LINDSBORG CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

PREPARED BY HOLLY LOFTON







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2021 RECAP

highlighting our efforts to market Lindsborg to visitors and groups

Like communities worldwide, Lindsborg's tourism industry faced unprecedented challenges in 2020 and 2021. The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau adapted to the challenges and continued to market Lindsborg, achieving much despite the pandemic. With 2021 at an end, we celebrate our successes and look forward to the future of tourism in Lindsborg! The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau's Annual Report highlights how the office markets Lindsborg, and ways we help visitors and groups.

In this report, we focus on four types of marketing:

- 1. Earned media, blogger, and influencer relations
- 2. **Owned** website, blog, and content generated in-house
- 3. **Shared** social media, word of mouth, and referrals
- 4. Paid advertising

We also showcase new and continuing projects, grants, partnerships, visitation, and the economic impact of tourism in Lindsborg.

We look forward to building on this foundation.

Holly Lofton, Director Lindsborg Convention and Visitors Bureau



CVB staff responded to more than 10,000 emails in the 2021 year.

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PROMOTION - EARNED

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau continues to capitalize on earned media by coordinating with media outlets, responding to inquiries, and positioning Lindsborg on journalist's radar.

Media stories are then utilized in social media promotions and on the Visit Lindsborg website.



2021 top online articles

- Most Hallmark Movie-esque Small Town by Travel Awaits
- 10 Most Beautiful Small Towns of Kansas by Attractions of America
- 15 Friendliest Small Towns in the US by Travel Awaits
- 8 US Towns That Make You Feel Like You're in Europe by Livability
- Best Weekend Getaway by KANSAS! Magazine
- Top Kansas Events for the Holidays by Kansas Department of Tourism
- 9 Best Things to Do in Lindsborg, Kansas, by Vacation Idea Magazine
- Kansas Small Towns with the Best Downtowns (#1) by Only in Your State
- 10 Must-Visit Small Towns in Kansas by Hotels.com
- Prettiest Small Towns in Kansas by The Travel
- Best Places to Visit in Kansas by Touropia
- 15 Great Midwest Holiday Destinations by Midwest Living



PROMOTION - EARNED



by: Jillian Carroll Posted: Jul 22, 2021 / 03:24 PM CDT / Updated: Jul 22, 2021 / 05:14 PM CDT

TELEVISION

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau shared stories, photos, and videos with Kansas television stations interested in featuring Lindsborg stories.

RADIO

The Lindsborg CVB produces a talk radio program for McPherson radio station KBBE. Programs are sponsored by local businesses and air during the lunch hour on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. Programs in 2021 featured topics of interest, including travel, tourism and community growth.

NEWSPAPER

From news releases to feature stories, calendars, or photos, the Lindsborg CVB happily partners with area newspapers to promote Lindsborg to their readerships.



PROMOTION - PAID

Recognizing its budget limitations and the rising cost of traditional advertising, the Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau strategically purchases ads.



2021 AD PURCHASES

- Kansas Travel Guide 400,000 guides are distributed annually to people who request them, at rest stops, visitor centers, and events in and out of Kansas. Additionally, an online guide is available for download on TravelKS.com.
- KANSAS! Magazine 36,000 Subscribers, Bookstores, & Newsstands
- Visit Wichita Wichita Professional Offices and ICT Airport Distribution
- Nebraska Life 30,000 Subscribers & 5,000 Newsstands
- Colorado Life 14,000 Subscribers & 5,000 Newsstands
- Wing World 80,000 monthly readers that actively participate in motorcycle travel





PROMOTION - PAID



BILLBOARDS - Traditional

- The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau maintains two billboards along Kansas I-70, three along I-135 and one on Highway 4. In addition, partnerships with Lindsborg Community Development, Lindsborg businesses and Bethany College increases Lindsborg's presence by an additional eight boards.
- According to 2020 data from the Kansas Department of Transportation, the daily traffic count for these locations range from 15,000 22,000 vehicles.

BILLBOARDS - Digital

- The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau partnered in 2020 with 10 local businesses and two area CVB offices to place digital billboards at six locations in the KC Metro area that caught the eye of commuters as well as visitors to the airport, Legends Mall, the Power & Light District, and the Plaza.
- According to data provided from the billboard company, Outlook , the weekly impression count for these rotating billboards is 1,072,908. Billboards started running in May of 2021 and will continue into 2022 thanks to grant funding.



PROMOTION - PAID

LINDSBORG VISITORS GUIDE

Despite COVID-19 and changing travel patterns, the CVB used 10,000 visitors guides in 2021, with no change from a "normal" travel year. The Lindsborg brochure is popular in distribution racks and is depleted faster than most other brochures. This guide is printed, by necessity, in higher quantities that that of brochures from other larger communities across the state.



