

# SALTVISIT

2020 Annual Report

# ON AIR with VISIT SALT LAKE

2020 annual Report

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# 2020: A YEAR UNLIKE ANY OTHER

After a relatively calm first couple of months, 2020 quickly became a year unlike any of us have ever witnessed or experienced before, particularly our hospitality industry. As you well know, the travel and tourism industry was one of the hardest hit sectors of the economy during COVID-19...and it continues to be. But with a truly collaborative and creative effort by our collective membership, including quite a bit of pivoting done by the Visit Salt Lake staff, we have endured the hardships and have begun the long road to recovery.

In fact, despite the many trials and tribulations COVID-19 threw at us all, a sure sign that our collective efforts were on target is the fact that the Visit Salt Lake Sales team was still able to record its fourth best year ever, booking more than 720,000 room nights that will help fill our destination with visitors over the next decade, with many more bookings to come.

We would like to give a sincere thanks to the entire Board for its continued direction and to you, our members, for your continued support of our efforts as we worked to limit the impact of COVID-19 on our industry and our community. We hope we served you, your staff and your business well during the hardships, and we assure you Visit Salt Lake will continue to work on your behalf and toward a full recovery and beyond.

Kaitlin Eskelson

**President & CEO**Visit Salt Lake

**Taylor Vriens** 

**2020 Board Chair** Visit Salt Lake

## 2020 Treasurer's Report: FUNDING SOURCES



**Jenny Wilson** Mayor, Salt Lake County

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

Each year, VSL prepares its Comprehensive Marketing Plan (CMP) and budget for the upcoming calendar year. The budget for the CMP is based on a projection of TRT collections developed by VSL in concert with the County. Generally, VSL expenditures are targeted to match

anticipated collections. When TRT collections exceed expenditures, the excess is carried over into the County's Visitor Development and Promotion Fund to be available for future years. Transactional revenues from the Ski City ticketing program accounts for 25% of VSL's gross revenues which is paid out to the Resorts each season as tickets are redeemed, and VSL's Private Sector generates the other 25% through membership dues, convention and leisure reservation services, gift shop merchandise sales and marketing partnerships. Special grants for various projects and in-kind contributions from VSL's members enable VSL to leverage and extend its sales and marketing budget.

2020 was a very unusual year with significant shortfalls in TRT requiring several budget reductions while significant grants from the Utah Office of Tourism (approx. \$1.425M); \$150k from the Governor's Office of Economic Development; over \$420k in Cares Act related made available by Salt Lake County and \$376k of VSL's Private Sector Funds all combining to help us complete some new and some time-proven programs. 2021 has a similar ring to it. Since proposing our budget in October of last year, we now see an ongoing shortfall in TRT forcing budget reduction in our funding from Salt Lake County. However, we received \$793k in Payroll Protection Program funding to substantially mitigate those reductions. We will obtain additional funding through the Employee Retention Tax Credit and VSL will contribute \$706k of its Private Sector funds to keep critical programs bringing visitors and their spending to Salt Lake now and well into the future.

## 2020 Treasurer's Report: BUDGET & IMPACT

#### PUBLIC SECTOR SUMMARY BUDGET

Program Budget	2019	<b>2020</b> (Revised)	2021
Administration Sales Services Marketing	\$1,405,655 \$2,302,837 \$807,850 \$2,846,042	\$1,013,660 \$1,754,159 \$498,730 \$2,099,962	\$1,290,020 \$1,720,184 \$543,500 \$2,415,700
Total Public Sector Programs	\$7,362,384	\$5,366,511	\$5,969,404
Salaries & Benefits	\$4,364,255	\$3,648,958	\$4,171,022
Total Public Sector Budget % change over prior year	\$11,726,639	\$9,015,469	\$10,140,426



#### Salt Lake County Council 2019-20

BACK, FROM LEFT: Richard Snelgrove, Steve Debry, Shireen Ghorbani, Ann Granato, Jim Bradley FRONT, FROM LEFT: Max Burdick, Michael Jensen, Arlyn Bradshaw, Aimee Winder Newton

# CURRENT & FUTURE IMPACT OF MEETINGS, ATHLETIC EVENTS & CONVENTIONS BOOKED DURING 2020

	<b>Booked in 2020 for 2020</b>	Booked in 2020 for future years	s Total
• • • • • • • • • • •	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •		• • • • • • • • • • •
Attendees	53,104	514,656	567,760
Room Nights	47,316	673,856	721,172
Spending	\$23,759,344	\$316,567,608	\$340,326,952



