



## FIRST QUARTER REPORT 2009-10 July, August, September

### INTRODUCTION

Travel Salem is pleased to submit the tourism and convention first quarter report for 2009-10 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 first quarter of 2009-10 produced positive results in key program areas.



Travel Salem was selected as a “**Top 100 Best Nonprofits to Work for in Oregon**” by Oregon Business magazine for 2009. The rankings were unveiled at a banquet held at the Portland Art Museum on September 29, featuring a keynote from former Governor Barbara Roberts. Travel Salem was recognized as the 16<sup>th</sup> best small nonprofit and 21<sup>st</sup> overall.

Travel Salem received a ***Distinguished Service Award*** from the City of Salem on July 8 in recognition of volunteer efforts to launch SalemAlive.com as part of Vision 2020.

Travel Salem’s marketing efforts were recognized in the ***Desperately Seeking Salem blog*** – “Travel Salem is kickin’ it downtown and running, Usain Bolt-like into the new millennium.” (Note: Usain Bolt was a three-time gold medalist at the 2008 Summer Olympics.)

Launched a three-year Travel Café partnership with **Willamette Valley Vineyards** featuring a tasting room and retail outlet for WVV product. This is the first-ever partnership of its kind designed to showcase this key regional asset and growing agricultural industry. (2/d #4)



Formed a partnership with **Digital City Guide** to provide new advertising opportunities for businesses. Businesses can purchase display advertising on the Travel Café plasma screens and 600 hotel rooms throughout the city. In addition, using RSS feed technology, events are pulled directly from TravelSalem.com and run in a “news feed” along the bottom of the screens. This is the first partnership of its kind. (1/a #3 & #4, 2/b #9, 2/d #5)



Installed **directional “i” signs** for the **Red Lion Hotel** satellite information center as part of the Travel Salem Visitor Information Network. (2/b #3, 2/d #4)

Created a brochure highlighting services offered in the Travel Café. Distributed throughout the visitor information network and used in welcome bags. (2/c #1)

National and local **media** secured for the period resulted in 294 impressions valued at \$133,069 of free media exposure in *Arts & Crafts Homes*, *Oregon Wine Press*, *American Road*, *Northwest Palate*, *Where to Retire*, *Woman’s World*, *KGW*, *RV Life*, *Meetings West*, *Northwest Travel*, and *VIA* to name a few. (2/b #1 & #6, as well as the attached **PR Addendum**)



**Social media** efforts continued to progress: 1,248 images and 1 video posted on Flickr to date with 16,125 viewer sessions; 369 tweets posted during the quarter on Twitter reaching 1,143 local, national and international followers; and 40 events, specials and announcements were posted on Facebook reaching 341 fans. (2/b #5)

Researched opportunities with **Oregon Sports Authority** to host more sporting events in the Salem area. Two possible opportunities emerged including a youth wrestling tournament (booked for December ‘09) and an Oregon Wine Country Half Marathon. (2/a #3 & #7)

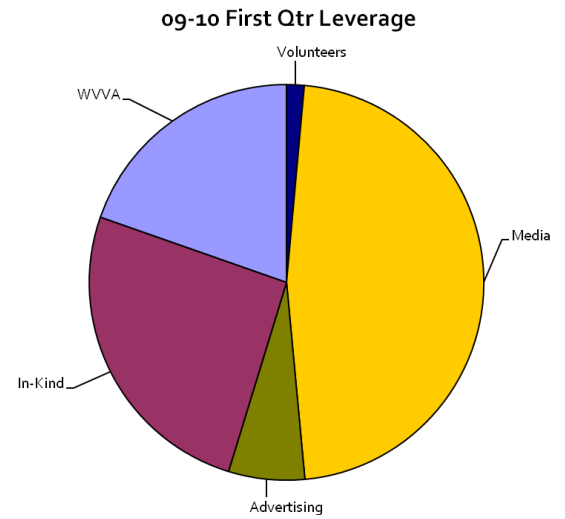
Provided **services** to 30 conferences and events that were held at locations throughout the Salem area, serving roughly 17,000 delegates. (2/c #7)

Detailed **Financial statements** for the first quarter are attached: revenues were \$200,797 (a 10% increase over the previous year), while expenses were \$186,066 for an operating surplus of \$14,731. Net assets were \$163,039.

