

ANNUAL
REPORT

2016

Visit
OMAHA™

VISIT OMAHA - OMAHA'S OFFICIAL TOURISM AUTHORITY

“ Omaha was a nice surprise and a culinary treat! I ate my way through the city! Omaha residents make you feel welcome in their city and they seem genuinely happy to have you in their town. I have recommended Omaha to several customers after my initial visit and will continue to do so in the future. ”

- Lindsey White, Global Account Executive - ConferenceDirect



MISSION

To promote and develop metro Omaha as a dynamic destination to stimulate economic growth.

ABOUT VISIT OMAHA

Visit Omaha, Omaha's official tourism authority, is a research-based, strategic destination marketing and management organization. Visit Omaha's main goal is to serve as the destination expert and drive increased visitation and revenue to Omaha through its convention sales/business development, advertising and promotional efforts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There's one (albeit hyphenated) word that really describes 2016, and it's RECORD-BREAKING. From the record-breaking attendance at the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials to the two millionth visitor at the zoo, 2016 blew it out of the water. Omaha also experienced the highest demand for hotel rooms in the city's history, just 14-thousand shy of two million room nights. On the supply side, Omaha has experienced record-breaking hotel growth. There are now more than ten thousand hotel rooms in Douglas County. We saw improvement in convention bookings in 2016, increasing the number of room nights on the books for future years. However, 2018 and 2019 are currently running behind pace. Even though the Visit Omaha Convention Sales team put 237,659 room night opportunities on the table for those years, conversion remains low.

With record-breaking years comes the reality of having to perform at an even higher level the next year. It's a challenge, but based on what I've learned in my almost 2 years of being in Omaha, this city is up for it.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Every two years Visit Omaha commissions an independent economic impact study that provides important tourism data on the number of visitors, their spending patterns, how they impact Omaha's job market, and the amount of tax revenue they generate while visiting Omaha. Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company, is currently researching data for 2016; that information will be included in the 2017 Annual Report.

In 2014, 11.9 million out-of-towners visited Omaha and spent \$1.13 billion here, an 11% increase over 2012. Visitor spending stimulated an additional \$651 million dollars in business-to-business spending as well as employee spending, resulting in a total tourism economic impact of nearly \$1.8 billion for the year.

Tourism Supports Local Jobs

Tourism sustains 16,700 jobs in Omaha that equates to one in every 17 jobs. Omaha's tourism industry is the 9th largest private sector employer in the city. Tourism employment, as the result of visitor spending, provides citizens of Omaha/Douglas County with \$530 million in annual income, up 8% since 2012.

Tourism Provides Tax Revenue and Tax Relief

Visitor spending in Omaha/Douglas County results in more than \$250 million in tax revenues for local, state and federal governments. If it weren't for the local tax revenues generated by visitor spending, each Omaha/Douglas County household would pay an additional \$682 per year in taxes or face the equivalent reduction in services.

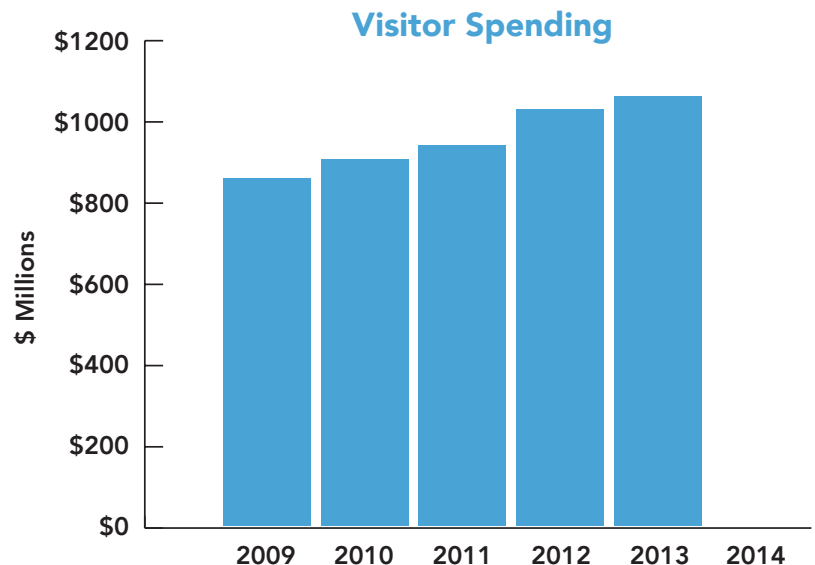
SOURCE: Tourism Economics - An Oxford Economics Company



The average day visitor to Omaha spends approximately \$59 in the city.



