

YOU'RE OUR PEOPLE.



FY 2026/27 STRATEGIC PLAN | JUNE 2026

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Goals	4
Measurement	6
Work Plan Overview	7
Drive Consumer Visitation	11
Promote Local Businesses	14
Build a Sustainable Destination	16
Community Advocacy	18
Hood River Chamber Programs	20
Reporting	21
Budget	22



INTRODUCTION

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

–Visit Hood River Mission

We're dedicated to enhancing our area's economy by attracting visitors who will help build and sustain the quality of life for the residents and businesses that call Hood River home. Visit Hood River's initiatives promote the area through messages of diversity, equity, inclusion, and the sustainability of our community, with a foundational anchor in environmental stewardship, protection, and preservation for all to responsibly enjoy.



PERENNIAL GOALS

As opposed to any given fiscal year's specific goals and objectives, Visit Hood River's **Perennial Goals** are the non-negotiables that are woven into the marketing effort.

1

Spread demand across the calendar by attracting visitors during less visited times including midweek, shoulder, and off-seasons.

2

Increase overall visitation, resulting in increased tax collections, occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR.

3

Utilize promotion efforts to direct traffic to individual businesses, attractions, and places throughout the region.

4

Be a driving force behind community initiatives centered around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

5

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

FY 2026/27 OBJECTIVES

1

LODGING-FOCUSED CONTENT + CREATIVE

On the heels of a successful “River to Mountain” campaign which highlighted select local businesses whose owners and staff embody the spirit of Hood River, we plan to continue our video programming for 2026/27 with profiles of the unique lodging offerings in our community. The video series will be shot by local videographer, Rod Parmenter, and hosted by Katie Kadlub, CEO of Visit Hood River.

Our goal is to make the appeal for overnight visits undeniable with palpable emotion and imagery.

2

GEO – GENERATIVE ENGINE OPTIMIZATION + CHAT GPT ADVERTISING

With the growth of zero-click search through platforms like Google Gemini, we have spent considerable time and effort optimizing the content on our site for results within this space. In 2026/27 we also plan to begin a pilot ad program within Chat GPT to take advantage of changing user search behavior. This spend will be in addition to current allocations rather than a dilution of efforts.

We’re looking to stay ahead in the AI search environment and take the lead on advertising opportunities.

3

STAKEHOLDER ACCOUNTABILITY

In 2026/27 we will offer increased opportunities for stakeholder input with quarterly performance reviews and strategy communications, as well as communicating shared expectations in the fulfillment of seasonal campaigns.

MEASUREMENT

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.

We'll report on and compare against historical numbers including:

- **Year-over-year lodging tax collections, ADR, and RevPar, including seasonal trends**
- **Year-over-year visitor numbers, origination, length of stay, and activities**
- **Ad aware audience in-market spend through our ad partner, Datafy**
- **Benchmarks produced by a blend of other DVA managed DMOs to provide a meaningful performance comparison**
- **We'll use Uber Suggest to track AI search and visithoodriver.com content placement in platform results**



WORK PLAN OVERVIEW

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

DRIVE CONSUMER VISITATION

- 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

PR WORK PLAN OVERVIEW

The FY 2026–27 public relations strategy is built around the seasons that naturally drive visitation to Hood River, and the stories most likely to resonate with high-value travelers.

Rather than pursuing broad media coverage, efforts will focus on a more select group of outlets whose audiences align with Visit Hood River's goals related to shoulder-season travel, overnight stays, stewardship & sustainability, outdoor recreation, food & beverage, and creative & community culture.

The year is organized around three primary opportunity windows:

Fall Harvest (September–November)

Agritourism, wine, cider, culinary travel

Winter & Shoulder Season (January–March)

Community, culture, makers, lodging partner experiences, Winter PrideFest, and winter recreation

Spring & Early Summer (April–June)

Blossoms, cycling, hiking, stewardship, creativity, outdoor exploration, and summer travel

Story starters may include:

- The town where the wind built the economy –
- Why HR is the West's most efficient adventure basecamp –
- The geography that shapes life in Hood River –

These stories help position Hood River as a destination where outdoor recreation, geography, and community intersect in ways that few – if any – places can offer.

PR PLAN DELIVERABLES

Media Relations

The FY 26–27 PR effort will be anchored by the following tactics/deliverables, which mark a slight shift in strategy from the broader awareness efforts of past years, toward a more targeted, individualized effort.

