

visit
TUOLUMNE
county
★CALIFORNIA★



2024-2026

Marketing Plan

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A MESSAGE FROM VISIT TUOLUMNE COUNTY PRESIDENT & CEO, LISA MAYO

At Visit Tuolumne County we anticipate that the 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 fiscal years will continue to see growth in the County's tourism industry. Some of that growth will come in the form of new resorts and activities that VTC is looking forward to promoting. Other parts of that growth will come from strategic changes in VTC's marketing plan that reflect new promotions and outreach to new markets.

In-state marketing to large population centers like the Bay Area and Los Angeles continue to be valuable sources of high quality guests who tend to be repeat and multigenerational visitors. VTC will continue to promote to these markets in addition to its two current national markets which are Seattle and Las Vegas. New national markets will be determined by agency insights and insights gleaned from Placer.ai, VTC's research platform. Internationally, VTC will continue to have travel trade and media representation in the UK and Mexico markets. New for 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 is representation in the German market.

VTC has put in place various promotions to help bolster visitation in off-peak periods. While this market is slow to take off, outreach in the meetings/groups sector and encouraging more group events like weddings, family reunions, corporate meetings and retreats will remain a key initiative in the coming years. Overall, it would be ideal to see more room-night bookings October through April.

VTC continues to dedicate a portion of funds to county events and destination development projects that further the mission of VTC by increasing visitation to our area. We are also supporting projects that lead to stewardship and sustainability of our natural resources. These initiatives benefit residents and visitors.

VTC has a huge task in front of us and that is to form a Tourism Marketing District by May 2026 per the Tourism Promotion Agreement between the County and VTC. This endeavor is taking a lot of time, effort, and funding. However, it is an important investment to ensure a strong and vibrant future for Tuolumne County's number one private sector industry – tourism.

The VTC Team thanks our Board of Directors and our many partners for your support over the years and in the years ahead. We love what we do and we look forward to continuing to serve you for many, many years.

Looking forward,



Lisa Mayo, CDME

President/CEO, Visit Tuolumne County



DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION

ABOUT VISIT TUOLUMNE COUNTY

Visit Tuolumne County is a Destination Marketing Organization and the official Tourism Bureau of Tuolumne County, California. Tuolumne County is one destination with three incredible regions that beckon visitors year round. In Tuolumne County, visitors and residents can experience iconic Yosemite adventures, make golden discoveries in California’s Gold Country or explore the potential of an exciting High Sierra trip. With its proximity to the San Francisco Bay Area and being just two hours from the Sacramento area, Tuolumne County is convenient, affordable and uniquely amazing -- providing unforgettable memories to its visitors.

MISSION AND VISION

MISSION

To enhance economic growth by increasing tourism to Tuolumne County.

VISION

Visit Tuolumne County is the premiere authority for marketing Tuolumne County’s tourism and is looked to for leadership in all areas of destination management.

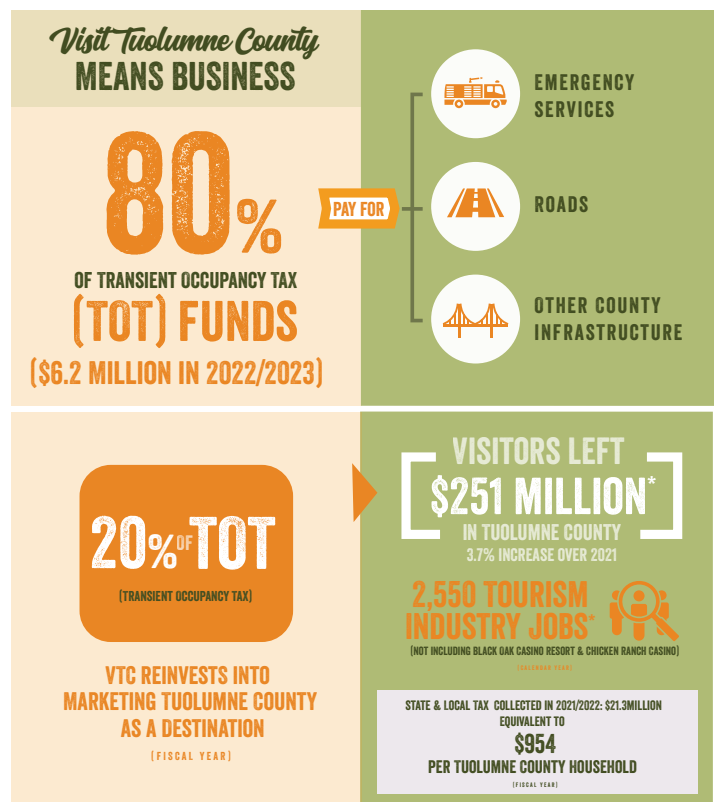
WHY TOURISM MATTERS

An investment in Visit Tuolumne County fuels economic activity in our community. Destination promotion is a crucial step in growing our travel and hospitality sector, and is imperative for the economic development of the whole county.

