



ANNUAL REPORT  
2015-16



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## MISSION STATEMENT

Visit Phoenix is a private, non-profit corporation that promotes and markets Greater Phoenix as a year-round convention and leisure-traveler destination. We target potential visitors and convey the message that Greater Phoenix is the nation's premier location for meeting facilities, resorts, hotels, spas, golf courses, culture, cuisine and outdoor adventure.

Visit Phoenix represents nearly 1,000 member businesses and spearheads convention and tourism efforts both domestically and internationally. We are committed to education relevant to the hospitality industry, and our performance and reputation is achieved through the efforts of a highly qualified and professional staff.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS – FY15/16

**Win Holden** (Chairman), Publisher, *Arizona Highways*, and CEO, Grand Canyon State Logo Signs

**George Dean** (Immediate Past Chair), President and CEO, Greater Phoenix Urban League

**Manny Molina** (Vice Chairman), President and CEO, Molina Outdoor LLC

**J. Bruce Lange** (Vice Chairman), Managing Director, Westin Kierland Resort

**Rich Dozer** (Executive Committee, Secretary/Treasurer), Chairman, Viad Board of Directors

**Robert J. Miller** (Chief Counsel), Attorney at Law, Bryan Cave LLP

**Richard Behr** (Executive Committee), Managing Director, Arizona Grand Resort

**Martin Shultz** (Executive Committee), JDM Partners, LLC

**Steve Moore** (ex-officio), President and CEO, Visit Phoenix

**Paul Blue**, Deputy City Manager City of Phoenix

**John Chan**, Director, Phoenix Convention Center

**Steven Cohn**, President PHXhotel, LLC

**Mike Ehmann**, General Manager, Sheraton Grand Phoenix

**Derrick Hall**, President, Arizona Diamondbacks

**Steve Hart**, General Manager, JW Marriott's Desert Ridge Resort & Spa

**Robert Hayward**, Senior Vice President, CHMWarnick

**Don Henninger**, Principal, DH Advisors

**C.A. Howlett**, Principal, Indigo Partners

**Debbie Johnson**, Executive Director, Arizona Office of Tourism

**David Krietor**, President and CEO, Downtown Phoenix Inc.

**Andy Kunasek**, Supervisor, District 3, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors

**Greg Miller**, Vice President and Area Managing Director, Destination Hotels & Resorts

**Steve Moster**, President and CEO, Viad Corp.

**Peggy Neely**, Associate Broker, Arizona Home Team

**Michael Nowakowski**, Councilman, District 7, City of Phoenix

**Todd Sanders**, President and CEO, Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce

**Ray Schey**, Publisher, Phoenix Business Journal

# CONVENTION SALES

Visit Phoenix’s Convention Sales Department represents the two distinct meeting products in Greater Phoenix: (1) the downtown Phoenix market, anchored by the Phoenix Convention Center, and (2) the hotel and resort market. The department comprises two sales teams: The Citywide Sales team books groups at the convention center, while the Hotel/Resort Sales team books groups at area hotels and resorts.

## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

### CITYWIDE SALES

The Citywide Sales team booked more than 300,000 future delegates into the convention center during the past fiscal year—a **record for delegate production** in a single year.

A major component of this record production effort was the Citywide Sales team’s ability to secure **short-term business** to offset pace deficits. Sales staff booked 25 groups whose conventions will occur in 2017. These short-term bookings represent more than 56,000 delegates and 68,000 room nights for downtown Phoenix hotels.

Notable Citywide Bookings	Delegates	Room Nights
General Council of the Assemblies of God (2021)	28,000	20,075
Dynamic Communities (2018)	10,000	14,310
The American Legion (2021)	9,000	16,682
American Heart Association (2024)	5,500	8,455
American Assn. for Advancement of Science (2021)	5,200	6,766
Higher Education Users Group (2021)	5,000	9,968
NCAA National Basketball Coaches Convention (2017)	5,000	8,236
National Council for La Raza (2017)	4,500	4,079
Berkshire Hathaway (2017)	3,800	3,128
Digital Solutions Cooperative – DSCOOP (2017)	3,200	6,135

### HOTEL/RESORT SALES

The Hotel/Resort Sales team posted its **second-best production year ever**, booking 580 groups representing nearly 328,000 definite room nights. The Hotel/Resort Sales team also had its best year ever for future-room-night business leads, and its third-best year for total leads.

