

YOUR INDESPENSIBLE RESOURCE FOR TRAVEL & LEISURE MARKETING IN AN EVER CHANGING INDUSTRY.



2022  
*HOSPITALITY*  
*SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE*

© 2022 *Sawgrass Marketing, LLC*

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. THIS REPORT IS PROTECTED BY U.S.  
AND INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT LAWS. REPRODUCTION AND  
DISTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION  
OF THE SPONSOR IS PROHIBITED.

# TABLE of CONTENTS

01/ THE MARKET.....04

02/ WHY SOCIAL MEDIA SECURES BOOKINGS.....07

03/ AUDIT YOUR INSTAGRAM.....10

04/ THE SCIENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA.....12

05/ BENCHMARK YOUR SUCCESS.....14

06/ THE SECRET TO SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL CONTENT.....16

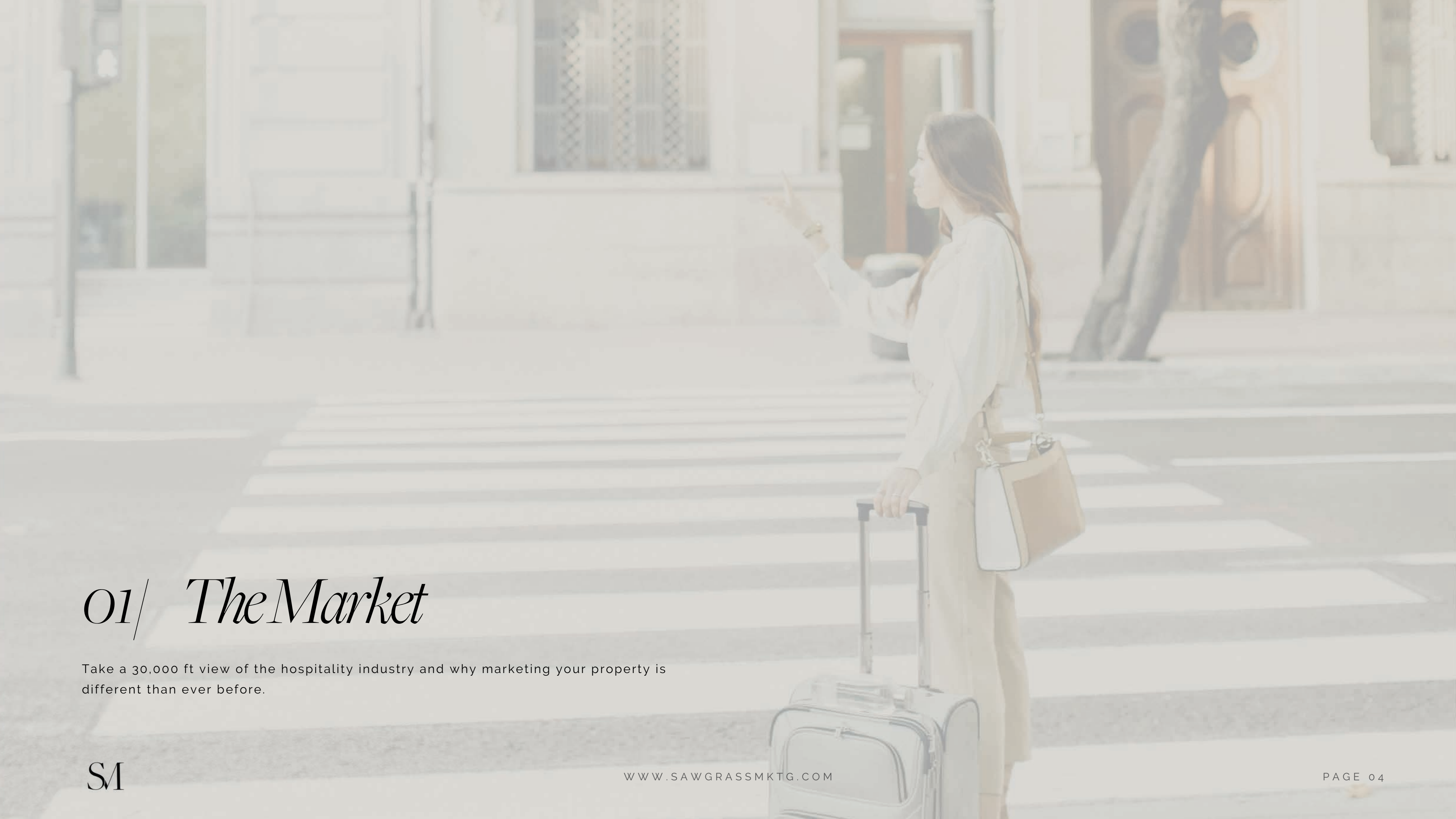
07/ TIMING AROUND SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS.....18

08/ CREATING DESIRABLE PHOTOGRAPHY.....20

09/ ADDRESSING YOUR GUESTS DEEPEST NEEDS.....23

10/ FOUR PILLARS OF HOSPITALITY CONTENT.....25

11/ COMPLIMENTARY CONSULTATION.....27



# 01/ *The Market*

Take a 30,000 ft view of the hospitality industry and why marketing your property is different than ever before.



