



**BUILDING A
DESTINATION**



FOX CITIES

GREATER APPLETON WISCONSIN

FOX CITIES CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
2013 ANNUAL REPORT

BUILDING A DESTINATION



The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau's work is essentially sales and marketing. **We promote and sell our destination to potential visitors.** Since the Bureau's inception, our Tourism Development Grant program has allowed us to contribute to building a better destination. Essentially, it is our product development area.

Destination building or "development" is the hot trend in tourism. Many industry experts point to the ability to identify and support the destination development strategy as the key to future success of destination marketing organizations such as ours. We're pleased the industry has recognized what the Bureau's founders saw more than 25 years ago: product development is essential to a successful sales and marketing effort.

In 2013, the Bureau assessed the Tourism Development Grant program, revising criteria, funding models and identifying new grant opportunities. **We approved \$350,000 in new grants** and re-opened our wayfinding signage and visitor information kiosk programs. We built our profile as a destination for youth sports by granting more than \$7,000 through our Fox Cities Sports Commission.

With a change in leadership, we also spent time **building our organization internally**, initiating some fresh approaches that maintain our focus on economic development through tourism while embracing new ideas, best practices, creative thinking and technology.

We evaluated how we operate and staff the organization. We updated our bylaws and human resources policies to reflect a 21st century not-for-profit. We changed the structure of our sales department and reinvented our Convention Services process. Our expanded sales effort is focused on return on investment,

opening new markets and implementing sales tactics to grow our customer base.

As our industry changes, we have begun to evaluate how we deliver information to the visitor. Our research suggests we either have to be "all in" as a full-service, full-time information center, or "all out," spending the money instead on online content rather than on bricks and mortar information centers. This year we will continue to evaluate our Visitor Center operations and make changes to ensure we are well positioned for the future.

Financially, we saw room tax collections and hotel occupancy increase, continuing a positive trend. A philosophy of conservative fiscal management by the Board and staff has put the Bureau in an excellent financial position. With an emergency fund and operating reserve in place to backstop us in tough times, we can move into the future with great confidence.

Our sales, marketing and destination development efforts have paid off. **Visitor spending in the Fox Cities increased 2.5%**, to more than **\$392 million in 2012**, and this spending generated **\$500 million in total business sales, \$125 million in income for Fox Cities Residents, and sustained 7,150 jobs in the tourism industry.**

We would like to thank the Bureau Board, committees and staff, along with our municipal, hotel and other tourism business partners. Together we have built a strong tourism economy, and we look forward to continuing to **build this destination** with you.


Jeff Nooyen, Board Chair


Pam Seidl, Executive Director

VISION

The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau:

- Is the independent expert source for tourism information in the Fox Cities.
- Is a catalyst for initiatives that have a positive impact on tourism.
- Works with other organizations to accomplish mutually beneficial goals.
- Embraces new ideas, best practices, creative thinking and technology.

2014 GOALS

- Book 43,000 future hotel room nights.
- Generate \$9.8 million in estimated visitor spending.
- Work with partners to advance a destination development strategy.
- Tell our "story" more locally to grow awareness of tourism as an important economic engine and the work the Bureau does.
- Evaluate Visitor Center operations and identify options for the future.
- Participate in relevant national and state tourism initiatives, representing our destination well with our industry peers, elected officials and industry partners.
- Expand our Visitor Information Kiosk network.
- Update the look and feel of our website and create new, high-definition marketing videos.
- Conduct a sports research project to evaluate current facilities and events and identify potential development opportunities.



2013 IN REVIEW

HOTEL OCCUPANCY

- The percentage of hotel rooms occupied in the Fox Cities for 2013 was even with 2012.

SALES & SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2013, through our convention and sports sales effort, we booked 276 events totaling 59,512 room nights.

CONVENTION SALES

- Booked 111 meetings and convention events.
- Booked 20,460 future room nights.
- Exhibited in five tradeshow.
- Catalyst in booking five large conventions of 900+ room nights.

SPORTS SALES

- Booked 165 future sporting events with 39,052 estimated hotel room nights. Both figures are, by far, the most ever recorded for sports sales in the Fox Cities.
- The Fox Cities was awarded hosting rights for the 2015-2018 NCAA Division III Baseball Championships. This event will be hosted by Lawrence University and UW-Oshkosh at Neuroscience Group Field at Fox Cities Stadium.
- The 2015 US Youth Soccer Midwest Region Championships will return to Scheels USA Youth Sports Complex and DePere's Southwest Park in June 2015. The 214-team event is one of the largest events that can be hosted in the Fox Cities with an estimated 12,000 hotel room nights and economic impact worth \$6.5 million.
- The WIAA Spring State High School Baseball Championships will continue on at Neuroscience Group Field at Fox Cities Stadium through 2020.

CONVENTION & SPORTS SERVICES

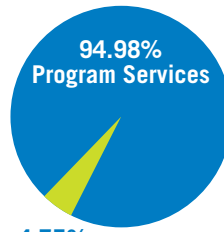
- Provided services to 96 groups.
- Revamped our Services Brochure and expanded our service offerings to include additional planning support, promotion resources and local resources such as social responsibility project options. We are also now offering more of our services to smaller groups.
- Provided more than 565 volunteer hours of work for convention and sports tournament groups.

MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted two tours with 25 professional travel writers that resulted in 27 story placements with an advertising equivalence of \$43,745.
- Continued to market the Wisconsin's Shopping Place brand in leisure ads throughout Wisconsin and upper Michigan.
- Received a 3rd year JEM grant, securing \$18,069 in additional marketing funds.
- Grew the size of the Marketing Advisory Committee to incorporate more attractions, hotels and businesses.

