Mesa and its surrounding regional partners are globally recognized as the preeminent visitor destination in Arizona.

To promote Mesa and its neighboring partner communities as a premier business and leisure travel destination on behalf of our stakeholders.
Mesa is a dynamic city. The country’s 38th largest. And growing. Or should we say burgeoning? Mesa and the Greater East Valley are attracting leaders in technology, health care, aerospace and education. The arts community is critically acclaimed. Commitment to civic improvements and expansion is unparalleled and unwavering. Mesa is also a wonderland of natural and man-made wonders. The Superstition Mountains still hide the Lost Dutchman Gold Mine while our lakes float the boats of water lovers and fishermen from across the Valley. Tonto National Forest provides a cool escape. The Sonoran Desert is a majestic landscape. Golfers have some 40 courses to choose from.

Foodies can sample all manner of cuisine. Fashionistas can shop ‘til they drop. And lovers of America’s pastime can catch the Boys of Summer every Spring. Taken in total, Mesa and the East Valley provide a limitless array of things to see and do, from the cultural to the recreational, the active to the passive and the Old West to the New West.

MESA CITY LIMITLESS®
VISIT MESA STAFF

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
2015-2016

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Hilton Phoenix/Mesa

SCOTT APPLEMAN, Vice-Chairperson  
Rainbow Ryders

DEBBIE JOHNSON, Secretary  
Arizona Office of Tourism

DAVE WIER, Treasurer (Emeritus)  
Wells Fargo Bank

MARC GARCIA, President and CEO  
Visit Mesa
THE YEAR AHEAD

Visit Mesa will embark on our third year of branding Mesa and our surrounding regional partners as City Limitless®, an effort that continues to earn praise by our industry colleagues as a best practice for destination promotion. Visit Mesa began the fiscal year with yet another nod to our unique positioning of Mesa having earned the Outstanding Travel Website Web Award by Web Marketing Association in July. Clearly, our destination and its accompanying brand is getting noticed and we recognize that now is the time to evolve our approach and breathe additional life into the core attributes that were established three years ago. Throughout our marketing, including this Business Development Plan, you will see our creative team bring those five brand archetypes to the forefront for the consumer—Active Family / Fresh Foodie / Adventure Explorer / Culture Seeker / Sports Enthusiast. Our digital ads will highlight updated photography and fresh design applications that will appeal to a new customer— Millennials. Our vibrant placements will leap off laptops, mobile screens and the pages of print magazines, all pushing the consumer to learn more and begin planning their travel at VisitMesa.com.

As a direct result of our Two-Year Strategic Plan unveiled earlier this calendar year, our sales teams will collectively work to host clients as part of a fly-in program direct to our destination. We know that seeing is believing when it comes to selling Mesa and this tried-and-true tactic is the most authentic way to secure business. The expanded effort to host clients during special events also offers our sales directors an opportunity to build on their existing relationships with top prospects and personally showcase just how endless the opportunities are when choosing Mesa as their destination city.

Due to the limited access and construction that occurred in Downtown Mesa during Light Rail construction, Visit Mesa was unable to accurately portray the positive activity and vibrancy of our city’s core in our marketing materials when the City Limitless® brand was launched in 2013. Given the growing assets of downtown—new restaurants, shopping, pocket parks and an ever-expanding schedule of recurring events—Visit Mesa will take leadership on the creation of a destination video intended to celebrate the area as a hub of urban cool targeted directly to visitors. The new access to downtown and the potential for increased business growth in the area are also two key messages Visit Mesa will actively share with travel media and clients.
Perhaps the biggest impact you will see from our organization in the year ahead is our increased level of advocacy on behalf of the Mesa visitor industry. It is my personal goal to educate our stakeholders about the value of visitors and the impact their spending has on our community. Visit Mesa will identify signature visitor developments, chiefly the proposed Youth & Amateur Sports Complex, and ensure our residents understand fully the benefits of such new developments. Our recent Destination Product Assessment from Radcliffe & Associates clearly stated the immediate need for Visit Mesa to champion additional sources of visitor revenue and I’m proud to note that our Board of Directors is in full agreement. One of the first courses of action this fiscal year will be to hire a third-party economist to identify all possible revenue streams and impacts that may be generated by the complex. Updates will be shared throughout the year on this effort.

As advocates for visitor activity, Visit Mesa must serve as the change agent in this regard and we urge your support as we call for a unified Mesa Visitor Industry. Over the course of the next year, you will see our hospitality community come together as part of our partner outreach programs and my staff will speak often about how ‘Visitors Mean Business’ and share more about the role of a DMO and what it means to you.

We boast a bright future ahead and Visit Mesa will continue to elevate our presence and destination messaging in all market segments and grow our resources along with our city and surrounding destination.

