



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS,
CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

To: TDA Board

From: Nick Breedlove, TDA Executive Director
Caleb Sullivan, TDA Sales & Marketing Manager

Date: January 10, 2019

Subject: Updates for TDA Board

Executive Director Report – Nick Breedlove

1. We are beginning work in earnest on the 2020-21 Visitor Guide which we will send to our publisher on or before Feb. 15, 2020. This should allow us receipt of the new guides on or about March 1, in time for top of mind awareness and vacation planning by our visitors. We are incorporating several new aspects into this Visitor Guide in line with our Strategic Plan, Visitor Research and data from our last year’s marketing efforts.
 - a. We are removing listings from our website and Visitor Guide that are solely linking to Airbnb or VRBO listings. Remitters with their own occupancy tax ID and own website (non-Airbnb/VRBO) will still qualify to list on our website. This change aligns with our goals of not duplicating what others are already doing better (namely Airbnb/VRBO and their websites, which are already household names). We have placed prominent links to Airbnb/VRBO on top of the **Vacation Rentals Page [link]**. This policy change of listing Airbnb on a DMO website is becoming commonplace among DMO’s and was approved by Executive at their Jan. 8 meeting.
2. Committees for 2022 Strategic Plan – Staff has been working with the Board of Directors on both their seat on Committees and their Recommendations for Community Stakeholders to serve on Committees. At the Executive Committee meeting held Jan. 8, the we reviewed the proposed slate of members for each committee and approved a tentative roster. We hope to have near-final list for our Wednesday Board Meeting to share with the Full Board.
3. We are continuing to grow collections during a period of decreased revenue. This has been a group effort utilizing our Visitor Research and actionable insights from our Marketing and Communication Campaigns. While we did see a dip in revenue during November for that period’s occupancy tax collections, it’s almost exclusively limited to the Resort category. In hotel revenue for that collection period, we saw an increase in collections of \$1,538 which while not significant to our budget, it translates to an additional \$38,450 in revenue to our

hotels, and at our November ADR of \$108, that translates to an additional 355 room nights booked, which has a great impact and ripple effect on our local economy as all those people need to buy gas, eat, and likely venture out into our communities and spend money locally. As a colleague, Maura Gast, says, that's 'Cash-in-Hand Economic Development'.

4. We are planning to launch our Safety Guide to Visiting the NC Mountains soon. Copy has been drafted by Staff and is undergoing review by our PR firm and will soon be implemented to all trail and waterfall sections and be live on a dedicated Safety Tips page under the 'Outdoors' section.
5. In related marketing news during our 'Secret Season', our newly created '**Lodging Specials**' [page \[link\]](#) dedicated to winter travel deals is seeing great traffic, at roughly 1600-page views in December alone. We are hoping this translates into bookings during a need period for revenue for our accommodations.
6. Staff will attend Planning with RawleMurdy Feb. 4-5 in Charleston for FY 2020-21 Marketing Plans. A brief timeline of 2020-21 planning appears below:
 - Team planning meeting leveraging rough draft of planning brief 2/5
 - Confirm brief with JCTDA Staff 2/26
 - Review brief on a call with the Executive Committee 3/11
 - VisitNC365 Conference 3/22-24
 - Plan preview call with JCTDA Staff 4/16
 - Plan preview call with Executive Committee 5/13 2:00 - 3:00
 - Plan presentation in person to Board for approval 5/20 1:00 p.m.
7. On our agenda you will notice Appointment of Vice Chair; at our last meeting we named Robert Jumper vice chair, however, we need to take a formal vote to name the Vice Chair, which will occur at the Jan. 15 meeting.
8. Other efforts:
 - Approval and edits of two AJC Sponsored Content features for Jackson County
 - Review of Year over Year marketing data from RM
 - Onboarding of two board members
 - Attended Hospital Roundtable Meeting @ Harris Regional Hospital
 - Service on the WCU Chancellor Installation Committee & Events Subcommittee
 - Toured High Hampton Inn renovation with Pineapple PR, Caleb Sullivan and our State Interim Marketing Director, Guy Gaster

Staff Report – Caleb Sullivan

Group Sales

- Continue to work on Strategic Sales Plan. The first draft was reviewed by the Executive Director and changes are being incorporated before presentation to the Executive Committee.
- Researching appointments with tour operators for Travel South Destination Showcase in Baton Rouge, LA.

- Creating print collateral for tour operators.
- Conducting hotel/event venue site visits beginning next week to create asset inventory for group sales.

Additional Notes

- Toured High Hampton Resort Renovation
- Updating event calendar on website, VisitNC, and the Visitor Guide.

Social Media

Cross Channel Report December 1 – 31 vs. November 1 - 30

- Total Followers grew by 0.7% MOM (1,603 vs. 1,140)
 - Total Instagram Followers 14,853
 - Total Facebook Page Likes 194,381
- Total Impressions increased by 43.6% MOM. (1,406, vs. 979,599)
- Total Engagement increased by 73.6% MOM (100,476 vs. 57,871)

Google Post/Event Platform

- November 40,755 Impressions
- December 35,013 Impressions
- 14.1% Decrease MOM
 - We plan on increasing post frequency this month for higher engagement.


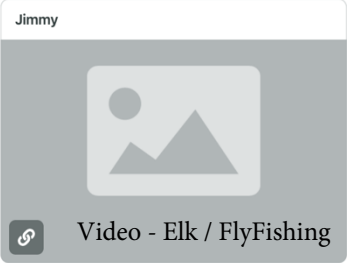

Instagram Stories




- Instagram Story Impressions totaled 1,868 for December.

Highlights

- Followers across all platforms continue to steadily increase.

Top Performing Posts for December

Post	Date	Total Engagements	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Message Clicks
<p>North Carolina Mountain Towns of Cas... Wed 12/4/2019 8:42 am PST</p> <p>Elk sighting! This herd was seen crossing a river on the Western North Carolina Fly Fishing Trail®. Sam Smith captured this majestic sight while fly fishing.</p> 	19,414	7,802	758	1,667	9,187	
<p>North Carolina Mountain Towns of Cas... Wed 12/11/2019 7:44 am PST</p> <p>In the Great Smokies, you never know who you'll run into while fishing! What a beautiful, serene sight to behold. 🐟</p> <p>Jimmy</p>  <p>Video - Elk / FlyFishing</p>	3,599	1,353	114	0	2,132	
<p>North Carolina Mountain Towns of Cas... Mon 12/2/2019 8:04 am PST</p> <p>Season's Greetings from Sylva, NC. 🌲 First snowflakes of the year! ❄️ 🌨️</p> 	2,854	1,239	125	196	1,294	

Post	Date	Total Engagements	Reactions	Comments	Saves
<p>discoverjacksonnc Wed 12/4/2019 8:50 am PST</p> <p>Elk sighting! This herd was seen crossing a river on the Western North Carolina Fly Fishing Trail. @coach_sam_smith captured this beautiful sight!</p> 	1,261	1,183	23	55	
<p>discoverjacksonnc Thu 12/26/2019 12:26 pm PST</p> <p>Too much good cookin' and eatin' this Holiday? 🍗🍷 Why not burn it off with a scenic hike in the NC mountains? Check out our trails page to learn more.</p> 	838	807	2	29	
<p>discoverjacksonnc Mon 12/2/2019 1:03 pm PST</p> <p>As one season comes to an end another beautifully begins. 🌲🍂❄️ With winter less than 20 days away, now is the perfect time to start planning your winter.</p> 	728	698	4	26	