



.....2015.....

Annual Report





TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2** Executive Summary
- 5** Convention Sales
- 9** Convention Services
- 12** Marketing
- 16** Communications
- 19** Partnership
- 22** Finance and Administration

MISSION STATEMENT

VISIT Milwaukee's mission is to market the Greater Milwaukee area as the destination of choice for conventions, events, and leisure travel, thereby increasing the economic impact of tourism.

VISION STATEMENT

VISIT Milwaukee is recognized as the chief image and tourism marketing organization of the Greater Milwaukee area, and continues to be recognized as a major contributor to a thriving tourism economy that supports job creation and the growth within the convention and tourism infrastructure.



TOURISM IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY

experienced continued growth in 2015. Our final numbers from the state indicate that the total economic impact of tourism for Milwaukee County was \$3.3 billion, and for the four-county area, \$5.1 billion. Tourism supported over 50,000 jobs in the region and brought in \$339 million in total tax receipts. This is great news and shows a 3.37 percent growth over last year.

On the hotel and lodging side, hotel revenue was up 5.3 percent in downtown Milwaukee, 9.6 percent in Wauwatosa and 6.4 percent in Milwaukee County. The industry STR report also shows a 74 percent occupancy rate in

Milwaukee's 16,500 hotel rooms for 2015, with an average daily rate of \$134.64.

The 2015 convention year was anchored by our annuals, Northwestern Mutual and the Bead & Button Show. USA Triathlon returned to the lakefront for an unprecedented third year, and new conventions and events, such as Skate America, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Lifeway Christian Resources and USA Fencing made for a busy year.

The forecast for our industry remains very positive in 2016. Industry experts predict that demand will continue to grow nationally, but



at a slightly slower pace than 2015.

The continued demand growth will outpace supply growth in most markets, allowing further opportunities for hotel rate increases. Overall travel costs will remain stable, with lower oil prices affecting airline and gas prices, partially offsetting hotel cost increases.

The Business Travel Index, a measure used to predict business travel, is at the highest level it has been in several years, signaling a robust year for business travel. There are certain segments that could see a slowdown in travel, specifically manufacturing and agriculture, while banking and pharmaceuticals should see an upturn. While the impact these shifts will have on Milwaukee business travel for 2016 is yet to be determined, overall we expect business travel in the Greater Milwaukee area to remain strong for 2016.

Leisure travelers have money to spend and are motivated to travel. They are expected to increase travel in 2016 with a focus on quality experiences. We are increasing our marketing spend in key markets for the summer and fall campaigns and will again extend our leisure campaign into late fall to drive travel to Milwaukee. Our many events, award-winning dining scene, live music and theater venues, world-class attractions and idyllic location position us well to provide the type of quality experiences leisure travelers are seeking. Continuing to effectively market to leisure travelers with a strong, well-targeted campaign will be important to growing overall tourism spending in 2016.

The meetings market will remain strong overall in 2016, and the seller's market will continue driving hotel pricing for meetings and events higher. Availability of discounted group rates at many hotels is very limited particularly during high demand periods. Many cities are seeing a decrease in large convention bookings and an increase in smaller bookings due to the higher hotel pricing. This trend has impacted the number of large conventions in Milwaukee during the summer months. The sales team will continue to book more events to generate group room nights short-term without losing focus on large meetings booking well into the future.

Important decisions will be made in 2016 that will impact our tourism economy for years to come. We all need to think big in building a new sports and entertainment complex, expanding our transportation options and maintaining thriving cultural and entertainment venues. We look forward to working with all of our community partners to maximize tourism spending in 2016. ■



PAUL UPCHURCH

*President & CEO
VISIT Milwaukee*



ALDO MADRIGRANO

*Chair
VISIT Milwaukee
Board of Directors*

Convention Sales





THE SALES TEAM'S 2015 SUCCESS

was, in part, due to a strong convention year including annual conventions such as Northwestern Mutual, the Bead and Button Show, the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and the Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Association. 2015 also brought the return of a local favorite, the USA Triathlon, and new conventions and events including the PGA Tournament, National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) and Fraternal Order of Eagles.

