

## NOBODY DOES IT BETTER ...MARKETING

Most retail developers reluctantly market their centers. AWE Talisman is unique, a retail owner committed to providing its centers with unique and all-encompassing marketing programs. Each of its centers is continually evaluated and reevaluated by a team of marketing experts non-paralleled in the industry. AWE Talisman utilizes the services of research companies, input from existing tenants, tourist and convention bureaus, and other research collected by the marketing team combined with the 20 years of experience of Ann Ackerman, creating marketing and tourism programs tailored to the needs of each property.

**Fashion Outlets of Las Vegas**, located in Primm, Nevada, 35 miles outside of Las Vegas, was in severe distress. The center was stunning with sizzling billboard graphics, lighting effects and two distinctly themed areas, New York, New York and South Beach. The mall opened up strong but swiftly weakened, as the former owner did not understand that the main market feeder to the center was Southern California. Previous ownership mispent hundreds of thousands of dollars on such ineffectual advertising as Taxi Toppers in Las Vegas missing entirely their main market - Southern California. Once Talisman Companies acquired the property, it redirected the marketing efforts, spending \$10 million dollars during the first five years of ownership. Fashion Outlets of Las Vegas finally became known to Southern California and the international tourist market producing spectacular results. See the [case study](#) for more information.

**Fashion Outlets of Niagara** had similarities to the difficulties first encountered at Fashion Outlets of Las Vegas. The property had been owned by Prime Retail, not marketed in five years, lost in foreclosure, and then in a misguided attempt by the receiver for the lender wasted millions of marketing dollars promoting the center to the local population. As an example, the receiver heavily advertised in the local newspaper, despite its limited distribution in the Buffalo market. Once research was complete, it was discovered that the Toronto market was a far more significant and lucrative market. A plan was immediately put into action to advertise in Toronto and its suburbs. Research discovered that the television stations in the Buffalo market were also watched in the Toronto market demonstrating a need to devote a significant portion of the budget to electronic media. Television, normally very expensive, became an affordable cost. Certain radio stations that were also well received in both markets were also utilized. Select print media was also chosen for the Toronto market. Niagara stopped advertising in the Buffalo newspaper. The result was immediate, with 30% annual increases and merchants reporting huge increases in customers coming from Toronto.

Tourist efforts were also put into place to introduce the new Fashion Outlets of Niagara to the 22 million tourists that visit Niagara Falls. A tourism director, following the Las Vegas model, was hired to concentrate on attracting the tourists vacationing in Niagara Falls. A new shopping package was introduced that is sold on Expedia, Travelocity and Orbitz. The group tour business has increased double digits. Today, Fashion Outlets of Niagara Falls is considered one of the top three outlet centers in the country with sales per square foot at \$900.00. It was the foresight of AWE Talisman to identify and market the center to the correct market that resulted in great success for the center and over 60 new leases in only 20 months of ownership.

**Fashion Outlets of Santa Fe** in Santa Fe New Mexico is a newly acquired center. The merchant mix and tenant vacancy first needed to be addressed before initiating a strong marketing program. Since AWE Talisman purchased the project a Polo Ralph Lauren Factory store has been added as well as a Designer Fragrance store. Existing stores have expanded and remodeled. In the first quarter of 2009 a new Nike store will join Fashion Outlets of Santa Fe.

The market research showed three distinct markets, the Santa Fe resident, its upscale tourist and the middle market of Albuquerque. A combination of these three markets makes up the core shopper base. Fashion Outlets of Santa Fe has an aggressive community marketing program that includes partnering with local events (there are over 30 events weekly in the Santa Fe area). An example is the Renaissance Fair. The center donated space to a well known costume designer working for the nonprofit organization Open Hands. Together they hold costume making seminars at Santa Fe. Similarly, the well known Theater Grottesco rehearses its show at Santa Fe prior to its performances in the Opera House.

The tourism program has also developed shopping packages with area hotels, an official pick up and drop off shuttle stop from the Albuquerque airport and valuable relationships with the area Convention and Visitor organization. Further enhancements to the program will be made once Nike is open.

FASHION OUTLETS OF LAS VEGAS:  
A MARKETING CASE STUDY