BROCHURE DISTRIBUTION

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau contracts with Certified Folder and Central Brochure Distribution to place the Lindsborg Visitors Guide in more than 250 distribution racks in hotels, restaurants, and gas stations. The brochure is also available in Kansas' two welcome centers (Belle Plaine and Goodland), as well as 28 state-designated Travel Information Centers throughout Kansas.

TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER (TIC)

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau also maintains a statedesignated travel information center to serve visitors on Main Street.



PROMOTION - OWNED

LINDSBORG POSTEN & NEWS RELEASES

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau creates an electronic newsletter that shares topics of interest to locals and potential visitors. The newsletter is sent to anyone who requests information about Lindsborg and is also shared on social media. Additional news releases were sent out in 2021 to cover events that were not announced to the CVB before the Posten release date each month.



Posten August 2021

2021 LINDSBORG POSTEN
12 Editions Sent
52,516 Individual Sends
11,688 Unique Opens
This averages to a 22% open rate, a
high average for the travel industry.

POSTCARDS

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau creates new postcard artwork each year, with the assistance of local artists and photographers who allow the CVB to use their work for a small fee. These cards are distributed throughout the year in Hemslojd and White's Foodliner shipments as well as tradeshows, CVB information mailings, and to travelers stopping by the CVB office. In 2021, 14,500 postcards were distributed.







PROMOTION - OWNED

VISIT LINDSBORG WEBSITE

The Visit Lindsborg website is updated regularly with new content, A Google calendar of events can be subscribed to. The website saw 42,000 unique users in 2021 logging in for 52,000 sessions. Substantial peaks were largely because the Visit Lindsborg website was used for a landing page for the **Living in Lindsborg** marketing campaigns that were delivered by Bower Comm Marketing. Mobile device use surpassed desktop use in 2021.





Google Analytics confirmed the positive results of Kansas City metro billboard ads with Kansas City ranking #1 in the top cities of inquiry for those searching for information about Lindsborg. 87.3% of website users in 2021 were new users.

City

1. Kansas City
2. Wichita
3. (not set)
4. Overland Park
5. Denver
6. McPherson
7. Chicago
8. Lindsborg
9. Salina
10. Lawrence



PROMOTION - SHARED

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau uses social media to reach new audiences, including the use of Facebook Live to share pre-recorded stories and live events. Comparatively, the Visit Lindsborg Facebook page has significantly more page likes and engagement per capita than other communities across the state.

Lindsborg can also be found on Instagram @VisitLindsborg and Twitter @VisitLindsborg. Videos are also shared on the Visit Lindsborg YouTube Channel.









PROMOTION - SHARED

VIDEOS

The Lindsborg Convention and Visitors Bureau created 49 new "Live from Lindsborg" videos along with other short videos to reach new audiences on social media. Live from Lindsborg Videos were permanently housed on the Visit Lindsborg YouTube channel after initial release on Facebook Live. Live Facebook videos garnered more than 53,000 views in the 2021 year.



GOOGLE PHOTOS

The Lindsborg Convention and Visitors Bureau continues to add to our online Google Photo Gallery which has garnered more than 1 million views over the past four years.





PROMOTION - GRANTS

2021 AWARDED GRANTS

The Lindsborg Convention and Visitors Bureau received two grants this year. Both grants were added to funds that were pooled with funds from local business and CVB offices, promoting Lindsborg and the surrounding area on KC Metro digital billboards. More than 50% of the total cost of this project was provided through awarded grants. This project will end in June of 2022.

- Nutt Foundation \$6,300
- Kansas Department of Tourism \$6,300





PROMOTION - PARTNERSHIPS

The Lindsborg Convention & Visitors Bureau is a member of organizations that help promote and advocate for tourism. These memberships pay off in relationships and community visibility among policymakers.

MEMBERSHIPS & BOARDS

- Travel Industry Association of Kansas (Lindsborg CVB director served on the Executive Board as Treasurer of the Association in 2021)
- South-Central Kansas Tourism Region (Lindsborg CVB director served as Vice President of the Association in 2021)
- Tour Kansas
- Kansas State Fair Board (Lindsborg CVB Director served on the board as a Governorappointed position representing the Travel Industry Association of Kansas in 2021.)





PROMOTION - PARTNERSHIPS

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

The Lindsborg CVB maintains listings for Lindsborg attractions and businesses on the TravelKS.com website. In 2021, these listings received 5,965 views and 2,168 clicks, for a 36% conversion rate.

The CVB also coordinated 29 paid listings in the Official Kansas Travel Guide for Lindsborg businesses and attractions. Businesses and attractions paid for these listings and the CVB's services were complimentary.





VISITATION

TOURS AND GROUPS

In 2021, the Lindsborg CVB began to reschedule group tours that had cancelled during the early stages of the pandemic. The actuality of these group visits continued to be largely dependent on concerns for group travel, While several groups cancelled, others were still able to visit including two groups from Johnson County Parks and Rec and Travel Cat Tours. CVB staff, along with community partners, also put together Zoom "tours" that were presented as far away as Albuquerque, New Mexico.

