



## FOURTH QUARTER REPORT 2008-09 April, May, June

### INTRODUCTION

Travel Salem is pleased to submit the tourism and convention fourth quarter report for 2008-09 pursuant to City of Salem contract section 1.1.3. The contract stipulates that quarterly reports include a “financial report, an overview of activities, progress statements on meeting ‘scope of services,’ and updated information as required in the strategic/business plan.” This report fulfills these contractual requirements.

All programs and services tie back to Travel Salem’s 07-10 Strategic Plan, and drive toward two main objectives: long-term stability for tourism leadership, and increased visitation and tourism economic impact. In addition, the quarterly reports connect specific activities and initiatives to the 07-09 Business Plan, demonstrating progress to achieve plan goals.

Travel Salem welcomes the opportunity to present and review this report, answer any questions and share information regarding current marketing efforts.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Activities during the fourth quarter of 2008-09 produced positive results in key program areas.



Travel Salem held the **grand opening** event for the Travel Café on April 1 in conjunction with First Wednesday and drew more than 300 guests and well-wishers to the celebration. (1/b #3)

Travel Salem received the **Oregon Governor’s Creative Tourism Development Award** on April 19 at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor’s Conference on Tourism held in Salem at the Salem Conference Center. This prestigious award recognized ground-breaking work done to create the first-ever Travel Café. This is the second year in a row that Travel Salem has received this distinguished award ... and the *first time ever* that the award has been given to the same organization two years in a row. Governor’s Conference attendees got to experience the award-winning project first-hand at the Sunday After-Hours party held at the Travel Café with more than 350 people in attendance. (2/a #4)



Launched **Garmin GPS unit** rentals, pre-programmed with themed, regional tours. Developed a step-by-step guide to help visitors quickly get up to speed on how to use the units. Rentals will be tracked, as well as the route and points of interest that consumers visit. (2/d #4)



Launched the **AbsolutelyTix** network, a centralized ticketing outlet at the Travel Café. The network went live with three clients (Salem Chamber Orchestra, Salem Film Festival and CETs Chocolate Soiree) and sold roughly 250 tickets. Outreach to promote the service to

**AbsolutelyTix.com**

Your Source for Salem Area Tickets

businesses occurred throughout the quarter, driving six new partners and an additional 10 pending contract completion. This is a new revenue stream for Travel Salem. (2/d #4)

The **directional “i” signage system** was installed on the Salem Parkway, driving traffic and visibility for the Travel Café. In addition, **Travel Plaza signage** was installed for the Best Western Mill Creek Inn satellite visitors center. This signage promotes Travel Salem’s regional Visitor Information Network. (2/d #4)

National and local **media** secured for the period resulted in 320 impressions valued at \$198,023 of free media exposure in *The Oregonian*, KGWs Out & About with Drew Carney, Uptake.com, *Group Tour Magazine*, “What a Trip” blog, *RV Journal*, *Sunset* magazine, and The Weather Channel. (2/b #1 & #5, as well as the attached **PR Addendum**)



**Social media** efforts continued to progress: 1,046 images and 1 video posted on Flickr to date with 12,069 viewer sessions; and Twitter activity including 293 tweets reaching 775 local, national and international followers. Travel Salem launched the first episode in a cutting-edge series called “**Absolutely Extreme Twitter Adventures.**” This live reporting concept featured North Santiam River Trips and included a partnership with Travel Oregon and *Statesman Journal*. (2/b #8)



Presented a “**Social Media Marketing Strategies**” **workshop** to the Reed Opera House merchants to create awareness of this medium and encourage partnerships and engagement. Additional workshops will be offered in 09-10. (2/d #3)

Completed the **Salem Area Media Kit** (online & print) made possible through a Travel Oregon matching grant. The kit can be customized with new story ideas, fact sheets, bios and itineraries as needed. (2/d #3)



Launched **free business listings** on TravelSalem.com for businesses inside Salem city limits. In addition, a comprehensive list of free tourism promotion services was published and distributed to the Salem business community. (2/d #3)

Irene Bernards was elected Chair of the **Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA)** for 09-10. WVVA is a regional destination marketing organization with representation from Salem (Marion & Polk), Eugene (East Lane), Corvallis (Benton), Albany (Linn), and Yamhill & Clackamas counties. (2/d #4)

Travel Salem provided support for **three new conferences** previously secured: the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism, the NW Section of the Pacific Northwest Water Works Association, and the Jehovah Witness Conventions. (2/a #4)

