



## Case Study: San Antonio Vacation Experience co-op (SAVE)

Developed in 1991 by Lord & Lasker, the SAVE co-op was one of the first comprehensive retail tourism programs in the country designed to drive family vacation business during the summer (an off-peak time for San Antonio's convention business).

The perfect complement to the city's brand image campaign, it allowed San Antonio to amplify its marketing message by over \$2 million and provided strong value-added incentives for consumers to visit San Antonio. Key partners included the SACVB, SeaWorld of Texas, Six Flags Fiesta Texas, over 50 hotels and 25 attractions, a package vacation retailer and an airline partner.

The centerpiece of the program consisted of seven million newspaper inserts in 30 key origination cities located within a two-day drive of San Antonio. Magazine ads, spot network television and radio were initially produced to cross-sell the newspaper insert and to generate interest in a fulfillment kit with destination information and valuable hotel and attraction discount coupons. Media was initially purchased using 50 percent barter and 50 percent cash, a strategy that became harder to execute and was later dropped.

Results from the program in its infancy were respectable, but the agency decided that response to the spot network TV was not sufficient to justify the cost. With limited "cash" dollars, there simply was not enough money available to maintain the frequency levels needed to drive response.

Therefore, the electronic media strategy was revised to include a 30-minute infomercial. This strategy increased response dramatically and was used for three consecutive years. Two years ago, the electronic media strategy was again revised (the infomercial had played out) to include 30-second and 60-second direct response TV spots. The return on investment was better than it had ever been.

- 84,054 advertising responses were generated
- 68,330 hotel room nights were generated
- 408,138 attractions coupons were redeemed

Overall for the San Antonio CVB, the client saw the following results during our tenure as agency of record:

- Almost 5.8 million room nights were booked, 38% more than 10 years ago
- Tax collections, perhaps the best barometer of the growth and continued success of the visitor industry, now exceed \$31 million annually, an increase of 116% in just a few years
- Visitor expenditures grew 16% to \$1.7 billion
- Visitor's length of stay increased from 3.2 to 3.6 nights
- The average size of travel parties to San Antonio increased from 3.0 to 3.4 people
- Visitors from out of state accounted for 60% of all guests, up from 54%
- Almost 716,000 people responded to San Antonio's advertising, an increase of 61% in the last three years
- Almost 50% of visitors recalled hearing or seeing San Antonio's advertising, up from just a third when last measured in 1995