

# YOU'RE OUR PEOPLE.



FY2025/26 STRATEGIC PLAN | JUNE 2025



DVA ADVERTISING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

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With three years of progressive work under our belts, Visit Hood River and DVA are well-positioned to drive strategic vision and implementation for Hood River's long-term economic development success.

Strengthening Hood River's economy while benefiting its communities, cultures, and environments will continue to require strong partnerships and collaborative efforts, and this plan will serve as our compass. At its core, it supports the fundamental mission of Visit Hood River:

**Build and sustain the quality of life for the residents and businesses who call Hood River home.**



# PERENNIAL GOALS

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**Attract visitors during less visited midweek, shoulder, and off-seasons.**

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**Grow visitation, resulting in increased room tax collections, occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR.**

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**Utilize promotion efforts to direct traffic to individual businesses throughout the region.**

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**Drive community initiatives around diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

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**Position Hood River as a place worthy of respect and protection.**

## Content + Creative -

The last 3+ years have brought us many things, most notably a foundational campaign (You're Our People), a successful PR strategy and implementation, and a brand new, code-compliant website. While we're pleased with the progress, we're looking to further amplify it with a renewed commitment to our visual storytelling, ad creative, and library of assets that celebrate the vibrance of a modern Hood River. For 2025/26, we intend to complete multiple photo and video projects, and draft authentic content pieces employing a blend of local and other sourced talent.

**Our goal is simple — show Hood River off in a way that is 100% on brand, 100% of the time.**

## GEO - Generative Engine Optimization

Results for **Hood River, OR** · Choose area

### AI Overview

Hood River offers a wide array of activities, from outdoor adventures to local attractions. Popular options include exploring the Columbia River Gorge, enjoying water sports like windsurfing and kiteboarding, visiting the Hood River Waterfront, and experiencing the Hood River Lavender Farms. You can also enjoy scenic train rides on the Mount Hood Railroad and explore the Hood River Fruit Loop.



### Outdoor Activities:

- **Columbia River Gorge:** Hike, bike, or simply enjoy the stunning views of the canyon and waterfalls.

Show more

### THE 15 BEST Things to Do in Hood River (2025) - Must-See Attractions

\* Columbia River Gorge Waterfalls Tour from Portland, OR. ... \* Columbia Gorge Waterfalls...

Tripadvisor



### First Time Visitor Recs : r/hoodriver - Reddit

Jul 25, 2024 — I second The Gorge White House. ... Rent some e-bikes and ride the Twin Tunnels trail to Mosier. ... Visi...

