

# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Friday, June 5, 2009  
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## GHOST TOWN HOSTED TOURISM RALLY AND APPRECIATION BREAKFAST

**Maggie Valley, NC** – In an effort to leverage each company’s marketing resources and come together to promote the area with a consistent message to drive tourism in Western North Carolina, Ghost Town hosted a Tourism Rally and Appreciation Breakfast Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>. Over 60 business owners and tourism professionals attended Ghost Town’s rally inside America’s Music Hall.

“In keeping with our commitment to tourism and our community, we are gathering and sharing ideas and strategies. We want to grow tourism, our biggest economic engine,” states Steve Shiver, Ghost Town’s President and CEO. “By doing this collectively and by effectively promoting *everything* that Western North Carolina has to offer, we will all benefit from increased traffic, more overnight stays and more families visiting the area.”

Ghost Town shared with the attendees the data that they collected and analyzed from 2008. From approximately 130,000 guests, Ghost Town captured zip codes from each on-site and online ticket purchasers. This information has helped Ghost Town pinpoint where its guests are coming from, identify adult to child ratios, and help allocate advertising dollars for key markets.

By sharing this information with area lodging facilities, retailers, restaurants, attractions, area Chambers and the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority, recipients can also use the information to help reach their target audience most efficient and effectively. Steve Shiver also said, “It is imperative that we make the most effective use of our limited resources and do so with a consistent message and I think the Haywood TDA leadership now has the ability to get that done.”

This year, through exit surveys, Ghost Town is also capturing how many nights each guest is staying and where. Once compiled and analyzed, this information will also be distributed to area businesses.

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