

Buellton Visitors Bureau
Tourism Marketing Action Plan

Final



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Overview

Buellton is located on the Santa Ynez River on US Highway 101 in the Santa Ynez Valley of Santa Barbara County. The destination offers visitors a variety of activities, special events lodging and dining options. The destination also serves as a hub for visiting the Santa Ynez Valley and serves as a gateway to the Santa Ynez wine region.

The Central Coast region is one of the most competitive regions in California with a wide variety of choices for travelers. The area is dominated by major destinations as well as mid-size and smaller locations all vying for overnight visitors and their expenditures. Buellton is a niche destination and as such it is important to identify and maximize their competitive advantages. At a fundamental level the destination must create awareness and differentiate themselves and appeal to visitors as an interesting must visit destination.

The task of marketing Buellton falls to the Buellton Visitors Bureau which is funded by the City of Buellton. The organization is charged with creating awareness for the destination and influencing potential overnight visitors to stay. These efforts are necessary to make potential visitors aware of the destination, but to also improve its competitive position within the Central Coast marketplace, and to increase revenues, employment and local taxes.

To that end, the Buellton Visitors Bureau would like to develop a new Marketing Action Plan to guide those efforts. The purpose of this effort is twofold: (1) **to bring together the ideas and thoughts and insights** of the stakeholders and (2) **use those ideas to develop a cohesive approach** to promoting the region.

The Tourism Marketing Process

The development of a tourism marketing action plan is based on a clear understanding of the current tourism marketing environment and the existing visitor product/experience. From that situational analysis marketing goals and objectives are developed, which in turn are realized through the implementation of specific strategies and action steps. The process is completed with the implementation of a comprehensive measurement program designed to assess the organization's marketing programs for it to continue to improve and become more efficient and effective.

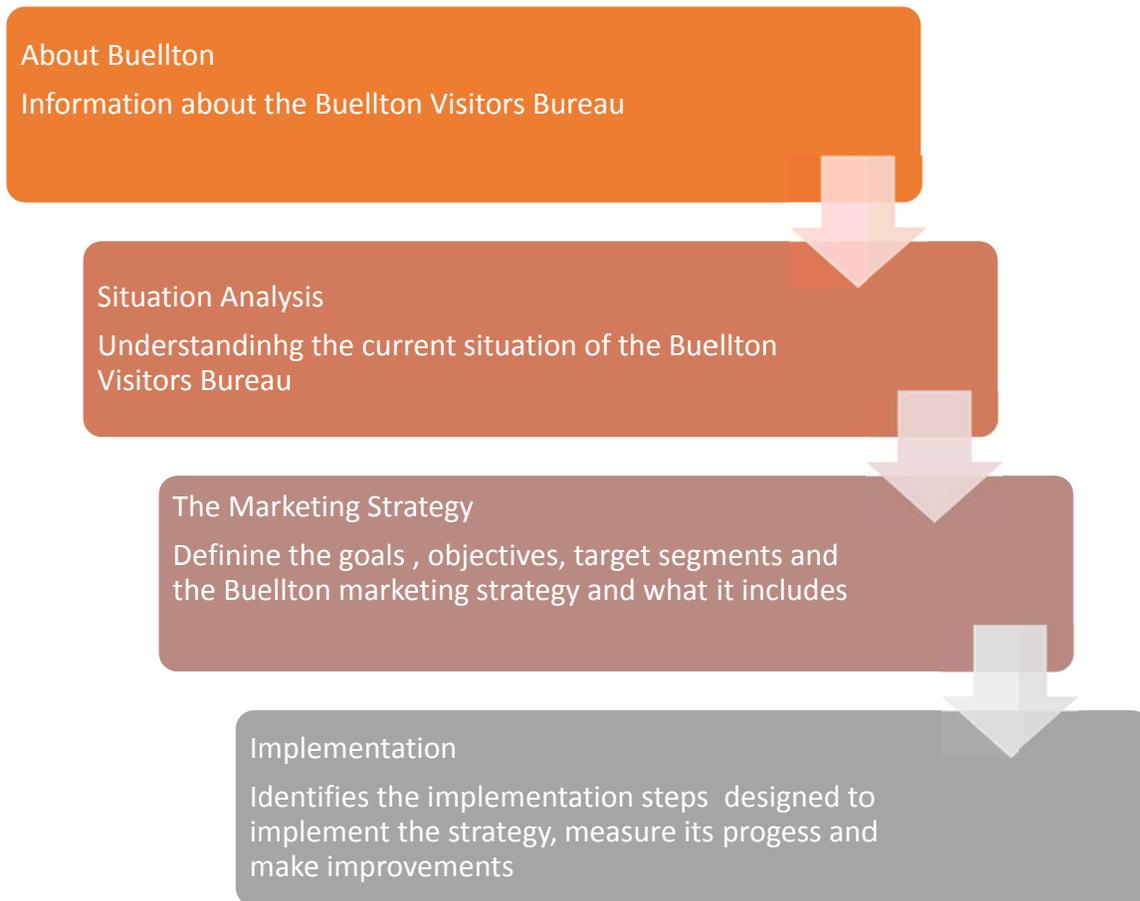
This process of continuous improvement of the marketing program is a focus on the ability of the industry and organization to always be looking **to adapt and change to marketplace opportunities** while at the same time **staying focused the key metrics of success**.



The Marketing Action Plan

The Marketing Action Plan has an emphasis on implementation the is developed by understanding the current operating environment the bureau is in. Each step in the plan develops from the previous one and is designed to get to measurable results.

Buellton Marketing Action Plan Process



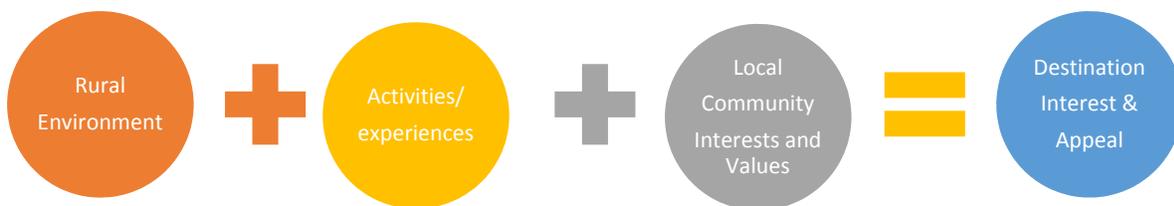
Each of these steps is designed to assist the organization to reach its tourism marketing goals.

Part 1: About Buellton

I. The Buellton Experience

As a tourism area, Buellton is diverse in its tourism assets. It is located in the Santa Ynez Valley and is a gateway to the area's wine region. One of Buellton's key strengths is its location relative to core Southern California markets.

