



# MARKETING REPORT

## July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025



### WEBSITE TRAFFIC OVERVIEW: QUALITY AND QUANTITY

<b>FY Rollup</b>	1.4M Sessions <span style="color: green;">▲ 2.9%</span>	1.4M Engaged sessions <span style="color: green;">▲ 9.5%</span>	94.7% Engagement Rate <span style="color: green;">▲ 6.4%</span>	1.1M New Users <span style="color: green;">▲ 0.6%</span>	1.2 Sessions per user <span style="color: green;">▲ 3.1%</span>
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Channel	Sessions	Engaged Sessions	Engagement Rate	New Users	Sessions per User
Organic Search	299,083	279,335	93.4%	225,525	1.28
Cross Network	246,545	241,451	97.93%	192,265	1.26
Paid Search	231,979	219,322	94.54%	194,767	1.15
Unassigned	165,121	161,356	97.72%	137,679	1.12
Direct	112,373	97,144	86.45%	92,691	1.17
Paid Video	88,470	86,291	97.54%	69,728	1.27
Email	54,435	51,767	95.1%	37,211	1.33
Organic Social	53,809	53,184	98.84%	49,883	1.03
Paid Social	53,484	53,448	99.93%	44,181	1.12
Organic Video	38,266	37,490	97.97%	34,521	1.07
Display	16,509	15,621	94.62%	11,915	1.21
Referral	15,788	13,673	86.6%	11,662	1.25
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,429,466</b>	<b>1,353,158</b>	<b>94.66%</b>	<b>1,121,350</b>	<b>1.24</b>
<b>23-24 FY</b>	<b>1,389,174</b>	<b>1,235,667</b>	<b>88.95%</b>	<b>1,115,090</b>	<b>1.21</b>

### EBLASTS & LEAD GENERATION

#### WINS

- **43% open rate** (above Travel industry average of 33%)
- Increased subscribers (+26,655, a **14% increase** over last year)
- Rebranding completed across all email marketing templates & content
- Content refreshed to be more relevant and timely
- Implemented new Welcome drip series

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- More personalized content
- Map automations migration project will allow repeat requests (resolved)
- Room for click rate to improve



#### CHALLENGES

- Decreased open rates July - October (resolved)
- Deliverability issues - emails landing in spam (resolved)
- Flooding of Highway 1 caused tourist concerns (resolved with addition of road condition info to footer)

<b>FY Rollup</b>	1,957,948 Sent	1,951,884 Delivered	842,297 Opens	43% Open Rate
<b>145,499</b> Total Email Subscribers	33,497 Clicks	1.72% Click Rate	5,058 Unsubscribes	0.26% Sessions per user



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## SEO ORGANIC REACH

### ORGANIC SEARCH TRAFFIC

299,083 Sessions	225,525 Users
▲ 9.08%	▲ 8.48%

### GOOGLE SEARCH CONSOLE RESULTS

17,641,859 Impressions	229,299 URL Clicks	1.3% CTR	16.5 Average Position
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Google had several algorithm updates during the fiscal year. The H1TA benefited the most from the most recent updates in March. **Significant lift was seen as a result of having rich content.** As zero click search also becomes more prevalent, **rich content will be beneficial for AI engines that aggregate and consolidate H1TA content.**

## PAID MEDIA

### Key Insights & Achievements for Just Coast Winter/Spring Campaigns July 24 - June 25.

(Updated spend of \$496k for H1TA and \$125.5k LFAs). A multichannel effort across Google SEM, Meta, Spotify, Amazon Display/CTV, Programmatic, Native, Email, and Print.

### YOY COMPARISON FY'25 VS FY 24

- **Impressions held steady** at 64M but spend decreased slightly, driving a **lower \$6.94 CPM**.
- **Engagements down YoY** (1.6M vs. 2.8M) — mostly due to reduced volume from Meta — but time on site and 4+ page visits increased.
- **Clicks totaled 1.1M**, with **CTR softening to 1.76%** (from 2.17%) as short-form Meta video delivery slowed.
- **CPV down 54% YoY to \$0.67**, continuing a healthy trend toward more efficient site traffic.
- **CPCV dropped to \$1.22** (vs. \$1.40 in the same period last year; full FY'24 was \$2.39).
- **CPL increased again to \$1.95** average (from \$1.23 last year).

### ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

- **154k visitors read 4+ pages**, a strong signal of trip planning intent; this audience segment grew 10% YoY.
- **25.7k total downloads**, including **7.5k lead forms** from paid social and native content (mainly via Meta Instant Forms and Google remarketing).
- **Google PMax** and **StoryStudio** drove the most cost efficient volume at depth, while Spotify and CTV maintained top-of-funnel lift.



**Key Takeaway:** Efficiencies remain strong as the campaign matured into late spring. Google, social and retargeting continue to drive the deepest on-site engagement, while Google Ads was the backbone of conversion flow.



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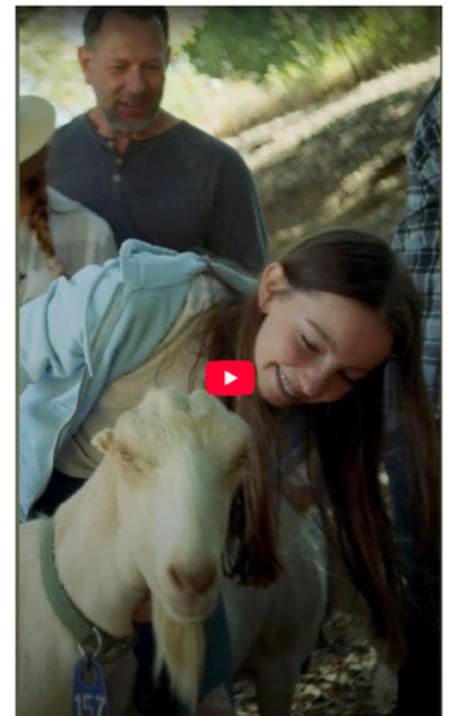


### SEM

- 1. Total clicks from Google Ads were up 54% from the previous year and impressions were up 139% with only an 11% increase in spend.** Google Ads accounted for 40% of sessions on the H1RT site. The majority of the **increases came from the PMax campaigns**, which had low CPCs and the lowest cost/conversion. Video gained efficiency over the year, especially at driving on-site conversions: even though spend on Video ads was down 8%, the number of conversions it drove was up 32%. The Coolcations PMax effort began in June - in a short time it has shown similar efficiency to the existing PMax efforts. Expansion in both PMax and Video are in the works for '25-'26.
- 2. The Search campaigns also gained in efficiency:** spend in Search was down 14%, but clicks were down only 6% and conversions increased 34%. In the Main Search campaign, "things to do in california" was the top conversion driver, while "road trip" related searches saw a big jump in clicks and conversions over the year, as did '2-3 or 4-day trip' type searches; keywords containing "destinations" also performed very well. The introduction of AI Max in the new fiscal year should allow for even more prospecting into new areas of vacation-related search.
- 3. Conversions: Google Ads drove 389 Wildlife Submits, 2,689 Beaches Submits, 601 Small Town Submits, 2,561 Hidden Secrets Submits, and 265 Hiking Submits.** The strongest metric has been 4+ Page sessions - Google Ads drove 133,456 such sessions on the H1RT site, 51% of the site's total and a strong 52% increase from the previous year. **All campaign types saw increases, with PMax increasing most dramatically followed by the Video effort.**

### VIDEO OBSERVATIONS

- 1. Conversion Value Up 37% YoY:** Video evolved from a pure awareness play into a **highly efficient conversion driver**, delivering significantly more value per dollar than previous years.
- 2. Wildlife Creative Outperformed:** Lowest cost per view and highest conversion ROI—proving **animal-focused content** resonates most with our audience.
  - Wildlife content capitalized on a proven trend: **audiences are hungry for animal and nature content**. This campaign tapped into that instinctive engagement behavior, leading to:
    - Higher watch-through rates
    - Increased click-through to site
    - Superior **on-site behavior** (more 4+ page sessions and Hidden Gems form fills)
- 3. First-Ever Statistically Valid Brand Lift via YouTube:** April's Brand Lift study showed a +2.15% lift in ad recall, translating to a 27.7% relative lift in brand awareness among exposed users—17.4K Lifted Users at just \$0.52 CPLU.
  - Creative Strategy Takeaway:
    - Use mobile-first short form (:15s, :30s) for prospecting.
    - Deploy longer-form content for retargeting.
    - Justifies increased YouTube investment in FY26 planning.