Tourism benefits local economies, businesses and residents alike. The economic development of Tuolumne County depends on robust tourism marketing tactics, which will ultimately generate more visitor spending and tax revenue.

Competition amongst destinations remains fierce, and it is crucial that we continue to build on our proven tactics. There’s substantial opportunity to bring in more visitors during fall, winter and spring, and improve the quality of the trip for summer visitors. As meetings/groups and international travel continue their comeback, VTC is an imperative tool in reaching these audiences, encouraging them to stay longer and spend more across a wider range of products and services.

The benefits of destination promotion are not limited to the tourism industry. Destination marketing raises the profile of Tuolumne County and creates a positive brand that encourages businesses to locate here, attracts new residents, leads to real estate investments, contributes to our arts and cultural industries and makes our destination a better place to live. Destination promotion is for the benefit and wellbeing of every person in the community. It is an essential investment to develop opportunities and build quality of life to benefit all of our residents.



*Source: Dean Runyan Associates

FY24-26 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The overall goal is to increase visitation, travel spending and overnight stays. Objectives to meet these goals include:

- Utilize earned, owned and paid channels to inspire travel.
- Support shoulder seasons of fall, winter and spring when travel is at its lowest through travel trade, and meetings/group promotion.
- Communicate the authentic personality of the destination, emphasizing the key differentiators.
- Establish messaging and imagery that evoke emotion among target audiences.
- Through our strategic partnerships, ad and public relations agencies and our own research, identify media placements that reach and influence our target audiences.
- Assist potential domestic and international visitors navigate the Yosemite Reservation System and other travel challenges that may arise.

BRAND POSITIONING/PILLARS

Tuolumne County is a year-round destination offering three vacations in one. Here people can experience iconic Yosemite explorations, authentic California Gold Country discoveries and unforgettable High Sierra outdoor adventures. This positioning helps identify VTC's brand pillars, helping communicate what makes Tuolumne County different from other destinations.

- Diverse and scenic natural landscapes
- Uncrowded, open spaces
- Three vacations in one destination (Gold Country, High Sierra and Yosemite)
- Living history - step back into simpler times
- Accessible/proximity - is in drivable distances and within 2-3 hours of major local airports and population centers
- Value and affordability
- Unique/different/unexpected
- Wellness focus
- Responsible and sustainable travel

We will continue to leverage the Wander Freely campaign which gives travelers a sense of wanderlust with imagery and copy that feels open and free. The campaign will continue to highlight the many things to do and places to visit within the county. Specifically, copy will focus on "It's Wonderful" language which promotes big open spaces, smaller crowds and many experiences to encourage target audiences to visit on their own, with family or as a group of friends.

The Wander Freely campaign logo was designed to align with our brand. The campaign provides a sense of adventure and exploration while being welcoming and friendly. As expressed in the logo the "W" breaking out of the frame speaks to going beyond the boundaries people have been confined to, encouraging them to discover something new and different while the tree landscape adds an extra element of exploration promoting various landscapes. Birds are also included and work well with "FREELY" - being free with the ability to wander throughout Tuolumne County.



RESEARCH, INSIGHTS, & TRENDS

Industry research and insights form the foundation to all Visit Tuolumne County's campaigns and marketing projects. Thus, ensuring that we are staying on top of trends and appealing to key markets.

TRENDS

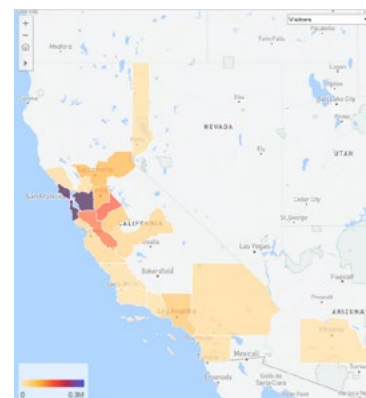
Industry research including the latest trends, helps VTC to create our marketing programs and campaigns. How and why are people traveling? Here are some of the latest and ongoing trends we can leverage for promoting Tuolumne County:

