

# The Risk You Can't Afford Not To Take

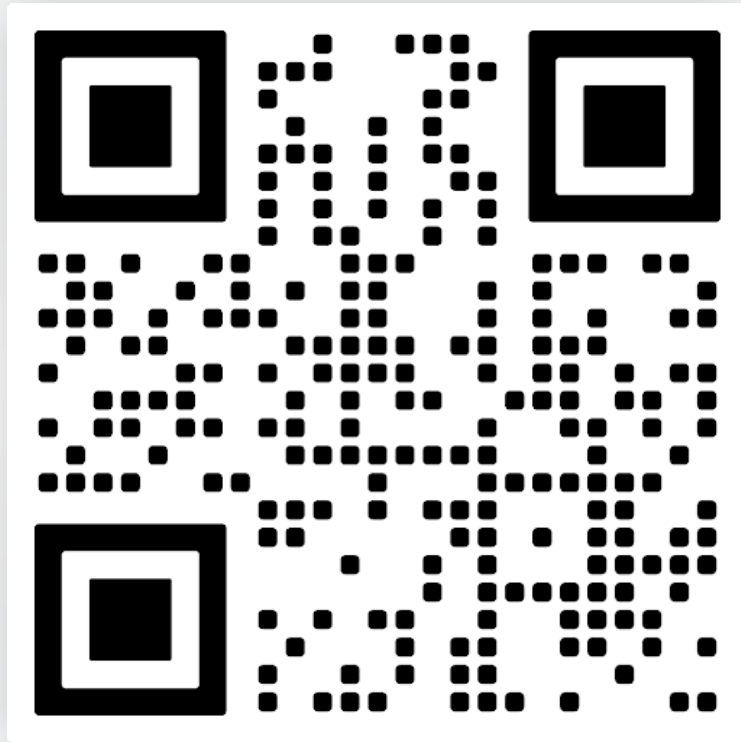
Own Your Future

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Adam Stoker

*Brand Revolt CEO*





For a Copy of My  
Slides, Scan this  
QR code

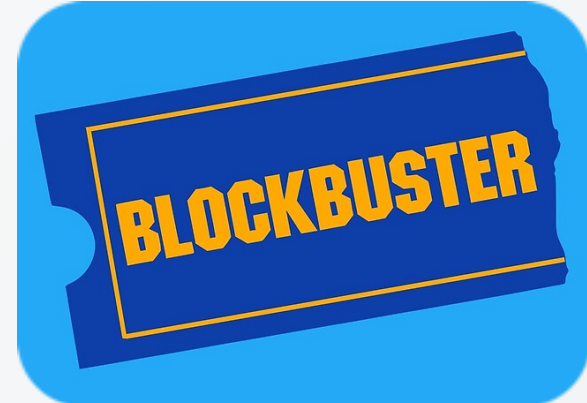
# Why Playing It Safe is the Most Dangerous Move

## Kodak & Blockbuster:

Refusal to evolve = Collapse.

**Could This Happen To DMOs?**

Evolution requires risk taking



# Ambition + Ignorance



# Risks Have Changed My Life



**2011 - Left a stable job**

**2019 - Launched a podcast**

**2016 - Bought an agency**

# The Merger That Failed — and What I Learned

- Lost 70% of the acquired team
- Gained clarity, resilience, and real leadership growth

**You Win or  
You Learn**

## Case Study - Kazakhstan & Borat

# A Risk-Taking Story of Redemption

# Problem → Risk Taken → Media Explosion

# "Very Nice!"

## How Borat helped Kazakhstan make the viral tourism campaign of the year

Despite efforts to promote Kazakhstan as a unique tourist destination, most people barely knew it existed. Or if they did, they knew one thing:



### IDEA

Make Borat's catchphrase "Very Nice!" the official tourism slogan of Kazakhstan, using the buzz around Borat 2 to introduce the real Kazakhstan to a global audience.

