

Travel Lane County

Annual Report FY14



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Maxine Walton
Willamette Stationers

President's Message



Visitor Volume and Spending at Record Levels

- Kari Westlund, President & CEO

Room tax collections surpass \$8.2 million for the first time in FY14, marking a third consecutive record level year for lodging revenues. Only Central Oregon's growth rate exceeded Lane County's mid-way through calendar year 2014, as that region recovered from a deeper recessionary plunge.

As we finished FY14 and started FY15, we were engaged with major track and field events, hosting the IAAF World Junior Track & Field Championships and glowing after securing the NCAA Track & Field Championships through 2021. We've marked other successes booking prestigious conferences like the Overseas Association of College Admissions Counselors and the American Scientific Glassblowers Society, while extending planning and hospitality services to events like the Neighborhoods, USA Conference and the H2O Dragon Boat Paddle Challenge.

Other key accomplishments of the Convention and Sports Marketing program included increases in earned media in national and regional trade publications and in loyal social media followers. Janis Ross now serves on the National Association of Sports Commissions' board of directors and is an accomplished national presenter on topics of sustainability and green practices in sporting events and meetings.

Website visits and social media traffic hit all-time records, with unique visitors to the website rising to 402,727 (up 62%) and mobile site visitors increasing to nearly 80,000 (up 759%). Social media contests, featuring communities countywide, have generated thousands of entries and followers. Multiple social media channels are maintained with fresh, inspiring and engaging content. Online marketing channels have never been stronger, and our upcoming launch of a fully-redesigned website will make trip planning even more efficient. Visitor center counts are also up, and responses to new advertising campaigns, focused on checking off your adventure ("bucket") list, have generated web visits and calls that tell us the ads are getting the job done.

We launched our third and fourth GeoTour editions, featuring the Willamette Highway and Territorial Highway corridors, which produced trackable visits and powerful visitor testimonials. The extremely successful Eugene Ale Trail also launched spurring travel to metro area breweries, as well as those in Coburg and Oakridge. From city-based ad campaigns to video productions and festivals, we've collaborated and supported community partners generating fruitful results and relationships. Lane County's tourism team has truly worked together to generate the strongest outcomes possible.

Return on Investment: \$72,260,203 million was generated for local communities. For every room tax dollar invested in Travel Lane County, \$39 in visitor spending returned or will return to Lane County's economy. Earned editorial media coverage totaled \$5,194,692. In-kind contributions totaled \$18,359. Room tax rose 10.15 percent and occupancy rates averaged 62.74 percent, up 5.8 percent over FY13.

ROOM TAX	FY14	FY13	FY12	FY11	FY10
Eugene	8.65%	3.61%	1.71%	9.2%	-9.56%
Springfield	11.28%	5.07%	15.16%	15.5%	-8.14%
Florence	15.72%	-1.93%	2.13%	2.6%	4.34%
Cottage Grove	13.11%	0.92%	11.88%	-8.0%	-8.61%
Other	9.67%	6.15%	1.30%	10.0%	-3.48%
Total Tax	10.15%	3.83%	5.27%	9.7%	-7.33%

Convention Marketing

Convention sales and marketing efforts generated \$1.9 million in economic impact during the semi-annual period. Staff booked 6,829 delegates and 3,947 rooms nights. The meetings market continued to face challenges without significant convention space needed to attract more regional and national business despite positive development with the opening of the Candlewood Suites and the construction of the Hyatt Place hotel.

Advertising

Printed and online advertisements, targeting planners, were placed in Association News, Northwest Meetings + Events and Meetings Focus. In addition to Google and banner ads, other digital channels included partnerships with HelmsBriscoe, the world's leading third-party meeting planning and site selection company, and DMAI's empowerMINT program, providing outreach to meeting and event planners on a national and international scale.

Convention-Related Media Coverage

PR outreach to Small Market Meetings, Northwest Meetings + Events, Connect, Meetings Focus West and Smart Meetings resulted in \$55,529 (up 386%) in editorial coverage.

Convention Services*

A total of 81 events, representing 20,706 delegates, received services to help ensure the successful meetings and repeat business.

