

# BUELLTON VISITORS BUREAU

---

July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014 Year End Report

## History

- The City of Buellton contracts with the Chamber of Commerce to operate a Visitors Bureau for the promotion of tourism and economic development.
- The Visitors Bureau was asked to assist with promoting a TOT increase from 10% to 12% with the intent, the increase would be used for the promotion of tourism and economic development. The Visitors Bureau hit the streets and neighborhoods promoting the increase which was passed in November 2012 and went into effect in February 2013.
- The Visitors Bureau used a formula based off the previous years allocations and room sales to come up with an ideal amount for the promotion of tourism and economic development. The proposed allocation was 20.83% of the TOT. The Council reviewed and discussed this allocation and voted to pass this percentage in May 2013 on a 5-0 vote. Payments to the Visitors Bureau began in May 2013 reflecting TOT collected from the two months prior.

## Overview

- This was the first year with the new allocation of funds to the Visitors Bureau and therefore we were cautious with our budgeting and spending. We feel we were responsible with the funding received and have provided the City with a great service and return on their investment. With the new allocation of funds, the Visitors Bureau budget is based off our performance as well. When TOT goes down, the Visitors Bureau allocation also goes down. Tourism is an economic engine for our country, state, and our city. It is the responsibility of our city to understand this and cater to this necessary revenue generator for the betterment of the community.
- Based off studies conducted by Kosmont Companies and in the results of the community visioning, Tourism was identified as a key component to the financial stability of the city. The Visitors Bureau takes our work seriously and are passionate about what we do. We enjoy sharing our Valley with the visitors who walk through the door and on many occasions have seen them return on future visits. We have had the ability to reach domestic and international markets through our promotions, trade shows, and visitors center. It is a true honor to be able to promote Buellton as a destination.
- This past year, much of the focus went into creating a foundation to work from. A photo shoot took place so we had professional images to work with for marketing materials and website development. This allowed us to create a better image of Buellton which compliments the larger image of the Santa Ynez Valley. Trade shows were attended to create awareness of what Buellton has to offer by highlighting the hidden gems along with new up and coming attractions & businesses. We have been known as "Service Town USA" and "Home of Pea Soup Andersen's", which have all put us on the map. What we have today, is a new Buellton, we are evolving and morphing into an even greater Buellton and that is the message we are promoting.

## Visitor Bureau Income

- 20.83% of the TOT collected by the hotels and reported to the City.
- County of Santa Barbara

7/1/13 – 6/30/14	YTD	Budget
City of Buellton	326,268.50	352,770.00
County of SB	2,758.00	2,758.00
Total Income	329,026.50	352,770.00

## Expenses

Program Expense  
Employee Services  
Maintenance Expense  
Taxes

7/1/13 – 6/30/14	YTD	Budget
Program Exp.	136,948.41	199,650.00
Employee Service	75,874.40	76,996.00
Maintenance Exp.	15,276.15	19,600.00
Taxes	432.05	440.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>228,531.01</b>	<b>296,686.00</b>

## Program Expenses

- Member Dues & Subscriptions
  - Central Coast Tourism Council - Membership
  - Santa Ynez Valley News
  - Santa Barbara News Press
  - Santa Maria Times
- Sponsorships & Donations
  - Sponsored Arts on the Avenue
  - Sponsored Muddy Madness Mud Run
  - Sponsored 805 Avenue of Flags Criterium
  - Hosted dinner for a travel writer
  - Sponsored Extreme Mud Run
  - Sponsored Wheels & Windmills Car Show
  - Hosted a FAM Tour
- Conference & Meeting
  - Mileage reimbursements for conferences, meetings and trade shows
  - Registration fees for annual conferences and meetings
  - Conference lodging reimbursements

## Program Expenses Continued

- Economic Development
  - ICSC Conferences, registration fees, lodging, mileage, transportation, membership
  - Avenue of Flags pole banners
  - Remodel and re-facing McMurray Billboard
  - Contract continuation with Kosmont Companies
- Advertising
  - Silverado Stages Inc. – Bus Wrap
  - Billboard – rent, utilities, permits
  - Co-op
    - Certified Folder rack card displays
    - B2B with Solvang and Visit SYV
  - Print Advertising
    - Rack Cards
    - PCPA Solvang Festival Theater brochure
    - Scarecrow Fest postcards
    - Yosemite Journal
    - CCTC Map
    - Vintners Festival program
    - Solvang/ Santa Ynez Valley visitor guide
    - Accommodations for German travel writer

## Program Expenses Continued

- Web
  - Web hosting
  - Web promotions
- Graphic Design
  - Develop concepts and designs for ad layouts (print & digital), promotional materials, trade show displays, bus wrap, billboard re-design
- E Marketing
  - Social Media
  - Photo Shoot – Models, props, photographer, art direction
- Events
  - Scarecrow Fest participation
- Trade Shows
  - LA Travel Show
  - California RV Show
  - International Pow Wow (IPW)
  - ICSC

