

2015/16 ANNUAL REPORT AND

2016/17

DESTINATION MARKETING PLAN

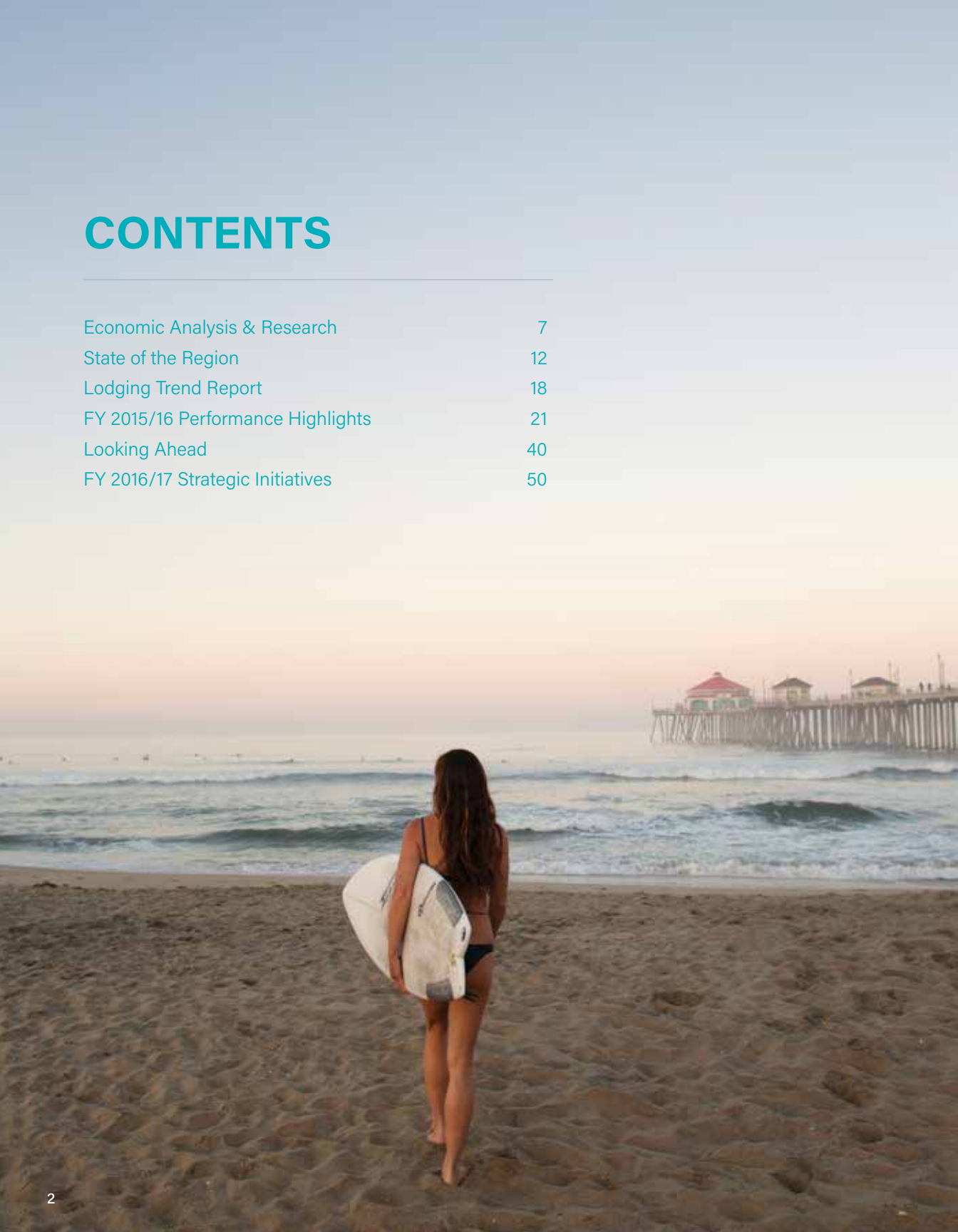


**VISIT  
HUNTINGTON BEACH**  
SURF CITY USA®



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## OUR HISTORY

*In 1989, the Huntington Beach Conference and Visitors Bureau became incorporated as a private, not-for-profit mutual benefit corporation with a \$150,000 annual grant from the City of Huntington Beach. The grant funding's purpose was "to provide a promotional program for the City designed to attract visitors and conferences to Huntington Beach through advertising, promotion, familiarization trips, trade shows, market places and other activities." In 2009, the destination marketing organization's name was updated to Visit Huntington Beach.*



# SURF CITY USA OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES.

## Vision

Visit Huntington Beach is an effective city destination leader representing the combined visitor industry and community partnership in the brand development, marketing and sales of the Surf City USA experience.

## Mission

Market and sell Huntington Beach's Surf City USA brand experience as the preferred quintessential California beach destination leading to increased visitor spending and enhanced quality of life for residents.

## Team Core Values

- Professional and Quality Oriented
- Visitor, Partner and Community-Driven
- Vision Strategic
- Creative and Innovative
- Transparent and Accountable
- Sustainable and Efficient

## VHB Logo History

Visit Huntington Beach introduced a contemporary new logo design for Surf City USA at our June *Soulful Journey* Annual Meeting and Brand Summit.



**Tourism builds community.** Attracting visitors is economic development. Nearly *four million annual visitors* from outside Orange County chose Huntington Beach in 2015 as the place to spend time and money, enjoying their quintessential California beach destination experience. The positive impact from this important market segment is impressive: \$697 million in total economic impact, supporting nearly 6,000 jobs, and \$276 million in labor income. Equally important is the \$15.7 million visitor-generated local taxes and fees for our local government. These visitors reduce the average tax burden by nearly \$500 for every City household.

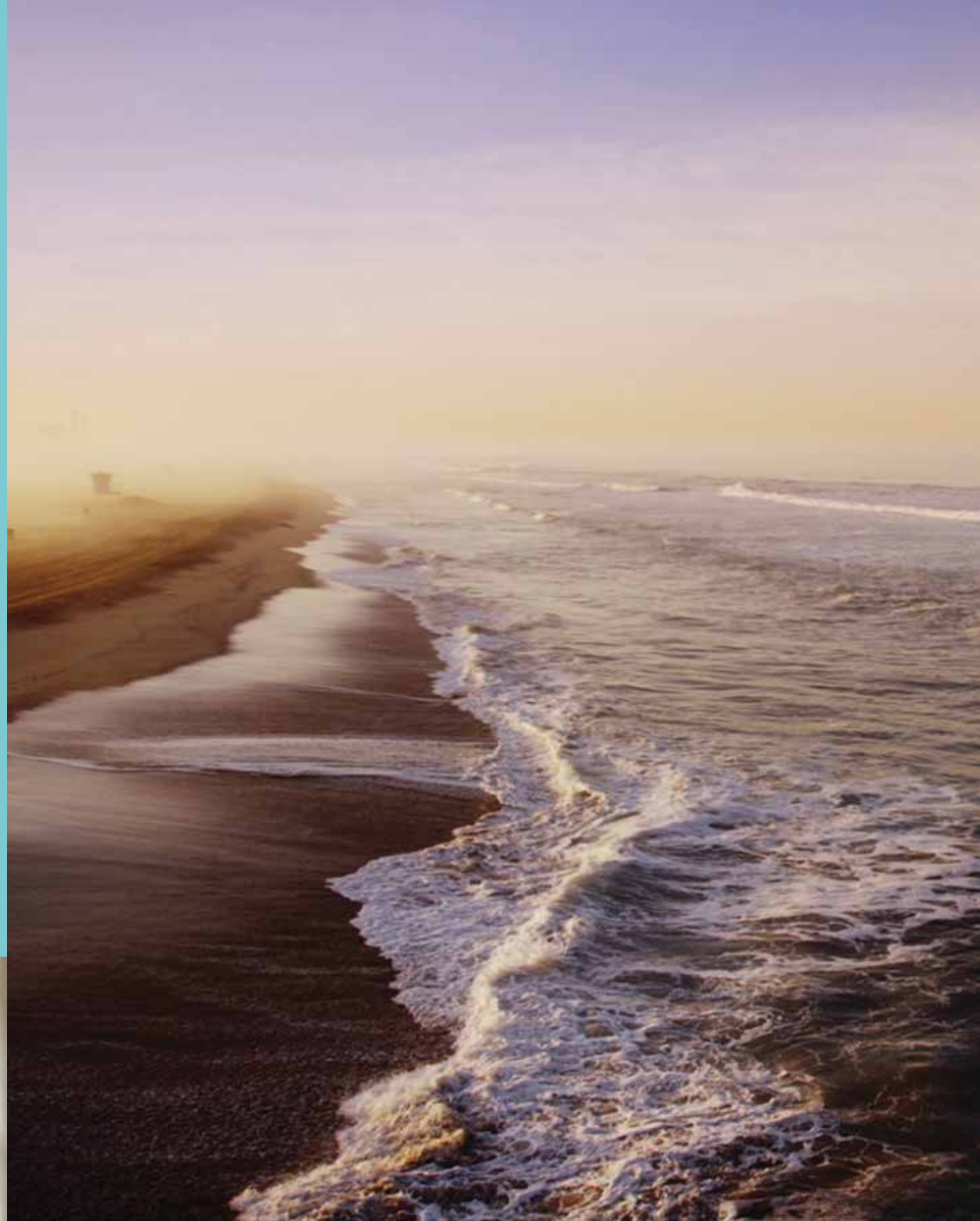
Visit Huntington Beach leadership and staff will continue to be both skillfully strategic and innovatively savvy in FY 16-17. **Our Annual Report & Destination Marketing Plan** celebrates the metric driven success of last year's record setting numbers, and outlines a specific and measurable game plan to continue growing marketing share, driving new visitor expenditures, more job creation and needed tax revenue for our community.

We encourage you to read the Plan. Give us your feedback or stop by the office anytime. We guarantee our team can provide you with many opportunities to tap into the power of the Surf City USA destination brand!



**KELLY MILLER**

President & CEO, Visit Huntington Beach



**I am privileged** to serve a second term as Visit Huntington Beach (VHB) Chairman. Our board, and the talented, awarded winning, VHB team, are especially proud of the record setting FY 15-16 numbers and proactive plan laid out for this coming year. But we are most proud of the return on investment metric (ROI) for our community: \$67 dollars generated in visitor spending for every \$1 dollars invested by VHB. This amazing ROI is nearly 60% higher than the national average of \$42 dollars for every \$1 invested by similar visitor marketing organizations like VHB.

We are equally proud of the commitment by VHB in stepping up to invest needed dollars into civic projects like a communitywide comprehensive wayfinding system, a free year-round shuttle program, daytime and evening Downtown Ambassadors, and improvements to the HB International Surfing Museum.

It's a highly competitive market place out there. We compete on a global stage. New reasons to visit other destinations crop up regularly. Just know that your VHB board and team members are poised to continue positioning Surf City USA as a must see, must experience in the U.S.!



**PETER RICE**

Chairman, Visit Huntington Beach



# PRAISE FOR VHB AND HUNTINGTON BEACH

## Accolades

- One of the 55 Most Breathtakingly Beautiful Destinations in the World (2016) by Expedia
- #3 of 11 Best Beaches in California by *Condé Nast Traveler* (2016)
- *USA Today's* 10 Best Readers Choice Award for Best Beach in California (2015 & 2016)
- Best on the West Beach Bracket from *Coastal Living Magazine* (2016)
- Voted by readers of the *Orange County Register*: Best Beach (2015) Best Dog Beach (2016)
- Hotel Planner Top 10 Most Group-Friendly Beach Cities (2016)
- *TIME Magazine* 25 Most Instagrammed Summer Vacation Spots (2016)
- *TIME Magazine* Best Beach in America (2015)
- Most Instagrammed City in Orange County by *OC Weekly* (2015)

## Awards

- US Travel Destiny Award - Best Public Relations Campaign in the U.S. by America's top travel association - "Epic Big Board Campaign" (2016)
- Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIA) Adrian Award – Public Relations Best of Show – "Epic Big Board Campaign" (2015)
- HSMIA Adrian Award – Gold Public Relations, Feature Placement, Television – "Good Morning America, Epic Big Board Campaign" (2015)
- HSMA Adrian Award – Gold Public Relations, Partnership with Major Brand – "Hurley Brand Partnership, Epic Big Board Campaign" (2015)
- Visit California Poppy Award – Best Public Relations Campaign in California in travel and tourism – "Epic Big Board Campaign" (2015)
- Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) WOW Award: Recognition of Exemplary Ideas in Visitor Services - Most Cost-Effective - "Surf City Ambassador Program" (2016)
- *Smart Meetings* Platinum Choice Award for excellence in service to meeting planners (2015 & 2016)

## Individual Staff Awards & Recognitions

- 2016 CalTravel "30 and Under" Emerging Leaders Award - Rachel Volbert
- DMAI CDME (Certified Destination Management Executive) Certification - John Ehlenfeldt
- DMAI CDME Certification - Susan Thomas
- 2016 DMAI "30 Under 30" Award - Rachel Volbert



## ECONOMIC

# ANALYSIS & RESEARCH

# VISITORS BRING MORE THAN THEMSELVES TO HUNTINGTON BEACH.

## Tourism Builds Community

Visitors from around the globe increasingly recognize Huntington Beach as one of America's most treasured coastal destinations, as witnessed by Expedia recently naming Surf City USA one of the "55 Most Breathtakingly Beautiful Destinations in the World" and Time, Inc. recognizing HB as the "Best Beach in America." They join residents and business owners here in a love for the beauty, diversity and abundant quality of life that makes our city by the sea so special. There is much to celebrate in this common ground among visitors and locals.



