1. LODGING REVENUES
   a. Year-End Results were 15% higher than 2017 with a total collection of $268,858. These results are the highest we’ve ever seen yr to yr. CVB Organization to date increase is 55% since 2008.
   b. 1st qtr (Jan/Feb/Mar) 13%
   c. 2nd qtr (Apr/May/June 3%
   d. 3rd qtr (July/Aug/Sept) 17%
   e. 4th Qtr (Oct/Nov/Dec) 28%
      Note that the new hotel Lora and VRBOs are included in the 4th qtr numbers but Hotel Crosby which opened in November was not reporting yet.
   f. View detailed spreadsheet here.

2. GOOGLE ANALYTICS for DiscoverStillwater.com
   a. 2018 Year-End Total Unique Visitors: 394,433 a 6% increase from 2017. This breaks down to an average of 33,333 a month or 1,111 a day. Over 1 million pageviews, that’s an average of 2,915 pageviews per day. Note that the linked reports show separate stats - main site and events calendar sub domain - so this is the combined number. As of Feb 7, 2019 we will have the capability to view combined reports going forward. CVB to date website users increase is 552% 😃.
   b. 68% female, 64% from Minnesota, 83% new users, Events Calendar most popular section
   c. Full report can be viewed here.
   d. Peeking at 1st qtr 2019 numbers we are down about 39% from 2017. Contributing factors are the Ice Castles not returning and Polar Vortex weather having a terrible effect on business this year. “In the Twin Cities, February has been the 4th all-time snowiest month on record with 39.0”, and the 7th
snowiest meteorological winter (December through February) with 52.5". (Weather.gov)

3. BUDGETING/PLANNING/STAFFING/ADMIN
   b. Continuing to set up Insightly contacts database
   c. Organizing photos and setting-up network file and contacts sharing with Marketing Assistant.

4. TOURISM UPDATE REPORTS
   a. Sending out in March/April
   b. Dates set up with city of Stillwater and OPH for annual reports in April

5. MARKETING PLAN
   a. Current Calendar & Budget.

6. ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS
   a. Digital – Content/Google Ad Words/Display/SEM
      i. Madden Media reports showing Google AdWords/SEM and paid Facebook, video, and content article advertising: Aug, Sept, Nov, Dec, Jan
      ii. A new dashboard reporting feature went live this week, so I’ll have a phone conference with them on Friday to discuss Feb results and see the new tool.
      iii. A few notes from the last report and phone call. I am very happy with where things are at and we are in good communication.
         1. SEM: Madden media added the Google Analytics for both our main website and the Events Sub domain Traffic (as of Feb. 7th we were able to merge the two in Google Analytics, so we’ll no longer need to look at website stats separately going forward). We are on pace to meet the yearly Goal. Currently CTR 6.03%, typical benchmark is 2.18. Per my request, they are testing out a few new key words to broaden the geography.
         2. FB Video Ads: 2.83% CTR, typical benchmark 1%. Adding another new lodging ad now that we have new photos of Crosby.
         3. FB Video Ads: 20K views, 87% view rate...excellent results. I'll work to tweak current winter romantic getaway ad so it can extend beyond winter and we'll be adding girlfriend getaway, biking and ways to explore videos next month.
         4. YouTube Trueview: They spent January Optimizing the campaign, so the views were low at 19 views. However, it worked because as of today (Feb. 1st - Feb. 14th) views are already at 2,385 views.
         5. Website updates: SEO tweaks still in progress, but these initial edits have been made: 1) Update a large logo being loaded on every page to be much smaller to improve load speed. 1.1mb down to 7kb 2) Use the same Analytics ID for tracking on the main page and the Events page. 3) Update the homepage slider -Lowered total number of sliders down to 4 and added arrow and dot navigation to the slider.
         6. Note...there is much more to be done with our website that will be a part of another project where I'll obtain bids from a few vendors. Need to address outdated content, design issues, accessibility issues, SEO concerns, and more.
   b. TV
      i. OTT(Over the Top)
         1. Reach today’s engaged audiences in the living room big screen like never before and gain access to OTT premium inventory with no ad blockers, bots or below-the-fold concerns. Orange 142’s Connected TV program connects your :15 or :30 second video ad with user’s cross device via smart TV platforms, gaming consoles or dedicated streaming devices like Roku, Chromecast, AppleTV, AmazonFire and more. Explore Minnesota Co-Op Campaign, ran Jan-Feb using the 30 second winter romantic getaway couples’ videos as well as a 15 second teaser. 29,573 impressions. Full report here. Notes from vendor: The click through rate for Connected TV is really obsolete as we were able to serve everything on a Television. The impression (or view) to 100% completion
ratio is really good!! This was well above what we typically see. To only have 722 skips is pretty impressive. We hit goal a little early but kept it running so you also received an additional 2,185 completed views. We ran a split between HULU, DirectTV Now and Sling so it did well across all three.