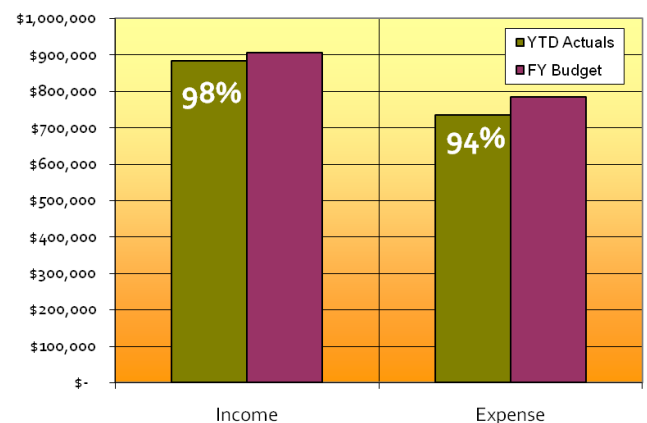
Provided **services** to 34 conferences and events that were held at locations throughout the Salem area, serving roughly 25,000 delegates. (2/c #8)

Detailed **Financial statements** for the fourth quarter are attached: revenues were \$166,560, while expenses were \$279,417. Total operating revenues for the period were \$839,312 which included carry forward, other income and leverage. Net equity was \$148,308.

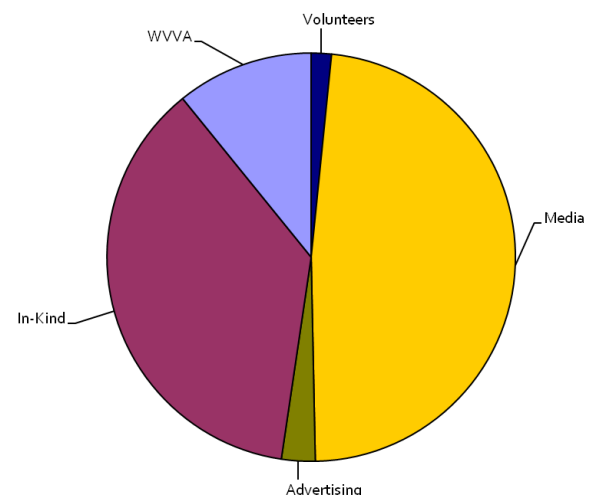
The results generated by Travel Salem are measured by examining progress in three key areas: estimated economic impact (EEI), transient occupancy tax (TOT) revenues, and leverage.

- **EEI results** are available at year end, and will be reported in Travel Salem's 08-09 annual report.
- Fourth quarter **TOT receipts** were down 3.4% from the previous year to \$803,335. Year-to-date TOT is only down 3.58% which is very good compared to other regions around the state which are experiencing double-digit decreases.
- Fourth quarter **leverage results of \$411,837 increased 198%** over the previous year due to media successes with dedicated PR efforts, and in-kind support related to the Travel Café build.  
*Please note: leverage results are not predictable from year to year because Travel Salem can't guarantee, for example, in-kind donations or that a story will be published. However, Travel Salem strives to increase leverage support each year by continuing to develop and broaden key partnerships.*

**2008-09 YTD Actuals vs. FY Budget**



**08-09 Fourth Qtr Leverage**





## OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

The Travel Salem staff tracks numerous statistics throughout the year to monitor, evaluate and adjust marketing strategies, staff levels, funding, etc. These internal measurement statistics assist with forecasting and trending, and need to be examined as a whole to get a true indication of the industry and performance of marketing activities. Outside influences such as gas prices, weather, natural disasters, or inflation, etc. will also have an impact on the peaks and valleys that these numbers may reflect.

*Please refer to the Glossary of Terms for definitions of the following activities.*

Activity & Production Statistics	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 08-09	% Change from 07-08	08-09 YTD	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 07-08	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 06-07
<b>Marketing &amp; PR</b>					
National Earned Media Impressions <sup>1</sup>	105	110%	275	50	57
Local Earned Media Impressions <sup>2</sup>	215	1,854%	764	11	10
PR Presentations <sup>3</sup>	43	153%	163	17	2
Visitor Information Inquiries <sup>4</sup>	6,865	-66%	45,513	19,906	14,863
TravelSalem.com User Sessions <sup>5</sup>	35,746	-36%	189,324	55,826	105,377
Visitors Center Attendance <sup>6</sup>	11,952	72%	30,704	6,957	8,256
Events & Community Activities Assisted <sup>7</sup>	497	50%	1,332	332	n/a
<b>Convention &amp; Event Marketing</b>					
Real-Time Conventions/Events <sup>8</sup>	16	60%	47	10	17
• Number of Delegates	20,145	18%	43,378	17,100	17,895
• Number of Room Nights	14,884	778%	25,646	1,695	1,450
Sales Leads Generated <sup>9</sup>	9	-53%	29	19	21
Bookings <sup>10</sup>	7	-36%	32	11	10
Sales Activities <sup>11</sup>					
• Direct Contact	364	257%	903	83	n/a
• Phone/E-mail	120	173%	597	44	n/a
• Sales Packets Distributed	38	-56%	155	86	n/a
• Site/FAM Tours	1	100%	10	0	n/a
• Referrals	74	-24%	98	16	n/a
<b>Convention &amp; Event Services</b>					
Conventions Assisted <sup>12</sup>	34	36%	87	25	21
Visitors Reached <sup>13</sup>	24,941	127%	70,267	10,959	n/a
Welcome Bags Distributed <sup>14</sup>	3,234	49%	7,062	2,188	n/a

<sup>1</sup> National Earned Media Impressions – increase due to enhanced PR efforts with designated PR staff person.