For an unprecedented third year in a row the USA Triathlon created an **estimated economic impact of \$5.3 million** and brought 5,000+ athletes to the city. The organizers continue to rave about their experience in Milwaukee.

Also in August, southeastern Wisconsin was filled with over 35,000 visitors for the 2015 PGA Tournament. With **\$18.2 million in economic impact**, most local establishments saw a boost in business; for example, Go Riteway stated they were “sold out weeks in advance, and it was one of the busiest weeks in recent history.”

The sales team strengthened key relationships within the sports industry this year when the city hosted over 150 members of the National Association of

Sports Commissions for the group’s annual conference in April. The team followed up on over 15 leads received at the conference, including four that have turned definite. Many attendees said that it was “the best” or “one of the best” conferences they had ever attended.



Finally, to help continue momentum into 2016 and beyond, the sales team attended several conferences and tradeshows throughout the year including Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), Springtime Tradeshaw, Meeting Professionals International-World Education Conference MPI-WEC), IMEX America and American Society of Association Executives (ASAE).

At ASAE, VISIT Milwaukee rolled out its re-designed tradeshow booth featuring a

The USA Triathlon created an
estimated ECONOMIC IMPACT OF \$5.3 MILLION.

••••• 2015 *at a* GLANCE •••••

185,573
TOTAL DEFINITE
ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED

779,071
TOTAL TENTATIVE
ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED

KEY

ADR
*Average Daily
Rate of a hotel
room*

\$162,921,643.⁰⁰
*estimated Total Economic Impact
of 2015 sales team books*

**DEFINITE
ROOM
NIGHTS**
*Room nights
booked by a
client who has
officially selected
Milwaukee*

84
TOTAL MEETING
PLANNER
SITE VISITS

\$162,174,624.³¹
ECONOMIC IMPACT OF
CONVENTION ROOM NIGHTS
IN 2015 AND BEYOND

REVPAR
*Revenue per
available rooms*

**REVPAR FOR MILWAUKEE COUNTY FINISHED
UP 3.8 POINTS OVER THE FINAL RESULT OF 2014;
THIS GROWTH WAS DRIVEN THROUGH ADR GAINS**

**HOTEL REVENUES
WERE UP 7.6%
IN WAUWATOSA/
MILWAUKEE
WEST, DRIVEN
BY STRONG ADR
GAINS**

HOTEL REVENUES
WERE UP **6.4%** IN
MILWAUKEE COUNTY

**TENTATIVE
ROOM
NIGHTS**
*Potential room
nights that are
being pursued
by the VISIT
Milwaukee sales
team*

HOTEL REVENUES
WERE UP **5.3%**
IN DOWNTOWN
MILWAUKEE

*Hotel supply in Downtown
Milwaukee was up 5%*

The booth was such a hit it was awarded
2nd place for “BEST IN-LINE BOOTH” BY ASAE.

Bloody Mary promotional giveaway. The booth had a constant line of people waiting to sample the local mix and ingredients that the team brought with them to Detroit. The booth was such a hit that it was awarded 2nd place for “Best in-line Booth” by ASAE. The team looks forward to traveling with the award-winning booth to new conferences in 2016.



GROUP TOUR

The VISIT Milwaukee sales team also works to bring in hotel leads from the group tour industry. To promote Milwaukee to groups, the team attended five group tour conferences including the American Bus Association, Midwest Marketplace, Boomers in Groups and Ontario Motor Coach Association.

At the conferences, the team coordinated more than 122 appointments garnering 75

tentative and 60 definite leads, representing almost 8,000 visitors to the city. The team also provided group tour operators with custom itineraries and information for over 20 day trips visiting the Greater Milwaukee area.