*The creative strategy involved reworking the official government position on the film by asserting a more sophisticated self-aware stance. The creative strategy allowed us to put forward a positive image of the country while using a concept that was already iconic. The resulting film about Borat himself went unmentioned in the campaign — instead we relied on the audience to fill in the blanks.*

To provide visual material for the larger PR campaign and highlight the campaign's official backing, a series of promotional videos were shot and uploaded to the official YouTube channel of Kazakhstan tourism board.



### Launch timeline



### Results

With a total budget of only \$4,000:

- Over 1,000 publications in every major media market in the world, all earned.
- Exclusive debut in New York Times, followed by BBC, CNN, Washington Post, and every major print and television outlet.
- Front page of Reddit and trending on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.
- More than 1 million views on YouTube.



Case Study - Savannah Bananas

# When Weird Works: Sports Meets Tourism PR

Experimental Storytelling to  
Global Buzz



TikTok  
@yellowtuxjesse

How the Savannah Bananas  
Built Their Brand



Case Study - Savannah Bananas

## When Weird Works: Sports Meets Tourism PR

Experimental Storytelling to  
Global Buzz



How Failure Has Helped Build  
the Savannah Bananas

# Great Ideas Die Without Great Buy-In

Pitbull x Visit Florida → Misaligned stakeholder vision



# How to Take Smarter Risks, Without Overexposure

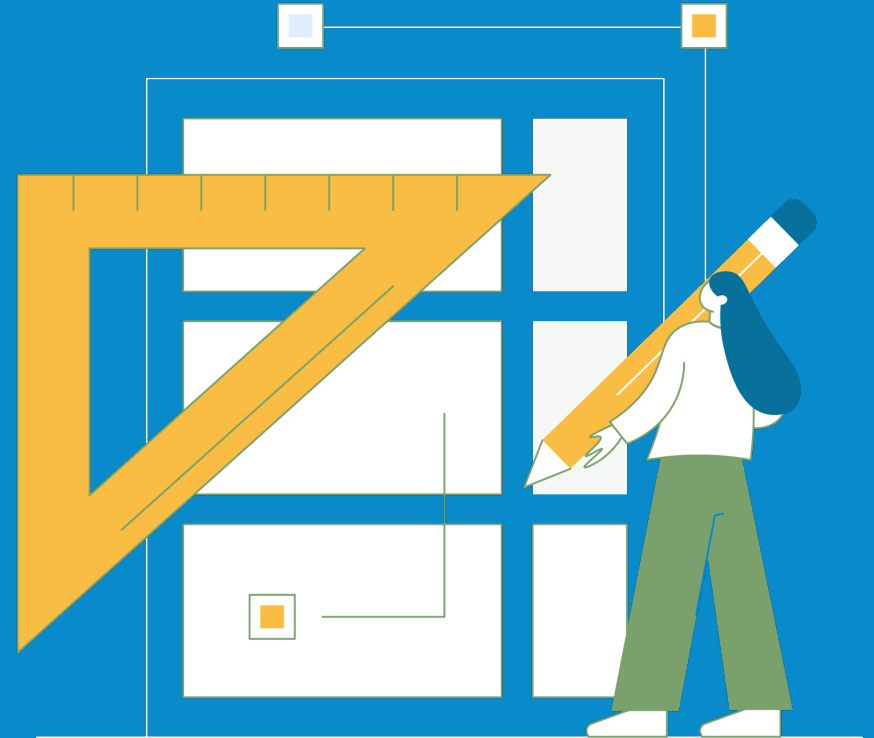
1. Start Small
2. Gather Data
3. Build Buy-In
4. Leverage Crisis
5. Define Success



