

Travel Lane County

FY14 Semi-Annual Report

July 2013 - December 2013



Travel Lane County

Adventure Center 3312 Gateway St., Springfield • Downtown Visitor Center 754 Olive St., Eugene

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President's Message

Kari Westlund, President & CEO, Travel Lane County

The program year is showing great results to date, with solid strength in our convention, sports, and tourism marketing measures, tempered with very slight softening in visitor center visits and paid memberships.

We witnessed many major successes in the booking of sports events, including the unprecedented award of seven years of NCAA Track & Field Championships. Only four of the seven years appear in our reported numbers, with three more years to be added when dates are confirmed. We also eagerly anticipate the 2014 World Junior Championships in July, just a few weeks after the USA Junior Championships. Our destination is positioned as the national epicenter for track and field, and is gaining ground globally as well.

Convention and meetings bookings are also picking up after several challenging years, and we have added several digital advertising channels that are gaining us visibility and reputation in the meetings markets, as detailed on page eight.

In leisure marketing, our lead generation shifted up dramatically, 326 percent, from our own advertising. Partner referrals from Travel Oregon and our two regional marketing partners, Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast are down slightly, but we anticipate a big bump this spring as Travel Oregon launches its largest media campaign in history. Total visitor inquiries from all sources were up 18 percent.

We entered the fiscal year with significant uncertainty around the destination marketing contract, and while our staff team continued to work very hard across our sales and marketing channels, our paid media and promotions and any long term contracts were largely on hold until mid fall. Since resolving our status as the official destination marketing organization for Lane County/Eugene, Cascades & Coast, we have launched several key initiatives that will generate strong returns in the future, including a complete redesign and upgrade of our website that will launch in late 2014. Our website is our flagship marketing investment, and its patronage continues to rise across measurable categories, including site visits, unique visitors, and page views.

Visitor Center visits held close to even, off 0.8 percent, and our team of Adventure Specialists have been working hard on two new editions of our highly successful GeoTour series, with the third edition launching this fall and featuring southeast Lane County and the fourth edition coming up connecting south and north Lane County along Territorial Highway.

Private sector membership investment in Travel Lane County was at 516 at the end of December, and we continue to see recessionary impacts on cash flow for visitor industry businesses across sectors even while experiencing strong growth in food and beverage. There remains a lot of churn in small businesses, with new businesses being formed but business closures as well.

Overall, visitor volumes have been strong, and transient room tax growth reflects both increases in demand and average rate, though our room rates remain a bargain for travelers. Air passenger arrivals achieved record growth for the third consecutive year at the Eugene Airport.

Our staff team works diligently on marketing and communications, positioning Eugene, Cascades & Coast as a preferred travel destination. Our brand promise of authentic, approachable, inspiring outdoor recreation experiences is complemented by communities vibrant with cultural and culinary offerings. Our staff team engages with community and industry leaders throughout the destination on community planning and product development related to tourism as well as cooperative marketing and sales efforts, and we've enjoyed many successes in the first half of this program year.

Our work is an outcome of Lane County's investment of transient room tax back into destination marketing through Travel Lane County, and we are proud to serve as an economic catalyst.

Executive Summary

Overall Returns: \$45,993,360

Room Tax Investment: \$921,107

Ratio: 50:1

For every dollar of room tax invested in Travel Lane County, an estimated \$50 in visitor spending came or will come to the county economy. This is an estimate of direct expenditures; no multipliers are incorporated. In addition to \$64,406 in private dollar revenues and 64,072 in membership dues, Travel Lane County generated \$1,415,464 in media and public relations exposure and \$9,236 in in-kind support and volunteer support, extending the reach of its budget.

Convention Sales	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Jul-Dec '09
Leads Achieved	97	103	66	76	123
Room Nights Booked	51,507	25,976	32,443	20,143	27,065
Delegates Booked	108,156	80,205	90,456	53,708	76,036
Est. Economic Impact	\$39.8 million	\$11.6 million	\$17.6 million	\$12.1 million	\$22.5 million*

** In FY09, the NCAA Outdoor Championships for 2013 and 2014 were confirmed, totaling \$12.8 million in EEI. In FY07, the 2012 Olympic Team Trials-Track & Field was confirmed. National Track & Field events generate significant attendance, room nights and economic impacts, and make year to year comparisons difficult.*

Tourism Sales	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Jul-Dec '09
Media Coverage (non-local)	1,346,525	\$75,280	\$132,063	\$372,155**	\$143,099
Media Coverage (Circulation)	43,670,862	72,974,653	16,622,078	97,331,612	4,914,978
Facebook Fans	28,941	27,963	11,411	1,202	n/a
Destination Advertising & Leads	24,963	18,647	21,622	29,175	22,802

Visitor Services	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Jul-Dec '09
Adventure Center Walk-ins	3,344	3,776	3,970	3,457	n/a
Downtown Center Walk-ins	1,794	1,405	1,793	2,041	2,707
Visitor Van	3,886	4,291	3,745	4,714	5,706

Website	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Jul-Dec '09
Unique Visitors	186,215	115,095	73,045	70,450	64,739
Mobile Site Visits	34,254	4,914	n/a	n/a	n/a

Membership	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Jul-Dec '09
Total Membership	516	539	519	508	536

Community Relations	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Jul-Dec '09
Media Coverage (local)	\$40,868	\$18,746	\$29,301	\$28,163	\$10,035
Media Stories	92	55	52	73	37
Press Releases	41	56	53	33	31
Presentations	18	14	31	21	19

Travel and Tourism: An Economic Generator

Return on Lane County Room Tax Investment

Travel Lane County is able to measure many, but not all, of its programs for estimated economic returns. Summarizing those quantifiable returns, a transient room tax TRT investment of \$921,107 by Lane County into Travel Lane County secured over \$45,993,360 in current and future economic impact to the county during the first half of FY14.¹

Private businesses contributed \$7,232 in in-kind donations, \$64,072 in dues, and \$64,406 in program support, to leverage Lane County's investment and increase Travel Lane County's overall effectiveness. Interns and volunteers contributed \$2,004 in labor. Media efforts extended the reach of Travel Lane County's budget by another \$1,415,464 during the six-month period.

