

Strategic Considerations: Coronavirus Content

Here are some best practices for use in
the COVID-19 / coronavirus outbreak.

UPDATED: MARCH 13, 2020



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These guidelines were developed in a collaborative spirit as California's travel industry navigates the pandemic.



TONE

Honesty is essential—the worst thing we can do during this outbreak is pretend that everything is fine. It's not. This is a global pandemic, and thousands have died because of it. We must remember that at all times, even as the crisis begins to lessen.

Panic is not helpful—the second worst thing we can do is create panic, as that can lead to irrational and negative behavior. A calm, authoritative tone will help consumers process the key information. Hyperbole is to be avoided at all times.

Avoid the hard sell—We are not trying to convince people to book a trip; we are trying to provide them the information they need to make an informed decision about booking a trip.

Focus on utility—consumers are hungry for trustworthy, actionable information that will help them with travel planning. Provide facts, provide links to reliable resources, and promise to keep them updated.

Take the long view—California is not going anywhere, and we'd like travelers to come here when they are good and ready. We should keep this long view in mind in all of our outreach.

Monitor coronavirus news closely and adjust accordingly—this is an evolving situation and audience perception to the crisis will change as the risks mount and decline. Also, date-stamping content will help protect against criticism of "tone deaf" content should the situation change drastically.

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AUDIENCES

Consider audiences in drive markets—many travelers will seek to avoid air travel in the weeks and months ahead. But road trippers in neighboring states may remain inclined to plan a road trip to California. Providing these travelers with the inspiration and information they need to embark on a road trip to the Golden State is a win-win.

Think about “Downshifters”—while many Americans are canceling overseas travel due to outbreak worries, they still have vacation days to use. We should endeavor to position California as a low-risk, high-value alternative to travel to Asia, Europe, and other destinations.

Avoid content geared toward high-risk segments—the coronavirus is proving most dangerous for elderly travelers and those with underlying health problems. We should be very sensitive to that during the content development process.

Reconsider content built around large, crowded events—many big events that draw big crowds have been postponed or canceled due to the contagiousness of the virus. Audiences are looking for alternatives to these sorts of events, and we should be ready with Plan B content.



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VISUALS

Showcase open spaces and natural beauty—California’s unparalleled scenic beauty projects a vibrant glow and reinforces its reputation as a healthy destination.

Emphasize open spaces in urban communities—gateways and other cities in California have done a great job creating open spaces within city limits, and we should celebrate this.

Seek out and emphasize solo travelers—Instagrammers love to post wide shots of themselves, alone, amid a beautiful setting. Amplifying these sorts of images will help convey that California features plenty of elbow room and all sorts of majestic scenery.

Celebrate mindfulness and wellness—anxiety and fear are side effects during this crisis—even for those who are not ill. By highlighting California’s leadership in the wellness space, we can remind travelers that they can find peace of mind here via travel.

Avoid imagery that showcases festivals or large crowds—for obvious reasons.

Avoid photos of empty planes, crowded airports, and surgical masks—while we do not want to ignore or soft-pedal the crisis, neither do we want to feed misperceptions or spark overreactions to it. We can make our points about legitimate coronavirus concerns via text rather than imagery.

Coronavirus Content Library

Existing articles available now and optimized for deployment during coronavirus outbreak

Road Trip: [San Francisco Bay Loop](#)

Road Trip: [Golden Chain Highway](#)

Road Trip: [Undiscovered Wine Regions](#)

Road Trip: [Volcanoes to the Sea](#)

Road Trip: [SoCal Stargazing Tour](#)

Road Trip: [Exploring Modoc County](#)

Road Trip: [Amazing Views](#)

Road Trip: [Wild North Coast](#)

[Discover 8 of California's Best-Kept Secrets](#)

[Lands End, San Francisco's Oceanfront Gem](#)

[5 Best Hikes Out of San Francisco](#)

[CA 101 Video: 5 Amazing Things San Francisco](#)

[The Presidio](#)

[Golden Gate Park](#)

[Discover McCloud, a Hidden Gem in the Shasta Cascade](#)

[10 Tips for Exploring the Pacific Crest Trail](#)

[Plan an Idyllic Idyllwild Getaway](#)

[Here's How to Explore L.A. Without a Car](#)

[5 Amazing Things to Do in Griffith Park](#)

[7 Road Trip-Friendly Restaurants that Embody the California Spirit](#)

[Ideas for a Solo Trip to Napa and Sonoma](#)

[Hit the Trail—With the Kids](#)

[Orange County's Best Beaches](#)

[Crystal Cove State Park](#)

[Cabrillo National Monument](#)

[San Diego's Best Rooftop Bars](#)

[5 Great Hikes in Temecula](#)

[5 Amazing Things to Do in Temecula](#)

[Beaches and Hikes Along the Mendocino Coast](#)

[How to Explore the Channel Islands](#)

[California Missions](#)

[Sierra's Big Bloom](#)

[Coastal Campgrounds](#)

[9 Amazing Alternatives to National Parks](#)

[California Detox Retreats](#)

[California Cheese Trail](#)

Coronavirus Content Library

Existing videos and podcasts available now and optimized for deployment during coronavirus outbreak

CA 101 video: [Shasta Cascade Road Trip](#)

CA 101 video: [Highway 395 Road Trip](#)

