

Best Marketing & Communications  
on the Covid-19 Pandemic  
**SOCIAL MEDIA**



**PACIFIC  
SURFLINER®**



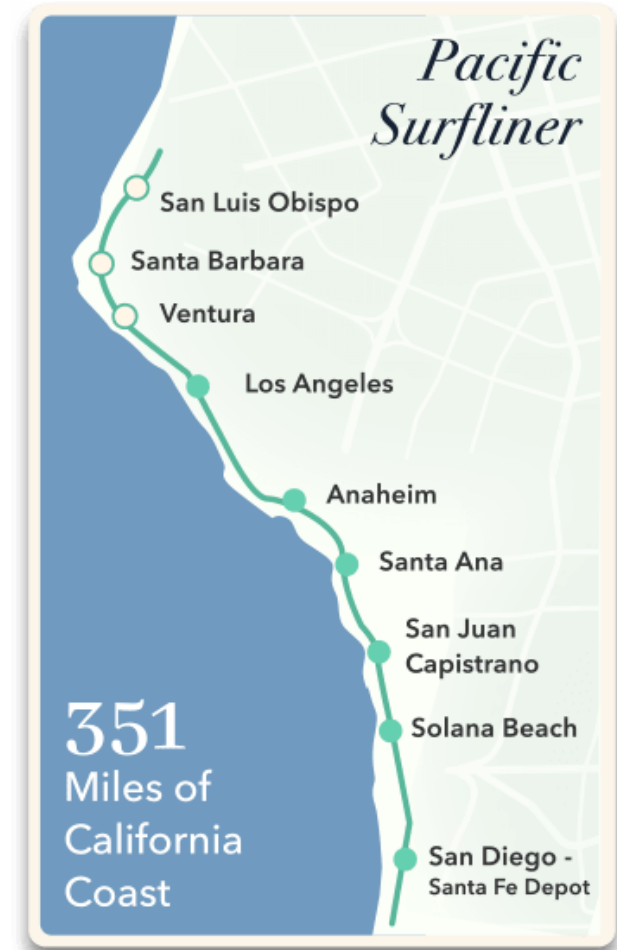
# BACKGROUND

## **About the Route**

The Pacific Surfliner route spans 351-miles through six counties in California, from San Diego to San Luis Obispo. It is the busiest state-supported intercity passenger rail route in the United States with an annual ridership of nearly 3 million (pre-COVID).

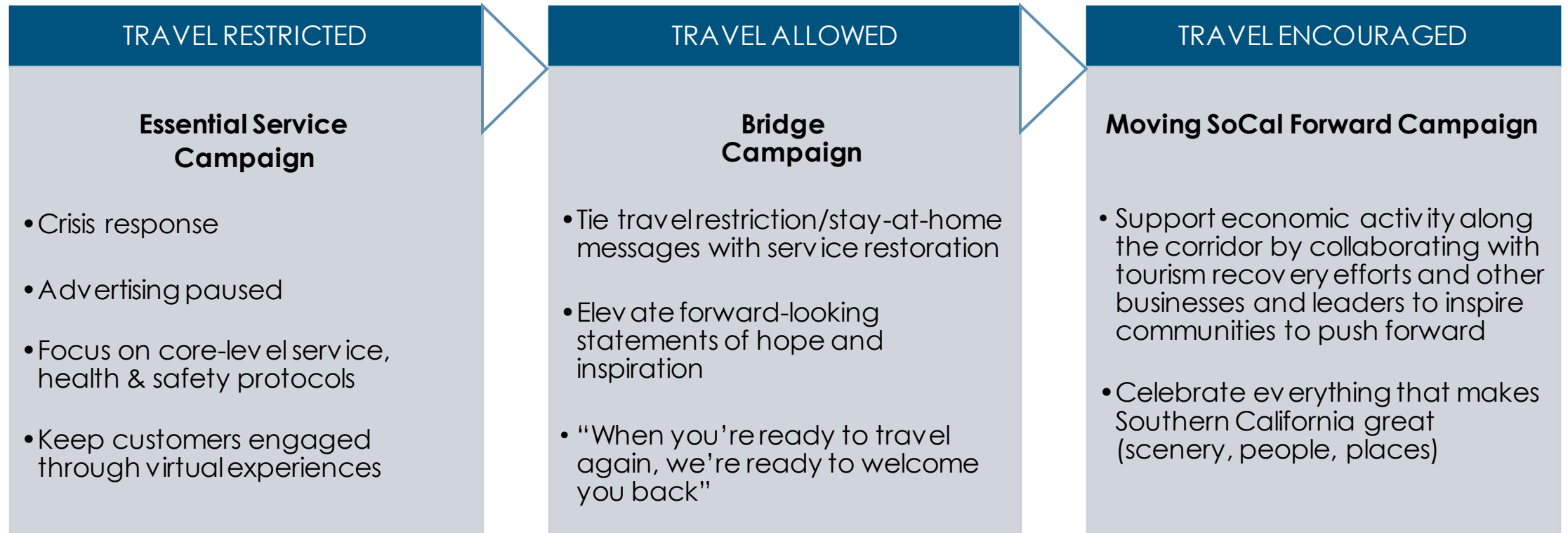
## **COVID-19 Pandemic**

The service was severely impacted by the pandemic, as travel sharply declined across the state starting in spring 2020. As an essential service providing critical transportation options to the communities we serve, it was imperative for us to communicate detailed and timely information about schedules, travel policies, and safety measures.



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS PHASES

Social media supported a larger communications campaign, which was segmented into three phases with distinct messaging for each stage of the pandemic, from periods of travel restrictions to a time when travel will be encouraged.



# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Share timely and relevant service update information for those who need to travel.

Offer support to travelers who have questions about policies, the travel experience, and adjustments.

Inspire confidence in the service by highlighting enhanced safety measures and sharing tips for being a responsible traveler.

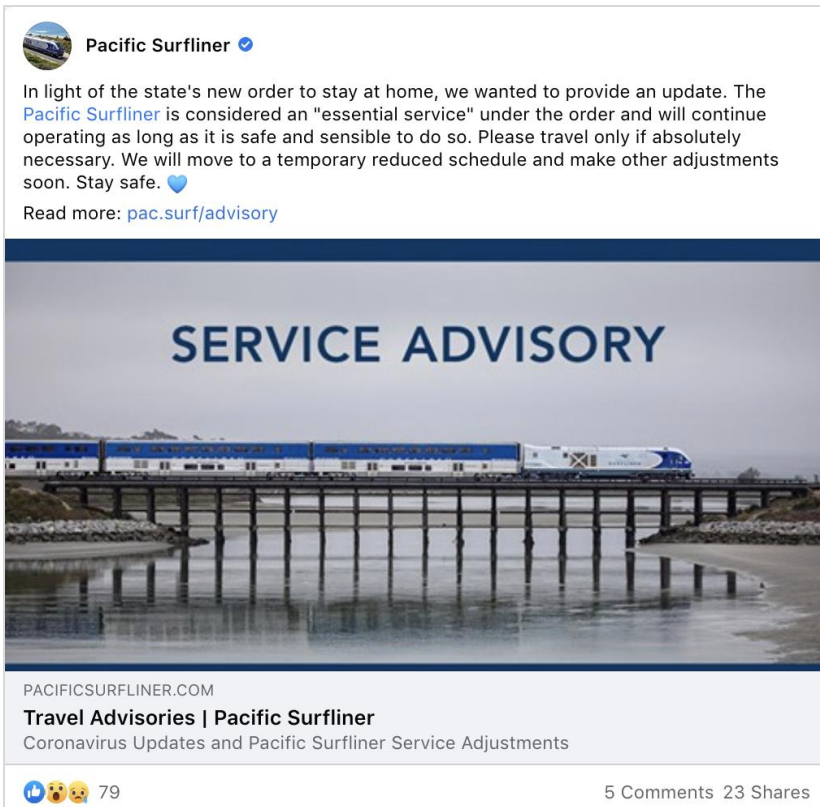
Maintain a connection with riders by sharing ways for them to enjoy the route virtually, through virtual views, beautiful photos, and messages of hope.

Spark positive conversations about the service by asking riders to share memories of past trips, photos, favorite destinations, future travel plans, and more.



# INFORMATIONAL POSTS

Especially at the start of the pandemic, during our Essential Service Campaign, much of our social posts focused on timely and relevant service update information for those who needed to travel.



**Pacific Surfliner** ✓

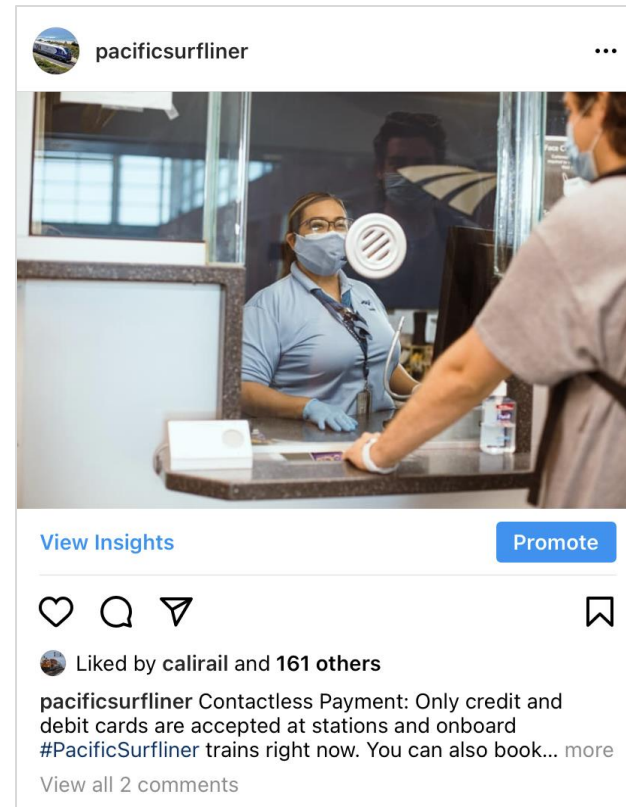
In light of the state's new order to stay at home, we wanted to provide an update. The [Pacific Surfliner](#) is considered an "essential service" under the order and will continue operating as long as it is safe and sensible to do so. Please travel only if absolutely necessary. We will move to a temporary reduced schedule and make other adjustments soon. Stay safe. ❤️

Read more: [pac.surf/advisory](http://pac.surf/advisory)


## SERVICE ADVISORY

PACIFICSURLINER.COM  
**Travel Advisories | Pacific Surfliner**  
Coronavirus Updates and Pacific Surfliner Service Adjustments

79 5 Comments 23 Shares



**pacificsurfliner**



[View Insights](#) [Promote](#)

