January 11, 2017

CVB Board Meeting – Marketing Recap

Prepared by: Christie Rosckes info@discoverstillwater.com (Fresh Avenue Marketing) 651.351.1717

1. **STATISTICS for DiscoverStillwater.com via Google Analytics.**
   a. We had a large advertising push for November/December Holiday Shopping & Events this year – how did the businesses do? Should we survey?
   b. Average 24% increase in website traffic for 2016. The most improved quarter was 3rd quarter – October, November (33%). In looking at just November and December there was a **51% increase from 2015**. This was where the most advertising dollars were spent.
   c. 3,200 Avg pageviews per day, 30,583 Avg Users per month, 1007 users per day
   d. More detailed analysis will be provided with the annual report
Percentage Increases from year to year. 2011-2012 60%, 40%, 51%, 44%, 2015-2016 24%
2. **Budgeting & Planning**
3. **Tourism Update Reports**
   a. Sent a few reminders to businesses regarding details needed for ice castles promotions which included stats.
4. **Advertising Campaigns**
   a. **Radio**
      i. Solicited 6 partners and wrote radio ads for KDWB January radio campaign promoting Ice castles/winter getaway: [Mamas Happy & Charlie’s Irish Pub, Sawdust Savvy & Nina Marie Boutique, Studio One Yoga & Marquess Studios.](#)
      KDWB was selected by Media Bridge Advertising based on best Twin Cities rankings as one of the top stations in the market for our female 25-45 demo and an incredibly nostalgic station as mothers listen to this station with their children. The efficiently and affordable strategy best for our budget was to do a weekend takeover approach. This makes a lot of sense for our brand/ small businesses since people are thinking about what they want to do on the weekends. This is then aided with a broad ROS M-Su 6a-12m to try and push some spots in “prime” that can go for a couple hundred dollars when we are only paying a few bucks for them in the grand scheme of things. These broad ROS are meant to add frequency to the campaign as a smaller component to the overall campaign. Radio ads run all of January.

b. **TV**
   i. **Hockey Day**
      1. Included with girls hockey coupon book
      2. **Hockey Day Sweepstakes** – Promoted via enewsletter, retargeting, and social media. 964 Entrants which included 500+ new emails to add to our database. 3 Winners received the Stillwater outdoor game tickets, VIP party tickets, and parking pass that we received as a sponsor. Each winner got a pack of 4. Winners selected on Saturday, January 7th. All have been notified.
      3. Advertising partnership includes logo on [wild.com/hockeyday](http://wild.com/hockeyday), the Zamboni, signage on the arena, ice sculpture, etc. New street banners along Main Street look so good!
      4. Retargeting digital ads running as well
c. Direct Marketing
   i. Ice Castles winter getaway direct mail postcard. Explore Minnesota co-op with Primenet Marketing. A large 6x10 postcard was mailed to 6200 potential customers in Rochester and Northwestern Twin Cities suburbs with 100K+ income, female, travel interest. Final postcard Design. We had initially planned to include Eau Claire and La Crosse but I made a last minute decision not to target WI when I was made aware that WI Dells also has an ice castle for the first time this year.

d. Print Publications
   ii. Ordway and Stages Theater Programs – Took remnant opportunities for popular holiday White Christmas program at the Ordway, Dec. 8th - 31st Circulation: 55,000 ($1195) and at Hennepin Theatre All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914, Dec. 15 – 18 Circulation: 7,000 ($350) to capture extra out of town/state visitors over the holidays (December) to promote the ice castles. Print – discretionary fund.

e. Tourism Guidebooks/Websites
   i. Working on ad design for MN Biking Guide.
   ii. 2017 Minnesota (ad on pg 51) travel guide is out. MSP, St. Croix Valley – not published yet.

f. Explore Minnesota
   i. Metro EMT Group – next meeting January 18th.
   ii. Social Media – working with Explore Minnesota to partner on winter promotions for Hockey Day, Ice Castles, and the Ice cream social as part of a OnlyinMN Dare promotion. We also donated an overnight stay as a prize for the CheckpointMN campaign this year even though we aren’t a destination.
iii. **Annual Conference** – coming up end of January. I am registered and plan to attend the pre-event **MACVB event** as well. Anyone else is welcome to join for the Monday night event (in St. Paul this year).