Sports Marketing

Eugene, Cascades & Coast Sports' marketing efforts resulted in \$7.9 million in impacts. Staff booked 39,014 delegates and 16,996 room nights. New events were introduced during the period including the H2O Paddle Challenge in conjunction with the Eugene's Adaptive Recreation program, and the Springfield Mayor's Invitational Soccer Tournament, made possible Willamalane's field expansions.

Staff provided comprehensive housing and hospitality support to TrackTown USA, the UO for NCAA D1 Outdoor Track & Field Championships, IAAF World Junior Track & Field Championships, Eugene Marathon, 2015 USA Outdoor Track & Field Championships, and the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Track & Field. A Group Housing Manager was hired in September 2014 to oversee group housing needs and the on-line group housing portal.

Eugene, Cascades & Coast Sports increased visibility and outreach efforts through presentations and quarterly e-newsletters distribution to sports partners, community leaders and elected officials.

Sports Advertising

Print, online and/or integrated packages leveraged ad placements in Sports Travel, Sports Events Magazine, and Sports Destination Management.

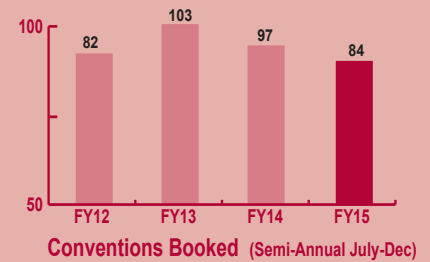
Sports-Related Media Coverage

Coverage valued at \$41,366 (up 261%) promoted the region's sports product in publications including SportsEvents, Sports Travel, Sports Destination Management, and Sports Planning Guide.

Sports Services*

Extensive services facilitated successful planning for 27 sports events representing 76,264 participants.

* A list of convention services is available at www.EugeneCascadesCoast.org



Tradeshow Participation

Sales staff promoted Lane County to meeting planners at the following shows:

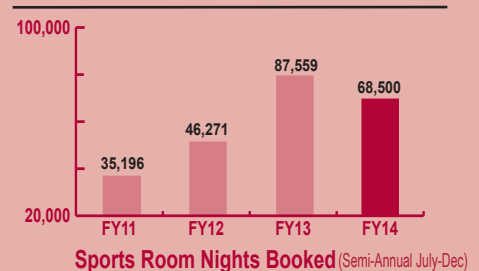
- Bravo! Live - Portland, OR
- Movement Day (faith) - New York, NY
- Rejuvenate (faith) - Atlanta, GA
- UO Travel Fair - Eugene, OR
- Nursing Organizations Alliance - Tampa, FL
- SpinCon - St. Louis, MO
- Oregon Society of Association Management - Wilsonville, OR

Sample Confirmations

- Oregon Community Health Workers
- Eugene World Challenge
- Indie Game Con

Pending Events

- Church of God
- Nurnberg High School Reunion



Tradeshow Participation

Sports sales staff promoted Lane County to sports planners at the following shows:

- Chamber Business Expo - Eugene, OR
- Olympic SportsLink - Chicago, IL
- TEAMS - Las Vegas, NV

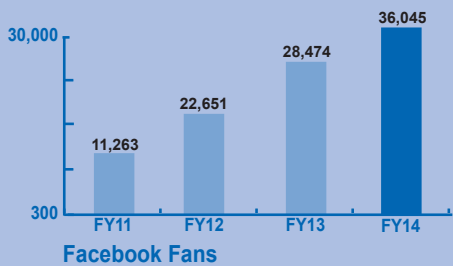
Sample Confirmations

- PIVA February Fever Collegiate Volleyball
- OSAA 6A/5A District Swimming Championships
- Adidas Cup

Pending Events

- NWAC
- Slide the City

While placing second to Doha, Qatar in the IAAF World Track & Field Championships bid, Eugene's efforts garnered significant publicity in the international track and field community.



Visitor Inquiries

A total of 13,164 inquiries for visitor information were tracked as a direct result of ad placements, public relations and regional partnerships. Overall website visits totaled 34,108 (up 6%).