## 2020 Treasurer's Report: IMPACT & VISITOR SPENDING

#### IMPACT OF MEETINGS / CONVENTIONS / EVENTS REALIZED IN 2020

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	Number of people	Delegate / Attendee Spending	
Convention Delegates  Attendees tied directly to Visit Salt Lake sales efforts	14,681	\$12,604,551	
Quasi-consumer Show Attendees  Include: Silicon Slopes, WHCE, and Rootstech	114,065	\$39,596,409	
Hotel/Resort Meeting Attendees  All non-Salt Palace Convention Center / Mountain America Exposition Center / Mountain Center / Mountai	11,810 Center attendees from Visit Salt Lake s	\$11,467,510 sales efforts	
Sporting / Special Event Visitors*	43,272	\$16,859,389	
<b>Total Direct Spending by Delegates &amp; Attendees</b>	183,828	\$80,527,859	

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

#### 2020 DIRECT VISITOR SPENDING, SALT LAKE COUNTY\*

			<ul> <li>Sales &amp; Use Tax</li> </ul>	xes Generated 202	20
Direct Visitor	Spending*	State	County	Cities	<b>Total Taxes</b>
Hotel	\$308,832,487	\$18,437,299	\$16,522,538	\$7,720,812	\$42,680,650
Car Rental	\$134,262,221	\$10,942,371	\$10,203,929	\$2,013,933	\$23,160,233
Restaurant*	\$348,118,000	\$19,668,667	\$5,569,888	\$5,221,770	\$30,460,325
Retail & Attractions*	* \$158,242,542	\$8,940,704	\$1,819,789	\$2,373,638	\$13,134,131
TOTAL	\$949,455,250	\$57,989,041	\$34,116,144	\$17,330,154	\$109,435,339

<sup>\*</sup> Estimate Based on Hotel Occupancy patterns in Salt Lake County

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

#### **2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**CHAIR** 

**Taylor Vriens** 

Modern Display

**PAST CHAIR** 

Chris Erickson

The Grand America Hotel

**CHAIR-ELECT** 

Chris Redgrave

Zions Bank

AT LARGE

**Brent Lange** 

SECRETARY TREASURER

Abby Murtagh

Hilton Salt Lake City Center

**AT LARGE**Jim Breitinger

Natural History Museum of Utah

#### **2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Arlyn Bradshaw

Salt Lake County Council

Jacklyn Briggs

The Gateway/Vestar

**Mary Crafts** 

Mary Crafts, Inc.

Derek Dver

Utah Arts Alliance

Dave Fields

Snowbird/Cottonwood Resorts

**Scott George** 

Woodbury Corporation

Michael Hopkins

Utah Olympic Legacy Foundation

Oz Hutton

Melange, LLC

Jeff Kempton

Salt Lake Marriott Downtown at City Creek

Erin Litvack

Salt Lake County

Kris Mecham

Deseret Management Corp.

Jeff Olpin

Sequoia Hospitality

Sarah Pearce

Salt Lake County Arts & Culture

Adrienne Ruderman

Alta Chalets

Julia Stout

PRA Utah

Ric Tanner

Hotel Monaco



#### **2020 EX OFFICIO MEMBERS**

Mayor Jenny Wilson

Salt Lake County

Mayor Erin Mendenhall

Mayor of Salt Lake City

Vicki Varela

Utah Office of Tourism

Cody Adent

Utah Tourism Industry Association

Kaitlin Eskelson

Visit Salt Lake

Jay Francis

South Valley Chamber

Barbara Riddle

ChamberWest

Michele Corigliano Salt Lake Area Restaurant Association

Juan Becerra

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Bill Wyatt

Salt Lake City Department of Airports

Dan Hayes

Salt Palace Convention Center

Kimberly Barnett

Salt Lake County

**Reed Forrester** 

Delta Airlines

Erik Christiansen

Parsons Behle & Latimer

Theresa Foxley

Economic Development Corporation of Utah

Dee Brewer

Downtown Alliance

## Sales & Services: 2020 Performance Measures

Sales Performance Measures	2020 GOAL	2020 ACTUAL	% of GOAL
Convention Room Nights:	844,250	721,172	85%
Prospecting Calls - Convention Sales Directors:	544	726	133%
Prospecting Calls - EMM / National Sales Manager:	900	1,170	130%
Personal Visits to Existing Clients:	24	8	33%
Outside Sales Trips:	14	16	114%
Site Inspections:	124	150	121%
Tradeshows:	9	9	100%
Services Performance Measures	2020 GOAL	2020 ACTUAL	% of GOAL
Achieve the Stella Award (formerly <i>Meetings &amp; Conventions</i> Gold Service Award and <i>Successful Meetings'</i> Pinnacle Awards):		Finalist	
Promote social media attendance promotion to all incoming city-wide groups, with 70% adoption rate:	20	6	29%
Maintain post convention survey score average of 4.8 or higher:	4.8	4.7	98%
Conduct quarterly outreach events to in-state repeat clients:	12	14	117%
Work with Sundance Film Festival to expand Festival presence in Salt Lake through programming and other means:		Completed	



