



# **VISIT BISHOP ANNUAL REPORT**

**| 2022-2023**

## **BTID Annual Report**

presented to Bishop Lodging Partners,  
Bishop Chamber of Commerce and  
Information Center Board and  
Bishop City Council

**September 2023**

**[www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com)**

## A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you for taking time to read this report. We are very proud of the work we do, and we are eager to share some of the positive outcomes of our efforts with our stakeholders. Afterall, our success is YOUR success! The Bishop Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau works collaboratively with Bishop lodging partners, City of Bishop, Inyo County, 300+ member businesses, and many volunteers – we could never do what we do without YOU!

While tourism in our region certainly picked up this past year, it is important to note that the travel industry has not fully recovered from the pandemic. We have started to see some international visitors return, but nowhere near the level of 2019. Bishop's proximity to two National Parks and several of the most iconic landmarks in the western United States makes us highly desirable to international explorers. We continue to invest in programs through Visit California, High Sierra Visitors Council, US Travel Association, and others so that the Eastern Sierra retains brand awareness at the global level. The US Travel Association predicts a full recovery by the end of 2025.

While we patiently wait for the full return of our international friends, we increased efforts to draw more guests from within California and surrounding states. We developed new itineraries, created content to highlight new and different events and activities. We must continually show people that Bishop has much to offer for every age group, every interest, every skill level and in every season.

We are proud that lodging occupancy and average daily rate have increased over the last year despite the heavy snow year, hazardous runoff conditions, road destruction and generally adverse recreation conditions. Our strategy to focus on events and "soft adventures" has worked well.

While we are proud of how far we've come since the inception of BTID, there is still much work to be done. We promise to remain vigilant by monitoring travel data and trends. Sources like STR and Datafy help guide our marketing strategies. We will stay connected with our local partners, land management agencies and local businesses so that we may continue to provide excellent, authentic, and well-informed service to our guests.

Today is great, but we know there will be future challenges to work through. We are planning now for sustainability and growing our capacity.

We are always thankful for the cooperative relationships we have with our stakeholders.

Sincerely,

*Tawni Thomson*



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# BTID ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

BISHOP TOURISM IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BTID)

## BTID BACKGROUND

Developed by Bishop lodging businesses and the Bishop Chamber of Commerce, the Bishop Tourism Improvement District (BTID) is an assessment district designed to provide specific benefits to payors, by funding marketing and sales promotion efforts for assessed businesses. The BTID was initially formed in 2014 for a five (5) year term, beginning January 1, 2015. The district was renewed for a 10-year term, January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2029.

The district includes all lodging businesses located within the boundaries of the Bishop City limits, including hotels, motels, hostels and short-term rentals such as AirBnB. Assessment rate is currently 2% of gross sales and is collected by the City of Bishop at the same time and in the same manner as Transient Occupancy Tax. BTID funds are then forwarded to Bishop Chamber of Commerce on a quarterly basis. BTID funds are used for tourism promotion programs as outlined in the BTID Management District Plan. No proposed changes to boundary, rate or business classifications are proposed for this year.

The Bishop Chamber of Commerce will continue to serve as the BTID's Owners' Association. The Owners' Association is charged with managing funds and implementing programs in accordance with this plan, and must provide annual reports to the Bishop City Council.

In California, TIDs are formed pursuant to the Property and Business Improvement District Law of 1994. This law allows for the creation of a benefit assessment district to raise funds within a specific geographic area. The key difference between TIDs and other benefit assessment districts is that funds raised are returned to the private non-profit corporation governing the district.

The Bishop Tourism Improvement District has proven to be a “win-win-win” program. New marketing initiatives have led to higher occupancy, a “win” for the lodging partners. Higher occupancy increases TOT, a “win” for the City’s general fund. Higher room sales also generates additional BTID funds, a “win” for BACCVB’s marketing budget, allowing increased investments to properly promote Bishop.

The strategic marketing plan is much larger program with a wider reach than any one stakeholder could afford on its own. While a \$800K marketing budget for Bishop might seem like a lot of money, it really pales in comparison to other nearby destinations like Big Bear, Joshua Tree and Mammoth Lakes.

## BTID ADVISORY BODY

The use of the assessment fund is based on recommendations of the Bishop Chamber of Commerce. The organization is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors, elected by the Bishop Business community to set policy and provide oversight of staff. The Bishop Chamber holds monthly business meetings to review programs, discuss progress and monitor the budget. The Executive Director regularly presents public updates at Bishop City Council meetings. *\*A minimum of three Bishop Chamber Board members represent lodging businesses paying the BTID assessment.* All BTID lodging owners and representatives are invited and encouraged to participate in program development.

### 2023/2024 BACCVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Business Representation</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>
<b>Cheryl Underhill</b>	Northern Inyo Hospital Foundation, VFW, Lions Altrusa, Eastern Sierra Cancer Alliance, Elks	President
<b>Sunil Lad</b>	*Best Western Bishop Lodge & Comfort Inn	Vice President
<b>Sarah Freundt</b>	Grocery Outlet	Immediate Past President
<b>Robert Sharp</b>	Eastern Sierra Community Bank	Treasurer
<b>Debi Yerkes</b>	Alex Printing	Board Member
<b>Manuel Astorga</b>	Astorga's Mexican Restaurant	Board Member
<b>Deven Bhakta</b>	*Cielo Hotel & Days Inn	Board Member
<b>Tara Frank</b>	Owens Valley Paiute-Shoshone Cultural Ctr.	Board Member
<b>Lynn Hawks</b>	Hawks Landing Gourmet Confections	Board Member
<b>Corinna Korpi</b>	Alta One Federal Credit Union	Board Member
<b>Jennifer McGuire</b>	Eastern Sierra Tri County Fair & Event Center	Board Member
<b>Holly Mullanix</b>	Bishop Twin Theatre	Board Member
<b>Niral Munshaw</b>	*Vagabond Inn, Motel 6 & Travelodge	Board Member
<b>Gary Gunsolley</b>	Fly Fishing Guide	Board Member
<b>Justin Snyder</b>	The Toggery	Board Member
<b>Gayla Wolf</b>	Honey Bee Photography	Board Member

## BTID KEY OBJECTIVES:

*The BTID District Management Plan, developed by Bishop Hoteliers prescribes 80% of funds for sales and marketing; 10% for administration; 5% for visitor services/enhancements; and 5% for contingency/reserve.*

### **Sales and Marketing Programs May Include:**

- Year-Round Visitor Information Center in downtown Bishop operated by professionally trained staff;
- Membership with local, state and national tourism organizations, such as Visit California and High Sierra Visitors Council, and Brand USA to target key international markets to increase overnight visitation;
- Production or sponsorship of events that draw overnight visitors, particularly in the off seasons;
- Electronic Billboards along Highway 395 to promote responsible recreation, swiftwater and events;
- Attendance of travel consumer shows to promote overnight visitation;
- Participation in educational and networking conferences, such as VisitCA, Caltravel, IPW and DMA West.
- Online marketing, including website with mobile and foreign language versions, search engine marketing, paid social media ads, banner ads promoting Bishop as a year-round destination;
- Engage professional companies such as Smith Travel Research (STR), VisaVue, Datafy and others to conduct research that will help guide marketing efforts and effectively remarket to increase overnight visitation;
- Print, and digital advertising to promote overnight visitation to Bishop;
- Development and implementation of a public relations and communications strategy, inclusive of social media outlets and press release distribution designed to increase overnight visitation at assessed businesses;
- Sales and marketing blitzes for assessed businesses;
- Familiarization tours of assessed businesses; and
- Preparation, distribution and production of collateral promotional materials such as brochures, flyers and maps to promote overnight visitation.

