



MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING
March 1, 2021
Minutes

The Marketing Committee Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) was held at the Las Vegas Convention Center, 3150 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109 and telephonically on March 1, 2021. This meeting was properly noticed and posted in accordance with the State of Nevada Executive Department Declaration of Emergency Directives 006, 016, 018, 021, 026, 029, and 037, dated March 22, 2020, April 29, 2020, May 7, 2020, May 28, 2020, June 29, 2020, July 31, 2020, and February 14, 2021, respectively.

Marketing Committee Members:

Present unless otherwise noted

Councilman John Marz, Chair
Mr. Anton Nikodemus, Vice Chair
Mr. Scott DeAngelo.....*absent*
Councilwoman Pamela Goynes-Brown
Ms. Jan Jones Blackhurst
Ms. Mary Beth Sewald
Ms. Marilyn Spiegel

LVCVA Executive Staff in Attendance

Steve Hill, CEO/President
Ed Finger, Chief Financial Officer
Caroline Bateman, General Counsel
Brian Yost, Chief Operating Officer
Lori Nelson-Kraft, Sr. Vice President of Communications
Fletch Brunelle, Vice President of Marketing
Kevin Bagger, Vice President of Research Center
John Schreiber, Vice President of Business Sales

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chair John Marz called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR BY THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the floor by the public.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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Member Marilyn Spiegel moved, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the voting members present, including Member Michele Fiore via telephone, to approve the March 1, 2021, Marketing Committee Meeting agenda and the February 6, 2020, Marketing Committee Meeting minutes.

STAFF REPORTS AND REQUESTED ACTIONS

ITEM A. **2020 Marketing Recap and 2021 Marketing Outlook**

Steve Hill, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/President, commented on the following: the targeted approach of marketing efforts as they relate to health statistics, herd immunity, and “returning to normal”. Mr. Hill provided information on projected vaccination statistics by Memorial Day Weekend, commented on the potential to host World of Concrete (WOC) in June, and expressed optimism in the recovery of Las Vegas.

Kate Wik, Chief Marketing Officer, commented on the format of the meeting to include open dialogue and real-time feedback from Committee members.

Ms. Wik described the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on marketing operations.

Billy Vassiliadis, R&R Partners CEO, presented a video to depict R&R’s adjustments to the “confusion” during the COVID-19 pandemic in the past year.

Justin Gilbert of R&R Partners (telephonically) described the questions raised by the pandemic and the research involved for effective communication during unprecedented times.

Lindsey Patterson of R&R Partners described the evolution of processes to maximize the effectiveness and flexibility of marketing and emphasized the programming with Online Travel Agencies (OTA).

Ms. Wik informed that a summary of all marketing efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic period had been prepared and stated that today’s conversation would focus on the path forward.

Mr. Vassiliadis commented on the path and protocols to safely hosting meetings, and the research conducted for the group segment marketing strategy and plan.

Ms. Wik described the layered messaging for business groups in the current environment, including the “Back to Business”, “Meet Smart”, and “Fast Forward” platforms.

Ms. Wik discussed the messaging leading up to the June hosting of Informa Exhibits’ World of Concrete and leveraging that media coverage.

Colleen Yoshida, LVCVA Director of Advertising, described the creation and intent of the “Meet Smart, Vegas Smart” initiative and online resources related to that campaign. Ms. Yoshida shared a video regarding the “Meet Smart, Vegas Smart” effort, and described other messaging efforts related to the safe reopening of Las Vegas for groups, including leadership quotes and a toolkit.

Yanick Dalhouse of R&R Partners discussed the launch of the “Fast Forward” campaign and described its creation and direction.

Arnie DiGeorge of R&R Partners described the growing desire to meet face to face and detailed the visuals of the “Fast Forward” campaign including design and color. Mr. DiGeorge presented a video advertisement and social media clips for meeting planners and tradeshow producers.

Ms. Dalhouse noted that the Vegas Means Business website had been refreshed to complement the look and feel of the “Fast Forward” campaign.

Molly Castano, LVCVA Communications Manager, detailed paid and earned media activities including print and digital campaigns, and trade publications.

Mr. Vassiliadis emphasized the importance of communicating the flexibility and reinvention of Las Vegas and the plan moving forward, noting the ongoing uncertainty of the convention industry.

Ms. Wik summarized long-term and short-term communication efforts and the leveraging of events that are actually happening.

Vice Chair Anton Nikodemus asked what the meeting planner sentiment was, and what is the difference in the messaging now to make them act, to which Mr. Vassiliadis answered that communicating that Las Vegas is open is the immediate message to be communicated.

Vice Chair Nikodemus expressed concern in the timing of the messaging to meeting planners, to which Mr. Vassiliadis indicated he was waiting on a "starter's pistol". Vice Chair Nikodemus asked for clarification, to which Mr. Hill explained the LVCVA doesn't have the ability to guarantee show organizers that their exhibitors' investments would result in customers. Mr. Hill expressed hope that the approval of WOC would be that launch point. Vice Chair Nikodemus clarified that Mr. Hill's hopes were that once WOC was approved, that would be the launch point that the resort corridor can leverage off of, to which Mr. Hill confirmed.

