



Agritourism Marketing Toolkit

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Why is Marketing my Agritourism Business Important?

- Maximizing profitability on the farm, ranch or agritourism operation
- Keep the family business and employ family members
- Enhance service to current visitors
- Great way to engage new customers
- Opportunity to educate the public about agriculture
- Reconnect travelers and locals to their food, land and rural life
- Preserve farmland in Oregon
- Maintain vital, thriving rural communities



Business Basics

If you need help accomplishing the business basics, learn more in the [Oregon Agri-Business Council Workbook](#)

Agritourism Business Basics

- Secure the permits & licenses required for your business through the state and county
- Connect with your local planning department or DLCD regional solution center [representative](#) around zoning and land use regulations
- Review your insurance needs. This is not the most fun part of starting a business but it is one of the most critical.
- Evaluate the capital & human resource investment requirements to successfully operate your venture
- Connect with your local Small Business Development Center to evaluate whether adding or starting an agritourism business is the right decision for you (find your closest center [here](#))
- Select the right business structure. The SBA “[Starting a Business](#)” page can help.



Tips for Successful Marketing



“Marketing is no longer about the stuff that you make,
but about the stories you tell.”

- Seth Godin

Marketing Basics

Tips for Successful Marketing

- Create an abbreviated way to describe your business (aka [elevator pitch](#))
- Research and analyze the potential market for your product and services
- Identify a target audience and figure out what they like
- Set marketing and financial goals to focus & evaluate your efforts
- Create a marketing budget that is realistic for your business income
- Create a checklist summarizing the tasks necessary to put your plan into action
- Seek out assistance or design visual images like a logo and brand that is consistent and cohesive

