



# WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

August 18, 2020

VISIT  
**SANTA BARBARA**  
THE AMERICAN RIVIERA®



# Visit Santa Barbara In-House PR Team



Karna Hughes  
Director of Public Relations



Anna Jacobson  
Public Relations Manager

# Today's Presenters – Lou Hammond Group



Terry Gallagher  
President



Carlyn Topkin  
Vice President

# About LHG – 4+ years with Visit Santa Barbara

## Founded in 1984

Then: 3 clients, 3 employees  
Now: Destination marketing leaders  
Serve key industries including:

- Travel/Hospitality
- Food & Beverage
- Economic Development
- Arts/Culture

## Why LHG?

36 years of experience  
Far-Reaching Media & Influencer Network  
Strategic & Measurable Results  
Tactical Research, Integrated Approach  
High Client & Staff Retention  
Premier Client Roster  
Independent, Family Owned & Operated  
PR World Network

## What We Do?

Public Relations  
Social Media  
Marketing Strategy

Creative Services  
Branding  
Digital Marketing

# Today's Agenda

- Current Media, Travel Trends
- Challenges
- Recovery Messaging
- Preparing for an Interview
- Ten Points to Know When Speaking with the Press



A wide-angle photograph of a large marina filled with numerous sailboats. The boats are docked in rows, with their masts creating a dense forest of vertical lines. In the foreground, several tall palm trees and other green foliage are visible, partially obscuring the view of the boats. The water is a deep blue, and in the background, a range of mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear sky. The text "Poll #1" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Poll #1

A scenic view of a church with two bell towers and a fountain in the foreground. The church is white with red accents and a red roof. The fountain is a multi-tiered stone structure with water flowing from it. The scene is set in a lush, green landscape with palm trees and other vegetation under a clear blue sky.

# Poll #1 Results

# Current Media, Travel Trends





# Media Trends

Media after COVID-19

## Overview

- Car is still the hottest mode of transportation!
- Multi-Family is the new Multi-Generational
  - Families forming travel pods when two+ have same social distancing philosophy.
- Recreating hotel experiences in room; virtual workout classes, to-go cocktail kits.
- Bleisure 2.0 – Hotels creating work/play packages, repurposing meeting + outdoor space.
- Safety, Safety, Safety



# Media Trends

Media after COVID-19

## Outlet Updates

- Major editorial changes at bon appetit, Elite Traveler, Fodor's Travel.
- LUXURY magazine expanding online content, biannual print editions.
- Creation of new outlets; Family Vacationist.



# Travel Trends

Consumers after COVID-19

## TRIP EXPERIENCES TRAVELING AMERICANS WILL PRIORITIZE THIS YEAR

AS OF AUGUST 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2020



SPENDING TIME WITH  
LOVED ONES  
(68.1%)



GETTING AWAY FROM  
CROWDS  
(57.6%)



ENJOYING  
NATURE  
(53.1%)



NEW PLACES I HAVEN'T  
VISITED BEFORE  
(37.8%)



EXCITEMENT  
AND ENERGY  
(36.6%)



BUDGET  
TRAVEL  
(33.4%)



STAYING CLOSE  
TO HOME  
(33.1%)



BUCKET LIST  
TRAVEL  
(27.8%)



LUXURY TRAVEL  
(24.4%)



VISITING CULTURAL  
INSTITUTIONS  
(24.1%)



VISITING THEME  
PARKS  
(22.1%)



VISITING LARGE  
CITIES  
(20.9%)



ATTENDING  
SPORTING EVENTS  
(17.8%)

Q: THINKING ABOUT YOUR TRAVEL DURING THE REST OF THE YEAR, WHAT TRAVEL EXPERIENCES WILL YOU PRIORITIZE? HOWEVER YOU PERSONALLY DEFINE EACH, USE THE SCALE PROVIDED TO INDICATE HOW YOU WILL PRIORITIZE THEM.