VISIT Milwaukee continues to foster and grow the “Explore Milwaukee’s Best” program assisting partners in networking opportunities and exploring new attractions in the Greater Milwaukee area. The team also partnered with *Group Tour* magazine to offer a co-op advertising program to help partners with their marketing needs.

The group tour team was awarded *Groups Today Magazine’s* “2015 Readers’ Choice Awards”. The poll rewards excellence in service in the group travel industry and is the only official awards certification in the marketplace.

Finally, VISIT Milwaukee continues to pursue the international/domestic foreign independent travel market where 1,945 room nights were generated in 2015. The team also focuses on the emerging Chinese group travel market and other group markets by attending International Pow Wow, the travel industry’s premier international marketplace and the largest generator of Visit USA travel. ■

Convention Services





THE CONVENTION SERVICES

department works with booked conventions and events to coordinate local convention logistics and attendee experience. They also assist groups with promoting Milwaukee both prior to and during their convention. The team ensures an exceptional Milwaukee experience and may assist the convention in many ways, from Visitor Information staff at the airport to transportation, hotel arrangements, meeting logistics, entertainment, dining and events. The convention services managers connect conventions and their attendees with local businesses and assisted with:

- 481 events
- 527,320 attendees

Ninety-eight percent of meeting planners who held events in Milwaukee this year rated the convention services staff as “Excellent” or “Very Good” on post-event surveys.

Due to the team’s outstanding reputation throughout the industry, VISIT Milwaukee is recognized and receives a series of awards each year. For the 14th year, the services department was awarded the Pinnacle Award by Successful Meetings Magazine for “setting the standard for others to follow.” Furthermore, for the 9th consecutive year, the convention services department was awarded the Meetings and Conventions Gold Service award, presented to CVBs that are “dedicated to meeting professionals.”

Convention services welcomed several large, national conventions and events to Milwaukee in 2015, including:

- International Technology and Engineering Educators Association Annual Conference
- National Association of Sports Commissions Sports Event Symposium
- Society for Freshwater Science Annual Meeting
- Ducks Unlimited, Inc. Annual Convention
- Fraternal Order of Eagles Annual Convention
- Gauverband Nordamerika Gaufest
- Jewish Community Centers Association Maccabi Games
- Brewery Collectibles Club of America CANvention
- Annual Call to Action National Conference
- National Women’s Studies Association Annual Conference

The convention services team maximized relationships with event planners of repeat



business events and conventions to ensure their continued success in Milwaukee and their return for future years, including:

- Wisconsin Association of School Boards
- Anime Milwaukee
- National Association of Sports Commissions
- Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Association
- Wisconsin State Reading Association
- Wisconsin Juniors Volleyball Winter Classic
- Badger Region Volleyball Association
- Kalmbach Publishing Bead and Button Show
- Kohl's
- Wisconsin Restaurant Association
- Northwestern Mutual's Annual Meeting of Network Professionals
- USA Triathlon
- Air & Water Show

Throughout 2015, the convention services team worked with the commissioning



committee of the Littoral Combat Ship USS Milwaukee to plan the Commissioning Ceremony in Veterans Park at the Milwaukee lakefront. Throughout the summer, the team helped to welcome portions of the USS Milwaukee crew to Milwaukee to give the crew a more personal connection to the City of Milwaukee and its citizens. VISIT Milwaukee volunteers assisted at several events in the week leading up to the commissioning, which was held on a cold, snowy November day, with over 7,000 people in attendance.

In addition to assisting incoming conventions, the services department also organizes the Visitor Information Center and over 150 active volunteers, giving 2,600 volunteer hours. Visitor Information assisted more than 20,500 visitors over the course of the year. ■

Marketing





VISIT MILWAUKEE IMPLEMENTED

many successful marketing initiatives in 2015. The team conducted three campaigns targeted to leisure travelers, as well as a campaign for meeting and convention planners and group tour operators.