#### Sales & Services: 2020 Pivots due to COVID

#### **Sales**

Client Contacts - The Sales Team completed contacted 1,896 new potential clients (versus a goal of 1,444)

**Site Inspections, Tradeshows & Sales Trips -** The Sales Team hosted 150 in-person and virtual site inspections, attended 9 tradeshows, and conducted 16 sales trips.

**Redeployment -** Half way through 2020, the Sales team was redeployed to put focus on short business; that will actualize in 2021 and 2022.

**The Meet in Utah promotion** resulted in 30 bookings totaling 27,766 room nights.

Bookings - 123 meetings, athletic events and convention were booked, that will collectively generate 721,172 room nights.



#### **Services**

Event Support - The Services team provided support to 22 in-person and virtual events in 2020.

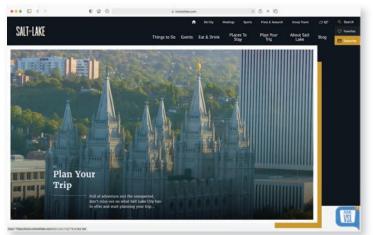
**Attendance Promotions and Site Inspections -** The Services Team conducted one attendance-promotion trip, and supported seven virtual site inspections.

Meeting Planner Visits - Eight in-person meeting planner visits were hosted.

**Redeployment -** Half way through the year, two Services Managers transitioned to Sales Managers to prospect for short term meetings.

# Marketing: 2020 Performance Measures

<b>Marketing Performance Measures</b>	2020 GOAL	2020 ACTUAL	% of GOAL
<b>Earned Media:</b> Generate the equivalent advertising value of \$15.4 million, or a 5% increase over the 2019 total, worth of positive earned media.	\$15,400,000	\$19,630,486	127%
<b>Ski City Earned Media:</b> Will be inclusive of the \$15.4 million total goal but will be tracked separately and will have a goal to generate the equivalent advertising value of \$5.19 million:	\$5,190,000	\$5,122,943	98%
<b>Website Traffic:</b> Increase VisitSaltLake.com by 10% to more than 3 million total visitors sessions on the main, mobile, and booking websites:	3,000,000	1,962,383	65%
<b>Ski City Website</b> : Increase visitation to SkiCity.com by 10% to more than 300,000 visitor sessions:	300,000	230,519	77%
<b>Content Development:</b> Generate 8 new content articles monthly across all web properties for a total of 96 new articles that can be promoted through web, email, and social media:	96	76	80%
<b>Email Contact Database:</b> Increase active email address database by 10% and maintain an email open rate of 20%:	90,200	100,070	111%
Visit Salt Lake Connect Pass Sales: Increase the number of Visit Salt Lake Connect Pass days sold via hotels, attractions, and online channels by 5%:	42,000	9,329	22%





## Marketing: 2020 Pivots due to COVID

**Educating our visitors** — almost immediately as the COVID-19 Crisis shut down America it was necessary to inform our potential visitors of the how the crisis was impacting Salt Lake. We create a complete section on our website that discussed these areas:

- #Salt Lake Strong this was a movement to support our local economy. This
  was pushed out through PR efforts, Social Media Channels and throughout our
  hospitality community.
- **Gift Card Marketplace** Using the Bandwango technology we created a marketplace to buy gift cards for future purchases to local businesses.
- Virtuals Event The highly visited Event section of our website had to be transitioned to promote events that were mostly virtual and online. Transitions were made with Now Playing Utah to not only promote Virtual Events but also to notify users of events that had been cancelled.
- **Daily Updates from Salt Lake County** were added to notify visitors of venue closures, case count totals and health safety guidelines and/or restrictions.
- Virtual Tours based on the investment the Visit Salt Lake has made with Threshold 360, we were able to create virtual 360 itineraries of places to visit across Salt Lake County. These virtual tours have also become useful as a part of Convention Sales site inspections.

