



## CVB Marketing Recap for the Board October 9, 2020

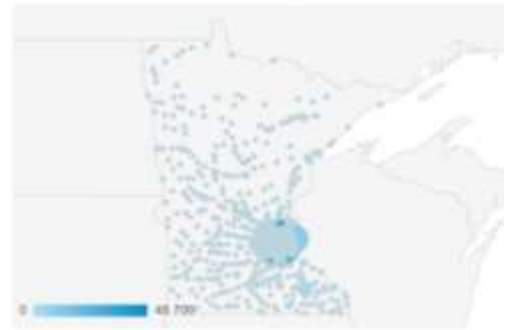
### 1. LODGING REVENUES

- i) Due to COVID-19, the CVB board went to both city councils to request crisis grant funding. We asked for 50% of what they would have collected for us in 2020. We received \$15,000 from Oak Park Heights and are awaiting a response from the City of Stillwater. Tourism is the largest economy in Stillwater; therefore, tourism marketing is essential to our recovery and through our organization we could help all 100+ tourism businesses from hotels to restaurants to shops and attractions.
- ii) We now have Q1 & Q2 lodging tax revenue data: Q1 down 5%, Q2 down 68% as compared to 2019.
- iii) We made \$60,000 in cuts to our 2020 budget so far.
- iv) Current balance in account is \$81,000. Assessing needs through the end of the year to finish out 2020 budget expenditures.

### 2. GOOGLE ANALYTICS (website traffic to DiscoverStillwater.com)

- i) 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr Jan/Feb/Mar: 6% increase from 2019 with 64,862 unique visitors. Pageviews up 2%
- ii) 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr Apr/May/June: 22% decrease from 2019 with 66,998 unique visitors. Pageviews down 41%. COVID.
- iii) 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr July/Aug/Sept: 8% decrease from 2019 with 106,356 unique visitors. Pageviews down 18%. Looks extremely good considering COVID.
- iv) YTD Jan-Sept: Up 3% (7,602 users), Up 22% for pageviews (143,079). COVID period shown below. Once the shutdown was over, our usage was pretty close to typical.
- v) 97% USA, 68% MN (up 5% from 2019), 7% WI (only down 1% from 2019), 84% New Visitor (up 2%) vs 15% returning
- vi) Majority of referrals to our website come from Facebook 54% (last year was 38%).

Mar 1, 2020 - Sep 30, 2020



Page	Pageviews
	<b>481,900</b> % of Total: 100.00% (481,900)
1. /	62,581 (12.99%)
2. /things-to-do/	52,049 (10.80%)
3. /things-to-do/biking-hiking-trails/	20,209 (4.19%)
4. /13-things-to-do-in-stillwater-mn-during-the-pandemic/	16,278 (3.38%)
5. /lodging/	11,417 (2.37%)
6. /staycation/	10,970 (2.28%)
7. /dining-night-life/	10,728 (2.23%)
8. /oop-trail-lift-bridge-open-june-15/	10,579 (2.20%)
9. /things-to-do/on-the-water/	10,296 (2.14%)
10. /shopping/	9,118 (1.89%)

Users VS. Select a metric

Mar 1, 2020 - Sep 30, 2020: Users

Mar 1, 2019 - Sep 30, 2019: Users



### 3. BUDGET PLANNING/STAFFING/ADMIN

- i) Contract staff cut to half time for 5 months (April-August), reinstated as of September through December at normal rate/hours.
- ii) Working with accountant and vendors to determine remaining 2020 payments to be made.
- iii) FYI. All CVB files now on a 1TB external hard drive so I'll be able to just bring my laptop to meetings and access if needed.

### 4. TOURISM UPDATES/REPORTS

- i) Sent to city councils in April. Once Q3 data in, we'll share another.

### 5. MARKETING PLAN

- i) Current calendar and budget – attached to email.

### 6. ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

#### i) Digital – Content/Google Ad Words/Display/SEM/Email

- (1) Search Engine Marketing via Google: paused mid-March – mid-May. Active again with minimal budget through end of the year. You can view results dashboard anytime here: <https://maddenmedia.domo.com/auth/index?redirectUrl=%2Fpage%2F2091992195> username: [info@discoverstillwater.com](mailto:info@discoverstillwater.com) password: Christi3CVB.
- (2) Paid Social Media: Ran outdoor dining and bike trail themed ads during the summer and fall campaign is currently running until mid-October. You can view results dashboard and see links to ads anytime here: <https://maddenmedia.domo.com/auth/index?redirectUrl=%2Fpage%2F2091992195> username:

[info@discoverstillwater.com](mailto:info@discoverstillwater.com) password:

Christi3CVB. I've boosted a few hundred dollars in additional ads directly as well.