(Base: Wave 23 data. Respondents planning to travel for leisure later in 2020, 432 completed surveys.  
Data collected Aug 14-16, 2020)

Destination  Analysts

# Travel Trends

Consumers after COVID-19

## Overview

- Increasing expectation Americans will travel for holidays:
  - Labor Day (13%)
  - Thanksgiving (16%)
  - Christmas (20%)
- About 30% would take a flight in the next month, preferably direct flights.
- Three-quarters of Americans have at least tentative trip plans right now in 2021.
- 25% say they have no plans to travel through 2021.

An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely San Diego, featuring a large, multi-story hotel complex with white walls and red-tiled roofs. A canal winds through the hotel grounds. In the background, a sandy beach and the ocean are visible, along with a pier extending into the water. The word "Challenges" is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

# Challenges

# Challenges

- What is the best way to work with the local, national media to ensure we are portrayed most favorably?
- How can we convey we're a safe, welcoming destination and we're ready for visitors once again?
- How do we promote our destination while being sensitive to the global pandemic?

# Challenges

- **What is the best way to work with the local, national media to ensure we are portrayed most favorably?**
  - Honesty
  - Transparency
  - Be a resource: What's worked, what we've learned
  - Responsiveness
  - On-trend
  - Customer-first service
  - Commitment to do the right thing
  - Leverage relationship with VSB, ensuring organization has the latest on what your doing (new menus, hours, promotions)

# Challenges

- **How can we convey we're a safe, welcoming destination and we're ready for visitors once again?**
  - Share safety measure details
  - Provide value, special incentives, services
  - Ensure measures reflect/exceed CDC/industry standards
  - Emphasize commitment to customer/staff safety as priority one



# Challenges

- **How do we promote our destination while being sensitive to the global pandemic?**
  - Underscore economic impact – jobs, taxes paid, ripple effect
  - Illustrate how we adapt: virtual experiences, contact-less service, pop-up outdoor entertainment/dining
  - Hospitality businesses as good citizens: examples giving back to the community

# Recovery Messaging

An aerial photograph of a city, likely in a Mediterranean or Spanish style, featuring numerous buildings with red-tiled roofs and white walls. Palm trees are scattered throughout the scene. In the background, there are mountains under a clear blue sky. The text "Recovery Messaging" is overlaid in the center of the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

# Messaging

Delivering the right message to the right people

## ■ Messaging for:

- Guests
- Media
- Community

## ■ Messaging Tools

- Social Media
- Website
- E-Newsletters
- Flyers
- Op-Ed/Interviews



# Messaging

Delivering the right message to the right people

## Safety Messaging to Guests

- Your safety and wellbeing is the number one priority when you're coming to visit us.
- Plan ahead by checking our website or calling business for hours of operation, payment methods, and to make a reservation.
- Please stay home if you are not feeling well.
- Wear face coverings that conceal both your mouth and nose when inside or when you're not able to maintain six feet.

# Messaging

Delivering the right message to the right people

## Messaging for the Media, Community

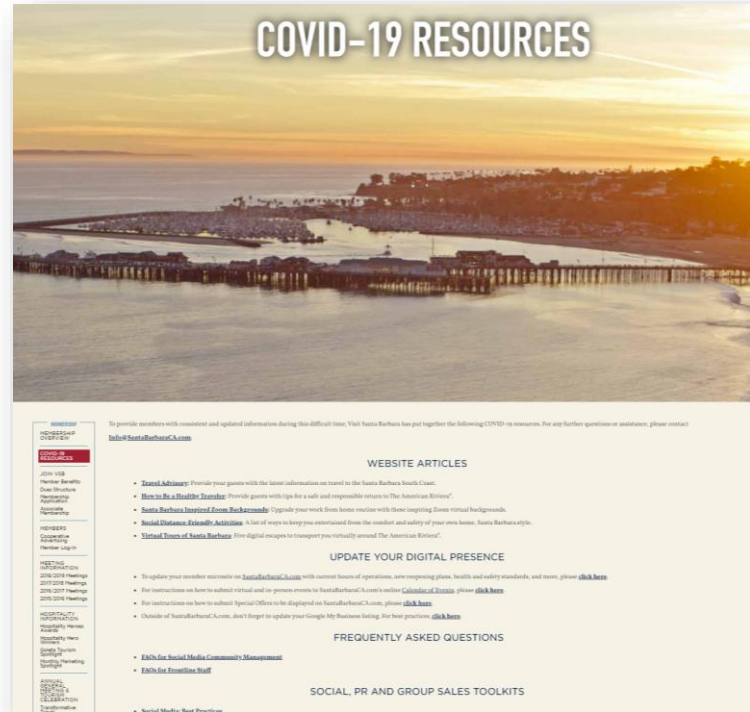
- We are encouraging visitors to act safely and responsibly. We're urging them to wear masks, utilize social distancing and practice best hygiene techniques. Remember, they want to stay healthy just like you.
- The economy – yours, mine, and ours – depends on bringing visitors back to our hotels, restaurants, bars and shops.
- Annual spending by travelers to the South Coast totals more than \$1.9 billion, supporting 13,000+ jobs, \$56 million+ in yearly tax revenue, so it's important that we continue to welcome healthy travelers.

