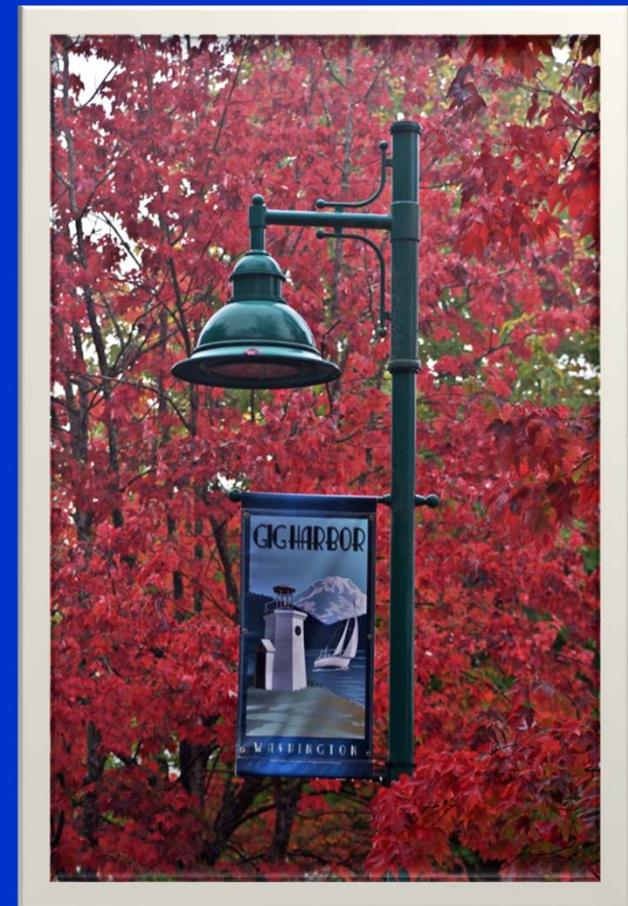


City of Gig Harbor Tourism & Communications

*Work Study Session - Impacts of Growth
November 23, 2015*



Tourism & Communications Staff



The City of Gig Harbor
Tourism &
Communications
Office
is comprised of two
staff members:

Karen Scott (1FTE)
and
Mandy Silver (.6 FTE)

Together, we get the
job done!

History

Director position was introduced in 2000

Within the first year...

Developed clear destination marketing strategies
The first welcome center opened

Soon after...

First website developed
Installation of cultural heritage markers
Administrative assistant position added
Expanded tours and small convention markets
Built relationships with extended tourism agencies



Today

- Second visitor center opened - in partnership with Harbor WildWatch
- Launched the PT Trolley with community partners
- Relaunched both websites with a consistent look and feel
- Built off of our successful video release through broadcast and internet
- Updated our Tourism Strategic Plan through 2019
- Further developed partnerships with Pierce County municipalities surrounding the US Open

In 2015 and Beyond

Tourism

- Lead organization for tourism and visitor services in the community
- Responsible for the city visitor website and portions of the municipal website
- All advertising and public relations for promotion of the Gig Harbor and Peninsula community
- Goal to enhance the local economy and to attract and serve the traveling public.

Communication

- Growing need for public outreach for city projects and events that are municipal in nature

What We Do Today

Cultivate and promote activities through partnership with:

- Hotels and lodging properties
- Downtown Waterfront Alliance
- Chamber of Commerce
- Merchants at Uptown
- Local groups and festivals
- With our own City of Gig Harbor staff

Partnerships with tourism industry professionals such as:

- Washington Tourism Alliance (member)
- Travel Tacoma + Pierce County (funding partner)
- Visit Kitsap (funding partner)
- Visit Seattle (member)
- South Sound Sports (funding partner)
- Media Relations Consultant

We are the staff liaison for the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

GigHarborWine
OlallaBlueGrassFestival
GallopingGertieRun
ClassicBoatShowAtTheTides
GigHarborLightedBoatParade
TurkeyTrot
NationalNightOut
GigHarborGardenTour
KeyPeninsulaFarmTour
GigHarborFilmFestival
GigHarborPaddlersCup
GigHarborBeerFestival
CraftsFair
GigHarborAnnualTreeLighting
Stroll
WinterfestArts
WriteInTheHarbor
FoodFest
DonkeyCreekChumFestival
RelayForLife
RaceForASoldier
SOLFEST
OpenStudioTour
OutdoorMoviesInThePark
Tourism
SummerSoundsAtSkansie
Communication
StPattysDayRun
GlassPumpkinsallIptown
GigHarborGuide
GIGABYTE
Wheels
GirlsNightOut
WaterfrontFarmersMarket
ScarecrowFestival
MaritimeGigFestival
Tidefest
CruiseTheNarrowsClassicCarShow
KeyFest
CandlelightChristmasInTheHarbor
GigHarborStreetScramble
UptownSummerConcerts
TrickOrTreatinGigHarbor
GetAroundGigHarborTrolley
ChalkTheHarbor
BlueWillowLavenderFest
GigHarborWings
ParksAppreciationDay
HarborHoundsWalkTheTown

How Do We Do This

Our Mantra

Residents are our greatest tourism ambassadors:

We work hard to provide our community an array of events to educate, inform and entertain. We provide information about activities to enhance their experience in Gig Harbor.