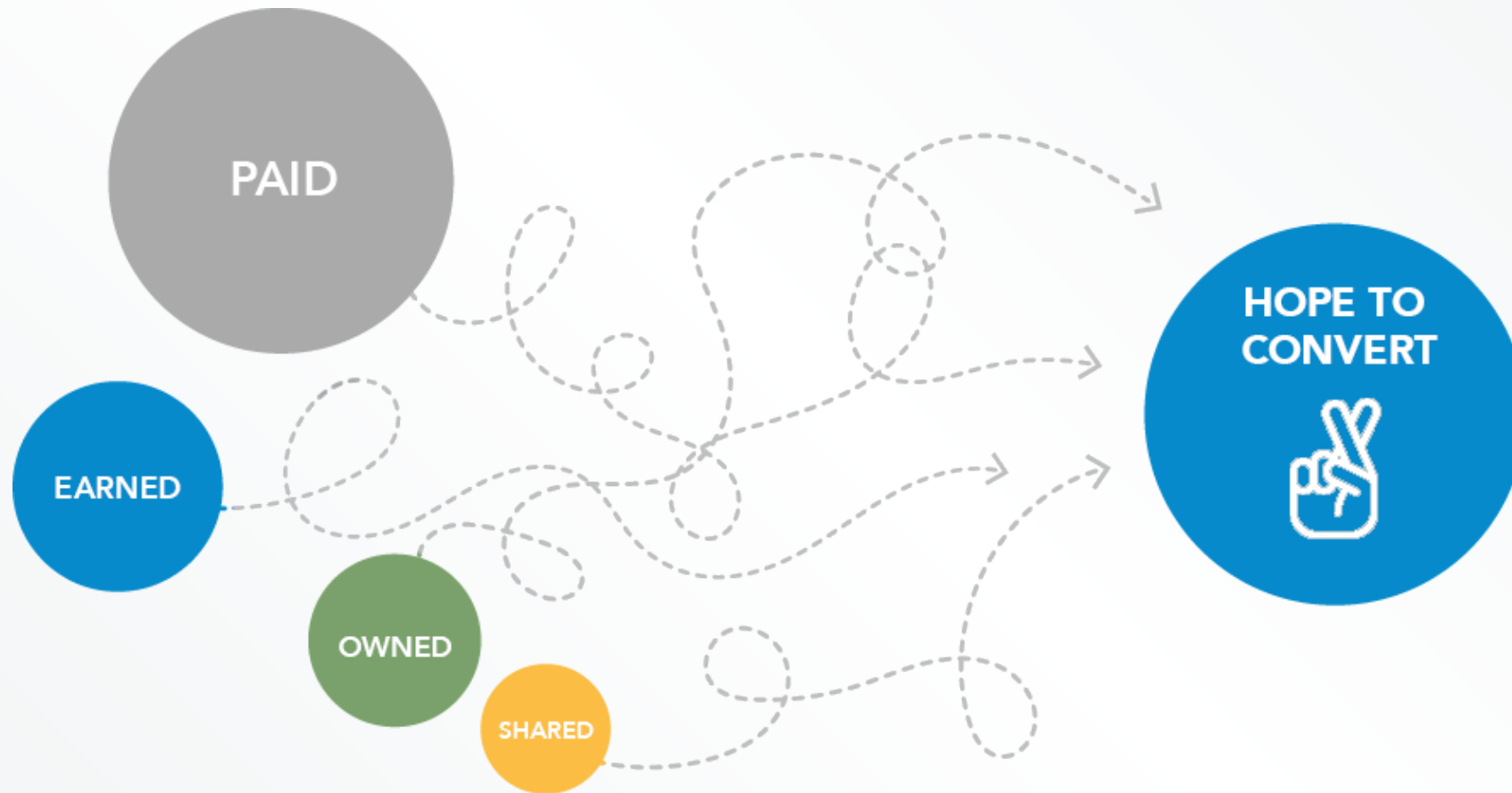


# Sell Bold Ideas by Framing Them Around Shared Goals

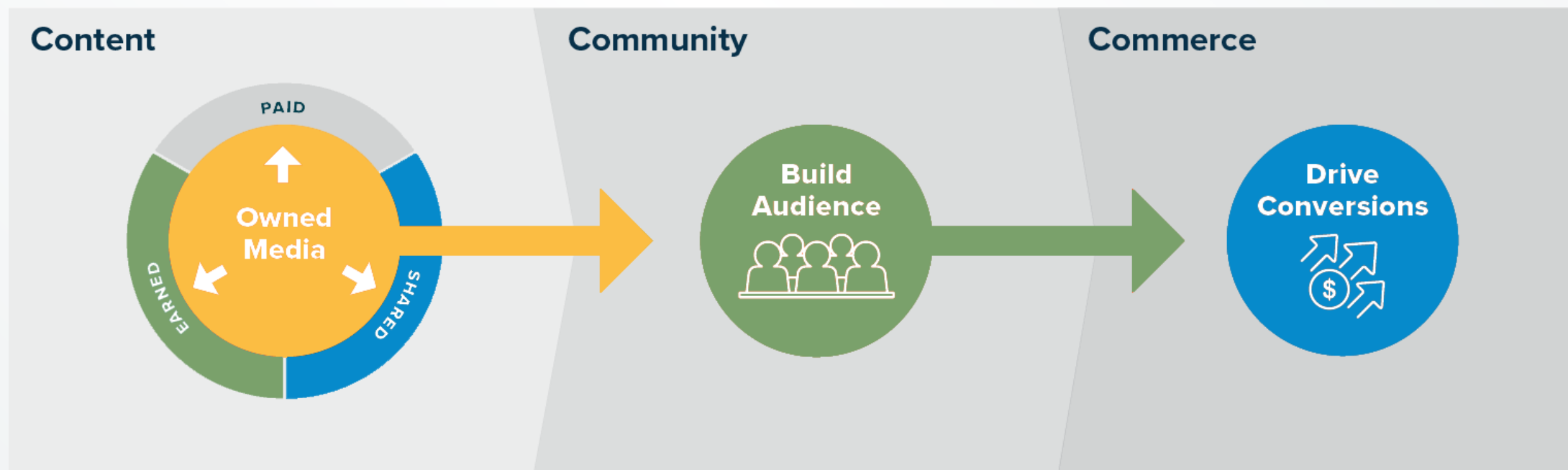
- Coalition Building
- Pilot-First Approach
- Align with Economic Value



