

# Pay Attention to Tourist Needs

## Community connections are important

Visits by tourists can build the vitality of your organization and your community. Your work to attract and serve them, however, must support your organization's mission and mesh with your community's welcoming efforts.



Forest Grove

## Word of Mouth

Several recent museum visitor studies revealed that word of mouth is the strongest reason for visiting museums. Recommendations from locals and travelers are key factors in becoming a tourist destination.

- Be Great! Whatever you do – from events to organizational management – do it well. Behave ethically

and professionally. This may mean quality over quantity with limited resources, but that is OK. If you are trustworthy and provide superior services word will spread. If not, word will spread faster.

- Give awesome customer service. This may be obvious, but it must not be overlooked. Travel Oregon offers a great online customer service training. Take advantage of it.
- Recruit volunteers. They are handy for tasks and they are also outstanding advocates and advertisers. They share their work with friends and family and promote the organization.
- Be relevant in your community. Provide services that interest and relate to the locals. Participate in community efforts, events of other organizations, and collaborate.
- Strategically share the experience. In large communities, offer free passes to owners and employees of lodging facilities, restaurants, and other organizations that tourists visit. In a small community, have an annual open house or tour event for those folks.

## Coordination and Collaboration

When you combine your resources and your destinations the power multiplies!

- Know the other destinations in your community and region. Be aware of other organizations, what they are doing and when. This allows you to see potential collaborations, promote each other and avoid overlap.
- Strategically time your events. One strategy is to time your event to avoid a major event of another organization. This is a friendly gesture to other organizations and avoids forcing people to choose between two great opportunities. Another approach might be hold your events at the same time to make the entire community package a bigger draw.
- Be involved in community efforts. Participate in community events and efforts in some way. Provide historic photos, lead walking tours or host an open house at a historic property.

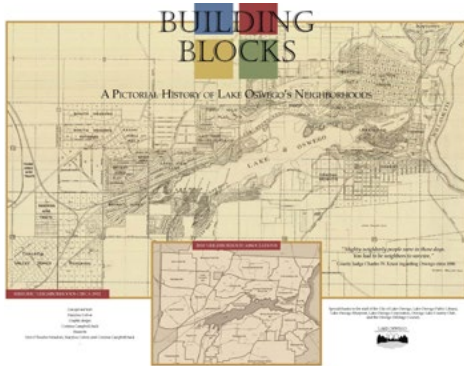


**Oregon Heritage**

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#### Lake Oswego

- Promote other destinations and events. Use your newsletters to remind members to visit local attractions with their guests. Have a rack of information in your establishment and provide recommendations about what to see next. This is excellent customer service.
- Seek unique promotions. Be open to collaboration with organizations you might not normally consider. A bird watching tour with the Audubon Society in the historic cemetery. A bike tour company and the museum with a biking exhibit.

### Participate in Established Tourism Efforts

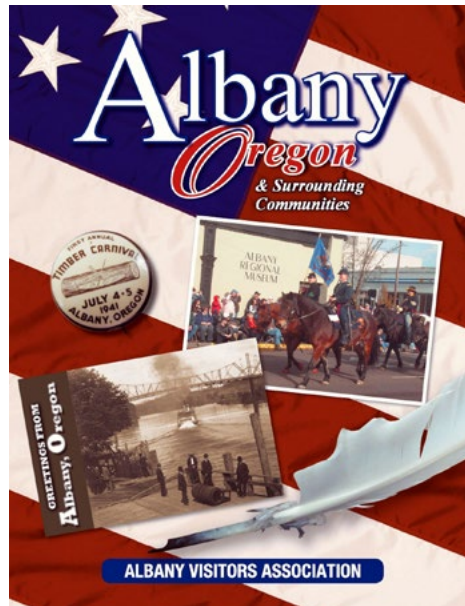
Tourism promotion is happening all around you all the time. Join in and take advantage of those resources.

- Make your organization accessible to tourists. This usually serves your community as well. Be open during typical tourist hours. Have good signage and participate in community way finding efforts. Provide auto, bus and bike parking nearby or have it easily located. Participate in community transportation efforts – bike share, car share, shuttles, bus and

tour routes. Offer access to toilets and other facilities.

- Brochures, passports, and tours - make sure your attraction is included. Make sure you are a part of any group tourism efforts. Topical, geographic, and themed brochures are common lures for tourist activity.

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#### Albany

- Know your local tourism promoters. At the local level these are often visitor associations and Chambers of Commerce. You don't have to be at every meeting, but it would be good to be a member. Be persistent sharing your information.
- Know your regional tourism promoters. Travel Oregon, the state tourism organization, works closely with the regional organizations. Communicate with them. Be persistent sharing your information.

- Know Travel Oregon. Scroll down to the bottom of the Travel Oregon website, [www.traveloregon.com](http://www.traveloregon.com), and click on Travel Industry. Then explore the partner section. You can add information about destinations and events to the website, submit stories. You will also learn about workshops, Q customer service training, grant opportunities and more.



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