



FY2020-2021

Strategic Marketing Plan

Date: 08/20/2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August of 2019, the Cochise County Tourism and Economic Council Steering Committee (CCTECSC) met to reconsider the Cochise County Tourism Council Board (Board), Cochise County Tourism and Economic Council's (Council) direction and rebranding, and the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) - which defines and directs tourism marketing activities conducted under the Council. As of August 2019, the Council is made up of representatives from Cochise County, Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Sierra Vista, and Willcox, with Tombstone opting to pursue a marketing plan on its own. These six participants each contribute funds to further the Council's mission. The IGA identifies the City of Sierra Vista as the Council's fiscal agent and marketing agency. Therefore, Judy Hector of Sierra Vista, maintains the role of Treasurer.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE

The activities of the Council are defined through an IGA between the participating communities and Cochise County. With each entity contributing a fixed amount, the funds are cooperatively invested in tourism marketing efforts to promote Cochise County as a tourism, business and relocation destination.

Since 2017, the Council's marketing and public relations efforts have been led by a Marketing Coordinator. The Marketing Coordinator is based out of Sierra Vista, and reports to Judy Hector. The Marketing Coordinator is guided by the CCTECSC made up of the City Managers from each invested Cochise County community.

The communities in the County are each unique. They are bound by geography and a common vision to enhance the regional economy through tourism and economic development, and share their passion for the region with potential visitors, businesses, and residents. To that end, the marketing program has distilled the message into four experiential pillars: **outdoor activities, birding/wildlife watching, wine/cuisine, and culture/history**. These experiences can all be enjoyed within each community, and the Council encourages movement between communities to experience the entire County.

Economic Landscape

The travel industry is the number one export in Arizona. In 2019, 46.8 million people visited Arizona and collectively spent \$25.6 billion in the State. The travel industry and microelectronics industry have been the top two export-oriented industries in Arizona in recent years.

Arizona Travel Impacts: 2000-2019p, an economic impact study completed by economic analyst company Dean Runyan Associates (May 2020), noted the multi-billion-dollar travel industry in Arizona is an important part of the state and local economies. The preliminary data reports that the Arizona travel industry generated \$10.9 billion in GDP in 2019 and created 194,300 jobs. Furthermore, the Arizona travel industry experienced strong growth in 2019. Travel spending increased by 4.7 percent from 2018 to 2019.

The County saw an increase in local tax revenue generated by travel spending in 2019, according to the 2019 Dean Runyan figures. Travel-generated employment in Cochise County increased in 2019 from 2018, but still lower than 2012 figures. This is likely attributed to an increase in automation, as well as the minimum wage increase – which curtailed the number of minimum wage workers across many industries. Tax revenue and employment data is included in the table below. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on the tourism industry, Cochise County will likely see an economic decline in FY20-21.

Cochise County Tourism Tax Revenue and Direct Employment, 2012-2019p

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Tax Revenue (\$ millions)	29.1	27.2	26.2	27.1	26.4	28.4	28.9	30.8
Local Tax Revenue (\$ millions)	13.1	12.2	12.0	12.6	12.0	13.5	14.0	15.0
Direct Employment	3,750	3,710	3,750	3,760	3,580	3,430	3,420	3,510

