

# Travel Santa Ana's Big Win in the Mexican Market

Orange 142's smart strategy turned Santa Ana into a must-visit destination

Santa Ana is a vibrant and authentic city in Orange County, well worth a visit for anyone with a passion for art, food, historic architecture, music, and more. Established in 1889 as the county seat of Orange County, Santa Ana serves as the central hub for governance and administration.

**.21%**

CTR Display

**.76%**

In-need CTR

**64%**

VCR Instream Video

**4.84%**

Instream Video Clicks



## About Travel Santa Ana

Santa Ana boasts a rich Latino heritage reflected in its lively community events, diverse cuisine, and cultural celebrations like Fiestas Patrias. Santa Ana's thriving arts scene is showcased in events like the Downtown Santa Ana Artwalk, where local artists take center stage. It is also home to many historic landmarks, including the Old Orange County Courthouse and the Santora Arts Building, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 2021, Travel Santa Ana was formed as the city's official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). Its mission is to promote Santa Ana as a top destination for leisure and business travelers. The city attracts visitors for meetings, group events, social gatherings like weddings and reunions, sports tournaments, and youth travel. Travel Santa Ana also reaches international markets, particularly Mexico, to draw in visitors eager to explore Orange County.

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## The Challenge: Launching for the Ground Up

Launching a business from the ground up is never easy, and Wendy Haase-Roberts, Travel Santa Ana's first employee and current President and CEO, certainly had her hands full. "We were literally starting a destination marketing organization from the ground up. And when I say ground up, I mean payroll, all the operations, as well as creating the branding of a destination that's the second largest city in Orange County. It had never been promoted from a tourism platform before," she said.

The challenges were many. Although Orange County is a popular destination for global travelers, Santa Ana wasn't widely known as a travel destination. Branding campaigns are expensive, and the budget was relatively small. Travel Santa Ana needed to be strategic about who to target.

Mexico seemed like an ideal market, as the Santa Ana population is 76% Hispanic, but as a new organization with no experience in audience development, Travel Santa Ana didn't know which specific audiences to target, or the right places to reach them. "It was a bit like throwing spaghetti at the wall and hoping some of it would stick, because we were so new and inexperienced in promoting the destination," said Haase-Roberts.

But Travel Santa Ana also had a unique opportunity: Formed immediately after COVID-19, the DMO could build its business from the ground up, using all the knowledge gained from the pandemic. "While other DMOs had to pivot their operations to adapt post-COVID, we were coming out of the gate with fresh insights and strategies shaped by the experience of COVID," she said.

With a tight budget and significant needs, Haase-Roberts contacted a former and trusted colleague who recommended she talk to Orange 142, a digital media company that provides end-to-end media solutions and marketing services for destination marketing organizations like Travel Santa Ana. She had particular objectives she wanted Orange 142 to meet:

- » Increase brand awareness and recognition of Santa Ana
- » Attract Mexican tourists seeking diverse and memorable travel experiences
- » Drive visitation to Santa Ana's attractions, restaurants, and cultural events
- » Create a positive economic impact by boosting tourism and local businesses



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## The Solution: Performance Marketing

Thanks to our extensive experience in the Travel & Tourism sector, Orange 142 was ready to spring into action, providing a range of critical services to Travel Santa Ana:

### Custom KPIs to Measure Success

The first step is to determine how to measure success. Orange 142 and Travel Santa Ana agreed on the following KPIs:

- » Qualified traffic to the website
- » Website conversion (visitor guide requests/views, email sign-ups)
- » Engagement (CTR, VCR, time spent on site, reactions/comments/shares)
- » Reach
- » Hotel conversion (bookings and searches), with flight searches/bookings being secondary

### Digital Brand Awareness Campaign Targeting Mexico

“We knew the Mexico market would be important to us and wanted to generate awareness for our destination. So we asked Orange 142 to develop an efficient campaign to draw visitors and create that awareness.” said Haase-Roberts.