Marc J. Garcia
President and CEO
Visit Mesa
Visit Mesa’s National Group Sales efforts will be markedly enhanced in 2015-2016 with an emphasis on attracting Association and Corporate groups as well as Government and Religious groups. National Sales will again maximize our established partnership with HelmsBriscoe and participate in select opportunities as well as conduct regional presentations for HelmsBriscoe associates in our feeder cities. In addition, National Sales will continue to utilize the EmpowerMINT database to pre-qualify planners as we target them for site visits to Mesa City Limitless®.

OBJECTIVES

» Increase leads sourced and qualified by Visit Mesa for Mesa hotels and signature meeting and event venues.

» Create a greater awareness of the distinct meeting and event space throughout Mesa by attending industry conferences featuring one-on-one appointments with meeting professionals.

» Tailor all prospecting efforts to groups and conferences that command 100 - 250 peak room nights for our hotels and event venues.

» Host local meeting planners and create customized familiarization tours to introduce them to City Limitless®.

» Foster new connections with HelmsBriscoe, particularly in our feeder cities, to create more opportunities for business development and lead generation.

STRATEGIES

CLIENT FLY-IN PROGRAM
As part of the strategic planning process, Visit Mesa staff and stakeholders identified the immediate need to bring clients, namely meeting planners, into the marketplace to better showcase our visitor product and meeting opportunities. Visit Mesa’s Two-Year Strategic Plan set a baseline of flying in 40 clients during the first year. To meet that goal, National Sales will organize a series of individual FAM tours, including a larger Buyer Education Trip that will target up to 10 planners. The group FAM tour will take place in December 2015 and will highlight Mesa hotel meeting space and our key venues and attractions, with a special focus on Downtown Mesa and its accessibility. Additional group FAMs will be considered for the late spring/early summer shoulder season.

FOCUS: TARGETING THE PERFECT-SIZE GROUP FOR MESA
National Sales will develop incentive campaigns dedicated to clients with programs meeting the 100 - 250 peak room night parameter. This strategy will place Mesa in a competitive position to develop and enhance our booking opportunities. Mesa hotels and venues are always looking for new business opportunities to fill their properties, drive business and book need dates. The incentive campaign launches in September via e-mail marketing that will be distributed regularly promoting the value of our destination and its products.
LEAD GENERATION THROUGH NEW PLANNER RELATIONSHIPS & EXPOSURE

This year our National Sales team will be attending a number of high profile industry trade shows and target market sales missions to maximize our opportunity for one-on-one appointments with planners. Visit Mesa will target planners that focus on Association, Corporate, Government, Religious, and Education markets. We understand that building relationships through in-person appointments and immediate follow up is the root of driving business to our community. These industry trade shows and sales missions support our strategy to stay top of mind with our customers, be competitive with similar destinations, and book regular business within our Mesa hotels and event venues. In FY 2015-16, we will have a presence at the following trade shows: Connect MarketPlace, Small Market Meetings, Rejuvenate, Destinations Showcase, and lead missions in both the upper Midwest (Chicago as primary feeder) and Dallas-Fort Worth markets.

NEW: NATIONAL SALES MEETING PLANNER GUIDE

In a focused effort to showcase Mesa as a competitive destination with ample product offerings, the Visit Mesa National Sales team will develop our first digital Meeting Planner Guide, available as a downloadable brochure direct from VisitMesa.com. This new resource will be utilized by planners considering our destination for their groups and programs. Information and details pertinent to planner and group needs will be featured throughout, including hotel room capacity, meeting space square footage and other specifications, number of meeting rooms, services provided, as well as off-site event venue locations. Through our new Meeting Planner Guide, Visit Mesa will convey to planners that myriad possibilities exist for planning a unique Arizona meeting.

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![Meeting Planner Guide Cover](image)

**MEETING PLANNER GUIDE**

- [VisitMesa.com/meeting-planner]

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![Hotel Meeting Spaces Table](image)

**HOTEL MEETING SPACES**

- [VisitMesa.com/meeting-planner]

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![Venues Grid](image)

**VENUES**

- [VisitMesa.com/meeting-planner]
NATIONAL GROUP SALES TRAVEL SCHEDULE

2015

CONNECT MARKETPLACE

SMALL MARKET MEETINGS CONFERENCE

REJUVENATE CONFERENCE

2016

TEXAS SALES MISSION

DESTINATIONS SHOWCASE

CHICAGO & MIDWEST SALES MISSION

HELMSBRISCOE ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

AUGUST 27-29 \ PITTSBURGH, PA

SEPTEMBER 27-29 \ LITTLE ROCK, AR

NOVEMBER 2-5 \ DALLAS, TX

JANUARY \ DALLAS & HOUSTON, TX

FEBRUARY 8-10 \ WASHINGTON, D.C.

