

2013 SRTBIA ANNUAL REPORT 2014/2015 WORK PLAN

SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Santa Rosa Tourism Business Improvement Area (SRTBIA) – page 1

Background

Tourism in the Marketplace - pages 2-3

- Indicators
- Industry Employment
- Visitor Spending Impacts
- Transient Occupancy Tax

Program Highlights – pages 4-8

- City Program
- Santa Rosa CVB Program
- Program Costs

SRTBIA Administration – page 9

- Changes to the Boundaries
- Method and Basis of Levying Assessment
- Advisory Board
- Contributions and other Sources

2014/2015 Work Plan - pages 12-19

- City Activities
- SRCVB Activities
- Benchmark Overview



SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: BACKGROUND

The Santa Rosa Tourism Business Improvement Area (SRTBIA) is a collaborative public-private partnership between Santa Rosa Lodging Establishments, the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce, the Santa Rosa Convention and Visitors Bureau (SRCVB) and the City of Santa Rosa created in September 2010. This partnership and dedicated funding source supports tourism programming that increases overnight stays and Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT).

The City of Santa Rosa has been contracting with the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce and the SRCVB since the early 1990s. In FY 2007/2008 the effects of the 'Great Recession' took its toll on the City's General Fund, and subsequently caused an 18% reduction to the CVB services contract, followed by an additional reduction in FY 2009/2010, and culminating with the elimination of General Fund support in FY 2010/2011.

In June 2010, Santa Rosa lodging operators and the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce approached the City with a request to form a Business Improvement Area to secure a stable revenue stream to continue CVB Welcome Center operations, while increasing tourism programs by adding a 3% surcharge for lodging operators within Santa Rosa City limits. Proceeds from the surcharge are used to increase overnight stays and Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT).

The City receives a 2% administrative fee for revenue collection, after which the remaining revenues are dispersed with the SRCVB receiving 70% to support their programs and services, and the City's Economic Development marketing initiative to drive tourism receiving 30%.

The coordinated SRTBIA programs focus on:

- SRCVB Group Sales: brings groups and organizations to the community for meetings, events and conventions.
- Event Support and Attraction: sustains current event programming and grows future event programming opportunities to encourage overnight stays in Santa Rosa.
- Marketing and Promotions/Public Relations: conducts marketing to promote and brand Santa Rosa as a destination in the heart of Sonoma County wine country, one of the top wine travel destinations in the world.
- **SRCVB Welcome Center Operations**: directs visitors to various community amenities including hotels, restaurants, retail, and local attractions and events in the community.



SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: TOURISM IN THE MARKETPLACE

SONOMA COUNTY TOURISM INDICATORS 2013

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) and Sonoma County Tourism (SCT) produce an annual report with research partner Moody's to highlight economic trends and indicators:

- A strengthening US recovery after the federal fiscal cliff is resolved, and improving outlook for the wine country bode well for Sonoma's visitor-dependent industries. Greater interest in the County's destinations is evident in the increasing passenger traffic at Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport. Passenger traffic through the first eight months of 2012 increased 3% from a year earlier and was close to matching the airport's peak for the same time period in 2008.
- Tourism indicators show that travel is returning to Sonoma County following the economic downtown beginning in 2007-2008.

 Destination spending, transient occupancy tax (TOT), industry earnings and local and state tax receipts are the highest that Sonoma County has seen in the last decade. Travelers are returning to Sonoma County and supporting the local economy through spending.
- In 2012, Sonoma County's year-over average daily rate (ADR) for lodging increased 1.3% when adjusted for inflation. This follows a 3.9% increase in 2011, further suggesting that travel is returning to Sonoma County.
- Sonoma County's Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) receipts totaled \$23.9 million in 2012 after adjusting for inflation. This is the highest level of TOT receipts that Sonoma County has ever received.