MARKETING STRATEGY

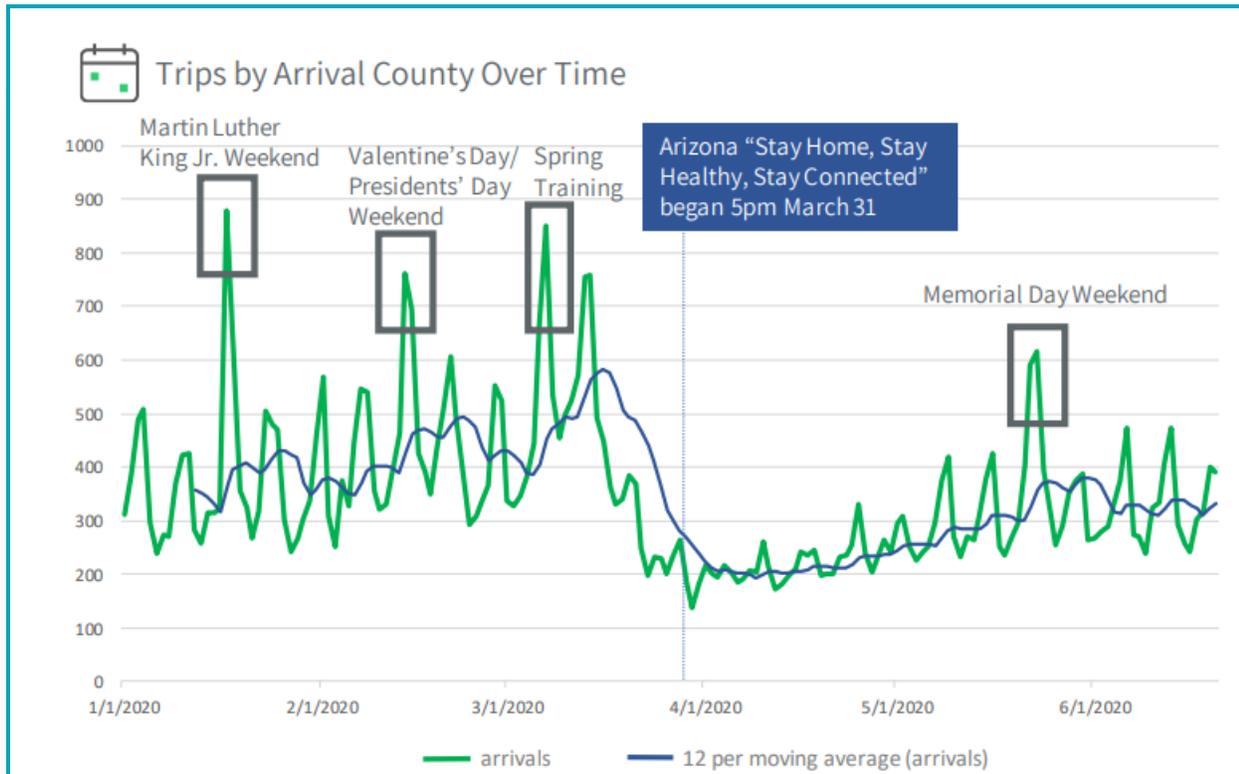
Current Landscape

The mission of the Council is to enhance economic prosperity of the participants and their citizens by promoting and developing tourism and economic development in Cochise County through cooperative leadership and a regional approach, augmenting the efforts of the County and individual communities. Through this mission, the Council seeks to present a unified voice in the marketplace that captures and communicates the unique assets of each community while resonating with the target market.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been predicted that tourism spending is not likely to return to pre-crisis levels until 2024 (McKinsey & Co.). A recent study from Longwoods International found that 82% of travelers polled had changed their travel plans for the next six months. In fact, the Longwoods survey found that of those that had changed their travel plans for this year, nearly a quarter had switched to driving from flying.

After Arizona’s “Stay Home, Stay Healthy, Stay Connected” campaign initiated on March 31st, Arrivalist shows spikes in cell phone data in Cochise County on the weekends (see graph). This is attributed to the Top Origin Markets of Tucson and Phoenix representing 26.6 percent and 23.5 percent of visitors respectively from March 13 – June 25, 2020. During this time frame, the length of stay for these visitors was 62 percent day visitors and 38 percent overnight visitors. The spikes in weekend cell phone activity demonstrates that the local drive market is still interested in travel.

As the COVID-19 pandemic persists and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) continues to encourage social distancing, Cochise County is uniquely positioned to answer the call of those wanting to escape their homes. The County’s wide open spaces and vast outdoor activities allow for social distancing, while still enjoying exceptional natural beauty and wildlife.



Rebranding

The Council underwent a rebranding in FY2019-2020. In November 2019, a formal Request for Proposals process was facilitated by Cochise County Procurement and eight bids were received. The contract was awarded to Pat Davis Design Group (PDDG) in February 2020. PDDG has more than 40 years of experience working with local government organizations, including supporting tourism and economic development marketing for more than 20 communities throughout Arizona. PDDG was brought in to consult on the new brand identity, including a new website, branding templates, marketing materials, and logo.