<sup>2</sup> Local Earned Media – increase due to enhanced PR efforts with designated PR staff person.

<sup>3</sup> PR Presentations – increased results due to enhanced community outreach.

<sup>4</sup> Visitor Information Inquiries - inquiries are down for the quarter due to timing of ads breaking. However, inquiries are up for the year.

<sup>5</sup> TravelSalem.com User Sessions – the decrease is a result of Travel Salem switching to a new website host that tracks user-sessions in a more efficient and precise manner.

<sup>6</sup> Visitor Center Attendance – increase is due to new expanded Visitor Information Network (Travel Café plus I-5 satellite locations).

<sup>7</sup> Events & Community Activities Assisted – increase due to enhanced promotional efforts through community presentations.

<sup>8</sup> Real-Time Conventions/Events – the increase in delegates and room night is due to 3 Jehovah Witness Conventions that were held during the quarter.

<sup>9</sup> Sales Leads Generated – the decrease was due to less activity from planners, and more planners contact the Salem Conference Center directly.

<sup>10</sup> Bookings – the decrease was due to less activity from planners during the uncertain economy.

<sup>11</sup> Sales Activities – sales packet were down due to more planners wanting information digitally (email and online at TravelSalem.com).

<sup>12</sup> Conventions Assisted – the increase was due to more conventions held during the quarter, which were first-time events to Salem.

<sup>13</sup> Visitors Reached – the increase was due to the Jehovah Witness Conventions.

<sup>14</sup> Welcome Bags Distributed – the increase is due to more conventions & events requesting this service.

Activity & Production Statistics	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 08-09	% Change from 07-08	08-09 YTD	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 07-08	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 06-07
<b>Membership<sup>11</sup></b>					
Total Membership	275	54%	275	178	n/a
New Members Acquired	17	21%	97	14	n/a
Attrition	12	n/a	13	n/a	n/a
Sales Presentations	542	56%	1,573	348	n/a
<b>Leverage (detail below)<sup>12</sup></b>	\$411,837	198%	\$1,363,105	\$138,134	\$113,250
Visitors Guide	\$0	0%	\$91,693	\$700	\$0
Volunteers	\$6,570	47%	\$23,148	\$4,472	\$11,034
Media	\$198,023	336%	\$660,288	\$45,445	\$57,268
Advertising	\$10,947	-33%	\$50,302	\$16,399	n/a
In-Kind	\$151,728	561%	\$300,429	\$22,952	\$5,046
WVVA/Regional	\$44,570	-7%	\$237,245	\$48,166	\$39,902

<sup>11</sup> Membership – the program was launched in 07-08, so increases and decreases will show significant swings until program matures.

<sup>12</sup> Leverage results increased over prior period due to growth across all major categories, with significant increases in Media and In-Kind support for the build of the Travel Café.

### **1/a - DIVERSIFY FUNDING STREAMS**

Develop long-term stable funding by examining opportunities within existing program offerings and establishing new revenue streams through creative ventures.

#### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESULTS:**

- *#1 Develop & implement sponsorship opportunities:*
  - Secured sponsors for the bi-monthly Industry e-Newsletter, the quarterly Consumer e-Newsletter and Marketing Exchange Luncheon.
- *#2 Implement fundraising events:*
  - Membership luncheons – held one successful event during the fourth quarter:
    - May featured “We Can Prove It – Oregon Tourism’s Impact on Local Business” by Scott West, chief strategy officer of Travel Oregon, and was hosted by the Red Lion Hotel.
- *#6 Build and expand essential financial partnerships:*
  - Launched AbsolutelyTix network, a new revenue stream for Travel Salem (see 2/d #4).
  - Travel Salem withdrew its proposal to Woodburn Area Tourism for 09-10 tourism promotion services due to a lack of available funding for the contract. A future partnership may be discussed again in the future when adequate funding is available.

### **1/b - INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY**

Increase organizational capacity in both human and financial resources to boost program support, services and the overall bandwidth of Travel Salem.

#### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESULTS:**

- *#1 Strategically enhance staffing levels*
  - Recruited one intern for the quarter to work on public relations projects.
  - Hired two part-time staff to assist Thursday through Saturday in the Travel Café.