SPRING \ CHICAGO, IL

JUNE 8-10 \ PHOENIX, AZ

NATIONAL SALES

GOALS 2015\2016

22 BOOKINGS 6,000 TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS

visitmesa.com
The Travel Industry Sales department will build upon our relationships in the emerging overseas markets of the United Kingdom, Germany and China. FY 2015-16 represents our third year of fostering business connections in these markets and will also mark our first physical entry to the Chinese market. Continued efforts within the U.S. domestic leisure markets to attract visitors will also be a focus. Travel Industry Sales will continue to work with regional partners, Town of Queen Creek and Town of Gilbert, to showcase their visitor attractions and amenities to our valued clients. Visit Mesa will continue to reach consumers via select tour operator campaigns, seasonal promotions, and establish a new program, Club Visit Mesa, which features opaque rate pricing supporting our existing vacation packages on our booking engine.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Strengthen awareness within the Chinese market with a focused sales mission and appointments with key tour operators.
- Promote City Limitless® attributes including Cowboy and Western culture and Outdoor Adventure to the United Kingdom and German markets, along with increasing Mesa hotel product availability in various client produced tariffs and publications.
- Increase room night production through various tour product additions and client marketing campaigns.
  - Work with the Arizona Office of Tourism to attract more business for the region through collaborative trade events and familiarization tours.
  - Host product trainings throughout the year targeting tour operators and agencies with the highest propensity to sell through on Arizona product.
- Schedule and theme seasonal marketing outreach campaigns targeted to airline consumers with American Airlines Vacations, Allegiant Vacations and Southwest Vacations.
  - Increase consumer-direct bookings on the Visit Mesa booking engine through the development of vacation packaging and opaque rate offers.

**STRATEGIES**

**DIRECTING OUR CONSUMER TO BOOK WITH VISIT MESA**

Travel Industry Sales will concentrate heavily on the creation and promotion of consumer vacation packages with the support of our industry partners. These new product offerings will be showcased on Visit Mesa’s booking engine operated by Regatta Travel Solutions. Visit Mesa will be able to build hotel and attraction packages and display them prominently for direct consumer bookings. Visit Mesa will continue to grow package potential for seasonal and signature events including Queen Creek’s Roots N’ Boots Rodeo, Country Thunder, select festivals and more. These inspired vacation packages will offer substantial value to the consumer with Mesa hotels and area attractions. Select marketing campaigns will have direct click-thrus and call-to-action messaging that directs consumers to book online at VisitMesa.com.
INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION: CHINA GETS FIRST VISIT FROM MESA CITY LIMITLESS®

Visit Mesa will be conducting its first-ever China Sales Mission. Produced by East/West Marketing Corp, this mission will establish relationships with the top-producing Chinese tour operators and wholesalers. Officials from the Town of Queen Creek will participate on the sales mission in order to gain more exposure for our regional partners and their attractions. Visit Mesa will also produce a product training video—in Mandarin—highlighting the unique attributes of Mesa, the region and Arizona. The video will be showcased during presentations and appointments and was produced in collaboration with Arizona China and Travel Tours.

During the mission, Chinese clients will be introduced to our newest ambassador—Mesa, our mascot lizard. The mascot is prominently featured in the video and will be showcased during our scheduled trainings to connect our destination to a character unique to our location. The lizard’s color tones identify with the vast Chinese population and consumer market—his red body and golden belly are a symbol of the Chinese national colors. According to the current government interpretation of the Chinese flag, the red background symbolizes the revolution and the golden colors were applied to “radiate” on the flag’s background. Another unique feature of our mascot is the lizard’s bright green eyes which is the color that most Chinese nationals associate with American eye color. The mascot will also have a role in our social media efforts in the Chinese market—which will continue on after laying incredible ground work last fiscal year. To help expand upon the success of our 250,000 followers on China’s popular social media site, Weibo, the lizard will be spending the week with Visit Mesa’s Essentially America sweepstakes winner when they visit our city in October 2015. Visit Mesa staff will also conduct photo opportunities with our mascot throughout the upcoming mission.

PRODUCT TRAININGS & SALES MISSIONS

Travel Industry Sales will conduct several sales missions and attend tradeshows throughout the year. Our annual sales and product training mission to Las Vegas will take place at Allegiant Travel Company. In addition, mission participants will also conduct product manager meetings in and around the Las Vegas area. Included this year will be a product training and sales call mission to Los Angeles in Spring 2016. Los Angeles is home to a large number of receptive operators and our visit will shed more awareness on the growing hotel product and attractions in and surrounding Mesa.

