

MARKETING PLAN FISCAL YEAR 2017/2018



Letter from Terry Selk, Executive Director Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau

Dear Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Partners:

With your support, the Mariposa County Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) has made great gains for the tourism industry of Mariposa County since its establishment back in 2008. In fact, Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) overall has grown more than 50% since the TBID was adopted and increased by a similar percentage in the off-season months over the same time period. As we look forward to the TBID renewal in 2018, our 2017/2018 marketing plan provides some insight into how the Tourism Bureau is investing the assessment to ensure the pipeline for off-season bookings remains full and highlights our successes in 2016/2017.

The 2016/2017 year was notable for both accomplishments and challenges for the tourism industry of Mariposa County. Transient Occupancy Tax totaled \$14.9 million, up 3.7% over 2015/2016 fiscal year and marking yet another record-breaking year of collections. This

growth occurred despite natural disasters in the form of rock slides, wildfires and subsequent road closures. The Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau implemented robust domestic and international advertising campaigns, drove tens of thousands of booking leads to lodging partners and nurtured trade and media relationships to further the economic growth of the region.

Our new brand that was launched last year embodies the natural majesty of Yosemite and Mariposa County and will continue to receive a high level of engagement across every media platform where it is deployed. Our award-winning website Yosemite.com is projected to generate more than 5 million pageviews. Our consistent international marketing efforts will help ensure a steady flow of valued foreign visitors, many of which travel during our off-season periods, despite obstacles such as a strong US dollar, natural disasters and political concerns.

In the coming year our commitment to success remains unwavering and it is our privilege to serve and continue to bring business to you in 2017/2018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry Selk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Find us @YosemiteNation



TBID ASSESSEMENT

MISSION STATEMENT

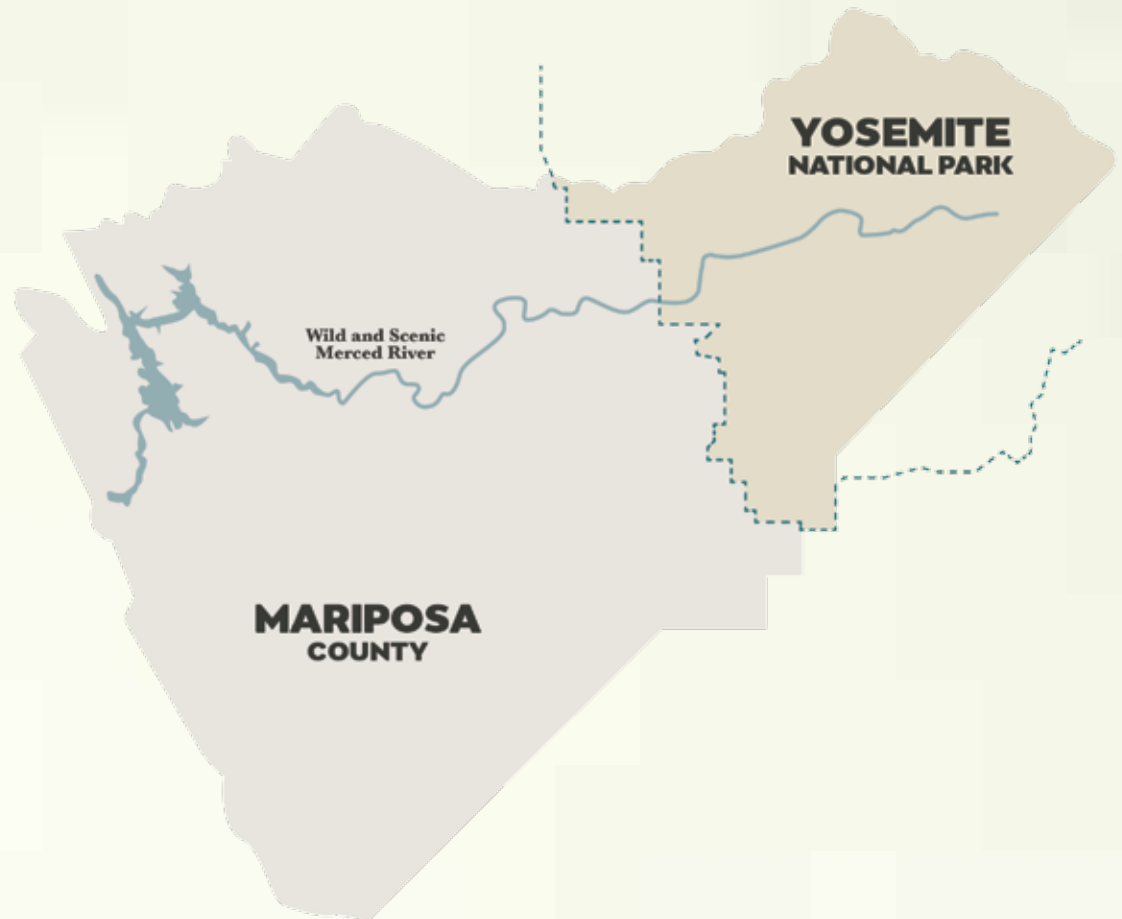
The Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau is the branding, sales, and marketing agency responsible for positioning Yosemite Mariposa County as the destination of choice for leisure and group business for the economic benefit of the region.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Promote off season overnight visitation
- Educate customers and constituents
- Operate a fiscally sound and effective business
- Foster positive relationships with key stakeholders and partners

