



Buellton Visitors Bureau 6 month report (July 2017-December 2017)

The following report is of the activities that have occurred in the first 6 months of the fiscal year July 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017.

Buellton continues to develop and grow which allows for more visitors and traffic to flow through our city. With the addition of the Hampton Inn & Suites, more cottages at Flying Flags, and renovations complete at the Marriott and Sideways our inventory has increased which has led to an increase in TOT of an average of over \$80 thousand a month.

With the completion of a marketing strategic plan, the Visitors Bureau has been taking the necessary steps to carry out the plan. In doing so, we have contracted with Solutions on 2nd to assist with the implementation of the plan. We have assembled a Tourism Council, made up of individuals in the tourism industry to assist with direction and recommendations for the Board of Directors to consider. This process will be looking at branding, messaging, website development, and overall marketing directives under the Visitors Bureau.

We also continue to work with 360View PR who have brought numerous travel writers and bloggers into Buellton as well as pitched stories and answered to leads highlighting Buellton, our amenities, hidden gems, and attractions. Writers from Frommers, Washington Post, National Geographic, New York Times, family magazines, and social media influencers; to name a few have visited and/or highlighted Buellton on various platforms including print and social media. Over the 2017 calendar year, we saw 83 pieces of coverage, 9.46k social shares, 282 individual media pitched, 341m online readership, and 8 press trips. The PR efforts have really taken off and have proved to be very beneficial for Buellton with telling our story to the world.

We've partnered with Visit CA and the Central Coast Tourism Council to host an influencer group. They stayed at Flying Flags and we met up for breakfast at Ellen's. They were on a 19 day trip throughout the rural regions of CA and posting on their social media channels along the way.

We continue to market through a variety of platforms such as: digital, print, social media, and on an individual and cooperative level. Our marketing efforts reach a domestic and international audience attracting tourists from around the globe.

Income/Expenses

Income received from July – December is approximately \$200 thousand.

Expenses incurred from July 1 – December 31 are \$209,856.33.



Print / Digital

Westways Discover – We partnered with Solvang CVB and Visit SYV to produce a 2 page spread highlighting all there is to do and see in the Valley. This will be featured in the Discover section of Westways in their February edition. We also secured the following page for our local tourism partners, who received a discounted rate to purchase a 1/6 page ad. This allowed for a 4 page spread highlighting Buellton and the Santa Ynez Valley. Circulation is 500,000 So Cal AAA households with incomes over \$100k.

Canadian Traveler – Partnered with Central Coast Tourism partners to produce a Central Coast section in the Canadian Traveler recognizing the Canadian market as high importance for our region. With the co-op we received 2 (½) pages ad in America Yours to Discover and Explore, 50 thousand run of network online banners, one highlight article, 5 e-blasts and 2 newsletters, along with one full page bonus in the Canadian Traveler.

California Road Trips – Partnered with Central Coast Tourism partners to showcase our region as a destination and a recommended California Road Trip.

Yosemite Journal – We partnered with Central Coast Tourism partners to leverage our visibility within the region and cost of advertising. Ad buy included: ½ page ad, ½ page advertorial, in print and digital editions on Nook, iPad, and Kindle. Also included are: integration into Central Coast itineraries, a pin on the California map to identify Buellton's location, quarterly posts on facebook, and participation in the Coast to Yosemite Road Trip sweepstakes, which is also promoted on social media. The winner will receive a grand package including overnight stays, attractions, and meals from participating partners. Through this buy, we generate leads which are followed up by sending additional information about Buellton.

SYV Destination Guide – ½ page ad in the Santa Ynez Valley/Solvang Destination guide highlighting our main events in Buellton. Over 90,000 copies printed and distributed via trade shows, festivals, Visitors Centers, direct mailings in Santa Ynez, SB, and Montecito along with Laguna Beach and Newport Beach. Guides are also delivered to local hotels, museums, and restaurants, UK, Denmark international offices and to cruise ships arriving in Santa Barbara. A digital version of the publication is also available on the VisitSYV and Solvang websites.

Santa Barbara Destination Guide – Full page ad with 100 words advertorial within the Santa Ynez Valley section. 90,000 total distribution, digital publications on SantaBarbaraCA.com(over one million visits yearly), and digital platforms for smart phones and tablet devices. These guides are also displayed in visitor centers, hotels, airports, trade shows, in market and direct mailings.

PCPA – Renewed Rack Brochure listing. Distribution in Display racks throughout the area including visitor centers and hotels. This brochure advertises upcoming plays for the summer season at the Solvang Festival Theater.



Certified Folder – ½ panel ad in the Traveler Info Guide (a free map to visitors). Distribution to 370 visitor locations throughout the state from San Francisco to Ventura. 100,000 copies printed. We also distribute our Buellton Rack Card in the Pismo Welcome Center and Santa Barbara airport through Certified Folder.