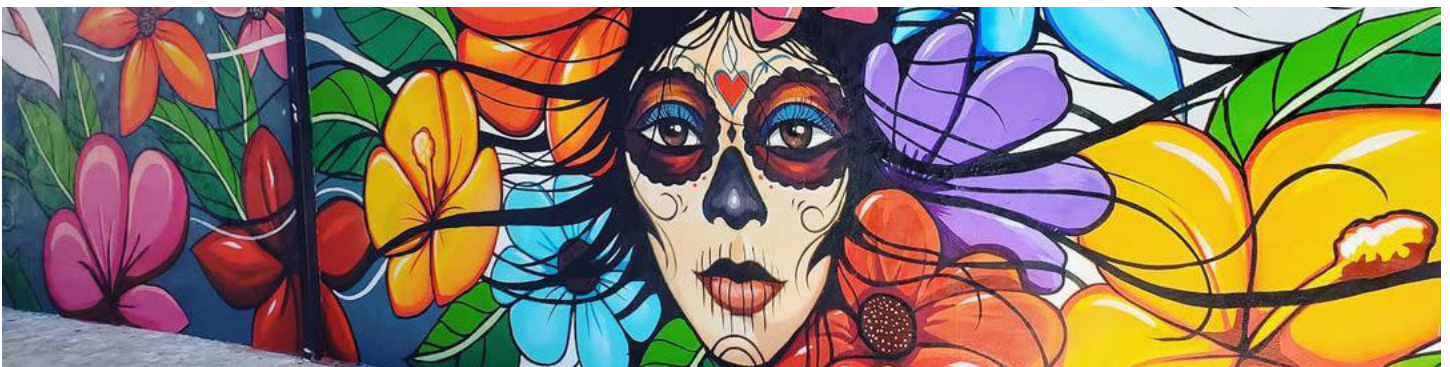
To meet this need, Orange 142 developed an awareness campaign focused on critical cities with direct flight connections to Southern California, including:

- » Mexico City: A significant market due to its size and connectivity
- » Guadalajara: An important hub with direct flights to Southern California
- » Monterrey: Another key city with direct connections to the region

### Audience Development

Going down a level, Orange 142 leveraged behavioral-based targeting-- including website visits, search history, and online activity to identify consumers within these cities who are likely to respond to Santa Ana's unique attractions. Those cohorts included:

- » **Mexican Tourists Interested in Southern California.** This segment includes travelers from Mexico seeking convenient and unique travel experiences within Southern California. They are open to exploring hidden gems and local culture.
- » **Culinary Enthusiasts.** This segment comprises Mexican tourists who are passionate about diverse culinary experiences. They are interested in savoring local flavors and experiencing cultural immersion through cuisine.
- » **Cultural and Art Enthusiasts.** This segment comprises culturally curious Mexican tourists who appreciate art, history, and heritage. They seek immersive and educational travel experiences, focusing on authentic cultural engagement.



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### Creative Direction

While Travel Santa Ana worked with their creative designer, Orange 142 provided crucial direction on the campaign's creative elements. The performance teams guided where banner ads and native content should be placed, ensuring the creative resonated with the intended audience. This collaboration allowed for a well-executed campaign aligned with the overall marketing strategy.



### Media Buying and Channel Strategy

Orange 142 employed a well-rounded media buying and channel strategy to maximize exposure and minimize ad fatigue, retargeting, paid social, and in-need advertising.

Rather than rely on direct buys, the team leveraged programmatic to target consumers across over 1,000 websites. Additionally, Orange 142 launched a social media campaign targeting users on Facebook and Instagram.

In addition, banner ads, native ads, and in-stream video ads were deployed to grab attention and drive traffic to the DMO's website. Tactics like carousel ads and video content ensured that Travel Santa Ana's message reached a broad but relevant audience.

### Ongoing Optimization

From the start, Travel Santa Ana's campaign generated strong results, which meant ongoing optimizations were minimal. However, Orange 142 continued micro-optimizing throughout the campaign to maintain high performance. This attention to detail ensured the campaign's success was sustained over time, with strong metrics supporting Travel Santa Ana's goals.



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## “Off-the Chart” Results

The campaign ran for three months, but because it delivered “off-the-chart” results, the team didn’t need to do much ongoing optimization. Overall, for the campaign there was 3,515,118 total impressions served to users in Mexico, 68,818 total clicks back to the website for an overall CTR of 1.96%!! For just the video instream which had a completed view rate of 88.5% and a total of 286,912 completed views, for a :30 video that equated to 143,456 minutes or 2,391 hours!

Tactic	Industry Average Performance	Campaign Performance
Display	.10% CTR	0.21% CTR
In-need (behavioral)	~.30 CTR (estimated)	0.76% CTR
Instream Video	N/A	64% VCR
Instream Video Clicks	N/A	4.84%
Meta	.90% CTR	4.67% CTR
Retargeting	N/A	0.25% CTR
Native	.30% CTR	1.04% CTR

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Wendy Haase-Robert  
President and CEO  
Travel Santa Ana

### About Orange 142

Orange 142 is a digital marketing and advertising company with offices across the US. We service marketers and agencies. We are part of Direct Digital Holding, the ninth Black-owned company to go public.

We help marketers of all sizes grow their reach and revenue through data-driven media strategies. We also partner with agencies and execute campaigns on behalf of their clients.

Our team of experts deeply understands the digital landscape and the latest advertising and marketing technologies. We work closely with our clients to develop and execute custom advertising and marketing campaigns that meet specific goals.

We are committed to providing our clients with the highest service and transparency. Open communication and collaboration are essential to the success of every advertising and marketing initiative.

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