

February 10, 2009

### Rebranding Highlights:

After months of planning and research, tourism officials at the Convention & Visitors Association of Lane County Oregon (CVALCO) will be heading in a new direction when it comes to marketing and promoting Lane County as a visitor, meeting and event destination.

Beginning March 2, 2009, CVALCO will transition to its new organization name and brand identity. CVALCO will become Travel Lane County and market the destination as Eugene, Cascades & Coast, with the slogan "Real Adventures. Real Close."



**CVALCO Background & Mission:** The Convention & Visitors Association of Lane County Oregon (CVALCO) has been marketing the county as a destination for leisure travel, as well as a site for conventions, meetings and events for nearly 30 years. A private, nonprofit organization, CVALCO was originally founded as the Eugene-Springfield Convention & Visitor Bureau in 1980. It has operated under its current name since 1993, with the slogan "See All of Oregon in Lane County." CVALCO is dedicated to its mission of increasing the number of overnight visitors to Lane County for the benefit of its 500 members, and all businesses and citizens who depend on a strong Lane County economy. Annually, Lane County's visitor industry generates more than \$573 million dollars for the local economy and supports 7,570 jobs.

**Why rebrand:** The tourism industry is a vital component of Lane County's economy. CVALCO needs to remain competitive in the marketplace to garner the greatest return from the county's investment in tourism marketing. In an increasingly crowded environment where travelers have an oversupply of options, destinations need to distinguish themselves from their competitors, build a compelling identity, and generate greater awareness of their destination. Under the current branding, CVALCO has faced challenges with both its organizational name, as well as its county-focused marketing strategy.

**Rebranding Background:** In April 2008, CVALCO appointed Oregon-based Total Destination Management (TDM), to examine its current marketing efforts and develop a brand strategy to enhance the identity and competitiveness of the county as a travel, convention, meeting and event destination. During the past year, TDM conducted comprehensive research that identified Lane County's competitive advantages, opportunities, challenges and distinctive characteristics. The process also examined CVALCO's current organizational name, slogan and county-focused identity. During the process, TDM worked with a locally appointed Brand Advisory Committee that contributed input throughout the planning phases of the project. TDM also conducted Visitor Readiness Reports for five Lane County communities to provide guidance for enhancing local visitor experiences. Reports are available for review at [www.VisitLaneCounty.org/vrr](http://www.VisitLaneCounty.org/vrr).

**Key Research Findings:** Total Destination Management conducted one-on-one stakeholder interviews; stakeholder focus group sessions; and interviews with meeting planners, tour operators and sporting event organizers. Resident and visitor surveys were also conducted. Key findings included:

- Lane County as a destination was not resonating with travelers, nor was it easily identified. Eugene's name recognition was more well known.

- A stronger focus on activities and experiences was needed, such as mountain biking, river activities, sand boarding, snow sports and golf.
- More emphasis was needed on the county's most appealing attributes.
- Small operators and outfitters were not getting to market.
- Greater unity was needed around a single message.

**Eugene, Cascades & Coast Brand:** The research showed that a Lane County-focused marketing strategy was not resonating well with travelers outside the region. The name Eugene, Cascades & Coast helps the region become more easily identifiable. It capitalizes on the national awareness of Eugene, as well as the familiarity of the Cascade Mountains and coast regions.

**“Real Adventures. Real Close”:** The research consistently pointed to the strength of the county as being a destination that offers an extensive variety of nature-based, adventure activities. All areas and communities throughout Lane County offer some form of adventure opportunity, particularly connected with the diverse, natural environment. From kayaking and mountain biking to hiking and sandboarding, the county provides abundant and easily accessed adventures for all types of travelers. The theme was recognized as one that would complement other county offerings, like touring the area's wine country or enjoying the culinary or performing arts scene.

**Logo Design:** Oslund Design was selected to create the visual logo and initial advertising displays. While a logo can't represent all the diverse adventures in Lane County, the selected icons represent key experiences distinct to the county. The sandboarder/snowboarder represents both the distinct dune experiences offered in the coastal region, as well as winter sports in the Cascades. The McKenzie River drift boat, invented in Lane County, along with the fishing icons, honors both fresh and salt water fishing throughout the county. The cyclist represents the abundant cycling opportunities, events and infrastructure in the region, from the extensive bike trail system in the metro area to the highly-acclaimed mountain biking opportunities in the Oakridge area.

**CVALCO Transitions to Travel Lane County:** CVALCO's name change to Travel Lane County reflects an alignment with convention and visitor associations across the state, including Travel Oregon, Travel Portland and Travel Salem. The Travel Lane County name, which will be used primarily from a local and industry standpoint, will more succinctly identify both the organization and its mission than the previous name. From business collateral and signage to its Web site, the name Travel Lane County will replace all CVALCO references beginning March 2, 2009.

**Adventure Visitor Center:** Opportunities to reposition Lane County and generate greater visibility are being explored in the form of a new visitor center. The adventure-themed center would be located adjacent to Interstate-5 in Springfield's Gateway area. An I-5 location would place the visitor center in close proximity to 71,000 travelers that drive the corridor daily, significantly boosting opportunities to interact with visitors. The visitor center would be designed to immerse travelers in the adventure experiences of Lane County, through visual designs, videos, special presentations, easy access to adventure trips and personal assistance from adventure specialists.

*For more information about Travel Lane County, visit [www.TravelLaneCounty.org](http://www.TravelLaneCounty.org) or call (541) 484-5307.*

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