



California Travel and Tourism Commission

California Sustainable Tourism Marketing Handbook



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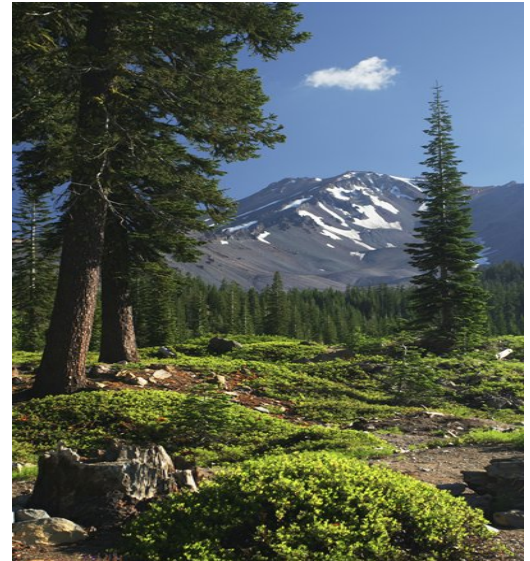
Table of Contents



<i>Handbook Introduction</i>	3
<i>Sustainable Tourism Review</i>	4
<i>Marketing Review</i>	5
<i>Best Practices and Benchmarking</i>	7
<i>California Tourism Best Practices</i>	8
<i>Marketing Tools Table</i>	9
<i>Accommodations</i>	12
<i>Attractions and Destinations</i>	15
<i>Wine Industry</i>	19
<i>Destination Marketing Organizations</i>	20
<i>Restaurants and Retail</i>	23
<i>Transportation and Travel</i>	25
<i>Recreation and Public Lands</i>	26
<i>References</i>	29

Handbook Introduction

The California Travel and Tourism Commission (CTTC) has implemented a sustainable tourism program to guide the tourism industry in its efforts to adopt sustainability practices and strategies. In 2009, two significant documents were written and made available on the CTTC industry Web site (tourism.visitcalifornia.com). Presented at the first California Sustainable Tourism Summit in 2009, the California Sustainable Tourism Summit Planning Document, produced by the Strategic Marketing Group (SMG), and the California Sustainable Tourism Handbook, written by Dr. Sandra Sun-Ah Ponting and Dr. Jess Ponting (faculty members in the Recreation and Tourism Management Program at San Diego State University), served as a catalyst for tourism industry leaders and service providers who were interested in learning more about operating their organizations in a more sustainable manner.



These two publications offer a glimpse of the intricacies and complexities of sustainable tourism, define it and related concepts, and provide a foundation for understanding the economic, social/cultural and environmental pillars of sustainability. The Planning Document emphasizes CTTC's role in sustainable tourism, goals, objectives and strategies for the state; the results of an industry sustainable tourism survey; and a SWOT analysis of California's sustainable



tourism assets. The Handbook further elaborates on the definitions of sustainable tourism, its importance to the viability of the industry, and best practices of organizations

within California who have adopted sustainable economic, social/cultural and environmental practices. The purpose of this document is to assist CTTC with its “mission to develop and maintain marketing programs – in partnership with the state's travel industry – that keep California top-of-mind as a premier travel destination” by identifying sustainable tourism marketing best practices. In essence, we want to know not only who in the industry is implementing sustainability, but also who in the industry can legitimately demonstrate that they are successfully marketing sustainable tourism.

This handbook will first present a brief review of sustainable tourism, an overview of basic marketing principles, an explanation of best practices and the usefulness of benchmarking, and a description of best practices in sustainable tourism marketing representing organizations throughout the California tourism industry.

It is important to note that we view this handbook as a “living document.” In other words, although we have attempted to identify numerous industry members who embrace sustainability and market their efforts successfully, we know there are many more exemplary organizations in California. In fact, with the rapid escalation of sustainability in all aspects of the tourism industry, we have probably barely reached the tip of the iceberg. So, let us hear from you. Contact CTTC and let us know how you have successfully marketed sustainable tourism. Your best practice example will be added to the growing description of organizations available to others as a resource in this publication.

Sustainable Tourism Review

As sustainable tourism continues to evolve as a discipline, body of knowledge and way of doing business, the debate regarding what is and is not sustainability will follow right along with this evolution. For the purpose of this handbook, we will utilize the World Tourism Organization (WTO) definition of tourism, previously presented in the California Sustainable Tourism Summit Planning Document.

“Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments. Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.”
(WTO, 2004)

As the mainstream tourism industry has embraced sustainable practices, efforts to reject the status quo have led to innovative energy-efficient building designs, respected and rigorous certification programs, water and waste management systems that reduce the carbon footprint, creative partnerships, improved communication and signage, purchases of “green” local products and services, and widespread recycling, reuse and reduce initiatives. Consequently, organizations are finding it advantageous to market these efforts to tourists through direct and indirect distribution channels.

