



Final

**State of California  
California Exposition & State Fair  
1600 Exposition Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95815  
Tel: (916) 263-3010  
Fax: (916) 263-7903**

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** September 26, 2019

**To:** State Fair Board

**From:** Margaret Mohr, Deputy General Manager Marketing

**Subject:** California State Fair 2019 Staff Report

### Marketing Overview for the 2019 California State Fair

The 2019 California State Fair was full of first's this year. We launched the first-ever Food Festival and Food Competition, first-ever Bank of America Selfie Experience, first-ever Esports Gaming Tournament and first-ever Drone Light Show. As many new exhibits and items there were this year, we also brought back many favorites – SMUD Giving Monday, Youth Mariachi Festival, Sacramento Zoo and Fair Combo package, Goat Mountain, Silent Disco, Read to Ride program , Kids Free Day and \$2.00 Rides for All, Military & Veterans Appreciation Day, First Responder Appreciation Day, and Out at the Fair and more. The following report is a recap of some of the major highlights and events.

#### **The New California State Fair & Food Festival:**

The overall theme in 2019 was The California State Fair & Food Festival. A bright & bold new look for the Fair launched in June and carried through in all paid advertising, signage, and online graphics.



We announced the concert line-up in April and promoted the concerts on our marketing channels; however, we did not have a paid media buy in March or April for our concert series this year. Our marketing channels are email newsletters database 60,000, social media, website and our outdoor digital boards on the property. Concert sales were brisk with our loyalists. In our spring launch, we sold 2,887 reserved concert tickets for \$57,665 by May 21<sup>st</sup>. Staff also tried a new idea that would successfully drive attendance on Opening day of the Fair with a \$2.00 admission offer to our fans for one week in April and a \$7.00 Groupon deal for one month in June. Ticket sales were brisk earlier than usual for Opening Day and it

helped to increase attendance on Opening day. Otherwise, our advance ticket sales promotions included Costco, Groupon, Fun Pack, Season Pass, Blue Ribbon Pass, and a new 3-day Parking Pass special. The 3-day parking pass, which was \$30.00 for three daily parking, was successful with several hundred passes sold and the Sacramento Zoo Combo sold 1,124 tickets for combined revenue of \$21,868. The Sacramento Zoo Combo included admission into the Ca. State Fair and the Sacramento Zoo through December 2019.