# *A 30,000 ft. view of the industry.*

## *The global economy needs tourism, and the United States is a key player.*

When looking at countries that directly contributed the most to global GDP the United States' travel and tourism industry contributed the largest sum at 1.1 trillion U.S. dollars in 2020.

*Statista*

In 2022, the World Travel & Tourism Council is projecting a 228% leap in spending in the United States by international travelers compared to 2021.

*American Hotel and Lodging Association*

## *The hotel industry is still recovering*

Hotels across the [United States] are continuing to dig out from a two-year period where they lost a collective \$111.8 billion in room revenue alone. A partial recovery in 2022 will not be enough to allow hotels to completely pay back lenders, fully rehire staff, invest in delayed property improvements, and refill business cash reserves.

The pandemic brought U.S. hotel occupancy to a historic low of 24.5% in April 2020, and annual occupancy fell to 44% for the year. However, occupancy rates are projected to continue trending upward in 2022, averaging 63.4% for the year.

*American Hotel and Lodging Association*

## *Technology and safety standards are shifting, faster than ever before.*

During that same year, a poll was conducted to determine the global share of hotel guests who would use an app to open the door of their hotel room. The results indicated that a large majority of respondents, 73%, would prefer to use an app to open the door of their room.

*Statista*

# Why is hospitality marketing different now?

THE BOTTOM LINE? GUESTS EXPECT MORE, DEMAND IS HIGHER, AND INFLATION (& DEMAND) HAVE INCREASED THE COST OF TRAVEL.

In a digital world where vacation availability and accessibility seemed limitless, the pandemic built barriers between the traveler, provider and market like we've never seen before. The digital landscape allowed travelers to feed into their wanderlust and only increased the desire to plan & save for vacations missed in the last two years.

According to **Accenture's 2021 U.S. Holiday Shopping Survey**, 40% of U.S. consumers plan to focus on saving for a vacation or trip away in the future. It's their second most important financial priority after paying down debt. **With inflation on the rise, we can see an increase on value-based travel, or saving to splurge on annual vacations.**

Accompanying an increased demand for travel are staffing shortages. In 2020, the hotel industry lost 710,000 members of its workforce and it's still down 7% in comparison to 2019 employment according to Oxford Economics. **With increased demand and limited staff, high expectations will need to be considered.**

The good news is the high demand is a much needed sigh of relief for the hospitality industry after a very rough few years. In July 2021, pandemic travel peaked to more than 19.7 million nights sold in July 2021 — a 3.9% increase over 2019 levels (+23.9% vs 2020), AirDNA. **We will continue to see this upward trend as travel restrictions become a new standard and borders reopen.**

*With all the change and high expectations in the market how does your property stand out?*

*The Guest*

*The Host*



*The Market*



## 02/ *Why Social Media Secures Bookings*

Social media allows hotels and vacation rentals to build trust and brand loyalty directly with its guests prior to arrival. It gives you an incredible opportunity to consistently remind them of your offerings and can connects you to your guests on a more personal level.

# *How can you stand out from the competition?*

## DEVELOP TRUST & BRAND LOYALTY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA.

Now more than ever, travelers are looking for an unparalleled experience they can share with others - if not in person - on social media. The new traveler is searching for vacations that are unique, immersive and memorable.

They seek out hotels which place a premium on safe and sanitary environments, flexible and no-penalty booking policies, convenient customer service, sustainable products, and a positive social impact ([AHLA](#)). **Your ability to foster relationships with your guests on social media before they place a reservation gives you the opportunity to speak to what's most important to them, before your competitors do.**

Not only that, the Millennial market in particular is changing the way travel experiences are shared. According to [REQ](#), 97% of Millennial travelers will share their travel experiences on social media, with 2 in 3 posting once a day.

*This is your opportunity to capitalize on the strongest form of marketing, word of mouth marketing, at absolutely no charge.*

A social media strategy curated by an agency that understands your niche, forms the narrative of your property, engages directly with inquiring guests, and positions your property apart from local competition.

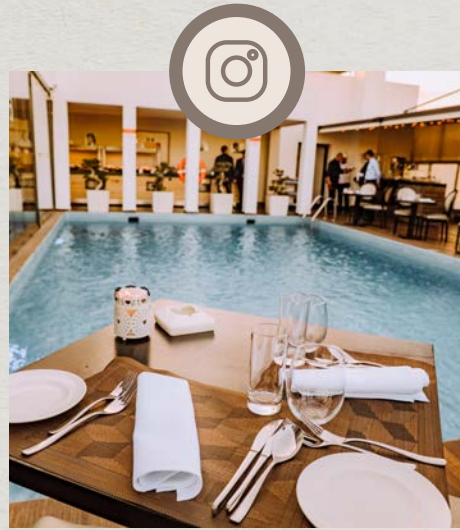
But don't think that you need to perfect all 16 international social platforms to make an impact.





# Three Social Media Platforms You Shouldn't Ignore

As of January 2022, there are 17 major social media platforms that boast at least 300 million active users. With so many outlets, it's near impossible to perfect marketing on every platform. Here are our top three platforms we see the most success with our clients.



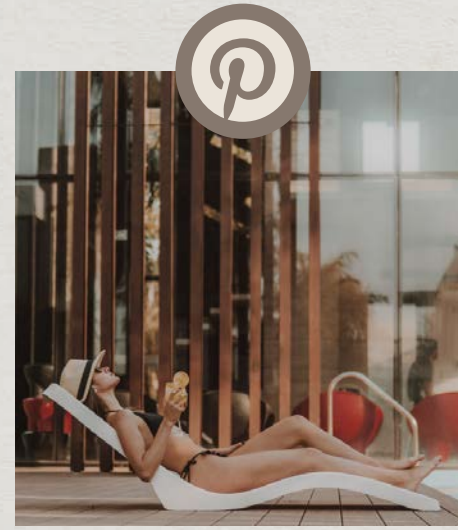
*Instagram*

The most visual social media platform in market and holds the greatest opportunity to connect with current & future clientele.

**Target Market:** Mostly men & women 25-34, 60% of users making more than \$100k

**The Approach:** Consistent posts increase brand awareness and personalize interaction with followers through Stories and Reels.

[TAKE OUR AUDIT ON THE NEXT PAGE](#)



*Pinterest*

Put best kept secret for hospitality marketing is Pinterest. It is ripe for growth in highlighting travel destinations, food & beverage, and health & wellness. Pinterest users are planners and this is the opportunity to find guests before they plan their next vacation.

**Target Market:** Mostly women ages 50-64, 45% of users making more than \$100k.

**The Approach:** A healthy mix of travel features, property features and organic and paid media. Biggest opportunity for growth.




*Facebook*

Think of Facebook as your storefront. It is the largest social media platform to date, and is the largest marketplace for advertising. Organic business page engagement remains low, but Facebook is an essential for paid advertising.

**Target Market:** Men & women over the age of 25, 70% earning more than \$75k.

**The Approach:** A premier opportunity for advertising. Minimal organic presence with focus on video.

A woman with curly hair is shown in profile, holding a white smartphone to take a selfie. The background is a bright, slightly blurred indoor setting. The overall tone is soft and professional.

## 03/ *Audit your Instagram*

As one of the most active platforms for Millennial travelers, Instagram is the ultimate connector to your guests. Take our 5-question audit to quickly evaluate where your team needs to focus their time.

# Your Instagram Audit

Is your Instagram strategy working for you? Here's a quick pulse check to see how your account is performing. Score yourself below.

## NEED HELP?

Book a complimentary social media audit session with us today to review your entire social presence.

[BOOK NOW](#)

I post 2-3 times per week.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
never sometimes always

I have an engagement score higher than 1% on 5 or more posts.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
never sometimes always

I use hashtags regularly & know my niche.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
never sometimes always

I have consistent traffic to my website from Instagram & often receive inquires from Direct Messages.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
never sometimes always

I receive compliments, questions, and interactions (like tagging friends) on my posts.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
never sometimes always

## Your Evaluation

*You're verified.*

21-25 points

You have your audience thoroughly connected and engaged with your property on Instagram and see your social profile working for you. If it becomes time consuming - you have the strategy finessed to pass along to another team member to rinse and repeat.

*You're committed & you understand the value.*

11-20 points

You see the potential in reaching the next generation of travelers, but you may need a little help refining your strategy. Dive into your analytics and find a pattern in your successful posts.

*Let's cover the basics*

5-10 points

If Instagram isn't your cup of tea, that's okay. It's an ever-evolving platform and there's always room to learn. We can hop on a strategy call and walk you through the basics.

A modern dining room with a round wooden table, a chair, and a shelf with a basket and books.

## 04/ *The Science of Social Media*

Having your team clearly determine where success and opportunity lie in social media will allow you to effectively determine the ROI of your social strategy. Qualifying your followers by interaction is the first step to help move them through your social funnel.

# The Science Behind Social Media

YOU'LL SEE THERE IS A SCIENCE BEHIND THE CONTENT SHARED AND THE RELATIONSHIP IT BUILDS WITH YOUR GUESTS.