Tourism in Lane County

Overall, travel spending reached \$555.2 million in 2012, a 2.6 percent increase in spending compared to 2011. Made up primarily of small and medium-sized businesses, the visitor industry in Lane County employed an estimated 8,240 people and paid out \$165.9 million in wages in 2012.

Tourism in Oregon

Travelers to Oregon contributed \$9.2 billion⁴ directly to the state economy in 2012, a 3.2 percent increase from 2011. Oregon's travel industry also supported 91,000 jobs and \$2.2 billion in earnings.

Tourism in America

In 2012, the U.S. travel industry received \$855.4 billion⁵ from domestic and international travelers, up 5.2 percent from the previous year. Travel expenditures directly supported more than 7.7 million jobs, generating \$200.9 billion in payroll income for Americans. Additionally, the industry generated \$128.8 billion in federal, state and local tax revenue.

Travel Lane County: A Private-Public Partnership

A recognized visitor industry leader, Travel Lane County continued to partner with business, civic, government, and community groups, including its 516 members. As a private, non-profit corporation, Travel Lane County is governed by a 30-member board of directors, including representatives from the Lane County Board of Commissioners and the Eugene and Springfield City Councils. Ex-officio board members provide additional links to city and county government.

Travel Lane County is funded by county TRT, paid by visitors staying overnight in commercial lodging and campgrounds. It receives 70 percent of three of the eight points of room tax collected by the County. This method of percentage-based funding sets up a healthy incentive; the better job Travel Lane County does at bringing overnight visitors and their dollars into the county, the more funds it receives to re-invest in marketing.

Travel Lane County's Mission

Travel Lane County supports the local economy by increasing the number of visitors to Lane County, with a focus on overnight visitors. Travel Lane County continues to implement marketing strategies to promote the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region as a convention, meeting, event, and leisure-travel destination. Ongoing areas of focus include convention and meeting sales and service, tourism marketing, visitor information services, membership and integrated marketing and community relations. Stewardship of our limited resources is a critical component of our continued success.

Lane County Room Tax Collections

Overall room tax collections increased 12.2 percent during the first half of FY14, showing healthy growth in room tax revenues throughout all areas of the region. The highest increase was seen in Florence, followed by Springfield and Eugene.

Room Tax Collection Summary

	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Change
Eugene	\$2,047,227	\$1,820,210	\$1,778,062	\$1,771,387	↑12.5%
Springfield	\$1,141,537	\$1,001,064	\$991,002	\$841,719	↑14.0%
Florence	\$384,625	\$321,237	\$370,256	\$362,667	↑20%
Cottage Grove	\$129,290	\$118,435	\$122,524	\$106,103	↑9.2%
Other	\$676,975	\$642,946	\$582,407	\$605,137	↑5.3%
Total	\$4,379,654	\$3,903,892	\$3,844,251	\$3,687,013	↑12.2%

Source: City of Eugene Transient Room Tax Collections Monthly Reports.

Lane County Hotel/Motel Statistics

Lane County's average occupancy rate during the period increased by 8.5 percent when compared the same six-month period. Room tax collections are a function of both occupancy and rate.

	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Change
Occupancy	64%	59%	↑8.5%
Average Daily Rate	\$89	\$85	↑4.7%
Room/Rev Par	\$62	\$51	↑22%

Source: Smith Travel Research

Eugene Airport Arrivals

The Eugene Airport ended with a record year, January through December 2013, with 863,523 air passenger arrivals, up a 6.68 percent over 2012. EUG is now served by six airlines, the most ever, with 10 nonstop routes including Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Denver, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Phoenix-Mesa and Honolulu.

Convention & Sports Marketing

Convention Marketing

Janis Ross, Vice President of Convention & Sports Marketing

Sue Harshbarger, Senior Convention Sales Manager

Juanita Metzler, Convention Sales Manager

Linda Norris, Convention Services Manager

Jessica Chestnut, Social Media/ PR Manager, Convention & Sports

Sports Marketing – Eugene, Cascades & Coast Sports

Janis Ross, Executive Director

Mike Gaffaney, Director of Sports Sales & Development

Kayla Krempley, Director of Event Operations

The Convention & Sports Marketing program continued its efforts to attract conventions, meetings and sports events to Lane County. The staff's sales strategies to develop new business and maintain existing accounts during the first half of FY14 resulted in direct economic impacts of \$3.9 million in anticipated convention delegate spending and \$35.8 million in sports events participant spending. Trade shows, sales presentations, advertising, editorial and story pitches, social media, direct sales calls and e-newsletters targeting meeting and sports event planners have been effective means of increasing overnight visits to Lane County.

The convention and meetings market has been slow growing. Meetings industry research demonstrates what we have experienced in shorter lead times in group business booked. While the government meetings market has been slow to return to normal levels, we are seeing signs of a strong recovery in the education and medical meetings market. The University of Oregon is hosting several large and prestigious conferences in 2014 and 2015. Connecting with both the University and local industry sectors in high-tech and bio-tech is providing much-needed visibility and information as we target those markets.

The faith-based meetings and events market continues to provide exciting opportunities. We are currently in discussions with two large events (8,000-10,000 delegates), which would utilize the Matthew Knight Arena. Our reputation in this market through hosting prior events like Acquire The Fire and Beth Moore Live have opened new doors that will help us realize many future bookings.

Sports events bookings continue to remain strong. With the launch of the Eugene, Cascades & Coast Sports commission in 2012, our destination has become more visible to the local community and with national and regional sports events planners. The December announcement that the University of Oregon secured the NCAA D1 Outdoor Track & Field Championships through 2021 has certainly bolstered both numbers and our visibility in the marketplace. Willamalane's expansion in 2014 will include new fields, which has already resulted in increased sports events bookings and the creation of a new event, the Mayor's Invitational Soccer Tournament.

