

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

CALIFORNIA



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Annual report for 2015 of the Santa Ynez Valley Hotel Association (dba Visit the Santa Ynez Valley) – Submitted 2/19/16

VisitSYV is reporting activity for the entire year of 2015. This report is submitted to the City of Solvang, the City of Buellton and the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, in accordance with the fulfillment of the provisions of the SYVTBID.

Financial (Jan-Dec 2015)

TBID Funding received - \$719,818

Membership income - \$28,125

County Marketing Grant - \$7,307

Marketing Co-op with Cities of Solvang, Buellton and the Santa Barbara Vintners Association - \$60,000

Total Income - \$815,250

Expenses

Advertising/Marketing - \$402,420

Grants/Special Projects - \$70,500

Travel & Meetings - \$24,685

Personnel Costs - \$161,790

Contract services - \$93,428

Facilities/equipment - \$5,654

Operations - \$6,884

Credit card fees - \$912

Insurance - \$5,322

Total expenses - \$768,095

Balance as of December 31st, 2015 - \$146,856

Membership

We receive TBID funding from 35 lodging properties and currently have **184 members** that pay a basic membership fee of \$250, and a nonprofit fee of \$125. We also have trade members where services are traded for membership such as wine, catering, photography. We held 4 networking receptions that were well attended throughout the year.

We developed our “Spirit of the Valley” Education program to enhance the visitor experience and it launched with 60 in attendance in January of 2016 to rave reviews. The program teaches Four Seasons style customer service as well as information about each of our communities such as things to do after 5pm and activities for families. We put on the 3 hour interactive seminar once a quarter.

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We partnered with Solvang, Buellton and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments to implement a Saturday Shuttle service between Santa Barbara and the SYV in July to provide affordable (\$7 each way) day trips between the two destinations.

Marketing (January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015)

Santa Ynez Valley Marketing Co-Operative Campaign

January 1 – December 31, 2015

2015 saw the start of a new era of cooperative marketing for the Santa Ynez Valley. The 2015 VisitSYV Marketing Co-Op consisted of VisitSYV as the lead stakeholder with \$150k, Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau as a major stakeholder at \$25k, Buellton Conference and Visitors Bureau as a major stakeholder at \$25k, and the Santa Barbara County Vintners as a PR stakeholder at \$10k. DVA Advertising & PR Agency continues to be our ad agency. The results of these combined efforts have been greatly successful and VisitSYV is pleased to report on the metrics supporting the benefits of the marketing program to the entire Valley.

Public Relations

Public relations highlights from 2015 include:

- Ongoing media outreach to more than 150 key regional and national editors and writers, focusing primarily on the wine, travel and culinary categories.
- Coordinated media visits that resulted in major regional/national coverage including *Diablo Magazine*, *Fodors*, *Westways*, *Sip California*, *Shape.com*, *Wine Enthusiast*, *The Road Les Traveled*, *Cowboys & Indians*, *Orange County Register*, and more.
- One-on-one media visits with prominent editors in both the San Francisco and Los Angeles markets with *Wine & Spirits*, *Sunset*, *VIA Magazine*, *Diablo Magazine*, *Smart Meetings*, *L.A. Parent*, *California Golf News*, *Orange County Register*, and *Los Angeles Times*.
- Regional/national distribution of press releases covering topics including major annual events, craft beer tasting in wine country, off-season appeal, holiday activities, cycling in the Santa Ynez Valley, experiencing wine country with kids, and cultural events, activities, and attractions.
- Feature story coordination for outlets including *Sunset*, *USA Today*, *Sip California*, *Western Art & Architecture*, and *Cowboys & Indians*.
- Media visit planning and coordination for *Cycle California Magazine*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Diablo Magazine*, and *Greenville News*.

