

**TO:** James L. App, City Manager

**FROM:** Meg Williamson, Assistant City Manager  
Jim Throop, Administrative Services Director

**SUBJECT:** **Tourism & Lodging Promotions Business Improvement District (BID)  
Annual Report and Notice of Intent for Renewal of Assessment**

**DATE:** December 17, 2013

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**NEEDS:** For the City Council to receive the annual report and set a public hearing for the annual renewal of the Tourism and Lodging Promotions Business Improvement District (BID).

**FACTS:**

1. At the request of the majority of Paso Robles hoteliers, the BID was formed via ordinance by the City Council in December 2008 and the BID became effective January 16, 2009.
2. Collection of the two percent (2%) Business Improvement Tax began on February 1, 2009, establishing the fiscal year for the district as February 1<sup>st</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup>. These funds are held in a separate City fund that is to be used only for the purposes of tourism and lodging as stated in the formation Ordinance and Bylaws.
3. Use of BID funds is guided by an annually approved marketing plan, of which its implementation is overseen by the Travel Paso Robles Alliance (TPRA) who are an advisory committee to the City Council. The TPRA membership represents a cross section of the 20 hoteliers within the BID assessment district.
4. Per the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law (Streets and Highways Code Sections 36500 et seq.) under which the BID was formed, the assessment must be re-levied annually.
5. The City Council has renewed the BID levy the past four years at the request of the hoteliers. The BID currently will be effective through January 30, 2014, unless again extended.
6. At their November 26, 2013 meeting, the TPRA Advisory Committee unanimously:
  - Approved the Annual Report for the 2013/14 fiscal year;
  - Proposed a Marketing Plan scope/budget for the 2014/15 year; and
  - Recommended the continued levy of the BID assessment for 2014/15.
7. Renewal of the BID tax assessment requires that the City Council receive the annual report from the TPRA and set a public hearing for consideration of the renewal of the levy of assessment. The FY 13/14 Annual Report is attached.

8. The TPRA's proposed marketing plan and budget for the next fiscal year of tourism promotion work is attached. Highlights of the marketing plan include:

Destination Manager: Continuation of a professional service contract for a Destination Manager (Big Red Marketing) to oversee implementation/coordination of marketing efforts and to conduct trade and group sales outreach in addition to administrative support duties.

Marketing Agency Services: Retention of marketing agency services (Augustine Ideas) to implement key promotional and advertising strategies for the Paso Robles brand identity, including public relations and media relations, and support of digital marketing.

Community Partnerships: Support of local and regional tourism partners to leverage tourism efforts which benefit the Paso Robles area and/or sponsorship of community based events that enrich the visitor experience.

**ANALYSIS &**

**CONCLUSION:** The TPRA's marketing efforts continue to support an upward trend in transient occupancy stays within our community. The TPRA has recommended a continued levy of the BID assessment in order to carry on work efforts towards the marketing and promotion of the Paso Robles area.

**POLICY**

**REFERENCE:** Economic Strategy; Ordinance 952 NS, forming the Tourism and Lodging Business Improvement District; BID Committee Bylaws; Streets and Highways Cod Sections 36500 et seq.

**FISCAL**

**IMPACT:** The BID assessment is being collected on a monthly basis and will accumulate in a separately maintained fund. City staff will continue to commit its resources to facilitate the goals of the BID. Renewal of the assessment levy is estimated to generate approximately \$750,000 annually, to be spent on marketing and promotions.

**OPTIONS:**

- a. For the City Council to adopt Resolution No. 13-XX declaring its intention to levy an annual assessment for the fiscal year February 1, 2014 to January 31, 2015 for the Paso Robles Tourism and Lodging Promotions Business Improvement District, and setting a public hearing for January 7, 2014.
- b. Amend, modify or reject above option.

Attachments:

1. Resolution declaring intention to levy an annual assessment and setting January 7, 2014 for a public hearing
2. BID 2013/14 Annual Report and Marketing Agency Plan scope and Marketing Budget for FY 2014/15

RESOLUTION NO. 13-XXX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES ESTABLISHING  
A NOTICE OF INTENT TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING FOR  
THE PURPOSE OF CONSIDERING THE 2014/15 ANNUAL  
RENEWAL OF LEVY FOR THE PASO ROBLES TOURISM AND LODGING  
PROMOTIONS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
PURSUANT TO THE PARKING AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA LAW OF 1989

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WHEREAS, the Paso Robles Tourism and Lodging Promotions Business Improvement District (BID) was formed via Ordinance 952 N.S. by the City Council in December 2008, and the BID became effective January 16, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the BID is now commonly known as the Travel Paso Robles Alliance (TPRA); and

WHEREAS, at its November 26, 2013 meeting, the TPRA Advisory Committee recommended the release of the annual report for the 2013/14 fiscal year, proposed a scope/budget for the upcoming 2014/15 year, and recommended the continued levy of the BID assessment; and

WHEREAS, the annual report of the professional marketing services and financials associated with the 2013/14 marketing year is available for public inspection; and

WHEREAS, under the projected scope of service and budget for fiscal year 2014/15, the amount of the BID assessment is recommended to continue at the two percent (2%) amount and be collected in the same manner for another year; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council for the City of El Paso de Robles does hereby resolve, determine and find as follows:

Section 1. The recitals set forth herein are true and correct; and

Section 2. The boundaries of the area to be included in the District are to remain unchanged and are the boundaries of the City of El Paso de Robles; and

Section 3. The types of activities proposed to be funded by the continued levy of assessments on businesses in the District are those activities that will promote tourism and the local tourist lodging establishments; and

Section 4. The City Council intends to levy an annual assessment on all tourist lodging establishments within the District, to pay for all improvements and activities of the District, except where funds may otherwise be available, continuing for the District's fiscal year February 1, 2014 – January 31, 2015. As used herein, the term "tourist lodging establishments" shall mean hotels, as defined in Section 21.08.250 of the Paso Robles Municipal Code, but not bed and breakfast establishments, as defined in Section 21.15.220 of the Paso Robles Municipal Code, nor campgrounds or recreational vehicle parks. The method and the basis for levying the assessment on such tourist lodging establishments within the District shall be as follows: An assessment will be levied annually against tourist lodging establishments to pay for the improvements and activities within the District and will be collected in monthly installments or such other installments as determined by the City Council. The proposed assessment is to be levied on all tourist lodging establishments within the District boundaries based upon two percent (2%) of the rent charged by the operator per occupied room per night for all transient occupancies. "Transient occupancy" shall mean the use or possession, or the right to the use or possession, of any room or rooms or portion thereof, in any hotel for dwelling, lodging or sleeping purposes, for a period of thirty consecutive calendar days or less. Transient occupancies by federal government employees on government business will be exempt from the levy of assessment. Extended stays, defined as more than thirty (30) consecutive calendar days, shall be exempt from the levy of assessment. Assessments levied pursuant to the District shall not be included in gross room rental revenue for the purpose of determining the amount of the transient occupancy tax.