### **Visitor Services/Enhancements May Include:**

- Comprehensive and integrated wayfinding signage;
- Visitor education through projects such as Climbing Ranger;
- Visitor Center improvements and enhancements; and
- Trout stocking in Bishop Area waters to promote overnight visitation.



## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: DIGITAL [BISHOPVISITOR.COM](http://BISHOPVISITOR.COM)

Website metrics are an important way we measure the success of our advertising efforts. Website usage remains steady – 596,358 page views in the past 12 months. Website unique users was similar to the

BISHOPVISITOR.COM ENGAGEMENT	
Average Monthly Visits	50K
<b>Annual Visits</b>	<b>596,358</b>
<i>Top Tier Markets</i>	<i>Top Pages (1-10)</i>
CALIFORNIA (83%) Los Angeles, San Jose, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Bishop, Bakersfield, Long Beach	1. Home Page 2. Lodging 3. Fall Colors 4. Webcams 5. Fish Report 6. Events
UNITED STATES (93%) California, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, and Texas.	7. Activities 8. Air Service 9. Bristlecone 10. Request Info 11. Road Conditions
INTERNATIONAL (4%) Germany, Netherlands, UK, Canada, France, India, Australia, Mexico.	
Average Time on Site	3:13
Organic Search	+15%
Direct Search	+31%
Paid Search	+19%
Social Referrals	+32%
Email	+5100%
Other Websites	+1%
SpamBots	-50%

previous year – 335,124. International gained 3% over the year prior. Domestically we had our biggest gains from Washington, Oregon, Colorado and Idaho. San Jose made the largest leap within California – up 97%. Guests are staying on the site over 3:13 minutes, well over the 2-minute industry average. Colorado was in the top 5 for the second time, likely due to the new direct flights from Denver to Bishop.

**Email Marketing** – We use Constant Contact for e-news communications with guests that have subscribed through the website, social media, in the Information Center and at travel/trade shows. We've developed a new e-news template utilizing banners that match the design of the new visitor guide. Local Freshies compiles one new blog post each month that is featured in the e-news along with upcoming local events and responsible recreation messaging. The new format of the monthly e-newsletter contains links to relevant content on [www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com). This has generated a huge increase in engagement with the site. We currently have 41K subscribers (up from 32K) and an excellent open rate of 43%.

### New Pages/Programs/Apps

- **"Ale Trail"** featuring breweries in Inyo and Mono County is featured on website and promoted on social platforms.
- **Localhood Stories** submitted to Visit California and Google Travel generated 260K impressions with interaction rate of 64%. This campaign supported 27K new story views and increase of 225% over last year.
- **Bishop Time Capsule** video created with Alex and Joe Pollini is very popular with locals and visitors.

*We continue to see over 70% of guests accessing the website from a mobile device, so the new website proposed for next year will be designed embracing fast load times and the smallest screens first.*

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: DIGITAL + DATA

### VISIT BISHOP APP

The Visit Bishop Team has invested significant time with the pros at VisitWidget to develop our region's first advanced, cross-device application that creates an engaging and intuitive way for visitors to research, plan, and experience their visit. Welcome to Visit Bishop.

The IOS and Android App is free to download and easy to navigate. Users can choose places to stay, see, eat, and shop and add them to their itinerary and map. All is all, there are **44K total users, staying 2m 41s and 2K mobile app downloads.**

A large touchscreen at the Bishop Airport has been in place since December 2022, and seems to get its share of users creating itineraries, according to the guest host. One impressive stat - 40% of the users are return visitors. Guests from near and far love the functionality of the app, widget and kiosk. This has been an investment that will continue to gain traction and use. Primary users are from Los Angeles, San Diego, Sacramento, San Jose, Las Vegas, and Bishop. iOS App users tend to stay the longest and view the most pages.

#### Most viewed attractions:

1. Keough's Hot Springs
2. Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest
3. Museum Tour
4. North Lake
5. Lake Sabrina
6. Wanaaha Casino
7. Laws Railroad Museum
8. Owens Valley Paiute Shoshone Cultural Center
9. Mural Walk
10. Alabama Hills



## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: DATA ANALYSIS

DATAFY uses geolocation data from mobile devices that allows us to examine visitor trends over the past five years. Please view a comprehensive report attached. Simpleview is also analyzing this data to enhance our remarketing and target audiences for social and google advertising.

\*DATAFY report is included in appendix to this report.



## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: VISITOR INFORMATION REQUESTS (KPI)

The Bishop Visitor Guide was completely redesigned in 2021 from a rack card style brochure into a full-size magazine format. The new publication is much more than a guide now as it features in-depth articles and large photos to inspire travelers to explore the destination more deeply. It's been very well received, and we reprinted 50K copies in 2022-2023 with a new cover, some new articles and updated member information. Please take the time to [Flip through the pages](#) of the new Bishop Visitor Guide, we are very proud of the publication and hope you are as well.

Search Engine Management (SEM) efforts focus on driving visitors to request a FREE Bishop Visitor Guide via a form on [www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com). A completed request is considered a "conversion" for purposes of measuring SEM success. Last year 3,423 requests were received and fulfilled. Nearly 10% more than the previous year.

**43% (1,459) were mailed, while 57% (1,964) requested a digital download. \* This is the third year the digital download was greater than the mailed request.**



## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: MULTI-SEASON TARGETED CAMPAIGNS

BCC has strategically targeted campaigns to attract visitors that enjoy off-season activities such as photography, birding, fly-fishing, desert trail running, bouldering and high desert exploration.

BCC utilizes niche publications and continually updates social media campaigns, blogs and paid digital ads to fit the season.

- **Weekly fishing reports** by local guides are now featured on the website.
- **Weekly fall color reports** with photos were submitted to CaliforniaFallColor.com.
- New for this year, **weekly wildflower reports** with photos submitted to DesertUSA.com.
- **Weekly climbing conditions report** provided by Climbing Rangers featured on website and shared on socials.