The Buellton Experience exists in three dimensions; place (rural environment, local resident interest and passions) and activities. It is the combination of these elements and the understanding by visitors that creates the interest and appeal of the destination to its target segments¹.



Rural Environment

Buellton natural beauty with a variety of opportunities for recreation, dining, wine tasting in a rural environment.

From Buellton, there are several areas that, when combined, provide a rich and varied visitor experience.

- **Downtown Buellton-** A variety of lodging dining options in a relaxed and friendly environment.
 - **Santa Barbara County-** With Buellton as a lodging hub, visitors can not only enjoy what the destination has to offer but also other areas and activities throughout Santa Barbara County.
-

Activities

Complementing the rural environment is a range of activities that help define the Buellton experience and its unique feel and appeal. Table 6 on the following page outlines a variety of experiences including:

- **Food and drink** - The region offers a variety of dining opportunities from casual to upscale with a variety of price points for consumers.
- **Art & Culture**- Buellton and Santa Barbara County is rich in local culture that reflects everything from its heritage to contemporary art and events.
- **Recreation (Land based)** - Buellton offers access to a wide variety of land based recreation activities.
- **Natural Wonders** - The region offers extensive access to the natural environment.
- **Agriculture/Ag tourism** - Buellton offers visitors a connection to agriculture in both farm to table and on farm experiences.
- **Downtown** - Buellton offers a variety of downtown experiences that reflect the greater local community.
- **Special events** - Buellton offers a variety of signature special events to attract visitors.

Local Community

Table 6: Buellton Experience Profile

| Food & Drink | Arts & Culture | Recreation | Natural Wonders | Agriculture/ Agritourism | In town | Special Events |
|---------------|---|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Fine Dining | Special Events | Hiking | State Parks County Parks City Parks | Farmers Markets | Entertainment | Major events |
| Casual Dining | Visual Arts Dance Theater Music | RV Resort | Lake Cachuma | Organic Farm stands | Food Shopping | Mid-Size events |
| Wineries | Heritage | Fishing & Boating | | Agricultural Events | Events | |
| Brewery | Preservation | Gas & Oil Motorcycle Auto | | Orchards | | |
| Farm to Table | Architecture | Road biking | | | | |
| Wine Tours | Old Mission | Bird watching | | | | |
| | | Glider Rides/Ballooning | | | | |
| | Wilding Museum Buellton Historical Society HCA Museum Mendenhall | Mountain Biking | | | | |
| | | Swimming | | | | |
| | | Golf | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

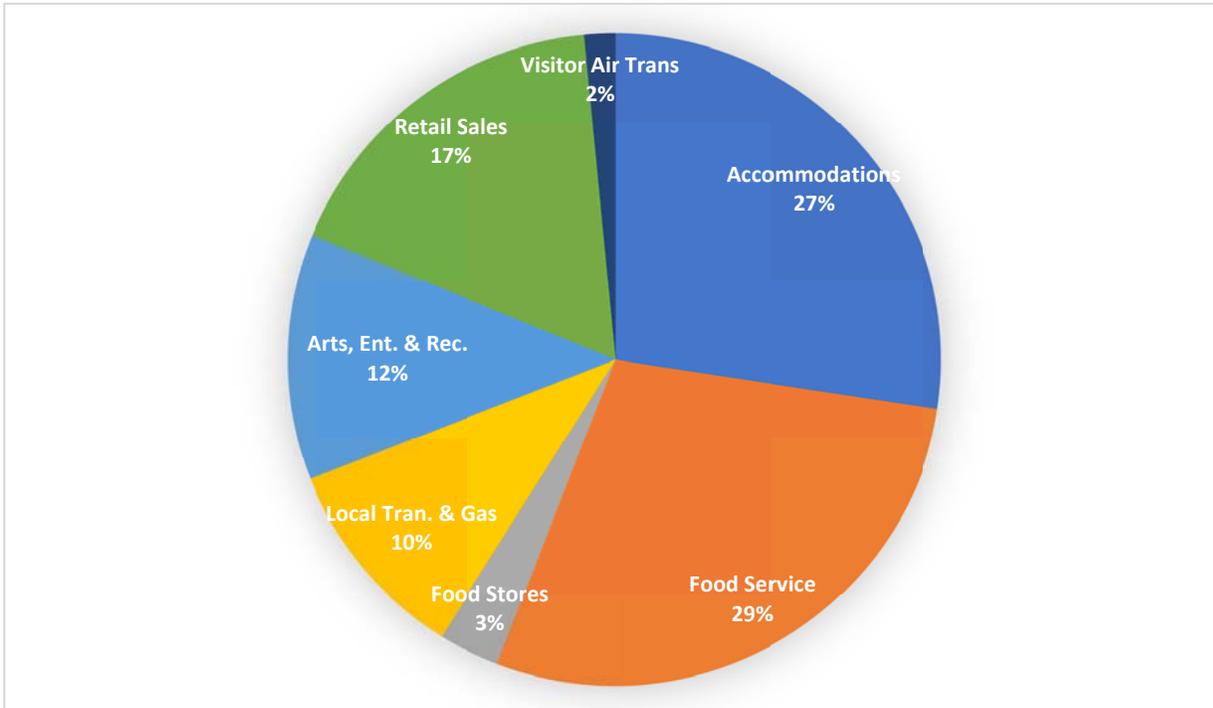
As can be seen above Buellton provides a variety of natural assets and activities that visitors can actively engage in.

Part 2: Situation Analysis

The Size and Scope of the Buellton Tourism Economy

The tourism industry in Buellton is estimated to be approximately \$60 million dollars. The two largest visitor spending segments include food service and accommodations

Figure: Travel Spending by Percentage



Source: California Travel Impacts by County 1992-2016

Table: Travel Spending by Dollar Volume

| | Amount |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Accommodations | \$17,239,156.14 |
| Food Service | \$17,833,609.80 |
| Food Stores | \$1,783,360.98 |
| Local Trans. & Gas | \$5,944,536.60 |
| Arts, Ent. & Recreation | \$7,133,443.92 |
| Retail Sales | \$10,105,712.22 |
| Visitor Air Transfers | \$1,188,907.32 |
| Total | \$59,445,366 |

