

**Unincorporated San Luis Obispo County  
Tourism Business Improvement District (CBID)**

**Minutes | September 19, 2024 | Cambria Pines Lodge**

CBID Board Members Present: Mike Hanchett, Bram Winter, Laila Kollmann, Gary Setting

County Liaison: CAO Cheryl Cuming, Tessa Cornejo

Absent: Melissa Kurry, Aaron Graves

Guests: Lori Ritchey

**Call to Order**

12:12pm

**Public Comment**

Bram said that he misses Matt and commented on what a good guy he was. CAO Cuming shared the Celebration of Life details and said that it honored Matt in the things he loved the most - family and Giants baseball.

**Administrative Items**

- Roll Call: Mike Hanchett, Bram Winter, Gary Setting, Laila Kollmann are present
- Consent Agenda – Minutes: A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded by Bram Winter to approve the July 24 minutes. With no further discussion, these minutes were approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board; Gary Setting abstained.
- Financials | Balance Sheet, Administrator and Partner updates:
  - General fund ties back to BID Bunch expenses, both reporting \$95,358 in expenses for August. YTD revenue is \$259,192. YTD revenue is 374,390, which is \$13,265 less than budgeted. YTD expenses are \$259,192, which is under budget by \$63,518. Net income of \$50,253 is more than budgeted YTD. Overall cash increased by \$269,090 from June 30, 2024.
  - SLO CAL version of Monopoly is now available, being sold on Amazon
  - Highway 1 update: Bram said that there are a large number of trucks and loads of rocks working daily. Current timeline is for a 2025 reopening
- Upcoming Events | Deadlines
  - Board Meetings: October 23 and November | December on 12/4

**Discussion Items**

- Marketing
  - Just Coast Campaign Launch: Lori Ritchey's presentation was reviewed. The board was impressed with the growth and progress. CAO Cuming noted how proud she was of the brand work with Sunshine & Bourbon, and the BID Bunch. The board thanked Lori Ritchey for all of her hard work to get the brand launched. [A copy of the report is available here.](#)

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# MARKETING REPORT

## July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024



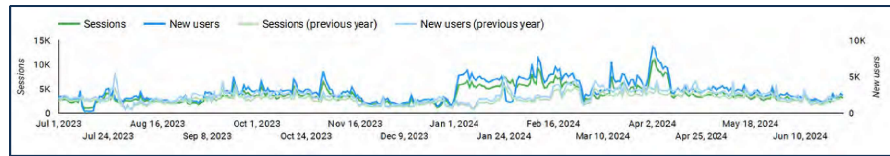
### WEBSITE TRAFFIC OVERVIEW

#### AQUISITION

H1DR reached a record with more than **1.39M sessions** and **1.15M users**. Sessions were up 31% and Users were up 34%, Y/Y (22/23 compared to 23/24). H1DR recorded **4.89M page views**, up 17%, Y/Y

By website traffic in all channels

FY Rollup	1.4M Sessions	1.2M Engaged sessions	88.9% Engagement Rate	1.1M New Users	1.2 Sessions per user
	▲31.4%	▲39.7%	▲6.3%	▲28.0%	▼-0.8%



### EBLASTS & LEAD GENERATION

#### WINS

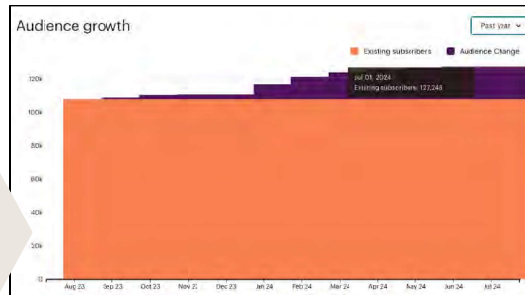
- 37% Open rate (8% above previous 29% average)
- 1.91% Click rate (.61% above previous 1.3% average)
- Increased subscribers (+27,595)
- Resolved blocker on welcome series
- Gained insights from survey campaign

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Rebranding will give emails a fresh look & voice
- Revamping automated welcome series and map automations with updated content and design
- Increased advanced personalization opportunities utilizing dynamic content

#### CHALLENGES

- Audience engagement dipped slightly in last quarter
- Flooding of Highway 1 caused tourist concerns



Database total: **127,248 subscribers**  
 July 2023 - June 2024 added approximately 32,402 subscribers, with 27,595 remaining at FYE.

