

SLO Marketing Activities Report

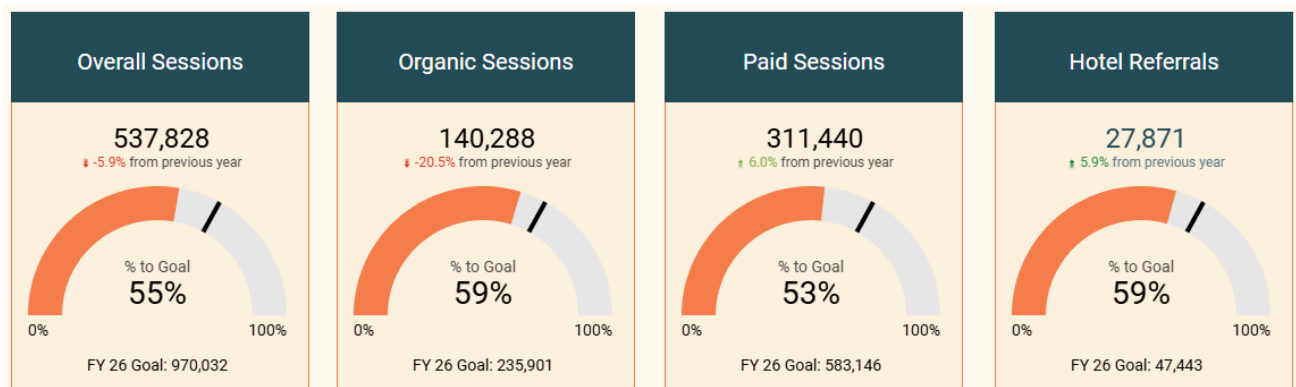
Key Performance Highlights
February 2026



At-a-Glance Highlights

- **Total Website Sessions:** 78,977 (-1% YoY)
- **Top Traffic Source:** Paid Social 24,929 (+6% YoY)
- **Total Lodging Referrals:** 4,864 (+49% YoY)
- **Top Performing Ads:**
 - SLO Life Coach | 65+ | Video | Culinary (6.54% CTR)
 - SLO Life Coach | Wine & Dine | Video | Intro (5.37% CTR)
 - SLO Life Coach | Remarketing | Video | Intro (5.20% CTR)
- **Earned Media (Public Relations):** 379,502,742 Impressions/Circulation across 5 secured placements

YTD KPI Performance



Expected Pace through February: 58%



Overall Performance Summary

Despite industry-wide organic traffic declines of 20%–40%, VisitSLO.com has maintained relatively flat **overall website traffic YoY**. Strong paid performance has continued to contribute large YoY improvements that have greatly helped to offset organic traffic losses with large improvements in paid efficiency due to the new SLO Life Coach campaign assets.

While our overall sessions and paid sessions KPIs are trailing slightly behind goal, our paid media efforts tapered off in December and started picking up steam again in February, and we expect to see improvements in our percent to goal in the next few months.

At a 10% increase in total paid traffic, the SLO Life Coach campaign and evergreen MidWeekend messaging have greatly contributed to YoY improvements in efficiency and conversion, resulting in a 101% increase in paid partner referrals, a 75% increase in lodging referrals, a 41% increase in engagement rate, and a 71% increase in average engagement time.

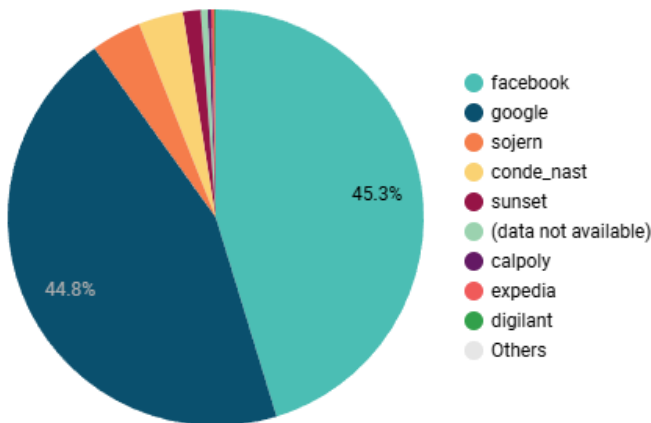
We are continuing to implement new creative assets for the SLO Life Coach campaign, including the new short-form video cutdowns on select paid channels while featuring the full-length videos on our paid landing pages and across other organic pages on the site. We will also be rolling out the new SLO Life Tips short-form videos to drive further brand awareness and consideration in upper and mid-funnel channels.