- **Set-Jetting-** Also known as film tourism or movie tourism, refers to the phenomenon where people travel to locations that have been featured in movies, TV shows or other forms of media. It involves visiting places that have gained popularity or significance because of their appearance in popular entertainment. Set-jetting enthusiasts seek to experience firsthand the settings and landmarks that they have seen on screen, often re-creating scenes or simply immersing themselves in the atmosphere of their favorite films or shows. This type of tourism can boost local economies, as businesses capitalize on the increased interest in their area due to its association with popular media.
- **Authenticity-** The genuine, uncontrived experience that travelers seek when exploring a destination. It involves engaging with local culture, traditions, and people in a way that is true to the destination's identity, rather than experiencing a commercialized version of it. Authentic travel experiences usually involve interacting with locals, participating in cultural activities, and exploring off-the-beaten-path locations, allowing travelers to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the destination's uniqueness. This is an ongoing trend that VTC has been able to leverage in the past, the present and will for the future.
- **Wellness-** This applies to both a physical and mental perspective. There is a Loneliness Crisis which speaks to more loneliness due to more remote work, hard times and basic life pressures. People want to take better care of themselves and prioritize wellness when traveling.
- **Adventure Travel-** People are looking to escape in big ways that tie to the prioritization of wellness and are seeking more adventurous and unique travel destinations.
- **Affordability-** This is particularly important to the Millennials and Gen Z travelers who often prioritize budget-friendly travel options due to limited disposable income or financial obligations. These generations seek affordable accommodations, transportation, and activities that offer value for money without compromising on the quality of their travel experience.

TARGET AUDIENCES

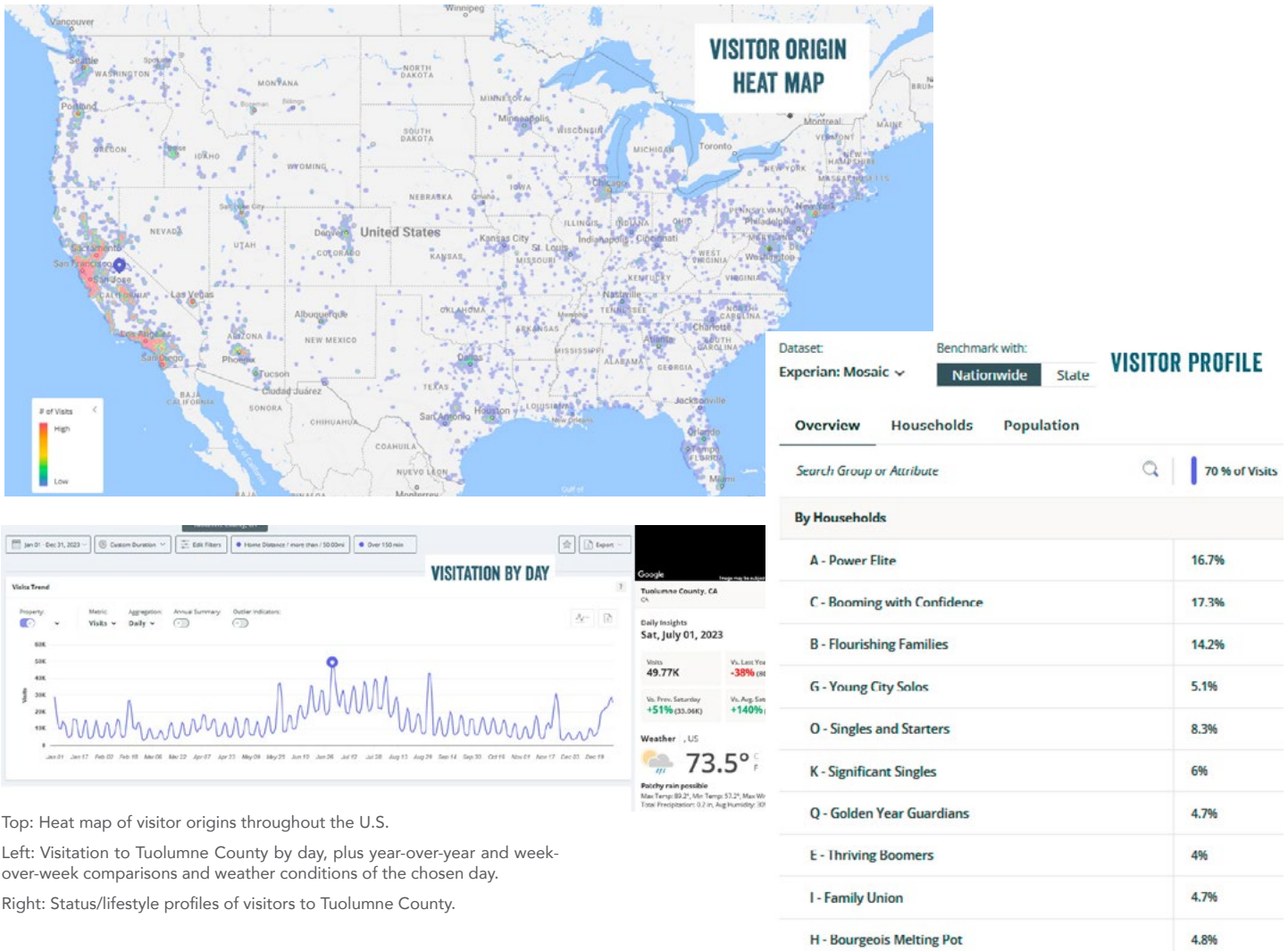
Visit Tuolumne County reaches consumer audiences in six key segments: In-Market, Regional, Statewide, National, International and Meetings. Audiences within each are identified after doing thorough research, pulling in data from various resources including app location-powered visitation, website traffic and flight patterns. We will launch very specific initiatives to reach visitors and encourage them to extend their stay in Tuolumne County. And, to secure larger group and event travel for off-peak times, we will continue our meetings and group initiatives.