FY Total	3,213,627 Sent	3,200,264 Delivered	1,169,744 Opens	37% Open Rate
61,066 Clicks	1.91% Click Rate	7,299 Unsubscribed	0.23% Unsubscribed Rate	30,618 Map Downloads



# MARKETING REPORT

## July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024



### SEO ORGANIC REACH

- FY 23/24 experienced the following for Organic Traffic:
  - Up 24% in Sessions (274K vs 221K)
  - Up 25% in Users (217K vs 172K)
  - Up 33% in Page Views (1.05M vs 783K)
- As a result of the algorithm change, H1DR experienced some reduced impressions. However, the CTR and Page Rankings both improved as a result of the **original, high quality content the site hosts**. Additionally, while impressions were down, the amount of traffic was not impacted in a negative way. People are now more engaged with the site because the **content being served is more relevant to a user's search query**.

### TOP 20 ORGANIC PAGES

Rank	Page title and screen name	Views	Users
1	Scenic Drive: Your Highway 1 Road Trip - Highway 1 Road Trip	72,346	21,492
2	Highway 1 Road Trip   San Luis Obispo County Coastal Road Trip	43,440	12,899
3	Best Places to Eat in Cambria - Highway 1 Road Trip	24,638	6,939
4	Moonstone Beach in Cambria, CA   Visit Highway 1 Road Trip	22,355	6,626
5	Elephant Seals of San Simeon   View them at Vista Point on Highway 1	20,331	6,279
6	Where To Stay Archive - Highway 1 Road Trip	19,914	3,927
7	Montaña de Oro State Park   Beaches, Hiking, and Mountain Biking	19,377	5,813
8	Best Beaches on Highway 1 - Highway 1 Road Trip	17,572	5,040
9	Best Places to Eat on Highway 1 - Highway 1 Road Trip	17,421	5,460
10	Best Restaurants in SLO - Highway 1 Road Trip	16,543	4,913
11	Where to Hike on Highway 1   Highway 1 Discovery Route	13,500	3,637
12	Oceano Dunes Natural Preserve   Highway 1 Road Trip	12,870	3,779
13	Biking Pacific Coast Highway 1   Highway 1 Road Trip	12,766	4,130
14	Sea Otter Spotting   Along the Highway 1 Road Trip	12,518	3,706
15	Ragged Point on Highway 1   Most Beautiful Drive on Highway 1   Visit Us	12,175	3,736
16	Hidden Secrets Along Highway 1 - Highway 1 Road Trip	12,174	3,095
17	Monarch Butterfly Groves in Pismo Beach, Nipomo, Morro Bay, Los Osos	12,116	3,281
18	Get your Hidden Secrets Map - Highway 1 Road Trip	11,626	3,252
19	Whale Watching from the Whale Trail on Highway 1   Discover Highway 1	11,508	3,336
20	Wildflowers on Highway 1 - Highway 1 Road Trip	10,263	3,045



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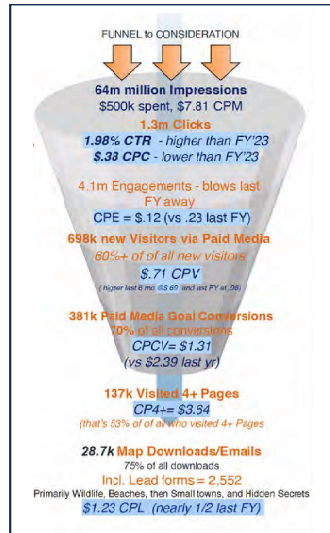


## PAID MEDIA

\$500k <small>(budget was \$510k)</small>	\$145k for LFA's <small>(budget was \$150k)</small>
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**Achieving unprecedented impact and continuous improvement** (and coming in under budget), our coastal ad campaign garnered **64 million impressions** (25% higher than estimated), drove **1.3 million clicks** and **4.1 million engagements**. Remarkably, 55% of the 698k site arrivals took action, setting a new benchmark for engagement and conversion. This was even higher at 75% in the winter/spring campaign. **Our strategic blend of multi-channel optimizations maximized reach and all KPI's:**

- **Overall Strong User Growth:** Site users increased 32%, (with Google Ads driving a 23% rise in traffic and a 45% jump in impressions).
- **Time on Site:** Cost Per 4+ pages at its lowest with 20% of arrivals to site converted (30% in 2nd half). Although Top channels like SEM and social drove the most volume, other tactics like email and native kept users longer.
- **Engagement:** Record volume for 4.1m at the lowest CPE of \$12 cents. • Database Growth: Highest names (127k) collected at the lowest CPL (\$1.23).
- **Video Surge:** Video campaign impressions contributed significantly to overall conversions especially with YouTube and Spotify video, contributing 22% of all program clicks using 17% of all costs.
- **LFA Efficiency Wins:** SEM Conversions rose 37-76% in key LFA regions, with top keywords boosting CTRs and lowering costs. Social programs drove mostly better metrics over FY23.