Section 5. New tourist lodging establishments shall not be exempt from assessment.

Section 6. A public hearing to renew the annual levy for the District is hereby set for January 7, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. before the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles at the Paso Robles Library/City Hall Conference Center, 1000 Spring Street, El Paso de Robles, California.

Section 7. The City Clerk is instructed to provide notice to the public hearing as follows:

- a). Publish this Resolution of Intention in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of El Paso de Robles once, at least seven (7) days before the hearing.

Section 8. At the public hearing, the testimony of all interested persons, for or against the establishment of the District, the boundaries of the District, the area of benefit within the District, the assessments to be levied, or the furnishing of specified types of improvements or activities, will be heard. A protest may be made orally or in writing by any interested person. Any written protest as to the regularity or evidence of the proceedings shall be in writing and clearly state the irregularity or defect to which the objection is made. Written protests must be received by the City Clerk at or before the time set for the public hearing. A written protest may be withdrawn in writing at any time before the conclusion of the public hearing. Each written protest shall contain a written description of the business in which the person subscribing the protest is interested sufficient to identify the business. If the person subscribing is not shown on the official records of the City as the owner of the business, then the protest shall contain or be accompanied by written evidence that the person is the owner of the business.

Section 9. If at the conclusion of the public hearing, there are of record, written protests by the owners of the tourist lodging establishments within the District that would pay fifty percent (50%) or more of the total assessments of the entire District, no further proceedings to renew the annual levy for the District shall occur. New proceedings to form the District shall not be undertaken again for a period of at least one (1) year from the date of the finding of the majority written protests by the City Council. If the majority written protests are only as to an improvement or activity proposed, then that type of improvement or activity shall not be included in the District.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City council of the City of El Paso de Robles this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December 2013 by the following roll call vote:

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSENT:  
ABSTAIN:

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Duane Picanco, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Caryn Jackson, Deputy City Clerk



# Annual Marketing Report

November 1, 2012 – October 31, 2013



Written By:



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# Brand Awareness

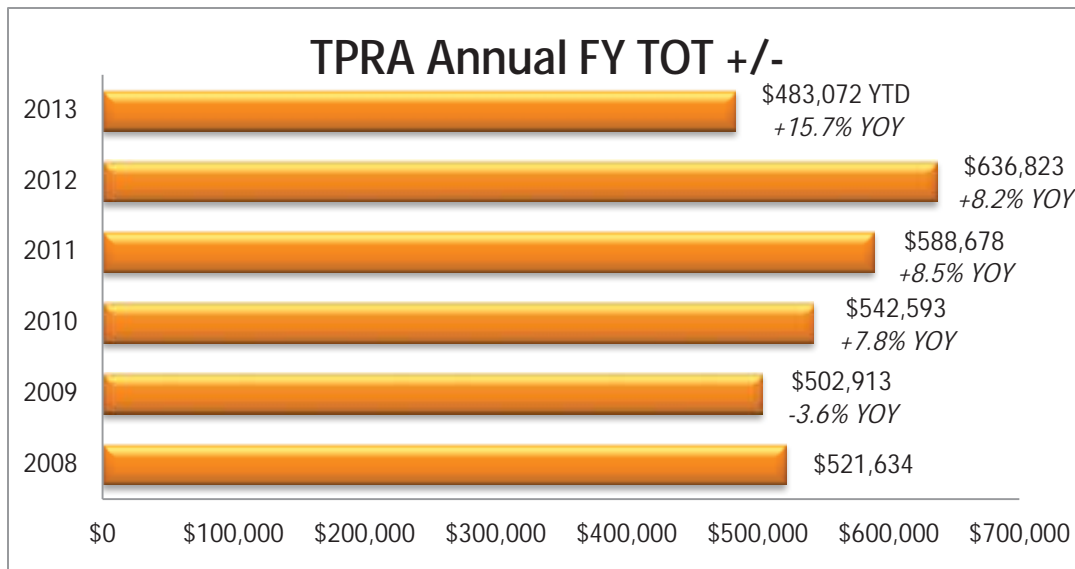
## Consistent Brand Messaging

Brand Messaging is what sets one product or destination apart from another. In an effort to consistently grow Paso Robles brand awareness and increase top of mind exposure to key drive markets, regional fly-drive audiences, and to obtain incremental growth in the national and international spot lights, Mental maintained a consistent flow of advertising and public relations activities to influential niche markets throughout the year, including advertising throughout the summer high season for the first time. Steady messages supporting the diverse attractions in and around Paso Robles, supplementing the essential wine message with a focus on events, agri-tourism, food, outdoor adventure, and local attractions backs the “authentic” brand emphasizing the diverse offerings that set Paso apart from the competition.

## Impact of Tourism Marketing

Over the past 4.5 years the TPRA has spent 2.73 million dollars on marketing programs branding Paso Robles as a diverse, world-class food, wine and outdoor destination nearby Hearst Castle and coastal beaches. According to the November 2012 Central Coast Economic Forecast, San Luis Obispo County restaurant and hotel sales tax receipts increased 10.6% from 2011 to 2012. From September 2011 to September 2012, the leisure and hospitality sector added 1,100 jobs, a 7.3% increase.

Since the end of the historic recession, Paso Robles has experienced a slow but steady recovery with tourism continuing to be the largest growth sector, with the city projecting increases of at least 6.0% YOY for their fiscal year July 2013 – June 2014. Tourism Marketing is Paso Robles best ROI generating millions of dollars in transient occupancy tax (TOT), creating jobs, supporting local business and keeping Paso Robles economically viable. **The result:** TPRA TOT has increased annually over the last three fiscal years (FY)\*, and is up +15.7% to date in this current FY, the highest increase during this time period since TPRA’s inception.



