



# Arroyo Grande

CALIFORNIA

Annual Report | 2021-2022

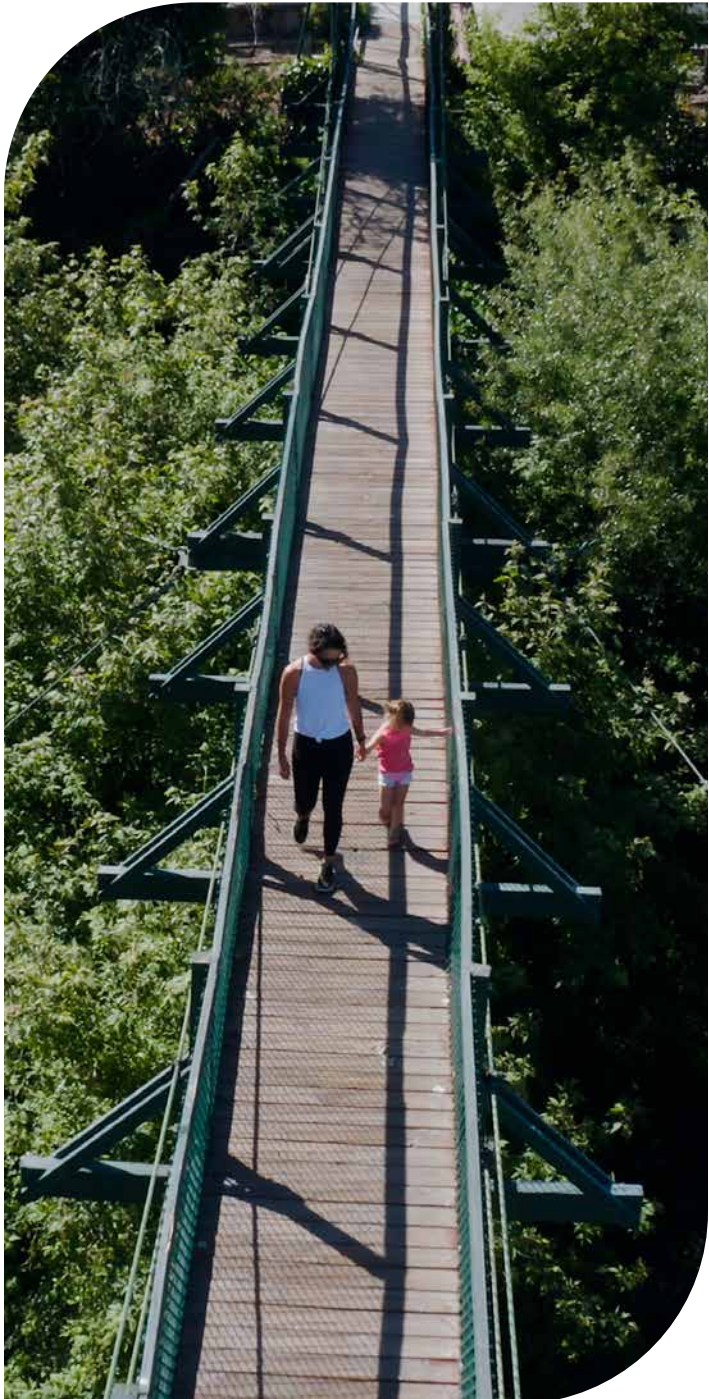






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# Overview & Goals

The Arroyo Grande Tourism Business Improvement District (Arroyo Grande TBID) has a plan in motion to reach travelers whose interests and behaviors align with the genuine experiences found in our area. These travelers are ready to discover the magic of Arroyo Grande—a town differentiated by its charming atmosphere, striking scenery, and access to some of the Central Coast’s most sought-after experiences.

