

THE NORMAN CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

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# NORMAN

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Destination Marketing Plan  
Fiscal Year 2014  
(July 2013-June 2014)

# Norman Convention & Visitors Bureau

## Destination Marketing Plan

Fiscal Year 2014

(July 2013-June 2014)

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## Executive Summary

Tourism as an industry in Oklahoma is estimated to generate \$6.3 billion dollars in annual direct traveler expenditures making tourism the third largest industry in Oklahoma. \$971 million dollars in federal, state, and local economy tax revenues are brought in by travelers to Oklahoma. These dollars help fund jobs and public programs such as police, firefighters, education and road projects. 77,000 jobs are secured by Oklahoma tourism, supporting the economies of all 77 counties in Oklahoma. This represents 4.9% of the state's total non-farm employment. Specifically in Norman, the tourism industry provides about 1,330 careers and has an estimated annual economic impact of more than \$146 million dollars.

All forecasts predict increased travel and tourism in 2013 and 2014. Smith Travel Research, Inc. shared at a recent Oklahoma Hotel & Lodging Summit that the U.S. hotel industry is projected to increase in 2013 in all three key performance measurements – average daily rate, occupancy and revenue over per available room. The State of The American Traveler says 34.2% of Americans plan to travel more this year and 33% of Americans plan to increase their leisure travel spending in the next 12 months. Data from ConventionSouth, Meeting Professionals International, Global Business Travel Association & others show that corporations & businesses are expected to increase their spending on face-to-face business meetings in 2013, and American Express Meetings & Events forecasts no change in the number of meetings in North America in 2013.

Norman has continued to see growth in four key indicators. As of December 2012, hotel room occupancy was up 4.4%, ADR is up nearly a dollar, guest tax collections are up 11% and sales tax collections are up 4.6%.

The Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB) is the Official Destination Marketing Organization for Norman, Oklahoma. We are the only entity solely marketing Norman's tourism attributes to a regional and national audience. The NCVB's primary mission is to improve the local economy by attracting overnight visitors, meetings, conventions and events to the city. This mission is undertaken by a variety of marketing and development strategies designed to promote Norman as a destination to defined markets. This Destination Management Plan outlines how the NCVB looks to continue to reach key goals and fulfill our mission.

Through strategic, research-based sales, promotions and public relations initiatives, the NCVB marketing goal is to show growth in the following key indicators:

- Occupancy rates of Norman hotels
- Average daily rates of Norman hotels
- Transient guest tax collections
- Sales tax collections

Through proper execution of the following objectives, Norman will see growth in the four key indicators above. Marketing objectives:

1. Aid in the continued development of Norman as a destination
2. Continue to collect secondary research and pursue primary research to aid in our marketing and branding effectiveness
3. Create a genuine brand encompassing the entire destination experience
4. Execute promotions to meetings/conventions, sports and leisure target markets

This Destination Marketing Plan for Fiscal Year 2014 outlines the key strategies to be executed related to each marketing objective.

## Situation Analysis

The temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal place of work and residence, and the activities undertaken en route to and during their stay at these destinations and the facilities / services created to cater to their needs leads to economic impacts generated by these activities.

That's Tourism! Tourists going to destinations, doing tourism activities and creating economic impact in those destinations.



## Tourism Industry Overview

Travel and tourism is a \$6.3-billion industry in Oklahoma. Travel and tourism generates \$971 million in tax revenue for local, state and federal governments. Each U.S. household would pay \$950 more in taxes without the tax revenue generated by the travel and tourism industry.

The travel and tourism industry is one of the state's third-largest employers with 77,000 direct travel-generated jobs with a direct travel-generated payroll of \$1,757.9 million. This represents 4.9% of the state's total non-farm employment. Additionally, 1 out of every 8 U.S. non-farm jobs is created directly, indirectly, or is induced by travel and tourism.

A recent study unveiled the quality of a job in tourism. Workers who begin their careers in travel achieve higher wages, have greater access to educational opportunities and enjoy better career progression, according to a first-of-its-kind study of more than 30 years of longitudinal data collected by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and analyzed by Oxford Economics and the U.S. Travel Association.

Key findings from *Fast Forward: Travel Creates Opportunities and Launches Careers* include:

- **Earning Higher Wages:** The average maximum salary for employees who start their career in the travel industry reaches \$81,900 - significantly more than other industries.
- **Promoting Educational Opportunities:** One-third of the 5.6 million Americans who are employed part time to support themselves while they further their education work in the travel industry. Among workers who began their careers in the travel industry, 33 percent earned at least a bachelor's degree.
- **Building the Middle Class:** The travel industry is one of the top 10 largest employers of middle-class wage earners in the U.S. More than half of all travel industry employees (53 percent) earn a middle-class salary or higher.
- **Leading to Rewarding Careers:** Employees who work in travel jobs build valuable skills that can translate into rewarding careers, both in travel and other industries. Two out of five workers who start their careers in the travel industry go on to earn more than \$100,000 per year.



Industry indicators shared at a recent Oklahoma Hotel & Lodging Summit by Smith Travel Research, Inc. point to a healthy industry statewide:

- Occupancy in Oklahoma hotels is at 61% - **UP** 6% year over year
- The Average Daily Rate (ADR) of those hotel rooms has reached the 2009 peak and is at \$73.80 - **UP** 4.1%
- Revenue Per Available Room (RevPar) is at \$44.99 - **UP** 10.4%
- Room demand is **UP** 6.7% in Oklahoma
- Transient Rooms sold-to-date is outpacing prior years

- Transient ADR has surpassed peak years
- Group Rooms sold to date has outpaced prior years (through June 2012)
- Group Rooms ADR has surpassed peak years
- Occupancy has surpassed prior peaks both weekdays and weekends (65% and 73%)
- The Tourism Promotion Tax Collection Benchmark is up more than 8% in FY13 (through November)
- Tourism Information Center visitation is up more than 12% through November, 2012

The attraction base around the State continues to develop:

- The Oklahoma City National Memorial desires to build out the Journal Record Building
- A new Bedre Chocolate Factory was completed in Sulphur
- The OK Pop Museum in Tulsa continues to be discussed
- Kevin Durant's restaurant has broken ground
- Winstar Casino is building an 18-Story hotel
- Osage Nation is building two casinos
- Retailers Michal Kors Lifestyle and L'Occitane En Provence are considering opening in the Penn Square Mall and retailer Von Maur in the Quail Springs Mall



All national forecasts predict increased travel and tourism in 2013 and 2014.

- Smith Travel Research, Inc. shared at a recent Oklahoma Hotel & Lodging Summit that the U.S. hotel industry is projected to increase in 2013 in all three key performance measurements – average daily rate (4.4%), occupancy (1.7%) and revenue over per available room (6.2%).
- The *State of The American Traveler* says 34.2% of American plan to travel more this year and 33% of Americans plan to increase their leisure travel spending in the next 12 months.
- Data from ConventionSouth, MPI, GBTA & others show that corporations & businesses are expected to increase their spend on face-to-face business meetings in 2013.
- American Express Meetings & Events forecasts no change in the number of meetings in North America in 2013.



## **Norman Tourism Industry Overview**

Indicators point to a healthy tourism industry in Norman. Through December 2012, four key indicators showed increases:

- Occupancy in Norman hotels was at 64.5% (vs. 60.1%)
- ADR of those rooms is up to \$80.96 (vs. \$80.25)
- Guest Tax collections are up 11%
- Sales Tax collections are up 4.6%

The tourism industry is and will continue to be an important source of income and employment for Norman. The tourism industry has an estimated annual economic impact of more than \$146 million dollars and provides an estimated 1,330 careers. Additionally, the tourism industry makes the following important contributions to the Norman community:

- Provides economic diversification
- Expands the tax base
- Creates identity and image
- Creates additional local amenities (i.e. restaurants, attractions, etc.)
- Builds audiences for local events

## **Market Overview**

The Norman tourism market is strong. According to recent research, virtually everyone who chooses Norman as a destination would return. Our central location in the state, proximity to Oklahoma City and access to Interstate 35 can be used as marketing advantages. The community is seen as friendly, easy-to-navigate, affordable and attractive by visitors. The University of Oklahoma campus, its athletic facilities and museums all have strong community and visitor appreciation. The Downtown Norman revitalization efforts have paid off as the area has been listed among the top Norman destinations two years running. Additionally, Embassy Suites' conference facilities are recognized by the community as a tremendous asset for attracting groups.

A further positive is that the community appears to have vision for continued improvement as well as a general drive to improve Norman for both residents and visitors alike. This is important because leisure travelers are faced with an astonishing array of options in how to spend their time and money. The growth of Oklahoma City's Bricktown as a destination and the recent completion of an IMAX theatre in Moore is competition for Norman in attracting drive market visitors.

