

Print

Tourism Sponsorship application - Submission #457

Date Submitted: 3/28/2019

Title of Project*

Klamath Basin Baby Bird Social Media Marketing Campaign

Grant Cycle*

Spring 2019

Funds Requested*

\$2500

Organization Applying*

Mary Williams Hyde Design

Contact Person*

Mary Williams Hyde

Phone Number*

5418837456

Email address*

mary@maryhyde.com

Website (if applicable)

http://www.klamathbasinbirding.com

Address

2705 California Avenue

City

Klamath Falls

State

OR

Zip Code

97601

Are you or is anyone in your organization an employee of Klamath County Government or a relative or an employee of Klamath County Government?

yes/no*

no

If yes, please enter name

Name

Are you or is anyone in your organization affiliated with or a relative of the Klamath County Tourism Review Committee?

yes/no*

no

If yes, please enter name

Name

Description of project including activities, date, time and location*

Late May, June and July are the prime months for viewing cute baby birds here in the Klamath Basin. Klamath Lake, the upper basin waterways, and the refuges are full of baby geese, coots, grebes, and ducks that are endlessly entertaining to bird watchers and bird photographers. It is also prime season for the beautiful wading birds like the Ibis, Stilts, and Avocets and for the beautiful pelicans that summer here. If funded for this social media marketing campaign, I would choose the best of the 200,000 photos I have taken, both in 2018 and 2017, and also from my weekly trips during this time period and post them on West Coast Facebook birding sites to attract tourists to see the babies. These sites have nearly 24,000 followers and I would also post on my own four main social media sites which have a combined following of nearly 700,000 people.

I have been tracking Klamath Basin birding marketing on Facebook for over two years and mentions of visiting here were rare until the last few months when my friends and I started posting our photos to west coast Facebook pages. Because most Facebook pages don't like overtly commercial posts, my posts end with this comment: "I created a website so you can keep track of what I am seeing in case you want to know what you might see if you visit here.... <http://www.klamathbasinbirding.com> then follow the link to my weekly photos in the smug mug archive."

With a small amount of startup funding from the Klamath Basin Audubon Society and Lonesome Duck Ranch, I promoted the Winter Wings Festival heavily in November and December but not birding because the refuges were dry and bird numbers were minimal. In January and February until the week of the Winter Wings Festival I promoted birding here heavily even though the bird numbers weren't up and the water didn't return until the week of the festival. That said, the visitor traffic to my website and my archives resulted in 2469 page views by 1240 unique visitors more heavily during January, the first two weeks of February, and much less heavily in March. Because the funding was so limited, I stopped promoting the Klamath Basin on social media the week of the Winter Wings Festival. Since then, because I haven't been posting much, visitor traffic to my website and archives has dropped to almost nothing. I attached the stats for you to see.

In addition to attracting visitors using social media, I have also learned that many who come need help with how to more successfully experience birds and wildlife, and not impact birds and wildlife negatively. Social media is a good way to quickly reach them with helpful hints.

The project promotions will use the best of my photos for the social media posts. My archives are arranged by date so that a visitor can see what I see seasonally and weekly. See the photos here: <https://buckarooocountry.smugmug.com/Birds-and-Wildlife>

Goals*

This is the first phase of the Klamath Basin birding marketing campaign. It will focus on west coast facebook groups with about 24,000 members. The results of my first marketing push in January and the first two weeks of February this year resulted in a clear increase in visitors to the LKNWR and Tulelake refuges and Miller Island based on the number of cars I saw this year compared with the last two years during the same time period. There were typically been 10-15 cars lined up at any time of day at the main eagle viewing area each weekend at the height of my marketing efforts. There would typically be two-to five people in each car. And conversations I had with some indicated most were staying here at least two days, if not 3 or 4 days. Because visiting birding hotspots is free, these kinds of observations will be crucial for tracking results. This in addition to comments made on social media posts, visits to the Klamath Basin Birding.com website which are being very carefully tracked by the StatCounter service I subscribe to, and emails and private messages to me and my friends who are helping me provide informal guiding advice to visitors. Birders in these social media groups typically post the best of their photos on their favorite Facebook pages. I monitor these pages every day and can make screenshots to document visits here from both local and out of county people.

How many out of county visitors do you expect to attract? How will you track the number of out of county visitors versus the number of locals?