Keep the public informed: We work alongside city staff regarding road closures, detours and city projects that may be impactful to residents, visitors and the community, living both inside and outside city limits. Communicating with citizens is a never ending battle, and we are continually exploring more and better options.

Direct Impacts of Growth

Some May Be Easy To See

1. More events to promote and visitors to support
2. Greater opportunity for online presence
3. More volunteers to support
4. More residents to inform

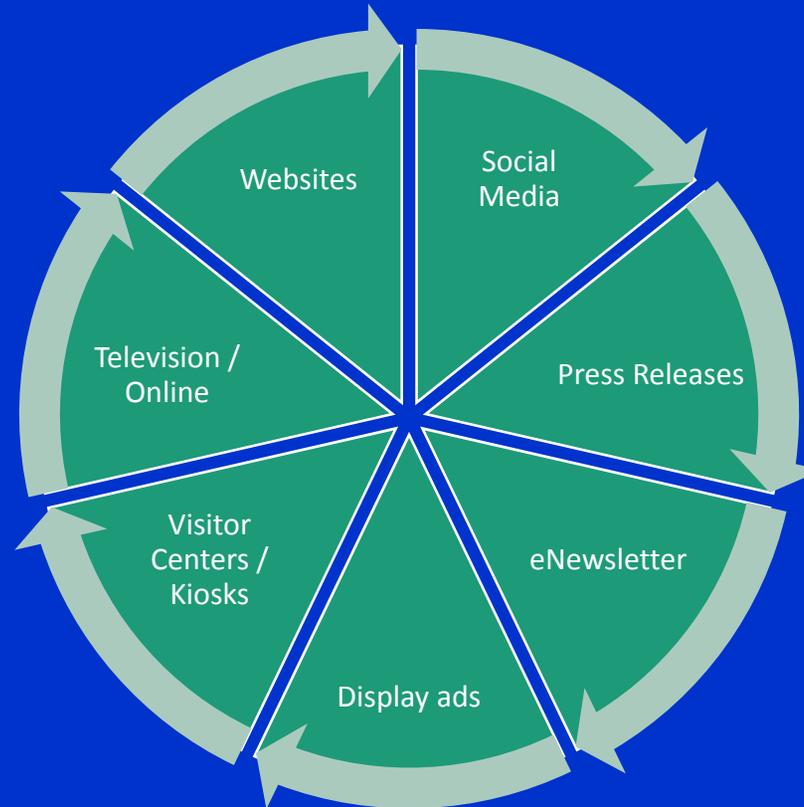
Increased visitors + Increased population = Increased Lodging Tax

(while Gig Harbor figures are proprietary, our partners at Travel Tacoma + Pierce County report YTD 2015 up 8%)

Growth area is focused on shoulder season

Avenues for Communicating

Demand for Information is Increasing



In The Future We Hope to Add

- Pinterest
- Instagram
- Billboards / Bus wrap
- Print Newsletter in cooperation with Administration

Sure Signs of Growth



Our eNewsletter remains popular
In 2006, we saw an average of 7 articles
In 2015, we average 37 articles
(our open rate averages 38% -- industry average of 23%)



More than 22,500 followers on Social Media

Internet Phenomenon



128,000 views worldwide



facebook





Discover

Meetings, Conferences
and Group Packages

Eat

Restaurants, Wine Bars
and Dining

Play

Annual Events, Music,
Movies and Nightlife

Stay

Hotels, B&B's and
Overnight Lodging

Calendar

Find Fun Things To
Do & See

History

Local Culture and
Landmarks

Welcome to Gig Harbor Guide

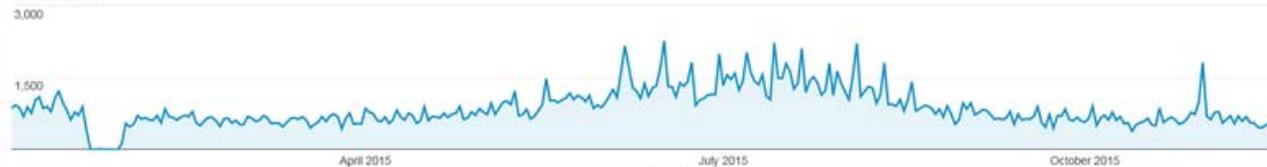
[Learn More](#)

Overview

Pageviews vs.