Business Booked	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	% Change
Delegates	108,156	80,205	↑35%
Room Nights	51,507	25,976	↑98.2%
EEL	\$39.8 million	\$11.6 million	↑243.1%

Leads	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	% Change
Total Leads Generated	97	103	↓5.8%
Generated (w/rooms)	82	95	↓13.7%
Confirmed	46	42	↑9.5%
Pending	21	18	↑16.7%
Lost/Cancelled	15	35	↓57.1%

Travel Lane County's confirmation ratio is 56 percent (46 out of 82 leads confirmed). Of the 46 leads, 17 confirmed (36.9%) and 19 of the 21 pending leads (90.5%) are new business. Of the 15 lost leads: two events were cancelled; hotels did not have availability during preferred dates on two leads; two cited that rates were too high; and the remaining leads simply chose other destinations.

Sample Confirmations (Groups)	Meeting Year	Attendees	Scope
USTA Junior Champs & Challengers Tournament	2014	400	Regional
YESS Spiketown MLK Classic Volleyball	2014	1,248	Regional
Science Fiction/Fantasy Writing Weekend	2014	150	Regional
Overseas Assn. of College Admissions Counselors	2015	1,100	International
Assn. of University Real Estate Officials	2015	100	National

Pacing Report (calendar year)

Travel Lane County's pacing report is designed to better track and compare sales results against historical efforts. The pacing results for 2012 reflect the national industry trend of greatly decreased booking lead times for conferences.

		Booked For Same Year	One Year Out	Two Years Out	Three Years Out	Four Years Out	Five Years Out	Totals
Booked In								
2013	Room Nights	17,570	30,030	17,040	37,550	5,450	5,450	113,090
	Delegates	34,590	53,006	28,200	32,000	15,000	15,000	177,796
2012	Room Nights	10,717	25,829	3,318				39,864
	Delegates	30,089	68,458	24,680				123,227
2011	Room Nights	16,545	22,791	1,160	7,000			47,496
	Delegates	47,405	58,221	16,350	10,000			131,976
2010	Room Nights	15,799	17,790	140		2,050		35,779
	Delegates	40,374	51,063	200		750		92,387
2009	Room Nights	19,382	14,775	2,120	360	6,050	4,650	47,337
	Delegates	45,679	36,629	1,610	2,000	15,650	15,000	116,568
2008	Room Nights	19,281	19,419	6,205	470	220		45,595
	Delegates	54,981	63,323	12,250	10,425	10,000		150,979

Tradeshaw Participation

Participation in industry trade shows continued to play an important role in the sales team's marketing strategy. During the first half of FY14, the sales staff attended the following shows to meet with meeting and sports event planners to promote Lane County as a meeting destination:

- MPI World Education Congress (all markets) – Las Vegas, NV
- Meetings Focus Live (all markets) – Portland, OR
- Olympic Sportslink (sports) – Colorado Springs, CO
- Movement Day (faith) – New York, NY
- MPI Bravo Show (all markets) – Portland, OR
- Rejuvenate (faith) – Daytona Beach, FL
- TEAMS (sports) – Salt Lake City, UT
- City Impact (faith) – Beaverton, OR
- US Rowing Association Convention – Seattle, WA
- US Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Assn. – Orlando, FL

Site Inspections

Travel Lane County assisted meeting and sports event planners with inspections of hotels, meeting facilities, sports venues and other areas of interest. The following groups came to Lane County to research the potential of holding a meeting, convention or event.

Ride To Recovery, 300 participants – Pending for 2014
USA Volleyball, various – Future consideration
American Scientific Glassblowers Society, 300 delegates – Confirmed for 2014
Archdiocese of Portland, 1,000 delegates – Pending for 2016
599th Field Artillery/610 Transportation, 60 delegates – Pending for 2015
MLRS (military reunions) – Future consideration
AUREO, 150 delegates – Confirmed for 2015
Pacific Region Embroiderers Guild, 200 delegates – Pending for 2016
NCAA D1 Outdoor Track & Field Championships, 15,000 participants – Confirmed for 2015-2021
Oregon Beekeepers, 150 delegates – Pending for 2015
Lutheran Women's Ministries, 250 delegates – Pending for 2016

Advertising

The Convention & Sports Marketing Department placed advertisements and participated in online advertising distribution by targeting meeting and event planners in the following publications: Association News, Northwest Meetings + Events, Meetings Focus, Sports Travel, SportsEvents, and Sports Destination Management.

New digital advertising channels this year included:

- Strategic Venue Partnership with HelmsBriscoe, the world's leading third-party meeting planning and site selection company
- Marketing partnership with DMAI's empowerMINT program, reaching meeting and event planners on a national and international level
- Enhanced web presence on Sports Destination Management's website

We continue to enhance our social media presence and grow both meeting and sports followers on our Twitter accounts and likes on our sports Facebook page. A new staff position was created and hired in August 2013 dedicated to social media and public relations for the convention and sports markets. Since that hire, we have seen our editorial mentions increase exponentially in trade publications, and more activity and engagement in social media channels.

Convention-Related Media Coverage

Travel Lane County increased its editorial coverage in convention and sports-related publications by 65 percent during the period. Editorial coverage, valued at \$28,071, promoted the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region as a convention, meeting and sports destination. Publications included Northwest Meetings + Events, Smart Meetings, SportsEvents, SportsTravel, Sports Destination Management, Sports Planning Guide, Sports Travel Magazine and Student Group Tour Management.

Sports Commission

Travel Lane County's embedded sports commission, Eugene, Cascades & Coast Sports, continued our efforts to both increase local visibility and to attract sports events to Lane County.

Educating the local community, elected officials and sports partners about activities by the sports commission include community presentations and distribution of our quarterly e-newsletter.