LONG-RANGE GOALS

- Lead the development of the Fox Cities as a tourism destination.
- Collaborate with other economic development partners to build a destination strategy.
- Strengthen our competitiveness in the sports and convention markets.
- Grow the leisure travel market, making it a significant part of the community's tourism mix.
- Build our tourism infrastructure via the Tourism Development Fund.
- Be a good steward of room tax dollars, accomplishing the greatest amount possible with them.

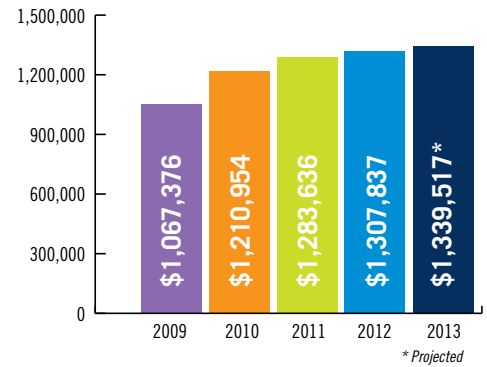


4.75%
Management/General

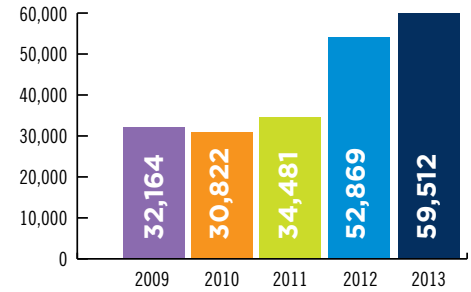
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL

Our 2012 audit showed management/general expenses to be 4.75% of the Bureau's total operating budget.

BUREAU ROOM TAX REVENUE

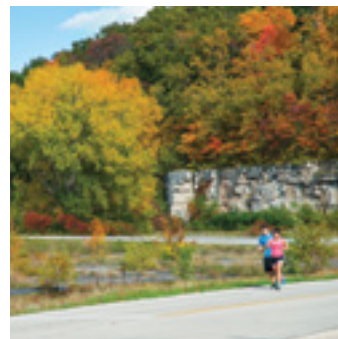


HOTEL ROOMS BOOKED



2013 OPERATIONS REVENUES & EXPENSES

	2013 YEAR-END ACTUAL	2014 BUDGET
REVENUES		
Room Tax Income - Oper	\$1,014,979.21	\$1,020,000.00
Interest Income - Oper	4,688.12	4,500.00
Grants Income	0.00	18,069.00
Sponsorship/Incidental Income	9,988.81	4,000.00
Visitor Guide Income	53,629.22	53,000.00
Tourism Development Admin Reimb	26,200.00	26,700.00
TOTAL REVENUES	\$1,109,485.36	\$1,126,269.00
EXPENSES		
Salaries & Wages	376,209.82	411,100.00
Employee Benefits	102,202.75	105,046.00
Professional Development	12,030.20	14,000.00
Convention Event Services	5,350.15	5,360.00
Trade Shows	4,101.97	12,658.00
Selling Expenses	38,862.40	54,494.00
Marketing	304,485.21	309,688.00
Visitor Guide	45,167.88	43,000.00
Research	26,049.74	76,000.00
Rent/Utilities/Taxes	91,259.77	91,500.00
Capital Equipment Expenses	2,394.00	11,100.00
Equipment Leases	4,378.89	3,675.00
Automobile Expenses	8,144.16	9,600.00
Local Meetings	8,674.14	9,300.00
Office Supplies	6,906.42	6,900.00
Postage & Shipping	8,161.60	8,700.00
Telephone	5,270.86	5,800.00
Property/Casualty Insurance	6,058.15	6,400.00
Professional Services	32,383.32	17,500.00
Memberships	7,855.00	8,500.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,095,946.03	\$1,210,521.00





MISSION

The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau is an economic development organization that strengthens the Fox Cities by attracting visitors in the convention, sports and leisure markets through sales, marketing and destination development.

OUR 2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Nooyen, Chair
Town of Grand Chute

Randy Kliment, Vice Chair
Hampton Inn Appleton

Jay Schumerth, Treasurer
Radisson Paper Valley Hotel

Chris Haese, Secretary
City of Neenah

Cheryl Zaug Casey

Adam Hammatt
Village of Kimberly

Bob Dove
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Mary Jo Parkins
FCCVB Volunteer

Vicki Schneider
Village of Little Chute

Char Stankowski
Country Inn & Suites Little Chute

John Burgland
Fox River Mall

Laura Dietz
Holiday Inn Neenah Riverwalk

Mark Dougherty
Mark's Eastside

Karen Harkness
City of Appleton

Deb Johnson
CopperLeaf Boutique Hotel & Spa

Jan Smith
Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

John Van Drunen
City of Kaukauna

BUREAU STAFF

Jennifer Hecht
Group Marketing & Services Manager

Kelly Hekler
Convention Sales Manager

Mary Hirvela
Marketing & Communications Manager

Mary Ann Minten
Group Visitor Services Coordinator

Pam Seidl
Executive Director

Matt Ten Haken
Director of Sports Marketing

Kim Tisler
Director of Operations

Karen Tremel
Visitor Services Coordinator



FOX CITIES
GREATER APPLETON WISCONSIN

Appleton | Clayton | Combined Locks | Buchanan | Freedom | Grand Chute | Greenville | Harrison | Hortonville | Kaukauna
Kimberly | Little Chute | Menasha | Neenah | Sherwood | Town of Menasha | Town of Neenah | Vandebroek | Woodville

FOX CITIES CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

3433 W. College Ave. | Appleton, WI 54914-3919 | Phone (920) 734-3358 | Fax (920) 734-1080

foxcities.org