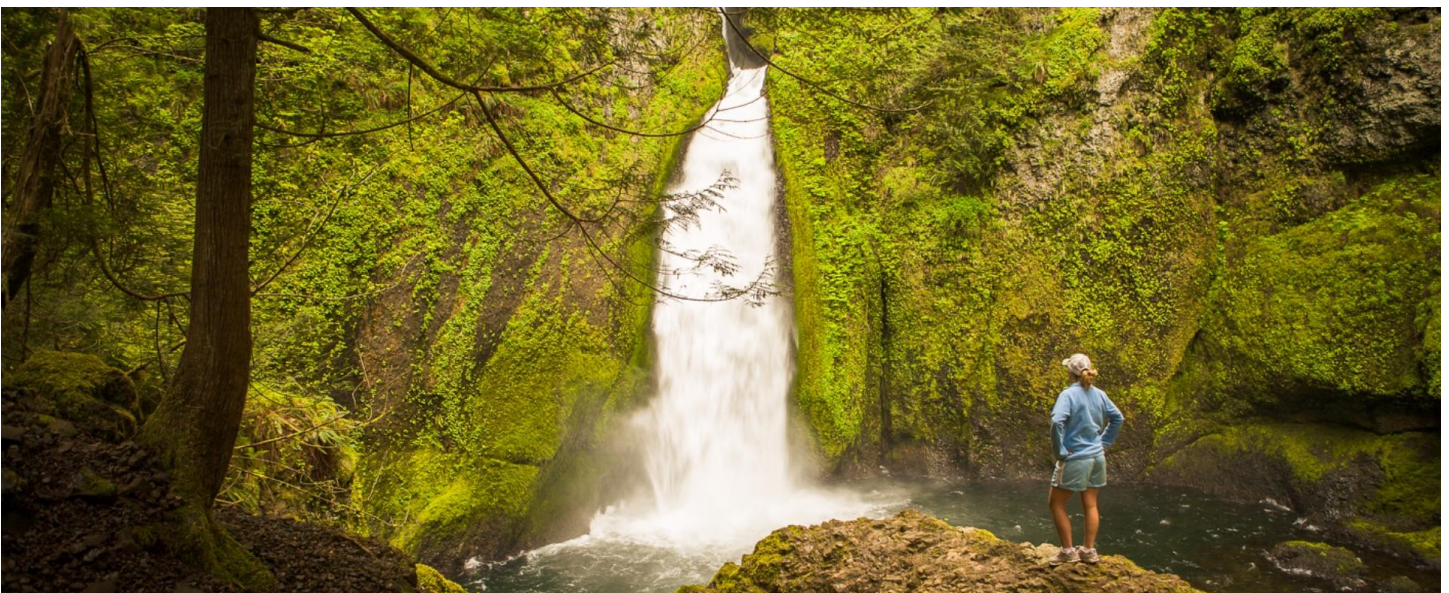
Reddit · r/hoodriver

**We have clear benchmarks** for performance evaluation on metrics including earned media value, digital advertising performance, website traffic, organic social engagement, and clicks from the website to book a stay or visit a stakeholder site.

In addition to the standard benchmarks listed above, we'll also report on advertising attribution in real dollars. While many of these are directly impacted by the marketing work, some metrics (such as ADR and RevPAR) may be influenced, but not directly impacted. Still, we'll report on them as the data is available for reference.

Among the we'll report on and compare against historical numbers include:

- Year-over-year lodging tax collections, ADR and RevPar, including seasonal trends
- Year-over-year visitor numbers, origination, length of stay, and activities
- Year-over-year mentions of individual businesses, and clicks to business sites from VisitHoodRiver.com
- We'll also use benchmarks produced by a blend of other DVA managed DMOs to provide a meaningful performance comparison.



**The measurement goals noted previously will be achieved through five primary categories of work:**

## **Drive Consumer Visitation + Promote Local Business**

- Grow visitation, resulting in increased room tax collections and occupancy
- Attract visitors during less visited shoulder and off-seasons

## **Promote Local Business**

- Utilize promotion efforts to direct traffic to individual businesses throughout the region

## **Support Event Promotion**

- Grow interest in newer events and festivals, ideally resulting in increased room tax collections and occupancy

## **Build a Sustainable Destination**

- Position Hood River as a place worthy of respect and protection
- Continue to provide sustainability messaging in-market during peak season.

## **Participate in and Promote a Welcoming Community**

- Drive community initiatives around diversity, equity, and inclusion

**The core of VHR's marketing program is aimed at driving consumer visitation – both overnight and day trip – throughout the year, with a special focus on shoulder, off season, and midweek.**

## TACTICS

### Creative Campaign

- DVA and VHR will embark on a deep-dive in 2025/26 to update the You're Our People campaign with new assets, messaging, and visual updates to reflect the energy and unique authenticity of Hood River.
- We'll work with local creatives, business owners, and residents to develop and showcase the stories, shared values, and cultural diversity of the community.

### Content Plan

- The bulk of our ongoing communications efforts, executed across paid channels, owned organic channels, email, website, and public relations are driven by a content plan and a Go-to-Market (GTM) strategy (pg.10). Our GTM revolves around planning, coordination, and timely execution to ensure messaging meets consumers ahead of decision points in their path to visit/purchase..
- We'll utilize a content calendar that outlines more than a year in advance the messaging and channels we'll be utilizing so we can prepare assets and buys accordingly. Additionally, we have monthly content connects with the VHR staff and subcontractors to make sure our messaging is timely and accurate.