The summer leisure campaign featured a mix of traditional, digital and social media placements in regional and national markets. Media was placed in publications such as *Chicago Tribune* and *Sturgis Magazine*, radio platforms such as Pandora and Wisconsin Public Radio and digital outlets such as Rocketfuel, YouTube and more. The advertising messaging was focused on specific niche topics, such as family, music, beer and motorcycling.

All advertising collateral directed viewers/listeners back to the VISIT Milwaukee website, where **34 custom itineraries were showcased to potential visitors**, covering interests relating to events, dining, motorcycles, beer and more. The media placements resulted in more than 59 million impressions. During the campaign run, there were **515,000 visits to the website**, an increase of 39.6 percent over the same period in 2014.

The fall campaign ran in publications such as *Food & Travel Magazine* and *Time Out New York*, and digital outlets such as Rocketfuel,

Outbrain, YouTube and more. The advertising messaging differed from the summer campaign to focus on long weekends and dining.

The advertising collateral continued to direct viewers back to the VISIT Milwaukee website, where 36 fall-specific itineraries were listed, in addition to the summer campaign itineraries. The media placements resulted in 23 million impressions. During the campaign run, there were 189,000 visits to the website, an increase of 47.2 percent over the same period in 2014.



The winter shopping campaign promoted Milwaukee and Wauwatosa as the premier shopping destinations in Wisconsin. A Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant helped to support the six-figure campaign.

The summer campaign resulted in more than 59 MILLION IMPRESSIONS.



video was created to support the campaign and highlight the shopping destinations in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa.

All advertising collateral directed viewers/ listeners back to a dedicated landing page on the VISIT Milwaukee website, where potential visitors could access special discounts for six participating hotels, and a number of retail partners and restaurants. The media placements **resulted in more than 5.5 million impressions**, and more than 24,000 visits to the landing page.



VISIT Milwaukee also continued its annual Meetings & Conventions (M&C) marketing campaign targeted to meeting planners. Media was placed in a variety of publications and outlets with a goal of targeting five specific meeting planner audiences: Association, Corporate, Diversity, Religious and Sports. Advertising channels included print publications, digital outlets, email newsletters, social media and more, with a higher focus on digital outlets than in past years. New sales collateral was also produced, including a refreshed trade show booth.

Media was placed in publications seen within a three-hour radius of Milwaukee, such as *Wisconsin Gazette* and *Madison Magazine*, Pandora radio and digital outlets such as Rocketfuel and Facebook. Consumers were also targeted through VISIT Milwaukee's leisure database reaching more than 86,000 email addresses. In addition, a

All advertising was directed back to the Meetings section of VISITMilwaukee.org, which featured custom content pertinent to each of the five target audiences. The media placements resulted in nearly nine million impressions. There were 57,000 visits to the M&C pages of the website, an increase of 48.6 percent over the same period in 2014.

Coinciding with the annual M&C campaign was a complete overhaul of the Meetings section of VISITMilwaukee.org. The new section featured a new design and layout, with more than 100 pages of content customized to the meeting planner audience, including content specific to the five audiences targeted in the M&C campaign. After launching the new section, the team received high praise from meeting planners; one commented that they wished more cities had a website as useful as VISITMilwaukee.org.

Another major project completed in 2015 was the [introduction of a new website: VISITWauwatosa.org](#). The new site was created to continue support of Wauwatosa and promote the city as a tourist destination. The site was developed with input from Wauwatosa city leaders, including Mayor Kathy Ehley. The site includes custom content highlighting Wauwatosa's tourist attractions, restaurants, hotels, shopping, events and more.

VISIT Milwaukee's digital home base, VISITMilwaukee.org, continued its year-over-year growth and reached more than one million visits. Traffic to the site has increased every year by an average of 30.2 percent since 2011.

Milwaukee365.com, the event calendar website, was updated with a refreshed site design and navigation improvements. The site saw more than [353,000 visits in 2015](#), an increase of 7.8 percent over 2014.