Salt Lake Bound = Freedom Found Campaign - while constantly analyzing when would be a good time to welcome back and promote Salt Lake to visitors, Visit Salt Lake working with Love Communications put together a tiered promotion that would first promote to regional travelers, second to travelers from top 10 flight markets as the new SLC International Airport was opening in September of 2020, and then to the national winter ski market as our season began in November of 2020.

Using the VSL.com no-commission booking site with Root Rez, we used value-added offers to incentivize visitors to book 2+



nights of lodging throughout Salt Lake County. These value-added offers included: Visit Salt Lake Connect Passes, Ski City Super Passes, \$50 Sinclair Gas Cards and \$200 Delta Air Lines eGift cards. Here are some highlights of this program:

SUPPORT LOCAL

A TVISIT AKE

#saltlakestrong

- Reservations were made at over 120+ hotels & lodging properties across Salt Lake County.
- Over 1,350 reservations were made to date (2/8/21) on VSL.com and SkiCity.com websites.
- Over 3,200 Room Nights were booked to date (2/8/21)
- Over \$310,000 of revenue was booked to date (2/8/21)

## Marketing: 2020 Pivots due to COVID (continued)

The establishment of this booking engine has laid the groundwork and ability for Visit Salt Lake to offer future promotions at over 170 different hotels and lodging properties across Salt Lake County.

Shop in Utah Grants – Based on the recovery Grant offerings from the state of Utah, Visit Salt Lake was able to participate in the Shop in Utah Grant with a 50% off offering of the Visit Salt Lake Connect Pass – a pass that is valid across 17 of the top Salt Lake County attractions. Visit Salt Lake was able to sell over \$100,000 of Connect Pass within 28 days of its offering to utilize the full amount of the \$50,000 grant that was received from GOED.

**Content Creation** – The COVID-19 Crisis has made us have to think differently to how we create content and what stories to create that will be applicable to our visitors. Our new content team has been able to create stories that are applicable to the times and able to promote some of the aspects of Salt Lake that make it desirable to our locals and visitors even during the pandemic. Here are some examples:

- Staying Happy and Healthy from Home in Salt Lake visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/staying-happy-andhealthy-at-home-in-salt-lake/
- Things to Do from Home in Salt Lake visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/things-to-do-from-homein-salt-lake/
- Salt Lake's Top Vegan Takeout
   visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/salt-lakes-top-vegan-takeout/
- Fourth of July with a Twist visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/fourth-of-july-with-a-2020twist/
- 5 Outdoor Summer Spots in Salt Lake
   visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/5-summer-spots-in-the-city-according-to-slug-magazine/
- 5 Stunning Patios for Every Dining Occasion
   visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/5-stunning-patios-for-every-dining-occasion/
- Pandemic Date Night Ideas in Salt Lake visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/pandemic-date-nightideas-in-salt-lake/
- A COVID Thanksgiving visitsaltlake.com/blog/stories/post/acovid-thanksgiving/



Tuesday June 30, 2020

Fourth of July with a 2020 Twist

Add to Favorites



Friday August 7, 2020

5 Stunning Patios for Every Dining Occasion

Add to Favorites



Friday September 4, 2020

Pandemic Date Night Ideas in Salt Lake

Add to Favorites

#### Marketing: 2020 Pivots due to COVID (continued)

**Getting the word out** - Visit Salt Lake has had to shift its focus to not only promote and create buzz to potential visitors, but we have had to focus more of our local businesses and community to help get them through this crisis. This a has made us shift efforts is each of these areas:

**Website** – Visit Salt Lake created dynamic entry pages that detected the origin of the website visitors. We were able to serve up content that were more relevant to either visitors from within the state of Utah to separate content that applied more to the regional and national visitor. During the early months of the pandemic, we had to pause our paid search advertising and then refocused on each of these markets.

Social Media — Our Social Media channels have done a lot of work during the pandemic crisis, but the messaging has had to change dramatically. We clearly had to focus first on our local community and then slowly move outward as we were able to promote visitation again. All of our paid social efforts were paused from March — May and then we were able to promote content, virtual event and our Freedom Found offers to a wider national audience.

PR/Communications - Visit Salt Lake's PR/Communication efforts also had to refocus its efforts to a closer local/regional audience as the COVID-19 Crisis shut down our city and state. Many of our releases



**Current Status/Travel Restrictions** 

a mask mandate for the entire state, limiting social gatherings to household-only

at higher education institutions. Detailed answers to frequently asked ques about the state of emergency orders can be found here. After Nov. 23, the

Utah has declared a state of emergency to address hospital overcrowding. It includes

until Nov. 23, 2020, and other rules regarding extracurricular activities and students

focus on business recovery efforts and statewide programs to help support and fund businesses that have been impacted. We have been able to tout some of the programs that Visit Salt Lake has been doing and continue to reach out to the media who is ready to offer up stories about destinations who are beginning to open up to visitors and promote the safe, outdoor, and open-air advantages that Salt Lake enjoys.