Total value of public relations media coverage for 2015 = **\$3,082,087***

Total circulation/viewership of editorial coverage for 2015 = **18,175,068**

**PR value is calculated by multiplying the advertising rate times the size of the story, and then doubling that number to reflect the added value of editorial coverage*

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The 2015 Campaign creative was featured in the following print in 2015:

- Gentry
- Edible Communities (San Francisco, Ventura, Silicon Valley)
- Sunset Insider So-Cal
- OC Weekly
- LA Weekly

1,063,000 total print readership

Digital

Digital Advertising is a major part of the 2015

Marketing Campaign. See the metrics below for Web Banner Advertising:

Over **6.2 million** total impressions

5,544 total clicks

.09% CTR

Retargeting

Part of our digital ad campaign is a retargeting campaign. Once users have left VisitSYV.com, users who have viewed a minimum of two pages and/or viewed the “Where to Stay” page are retargeted via additional websites. See stats for our retargeting campaign below.

Ad Roll Retargeting Campaign:

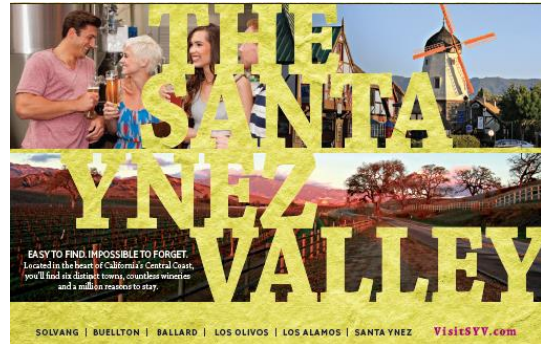
1.7 million Impressions

2,063 clicks

.12% CTR

2015 Santa Ynez Valley Destination Guide

VisitSYV worked with Griffin Publishing to create a new destination guide, with over 90 pages covering the Santa Ynez Valley. 90,000 copies were printed, with distribution taking place via trade shows, California festivals, the Solvang Visitors Center, the Buellton Visitors Center, the Santa Barbara Visitors Center, and direct mailings which took place the second week of January 2015 to 18,339 homes in Santa Barbara, the Santa Ynez Valley, Laguna and Newport Beach. The guides are also distributed on a monthly basis to our hotels, museums, and popular restaurants and retailers.



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Website

From January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015, VisitSYV.com has received **450,708** pageviews. The site has also garnered **35,086** clicks to our members' individual websites. The top 5 most popular pages on the site are as follows: (1) **Homepage**; (2) **Wine Tasting**; (3) **Where to Stay – Hotels**; (4) **Events Calendar**; (5) **Restaurant Week**. The VisitSYV blog on VisitSYV.com is currently being utilized for keyword and Search Engine Optimization.

VisitSYV Promotions

SYV Restaurant week (January 25-31, 2015) is an annual VisitSYV promotion which ties in with Visit California's Restaurant Month promotion. Our own SYV Restaurant Week advertising campaign reached consumers via Facebook (**59,446** impressions), 3 issues of The Independent (**40,000** printed), printed poster (**85** printed) and postcard distribution (**4,000** printed). Restaurant Week presents an opportunity for increased engagement and visitation for our website, and acts as a great opportunity to showcase our members and show appreciation. A total of 24 VisitSYV restaurants participated including 7 new restaurants, and an added 8 wineries participated as a new pairing feature. This year's promotion brought record-breaking traffic to the website. Please see analytic reports below.

DineSYV.com

Total Page views for DineSYV.com: **18,380**

Avg Time Spent on page: **00:02:27***

Vs. Avg Time Spent on other pages: **00:01:30**

**An increase in average time spent on DineSYV.com indicates that the content provided was relevant, desirable content to the specific audience targeted by our ad campaign.*

Top Traffic Sources

Google: **5,543**

Direct: **5,035** * *direct traffic can be attributed to Independent advertising, posters & postcards*

Facebook: **4,868**

Yahoo: **673**

Visit California: **504**

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Santa Ynez Valley Scarecrow Fest: VisitSYV contributed to the coordination, print, social media, and PR promotion of the Santa Ynez Valley Scarecrow Fest, executed by Solvang 3rd Wednesday.

