

Oregon Tourism Commission

Staff Report | February 2017

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OPTIMIZE STATEWIDE ECONOMIC IMPACT

Align and optimize integrated sales, marketing and destination development strategies with Oregon's tourism industry

ALIGNMENT & OPTIMIZATION

Oregon's Tourism Industry

In an effort to align on strategies, as well as plan for alignment on the development of future strategies (i.e. 2019-21 Strategic Planning), Travel Oregon is working to evolve Oregon tourism industry stakeholder information-gathering efforts we employ. Travel Oregon's biennial Industry Stakeholder Engagement Survey and Regional Stakeholder Survey are being reviewed and designed with the consideration of how to optimize and align these efforts and implement one survey that can serve mutual purposes. Similarly, we're reviewing and designing Oregon Tourism Town Halls and Regional Stakeholder Gatherings to assess and build opportunities for enhancement and alignment. The result of combining these surveys and listening session efforts, is to facilitate opportunities for local and regional partners to provide ample input and feedback, and to help align strategies with each other and Travel Oregon. The listening sessions will take place spring of 2018, and the survey will follow in fall of 2018.

Drive business from key global markets through integrated sales/marketing plans leveraged with global partners and domestic travel trade

TRADESHOWS

Vakantiebeurs: Utrecht, The Netherlands, January 10 - 14

Travel Oregon participated in the trade and consumer show Vakantiebeurs with Travel Portland, Mt. Hood Territory, Eastern Oregon Visitors Association and Tualatin Valley. The show is another opportunity to promote Oregon after the recent success of the popular Dutch reality show, *Wie is Die Mol*, which was filmed in Oregon and aired last year. Travel Oregon was able to connect with the main tour operators that sell Oregon. The consumer and trade interest in Oregon is still extremely high as the new season of *Wie is Die Mol* has started, and people still recall the beauty of Oregon featured in the last season. Last year tour operators added new itineraries and landing pages that referenced the reality show.

CMT: Stuttgart, Germany, January 13 - 21

Travel Oregon participated in the world's longest running and largest public exhibition for tourism and leisure. More than 230,000 visitors attended during the 10 days of the show,

featuring 100 countries and more than 360 regions and cities represented by over 2,060 exhibitors.

Go West Summit: Salt Lake City, USA, January 2018

Travel Oregon participated in the Go West Summit along with an Oregon delegation of 22 destinations and suppliers. Travel Oregon's small grant recipients, Dan Sizer with Go Wild American Adventures and Nick Gibson with Trans-Cascadia, were among the delegation. The two suppliers used their grant funds to attend their first ever tradeshow to develop new sales opportunities and relationships with international buyers. At this show, Travel Oregon participated in multiple networking events organized by Go West and spent two full days in one-on-one sales development meetings with tour operators from around the world during these scheduled appointments.

IcelandAir Mid-Atlantic: Reykjavik, Iceland, January 25 - 28

Travel Oregon attended Icelandair's annual trade show, Mid-Atlantic. The tradeshow was an ideal opportunity to promote the convenient connections to European cities via the Reykjavik nonstop service to Portland. Travel Oregon met with multiple trade partners from Europe in one-on-one scheduled appointments as well as meetings with Icelandair's marketing and network planning teams.

Holiday World Show: Dublin, Ireland, January 28 - 29

Travel Oregon participated in Holiday World Show, a trade and consumer show, in partnership with Platinum Travel, an Irish tour operator that actively promotes Oregon as a destination for their clients. The show had over 45,000 attendees, 50% of them travel 2-3 times per year. The trade and consumer show provided the opportunity to promote the nonstop flight from LHR to PDX on Delta Air Lines along with the new IcelandAir nonstop from Dublin to Reykjavik a direct connection from Reykjavik to PDX. Platinum Travel was a 2017 Oregon Road Rally participant.

American Bus Association: Charlotte, North Carolina, January 25 - 29

Travel Oregon attended the American Bus Association Annual Convention with Oregon partners, Travel Portland, Portland Rose Festival, Portland Spirit, Red Lion Hotels and Monarch Hotels. Oregon had over 30 tour operator appointments and built relationships with new motorcoach tour operators interested in selling Oregon.

International Inbound Travel Association (IITA) Summit: Portland, OR, February 5-7

Travel Portland will host this year's IITA Annual Summit in Portland, Oregon which provides an opportunity to showcase Portland and Oregon to inbound tour operators that plan travel for international visitors. The summit includes a one-on-one appointment marketplace and a variety of educational sessions on topics that are impacting the industry. Travel Oregon will host the opening event at Punch Bowl Social and co-host the official post conference familiarization tours.

North American Journeys RTO Summit West: Los Angeles, CA, February 21 – 22

Travel Oregon will meet with Los Angeles-based receptive tour operators (RTO) during one-on-one appointment sessions. Travel Oregon will be selling and marketing Oregon to a variety of receptive tour operators, which represent clients from throughout Asia, specifically the target markets of China and Japan.

ITB: Berlin, Germany, March 7-11

Travel Oregon is participating in ITB Berlin, the largest travel show and tradeshow in the world. While ITB is the primary show for the German market, several tour operators and press from other European countries also attend. Oregon will welcome clients and media to the ITB Oregon Booth and promote Oregon as a year-round destination.

Active America China (AAC) Summit: Atlanta, GA March 25-27

Following a successful hosting of AAC Summit 2017 in Portland, Travel Oregon will participate in one on one sales meetings with Chinese tour operators, OTA's and wholesalers during the two-day industry sales summit.

SALES MISSIONS

Port of Portland/Delta Air Lines Strategy Meetings and Desk Side Pitches: Tokyo, Japan, January 6 - 13

Travel Oregon participated in budget and market planning meetings with the Port of Portland and Delta Air Lines market representatives from Hong Kong and Japan in Tokyo. The meetings refined existing strategies and developed new opportunities to market and promote Delta Air Lines nonstop service from Tokyo to PDX. Travel Oregon representatives also utilized this time in Japan to meet with product development teams from JTB as well as editors from Transit Magazine, Hail Mary Magazine and CREA Magazine.

Canadian Sales Mission: Canada, February 26 – March 1

Travel Oregon will conduct a sales mission across Canada (Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver) in conjunction with participating in the Vancouver Outdoor Adventure Show March 3-4. The consumer show is British Columbia's largest showcase of adventure travel experiences. Sales mission partners include Travel Portland, Tualatin Valley, Travel Southern Oregon, Willamette Valley Visitors Association, Eastern Oregon Visitors Association and the Oregon Coast Visitors Association. The mission will include a media and agent event in each city with a focus on Air Canada's nonstop service to Portland.

TRADE FAMS

Travel Ko: Japan, January 2018

Reina Iwabuchi, editor for TravelKo visited Oregon to develop new winter content for the TravelKo booking channel. Featured content and travel blog TravelKo is an online content and booking portal for Japanese consumers interested in researching and booking travel from a single hub. It's the number one travel information portal site in Japan and it partners

with 200 national travel agencies, tour operators and OTA's. This portal has 3.4 million unique users per month.

United Airlines Australia / New Zealand Ski Operators: March 3-10

Travel Oregon is partnering with United Airlines to host 10 of Australia and New Zealand's top ski wholesalers this March. The focus of the fam is to introduce Oregon's winter product to these key global markets. Their itinerary will focus on the Portland Region, Mt. Hood / Gorge and Central Oregon.

MEDIA FAMS

Freelance Media: Canada, January 24 - 27

Travel Oregon hosted Elizabeth Chorney-Booth, a Calgary based freelance writer and editor, to experience the Willamette Valley and the Oregon Truffle Festival. Elizabeth has secured an assignment for this trip with the Calgary Herald.

Ski-Safari: United Kingdom, February 11 – 17

Travel Oregon will host Alf Alderson, an award-winning adventure sports and travel journalist and photographer. Alf specializes in ski, surf and mountain sports journalism and his travel writing has appeared in a wide range of publications and websites including The Guardian, Daily Telegraph, Independent, Toronto Globe & Mail, South China Morning Post, Financial Times, and various other publications. For this assignment Alf has secured a 1500-word main feature in the ski publication Fall-line as well as additional 800-word features. Fall-line is a monthly publication with approx. 32,500 in circulation.

Telegraph Ski & Snowboard: United Kingdom, March

Travel Oregon will host Leslie Woit, Editor of Fall Line Ski magazine. Based in Banff, Leslie is now a freelance journalist for US, Canadian and UK media and writes for a wide range of quality publications and websites. For this assignment she has been commissioned by for Telegraph Ski and Snowboard.

NEW PRODUCT

Japan - Alpine Travel Service

Japanese hiking tour operator, Alpine Travel Service has created a new product for July 2018 highlighting wildflower hiking in Portland and the Central Oregon cascades while utilizing the Suttle Lake Lodge and Boat House and Best Western Mt. Hood Inn during this 4-night small group tour program. (See appendix for excerpt)

Japan - Japan Tourist Bureau (JTB)

Japanese tour operator JTB is finalizing a new West Coast tour product that includes 2-3 nights in Oregon featuring Portland, Bend, Crater Lake National Park and an optional night in Medford, Oregon.

MEDIA EXPOSURE

February 21, Berlin, Germany

Der Tagesspiegel, a Berlin daily newspaper with a circulation of 100,000, recently featured a article titled “Waldwärts” (“Into the Woods”) promoting unique hiking and camping experiences along the North Umpqua Trail. The article was a result of a press trip hosted by Travel Oregon and used connections formed through the Umpqua Valley Rural Tourism Studio to pitch the experience and provide trip planning support.

Facilitate the development of world-class tourism product in partnership with community leaders, tourism businesses and key agencies

Car-Free Trip Ideas

Travel Oregon recently published four trip ideas on TravelOregon.com that focus on inspiring visitors without access to a vehicle to travel throughout the state. These trip ideas are a direct result of the visitor transportation research that Travel Oregon completed at the start of 2017 with Trillium Transit and Jarrett Walker + Associates. Each trip idea listed below includes a combination of public and private transportation options that connect key tourism experiences in Oregon:

- Car-Free Getaway: [Astoria and the North Coast](#)
- Car-Free Getaway: [Central Coast Cruising](#)
- Car-Free Getaway: [Willamette Valley Wine Country](#)
- Car-Free Getaway: [Active Adventures in Bend](#)

Travel Oregon plans to expand the availability of car-free trip ideas to more regions of the state during the current biennium.

Guide tourism in a way that achieves the optimal balance of visitation, economic impact, natural resources conservation and livability

TRAVEL OREGON FOREVER

Travel Oregon Forever Fund

2017 was another productive year for the Travel Oregon Forever Fund. The Forever Fund concluded its third project cycle (2016-2017) on December 31, 2017 and selected the next seven projects for the fourth project cycle (2018-2019) on January 1, 2018. The Forever Fund also achieved a major programmatic milestone in November 2017 when it raised its \$150,000th donation since launching in 2012.

The final donation tally for 2017 will be available in late February 2018 when all Quarter 4 and annual donations from the [Travel Oregon Forever Business Partners](#) have been received by fund administrator, the Oregon Community Foundation (OCF). OCF will distribute the

final grant checks to the 2016-2017 Forever Fund projects. (Note: grant recipients receive funds from the future year of Forever Fund collections.)

Travel Oregon will also be hosting its annual Travel Oregon Forever Fund Beneficiary Lunch with the 2018-2019 Forever Fund projects listed below on February 14, 2018 to coincide with Oregon's 159th birthday. For the current project cycle, we are pleased that many of the Forever Fund projects include support for fire restoration efforts on public lands in Oregon.