### Paid Media

- The paid media strategy – primarily digital – is guided by a sales funnel approach more completely described on pages 11 and 12 below. We utilize a range of channels to ensure we address targeted audiences at appropriate stages in their exploratory and planning stages, then follow them through booking and subsequently bringing them back to the destination again.
- This entire strategy is informed by data obtained through VHR's Google Analytics, but now also by data that shows us a five-year lookback at visitation patterns so we can specifically target people and lookalikes that visit midweek, during key seasons, participating in most desired activities and originating from identified markets that provide the most value to Hood River.
- Targeting is based primarily on behaviors and geographic location, secondarily on demographics. Behaviorally, Hood River is looking for individuals, groups, and families who are interested in exploration, travel, food and wine/beer/spirits, outdoor recreation and have a history of searching for and physically participating in those things. Data specific to Hood River website and physical visitation will give us precise information on the types of people most likely to visit in a manner we prefer (shoulder/off season, midweek, staying in a lodging property, or spending in local businesses if a day guest, etc. The same data will help us hone our geographic targeting spends, as well.
- The digital strategy currently in place incorporates paid social as well as programmatic native and display campaigns, and an aggressive paid search effort that has been extremely effective in driving conversions.

## Organic Social Media

- A key component to building and maintaining a relationship with visitors, as well as businesses and residents, is through organic social media efforts, currently playing out on Facebook and Instagram.
- Our social media plan follows the previously described content plan, and involves regular posts, responses and community engagement, and constant evaluation of reach and overall effectiveness..

## Email Marketing

- For 2025/26 email communications will be managed in-house by DVA with Hood River local, Ashley Huckaby taking primary author responsibilities.
- The purpose of email is to provide actionable inspiration for return visits from our opted in travelers. As noted below, both email and organic social are also prime territory for promoting individual local businesses.
- Email success is measured by opens and clicks versus industry benchmarks.

## Website Optimization

- In 2024 we built an all new, lightweight, modern website that is easy to navigate for both visitors and back-end users. We forged partnerships with local photographers for image needs to help create a visual hook of authenticity that is undeniably Hood River. In 2025/26 we'll continue to refine this user experience with new long-form content, visuals, and experiences. .
- We'll continue to build out specific campaign landing pages that will serve as informative destinations for the Hood River curious. Additionally, this will also allow us the opportunity to retarget and evaluate the effectiveness of individual campaigns.

## Public Relations

- The PR strategy around consumer visitation will be focused on generating interest, awareness, visitation, and ultimately editorial/social coverage among targeted media and influencers.
- In addition to proactive outreach efforts, DVA will manage the review, vetting, and management of inbound inquiries based on timing, story angle, audience, and reach.
- Through a combination of press releases, proactive outreach, media invitations, pitches, media visit coordination, and more, Hood River will maintain a steady presence in front of key media and influencer audiences, and ultimately their readers, viewers, listeners, and followers.

## Advertising Deliverables

- You're Our People Creative Development Campaign Renewal, Asset Collection, and Implementation.
- Content, Go-To-Market plan, Media Plan and Buy
- Organic social media posts on both Facebook and Instagram
- Monthly Newsletter and List Growth Tactics
- Website Blog Posts including local author contributions, continued map integrations, and evergreen content pages (sustainability etc.)