The Council is implementing the new brand for tourism marketing which focuses on all the opportunities that Cochise County offers, specifically concentrating on the four marketing pillars: **outdoor activities, birding/wildlife watching, wine/cuisine, and history/culture**. This campaign continues to emphasize “go and do” experiential travel that is currently more mainstream, while being sensitive to the current pandemic environment.

The goal of the rebranding is to capture new demographics, maintain current demographics; represent newer events and experiences that have developed since “Land of Legends” was put in place; and cover all promotion-worthy aspects of the county.

In addition, the branding has implemented the hashtag: #RoamCochise. With the tourism industry being one of the hardest hit during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become apparent that showcasing Cochise County’s

greater ease of social distancing while participating in tourism endeavors – like its vast outdoor activities – is imperative to a successful recovery. Additionally, #RoamCochise captures the essence of Cochise County’s limitlessness. Not only are there a multitude of activities to do, but many communities to do them within, and plenty of places to create ones next adventure.

Budget and Investment

In 2019, a portion of tourism marketing dollars were redirected into social media and electronic newsletters, and a significant investment was made in the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) Rural Cooperative advertising program. Through this program, the Council receives a dollar-for-dollar match on advertising.

An intercept study was also contracted through the AOT Rural Cooperative program. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 complications, the study was unable to be completed, and only comprises four months of data collection from December 2019 through April 2020. The surveys collected provide a look at visitors averaging 62 years of age. (It is important to note that the average age of visitors to southern Arizona is 50.4 years old [Source: Arizona Office of Tourism, Longwoods International].) Still, the survey presented a look at the interests of this age group – generally known as “snow birds.” National¹/state parks, history/ghost towns, photography, hiking and birding were the top five activities of interest.

The Council also invested in a cell phone tracking research that provided data for Cochise County visitors in 2018 based on cell phone data collection. This data included 20 hand-selected attractions across the County, in addition to providing insights on Cochise County visitors’ interests, tendencies, and demographics. The Council is planning to participate in this program again to gain 2019 data.

For FY2020-2021, the **proposed investment** for the AOT Rural Cooperative **totals \$43,035.00**, with AOT matching this amount for a total advertising **value of \$86,070.00**, with a significant portion invested in digital media.

In addition to investing in advertising in the AOT cooperative program, the Council is investing funds in print and digital ads independently, maintaining its website, mailing print materials for distribution through no-charge state visitor centers, membership/registration/attendance for two national conventions, hosting travel writers, mailing postcards/attraction maps, and continuing a cooperative venture with Wings Over Willcox and Southwest Wings (with funds dedicated to promoting birding in Cochise County). The goal of these investments and the AOT Rural Cooperative investment is to enhance awareness of Cochise County; increase engagement with Explore Cochise social media accounts and ExploreCochise.com; and convert inquiries and online engagement to actual tours and visitors to the County – adding to County lodging figures and tax revenue.

The total planned expense is **\$153,194.00**. Projected revenue includes a beginning balance of **\$50,000**. (A budget summary follows.)

¹While Cochise County does not have any National Parks, it does have nationally designated locations, including a National Memorial, National Monument and National Site.



Expenditures		Revenues	
Professional Services	\$62,264	Beginning Balance	\$50,000
Advertising	\$70,000	Cochise County	\$34,000
Printing & Binding	\$5,000	City of Bisbee	\$15,000
Travel & Training	\$7,500	City of Benson	\$15,000
Office Supplies	\$5,930	City of Douglas	\$15,000
Specialized Supplies	\$2,500	City of Sierra Vista	\$20,000
Total Expenditures	\$153,194	City of Willcox	\$15,000
Projected Balance	\$10,806	Southwest Wings	\$0 *
			<small>(*carried over from 2020 due to COVID-19)</small>
		Wings Over Willcox	\$500
		Total Contributions	\$114,500
		Total Projected Income	\$164,500

The investment level for each partner has changed to a standard \$15,000 investment for each community. The City of Sierra Vista has opted to continue their contribution of \$20,000. Cochise County’s investment is continuing at \$34,000.

Professional services include administrative services fee to the City of Sierra Vista for \$62,264 to cover the cost of a part-time dedicated staff person, administration, web hosting, rebranding services, and graphic design services.

