



CHEYENNE
W Y O M I N G
Live the Legend™

2016
ANNUAL REPORT

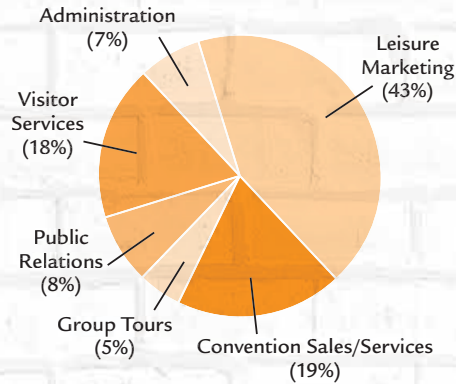
Visit Cheyenne OVERVIEW

Visit Cheyenne is the official tourism organization for Laramie County. It is governed by the Laramie County Tourism Joint Powers Board, which includes members appointed by Laramie County (3), the City of Cheyenne (3), Pine Bluffs (1), Burns (1), and Albin (1).

The Laramie County lodging tax is the primary funding source for **Visit Cheyenne**. The tax is paid by visitors who stay in Laramie County lodging establishments. Laramie County residents do not pay the tax unless they stay in local lodging. Laramie County voters first approved the tax in 1987 and have renewed it every time it has been up for a vote since. In 2014, voters renewed the tax with 76% of the vote.

Visit Cheyenne promotes and develops the Cheyenne area through paid advertising, visitor guides and websites, social media, public relations, convention and bus tour solicitation, trolley operation, and the operation of two visitor centers.

Expenditures Fiscal Year 2016



MISSION

Visit Cheyenne provides leadership in developing, promoting, and protecting the Cheyenne area's travel industry.

Visit Cheyenne strives to attract visitors to the Cheyenne area by capitalizing on Cheyenne's legendary history and image, thereby increasing visitor spending in the county.

Audited Financials Fiscal Year 2016

(July 2015 - June 2016)

REVENUES	
Lodging Tax	\$1,705,854
Other Revenues*	\$84
TOTAL	\$1,705,938

EXPENDITURES	
Leisure Marketing	\$805,861
Convention Sales/Services*	\$361,100
Group Tours	\$81,516
Public Relations	\$159,204
Visitor Services	\$340,315
Administration	\$125,861
TOTAL	\$1,873,857

CHEYENNE STREET RAILWAY TROLLEY	
Revenues	\$98,856
Expenditures**	\$229,786
TOTAL	\$29,426

*Does not include registration fees **Visit Cheyenne** accepts and disperses for local conventions. **Includes purchase of a new trolley using trolley reserves. Auditor: RLR, LLP