Media Relations

Lane County tracked \$2,129,038 (up 58%) in positive destination coverage during FY15. Press releases, press trips and media assistance resulted in editorial in regional, national and international newspapers, guidebooks, travel/lifestyle/adventure-related publications, and online blogs and magazines. Travel Lane County's media tracking system changed from Meltwater to MyMediaInfo, made possible through a Willamette Valley Visitor Association partnership.

Oregon Fall Foliage Campaign

Visits to Lane County's Oregon Fall Foliage blog were up 34 percent over last year (August - November). Story pitches and social media outreach resulted in exposure on TravelOregon.com, [insert others articles in The Oregonian, Portland Monthly, About.com, Northwest Travel Magazine, Northwest Road Tripper and AARP Magazine.

RV Outreach

Travel Lane County partnered with Guaranty RV to promote the region as an RV destination at the FMCA RV Rally in Redmond and served as a presenter at a Guaranty RV Bar-be-cue for RV travelers. Travel Lane County also provided planner assistance for the WIN RV Rally in Junction City. In addition, Visitor Guides were delivered to 22 local RV sites.

Regional Partnerships Travel Lane County partnered with Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast Visitors Associations, taking on PR, travel tour and board positions.

Tourism Marketing & Sales

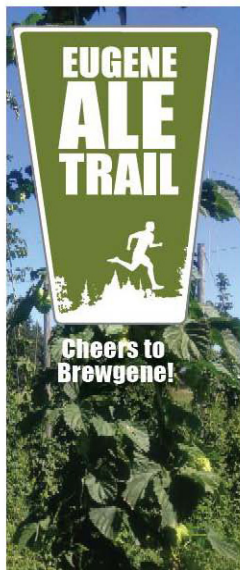
Marketing efforts to attract leisure and group tour travelers resulted in **\$16,634,676** in economic returns.

Bike Magazine

A crew from Bike Magazine was in the region in October to use the Oregon Cascades as a backdrop for their annual product testing issue, The Bike Bible. In addition to the print magazine that came out in January, they shot video, which was released on YouTube and through social media. Communities featured included McKenzie River, Oakridge/Westfir and Bend. Financial partners included Travel Lane County, Travel Oregon and the Central Oregon Visitors Association.

New Ad Series

Travel Lane County launched a series of new leisure ads in summer 2014 promoting each county region with print ads, videos, online display ads and keyword ads. Ads featured Dune buggy riding on the Oregon Coast, a "Pedal for Pinot" ad in the Eugene and Willamette Valley region and a trails ad highlighting the Eugene Ale Trail. A fourth ad focused on waterfalls and the Cascades was set to be released this summer.



NextStop Filming

Travel Lane County participated in an Oregon Coast Travel Show co-op coordinated by NextStop. Filming occurred in September 2014, with shows set to air on FOX 12 OREGON/PDX TV and Hawaii News in January, March and September 2015. Preliminary reports from the first video segment released on Dune Buggy riding in Florence resulted in 65,500 viewings to date.

Travel Lane County assisted with Fams introducing 59 individuals to the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region. To increase the tour readiness of our staff and members, we brought Hylton Fothergill of GTA, a world-wide receptive

tour company, as guest speaker at the monthly Convention Marketing meeting. We also subsidized member attendance at a China Ready seminar.



Social Media channels continued to provide significant engagement with visitors and potential travelers. Twitter rose to 4,342 (Up 26.4%). The blog, launched in May 2014, generated 5,410 views. Facebook remained the foundation of social marketing efforts. A contest strategy was tested to grow Facebook fans, which helped increase fans to 36,045 (up 26.6%), pushing past the 30,000 mark for the first time.

Launched in February, three Facebook campaigns, promoting the Oregon

Visitor Services

Travel Lane County's visitor services staff personally assisted 16,333 (up 1.7%) visitors and residents during FY14. Walk-in visits at the Adventure Center and downtown Visitor Information Center totaled 9,740 (up 7.5%) visits, additionally the center assisted 2,131 guests who called the Adventure Center for assistance (up 29.4%). The mobile visitor van staff served 6,593 people at various attractions and events across the region.



