

# SLO Marketing Activities Report

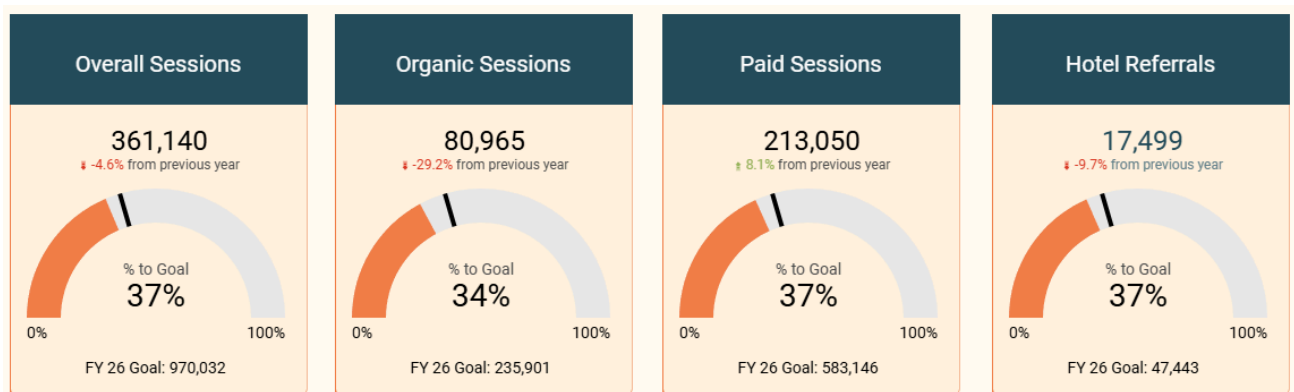
Key Performance Highlights  
November 2025



## At-a-Glance Highlights

- **Total Website Sessions:** 74,186 (+16% YoY)
- **Top Traffic Source:** Paid Social (+50% YoY)
- **Total Lodging Referrals:** 2,986 (+29% YoY)
- **Top Performing Ads:** SLO Life Coach and MidWeekend Ads across Display, Demand Gen, and PMAX channels saw:
  - +116% YoY increase in website sessions
  - +145% YoY increase in lodging referrals
  - all at a +5% YoY increase in spend
- **Public Relations:** 11/12/25: SheBuysTravel: 10 Festive Things to Do Near Los Angeles (Kim Orlando) (Combined Reach: 13,002,683)

## YTD KPI Performance



**Expected Pace through November: 41%**



## Overall Performance Summary

Despite industry-wide organic traffic declines of 20–40%, VisitSLO.com saw a **12% YoY increase in overall website traffic**. Strong performance from the SLO Life Coach and MidWeekend paid campaigns has helped offset the 29% drop in organic traffic. **Paid social click-through rates increased 49%**, driving a **50% lift in paid social traffic with only a 1% spend increase**. **Display, Demand Gen, and PMAX campaigns** collectively delivered a **116% increase in traffic with only a 5% increase in spend**.

Organic traffic has historically driven a third of total site traffic and contributed to nearly half of all partner referrals, while paid social (an upper-funnel channel tactic) has contributed to only 1% of partner referrals and 12% of total site traffic.

Even so, **partner referrals overall grew 19%, with lodging referrals up 29% YoY**.

As the way people search online continues to shift with the rise of AI, we are evolving our SEO approach to elevate rich media and amplify the new SLO Life Coach campaign.