\*TPRA FY is Feb. 1 – Jan. 31

### **Importance of Brand Benchmarks**

As a result of the May 2012 TPRA Board retreat discussion on metrics and reporting ROI, a countywide awareness study was commissioned by VSLOC to establish baseline levels of visitation and general awareness to San Luis Obispo County and its competitive set among its target geographic markets. Mental worked with VSLOC to develop a co-op segment available to tourism partners like the TPRA that was conducted by SMG with Carl Ribaud as the lead. The survey launched in November 2012 using a panel survey and targeted completed surveys from 800 California respondents, including:

- 300 respondents from Los Angeles/Orange County
- 200 from the Central Valley, and
- 300 from the greater Bay Area

### **Key 2012 Brand Awareness Study Findings**

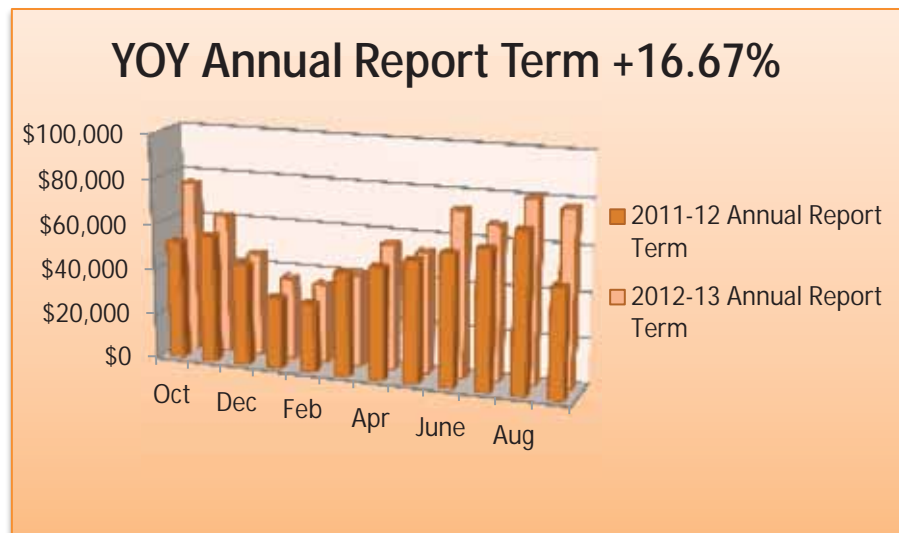
- Central Valley respondents differ from those from Los Angeles/Orange County or San Francisco – they value destinations with beaches more, and those with wine country less. Central Valley more likely to visit Pismo and Morro Bay.
- On Average, 38% of the respondents from Central Valley, LA, and SF are not familiar with Paso Robles
- Overall, respondents gave “activities that I like to participate in” the highest ratings, followed by “to visit a specific town,” “good lodging prices,” “just to get away,” and “visiting Hearst Castle.”
- Advertising was most frequently recalled for San Simeon/Hearst Castle followed by Pismo Beach.
- By region, visitor respondents from the San Francisco Bay Area were much more likely to select Hearst Castle, while those from the Central Valley were more likely to select beaches and Los Angeles/Orange County respondents were most likely to cite wine growing/tasting.
- The most frequently-selected activities included wine tasting (35%), Hearst Castle (32%), food and wine events (30%) and dining/cuisine (24%).



# Advertising Campaigns

## Overview

Based on key findings from the Awareness Study and direction from Destination Manager Amanda Diefenderfer, Mental worked towards leveraging marketing dollars focusing paid media primarily in the San Jose/Bay Area region. In addition, Mental launched six online campaigns with key brand messaging throughout winter, spring, summer and fall. Using strategic promotions geared towards niche audiences within the targeted area, focusing on good lodging prices and/or calls to action highlighting weekend giveaway packages showcasing diverse offerings of Paso Robles, the marketing efforts allowed for a higher reach and frequency of consistent brand messaging. **Results:** the YOY TOT showed significant lift throughout the term of this annual report\* with August TOT numbers breaking the \$80K mark for the first time in TPRA history, reflecting July occupancy.



*\*These numbers reflect TOT from October 2012 – Sept 2013*

### 1) Winter Gas Card Campaign: November 2012 – January 2013

#### **Campaign Overview:**

This promotion was devised in an effort to gain top of mind awareness prior to the Hotel Month promotion with a strong call to action and ran **weekly through Dec and Jan** to increase Paso Robles awareness in the tech savvy, close by San Jose market and was cross promoted with the 2013 Hotel Month promotion.

#### **Call to Action:**

Drive to Paso on Us! Consumer's sign up for a weekly giveaway of a \$100 gas card, a wine tour for two, and mineral spring spa soak on Facebook or TPRA's e-newsletter.



**Results:**

- Paid Media Impressions: 3.5 million
- Clicks to Landing Page: 1,969
- Facebook Sweeps Signups: 590; Clicks: 800; Winners: nine

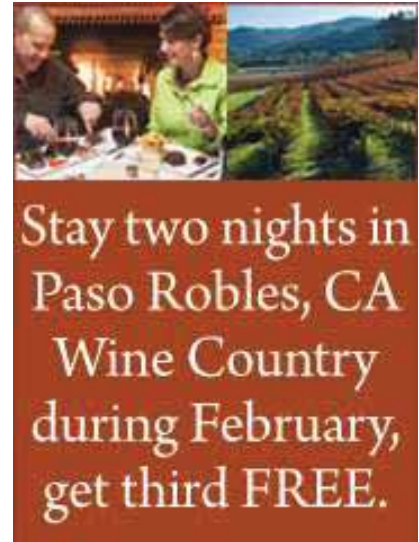
**2) February Hotel Month Campaign: Bookings +10% YOY**

**Campaign Overview:**

The second annual program was launched in December 2012 and encouraged visitors to visit Paso Robles in February with an attractive offer of getting a third night free when booking two nights. This enticed visitors to stay longer – a strategic goal of the alliance – and spend more in restaurants, shops and attractions.

**Call to Action:**

Ten TPRA hotels offered their guests the same special package: Stay Two Nights, Get One Free! To leverage the region’s brand equity as one of state’s leading wine destinations, the campaign offered a bottle of wine per room booked to add more cache to the packages and created a great ROI tracking component for bookings.



**Results:**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual promotion ran Dec 1 – Feb 28 generated 236 bookings, 708 incremental room nights, **+10% YOY** from 2012.

- Paid Media Impressions: 1.5 mil online media **(+149% YOY)**
- Earned Media Impressions: \$63.4 million online & print **(+53.7 mil YOY)**
- Ad Equivalency: \$114,473
- Publicity Value: \$343,419
- Clicks to Landing Page: 6,329 **(+50% YOY)**
- Facebook Sweeps Signups: 904 **(+184% YOY)**; FB Ad Clicks: 5,585

**3) Spring Campaign: Food and Wine Getaways**

**Campaign Overview:**

In an effort to continue frequent messaging to the San Jose/Bay Area region, and leverage the success of Hotel Month, the spring food and wine getaway campaigns were strategized to focus weekend getaways featuring wine and agri-tourism related events to keep Paso top of mind through spring into summer. This approach was supported by the findings from the awareness study that identified the top three reasons visitors come to Paso: wine, food & events.



**Call to Action:**

Enter to win two fantastic getaways to Paso Robles: the Paso Robles Wine Festival May 17 – 19, 2013 and the Paso Robles Olive Festival August 16 – 18.