With a concentrated focus on three social platforms, you'll find more patterns and themes within your social content. To gauge your booking rate for your social plan, you'll need to better understand just how qualified your social audience is. **There are four key steps your followers take when moving through your social funnel - awareness, trust building, consideration and conversion.**

Your social media funnel gives you a glimpse at where your followers are in the decision-making process and provides you insights on what you may need to adjust to meet your conversion goals.

Want to build more awareness? How many impressions are you getting from geotagging and hashtags?

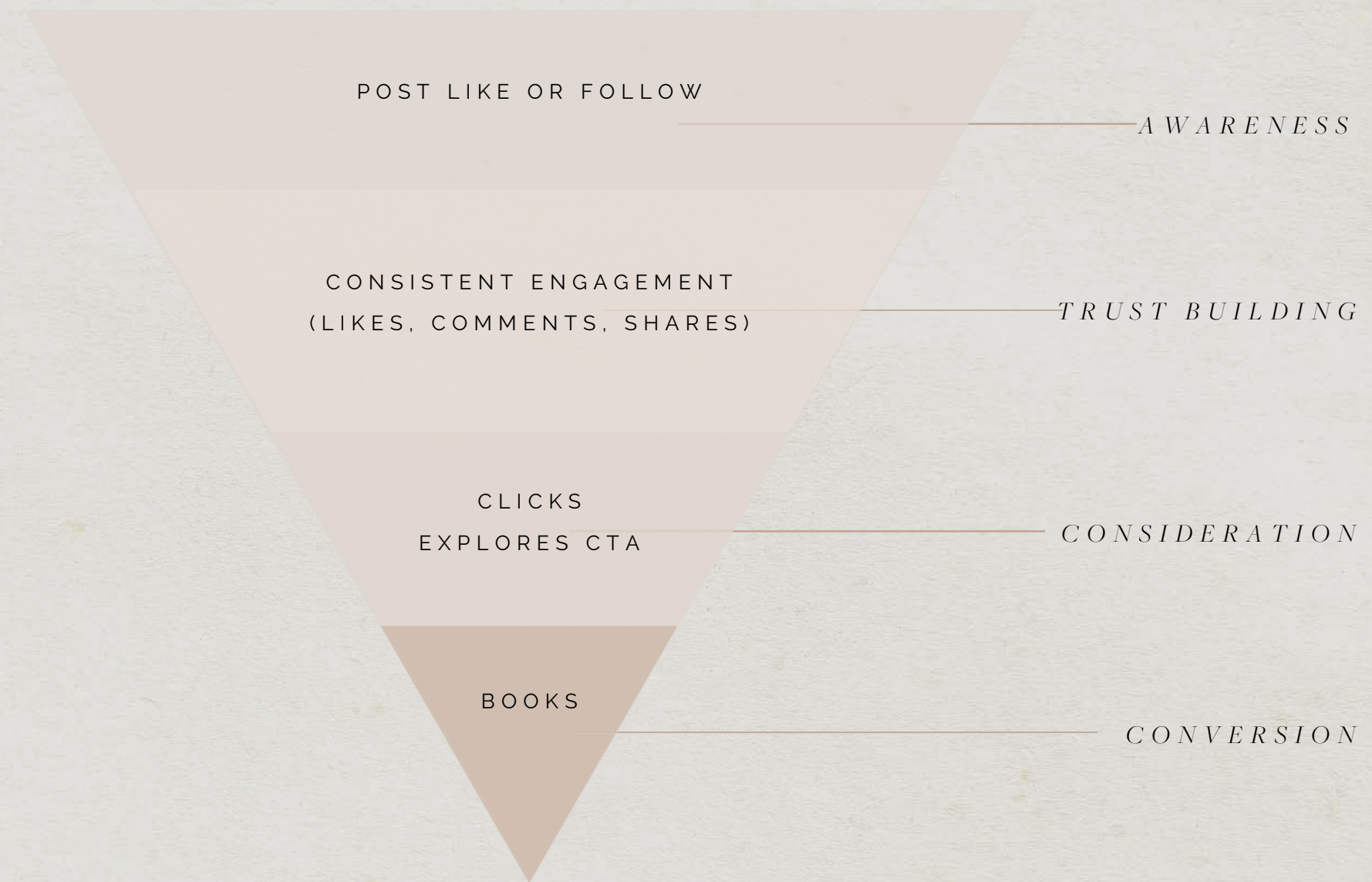
Do you need more engaging content? Time to rethink your content approach.

What's your click thru rate? Are you asking people to visit or take an action?

Pausing to look at the analytics will help you create a high-functioning social media funnel which supports your marketing strategy & revenue goals.