However, there has also been a rise in “greenwashing,” or misrepresenting true sustainability efforts. These efforts are also being marketed as sustainable tourism. Thus, it becomes imperative to identify marketing strategies and practices that are truly sustainable and successful that afford tourists an opportunity to make wise travel and lifestyle choices through accurate and accessible information.

Marketing Review

Basic marketing principles and the stages of the marketing plan lay the groundwork for understanding sustainable tourism marketing. The Board of Directors of the American Marketing Association has defined marketing as:

“The activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communication, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” (American Marketing Association, 2007)

Typically, a marketing plan is recognized as having three primary stages: analysis, strategy and marketing mix. During the analysis stage, an organization assesses its environment, competition, resources and the market as a whole. The analysis is followed by a strategy that positions its product or service, determines target markets and provides a guide for how to position itself within an industry. Finally, the marketing mix commonly known as the four P's of marketing includes the product or service itself; the price of the product/service; promotional efforts such as publicity, word of mouth, social media, public relations, trade shows, advertising, other media outlets and fam tours; and the place or distribution channels utilized (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2006; Marketing Sustainable Tourism, 2005; Practical Steps for Marketing).

There are several key components to successful sustainable tourism marketing:

- The product or service must truly be sustainable.
- Authenticity is absolutely critical.
- Marketing sustainable tourism requires a firm understanding of the delicate balance between conservation of resources and the expectations and experiences of tourists.
- Service providers, destination marketing organizations and tour distributors must all understand the “preservation-use paradox.” Jumping on the sustainability bandwagon ultimately necessitates understanding that the organization is now committed to both the goal of preserving resources for future generations and providing quality tourist experiences.
- De-marketing may be adopted as a strategy for sustainable tourism. De-marketing attempts to reduce product demand. For example, it may be necessary to reduce environmental degradation due to overuse by tourists in a pristine alpine setting by



discouraging use, promoting usage during another time of year or encouraging tourists to visit another destination.

- Research, evaluation and monitoring are necessary to determine whether or not sustainable tourism practices have been successful.

Best Practices and Benchmarking

Best practices have become commonplace among all sectors of society. Non-profit organizations, small business owners, public agencies and large corporations review and implement best practices to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their organizations. In addition to improved efficiency, best practices in sustainable tourism ensure that environmental, economic and socio-cultural impacts are minimized and that the quality of tourists' experiences is enhanced (Guide for Sustainable Tourism).



Perhaps the most comprehensive example of best practices thus far available relating to sustainable tourism is the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC), which promotes 37 standards that are viewed as requisites for organizations in the tourism industry who advocate and adopt sustainability. Developed by the Rainforest Alliance, the United Nations Foundation, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations World Tourism Organization, the GSTC is gaining momentum and support from the international tourism community. The standards address criteria in sustainable management and planning, reducing environmental impacts, cultural heritage enhancement, and social and economic community benefits (www.sustainabletourismcriteria.org). These standards were adapted for the aforementioned California Sustainable Tourism Handbook to introduce sustainable tourism within the California tourism industry. Furthermore, the GSTC identified several

benefits of benchmarking including cost-savings, risk management, improved utilization of resources and improving staff morale. The GSTC also identified TourBench (www.tourbench.info) as a benchmarking resource that primarily serves the accommodations sector and EarthCheck (www.earthcheck.org), which provides a benchmarking assessment tool for large and small businesses.

Although identifying best practices is certainly a critical step in sustainable tourism, benchmarking provides a measure to compare an organization to other entities within and outside the tourism industry. Organizations identified as employing best practices are used as a comparison or standard that can serve as a measure to gauge success. Ultimately, an organization assumes these practices in their own environment to reach a higher level of excellence.

California Tourism Best Practices

In an attempt to achieve our goal of identifying best practices in sustainable tourism marketing, semi-structured interviews by telephone and e-mail were conducted with several tourism organizations to:

- Identify sustainable tourism practices within the industry.
- Determine if the focus of these practices was on environmental, social/cultural or economic aspects of sustainability.
- Recognize common marketing tools used in conjunction with sustainable tourism.
- Ascertain if there was evidence of success of these marketing tools through evaluation and monitoring.
- Collect recommendations regarding how other organizations could implement these marketing tools.
- Compile descriptions of successful marketing that could be used as a resource and as a benchmark for other organizations in the California tourism industry.

These best practices are divided into seven categories that align with the commonly accepted tourism industry sectors identified by CTTC. To ease in use of the best practices, a table is provide that links specific best practices to each organization described in the handbook. The most frequently identified marketing best practices are social media, partnerships and networking, public relations, press releases, certifications, word of mouth and directories/maps. Marketing strategies identified by only one organization are not included in the table.