Team*

I am a professional photographer documenting the Great Basin buckaroos who keep the old traditions of horsemanship and stockmanship of the vaquero style. I have a world wide following on my Facebook pages of nearly 700,000. I have been published extensively including, in the last few months, a feature with the largest photo spread in the history of Range Magazine, and also an 11 page spread in Western Horseman magazine. I have been a professional graphic designer, web designer, advertising designer, marketing advisor, major event promoter, tourism marketing specialist since I started work for the Herald and News in 1972, and, after returning to college to finish my BS and MS degrees, starting my own business in 1990. I am a master user of Photoshop, Lightroom and other important tools of the marketing and advertising trade.

Though I was born and raised on a ranch near Bly, and though I have been taking photos professionally since 1972, until I was able to purchase the long lens needed to photograph wildlife two and a half years ago, I had no idea how thrilling it is to photograph birds and wildlife in the Klamath Basin. Now I visit the refuges three or four times a week and, to date, have taken well over 200,000 photos. I am eager to share the bounty of this region with other bird and wildlife lovers. The best of these photos combined with my social media expertise have already resulted in increasing tourism here. I am self-funding my travels to birding hotspots, but am asking for funding to promote Klamath Basin Birding on Facebook which, because I am self-employed, I can't afford to do on my own. I like doing work that not only keeps a roof over my head and my cats fed, but that also does good things for the community.

Describe your organization/project management team. How are these individuals qualified to lead this project?

Experience*

I am a marketing and advertising professional with work experience dating back to 1972 when I worked for the Herald and News. I also have a masters degree in part in communication which included a heavy component in marketing. I am a professional graphic and web designer, social media expert, major event marketing expert, major project fund raiser, and a professional photographer with nearly 700,000 followers on Facebook from all over the planet.

My tourism and event marketing experience includes:

* Three years of work marketing nationally and internationally for the largest "city slicker" guest ranch of its time, Spanish Springs Ranch

- The development and editing of a regional tourism marketing book about Oregon's Outback
- More than a decade's work promoting my uncles Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary in South Dakota to the point where it is a sustainable non-profit today
- Web sites and marketing for local resort and tourism attractions like Collier Park, Lonesome Duck and Yamsi Fly Fishing
- Two years of experience and the creator of the marketing plan for the Great Basin Visitor Association which produced high visitor counts, several highly successful community events, the move to the current location of county tourism services, and created the environment needed for a successful campaign to increase the hotel/motel tax rate.
- Worked with the Klamath-Lake-Modoc-Siskiyou Outdoor Recreation Working Group to create the first Klamathbirdingtrails.com website and the first Klamath Birding Trails brochure promoting 47 birding hotspots in the Basin.
- Created a major Klamath Basin tourism website covering every possible all season visitor opportunity we have available in the region. Paid out of my own pocket for it to remain online for several years.
- Co-founder and marketing director of the Western States Ranch Rodeo Association which now has members and over 100 events a year in 13 western states and Canada
- Major marketing partner of the Great Basin Buckaroo Gathering in Ogden Utah
- Publisher of The Mirror Magazine for 32 issues that featured positive stories of people and places in Klamath, Lake, Siskiyou, Modoc, Harney, and Malheur counties
- Publisher, editor and fundraiser for more than a dozen "Bootstraps" magazines where I worked with local social service providers on messages that were inserted in the Herald and News meant to provide solutions for various social problems
- Designer of kiosk story boards for the Midland Visitor Center and Collier Park
- Designer of many books about the history of the region
- Publicist on major fund raising drives that resulted in nearly a million dollars for the purchase of the McLeod-Rutnic Collection of Klamath-Modoc artifacts and the construction of the Klamath Youth Development Center.
- Worked with hundreds of clients creating ads and advising them about their marketing plans including preparing ads and marketing flyers for the ad sales people for Western Horseman Magazine.
- Developed the first marketing piece for the Running Y Ranch and Resort. I got the job because the first RY manager was impressed with the Oregon Outback book I had just published. It was developed primarily for the call center staff who were unfamiliar with all the many attractions we have here. It was so successful that they were able to sell the first round of real estate offerings in less than a month.

Describe your team's experience in operating past or similar projects

County credit*

Social media flyers and the klamathbasinbirding.com website will credit Klamath County for its support.