**INVESTING IN A SOCIAL MANAGEMENT TEAM, MEANS RECEIVING ACTIONABLE REPORTS ON A CONSISTENT BASIS TO BOOST YOUR BOTTOM LINE.**

## Your Social Funnel



# 05/ *Benchmark Your Success*

Here's an easy to use template to keep a keen eye on your social analytics and view your growth rate every quarter.



# Benchmark your Success

Checking in on your social media analytics is critical to monitoring the health of your social media strategy. Have your team benchmark your success every month on each platform with our template below.

	January	February	March	Q1 GROWTH RATE	April	May	June	Q2 GROWTH RATE	July	August	September	Q3 GROWTH RATE	October	November	December	YoY GROWTH RATE
<i>Followers</i>																
<i>Posts</i>																
<i>Avg Engagement per post</i>																
<i>Website Referral Traffic</i>																
<i>Bookings</i>																

GROWTH RATE CALCULATION

$$\frac{\text{present} - \text{past}}{\text{past}} \times 100$$



## 06/ *The Secret To Successful Social Content*

Let's help demystify what it takes to have successful social content. There are three core areas your content needs to address to help connect and convert your followers.



# The Secret to Social Success

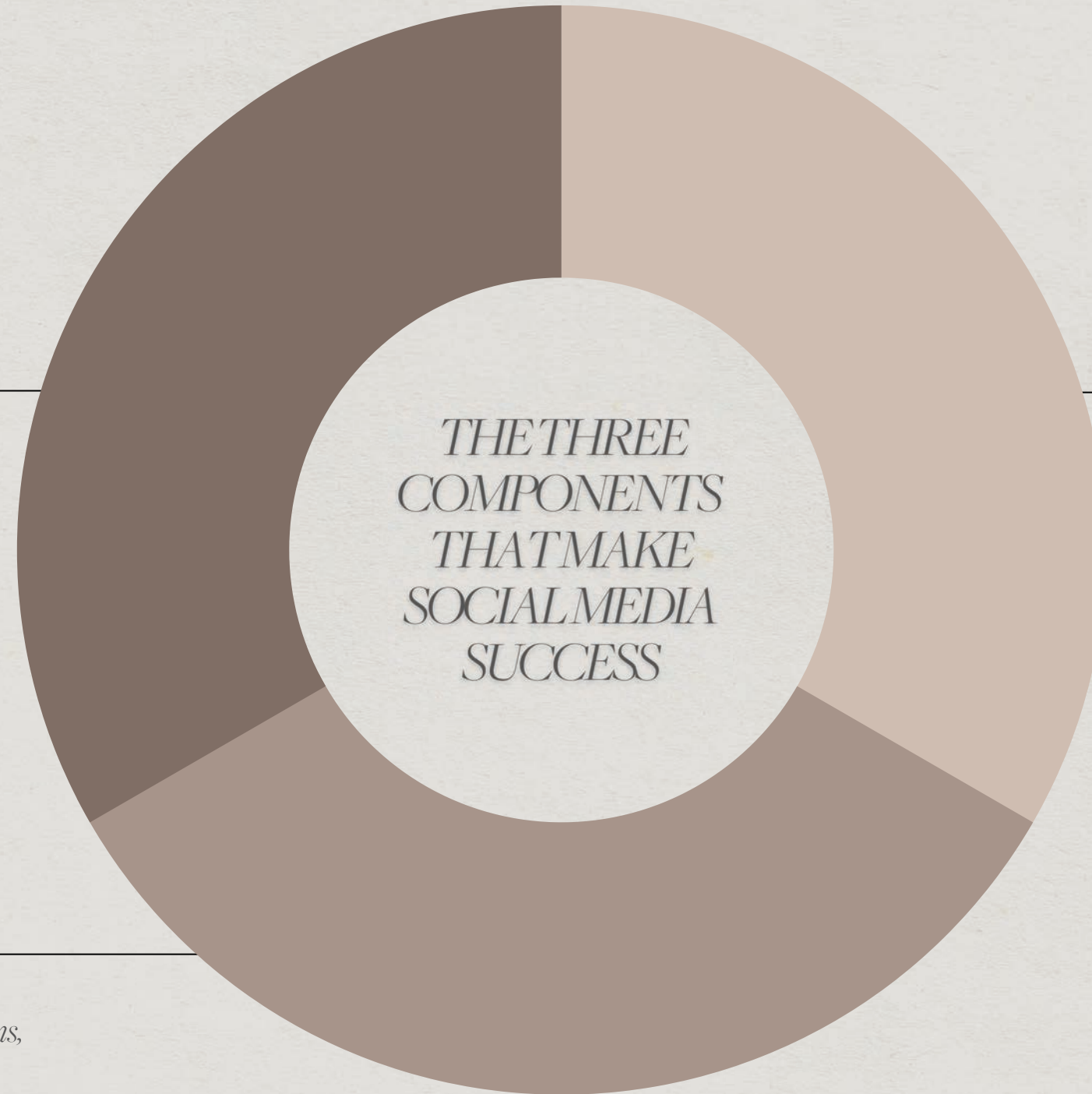
Once you have benchmarked your current social impact, it's time to develop your content strategy. While social media success isn't garnished overnight, there are three core components that are attributed to high-performing social posts.