# Messaging

Delivering the right message to the right people

## Visit Santa Barbara Toolkit

- Can be found on [SantaBarbaraCA.com](http://SantaBarbaraCA.com)
- FAQs, Webinars, Email Updates, Resources
- Toolkits also available for Group Sales, Social Media
- Available complimentary



A scenic view of a beach with palm trees and mountains in the background. The foreground shows a sandy beach and blue water. A row of tall palm trees stands in the middle ground. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains under a clear sky. A white building with a dome is visible on the right side.

# Preparing for the Interview

# Media 101

Preparing for the Interview


## HOW TO PREPARE

- Know their outlet/beat: read recent coverage (from outlet and reporter), Muck Rack
- Connect with reporter on social media
- Ask for questions in advance
- Rehearse snippets

### MUCK RACK

For PR Pros ▾ For Journalists

Introducing Trends: visualize news in real-time and discover top authors or outlets.



#### Jacqueline Gifford

✓ VERIFIED

New York

Editor in Chief, Meredith Corporation — Travel + Leisure

Beauty, Travel, U.S.

**As seen in:** Travel + Leisure, MSN Canada, MSN, Time Magazine, INSIDER, TODAY, Boston Herald, Food & Wine Magazine, Southern Living, Coastal Living, Departures Magazine

✉ Is this you? Contact us to edit this page

Editor in Chief @TravelLeisure. Mom of Bobby, wife to Rob, my travel buddies. Opinions are my own.

#### ARTICLES

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**Pilot and Explorer Kellee Edwards on Solo Travel, Meeting New People, and Seeing the World As a Black Woman**

By Jacqueline Gifford

travelandleisure.com — I first met Kellee Edwards three years ago at an event in New York City, where we were able to have frank conversations about gender, race, and navigating our planet. I listened to her, learned from her, and we stayed in touch, as both our careers took us to new and exciting places. As Travel + Leisure prepared to launch Let's Go Together, a podcast celebrating diversity in travel, I immediately thought of Kellee.

2 MONTHS AGO | f | in | t | % Open in Who Shared | Wrong byline? ▾

**A Note from T+L Editor-in-chief Jacqui Gifford: Why We'll Continue to Share Our Travel Stories**

By Jacqueline Gifford

travelandleisure.com — Today, Travel + Leisure sent its May Europe issue to press. In that issue, our editor in chief, Jacqui Gifford, included a letter which we would like to share with you now, knowing that the coronavirus pandemic is an evolving situation. Our hearts go out to every destination and every individual, worldwide, who has been impacted by the disease.