Source: SMG Consulting Estimates

Lodging Industry Supply

The table below outlines the size of the Buellton lodging industry. *(It should be noted that the impact of Airbnb on travel and lodging trends is yet to be determined.)*

| Lodging | Units |
|---|--------------|
| | |
| <i>A Country Lane Motel</i> | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Sideways Inn</i> | <i>111</i> |
| <i>Motel 6</i> | <i>59</i> |
| <i>Pea Soup Andersons Inn</i> | <i>97</i> |
| <i>Quality Inn</i> | <i>60</i> |
| <i>San Marcos Hotel</i> | <i>19</i> |
| <i>Santa Ynez Valley Marriott</i> | <i>163</i> |
| <i>Sleepy Hollow Motel</i> | <i>20</i> |
| <i>Hampton Inn</i> | <i>99</i> |
| | <i>Total</i> |
| | <i>642</i> |
| <i>Flying Flags RV Resort</i> | <i>327</i> |
| <i>Safari Tents/Cottages/Vintage Trailers</i> | |
| | <i>Total</i> |
| | <i>969</i> |

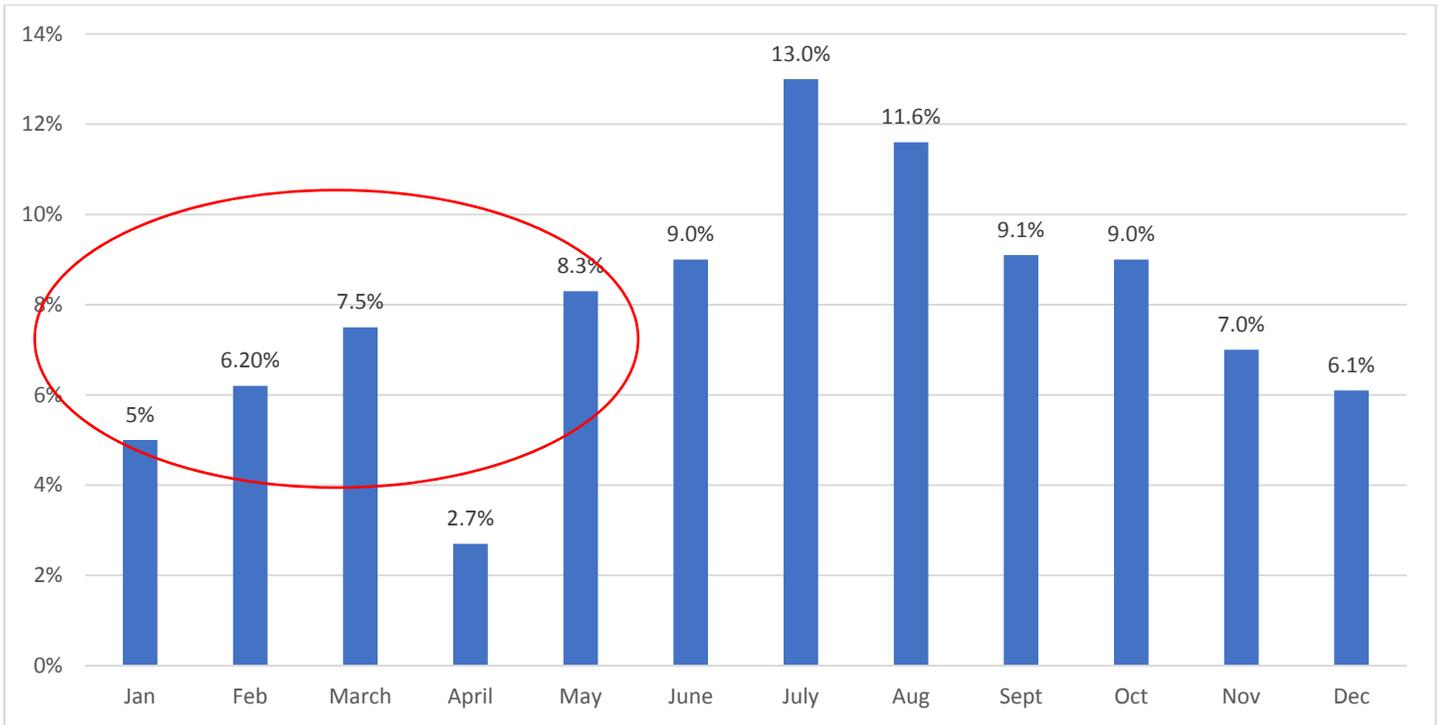
Source: Buellton Visitors Bureau

Buellton Seasonality and T.O.T Trend

Peak demand time for Buellton is between May and October with July being the annual highpoint for demand. This suggests opportunity to build long term demand exists during quarter 1, 2 and 4.

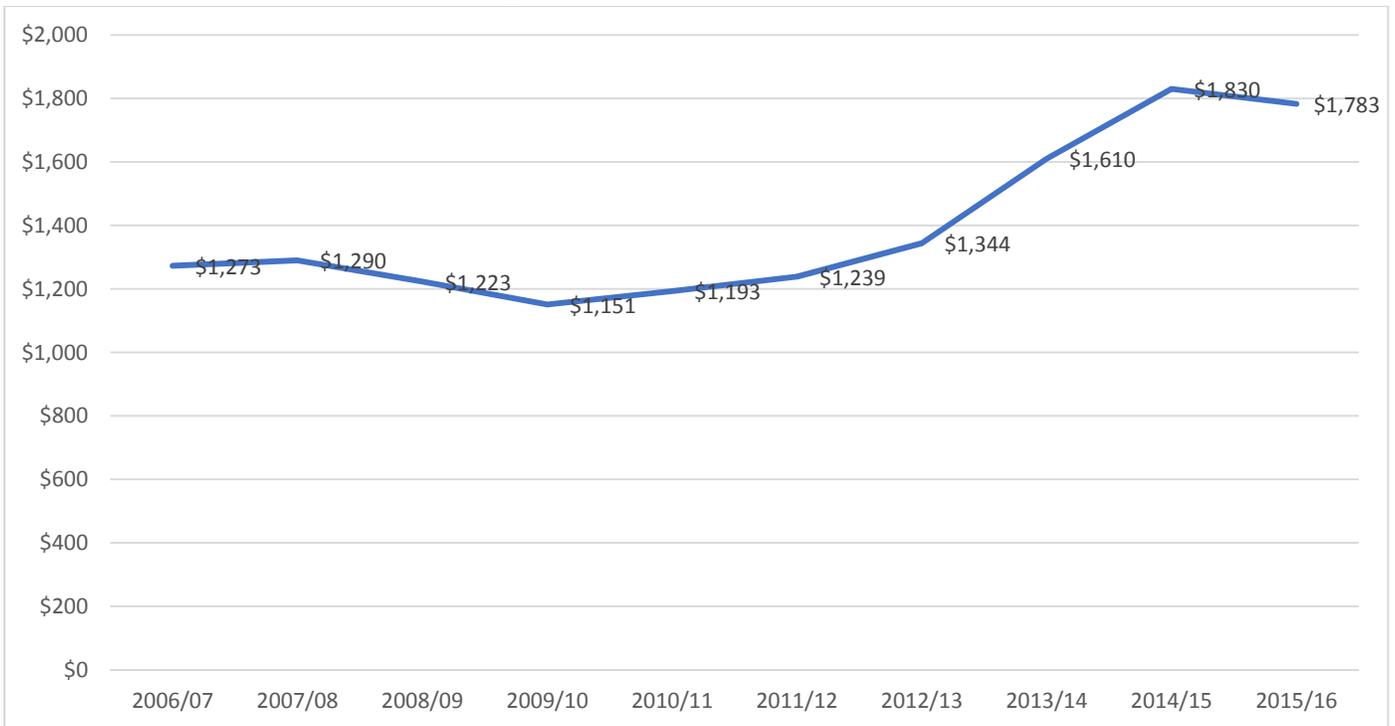
Buellton has experienced consistent Transient Occupancy Tax (T.O.T.) collections growth. Collections have grown 40% since 2006/07