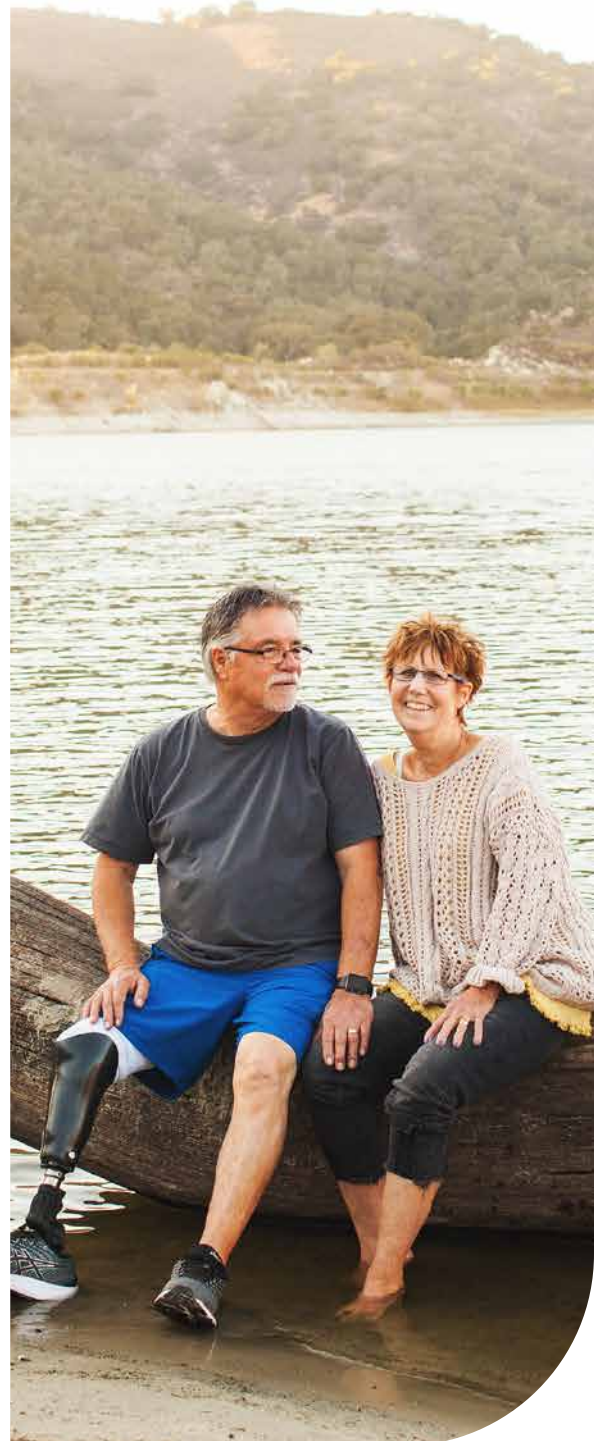
The Arroyo Grande TBID Advisory Board is made up of representatives from lodging or hospitality related businesses in Arroyo Grande appointed by the City Council. The TBID helps to promote Arroyo Grande as a travel destination and is funded by a 2% assessment charged by hotels for this purpose.

## *Marketing Goals:*

Position Arroyo Grande as a travel destination

Increase overnight stays in Arroyo Grande

Introduce new visitors to Arroyo Grande





# 2021–2024 Strategic Plan

In August 2020, the Arroyo Grande TBID finalized their three-year strategic plan defining key imperatives, objectives to measure and initiatives to execute. This plan will guide all future marketing efforts and direct the organization.

Vision	Mission	Position
A thriving community rooted in authentic hospitality and nourished by a strong economy	To market Arroyo Grande as a desirable travel destination, create memorable experiences and support a prosperous economy and community	Visit Arroyo Grande is the city's primary source for destination marketing services and tourism leadership. We are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storytellers of the Arroyo Grande tourism experience</li> <li>• Providers of tourism related information and data</li> <li>• Collaborators championing the value of tourism and supporting key tourism drivers</li> <li>• Stewards balancing the benefits of tourism with Arroyo Grande's quality of life</li> </ul>
Values	Reputation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Truth</li> <li>• Excellence</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparent</li> <li>• Forward-thinking</li> <li>• Reliable</li> <li>• Humble</li> <li>• Partners</li> </ul>	
Imperatives	Objectives	Initiatives
<b>Support the Destination in Tourism Recovery and Strengthen Organizational Capacity for Future Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recover/Achieve 2019 Occupancy Rate</li> <li>• Increase Staffing budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align on and implement tiered re-opening marketing and communication plan with key partners and stakeholders</li> <li>• Advocate for organizational capacity to ensure the resiliency of AG's tourism economy</li> <li>• Enhance the tourism industry's position and importance in AG's economic recovery</li> </ul>
<b>Increase Brand Awareness as a Central California Destination of Choice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase share of county visitor volume</li> <li>• Increase use of shared brand assets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiate AG brand's position in the larger SLO CAL travel market</li> <li>• Create a content library and tool kit to influence a unified brand approach</li> <li>• Pursue opportunities for collaborative and aligned promotional partnerships and messaging</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure the Quality of our Brand Promise and Visitor Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of visitor hours in market</li> <li>• Increase length of stay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a framework to evaluate and promote events that generate new and repeat visitors to the destination</li> <li>• Encourage the availability of downtown and highlight opportunities</li> <li>• Design attractive trip itineraries to drive visitation to AG's portfolio of experiences</li> </ul>
<b>Expand Stakeholder and Community Engagement to Create a Collaborative and Supportive Tourism Industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase representation of lodging partners on the Board</li> <li>• Grow stakeholder participation</li> <li>• Increase resident approval of tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a stakeholder engagement and outreach campaign to educate and promote the value of the TBID to lodging partners</li> <li>• Collaborate with stakeholders to design and expand co-operative marketing programs</li> <li>• Increase the voice of tourism with key governmental, businesses and community decision makers and leaders</li> </ul>