Oregon Coast | Tillamook Estuaries Partnership

Explore Nature – This project is a collaborative effort between eight partner organizations to deliver a series of over 60 meaningful, nature-based hikes, walks, and paddles that showcase the uniqueness of Tillamook County and the work being done to conserve the area's natural resources, restore biodiversity, and preserve natural resource-based industries.

Greater Portland | Northwest Trails Alliance

Dirt Lab Evolution at Gateway Green – Since opening in 2017, Gateway Green is quickly becoming an iconic mountain bike attraction in Portland for users of all skills levels. The location of Gateway Green – in one of Portland's underserved neighborhoods – also helps to introduce new and diverse user groups to this outdoor activity. This project will help increase the fun and challenge of mountain biking at Gateway Green's Dirt Lab, while simultaneously lowering the bar for the youngest riders.

Willamette Valley | The Oregon Timber Trail Alliance

Bunchgrass Trail Rehabilitation – Bunchgrass Ridge is a historic transportation route for travelers and recreationalists looking to connect Oakridge and the Willamette Valley to Central Oregon. Recent wildfires, poorly designed switchbacks, erosion, and a missing segment of trail have all combined to prevent Bunchgrass Ridge from realizing its potential as a resource for the Oakridge community. This project will re-establish this epic backcountry destination for all users through volunteer events and work parties.

Southern Oregon | The Umpqua National Forest

Restoring the North Umpqua Trail – Damage from the 2017 Umpqua North Complex closed 12.5 miles of the 79-mile North Umpqua Trail for the foreseeable future. Through this project, the Umpqua National Forest will offer a volunteer training program and build a sustainable volunteer base tailored to the restoration and stewardship of the North Umpqua Trail.

Central Oregon | Oregon Equestrians Trails

Cascade Lakes Mountain Bike Trail – This project will enhance the recreational experience for visitors and locals by creating a new mountain bike trail in the area to alleviate user conflicts on the nearby Metolius-Windigo Trail.

Mt. Hood / Columbia River Gorge | Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Ready, Set, GOrge! – Ready, Set, GOrge! is a collaborative effort to inspire Columbia Gorge visitors to keep their visit safe and fun. The funding provided by the Forever Fund will support Friends of the Columbia Gorge to expand this campaign by creating seasonal digital and print content and offering trainings for public-facing businesses, chambers, trailhead ambassadors to ensure the Ready, Set, GOrge! message is used consistently and inspires more people to enjoy the Gorge responsibly.

Eastern Oregon | Oregon Natural Desert Association

Oregon Desert Trail – Oregon's high desert public lands are largely unknown and difficult to access. The Oregon Desert Trail helps break down these barriers and provide users with an inspiring introduction to Eastern Oregon's unparalleled natural beauty. The funding provided by the Forever Fund will help the Oregon Natural Desert Association to host 10 stewardship projects to improve the route corridor, engage in community outreach and develop promotional materials.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Rebate Program

Travel Oregon partnered with Forth Mobility (formerly Drive Oregon) in 2017 to develop and launch an electric vehicle charging station program for tourism businesses in Oregon. Up to \$5,000 rebates are available for tourism-facing businesses in Oregon that successfully install a Level 2 charging station of a DC fast charging station that is available to the general public. The availability of more charging infrastructure will support the expansion of the [Oregon Electric Byway program](#).



We are pleased to announce that Forth Mobility has approved the first electric vehicle charging rebate check for the City of Estacada. The City of Estacada successfully installed a set of Tesla Superchargers with a universal Level 2 connector port at the Estacada City Hall on December 28, 2017. Five additional entities have been identified and rebate checks will be reviewed for approval upon successful installation at those properties.

Inspire overnight leisure travel through industry-leading branding, marketing and communications

WINTER CAMPAIGN 2017/18 RESULTS

The following is a brief update on our winter marketing efforts. We will report full campaign results at the Commission meeting in April.

Travel Oregon: The Game (TOTG)

As reported at the December 2017 Commission meeting, the mid-campaign results for TOTG were exceptionally strong. The number of TravelOregon.com sessions over the first half of the TOTG campaign was up 29% over the prior year. We saw equally strong results in terms of engaged users, with visitors averaging 3:33 minutes on the site -- an average of 17.41 pages per session.

	2016	2017	WEEK 4
YoY - All Users	10/17 -11/14	10/20-11/16	Change
Number of sessions	205,345	265,195	29%
Pageviews	439,957	4,618,011	950%
Pages/Sessions	2.14	17.41	714%
Avg Session Duration	1:52	3:33	90%
Bounce Rate	67.75%	27.10%	-60%

While the media, search and social campaign driving traffic to Travel Oregon: The Game ended on December 31, 2017, TOTG will remain live on TravelOregon.com through December 2018 to support the 175th Anniversary of the Oregon Trail.

We will also be promoting both the 175th Anniversary and the game in a partnership with Lyft in early February 2018. Through Lyft, consumers in Portland will be able to book a ride in a covered wagon.

The Enthusiast Network (TEN) Ski Film

- Over 520,888 consumers viewed a version of the ski film (teaser, full format, ski cutdown, snowboard cutdown) on The Enthusiast Network's web and social media channels.
- As of January 12, 2018, TEN overdelivered impressions by 9.4%, totaling 8 million impressions.
- Travel Oregon owns the ski film and will be looking for creative ways to show it to more consumers next year in locations like welcome centers, visitor centers and the Portland International Airport.
- 13,000 consumers entered our Ski & Surf winter sweepstakes before it closed on December 31, 2017.

SPRING 2018 CAMPAIGN UPDATE

On March 12, 2018, we will introduce a new campaign that inspires people to come find happiness off the beaten path, all over Oregon. Using beautiful, enchanting and inviting animation, we will showcase places in Oregon in new, innovative ways that are true and honest to the spirit of Oregon.

Creative update:

- Paying careful attention to authenticity, regional equity and land management issues, we approved both an animatic (a storyboard set-to-time) and various color studies for our Spring :90 television spot. We will review the first full colored animation with backgrounds on February 6, 2018.



Approved color study for Wallows scene in Spring :90

- In addition to featuring iconic Oregon locations, the Spring :90 features many hand-crafted native plants and animals.



Columbia White-tailed deer and Western Meadowlark designs

- Supported by key insights from leaders at Adventure Without Limits, Soul River, America's Hub World Tours, the Mazamas and Basic Rights Oregon, we worked with Wieden+Kennedy to authentically represent a diverse group of Oregonians in our Spring campaign.



Character design for Wooden Tree Tulip Farm scene in Willamette Valley

- The Oregon Symphony will record an original score for the Spring television spots in late February/early March 2018.

Media update

We are currently building the Spring media plan based on these foundational elements:

KPIs

- Video views
- TravelOregon.com traffic
- Engaged users/quality audience

Parameters

Flighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3.12 - 5.6 (8 weeks)
Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• San Francisco, Seattle, Phoenix, Portland• National (Interest & Behavior Targeting)
Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "The Active Adventurer"• Buying Demo: A25-54
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 X :90• 4 X :15• 7 X :06• OOH Billboards• Display Banners

Target: The Active Adventurer

Activities They Enjoy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hiking, bike riding, golf, skiing and snowboarding, outdoor sports, visiting beaches, shopping, fine dining
Travel Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prefer traveling to places they've never been• Love doing research on a location before they go on vacation• Would rather book a trip over the internet than meet with a travel agent• Choose active vacations with lots to do• More likely than average adult to be a travel influencer
Travel Oregon Market Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They prioritize travel• They travel for work and come back for pleasure• When traveling they want to know what they can't miss but also leave room for exploration• They travel for adventure

Communication Approach

Our message	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspire individuals to come find happiness off the beat and path, all over Oregon
Messaging goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage people in the places and spaces that can underscore the inviting, enchanting that is Oregon.

Objectives and Strategies

Media Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote Oregon and its beauty through our Barely Exaggerated campaign
Media Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise awareness of Oregon and its offerings through large creative canvases and impactful video• Spark curiosity through custom content partnerships• Drive vacation planning and capture lower funnel demand through travel intent targeting and OTA partnerships

Next Steps:

- **Feb 5:** Approve final Wieden+Kennedy media plan
- **Feb. 13:** Approve final partner plans (Social, Content, Search, PR)
- **Feb. 15:** Present co-op opportunities to regional partners
- **March 6:** TV Ships
- **March 12:** Campaign Launch

PROMOTIONS

Capitol Christmas Tree Project

The 2018 US Capitol Christmas Tree selected from Willamette National Forest (WNF) was announced at a media event in Sweet Home, Ore. on January 19, 2018.

Travel Oregon Involvement:

In the past, The United States Forest Service (USFS) contracted with Choose Outdoors for transportation, tours, marketing and collateral supporting the promotion of the Capitol Christmas Tree. Choose Outdoors also owns and manages the web domain capitolchristmastree.com.

This year, however, the WNF decided to work with the Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) to approach Travel Oregon for our marketing expertise. Working with the WNF and WVVA, Travel Oregon brought on Weinstein PR and Aaron Draplin Design. Weinstein PR will develop a robust communications plan and strategy and Aaron Draplin Design created a one-of-a-kind logo. The logo was unveiled at the January media event, and the communication plan will be finalized in March 2018.



WNF has a budget of \$50,000 for marketing/community support and has signed a cost share agreement with Travel Oregon to achieve the following goals:

- Community engagement
- Marketing the WNF and public lands in Oregon

The Capitol Christmas Tree (CCT) project leads from WNF and Travel Oregon convene biweekly to discuss project coordination and have established a Basecamp project for all stakeholders to discuss and review the efforts of this project.

Oregon Trail 175th Anniversary

The Oregon Trail Coalition is a collection of RDMOs, DMOs and state agency partner groups that are directly involved with the Oregon Trail and are interested in the commemoration.

- The coalition includes Eastern Oregon Visitor Association (EOVA), Hood/Gorge, Travel Oregon, Travel Portland, Oregon Mount Hood Territory, Oregon Travel Experience, Oregon State Parks, Oregon Department of Transportation and Oregon Heritage Commission
- Alice Trindle (EOVA) has acted as lead convener; three meetings were held at Travel Oregon offices with representatives from Global Marketing, Global Strategic Partnerships and Global Sales participating.