The Official Eugene, Cascades & Coast Visitor Guide (140,000 printed) was produced with new content and four cover shots. An updated visitor map/pad map was inserted in the guide and available for further distribution at visitor venues. More than 77,974 (up 25.4%) guides were tracked and distributed through Certified

Display Folder sites, at Travel Lane County member locations, statewide information and welcome centers, the Eugene and Portland Airports, and through local convention, meeting, sports and community relations outreach. Distributions accounted for an estimated economic impact of \$7,812,995.

Travelers visiting state rest areas were greeted with new display ads. Eight ad panels featuring maps, travel resources and visitor information at the Adventure Center were placed in rest areas near Brookings, Wilsonville, Woodburn, Klamath Falls, Ontario, Multnomah Falls and two 1-5 locations north and south of the Eugene-Springfield metro area. Displays highlighted key

attractions and visitor experiences, including wine tasting, covered bridges, waterfalls, hiking and Heceta Head Lighthouse.



PURCHASE A PERMIT
GRAB A GUIDEBOOK
ASK A TRAIL EXPERT

Ads promoting the Adventure Center as a source for travel information, permits, guidebooks and trip planning assistance were placed in Travel Lane County publications, The Register-Guard Discovery Magazine and Eugene Magazine. Monthly giveaways also encouraged Adventure Center visits.

During FY14, combined sales in the center totaled \$41,662 (up 12.5%) over last year. Retail sales accounted for \$14,426 (up 4.5%) and sales of tickets and passes total \$25,266 (up 23%).

A total of 139 deals/coupons (up 3%), with views totaling 3,080 (up 44%), enticed website visitors with discounts and offers on lodging, dining, recreation, arts and culture, university visits, family and geocaching adventures.



Top Geographic Markets

U.S.	International
Oregon	Canada
California	Germany
Washington	Australia
Texas	United Kingdom
Arizona	Japan
Florida	France
Colorado	Switzerland
New York	Netherlands
Alaska	New Zealand
Idaho	Norway

Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour

Travel Lane County's successful GeoTour expanded to include Oakridge/Westfir (October 2013) and Territorial Highway (March 2014) editions, completing the four-part tour. A total of 280 geocachers attended the kickoff events and participated in the new editions that same day.

Since the first edition's original launch of the Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour, an estimated 42,636 visits have been made to the 143 geocache site locations.

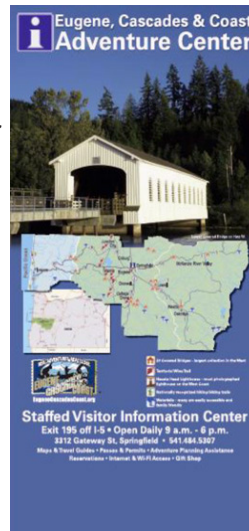
Of the geocachers who completed the GeoTour's accompanying passport, the following was tracked through surveys: 57% of cachers were from out of the area, 10% of the cachers were from out of state, 23% were first-time cachers and 41% stayed overnight during their GeoTour experience.

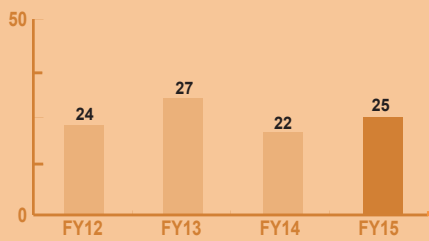
Cachers finding a minimum number of required sites were eligible to earn locally-produced, collectible coins.

Consumer Shows

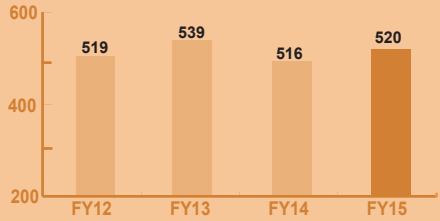
Visitor Services staff promoted the region in Canada at the Vancouver Outdoor Adventure Show and Vancouver Bike Show. Partnering members included the Three Rivers Casino, Oregon Adventures and the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce providing opportunities to promote coastal offerings, as well as key destination draws for mountain bikers.

Meanwhile, staff attended the Sunset Celebration, which generated more than 1,000 leads and trip planning interactions.