The marketing team also rolled out a series of new videos to promote the region as a leisure and business destination. A “Beer & Brewing” video was completed to showcase the city's beer heritage; a “Sports Events” video was completed to highlight Milwaukee as a great host for sporting events; and a “Martin Meets in Milwaukee” video was completed to explain to viewers the significant economic impact that results from hosting meetings and conventions. The team also worked on production of two videos to be released in 2016: a “City of Festivals” video and a “Wauwatosa” video. ■

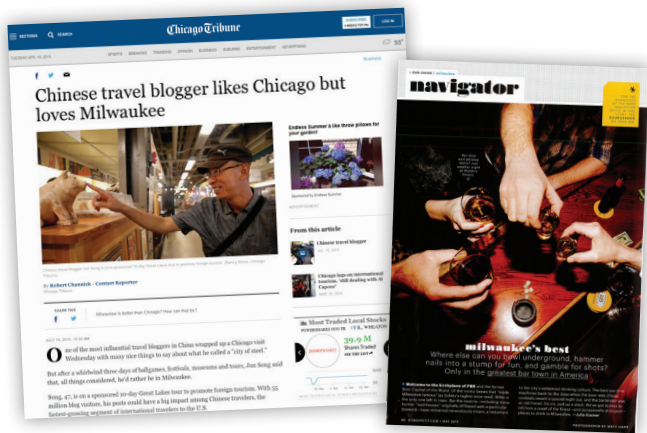
VISITMILWAUKEE.ORG CONTINUED ITS YEAR-OVER-YEAR GROWTH *and reached more than one million visits.*

Communications



THE COMMUNICATIONS department was busy in 2015, hosting nearly 100 travel writers and six familiarization (FAM) trips throughout the year. These efforts, led by new Communications Director Kristin Settle, resulted in over 450 story placements including 120 national and international stories, and 130 regional stories.

Among the more prominent placements for 2015 were features in the *Chicago Tribune*, *Washington Post*, *Indianapolis Star Tribune*, *Midwest Living*, *Better Homes & Gardens*, and *USA Today*.



The PR team met with several writers, producers, and editors at desk side visits in 2015, including Chicago, Rockford, and Madison. These visits led to story placements and potential stories for 2016 as well.

In June, a group of 17 national and international bloggers came to Milwaukee as part of the Blog House Conference, which was hosted by VISIT Milwaukee and Potawatomi

Hotel & Casino. The bloggers learned not only new blogging skills and connections, but also sampled Milwaukee's outstanding food, entertainment venues, and attractions. Thus far, this trip has yielded over 20 story placements from around the globe.

In July, VISIT Milwaukee hosted 22 writers in conjunction with Travel Wisconsin and Geiger & Associates in Florida. The writers flew in from all over the country and were amazed at Milwaukee's beautiful lakefront and delicious food scene, and overwhelmed with the events happening over the busy summer weekend. This five-day trip resulted in over 30 story placements.

Also in July, VISIT Milwaukee partnered with Brand USA to welcome Chinese blogger and photographer Jun Song to Milwaukee for a visit. Blown away by Milwaukee's beauty and attractions, Jun shared many blogs and photos of Milwaukee with his over 55 million readers, but a headline in the *Chicago Tribune* summed up his trip best: "Chinese blogger likes Chicago, but loves Milwaukee." Jun said he would recommend Chicago to his readers, if nothing more than as a way to get to Milwaukee.

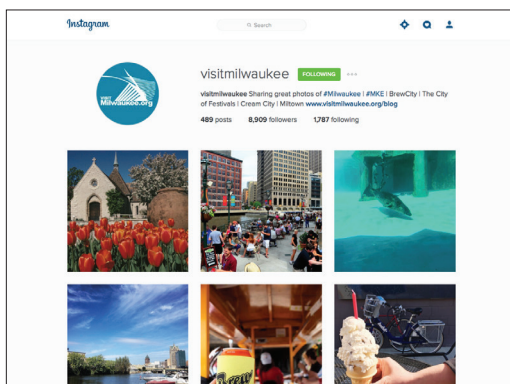
VISIT's PR team wrapped up the year with its sixth and final FAM, a group of shoppers who spent three days (and several hundred dollars) at the area's boutiques, antique stores, and national brand chains. The FAM was part of VISIT Milwaukee's winter shopping campaign and funded in part



VISIT MILWAUKEE ALSO REFOCUSED ITS LOCAL EFFORTS *to bring more brand awareness to those living in the Greater Milwaukee area.*

thanks to a JEM Grant from the Department of Tourism.