Further consider the recent announcements of attraction developments around Norman:

- Oklahoma City National Memorial / Journal Record Building
- Quail Ridge Hunting & Sporting Clays skeet-shooting facility
- Bedre Chocolate Factory in Sulphur
- Tulsa Raceway Park
- OK Pop Museum
- Kevin Durant's Restaurant
- KOSU Film Row studio



- Winstar's 18-Story hotel
- Osage Nation's two casinos
- Kialegee Red Clay Casino
- Retailers Michal Kors Lifestyle and L'Occitane En Provence in the Penn Square Mall
- Retailer Von Maur in the Quail Springs Mall
- OKC Century Center (downtown mall)



And the success of attractions that have opened or improved around Norman:

- Oklahoma City Outlet Mall / Westgate Market Place
- Retail outlets (Dick's Sporting Goods) in Moore
- Warren Theatres IMAX
- Frontier City water attraction
- Remington Park
- Hard Rock Casino
- Boathouse District in Oklahoma City
- Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur
- State Fairgrounds Equestrian facilities
- OneOK Field in Tulsa
- Oklahoma City Redhawks



OKC Boathouse District

The NCVB has been incorporating these leisure and entertainment options in its marketing materials. The competition is very real, and in an effort to leverage that in Norman's favor, it is necessary to position Norman as an ideal overnight destination from which visitors can daytrip to "competitive" communities such as Oklahoma City or attractions such as the Arbuckle Mountains or the Chickasaw Culture Center. Recent surveys indicate the Norman community recognizes visitors to Norman are likely to visit regional attractions. Research affirmed that two of three visitors to Norman are visiting OKC attractions. With 2 million visitors to OKC National Memorial & Museum, it would behoove

Norman to continue to market ourselves in relationship to the close proximity to the state's highest traffic attraction and a growing assembly of regional attractions.

However, while Norman celebrates that the attraction base around us continues to develop, the contrast is recognizing the increased competition for visitor spending from surrounding Oklahoma communities and from the increase in these leisure and group opportunities in general. Additionally, there will be increased competition in the meetings and conventions industry as Oklahoma City continues with site selection for the \$280 million convention center approved through MAPS 3. An additional 27,000 square foot banquet space is being developed in Bricktown. Choctaw Casino and Resort has included meeting space. The Ardmore Convention Center, Frisco Conference Center in Clinton and Hard Rock Casino and Hotel in Tulsa have all recently opened. The Tulsa Technology Center Campus in Owasso is now welcoming groups. Enid is soon to open the Enid Expo Center.



Enid Event Center

While community citizens have championed an aquatics center for years now in Norman, Moore and Edmond have moved forward with construction of swim facilities.

At a recent luncheon presented by the Norman Chamber of Commerce, Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett shared two key successes to the Oklahoma City economy:

1. A diversified economy
2. A strong tourism industry



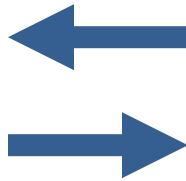
Numerous attractions have been the vision of Norman residents for years:

- National Weather Museum
- Upgraded competitive sport facilities including a competitive swim facility as identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Cheer competition facilities
- University North Park including Legacy Park and destination shopping
- Parks and recreation offerings beyond neighborhood parks

While we celebrate the recent opening of Andy Alligator’s Water Park and the ever-closer development of Legacy Park, we must continue to discuss development of our own attractions and enhancements of the attractions we have.

Recent feedback from the community showed support for further initiatives that could attract more visitors: 84.5% of those surveyed expressed interest in new nightlife options; 83% expressed interest in high-end shopping options; 81% expressed interest in more unique boutique shopping options; nearly 80% expressed interest in additional fine dining options.

Further community input showed support of the continued development of Norman, specifically through beautification and transportation. We applaud the Norman voters for passing the Transportation Bond that will expand Lindsey Street in addition to the other seven projects. We compliment the City on embarking on a Comprehensive Transportation Master Plan and look forward to participating on its development. Also, 93.5% expressed interest in community beautification initiatives. More than 88% expressed interest in connecting various districts in the city. (For example, connecting Historic Downtown to Campus Corner.)



Concepts that have been the vision of Norman residents include:

- Enhancements to entry points and corridors within Norman – Porter, Flood, Main Street, Lindsey, South Classen
- Development of Front Street concepts from Robinson into Downtown
- Continued beautification of Downtown Norman and Campus Corner in line with the ‘Central Initiative’ as proposed by Imagine Norman
- Beautification Master Plan as proposed by Imagine Norman

As the community looks to further develop Norman as an attraction, the city must continue to foster a pro-business and development environment. We must cultivate a development process that is as expeditious and manageable as possible. Additionally, we must continue to explore and use tax incentives as development tools. (TIF, BID, sales tax abatements, etc.) All interested parties working together for this common goal will exponentially increase opportunities for destination experiences in Norman.

It's as Maura Gast, Irving Texas CVB Executive Director, said at the 2012 Annual Tourism Luncheon:

*"If you build a place people want to visit, you build a place where people want to live.*

*"If you build a place where people want to live, you'll build a place where people want to work.*

*"If you build a place where people want to work, you'll build a place where business has to be.*

*"And if you build a place where business has to be, you'll build a place where people have to visit."*

In addition to increased competition with attraction and meeting space development, Norman continues to face increasing competition from communities regionally and across the nation with similar make-up: 85- to 130,000 in population, within a metropolitan area, and home to major university. Consider the following:

<u>City</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>DMO Budget</u>
Ann Arbor, MI	114,000	\$2,600,000
Gainesville, FL	124,000	\$2,000,000
Las Cruces, NM	93,570	\$1,549,000
Waco, TX	126,000	\$1,300,000
Columbia, MO	101,100	\$1,300,000
St. Joseph, MO	76,200	\$1,300,000
Fort Smith, AR	86,200	\$ 894,500
Odessa, TX	90,900	\$ 870,000
Boulder, CO	94,200	\$ 727,000
Lawrence, KS	92,000	\$ 685,000
Stillwater	39,000	\$ 580,400
<b>Norman</b>	<b>113,000</b>	<b>\$ 557,500</b>
Edmond	81,000	\$ 452,350

\*excerpt from benchmark comparison of 27 communities. For full list, see Appendix A.

The marketing initiatives outlined in this plan are those that are budgeted at this time, with our limited budget, many initiatives have been left out of the budget. To date, more than \$350,000 worth of marketing initiatives we have identified as sure-fire opportunities remain unfunded.



## **NCVB Overview**

### **NCVB Vision and Mission Statements**

*The Vision of the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau is to be the leader who proactively markets and develops Norman as the preferred destination in Oklahoma.*

*The Mission of the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau is 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 well-being of the city.*

### **NCVB Organizational Structure**

The Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation. Incorporated as a 501(c)6 on June 4, 1993, the NCVB is governed by a 17-member Board of Directors. The Board oversees policies of the NCVB and a contract with the City of Norman. Through the contract – K-9293-136 – the NCVB receives 50% of the transient guest taxes collected by a state statute and city ordinance on local hotel rooms. The city ordinance is Ordinance Number 0-7980-58 or the “Norman Transient Guest Room Tax Ordinance.”

The NCVB By-laws and Contract K-9293-136 stipulate how the 17 members of the Board of Directors are elected. The 17 members shall be composed of the following:

- Seven Directors elected by the NCVB Board of Directors nominated from the following organizations or industries:
  - The University of Oklahoma Athletic Department;
  - The Norman Public Schools;
  - The Norman Chamber of Commerce;
  - The Norman Arts Council;
  - The Norman hotels and hospitality industry (2); and/or
  - The Norman restaurant and entertainment industry.
- Two Directors appointed by the Mayor of the City of Norman representing the University of Oklahoma and organized athletic groups.
- Four Directors elected by the NCVB Board of Directors to serve in “at-large” capacities.
- Four Ex-Officio representatives as follows:
  - The Mayor of the City of Norman or a City Councilmember appointee;
  - The City Manager of the City of Norman or a designee;
  - The Executive Director of the Norman Chamber of Commerce; and
  - The Executive Director of the Norman Economic Development Coalition, Inc.

Fiscal Year 2013 Board of Directors members are:

Chair: Kris Glenn, Tyler Outdoor Media

Vice Chair: Suzanne M. McAuley, Norman Chamber of Commerce, First American Bank

Treasurer: William Murray, CTA, Norman hospitality industry, Montford Inn Bed & Breakfast

Secretary: Michael Vance, CTA, At-Large, Embassy Suites Hotel and Conference Center

Past-Chair: Joe Sparks, Norman restaurant industry, Legends Restaurant

Dr. Roger Brown, Norman Public Schools

Sherry Brown, Norman Arts Council, Republic Bank & Trust

Sandy Huse, At-Large, Sooner Mall

Randy Laffoon, Mayoral Appointment – organized athletics, SportsTalk 1400

Jay Potter, Norman hospitality industry, Hampton Inn

Juna Stovall, Mayoral Appointment – OU, OU OCCE

Charlie Taylor, OU Athletics

Paige Williams, At-Large, Chickasaw Nation

Ex-Officio

Brenda Hall, City Manager Designee

Linda Lockett, Mayor/City Council Designee

Don Wood, Norman Economic Development Coalition, Inc.

John Woods, Chamber of Commerce

## **NCVB Staff and Titles**

Stephen Koranda, Executive Director, CTA

Susan Bash, Sales Manager, CTA

Stefanie Brickman, Communications Manager, CTA

Taylor Mauldin, Services Specialist, CTA

Michelle Samp, Sales Manager, CMP, CTA

Sarah Jay, Marketing Assistant, CTA (PT)

## Target Audience Overview

The Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau targets three audiences as outlined in our Mission Statement - overnight meeting, convention, sport and tourism business (or leisure travelers).

### Meeting/Convention

Meetings contribute greatly to the economy. The U.S. Travel Association prepared a report – *Economic Significance of Meetings to the U.S. Economy*. It reported 1.8 million meetings are held in the United States annually and contribute \$263 billion in direct spending to the U.S. economy. According to the study, the meetings industry accounts for a total of 1.7 million jobs and generates \$60 billion in U.S. labor income, \$14.3 billion in federal taxes and \$11.3 billion in state and local taxes.

Meeting and convention opportunities are based upon businesses, associations, military, social groups, visiting families and relatives, weddings, reunions and other local, state, regional or national organizations that can be adequately accommodated by Norman meeting facilities and hotel properties.