**Results:**

The Wine Festival giveaway winner Tessa Dixon is a Tour/Meeting Planner for Global Markets. Lead was sent to Destination Manager Amanda Diefenderfer to coordinate site visits during her winning stay.

- Paid Media Impressions: 4.5 million
- Clicks to Landing Page: 1,911
- Facebook Sweeps Signups: 638
- FB Ad Clicks: 1,914 FB Likes: 670

**4) Summer Campaign: Cool Summer Hotel Deals June - August**

**Campaign Overview:**

Even though summer is high season in Paso Robles and weekends are often booked solid, keeping Paso Robles top of mind for late spring & summer travel as wine, food and outdoor destination is key to increase mid-week bookings throughout this burgeoning time, creating momentum rolling into the wine month promotion.



**Call to Action:**

Enlisting hotels that offer a special package throughout the summer offering mid-week rates was key to its success.

Landing page offer: *Visit Paso Robles for The Ideal California Summer Vacation & Save with Exclusive Lodging Deals & Fun Packages.* Six hotels offering 10 unique packages participated and were listed.

**Results:**

- Paid Media Impressions: 481,815
- Earned Media Impressions: 25 million+ including SF Gate, Fox Business News, Digital Journal and Examiner.com
  - PR Ad Value: \$289,055
  - Publicity Value: \$867,165
- Clicks to landing page listing summer hotel packages: 3,545
- **TravelPaso.com visits up 26% YOY June/July**
- Paid Social Media Impressions: 160,559 FB impressions, 3,153 clicks, 320 likes

5) **Wine Month: Discover Hotel Deals in Paso Robles**

**Campaign Overview:**

In an effort to leverage top of mind awareness and the lift in TOT activity achieved from the Summer Hotel Deals campaign, and with board approval to add advertising dollars to the media budget for this campaign, Mental coordinated efforts to launch a Wine Month Hotel Deals Campaign, offering a monthly weekend giveaway targeting food and wine lovers and female decision makers.

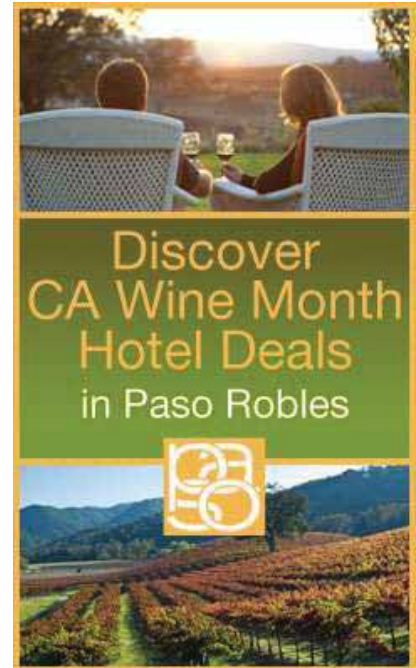
**Call to Action:**

Celebrate California Wine Month this September in Paso Robles! Discover Spectacular Hotel Packages and Enjoy "Sunset in the Vineyard at Vina Robles" or Win a Getaway Weekend to Paso Robles. All media impressions linked to landing page listing 12 packages from seven hotel participants.

**Results:**

These results are for the August / September Wine Month campaign as well as for the Paid Media for the monthly giveaway campaigns detailed below.

- Paid Media Impressions: 1.52 million
- Earned Media Impressions: 28 million
  - PR Ad Value: \$340,054
  - Publicity Value: \$1,020,162
- **Clicks to landing page: 6,875**



**August Wine Month Giveaway: Weekend at SAVOR**

*Sunset* SAVOR the Central Coast is a countywide food and wine event that highlights the key brand messaging points that Paso Robles consistently promotes, and features a Saturday evening event in Paso Robles each year sponsored by the TPRA. In an effort to promote SAVOR and more specifically the TPRA sponsored event alongside the Wine Month Hotel Deals campaign, Mental launched a SAVOR weekend getaway contest co-oped between the TPRA, BANG and the VSLOC Facebook pages.

**Contest Results:**

- Facebook Contest entries: 1,106
- Paid Social Media Impressions: 315,570
- Winners were from Napa - husband a chef!



**September Wine Month Giveaway: Girlfriend Giveaway**

After the SAVOR giveaway promotion ended in August, the Wine Month Hotel Packages campaign was still thriving. In a dual effort to leverage the Fitcation mom-bloggers convention in Paso Robles in October, and continue a strong call to action throughout the Wine Month Campaign, Mental strategized a Girlfriend Getaways Facebook contest co-op with Bay Area News Group, Oakland Tribune, SJ Mercury News, Contra Costa Times September 15 – 30, 2013. This pre convention-promotion

launched the Girlfriend Getaway messaging to this key target audience.

**Contest Results:**

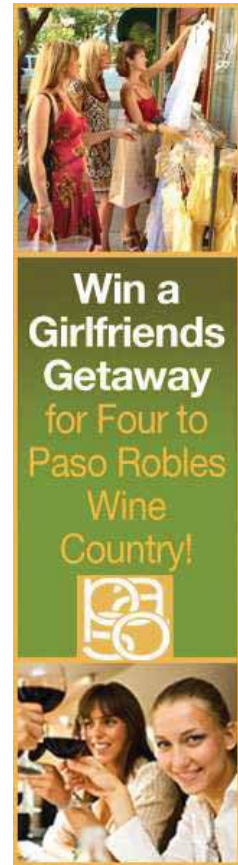
- Facebook Contest entries: 1,200
- Paid Social Media Impressions: 125,563; 1,335 clicks
- Earned Social Media: 109,300 reach

**Twitter Party**

On top of the paid media, Mental coordinated an advertorial twitter party opportunity involving all 30 of the Fitcation bloggers, TPRA, VSLOC, PRWCA and their colleagues. This twitter party promoted #TravelPaso and key TPRA messaging on September 18, 2013, during Girlfriends Getaway contest.

**Twitter Party Results:**

- Earned Social Media Impressions: 17.6 million
- 5499 tweets by 276 participants
- 14 million individual accounts reached
- #TravelPaso mentioned 3,000 times
- #TravelPaso trended on twitter nationwide at the peak of the event



**6) Harvest Campaign: Find Fun Harvest Hotel Deals**

**Campaign Overview:**

To keep the reach and frequency of ad penetration consistent in the San Jose/Bay Area market, Mental rebranded the the Wine Month Hotel Packages campaign into a Harvest Hotel Deals Campaign for the month of October.

