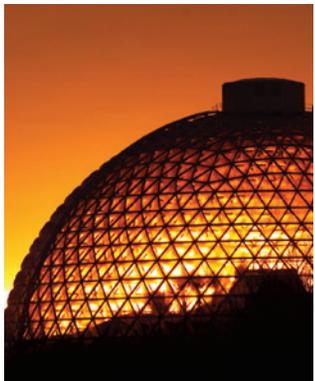


2014 Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

OMAHA



“ Omaha is a hidden treasure waiting to be explored. It has so much to offer and all within a condensed amount of space. It is friendly, it is safe, and it is easy to get around. The value you get for your dollar is incredible. ”

- Irene Lazaroski, Director of Meetings and Education, Catholic Cemetery, Annual Fall North American Convention & Exposition

# MISSION

The mission of the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau (OCVB) is to serve as Omaha's official tourism authority, to strengthen Omaha as a visitor destination, and to increase visitor demand to stimulate economic growth for our community.

# ABOUT THE CVB

The OCVB's programs promote and market Omaha as a destination for convention, meeting and leisure travelers as a means of economic development for the entire community. Omaha has invested in building a stunning destination experience with accommodations and amenities capable of winning the high yielding visitor dollar. The OCVB partners with many businesses in the hospitality industry to promote, develop and grow the destination experience. Over 85% of the OCVB budget is dedicated to effective and impactful convention and marketing campaigns, as well as improving the national and regional awareness and image of Omaha as a tourism destination.



# ECONOMIC IMPACT

In 2012, out-of-town visitor spending surpassed \$1 billion, growing by more than 9% over the previous year. Visitor spending stimulated an additional \$568 million dollars in business-to-business spending, as well as employee spending, resulting in a total tourism economic impact of nearly \$1.5 billion for the year.

## Tourism Supports Local Jobs

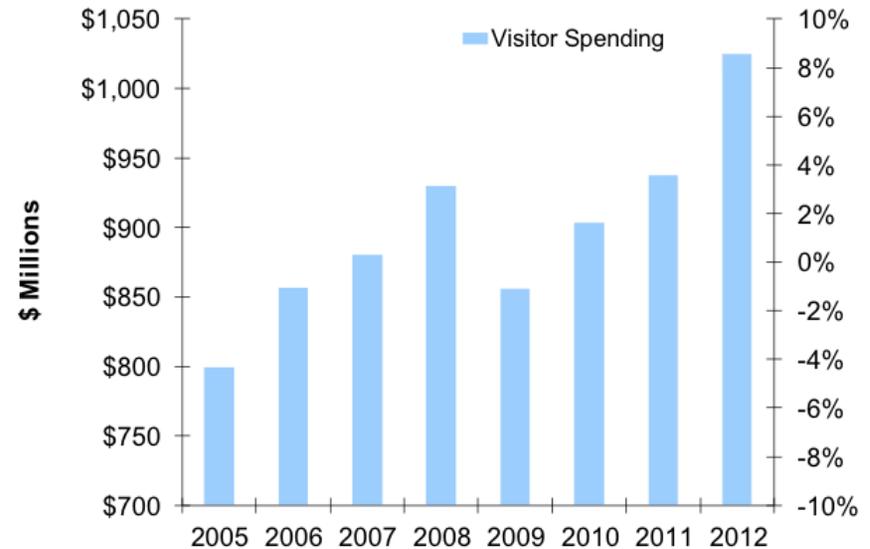
Tourism sustains more than 16,200 jobs in Omaha – one in every 16 jobs. Omaha’s Tourism industry is the 9th largest private sector employer in the city.

Tourism employment, as the result of visitor spending, provides citizens of Omaha/Douglas County with \$490 million in annual income.