# Completed Initiatives

## *Visit SLO CAL Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Study*

As a strategic plan initiative, Arroyo Grande TBID in partnership with Visit SLO CAL, participated in the 2021 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Audience & Asset Alignment Study conducted by Insights Strategic Marketing and Research. The study was designed to help identify gaps in product offerings and also provided direction to the images and messaging that will enable Arroyo Grande TBID to effectively communicate the leisure product and invitation to these audiences.

## *California Welcome Center Video and Assets*

California Welcome Centers are strategically located across the state, staffed with experts who can provide resources and information that inspires visitors to explore a destination's greater region. To help increase brand awareness for Arroyo Grande TBID, a video shoot was held to capture assets for a new California Welcome Center video spot. The videography and images captured reflect the diversity of the region and its visitors. The spot features authentic Arroyo Grande destination locations and activities including wineries and tasting rooms, outdoor vistas and activities, premiere restaurants and shops.

## *Website Content Enhancements*

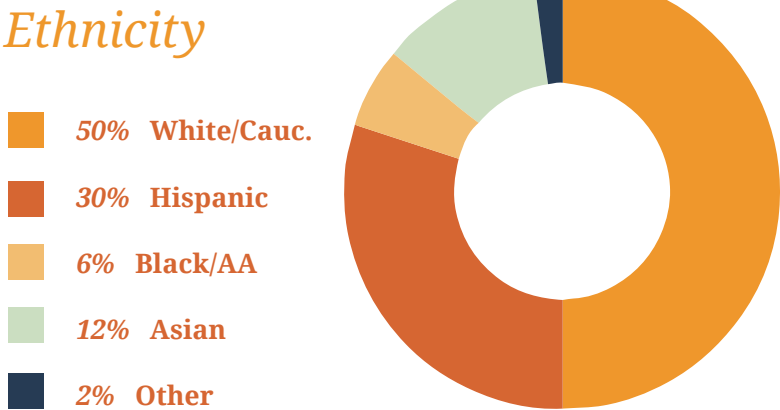
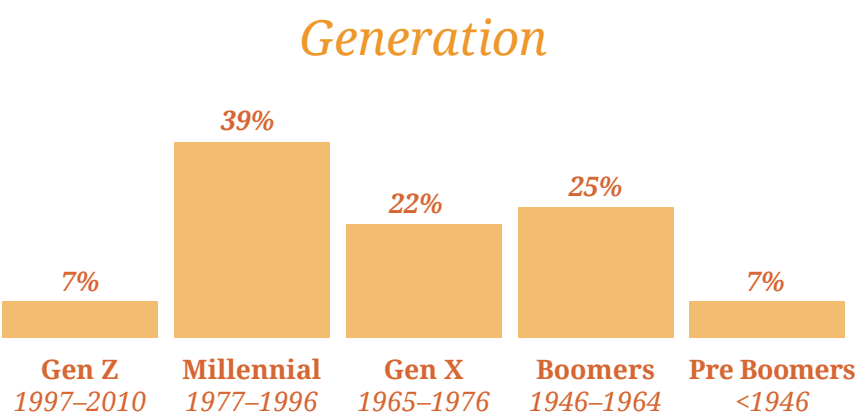
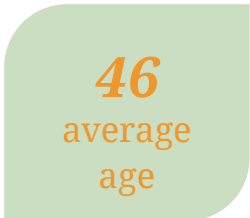
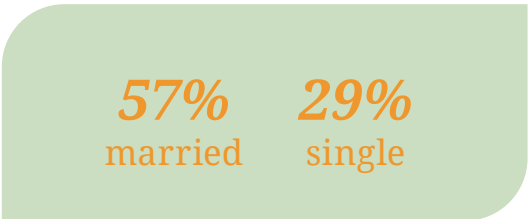
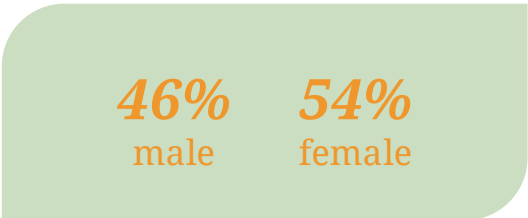
In line with Arroyo Grande TBID content pillars, a culinary themed itinerary was developed to help drive visitation to the website and highlight the area's top food and beverage offerings to people in the trip planning phase. Existing outdoor adventures and family fun itineraries were also updated with keywords and relevant content.