FULL TIME STAFF

President & CEO
Darren Rudloff

Director of Operations
Jill Pope

Director of Sales & Marketing
Jim Walter

Convention Sales Manager
Lisa Maney

Digital Marketing Coordinator
Laura Levi

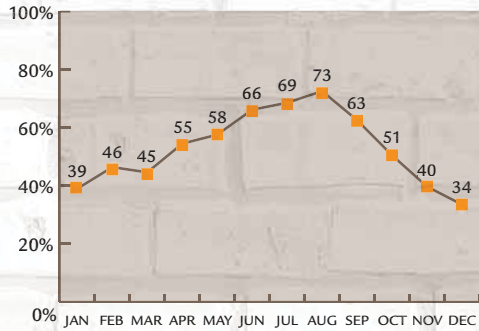
Convention Sales Manager
Will Luna

Pine Bluffs Visitor Center
Charlene Smith



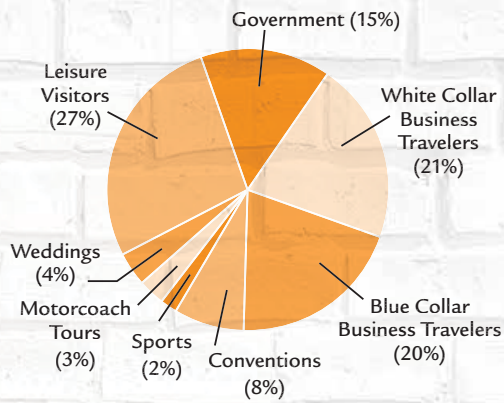
Visit Cheyenne DATA

Cheyenne Lodging Occupancy Rates, 2016



Source: Smith Travel Research

Cheyenne Lodging Customer Mix



Source: Visit Cheyenne, 2016 Lodging Survey

VISIT CHEYENNE Convention Sales

Convention Bids



2016	2015	2014
109	80	54

Booked Roomnights



2016	2015	2014
10,233	6,817	8,091

Conventions Assisted*



2016	2015	2014
137	123	109

* Planning, coupons, phone chargers, etc.

Laramie County Travel Statistics and Impact

	2015	2014
Travel Spending in Laramie County	\$338.4 million	\$377.0 million
Laramie County Lodging Tax Collections (fiscal year)	\$1,707,338	\$1,932,468**
State and Local Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending	\$19,900,000	\$20,200,000
Employment Generated by Tourism in Laramie County	3,070 jobs	3,020 jobs

**Includes an estimated \$100,000+ in one-time back taxes from online travel agencies.

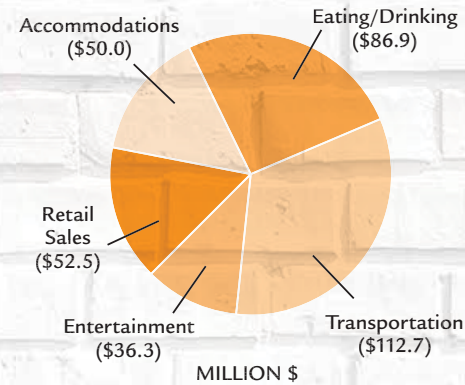
Sources: Wyoming Department of Revenue; Dean Runyan Associates

total trolley riders



2016	2015	2014
23,737	20,690	19,758

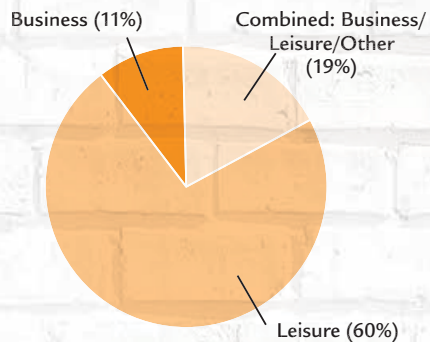
Laramie County Travel Spending by Business Sector, 2015



Source: Dean Runyan Associates

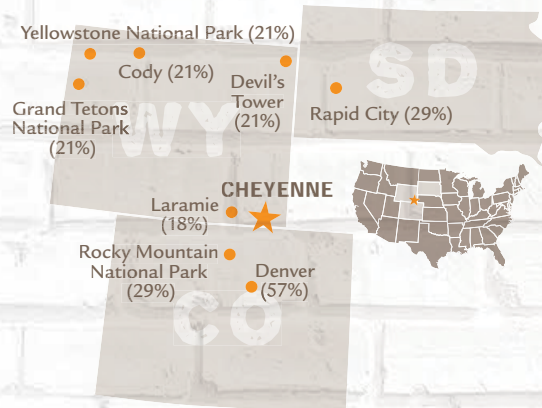
Depot Visitor Center Research: According to a survey of fall and winter visitors at the Depot Visitor Center...

Reason for visit



Cheyenne was the main destination for 66% OF visitors

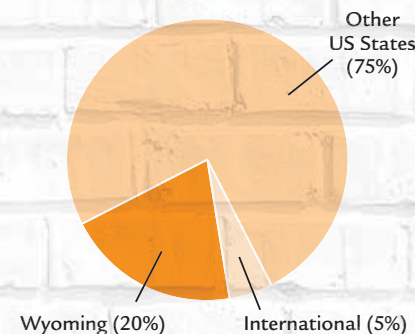
Other top destinations visited while on their Cheyenne trip:



As a result of chatting with Visit Cheyenne staff, visitors...