## Public Relations Deliverables

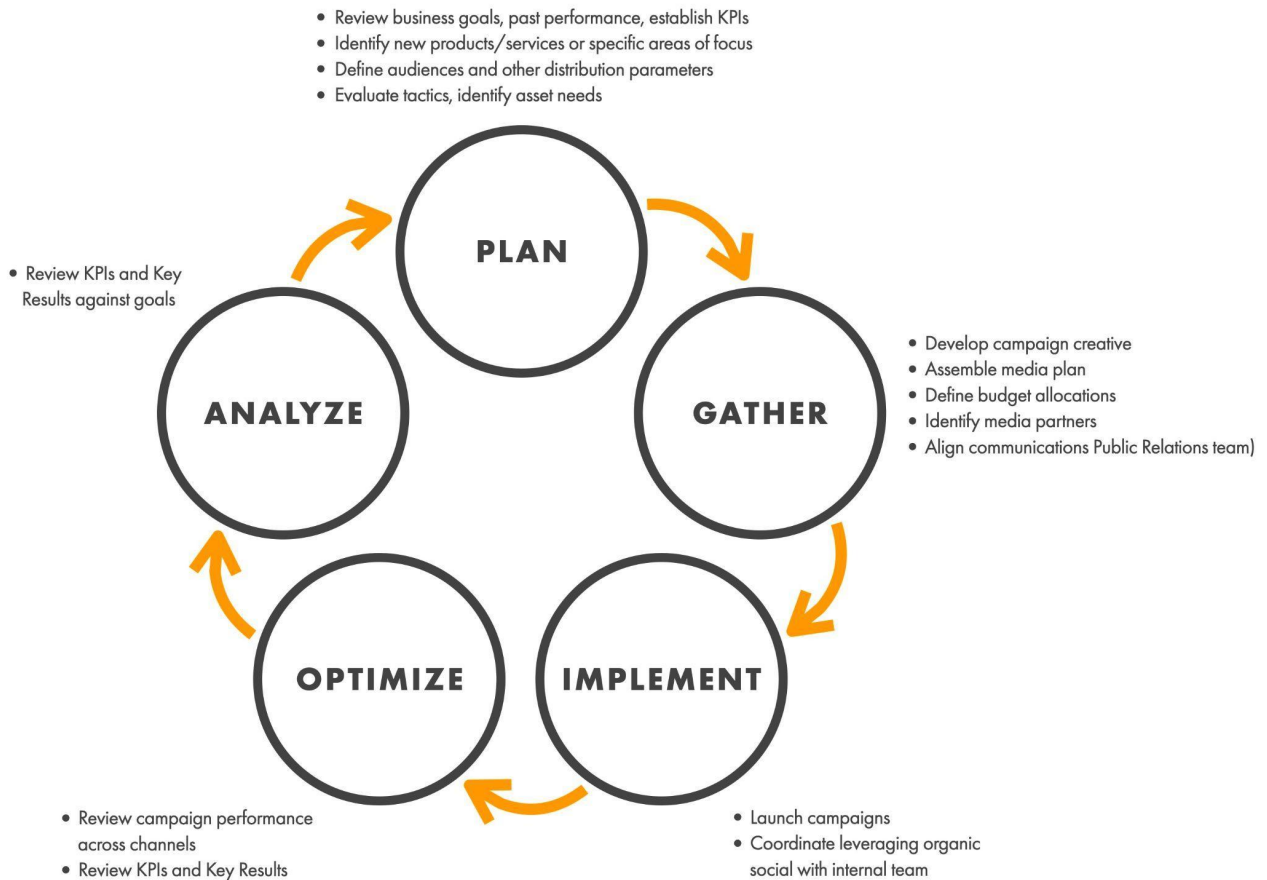
- **Media kit/press room** – Continue to update the media kit and website press room.
- **PR editorial calendar** – Develop and execute a 12-month proactive calendar for drafting and distribution of press releases, invitations, and themed pitches to regional and national media.
- **Media invitations and hosted visits** – Develop and distribute fall/winter and spring/summer themed invitations encouraging select media and influencers to visit. Host media on an ongoing basis for the purpose of generating feature editorial coverage.
- **Media/Influencer FAM Tour** – Plan and execute one in-market media familiarization tour in FY 2025/26, centered around a specific theme (TBD).
- **Proactive media/influencer outreach** – Leverage Hood River's many assets to actively recruit editorial coverage and individual visits from travel and lifestyle media and influencers.



# GO-TO-MARKET CAMPAIGN PLANNING

Management of major consumer facing tactics requires planning, coordination, and timely execution to ensure messaging meets consumers ahead of decision points in their path to purchase.