## Overview of Marketing Highlights this Year

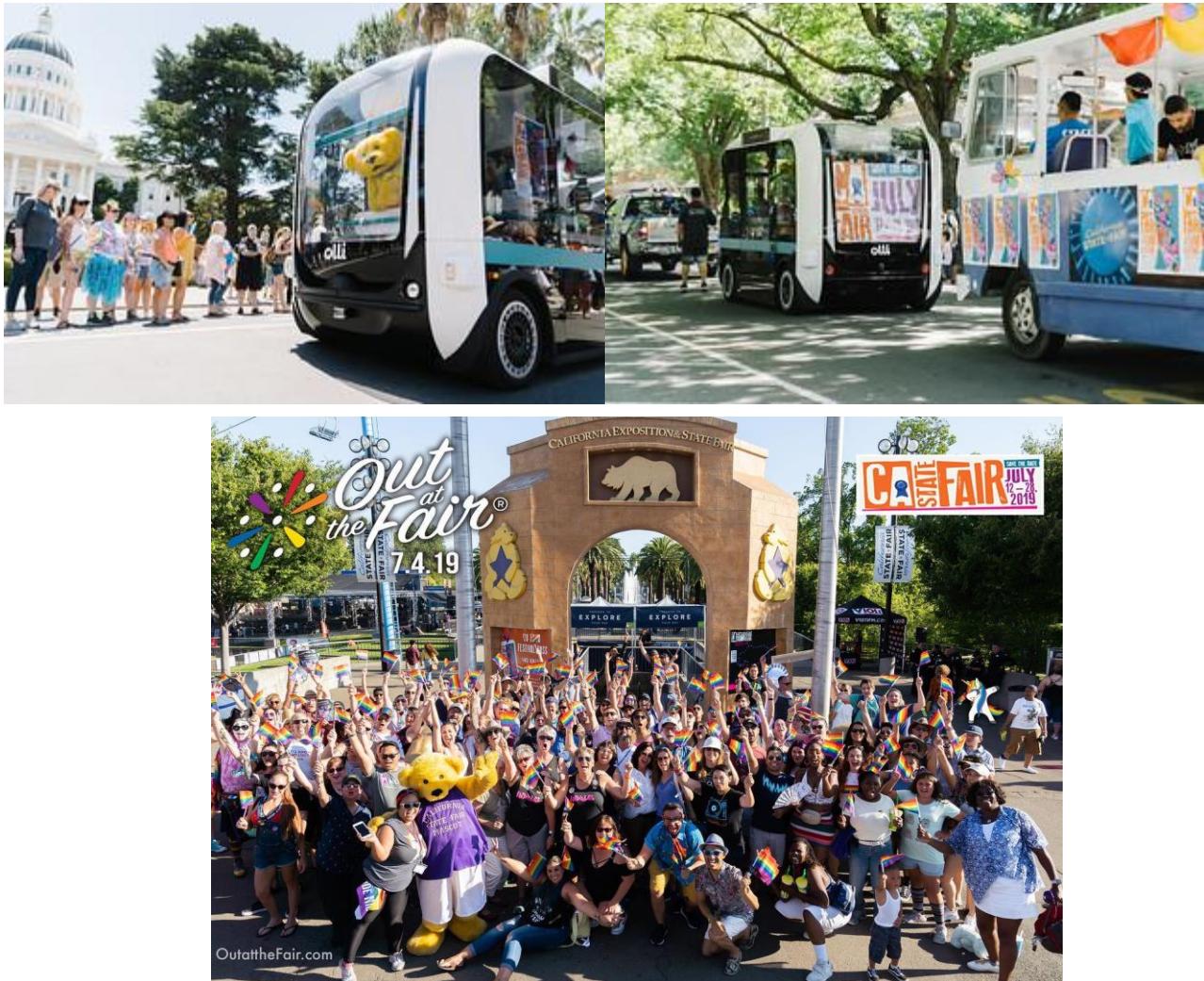
### **Food Festival and Competition:**

The Food Festival Pass and Competition was a huge success! We completely sold out of our Food Festival passes and generated over \$300,000 in food pass revenue. The Food Festival pass idea generated a nice buzz, media attention and social media chatter. The vendors who participated were extremely happy and would like to participate again next year. “*The Food Festival pass was popular every single day of the Fair,*” says Wille Madaus, owner of Country Fair Cinnamon Rolls, who’s Bacon & Pecan Cinnamon Roll won Best of Show in the Food Festival Competition. *We had our highest grossing Saturday ever and are up more than 20% this year.*” There were some operational challenges and a lot to learn from this first year effort, but overall staff is thrilled with the results.



### **Out at the Fair:**

Out at the Fair Day was on Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup> and it was our third year working with the Out at the Fair team. Sacramento Pride on June 29<sup>th</sup> launched our promotional efforts. New this year, Olli & the Trollie joined the parade along with Poppy and the team from OATF. We added new in-kind sponsorships with the Rainbow Pages, and the LGBTQ Center. Part of the sponsorship included a booth at the Festival, announcements on stage, at the parade and on social media and print. This year, we also stepped up the programming during the Fair with “New” Drag Queen Bingo, and the Glam Show on the Promenade stage.



Drag Queen Bingo sold out and is need of a bigger location next year. Out of the Fair only gets bigger every year and even with the cancellation of TLC, the day was extremely successful.

### **Esports Gaming Center and the Bear Cup Tournament:**

As far as impact, the new Esports Gaming Tournament was a huge success in the Gaming world! All but one of the paid tournaments were sold out, we maxed out our daily tournaments that seated 100 players for each tournament, the Smash Bros area was always filled and we registered over 3,000 players for future gaming tournaments.

Fair attendees interested to learn more could watch the tournaments, listen to the AMA panels (Ask Me Anything), participate in Lan Fest computer building by Intel or come see the retro gaming area. There were long lines for the big weekend professional players Meet and Greets for NRG Shock, Nevix, Smash Bros - Nairo, and Rocket League - Garrett G. Intel Lan Fest said they had the largest crowds at the Fair than any other event. NBA2K Kings Guard Meet & Greet did not see the same lines but the NBA2K team organizers were there and were very impressed by the tournament as a whole.