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

- Sonoma County ranks first against comparable counties of Napa and Santa Barbara with 16,910 jobs generated by tourist destination spending, Napa had 11,350 in tourism jobs and Santa Barbara had 16,300 tourism jobs in 2011. Sonoma County's 2011 job figures show a 2.6% increase from 2010, up from a year-over increase of 1.4% from 2009 to 2010.
- Distribution of employment within Sonoma County's Tourism industry is similar to previous years, within 51.9% of employment in accommodations & food services, 38.3% in arts, entertainment and recreation, and 8.8% in retail. In the coming years, air transportation is expected to be a new source of employment, due to the expansion of air services to Sonoma County.

SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: TOURISM IN THE MARKETPLACE

VISITOR SPENDING IMPACTS

Visitor spending includes all spending for accommodations, wine activities, retail and other tourism related purchases. The most recent figures show that Sonoma County's destination spending was up 8.47% from \$1.36 billion in 2010 to \$1.47 billion in 2011. With a total visitor spending equal to \$1.47 billion, the majority of the money is spent by visitors who stay at hotels or motels (\$726.6 million) and on food and beverage (\$396.9 million).

Destination spending per-capita shows for each of Sonoma County's 488,116 residents, \$3,117 dollars in destination spending were generated. Santa Barbara County, with a population of 426,878 generated \$3,955 per-capita and Napa County generated the highest per-capita spending at \$7,414 for each of its 138,088 residents. Napa County consistently has high per-capita destination spending due to its relatively small population. Sonoma County's destination spending per-capital fell short of Napa and Santa Barbara Counties, but outpaced the statewide average of \$2,767 per-capita.

The 5.15% increase in inflation-adjusted destination spending was a positive indicator for tourism in Sonoma County, following a 7.11% increase in the prior year. The increases indicate that direct spending is on track with pre-recession levels. This growth outpaced that of Santa Barbara and Napa County and the California average for 2011. Early 2012 figures indicate that this positive trend will continue.

TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAXES (TOT)

Santa Rosa Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) increased by 12%

YEAR	1ST QUARTER	2ND QUARTER	3rd Quarter	4TH QUARTER	Annual Total
2012	\$639,225	\$974,865	\$1,327,717	\$920,002	\$3,861,809
2013	\$730,203	\$1,166,691	\$1,459,427	\$1,004,402	\$4,360,723

SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: CITY PROGRAM



'OUT THERE' SANTA ROSA DESTINATION CAMPAIGN

The "Out There" campaign has found success beyond traditional tourism initiatives by increasing tourism through a strategy that positions Santa Rosa as a culturally progressive wine country destination. The media campaign focused on markets with direct flight access into Santa Rosa via the Sonoma County Airport.

Results from **Phase 1** of the campaign have generated 5 million impressions with over 60,000 click-throughs recorded at a click rate of 2.21% (good by web standards). Early results from the TV and online efforts show over 500,000 impressions with an engagement rate of 2.65%. The average engagement response on cable sites is .07% to 1%, indicating a relatively high success rate for this campaign.

Since embarking on the "Out There" campaign, City staff has worked with SRCVB staff to integrate the marketing themes into the SRCVB's outreach and advertising efforts.

WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The City uses social media and web/internet content generation to engage visitors and residents and build on Santa Rosa's *destination city* brand. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest are the main social media platforms the City uses to interact with visitors. Current Facebook fans are 4,069, twitter followers 4,383, Instagram followers 1,429, YouTube views 9,333. The Visitors and Downtown web content has generated 139,681 unique page views for 2013.



DOWNTOWN SANTA ROSA



SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: CITY PROGRAM



SONOMA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD (EDB) BEER, CIDER, DISTILLERY CONFERENCE

Craft breweries are a unique asset to Sonoma County. Given the annual Pliny the Younger pilgrimage, and the City's capacity to accommodate growth in this area, it is particularly relevant to Santa Rosa. For this reason, staff participated in the development of the Beer, Cider, and Spirits Conference. Through this conference the Economic Development team launched a targeted beer tourist, and beer entrepreneur campaign aligned with the *Out There* marketing that has resulted in accelerated growth and interest in Santa Rosa's brewing scene.