Sports commission staff has been involved in incubating several new sports events in the county including the EVP Volleyball Tour (sand volleyball) in Florence, the Mayor's Invitational Soccer Tournament in Springfield, and the H2O Paddle Challenge in conjunction with the City of Eugene's Adaptive Recreation program. All three events are slated for the summer of 2014.

Sports staff continues to provide comprehensive housing and hospitality support to TrackTown USA and the University of Oregon 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.

Convention & Sports Services

Travel Lane County's Convention and Sports Service programs continued to provide comprehensive event support for conferences, meetings, events, retreats, weddings, and reunions. Services are designed to facilitate a smooth planning process, contribute to the success of each event, encourage attendees to explore the area and patronize member businesses, and build relationships with event planners that will result in return visits.

From July to December 2013, services were provided for 94 groups representing 102,250 delegates or participants. Services included the distribution of Lane County promotional materials to encourage event attendance; assistance with event planning, transportation, and activities; procurement of letters of support from local dignitaries; promotion of area attractions and tours to event attendees; distribution of welcome signs to member businesses; and on-site visitor information assistance.

As a liaison between event planners and Travel Lane County members, staff initiated 15 leads for services and information. These leads included requests for meeting space, bids to provide event services, promotional items for registration bags and gift baskets and special offers for event participants. Leads provided benefits to our members in the form of increased visibility and sales, and to event planners as a means to establish communication with local quality service providers.

Gift baskets, registration bags, and discount coupons were provided to various organizations, conventions, and events, including Pacific Gospel Music Association, Association for Direct Instruction, Meeting Professionals International, Greater Oregon Society of Government Meeting Professionals, Oregon Chamber Ambassadors/Greeters, Mobility International, DVG Dog Show, UO Office of Parent & Students Programs, Oregon Cheerleaders, InDesign, Oregon Juvenile Justice Directors Association, Eugene Mayor's Office (for visiting delegates), Society for Phenomenology & Existential Philosophy, and Oregon Rehabilitation Conference.

These items provided members with a showcase for their products and services, and strengthened relationships between Travel Lane County and the recipient organizations.

Convention & Sports staff served on planning committees for American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament, Neighborhoods USA, H2O Paddle Challenge, Mayor's Invitational Soccer Tournament and Wordcrafters of Eugene.

Tourism Marketing & Sales

Natalie Inouye, Vice President of Tourism Marketing
Molly Blancett, Tourism Public Relations Manager

Meg Trendler, Tourism Sales Manager
Mary Duke, Tourism Assistant

Travel Lane County's Tourism Marketing & Sales Department implemented marketing strategies to gain a greater share of the travel market. Regional and national advertising, cooperative marketing with regional partnerships, travel trade shows, and media outreach were strategies used to attract both group tour and independent leisure travelers. Tourism marketing efforts during the first half of FY14 resulted in more than \$5,845,766 in returns from inquiry generation, fulfillment and bulk brochure distribution alone.⁷

Leisure Marketing

Eugene, Cascades & Coast continued to be a draw for independent leisure travelers seeking easily accessible soft adventures; key experiences promoted through Travel Lane County's brand. The complementary experiences related to culture, culinary, events and scenic beauty were equally important to Travel Lane County's marketing efforts during the period.

Destination Advertising & Regional Partnership

A total of 49,777 visitor inquiries were received during the period as a result of Travel Lane County ad placements, leads, social marketing, public relations and referrals. Travel Lane County added a lead-generating campaign on American Road magazine and trackable online ads, which increased our number of destination advertising contacts.

Visitor Inquiries	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Change
Destination Advertising	9,535	2,235	7,972*	↑326%
Travel Oregon & Regional Partnership Leads	15,428	16,412	13,650	↓6.0%
Social Marketing	4,188	2,808	2,674	↑49.1%
Public Relations	3,673	5,812	4,219	↓36.8%
Referrals	<u>16,953</u>	<u>14,875</u>	<u>13,845</u>	↑14%
Total	49,777	42,142	42,360	↑18.1%
Facebook Fans	28,941	27,963	11,411	↑3.49%
Twitter Followers	3,916	2,973	2,368	↑31.7%

* Jul-Dec '11 destination ad total included 4,061 guide downloads from Oregon Spring Insert program, which was not repeated in the same period of FY13 or FY14.

Willamette Valley & Oregon Coast Visitor Associations

Travel Lane County continued to play a leading role in the regional marketing efforts of both the Willamette Valley Visitors Association's (WVVA) and Oregon Coast Visitors Association (OCVA). For WVVA, Natalie Inouye served on the board of directors. Meg Trendler coordinated the tour/travel efforts with their WVVA counterparts and Molly Blancett serves on the PR team. WVVA marketing and PR efforts have focused on its Oregon Wine Country brand and the continued development of wine trails, which incorporate the region's complementary activities, dining and lodging options.

Tourism Committees

The communities of Cottage Grove, McKenzie River, Oakridge/Westfir and Florence have each convened tourism/marketing committees. They are all working on marketing and visitor readiness projects. Travel Lane County staff participated in each committee.

Travel Trade Marketing

Travel Lane County continued to reach out to the group tour travel market. Meg attended World Travel Market in London funded in part by the Willamette Valley Visitors Association. Interactions with travel trade resulted in 2 bookings, 39 leads/partner referrals/service requests. 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.

Media Relations/Editorial

The Tourism Department assisted media with articles, guidebooks and travel television shows, increasing exposure for Lane County nationally and internationally. Travel Lane County tracked articles valued at \$1,346,525 with a total circulation of 43,670,862 during the period.* Travel Lane County assisted with press trips providing an opportunity for 31 people to explore the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region to gain editorial coverage.