Combined, Visit Phoenix’s sales teams had their **best production performance in history**, booking 458,000 meeting-and-convention attendees who represent nearly 685,000 room nights for Greater Phoenix hotels.

### SALES PROMOTIONS

#### “Set Your Meetings Free” Booking Promotion

This citywide booking promotion—created in conjunction with the Phoenix Convention Center and downtown hotel partners—offered complimentary convention center rental and free WiFi (at both hotels and the convention center) for clients with citywide conventions slated from years 2017 to 2021 and meetings dates between Labor Day and Columbus day. This promotion resulted in 30 bookings representing 135,000 delegates and 199,017 room nights.

#### “See It to Believe It” Fly-In Promotion

This continuation of the Convention Sales Department’s fly-in promotion gave potential clients the chance to see the destination firsthand. The Citywide Sales team flew in 54 clients for site tours of the Phoenix Convention Center, downtown hotels and off-site venues; these clients represented 165,000 future convention delegates. The Hotel/Resort Sales team brought in 108 clients for site tours of area hotels and resorts; these clients represented more than 101,000 room nights.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**684,909** Total room nights booked by the Visit Phoenix sales team

**303,122** Future delegates booked into the Phoenix Convention Center

**162** Clients flown into Phoenix for site tours

**23** Industry and client-direct trade shows attended by Visit Phoenix sales staff

# CONVENTION SERVICES

The Convention Services Department is the servicing arm of Convention Sales, providing a liaison between meeting planners, Visit Phoenix's member businesses and key community partners. The department assists meeting professionals with all aspects of their promotional and planning needs, and also offers housing and registration assistance.

## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Fiscal year 2015-16 was a year of transition for the Convention Services Department. Staff responsibilities were realigned to increase overall departmental efficiency and provide additional service to the resort meetings segment. We also prioritized our partnerships with the Phoenix Convention Center and the Downtown Phoenix Partnership, exchanging information and ideas with event managers at the convention center, and tapping the expertise of Downtown Ambassadors for customer site visits.

### Production Highlights

- The department provided 330 direct leads to Visit Phoenix member businesses, resulting in 275 definite business opportunities related to services rendered to various convention groups.
- Convention Services staff conducted 334 customized site tours for convention groups. This effort provided direct client exposure to 595 member business, hotels and meeting venues.
- The department's registrars accounted for more than \$220,000 in registration revenues—just \$3,800 short of last year's record revenue total.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**330** Direct leads to Visit Phoenix member businesses

**\$222,593** Revenues generated by registration services

# MARKETING

The Marketing Department oversees all advertising and marketing efforts for Visit Phoenix. This includes advertising, visitphoenix.com, email marketing, social media, collateral and publication development, video production, consumer research, and photography. The department's principal goals are to ensure the integrity of the Visit Phoenix brand and deliver a consistent marketing message to consumers and clients across all mediums of communication.

## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

### ADVERTISING IMPRESSIONS

The Marketing Department continued to focus on out-of-home digital boards (OOH), print and online advertising, social media, and email marketing to reach consumers and clients with our destination messaging.



In FY 2015-16, the Marketing Department launched a new responsive website, which is still found at [www.VisitPhoenix.com](http://www.VisitPhoenix.com). The site is rich in inspirational content, including "PHX Stories" and the "Soul of PHX" video series.