## Employee Services

- Wages & Salaries
  - Payroll Taxes
  - Contract Labor
  - Insurance
  - Workmens comp
- Liability Insurance
- Property Tax

## Maintenance Expense

- Office Expense
  - Office Supplies
  - Telephone/Internet
  - Office Alarm
  - Equipment Rental & Service
  - Cleaning & Janitorial
  - Postage & Shipping
  - Storage rental
- Professional Fees
  - Accounting
  - Bookkeeping

## Sponsorships & Donations

The Buellton Visitors Bureau supported various events this year.

These events continue to highlight our community and bring visitors in for overnight stays.

Our contributions to these events have been well received and our businesses in Buellton have benefitted as an outcome.

The Visitors Bureau sponsored over \$8,000.00 to local events this year.

- Arts on the Avenue
- Muddy Madness Mud Run
- 805 Avenue of Flags Criterium
- Extreme Mud Run
- Wheels & Windmills Car Show

## California Tourism Statistics

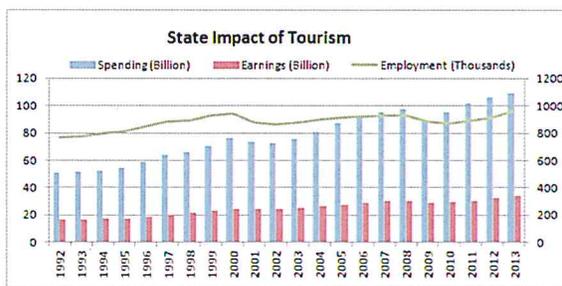
15.6 million international visitors traveled to California in 2013.

Approximately:

- 6.6 million overseas origins
- 7.4 million from Mexico
- 1.5 million from Canada.

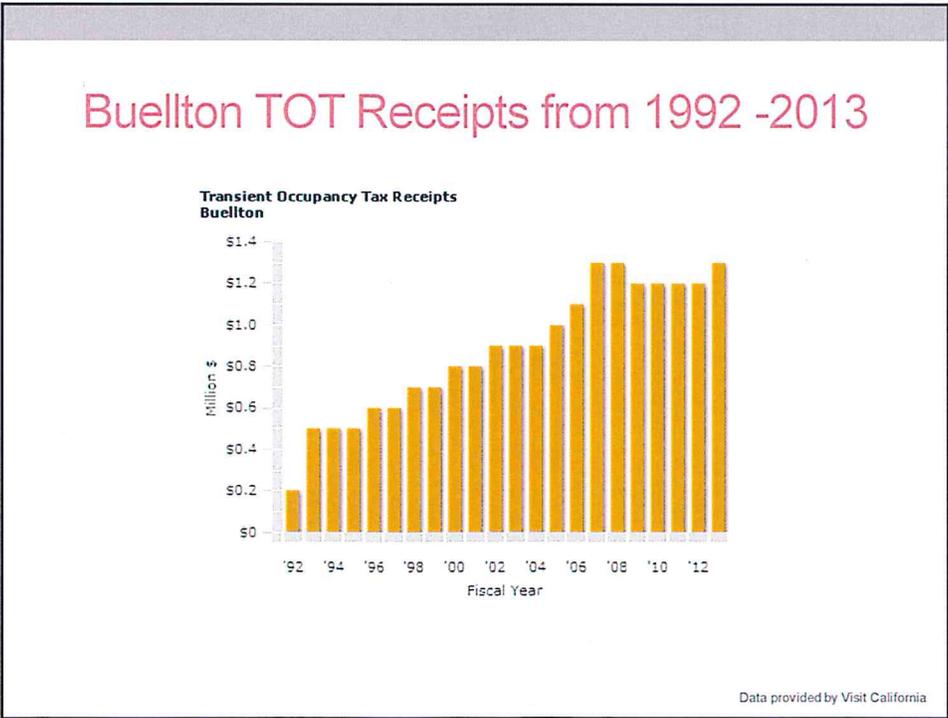
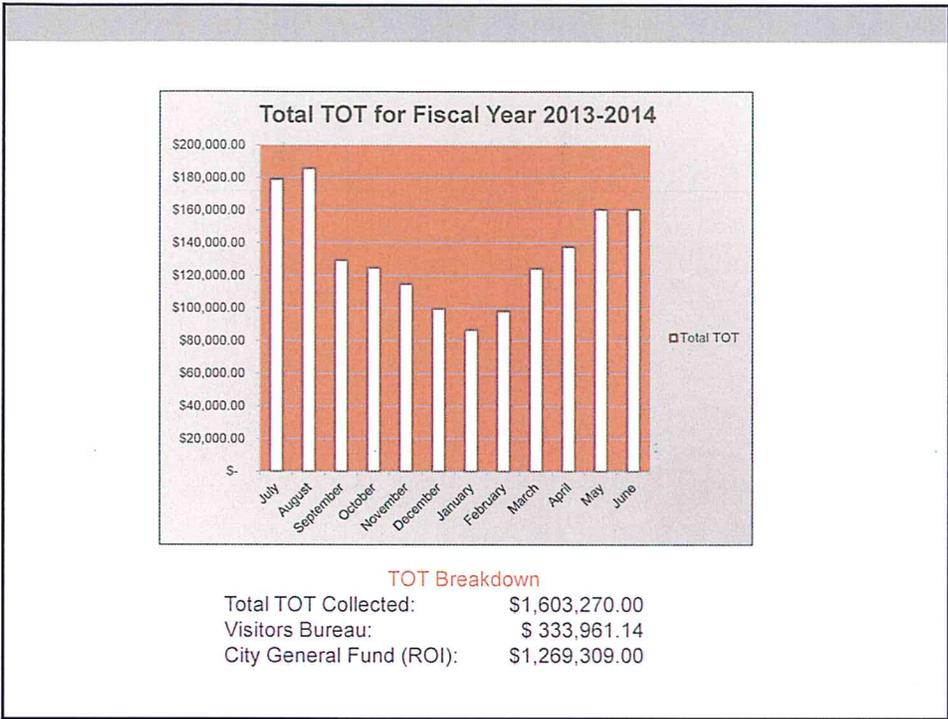
California's top overseas markets in 2013 were