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 09-10 annual report.
- First quarter **TOT receipts** were down 15% from the previous year to \$471,429.

- First quarter **leverage results** of \$282,608 decreased 2% over the previous year. *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.*



## 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	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 09-10	% Change from 08-09	09-10 YTD	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 08-09	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 07-08
<b>Marketing &amp; PR</b>					
National Earned Media Impressions <sup>1</sup>	32	-60%	32	80	69
Local Earned Media Impressions <sup>2</sup>	291	493%	291	49	9
PR Presentations <sup>3</sup>	43	23%	43	35	5
Visitor Information Inquiries <sup>4</sup>	11,570	-26%	11,570	15,665	6,233
TravelSalem.com User Sessions <sup>5</sup>	37,225	-39%	37,225	61,554	91,681
Visitors Center Attendance <sup>6</sup>	15,966	75%	15,966	9,105	11,127
Events & Community Activities Assisted <sup>7</sup>	514	62%	514	317	216
<b>Convention &amp; Event Marketing</b>					
Real-Time Conventions/Events <sup>8</sup>	7	-56%	7	16	14
• Number of Delegates	5,802	16%	5,802	5,013	5,172
• Number of Room Nights	3,360	-3%	3,360	3,455	5,817
Sales Leads Generated <sup>9</sup>	6	-60%	6	15	17
Bookings	11	2%	11	9	11
Sales Activities					
• Direct Contact	26	-7%	26	28	17
• Phone/E-mail <sup>10</sup>	100	-28%	100	138	213
• Sales Packets Distributed <sup>11</sup>	13	-38%	13	21	31
• Site/FAM Tours	2	-1%	2	3	15
• Referrals	16	-1%	16	17	27
<b>Convention &amp; Event Services</b>					
Conventions Assisted	30	1%	30	29	32
Visitors Reached	17,321	-18%	17,321	21,076	16,024
Welcome Bags Distributed <sup>12</sup>	3,922	77%	3,922	2,216	4,150

<sup>1</sup> National Earned Media Impressions – decrease due to less articles published and less articles pitched due to PR person taking on social media efforts.

<sup>2</sup> Local Earned Media – increase due to new product & partnership launches (e.g. satellite locations, GPS rentals & Willamette Valley Vineyards partnership).

<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.

<sup>5</sup> TravelSalem.com User Sessions – the decrease is attributed to economic downturn with less people planning trips/vacations.

<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.

<sup>8</sup> Real-Time Conventions/Events – the decrease is due to one-time events in 08-09 not returning in 09-10 (e.g. weddings, family reunions).

<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> Phone/E-mail – the decrease is due to the Director of Sales being on vacation for two weeks in September.

<sup>11</sup> Sales Packets Distributed – the decrease is due to planners wanting information digitally (email and online at TravelSalem.com).

<sup>12</sup> Welcome Bags Distributed – the increase is due to more conventions & events requesting this service.

Activity & Production Statistics	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 09-10	% Change from 08-09	09-10 YTD	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 08-09	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 07-08
<b>Membership<sup>11</sup></b>					
Total Membership	287	29%	287	222	n/a
New Members Acquired	54	74%	54	31	n/a
Attrition	12	n/a	12	n/a	n/a
Sales Presentations	1,586	379%	1,586	331	n/a
<b>Leverage (detail below)<sup>12</sup></b>	\$282,607	-2%	\$282,607	\$287,315	\$727,761
Visitors Guide	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Volunteers	\$4,410	-39%	\$4,410	\$7,236	\$9,900
Media	\$133,069	-32%	\$133,069	\$195,756	\$643,499
Advertising	\$17,600	756%	\$17,600	\$4,013	\$3,118
In-Kind	\$72,028	299%	\$72,028	\$16,060	\$27,577
WVVA/Regional	\$55,500	-14%	\$55,500	\$64,250	\$43,667

<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 reflect new visitor information network partnerships, Digital City Guide partnership and other marketing program innovations.