One of the key yet unsung elements of tourism programming is the element of civic pride and sense of community. The City's efforts to integrate the *Out There* campaign provides a foundation to unify many of the city's unique and interesting attractions. By developing desirable and useful placemaking merchandise, creating on- and offline spaces where local artists can be featured, and having a presence at events, the City will capture the *local* Santa Rosa experience for visitors.

CYCLING CULTURE AND TOURISM

In the case of the Amgen Tour of California, absence makes the heart grow fonder. Staff spent FY 2013-2014 boosting relations and working with the Tour and other cycling culture lynchpin organizations. Cycling tourism remains high in Santa Rosa – a destination for professional, amateur, and recreational cyclists – and our lodging establishments are adept at accommodating cycling groups.







SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: CVB PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Santa Rosa Convention and Visitors Bureau

GROUP BUSINESS

CVB room nights booked for the 2013 calendar year were 7,487 an increase of 1,775 room nights over 2012. In addition we booked over \$140,625 in other non-hotel revenues in 2013 including restaurants, winery groups and transportation.

WELCOME CENTER

California Welcome Center assisted 45,813 walk-in visitors to the Santa Rosa community, handled 2,501 tourism related phone calls, and answered over 896 email requests for additional information on lodging, attractions and activities. The Welcome Center provided over 8,056 direct referrals for winery visits, 4,535 restaurant recommendations and 2,035 accommodation requests and reservations.

CVB PRINT AND WEB MEDIA

SRCVB contracted for print advertising with VIA and Sunset Magazine. Ads proved to be very successful at increasing traffic to the SRCVB web site and requests for information: 4,507 leads were generated from this ad campaign. Lastly, the SRCVB web site enjoyed a healthy stream of 118,249 unique web visits for the 2013 calendar year and increase of 40,136 unique visitors.

SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: COOPERATIVE EVENTS & PROGRAM COSTS

SRTBIA Cooperative Event Grants

Amgen Tour of California 2013 Levi's Gran Fondo 2013

National Heirloom Exposition Café Aeronautics Foundation Iron Girl Wine Country Senior Games Country Summer Peggy Sue's Cruise Latin Jazz Festival

2013/2014 PROGRAM COSTS

Appropriated Budget (based on a full year)

City Program	
Group Sales	
Event Support & Attraction	
Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations	
California Welcome Ctr.	
Operations/Administration	
Total	

FY 13/14
- n/a -
\$50,000
\$157,485
- n/a -
167,515
\$375,000



SRCVB Program		
Group Sales		
Event Support & Attraction		
Marketing, Promotions,		
Public Relations		
California Welcome Ctr.		
Operations/Administration		
Total		

Calendar 2013
\$181,085
\$50,000
\$222,126
\$141,906
\$242,090
\$837,207

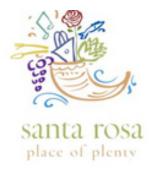


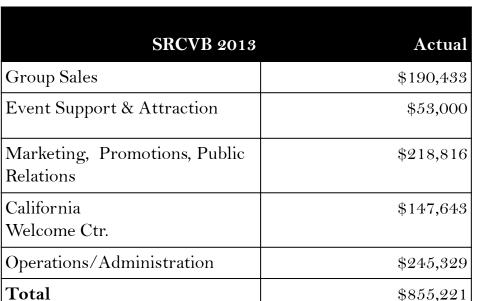
Combined Totals	
	\$181,085
	\$100,000
	\$379,611
	\$141,906
	\$409,605
	\$1,212,207





SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: PROGRAM COSTS - BUDGET ACTUAL







City FY 13/14	Actual
Group Sales	-0-
Event Support & Attractions	\$53,000
Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations	\$204,010
California Welcome Center	- O -
Operations/Administration	\$134,956
Total	\$391,966

(reflects 3 Quarters of Revenue Collection)

SRTBIA 2013 ANNUAL REPORT: ADMINSTRATION

CHANGES TO BOUNDARIES

CONTINUE METHOD AND BASIS OF LEVYING ASSESSMENT

None

No change. Assessment method and detail located in the SRTBIA Ordinance attachment.

