

PLAN von CASTROVILLE.

YEAR THREE RECAP CASTROVILLE

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WESTERN FRONTIER

WELCOME TO
COLORFUL
COLORADO

from

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground on the left, there is a vertical wooden post, possibly part of a fence or a signpost. The ground is dry and sandy with some sparse, low-lying vegetation. In the distance, there are rolling hills or mountains under a clear sky. The overall color palette is warm, with browns, tans, and blues.

The Importance of Strategic Marketing

In 1993, the state of Colorado made the drastic decision to eliminate its tourism marketing budget entirely. The reasoning was simple: Colorado, with its breathtaking landscapes, mountain ranges, and rich natural beauty, was already a well-known destination. The assumption was that people would continue visiting without the need for active promotion. Instead of investing in tourism marketing, state funds were redirected to other priorities.

The results were devastating. Almost immediately, Colorado experienced a 30% decline in tourism-related business. The state, once ranked as the number one tourist destination, plummeted to 17th place. The economic losses continued to mount, with tourism spending ultimately dropping by 47%. When Colorado finally reinstated its tourism marketing efforts, it took 22 years to recover to pre-cutback levels. (Source: What Happens When You Stop Marketing? The Rise and Fall of Colorado Tourism – Dr. Bill Siegel, Longwoods International.)

If any place could assume it didn't need marketing, Colorado would be that place. Yet even with its world-renowned attractions, it suffered immensely from a lack of promotional efforts. This raises an important question: If a state as popular as Colorado can falter due to a lack of marketing, why would any community believe it is immune?

A Lesson from Colorado

CASTROVILLE'S INVESTMENT IN TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The most recent data shows that \$1.2 million was spent on tourism in Castroville and the surrounding area (State of Texas Tourism Report). Despite working with a limited budget, the City of Castroville has successfully marketed itself to visitors while simultaneously strengthening its community identity. With an investment of under \$75,000 annually on production, printing, advertising and event spending, we have effectively promoted Castroville's unique character and safeguarded its identity as, *The Little Alsace of Texas*.



Our marketing efforts serve a dual purpose: attracting visitors and reinforcing our cultural heritage. Establishing a strong identity not only helps secure resources but also attracts businesses looking to invest. When potential investors understand and appreciate who we are as a community, they are more likely to align their developments with our values and long-term vision.

Setting the Foundation: The First Steps

Beginning in June 2022, we immediately began the work of promoting Castroville. The charge from City Council was, "We need to get moving." Growth and developments to the east were rapidly expanding, posing a potential threat to Castroville's unique character. Without clear messaging and a strategy to preserve our identity, Castroville risked becoming just another indistinguishable community absorbed by the greater San Antonio metroplex.



Recognizing the urgency, designs were submitted and concepts were shown to City Council. This took place within the first three months. The goal was to establish a strong, culturally reflective brand that would ensure Castroville remained distinct amidst the region's rapid expansion.

One of our earliest initiatives was investing in high-quality video content. We hired Clinton Haby to capture Castroville's essence through video, creating a visual identity to share with the public. A professional background in design and media helped streamline this process. We have been able to leverage this footage into multiple productions, maximizing our reach and impact. This approach saved the city tens of thousands of dollars. A single professional agency-produced video could have cost between \$40,000 and \$60,000. Instead, we created a vast library of content that has been viewed over 500,000 times in the past three years, with event promotion videos garnering another 300,000 views.