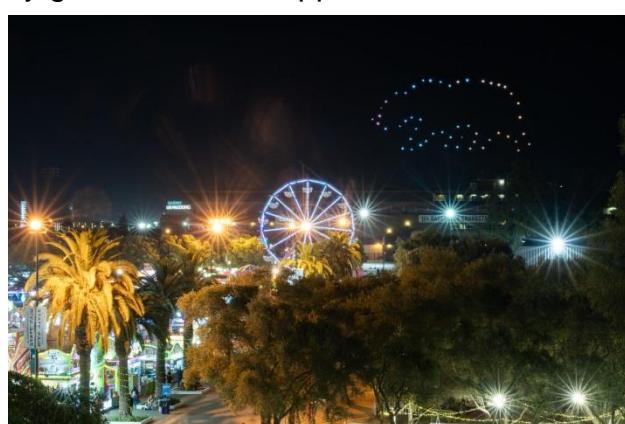
Another big successful part of the tournament is our partnership with Twitch. We secured a Twitch.TV channel just to stream our tournaments and panels and announce upcoming

tournaments. Twitch placed our channel on the front page giving us worldwide exposure. The second weekend of the Fair we hit over 300,000 views and by the end of the fair, we had over 702,042 views. We are now an Official Twitch Partner and the Twitch partnership may open up sponsorship opportunities in the future with Amazon Prime and get us other key sponsor contacts.



### Drone Light Show:

The Drone Light Show did happen with mixed reviews. Depending on where you were located on the grounds and the day you watched the show, depended on if you liked the Drone Show or not. We do know that audio and the number of drones in the sky play a big role in the success of the show. There were many learning experiences with this new technology effort for our team and staff was very greatful for the support of our Fireworks team.



## Youth Mariachi Competition:

Another proud moment for the California State Fair was the second annual Youth Mariachi Competition, now moved to the Golden One Stage. The stage was packed all day as everyone got to enjoy the sounds of Mariachi, even if just passing by and Mariachi Vargas concert was sold out. We received another grant for marketing to the Hispanic audience again this year from Visit Sacramento. The \$10,000 went to Univision to promote the competition and Mariachi Vargas Concert. Other Spanish marketing included Latino Times, Telemundo, Entravision and Lazer Broadcasting. All the Spanish language media partners promoted the concert and competition and used their social media platforms. Spanish and general market media was in full support on the day of the competition and came out in force.

## Bank of America Selfie Experience:

New this year, a Selife exhibit designed and produced by Stage 9. Bank of America sponsored the exhibit for \$50,000 as a first time Fair sponsor. It was a media darling, and social media hit of the Fair. Constant lines, social media pictures and news stories, kept the exhibit hopping throughout the Fair.



## Giving Monday/SMUD Cares at the Fair:

SMUD sponsored Giving Monday for the second year in a row with a \$5,000 increase in sponsorship. The Elk Grove Food Bank provided the volunteers and logistics to collect the food items at all three gates on both Monday's.

We received over 31,000 pounds of food this year up from the 28,000 last year.

## Community Outreach:

Community outreach begins in April every weekend prior to the Fair. The marketing team participates in 16 events over several months promoting the fair, signing the community up for our newsletter, distributing Read to Rides, the Best of California magazine and selling tickets. The list of attended events: Kids Day in Rancho Cordova, Raleyfield Brewfest in Sacramento, FISH Family Festival in Sacramento, Honey Festival in Woodland, Komen Race for the Cure in Sacramento, International Kids Festival in Land Park, Sac Pride in Sacramento, Front St. Brewfest in Sacramento, Sac Zoo in Sacramento, Farmers Markets in Sacramento, Summer Spectacular in Cameron Park, and Downtown Tuesday Nights in Roseville.

## **Read to Ride Promotions:**

New this year, Read to Ride in Russian and a new partnership with the Russian American Media. Also new, we increased our digital distribution to elementary schools in Roseville, San Juan and Twin Rivers. We also launched a month early in April and got the printed versions to Elk Grove in April. However, with all these improvements submissions were down from 1,968 in 2018 to 1,496 in 2019.

## **Sponsorships 2019**

Event Partnership had a successful Fair. *Winery of the Day* sponsorships was up substantially this year and we had several new sponsors like Bank of America. Although several sponsorships did not return this year, it is important to note with *Winery of the Day* sponsorship increased by \$69,000 this year and the trade value for the Esports Gaming Tournament was \$276,505.50.

