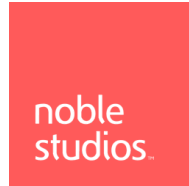


SLO Marketing Activities Report

Key Performance Highlights

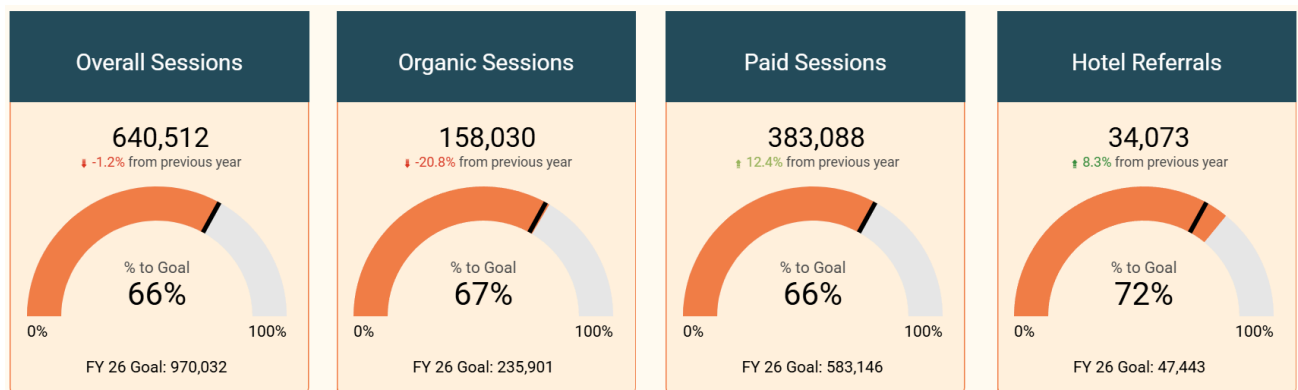
March 2026



At-a-Glance Highlights

- **Total Website Sessions:** 99,047 (+18.5% YoY)
- **Top Traffic Source:** Paid Social
- **Total Lodging Referrals:** 6,202 (+20.9% YoY)
- **Top Performing Ads:**
 - SLC | Remarketing | Video | Intro | Long Form (5.58% CTR)
 - SLC | Remarketing | Video | Sustainability | Long Form (5.09% CTR)
 - SLC | Remarketing LAL | Video | Intro | Long Form (54.64% CTR)
- **Earned Media (Public Relations):** 39,042,866 Impressions/Circulation across 9 secured placements

FYTD KPI Performance



Expected Pace through March: 75%

Overall Performance Summary

While Organic Traffic continues to decline YoY, overall website traffic to VisitSLO.com has jumped 18.5%, driven largely by the success of paid media efforts. While paid traffic has jumped, we have also seen consistent performance in key metrics indicating appropriate audience targeting as well as timing for paid media increases as we approach peak summer booking months.

Hotel Referrals is our top KPI in regard to performance, sitting at 72% goal (expected pacing is 75%). So while traffic is slightly behind our goal, Hotel Referrals are increasing toward the expected pace. .

A 30% increase in total paid traffic YoY driven by strong remarketing campaigns on Meta contributed to a 90% increase in paid partner referrals, a 45% increase in lodging referrals, and an 18% increase in engagement rate.

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 over the next few weeks.