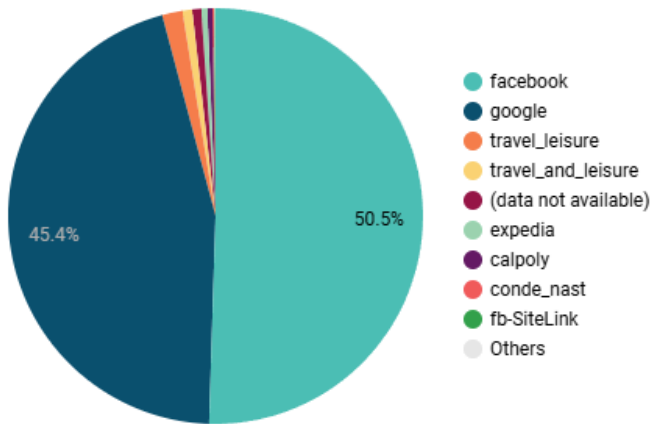
## Paid Media Snapshot

- **Paid Search**
  - Impressions: 50,181 (+2% YoY)
  - Clicks: 5,650 (+19% YoY)
  - CTR: 11.26% (+17% YoY)
  - Sessions: 5,824 (+30% YoY)
  - Lodging Referrals: 1,953 (+38% YoY)
  - Cost: \$17,574 (+6% YoY)
- **Paid Social**
  - Impressions: 1,207,241 (+10% YoY)
  - Clicks: 38,080 (+63% YoY)
  - CTR: 3.15% (+49% YoY)
  - Sessions: 18,315 (+50% YoY)
  - Lodging Referrals: 18 (-31% YoY)
  - Cost: \$14,981 (+1% YoY)
- **Display, Demand Gen, & PMAX**
  - Impressions: 1,520,834 (+3% YoY)
  - CTR: 0.93% (+1% YoY)
  - Clicks: 14,213 (+4% YoY)
  - Sessions: 14,855 (+116% YoY)
  - Lodging Referrals: 269 (+145% YoY)
  - Cost: \$7,566 (+5% YoY)

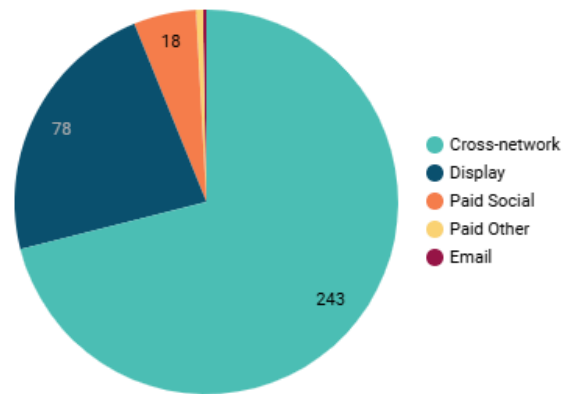
- **Video**

- Impressions: 143,856 (-61% YoY)
- CTR: 1.38% (+48% YoY)
- Clicks: 1,983 (-42% YoY)
- Sessions: 1,680 (-20% YoY)
- Lodging Referrals: 17 (+1,600% YoY)
- Cost: \$3,077 (+23% YoY)

**Sessions by Source**




**Lodging Referrals by Channel**



**Paid Media YoY Performance**

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Sessions<br><b>37,193</b><br>↑ 61.6%        | All Partner Referrals<br><b>2,470</b><br>↑ 87.4% | Lodging Referrals<br><b>342</b><br>↑ 144.3%    |
| Things to Do<br><b>1,602</b><br>↑ 149.1%    | Hotel Referrals<br><b>321</b><br>↑ 167.5%        | Homestay Referrals<br><b>21</b><br>↑ 5.0%      |
| Food & Drink<br><b>508</b><br>↑ 2.6%        | Newsletter Signups<br><b>33</b><br>↑ 94.1%       | Event Referrals<br><b>76</b><br>↑ 68.9%        |
| Engagement rate<br><b>32.55%</b><br>↑ 15.2% | Views per session<br><b>1.29</b><br>↓ -5.1%      | Avg. Engagement Time<br><b>16.62</b><br>↑ 4.0% |



**Key Insight:** Since the launch of the new SLO Life Coach campaign and evergreen MidWeekend ads, we've seen outstanding performance improvements compared to last year. In November, at a +4% YoY increase in spend, paid channels (excluding Paid Search) saw a +62% increase in total website traffic, an 87% increase in total partner referrals, and a 144% increase in lodging referrals. In this time, we've also seen strong performance improvements in our Performance Max campaign, which contributed 84% of paid media partner referrals. Our new campaign is reaching more potential travelers in a way that resonates and ultimately drives more engaged website traffic and partner referrals.

## Owned Media Snapshot

### Email Marketing

We sent one email in November that spotlighted holiday events, a giveaway on social, and encouraged readers to book a stay. Despite a slight YoY decrease in total sessions and partner referrals, readers of our newsletter this November showed increased interest in Holiday events and the Instagram giveaway. This year, 35% of readers clicked on the content in the hero section (holiday events) compared to last year's hero content (restaurants and dining). Readers were also more interested in the Instagram giveaway this year, resulting in a 36% YoY increase in clicks to the Instagram pages mentioned in the newsletter, helping to drive more followers and awareness of Visit SLO.