### **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 Weekly e-Newsletter, quarterly Consumer e-Newsletter and Marketing Exchange Luncheons.
  - Implemented Willamette Valley Vineyards partnership (see 2/d #4).
- *#2 Implement fundraising events:*
  - Membership luncheons – held two successful events during the first quarter:
    - July featured “How Creativity and Innovation Fuel our Economy and Transform Businesses,” by Chris Coleman, artistic director of Portland Center Stage, and was hosted by the Willamette Valley Event Center in Mt Angel.
    - September featured “Marketing Insights to Propel Your Business to the Next Level,” by Jim Bernau, founder of Willamette Valley Vineyards, and was hosted by Alessandro's Ristorante and Galleria.
- *#3 Create new advertising opportunities:*
  - Formed a partnership with Digital City Guide to provide new advertising opportunities for businesses and a new revenue stream for Travel Salem. Businesses can purchase advertising for display on the Travel Café plasma screens and 600 hotel rooms throughout the city. In addition, using RSS feed technology, events are pulled directly from TravelSalem.com and run in a “news feed” along the bottom of the screens. This is the first partnership of its kind.
- *#4 Create new funding mechanisms:*
  - Digital City Guide partnership (see 1/a #3).
- *#5 Leverage participation in the RCMP through WVVA:*
  - Travel Salem’s Marketing & PR Director was elected President of WVVA for 09-10, which will ensure inclusion of the Salem area in all marketing efforts.

- *#7 Build and expand essential financial partnerships:*
  - Launched Digital City Guide partnership (see 1/a #3).

### **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*
  - Hired Kimberly Ficklin as Community Development Manager.
  - Recruited one Chemeketa Community College intern for the quarter to work on a regional inventory and database update project (see 2/a #3).
- *#4 Recruit volunteers with attributes/skill sets to achieve program goals:*
  - Recruited five 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.
- *#6 Utilize resources from academic institutions:*
  - Working with Chemeketa Community College (see 1/b #1).

### **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:**

- *#1 Develop regional inventory of visitor industry:*
  - Comprehensive regional inventory project underway (see 2/a #3).
- *#2 Obtain regional participation:*
  - Recruited 18 new regional members (35% of total new members secured during the quarter).
- *#3 Use public relations to communicate/promote membership:*
  - Held a downtown PR blitz to promote membership, Travel Salem's new location and the resources available for the visitor through the Travel Café.
  - Participated in monthly Artsmart meetings to engage with cultural and heritage organizations.
  - Published 4 press releases to build awareness about Travel Salem and the membership program.
  - Promoted membership through the Industry e-Newsletter distributed to 1,109 subscribers informing them of marketing opportunities.
- *#5 Recruit through statewide tourism organizations:*
  - Partnered with the Oregon Restaurant Association to develop and broaden engagement of restaurants with Travel Salem.
- *#6 Leverage regional Chamber of Commerce memberships:*
  - Gathered the Marion County Chambers together to discuss regional strategic marketing opportunities (see 2/d #3).
  - 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:**