- *#2 Engage the Board of Directors by developing advisory committees:*
  - Nominations Committee - recommended six candidates that were unanimously approved for the 09-10 Board of Directors:
    - Alan Alexander, Salem Municipal Airport
    - Connie Bradley, Oregon State Fair & Expo
    - Lois Cole, Historic Deepwood Estate
    - Tim Klarr, Today's Hair Salon & Day Spa
    - Kristy Kummer, Woodburn Company Stores
    - Jennifer McCormick, Oregon State Parks
- *#3 Explore facility opportunities that support organizational growth:*
  - Held the **grand opening** event for the Travel Café on April 1 in conjunction with First Wednesday and drew more than 300 guests and well-wishers to the celebration. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was emceed by Travel Oregon CEO Todd Davidson, with Mayor Janet Taylor, Marion County Commissioner Patti Milne, Polk County Commissioner Tom Ritchey, CB2 Chief Garth Brandaw, and Dwane Brennenman on hand to cut the ribbon. The event featured donated wine products from more than nine local wineries, microbrews from Roth's, chips from Kettle Foods, hors d'oeuvres from Mill Creek Station, entertainment and music from Sound Sensations, sponsor gifts from French Prairie Gardens and Extreme Chocolates, and much more.
- *#4 Recruit volunteers with attributes/skill sets to achieve program goals:*
  - Recruited three additional volunteers through a referral program to support Guest Services.
- *#5 Implement technology to enhance program efficiency:*
  - Continued social media efforts (FaceBook, Twitter) – see 2/b #8.
- *#7 Implement & maintain visitor information network:*
  - Secured Amtrak as a visitor information location, with installation occurring in the second quarter of 09-10.

### **1/c - BUILD MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM**

Develop a broad-based, regional membership program that delivers value-added tourism services to members. The membership program will be designed within requirements of the Salem City charter.

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESULTS:**

- *#2 Obtain regional participation:*
  - Recruited 4 new regional members (24% of total new members secured during the quarter).
- *#3 Use public relations to communicate/promote membership:*
  - Published 15 press releases to build awareness about Travel Salem and the membership program.
  - Promoted membership through the Industry e-Newsletter distributed to 1,089 subscribers informing them of marketing opportunities.
- *#6 Leverage regional Chamber of Commerce memberships*
  - Participated in weekly and monthly Chamber Greeter programs for Salem, Keizer, North Santiam, and Stayton/Sublimity.

## **2/a - BROADEN SCOPE OF CONVENTION & EVENT MARKETING PROGRAM**

Develop a comprehensive Convention & Event Sales program that promotes and leverages a wide variety of properties and meeting venues throughout the region.

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESULTS:**

- *#2 Develop cooperative marketing campaigns with partners:*
  - Worked with the Salem Conference Center on the 09-10 marketing campaign; co-op ads to be placed in industry annual directories, as well as online ads and display ads in print magazines.
- *#4 Secure new conference/event opportunities:*
  - Provided support for three new conferences previously secured: the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism, the NW Section of the Pacific Northwest Water Works Association, and the Jehovah Witness Conventions. At this time two of the conventions are rebooking for future years.
    - **Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism** – this was the first time the conference was held in the capital city. Travel Salem worked with a variety of local businesses and organizations to develop and coordinate activities for the event that would best showcase community assets. Activities included a pub crawl & tour, downtown walking tour (including the newly opened Union Street Pedestrian Bridge), kayaking expedition on the Riverfront, awards banquet at Elsinore Theatre, evening celebration at the Travel Café, and an event called Mini-State Fair at the Oregon State Fair. The conference was successful in turning around perceptions and opening the door for future opportunities. The Salem conference was hailed as the “best ever!”
  - Facilitated a site tour for company out of Denver. The possible 2010 conference would bring roughly 1,000 delegates for three days, utilizing 300 plus room nights.
- *#6 Pursue editorial coverage for Salem as a convention destination:*
  - Secured coverage in the April edition of *Meetings West* and the June edition of *Sports Travel Magazine*.
- *#8 Research & broaden geographic scope of program:*
  - Attended the Oregon Tour and Travel Alliance (OTTA) bi-monthly meeting held at the Salem Conference Center during the Governor's Conference on Tourism. The mission of this statewide alliance is to partner and sell Oregon as a packaged travel destination, nationally and internationally.
- *#9 Maintain existing marketing efforts:*
  - Participated in the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce ShowBiz Tradeshow.
  - Co-Sponsored the Meeting Professional International (MPI) monthly luncheon at the Oregon Garden Resort with other destination marketing organizations. As a sponsor we were able to make a sales presentation to the membership.
  - Attended industry association monthly networking opportunities including Oregon Society of Meeting Professionals, Meeting Professionals International, Oregon Society of Association Management, and the Oregon Tour and Travel Alliance.

## **2/b - DRIVE INNOVATIVE TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGIES**

Develop a comprehensive leisure tourism marketing program that promotes Salem as a preferred destination for leisure day and overnight visitors.