Liked by [calirail](#) and 161 others

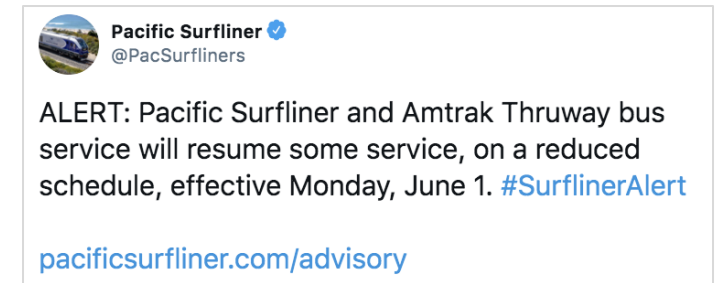
**pacificsurfliner** Contactless Payment: Only credit and debit cards are accepted at stations and onboard #PacificSurfliner trains right now. You can also book... more

[View all 2 comments](#)



**Pacific Surfliner** ✓  
@PacSurfliners

Contact-free ticketing: To help safeguard your travel experience, we encourage riders to book their trip online or in the Amtrak app. Simply save your ticket on your phone for quick and contact-free access! Learn more: [pac.surf/2DketVf](http://pac.surf/2DketVf)



**Pacific Surfliner** ✓  
@PacSurfliners

ALERT: Pacific Surfliner and Amtrak Thruway bus service will resume some service, on a reduced schedule, effective Monday, June 1. [#SurflinerAlert](#)

[pacificsurfliner.com/advisory](http://pacificsurfliner.com/advisory)

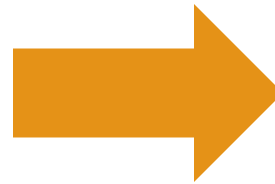
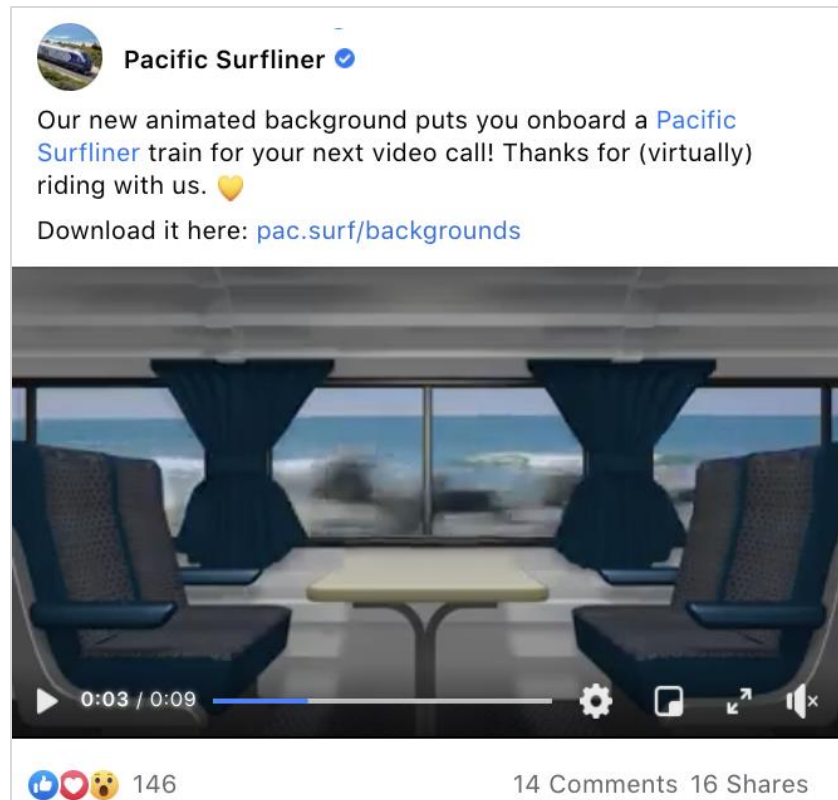
# EXPERIENCE THE PACIFIC SURFLINER FROM ANYWHERE

Especially when stay-at-home orders were in effect across California, we posted content that allowed riders to enjoy the Pacific Surfliner virtually, through videos and photos that featured stunning views, as well as branded backgrounds for video calls. We continued posting this content even as restrictions were lifted in order to provide a safe and responsible way for people to continue experiencing train travel and the beauty of the Pacific Surfliner route.



# EXPERIENCE THE PACIFIC SURFLINER FROM ANYWHERE

Among the "virtual experiences" content we posted on social media, the video and photo backgrounds we shared for fans to use as video call backgrounds were very popular.





# INSPIRING CONSUMER CONFIDENCE

We highlighted enhanced safety measures and shared tips for being a responsible traveler to inspire confidence in the service by those who needed to travel (Essential Service Campaign) and those who resumed travel as restrictions were lifted.


 Pacific Surfliner ✓

Reporter [Jeff Zevely](#) with [CBS 8 - San Diego News](#) rode the Pacific Surfliner from Oceanside to Irvine and back to see some of the health and safety improvements onboard. Check it out!




**AMTRAK ADDS ENHANCED COVID PROTOCOLS** NEWS 8 5:42 75°

50 10 Comments 12 Shares

 Pacific Surfliner ✓

Whether you need to ride with us soon or are dreaming of a future adventure, check out our top tips for planning a safe Pacific Surfliner trip: [pac.surf/traveltips](https://pac.surf/traveltips)





PACIFICSURLINER.COM

**Tips for Safe Travels | Pacific Surfliner**

Whether you need to ride with us soon or are dreaming of a f...

41 2 Comments 5 Shares

 pacificsurfliner ...



[View Insights](#) [Promote](#)

♥ 🔍 📍

Liked by [calirail](#) and 348 others

**pacificsurfliner** In addition to disinfectant wipes, we've installed hand sanitizer throughout our trains for your use. For more health and safety updates, check out the link in our bio.