ii. Comcast Spotlight TV

1. Chicago market Co-Op with Explore Minnesota. We’ll feature two 30 second ads (ways to explore and girlfriend getaway) during a two-week 40 spot campaign April 29th – May 12th. I’ve asked Madden Media to target this geo area with digital ads at the same time as well. See TV station schedule here. Premium Digital TV is an extension of Xfinity’s extensive programming, and much more: more network programs across more screens. Premium Digital TV reaches local consumers viewing short and long-form video TV content, wherever they are, whenever they want to watch – including through Xfinity On Demand. run on targeted networks such as Discovery, Food Network, HGTV, History, National Geographic, Outdoor, Weather Channel, TV Land, TNT and USA. 100,000 Premium Digital TV impressions which extends your TV campaign to multiple screens and is targeted to web/mobile/tablet viewers within same market/zone as TV. In addition, audience verification ensures real people are viewing (not bots).

c. Direct Marketing to Niche Markets

i. Lavender Magazine: Minnesota, home of LAVENDER Media, has one of the largest GLBT communities in the United States. According to the U.S. Census and Williams Institute, among the nation’s 50 most populated cities, Minneapolis has the 4th-highest percentage of adults identifying themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. America’s largest pride edition (June issue) reaching 108,000 readers in print and online. Since 1995, LAVENDER Media has produced award-winning publications, websites, podcasts, apps and events aimed at the local, national and international gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender (GLBT) and GLBT-friendly audience.

1. Directory listing in community connection every issue (26 issues. Print/Online.)
2. First Thursdays Sponsor for the year (5 events in Metro: Feb. (cancelled due to weather that day), April 4th, May 2nd, June 6th, August 1st, Nov. 7th, Dec. 5th. We have a booth and will need 1-2 representatives in attendance.
3. Coming up: online digital ad and June Pride edition print ad.

d. Out of Home

e. Print Publications


iii. **Midwest Living Magazine** January/February *Issue.* Explore Minnesota Co-Op 70% savings. Explore Minnesota’s eight-page, four-door reveal high-impact unit will reach the entire circulation of 950,000 in MN, WI, IL, IA, ND, SD, MI, NE, MO, IN and OH, plus subscribers outside of this area (total readership is over 3 million). Explore Minnesota will be featured along with five-plus pages of Minnesota industry ads within the section. Advertisers will receive two editions of reader’s service – the January/February insert edition and the March/April issue. 4” ad. Mailed 376 visitor guides to Jan/Feb leads.

e. Tourism Guidebooks/Websites

i. **Explore Minnesota State Travel Guide.** We are on page 53.

ii. **Minneapolis Travel Guide.** We are on page 42.

iii. **St. Croix Valley Travel Guide.** We are on pages 36, 37, and back cover.

g. **Explore Minnesota** Christie attended **Explore Minnesota annual Tourism Conference** in St. Paul in early Feb. Here’s a few take-aways:

1. The new Minnesota Governor Tim Walz spoke at the conference and we toured the renovated State Capital.

2. EMT updated their industry ‘insider’ website - find mkt tools, co-op & grant programs, update your business listing here, ADA, workforce resources, etc: [https://mn.gov/tourism-industry/](https://mn.gov/tourism-industry/)

3. I attended the **MACVB** meeting before the conference - I think it's really great we are finally a part of this! Here’s what the tourism legislators are working on: [http://www.minnesotacvbs.com/public-policy-advocacy/](http://www.minnesotacvbs.com/public-policy-advocacy/)

4. Find your True North - current Minnesota marketing campaign: [https://mn.gov/tourism-industry/our-marketing/true-north-toolkit.jsp](https://mn.gov/tourism-industry/our-marketing/true-north-toolkit.jsp)

5. Watch this video: **Tourism works for Minnesota.** Updated ROI for tourism spending by EMT - $10 return for every $1 spent on advertising! [Updated Tourism & Minnesota’s Economy Fact Sheet](https://mn.gov/tourism-industry/).
6. Take-aways from speakers and break-out sessions: Much of our current marketing tactics are on trend and we are doing well - focus on SEO, Video, OTT, Digital, Magazines, Social (Instagram in particular, paid FB as organic is extremely low for biz now), etc. (whew...always good to feel since the knowledge gained at these sessions can overwhelm attendees), I learned about Google's new DMO section so I'll dive into that free opportunity, I think we need to move up two projects on the priority list - sign/photo opp artwork by the river as well as coasters or something to encourage #discoverstillwater sharing, we need swag (stillwater shirts ;) and more people in attendance from our CVB, during the vendor marketplace I made two great connections - one with editors at MN MO and the other with StarTribune in hopes they'll partner on a staycation sweepstakes.