# The Model Of The Past



# Owned Media Can Power Everything





# Why Owned Media?

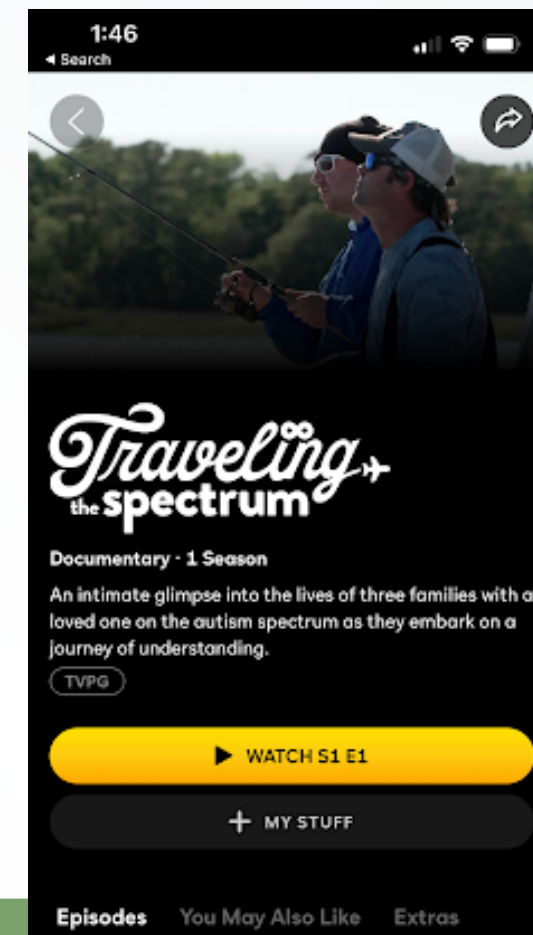
- Full control
- Evergreen
- Own Audience Relationship
- Influence Paid and Earned Media
- Future-proof