VTC utilizes Placer.ai, a robust platform that provides location intelligence and foot traffic insights and allows us to access and analyze domestic visitor origins, demographics, profiles, channels they use to consume content, activities and more to help pinpoint target audiences, ultimately optimizing our reach to potential visitors.



Heat map of visitor origins in Western U.S.

PLACER.AI DATA



Top: Heat map of visitor origins throughout the U.S.

Left: Visitation to Tuolumne County by day, plus year-over-year and week-over-week comparisons and weather conditions of the chosen day.

Right: Status/lifestyle profiles of visitors to Tuolumne County.

MARKETING TACTICS

As a marketing standard VTC markets to our target audiences, bearing in mind current trends, by utilizing three key strategies, paid media, owned media, and earned media through our strategic partnerships, social media and our marketing agency and in-house media buys.

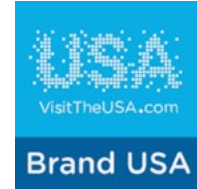
- Paid media refers to external marketing efforts that involve a paid placement such as print ads, billboards, radio and TV spots and public relations outreach.
- Owned media is a set of communication channels/outlets where Visit Tuolumne County has complete control. These include our social media channels, website, annual travel guide, etc.
- Earned media is coverage or promotion of our brand through organic means. These include published tourism articles that include Tuolumne County, shared social media posts or social media mentions, influencer shout-outs, reviews and recommendations, etc.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Through these partnerships we are able to identify target markets and leverage our marketing dollars and enhance the value of every dollar invested in tourism. These organizations are critical to building our brand awareness in California, the U.S. and international markets.

BRAND USA

Building on our successful long-standing partnership with Brand USA, we will continue new brand awareness campaigns and participate in efforts that align with our target audiences. In previous Brand USA campaigns, we have also been able to secure new video footage and photography.



VISIT CALIFORNIA

Visit California is the official destination marketing and management organization for the state of California. Visit Tuolumne County utilizes industry partners like Visit California to leverage marketing dollars and efforts. We will continue to partner with Visit California submitting story idea content and hosting media representatives, including journalists and influencers. Visit Tuolumne County will also continue to leverage paid cooperative opportunities such as print placements in the Official Visit California Travel Guide and a dedicated newsletter reaching an audience of over 200,000 consumers who subscribe to Visit California news alerts.



Examples:

Dedicated E-blast- October 2023 Investment: \$8,500. Total Delivered: 239,691; Open Rate: 58% (Industry Avg. is 16%); Click Through Rate: 1.6%.

Sponsored E-blast- November 2023 Investment (Co-op with Dodge Ridge): \$3,000. Total Delivered: 235,862, Open Rate: 53%; Click Through Rate: 1.26%.



GOLD COUNTRY VISITORS ASSOCIATION & HIGH SIERRA VISITORS COUNCIL

Visit California divides the state into 12 regional marketing groups. Tuolumne County falls under two: The Gold Country Visitors Association (GCVA) and the High Sierra Visitors Council (HSVC). GCVA has a focus on road trippers looking for history, outdoor adventure, culinary delights, craft brews and wine, and multi-generational family adventure. Through this partnership VTC co-hosts familiarization trips and collaborates with other GCVA members. HSVC focuses more on international travelers while cooperatively hosting journalists and influencers. They also have exclusive representation in France, which VTC leverages for promotion. VTC will continue to participate in the Visit California co-op for this organization which leverages membership funds and helps smaller destinations participate in large scale marketing efforts to expand reach for the region.



