

Ride Polk County Video

A two-minute video showcasing the quality of bicycle riding experiences, amenities, culinary treats, and the natural beauty of Polk County all in close proximity.

Goal	To showcase Polk County's uncrowded road bicycling opportunities, vineyards and hop-yards – and to encourage bicyclists to spend time in its communities and money in its businesses.
Why this particular project?	To create content that would be shared virally through social media. A video would also enhance the website and other marketing efforts as well as yield quality still shots for printed materials.
Activities and lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The action team had a clear vision for the video, informed by their diverse backgrounds, including in-city and country bicycling, non-bicyclists, budgeting and marketing skills. • Without a formal RFP process, they hired a trusted local video production firm to guide process, since no one on the committee had experience with this type of project. • Rather than featuring residents in the video, the team decided to recruit "influencers" with large social media followings in the bicycling world, with the idea that this would efficiently promote Polk County to a wide audience (see quotes below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Featured unscripted dialogue, conversational. • A community launch party to release the video occurred in May 2017 at a local culinary tourism attraction. The event also included information about becoming a bike-friendly business, and several of the 30 attendees are following up on that. • The 90 second video is housed on Explore Polk County Tourism Website • Critical next steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To build on momentum and create a more targeted outreach and distribution plan for visitors. ○ To continue building awareness of the benefits, the bicycle action team continues to work on this. As well as continuing its community outreach to build awareness of benefits.
Budget and timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original budget was \$8,000: \$4,000 from Travel Oregon matching grants, and \$1,333 each from the cities of Dallas, Independence and Monmouth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The actual budget was \$9,525. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$6,950 for video production (see attached scope of work for details); ▪ \$2,575 to finance a YouTube marketing campaign. • The original timeframe was to have video production firm selected by September 2015, to film the following month. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ While the production firm was selected on schedule, filming was deferred until July 28, 2016 during Hops Days, an annual large community event. The video production was completed in Spring of 2017, with the release party in May. ○ The Bicycle Team Work Plan is available online as a resource.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lesson: video production and iterative review by a volunteer committee takes time!• To drive a marketing tool through social media, recruit social media influencers as ambassadors as was done for this project. |
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Quotes:

- "A good video is worth a million words. We learned that if we want a video to have a viral social media presence, we need to pick the talent (who is shown in the video) based on the size and influence of their social media networks, rather than default to using local people. We got one guy who runs a bike touring company, a chef for a bike manufacturing company, and a coordinator for a Century Ride. Their product was featured in the video- a win-win."
- "We got the right number of people, with diverse perspectives on the action team, and that helped. Not so many that we would get lost in minutiae. People from the cities and out in the country, people who grew up in the area and from away, outdoorsy non-cyclists, and cycling enthusiast for many types of riding."
- "Our community understands the benefits of cycling tourism more; for example, it is easier to get county permits for cycling events now."
- "We still have more work to do in terms of community outreach; for example, ensuring that there aren't conflicts between farm equipment and bicycling groups on the roads. That is a big focus going forward."
- "The cycling video brings tears to my eyes, as I think back to eight years ago when we started to focus on tourism, and can now see the results."