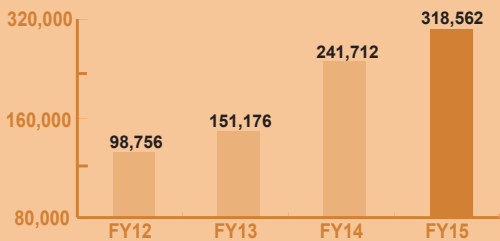




New Members



Total Members



Website Sessions

Top Visited Web Pages

- 1 Event Calendar
- 2 Things to Do
- 3 Places to Stay
- 4 Where to Eat
- 5 Waterfalls Campaign

Top Website Origins Visit (Domestic)

- 1 Oregon
- 2 Washington
- 3 California
- 4 Colorado

Top Website Visit Origins (International)

- 1 Canada
- 2 United Kingdom
- 3 Brazil
- 4 Germany

Membership

Travel Lane County's members continued to provide quality products and services, contributing to the overall success of Lane County's visitor industry. The department's hire of a new Director of Partner Development helped increased new and prospective members during the period.

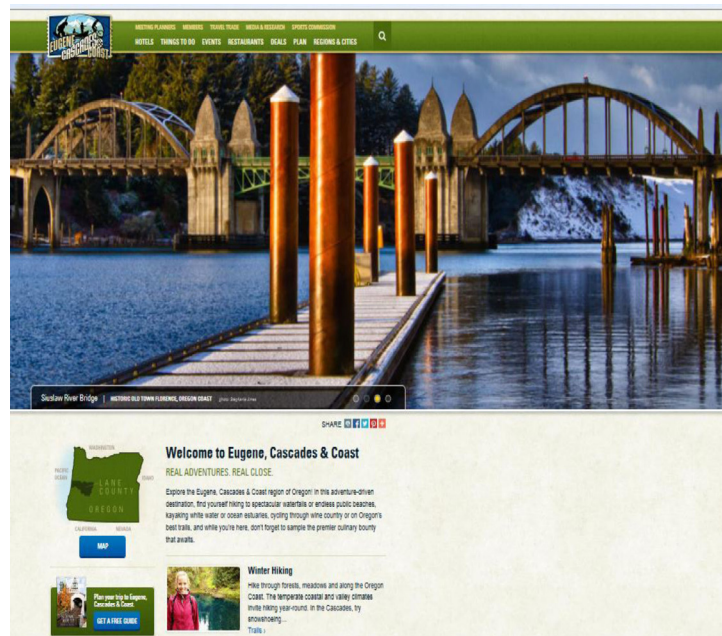
Membership Support

Total membership rose to 520 businesses, organizations and individuals. Combined member dues and ad purchases accounted for \$75,912 in revenue.

Member Orientations and Member Spotlights provided industry partners with networking and educational opportunities. Travel Lane County's Member Update e-newsletters kept members informed of marketing opportunities and industry news. Leads were also available to members via Travel Lane County's work with conventions, tour operators and media.

Integrated Marketing

Online marketing efforts grew exponential during the period as Travel Lane County launched a newly designed website and saw continued growth through online advertising and social media channels.



New Website Launched

The overall look, navigation and organization of Travel Lane County's new website has enhanced the internal effectiveness and the end user experience. Changes focused on improving search returns, microsite and advertising integration, and key placement of tools like Trip Planner and the What's Nearby map feature. In addition, emphasis was made on the use of large-scale images, and those associated with member listings, deals and events.

Website Sessions Up

32%



Website Growth

The website continued to produce growing volumes of visits, increasing a total of 318,562 (up 32%) in website sessions, 246,694 (up 32%) users and 52,604 (up 54%) mobile sessions.

Member Publications

Members received significant exposure key visitor publications during the period. In September, a 44-page Eugene, Cascades and Coast Dining Guide featuring 128 restaurants was produced with the support of \$21,231 in ad revenue. Work began in October on the Lane County Visitor Map, which generated \$20,280 in revenue to cover production costs.

Community Relations

Community Relations programs strengthened the awareness of Travel Lane County's key programs, while increasing awareness of the impacts of the local tourism industry.