Social Media Stats

- Our **Facebook** audience has increased to over **12,000** likes. During our Restaurant Week campaign, our Facebook ads for increased likes and website clicks received an average click-through rate (CTR) of **3.57%** with **59,446** impressions served.
- VisitSYV **Twitter** account has **3,179** followers, compared to **2,633** in 2014. Engagement has increased with major media like KEYT, Yahoo Travel and Touring & Tasting tagging @VisitSYV in all relevant SYV-related posts.
- VisitSYV **Instagram** has nearly doubled its number of followers since the 3rd quarter, with a total of **911** followers. We average between 4-8 new followers everyday on this emerging platform.

Additional Print Advertising

Touring & Tasting

VisitSYV sponsored a 4 page spread on the Santa Ynez Valley in the Spring 2015 Issue of **Touring & Tasting (66,000 copies distributed nationwide)**. This allows for a feature both in print and several additional features online, including SYV coverage via the Online Grapevine E-Newsletter, Touring & Tastings' meeting planners newsletter, as well as features on partner website www.hitchedmag.com.

Visit Santa Barbara Magazine

VisitSYV also sponsored a 6 page advertorial spread on the Santa Ynez Valley in Visit Santa Barbara's annual visitors' magazine (**100,000 copies printed**)

Westways: Discover June 2015

VisitSYV partnered with the Buellton Chamber & Visitors Bureau for a 2 page advertorial co-op spread in Westways' Discover June edition. This special insert went to **500,000 Westways** households in California with household incomes of +\$75,000.

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Festival Programs

VisitSYV has also received complimentary one page ads in the Los Alamos Old Days Program, Santa Barbara Vintners Harvest Festival Program, Santa Barbara Vintners Spring Festival Program, and the Los Olivos Jazz & Olive Festival Program thanks to our grant sponsorships of these events.

Additional Display Advertising

Airport Digital Display Ad Buy

VisitSYV has purchased a year-long campaign of digital display advertising in the Santa Barbara Airport which encourages travelers to visit the Santa Ynez Valley, highlighting that we are only 30 minutes north of the airport. Our ads play on 5 screens strategically placed in the lobby, baggage claim, and by the rental car booth. Ads began June 6, 2015.

KEYT Commercials

For the second year in a row, VisitSYV aired 30 second commercials on KEYT and KKFX as part of a sweepstakes with users engaging with the website to win a special package, featuring a 2 night stay in the valley. This year, however, we doubled the number of ads aired; from November 23 – December 24, 2015, VisitSYV had a total of 120 thirty-second commercials featuring the Santa Ynez Valley air on KEYT and KKFX.

Trade Shows

LA Travel & Adventure 2015 – VisitSYV had a booth at the LA Travel & Adventure Show in Long Beach, CA in February 2015. Executive Director, Shelby Sim, and Marketing & Communications Manager, Danielle Laudon, engaged with over 1,000 consumers over the course of the 2 day show, and distributed 800 SYV Destination Guides. LA Travel & Adventure is now the nation's largest consumer travel show, with 33,484 consumers at the 2015 show.

LA Weekly's LA Essentials 2015 – VisitSYV had the opportunity to create a Santa Ynez Valley section free of charge at LA Weekly's LA Essentials consumer show on Saturday, March 8, 2015. Executive Director, Shelby Sim, invited Santa Barbara County Vintners' Executive Director, Morgen McLaughlin, to attend with him and round up as many vintners as possible to represent the region; we were able to get 9 wineries to commit. There were 2,500 attendees for a multiple food and beverage event on the top floor of LA Market Center. Many attendees were unfamiliar with SYV and our local wine vendors were very happy to have the opportunity to educate this target audience.

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IPW 2015 – VisitSYV Marketing & Communications Manager Danielle Laudon and Tracy Farhad (Executive Director, Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau) were two of four delegates representing The Central Coast Tourism Council (CCTC) at IPW trade show in Orlando, Florida in June 2015. This year's show had over 1,300 International & Domestic Buyers and 500 media from the US and abroad. The responses from the international travel & media companies were positive as we maximized their appointment by meeting with multiple destinations at the CCTC booth; this culminated in an overwhelming desire to have their customers explore more outside of the gateways and throughout the Central Coast region. The Scandinavian, UK & Brazilian markets had more of a familiarity with our region due to the fly/drive aspect of their travel, where the Asian markets are depending heavily on leaving the gateways in motor coaches. Asian & Brazilian markets were seeking destinations with shopping, golfing and outdoor recreational opportunities for their groups, while other markets are looking for unique events, experiential activities, and wine tasting tours, culinary and outdoor experiences for both individuals and groups. All markets are seeking new properties moderate to luxury accommodations, with a unique boutique style. With a consistent annual presence at international travel trade shows like IPW, we are confident that the Santa Ynez Valley will become a well-regarded, year-round destination promoted by agencies around the world.