TBID STATEMENT

There are no proposed changes to the boundaries or assessed business. The district will continue to include lodging businesses, existing and in the future, available for public occupancy within the boundaries of the County of Mariposa, as shown.



ADVERTISING

DOMESTIC CAMPAIGN

With domestic visitors making up more than more than 70% of the visitation to our region, the bulk of our marketing and advertising efforts in the coming year will be focused specifically in key California feeder markets such as the Bay Area, Central Coast, Sacramento and Los Angeles. The greater San Francisco Bay Area has always been and will continue to be our primary target market, featuring media platforms such as radio, print, and digital.

Great success has been achieved through Pandora Radio in penetrating expensive markets such as Los Angeles and the Bay Area, while traditional print media in the way of *Sunset* Magazine for statewide targeting, *Westways* Magazine for Southern CA as a region, Bay Area News Group for SF Bay Area will be used to provide a broad outreach to a diverse consumer market mix.

2016/2017 HIGHLIGHTS

The 2016/2017 campaign included publications such as Bay Area News Group, CBS, Pandora, Sunset and Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and radio features on KFOG and KOIT.

The campaign also included co-operative advertising opportunities to bring affordable advertising options to our partners.

The strategy for the print media campaign included penetrating the San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles markets through some of the following publications:

Bay Area News Group (BANG)

- Eat, Drink, Play Sunday Feature in the *Contra Costa Times*, *Oakland Tribune* and *San Jose Mercury News*
- Print Campaign reached of 4.4 million
- Digital Marketing campaign served 1,136,209 impressions & 5,962 clicks
- Eblasts received 41,954 opens
- Content focused heavily on town of Mariposa and Coulterville

Carthays Valley • Coulterville • El Portal • Fish Camp • Forests • Groves • Mariposa • Midpines • Mariposa • Yosemite Valley • Yosemite West

Yosemite is calling.

Answer the call. Discover Yosemite and Mariposa County. Plan your fall getaway today.

Download our new vacation planner at Yosemite.com/sfgate

TENAYA LODGE AT YOSEMITE

Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite is your "basecamp" for Yosemite exploration. After a day of outdoor adventures, relax in the Four-diamond comforts of newly-renovated guestrooms.

BREAKFAST • FREE YOSEMITE PARK PASS
Visit TENAYALODGE.COM or call 888.514.2167
Promo Code: YOSEPASS

THE REDWOODS IN YOSEMITE

Year-Round Vacation Home Rentals, Wedding & Event Center located inside Yosemite National Park. Choose from our 125 fully equipped cozy cabins and spacious luxury homes located in Mariposa, Yosemite Falls or near your party to see new Wedding and Event Center. We have many pet-friendly homes, too!