** The total value and circulation figures represented above do not reflect all the international media coverage received during the semi-annual period due to a delay in the receipt of article clippings sent from statewide tourism representatives. Furthermore, the circulation numbers are counted just once for each publication, rather than for each article. If circulation counts are included for each article, the total circulation would rise to 44,888,719.*

Social Media

The Tourism Department continued to grow its social media presence in the first half of FY14. Recognizing that the highly visual Pinterest is now the third highest social media platform, we have 31 boards, 504 pins and 231 followers, up from 63 followers at this point in FY13. Following the trend of the majority of Internet users, Travel Lane County focused primarily on gaining and engaging Facebook fans. Indicators show that we have strong engagement at our average of 3.95 percent. A mix of articles, blogs, photos, videos and questions about the region were posted through all social media channels, and were designed to engage and inspire the traveler who may be planning or considering a trip to the area.

Through partnership with the Willamette Valley Visitors Association, Travel Lane County was also able to regularly post items to the Oregon Wine Country Travel Facebook feed and Pinterest page.

Social Marketing	Dec '13	Dec '12	Dec '11	Change
Twitter Followers	3,916	2,973	2,368	↑31.71%
Facebook Fans	28,941	27,963	11,411	↑3.49%

Film & Video

Travel Lane County supported a variety of film-related projects and events during the period including location scouting for a feature film, assisting with a music video and a kick-off event for a documentary on Animal House of Blues.

Oregon Bounty

For the second year, the Oregon Bounty campaign focused on Travel Oregon's sponsorship of FEAST Portland. Travel Lane County attended Feast Portland, meeting media from around the country and sharing story ideas about the local region. The itinerary showcased Stephanie Pearl Kimmel on a tour from Eugene to Yamhill County.

Fall Foliage Promotion

2013 marked the 10 year of the Oregon Fall Foliage Hotline. Visits to the Fall Foliage Blog were up 44 percent compared to the same time last year. The number of Facebook fans surpassed 1,000 for the first time, with post engagement at more than 4 percent. Story pitches and social media campaigns resulted in articles in regional and national publications, including The Oregonian, Portland Monthly, About.com, Northwest Travel Magazine, Northwest Road Tripper and AARP Magazine.

Calls to the Fall Foliage Hotline were up significantly from last year, especially after the number was published in The Oregonian. Fall foliage callers used the blog and other online resources as well; appreciated talking to a person; and requested very specific trip planning advice. Two thirds of callers were unfamiliar with fall in our area. The other third were familiar and looking for local tips for less obvious locations to view or photograph color.

Scenic Bikeways

Travel Lane County continues to leverage the Oregon Scenic Bikeways program. Videos are being produced on all of Oregon's scenic bikeways. Meg assisted The Path Less Pedaled as they filmed the three bikeways that come through the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region. The films on the McKenzie Pass & Willamette Valley scenic bikeways have been released. The Covered Bridges video will be released soon. Natalie serves on the Oregon Scenic Bikeways committee as the representative for the Oregon Destination Marketing Organizations and was recently voted in as chair.

Travel Lane County enlisted the aid of a University of Oregon Journalism Campaigns Class to look at opportunities to increase our presence on campus and engage with UO students in ways that will connect them more strongly to the greater Eugene, Cascades & Coast region. The class provided recommendations related to encouraging students to "Get Out of the Campus Bubble." Their recommendations targeted Fraternity and Sorority Presidents to reach their members; P.E. and Student Recreation Center Patrons; and University of Oregon Freshmen. They provided implementation tools for each target, and chose the Rec Center as a project to implement within their programmed time. They set up at table at the Rec Center for two days in early December where they generated 91 new Facebook fans and distributed 38 guides plus additional materials.

Visitor Services

Natalie Inouye, Vice President of Tourism Marketing
 Samara Phelps, Director of Visitor Services
 Kelly Wilkes, Adventure Center Assistant Manager
 Jesse Lally, Downtown Adventure Specialist

Adventure Specialists: Spencer Adrian, Jennifer Archer, Marc Card, Sara Garrow, Rose Lombino, Hayley Radich, Collin Smith
 Visitor Services Specialists: Janet Auxier, Victoria Clark

The Visitor Services Department continued to play an essential role in assisting visitors, while promoting the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region. The department served guests at the Adventure Center, Downtown Visitor Center and Visitor Van operations, while fulfilling requests for information from visitors around the world.

Visitor Services	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Change	Estimated Economic Impact
Walk-ins				
Adventure Center	3,344	3,776	↓11.4%	\$138,776
Downtown Center	<u>1,794</u>	<u>1,405</u>	↑27.6%	\$74,451
Total	5,138	5,181	↓0.8%	\$213,227
Visitor Van				
Total	<u>3,886</u>	<u>4,291</u>	↓9.4 %	\$161,269
	9,024	9,472	↓4.7%	\$374,496

Visitors Center Operations

During the period, visitors and residents provided ongoing positive feedback regarding the Eugene, Cascades & Coast Adventure Center's offerings and the exceptional trip planning assistance and customer service they received from Travel Lane County's on-site Adventure Specialists. Downtown visitor center operations continued with the addition of a full-time adventure specialist position.

Top 10 Areas of Traveler Origin

Domestic & U.S. Cities

- Eugene
- Portland
- Los Angeles
- San Francisco
- Seattle
- Denver
- Medford
- Sacramento
- Bend
- Las Vegas & Phoenix

States

- Oregon
- California
- Washington
- Texas
- Arizona
- Florida
- Colorado
- New York
- Illinois
- Virginia

Countries

- Canada
- Germany
- Japan
- United Kingdom
- Australia
- France
- The Netherlands
- Switzerland
- Norway
- China & Denmark

Top 10 Areas of Interests by Traveler Origin

Oregon

- Oregon Coast
- Running/hiking trails
- Cycling
- Wineries
- Art/Culture
- Waterfalls
- Shopping
- Events/Fairs/Festivals
- Camping

U.S.

- Oregon Coast
- Running/hiking trails
- Cycling
- Lodging
- Wineries
- Shopping
- Outdoors/nature/recreation
- Events/fairs/festivals
- Culinary/food/restaurants

International

- Shopping
- Lodging
- Oregon Coast
- Culinary/food/restaurants
- Walking Tours
- Cycling
- Wineries
- Camping
- Running/hiking trails

- Covered Bridges
- Camping
- Events/fairs/festivals

Visitor Guide Distribution

A total of 11,314 Eugene, Cascades & Coast Official Visitor Guides were distributed in bulk to welcome centers and visitor information centers throughout the state during the period. This resulted in an estimated \$1,133,663 in economic activity in Lane County during the first half of FY14.

