

WALKER  
CENTER

**SALT VISIT LAKE**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2017**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
**SL**  
SALT LAKE  
COUNTY





Photo: Adam Barker

# 2017: ANOTHER RECORD BREAKING YEAR!

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Visit Salt Lake and the greater Salt Lake hospitality community set new records in 2017, not the least of which is a new benchmark for hotel room nights booked: 736,203! That's a 7.5% increase over the previous record set just the year before and marks the third consecutive record year. This accomplishment is all the more meaningful as 2017 was our final year hosting Outdoor Retailer after a 22-year run, which easily could have led to a letdown in our sales efforts but instead energized and re-focused our efforts.

Not only did our sales efforts become more focused, but many VSL programs were enhanced in 2017. Our storytelling was enhanced and more targeted across all platforms, including blogs, videos, editorial and social media. The typically proactive Marketing team proved once again its ability to react at a moment's notice when the opportunity presents itself, as showcased when we reignited our "There's Nothing To Do In Salt Lake" campaign in response to disparaging comments made by some Golden State Warriors during the NBA playoffs. The rebooted campaign was swift, on-point and successful, garnering not only positive national attention but also being honored with HSMIA's highest honor, the Platinum Adrian Award.

Visit Salt Lake's exemplary Services department again awed our meeting and convention clients, no small task as we host more and more groups and attendees. Partner Development worked tirelessly to ensure our members found value in their partnerships with Visit Salt Lake, and felt our genuine appreciation for their continued support.

Yes, 2017 was an exceptional one for both Visit Salt Lake and our hospitality community as a whole, and we could not have accomplished all that we did without the collaborative efforts and support of each and every VSL department and our valued partners.

For all that and much more, we thank you!

Dee Brewer



Board Chair  
Visit Salt Lake

Scott Beck



President & CEO  
Visit Salt Lake





Photo: f11photo

# 2017 Treasurer's Report: FUNDING SOURCES



**Ben McAdams**

Mayor, Salt Lake County

Salt Lake County provides approximately half of Visit Salt Lake's (VSL) total revenues through a Visitor and Promotion Management Agreement to promote conventions and tourism. Empowered by the state legislature, the County levies a 4.25% Transient Room Tax (TRT) on room rentals in Salt Lake County and a portion of the proceeds from that tax (about 45% of total TRT) is awarded by the County to fund VSL's Public Sector sales and marketing efforts. VSL's Ski Salt Lake Super Pass marketing and multi-resort ticket program for the four Salt Lake County Resorts—Alta, Brighton, Snowbird and Solitude—receives an additional \$450,000 from a one-half percent Tourism Transient Room Tax on County hotels.

Each year, VSL prepares its Comprehensive Marketing Plan (CMP) and budget for the upcoming

## PUBLIC SECTOR SUMMARY BUDGET

Program Budget	2016	2017	2018
Administration	\$730,981	\$696,063	\$1,020,393
Sales	\$3,305,905	\$2,604,350	\$1,804,950
Services	\$559,250	\$667,250	\$762,750
Marketing	\$1,878,922	\$2,020,737	\$2,184,300
<b>Total Public Sector Programs</b>	<b>\$6,475,058</b>	<b>\$5,988,400</b>	<b>\$5,772,393</b>
<i>% change over prior year</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>-8%</i>	<i>-4%</i>
<b>Salaries &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>\$3,960,401</b>	<b>\$4,043,460</b>	<b>\$4,253,632</b>
<i>% change over prior year</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>5%</i>
<b>Total Public Sector Budget</b>	<b>\$10,435,459</b>	<b>\$10,031,860</b>	<b>\$10,026,026</b>
<i>% change over prior year</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>-4%</i>	<i>0%</i>

## IMPACT OF MEETINGS / CONVENTIONS / EVENTS REALIZED IN 2017


	Number of people	Delegate / Attendee Spending
Convention Delegates	242,561	\$226,309,413
<i>Attendees tied directly to Visit Salt Lake sales efforts (includes BMW Motorcycle Owners HQ at Fairparks but is a citywide)</i>		
Quasi-consumer Show Attendees	129,800	\$17,401,383
<i>Include: Salt Lake Comic Con Fan X (2 events) and Silicon Slopes</i>		
Hotel/Resort Meeting Attendees	39,893	\$37,220,169
<i>All non-Salt Palace Convention Center / Mountain America Exposition Center delegates from Visit Salt Lake sales efforts</i>		
Sporting / Special Event Visitors*	138,700	\$50,675,782
<b>Total Spending by Delegates &amp; Attendees</b>	<b>550,954</b>	<b>\$331,606,747</b>

\*Attendee Spending figure based on findings from the DMAI Sports Event Impact Calculator.