Our paid media plan garnered the following number of impressions:

Print	8,141,952
Out-of-home	198,462,907
Online	150,961,713
<b>Total impressions:</b>	<b>357,566,572</b>

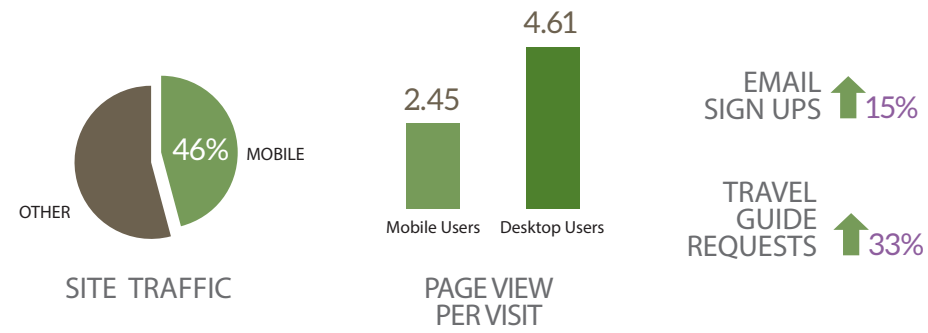
### WEBSITE TRAFFIC

Visit Phoenix launched its new website on Nov. 20, 2015. The new site simplifies navigation with the goal of directing users to the information they seek more efficiently. A potential side effect of this streamlining is that users may find what they are looking for via fewer clicks, which can translate into fewer page views.

Page views are also impacted by the continuing shift to mobile; mobile traffic to our website increased 37 percent over the previous fiscal year, and users who access the site on their smart phones viewed, on average, two fewer pages than desktop users.

Finally, the launch of a new website often negatively impact site traffic due to the re-indexing of pages by search engines. For example, our organic traffic was down by 132,000 visits and 1.4 million page views.

	FY 2015-16
Total Visits	1.72 million
Total Page Views	6.04 million

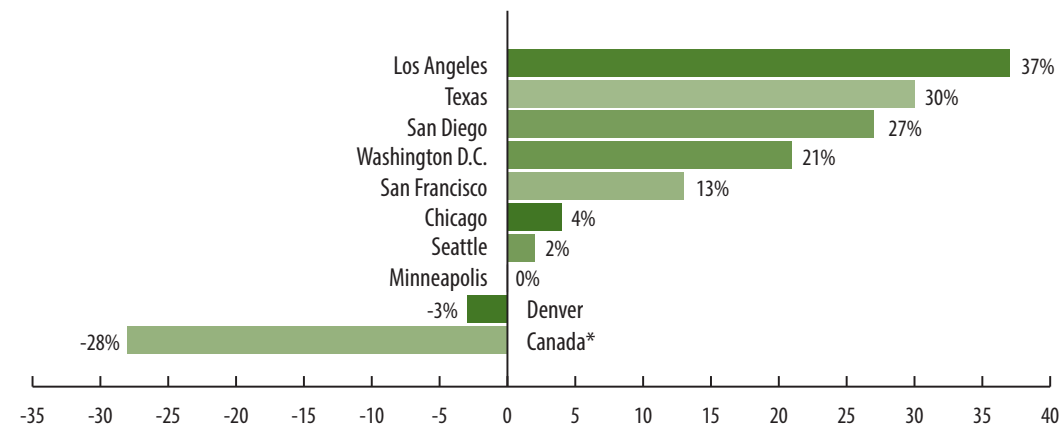


Mobile traffic accounted 46% of all site traffic, up from 37% in fiscal year 2014-15. Mobile users view an average of 2.45 pages per visit compared to 4.61 for desktop users.

Email signups on the website increased by 15%, and travel guide requests increased by 33%.

### Target Markets

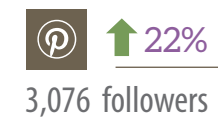
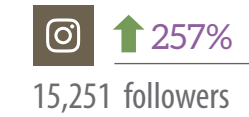
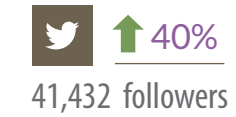
Website traffic from most of our target markets increased:



\*Canadian traffic was likely down due to the strong U.S. dollar.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

At the end of fiscal year 2015-16, our social pages had the following audience numbers:



# MEDIA RELATIONS

The Media Relations team establishes and fosters strong relationships with meeting-industry and travel-trade media, newspaper and magazine writers and editors, freelance travel writers, and representatives from travel television and radio programming. The department maintains a database of more than 2,000 national and international media, and also produces editorial content and storytelling ideas for travel media.

## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

In fiscal year 2015-16, the Media Relations team hosted nearly 600 travel journalists and assisted or established contact with more than 2,200 additional media. The department also conducted media outreach in the markets of the teams that participated in the 2016 College Football Playoff National Championship.

Among the magazines, newspapers and online media outlets that published coverage about Greater Phoenix were *The Associated Press*, *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, *American Way*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Sunset*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Globe and Mail (Canada)*, *Toronto Star*, *Meetings & Conventions*, *Smart Meetings* and *Successful Meetings*.

To foster coverage of Greater Phoenix, the Media Relations team invited individual members of the media to the destination and developed custom itineraries that fit their assignments. We also hosted customized media tours (CMTs) for writers covering the niche markets of meetings, golf, outdoor adventure, cuisine, arts and culture, and urban development.

The Media Relations team is responsible for producing Visit Phoenix's Annual Meeting. This year's event was held at the Arizona Science Center and attended by more than 250 hospitality-industry stakeholders.

## BY THE NUMBERS

587 Media Hosted

2,507 Media Leads to Members

## NOTABLE MEDIA PLACEMENTS

### Meeting Magazines

Association News  
BizBash  
Facilities & Destinations  
M&C Magazine  
Smart Meetings  
Meetings Focus  
MeetingsNet  
Connect  
Collaborate  
Phoenix Business Journal  
Prevue magazine  
Rejuvenate  
Skift  
Successful Meetings  
USAE

### Consumer Magazines

AAA Car & Travel Magazine  
American Way Magazine  
Clef Notes  
Diablo Magazine  
Indulge-Miami Herald  
Metrosource  
New York Lifestyles  
Passport Magazine  
Sunseeker (Allegiant Airlines in-flight publication)  
Sunset  
Travel + Leisure  
WestJet Airlines in-flight publication

### Newspapers/Blogs

The Associated Press  
Chicago Tribune  
CNN  
Columbus Dispatch  
Dallas Morning News  
Expedia  
Fathom  
FWx (Food & Wine)  
LA Times  
Matador Network  
Orbitz  
Sherman's Travel  
Thrillist  
Trivago  
USA Today  
Wall Street Journal  
Yahoo! Travel

### Canadian Outlets

Elle Quebec  
Enroute Canada  
Marie-Claire Maison  
Travel Life Magazine  
Toronto Star  
The Globe and Mail



# TOURISM

The mission of the Tourism Department is to promote the Greater Phoenix metropolitan region to the domestic and international leisure travel market, primarily through tour operators and travel agents. The objective is to increase the number of visitors traveling to Greater Phoenix through cooperative marketing programs, familiarization trips (FAMs), destination trainings, sales missions and trade-show participation. To maximize destination visibility, the department educates receptive operators, tour operators and travel agents about the attributes of Greater Phoenix.

## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

In fiscal year 2015-16, the Tourism Department focused on programs that presented valuable exposure for Visit Phoenix members, as well as opportunities to interact with clients interested in selling our destination.

### FAMs and Site Inspections

A total of 31 clients were hosted during FAMs and site inspections. These events provided excellent opportunities to showcase the attributes of the destination, as well as the services of participating Visit Phoenix members.

### Destination Training

In conjunction with one of our tour-operator partners, the Tourism Department conducted a destination-training session that was attended by 39 travel agents. The training highlighted things to see and do in Greater Phoenix, and also provided updates on the operator's hotel and attraction inventory.

### Sales Missions

Sales missions were conducted in the key markets of Hermosillo, Mexico City, Guadalajara, Chicago and Southern California. Visit Phoenix members had an opportunity to either travel to these markets or provide brochure support in order to increase the exposure of their product. The Phoenix delegation met with 452 retail travel agents.