The Oregon Trail Coalition has developed a draft marketing strategy and is currently prioritizing and reviewing campaign proposals. The coalition is exploring the development

of an influencer campaign spearheaded by Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory and the influencer marketing agency Linqia, as well as a media proposal from the Oregonian Media Group. Travel Oregon created deeper content featuring the Oregon Trail that supports the TOTG campaign launch. Highlights include:

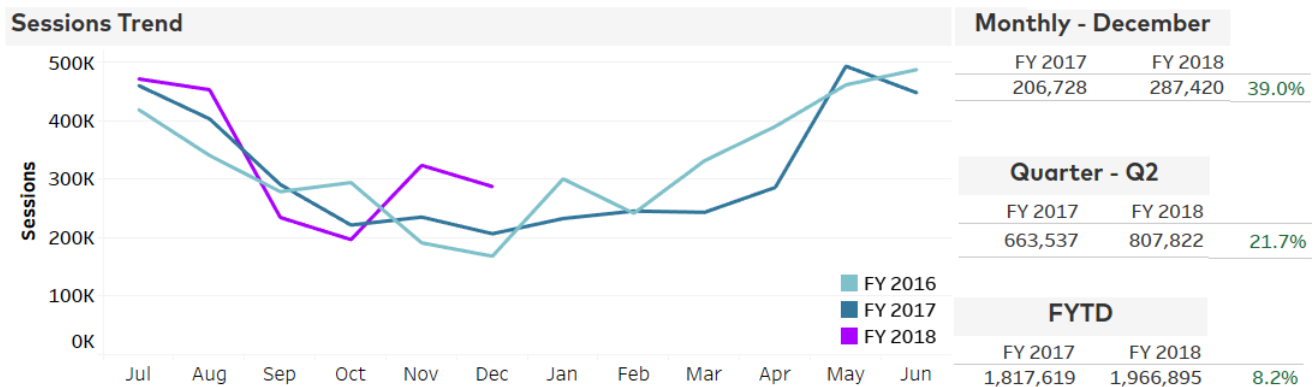
- Narrative video series following the route of the Travel Oregon: The Game's trail through the seven regions featuring unique points of interest
- Historic Oregon Trail featured stories
- Content hub on TravelOregon.com

Travel Oregon has earmarked \$10,000 for content development that will be featured and promoted TravelOregon.com and our social media channels; content will also be available for partner websites and platforms.

DIGITAL CONSUMER PLATFORMS

TravelOregon.com

Boosted by the winter campaign, traffic to TravelOregon.com was up 21.7% in Q2 (Oct-Dec.) compared to the same period last year. For the year to date, we were up 8.2% (1.97 million sessions vs 1.82 million sessions).



TravelOregon.com Platform Updates:

With site launch behind us, we made extensive progress on Q2 priorities.

- Multi-Point Maps is a high priority item that was unable to be completed prior to launch. The feature update will allow users to search for content around an address, along an entire bike route, or along a Scenic Byway route.
- Partner Integrations: One of our strategic priorities for the new site was to empower partners to leverage the platform and tell their own story, without focusing on creating their own platforms. We have made the following progress on this goal:
 - Eastern Oregon: The EOVA board voted last year to merge VisitEasternOregon.com with the Eastern Oregon section of TravelOregon.com. After content migration and deduping with OTIS, this process was finalized in early January.
 - We are in the final stages of integrating SkiOregon.org into TravelOregon.com's ski section; while the content has been migrated and we

are now providing conditions updates, we are working on forwarding the SkiOregon.org domain to TravelOregon.com

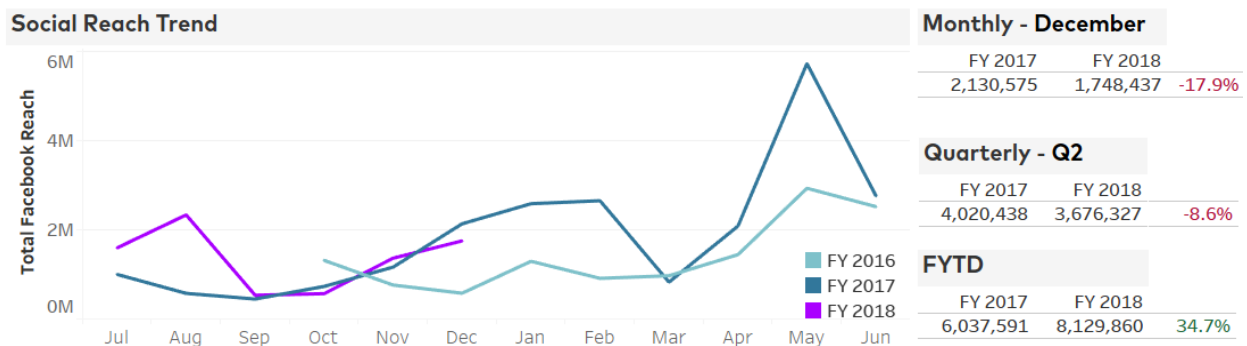
- We successfully worked with John Day River Territory to allow this RTS community to stage and use the Travel Oregon platform to tell the story of their region.

Social Media

Social reach, as measured by Facebook traffic, declined slightly by 8.6% in Q2 (Oct-Dec.) compared to the same period last year. For the year to date, we were down 17.9%.

The primary driver for this downturn could be related to the allocation of paid media and campaign launch periods; in Q2 2016/17, the winter campaign kicked off on October 14 and a total of \$85,796 was spent by the end of the quarter. Comparatively, in Q2 2017/18, it launched six days later (October 20) and \$64,000 was spent by the end of the quarter.

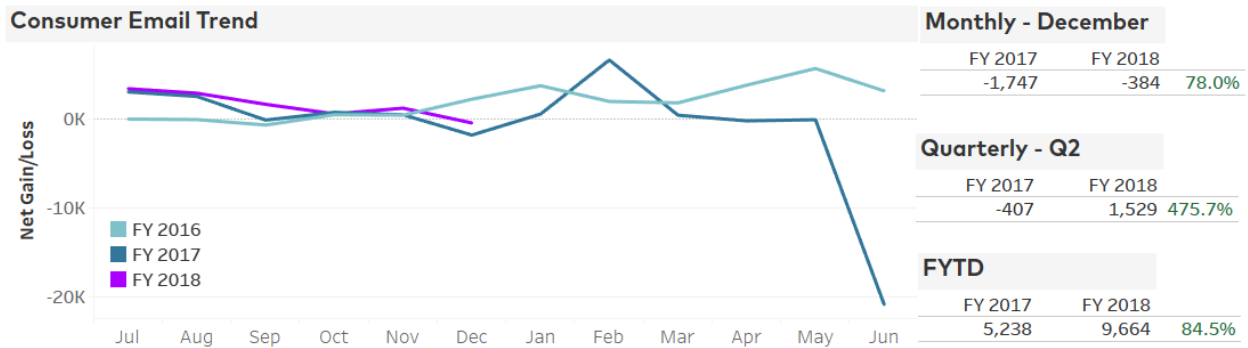
Our social strategy will need to evolve drastically in the next few years as Facebook moves to change the news feed algorithm to prioritize posts from friends, family members and groups over posts from publishers and brands. Publishers are expecting to see organic reach and engagement continue to decline. Paid content will become increasingly competitive as Facebook will prioritize content that only "ignite conversations and meaningful interactions". Content that induces fear and anger produces higher engagement and sharing than joyous content, and this challenge will be exacerbated as we seek to inspire people.



Other highlights from this quarter included the following:

- As a result of Travel Oregon: The Game and an increased focus on engagement, the second half of 2017 was strong on Twitter, with the top four most engaging months on the platform taking place over the last five months of the year.
- Instagram continued to be a strong growth channel; for example, in December alone, post reach for the channel was a 7.88% increase MOM (727,683 November), a 19.89% increase YOY (654,754 December 2016), and a 3.46% increase on average post reach from the past 15 months (758,781). As a result, one of our strategies moving forward will be to increase our posting frequency.

Email Marketing



Travel Oregon's consumer email marketing programs were identified as a key initiative for FY17/18. The email programs allowed for ongoing communication with potential travelers to keep Oregon top of mind. Therefore, we created a new metric that tracks the net gain or loss across all our consumer lists: general, culinary and outdoor.

- **List Growth:**
 - The combined lists saw a net gain of 1,529 subscribers for Q2 of 2017/18, up 475% compared to the prior year.
 - Individually, all three lists saw net subscriber growth for the second quarter of the year.
 - For Q2, the niche lists saw growth in new sign-ups compared to last year, while the general list's number was down 10% compared to last year.
 - In Q2, total list size across all three lists equaled 185,279 subscribers, which was flat to the prior quarter.
- **Engagement:**
 - To gain a better understanding of the engagement levels with our lists, we started to track a new metric called "active subscribers."
 - Active subscribers are described as people who have clicked an email within a year or opened an email within 6 months.
 - This metric will allow us to track the health of each list over time.
 - Open rates for each list fell for the quarter compared to last year.
 - However, the culinary list showed a decline compared to last year of the same period. Both the general and outdoor lists were up for the first two quarters of the year.
 - Click-through rates for all three lists grew over Q2. Each list showed double digit growth.
 - Only the outdoor newsletter showed a loss compared to the same time last year.
- **Email Optimization:**
 - With the Visitor Lifecycle Management (VLM) project coming down the pike, the team shifted focus away from optimizing the legacy email program. The team is aiming its attention at preparing our lists for a migration to a new

platform. While this shift is still a few months out, a lot of upfront work is required to clean the database. The Canadian anti-spam legislation (CASL) project was just one step in the preparation process.

- The team is currently researching and preparing for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements being laid out by the European Parliament and Council as we have international email addresses within our list.
- To help keep leads flowing consistently, the marketing team is planning on four lead-generating sweepstakes over the 2017-18 fiscal year. The next sweepstakes is the Oregon Birthday sweeps which is currently being put together with a launch date around February 14.

PUBLISHING & CONTENT

We oversaw the development, production and distribution of 62 stories on TravelOregon.com in Q2. The publishing line-up included:

- 10 feature stories: This included long-lead “Summer Features” and other long-form content designed to evoke an emotional response and ignite a desire to travel to Oregon.
- 20 news stories: These stories were informational in nature and were designed to keep Oregon “top-of-mind” with information about events and happenings within three months.
- 17 blogger stories: Stories from local Oregon personalities and content partners using their independent voice.
- 12 special project stories: Stories produced to support special partner request and/or specific partner events including nine sponsored stories.

Fall Seasonal Features were published in September and included deep-dive stories on [ghost towns](#), [hiking Cascade Head](#), an [immigrant winemaker](#), [Oregon’s Jewish heritage](#), and [detour-worthy eateries along I-5](#).

In addition to our seasonal features, the team also produced long form content to support the winter Oregon Trail campaign. They included:

Insider’s Guide to the Oregon Trail: We all have a soft spot for the original “Oregon Trail” game, but how much do we really know about the trail itself – why some 400,000 settlers hit the 2,000-mile trail and what this meant for life in Oregon? Written by Emily Grosvenor, who once played live-action Oregon Trail and [wrote about it](#) for The Atlantic, this reflective historical feature answers this question and highlights places in Oregon where travelers can immerse themselves in the heritage of the mass-migration that forever changed the West.

Unsettling Oregon’s History



Chief Joseph statue in Joseph by Leon Werdinger

It’s easy to step into pioneers’ stories and see them as the heroes of an epic journey. And popular culture tends to romanticize the unflinching ambition of those who left their lives behind to venture west. But today many historians strive to paint a more accurate picture of how this mass migration decimated tribal life, in hopes that illuminating deep-rooted inequity might keep history from repeating itself.

“We’ve really privileged the perspectives

Highlights on the Travel Oregon Trail: To support this year's winter campaign, we published a video series, [Cool Season Adventures](#), that roughly follows the seven-region route of the game. Featuring Portland based Lindsey Murphy, this story was told in the form of an epic, first person road trip. Lindsey is a travel writer who loves Oregon, but has not experienced much of the state outside of Portland. Her approachability and natural enthusiasm translated well to the format, and we released several snack-sized video pieces on social, along with a single road trip story on TravelOregon.com.



