



Visit Sitka Operation Update

General Overview of Sitka Travel Industry – Outlook to 2021

The 2021 “Draft” cruise ship calendar has been released by Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska. The draft includes most of the ships on the schedule but does not include some of the smaller cruise companies. The first scheduled call will be on April 29 and the final call on October 10, 2021, with the major cruise lines planning full schedules for 2021.

There is still a lot of uncertainty around 2021 ferry travel. At this time, one AMH Ferry is scheduled to call in Sitka one day a week through April 2021. There are no schedules posted from May 2021 or later. Efforts continue to support reform of the system to create a sustainable marine highway system.

Based on current travel research, general sentiment is that Americans are planning to travel as soon as travel restrictions are lifted. This summer Sitka experienced an influx of visitors who stayed in local accommodations, went shopping and frequented local eateries. VS partners have shared that independent travelers are booking trips in 2021 as well as into 2022. Travelers appear to be searching out locations that are more remote, offer privacy and are considered “safe”, a combination Sitka can offer.

Marketing & Promotion Updates: 7/1-9/30

In August, Visit Sitka hosted a writer for ten days for the Sitka TV Show, an eight-episode anthology series planned to share unique stories of Sitka and be filmed in the community. There was a public meeting held for the community to meet the writer and hear more about the project. VS also provided on-site support for Driven Equation, an LA-based production company, to conduct a five-day film shoot in Sitka. Driven Equation worked with the VS team to produce five 1-minute videos about city attractions, food, outdoors and wildlife, culture, and conventions in Sitka. VS team members collaborated with local community members and Sitka businesses to highlight different aspects of our community. The completed videos will be released at the end of November. VS also ran a ½ page ad in the July/August issue of *Alaska* magazine which reaches an average 348,181 readers per issue.

In this quarter the Visit Sitka website visitsitka.org had 13,702 visits with 31,410 page-views and 13,702 unique visitors. The website also was expanded to include a Special Offers page for partners to showcase their latest deals. On average, Visit Sitka’s Instagram account increased by an average 264 followers per month (for a total of 7,856 at the end of September) and reached a total of 190,108 unique viewers. Visit Sitka’s Facebook page maintained a high level of engagement.

In September, the VS team hired and onboarded a Communications Specialist to help market Sitka, develop the VS leads program, and further build relationships with partners. The VS team also continued to develop their photo asset library through Canto, an online platform that will allow for

storage of digital assets, share assets with travel writers and allow asset uploads from photographers for programs such as the photo contest.

Visit Sitka (VS) renewed a contract with local marketing firm, Element Agency, to provide marketing support for 2020-2021. Element will assist with social media management as well as production of the 2021-22 Visit Sitka Official Visitors' Guide. In this quarter VS worked on content, layout and advertising sales for the 2021-22 guide. VS released the 2020 Summer Pocket Guide to highlight businesses operating through the summer 2020 to assist the independent travelers with activities, dining and shopping options.

Meeting & Conventions (M&E) Update: 7/1-9/30

In September, the Events & Conventions Development Fellow joined the VS team through the Alaska Fellows Program. The Fellow will work with VS to create a Meetings & Conventions collateral program to encourage event planners to bring their meetings and conventions to Sitka. This program will include a dedicated meeting planners guide, a new digital meeting guide area on visitsitka.org, a planners' toolkit, social media development and an education program.

Visitor Services Update: 7/1-9/30

In July, VS team members reopened the Visit Sitka Information Center (104 Lake St.) and made appropriate COVID-19 modifications for the building, including rearranging the Visitor Information Center, separating workstations, laminating pamphlets and brochures, requiring masks inside the building, and sign-in sheets for contact tracing. VS distributed Visit Sitka Magazines by mail, locally and throughout the state including distribution racks at Westmark Sitka Hotel, Totem Square Inn and 2 racks at the Airport.

Between July and September, VS team members directly interacted with 279 guests from 28 states in addition to local Sitka community members. 18% of visitors were in-state travelers. Two VS volunteers provided 118 hours of additional support while VS team members provided telephone support services for visitors and locals looking for most up-to-date protocols. To accommodate distancing requirements for VS staff and the addition of an Alaska Fellow, VS added an additional phone line to field phone inquiries. Throughout the month of July and most of August, the VS team continued to supply biweekly COVID-19 updates through email.

VS leadership attended biweekly Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) COVID support meetings. They also attended the Southeast Conference Tourism Committee Meeting representing Sitka's tourism industry, and attended virtual events such as Southeast Conference Annual Meeting, Alaska Chamber Fall Forum, American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association Conference and ATIA Voice of the Membership pre-convention meetings.

Financial Update: FY2021- Q1

The Profit and Loss statement covers the first three quarters of the 2020 calendar year. The Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce utilized bookkeeping services from Balance Accounting Solutions. The Chamber operates on a calendar year with budgets and financials reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors.

Attachment: The Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

Visit Sitka Profit & Loss Statement, January 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020.

Income Update: 7/1-9/30

The Profit & Loss Statement reflects income from the CBS Contract in the amount of \$375,150. This amount reflects \$125,050 per quarter for three quarters of FY20. The Sitka Chamber raises revenues outside the contract through marketing partnerships and sales. Partners of Visit Sitka, which include local tourism businesses and non-profits contributed \$39,188 towards the marketing programs at up to this point in 2020.

Expense Updates: 7/1-9/30

In the expense portion of the report, you will see direct (marketing, promotion, staffing) and indirect (office and insurance) expenses. The overall spending to date is on-track with the budgeted amounts based on the funding allocated and once the obligated funding is sent to the Chamber, the Profit & Loss statement reflects a \$58,000 variance with one quarter remaining in 2020's calendar year.

Respectfully,

Rachel Roy, Executive Director

Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce | Visit Sitka

Visit Sitka
Profit & Loss Statement
September 30, 2020

	Actuals YTD
REVENUE	
Income	
CBS contract revenue	\$ 375,150
Total Income	\$ 375,150
Direct Expense	
Planner Printing	\$ 17,695
Planner Graphic Design	\$ 21,886
Planner Photo Usage	\$ 750
Fundraising Expense	\$ -
Salaries	\$ 137,307
Special events expense	\$ -
Advertising	\$ 96,754
Alaska Co-op Marketing	\$ -
Website/Digital Media	\$ 911
Webpage (2018 Brand Voice)	\$ 276
Postage & freight (Planner)	\$ 12,113
Office Technology	\$ 5,575
Rent	\$ 18,900
Leasehold improvements	\$ 2,681
Payroll tax expense	\$ 11,734
Professional Development/Training	\$ 1,559
Promotion: Cruise	\$ 12,535
Promotion: Conventions	\$ 16,913
Promotion: Tourism	\$ 26,376
Travel Writers & FAM Tours	\$ 23,460
Travel/Training	\$ -
Membership/Volunteer Events	\$ 915
Membership/Volunteer Training: CVS	\$ 86
Total Direct Expenses	\$ 408,425
Indirect Expenses	
Utilities	\$ 2,924
Insurance: Liability	\$ 2,357
Insurance: worker's comp	\$ 985
Bank online fees	\$ 1,575
Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 2,945
Accounting Services	\$ 2,886
Professional Services	\$ 318
Office supplies	\$ 3,951
Office Equipment	\$ -
Telephone & internet	\$ 7,146
Misc Expense	\$ -
Total Indirect Expenses	\$ 25,087
Total Expenses	\$ 433,513
TOTAL NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$ (58,363)