

Create Prospect Packages

- Develop a series of “packages” of tours and places to visit that you know will create a successful visit.
 - These can be designed such in the following formats”
 - If you have two hours
 - If you have half of a day (morning)
 - If you have half of a day (afternoon)
 - If you have a whole day and one evening
 - If you have two days and one night
 - If you have three days
 - If you have four days
 - If you have five days, etc.
 - The goal is to have several packages developed and not to leave their visit to chance.
 - Develop packages around different types of interests
 - Antiquing
 - Horse racing
 - Mexican art, crafts and culture
 - Performing arts
 - Visual arts
 - Spas
 - Golf
- Provide an overnight guesthouse, complimentary lodging, or other amenities, such as a free meal, a round of golf, or a mission tour to visiting retiree prospects.
- Develop an entire coupon book filled with items such as passports for retiree prospects.
- Develop a driving tour of the Paso del Norte region featuring historical sights, amenities, and neighborhoods that may be of interest to potential in-migrant retirees. The tour can be especially effective if it is available on audiocassette or CD. Potential retirees can listen to the community’s story and take the audiocassette home as a souvenir.

Marketing/Promotion Sub-Committee

Getting Their Attention

The marketing should be completely “paso.” It should be like no one else’s marketing program and should convey the essential “paso” of Paso del Norte.

- Paso del Norte should develop a unique selling proposition—something belonging entirely to the Paso del Norte region, a statement of beliefs unique to the region—to be used in the marketing program.
- Consider several points when developing strategies to elicit the desired response from the target market. Even though this process will be part of the overall development of the marketing program, all of the committees should have the opportunity to participate.
- Produce a complete community profile that would provide valuable information to potential retirees. They would be involved later in the dissemination of this information to prospective in-migrant retirees.
- Develop a quality brochure that provides pertinent information to create interest in the region. Include a postage-paid response card with a telephone number (preferably a toll-free 800 number) to call for further information. For a small fee, most magazines will provide a listing for the program in their response card section and will provide mailing labels for those requesting more information about the program.
- Develop a media kit on the Paso del Norte region. Write newspaper- and magazine-length articles with photos to include in the kit. Provide permission for the media to use them.
- Create a DVD featuring the Paso del Norte region as a potential retirement destination and allowing interested individuals to visit without leaving their current homes. Be sure the content is appropriate to the 55+ consumer. Not ageist content, but content that appeals to the four target market sectors.
- Write a comprehensive story for the local newspaper explaining to the community the benefits of a retiree in-migration effort. This story should also suggest that local residents contact family members and business associates to do the same.
- Develop a Web site for tourism-based kiosk systems.

Print Media

While each method has the ability to deliver a uniquely different audience, the most frequently used media source is print. Using print media affords the target audience the luxury of exposure at a leisurely pace. If interested, the reader can take time to read long news articles (publicity) or detailed advertisements. Print is far more selective than television, radio, and billboards since it allows the targeting of a specific geographic market and age group. Because there are so many different types of magazines and newspapers available, either in a particular market or region, the message can be tailored to fit the interests of a specific audience. Following is a list of publications that are of special interest to the 50 and over market. Examining these magazines will provide an idea of what type of public relations stories and advertising commonly appear, as well as provide additional insight to that market. Some of these publications are targeted to retirees in general; some are targeted to specific audiences, such as travelers or golfers; and some even publish special retirement issues.

- Fortune
- Kiplinger's
- Mature Outlook
- Modern Maturity
- Money Magazine
- New Choices
- Senior Golfer
- Trailer Life
- Travel 50 and Beyond
- U.S. News & World Report
- Vacations
- Where to Retire

One long-term goal of the promotional strategy may be to have the Paso del Norte Region mentioned or even be the focus of a story in a noted national publication, such as the Wall Street Journal. Such a goal is definitely achievable, but it will require both time and money: time to develop and promote the initial program and money to make repeated visits to the offices of the desired media. The end result of obtaining "free" publicity in local, regional, and even national publications will be the same as if advertising were purchased. People in the target audience will read and understand why the Paso del Norte region should be their retirement destination. This type of publicity has little or no cost to the retiree attraction program.