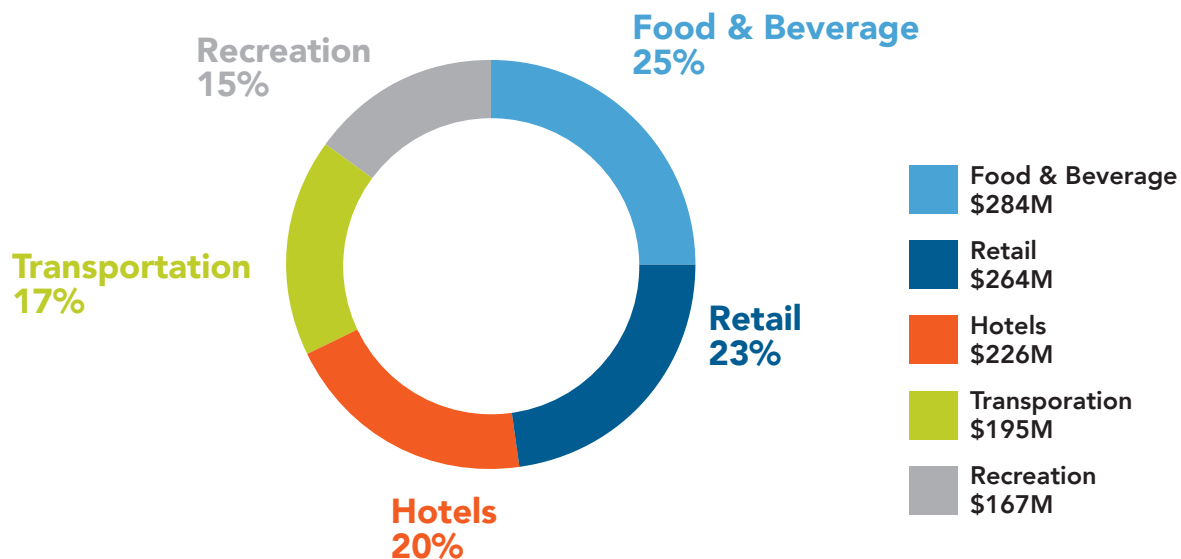
The average overnight visitor to Omaha spends approximately \$143 in the city.



\$1.1 BILLION IN VISITOR SPENDING MEANS THAT VISITORS SPENT \$130,000 EVERY HOUR OF EVERY DAY IN OMAHA DURING 2014.



HOW THE VISITOR DOLLAR IS SPENT



11.9 MILLION People per year who travel to Omaha

5.2 MILLION Overnight visitors

\$742,000,000 Money spent by overnight visitors

6.7 MILLION Day visitors

\$394,000,000 Money spent by day visitors

16,700 Jobs sustained by visitor spending in Douglas County



ADMINISTRATION

Finance

The majority of Visit Omaha's funding comes from the lodging tax paid by visitors. Visitors pay an 18.16% tax every time they stay in an Omaha/Douglas County hotel; of that, 5% is lodging tax. One percent of that tax goes to the State of Nebraska for its tourism efforts, 2% goes to Douglas County for visitor improvements, and the remaining 2% goes to Visit Omaha for visitor promotion and convention sales.

In addition, visitors pay a 5.5% city occupation tax every time they stay in an Omaha/Douglas County hotel. The City of Omaha uses 5% of the revenues for debt service and the remaining .5% goes to Visit Omaha for its promotional and convention sales efforts. The City of Omaha and Douglas County signed a 10-year inter-local agreement in 2014 which solidified their partnership to grow tourism, and provided Visit Omaha with an additional \$200,000 per year from the city's general fund.

New Office Space

Visit Omaha relocated its administrative offices in 2016 to the First National Bank building at 1620 Dodge. The new 7-year agreement provides the staff with more useable space, a better work flow, and an inspiring view, all for less cost. The Omaha Visitors Center remains at 1001 Farnam Street.