## LOCAL PROMOTION PROGRAMS

- Passenger Air Service promoted to locals via social media and chamber e-newsletters.
- Facilitated design and installation of new sign at Bishop Airport as well as local art inside terminal.
- New Flatscreen Kiosk installed at Bishop Airport allows guests to access Visit Bishop App.

## MARKETING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- BCC is actively involved in the new Small Business Resource Center; assisting with event planning and community outreach.
- Lunch and Learn program connects business owners with local leaders and industry experts.



## VISUAL STORYTELLING FOR OUR DESTINATION

## USER GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)

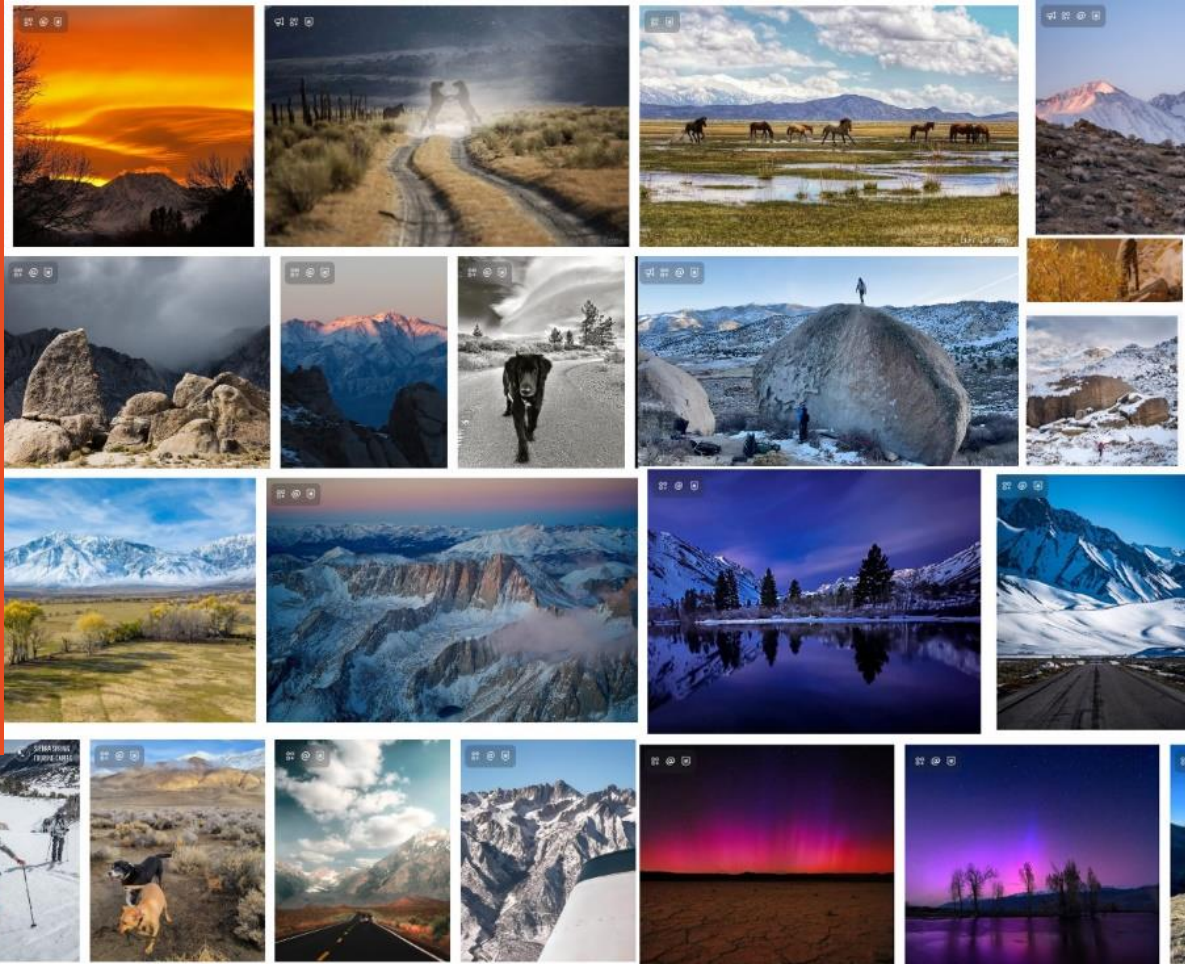
UGC offers the leading visual storytelling solution and plays an important role in our social media efforts. We have been filling our library with relevant up-to-date user generated content. UGC is invaluable as our guests trust their friends and family experiences more than those of paid spokespeople. These photos are generated by Crowdriff and currently play a powerful part under the VISITOR EXPERIENCES GALLERIES on our website, shared on our social channels, added to VISIT CALIFORNIA's stories and occasionally turned into blog posts.

+150 Galleries  
2556 Assets  
35% Engagement  
171k Views



# SOCIAL MEDIA

BACCVB has established a social media "Dream Team." These contracted professionals work with BACCVB staff to create content including social media posts, videos, photos, new page content, articles, stories and blog posts. The team works collaboratively to deliver daily messaging and monitor monthly progress of strategic social media and online marketing efforts. It's SO critical to have a local team doing this, as the conditions and messaging needs to shift quickly. We're lucky to have such a solid team.





# STRATEGIC PROGRAM: USER GENERATED CONTENT & INFLUENCER

“Earned Media” is a vital component of the Visit Bishop Destination development strategy. Sometimes this is called “free” advertising, but it’s not really that at all. “Earned Media” is publicity that is not paid for, but is an article, BLOG or social post that’s written by a third party. The Bishop Chamber understands the value of engaging and nurturing relationships with journalists, photographers and influencers. In the digital world, we have a gold star rating, as our approvals are now above 64%. We’ve also been adding to stories through Crowdriff which is shared through Visit California and a Google pilot program. We now have 50 stories, with an 18% CTR, 37K Gallery impressions and 482K Google impressions.

In real life, we regularly facilitate familiarization tours (FAMS) for these important partners, but we don’t write the stories for them. We invite them to visit our region, discover and report on their experiences. We do pay for lodging and meals if that type of support is requested.

