

September 25, 2017

## Sun Valley Marketing Alliance Extends Membership at No Cost to Ketchum/Sun Valley Businesses

Over the past year, the staff and Board members of Visit Sun Valley (VSV), with the involvement of the mayors and councils of the cities of Ketchum and Sun Valley, have been discussing how to best serve our guests while also keeping the business community at the forefront of our actions.

Our discussions have led to a restructuring of our membership program that broadens our reach and more effectively allows us to nurture the valley's tourism business community. Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, all Business License holders and/or Local Option Tax (LOT) collectors located in either Ketchum or Sun Valley will be eligible for VSV membership at no cost, because these cities contribute to the budget of VSV through the collections of their respective LOT.

This restructuring will allow individuals/businesses outside of Ketchum and Sun Valley to continue as members of Visit Sun Valley for a minimal annual fee.

### Advantages:

- *It's best for the business:* a non-paid structure removes a built-in bias toward promoting members over non-members, often leading to dissatisfaction among the community. The change in dialog focuses on positive associations, actions and benefits—leading to improved communication about what VSV is doing and how/why businesses can leverage VSV's assets and assistance (at no cost).
- *It's best for the guest:* by removing the paid membership model, VSV will be free to focus on the needs of visitors, not just member businesses.
- Best practices: More and more Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) are adopting this model; meeting planners and journalists appreciate the transparency.
- Visit Sun Valley can now redirect resources formerly used to recruit and retain membership toward more active involvement in promotion, guest support and community communication.

### Benefits for businesses include:

- Presence on [www.visitsunvalley.com](http://www.visitsunvalley.com)—business listings, calendar posts, 'deals/specials', etc.
- Presence and referrals via the Visitor Center, Social Media, newsletters, media visits, etc.
- Receipt of the DestiMetrics reports (forward-looking occupancy reports)
- Lodging properties can opt for representation via central reservations on the VSV site via [ski.com](http://ski.com)
- Receipt of the Summer Consumer Research Study results

Visit Sun Valley is a nonprofit organization and is the primary marketing agency (DMO) for the Sun Valley area. The mission of VSV is to raise awareness of Sun Valley and increase visitor traffic from target markets. Rest assured that the move to a free vs. paid membership system will affect only 3.2 percent of the overall budget.

The next Community Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at 10:00 am** (at The Community Library). The purpose of the meeting is to provide the future VSV vision (re: winter marketing campaign) and to allow for a Q & A with the staff and Board. Join us!

Cheers,

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