# Target Audiences

Who are we be speaking to? In previous years, Arroyo Grande TBID built personas of the visitor profile to craft messages and assets that are specific to their behaviors and interests (Ex. On-the-Go Eric, Family-Focused Fiona and Ready-to-Relax Rachel). Instead, Arroyo Grande TBID aligned with Visit SLO CAL’s audience approach for the year, evolving from specific personas to target “The Purposeful Traveler.”

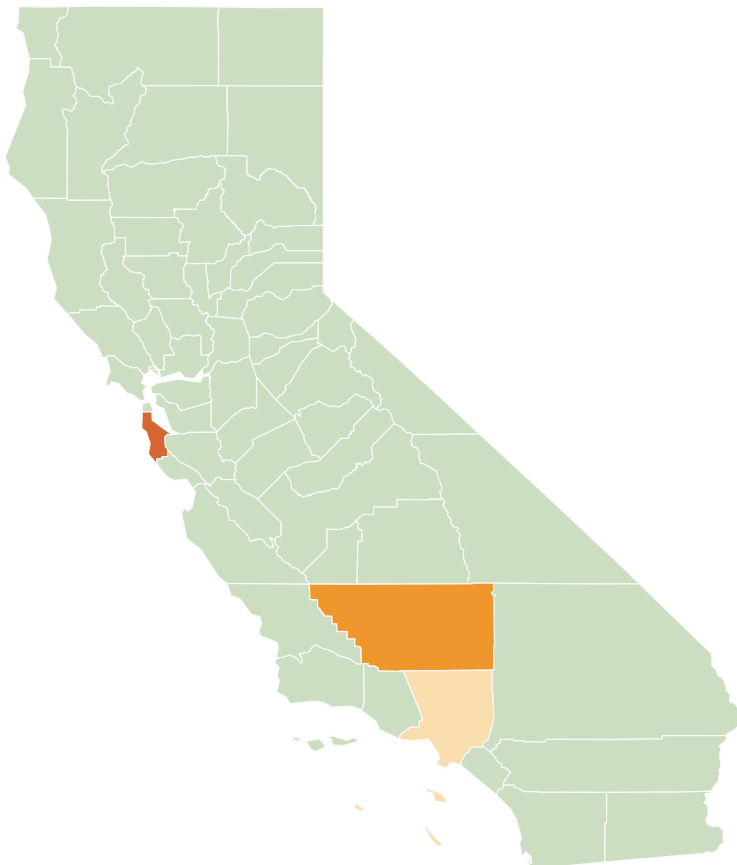
Who is this audience? Purposeful Travelers live vividly and value simplicity, keeping life and the mind as uncluttered as possible. Authenticity and being true to oneself while maintaining strong personal relationships with family and friends is important. Curious and creative, they are open-minded, want to explore and learn about new things, and seek stimulating experiences. They are in tune with nature and themselves, doing activities they enjoy.





# Geographic Markets

As the pandemic continues, Arroyo Grande TBID focused on shorter drive markets throughout California, including the San Francisco Bay Area, Greater Los Angeles and the Central Valley to generate overnight stays.



- 1** San Francisco Bay Area
- 2** Los Angeles  
*(Thousand Oaks, Long Beach)*
- 3** Central Valley  
*(Fresno, Visalia, Bakersfield)*





# Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Arroyo Grande TBID is committed to ensuring its work fosters equity, diversity and inclusion, so that all visitors feel welcome. In partnership with Visit SLO CAL, the destination participated in a recent 2021 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Audience & Asset Alignment Study conducted by Insights Strategic Marketing and Research. The study was designed to help identify gaps in product offerings and also provided direction to the images and messaging that will enable the organization to effectively communicate the leisure product and invitation to these audiences.