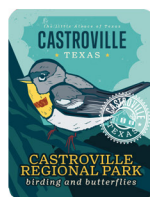
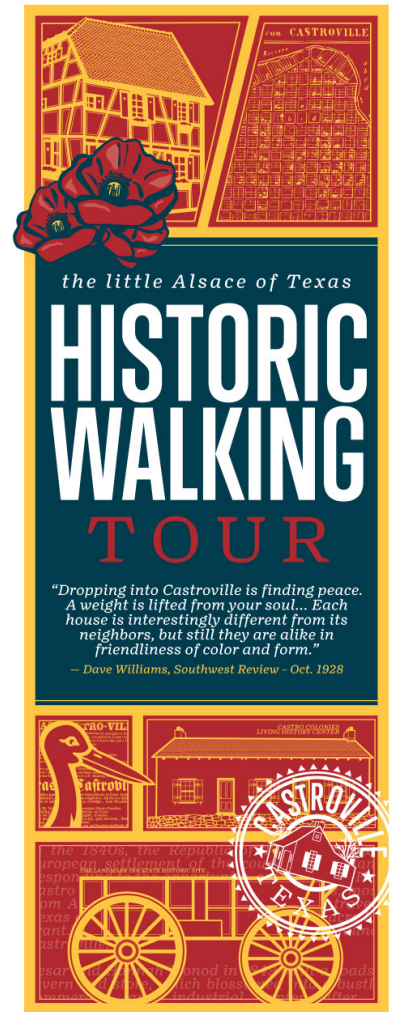
Not only has this content been instrumental in marketing Castroville, but it has also received regional recognition. In 2024, our video work earned a Bronze Addy Award from the American Advertising Federation's San Antonio chapter—further validating the quality and effectiveness of our marketing strategy.



Maximizing ROI: THE NUMBERS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

Our marketing initiatives have demonstrated an outstanding return on investment (ROI). For every \$1 spent on tourism marketing, Castroville sees a return of \$16 in visitor spending. To put this into perspective, the State of Colorado considers a 12:1 ROI a great success—our numbers surpass this benchmark.

This success is not achieved in isolation. It requires collaboration between the public and private sectors. The Downtown Development Group has been instrumental in bringing high-quality businesses to Castroville, further strengthening our historic district and reinforcing our community's charm. This synergy between marketing efforts and business development is essential for sustained growth. We have also worked with existing events to help bring more people to Castroville.