Brochures

A brochure is an effective way to promote the Paso del Norte region. Brochures must be tailored to the retiree and those factors that retirees believe to be necessary in choosing a retirement destination. The seven criteria critical to attracting retirees—money matters, housing, climate, personal safety, services, work opportunities, and leisure activities—should be addressed in the brochure. All of the amenities identified through the community assessment profile should be considered for the brochure. Include as much factual information as possible. Example: A statement in the brochure that reads “plenty of affordable housing” isn’t as useful as one that reads “housing costs in the more desirable areas of the community start at \$100,000.” This could be powerful information if the prices of desirable homes in the retiree’s present location start at \$175,000. The four goals of the brochure should be to target, to reach, to inform, and to generate a positive response—make the telephones ring. To help achieve these goals, a brochure should do the following:

- Target the active retiree and pre-retiree mature adult market and present factors that this market believes to be important when choosing a retirement destination.
- Use an easy-to-read format, such as a tri-fold or quad-fold style in 12- to 14-point type with minimal copy.
- Feature color photographs of active and mature adults, local events, facilities, and scenery.
- Include short statements or bulleted information about the lifestyles and amenities of the Paso del Norte region.
- Include a tear-off, postage paid return panel to provide interested parties with more information about housing, taxes, recreation, shopping, etc.
- Provide a telephone number (preferably a toll free 800 number) for prospects to call for more information.
- Feature a map of the Paso del Norte region.

The overall impact of the brochure will be a call to action that is simple, direct, and easy for the in-migrant retiree prospect to follow through.

Budget

Program Director

The program must have a full-time director whose responsibilities are solely to build and establish this program. If the director is successful it is likely at least one clerical staff person will be required to assist (unless volunteers are able to provide this support).

Promotional Materials

A web-site is great, but an attractive, interesting and informative package that includes the “packages” for successful visits that can be mailed to a prospect with a personal letter will help initiate the personal relationship.

Office expenses

Telephones, 800 incoming service, postage, computer and lead tracking software (ACT is a good, inexpensive off-the shelf product).

Advertising

Advertising in military, travel and alumni publications.

Travel

Staff should attend “retirement” trade shows. The AARP biannual show may be a good opportunity to show case Paso del Norte’s attributes.

Gifts

A small gift (chile pepper ceramic) or another fun remembrance is good to send home with the prospect or to mail to them two to three weeks after their visit, to remind them of the fun they had while in the area.

Paso del Norte Personal Touch Follow-Up Response

The next step in the marketing process is handling the response. The response process follows these steps:

- Initial follow-up
- Telephone follow-up
- Long-term follow-up
- Visit by the prospect
- Decision time
- Long-term success through assimilation

Initial Follow-UP

The first step in handling the response is through initial follow-up. Two alternatives exist regarding the initial response to a prospect contact. The alternative should be chosen based on the budget of your program, the source of program exposure to the prospect, and the type of information requested. Whichever choice is made, it is strongly recommended that the mailing be sent within two days of receipt of the lead. The alternatives are to send a general brochure with telephone number and tear-off reply card that the prospect can use to request specific information or to send a general information packet that will answer most questions a prospect would have including the following:

- Cost of living. This should be kept simple. For example, give the exact property taxes on a \$100,000 home.
- Climate data. Average seasonal temperatures, precipitation, etc.
- Medical services. The number of physicians and hospital information.
- Recreational opportunities.
- Attractions and events in or near the Paso del Norte region.
- Commercial and public transportation availability.
- Cultural offerings.
- Educational opportunities for adults.
- Shopping.
- Housing availability and rental information.

Paso del Norte Personal Touch

Follow-Up Response - 2

Personal Letter

A personal letter from the Director, Retiree Attraction Committee chairperson, Mayor, can also be included. When compiling material for the information packet, take a hard look at it from the standpoint of the prospect. Resist loading the package with materials from various merchants and chamber of commerce members. Too much medical data, nursing home, or funeral home information may cause prospects to think about the dark side of retirement, unwittingly causing them to think about staying where they are or moving near their children rather than to the Paso del Norte region.