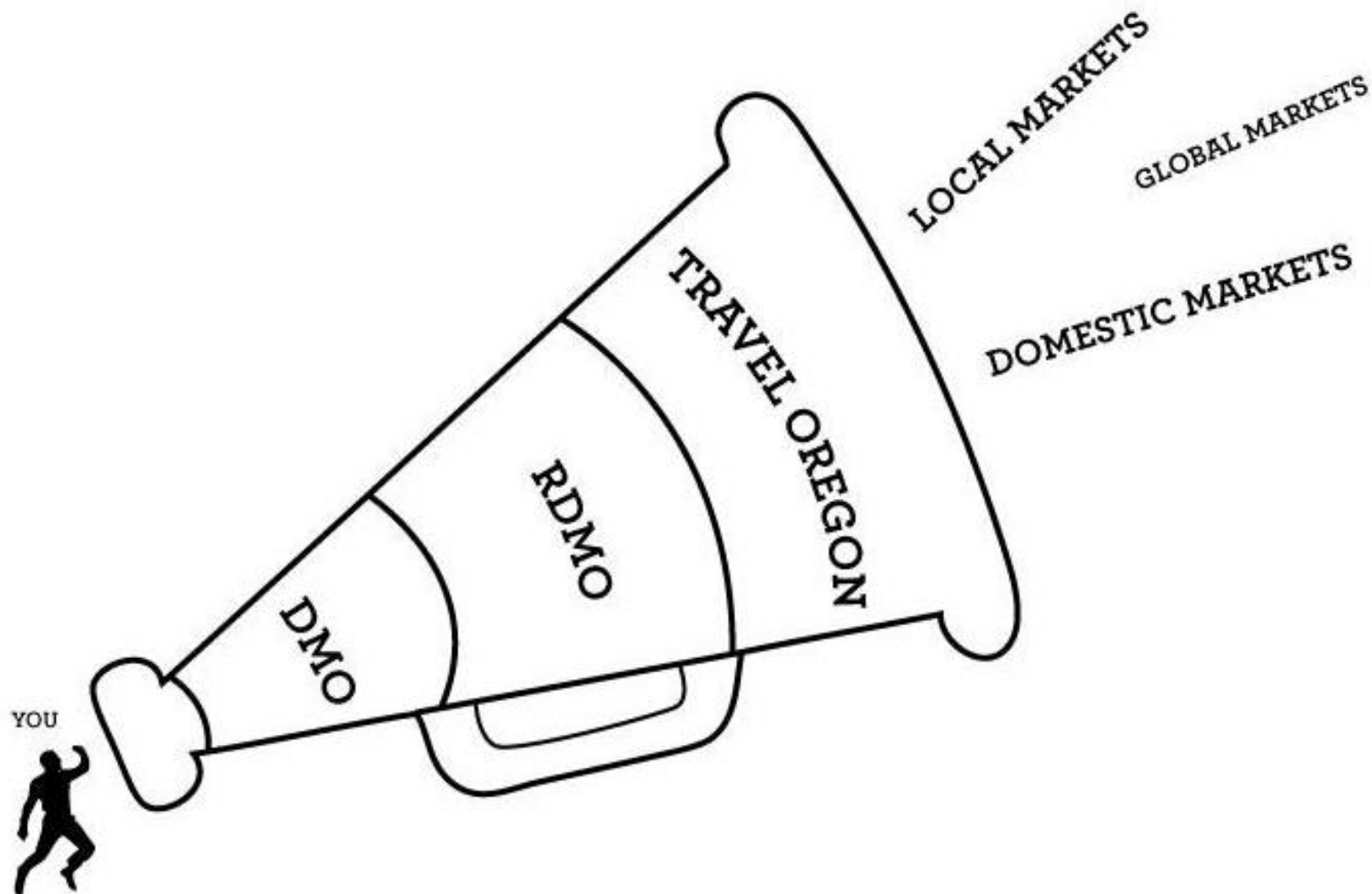


Tourism Marketing in Oregon

Who does what to marketing Oregon as a Destination? It's important to understand the different roles each of us play in visitor marketing.

- **Travel Oregon**
 - Inspires people to choose Oregon for a vacation
 - Provide high quality trip planning information statewide
- **Regional and Local Destination Marketing Organizations**
 - Motivate/inspire people to choose YOUR region of Oregon
- **Business and Attractions**
 - Get people to choose YOUR business in YOUR destination





TOURISM MARKETING MEGAPHONE



Tourism Marketing

What can you do to plug in?

- Develop relationships with:
 - [Your local DMO](#)
 - [Your RDMO](#)
 - Travel Oregon
- Work with your DMO to ensure your attraction is listed on their site and TravelOregon.com
- Share, share, share YOUR stories – what new experiences are you creating? Share with DMO & RDMO
- Let your DMO know you are interested in hosting media familiarization tours
 - Attend a [‘Travel Oregon 101’](#)
 - Sign up for Travel Oregon’s Industry [eNewsletter](#)

A photograph of a man and a woman standing behind a bar. The woman, on the left, has dark hair tied back and is wearing a brown blazer over a yellow top. The man, on the right, has short brown hair and is wearing a white button-down shirt. Both are smiling and looking towards the right. The bar counter in front of them holds various items: a glass of beer, a blue water bottle, a bottle of hot sauce, a bottle of olive oil, and a container of black straws. In the background, shelves are stocked with various bottles of alcohol and glassware.

Crafting Your Message

Building a Connection

- Your story facilitates a connection between you and the visitor
- Make a connection between the interests of the visitor and your lifestyle and values
- The primary goal is not to provide information, but to provide meaning
- Providing accurate and balanced information is your responsibility as a host – starting from this base allows for mutual respect and facilitates communication



Role of Storytelling

- The primary goal of telling your story is to draw people in and connect
- Audiences must care before they can see value
- Use your knowledge and experience to help the travelers draw their own meaningful conclusions
- Choose stories that are relevant
 - Compelling stories connect people emotionally to a place, activity, or person they encounter
- Narrow down and present your story in a way that will draw interest and inspire people to do business with you



Organize Your Thoughts

- Theme statement – what is the core message you want the reader to absorb
- Throw your draft message down on paper – then pull out the concepts, phrases and words that best convey your message
- Create an outline of the items you want to share
- Watch your transitions, chronology, and flow
- Use complete sentences and paragraphs
 - Use consistent tense and point of view
 - Use this message in any publication, online media, presentation, or interaction



Use Your Unique Voice

- Your style is an asset
- Write like you speak – be genuine
- Filter – remember, once written and presented, what you have said cannot be easily retracted
- Be judicious with slang – using it only to strengthen your story. Avoid profanities.



