

Brand USA Background

Brand USA is the destination marketing organization for the United States, our mission is to increase incremental international visitation, spend, and market share to fuel the nation's economy and enhance the image of the USA worldwide. Working closely with more than 800 partner organizations, we invite the world to explore the exceptional, diverse, and almost limitless travel experiences available in the United States of America.

To market USA tourism, Brand USA focuses on video storytelling. We know the best way to move people -- literally and emotionally -- is by showcasing the exceptional, diverse and real experiences found in our 50 States, 5 Territories, and the District of Columbia, including both rural and urban. We do this through a multi-screen video strategy -- mobile, desktop, Over The Top Television (OTT), Out of Home (OOH), and giant screen films -- to ensure we're hitting our core audiences at the right place, at the right time.

We focus on video storytelling because travelers increasingly turn to videos to research what they're going to get before they purchase. Google data has shown that consumers move through the purchase journey on their own terms, seamlessly shifting between search and video. 80% of people say they switch between search and video when researching products and 55% of people that search for a product go on to learn more by viewing a video on YouTube before buying or deciding. (Haller, 2019)

In other words, when consumers see something in a video that interests them, they shift to a search engine to look up more information. Additionally, when they search for something they're interested in and a relevant video pops up, they watch it. This back and forth behavior is typical and has been adopted as a way of using the internet. We tap into this behavior with our multi-screen video strategy. As people use video to learn about a product before they purchase, our product being USA travel, we work to have the right video available to the consumer at the right time and place.

Haller, M. (2019, May). Search, video, and the purchase journey - Think with Google. Retrieved from <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/advertising-channels/search-video-purchase-journey/>

GoUSA TV: A Multi-Channel Network

The ways travelers form perceptions of a place have changed dramatically. Entertainment and pop culture have always helped influence the zeitgeist of travel, but with more content more easily accessible than ever before, the influence of entertainment and its ability to change behavior has compounded.

GoUSA TV launched on February 2018 as an extension of our video storytelling strategy to immerse audiences in an entertainment-led point of view of the USA. GoUSA TV is available on Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire, Google Chromecast, iOS, Android, and YouTube. GoUSA TV gives us the space to curate, produce, and partner on the production of content so we can better harness the power that entertainment has to get people to book their next trip.

Channel Description

Because every place has a story.

Introducing GoUSA TV. The premier travel entertainment channel, available at your fingertips with no subscription, no fees and no logins required.

Watch full episodes, documentaries and films, told from the diverse perspectives of real people across America.

Download. Escape. Explore. GoUSA TV.

Objectives

We want consumers to feel positive affection and inspiration to travel to the USA (stimulate wanderlust), engage with our content (view more and often), install or subscribe to our channel, and consider a USA trip over other destinations. GoUSA TV will do this through entertainment-led video content. For FY20 our key objective is:

More people watching more content for more minutes

To achieve this we've outlined the following goals for the next year:

- Grow awareness of GoUSA TV as a multi-channel entertainment source to international travelers and video viewers across all platforms (OTT, app, YouTube)
- Grow channel in views and view duration across all platforms
- Grow our content library to:
 - Illustrate the depth of diversity in destinations and experiences the USA has to offer that touch on a multitude of different traveler passions points
 - Include more plot driven narratives

Audience

Everyday culturally conscious video viewers in international markets. They look down at their phones to escape from their immediate surroundings. For them, travel is the ultimate manifestation of this shared desire: to break free from the routine of everyday life, explore who they are in a different world, and feel connected to something beyond their familiar orbit. For every 100 travel shows they watch, they'll plan one trip - but the opportunity to expose themselves to new cultures, even if it's just through a screen, is enough to keep them dreaming.

Strategy

Get: Culturally curious video viewers in international markets

To: Feel positive affinity and emotional connections to a diverse set of U.S. destinations

By: Curating entertainment led storytelling with a distinct sense of place

Because: GoUSA TV is uniquely situated in the travel category to connect travelers to all the possible experiences in the USA without having to facilitate a transaction

Challenges

- Finding everyday relevance beyond moments of active trip planning. How do we create meaningful, inspiring, and entertaining content that aligns with the many passion points of our audiences?
- Driving continued engagement.