RedwoodsInYosemite.com
856.703.6266

ADVERTISING (CONT.)

CBS

A combination of streamlining audio and video spots, along with custom video ads, social media posts and a travel section takeover resulted in:

- 3,946,145 digital impressions
- 7,790 clicks

SUNSET MAGAZINE

- 1/3-page print ads reached 6.8 million readers in Northern California
- *Sunset* Travel E-newsletter sent to opt-in subscribers resulted in 49,190 eblast opens and 220 clicks to Yosemite.com

KFOG RADIO

- 140 Total Spots (including 34 live reads)

KOIT RADIO

- 50 ad spots
- 5,337 eblast opens
- 437 clicks
- 20,002 impressions

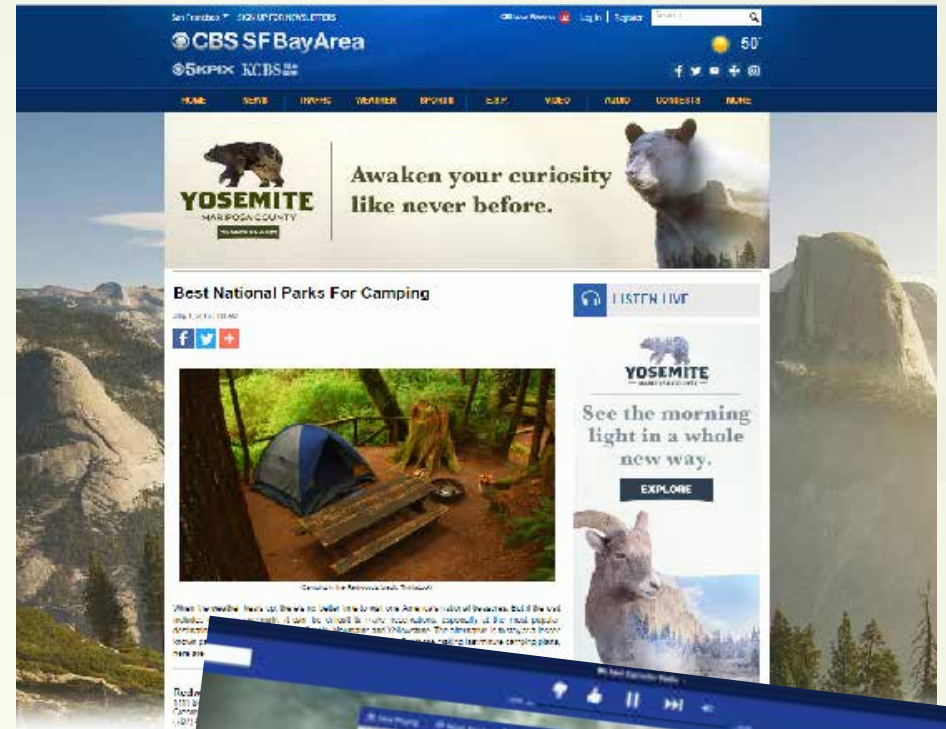
PANDORA

Ads and desktop website skins were targeted to San Francisco, Fresno and Orange County specifically, resulting in:

- 8,404,887 digital impressions
- 12,347 clicks

BART

- Offline media resulted in 5.4 million impressions
- Mobile targeting produced 1 million digital impressions and 5,339 clicks



ADVERTISING (CONT.)

YOSEMITE JOURNAL

- Magazine distribution is 100,000 annually
- Participated in road trip contest from San Francisco to Yosemite and generated over 3000 leads

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Digital efforts

- Total Digital Impressions: 19,338,833 (19+ million)
- Total Clicks: 44,777
- Total CTR: 2.64% (search & display Combined)
- Book conversions (including view through conversions): 16,589
- Travel Planner downloads: 793

OFFLINE AND PRINT

- Total print and offline media impressions: 13.2 million

In previous years, the commencement of display advertising was typically deployed in early September in an effort to entice early bookings for fall and would continue for eight to nine months over a variety of medium. However, in 2017/2018 the strategy will involve an earlier deployment of the nine months advertising campaigns in response to lodging partners indicating the desire to see an earlier booking push for the fall. The mix of media platforms used will feature *Sunset* Magazine, Bay Area News Group (BANG), *Westways* Magazine (Southern CA AAA members), Pandora, TripAdvisor, *Yosemite* Journal and BART.