## Some 2022-2023 Earned Media Projects:

- Matt Johanson/Bay Area Freelance Travel Writer
- Scott Linden/Sporting Freelance Travel Writer/Author
- Wendy Pramik/Freelance, Mid-West Travel Writers Association
- Visit CA/HSVC French Travel Writers
- Connor Ursin/National Park Travelers
- Hermann Global/Visit USA Parks



## More than Mount Whitney, Inyo County offers moderate majesty

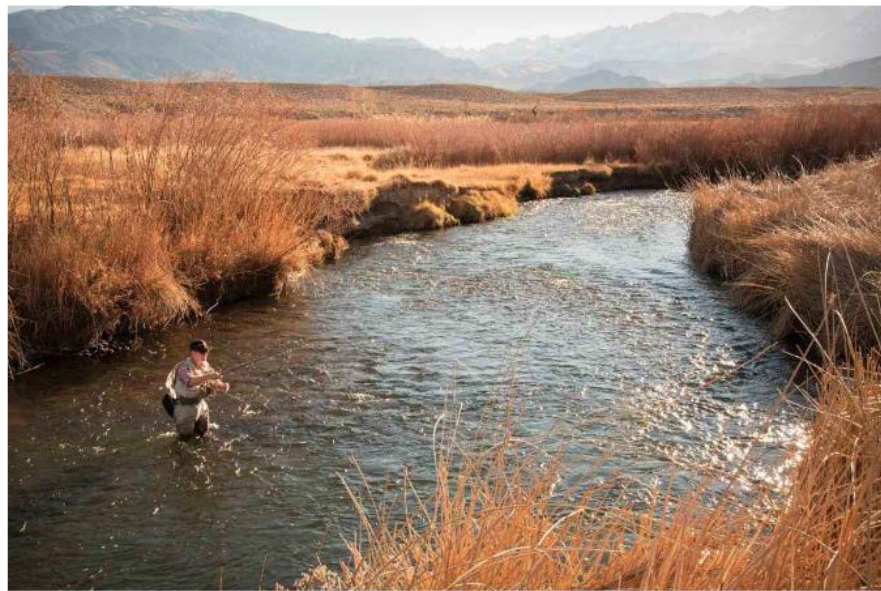
The large, rural community on California’s eastern border includes some dramatic extremes – and adventure for all abilities.

BY MATT JOHANSON • ENVIRONMENT • JUNE 27, 2023



Sierra Nevada mountains and the Owens Valley desert come together in Inyo County. Credit Matt Johanson

As the sun beat down, we rotated through the soft water of a shaded, quiet pool. After a few refusals, my buddy Dave’s Parachute Adams got a slashing rise. Surprisingly, the rainbow-like leaps were made by a 15-inch brown, buttery belly and spotted back as black as a moonless night. He ran the length of the small pool until its bounds apparent, he dashed for downstream rocks. Coons was closest to the net, and while Dave coaxed the brown from a root ball, he splashed downriver, losing his glasses but netting the fish.

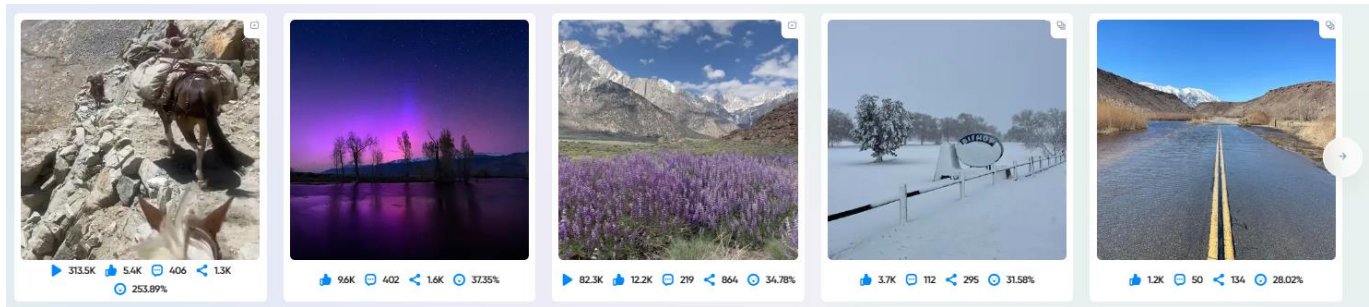


The Lower Owens River is a trout oasis in a high desert with 16 miles of special-regulations water and plenty of foot access. (Jim Stimson photo)

## Lower Owens

You can spend an entire visit to Bishop, California, exploring the nooks and crannies of the Owens River Gorge, but most anglers make a pilgrimage to the wild trout section, or “Lower Owens.” Downstream from Pleasant Valley Reservoir, it’s just a few miles northeast of Bishop. It runs with muscles flexed, like a winding, friendlier

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: SOCIAL MEDIA



### FACEBOOK

59K Followers

16% Net Growth

18.2M Impressions

16M Reach

769K Engagement  
(up 40%)

### INSTAGRAM

35K Followers

17% Fan Growth

5.2M Impressions

3M Reach

13% Engagement

### TIKTOK

3.5K Followers

37K Views



**BOOK DIRECT** on [www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com)

5700 LODGING REFERRALS – NO 3<sup>rd</sup> PARTY COMMISSIONS

**BOOK YOUR STAY**

Check-In

Check-Out

All Lodging

**SEARCH**



# STRATEGIC PROGRAM: SEARCH ENGINE & PAID SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

Online advertising efforts are managed closely and monitored for productivity and cost-effectiveness by Simpleview, the leading support for Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) with tools, knowledge, and creativity to help us perform at the top of our game.

- Paid digital delivers 4,400+ clicks per month to partners including Bishop lodging, dining, events and United Airlines. This is +1,400 clicks per month over last year.
- Average click-through rate with our paid media is 22%; travel industry average is 4.7%.
- Cost per click is \$0.37, well below the industry average of \$1.50.

**PAID SEARCH**  
**241K IMPRESSIONS**  
**22% CTR**



**PAID SOCIAL**  
**8.7M IMPRESSIONS**  
**110K CLICKS**



\*Simpleview 2022-2023 annual report is included in appendix to this report.

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: EVENT SUPPORT

Several events draw thousands of participants to Bishop each year. The Bishop Chamber is proud of our work to support longstanding events and attract new ones. Our staff continues to keep in contact with organizers, offering support and helping them plan for their scheduled and rescheduled events.

### Event Promotion:

- Events Page on [www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com) includes a list view of events and traditional calendar view.
- The events list is continually updated, representing a significant contribution of staff time. A typical month has 35+ events on the web calendar.
- Paid social and search campaigns drive traffic to the events page. Google ads campaign for events had 8,506 clicks and 24,727 impressions. 4,133 clicks were for Mule Days. Event Development & Support: BACCVB hosts and supports a diverse range of events in our community. Some are for locals; some are for visitors and many are for both. BACCVB is lead organizer on some events (Blake Jones, Christmas, Media Reception).

For other events, BCC provides varying types of support like marketing, volunteers, and equipment.