[View all 9 comments](#)

# ENGAGING RIDERS







At a time when a large portion of our riders were not traveling, it was important to maintain a connection with them. We also wanted to balance serious service updates with content that brightened up the newsfeed for our fans. We frequently asked riders to share photos and memories of past trips, favorite destinations and future travel plans to spark positive conversations about the Pacific Surfliner. This helped us keep the service top of mind without actively promoting travel.


 Pacific Surfliner ✓

From historical depots to surf-side platforms, each station along the Pacific Surfliner route has its own unique character. Which is your favorite stop?





 Linda Garbowski and 104 others 19 Comments 6 Shares


-  **Tim Broom**  
San Juan Capistrano is very pretty. I think its a great destination for anyone wanting to get away!  
Like · Reply · 6w  1  
↳ 4 Replies
-  **Elijah Schwartz**  
Old Town because it drops me in the original San Diego and gets me back to school or Fullerton because it takes me home 😊  
Like · Reply · 6w  3
-  **David C Trumbull**  
San Clemente pier when it stops there in the summer  
Like · Reply · 6w
-  **Jeannette Miller Wynne**  
Surf Beach...beautiful!  
Like · Reply · 6w  2



 Pacific Surfliner ✓

Take a minute to daydream with us. Imagine you are on the train, coasting along beautiful beaches to somewhere new. Where are you headed?

 mad\_visualz via Instagram



 Linda Garbowski and 78 others 57 Comments 2 Shares

-  **Norma Matias**  
Beautiful Santa Barbara!  
Like · Reply · 9w
-  **Kenny Langlois**  
One thing on my bucket list is to ride the surf liner Someday when things get back to normal.  
Like · Reply · 9w
-  **Gin Sanders**  
San Luis Obispo. I've never been to the end of the line.  
Like · Reply · 9w  2
-  **Elizabeth Partida**  
Up the coast to Santa Barbara.  
Like · Reply · 9w
-  **Judy Proo**  
Santa Barbara ❤️  
Like · Reply · 9w
-  **Nancy Carnes Breese**  
Dang! I think I've been to all of them, but wouldn't mind revisiting any of them.  
Like · Reply · 9w

# ENGAGING RIDERS (ADDITIONAL SAMPLES)

 **pacificsurfliner**




   


 Liked by calirail and 570 others

**pacificsurfliner** Moments like these spark joy. What #PacificSurfliner memory puts a smile on your face? ✨





 : @trainswesee


[View all 15 comments](#)

 **pacificsurfliner** ...




[View Insights](#) [Promote](#)


   





 Liked by calirail and 462 others


**pacificsurfliner** California dreamin'. What will be the first place you visit when you start traveling again?

[View all 10 comments](#)


 **pacificsurfliner**



 Liked by calirail and 307 others

**pacificsurfliner** Loving this station art. 🎨 Can you identify the #PacificSurfliner station that inspired this illustration?

 : @aprillvaleart



[View all 49 comments](#)




**pacificsurfliner** Great guesses, everyone! Kudos to everyone who correctly guessed Santa Barbara! This station was constructed in the Spanish Mission Revival style in 1902 and serves both Pacific Surfliner and Coast Starlight trains. ❤️



# ENGAGEMENT POSTS (COMMENT SAMPLES)


 **April Vale**  
My favourite journey 🌟👑  
Like · Reply · Message · 21w


 **Elijah Schwartz**  
I miss taking the Surfliner whenever I go home on the weekends. Great views and allows me to do some homework.  
Like · Reply · Message · 30w


 **William Estrada**  
Always a nice ride along our coast!  
Like · Reply · Message · 30w  1

 **Susan Rudd** Taken it south, and back, many times. Takes a long time, but so much better than driving through LA. Beautiful beach towns.  
15w   2

 **Judy Proo** I missed my vacation to San Diego this year. We were going to go to Santa Barbara via Surfliner. Hopefully next year 📍  
15w  1


 **William Seaver II** Top Fan  
I've ridden the Surfliner many, many times, the best moments were always visiting my parents. They always came to meet me. Simple, but great.  
Like · Reply · Message · 5d


 **Kemamo Ho**  
My first ride on the **Pacific Surfliner**. I needed transport to San Diego from Los Angeles. Being from Hawaii, I thought I would be a great experience. It did and I try to utilize the rails any chance I get.  
Like · Reply · Message · 5d

 **Lourdes Mondragon**  
Love the train!



Like · Reply · Message · 5d

 **trinityj3107** Awwww my favorite train ride to SB - thank u for this virtual ride! 🥰🥰🥰  
34w Reply

 **aprilvaleart** These views made my whole trip!  
22w Reply

## SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

To view all posts and comments from fans and followers, please visit our social media pages:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Instagram](#)



## TRAVEL RESOURCES

The Pacific Surfliner blog supports social media, with articles that go into more detail about topics that are highlighted through our posts. Many times, ideas for blog content come from commonly asked questions on social media or are inspired by posts that get a lot of engagement. During the pandemic, most articles focused on travel tips and virtual experiences.

# EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL RESOURCES

In support of our COVID-19 communications campaign, a series of eight blog articles were published that highlight ways to enjoy the Pacific Surfliner virtually (Essential Service Campaign) and provide useful tips for passengers who resumed travel as restrictions were lifted.



## Virtual Views

We're bringing the Pacific Surfliner to you through videos of scenery along the route. Enjoy our favorite virtual views.

[LEARN MORE >](#)



## Tips for Safe Travels

Whether you need to ride with us soon or are dreaming of a future adventure, check out our top tips for planning a safe and responsible trip.