Research through the brand realignment found that presently Norman is only considered a destination among Oklahoma-based meeting planners. A strategy must be implemented to market to regional meeting planners outside of Oklahoma to bring Norman to the forefront of their considerations.

The same research identified that meeting planners tend to be women between the ages of 30 and 60. Any strategy must recognize this and the design of advertisements or materials and the messages they contain must be created appropriately.



### Sports

The sports market are selected sport events and sport organization rights holders, including National Governing Bodies, multi-sports organizations/associations, college and university conferences and other organizations who own events that are available to Norman through a bid selection process by the NCVB or in conjunction with local sport organizations and associations with similar goals.

Networking is a major strategy to attract events to Norman. Major influencers in the community who can assist in bringing events to Norman are the local sports associations. Results are more successful when these associations are partners with the NCVB in bidding on events.





## Tourism (Leisure)

The tourism market is defined as the leisure traveler or any visitor traveling to Norman outside of an organized convention or meeting with interest in Norman's attractions, history, culture, and/or accommodations.



Recently the NCVB database of more than 80,000 potential leisure visitors was “scrubbed” by a research firm. RUF Strategic Solutions was able to match the names in our database to information available to them. The members of the database represented household clusters and the descriptions of those clusters provide us insights as to the typical visitor to Norman:

- The head of the household is 45 to 75+; one cluster well represented trended younger at 35- to 54-years-of-age
- The household income is \$50,000 to 150,000; one cluster well represented trended higher at \$75,000 to \$250,000
- They have completed high school and most likely graduate school
- They are married
- They have been in their home for 16 years or more
- They generally do not have children in their home. However, two clusters well represented show a strong propensity to having kids 13- to 18-years-of-age in the home.
- They are strong magazine and newspaper readers and television watchers. Although some clusters well represented suggest the exact opposite – weak propensity to listen to the radio, watch TV, read magazines and newspaper and pay attention to advertising outside the home.
- Magazines they most likely read are Smithsonian, AARP, Better Homes and Garden, Southern Living and Golf Digest
- Serves or has served in the military
- Belongs to a social, fraternal or civic group

### Specific to travel

- They took a domestic trip in the last year
- Most will travel twice a quarter
- Stay 4 to 8+ nights



- Spend \$900 or more per trip
- Most likely visit in the fall. The clusters with kids in the household will visit in the summer.
- On the trips they will golf, gamble, visit historic places, museums and beaches, participate in water activities
- The clusters with kids in the household attended a theme park in the last year and attend sporting and other events. They also hike/bike, boat/sail, and hunt/fish.

The interest in Norman comes primarily from Oklahoma and Texas. Missouri, Illinois, Kansas, California, Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan, Arkansas and Indiana are the other states in the top 10 with regards to states represented most by leisure inquiries.

## **Marketing Goals and Objectives**

### **Marketing Goals**

Through strategic, research based sales, promotions and public relations initiatives, the NCVB marketing goal is to show growth in the following key indicators:

1. Occupancy rates of Norman hotels
2. Average daily rates of Norman hotels
3. Transient guest tax collections
4. Sales tax collections

Performance and Activity Measures that lead to the growth of the above key indicators include:

1. Number of leisure promotions programs
2. Number of gross impressions of those programs
3. Number of conversions through those programs
4. Number of leisure media placements
5. Number of gross impressions of those media placements
6. Number of leads sent to hotels for meeting/sport groups
7. Number of room nights booked for meeting/sport groups
8. Number of room nights serviced for meeting/sport groups
9. Room nights booked for group tours

### **Marketing Objectives**

The following marketing objectives will be the concentration of the CVB in FY 2014:

1. Aid in the continued development of Norman as a destination
2. Continue to collect secondary research and pursue primary research to aid in our marketing and branding effectiveness
3. Create a genuine brand encompassing the entire destination experience
4. Execute promotions to meetings/conventions, sports and leisure target markets

Proper execution of the above objectives will assure growth in the four key indicators above.

## Marketing Objectives

### Destination Development

Marketing 101 teaches the Four Ps of Marketing – Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Clearly Product drives the other three P's of the Marketing Mix. Without a quality Product, no matter the Price, Place or Promotion, the Product will not satisfy the consumer. Just as Apple, Chevy and Proctor & Gamble concentrate on the quality, design, features, sizes and services of

their products, a destination must concentrate on the quality of the destination and the features it offers to the tourist. The NCVB Board of Directors and staff recognize development of the Product – Norman as a destination – is our first and foremost concentration.



Refer back to the Market Overview and specifically the list of attractions being developed – museums, sport facilities, destination restaurants, retail, entertainment outlets, etc. As previously stated, while Norman celebrates that the attraction base around us continues to be developed, the contrast is recognizing the increased competition for visitor spending from surrounding Oklahoma communities and from the increase in these leisure and group opportunities in general.

### Key Objectives

Aid in the continued development of Norman as a destination. Focus areas to include:

- A. Development of new attractions (i.e., National Weather Museum)
- B. Development of an events center in University North Park
- C. Development of upgraded competitive or new sport facilities
- D. Development of a Travel Information Center along Interstate 35
- E. Continued development of districts within Norman as destinations (i.e., Downtown, Campus Corner, University North Park etc.)
- F. Redevelopment of distressed districts (i.e., Main Street, Ed Noble Parkway, Porter corridor etc.)
- G. Continued beautification of Norman
- H. Enhancement of current attractions
- I. Development and promotion of existing festivals and events
- J. Development of new festivals and events
- K. Engagement in transportation enhancements
- L. Expansion of the Certified Tourism Ambassador program

### Development of new attractions (i.e., National Weather Museum)

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to look for ways we can assist with the development of new attractions. NCVB staff presently sits on the board of directors for the long envisioned National Weather Museum. We constantly monitor activities and discussions related to other possible attractions in Norman. More attractions than the National Weather Museum are being discussed.

## **Development of an events center in University North Park**

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to advocate for an events center in University North Park. There have been discussions of a feasibility study to be done for such a project. The NCVB will push for such a study to be conducted towards the development of an events center to compliment the Embassy Suites Hotel and Conference Center and neighboring hotels.

## **Development of upgraded competitive or new sport facilities**

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to look for ways we can assist with the upgrading or development of new competitive sport facilities, specifically facilities able to host lucrative weekend tournaments. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan outlined initiatives. A group has long advocated for a competitive swim facility. We constantly monitor activities and discussions related to each and will advocate for their development.

## **Development of a Travel Information Center along Interstate 35**

The need for Travel Information Centers (visitor or welcome centers) is growing, at least according to a recent survey of DMO professionals conducted by Destination Marketing Association International. 16% of destinations indicated an increase in the number of visitor centers they manage. With 81% of DMOs indicating they manage at least one visitor center, one perspective for this growth is that today's centers are finding fresh ways to draw in visitors. From touch-screen technology to ticket sales, today's evolving TICs are producing new ways to engage tourists. While the storm damage to the NCVB Downtown office provided the opportunity to locate closer to Interstate 35, we must continue to explore opportunities to establish a very visible presence on I-35 through a Travel Information Center.

The NCVB Executive Director attended a seminar on Travel Information Centers. With this information from DMAI's Certified Destination Marketing Executive program, Norman now has a blueprint for developing the long envisioned Travel Information Center along Interstate 35.

**Key Strategy** – continue to explore opportunities to establish a very visible presence on Interstate 35 through a Travel Information Center.

## **Continued development of districts within Norman as destinations (i.e., Downtown, Campus Corner, University North Park etc.)**

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to look for ways we can assist with the development of districts within Norman as destinations. NCVB staff presently sits on the board of directors for the Downtowners Association. We remain in communications with key Campus Corner tenants and owners. We constantly monitor activities and discussions related to other all districts and remain prepared to work with those entities to advocate for the further enhancement of those districts.

## **Redevelopment of distressed districts (i.e., Main Street, Ed Noble Parkway, Porter Corridor etc.)**

**Key Strategy** – Recognizing there are districts or corridors that perhaps are not the most attractive, the NCVB maintains public enhancements should be explored that will drive private investments. Whether those be beautification efforts such as streetscape or landscaping, or putting in place incentives such as tax increment financing or tax abatements, with public investment, private investment will follow.

## **Continued beautification of Norman**

*Almost every aspect of your physical destination presents an opportunity to make favorable impressions. You have a captive audience and a controlled environment where you can communicate your marketing message any way you choose. What will you do with it?*

- Explore design and beautification initiatives
- Explore signage and way-finding programs
- And in general, work on the Norman mojo and ambiance

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to look for ways we can assist with the beautification of corridors and gateways to Norman. NCVB staff presently sits on boards and committee for numerous entities and through those will advocate for beautification efforts. The NCVB co-funded a wayfinding study that lead to a plan being prepared. We will work with City staff on the implementation of that plan.

## **Enhancement of current attractions**

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to look for ways we can assist with the further enhancement of current attractions. Naturally, the key way to do that is with research-based, targeted promotions. Through constant communication with personnel at Norman's attractions, we can continue to understand other ways we can assist.

## **Development and promotion of existing festivals and events**

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to look for ways we can assist with the further development of existing festivals or events. Naturally, the key way to do that is with research-based, targeted promotions of the festivals and events. Another is that we will continue our involvement with community events and send media releases about such events. At present, the Communications Manager is actively involved with the organizing committee or lends media support to more than 15 community events. But whether that be a new feature of a parade, new offering at a festival, or the expansion of an event to include an additional day, the NCVB is ever ready to assist with opportunities to enhance one of our iconic events.

## **Development of new festivals and events**

**Key Strategy** - The NCVB will continue to look for ways we can assist with the development of new festivals or events. We constantly monitor activities and discussions related to such and remain ever ready to assist with opportunities to add a new festival or event to our ever popular line-up.