## Strategy

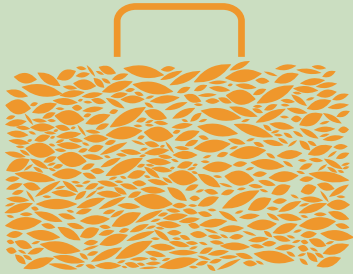
Arroyo Grande TBID will aim to increase familiarity and awareness of the destination among five specific audience segments including Black travelers, Hispanic travelers, Asian travelers, travelers with disabilities and LGBTQ+ travelers. Messaging will let potential visitors know that Arroyo Grande is a safe and welcoming community that invites people with diverse backgrounds.

## Completed Initiatives:

- Showed diverse visitors in advertising and marketing materials that show people of color in a way that depicts the destination as welcoming
  - Developed programmatic video ads (Outdoors, Family, Culinary) that include audience segment
  - Utilized EDI images across all owned channels
- Used inclusive language and messaging within content platforms
- Amplified the voices of women-owned and minority-owned local travel and tourism related businesses
  - Created Instagram/Facebook stories
- Positioned Arroyo Grande as a destination with small town charm and history, with a thriving culinary scene and outdoor activities that appeal to visitors from all backgrounds and ethnicities



# Why Tourism Matters in SLO County



Travel Spending  
**\$1.19B**

**\$3.3M**  
a day

**\$136K**  
an hour

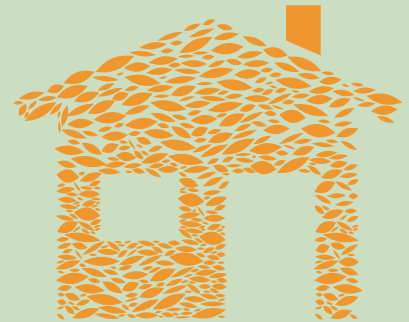
**\$2.3K**  
a minute

**\$38**  
a second

Tourism puts  
**10,450**  
**people**  
to work each day

Tourism contributes  
**\$35.9M**  
in transient  
occupancy tax  
revenue  
(15.6% YOY Decrease)

Without state and local  
tax revenue generated  
by travel and tourism,  
each SLO CAL household  
would pay an additional  
**\$1,113 in taxes**



Travel spending created **\$66M** in local tax  
revenue which would cover the expenses for

**614** police officers' salaries or.....

**760** firefighters salaries or.....

**1,401** teachers salaries or.....

**106** miles of 2-lane resurfaced roads

# Destination Campaigns

To inspire travel to Arroyo Grande and build brand awareness, a series of digital ads were placed programmatically and on social media. Several motion graphics were created to attract key audiences' attention with movement and messaging covering unique travel activities in the destination.

## *Time Well Spent*

In September 2021, Arroyo Grande TBID launched its new marketing campaign “Time Well Spent” that focuses on the destination as a place “where experiences are naturally more full, more engaging, and more worth your time.” The campaign targets “The Purposeful Traveler” persona geared towards family, outdoor and culinary activities. To help build brand awareness and drive hotel bookings, new video assets were utilized to create three new 15-second programmatic digital ads with voice overs that click thru to existing “outdoor adventure” and “family fun” itineraries on the website. A new “Time Well Spent” graphic is an additional layer to the campaign, used both in programmatic video and custom social media posts.



# Results at a Glance

July–February YOY



**20% increase**  
in website visits (sessions)

**50% increase**  
in time on site

**34% decrease**  
in pageviews

**Facebook**  
**20,419**  
engagements

**Instagram**  
**6,589**  
engagements

**Reached 846,845**  
through paid media

**12,078**  
clicks from paid media

## **Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT)**

**July–January totals**

<b>2021–2022:</b>	<b>2020–2021:</b>	<b>2019–2020:</b>	<b>2018–2019:</b>	<b>2017–2018:</b>
\$FPO	\$519,636	\$684,104	\$596,208	\$576,450



# Email Marketing

Email marketing keeps Arroyo Grande top of mind for potential travelers and highlights the destination's unique offerings. This year, the design template was refreshed to bring in video assets to attract readers' interests. The monthly newsletter is sent out to an opt-in subscriber database through Mailchimp with featured content covering the following:

- Specific themes from Arroyo Grande's key messaging points
- Promotion of events, new happenings and local businesses that support tourism
- Itineraries, activities, restaurants, accommodations and more that build interest in planning an Arroyo Grande getaway, with URLs that link to the website

## E-newsletter Results:

1,054 email subscribers

8 distributed newsletters

32% average open rate

3.9% average click rate

Industry benchmarks show an average open rate of 20.4% and click rate of 2.25%. Source: Mailchimp



### Spring for All

There is so much to discover in Arroyo Grande. It's time to soak up the sunshine and experience the good life. Grab some tickets to our local theatre and boogie down to beats from the 1970s. Go tasting at local wineries and breweries. Many are having spring release events! Hikes, bikes and beaches: Arroyo Grande is perfectly located to enjoy it all. Plan your adventure this spring! We can't wait to welcome you.