- Stayed longer in Laramie County (average one extra day)..... 21%
- Visited attraction, museum, etc. 70%
- Chose restaurant..... 33%
- Took trolley tour..... 33%
- Went to retail store..... 33%
- Chose scenic drive..... 18%

Wyoming Travel Spending by Visitor Residence, 2015



Source: Dean Runyan Associates

Did You Know?

If the travel industry were a single business, it would rank as the county's third largest employer behind F.E. Warren Air Force Base and the State of Wyoming.

Without the tax contribution of tourists, each Laramie County household would pay an additional \$515 in taxes to maintain existing government services.

Visitors pay Laramie County and Wyoming taxes that support local schools, roads and other services. Visitors pay 9.1% of the sales tax collected in Laramie County.

Laramie County has the 2nd highest level of traveler spending among all Wyoming counties, behind only Teton County.

Travelers spent \$9.1 million a day in Wyoming in 2015.

According to Cheyenne Frontier Days, total attendance at the 120th CFD was 259,193, ranking it in the top 5 of all CFDs (rodeo and concert tickets, plus gate admittance).

More than three-quarters (78%) of Frontier Days attendees travel from outside of Laramie County to attend.

At the end of 2016, Laramie County had 2,674 hotel/motel rooms and 807 RV spots. The combined total of 3481 overnight "spots" is an increase of 14% over 2011 levels.

Sources: Dean Runyan Associates; Cheyenne Frontier Days™

Building a Better Cheyenne: Visit Cheyenne's Responses to Destination Next

In late 2015, *Visit Cheyenne* led a research survey/workshop called Destination Next which revealed areas where Cheyenne needed improvement. The top two needs were for 1) more iconic attractions/events and 2) downtown redevelopment. To address these needs, *Visit Cheyenne* worked on a number of projects with public and private partners .

UNION PACIFIC STEAM SHOP TOURS

Visit Cheyenne, the Cheyenne Depot, and UP provided trolley tours to the steam shop in 2016, with more scheduled for 2017. The tours were very popular, attracting visitors from throughout the U.S.



BNSF RAILROAD BRIDGE / W. LINCOLNWAY LANDSCAPING

BNSF repainted its bridge, turning the bridge into an attractive community gateway. Also, new landscaping along W. Lincolnway added to the entryway improvements. These actions were the culmination of several years of work by *Visit Cheyenne*, LEADs, BNSF, WYDOT, the City of Cheyenne, and community activist Gene Burchett.



DOWNTOWN CORE

Visit Cheyenne, its economic development partners (Cheyenne LEADs, Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development Authority/ Main Street) and the City worked together to improve Cheyenne's downtown core area:

- > *MORE LIGHTS* at the Depot and Plaza
- > *DEPOT RINK* in December
- > *DEPOT SPLASH WATER FEATURE* (design completed)
- > *FIGHT THE BLIGHT TASK FORCE* formed to address neglected buildings
- > *DOWNTOWN ALLEY MODERNIZATION / CLEANUP* (design started)



Visit Cheyenne 2016 ACTIVITIES

2016 proved to be a challenging year for the local hospitality industry. Low energy prices dampened business and blue collar travel significantly, while state and local government budget cuts reduced the government travel that Laramie County usually enjoys. Leisure travel remained strong, but could not overcome the downward pressure from business travel.

During this time, *Visit Cheyenne* continued its marketing and sales efforts, and refocused on development efforts recommended by the 2015 Destination Next research program.

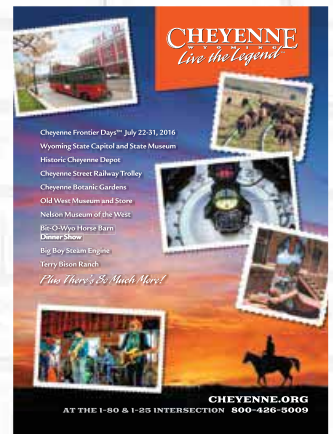
Leisure Travel Marketing & Public Relations

Visit Cheyenne advertised in numerous publications and websites (often in partnership with Frontier Days or the Wyoming Office of Tourism) and responded to 68,950 resulting travel inquiries in 2016 (+42% from 2015).