ADVISORY BOARD CHANGES

The SRTBIA Board is a five member appointed advisory board by the Santa Rosa City Council which includes: one Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce employee, one City of Santa Rosa employee and three hotel operators, at least one of whom is employed by a full-service hotel and one of whom is employed by a select-service hotel. The SRTBIA Board roster is as followed:

Max Childs	Courtyard Marriott	Hotel-at-Large Representative
Donna Rentera	Best Western Garden Inn	Limited-service Hotel Representative
Jonathan Coe	Santa Rosa Chamber President	Chamber of Commerce Representative
Danielle O'Leary	Economic Development Manager	City of Santa Rosa Representative
OPEN Hotel Seat	(Undergoing recruitment)	Full-Service Hotel Representative

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR OTHER SOURCES

The CVB received the following additional contributions for the 2013 calendar year:

- •\$31,000 County of Sonoma Welcome Center funding
- •\$32,944 Merchandise Sales
- •\$3,250 Display and Advertising Sales
- •\$6,737 Certified Folder Contract Fees

SURPLUS OR DEFICIT REVENUES TO BE CARRIED OVER

The remaining balance of the City's FY 2013/2014 appropriated budget will be carried over to FY 2014/2015. This amount will be determined when the fiscal year books are closed in early July. The CVB operates on a calendar year, therefore some of the funds will carry over into the City's new fiscal year as well as the CVB's calendar year. Those funds will be determined at year-end.





CITY MARKETING STRATEGIES

The City's work plan strategies are consciously derived from and aligned with the CVB Board's nine strategies as adopted in 2012. Those strategies are as follows, with the four City-relevant strategies highlighted with italics.

- Attract and develop sports tourism to provide overnight stays for our lodging partners.
- Increase visitor local spending (focusing on Chamber members) through visits to and referrals from the CWC to area attractions.
- Drive Business to our Chamber hospitality members through value driven programs and activities.
- Increase revenue for our lodging partners through effective leisure transient marketing programs.
- Increase awareness of Santa Rosa as a visitor destination through an effective PR and social media campaign.
- Develop and implement an annual local community public relations plan communicating the benefits of SRTBIA funded activities and the importance of tourism (for the CVB this is modified as communicating the benefits of the CVB's activities).
- Achieve annual goals for group room nights for our lodging partners through the effective deployment of our sales team
- Maximize the effective use of SRTBIA funds through the implementation of a coordinated work plan with the SRCVB.
- Advocate to develop tourism infrastructure in the community; promote place-making and cultural programming of public spaces.

Strategy: Increase awareness of Santa Rosa as a visitor destination through an effective PR and social media campaign

Benchmarks: Website traffic; social media traffic/fan count/likes, participation in engagement campaigns; content production; media

releases promoting Santa Rosa, media requests, media impressions

Tactics: Sustain and grow strong social media presence for increased brand engagement with a goal of increasing recognition of

Santa Rosa as a destination, and, over time, converting that awareness to overnight stays.

Refresh (ongoing) and maintain City's visitor, residents, and business web presence and digital offerings with a goal of increasing recognition of Santa Rosa as a destination to do and/or relocate business, as well as to recreate, and converting that awareness to overnight hotel stays.

Involve locals using all available tools to build civic pride and encourage an attitude of local ambassadorship.

Engage media in promoting Santa Rosa as a business and leisure destination.

Develop a web-based media kit that is flexible for the needs of leisure, family, business, and sports travel.

Create marketing campaigns that reinforce cycling tourism and brand affinity, wine, craft beverage and culinary "farm-to-table" plentitude, and cultural activity themes to travelers, and encourage corporate event utilization.

Strategy: Develop and implement an annual local community public relations plan communicating the benefits of SRTBIA funded

activities and the importance of tourism

Benchmarks: Number of speaking engagements related to local economic drivers, increase in media mentions regarding the

importance/benefits of tourism and/or mentioning support from the CVB and City through direct funding assistance.

Tactics: Update talking points illustrating the positive economic and cultural impacts of the tourism industry incorporating facts, figures,

and anecdotal stories.

Insert tourism related economic and cultural impacts into media and community engagement opportunities.