#### It's Showtime

The hottest tickets of the season are available now at our [Clark Center for the Performing Arts](#). Be sure to grab 'em while you can. Get your groove on with [The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra](#) (March 18), enjoy a Shakespearean comedy ["Twelfth Night"](#) (March 17-19) and dance the night away to classic 1970s tunes by [Close to You: Music of the Cerebraters](#) (March 25). Photo credit: The Clark Center for the Performing Arts



#### Spring Break

Calling all lovers of the great outdoors! Arroyo Grande is an easy gateway to beautiful miles of California coastline — moments like these are just a few minutes away. And our incredible trails and [Lake Lopez Marina](#) are beckoning all of you hikers and bikers! Make it an authentically AG adventure this March. Photo credit: @kamel\_chance

#### Drinks for All

When in Arroyo Grande, do as the locals do. Enjoy crafty cocktails at [Mason Bar & Kitchen](#), sip selections at [Peacock Cellars](#), and grab bottomless mimosas at Sunday brunch on the creekside patio at [E. McLintock's Saloon](#). Wherever you choose, there's something for everyone in our thriving foodie scene. Come and savor all the best in Arroyo Grande!



#### Stay With Us

[Click for more](#)



#### Don't Miss Our Events

[Click for more](#)



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Our mailing address is:  
PO Box 672  
Arroyo Grande, CA 93421



# Social Media

Arroyo Grande TBID developed engaging content on its owned social media channels (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) with the goal to strengthen its brand identity and create awareness of the destination.

- Used new video/photo assets in social media posts and stories
- Developed original content geared towards targeted personas around local favorites including businesses, history, people and artisans, etc. that highlighted the friendly and historic character of the destination
- Incorporated Time Well Spent campaign messaging
- Shared user-generated content to build audience and to show authentic experiences
- Supported local events