Marketing Tools								
Organization	Page	Social Media	PR Articles	Press Release	Word of Mouth	Branding sustainable efforts	Newsletter	Partnerships/ Networking
Ambrose Hotel	12		X					
BART	26	X						X
Bon Appétit Management Company	24	X	X					X
Bureau of Land Management	27							
California Academy of Sciences	17	X	X	X				
California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance	20	X	X	X	X			X
Cavallo Point Lodge	13	X		X				X
Central Coast Outdoors	17				X			
Global Exchange Reality Tours	18	X		X	X			X
Green Zebra	24				X			X
Half Moon Bay Chamber of Commerce	20		X					
Hornblower	18	X				X		
Institute at the Golden Gate	26	X				X		

Laguna Beach CVB	22	X						
Northstar at Tahoe	15			X		X	X	
Redwood Lodge Company Eco-lodge	14	X			X			X
San Diego Botanical Gardens	16		X					X
San Diego Natural History Museum	15			X	X			
San Francisco CVB	21	X				X		
Santa Barbara Car Free	25	X	X	X				X
Santa Barbara CVB	21	X	X	X				X
Sierra At Tahoe	15		X	X	X	X		
Sonoma Orchid Inn	13				X			
Sustainable Vine Wine Tours	19	X	X	X				X
Tahoe Chamber of Commerce	22							X
Tender Greens	23	X	X	X		X		X
The Stanford Inn by the Sea	13				X			X
Travelocity	25					X		X
USDA Forest Service	28					X		X
Visit Mendocino	22	X			X			X

Marketing Tools

Organization	Page	Facility Design	Signage	Specific Web Pages	Certifications	Directories/ Maps	Events	Discounts/ Sweepstakes
Ambrose Hotel	12				X			
BART	26							X
Bon Appétit Management Company	24			X				
Bureau of Land Management	27							
California Academy of Sciences	17	X	X		X		X	
California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance	20	X	X	X	X		X	
Cavallo Point Lodge	13	X			X			
Central Coast Outdoors	17			X				
Global Exchange Reality Tours	18			X			X	
Green Zebra	24							X
Half Moon Bay Chamber of Commerce	20			X		X	X	
Hornblower Cruises and Events	18	X	X	X				
Institute at the Golden Gate	26	X			X		X	X
Laguna Beach CVB	22			X				

Northstar at Tahoe	15		X					
Redwood Lodge Company Eco-lodge	14				X			
San Diego Botanical Gardens	16							
San Diego Natural History Museum	15	X			X			
San Francisco CVB	21			X		X		
Santa Barbara Car Free	25					X		X
Santa Barbara CVB	21			X		X	X	
Sierra At Tahoe	15		X					
Sonoma Orchid Inn	13	X						
Sustainable Vine Wine Tours	19							
Tahoe Chamber of Commerce	22					X	X	
Tender Greens	23						X	X
The Stanford Inn by the Sea	13							
Travelocity	25			X		X		
USDA Forest Service	28		X	X		X		
Visit Mendocino	22					X	X	

ACCOMMODATIONS

The Ambrose Hotel, Santa Monica www.ambrosehotel.com.

Since opening in 2003, The Ambrose Hotel has been centered on sustainability. By focusing internally, The Ambrose has made a sustainable impact in many ways – using all environmentally friendly housekeeping products, creating a sustainable purchasing program, using Energy Star appliances, providing recycling bins in every room and

offering an alternative transportation initiative program. The Ambrose was the first hotel to receive LEED Certification and was awarded the 2006 Sustainable Quality Award by the Sustainable Works Program. The Ambrose Hotel relies on marketing through public relations efforts in different media outlets, including features magazines. The hotel remains focused on authenticity and providing the features and services that they actively promote.

The Stanford Inn by the Sea, Mendocino www.stanfordinn.com

The Stanford Inn is an eco-resort located on the beautiful Mendocino coast. The Stanford Inn is a leader in the green movement in Northern California by adopting the best practices for sustainability. Their focus has been on sustaining environmental, economic and cultural resources. They contribute to environmental sustainability by using only organic food and products, and support economic sustainability by working with local organizations and using local resources. They also strive to preserve the cultural traditions of the area. The Stanford Inn has found networking to be one of the best marketing practices by working with local organizations. They also rely on word of mouth through past guests, who know first-hand that they provide a truly eco-friendly experience.

Sonoma Orchid Inn, Guerneville www.sonomaorchidinn.com

The Sonoma Orchid Inn is a small bed and breakfast that has implemented sustainable practices. The Sonoma Orchid Inn has an orchard and chickens to serve fresh fruit and eggs to their guests. In addition, the facility has been designed with drip watering systems, energy efficient lights and solar power. The Sonoma Orchid Inn used solar panels to create a gazebo on the roof for guests to relax and look out over the orchard. The Sonoma Orchid Inn has used the facility design to attract additional guests who value sustainable practices.

