

DESTINATION NEWS: REBRANDING OF NEW MEXICO TOURISM



The state of New Mexico recently launched a tourism re-branding campaign that seeks to position the state as a worthwhile tourism destination. The state Tourism Department is largely involved in the funding the \$2.5 million campaign that includes advertising and niche marketing. Although the budget amount spent in efforts to rebrand New Mexico is significantly low, this initial investment is not a one-off cost, as the tourism department will continue to spend

on advertising the state.

At the top of this rebranding campaign is Monique Jacobson who is the state's Tourism Secretary. Her approach is to market and promote New Mexico as a state that has a rich culture as well as exhilarating outdoor expeditions. In totality, these tourism rebranding efforts fall under the lucidly elaborative banner of "New Mexico True". The Tourism Department is anticipating a boost in their campaign budget by state legislators.

So far, the Tourism Department has been able to launch advertisements across television networks. What differentiates the current ad campaigns with those that were done in the past is that the current ones take a more comprehensive approach. The current ad campaigns are not just advertising different towns or aspects of the city; they are marketing the state as a whole across different media channels.

The advertisements launched by the ministry of tourism have a double tourism re-branding goal. First is to eliminate misconceptions about New Mexico such as there is nothing to do in the state and that it is a desert wasteland. The other goal is to create a feeling of emotional connections so that those who visit the state and experience the culture will want to go back there over and over again.

The ad campaigns are focused on advertising New Mexico as a tourism destination that is favorable for different niches. These include families, golfers, skiers, and culture and art lovers. A Texas-based advertising firm is notably behind the creation of the "New Mexico True" ad campaigns. Vendor is a high profile media advertising and public relations firm that has created ad campaigns for renowned brands including Wal-Mart and BMW. As such, there is much anticipation that these latest efforts to revive New Mexico's image will yield fruit.

Admittedly, the task of positioning New Mexico as a local and international tourism destination of choice is an uphill one. This is especially true because most people in the country are completely unaware of New Mexico as a state let alone its cultural and natural attractions. This bias has mainly been due to New Mexico's geographical location as it nestles between the well-known and more popular states of Arizona and Colorado.

However, these neighboring states have acknowledged the tourism re-branding efforts of New Mexico and are looking for ways to market the region as a whole. This will ensure that the states in this particular region will take advantage of the promising international tourism. If this tourism re-branding is successful, it will go a long way in eliminating the entrenched ideas that people all over the country have about the state of New Mexico.

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