- **Emails Sent:** 1
- **Avg. Open Rate:** 41.9% (33.25% [Benchmark](#))
- **Avg. CTR:** 1.6% (2.56% [Benchmark](#))
- **Total Sessions:** 607 (-10% YoY)
- **Total Partner Referrals:** 43 (-39% YoY)
- **Total Lodging Referrals:** 18 (-45% YoY)
- **Engagement Rate:** 56% (-4% YoY)
- **Average Engagement Time Per Session:** 54s (-14% YoY)
- **Page Views Per Session:** 2.77 (+9% YoY)

### Website

- **Total Sessions:** 71,721 (+12% YoY)
- **Lodging Partner Referrals:** 2,986 (+29% YoY)
- **Avg. Pages/Session:** 1.66 (-9% YoY)
- **Average Session Duration:** 1m 58s (+9% YoY)
- **Top Lodging Referral Channels:** Paid Social (25% of total site traffic), Organic Search (18% of total site traffic), Cross-Network (12% of total site traffic)

## SEO + Content

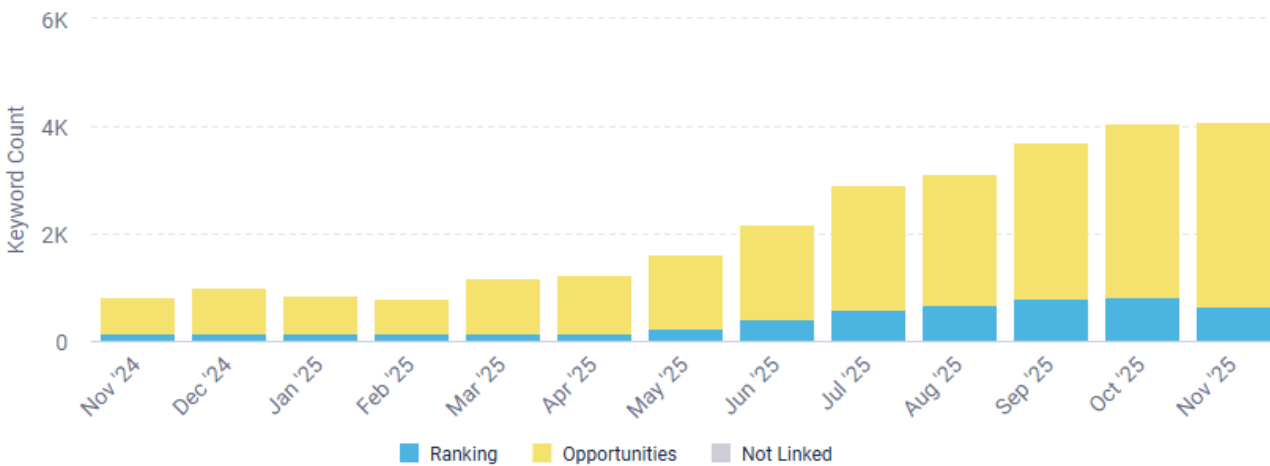
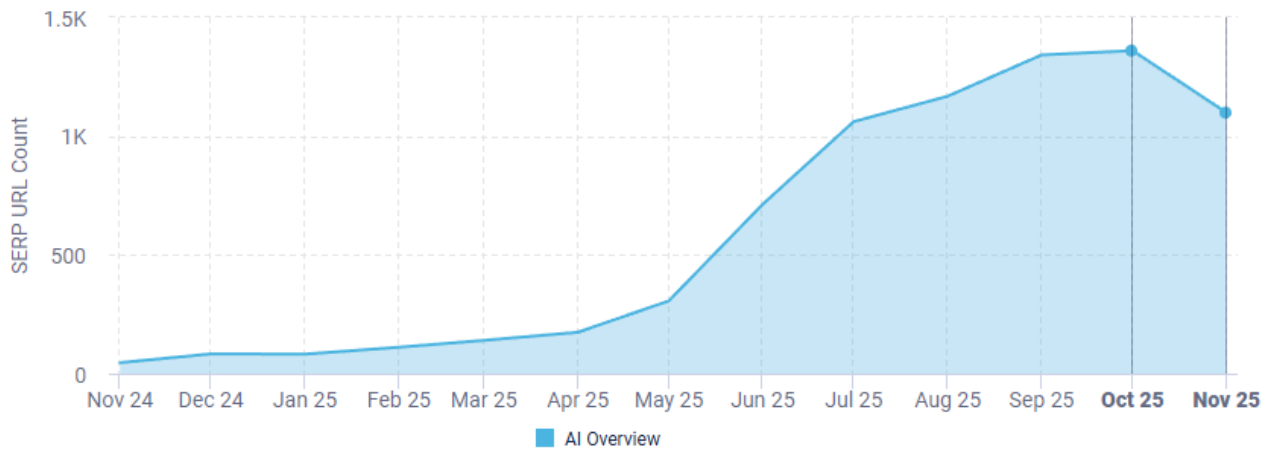
- **Organic Search Sessions:** 13,393 (-29% YoY)
- **Organic Search Partner Referrals:** 2,193 (-29% YoY)
- **Organic Search Impressions:** 1.39 Mil (-12% YoY)
- **Organic Search Clicks:** 9.91K (-34% YoY)
- **Organic Search CTR:** 0.7% (-30% YoY)
- **Page 1 Keywords:** 4.3K (-13%)
- **Sessions from LLMs (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc):** 196 (+284% YoY)
- **Top Click Losses:** things to do in San Luis Obispo, Sunset Drive-In, things to do in SLO, what to do in SLO, things to do San Luis Obispo

