

ANDREW GROSSMANN, TRAVEL OREGON

- Visitors only know what they are told or shown about a destination
- How do we combine our marketing budgets to have a greater collective impact?
 - If we are all reinforcing a consistent unified message, this will drive home the message that we'd like visitors to take away
- 89% of North Coast visitors are here for leisure travel, as opposed to visiting friends or conducting business
- African Safari Model
 - When safari companies dropped their focus on promoting gun experiences for promoting camera-based experiences, visitor experience was prioritized over "trophies" or souvenirs
 - Engaging in destination development
 - Safari operators build the lodging and communities that hosts visitors
 - Trip planning, booking, customer service to help plan travel
 - Abercrombie & Kent is an operator in Africa who harnesses the visitor experience to make the ask for donations
 - Promoting visitor experience in order to showcase the destination and the value of the projects that they are conducting
 - Visitor messaging throughout the experience is geared toward asking for support through destinations
 - Visitors are shown how funding is used throughout their trip, so they can see how donations are used to support destination development

ACTIVITY #1 – In a future state of the North Coast where collaboration around destination management practices are being incorporated, what kind of visitor communication opportunities are being implemented?

REPORT OUTS:

- Many people have websites, social media profiles, etc. – it would be nice to have links up on those landing pages in order to connect to other resources, calendars, and operators in the region
- Something to provide further information; low impact on local tourism (avoid excess driving) – a checklist of things that you can do in each community besides what appears in travel guides or "top ten" guides
 - Wildlife – how can people safely interact with wildlife? Provide public info on how to safely interact with a seal that you see on the beach
 - Training course for certification as a "Superhost" – someone who is a local guide accessible to visitors

- Offerings through CEDR or chambers of commerce
 - Branded message that is cohesive within the entire region; how to safely interact with elk, how and where to recycle or dispose of your waste
 - Collective messaging that is shared throughout user experience
 - Good example is visit bend on their social media: they are no longer geotagging locations on their posts in order to avoid driving further traffic to specific locations
- "Caring For The Coast" campaign
 - United campaign between all visitor facing entities to promote stewardship
- Spread visitation through offering and promoting more than the already known high-use destinations
- Beach cleanup is a huge effort; both locals and visitors collect trash from the ocean at events
- Transportation options expanded!
- A singular calendar or resource that everyone is interacting with, both to advertise and to consumer
- Leave no trace messaging – this is a sustainable place, and you should treat it that way. Respectful behavior promoted
- "OpenTable" style platform that can tell you how long transportation wait times
- Regional calendar tie-in to booking engines and platforms
- Visitor capacity integrated into other platforms that people are already using to plan their trips: Google Maps, Waze, TripAdvisor
 - Know usage of highly visited destinations, plan alternative destinations to send/suggest to visitors

KELDA SCHMIDT – TRAVEL OREGON

CONSUMER MINDSET & VISITOR LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT (VLM)

Travel Oregon's role:

- Brand and consumer advertising
- Digital platforms and content
- Insight and planning
- Consumer, industry, and corporate communications
- Marketing services
- State Welcome Centers

What we know about visitors:

- We know that we need to engage visitors in the Oregon brand
- Getting there can be tricky; it's a noisy marketing landscape, so we need focused messaging and materials

- Leverage fans of Oregon; they can help spread the word about Oregon destinations
- Target Market: the "Active Adventurer"
 - These people are a variety of age range from 25-65~
 - They are people who are seeking all of the active, engaging things that Oregon has to offer
 - Such as hiking, biking, craft beer, agricultural experiences, boating, backpacking, etc
 - Key markets that we target to bring in these visitors: Seattle, San Francisco and Portland

The Visitor Lifecycle

- Inspire: create top of mind ideas and awareness of Oregon as an ideal travel destination
 - This is Travel Oregon's primary function at the global level; primary intent of consumer facing marketing
 - Wieden & Kennedy is advertising agency; SparkLoft is social media, MediAmerica is online content
- Plan: Provide inspired visitors with the tools that they need to plan and implement their travel plans
 - Expedia, etc
- Book: Make it straightforward and simple for visitors to book their travel needs
 - Airlines, outfitters, tour guides
- Trip: Experience on the ground! Boots on the ground
 - Guides & operators are playing a key role here in how someone is experiencing their trip activities
- Share: Offer encouragement to guests to share their feedback through the right channels
 - Instagram, Facebook, etc.
- Repeat: We want our visitors to come back
 - Travel Oregon, RDMO, Wieden + Kennedy, SparkLoft, MediAmerica

GABI DUARTE, GLOBAL SALES TEAM, TRAVEL OREGON

What does Travel Oregon Global Sales do?