New Region Updates

Travel Lane County rolled out a new series of region updates to keep public officials, business and community members informed about the specific programs the association implements on behalf of the local tourism industry. Updates on the McKenzie, Florence and Springfield areas were produced during the period.

Lane County Media Outreach

Media outreach resulted in record coverage during the semi-annual period. News releases, interviews and in association with Lane County-based newspapers, television and radio, generated 68 media placements valued at \$59,396 (up 45%) in editorial coverage.

Local Media Coverage

45%

Coverage highlights included stories about the Eugene Ale Trail, Create! Eugene, Oregon Fall Foliage Blog, IAAF World Championship bid, Unofficial Simpsons Tour, Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour and the Oregon

Covered Bridge Festival. Special features on Labor Day destinations, the impacts of outdoor recreation and record-setting holiday travel were also produced. Other coverage included stories about hotel development, the impacts of visitors and conventions, as well as staff, member and board news. A holiday focus on the Adventure Center garnered seasonal coverage on holiday gift shopping, Christmas tree permits and Sno-Park permits, resulted in increased visits to the Adventure Center.

A KUGN radio partnership provided weekly opportunities to promote more than 150 community events during the period, as well as Travel Lane County's members, website, calendar and Adventure Center.

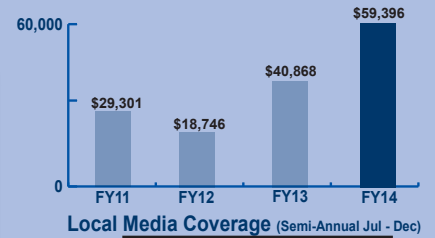
Community Outreach

Staff attended and participated in 221 community and business meetings, including those tied to board and committee service. In addition, 29 presentations about Travel Lane County's programs and local tourism impacts were made to groups countywide.

Create! Eugene

In partnership with the Arts and Business Alliance of Eugene, Travel Lane County collaborated in the 2nd Annual Create! Eugene Plein Air Paint Out and produced a new youth event called Kids Create! Eugene.

Artists from around the region participated in the Plein Air Paint Out, which featured contests, demonstrations, socials, special events and workshops. Meanwhile, the Kids Create! Eugene event introduced more than 500 families to local visual and performing arts organizations and opportunities through hands-on art projects and live performances.



Kids' Adventure Club

The Eugene, Cascades & Coast Kids' Adventure Club promoted countywide travel adventures, family-friendly events and local member attractions to locals and visitors alike.

Members expanded to 1,071 (up 112%), representing more than 4,284 parents and children. Outreach to local schools reach an additional 12,000 families.



During the period, Kids' Adventure Club outreach and activities were associated with the Willamalane's Springfield SummerFair (geocaching activity), Oregon Covered Bridge Festival, Springfield City Hall Trick-or-Treat and the Springfest Christmas Parade. Attendance at these community events total more than _____ kids and families.



Travel Lane County Mission

To increase the number of overnight visitors to the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region for the benefit of its members and all businesses and citizens who depend on a strong Lane County economy.

Eugene, Cascades & Coast Travel Impacts

Visitors spent an estimated
\$575.7 million in 2013, supporting a
variety of businesses and jobs in
Lane County.

Food Service

\$167 million

Accommodations

\$102.4 million

Retail Sales

\$90.1 million

Arts, Entertainment & Recreation

\$79 million

Local Transportation & Fuel

\$76.2 million

Food Stores

\$60.9 million

State & Local Tax Revenues

\$28.9 million

Jobs

8,510

Direct Earnings

\$173.3 million

Source:

Oregon Travel Impacts 1991-2013p Report,
Dean Runyan Associates, April 2014

Staff directory available at:
EugeneCascadesCoast.org/staff

*Back: Lower Kentucky Falls near
Mapleton, by Jeff Dimmick*



Travel Lane County

541.484.5307 | 800.547.5445

EugeneCascadesCoast.org

Eugene, Cascades & Coast
Adventure Center
3312 Gateway St | Springfield

Downtown Eugene
Visitor Center
754 Olive St | Eugene