Other content wins:



- We supported Seaside's new branding/marketing campaign and videos with a story about [How to Spend a Weekend in Seaside](#).
- After years of serving as our Central Oregon Ask Oregon expert and answering visitor questions, Kim Cooper Findling compiled the most frequently-asked questions into a [trip guide](#).
- We published our first [Powder Alert](#) for Ski Oregon. Our partnership with Ski Oregon also led to a [great story about car-free transportation to Mt. Hood](#).
- We continued providing a platform for [Hopstories videos](#) to tell the story behind Oregon breweries.
- We produced our [first of a three-part video series with Outdoor Project](#). Our story about [magical moments in the Cascades](#) was created to support the East Lane County RTS.
- We worked with Instagram influencer Isaac Johnston on his return trip to Oregon with his family to [share photos of Oregon on his account](#) and a [narrative story of his family road trip](#) on TravelOregon.com.

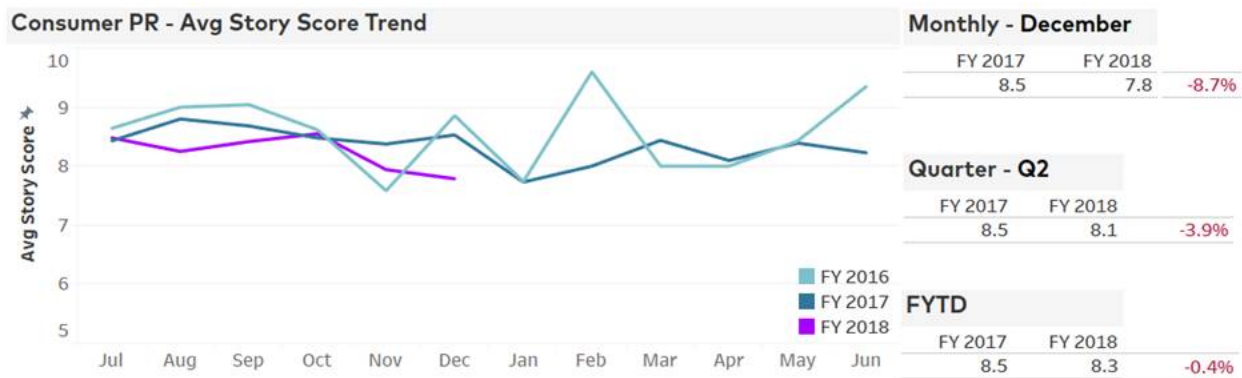
Oregon Scenic Bikeway Landing Page

As part of the continued relaunch of RideOregonRide.com into the new TravelOregon.com Travel Oregon has published a new landing page for the Oregon Scenic Bikeway program (RideOregonRide.com/Bikeways). The format of the new landing page lends itself well to the look and feel of TravelOregon.com while also showcasing the Oregon Scenic Bikeway brand that Travel Oregon developed to create a consistent look and feel for visitors along these signature routes in Oregon.

On February 22, 2018, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission will vote on the designation of the Crooked River Canyon Scenic Bikeway. Based on the results of this vote, Travel Oregon will update the [Oregon Scenic Bikeway map](#) to reflect the current number of bikeways in time for riders this spring.

CONSUMER COMMUNICATIONS

FY 2017/18 Second Quarter Consumer Coverage



Q2 held fairly steady for consumer coverage. Although the average story score was slightly lower than FY 16/17 in a year-over-year comparison, we still tracked above our yearly goal and saw story placements in top-tier publications. Even with top-tier placements, circulation for Q2 was down 27% (279 million in FY 16/17 vs. 204 million for FY 17/18). However, the year-to-date numbers show circulation up 61%, from 339 million in FY 16/17 to 544 million in FY 17/18.

October

Travel Oregon garnered a total of 20 stories (10 consumer publications and 10 blog posts) for a circulation total of 67.8 million and an average story score of 8.6.

We kicked off the month with a bang with a story in The Wall Street Journal (both print and online). The story, "[The \(Wild\) Game Plan for Fall Cooking](#)," was written by Kathleen Squires, whom Travel Oregon hosted as a judge for the Wild About Game competition last year. The PR team has established a strong relationship with Kathleen, and she continues to produce incredible coverage for Oregon.

A roundup on Thrillist.com touted “[8 Ridiculously Charming Train Rides To Take This Fall](#),” that included Mt. Hood Railroad. Another roundup that ran on LAMag.com (“[Portland Flights Are Dirt Cheap Right Now, and Here’s What to Do When You Get There](#)”) was written by Natalie Compton, whom Travel Oregon hosted on a press trip in late summer 2017.

As mentioned, October was a big month for blog posts—many of which came from the following pre-Feast adventures:

- FeedMeDearly.com, “[Feast Portland](#)”
- TheGoodHeartedWoman.com, “[2017 Good Hearted FEAST Awards](#)”
- UrbanBlissLife.com, “[Curiosity Cultivates Success at Abacela Winery](#),” “[French-Inspired Pacific Northwest Cuisine At Marche Restaurant](#),” “[Where to eat, play, and stay in Jacksonville, Oregon](#),” “[A Retro-Modern Marvel: Ashland Hills Hotel & Suites](#),” and “[Applegate Valley Wine Tasting: Troon Vineyards](#)”
- MelissaKaylene.com, “[I Spent The Night In Historic Jacksonville, Oregon](#)”

Additional blog coverage included a post from prolific bloggers Jacob Fu and Esther Julee, whom Travel Oregon hosted on two press trips, in “[The Ultimate Oregon Bucket List](#)”, and [a post](#) from Victoria Yore (FollowMeAway.com), whom Travel Oregon hosted in late August/early September.

November

Much like October, November’s consumer coverage consisted largely of blog posts and smaller circulation publications. Nevertheless, it was a good month for our numbers. The PR team garnered a total of 18 stories (10 consumer publications, 8 blog posts) with a circulation sum of 25.5 million and an average story score of 7.94.

National Geographic Traveler ran a roundup on its “[Best List](#)” of the best ski resorts of 2017 that featured Timberline. The story was written by Amber Gibson, whom Travel Oregon hosted on a press trip in early June.

Lauren Mowry, a journalist Travel Oregon hosted in late July/early August, interviewed Courtney Taylor-Taylor of the Dandy Warhols (and owner of Old Portland wine bar in Portland’s Slabtown neighborhood) delving into what inspired him to get into the wine industry.

Kate Donnelly, whom Travel Oregon has hosted several times for pre-Feast adventures, included Suttle Lodge on a roundup of “[design-savvy, cozy retreats](#)” that ran on ArchitecturalDigest.com.

The popular lifestyle blog, Cup of Jo, also wrote about Travel Oregon: The Game with a post about “[Four Fun Things](#)” that included The Game (and a link to TravelOregon.com) that led to the largest spike in referral traffic the game had seen—3,400 visits in one day!

December

December was an outstanding month for influenced consumer coverage. The PR team placed a total of 14 stories with a circulation sum of 111.9 million and an average story score of 7.8. Although the PR team garnered coverage in several major media outlets, the story score was slightly lower than one would expect. This was due to the number of “roundups,” which scored lower than feature stories but were still valuable for inspiring visits to Oregon.

- The first of these roundups, written by Amber Gibson, whom the PR team hosted on a press trip in early June, appeared on RealSimple.com featuring Oregon on a list of literary landscapes (“[7 Book Settings You Can Actually Visit](#)”). Southern Oregon (Crater Lake and Ashland) and Bridge of the Gods were among the stops in Cheryl Strayed’s *Wild* that make the list.
- Next, Oregon Hazelnuts from Freddy Guys were listed on a roundup of “[giftable tastes from each state](#)” on USAToday.com compiled by Susan Barnes (whom the PR team works with regularly on similar roundups).
- TravelChannel.com included Heceta Head Lighthouse on its roundup of “[10 Best Beaches for a Beach Wedding Ceremony](#).”
- Additionally, Vogue.com featured Joseph on its list of “[9 Destinations to Visit in 2018](#).”

Aside from the great roundups, there were two prolific stories that featured Oregon as a destination. The first, written by Katie Chang (who was among the journalists attending Feast), ran on Forbes.com (“[Why McMinnville Makes For The Perfect Getaway From Portland, Oregon](#)”). The second, by Victoria Yore (whom Travel Oregon hosted on a press trip in early September) appeared on HuffingtonPost.com (“[8 Convincing Reasons You Should Visit Oregon in 2018](#)”).

SATW

In partnership with all seven Regional Destination Management Organizations, Travel Oregon developed itineraries and hosted 44 members of SATW on ten pre- and post-conference familiarization tours that highlighted natural wonders, culinary delights and authentic experiences all over the state. Throughout November, coverage rolled in, much of which was on the writers’ personal blogs and websites (e.g. “[Heceta Lighthouse B&B—Maybe the Best in the State of Oregon](#)”). Our first major coverage to come out of SATW was an article on HuffingtonPost.com, “[Columbia River Gorge is Open for Business—and as Beautiful as Ever](#),” that touched on the Eagle Creek fire, and all amazing attractions and beauty that are available for visitors and residents in the Hood-Gorge region.

MARKETING SERVICES - RESEARCH

Oregon Wildfire Travel Impacts Report

During 2017, Oregon experienced one of its most severe fire seasons in years. Residents and businesses were affected throughout the state. As lawmakers consider wildfire funding and management issues, we must ensure the story of tourism losses is included in the conversation to provide better context to the value of wildfire maintenance. Therefore, Travel Oregon, in partnership with Oregon State Parks and Visit California, fielded a study

to learn more about the economic impacts of these fires on Oregon's travel and tourism industry.

We are working with Dean Runyan Associates to field an online survey of travel-related businesses and organizations across Oregon to better understand the travel-related changes caused by the wildfires. They will be looking at changes in supply, demand and revenue and will connect this data to Oregon's travel impact numbers to provide an estimate of the wildfire-related travel impacts. The report will provide travel impact numbers for the State as well as breakouts by region, county (where available) and specific major wildfire events.

The survey will be sent to our industry partners, businesses throughout the state, Oregon State Parks, the United States Forest Service, the Oregon Restaurant Lodging Association (ORLA), and Oregon Art Commission in early February 2018. Preliminary data will be available at the end of March with delivery of the final wildfire travel impacts in mid-April 2018.

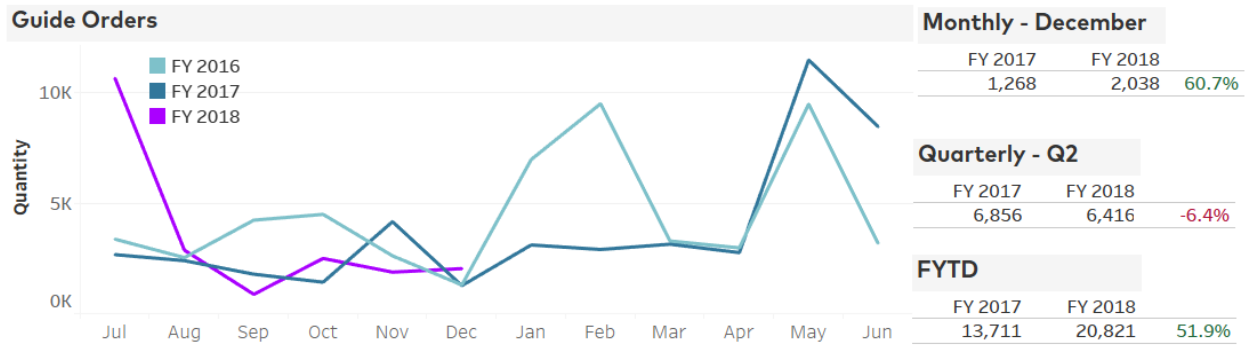
Sandy/Estacada Visitor Profile Study

In partnership with Clackamas County Tourism, we are working with RRC Associates to understand visitor profile and transportation preferences in Sandy and Estacada (with a focus on outdoor recreation). One of the goals of this study is to develop information that will be useful inputs into the "Round the Mountain" transportation study, planned to begin in fall 2018. This study will also inform marketing strategies, messaging campaigns, and itinerary development in those regions.