Messaging Framework

Our global messaging framework outlines the foundational approach we use to tell the story of the USA. Any story we tell should always touch on Possibility, Proximity, and Welcome

- Unique Product Benefit: **Possibility**
 - Whether geographical, emotional or sensory, the vast range of experiences you can have while traveling in the USA are unique, diverse and totally up to you.

- Value Proposition: **Proximity**
 - The interconnectedness of USA points of interest means less time spent traveling and more time enjoying the wide range of experiences available.
- Tone of Voice: **Welcome**
 - Dear World, we invite you to visit the USA and discover everything our 50 states, five territories and one district have to offer. There is so much you haven't seen and we'd love to show you around.

Inspirational Content Themes

Our content themes focus on personal, emotional and human themes we've all seen in movies and literature. For GoUSA TV, these themes drive the narrative but the destination or experience is always the focus. **The destination is the hero**, but the story or characters are the lens by which we learn about that hero. In other words, the plot is driven by (moves forward with) the thematic experiences of the characters, but the destination is always the protagonist of the story.

- Friendship
- Self-discovery
- Falling in love
- Adventure
- Achievement

Content Selection Guidelines

Regardless of whether it is licensed or an original production, we have a singular focus on how we approach and evaluate content:

- Prioritizes storytelling over destination information (story arc is important). The story must have a plot with concrete beginning, middle, and end for viewers to follow
- Highlights uniqueness and builds a sense of place by featuring cultural elements such as food, music, identities, traditions, etc.
- Shares something completely new and unexpected, or shines a new light on something well-known
- Builds affection for the place and characters

Most importantly, ALL submissions, whether an original production idea or licensed content, must have a clear plot that drives the narrative from beginning to end. The plot must have relatable characters, a simple, clear conflict, and a design that supports the story.

Ultimately, the best videos make us think: "I want to go do that thing, in that place, with those people now."

Additional content specs:

- We are looking for video content from two-minutes to two-hours in length.
- Episodic series are preferred, but we will accept one-off videos, short films and feature films on a case by case basis - how well the content addresses this brief and adheres to the content guidelines
- Interested in talent driven; although not a requirement
- Great characters that viewers can get attached to are important
- If episodic, episodes should build on each other to encourage binge-watching
 - Stakes necessary; audience should have something to root for
 - Should not feel editorial or a tour through a destination's highlights
- Open to all formats (non-scripted, scripted, documentary, reality, gameshow, live...)

- If non-scripted, must feel authentic and real; never contrived or over-sanitized
- If there is brand integration, it must be organic
- Must cover USA destinations only
- Always a sense of place (serves as pivotal character in story)
- Unless your proposed project is already an existing series, we will create a pilot as proof of concept before committing to a full series run

Because we already have much culinary content, we are not currently looking for food programming, or videos of locals exploring their favorite restaurants.

We are seeking content about road trips, outdoor adventures, culture and events, although we aren't limited to these areas.

Original Content: Proposal Specs

Please submit a brief treatment or proposal of your concept. Proposal format is open to the presentation style and delivery of the proposing team. We will accept proposals through September 20th and must include the following:

- Type: TV/Web series, documentary, or feature film
- Format: Story ideas must touch on key messaging framework, align with one or more of the content themes, and adhere to all content guidelines
- Attached talent (if applicable) -- please send on camera links + social media #s
- Clear budget estimation
- Examples of previous similar work and/or case studies
- Bio and company history of content creator/production company/director

Proposals that include a distribution strategy (beyond GoUSA TV) to increase awareness of GoUSA TV and its specific programming will be prioritized.

Content Licensing: Specs

At minimum, we seek non-exclusive, international rights for on-demand for a 3-year period for OTT, app and in-flight. Please send us the following by September 20th to review:

- Links to trailer and full episode(s) for review
- Must include editable trailers to drive consumers to GoUSA TV for use digital worldwide

Timeline

Brief released: Thursday, August 29th

Proposals due: Friday, September 20th

Brand USA Responses by: Friday, October 25th

Email proposals/links to: RFPAdmin@thebrandusa.com