- |                                      |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting | • Flash Foxy Climbing Festival  |
| • Shop Local Holiday Raffle          | • Craggin' Classic              |
| • Railroad Express                   | • Business After Hours Mixers   |
| • Chamber Challenge Golf             | • Lunch and Learn               |
| • Blake Jones Trout Derby            | • Inyo Associates               |
| • Trout Opener Media Reception       | • Procurement Fair              |
| • Trout Rodeo                        | • Eastern Sierra Employment Day |
| • CHSRA State Finals Rodeo           | • Trunk or Treat                |
| • VCMC Dual Sport Rally              | • 4th in the Park               |
| • Eastern Sierra Pride               | • And More...                   |

**A quote from the founder of Flash Foxy Climbing Festival:** *"Just like you're sometimes on a climbing trip and you don't get to climb on rocks... well, sometimes we have a climbing festival and we don't get to climb on rocks. (shrugs) This is to say, we'll still be having our festival this coming weekend. BUT with current access conditions devastated due to flooding and the emergency services in the county being so stretched thin with storm related calls, we will not have ANY programming that includes climbing on any rocks. We strongly believe that the land and the rocks need some time and are asking anyone attending to respect the road closures and avoid creating more impact on areas that have already been severely impacted by this stormy winter season. Please remember that we are a large group and as such, we must move responsibly as a whole. I'd love for us to show that our community is one that prioritizes land stewardship over personal climbing days."*

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: BISHOP CLIMBING RANGERS



### ⚠️ IMPORTANT ROAD DAMAGE INFORMATION & DISASTER INFORMATION FROM INYO COUNTY

For some time, local people have been complaining about over-use and irresponsible recreation on some public lands around Bishop. In effort to curb the undesired behavior and protect our recreational assets, the Climbing Ranger Program was launched in the fall of 2019. This is a collaborative effort supported by Bishop Area Climbers' Coalition, USFS, BLM, Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association, private foundations and BACCVB. Our organization contributed \$13,500 last year which allowed for two full-time people to provide patrols during peak climbing season (November-April). The Climbing Rangers conducted educational outreach and monitored dispersed camping with the goal of educating users about Leave No Trace and best practices for outdoor etiquette. This year they also distributed a weekly Climbing conditions report that was quite useful throughout this epic snow year. The Climbing Rangers also threw a Gym to Crag hosted Trivia hour at 3 Los Angeles Gyms to discuss resources, and outdoor etiquette.



- 2,632 Cars counted at climbing area trailheads.
- One single day in February 171 cars counted and 53 contacts made.
- 1,276 Climber contacts in Bishop.
- 213 Dog Contacts. 59 were leashed.
- Busiest Climber Coffee was on President's Day Weekend. 50 guests.





## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: TRAVEL TRADE SHOWS

Consumer travel and outdoor recreation shows have been a key component of our destination marketing efforts for many years. These events effectively attract new visitors to Bishop and increase awareness of Bishop's brand. These events allow us to personally connect with travel consumers in several key markets.

- International Sportsmen's Expo, Sacramento, January 19-22, 2023
- Bart Hall, Del Mar, February 16-19, 2023
- Travel & Adventure Show, Los Angeles, February 18-19, 2023
- Pacific Coast Sportfishing Show, OC Fairgrounds, March 2-5, 2023
- Bart Hall, Long Beach, March 29-April 2, 2023
- US Travel Association IPW Conference, San Antonio, May 19-22, 2023

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: TROUT STOCKING

Trout fishing continues to be an important draw for visitors to Bishop. Lodging owners, guests and community leaders have urged us to increase trout stocking to supplement the efforts of California Department of Fish and Wildlife. In winter months, we purchase trout from Wright's Rainbows for Pleasant Valley Reservoir and the Owens River. In summer, BTID funds are matched, as we partner with Bishop Creek Canyon resort owners to stock extra fish in the lakes & streams. If we're advertising to attract anglers, we know we better invest in the fish.

- August 16, 2022 – Lake Sabrina. South Lake, Intake II, Bishop Creek
- September 16, 2022 - Lake Sabrina. South Lake, Intake II, Bishop Creek
- September 29, 2022 - Lake Sabrina. South Lake, Intake II, Bishop Creek
- February 17, 2023 – Pleasant Valley Reservoir and Owens River

Bishop Chamber helped produce a new **Inyo County Fishing Map Brochure** which will help promote year-round angling opportunities and best sustainable fishing practices.







A must resource!

Apr 2023 • Solo

These people were outstanding! As a photographer, I contacted them before I left for Bishop and also when I was there. They gave me terrific suggestions and warned me about bad road conditions.

Written April 27, 2023

This review is the subjective opinion of a Tripadvisor member and not of Tripadvisor LLC. Tripadvisor performs checks on reviews as part of our industry-leading trust & safety standards. Read our [transparency report](#) to learn more.

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: GUEST SERVICES

### BISHOP VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

- Open year-round, hours vary by season.
- One full-time and three part-time hosts provide outstanding service to guests and locals.
- Well trained, professional, courteous, and knowledgeable.
- Must handle a vast scope of inquiries in-person, by phone and email.

### Annual Guest Services Total

Year	Visitors
2017	24,199
2018	24,123
2019	24,239
2020	7,302
2021	13,453
2022	17,058

★★★★★ Jul 1, 2023

1 photo

Talk to Joe! My friend and I were on a roadtrip and sort of stranded in Bishop, since there was a huge sandstorm in the desert and a lot of (unexpected) snow in the Sierras. Our original plans had to be cancelled due to this. We both didn't exactly know where to go for the following couple of days, so I checked out the visitor center with hopes of getting some ideas on what we could do instead. We were greeted by Joe, and he helped us with his fast expertise and knowledge on outdoor activities in the surrounding (and distant) area. We talked for hours on multiple occasions and every single suggestion of his ended up being a great success. I can only recommend this business/organization!

**Bishop Area Chamber-Commerce**

Website Directions Save Call

4.4 ★★★★★ 14 Google reviews

Chamber of commerce in Bishop, California

**Located in:** Bishop City Park

**Address:** 690 N Main St, Bishop, CA 93514

**Hours:** Thursday 9 AM–5 PM  
Friday 9 AM–5 PM  
Saturday 9 AM–5 PM  
Sunday 12–4 PM  
Monday 9 AM–5 PM  
(Labor Day) Hours might differ  
Tuesday 9 AM–5 PM  
Wednesday 9 AM–5 PM

[Suggest new hours](#)

**Phone:** (760) 873-8405

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: VISITOR PUBLICATIONS (KPI)

Print brochures and maps are excellent tools to attract new visitors and encourage them to spend more time in our region. We worked with regional partners to create and update several key publications. These guides are distributed at travel shows, area visitor centers and businesses along HWY 395. *Digital versions are also available on our website.*

- **New Bishop Visitor Guide**
- Hidden History Brochure
- Birding Hotspots Brochure
- Inyo County Backroads Motor Touring Guide
- Inyo County Treasure Map
- Eastern Sierra Fishing Map
- Eastern Sierra Fall Color Map Guide
- Inyo County Warm Water Fishing Map
- E-Z Hikes
- Winter Hiking Trails

## STRATEGIC PROGRAM: MAJOR MEDIA ADVERTISING

Some BTID funds have been invested in national and regional major media publications. Many of the publications are very niche-specific, targeting climbers, OHV users, bird watchers or anglers. Other publications are widely read by general leisure travelers.

