

#1 - Board Management Round Table

Summary: Best Practices & Managing Tips

Anne Jenkins, Travel Medford - facilitator

Cindy Rawlings, Coos Bay - North Bend VCB (5 board members)

Lorna Davis, Newport (has 21 board members)

Cindy is both new and the lone ED for the Coos Bay - North Bend VCB and her work, promoting tourism, is sometimes complicated by the lack of clarity in the degree of detail in oversight and approval.

Q: what's an appropriate boundary for decision making and approval processes.

- Develop clear policies and by-laws. Reach out to other similar sized organizations and ask them for copies of their policies for cross-reference.
- Educate the Board through by-law development. You, the ED, will be the institutional memory and structure and process changes should be at the whim of the changing board members and their personalities.
- Dig in to individual roles of board members, board leadership, staff interaction, channels of communication and legal side-boards.
- ED should be the advisor to the Board, not the Board being a collective and unpaid staff-member. There are different responsibilities that need to be delineated.
- Voting by email, anti-trust laws and conflict of interest risks are likely to arise without any of the above side-boards, by-laws, job descriptions and guidelines.

Example: Who sits in on the advertising sub-committee? How does feedback loop work with staff and board members work for approval of advertising? What is the process and timeline for approval? Is it efficient and nimble enough to make these decisions?

Many organizations struggle with something like this; EDs will continue to leave organizations in instances like this.

There are other organizations that will come in and help to trouble-shoot the board/staff relationship. Oregon Non-Profit Association or other cohorts in attendance at the conference this week will likely share.

Q: When do you meet with your Board Members and in what format?

- Lorna will meet with them 1:1 prior to them running for the position.
- After election, take a 2 hour meeting or so and do an orientation.
 - By-laws Review and tutorial on roles and programs
 - Staff sometimes come in and give program summary and roles and responsibilities, committees they liaison, etc.

#2 - Research Round Table

NEEDS

- Regular (annual?) updates of the statewide compendium of DMO budget sizes and staffing levels. ODMO will happily assist Kari/Eugene, Cascades & Coast with this.

TRAINING

- For a future Winter Conference: refreshers on how to read/interpret/apply the data from Dean Runyan Associates (economic impacts, etc.) and Longwoods International (visitor profile).

WHAT'S NEW -- PRODUCTS AND OFFERINGS FOR ODMO MEMBERS TO CONSIDER

- Destination Analysts is offering -- via DMA West (formerly WACVB) -- a Website User and Conversion Study, which helps determine the ROI for DMO websites.
- Destination Arena allows DMOs, for a relatively low cost, to analyze web, meeting and social metrics compared to that of your peers with similar, lower or bigger budgets. More info: <http://destinationarena.com/about/>
- Arrivalist: <http://www.arrivalist.com/index.html#overview>
- Nsight: <http://www.naightfortravel.com/destinations/> and <http://www.naightfortravel.com/how-it-works/>
- VisaVue (international visitation and spending data): DMOs can purchase city- and/or county-specific reports. (You just provide the ZIP Codes, and they can run the report.) To learn more, contact Carolyn McCormick, who purchases the data for Washington County.

#3 - Finance and Funding Round Table

Concerns in Albany:

- Jimmy discussed that he had one city council member that want to de-fund the VCB. Apparently he feels there needs to be more accountability. In January of 2016 the City council will look at how all the TRT funds are expended.
- A second issue is a discussion regarding how Linn County might join together with Albany Visitor Assn. to get a staff person dedicated to tourism. How this might affect the Albany VCB has both negative and positive possibilities.
- Jimmy will be looking for assistance in talking with his city council, and helping to make the case for their productivity and accountability.

Concerns in Astoria:

- Astoria has a councilman saying the Chamber is doing too good and that the community is simply too busy with tourists.
- We discussed how ODMO might be of assistance to both Albany and Astoria via the ODMO forum on-line, where they could seek input from members, particularly in sharing information that helps to present the 'Value' of tourism, the DMO, and how they spend TRT funds.

FYI Discussion: The Southern Oregon Sports Coalition has or will have a facility that is the largest artificial turf facility in the world. It would be nice to have information about this on the ODMO forum, just as an FYI.

#4 – Working with Media

Question: On tight budget, is it better to hit several targets lightly and do deeper dive w/ one?

Answer: Doing it right is the most important thing.

Spend your time and resources researching your target markets, or if you are hiring a PR agency, hire based on their relationships in those markets. Hire someone who can help you with the right medium and who can introduce you to the right writers in the area.

General Notes:

You are likely to run into the full spectrum of publishing models. Some keep editorial and advertising truly separate. Others are fully pay to play. There are also many that operate somewhere in between. Your ad rep is your friend! They know the publication better than anyone and can help direct you and can sometimes help you with your pitch.

The art of the pitch.

It includes an amazing first sentence and is very brief.

Advice from an expert. Every release he sends out includes three to four pitches.

You need an amazing first sentence and just a bit more. Avoid throwing in too much copy.

Make your content interesting and inspiring.

Deskside tours work. Especially if you are working with an in-destination agency that knows how to get you to the right person.

Working with editorial calendars.

By the time you see the editorial calendar, it's too late to influence it.

FYI on timing for AAA Journey. They do their planning in July/August. The Media Kit is available in September. They run three big stories per issue. International, Regional, Local (Oregon is local)