1. EMT Grants. Submitted invoice and tear sheets for 2018 grant and our $7000 check has been received. 2019 application submitted and approved.

ii. Metro EMT Group –

   iii. Attend quarterly meetings. Group works with Casual Astraunaut digital agency to create & implement campaigns. www.MSPVacations.com. Tune in any time to see the dashboard report on seasonal campaigns which consist of emails, digital article and display ads. Note email campaign results from Take 5 media are not reported in the dashboard.

v. MSP Vacations Live Dashboard Report pw: metro. All advertising is directed to: http://msp vacations.com/. Stillwater featured this fall and winter in: 52 Reasons to Love MSP Metro in the Winter, Gather Your Girlfriends for a Winter Getaway, Top Dining Destinations, Bond with the Family this Fall, 11 Best Ways to Experience Fall Colors, Cheers! Lift Your Spirits with a Minnesota Beer or Cocktail, Halloween Zoos to Zombies.

v. Next meeting March 20th.

h. Sweepstakes/Contests

i. Spring Staycation Sweepstakes

i. Social Media

   ii. Holiday Shops Video Tours Campaign– featured all 54 shops with one post on Instagram TV and FB video daily Nov-Dec. Total video views: 63,900 (61K on Facebook, Avg 1000 views per view, 2900 views on Instagram TV)

   iii. Live Music Campaign – featured 15 downtown live music venues in a blog post with map & weekly live post features on Facebook Live and Instagram Story Live/TV. Jan-March. Sent to Email database as well. Total video views so far: 17,440. DiscoverStillwater.com/livemusic page views: 732
iv. Facebook 34,225 fans. Page reach 103K in the last month, Average Post Reach 7-9K. News articles, videos continue to dominate organic reach with new algorithm. Most popular post since Jan 1: Velveteen Speakeasy/Hotel Crosby couple 30 sec video, New Bike Trails Map Post (25.6K reach), New MNNiceCream shop article (25.8K reach), Snowmobile golf 16.4K, WSI Renovation 15.1K, Winter Romance Video Full Version 73.4K.
v. Instagram – 9,411 followers. We are SO close to our goal of 10,000! This has been built all organically without paid advertising. Once we hit goal, we can link to our website from posts. Analytics only available weekly, so here’s the most recent weekly snapshot. Created Instagram TV channel (75 videos posted so far.) Instagram is currently the most engaged and growing social channel for us!

vi. Twitter – 1,688 followers.

vii. YouTube – 105,328 views.

j. Special Markets – Weddings, Meetings, Group Travel

a. Group Travel – respond to calls from group travel planners to assist in planning.

b. Meetings –
   2. Respond to calls/emails from planners.
   3. We captured a 360 tour of the two new meeting spaces at Lora & Crosby as well as a winter 360 from the top of the main street steps - it was right after a fresh coat of snow and the sun was out. Waiting for final files of meeting spaces but the winter scene was shared on social and website.

4. April 11th Fam Tour for SPIN (senior planners) section of MPI (Minnesota Chapter of Meeting Professionals International). Hosting this group of up to 40 for tour of venues, hotels and some fun.

5. June 12th Fam Tour – hosting another tour and will reach out to MPI, Associations North, and other contacts to invite professional event planners to see what’s new in Stillwater.

6. Associations North Member Directory Ad 2019. Hosted planning group of 7 this past fall in hopes of securing a conference here, but unfortunately, they chose elsewhere because the venues/attractions weren’t all in one place

a. Weddings –
   1. Responding to TheKnot.com leads. 45 since January.
   2. Responding to brides calling for visitor guides this year.
   3. Exhibited at October and January Wedding Fairs, Followed up with 958 (Oct) and 759 (Jan) brides via purchased email leads Oct Email (16.8%) , Jan Email (Open Rate 11.3%). Did a booth drawing of Gondola Romantica cruise?