Paid Media Snapshot

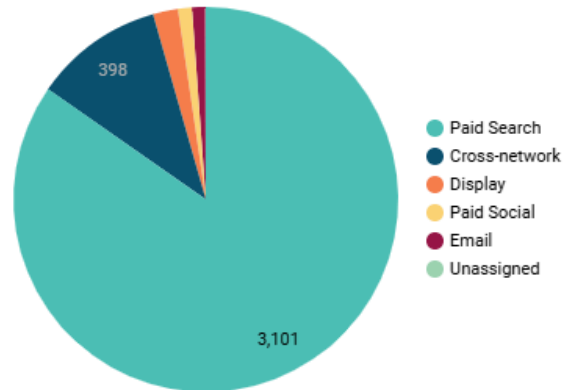
- **Paid Search**
 - Sessions: 6,132 (+46% YoY)
 - Impressions: 50,126 (+21% YoY)
 - Clicks: 6,142 (+44% YoY)
 - CTR: 12.25% (+19% YoY)
 - Lodging Referrals: 3,102 (+71% YoY)
 - Cost: \$18,835 (+5% YoY)
- **Paid Social**
 - Sessions: 24,904 (+5% YoY)
 - Impressions: 2,779,684 (+22% YoY)
 - Clicks: 66,675 (+23% YoY)
 - CTR: 2.40% (+1% YoY)
 - Total Referrals: 80 (-14% YoY)
 - Engagement Rate: 22.11% (+55% YoY)
 - Cost: \$23,059 (-1% YoY)

- **Display, Demand Gen, & PMAx**
 - Sessions: 16,508 (+91% YoY)
 - Impressions: 1,236,511 (-45% YoY)
 - Clicks: 17,173 (-16% YoY)
 - CTR: 1.39% (+54% YoY)
 - Lodging Referrals: 404 (+120% YoY)
 - Cost: \$11,589 (+31% YoY)
- **Video**
 - Sessions: 1,811 (+11% YoY)
 - Impressions: 197,901 (-7% YoY)
 - Clicks: 2,637 (+5% YoY)
 - CTR: 1.33% (+13% YoY)
 - Lodging Referrals: 13
 - Cost: \$2,214 (+10% YoY)

Sessions by Source



Lodging Referrals by Channel



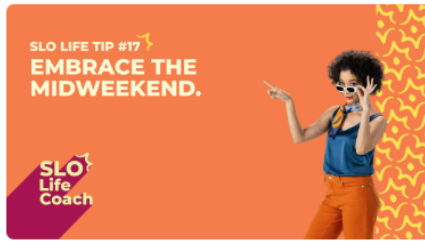


Key Insight: Paid media saw a very strong February with large improvements in conversion efficiency and engagement. Paid Search and Performance Max campaigns saw a 70% and 150% improvement in total conversions, respectively, despite only a total increase in spend of 12%. The large improvements in engagement metrics also signal that our ads are showing up in front of the right people at the right time with messaging that resonates.

Owned Media Snapshot

Email Marketing

We sent one email in February that highlighted the MidWeekend in SLO, with the hero content and primary CTA leading to the MidWeekend page. Ultimately, 25% of the traffic went to the MidWeekend page, with another 18% of traffic going to the MidWeekend deals page. The email also promoted our romantic getaway itinerary and featured our first promotion of SLO Film Fest in 2026. The 49% decrease in sessions was mostly attributed to sending two emails in February of 2025, and we saw great improvements in engagement metrics this year, with a 16% increase in engagement rate and a 33% increase in average engagement time, indicating that our email was well-received and engaged our readers.