## HUNTINGTON BEACH VISITOR ECONOMIC IMPACT RESEARCH

TOURISM SUPPORTS  
**5,923**  
JOBS IN  
HUNTINGTON BEACH  
OR 1 IN 17 JOBS

VISITOR SPENDING IN HB  
**\$519,500,000 A YEAR**

AVERAGING

**\$1,400,000 A DAY**

OR

**\$59,303 AN HOUR**

TOURISM ACCOUNTS FOR  
**6% OF THE TOTAL**  
EMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY

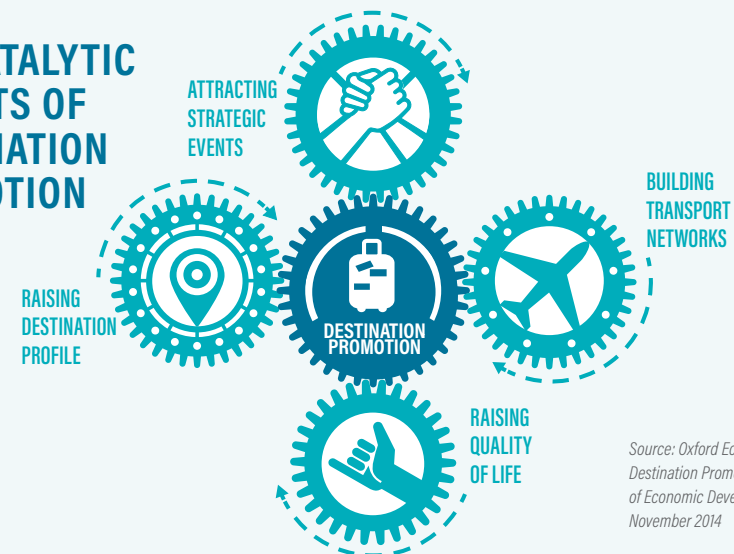
AS AN INDUSTRY, TOURISM IS THE  
**6TH LARGEST EMPLOYER IN HUNTINGTON BEACH**

THE VISITOR ECONOMY IN HUNTINGTON BEACH  
GENERATED **\$15.7 MILLION** IN  
LOCAL TAX REVENUES, PROVIDING  
**\$497 IN ANNUAL TAX**  
**BURDEN RELIEF FOR EACH**  
HUNTINGTON BEACH HOUSEHOLD

**TOURISM GENERATED \$697 MILLION TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Note: Based on 3.9 million annual non-Orange County resident visitors. Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in Huntington Beach, California, Tourism Economics, 2015 Analysis.

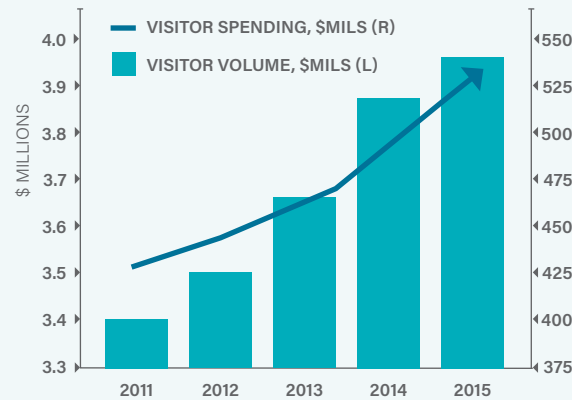
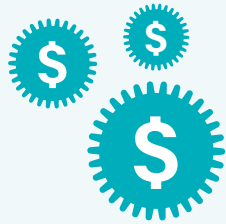
### THE CATALYTIC IMPACTS OF DESTINATION PROMOTION



Source: Oxford Economics, Destination Promotion: An Engine of Economic Development, November 2014

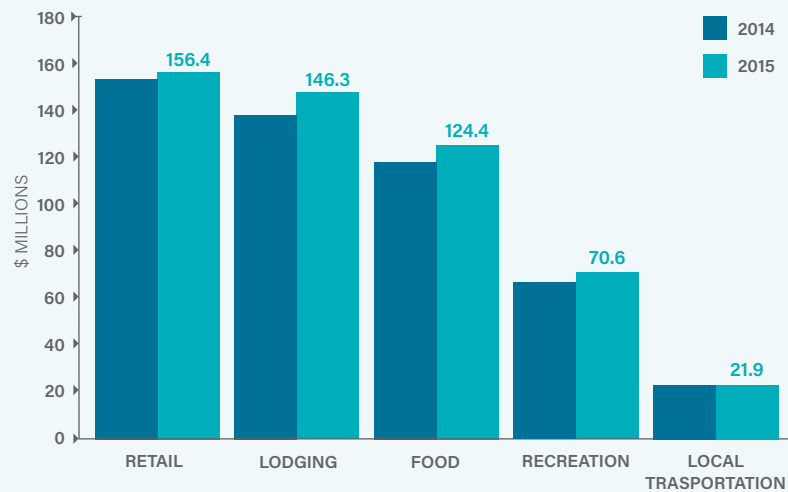
## HUNTINGTON BEACH VISITOR VOLUME AND SPENDING

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
VISITOR VOLUME (MILLIONS)	3.39M	3.48M	3.66M	3.84M	3.91M
PERCENT OF CHANGE	-	+2.7	+5.3	+4.8	+1.9
VISITOR SPENDING (MILLIONS)	\$429.7	\$450.3	\$466.8	\$497.1	\$519.5
PERCENT OF CHANGE	-	+4.6	+3.7	+6.5	+4.5



Sources: Tourism Economics

## HUNTINGTON BEACH VISITOR SPENDING



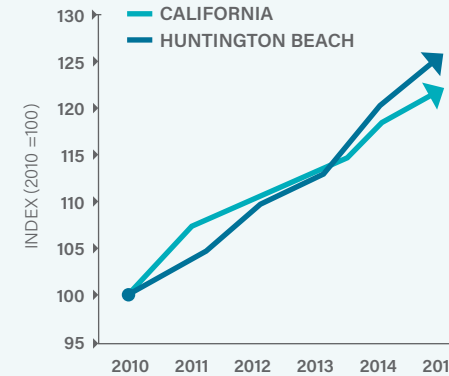
Sources: CIC Research, Tourism Economics



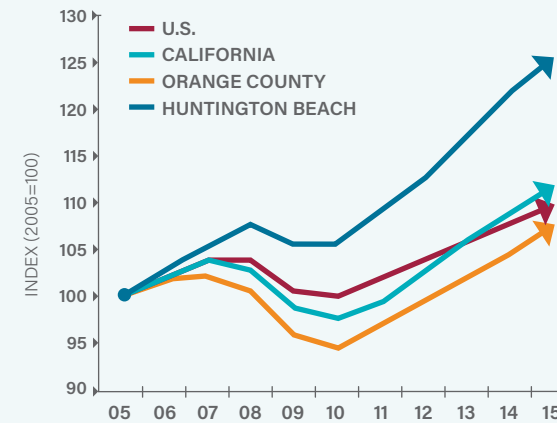
## DID YOU KNOW:

- Travel generates **\$2.1 trillion** for the U.S. economy and nearly **\$150 billion** in tax revenues for local, state and federal governments
- Each U.S. household would pay **\$1,147** more in taxes without the tax revenue generated by travel and tourism
- Over **15 million** jobs in America are supported by travel expenditures
- One out of 9 U.S. jobs** are dependent on travel and tourism
- Travel is among the top **10 industries** in 49 states and D.C. in terms of total employment
- Travel **ranks 6th** in terms of overall U.S. employment compared to other major private industry sectors
- Travel **ranks #1** among all U.S. industry exports (Expenditures by international visitors in the U.S. are categorized as an export)
- Since the employment recovery began, the travel industry has added **865,600 jobs** and has outpaced job growth in the rest of the economy by **37 percent**
- Direct spending by resident and international travelers in the U.S. averaged **\$2.5 billion** a day, **\$105 million** per hour, **\$1.8 million** per minute and **\$29,398 a second**
- Each overseas traveler visiting the U.S. spends approximately **\$4,500** and stays an average of **17 nights**

## TOTAL VISITOR SPENDING OUTPACES CALIFORNIA



## HUNTINGTON BEACH TOURISM JOBS OUTPACE



Sources: BEA, BLS, U.S. Census, Tourism Economics

# STATE OF THE REGION

## Surf City USA

*Wow, what a cool place. Has a great vibe--exactly what comes to mind when you think of the Southern California beach scene. Clean. Surrounded by white sand and tons of volleyball nets. Fantastic people watching. Lots of shops and restaurants nearby.*

**Timothy R.**  
Portland, OR

## GLOBAL FACTORS IMPACTING TRAVEL

### The Big Picture

- **Improving Global Economy:** US GDP growth expected to hold steady, US continues to regain lost travel market share internationally
- **Reduced Energy Costs:** household finances and disposable income benefiting
- **Safety & Security Concerns:** create sharp local and regional impacts but will not stop people from traveling reduced energy costs
- **Strong US Dollar:** continues to make US travel significantly costlier to international markets
- **US Election Year:** political populism, geopolitical strife
- **Rising Global Traveling Class:** growing income levels, especially in China, India and Asian markets
- **Global Aging:** elderly have more money with focus on comfort/health trips over saving money
- **Sharing Economy Growth:** including alternative modes of transportation, accommodations, destinations

Source: World Travel & Tourism Council, Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2016 World

Source: Oxford Economics, The Return on Investment of Brand USA Marketing, May 2016

Source: Mapping the Future of Global Travel and Tourism, Visa, 2014

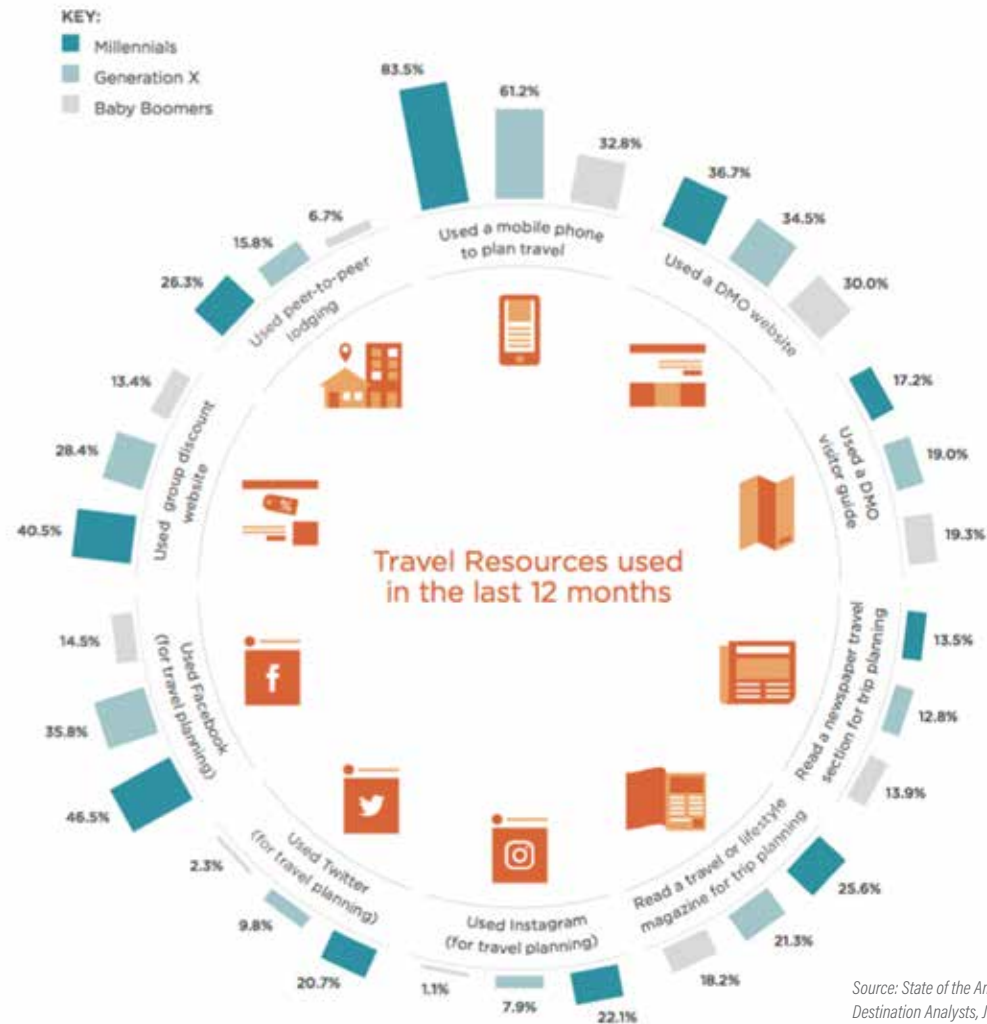


## Domestic Visitation Trends and Forecasts

- Americans took an average of **4.4 leisure trips** last year
- Domestic travel forecasted to grow **2-3% annually** through 2018
- Americans plan to increase leisure travel **spending 34%** in the next year
- 92%** of leisure travelers expect to travel as much or more this year as last
- U.S. residents logged **1.7 billion** person-trips\* for leisure purposes in 2015

Source: State of the American Traveler, Destination Analysts, July 2016  
Source: US Travel Association

## Domestic Travel Resources by Generation



## CALIFORNIA VISITOR FORECAST

	2015	2016	2017
VISITS	+2.6%	+2.3%	+2.4%
DOMESTIC	+2.6%	+2.2%	+2.3%
INTERNATIONAL	+3%	+3.5%	+4%
OVERSEAS	+4.8%	+4.9%	+5.1%

Source: Tourism Economics; DKSA, TNS Global (domestic); CIC Research; OTTI (international); Dean Runyan (expenditures)

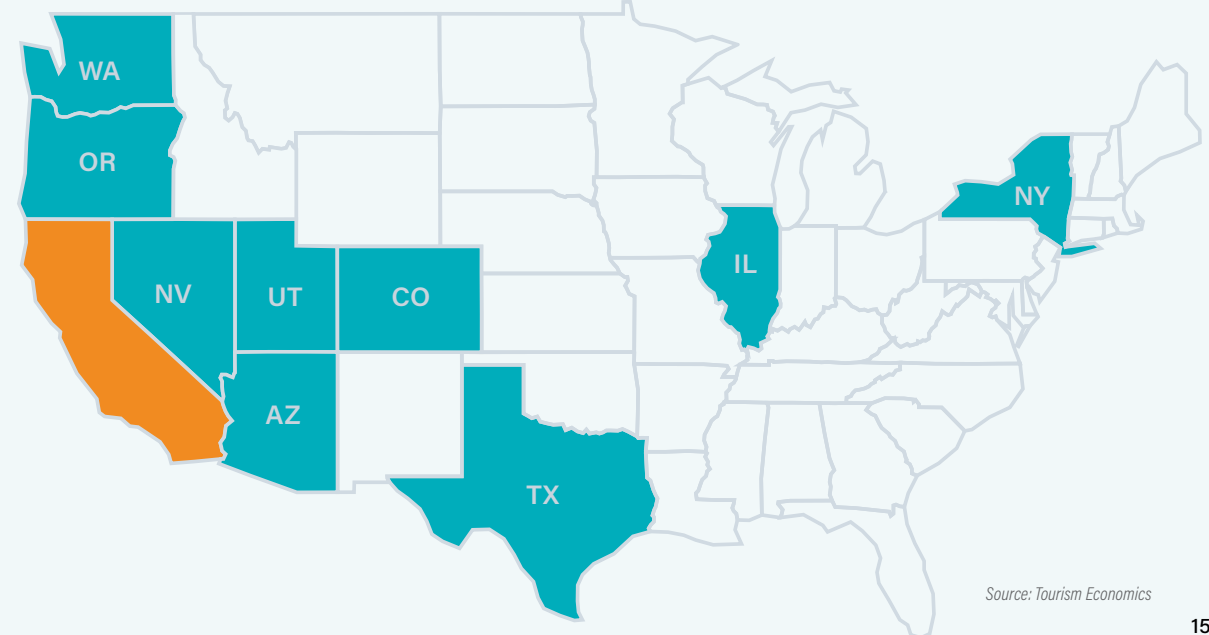
## CALIFORNIA VISITOR SPENDING FORECAST

	2015	2016	2017
TOTAL SPENDING	+2.8%	+2.7%	+3.9%
DOMESTIC	+2.3%	+2.3%	+3.5%
INTERNATIONAL	+4.6%	+4.7%	+5.6%

Source: Tourism Economics; DKSA, TNS Global (domestic); CIC Research; OTTI (international); Dean Runyan (expenditures)

## DOMESTIC VISITATION TO CALIFORNIA

Six primary states account for nearly half of non-resident leisure visits and 1/3 of non-resident spending in California. Texas, Illinois and New York have the next highest projected trip growth in visitors for 2015-2020. Seven of these states are primary domestic visitor target markets for VHB.