CA 101 video: [Santa Cruz 5 Amazing Things](#)

CA 101 video: [Mendocino County Road Trip](#)

CA 101 video : [Berkeley and Oakland 5 Amazing Things](#)

CA 101 video: [Santa Barbara 5 Amazing Things](#)

CA 101 video: [Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks](#)

CA 101 video: [San Diego County's Best Beaches](#)

Hidden Gems video: [Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands](#)

Hidden Gems video: [Off-Road Trails of Big Bear Lake](#)

CA Now Podcast: [Family Travel, Idyllwild, Wild North Coast](#)

CA Now Podcast: [Sonoma County's Hidden Gems](#)

CA Now Podcast: [Cowboy Culture, Highway One, Bikes and Hikes LA](#)

CA Now Podcast: [Road Trip—Searching for Stars](#)

CA Now Podcast: [Spas, National Monuments, Mission San Juan Capistrano](#)



Coronavirus Response — New Content

Content currently in development

Upcoming articles and podcasts will emphasize Harmony & Balance trip motivators, along with a special focus on the drive market and road trippers.

Podcast: California's Wide Open Spaces

We will interview a Mount Whitney tour operator, a Pinnacles National Park Ranger, and a tour guide at Lake Shasta Caverns to showcase three of California's most remote (and wonderful) attractions.

10 Dynamic Places to Find Solitude in California's Urban Centers

From Torrey Pines State Preserve in San Diego to the hiking trails of the Santa Monica Mountains in LA to the secret alcoves of San Francisco's Presidio, California's urban centers are blessed with beautiful open spaces that offer seclusion, nature, and a bit of solitude.

Road Trip—Northern Approach: Seattle to Northern California

We will inspire readers in the Seattle/Portland area to head south on I-5 to see the Redwoods and more in California, recommending stops en route to the Golden State as well as destinations within it.

Road Trip—The Loneliest Road: Salt Lake to Sacramento

We will inspire readers in the Salt Lake City area to head southwest along I-50 to see Lake Tahoe, Gold Country, and more within California, recommending stops en route to the Golden State as well as destinations within it.

Road Trip—Mountains to Sea: Denver to Santa Barbara

We will inspire readers in the Denver area to head to the coast in Santa Barbara, recommending stops en route to the Golden State as well as destinations within it.

Road Trip—Southern Deserts: Albuquerque to Death Valley

We will inspire readers in Arizona/New Mexico to head west to Death Valley National Park and Southern California, recommending stops en route to the Golden State as well as destinations within it.

7 Great Restorative Escapes in California

Destress, detox, and restore balance in your life with wellness retreats across the Golden State, including everything from healing sound baths to animal therapy.

Forest Bathing in California: A User's Guide

From the redwood groves of the North Coast to the eucalyptus stands in San Diego and everything in between, we will discuss the Japanese-led forest bathing phenomenon—and showcase the many different ways to experience it in the Golden State.

Experience Natural Immersion in California

Tying into the top 2020 wellness trend of “natural immersion,” this piece will focus on beautiful, under-the-radar parks, beaches, etc., in California where you can get away from it all and experience the healing power of nature. This will include a mix of urban and rural destinations, including Balboa Park, Malibu, Del Norte Coast Redwoods, Donner Memorial State Park, and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

10 Amazing Solo Retreats in California

Get away from it all, and get away from everybody, at these gorgeous and secluded camping/glamping spots. The organizing principle here is cozy cabins and beautiful camping spots away from big cities, including Emerald Forest Cabins, Mendocino Grove, and Elk Meadow Cabins.

Coronavirus Response — New Content



Get Off the Grid in California's Terrific Tiny Towns

This article highlights remote towns great for avoiding crowds, resetting, and recharging. The focus here would be on little towns with a “get off the grid” appeal that also offer opportunities to eat and shop locally. Possible locations include McCloud, Ojai, Nevada City, Philo, Sebastopol, etc.

Is Your California Event Canceled Because of Coronavirus?

We will create a centralized, ongoing post to report on postponements and cancellations for events in California and update it daily with the latest information. We will offer alternative trip ideas near the affected regions.

BottleRock Napa Valley Alternative Itinerary

If the May 22–24 music and culinary festival is canceled, we will be ready with a fantastic wine country itinerary to encourage ticketholders to come to the region regardless.

Comic-Con Alternative Itinerary

If the July 23–26 pop culture event is canceled due to coronavirus, we will have a San Diego itinerary ready for badge holders who are looking for a plan B.

→ We want to hear ideas from your region too. To submit ideas, please use the consumer content submission tool at industry.visitcalifornia.com.

Coronavirus Content Calendar: March 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 Coachella, Stagecoach Postponed	12 7 Great Restorative Escapes in California	13	14
15	16 Road Trip: Denver to Santa Barbara	17 10 Dynamic Places to Find Solitude	18	19	20 Forest Bathing in California: A User's Guide	21
22	23 10 Amazing Solo Retreats in California	24 Road Trip: SLC to Sacramento	25	26 Get Off the Grid in California's Terrific Tiny Towns	27 Experience Natural Immersion in California	28
29	30 Podcast: California's Wide-Open Spaces	31 Road Trip: Albuquerque to to Death Valley	APRIL-JUNE 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BottleRock Napa Valley Alternate Itinerary • Comic-Con Alternative Itinerary 			