PAID MEDIA

LOCAL/IN-MARKET

Visit Tuolumne County will continue to partner with local media including MyMotherLode.com, radio stations and the Union Democrat to support local business and encourage sustainable travel.



STATEWIDE

The majority of traffic to the Visit Tuolumne County website and the region comes from California. To promote Tuolumne County for all types of travel, VTC will continue to run an evolved Wander Freely campaign including Visit California’s new “Play” initiative and implement integrated strategic statewide media placements to reach target audiences. To ensure media is running at its highest potential, VTC will work with Visit California to leverage their partnerships with leading media and travel platforms to develop flexible, collaborative marketing opportunities. Participation in this co-op program allows VTC to receive lower negotiated ad rates and matching dollars on the media investment. Visit Tuolumne County will also send eblasts to over 200,000 individual travel consumers that subscribe to Visit California newsletters. In addition, VTC will place media with various print publications, on broadcast and streaming TV, and additional placements that will drive traffic to the website and, ultimately, to the County.

NATIONAL

To reach audiences outside of California, we will run a national campaign that will be a mix of tactics across digital and traditional placements reaching specific audiences which are selected based on direct flights and visiting state data. This will allow VTC to reach airline markets with consumers who tend to stay longer and, therefore, spend more while in-market. The campaign will leverage the Wander Freely and our secondary “Play” campaigns and have a seasonality focus of fall and spring with some winter coverage to promote the destination during these slower periods.



Our research and analytics show increased visitation from Texas and Arizona. To continue to build on this momentum, we will extend our marketing in the 2024/2025 fiscal year to reach potential visitors from these areas.

INTERNATIONAL

Having international representation is something that VTC will continue well into the future. It is important to reach international travelers as they stay in destinations longer and therefore spend more money than most domestic travelers. To reach these audiences we will partner with a variety of organizations to provide marketing across paid and earned media including:

- Black Diamond – United Kingdom, Ireland
- Global Marketing & Sales (GMS) – Mexico
- NEW: Marketing Services International (MSi) – Germany
- Visit California – Markets which align with VTC’s domestic and international efforts
- Brand USA – Markets which align with our international efforts
- US Commercial Service – Markets which align with Visit Tuolumne County’s international efforts



For the 2024/2025 fiscal year we will continue to grow our international brand in our established markets and branch into new markets. 2024/2025 market expansion includes Germany, which is identified by both our research and Visit California as a top success market for Tuolumne County.

Example Via Black Diamond Public Relations:

National Geographic Traveller (print and online)- May 2023; VTC Investment: \$4,500 (including hosting writer and photographer). Total Reach: 3,522,906; Estimated Advertising Value: \$132,794.

MEETINGS

Visit Tuolumne County will utilize Visit California and San Francisco Travel Association meetings initiatives to leverage and expand upon their meetings and groups programs. We will participate in conferences and conventions to educate meeting planners on Tuolumne County offerings. To entice meetings and groups to book in Tuolumne County, we will continue to offer our sponsorship program based on the number of room nights booked.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Book your first corporate or business meeting through Visit Tuolumne County and receive a sponsorship.

\$500 for 10-24 room nights

\$750 for 25-49 room nights

\$1,000 for 50-100 room nights

Contact us for details on how to receive the sponsorship incentive:
209-533-4420

Example of current Meeting Incentive Plan.

OWNED MEDIA

ANNUAL TRAVEL GUIDE

VTC creates and distributes an annual Travel Guide to inspire travelers to plan a trip to Tuolumne County. 75,000 copies are printed and distributed yearly at various Bay Area locations such as the California Welcome Centers at Pier 39 in San Francisco and Jelly Belly Factory in Fairfield, Caltrain stations, Starbucks, Trader Joe’s, the San Jose and Oakland International Airports, and in Orange County at the John Wayne Airport to name a few. They will also be distributed at the Visit Tuolumne County Visitors Center, through advertising leads, individual requests, at media events and travel shows, at local businesses and be available online year-round.

In 2024 we revised the Travel Guide to be more of an editorial piece that will have a longer “coffee table-life” than previous editions. The Guide includes itineraries, articles about the destination, maps and local stories of our history and culture. The Guide’s advertisements and partner listings will be updated for the 2025 print run.

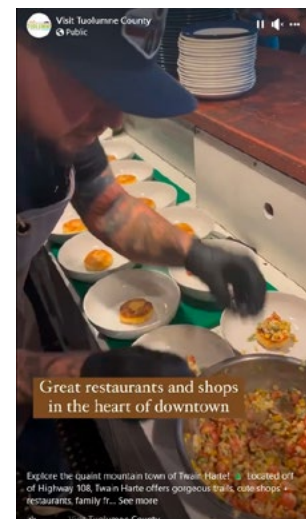


SOCIAL MEDIA

Organic social media is one of the more personal ways to reach our audiences. Visit Tuolumne County aims for social media to be an active mouthpiece to draw people to Tuolumne County and to provide important information. Goals for the coming year include leveraging more video content across platforms, focusing on growing the best performing platforms and scaling back on platforms that aren’t as effective. We will realign channel priority based on current use trends.

