



HSMAI SPECIAL REPORT

# 2021 Adrian Awards: Platinum and President's Award Honorees

Best Practices in Digital Marketing, Public Relations,  
Advertising & Diversity Marketing

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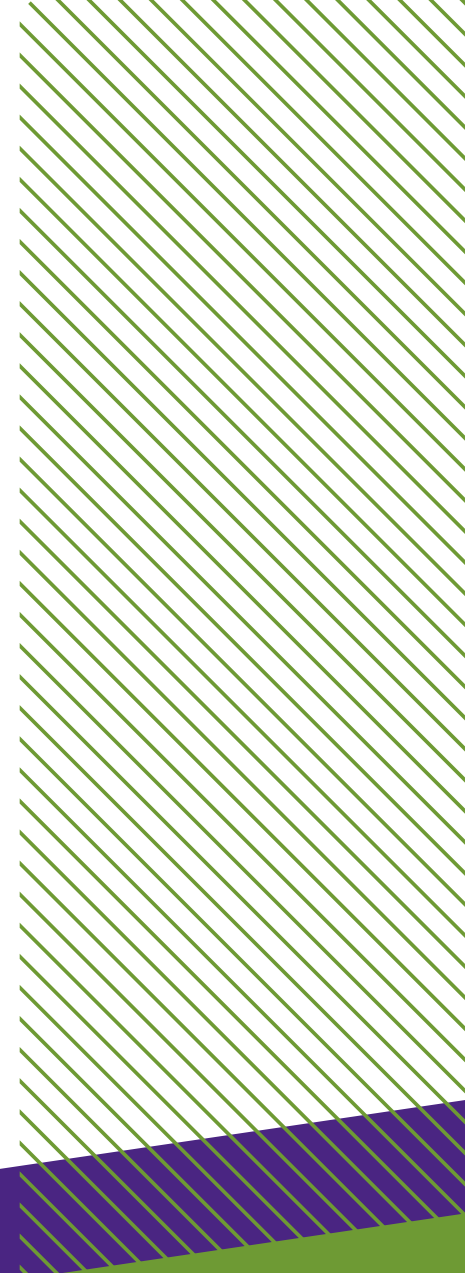
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*By Robert A. Gilbert, CHME, CHBA, President and CEO, Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI)*

The 2021 HSMAI Adrian Awards celebrate the creative and innovative digital marketing, advertising, and public relations work completed during one of the most unique times hospitality and travel has ever seen. The theme for this year's Adrian Awards is "Empowering Recovery" — a premise that has been top of mind for everyone in this profession. Marketing has been at the forefront of leading the recovery of travel, encouraging guests and visitors to get back on the road, and inspiring them to create the moments and experiences they'll never forget. At our awards ceremony held in March in Boca Raton, Florida, we honored and recognized the great work done by hotels, destinations, and their agency partners to get travelers moving again, showcase safety and security, and welcome those traveling for the first time in over a year. In this special report, we spotlight the platinum and president's award winners and showcase their best practices in the categories of digital marketing, public relations, advertising and diversity marketing.



#### ABOUT HSMAI

Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) is the hospitality industry's leading advocate for intelligent, sustainable hotel revenue growth. HSMAI provides hotel professionals and their partners with tools, insights, and expertise to fuel sales, inspire marketing, and optimize revenue through programs such as HSMAI's Revenue Optimization Conference, Digital Marketing Strategy Conference, Sales Leader Forum, and Adrian Awards. HSMAI offers organizational and individual membership, with more than 7,000 members in four global regions — the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East. — [hsmai.org](https://www.hsmai.org)

# 13,000 Reasons to Visit Northern Norway

AGENCY PARTNER: TRIGGER OSLO

## BACKGROUND

When the pandemic prevented international tourists from visiting Northern Norway, Visit Norway wanted to convince Norwegians to travel north for summer vacation. Tourists speak highly of the destination on social media, so Visit Norway decided to collect these comments to inspire the locals.

## CAMPAIGN

They collected 13,000 comments total, and comedian Truls Svendsen read them all aloud in one take. The review took seven hours to record and was published in its entirety on YouTube. Highlights were edited down for social media and used in ads and as content. Visit Norway also used specific comments to target people with different interests. All 13,000 comments were published on VisitNorway.com, and viewers could watch Truls read them live in a public Facebook event.