## HUNTINGTON BEACH VISITOR PROFILE IN 2015

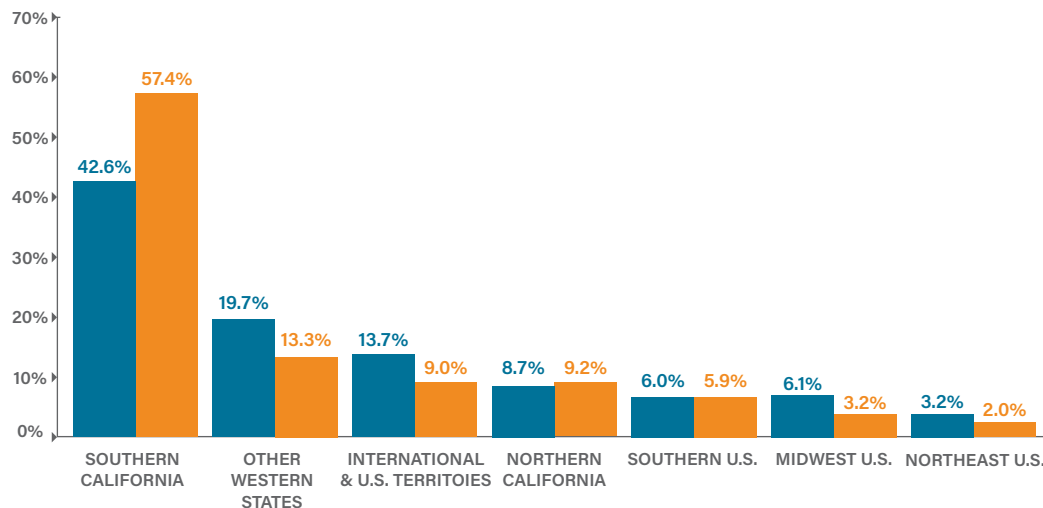
- The average size of a visitor group to Huntington Beach was **2.5** people
- About **42%** of Huntington Beach visitor groups were traveling with children
- The median age of visitors to Huntington Beach was **33** years
- Average length of stay was **4.4** days
- Average spending in Orange County by a HB visitor was **\$310** per person
- 13.7%** of all visitors were from international markets

Note: Based on 3.9 million annual non-Orange County resident visitors

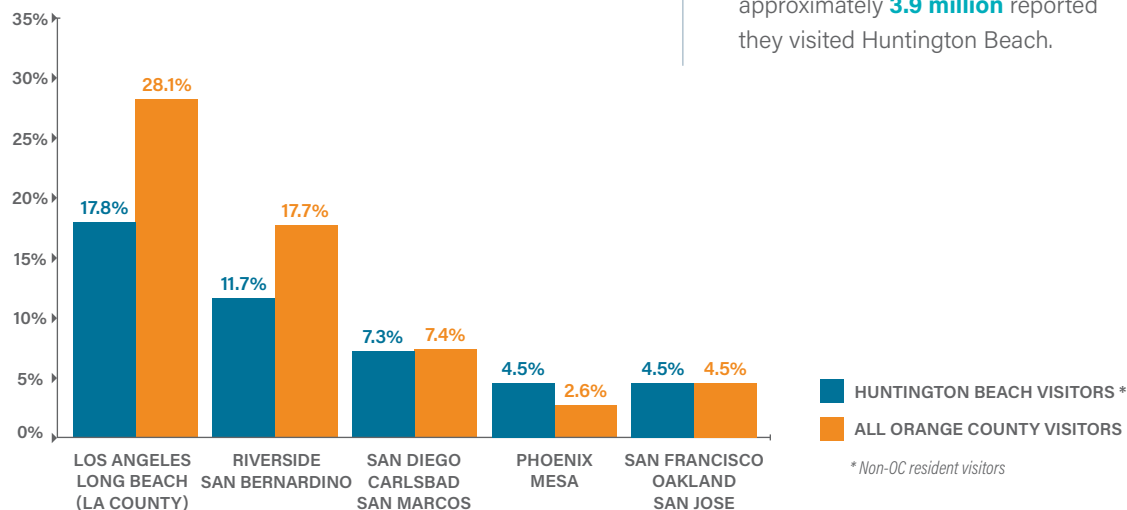




## HUNTINGTON BEACH VISITOR ORIGIN IN 2015 BY REGION



## METROPOLITAN ORIGIN OF RESIDENCE



Among the **47.4 million** visitors to Orange County in 2015, **8.3%** or approximately **3.9 million** reported they visited Huntington Beach.

## Top Domestic Travel Geographic Markets:

- 200 mile radius around HB from LA to San Diego
- Phoenix/ Scottsdale, AZ
- Dallas/ Houston/ Austin, TX
- San Francisco, CA
- Las Vegas, NV
- New York, NY

**Frequent Travelers:** Travelers from our top markets take an average of **6.3 leisure trips** per year

Source: Annual Survey of Visitors to Orange County, conducted by CIC Research, Inc., 2015

## INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL



## International Trips to California in 2015

Annual International Trips to California: 2016 (Volume)

- Mexico: 8,144,000
- Canada: 1,571,000
- China: 1,369,000
- UK: 709,000
- Australia: 638,000
- Japan: 539,000
- South Korea: 507,000
- Germany: 446,000
- France: 439,000
- India: 319,000

Source: Tourism Economics

## International Growth Outlook

▪ **CANADA:** After four consecutive years of record-seeding visitation by our neighbors to the north, Canadian travelers to the U.S. have decreased slightly since 2014, primarily due to the strength of the U.S. dollar. Nevertheless, Canada accounts for nearly **31%** of total international arrivals in the U.S. Huntington Beach is well positioned to take advantage of Canadian's affinity for beach/ seaside attractions, their top motivator for intercontinental travel, and California is tied with Florida as the top states that Canadians are most interested in visiting.

▪ **UNITED KINGDOM:** Visitation is on the rise from our British, and California ranks as their top state to visit at **45%** of UK intercontinental travelers. Websites now outrank personal recommendations 2:1 compared to family/ friends as the channel used for destination selection by the Brits.

▪ **AUSTRALIA:** Aussie visitors see the USA as diverse, energetic, friendly, adventurous and trendy - all positive attributes among this growing segment of international travelers who prefer California over any other U.S. state to visit. They are especially keen on local lifestyle, cultural attractions and beach/ seaside locations when traveling overseas, making them a perfect target market for Surf City USA.

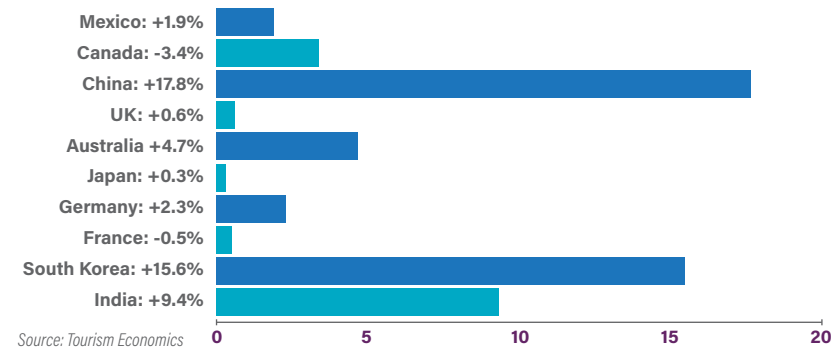
▪ **CHINA:** This fast growth international market now rates California right behind Hawaii as the U.S. state that China's affluent visitors (avg spending of **\$7,486** per trip) are most interested in visiting. After 6 years of double digits annual growth, Chinese visitation is projected to grow another **17.8%** in 2016. Eco-tourism, cultural attractions and beaches/seaside attractions are the top motivators for Chinese visitors in selecting their most recent intercontinental destination.

▪ **MEXICO:** While slower growing, Mexico marks the highest number of International trips to California. The close proximity proves for an easy vacation option as most Mexican visitors prefer a land port of entry and have the shortest trip planning time frame. This market tends to travel with family and enjoys experiencing the culture and natural beauty of California.

Sources: Brand USA Custom Study; U.S. Dept. of Commerce National Travel and Tourism Office, Tourism Economics

## California Projected Growth by International Market (2015-2020)

Annual International Trips to California: 2016 (Percentage Change YOY)



Source: Tourism Economics

# LODGING TREND REPORT



## Surf City USA Lodging Trends Show Strong Revenue Growth

### Huntington Beach Lodging Trend Report

FY	AVERAGE DAILY RATE (ADR)	YOY GROWTH	OCCUPANCY PERCENTAGE	YOY GROWTH	REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM*	YOY GROWTH
2014	\$191.45	+5.0%	75.7%	+4.7%	\$144.90	+9.9%
2015	\$206.15	+7.7%	76.3%	+0.8%	\$157.26	+8.5%
2016	\$213.00	+3.3%	75.5%	-1.1%	\$160.75	+2.2%

\*(RevPAR) | Source: The Smith Travel Report

### Key Lodging Report Trends

In order to fully understand the situation in our marketplace, it's also important to note the significant change in rooms (supply), growing demand and revenue that impacts tourism's bottom line:

**Supply:** +71 % in 2016

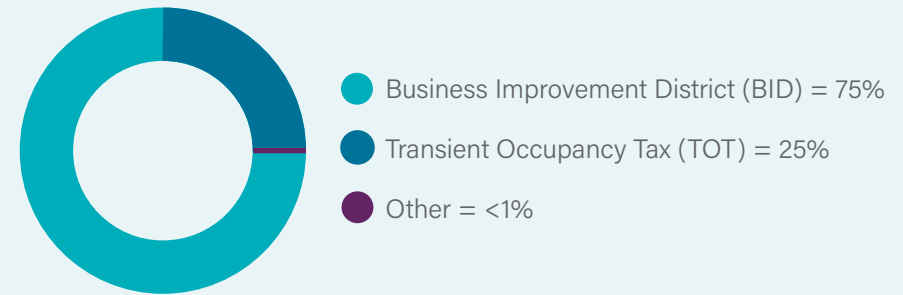
**Demand:** +6% in 2016 and +11.5% since 2014

**Revenues:** + 9.5% in 2016 and +27.9% since 2014

In 2015 and 2016, Huntington Beach continued to out perform many Orange County and California destinations and be a consistent leader in overall ADR and RevPAR lodging trends in the state.

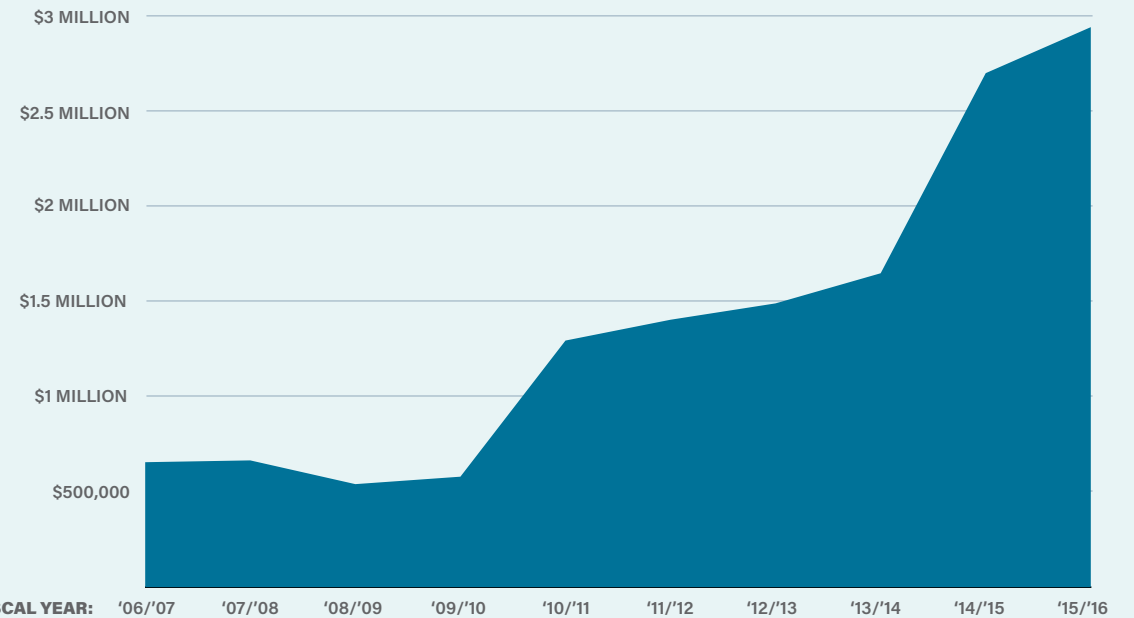
## BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

### VISIT HUNTINGTON BEACH FUNDING



### BID REVENUE GROWTH

BID COLLECTION:



