TRAVELSALEM ABSOLUTELY OREGON

2015-2016 Annual Report

Promoting Salem & the Mid-Willamette Valley



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> BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Sue Nichols Community Development Director

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Hazel Patton	Oregon State Hospital Museum
elma Moon Pierce	DDS
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Cover photo courtesy of Nickie Bournias

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MISSION

Brian Chung

Travel Salem <u>markets and promotes</u> the mid-Willamette Valley area as a premier, year-round destination for conventions, events and leisure travelers. Travel Salem serves as the official destination marketing organization and a vital tourism economic development generator for the region.

VISION

Through **bold innovation and integrated partnerships**, Travel Salem's award-winning programs and services heighten the visitor experience and drive economic impact, which supports local businesses, job creation and an enhanced quality of life.

VALUES

We are committed to <u>service, integrity and excellence</u> that provide tangible results and strengthen the businesses and communities we serve.

S

THE SKY WAS THE LIMIT IN 2015-2016

Continuing the upward momentum, 2015-16 was the best year on record for the Mid-Willamette Valley's tourism industry.

The success of the previous year continued to build with Travel Salem broadening and deepening its work in Destination Development and Sports Marketing. New products were launched including Wine, Garden & Falls tours, cycling routes, cultural heritage video shorts, and a totally re-envisioned website. On the Sports Marketing side, Travel Salem secured new opportunities and expanded existing events that helped fill hotel rooms and drive "sold out" status throughout the year.

New records were set across the board for all key performance measurements. The 15-16 estimated economic impact (EEI) increased to \$553.2 million, the largest EEI on record in the history of the region. The transient occupancy tax (TOT) increased 16% to \$3.6 million, infusing new resources into the community to support tourism promotion, cultural heritage assets and park improvements. Occupancy was up 35% over prior year to 563,000 room nights sold with average daily rates of \$89.29.

Leverage was up 27% over prior year largely due to increases in national publicity as well as an increase in the Willamette Valley Visitors Association's allocation for regional tourism promotion. Leverage continues to be a vital component to the health of Travel Salem and demonstrates the organizations ability to establish and nurture regional, statewide and national partnerships that deliver bottom-line results to tourism promotion initiatives. **Consumer** **engagement**, which tracks how many times Travel Salem interacts with a visitor through our various platforms, **was up 45%** to more than 60 million engagements.

The health of the tourism ecosystem requires the collaboration and contribution of all its members, working together to create jobs and a vibrant guality of life. With the significant increases and milestones witnessed in 2015-16, Travel Salem would like to acknowledge and thank our funding partners at the City of Salem, Marion County, Polk County, and our hundreds of members throughout the region. It's these partners and their vision and dedication that ensure the visitor will receive the best of what Oregon has to offer right here in the Mid-Willamette Valley. The industry delivers on the brand promise that makes this region a premier destination. As a result, Travel Salem and the tourism sector continue to be major contributors to economic growth and vitality for the many communities we serve. Here's to another robust year!

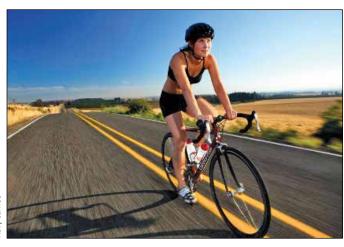


Shan UNQ

Steve Johnson Chair



Angie Morris President & CEO





KEY PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Travel Salem's programs and services are designed to deliver tangible results for the communities and businesses we serve.

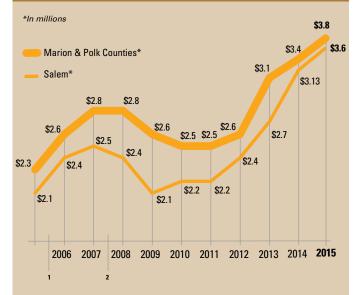
There are several key performance indicators that can provide a sense of the overall economic health of the Salem area tourism industry.

When evaluating progress, these indicators must be considered alongside other measurements such as financial resources, program staff and membership support. Add into the mix environmental influences and other economic trends to gain better insight into the health of the industry.