The fun doesn't stop when the weekend ends. In San Luis Obispo, we lean way into what we call the MidWeekend, because every day feels like a Saturday here.

Go with the flow. Shop a little longer. Sip sun-soaked wines. Explore the very best of California's Central Coast. All without the weekend crowds.

Top it all off with dozens of [MidWeekend offers](#) from restaurants all over town and treat yourself to even more ways to live the SLO Life.

[Plan Your MidWeekend](#)



- **Emails Sent:** 1
- **Avg. Open Rate:** 13.1% (15.70% [Benchmark](#))
- **Avg. Click Rate:** 1.3% (1.6% [Benchmark](#))
- **Total Sessions:** 584 (-49% YoY)
- **Total Partner Referrals:** 109 (-11% YoY)
- **Total Lodging Referrals:** 58 (-24% YoY)
- **Conversion Rate:** 8.56% (+32% YoY)
- **Engagement Rate:** 57% (+16% YoY)
- **Average Engagement Time Per Session:** 1m 12s (+33% YoY)
- **Page Views Per Session:** 2.7 (+13% YoY)

Website

- **Total Sessions:** 78,977 (-1% YoY)
- **Lodging Partner Referrals:** 4,864 (+49% YoY)
- **Avg. Pages/Session:** 1.8 (+8% YoY)
- **Average Session Duration:** 0m 31s (+24% YoY)
- **Top Lodging Referral Channels:** Paid Search (64% of total lodging referrals), Organic Search (16% of total lodging referrals), Cross-Network (8% total lodging referrals)

SEO + Content

- **Organic Search Sessions:** 15,463 (-15% YoY)
- **Organic Search Partner Referrals:** 3,393 (+6% YoY)
- **Organic Search Impressions:** 1.6 Mil (+5% YoY)
- **Organic Search Clicks:** 11.4K (-19% YoY)
- **Organic Search CTR:** 0.7% (-22% YoY)
- **Page 1 Keywords:** 4.8K (Flat YoY)
- **Sessions from LLMs (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc):** 238 (+303% YoY)
- **Partner Referrals from LLMs (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc):** 39 (+225% YoY)
- **Top Impression Gains:** Hearst Castle, San Luis Obispo Weather, SLO weather, SLO
- **Top Click Losses:** things to do in San Luis Obispo, things to do in SLO, sunset drive in

Key Takeaway: While February saw a 15% decrease in organic sessions, we saw a 26% increase in organic search conversion rates, resulting in a 6% increase in total organic partner referrals. Strong improvements in engagement metrics indicate that while total organic search traffic is down, the people who are coming to the site are more engaged and ready to explore SLO more than past users.

The homepage saw a 50% increase in organic search traffic, while some pages, like our things to do hub, saw a 25% decrease. Specific things to do pages, like the SLO Downtown page, saw a 64% increase in traffic, indicating that as people explore more detailed searches, they're more likely to explore a page on the site regarding a specific topic.

The largest declines in organic clicks are coming from *things to do* queries. VisitSLO.com continues to rank in position 1 for "things to do in San Luis Obispo", 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, resulting in a 53% decrease in clicks from that query.


Amid this rapidly shifting search landscape and broader changes in how users engage with search and AI, organic traffic declined 15% YoY in February, which was significantly lower than we've been seeing the last several months and lower than trends we've seen across the Travel and Tourism industry.

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.