The Advertising expense line item includes print and digital ads, additional opportunities offered through AOT, and other print and digital means. This may include working with a firm to develop and print a Visitor and Relocation Guide. Specific recommended media buys are detailed in the **Addendum**.

Projected Printing and Binding projects include reprinting of business cards, notecards, and profile sheets for conferences. Reprinting attractions maps and community brochures (presently in stock) comes out of this line item, as well. This collateral is distributed through fulfillment outlets and partner visitor centers.

Travel and Training includes the National Tourism Association (NTA) Virtual Travel Exchange (vTREX) Annual Convention in December 2020 – which brings tourism professionals from all industry sectors together in one location. The annual NTA conference provides the Council the opportunity to meet with buyers of all sizes who package travel to and within North America. This line item also includes the U.S. Travel Association’s IPW conference. IPW is the leading international inbound travel trade show, driving \$5.5 billion in future travel to the United States. It will provide the Council a national platform to promote the County, negotiate future business and build relationships with travel buyers and media. Representatives from more than 70 countries attend this event. The recent intercept study identified visitors to Cochise County from Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Kuwait, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Mexico. Engaging with representatives from target countries will expand awareness of Cochise County and enhance Cochise County’s international visitor experience.

Office supplies include postage for fulfillment services to ship the attractions map and community brochure to visitor centers around the state. The attractions map is also being distributed via mail to address leads generated from AAA *Via Magazine* online ads and GoTravelSites Lead Generation and eResponse email program. This line item also includes printing a new large background banner, retractable banner and tabletop banners for events.

TARGET MARKETS

Several agencies are working to bring tourists to Arizona, starting with the Brand USA, attracting visitors to the U.S.; the Arizona Office of Tourism, bringing tourists to Arizona; the Council, bringing tourists to Cochise County; and each community DMO within Cochise County, to attract tourists to their individual communities.

With a conservative budget, the Council is focusing funds on specific geographic, demographic, and interest niche targets. The investment in the AOT Rural Cooperative program also defines media targets, which are identified through AOT's extensive data mining and analysis.

Geographic Targets. FY2020-2021 will focus on in-state travelers and nearby drive markets. The Council is targeting tourists in the Phoenix and Tucson metropolitan areas with print and digital media.

Demographic Targets. Demographic targets have focused on tourists between the ages of 40 and 65, with an average household income of about \$70,000 and higher. In FY2019-2020, demographics also targeted Millennials – the fastest growing travel demographic – and Generation X. For FY2020-2021, this will continue to be the case.

Interest Niche Targets. With the worldwide trend toward adventure tourism and personalization, the Council is focusing on activities that are abundant and unique, either through geography or the pristine nature of the attraction, and emphasize “adventure” and provide “bragging rights.” Niche targets include the four experiential pillars: **outdoor adventure** (ex: hiking, cycling, mountain biking, rock climbing, ATVing and Off-Road adventuring), **bird/wildlife watching**, **wine/cuisine**, and **history/culture**.

Media Buys. Examples of specific media buys **proposed for FY2020-2021** via the Arizona Office of Tourism Rural Cooperative, the investment amounts and target market information are included in the **Addendum**.

PR Efforts

Public relations efforts include working through Help a Reporter Out (HARO) for publication opportunities, and this has seen good results. In addition, the Council has maintained relationships with travel writers from past conferences in order to bring out writers to cover the County.

The Council will continue to independently maintain its social media presence through regular posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. There is no additional cost for basic social media posts. For FY2020-2021, boosted posts and social media advertisements will be employed to enhance engagement and increase followers. The additional cost has been incorporated into the budget.

Key Performance Indicators

Creating awareness is the first step in any tourism marketing program. Tourists must first be aware of a destination before choosing to visit it. All advertising efforts direct potential tourists to the Council website and social media pages. To that end, success of the program will be measured through social media and website interactions.

Another key measure is the tax revenue generated through tourism activities, as reported by Dean Runyan Associates. County lodging figures will also be tracked, as reported by the Arizona Office of Tourism.

Barring economic influences beyond the control of Council, the aim of the organization is to see increases in interactions generally, and tax revenue specifically.