Adventure Center Retail

During the first half of FY14, combined sales in the Adventure Center totaled \$18,937 (down 36%). Retail sales of 1,958 items accounted for \$8,830 (down 19.5%); sales of permits/passes totaled \$4,112 and Tickets West sales totaled \$6,549. Customers continue to praise the convenience of purchasing permits and passes at the Adventure Center. We see repeat customers purchasing locally-made and inspired gifts and souvenirs.

Adventure Center Events

The Adventure Center has given Travel Lane County the opportunity to host both community and member events, while partnering with dozens of local agencies and businesses. These activities have spurred exposure for the center through media, member and community outreach. The Adventure Center hosted the following events during the period: Eugene, Cascades & Coast Kids' Adventure Club Family Day, MOPAN/OMPA's holiday party and Travel Lane County's Holiday Open House.

Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour – McKenzie River edition

The Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour expanded to include an Oakridge/Westfir Edition. The newest leg of the tour launched on October 25, drawing about 80 people from around Oregon. The event drew overnight visits and stops at local restaurants. The GeoTour continues to attract geocaches to all legs of the tour, which includes a McKenzie River Edition, Oregon Coast Edition and plans for a Territorial Wine Trail Edition.

Travel Lane County attended the Geocaching Block Party in Seattle, one of geocaching's biggest events in the country. Many interactions were made with people interested in experiencing the Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour, as well as people who had completed portions of it already.

Signs

The city of Springfield added wayfinding signs northbound on Gateway St to help locals and visitors in Springfield navigate to the Adventure Center. Walk-ins to our downtown Visitor Center increased due to improved signage and more foot traffic in downtown Eugene.

Volunteer/Internship Program

Volunteers served 23 hours in our Visitor Center, valued at \$276. This year we continued our program of hiring PR students with Social Media skills as Adventure Specialists to both assist visitors and inspire social media engagement.

Membership & Integrated Marketing

Sally McAleer, Vice President of Integrated Marketing
Taj Morgan, Web Content Manager

Wendy Reetz, Graphic Design & Member Services

Membership remains a critical component of Travel Lane County's marketing efforts. In addition to recruitment and retention efforts, the membership program helped members utilize Travel Lane County's marketing tools to promote themselves to visitors and other members. The increased integration of Travel Lane County's website and publications provide enhanced tools for marketing members and Lane County. The quality products and services members provide are key to the success of Travel Lane County and Lane County's visitor industry.

Membership Sales Currently, 516 members partner with Travel Lane County. A total of 22 new members joined during the semi-annual period. While 50 memberships were lost, those memberships actually represented just 17 total member businesses/organizations since some dropped members represented multiple listings. Overall, members contributed \$64,072 in dues revenue, down 4.8 percent. Last year at this time, a full-time membership position was eliminated and absorbed by the VP of Membership and Integrated Marketing.

Membership	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10
New Members/Recovered	22	27	24	25
Lost Members	50	26	23	34
Net Loss/Gain	-27	1	1	-9
Total Members	516	539	519	508

Membership Meetings, Communications & Outreach Quarterly Market Your Business meetings informed members and prospective members about Travel Lane County, its benefits and marketing programs. Members also took the opportunity to present their businesses and services to Travel Lane County staff during three Member Spotlight presentations. Monthly Member Updates were emailed to members informing them of marketing and advertising opportunities, member meetings and events and other relevant member news. In addition, a Holiday Open House was held in December.

Integrated Marketing The work under integrated marketing continues to pull together all facets of the organization's brand and program areas to ensure that all the publications, website, marketing materials and advertising are supporting each other.

Publication Production & Advertising Sales

- The *Eugene, Cascades & Coast Dining Guide* was produced and published in September 2013. The restaurant guide continues to be distributed through Certified Folder Display in area hotels as well as the Travel Lane County office, van and during conferences.
- The *Lane County/Eugene & Springfield Visitor Map* work began in October 2013. A total of \$16,680 was collected in revenue during the period.

Sponsorship & Advertising Opportunities

A variety of member advertising and sponsorship opportunities provided Travel Lane County with increased revenue sources, while providing members with enhanced marketing exposure. Members purchased sponsorships, brochure space and video advertising at the Adventure Center, which resulted in \$16,200 in revenues. Advertising space sold in the Eugene, Cascades & Coast Dining Guide generated \$20,096 in revenues. Priority listings on Travel Lane County's website, as well as advertising opportunities through the 1-5 Travel Information Kiosk program brought in an additional \$3,400 in revenues.

Website	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Change
Visits	241,712	151,176	98,756	94,868	↑ 59.9%
Unique Visitors	186,215	115,095	73,045	70,450	↑ 61.8%
Page Views	639,727	456,922	n/a	n/a	↑ 40%
Mobile Site Visits	24,254	4,914	n/a	n/a	↑ 393%

Community Relations

Lisa Lawton, Director of Community Relations

The Community Relations Department implemented a variety of programs and campaigns designed to gain exposure for Travel Lane County and the local visitor industry, while encouraging countywide travel. Projects and programs included local radio underwriting, special promotions, a photo contest, local media relations, community presentations, and family outreach through the Kids' Adventure Club. Work on Create! Eugene, a new arts and cultural event, as well as the Oregon Covered Bridge Festival laid strong foundations for generating increased visits and overnight stays.