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESULTS:**

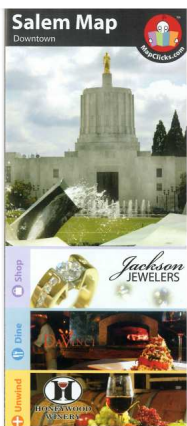
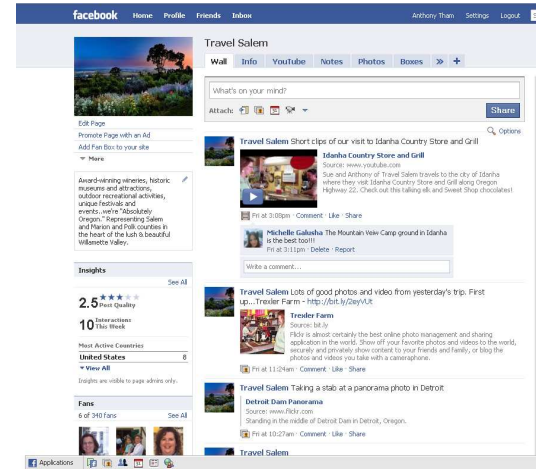
- *#1 Explore advertising & publicity options to educate target audiences:*
  - Submitted *Statesman Journal* columns:
    - “Enjoying Agricultural Offerings at Markets”
    - “Branding Salem as an Absolutely Top Destination”
    - “Events Help Celebrate Life in Salem”
  - Pitched three stories to the *Statesman Journal* that resulted in print and online exposure:
    - Episode one of “Absolutely Extreme Twitter Adventures,” North Santiam River Trips (see 2/b #8)
    - “Area’s Visitors Center Impresses in its Debut” (front page)
    - “Importance of Tourism,” full page in *Inside Business* section
  - Researched Cision database for regional and national media opportunities.
  - Distributed the Consumer e-Newsletter to 350 subscribers offering Salem area travel packages, specials and events.
- *#2 Redesign TravelSalem.com to be dynamic & user-friendly:*
  - Completed the new TravelSalem.com website which features a database-driven engine with search capability (e.g. by category of interest, date of travel, etc.). Transferred 3,000 pages of information to new structure.
  - Implemented and promoted free TravelSalem.com listings for businesses within Salem city limits.
- *#3 2009 Salem Area Visitors Guide:*
  - Continued distribution of the Salem Area Visitors Guide to locations throughout Oregon, Washington, California, British Columbia and nationally. Quarterly follow-up with distribution outlets to ensure adequate supplies are stocked.
- *#4 Research & establish satellite visitor resource locations:*
  - Secured Amtrak as a visitor information location, which will be installed during the second quarter of 09-10.
  - Negotiations underway to secure satellite locations for visitor information kiosks (Lancaster Mall, Maples Rest Area on Hwy 22 east close to Detroit Lake).
- *#5 Pursue editorial coverage to leverage marketing resources:*
  - National and Local Media – secured 105 impressions (e.g. articles, listings, photographs) valued at \$159,090 of free media exposure.
  - Local Media – secured 215 impressions valued at \$38,933 of free media exposure (see 2/b #1).
  - Pitched new story ideas for the fall edition of the Travel Oregon Magazine.
  - Pitched the Marion County Oregon 150 Relay to print, broadcast and online media.
  - See detailed results on attached **Public Relations Addendum**
- *#6 Expand regional efforts through creative partnerships & marketing initiatives:*
  - Generated 1,499 inquiries in the fourth quarter from an ad placed in *Good Housekeeping* magazine (840,000 circulation). The ad ran during the third quarter and featured gardens and overnight stays (funded by Marion County).



- *#7 Participate with current tourism partners to enhance marketing efforts:*
  - Participated in year-round *Sunset* magazine ad placements (870,000 monthly circulation) and leisure lead generation valued at \$62,400.
  - Partnered with OregonWineCountry.org to drive traffic to TravelSalem.com through specials offers, events and appealing articles.
  - Participated in the “WVVA Pack,” a fulfillment program for all Willamette Valley leisure leads through online, print, advertising and Travel Oregon advertising. Fulfilled 1,732 inquiries through this partnership for the quarter.
  - Submitted six Salem “deals” to the **Oregon 150 Challenge – “I am Oregonian.”** Travel Oregon launched the promotion encouraging residents and visitors to take the Oregon 150 Challenge and discover Oregon. The campaign promotes travel throughout the state and allows visitors to document their travels online. Upon completion, the visitor receives a congratulatory certificate from the Governor. The site has “specials” and “deals” from throughout Oregon.
  - Transit Mall Events – submitted Salem area events for posting on transit plasma screens.
- *#8 Maintain current promotions & develop new promotional opportunities:*
  - Online & Social Media
    - Advertised on **Google “pay-per-click”** resulting in 365 click throughs.
    - Uploaded 189 images to **Flickr**, for a total of 1,046 images and 1 video on the Travel Salem account, with 12,069 viewer sessions. Flickr is an online photo management and sharing application that allows photos to be uploaded and viewed by individuals and the media.
    - Maintained dialogue on **Twitter** with 775 local, national and international followers. Posted 293 tweets throughout the quarter promoting regional partners and events. Twitter is a social messaging tool that Travel Salem uses to communicate and stay connected with consumers, media and regional partners through the exchange of quick, frequent real-time updates.
    - Posted three feature articles online at the *Statesman Journal Persona* (viewers can access Travel Salem’s profile where blogs, photos and other information is posted - averaging 300,000 visitors per month).
      - “Enjoying Agricultural Offerings at Markets”
      - “Branding Salem as an Absolutely Top Destination”
      - “Events Help Celebrate Life in Salem”
    - Launched the first in a series called “**Absolutely Extreme Twitter Adventures,**” with a goal to use social media to report/tell the story about a location or experience. A rafting trip was arranged with master water guide Bill Sanderson of North Santiam River Trips. To maximize the opportunity, representatives from Travel Oregon (PR manager and blogger) and the *Statesman Journal* (reporter & photographer) were invited to join on the adventure. During the trip, Twitter was used to communicate the experience through text, photos and video. The Twitter-dialogue was posted live onto the SJ website. The following day, SJ published the Twitter Adventure in print. This is the first instance (that we know of) where social media was used in