- *#1 Implement “Champion” program focusing on role of local community:*
  - Placed a “Be a Champion” ad in the Salem Chamber and SEDCOR membership directories.
  - Participated in the Marion County Fair during the three-day event with a display including Salem Area Visitors Guides and photos from the region.
- *#2 Develop cooperative marketing campaigns with partners:*
  - Partnered with the Salem Conference Center and the Oregon Expo Center to co-op on the BRAVO! Tradeshow in Portland to be held during the second quarter.
  - Placed co-op ads in *Smart Meetings* magazine with Salem Conference Center.
- *#3 Research niche markets:*
  - Working with the Oregon Sports Authority (see 2/a #7).
  - Compiling a comprehensive regional inventory of lodging, meeting facilities, attractions, sports venues and restaurants.
- *#4 Secure new conference/event opportunities using the Agility Fund:*
  - Finalized contracts using Agility Funds for the 2010 Jehovah Witness Conventions to be held at the Oregon Expo Center in June/July 2010.
  - Travel Salem has bid on a new event with the potential for tapping into the Agility Fund.
- *#6 Pursue editorial coverage for Salem as a convention destination:*
  - Secured coverage in the August edition of *Meetings West*.
- *#7 Develop sports marketing program/create inventory of venues:*
  - Met with Oregon Sports Authority to research opportunities to host more sporting events in the Salem area. Two opportunities came out of the meeting:
    - A youth wrestling tournament event booked for December 09’ at the Oregon Expo Center.
    - An event planner was hosted and given a site tour for an Oregon Wine Country Half Marathon. A proposal has been submitted with the potential of a fall 2010 event.
- *#8 Research & broaden geographic scope of program:*
  - Met with Marion County Chambers of Commerce to discuss programs, opportunities and partnerships (see 2/d #3).
- *#9 Maintain existing marketing efforts:*
  - During the quarter, six leads were distributed to properties, and 11 bookings resulted from previous leads.
  - Placed a “Be a Champion” ad in the Salem Chamber and SEDCOR membership directories.
  - Partnered with Washington, Clackamas and Jackson counties on a collaborative marketing strategy for the tradeshow booth at the Amateur Softball Association’s (ASA) Annual Council Meeting to be held in Reno during the second quarter. With the development of new sports facilities in



these counties, this partnership approach ensures Salem is part of the overall Oregon strategy to capture lucrative softball tournaments.

- 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:
    - “Kalapuya Natives are Strong Part of State’s Past”
    - “Fall’s a Good Time to Celebrate Region’s Bounty”
    - “Groups Increase Area’s Tourism”
  - Pitched three stories to the *Statesman Journal* that resulted in print and online exposure:
    - “Travel Salem and Willamette Valley Vineyards...Give it a Swirl” front page in *Life* section.
    - “Partnership Showcases Sustainability,” front page in *Inside Business* section.
    - “Teens Want You to Bowl their Way into History,” front page of *Mid-Valley* section, based on press release written for Town & Country Lanes.
  - Researched Cision database for regional and national media opportunities.
  - Distributed the Consumer e-Newsletter to 354 subscribers offering Salem area travel packages, specials and events.
- *#3 Research & establish satellite visitor resource locations:*
  - Secured and setup a visitor kiosk at Lancaster Mall, valued at \$24,000 per year.
  - Installed directional “i” signs for the Red Lion Hotel satellite information center. (see 2/d #4)
  - Exploring the possibility of a Hwy 22 visitor kiosk with the North Santiam Canyon Chamber of Commerce.
- *#5 Implement technology and utilize online marketing resources:*
  - Online & Social Media
    - Added content and promotions to Travel Salem’s **Facebook** page – more than 40 events, specials & announcements were posted reaching 341 fans.
    - Uploaded 202 images to **Flickr**, for a total of 1,248 images and one video on the Travel Salem account, with 4,056 viewer sessions during the quarter. Flickr is an online photo management and sharing application that allows photos to be uploaded and viewed by individuals and the media. All images are tagged which allows them to be searched via search engines.
    - Maintained dialogue on **Twitter** with 1,143 local, national and international followers. Posted 369 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.