## *timing*

*Understanding when your guests are searching for escapes, where they are searching and aligning it with how they find your property.*

## *answering a need*

*Uncover your guests greatest stressors and alleviate them. Address them in your captions, imagery, and ongoing communications.*



## *creating desire*

*Hint at what is achievable only at your location. Photography, videography, and graphics help connect & create this desire.*

### THE 80-20 RULE

*Eighty percent of your social content should be inspiring, educational, or entertaining. The remaining 20% should be promotional.*

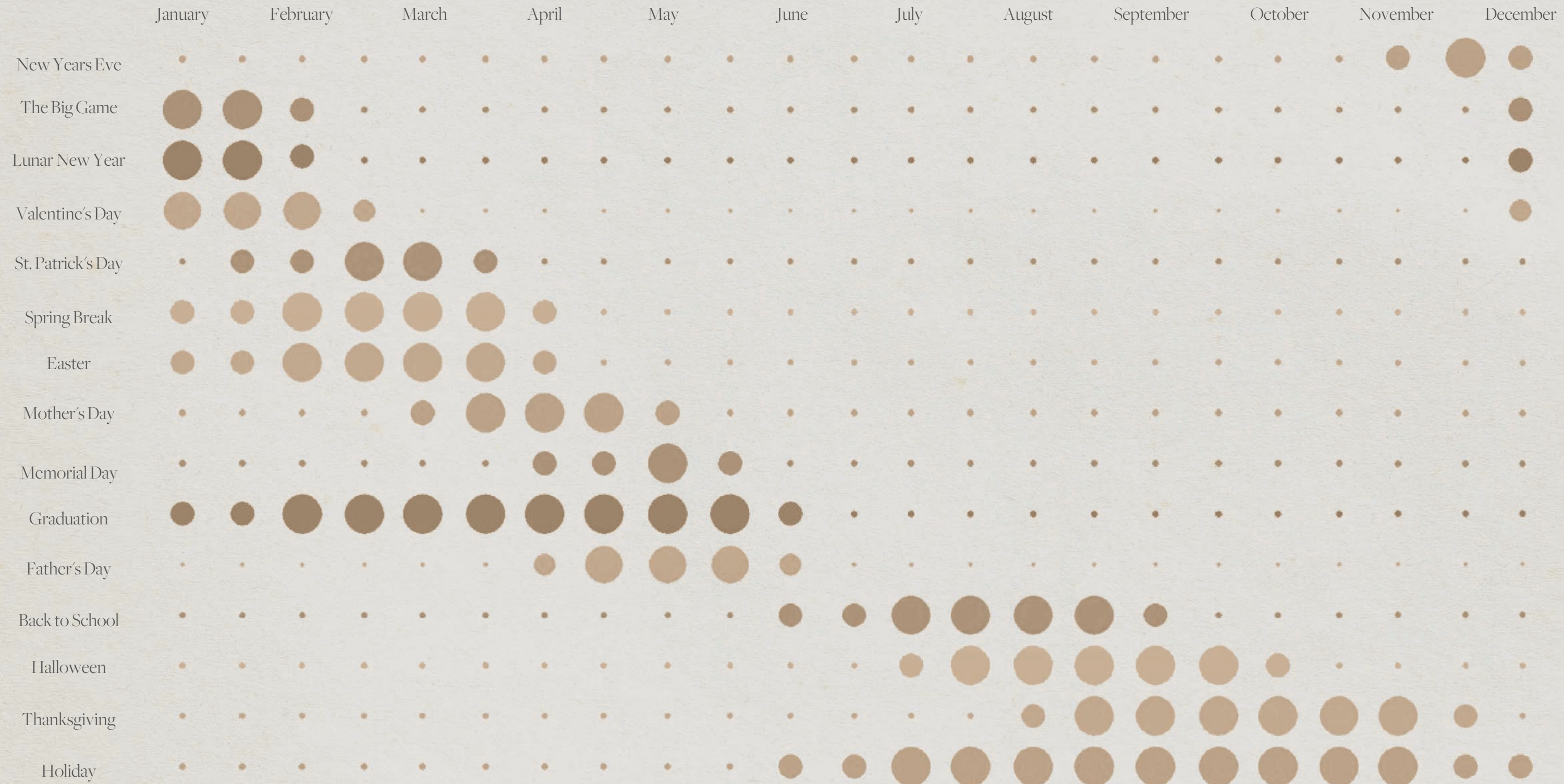


## 07/ *Timing Around Seasonal Celebrations*

Understanding when guests begin their search for holiday escapes is critical to increase your booking consideration. Pinterest has provided data points on when users are searching for seasonal celebrations and when you should be talking to guests about upcoming holidays.