The results of the research will be presented with various breakouts and segmentations, such as visitor type, purpose of trip, type of accommodations, gender, family status, survey location, or any number of variables surfaced through the survey.

Our data collection approach includes a blend of visitor intercept surveys in each area, emails and hard-copy surveys for hotels to give directly to overnight guests. The intercept survey will target a total of 1,000 completed surveys for study period, generally from February through June 2018. A final report will be provided before by the end of August 2018.

FULFILLMENT



- Individual guide orders for Q2 were down slightly (-6.4%) versus the same time last year. However, fiscal year-to-date guide orders are up 51.9%.
 - Orders in both October and December 2017 were up over the previous year.
 - November experienced a 54.9% drop vs. November 2016. This was an expected drop as last year the dedicated winter guide email was sent to subscribers in November 2016. This year, there was a shift in strategy to avoid competing with holiday emails. We sent the email in January 2018, causing a spike in guide orders.
- Travel Oregon is starting the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for fulfillment vendors in early 2018. The goal will be to select a vendor and have a contract signed in time for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2018.

CORPORATE BRAND LOGO

We continue to implement the new Travel Oregon brand identity throughout our channels and in support of the industry.

While internal branding is ongoing, we are in the process of supporting new brand implementation via logo development for several key industry partners including Ski Oregon, the Oregon Bed and Breakfast Guild, and the Oregon Tour and Travel Alliance.

SUPPORT AND EMPOWER OREGON'S TOURISM INDUSTRY

**Provide development and training opportunities to meet
the evolving tourism industry needs**

Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism

April 29 – May 1, 2018 | Riverhouse on the Deschutes | Bend

- The [Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism](#) attendee registration is now open. The early bird registration deadline is March 23 at midnight and registration will close on April 20 at midnight. The room block opened for general conference attendees when registration went live in January and is anticipated to fill very soon. We have seen the demand for lodging rooms at the conference increase earlier year-over-year, allowing us to send attendees and Travel Oregon staff to different lodging properties across town.
- This year, Travel Oregon will host two events just prior to the start of the conference: the annual Oregon Tourism Studio: Community Leaders Boot Camp will be held at Sunriver Resort, Friday, April 27 through Sunday, April 29; and the Oregon Visitor Information Training will be held Saturday, April 28 through Sunday, April 29, which will include a familiarization tour of Bend. Among several other pre-conference industry meetings, the Oregon Tourism Commission will meet on Sunday, April 29 from 12:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.
- New this year, we have asked the Regional Destination Management Organizations to lead a session geared towards the Oregon Visitor Information Training attendees and Governor's Conference First-Timers, that will address what's new for visitors to enjoy in their region and showcase their work with the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program. This session will lead into the Governor's Conference First-Timers Reception and will allow for attendees to take the opportunity to meet their RDMO.



- On Monday night, the conference will take over Mt. Bachelor for an unforgettable night on the mountain. Attendees will have the opportunity to take the chairlift up to Pine Marten Lodge, tube down the hill (weather dependent) and cozy up by the fire with a hot beverage. We are excited to showcase to our attendees why Mt. Bachelor has been named one of the top ski resorts in the Northwest.



- Sponsor and exhibitor partnerships have been steadily coming in, many returning and several new to the conference. We are on track for another full exhibit area and anticipate 100% commitment for the sponsorship opportunities. These partnerships are what help us make this conference great and we truly appreciate their support.
- [Nominations](#) for the 2017 Oregon Travel & Tourism Industry Achievement Awards are open through February 28 in the following categories: Leadership, Sustainable Tourism, International Sales & Development, Heritage Tourism, Tourism Development, Tourism Volunteer, Advertising, Content and/or Visitor Guide/Collateral, PR or Initiative, Social Media, Website and Marketing. Award recipients will be recognized on the opening night of the Governor's Conference.
- A big thank you to our local planning partners Visit Bend and the Central Oregon Visitors Association.

Travel Oregon 101

The Travel Oregon 101 schedule for the first five months of 2018 has been announced. We start the year off with a webinar in January and will have one in May as well. We present for the first time at the Oregon Sports Summit in February in Eugene where the session will be open to event attendees as well as others who wish to attend. We'll be presenting along with the RDMO Consultation meetings in Grants Pass and Bandon. Details can be found here on the [Travel Oregon 101 schedule](#):

January 25, 2018 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.	Statewide	Webinar
February 2, 2018 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Willamette Valley	Valley River Inn Eugene In conjunction with the Oregon Sports Summit
March 14, 2018 1:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.	Southern Oregon	Grants Pass

March 15, 2018 1:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.	Oregon Coast	Bandon
May 30, 2018 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.	Statewide	Webinar

OREGON TOURISM STUDIOS

Communications Update for the Oregon Tourism Studio Program

In response to the increasing demand for the Oregon Tourism Studio program and the growing interest in the Culinary and Agritourism Studio and the Bicycle Tourism Studio, Travel Oregon updated how it communicates the objectives of the Oregon Tourism Studio program, the process for submitting applications for consideration and what Travel Oregon's expectations are for participating communities.

Moving forward, tourism communities in Oregon will be invited to apply for one of the three Oregon Tourism Studios listed below:

- The *Rural Tourism Studio* program provides rural communities with on-the-ground guidance, training and support for growing tourism in the local area based on the region's unique offerings.
- The *Destination Management Studio* is designed to assist communities that already have strong tourism demand and may be vulnerable to the unintended negative impacts of high visitation.
- The *Tourism Experience Studio* is a streamlined one- to two-day workshop that helps communities strategize on how to develop and market specific, unique tourism products.

The updated message frame for the Oregon Tourism Studio program is available in the Destination Development section of Industry.TravelOregon.com. Travel Oregon is also finalizing an updated Oregon Tourism Studio brochure that will be available later this year.

Klamath Basin Tourism Studio

The Klamath Basin Tourism Studio concluded in early December with the delivery of the Marketing workshop and the Teaming for Action workshop in Klamath Falls.

Approximately 43 individuals attended the two-day session. The purpose of these two workshops was to prepare for the public promotion of the sub-region's existing and future successes on TravelOregon.com and to confirm which actions teams to establish for advancing tourism related projects.

Attendees reviewed the priority from the previous workshops focused on visioning and planning, cultural heritage and agritourism and outdoor recreation. Participants then discussed the ideal management structure for the region's collaborative efforts and agreed to form the action teams listed below:

1. **Heritage and Agritourism** - Initial Project: Develop four visitor itineraries inclusive of agriculture, cultural heritage, quilting, and culinary assets in the Klamath Basin.

2. **Recreating Outdoors – Outdoor Recreation** - Initial Project: Identify routes for cycling and develop a regional cycling map highlighting the “best of the best” routes in each local area for different rider niches.
3. **Marketing** - Initial Project: Gather inventory of current marketing assets (photos, itineraries, collateral materials), develop trip ideas & OTIS listing information.

The action teams and steering committee reconvened in January to discuss the next steps regarding network structure. A consultant will be engaged to support strategic project implementation for the next few years and to prepare the region for sustainable development.

Upcoming Tourism Studios + Experience Studios

Travel Oregon received five applications for Tourism Experience Studios focused on niche topics including culinary & agritourism, bicycle tourism, and outdoor recreation. All of the applications were submitted from communities outside of existing Oregon Tourism Studio regions.

Of the five applications received, two have been approved below. The Destination Development team is working through the remaining applications and will include an update to the 2018-19 Oregon Tourism Studio schedule in the next report.

1. *South Willamette Valley Culinary and Agritourism Studio* (March 6-7) - This program will be delivered in Lane County and will include representation from all of Lane County communities as well as from communities in South Benton and Linn Counties.
2. *Washington-Columbia County Outdoor Recreation Studio* (May 15-16) - This program will be delivered in Vernonia (official studio name is yet to be confirmed). This studio will include Western Washington and Southern Columbia County.

Follow-Up with Past Oregon Tourism Studio Communities

The *Southern Oregon Coast* has submitted their community investment fund proposal. After incorporating feedback, they have been awarded funds for projects focused on farm trail development, a mountain biking influencer event, and tourism marketing photo asset development. These funds will be leveraged with other matching funds to implement priority projects.

The *Umpqua Valley* region has submitted and been approved for one of their two community investment fund projects. The first application focused on supporting cycling content and promoting a mountain bike event hosted along the North Umpqua Trail. The second application which focuses on supporting development of a culinary and agritourism farm trail throughout the Umpqua Valley is pending.

The *Columbia Gorge Cultural Heritage Action Team*, with support from Travel Oregon has secured \$14,300 in funding to expand the [Hear in the Gorge - Sense of Place podcast series](#). These podcasts enrich both the local and visitor experience by revealing unique stories and

capturing narratives that inspire connection with the Columbia River Gorge and its rich history. Future podcast topics include:

- Tribal Village Life – explore indigenous life at along the Columbia River and at in-lieu fishing sites
- Barlow Road – a deeper reach into places and experiences along the Oregon Trail
- Latino heritage – explore Latino life in the agricultural areas in Hood River valley, Mosier, and The Dalles

Resource Assistance for Rural Environments

Travel Oregon convened the six tourism-focused placements for the Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) program at its Portland office for an in-depth two-day training in November 2017.

The six RARE placements are working directly with the Destination Development team to support tourism studio follow-up work and coordinate other tourism development activities. Example projects include improving OTIS content, establishing regional tourism networks and implementing projects that advance cycling, outdoor recreation, agritourism and cultural heritage.

OUTDOOR RECREATION DEVELOPMENT

Oregon Outdoor Recreation Initiative

Since August 2017, Travel Oregon has been working to support the seven action teams as part of Phase Two of the [Oregon Outdoor Recreation Initiative](#) (OORI). Travel Oregon has been participating in and monitoring each team's progress, assisting in communications and coordinating meetings; Travel Oregon also co-leads three of the Action Teams. In January, Travel Oregon convened action team leads to check-in on progress and share insights across the teams. Brief progress reports from the meeting are listed below:

Economic Impact Action Team:

- In process of soliciting an RFP for a literature review by PSU or an external firm, to be completed by early spring 2018.
- An RFP for full study to follow; funding for full study will need to be sourced by multiple agencies/organizations.

Marketing & Communications Action Team:

- Building this work into the Maxwell PR scope of work. Once Maxwell provides concepts, conveners will share with full OORI Leadership Team for feedback.
- Action Team's work will be responsive to Maxwell PR's work.

Transportation Action Team:

- A Portland State University Masters of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) planning studio group agreed to take on the work of this Action Team. The kick-off meeting with the PSU group will be on January 31.

- Considering a work session with existing transit agencies to start discussing outdoor recreators as strong future customers.
- Interested in diving into one key project, such as the “around the mountain” transportation study to assess at how we market the transportation experience through the Gorge/Mt. Hood Wilderness.

Signature Trails Action Team:

- Team has met twice and determined a focus will be to support the broader development of signature trails, including developing a working definition of the components of trails and case studies to demonstrate
- Additional tasks include creating a communications strategy to get this information out and collaborating with the forming Statewide Trails Association and others to advance signature trails in Oregon.