 International Academy  
of Emergency Dispatch

 KeyBank

801-240-5600

BRIO grille

GYM

Mascabi Factory

Photo: Jon Burkholz

## 2017 Treasurer's Report: FUNDING SOURCES (continued)

calendar year. The budget for the CMP is based on a projection of TRT collections developed by VSL in concert with the County. Generally, VSL expenditures are targeted to match anticipated collections. When TRT collections exceed expenditures, the excess is carried over into the County's Visitor Development and Promotion Fund to be available for future years. Transactional revenues from the Ski Salt Lake ticketing program accounts for 25% of VSL's gross revenues, and VSL's Private Sector generates the other 25% through membership dues, convention and leisure reservation services, gift shop merchandise sales and marketing partnerships. Special grants for various projects and in-kind contributions from VSL's members enable VSL to leverage and extend its sales and marketing budget.



**Salt Lake County Council 2016-17**

BACK, FROM LEFT: Richard Snelgrove, Steve Debry, Jenny Wilson, Sam Granato, Jim Bradley

FRONT, FROM LEFT: Max Burdick, Michael Jensen, Arlyn Bradshaw, Aimee Winder Newton

### 2017 DIRECT VISITOR SPENDING, SALT LAKE COUNTY\*

Direct Visitor Spending*	Sales & Use Taxes Generated 2017				Total Taxes
	State	County	Cities		
Hotel	\$568,637,444	\$30,154,077	\$29,063,254	\$10,864,768	\$70,082,098
Car Rental	\$197,075,654	\$15,273,363	\$14,977,750	\$1,970,757	\$32,221,869
Restaurant*	\$435,831,899	\$22,881,175	\$6,973,310	\$4,358,319	\$34,212,804
Retail & Attractions**	\$235,229,189	\$12,349,532	\$1,411,375	\$2,352,292	\$16,113,199
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,436,774,186</b>	<b>\$80,658,147</b>	<b>\$52,425,689</b>	<b>\$19,546,135</b>	<b>\$152,629,971</b>

\* Estimate Based on Hotel Occupancy patterns in Salt Lake County

\*\* "Retail & Attractions" estimated applying the average ratio of convention delegate spending on Retail & Attractions to spending on hotels in Surveys by the University of Utah, Policy Institute.

### CURRENT & FUTURE IMPACT OF MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS BOOKED DURING 2017

	Booked in 2017 for 2017	Booked in 2017 for future years	Total
Delegates	88,504	286,271	374,775
Room Nights	136,319	599,884	736,203
<b>Spending</b>	<b>\$82,574,232</b>	<b>\$267,090,843</b>	<b>\$349,665,075</b>





*Photo: Sean Buckley*



## 2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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### **CHAIR**

**Mary Crafts-Homer**  
*Culinary Crafts*

### **PAST CHAIR**

**Scott George**  
*Woodbury Corporation\**

### **CHAIR-ELECT**

**Dee Brewer**

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---

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*Salt Lake County*

### **Mayor Jackie Biskupski**

*Mayor of Salt Lake City*

### **Mayor Tom Dolan**

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*Salt Lake Chamber*

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*Visit Salt Lake*

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*Ski Utah/Utah Ski & Snowboard  
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### **Melva Sine**

*Utah Restaurant Association*

### **Duane & Margaret Cardall**

*Visitor Activities - The Church of  
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

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### **Maureen Riley**

*Salt Lake City Department of Airports*

### **Jordan Garn**

*Utah Hotel & Lodging Association*

### **Dan Hayes**

*Salt Palace Convention Center*

### **Jason Mathis**

*Downtown Alliance*





Photo: Sean Buckley



# 2017 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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*Utah Attorney General's Office\**

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**Brandon Hansen**  
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*Western States Lodging &  
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*Photo: Emily Sargent*



## 2017 Highlights: Web Traffic

In 2017, VSL hit an all-time traffic record with a 14% YOY increase in visits to the website. Additionally, traffic to our mobile site increased by 55% YOY. Mobile traffic has taken on an increasingly important role in our marketing strategy given the prevalence of smartphone usage, and we are poised to take even greater advantage of the mobile medium.