In November, Visit Mesa will return to the United Kingdom and bring partners to build upon the efforts already made in this market. British Airways Holidays, which offers the only direct overseas flight to Phoenix, will be enhancing their Mesa hotel product and provide additional options to UK visitors and British Airways Employees. A broader selection of hotels close to Mesa’s outdoor adventure experiences will be part the new offerings. Additional efforts will include outreach in Germany with travel agent and reservation staff trainings and product manager appointments. FTI Touristik, one of Germany’s leading tour operators, will feature three Mesa hotels in their 2015 tariff, an increase over the previous year’s offerings.

Visit Mesa’s tradeshow presence will be secured at the American Bus Association Marketplace in January 2016 which will target domestic motor coach tour operators, as well as at the U.S. Travel IPW operators. Each of these trainings and tradeshow opportunities will generate leads for potential new business in Mesa.
TRAVEL INDUSTRY SALES TRAVEL SCHEDULE

2015 \

CHINA SALES & OUTREACH MISSION
Targeted client reach: 275

UNITED KINGDOM SALES MISSION
Targeted client reach: 50

LAS VEGAS SALES MISSION
RECEPTIVE MEETINGS & ALLEGIANT TRAINING
Targeted client reach: 100

2016 \

AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION MARKETPLACE
Targeted client reach: 40

ALLEGIANT VACATIONS TRAINING & TOUR OPERATOR SALES CALLS
Targeted client reach: 6

U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION’S IPW
Targeted client reach: 70

GERMANY SALES MISSION
Targeted client reach: 40

TRAVEL INDUSTRY SALES

GOALS
2015\2016 137 BOOKINGS 19,168 TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS

visitmesa.com
SPORTS

Visit Mesa’s Sports Sales department promotes Mesa hotels in addition to our destination’s collection of sports venues and attractions in order to attract new business for the region in the form of visitor-driven youth and amateur sports events, tournaments and championships. Sports Sales also provides superior service to existing events primarily for the purpose of business retention and enhancing the event and overall Mesa visitor experience. Both the marketing and hosting duties related to sports events and tournaments are designed to effectively position and brand Mesa as the nation’s premier sports event destination in the Southwest.

OBJECTIVES

» Drive visitor spending and long term incremental tax dollars by filling hotels, facilities, restaurants and attractions with sports-related business.

» Generate positive exposure and visibility for Mesa City Limitless® as well as its sports facilities by hosting memorable events that keep Mesa in attendees’ minds long after they leave.

» Continue to position Mesa City Limitless® as one of the nation’s premier locations for sporting events in the eyes of National Governing Bodies (NGB’s) and event rights holders.

» Continue to develop and strengthen relationships with local host partners and sport-specific organizations, with strong significance placed on the advocacy role related to the development of a new youth and amateur sports complex in Mesa.

STRATEGIES

CENTER OF NATIONAL AQUATICS SCENE

Visit Mesa has always placed a strong focus on championship caliber aquatic events throughout the year and this coming year may be the biggest yet. USA Synchro will bring more than 350 athletes and coaches from around the country to Mesa to compete in their U.S. Nationals at Skyline Aquatic Center. Mesa hosted a similar event in 2012 at Kino Aquatic Center and the 2016 event will target twice the attendees. At the conclusion of the event, the USA National Team will hold tryouts in Mesa as some of the best young synchronized swimmers in the country will be here competing the week prior to tryouts.

Visit Mesa is now entering our fourth year of hosting the USA Swimming Arena Pro Series where the best of the best in the world of swimming come to Mesa and compete over four days. With 2016 being an Olympic year, the event promises to be as competitive as it ever has been in the past with Olympians in the line-up. In addition, USA Water Polo 12U Nationals will take place this year in Mesa, making this year a trifecta of national aquatic events for our destination.
CSEE AND CONNECTSPORTS NATIONAL SPORTS ADVISORY BOARD
Director of Sports Sales Josh Todd recently earned his CSEE (Certified Sports Event Executive) certification and was nominated to the Collinson/ConnectSports Advisory Board. This highly-regarded board sets forth the plan for the annual ConnectSports Marketplace and USOC SportsLink annual tradeshows. Not only is the board responsible for overseeing these annual showcases, but the board will meet twice annually to discuss sports visitor industry best practices, ways to improve the industry, and identify and develop additional professional development opportunities. Todd’s role on the board also lends itself to his sales duties with a mix of sports planners also in this elite group.