Network Design Action Team:

- Completed 20 interviews with outdoor recreation leaders across seven regions Oregon to better understand the following:
 - The roles they are playing in local outdoor networks
 - Assets that could be offered to a statewide network
 - Areas of need that a statewide network could support
- Working towards developing a formula for effective outdoor recreation networks, testing definition it on the “pilot” are of Central Oregon, and building a set of network engagement tools that can be used by other regions.

Office of Outdoor Recreation Action Team:

- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is in the process of recruiting an Associate Director of the Office of Outdoor Recreation
- On January 24, a number of states with an established or forming Office of Outdoor Recreation or similar position met in Colorado to develop understanding of the variety of work being conducted around the nation and to develop synergy among states to try to accomplish joint efforts.

Diversity of Participants Action Team:

- [Roadmap to the Outdoors](#) event is scheduled for February 15. Desired outcomes of this event include:
 - Identify three to four of the most critical barriers to access; these will then become action items.
 - Understand the demographics of outdoor recreation user groups and compare to the demographics of Oregon.
 - Build connections and synergy among diverse outdoor recreation enthusiasts and professionals.

Special Use Permit Workshop – February 16, 2018

The U.S. Forest Service and Travel Oregon are partnering to host a [Special Use Permit Workshop](#) on February 16 at the World Forestry Center in Portland. This full-day workshop will bring together land managers, tour operators, guides, outfitters, and related organizations to delve into the current and potential future state of permitted access and securing permits, and connecting these activities with the stewardship of public lands. [Registration is now open.](#)

BICYCLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2018 Oregon Active Transportation Summit and 2018 Oregon Bicycle Tourism Summit
[Registration is now live](#) for the 2018 Oregon Bike Tourism Summit, hosted by Travel Oregon. The Bike Tourism Summit will be a one-day event to offer inspiration and collaboration to advancing bicycle tourism in Oregon.

Oregon Trails Coalition

On January 10, 150 people participated in a lunchtime webinar on trails funding hosted by Travel Oregon staff and Stephanie M. Noll Consulting. The [Oregon Trails Funding Webinar](#) is available for viewing online and features presentations by Jodi Bellefeuille of OPRD, Susan Peithman of ODOT, Michelle Woodard of Travel Oregon, and Dan Miller of the National Parks Service.

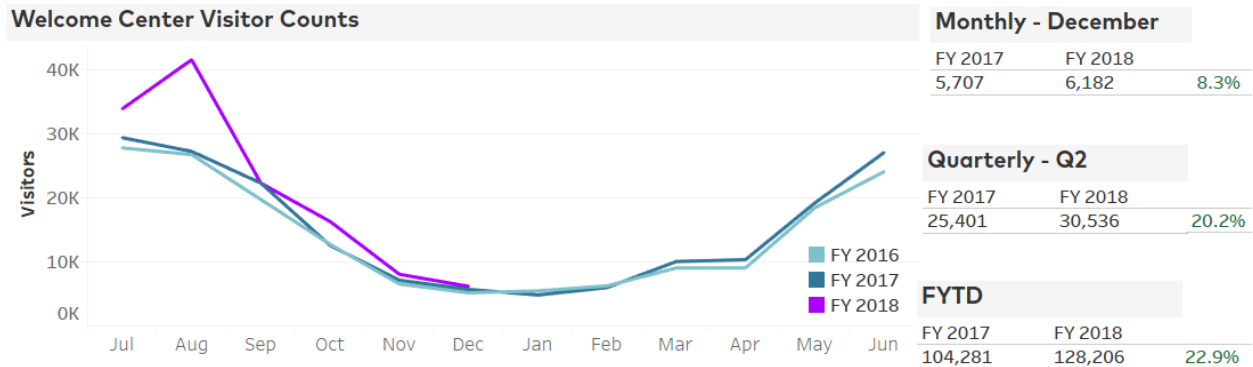
CULINARY & AGRITOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Oregon Agritourism Network (OAN)

Travel Oregon Staff and contractors are gearing up for the soon-to-be-announced OAN meeting on March 21. In preparation for this meeting, Travel Oregon is distributing an agritourism operator survey in February 2018 to better understand on-the-ground needs of operators, assess gaps and opportunities, and determine ways to better serve the industry. The March 21 agenda and future OAN structural conversations will reflect upon the results of this survey and other input from leaders in the field. The work we plan to continue includes creating a central resource for business operators to direct questions, navigate land use policy, expand offerings, and receive advice from the tourism lens.

Implement industry leading visitor information network

WELCOME CENTERS



Q2 began with a 20% increase of visitor traffic to the welcome centers over Q2 2017 (30,536 vs. 25,401) despite the impact of the forest fires in Q1. the largest increases occurred at PDX and Boardman.

- PDX: The October 2017 visitor counts increased 43% over October 2016 (7,272 vs. 5,073) despite a slight decline in overall passenger growth for the month at the airport. The increase could be attributed to several Portland conventions.
- Boardman: The October 2017 visitor increase to the Boardman Welcome Center was 417% over October 2016 counts (1,850 vs. 358). Note that the partnership for the Boardman Welcome Center began in 2017, so the comparative 2016 data is from the former Umatilla Welcome Center. The Boardman Welcome Center, located at the SAGE Center off I-84 receives more visitation than the Umatilla location off I-82.

Visitor count data came from the following centers: Boardman, Brookings, Klamath, Ontario, Oregon City, PDX and Seaside. No data was reported from Lakeview for 2017.

Ashland (Siskiyou) Welcome Center Update

After delays due to the harsh winter weather conditions of 2016-2017, the project's first phase (site work including paving, signs, service road, fencing, etc.) was completed. Stage two, the construction of the Welcome Center and rest area buildings, was delayed after the selected architect withdrew due to unforeseen circumstances. ODOT will send the project to bid by the end of February to select another contractor. The current estimated move-in date (installation of cabinetry, exhibits, furnishings, etc.) is February 2019. Meanwhile, our planning continues and recently included a brainstorming session with internal staff and agency partners, including W+K, ThinkShout, and Travel Portland to identify opportunities for unique and effective visitor engagement through technology and via the physical aesthetics of the space.

Fully realize statewide, strategic integration of OTIS (Oregon Tourism Information System)

OREGON TOURISM INFORMATION SYSTEM (OTIS)

The team worked diligently to continuously improve the user experience and introduce several new post-launch features.

The first major feature update for OTIS post-launch was capturing location information under a location tab. This allowed users to:

1. Edit the location within a map, regardless of the address, to ensure accuracy.
2. Since not all points of interest have a physical address (e.g. outdoor content), it was important to provide another way to specify location information. Users could do this by simply editing the latitude and longitude or using the map interface.
3. This update laid the foundation for our long-term need to support geospatial data (e.g. outdoor recreation areas and trails, art walks, ale trails, scenic byways, etc.).

This quarter, we also worked with Visit McMinnville, EOVA, Ski Oregon and John Day Territory to leverage OTIS as their tourism database while Central Oregon Visitors Association and Travel Southern Oregon have both reviewed the OTIS API in consideration of future integration.

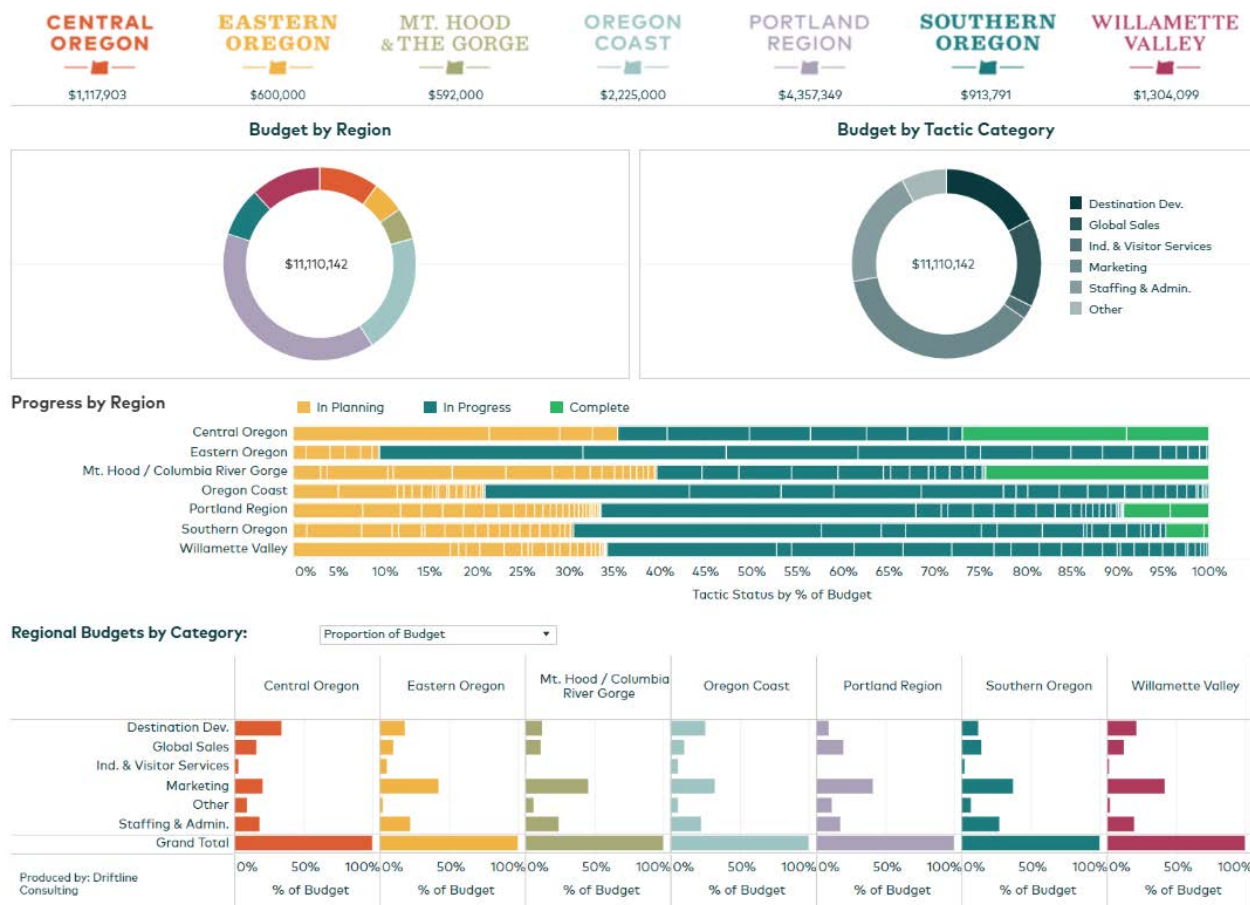
Finally, the OTIS team continued hosting monthly webinar trainings for the industry. Thus far, 23 organizations have attended these trainings.

Deploy tourism programs (e.g. RCTP, Competitive Grants) in a powerful way that fulfills unique opportunities and challenges as defined by the tourism industry

REGIONAL COOPERATIVE TOURISM PROGRAM

Regional Updates

RCTP Overall Plan Summary



Please consult the RCTP dashboard (global and regional) which can be found on [Travel Oregon's industry website](#), for comprehensive RCTP plan updates. The following updates are key highlights gleaned from some of the Regional Partners during the RCTP team's in-region consultations.

