



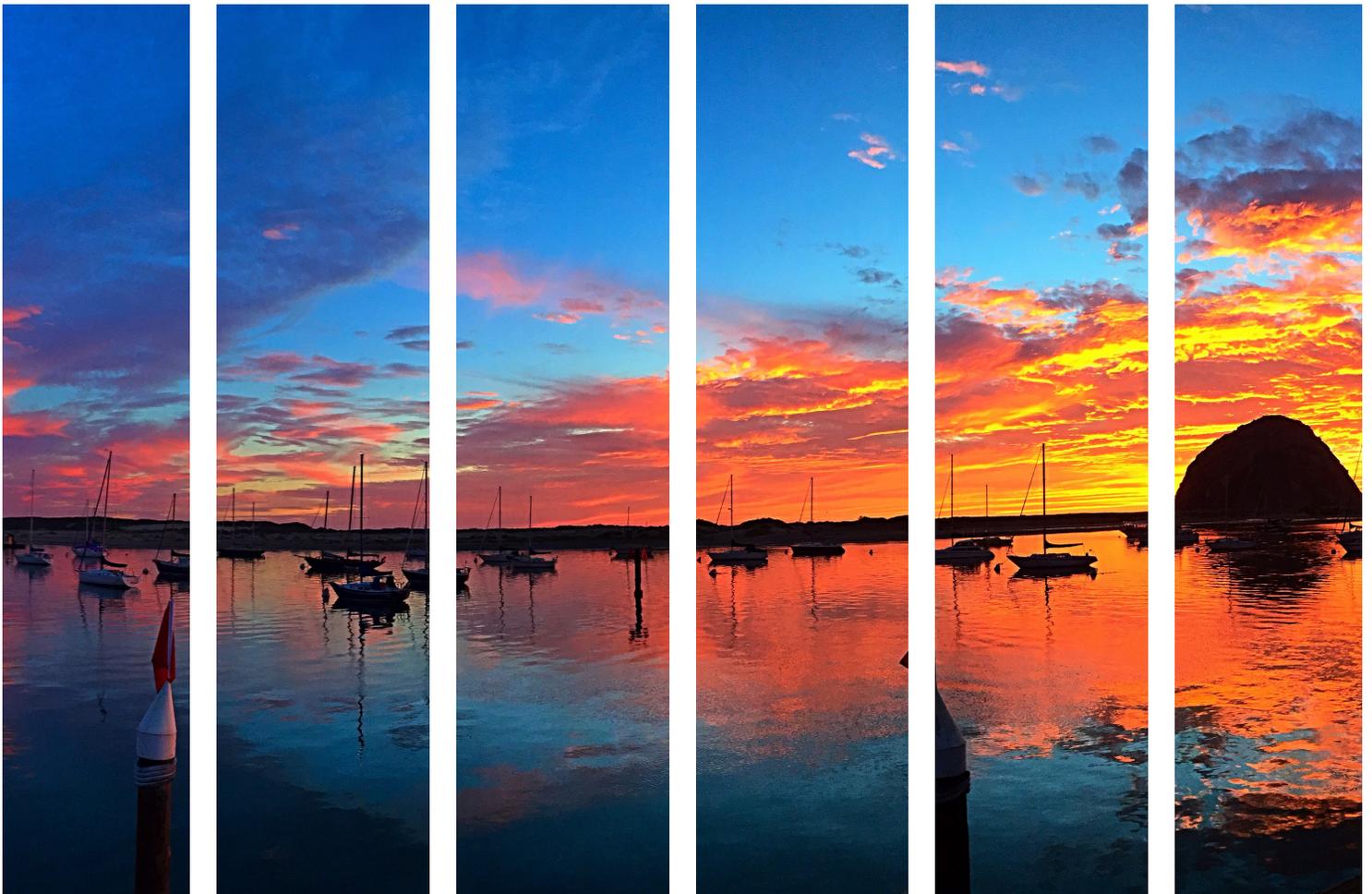
**MORRO BAY**  
PUT LIFE ON COAST

**MORRO BAY TOURISM**  
**I-YEAR MARKETING PLAN**  
FISCAL YEAR 2019-20



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# HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018-19

## #VACTIONRULES BRAND CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Ads promoting the newly re-opened CA Highway 1 and the fall wine campaign launched the successful #VacationRules brand campaign in August 2018, giving Morro Bay Tourism a lot of momentum as we head into this new fiscal year. Mental Marketing created and together with Morro Bay Tourism launched this new campaign featuring a unique brand promise and then built stories around those expectations. Put Life on Coast is a promise that while a #MorroBaycation offers a slower pace, groovy small town charm, and an incredible agri- and aqua-cultural foodie experience, Morro Bay offers the best variety of outdoor recreation making it the ultimate coastal destination on the Central Coast.