Paid Media Snapshot

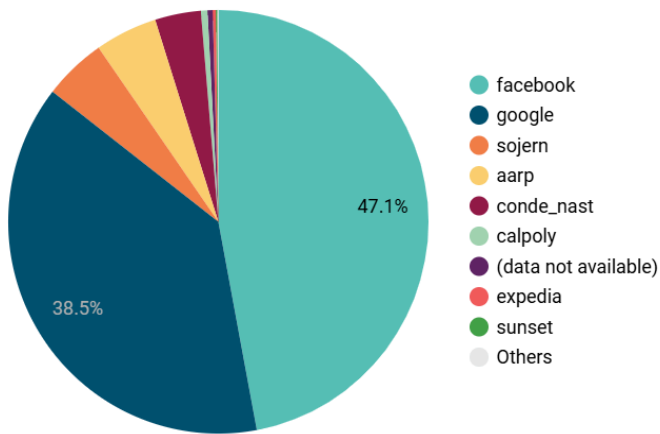
- **Paid Search**
 - Sessions: 7,293 (-57.0% YoY)
 - Impressions: 59,222 (+27.4% YoY)
 - Clicks: 7,237 (+36.1% YoY)
 - CTR: 12.22% (+6.8% YoY)
 - Lodging Referrals: 5,002 (+48.1% YoY)
 - Cost: \$18,853 (+6.3% YoY)
- **Paid Social**
 - Sessions: 32,252 (+46.0% YoY)
 - Impressions: 3.1M (+10.6% YoY)
 - Clicks: 68.9K (+3.3% YoY)
 - CTR: 2.20% (-6.5% YoY)
 - Total Referrals: 105 (-7.1% YoY)
 - Engagement Rate: 27.60% (+14.9% YoY)
 - Cost: \$25.8K (+12% YoY)
- **Display, Demand Gen, & PMAx**
 - Sessions: 17,521 (+77.1% YoY)
 - Impressions: 1,119,127 (-36.6% YoY)

- Clicks: 18,305 (-16.9% YoY)
- CTR: 1.64% (+31.1% YoY)
- Lodging Referrals: 406 (+30% YoY)
- Cost: \$12,088 (+33.9% YoY)

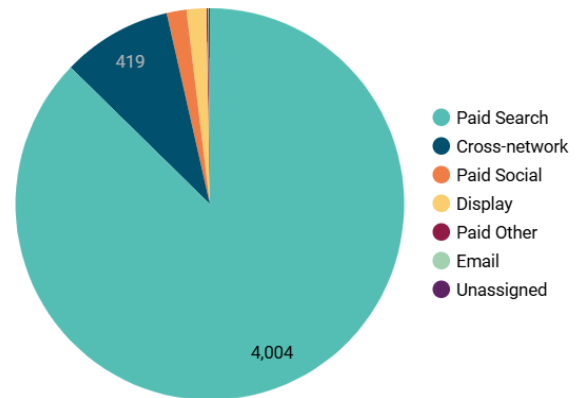
- **Video**

- Sessions: 1,136 (-46.7% YoY)
- Impressions: 128,1851 (-35.2% YoY)
- Clicks: 1,583 (-40.0% YoY)
- CTR: 1.23% (-7.3% YoY)
- Lodging Referrals: 16
- Cost: \$2,230 (+0.80% YoY)

Sessions by Source



Lodging Referrals by Channel





Key Insight: Paid media saw a very strong March with large improvements in conversion efficiency and engagement. Paid Search and Performance Max campaigns saw a 48% and 30% improvement in total conversions, respectively. We're also seeing a very strong improvement in Newsletter Signups from paid media sources which means we're getting people who are interested in the area to keep coming back.

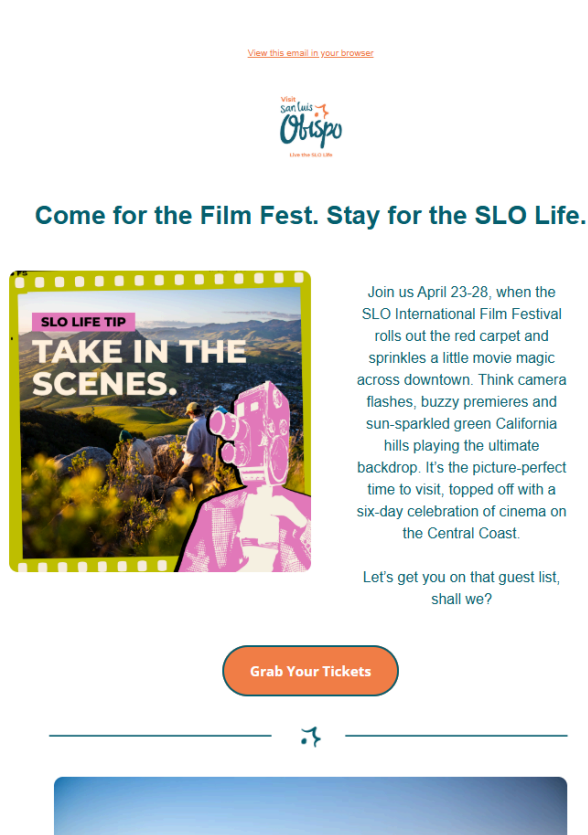
Owned Media Snapshot

Email Marketing

We sent two emails in March that highlighted the SLO Film Fest and saw traffic grow by 20% and total partner referrals increase by 34%. The **Film Fest** email drove direct action, while the **Monthly Newsletter** provided a broad secondary boost.