Central Oregon

Regional Grant Program Update

- [Central Oregon's Matching Grants Program](#) (COMGP) application for Non-Profit entities officially opened as of January 2, 2018. To be eligible for a grant award from COVA, projects must align with COMGP Key Initiatives. The total Grant Program is funded with up to \$100,000 in total for all projects awarded. Applicants must demonstrate at least a 25% cash match. The application window for the Non-Profit COMGP closes March 1st.
- Central Oregon's Matching Grant Program for Group Development closed on January 2nd with five applications submitted. The Group Development Grant will fund up to \$25,000 total to support off-season partner development and convention or group meetings.

Regional Project Update

- Central Oregon Visitors Association is working in concert with Travel Oregon's Global Sales team and partners at Sunriver on IAGTO. Registration for this event is looking like it will exceed its predecessor.

Willamette Valley

Regional Grant Program Update

- Willamette Valley Visitors Association opened their annual [Grant Program](#) application on January 15, 2018. Each project must adhere to the Grant Program guidelines key initiatives. Applicants are required to demonstrate at least a 10% cash match. The application window for this year's program closes March 1st.

Regional Project Update

- Industry E-newsletter is now in circulation providing industry partners with monthly updates on events and Willamette Valley related content.

Oregon Coast

Strategic Investment Fund Update

- The Oregon Coast Visitors Association established a Strategic Investment Fund (Si-Fund) grant opportunity as a tactic within their RCTP Plan. The first pool of funding, totaling \$72,000, is available at the end of this fiscal year, June 30th, 2018. The purpose of this Si-Fund being the need to respond rapidly to high value destination development projects to sustain their momentum. Applicants must directly address one or more of the goals in the 2017-2019 RCTP Oregon Coast Plan and compliment a current tactic within the plan. Applicants may apply at any time as there is a rolling deadline until all funds are allocated.

Regional Project Update

- [OCVA](#) is working in collaboration with the Outdoor Project to create comprehensive maps of the Oregon Coast Trail.

- Includes Five (5) overview maps outlining highlights of the OCT, complemented by 38 detailed maps displaying section covering roughly 55 square miles each.
- Additionally, OCVA and The Outdoor Project developed 10 Oregon Coast Trail Adventure Guides including an [OCT Overview page](#). The guides are laid out in north to south orientation for hikers and include photos and descriptions.

Eastern Oregon

Regional Project Update

- Work on the Oregon Trails Coalition to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the Oregon Trail continues. Recently received a proposal for a multi-media promotion with the Oregonian Media Group.
- Developing a schedule with Travel Oregon's Global Sales team to provide two GS educational workshops in Eastern Oregon.

Mt. Hood-Gorge

Regional Project Update

- Launched [Winter & Spring Anthem Video](#).

Portland Region

Regional Project Update

- Hosted the 2017 Society of American Travel Writers Conference (SATW).
- The Portland Convention had 235 registered attendees.
- The convention included 54 tours including the welcome tours. Tour topics ranged from Portland neighborhood tours to Silver Falls State Park, The Columbia River Gorge, Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory, The Willamette Valley and Tualatin Valley. The Instagram hashtag #SATWPortland has more than 675 posts to date.

Southern Oregon

Regional Project Update

- Completed brochures for the Applegate Trail Route, which can now be found at Welcome Centers across the state. Received a Travel Oregon Grant to complement this work with website and video development for the trail.
- Continuing to develop an outdoor Industry Collaborative. Engaged in a comprehensive asset assessment for the Southern Oregon region.

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

Oregon Wine Country Plates Matching Grants

The Oregon Wine Country Plates Matching Grants program will open on January 29, 2018, with applications due February 28, 2018. The program is funded through sales of the Oregon Wine Country license plate and administered by Travel Oregon. \$200,000 will be available for award to tourism promotion agencies for projects that promote wine and/or culinary

tourism. Applicants may request up to \$50,000 with a 1-to-1 match required and 50 percent of matching funds must be cash.

Competitive Large Grants

The Travel Oregon and Oregon21 Large Grant contract terms have been agreed to and are under legal review.

As was requested by the Commission at its December meeting, below is a list of entities that have submitted applications to host training camps as of December 21, 2017:

- Central Oregon Community College (Bend)
- Concordia University (Portland)
- Corvallis, OR
- Creswell, OR
- Discover Klamath (Klamath Falls, OR)
- Eastern Oregon Community College (La Grande)
- Eastern Oregon University (La Grande)
- Forest Grove, OR
- Independence, Monmouth, and Dallas (in collaboration)
- Hermiston, OR
- Hood River, OR
- McMinnville, OR
- Mt. Hood Community College (Gresham)
- Oregon State University (Corvallis)
- Pacific University (Forest Grove)
- Southern Oregon University (Ashland)
- Sunriver, OR
- West Salem High School (Salem)
- Willamette University (Salem)

Travel Oregon Staff attended the Oregon21 IAAF Site Visit over the dates of Jan. 16-17, 2018 in Eugene Oregon. IAAF presentations included: Event overview, Team Structure, Governance and Responsibilities, Competition, Event Presentation, Event Operations, Press Operation, Platforms and Distribution, Partnerships and Marketing and Information/Knowledge exchange.

Travel Oregon Staff Point of View (POV) on Large Grant Program

The Travel Oregon Staff was directed at the Dec. 5, 2017, Commission Meeting to “analyze the grant funding process and structure and to report back to the Commission with scenarios if any changes need to be made”.

The following is an outline of the Staff POV, including budget:

The Budget and Plan adopted by the OTC at June 2017 meeting anticipated the administration of the Travel Oregon Competitive Grants program funded at 10% of TLT income in the prior fiscal year. The staff anticipated that Small Grants would open annually and the Medium Grants once every two years. Large Grants are only opened and awarded at OTC direction.

The Competitive Grants funding is outlined below:

2017/18 \$3.14M

2018/19 \$3.49M

Biennial Total \$6.63M

Travel Oregon awarded \$400,000 in Small Grants in 2017/18. In addition, beginning in 2017/18, the OTC awarded \$2.5M in large grants for each of the next four years. This leaves a grant fund balance of approximately \$242,000 in 2017/18.

Travel Oregon anticipates opening Small Grants again in Fall 2018/19 and making \$400,000 available. In addition, Travel Oregon recommends combining the balance of \$242,000 from 2017/18 with \$500,000 from 2018/19 to make \$742,000 available for Medium Grants scheduled to open in March 2018.

Regarding the Commission question of raising the ceiling on Medium Grants above \$100k and or possibly adding another tier of grants, the Staff recommends completing the current full (small, medium and large) grant cycle before considering these options.

It is the recommendation of staff that the Competitive Grants program be allowed to complete one full biennial cycle before re-opening large grants.

It is the recommendation of Staff that the Large Grants Program be considered for reopening by the Commission for the 2019-21 biennium and, as directed by the Commission, no sooner than the June 2019 Commission Meeting.

CHAMPION THE VALUE OF TOURISM

**Grow and align strategic partnerships to leverage
resources and capacity to address key issues**

TRAVEL OREGON GLOBAL MICROSITE

Development Work Update

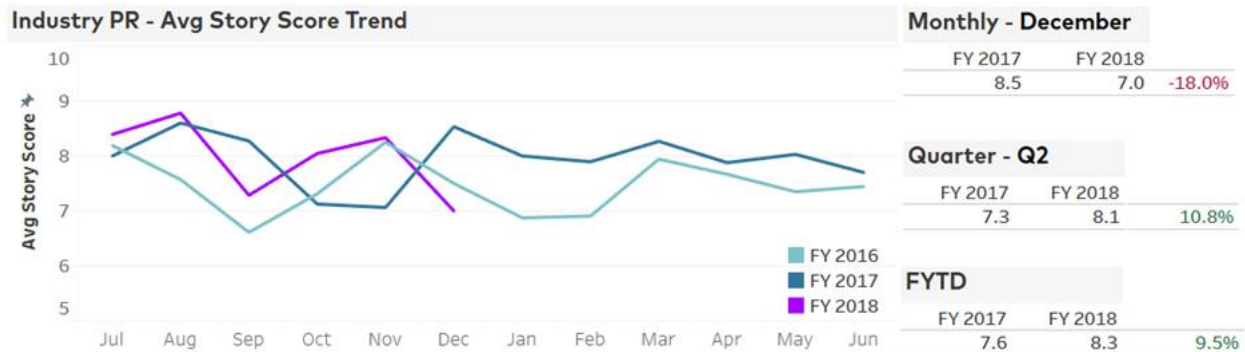
In partnership with Brand USA, development work is being finalized on the Travel Oregon Global VisitTheUSA.com microsite project, including curated English language content translated into seven languages and fourteen countries. Each of Oregon's seven RDMOs have contributed content and assets for regional pages and continue to proof their pages with a late January/early February launch date within sight. A prominent part of the

website will feature road trip itineraries around the regions and state. Location selection is nearly finalized with filming slated for late spring 2018.

Empower and equip Oregon's tourism industry with power of travel and issue-oriented messages

INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS

FY 2017/18 Second Quarter Industry Coverage



The eclipse, wildfire season and the launch of Travel Oregon: The Game led to decent numbers for industry coverage for FY17/18. Q2's numbers were down, but were bolstered by the release of Travel Oregon: The Game. Q2 saw a 97% dip in circulation over the previous year's second quarter, as December FY 16/17 saw prolific coverage of the Outdoor Retailer show possibly relocating to Portland, along with multiple stories of the Oregon Weather Compass, which garnered coverage on several outlets, including Yahoo! Business.

Even with this dip in circulation, we are on track to beat the previous year's numbers as industry coverage is up 19.8% fiscal year-to-date (482.3 million in FY 17/18 vs. 402.6 million in FY 16/17).

We also saw a dip in our story scores due to an inherent flaw in our measurement system as it applies to radio, which gave us lower scores when featured on radio outlets (no visual element knocks our score down). We are revisiting the scoring process so that quality radio interviews do not drag our score down, while ensuring we are giving an accurate view of the coverage quality.

October

October was a strong month for industry coverage. Travel Oregon influenced a total of 22 stories, with a circulation sum of 5,564,671 and an average story score of 8.

Early in the month, most coverage came from small, regional publications, announcing small grants awarded late in September. Stories ran on WorldLink.com ("[Port receives grant to replace picnic tables at Charleston RV Park](#)"), NorthCoastCitizen.com ("[Visit Tillamook](#)

[Coast receives \\$30,000 in grants from Travel Oregon](#)”), DailyAstorian.com (“[Travel Oregon grant to tackle ‘sustainable’ tourism on North Coast](#)”) and BeachConnection.net (“[New Food and Agri-Tours, New Food Fest for North Oregon Coast](#)”), to name a few.

On October 26, Travel Oregon sent out a [press release](#) announcing the launch of Travel Oregon: The Game that quickly garnered coverage. KTVZ ran the [press release](#) on its website, while the following publications produced articles about The Game’s release:

- PortlandMercury.com, “[Travel Oregon Made an ‘Oregon Trail’ Knockoff And It’s Exactly What You’re Thinking Right Now.](#)”
- TheDrum.com, “[Travel Oregon, W+K pulls out Oregon Trail 8-bit graphics for fun new tourism game.](#)”
- TechRaptor.net, “[Oregon Trail Comes to the Modern Day With Travel Oregon Game.](#)”
- TheDrum.com, “[Travel Oregon: The Game By Wieden+Kennedy.](#)”
- MediaPost.com, “[‘The Oregon Trail’ Computer Game Reimagined For Tourism Push.](#)”
- WWeek.com, “[Holy Crap, There’s a New Oregon Trail Video Game With Craft Kombucha and Great Notion Key Lime Pie.](#)”
- Austin360.com, “[This updated Oregon Trail game has craft beer and yoga instructors.](#)”

November

November was an outstanding month for Travel Oregon’s industry coverage, largely due to the release of Travel Oregon: The Game (TOTG). There was a total of 30 stories, an impressive circulation sum of 161.7 million and an average story score of 8.34.