Figure: Buellton Visitor Seasonality



Source: City of Buellton

Figure: Buellton T.O.T. Collections



Source: City of Buellton

Part 3: Marketing Strategy

Mission Statement

The mission of the Buellton Visitors Bureau is to inspire and influence individuals to explore Buellton as a tourist destination within Santa Barbara County. Through a variety of marketing programs the Buellton Visitors Bureau seeks to generate revenues that will contribute to the economic viability of the City Buellton and its residents.

Vision

To develop and implement tourism marketing programs that position Buellton as a year-round travel destination and gateway to the Santa Ynez Valley that provides a quality visitor experience while working in harmony with the environment and the values of the community.

Overall Strategic Goal

Increase tourism spending in the City of Buellton from the current estimated \$60 million to over \$75million² over the next five years by effectively promoting tourism in a way that optimizes both Buellton's assets by using the regions assets including its gateway location, recreation, agriculture, history while working to support the rural small town attributes.

Marketing Plan Objectives

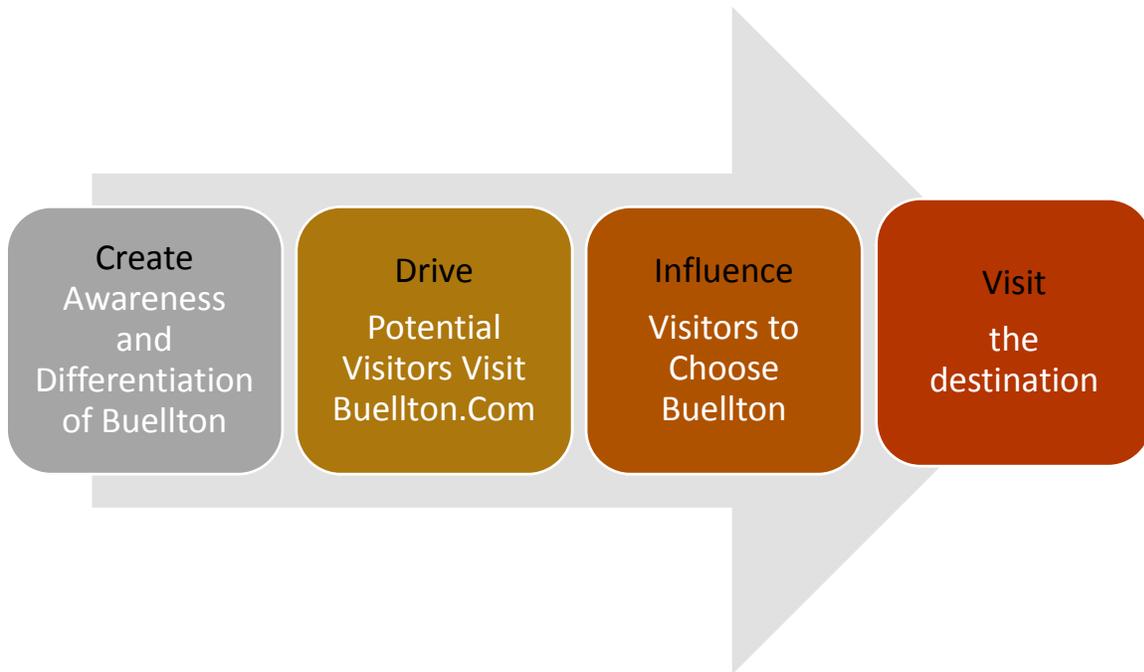
A successful cooperative and competitive tourism promotion strategy for Buellton can be achieved through the following strategies.

- **Generate an overall awareness and distinct positioning for Buellton including** its assets, special events, and local culture in an effort to attract visitors and increase travel spending.
- **Generate targeted unique visitors** to the Buellton Visitor Bureau website from its current 38,000 to approximately 75,000 in an effort to influence consumers to visit the area.
- **Generate incremental overnight visitation and travel spending.**
- **To serve as a catalyst in the tourism industry in Buellton and the region** bringing together all elements of the industry in an effort to effectively compete.
- **Increase awareness among local residents and public officials the importance of** tourism to the local economy.

² Assumes approximately 3% annual growth.

Marketing Strategies

The essence of the marketing strategy is **Create, Drive, Influence and Visit**. To create awareness of Buellton in target markets and to drive them to the website where they can be influenced to visit the area.