[LEARN MORE >](#)



## Flexible Ticketing Tips

We know that travel conditions and plans can change, and flexibility is more important than ever. And with our convenient ticketing policies, you can book with confidence knowing that it's easy to adjust your trip if plans change.

[EXPLORE >](#)



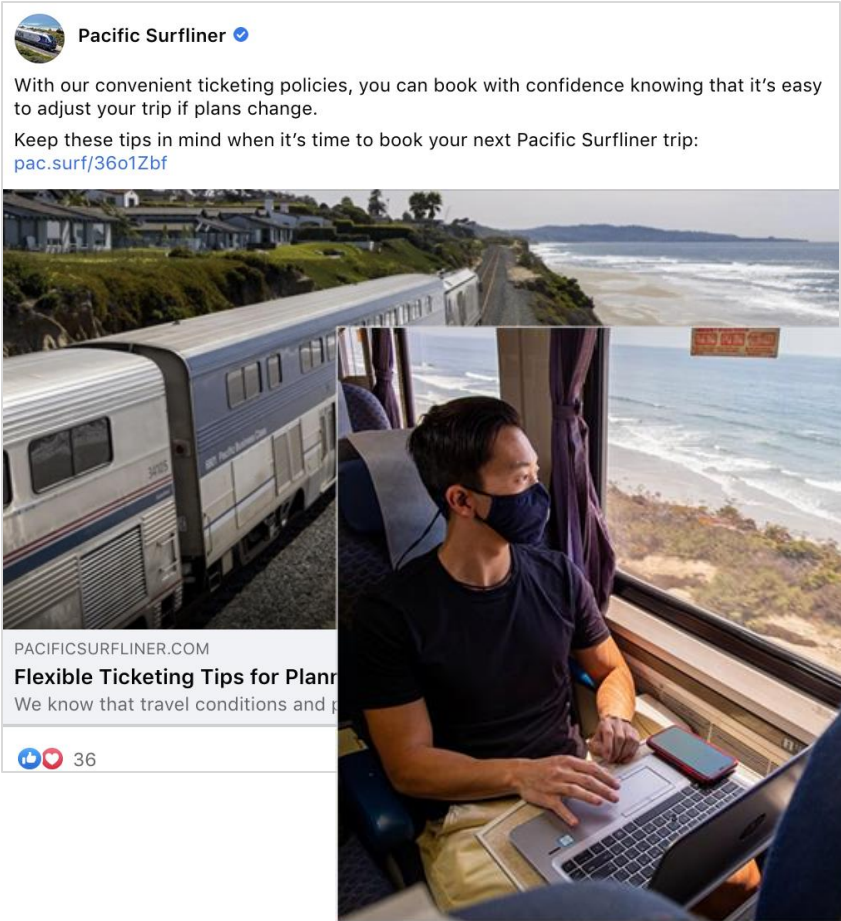
## Quintessential Outdoor Experiences

Southern California has plenty of outdoor activities that can be enjoyed safely while maintaining physical distance. And here are some of our top picks you can enjoy once you arrive.

[EXPLORE >](#)

# BLOG CONTENT: SAMPLES


Each blog article was supported by a series of social media posts that drove traffic back to the Pacific Surfliner website.



**Pacific Surfliner** ✓

With our convenient ticketing policies, you can book with confidence knowing that it's easy to adjust your trip if plans change.

Keep these tips in mind when it's time to book your next Pacific Surfliner trip: [pac.surf/36o1Zbf](https://pac.surf/36o1Zbf)



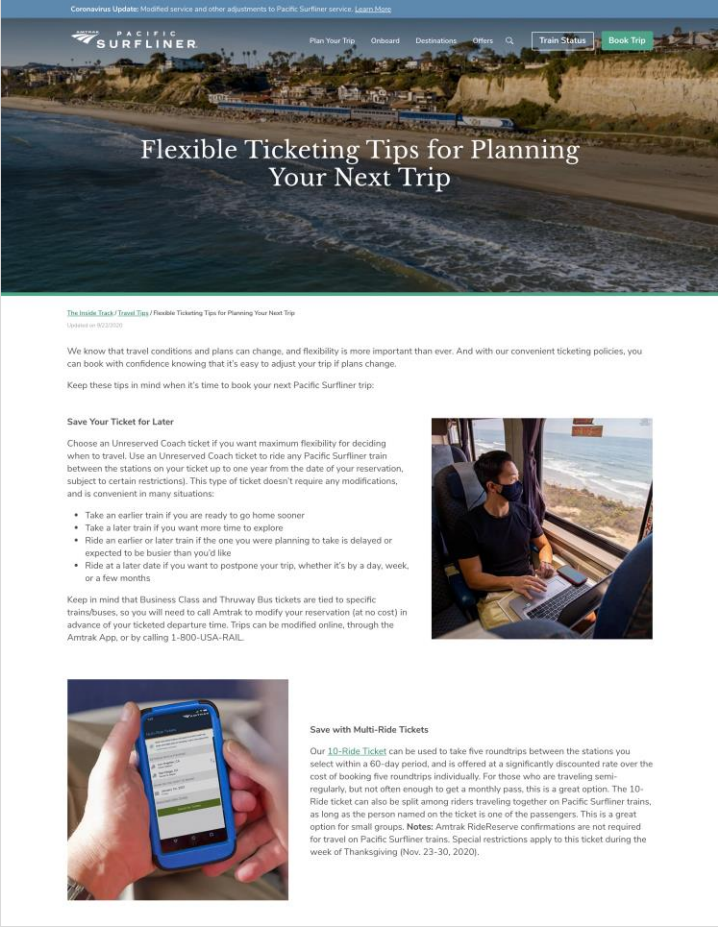

PACIFICSURFLINER.COM

### Flexible Ticketing Tips for Planning Your Next Trip

We know that travel conditions and plans can change, and flexibility is more important than ever. And with our convenient ticketing policies, you can book with confidence knowing that it's easy to adjust your trip if plans change.

