
File #: 2016-366, Version: 1

City Council

MEETING DATE: 9/14/2016

TITLE:
Desert Sun Advertising Campaign and Sponsorship

FROM:
Chris Parman, Communications / Events Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council approve a multi-month advertising contract with the Desert Sun newspaper and accept its sponsorship for the Cathedral City 35th Anniversary Celebration and Hot Air Balloon Festival as well as Cathedral City LGBT Days.

BACKGROUND:

The Desert Sun newspaper has the largest print circulation in the Coachella Valley at 50,000 subscribers and more than 165,000 readers. The Desert Sun with its print and digital website reaches 47% of the total population in the Valley.

The City Council approved a multi-month advertising contract last spring that promoted many of the City events such as the Cathedral City Hot Air Balloon Festival, Cathedral City LGBT Days, Cuisine & Art Tuesdays, Movies in the Park, Shorts Showcase, and the Cent\$ational Mile of Savings. The campaign offered three 1/4 page color ads per week. These events received widespread recognition and increased attendance and sales. The ad campaign also allowed us to highlight the efforts of our police department in lowering crime, the work of our economic development department partnering with local businesses to improve their facilities and to build new ones, and the City's efforts to reduce our carbon footprint through the many programs offered by our conservation and environmental division.

DISCUSSION:

The Desert Sun has noticed the success of Cathedral City's signature events and is offering a sponsorship tied to a multi-month advertising campaign. The campaign would offer three 1/4 ads per week starting September 20, 2016 through November 20, 2016 and then picking back up on January 10, 2017 through March 26, 2017. This will allow us to advertise the Desert Treasure Hunt, Cathedral City 35th Anniversary Celebration & Hot Air Balloon Festival, Halloween Spooktacular, FallFest, Healing Field, Movies in the Park, Santa & Seasonal Lights, West Coast Artists Art Festival, Taste of Jalisco, Restaurant and Art Week, Cathedral Cove Historic Homes & Artists Tour, and Cathedral City LGBT Days. The campaign also allows us to insert promotional advertising focused

on our multiple city departments and investments to our community.

This print campaign allows the City to continue to receive a rock bottom, non-profit rate of \$290 per 1/4 color ad that would otherwise cost \$1,000 per ad.

The campaign also includes a digital media component that places our ads on the Desert Sun electronic newspaper and promotional ads on Facebook. The last social media campaign produced amazing results for the City. During a four-month Facebook campaign, the City's Facebook site reached 256,000 viewers, produced nearly 4,500 clicks, and increased our page LIKES from 1,000 to a little over 4,000. This is significant as each of those who LIKED our Facebook site now receive our messages posted on Facebook. Prior to the ad campaign, our postings would reach 500 to 3,500 viewers depending on the interest of the story. Now, our postings usually receive 1,500 views to more than 16,000 views.

If the Desert Sun campaign is approved by the City Council, then the Desert Sun will become an official sponsor of the Cathedral City's 35th Anniversary & Hot Air Balloon Festival as well as Cathedral City LGBT Days. Their sponsorship would be valued at \$7,000.00 which would provide an additional thirteen 1/4 page ads or increasing thirteen ads as part of the campaign to 1/2 page ads.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed Desert Sun multi-month print and social media digital campaign is \$20,600. This would also provide us with an additional \$7,000 sponsorship from the Desert Sun. The funds would come out of the Special Events budget.

ATTACHMENTS:

DS Previous Facebook Stats