- (3) City Pages remnant deal [custom eblast](#) 50,000 subscribers on 9/28 to promote photo contest, trails, fall. Opens: 4,562/Open Rate: 9.3%/Clicks: 1,165 /Click to Open Rate: 25%

- (4) Email ads with Explore Minnesota's [fall colors newsletter](#) – Overall Performance - Recipients: 38,444, Unique Open Rate: 30.6%, Unique Click Rate: 9% Stillwater Fall Biking Display Ad



Results: Unique Impressions:11,760/Total Impressions: 27,993/Unique Clicks: 62

- (5) Geofencing with Star Tribune EMT- bike trail campaign/targets with 516,115 impressions, CTR .09%, 989 geo conversions.

ii) TV

- (1) Completed over summer, shared in last report.

iii) Direct Marketing to Niche Markets

- (1) Lavender Magazine: Custom email, digital ads running on their [website](#). Stillwater appears in Sept editorial about bike trails as well.



iv) Out of Home

- (1) Scheduled metro campaign for after election with EMT crisis grant money. Campaign theme will be romantic getaway.

v) Print

vi) Tourism Guidebooks/Publications

- (1) [SCVRTA](#) (pg 39)  
(2) [Minnesota](#) 2020 (pg 51) – 2021 ad booked and artwork sent (will show at the meeting).

vii) Metro CVB EMT Group

- (1) Fall campaign underway.  
<http://mspvacations.com/fall/> (stillwater video and articles mentioned). All five pieces of new fall content (three articles, two itineraries) are now published on the MSP Vacations site. They have also updated the homepage so it automatically redirects to the fall landing page. The three display ad sets for the fall campaign launched as well as the fall email. The long-awaited [itineraries](#) page is now up on the site! [scavenger hunt](#) itinerary or the [biking weekend](#) itinerary!  
(2) Summer campaign [results dashboard from](#) vendor Casual Astronaut (awaiting report)  
(3) Our group has not been meeting in person due to COVID19, but is still having Zoom calls.

viii) Content: Social/Blog/Newsletter

- (1) New photography – worked with local photographers to capture images of evening patios, green bridge views from Main street stairs via drone (seen [here](#) in this email), and wi view of fall photos and 360 underway.  
(2) 3 new blogs with custom content and 3 announcements: [Summer Staycation Sweepstakes](#), [Best Food Scene Award](#), [Photo Contest](#), [America's Best Towns Fall Colors](#), [10 Reasons to Visit Stillwater in the Fall](#), [Road TripN Bingo EMT](#), [Fall Shopping Finds Downtown Stillwater](#). All also sent to our email list. Continue to update [COVID](#) and [What's Open](#) as well.  
(3) Enewsletter – 40,000 subscribers. Due to reduced ad spending, using our existing email database more with more frequent emails. Used to be 1-2/month, now about 4/mo and resending to unopens. [Fall Bike Trails](#), [Summer Winner/Bike Blogs](#), [Mask Mandate](#), [September](#), [October](#), [Photo Contest Reminders](#), [Patios with Heaters](#), [Mental Beauty Break](#), Fall Fashion.  
(4) [Facebook](#) 39,171–421 new net followers in last 90 days – many pausing facebook due to political



climate. Avg reach in last month 128,000 (up 57%), post engagements up 47% as well. Daily posts.

- (5) [Instagram](#) 14,507 – Gaining about 60 new followers every week. Added 976 fans since July. Post impressions week 181,341 impressions. 1500 content engagements avg this week. Daily news feed and stories posts.
- (6) Paid influencers. Invited three micro-influencers to visit this fall offering a complimentary overnight stay. The content and reach they created was amazing. We really need to expand on this marketing tactic more with such a great ROI. A 4<sup>th</sup> one will be staying this weekend at Water Street Inn (@mikahmeyer) as part of a Run Across Minnesota event whose finale is on the lift bridge.

## ii) Sweepstakes/Contests

- (1) [Summer Staycation Sweepstakes](#) (Ended July 19<sup>th</sup>. 9800 views of the campaign, 4651 entries/emails – all but 130 were new emails for our database.)

