

# WISCONSIN GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON TOURISM YEAR-END REPORT

JANUARY-DECEMBER 2014

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## OVERVIEW

The Governor's Council on Tourism advises the Secretary of Tourism in formulating a statewide tourism marketing strategy.

### Council Officers:

**Paul Upchurch** – President & CEO VISIT Milwaukee, Chair

**Brian Kelsey** – Managing Director, Peninsula Players Theatre, Vice Chair

**James Bolen** – Executive Director, Cable Area Chamber of Commerce, Secretary

### Council Members:

**Deb Archer** – President & CEO, Greater Madison CVB

**Representative Jill Billings** – Wisconsin State Assembly

**Dr. Ellsworth Brown** – Director, Wisconsin Historical Society

**Cindy Burzinski** – Director, Vilas County Tourism & Publicity

**Paul Cunningham** – President, Schreiner's Restaurant, Inc.

**Allyson Gommer** – Tourism Director, Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce

**Senator Dave Hansen** – Wisconsin State Senate

**Stanton Peter Helland** – Co-owner, Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort

**Representative Dean Kaufert** – Wisconsin State Assembly

**Stephanie Klett** – Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Tourism

**Joe Klimczak** – General Manager, Cave of the Mounds

**Kathy Kopp** – Executive Director, Platteville Area Chamber of Commerce

**Scott Krause** – General Manager, Heidel House Resort & Spa

**Senator Terry Moulton** – Wisconsin State Senate

**Lola Roeh** – General Manager, Osthoff Resort & Aspira Spa

**Ernie Stevens III** – Executive Director, Native American Tourism of Wisconsin

**George Tzougros** – Executive Director, Wisconsin Arts Board

**Stacey Watson** – Senior Director, Consumer Segment Marketing, Harley-Davidson

## Council Meetings:

The Governor's Council met four times during 2014: January 9 (Madison), March 2 (Lake Geneva during WIGCOT), May 15 (Fond du Lac) and October 7 (Madison). It is Council protocol to hold one meeting during the Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism (WIGCOT), one meeting at an out-state location hosted by a Council member and at least one meeting in Madison at the Department of Tourism.

Council Committees meet regularly throughout the year both in person and by teleconference. A Council member serves as Council Representative on the committees and reports on the work of that committee at each meeting.

The Wisconsin Tourism Industry is informed of the Council's work through:

- Meeting minutes posted on [industry.travelwisconsin.com](http://industry.travelwisconsin.com) within 10 days.
- Post meeting teleconference briefings managed by the Department's Regional Tourism Specialists.
- Associations and "Friends of Council" welcomed to attend meetings.
- Secretary's regular emails informing Council members and "Friends of Council" of Department happenings and achievements.

## The Council Committees:

Committee	Council Representative
Marketing	Stacey Watson
Joint Effort Marketing	Paul Upchurch
Travel Green Wisconsin	Joe Klimczak
Sports	James Bolen
Meetings & Conventions	Deb Archer
Travel Information Center	Cindy Burzinski
International	Stephanie Klett

## Committee Key Accomplishments:

### Leisure Marketing:

The Marketing Committee worked very closely with the Department of Tourism and the Department's agencies of record, Ascedia (Digital and Website), Creative Marketing Resources (Multicultural) and Laughlin Constable (General), to assist in strategy development and offer marketing expertise. The Marketing Committee was extremely proud of the creative work and the results of the marketing programs created and executed by the Department of Tourism. The awards won are reflective of the high quality of work done by the Department in promoting Wisconsin tourism.

- As of October 2014, earned media for the calendar year topped \$109 million and 2 million in impressions. Key achievements include the launch of the Airplane! ad starring Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the Bo Ryan press conference and leisure travel coverage in high profile publications including the Huffington Post, New York Times, Chicago Tribune and USA Today. The public relations team earned its second "Best in Show" honor at the 2014 PRSA Paragon Awards.
- Continued evolution of the Wisconsin brand of FUN in print, radio, television, digital, social and out-of-home paid advertising resulting in extraordinary earned media exposure and numerous awards on a global level. (See addendum for list of awards.) and a 212% increase in subscriptions.
- Research-based decision making continues to be the focus. Specific projects in 2014 included Return on Investment and Economic Impact research with Longwood's International and Tourism Economics.

## **TravelWisconsin.com Tourism's Workhorse**

- Sessions to the website and apps through November 2014 were 4.8 million, which is a 29% increase over YTD 2013. A record was set in September with over 1,000,000 pageviews in one week.
- Content marketing research was completed and the findings are being used to craft enhancements including a redesigned Cities & Regions section of the site.
- A new digital communications program was launched which allows users to subscribe to updates on specific areas of interest. This resulted in an 11% increase in subscribers and a 212% increase in subscriptions.

## **Meetings & Conventions Marketing:**

The MeetinWisconsin.com website designed last year (2013) to increase meetings and conventions in Wisconsin by providing meeting planners a comprehensive site to research and evaluate destinations and meeting venues exceeded expectations.

- The website had 9,681 sessions, 8,530 users, and a total of 44,068 pageviews.
- Co-op partnership with the industry in trade shows, printed pieces and paid advertising.

## **Sports Marketing:**

Creation of SportsWisconsin.com, a website designed to increase sporting events within Wisconsin by providing sports rights holders and event managers a comprehensive site to research and evaluate destinations and sports facilities in the state exceeded expectations.

- The website had 17,282 sessions, 14,801 users, and a total of 55,784 pageviews.
- Co-op partnership with the industry in trade shows, printed pieces and paid advertising.