g. **Digital – Content/Google Ad Words/Display**
   i. Retargeting.
      1. Holiday Events digital display ads on Ad Roll retargeting. EMT Grant. **Ad Styles**.
      2. Hockey Day/Ice Castles currently running.

h. **Social Media**
   i. Multiple daily posts on all channels featuring original photos and videos as well as shared content.
   ii. Social media will be used heavily to promote the ice castles. We’ll encourage ‘warming up on main street’ and staying overnight messages as well as give away free tickets via this channel.
   iii. **Facebook** – 26,451 fans. Since my last report in Nov, we have 3400 new Facebook fans...this is the largest increase in our history in that short of a time period. We exceeded our 25K goal (Visit Duluth 35K, Hudson 11K, Redwing 2,800)! Engagement is also at an all-time high – actions on page up 714%! The average organic reach has DOUBLED! Top posts in Nov/Dec: Holiday Shopping TV Spot Video, Ice Castles promos, bloody mary’s at No Neck Tony’s on a cold Sunday. Our highest reach EVER – Ice castles video 12/15 – 258,000 reach! Facebook Live video from Ice Castles was a hit, too!
Nov-December: Holiday Gift Guide of Ideas. 57 Photos shared daily, promoted weekly.
iv. **Instagram** – 3768 followers. Really honing in on using this medium for beautiful, inspiring photography as that is what seems to get the best interaction. Top posts in Sept/Oct.

v. **Twitter** – 1440 followers.

vi. **YouTube** – 25,579 views.

i. **Special Markets – Weddings, Meetings, Group Travel**
   a. **Group Travel** – respond to calls from group travel planners to assist in planning.
   b. **Meetings** – respond to calls/emails from planners.
   c. **Weddings** – Wedding leads from The Knot multiple weekly this time of year, several calls as well. **Bridal Fair** January 15th – Minneapolis Convention Center. Connie from Lowell Inn will help staff the booth. Using current marketing materials for this show, hopefully by the next show we’ll have time to update our booth, video, handouts, etc. The Visitor Guide will be the main handout for this one with a push to visit DiscoverStillwater.com/weddings. We’ll do a drawing for Ice Castles tickets.

c. **Website**
   a. Removed all holiday hours temporarily listed for each business. Kept/added ‘Open 7 Days a Week’.
   b. Updating Deals for 2017
   c. Updating Events Calendar for 2017 including Explore Minnesota’s calendar
   d. Added new images to homepage slideshow including Ice Castles with link to event
   e. Added promotions on homepage – made deals more prominent, hockey day sweepstakes, ice castles.

d. **Visitor Guide**
   a. 2017 Visitor Guides are printed and stored at a new storage facility at Action Rental in Stillwater. Shipments are being sent to Travel information centers and we are busy delivering boxes to local businesses and nearby lodging. Online orders are coming in strong right now as well. All
g. Recent Press
   j. http://www.presspubs.com/st_croix/article_91c5b2a4-a6e0-11e6-977b-9b9d6b7f1bb2.html
   k. Ice Castles
   I. Hockey Day
h. Branding/Marketing Materials
   a. Downtown Kiosks – goal is to have this completed by January if possible. New signage to include both history and downtown tourism/business information. Improve print material quality for sun/durability. Final proofs en-route this week, should go to the printer this week. I will share final artwork links in the next report.

i. IBA/Chamber/City Partners

j. New Businesses
   a. New boutique hotel/restaurant in the works on northern end of main street – The Crosby
   b. New boutique hotel downtown under construction. Will reopen as a combo retail/restaurant
   c. South Hill Vintage has moved locations to main street in the staples mill building
   d. Bentley’s Pet Stuff is now open on Main street next to Barbara Ann’s Fudge

k. Events
   a. Ice Castles opened Friday, January 6th. Signage at the event and comp tickets have our logo, here is our ad on the back of the brochure that is given to every ticket holder. I have delivered visitor guides to them as well. We are working on social media promos, too.
   b. Sticks in Stillwater – January 13-15. They are listing us as a sponsor/link on their website this year and hope to be able to work together again in the future.
   c. Hockey Day – January 21st
   d. Winter Games with the University of Stillwater

Thank you!