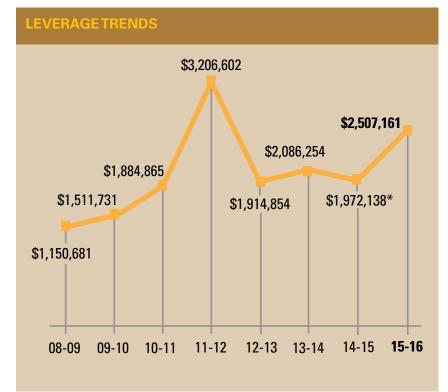
Specific tourism-based activities also provide context for evaluating the big picture, and can reveal trends and key market factors that influence how the organization makes adjustments in program initiatives.

Travel Salem is not the sole contributor or driver to the region's tourism economic outcomes. However, the organization takes a leadership role in tourism promotion to help shape industry results.





¹ Salem Convention Center & The Grand Hotel opened ² Beginning of recession



Media	\$1,584,522
In-Kind (including VIN)	544,901
WVVA / Regional	240,000
Visitors Guide	69,606
Advertising	65,787
Volunteers	2,345
TOTAL	\$ 2,507,161

*Leverage down due to less TV media exposure

MARION & POLK COUNTIES

Arts & Entertainment	\$133.6 million
Food & Beverage	134.4 million
Accommodations	73.2 million
Retail Sales	58.8 million
Food Stores	55.3 million
Local Transportation & Gas	40.7 million
OtherTravel	57.3 million
Direct Travel Spending Total	\$553.2 million
Direct Earnings	\$142.2 million
Jobs	6,450

ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT

*In millions

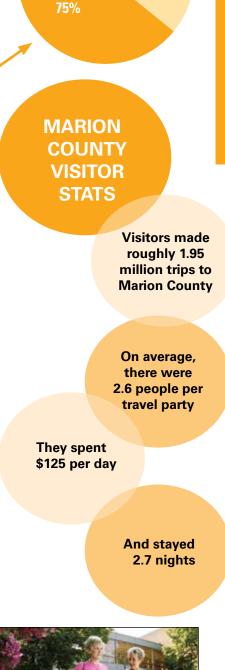
Since 2010, direct travel spending in Marion & Polk counties grew \$18.5 million on average each year.



*Source: Economic Impacts of Travel, 1992-2015p, Salem, Oregon, Dean Runyan Associates, www.deanrunyan.com

All of us here at Allied Video Productions are thrilled to have Travel Salem as one of our most esteemed clients. Travel Salem is a pleasure to work with. We absolutely appreciate you! :)

– Brian Hart Allied Video



Day Travel 25%

Overnight Travel

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Kelly James

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Create broader understanding of tourism as an economic development generator utilizing the key performance measurements (EEI, TOT, Leverage). Create partnerships & resources to influence community dialogue and decision-making that impacts tourism, quality of life and the Salem area's viability as a travel destination. Support local businesses by providing opportunities and solutions to open doors, address challenges and harness best practices.

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS AWARDS

The 6th Annual Absolutely Fabulous Awards event was hosted by the Salem Convention Center. Keynote speaker, Katy Clair, Travel Oregon Manager Global Marketing, presented tips on crafting media outreach to attract travel media.

2015-16 AWARD WINNERS

Absolutely	Fabulous
Award	
Hoopla	

Absolutely Engaged Award Left Coast Cellars

Absolutely Hoppin' Award **Rogue Farms**

Absolutely In Focus Award Allied Video

Absolutely Authentic Award Aurora Colony

Absolutely Connected Award **Roth's Fresh Markets Absolutely Powerful** Award Antique Powerland Absolutely Oregon Award **Oregon State Capitol** Foundation **Absolutely Energized** Award Terry Kelly, Salem





Left Coast Cellers

Aurora Colony

Rogue Farms



Roth's Fresh Markets



Allied Video

OUTREACH

Oregon State Capitol



Foundation

Terry Kelly, Salem Electric



Electric

 Participated in the Salem All-Star Heritage community committee; Polk County Rural Tourism Studio; Polk County Tourism Marketing Committee & Agritourism committee; Downtown Salem 365 committee; Capitol History Gateway Project; Willamette Water Trail; Eola-Amity AVA; Lord & Schryver Conservancy; and the Santiam River Canyon Rural Tourism Studio to name a few.