## Facebook Results:

**6,039** followers  
(4% decrease YOY)

**20,419** engagements  
(19% increase YOY)

**261,774** impressions  
(40% increase YOY)

## Instagram Results:

**3,040** followers  
(17% increase YOY)

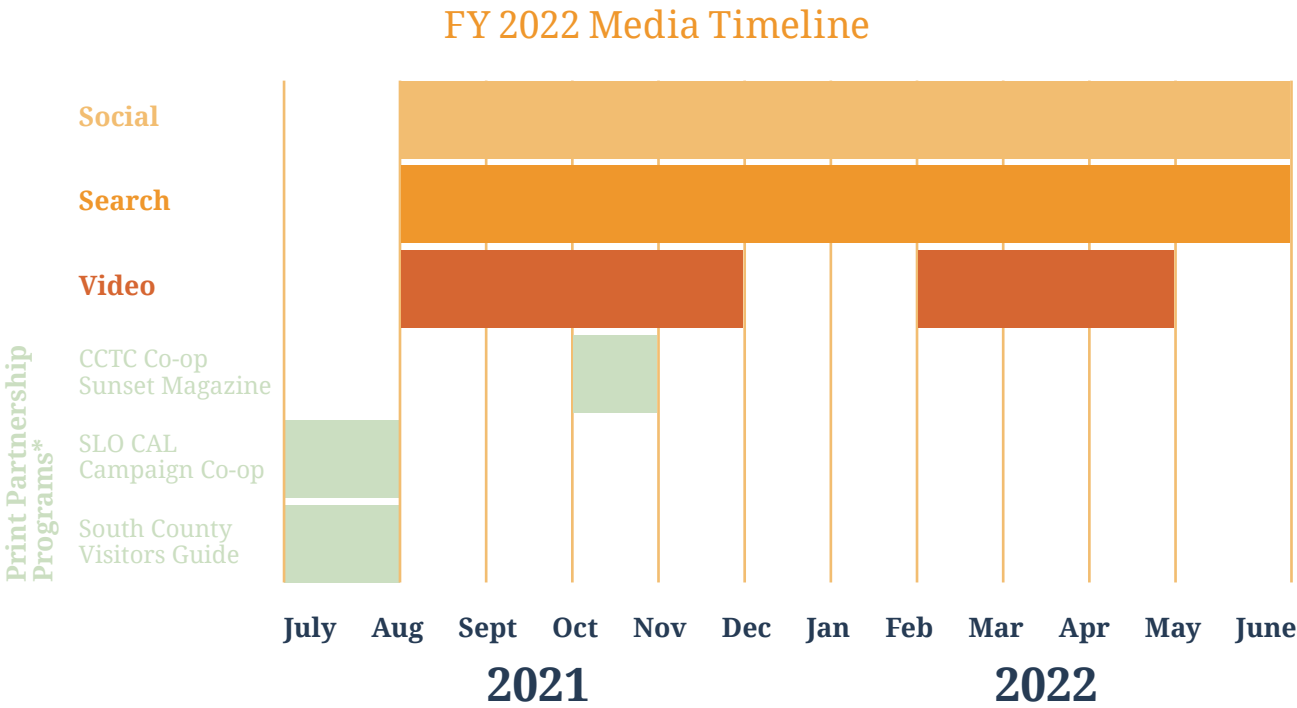
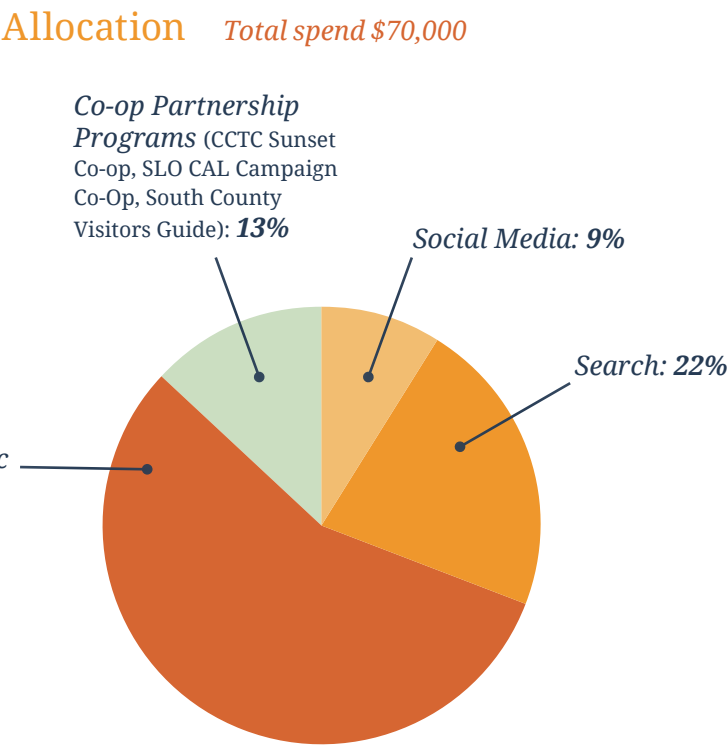
**6,589** total engagements  
(1% increase YOY)

**110,019** impressions  
(25% increase YOY)



# Paid Media

July 2021–February 2022 had strong performance across all digital platforms: programmatic video and paid search. Programmatic video had over 800,000 impressions and over 5,000 clicks/visits to the website. The programmatic buy also tracked visits as a conversion and had over 5,000 tracked visits. Paid search was started this year with 96,000 impressions, and over 7,000 clicks. Performance was excellent across the board for Arroyo Grande TBID.



*\*Arroyo Grande TBID leverages its regional partnerships with Central Coast Tourism Council and Visit SLO CAL for industry research and participates in reactive co-op print/digital advertising opportunities throughout the fiscal year.*



# Public Relations & Partnerships

In an effort to differentiate Arroyo Grande TBID's brand's position in the larger travel market and continue to increase exposure for the destination through earned media, Arroyo Grande TBID leveraged its existing tourism partnerships with Visit California, Visit SLO CAL, Highway 1 Discovery Route and Central Coast Tourism Council.

In February, Arroyo Grande TBID partnered with the City of SLO and Highway 1 Discovery Route to host a press trip for two journalists who represented lifestyle and culinary outlets including Food Wine Travel Magazine, the official International Food Wine and Travel Writers Association Magazine, travel site Wander with Wonder and "SoCal Restaurant Show" in LA on AM 830 KLAA.