**Call to Action:**

Visit Paso Robles during Harvest & Save with Fun Hotel Deals. Enjoy Special Savings on Wine Tasting, Biking through a vineyard, or hot air ballooning and enter to win a behind the scenes package to Paso Robles! Ten package were listed on the landing page from seven hotel participants.

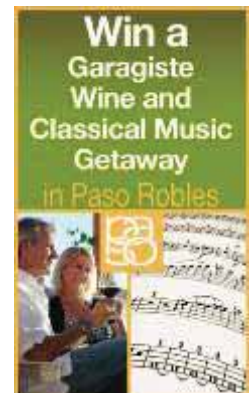


**Results:**

- Paid media impressions: 446,176
- Earned media impressions: 33.6 million
  - PR Ad Value: \$72,607
  - Publicity Value: \$217,821
- Clicks to landing page: 1,105

**October Giveaway: Win Garagiste and Music Getaway**

This program focused on niche wine aficionados and classical music fans. Call to action: Win a Garagiste Wine and Classical Music Getaway in Paso Robles!





**Contest Results:**

- Paid SM impressions: 146,496
- Earned Social Media Impressions: 96,914
- SM ad clicks to contest: 1,564
- Contest Entries: 407

**Additional Annual Advertising Programs**

**Trip Advisor**

Trip Advisor is consistently one of the top 5 referral sites to TravelPaso.com and is a key advertising supporter of all marketing programs and sweepstakes. Trip Advisor picked Paso Robles as a Best Wine Destination Traveler’s Choice Award for 2012. There are four online ads that geo target users looking to travel to Paso Robles, Sonoma, Napa, and other SLO county TA pages, geo-targeting consumers looking to come to the Central Coast. These ads are changed out based on the branding or marketing program at hand.



**October 2012 – Sept 2013 Results:**

- Paid Trip Advisor Media Impressions: **506,625**
- TravelPaso Referral Clicks: **2952**

**Brochure Update and Distribution**

This year the TPRA continued brochure distribution through Certified Folder, helping keep mailing costs down, to **include two corporate office programs in LA and SJ distributing to 332 corporations**, on top of the airport and welcome center strategy: *SJ San Jose Airport, Burbank/Bob Hope Airport, Santa Barbara Airport, CA Welcome Center Pismo Beach, CA Welcome Center San Francisco, CA Welcome Center Merced, CA Welcome Center Salinas.*

**Public Relations**

**Overview**

Mental Marketing executed very cost effective PR programs that covered a wide range of outreach techniques to educate and build long term relationships with key media, to garner earned media stories and publicity about what Paso Robles has to offer. This approach grows top of mind brand awareness with audiences in multiple key geographic and demographic markets. Specific niche markets were chosen with key consideration of Awareness Study results, with the intention of supporting advertising campaigns, growing shoulder, extended stay and mid-week high season business.

A [Nielsen study in 2013](#) found that earned media (also described in the report as word-of-mouth) is the most trusted source of information in all countries it surveyed worldwide. It also found that earned media is the channel most likely to stimulate the consumer to action.

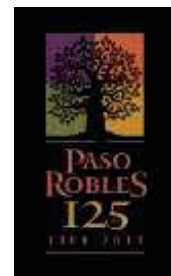


### Press Releases and Themed Programs Support

The TPRA media outreach efforts a series of **15** press releases that focus on newsworthy story ideas, special promotions, like Hotel and Wine Month, and themed branding programs like SAVOR, CA Wine Month and Paso Robles 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Distribution: **PR Web and PR Newswire** - Releases sent to Western US / Travel region reaching over 5,000 media per release. **Mental Proprietary Media List** - Sent to additional 5,000 Hotel, Golf, Wine, Food, Pet Friendly, Travel and Tourism focused journalists.

### Press Releases:

1. Nov 2012: **Holiday Events in Paso Robles**
2. Dec 2012: **Hotel Month**
3. Jan 2013: **Winter and Spring Events**
4. Feb 2013: **What's New in Paso Robles for Spring**
5. April 2013: **Summer Events**
6. May 2013: **What's New in PR for Summer**
7. May 2012: **What's New Release for IPW**
8. June 2013: **Ideal Summer Vacation Packages**
9. July 2013: **Celebrate Wine Month in Paso Robles w/Special Packages**
10. Sep 2013: **101 Reasons to Get Off HWY 101 in Paso Robles**
11. Sept 2013: **What's New for Fall**
12. Sept 2013: **Fall and Early Winter Events & 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**
13. Oct 2013: **Visit Paso Robles During Harvest**
14. Oct 2013: **Holiday Events & 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Kick Off Celebration**
15. Oct 2013: **Dog Friendly Travel to Paso Robles**



### Media Pitching and Press Visits

Year round leisure outreach continues to be a huge factor in the success of the TPRA Public Relations program. Similar to sales, knowing how to sell your product and persistence is key to securing feature stories and media fams. Mental crafted a variety of pitches aimed at niche market media from pet-friendly travel to girlfriend's getaways. Mental collaborated with Destination Manager to manage in-person contact during press visits.

- Pitches to media: **786**
  - Pro-active pitches: **691**
  - Reactive media pitches: **95**
  - **Sample media pitched:** *50 Golf writers, CondeNaste Traveler, Associated Press, Robb Report, AOL.com, USA Today, Pup Culture Magazine, Pet Business News, Modern Dog Magazine, Urban Dog Magazine, New York Post, 20 Bride Magazines, 20 Family Publications, etc.*
- TPRA Hosted Media Fams: **27 Press Visits** from various publications throughout the year including:
  - *National Geographic Traveler, Las Vegas News, Yahoo.com, Food Channel, Sacramento Bee, Pasadena Now, Sunset Magazine, Bon Appetit, Sunday Times Magazine, and Bay Area Parent*
- Pet Friendly FAM Tour in Paso April 27: VSLOC coordinated countywide Media Fam showcasing dog-friendly travel. Mental supplied VSLOC with round-up of Paso Robles dog friendly restaurants, hotels



and activities. Journalists from the following media outlets enjoyed wine tasting and a lunch in Paso Robles: *Have Dog Blog Will Travel, Bay Woof Newspaper, Westways, Jet Set Extra, DogTrekker.com, Examiner.com and Dogster.com.*

**Golf Fam October 23 – 26, 2013**

Sent invite to 50 vetted golf travel writers and secured six golf travel writers. The itinerary included a cigar and spirits reception, two rounds of golf at Hunter Ranch and PR Golf Club, dinner at three downtown restaurants and a wine tour attending by the following media: *The A Position, African American Golfer's Digest, Golf News Magazine, Avid Golfer, NCGA Magazine, California Golf News.* Media results pending.