 Salem Up Front – This annual event educates front desk staff about area attractions and events, while acknowledging their hard work as the "friendly face" of Salem.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Develop long-term stable funding, strategic staffing levels, and the technology and tools necessary for organizational growth.

INCREASED BANDWIDTH

Travel Salem's financial resources were up 20% over the previous year. The increase was primarily due to two factors. Transient occupancy tax funds from the City of Salem were up 8% to \$771,420. In addition, Travel Salem was selected to administer funds related to the Wine Country Plate for Region #1 in the amount of \$136,392 for the biennium.

WINE COUNTRY PLATE

Plate sales reached 27,367 by the end of June 2016. The Wine Country Plate is the second-fastest selling specialty plate in Oregon history.

Travel Salem is managing the funds for Region #1 (Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties) and executing the marketing plan including:

- A robust and integrated social media campaign
- Public relations events and campaigns targeting travel writers, Instagram influencers and bloggers
- Three 2-minute sizzle videos highlighting regional travel experiences
- Advertising partnerships with Willamette Valley Visitors Association, Travel Oregon and other wine regions
- Wine CharmTrail highlighting assets in the Mid-Willamette Valley









MEMBERSHIP

Travel Salem's Membership program delivered a successful campaign with 348 members and **revenue** of \$107,318, a 15% increase over prior year. The program secured a 125% increase in new member revenue from 50 regional businesses. On the renewal side, despite 53 members canceling their membership due to budget constraints or going out of business, Travel Salem still increased renewal revenue by 2%. The program was redesigned in January 2015 with new options, packages and discounts. This redesign resulted in businesses increasing their membership with Travel Salem, with an **average investment of \$308 per member, up 17%** over prior year.



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MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Position the region as a desirable travel destination for convention & leisure travelers utilizing vertically integrated marketing & communication strategies. Leverage the regional travel experience by connecting visitors to the unique people, products, and stories that will lengthen the visitor's stay. Drive Travel Salem's key performance measurements.

Secured **\$1.6 million in earned media** generated from aggressive media pitches and hosting travel writers to the area.

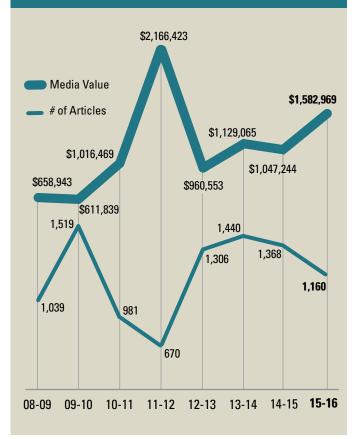
MEDIA COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Pick the Perfect Spot to View the 2017 Solar Eclipse- Published by USA Today in October 2015. Salem was highlighted as one of the first cities in the path of the eclipse, with Eola Hills Winery being called out for its eclipse activities. The Grand Hotel, Red Lion & restaurants mentioned. Impressions 1,142,647 & media value \$71,415.
- Peaceful Paddles With Beer Stops on Oregon's Willamette Water Trail- Published by Seattle Times in July 2015. Freelancer Kristy Karras' article included mentions of Arcane Cellars, Rogue Hopyard, Mecanico (Independence), The Feller House B&B and Travelsalem.com. Impressions 260,000 & media value \$10,472.
- The World's Most Breathtaking Waterfalls-Published by *The Daily Mail* in March 2016. Silver Falls State Park was included in this feature story and slideshow highlighting some of the world's most stunning waterfalls. Impressions 1,700,000 & media value \$31,782.
- Bend and a Beer: Yoga Classes and Craft Breweries Team Up- Published on *Foxnews.com* in January 2016. Salem's Mikki Trowbridge was highlighted as one of the first yoga instructors to bring yoga into breweries in the Willamette Valley, which as now spread across the nation. Impressions 1,231,000 & media value \$39,930.
- Beavering Away: A Look at How Oregon
 Organizations are Pushing Boundaries WorldwidePublished by Dossier/Hemispheres Magazine
 in May 2016. Some of Salem's recent tourism
 initiatives including the Peter Courtney Bridge to
 Minto-Brown were highlighted in Dossier the
 business magazine that's part of United Airlines'
 inflight publication, Hemispheres. Impressions
 11,500,000 & media value \$66,087.