## Partnerships:



Visit California is the state marketing agency that partners with the state's travel industry to keep California top-of-mind as a premier travel destination. Arroyo Grande TBID submitted story pitches and content for the following marketing topics:

- California's Holiday Spirit
- California's Sustainable Wineries
- Roadside Must Eats



Visit SLO CAL is the non-profit county-wide destination marketing and management organization for San Luis Obispo County. They are responsible for promoting a community as an attractive travel destination and enhancing its public image as a dynamic place to live and work. In addition to submitting content about Arroyo Grande for use in media pitching and story lead generation, Arroyo Grande TBID also partnered with them on the following initiatives:

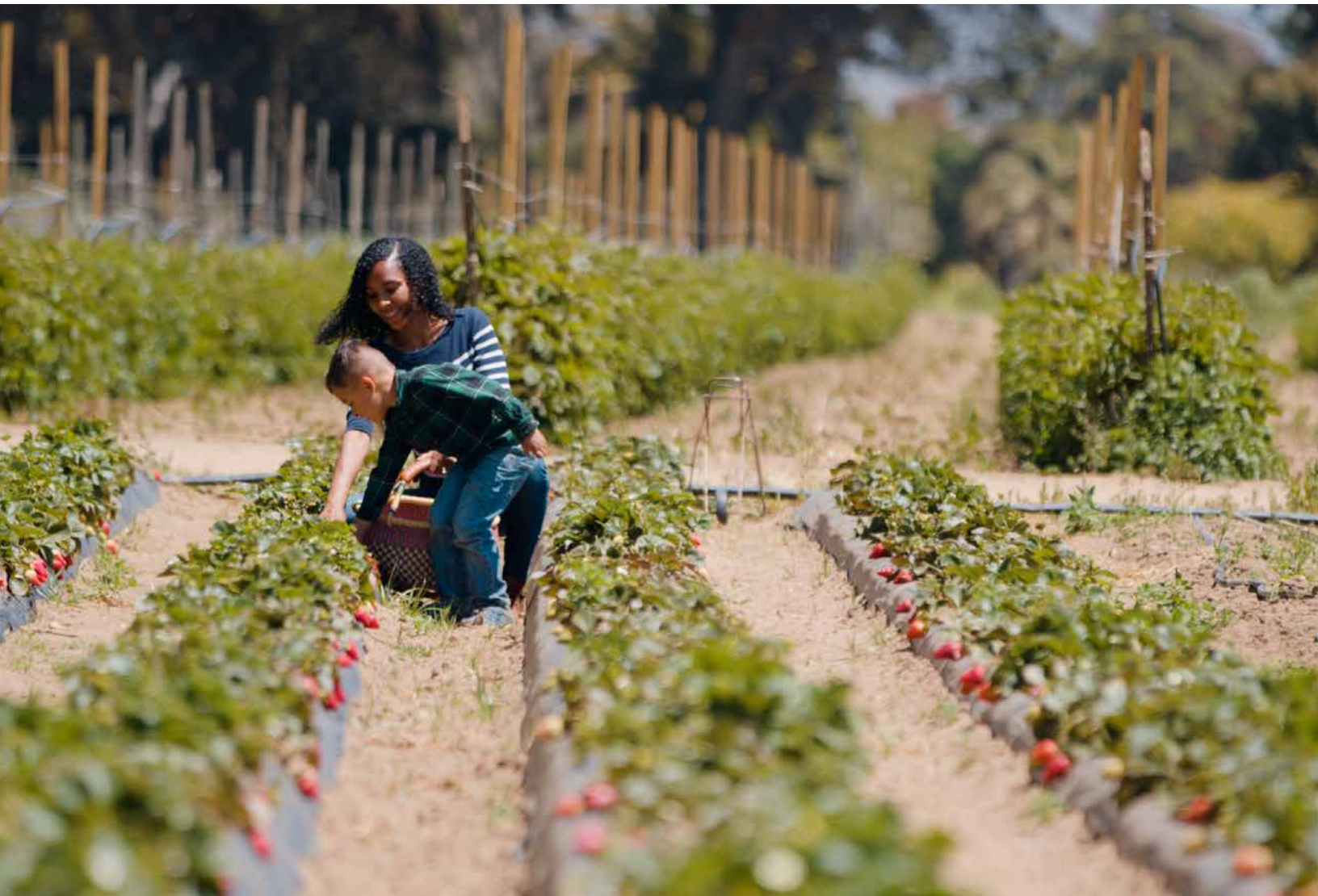
- Future Visitor Profile Study
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Asset Alignment Study
- House of Brands Phase 1



The Central Coast Tourism Council is a marketing organization that promotes the Central Coast of California. Arroyo Grande TBID submitted content for the following marketing topics:

- Event promotion and content
- Sunset co-op





Arroyo  
Grande  
CALIFORNIA

[visitarroyogrande.org](http://visitarroyogrande.org)