Review & Edit

- Review your work; read it aloud
- Ask a peer to review what you have written (It's easy to miss a mistake when you've been working on a piece for a long time)
- Proof, proof, **proof again**
- If you're writing a press release for an update or event, check out this [sample draft](#).
- Share your story with interested travelers and locals – feel free to include a call to action such as “come visit, join our CSA, swing by for our Wednesday tour, join at our farm dinner, etc.”
 - When people are asked to help about something they care about, usually they go the extra mile to





Photography

Choosing Great Photography

- Photography should feel authentic and evoke a desire to visit, explore, learn more, etc.
- Use photography with a main focus or main object to attract the eye
- Select images with rich colors and an interesting composition to increase interest
- Stay consistent. Use the similar style of photography across all channels (e.g. don't use photos with filters in your eNewsletter but not on your website)
- When purchasing photos, try to think about all the potential use for the image so that you don't have to pay for the same image more than once
- Stay away from stock photography that looks too posed or unnatural as the viewer should feel like they're sharing in the moment



Hiring and Hosting a Photographer



Please review the following tips:

Prioritizing the Photo Asset Usage

Start by making a list of all the ways you will want to use photography: in social media, journalist requests, collateral pieces, newsletters, event invitations, etc. Be sure to think through a year of operations to consider seasonal promotions, what's happening on the farm, events, etc. Ideally, a photographer should be able to check off as many of your needs as possible in one session.

Build a Library of Photos

Capture photos that are generic enough that you can use them along with timely content. Landscape/scenery shots, close-ups of products, and people enjoying your experience are all good 'evergreen' content that can be used to illustrate a timely caption throughout the year. For example: "Check out the view from our deck at this weekend's open house!" with a scenery shot of a "Saving a spot for you!" showing two people in chairs by the fire enjoying your cider/cheese/product. Think aspirational – shots that will make people want to be there. If the photographer can be around during a big consumer day or event, that would be great too. Get people smiling, laughing, consuming, enjoying in all of the beautiful places on your property.



Customer Service

Guest Experience

- Make a positive impression
 - Be authentic
 - Be a good listener
 - Identify and anticipate needs
 - Guests should feel appreciated
 - Help guests understand your procedures
 - Appreciate the power of “yes”
 - Appreciate differences
 - Know how to apologize
- Give more than expected
 - Get regular feedback
 - Treat employees well
 - Need customer service training? Check out ORLA’s Guest Service Gold program



The Promise

- There's more to being a successful host or hostess than serving great food and providing a comfortable mattress.
- When you sell a product or service, you make a promise to your customer
- How you fulfill or exceed that promise determines how long you stay in business and impacts other businesses in your community and region

**The higher the ticket price, the greater the visitor's expectations*





First Impressions

It's about preparation and presentation

- Make a positive impression from the first thing they see, to the food and activities they enjoy
- Remember that you have a role in the visitor's vacation memories
- Your relationship with your customer actually begins with their first introduction to your business, whether through an advertisement, article, social media or website
- The impression develops as they contact you for reservations or more information
- Control the message at every step
- By the time they arrive, they have formed an opinion – not keep up the good work & fulfill the promise!

Curb Appeal

What will they see when arriving at your farm, ranch or business?

Who wouldn't want to stay at your farm or ranch stay, bed and breakfast or glamping location?

Take a fresh look at your surroundings and try and view them from the eyes of a visitor. You may have become jaded to what you see every day. Farms and ranches are busy places that are very hard to keep picked up and clean. If you have livestock, you know that challenge is even greater.

It would take more time and employees than most of us have to keep things in ship shape, but if you focus on keeping the areas directly around where visitors will stay or spend time neat and attractive, it will make a positive and lasting first impression.





Get Creative with “Collections”

Flowers and careful arrangements can turn old farm equipment into an attractive decorative item. Keep weeds controlled in areas visitors frequent. In addition to improving your curb appeal, removing old boards, tools, and equipment reduces the risk of injuries.



Take a look around and get creative. Can you repurpose farm equipment and implements into decorative items? Don't settle for a collection that is scattered in piles here and there. Collect it and arrange it decoratively. Things put in order look intentional. Looks are very important, but they aren't everything. There are many ways to make your business welcoming and friendly.