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## ORGANIC SOCIAL UPDATE



While Highway 1 Road Trip’s Facebook performance saw declines across impressions, engagements, and video views in fiscal year 2025, these trends align with **larger shifts in paid results**. Despite these challenges, the account maintained a steady follower base and continued to drive traffic through link clicks. These outcomes reflect the enduring interest in the Highway 1 brand and highlight the platform’s potential for future growth as paid and organic strategies continue to evolve under the updated media plan for FY 2026.



Highway 1 Road Trip’s Instagram account **experienced healthy follower growth of nearly 10% this fiscal year**, demonstrating continued interest and relevance. While impressions and engagement saw slight declines, overall performance remained stable, with consistent content delivery helping to maintain strong connections with the audience. As a visually driven platform, Instagram continues to serve as a valuable space for inspiring travel and showcasing the beauty of Highway 1.

*Pinterest, YouTube, and LocalHood Stories are all secondary organic platforms.*



Pinterest performance declined across all key metrics this fiscal year, reflecting minimal paid support and a limited presence on the platform. These results were anticipated, as Pinterest was not a focus in the FY25 media strategy. However, based on internal discussions and positive feedback about the platform’s customer service and campaign potential, Pinterest has been identified as a key area for growth in FY26. With new creative, dedicated ad campaigns, and expanded platform testing planned, Pinterest is expected to play a larger and more strategic role in the year ahead.



This year’s YouTube performance showed positive momentum in reach, reflecting growing interest in video content. Although average viewing duration dipped, the platform continues to support broader storytelling goals and offers room to further engage audiences through expanded creative strategies.



While overall reach declined, improved engagement metrics suggest that Localhood Stories continued to resonate with viewers through to the end of the program. With Crowdriff officially retiring the feature, resources will be redirected to platforms that offer greater visibility, creative control, and long-term value for destination storytelling.



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## PUBLIC RELATIONS

66 Articles to date	18 Visiting journalists	27 Articles in Target Outlets	9 Direct Links to Highway 1 Road Trip Website
22 Journalist Shares	19,248 Total Engagement	717.78K Journalist Reach	6 Stewardship/Sustainability Related Articles

2.02B  
Total UVM

AFAR

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Forbes

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

Islands

THE POINTS GUY

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

Sunset

GO WORLD TRAVEL MAGAZINE

## STEWARDSHIP TRAVEL FOR GOOD

### 2024-2025 ACHIEVEMENTS & KEY FINDINGS

- **Launched & Promoted New “Back to Nature” Tours on the Central Coast**
  - A detailed and motivating curated collection of guided and self-guided adventures was promoted through a new landing page, inviting visitors to connect even more deeply with wildlife, a sense of place, and the natural world.
- **Targeted PR Campaigns**
  - Media outreach emphasized the region’s sustainable travel offerings, deeper integration of STFG messaging into press trips, pitches, and published content. Exceeded the goal and received 6 published articles related to Travel for Good.
- **Content Development & Messaging Integration**
  - Travel for Good themes and tips were integrated into all marketing channels, including newsletters, social media, and authority pages. In addition, the Travel for Good Landing page was updated and consolidated for easier access viewing and higher SEO.
- **Partnership Alignment**
  - The STFG marketing strategy continues to work effectively with Visit SLO CAL to leverage our broader Sustainability Tourism Strategies as well as support and integrate the new Just Coast branding efforts.



STEWARDSHIP/SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL IS RAPIDLY GROWING WORLDWIDE