## iii) Special Markets – Weddings, Meetings, Group Travel

- (1) Sent content to Madden Media, so the wedding Instagram Ads should be up anyday and will run through December.
- (2) 360 images – shot new spaces at Water Street Inn, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Brians, and the new Forge & Foundry. They have been added to our [360 venue tours](#) on our website and shared with the businesses to use as well. This mostly completes this project. In the future we could add Camrose Hill and Trellis so it's complete with all wedding venues as well.

## iv) Event sponsorships

- (1) Organizations have been notified of reduced or cancelled funding. Board decided to maintain \$3000 for Harvest Fest virtual weigh-off and will discuss holiday and Zephyr sponsorships at next meeting. Saved \$29,000 with events being cancelled/reduced funding.

## 2. MARKETING MATERIALS

- i) Envelopes – ran out so had to order another 2 year supply, cost \$1280.
- ii) Stickers – purchased a few months ago on a super cheap group run from our coaster vendor. Handed out in person in course of the lift bridge on Saturday 7/11 and 9/11 as a thank you to people for visiting. We've also mailed a few as prizes to email subscribers via monthly trivia contests.
- iii) Thank you notes – we have a decent supply so giving each board member a few to think of someone they could write a note to – customer or business.
- iv) Postcards – distributed to all hotels, B&Bs, VRBOS. We ordered 5,000 for a cost of \$350 but Bayport printing provided almost a double run at no



extra charge! Most have been distributed but a few more remain in inventory.



## 3. WEBSITE

- i) [Website](#) Google Map Expenses – noticed \$600 charge this month, so connected with Google Cloud and our webmaster to determine accuracy and which charges will be likely to plan for going forward.
- ii) Updated with new/closed business listings
- iii) Updated parking language per city
- iv) Updated meetings/weddings venue listings as well as the [printable venues list](#) wedding flier.
- v) updated our VRBO listing spreadsheet and [website](#) as well as removed shop hours for the few stores we did post them for on [DiscoverStillwater.com/shopping](#).
- vi) Updated outdoor dining listing to include those who have [heaters on the patios](#)
- vii) Updated 'events' to '[events calendar](#)' in navigation bar, added winter events tab, removed major covid message, updated stay overnight graphic, added winter romantic getaway video.
- viii) Emailed all lodging properties asking them to add a link to DiscoverStillwater.com in ALL confirmation emails. A helpful move for customers as well as a way to increase referrals to our website and collaborate marketing efforts.



## 2. VISITOR GUIDE

- i) Re-stock visitor guides continuously.
- ii) Current inventory about two months behind. The 2<sup>nd</sup> shipment has been delivered from La Crosse Graphics and is in storage.
- iii) Sent email to all current advertisers to inform of our plan to delay publication likely until spring due to COVID so we can use up remaining inventory and allow them more time to save for advertising.
- iv) Website orders and leads have remained steady. Our mailing service, Rise has re-opened since COVID so its great to have their assistance again.

## 3. CUSTOMER SERVICE

- i) Phones, Email, Social daily

## 4. PUBLIC RELATIONS/Media

- i) Pioneer Press: responded to request for outdoor dining with heaters and other updates for fall/winter.
- ii) Explore Minnesota's Fall campaign included several mentions of Stillwater.
  - (1) [Video](#) (Lora, Leo's, Main Street)
  - (2) [Dog Friendly Places to Stay](#) (Includes Lora images, etc. used on website, emails, social posts)
  - (3) [Fall Rainbow Routes](#) (St. Croix Scenic byway)

## 5. PARTNERS: CITY/IBA/CHAMBER

- i) Business Recovery Committee – attended a few meetings but haven't heard more?
- ii) Mainstreet IBA – organization is ending as of the end of 2020, several holiday events have been passed onto RM Realty, Zephyr Theatre, Chamber to possibly takeover.
- iii) Winter Meetings – Mayor Ted pulled together key players to discuss winter events and collaboration. I've attended two meetings so far.
- iv) [MACVB](#) – attending bi-monthly industry zoom calls and attended the virtual annual conference October 5/6. As always I find this organizations connections and resources extremely valuable. Sharing a few takeaways from the conference in my email.

## 6. BUSINESS UPDATES

- i) New: [Forge & Foundry Distillery](#), [Prohibition Barbers](#), [What Not Boutique](#) (Temporary pop up through end of year in previous A Spacious Place spot), [Rivertown Tours](#) (guided historic walking tours)
- ii) Closed: River City Antiques, Paint Sip Nosh, Carriage Rydeen
- iii) VRBOS added: 3<sup>rd</sup> St Inn, A River Runs Near It, Rustic Lodge at Ol' Sawmill Marina

*Thank you! Questions always welcome!*