## **Engagement in transportation enhancements**

**Key Strategy** – While research indicates the overwhelming majority of tourists drive a vehicle into Norman when visiting, providing them with transportation, the NCVB recognizes there are visitors who do not have transportation and could use public transit. We will continue our engagement in public transit initiatives such as the current bus system and discussions of future expanded rail service and remain ready to advocate for expansion or development of systems to move visitors conveniently from one attraction to another.

## **Expansion of the Certified Tourism Ambassador program**

Recognizing one can always improve customer service, the NCVB partnered with the Oklahoma City and Edmond CVBs to bring the Certified Tourism Ambassador program to the OKC metro. This national program trains and certifies people who work in front-line industries with the skills to enhance a visitor experience to increase tourism, from hotel employees to convenience-store clerks to taxi drivers and museum guides. The CTA program goes well beyond basic customer service training; it gives participants the opportunity to build upon their knowledge of the local region, enhance their skills in serving customers, increase their awareness of information resources and discover the power of tourism. A summary of the program is included as Appendix B.



**Key Strategy** – The NCVB will continue the promotion of the program in hopes more front-line staff will become certified.





#### 4. Monitoring brand effectiveness.

This will measure and benchmark satisfaction and loyalty levels. Research will identify critical elements of the destination experience as well as competitors' relative performance. Routine, periodic research is required to gauge the destination brand's ability to deliver on its promise over time and track changes toward any of its inherent brand attributes.

#### 5. Evaluating VisitNorman.com's effectiveness.

The evaluation is designed to provide an objective measurement to gauge the "brand" effectiveness of VisitNorman.com by taking into consideration some important applications of basic brand-building principles. The evaluation will also examine VisitNorman.com from the perspective of its intended target audience. The criterion used in the evaluation process is designed to assess the visitor's experience and potential to meet brand expectations.

Additionally, a future studies will look to determine the conversion of potential visitors into actual visitors to Norman.

In the interim, memberships in Destination Marketing Association International, National Association of Sports Commissions, and Oklahoma Travel Industry Association allow the NCVB access to secondary research.

## Brand Image

Any business professional knows one of the most important assets one can develop for a business is a powerful brand. It is the same for destinations.

Brands are not just logos or tag lines. Brands are the culmination of who you are, how you are different from your competition, and why a tourist should visit your destination.

A brand instills confidence, creates loyalty, and many times can command a premium price. Most of all, a great brand reduces a buyer's perception of risk and makes the purchase choice easy.

Developing a brand is much more than just deciding on a name or picking some colors. A brand is the sum of all Norman does. It's derived from all of our touch points with our customers and prospects. Developing a brand requires having a plan that consistently communicates what Norman is and does, along with our distinct attributes, image, and personality. For example, see the image below from the Norman Wayfinding Plan.



The Norman CVB took a step towards developing a genuine brand for Norman with the “brand realignment” completed in 2010. But as the Norman Wayfinding Plan was being prepared, it became apparent that Norman is not consistently communicating what Norman is and does. We need to continue developing brand Norman.

If we think that developing a strategic direction for brand Norman is basically “image building,” “positioning” and advertising, then we will miss out on many other opportunities and benefits. Too often, destination brand initiatives are focused on naming, logo makeover, advertising slogans and media spend. Without the umbrella of an overarching strategy for the destination brand experience, tactics such as the aforementioned may garner short-term gains in building awareness, but may lack the staying power vital to the long-term good health and wellbeing of a brand.

## **Key Objective**

To create a genuine brand – brand Norman. Genuine brands are not designed. Genuine brands are the result of a comprehensive, well thought-out and carefully crafted strategy that encompasses the entire destination experience reflecting visitors’ needs and expectations. It is for this reason that the destination brand-building process must focus on strategic development of a brand versus individual tactics focused on identity, image, awareness and promotion.

## **Strategy Towards Key Objective**

To create a distinctive, long-lasting, one-of-a-kind brand is a process that comes from within. The Norman CVB will lead a team of stakeholders representing a cross section of key constituents. This “brand commission” will own and direct the destination brand development and implementation process.

The first task of the “brand commission” will be to conduct a brand assessment that will objectively evaluate perceptions of the destination brand’s current brand position, building toward consensus among the organization’s primary stakeholders with the brand’s reality: where and how the destination is perceived today.

However, an objective assessment of the organization’s destination brand cannot be accomplished without quality research. Effective destination brand research gets inside consumers’ minds to discover the primary motivating or influential factors driving tourism and visitor decision-making. The “brand commission” will be reviewing options for conducting the research needed for a brand assessment.

Consumer and customer satisfaction must be understood from an absolute standpoint: “How satisfied are customers with our destination’s products, accommodations and service?” It is also important to gain a high level of understanding of satisfaction relative to other competitors and from a macro point of view. In other words, determine what is reasonable, acceptable or the norm in a particular market or market segment. Studying best-demonstrated practices helps identify the industry’s “gold standard” or top performance (inside or outside the industry) to help establish benchmarking targets.

Any research will coincide with the research mentioned above. (See pages 21-22.)

## Promotions

### Meetings/Convention and Sports

The NCVB will continue to work with conference centers, hotels and the University of Oklahoma's Center for Continuing Education to increase the number of meetings, conferences, and events-related spending in Norman – particularly during off-peak time periods.

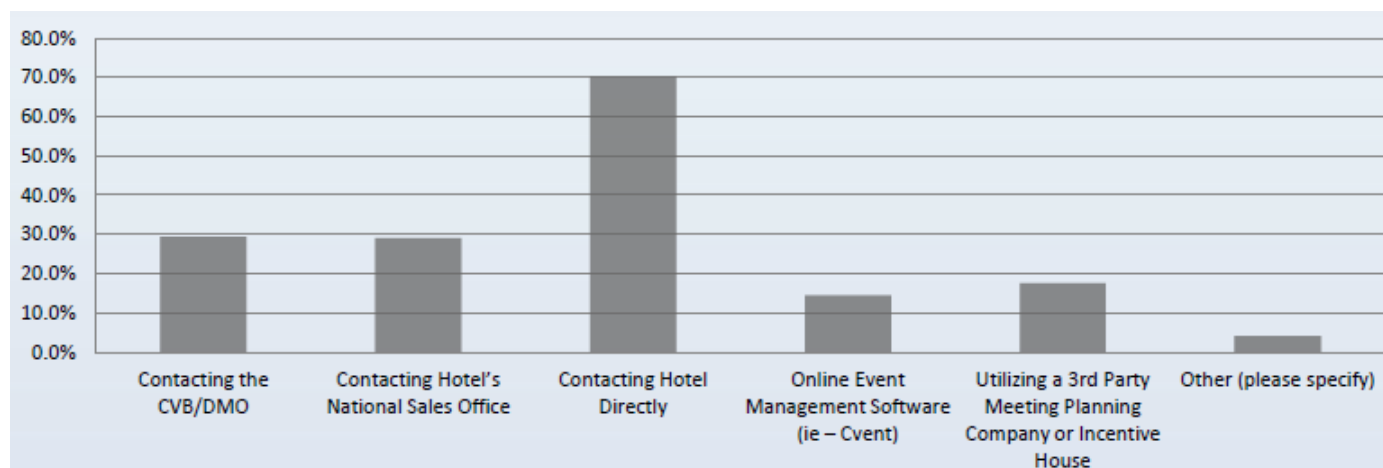
### Key Objectives towards Meetings, Conventions and Sports

1. Brand Norman, enhance awareness and expand promotion of Norman as a convention, meetings and sports destination
2. Continue to develop Norman as a destination for meetings/conventions and sports
3. Expand our digital activities
4. Enhance the servicing of groups meeting or hosting a sports event in Norman

### Branding the Destination for Meetings

Recent research has revealed that we, as a DMO, must continue to re-find our niche in the ever-growing meetings, conventions and sports industries. Whereas in the past a meeting planner had two resources available to them – the hotel/conference center or the DMO – today the online world has made available countless websites (Cvent.com, ASAEBuyersGuide.com) providing hotel, conference space and destination information. Third-party meeting planning / site-selection companies like HelmsBriscoe, Conference Direct and Experient have also “crowded our space.”

A most telling statistic from a recent study revealed that the preferred method of meeting planners when submitting a request for proposal is contacting hotels directly (70.1%). 29.1% contact the hotel's national sales office. 14.4% use online event management software (i.e. Cvent.com) and 17.5% use a third-party meeting planning company. Only 29.3% of meeting planners contact a DMO. (Respondents could respond to multiple options.)



E-pro Direct Meeting Planner Survey, 2012



## Key Strategy

Thus, a key strategy in the meetings/conventions and sports markets is that we must take a more “promotions-oriented” strategy towards group business through branding Norman and enhancing the awareness of Norman as a convention and meetings destination, while also establishing a strong regional and state presence in the meetings and sport industries.

In an article in *Successful Meetings*, the late Gary Sain, then the Visit Orlando President and CEO, stated he was *less concerned about his (DMO) generating leads and more concerned about booked business, however that is accomplished.*

*“We believe our first job is to brand the destination. We don’t care if a lead goes through us or directly to the hotel. As long as they’re coming to Orlando, we don’t care.”*

Another industry colleague emphasized the need for additional promotions centered around sales by stating, *“No sales person can close the deal if there isn’t ad awareness or desire for our destination.”* (Don’t recall source.)

As the CVB further enhances our promotions to the meeting planners, we in return, expect to see a direct economic impact through increased room-night production for our area hotel partners.