As mentioned, TOTG dominated coverage this month and was written about in several top-tier, high circulation publications, including People and Lonely Planet, among others:

- LonelyPlanet.com, “[This update on the classic Oregon Trail game will entice you to plan a trip](#)” (Unique Monthly Visitors (UVM) 11,858,004).
- People.com, “[Oregon Trail Is Back! Travel Oregon Has Resurrected the Nostalgic 90s Game: Here’s How to Play](#)” (UVM 43,500,570)
- FoodAndWine.com, “[Updated ‘Oregon Trail’-Like Game Has Players Stocking Up on Craft Beer and Kombucha](#)” (UVM 9,396,329).
- Munchies (Vice.com), “[Die of a Kombucha Overdose in This Modern Version of ‘Oregon Trail’](#)” (UVM 1,118,243)—Katie Meeker is quoted.
- Statesman.com, “[This updated Oregon Trail game has craft beer and yoga instructors](#)” (UVM 2,119,861)
- Thrillist.com, “[New Hipster Version Of ‘Oregon Trail’ Involves Brewery Stops And Kombucha](#)” (UVM 11,520,668)

- Bustle.com, “[This ‘Oregon Trail’ For Millennials Is The Oregon Tourism Board’s Update Of Your Favorite Childhood Game](#)” (UVM 16,364,733).
- Mashable.com, “[Ford the river with kombucha and craft beer in the millennial version of ‘The Oregon Trail’](#)” (UVM 36,691,189).
- Neatorama.com, “[Die Of A Kombucha Overdose In Travel Oregon’s Updated Version Of Oregon Trail](#)” (UVM 3,812,451).

KPTV ran two broadcast segments covering TOTG. [The second](#) segment featured Linea Gagliano along with host, Molly Riehl, exploring Portland stops included in the game (Lompoc Brewing and Salt & Straw).

Additional (non-TOTG) coverage included a broadcast segment (and online article) on KATU, “[PDX growing into a gateway to the world](#),” about the growth and success of Portland Airport and its role in bolstering Oregon’s tourism industry.

Pamplin Media Group also ran [a story](#) about the reopening of Multnomah Lodge and recovery efforts in the Gorge post-Eagle Creek fire. The Oregon Tourism Commission was mentioned as one of the active state agencies promoting these efforts.

December

While December was a slower month for industry articles, we still tracked well on our yearly goals. December saw a total of seven stories with a circulation sum of 335k and an average story score of 7.55.

Top December coverage included a story on [BendBulletin.com](#) about a proposed B&B near Smith Rock State Park that touted the success of the 7 Wonders campaign. An [article](#) (and corresponding radio broadcast) ran on Jefferson Public Radio about adventure tourism helping to “save” the South Coast. Finally, the Oregon Timber Trail was honored as the top new route of 2017 from [BikePacking.com](#).

Industry Site Trends

We continue to see the industry using our industry site as a resource. Our top three viewed pages in Q2 were Governor’s Conference, Job and RFP Opportunities and Matching Grants.

We saw an increase in Q2 as we shared wildfire related resources and content, opened matching grant applications and posted new career and RFP opportunities.

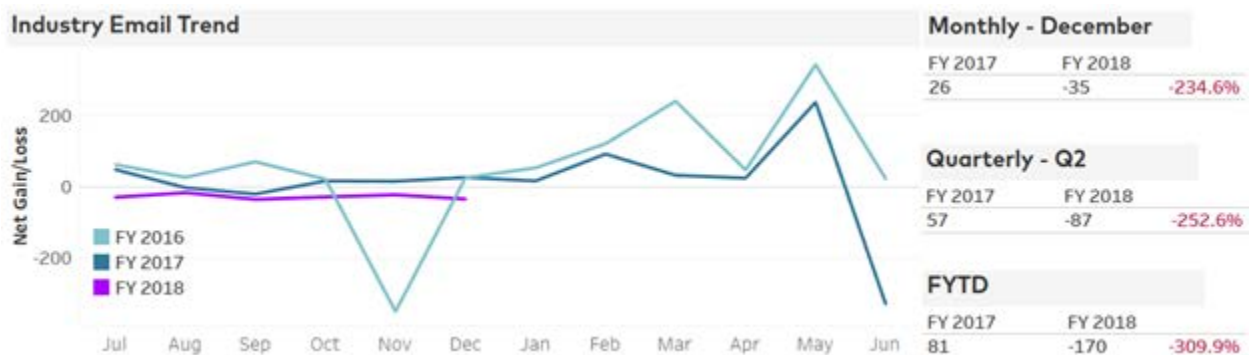


Industry Press Releases

10/26/17, "[Travel Oregon: The Game' Launches, Inspired By Classic Video Game](#)"

Industry Email Trend

In the second quarter of FY 16/17 we had a total of 3,975 industry subscribers, while we saw 4,100 for the same time in FY 17/18. We continue to see a strong open rate with an average at 27% and our most read Breaking News newsletter related to the wildfires across the state saw an open rate of 30%. We continue to receive positive responses to our general and niche (Outdoor Rec, Culinary & Agritourism, Bicycle, Destination Development) newsletters. Our numbers are often reflected as negative due to opt-outs and errors (emails not received due to any number of glitches on the receiver's end) when in reality, we gain 20-50 new subscribers monthly.



Engage policymakers to strengthen Oregon's tourism industry

Travel Oregon staff continued working with the First Gentleman, Dan Little, to connect more Oregonians and visitors with the outdoors. Mr. Little's priority is encouraging and

helping people who are not traditionally engaged in outdoor recreation (or who have real or perceived roadblocks that prevent them from recreating) to get outdoors.

With that priority in mind, Travel Oregon sponsored and is helping to program the [Roadmap to the Outdoors Symposium](#) to be held on Feb. 15, 2018. Former Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell, and Governor Kate Brown will present, along with other influential outdoor enthusiasts and groups that facilitate outdoor adventures for underserved populations.

Improve industry and public feedback channel/process

Crisis Communications

Travel Oregon's communications team developed a comprehensive Crisis Communications Plan. To assist the industry in creating their own plans, Travel Oregon staff presented at the Oregon Destination Marketing Organizations' annual conference. The presentation was built to make it easy for our industry partners to copy and paste into their own plans. We will continue to refine and implement our current plan and share updates throughout the year with the industry.

Improvement

To *improve* industry and public feedback channel/process, Travel Oregon is working with consulting agency, Coraggio Group, to bring together a cross-functional Travel Oregon team to inventory all of our current and future-planned communications, engagements, events, programs, trainings, etc. over the next year where we engage the industry and public and they have the opportunity to provide feedback in some capacity. Our first meetings were held in late-fall of 2017, and it was identified that across our teams we have approximately 172 opportunities slated this fiscal year for some level of feedback to be shared and gathered. We identified opportunities to improve the feedback channels and processes, and have future-state meetings held in late-February and March to plan implementation and communication tactics.

Public Polling

To establish and monitor the public perception and attitude Oregonians have towards the Oregon's Tourism industry as it contributes to the economy and quality of life, Travel Oregon is working with a 3rd party vendor to fund a study spring of 2018. Travel Oregon funded a similar study nearly 7 years ago, and we feel it's our duty to understand the attitude of Oregonians today. A few areas to point out that this new study will include:

- We are interested in Oregonians' attitudes across the 7 tourism regions (regional breakouts were not included in the former study)
- In addition to demographic information such as age, gender, annual income, we are interested in length of residency and proximity to main tourism attractions
- We are using a conceptual model to measure several key variables: perceptions of positive and negative tourism impacts; intrinsic and extrinsic factors that could influence attitudes about tourism; indicators of quality of life and human wellbeing

conditions; overall community satisfaction perceptions; and community support for tourism.

The study results will be analyzed, and a report will be released in June 2018.

RUN AN EFFECTIVE BUSINESS

Prioritize the implementation of technology to make Travel Oregon more effective and efficient

IT Club

Travel Oregon has undertaken several steps as outlined in previous Commission reports to improve our strategic use of technology throughout the agency. While far from having “arrived”, the cloud migration of data has been completed and provides reliable access and security as mentioned the December report. Since October 2017, a small internal IT team (were calling the IT Club) has been meeting in partnership with One Up Northwest, Travel Oregon’s IT vendor, to help communicate needs and will lead to successful development of an integrated IT plan. While still in its early stages, the approach is one that necessarily includes development of goals and establishing a plan for communicating clear and consistent policies. The internal IT Club is meeting twice monthly for on-going check-in meetings to communicate progress and elicit feedback on areas of challenge and includes representatives from every department. This group is one of several cross functional teams being convened to help improve internal alignment and engage staff.

Attract, develop and retain top talent

STAFFING

Recruitment Update

We previously reported out on several positions included and approved in the current year budget but planned for the second half of the year. The positions included a Public Affairs Manager, an Outdoor Recreation Specialist, and two positions with the Global Strategic Partnerships department: Director of Strategic Partnership Development and a Competitive Grants Coordinator.

It’s with overwhelming enthusiasm that we announce the promotion of Lisa Itel as Director of Strategic Partnership Development. Effective March 1st, 2018, Lisa will oversee the Strategic Partnership Program and Competitive Grant Program. Lisa brings over ten years of experience with Travel Oregon as the Global Sales Manager for the Americas and Oceania to the new role. The Competitive Grants Coordinator applicant solicitation period has closed and we are in process of holding interviews. We have completed two rounds of interviews for the Outdoor Recreation Specialist position within Destination Development

and are scheduling second round interviews for the Public Affairs Manager position finalists. At the next Commission update, we hope to have additional information to share as we welcome new team members to the Travel Oregon team!

Continuously review, improve and document policies and processes/procedures

ACCOUNTING POLICY

Financial Review

Travel Oregon engaged CPA firm Aldrich + Advisors LLP to conduct a financial review of the 2015-17 biennium and that review has been completed. The engagement is a part of Travel Oregon's regular accounting process to ensure reporting as required by the Oregon Secretary of State's Office. Travel Oregon convened a meeting with Commissioners Snyder, Youngblood and Francisco to discuss financial performance and reporting ahead of every Commission meeting and prior to the February OTC meeting this discussion will include detail related to the 2015-17 Financial review. Once completed and finalized, Travel Oregon will provide a "management response" for inclusion in what will be submitted to the Oregon Secretary of State's office as Final.

Improve internal alignment amongst Travel Oregon departments

Staff Engagement

Engaging staff in planning, problem solving and providing input through intentional, cross-functional opportunities is identified as an element of Travel Oregon's effort to improve internal alignment. To this end, we're forming several teams that will meet on a regular basis, some of which are already up and running. The various cross functional groups include: IT Club, Ambassadors of Fun, Diversity/Equity/Inclusion, Emergency Response/Safety, Green Team, Admin and Coordinators. While the over-arching purpose of these groups includes sourcing solutions to organizational challenges from a wide-variety of places, we're also convening these group to further develop staff alignment and improve communications. The groups are formed with conveners who will establish a meeting schedule, produce meeting agendas, convene meetings and ensure notes are captured and shared. Each team is unique in its membership make-up and will primarily focus on specific topics relevant to the group itself, ie, IT, Team Building, Diversity, Safety, Sustainability and Administration.