NEWSLETTERS

VTC sends monthly emails to a subscriber data base of over 14,000. These subscribers opt-in to receive our newsletters through our advertising placements, at travel shows or on our website sign-up form. The emails include the latest stories, travel tips and more from Visit Tuolumne County delivered straight to your Inbox.



EARNED MEDIA

PUBLIC RELATIONS

To garner the most earned media possible, VTC partners with Black Diamond, Global Marketing and Sales, and this coming year, Marketing Services International to reach international media. Visit Tuolumne County also manages media relations for domestic markets, submitting story ideas to various publications and freelancers. We also maintain our relationships at media events. Due to the success of attending media centered events, we will continue to attend Visit California Media Missions, TravMedia's International Media Marketplace, and IPW's Media Mission.

Example:

Muck Rack Media Pitching Platform- Investment: \$12,000. Value of earned media: \$14.6 million and a potential reach of 1.5 billion. Source: MuckRack.com, this data date range is July 1, 2023-December 31, 2023.

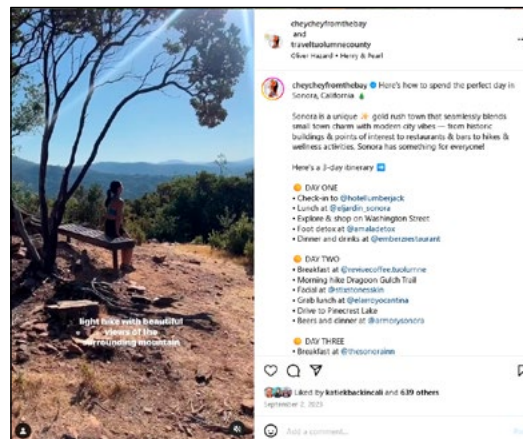
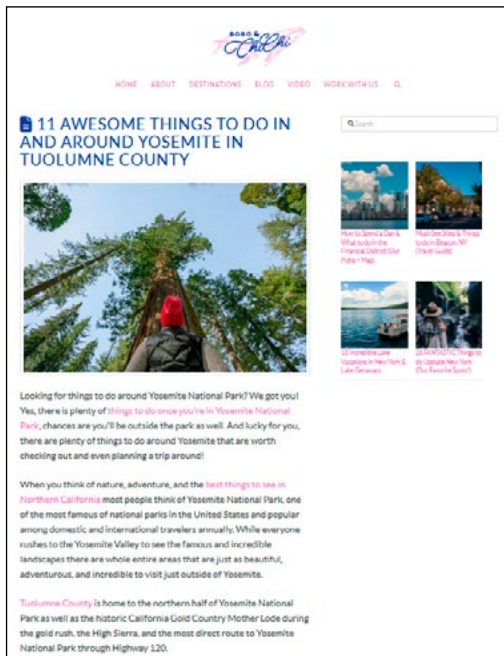


PARTNER CALLS FOR CONTENT

Each quarter Visit Tuolumne County uses its earned media strategies to promote local businesses and events. We reach out to local businesses asking for their current news, and VTC then takes this content and develops "What's New" press releases and distributes them to our media list. Visit Tuolumne County also submits information for content requests from Visit California and Brand USA.

INFLUENCER/MEDIA FAMILIARIZATION TOURS (DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL)

VTC will continue to host various influencers, journalists and travel trade representatives through familiarization tours, partnering with other organizations like Visit California, High Sierra Visitors Council, Gold Country Visitors Association and international offices (Black Diamond, Global Marketing and Sales and Marketing Sales International) where it makes sense to influence and inspire travel to Tuolumne County from first-hand experience. Influencers and media selected will align with our target audiences, and VTC will work with diverse content creators to bring Tuolumne County to a broader audience.



PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

NEW: YOU THINK YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY? CAMPAIGN

As a secondary campaign under the Wander Freely umbrella, VTC introduces the “You Think You Know How to Play” campaign. It embraces Visit California’s “The Ultimate Playground” campaign, which promotes pursuing playfulness in life and travel. The campaign establishes our own “play” culture in Tuolumne County. Working with local partners, we will produce video and other content highlighting all the ways to play in Tuolumne County in the coming year.

