

9. MARKETING AND OUTREACH

The San Joaquins serve markets from Bakersfield to Sacramento via the San Joaquin Valley and branch off from Stockton through the East Bay Area to Oakland. The San Joaquins are unique in the State and Nation, with a vast network of Thruway Bus services that provide convenient connections between northern and southern California. Between the trains and connecting buses, the San Joaquins provide easy access to many of California's popular destinations, including: cultural attractions; museums; universities; amusement parks; entertainment and music venues; national, state, regional, and local parks; state and county fairs and festivals; seasonal cuisine and artisan foods; the State Capitol; and major population centers.

SJJPA staff has developed and continues to implement the SJJPA Marketing and Outreach Plan, which focuses on a combination of advertising, social media, and grassroots strategies. It is the combination of strategies and channels that provide greater coverage and focus to the Marketing and Outreach Plan, providing SJJPA the best opportunity to reach community stakeholders and passengers.

The marketing and outreach efforts have resulted in corridor-wide support from stakeholders for Intercity Passenger Rail. Many corridor stakeholders and stakeholder groups have submitted grant application support letters and have attended SJJPA Board of Directors meetings to support planning efforts for Morning Express Service and future service expansion. In addition, many stakeholder groups have taken group trips on the San Joaquins to experience the service and promote its use on social media. Stakeholder individuals that utilize the service are continuing to participate in SJJPA's 'Look Who's Riding' social media campaign, which shares photos and testimonials from corridor stakeholders.

Grassroots Outreach Strategies

SJJPA contracts with qualified Outreach Teams to engage in several activities to reach corridor communities and stakeholders including: engaging stakeholders, working with the media, facilitating group trips, tabling at large local events, and presenting to community groups.

Engaging Stakeholders

Local, committed stakeholders are vital to promote the service, improve local presence, and activate communities to ride the train. Stakeholder education meetings and presentations are key components to the grassroots marketing efforts.

Stakeholder group outreach is a key component of both the Outreach Team contracts as well as a staff priority. There are several key groups, chambers, partnerships, agencies, universities, and organizations within the corridor that are an essential component of awareness and messaging multiplication. SJJPA is also expanding outreach to include other stakeholder groups throughout corridor, including bicycle coalitions, university Alumni Associations, League of California Cities, and California State Association of Counties.

Each Outreach Team is leveraging its contacts and SJJPA contacts, while also placing and emphasis on new stakeholder acquisition, to schedule formal meetings that serve to education stakeholders about the San Joaquins Service. A key component to Stakeholder Development is to create a reliable database of contacts to inform about service updates, call upon



for help, and utilize to increase the SJJPA message throughout the corridor.

SJJPA staff also coordinates and hosts regular meetings of the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee (SJVRC). The SJVRC is a technical advisory committee composed of a diverse group of rail advocates from various backgrounds and affiliations. Committee members represent all the counties through which the San Joaquins operate, as well as Thruway Bus regions including Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Northern California. SJVRC members provide critical feedback to SJJPA staff on how to improve the San Joaquins from the perspective of ordinary citizens.

Working with the Media

The media is an important aspect of any marketing plan. The localized Outreach Teams assist with media relations, utilizing their established relationships with local and regional media. The Outreach Teams help to schedule interviews, facilitate press conferences, and ensure that SJJPA press releases and media advisories are successfully delivered.

Facilitating Group Trips

In partnership with the community groups, agencies, organizations, school groups, businesses, and other stakeholders, Outreach Teams are facilitating group trips on the San Joaquins. They assist with building itineraries, navigating ticket purchases, offering safety

information, and other supporting activity necessary to accomplish the group trip.

Getting groups on the train helps cultivate community ambassadors by offering firsthand experience of the service. Outreach Teams' efforts in this area ensure that engaged parties do not just hear a presentation but ride the service, helping them get over the hurdle of the 'first ride' and using this as an opportunity to engage their constituents through testimonials via social media and other means.

Tabling at Local Events

A key grassroots initiative for SJJPA is to meet current and potential riders in their communities. To this end, SJJPA Outreach Teams are tabling at local community events in the corridor to hand out service information, educate potential riders on the service, promote discounts, provide train safety information, and listen to the community's feedback on the service. Event tabling is an important strategy for reaching Hispanic and disadvantaged communities, allowing Outreach Teams to meet these communities in their contexts with materials adapted to their language. Additionally, Outreach Teams employ or contract bi-lingual service ambassadors for SJJPA.

Presenting to Community Groups

Service education and awareness is an important grassroots marketing principle. To educate corridor



communities and stakeholders, Outreach Teams frequently give presentations to community groups, organizations, school groups, businesses, and others to grow awareness of the service and cultivate community ambassadors.

Advertising

In addition to the grassroots efforts, SJJPA is engaging in targeted advertising campaigns through both digital and traditional advertising channels. The advertising program utilizes a multi-touch methodology by which multiple mediums are employed to reach a broad base of current and potential riders with opportunity for the targets to see the advertising multiple times. Digital advertising types being utilized include: display networks, digital radio, social media, and pre-roll video advertising. Traditional advertising types being utilized include: television, radio, print, billboards, and theatre screen advertising. Advertising is being deployed primarily in English and Spanish with other languages being adapted on a targeted basis.

SJJPA will be placing a higher priority on advertising due to the success of past campaigns in driving traffic to the website and passenger preferences for purchasing tickets through online methods such as AmtrakSanJoaquins.com, Amtrak.com, and the Amtrak Mobile App.

