



# City of Moose Jaw

**COMMUNICATION # CC-2019-0177**

**TITLE:** "Moose War" Marketing Impact

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Communications Manager

**DATE:** September 12, 2019

**PUBLIC:** PUBLIC DOCUMENT

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the report dated September 12, 2019 from the Communications Manager regarding the Moose War Marketing Impact be received and filed.

## **TOPIC AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to summarize the marketing impact of the "Moose War" between the City of Moose Jaw and Stor-Elvdal, Norway from January-March of 2019.

## **BACKGROUND**

January 11, 2019 was the "birth" of the world's most famous moose feud (or, as the Norwegians called it, an International Moose Beef), as the City of Moose Jaw sought to reclaim the title of the "World's Largest Moose Statue" from the municipality of Stor-Elvdal, Norway.

How did it happen?

1. Outdoor Canada published an article about Mac the Moose on January 3, 2019. Titled "Why Mac the Moose Is Worth A Visit Next Time You're In Saskatchewan", it was noted that Mac had lost the title of "World's Tallest Moose Statue" to Norway in 2015.
2. Regina -based social media stars Justin (Reves) and Greg (Moore) released their video in front of Mac the Moose on January 11, 2019. Their enthusiasm and mock outrage over Mac's second fiddle status was perfect and, most importantly, they challenged Mayor Fraser Tolmie to do something about it.

Rather than look a “gift moose” in the mouth, the City and Tourism Moose Jaw set out to feed it.

1. Four days later Mayor Tolmie released a video asking the community what the City should do to make Mac bigger. This was key. By involving the community, the story expanded the interest locally, as interest continued to expand in Norway.
2. Once the story had legs and was gaining national and international attention, there was discussion between the team at City Hall (Mayor Tolmie, the City Manager, and the Communications Manager) and Tourism Moose Jaw about how to handle the situation. The City of Moose Jaw had never been part of anything like this story before, so the question, “what to do and how to capitalize on it?” became the focus. It was decided to use a principle of Improvisational Theatre (Improv) – “Yes, and...”, which means to always agree and then advance the idea.
3. On January 21, 2019 a media conference was held where Mayor Tolmie read an official statement “written by Mac the Moose”. In the statement Mac gave permission for his body to be made taller.
4. On January 23, 2019 – Stephen Colbert talks about the Moose Beef on his Late Show.
5. Moosehead Breweries (based in Nova Scotia) came to Moose Jaw on January 30, 2019 to make a \$25,000 donation to Mac's new “Rack”.
6. On February 25, 2019, the City announced that Deputy Mayor of Stor-Elvdal, Norway, Linda Henriksen, would be coming to Moose Jaw for a “Moose Summit”.
7. As part of the Summit Ms. Henriksen flew with the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, visited schools, was recognized at the Business Women of Moose Jaw's I PRISM Awards, received spa treatments, visited local landmarks, dropped the puck at a Moose Jaw Warriors game and did almost all of it with media present, leading to more local, provincial, national and international coverage.
8. On Ms. Henriksen's last day the City hosted the signing of a “Moosarandum of Understanding” between Moose Jaw and Stor-Elvdal. Norway agreed to let Mac be the biggest in the world again, and Moose Jaw would acknowledge that Norway's moose was the “shiniest and most attractive in the world”.
9. As part of the “MOA” Moose Jaw declared that every May 17 (Norway's Constitution Day) would be known as “Norway Day” in Moose Jaw. Norway agreed to host “Canada Day” every October.

For the inaugural “Norway Day” City Administration and Tourism Moose Jaw held a scrambled eggs and sausage breakfast (an offshoot of the traditional scrambled eggs

and salmon feast they have in Norway) at the Tourism Centre, right next to Mac the Moose. A video message from Ms. Henriksen was played and the Peacock Collegiate Choir sang the Norwegian national anthem. Also, in what was dubbed the “A-ha” moment, the Choir sang the 80s classic “Take On Me” by the Norwegian group “A-ha”.

## **DISCUSSION**

- A common question during this period was “what is all of this media and social media coverage worth”?
- In order to properly answer the question, a Canadian company called Meltwater was used to measure the metrics of just how much the phrase “Mac the Moose” was used in media stories and social media feeds in that two-month period. The analytics report is contained in “Schedule A” of this report.
- The results were staggering. Between unique news stories, added to social media mentions, the phrase “Mac the Moose”, in relation to the “Moose War”, was seen around the world 993,000 times.
- It truly was a worldwide phenomenon. Stories were printed not only in Norway, but also Sweden, Spain, Australia, Romania, India, China and even Sputnik News in Russia.
- Major US publications like the New York Times and Washington Post ran stories.
- Moosehead Breweries donated \$25,000.00 to the fund to make Mac the Moose bigger.
- BBC International interviewed Mayor Tolmie and Ms. Henriksen for over 7 minutes, and Stephen Colbert devoted part of his “Meanwhile” segment to the matter.
- The total monetary value of the news coverage? \$6.3 million, plus another \$1.1 million in social media value.

## **PUBLIC AND/OR STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

Beyond the marketing value of this story, immeasurable value was realized from the community impact. Firstly, this was truly a collaborative effort between the Mayor’s Office, Ms. Jacki L’Heureux-Mason at Tourism Moose Jaw, and City Administration. Moose Jaw had never experienced a story like this before. However, through creativity, timing and communication this story grew beyond any reasonable expectations. One other major element that is hard to measure is community pride. A significant part of this story is the pride and interest shown in Mac. This was apparent in the social media and local media responses, in the Go Fund Me donations and in the efforts of the local individuals and businesses that are contributing to the cause of making Mac’s Rack a world-beater once again.

The City would like to extend a sincere thank you to the local businesses, schools, organizations and individuals who played a significant role in welcoming Ms. Linda

Henriksen to Moose Jaw. The City of Moose Jaw proved once again how “Notoriously” welcoming, generous and friendly the community truly can be.

### **COMMUNICATION PLAN**

Information contained in this report will be summarized in a media release and promoted through City social media accounts and website.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

This report supports the long-term strategies to increase community pride, spur growth and generate outside investment in the City.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- \$1,060.00 from the Communications Budget was used to procure the Meltwater analytics report.

### **PRESENTATION**

Mr. Craig Hemingway, Communications Manager, will provide a brief overview and visual presentation with respect to this report.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- i. Schedule “A” – “Mac The Moose” Analytics
- ii. “Mac The Moose VS Norway” video recap:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kLY00czBZ8>

### **REPORT APPROVAL**

Written by: Craig Hemingway, Communications Manager  
Reviewed by: Tracy Wittke, Assistant City Clerk  
Approved by: Jim Puffalt, City Manager  
Approved by: Fraser Tolmie, Mayor

*To be completed by the Clerk's Department only.*

Presented to Regular Council or Executive Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.

No. \_\_\_\_\_ Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Moose War Marketing Impact - CC-2019-0177.docx
Attachments:	- Schedule A Mac the Moose.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 16, 2019

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Tracy Wittke



Jim Puffalt



Fraser Tolmie