- **Film Fest Dedicated Email:** Generated 41 lodging referrals. This campaign had the highest "intent to book," with the "Get the Package" and "Book Now" buttons performing exceptionally well..
- **March Newsletter:** Contributed 31 lodging referrals, successfully capturing the interest of our broader audience by framing the festival as part of the "SLO Life." The "Get the Package" button (20.8% of clicks) was a primary driver, proving that the \$570 value proposition is a major motivator for our audience.

By aligning the "See + Stay" messaging with a lodging CTA, we achieved a **35% increase in lodging referrals across both emails** indicating that our audience is increasingly looking to us as a travel-planning resource rather than just an information source.



- **Emails Sent:** 2
- **Avg. Open Rate:** 11.2% (15.70% [Benchmark](#))
- **Avg. Click Rate:** 0.88% (1.6% [Benchmark](#))
- **Total Sessions:** 710 (+20.1% YoY)
- **Total Partner Referrals:** 99 (+33.8% YoY)
- **Total Lodging Referrals:** 74 (+34.5% YoY)
- **Conversion Rate:** 6.06% (+2.2% YoY)
- **Engagement Rate:** 50.85% (-11.1% YoY)
- **Average Engagement Time Per Session:** 51s (-0.31% YoY)
- **Page Views Per Session:** 2.19 (-12.3% YoY)

Website

- **Total Sessions:** 99,047 (+18.5% YoY)
- **Lodging Partner Referrals:** 6,493 (+33.5% YoY)
- **Avg. Pages/Session:** 1.74 (-13.6% YoY)
- **Average Session Duration:** 1m 45s (-19.7% YoY)

- **Top Lodging Referral Channels:** Paid Search (62% of total lodging referrals), Organic Search (17% of total lodging referrals), Cross-Network (7% total lodging referrals)