**BID assessment from 2006-2010**



**BID assessment from 2010-2014**



**BID assessment starting October 2014**

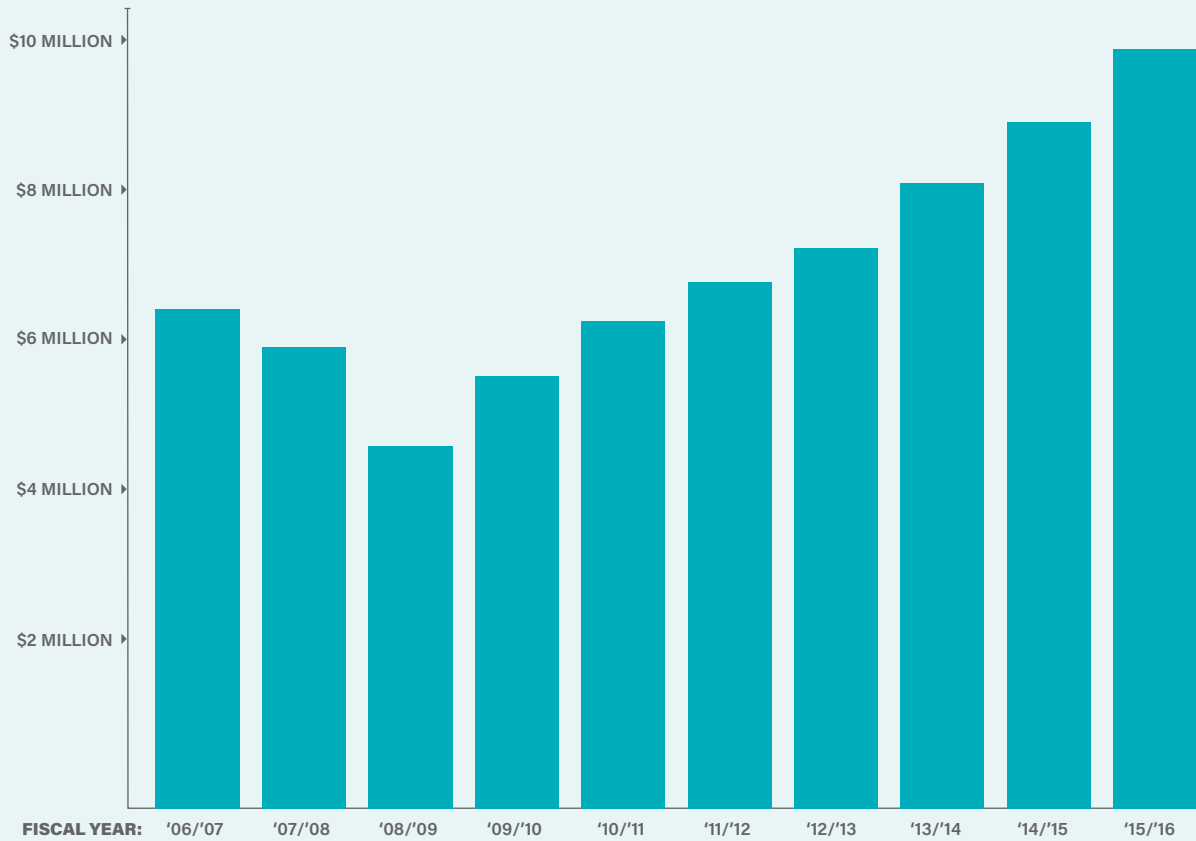
TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX



*NOTE: Visit Huntington Beach receives 10% of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) collection from visitors for destination marketing reinvestment while the City of Huntington Beach receives 90%. Money generated by TOT receipts from visitors helps keep Huntington Beach's roads and street signage maintained, beaches clean, and public safe, a benefit to residents and visitor that also encourages return and future visitation and increases to TOT revenues.*

TOT REVENUE GROWTH

TOT COLLECTION:



Source: City of Huntington Beach



Increase since 2006-2007



Increase since 2008 financial crisis



Increase since previous year 2014-2015

FY 2015/16

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

# PUBLIC RELATIONS

## What the Media Says about HB...

"In Huntington you're on the sand looking at the surf, which is a different perspective. They let you burn fires on the beach on Huntington Beach, so you're smelling wood and there's this rustic smell in the air and you can see there's 50 fires across the street from where the Bungalow is and it's awesome."

**Brent Bolthouse**, *The Hollywood Reporter* (USA)

"There is just something about that ocean air, it heals everything I'm convinced. No trip to Southern California is complete without a visit to the beach. Huntington Beach was the perfect place to relax for a few days, and enjoy the beautiful California sun."

**Caroline Drake**, *Armelle Blog* (USA)



# VHB HOSTED 64 JOURNALISTS FROM 11 COUNTRIES GENERATING \$5,117,929 IN EARNED MEDIA AND OVER 443 MILLION MEDIA IMPRESSIONS



## Media Events and Shows

**October 2015** | SOMET CONFERENCE, New Orleans, LA

**February 2016** | VCA OUTLOOK FORUM, San Francisco, CA

**March 2016** | VCA NEW YORK MEDIA EVENT / REGIONAL MEDIA MISSION, New York, NY

- 12 secured appointments and interactions with 32 additional journalists

**June 2016** | DCI LA MEDIA MISSION, Los Angeles, CA

- 10 secured appointments

**June 2016** | INTERNATIONAL POW WOW, New Orleans, LA

- 16 secured appointments

**August 2016** | VCA AUSTRALIA MEDIA MISSION, New Zealand/Australia

- Interactions with over 104 media and influencers



## International Representation

**UK / Ireland** | Black Diamond  
**Australia** | Gate7  
**Canada** | DCI  
**China** | OCVA  
**Mexico** | OCVA  
**Japan** | OCVA  
**India** | OCVA  
**China** | OCVA



## Key Placements

*Virgin Australia Voyeur Magazine*  
 Cover & Feature - Surfing USA  
**Impressions: 473,000**  
**AVE: \$8,873**

*Hollywood Reporter* - The Bungalow  
**Impressions: 5,437,629**  
**AVE: \$50,298**

*BuzzFeed* - Surf City Surf Dog  
**Impressions: 200,000,000**  
**AVE: \$1,850,000**

*Visit California* - California Dream Eater  
**Impressions: 5,000,000**  
**AVE: \$750,000**

## Quotes on HB from the Media

"I honestly don't think I've ever been anywhere so chilled and cheerful. Everyone seems delighted just to be alive – and given the surroundings it's hardly surprising. A street market with live music turned into an impromptu street party, with strangers dancing like nobody was watching. And as for the body beautiful culture, honestly, nobody cares how you look in your bikini. There's so much flesh on view, the odd roll of flab soon becomes irrelevant."

**Patricia Carswell**, *Sportsister* (UK)

"When most people think of Southern California, the image that comes to mind is of golden sand beaches running for miles, beautiful sunsets and surfers galore. This is exactly what is waiting to greet you in Huntington Beach! From relaxing on the beach, to adventure sports and delicious restaurants, Huntington Beach offers something for everyone, making it a great destination for families who love to sit back and relax or get out and explore."

**Karilyn Owen**, *No Back Home* (USA)



# TRAVEL TRADE

Nearly 1 in 7 Surf City USA visitors are international travelers. The global appeal of Huntington Beach brings visitors who also stay longer and spend more than domestic visitors. Diversifying and moderately growing our international visitation also helps protect the destination from economic fluctuations domestically and within any one international marketplace.

<b>12</b> TRAVEL TRADE FAMS &	<b>244+</b> TOUR OPERATORS & TRAVEL AGENTS	<b>5</b> FROM TARGETED MARKETS
----------------------------------	---	--------------------------------------

## Travel Trade Shows

Staff held **71 sales appointments** with key tour operators, wholesalers and receptives at domestic and international travel trade shows and events including IPW, GoWest, the California Cup, and the Visit California Australia Sales Mission.

## Travel Trade Markets



## CASE STUDY: Brand USA Mega FAM

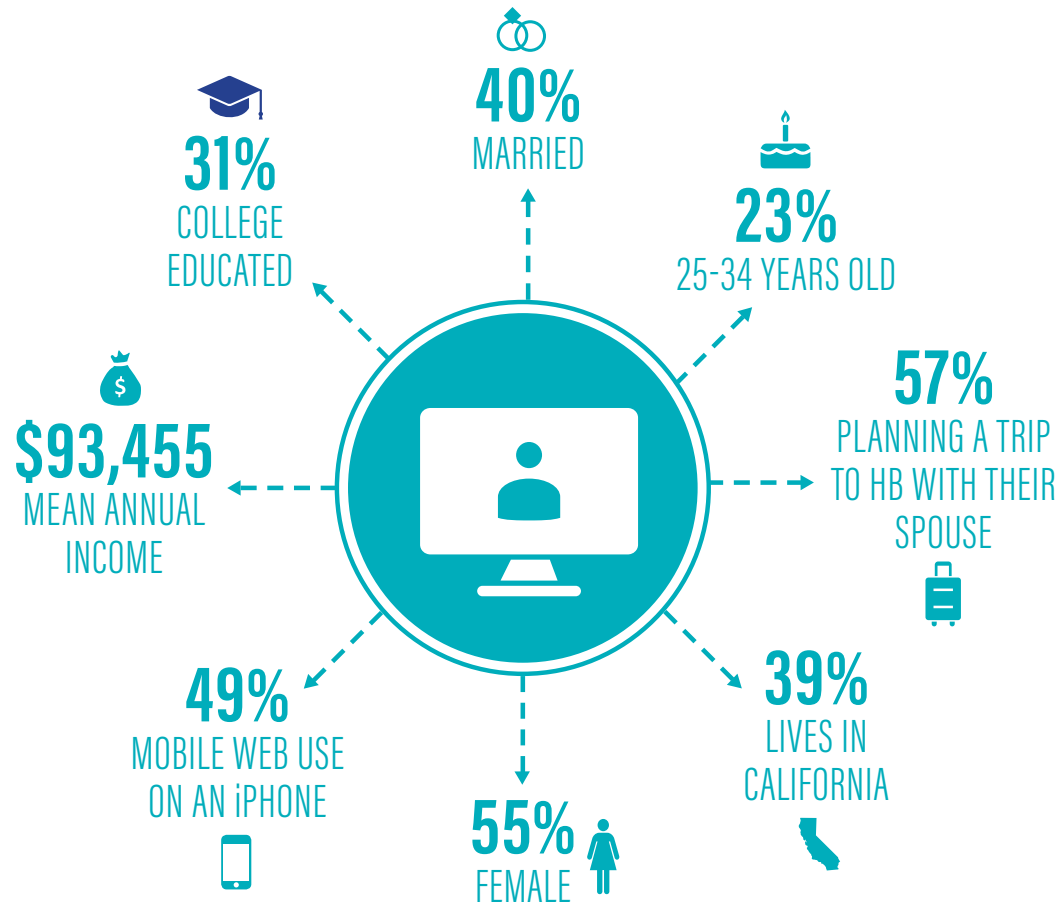
In 2016, Huntington Beach was given the unique chance to be the host destination for Brand USA's grand finale of their UK Mega FAM. In partnership with American Airlines and British Airways, 140 top selling travel agents from across the United Kingdom embarked on a Mega FAM throughout the U.S. in May of 2016 to better educate them of all the U.S. has to offer. Visit Huntington Beach hosted all 140 agents and 20 key decision makers from British Airways, American Airlines, Brand USA, Visit California and Black Diamond, giving Huntington Beach unparalleled exposure of our destination to the UK market. In the two days they were here, the agents were spread across our four oceanfront hotels. They lived the true Huntington Beach experience with a beach day filled with surf lessons, bike rides, beach games, and sunshine. Their trip culminated in a phenomenal evening event at the new SeaLegs on the Beach, where all 160 attendees plus Visit Huntington Beach staff were treated to a delicious meal from SeaLegs, and listened to both American Airlines and British Airways representatives speak to the tremendous success and ROI from these types of FAMS.



# DIGITAL MARKETING

## DIGITAL MARKETING SPURS STRONG ROI FOR VISIT HUNTINGTON BEACH

THE TYPICAL SURFCITYUSA.COM WEBSITE VISITOR IS:



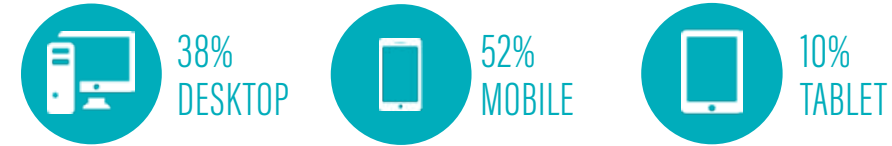
## INTERESTS

MOVIES, TV, CELEBRITIES & ENTERTAINMENT, NEWS, TECHNOLOGY, TRAVEL, COOKING



## Website Visitor Numbers and Facts

In the past year there have been over **738,000 visitors** to SurfCityUSA.com, an **increase of 15%** from the previous fiscal year. 57% of visitors find us through organic search and 24% spend more than 1 minute on the site.



## Website Usability and ROI Studies

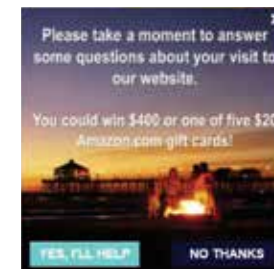
Visit Huntington beach implemented year long website usability and ROI studies, using interviews with **10 leisure travelers** and **4 meetings planners** from key target demographics, plus thousands of online surveys.

**Key Website Strengths:** Great resource of city's offerings. Reliable and trustworthy. Useful both prior to arriving and in-market. Integration of TripAdvisor and Yelp highly praised.

The SurfCityUSA.com website has generated **10,776 incremental visitor trips**, plus an additional **1,870 day visits**, with a total economic impact of **\$14.2 million** and \$50.64 per unique visitor, producing at **95:1** to program investment ROI.

**High satisfaction and likelihood to return from the Web ROI Study:**

- **98%** of respondents very satisfied or satisfied with their visitor experience in HB.
- **94%** of respondents very likely or likely to return to HB.



## Website Bookings

After recommendations from partners, we switched our booking engine on SurfCityUSA.com. This past year, there have been **94** direct bookings on our site, a **62%** increase from the previous year.



# SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

## @SurfCityUSA: The OC's Most Instagrammed City

There's a reason why Huntington Beach was named by Time, Inc as one of the most instagrammed summer vacation spots in the US, and by the OC Register as Orange County's Most Instagrammed City in 2016. The destination's stunning natural beauty and active, engaged visitors and residents love to share Surf City USA's everyday moments of visual inspiration. And here at Visit Huntington Beach, so do we...

## Social Media Following

- Over **55,000** Facebook fans with **6.3 million** impressions
- Over **8,700** Twitter followers with over **55,000** total engagements
- Over **25,300** Instagram followers with average **1,028** likes per post
- **640,400+** YouTube video views
- **1,424** Pinterest pins

## Follow US

 **Facebook:** Visit Huntington Beach

 **Instagram:** @surfcityusa

 **Twitter:** @hbsurfcityusa

 **YouTube:** Visit Huntington Beach

 **Pinterest:** Visit Huntington Beach

## MOST LIKED INSTAGRAM PHOTOS



@piersofcalifornia  
2,383 likes



@dirka  
2,175 likes



@nicholas\_schultz\_  
1,890 likes

## Social Media Fan Quotes

"I can't forget the energy and the passion. I have been to HB this Summer for two weeks for painting. It was very short to paint the vibrant beauty of HB."

**Facebooker ChangHan Kim** (South Korea)

"This place is just beyond perfect!! I have dreamed my whole life and am finally moving to HB in exactly 19 days!!"

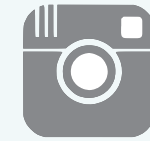
**Instagrammer @bella\_cl**

"Our favorite pier, our favorite beach, so much love and memories surround that surf!"