Source: SMG Consulting

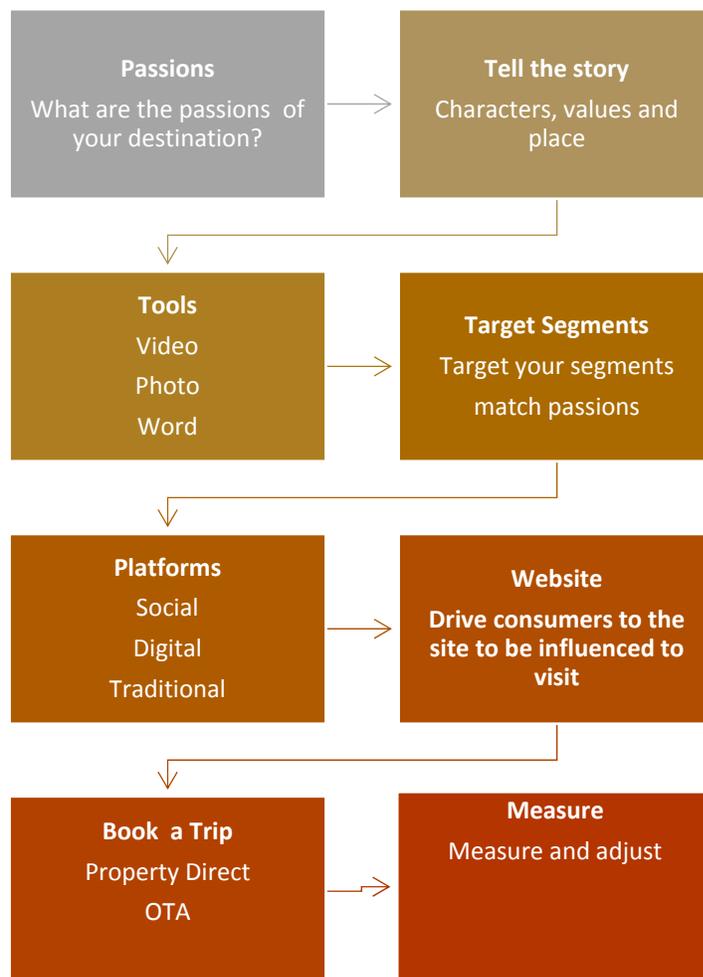
Tell the story of “Buellton” and in doing so connect the visitor to the destination. To achieve this we have developed a “story driven marketing strategy.”

How the strategy works (see model on following page)

- **Passions.** First identify the passions of the residents. What do they like to do? What are their favorite places and events and understand why locals engage in those passions?
- **Stories.** Craft and develop the story of local passions be it favorite activities, events and places. Make visitors feel the authentic nature of what residents are passionate about.
- **Tools.** Develop the tools to best tell those stories be it video, photography, written, or some combination.
- **Target.** Target your segments based on the passions you have identified. They could be niches and activities or demographics. The passions you have identified from residents are authentic and give the marketing effort legitimacy and authenticity.
- **Platforms.** Identify the best platforms to reach the target segments to tell the story.
- **Website.** Develop a website that is designed to drive visitors to the site (through Search Engine Optimization SEO) and influence site visitors to commit to visit the area and book a trip.

- **Book a trip.** Once they go to the website, at some point they may click on a lodging property or attraction. They may book directly or they may book through an online travel agency or some other channel. This sequence of events may happen all at once or over a period.
- **Measure.** Based upon their experience, new visitors either become repeat visitors going back to the lodging property/attraction directly, or back to Visit Buellton’s website to choose another lodging property or attraction, or they fall out of the entire system.
 - The DMO can measure its effectiveness and accountability at several points.
 - First, it will be able to measure **how many visits are generated overall** by its marketing efforts.
 - Second, it can **develop online surveys to determine how people got to the website** and the influence advertising and the site has on visitor decision making to visit the destination. (Currently in progress)
 - Third, it can measure **how many visitors (leads) it provides to its members.**

SMG Destination Story Driven Marketing Strategy



Source: SMG Consulting

Local Benefits

By growing the local tourism economy from the current \$60 million in annual travel spending, tourism promotion can increase revenues as well as employment and local taxes. Table 7 below identifies travel spending projections at different levels.