### Trade Shows

The Tourism team attended three major trade shows in fiscal year 2015-16: the National Tour Association's Travel Exchange, Go West Summit and the U.S. Travel Association's IPW (the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the United States). A total of 140 appointments were conducted with clients during these three trade shows.

## BY THE NUMBERS

114 Member Leads Generated

668 Client Reach

4,935 Fulfillment Inquiries

12,407 Fulfillment Pieces

# MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Department offers industry-focused business resources and targeted exposure to the convention, meeting, and leisure-visitor markets. Our key objective is to make available business intelligence and opportunities that assist Visit Phoenix members in realizing their business goals.

## PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

To gain greater insight into the satisfaction and needs of our members, the Membership Department began the fiscal year by conducting a third-party survey of our membership. After receiving a better than 20 percent response rate, the results of the survey were both enlightening and reassuring.

We learned that our members rated their overall satisfaction level at 4.1 on a 5-point scale, with only 5 percent of respondents indicating dissatisfaction. While we are told by the survey contractor that this is a very good result, we know there are always opportunities for growth and improvement. With 84 percent of respondents indicating that Visit Phoenix is delivering what they need as a member, and 76 percent stating that they are likely to recommend Visit Phoenix members to other businesses, we plan to incorporate elements of the survey findings into our ongoing membership philosophy.

Our members indicated they want Visit Phoenix to pursue the following priorities: (1) bringing citywide meetings and events to Phoenix, (2) increasing leisure marketing, (3) placing a greater focus on resort meetings and events, and (4) increasing small-meeting recruitment.

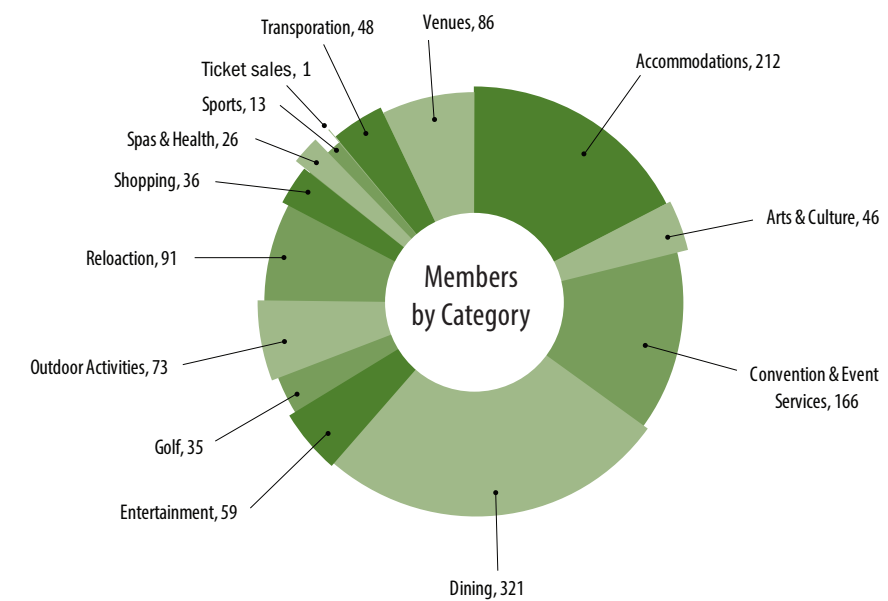
A key industry metric we continue to monitor is the retention of industry businesses that have been affiliated with Visit Phoenix for more than three years. The survey found that 80 percent of our membership revenue continues to be derived from this core group of members. Visit Phoenix retained 97 percent of its member base in fiscal year 2015-16 (a 4 percent increase over last year) and engaged 1,239 members at events and extranet training sessions throughout the year.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**97%** Percentage of members retained in fiscal year 2015-16

**84%** Percentage of surveyed members who said Visit Phoenix is "delivering what they need" as a member

**4.1** Satisfaction level of survey members on a 5-point scale





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