Highlight program and event support provided to organizations that result in overnight stays as well as the advancement of

community causes.

Strategy: Maximize the effective use of SRTBIA funds through the implementation of a coordinated work plan with the SRCVB

Benchmarks: Coordinated programs should benefit Santa Rosa's strategic tourism assets and increase visitor awareness of Santa Rosa as a

tourism and business destination within greater Sonoma County.

Tactics: Implement this coordinated work plan, as well as other agreed upon projects.

Work and clearly communicate with the Chamber and CVB on SRTBIA activities and use of funds.

Strategy: Advocate the development of tourism infrastructure in the community; promote place-making and cultural programming of

public spaces

Benchmarks: Creation of City policies and/or initiatives to improve the visitor experience (e.g. busking programs, outdoor dining opportunities,

bike trails and lanes, etc.); number of community events underwritten that support the "Out There" and/or "place of plenty" brand concept; participation in groups and committees advocating for and/or planning activities affecting or related to the tourism

infrastructure and cultural programming.

Tactic: Promote and coordinate special event programming and/or underwrite community and cultural arts programming activities that

encourage overnight stays.

Grow and retain events/activities by supporting local non-profit organizations and community groups in their development of place-making and cultural activities that bring visitors to and/or prolong visitors' overnight stays in the area, and/or create a sense of destination in Santa Rosa. This support will take the form of seeding and/or supporting the production of events through the event support process, and/or using ED staff expertise, knowledge, connections to consult on the project.

Work with other City departments, agencies, and outside organizations to integrate visitor infrastructure into the planning process for appropriate projects and/or advocate for specific tourism infrastructure projects to be implemented.

Participate in the Sonoma County Economic Development Boards Arts Action Plan Committee, and the Arts Steering Committee of the Community Foundation of Sonoma County, the purpose of both of which is to elevate the arts in Sonoma County so that it is a viable factor in the county's destination identity and a solid amenity to Santa Rosa visitors.

Recommendations for FY 2014/2015

The City's programming model supports programs and events that grow long-term tourism opportunities and increases local and visitor awareness for Santa Rosa as a tourism destination. City marketing, promotion and communication efforts will reinforce Santa Rosa as the central hub of Sonoma County where one can enjoy food and craft beverages, arts and culture, sports and leisure in a centralized wine country location.

Forecasting for FY 2014/2015, staff assumed a *very* conservative budget projection; any funds received over the forecasted amount (which is likely) will be appropriated to City visitor programming only with Council approval.

FY 2013/2014 Budget	\$425,000
Administrative Costs	\$172,957
Salary 1.22 (FTE)	(\$110,451)
Benefits	(\$51,406)
City Overhead	(\$11,100)
AVAILABLE PROGRAMMING	\$252,043
Event Support/Attraction	\$50,000
Marketing/Promotions/Communication	\$202,043
Total Program Costs	\$425,000





CVB ACTIVITIES 2014

CVB operations are overseen by Brad Calkins, Executive Director, who is hired by and reports to the Chamber President. The Executive Director is responsible for providing support to the CVB Board by monitoring its expenditures and budget, implementing CVB programs and work plan, and overseeing the operation of the Welcome Center. The Executive Director supervises staff members who are funded by the CVB budget in order to achieve its goals. In addition to the Executive Director, current staff includes a Sales Coordinator and a Director of Sales.

Director of Sales

- Primary Market: Group business including local host.
- Retention and growth of existing Santa Rosa events and solicitation/creation of new events including sporting events.
- The CVB positions Santa Rosa as the best place to meet for conferences, reunions and tour planners. Programs such as the Local Host program, cycling community outreach, sales missions and reverse familiarization trips to the greater Bay Area are part of the strategy.
- This effort is directed by a full-time sales manager charged with selling groups and meetings directly into Santa Rosa hotels

Sales Coordinator

- Assist clients with non-hotel needs such as destination management companies, transportation, off-site venues, attractions, teambuilding and all other hospitality services to maximize member benefits.
- Manage online group lead program.