**Total distribution reached through the media below is at least 15,000,000.**

- |                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Adventure Sports Journal | • Sierra Trail Running Guidebook |
| • CA Climber Magazine      | • S&S Off Road Magazine          |
| • CA Road Trips Magazine   | • Scenic 395 Magazine            |
| • CA Visitors Guide        | • Trail Runner /DIRT Magazine    |
| • Fish Sniffer Magazine    | • Travel Guide to California     |
| • Daily Independent        | • Travel, Taste & Tour           |
| • Fish Taco Chronicles     | • True West                      |
| • Hemispheres              | • Western Outdoor News           |
| • Living Bird              | • Yosemite Journal               |

**Note: All of the publications offer digital versions as well as the printed magazines.**

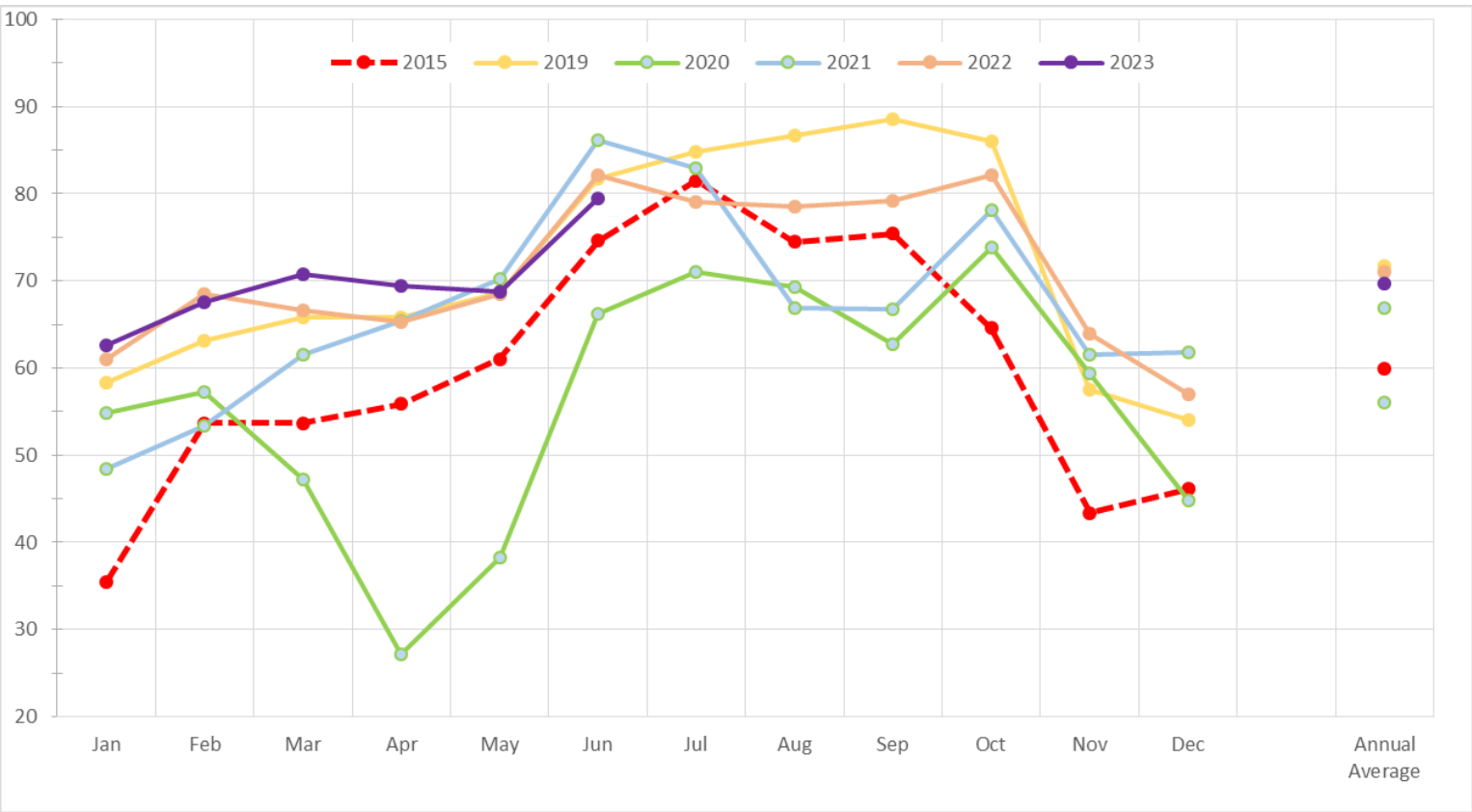
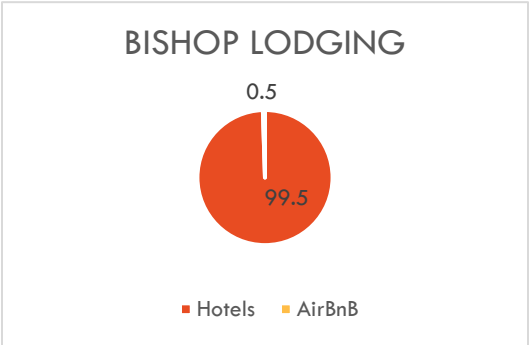
# STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRAM APPROACH

## OCCUPANCY & ADR

BACCVB subscribes to weekly occupancy reports provided by Smith Travel Research (STR). Smith Travel Research is recognized as the lodging industry expert for gathering data, providing analytics, and benchmarking performance data including occupancy and average daily rate (ADR).

STR Reports for Bishop include data from 10 of the 19 downtown hotels, representing 68% of BTID room inventory. STR data includes small (33 rooms) and large (86 rooms) properties. We are confident the data is a solid representation of overall Bishop lodging trends.

Average Daily Rate (ADR) is a carefully monitored metric. Lodging rates vary in all communities according to demand, with higher rates during peak travel season and major events. Increasing ADR is a good indicator that BTID funded marketing programs are working to increase Bishop's status as a desirable destination.



## BISHOP LODGING PERFORMANCE

According to Smith Travel Research, Bishop lodging occupancy for July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 was 71.5%. This is slightly above the great year we had just before the pandemic – impressive considering the heavy winter and adverse recreation conditions in the spring. Average Daily Rate for the past 12 months was \$131.73, which represents a 4.5% increase over the previous year. All in all, Bishop's occupancy rate is higher than state average and higher than High Sierra Region. ADR is considerably lower than both the state and the region, likely because we do not have large-scale resort hotels.