With a new logo, tagline, brand new ad template leading the way for consistent branding for the first time in years, Morro Bay was positioned perfectly to grow awareness and site traffic, and track campaign driven bookings and revenue. Shoulder season campaigns throughout the year spoke to great events, fun, food and outdoor adventure in this funky and unique destination. These campaigns garnered great year-over-year (YOY) engagement, clicks and traffic to MorroBay.org. While YOY fiscal traffic to MorroBay.org to date (July 1, 2018 – May 31, 2019) is up +7.15%, clicks to MorroBay.org driven by campaign ads are up +114%, and clicks driven by social media are up +83%.

With consistent digital ads that captured travelers making decisions from intent-to-book, and press releases, blogs and social media that told stories about destination experiences to enhance their stay, Morro Bay's tourism family welcomed every traveler at every stage of life, human or canine. Because, #VacationRules when you Put Life on Coast.



# MORRO BAY TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN: TBID AND COUNCIL APPROVED 2019

Under the facilitation of SMG Consulting led by Carl Ribaud, and with the active participation of stakeholders throughout the city and the community, Morro Bay Tourism assembled a 3 – 5 year strategic plan to align staff and community stakeholders on the direction of the organization, its strategy and how the organization’s success will be measured. SMG Consulting conducted a series of ten workshops that included input from a variety of stakeholder groups: lodging, recreation, environmental, business, arts and culture, and food/ dining in an effort to understand the culture and values of the destination and compiled and also analyzed secondary research from a number of sources including Visit SLOCAL, the City of Morro Bay and the Morro Bay Tourism visitor impact study.

Mental Marketing presented a plan to the TBID board on how to integrate the strategic plan into current and future marketing practices and was able to implement some of the plans results in Q4 marketing efforts in the current fiscal year. Acting quickly, and with Amgen on the horizon, Jennifer Little, City Tourism Manager coordinated three tourism meetings with different community segments as per the strategic plan: avid cyclists and multisport enthusiasts; local artists, gallery owners and MB Art Center representatives; and the Morro Bay Estuary Program staff. As a result, Mental Marketing crafted a #hashtag program that was implemented quickly throughout digital, print and PR mediums in the spring seasonal marketing campaign and Amgen advertising. These ads support the key messaging direction from the strategic plan, which was adopted by the TBID board and Morro Bay City Council. Ads were used in Amgen program and on their website.



## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

Morro Bay Tourism launched a new website April 10, 2019 and the transition went seamlessly. It is, however, still in the testing stages of growth, monitoring SEO and SEM, with many more updates to fine tune the performance. Once up to speed the new MBT website will allow for more analytic tracking, better SEO and SEM, which will make the MBT site easier to find through search engines. The website has a new design with new style guide specs with updated images and content. Using updated rich media and brand content will help make the site more user friendly, increase time on the site, decrease bounce rate and allow for better brand positioning.

## ADARA TRACKING IMPLEMENTED

MBT has added a new product to its marketing and tracking arsenal July of 2018. Adara Impact is a product that tracks MBT online media buys, social media ad buys and website usage as it relates to hotel and flight searches, bookings and revenue. This product also tracks important profile information so we know where our customers originate from, where else they are searching and ultimately, if they don't book with us in Morro Bay, where they did book. In addition, we can better understand and track the traveler profile as it relates to look-to-book ratios, how many travelers per bookings, and growth of length of stay.

## STRATEGIC PLAN TAKEAWAYS

*"Improve the competitiveness of the destination by reimagining and leveraging its assets, effectively positioning the destination and communicating Morro Bay's unique persona to consumers, which will increase demand, revenues and taxes during targeted times of the year."*

*-SMG Consulting Strategic Plan*

### WHAT MAKES MORRO BAY DIFFERENT?

The three key differentiators that set Morro Bay apart from its comp set identified by the MBT Strategic Plan as outdoor recreation, eclectic culture and vibe, and superior price value are a main focus of the marketing strategy going forward. These key points, along with the additional assets identified including that Morro Bay is an ocean front, friendly and welcoming community that is committed to protecting its marine history, the environment and its incredible estuary, create a unique combination that make us far different from the usual southern CA surf towns.

Morro Bay is entering into its second year presenting a streamlined and consistent brand presence, with updated messaging and a unified focus on sharing that voice with the community is an effort that MBT and Mental Marketing welcomes. It's a great time for tourism growth in Morro Bay, CA.

### EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY - BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

This transition needs to occur in a collaborative way that supports and empowers the local tourism industry to be a voice for the value of tourism in Morro Bay, and to respect and champion the local culture and natural resources of the area. According to the Strategic Plan, competitive destinations enjoy the support of the tourism industry and residents, which is critical to present an authentic experience that reinforces why Morro Bay is different from everywhere else. To that end a series of community meetings will continue to take place seasonally with identified community segments including sports & recreation, local retail/restaurant businesses, arts & artisans, and eco-tourism related.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

These assets tell the story of Morro Bay and its cool and eclectic locally-owned and operated business community, filled with creative artisans, retail operators and innovative artists, chefs, craft brewers, soap makers and beyond. Also identified in the strategic plan are the numerous opportunities for growth within the county and between comp set to the north in Monterey and south in Santa Barbara.

The Strategic Plan identified seasonal, ADR, and occupancy opportunities for growth based on the value and quality of accommodations offered here in Morro Bay. Morro Bay generates approximately 800,000 visitors who spend approximately \$161 million dollars a year. For perspective, Morro Bay has approximately a 9% share of visitor spending within San Luis Obispo County. MBT and Mental Marketing are reimagining and targeting our integrated marketing and storytelling approach with these opportunities in mind.

### I. **Morro Bay Seasonality**

According to the city of Morro Bay occupancy numbers, Morro Bay's strongest quarter is the summer (Average 76% Occ.). The other seasonal numbers are pretty close with spring (Average 62% Occ.), fall (Average 60% Occ.) and winter (Average 58% Occ.) running pretty close together at only 2 percentage points apart. Clearly, there is an opportunity for strategic growth throughout the year.

### II. **San Luis Obispo County Destinations Annual Occupancy %**

When compared to other destinations within the County, Morro Bay occupancy lags behind all other destinations except for San Simeon. This is an enormous opportunity for growth and to create demand for our lodging properties in a coastal destination that is more affordable than our comp set. Creating more demand for Morro Bay lodging is how we create compression, thereby allowing for ADR to increase.

### III. **San Luis Obispo County Destinations Average Daily Rate \$**

In terms of Average Daily Rate, Morro Bay has the lowest of any destination within the county fully 33% below the five-city average. This is due in part from an older lodging infrastructure, as well as lower tourism promotion funding levels and in the past a lack of a clear and consistent marketing strategy. Now, with one year of a consistent brand under our belts and a Strategic Plan to follow and fine tune messaging, storytelling and targeting, Morro Bay is poised for growth.

## ACTIONABLE TOURISM TRENDS

### FAMILIES HIT THE ROAD – YEAR ROUND

According to California AAA research from 2018, [www.cali.aaa.com](http://www.cali.aaa.com), 53% of families plan to hit the road for their vacations this year and 37% plan to visit a state or national park. That is certainly good news for Morro Bay, located on one of the top road trips routes in the county and boasting a pristine state park located on the Pacific Ocean, teaming with wildlife and a healthy ecosystem primed and ready for eco conscious travelers – of which multiple trends show is a growing market. The study further discovered that families are taking more trips each year—29% of families planned to take three or more vacations in the following 12 months. Two-thirds of all family travelers plan on a summer getaway, while just under half (45%) made plans to travel as a family in spring.

According to [www.SmartTravel.com](http://www.SmartTravel.com), year-round travel is catching on, where people can hit destinations in the off season. According to their trend report, 61% of people agree that being in places with large crowds is a negative aspect of travel. And here's even more support for this trend, according to Conde Nast Traveler, family travel will become even more year-round given that by 2020 it's estimated that roughly half the UK and American workforce will be freelance, and that 40% more children were home-schooled in 2017 than in 2014 (48,000 in total). Parents have embraced that freedom and we see more and more Instagram influencers traveling the globe with kids in tow. According to the article, in 2019 we will continue to hear more about 'unschooling', 'edventure' and family gap years.

## THE TRAVELING MILLENNIALS

According to [www.TravelPlacement.com](http://www.TravelPlacement.com), 2019 shows a few trends are on the rise for millennials, beginning with a rise in micro-trips for this travel hungry demographic. Spontaneous mini excursions are a great option if you can't swing a week or two off work, and Morro Bay wants to be the destination of choice for millennials within the CA drive market. Also on the rise, solo travel and the conscious consumer who wants to travel with purpose. Adventure Travel claimed that solo travel among millennials was up by 80% at the end of 2018 and according to [www.Booking.com](http://www.Booking.com), 49% of people will consider social issues of a destination before packing their bags, and 58% won't select a destination if they think they will negatively impact the community. Experts believe that 2019 promises to be a year of record-breaking travel and let's hope that continues into 2020 and beyond.

## FOOD TOURISM IS ABOUT MORE THAN THE FOOD ITSELF

According to industry travel research organization Skift, [www.skift.com](http://www.skift.com), over the past few years, food tourism has been a buzzy trend in the travel industry. Not only is it appealing to a large population of travelers who check out foodie experiences before booking their travel, but it also has the potential to boost in-destination spending, and therefore, positively benefit local economies and small businesses.

