

Semi-Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2015



2014-15 VisitNorman Executive Board

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VisitNorman Staff

Executive Director: Dan Schemm

Sales Managers: Michelle Hohlier & Taylor Mauldin

Communications Manager: Stefanie Brickman

Visitor Services Specialist: Lacy Jo Burgess Cady

VisitNorman's mission

VisitNorman, the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau, exists to promote the city, to attract overnight meeting, convention, sport and tourism business to the community, and to enhance and contribute to the overall identity and economic wellbeing of the city. VisitNorman's mission is to be the leader who proactively markets and develops Norman as the preferred destination in Oklahoma.

FROM *the Executive Director*

Dear Mayor & Council members,

VisitNorman's fiscal year runs July 1 through June 30. This Semi-Annual Report presents information, data and figures from July 1 through Dec. 31, 2014.

The most visible change has been our move back to Downtown, moving into a new office at 309 E. Main Street in late August.

We are very excited to report that during the six-month period, the number of booked room nights from the same time period last year increased from 2.4K to nearly 9K!

As the sales cycle typically overlaps more than one six-month period or even a 12-month period, the gain in the number of booked room nights can, in part, be traced back to additional sales opportunities thanks to the increase in the transient guest tax which began to be collected in June 2013 and applied to our budgeting cycle in FY14.

Two of the larger pieces of business booked during the mid-year report include Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. which represented nearly 700 booked rooms and upcoming 2015 North American Youth Congress overflow in August 2015, projected to result in 1,650 booked rooms.

In the past six months, sales opportunities at new conferences for VisitNorman included the Fraternal Executives Association and Small Market Meetings.



Among other successes to report, the number of unique visits to VisitNorman.com increased from 56.8K to 80.7K, the number of media placements jumped from 211 to 294 and our marketing impressions showed improvement from 5.1 million to 9.2 million by using an additional 19 programs.

VisitNorman was able to roll out its Mobile Visitor Center in early FY15, making appearances at all six Fan-Fests preceding Oklahoma Sooners home football games, the National Weather Festival, 2nd Friday Artwalk, the Oklahoma Arts Conference's special Tuesday night Artwalk, Fall Festival and even Leadership Norman's retreat.

Sincerely,

Dan Schemm
Executive Director

The VisitNorman sales team featured a new addition during FY15 with the addition of Taylor Mauldin joining the team. Mauldin previously served as the Visitor Services Specialist for VisitNorman.

During the first half of the fiscal year, the VisitNorman participated in the Fraternal Executives Association meeting, Small Market Meetings Conference and Rejuvenate Marketplace.

Booked business during the time period included:

- ◆ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Mid-Western Regional Conference
- ◆ Diamond King Tournaments, DK Invitational Diamond Showcase
- ◆ Mid America Youth Basketball, MAYB Girls National Championship
- ◆ National Underclassmen Combines, Top Prospect Football Camp
- ◆ Oklahoma Arts Council, Oklahoma Arts Conference
- ◆ Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association

◆ United Pentecostal, 2015 North American Youth Congress

◆ Oklahoma Rural Letter Carriers Association

◆ City Management Association of Oklahoma, Winter Conference

◆ American Meteorological Society Radar Conference

These bookings represent a 264-percent increase in the number of estimated booked room nights versus the same time period a year prior.

During the first half of the fiscal year, the VisitNorman executive director and sales staff revived the Hospitality Roundtable meetings with the local lodging establishments. These quarterly meetings provide an opportunity for VisitNorman to share pertinent information with local hotel partners and to open a forum for timely topics.



	Mid-FY 2011	Mid-FY 2012	Mid-FY 2013	Mid-FY 2014	Mid-FY 2015
Leisure Travel Advertisement & Communication					
Number of programs	40	77	91	81	100
Number of gross impressions	1,009,772	1,826,100	4,573,461	5,165,654	9,237,515
Visitor Guides distributed	18,421	23,886	8,710	14,126	9,485
Unique visits to VisitNorman.com	12,956	16,685	30,949	56,866	80,747
Leisure Travel Media Relations					
Media Placements	107	47	193	211	294
Number of impressions	5.01 million	8.995 million	83.64 million	423 million	125 million**
Advertising equivalency	\$31,838.39	\$65,561.00	\$48,224.00	\$396,123.00	\$108,848.90
Convention/Sports Performance Measures					
Number of Qualified Leads	18	12	13	25	10
Number of potential room nights	5,012	5,192	7,515	10,360	2,075
Number of bookings	4	4	15	9	10
Booked room nights	5,028	248	7,387	2,464	8,990
Number of groups serviced	(not tracked)	4	24	46	17
Visitor Volume Measures					
Bureau expenditures	\$291,738	\$296,385	\$282,017	\$276,717*	\$412,960
Occupancy rate	54.80%	60.10%	64.50%	57.30%	55.60%
Average daily rate	\$80.31	\$80.25	\$80.96	\$80.28	\$81.54
Transient Guest Tax collection	\$555,291	\$591,773	\$717,080	\$923,034	\$939,361
Sales tax collection	\$23.4 million	\$24.77 million	\$26.53 million	\$27.05 million	\$27.87 million