- China (819,000)
- United Kingdom (652,000)
- Australia (553,000)
- Japan (535,000)
- Germany (421,000)
- South Korea (389,000)
- France (388,000)
- Scandinavia (241,000)
- India (239,000)



- Total direct travel spending in California was \$109.6 billion in 2013, a 3.2 percent increase from 2012 spending.
- Travel spending in California directly supported 965,800 jobs, with earnings of \$34.1 billion.
- Travel spending generated the greatest number of jobs in accommodations and food service (568,000 jobs) and arts, entertainment and recreation (239,000 jobs), and retail (87,000 jobs).
- Travel spending in 2013 generated \$2.8 billion in local taxes and \$4.3 billion in state taxes.

Data provided by Visit California



## Visitor Traffic

The Visitors Bureau welcomes visitors from near and far and around the globe.

We provide concierge service to our visitors and encourage them to stay, enjoy the valley, and share their experience with their friends back home.

We assist visitors in person, over the phone, and by mail (snail & email).

We also provide a welcome bag to groups coming into the area for reunions, corporate retreats, weddings, and gatherings.

Quality customer service goes a long way and turns overnight guests into repeat customers.

2013-2014	Walk-Ins & Calls	Mailings	Total Contacts
July	387	15	402
August	373	3	376
September	301	2	303
October	305	3	308
November	211	6	217
December	171	6	177
January	135	108	243
February	255	93	348
March	342	98	440
April	374	84	458
May	398	87	485
June	468	72	540
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3720</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>4297</b>

## Visitor Bags

Q1	210
Q2	388
Q3	170
Q4	211
<b>Totals</b>	<b>979</b>

## Who's looking at Buellton? VisitBuellton.com

VisitBuellton.com sees significant traffic from around the world.

Much like the traffic reported by Visit California, Buellton has attracted much of the same overseas market.

Domestic traffic to the site continues to be the bordering states of California with Texas and New York in the top 5. The Northwestern states came in the top 10.

### Top 10 countries visiting our website are:

- USA
- United Kingdom
- Canada
- Brazil
- Australia
- Germany
- India
- Denmark
- Japan
- Italy