MEDIA VALUE & ARTICLES



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

VISITOR OUTREACH & INQUIRY FULFILLMENT

- The Travel Café & Visitor Information Network served 164,735 visitors in 2015-16 an increase of 7% over the previous year. The network includes: Travel Café, BEST WESTERN PLUS Mill Creek Inn, Red Lion Hotel, Phoenix Inn South, Willamette Heritage Center, Salem Convention Center, Lancaster Mall, Amtrak, Salem AAA and Salem Airport.
- Travel Salem received 53,708 (+53%) consumer inquiries through advertising, mail, phone and online. Each response was customized according to the request.
- Provided support to 626 relocation inquiries from businesses, families and individuals seeking assistance with resources & connections – an increase of 21%.
- Responded to leads interested in visitor information that were generated by the following organizations:
 - National Tour Association (NTA): Motorcoach operators
 - International Tradeshow Berlin (ITB): International travel trade (tour operators, travel agents, etc.)
 - GoWest / ITM: International tour operators
 - Japanese Association of Travel Agents (JATA)
 - IPW tradeshow: The travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the U.S.



Try this for

sensory overload... Only in a good way!



Tracksum

ITS DESTINATION IS FREE



KALEN



VISITOR INFORMATION NETWORK



*Launched satellite visitor information locations **Limited Visitor Center hours

COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVERTISING

- Produced the 15-16 Salem Area Visitors Guide with 140,000 distributed to over 800 locations throughout Oregon, Washington, California and British Columbia.
- Launched a lodging, attractions and ticketing booking engine for Travel Salem.com
- Published monthly e-communications to consumers, local residents and the local visitor industry to promote events and activities throughout the Mid-Willamette Valley.
- Ran advertisements in the Travel Portland Visitors Guide, On Track Magazine and Race Center.
- Discovery Map
- The map highlights points of interest throughout
 - Polk and Marion Counties. The Discovery Map focuses on the following niche areas: Cultural Heritage, Wineries & Vineyards, Specialty Food & Beverage, Recreation, Farms & Markets, Gardens and Birding & Nature



- The map contains a total of **88 points of interest**.

EVENT PROMOTION

• Marketed & promoted **2,178 Salem area events**. An average of 181 events were promoted every month.



Willamette Valley

WILLAMETTE VALLEY VISITORS ASSOCIATION PARTNERSHIP

- Launched "Wine +" online video content (e.g. Wine+ Food, Family, Cycling, Heritage and Art).
- Created a Willamette Valley advertisement and content for the **Brand USA** Discover America inspirational guide.
- Attended a 3-day **New York City press trip** with Travel Oregon and WVVA,; delivered artisan food/drink products to 11 top-tier media.
- Ran a Food & Travel Magazine sweepstakes to encourage interest in the Willamette Valley.





- Food Network The Jeni & Ollie wine program includes Willamette Valley segments.
- Participated in the **Fall Bounty promotion** with Travel Oregon. A Willamette Valley chef was featured sharing their favorite spot to visit near one of the 7 wonders. This tied into an **Eater.com** promotion.
- Partnered with Travel Oregon and the Oregon Wine Board to run ads in **Alaska Air's in-flight magazine** promoting the Wines Fly Free program.
- Ran a Willamette Valley ad in the **Oregon Wine Directory**.
- Participated in the **Oregon Road Rally** that hosted international tour operators on a tour throughout Oregon.