Continuing the wildlife association with Yosemite in our creative, new characters including a coyote, peregrine falcon, and others will be incorporated into the strategic deployment.



COMMUNICATIONS

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau will continue to deploy a robust communications strategy in 2017/2018 reaching our targeted audiences through social media, printed collateral, public relations, and ecommunications. We will continue to focus efforts on the Yosemite.com website, leveraging the massive organic reach of the url with enriched content designed and paid search engine marketing in order to gain the greatest market share possible and drive bookings to our lodging partners and attractions throughout Mariposa County.

WEBSITE

Yosemite.com serves all Mariposa County lodging, dining and attractions partners by offering free listings and information about activities and events throughout the county. It is a crucial tool for information sharing for visitors during crisis situations such as road closures, rock falls and fires.

In spring 2016, Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau's board made the decision to merge two existing websites, the free-to-list YosemiteExperience.com and the for-profit advertising site, Yosemite.com into one website to better serve the majority of businesses in Mariposa County. The results have produced an award-winning, well-performing website that drives nearly 163% more website traffic to Mariposa County businesses and generated more than 4 million pageviews annually.

Highlights July 2016-June 2017

- 1,410,399 in Total User Sessions (163% increase compared to last year)
- 4,260,471 Total Page Views (236% increase compared to last year)
- Top Ranked Page: Places to Stay

In January, YMCTB embarked on a new partnership with Noble Studios to increase SEO rankings and partner referrals from Yosemite.com. In the first six months of the project we saw the following results:

- Partner Referrals had 259k referrals, 235% over our goal
- Organic growth had 425k sessions, 127% over our goal
- Email Subscribers had 693 conversions, 462% over our goal
- International Market growth (UK, Australia, China, Germany, Scandinavia 70.3k, more than 100% of goal.



**TOTAL COMBINED PAGE VIEWS WERE
MORE THAN 4 MILLION**

COMMUNICATIONS (CONT.)

ECOMMUNICATIONS

The monthly e-news reaches an average of 27,081 with travel tips, events, and more for travelers headed to Mariposa County.

Avg Opens	5,741	21% (industry avg. 14%)
Avg Clicks	811	2.88% (industry avg. 1.6%)

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Providing accurate and timely information to the media regarding upcoming events, news, or an inevitable crisis is one of the core foundations of our communications strategy.

2016/2017 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Yosemite Mariposa County hosted 8 media familiarization tours (FAMS).
- Provided a delegate for the Yosemite region at the UK Media Mission hosted by Visit California. Met with dozens of top-tier editorial staff and journalists for various outlets in the UK and Ireland.
- Implemented broad crisis response for Detwiler Fire and Big Oak Flat road closure, both which had significant visitation impacts to Mariposa County, along with various other smaller crisis response efforts.
- Arranged several on-air interviews and cooking segments for local event organizers to promote events to audiences in the Central Valley.
- Attended the Media Marketplace at the International Discover America Pow Wow (IPW) regarding new product developments in Mariposa County (aerial tours, gold panning tours, prospective Harley Davidson motorcycle rentals, new lodging, opening of Mariposa Grove, etc.) to connect with dozens of media representatives from around the world.



COMMUNICATIONS (CONT.)