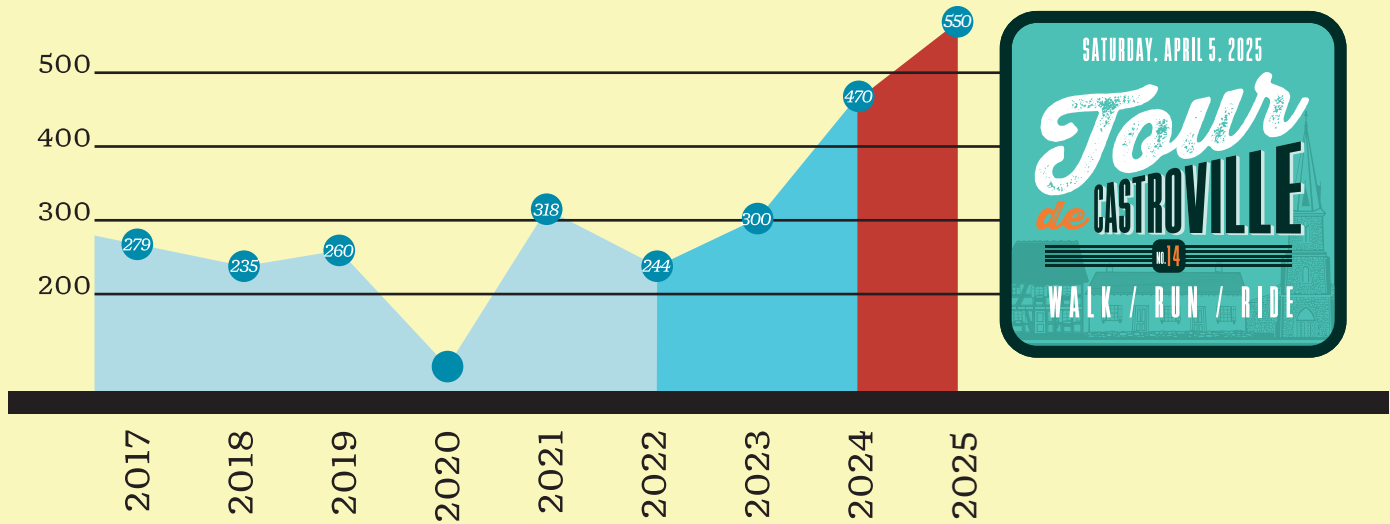
EXPANDED OUR BRANDING EFFORTS

Beyond video marketing, we have also developed a comprehensive graphic identity system to strengthen Castroville's brand. Many municipalities spend upwards of \$70,000 to establish a visual identity and an additional \$12,000 to \$15,000 annually for brand maintenance. By handling these efforts in-house, the city has saved a significant amount of money while maintaining a consistent and professional brand image.

Our branding initiatives extend beyond traditional marketing. Tour de Castroville has seen a surge in participation, reaching capacity due to overwhelming demand. Fiorella Friday has grown from attracting 500 attendees in 2022 to over 2,000 visitors for our most recent night. These numbers reflect not just event success but a broader increase in regional engagement with Castroville's culture and economy.

Additionally, our branding has gained national recognition, earning awards from Graphic Design USA and being featured in design annuals alongside Fortune 500 companies like Citi, Dell, Morgan Stanley, and PepsiCo.





We began with limited target marketing in 2023 and moved into a full plan for marketing in 2024 and 2025.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN SALES TAX REVENUE

+31%

Increase
over 2023

+14%

Sales Tax
Revenue
Increase
YTD

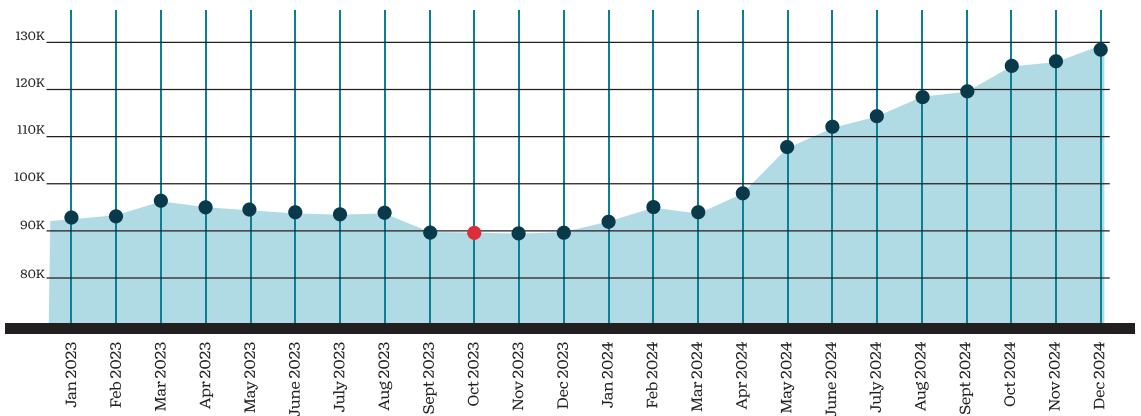
Old-Fashioned
July 4th

20%

Increase

over 1,000 more
visitors in 2024

Placir.ai Data



Expanding Our Economic Footprint

In recent years, we have strategically targeted San Antonio's U.S. Highway 90 corridor and the Potranco Road area as key demographics. Our goal has been to establish Castroville as their home shopping base. Data shows that only 30% of Walmart shoppers in Castroville are local residents, while nearly 60% have San Antonio ZIP codes (Placer.ai). Capturing more revenue from this population helps sustain city services without increasing the tax burden on local residents.

Additionally, our Library outreach program in 2024 has increased membership and engagement from surrounding communities through targeted marketing, door hangers, and digital campaigns.