Currently, annual ADR is at \$132; a 39% increase since the start of BTID.

The goal is to smooth out the seasonality of our tourism-based economy, positively impacting business, tax revenues and employment opportunities. Our efforts are working as you can see from this table. In 2015, Bishop had six months with occupancy below 60%. Last year, there was just one – December at 57%. That was still 11% higher than December of 2015. This table also illustrates that it takes time and continued investment in the marketing program to grow occupancy. The travel industry has not yet fully recovered from the pandemic, but Bishop is moving in the right direction and doing better than many destinations.

% Bishop Occupancy									
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	35.5	42.1	50.2	43.2	58.3	54.9	48.4	61.0	62.6
February	53.7	42.3	52.0	54.2	63.2	57.3	53.4	68.5	67.6
March	53.7	57.0	59.4	61.1	65.8	47.2	61.5	66.6	70.7
April	55.9	52.6	60.4	57.6	65.8	27.1	65.4	65.3	69.4
May	61.0	63.0	64.6	69.8	68.6	38.3	70.2	68.5	68.8
June	74.6	81.5	81.2	81.0	81.7	66.2	86.1	82.1	79.4
July	81.5	84.4	86.9	86.3	84.8	71.0	82.9	79.0	
August	74.5	81.1	84.9	78.8	86.7	69.3	66.9	78.5	
September	75.4	85.1	85.1	83.6	88.6	62.8	66.8	79.2	
October	64.6	77.9	85.6	81.6	86.0	73.8	78.1	81.1	
November	43.4	52.8	54.4	56.5	57.5	59.4	61.5	63.9	
December	46.1	46.9	47.8	52.3	54.1	44.8	61.8	57.0	
<b>Annual Average</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>63.9</b>	<b>67.7</b>	<b>67.2</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>56.0</b>	<b>66.9</b>	<b>71.0</b>	

AVERAGE DAILY RATE								YTD
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
\$94	\$100	\$106	\$108	\$114	\$110	\$120	\$127	\$132



## OUR BRAND – SMALL TOWN WITH A BIG BACKYARD

The brand for Bishop, CA is “**Small Town with a BIG Backyard.**”

The brand is equally effective when communicating with visitors and locals. It also perfectly describes Bishop. Our town is definitely small – population is about 3,700. Downtown features family-run restaurants, galleries, shops and saloons that take pride in offering old-fashioned hospitality with all modern conveniences. We have one high school, one historic movie theatre and an idyllic park in the center of town. Our backyard is definitely BIG! 98% of land in Inyo County is publicly owned by USFS, BLM and Los Angeles Department of Water & Power. That means Bishop is surrounded by over 6 Million acres of land that’s open for recreation. Within an hour drive from Bishop, you can access Mount Whitney, Alabama Hills and the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest. Just to the north lies Mammoth Mountain, Devil’s Post Pile, Mono Lake and the eastern entrance to Yosemite.

### Access & Transportation Awareness

- Utilized social media, e-news and website to inform visitors and locals about road hazards, repairs, closures and openings related to severe winter and spring runoff.
- Utilized all media platforms to alert visitors and locals to hazardous swift water conditions.
- Trip Planning Menu on [www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com) is continuously updated to reflect current season/conditions.
- Maintain “Roads and Weather” page on [www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com) page with links to CalTrans, Nevada DOT, weather, and wildfire smoke projections.
- Social Media team shares official CalTrans and Inyo County Sheriff road closures and weather warnings.
- Visitor Center Hosts are well trained to help guests with all transportation questions. • “Fly to Bishop” messaging added to some print and digital ads. • “Fly to Bishop” messaging included in all e-newsletters.
- In-person outreach at US Travel Association International Travel Conference.
- Bishop featured in California Road Trips Magazine, highlighting Bishop Airport as new gateway to CA.
- Created four new seasonal guides and nine new ArcGIS Story Maps for a visual guided travel experience.

### Brand & Community Awareness

- Responsible Recreation messaging is built into all campaigns. Our destination voice encourages responsible and respectful behavior from our guests and locals.



# STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRAM APPROACH

## DIGITAL EMPHASIS

We work with Simpleview, the travel industry expert, to place paid social media ads and for search engine management. Our website, [www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com) is an amazing tool. It is very dynamic and our team works continuously to update, improve, and build the content offered on the site. The greatest thing about online marketing is that we can track and monitor all the programs, change content according to seasons and events, and make micro adjustments to communicate. The travel industry is still in post-pandemic recovery mode. US Travel Association predicts full recovery, including international visitation by the end of 2025. Our investment in building this solid digital communications infrastructure has proven to be essential. It has allowed us to be nimble and responsive. It has allowed us to keep in contact with our customers, positioning us well for continued recovery and success in the future.

## AUTHENTICITY

**We create** through a “Dream Team” of local experts to share their love of the area with the world. It’s imperative we use authentic voices on all platforms. Our social media team, bloggers, photographers, videographers all really do recreate in our big backyard, and they share their first-hand experiences. It might be easier to hire an ad agency, but this could not convey the same friendly voice, local knowledge, and true passion achieved by using locals. With this team, we invest in a variety of online marketing programs. Together, we create content and promote Bishop on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, TripAdvisor, Expedia and other online platforms.

## SUSTAINABILITY

**We inspire** travel that drives community togetherness and economic development. We strive to strengthen the image and welcome and preserve the unique guest experience while creating a sustainable partnership between our community and our big backyard. So, we helped fund two Climbing Rangers, in cooperation with ESIA to patrol the lands and educate our guests. We created a full campaign around COVID-19 to keep our guests informed on best practices to stay safe and well. The health of our community, our businesses and our guests is paramount. We encourage **responsibility** from residents and guests alike.

## INFORMED INVESTMENTS FOR RECOVERY AND GROWTH

**We invest** in a variety of regional and national publications, both print and online. We also produce and distribute visitor publications like the Bishop Visitor Guide, EZ Hikes Brochure, Inyo County Fishing Map, Birding Hotspots, Treasure Map, Inyo County Backroads Magazine and Eastern Sierra Fall Colors Guide (all available in print and digital versions). We utilize a variety of resources to inform decisions on marketing plans. We’ve recently partnered with Datafy LLC to learn more about our guests and their varied interests. The Visitor Impact study that’s been in the works since 2019 will be available soon and we’re looking forward to taking a deep dive into the information.

## INFORMATION CENTER

The most important cog on our wheel is the Bishop Information Center! Our professional team of Guest Hosts respond to every call, email and walk-in inquiry with courteous, knowledgeable and prompt service. As more people are becoming interested in Bishop, we are seeing significant increase in number of inquiries as well as scope of information request.