FUEL YOUR JOURNEY CAMPAIGN

With a downturn in hotel reservations in January 2024, the VTC team came up with the “Fuel Your Journey” promotion to encourage hotel stays during what was a slow time of year. Through this campaign, visitors who book a new two-night, or longer, stay at a VTC-partner lodging property or RV resort during the months of January and February were rewarded with a free gas card. We saw some success with our first Fuel Your Journey promotion, and it’s now in our toolkit to run again as needed in the future.



UPCOMING: TUOLUMNE COUNTY MAP

VTC will embark on developing a comprehensive county map over the course of the coming year. Recognizing the frequent requests from both visitors and residents at the Visitors Center for a detailed and reliable map, we aim to provide a resource that meets these needs effectively. The new map will feature city breakouts and will highlight key attractions and landmarks throughout the county to enhance the visitor experience and facilitate exploration of our beautiful county.

ONGOING:

CRAFT BEVERAGE & BURGER TRAILS

Based on the success of the Craft Beverage and Burger Trails over the past few years, we are continuing to offer them, and local businesses can participate free of charge by offering deals and discounts through the platform. The two mobile trails are a fun way for residents and visitors to try restaurants and beverage establishments throughout the County where they “check-in” to be eligible for the discounts and deals and grand prize drawings. The goal for these trails is to showcase our local restaurants and influence locals and visitors to dine around in Tuolumne County.



SONORA SELFIE TRAIL

With the success on the Craft Mobile Trails, we launched the new Sonora Selfie Trail in late 2023, as part of our city-specific marketing agreement. The mobile passport highlights and features nearly 30 selfie spots within the City of Sonora. The trail leads participants to explore cultural and historical treasures, natural gems, unique artistry that graces the town and modern-day highlights.

Additional mobile trails are on the horizon including a Groveland Selfie Trail.



TUOLUMNE COUNTY ART WEEK

Every April, VTC hosts Tuolumne County Art Week, coinciding with Art, Culture and Creativity Month. Art Week stands as an annual event to promote and support the artists and creatives of Tuolumne County and highlight Tuolumne County as a destination for art lovers. The program has previously seen success, and VTC will continue to highlight individual artists and the event from a digital perspective via digital billboards in Riverbank and Manteca, social media platforms, video ads, website promotion, newsletter and printed collateral.



NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK & CALIFORNIA TOURISM MONTH

Every May, U.S. Travel Association celebrates National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW), and California honors California Tourism Month. Both events celebrate and drive awareness of the positive impact that tourism has on the economy and the community. Visit Tuolumne County will continue to secure video testimonials featuring community members and business owners expressing their support of tourism and its importance to them and the local economy. We will also promote these observances on social media, the VTC website and County of Tuolumne and City of Sonora resolutions/proclamations.



ACQUIRING PHOTO/VIDEO CONTENT

By investing in high-quality video and professional photography, we can effectively communicate the allure of Tuolumne County, enticing travelers to explore and experience all it has to offer.

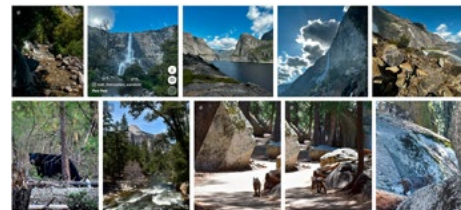
Stunning visuals have the unparalleled ability to evoke emotions and ignite interest within viewers. Imagery showcasing the natural beauty, cultural heritage and unique experiences of Tuolumne County can instantly capture the attention of audiences, inspiring them to visit.

Furthermore, in a highly competitive travel landscape, where travelers are inundated with choices, visually immersive content sets a destination apart, making it more memorable and desirable. By incorporating current video and professional photography into our strategies we can effectively showcase the essence and authenticity of our area, helping to build brand identity and recognition. Moreover, in the age of social media dominance, visually appealing content tends to garner higher engagement rates, amplifying the reach and impact of the marketing efforts.



CROWDRIFF

One tactic to acquire authentic photos and video content is by utilizing CrowdRiff, a platform that helps us search for, request permission for use and store rights to content that are user generated (residents and visitors). Based on the permissions, we can utilize the content in the travel guide, in emails and in advertisements. It also allows us to create website galleries on various pages, which increases user time on the website and allows audiences to deepen their engagement with the brand. VTC will continue to publish Travel Stories through the platform that get shared by Visit California, are downloadable to use across our social channels and can be found when searching on Google, increasing reach on an organic level.



Example of Crowdriiff for the Yosemite Area

MOBILE VISITOR CENTER

In 2022, Visit Tuolumne County invested in a van that is used as a Mobile Visitors Center, allowing the VTC team to go out to where visitors congregate in the county. Not only does the van make the team more accessible, it is wrapped with photos highlighting activities and destinations throughout the county and promotes VTC's website making it a traveling billboard.