Here are some of the revenue and sponsorship highlights:

### **TOTAL SPONSORSHIP REVENUE (Cash, Trade, Wine Ads, & Winery of the Day)**

- **\$2,958,997.36** – Fair Attendance 601,761
- 2019 sponsorship revenue **\$4.92 per Fair Guest!** (2018 **\$4.82 per Fair Guest**)

### **SPONSORSHIP CASH (not including California Wine Ads and Winery of the Day Revenue)**

- 2019 cash sponsorship sales \$2,102,393.15
- 2019 cash sponsorship revenue amounts to **\$3.49 per Fair Guest** (2018 **\$3.85 per Fair Guest**)

### **SPONSORSHIP TRADE**

- 2019 trade sponsorship sales \$597,893.15 (up \$270,670.44 from 2018)

### **TOTAL SPONSORSHIP CASH & TRADE (not including California Wine Ads and Winery of the Day Revenue)**

- 2019 cash and trade \$2,663,497.36

### **CALIFORNIA WINE ADS & WINERY OF THE DAY CASH**

- 2019 Winery of the Day/Wine Ads sales \$295,500.00 up \$69,000 over 2018

### **2019 HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Esports Center - Key Sponsors
  - ASUS – Provided PC's, Monitors, Peripherals
  - NRG/SF Shock/Kings Guard Gaming
  - Tech2U
  - Consolidated Communications
  - Twitch
    - **Total Esports Center Trade Value: \$276,505.50**
- Bank of America Selfie Experience (\$50,000 cash sponsorship)
  - Drove Social Media
  - New interactive, sponsored exhibit

- RAM Ride & Drive (\$80,000 - 8 Day Interactive Ride & Drive in the Horse Show and Rodeo Arena)
- Traffic Drivers to Horseracing
  - Splash Dogs – Opening weekend of horseracing, great traffic driver
  - Wienerschnitzel Wiener Nationals (Final weekend, promoting horseracing, huge media impact)
- SMUD sponsoring “SMUD Cares at the Fair – Giving Monday” (\$60,000 – up \$5,000)
  - Received 31,192 pounds of non-perishable food items for the Elk Grove Food Bank
- Winery of the Day/Wine Ads sales \$295,500.00 up \$69,000 over 2018
- Increased cash sponsorship investments SMUD (\$5,000), Chevron \$5,000, Eurocast Cookware \$8,000, Sprint \$2,500
- One (1) animated movie character mobile tours – Angry Birds Movie
- Nine (9) Mobile Tours, accounting for \$87,500
- Vitalant 959 lifesaving pints collected, just at the Cal Expo blood drive. Vitalant also purchased 3,999 tickets at \$10 each (ticket revenue in addition to sponsorships \$39,990.00)!

#### **NEW SPONSORS:**

- ASUS
- Bank of America
- Bluegreen
- Consolidated Communications
- Farm Credit
- IKEA
- Kings Guard Gaming
- NRG/San Francisco Shock
- RAM
- Tabu Ohana
- Tech2U

#### **Sponsors Not Returning or Reduced (\$271,613.66 cash, \$101,369 trade):**

- Advance Marketing International Inc. - \$13,000 (Reduced)
- California Endowment - \$7,500
- California Family Fitness - \$62,739 (Reduced Trade)
- Coca Cola - \$11,600 (Reduced)
- Deluvia, Inc. - \$8,000
- Department of Water Resources - \$19,000 (Reduced)
- Ford - \$27,500
- Golden 1 Credit Union - \$10,000 (Reduced)
- Groupon - \$31,263.66 (Reduced)
- GTN – 20,000 (Reduced)
- Kaiser Permanente - \$25,000 (Reduced)
- Sacramento Bee - \$6,630 (Reduced Trade)
- T-Mobile 34,000 (Reduced)
- Telemundo - \$32,000 (Reduced Trade)
- Thrivent Financial - \$10,000

- Wells Fargo - \$49,750

## Advertising

Our goal this year as our advertising budget continues to dwindle was to cut out print entirely and reduce the production costs of our radio, TV, and billboards in order to put as much money into paid media as possible. We also pushed *Added Value* with all our TV and radio partners that included ticket giveaways, special event promotions like Brewfest and added social media. We did receive grant money of \$15,000 from Visit Sacramento to promote the Esports Gaming Tournament and Mariachi Competition. Below is a summary of the paid media spend. The total impressions and added value analytics will be available by the board retreat in October in order to paint a complete picture of what we received for our paid campaign.