5 MONTHS AGO | f | in | t | % Open in Who Shared | Wrong byline? ▾



# Media 101

Preparing for the Interview

## HOW TO PREPARE

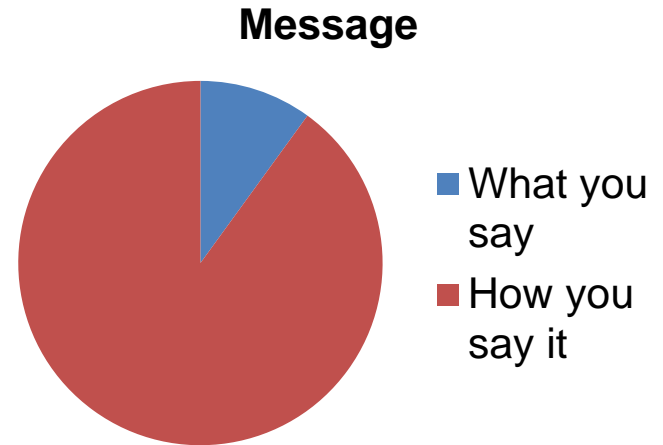
- Prepare for the medium
- Get comfortable with answering potential questions
- Always be prepared to answer the inevitable “anything else you want to mention that I didn’t ask?”



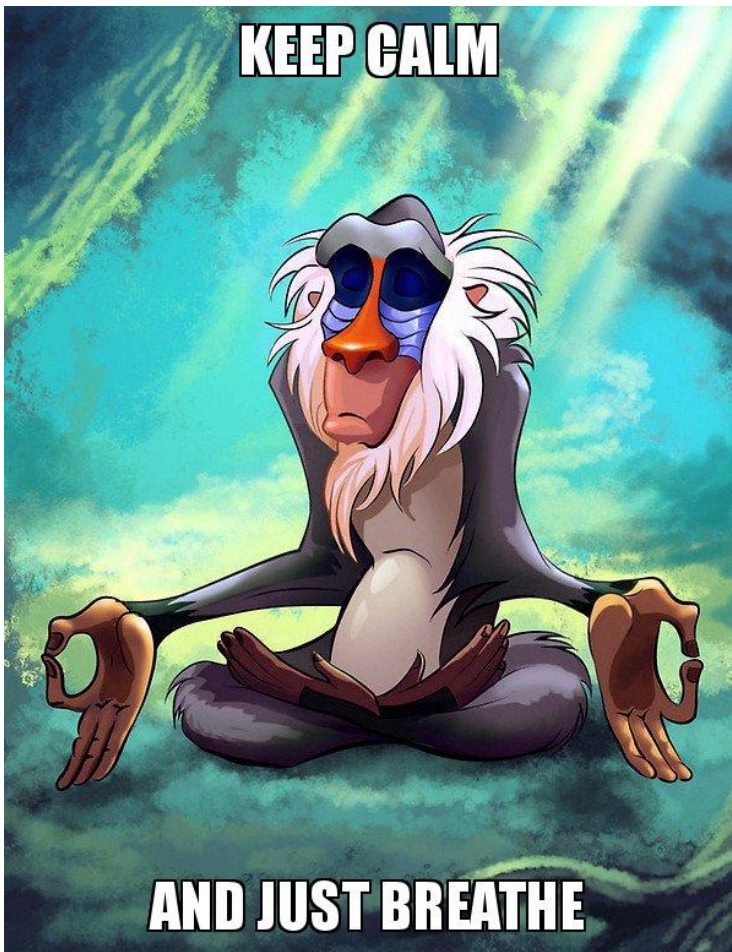
# Body Language

Preparing for the Interview

- Keep arms loose, don't clasp hands, fold
- Don't gesture often, be natural
- Avoid sympathetic nodding
- Make eye contact: eye shifting = lying
- Smile naturally as appropriate



**KEEP CALM**



**AND JUST BREATHE**

# Media 101

Preparing for the Interview

## Phrases/Words to Avoid

- We've become experts in crisis communications
- We'll never be able to recover
- Disaster
- Catastrophe
- Destroyed
- Overwhelming
- Resilient
- None of your business



# Media 101

Preparing for the Interview

## Medium Matters

- Telephone/Radio interview
  - Secure connection in quiet room, preferably not on speaker
  - Raise voice for inflection/avoid speaking in monotone
  - For radio/video: prepare notes, but not a script, in advance – reference as needed!



# Media 101

Preparing for the Interview

## Medium Matters

- Zoom/Broadcast Interviews
  - Dress in solid clothing but avoid red and black.
    - *Blue, pastels work well.*
  - Wear contacts vs. glasses if possible
- Body language
  - Sit up straight/keep feet on floor
  - If standing, keep one foot slightly in front of other
  - Avoid nodding or tapping
  - OK to use gestures to emphasize points



**Remember!**



Confidence comes  
from being prepared.