How will you give credit to Klamath County for its support in your event or project?

Timeline*

Posting on social media will begin immediately. The level of funding will determine the length of the project as I will track time used and end the project when the hours I work multiplied by my professional hourly rate of \$75 use up the funding. Several social media posts can be made in a half hour or so every day which increases the value of the rate I charge. Each post drives traffic to my website www.klamathbasinbirding.com or to my photo archives which will be tracked by the professional StatCounter tracking service I have paid for.

Provide a timeline of your marketing efforts leading up to the event or project including out of county marketing.

Target Market*

The members of West Coast Facebook birding groups that total about 24,000 bird photographers and bird watchers. I especially am interested in marketing to a Bay area Meetup group that has about 5000 members. A small number (because of a major snowstorm that weekend) have visited already and their leader, at my suggestion, is making plans to bring a group up to see the grebes "running" the first weekend of May. I am providing my most exciting photos of the grebe's mating behavior to him for promoting this event. Eventually my goal is to raise enough funding to do a national marketing campaign that would reach the more than 6,000,000 birders that are members of over 70 Facebook birding groups. Birding and wildlife viewing is a multi-billion dollar industry and we should be a prime destination because we have nearly a million birds migrating thru the area each year. The average birder has an income of \$90,000, and travels an average 11 days a year to bird. Visitors to our region typically will stay at least two days or more.

Describe your target market/audience

Measurability*

I will be able to provide detailed statistics about who visited the Klamathbasinbirding.com website, where they live, how much time they spent on the site, what pages they looked at, whether they then contacted me privately by email or private message for more information about traveling here to see or photograph birds. I will also make a screenshot of every Facebook post I make including the comments and questions they have about visiting here or whether they have had prior positive (or negative) experiences here. I generally visit the refuges about four times a week so I will make note of how much visitor activity I observe. My subscription to the StatCounter service I use also includes a record of any clicks on the links I have included on Klamathbasinbirding.com as community resources or paid advertisers.

I attached the klamathbasinbirding.com stats to date to this project proposal that show how the numbers went up when I promoted and started going down after Winter Wings when I didn't promote.

How will you measure attendance in drawing out of county visitors to the project? Examples: Hotel Rate code, Ticket Sales, Trail Counts (be specific).

Sponsors*

The Klamath Basin Refuge and the Miller Island Refuge staff have indicated support for my work. I will use my fund raising and advertising skills to create a group of partners to include those that offer places to stay, tour guide services, places to eat, and places to shop while here. I will be offering advertising on my web site that will benefit from the traffic I drive to it. Every sponsor or advertiser can pay for various levels of live links, ad size, and videos.

List your potential sponsors and partners and how they contribute to the event or project.

Flexibility*

The funding request amount has been calculated using my professional hourly rate for social media marketing and graphic and web design services. I would track my time as I work on the project. Less funding would reduce the number of hours I could spend marketing birding in the Klamath Basin.

If your organization is not awarded full funding, how would you modify your plans?

Required supporting documents*

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***Proof of federal tax id (if one is issued, do not upload docs for SSN)
***Entity's W-9 form (omit SSN) ***Grant Budget - Use the grant budget template provided ***Support letters - All entities are required to obtain support from 3 businesses/organizations ***If your grant project involves signage of any kind, you are required to gather and submit letters from all required local, regional or state sign authorities involved demonstrating approval to place signage on their land/property during the timeframe of the grant ***Marketing type projects - If producing collateral you must describe your distribution plan, including budgeted costs ***If your grant project involves infrastructure development/construction you must include plan drawings and approval from permitting authorities if required locally

Insurance Requirements

Insurance Acord 25-S with County required minimums, Klamath County as additional insured, additional insured endorsement, proof of workers comp and auto coverage (if needed). If no employees or autos will be used for grant fulfillment, a document on letterhead stating no employees or autos will be used for grant fulfilment must be submitted.

Electronic Signature Agreement*

By checking the "I agree" box below, you agree and acknowledge that 1) your application will not be signed in the sense of a traditional paper document, 2) by signing in this alternate manner, you authorize your electronic signature to be valid and binding upon you to the same force and effect as a handwritten signature, and 3) you may still be required to provide a traditional signature at a later date.

I agree.

Electronic Signature*

Mary Williams Hyde