In social media, VISIT Milwaukee grew its social following and influence, ending the year with over 33,000 Facebook fans (up 27 percent from last year), 35,000 Twitter followers (up 32 percent from last year), and **4,700 Instagram followers (up 370 percent)**. Part of the success was due to the over twenty social media videos produced by VISIT Milwaukee in 2015, as well as the success of its social media contests and promotions.



VISIT Milwaukee also refocused its local efforts to bring more brand awareness to those living in the Greater Milwaukee area. These efforts included bi-monthly television appearances on WDJT-TV (CBS) and WITI-TV (FOX) to promote attractions, conventions,

restaurants, holidays, and other Milwaukee events as well as the Milwaukee365.com website. VISIT Milwaukee also sponsored radio content on WUWM, WPR, and 88Nine Radio Milwaukee to help expand awareness of its brand and the effect tourism has on the local economy. Finally, the communications team worked with a variety of local writers to serve as resources for stories within the Milwaukee DMA, including all four TV stations, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, the *Business Journal Serving Greater Milwaukee*, *BizTimes*, *OnMilwaukee.com*, and others.

The VISIT Milwaukee team was also busy traveling to various tradeshows in 2015, including the Governor's Conference on Tourism, Travel Blogger Exchange (TBEX), the Education Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO), PRSA National Travel & Tourism Conference, and local conferences such as the Walk and Talk Conference, hosted by the Creative Alliance, and the Marquette University PR Summit.

Dear MKE continued its mission to encourage local pride, with 3,500 Facebook fans, 3,600 Twitter followers, and **5,500 Instagram followers**, in addition to partnerships and sponsorships with local groups such as NEWaukee, Yelp, and Garlic Fest. ■

Partnership



VIBRANT PROGRAMMING AND

partner engagement was the priority of the partnership department in 2015.

The partnership department spent 2015 recruiting new members to VISIT Milwaukee, including Meijer, Inlanta Mortgage, the Kimpton Journeyman, SpringHill Suites Milwaukee Downtown, and the Radisson Hotel Milwaukee Northwest. Other new partners in 2015 include Boswell Books, Float Milwaukee, Carroll University, Nordstrom, UPAF, and 88Nine Radio Milwaukee. In total, VISIT Milwaukee **added 85 new partners in 2015**, had a 90 percent retention rate with previous partners, and **ended the year with 653 total partners**.

As the result of the department's outreach to the corporate partners and hearing their needs, a new program was created called the Corporate Partner Summit. More than 130 corporate representatives from 18 companies, as well as municipal officials representing VISIT Milwaukee's regional partners, registered for the half-day summit in February to learn new ways to tell the Milwaukee piece of their business story. This program provided an excellent opportunity for the partnership department to bring together its corporate partners with leaders from the Milwaukee 7, MMAC, FUEL

Milwaukee, the Greater Milwaukee Committee, and NEWaukee. Participants were given an informational resource called the MKE Toolkit to assist them in business throughout the year. Due to the overwhelming positive response to this summit, it was planned again for in 2016, renamed the Marketing Milwaukee Summit.



Attendance also increased dramatically for the annual Customer Service Training program in March. The Partnership Department grew its relationships with the Wisconsin Restaurant Association and Milwaukee Area Technical College hospitality program by forming a committee to drive attendance to a customer service training speaker from Zappos. Over **600 people attended this Customer Service Training**, an increase of 254 percent over 2014.