Cavallo Point Lodge, Sausalito www.cavallopoint.com

Nestled at the base of the Golden Gate Bridge within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Cavallo Point Lodge has established itself as a high-end

sustainable tourism destination. Cavallo Point Lodge has qualified for the LEED gold certification, which was identified as an initial goal of the property. Local foods and products are used to support the property, along with solar panels and recycled products. Cavallo Point Lodge works with the Good Night Foundation, a national organization that helps raise money for local charities. To increase awareness of Cavallo Point, a press release highlighted its LEED gold certification. To further increase visibility, Cavallo Point works with a PR company dedicated to increasing press for the property. The majority of the marketing materials used are recycled products. Cavallo Point Lodge also uses social media to connect with guests and to increase awareness.

Redwood Lodge Company Eco-lodge, Orick www.redwoodadventures.com

The Redwood Lodge Company is currently in the process of completing an eco-lodge located in Redwood National Park. Several activities are offered to guests such as eco-tours, mountain bike tours/rentals, kayaking, horseback rides and fishing trips. The Redwood Lodge Company has implemented sustainable tourism into the foundation of this project, starting with their mission statement. At each stage of development, the Redwood Lodge Company sought input from the public to ensure the eco-lodge was created in a manner that was congruent with the host community. Social media such as Twitter, Facebook and a blog are used to increase awareness and potential occupancy at the eco-lodge. The Redwood Lodge Company has become a leader in the lodging and hospitality industry for sustainable practices. They have created a green certificate program for the lodging industry in Humboldt County, and they are now being contacted by several other organizations outside the county for advice on developing similar green certificate programs. The Redwood Lodge Company focuses on employee empowerment, which has helped boost “word of mouth” promotions and will ultimately strengthen visitor experiences at the eco-lodge when it opens.

ATTRACTIONS AND DESTINATIONS

Sierra at Tahoe www.sierraattahoe.com

Sierra at Tahoe promotes sustainability through many aspects of the resort. They offer free parking for hybrid vehicles in the preferred parking lot, have converted all of their lights to CFLs, buy only biodiesel (B5), and use all compostable utensils and plates in the restaurant. Sierra at Tahoe emphasizes sustaining the environment. Marketing has included onsite collateral and signage, public relations efforts and word of mouth. In 2010, Sierra at Tahoe was awarded the Silver Eagle Award for environmental education through the Golden Eagle Awards. They have also found a significant increase in guests' awareness of "Project Green Sierra" from their marketing efforts. Sierra at Tahoe promotes sustainable tourism by focusing on locally based changes and spreading the word about sustainability.



Northstar at Tahoe www.northstarattahoe.com

Northstar at Tahoe has been emphasizing sustainability by creating a Habitat Management Plan (HMP). Through the HMP, they aim to sustain the local environment by balancing the land the resort uses with natural resources. The goal of the HMP is to preserve natural resources including the seral habitat forests, aquatic, riparian and meadow habitats while operating a four-season resort. They have been marketing the HMP on the Northstar at Tahoe Web site, in newsletters and through onsite signage. Northstar at Tahoe has observed strong support for the HMP from the local community and guests. Northstar at Tahoe suggests that other sustainable organizations make sure that they have a solid sustainable background in place and that organizations adopt sustainability for the right reasons.

San Diego Natural History Museum www.sdnhm.org

The San Diego Natural History Museum has gone to great lengths to become a leader in sustainable tourism. Their mission is to interpret the natural world through research, education and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of

Southern California and the peninsula of Baja California; and to inspire in all a respect for nature and the environment. They support their mission by offering informational series, such as “Sustainable Planet: Food,” which focuses on topics like sustainable agriculture and eating greener. The San Diego Natural History Museum, the first LEED-certified museum in California, is also the oldest LEED-certified museum in the nation. They use green cleaning products through a low-environmental-impact, high-performance cleaning program. Among other sustainability efforts, the San Diego Natural History Museum is using less paper, recycling 50% of their total waste, and controlling lights with automatic motion sensors to ensure they’re only used when needed. They rely on marketing through press releases, word of mouth and by providing an abundance of information on their Web site.

San Diego Botanical Gardens www.sdbgarden.org

The San Diego Botanical Garden has long been a leader and participant in sustainable tourism practices. Their goal is to preserve the environment by acting locally and thinking globally. They have made many changes to support their sustainability goals, such as replacing irrigation controllers with weather-based controllers; re-using green waste materials by grounding it into mulch; composting foods on-site at events; and using compostable utensils, plates and cups at events held on location. The San Diego Botanical Garden was one of the first botanical gardens to use recycled water for irrigation. In addition to these changes, they have also installed green roofs, which started on a small potting shed, and are now on numerous restrooms and other structures. The plants used for these green roofs are almost entirely drought resistant succulent plants. The San Diego Botanical Garden stresses “walking the walk” when it comes to promoting their sustainability efforts. They are acting locally and thinking globally by making the education of children a major priority. They also market through partnerships with local organizations and public relations efforts. One definite marketing success was the creation of *Be Water Smart*, a video that aired on the San Diego PBS station and is available to view online.