The types of experiences that define the new era of food tourism are about more than just food or beverages. The biggest part of the new definition of food tourism experiences that best exemplify what food tourists want is that they want it to overlap with other types of tourism such as cultural tourism, historical tourism, agritourism, or in our case, aquatourism. Here is where Morro Bay hits the trifecta.

Morro Bay is positioned well to take advantage of this foodie travel trend by keeping the sustainable fishing and historic marine industry top of mind in the media and with our campaigns. It is part of Morro Bay's DNA to offer the freshest sustainably caught local fish and fresh farmed oysters, local food focused festivals and cultural events. Culinary tourists prioritize eating and drinking, and the aqua culture in Morro Bay, combined with the viticulture and agriculture located just minutes away, makes this travel trend a perfect fit for Morro Bay to act on.

# OBJECTIVES & TARGET AUDIENCES

## NEW: ACTIONABLE DATA

Not only does MBT and Mental Marketing have actionable data to use from the Strategic Plan, including psychographic data of our intended market, after 11 months of collecting analytics with Adara Impact, we have actionable data and benchmarks to help refine objectives and pinpoint the targeted geographics and demographics of our top tier audiences.

# NEW: INCREASED AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY BENCHMARK

Year after year Morro Bay Tourism has had the goal of increasing the average length of stay (LOS) and has pushed marketing campaigns to support that goal. Best educated guesses in the past have determined that Morro Bay's average LOS was 1.5 days. Without analytics to support its growth, we've not been able to show success in moving the needle on this goal, until now. Adara analytics tracked campaign driven hotel bookings and calculated the LOS from July 1, 2018 – May 31, 2019 at 1.7 days. Congrats MBT! The needle is moving, and we can prove it!

## OBJECTIVES

1. Build stronger relationships with core community sectors
  - a. How: Through quarterly meetings sharing upcoming campaigns and tools on how to engage in key messaging and overall promotion
  - b. Measurement: Level of involvement from community partners to engage with marketing efforts; tracking through #hashtag programs, strength of partner groups
2. Increase traffic to Morro Bay tourism website between 10 – 20%
  - a. How: Through focused digital marketing efforts, including social media, SEO, SEM; fine tuning new website
  - b. Measurement: Monthly google analytic tracking
3. Increase demand for Morro Bay lodging throughout the year, thereby lifting annual occupancy by 2%
  - a. How: Increase in digital media buy by \$38,000, focus on midweek growth especially during high season
  - b. Measurement: Tracking Occ. numbers quarterly
4. Incrementally increase the hotel/motel Average Daily Rate (ADR)
  - a. How: Target more affluent travelers, grow demand, create compression
  - b. Measurement: Current benchmark – \$122 ADR
5. Extend the number of average LOS beyond 1.7, the current LOS resulting from Adara Impact tracking July 1, 2018 – May 31, 2019
  - a. How: Continue to strengthen midweek savings messaging, campaign outreach including PR and content on the website
  - b. Measurement: Adara Impact Tracking Seasonal numbers
6. Increase campaign generated revenue tracked by Adara Impact by 3%
  - a. How: Focused campaigns on geo and demographics based on where MBT receives the best booking ROI data from Adara Tracking
  - b. Measurement: Adara Impact Tracking Seasonal numbers

## TARGET AUDIENCES

Traditional geographic and demographic data is helpful, but by themselves, they are not enough to build a strategic picture of the target audience for Morro Bay. Psychographic identification takes into account likes and dislikes, lifestyle choices and nuances. It goes beyond the HHI, age, and education level to uncover the beliefs, motivations, and aspirations that will enable us to understand the person coming to Morro Bay.

## GEO & DEMO TARGETS

We tracked where Morro Bay's hotel and flight bookers originate from, where they alternately search and then ultimately book, if not with us. We have based our goals and objectives on a combination of the Morro Bay Strategic Plan strategies and the Adara Impact data. We will continue to focus on how to best leverage MBT marketing dollars to increase web traffic, searches, bookings, Occupancy, ADR and revenue. Below are geo and demo targets that Adara Impact identified as our "bookers".

### GEOGRAPHIC TARGET

- #1: Los Angeles = 27.9% of all hotels booked originated here
- #2: San Jose/San Francisco = 18.2% of all hotels booked originated here
- #3: Sacramento = 8.7% of all hotels booked originated here
- #4 Fresno = 7.9% of all hotels booked originated here

### DEMOGRAPHIC TARGET

Adara Impact data collected from July 1, 2018 – May 31, 2019. This data supports opportunities identified by the Strategic Plan that Morro Bay's ADR and Occ. has lots of room for growth. Targeting higher income brackets with a focus on the growth of higher end boutique properties now available in Morro Bay will be a tactic in digital media buys.