TRAVELSALEM.COM REDESIGN

- Visual redesign compelling imagery & clean design
- · Responsive design model desktop, laptop & mobile friendly
- Streamlined navigation easy access to rich content
- Video content reveal beauty & depth of regional assets
- Event search prominently showcases 180+ regional activities & events every month
- Social Media front & center (Facebook, blog, Instagram)
- · Sports Marketing section targets event organizers

BOOKING ENGINE

- Integrates transactional product on TravelSalem.com & Facebook easy to search & book hotels, attractions & events
- Delivers competitive advantage compete directly with Online Travel Companies (Expedia, Priceline)
- Leverages Travel Salem's position as local destination experts
- · Provides consumers with convenient booking resource throughout all stages of trip planning
- Drives greater returns to Travel Salem Members
- Provides powerful analytics
- Leverages deeper engagement with direct consumers marketing tools (special offers prior to and during trip)

WEBSITE ANALYTICS

12% increase in web traffic

73% of web traffic in 15-16 was organic (nonpaid search); remaining 27% was direct or referral

2014-15

2015-16

301,183 visits 141 countries represented

Top web traffic came from:

273.903 visits 147 countries represented

Top web traffic came from:

- 1. U.S.
- 2. Canada 3. India
- 4. UK
- 5. Japan
- 2. Canada
- 4. UK

1. U.S.

- 3. India 5. Brazil





Began using Google Analytics in 2007-08 to more accurately reflect website traffic.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Executed a comprehensive social media program with these concentrated efforts:

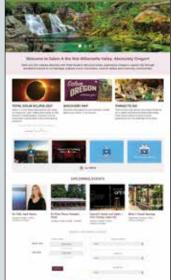
- Twitter: Maintained "real-time" conversations with 5,687 (up 10%) local, Pe national and international followers
- Facebook: Posted 264 events & promotions reaching 9,484 fans (up 17%)
- ... Flickr: Received 200,400 viewer sessions during the year
- D Pinterest: Featured 31 new pins with 374 followers (16% increase)
- Instagram: Featured 53 posts and 1,042 followers (141% increase)
- You YouTube: Received 12,031 viewer sessions Tube







Facebook



Tolun

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Contribute to the overall economic health of the region by researching, exploring & facilitating the development of new & existing tourism products. Identify collaborative partners & private funding to implement opportunities. Due to this being a new program, it may take 1-3 years to realize new & expanded products.

DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH:

 Created new cycling routes connecting to the beautiful and popular Willamette Valley Scenic Bikeway. Route maps include elevations, distance and type of course, as well as highlight points of interest, attractions and bike-friendly businesses along the way.

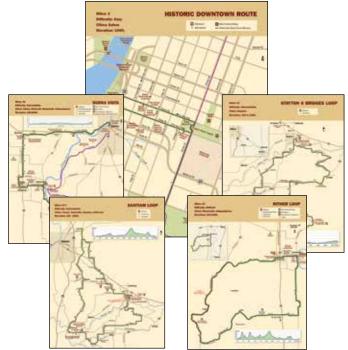


 Launched a new video shorts series titled "Salem Like a Local" showcasing ElsinoreTheatre, Oregon Museum



of Mental Health, Willamette Heritage Center, and Boons Treasury. The series features charismatic historian and story teller John Ritter who seeks to pique the visitor's interest with compelling and a behind-thescenes look at a few of Salem's rich cultural heritage sites.

• Launched first-ever bookable product of its kind, **Wine Country & Garden/Falls Tours** of the Mid-Willamette Valley, in partnership with Gray Line and Amtrak. The tours position the region as a premier destination and gateway to Oregon's wine country and natural attractions. Tours can be booked by travel agents anywhere in the world, or booked by locals who want to explore the bounty in their own backyard.









Part of the Global Greeters Network, **Salem Greeters** provides free guided walking tours of Historic Downtown Salem for visitors by local expert residents. Local volunteers gave customized tours to **113 visitors** from all regions of the world including California, Missouri, Japan, Mexico, and China and beyond.