Telephone Follow-Up

After the initial brochure or information packet has been mailed (within two days of receipt of the lead), the second step is the telephone follow-up call placed by an ambassador, someone so designated on the Ambassadors Subcommittee. The telephone follow-up call should be made within 7 to 10 days after the information packet has been sent. The purpose of the call is to:

- Ensure that the prospect received the material
- Answer any questions the prospect may have
- Determine if further information is required by the prospect
- Gather demographic information, such as profession, hobbies, interests, etc., for a prospect file
- Encourage a local visit by the prospect
- Tell the prospect of upcoming events of the Just/Been Club or in the area
- Ask the prospect if he/she would like to visit
- Make a prospect feel that he or she already has a friend in the Paso del Norte region

Paso del Norte Personal Touch Follow-Up Response - 3

- While this contact could result in a prospect visit in a few days, hopefully an ongoing relationship evolves over weeks, months, or even years. Providing this personal touch is essential to building a successful retiree attraction program.
- A regular schedule should be maintained for ambassadors to make these calls. Some calls will need to be made in the evening to reach those prospects who work during the day. It is the responsibility of the ambassadors to qualify each prospect in regard to a proper fit with the Paso del Norte region. Over time, these ambassadors will discover what prospects desire in a retirement destination, whether the Paso del Norte region has the ability to satisfy their desires, and how to improve the program.
- The third step in the response process is through long-term follow-up, and the reinforcement process begins. The Paso del Norte region can maintain this follow-up through several methods:
 - A quarterly mailing in newsletter form, featuring events that will be of interest to new retirees.
 - Invite prospects to special events throughout the year.
 - Whatever the form of contact chosen, whether written or by telephone, contact must be maintained with a prospect until he or she has moved or has requested that contact be terminated. Do not let a prospect slip away because of a lack of interest on your part.

Paso del Norte Personal Touch Follow-Up Response - 4

- The fourth step in the response process will be a visit by the prospect to the Paso del Norte region. The prospect's ambassador should conduct the tour, which should highlight the following:
 - Attractions and history
 - Shopping
 - Medical facilities
 - Colleges and universities
 - Overview of available housing
 - Recreational opportunities, such as public and private golf, swimming, tennis, and walking facilities; parks, lakes, etc.
 - Transportation facilities, such as airports, bus stations, or train depots

 - The prospect may request specific information about churches or certain types of housing. The ambassador can add these to any tour. All tours should be reasonable in both scope and time.

- The fifth step in the response process is decision time. After the prospect visit to Paso del Norte Region, one of three things will occur:
 - They will eliminate the Paso del Norte region from their list of choices.
 - They will want to know more about the Paso del Norte region and plan another visit.
 - They will move to the Paso del Norte region.

Paso del Norte Personal Touch Follow-Up Response - 5

- Should the prospect decide against moving, the Ambassador and/or surveys by the Program Evaluation Committee should attempt to discover why. The reasons behind their decision should be honestly probed, without offending the prospect. They should be told that the Paso del Norte region has a desire to improve and wishes to know the reason they decided against relocation. If known, prospects will usually disclose it, but it should not be surprising if they themselves do not know.

- After the initial visit, the prospect may want more information and plan another visit. Supply any requested information since it may serve to reinforce the decision-making process. At this stage, prospects will realize that they have a contact in the Paso del Norte region on whom they can rely for answers.

- The most desirable action is that prospects have found that the Paso del Norte region meets their needs and desires. They have chosen the Paso del Norte region as their retirement destination and they move. The final step of the response process is to ensure newcomers are welcome. This will lead to long-term success through assimilation, which can be achieved through several methods:
 - Newcomer events, such as picnics, dances, golf tournaments
 - Special organizations for both in-migrant and in-place retirees
 - Institute for Learning in Retirement in connection with the local college or university
 - Special projects, such as environmental, educational, and community activities sponsored by the local ambassadors. These might include beautification or adopt-a-school projects.