Visit Cheyenne once again ran a major internet advertising campaign using online ads and targeted, short videos. The campaign resulted in more than 28 million internet impressions, 46,000 video views, and 96,000 clicks to Cheyenne information.

Recognizing that local residents are marketing the area daily through social media and peer review sites like TripAdvisor, *Visit Cheyenne* began advertising events and attractions in the local area, primarily in social media.

Visit Cheyenne promoted Laramie County on 9 billboards throughout the region.



Cheyenne
RESTAURANT
WEEK



RESTAURANT WEEK

Visit Cheyenne's inaugural Cheyenne Restaurant Week was a great success with 13 eateries participating. Most indicated that business was up significantly, with one reporting a 40% increase.

DOWNTOWN BRONZES

Visit Cheyenne worked with DeSelms Fine Art and the City to help install three new bronze sculptures downtown.



Visit Cheyenne produced and distributed 6 brochures: Cheyenne Area Visitor Guide, Cheyenne Museum Passport, Tracking Trains in Cheyenne, These Boots Are Made For Talking, Cheyenne Adventure, and the Pine Bluffs Visitor Guide.

Visit Cheyenne public relations efforts led to an estimated \$1,324,410 in media value for stories published in 2016 (+42%), including in *USA Today*, *Denver Post*, *Cowboys and Indians* and *Parade.com*.

Visit Cheyenne advertised in group tour publications and promoted the area at 4 group tour trade shows.

Visit Cheyenne hosted 15 travel writers in Laramie County in 2016. In all, **Visit Cheyenne** responded to inquiries for photos and information from both national/international media (80 contacts, -15% from 2015) and local media (69 contacts, +50% from 2016).

Visit Cheyenne provided marketing or sponsorship grants to the Hell on Wheels Shootout, Steamboat Challenge NRA Pistol Championship, Depot Summer Events, Cheyenne Arts Festival, Cheyenne Gunslingers, Ballet Les Sylphides, Ballet WY Peter Pan, CFD Imprinting the West Exhibit, Sherman Hill Model Railroad Show, MAAFA Sankofa African Heritage Event, Cheyenne Comic Con, Cheyenne Stampede Hockey, Jake Martin Saloon Show, Tour the Legend Homes Tour, Wyoming Carriages, Historic Governors' Mansion's Tinsel Through Time Event, Cowboy Tough Spring Adventure Race, Cheyenne Frontier Days Western Art Show, Old Fashioned Melodrama, Zombie Fest, Christmas House, and to Laramie County, Albin, Pine Bluffs, Burns, and Cheyenne.

Visit Cheyenne managed a strong social media effort, providing updates on Laramie County attractions, events, and other news through Facebook (52,356 fans), Twitter (6,091 followers), Instagram (1,607 followers), Pinterest (1,336 followers) and LinkedIn.

Visit Cheyenne's website hosted 458,281 user sessions in 2016 (-18% from 2015).

Convention Marketing & Services

Visit Cheyenne provided 109 bids (+35% from 2015) for new convention business to lodging partners. Winning bids represented an estimated 10,233 room nights (+50%) and \$4.8 million in direct spending.

Visit Cheyenne assisted 137 conventions with brochures, coupons, planning, and registration help (+11% from 2015).

Downtown Cheyenne hosted two major car rallies during the summer that were bid on and won by **Visit Cheyenne**. First, the Great Race brought 120 vintage automobiles to Depot Plaza in June, and then more than 500 Mini-Coopers overran downtown in July.



Community & Industry Efforts

Visit Cheyenne sponsored several successful "Experience Cheyenne" networking events for industry and business leaders at such locations as the Botanic Gardens, Accomplish Brewery, and a Stampede hockey game.