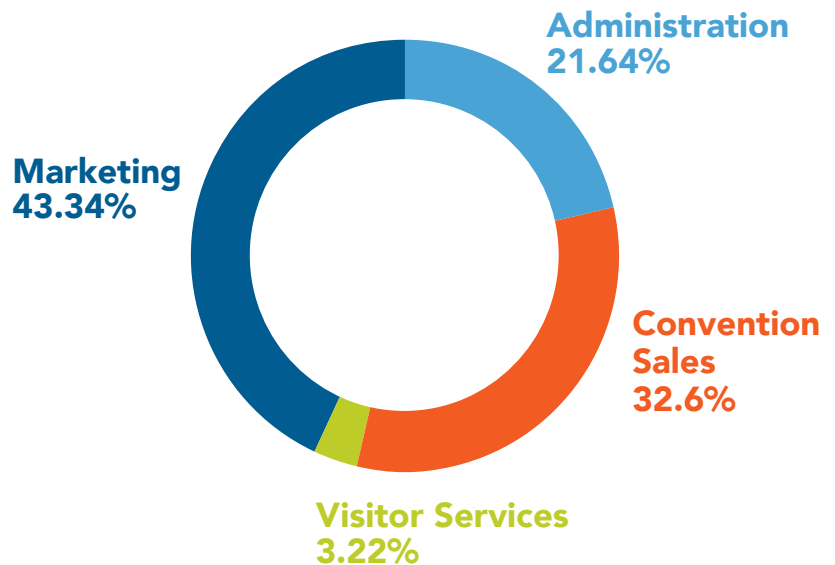
Accounting

Visit Omaha worked with the City of Omaha finance department to adopt Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) best practices for accounting and finance. DMAI is an international trade association representing destination marketing organizations such as Visit Omaha.

Technology

In 2016, an integrated technology plan was implemented to improve efficiencies for Visit Omaha employees. The plan included updated hardware, software, network connections and phone system that provides Visit Omaha staff with the necessary tools to do their jobs more effectively.

2016 BUDGET DISTRIBUTION



2016 Visit Omaha Revenue

Lodging Tax - Douglas Co. (2%)	63.02%	\$3,776,338
Lodging Tax - City (.5%)	14.24%	\$853,155
Private Revenue	6.72%	\$402,786
General Fund	13.35%	\$800,000
Strategic Marketing Fund Reserve	2.67%	\$160,240
Total Revenue	100%	\$5,992,518

2016 Visit Omaha Expenses

Convention Sales & Service Dept.	32.60%	\$1,953,840
Marketing Dept.	43.34%	\$2,596,985
Visitor Services	2.42%	\$144,866
Administration	21.64%	\$1,296,827
Total Revenue	100%	\$5,992,518



MARKETING

WELCOME TO THE WEEKEND - LEISURE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Brand Position

Omaha is the Midwest destination for memorable weekends because Omaha lets the traveler focus on creating new experiences instead of the hassles of travel.

Brand Promise

To provide a weekend of memorable experiences.

The Visit Omaha marketing team developed an eight-month multi-media leisure campaign targeting residents of Kansas City, Des Moines and Sioux Falls, inviting them to enjoy a weekend getaway in Omaha. The campaign included television, radio, print, digital and paid social media advertising. Research conducted by Nielsen Scarborough, an independent research firm, shows an 8.2% increase in overnight visitation from those targeted markets in 2016.

182,341 Kansas City

129,533 Sioux Falls

123,158 Des Moines

435,032 Total Overnight Visitors from
Target Market (8.2% increase)

840,145 TOTAL WEEKEND HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS IN 2016

805,104 TOTAL WEEKEND HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS IN 2015

(represents visitors from all markets)

4.4%
INCREASE



Now Serving Omaha

To increase awareness and excitement about Omaha's restaurant scene and highlight the city's appeal as a culinary destination, the marketing team launched Season 3 of the "Now Serving Omaha" video series. Sixty (60) new videos were produced that highlight locally owned restaurants and showcase their specialties. The videos are shared via the Visit Omaha social media network and through digital outreach to a database of more than 60,000.

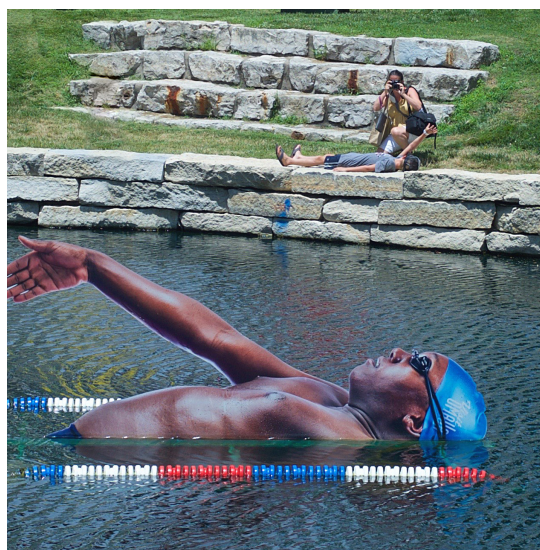
150,679 Now Serving Omaha video views to date



Holiday Island

In an effort to increase the appeal of the Holiday Lights Festival and create shareable moments for both locals and out-of-town visitors, Visit Omaha created a holiday display on the island at the Gene Leahy Mall. The Holiday Island decorations represented different experiences out-of-towners can enjoy when they visit our city and that locals can enjoy 365 days a year. Media stories about Holiday Island reached an audience of 2 million.