The Tracking Process

It is essential to maintain a complete and detailed record of each contact made. Ideally, this tracking system should be maintained on a computer database that can easily be updated as each new follow-up contact is recorded. No matter how this database is maintained, the following information should be documented:

- Prospect's name, address, and telephone number
- Date of initial contact
- How the prospect first learned of the local program
- What type of information the prospect requested and when it was mailed
- Date of follow-up contact, by whom, and any comments
- Demographic profile of prospect, including profession, hobbies, interests, etc.
- Dates of all additional contacts and follow-ups with related information
- Date the prospect is to tour the local community
- Comments following the tour
- Date the prospect relocates to the community or asks to no longer be considered as a prospect

Some of these sources may provide information on an ongoing basis, others may require periodic information requests, and some may resist information gathering efforts. It is vital to be aware of any interest the program is generating; tracking can provide this awareness. Tracking not only reassures committee members that the program is working, but it also proves the value of the program to those providing funding. Use a quarterly tracking report to help the local program with long-term tracking efforts. This report should show progress both with statistics and by committee activity. The quarterly tracking report can provide the following:

- Accountability. It is very useful to have accurate, timely, and cumulative data to justify the existence of the program.
- Sources of leads. Effectively assess the marketing strategy by being aware of both how the message reached the prospect and where the prospect resides.
- Program improvement ideas. Timely reports can assist the local program in discovering any areas where assistance or improvements may be needed.

The Program for Travel Writers

Purpose

The goal of this program is to find, court, and find the best travel writers possible for the Paso del Norte region.

Travel writers can have an amazing impact on the number of people who visit the community and ultimately move to the community. The purpose of the program for travel writers is to carefully prepare, plan and execute the program so that the Paso del Norte region will not only be featured once by the travel writer, but rather to engage the travel writer so thoroughly in the opportunities and changes of the Paso del Norte region that they will become frequent writers about the region.

There are two documents in the Appendices of this section that provide details about conducting programs for travel writers.

You must be sure you are ready to have Travel Writers scrutinize the area before you invite them to the area. You don't want a perfunctory description of the area, you want a rousing endorsement and the opinion that "now" is the time to travel to the Paso del Norte region because..."

The Travel Writers Visit

Put them in the nicest hotel, take them to all points of interest not just the "Chamber of Commerce" spots, but the charming extraordinary out of the way spots. Take them to the funky places and the elegant places.

Remember El Paso is a "Wild West" town. Don't try to be Chicago, Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Dallas or any other town. Be yourself and know who you are and where you're from (your history).

Take them to eat at the elegant places and the fun out of the way places. Show off your theatre and culture. But remember what they want to see and hear and smell are all the things that make you different and stand out from any other place. They have to have a story they can sell so it has to have a twist that will get the editor to agree to pay money for it.

Plan a Familiarization “FAM” Tour for Travel Writers

A Familiarization or “FAM” tour is planned visit where you plan and execute a visit to the area for five or six travel writers at a time. Your goal is to develop personal relationships with the travel writers, but to use your time efficiently by touring more than writer at a time.

Find people 55+ who have moved to the Paso del Norte region to visit with Travel Writers.

When the travel writers visit be sure to have series of people 55+ lined up to visit with them one-on-one. Get a good mix of people who:

- Never lived in the Paso del Norte region or Texas
- Lived in the Paso del Norte region at one time
- Were Stationed in Texas
- Came to the Paso del Norte region to start a second career
- Always lived in the Paso del Norte region and never wants to move

The FAM Tour for Travel Writers

- To organize a FAM Tour you must have airlines on board with you or have the money to fly the writers in.
- The best hotel in town must be on board so that the service is top notch. That means that it is not just the manager that is involved, but all of the people from the front desk to the maids.
- All of the restaurants should be well aware of who is coming and who they are with.
- Have every minute planned, but include free time for them.
- Do not have any more than 6 writers at any one time. You must be able to make each one of them feel special. Try to make sure they aren't competing for the same story.
- Here are some quotes about why not to come to something that is "scheduled"
 - "The programs never have time for us to really work!"
 - "The sites try to show us too many things in too little time."
 - "I never have time to work on my own, at my own pace, and do MY kind of story."
 - "The days are so full I don't have time to even keep my notes straight or call home."
 - "I'm a photographer and can't tell you how many times I've missed great shots because I had to be at some scheduled cocktail party or dinner or go hungry."
 - "I don't write about hotels. However, my last FLC trip included four site inspections; we're not travel agents, and I resent being treated like one."
 - "Too much time is spent going from place to place."