Hourly Day Week Month

● Pageviews



Sure Signs of Growth



Higher turnout at *all* events in 2015
Summer Sounds averaged 2,200 attendees weekly

Direct Impacts of Growth

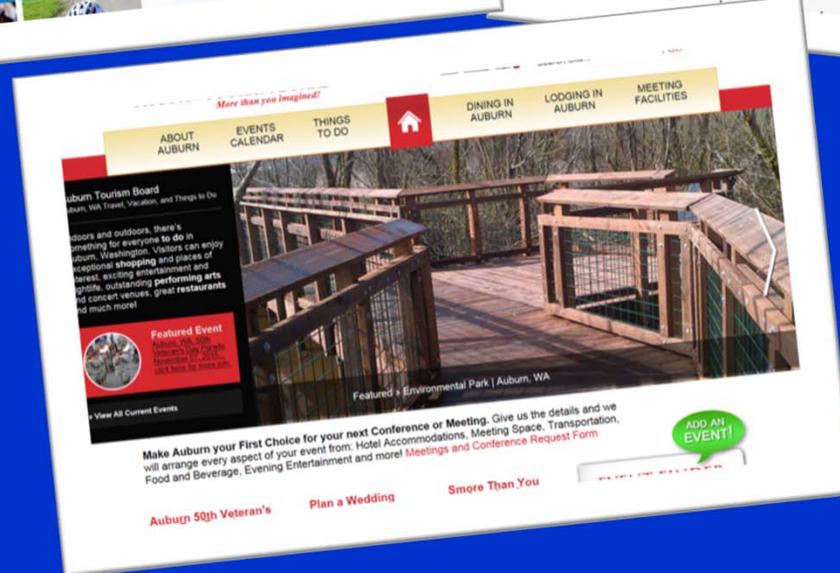
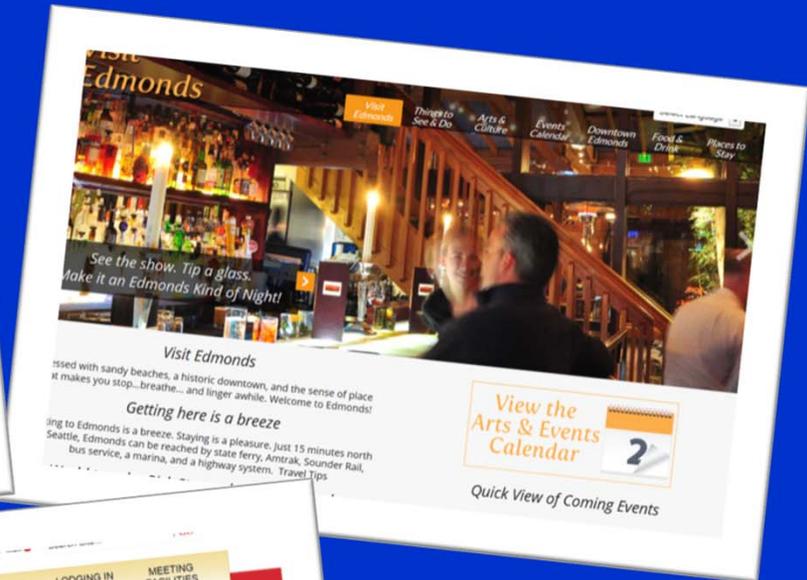
Some May Not Be Easy To See

In order to embrace growth and to accommodate an increased number of visitors, we need to pursue off season and non-traditional efforts.

- Continue to be creative
- Remain competitive
- Explore Micro Groups such as:
 - Heritage or cultural tourism
 - Sports tourism
 - Eco tourism such as the Kitsap Water Trails
- Meetings and groups
- Maintain a high level of community confidence through effective communications

Others Are Catching On

Examples of Emerging Travel and Tourism Municipal Markets in our Region



What Our Partners Say About Us

As I look around at examples of how various communities approach tourism promotion, I am constantly impressed at the program Gig Harbor has developed. In my opinion, the city has become one of the best in the region at finding a balance between marketing and product development.

*Robert Allen CCR, Senior Economic Development Specialist
Pierce County, Economic Development Department*

We appreciate your constant support, and most specifically your efforts in promoting our many events. Our partnership is essential as we all work together to promote Gig Harbor and strive to create economic vitality for our community, while maintaining a balance with preserving our unique historic character.

*Mary DesMarais, Executive Director
Gig Harbor Downtown Waterfront Alliance*



What Does The Future Bring?

- In 2016
- Beyond

Questions?