**NYC Visit CA Media Event, March 19, 2013**

**Event Overview:**

On March 19, Visit California hosted their annual NYC media marketplace. The NYC media trip is a great opportunity to get in front of top media and spark interest in Paso Robles as interest in the area is blossoming, with most mentioning they've heard about Paso and want to know more.

**Results:**

- 79 travel media attended the show
- Pitched Paso Robles features with 19 media at event
- "A-listers" Mental met with included Travel & Leisure, Hemispheres, Fodor's, ShermansTravel, Bride's, NY Daily News and Every Day w/Rachel Ray
- In addition, we reached out to 50+ NYC media to schedule desk side meetings securing four appts

**Public Relations ROI**

Total print, broadcast and online coverage from all the above described programs:

- Editorial Placements: 235
- Earned Media Impressions: 727.9 Million
- Total Ad Equivalency: \$4.6 Million
- Total Publicity Value: \$13.8 Million





# Social Media

Social Media programs extend TPRA’s traditional media and advertising reach through content generation, earned social media, and interactive outreach incentives that offer measureable results. This last year Mental conducted six Facebook sweepstakes contests, some in conjunction with the Bay Area News Group and other tourism partners, continuing to build social media awareness, growing TravelPaso.com organic SEO, and interest in the TravelPaso.com Facebook, twitter, YouTube and blog programs.

## Social Media Platform Recap

The blog has been a huge success story for the TravelPaso.com social media program. Mental dedicates many hours monthly to this program starting with editorial calendar development in coordination with the city tourism coordinator and ending with substantial content development. The success of the database growth is reflective of the accomplishment of the strategic giveaways programs that enhance the ad campaigns.

### Social Media Stats



Report Year	Facebook Followers	Twitter Followers	YouTube Views	Pinterest	Blog Views	Database e-newsletter
Oct 12	4,261	2,673	31,286	N/A	56,763	7,632
Oct 13	7,030	3,544	35,037	220	92,338	11,725

## Social Media Content Development

From social media campaign posts to blog content creation, growth and management, Mental Marketing has been the main content developer for the TPRA. As an avenue to help raise SEO and to create editorial content that informs the public, the Paso Insider Blog has become an important advertising and branding tool in the TPRA marketing toolkit.

### Advertising Campaign Blog Support:

From Hotel Month, to Wine Month, Mental Marketing created supporting content blogs that gained Earned Social Media value, extending the advertising efforts, all while growing organic SEO. Below are samples of campaign support blogs:

- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2012/12/paso-robles-hotel-month-enter-to-win-a-weekend-in-paso-robles.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2012/12/paso-robles-travel-alliance-launches-new-destination-app.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/03/win-food-and-wine-weekend-getaways-in-paso-robles-wine-country.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/01/enter-to-win-a-weekend-in-paso-robles-last-chance.html>



- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/05/fabulous-summer-specials-in-paso-robles.html>

**Results:**

- Earned Media Impressions: 18,000
- Earned Social Media Shares: 508

**Pairings in Paso Series:**

A popular monthly blog series that pairs local wines with local winemakers and chef’s recipes, this blog really gets tongues wagging. This content is also fed into the monthly e-newsletter sent to over 11,000 opt-in users. Sample blogs:

- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/04/pairings-in-paso-archambeault-family-wines-okipe-syrah-and-kevins-smoked-tri-tip.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/06/pairings-in-paso-bbq-artichoke-pizza.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/i-think-we-can-all-agree-that-one-of-the-best-things-about-summer-is-firing-up-the-grill-and-leaving-your-kitchen-almost-mess.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/08/pairings-in-paso-tablas-creek-gazpacho-and-halter-ranch-sauvignon-blanc-.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/09/pairings-in-paso-nelle-grenache-and-carnitas-tacos-.html>

**Results:**

- Earned Media Impressions: 36,000
- Earned Social Media Shares: 444

**Mid State Fair Series:**

- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/this-weekend-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/friday-july-26-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/thursday-july-25-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/wednesday-july-24-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/tuesday-july-23-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/monday-july-22-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/sunday-july-21-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/friday-july-19-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/thursday-july-18-today-at-the-california-mid-state-fair.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/07/the-california-mid-state-fair-in-paso-robles-starts-today-.html>

**Results:**

- Earned Media Impressions: 4,000
- Earned Social Media Shares: 42

**Summer 2013 Family Friendly Blog Series:**

On behalf of TPRA, Mental and the City’s Tourism Coordinator Shonna Howenstine partnered to bring child blogger Zane Thormodsgaard, a 4th grader from Manhattan Beach, to Paso Robles to write a 9-part series on Family Friendly Activities posted on the Travepaso.com blog from June 22 – July 5:





Part 1: [Ravine Water Park](#)

Part 2: [Eberle Winery Tour and Bocce Ball Court](#)

Part 3: [Panolivo Family Bistro](#)

Part 4: [Pithy Little Soda Works](#)

Part 5: [Big Bubba's Bad BBQ](#)

Part 6: [Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory](#)

Part 7 [Harris Stage Lines](#)

Part 8: [Santa Margarita Adventure Ziplines](#)

Part 9: [The La Quinta Inn& Suites](#)

**Results:**

- Earned Media Impressions: 1,112 blog views; 14,400 print
- Earned Social Media: 21 blog comments; 93 social media shares; 2,230 views on Facebook; 31 likes
- Total Social Media Actions: 3,487

**Guest Blogger Program:**

Mental created a guest blogger program for TravelPaso.com to help with consistent new idea generation, add valuable content for the end user and grow organic SEO. Mental established tourism partners and positioned them as experts in their fields through this editorial outlet. We encouraged them to be regular or semi-regular guest bloggers offering a venue for them to promote their brand on behalf of Paso Robles. This allowed us to keep up with rich new content, including photos and video with each post to help search engine spiders find the new content for SEO growth. The blogs were sharable and also posted to Facebook and Twitter to gain earned media. Sample guest blogs:

- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/10/dont-get-spooked-by-cheese-in-paso-robles-.html>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/10/drinking-paso-the-old-world-rules-do-not-apply-.htm>
- <http://blog.travelpaso.com/2013/08/im-on-a-love-fest-and-its-happening-at-the-paso-robles-inn-.html>

**Ongoing Blog Program Results:**

Organic searches on TravelPaso.com have increased by 16% over the last two years. Content has been created for 298 blog posts averaging 3 per week, with 11 regular and 26 semi-regular guest bloggers including local cookbook authors, winemakers, olive oil producers, and regional and state tourism partners including Hearst Castle and **Visit CA President and CEO Caroline Beteta**. With 3,200 monthly visits to blog in October 2013, up from 1,887 in July 2011, blog growth equals 65%.

# Website Analytics

By far the most important tools in a destination marketing tool kit are the website and mobile technology. Developing new content on a regular basis is the current employed key strategy for SEO management and user growth.