HHI	<\$49K	\$50K-\$99K	\$100K-\$149K	\$150K-\$199K	\$200K-\$249K	\$250K+
% Book	9.1	33.2	45.7	9.5	2.4	0.1

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
% Book	0.2	8.5	28.8	31.6	20.7	10.2

## LIFESTYLE TARGETS

From the strategic plan, we were able to ascertain what psychographic audiences pair well with our key differentiators and can focus more clearly on those attributes. The paid media plan identifies travelers by their interest and lifestyles and engages them throughout their travel planning cycle and this year, we are ramping up the volume by adding the Adara Impact metrics to truly analyze our audience and cater to their needs.

### • On the Go Traveler

This traveler loves to be outdoors, moving, experiencing, seeing and most importantly doing. From hiking and biking to kayaking and fishing, this traveler, no matter what age is on the go! They are motivated by nature, beauty, challenging experiences and themselves.

### • Hip Millennial and Influencer

Travel is their middle name, and they have time, finances and followers. They are young, child free and moving from one experience to the next. Fun, food and drink are always on the menu, and keep it coming! The more unique, the more off the radar, the more funky, the better!

### • Budget Conscious Families

Moms want it all, not just for themselves, but for their families, too. That means travel needs to fit in the budget somehow. So where can families get the best bang for their buck is always on mom's mind. Look no further mom, Morro Bay is here for you.

# MEDIA STRATEGY

Our media strategy focuses primarily on digital executions where consumers are influenced by the internet when making travel decisions. Our plan is to leverage this preferred channel once travelers are in the intent to purchase phase in their travel searches. We will support these paid digital executions and build brand awareness and demand for Morro Bay with paid search, paid social, owned and earned activity.

All placements proposed are reviewed for best performance throughout the life of the campaign and optimizations are made to ensure the best performance possible. Mental Marketing will ensure that the media strategy continually delivers the most significant, targeted consumer impact with strong reach, frequency and CPM/CPC/CPV metrics.

Our media flights will focus on growing mid-week business in the high season of summer, with the shoulder and low seasons, with strong calls to action campaigns running August through May. Search and social will be extended throughout the year. We will maintain some budget flexibility throughout the different media channels, in order to shift budget on an ongoing basis based on campaign performance. Of the total budget, 65% will be allocated toward digital, 15% will be allocated toward paid social media, 8% for Adara Impact, 6% for annual print visitor guides and 6% contingency.

## PAID MEDIA - DIGITAL MEDIA, WEB & MOBILE

Morro Bay is poised to take the digital outreach and results to the next level increasing impressions, conversions and other metrics using the following digital campaign strategies and tactics and tracking methods with Adara Impact. The digital universe offers a direct link to conversions tracking lifts in UVPMs, Occupancy and an overall increase in TOT when a strong call to action digital campaign must have a compelling message that moves the target audience to respond.

Develop strong seasonal campaigns using display and text ads and e-blasts targeting lifestyle groups in geo-targeted southern, northern and eastern CA markets to increase UVPMs, track bookings and conversions, and increase database of visitors.

## ADARA

In a world where data is often collected without permission and shared without attribution, data ownership is a principle that travel data company ADARA takes very seriously. For nearly a decade, ADARA has been steadily and rapidly growing its collection of real-time data captured through agreements with travel brands around the world. Through Adara's 200+ partnerships with the world's largest travel companies including Delta, American Airlines, United Airlines, Hertz Rental Car, Wyndham, Best Western and RoomKey, ADARA has unparalleled access to Morro Bay's tourist target. Thanks to their contractual relationships with their partners, they have over 700 million active traveller profiles and they collect search, booking & itinerary views in real time directly from the source to track and report travel patterns to their clients' destination. Hotel revenue generated by this media partner tracks higher than the digital spend, keeping ROI above 100% for this vendor.



## TRIP ADVISOR

Trip Advisor is the world's largest travel site and the top planning resource for global travelers to plan and have the perfect trip. In more than 34 countries and 21 languages, the site offers travelers trusted advice from real travelers and seamless links to booking tools. Trip Advisor enables Morro Bay to reach predisposed audiences researching and planning a trip 46 days in advance with higher hotel booking results per impression than other sites. We increased ad spend with this vendor for 2019-20 budget cycle.