**Key Takeaway:** The largest declines in organic clicks are coming from *things to do* queries. VisitSLO.com continues to rank in position 1, but the search engine results page (SERP) is now dominated by AI Overviews and new SERP features that surface activity ideas and third-party links, reducing traditional click-through opportunities.

Amid this rapidly shifting search landscape and broader changes in how users engage with search and AI, organic traffic declined 29% YoY in November, which aligns with trends across the Travel and Tourism industry. **Engagement and conversion rates remain stable YoY**, indicating that traffic quality has not declined.

We are continuing to monitor Visit SLO's visibility within AI search results, while pursuing tactics that help to increase Visit SLO's likelihood of being cited within AI results.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "things to do in san luis obispo". The search bar is at the top with the query and search icons. Below the search bar is an "AI Overview" section. The AI Overview text reads: "In San Luis Obispo, you can explore the historic downtown by visiting the Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, walking through Bubblegum Alley, and shopping at unique boutiques. Other popular activities include attending the Thursday night Farmers' Market, hiking trails like Bishop's Peak, and visiting museums like the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art or the Children's Museum. For a unique experience, you can also stay at the iconic Madonna Inn or explore nearby attractions like Hearst Castle." To the right of this text is a small image of a street scene. Below the AI Overview is a section titled "Downtown and local attractions" with a list of items: "Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa", "Bubblegum Alley", "Thursday Night Farmers' Market", "San Luis Obispo Museum of Art", "SLO Children's Museum", and "Fremont Theatre". To the right of the AI Overview and list are three search result cards. The first card is "Top Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County - Tripadvisor". The second card, "Downtown San Luis Obispo | Visit Downtown SLO", is highlighted with a red border and contains the text "Countless Things to Do in Downtown SLO" and "Visitors can explore the famous Thursday night...". The third card is "12 Kid-Friendly Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County". At the bottom of the search results is a "Show all" button.



## Creative & Web Maintenance

### Website Maintenance, Repair & Optimization (MRO)

- Plugins and Updates
  - ACF Pro
  - Gravity Forms
  - Permalink Manager Pro
  - Events Calendar
  - Events Calendar Pro
  - Tiny PNG
  - Wp Croncontrol
  - WP Mail SMTP
  - Yoast



## Website Services

- November Website Services Efforts:
  - 7.25h out of 120 hours were utilized for November 2025
    - Remaining hours: 89
  - Work Accomplished: Stakeholder Additions, homepage and event updates, ideating future enhancements for the site

## Creative Services

- November Creative Services Efforts:
  - .75h out of 150 hours were utilized for November 2025
    - Remaining hours: 130.75
  - Work Accomplished: New Biz Blog QC wrap-up

## Earned Media Activity

### Earned Media Highlights

Total Impressions/Circulation: 13,024,654

Placements: 23

### Press Coverage

- 11/12/25: **SheBuysTravel**: 10 Festive Things to Do Near Los Angeles (Kim Orlando)  
(Reach: 21,971)
  - 22 Regional syndications (Combined Reach: 13,002,683)

### **Upcoming Individual Press Trips:**

- January dates TBC: Cassandra Brooklyn (National Geographic, AFAR, AARP)