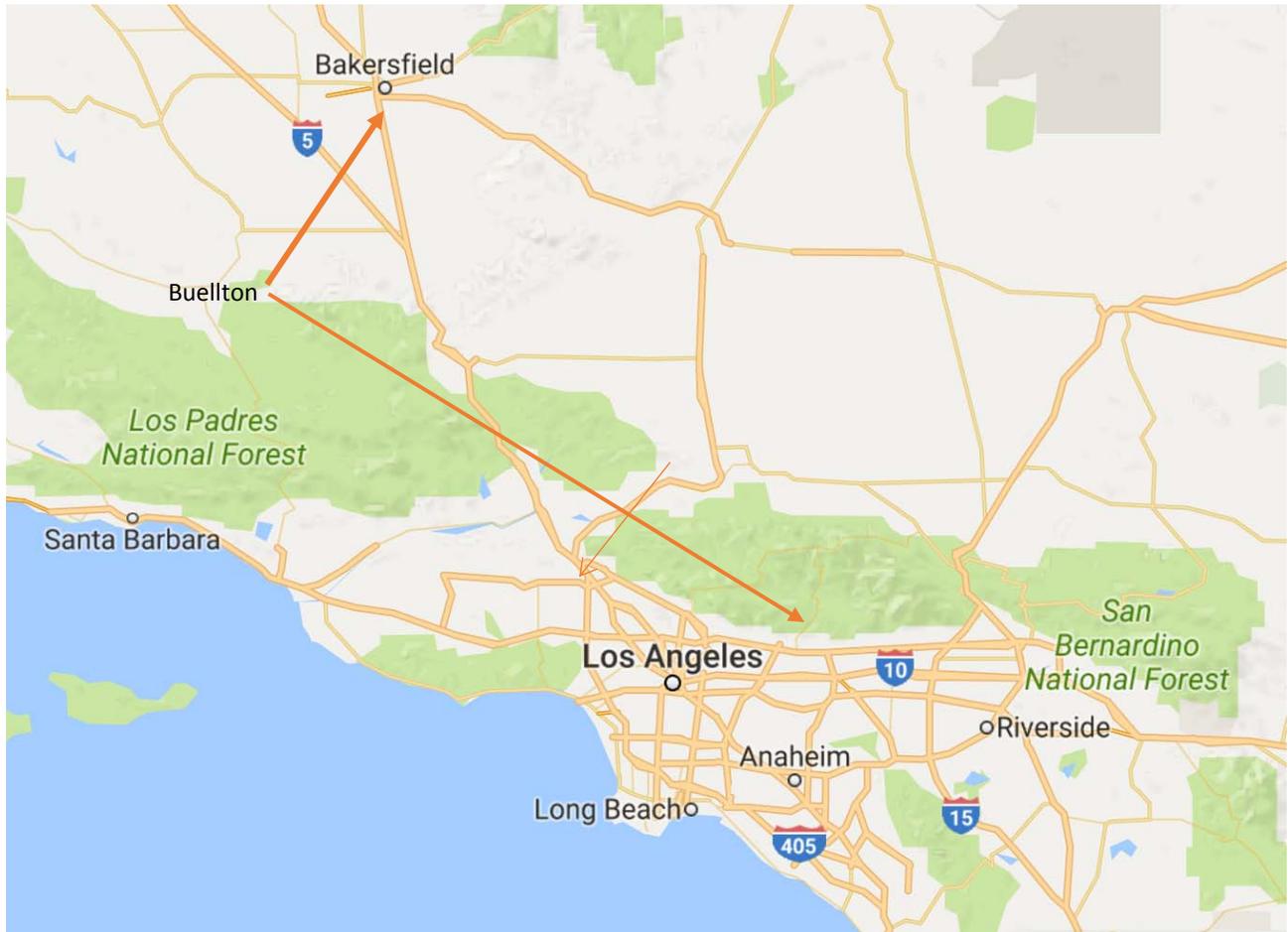
Table 7: Travel Spending Projections

| | Revenue (\$ Millions) | Revenue (\$ Millions) 5% | Revenue (\$ Millions) 10% | Revenue Millions 15% | Revenue Millions 20% |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | \$60,000,000 | \$63,000,000 | \$66,000,000 | \$69,000,000 | \$75,600,000 |
| Accommodations | \$17,239,156.14 | \$18,101,114 | \$18,963,072 | \$19,825,030 | \$21,721,337 |
| Eating/drinking | \$17,833,609.80 | \$18,725,290 | \$19,616,971 | \$20,508,651 | \$22,470,348 |
| Food stores | \$1,783,360.98 | \$1,872,529 | \$1,961,697 | \$2,050,865 | \$2,247,035 |
| Ground | | | | | |
| Transportation | \$5,944,536.60 | \$6,241,763 | \$6,538,990 | \$6,836,217 | \$7,490,116 |
| Arts, ent. & rec. | \$7,133,443.92 | \$7,490,116 | \$7,846,788 | \$8,203,461 | \$8,988,139 |
| Retail sales | \$10,105,712.22 | \$10,610,998 | \$11,116,283 | \$11,621,569 | \$12,733,197 |

Source: SMG estimates. Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Target Markets

A. Geographic Markets - Primary target markets for Buellton are defined **within a three-hour driving time radius**. Potential target markets range from Southern California (Santa Clarita), and the Central Valley.



B. Seasonal marketing - Priority seasons for attracting visitors include fall, spring, and winter.

C. Demographic profiling - of visitors include the following:

- Age: 30-50 and 50+ (Primary market is 50+ but future efforts need to attract the 30-50 segment). **A key focus need is the millennial segment in an effort to build destination loyalty**

D. Primary reason for visiting: (Local Resident Passions)

- Ag Tourism
- Special events
- Wine/Beer
- Appreciation of the area's natural assets
- History (Event and cultural history)
- Dining (Fine dining, Farm to Table)
- Enjoy outdoor recreation experiences
 - Hiking
 - Cycling (Road and Mountain Biking)
 - Motorcycle touring

E. Target Segment personas

- Contrarians - Those consumers who want to experience Santa Barbara County but not deal with the crowding and congestions of Santa Barbara, Los Olivos or Solvang.
- Ag Lover - based around the ag experience, Farm to Table etc.
- Beer Lover- Loves craft beer at its source.
- Casual Adventurer-Ties into the recreation + attributes of the destination.

Part 6: Action Steps



I. Branding

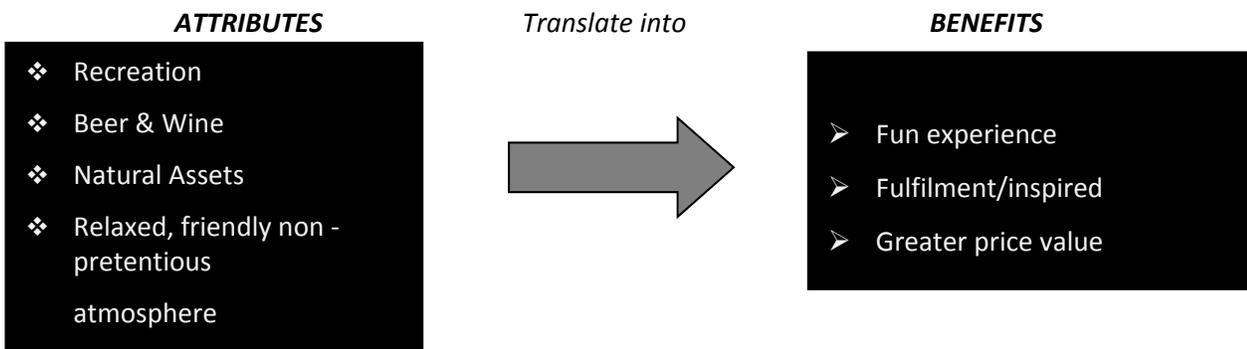
One of the biggest challenges facing Buellton is a lack of awareness and differentiation given the significant level of competition. As such one of the most fundamental actions is the need to develop a sustainable Buellton tourism brand.

Basic Tactics:

1. To create awareness, clearly differentiate Buellton, and to effectively position Buellton as a unique travel destination. Branding efforts must also work to position Buellton as a place that offers visitors the opportunity to experience Santa Barbara County in a different more easy to navigate and relaxed way.
2. Review the current positioning of “eat, play, stay” as it does not fully differentiate Buellton. A focus needs to be developed that positions Buellton as “different” in a way that makes sense to the visitor. It is critical that branding and messaging draw the difference out between Buellton and other destinations within the county.

Visitor Benefits

Properly promoted, Buellton’s destination attributes translate into a variety of visitor benefits.



➤ **Fun experience**

Buellton’s activities and access make it a fun experience for those looking for a different kind of Santa Barbara experience.

➤ **Fulfillment/Inspiration**

The natural surroundings found throughout the destination create a beautiful and inspirational sense of place for visitors and residents alike.

1. **Once a new branding is developed revise the website to reflect the new positioning, as well as,** all marketing materials to build brand familiarity at every opportunity.
2. To leverage exposure and brand awareness, encourage tourism related businesses to **integrate the branding** into their individual communication efforts, including their websites and printed materials.
3. Consider rebranding the tourism promotion efforts Visit Buellton instead of the Buellton visitors bureau to reflect the changing Destination Marketing Organization industry.

II. Website Development/Digital Marketing

With the majority of travelers using the Internet for vacation planning and with limited marketing funds, it is **critical that Buellton upgrade the website for its tourism promotion efforts**. This will strengthen the Buellton brand and, above all, assist potential visitors with information gathering and vacation planning.

In order to optimize its efficiency for visitors and the tourism organizations and businesses, the upgraded website **should be viewed as a central marketing element and not just an addition to existing marketing efforts**.

I. Website

Basic Tactics:

1. **Upgrade the website.** Upgrade the responsive tourism website that includes the previously mentioned branding along with expanded visitor information, is a critical first step for Buellton. It should include a blend of content that reflects why Buellton is different and helps inspire the target segments to plan a visit.
2. **Continue to invest in developing ongoing content for the website and other channels.** This should include photography, video, and written content.