- Travel Salem created a “tweet-up” of “**An Evening with Jim Bernau & Willamette Valley Vineyards**” hosted by Bentley’s Grill. The event featured food and wine pairings. More than 30 messages and photos were posted promoting the event which created a viral interest and attracted a dozen new followers during the event (@TravelSalem and @AbsolutelyAngie).
- Posted Association press releases to TravelSalem.com.
- 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).
  - “Kalapuya Natives are Strong Part of State’s Past”
  - “Fall’s a Good Time to Celebrate Region’s Bounty”
  - “Groups Increase Area’s Tourism”
- 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 Marketing Exchange videos to TravelSalem.com.
- Added new events throughout quarter to TravelSalem.com.
- Added new listings to TravelSalem.com weekly.
- *#6 Pursue editorial coverage to leverage marketing resources:*
  - National and Local Media – secured 294 impressions (e.g. articles, listings, photographs) valued at \$133,069 of free media exposure (see 2/b #1).
  - Pitched new story ideas for the spring edition of the Travel Oregon Magazine (see 2/b #10).
  - See detailed results on attached **Public Relations Addendum**.
- *#7 Expand regional efforts through creative partnerships & marketing initiatives:*
  - Generated 9,788 inquiries in the first quarter from an ad placed in *Good Housekeeping* magazine (840,000 circulation) and *Sunset* magazine (870,000 circulation). The *Good Housekeeping* ad ran during the third quarter of 08-09 and featured gardens and overnight stays (funded by Marion County).
- *#8 Participate with current tourism partners to enhance marketing efforts:*
  - Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) partnership:
    - 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 8,420 inquiries through this partnership for the quarter.
    - Created a Madden Publishing online promotion through WVVA that will launch during the second quarter. The promotion drives visitors to the WVVA website OregonWineCountry.org to enter-to-win a Willamette Valley vacation.

- Met with representatives from Travel Oregon, Oregon Wine Board, Willamette Valley Winery Association and Roberson PR to ensure cross promotion of Willamette Valley communities.
  - Participated with the WVVA OregonWineCountry.org website to promote Thanksgiving wine activities throughout the Willamette Valley.
  - Developed a Google Docs WVVA report to track regional marketing activities.
  - Sent letters of support for the following entities for Travel Oregon grant requests: North Santiam Canyon Chamber of Commerce, City of Carlton, Travel Lane County, Albany Visitors Association, Indy Wine Foundation and the Yamhill Valley Visitors Association.
- **US Travel Association** – Irene Bernards worked with Woodburn Company Stores to connect Willamette Valley Vineyards to Shop America Alliance and a member of the US Travel Association board of directors. In July, 100 board members of the US Travel Association met in Sunriver. The meeting organizers requested a bottle of Oregon wine as a special in-room welcome gift for each member (eight cases of wine were needed as a donation/reduced cost). The US Travel Association board of directors is made up of representatives from large tourism industry businesses such as Harrah's Entertainment, Walt Disney Parks & Resorts, Anaheim/Orange County Convention & Visitors Association, American Express, National Geographic Society, USA Today, Orbitz Worldwide, Travel Channel and a variety of state travel offices throughout the U.S. Travel Salem connected a Salem area wine to these distinguished groups with the hope of future opportunities for other local partners.
- Facilitated a tour and presentation for the IYO Japanese Delegation, and collected promotional items for the City of Salem for the delegation's welcome bags.
- Sent Travel Salem's free marketing opportunities list to all Cultural Tourism and Promotion Advisory Board contractors.
- Provided support to the Salem's Riverfront Carousel upon their request to review their billboard and brochure marketing initiatives.
- Assisted the North Santiam Canyon Chamber with a Travel Oregon grant request to produce a promotional brochure for the Canyon.
- Transit Mall Events – submitted Salem area events for posting on transit plasma screens.
- *#9 Develop new promotional opportunities:*
  - Advertising:
    - Partnered with Cherriots on a *Statesman Journal* advertisement announcing an additional shuttle to Spirit Mountain Casino.
    - Formed a partnership with Digital City Guide (see 1/a #3).
- *#10 Leverage Travel Oregon's marketing efforts:*
  - Pitched new story ideas for the spring edition of the **Travel Oregon Magazine**. A wide variety of assets were pitched under the following categories:
    - Outdoor recreation (mountain biking, road biking, golfing)
    - Wildlife viewing
    - Cheese, chocolate & spirits
    - Harvest tours & u-pick farms
    - Culture & heritage