## NEW: TRAVEL SPIKE

New to the media mix this budget cycle, Mental proposed using this media vendor to reach out via six monthly targeted email campaigns in shoulder season. A digital media mix is such a critical component to any ad campaign and Travel Spike offers a targeted database of over 400,000 opt in users. This approach allows Morro Bay to surround our target throughout the sales funnel with multiple ad products that deliver results. Travel Spike reverse engineered pre-booking activities leading right up to a purchase and isolated consumer behaviors where advertising can be presented. Then they poured over every type of digital media available and strategically selected ad products that map to those consumer behaviors. Brilliant, we say!

## GOOGLE ADWORDS/DISPLAY ADS

Google AdWords and Display enable Morro Bay to reach relevant visitors on relevant websites with the right message when it matters most. Google AdWords shows how many people notice the ads and what percentage click to visit MorroBay.org. With the tracking tools, you can even see the actual booking goals the website is generating as a direct result of ads. Morro Bay can test ads, try new search terms, pause shoulder season campaigns and re-start when desired. In addition, the Google Match program enables Morro Bay to serve specific digital ads to existing email subscribers and the travelers with the same matching profiles.

## PAID MEDIA - SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is one of the most important tools in our arsenal for building awareness, engagement and consideration, not to mention website traffic and event promotions. The focus will be on Facebook and Instagram, two of the most effective platforms for user engagement around travel/destinations.

- Paid Facebook ads and boosted existing posts will be used for content messages on more immediate/urgent opportunities for visitation like promotions, events and deals.
- Paid Instagram photo, video and carousel ads will be used in a similar way as Facebook to move beyond ads to a deeper engagement with our target and deliver marketing messages through image-based storytelling.

## YOUTUBE VIDEO SPOTS

Morro Bay is developing a series of 10 second videos that support the new hashtag program focused on #outdoorgoals, and are perfect for the YouTube medium. YouTube is owned by Google and is the second largest search engine in the world. It has a variety of targeting options that targets the exact traveler we are looking for. Not only great for brand awareness, we've executed tourism campaigns with a CTR of 25% at a cost of .11 per click. We think Morro Bay is perfect for this medium.

## PAID MEDIA - CO-OP ADVERTISING

Visit SLOCAL and CCTC offer print and digital opportunities that are low hanging fruit on the tourism tree – meaning, if travelers are looking at CCTC or SLOCAL collateral or websites, they have intent to book, the perfect time for them to learn about Morro Bay. These local and regional partners offer co-ops to offset the cost on marketing programs that may otherwise be unaffordable. Morro Bay can leverage these low cost opportunities to garner additional branding and awareness about Morro Bay’s location in SLO CAL and on the Central CA Cost, as well as gain additional traffic to MorroBay.org.

## GROW CAMPAIGN APPROACH

Keeping with best practices for branding, we looked closely at whether our Put Life On Coast tag line and #VacationRules theme continues to be valid. The conclusion was reached that both offer multifaceted, long-term opportunities for positioning Morro Bay as a leader in coastal recreation that offers a funky vibe and an affordably competitive experience.

With the objective of penetrating each market with consistent branding, our year two approach for each of the seasonal efforts is to connect the offer and call-to-action directly to a key Morro Bay differentiator. For fall, the spotlight is on our cool vibe and locally owned restaurants, wine bars and craft brewers. The Holiday effort calls for making Morro Bay an untraditional tradition with a continuous platform of events throughout the season. Winter leverages the competitive affordably platform targeting foodie travelers, which are mainstream. And spring targets the activity driven traveler, families for spring break, and those who have spring fever and are aching to get outdoors.

Seasonal promotions and activities provide the opportunity to work with the community partners to build awareness about how MBT is promoting the region. We will provide the partners with a brand “tool-kit” to help ensure message and brand consistency with these promotions throughout the city:

### FALL CONCEPTS

August: Sip & Savor  
September: Sip & Savor  
October: Sip & Savor

### HOLIDAY CONCEPTS

November: Spend the Ho-Ho-Holidays at the Coast!  
December: Spend the Ho-Ho-Holidays at the Coast!

### WINTER CONCEPTS

January: Foodies Wanted  
February: Foodies Wanted  
March: Foodies Wanted

### SPRING CONCEPTS

April: Get Outside!  
May: Get Outside!