To deliver an optimized plan, DVA utilizes a Go-To-Market process that brings transparency, fosters collaboration, and builds consensus among all stakeholders. Our GTM process typically works 6-12 months ahead of launch dates, and identifies key deliverables to execute a campaign across all sections of the sales funnel.



## Strategy Sessions

At regular intervals across the calendar, DVA and Visit Hood River will meet to review performance and strategize for future campaigns including but not limited to:

- **Consumer-facing efforts intended to drive visitation**
- **Meetings, groups, conferences & conventions**
- **In-market diversity, equity, & inclusion**
- **Tourism advocacy and industry/stakeholder support**
- **Sustainability & sustainable tourism initiatives**

**All the visitation in the world won't matter if local businesses are not specifically benefitting from our efforts in the form of visibility in our marketing efforts resulting in clicks to their digital properties, and ultimately consistent in-person traffic and sales.**

## TACTICS

### Asset building

- Continue to build the photo and video library featuring individual businesses, owners, staff and products. DVA will use a blend of local and traveling creatives to achieve this objective.

### Creative / Messaging

- Ensure individual, named, and linked businesses, are incorporated into campaign creative

### Paid Media

- Commit a portion of the paid media campaign to running assets that feature individual businesses, either in the ads themselves and/or in the content pieces and landing pages linked to the campaign assets

### Organic Social Media

- Continue to incorporate a constant stream of always changing businesses in our organic feed with links to the business' social media feed
- Monitor and share local business' social media posts

### Email Marketing

- Incorporate individual businesses in stories, sample itineraries and other features

### Website Optimization

- Maintain the business directory, and also link to individual businesses throughout the website within blogs, sample itineraries and landing pages

### Public Relations

- Continue highlighting local businesses and business owners, featuring locally-owned or managed businesses in media and influencer visit itineraries, and spotlighting the makers, producers, growers, and operators who proudly call Hood River home

## FY 2025/26 DELIVERABLES

- Photos/videos featuring local businesses and products
- A minimum of one weekly organic social media post featuring local businesses/products
- Mentions and/or links to website content containing direct links to local businesses
- Website blog posts and/or itineraries that link directly to local businesses
- Business mentions in press materials and business inclusion in PR-arranged media visit itineraries
- Public relations team is available to conduct quarterly outreach/communication targeting tourism partners, elected officials, and the greater Hood River community

**The “other side” of destination marketing is guiding demand appropriately, and educating visitors, as well as locals, in positive ways to visit and treat the residents, businesses and natural resources found in the community.**

## TACTICS

### Creative / Messaging

- Continue to develop digital assets that can be utilized to raise awareness of responsible travel

### Paid Media

- Specifically budget a portion of the media buy for locally geo-fenced sustainability messaging

### Organic Social Media

- The content plan will include environmental sustainability categories that will be incorporated into regular organic social media posts

### Email Marketing

- Email is an optimal channel for environmental messaging since it speaks to an audience that is already familiar with and interested in Hood River
- As with organic social, email will incorporate sustainability messaging as per the content plan

### Public Relations

- Build sustainable tourism messaging into the FY 2025/26 editorial calendar.
- Develop itineraries that route visiting media and influencers to lesser-known and less crowded areas of the valley, including some of the ‘hidden gems’ that are waiting to be discovered
- Where appropriate, incorporate a voluntourism or similar activity into itineraries for visiting media and content creators

### **FY 2025/26 DELIVERABLES**

- Creative assets promoting responsible travel
- Locally geo-fenced digital ad buy conveying sustainability messaging
- Ensure that summer email themes focus first and foremost on responsible recreation
- See detailed Public Relations deliverables in the PR section below
- A minimum of two blog posts that focus on responsible recreation, fire safety, water safety, appropriate visitor behavior, etc.