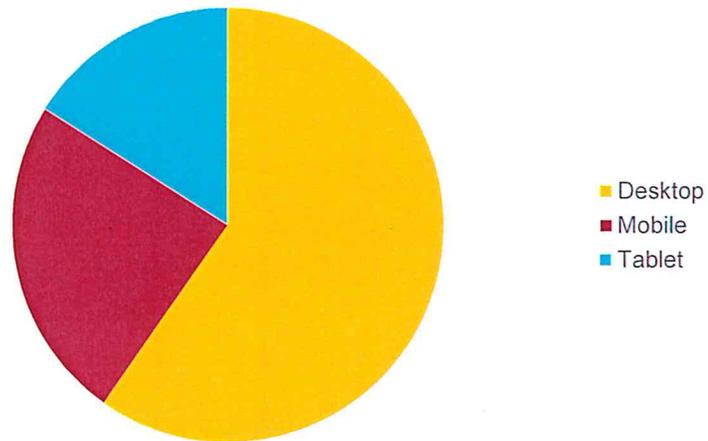
### Top 5 states in the USA

- California
- Nevada
- Arizona
- Texas
- New York



## How are our Visitors finding us on the web?

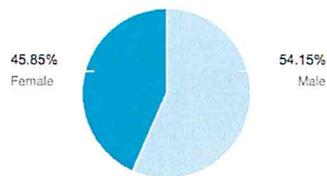
Devices



## Who are these Visitors?

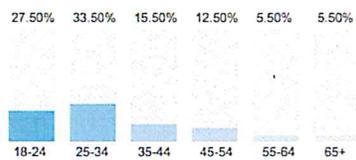
Gender

100% of total sessions



Age

100% of total sessions



## Getting Social

- Our Facebook Page was sitting at 640 likes at the end of the fiscal year. Understanding this number should be much higher, we will be placing focus on building a stronger fan base in the current fiscal year.
- We did notice a spike in likes following trade show appearances.
- We have just recently began tweeting so we only have 78 followers at this time.
- Social Media is an area we plan to expand upon in the new fiscal year.



## Economic Development

- Attended breakout sessions to learn more about the future of retail. Heard from businesses who are expanding and gained better understanding of their footprint. Buellton is not always the right fit for every business.
- Met with potential retailers for new Village project, vacant parcels, and vacant buildings.
- Had a booth display in Monterey to attract retailers and developers who wanted to learn more about Buellton and what we have to offer.
- Success with retailers locating to Buellton and very positive conversations with developers taking place.

- Attended ICSC
  1. San Diego
  2. Monterey
  3. Las Vegas Recon



## Travel Shows

Los Angeles Times  
**TRAVEL SHOW**



**IPW**  
Powered by U.S. Travel

- The Visitors Bureau had a 10x10 booth at the LA Times Travel Show. This show welcomed media professionals and consumers looking to travel.
- We connected with a travel writer who came to Buellton to spend a few days. He then published an article in the LA Times Travel section which turned into numerous reservations and bookings for local businesses.
- The show attracts over 22,000 attendees with an average visit of 4 hours
- 98% of attendees plan to travel in the next year
- 67% of attendees take more than 3 vacations each year
- Attendees spent an average of \$5,400+ on travel in the past year
- 39% of attendees have booked trips as a result of the Travel Show

- 43 Appointments with travel agents, tour receptors and tour companies.
- Multiple countries represented
- Partnered with Central Coast Tourism Council members from Gilroy and Channel Islands.
- Entertained a FAM Tour with tour receptors



## Travel Shows



- 28,894 attendees, a 39% increase from the prior year
- Multiple direct bookings at Flying Flags RV Resort
- This is the largest RV show in California and proved to be a great success for the Visitors Bureau to be there and partner with Flying Flags RV Resort



Bus Wrap Design – Western States route



McMurray Billboard revised vinyl



## Advertising

In addition to Trade Shows, Bus wraps, and Billboards, the Visitors Bureau made the pages of magazines, travel guides, maps, newspapers, and brochures.

Here is a listing of those places Buellton could be seen throughout the year.

A new branding effort took place late in the fiscal year and will continue to have continuity throughout the current year. Also, new photos can be seen in many of the latest pieces.

- Yosemite Journal
- Solvang/Santa Ynez Visitor Guide
- Central Coast Map
- PCPA Solvang Festival Theater
- Santa Barbara County Vintner's Guide
- Vintner's Festival program
- A new rack card for Buellton was produced
- LA Times Travel Section
- California RV Show Program

• Actual copies of these items have been submitted separately from this report.

## Visioning

The Visitors Bureau has implemented many objectives from Community Visioning plan.

Understanding the importance of Economic Development, branding, and creating a business and visitor friendly town, the Visitors Bureau has played an active role in many of the improvements we see around the City.

The Chamber of Commerce has also played an important part in creating signature events which have put Buellton on the map.

### Visitors Bureau and Visioning

- Economic Development (Worked closely with Kosmont)
- Brand / Image – Eat, Stay & Play
- Promote Tourism (Important to community)
- Wayfinding signs-worked with sign committee to complete
- Banners along Avenue and Hwy 246 – Seasonal and Holiday themed to enhance Avenue and Hwy 246.
- Reached out to healthy food options, Trader Joes, and clothing retailers, however our demographics were not a match for these industries.
- We offer concierge services to our visitors
- We offer community calendar of events
- Working on a highway banner system to go across Hwy 246 – in process

### Chamber of Commerce and Visioning

- Hold holiday events
- Promote volunteer opportunities
- Hold State of the City addresses
- Special Events

Welcome to Buellton!  
Eat, Stay, & Play!!

