


Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2015

VISIT 
NORMAN

THE NORMAN CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

2014-15 VisitNorman Executive Board

Chair: William Murray
Vice Chair: Carol Dillingham
Past Chairs: Suzanne McAuley and Joe Sparks
Treasurer: Don Hiebert

VisitNorman Board Members

Kyle Allison*
Rex Amsler
Meghan Brooks*
Shelly Hickman*
Randy Laffoon
Lesha Maag
Juna Stovall
Robby Tawil
Jen Tregarthen
Paige Williams

VisitNorman Ex-Officio Members

Brenda Hall, City of Norman
Greg Heiple, Norman City Council Member
John Woods, Norman Chamber of Commerce
Don Wood, Norman Economic Development Coalition

VisitNorman Staff

Executive Director: Dan Schemm
Sales Managers: Michelle Hohlier & Taylor Mauldin Wagner
Communications Manager: Stefanie Brickman
Visitor Services Specialist: Lacy Jo Burgess Cady
Interns: Paige Earley & Candace Hinnergardt

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.

*Kyle Allison, Shelly Hickman and Meghan Brooks left the board part of the way through the fiscal year.

FROM *the Executive Director*

Dear Mayor & Council members,

VisitNorman's fiscal year runs July 1 through June 30. This Annual Report presents information, data and figures from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

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 12-month period, the number of booked room nights from the same time period last year increased from 4K to nearly 12K!

The occupancy rate of Norman's lodging establishments increased by nearly 3 percent during the Fiscal Year. Norman welcomed a new property, the 115-suite Holiday Inn Express during the time period.

As the sales cycle typically overlaps more than 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.

Larger pieces of business booked during the fiscal year included sporting events including the Diamond King softball event, Norman Amateur

Softball Foundation tournaments and the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Mid-Western Regional Conference.

In the past six months, sales opportunities at new conferences for VisitNorman included the Fraternal Executives Association and Small Market Meetings as well as a sales blitz in Kansas City and Omaha with Helms Briscoe.

Among other successes to report, the number of unique visits to VisitNorman.com increased from 127.5K to 162K, the number of media placements jumped from 632 to 696.

VisitNorman was able to roll out its Mobile Visitor Center in early FY15, making appearances at all six FanFests 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.



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dan Schemm'.

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.

During the fiscal year, VisitNorman participated in the Fraternal Executives Association meeting, Small Market Meetings Conference, Rejuvenate Marketplace, National Association of Sports Commissions conference, Society of Government Meeting Professionals national conference as well as conducted a sales blitz with Helms Briscoe representatives in Kansas City and Omaha and participated in a Meeting Professionals International Dallas-Fort Worth chapter luncheon.

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
- ◆ Oklahoma Society of Professional Journalists
- ◆ Saltfork Craftsmen Artists-Blacksmith Association
- ◆ Southern District Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches
- ◆ U.S. Tennis Association Sectional Tournament
- ◆ U.S. Tennis Association Regional tournament
- ◆ Oklahoma Department of Human Services conference
- ◆ Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse conference
- ◆ Oklahoma Department of Mental Health conference
- ◆ Staff Development for Educators conference

These bookings represent a 194-percent increase in the number of booked events.

MEASUREMENTS *Year at a Glance*

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Leisure Travel Advertisement & Communication					
Number of programs	110	173	176	209	181
Number of gross impressions	8,944,167	12,939,050	11,865,547	15,213,325	14,039,802
Visitor Guides distributed	59,167	39,332	35,562	30,775	24,063
Unique visits to VisitNorman.com	27,921	37,733	82,146	127,500	162,207
Leisure Travel Media Relations					
Media Placements	276	336	588	632	696
Number of impressions	104,499,902	46,091,300	510,191,255	1,362,887,508	653,903,751*
Advertising equivalency	\$80,268.87	\$140,736.93	\$359,278.58	\$785,902.18	\$291,809.04*
Convention/Sports Performance Measures					
Number of Qualified Leads	26	36	27	43	26
Number of potential room nights	13,418	11,049	15,329	16,527	4,624
Number of bookings	17	26	28	17	24
Booked room nights	5,955	6,666	14,653**	4,020**	11,847
Number of groups serviced	(not tracked)	17	33	96	65
Visitor Volume Measures					
Bureau expenditures	\$533,343	\$619,664	\$626,390	\$712,257.57***	\$816,251.98
Occupancy rate	56.6%	62.7%	63.3%	56.7%	59.6%
Average daily rate	\$79.48	\$80.30	\$78.21	\$79.79	\$82.15
Transient Guest Tax collection	\$1.069 million	\$1.133 million	\$1.287 million	\$1.5 million	\$1.78 million
Sales tax collection	\$47.97 million	\$50 million	\$51.4 million	\$54.3 million	\$60.8 million

*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.

**2013 booked room nights figure reflects two years of softball being book within the same fiscal year as well as a large soccer tournament, large Harley Davidson Owners event and Mustang rally; 2014 booked room nights do not reflect the softball tournament that is typically booked to timing of sponsorships. Those room nights booked in early FY15.

***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.



Hitting the streets with the VisitNorman Mobile Visitors Center (MVC) was the leisure travel highlight for the Fiscal Year 2015.

◆ 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 at Six FanFests before Oklahoma Sooners 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, Wichita Falls Women's Expo, The

Wichita Women's Fair, Paycom Road Trip, Boeing Road Trip, Kansas City Just for Her and 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 632 to 696 in FY15, a 10-percent increase versus the same time period a year prior. The media placements produced \$291,809 in advertising equivalency and a total of 654 million impressions.

During the time period, the communications manager participated in two media blitzes. The first took place in Northwest Texas, visiting newspapers and radio stations in Shamrock, Amarillo, Borger, Dumas and Pampa, Texas; the second traveled to Sallisaw and then stops in Arkansas at Fayetteville, Little Rock, Conway and Fort Smith at newspapers and radio stations.

Marketing initiatives produced 14 million impressions using 181 programs.

These 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 increased 65 percent from FY14 (1.22 million) to FY15 (2.02 million).

◆ Other online banner ad campaigns included TripAdvisor.com (resulting in nearly 95K impressions), FreeTravelGuides.com and VideoGlobetrotter.

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

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

◆ Owned media impressions via social media and e-blasts produced more than 750K impressions throughout the 12-month period.

◆ The 2014-15 Official Visitors Guide of Norman/University of Oklahoma Visitors Guide took top honors at the Oklahoma Travel Industry Association’s Redbud Awards in the Outstanding Brochure category.

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 27,921 in FY11 to 37,733 in FY12 to 82,146 in FY13 to 127,500 in FY14 and 162,207 in FY15. From FY14 to FY15, the

number of unique users increased 28 percent and within the five-year period, the number of users increased nearly 500 percent.

In FY15, mobile user sessions increased from 45,493 to 367,229 -- a 48-percent increase versus the same time period one year prior. Tablet users increased by 18.3 percent; 15,294 users in FY14 with 18,097 users in FY15.

VISITNORMAN *Staff*



Contact us

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