Conclusion

The promotional value afforded each community is far greater than their individual investment. Not only is each dollar invested in AOT's Rural Cooperative advertising matched, each community is included in every effort produced by the Council. In short, each community receives estimated value-added promotions roughly in excess of \$250,000.

The Council's marketing program includes strategic media buys, and leverages investments and partnerships to ensure the greatest value for the cost. Strategic placements ensure the Council's marketing message is reaching those most likely to visit the County and spend at least one night to earn an overall increase in visitation, visitor spending, and tax revenue generated.

ADDENDUM

Vendor	Offer	Circulation/ Geographic Areas	Demographics	Investment (* = AOT Rural Coop)
Viant	Cross-Device Display Banners	AZ (PHX, TUC), Domestic (CO, TX, CA, NM, UT, NV), Int'l (Mexico, Canada)	highly targeted audiences' web content on mobile devices, desktop or tablet.	\$2500*
Crowdriff	1 year UGC (AOT Rural Coop)	+ others can upload directly to Crowdriff (ex: restaurant menus; photographers)		\$4800* + \$1500 = \$6300
Quantcast	Programmatic Audience Targeting		Behavioral Targeting	\$5000*
AAA Colorado	Exclusive eBlast includes 200-400 copy and URL-link	270,000 opted-in AAA Colorado users	55 Avg. Age / 39% Male / 61% Female / \$88,400 Avg. HHI	\$1250*
AAA Via Arizona	1/3 FC ad for Issues: Spring & Winter/Fall	\$86,500 Avg. income / Men 34.1% / Women 65.9% / 35-54 22.7% / 55-64 24.7% / 65+ 48.9%	Circulation: 525,000 Readers: 1,284,000; 7/10 readers took some type of action as a result of something seen in Via Arizona	\$3406*
PlayBall Magazine	Full Page 4C, Annual Spring Training Guide/Cactus League			\$2499*
AZ Drive Guide	1/3, 4C ad in Winter & Fall + eGuide Monthly Newsletter, Editorial Content, App: Listing & Link, FREE Banner ad/link, Calendar of Events, SM engagements			\$700*
Arizona Hwys	Full page, far forward + Digital (\$1100 Value)			\$2750*
Miles Partnership/ AOT	Arizona Official Travel Guide: ½ pg, 4C, Free basic listing	450,000 circ / Direct requests, regional, int'l	40-52 y.o. / HHI varies	\$3770*
Visit Tucson	Official Tucson Guide: 1 page + newsletter banner (\$400 Value)			\$2240*

Texas Monthly.com	March, August			\$1000*
ROVA Magazine	½ pg FC + Blog Post on RovaMag.com: 200 words and one photo as part of an AZ blog (\$2,000 Value)	55,000 circulation	55% women / 45% men / 26–44 average age / \$100k+ average HHI	\$3120*
Viant	Streaming Audio & Podcasts 277,778 units	integrations with Spotify, iHeart, Target Spot, SoundCloud, Pandora, and Univision		\$2500*
Uber Media	mobile location data provided by Uber Media with the intention of improving demographic and visitor behavior intelligence.	Data will be provided in dashboard format and delivered monthly for a 6-month time period. Time period will be customized by destination.		\$5000*
IPW Conference	May 10-14, 2021 Las Vegas, NV			\$2500*
NTA vTREX	Virtual Travel Exchange 2020	Sponsorship (\$1500) Attendance cost (\$465)		\$1500 + \$465 = \$1,965
GoTravel Sites	SkyScraper Ad (160 x 600) 200,000 impressions annually + Lead Generation and eResponse email Promotion			\$1800 + \$4000 = \$5800
Social Media Paid Ads	Paid Advertising through Social Media (Facebook and Instagram)			\$1200 (or average of \$100/month)
Arizona Public Media	Radio: 250 spots (ex: The Splendid Table, Travel w/ Rick Steves) / Television: (3) ad campaigns with 30 spots over 2-week period	500,000 people reached weekly	52% aged 25 – 54 / 80% HHI \$50,000+/ 45% women / 55% men	\$3000 + \$2700 = \$5700
			Proposed Total: \$59,200 / \$60,000	