**Diversity, equity, and inclusion** are important elements of a community we all want to be a part of, whether as residents or visitors. Visit Hood River has a responsibility to advocate for, bring visibility to, and engage in the narrative surrounding the importance of welcoming every individual who visits our town or interacts with our residents, and being open and good neighbors to every resident regardless of their beliefs, origins, economic status, upbringing, sexual orientation, political viewpoint, age, or appearance. More than ever, these attitudes, actions, and words are what truly reflect and define a destination, more so than any natural beauty, amenities, location, or history ever could.

## TACTICS

### Community Activism

- Attend, participate in, and engage with local efforts around DEI initiatives

### Asset Building

- Continue to expand the photography and videography library with models who are representative of a broader swath of our residents, business owners and visitors. In 2025 we partnered with Blaine Franger, Bob Stawicki, and others, and look to expand the local relationships.

### Creative / Messaging

- Develop digital assets that feature a more diverse audience

### Organic Social Media

- The content plan will include social issue categories that will be incorporated into regular organic social media posts

### Email Marketing

- Email is an optimal channel for social messaging since it speaks to an audience that is already familiar with and interested in Hood River
- As with organic social, email will incorporate sustainability messaging as per the content plan

## TACTICS cont.

### Public Relations

- As part of Visit Hood River’s ongoing efforts to more deeply incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and practices into the organization, the public relations plan will prioritize DEI into all PR tactics. These efforts will include, but are not limited to:
  - Identify and prioritize media outlets and influencers that reach a diverse audience that extends beyond what has been traditionally considered the core Visit Hood River demographic.
  - Invite and attract hosted visits from individuals representing the BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized audiences to visit Hood River for the purpose of sharing their experiences with their readers, viewers, fans, and followers.
  - Feature women and minority owned businesses, individuals, products, and other services and activities in content developed for the purpose of promoting Hood River as a diverse, tolerant, accepting, progressive, and welcoming community.
  - Recognize the ancestral history, heritage, culture, and role of Indigenous People in Hood River and the Columbia River Gorge, and celebrate their continued presence and impacts today.

### FY 2025/26 DELIVERABLES

- VHR will seek out appropriate community partners in DEI advocacy
- Photos/videos showing a diversity of people in and around Hood River
- A minimum of two (2) monthly organic social media posts that feature someone from the community representing a diverse point of view or experience
- A minimum of one (1) blog post that would likely be guest-written to discuss Hood River’s approach to diversity, equity and inclusion
- Diverse media outlet targets, featured people and businesses, and recognition in PR tactics



Hood River County Chamber of Commerce programs will continue to focus on community vitality, health, and well being for all of us fortunate enough to make Hood River our place to live and do business.

While our organization operates as Visit Hood River, the Chamber's priorities are at the heart and foundation of how we view our role in community stewardship and leadership. Our community-facing Chamber programs will continue to highlight and enhance the quality of life for Hood River businesses and residents with the following programs:

## Stewardship initiatives:

- Regular meetings to collaborate with the City of Hood River, Hood River County, The Port of Hood River, City of Cascade Locks and The Port of Cascade Locks leadership to discuss our priorities, policies and vision to benefit Hood River as a whole

## Business Leadership and Education

- Downtown Business Committee
- Heights Business Committee
- Cascade Locks Business Committee
- First Thursdays - Business After Hours
- Trails support and management initiatives
- Quarterly Taste of Success