Keep these tips in mind when it's time to book your next Pacific Surfliner trip:

- Save Your Ticket for Later



Coronavirus Update: Modified service and other adjustments to Pacific Surfliner service. [Learn More](#)

PACIFIC SURFLINER

Plan Your Trip | Onboard | Destinations | Offers | Train Status | Book Trip

## Flexible Ticketing Tips for Planning Your Next Trip


The Health Desk / Travel Tips / Flexible Ticketing Tips for Planning Your Next Trip

We know that travel conditions and plans can change, and flexibility is more important than ever. And with our convenient ticketing policies, you can book with confidence knowing that it's easy to adjust your trip if plans change.


Keep these tips in mind when it's time to book your next Pacific Surfliner trip:

- Save Your Ticket for Later**  
Choose an Unreserved Coach ticket if you want maximum flexibility for deciding when to travel. Use an Unreserved Coach ticket to ride any Pacific Surfliner train between the stations on your ticket up to one year from the date of your reservation, subject to certain restrictions. This type of ticket doesn't require any modifications, and is convenient in many situations:
  - Take an earlier train if you are ready to go home sooner
  - Take a later train if you want more time to explore
  - Ride an earlier or later train if the one you were planning to take is delayed or expected to be busier than you'd like
  - Ride at a later date if you want to postpone your trip, whether it's by a day, week, or a few months

Keep in mind that Business Class and Thruway Bus tickets are tied to specific trains/buses, so you will need to call Amtrak to modify your reservation (at no cost) in advance of your ticketed departure time. Trips can be modified online, through the Amtrak App, or by calling 1-800-USA-RAIL.



- Save with Multi-Ride Tickets**  
Our 10-Ride Ticket can be used to take five roundtrips between the stations you select within a 60-day period, and is offered at a significantly discounted rate over the cost of booking five roundtrips individually. For those who are traveling semi-regularly, but not often enough to get a monthly pass, this is a great option. The 10-Ride ticket can also be split among riders traveling together on Pacific Surfliner trains, as long as the person named on the ticket is one of the passengers. This is a great option for small groups. Notes: Amtrak RideReserve confirmations are not required for travel on Pacific Surfliner trains. Special restrictions apply to this ticket during the week of Thanksgiving (Nov. 23-30, 2020).





## VIDEO

Videos have always played an important role for us on social media, but they became increasingly critical when travel sharply declined. We used videos to bring beauty to the newsfeeds of our online communities, allowing fans to enjoy their favorite Pacific Surfliner scenery from home.

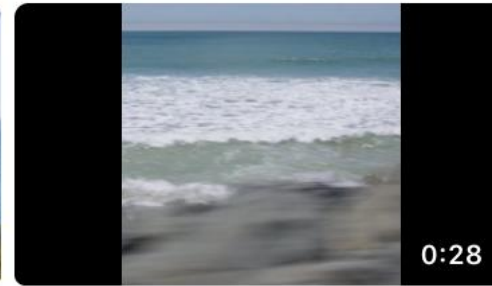
# VIRTUAL VIEWS VIDEOS

"Virtual views" videos uploaded to the Pacific Surfliner social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) have been viewed more than 129,000 times across the three platforms.

These videos were especially important during the periods of our campaign when travel was restricted.



**Pacific Surfliner Views North of Jalama Beach** ...  
36 weeks ago · 3.1K Views  
👍❤️😱 176



**Pacific Surfliner Views Through San Clemente** ...  
39 weeks ago · 40.5K Views  
👍❤️😱 918



... **Pacific Surfliner Views Through Santa Maria** ...  
38 weeks ago · 692 Views  
👍❤️😱 44



**Pacific Surfliner Views Through Torrey Pines** ...  
38 weeks ago · 28.4K Views  
👍❤️😱 2.2K



... **Pacific Surfliner Views Through San Clemente** ...  
34 weeks ago · 17.1K Views  
👍❤️😱 1.3K



... **Pacific Surfliner Views Near Refugio Beach** ...  
34 weeks ago · 1.6K Views  
👍❤️😱 129

# RECONNECTING YOU VIDEO

Once travel restrictions were lifted, we produced a video to inspire confidence in the Pacific Surfliner service and share a positive, forward-looking message.