## Tourism Provides Tax Revenue and Tax Relief

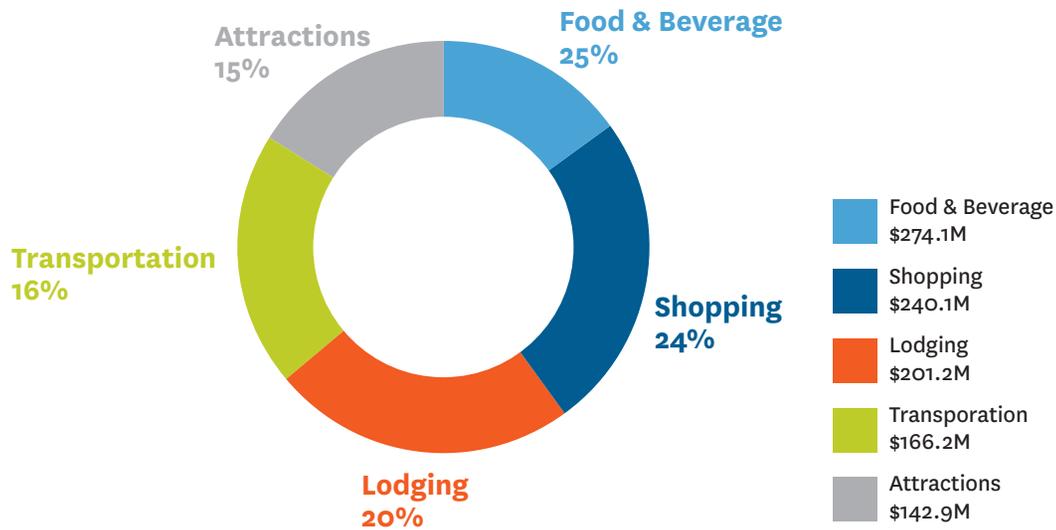
Visitor spending in Omaha/Douglas County results in more than \$232 million in tax revenues for local, state and federal governments. If it weren’t for the local tax revenues generated by visitor spending, each Omaha/Douglas County household would pay an additional \$655 per year in taxes or face the equivalent reduction in services.

*SOURCE: Tourism Economics - An Oxford Economics Company*



**\$1 BILLION IN VISITOR SPENDING IN 2012 MEANS THAT MORE THAN \$115,000 WAS SPENT BY VISITORS EVERY HOUR IN OMAHA IN 2012.**

# HOW THE VISITOR DOLLAR IS SPENT



## Visitor Spending

Tourism is an important economic engine for the City of Omaha. When visitors come to town for a quick getaway, to attend a convention, or to conduct business, they spend money in our community.

The money visitors spend at our restaurants, attractions, hotels, retail shops and other enterprises contributes to our local economy, providing jobs and income, tax revenue, community development and other important benefits we all enjoy.

**11 MILLION** People per year who travel to Omaha

**4.95 MILLION** Overnight visitors

**\$680,000,000** Money spent by overnight visitors

**6.48 MILLION** Day visitors

**\$343,000,000** Money spent by day visitors

**16,200** Jobs sustained by visitor spending in Douglas County



The average day visitor to Omaha spends approximately \$53 in the city.



The average overnight visitor to Omaha spends approximately \$138 in the city.