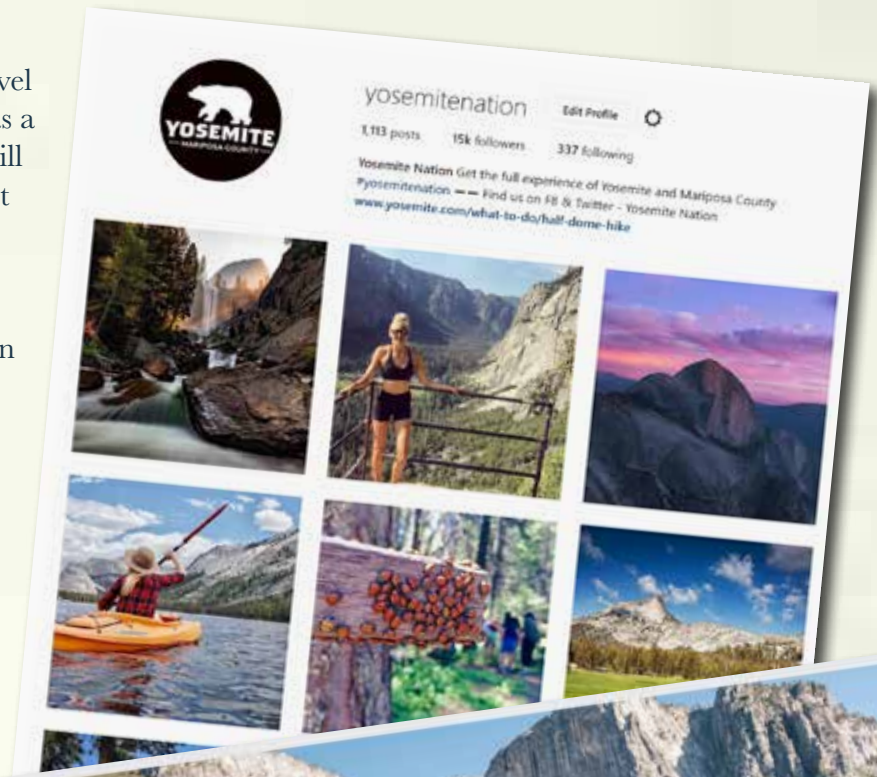
In 2017/2018, YMCTB will continue to welcome the opportunity to host important travel trade and media representatives but will narrow the window of focus to October-April as a result of the growing occupancy in the shoulder months of September and May. Staff will attend selected exhibitions and events that provide cost-effective face-to-face engagement with key media representatives.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Yosemite Mariposa maintains several platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and even WeChat, the primary social media platform in China. In 2017/2018 we will set higher goals for growing our engaged audience across all our platforms to drive more visitation to Mariposa County.

In 2017/2018 we have plans to grow our engagement across all of our platforms and thus further our effectiveness in communicating with prospective visitors.

FACEBOOK TOTAL FANS – 83K
INSTAGRAM – 15K FOLLOWERS
TWITTER – 50K FOLLOWERS
PINTEREST – 2.8K FOLLOWERS



TRADE

TRADE AND CONSUMER INITIATIVES

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau maintains a strong presence in the travel industry by both working with trade professionals (commercial tour operators and travel agents) and by direct interaction with consumers. Whether staff are attending a trade or consumer travel show or hosting a group of travel professionals, these interactions help to educate our potential visitors on four-season availability, property offerings, and attractions.

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau hosted several trade familiarization tours (FAMS) for travel agents and tour operators to educate them as to Mariposa County's tourism attributes, with a specific emphasis on the off-season. In fact, we have adopted a policy to not host any travel writer or trade representative during key peak season periods. This year we hosted a total of 161 clients representing more than ten countries. This resulted in a direct spend of \$44,000. to Mariposa lodging, dining and attractions.

CONSUMER SHOWS

In addition, staff participated in two major consumer trade shows, the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show in Santa Clara and the LA Travel and Adventure show in Los Angeles. We also partnered with the surrounding regions; Madera, Mammoth, Mono, and Tuolumne to create a "Yosemite Experience Pavilion" that consisted of ten booths and a rock wall attraction.

TRAVEL TRADE SHOWS

In addition to hosting trade sellers in the destination, staff also engages with them at exhibitions during scheduled business appointments.

NTA Travel Exchange

- Travel Exchange brings together National Tour Association (NTA) sellers, focusing on group travel with US travel suppliers for one-on-one business meetings to discuss travel itineraries and product development opportunities.