In this fast changing travel market, high functioning websites and mobile and social technology are key to growing market share. Currently, the TPRA Destination Manager and City of Paso Robles tourism and web support staff has been working with Civic Resource Group to develop a new website to



serve Paso Robles visitors. New features include user-friendly navigation, a new location to host media and trade resources, a multi-level partner login, responsive design and many other features. They anticipate the website to launch around the start of 2014. Below are the most recent stats from the current site.

**Website**

While the overall visitors and organic referrals are up, and mobile visits have more than doubled YOY for the third year in a row, the number of pages the use looks at is low, demonstrating that while we can get them to the desktop and the mobile site, more and more end-users are leaving the site because they are not finding what they are looking for. And finally, the lodging page views are difficult to track for the second year since changing the format in late 2011 to remove the lodging homepage and instead track searches.

**Website Stats YOY**

Report Year	Web Visits	Mobile Visits	Lodging Visits
Nov 09 - Oct 10	81,857	3,091	30,224
Nov 10 - Oct 11	90,105	10,230	28,304
Nov 11 - Oct 12	102,473	21,669	Approx. 25,000
Nov 12 – Oct 13	131,601	42,859	Approx. 25,000

**Paso Robles iPhone App**

In the fall of 2012, the TPRA board approved an iPhone App strategy presented by Mental Marketing involving a roll out plan that promotes Paso Robles to the tech savvy San Jose market. This program brought TPRA into the mobile/social world with the goal of reaching ever growing mobile and social regional, domestic and international travel markets. This app allows for frictionless social media sharing with TravelPaso.com’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

Currently, ads running on Facebook and PRWCA are supporting the growth of downloads. To date, there have been 494 downloads of this program. Several things are at play here. Primarily, as the Android market is giving Apple a run for its money, TPRA’s app is only offered to iPhone users, blocking out a huge portion of desired market audience. Secondly, minimal funds are being spent in the effort to grow this program. Mental recommends devising a new program strategy to further the success of this marketing tool.



**TravelPaso.com Campaign Landing Page Content Development**

To support promotions and to increase SEO, landing pages are a big part of the integrated branding strategy

employed by Mental. Here is a sampling of links from campaigns throughout the year. Below are 5 landing pages containing key messaging, contests, lists of hotel deals and reasons to come to Paso Robles.

- [http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience\\_paso\\_robles/paso-hotel-month-2013.html](http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience_paso_robles/paso-hotel-month-2013.html)
- [http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience\\_paso\\_robles/2013-spring-promo.html](http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience_paso_robles/2013-spring-promo.html)
- [http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience\\_paso\\_robles/summer\\_packages\\_2013.html](http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience_paso_robles/summer_packages_2013.html)
- [http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience\\_paso\\_robles/savorwinemonth2013.html](http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience_paso_robles/savorwinemonth2013.html)
- [http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience\\_paso\\_robles/harvest2013.html](http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience_paso_robles/harvest2013.html)

### TravelPaso.com Added Niche Landing Pages

In addition, content created through public relations programs are easily converted into TravelPaso.com landing pages focusing on niche market interests. Mental worked with the City of Paso Robles IT team to add new rich content to the site including family friendly activities and dog friendly activities,

- [http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience\\_paso\\_robles/Family\\_Friendly\\_Activities.html](http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience_paso_robles/Family_Friendly_Activities.html).
- [http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience\\_paso\\_robles/pet\\_friendly.html](http://www.travelpaso.com/cm/experience_paso_robles/pet_friendly.html)

## Tour & Travel Trade Shows

Mental assisted the TPRA in recruiting a Destination Manager to manage Tour & Travel Sales. The first three shows listed were managed by Mental until the new DM was in place in March 2013. The new Destination Manager Amanda Diefenderfer from Big Red Marketing managed the final four listings.

- **CalSAE, Sacramento December 5, 2012:** Mental attended this show where they had a new booth and approach this year, which included a sales blitz and meeting planner luncheon. Result: 145 contacts, 5 RFPs. Post-show Sales Blitz calling on 30 meeting planners.
- **NTA, Orlando, Jan 20 – 24, 2013:** Mental held 23 meetings with tour operators on behalf of the TPRA and poured Paso Robles Wine at the Visit CA booth on Thursday (TPRA paid sponsorship program) garnering 9 additional leads. Visit CA shared their 37 leads for a total of 68 leads.
- **Visit CA Annual Marketing Forum Feb 2013:** Mental attended international development program put on by the state inviting all the staff from the international sales offices around the world. Great tourism marketing and networking opportunity.
- **IPW, Las Vegas, June 8 - 13, 2013:** The Destination Manager attended on behalf of the TPRA in a cooperative booth shared with Visit SLO County and two other County hotel partners. While there, she met with more than 40 tour operators and wholesalers from the international market.
- **Sunset Celebration Weekend, Menlo Park, June 1 - 2, 2013:** The Destination Manager attended the show that saw more than 20,000 attendees and invited visitor's to the TPRA booth to have fun and learn more about this nearby destination.
- **Sunset Savor the Central Coast:** The Travel Paso booth invited visitor's to step in and "picture" themselves in Paso Robles by taking Instagram photos in front of a Paso Robles backdrop image. Additionally, the TPRA was a presenting sponsor of the new concert event held at the Vina Robles Amphitheatre.





- **UK and Ireland Super FAMs:** The Destination Manager collaborated with Visit SLO County to support the Visit California Super FAM trip of UK tour operators.

## Strategic Partnerships

The TPRA account management team continues key marketing relationships with local, county, regional, state and international tourism partners in an effort to leverage TPRA marketing dollars and expand the reach and exposure of the Paso Robles brand.

- **City of Paso Robles:** Mental Marketing maintains a connected working relationship on behalf of the TPRA with the City tourism coordinator and staff to develop website and social media initiatives and keep the city apprised of marketing outreach and efforts on an ongoing basis. Also, Maryann Stansfield and Amanda Diefenderfer both sit on the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Task Force Committee.
- **Paso Robles Main Street Association:** The TPRA supports the marketing efforts of Main Street Association through sponsorship programs and event promotions.
- **Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance:** TPRA worked with the PRWCA as a sponsor of the Hotel Month program offering home page ad space and outreach offerings. Both Mental and TPRA Destination Manager continues to work with their public relations team.
- **Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce:** The Destination Manager met with the previous director and exchanged emails to explore opportunities for the two organizations to work together. She has also had multiple meetings with the new interim director.
- **Hearst Castle:** A key relationship that Mental Marketing has developed on behalf of the TPRA is with Hearst Castle Marketing Director Jim Allen. As the most renowned attraction in the county, Hearst Castle is an icon throughout the world. Paso Robles has a historic connection with Hearst Castle, and the location to position itself as the place to stay when visiting Hearst Castle.
- **Central Coast Tourism Council:** Maryann Stansfield is a member of the CCTC website committee and is actively involved on their website and social media committees. The CCTC is the regional liaison with CTTC and focuses on international tour and travel.
- **Visit CA:** Both Mental Marketing and TPRA Destination Manager continue to work directly with top Visit CA sales and public relations managers to showcase Paso Robles and the TPRA members to the domestic and international audience targeted by Visit CA.
- **VSLOC:** Both Mental Marketing and TPRA Destination Manager work with VSLOC on outreach initiatives, public relations programs and paid media.
- **WineCoastCountry:** Mental brings scale to the TPRA press trips offering co-op opportunities for TPRA to share costs.