Visit Cheyenne provided its annual hospitality trolley tours to more than 50 hotel staff so they are better prepared to recommend the Trolley and area attractions to hotel guests.

Visit Cheyenne worked with the Cheyenne Little Theater to create a mini-melodrama for groups and conventions visiting at times other than the summer.

Visit Cheyenne and its partners successfully expanded the New Year's Eve Ball Drop with a new adult dance party held between the Children and Adult Ball Drops.

Visitor Services

Visit Cheyenne operated year-round visitor centers in Pine Bluffs and the Cheyenne Depot. **Visit Cheyenne** "wrapped" the interior doors of the Pine Bluffs Visitor Center with colorful photos of eastern Laramie County to brighten the facility.



Visit Cheyenne operated the Cheyenne Street Railway trolley system, providing summer historic tours, Halloween and Christmas tours, and transportation for conventions. A total of 23,737 passengers (+15%) rode the trolleys in 2016.

Visit Cheyenne offered very successful Pokemon Express trolley tours in July and August which gained media coverage in the *Denver Post*, National Public Radio and the TravelChannel.com.

Visit Cheyenne provided a coupon program at no cost to participating hospitality businesses, available via a coupon book and **Visit Cheyenne's** website.

KUDOS

Visit Cheyenne's Darren Rudloff was elected Chairman of the Wyoming Office of Tourism Board of Directors. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Wyoming Industry Travel Coalition and the Destination Marketing Association International Foundation.

The U.S. Department of the Interior named the Ames Monument west of Cheyenne as a new national historic landmark.

A travel writer **Visit Cheyenne** brought to town, Rich Grant of Denver, won a Silver award from the North American Travel Journalists Association (NATJA) for his Cheyenne article in the international newspaper category.



Artwork Credits Buffalo mural: Jordan Dean, artist; Daniel Joder, photographer; Comics mural: Chad Blakely, artist; "Hard To Leave": Bobbie Carlyle, sculptor; "Devoted": Chuck Weaver, sculptor

PROUD MEMBER/PARTNER

Cheyenne LEADS
Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce
Greater Cheyenne Foundation
Wyoming Office of Tourism
Wyoming Travel Industry Coalition
National Tour Association
American Bus Association
Meeting Planners International
Wyoming Society of Association Executives

Hospitality Services and Meetings Associations Industry
Society of Governmental Meeting Professionals
Professional Convention Managers Association
Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI)



Visit Cheyenne has earned DMAI's highest professional visitor bureau accreditation.



VISIT CHEYENNE

The Convention & Visitors Bureau

121 W 15th St, Suite 202
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001

307-778-3133

800-426-5009

www.cheyenne.org



PINE BLUFFS VISITORS CENTER

I-80 at Pine Bluffs Exit 401
Pine Bluffs, Wyoming 82082

307-245-3695

307-245-3746



Visit Cheyenne Board Members in 2016

Barry Sims, *Retired, Taco John's*

Wendy Volk, *Number One Properties*

Tony O'Brien, *Little America Hotel & Resort*

Sonja Fornstrom, *Town of Pine Bluffs*

Amiee Reese, *Old West Museum*

Jim Osterfoss, *Nagle Warren Mansion B&B*

Lisa Murphy, *Laramie County Community College*

Mark Anderson, *Burns Insurance*

Jim Brown (ex officio), *Cheyenne City Council*

Amber Ash (ex officio), *Laramie County Commissioner*

Help Us Promote Cheyenne!

Spread good news about area events, businesses, and attractions to your friends and relatives! You are our best promoters!

- **Follow us** on Social Media and share local information:



Facebook.com/VisitCheyenne



Twitter: @CheyenneWY



Instagram.com/VisitCheyenne/



Pinterest.com/VisitCheyenne

- **Invite** your friends and relatives to visit;
- **Ride** the Cheyenne Street Railway Trolley;
- **Host** a meeting or retreat in Cheyenne for organizations of which you are a member;
- **Subscribe** to our e-newsletter at www.cheyenne.org.