	Jul-Dec '13	Jul-Dec '12	Jul-Dec '11	Jul-Dec '10	Change
Media Coverage (Lane County)	\$40,868	\$18,746	\$29,301	\$28,163	↑ 118%
Media Stories & Articles	92	55	52	73	↑ 67%
Press Releases	41	56	53	33	↓ 26%
Presentations	18	14	31	21	↑ 28%

Media Coverage (Lane County)

A total of \$40,868 in editorial coverage about Travel Lane County, the local visitor industry and the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region was generated through press releases, e-newsletters and media interviews with local newspapers and broadcast stations. Coverage included stories about the impacts of visitors, conventions and sporting events, new hotel development, fall foliage, bicycle tourism and local wineries. Media stories also focused on Kids' Adventure Club events, Create! Eugene, the Oregon Covered Bridge Festival, the Oregon Truffle Festival, the Eugene, Cascades & Coast Photo Contest, Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour, as well as Travel Lane County publications, staff and board member news.

An ongoing partnership with KUGN radio continued to provide weekly on-air opportunities to promote more than 130 community events during the period, along with promotions of Travel Lane County's online event calendar, Adventure Center and travel resources.

Advertising Campaigns

An underwriting campaign with public radio station KLCC promoted messages to a weekly audience of 80,000 listeners continued into the program year. Three, themed messages focused on tourism's economic impacts, sustainable travel and Travel Lane County/Adventure Center travel resources. Advertising partnerships were also renewed with the Eugene Weekly and Eugene Magazine, facilitating discounted advertising opportunities for Travel Lane County members.

Kids' Adventure Club

The Eugene, Cascades & Coast Kids' Adventure Club entered its fourth year. Quarterly Adventure Club events, newsletters and monthly event calendars promoted the region's seasonal activities, while encouraging families to get out and explore the area. In October, a Fall Family Day event was held off site at the Oregon Covered Bridge Festival in Cottage Grove, which provided a day of hands-on activities, crafts, education and promotions centered on the region's covered bridges. During the period, planning began for club events focused on fishing, the 50th anniversary of wilderness areas and Eugene's new skateboard park.

Since the launch of the first Kids' Adventure Club in Fall 2010, the club membership list has grown to 505 family subscribers, representing approximately 2,020 parents and kids. An average of 85 kids/parents are currently participating in each quarterly family day event held at the Adventure Center. Outreach to families also included club event flyer distribution to all 4J and Springfield School District elementary schools, representing more than 12,000 students.

Eugene, Cascades & Coast Photo Contest

The Eugene, Cascades & Coast Photo Contest expanded to 16 categories, increasing member and sponsor participation by 24 percent. In exchange for contest-related publicity, partners provided more than \$2,320 in

prizes awarded to contest winners. More than 140 images, valued at an estimated \$14,000 were permanently secured for Travel Lane County's free use for editorial and marketing purposes.

New partners included the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce, Oakridge/Westfir Chamber of Commerce, University of Oregon & Brand Management, Oregon RV Alliance, Oregon Adventures, Café Yumm!, Eugene, Cascades & Coast Sports, Cuthbert Amphitheater, Eugene Emeralds Baseball Club, Eugene Running Company, The Flower Basket & Gift Boutique, Hult Center for the Performing Arts, King Estate, Oakshire Brewing, Pegasus Pizza and Sprout!. Returning partners included the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce OBEC Consulting Engineers, the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce, Cascades Raptor Center, Cottage Theatre, The John. G Shedd Institute for the Arts, and Middlefield Golf Course. Press releases and social media outreach further promoted Travel Lane County and contest winners.

Create Eugene

In partnership with the Arts and Business Alliance of Eugene, Travel Lane County worked on the first-ever Create! Eugene event held in August. The event highlighted the community's arts and culture during a month-long, hands-on series of workshops and special events. A highlight included a Plein Air Paint Out competition and workshop series, which culminated with a City of Eugene sponsored Summer in the City event showcasing the artists' entries painted earlier in the day. A gallery reception and exhibit of the paintings followed at DIVA Gallery.

Oregon Covered Bridge Festival

Travel Lane County assisted the Oregon Covered Bridge Festival committee with programming and publicity. As a result, new features were added to the event, including plein air painting demonstrations and art displays, as well as a Kids' Adventure Club activity station where children could build bridge replicas and sketch bridges with a professional artist. Press releases about the festival, youth activities and the pre-event dinner were sent to local media resulting in \$5,686 in local media coverage, including an appearance on KEZI-TV and a front page article in The Register-Guard's City/Region section. Additional outreach resulted in coverage in Group Tour Travel and VIA magazines.

Travel Lane County/Industry Outreach and Communications

Travel Lane County staff connected and partnered with local community and business groups throughout the county, attending 116 local meetings and events, making 18 presentations to business and community groups, and serving on a variety of local boards and committees. This outreach helped generate awareness about Travel Lane County programs, the benefits of Lane County's tourism industry, and increased opportunities to form valuable community partnerships.

During the period, the Community Relations department produced Travel Lane County's Annual Report and monthly Tourism Industry News e-newsletters. The department also assisted with communication outreach to members, public officials and media regarding Travel Lane County's destination marketing contract proceedings.

Internships

The Community Relations department worked with two interns during the period, one from the University of Oregon and one from Lane Community College. Each worked an average of 6 hours per week, during their internship period, which totaled more than 144 hours and an in-kind value of \$1,728.

Administration

Kari Westlund, President & CEO

Karyn Mieloszyk, Director of Finance & Administration

Industry and Community Leadership

Travel Lane County staff serve on many state, regional, county and community boards and commissions that intersect with tourism and the visitor industry.

Kari Westlund serves as the chair of the Oregon Tourism & Hospitality Consortium, which is currently spearheading a statewide tourism master plan. She is also chair of the Arts & Business Alliance of Eugene and chairs the working committee for the upcoming 2014 World Junior Championships. Other boards and committees include the Lane Economic Committee and the LCC Culinary & Hospitality Management Program Advisory Committee. She served on the Florence Event Center Review Committee and the Oregon Covered Bridges Festival planning committee this fall, among others.