Grants and special projects

The purpose of our grants program continues to be to assist with publicity and outreach for valley events which encourage overnight stays. Primary consideration goes to events which occur mid-week (Sunday to Thursday) and/or in off-season. For special projects we award scholarships to Hospitality students and Education programs. These funds in 2015 were awarded to the following;

Spirit of The Santa Ynez Valley Education program \$10,500

World Special Olympics \$1,000

Santa Barbara Film Commission \$10,000

Awarded two \$1,000 Scholarship grants to Allan Handcock Hospitality students \$2,000

Solvang CVB Taste of Solvang \$4,000

Garagiste Festival \$4,000

Los Olivos Wine Fest \$3,500

Santa Barbara Vintners Spring Harvest \$3,500

Solvang Festival Theater Summer Jazz series \$3,000

Los Olivos Rotary Jazz and Olive Festival \$2,000

Santa Ynez Valley Rotary 4th of July Fireworks \$3,000

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SYV Artists Guild's Los Olivos Quick Draw \$2,000
Solvang CVB Danish Days \$4,000
Los Alamos Valley Men's Club's Los Alamos Old Days \$3,000
Los Olivos Day in the Country \$3,500
American Hot Shots Extreme Run \$1,500
SYV Historical Museum Vaquero Show \$3,500
Buellton CVB Wine and Chili Festival \$3,000
Solvang CVB Julefest \$3,500
For a total of \$70,500

Collaborations with Santa Barbara County DMOs and other organizations

VisitSYV collaborates actively with other county destination marketing organizations, Solvang CVB, Buellton Visitor Bureau, the Santa Barbara County Vintners Association, LOBO (Los Olivos Business Organization), the Buellton, Solvang, and Santa Ynez Chambers as well as the Santa Barbara Film Commission, The Chumash Foundation, Visit Santa Barbara, Go Goleta, Explore Lompoc, and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments.

Public comment

Members of the board and the Executive Director continue to be called upon to make written and/or verbal public comment on a number of hotel and tourism related issues. Each question is raised on a board agenda and voted upon by the board, or authorized by the president, before comment is made. Ongoing participation with our water challenges, wine ordinance, short term vacation rentals, and special events ordinance hearings as needed by Executive Director Shelby Sim, and, when available, Jessy Osehan, President.

Organization

VisitSYV renewed a 6 year contract with the City of Solvang, City of Buellton, and the Santa Barbara County on July 1st, 2015.

The TBID fee assessed from each lodging property was approved and increased to \$2.50 from \$2.00 on July 1st.

The board continued to meet monthly, normally the 2nd Thursday of the month, 9:00 a.m. at the SYV Marriott in Buellton. The board consists of nine individuals, seven of which are from the hotel industry and the other two are an at large representation of the membership base.



Staff & Board of Directors

Executive Director - Shelby Sim

Marketing & Communications Manager - Danielle Laudon

The board members are:

President – Jessy Osehan, Manager, Hamlet Inn, Owner, Atterdag Inn, Solvang

Vice President – Linda Johansen, Owner, Pea Soup Andersen Inn, Buellton and King Frederik Inn, Solvang

Secretary – Christine Forsyth, General Manager, Ballard Inn and Restaurant, Ballard

Treasurer – Bion Rice, Owner/Winemaker, Sunstone Winery, Santa Ynez and Artiste Winery, Los Olivos

James Colvin, General Manager, Hotel Corque, Solvang

Cammy Pinoli, Director of Guest Services, Fess Parker Wine Country Inn & Spa, Los Olivos