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT & STEWARDSHIP

As a Destination Marketing Organization, we not only market to visitors, but also support organizations and businesses through local communications and grant programs. Each year Visit Tuolumne County sets aside funds to sponsor community events that drive tourism and to support tourism-related activities, such as trail building. Staff members also sit on various Board of Directors and committees throughout the county.

VTC is improving the quality of life for residents through understanding the impacts tourism can have and continues to keep sustainability top of mind. Sustainability and tourism are intertwined, and we take our role seriously in helping to ensure residents and visitors have a beautiful and resilient community and environment for generations to come.

Example: Recreate Responsibly messaging placement on digital billboards in Riverbank and Manteca: 7,371,175 impressions per year (meaning that 7.4 million people will see our billboard ad spot).

VTC has worked with the Office of Emergency Services to ensure our messaging regarding recreation and fire safety aligns with Tuolumne County Government messaging. This includes items such as the Wildfire Toolkit developed to bring awareness in helping to prevent wildfires and educate partners, visitors and locals on how to be fire safe. Additional resources include a Homelessness Toolkit created to work in collaboration with the City of Sonora government and public safety groups on the issue.

In times of crisis, Visit Tuolumne County works with local governments and other organizations to put into action the Crisis Communication Plan, a comprehensive evaluation of potential crises for the region. It includes a response plan for each type of incident with specific steps and a post-event evaluator. The plan also has a crisis tracker template to monitor responses in real time, outlines spokesperson and crisis communication team, media policies and procedures, prepared statements, sample news releases, email and social copy templates, key audiences and media contacts.



VTC COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUNDS

As a way to support our community and support events or projects that help boost tourism or help to manage tourism, we dedicate funds to sponsor major events.

We have heightened our reach by partnering with the Sonora Area Foundation. This partnership expands and grows our Community Investment Fund Program and introduces us to additional opportunities. Visit Tuolumne County will identify specific non-profits as funds are requested, and will also look for additional ways to partner with city and county departments to provide resources and promote their efforts.

TUOLUMNE COUNTY FILM COMMISSION

Visit Tuolumne County serves as the County's Film Commission. VTC maintains the website (filmtuolumne.org) and assists production companies with the permitting process. There are several jurisdictions within the county. VTC helps guide which jurisdiction a particular filming location falls under then acts as the go between for the production company and the jurisdiction. Recently, Visit Tuolumne County has ramped up its film social media channels -Instagram (@tuolumnecountyfilm) and Facebook (@filmtuolumnecounty). Moving forward VTC will get more involved with the Film Liaisons in California Statewide (FLICS) association and participate in their events which provide affordable access to production managers, location managers and location scouts. Additionally, VTC will take advantage of more film advertising opportunities. Sponsoring and participating in the California On Location Awards (also known as the COLAs) is a great way to honor and meet film industry influencers and decision-makers. VTC will also work with film industry professionals to host a film familiarization tour.



Lowe's Home Improvement commercial filmed in Sonora in December 2023.

JOINT INITIATIVES

CITY OF SONORA TOURISM MARKETING AGREEMENT

Prior to 2023 the City of Sonora and Tuolumne County had a joint Agreement for the Promotion of Tourism with Visit Tuolumne County. In 2023 with the notion that the County may go out to bid on tourism promotion, the City decided to create a separate five-year agreement with Visit Tuolumne County. This agreement provides a Scope of Services that includes media visits, digital advertising campaigns and other special promotions. VTC will continue to work with the City on a year to year Scope of Services.



TOURISM MARKETING DISTRICT

VTC will continue to work towards forming a Tourism Marketing District (TMD) with the goal of having it in place by May of 2026, per the 2023 Agreement for the Promotion of Tourism between the County and VTC. A TMD is an additional assessment that a business pays or passes along to their customers to support tourism. The process to form the district is quite costly and funds that would otherwise be spent on marketing will be diverted to forming the TMD. While VTC has already done the Feasibility Study and has held three TMD Learning Sessions (one in person and two via Zoom), there is still a lot of work to do. Creating the TMD Plan, creating leave-behind collateral pieces, continued outreach, and legal matters associated with district formation will cost thousands of dollars. Once the district is formed, it will enhance budget stability for VTC thereby ensuring continued effective marketing programs to sustain and build Tuolumne County's tourism industry.

*Thank You for your
continued support!*



Visit Tuolumne County • 193 S Washington St.
Sonora, California 95370 • (800) 446-1333 • VisitTuolumne.com