311,199 People who saw Holiday Island photos on Twitter and Instagram



Swimmers of the Lagoon

Visit Omaha took an unconventional approach to promote Omaha by creating a unique event in the Gene Leahy Mall lagoon to complement the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials. Local student athletes were featured "swimming" in the lagoon during the Trials. A total of 12, ten-by-five-foot floating cutout swimmers were placed in the lagoon to simulate swimmers doing the backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle and butterfly. The five student athletes volunteered their time to model for the Swimmers of the Lagoon social media campaign. The campaign provided a fun sharable moment for visitors and locals attending the Trials and the NCAA Men's College World Series.

386,029 People who saw Swimmers of the Lagoon photos on Twitter and Instagram

Omaha Craft Brew

The Omaha Craft Brew campaign promotes Omaha as a prime destination for beer lovers. Radio and digital advertising targets adults in Kansas City, Des Moines and Sioux Falls. Regional residents who request a Visit Omaha brew pack receive information on each participating brewery plus coupons for a free beer at each of the nine (9) participating locations. This collaborative partnership provides brewery regional promotion for their establishments.

10% Increase in Craft Brew book requests
6,070 requests (5,498 in 2015)

44% Increase in redemptions
8,612 redemptions (5,988 in 2015)

9% Increase in Craft Brew app users
5,069 users (4,660 in 2015)



Partners: Benson Brewery, Brickway Brewery, Farnam House Brewing, Infusion Brewing, Lucky Bucket Brewing, Nebraska Brewing, Scriptown Brewing, Soaring Wings and Upstream Brewing Company.



Bob the Bridge

The goal of the Bob the Bridge campaign is to turn the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge into an identifiable, iconic visual for Omaha. The campaign focuses on creating a larger-than-life personality for this one-of-a-kind bridge by giving Bob his own vlog (video blog) plus his own Twitter and Instagram accounts. The marketing team created 25 new videos for Bob's vlog that capture his unique perspective. To date, Bob's videos have been viewed 563,230 times and Bob's followers on social media have increased by 74%. The team also added a permanent sign on Bob to promote "Bobbing" – taking a photo while standing in two states at once. The number of visitor "Bobbing" photos shared on social media have increased dramatically.



OMAHA VISITORS GUIDES DISTRIBUTED = 242,780

64% Increase in the number of Visitor Guide requested online or by phone

18% Increase in the number of Visitor Guide distributed through brochure racks

13% Increase in the number of Visitor Guides distributed through Visitor Services
(includes distribution to convention groups and through the three Omaha Visitor Information Centers)

Social Media

Visit Omaha's growing social media network is made up of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram. The social media team not only uses the network to showcase Omaha as a tourism destination, but as a tool to listen and engage with different audiences. The Visit Omaha social media audience has grown 8% over the last year.

TOTAL VISIT OMAHA SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIENCE = 124,628

101,804	Facebook fans
14,701	Twitter followers
6,596	Instagram followers
284	Pinterest followers
208	LinkedIn followers
945,771	Video views on YouTube

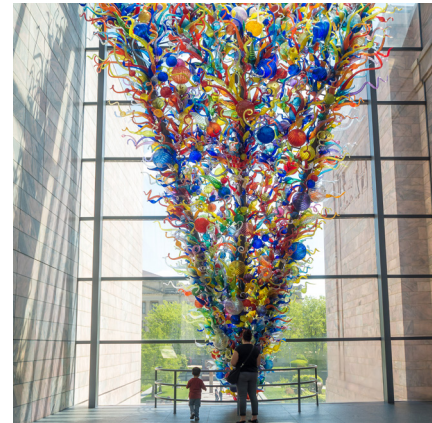
Earned Media

Visit Omaha worked with media representatives throughout the country during 2016 and generated more than \$24 million dollars in publicity for Omaha.

351	Stories
342,930,779	Impressions (the number of times a story is displayed)
\$24,310,546	Publicity value

Blogger Outreach

In 2016, Visit Omaha's strategy was to concentrate outreach efforts on bloggers with audiences of at least 40,000. While we hosted 11 fewer bloggers in 2016, the 14 bloggers we did bring to Omaha resulted in 21 blog posts that reached an audience of 25.6 million readers. As a reference, in 2015 we hosted 25 bloggers who wrote 47 blog posts that reached an audience of 1.2 million readers. Sometimes less is more!