- Art museums & galleries
  - Destination spas
  - Kids attractions
  - Shopping
  - Gardens
- Assisted Travel Oregon with regional content for their Oregon Bounty Culinary Micro-Site, a second tier website for culinary opportunities in support of the overall Oregon Bounty campaign.
- Submitted wineries and golf locations to Travel Oregon for their international marketing efforts.
- Submitted technical tours to Travel Oregon for their international and domestic group marketing efforts.
- Submitted a list of “what’s new” in the Salem area to Travel Oregon for their Japanese tradeshow (JATA) to promote Oregon to Japanese group and individual travelers.
- *#12 Maintain existing marketing efforts:*
  - Assisted LMNO Productions based out of Los Angeles with video production and content needs for “Unusual Suspects,” a television show that will be airing on the Discovery Channel.
  - Sent weekly event and activity updates to 2,441 subscribers to drive traffic to TravelSalem.com and encourage front-line workers to promote the Salem area to visitors.
  - Sent Industry e-Newsletter to 1,109 Travel Salem members, partners and industry organizations.
  - Sent Consumer e-Newsletter to 354 consumers promoting special deals and packages.
  - Distributed regional events brochures through two I-5 rest areas bordering Salem (north & south) to attract visitors and encourage visitation.
  - Created a brochure highlighting all the services offered in the Travel Café and distributed the brochure throughout the visitor information network.

## **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:**

- *#1 Develop & implement a marketing campaign:*
  - Developed a brochure for promoting services available through the Travel Café (e.g. personal assistance, wine tasting, ticket sales, GPS rentals, free wi-fi); will be used in welcome bags and at information tables.
- *#4 Increase volunteer base targeting specific skill sets:*
  - Recruited 5 new volunteers.
- *#5 Communicate proactively to industry partners regarding activities & events to increase participation & promotion of regional assets:*
  - Distributed the Industry e-Newsletter to 1,109 industry partners informing them of marketing opportunities and Travel Salem’s efforts.
  - Sent weekly events email to 2,441 subscribers.
- *#7 Maintain existing service efforts:*
  - Provided services to 30 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, Wallace Marine Sports Complex and other venues.

- Provided visitor services for the Amateur Softball Association national tournaments that were held in July and September. More than 1,000 welcome bags were distributed to the participants during the tournaments.
- Held a Travel Salem Booster Appreciation Potluck to thank volunteers that donated more than 1,100 hours of service valued at \$22,000 in 08-09.
- 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:**

- *#1 Develop local industry committees:*
  - Earthwise Certification Project Committee - Travel Salem launched an ad-hoc committee to discuss initiatives to encourage the downtown core and other businesses throughout Marion County to become Earthwise certified. Outcomes would be to create a stronger marketing position for selling the Salem area as a green and sustainable destination for group business – “If it’s good for the environment, it’s good for business!” A strategic plan will be developed for how to roll-out and promote the concept locally to the business community. Additional strategies will be discussed for how to promote a “green business district” to attract meeting planners and secure new business. Initial meetings have taken place with the Salem Conference Center, The Grand Hotel, City of Salem, Go Downtown and Marion County. Additional partners will be recruited to the committee (e.g. Garten Services).
- *#2 Meet with current partners to determine common goals, resources & obstacles:*
  - Met with lodging properties and City of Salem staff to debrief after the 09’ softball season. Issues discussed included: teams booking online to get lower rates than what was negotiated with the properties, damage and wear and tear to rooms by teams, etc. Overall the properties were very thankful for the business and want the city and Travel Salem to continue strong marketing efforts to secure national and regional tournaments.
  - **Salem Area Lodging Association** – attended SALA meetings to engage with lodging industry partners and discuss collaborative partnerships, future opportunities, industry trends and challenges.
  - Held a bi-monthly **Team Salem** meeting at the Oregon Garden during the quarter. This forum provides the opportunity to bring stakeholders together to share marketing and partnership opportunities. Attendees included:
    - The Oregon Garden
    - The Grand Hotel
    - Phoenix Inn Suites – N & S
    - PGE Festival of Lights
    - Keizer Renaissance Inn
    - Chemeketa Events at Eola
    - Best Western Mill Creek Inn
    - Mission Mill Museum
    - Salem Conference Center
    - A.C. Gilbert’s Discovery Village
    - Feller House B & B
    - Shilo Inn & Suites
    - Special Memories Travel
    - Ingalls & Associates