Advanced Tactics:

1. **Develop an SEO (search engine optimization) strategy** for Buellton that will facilitate organic positioning on search engines (Google and Yahoo) with tactics such as adding key words in the descriptive copy of every page to ensure the **site includes the most popular words used by visitors searching for Buellton**.
2. **Use website measurements and input from visitor surveys** to identify issues and make improvements to the website on an ongoing basis.

II. Interactive/Social Media Marketing Efforts

Basic Tactics:

1. **Continue to invest in a digital media plan to build awareness for Buellton and drive traffic to the website.** It should include a mix of brand building online display ads, paid search, social media, eblasts, video, and should be managed in such a way to optimize the budget.
2. **Continue to support social media accounts** on Facebook etc. Consider setting up new accounts on other social sites as needed.
3. **Continue the email newsletter.** This should include content that differentiates the destination, and introduces the local community culture to visitors. Include stories, video images, events, messaging, and seasonally appropriate specials. Grow the email database should be a primary goal for the above mentioned digital media plan. Email signups should continue to be one of the goals of the new website.
4. **Develop a content calendar to identify post content and frequency.** Content and updates can include information on special events, activities, dining, history, photos, questions, etc. The calendar should include all social channels, a newsletter and the blog. Engaging with fans is a key metric that determines whether posts appears in newsfeeds, so focusing on quality of content is important.

Advanced Tactics:

Facebook

1. Create a budget for **year-round promoted posts** to increase the number of likes, as well as, increase post reach.
2. **Refer to Facebook insights** to determine what content sees the most engagement, and balance that type of content with other messaging.

Twitter

1. **Use a social media management tool** to schedule tweets, upload images, shorten URLs, and retweet. Free tools include Hootsuite and Tweet deck, among many others.

III. Visitor Information

Visitor information consists of two primary components. The first is **information that is used to attract potential visitors to Buellton**. The second component is **information used to assist visitors once they arrive**. Both information components are critical in defining the visitor experience, and have the potential to impact both first-time and repeat visitations.

As it currently exists, the Visitor and Convention Bureau serves as the primary source for the city for visitor information.

Basic Tactics:

1. **Promote the upgraded Buellton website as the primary visitor information tool.** Include the new Buellton website address in every marketing initiative and encourage regional tourism related businesses and tourism officials to include in their marketing materials.
2. **Link the website with the Chamber of Commerce visitor center.** Use the international symbol on both the site and the building so visitors understand the connection.



Advanced Tactics:

1. Make ongoing improvements to the website and guide **based upon visitor and community input**.

IV. Content Development (Content /Photo/Video)

Content development is a critically important component within the marketing mix **for helping to build awareness for Buellton and its position as an different kind of destination within Santa Barbara County.** Effective content development can also educate potential visitors about the diversity of the region and assist with visitor planning information. Similar to advertising activities, **Content development efforts should promote Buellton as a different kind of place in a unified format representing all of its areas and related activities.** Content development is also a very cost effective and efficient communications tool **to tell the Buellton story to the traveling public** and for building brand awareness. Efforts should be designed to motivate potential visitors to call for information, visit the Buellton website, and ultimately to visit Buellton.

I. Out of Market Content Development

Basic Tactics:

1. **Develop basic tools** including the following:
 - A series of video, photography and copy that tells the story of Buellton and how it's different from other places within the county. Potential story ideas include the following:
 - Unique things to do in Buellton
 - Area history and things to see
 - Food and wine in Buellton
 - Recreation in Buellton
 - Bicycle rides in Buellton
 - Motorcycle rides in Buellton
 - Buellton special events
 - Photography that depicts the Buellton visitor experience.
 - Video for inclusion on the website and social media channels.
 - Consolidate your content development plan into a single marketing calendar.
2. **Provide ongoing fulfillment** of information requests. As awareness for Buellton slowly increases there will be continuing requests for information, story ideas, photos, and video from media sources looking to add Buellton to stories or to create stories.
3. **Send press releases and images to Visit California** and encourage them to post on the Visit California website or include in their Content development efforts.
4. **Regularly update the media section on the new Buellton website** to feature press releases, images and contact information to assist media with their travel stories.

Advanced Tactics:

1. Measure content efforts via generated coverage and ad equivalency. It should be noted that in conjunction with advertising and other marketing activities, **Content development is vital for building brand awareness, but is often hard to measure and attribute to specific content development efforts.**
2. **Leverage any ad buys and increase exposure for Buellton** by sending press releases or specific stories that fit editorial calendar to publications that feature Buellton ads.
3. **Develop a measurement system** based upon generated coverage and ad equivalency.
4. Segment audience to increase engagement, **by product need.**
5. Know your audience very well; one technique in this regard is **keyword research, aimed at discovering what your ideal visitors are looking for.**
6. Target the millennials with adaptive content. **Millennials constitute a large chunk of your target audience.** Content should speak to their needs.
7. Craft content based on Buellton's core values.

II. In Market Communication

Basic Tactics:

1. Develop an ongoing communication program with the local tourism officials **in order to keep them informed about tourism efforts. These efforts can include the following:**
 - Monthly email to key politicians and stakeholders
 - Annual report summarizing tourism activities
2. Educate the local community **about how tourism can help preserve their quality of life while generating revenues for city/community services through stories in local newspapers or town hall meetings. Story ideas could include the following:**
 - The value of tourism to Buellton budget
 - Tourism business and employment
3. Work with local news media **to educate community about tourism promotion efforts and to promote the Buellton brand.**

Advanced Tactics:

1. **Develop an annual tourism meeting Breakfast Lunch etc. ,** inviting the Buellton community to inform and educate them about the continued importance of tourism to both the economy and the environment. This luncheon could include a review of past year's tourism activities, a guest speaker from within the industry, networking opportunities for attendees, etc.
2. Continue to **gather story ideas and participation from the local community** in order to include local businesses in the overall content development efforts and to bolster long-term community support.

V. Sales

Basic Tactics:

1. **Implement** a unified approach for attracting visitors to Buellton by attending appropriate consumer and trade shows to attract target segments.
2. Leverage trade show exposure and budget by **attending specific shows with neighboring destinations in the Central Coast and Visit California**. Work to develop a regional presence and reduce costs at the same time.
3. **Continually review trade shows to** ensure there is value in creating awareness and demand for Buellton.
4. Take advantage of Visit California domestic and international sales opportunities as appropriate.

Advanced Tactics:

1. **Develop a trade show evaluation form** in order to identify areas of improvement and to gauge the overall effectiveness and ROI of each show for future planning. Consider including the following:
 - Name of the event
 - Date of the event
 - Location of the event
 - Type of tradeshow
 - Estimated number of attendees
 - Number of brochures
 - Overall evaluation of the show (e.g. was it valuable?)