Adapting to the Land

- Clear the path and clean up the logical backdrop for your obvious photo subjects
- Postings on Instagram and Facebook are great ways to reach new customers.
- A little bit of clean-up and creating a great photo spot makes a big difference
- The two characters on the right are very photogenic, but the pen and fences didn't allow for a good pic.
- Make sure your favorite "heeler" doesn't try and herd the guests. We all love our cow dogs, but a nip on the back of the leg usually spells trouble.



Accessibility

Can people with limited mobility experience what you have to offer? Are there adaptations you can make that will allow more people to enjoy the pleasures of country life?

Consider:

- Smoother walking surfaces in lawn and barnyard
- Arrangement of furniture to accommodate wheelchairs
- Gates and doors that are wide and easy to open and close
- Ramps instead of or in addition to steps
- Level thresholds
- Grab bars in guest bathrooms
- Tables that accommodate people who are in wheelchairs
- Modified experiences for activities

For everyone's safety, look for and remove exposed nails, broken steps, protruding boards, and wires hidden in the grass.



Customer Service 101

Great Hospitality Starts with a Great Attitude



- Smile! In person, a genuine smile says, “You are welcome here!” When talking on the phone, a smile on your face can be heard in your voice.
- Every encounter is an opportunity to enhance the visitor’s experience
- Word-of-mouth referrals are the most effective marketing tool. Helping visitors have a quality experience makes it more likely that they will recommend others visit your business and Oregon.
- Arm yourself with knowledge - be the local expert visitors are seeking with insider recommendations
- Avoid using slang and keep gestures to a minimum = words and gestures have different meanings across different cultures.
- Keep conversations friendly and avoid the controversial when possible. Follow the guest’s lead in selecting topics.
- Go the extra mile for your tourism partners – they will do the same for you



Signage Best Practices

How Will They Find You?

Having The Right Roadway Signage Is Essential To Success

- Check with Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) to see if your business qualifies for a Tourist Oriented Directional (TOD) sign. OTE manages the blue travel signs and logo signs on the freeways and state highways.
www.ortravelexperience.com/for-businesses/sign-programs/
- Make sure the signs at the entrance to your farm or ranch include the name you are using for your tourism business
- Provide clear driving directions on your reservation confirmation letter or email and your brochure. Check Google Maps to see if the directions they provide are accurate and logical.
- Talk to your neighbors and businesses in town about what you are doing. They may be asked for directions and can also refer customers your way. Leave them a supply of business cards or rack cards to distribute & do the same for them.



How Will They Find You?

Entryway and On-site Signage

- When guests are on your property, they will benefit from signs and symbols that direct them to points of interest, inform of off-limits areas, highlight safety notices, and guide them back to the guest facilities
- Make sure your property is clearly marked with durable signage
- Inform guests about where and where not to park
- Keep it positive!
- When you have to post or state a warning, humor is fun, but make sure that visitors know that the risks are real.



A group of people, seen from behind, are walking along a dirt path that winds through a field of tall, green grass. The path is flanked by dense, low-lying green bushes in the foreground. In the background, there are several large, mature trees with green foliage, and the scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of late afternoon or early morning. The people are dressed in casual attire, including t-shirts, button-down shirts, and trousers. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and suggests a community event or a guided walk in a park or nature reserve.

Crafting Successful Events

Creating Successful Events

Consider the basics:

- Be sure to connect with your local regulatory and government agencies to see if there are event restrictions or rules in your community
- Check out this helpful, general event planning timeline for marketing and planning an event
- Decide on a theme for your event, festival or gathering then mesh the visitor's interests with the event offerings
- If this is your first time organizing event, consider reaching out to successful event operators statewide for guidance
- Consider a trial run or soft opening depending on your event type
- Make sure you have enough staff on hand to help cover that can talk about the history of the farm as well as act as a helping hand
- Have well-positioned signage that direct visitors to the right location
- Anticipate safety issues have precautions established
- Follow-up with participants to keep them engaged through communication – you wan to be able to invite them back again!



A photograph of two young girls sitting side-by-side on a wooden fence. They are both wearing cowboy hats and plaid shirts. The girl on the left is wearing a purple and yellow plaid shirt and a large silver belt buckle. The girl on the right is wearing a pink and white plaid shirt and a large silver belt buckle. They are both smiling at the camera. The background is a scenic view of a mountainous landscape with evergreen trees and a clear sky.

THANK YOU