We are seeing Visit SLO used as a cited source in the AI Overviews with a highlighted link to the website on the sidebar.

things to do in san luis obispo

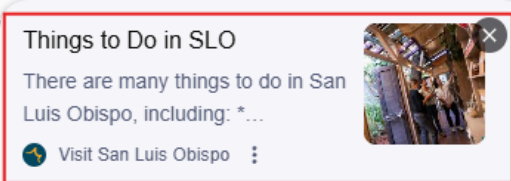
AI Overview +11



San Luis Obispo (SLO) offers a mix of historic, cultural, and outdoor activities, featuring a vibrant downtown, scenic hikes, and nearby coastal attractions. Top things to do include exploring [Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa](#), visiting [Bubblegum Alley](#), browsing the [Thursday Farmers' Market](#), hiking Bishop Peak, and visiting the nearby [Hearst Castle](#). [Visit San Luis Obispo +2](#)

Top AI

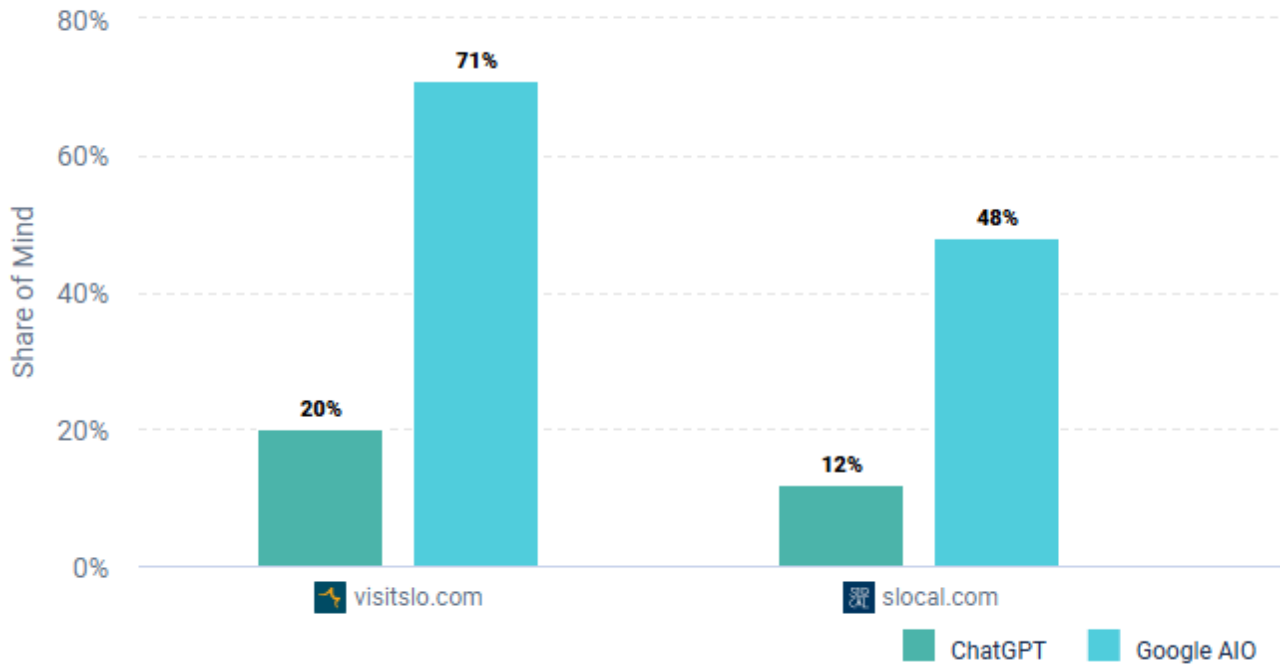
- **Do** Things to Do in SLO
There are many things to do in San Luis Obispo, including: *...
[Visit San Luis Obispo +2](#)
- **Icon** Area Attractions - English
- **Hea** Department - Cal Poly, San...
There are many attractions near Cal Poly SLO, including: * **Hear...
[Cal Poly +2](#)
- **Ma**



Outdoor Adventure & Nature

- **Hiking:** Hike Bishop Peak for panoramic views (the tallest of the "Nine Sisters" volcanic peaks) or try the easier Terrace Hill trail.
- **Beaches:** Relax at nearby Pismo Beach, known for its pier and dunes, or visit Morro Bay to see the iconic Morro Rock.