**VISIT MILWAUKEE ADDED 85 NEW PARTNERS
IN 2015, *had a 90 percent retention
rate with previous partners.***

VISIT MILWAUKEE Events in 2015

- **VISIT Milwaukee 101**, January 22, VM Board Room
- **Corporate Partner Summit**, February 3, Wisconsin Center, Room 202
- **Partner Spotlight**, February 18, VM Board Room
- **Joint Mixer w/ MMAC**, February 25, Lucid/The Garden
- **Customer Service**, March 10, Wisconsin Center, Ballroom D
- **VISIT Milwaukee 101**, March 18, VM Board Room
- **Annual Meeting**, May 6, Historic Turner Ballroom
- **VISIT Milwaukee 101**, May 20, VM Board Room
- **Partner Spotlight**, June 17, VM Board Room
- **VISIT Milwaukee 101**, July 21, VM Board Room
- **Partner Mixer**, July 23, Lakefront Brewery
- **Greater Milwaukee Hospitality Open**, August 2-3, The Brute at Grand Geneva Resort & Spa
- **Partner Spotlight**, August 19, VM Board Room
- **Mega VISIT Milwaukee 101**, September 23, Aloft Hotel Downtown Milwaukee
- **Partner Spotlight**, October 21, VM Board Room
- **Mixer w/ArtSpin & MMAC**, October 27, Company Brewing
- **Educational Session: Reputation Management**, October 29, Hilton Garden Inn - Milwaukee Airport
- **VISIT Milwaukee 101**, November 18, VM Board Room
- **Marketing to the Meeting Planner**, November 19, Rumble; Harley-Davidson Museum

The 2015 Annual Meeting at the Historic Turner Hall Ballroom in May had record sponsorships from the corporate community, and with 492 attendees, saw a 45.5 percent increase over the prior year. Following the event, 12 of Milwaukee's best restaurants provided the reception food and craft cocktails.



At the Greater Milwaukee Hospitality Golf Outing in August, the presenting sponsor Milwaukee Bucks helped raise the level of excitement and fun with its staff presence, prizes, and silent auction donation package. The partnership department implemented a new auction strategy with exciting packages and a live auctioneer. As the result, **net revenues were up 18.6 percent from 2014** and the silent auction revenues increased 64 percent from 2014.

The partnership team presented fresh and topical programming for the partners in 2015, hosting two well-attended programs about online reputation management on Yelp and Marketing to the Meeting Planner. ■

Operations & Administration





VISIT MILWAUKEE, A PRIVATE,

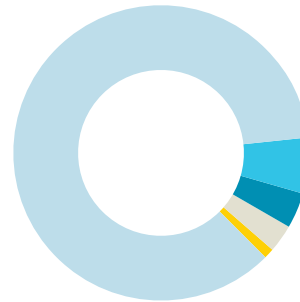
non-profit corporation, was incorporated in 1967 as a 501(c)(6) tax-exempt organization. Governed by an independent board of directors, the President/CEO leads a full-time staff of 37, as well as additional part-time and seasonal staff members.

VISIT Milwaukee is a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). The role of a DMO is to market and sell the destination’s convention facilities, hotels, attractions and other hospitality industry businesses to meeting planners and leisure visitors. In addition, VISIT Milwaukee works to enhance the image of the Greater Milwaukee area on a national level.

To accomplish this mission, VISIT Milwaukee’s main funding source is the occupancy tax, also known as “room tax” or “bed tax,” an industry-imposed tax paid by overnight visitors. Currently, VISIT Milwaukee receives a portion of occupancy taxes from the City of Milwaukee (through a contract with the Wisconsin Center District) and the City of Wauwatosa.