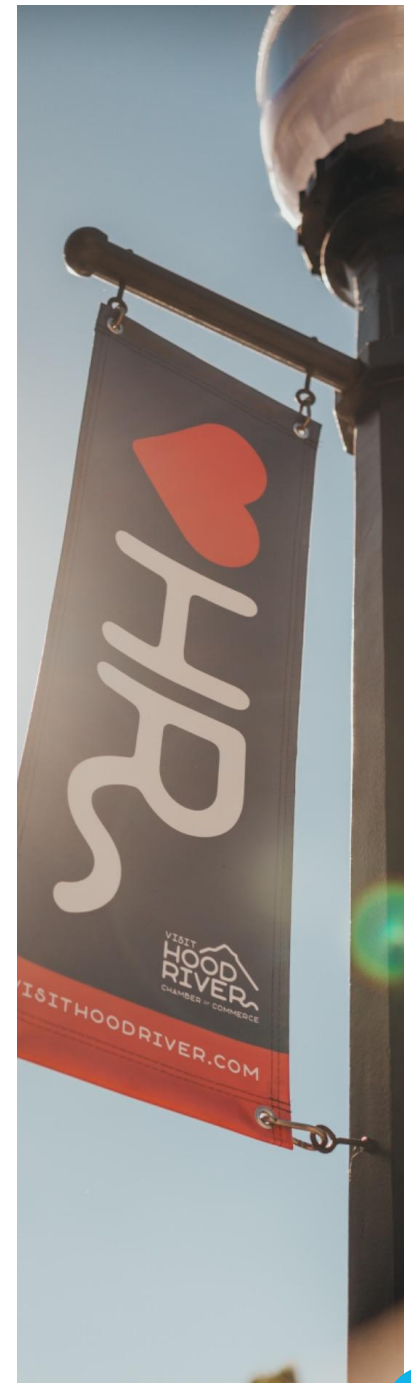
## Community Matching Grant Program

- VHR will award \$40,000 annually to key stakeholder program development projects
- Funding through our VHR Community Matching Grant Program

## Special Event Production and Promotion

- Hops Fest
- Harvest Festival
- Halloween Downtown
- Hood River Holidays
- Ciderfest
- Pride Celebration
- First Friday Celebrations

## Public Health and Safety Advocacy and Communications



**DVA will provide monthly, campaign, and annual recaps per the detail below outlining results measured and evaluated against key performance indicators, historical figures, and industry benchmarks.**

## Advertising Metrics

**MONTHLY - reported month-over-month and year-over-year with industry and competitive destination comparisons as available**

- Business critical KPIs, including:
  - Site traffic
  - Clicks to book
  - Campaign performance
  - High-level lodging metrics (ADR, Occupancy, RevPAR)
- Economic and Hotel attribution to deliver a clear Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)
- Earned media value - per Cision Media Monitoring, measuring against PR goal noted below. Also included in PR reporting will be:
  - Total mentions
  - Audience reach
  - Sentiment (positive, neutral, negative)

**Campaign - reported at the end of each campaign period with analysis of campaign performance against prior year performance. Report will expand on monthly KPI reporting with the addition of:**

- Creative and channel performance
- Visitation
  - Market origination
  - Top Points of Interest
  - Visitation trend against past year/season