CONVENTION SALES

Contribute to the overall economic health of the region by booking conventions & events through direct sales efforts, cooperative promotional efforts & innovative marketing strategies. Drive Travel Salem's key performance measurements.

Convention, Sport & Event Estimate Economic impact \$16,833,617

Future Bookings impact: \$14,614,900







Oregon-Idaho Conference of The United Methodist Church



HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel Salem, Salem Convention Center and the Oregon State Expo Center co-opted on the **Bravo! Live** tradeshow held at the Oregon Convention Center.
- Amateur Softball Association Council (ASA) meeting and tradeshow held in Louisville with our City of Salem partners to bid on 2017 ASA tournaments.
- Oregon Society of Association Managers (OSAM) conference and tradeshow, held in Corvallis.
- Religious Conference Managers Association (RCMA) tradeshow held in San Diego, Ca. This was our second year attending and co-oping with the Grand Hotel and the Convention Center, there were 900 attendees from the U.S. and Canada.
- Attended the Greater Oregon Society of Government Meeting Professionals (GOSGMP) Annual Conference and Tradeshow in Lincoln City.
- Attended the **Meeting Professionals International** (MPI) Cascadia Conference in Bend.

You have been fabulous and we appreciate all you have done to help our team find lodging for Memorial day weekend.

> - Kristi Ocampo-Henry The Hoop - Team Steel (from Idaho)

DELEGATES



* Decrease due to timing of the Jehovah Witness Conventions.

ROOM NIGHTS



*Increase was due to the American Truck Historical Society.

SPORTS & EVENTS SALES

Identify **new opportunities and support upcoming sporting events** hosted in the Mid-Willamette Valley. Expand current and foster new collaborative sporting event opportunities to grow the economic impact of sports and events.

SPORTS SALES AND MARKETING INITIATIVE

- Helped coordinate the **RaceWalk Olympic Trials** in Salem on June 30, 2016.
- Facilitated **Quaterly Sports Committee** meetings to discuss future business opportunities.
- Attended **TEAMS 2015** conference in Las Vegas. Met with 32 event organizers and secured 6 RFPs for potential business.
- Attended the **2016 National Association of Sports Commissions Sports Events Symposium** in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Met with 19 event organizers and brought back 4 RFPs for future business.
- Attended a new tradeshow, the ConnectSports Marketplace in Pittsburgh, Pa. Met with 40 event organizers and secured 14 RFPs for potential business (e.g. Senior Softball USA, the Can-Am Police-Fire Games Federation, US Australian Football, International Distance Skating Association, American Marksman, and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics).
- Attended the United States Specialty Sports Association's Annual National Meeting in Temecula, Ca. with the City of Salem to see how we can attract more USSSA sports to the Salem area.

Attended **MontBell's Sea to Summit event** in Japan in October 2015 to conduct research and development and foster partnerships.

In September 2017, Salem and the Mid-Willamette Valley will host the first U.S. River2Ridge event, modeled after Japan's Sea to Summit series. This 60-mile adventure sporting event will feature kayaking the Willamette River, cycling wine country, and hiking Silver Creek Falls 10-Fall Loop. The City of Salem and Travel Salem seek to establish a signature event that showcases the destination's abundance in unique recreational assets and ultimately develop a key driver in tourism economic impact for the region.



Sea to Summit in Japan, October 2015: Brian Chung/Travel Salem Sports Marketing, City of Salem Mayor Anna M. Peterson, Daisuke Tai/President of Montbell, Angie Morris/Travel Salem President & CEO



This **Quidditch post received a record number of likes, comments & shares** (225 Likes, 77 comments, 215 shares, 30,800 impressions) – the biggest number of comments and shares for anyTravel Salem FB post in the last 3 years. (A "good" response rate for posts is roughly 25 shares and 10 comments).