this fashion, and combined with other online and print media. Other Twitter Adventures are in the works.

- Added content and promotions to Travel Salem's **FaceBook** page – more than 30 events, specials & news were posted, with a special focus on the Marion County Oregon 150 Relay.
- Posted the new Salem Area Media Kit to TravelSalem.com.
- Syndicated TravelSalem.com events out to WVVA, TravelOregon.com and other sources.
- Monitored TravelSalem.com search engine rankings; adjusting and refreshing content weekly to remain within the top three Salem sites.
- Posted member and Association press releases to TravelSalem.com.
- Posted Marketing Exchange videos to TravelSalem.com.
- Added new events throughout quarter to TravelSalem.com.
- Added new listings to TravelSalem.com weekly.



- Submitted attraction and points of interest information to ODOT for their **Silver Falls Scenic Byway** video, a 3 to 7 minute video highlighting points of interest and events along the route. ODOT will use these videos to promote the byways in conjunction with Travel Oregon. The completed videos will be posted on TravelSalem.com as well.
- ← ○ Secured a free advertisement for the Travel Café in the **2009 Map Clicks Salem map** that will be available during the first quarter of 09-10.

- **#9 Leverage Travel Oregon's marketing efforts:**
  - Completed the **Salem Area Media Kit** (online & print) made possible through a Travel Oregon matching grant.
  - Promoted six Salem area packages through Travel Oregon's "Oregon 150 Challenge" promotion.
  - Submitted Salem area events and culinary activities to Travel Oregon for their new **Oregon Bounty** website and Food & Wine micro-site. These two websites will be promoted heavily during the fall 2009 Oregon Bounty promotion.
  - Pitched new story ideas for the fall edition of the **Travel Oregon Magazine**.
  - Participated in a presentation to Travel Oregon staff regarding Salem Urban Development projects, Go Downtown Salem! promotions, and Travel Salem marketing strategies. The goal of the presentation was to ensure the Travel Oregon staff has a well-rounded knowledge of the Salem region when promoting Oregon.
- **#11 Maintain existing marketing efforts:**
  - Sent weekly event and activity updates to 1,299 subscribers to drive traffic to TravelSalem.com and encourage front-line workers to promote the Salem area to visitors.



- Sent Industry e-Newsletter to 1,089 Travel Salem members, partners and industry organizations.
- Distributed regional events brochures through two I-5 rest areas bordering Salem (north & south) to attract visitors and encourage visitation.

## **2/c - BUILD SERVICES & HOSPITALITY PROGRAM**

Develop a comprehensive services and hospitality program that ensures visitors have the information, resources and support they need to make the most out of their travel experience.

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESULTS:**

- *#4 Increase volunteer base targeting specific skill sets:*
  - Recruited 3 new volunteers.
- *#5 Communicate proactively to industry partners regarding activities & events to increase participation & promotion of regional assets:*
  - Distributed the Industry e-Newsletter to 1,089 industry partners informing them of marketing opportunities and Travel Salem's efforts.
  - Sent weekly events email to 1,299 subscribers.
- *#8 Maintain existing service efforts:*
  - Provided services to 34 conferences/events that were held at locations throughout the Salem area including the Salem Conference Center, Red Lion Hotel, Oregon State Fair & Expo Center, Willamette University and other venues.
  - Participated on planning committees for two upcoming conferences/events to be held at the Salem Conference Center (both are first-time conferences to Salem): the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism (400 delegates) and the Pacific North West American Water Works Association (700 delegates).
  - Participated in planning for the Amateur Softball Association National tournaments that will be held July through September.
  - Held monthly Booster volunteer meetings where Boosters sign up to assist at conventions and in the Travel Café Visitors Center.

## **2/d - DEVELOP STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES**

Develop strong, interdependent partnerships that enhance Travel Salem's credibility, improve program effectiveness and increase funding resources and opportunities.