## COST PER LEAD/DATABASE EFFICIENCY

At a time where first party data rules, building our database has been key

### Media We Tried

- Facebook Carousels, Lead forms, Video, Retargeting, lead-forms and look-a-likes
- Email (Did not work for lead gen, but strong in other KPI's)
- Indirectly:
  - Google ads SEM & Performance Max
  - QR codes in Print ads and CTV

### Looking Ahead

- Heavier weighting on the KPI for CPL
- Optimize Existing Channels: Enhance Facebook campaigns using newest personalization and retargeting techniques



# MARKETING REPORT

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024



## PAID MEDIA (CONTINUED)

### TOP PERFORMERS

High CTR	Avila Beach Dynamic search - 17%
Lowest CPC	Avila Beach - Max - \$.13
Lowest Cost Per Conversion	Discovery Ads Road Trip - \$1.10
Highest Impressions Generated	Video Ads 5.4M
Highest Clicks	Video Ads: largest driver of clicks of any Google Ads campaign

With the brand lift study the Video campaign delivery exploded - **YoY impressions were up 574%, full-video Views were up 93%, and clicks were up over 1,000%**. While video ads aren't quite as likely to deliver lower-funnel conversions they were the 3rd largest source of conversions overall and have seen their ability to deliver strong conversion value increase over time.

## SEM

1. While the data might not be perfectly apples-to-apples due to GA4 issues, it appears that - looking at traffic from all sources - **the number of users on H1RT increased 32% to 1.15 million in the '23-'24 fiscal year. Google Ads was the top source of traffic with over 300K users, a 23% increase from the previous year.** The number of impressions delivered across all **Google Ads campaigns increased a massive 45%**, largely due to PMax being implemented plus the huge delivery in Video/YouTube during the brand lift study in early Spring.
2. Looking at conversions, **Google Ads is credited with the most (87.5K) users** who visited at least 4 pages on the site, along with 85K 1+ minute sessions, 2K Hidden Secrets form submits, 855 Beaches submits, 716 Small Town submits, 485 Wildlife submits, and 295 Hiking submits, for about 4,300 total additions to the CRM. An important goal for the next fiscal year will be work toward increasing all of these metrics but particularly the more advanced submits - with the Conversion Value bidding being used on nearly all campaigns now, Google will be able to 'find' and deliver ads to more users who resemble these advanced converters.
3. While the more traditional **Main Search campaign had its budget reduced** to allow for expansion of other, newer campaign types, **it gained efficiency. Top keywords for the year**, in terms of the number of conversions they drove, were **"things to do in california," "coastal road trip," "road trip map," "travel in california," "places in california," and "what to do in california."**



# MARKETING REPORT

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

## ORGANIC SOCIAL UPDATE

**f**

119,160 ▲ 5%  
Total Followers

864,582 ▼ -24%  
Total Engagements

2,200,000 ▲ 83%  
Video Views

29,317,783 ▲ 25%  
Total Impressions

291,159 ▼ -15%  
Total link clicks

- Engagement on our posts decreased by 24%, indicating a drop in interaction despite the higher impressions. This suggests that while more people are seeing our content, fewer are actively engaging with it, which may point to the need for a content refresh or new engagement strategies
- Post-link clicks decreased by 15% compared to last year, suggesting a decline in user interest in clicking through to additional content or offers. This could indicate the need for more compelling calls to action.

**ig**

44,540 ▲ 10%  
Total Followers

87,113 ▼ -46%  
Total Engagements

1,828,801 ▼ -40%  
Total Impressions

- Impressions dropped by 40% this year, totaling 1,828,801 compared to last year's 3,073,899. While significant, this presents an opportunity to refine our content strategy and boost Instagram engagement by addressing the factors behind the decline.
- Engagement dropped 46% this year, with 87,113 interactions compared to 162,446 last year. This highlights the need to improve our strategies by creating more compelling content and fostering stronger audience connections.

**yt**

162,000 ▲ 58%  
Total Views

81,240 ▼ -92%  
Total Impressions

50,760 ▼ -89%  
Total Audience

279,500 ▲ 68%  
Watch Time (in min)

6,320 ▼ -60%  
Total Engagements

Content	Average view duration	Views
1. Small Towns Big Experiences Await on a Highway 1 Road Trip Aug 31, 2023	0:32 (106.1%)	123,697
2. Best Beaches of Highway 1 Mar 7, 2024	0:29 (96.6%)	55,797
3. Beaches Along Highway 1 Mar 29, 2023	0:28 (92.7%)	52,599

**lh**

70.10% ▲ 57%  
Interaction Rate

5.92% ▲ 1%  
Story CTR

52.80% ▲ 8%  
Completion Rate



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July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

214 Articles to date	14 Visiting journalists	147 Direct Links to Highway 1 Road Trip Website
4 Media Missions	1 FAMS with SLO CAL	13 Articles in Target Outlets
		7 Additional Placements to Target Outlets