- Primary function is creating international visitor awareness through media and travel trade
- Promote Oregon as a year-round destination
- Offer world-class familiarization tours to international travel trade
- Generate fans of Oregon as ambassadors around the world

International visitors are different than domestic visitors

- Typically very sustainability-minded

- Their holidays are different than ours, they often travel/arrive midweek
 - These visitors help fill in arrivals during off-season or shoulder season travel times

International visitors buy their travel differently

- They use travel agents, they buy packaged travel that encompasses their airfare, ground travel, lodging etc.
- Holiday is sacred in many countries abroad, they want to be sure to maximize their time and often prefer not to handle smaller trip details
- Travel Oregon works very closely with tour operators in international countries so that those operators have detailed awareness of what is available in Oregon
- Those operators in turn work with the travel agencies and booking engines that will be selling trip packages or travel with Oregon product
- Online travel agencies (OTAs) still used because these agencies take care of things every step of the way; you know that your trip is guaranteed every step of the way

How does this relate to the North Coast region?

- Receptive Tour Operators (RTOs): when a bookable product is available in your area (hotels, attractions, tours), RTOs create a contract for that product in US currency within local business operations. They in turn make this bookable on the international stage so that international visitors can book through them, or can book through travel agencies
- Our "bread and butter" way of selling Oregon to tour operators is by bringing them on familiarization (FAM) tours in-destination
 - We bring people to the North Coast all the time!
 - We want to know about your product
 - We bring them to destinations or to specific experiences so that they can experience it first-hand and bring those rich experiences back to their teams back home

REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS ALIGNMENT

- Ready, Set, GORGE marketing campaign in the Columbia River Gorge
 - This campaign is a great example of regional marketing alignment that united visitor messaging
 - This communication strategy helped create content that answered the needs of the region and generate new content to answer some of the key challenges addressed by the marketing campaign
- A campaign like this is meant to advertise alternative trip ideas and experience options to visitors in a way that supports stewardship

ACTIVITY #2 - Each table receives Destination Marketing content related to the North Coast along with copies of the statement of intent. Review the statement of intent

and destination marketing content. Discuss how the content can be refined to better address the objectives of the statement of intent.

REPORT OUTS –

- CASE STUDY: Hay Stack Rock
 - GAPS: Messaging was consistent in some ways, but brief in places. Could include links to DMOs and Friends of Haystack Rock. Lacking safety messages and valuable information about tide tables and information about wildlife; key messages were not reflected across all materials
 - OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALIGNMENT: Organizations need to work (DMO to RDMO) to correct false information and point the visitor in the same direction. Add language describing the larger season and programs offered during the off-season. Friends of Haystack Rock use the words "Stewardship and Action" – would be good to include this on TravelOregon.com to frame the interaction as active. Could create an icon system consistent across the region – used in the same way (icon for danger, congestion, family-friendly, etc.). Put key messages at the top of longer articles so they don't get lost.

- CASE STUDY: NW Connector
 - GAPS: Promote the off-season: benefits of coming to the coast in the fall and winter, events during that time of year, indoor museums and cultural heritage opportunities; Message is not cohesive throughout the different marketing materials; Travel Oregon article lacked information
 - OPPORTUNITIES: Encourage crabbing over clamming; use pictures of places that indicate the lack of crowds during off-peak season (sometimes visual content didn't match what articles were trying to convey); better disperse information about car-free transportation options; align the information with the imagery and the narrative (including frontline staff interactions); Focus on making the message concise and memorable
 - IDEAS:
 - A train from Portland to Astoria with connector buses – resurrect former transportation connections. NW Connector is a great start. Need to help people connect to the Connector
 - More shuttles available – beyond those operating around the cruise ship landings; create more shuttle opportunities for hikers and bikers
 - NW Point buses – two per day is not enough during peak season
 - Infrastructure that is being funded by the state should not only address local congestion, but also consider visitor congestion

- CASE STUDY: Beaches & Parks
 - GAPS: Messaging was consistent in not mentioning how to protect and preserve those areas, or how to visit the coast safely on not a clear sunny day; Doesn't mention anything about how to access these places during off-peak season
 - OPPORTUNITIES: Would be great to have some kind of collateral that would help visitors be informed about how to be prepared for an Oregon Beach – including bringing cold weather gear in July
- CASE STUDY: Fat Biking
 - All three materials did a good job at inspiring interest in a new activity on the coast; Two of the articles linked back to the Travel Oregon website as well as other resources to help plan your trip; Local references included in bike route descriptions in all three
 - GAPS: All three lacked significant mention of how to do the activity safely (riding at low tide, watching for sneaker waves, avoiding disturbing natural habitats, etc.; All three could speak better to the year-round opportunities and more cultural references
- CASE STUDY: Oswald West State Park
 - GAPS: Didn't explain how to interact with the environment; Seasonality – emphasizing the beauty available at other times of year
 - OPPORTUNITIES: Emphasize carpooling, spreading visitation to weekdays, adding links to tide tables, etc.