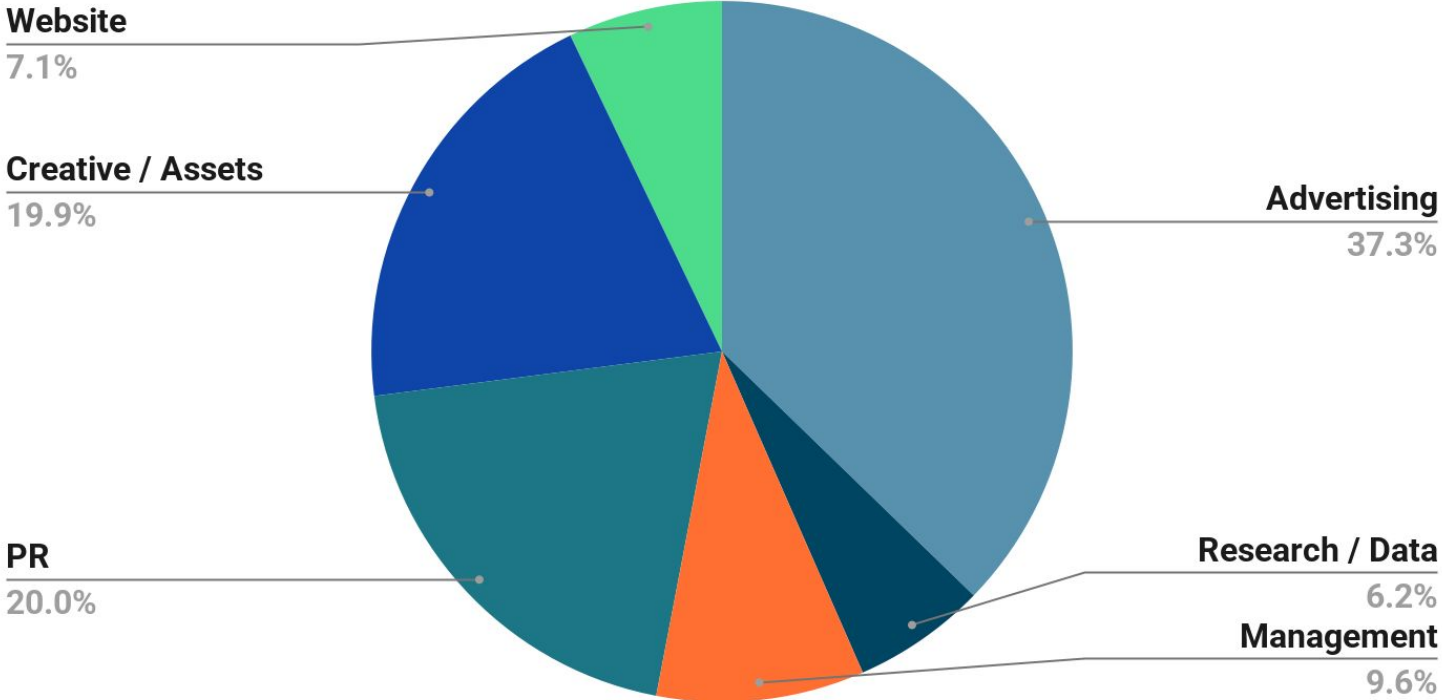
## Public Relations Metrics

Specific to public relations, the plan is to generate, at a minimum, a 10:1 return on investment as measured by the advertising equivalency value of earned media coverage. With a proposed budget of \$75,000 for the 2025/26 fiscal year (\$50,140 PR services; \$9,850 hard costs; \$15,000 collaborator program), the public relations metrics would be as follows:

- Generate \$750,000 in editorial value
- Distribute 11 press releases and pitches
- Host 15 writer/influencer visits

# FY 2025/26 BUDGET

The following is a breakdown of proposed budget allocation by category.



# FY 2025/26 BUDGET - CONT.

DELIVERABLE	CADENCE	COST PER OCCURRENCE	TOTAL
<b>ADVERTISING</b>			
Organic Social	Monthly	\$1,470	\$17,640
B2C Email Communications	Monthly	\$1,000	\$12,000
Paid Digital (Programmatic, Social, Data-Served, Etc.)	Monthly	\$4,950	\$59,400
Paid Search	Monthly	\$1,500	\$18,000
Print Ads (Travel Oregon, CGVG, 1859)			\$10,900
KATU Weather Cam	Monthly	\$1,000	\$12,000
Ad Hoc	As Needed		\$10,000
<b>WEBSITE</b>			
Website Maintenance & Updates	Monthly	\$1,480	\$17,760
Book Direct Booking Engine	One-time		\$9,000
Go Daddy	Annually		\$23
<b>RESEARCH / DATA</b>			
Reporting	Monthly	\$600	\$7,200
Data Service - Datafy	One-time		\$13,000
2027 Strategic Plan	One-time	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>CREATIVE / ASSETS</b>			
Campaign Creative, Post Building, Copywriting	Ongoing		\$40,000
Design Needs (Banners, Stickers, Etc.)	Ongoing		\$14,800
Photography/Videography	Ongoing		\$20,000
<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS</b>			
Public Relations (\$50,140 PR services; \$9,850 hard costs; \$15,000 collaborator program)	Monthly	\$6,250	\$75,000
<b>MANAGEMENT</b>			
Account Management	Monthly	\$3,000	\$36,000
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$375,723</b>



# THANK YOU

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