*During the first half of FY14, VisitNorman was in transition between executive directors, thus a smaller payroll, and existing staff was fiscally conservative while waiting for arrival of a new director. Some expenditures in early FY15 were items budgeted in FY14 including the mobile visitor center.

**In FY14, the service VisitNorman uses to calculate earned media impressions performed its annual audit and one outlet dropped from 17 million users per month to one million per month resulting in a lower overall impression count as well as the advertising equivalency formula.



Hitting the streets with the VisitNorman Mobile Visitors Center (MVC) was the leisure travel highlight for the first half of Fiscal Year 2014.

◆ The MVC contains two retractable tents, two HD TVs with swivel arms, an over-the-air television antenna, two DVD players, LED tract lighting and a portable generator.

◆ The vehicle made appearances during the fall at: Six FanFests before Oklahoma Sooner home football games, Leadership Norman retreat, the National Weather Festival, Oklahoma Art Conference's special artwalk, 2nd Friday Artwalk and Fall Festival.

◆ VisitNorman participated in the

Dallas Travel and Adventure Show with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department.

◆ For the second year, VisitNorman partnered with The University of Oklahoma's Visitor Center to produce a dual-cover visitors guide. Partnering with OU adds distribution points including satellite student recruiting offices in Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Denver, Kansas City and San Diego.

◆ The visitor services specialist also participated at University of Oklahoma orientations including: Graduate Student orientation, Atmospheric and Geographic Student Orientation and New Student Orientation and Browsing Fair.

Earned media impressions increased from 211 to 294 in the first half of FY15, a 23-percent increase versus the same time period a year prior. The media placements produced \$108,848.09 in advertising equivalency and a total of 125 million impressions.

During the time period, the communications manager participated in a media blitz throughout the North-west Texas, visiting newspapers and radio stations in Shamrock, Amarillo, Borger, Dumas and Pampa, Texas.

Throughout the six-month segment, the number of marketing programs increased from 81 to 100 and the number of impressions jumped from 5.1 million to 9.2 million. These initiatives included:

- ◆ Sooner Sports properties, including a banner campaign on SoonerSports.com, Game Day app, Game Day Central sponsorship, FanFest presence, VisitNorman.com band stage at FanFest and courtside signage at Lloyd Noble Center. The SoonerSports.com banner campaign produced an increase of 79 percent more impressions than the same time period one year prior.

- ◆ Banner ad campaign on TravelOK.com which produced 1.17 million impressions for the VisitNorman.com ad.

- ◆ Other online banner ad campaigns included TripAdvisor.com (resulting in



75K impressions), FreeTravelGuides.com and VideoGlobetrotter.

- ◆ Print advertising campaigns produced more than three million impressions. These publications included:

- ✦ Midwest Living
- ✦ Best of the Midwest
- ✦ University Parent magazine
- ✦ University of Oklahoma Panhellenic manual
- ✦ The Sunday Oklahoman and Daily Oklahoman holiday gift guide
- ✦ The Norman Transcript "N" Town
- ✦ Frontier Country Travel Guide

- ◆ Owned media impressions via social media and e-blasts produced nearly 250K impressions throughout the six-month period.

VisitNorman.com continued the five-year trend of showing increases among unique users, unique sessions and total page views.

With the debut of the current website design, the number of unique users in each of the mid-year reports has grown six-fold from 12,956 in FY11 to 16,685 in FY12 to 30,949 in FY13 to 56,866 in FY14 and 80,747 in FY15.

In FY15, mobile user sessions increased from 18,424 to 30,799 -- a 116-percent increase versus the same time period one year prior -- and the percentage of mobile users among the sessions increased from 33.4 percent to 39.29 percent.

Tablet users increased by 35 percent; 6,226 users in FY14 with 8,437 users in FY15.

VISITNORMAN *Staff*



Contact us

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