Our website is the hardest working element of our marketing operations. Active 24-7, we continue to see great growth onsite, and via our social channels. While continuing to leverage our content marketing strategy, we are seeing traffic growth in key areas—bringing awareness to the urban and resource-dense aspects of the county.

To add even more fuel to this fire, we will be launching a new website in May of 2018. The new website will take us into the future of content marketing with a mobile-friendly design, responsive content and formats, and aspects of automation and personalization that few DMOs are dabbling in. Visit Salt Lake continues to be at the forefront of the industry with a strong, aspirational, and authentic presence online.



## 2017 Highlights: Earned Media

Editorial coverage in traditional media outlets (newspapers, magazines, TV, etc.) continues to be one of the most trusted sources of information, particularly in travel and tourism. In 2017, positive editorial coverage of Salt Lake set a new benchmark, accounting for more than 3,100 stories and articles and equating to nearly \$16 million in earned media value.

As traditional media coverage, social media and original content continue to grow and become more robust, these critical components of VSL's marketing efforts will further complement one another and leverage even greater insight as to all Salt Lake has to offer in terms of a meeting, convention, and leisure travel destination.

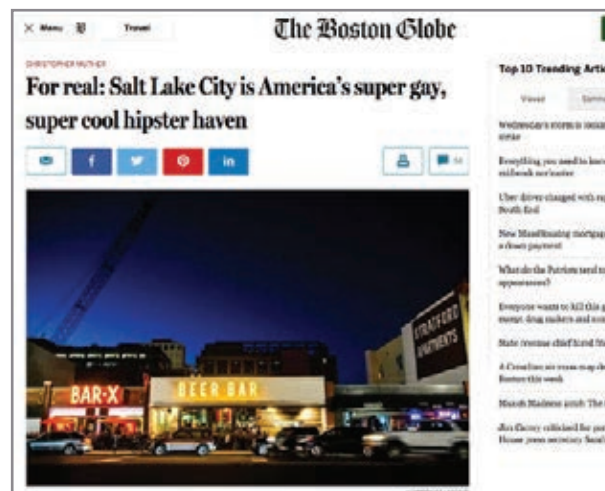






Photo: Austen Diamond

## 2017 Highlights: Loss of Outdoor Retailer

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It's no secret that 2018 will be the first time in more than two decades we won't be hosting Outdoor Retailer. Our teams are doubling efforts and are being more aggressive in all that we do to attract new meetings, conventions and leisure travelers to our community, as well as continue to strengthen the relationships we have with existing clients and long-term visitors.

In the last two months of 2017, in an effort to help fill the void OR is leaving in January 2018, Visit Salt Lake and our winter brand, Ski City—along with our incredible resort partners: Alta, Brighton, Snowbird and Solitude—launched the Ski FREE in January promotion, offering up to two free Super Passes (lift tickets) for every room night booked in the Salt Lake valley throughout the month of January. Capping the promotion at 5,000 complimentary days of skiing/riding, we are thrilled to announce we sold out, producing more than 600 reservations and approximately 3,000 room nights.

Yes, our community will feel different without OR and the many friends and business relationships made over the 20+ years of welcoming OR to Salt Lake, we are confident our numbers will continue to show steady growth making 2018 yet another record year for Salt Lake and the state as a whole. VSL will do everything possible to ensure that.

## 2017 Highlights: #Nightlife – Golden State Warriors Campaign

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Jazz Playoff buzz is always welcome in Salt Lake in spring, but last spring we took advantage of an incredible opportunity, and without tooting our own horns too hard (Take Note, people) we think we killed this one.

In a good-natured back-and-forth with Golden State Warriors team member Matt Barnes, we created an award-winning response and reaction. The #NIGHTLIFE conversation reached far and wide, and we were able to really bring home the message with the support of our still-killing-it There's Nothing To Do In Salt Lake campaign. Not only that, but the entire response helped Visit Salt Lake receive the 2017 Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International's prestigious Platinum Adrian Award for Public Relations. The message that Salt Lake is truly a thriving, urban environment reached many new ears.