## RESULTS

The campaign reached 72% of Visit Norway's target group. Even though only a few viewers watched the full seven-hour video, people, on average, watched it for about nine minutes. While Visit Norway can't exactly quantify how many viewers decided to travel, Northern Norway got 33% more Norwegian visitors, compared to June 2020.



# A Table for All: Feeding Utah's Culture

## BACKGROUND

Thirty percent of Salt Lake County identifies as non-white, yet there remains a perception that Utah has little diversity. The Utah Office of Tourism's "A Table for All" video series aimed to shift this perception through the universal language of food by inviting prospective travelers into the homes and kitchens of diverse voices.

## CAMPAIGN

The three-part narrative series was an anchor storytelling piece for the Utah Office of Tourism's urban digital marketing campaign. Each episode was designed to be watched in tandem or to stand alone. There's also a thematic "anthem" video crafted to carry a unified message in a shorter watch time. The videos are anchored within articles on VisitUtah.com, written by a BIPOC writer, to further extend the invitation offered by Utah's thriving, diverse food culture.

## RESULTS

With the strategic distribution support of Love Communications and Sparkloft Media, the campaign delivered more than 2.1 million Nativo (native advertising) impressions; more than 3.1 million YouTube impressions; more than 2.1 million impressions and 257,000 engagements across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, with over 8,700 clicks from social to VisitUtah.com. Headlines calling out "soul" and "love" also captured Nativo traffic, and a companion native article logged 93 hotel bookings.



# See You Soon

AGENCY PARTNER: IDEAS COLLIDE

## BACKGROUND

As people began to make travel plans again, Best Western® Hotels & Resorts wanted to remind travelers of its commitment to industry-leading hospitality. Its “See You Soon” campaign was designed to welcome back guests after a challenging year and invite them to make new memories with Best Western.

## CAMPAIGN

A key campaign channel was influencer marketing. Each influencer brought their travel stories to life by covering not only various types of properties within the brand but also the diverse communities around them. As part of the larger “See You Soon” campaign, these influencer videos sought to amplify social reach, revitalize bookings during summer travel season, position Best Western as a trusted travel partner amid COVID-19 concerns, and foster positive brand association with strong storytelling.

## RESULTS

Influencers produced 16 videos from various perspectives, including family, millennial, pet, and road trip travel. Though the videos were made as part of a single campaign, they will each continue to provide relevant content for some time. The videos have received more than 2 million views and an average view rate of 50.51%.

**BW**

**Best Western®  
Hotels & Resorts**



## Where Is Will?

**AGENCY PARTNER: VISIT NORWAY/MAVERIX**

### BACKGROUND

When General Motors aired a Super Bowl commercial with Will Ferrell being obsessed with how Norway has outdone the United States in its use of electric vehicles, Visit Norway saw an opportunity to maximize the exposure and highlight the country's sustainable solutions, in a world increasingly focused on climate change.

### CAMPAIGN

Visit Norway capitalized on being in the spotlight after the Super Bowl spot, launching a social media campaign that aimed to create a general desire to travel to Norway.

### RESULTS

The campaign generated 1.8 million impressions, a reach of 3.1 million, and more than 70,000 engagements across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The centerpiece video, "Where are you, Will?" generated 450,000 views and 22,000 engagements. In addition to receiving a lot of media attention and trending on Twitter, the video was listed as one of the top four in Adweek and received favorable mentions in The Next Web, Meedia (Germany), and Kampanje (Norway).



# Hallmark Channel's "Countdown to Christmas" Holiday Suites by Club Wyndham

AGENCY PARTNER: THE DECKER/ROYAL AGENCY

## BACKGROUND

For years, "Countdown to Christmas" viewers have dreamed of living inside a Hallmark Channel holiday movie. Club Wyndham's PR team partnered with Hallmark Channel to turn that dream into a reality with three, custom designed suites at Club Wyndham's timeshare resorts in New York City, Nashville, and Vail, Colorado.

## CAMPAIGN

As part of the PR activation and campaign, Christmas-lovers could select their getaway destination based on three themes inspired by Hallmark Channel's "Countdown to Christmas" movie lineup. The goals for this campaign included building awareness of Club Wyndham through a multichannel partnership with Hallmark's Crown Media; creating a tangible experience for Hallmark Channel fans and Club Wyndham owners; and more.