Central Coast Outdoors www.centralcoastoutdoors.com

Central Coast Outdoors Tour Company strives to minimize the environmental impact throughout the company by using electric vehicles, solar panels at their office and making donations to counteract their remaining carbon footprint. All guides at Central Coast Outdoors must have a firm understanding of the cultural history and ecosystem of the destinations the company frequents. Sustainable tourism has been built into the brand image of Central Coast Outdoors. Central Coast Outdoors has dedicated a page on their Web site for eco-tours and communicating their efforts to their customers. Central Coast Outdoors also receives support of its promotion efforts through past customers' reviews such as TripAdvisor Media Group.

California Academy of Sciences www.calacademy.org

The California Academy of Sciences is an organization that leads by example with its sustainable practices. Sustainable efforts have been incorporated into the core of the organization and have been implemented at every level of the Academy. Since its creation, the California Academy of Sciences has strived to become a leader and role model for other organizations. The building itself has become a tourist attraction, as well as an example of what is possible in facility design. The building's features include a natural cooling system, efficient water use, solar power, living roof and water pipeline from the Pacific Ocean for more efficient water use in the aquariums inside the building. The California Academy of Sciences has done an outstanding job of utilizing signage to communicate to guests their sustainable practices. This includes signs for recycling and water use. To help others in their efforts, the California Academy of Sciences will duplicate these signs for other organizations to use at their facilities upon request as part of their "Sustainability Made Simple" project. California Academy of Sciences' marketing effort is geared toward communicating its sustainability. In an attempt to reach new customers, "Friday Night Life" parties are held, with 10-20% of these events incorporating a sustainability theme. To help increase awareness of these events and various other events, social media sites are used to increase the "buzz."

Global Exchange Reality Tours www.globalexchange.org

Global Exchange Reality Tours, a non-profit human rights group as well as a unique tour company located in San Francisco, provides travelers with the opportunity to link with activists and organizations from around the world who are working to make a positive change. Global Exchange Reality Tours practices sustainability internally and externally. Internally, they use all sustainable products, including cleaning supplies and trash bags. They are also moving toward being paperless. Currently, 95% of their packages and toolkits are electronic. Externally, they use all organic foods, look at the social ramifications of their tours, and use services from local businesses in the location of their tours. Global Exchange Reality Tours evaluates every aspect of the tour experience to ensure that the entire program is promoting sustainability. Their ethos is social responsibility. They strive to treat other countries and people as equals, support local businesses and educate travelers about the local community. Global Exchange Reality Tours markets through its Web site, by word of mouth, press releases, travel shows and their alumni, who tell other travelers of their first-hand experiences. Global Exchange Reality Tours also markets its partnerships with other organizations. They are currently starting to market through social media outlets including a blog, Facebook and Twitter. Global Exchange Reality Tours says that it's important to show substance, hold the bar high in sustainable practices and avoid greenwashing.

Hornblower Cruises and Events, San Francisco www.hornblower.com/hce/home

Hornblower Cruises and Events offers a variety of tours, dining cruises and private events throughout California. Hornblower currently has ports in San Diego, San Francisco, Berkeley, Sacramento, Marina del Rey, Long Beach and Newport. Hornblower has several programs in place at their various ports to help increase the company's sustainable efforts. One example is the use of sustainable seafood. In San Francisco, Hornblower only serves seafood that has been identified as sustainable by the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program. Cards are distributed onboard their vessels explaining which seafood products are on the watch list. One of the most noticeable efforts Hornblower has taken to be sustainable is their use of a hybrid ferry for their fleet. Hornblower was the first company in the U.S. to build and operate a

hybrid ferry, which operates on wind, solar, diesel and electric power. Hornblower has also created a program called Respect Our Planet, which has been used to help brand the sustainable efforts of Hornblower. A Web site, blog, Twitter account and Facebook page have been created to help promote the efforts incorporated in Respect Our Planet.

WINE INDUSTRY

Sustainable Vine Wine Tours www.sustainablevine.com

Sustainable Vine Wine Tours is a sustainable wine tasting tour company located in Santa Barbara County. Sustainable Vine was created in 2007 and has quickly become a leading wine tasting tour company on the Central Coast. They operate an average of



three to four tours per week. Sustainable Vine supports the environment by transporting their customers in a nine-seat Mercedes sprinter van that runs on biodiesel and averages 24-25 mpg. They support the local economy by touring only wineries that farm organically. Sustainable Vine also provides educational components with their tours. Their marketing efforts have had a broad reach: Sustainable Vine markets

through their Web site, social media, press releases, free press and partnerships with sustainable wineries. Sustainable Vine was voted #1 in the Top 10 green things to do in the West according to *Sunset* magazine. Although they have only been in business for a few years, they continue to see strong growth year after year due to their marketing efforts. Sustainable Vine's advice to other sustainable organizations is that being green alone is not the key to success. Sustainable Vine says that you have to be better than your competition through your products, services and prices, while also maintaining your sustainability goals.