A FUTURE FOR YOUTH SPORTS IN MESA: ADVOCATING FOR VISITOR DEVELOPMENT
Visit Mesa sponsored a feasibility study this year on a proposed 24-field, multi-purpose sports complex. Nations Group, a leading sports development agency, conducted a three-part survey to determine the impact such a facility could have here in Mesa. More than 400 events rights holders throughout North America were surveyed gauging their interest and feedback on the facility. Literally hundreds of events were identified as being a probable fit for the proposed complex. There is a glaring void for this type of offering in the East Valley and the projected economic impacts from the addition would be significant for sports tourism throughout the state. Nations Group also conducted land surveys of three pre-selected locations in Mesa and recommended development in the eastern part of the city, adjacent to the current Red Mountain Sports Complex. The location ensures the majority of room night production would be retained within the city boundaries and available land could spur additional related developments from hotels, restaurants and more. Nations Group projected that 109,000 rooms nights could be directly attributed to tournaments held at the facility if 50% of the events Mesa already bids for were to confirm events in the city. The estimated impacts from the outdoor events would reach $90 million and the indoor events would reach $7.8 million in direct visitor spending.

SPORTS COMPLEX FEATURES:
- 24 Multi-Purpose Fields
- Duel Stadium Concept with Clubhouses, Seating for 4,000+ per stadium
- Indoor Fieldhouse (110,000 square feet)
- Operations Center
- Parking, Restrooms & Amenities
- Destination Driver and ‘Point of Pride’ for Mesa
- Facility would bring over 100K visitors to Mesa every year

Projected Annual Economic Impact: $98 Million
SPORTS SALES TRAVEL SCHEDULE

2015 \

USOC SPORTSLINK & CONNECTSPORTS
COLORADO SALES MISSION
USAS CONVENTION (UNITED STATES AQUATIC SPORTS)
TEAMS CONFERENCE

2016 \

ABCA CONVENTION (AMERICAN BASEBALL)
WAC BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT/ANNUAL MEETING
NASC ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM
INDIANA SALES MISSION (NCAA)

AUGUST 25-30, 2015 \ PITTSBURGH, PA
SEPTEMBER 14-18, 2015 \ BOULDER, DENVER, FORT COLLINS, CO
SEPTEMBER 29-OCTOBER 2, 2015 \ KANSAS CITY, MO
NOVEMBER 10-13 \ LAS VEGAS, NV
JANUARY 7-10, 2016 \ NASHVILLE, TN
MARCH 10-13, 2016 \ LAS VEGAS, NV
APRIL 3-7, 2016 \ GRAND RAPIDS, MI
SPRING 2016 \ INDIANAPOLIS, IN

GOALS 2015\2016
82
BOOKINGS
26,894
TOTAL ROOM
NIGHTS
This is the year for evolving the City Limitless® brand and Visit Mesa will be creatively re-positioning our destination’s lifestyle attributes in layers, applying new graphics and smart, to-the-point messaging in our marketing placements. This new directive will appear in our digital banner ads, on our social media feeds as well as carry through in our printed materials promoting Mesa and our regional experiences. This fiscal year, Marketing will also identify unconventional ways for targeting new visitors. We will test the power of video and music in Germany, go after the lucrative millennial jetsetters, and invest in targeting Canadians - an on-going marketing effort that has always yielded great returns. Throughout our program of work, Visit Mesa will apply the new research received from our RUF Strategic Solutions analysis of our database accounts. Visit Mesa now has customer ‘clusters’ that are defined on a number of traits including demographics, lifestyle influences, and spending power.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Update Visit Mesa creative to show evolution of the brand and new applications of City Limitless®
- Manage Visit Mesa’s online marketing performance across all digital platforms.
- Identify unique applications for video to extend our presence in new and international markets.
- Invite industry partners participation in the Visit Mesa booking engine, sharing benefits from exclusive offers and travel packages.
- Closely monitor SEO performance and its effect on site navigation analysis on Visit Mesa website.

**STRATEGIES**

**GERMANY: TARGETING A NEW AUDIENCE WITH TELEVISION**

Visit Mesa will partner with 3Sixty-TV Travel Magazine and share our destination message via video to German consumers. This television campaign will take place in select McDonald’s locations throughout Germany which will air the three-minute Visit Mesa destination video in its entirety as part of their rotated programming. The video will air with volume, allowing consumers to hear Visit Mesa’s original compilation while watching the destination imagery. The Visit Mesa video and accompanying lyrics will be aired on televisions in 900 McDonald’s over a course of two months, with a guaranteed 160,000 impressions reached during that period. The in-restaurant television channels run during all three meal periods, with some locations offering 24-hour service.
MADDEN MEDIA & VISIT MESA: PUSHING OUT TARGETED MESSAGING TO NEW AUDIENCES

