

First Quarter Update

Throughout Q1, the Seattle Southside RTA team has been working hard to effectively market Seattle Southside as a desirable destination and attract more visitors to the Seattle Southside region. 2016 was a whirlwind year for the RTA and for the destination; and the RTA staff hopes to keep the momentum going through 2017 and beyond.

The Seattle Southside website is being redeveloped to stay current and relevant with the newest trends and support the customer's travel planning journey to deliver on our promise of being able to do more in Seattle Southside. The new site will launch early summer so customers in market will be able to use the responsive mobile site and plan future vacations.

The new Travel Planner and Dining Guide are now available to the public. You can pick the hard copies up in our visitor centers and hotels, and download digital copies from our website.

Seattle Southside RTA's sales team hosted our 2017 Q1 Director of Sales Meeting on April 27, 2017. They shared sales and marketing updates, new programs for 2017 including the Extranet and Meetingmax, industry news included upcoming hotel supply for 2017 and 2018, new partner opportunities, and upcoming educational presentations.

The RTA hosted two trainings on how to use and navigate through our newly introduced Extranet. This hour-long webinar training took our partners through a virtual tour of the Extranet and showed them where to find things and how to maximize their usage. By accessing the Extranet, partners can view and respond to sales leads, update company listings and photos, upload coupons and special offerings to display on Seattlesouthside.com, and much more.

Seattle Southside RTA invited HelmsBriscoe's Associate Regional Vice President for the Pacific Northwest and Canada to present to our partners in March to discuss best practices. Last fall, Seattle Southside RTA joined HelmsBriscoe as a destination partner and this presentation allowed partners to see what benefits that partnership is bringing to the region.

Our sales team has already travelled to numerous conferences and tradeshows this year promoting the region as the best place to hold a meeting, reunion or sporting event.

Our media team has been pushing the Seattle Southside brand out and engaging with followers in the world of social media. In the first quarter, the RTA's presence on Facebook increased 7.2% in overall fan growth. Our Twitter account increased 23.4% in the number of engagements per tweet. Finally, on Instagram, the number and frequency of posts on our page continues to help increase our growth. Since January, our followers grew by 4.3%, and our engagement increased 22.3%.

We've had a couple media visits/FAM tours in Q1 which generated multiple digital articles and significant buzz on social media. Including these visits and other articles generated from pitches to the media we've secured 4.4 million impressions resulting in more than \$40,000 in earned media.

The RTA staff continues to work tirelessly to promote and market the Seattle Southside destination to international and domestic leisure and business travelers. Our brand is gaining traction in the travel market and our "do more" promise is being fulfilled every time someone visits one of our three cities. 2016 was a record breaking year for Seattle Southside RTA, and we hope to continue to raise the bar in 2017 and beyond.