



Mississippi River Parkway Commission

701 East Washington Avenue, Suite 202
Madison, WI 53703



Mississippi River Parkway Commission Marketing Committee Video Conference Call November 12, 2020

NOTES

Attendance: MN, WI, AR, MS, LA, KY, National Office (NO)

Meeting began at 11:03am.

I. 2020 marketing plan

- Q3 report review
 - Website:
 - 3rd quarter numbers were strong
 - #1 top visited was best drives in America article, print map order form is second, and the rest are related to the contests
 - Promotions driving vast amount of website traffic
 - App and interactive tools fun facts popular pages
 - Top referring sites are Facebook, pages related to contests
 - 40% of traffic is organic.
 - 60/40 with mobile versus desktop
 - E-newsletters
 - After two contests, we gained substantial subscribers to lists (just under 10,000)
 - Open and click through rates can go down as subscribers go up, but our open and click rates did not go down, they are above average
 - Facebook
 - Added just under 5,500 fans due to promotions
 - Instagram: Growing steadily but difficult platform to add followers
 - Promotion
 - Flavors campaign
 - Highlighting regional food
 - Timing set by marketing committee capitalized on people travelling again
 - Goal 3,000 entries, almost doubled with almost 6,000 entries
 - Drive the Great River road
 - Goal 3,500 entries, gained over 7,300 entries

Mission Statement: Preserving, promoting and enhancing the Mississippi River Parkway for communities and travelers

Phone: 866-763-8310 • Fax: 608-242-8896

Web Site: ExperienceMississippiRiver.com • E-mail: info@experiencemississippiriver.com



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- Goal 800 new fans, gained almost 3,000 new fans
- E-newsletter gained over 3,500
- Promotions resulted in increases across all of our platforms
- We will be sending new report with app numbers which are missing from original distributed report

II. 2021 marketing plan/budget

- All American Road
 - Wasn't announced prior to election but expected by end of December Prepping for announcement. Moving forward with toolkit and need input on what to prepare for announcement
 - No AAR logo. Researched how others promote it; mentioned it but no signifier. Most AAR byways use is just America's Byway logo.
 - NO created some visual representation ideas. Looking for options all 8 states can use once we receive designation. One option is very simple and less graphic/more font. Other options are more graphic. All logos would be included next to our other logos.
 - Goal is to have in place so it's ready with announcement, which can then be included on everything moving forward.
 - Marketing committee's recommendation will be brought to board.
 - Feedback on logo: All American should be dominant, not Road.
 - Question regarding whether we need to do anything legal with logo to make sure no one else to use it? NO said wasn't planning to trademark.
 - LA brought up that America's Byways logo may be an outdated logo. LA noted Federal highway administration will give instructions on what needs to be included.
 - LA recommended a script for All American Road font option.
 - Committee voted for all different options, so NO will make some tweaks and resend to Committee for final thoughts.
 - MS offered to designate a "week" of All American Road and all states could try to do the press announcement during that week. Committee was interested in this option as it would be cohesive but also flexible.
- Budget
 - Increase e-newsletters from quarterly to monthly to focus on intrinsic qualities used in AAR application
 - AAR designation will be a year-long campaign
 - Look to replace Flavors promo with one for interpretive centers (ICs)
 - Discussed a swag item that could be utilized by states, businesses, and visitors to celebrate AAR. Confirmed AAR logo and GRR logo would be included on promotional items if possible. Not all options support both logos, but we'll include when we can. We've done keychains which were popular. Based on budget, we could get about 10,000

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keychains, 50,000/window clings, 10,000/pins (just GRR logo), 1,000/geocoins. Discussed options. Clings and keychains are most requested and committee prioritized them as top picks.

- Print map
 - Print maps every other year so 2021 is the year to reprint. States get 10,000/maps to distribute.
 - Estimated cost is \$15,000 for 150,000 maps (just printing with minimal changes). Included in cost is a couple thousand on shipping to send one shipment to state. Map not for navigation but for promotion. We have done a variety of other types of formats and map has stuck around longest. Map highlights road and ICs.
 - Discussed with committee whether we leave it as a promotional map or change it navigation map. Option to use states map files as guide and free draw to match. States then review for accuracy. Option to use mapping software for more detail. Considered reducing details on it, increasing it or format change?
 - Committee determined to keep it a promotional map with option of state tear off maps with more detail that states could print using mapping software. Creating a navigational map was decidedly too complex and would increase the cost since it would need to be larger to make room for the additional roads and highways in each of the 10 states.
 - Recommend adding QR code to link to app download. Committee wants focus on updating app and updating promotional map, adding AAR logo.
- Mobile app
 - Estimate \$15,000 to get this done. NO can do Apple/IOS updates but needs 3rd party to do Android. NO can add features and incorporate new GIS. Asked Committee to discuss priority for budget.
 - App is navigable and dependent on updated GIS files obtained by Transportation Committee. Obtaining new files is a 2021 priority.
 - With AAR nomination, some states updated their files already.
- Websites (experiencemississippiriver.com, mrpcmembers.com)
 - Requests to update both members and Experience sites.
 - Experience (consumer-facing):
 - Good numbers, but SEO could get better.
 - Blog based style could result in better SEO and more inclusive content with themes and integrated state-information
 - MRC is creating new site for Canada with pay-to-play options built into design. CVBs, attractions, communities, businesses have a place on site with an expanded pay-to-play presence.

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- MRPC site could offer same options to give businesses and communities to be a part in a more supportive way. NO does get requests by partners to be added to the site but no way to do it. MS confirmed CVB would be interested if packages were put together. Sponsorship options could include: e-newsletter, social media post, and dedicated page with links to own page or social. Committees very supportive of idea and discussed ideas of associate memberships. Would replace a singular sponsor. NO believes assets are strong and best understood by potential associate members. Committee feels this is a top priority, since it has not been structurally changed since 2010. MS feels this is a very important investment to make.
- Members site:
 - Requests site be navigational with search features, which requires NO to build as a databased site. NO asked about site usage. LA uses it very minimally and only to look up past documents. Committee questioned if worth funding with other priorities. Determined not priority to consumer and promotion. Committee feels Member site updates shouldn't be part of marketing committee budget.
- Social Media/Promotions:
 - Committee recommends two promotions and social media maintenance. Feels cost is particularly important. Requested NO consider outbreak when planning promotions and topics for e-newsletters.
- Sponsorship: discussed during budget/website

III. Reschedule December meeting for December 17

IV. No other business

Adjourned at 12:14pm