# Capitalize on Seasonal Celebrations

Timing is everything. Below you'll find the most searched seasonal themes throughout the year on Pinterest. Historical social data, like this, will help you plan for promotional packages as well as paid advertising campaigns in the future.





## 08/ *Creating Desirable Photography*

Captivating photography and videography are the strongest marketing assets in social media. By evoking emotion, desire, and want, through the five senses, you'll increase your hotel or vacation rental visibility.

# Create Desire with Alluring Visuals

Guests will decide on how they use their purchasing power based on how the property is visually presented online and in marketing materials. Aside from online reviews, photography is the mitigating factor as to whether those dollars will be spent with you, or move along to the competition.

Photos of hotels and resorts provide a person with their first impression of their vacation. It's the lynch pin to creating the lure and appeal while informing guests of your space. Hiring a marketing agency that has a professional photographer will ensure that your properties symmetry, ambiance and perfect angles are captured as well as the uniqueness your guests are searching for.

Every social post in hospitality marketing taps into the viewers five senses. Here are a few examples of common textures you would find within your feed and how they capture your senses.

## Sight

Clean lines, room symmetry, minimal décor, lush landscapes, calm seas.

## Taste

Breakfast croissant, buttery pasta, bubbly prosecco, sharp cheeses, crunchy brioche.

## Touch

fresh plush linens, velvet accent chairs, floury sand, soft bubbles.

## Smell

floral bouquet, glowing candle, any plated meal.

## Sound

Crashing waves, gentle breezes, live musicians, running waterfall shower,



INSPIRATION FOR YOUR NEXT SHOOT

# *Developing Your Photography Approach*

Before hiring a photographer, take a few moments to walk through the questions below to help identify shot locations and scenes for your shoot. This insight will give you and the photographer ideas for the types of props, models and scenery you need to capture that aligns with your guests needs.

What is the most desirable space at my property?

Where are the top three places my guests will visit/interact with?

What feature does my property have that my competition doesn't?

How can I incorporate the five senses into my shoot?

What age range are my ideal guests? What will they be doing during their stay and outside of our property?

What is most important to my guest?

How can I localize my photography to showcase our destination?



## 09/ *Addressing Your Guests Deepest Needs*

As curators of exceptional experiences, understanding your guests deepest needs builds brand loyalty and trust. It also positions you ahead of the competition. Think through your ideal guests daily life and what problems they are trying to overcome when escaping to your property.



# *Ease their biggest fears by sharing solutions.*

**Aside from airline delays, cancellations, and COVID-19 regulations, the biggest pitfall travelers can experience is a vacation that does not meet their expectations.**

Social media allows you to clearly share what their experience will be at your property through behind the scenes stories and sharing guests experiences. It also allows you to poll your audience directly and better understand their wants and needs. When you can address your traveler's biggest challenges you build, trust, empathy and brand loyalty. But how do you address their deepest troubles?

## *Problem*

Burnout from work.

Cooks for family every week.

Parents looking for reprieve.

Unfamiliar with destination location

## *Solution*

Escaping daily monotony with spa treatments, nature hikes, meditation gardens,

Chefs tasting course at fine dining restaurant, delivery grocery service, room service or dinner reservations through concierge.

Childcare recommendations, in-room childcare services, kids-only activities on premises.

Walkthrough of top attractions within 30 minutes of your property location, cultural experiences unique to your area, and a simple packing list.





## 10/ *Four Pillars of Hospitality Content*

The foundation of a strong social strategy rests on the four pillars of hospitality content. When your guests travel they are looking for these key themes in every vacation.

# *Rely on a strong foundation.*

Hospitality marketing is built upon four, strong content pillars which should be the base for all social media content themes. When writers block creeps in, step back to these four building blocks for inspiration.

## CONTENT PILLARS FOR HOSPITALITY

### *Location*

*Geographic Appeal*

Share the history, scenery, and unique appeal of your destination. Your environment is the top reason for tourism. Give your guests an insider look into your location.

### *Cuisine*

*Unique Palette Pleasers*

With food tourism on the rise, sharing local culinary cultures and customs gives guests a taste of travel you can't experience otherwise. Feature everything from food trucks to fine dining.

### *Amenities*

*Exclusive Property Features*

Amenities are the crowned jewel to your portfolio. It's the décor, the extra timeless touches that make your stay stand out from the rest. From goose down pillows to private saunas, your amenities are what make your property exclusive.