Photo: Jon Burkholz

## 2017 Highlights: UOT Entry into Urban Messaging

*with Bad Brad Wheeler and first ever dedicated funding of targeted social media story-telling*

Content Marketing is hot. Salt Lake's Urban scene is also hot. Working with the Utah Office of Tourism, VSL is now driving the story of Salt Lake and Utah's urban renaissance. This is a big step. Historically the UOT's efforts have been directed towards red rocks, the National Parks, and Utah's outdoor offerings, but we are attracting new visitors with a focus on our burgeoning, urban growth. We're saying Stereotypes Be Damned, and we're flipping the script on people's outdated notions of Salt Lake. Keep an eye out for storytelling through the lens of Brad Wheeler.

Three things recently created stronger urban pockets in Utah: strong business communities, public and private invest-

ment in urban places, and a newly championed message that says our unique food and drink is worth your time. However it came about, the urban community is now exploding. And visiting urban experiences is different than visiting Arches or Zion because those places are limited in capacity and services.

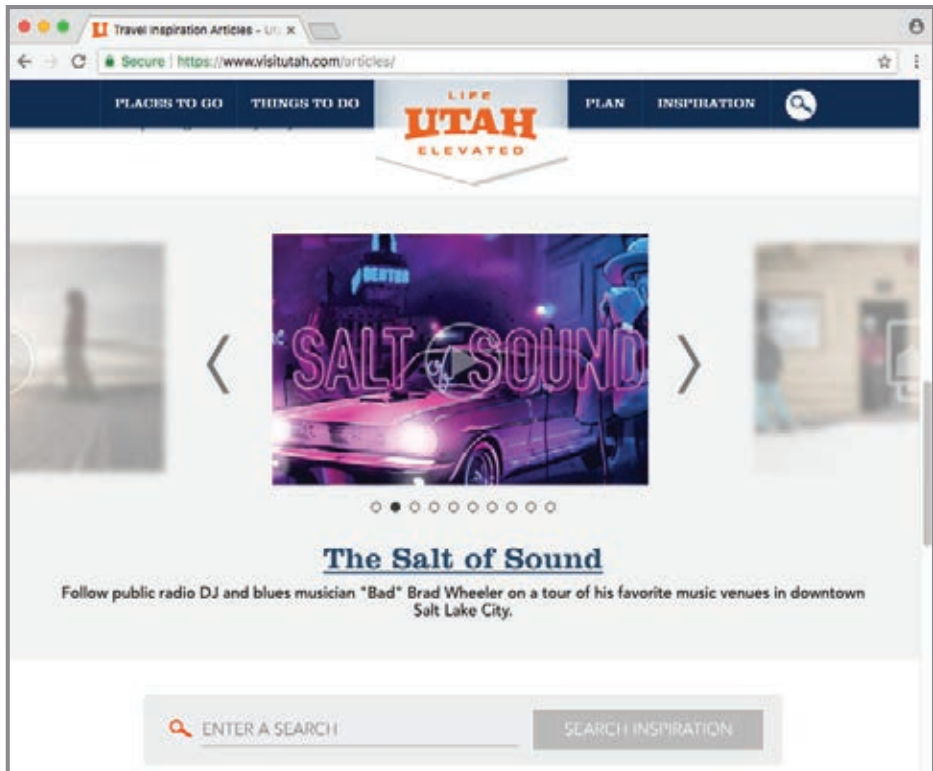






Photo: Sean Buckley

## 2017 Highlights: Performance Measures

<b>Convention Sales</b>	<i>2017 GOAL</i>	<i>2017 ACTUAL</i>	<i>% of GOAL</i>
Convention Room Nights:	<b>734,946</b>	<b>736,203</b>	<b>100.2%</b>
Prospecting Calls - Convention Sales Directors:	<b>480</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>109.8%</b>
Prospecting Calls - EMM / National Sales Manager:	<b>1,045</b>	<b>1,114</b>	<b>106.6%</b>
Personal Visits to Existing Clients:	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>104.2%</b>
Outside Sales Trips:	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>101.8%</b>
Satellite Offices' Initial Sales Appointments:	<b>112</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>127.7%</b>
Site Inspections:	<b>130</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>105.4%</b>