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & RESULTS:**

- *#2 Meet with current partners to determine common goals, resources & obstacles:*
  - Met with **Willamette University** on their new Travel and Visitors program. This is a preferred-partner relationship for hotels and ground transportation entities serving the local, incoming university travel community. Travel Salem will be partnering to provide visitor information and services to university visitors.
  - Discussed marketing efficiencies and opportunities with the **Cultural Tourism Promotion & Advisory Board** (CTPAB), resulting in two motions being approved that require TOT contractors to actively engage with Travel Salem by placing events on TravelSalem.com and putting the SalemAlive.com bug on their websites.
  - **Salem Area Lodging Association** – attended SALA meetings to engage with lodging industry partners and discuss collaborative partnerships, future opportunities and industry challenges.

- Held bi-monthly **Team Salem** meetings at Events at Copper Hill and the Phoenix Inn South during the quarter. This forum provides the opportunity to bring stakeholders together to share marketing and partnership opportunities. Attendees included:
  - The Oregon Garden
  - Phoenix Grand Hotel
  - Phoenix Inn Suites – N & S
  - Aurora Colony Visitors Assoc
  - Keizer Renaissance Inn
  - Comfort Inn & Suites
  - HUT Airport Shuttle
  - Best Western Mill Creek Inn
  - Virtually Sold by Sarah
  - Comfort Suites
  - One Fair World
  - Mission Mill Museum
  - Salem Conference Center
  - A.C. Gilbert’s Discovery Village
  - Feller House B &B
  - Lights in the Attic
  - Enchanted Forrest
  - VanNatta Public Relations
  - Marion Cty Historical Society
  - Spirit Mountain Casino
  - Cherriots
  - Willamette Art Center
- *#3 Assist industry partners with sales & marketing efforts:*
  - Presented a workshop on “**Social Media Marketing Strategies**” to the Reed Opera House merchants to create awareness of this medium and encourage partnerships and engagement.
  - Assisted 5 partners with press releases and distribution to the media (Brooks Gardens, Extreme Chocolates, A.C. Gilbert’s Discovery Village, Town & Country Lanes, French Prairie Gardens).
  - Launched **free business listings** (business name, address and phone number) on TravelSalem.com for businesses inside Salem city limits. These free listings are promoted quarterly via a press release to the media, neighborhood associations, Salem Chamber, SEDCOR and Go Downtown. Travel Salem will continue to sell “expanded” web listings for a fee as part of the Membership program. In addition, a comprehensive list of “free services” was published to provide businesses inside Salem city limits the full menu of options on ways to take advantage of free tourism promotion.
  - Secured 1,017 pre-orders for the **Salem Book**, a coffee table book designed to support economic development initiatives, and provide a high-quality retail opportunity. Provided the publisher with a list of key regional assets for inclusion in the book, which is scheduled for completion sometime in the late fall of 2009.
  - Participated in **GROW North Santiam**, a program through the North Santiam Economic Development Corporation that provides intensive one-on-one business coaching.
- *#4 Expand regional efforts through creative partnerships & marketing initiatives:*
  - Signed an exclusive three-year sponsorship with **Willamette Valley Vineyards** for the “Willamette Room.” The partnership would involve a tasting room and retail outlet for WVV product. This is the first-ever partnership of its kind, which will be officially launched during the first quarter of 09-10.
  - Installed the “**i**” **signage system** on the Salem Parkway as well as the **Travel Plaza signage** for the Best Western Mill Creek Inn satellite visitors center – both through a partnership with Travel Information Council. Approval was finally secured from ODOT for directional “i” signs for the Red Lion Hotel satellite visitors center which will be installed next quarter. These projects represent more than \$6,700 in leverage.

- Launched **Garmin GPS unit rentals**, pre-programmed with themed, regional tours. Developed a step-by-step guide to help visitors quickly get up to speed on how to use the units. Travel Salem is now selling advertising and featured partner screens for tours, as well as the ability for businesses to do special promotional offers that the consumer can redeem by presenting the GPS to the retailer. Rentals will be tracked, as well as the route and points of interest that consumers visit.
- Launched the **AbsolutelyTix** network, a centralized ticketing outlet at the Travel Cafe. The network went live with three clients (Salem Chamber Orchestra, Salem Film Festival and CETs Chocolate Soiree) and sold roughly 250 tickets during the quarter. Outreach to promote the service to businesses occurred throughout the quarter, driving six new partners and an additional 10 pending contract completion. This is a new revenue stream for Travel Salem.
- During the quarter, the following businesses hooked on to the regional **“Absolutely Oregon”** branding initiative with a tagline:
  - Digital City Guide – Absolutely Welcoming
  - Willamette Art Center – Absolutely Clay & Glass
  - Gordon House – Absolutely Wright
- Served on the Marion County Economic Development Advisory Board, and made a presentation to the Marion County Board of Commissioners reviewing progress and results achieved in 08-09.
- Irene Bernards was elected Chair of the **Willamette Valley Visitors Association** (WVVA) for 09-10. WVVA’s focus next year will include coordinating the Travel Oregon Orb to the WVVA OregonWineCountry.org site, cooperative advertising, cooperative fulfillment and PR efforts.
- Served on the Board of Directors for the Oregon Destination Marketing Organization. Attended the spring conference at the Oregon Garden.