### *Activities*

*Culture Environment Immersion*

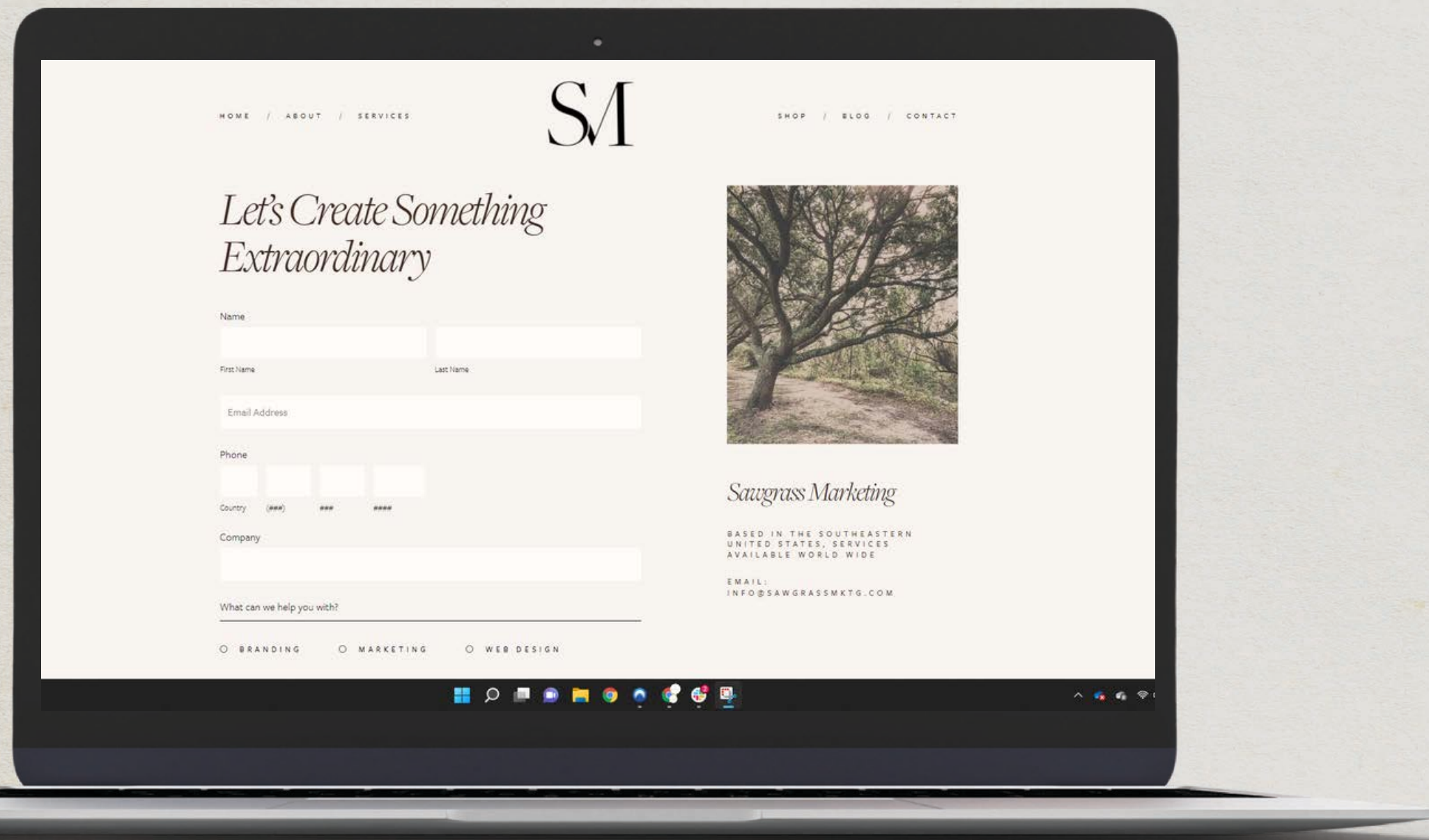
Give your guests a glimpse into how they will spend their days. Showcase the experiences surrounding your property - the spas, the natural preserves, the shopping, the hidden gems they can't find on their own.





## 11/ *Complimentary Consultation*

Let's optimize your social media strategy and see results faster when you take advantage of a complimentary 30-minute consultation.



# Ready to elevate your property and increase bookings?

You covered A LOT of insights, worksheets, and data around the future of hospitality marketing. And while we're confident you're going to take this handbook and RUN, we want to share how a custom social strategy will help you overcome any learning curve and you can cash in on bookings this season.

Head over to Sawgrass Marketing and complete our contact form and mention this guide to receive a complimentary 30-minute strategy session (valued at \$279).

COMPLIMENTARY STRATEGY SESSION

PLUS, JOIN OUR EXCLUSIVE COMMUNITY.

[HOSPITALITY MARKETING FB GROUP](#)