



TO: JEFF HAMPTON – TRAVEL OREGON

FROM: CAROLYN S. HILL – TRAVEL SOUTHERN OREGON

DATE: December 16, 2015

**RE: NARRATIVE REGARDING WINE COUNTRY LICENSE PLATES PLAN**

The Wine Country License Plate plan for Region 3 contains four program areas. Intended ROI, metrics, timing and other elements specific to each of the four program areas are included with information provided in regional planning documents submitted to Travel Oregon (as prescribed by the WCP guidelines).

### **STRATEGY/PROGRAM AREA ONE**

Program area one has two tactics:

- 1) Tactic One: Invest in wine and culinary consumer research
  - a) The first tactic that the Wine Country License Plate Advisory Committee \* took on is the development of a consumer survey about wine and culinary tourism experiences in Southern Oregon.
  - b) The Committee developed a set of questions, and the survey has been delivered to consumers who have visited Southern Oregon.
  - c) Using the communications and data analysis platform at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, consumers follow a survey link to answer questions about their wine-tasting and dining experiences in Southern Oregon.
  - d) Thousands of consumers have completed the survey already, and the trends we are beginning to see reveal strengths and opportunities for promoting Southern Oregon.
  - e) We are continuing to collect as many surveys as possible, and have urged all of the area DMOs and other attractions to send the survey out to their respective lists.
  - f) As our area DMO partners continue to populate the survey (along with attractions, outfitters, and others who have newsletters and consumer communications channels), we eagerly anticipate sharing the insights revealed.
  - g) Travel Southern Oregon has embedded the survey link onto its website and we are including it in our digital magazine (which goes to our subscribers and Facebook fans – a qualified list of more than 55,000 “hand raisers” with whom we have relationships through our social media channels, subscription lists, etc.).

*\*\* Wine Country License Plate Advisory Committee: Bob Hackett (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Nora Lancaster (Kriselle Cellars and the Southern Oregon Winery Association); Liz Wan (Serra Vineyards & Applegate Wine Trail); Jean Kurtz (Umpqua Valley Winegrowers Association); Kerrie Walters (Wine Industry Liaison and Chief Regional Specialist for Travel Southern Oregon); Fred Wickman (Prospect Hotel/Motel & Dinner house); Carolyn S. Hill, CEO Travel Southern Oregon. The group has already met seven times and has accomplished a great deal of work and is developing wonderful ideas and goals for the coming year.*

- 2) Tactic Two: Conduct field research, itinerary development, create library of digital assets
- a) Field research and itinerary development, to better understand the products and wine-tasting and culinary experiences of the region, is a critical tactic for program area one.
  - b) By traveling wine trails and visiting farmers markets, restaurants and other culinary artisans, and by talking with these creative individuals, we will bring insight and nuance to our consumer survey findings, which helps us deepen the region's culinary and wine brand immeasurably.
  - c) We will create imaginative, inspirational wine and culinary itineraries and other beautiful content that can be leveraged through consumer marketing channels (multiple groups can have access to this); and we will also leverage these through consumer trade shows, media relations, travel writer FAMs, our global sales activities, RDMO tours, and more.
  - d) The content will live on our digital platform and be engaging with live maps and links, fascinating side trips, places to stay, and an emphasis on where to find the best of the region's culinary delights.
  - e) Itineraries (e.g. "road trips") are the top-visited pages on the SouthernOregon.org platform. A new interface in which Travel Southern Oregon recently invested allows us to animate itineraries for maximum viewability across multiple platforms and devices. These dynamic, animated itineraries (we plan on developing at least 10 new ones this year, bringing our total to 35) are unique in Oregon tourism.
  - f) We will hire a photographer/videographer for field outreach to produce high-quality, rights-released digital (pictures and videos) assets that we can then share with partners across the region.
  - g) The need for these assets has been demonstrated many times, and the availability of these assets will be beneficial to non-profit groups like the Applegate Wine Trail, the Umpqua Winegrowers Association, or the Jacksonville Winery Association (to name just three of the 10 winery associations that exist within the AVA). We will reserve a small number of these assets (to avoid consumer fatigue from over-used images) for specific Travel Southern Oregon-sponsored brand advertising to promote our regions restaurants, farmers markets, vineyards, and tasting rooms.
  - h) The goal of regional marketing, as always, is to grow the pie for all. By focusing on endeavors to increase business to the entire region, we make the pie bigger for all – and everyone's piece of that pie grows. Then, every destination, attraction, restaurant, winery, or hotel will be able to **gain new business while sharing success** with their colleagues throughout the region.