12 Customized outlet-specific pitches/invitations

6 Hosted individual media visits

2 Paid content creator collaborations

8 Event/Chamber-driven press releases

3 Seasonal toolkits for media kit

12 Destination story concepts

2 Annual editorial planning sessions (Aug. & Jan.)

12 Monthly PR recaps

+ Ongoing, proactive media outreach

Metrics

As with previous years, metrics will be evaluated month-over-month and year-over-year, focusing primarily on earned media value and audience reach. Metrics include:

8–12

Meaningful earned media placements

4–6

Placements in outlets considered tier one

\$1m+

Total earned media value for the fiscal year

Additionally, placements will be evaluated based on inclusion/mention of local businesses, stewardship initiatives, community culture, and shoulder-season travel opportunities.

PR PLAN DELIVERABLES

Media Outlet Focus

As part of the strategy to focus on generating more in-depth and meaningful feature editorial coverage in select media outlets, an initial list of target outlets has been developed. That list includes, but will not be limited to the following:

AFAR **Outside** **Condé Nast Traveler**

The New York Times
TRAVEL



explore™

FOOD & WINE

TRAVEL+
LEISURE

 **NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC
TRAVELER**

MONOCLE

Quality Over Quantity

The editorial goal is not to generate the greatest number of media placements – though that will still happen organically through broader awareness-based PR efforts (i.e. press releases) – but rather to secure the right placements.

Success will be measured by the quality, influence, and longevity of coverage that positions Hood River as one of the West's most distinctive destinations for outdoor recreation, agritourism, stewardship, creativity, and community.

DRIVE CONSUMER VISITATION

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.

Creative Campaign

- In 2025/26 VHR and DVA updated the You're Our People campaign with new assets, messaging, and visuals to reflect the energy and authenticity of Hood River. We also underwent a large organic effort through the River to Mountain video/blog series, highlighting local businesses, owners, and staff.
- The River to Mountain series will evolve in 2026/27 to focus on lodging offerings in the area and will be brought to life through a local team. Their intimate knowledge of the area, proximity to shoot locations, and accessibility was essential for the initial River to Mountain success and will be leveraged moving forward.

Content Plan

- The bulk of ongoing communications efforts – executed across paid channels, owned organic channels, email, website, and public relations – are driven by a content plan and Go-to-Market (GTM) strategy. 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 a year in advance the messages and channels we'll utilize, 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.

Website Optimization

- Optimize site content to prioritize AI search with a thorough audit resulting in actionable items/updates for best results in a zero-click environment.
- We'll continue to build specific campaign landing pages to 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.

Email Marketing

- Monthly newsletters will continue to have a thematic undertone based on seasonality, events, and other activations designed to inform and engage. Content themes and send dates will be scheduled by the end of July 2026.
- In 2026/27 we'll focus on distribution list clean up, ensuring we're following best practices for list maintenance, and follow up comms.
- Offer lodging promo placement opportunities to interested stakeholders.

DRIVE CONSUMER VISITATION

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

- VHR will provide a quick start guide for local businesses for easy tagging and sharing on owned social channels. Posting collaborations and boosts will be done at the discretion of the organic social manager and VHR team and are meant to amplify messaging across platforms.
- 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