- Salem Repertory Theatre
  - Olsen Family Vineyard
  - Enterprise Rent-A-Car
  - VanNatta Public Relations
  - Gordon House
  - Comfort Suites Salem - Airport
  - Willamette Valley Fruit Co.
  - Comfort Inn & Suites
  - Fastsigns
  - Historic Elsinore Theatre
  - Willamette Valley Vineyards
  - Cherriots
- **Vision 2020 Wayfinding & Entrance Way Task Force** – Travel Salem initiated dialogue with key stakeholders (City of Salem and Go Downtown) to review scope and detail of these two critical projects. The task force will be expanded to include additional stakeholders as dialogue continues in future quarters.
- *#3 Assist industry partners with sales & marketing efforts:*
  - Assisted 5 partners with press releases and distribution to the media (Brooks Gardens, Mission Mill Museum, Town & Country Lanes, Break the Chain Apparel, the Exchange Clubs of Salem/Keizer).
  - Gathered the Marion County Chambers of Commerce together to discuss regional strategic marketing opportunities. The following Chambers participated: Silverton, Mt. Angel, Stayton-Sublimity, and North Santiam Canyon.
  - Provided marketing consultation for **Salem's Riverfront Carousel** to discuss projects for their recently acquired Ford Foundation grant. Assisted with billboard and brochure review.
  - Participated in **GROW North Santiam**, a program through the North Santiam Economic Development Corporation that provides intensive one-on-one business coaching.
  - Facilitated a meeting between the City of Independence and the Oregon Lodging Association regarding hotel developer opportunities for a new sports complex the city is building.
  - Uploaded 14 **free website 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.
- *#4 Expand regional efforts through creative partnerships & marketing initiatives:*
  - Participated in Keizer Tourism meetings organized by the Keizer Chamber of Commerce to stay plugged in with partnership opportunities.
  - Launched new monthly series in conjunction with First Wednesdays called “Member Spotlights” showcasing local businesses, product sampling and live demonstrations from a variety of regional partners at the Travel Café.
    - September's event “Dance, Dine & Drink” featured chicken dance lessons for Oktoberfest, cooking demonstrations and kabobs from Wellspring's Vitality Restaurant, and wine tasting with Willamette Valley Vineyards.
  - **Willamette Valley Vineyards** – installed an innovative wine exhibit and “tasting room” component to the Travel Café. The official grand opening event in September was emceed by Randy Harrington of Extreme Arts & Sciences and showcased a “Mini-Grape Stomp” competition with Jim Bernau and Angie Morris going toe-to-toe against Ray Burstedt/SEDCOR and Austin McGuigan/Polk County. Refreshments were provided by Willaby's Catering and music by NW Mobile DJ. *Statesman Journal* coverage included front

page of the Life section and again front page of the Sunday Inside Business section.

- **Absolutely Tickets:** the program currently has 18 active partners, with 6 partners pending contract completion, and 5 inactive partners awaiting their next event.
- Directional “i” signs for the **Red Lion Hotel** satellite information center were installed as part of the Travel Salem Visitor Information Network.
- During the quarter, the following businesses hooked on to the regional “**Absolutely Oregon**” branding initiative with a tagline:
  - Feller House B&B – Absolutely Cozy
  - Bentley’s Restaurant – Absolutely Delicious
  - Phoenix Inn Suites (north & south) – Absolutely Northwest
- Served on the Marion County Economic Development Advisory Board.
- Served on the Board of Directors for the Oregon Destination Marketing Organization.
- #5 *Leverage partnerships to diversify funding streams:*
  - Launched the Digital City Guide partnership (see 1/a #3).



## **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.