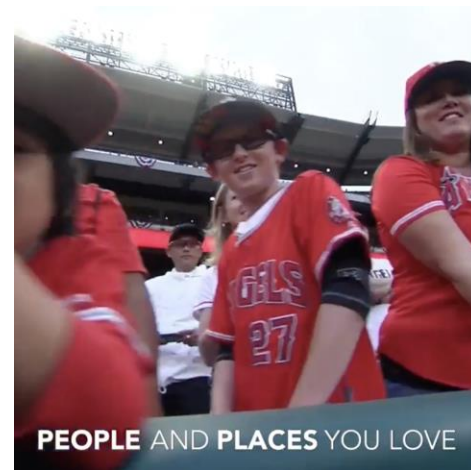
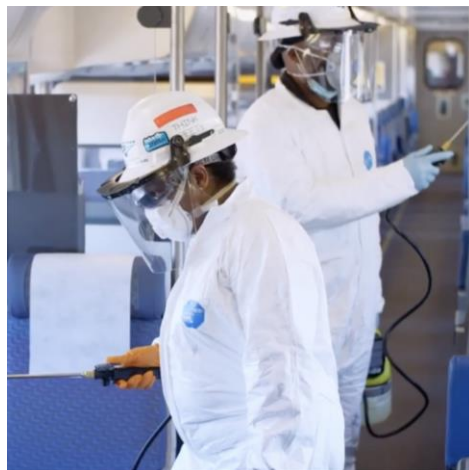
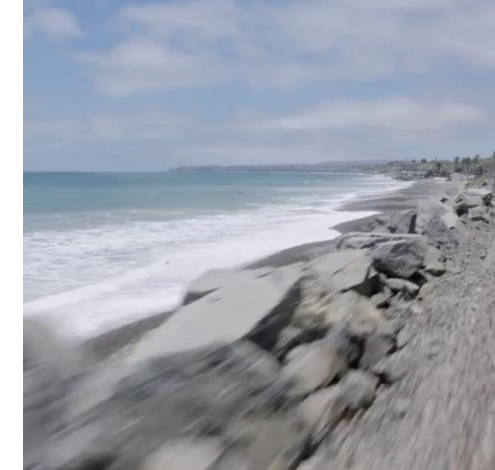
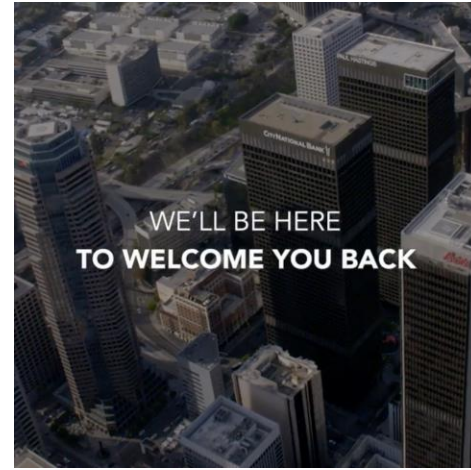
The video was viewed more than 65,000 times across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and nearly 60,000 times on YouTube.



# RECONNECTING YOU VIDEO: SCREENSHOTS



[Video Link](#)



Sample visuals from the video that was shared on social media channels:














# SAMPLE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 **kikovb66** Do you have season passes or month passes similar to a bus pass?   
6w Reply


 **pacificsurfliner** @kikovb66 We do have monthly passes - another popular option is our 10-trip ticket, which can be used for 10 one-way trips (or 5 round-trips) within a 60-day period (offered at a significant discount over booking each trip separately). Tap the link in our bio to visit a page where you can learn more (Flexible Ticketing Tips) 

 **Oscar Gonzalez** @OscarGo97625489 · May 14   
Hello, In the summertime on June, are they going to be having any more Amtrak Trains back to normal in the summer this year? Because I want to go to Ventura for Vacation like few times.  
 1   

 **Pacific Surfliner**    
@PacSurfliners

Replying to @OscarGo97625489

That's a great question, Oscar. This situation is changing rapidly, and we want to make our best efforts to keep our passengers safe and provide reliable transportation. You can keep up with schedule changes at [pacificsurfliner.com](https://www.pacificsurfliner.com)

 do you still serve beer and wine on the train

Yes - there have been some changes to our Cafe Car offerings. Some fresh food items such as salads and sandwiches are not available, nor are hand-mixed cocktails. Bottled/canned beer and wine are still available for purchase. As a note, cash is still not being accepted onboard. You can visit our website for more information, but please also reach out if you have any other questions! [pacificsurfliner.com](https://www.pacificsurfliner.com)

 **supertrader** @ssg10 · Mar 27   
Is there any change to your schedule?  
 1  

 **Pacific Surfliner**    
@PacSurfliners

Replying to @ssg10

We have moved to a temporarily reduced schedule on Pacific Surfliner trains effective Monday, March 23rd to align with current service needs. The most up-to-date schedules are available when booking your trip on [Amtrak.com](https://www.amtrak.com) and in the mobile app.

# MAINTAINING CONSISTENCY IN MESSAGING

With the quickly evolving conditions that come with a pandemic, it was important for us to maintain a database of common questions and associated responses so that we could reply to comments with accuracy and speed.

As we received questions on social media related to COVID-19, we categorized them in a document with approved responses. As policies and service levels changed, we updated the document, ensuring content remained accurate for quick and easy reference.

What rules/guidelines has Amtrak/Pacific Surfliner put in place to protect visitors?	New procedures such as cashless payment and mask mandates have been implemented for the safety of our riders and crews. Information on updated safety measures and travel tips are available here: <a href="https://pac.surf/2DketVf">https://pac.surf/2DketVf</a>
What do I need to know to prepare for my trip?	Please check travel restrictions and health ordinances in the counties you are traveling to and from in advance of your trip. We also recommend visiting our travel advisory page to learn about some of the adjustments we've made for the safety of passengers and crews, including a mask requirement and cashless payment. Learn more: <a href="https://pac.surf/339saPi">https://pac.surf/339saPi</a>
Do I need to wear a mask on board?	Yes, masks are required onboard as well as in stations for the safety of passengers and crews. Please visit our website for more information about this and other safety measures: <a href="https://pac.surf/339saPi">https://pac.surf/339saPi</a>
Why isn't Pacific Surfliner making people wear a mask?	Masks that cover both the nose and mouth are required to be worn onboard Pacific Surfliner trains as well as in stations for the safety of passengers and crews. Please alert the conductor of any issues that arise during your trip. They have a supply of masks available for passengers who do not have one. Please know that you can also move to a new location on the train at any point during your trip - just take the seat check ticket that the conductor places above your seat and display it above your new seat. Please visit our website for more info on our current policies and expanded safety measures: <a href="https://pac.surf/2DketVf">https://pac.surf/2DketVf</a>

## RESULTS

Social media has played a critical role in the Pacific Surfliner's COVID-19 communications efforts. We've reached tens of thousands of people to share timely and accurate information about the service. We've also maintained or even strengthened relationships with riders through virtual content. This was paramount to the campaign's success at a time when budgets were limited and the need to communicate was greater than ever.



# SOCIAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE

Between March and December, activity on the Pacific Surfliner's greatly increased, with a diverse mix of content that both informed and engaged.

170

Total Posts

798K

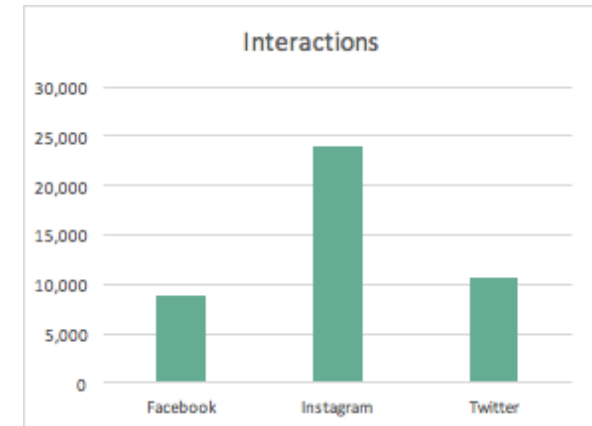
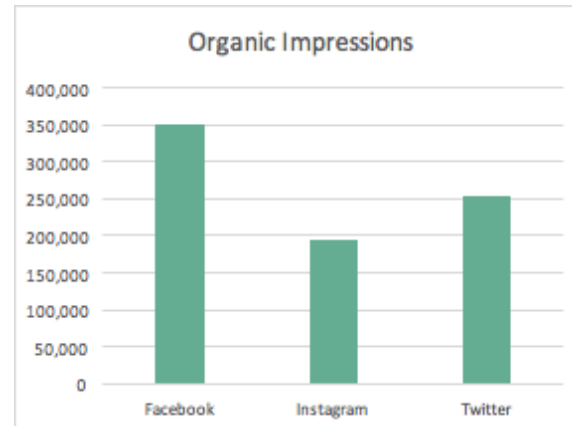
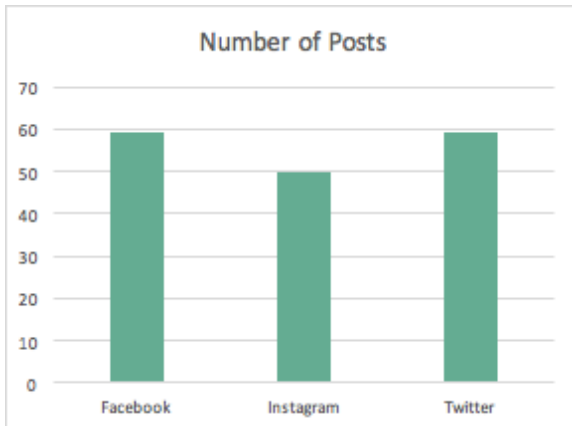
Organic Impressions

43K

Likes, Comments,  
and Clicks

195K

Video Views

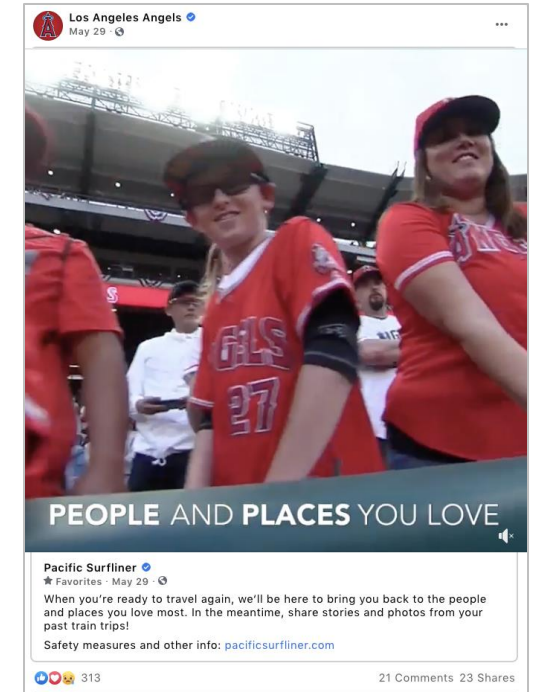


# PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Activity on the Pacific Surfliner social channels greatly increased, with a diverse mix of content that both informed and engaged audiences. At a time when travel was put on hold across the globe, and when ridership on the Pacific Surfliner reached unprecedented lows, we used social media to maintain relationships with riders and build a foundation to recover ridership once the pandemic subsides.

## **March – December 2020**

- 9K website visits to PacificSurfliner.com from social media posts
- More than 200 questions and comments addressed
- 8 blog articles published, covering a range of topics, from virtual views and video conference backgrounds to tips for traveling safely and responsibly
- Social content shared by partners including Amtrak, the Los Angeles Angels, Visit Santa Barbara, and others



During these trying and unprecedented times, we've seen first-hand the strength and resilience of the communities that we have the privilege to serve. We will continue to play a critical role in bringing people together for business and recovery.