**Facebooker Debbie Dunn** (Phoenix, AZ)

"I love HB. I live where people save to come and spend their honeymoons and their vacations and some live whole lifetimes dreaming of seeing this beach. #LivingTheDream"

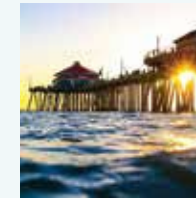
**Instagrammer @xoxoxdarya**



## Instagram Influencer Takeovers



• **Cherie, Surf City Surf Dog competitor** @cheriethesurfdog (17,500 followers) took over our account for two days during the Surf City Surf Dog contest on September 24-25 at Huntington Dog Beach. She posted seven photos for a total of **4,868 likes**.



• **Joe Nickerson, local photographer and VHB intern** @joe\_nickerson\_photography (8,300 followers) took over our account for three days on August 12-14. He posted seven Huntington Beach/surf photos for a total of **8,015 likes**.



• **Josh Glazebrook and Casey Patterson, AVP Creative Director and AVP Beach volleyball player and Olympian** @jglazecreek (1,417 followers) and @caseypatt (31,800 followers) took over our account for one day on May 7 during the AVP tournament stop in Huntington Beach. They posted seven photos for a total of **4,292 likes**.



• **Maté Bros and Sam Mikulak, local energy drink company and Olympic gymnast** @matebros (12,800 followers) and Sam Mikulak (240,400 followers) took over our account for one day on July 25 to post a video of Sam at the Olympics, encouraging viewers to "Ask Sam" and win a case of Maté Bros. The video had over **3,200 views**.

Blog Views

**43,382 VISITS TO THE SURF CITY USA BLOG**  
WITH 74 NEW BLOG POSTS THIS PAST YEAR.



**CASE STUDY: My #SurfCityUSA**

In spring of 2016, Visit Huntington Beach launched 12 social media videos, each 15 seconds in length, that highlighted a local ambassador and their connection to Surf City USA. The videos received 3,840 likes, 324 comments, and 396 shares on Facebook and Instagram throughout 2 months with a total of 719,018 views. This campaign was also used as a feature in the 2016-2017 Huntington Beach Visitor Guide.

**CASE STUDY: InstaMeet HB**

The Visit Huntington Beach social media team hosted their first Instameet in January in partnership with 19 local companies and influencers. Over 200 photographers spent the day sharing 960 images of Huntington Beach on Instagram using #InstaMeetHB. The participants had a combined total of over 498,000 Instagram followers, averaging out to 2,457 followers per participant.

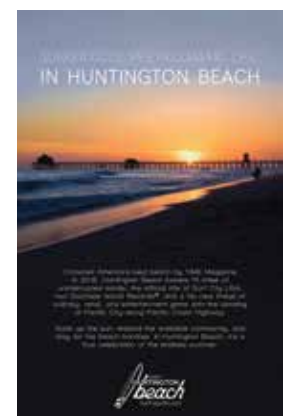
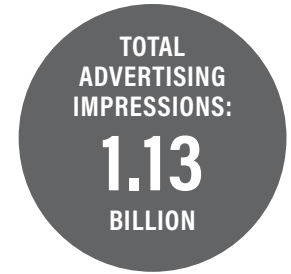


ADVERTISING

Target Marketing

VHB produced print and digital advertisements for publications and digital media such as:

- Discover America Inspiration Guide
- Sunset Magazine & E-Newsletter
- Travel Guide to California
- California Visitor's Guide
- Visit California E-Newsletter
- WHERE OC Magazine & Guestbook
- Brand USA Multi-Channel Promotions in China & Canada
- OC Business Journal
- AAA Westways
- Smart Meetings
- HelmsBriscoe
- Cvent
- Connect Magazine





# VISITOR SERVICES & PUBLICATIONS



## Ambassador Program

The **Daytime Surf City USA Ambassador Program** was re-launched in late April 2016. Visit HB worked with HBPD and the Downtown BID to evaluate the previous year's program and to make improvements that better met the needs of our partners.

The following interaction data is for May to September 2016 for the daytime program:

**TOTAL INTERACTIONS: 2,687 | RESTAURANTS: 228 | ACTIVITY/ATTRACTION: 296**  
**DIRECTIONS: 263 | GENERAL QUESTIONS: 233 | RESTROOMS: 351**

Other interactions include business requests from partners and working with the homeless, street vendors, and others to maintain a family-friendly atmosphere in the downtown area.

## Nighttime Ambassador Program

Visit Huntington Beach partnered again with HBPD and the Downtown BID to create the Nighttime Ambassador Program, which ran June to September 2016. On the two busiest nights of the week, ambassadors were present in the downtown area to provide a visible presence and deterrence to minimize nuisance behavior, as well as to greet visitors and answer visitor questions.



## Surf City USA Shuttle

The Surf City USA Shuttle program ran weekends from June 17 - September 4 and carried over **2,207 riders** to 5 stops throughout the city. This was a **75% increase** in regular service riders from the previous summer. The shuttle service was also in operation for two summer events, carrying **669 passengers** Downtown for the Fourth of July celebration (double from last year) and **463 passengers** to the U.S. Open of Surfing.



## Visitor Information Kiosk

**TOTAL WALK-UPS: 44,568**

**Most requested information:**

**DIRECTIONS: 6,428 | VISITOR MAP: 6,111 | BEACH INFORMATION: 5,838**  
**EVENTS: 3,731 | RESTROOMS: 3,412**

## Publications

**VISITOR MAPS: 120,000 | VISITOR GUIDES: 90,000**  
**SUNSET BEACH HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR MAPS: 960**  
**RACK BROCHURES: 33,800 | HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN WALKING MAPS: 1,400**



# PARTNER SERVICES

## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting and Brand Summit was held at Pasea Hotel & Spa on June 28, 2016 with over **150 attendees**. It was there that VHB gave the first Surf City USA Superstar Award to Tammy Thurlow from The Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel. Any front-line staff person who currently works for a visitor serving business in HB and has been in a front-line position for at least 2 years was eligible for the award. There were **10 nominations** made by partners throughout the community.

Visit Huntington Beach also previewed the creative for a destination marketing campaign featuring our new Surf City USA logo as well as broadcast video and digital marketing that is launching in FY 2016/17.



## Partner Info Meetings

VHB hosted **9 Partner** Information Meetings throughout the year with **30 partners** in attendance from the Huntington Beach community.



## Partner listings on website

**LISTING VIEWS** (FOR ALL PARTNER LISTINGS ON WEBSITE): **195,943**

**CLICK THRU:** **97,279**

**RESERVATIONS CLICKS** (FOR THOSE HOTELS OR BUSINESSES THAT HAVE A BUY TICKET OPTION): **4,595**

# DESTINATION SALES

ECONOMIC  
IMPACT:  
**\$18.4M**

**LEADS: 404**

**LEAD ROOM NIGHTS: 200,601**

**BOOKED ROOM NIGHTS: 17,774**

**SITE INSPECTIONS: 57**



## SHOW ATTENDANCE

OCTOBER 2015	IMEX AMERICA - LAS VEGAS, NV
OCTOBER 2015	PCMA/BAMIE AWARDS - SAN FRANCISCO
DECEMBER 2015	SITE SOCIAL HOLIDAY EVENT - LA QUINTA
JANUARY 2016	MPISCC 2016 WEEKEND RETREAT - VENTURA
FEBRUARY 2016	MPI NORTHERN CALIFORNIA EXPO/CONFERENCE - SAN FRANCISCO
MARCH 2016	CONFERENCEDIRECT ANNUAL MEETING - SAN ANTONIO, TX
MARCH 2016	MPI BEVERLEY LAING GOLF TOURNAMENT - BUENA PARK
APRIL 2016	SMART MEETINGS CORPORATE TRADESHOW - LOS ANGELES
MAY 2016	LUXURY MEETINGS SUMMIT - DENVER, SALT LAKE CITY
MAY 2016	DESTINATION CALIFORNIA, SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS - SAN FRANCISCO
JUNE 2016	HELMSBRISCOE ABC - PHOENIX, AZ
JUNE 2016	MPI WEC CONFERENCE - ATLANTIC CITY, NJ
JULY 2016	ALL THINGS MEETINGS - SILICON VALLEY
AUGUST 2016	CONNECT MARKETPLACE - GRAPEVINE, TX
SEPTEMBER 2016	SITE CLASSIC - LA QUINTA



## Inspiration and Rewards

The Inspiration & Rewards promotion incentivized planners to book events in Huntington Beach. Groups that signed a contract with a qualifying hotel within 45 days of their site visit received a reward of \$1,000 towards their master bill.

**50 BOOKED MEETING PROGRAMS**  
 BENEFITED FROM THE INSPIRATION AND REWARDS OFFER  
**6,920 CONFIRMED ROOM NIGHTS FOR HB**  
 AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE OFFER LARGEST PROGRAM CONFIRMED  
 FOR HUNTINGTON BEACH BY VHB WAS A DIRECT RESULT OF THIS PROMOTION



## CASE STUDY: Immersion FAM

Due to the combined efforts of the VHB and Visit Anaheim group sales departments, the first Immersion Corporate familiarization tour (FAM) in May of 2016 was an absolute success. VHB and Visit Anaheim invited 150 planners and confirmed 15 meeting planners that were qualified and had specific business for both destinations. Thus far, Huntington Beach has confirmed three programs resulting in leads from the FAM that represent 345 booked room nights and 1,186 room nights pending for May 2017.

## CASE STUDY: Largest Group Program

As a result of the group sales department efforts, Huntington Beach has been booked and confirmed for the largest group program since our organization's inception, which will happen in December 2016. The luxury auto maker program will represent 3,593 room nights, with an economic impact of **\$4.6 million** to Huntington Beach. This will take place during dates our destination is traditionally not as busy and when additional business is needed. Strategic planning and partnering with John Wayne/Orange County airport, our partner hotels and the City Mayor all led to a successful bid and ultimate win for our destination.



## CASE STUDY: Exploring with Josh

In June 2016, YouTube stars Exploring With Josh and his Exploring With crew visited Huntington Beach for three days and produced nine videos on the destination and Orange County for a total of over **950,000 views**. The videos featured partners such as Pedego Electric Bike Rentals, Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel, Bolsa Chica Wetlands, Sugar Shack, HB Surfboard and Bike Rentals, Timmy Reyes, and the International Surfing Museum. VHB also hosted a bonfire meetup where fans drove from all over California and even Arizona to meet Exploring With Josh. Josh has over 1.6 million subscribers on YouTube and his Exploring With Crew has 585,924 subscribers.

# FILM

## Filming Locations

A number of major shows were filmed in Huntington Beach this past year with the help of the City of Huntington Beach and the new online film permit application process. Popular FOX TV series, Rosewood has filmed numerous episodes around the city. Other television shows that have filmed around Huntington Beach include *MasterChef*, *The Independent* (UK), *Chelsea*, and *The Late Late Show with James Corden*.

### POPULAR FILMING DESTINATION INCLUDE:

- Huntington City Beach
- The Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel
- Hyatt Regency Resort & Spa
- City Hall
- Bolsa Chica State Beach
- Downtown Main Street
- Kimpton Shorebreak
- Central Library
- Central Park

...and more!



## Film Permits Issued

This year, 143 film permits were issued for the City of Huntington Beach and Huntington State Beaches, an increase of 55% over FY 2014-2015.



# LEVERAGING THE BIG BOARD

## WORLD'S LARGEST SURFBORD WITH **66 RIDERS** ON A 42-FOOT BOARD



### Documentary Film and Premiere

On June 20, 2015, Huntington Beach broke the GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ for "The Most People Riding a Surfboard" with 66 riders surfing unassisted for 12 seconds on the world's "Largest Surfboard" at 42-feet long. The making of this gigantic surfboard and the historic record breaking moment were all captured on film by videographer Nick Bowser in collaboration with VHB and the community. *The Biggest Board: Surf City USA's Epic Ride* premiered on January 21, 2016 at the Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel to a crowd of more than 220 guests. The board was then unveiled for permanent display at the International Surfing Museum the following day.



### Newport Beach Film Festival

*The Biggest Board: Surf City USA's Epic Ride* was accepted into the Newport Beach Film Festival as part of the Actions Sports film series in April 2016. The short film had two sold out screenings at Triangle Square Cinemas and were followed by a live Q&A with Director Nick Bowser.



### Earned Media and Award Recognition

The Epic Big Board Ride GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ event earned nearly \$10 million in earned media coverage both domestically and international, and the world, literally, took note of it! Along with the film premiere and Big Board unveiling event in January 2016, the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association awarded it prestigious Best PR Campaign Award worldwide to the Epic Big Board Ride Campaign. Particularly cited by the judges was the community engagement in this very special, "on brand" initiative. Visit California recognized the most successful PR campaign in Huntington Beach history with Best of Show at their annual Poppy Awards in February 2016. An award winning trifecta was complete when the U.S. Travel Association bestowed its prestigious Destiny Award for the Best PR campaign in the U.S. travel industry to Visit Huntington Beach in August 2016.



The entire 15 minute long film can now  
be viewed online at [TheBiggestBoard.com](http://TheBiggestBoard.com).

# LOOKING AHEAD



## TRAVEL TRENDS AND INSIGHTS

### 1. Data Driven Customization

Customer data collection and analyzation has become an essential part of a destination marketing strategy as it drives and supports the creation of personalized content to generate an individualized customer experience. Users are now expecting customized content based on their needs and interests, especially the tech savvy and millennial audiences. There's a large opportunity for Surf City USA to provide this relevant content to target visitors directly on their phones, as 74% of millennials are willing to receive location-based mobile alerts.

### 2. Embracing the Sharing Economy

The sharing economy is making it easier than ever for visitors wishing to 'live like a local' as they interact with the local community throughout all steps of the travel process. This concept of sharing goes to the core of the customer experience as it encourages community, connectivity, effectiveness, and convenience for all involved. While there are significant regulations to the evolving sharing economy, travelers are embracing these new experiences.

# TRAVEL TRENDS AND INSIGHTS [continued]

## 3. Customer Service Goes Social

Technology is slowly taking over traditional customer service platforms as brands are developing bots to engage with customers and tackle issues and requests. Consumers can now use Facebook Messenger to get technical support, WeChat to book a hotel room, or even order a pizza through Twitter. In fact, more than one-third of customers already prefer using social media rather than the telephone for customer support. While this technology is improving, Visit Huntington Beach could use bots to help answer the large number of visitor inquiries that are received daily.

## 4. Experiential and Immersive Marketing

When a consumer has an authentic physical interaction with a brand and it's messaging, the brand becomes memorable. This immersive experience is called experiential marketing and it not only creates an emotional connection between a brand and its consumers, but also increases brand awareness and loyalty. Virtual and augmented reality are becoming the most impactful mediums in experiential travel marketing as they offer prospective visitors a true visualization of what to expect on a trip and even spark inspiration in the planning process. This immersive experience is quickly becoming more accessible as well as consumable as technology improves.