Visit Mesa will again enlist Madden Media, based in Tucson, to execute a multi-faceted digital marketing campaign targeting consumers across digital platforms and reaching them on some of the most popular web domains in the country including Facebook, Hulu, YouTube, Google and more. The eight-month campaign will target consumers via e-mail blast messaging and with a series of Facebook and Google Display Network digital ads delivered to consumers based on their key web search terms, profiles and online search habits. The campaign will feature four themed getaways to Mesa and capture consumer data through the online sweepstakes. Madden Media does additional targeting through VacationFun.com and displays feature destination banners across this vacation planning website. This year, Visit Mesa has selected compelling brand images that have the power to engage the potential traveler and boost campaign performance.
MARKETING OUR URBAN CHARMS TO MILLENNIALS

This year, a concentrated effort will take place to target Millennials, also known as Generation Y. This influential set of consumers, born in the 1980s and 90s, has surpassed Generation X in population and now represents the largest share of the American workforce. Visit Mesa has partnered with Millennials.com on a seven-month digital marketing campaign that targets consumers via their mobile use, and monitors their mobile behavior. This campaign will highlight images and messaging promoting Mesa and the region, specifically the culinary and nightlife lifestyle offerings. Criteria for receiving a targeted ad from Visit Mesa will depend on website searches and purchasing habits. The campaign with Millennials.com will also feature a proactive retargeting campaign that follows the consumer online. Refined messages on the destination will be shared in the retargeted ad placements featuring outdoor adventure and exclusive hotel rates. Millennials are a lucrative new market set for the visitor industry. According to Council of Economic Advisors, this generation represents the most diverse group in America and 61% of adult millennials have a college education; a travel study by Shullman Research Center showed that 69% of Millennials will travel within the U.S. and 77% of that same group travel for leisure.

MILLENNIALS: HITTING OUR TARGET

Digital ads will be served to targeted Millennial consumers in these geo-targets:

» California
» New Mexico
» Texas
» Utah
» Washington
» Arizona
» Indiana
» Iowa
» Oregon
» Illinois
» Minnesota

NATIVE NEIGHBORS

Visit Mesa will position both the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation and the Wild Horse Pass Development Authority as two unique destinations within City Limitless®. The visitor developments and attractions in these regions complement the Mesa visitor experience and the business enterprises within each Native American community will be woven into our Visit Mesa Partnership program. These Native-owned experiences will receive all the benefits of a Limitless® Partnership, featuring inclusion in e-mail marketing campaigns, targeted social media posts and organic videos, as well as receiving leads and referrals among other services. Group media tours will include the many one-of-a-kind adventures on client itineraries, and National Sales will feature the destinations as ideal off-site meeting locations. Visit Mesa will also prominently feature the communities online and in the 2016 Mesa Life Visitors Guide.
OH CANADA!

Visit Mesa will partner once again with My Passion Media, a leading Canadian trade and consumer marketing agency with solid reach across Canada. On behalf of our regional partner, Town of Gilbert, Visit Mesa has negotiated a series of marketing placements in both Canadian Traveller, the high-end, quarterly glossy consumer magazine with stimulating travel content, and Explore Magazine, Canada’s leading outdoor lifestyle publication that reaches outdoor enthusiasts across the country. A single advertisement placement in each magazine will reach more than 100,000 readers, with additional exposure offered through a series of “Where Next?” e-mail blasts as part of the expansive media buy. Visit Mesa’s targeted ads featuring Gilbert messaging will also be placed on additional online media sites popular in Canada including InfoBarrel.com, BC Outdoors, and Environment911.org to name a few. According to Statistics Canada, the United States welcomes more visitors from Canada than from any other country and in 2012 Arizona vacation spending by Canadians was $923 million. The Arizona Office of Tourism Canadian Visitation Profile notes that in 2013, Canadians spent an average 20.8 overnights in the state and that 91% stated their reason for travel was for leisure purposes.

VISIT MESA 2015-2016 MEDIA PLAN

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Visit Mesa Communications is responsible for sharing stories about Mesa’s newest product offerings and industry updates. In addition to targeting travel writers, this year Communications will begin to host influencers – social media personalities and bloggers, that have large followings and are known to impact travel-making decisions by consumers. As consumers continue to change their patterns about how they receive destination information, it’s critical for our Communications team to target new outlets and audiences for telling our story. Sharing Visit Mesa’s experiences both online and on social media channels is working as more writers tag and label their stories with marketing identifiers including hashtags and apply key words to their social posts. In addition, new messaging will be crafted to promote our expanding visitor attractions, as well as the new hotel product entering our market this fiscal year. Also this year, Communications will take on an expanded role with advocacy as our organization gets ready to present our community with a proposed strategy for the construction of a youth and amateur sports complex. Important data regarding the economic impact of this development will need to be carefully and strategically communicated to the Mesa resident. Visit Mesa Communications will also provide updated messaging as it relates to our regional partners in the Town of Gilbert and Town of Queen Creek, and craft new pitches for our Native American partners that have increased their support of Visit Mesa this year.