## RESULTS

The suites sold out within seven hours. Between Oct. 18 and Nov. 3, the campaign landing page on Club Wyndham's website had 95,883 page views, an average of almost 6,000 per day. The PR campaign earned 175 stories in top consumer outlets, for a total reach just shy of 4 billion media impressions. Total social reach across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram on launch day was 215,000.

# CLUB WYNDHAM





# The Return of the Railway Up America's Mountain

AGENCY PARTNER: PERCEPTURE

## BACKGROUND

The campaign heralded the return of The Broadmoor Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway, which climbs via cog to more than 14,000 feet. The railway shut down in 2017 and, after a three-year, \$100 million rebuild, it reopened in May 2021. The railway is the highest railroad in America, the highest cog railway in the world, and one of Colorado's top attractions.

## CAMPAIGN

The goals for this PR campaign included driving revenue and advance ticket sales; creating local, regional, and national media awareness; using storytelling to follow the rebuild; launching an overhauled website; collecting and registering a new CRM database; and more.

## RESULTS

Media coverage and news exposure for the reopening of The Broadmoor Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway reached over 1.9 million unique visitors and included nationwide coverage featuring print, digital, radio, and more than 25 local and regional broadcast news and feature segments, as well as two live broadcasts with Good Morning America and a six-minute CBS Saturday Morning segment. Also, despite a limited availability window, the hotel's 'Ride & Stay at The Broadmoor' package generated 200-plus room nights, during the pandemic.



# Visit Irving Safely

AGENCY PARTNER: SIMPLEVIEW

## BACKGROUND

Visit Irving wanted to publicize the reopening of Irving’s hospitality venues and the steps taken to ensure public safety during the pandemic. They targeted meeting planners to convey specific steps taken to ensure the safety measures at Irving’s meeting venues, as well as individual travelers (who were in driving distance) to increase occupancy in the short term.

## CAMPAIGN

Their approach to these challenges resulted in the “Visit Irving Safely” campaign, which included two fully integrated campaigns — the “Staycations” campaign and “Safe-Meetings” campaign — and a series of advertisements that focused on both visitor safety and mitigating the final impacts of booking future meetings in Irving.

## RESULTS

The “Staycations” campaign generated nearly 25 million impressions and over 316,000 website sessions. The campaign increased Irving hotel occupancy by generating over 151,000 hotel booking referrals, which represented \$25.6 million in potential economic value. The “Safe-Meetings” campaign included a series of ads on LinkedIn, Facebook and paid search, and used click-to-call ads, generating over 6 million impressions, 38,408 website sessions and 315 group sales leads.



# Discover Atlanta

AGENCY PARTNER: MADDEN MEDIA

## BACKGROUND

Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB) and their agency partner Madden Media set out to develop a new website that showcased Atlanta's diversity and create a personalized experience for each website visitor.

## CAMPAIGN

When a user reaches the homepage, they are greeted with a large header video that features couples and families of all ages and ethnic backgrounds discovering things to do. The agency worked with local Black content creators to write inspiring, personal stories of their favorite places to spend time in Atlanta, so travelers got a local's view of the city.

## RESULTS

The ACVB successfully added several Disadvantaged Business Enterprises to its membership base. The bounce rate has improved by 7% and the number of pages per session increased by 58%. Organic search visits have increased by 27% and new users coming to the site have increased by 30%. Four stories on DiscoverAtlanta.com became featured snippets on Google search results in the first month, and organic traffic page views also increased by 83%.



# Atrium Hospitality and American Red Cross: National Partnership for Saving Lives

AGENCY PARTNER: WISEHIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS, LLC

## BACKGROUND

As a part of Atrium Hospitality's Wellness Corporate Social Responsibility pillar, their associates partner with a broad range of organizations to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods and cities. Atrium aimed to address the United States' emergency blood and platelet shortage and decrease in donors during the pandemic. Through their national partnership with the American Red Cross, they provided safe, clean, and large venues for hosting numerous blood drives.

## CAMPAIGN

The goals for this program were to host 51-plus blood drives and measure against actual hosted events and to drive first-time donor participation at blood drives hosted at Atrium Hospitality-managed hotels and measure against American Red Cross' national performance.