Barry Prescott, General Manager, The Landsby, Solvang

Tonya Davis, Hospitality Director, Flying Flags RV Resort, Buellton

Kady Fleckenstein – Brand Director, Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co., Buellton

Respectfully submitted by:

Shelby Sim, Executive Director

Santa Ynez Valley Hotel Association, dba Visit the Santa Ynez Valley

Shelby@VisitSYV.com

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Please see next two pages for 2015 and 2016 budget information

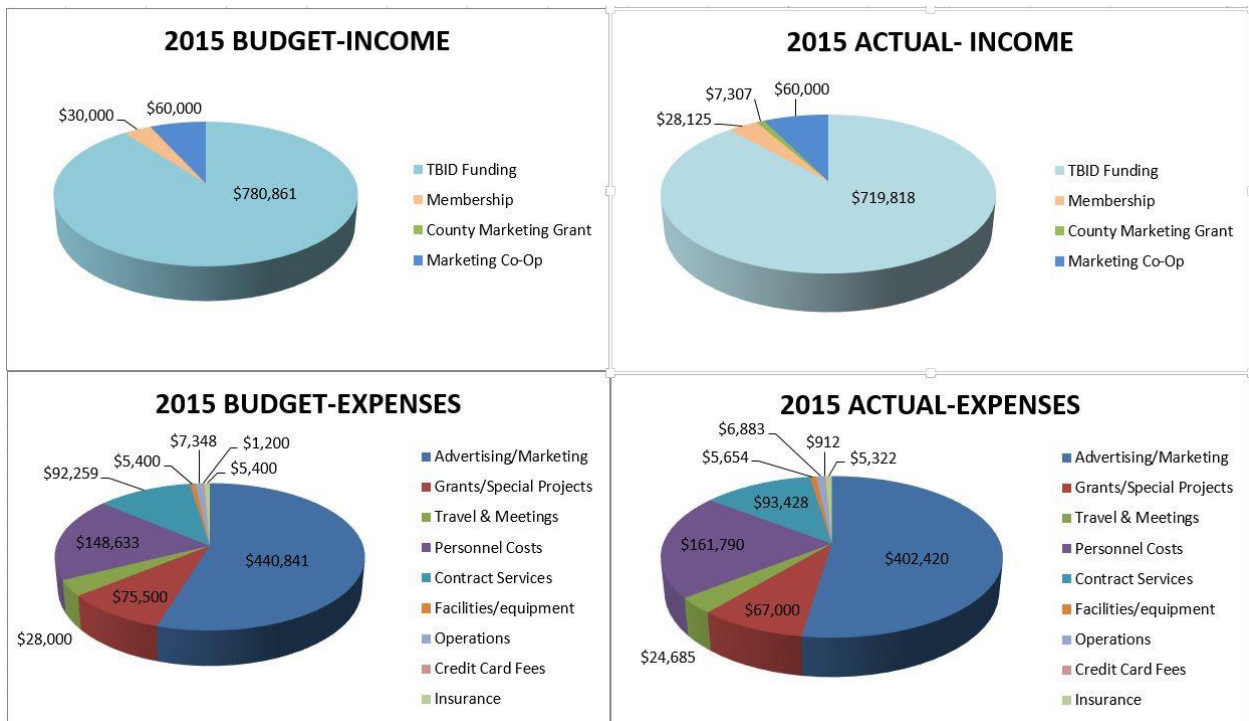
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2015 Budget information



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2016 Budget

Income	
TBID Funding	\$ 820,000
Membership	\$ 20,000
County Marketing Grant	\$ 7,000
Marketing Co-Op	\$ 35,000
	\$ 882,000
Expense	
Advertising/Marketing	\$ 509,000
Grants/Special Projects	\$ 82,400
Travel & Meetings	\$ 37,997
Personnel Costs	\$ 161,790
Contract Services	\$ 80,640
Facilities/equipment	\$ 5,400
Operations	\$ 13,584
Credit Card Fees	\$ 1,200
Insurance	\$ 5,400
	\$ 897,411