Natalie Inouye serves on the board of the Willamette Valley Visitors Association, the Oregon Scenic Bikeways Committee, Covered Bridges Scenic Bikeway Committee and the McKenzie River, Oakridge and Florence Tourism Committee, as well as serving as the marketing chair for the Oregon Coast Visitors Association. Janis Ross serves on the board of the Oregon Chapter of Meeting Planners International and the Eugene Airport Advisory Committee. Lisa Lawton serves on the board of the Greater Oregon Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America and serves on the planning committees of Create! Eugene and the Oregon Covered Bridge Festival. Sally serves on the Oregon RV Alliance board and Ski Oregon. Samara serves on the board of Nearby Nature and the Public Lands Frontliners committee. Meg serves on the Oregon Tour & Travel Alliance and the Lane County Cultural Coalition.

Travel Lane County Board

Travel Lane County has a governing board of 30 members made up of visitor industry and community leaders representing a wide range of businesses, organizations and governmental entities. During the semi-annual period, the Executive Committee included Board Chair George Rogers, Vice Chair Robert Canaga, Treasurer Pam Whyte, and Past Chair Richard Boyles. During the period, Jonas Kungys, owner of Hop Valley Brewing Company, Oregon Tax and The Cooler Restaurant & Bar; Josh Messer, general manager of the Hilton Garden Inn; and Georg Adelt, owner of High Country Expeditions. For a current list, see the Travel Lane County Board of Directors attachment to this report.

In-Kind Support

In-kind donations, valued at \$7,232 were received in connection with travel writer/media visits, visitor van access to fair and festivals, as well as member donations supporting trade shows, conventions, events and Travel Lane County's photo contest. Travel Lane County received 23 hours of donated work through volunteers and 144 hours of donated work through interns, valued at \$2,004.

Footnotes & Sources

1. \$3,976,399 from convention sales, \$35,796,699 from sports sales bookings, \$4,712,103 from inquiry generation, \$213,227 from visitor information center operations, \$161,269 from mobile visitor van operation, and \$1,133,663 from bulk brochure distribution. No economic returns from trade shows, group tour sales, international sales efforts or film and video are included.
2. Lane County Travel Impacts 1991-2012p. Prepared for Travel Lane County by Dean Runyan Associates, May 2013.
3. Ibid.
4. Oregon Travel Impacts and Visitor Volume. Prepared by Dean Runyan Associates for the Oregon Tourism Commission, May 2013.
5. Travel Industry of America 2013p Report.
6. Reports from Eugene Airport and WSDOT State Rail & Marine Office.
7. \$4,712,103 million in inquiry generation and related fulfillment and \$1,133,663 million in bulk brochure distribution, for a total of \$5,845,766.
8. Research by the Oregon Tourism Commission and StoryCo has shown that 60 percent of visitors to Oregon are influenced to visit additional destinations by visitor guides and promotional materials received in visitor information centers. Throughout the period, Travel Lane County sent 11,314 visitor guides through bulk distributions. Using the 60 percent factor, and the average party expenditure of \$167 per day, identified in the 2008 statewide visitor profiles, and assuming a half day in Lane County, the total economic impact is \$1,133,663

Formulas

Overall Returns: \$3,976,399 (convention bookings); \$35,796,699 (sports bookings); \$4,712,103 inquiries/fulfillment); \$213,227 visitor center operations); \$161,269 (mobile van operations); \$1,133,663 (bulk brochure distribution). Total: \$45,993,360

Convention Sales Bookings: Economic impact is determined by multiplying the number of delegates by the number of event days by \$166. The economic impact is estimated at \$3,976,399.

Sports Bookings: Economic impact is determined by multiplying the number of participants/attendees by the number of event days by either \$83 per day for youth sports events or \$166 per day for adult sports events. Spending for day visitors of \$57 per day may also be factored in depending on the spectator draw for each event. The economic impact is estimated at \$35,796,699.

Inquiry Generation: GMA Research identified an overall conversion rate of 20 percent. $24,963 \text{ inquiries} * 20\% = 4,993$
The average party spent \$363 per group, per trip and \$181.50 per group per day. $4,993 * 363 = \$1,812,459$. In addition, 32 percent of inquiries plan to visit within two years for an additional economic impact of \$2,899,644 ($24,963 * 32\% = 7,988 * \$363 = \$2,899,644$). Total tourism marketing efforts = $\$1,812,459 + \$2,899,644 = \$4,712,103$.

There are additional impacts to our economy from transportation spending, but it's difficult to identify how much of that spending supports local jobs and/or comes to the Eugene Airport and Eugene-based fuel and service providers. Additional impacts are a potential result of FY13 marketing efforts. Of the 24,963 inquires, 32% plan to visit sometime in the future or *beyond two years* ($24,963 * 32\% = 7,988 * \$363 = \$2,899,644$). This additional impact is *not* included in FY14 measurable returns.

Visitor Information Center and Mobile Visitor Van Operations: Travel Lane County estimates facilitating a half-day average extension for walk-in visitors. The Downtown Visitor Center and the Adventure Center served a total of 5,138 visitors with \$83 per full day average spending, for an estimated impact of \$213,227. The Mobile Visitor Van served 3,886 for a total of \$161,269.

Media: Travel Lane County has been directly or indirectly responsible for print, broadcast, and film exposure of Lane County, but has limited tracking ability. Media exposure generated from national/international efforts on the leisure side, that Travel Lane County was able to track, was valued at \$1,346,525. An additional \$28,071 in free media editorial was generated through national convention and sports-related coverage. Editorial generated through Lane County media sources totaled \$40,868. The total media coverage value was \$1,415,464

Bulk Brochure Distribution: Research by the Oregon Tourism Commission and StoryCo has shown that 60% of visitors to Oregon are influenced to visit additional destinations due to visitor guides and promotional materials they pick up in visitor information centers. Travel Lane County distributed 11,314 Lane County Visitor Guides to visitor information centers during the period. Using the 60% factor, a half day stopover and the average party expenditure of \$167 per day identified in the visitor profiles mentioned above, total economic impact is \$1,133,663.