

big idea {small budget} big return 

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Welcome



+ **Debbie Kovalik**, Executive Director
Grand Junction Visitor & Convention Bureau



+ **Kelli Hepler**, Tourism Coordinator
Delta County Tourism



+ **Mandy Gauldin**, PR + Social Media Guru
Peak Communications, LLC



+ **April Prout-Ralph**, Marketing Director
Chaffee County Visitors Bureau



Introduction: What's the Big Idea?



The Colorado Case Study

Colorado
Tourism Office



Partnerships

GRAND JUNCTION
Colorado's Wine Country
VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU



- + Started as a partnership with AMTRAK and GJVCB and its partners to attract shoulder season visitation.
- + Ties in closely with Agritourism and Culinary Tourism and strongly promotes both of these statewide initiatives.
- + Robust growth of the program has turned a small idea into an award-winning sustainable tourism initiative.
- + Regularly sold out with a waiting list; estimated economic impact is more than \$700k.



Harnessing Social Media/UGC



- + Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park: From YouTube to *The Travel Channel* and *Good Morning America*.
- + Hosted Bert the Conqueror at Glenwood Caverns and Parlayed Visit into a *Good Morning America* broadcast.
- + Worked Hard Behind the Scenes to Keep Momentum; Increase Visibility.
- + The Result – Coverage Worth Upwards of \$1M – All Started with a YouTube video.



Emerging Media / Companies



- + Trippons.com Partnership with Salida, Colorado.
- + Began thanks to an existing relationship with a travel + tourism entrepreneur.
- + Utilizes new and emerging technology, e.g. QR codes.
- + CVB and Local Chamber used the program to build membership and as an incentive for current members.
- + Participation is *scale-able* making the program accessible to a larger number of hotel and destination partners.

Community Engagement



- + Development of the Delta County agritourism program.
- + Engaged nearby communities to take an active part in promoting Delta's local offerings.
- + Created strong agritourism initiatives for Delta County.
- + Maintained close relationships with community partners: West Elk Scenic Loop Byway, Southwest Colorado Travel Region.
- + Strengthened overall awareness and presented a unified identity.



Best Practices: Strategic Matchmaking

- + Find and follow 'influencers' who have the audiences/attributes that mirror your brand and are specific to your business.
- + Ask Yourself: What's in it for *them*?
- + Make your idea "scaleable" – i.e. make sure it can work as a simple idea or a more robust campaign.
- + What are the partnership goals? Incremental revenue? Awareness?
- + Consider in-kind support and what it means to the overall partnership. How can both sides benefit?
- + See what potential partners have done before and find a new and engaging way to position your partnership.

Best Practices: A Rising Tide Lift All Ships

- + Rally the community and everyone wins.
- + Approaching opportunities with several areas and/or organizations strengthens the overall effort.
- + Shared resources – manpower or monetary – can make a bigger overall impact for a project.
- + Diversify your partners and keep the project's end goal in mind.
 - Each partner plays a specific role and is integral to overall success.

Best Practices: Harness The Power of Social

- + Make it easy for the public – and the media – to find you.
- + Be Authentic.
- + Jump on opportunities with large media companies with big social audiences; but don't forget the "Magic Middle" either.
- + Something big can begin with just one 'tweet' or post.
- + The positive 'Snowball Effect' of tagging photos; using – and understanding – sites like del.icio.us and StumbleUpon.
- + Be where your customers are – and be visible in those places.

Best Practices: Get in on the 'Ground Floor'

- + Establish a relationship with up-and-coming companies. You never know which company is tomorrow's Facebook.
 - + *Example: Sean Parker and Shawn Fanning, founders of Napster, are joining forces on a new video social media site (tentatively: SupYo).*
- + Build gradual relationships – and trust – with like-minded brands, companies or organizations.
- + Don't view the lack of immediate, actionable results as failure; but follow up and advance the relationship.