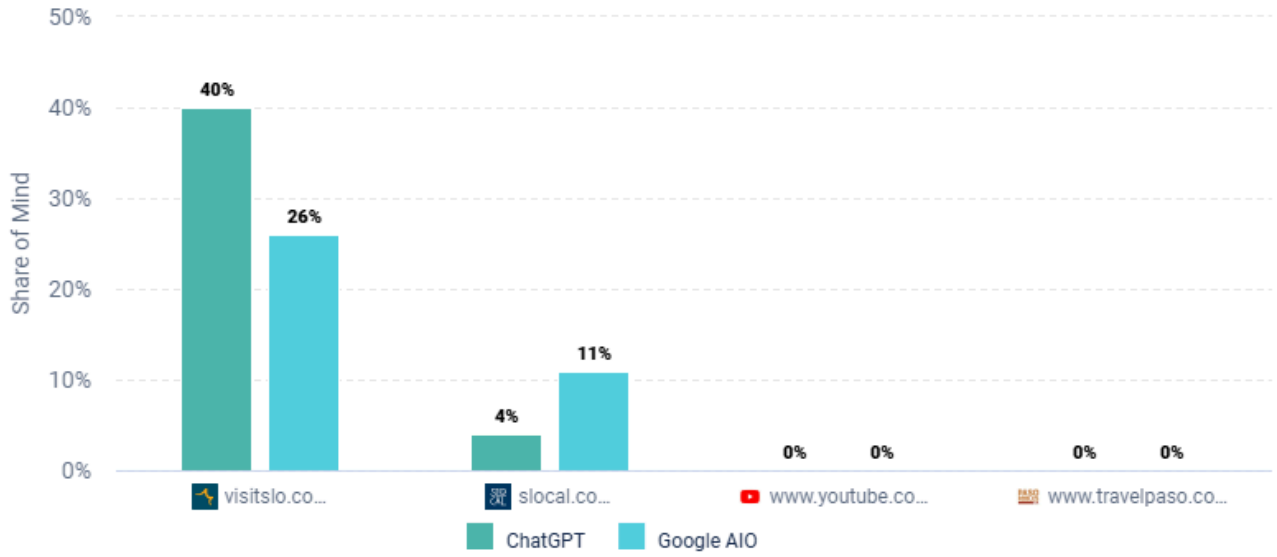
SEO + Content

- **Organic Search Sessions:** 17,943 (-8.5% YoY)
- **Organic Search Partner Referrals:** 4,363 (+27.4% YoY)
- **Organic Search Impressions:** 1.82 Mil (-3% YoY)
- **Organic Search Clicks:** 13.4K (-12% YoY)
- **Organic Search CTR:** 0.7% (-13% YoY)
- **Page 1 Keywords:** 7K (Flat YoY)
- **Sessions from LLMs (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc):** 156 (+239.1% YoY)
- **Partner Referrals from LLMs (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc):** 39 (+290% YoY)
- **Top Impression Gains:** Hearst Castle, San Luis Obispo Weather, hearst castle photos, madonna inn
- **Top Click Losses:** things to do in San Luis Obispo, things to do in SLO

Key Takeaway: The organic session decline improved from -15% in February to -8.5% in March, showing that your site is beginning to stabilize against the AI search shifts. While we maintain 7K Page 1 keywords, Organic Clicks (-12%) and CTR (-13%) are down. This is largely due to Google AI Overviews and new SERP features answering broad queries (like "things to do in SLO") directly on the search page. Our top click losses remain broad terms, but we are seeing high-intent gains in specific POI searches such as Hearst Castle and Madonna Inn. Most importantly, while sessions dipped, organic partner referrals increased 27.4% YoY, proving that the users who do click through are further down the planning funnel and ready to engage with local businesses.

Despite the broader decline in traditional organic clicks, Visit SLO has established itself in the new era of AI-driven search:

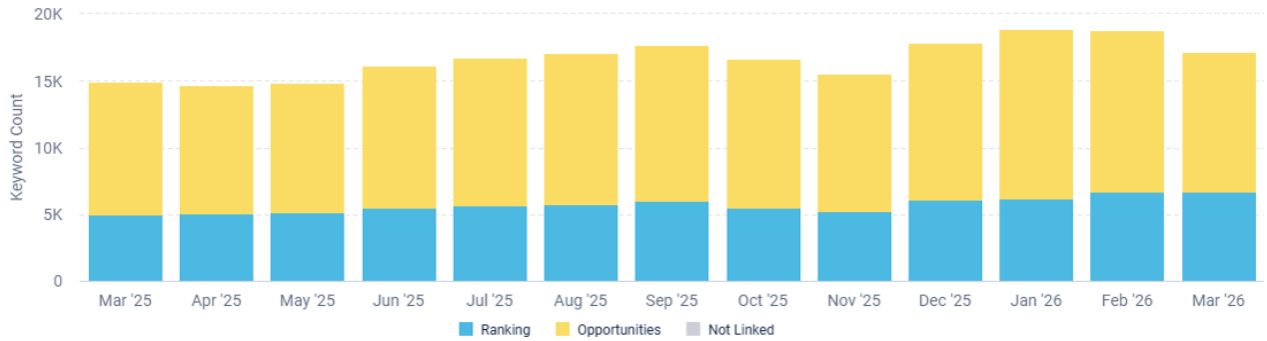
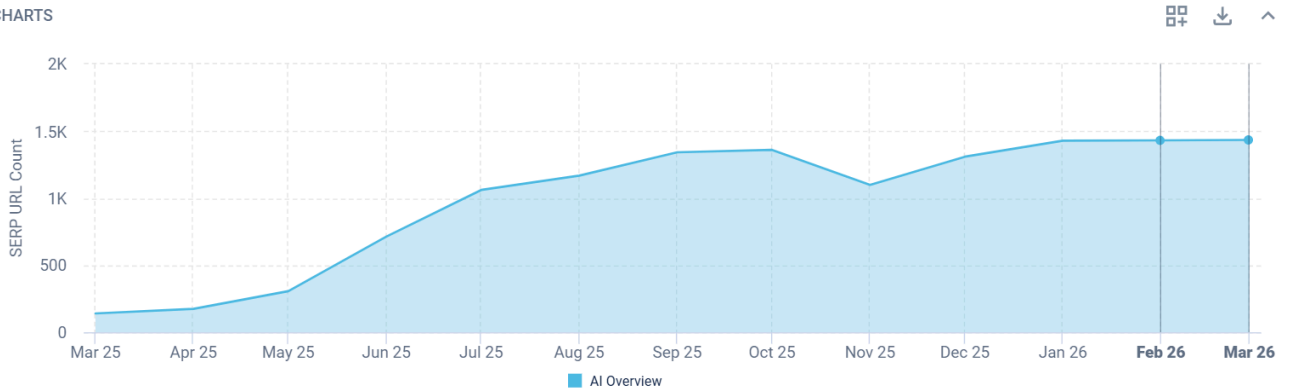
- **AI Share of Mind:** Visit SLO is the clear market leader in AI visibility, capturing 40% Share of Mind in ChatGPT and 26% in Google AI Overviews when compared to regional competitors like SLOCAL (4% and 11% respectively) and Travel Paso, who have yet to gain significant traction in these results.
- **Citation Stability:** Between January and March, AI Overview citations and total opportunities remained relatively flat, signaling that we have secured a "stable foothold" in these AI results despite the volatility of the general search market.
- **Explosive AI Traffic Growth:** Sessions from LLMs up 239% and partner referrals from LLMs up 290%.