## 5. Authentic Video

Video is taking over the digital landscape, as daily views on Facebook have increased from 1 billion to 8 billion in the past year. According to Cisco, streaming video will account for more than two-thirds of all consumer Internet traffic through 2017. As consumers continue to demand authentic video content, live video options through social media are quickly turning from novelty to mainstay. Live video is highly effective in delivering unfiltered content to consumers in the moment, encouraging engagement and building trust.



## Project Time Off

Since 2000, vacation usage has been steadily declining. In 2015, more than half of American workers left a total of **658 million** vacation days unused. Workers reported taking off just 16.2 days, almost a full week less compared to the pre-2000 average (20.3 days)... this is America's Lost Week. Project: Time Off is an initiative to win back America's Lost Week of vacation. The growing stockpile of unused paid leave threatens workers productivity, creativity, and energy which directly affects the bottom line of American businesses.

The single-most important step workers can take is to plan their time off in advance. Yet less than half (49%) of households set aside time to plan the use of their vacation time each year. *National Plan for Vacation Day*, celebrated on January 31, is a day to encourage Americans to plan their vacation days for the rest of the year at the start of the year. Putting our wasted days to use will not only help Americans improve their health, happiness, and careers, it will also provide a **\$223 billion** boost to the economy.

Source: [www.ProjectTimeOff.com](http://www.ProjectTimeOff.com)



## Consumer Trends

- **REMOTE TRAVEL** - New technologies and ease of access expose cultural adventures for travelers look to explore unconventional destinations.
- **CULINARY TRAVEL** - Consumers continue to seek out destinations based on local flavors and unique culinary experiences.
- **LOCAL TRAVEL** - Locals are the new tourists, as many prefer staycations or a vacation close to home.
- **BLEISURE TRAVEL** - Business travelers are combining work with pleasure as business trips are extended to include time with the family.
- **SOLO TRAVEL** - Bold voyagers are hitting the road alone as solo tourists make up one fourth of all travelers this past year.
- **SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL** - Travelers are looking for meaningful activities that contribute to the conservation of local culture and natural environments.
- **WELLNESS TRAVEL** - The wellness movement has frequent travelers focused on distressing with healthy lifestyle activities.



## Consumer and Influencer Profiles



### LUXURY TRAVELER

This high value persona has great interest in Huntington Beach, and is a centerpiece of the destination's marketing efforts. These travelers find Huntington Beach to be highly appealing and are familiar with our destination assets. This group prefers 4 or 5 star accommodations, which we have the resort product to support, and crave authentic travel experiences.



### FAMILY TRAVELERS

Family traveler audiences, both domestically and internationally, have great potential for Huntington Beach. This persona overwhelmingly finds the destination to be of high appeal, and exhibit travel behaviors that make it a valuable audience segment, including a significant length of stay. Our 10-miles of uninterrupted coastline will fulfill this group's desire for the quintessential California beach experience.



### BEACH GOERS

Beach goers may be the most dedicated segment to Huntington Beach. This slightly younger persona also has significant income and is likely to be a high value visitor. These travelers are abundant and seek exactly what Huntington Beach offers — a relaxed and beautiful beach town vibe.



### OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

Those who seek a more active lifestyle are naturally drawn to our destination and represent another successful market for Huntington Beach. They see Huntington Beach as an ideal place for more adventurous sports like surfing, skateboarding, BMX, bicycling, SUP and more. While attracted to our diverse outdoor assets, this persona strongly values our beach experience and beach town vibe as well.



### MEETINGS AND GROUPS

Visit Huntington Beach marketing efforts will have a special focus on corporate and incentive travel meeting planners to yield higher-end groups and meetings business in the tech, medical, legal, finance and insurance markets. This meeting planner audience is focused on impacting their bottom line, and seeks a destination that can be an inspiring setting.

**Target Markets:**  
California, Texas, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Florida

## Consumer Journey Map

THE STORY IS CENTRAL TO EVERY PART OF THE LEISURE CYCLE



# VHB BRANDING



## Brand Positioning

Huntington Beach: forever summer, flawless weather, non-stop waves, perfect for surfing or just watching, surrounded by an active community of life enthusiasts. Luxurious? Absolutely, yet we're proud of our unhurried, laid back, and welcoming culture. For those seeking the quintessential California experience, we invite you to the hub and soul of SoCal — Surf City USA.

## Attitudes and Personality

**1. WE ARE FIERCE** - The original surf culture, all grown up: a culture and heritage we're fiercely passionate about. We are entrepreneurial, inventive, but still inspired and welcoming. Here you'll find all of the hustle, and none of the bustle. We're not everything to everyone, but for those who seek the soul of SoCal, Huntington Beach is perfect—



a vacation you don't need-a-vacation-to-recover- from vacation.

**2. WE ARE WARM** - Families thrive here. Activity-loving, beach-going, adventure-seeking, surf-riding family. Because this is what forever summer feels like: peaceful, not passive; active, not busy; always welcoming, and never boring. We're optimistic and full of hope.

**3. WE ARE LUXURY** - It comes in many forms and is found on many paths. Here luxurious is re-imagined: never overindulgent or overemphasized. It's upscale—but as a state of mind—while relaxing and easy going. Luxury looks different here, because it's unexpected, tailored to each visitor's unique definition.



## Brand Research Initiative

With more than **\$100 million** investment by the private sector in significant expansion of existing and new hotels and resorts as well as shopping, dining and attractions in Huntington Beach, Visit Huntington Beach prioritized an investment in brand research and assessment in FY 2015/16. The goal of the market research was to yield deep, rich insights into the brand awareness and perceptions, familiarity, appeal and likelihood to visit of target market travelers in both the corporate meetings and national leisure travel marketplace. The research, conducted by third party, California-based destination marketing research firm Destination Analysts, The study included over **2,200** completed qualitative random sort surveys among meeting planners, travelers in key markets, Visit Huntington Beach's database, and local community stakeholders. A follow-up qualitative survey interviewed **12** potential meeting and leisure travel decision makers.





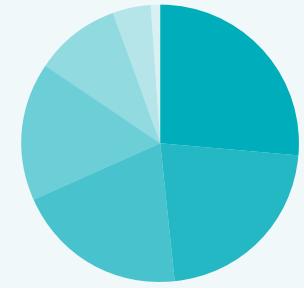


### A look at some key findings:

- Huntington Beach is seen as a beach town embodying classic California, which is beautiful, walkable and relaxing.
- Familiarity fosters demand, and Huntington Beach is positioned in the heart of a renowned travel region. Initial thinking about Southern California travel leans toward LA, San Diego and Anaheim/ Disneyland – creating a competitive environment to gain consideration.
- Huntington Beach has comparative or superior top-of-mind awareness to other competing beach/ resort destination in the region. Familiarity is considerably less strong in more distant regions, creating opportunity for growth.
- San Francisco, Texas and the Northwest markets domestically represent geo targets with high potential for Huntington Beach, along with group corporate and incentive business.
- Travelers interested in visiting Surf City USA are younger, less likely to be married, college educated and travel more compared to those who do not have an interest in HB.
- The beach is Huntington Beach's most recognized destination asset, with surfing a core part of its brand.
- HB is seen by traveler's as suitable for many trip types, but particularly good for relaxation and family fun. Luxury, relaxation and the SoCal lifestyle were seen as especially strong in inspiring new visitors to Huntington Beach.
- Emotions that travelers connected to visiting Huntington Beach also helped form the new creative campaign focus for Visit Huntington Beach:

*Relaxed* **Happy** Romantic  
**Grateful** Excited **Rejuvenated**

## VHB BUDGET



### VHB Spending by Department

DEPARTMENT	FY 15/16 SPEND	% OF BUDGET
Marketing & Communications	\$1,324,446	26.5%
Visitor & Partner Services	\$1,084,964	22%
Administration & Advocacy	\$979,416	20%
Group Sales	\$821,450	16%
Digital	\$494,333	10%
Travel Trade	\$227,427	4.5%
Film Commission	\$18,490	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,000,526</b>	

### Destination Product Development

VHB's contract with the City of Huntington Beach requires that all programs funded by Destination Product Development (DPD) funds be capital improvement projects that attract overnight visitors to Huntington Beach hotels. These funds may not be used for non-DPD programs, but can be rolled over from previous years if not used within the fiscal year they are assessed.

In FY 16-17, programs funded by DPD funds include wayfinding signage fabrication and installation, Surf City USA shuttle operations, and Big Board interactive signage at the Huntington Beach International Surfing Museum.

VHB and the City of Huntington Beach have been working together for the past two years to research, plan, and implement a citywide wayfinding signage program that will help our visitors explore more of the city. DPD funds have been allocated to wayfinding for the last two fiscal years and will be used this year to fund the first phase of fabrication and installation of the signs. By dispersing visitors throughout the community, the program will relieve traffic in popular areas, improve access to parking in downtown, and increase spending around the city.

**FY 2016/17**

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## **1. DRIVE GROWTH THROUGH SURF CITY USA DESTINATION BRAND DEMAND**

Benchmark consumer brand perceptions and competitively position Surf City USA as a preferred travel destination.

## **2. REACH VISITORS THAT ALIGN WITH SURF CITY USA BRAND & PRODUCTS**

Apply market intelligence and “big data” to develop a deep understanding of the travel aspirations, motivations, behaviors, and experiences of all target travel segments for Huntington Beach. Prioritize reaching high value visitors in all sales and marketing programs.

## **3. BRING THE SURF CITY USA BRAND TO LIFE FOR VISITORS**

Tell the Surf City USA story in emotionally connective, aspirational and compelling ways.

# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Visit Huntington Beach's destination marketing plan includes a broad range of marketing activity designed to fuel inspiration, desire and preference for the Huntington Beach, Surf City USA brand globally. All initiatives are built on an integration of "always on" overarching branding programs and seasonally targeted, need period promotions. Tailored by market, our marketing plan is targeted to reach five primary audiences: leisure travelers, meeting planners, travel trade, filmmakers and media professionals.

**The DMO's program of work is designed to reach the specific audiences our brand research has identified to deliver the greatest ROI potential, including:**

- Core regional, national and international tier one target markets, which takes into consideration age, income, experiential preferences and travel propensity
- Opportunity brand targets, which home in on key demographic niches, particularly multi-generational travel families, high-income luxury travelers, corporate groups, and action sports enthusiasts
- Passion-based experiential travel audiences, with a special focus on culinary, surf, action sports fashion, and health and wellness

Extensive brand research has shaped content and messaging, as well as marketing programming, targeted toward preferred consumptive characteristics of each audience. This plan will be managed by a year-round destination editorial calendar, detailing content thematics and tactics.

## 1. DRIVE GROWTH THROUGH SURF CITY USA DESTINATION BRAND DEMAND

### Marketing Research & Branding

**OBJECTIVE:** Launch integrated group travel marketing and media campaign with Huntington Beach's new campaign theme and logo.

**STRATEGY:** Sequentially launch meetings market HB Collection campaign beginning in Q1 and rolling out through Q2, Q3 & Q4, including new travel trade digital and print advertising, meetings digital and print collateral, new meeting planner co-op initiative, e-marketing series, new meetings responsive microsite, logoed trade show displays and amenities, and video components.

**STRATEGY:** Market and promote Huntington Beach's quarter mile stretch of beachfront, luxury hotels and resorts, all within an easy walkable footprint of Pacific City, the pier and downtown Huntington Beach through the HB Collection theme. Focus on corporate and incentive planners in key geo markets.

**OBJECTIVE:** Launch integrated leisure travel marketing and media campaign with Surf City USA's refreshed campaign theme and new logo.

**STRATEGY:** Utilize branded campaign messages for each of our key experiential pillar target markets, both internationally and domestically: laid-back luxury, multi-gen families and action sports enthusiasts.

**STRATEGY:** Sequentially launch leisure market themes beginning in Q2 and rolling through Q3 & Q4, including new digital, online broadcast, display, and print advertising, new responsive website, refreshed leisure collateral, social media content integration, e-marketing series domestically, internationally and in the film market, and public relations content integration.

**OBJECTIVE:** Roll-out a new dashboard metrics reporting system that provides a comprehensive, ongoing summary of Visit Huntington Beach's marketing research and results metrics.

**STRATEGY:** Develop, test and maintain a new dashboard reporting system through our CRM that includes destination TOT and TBID collections, PKF and STR lodging reports, and metrics reports by each VHB department on a monthly and YTD metrics reporting basis, beginning in early 2017.

**STRATEGY:** Invest in monthly STR reports to measure Huntington Beach lodging metrics, along with reporting among a set of competitive destinations.

## Public Relations

**OBJECTIVE:** Benchmark qualitative earned media value with average of 60 points generated per month or 720 points annually.

**STRATEGY:** Implement Barcelona Principles qualitative measurement system internally and with DCI, Black Diamond, and Gate 7.

**STRATEGY:** Continue national and international media presence, and increase efforts targeting the Western region and drive markets such as San Francisco and Los Angeles, as well as key fly markets including the Pacific Northwest, Arizona, Texas, and New York. Focus on tier one international markets such as Australia, UK/Ireland, Canada, and China.

**OBJECTIVE:** Write and develop up to four press releases and deploy through our distribution platform and PR firms.

**STRATEGY:** Increase awareness about internal Visit Huntington Beach efforts and capitalize on upcoming events, industry updates and destination product development tactics.

**OBJECTIVE:** Benchmark and generate a ten percent increase in targeted earned media that reaches our high value customer targets in leisure, travel trade, and meetings media, both domestically and internationally.

**STRATEGY:** Secure Huntington Beach as the primary resource for comprehensive visitor and destination information for media contacts worldwide. Execute proactive pitching strategies with our PR firms.

## Travel Trade

**OBJECTIVE:** Prioritize travel trade activities and sales in Tier One Markets: Canada, UK, Australia and China. Successfully coordinate representative activities and maximize KPIs through:

**STRATEGY:** Engage representative firm Black Diamond for support in the UK & Ireland; engage Gate 7 for support in Australia.

**STRATEGY:** Maximize opportunities presented through partnership with Visit California and Brand USA for all markets, especially Canada and China where Visit Huntington Beach does not have specific representation.

**STRATEGY:** Work through OCVA for travel trade and PR co-op sales missions, PR support and promotional activities in China, the Middle East, Mexico and North America. Supplement these efforts with VHB produced in-language microsites for Mexico and Canada.

**OBJECTIVE:** Send three Travel Trade e-newsletters on a tri-semester basis to all tour operators, travel agents, and travel trade partners.