IPW – International POW WOW

- U.S. Travel Association's IPW is the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest travel trade business exchange on US soil. Buyer attendees represent independent, group, MICE/incentive and special interests from over 70 countries.



Australian Travel Trade Agents from TopDeck Tours enjoy a western experience at the Yosemite Zipline and Adventure Ranch

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND MEDIA

Approximately 25% of the visitors through Yosemite's gates are from foreign countries. In an effort to make sure Mariposa County attracts overnight visitors from this valued market segment (stays longer, spends more), the Tourism Bureau retains representation services in primary core markets of Australia, France, Germany, Scandinavia and the UK under the partnership umbrella of the Visit California Tourism office. Each agency serves as Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau's in-market voice to the media, travel trade and consumers and executes a varied scope of work in the respective market.

Each office works around a primary travel trade objective of promoting off-season itinerary development, encouraging longer lengths of stay through communication and education about the four-season accessibility of the destination, available attractions and events. Most often information is conveyed through training sessions with frontline travel agents, presenting itinerary and product ideas to tour operators and supporting consumer-direct promotions with partners such as airlines, tour operators and consumer products. Monthly reporting includes invaluable market intelligence.

In Scandinavia, France and the UK, the additional scope of media outreach is conducted to pitch story ideas, encourage media visits (off-season) and to generally write positive travel pieces on Mariposa County.

Some of the key highlights achieved by these offices in 2016/2017 include:

AUSTRALIA

- Trade and consumer campaign with major travel seller, Adventure World, which included key positioning in its annual travel product catalog, exclusive visibility at a range of travel agent and consumer exhibitions, partnership with National Geographic Traveller magazine and its website, consumer competition.

CHINA

- Continued investment in the Club CA agent training program, bringing California travel information to agencies and agents through the country on the selling of California and Yosemite and Mariposa County.
- Production of an in-language translation of the six-page consumer brochure.



Yosemite Mariposa “s’mores” tasting table at an AdventureWorld Travel brochure release reception in Sydney.

INTERNATIONAL (CONT.)

FRANCE

•As part of a partnership involving the High Sierra Visitors Council and Rural Tourism Grant funding from Visit CA, the Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau benefits from a matching dollar effort to retain representation in France. The region as a whole and the eleven individual partner destinations within the region receive dedicated trade and consumer exposure through daily trade and media representation, management of a French language Facebook page and subsequent promotions, a French language website, trade and media fam tour coordination, itinerary development, education/training seminars and attendance at key trade and consumer exhibitions.

GERMANY

•Participated in several campaigns with key partners such as Mair Dumont/Marco Polo, Faszination Fernweh (Northern CA Triangle), America Unlimited (urban citywide poster campaign), CRD (microsite), Canusa Touristik's National Park Campaign, DER Touristik's Campus (educational campaign) and the Thomas Cook College.

JAPAN

•Invested in Visit CA Japan office's Club CA educational training program, providing travel agent training to frontline agents across the country.
 •Attended the Japan Association of Travel Agencies (JATA) Expo. A local Mariposa County resident of Japanese decent was our representative at the booth.

KOREA

•Influenced Korean Tour operator Hana Tours to include overnight stays in Mariposa County.



INTERNATIONAL (CONT.)