Questions / Comments

- Important to define even basic terms that might not be familiar to visitors or mean something different. E.g. what is a tide pool? Wildlife refuges can indicate areas for hunting in other parts of the country.
- Providing the best trip planning tools to visitors taking a DIY approach will help them know how to be safe while in market.
- Need to use poetic language to reach people on a deeper level than providing a list of rules. Can start by identifying why we love being here and have that lay the groundwork for how we market the region
- Need to do a better job bringing in more knowledge about the indigenous peoples native to each community along the North Coast

GUEST SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS

KEVNEY DUGAN – VISIT BEND

- In 2014, decided to focus marketing efforts on expanding seasonality; invested 90% of marketing budget toward driving visitation in October – April

- Local transient lodging tax has helped the city tackle issues like transportation and public safety
- Bend's rapid growth has come from increase in residents, commuters, and visitors
- 181% increase in visitation to the Central Cascades wilderness areas in the past 5 years
- Visit Bend supports the new Deschutes National Forest permit system (permits for 10% of public lands in local area) because it will help preserve Bend's visitor experience for years to come
- You can create a target receptive audience to help drive more overnight stays
- Bend targets markets in Seattle, Portland, Bay Area
- Adapted the concept of the Icelandic Pledge to create The Bend Pledge – adopted to fit Bend's specific needs and address common issues:
 - Human-created trails
 - Weather preparedness
 - Have tried to use playful quirky messaging to relay the sense of place while also influencing visitor behavior.
- Visit Like a Local also speaks to residents as a reminder of how to responsibly recreate
- Connections to local stewardship groups and organizations – donate button included
- Make sure local elected officials are at the table and understand the positive impact and value of tourism for the local area and provide the data and information that paints the picture accurately in terms of congestion etc. that is often blamed on visitors vs. growing residential population

LIZZIE KEENAN – MT. HOOD & COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE REGION

- Trailhead Ambassador Program to address visitors that are not doing extensive research in advance of arriving at a trailhead.
 - High season; at busiest trailheads
 - Educate about trail conditions; provide trail maps
 - Serve as a pop-up visitors center
 - Prevent search & rescue
- Practical information and advice can be better received at the site of the activity rather than in advance marketing
- Partnership between State Parks / Forest Service / Friends of the Gorge / Regional DMO
- Volunteer base helped grow the shared sense of pride of place
- Engaged 24,000 visitors only on weekends over 4.5 months
- Hoping to expand the program to other parts of the state – willing to share lessons learned and structure with any interested communities

Q&A WITH KEVNEY & LIZZIE

Q: Care for the Coast Campaign – how is that information deployed to visitors
A: Social Media focused strategy – e.g. getting word out around fire bans
Also use newsletters and other traditional marketing – plug Bend Pledge at the end of the newsletter (include a giveaway)

Q: What is a typical interaction between an ambassador and a visitor seeking information?

A: Varies per trail but starts with friendly greeting, ask if they have questions, offer a map and basic information – often concluded with recommendations for where to go next and visitor planning

Q: How do you create messaging that Oregonians traveling around the state will also respond to?

A: Treating everyone the same, including having answers to questions only locals might ask (e.g. information related to the Eagle Creek fire)

A: 85% of people applying for permits are from Oregon. The USFS calls anyone entering the forest a visitor, which can create miscommunications around where the congestion is coming from. The data should outweigh the perception

Q: What was the criteria for choosing the stewardship non-profits included on your website?

A: There was no set-in-stone criteria, just whether the groups were doing work to protect and improve the natural landscapes.

Q: How are you bridging the gap between TLT generated funding and where that funding is allocated?

A: Three years ago, Visit Bend shifted its lens to focus on how the city is benefiting from TLT and tourism, rather than the money and ways that Visit Bend is benefitting. Focusing on the key impacts of tourism rather than digging into the weeds with local officials has been key.

