



# 2024 Sales & Marketing Plan Draft





## OVERVIEW

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Visit Visalia's 2024 Business Development Plan addresses three target audiences: leisure travelers, meeting planners and our local community. The Plan focuses on these three distinct perspectives, builds on the foundational strengths of our region, and deploys industry best practices to achieve Visit Visalia's goals and objectives:

1. Increase in overnight room demand.
2. Facilitate and support group sales endeavors.
3. Encourage tourism product development.
4. Build community champions.

## STRENGTHS

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1. Gateway to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks & Sequoia National Forest
2. Geographic accessibility
3. Broad range of branded and independent hotels
4. Affordability for both group and leisure travel
5. Pedestrian-friendly dining, shopping and entertainment districts
6. Nationally recognized Certified Autism Destination designation

## OPPORTUNITIES

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1. Strengthen destination visibility and brand awareness.
2. Encourage overnight visitation in non-peak seasons.
3. Advocate for tourism transportation access.
4. Promote group attendee length of stay.
5. Endorse Festival Development.



## OUR BRAND

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The Visit Visalia brand, relaunched in 2018, inspires visitors to embrace their adventurous side. Our Brand Positioning Statement guides our communications.

*Visalia is the embodiment of America’s adventurous spirit, connecting people to nature through immersive experiences that move, challenge and inspire.*

By capitalizing on visitation data, we will further strengthen the Visit Visalia brand, deepening the connection to our national parks.

## TOP LINE STRATEGIES

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- Deploy marketing initiatives to expand our destination brand domestically and globally.
- Generate group meetings and convention leads to support our funding partners.
- Engage industry leaders and community champions to amplify the Visit Visalia brand.
- Advocate for tourism growth.





# TOURISM TARGET AUDIENCE (source: MIMGY Sept 2023 )

Visitors who represent the following personas are more likely to choose Visalia and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks as a vacation destination (not necessarily in this order). These personas also represent areas of opportunity for growth in visitors, and should be considered when making decisions about psychographic targeting.

The Visalia Visitor is adventurous and confident. It’s important to them to be active members of their community. They prioritize staying fit and healthy and exploring the world around them.

**OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS:** Confident, adventurous, and open-minded individuals. Helping the environment, exploring the world with loved ones and living a healthy lifestyle are their top priorities in life.  
(Age: 40-69 | HHI: \$121K | Children in HH: 47% | Travel Spend: \$500-\$5K)

**PEPPY PARENTS:** Creative, confident and adventurous. Family is their biggest focus in life. They want to explore the world with their children and teach them the importance of helping others.  
(Age: 18-49 | HHI: \$121K | Children in HH: 100% | Travel spent: \$500-\$5K)

**WILDERNESS BON VIVANTS:** Adventurous, confident and established individuals. They love to stay informed on recent events, show off their appearance and travel. Exploring the outdoors, challenging themselves physically and being healthy are their top priorities. (Age 45+ | HHI: \$158 | Children in HH: 41% | Travel Spend: \$5K+)

## TARGET MARKETS

The following target markets are rich with Visit Visalia's target psychographic and demographic makeups.

### PRIMARY

Southern California

- > Four County Area (Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside and San Diego)

### SECONDARY

Northern California

- > Three County Area (Sacramento, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara)

### TERTIARY

Key International Markets

- > France, Germany, England, Canada and Mexico





## LEISURE AND GROUP TRAVELER

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Proactively seeking domestic and international leisure and group travelers will remain a priority. Direct B2B and B2C marketing, FAM tours and tradeshow attendance will position Visalia as:

- the gateway to Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks,
- welcoming and collaborative convention partners,
- a community aware of diversity strengths with safe and family-friendly attractions.

## TOURISM INITIATIVES

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**Goal: Increase overnight hotel stays**

**Objective: Leverage and deploy earned and paid media in identified geographic and demographic target markets**

Tactics:

1. Engage a marketing agency of record to deliver industry best digital media practices in domestic markets.
2. Invest with Visit California and other travel partners on co-op campaigns when appropriate to our target markets.
3. Use industry channels to reach domestic and international travelers.
4. Routinely populate all owned channels featuring experiences in and around Visalia. Seek and promote attractions, activities and events to stimulate “just one more night” in Visalia.





## Objective: Collaboration

### Tactics:

1. Participate in and leverage State and Regional Partnerships to amplify our tourism message.
2. Support initiatives to enhance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion messaging.

Objective: Educate travel influencers (media and travel trade) on Visalia attributes that are attractive to each market.

### Tactics

1. Participate in Visit CA-sponsored and other media and travel trade events.
2. Consistently submit topical content to media sources.
3. Solicit opportunities to host FAM tours for in-market experiences.

Objective: Increase tour and travel groups to Visalia.

### Tactics

1. Attend market and industry-focused tradeshows.
2. Remain active with agents and tour operators.

Objective: Collaborate with Convention Sales to encourage meeting attendees to add pre- and post-leisure stays.

### Tactics

1. Convention Servicing that highlights destination assets.



## MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS INITIATIVES

### Goal: Generate New Meeting and Conventions

- **Objective:** Leads reflective of 3,858 Room Nights.

#### Tactics:

1. Leverage paid partnership programs with third party organizations and industry alliances.
2. Increase planner and prospect destination awareness through FAM tours.
3. Track prospects and CRM initiatives using iDSS.
4. Grow Visalia Meeting Planner Database.

### Goal: Secure Memorandums of Understanding with a minimum of 51% of hotels

- **Objective:** Ensure annual inventory of room nights available for convention sales

### Goal: Win Proposals

- **Objective:** Increase Transient Occupancy Tax Receipts and Tourism Marketing District Funding

#### Tactics:

1. Collaborate with venue and lodging colleagues in the development of attractive proposals.
2. Develop and adopt an incentive program including a tracking and accounting process.
3. Increase planner and prospect destination awareness through FAM tours.
4. Facilitate Convention Committee.
5. Educate and facilitate venues toward improved sustainability policies/efforts and advance technology investments to attract meeting planners and attendees.
6. Once approved or identified, update meeting planner content and proposals to reflect sustainability efforts and DEI Commitment.



## Goal: Client and Convention Servicing

- **Objective: Provide optimal Visit Visalia attendee experience**

### Tactics:

1. Convention announcement videos
2. Develop and deploy itineraries and group tours.
3. Manage and promote “Show Your Badge” program.
4. Communicate group presence to retail and attraction partners.
5. Coordinate “Welcome” services; dignitary message, concierge table, etc.





## DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT INITITIVES

### Goal: Increase overnight stays

**Objective: Enhance existing and encourage new tourism product.**

#### Tactics:

1. Partner with local organizations to update, develop and promote: Tours, attractions, festivals, events.
2. Develop and implement a grant program: Provide funding support for groups developing attractions or events stimulating overnight stays.
3. Provide technical assistance, when appropriate.

**Objective: Serve as community visionary and facilitator for regional tourism growth.**

#### Tactics

1. Facilitate Destination Development Committee.
2. Provide quarterly updates to Visalia City Council and Visalia Economic Development Corp.
3. Develop and facilitate FIFA 2026 Impact Taskforce.
4. Develop and facilitate LA 2028 Impact Taskforce.
5. Serve on Sequoia Tourism Council.
6. Participate in Cal Travel Advocacy Efforts.
7. Participate in Visit CA Strategic Planning.
8. Collaborate with Sequoia Parks Conservancy and Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks.