1. Welcome/Introduction/Roll Call – Jason Settlemoir (chairman)

Chairman Jason Settlemoir called the Marketing and Communications Committee to order at 4 p.m. with welcome and roll call.

Present were directors – J. Settlemoir (chairman); K. Decker (vice chairman); I. Axelrod; D. Bittle; R. Brandt; S. Cahill; J. Frasure; D. Hoovler; B. Kenney; M. Kimmelman; P. Koch; M. Loewe; C. McErlean; J. Miller; F. Nichols; S. O'Toole; S. Peine; Dr. T. Powers; D. Spriggs

2. 2017 Advertising Recap – Dan Leary

Total advertising revenue for 2017 was $751,432, down 12.2% ($104,870) vs. budget ($856,302)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hoof Beats</td>
<td>$355,681</td>
<td>$421,302</td>
<td>-$65,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web ads</td>
<td>$301,739</td>
<td>$340,000</td>
<td>-$38,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARS</td>
<td>$94,012</td>
<td>$95,000</td>
<td>-$988 (1 stallion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$751,432</td>
<td>$856,302</td>
<td>-$104,870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Several major advertisers did not renew their contracts in 2017 or significantly decreased their ad spending with us.
- Farms, breeders, sale companies & tracks have shifted spending money elsewhere (social media, race & event sponsorships), which the USTA doesn’t offer.
  - Budget cuts
  - Advertisers lost to HRU

Advertiser Decreases:
- Farms: ($51,000) -- Brittany Farms - $24,000; Walnut Hall - $15,000, Diamond Creek Farm - $12,000
- Tracks: ($14,500) -- Meadowlands/Tioga & Vernon Downs - $6,000; Mohegan Sun - $4,500, Woodbine - $4,000
- Products & Services: ($40,300 from 6 major advertisers)

SOLUTIONS:
- Increased digital offerings
  - Mobile Site - $7,500 (through Feb. 2018) (available since Fall 2017)
  - HRFZ – starting in Feb. 2018, some initial sales for June & July
- Increasing integrated media buy offers – combining digital and print
- Video sponsorships (major events - Hambo, LBJ, yearling sales, Futurity, BCrown)
• E-newsletter sponsorships
• USTA video content for sale to our breeders (stallions)
• Exploring social media sponsorships and ads
• Hoof Beats redesign -- March 2018 issue
  • Increase in equine health and nutrition stories -- Ability to pitch health/nutrition advertisers

3. **USTA Advanced Marketing Concept – Russell Williams, Dan Leary**

Russell Williams led a discussion of the concept of the USTA establishing an Advanced Marketing service. Topics were:

- Exploring the landscape of marketing money available for marketing harness racing
- Consideration of whether USTA’s ability to create high-quality content provides a reasonable chance to attract marketing business.
- Is this a revenue generating project that the USTA should pursue?
  • Must consider additional burden on current staffing
- Consideration of this as a stand-alone division of the USTA, perhaps in a year or two

**Pennsylvania Marketing Initiative**

R. Williams explained the current statewide marketing initiative in Pennsylvania.

Dan Leary discussed the USTA’s proposal to the Standardbred Breeders Association of Pennsylvania. The proposal was a campaign to promote breeding in PA and included: an awareness campaign, advertising - traditional and digital (with creative from USTA); SBAP website redesign; Stallion Fee Rebate program; and Breeding farm open houses

R. Williams concluded with the Advanced Marketing concept ideas including:

- USTA could serves as Harness Racing’s premier provider of marketing analytics, which is currently done by multiple PR/Ad firms
- Provide state authorities with comprehensive, accurate assessment of their marketing efforts and provide comparisons with other states
- USTA would acquire valuable data to utilize in other ways
- USTA Advance Marketing could possibly be a future project, in a year or two, as a stand-alone

4. **Youth Delegates Committee and Initiative – Gabe Wand, Marilyn Breuer-Bertera**

Gabe Wand and Marilyn Breuer-Bertera discussed the formation of USTA Youth Delegates to:

- Generate innovative ideas
- Development of the next generation of USTA members through involvement in this program
- Create future leaders for our sport

The purpose of the program is to develop harness racing industry leaders by:
• Encouraging youth to become involved with the USTA by assisting in marketing and promotional efforts as well as participating in the decision-making process
• Capturing the passion of youth involved in harness racing and using it to generate new ideas and renewed enthusiasm.

Delegates
• One youth delegate from each USTA district, who is between ages 16-20, is a USTA (Youth) member to serve a two-year term

Selection Process
• Application due by May 1, 2018 with parental consent; selection complete by May 15, 2018
  o Requires recommendation from industry participant

Program includes:
• Redesign of USTA Youth Corner web page
• Welcome packet, monthly communication, resource development and coordination with horsemen at local events

Other projects
• Social media projects and marketing assistance at local racetracks
• Develop electronic newsletter
• Contribute Youth Beats content
• Attend USTA District Meetings

Project Supervision
• USTA (A. Conte, J. Turner); USTA Board (G. Wand) and HHFY (E. Taylor)

USTA Benefits
• Strengthen youth perspective in individual districts
• Marketing and social media assistance
• Increase youth membership

Delegate Benefits
• Academic credits, opportunity to publish and working in a collaborative environment in our industry

Funding

2018
• Utilize existing USTA social media budget
• Include in district meeting budgets for attendance at those meetings

2019
• Present progress report at Nov. 2018 Executive Committee
• Annual meeting attendance funding to be considered for 2019 USTA budget
• Projected expense -- $1,100 to $1,900 per delegate
  ▪ Includes: district meeting, local event and annual meeting attendance
All USTA directors are asked to encourage energetic and enthusiastic youths in their district to apply.

5. Crisis Communications – CANCELLED

6. USTA Website Newsroom Coverage and Social Media – Dan Leary

Staffing and Hours – (7 days per week)
- Day Editor – 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Night Editor – 4:30 – 10 p.m. (Fri & Sat – midnight/ 1 a.m.)

Submissions
- Send stories and announcements - news@ustrotting.com and ustrottingnews@gmail.com
- Assist us in mining good local, feature stories

Other Suggestions
- Need more focus on pre-race and pre-event news and announcements
  - Helps us to help you amplify that news to increase your audience/attendance
- Special wagers, carryovers – especially USTA Strategic Wagers
  - Applies to a wide audience of bettors who can wager online
- Non-racing, On-Track Promotions – apply to a much smaller audience – local only
  - Very small viewership - more views if included in a racing story

Travel Crew – Photos and Videos
- USTA has only one crew – Mark, Rich, Allison and sometimes TJ
- Limits the number of places we can be
  - Request USTA attendance in advance

Timeliness
- With social media – deadlines are immediate
  - Race Recaps – same night or early the next morning (8 – 10 a.m.)
  - Events, functions, contests - by the next day

Social Media – (prepared by Allison Conte for 2017)

Posting to Social Media
- Photo and Video content is the most popular
  - Average organic reach between 5,000-6,500
- Analytics show the most effective posts are: pre-event promotion and behind-the-scenes or experiential videos.
Harness Racing has unique ability to showcase behind-the-scenes and present a different perspective
   ▪ Utilize technology -- GoPro and 360 cameras (drone)

**Most popular videos:**
- Little Brown Jug “Experience” video *(Behind-the-Scenes)*
  - More than 27,000 organic views FB and YouTube --- 186 shares
- International Trot 360 video *(Behind-the-Scenes)*
  - More than 60,000 organic views and nearly 200,000 reached -- 512 shares
- Horse of the Year contender videos *(Pre-event promotion for Dan Patch Awards)*
  - Contender 2017 highlight’s
    ▪ Top 4 – More than 20,000 views and nearly 50,000 reach
    ▪ Released daily and views increased each day

7. **Adjourn**

There were no other matters to come before the committee and the meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m.