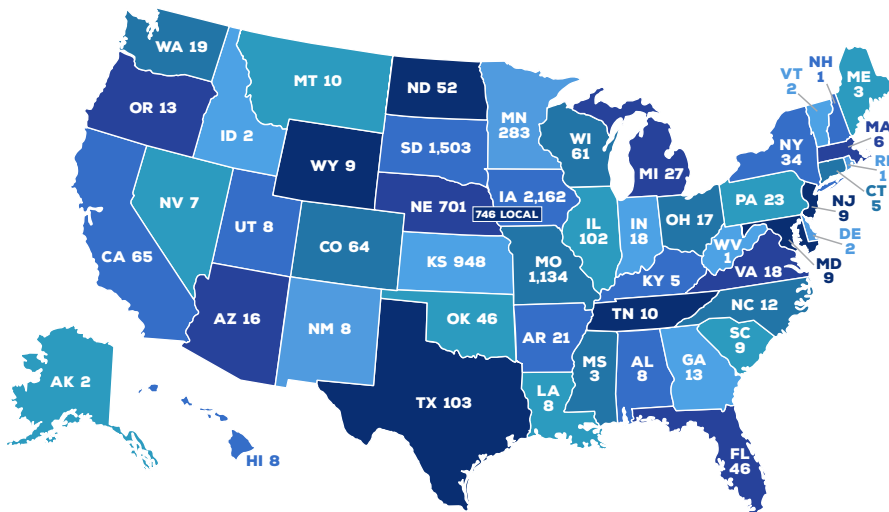
Omaha Savings App

In 2016 the marketing team created the new Omaha Savings app, which offers out-of-town visitors special discounts to top Omaha attractions. The app is part of an ongoing collaborative effort to promote Omaha as a visitor destination and increase awareness of the city by offering an incentive to visit and explore local attractions. In addition to developing a new customizable app, the team added three new attraction partners to the co-op effort and expanded the Omaha Savings campaign to offer attraction discounts and promotion year-round.

Partners include: Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium, The Durham Museum, Joslyn Art Museum, Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha Children's Museum, Village Pointe Shopping Center, Amazing Pizza Machine, Fontenelle Forest, Wild Life Safari Park and SAC Areospace Museum.



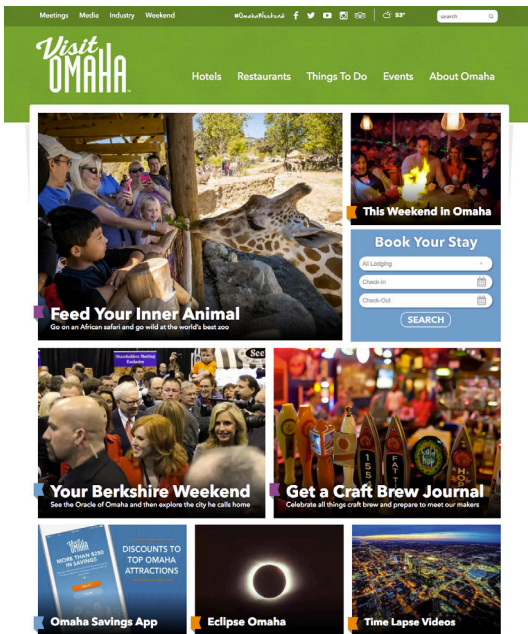
DOWNLOADS AROUND THE U.S.



67% Increase in app downloads - 8,719 (5,224 in 2015)

28% Increase in coupon redemptions - 6,075 (4,750 in 2015)





Website

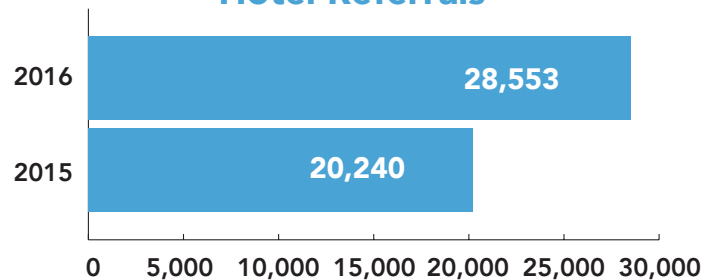
Launched VisitOmaha.com as a completely redesigned, responsive website providing consumers with better content and easier access via any device (e.g., desktop, mobile, tablet). The website includes a new photo-centric design, a full page for each partner complete with mapping, photo, video and social media functionality, and a Click-to-Compare feature that allows planners to easily compare one meeting space to another.

Visit Omaha - Book Direct

In 2016 there were 45,556 people who used the VisitOmaha.com Book Direct referral feature, which provides consumers a way to look at a variety of hotels, compare rates, and click through to make reservations directly with the hotel. 63% of those using this feature actually clicked through to the hotel's reservation page.

1,210,295	Total site visits
871,893	New visitors
3,648,506	Total page views
388,402	Returning visitors

Hotel Referrals



OMAHA VISITORS CENTER

Visit Omaha operates three visitor information centers. The main Omaha Visitors Center is located downtown at 1001 Farnam, with two additional information kiosks located in each terminal of Omaha's airport. Volunteer ambassadors staff all three locations and provide customized one-on-one concierge service to visitors. Vibrant video displays, brochures, maps and a photo booth at the downtown location provide visitors with information and tips on how to enjoy the city.