Keyword Count [ⓘ]
916 ↑ < 1%

SERP URL Count [ⓘ]
1.4K ↑ < 1%

CHARTS



Web Maintenance & Creative

MRO Services

Proactive maintenance of [VisitSLO.com](https://www.visit slo.com), during March key activities included:

- Updates to website software and plugins:
 - advanced-custom-fields-pro: 6.7.0.2 → 6.7.1 (manual)
 - permalink-manager-pro: 2.5.2.4 → 2.5.3.2 (manual)
 - enable-media-replace: 4.1.7 → 4.1.8
 - events-calendar-pro: 7.7.12 → 7.7.14 (manual)
 - gravityforms: 2.9.26 → 2.9.29
 - redirection: 5.6.1 → 5.7.5
 - the-events-calendar: 6.15.14 → 6.15.17.1
 - the-events-calendar-community-events: 5.0.13 → 5.0.14 (manual)
 - tiny-compress-images: 3.6.7 → 3.6.12
 - wp-croncontrol: 1.20.0 → 1.21.0
 - wordpress-seo: 26.8 → 27.1.1
- Fixed [VisitSLO.com](https://www.visit slo.com) theme
 - Admin list table thumbnail columns (Accommodation, Stakeholder) now resize responsively; images scale with column width to adhere to accessibility best practices

Website Services

- March Website Services Efforts:
 - 0h out of 120h were used for March 2026
 - Remaining hours: 5

Creative Services

- March Creative Services Efforts:
 - 1.25h out of 150 hours were utilized for March 2026
 - Remaining hours: 103.00
 - Updates to IPW Ad, Cal Poly Page Updates


Earned Media Activity

Earned Media Highlights

Total Impressions/Circulation: 39,042,866

Placements: 9

Press Coverage

- 
- 3/1/26: **805 Living**: Repeat Restaurateurs (Nancy Ransohoff) (Reach: 1,891)
 - **805 Living Print** (Circulation: 30,000)
 - **805 Living Instagram** (Followers: 6,854)
 - **805 Living Facebook** (Followers: 6,000)
 - 3/22/26: **Travel + Leisure**: This Is California's Most Underrated Road Trip—and It Goes Along One of the State's Oldest Highways (Cu Fleshman) (Reach: 10,710,003)
 - **Yahoo News Malaysia** (Reach: 425,253)
 - **Yahoo Style Singapore** (Reach: 340,299)
 - **AOL** (Reach: 24,780,931)
 - 3/25/26: **Yahoo Creators**: 10 Best Places to Eat and Drink in San Luis Obispo, California's Best Small City (Fiona Chandra) (Reach: 2,741,635)