A: From the Mt. Hood Columbia Gorge Region's perspective – trying to use the "Gorge Led, Portland Lifted" model that allows the locals in the region to lead while tapping into the resources available in Portland including the Portland tourism dollars

MARKETING EFFORTS IN PLACE ON THE NORTH COAST

KATERA WOODBRIDGE – OREGON COAST VISITORS ASSOCIATION

- Global Marketing – help to coordinate international groups on media & sales FAM tours all along the coast. These are usually cued up by Travel Oregon
- OCVA working on a new website after hearing a lot of local feedback
- Brand updates, retail sales, advertising using co-ops as much as possible

REGINA WILLKIE, ASTORIA-WARRENTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- Committee was established in the mid-nineties in response to needs of increasing visitors
- Grew from a place that people drove through on their way elsewhere to becoming a whole destination
- Launched an ambassador program in the last year so that repeat visitors can come back throughout the year and learn more about assets year round
- Working more on social media, especially Instagram. Reaching out to ask visitors if their photos can be shared to help promote the region

JOSHUA HEINEMAN – SEASIDE VISITORS BUREAU

- Their organization is a city bureau – not run by a chamber of commerce
- Geared toward greater Portland, greater Oregon, eastern Washington, western Idaho
- Social media channels utilize user-generated content; a nostalgic and younger based crowd who loves to share these assets on social media channels
- Seaside grant program provides seed money to nonprofits or businesses for projects focused on tourism development
- Oregon North Coast Partnership (ONCP): a collaborative effort between Clatsop county communities to promote and develop the region
- ONCP won aa Oregon Tourism & Hospitality Industry Exceptional Partnership Award in 2012 for creating a unique destination identity through marketing

CHRIS OLSON – CANNON BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- They are the DMO of Cannon Beach
- Branding refresh in 2018
- Creating videos for events within cannon beach as well as promotional
- Active Facebook page, any time that you have an event going on please contact viz Facebook or the Chamber directly so that they can post it online

NAN DEVLIN – VISIT TILLAMOOK COAST

- Our mission is to be curators of visitor experiences on the Tillamook Coast in ways that are socially, culturally, and ecologically responsible. Economic growth and
- We produce videos featuring local businesses and stories of our people
- Trees to Seas Scenic Byway
- Crave the Coast food festival in September; we anticipated 200 total, sold 300 tickets before doors opened, and grand total of attendance was over 800
- Spring break focused family activities and itineraries, and this year there will be the new visitors center inside Tillamook Cheese Factory

- There is not a hotel in Tillamook county that has a meeting or conference space, so meetings are hosted at the Tillamook Bay Community College
- Original guidebook publishing- Dan Haag helps author
- Recently received a Business Oregon grant for \$45k

ARICA SEARS – OREGON COAST VISITORS ASSOCIATION

- Tourism survey results show that locals want us to focus on stewardship and sustainability; we have now incorporated this into our Mission Statement
- In 2014, we were asking ourselves questions like how do we solve
- From this, we developed the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG); ideally have one representative from each agency; this group meets twice a year to talk about visitor trends as related to each of these industries
- Working to develop content creation in collaboration with these agency partners to develop visitor opportunities that are sustainable and ecologically minded
- There are some impacts that are happening by
- We offer an invitation to visit responsibly; we show them how to do this through suggestions and by example: "if you see a baby seal alone on the beach, please leave it alone because it is waiting for its mother while she's fishing"
- When we ask people not to cross onto cliffs and take a selfie, we are not only promoting personal safety, we're asking in order to protect our resources as well

ACTIVITY #3 – What project ideas have you heard today that resonated with you? Which of those ideas are the most actionable to bring forward during the Igniting Action Teams workshop tomorrow?

REPORT OUTS + KEY THEMES

- Table 1
 - Real time capacity to receive information using beacon technology or peak times (2)
 - Care for the Coast campaign. Develop Cohesive stewardship message – keep the messaging consistent and with incentives. People can share themselves demonstrating messaging socially for prizes (5)
 - Meet people where they are through an Ambassador style program / Host certification / consider local interpretation (6)
- Table 2
 - Develop a "stewards of the coastal landscape" program (like Visit Bend) (4)

- Develop a unified event calendar with a focus on offseason opportunities (3)
 - Develop marketing partnerships and related collaborations
 - Increase voluntourism opportunities
- Table 3
 - Trail ambassador-style program – train a group of core volunteers that can be deployed to and serve at several different destinations within the region
 - Develop a fundraising structure to collect one dollar per hour of recreation usership
- Table 4
 - Identify a Friends of the North Coast style organization that can fulfill a Friends of the Gorge role
- Table 5
 - Developing curated itineraries that highlight experiences across the entire North Coast
 - Increase shuttle capacity to support communications related to transportation
 - Expand the North Coast Partnership across the entire North Coast region