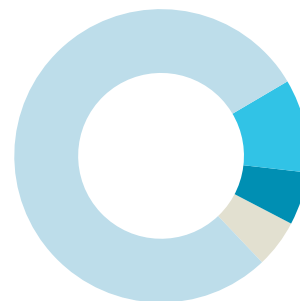
VISIT Milwaukee had annual budgeted revenues of \$8.4 million in 2015, of which 86 percent was derived from the occupancy tax and other public funding. Occupancy taxes in Milwaukee are comprised of a 7 percent City of Milwaukee occupancy tax and a 2.5 percent Milwaukee County occupancy tax. In 2015, total City of Milwaukee occupancy taxes were \$13.2

FUNDING SOURCES 2015



- **86%** Hotel Occupancy Taxes & Public Funding
- **6%** Partner Dues & Programs
- **4%** Marketing Sponsors & Ad Sales
- **3%** Program & Service Revenue
- **1%** State of Wisconsin Tourism Grants

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES 2015



- **78%** Convention Sales & Destination Marketing
- **10%** Convention Services
- **7%** Partnership Program
- **5%** Administration Department

VISIT MILWAUKEE WORKS TO ENHANCE THE *image of the Greater Milwaukee area on a national level.*

million, and Milwaukee County occupancy taxes were \$6.1 million. VISIT Milwaukee receives a portion of the City of Milwaukee occupancy tax only, which represented approximately 41 percent of the total city taxes collected in 2015. The remainder



of the occupancy taxes is retained by the Wisconsin Center District in order to pay the bond debt on convention facilities and the Milwaukee Theatre. VISIT Milwaukee also receives a portion of the city of Wauwatosa occupancy taxes.

The balance of funding comes from additional public support and tourism grants, marketing sponsorships, advertising

sales, partner dues and programs and other program and services revenue.

VISIT Milwaukee's financial operations are reviewed by a five member Audit/Finance Committee of the Board of Directors, led by the Secretary/Treasurer. In addition, VISIT Milwaukee retains an independent audit firm, Ritz Holman CPAs, to conduct an annual financial audit of the organization's financial operations and internal controls. ■

• 2015-2016 •

Board of Directors

* Executive Committee

OFFICERS:

Aldo Madrigano*

Chair
Beer Capitol Inc.

Omar Shaikh*

Vice-Chair
SURG Restaurant Group

Lynda Kohler*

Treasurer/Secretary
SHARP Literacy, Inc.

Paul Mathews*

Past Chair
Marcus Center for the
Performing Arts

Paul Upchurch*

President & CEO
VISIT Milwaukee

Dana Jones*

Assistant Secretary
VISIT Milwaukee

*Thank you to
outgoing board
members*

**DAN KEEGAN,
MARY DOWELL,
ALD. BOBBY PANTUSO
AND LAURETTE
PETTIBONE.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

Rafael Acevedo*

Greater Milwaukee
Foundation

Tyler Barnes

Milwaukee Brewers

Joe Bartolotta

Bartolotta Restaurant Group

Bill Davidson

Harley-Davidson Museum

Mayor Kathy Ehley*

City of Wauwatosa

Paulette Enders

City of Wauwatosa

Deborah Farris

Danceworks

Rick Frenette

Wisconsin State Fair

Jeremy Fojut

Clever/ART Milwaukee

Cecilia Gilbert

City of Milwaukee DPW

Ralph Hollmon

The Milwaukee Urban League

Joseph Khairallah*

Marcus Hotels & Resorts

Tom Malloy

Potawatomi Hotel & Casino

Harold Mester

Milwaukee County/General
Mitchell International Airport

Rose Murack*

Radisson Hotel
Milwaukee-West

David Murphy

Marquette University

Ald. Dennis R. McBride

City of Wauwatosa

Omar Shaikh*

SURG Restaurant Group

Don Smiley

Milwaukee World Festivals, Inc.

John Steinmiller*

Milwaukee Bucks

Teig Whaley-Smith*

Milwaukee County

Rick Wiegand

Ambassador Hotel

Chuck Wikenhauser

Milwaukee County Zoo

Ald. Terry Witkowski*

City of Milwaukee



648 N. Plankinton Ave., Suite 220
Milwaukee, WI 53203
(800) 554-1448



VISITMilwaukee.org
@VISITMilwaukee