### SUMMER

June: Come Monday Stay All Week  
July: Come Monday Stay All Week

# MEDIA PLAN

MEDIA VEHICLE	COST	July-Sept.	Oct.-Dec.	Jan.- March	April- June
<b>DIGITAL</b>	<b>\$156,000</b>				
Adara Ad Network	\$60,000	JULY- JUNE			
Trip Advisor	\$72,000	JULY- JUNE			
Travel Spike	\$24,000	AUGUST- MARCH			
<b>SEARCH</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>				
Google Ad Words	\$20,000	JULY- JUNE			
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>\$37,200</b>				
Facebook, Instagram	\$36,000	JULY- JUNE			
YouTube	\$1,200	JULY- JUNE			
<b>EVENT SOCIAL</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>				
Avo & Marg	\$250	JULY			
Harbor Fest	\$250	AUGUST			
Winterfest	\$250		OCTOBER		
Kite Fest	\$250			FEBRUARY	
Yard Sale	\$250			FEBRUARY	
Car Show	\$250			FEBRUARY	
4th of July	\$250				MAY
<b>TRACKING</b>	<b>\$22,800</b>				
Adara Impact	\$22,800	JULY- JUNE			
<b>PRINT</b>	<b>\$18,069</b>				
Adventure Outdoors	\$2,500	JULY			
2020 Road Trips	\$3,750	JULY			
Cal Poly Calendar 2019-20	\$6,819	JULY			
CCTC Map Ad	\$5,000				MAY
<b>CONTINGENCY</b>	<b>\$15,931</b>				
<b>MEDIA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$272,000</b>				

# PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Since April 2014 Mental Marketing has worked diligently on Public Relations outreach, and effectively raised awareness of Morro Bay as a destination through media relations, inviting niche lifestyle travel journalists to Morro Bay, developing itineraries showcasing activities targeted to their audiences in outdoor adventure, culinary, wine and beer, family fun, and getting back to nature.

Over the past five years we have seen a consistent growth in media demand for hosted visits to Morro Bay, with this last year the strongest ever, allowing us to be more picky about the media we host to leverage the hosting dollar for best results. More and more media are becoming aware of Morro Bay, and just last month Expedia Travel included a few video shots of Morro Bay in its TV commercial. Word is getting out, and it's time to push even harder!

- **Update Branded Press Kit**

A new messaging strategy identified by the Strategic Plan means the need to have a new way to communicate key message points to targeted media.

- **Brand Focused Story Ideas**

We will craft story ideas in line with the Morro Bay brand and key messaging strategy, which also capitalizes on current travel trends. Monthly press releases are distributed to Mental Marketing's proprietary list of over 5,000 travel writers, as well as over PR newswire to meet the above objectives.

- **Visiting Journalist Program**

A highly effective component of the PR strategy is hosting top vetted journalists on FAM trips in return for feature stories that generate demand for Morro Bay lodging. This outreach strategy is designed to target specific travel journalists whose audience is looking for adventure sports, great food, wine, events and lodging in under the radar places. We invite the media that will produce the best results and meet our strategic goals.

- **A Media Outreach Schedule**

Because of the variety of activities and promotions that take place each year, we want to ensure that we are included in any relevant planned stories or published event calendars. This master outreach schedule will allow us to pitch story ideas and provide event descriptions accordingly.

- **Partner Media Pitches**

Vet and respond to all media inquiries from Morro Bay, Visit SLO CAL, CCTC and their international offices, and Visit CA among other sources. Respond to public relations queries initiated through the press releases, individual journalists and publications.

## RELEASE CONCEPTS:

- July: Morro Bay has Oysters Every Which Way For National Oyster Day
- August: Top 5 End of Summer Must-Dos in Morro Bay
- September: Must See Secret Season Sunset Locations in Morro Bay
- October: Local Jerky of Morro Bay and Other Artisan Gifts for the Holidays
- November: Spend the Ho-Ho-Holidays in Morro Bay
- December: Morro Bay's Funky and Fine Art Galleries
- January: New WSL Surf Contest in February – Surf All Year Long in Morro Bay
- February: Plan your #SwimBikeRun #MorroBaycation Now!
- March: Get Outside and Play!
- April: Stay Mid-Week and #MorroBaycation for Less
- May: Plan your Summer #MorroBaycation Now
- June: Get Hooked on the Seasonal Catch in Morro Bay

## FIND INFLUENCERS: ENGAGE AUDIENCE THROUGH PR AND SOCIAL

Mental Marketing's social media and PR teams are working closely together to identify not only influencers to invite, but influencers who are on site, who found Morro Bay and are posting away. We are engaging them, and taking it to the next level, reaching out and trying to connect with them while they are here. Offer them a kayak trip, a nice dinner for two or just some great advice on where to hike.

One of the great things we've built through Morro Bay's social media program is the ability to have real conversations with our audience, and it's really paying off. They are constantly asking us about places to stay, dog friendly information, weather info, event info and, well, you name it. While we are always quick with a well-researched and thoughtful response, we are taking the engagement to the next level.

## SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH:

- **CALENDARS**

Our social media team calendars content posts across all channels on monthly basis, integrated with campaigns and outreach efforts

- **NEW HASHTAG PROGRAM**

- As part of the brand messaging strategy, MBT and Mental Marketing have put together a #hashtag messaging program to implement across all outreach platforms including long format blogs, press releases, landing pages and short format digital ads, print ads and social media. This approach allows for our tourism partners and overall segments of the Morro Bay community to effectually help brand Morro Bay in concert with MBT.
- This program is created to unite the business and residential community around Morro Bay Tourism, the biggest economic driver in the city.
- Overall MB Tourism Brand Hashtag: [#morrobaycation](#)
- Current MB Brand Campaign Hashtag: [#vacationrules](#)

- **PARTNERSHIPS WITH RICH MEDIA & CONTENT PROVIDERS**

- Partner with area photographers to feature the local perspective
- Share Morro Bay Tourism blog posts that give the insider perspective
- Share content from community partner groups including MBNEP, Harbor Patrol, Art community and more

- **ORGANIC OUTREACH APPROACH**

- 70% Organic Outreach: Pull marketing is more organic in nature, and “pulls” the consumer to engage through response, interest, inquiries, and transactions, through the use of actionable and experiential digital content i.e. great photos, video, blogs, and unique content.
- 30% Organic Outreach: Push marketing content is the type of post that “pushes” content to the user using persuasive calls to action to get them to response through discounts, special offerings, giveaways and ads. 40% would mean that 4 out of every 10 posts would be this type of marketing campaign content.

## SOCIAL MEDIA STORIES & CONTENT

Organic posts include a range of ideas and concepts from rich media to events to cool and unusual video, to national days and months of celebration ie National Oyster Day, National Bike Month, etc. The whole purpose is to engage the audience and share what Morro Bay is about, how it feels when you are here, and what intended travelers are missing on a daily basis. Enticing our visitors by this method engages them and creates great opportunities to chat through this medium.

- **July:** Patriot Pride, 4th of July Events, Historic Maritime Museum, Summer Tips, Beach & Bay Shots, Otter shots, video
- **August:** Last Minute Summer Ideas, National Oyster Day, Ling Cod Contest, Lighthouse Century, Art in the Park, Labor Day Stories
- **September:** Best Sunset Locations, Avo & Marg Fest, Harbor Fest, Farmers' Market, Halloween Pub Crawl
- **October:** Local Artisan Features, Tall Ships, Thanksgiving, MB Triathlon,
- **November:** Spend the Ho-Ho-Holidays in Morro Bay promotion, Tall Ships, MB Triathlon,
- **December:** What to do for the holidays, Fresh seafood for the holidays, Event listings, Winterfest, unloading crab off the docks, art galleries
- **January:** Winter is for Birds, Get Foodies Savings, Martin Luther King Holiday, Bird Fest, Nature shots, video
- **February:** WSL surf contest, Valentine's Day, Presidents Day Weekend, Be outdoors in the winter
- **March:** Citywide Yard Sale, Car Show, Get outside!, Spring Break, Easter Holiday, Spring Fever is over
- **April:** May is National Museum Month – we have the Museums, Mid-week is great for the budget, Miracle Miles, Memorial Day, April Events
- **May:** What's New for Summer Fun in Morro Bay, pictures of beach town fun like ie salt water taffy, fish & chips, arcade, playing in the sand, patio restaurants, unloading fish off the docks
- **June:** Mid-week push going into summer, great images of wildlife, boating, water fun, beach fun, patio dining, kayakers, whale watching tours, 4th of July events



# REALIZE RESULTS: TRACKING AND REVIEWS

Mental's team will work closely with the Morro Bay leadership on an ongoing basis including deadline management, weekly or monthly conference calls and campaign updates. Mental will be available for in person meetings as frequent as Morro Bay requires. Upon approval of a strategic outreach plan, creative concepts, marketing and website recommendations, Mental will execute all assigned activities including creative, content development and production of all deliverables. Mental's team executes all assigned activities including creative, content development and production of all deliverables.

## ONGOING TRAVEL METRICS FROM ADARA IMPACT

Using Website Impact Tracking allows Mental Marketing to watch market trends in real time. Now that we have a year of analytics under our belt, we have data to compare and help navigate monthly and quarterly results. This allows us to make adjustments along the way, fine tuning media planning and spending based on actionable data. This program has taken our reports to the next analytic level, helping us fine tune our messaging and audience targets.

## MONTHLY REPORTS AND KPIs

Our comprehensive monthly reports include metrics from owned, paid and earned media outreach. Now with Adara Impact, on top of our Similar Web and Cision Public Relations Tracking programs, ROI for MBT programs just went to the next level. We are always watching for the best way to present KPIs to the board and streamline the reporting process.

## MID-YEAR REVIEW

In February Mental Marketing will report out 6-months of results and findings from the marketing strategies executed from July 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019. The mid-year review of programs allows for new promotions, emerging story angles and budget shifts to be identified and addressed accordingly. We are available for a mid-year review at MBTs convenience.