**AugustineIdeas**

**Travel Paso Robles Alliance  
Marketing Agency Plan 2014-2015**

Executive Summary:

- Paso Robles (Paso) is the world's best-kept wine destination secret; *a place of laid-back overachievers that love what they do and do what they love*. For many, it is in their genes as they serve as stewards to the land nurtured by the generations before them. For others, it was a place in which blue jeans were the new uniform and the hustle of corporate life was a road trip away.
- Paso's time as a secret may be coming to an end. In November 2013, Wine Enthusiast announced it as the country's top wine region. This designation provides great opportunity as well as challenges. Accolades, news stories, blogs and social media posts will flourish in connection with the award. Travel and wine writers may share stories of why the region deserves of the honor and worth the trip off the beaten path. Visitor numbers to both lodging and wineries will see boosts, especially during the off-season.

Paso Robles (Paso) Umbrella Brand Experience Pillars:

- Outdoor Recreation
- Food & Wine
- Attractions

Marketing Plan Goals:

- Position Paso Robles as the "maverick" wine destination, and beyond, of choice within California
- Create awareness of Paso Robles as a unique experience for the visitor
- Leverage strategic alliances with partners to provide incentives that would encourage overnight and vacation to Paso Robles as a coastal wine destination and beyond within California

### Marketing Plan Strategies:

- Celebrate the unique characteristics and identity of Paso Robles through the positioning of a visitor brand identity.
- Motivate visitors to extend their stays by promoting attractions and the diversity of events/activities.
- Divert the “drive” audience to make Paso Robles their destination of choice for lodging.
- Elevate the hospitality experience for visitors and lodging guests through resources, education and training of front line personnel.
- Partner with Visit San Luis Obispo County and Visit California and collaborate with local DMOs to maximize resources and enhance audience experiences.

### Targets and Markets:

- People:
  - Core: A35-64, \$75k+
  - Secondary: A25-35, \$50k+
    - Wine Audiences
- Places:
  - Primary Drive Markets:
    - Los Angeles
    - Silicon Valley
  - Secondary:
    - Central Valley

### Media Tactics:

- Integrated Partnership Program – Sunset
- Banner Ad Networks
- Social Ads – Facebook
- Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
- Endemic Print – Advertorial

### Measurements and Results:

- Increase TOT Income to meet and exceed expected YOY growth
- Increase engagement on social media platforms and overall reach with increased numbers in followers/fans
- Increase website traffic and visits to the online reservations page



- Show notable media impressions through advertising, advertorial and editorial formats
- Audit and influence of social sentiment on select review sites towards lodging to set a bench mark for measured future improvement
- Increase traffic to lodging pages or reservations through paid digital advertising.

GL #	TPRA 2014-15 BUDGETED P&L			Notes
	<b>INCOME PROJECTIONS</b>	<b>Budgeted 2014/2015</b>	<b>2013/2014 Budgeted</b>	
1100	2% BID Revenue (Feb 2013 - Jan 2014)	\$687,503	\$654,765	2013/2014 budgeted was derived from 2012/2013 numbers
1101	7% projected increase	\$48,125	\$32,738	7 % growth of anticipated 2013/2014 total income
1200	Cash Rollover	\$50,000	\$83,539	Conservative Estimation
1300	Cash Reserves	\$10,000	\$10,000	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$795,628</b>	<b>\$781,042</b>	The 7% increase is less noticeable due to the conservative approach to the anticipated cash rollover
	<b>Expenses</b>		<b>Category Budget</b>	
2100	Admin		\$1,500	Includes Storage Costs
2200	Destination Manager		\$65,000	Includes Annual contract costs and estimated mileage costs
2300	Marketing Agency		\$80,000	Includes marketing plan development, travel and client services and PR retainer costs
2400	Sponsorships/Community Support/Partnerships		\$175,000	Planned partnerships with Visit SLO County, Savor the Central Coast, Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Association, CCTC, PRWCA, PCCHA, WiVi, 125th Anniversary, Garagiste Festival, and room for additional community support
2500	Brand Identity (Visual)		\$175,000	This includes all retainer fees for graphic design and visual branding for services provided by Augustine Ideas. Additionally, funds have been reserved to allow a refresh of regularly used resources such as photography, the Visitor's Guide (design, printing and distribution) and billboard advertising costs.
2600	Digital Marketing		\$70,000	These funds are to be used to support regular updates to the website, licensing fees for a booking agent, social media design and support from Augustine Ideas and regular blog authoring and hosting costs
2700	Advertising and Media Buys		\$120,000	All advertising costs for print, outdoor and digital advertising are included in this budget with any associated firm commission fees
2800	Public Relations and Media Relations		\$45,000	Public relations efforts include regular press releases and their distribution, media outreach, media hosting, the coordination of multiple FAM media visits and outreach through Visit California Media Shows
2900	Trade and Sales Outreach		\$30,000	This allows the Destination Manager to expand the marketing efforts beyond the physical limits of Paso Robles by attending travel and trade shows including the annual National Tourism Association show, Interenational Powwow, Cal SAE, Visit CA Outlook Forum. Additionally, in support of those efforts here, these funds are also intended to support incoming tour operator FAM trips from Visit CA and the upcoming hosting of the Wine Tourism Conference in November 2014
3000	Consumer Shows		\$15,000	Consumer outreach shows include presence at Sunset Celebration Weekend and Sunset Savor the Central Coast booth participation
3100	TPRA Event Costs		\$2,000	These events are intended to support ongoing professional development for the industry and peer outreach to share the message of the services the TPRA is providing
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$778,500</b>	
	<b>Contingency</b>			
5000	Contingency Fund (unallocated)		\$7,128	Contingency fund reflects unallocated funds less \$10,000 reserves
	<b>TOTAL Budget</b>		<b>\$795,628</b>	<b>Total expenses, contingency and \$10,000 reserves</b>