OBJECTIVES

» Identify and target social influencers, defined as those contacts with more than 25,000 followers on social media outlets, with the intent to have these new non-traditional media outlets host our travel content and endorse our destination.

» Establish the Visit Mesa Blog as the main storytelling resource for consumers, posting updated content weekly with proactive promotion of the Blog topics via Visit Mesa’s social media channels.

» Identify community leaders and travel writers and invite them to ‘takeover’ Visit Mesa’s social media feeds and promote their special events with an original and authentic message.

» Partner with Arizona DMOs to host group media tours to tell a larger destination story, with the added benefit of cost sharing, including partnerships with Visit Tucson, Visit Phoenix and the Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau.

» Create new approaches to promoting Mesa’s brand attributes and core experiences in order to remain relevant and provide new story ideas to travel media - including the launch of the Fresh Foodie Agritourism Trail, combining regional culinary travel product and creating a new consumer resource guide featuring these experiences.

STRATEGIES

SOCIAL SHARING: TARGETED TAKEOVERS OF VISIT MESA SOCIAL FEEDS

Starting in FY 2015-16, Visit Mesa select partners will have the opportunity to share their stories via Visit Mesa’s social media channels and blog through takeovers and guest posts. This new added value for partners provides Visit Mesa the opportunity to acquire fresh content, new followers and increased engagement through each brand’s unique voice and third-party credibility as to what makes Mesa a unique destination. This opportunity will also be provided to social media influencers and bloggers to share their favorite experiences in City Limitless®.
NEW PR PRODUCT: ROUTES TO ROOTS, THE CITY LIMITLESS® FRESH FOODIE TRAIL
This year, Visit Mesa will launch a public relations campaign to promote the new Fresh Foodie Trail™ to travel and lifestyle media. Collectively, Mesa and our surrounding region boasts a number of culinary themed attractions that are gaining in popularity. The Communications team will develop the Agritourism brochure that promotes these attractions to our visitors. In addition, the guide will feature local dining, farmers markets, food-inspired events, and a u-pick produce guide that ties the type of produce available at different times of the year. The Fresh Foodie Trail will be featured on three group media tours in October and November, all attended by the top travel and culinary media. In addition, Visit Mesa will partner with area farmers and Valleywide chefs as part of the Desert to Dish local movement promoting Arizona purveyors and products. This event will bring VIP guests staying in the Valley to our region on a four-day hosted culinary tour and culminate with an Arizona showcase event. The Fresh Foodie Trail will also have a large presence online at VisitMesa.com with a corresponding map to the dozen locations that have been called out for visitors.

CURATED CONTENT: VISIT MESA BLOG POSITIONED AS STORYTELLING RESOURCE
Visitors looking for fresh, new content about City Limitless™ will be pushed messaging on our weekly blog blog posts. Our blog will be repositioned and named the “It’s About MEsa” blog. Used as another tool to help visitors plan their trip, the blog provides a continued opportunity for brand development and storytelling, but also for our partners featured in those regular stories. Additionally, the blogging platform will increasingly be used as a tool to increase SEO results through inserting strategic keywords throughout blog copy so as to increase organic search engine results for users searching for information on Mesa. Communications will incorporate the collection of key words that were identified as “consumer triggers” and appeared high on our SEO reports into all blog posts going forward.

VISIT MESA PARTNERSHIP: NEW BENEFITS AND INCREASED EXPOSURE
At the start of FY 2015-16, Visit Mesa will elevate our Partnership program by devoting staff to this department. Partner Relations has merged with Communications and will be overseen by our Vice President of Communications, Michelle Streeter and Associate Manager, Partnership Sales Terrie Gardner. Partnership with Visit Mesa is tiered and visitor-related businesses in Mesa and our regional communities are invited to join our organization and receive the benefits of destination marketing. Enhanced benefits in the new fiscal year include extended social media exposure on Visit Mesa's growing news feeds: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram; in addition to organic social video clips. Visit Mesa Partnership will also feature our new Website Lifestyle Referral Program which shares consumer data collected from our online requests for information. Last year alone, Visit Mesa shared 29,000 referrals with Mesa and surrounding businesses. New features include push messaging through Visit Mesa’s Travel App on behalf of partners, and new listing opportunities within our promotional materials and on our new Visitors Center kiosk.
2016 MESA LIFE VISITORS GUIDE
Quantity: 35,000