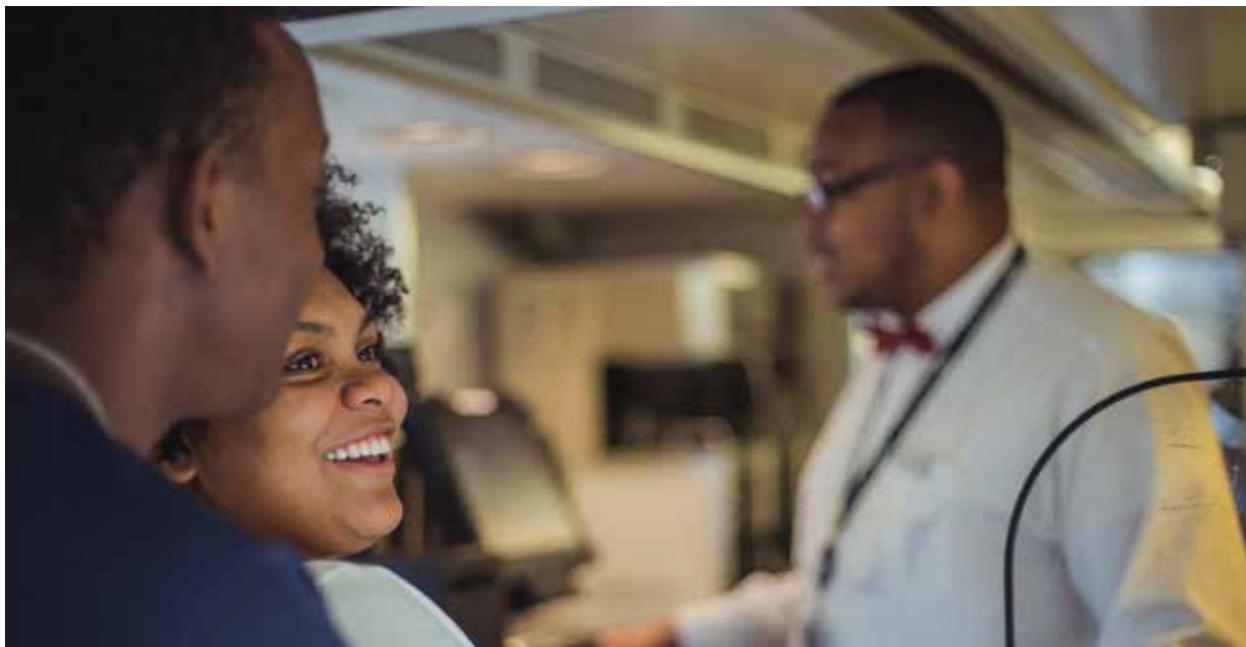
In addition to traditional advertising, SJJPA is placing Amtrak San Joaquins logos and the phrase “Your Train Connection” on the sides of Thruway Buses throughout the state to increase public awareness and exposure to the service. This strategy will increase the reach and scope of SJJPA advertising efforts, as well as, serve as a cost-effective means of attracting additional ridership.

Morning Express Service Advertising

SJJPA’s Morning Express program is designed to attract additional business travelers and same-day leisure travelers for the San Joaquins. With the launch of the Sacramento Morning Express on May 7, 2018, SJJPA is preparing to launch Bay Area Morning Express in 2019. In support of Bay Area Morning Express, SJJPA will conduct an extended advertising campaign geo-targeted to communities served and employment centers along the route benefitting from the service. To carry out this focused one-time advertising campaign, SJJPA is requesting advertising funds in the amount of \$500,000.

Social Media

Building on SJJPA’s successful social media strategy for the Amtrak San Joaquins, SJJPA is expanding the use of social media. Social Media strategies include both content posting and paid advertising. SJJPA is utilizing the following platforms: Facebook, In-



stagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Social Media is an effective tool to engage customers, increase communication, and ensure brand visibility. Capitalizing on SJJPA's extensive grassroots efforts, content is being aggregated corridor-wide to market station area communities and events. Discounts and promotions are organically posted as part of customer conversations, as well as in social advertising with a primary focus on Facebook.

Social Media is also being used to create a one-click channel to AmtrakSanJoaquins.com or subsequent discount pages. Social media platforms offer extensive targeting capability, ensuring relevant content and promotions are reaching the desired demographics.

Increase Marketing and Outreach to Universities and Community Colleges Served by Thruway Buses

The San Joaquins' Thruway Bus network provides connections to numerous universities and community colleges throughout California. SJJPA has initiated efforts to engage students through event tabling and will work to expand outreach efforts to additional campuses. By conducting outreach to students attending schools near Thruway Bus stops, SJJPA will work to inform students on the many benefits of the San Joaquins and attract additional ridership.

Increase Marketing and Outreach to Military Personnel and Veterans

The San Joaquins currently provides discounts for both active military personnel and veterans. However, Amtrak will be cancelling the veterans discount shortly. SJJPA is currently exploring ways to preserve this important discount. SJJPA will focus a portion of its efforts engaging these groups with discount education as well as targeted trip planning ideas.

Market Analysis

SJJPA is utilizing market analysis reports performed by Amtrak and Caltrans to inform its marketing efforts and tailor messages. Caltrans has indicated its suspension of further market analysis programs. To continue to gather this market data, SJJPA is requesting additional funds in the amount of \$150,000 to perform market analysis on a bi-annual basis. Marketing analysis research will be performed both onboard to gather current ridership data and via other means (phone surveys, online surveys, in person intercepts, etc.) to collect non-rider data. Data will be compiled into a report and utilized to inform ongoing marketing efforts and messaging. A bi-annual methodology is being employed to allow time for advertising and other marketing strategies that are based on market analysis to have sufficient time to penetrate the market.