## **Grant Programs:**

### **■ Joint Effort Marketing (JEM):**

- JEM committee met five times to review grant applications in five categories: destination marketing, new events, existing events, sales promotions and one-time/one-of-a-kind events.
- These grants are an important investment in tourism and drive tourism spending, create jobs and provide exposure to parts of the state that wouldn't necessarily see these benefits without the grants.
- The Department of Tourism awarded 59 Joint Effort Marketing grants totaling \$1.4 million dollars. The marketing campaigns and events supported by these grants will generate \$34 million in visitor expenditures.

### **■ Travel Information Center (TIC):**

- The Department of Tourism awarded 34 Tourist Information Center grants totaling \$162,000. The centers provided customer service for 769,000 visitors.

### **■ Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) Sports Marketing:**

- The Department of Tourism awarded 13 grants that are expected to bring \$9 million of direct visitor spending to destinations around the state.

### **■ Meetings Mean Business (MMB):**

- The Department of Tourism awarded 11 Meetings Mean Business grants totaling \$124,668. The estimated future expenditures resulting from these projects are \$9.8 million.

## **Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism (WIGCOT):**

WIGCOT continues to lead the way among state-produced Governor's Conferences. Very often other states use Wisconsin's conference as a benchmark of excellence.

The Grand Geneva in Lake Geneva was the site of WIGCOT 2014. Nearly 1,000 delegates, sponsors, special guests and exhibitors attended. A post survey analysis indicated that delegates most appreciated the high quality of keynote speakers and the increased production quality of videos and presentations. The tourism industry uses this conference as a networking and educational opportunity while continuing to welcome the Department's Showcase as a core component of the conference.

## **New in 2014:**

Staff hired:

- Jeff Anderson: Regional Tourism Specialist
- Shane Brossard: Marketing Director
- Brian Chullino: Visual communications and multi-channel brand integration
- Christina Torkelson: International, Travel Green and Trade Show Marketing

Secretary outreach to federal legislators:

- Provide Wisconsin tourism information and successes.
- Encourage reauthorization of Brand USA.

Regional Tourism Specialist program implementation:

- Association development and relationship management.

Marketing and Communications:

- Real-time social listening at Summerfest and State Fair.
- Interactive bus shelters in Chicago.

# ADDENDUM: COMPILATION OF AWARDS RECEIVED DURING 2014

## MAY

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■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Bronze Anvil**

Newsletters: Travel Wisconsin Revamps “Wisconsin Traveler” E-newsletter

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Best in Show for 2013 Wisconsin Department of Tourism PR Campaign

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Bronze Anvil Award of Commendation**

Media Relations – Government: Green Bay Packer Jordy Nelson Learns There’s No Place Like Wisconsin

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Bronze Anvil Award of Commendation**

Social Media Associations/Government/Non-profit Organizations: Promoting Fall for Travel Wisconsin with Jordy Nelson on Social Media

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Integrated Communications – Government/Non-profit: 2013 Wisconsin Department of Tourism PR Campaign

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Integrated Communications – Government/Non-profit: Travel Wisconsin Goes Hollywood

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Poster: Airplane! the Commercial Poster

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Online – eNewsletter: Travel Wisconsin’s Email Newsletter Redesign

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Social Media Campaign: Promoting Travel Wisconsin w/ Jordy Nelson on Social Media

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Integrated Communications – Government/Non-profit: Jordy Nelson Learns There’s No Place Like Wisconsin in the Fall

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

Tactic: Social Media Campaign: Travel Wisconsin’s “Sweaterize Yourself” Facebook App

■ **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon Award**

PR Tactic (Media Relations) - “Press Kit”: Travel Wisconsin’s 2013 Press Kit

## SEPTEMBER

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### ■ GovDelivery Outreach and Impact Awards

Designer Category: Digital Communications

### ■ W3 Awards by the Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts Gold Award Winner

General Website Categories – Tourism

### ■ W3 Awards by the Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts Silver Award Winner

General Website Categories – Government

### ■ W3 Awards by the Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts Silver Award Winner

General Website Categories – Travel

### ■ 2014 Milwaukee 99 Awards from Milwaukee Adworkers Silver Medal

Package Design: Media Kit

### ■ 2014 Milwaukee 99 Awards from Milwaukee Adworkers Silver Medal

Experiential Advertising: “Shelter Tent”

### ■ 2014 Milwaukee 99 Awards from Milwaukee Adworkers Merit Award

Outdoor/Transit Single: Camp WI Bus Wrap

### ■ 2014 Milwaukee 99 Awards from Milwaukee Adworkers Merit Award

Ad Photography Campaign: Camp Wisconsin: Wake, Biker, Tube Girl

### ■ 2014 Milwaukee 99 Awards from Milwaukee Adworkers Merit Award

Environmental Design: Shadow Box Trade Show Booth

### ■ 2014 Milwaukee 99 Awards from Milwaukee Adworkers Merit Award

Ad Photography Single: Water Hair – Girl (Bikini)

### ■ 2014 Milwaukee 99 Awards from Milwaukee Adworkers Merit Award

Ad Photography Single: Water Hair – Girl (Blue Suit)

## NOVEMBER

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### ■ Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Bronze Adrian Award

Digital Marketing/Digital Campaign - Search Marketing Strategy

### ■ Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Adrian Award

Wisconsin Department of Tourism’s PR Story Award: Silver

### ■ Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Adrian Award

Promoting fall in WI with Jordy Nelson Award: Gold

### ■ Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Adrian Award

Wisconsin’s e-Newsletter - Traveler Award: Bronze

### ■ Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Adrian Award

Wisconsin Transforms Bus Shelters Award: Silver