The Program for Travel Writers

- Don't start off too ambitious. You need to get some practice in with maybe some journalists you know or who are from the area. They will then be able to give you some feed-back. They are also the people that think they know all there is to know about the Paso del Norte region so you will really have to hustle to get them an interesting tour.
- The appendices for this section include list of magazines and newspapers to contact. Send them story ideas and see what you get.
- Also choose carefully magazines and newspapers in which to advertise and start as aggressive a campaign as you can budget with the advantages of moving to the Paso del Norte region. Consider certain times of the year when the hotels are not fully booked to offer specials to people 55+. These should include a tour with other 55+ people that live in the Paso del Norte region, discounts at hotels and restaurants and other places of entertainment. Be sure they are taken to interesting and fun places, not the hospitals and such that could remind them of their "age". Make sure their tour guide is upbeat and "young". Someone they would want to be friends with. When trying to attract these people you want to be sure you are reaching the market you desire, so choose your placement wisely.



Appendices

Appendix A. Travel Writers

North American Travel Journalists Association: www.natja.org

Travel Industry Association: www.tia.org

Travel Media and Public Relations Links

To assist public relations professionals, writers and researchers including media and public relations organizations, TIA has compiled many helpful resources. Simply explore the travel media and public relations links below for specific information. Want to add an organization to the list? Please [send an e-mail](#) with the link.

Adventure Travel Media Source: <http://www.atmstravelnews.com>

American Society of Journalists and Authors: <http://www.asja.org/>

Association de Journalistes des Tourismse (France): <http://www.ajt.net/>

Australian Society of Travel Writers: <http://www.astw.org/au>

British Guild Of Travel Writers: <http://www.bgtw.metronet.co.uk/>

Council of Writers Organizations: <http://www.councilofwriters.com/memb.html>

Eccentric America: <http://www.eccentricamerica.com/>

European Federation of the Tourism Journalists Associations (FEDAJT): <http://www.traveljournalists.org/>

GIST (Italy): <http://www.gist.it/>

Media Kitty: <http://mediakitty.com/>

Midwest Travel Writers Association: <http://www.mtwa.org/>

NEOS (Italy): <http://www.neonews.com/>

North American Travel Journalists Association [NATJA]: <http://www.natja.org/>

Outdoor Writers Association of America: <http://owaa.org/>

Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA): <http://www.patwainternational.com/>

Public Relations Society of America - Travel and Tourism Section: <http://www.travel.prsa.org/>

Society of American Travel Writers: <http://www.satw.org/>

The Connection For Travel Media Professionals: <http://www.writersmarketplace.com/> Tourpress Holland <http://www.tourjour.nl/>

Travel Journalists Guild: <http://www.tjgonline.com>

Travel Media Association of Canada: <http://www.travelmedia.ca>

Travel Media Directory: <http://www.scottamerican.com>

Travel Media Forum (India): <http://www.travelmediaforum.com>

Travel Media Showcase: <http://www.travelmediashowcase.com>

Travel Publicity Leads: <http://www.travelpublicityleads.com>

TravelWriters.com: <http://www.Travelwriters.com>

Travelwriter Marketletter: <http://www.travelwriterml.com>

Travel Writers Spot: <http://www.inkspot.com/genres/travel/>

World Federation of Journalists and Travel Writers <http://www.fijet.org/>

www.travelwriters.com

Society of American Travel Writers: www.satw.org

<http://www.travelpublicationsupdate.com/publications.asp>

Society of American Travel Writers

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Items on CD

1. How to Host a FAM Tour
2. Western Meeting Bid Planning
3. Fair Housing Pocket Guide
4. Approving Seniors Housing