# FINANCE

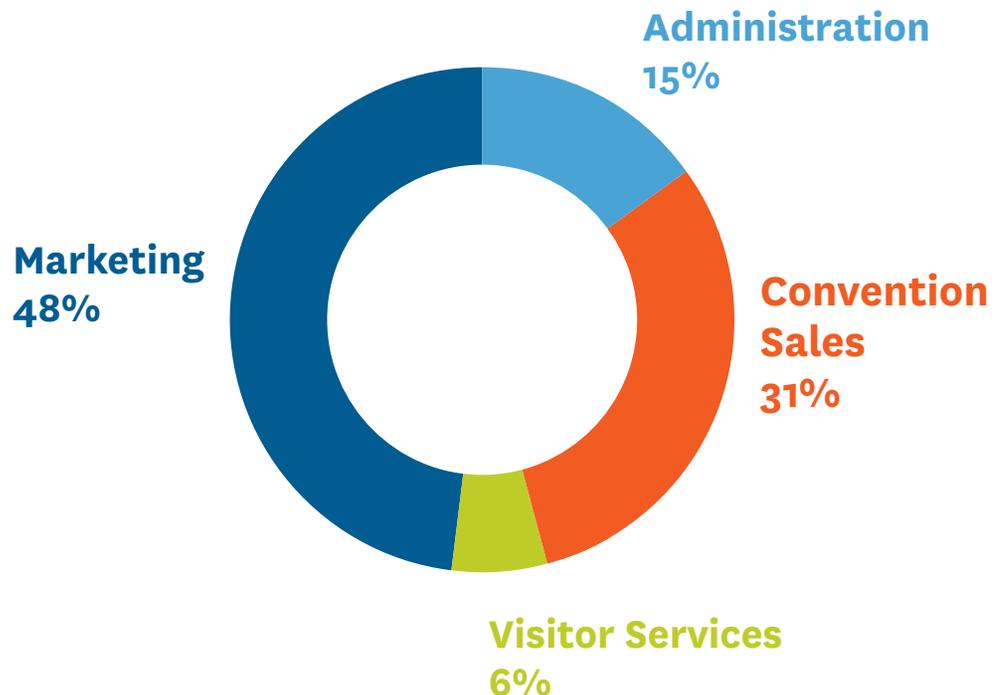
The majority of the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau (OCVB) funding comes from the lodging tax paid by visitors. Visitors pay a 5% lodging tax every time they stay in an Omaha/Douglas County hotel room. One percent of that tax goes to the State of Nebraska for its tourism efforts, 2% goes to Douglas County for visitor improvements, and the remaining 2% goes to the OCVB for visitor promotion and convention sales.

In addition, visitors pay a 5.5% city occupation tax every time they stay in an Omaha/Douglas County hotel. The City of Omaha uses 5% of the revenues for debt service and the remaining .5% goes to the OCVB for its promotional and sales efforts. The City of Omaha and Douglas County signed a 10-year inter-local agreement which solidified their partnership to grow tourism, and provided the OCVB with an additional \$200,000 per year from the city's general fund.

## 2014 Convention & Visitors Bureau Revenue

|                                      | Actual 2014 |                  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
|                                      | %           | \$               |
| <b>REVENUE:</b>                      |             |                  |
| NE Tourism Development (Douglas Co.) | 71.12%      | 3,238,735        |
| City Tax Contribution (.5%)          | 16.61%      | 756,314          |
| City General Fund Contribution       | 8.78%       | 400,000          |
| Promotion and Advertising Program    | 3.49%       | 158,851          |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                 | <b>100%</b> | <b>4,553,900</b> |

## 2014 BUDGET DISTRIBUTION



“ I call Omaha the ‘hidden jewel’ of the Midwest. I had no idea what an exciting city this would be! ”

- Sarah Donnelly, Meeting Planner, National Catholic Forensic League

# DID YOU KNOW?

Tourism is a year-round business in Omaha and it impacts each of us directly in the form of tax relief. *Tourism Economics* reports that visitor spending saves each Douglas County household approximately \$655 a year in taxes. Without tourism, your taxes would go up or the current level of government services would go down.



# MARKETING

The OCVB Marketing Department developed a nine-month multi-media campaign that resulted in more than 140 million advertising impressions – the number of times the Visit Omaha message was seen by a regional and national audience. Leisure visitation from the OCVB’s target markets of South Dakota, Missouri, Kansas and Iowa increased by 48%. The Visit Omaha social media network now has an audience of more than 113,000. The number of PR-generated stories about visiting Omaha has quadrupled since 2011 to 1,660 stories in 2014. And in the last two years, the number of visitors using the VisitOmaha.com website has more than doubled to 1.3 million users.

## Welcome to the Weekend

Branding is all about how you feel towards a particular product, person, or in our case, destination. The “Welcome to the Weekend” leisure branding campaign was created in 2012 after thorough research found that consumers want a travel destination that will provide new experiences without many of the hassles of travel. Omaha provides the right combination of adventure and convenience, which makes it the perfect regional destination for a weekend getaway. When out-of-town residents think of Omaha, we want them to feel the weekend, and ultimately choose Omaha for their weekend getaway.

### Brand Position

Omaha is the Midwest destination for memorable weekends because Omaha lets the traveler focus on creating new experiences instead of the hassles of travel.