**STRATEGY:** Use Emma to create eNewsletter template and use CRM database to continue communication and initiate follow-up with all tour operators, travel agents, and other travel trade partners. Follow-up with individual operators and communications quarterly.

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase travel trade contacts and prospects by five percent.

**STRATEGY:** One-to-one sales calls, trainings, FAMS, sales missions and partnerships with tour operators, OTA and retail travel agents.

**STRATEGY:** Exhibit at travel trade shows with Visit California, Brand USA and regional partners as appropriate to leverage cost, impact & ROI.

**STRATEGY:** Invest in consumer driven demand destination via key operators for bookings through Brand USA target market multi-channel marketing programs.

**OBJECTIVE:** Hold quarterly meetings with hotel partners to maintain healthy working relationships and generate collaborative marketing and sales input.

**STRATEGY:** Set up meetings with hotel partners to ask about specific markets and share industry trends learned from research, trade shows, and sales missions. Understand what has been working for each partner and determine solutions for future needs and opportunities.

**OBJECTIVE:** Plan and execute a successful UK & Ireland Sales Mission and House of Vans Event to grow awareness and maintain relationships in-market with tour operators, receptives and wholesalers.

**STRATEGY:** Utilize Black Diamond rep to secure meetings and appointments in Dublin, London and Manchester with key tour operators, wholesalers and receptive operators.

**STRATEGY:** Plan House of Vans event, showcasing Huntington Beach culture and all it has to offer for key travel trade and media VIPs to attend.

## Digital Marketing

**OBJECTIVE:** Successfully launch a new responsive SurfCityUSA.com website to improve engagement metrics and ROI.

**STRATEGY:** Refresh all static webpage copy, create new blog posts, integrate VHB social media, and utilize original imagery from social media curated through CrowdRiff to further engage web visitors.

**STRATEGY:** Develop a new site map with optimal booking engine, e-newsletter signup, and visitor guide request positioning.

**STRATEGY:** Introduce the visitor-friendly Neighborhoods interactive map and content strategy to help sort Huntington Beach businesses and activities by location within the city.

**STRATEGY:** Align Spring leisure advertising campaign with launch of responsive website.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase average time on website by 15 seconds to 1:35, while increasing website user sessions from 718,579 to 770,000, a seven percent YOY increase.

**STRATEGY:** Build the new website on a mobile first platform with real-time content and social integrations.

**STRATEGY:** Create more engaging experiential and itinerary focused content by keyword planning and identifying top HB search terms. Reduce reliance on static and evergreen pages.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Organize the digital photo and video library through the new digital asset management software for easy use internally with staff and externally with partners and media outlets.

**STRATEGY:** Create updated preferred photography folders and appropriately tag each asset with keywords for easy search within the platform.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase online booking revenue by \$1,000 to \$2,400.

**STRATEGY:** Work with booking engine aRes to ensure all Huntington Beach hotels are represented through the platform and available for online booking.

**STRATEGY:** Develop two to three activity and event package promotions for online booking.

## Social Media Marketing

**OBJECTIVE:** Execute four on-brand influencer or ambassador social media takeovers.

**STRATEGY:** Reach our target audiences through Instagram and other social channels by engaging the appropriate influencers and local Surf City USA brand ambassadors to feature local events and campaigns.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Generate six blog posts per month that feature a range of Surf City USA experiences and partners.

**STRATEGY:** Employ bloggers that are familiar with Huntington Beach and fit niche themes such as dining, family, activities, and events.

**STRATEGY:** Produce quarterly blog content calendars that strategically align with current campaigns and seasonality.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Create three new My #SurfCityUSA videos that feature Huntington Beach ambassadors and their stories and share with potential visitors and the local community through our social media channels.

**STRATEGY:** Hire a creative team to plan and produce the videos with a unique and captivating perspective to capture the attention of our social media audience.

**STRATEGY:** Identify local influencers and ambassadors who have a special connection with Huntington Beach and engage them to share their stories.

---

## Advertising

**OBJECTIVE:** Partner with the Orange County Visitor's Association (OCVA) via its North America initiative to reach high value, targeted travelers in San Francisco as a top tier partner in a new collaborative, integrated marketing program in Q1.

**STRATEGY:** Work with OCVA partners to pool resources among partner DMO's to create a \$310,000 marketing pool of funds to effectively market brand awareness, motivate interest, and generate travel to our destinations within the OC. Do together what we cannot afford to do alone in this key market.

**STRATEGY:** Position the OC as an exciting travel destination that offers a surprising and highly appealing array of travel experiences among luxury and multi-gem travelers in the Bay area.

**STRATEGY:** VHB will participate in the top tier, along with Visit Anaheim and Newport Beach and Co., to take advantage of the online broadcast and in-market activation components of the promotion, as well as receive top tier billing on the special website and in all the advertising and earned media promotions.

## Visitor Services & Publications

**OBJECTIVE:** Champion a successful 2016-2017 Official Huntington Beach Visitor's Guide with distribution of over 90,000 copies.

**STRATEGY:** Identify new writers, include relevant stories and topics, source original photography from local artists and social media, and utilize digital to elevate the quality of our Visitor's Guide and reach our target audiences.

---

## Destination Sales

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase Hotel/Resort room nights booked by ten percent.

**STRATEGY:** Face to Face Customer Events – Attend 31 Tradeshows and Sales Missions in destinations that bring high-end corporate group business to Southern California Beach.

**STRATEGY:** Introduce the HB Collection to our potential corporate and association customers, leveraging the launch of a new responsive microsite, collateral, email and digital marketing promotions, and media plan to create awareness of city wide opportunities.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase Group Sales E-Newsletter Readership by ten percent.

**STRATEGY:** Introduce new fresh content to create a buzz for meetings in Huntington Beach; HB Collection, City Wide group opportunities within ¼ mile of beach front; featuring new projects and development that will enhance the clients experience.

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## Film

**OBJECTIVE:** Explore Huntington Beach hosting domestic and international film festival opportunities.

**STRATEGY:** Research commitment levels and logistics for Huntington Beach to host festivals

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**OBJECTIVE:** Create a sizzle reel highlighting television, film, and still shoots that have shot in Huntington Beach.

**STRATEGY:** Utilize film contacts who have shot in Huntington Beach for television/film footage to use in sizzle reel, and distribute to key target film producers and production houses.

**OBJECTIVE:** Refresh the online film locations gallery to better show the vast variety of locations in Huntington Beach available for all types of filming.

**STRATEGY:** Comb through existing locations and assure we have correct contact information and if not, update with new information.

**STRATEGY:** Distribute flyer calling for new locations, utilizing social media channels.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Generate 50 film inquiries throughout the year.

**STRATEGY:** Place sizzle reel on main page of the FilmInHB.com website to showcase locations and ease of filming.

---

## Administration & Advocacy

**OBJECTIVE:** Continue building strong community and regional relationships/partnerships in order to sustain and grow stakeholder understanding and support for the "Power of Tourism."

**STRATEGY:** Continue to explore with other Orange County leaders the possibility of forming the Orange County Regional Sports Commission to better position Huntington Beach's venues and hotels to meet the needs of professional and amateur sports' markets.

**STRATEGY:** Work in cooperation with key community stakeholders, elected officials and VHB Board of Directors to provide current factual information, pros and cons, and best practices being deployed around the country on the topic of vacation rentals' regulations.

**STRATEGY:** Sustain a consistent local advocacy communications plan designed to highlight VHB's successes/wins, as well as the importance of the visitor industry to the community including the positive economic impact on the local economy.

- Surf City Shorts, partner and CEO update emails in monthly rotation
- Presentations by VHB board and staff leadership to key community stakeholder groups
- Monthly Dashboard reports highlighting measurable successes in key goal areas
- Op-Ed stories which underscore the importance of visitors to the community and local economy
- Annual VHB meeting
- Publish on several website "case studies" which highlight the return on investment (ROI) of VHB driven programs
- Local advocacy television project
- Schedule meetings with smaller hotel properties to present research and marketing intel, while using the opportunity to fully understand their needs and challenges.

**STRATEGY:** Schedule informative speaker presentations to VHB Board of Directors and other community stakeholders, designed to expand the sales and marketing knowledge of key decision makers.

## 2 REACH VISITORS THAT ALIGN WITH SURF CITY USA BRAND & PRODUCTS

### Marketing Research & Branding

**OBJECTIVE:** Invest in research that provides deeper understanding of the travel motivations, habits, product preferences and behaviors for Surf City USA's highest value visitors.

**STRATEGY:** Utilize A/B testing, monitor campaign results and use data collected to fine tune digital marketing and advertising spends to maximize reach and conversion impacts.  
**STRATEGY:** Develop market profiles of highest value customers from existing research and results data.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Evaluate results of new creative campaign, media plan, responsive website, and integrated marketing promotions at the end of 2017 campaign.

**STRATEGY:** Develop RFP for comprehensive conversion study in fiscal year Q4, for deployment in the last quarter of calendar 2017.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Prioritize and market to customers with both long term value and immediate business potential.

**STRATEGY:** Prioritize media spending, social media, PR and communications activities, sales efforts, FAMS, site visits and special promotions to reach HB's highest value visitors as determined by market research and data.

**STRATEGY:** Pivot programs and resources as needed to adjust media and marketing program spending based on ongoing results evaluation as well as comprehensive campaign conversion research.

---

### Public Relations

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase the volume of quarterly strategic story pitching ideas for internal outreach to our 'Most Wanted Media' list.

**STRATEGY:** Target media that align with our experiential pillars and editorial calendar to reach visitors who align with our brand and product offerings.

**OBJECTIVE:** Host five digital influencers, ten domestic journalists and eight to ten international journalists through pitch efforts that align with our marketing plan, in conjunction with PR firms.

**STRATEGY:** Grow awareness of the destination's products through individual press trips, personalized itineraries and strategic communication efforts.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Secure desk-side appointments with content creators and editorial decision makers that align with our brand and story ideas.

**STRATEGY:** Attend domestic and international media missions to develop relationships among targeted media and secure a minimum of three significant features as a result.

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**OBJECTIVE:** Develop quarterly media newsletters to highlight the destination to distribute among targeted media.

**STRATEGY:** Gather information about new destination updates and continue media outreach on items of interests.

---

### Travel Trade

**OBJECTIVE:** Host minimum of one familiarization tour (FAM) from each international Tier One market.

**STRATEGY:** Leverage our Gate 7 representation firm in Australia and Black Diamond representation firm in the UK & Ireland to secure quality FAMs between October to May, and late August to September.

**STRATEGY:** Leverage relationships with large-scale industry partners, such as Visit CA, OCVA and Brand USA, to gain opportunities to host top level FAMs in order to broaden awareness and knowledge of Huntington Beach with travel agents.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Host monthly calls with international agencies.

**STRATEGY:** Use research and programs created by the international agencies to gain further knowledge of markets, enabling team and agencies to have effective, efficient and goal oriented communications and programs.

## Digital Marketing

**OBJECTIVE:** Deploy e-newsletters to our leisure audience monthly based on a strategic editorial calendar with a ten percent open rate. Support all Visit Huntington Beach departments with their individual email marketing objectives.

**STRATEGY:** Design new e-newsletter templates to feature relevant Huntington Beach information and encourage click-throughs.

**STRATEGY:** Utilize A/B testing, automation, audience segments, dynamic content, and other optimization tactics through Emma e-newsletter software.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Generate \$15,000 in website advertising revenue, a 25% YOY increase.

**STRATEGY:** Work with DTN and other advertising partners to develop inventory for traditional (banner/text) and non-traditional (embedded blog content) advertising opportunities on the website.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve overall SEM conversion performance by two percent.

**STRATEGY:** Refine SEM efficiency to be more targeted and aligned with experiential pillars, events, and keywords.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Enhance existing International Microsites for Tier 1 audiences in Canada and China. Launch new microsites for United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany International audiences.

**STRATEGY:** Use Brand USA film series as a centerpiece for new microsite content while curating relevant stories for each country.

## Social Media Marketing

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase Facebook engagements from 99,920 by 8% YOY to 107,900, Twitter engagements from 55,096 by 10% YOY to 60,600 and Instagram engagements from 190,575 by 15% YOY to 219,100 as defined by likes, reactions, comments, and shares or retweets.

**STRATEGY:** Reach 60,000 Facebook fans, 9,750 Twitter followers and 30,000 Instagram followers.

**STRATEGY:** Grow our social media channels by sharing unique content that captivates our target audience and supports current campaigns.

**STRATEGY:** Increase engagement through post content and interaction with fans, followers, and local businesses.

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase overall social media referrals to the SurfCityUSA.com website by two percent.

**STRATEGY:** Evolve social media strategy by linking Facebook and Twitter posts to the Visit Huntington Beach website, cross-sharing Surf City USA blog posts, and expanding Pinterest boards to include linkable itineraries.

## Advertising

**OBJECTIVE:** Introduce the new Surf City USA leisure advertising campaign with placement in targeted print and digital publications resulting in a reach of over 700 million.

**STRATEGY:** Reach target audiences through advertising with specific brand messaging relative to the Huntington Beach experiential pillars: Laidback Luxury Traveler, Multi-Generational Families, Active Lifestyle Enthusiasts

**STRATEGY:** Secure placement in the following associated publications to share Surf City USA branding and strategic campaign messaging - See Media Plan Flowchart on following spread.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Introduce the new Meetings and HB Collection advertising campaign with placement in targeted print and digital publications.

**STRATEGY:** Reach target audiences through advertising with specific brand messaging relative to the Huntington Beach meetings target markets: Corporate and Incentive Meetings Planners

**STRATEGY:** Secure placement in the following associated publications to share HB Collection branding and strategic meetings campaign messaging - See Media Plan Flowchart on following spread.