VI. Advertising

Goal

Create advertising messages that effectively creates awareness, differentiates and drives consumers to the website to influence visitors to plan a trip.

Basic Tactics:

1. **Develop a media plan** for advertising placements in specific Southern and Central California target segments.
2. **Create advertisements using messages and photos that effectively promote Buellton's key attractions.** Include photos and message points about area attractions to use as hooks to increase awareness of highly recognized areas.
3. As the main visitor information tool, **drive potential visitors to the new website by making it the primary call to action** in every ad and communication piece.
4. **Focus on core regional markets as previously identified.**

Advanced Tactics:

1. **Develop a measurement system for all advertising** such as generated emails, website user sessions, etc. to determine if efforts are increasing awareness and interest in Buellton and creating positive brand associations. These measurements can be informal (tic marks on a sheet of paper made by staff) or tied to the website measurements and other research.
2. Create a larger presence for Buellton and participating businesses by **developing cooperative ads in specific publications** that would invite attractions and lodging properties to participate at more affordable rates than on their own. The co-op ads would create a much larger presence for all participants and unify the destination message under the new Buellton brand.

VII. Research & Measurement

In an effort to continually improve the organization's marketing effectiveness and to build confidence among the tourism industry partners, measurement systems need to be more fully developed. Just as important as measuring marketing, sales, advertising, and Content development programs is the need to communicate those measurements to appropriate stakeholders.

Basic Tactics:

1. Develop and distribute a Visit Buellton measurement dashboard. This dashboard should be comprehensive with all measurements available for the destination.
 - Transient Occupancy Tax collections
 - Website activity
 - Additional information as needed.
2. Integrate this information into an annual report/summary of activities.
 - Include information on major efforts and successes.
3. Purchase an annual subscription for Smith Travel Report.
4. Provide ongoing, destination-wide lodging data including the following:
 - Total rooms available
 - Total rooms sold
 - Average room rate
 - Total room revenue
 - Total T.O.T. collected

Advanced Tactics:

1. **Develop and implement an online ROI study** to understand the influence of the advertising and awareness in consumers' decision to visit and the return on those invested dollars.
(Currently in progress.)
2. **Implement periodic visitor profile studies** as well as market studies and advertising awareness studies, all designed to provide fresh new information regarding a changing marketplace.

VIII. Special Events

Special events are an important element for Buellton, as events can work to broaden the appeal of the destination and attract new visitors to the area. As well as provide existing visitors with another activity to participate in.

Goal

Support special events that help to create awareness for and position Buellton as a destination to visit. Key to using special events as a tool to broaden the appeal of Buellton as a reason to visit is to review the existing events and identify if current events support the above objectives.

Basic Tactics:

1. Review the existing schedule in an effort to understand the types of events and their timing. Events should meet two criteria; are they creating awareness and supporting the positioning of Buellton and are they driving visitation to the destination. Event funding should be reviewed within this context. Current Signature events include the following:
 - Vintners Spring Weekend
 - Buellton Brew Fest
 - Buellton Wine & Chili Festival
 - Buellton Winter Fest
 - Scarecrow Fest
2. Support the promotion of these events through Visit Buellton's media platforms
3. From a strategic standpoint look at potential opportunities to encourage new events in identified needed time frames to assist with creating demand at those times.
4. Develop a "seasonal" approach to promotion of special events. i.e. Buellton "Summer Season of Events" promoting the synergy and excitement of a number of related events.

IX. Strategic Alliances

An additional element that can improve Buellton competitiveness is the creation of alliances and partnerships that further leverage its resources. Currently, staff is already participating with some of these organizations, but it's important to review how each alliance further leverages the organization's goals to increase awareness and influence visitation to Buellton.

Goal

To leverage Buellton's assets by working with other tourism partners to implement programs which Buellton could not do on its own.

1. **Strategic Alliances** – To fully leverage Buellton's resources, it makes sense to continue existing alliances as well as develop new ones where appropriate to develop strategic partnerships where mutual objectives can be identified.
 - **Visit California**
Visit California's focus on increasing international business is a key opportunity for Buellton to leverage their resources in order to create more awareness and visitation to the area in the international marketplace.
 - **Central Coast Tourism Council**
This organization includes DMOs from around the Central Coast and is designed to attract visitors to the entire region, with a focus on international visitation.
 - **Visit Santa Barbara, Solvang, Santa Ynez**
These organizations are the primary tourism promotion organizations within the region. Cooperative efforts with these organizations make sense and provide an opportunity to leverage resources.
 - **Visit Santa Ynez Valley**
Continue to work and support the organization but with a more clearly defined market position.

2. **Partnerships** – Given the need to grow tourism visitation to Buellton, it's important for the VCB to support government partnerships in order to provide a positive experience for visitors.
 - **Arts and Culture**
Reach out to organizations representing Buellton and the communities within Buellton

Basic Tactics:

- Continue to support existing tourism alliances and seek the best opportunities for Buellton including sales, cooperative advertising, among other programs.
- Continue to seek collaboration and support the economic development offices and organizations where appropriate.

Budget

The organizations budget is approximately \$240,000 and to maximize the efforts needed to create awareness, differentiate the destination and drive consumers to the website we are suggesting the following sample budget.

The primary goal of this sample budget is to provide an idea of how funds could be allocated into marketing and advertising activities to maximize tourism promotion efforts for Buellton.

Buellton Budget 1.0

| | Year 1 | Year 2 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Advertising/Social Media/Public Relations | | |
| Billboards | \$22,500 | \$22,500 |
| Social Media | \$15,000 | \$15,000 |
| Advertising | \$47,000 | \$59,000 |
| Sales | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| Public Relations | \$48,000 | \$48,000 |
| Opportunistic | \$2,000 | \$5,000 |
| SEO | \$25,000 | \$25,000 |
| Special Events | | |
| Special Events | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| Production | | |
| Photography | \$10,000 | \$5,000 |
| Website Development | \$15,000 | \$5,000 |
| <u>Creative Services</u> | <u>\$20,000</u> | <u>\$20,000</u> |
| Total | \$224,500 | \$224,500 |

1. Revenue is projected based on City of Buellton support.
2. Advertising refers to placement of ads in specific publications/online locations.
3. SEO refers to Search Engine Optimization strategies designed to drive the website
4. Website/internet includes development of a new website.
5. Marketing services includes new creative that differentiates the destination as well as needed support services.
6. Public Relations refers to specific public relations activities as well as content development.