### Brand Promise

To provide a weekend of memorable experiences.

### Omaha’s Brand Personality

#### Authentic

- *Confident – Omaha aspires to be Omaha*
- *Genuine – nothing is manufactured about the experience*

#### Dynamic

- *Eclectic*
- *Hip*
- *Expressive*

#### Comfortable

- *Friendly*
- *Easy*
- *Affordable*





## Omaha Craft Brew

The Omaha Craft Brew pack inspires regional visitors to request a pack that incentivizes them to visit Omaha and check out craft breweries throughout the metro area. Regional residents who request a brew pack receive coupons for a free beer at each participating brewery. After a visitor has the Brew Pack stamped at each location, the pack can be redeemed at the Omaha Visitors Center for a complimentary souvenir Omaha Craft Brew pint glass. A total of 4,693

Brew Packs have been requested and more than 2,410 coupons have been redeemed. Partners include the following: Benson Brewery, Brickway, Farnam House Brewing, Infusion, Lucky Bucket, Nebraska Brewing, Soaring Wings and Upstream.



## Omaha Adventure

The “Omaha Adventure” campaign is a collaborative partnership that promotes Omaha as a visitor destination and increases awareness of the city by offering an incentive to visit and explore local attractions. The campaign also acts as a lead generator to increase the

OCVB’s database, with the goal of converting regional residents into visitors through ongoing communications about events and special offers. In 2014, more than 17,600 Omaha Adventure Savings packs were distributed and 7,104 coupons redeemed. Partners included the following: Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium, The Durham Museum, Joslyn Art Museum, Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha Children’s Museum, Village Pointe Shopping Center, Amazing Pizza Machine and First National Bank.