SCANDINAVIA

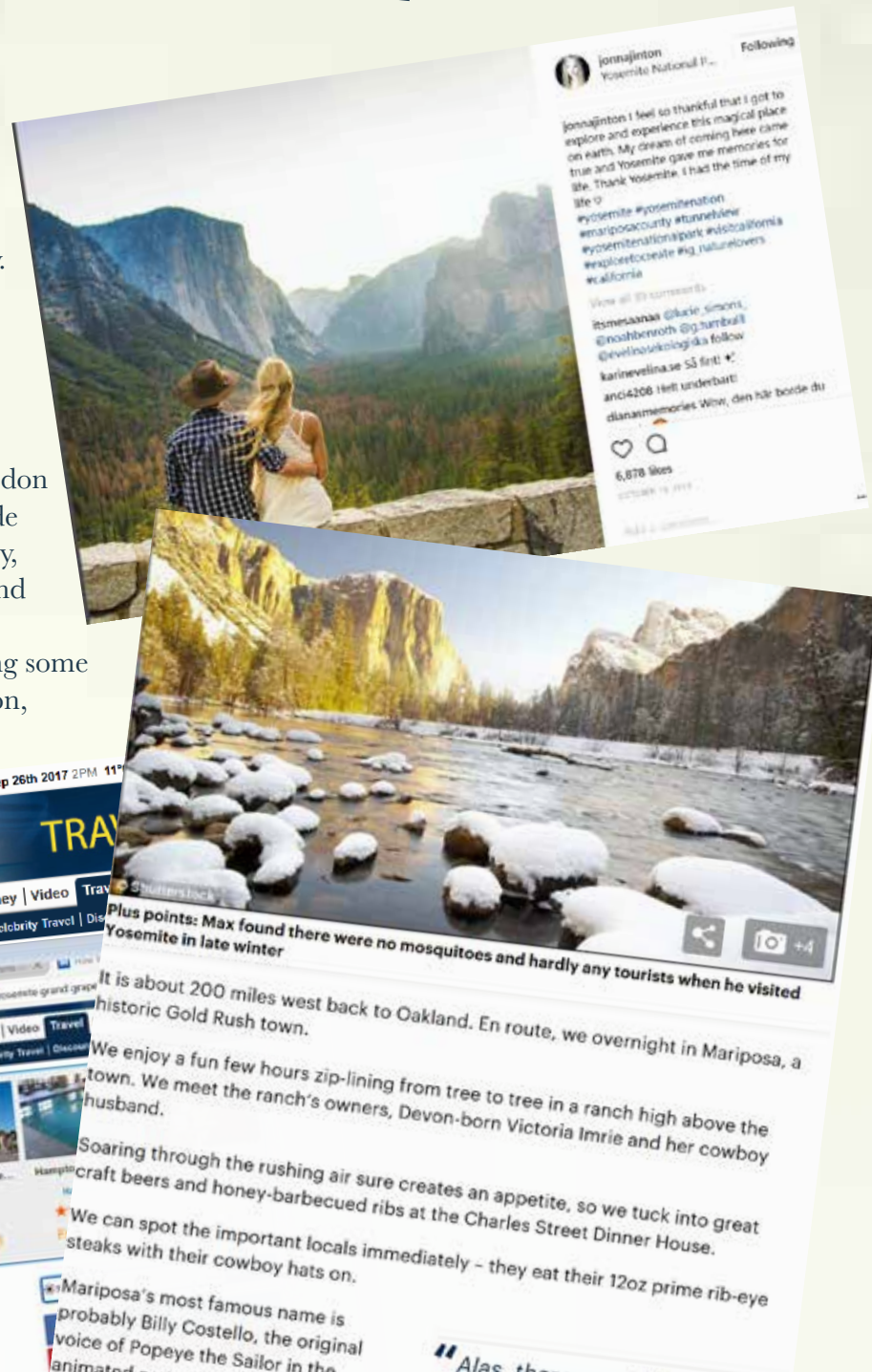
- Partnered with Flygstolen, a major online travel agency, in Denmark involving a popular Swedish blog writer Jonna Jinton with a following of more than 250,000. Her nine-day journey focused on off-season exposure to nature, wildlife, hiking, climbing, photography as well as the variety of lodging throughout Mariposa County.
- United Generations campaign featuring a road trip between a grandfather and grandson which featured Mariposa County.
- More than three million in advertising value obtained through PR outreach.

UNITED KINGDOM

- Partnered with Escapism, a monthly free travel magazine distributed in Central London with circulation of 100,000 + and readership of 250,000 +. A six-page insider's guide focusing on off-season visitation and the diverse accommodation options in the county, website banners, enews exposure, a dedicated competition page, social media posts and data capture added to the market penetration.
- Facilitation of a live radio broadcast program with Gaydio, a breakfast show reaching some 850,000 LGBT listeners each morning. Emphasis behind the messaging was off-season, vacation/self-catering accommodation, rustic resorts as well as attractions.
- One feature story, titled "Yosemite in Winter – It is Cool!"

garnered a reach of more than 200,000 readers in the *Scottish Sun* and *Travel Weekly*.