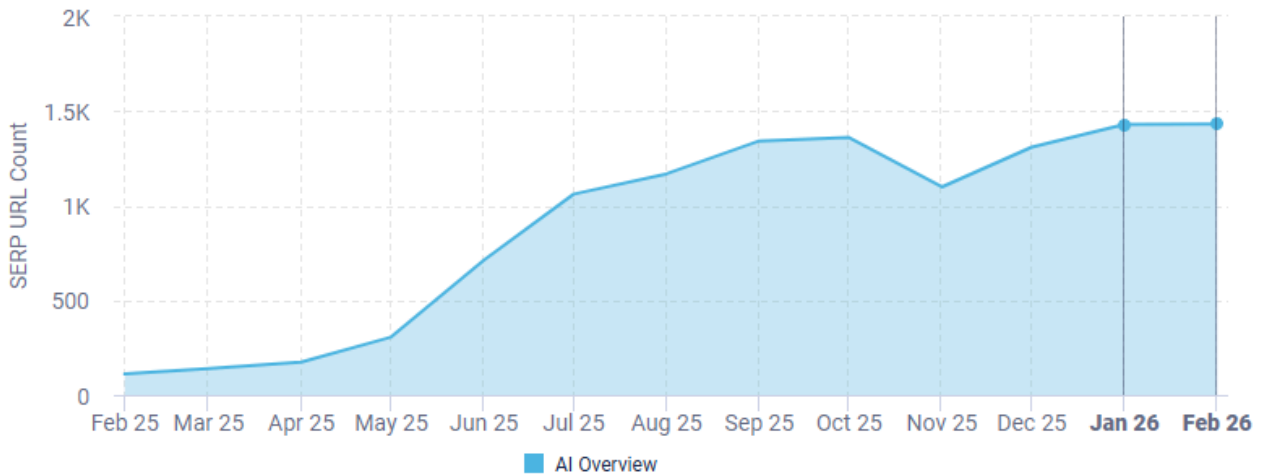
ALL ENGINES: BRAND VS. TOP 5 TRACKED COMPETITORS

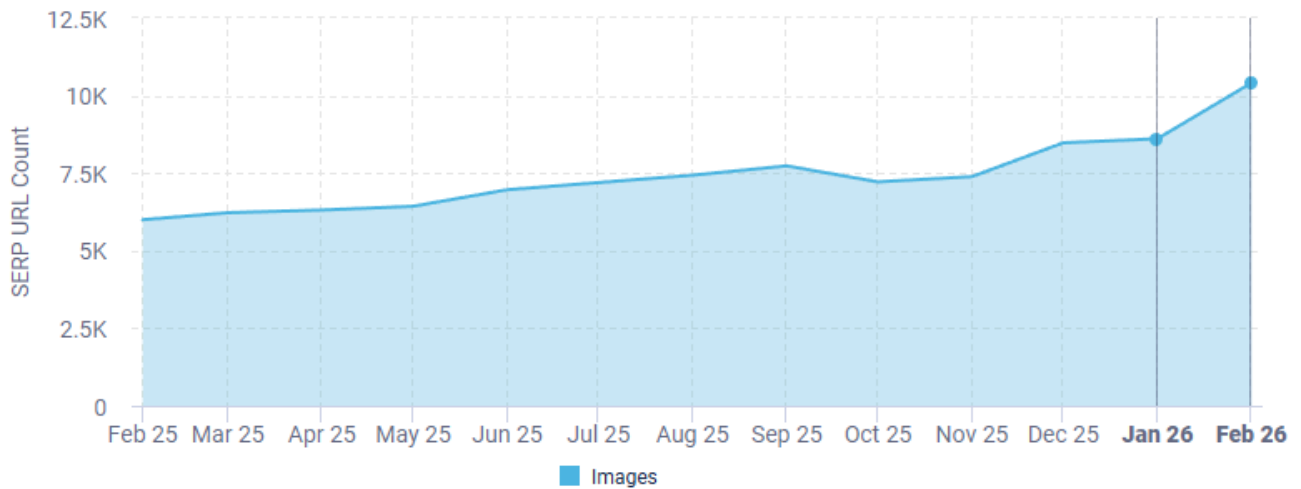
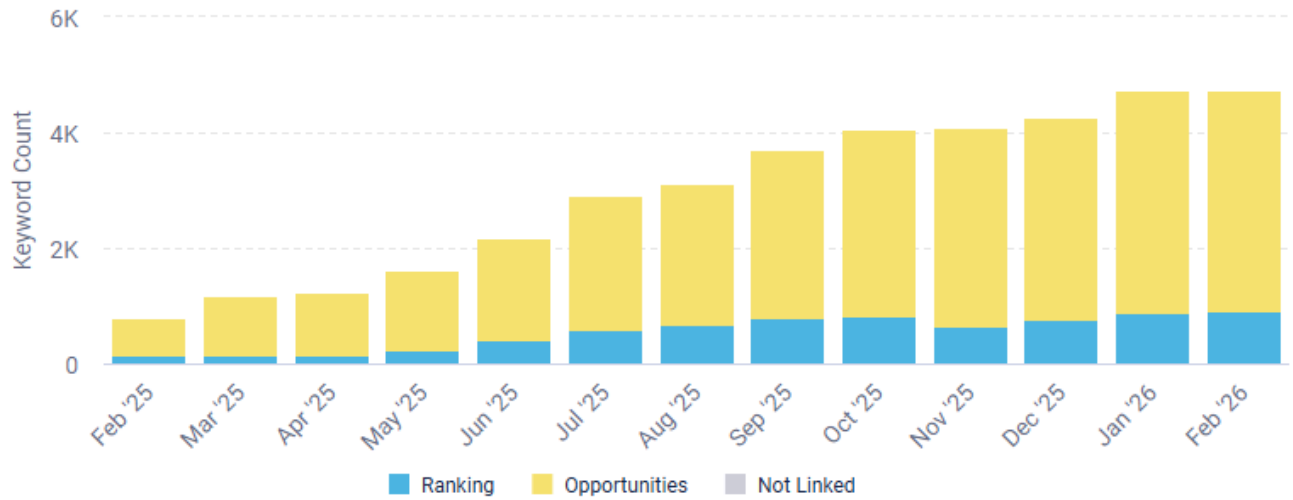


Keyword Count ⓘ
912 ↑ 1.9%

SERP URL Count ⓘ
1.4K ↑ < 1%

CHARTS





Between January and February, AI Overview citations and total opportunities remained relatively flat, however, we saw a large increase in total images ranking on the SERP.

Web Maintenance & Creative

Website Services

- February Website Services Efforts:
 - 3.75h out of 120h were used for February 2026
 - Remaining hours: 5
 - Updates to Stakeholder Hero (adding CTA)

Creative Services

- February Creative Services Efforts:
 - 1.25h out of 150 hours were utilized for February 2026
 - Remaining hours: 104.25
 - Updates to Media Page, Stakeholder Updates

Earned Media Activity

Earned Media Highlights

Total Impressions/Circulation: 379,502,742

Placements: 5

Press Coverage

- 2/1/26: **Travel + Leisure**: Discover California's 25 Best Destinations for Every Traveler (Stacey Leasca) (Reach: 10,710,003)
- 2/1/26: **Essence**: 7 Escapes For The Perfect Valentine's Day Weekend Getaway (Ronny Maye) (Reach: 968,808)
- 2/9/26: **RV Lifestyles**: The Ultimate List of Spring Road Trips for RV Enthusiasts (Mike Wendland) (Reach: 31,276)
- 2/19/26: **Eater LA**: The Best Road-Trip-Worthy Restaurants Along California's Central Coast, According to Eater Editors (Mona Holmes) (Reach: 621,682)
 - **Yahoo Lifestyle** (syndication): Reach: 367,170,973