California Visitor Guide- This is our state guide and Buellton is featured in the Central Coast portion along with other partners of the Central Coast Tourism Council. Distribution 500,000 on newsstands, sales missions, consumer and travel trade shows, California Welcome Centers, Visitor Centers, targeted list of spas, salons, professional offices, country clubs, and auto centers nationwide, Sunset, Coastal Living, and Southern Living magazine events. Digital version on Visit CA website with a link to our website.

Wine Country - 15,000 magazines with over 320 locations from Paso Robles to Malibu. Copies are also mailed to Central Valley, LA and Orange Counties and San Francisco South Bay area. Targeting in-market as well as key areas of our market. This publication highlights places to stay in Buellton as well as the wine scene in and around Buellton.

California Welcome Center (CWC)- Placement of a Ceiling Banner at the CA Welcome Center in Oxnard along with display of collateral materials. Over 30,000 visitors a year with exposure on CWC website.

Horizon Travel & Lifestyle –

-Full page ad and full page editorial in the September issue of Horizon catering to the eastern Canadian market. 21,800 – 5 second spots on 10 screens in Toronto’s Financial District PATH system and a social media campaign.

Reaching the Canadian Market on various platforms enticing visitors in cold climates to come explore Buellton and the Central Coast during the winter or to plan for spring and summer travel. It provides print pieces and digital components to reach the market in multiple forms of media. Digital copies are also available online at Horizontravelmag.com with link to VisitBuellton.com

CA RV Show –The VB purchased a full page ad in the show program highlighting Flying Flag RV Resort as a destination resort for new and seasoned RV’ers. Programs are made available to all attendees, RV Dealers, and exhibitors upon entering.

Graphic Design/Photography

We continue to work with UVA Design Studios for our graphic design. They assist us with our print ads, digital ads, billboard designs, maps, brochures, web design as well as our photo shoots. A photo shoot was done this fall to provide additional images for our photo library, while highlighting new locations in Buellton. We worked with various businesses on Industrial Way, the farm stand, Flying Flags, wine tasting, and the Mendenhall Museum. These images are used in various forms for our advertising and marketing needs.



Trade Shows

The VB will attend various trade shows in the New Year. The Travel & Adventure (San Diego/Los Angeles) and IPW (International Pow Wow). These shows are both consumer and appointment based shows allowing us to reach a national and international market.

Promotional Items

Items used for marketing and promotion of Buellton were purchased. With the increase in travel writers visiting Buellton and our PR team on the road doing media missions; it is important to leave something with them to keep Buellton in the forefront of their minds. Buellton bags, branded lens kits, branded USB's and Industrial Way stickers are a few of the items the VB has purchased for this use.

Economic Development

Billboard wrap – The VB continues to update the vinyl on the McMurray Road Billboard with a “Welcome to Buellton” message as well as, to highlight our ongoing events.

Traffic Counts

Walk-ins – July – Dec 2017 the Visitors Center welcomed and assisted 1,618 Walk-ins. Visitors from around the globe come into our Visitors Center allowing us to share all there is to do in and around Buellton. The time spent with each visitor varies depending on their needs, but we do our best to assure they have the answers they need. On many occasions we have been able to secure a night stay once they realize all there is to do and see.

Calls & Mailing – July – Dec 2017 the Visitors Center communicated with via phone and/or mail 1036 individuals. We receive requests via phone calls and most often it is through email and leads generated through our marketing efforts.

Visitor Welcome Bags – We've assembled 274 welcome bags for groups coming into Buellton and spending the night. The bags contain visitor guides, maps, and other relevant information for their stay.

Events

Winter Fest - The Visitors Bureau partnered with the Buellton Rec Center, Buellton Senior Center, Buellton Historical Society, Buellton Rotary and the Buellton Chamber of Commerce to host the Buellton Winter Fest. We continue to see growth with this event and it has become a signature event for Buellton. Guests enjoyed Live Music, food, beer, wine, and vendors, 20 tons of snow, a light parade, and



the tree lighting. This event continues to grow and has become a tradition for many families, as well has attracted people from out of town who stay the night.

Sponsorship & Donations

Wheels & Windmills – This car show takes place in Solvang, but originated in Buellton and continues to provide overnight stays in our Buellton hotels.

Buellton Historical Society – We continue to support the Buellton Historical Society with their Historical landmark project. We feel the historical trail will be visited by many visitors to come and we also highlight this trail on our Buellton maps.

Scarecrow Fest – A Valley-wide event promoting local business and overnight stays. We promote this event on our billboard, in social media, websites, and in hotels and local businesses. Visitors descend on the Valley to tour and vote for their favorite scarecrows. A winner is selected from each community and entered into the Harvest Cup, the valley-wide winner. This event continues to grow and has attracted return visitors.