43,779	Visitors welcomed
5,974	Hours volunteered by 68 ambassadors



CONVENTION SALES

In 2016, the Visit Omaha Convention Sales Team put 467,863 room night lead opportunities on the table for Omaha's hotel partners, double the leads generated in 2015. The team booked 186 meetings, events and motor coach tours for future years representing 94,569 hotel room nights worth an estimated \$86 million in economic impact to our community.

In addition, the Convention Sales team hosted 56 site visits; site visits are opportunities to invite potential clients to Omaha to see if the city is a good fit for their group. After visiting, 25 groups decided to book their event in Omaha – a 45% conversion rate. The Sales team hosted two national events that brought association decision makers from across the country to Omaha. The Nursing Organization Alliance and Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives provided the team an opportunity to influence organizations in the health and medical market, as well as in the technology, scientific and engineering sectors.

New Strategic Marketing Fund

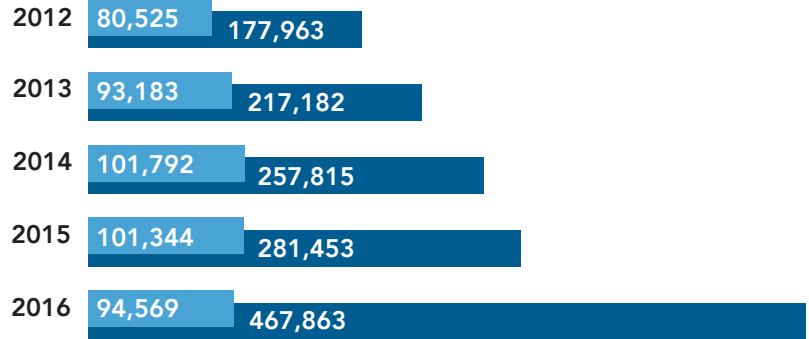
In 2016, the Omaha Destination Marketing Corporation 501(c) 3 non-profit organization was created to provide Visit Omaha the flexibility to offer incentives to convention groups, and increase Omaha's competitiveness in the convention marketplace. In addition, the 501(c) 3 structure provides oversight of the funds by elected and appointed city officials while maintaining the proprietary nature of the incentives.

New DC Office

Visit Omaha opened a Washington D.C. satellite office in 2016, providing increased access to the largest number of association meeting planners in the country. Having a D.C. address allows Visit Omaha to partner with organizations and establish better relationships with meeting planners.

Hotel Room Night Leads Booked vs. Sent

(Meeting Sales & Motorcoach)



Room Nights Booked Sales Leads Sent

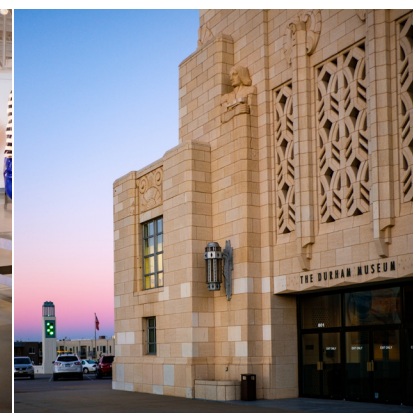
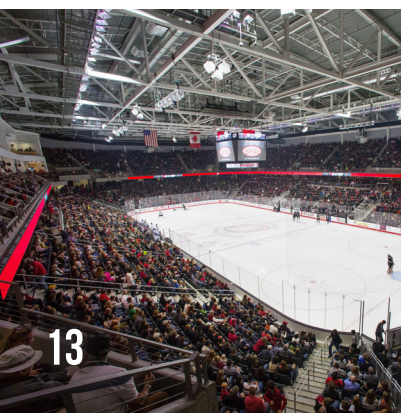
300 Hotel leads sent

461,226 Room night leads

90,853 Room nights booked

56 Site visits

116 Groups confirmed for future years



Old Market Inspires Big Win

Visit Omaha grabbed the spotlight in front of thousands of national convention planners and decision-makers by taking top honors at one of the largest convention tradeshows in the country. Visit Omaha received first place for best tradeshow booth at the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting and Expo in Salt Lake City. The Visit Omaha booth was a re-creation of the Old Market Entertainment District and provided four distinct stops where attendees could taste, experience, and take a piece of Omaha home with them. More than 800 attendees representing 376 organizations enjoyed Omaha steak, craft root beer, and hand-crafted soap from the Benson Soap Company.



Motorcoach Highlights

In 2016, Visit Omaha was involved in hosting 70 overnight motorcoach groups from 19 states. This includes 27 groups that traveled to Omaha for Christmas tours enhanced through partnerships with Omaha Performing Arts, the Omaha Community Playhouse, and the Douglas County Historical Society and its theater performance by Gerald Dickens, the great-great-grandson of Charles Dickens. Motorcoach groups originated from as far away as Virginia, Texas, Arkansas, Kentucky and Indiana.

