



October 9, 2019

CONTACT:

Teresa Stephenson

Destination Marketing Association of the West | DMA West

916-443-9012 | info@dmawest.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Western DMOs Take Top Honors Among Peers

Best Idea Program Achievement Awards

Four destination marketing organizations received achievement awards in a recent competition with their colleagues from the West. Sponsored by Destination Marketing Association of the West (DMA West), the annual **Best Idea Program** showcases innovative projects and creative marketing strategies as submitted by DMA West members.

This year's Best Idea Program awards were presented during the 2019 DMA West Education Summit, October 2-4, in Sacramento, California.

Following receipt of the entry forms, a Board-appointed Task Force reviewed the submissions and selected several ideas for presentation. Representatives presented their best ideas during the recent Education Summit.

DMA West congratulates the following member DMOs for receiving outstanding achievement awards for their organizations in the 2019 DMA West Best Idea Program.

Discover Flagstaff (Arizona)

Project Title: Flagstaff Lunar Legacy

The first Apollo Moon Mission would be commanding the world's attention as it approached its 50th anniversary on July 20, 2019. Due to Flagstaff's historic and scientific role in the Apollo Missions, Lowell Observatory's historian Kevin Schindler, brought the knowledge of the approaching anniversary to the City in fall 2017. By winter 2017, a community committee mobilized, representing nearly 20 attractions, partners and stakeholders, and was tasked with identifying significant Flagstaff attractions, buildings, milestones, historical photos and videos, local legends, and more, all of which would develop into an 18-month rich and immersive program attracting and fascinating local, domestic and international visitors. The objective of the campaign was to further strengthen and position Flagstaff as a robust astronomy destination with a fresh lens on the Apollo 11 Mission, and forward to today's astronaut training. In addition, the campaign was designed to pursue earned media, leverage the website — www.discoverflagstaff.com — to serve as a top referral site to partner organizations, and drive overnight stays to increase the city's collection of bed tax. The DMO created a mini-video series for use in movie theaters, social media channels, and website and cast a wide net to create partnerships beyond traditional tourism partners to assist in leveraging budget as well as create synergy. The DMO team also created marketing communication pieces explaining the Flagstaff Lunar Legacy story to engage visitors to actively participate in the astronauts' footsteps. Media pitches included digital, broadcast and print channels in key domestic and international markets.

Visit Oakland (California)

Project Title: Visit Oakland - Best Trips

Oakland, California, was recently recognized as one of the 28 must-see destinations and travel experiences for 2019 in the Culture Category via National Geographic Traveler Magazine. Visit Oakland decided to leverage this notoriety and drive the best possible and most engaged traffic to a dedicated landing page on its website so potential travelers could learn more about Oakland's culture and the best ways to experience it. The landing page — www.visitoakland.com/natgeo/ — features the city's diversity, sense of place and its people with content that highlights arts & style, events, things to do and foodie experiences. With the help of TwoSix Digital, Visit Oakland staff created a seven-week national strategy to increase the brand awareness of Oakland, California, to a high-value persona audience in key feeder markets. The project objectives for this social campaign included: driving website traffic, building brand awareness for the National Geographic Traveler Magazine feature, creating additional awareness about the pillars that support the destination in the areas of arts & style, events, things to do and food, and increasing e-newsletter signups and visitor guide requests.

Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory

Project Title: Travel the Entire Oregon Trail for the 175th Anniversary

The 2018 year marked the 175th Anniversary of the Oregon Trail, the 2,170-mile wagon road that stretched from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon City, Oregon. A large portion of the trail winds through Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory, including the official end in Oregon City. The Oregon Trail is very important to the heritage of Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory. As such, generating awareness around its history and this important anniversary, provided media a newsworthy topic to cover and inspire travel to the cities along the route. The DMO and its local/state partners wanted to target family audiences in markets along the trail and the West Coast. To execute these goals, Mt. Hood Territory staff collaborated with multiple partners on two main projects to commemorate the anniversary — a social influencer campaign accompanied by a microsite with original content and produced videos, and the creation of a themed children's activity guide. Social influencer campaign success was measured in clicks to a dedicated Oregon Trail microsite and website engagement, content creation along the route and total engagements on social media channels. Since the themed children's activity guide was created as a piece to inspire travel to Mt. Hood Territory, success was measured by the number of travel planners that were requested with activity guide orders and downloads from the Mt. Hood Territory website.

Visit San Juan Islands (Washington)

Project Title: Island Kids Explain

"Island Kids Explain" is an educational video series that harnesses the cuteness of local kids to promote stewardship. Following the seven principles of "Leave No Trace," this video series and corresponding webpage (<https://www.visitsanjuans.com/island-kids-explain>) encourages visitors to the San Juan Islands to be mindful and respectful travelers. Highlighting the importance of fire safety, proper garbage disposal, and respectful wildlife watching, these interview-style videos take a humorous and often adorable approach to environmental issues. The goal of this video series is to address environmental health concerns of the San Juan Islands in a fun and entertaining way in order to preserve and protect the islands.

Island Kids Explain videos:

Trash Tips: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNYf3jUeh8E>

Fire Safety: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pK6Kb2wWO8>

Respecting Wildlife: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIPSNbS_Z-g

After sharing these videos with local businesses, stewardship partners, and the greater community, Visit San Juan Islands staff received not only positive feedback, but tangible results. Local businesses have shared the videos on social media platforms, been asked to post the content to their own pages, and used the videos to educate guests and visitors. Because local children from each of the three major islands were featured in the videos, each island community is uniquely invested in sharing the videos and the stewardship messaging.

###

The Destination Marketing Association of the West (DMA West) is a regional professional association serving more than 150 destination marketing organizations (DMOs) in the West. Membership is open to DMOs in the western U.S. and western Canada.

Destination Marketing Association of the West | DMA West
950 Glenn Drive, Suite 150, Folsom, CA 95630 | info@dmawest.org | www.dmawest.org