Santa Barbara Craft Beer Week – This event highlighted the craft beer industry throughout the Santa Barbara County. It was a week-long event highlighting a different community each day. Participants purchased tickets and were transferred on a bus throughout the county or were invited to stay overnight, and participated in events at various locations. Local breweries offered specials and highlighted new releases. This was a first time event for our County.

Social Media / E Marketing

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram - The VB contracted with Megan Cullen of Santa Ynez Valley Consulting to manage the social media consisting of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We decided to end that contract and go with Solutions on 2nd to assist us with our social media strategy and implementation. We have seen an increase in our number of followers on these platforms and continue to engage with our audience. Our social media handles are as follows: #VisitBuellton and @VisitBuellton and numbers have grown to: Twitter stands at 837 followers, Instagram is at 2076 followers, and Facebook is at 1,817. Our followers continue to engage with us as we continue to analyze what is working and how we can continue to grow our audience.

CrowdRiff – This is a user generated tool that allows us to glean images from social media for our use. We have them displayed on our current site in various locations and we are also able to request usage from the owner of the photos for our own marketing purposes. This is a great way to build our image library as well as see where our visitors are spending their time and enjoying their visit. It also allows us to see where we may need to put more of our efforts in our marketing messaging to get people to



places that aren't showing up as much as we'd like to see. It is a wonderful tool that allows us to really put an authentic, fun look on Buellton.

U-Trip – This is an itinerary tool that we have begun to use on our website. This tool allows the user to customize their trip experience and build their own unique itinerary. They are able to slide the various bars to indicate their preferences, they may scroll through the various images and items listed to mark the ones they like, they choose their dates of their stay and then magically they build an itinerary. Adjustments may be made if they need or want to switch things around, but we feel this tool will allow them to be interactive with our site, as well as learn more about what we have to do in and around Buellton. Since launch, we have seen a good number of users and this number will continue to grow as we build and launch our new site and continue to market this tool.

Meltwater Press – The VB uses this service to track editorial and social media conversations pertaining to Buellton. It is a way for us to track what is being said about Buellton and follow articles that are relevant to Buellton. We have also been able to follow social media postings and conversations in that platform. It is important to see what people are saying as well as follow any writers or influencers we may have visiting our area.

Additional Projects Completed and/or in the process

Motion Loft Traffic Sensors – The VB installed an additional 2 sensors in Buellton to make for a total of 8. These sensors have provided us with up to date traffic counts and allow us to analyze traffic patterns and time of day traffic is moving throughout Buellton. We are able to do comparisons as well and look at year over year totals. This project was initiated to get an idea of changes in traffic before, during, and after the construction taking place throughout town. Also, with some of the sensor locations, it will provide us with accurate counts to attract developers and provide retailers with traffic counts at various times of the day so they may set their hours of operation accordingly.

Pacific Coast Business Times – The Visitors Bureau placed an ad in this publication to advertise the vacancies in Buellton for commercial/retail spaces.

Marketing Consultant – The visitors Bureau contracted with Solutions on 2nd to assist with the implementation of the strategic plan. Various items have been accomplished and we continue to execute the necessary steps as we work through the plan. We have been working on a new brand and logo for the Visitors Bureau and look forward to launching a new website in the spring of 2018.

Organizations & Meetings

We take part in various meetings throughout the year and offer support when needed. The following are organizations, committees, and meetings we are a part of or have attended.



Central Coast Tourism Council (CCTC) – Kathy was nominated to the treasurer position with the CCTC and remains on the international marketing committee. This is a dynamic organization consisting of tourism partners from Channel Island/Ventura area up to Santa Cruz/Monterey area. It encompasses the entire Central Coast of California and we come together to market our region as a multiple day destination. The CCTC provides cooperative marketing opportunities and ad buys that would otherwise cost the individuals much more going on their own. We are valued by our State Tourism Office for California and have a strong partnership with them as well.

Economic Development – We meet with potential developers and discuss possibilities and opportunities in Buellton. We stay in touch with our property owners and work to help fill vacancies when possible.

As a member of the EVT (Economic Vitality Team) we have discussed the need for Broadband across the county to link us to Ventura and SLO counties. This continues to evolve.

We have been instrumental in the Specific Plan for the Avenue of Flags and supported the concept of design elements that would create an identity for Buellton.

Our connectivity to the business community and our local commercial brokers and owners allows us to make those connections for possible leads.

Kathy continues to meet on a local level with other tourism bureaus and the Vintners Association to see how they may collaborate on upcoming marketing opportunities, events, or projects.

In conclusion, the Buellton Visitors Bureau continues to market on a domestic and international level working collaboratively with neighboring bureaus, regional partners, and state partners. It is in our best interest to place Buellton as a destination on the Central Coast where you may Eat, Stay, and Play in Santa Barbara Wine Country. We appreciate the opportunity to market Buellton and look forward to growing our audience and visitor traffic to Buellton.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Vreeland, Executive Director