## RESULTS

Atrium Hospitality-managed hotels hosted 101 blood drives in 20 states with the American Red Cross, collecting 2,608 units of blood that could potentially save more than 7,800 human lives. The national partnership also included 18% participation from first-time donors, surpassing American Red Cross' national average of 11% for the same period.



# Only Paradise Will Do

AGENCY PARTNER: PARADISE ADVERTISING & MARKETING

## BACKGROUND

Throughout the pandemic, Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades CVB has had three evolutions to its marketing efforts. Its first two phases aimed to mitigate the negative economic impacts of the pandemic on residents and local businesses and to deliver a positive message to resilient and reluctant travelers. This led to the third phase, a multi-platform campaign that aimed to reach these two segments of travelers — Only Paradise Will Do.

## CAMPAIGN

The goal for phase three efforts was to begin to steadily drive visitation back to the destination from the key drive and fly markets as soon as people were comfortable traveling again.

## RESULTS

The campaign contributed to a 24% increase in visitation from southeast drive markets and a 13% increase from Florida markets. New website users YOY from Jacksonville increased 776%; Gainesville increased 243%; Tallahassee increased 441%; and Savannah increased 987%. The capstone of the campaign came from one media partner in the form of an economic impact report that illustrated resident spending to local shops and restaurants. In total, \$50,000 was spent and 3.8 million impressions were delivered, 25,000 residents were captured and the total measured ROAS was \$160:1.



WHEN IT'S TIME TO EXPLORE  
BEYOND YOUR BACKYARD,  
ONLY PARADISE WILL DO.

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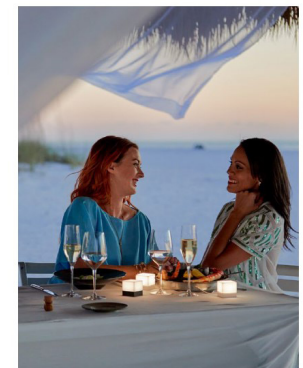
NAPLES · MARCO ISLAND  
EVERGLADES  
FLORIDA'S PARADISE COAST



IF THIS IS YOUR IDEA  
OF SOCIAL DISTANCING,  
ONLY PARADISE WILL DO.

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WHEN IT'S TIME  
FOR A DATE NIGHT OUT,  
ONLY PARADISE WILL DO.

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EVERGLADES  
FLORIDA'S PARADISE COAST

# Get Real – Experience It ALL

## BACKGROUND

Accor set out to launch a campaign encouraging people to visit its hotels and reenter the travel world. In addition, Accor wanted to raise the profile of its loyalty program, ALL – Accor Live Limitless, in North America.

## CAMPAIGN

Accor partnered with Momentum Worldwide and celebrity Neil Patrick Harris to reignite people's passion for travel. They created a series of five comedic tutorial videos depicting Neil's struggles with the basics of human interaction, covering topics such as how to pack and how to greet people. Each video featured an Accor destination, linking back to its main offer. Accor supported the campaign through digital and PR tactics, and the videos were housed on a microsite, which was promoted via email and display and social advertising.

## RESULTS

The campaign achieved 1.5 billion combined impressions across digital, social media and PR, and Accor saw a 111% increase in bookings and 141% increase in revenue, versus the same period in 2019. The campaign was also picked up by publications such as People, Travel + Leisure, and Conde Nast Traveler.



# Milestone Local

## BACKGROUND

With recent SEO trends, Milestone found that Google is the new homepage for most digital journeys, and users treat it as their homepage; almost half of Google's search queries have local intent; reviews continue to be a driving force for consumer decision-making; and mobile continues to be a driving force in local SEO as users turn to mobile for answers.

## CAMPAIGN

Milestone Local lets users manage their business listings and establish local presence through local search quickly and with minimal effort. Users can optimize business listings across the entire local ecosystem including search engines, maps, navigation systems, data aggregators, IYPs, and other key directories.

## RESULTS

Milestone Local Manager has generated over \$510,000 revenue in 2021. Milestone Local is used by over 2,000 hotels and hospitality-related businesses to distribute their location information. U.S. hotel brands with 1,400 hotels saw a 65% increase in visits (16.08 million vs. 9.76 million).



Milestone

Local SEO Marketing and  
Reviews Management Tools

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