Tradeshows Attended

Jan 5-7	Religious Conference Management Assoc. (RCMA) Emerge - San Diego, CA
Jan 9-12	American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace - Louisville, KY
Jan 10-13	PCMA Convening Leaders Vancouver, Canada
Mar 7-9	Conferece Direct Annual Partner Meeting - San Antonio, TX
Mar 9-11	EnVision 2016 - Experient - Dallas, TX
Apr 3-7	National Association of Sports Commissions - Grand Rapids, MI
Apr 28	American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Springtime - Washington, DC
May 17-19	Society of Government Meeting Professionals (SGMP) - San Diego, CA
Jun 8-10	Helms Briscoe Annual Business Conference - Phoenix, AZ
Jun 1-4	Fraternal Executives Associations (FEA) - Kansas City, MO
Jun 5-9	Travel Alliance Partners (TAP) Dance - Duluth, MN
Jun 26-30	CVENT Connect - Las Vegas, NV
Jul 13-14	Meetings Quest - Bloomington, MN
Aug 13-16	American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting - Salt Lake City, NV
Aug 18-23	Student Youth & Travel (SYTA) - Orlando, FL
Aug 25-27	Connect Marketplace - Grapevine, TX
Oct 3-4	Aspire - Dayton, OH
Oct 27	Nebraska Hotel and Lodging Association (NHLA) Fall Harvest Reception - Lincoln, NE
Oct 18-20	IMEX - Las Vegas, NV
Oct 25-27	Connect Faith - Orlando, FL
Dec 6-8	IAEE - Anaheim, CA
Dec 14	Connect DC - Washington, DC

6,637 Group room night leads

3,716 Group room nights booked

45 Step-on guide tours



Swing for the Fences.

Omaha has a big league reputation as a city that delivers sell-out crowds and devoted fans.

Just ask the thousands who flock to the NCAA Men's College World Series every year. *Sports Illustrated* ranks it as a "top fan experience" telling readers "You're not just a fan at the Greatest Show on Dirt, you're family."

It's a big reason why the Olympic Swim Trials come back to Omaha time after time. We transform our convention center and arena into an Olympic swimming facility. Then break records for attendance. Coaches and swimmers praise Omaha, saying, "The convenience factor is unparalleled," and that the city makes athletes and fans feel "welcome and important."

Our resume is filled with big-name events, such as the U.S. Senior Open, NCAA Basketball, Volleyball and Wrestling Championships, U.S. Speed Skating, FIVB and NORCECA Women's International Volleyball, and the National Veterans Wheelchair games. The list of sports bliss goes on and on.

Direct Marketing Campaign

From June through November in 2016, 200 meeting planners, with potential convention business for Omaha, received an unexpected package in the mail each month for six months. Each package contained fun items that represented Omaha's unique attributes, and included information about different characteristics meeting planners would find appealing about Omaha. For instance, in June the theme was "Swing for the Fences," and featured Omaha's success in hosting amateur sporting events such as the NCAA College World Series and U.S. Olympic Swim Trials. The June package included Omaha logoed swim goggles, a rally towel, plus peanuts from Omaha based Herman's Nuts. Clients enjoyed the unique marketing approach and it generated the following results:

18 Site visits generated for 2017

13 RFP's received
with leads for 14 additional
pieces of business

Partnerships

The OCVB strategically partners with organizations that will help enhance Omaha's presence on a national stage and heighten awareness of the city as a convention and meeting destination.



As a Corporate Partner with ASAE, Omaha is positioned alongside high-profile destinations such as Atlanta, Dallas and Orlando. The partnership provides Omaha with increased access to 21,000 association executives and industry partners.



Along with CenturyLink Center Omaha, Visit Omaha is a Preferred Partner with MPI, an organization that highlights Omaha to more than 18,500 meeting planners.



The Visit Omaha partnership with Helms Briscoe helps drive short term meeting business into the city. Helms Briscoe is a third-party planning organization that matches meeting planners to destinations.

