



Tourism is Economic Development

Linda DiMario

Vice President, Economic Development &
Tourism

Irvine Chamber of Commerce, Irvine, CA.



Las Vegas Gets It!





What's it take to “get it” ?

- Don't assume.
- See tourism through the prism of economic development.
- Think and talk about tourism as an economic driver.



Rule #1

DON'T ASSUME.



Don't assume.

- **That people KNOW what tourism is.**



KNOW what tourism is.

- Anyone visiting from more than 50 miles outside city limits.
 - Shoppers
 - Entertainment seekers
 - Business people
 - Vacationers/Weekend getaways
 - Convention/meeting attendees
 - Incentive winners
 - Sports events/tournaments
 - Medical/Education/International



Don't assume.

- **That people KNOW that tourism reflects many sectors.**



Learn the sectors.

- Transportation
- Hotels/Motels/B&Bs
- Rentals/Rent by Owner
- Meeting Places/Convention Centers
- Attractions – Natural/Man-made
- Entertainment
- Retail Centers
- Restaurants
- Support Services



Don't assume.

- **That people KNOW that tourism is part of your economic eco-system.**



Learn about your tourism drivers.

- What attracts out-of-town visitors to your area?
 - Cheyenne Bottoms
 - Corvette Museum
 - South by Southwest
 - Civil War battlefields
 - Ocean, lake, mountains, desert, river
 - Six Flags
 - Seasons
 - Super Bowl
 - South Coast Plaza
 - Sports



Rule #2

**SEE TOURISM THROUGH THE PRISM
OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**



See tourism through the prism of economic development.

- If you don't, who will?
 - You are the architect of your economic development.
 - You are the trusted source.
 - You are the champion.



See tourism through the prism of economic development.

- Tourism serves a valuable role in economic development.
 - It is a catalyst.
 - It is a demand solution.
 - It is essential to site selection.



Rule #3

**THINK AND TALK ABOUT TOURISM
AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER.**



It's math.

- $1 + 1 = 2$
- Thriving weekday hotel occupancy + thriving businesses = \$\$\$
- Strong corporate meeting business + thriving businesses = \$\$\$
- Hotels + destination marketing = incremental visitors



It's good business.

- Successful business attraction work = more overnight business travel
- Effective business retention work = more overnight business travel
- International outreach/FDI = more visits and investment



It's real.

- Express tourism in real terms: \$\$\$
 - Day visitor spending
 - Direct overnight spending
 - Economic impact
 - Jobs
 - Brand



It's got roots and branches.

- Who supplies the food and beverage?
- Who cleans the hotel pools, spas and hot tubs?
- Who insures the tourism businesses?
- Who provides the appliances, linen, furniture, software, flowers, paper goods?
- What utilities do they depend upon?
- Who provides building and equipment maintenance?



Final thoughts...

- Everyone has tourism in their community!
- Towns, cities, rural, suburban – everyone is a destination for someone.
- It is either a driver in the economy or part of an economic development eco-system.

