



June 10, 2020

Alta Town Council
PO Box 8016
Alta, UT 84092

Dear Alta Town Council,

Thank you for your continued support of the Alta Chamber Visitors Bureau. ACVB's purpose is "to promote Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon as a world class, year-round, mountain resort destination; to enhance the visitor experience; and to function as a partnership between the public entity of the Town of Alta and the private business community within the canyon."

The past year has been a time of both growth and challenges for ACVB, as it has been for our community. A few highlights of ACVB's efforts during the 2019-2020 fiscal year and ski season include:

- Early season and mid-winter video campaigns
- Ski Utah ads: weekly promotion of an Alta business over six weeks in Ski Utah Snow Report emails, produced ~1500 pageviews for each advertiser and between 50-100 clicks on deals offered by the advertiser
- Targeted Open Snow email banner ads in February: delivered 600,000 impressions and 851 clicks for a click-through rate of 0.14%, which is twice the average click-through rate for travel and tourism advertising campaigns
- Google AdWords purchasing
- Content focused on storytelling and creating a sense of community, consistent with Alta Ski Area marketing themes
- Enhanced relationship with Visit Salt Lake including strategic consultation and a presentation at the annual ACVB December member event by the Ski City brand manager
- Stronger focus on understanding the impact of ACVB programs through digital ad and content metrics

Of course, COVID-19 had profound impacts on ACVB activities this winter. ACVB discontinued a few key marketing initiatives including video content production and the spring campaign that has been a staple of ACVB's marketing plan for several years. These setbacks compounded some other challenges we faced at ACVB this year:

- Sasha Patane left the position of ACVB Coordinator in early March
- ACVB member engagement is inconsistent
- ACVB Board recruitment has been increasingly difficult over the years and we are currently seeking a candidate to fill an open position
- While utilization of website and advertising metrics for the purpose of understanding return on investment has increased, data reveals ACVB marketing initiatives do not produce substantial visibility or translate consistently to bookings or other revenue generators
 - www.discoveralta.com booking widget has produced 23 bookings since 2017 with \$35,981 in revenue; and only 4 bookings between 7/1/2019 and 4/29/2020 for \$10,783
 - www.discoveralta.com experiences between 1% and 5% of the annual website traffic that www.alta.com experiences, in terms of pageviews, users, and lodging property referrals.

The ACVB Board tackled these issues at its annual retreat in early May and has since been in frequent discussions about the future of ACVB. The Board acknowledges that competing for market visibility with the resources at ACVB's disposal is a challenge for a part-time employee who is also responsible with a variety of other programs. Given this and in light of other challenges, the Board is contemplating a few key questions:

- Is running a conventional "destination marketing organization" feasible given the ACVB budget and unique characteristics of the Alta business community?
- Would resources devoted to ACVB have a stronger economic impact for Alta by working lower in the "marketing funnel" to target visitors who've already decided to come to Alta or who are already present? Rather than competing with entities with much larger *destination marketing* budgets, can ACVB focus on *enhancing the destination* for visitors who are already planning to come to Alta, or who are already present in Alta?
- Is a stand-alone nonprofit organization the proper vehicle for this work, or could an existing organization take on additional programming and assume a partnership with the Town of Alta to fund that programming?

Given current circumstances including the vacancy of the ACVB Coordinator position, uncertainty about the 2021 ski season, and the reduction in contributions to ACVB in FY 2021, now is a good time to consider updating the ACVB model. We would be grateful for the Town's input on the future of ACVB, so that we ensure ACVB resources provide a return on investment that benefits the community and enhances the Town of Alta.

Sincerely,

The Alta Chamber Visitors Bureau Board of Directors

Rosie O'Grady, Alta Lodge

Brandon Ott, Alta Ski Area

Chris Cawley, Town of Alta

Sara Gibbs, Alta Community Enrichment

Hannah Dorf, Snowpine Lodge

Dan Ketner, Alta Chalets

Connie Marshall, ex officio