California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance www.sustainablewinegrowing.org

Since 2003, the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance has been providing educational workshops and tools to assist wineries and vineyards in adopting and implementing sustainable practices. One specific tool is a self- assessment workbook that covers 227 sustainable practices from grape to glass. The sustainable practices that the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance promote help conserve water and energy, maintain healthy soil, reduce pesticide use, preserve wildlife habitats, protect air and water quality, recycle natural resources, and enhance relations with employees and neighbors. The California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance sustains the environment, economy, and culture by achieving three E's: being environmentally sound, socially equitable and economically feasible. They market through their statewide sustainability reports and Web site. They also market by working with wineries statewide, and by word of mouth. The marketing success of the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance is monitored and evaluated through built-in metrics. The California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance recommends other sustainable organizations be authentic, be specific about practices, be able to verify sustainability claims, know the target audience, and communicate internally and externally.

DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS

Half Moon Bay Chamber of Commerce www.halfmoonbaychamber.org

The Half Moon Bay Chamber of Commerce has been a pioneer in implementing sustainable and ecotourism practices throughout the community of Half Moon Bay. The participants involved with the Half Moon Bay Chamber of Commerce must complete a nomination form to ensure sustainable practices are used throughout Half Moon Bay. To increase awareness of sustainable tourism in Half Moon Bay, they have hired a PR company to help increase press exposure. In addition, Half Moon Bay creates promo trips for freelance writers to visit the area and write articles about the destination. This is an effective way for organizations to increase press if they do not have the funds to purchase a full story or a print ad. The Half Moon Bay Chamber has also created an online eco-tourism map to help tourists identify sustainable organizations and attractions and for trip planning. The eco-map is actually one piece of the page

dedicated to communicating the efforts of the community toward sustainable tourism. Half Moon Bay has also targeted events that attract more environmentally friendly residents such as an upcoming event called Tour de Flur, when local nurseries open up their businesses for tourist and locals.

San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau www.onlyinsanfrancisco.com/green/

The San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau has helped establish San Francisco as one of the premier large sustainable tourism destinations in the United States. Along with communicating the sustainable efforts of their constituents, the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau operates in a green building. The San Francisco CVB helps promote environmental efforts and supports socio-cultural and economic aspects of sustainable tourism. The San Francisco CVB uses five “pillars” to promote San Francisco as a tourist destination: arts and culture, food and wine, diverse neighborhoods, green San Francisco, and gay and lesbian travel. For the socio-cultural component, the San Francisco CVB helps promote local culture and art by contributing grants to promote local artists. The diverse communities are celebrated as part of San Francisco’s culture. To promote the different communities, the San Francisco CVB has created a map to illustrate the city’s different communities. Furthermore, a Web page has been dedicated for green businesses in San Francisco. This page includes a green hotels map so visitors can identify environmentally friendly properties. Economically, since tourism is the largest industry in San Francisco, the CVB lobbies to help maintain San Francisco as a competitive tourist destination. Currently they are working on regulating San Francisco lodging taxes.

Santa Barbara CVB www.santabarbaraca.com/experience-santa-barbara/sustainable/

Santa Barbara has established itself as a premium sustainable tourism destination in California. To help attract tourists and to promote sustainable tourism, the Santa Barbara Convention and Visitors Bureau offers sample sustainable tourism itineraries on a Web page. To increase awareness of this Web page, the CVB issued a press release. The Santa Barbara CVB strives to keep Santa Barbara authentic and to promote its local culture and the surrounding area. Recently, Santa Barbara has

emphasized culinary tourism and local foods. The Santa Barbara CVB has also increased press by offering promotion packages to freelance writers to write articles about the area. Sustainable tourism has been embedded in the brand image of Santa Barbara to help increase the association between Santa Barbara and sustainable practices. Another effort to increase sustainable efforts is an Earth Day festival that attracts sustainable friendly tourists. The Santa Barbara CVB also uses strategic partnerships to help increase synergy through sustainable efforts.

Laguna Beach CVB www.lagunabeachinfo.com; www.greenlagunabeach.com

The Laguna Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau has created a Web site specifically for promoting sustainable practices in Laguna Beach. The site was launched on Earth Day 2009, with a press release to increase awareness. The site offers resources for transportation, restaurants, attractions and lodging. The Laguna Beach CVB also helped create a video ad for protecting the tide pools in Laguna Beach. The video, "Tidepools Scene," won several awards, including an Emmy in the category of children's programming.

Visit Mendocino www.visitmendocino.com

Mendocino County has implemented numerous sustainable practices, which Visit Mendocino has used to help promote the county as a sustainable tourism destination. Mendocino County has the highest percentage of organic wineries, including Par Duché, which is also a carbon neutral winery. Mendocino was the first county to ban the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). In addition, Visit Mendocino has encouraged the use of dry farming to decrease overall water usage for the county. To promote eating locally grown foods, they have embraced the slow food movement. Harvest and farm trails have been developed to increase awareness of the local food products and to increase agritourism in Mendocino County.

Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, Lake Tahoe www.tahoechamber.com/

The Tahoe Chamber of Commerce coordinates promotional efforts throughout the Lake Tahoe region. The Tahoe Chamber has made efforts to sustain all three pillars of

sustainable tourism. In 2007, a green business co-op was created to encourage businesses to share green practices. A basic brochure has been created to help notify businesses in the area about green practices and their benefits. In addition to the brochures, the green business co-op conducts three to four workshops on various green practices such as ozone laundry and energy-efficient appliances. The Tahoe Chamber has also helped initiate a socio-economic indicator report to measure the social well-being of their communities. Two years ago, the Tahoe Chamber created the Lake Tahoe prosperity plan. The prosperity plan developed three cluster categories to guide future development, which include include tourism, health and wellness, and green business and environmental evaluation. The Tahoe Chamber has identified geotourism as an alternative form of tourism that the area can sustain. A strategic partnership has been developed with National Geographic to help promote the geotourism trails in the Tahoe region. www.sierranevadageotourism.org

RESTAURANTS AND RETAIL

Tender Greens www.tendergreensfood.com

Tender Greens, a restaurant with five California locations, has been making great strides in sustainability. Tender Greens serves only locally grown, organic products. They also follow green building principles and use biodegradable packaging. They focus on sustaining the environment by using products from local organic farms, while also supporting non-profit organizations that support the interest of these farmers. Tender Greens supports their local economy by sourcing products, services and craftsmanship from local businesses. They also sustain social resources by actively participating in partnerships with local non-profits in the communities of their five locations. Tender Greens mainly markets through social media outlets including their Web site, Facebook and Twitter. They also market through press facilitated by a PR firm. They have measured their marketing success by the volume of related press, requests for their participation in green events and voluntary comments on various Web sites. Tender Greens has been established as a “lifestyle” brand. Consumers who choose to live a sustainable lifestyle are their greatest marketing tool and advocates. Tender Greens encourages organizations that desire to market sustainability in the tourism industry to

make sustainability a part of a brand's DNA, to avoid greenwashing and to maintain authenticity.

Bon Appétit Management Company www.bamco.com

Bon Appétit Management Company is a leader in the food industry in sustainable practices by preserving flavor, protecting the environment and protecting local communities. Their chefs pick food choices that celebrate flavor, affirm regional cultural traditions and support local economies. They sustain the environment, economy and social resources through various programs. These programs include the Farm to Fork Initiative, in which they buy directly from farmers within a 150-mile radius. Bon Appétit also supports local agriculture through their Eat Local Challenge, during which they challenge chefs to prepare a meal using only local ingredients. Bon Appétit supports social resources through the Bon Appétit Management Company Foundation with a goal to transform the purchasing practices of the food industry. Bon Appétit markets through its Web site, which holds extensive information on the company as well as current activities. They also market through their blog and various press outlets.

Green Zebra, San Francisco www.thegreenzebra.org/sf/

Green Zebra produces an annual guide to businesses in San Francisco that are making sustainable efforts. Along with helping consumers identify sustainable businesses, it also offers savings for sustainable living. Each organization included in the guide offers coupons to their consumers. This helps increase the value and demand for the guide. Green Zebra has four criteria – participating organizations must meet at least three of the four items. The criteria include (1) locally owned and operated business, (2) sell green products, (3) operations are green, and (4) give a portion of the proceeds back to the community. The participating organizations range from a variety of industries, not all within the tourism umbrella, although many have a connection to the tourism industry. These organizations include Pier 39, Sports Basement (sports equipment retailer), La Boulange Café & Bakery and Adventure Out (adventure tour operator). Green Zebra is currently investigating the potential of creating a similar guide designed for tourism to

San Francisco. Green Zebra is a valuable resource for companies making sustainable efforts to help promote themselves to consumers who value sustainable practices.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL

Travelocity www.travelocity.com/TravelForGood/gr-directory.html

Travelocity has created a “Travel for Good” program designed to support sustainable tourism and help tourists plan their trips in a sustainable manner. Travelocity has created a Web page specifically for this program, complete with partner certificate programs, volunteer tourism, hybrid car rental, carbon offset resources and a green hotel finder. Travelocity has become well known for its green hotel finder, which currently has 2,200 green hotels in the directory for tourists to choose from. Travelocity has adopted the standard of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC) to help prevent “greenwashing” and create a directory their customers can trust. As part of the GSTC, Travelocity focuses on management, social/economic, cultural heritage and environmental components of sustainability. Travelocity is currently the only green hotel directory that flags eco-friendly hotels throughout California. To help increase awareness of the program, Travelocity has planned a three-month long green hotel sale. To track the success of the program Travelocity monitors the activity of the green hotel finder. In the first quarter of 2010, Travelocity found that green hotel bookings were 65% higher than non-green hotels. In addition, they have determined that the green hotels in their directory have received higher customer reviews.