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **Activity & Production Statistics**

#### **National Earned Media Impressions**

Print or broadcast media coverage resulting from Travel Salem activities such as pitching stories and disseminating media kits. The number reflects regional or national stories, events, mentions and images that were published or produced based on these efforts.

#### **Local Earned Media Impressions**

Print or broadcast media coverage resulting from Travel Salem activities such as pitching stories, disseminating media kits and through interviews. The number reflects local stories and broadcast interviews that were published based on these efforts.

#### **PR Presentations**

Staff presentations to civic groups, nonprofits and businesses. Presentations include community outreach to promote Travel Salem programs and services, general tourism-related issues, convention, meeting and event business, and overall awareness of tourism economic impact.

#### **Visitor Information Inquiries**

Ad inquiries, travelsalem.com, telephone, U.S. post inquiries – requesting a variety of information and resources.

#### **TravelSalem.com User Sessions**

A User Session measures website traffic and is defined by the presence of a user with a specific IP address who has not visited the site recently. This type of user typically visits multiple pages on the TravelSalem.com site.

#### **Visitors Center Attendance**

The number of visitors to the Visitors Center that are assisted with their travel plans.

#### **Events & Community Activities Assisted**

Travel Salem helps promote community events and activities through the Visitors Center, TravelSalem.com, broadcast consumer and industry email, public relations and media exposure, and general information resources.

#### **Real-Time Conventions/Events**

Conventions/events that actually take place during the current month. The business may have been booked in a previous year, but it is reported in the month when it actually takes place.

#### **Number of Delegates**

The estimated number of delegates attending Real-Time Conventions/Events. When possible, the actual number of delegates is reported when the figure has been verified with the conference meeting planner and/or venue.

#### **Number of Room Nights**

The estimated number of room nights from the Real-Time Conventions/Events. When possible, the actual number of room nights is reported when the figure has been verified with the conference meeting planner and/or venue.

**Sales Leads Generated**

The number of leads of potential business that are distributed to venues.

**Bookings**

The number of leads that resulted in a confirmed booking taking place at a venue in the future.

**SALES ACTIVITIES****Direct Contact**

The number of meeting/conference/event planners that are contacted in face-to-face appointments or through tradeshow.

**Phone/E-mail**

The number of meeting/conference/event planners that are contacted via phone or email.

**Sales Packets Distributed**

The number of packets mailed to meeting/conference/event planners per request or as a result from Direct Contact.

**Site/FAM Tours**

A Site Tour is when the Director of Sales takes a meeting planner, group of meeting planners or group tour operator on a showcase tour of venues (e.g. hotels, meeting facilities). A Familiarization Tour (FAM) is when the Director of Sales takes a meeting planner, group of meeting planners or group tour operator on a showcase tour of Salem's attractions, restaurants, shopping, etc.

**Referrals**

The number of times a location is recommended to a meeting planner verbally or by email.

**CONVENTION & EVENT SERVICES****Conventions Assisted**

The number of groups/events that are provided services, resources and visitor information.

**Visitors Reached**

The number of visitors at conferences/events where Travel Salem provides visitor information.

**Welcome Bags Distributed**

Welcome Bags contain promotional information from local businesses on what there is to “see and do” in the Salem area. The Welcome Bags are distributed to conferences/events and contain information that is tailored to meet the delegates’ interest/needs.

## **LEVERAGE**

### **Volunteers**

The number of volunteer hours worked in the Visitors Center or at conferences/events. The hourly value of this service is provided by Points of Light & Hands On Network.

### **Media**

Local, regional or national media exposure resulting from Travel Salem's publicity efforts to promote the region. For print media the value is calculated using advertising rates per column inch of what that space would cost if Travel Salem had to purchase the exposure. For broadcast media the value is calculated using the "air-time" rate of what that broadcast would cost if purchased.

### **Advertising**

Travel Salem receives an "agency discount" on media buys because it is recognized as an in-house advertising agency. This discount is not available to individual businesses purchasing advertising.

### **In-Kind**

Travel Salem receives donated products and services that it would otherwise have to purchase. Examples include office and meeting space, accounting, legal services, product donations, advertising, etc.

### **WVVA/Regional**

Travel Oregon receives a statewide one percent lodging tax that it allocates to regional visitors associations for use in promoting each region to out-of-state visitors. The monies cannot be allocated to local destination marketing organizations. Salem is included in the Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) along with Eugene (East Lane County), Corvallis (Benton County), Albany (Linn County), Yamhill County and South Clackamas County). The WVVA Board of Directors includes key decision makers from the DMO of each city. This Board determines how the resources will be spent to market the region. Travel Salem recognizes the WVVA financial resources allocated from Travel Oregon as leverage.