# VISIT HUNTINGTON BEACH FY 2016/17 MEDIA FLOWCHART

Leisure - Online/Digital  
Leisure - Print  
Brand USA  
Meetings/Groups

	MONTHS: OCT					NOV				DEC				JAN					FEB				MAR				APR				MAY				JUNE				JULY				AUG				SEP					
	WEEKS:	26	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	4	11
<b>LEISURE</b>																																																				
<b>SEM &amp; Social Media Campaign</b>																																																				
Online Ad Platform - Display/Video - Cross Device w/ Device ID Targeting*	[Leisure - Online/Digital]																																																			
Pandora - Mobile Audio Spots/Mobile Display Banner/Mobile Video Rotation (San Francisco & Seattle)	[Leisure - Online/Digital]																																																			
<b>2017 California Official State Visitor Guide (Domestic)</b>																																																				
Sunset Magazine Insider Guide (SoCal/LA)	[Leisure - Print]																																																			
Sunset Magazine Insider Guide (San Francisco)	[Leisure - Print]																																																			
Sunset Magazine Insider Guide (Seattle)	[Leisure - Print]																																																			
<b>Sunset Magazine Print &amp; Online Package</b>																																																				
March 2017 - Travel Chronicles Special Section	[Leisure - Print]																																																			
June 2017 - CA Road Trips	[Leisure - Print]																																																			
September 2017 - Travel Directory	[Leisure - Print]																																																			
Sunset Travel E-newsletters (1x each month)	[Leisure - Online/Digital]																																																			
<b>Brand USA Placement</b>																																																				
2017 Inspiration Guide	[Brand USA]																																																			
Visit CA/Brand USA: China Co-Op - Spring 2017 (May-June 2017) Tier 3	[Brand USA]																																																			
Visit CA/Brand USA: Australia Co-Op - Spring 2017 (April-June 2017) Tier 3	[Brand USA]																																																			
Visit CA/Brand USA: Canada Co-Op - Spring 2017 (May-June 2017) Tier 3	[Brand USA]																																																			
Enhanced City Page on VisitTheUSA	[Brand USA]																																																			
<b>MEETINGS/GROUPS</b>																																																				
Meetings Today Partner Co-op - Print/Digital/Event Participation/Webinar/E-Newsletters	[Meetings/Groups]																																																			
HelmsBriscoe Digital Placement	[Meetings/Groups]																																																			
Cvent Digital Placement	[Meetings/Groups]																																																			
Convention Plan-It Website Enhanced Listing Package	[Meetings/Groups]																																																			
Collinson Media Package - Print/Digital/Event Participation/Webinars	[Meetings/Groups]																																																			
Northstar Travel Media Destination California Supplement	[Meetings/Groups]																																																			

\*Phoenix, Scottsdale, Dallas, Austin, Houston, Seattle, San Francisco and Vancouver

## Visitor Services & Publications

**OBJECTIVE:** Champion development of HB Collection group sales collateral including fulfillment brochure and incentive postcard.

**STRATEGY:** Convey consistent brand message for HB Collection and position Huntington Beach as a preferred Southern California meetings destination.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve brand awareness with domestic and international target markets via strategic publication distribution.

**STRATEGY:** Ensure distribution of rack brochures, Visitor Maps, and Visitor Guides align with appropriate target markets throughout the United States and Canada.

**STRATEGY:** Consistently distribute complimentary Visitor Guides and Visitor Maps to local partners throughout Huntington Beach for their guest and customer use.

**STRATEGY:** Develop in-language destination profile collateral pieces for tier 1 and tier 2 International target markets for use with travel trade, media and consumers.

---

## Destination Sales

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase prospecting clients by ten percent through indirect and direct sales efforts.

**STRATEGY:** Create awareness in the top four key group meeting markets: West Coast, Midwest Incentive, Southeast, Northeast.

**STRATEGY:** Focus on key corporate accounts segments: Medical, Pharmaceutical, Insurance, and Tech Corporate Accounts.

**OBJECTIVE:** Target and procure group meetings that produce an average daily rate of \$225 or more.

**STRATEGY:** Introduce the new HB Collection featuring the Waterfront Beach Resort's new tower and meeting space, Pasea Hotel & Spa, the Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel, and Hyatt Regency Resort & Spa renovations.

**STRATEGY:** Focus and solicit accounts that will understand the value of the destination.

**STRATEGY:** Build a stronger presence with organizations such as SITE, MPI, HSMAI nationwide.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Focus on group Incentive business for the destination.

**STRATEGY:** Quarterly solicitation calls to the following Incentive Companies: BCD Travel, ITA, Incentive Travel Solutions, BI Worldwide.

**STRATEGY:** Arrange SITE Inspections with these organization to visit Huntington Beach and experience the destination.

---

## Administration & Advocacy

**OBJECTIVE:** Continue focusing on return on investment (ROI) and distribution of the performance-based VHB Dashboard, which provided deeper sales and marketing intelligence to base future decisions.

**STRATEGY:** Assist community leaders in making sound policy decisions by ensuring the monthly Dashboard metrics are distributed and well understood.

# 3 BRING THE SURF CITY USA BRAND TO LIFE FOR VISITORS

## Marketing Research & Branding

**OBJECTIVE:** Continually work toward creation of an immerse brand culture in all aspects of the destination experience for visitors.

**STRATEGY:** Reflect the brand consistently and cohesively in all visitor and public information, sales and marketing materials and promotions, customer-facing communications by our kiosk staff, ambassadors, sales team, marketing team and administrative team, and within our destination advocacy initiatives.

**STRATEGY:** Interpret and bring the brand to life in creative and innovative ways, including through our destination way finder signage system, Surf City USA Shuttle program, other in-destination product development programs, events activities, social media activations, sales events and shows, and our advertising and PR programs.

**OBJECTIVE:** Measure the economic impact of the US Open of Surfing through a third party research study, conducted during the 2017 event.

**STRATEGY:** Develop the research study RFP and deploy in Q2; work with the US Open of Surfing event holders and the research firm to conduct the study in Q4.

**OBJECTIVE:** Help raise the bar on the Surf City USA brand experience for visitors by assisting our attraction, retail, restaurant and event holder business partners through several new strategic initiatives in FY 2016-17.

**STRATEGY:** China Ready: work with a local expert in the China travel market to vet and deploy a series of China Ready workshops for local visitor-related businesses, starting with the downtown BID district.

**STRATEGY:** Develop criteria and an information guide for VHB to provide support marketing programs and activities for signature events that drive destination visitation as a priority. Develop criteria and an information guide for basic marketing support activities that VHB can provide for community events that serve visitors already in the destination.

**STRATEGY:** VHB's Partner and Visitor Service department will develop a volunteer program that will man a destination information table at key visitor events throughout the year.

**STRATEGY:** VHB will prominently feature events on a rotating basis the new responsive website, along with promoting them through website search engine marketing, social media promotions and communications department quarterly e-news program targeting media.

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop two important planning research programs for VHB as a destination marketing organization in FY 2016-17: a long term strategic plan and annual partner survey.

**STRATEGY:** VHB's Board of Directors will work with an outside facilitator and staff to develop a three year strategy plan for FY 2017 - 2020.

**STRATEGY:** VHB will deploy an online partner survey and analysis in Q4 of the FY.

## Public Relations

**OBJECTIVE:** Prioritize social media, digital and mobile channel growth in earned media promotions.

**STRATEGY:** Target a minimum of eight blog posts and ten online media stories that align with our experiential brand pillars for distribution across VHB platforms and social media.

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase visitor engagement by five percent on all social media channels.

**STRATEGY:** Track and manage Visit Huntington Beach's accounts using SproutSocial and Meltwater while engaging in additional promotional opportunities, such as monthly Twitter Chats.

## Travel Trade

**OBJECTIVE:** Host minimum of one familiarization tour (FAM) from each international Tier One market.

**STRATEGY:** Leverage our Gate 7 representation firm in Australia and Black Diamond representation firm in the UK & Ireland to secure quality FAMs between October to May, and late August to September.

**STRATEGY:** Leverage relationships with large-scale industry partners, such as Visit CA, OCVA and Brand USA, to gain opportunities to host top level FAMs in order to broaden awareness and knowledge of Huntington Beach with travel agents.

**OBJECTIVE:** Host monthly calls with international agencies.

**STRATEGY:** Use research and programs created by the international agencies to gain further knowledge of markets, enabling team and agencies to have effective, efficient and goal oriented communications and programs.

## Digital Marketing

**OBJECTIVE:** Target Q3 distribution of destination app RFP and vendor selection.

**STRATEGY:** Develop Surf City USA app featuring surf culture attractions, local promotions and current events while highlighting Downtown walkable activities.

**STRATEGY:** Integrate app design with Downtown Wayfinding system.

---

## Social Media Marketing

**OBJECTIVE:** Schedule and execute two InstaMeet events with at least twenty participating local photographers and Huntington Beach ambassadors.

**STRATEGY:** Reach out to @surfcityusa Instagram followers and influencers to collaborate through an InstaMeet and capture photos of Huntington Beach in order to network with local photographers, produce visual content for our social media channels, and encourage usage of the #SurfCityUSA hashtag.

---

## Advertising

**OBJECTIVE:** Manage a photo shoot with the Atkins Group to produce at least four new hero images to use throughout advertisements, the Surf City USA website, and publications.

**STRATEGY:** Find models and a photographer whose talent and style fits the Surf City USA brand in order to capture timeless signature photographs that fit our new leisure ad campaign.

---

## Visitor Services & Publications

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide a means for visitors to more easily explore the various neighborhoods of Huntington Beach.

**STRATEGY:** Market and operate the complimentary Surf City USA Shuttle and increase ridership by 25% from the previous year.

**STRATEGY:** Work with the City of Huntington Beach and OCTA to confirm shuttle routes and timetables throughout Huntington Beach.

**STRATEGY:** Market the shuttle in-destination via print and digital advertising to increase shuttle ridership.

**STRATEGY:** Operate a special event shuttle on the 4th of July and during US Open of Surfing weekends.

**STRATEGY:** If necessary, operate a summer shuttle along Pacific Coast Highway to encourage visitation along the coast between Sunset Beach/Huntington Harbour and Downtown Huntington Beach.

**STRATEGY:** Create foreign language print materials to improve the in-destination experience for international visitors.

**STRATEGY:** Fabricate and install the first phases of wayfinding signage in Downtown Huntington Beach and major thoroughfares.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide an increased visitor services presence in Huntington Beach in order to maintain its family-friendly atmosphere and provide easy access to visitor information in areas with a higher density of visitors.

**STRATEGY:** Operate the Daytime Ambassador Program 365 days a year in Downtown Huntington Beach, using input from partners to improve visibility and services.

**STRATEGY:** Operate the Nighttime Ambassador Program from June to September 2017 in Downtown Huntington Beach, to provide a visible deterrence for nuisance behavior on weekend evenings.

**STRATEGY:** Recruit and train Surf City USA Volunteers to provide visitor information at select events in Huntington Beach throughout the year.

**STRATEGY:** Operate the Visitor Information Kiosk 365 days a year at the Huntington Beach Pier.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Redesign and distribute 2,000 informational Huntington Beach Downtown Historical Walking Tour maps.

**STRATEGY:** Refresh the Huntington Beach Downtown Historical Walking Tour maps using updated facts and stories from significant historical data and local historians.

**STRATEGY:** Promote the new Huntington Beach Downtown Historical Walking Tour maps through Surf City USA blog and social media posts and engage local media and residents with a live walking tour preview.

**STRATEGY:** Curate images and artwork from local partners such as the Historic Resources Board to update the look of the map and drive readership.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Update Huntington Beach city and downtown maps with refreshed brand creative and integrated neighborhood content strategy.

**STRATEGY:** Utilize neighborhood identifiers designated on responsive website and wayfinding system for content consistency and easy user navigation.

## Visitor Services & Publications [continued]

**OBJECTIVE:** Produce 2017 Surf City USA Shuttle expansion informational marketing brochures, posters, signs, and communication guides for use by visitors, residents and local partners.

**STRATEGY:** Apply existing Surf City USA Shuttle branding to all marketing materials while expanding distribution and awareness through local businesses and partners.

---

## Partner Services

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve communications with Huntington Beach partners in order to stay informed of new and improved products in the destination.

**STRATEGY:** Hold nine Partner Information Meetings throughout the year, with up to five partners in attendance at each meeting.

**STRATEGY:** Create a Welcome Program for new partners, to include a packet of information both in print and online, that will better communicate the advantages of working with Visit Huntington Beach

**STRATEGY:** Create an outreach program to visit approximately ten partners per quarter and create a face-to-face dialogue.

**STRATEGY:** Launch the Partner Portal and hold two trainings during the year for partners to learn how to update their business information, photos, deals, and events for use on [www.SurfCityUSA.com](http://www.SurfCityUSA.com).

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## Destination Sales

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase FAM participation and site inspections to the destination by ten percent.

**STRATEGY:** Tailor site inspections to fit the client's specific needs and align with the corporate goals and objectives of the customer.

**STRATEGY:** Showcase our new projects and developments in Huntington Beach that will enhance the attendee's experience.

**STRATEGY:** Work closely with partners such as Visit Anaheim to combine efforts in closing business for Huntington Beach.

## Film

**OBJECTIVE:** Target an LA based "Top 10" list of film & television locations scouts and producers.

**STRATEGY:** Engage with LA based producers through a production house tour, coordinated by DCI for film and PR pitching.

**STRATEGY:** Develop a prospect list and host one destination film FAM targeting key producers and location scouts.

---

## Administration & Advocacy

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve Destination Product Development offerings for visitors, with the adjunct benefit of improving products and the quality of life for local residents. Work collaboratively to complete projects within projected timeframe:

**STRATEGY:** Complete Phase One of a comprehensive wayfinding program including signage installations in target locations in 2017.

**STRATEGY:** Work with HB Int'l Surfing Museum to enhance the exterior special event space to include legacy story telling about the Epic Big Board.

**STRATEGY:** Launch supportive content/applications that leverages the HB's Guinness World Records, Surf Culture and Action Sports.

**STRATEGY:** Launch Surf City Shuttle marketing program that will now include a year around schedule.

**STRATEGY:** Continue working with the City of HB to create public wi-fi access in strategic areas.

**STRATEGY:** Work with the City and Downtown BID to provide research-based resources that help decision makers achieve downtown's strategic plan and vision.

**STRATEGY:** Monitor and proactively act upon water and beach quality and conditions that may affect the Huntington Beach visitor brand experience.

---

**OBJECTIVE:** Continue building Team VHB cohesiveness and collaborative spirit.

**STRATEGY:** Offer specific team building programs throughout the year that interface staff with destination experiences and events.

**STRATEGY:** Work with key community stakeholders to launch a Pacific Coast Highway clean up program in key gateway areas.

## Staff Directory



**KELLY MILLER**  
President & CEO



**SUSAN THOMAS**  
Chief Marketing Officer



**JOHN EHLENFELDT**  
Executive Vice President,  
Sales & Administration



**NICOLE LLIDO**  
Director of Information  
Technology and Visitor  
& Partner Services



**ELSIE JEAN RODRIGUEZ**  
Director of National Sales



**RACHEL VOLBERT**  
Content & Creative Services  
Manager



**JENNIFER TONG**  
Communications Coordinator



**SOPHIA VALDIVIA**  
Film & Travel Trade  
Coordinator



**TONYA IMADA**  
Sales & Service Coordinator



**STEFFANY SENSESBACH**  
Office Manager



**KEVIN KELLER**  
**DENICE YEAGER**  
**TERRY O'SHEA**  
**KELLEY JO MYNATT**  
Surf City Ambassador  
& Visitor Kiosk Staff

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**JUSTIN SIMPSON**, Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel  
**PAULETTE FISCHER**, Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel  
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**DEVEN SOLANKI**, Ocean Surf Inn

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