

# Tourism officials rebranding South Shore into Tahoe South

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Tahoe South. It's a place. It's an attitude. It's a feeling. It's a people. It is the South Shore.

"We know who we are. Now everyone else will too." That was the tagline in a promotional video shown at Thursday's Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority board meeting.

The fast-moving segment touched on all things South Shore. Real people doing all the things people moved here to do. The same things tourists envy locals for being able to enjoy 365 days a year.



A new name for the South Shore -- Tahoe South.

Gone are the mixed messages through various advertising and public relations campaigns through the multiple venues the word was delivered. In its place is a coordinated effort to deliver the same message, multiple ways, through an array of mediums. Bringing this promotional consistency means people will get used to seeing Tahoe South and hearing Tahoe South through online, television, radio, and social media outlets.

One cohesive brand is the outcome. While multiple components are involved to reflect the diversity of the region, it's not dominated by gaming and it's not some concept like "blue" that no one ever embraced.

When people say "Las Vegas" a variety of images emerge. That same idea, not the same images per se, are what marketing gurus are going after with "Tahoe South". As time goes by when people say Tahoe South the idea is it will evoke an image, feelings – ideally, a desire to plan a trip.

Expect to see it on T-shirts, tote bags, bandanas, stickers and other merchandise.

As people explore what Tahoe South is all about more in depth via the website – that Tahoe South logo will be there, the imagery will be familiar, but the content deeper, more rich.

Keeping with people's desire to be interactive online, the new website will allow people to blog about their experiences in Tahoe.

What started about 2.5 years ago will be complete on Monday when the tourism agency's website goes live.

To see the difference, go to the LTVA website between now and Sunday, and then go back after Monday.

"The complete reinvention of this brand will be done," Andy Berkenfield said of the website being finalized. With a glass of Champagne in his hand, he toasted the board for its tenacity to go forward, and his staff and others involved for what is being called a leading edge site.

Berkenfield is general manager of Duncan/Channon, LTVA's ad firm. While Noble Studios built the website, the two companies worked in concert to make it a reality.

Distinct winter and summer ad campaigns are part of the mix, too. This is the first winter LTVA has done a campaign beyond

its participation in Ski Lake Tahoe material. Usually it relies on the ski resorts to bring people to town.

“Come to the Wild Side” is the message geared toward ages 25-54 and families. The idea is Tahoe South is more hip, more fun, more energetic than the North Shore. A billboard in San Francisco and one on Interstate 80 eight miles west of the Highway 50 split will target drivers.

Buses along main routes in The City – including Market Street and the Financial District – will also be covered in advertising to lure people to Tahoe South.

“We want to bring the vibrant energy of the destination to life,” Jennifer Corrigan, account director with Duncan/Channon said.

While the ads will be up soon, they are not finalized so they can't be shown on *Lake Tahoe News* yet. It's abstract artistry of elements that when examined closely are crystal clear. They look more like murals than a traditional billboard.

At the Dec. 8 meeting it was also decided what direction to go with the \$1 million 2012 summer ad campaign. This is the same amount that was spent this year.

The goal is to increase awareness of Tahoe South and support key summer events.

Gone will be the television spots except on Comcast during Giants and A's games and what is contractually required with NBC for the celebrity golf tournament.

“Online is the most cost-efficient (advertising) out there,” Laura Davis, associate communications planning director with Duncan/Channon said. “People are spending more time online.”