## STEWARDSHIP



- Launched New "Back to Nature" Tours on the Central Coast
- Incorporated Stewardship on a Deeper Level in Our Public Relations Efforts
- Successfully Integrated "Stewardship Travel for Good" Messaging in All Marketing Efforts

## BACKEND WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- Moved server infrastructure to Hetzner servers running on a Runcloud management platform.
- Completely rewrote the theme from Sage to Timber using the Twig templating engine.
- Redesigned listing pages with more visible filters and additional filter choices.
- Redesigned individual Where to Stay, Where to Eat, Things to Do, and Events pages with a significantly more user-friendly design.
- Converted numerous pages from Elementor to the Gutenberg builder in an effort to phase out Elementor. This will result in better performance, accessibility, and SEO scores.
- Created content templates to make page building faster and more efficient.
- Created additional pages in support of marketing activities.
- Conducted an accessibility audit of the new theme and conducted any necessary remediation.
- Streamlined the method of adding tracking codes to the site.
- Worked with the rest of the team to redesign the homepage and Things to Do page. Implementation will be complete in Q3 2024.

- 23 | 24 FY Roll-Up: The report was reviewed and Gary commented on the change from Google Analytics to GA4; Lori provided some insights. Mike noted that the CBID is fortunate to have the BID Bunch team and he really appreciates everyone's efforts.

**Action Items** (each topic will allow for Board Discussion, followed by Public Comment)

- **Sunshine & Bourbon Travel Expenses:** Laila said that these should be reviewed more closely to avoid issues in the future. Lori Ritchey made note that they have done so much with the budget, including sizzle reels and videos that are exceptional. Gary appreciates their efforts and pointed out that the shoots were during high season when travel is more costly. Mike added that the value is there, without a doubt; his experience is that travel costs are typically an add-on to the scope of work, and wants to ensure our partners are made whole. Tessa shared the challenges with the process, including amendment and cost justification. A motion was made by Laila Kollmann and seconded by Mike Hanchett to amend the contract to include additional travel expenses, noting a total of \$4097.39, which will be funded from the CBID Contingency. Submission should include justification, which would note that the high season travel was more expensive, and that the launch timing required work to be done by July. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board; Bram Winter abstained.
- **Resolution to Amend Biennial Conflict of Interest:** Tessa noted that this comes up annually and wants to make sure it is clear and covers all needs. Mike clarified that no other obligation of the Col changed and Tessa confirmed. Mike also asked about the reporting requirements for Form 700 and Tessa reviewed them. Tessa will get more details around vendor overnight stays. A motion was made by Laila Kollmann and seconded by Mike Hanchett to accept the resolution to amend the Conflict of Interest. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.
- **CBID and LFA Bylaws:** The LFA and CBID bylaws are now the same. Updates included removal of the secretary position requirement, LFA meeting days, and language to allow renewal of the chair if no others are interested. Mike asked about the level of detail in bylaws and section 2A regarding admin submitting annual report. Tessa confirmed that the ordinance states this detail. Also, article 4 regarding LFA admins vs. LFA boards as SSTA does not currently have an admin and Tessa noted. A motion was made by Bram Winter and seconded by Mike Hanchett to approve the amended bylaws. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.
- **Board Succession:** The succession extends Chair Gary Setting's term for another year. A motion was made by Laila Kollmann and seconded by Bram Winter to extend Gary's CBID Chair term through June 30, 2025. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board; Gary Setting abstained.

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- Discussion to move CBID Meeting Time: The board discussed moving the meeting time and all agreed it will start at 9am on the 4th Wednesday of each month starting on October 23.
- **CAO Contract Renewal** (effective 1/1/2025): CAO Cuming voluntarily left the room for the discussion. Gary and Tessa outlined the discussion, which included: updating the scope of work to the new county format; follow-up call with Gary and Mike to prepare for vote at next CBID meeting; agendize the item for the October 23 meeting. Tessa confirmed that possible options to consider are sole source, RFP, and same terms. The board discussed the difference in formation structure from the 1989 Act to the 1994 Act and will place as a future agenda item.
- **VAC Cinderblock Wall Letter to BOS:** The letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the cinderblock wall repairs in downtown Cayucos was reviewed. A motion was made by Laila Kollmann and seconded by Mike Hanchett to approve the letter as presented. Further board discussion was held about the wording and Bram confirmed he is comfortable with it. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.
- **LFA Funding Applications**
  - None

#### **Future Agenda Items**

- LFA Funding Applications (CTB - Art & Wine Festival; CTB & SSTA - BlendFest)
- BID Bunch presentations: SEO & Website

#### **Closing Comments & Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06pm.

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