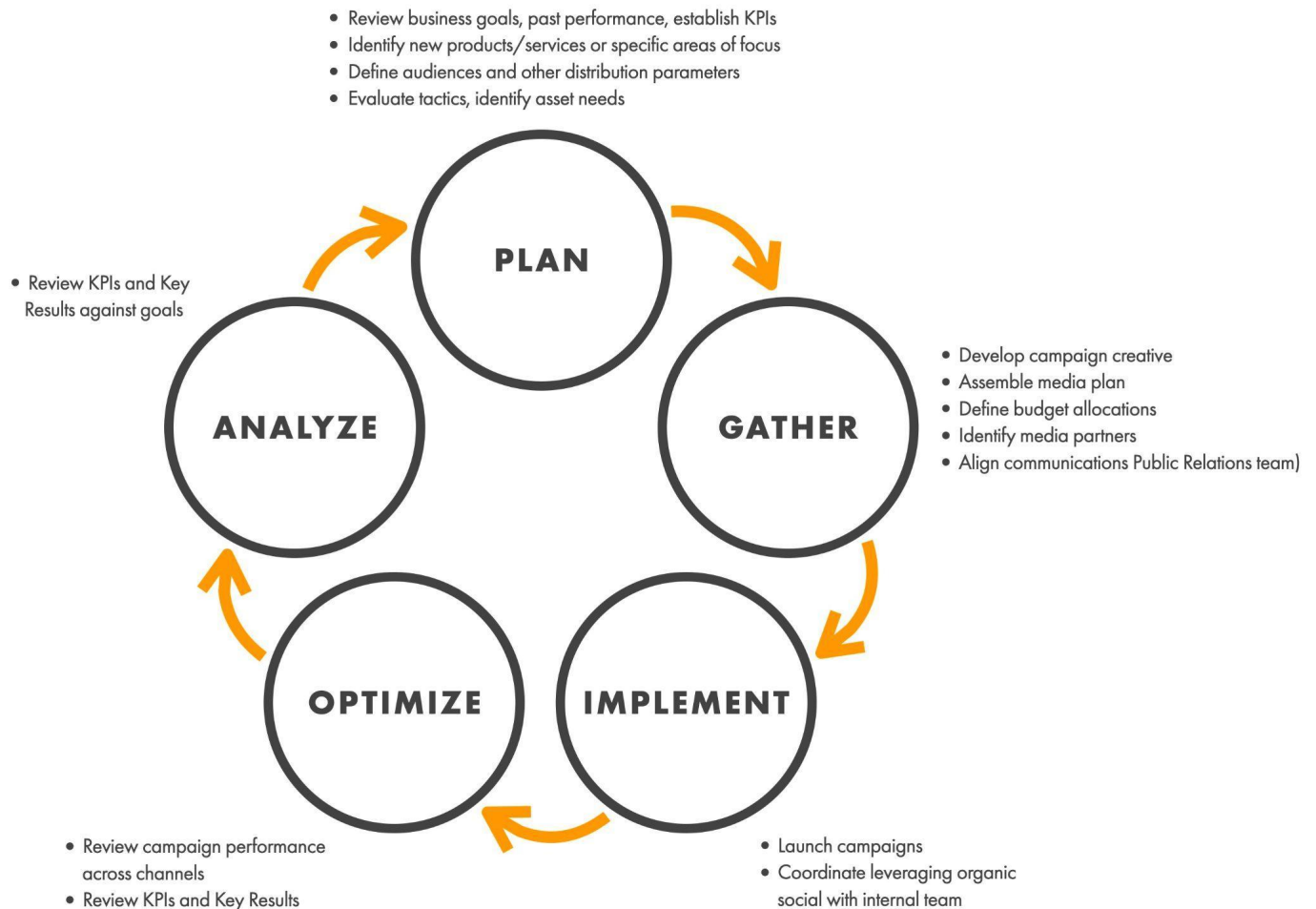
Advertising Deliverables

- 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 (Play Lists) including local author contributions, continued map integrations, and evergreen content pages (sustainability etc.)

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

PROMOTE LOCAL BUSINESSES

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.

Asset building

Continue to build the photo and video library featuring individual businesses, owners, staff and products. DVA will hire local creatives to achieve this objective.

Creative / Messaging

- Ensure individual, named, and linked businesses, are incorporated into campaign creative where applicable and appropriate.
- Redesign Wayfinding Kiosks in downtown with simple maps and landmarks for reference
- Downtown Finger Posts offering general directions and distances to popular destinations.

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
- Offer a tagging quick start guide that will help local businesses reach larger audiences with collaboration opportunities.



PROMOTE LOCAL BUSINESSES

Email Marketing

- Incorporate individual businesses in VHR playlists and other features.
- Provide opportunities for sponsored emails to the VHR database.

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, lodging partners, 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 2026/27 DELIVERABLES

- Photos/videos featuring local businesses and products
- Increase collabs with Quick Start Guide. A minimum of one weekly organic social media post featuring local businesses/products
- Organic Social 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 outreach/communication targeting tourism partners, elected officials, and the greater Hood River community as needed



BUILD A SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION

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.

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 per the content plan

Public Relations

- Build sustainable tourism messaging into the FY 2026/27 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

BUILD A SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION

FY 2026/27 DELIVERABLES

- Creative assets promoting responsible travel
- Summer blog content featuring prominent local athletes / photogs / etc...
- 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.



COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

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.

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 2025/26 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

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

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 2026/27 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
- Diverse media outlet targets, featured people and businesses, and recognition in PR tactics



HOOD RIVER CHAMBER of COMMERCE

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 Development
- Cascade Locks Business Committee Development
- First Thursdays - Business After Hours
- Trails support and management initiatives

Community Matching Grant Program

- VHR will award \$50,000 annually to key stakeholder program development projects
- Funding through our VHR Community Matching Grant Program

Special Event Production and Promotion

- Orchard and Ale Festival
- Harvest Festival
- Halloween Downtown
- Hood River Holidays
- Ciderfest
- Pride Celebration(s)
- First Friday Celebrations