Chair Marz asked if the LVCVA is working closely on assisting other show organizers and exhibitors in their messaging, to which Ms. Wik confirmed the LVCVA is partnering with event organizers to ensure they have materials to embed into their marketing efforts.

Mr. Hill clarified that the LVCVA doesn't have access to organizers' customer list, but the LVCVA partners with the organizers to provide messaging.

Member Spiegel suggested the use of cooperative advertising with meeting planners and the need to assist them to reach their customers. Ms. Wik confirmed that will be taken into consideration.

Member Mary Beth Sewald asked if there was any apparatus to assist clients to comply with current protocols, to which Mr. Yost responded that the LVCVA has been working with its clients to define building-specific protocols and assisting with submitting their packets for event approval.

Ms. Wik outlined destination sales efforts and noted the reorganization of internal teams for those efforts. Fletch Brunelle, Vice President of Marketing, detailed the destination sales reorganization including convention sales, global sales, leisure sales, and sports marketing.

Mr. Brunelle described the key components and third-party meeting planners that compose the majority of convention sales leads, and emphasized the importance of the development of platforms in conjunction with hotel partners to sell the destination.

Mr. Brunelle provided information on Leisure Sales efforts including work with tour operators, the Learn and Earn program, and extended destination programming.

Mr. Brunelle discussed Global Sales efforts and provided updates on border closures and international leisure travel, and provided information on the potential International Pow Wow event in September, to showcase the destination to international travel buyers.

Mr. Brunelle provided updates on air service development including passenger throughput and capacity statistics.

Mr. Brunelle discussed the development of youth and amateur sports programs.

Ms. Wik described consumer messaging strategies with the use of metrics including the decline of COVID-19 cases and vaccination doses. Ms. Wik discussed the building of momentum in this positive trajectory by creating buzz via social media influencers, a paid campaign, and destination-wide celebrations.

Ms. Patterson described the social influencer approach including diversity, content, and use of hashtags.

Nikki Velez, LVCVA Senior Director of Digital Engagement, discussed the influencer selection process including follower demographic, reach, and geographical location. Ms. Velez described the variety of the influencers' itineraries.

Erin McClesky of R&R Partners provided an information on paid media programs in conjunction with influencer programming.

Mr. Vassiliadis commented on broadcast efforts related to the consumer campaign and the use of the idea of personal freedom and choices after a period of not having those abilities, and described the appropriate timing being the end of April or beginning of May.

Ms. Wik expressed excitement in the path to marketing Las Vegas from a business and leisure perspective.

Vice Chair Nikodemus asked what the new messaging would be to capture the consumer emotion, to which Mr. Vassiliadis indicated that the tone would touch on the sense of immediacy and the emotional need to escape.

Vice Chair Nikodemus suggested the timing on the messaging should be "sooner rather than later", as leisure consumers are already making travel decisions.

Ms. Wik indicated the importance of the social and digital push to first communicate to those who are receptive to the messaging prior to pushing to a broader household level.

Member Spiegel expressed appreciation for the LVCVA's leisure marketing efforts and expressed the need for a focus on convention business for midweek bookings.

Vice Chair Nikodemus suggested the launch of a campaign for the start of convention business after the approval of the WOC convention, to which Ms. Wik stated the Fast Forward campaign is a paid campaign targeting longer-term meeting planners, whereas social and digital channels amplify groups that are currently meeting, and will ramp over the next few months as restrictions ease.

Mr. Vassiliadis described meeting planners and business executives as avid news and trade watchers that will be reached by the amount of PR the LVCVA will distribute when timing allows. Mr. Vassiliadis ensured meeting business is a focus for R&R Partners.

Member Spiegel discussed the importance of the selling of safety and justifying the importance of investment in face to face communication.

Chair Marz commented on the vitality of consumer messaging to all audiences including business travelers, to which Ms. Wik agreed, citing recent research findings by The Freeman Company that business travelers are looking to create leisure trips out of business trips. Ms. Wik commented on the overlap of consumer and business messaging.

Member Jan Jones Blackhurst emphasized the importance of the underlying message of health and vitality to business through the use of face to face communication, to which Ms. Wik agreed to the need to target a c-level narrative.

Member Sewald reiterated Member Blackhurst's sentiments and commented on the creation of "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO) and a call to action.

Vice Chair Nikodemus discussed the importance of emphasizing the closing of deals in person versus doing business virtually in the LVCVA's messaging.

Ms. Wik expressed appreciation for the Committee members' dialogue and feedback.

Chair Marz thanked Committee Members for their participation, emphasized the value of their input, and encouraged further conversation between Committee members and the marketing team.

This was an information item and did not require Committee action.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE

Chair Marz stated the next Marketing Committee meeting should be "in the next few months", to which Member Jones Blackhurst proposed meeting at the beginning of May.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR BY THE PUBLIC

Aleta Dupree (telephonically) provided thoughts on vaccinations, encouraged the wearing of masks, and expressed appreciation for the use of the Las Vegas Convention Center as a vaccination site.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Marz adjourned the meeting at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Date Approved: May 17, 2021

Silvia Perez
Executive Assistant to the Board

John Marz
Marketing Committee Chair