In addition to promotions to meeting planners, we must promote Norman to third-party meeting planning companies and build relationships with their associates. John Cychol of the Fort Worth CVB stated, *“It’s important for (Fort Worth) to partner with (third-party companies) to make sure the planner gets the best impression of our destination when going through a third party.”*

Our message to the third-party meeting planners: *CVBs offer a depth of knowledge that helps planners sell the destination to their attendees, and CVB staff has the relationships within the community that can resolve problems when they arrive and the best relationships with the hotel community third-party companies are representing.*

When the opportunity arises to actually sell Norman with an individual meeting planner, the CVB will target “city-wides.” We must capitalize on the fact that *(DMOs) are the undisputed kings in marketing destinations to groups holding city-wide conventions. The knowledge about the destination that the (DMOs) have is also crucial to creating a complete package for a large meeting.*

*(DMOs) can enjoy a competitive edge for city-wides by coordinating all the hospitality and travel components in the destination, negotiating vendor discounts or subsidies on behalf of groups, and providing groups a housing bureau at a discounted price.*



**“We don’t care if a lead goes through us or directly to the hotel. As long as they’re coming to Orlando.”**

**Gary Sain, President and CEO, Visit Orlando**

## Destination Development

Meetings are not just about the conference center or hotel. Open evenings or off-site functions can provide the attendees with an experience which may entice them to visit the destination with family or friends again. By working with local partners, the CVB can help deliver an experience to our visitors that is distinctly Norman. Our goal is to add value and maximize the group visitor's experience. If we build strong relationships and provide wonderful experiences this will affect repeat and referral business.

*"Planners have to create an experience as well as a meeting, and that's created by what goes on outside of the education, reception, and convention hall," Heidi Longton, Meeting Industry Experts Inc.*

## Key Strategy

The CVB will engage in the initiatives outlined above. (See pages 19-22.)

## Expand Digital Activities

Our industry has been charged that today's (DMOs) have to strive to distinguish themselves from a host of digitally empowered competitors. That means continuing to add meaningful content to the Meeting Professionals' section on [VisitNorman.com](http://VisitNorman.com)

*Brian John Riggs, Association Headquarters, recommends that (DMOs) act as curators for their destinations, a reference to the gaining concept that people researching a subject online want a single trusted source. "As the official voice for their destinations, (DMOs) are well-positioned to fulfill that role."*

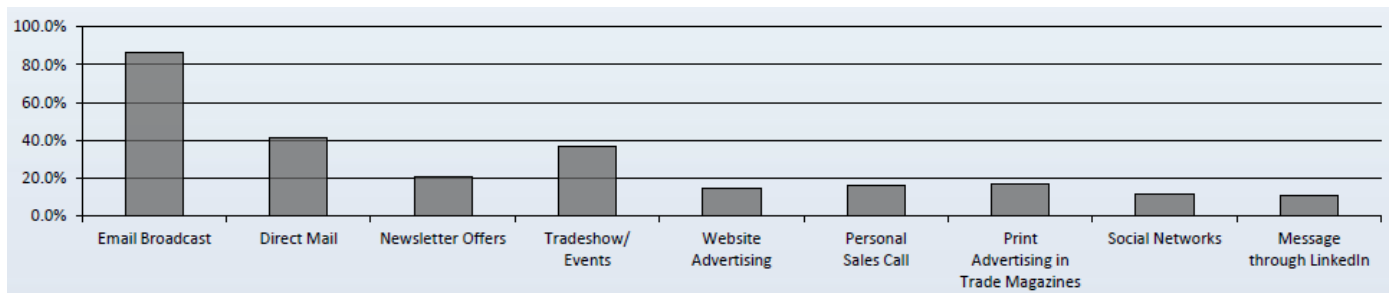
*(DMOs) must aggressively embrace the new communications technology. "It is fast becoming a component of our everyday life. The impressions made through electronic platforms are almost decision points. There has to be a 'capture experience' at the point of contact. If (DMOs) can leverage the culture of their destination and let it shine in that 'capture moment,' then I think they take a leap ahead." (Riggs)*

It's not just [VisitNorman.com](http://VisitNorman.com). We must develop strategies to use Social Media in the branding and promotion of Norman as a meetings and sport destination. Recent best practices include people posting favorable expressions about Vancouver (Canada) on various social-networking websites (after a disturbance) and the (DMOs) advertising agency deployed software to automatically aggregate those postings into a single site, [ThisIsOurVancouver.com](http://ThisIsOurVancouver.com). The effort helped restore some of the city's battered pride and presented a more positive image to the public.

Another example includes the Long Beach (DMO) using its Facebook page to run contests that promote attendance for groups meeting in the city. "It has been very effective in driving attendance for the events we've done it for." Steve Goodling



A survey of meeting planners unveiled how planners prefer to receive meeting supplier information. *Email broadcast was by far, the most preferred (86.2%). Direct mail and Tradeshow/Events followed at 41.6 and 36.4%.*



E-pro Direct Meeting Planner Survey, 2012

It is no surprise, then, that a different survey showed the top three most common online and digital marketing activities used by DMOs to reach event producers and group clients are, in order, social media, email blasts, and e-newsletters.

	DMOs	Convention Centers
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs)	85%	61%
Email blasts	75%	61%
E-newsletters	71%	67%
Dedicated website	69%	83%
Search marketing, key words	67%	39%
Online video promoting destination and/or hotels, venues, activities/ YouTube, etc.	56%	39%
Banner ads on other websites	54%	44%

## Key Strategy

The Norman CVB will concentrate on these proven promotion strategies to promote Norman to meeting planners.

As the database of meeting planners expands, regular communication through email will promote new enhancements to meeting facilities, hotels, and attractions – exactly what a meeting planner suggested they wanted in these communications – *quarterly e-newsletters that give a quick update on (a destination’s) facilities and promotions. Another desires constant updates on services/properties so I know that the information I am seeing is up to date and current.*

The emails will also promote our office’s services and the value proposition of a destination marketing organization to a meeting planner. We will additionally look to publications with greater databases in which to “e-blast” Norman’s message. Direct mail pieces will complement the emails. And social media will further promote [VisitNorman.com](http://VisitNorman.com).

## Servicing

It's not just sales either. It's service, too! Convention services enhance the visitor experience through customer service excellence and differentiated product development and delivery.

Many recognize that *“(DMOs) offer a depth of knowledge that helps planners sell the destination to their attendees, and we have the relationships within the community that can resolve problems when they arise.”* Steve Goodling, Long Beach CVB

What type of services? A recent survey unveiled that a considerable 85% of DMOs provide event organizers with attendance marketing support or assistance. See the chart below for the most common types of attendance marketing support provided:

	DMOs	Convention Centers
Public relations support	91%	71%
Liaison with city, state or regional affiliated groups or government agencies	88%	64%
Adding event information to the DMO and/or venue website(s)	74%	64%
Emails to potential local attendees	67%	29%
Airport signage and around the destination before the event	64%	29%
Hotel discounts/rebates	55%	14%
Assistance securing event speakers, keynoters	55%	7%
Entertainment, sports, cultural event or facility discounts	50%	50%
Cash payments/rebates/marketing support fees	48%	21%

## Key Strategy

Staff will also look to expand a new Attendance Generation Program. The program offer tools to help groups generate attendance. Studies show 85% of DMOs provide event organizers with attendance marketing support or assistance. Norman needs to expand our attendance marketing support.

## Tradeshows

*“People-based” marketing, including the sales force and participating at industry trade shows and conferences, account for a total of 44% of the average DMO’s total marketing expenditure. Strong investments as the industry reports the marketing mediums and activities that drive the highest quality leads are attending industry trade shows and events and the sales force. And competitors are investing more in those mediums: The marketing mediums that received the most increased investment recently have been industry trade shows, conventions and conferences, according to half of the DMOs responding to the survey.*

The Norman CVB will continue to invest significant resources in the sales force and our presence at trade shows and conferences. Collaborate, Connect, NASC, OSAE, PCMA, RCMA, Red Carpet Travel

Show, Rejuvenate, Small Market Meetings, SGMP and TEAMS are all shows that we are budgeting to attend.

Other shows under consideration include: Christian Meetings and Conferences Association Trade Show (CMCA), Chuck Cooke & Associates Trade Show, Destination Showcase, Fraternity Executives Association, HelmsBriscoe Annual Business Conference Trade Show, NIRSA (intramurals), National Panhellenic Conference, Reunion Friendly Network, Smart Meetings, and Student Youth Travel Association.

## **Digital Activities**

DMOs are finding value in digital activities. *The online and digital marketing activities considered the most effective by DMOs are their dedicated website, banner ads on other websites, email blasts and social media.* And with success, are investing more in digital.

*More than 30% of DMOs increased their spending on their internal sales force, websites and digital activities by more than 5%. Sixty-two percent of convention centers say they increased their budget for their website and digital activities by more than 5% in this fiscal year.*

As shared above, we must look to expand our digital activities. In addition to electronic communications, the NCVB will continue to expand and enhance [VisitNorman.com](http://VisitNorman.com). Photos, videos, a digital marketing tool kit, will look to be added among the expansion of information already provided. Meeting professionals have offered feedback on what additional tools and resources they would welcome in a destination's website:

- *The total number of rooms, suites, etc. clearly stated*
- *A dedicated conference website*
- *Make websites user-friendly – make sure floorplans are downloadable and printable*
- *More online 360 tours*
- *Easy to access hotel listing with group sales contacts*
- *Online meeting kits – photos of meeting rooms, hotel/resort layouts, etc.*

Additional digital activities will include the monitoring of Norman's web presence on other online listings and the expansion of Social Media as a promotions tool for meetings and sports. Careful consideration will be made for targeted advertising on websites for meeting planners.