**9 MONTHS**

Regional multi-media advertising campaign

**139,739,596**

Media impressions

**1,408,513**

Promotional emails sent

**162,640**

Visit Omaha database

**250,000**

Visitor Guides distributed

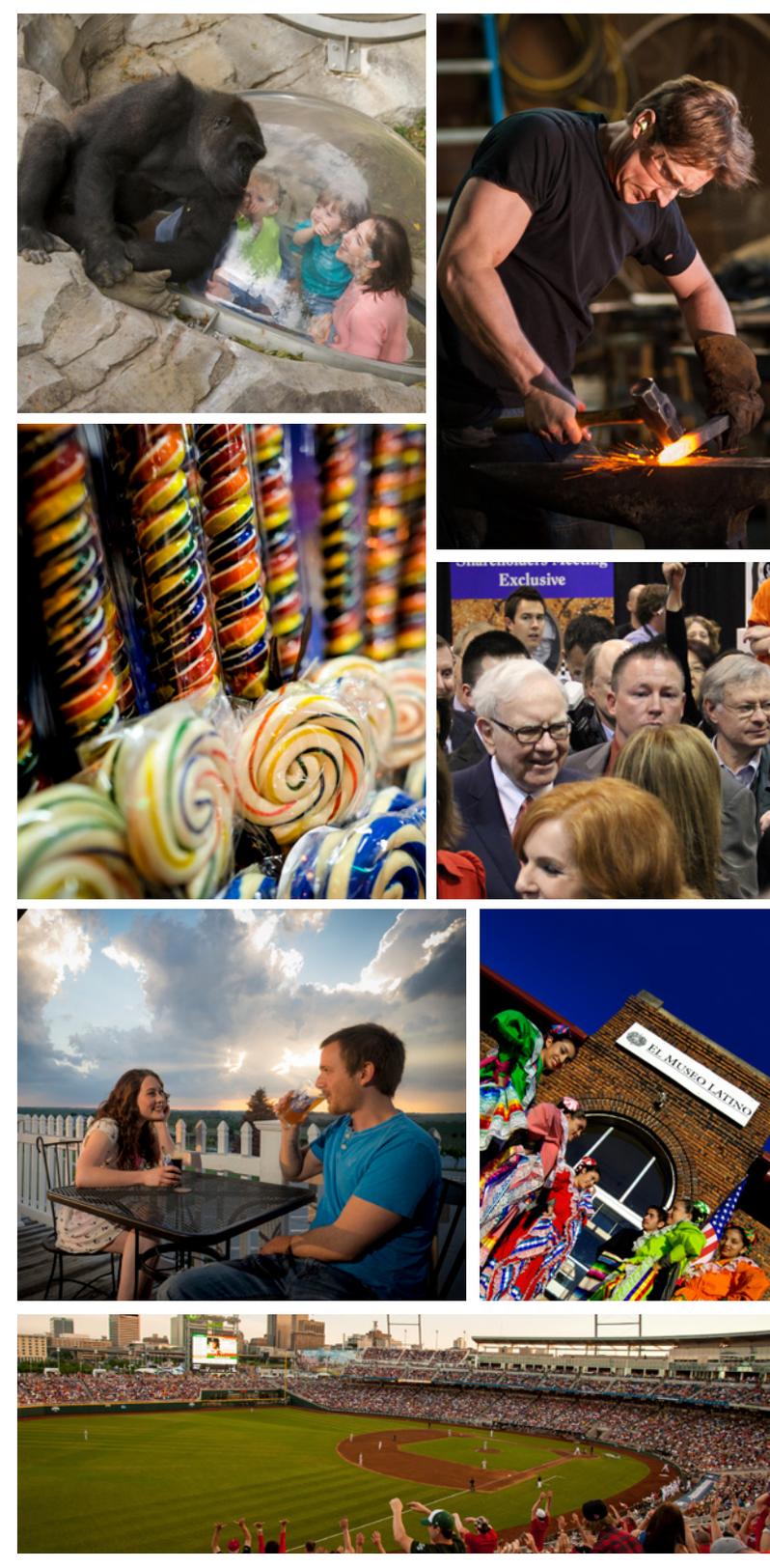
## Now Serving Omaha

The “Now Serving Omaha” campaign is an online video series that captures unique dining stories throughout the city to increase excitement and awareness about Omaha as a culinary destination. These video stories are shared via the Visit Omaha social media network.



# SOCIAL MEDIA

The OCVB's growing social media network is comprised of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram. The OCVB social media team not only uses the network to showcase Omaha as a tourism destination, but as a tool to listen and engage with a variety of audiences. In 2014, Omaha went viral after a Visit Omaha tweet acknowledging Peyton Manning's "Omaha, Omaha" audible. This tweet resulted in more than \$9 million in publicity for the city and added more than 1,000 new Visit Omaha fans and followers.



**102,340** Facebook fans

**10,390** Twitter followers

**70,559** Video views on YouTube

**61,255** Page views on TripAdvisor

**168** Pinterest followers

**226** Instagram followers

**101,061** Impressions on Facebook and Twitter from iSnap Photos shared on social media

# WEBSITE



**1,379,527** Website visits

**225,060** Mobile website visits

**3,462,113** Total page views

# BLOGGER OUTREACH

In 2014, the OCVB worked with 52 bloggers, resulting in 6,141 stories and comments about visiting Omaha.

**12.8 MILLION - BLOGGER ONLINE AUDIENCE**

“ If your aim was to put Omaha on the map, you could not have been more successful. I can't tell you how many people stopped me near the end of the conference to say, 'Wow, I never knew Omaha was such a great city!' ”

- Esther Mackintosh, President, Federation of State Humanities Councils



# SALES

The OCVB Convention Sales Department booked more than 101,000 room nights in 2014. In 2014, 97 meetings booked by the OCVB Conventions Sales Department resulted in more than \$30 million for the local economy.