CVB staff also assists with itineraries, reservations, welcome bags, and other requests for all travel groups, regardless of size.





SPECIAL PROJECTS

PROGRAMS

Throughout 2021, CVB Staff enjoyed the privilege of sharing with community groups about the current work of the CVB. One program that continues to be a staff favorite is working with the Soderstrom Elementary 4th grade class each May for its community service day. In 2021, our community service project included planting a pollinators garden along the Valkommen Trail for users to enjoy for many years to come. Partnerships with the City of Lindsborg Parks Department, McPherson County Soil Conservation office, and the Monarch Watch organization provided free milkweed plants, tools, and perennial seeds for the project with watering and care for the duration of the summer provided by City Parks staff. Programs like this are a purposeful way to engage our youth in the importance of civil service and community pride while teaching them about Lindsborg history and sharing a few Swedish treats from local businesses.



LINDSBORG ON FOREIGN SHORES

The 2021 year provided several opportunities to share Lindsborg with a much larger audience. Staff was able to film promotional video, in Lindsborg, for the Walk to Lindsborg fitness program that was offered during the pandemic by our Sister City, Munkfors.

Lindsborg was chosen from many communities across the US to be part of a 13part documentary on Swedish immigration to America, Staff worked with the film producers to provide content that included family interactions, meals, Swedish dancing, festival practice, and more. This film was produced in Arabic and will be aired across the Middle East, and on the AlYouTube location that reaches 622,000 subscribers.

https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=8MFAQqFe5m4



والنيار(ز والر، تكل في واحد - الأمير كبون من أصل أوروبني.. رحلة البحث عن هيّا جنية

J.O.SUNDSTROM CONFERENCE CENTER

SUNDSTROM CONFERENCE CENTER

Management of the Sundstrom Conference Center comes under the oversight of the Lindsborg CVB. Management changed hands in 2021 with the resignation of the manager to pursue a job that provide her children college tuition and the hire of a new manager that began working in the fall of 2021.

Despite Covid entirely changing the way we hold events and the frequency that inperson meetings took place in 2020 and 2021, the J.O. Sundstrom Conference Center continued to operate under policies that enabled meeting planners to safely utilize the conference center throughout the year.

2021 Event Statistics:

- 162 events cancelled due to COVID-19 Pandemic.
- 119 total events hosted, serving 3,275 people

Lindsborg Community Health Care Foundation:

The Sundstrom Conference Center partnered with the Lindsborg Community Health Care Foundation to hold up to 80, 2-hour meetings from August – December, free of charge to community entities. The Lindsborg Community Health Care Foundation covered the reduced cost of meeting space rentals.

- This partnership brought 40 meetings to the conference center.
- This partnership enabled 593 people from the Smoky Valley community to utilize the conference center at no charge to their group.
- \$3,000 in meeting space fees were paid by the Lindsborg Community Health Care Foundation for community use of the conference center. This number does not include meal packages, an additional source of revenue that these groups brought to the conference center.

Grants::

The SCC was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the McPherson County Community Foundation in 2021, to help offset the decrease in revenue due to cancelation of events.





ECONOMIC IMPACT

TRANSIENT GUEST TAX

Transient Guest Tax is paid by visitors staying 21 nights or less in a lodging establishment. These dollars provide the marketing budget for the Lindsborg CVB.

In spite of faltering overnight travel numbers in 2020 and 2021, the CVB continued to work with local lodging, locating contacts for grant dollars that would assist lodging businesses with overhead costs that were not being met with a lack of overnight stays. CVB staff also helped lodging owners find additional ways to market their property and create flyers for self-promotion as well as make clear notification to potential guests of COVID cleaning protocols that were being followed.

Transient Guest Tax finished the 2021 year with the highest quarter of collections on record since the CVB began keeping records in 2005.





ECONOMIC IMPACT

SALES TAX

The City of Lindsborg sales tax is 9.5%. According to the Kansas Department of Revenue, 2021 sales tax collections totaled \$1,166,610.10 from sales at Lindborg businesses. This is an 7.8% increase from 2020.





ABOUT US

As with tourism organizations across the country, the Lindsborg CVB made significant staff reductions in order to responsibly manage its budget because of expected decrease in both Transient Guest Tax and and Sales Tax collections. With the help of a part-time summer intern, we were able to make it through some of our busiest season with a new hire to take place after Svensk Hyllningsfest,

STAFF

Holly Lofton, Director Caroline Beckman, Summer Intern Diane Reece, Assistant to the Director

BOARD

Kathy Richardson, Board Chair & Small World Gallery Maleta Forsberg, Artist Cindy Bhakta, Viking Motel Ashraf Alam, Coronado Motel Amie Bauer, Bethany College Corey Peterson, Hemslojd Molly Johnson, The Good Merchant Ron Michael, Birger Sandzen Memorial Gallery



LINDSBORG CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

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