**2019 CSF Summary of Spend by Media**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>VEHICLE</b>	<b>PAID VALUE</b>	<b>PAID VALUE</b>
DIGITAL	\$ 167,505	\$ 165,249
OUTDOOR	\$ 214,350	\$ 213,249
PRINT		\$ 29,487
TV	\$ 256,520	\$ 264,199
RADIO	\$ 102,114	\$ 134,058
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 740,488</b>	<b>\$ 806,242</b>

## Earned Media and Media Partners Promotions:

### **Television Station** Promotions (added value):

Channel 13/Good Day

Concert Weather Forecasts

What's New at the Fair promotion the week prior to the Fair

Daily Rewind promotions on Good Day include Fair Dates and Video

River Cats In-Game read for the last weekend of the Fair

Native Advertising Campaign digital

Home page takeovers and banner rotation on website



ABC10

Mark S. Allen sleeps at the Fair Opening Weekend  
Charging Station – Cool Spots Promotions  
Drone Light Show Promotions  
Esports Gaming Promotions  
Swag Wagon at the Fair promotions

KCRA

Triple Crown promotions sponsored by California State Fair Horseracing Thurs – Sunday July 12<sup>th</sup> – July 28<sup>th</sup>. These spots included the Preakness, Belmont and Kentucky Derby.

Fox40

7 Day Countdown to Opening Day on Fox 40 Morning show  
2 Segments on Studio 40 Live

Univision

Read to Ride Promotions – distributed Spanish version at events and soccer tournaments  
Mariachi Vargas and Youth Mariachi Competition promotions

### Radio Promotions:

Entercom, iHeart, Bonneville, Lotus, Salem, Entravision radio station groups all heavily promoted the concerts and special events with ticket giveaways. Special promotions were done for Horseracing, Brewfest, Cornhole, Esports, and Silent Disco. 16- 20 different radio stations broadcast ‘live’ from the Ca. State Fair. We always had 2-3 radio stations per day on the grounds promoting the Fair.

**Earned Media** fills in a large part of our marketing and branding efforts.

The California State Fair has a strong relationship with the local broadcast stations and continues to build relationships in the community. Overall, as documented by Critical Mentions, the media monitoring program, the California State Fair received a total of 2,423,580 media impression on National TV, at a value of \$497,989. Local impressions were 1,847,57 at a value of \$473,237.

Many media outlets attended Media Day this year held the day before opening day of the Fair. The media team issued approximately 400 media credentials. Staff changed the criteria this year and asked for links or proof of past coverage of the California State Fair. This eliminated those individuals who have received credentials in the past but, don’t do legitimate coverage

for the Fair. We also required social media bloggers and influencers to have a minimum of 2,000 followers.

## **Social Media**

The Social media team (marketing interns and media directors) focused on Facebook and Instagram, this year. Snap Chat has a dwindling audience and efforts needed to be placed where it would count the most. Along with the in-house media team, staff hired 8 Moms and family influencers to visit the Fair and do outreach to their fan base. This was a new idea that generated a total of 210,512 impressions and 18,497 new engagements. Plus, our social media teams efforts on Instagram and Facebook helped grow our fan base and impressions prior to and during the Fair. Here are the statistics.

### **California State Fair Facebook:**

- 1.7 million people viewed our content
- Over 500k post engagements (Likes, Shares, Sends, Saves)
- 203,320 Followers on Facebook up from 202,000 in 2018
- 179,200 Video views – top views 62,000 Last Week to Enjoy the Fair video, 7,800 Cal Expo Police Meet & Greet, 7,400 How to Walk a Llama

### **On Instagram:**

The social media team really did a solid job with Instagram stories this year. Attendees commented that they were following our Instagram account since the stories were so interesting and visual. Golden 1 Credit Union commented that their team was watching and enjoying the posts. Here are the stats:

- Almost 40% audience growth, From 10k in May, to more than 13.7k on the last day of fair
- 542k accounts reached this last week with almost 1.5 million views.



Overall, attendance was up this year, and survey results indicated that there is positive momentum moving forward on some of our new exhibits and events. All survey data will be shared at the board retreat in October to help with the planning process for 2020.