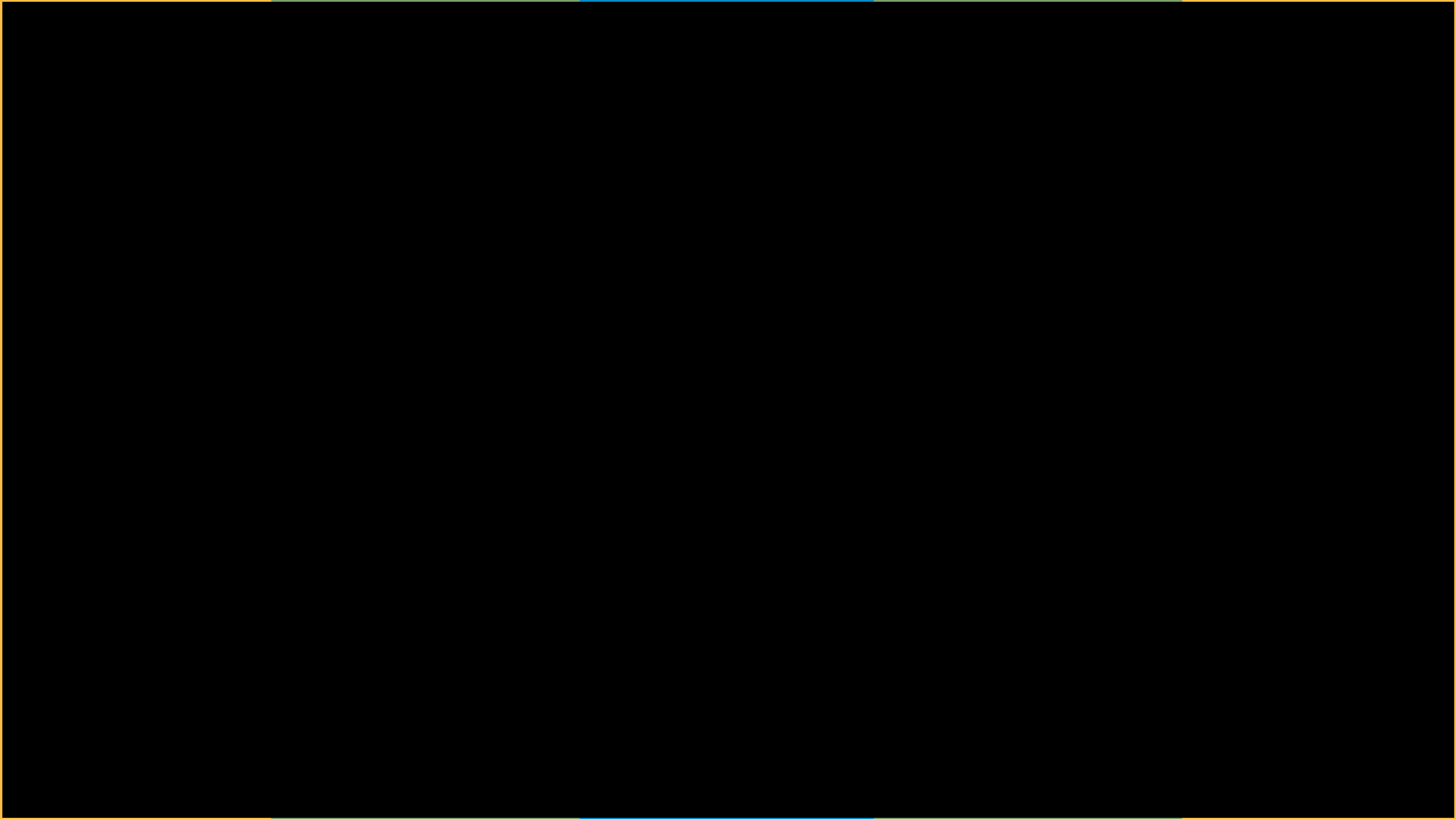


Case Study - Visit Myrtle Beach

# Going Beyond the Campaign: Autism-Friendly Tourism

Challenge → Bold Move → Outcome





# My Owned Media Bet: The Destination Marketing Podcast

Launched  
**2019**

**145k**  
All-Time Listens

**383**  
Total Episodes



## Destination Marketing Podcast



# A Few More Examples



# Takeaway: What's Your Pilot Project?

