

Tierra Bella 2025 - Marketing
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Accomplishments:

- Created and shared a [Tierra Bella 2025 Communications Plan](#) to outline strategy, schedule, and track progress via medium e.g. publications, bicycle clubs, etc. See the Google Sheet to see the strategy implemented and the schedule of actions taken (grey indicates completed)
- Primary medium was via mass emails sent via SendGrid utilizing the existing contact database of registered riders from previous 3 years (approx 2400 email addresses).
- Social media sites - TB Facebook and Strava Club were the most useful social media sites - the other social media sites don't generate much activity amongst target demographic (e.g. X, TikTok, Snap...). Also posted 3x (Jan, Feb, and May) to a dozen or more cycling, fitness, general interest sites for Bay Area Reddit groups - high number of potential viewers (20k+) but it's difficult to know if these were effective.
- Cross promotions with bay area / norcal cycling groups e.g. Fremont Freewheelers (Primavera) and Western Wheelers (Sequoia).

Challenges / recommendations:

- Retention, Price Sensitivity, and Branding
 - 38% of new riders (compared to 45% of all riders) said they would ride next year with 12% a hard no (compared to 7% for all riders) - around 50% maybes for both segments. The inability to retain a high number of new riders for future TBs seems consistent with previous year. Either we are not doing enough to Wow riders - or the TB may be looked upon as a "one and done" event. If the later, we need to plan on smaller registrations going forward.
 - At times I wonder if we are being too sensitive to raising the price and cutting costs. Other events charge more and offer unique amenities. I believe we need to be careful in cutting costs to a degree that the TB becomes a little more than a club ride in the eyes of the riders – i.e. what is the extra value they get from the day?
 - The Tierra Bella "brand" is tied to wildflowers and the area's beauty - although not sure we can always count the weather to cooperate.
 - Food – A high percentage of the suggestions for improvement mention food at rest stops and post ride activities (particularly in comparison to others in the area). Homemade bread and other offerings seem something unique to the Tierra Bella that could be more heavily emphasized / expanded.
 - Finish Line - another area for frequent mention of room for improvement was the end / finish line. Maybe also look for ways to make the finish more "exciting" - others offer drinks, meal, and/or live music. If we have sole use of CHP in the future it seems that more could be done.
- Direct Emails

- Primary marketing is via email to past registered riders - according to rider survey, 70% of 2025 riders rode a previous TB (approx 25% of the contacts db - i.e. 75% of the contacts in the db didn't register). The number of contacts who open / click on a link declines each mailing - after Mar it dips below 50% - and unsubscribes increase).
- Approx 1/3 of the TB35 riders were new to TB - 44% of the first time riders heard about the ride from a friend. We need to find a method of encouraging ACTC members and registered riders to publicize the TB for us.
 - Create a referral program e.g. discount or swag item for every new TB riders referred (i.e. had not ridden in a past TB)
- The number of contacts requires a temporary paid subscription to ?SendGrid? due to the number of contacts (the free subscription is severely limited). At \$15 per month for each of the 5 months of the email campaign to cover the number of contacts and projected mailings.
 - SendGrid is a feature rich mailing program. ~\$75 seems to be a reasonable value - not sure if a "free" service would be worth it
- The major email sites (Google, Yahoo, Microsoft, etc) are adding tools to their services which block and/or redirect mass emails to 'junk' folders. Email addresses of several Tierra Bella committee members blocked the test emails which required forwarding the emails from private email to get around spam blockers. Difficult to determine how many of the contact's email addresses rejected the Tierra Bella emails – although the statistics of the number of people who opened the email indicate that upwards of 80%+ got through.
 - Be aware of best practices for sending mass emails to limit the number of emails being blocked / redirected
- Each sent email resulted in a handful of recipients requesting to 'unsubscribe' - thus we lost all ability to send them emails
 - Be aware that each email will reduce the contact database for future mailings (and into subsequent years). (This could be dealt with by moving the mass email provider to another email service each year.)
- Bicycle clubs
 - The coordinated cooperation with other bicycle clubs to cross-promote each other's centuries appears to have been successful in raising awareness. Although hard to measure - 20% of new riders mention a forwarded email or ACTC email. Should continue and look for ways to expand. Some ideas:
 - Offer a discount - or swag item - to those who sign up for both the Tierra Bella and another rider (e.g. Primavera) at the same time – or create a 'bay area' award for those who ride in 3 local centuries....
 - Currently only able to offer listing on 'events' section of ACTC web page, an email to elist, and a posting in B&BB. Other clubs offer a discount code to outside clubs (Primavera, Grizzly Peak, others....) we should do the same
 - Inter cycling club communications and activities should probably be more of a long term relationship. Might be worth creating a post within ACTC to

handle inter-club communications / relationships. Could extend beyond the annual century event to joint rides in each other's territories, sharing of routes, etc. (e.g. on Paso Robles trip reach out SLO bicycling club to join in rides, same with trips to Napa, Sonoma, Monterey, etc).

- Social Media sites
 - Social media (10%), WebSite (10%) and Google (2%) were another chunk of how new riders found the TB.
 - Currently using Reddit to reach these riders - looks for other alternatives
 - Social media campaigns require a large number of followers to be successful. The current ACTC demographic does not seem to utilize social media sites outside of Strava and FB
 - ACTC may want to set up accounts, post frequently throughout the year, and grow a social following to reach outside of the current demographic. It will take time to build a following - an account for only the current year's TB won't have time to build a following
- Marketing days
 - For TB25 we had approx 122 days between launch and event - if the event is held on April 12th next year we will lose 20+ days of marketing. We should begin marketing TB26 prior to Jan 1st - as do the other events.
 - The weather plays a role in whether a rider registers - many hold out to the last minute or go by the previous year's weather. Day of event registration should be considered - could charge a premium. Primavera plans on 25 days of event registrations and creates packets etc. for them
 - Encourage early registration by offering a money back guarantee (Sequoia does this - not sure how successful) – could be a rolling amount e.g. 100% with 45 days of event, 50% within 30 days, 25% with 15 days, 0 within 14 days.
 - The 2 price bump seems to have been successful. This could be taken to the next level with a rolling increase - e.g. increase \$5 every week - start at \$50 at the end of 15 weeks it would be \$125.