Packages & Deals

Visitors Center & Info

Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Information for Visit

# Partner Development: 2020 Performance Measures

Partner Development	2020 GOAL	2020 ACTUAL	% of GOAL
Increase Membership Revenue 3%:	\$281,861	\$176,880	63%
288 Prospecting Calls Per Year (24/month):	288	166	<b>58%</b>
Increase New Members 5%:	57	40	70%
Increase Advertising Revenue 4%:	\$319,468	\$266,752	83%
Increase Number of Member Portal Visits 2%:	4,878	4,343	89%
Increase Member Event Attendance 4%:	2,235	2,052	92%
Produce The Following Events:			
Member Connections:	6	6	100%
Member Training Meetings/Webinars:	12	4	33%
Educational Member Events:	2	11	550%
Membership Survey:	1	1	100%



## Partner Development: 2020 Pivots due to COVID

During the past year, when it was not possible to gather as a group, but recognizing the need to provide information and resources to our members, the Partner Development team switched into "virtual mode" and started offering a variety of educational and informational webinars to our members. In addition, we offered marketing opportunities on our website at no charge and also utilized Cares Act and grant money to provide additional benefits. A listing of some of the events includes:

#### Virtual Webinars:

- **Virtual Town Halls in March, April and May** Updates on grant opportunities, VSL departmental updates, State and County COVID parameters and more, with over 750 total attendees.
- GBAC Star Accreditation The GBAC STAR Accreditation Program is performance-based and designed to help facilities establish a comprehensive system of cleaning, disinfection, and infectious disease prevention for their staff and their building. The program relies on GBAC's comprehensive training, which teaches the proper protocols, correct disinfection techniques, and cleaning best practices for bio hazard situations like the novel coronavirus. Successful GBAC STAR facilities are able to demonstrate that correct work practices, procedures and systems are in place to prepare, respond, and recover from outbreaks and pandemics.



- **Respro/Safety and Sanitation -** Updates to "Utah Leads Together"/updates on State and County guidelines, with 200 total attendees.
- Social Media "Understanding the Mindset of the Crisis Consumer", the state of social, consumers - current feeling and behavior, looking forward - how to market and how to engage consumers.
- **Diversity and Inclusion -** Terms and concepts, laws and policies (including SB 296, Utah's non-discrimination law and federal laws, as well as EEOC policies), economics (how inclusive workplaces impact the bottom line) and next steps.
- Return to Work Legal Liability concerns of reopening, creating a plan, temperature testing and symptom screening, vulnerable personnel, personal protective equipment (PPE), dealing with positive COVID-19 case, specific standards in the Utah hospitality industry.
- **Human Trafficking -** Training and education to recognize the signs of child sex trafficking and then know how to respond.
- Cares Act Explanation of available funds, how to apply, PPP

Over 2,100 members have participated in webinars hosted by Visit Salt Lake.

#### **Member Opportunities:**

- Member renewal deals All memberships extended 3 months. Additional grace period offered to those who needed it.
- **Gift Card marketplace** 18 participating member businesses virtual gift cards offered for sale on VSL website. VSL paid merchant and set up fees.

## Partner Development: 2020 Pivots due to COVID (continued)

- Mighty Main Street Opportunity for members to be featured on weekly radio podcast.
- **Shop in Utah advertising opportunities -** Advertising discounts offered to members utilizing Shop in Utah grant money.
- **GBAC** Opportunity to become GBAC Star accredited with cost covered by VSL in conjunction with a Cares Act grant from Salt Lake County
- Member Facebook Group Weekly membership tips, information and VSL news

#### Other Pivots:

- Virtual Summer Sizzle Presentation by Connect Pass attractions
- **Virtual Ski Biz -** Presentations by resort partners
- Holiday event Virtual reading of The Polar Express by Santa for benefit of members' families
- Quarterly membership meetings Rio Tinto 3rd Quarter Member Update /
   Virtual Holiday membership meeting



#### **Mighty Main Street**

As visitors and residents alike can attest, Salt Lake's culture speaks through its main streets. Small business owners make up the tight-kinit fabric of Salt Lake's innovative, resilient, and hopeful community. Visit Salt Lake and the Utah Office of Tourism invite you to listen to the stories and voices of the people creating our culture and community in a series we're calling Mighty Main Street.

Listen now