<b>Marketing</b>	<i>2017 GOAL</i>	<i>2017 ACTUAL</i>	<i>% of GOAL</i>
Generate the equivalent advertising value of \$14.01 million worth of positive earned media about Salt Lake as a convention and tourism destination (Ski City goal is \$4.71 million of total):	<b>\$14,010,000</b>	<b>\$15,978,738</b>	<b>114%</b>
Generate the equivalent advertising value of \$4.71 million worth of positive earned media about Salt Lake for Ski City:	<b>\$4,710,000</b>	<b>\$3,608,872</b>	<b>77%</b>
Increase VisitSaltLake.com by 10% to more than 2.375 million total visitors sessions on the main, mobile and booking websites:	<b>2,375,000</b>	<b>2,287,718</b>	<b>96%</b>
Increase visitation to SkiCity.com by 10% to more than 235,456 visitor sessions:	<b>235,456</b>	<b>273,451</b>	<b>116%</b>
Generate 8 new content articles monthly across all web properties for a total of 96 new articles that can be promoted through web, email and social media:	<b>96</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>113%</b>





Transfer?

GALLIVAN  
PLAZA

4



Photo: Jon Burkholz

## 2017 Highlights: Performance Measures

### Marketing *(continued)*

	2017 GOAL	2017 ACTUAL	% of GOAL
Increase active email address database (currently over 70,000 email addresses) by 20% in 2017 and achieve an email open rate of 20%:	<b>84,000</b>	<b>91,091</b>	<b>108%</b>
Increase the number of Visit Salt Lake Connect Pass days sold via hotels, attractions, and online channels by 20% to a total of 36,000:	<b>36,000</b>	<b>39,458</b>	<b>110%</b>

### Services

	2017 GOAL	2017 ACTUAL	% of GOAL
Achieve the <i>Meetings &amp; Conventions</i> Gold Service Award for the 23rd consecutive year and maintain membership in the M&C Gold Award Hall of Fame:		<b>Achieved</b>	
Promote social media attendance promotion to all incoming city-wide groups, with 70% adoption rate:	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>75%</b>
Maintain post convention survey score average of 4.8 or higher:	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>100%</b>
Produce and host 4 quarterly Info Center awareness events:	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>
Produce Visitor Info Center concierge events – 1 per quarter:	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>
Conduct quarterly outreach events to in-state repeat clients:	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>



## 2017 Highlights: Performance Measures

<b>Partner Development</b>	<i>2017 GOAL</i>	<i>2017 ACTUAL</i>	<i>% of GOAL</i>
Increase Membership Revenue:	<b>\$324,094</b>	<b>\$311,637</b>	<b>96%</b>
Increase Advertising Revenue:	<b>\$225,278</b>	<b>\$334,877</b>	<b>149%</b>
Prospecting Calls:	<b>252</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>100%</b>
New Members:	<b>53</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>104%</b>
Increase Member Engagement via Listing Updates:	<b>2,804</b>	<b>2,887</b>	<b>103%</b>
Increase Member Engagement via Member Event Attendance:	<b>1,991</b>	<b>1,676</b>	<b>84%</b>
Produce:			
Member Connections:	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>150%</b>
Member Training Meetings/Webinars:	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100%</b>
Educational Member Event:	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>
Membership Survey:	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>NowPlayingUtah.com</b>	<i>2017 GOAL</i>	<i>2017 ACTUAL</i>	<i>% of GOAL</i>
Fundraising:	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$68,000</b>	<b>113%</b>
Sales Revenue:	<b>\$38,600</b>	<b>\$43,840</b>	<b>114%</b>
Increase Website Visitor Sessions:	<b>851,592</b>	<b>796,780</b>	<b>94%</b>
Increase Registered Email Contacts:	<b>7,048</b>	<b>6,784</b>	<b>96%</b>



Photo: Jon Burkholz



## **VISIT SALT LAKE**

90 South West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

801-534-4900

**VisitSaltLake.com**

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Cover Photo: Jon Burkholz

**SALT** VISIT **LAKE**

## **VISIT SALT LAKE MISSION**

To improve the area economy by attracting and providing support to conventions, leisure travelers, and visitors to Salt Lake County.

## **FOLLOW US ONLINE:**

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