CONVENTION SERVICES

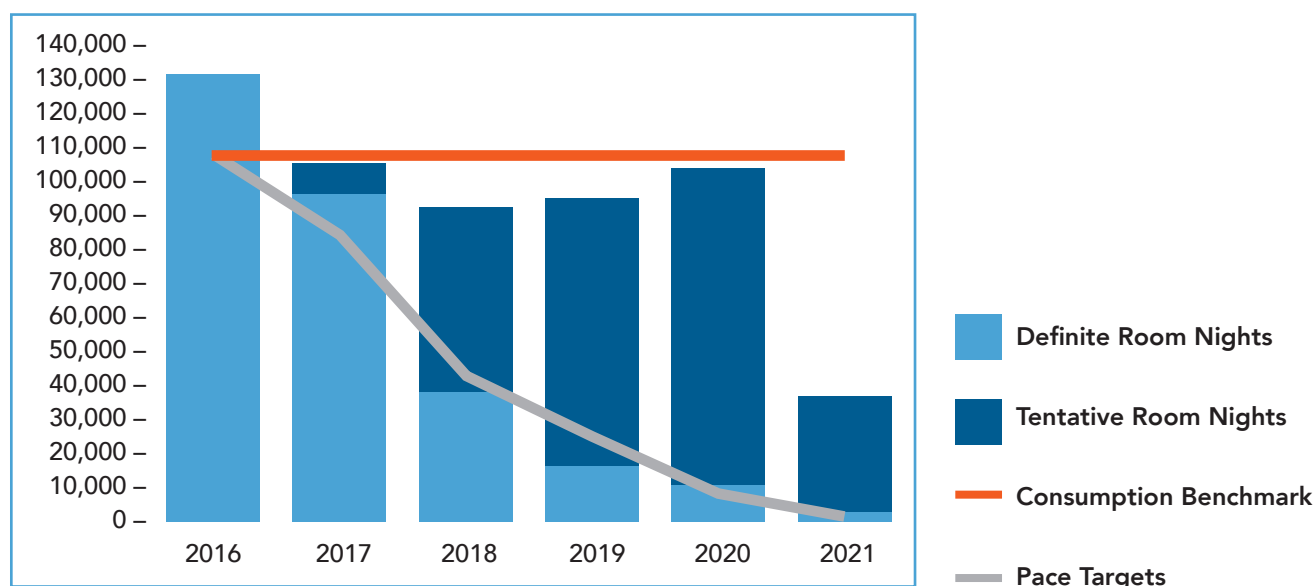
The three-member Visit Omaha Convention Services Team was responsible for providing assistance to 342 groups in 2016. Those groups had an estimated economic impact of more than \$229 million. The Services Team launched the Visit Omaha housing service and processed a total of 20,000 hotel room nights for the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials. In addition, the Services Team hosted two familiarization tours for 20 Association executive directors and meeting planners, providing them a customized tour of Omaha.

TAP REPORT

The Trends Analysis Projections (TAP) is a 6-year forecasting report that measures the booking pace of the Visit Omaha Convention Sales Team. The report measures tentative, definite and lost business. The bar graph below shows where the Visit Omaha Convention Sales team should be pacing in order to ensure a successful year.

Omaha Room Nights

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Definite Room Nights	131,352	95,585	37,765	15,993	10,470	2,511	293,676
Pace Targets	107,487	83,782	42,252	24,560	8,535	1,431	268,047
Variance	23,865	11,803	(4,487)	(8,567)	1,935	1,080	1,080
Consumption Benchmark	107,487	107,487	107,487	107,487	107,487	107,487	644,922
Pace Percentage	122%	114%	89%	65%	123%	175%	110%
Total Demand Room Nights	282,817	249,816	144,039	93,620	49,132	22,019	841,443
Lost Room Nights	151,465	154,231	106,274	77,627	38,662	19,508	547,767
Conversion Percentage	46%	38%	26%	17%	21%	11%	35%
Tentative Room Nights	0	9,671	54,574	78,718	93,466	34,329	270,758



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Consumption Benchmark – The average number of definite room nights produced by the bureau for each month and year for the last three twelve month periods. Each month the “oldest” month is dropped from the calculation and the most recent month is added.

Conversion Percentage – The percentage of Total Demand Room Nights that the convention bureau converts to Definite Room Nights for each month and year at the time the report is published.

Definite Room Nights – Number of definite room nights, confirmed by the convention bureau for each month and year at the time the report is published.

Pace Percentage – The percentage of Definite Room Nights compared to the Pace Target. If a given bureau continues to book at current trends the same percentage can be applied to the Consumption Benchmark when each month and year passes.

Pace Target – Number of definite room nights that should be confirmed for each month and year at the time the report is published (updated every month). Pace targets are determined by analyzing a minimum of the last three years definite room nights and all definite room nights confirmed for the future. The analysis is completed by comparing the date a booking was confirmed to that of the arrival date for each confirmed booking and computing the number of months in advance of arrival that each booking was confirmed.

Lost Room Nights – The number of room nights, both definite and tentative, that have been lost for each month and year at the time the report is published.

Tentative Room Nights – The number of tentative room nights pending for each future month and year at the time the report is published.

Total Demand Room Nights – Number of total lead room nights issued by the convention bureau for each month and year at the time the report is published.



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“ All the staff at Visit Omaha were a “joy” to work with. They were responsive to all our needs and worked very closely with us to ensure we had a GREAT experience in Omaha – and we DID. ”

- Cindy Joy-Rodgers, National Newspaper Association



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