What's the smallest bold move you could make this month that aligns with your values?

# Small Teams Can Move Fast with the Right Tools

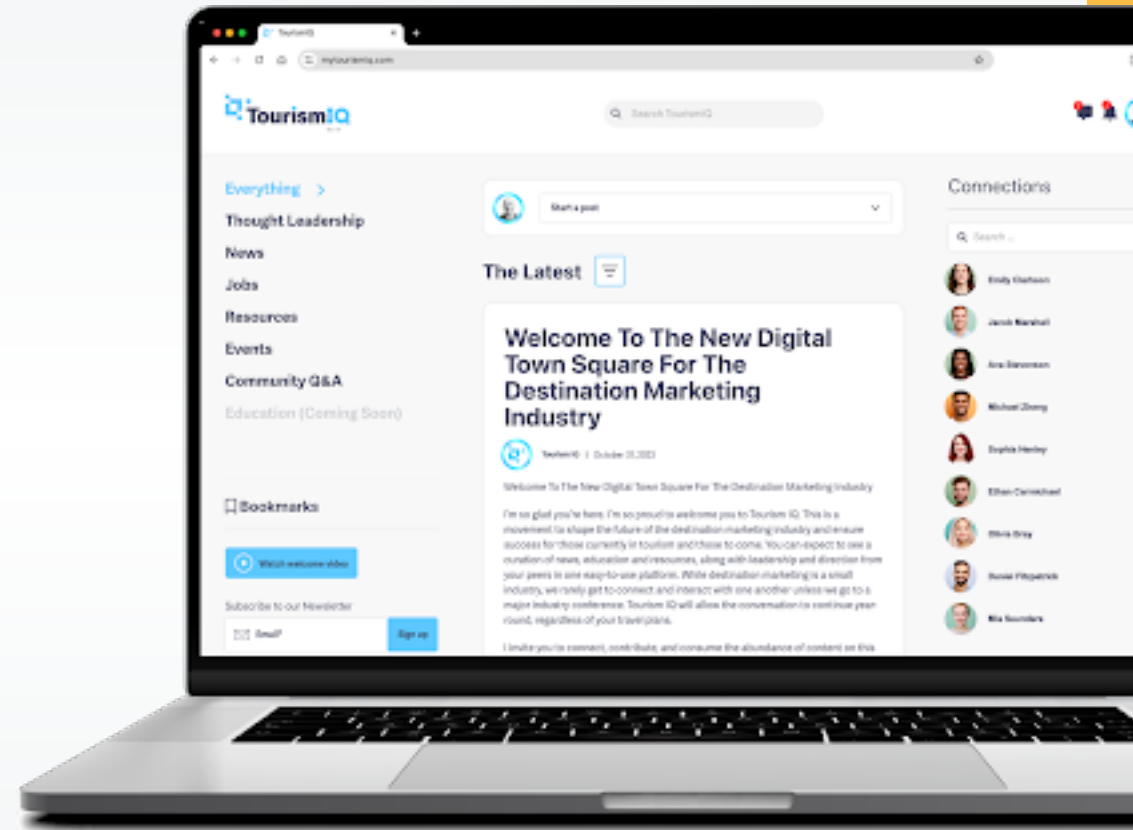


# Destination Marketing Agent



# A Community For Tourism

 **TourismIQ**



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