John Wooden



# Poll #2

A low-angle photograph of several tall palm trees against a sunset sky. The sky is a mix of soft pink, purple, and light blue, with wispy clouds. The palm trees are silhouetted against the bright sky, creating a strong vertical line. The text 'Poll #2' is centered in the middle of the image in a white, sans-serif font.



# Poll #2 Results

A scenic view of a coastline with a sandy beach, turquoise water, and green hills. The text "Ten Points to Know" is overlaid in the center.

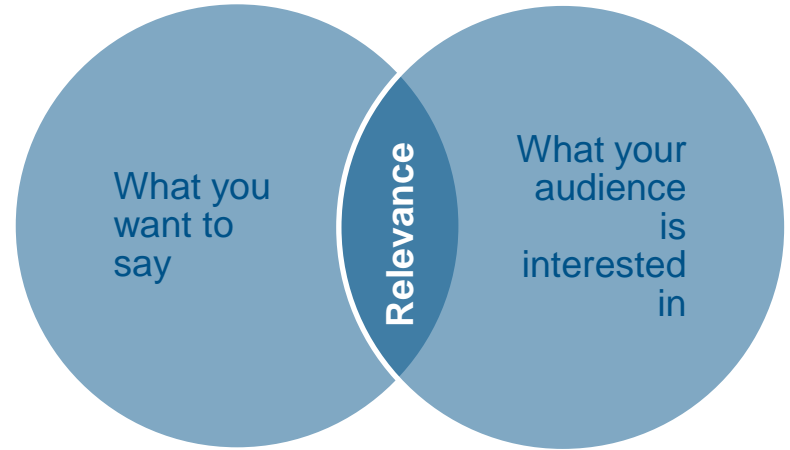
# Ten Points to Know

# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 1. The reporter is **NOT** your audience

- When speaking with a reporter, you are really conveying your messages, opinion, ideas, etc., to the reporter's audience.
- Think about the reporter's audience and how to frame your message to best reach them.

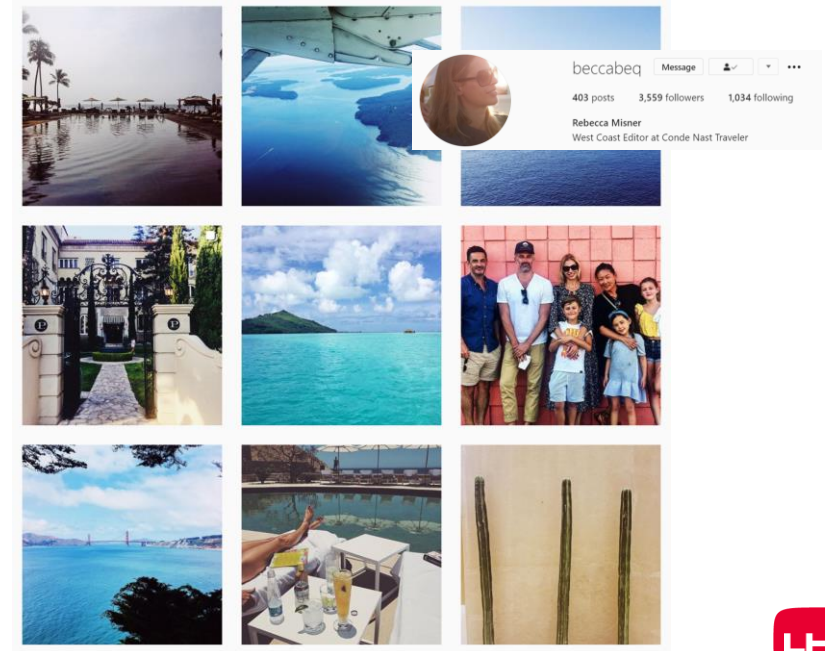


# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 2. Do establish rapport, but don't be overly casual

- Know the reporter, understand what they cover and how they've covered it.
- Be prepared to compliment them on their writing or broadcasting works.
- Be gracious – show your appreciation for his/her time.
- Review their social media profiles, identify any personal ways to connect i.e., college, pets, sports



# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 3. Clear answers work best

- Avoid industry jargon, acronyms and buzz words – provide your answer in simple, plain English as often as possible.
- Understand your audience – is it a regional publication, or someone from a travel or general news outlet – message may differ.
- OK to ask reporter's familiarity with Santa Barbara at the start of the interview.