## **Sales**

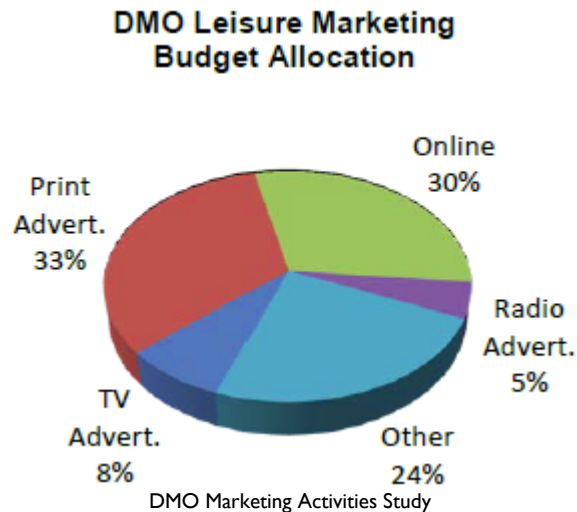
Not to be lost in all of the above is the importance of "people-based" marketing including direct sales. The Norman CVB will continue to start and build relationships through all the outlets presently being employed. A planner shared *one of the most effective services offered by (DMOs) is one of the oldest – a hosted site inspection of the destination*, the CVB will budget resources to be able to provide site inspections to meeting planners as identified.

One other consideration is the discovery that 37% of DMOs maintain a separate fund to cover discounts and incentives for qualified events and groups that book local hotels. The average incentive fund size is \$156,000 at DMOs. These incentives and discounts are mainly used to cover convention center rent and provide transportation for attendees. The NCVB Executive Director was told by a colleague that another shared “he had to provide some incentive to every piece of business booked (in 2012.)” Incentives are becoming more and more prevalent in the meetings and sports industries. We must look to develop a fund and identify resources to continue to feed the fund.

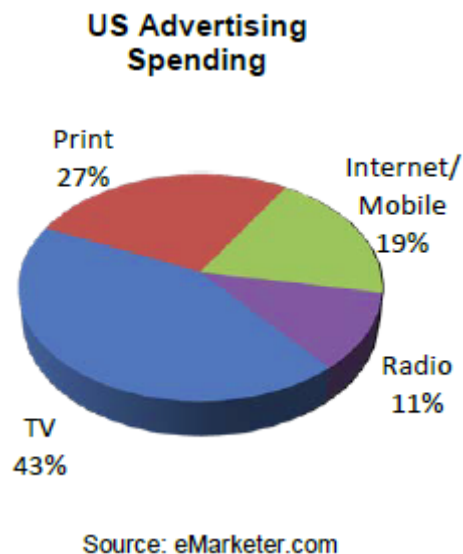
## Tourism (Leisure) Advertising

Leisure travel makes up 76% of all travel and tourism. It's no wonder DMOs commit two-thirds of their marketing budget to the lucrative leisure market segment.

A recent study by DMAI revealed how DMOs are allocating their leisure marketing budget:



Interesting when compared to U.S. adult weekly media consumption:



This is especially interesting when one considers the average leisure traveler to Norman has a weak propensity to pay attention to advertisements on television and radio, in magazines and newspapers, or those found outside the home.

Past data has revealed :

- Travel plans are done online: 66% use the internet for travel information; 42% word-of-mouth; 33 % state travel websites; 21% brochures; and 18% travel books and magazines.
- Family travelers are more likely to have taken a vacation in their local area (less than 50 miles from home) as an alternative to vacationing in a destination that would have required traveling a greater distance.
- 31% of families took a “last-minute” trip last year, departing an average of just six days after deciding to take the trip.
- All family travelers surveyed have access to the Internet at home and practically all have gone online to get information about travel suppliers and make reservations.
- Online search remains the No. 1 planning source for leisure travel. There also has been significant growth in search throughout the purchase funnel, as one-third of travelers say search prompted them to book travel. Search-engine users most often search for overnight accommodations, destinations, vacation activities, road trips and air travel.
- Online video use for travel is growing significantly among travelers. Throughout the travel planning process, 41% of personal travelers, 63% of business travelers and 58% of affluent travelers specifically watch travel-related video online. YouTube remains the most popular source of online video for these travelers, as 81% of travelers who watch videos visit YouTube.
- Substantiated with the report that YouTube is the second largest search engine in the U.S. (after Google), YouTube is processing more than 3.5 billion searches on the site each month.
- Personal travelers more than doubled their usage of mobile devices for travel purposes in the past year alone. Research also shows significant increases in the use of mobile devices for specific behaviors like booking and checking in. Mobile continues to offer immense growth opportunities, as one-third of travelers who currently do not use their mobile device for travel will likely do so in the next year.
- In the last 15 years, the Internet has become the foremost influence on the consumer’s decision-and-purchase process and continues to grow every year. How big is the Internet’s influence? According to a June 2007 report titled, “Frames of Reference: Online Video Advertising, Content and Consumer Behavior” (from Online Publishers Association and OTX) the Internet influenced 48-57% of purchase decisions at varying stages of consideration, compared to 20-26% influenced by word-of-mouth and just 18-29% for all other media (radio, magazines, newspapers and television) combined.
- Advance Travel Planning: 19% plan their trip one month out; 80% plan their trip less than 6 months out. (2009 SMRI indicates that 64% plan their trip less than one month out.)



The aforementioned DMAI marketing activity study shared *DMOs have fully embraced a wide variety of online activities into their overall destination marketing efforts. Banner ads and search engine marketing/adwords dominate, comprising more than half of DMO online budgets. (See chart below)*

(% of Online Marketing Budget)	Total	Less than \$500,000	\$500,000-\$999,999	\$1,000,000-\$1,999,999	\$2,000,000-\$3,999,999
Banner ads	30	18	32	22	32
Adwords/Search Engine Mktg	28	8	25	31	41
% spent on Google	72	55	70	68	72
Social Media Campaigns/Sites	18	32	23	18	12
OTA Campaigns	6	3	4	5	4
Mobile Campaigns	5	6	5	8	3
Email List Acquisition	3	5	3	6	2
App Development	2	1	4	2	1
Other*	6	10	5	8	4

\* online video, consumer sites, microsites, webinar sponsorships, development, lead generation, retargeting (one mention each)

DMO Marketing Activities Study

All of the above suggests the need for year-round advertising – with more online – instead of the conventional thought of advertising late-winter/early spring as the traveler plans for the traditional summer vacation. As budget allows, we can do more year-round advertising. The above findings further suggest a tremendous shift in strategy – away from ‘Bought Media’ as the only outlet – and more towards ‘Owned Media’ – channels that one develops and manages themselves, i.e., website, blog, Facebook page, Twitter feed, YouTube channel, and even the destination itself (as already mentioned on page 11.)

## Key Objectives towards Leisure Travel

1. Continue to expand and enhance our Owned Media
2. Continue to assess and select Paid Media for maximum return on investment
3. Continue to take advantage of and maximize the effort from Earned Media coverage

## Strategies Towards Key Objectives

### Owned Media

We must continue to build-out [VisitNorman.com](#) by adding tools and resources utilized by the visitor.

*DMO websites continue to command a high level of investment as market expectations for more sophisticated content and functionality increase. Content or functions present on DMO websites:*

Present on Website:	
Calendar of Events	99
Deals and Discounts	78
Mapping Technology	75
Online Booking Engine for Lodging	59
Trip or Itinerary Builder	47
User-generated Content	42

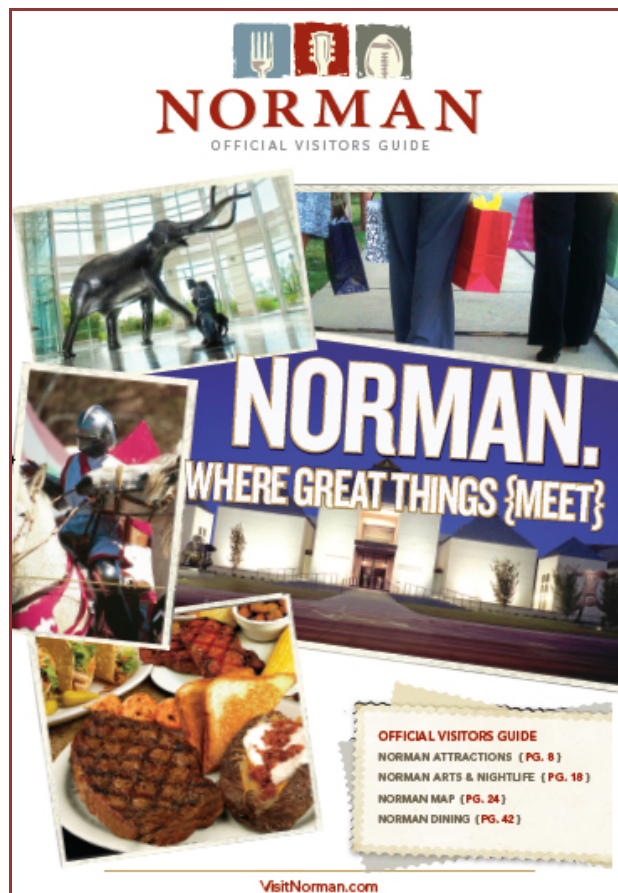
[VisitNorman.com](#) features a calendar of events and an online booking engine for lodging. The 2013-14 year will bring a “deals and discounts” function, more robust mapping technology – specifically on the mobile site – and itinerary builder. [VisitNorman.com](#) will also spotlight partner brochures and will also allow the visitor to request those partners’ brochures in addition to the *Official Visitors Guide for Norman*.