- Total PR/Media ROI for Year: \$46/\$1 invested.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LOCAL EVENT SUPPORT

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau is proud to support local events through a combination of cash donations, in-kind marketing support and advertising.

YMCTB provided donation and in-kind support for the following events and projects:

- Rotary Art & Wine Festival
- Civil War Days
- Coyotefest
- Go West Festival
- KYRZ Radio
- Las Mariposas Civil War Days
- Made in Mariposa
- Mariposa Butterfly Festival
- Mariposa Clean Sweep
- Mariposa County Fair
- Mariposa Downtown Christmas Décor
- Mariposa Farm & Ranch Tour
- Mariposa Yosemite Hot Rod and Custom Car Show
- Music on the Green Summer Concert Series
- Sausage & Suds
- State Capital Display
- Story Telling Festival
- Trans Valley Youth Football League Super Bowl

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau staff provide guidance on several boards and committees to support a wide range of initiatives locally as well as regionally, to bring opportunity and visibility to Yosemite Mariposa County.

AFFILIATED COMMITTEES

- Citizens Advisory Committee for the Transit Feasibility Study (TAC)
- DMA West (Destination Marketing Association)
- Gold County Visitors Association
- Golden Chain Highway revitalization committee
- High Sierra Visitors Council
- Las Mariposas Revitalization & Heritage Committee
- Made in Mariposa
- Mariposa Chamber of Commerce
- Visit CA Branding/Content Committee
- Visit CA Rural Tourism Marketing Committee
- YARTS Advisory Committee
- Yosemite Gateway Partners



Redesigned Mariposa County State Capitol Display

2016/2017 LEADERSHIP

2016/2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kevin Shelton, Board Chair

Yosemite Resorts

Donna Davis, Vice Chair

The Redwoods at Yosemite

Barbara Robinson, Board Secretary

Indian Peak Ranch Mountain Top Hideaway

Douglas Shaw, Board Treasurer

Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort

Jeff Bray, Board Member

Aramark/Yosemite Hospitality

Dane Carlson, Board Member

Mariposa County Chamber of Commerce

MaryAnn Huff, Board Member

Northern Mariposa County

Donna Nassar, Board Member

Bed & Breakfast Association

Paul Ratchford, Board Member

Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite

Sara Zahn, Board Member

Hotel Jeffery

2017/2018 BUDGET

CATEGORY	PERCENT OF BUDGET	DOLLAR AMOUNT
Sales & Marketing	72.30%	\$ 1,373,415.83
Public Relations	19.23%	\$ 365,354.20
Administration	2.99%	\$ 56,871.89
Contingency/Renewal	0.47%	\$ 9,000.00
Collection Costs	5.00%	\$ 94,984.31
Total Annual Budget	100.0%	\$ 1,899,626.23

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Roger Biery

Sierra Communications

Scott Gediman

Yosemite National Park

Candy O'Donel Browne

Community Member

BOARD LIAISON

Merlin Jones

Mariposa County Board Supervisor

District IV

Kevin Cann

Mariposa County Board Supervisor, District II

STAFF

Terry Selk, Executive Director

Noel Morrison, Communications Manager

Julie Hadzega, Travel Trade &

Operations Manager

Carrie Kidwell, Administrative Assistant

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Sara Zahn, Board Member

Hotel Jeffery



2017/2018 Board of Directors & Advisors

Top Row (from left): Kathrin Poetter (Marketing Committee) Dane Carlson, Jeff Bray, Kevin Shelton, Scott Gediman., Terry Selk (Executive Director) **Front Row (from left):** Donna Nassar, Sara Zahn, MaryAnn Huff, Christian Mueller (Marketing Committee) Douglas Shaw.

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