**BISHOP TOURISM IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
FY 2022-2023**

**REVENUE**

BTID Assessment (Received 7/1/22-6/30/23)	\$576,526
City of Bishop Contribution	\$72,500
County of Inyo Project Grants	\$29,050
Inyo County Marketing Co-Op	\$38,700
LADWP Responsible Recreation Ad Campaign Contract	\$36,083
Souvenir Sales (Gross)	\$65,394
Trout Stocking Co-Op	\$15,000
Visitor Guide Advertising	\$15,150
Visitor Events Income	<u>\$8,107</u>
<b>TOTAL VISITORS BUREAU INCOME</b>	<b>\$856,510</b>

**EXPENSES**

Marketing Staff Expense	\$217,831
Organic SM Content Creation & Management	\$124,634
Paid Social Media & Search Ads	\$63,292
E-newsletter	\$6,301
Major Media Publications	\$77,735
Travel & Sport Shows	\$26,692
Outdoor Advertising	\$30,296
Brochure Production & Distribution	\$59,478
Visit Bishop App	\$6,438
Expedia	\$5,976
Crowdriff-UGC Content & Galleries	\$12,765
CHSRA State Finals Rodeo	\$12,847
HMS Global/Visit USA Parks Online	\$11,500
Blake Jones Trout Derby	\$1,668
Trout Opener Media Reception	\$2,221
Photography/Video Production	\$6,500
Ventura County Motorcycle Club Rally	\$1,615
Familiarization Tours	\$6,232
Website	\$22,956
Poimiroo: <a href="http://www.californiafallcolor.com">www.californiafallcolor.com</a>	\$5,950
Visitor Center COGS	\$19,621
Analytics-Datafy/STR	\$17,594
Total Sales & Marketing	<b>\$740,142</b>
Co-Sponsor Climbing Ranger Program	\$13,500
Supplemental Trout Stocking	\$38,113
Total Visitor Service/Enhancement	<u>\$51,613</u>
Administration/Operations Expense	<u>\$53,777</u>
Contingency/Renewal	<u>\$-</u>
<b>TOTAL VISITORS BUREAU EXPENSES FOR 2022-23</b>	<b>\$845,532</b>
<b>AMOUNT TO ROLLOVER TO 2023-2024</b>	<b>\$10,978</b>



*SHOWCASE WHAT WE HAVE. **BUILD WHAT WE NEED.***

## RE-ENGAGE / NEW CAMPAIGN IDEAS

- **Video Projects** - stay tuned for a fall video series and “Small Town, Big Characters” video later this year.
- **Bishop Airport** - continue to push “Fly to Bishop” campaigns, and local promotions for passenger air service.
- **Small Business Resource Center** - actively assist with event planning and community outreach.
- **Consumer Travel and Sport Shows** - personally connect with travel & outdoor enthusiasts.
- **Bishop Information Guide & other Collateral** - The Bishop Visitor Guide magazine will be updated and reprinted. This publication is a cornerstone of our overall destination marketing program. It works to inspire travel to Bishop, as well as a guide to help guests plan the details of their visit. We will continue to distribute the Treasure Map, Backroads Guide, Inyo Co. Fishing Map, Birding Hotspots, EZ Hikes and other brochures we have developed.
- **Outdoor Advertising:** New digital billboards on US HWY 395 visible to northbound traffic offer the opportunity to relay messages appropriate to moment. This provides an excellent opportunity for Visit Bishop to co-op with LADWP to highlight safety and responsible recreation messages, plus highlight events and seasonal activities in our region.
- **Bishop Information Center** - We are excited to work hand in hand with City of Bishop, LADWP and other partners to create a new space that allows us to provide the best possible service to guests and locals.

## EXPAND CAPACITY

**NEW TEAM MEMBER:** The time has come to add a member to our dedicated Visit Bishop Team. We were ready to do this in 2020, but the pandemic placed a hold on the plan. With so many expanding opportunities (Bishop Airport, Small Business Resource Center, new and returning events, CERF and more), we simply must expand our capacity to best serve our community.



## ALIGNED ADVOCACY/REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **We are actively engaged with regional partners** including City of Bishop, County of Inyo, High Sierra Visitors Council, Inyo Associates, Tri-County Fairgrounds, LADWP, USFS, BLM, CalTrans, ESIA, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife and other stakeholders. We work collaboratively for the betterment of our community, and we actively participate in projects such as ESSRP, CERF, CEDS, ES Small Business Resource Center, and others.
- **We will continue to learn from industry experts** such as Crowdriff, Simpleview, Expedia, TripAdvisor, Visit California, CalTravel, and Brand USA. They provide good information about domestic and global travel trends, forecasts and best practices that we can apply right here in our own backyard. We are now a member of Destination Marketing Association of the West.
- **Visit Bishop has partnered with Mono County Tourism and Inyo County to develop a new branded itinerary** featuring 10 “must see” venues between Death Valley and Yosemite. The target for this new concept will be road trip enthusiasts (domestic and international) that are interested in experiencing the “est” of California – lowest, highest, hottest, coldest, driest, oldest..... We’ll be co-marketing this new itinerary at the annual **IPW travel event** in Los Angeles in May 2024 and will setup pre and post-fam tours for tour operators from all over the world.

## BUDGET APPROACH

- District Management Plan allocates 80% of BTID funds for sales and marketing; 5% for Visitor Services/Enhancements; 10% for administration and 5% for contingency/renewal. \*Since the cap for contingency has been reached, that 5% may be allocated to other budget categories.
- Revenue is conservatively projected.
- BACCVB will continue to seek funding from other sources including City of Bishop, County of Inyo, business community, and event co-sponsors.
- BACCVB will continue to seek fundraising opportunities.
- County of Inyo and Visit Bishop have formed a partnership to create unified Destination Marketing and Positive Public Relations Campaign together. Inyo County marketing budget is held separately from the BTID and Bishop Chamber budgets.
- Continue engaging volunteers to minimize staff expenses to enhance projects/events.
- Budget to remain flexible. Will evaluate quarterly and adjust as necessary.



# Bishop... Small Town with a Big Backyard

@visitbishop #recreateresponsibly



# STAY

an extra day or two  
to explore Bishop

start planning...

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bishop

Bishop Chamber of

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Los Angeles  
Department of  
Water & Power

The Bishop Chamber & Visitors Bureau and Los Angeles  
Department of Water and Power remind everybody to  
recreate responsibly on our public lands.

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!

We're experiencing the biggest water year  
on record! Your old fishing spots might not be

Reservoir lakes and bass fishing  
could be the hot ticket!

### INYO COUNTY FISHING



Download the NEW  
Inyo County Fishing Map  
& find updates on  
fishing conditions

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eve



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## Small town with a big backyard



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