As part of Visit Mesa’s brand evolution, the Mesa Life Visitors Guide will prominently feature new section dividers that key in on our targeted visitor archetypes. This move away from the “less” positioning of the past will move Visit Mesa toward highlighting the characteristics of our core visitors, an effort that was first introduced to consumers as part of our rebranding efforts when we identified the following core sets: Active Family, Fresh Foodie, Adventure Explorer, Sports Enthusiast, Culture Seeker. Each section will have corresponding editorial content related to the archetype, with new stories featuring our partners and advertisers throughout the guide. Digital copies will be available for direct download at VisitMesa.com, and a digital copy of the guide will be provided to every media guest hosted in City Limitless® over the next year.
COMMUNICATIONS TRAVEL SCHEDULE

2015 \ NEW YORK MEDIA MISSION
Partner: Visit Phoenix
AUGUST 18-21, 2015 \ NEW YORK CITY, NY

U.S. TRAVEL’S ESTO CONFERENCE
AUGUST 22 – 25, 2015 \ PORTLAND, OR

COLORADO MEDIA MISSION
Partner: Visit Phoenix
SEPTEMBER 22-24, 2015 \ DENVER, CO

TRAVEL CLASSICS WEST MEDIA CONFERENCE & ARIZONA MEDIA MARKETPLACE
Partner: Arizona Office of Tourism
OCTOBER 7 – 10, 2015 \ VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

TORONTO MEDIA MISSION & ARIZONA MEDIA MARKETPLACE
Partner: Arizona Office of Tourism
NOVEMBER 17 – 20, 2015 \ TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

CHICAGO MEDIA MARKETPLACE & MISSION
Partner: Visit Phoenix
DECEMBER 15 - 18, 2015 \ CHICAGO, IL

2016 \ TEXAS MEDIA MISSION
JANUARY 18 - 20, 2016 \ DALLAS-FORT WORTH, TX

PRSA TRAVEL & TOURISM CONFERENCE
MAY 22 – 25, 2016 \ HOUSTON, TX

GERMAN MEDIA MISSION
Partner: Arizona Office of Tourism
MAY 23 - 27, 2016 \ HAMBURG, MUNICH

U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION’S IPW MEDIA MARKETPLACE
JUNE 18 - 20, 2016 \ NEW ORLEANS, LA
VISITOR INDUSTRY ADVOCACY

Visit Mesa has equipped our Board of Directors and stakeholders with our Annual Advocacy Strategy, enabling them with the tools required to lobby for issues that are related to the health and growth of our visitor industry. It is imperative that our industry adopt a shared and consistent message that touts the direct economic benefits of visitation to the region and change the perception that tourism equates to low-paying jobs, traffic jams and longer waits at their local restaurant. Rather, visitors to Mesa contribute greatly to our quality of life. Visit Mesa is helping craft a unified narrative that communicates to our stakeholders that local and state governments are not sustainable without imported visitor dollars. The yield on visitor tax receipts is far more impressive than resident tax receipts, as visitors do not utilize most of the local, public services that governments and schools provide. Below are just some of the key points Visit Mesa will continue to share as part of our advocacy message:

- In 2014, the Arizona Travel Industry generated $1,150 in local, state and federal tax receipts (tax breaks) for each Arizona household. The average domestic, non-resident visitor to Arizona stays 4.3 nights; the average party size is 2.9 persons; the average spend is $767 per party/trip; the average household income is $75,160; and the average age is 45.
- The average overseas visitor stays 6.3 nights; the average party size is 3.6 persons; the average spend is $4,228 per party/trip; the average household income is $93,337; and the average age is 42.
- Direct travel-generated employment throughout the state was 171,500 in 2014.
- In fiscal year 2014-15, each dollar invested in Visit Mesa by the City of Mesa returned $17.83 in estimated future direct expenditures by meeting and event attendees booked during last fiscal year.

VISITORS CENTER

Visit Mesa is investing in an enhanced digital kiosk for our Visitors Center that will feature more interactive features tailored to the traveler. Owned by mobiManage, Visit Mesa’s new touchscreen kiosk will provide custom content through a series of new touch points. Their exclusive management system allows easy integration with Visit Mesa’s CMS (content management system) database ensuring all content is current with no chance for discrepancies. Additional features include ticketing, interactive mapping, weather, photo booth and guestbook sign-in, as well as Visit Mesa’s social media stream. Changes on our website will be updated seamlessly with our digital kiosk ensuring our Partners are receiving real-time updates to their listings, event posts, and more. The customizable kiosk will feature Visit Mesa brand colors and design, creating a new focal point and centerpiece in our Visitors Center lobby.

Visit Mesa digital kiosk - home screen