85 LEADS RESULTED IN 53 DEFINITE BOOKINGS:

Examples:

- Oregon Wrestling Association Kids State Championship at Fairgrounds (January 30-31, 2016)
- Oregon Racquetball Association Jerry Bower Memorial Tournament at Lancaster Courthouse (February 18-21, 2016)
- Oregon Latino Basketball Adult and Youth Tournaments at Willamette University (March 18-20 & 26, 2015)
- Oregon State Optional Gymnastics Meet at the Hoop Salem (March 18-20, 2016)
- Willamette Valley Water Polo Boys Junior Olympic Qualifier at the Kroc Center (May 13-15, 2016)
- USA Track and Field (June 30, 2016)

Provide the information, resources and support necessary to enhance the travel experience of the convention & group delegate and bolster repeat visitation.

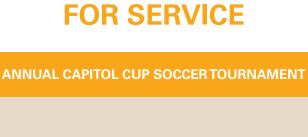
• Held a spring **Salem Up Front!**, front desk appreciation event. The event is designed to educate front desk staff about area attractions, while thanking them for serving as the region's welcoming committee.



PROVIDED ON-SITE VISITOR INFORMATION FOR:

- ASA USA Gold
- Western Oregon University Fam Fest
- Family Wellness Fair
- Oregon Latino Basketball
- Oregon Heritage Conference
- American Truck Historical Society Conference
- Travel & Words Conference
- OR/ID Conference of United Methodists





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GROUPS CONTACTED



In June, Travel Salem partnered with the Annual Capitol Cup Soccer tournament to schedule a team dinner at the Salem Convention Center and provide activities such as face painters, a balloon tying artist and cotton candy for a club of 500+ from Seattle.







FINANCIAL REPORTS

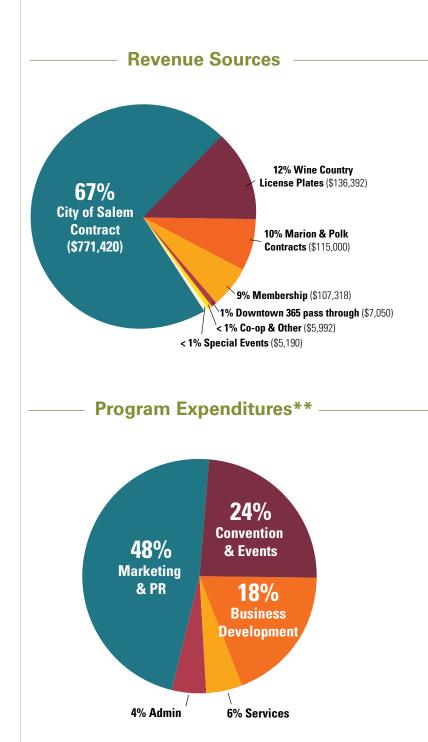
\$1 leveraged \$3.27

For every \$1 Travel Salem received from public sources—another \$3.27 was generated from outside sources. These results leveraged a 3.27 : 1 ratio for the region's investment in tourism promotion.

OPERATING RESULTS

REVENUES	
Public	
City of Salem Contract	\$771,420
Regional	
Marion County	\$100,000
Polk County	\$15,000
Private	
Membership + Donations	\$3,641
Special Events	\$13,282 \$238,767
Advertising & Sponsorship Other	\$230,707 \$5,992
Restricted	<i>40,002</i>
Temporarily Restricted Revenue	\$127,183
TOTAL REVENUES	\$1,275,285
EXPENSES	
Salaries & Related Expenses	\$664,142
Operations	\$220,112
Professional Services	\$76,224
Advertising	\$29,262
Trade Shows & Fam Tours	\$15,975
Special Events	\$5,559
Agility Fund	\$29,799
Misc	\$1,780
Transfer to Restricted Funds	\$127,183
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,170,036
OPERATING SURPLUS	\$105,249
Other Income - Leverage	
Visitors Guide	\$69,606
Volunteers	\$2,345
Media	\$1,584,522
Advertising	\$65,787
In-Kind	\$544,901
WVVA/Regional	\$240,000
_	
SUBTOTAL	\$2,507,161

91% of all revenues go toward direct visitor services



**Program costs include overhead expenses.

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