We will continue to look to leverage search-engine optimization and keyword rankings to attract the right audience to the site as well as develop a content strategy that continuously provides key information and optimize the site to the fullest by way of pictures, video, blogs, and functionality. These photos, videos and itineraries will work to fuel the imagination, and in turn, create a desire for Norman that will ultimately convert prospects to customers.

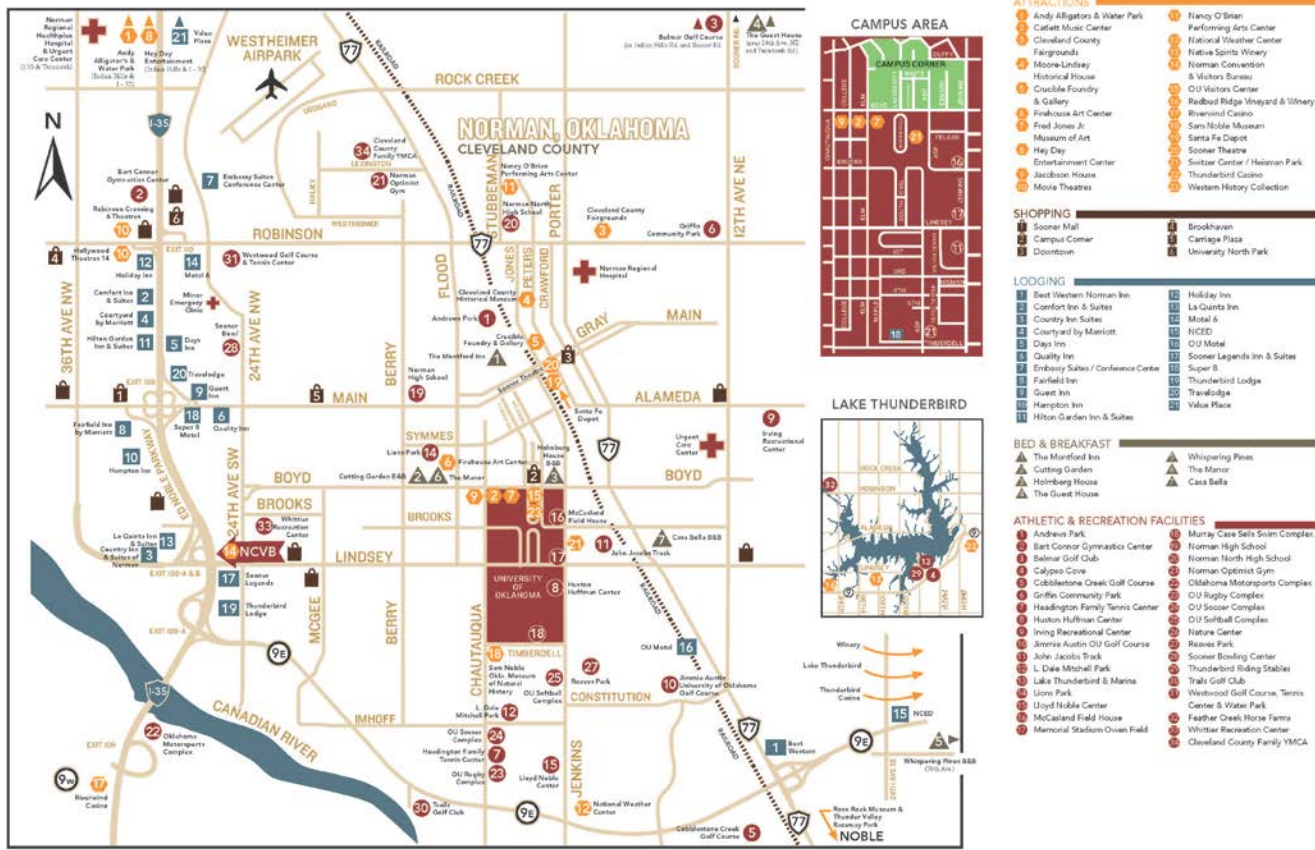
Beyond [VisitNorman.com](#), the NCVB will continue to focus on Norman’s online presence. As the ‘brand police’ for Norman, we will monitor other sites to see how they ‘sell’ Norman and suggest edits as needed to guard our brand.

As a result, this may include assisting community partners with their websites. Presently, the NCVB maintains the Downtown Association website ([DowntownNorman.org](#)), and the Main Street Christmas Parade site ([NormanChristmasParade.com](#)). As needed, we will maintain other partners’ sites to assure the visitor is accessing the best image of Norman and the most recent information.

As for non-digital outlets, the NCVB will continue to publish the *Official Visitors Guide for Norman* and the popular “pad-map.” See images of each below.



Cover of Official Visitors Guide for Norman



Norman "Pad Map"

Moreover, we will continue to work with community partners on the development of their collateral. We have recently assisted in the editing and publishing of the guide for Downtown as well as a brochure spotlighting the public art on display.

While maintaining the Welcome Center near 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW and Lindsey Ave., in addition to the service desk at the Sooner Mall, we must continue to discuss the future of state-approved Oklahoma Travel Information Center in Norman. Discussions with community leaders have indicated support for a TIC in Norman. Staff and the Board will continue their efforts to establish one. There have also been discussions of a Mobile Welcome Center that would travel to both local and regional events to promote Norman.

"Norman as a destination" is another part of the NCVB owned media strategy. In addition to those destination enhancements outlined in pages 18-21, we must provide greater customer service. The NCVB will continue the promotion of the Certified Tourism Ambassador program. See page 21 and Appendix B for more on the program. Our hope is that more entity staffs go through the training.



In addition, the NCVB will continue to monitor municipal and state issues that affect community and economic development – i.e. the Storm Water and Greenway Master Plan, Greenbelt Commission, waste water treatment, and water supply.

## **Paid Media**

In early 2013, the Norman CVB launched the “Be The First” campaign. This campaign seeks to provide a “call-to-action” for the visitor that drives traffic to [VisitNorman.com](http://VisitNorman.com) and helps the CVB grow its database for ongoing marketing efforts. A summary of the campaign can be found in Appendix C.

Upon completion of the campaign and review of its analytics, staff will then outline the 2014 spring campaign.

The above are the initiatives budgeted at this time. With our limited budget as cited previously (see page 12), many initiatives have been left out of the budget. To date, more than \$350,000 worth of marketing initiatives remain unfunded. As budget allows, staff will explore more non-traditional paid tactics including advertising on social networks, rich media banner advertising, cinema advertising in feeder markets, long-form video-on-demand delivered through cable networks, guerilla strategies at concerts and other large venues, contextual advertising and digital billboard advertising.

## **Earned Media**

*A recent article affirmed some of the most trustworthy and reliable recommendations a resort or destination can receive are those of the free press, the unbiased reviews from guests or the opinions of established bloggers. These are the earned media outlets – you don’t control them, but if you deliver an authentic, honest brand experience, you’ll earn their attention and support.*

In addition to assisting with owned media initiatives the NCVB will also:

- A. Participate in media blitzes offered through the Frontier Country Marketing Association.
- B. Plan four additional media blitzes
- C. Host targeted media for familiarization tours
- D. Continue to establish working relationships with media to promote editorial coverage about Norman and calculate advertising equivalence of generated coverage
- E. Monitor comments of online media coverage and bloggers to acknowledge critics, correct mistakes, thank fans and encourage/inspire dialogue
- F. Continue involvement with community events and send media releases about such events. At present, the Communications Manager is actively involved with the organizing committee or lends media support to more than 15 community events.
- G. With further development of the site, look to provide visitors the opportunity to share their experiences as testimonials and advocacy
- H. Sponsor the Norman, Oklahoma, ‘front page’ on TripAdvisor to control content provided to the visitor to the page
- I. Explore development of Norman content other social networks like Yelp and AroundMe
- J. Post current news releases, story ideas and pictures on [VisitNorman.com](http://VisitNorman.com) for use by media as an online press kit

## V. Fiscal Year 2014 Budget

### NORMAN CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU Fiscal Year 2013-14 Budget

#### REVENUES:

	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>(2012-13)</u>
Transient Guest Tax	606,900	(550,000)
Advertising	13,000	( 1,500)
Special Events	10,000	( 10,000)
Interest	1,500	( 1,500)
Other/Reserves	0	( 00)
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$631,400</b>	<b>(563,000)</b>

#### EXPENSES:

Marketing/Advertising	265,150	(223,322)
Research	2,250	( 2,250)
Special Events	8,000	( 10,000)
Operations	80,000	( 75,841)
Personnel	276,000	(251,587)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$631,400</b>	<b>(563,000)</b>



## Appendix A

### Big XII Conference and other Comparable Communities\*

City	Population	DMO Annual Budget	TGT Rate	Percentage of TGT DMO Receives
1. Austin, TX	790,300	\$9,000,000	15%	66%
2. Ann Arbor, MI	114,000	\$2,600,000	5%	67%
3. Lubbock, TX	225,000	\$2,500,000	13%	50%
4. Tempe, AZ	175,500	\$2,381,000	5%	60%
5. Gainesville, FL	124,000	\$2,000,000	5%	40%
6. Bryan/College Station, TX	184,000	\$1,250,000	13%	35%; 27%
7. Lincoln, NE	254,000	\$1,100,000	4%	50%
8. Ames, IA	50,700	\$978,000	7%	71%
9. Manhattan, KS	52,800	\$883,077	6%	88%
<b>10. Norman, OK</b>	<b>113,000</b>	<b>\$557,500</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>50%</b>
11. Berkeley, CA	102,000	\$365,000	12%	75%