Public Health & Safety Advocacy/ Communications



REPORTING

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

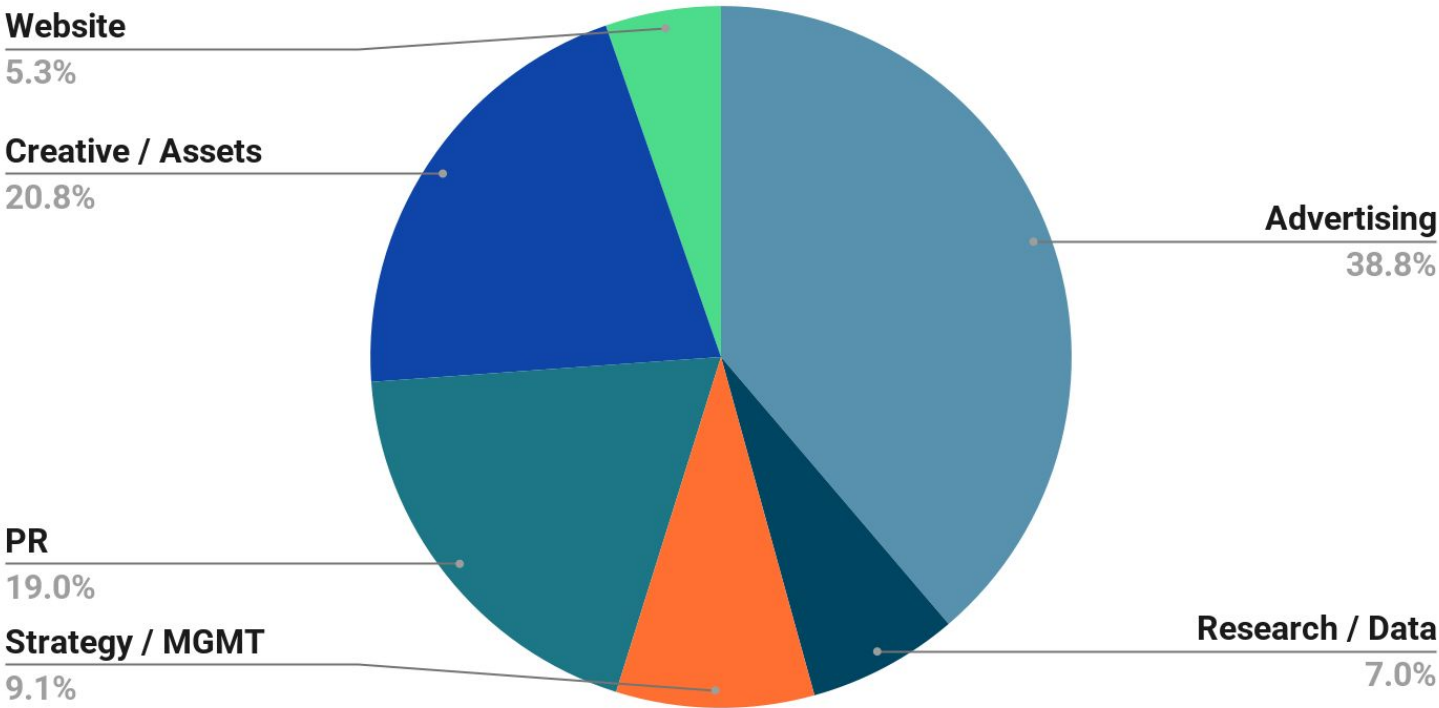
PUBLIC RELATIONS METRICS

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 2026/27 fiscal year the public relations metrics would be as follows:

- Generate \$1m in editorial value
- 8-12 featured earned media placements
- 6 hosted media visits + two content creator collaborations

FY 2026/27 BUDGET

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



FY 2026/27 BUDGET

DVA MANAGED COSTS	CADENCE	COST PER OCCURRENCE	TOTAL
ADVERTISING			
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
Ad Hoc	As Needed		\$10,000
Chat GPT			\$6,000
RESEARCH / DATA			
2027 Strategic Plan	One-time	\$3,000	\$3,000
Reporting	Monthly	\$600	\$7,200
Ubersuggest (AI monitor)			\$1,200
CREATIVE / ASSETS			
Campaign Creative, Post Building, Copywriting	Ongoing		\$30,000
Design Needs (Wayfinding, Banners, Stickers, etc.)	Ongoing		\$15,000
PUBLIC RELATIONS			
Public Relations (\$50,140 PR services; \$9,850 hard costs; \$15,000 collaborator program)	Monthly	\$6,250	\$75,000
STRATEGY/MANAGEMENT			
Account Management	Monthly	\$3,000	\$36,000
			\$290,440

VHR MANAGED COSTS	CADENCE	COST PER OCCURRENCE	TOTAL
Print Ads (Travel Oregon, CGVG, 1859)			\$17,675
KATU Weather Cam	Monthly	\$1,000	\$12,000
Business Partner Collabs - River to Mountain 2.0			\$25,000
Photography/Videography	Ongoing		\$12,000
Website Maintenance & Updates	Monthly	\$1,000	\$12,000
Book Direct Booking Engine	One-time		\$9,000
Go Daddy	Annually		\$23
Data Service - Datafy	One-time		\$16,000
			\$103,698



THANK YOU



DVA ADVERTISING & PUBLIC RELATIONS