## **PROGRAM AREA TWO**

### Create and fund a website for the Southern Oregon Winery Association.

- a) The organization's previous website was 10+ years old, and impossible to edit with any efficiency. It had very little content or photography, nor did it have a CMS to manage its content and membership directory needs. The site was breaking down daily, and the need to replace it was urgent, however, the Southern Oregon Winery Association lacked the resources to take this on.
- b) The Travel Southern Oregon board met and agreed that a strong regional winery website was a critical asset, and they approved the necessary funding to make it happen. The Southern Oregon Winery Association board appointed a website committee \*\* from its board and membership to work with the Travel Southern Oregon staff and contractors in the development of the new site. An aggressive deadline was chosen, giving us three months to complete the work for launch for Oregon Wine Month in May 2015.
- c) This tactic has been completed, the site was launched on time, and the largest share of the needed resource came directly from the Wine Country License Plate dollars, for the direct benefit of the Southern Oregon Winery Association and its members.
- d) Travel Southern Oregon produced the content and provided the images (the Southern Oregon Winery Association did not own these assets). All the wine-related content we had available from TSO blogs, digital newsletters, and past stories was assembled so the site would have a strong standing online and fare well in Google searches, etc.
- e) The resulting new site is a modern, mobile-optimized, professional, content-rich website that promotes the Southern Oregon Winery Association both as an industry group and as a membership association, with links out to members and opportunities to be featured in further depth. Its design allows for flexible editing and multiple opportunities to "build out" content, wherever the Southern Oregon Winery Association's board planning for digital marketing takes them. A multi-layered advertising system (so that the Southern Oregon Winery Association could look at income opportunities on the site in the future) was also created at their request. The new site provides multiple levels of exposure and marketing to its members through a custom, powerful CMS to populate the site content. A live Instagram feed of tagged pictures is an excellent feature added at the urging of the wine makers who served on the development committee.

*\*\* Website committee appointed by the Southern Oregon Winery Association board: Ashley Cates (Agate Ridge Vineyard); Nora Lancaster (Kriselle Cellars); Ruth Garvin (Cliff Creek Cellars and SOWA Board Chair), Travel Southern Oregon staff and contractors.*

### **PROGRAM AREA THREE**

Direct consumer marketing plan to align with Travel Oregon on the Oregon Bounty campaign.

- a) The call-to-action is to drive consumer visits to the region's restaurants, farmers markets, and artisan foods, fine wines, entertaining tasting room events, restaurant, and lodging establishments.
- b) Oregon Bounty, Travel Oregon's award-winning campaign, is a celebration of the fresh, local artisan food and drink that make Oregon a truly unique destination for foodies. This campaign has driven historic levels of interest to the Travel Oregon and partner digital platforms (such as Travel Southern Oregon) and has sparked the imagination of countless visitors to the region.
- c) Each fall, Travel Oregon showcases chefs and culinary experiences in every region of the state to inspire overnight stays during this typically slower season. Program area three seeks to leverage media buys and exhibit opportunity, plus any inspiration points around Oregon Bounty; with a call to action for visits to our Southern Oregon area restaurants and wineries, and an invitation to stay and enjoy the region.

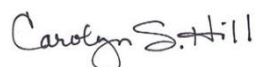
### **PROGRAM AREA FOUR**

Create opportunity reserve

- a) Creating a marketing opportunity reserve makes resource available for short-notice, extraordinary opportunities – such as remnant ad rates, new programs from Travel Oregon or other partners, digital campaigns, and more.
- b) A popular model Travel Southern Oregon has used for many years is to “buy down” the larger share of the media buy, then encourage partners to come in together for regional messaging. The decisions about such uses of opportunity funds will be within the discussion points of the LP Advisory Committee will be involved with.
- c) A second use for an opportunity reserve is to provide funds for fulfillment (direct-mail to requests specifically for wine-touring information). We could cull these leads not only from the Travel Southern Oregon platform, but also from TOOL (Travel Oregon Online Leads). Reserving a modest resource for this use gives us some flexibility to pursue direct-mail or other fulfillment strategies tied to marketing endeavors that benefit culinary and wine tourism.

We look forward, as always, to working with Travel Oregon and other partners across the state. On behalf of the Board of Travel Southern Oregon, best regards.

Sincerely,



Carolyn S. Hill, CEO – Travel Southern Oregon