STRENGTHENING OUR DOWNTOWN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Year three has been focused on reinforcing our business sector and sales tax revenue. We launched a Downtown Historic Business Group, meeting quarterly to ensure that our historic district remains the cultural and economic heart of Castroville. As growth continues, it is critical that incoming businesses align with our heritage and values, preserving the charm that makes Castroville unique.

We have implemented new signage to enhance Castroville's historic downtown district. This includes Walking Tour signs with QR codes that provide visitors with easy access to historical information about the city. Additionally, we have introduced distinctive street signs to create a cohesive visual identity that reflects our history and aligns with previous design efforts. In the near future, we will install additional signage to further strengthen our brand. Responding to requests from small business owners for a visual element to attract visitors from U.S. Highway 90, we will incorporate branded signage to draw more people into our downtown area.



Looking Ahead: Airport Growth & Future Development

One area that remains an untapped asset is the Castroville Municipal Airport. While FAA regulations present challenges, there is significant potential for expansion. As we enter 2025, we are prioritizing strategies for maximizing the airport's economic impact on Castroville.

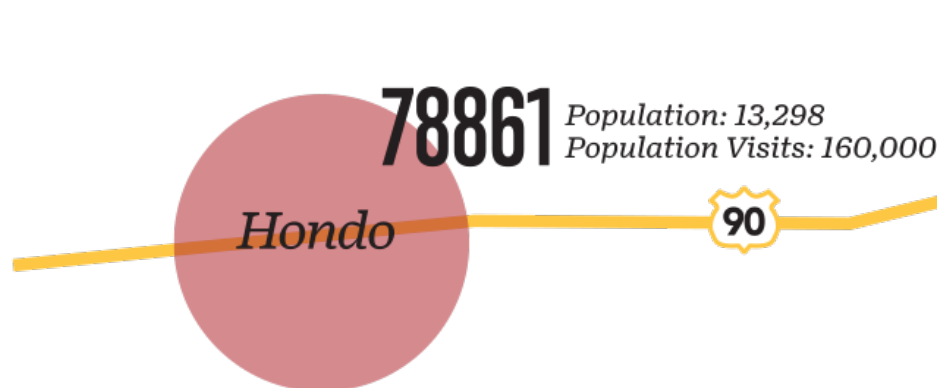
We will continue working with developers and businesses that reflect Castroville's character and culture. In December 2024, the Mayor was able to present Castroville to a roundtable of commercial developers in San Antonio, providing a platform to showcase our vision and unique appeal. Additionally, the February 2025 edition of MarketWire by Foresite Commercial Real Estate prominently features Castroville, utilizing demographics and data provided by us. These efforts will help attract strategic development, generate tax revenue, and ensure Castroville benefits from the area's inevitable growth.

Conclusion: Protecting Castroville's Legacy

Looking forward, our mission remains clear: to preserve, promote, and protect Castroville's identity while strategically managing growth. By maintaining a consistent marketing voice, investing in branding, and fostering economic development, we can ensure that Castroville remains a distinct and cherished community amidst regional expansion.



Castroville was certified as both Texas Film Friendly and Texas Tourism Friendly.



U.S. Census D

Total Market
Population 2023

132,678

Placer.ai Data

Market Population
Projections 2028

154,605

Market Population
Projections 2033

172,891



As we approach our fourth year, it is essential to have dedicated leadership in Tourism and Business Development to ensure that Castroville continues moving forward in a way that balances heritage preservation with economic progress. The work we do today will define Castroville's identity for generations, and it must be purposeful, strategic, and managed—it cannot be left to chance. Without someone actively guiding marketing efforts, fostering business partnerships, and overseeing business development, the risk of losing what makes Castroville unique increases. By maintaining a clear vision and a proactive approach, we will secure a future where Castroville remains the Little Alsace of Texas—a community that thrives economically while preserving its historic charm. This work ensures that Castroville will not suffer the same fate of Colorado in the early 90's.