\*population of 100,000 + with a major University within major metro

### City of Norman Benchmark Communities

City	Population	DMO Annual Budget	TGT Rate	Percentage of TGT DMO Receives
1. Oklahoma City, OK	560,000	\$4,980,000	5.5%	45%
2. Las Cruces, NM	93,570	\$1,549,000 ('09)	unknown	unknown
3. Columbia, MO	101,100	\$1,300,000	4%	100%
4. St. Joseph, MO	76,200	\$1,300,000	N/A***	N/A
5. Waco, TX	126,000	\$1,300,000	13%	90%
6. Fort Smith, AR	86,200	\$894,500	3%	100%
7. Odessa, TX	90,900	\$870,000	13%	51%
8. Lawton, OK	93,000	\$780,000*	5%	unknown
9. Boulder, CO	94,200	\$727,000	N/A***	N/A
10. Lawrence, KS	92,000	\$685,000	6%	80%
11. Denton, TX	119,450	\$650,076	13%	51%
12. Stillwater, OK	39,000	\$580,400	4%	100%
<b>13. Norman, OK</b>	<b>113,000</b>	<b>\$557,500</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>50%</b>
14. Edmond, OK	81,000	\$452,350	4%	100%
15. Broken Arrow, OK	92,000	\$350,000	4%	100%
16. Enid, OK	47,000	\$250,000	8%	0
17. Midwest City, OK	54,000	\$185,000 ('09)	unknown	unknown
18. Westminster, CO	108,850	N/A**	N/A	N/A

\*includes Economic Development

\*\*Westminster, CO has no DMO

\*\*\*St. Joseph, MO and Boulder, CO's funding structures differ greatly

## Appendix B



THOUSANDS OF CTAs...  
TURNING EVERY VISITOR ENCOUNTER  
INTO A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

### Turning Front-Line Employees & Volunteers into Certified Tourism Ambassadors

Greater Oklahoma City area tourism leaders have partnered to unite our front-line tourism representatives not only to serve our current visitors, but also to prepare for the future. This program demonstrates our dedication to promoting our destination as one of the best, with a high level of commitment to our visitors.

#### Why Choose the Greater Oklahoma City Area Tourism Ambassadors?

**For Employers** Tourism is big business not only to large cities, but also to small communities in the United States and around the world. Visitors spend money attending to business, touring attractions, or learning about the history of the area. This infusion of "new money" into the local economy often holds local tax increases at bay and gives the Greater Oklahoma City Area extra money to enhance its infrastructure—making the destination more appealing over time. As a result, destinations spend lots of money courting convention and leisure travelers.

But in reality, no amount of money will make up for the visitor having a bad experience, which negatively impacts our region's brand and overall image as a destination.

This program teaches front-line employees and volunteers best practices and ensures that they understand their role in increasing tourism. GOKCA CTA helps your front-line increase their knowledge of the region; provides answers to the variety of questions received from visitors; and gives your front-line a chance to meet one another, learn from each other's experiences and celebrate together!

**For Employees & Volunteers** What separates the Greater Oklahoma City Area Certified Tourism Ambassadors program from other training programs is that it's certification, not just training. Employees and volunteers who complete the program receive a credential and accompanying initials that can be used behind the person's name to denote their commitment to their profession as a *Certified Tourism Ambassador™* (e.g., Jim Smith, CTA). The CTA logo may also be used on your website and business cards/communications with approval.

As an Accredited Provider, the Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau presents the official CTA designation on behalf of the *Tourism Ambassador Institute™*, the national oversight body for the certification program.



### What's in it for you?

- ☐ Provides a meaningful credential
- ☐ Increased business, higher tips
- ☐ Builds valuable skills
- ☐ Career advancement
- ☐ Networking opportunities
- ☐ Receive regular advice & updates
- ☐ Rewards and incentives

By becoming a *Certified Tourism Ambassador™* you'll have the tools and knowledge necessary to create a more memorable visitor experience and you'll reap the benefits. Being a CTA is a great achievement. It is a national designation to add to your resume.

### Program Curriculum

Module 1: The Power of Tourism

Module 2: Discovering the Greater Oklahoma City Area

Module 3: Knowing, Finding, Using Resources

Module 4: Exceeding Customer Expectations

The curriculum is delivered through reading assignments and in-class participation.

### Program Requirements

Every certification program requires successful completion of a core curriculum. The following recaps the requirements to earn the CTA designation:

- ☐ Complete required reading
- ☐ Attend half-day classroom session
- ☐ Complete learning assignments
- ☐ Complete open-book examination

Upon successful completion, participants will earn the *Certified Tourism Ambassador™* designation and receive a CTA certificate and lapel pin. An annual renewal process of certification is also necessary to maintain your certification.

### Cost

There is a one-time non-refundable, non-transferable application fee of \$49 per person and an annual renewal fee of \$25 (if you renew by October 31; \$35 between November 1 and December 31.)

### How to Enroll

To access the class schedule and enroll in the program, visit [www.CTANetwork.com](http://www.CTANetwork.com), or call the Norman CVB at 405-637-6225.

## Appendix C



### Spring, 2013 Call-to-Action Campaign

Cubic Creative was retained to assist in the development of a ‘call-to-action’ campaign for Norman. The goal of the campaign is to provide a ‘call-to-action’ for the visitor driving traffic to VisitNorman.com and building a database for ongoing marketing efforts.

Cubic suggested further brand review – further understanding of what differentiates Norman from similar destinations and thus, help determine what would help Norman stand out. Through review is existing data, online research, in-person interviews, onsite ethnography and personal stories, the following was developed.

#### **Brand DNA**

The Norman DNA crystallized when “Sooners” were clever enough to find a way to be first in the First Land Run of 1889. While other Oklahoma towns were battling to be the capitol, Norman’s Mayor, T.R. Waggoner, directed a bill through the Territorial Legislature to become home of the state’s first institution of higher learning.

#### ***It’s Good To Be First***

This concept acknowledges the thirst to be first that lies at the heart of Norman. This is what drives the city and those who love it to excel at everything. Norman is bold, clever and charming. This is what our marketing messages are evolving to express in an even more striking way.

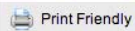
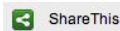
The *Be The First* campaign makes a connection with the audience that likes to be first, a little competitive and ultimately engaged. Norman's Sooner spirit, to be first, is with which something a lot of people can identify with. The integrated marketing approach will entice people to register to win *Be The First* packages that bring people to Norman and can be tracked in many ways.

#### **Campaign Execution**

- Continue print advertising in budgeted outlets
- Direct mail to 45,000 in database
- Social media – teaser messages on Facebook
- Online – build search ads and replace ads on TravelOK.com
- Travel shows / expos

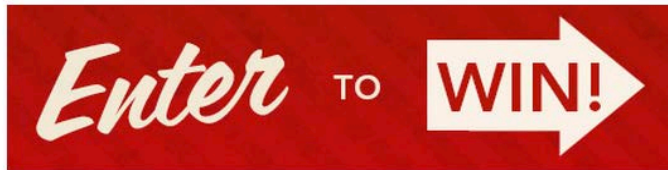
## VisitNorman.com Landing Page:

### BE THE FIRST IN NORMAN



Norman is a special place where it pays to be first. Enter to win a special Norman experience, from private, behind-the-scenes tours to special activities that are not open to the public. You never know what we might be offering. But you can't win if you don't enter. And, of course, sooner is better than later.

In Norman, it's good to be first.



### THE EXPERIENCES

Be The First... at Andy Alligator's Water Park's 2013 Season!



A family of four will be the first four to go down the water slides to open the 2013 season at Andy Alligator's Waterpark. In addition, you'll receive VIP treatment in one of Andy's Cabanas. (Includes private area with upgraded furnishings, flat screen TV, lunch for four, 4 Bottled Water, 1 cooler & cabana unit staff). After the Waterpark closes, enjoy all access

## Online Registration Form:

### Enter TO WIN!

Norman is a special place where it pays to be first. Enter to win a special Norman experience, from private, behind-the-scenes tours to special activities that are not open to the public. You never know what we might be offering. But you can't win if you don't enter. And, of course, sooner is better than later.

In Norman, it's beautiful to be first.

First Name	Last Name
Email	
Street	
City	
Oklahoma	
Zip	
Where did you hear about the Be The First in Norman campaign?	
Select a source	
What types of Norman experiences are you interested in winning?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Family friendly <input type="checkbox"/> Arts <input type="checkbox"/> Historic <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor	
<input type="checkbox"/> All of the above	

☒ Yes! I want to be the first to get special offers and inside information on Norman! Sign me up for your First-to-Know emails. (We promise we won't share your name and information with ANYONE.)

Submit

## Print Ad:



BRING YOUR CURIOSITY AND YOUR GOLF CLUBS.  
JUST BRING THEM EARLY. IN NORMAN, IT'S GOOD TO BE FIRST.

Have you ever seen a Pentaceratops skull? It's the largest dinosaur skull ever found. And it's in Norman at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. Did you know Toby Keith owned a golf course? It's the Belmar Golf Club and it's in Norman. So pack your bags and your interests and get here early. Better yet, check the web address for our current, limited-edition special offers. **In Norman, it's big to be first.**

  
**NORMAN**  
VisitNorman.com/BeTheFirst

## Online Ad:



TO SEE A REAL  
DINOSAUR UP CLOSE,  
IT'S GOOD TO BE FIRST.

  
**NORMAN**



FROM ART SHOWS  
TO LIVE MUSIC,  
IT'S GOOD TO BE FIRST.

  
**NORMAN**

## Why the look?

It's BOLD (more into Norman's brand.)

It's artistic.

It's easily identifiable.

It conveys art / artistic.

It's sophisticated.

It appeals to the sophisticated, artistic person.

It's different!