7. WEBSITE

a. Weekly maintenance/updates as needed. Lots of changes currently.

b. Events Calendar and ExploreMinnesota.com’s events calendar. Year-at-a-Glance calendar from visitor guide online as well.

c. VRTBOS – adding as they are sent to me from the City. Here is the current list.


e. Homepage sliders updated: http://www.DiscoverStillwater.com
8. VISITOR GUIDE
   b. Jen continues to replenish all ambassador locations as well as lodging
      properties, downtown restaurants and shops, and ESR mailing center.
   c. Weekly mailings from online orders, phone calls, and lead requests continue.
   d. 70,000 were ordered this year.
   e. New bike trail map and soft touch cover well received.

9. MONTHLY NEWSLETTER/MAILCHIMP
   a. Mail Chimp Subscription list: 35,091 Current Avg
      12.2%, industry open rate 15.3%
   b. Wrote and sent monthly travel tips newsletters: July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Fall Girlfriend Getaway Video, Photo
      Contest Winners, Nov, Holiday Gift Guide, Dec, Jan, Feb, Mar
   c. You can always find the latest newsletter on our website: www.DiscoverStillwater.com/news

10. PUBLIC RELATIONS
    a. Responded to media inquiries
    b. Voted Best Date Spot in Minnesota, TheActiveTimes.com (PR pitch from EMT)
    c. Noted as Sweetest Small Towns to Visit This Spring, MSN
    d. Feature with Lora Hotel in Artful Living Winter Issue, page 118
    e. Recent Press

11. MARKETING/BRANDING MATERIALS
    a. Videos
       i. New Winter Romantic Getaway Videos, Total Organic Views so far: 41,842
          (40,129 FB, 1700 Instagram) PLUS at least 62,000 views from paid advertising
          (Youtube 12K, OTT 30K, FB 20K)...Feb results not all in yet.
       ii. Filmed new winter romantic getaway series to showcase new lodging and
dining. Captured four couple’s itineraries hitting several diverse
demographics with the volunteer actors. Created a long version, 15
second teaser, and 4 30 section versions with each couple. Used for winter campaigns then
updated to include summer footage as well for a year-round version in 30 second and 60 second
cuts so we could use for spring & summer campaigns as well.
iii. Updated the Ways to Explore Video to include hot air balloons, new bike trails & rental, the trolley, new bridge, Lora hotel, historic stairs, historic courthouse, new aerial views, shopping & dining downtown. There is now a 30 sec, 60 second version as well as a 15 second biking video.

iv. Updated the girlfriend getaways videos so there is a spring and fall version, a 30 and 60 second version and an updated version that mentions new lodging.

v. We have a nice inventory of video now with a wonderful partner (Storyboard Films) who has access to all of our current and past footage to make edits as needed. Looking ahead to summer we’ll need to be sure we budget for time to capture the new green bridge, new shots of the lift bridge without cars on them as well as new aerial views with the green bridge. In addition, we’d like to try a new style of filming incorporating traveler interviews and event footage.

vi. View current videos on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLw148x6aQQ0kSL_ZgCI0LtyK0E7NNQuliR

vii. View current videos on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pg/DiscoverStillwater/videos/?ref=page_internal


c. Banner Displays have outdated photos but have decided to wait until this summer when new photography with green lift bridge can be incorporated. View current designs. Immediate need is for Lavender events, so created temporary signs to showcase new hotels, etc: Feb Version, Updated April Version.

d. Ordered a mini retractable banner of the 2019 Visitor Guide cover.

12. PARTNERS: CITY/IBA/CHAMBER
i. Collaborated on #LocalLoveThursdays initiative. Concept is to designate one weekday for locals to shop & dine. This effort will take years to establish but hoping for buy-in from businesses to stay open until 8pm that evening. The Chamber of Commerce is taking the lead on this, but the CVB and IBA are in support as we feel a join effort will have the best chance. The idea was born out of need for local advertising and loss of the Ice Castles. We have no paid effort behind this, but are the listing source for shops & restaurants, sent out an email to our database and shared on social media.

13. BUSINESS UPDATES
a. Hotel Crosby with Spa 810 and Matchstick Restaurant
b. 6 New VRBOS. See full list here: https://www.discoverstillwater.com/lodging/house-loft-rentals/
c. Uptown Curl
d. Magnolia’s Clothing & Textiles (In South Hill Vintage space)
e. Lift Bridge Brewery’s line of Hard Seltzers
g. Moved to new location: Enchante, Luya Shoes, Galeria Saro, Images of the Past
h. New Events: Stillwater Lights, Frozen Flannel Bonspiel,
i. Closed: Pearl & The Thief, Stillwater Farm Store, Loome Books, Kids Oasis, Jaguar Blu, A Little Candle Shop
j. Coming in 2019: Distillery, Brewery, Bakery, Co-Op Work Space, Water Street Inn Addition

Thank you! Questions always welcome!