~~Elucidate~~  
~~Streamline~~  
~~Demystify~~  
**Simplify**

# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 4. Key messages/points

- Limit your key messages to three. Anything beyond that starts to lose focus.
- Key messages should be communicated in 8–10-word sentences.
- It's perfectly fine to elaborate on key messages with proof points, filler, context, etc.
- Have passion and energy for your subject – if you don't, the journalist won't!



# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 5. Answer Concisely

- Allows the journalist space to ask follow-up questions.
- Have your elevator pitch ready in 20 seconds or less.
- Anticipate hard questions and practice the answers (Rude FAQs).



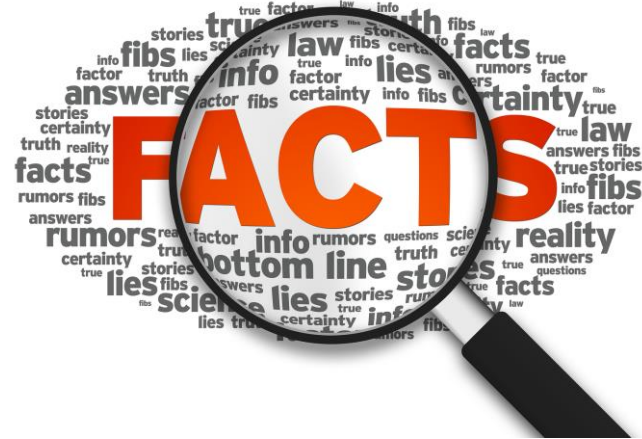


# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 6. Use Facts and Figures

- Helps speak to magnitude of what you're speaking to.
- Key facts, statistics help you sound informed and professional.
- Increased legitimacy.
- Be aware of what facts/numbers may be working against you; be prepared to address.
- Don't be tied to the numbers – avoid too much of a good thing.

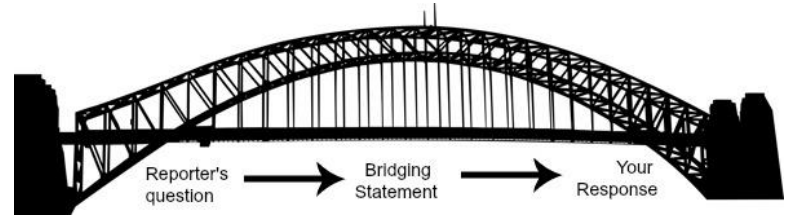


# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 7. Tell YOUR story

- The media interview is an opportunity to tell your story, your way. Remember, you are the expert.
- You don't have to just answer the questions asked of you – bridge to your message and flag the important points.



# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## *Bridge examples:*

*“I don’t know about that, but what I do know is...”*

*“What’s really important is...”*

*“That’s an interesting question, but it’s important to keep in mind...”*



# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 8. Be aware of the awkward silence

- Reporters use a technique where they will be silent for a few seconds, which usually creates an awkward pause in the conversation.
- Human nature compels us to fill the silence. Resist the temptation!



# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 9. “I don’t know” is a perfectly acceptable answer

- It’s impossible to know everything about everything, even in your field of expertise.
- Making up an answer is ALWAYS a bad idea.
- “I don’t know but I will try to find out” or “I’ll get back to you” is very different from “no comment.”



# Media 101

Ten Points You Need to Know When Speaking With the Press

## 10. There is no such thing as “off the record” Or “on background”

- MANY careers ended, lives ruined thinking something was off the record.
- Be aware of hot mikes; the interview is not over until you’re away from the reporter, video call has ended.
- Any time you get asked a question by the press, act as though you are on record – even if it’s just a friendly conversation over coffee or the camera isn’t on.





Thank You!