Santa Barbara Car Free www.santabarbaracarfree.org

Santa Barbara Car Free is an example of an organization that is increasing awareness of sustainable transportation options. Santa Barbara Car Free offers several transportation alternatives for visitors to the Santa Barbara area, along with maps and resources for trip planning. Santa Barbara Car Free is effectively using strategic partnerships to increase awareness of their organization and the success of their program. For example, a partnership with Amtrak offers discounts for tourists to get to the destination. Similarly, Santa Barbara Car Free partners with various tourism businesses in Santa Barbara to offer additional discounts for their customers. These

discount programs are incentives and business for the partnership organizations. Santa Barbara Car Free has monitored its success from the increased Amtrak ridership. Amtrak reported that 1,431 passengers have used the Santa Barbara Car Free discount on the Pacific Surfliner from January through June 2010. To help increase exposure, Santa Barbara Car Free has received press in such venues as the *Los Angeles Times*.

BART www.bart.gov

The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) District has always been a model of sustainable transportation service. BART started out as a green company, with all-electric cars that produce electricity during use. Each rider saves 21 pounds of CO2 per ride. BART was originally only targeted to local commuters; tourism was not a target market until 2005. By creating a tourism marketing position, BART was able to market to travelers coming into the Bay Area. The ridership from San Francisco International Airport to downtown San Francisco has increased by 400% over the past five years. BART has taken advantage of many marketing strategies. They have become involved in distribution through major online travel sellers to expand their business nationally and internationally. BART has also implemented a voucher system and partnered with the San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau and CTTC. BART has taken advantage of social media marketing through Facebook and Twitter, and markets through the Internet by holding viral sweepstakes on their Web site. For example, "Trains to Planes" is a program where BART customers have the opportunity to win plane tickets. BART advises other organizations to align themselves with a certification organization that can help validate and market the sustainability of the organization.

RECREATION AND PUBLIC LANDS

Institute at the Golden Gate www.instituteatgoldengate.org

The Institute at the Golden Gate is a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy that was created to serve as a means to connect, collaborate and inspire people about sustaining the planet. The Institute offers environmental programs, onsite events, native plant and habitat restoration, and trail and interpretive opportunities. Their focus has been on sustaining environmental resources. The Institute at the Golden Gate

has taken advantage of many different marketing opportunities. They use social media outlets including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Vimeo. They also market through e-mail, networking events, tradeshow and exhibiting opportunities, print collateral, paid advertisements, Google Adwords and speaking engagements. The Institute at the Golden Gate uses



salesforce.com and Convio to monitor its marketing efforts through impressions, click-throughs, conversations and registration codes. They have found that their marketing has been a success by a rise in demand for conference space contracts through their special rate offering. The Institute at the Golden Gate advises other sustainable tourism organizations to create unique differentiators, take advantage of face-to-face networking opportunities, and build a brand by maintaining consistent communication with constituents.

Bureau of Land Management www.blm.gov/ca/st/en.html

The natural California landscape is one of the most powerful tourist attractions in the nation. The Bureau of Land Management helps facilitate the use of public lands so the public can access the land in a variety of ways. The BLM has created and adopted many programs that implement sustainable practices to minimize the negative environmental impacts of tourism. Two of those programs are “Leave No Trace” and “Tread Lightly.”. The BLM recognizes that different destinations have different social and environmental carrying capacities, and has limited use in particular locations to maintain their pristine nature. The BLM recognizes the importance of partnerships with the local communities to sustain a destination. An example of this is the BLM partnership with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians in the Indian and Tahquitz Canyons within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains. They have worked together

to determine the areas that can be shown to tourists without infringing on the Agua Caliente culture, along with allowing them to tell the history and story of the destination to the tourists. This helps increase knowledge and awareness of the local culture along with offering a richer and more satisfying experience for tourists. The BLM uses social media, newsletters and offers brochures at California Welcome Centers (CWCs). Beneficial partnerships have also increased the awareness and effectiveness of their programs.

USDA Forest Service www.fs.fed.us

The USDA Forest Service's mission is "to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations." In order to achieve this mission, the Forest Service adopted a Framework for Sustainable Recreation that identifies environmental, social and economic sustainability. One aspect of the Framework is to implement a place-based recreation planning model that uses a collaborative process to work with local communities and outdoor recreation and tourism providers within regional destination areas. The Forest Service has already implemented these principles in support of sustainable tourism in California through completion of the Scenic Byway Corridor Management plan and through partnering with the National Geographic Center for Sustainable Tourism to complete a Geotourism Mapguide in the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. The Forest Service markets its projects through partnerships as well as onsite projects. The Forest Service's advice to other organizations is to form partnerships. Tourism companies benefit from partnerships with public land management agencies that manage natural treasures and attract visitors.

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