Events and Attractions

• Attract new events with event support and promotion. Partner with existing boards and committees to market existing events.

Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations

Because the Sonoma County Tourism Bureau (SCTB) has a broad branding message and covers the major print outlets to market Sonoma County and its destinations, the CVB will be more strategic using advertising to drive hotel night sales in Santa Rosa while continuing to leverage cooperative opportunities such as the Official Visitor Guide presented by the SCTB. Print advertising will be in publications such as:

- · AAA Tour book and website
- · VIA Magazine Travel Guide
- · Sunset Magazine
- · Official Sonoma County Visitor Guide & Map
- · 101 Things to Do

Social Media and Website

The CVB will utilize electronic media to engage customers, improve customer service, and create loyalty and drive hotel nights by developing and using new video outreach pieces to be placed on the Web and other sites focusing on Facebook and Twitter while continuing to use other platforms. Facebook Fans at the end of 2013 were 25,297. The CVB also creates goals and monitors social media engagement including sharing of post, comments on post and retweet of messages.

Internet & Mobile

Continue expanding website reach by creating new content and SEO/WSO (search engine optimization) programs to capitalize on the increase from 2013 of unique visitors to VisitSantaRosa.com and the use of smart phones during travel. The CVB made their website mobile friendly in 2013 and started a paid Google campaign to direct in market traffic searches to visitsantarosa.mobi.

Collateral Material

New collateral was created in 2013 including group sales pieces and a new Santa Rosa visitor guide.

Niche Markets—Food & Wine

Augment and expand locally specific advertising and marketing efforts promoting Santa Rosa as a food & wine country, and regional service destination. Activities include promoting Sonoma County Restaurant Week by highlighting Santa Rosa dining opportunities

Niche Markets—Arts and Culture

Expand collaboration on events that drive overnight room nights and co-marketing and branding to boost this niche market's potential for overnight stays including venues such as the Green Music Center, Wells Fargo Center and the Charles M. Shultz Museum.

Cycling

Create partnerships on events that drive room nights and co-marketing and branding to boost cycling related activities potential for overnight stays. Continue to showcase all the Amgen Tour of California events since 2006 and promote Santa Rosa as a year round cycling destination.

California Welcome Center (CWC) Operations

The CWC will continue its mission of providing excellent customer service to visitors to Santa Rosa while making an economic difference to the local business community as follows:

- · Maintain daily Welcome Center operation with professional staff and volunteers;
- · Update and promote VisitCWC.com in conjunction with the State of California;
- · Conduct ongoing training programs for staff and volunteers;
- · Track monthly referrals to local businesses and Chamber Members; and
- · Track visitor requests, walk-ins, web, and phone inquiries.

SRCVB Budget 2014	
Group Sales	\$227,449
Event Support and Attraction	\$45,000
Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations	\$239,620
California Welcome Center	\$155,639
CVB Operations	\$288,029
Total	\$955,787

SRTBIA ANNUAL REPORT: BENCHMARK SUMMARY

These performance measures are used to measure work plan success collectively and for the individual partners.

Revenue Benchmarks

- · Increase in TOT collection
- · BIA assessment increases in revenue in future years

Marketing & Sales Benchmarks

General Marketing Measures

- · Quantity and reach of brand marketing campaigns
- · Quantity, frequency and reach of niche marketing programs

Leisure Sales, Group Sales and Events

- · Room nights
- · Room and food and beverage revenue/delegate spending
- · Group services
- · Economic impact
- · Internet
- · Online bookings and packages

California Welcome Center Operations

- · Walk in visitors
- · Wear the Bear referrals tracked from businesses
- · Referred business submit monthly sales figures
- · Phone and web visitor requests monthly tally
- · Chamber member referrals daily tally











Social Media Benchmarks

- •Email Newsletters
- •Open rate and booking conversion

Twitter, Facebook & You Tube

- •Followers, fan counts, "likes" and views
- •Level of engagement
- •Content production

Number of Community Events Supported

- •Resulting in overnight hotel stays
- •Affirms "Place of Plenty" brand theme
- •Affirms cycling and sports
- •Destination brand theme