**376** Hotel leads sent

**257,815** Room nights

**194** Groups confirmed for future years

**37** Site visits

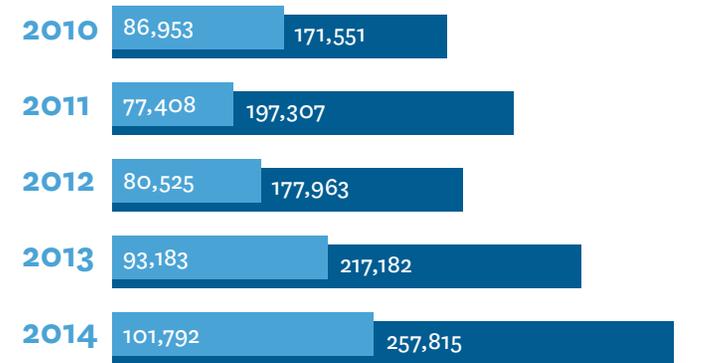


## The Art of Conventioneering

In order to break out of the sea of sameness in the world of convention sales, the OCVB's Art of Conventioneering messaging campaign was launched. The goal is to establish Omaha as a destination that understands planning a convention or meeting is a delicate dance, balancing convenience, comfort and cost with new memorable experiences. Omaha offers a seamless package, developed to lighten the planning burden while providing unique activities and a welcoming atmosphere for attendees. Six Art of Conventioneering slogans help sell Omaha's attributes in a fun, clever way.



## Hotel Room Night Leads Sent vs. Hotel Room Nights Booked



## Attended 13 industry tradeshow

- *Collinson Media - Diversity Summit* - Washington, DC
- *Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA) - Emerge* - Sacramento, CA
- *DMAI's Destinations Showcase* - Washington, DC
- *National Travel Association* - Los Angeles, CA
- *ConferenceDirect - Annual Partner Meeting and Tradeshow* - Anaheim, CA
- *HelmsBriscoe - Annual Business Conference* - Dallas, TX
- *American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) - Springtime in the Park* - Washington, DC
- *Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives (CESSE) - Annual Meeting* - Spokane, WA
- *Meeting Planners International (MPI) - WEC* - Minneapolis, MN
- *American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) - Annual Meeting & Expo* - Nashville, TN
- *Connect Marketplace* - Orlando, FL
- *Rejuvenate Marketplace* - Atlanta, GA
- *Nursing Alliance Fall Summit* - Tampa, FL

# PARTNERSHIPS

The OCVB strategically partners with organizations that will help enhance Omaha's presence on a national stage and heighten awareness of the city as a convention and meeting destination.



As a Corporate Partner with ASAE, Omaha is positioned alongside high-profile destinations such as Atlanta, Dallas and Orlando. The partnership provides Omaha with increased access to 21,000 association executives and industry partners.



Along with CenturyLink Center Omaha, the OCVB is a Preferred Partner with MPI, an organization that highlights Omaha to more than 18,500 meeting planners.



The OCVB partnership with Helms Briscoe helps drive short term meeting business into the city. Helms Briscoe is a third-party planning organization that matches meeting planners to destinations.

# MOTORCOACH HIGHLIGHTS

In 2014, the OCVB was involved in hosting 73 overnight motorcoach groups from 15 states. The groups originated from as far as California and as close as western Nebraska. Omaha's Ethnic Tour has become one of the most popular among motorcoach groups. Groups can visit "12 Countries Without a Passport" – spend the morning in Czechoslovakia making kolaches, have lunch in Ireland with an authentic 'boxty,' and end the evening in Germany with a customized Oktoberfest celebration.

**5,279** Group room night leads

**3,507** Group room nights booked

**50** Step-on guide tours



# OMAHA VISITORS CENTER

Discover what Omaha has to offer at one of the most distinctive visitor centers in the country. Volunteer ambassadors provide customized one-on-one concierge service to visitors. Vibrant video displays take you on a virtual tour of the city. The Omaha Visitors Center, at the corner of 10th and Farnam Streets, is a fun and informative place to start your exploration.

**20,000** Visitors welcomed

**150** Countries represented by visitors

**5,632** Hours volunteered by 43 ambassadors

“ Omaha is a GREAT city! We had a GREAT time there! ”

- Mark Muncey, Travelers Motor Club



# STAFF

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“ All the staff at the Omaha Convention & Visitors Bureau were a “joy” to work with. They were responsive to all our needs and worked very closely with us to assure we had a GREAT experience in Omaha – and we DID. ”

- Cindy Joy-Rodgers, National Newspaper Association

OMAHA™

VISITOMAHA.COM

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