



VALLEY BUSINESS NEWS

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



THE SCV FILM BIZ: Steady Growth Mirrors City's Success

By Pam Ripling

Twenty years after its incorporation as a city, Santa Clarita continues to grow and prosper with no end in sight. Despite a mercurial real estate market, challenges to local medical facilities expansion and ever-changing demographics, Santa Clarita remains a safe, attractive "community" offering opportunity and support to a wide variety of business entities.

The film business is no newcomer to Santa Clarita. Movie production in the SCV and its immediate surroundings has been on-going since the silent picture era. In 2002, the city created the Film Office in order to regulate the burgeoning number of television, motion picture and music videos being produced within its limits. The office issues permits for still shooting and motion pictures that occur outside of a certified sound stage, and boasts some of the lowest fees in the Los Angeles Metro area: \$90 for still, \$394 for a motion picture permit. Additional fees apply in cases where filming necessitates road closure (\$563/occurrence), parking (\$248/occurrence) and/or ITC (Intermittent Traffic Control), (\$158/occurrence). Applications may be reviewed by the L.A. County Fire De-

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City Hall, the SCV's government headquarters, moved from its location in a rented storefront on Soledad Canyon Road to Valencia Boulevard in 1989.

CITY'S GROWTH STEADY AND STRONG

By Mimi Slawoff

In the 20 years since the City of Santa Clarita was incorporated, housing, commercial and retail developments have replaced onion fields, population has swelled to 171,000 and the City has been recognized as the fourth safest city and for its good business practice.

Each year gets better and the future looks promising, say city officials. "What a fantastic year 2007 was for the City of Santa Clarita and especially for City-based businesses! This year, the City began the City/Sheriff Business Alliance, providing a dedicated sergeant to deal with law enforcement matters businesses located within the City of Santa Clarita. This includes proactive education programs, one-on-one service and a wide variety of prevention programs aimed at lowering crime and keeping our businesses safe and healthy. The City's new Enterprise Zone for City based businesses also went live this year, providing businesses in the City with tax credits and other money-saving endeavors only those in the Enterprise Zone can utilize. These are just two of the reasons Santa Clarita was once again named one of the top five most business friendly cities in all of Los Angeles," says City Manager Ken Pulskamp.

There are several ongoing projects and programs that will continue to grow in

2008, says newly appointed Mayor Bob Kellar. "One of the most exciting projects is actually a partnership among the Sheriffs, the State, the Fire Department, the District Attorney, the County, Newhall Land and the City that will create a new civic center complex in our City, to include a larger Sheriffs station and other public buildings on the corner of Magic Mountain Parkway and Valencia Blvd.

"This is a long time in coming and will help better utilize the space there, enhancing a variety of services for our residents," says Kellar.

In addition, the following projects are expected to be completed in the near future:

- The I-5/Magic Mountain expansion and improvement project, a partnership with funding partners, the County of Los

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POLISH UP YOUR CONFERENCE ROOM!

By Chris Oleszkowicz

When you hear the words "Conference Room," what do you picture? Is it a dim space with average looking furniture and a flip chart on an easel? Or, do you visualize a well-lit room with comfortable chairs, a drop down screen, overhead projector, and crystal clear audio?

Which room would you rather attend if you were invited to a meeting? If you are lucky enough to have a conference room and are looking for ways to polish it up and create a more professional image, there are plenty of options available.

You probably know how difficult it is to hear and be heard on a regular speakerphone during a conference call. By simply upgrading your speakerphone to a dedicated conference room telephone, you can eliminate those annoying problems, participate in a more satisfying meeting, and enhance your conference room experience. You may also want to consider Video Conferencing applications for that face-to-face experience.

If you are using the room for business presentations on a medium to large scale, then you need more than a "white board" and a loud voice! Instead of drawing boxes and semi-straight lines to make your point, why not inject your thoughts into a computer presentation? Then you can control the meeting in an organized fashion with some flair.

To do this, your audience needs to be able to see and hear your presentation. A compelling and impressive way make your presentation is to use a projector, a drop down screen, and a proper sound system. If the room is too bright, you could get up and turn off all the lights, or you can have a control system installed that will dim the lights at the same time the presentation is about to begin!

Your plan may include a ceiling mounted projector, a hidden motorized

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SCV Film Biz



Television show "Las Vegas" is one of several productions filmed on location in the Santa Clarita Valley.

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partment, the city's Traffic Division and the Sheriff's office for additional requirements.

Jason Crawford, film & tourism administrator, economic development office, City of Santa Clarita, says the department has seen significant growth in location filming since its creation five years ago. "The City issues, on average, 25 to 35 permits per month. Each permit can include filming for up to a two-week period with no more

than 10 locations. Location filming was at an all-time high in Fiscal Year 2006-2007 (July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007). The Film Office recorded an unprecedented 852 film days, which is a 26 percent increase over the previous year, and issued 311 film permits within the City of Santa Clarita, a 9 percent increase over the previous year. The Film Office anticipates there will be continued growth in Fiscal Year 2007-2008 with 93 permits and 214

film days recorded so far in the first quarter (July through September)."

Santa Clarita is currently home to some of TV's most watched shows, including HBO's "Big Love" and "Deadwood," CBS' "NCIS" and "The Unit," and FX's "The Riches." Several other television shows, including "24," "CSI," "Monk," "Heroes," and "Las Vegas" have recently filmed on location in Santa Clarita. Some of the features lately filmed in the SCV include "Charlie Wilson's War," "There Will Be Blood," and "Star Trek XI." Recently, commercials for Wal-Mart, Allstate, GMC, Old Spice, and Kellogg's were filmed here, as were music videos for artists such as the Foo Fighters, Daughtry, and Ashley Simpson.

According to Crawford, popular filming locations include College of the Canyons, Westfield Valencia Town Center, the Industrial Center, Old Town Newhall, and various City owned parks and properties. Santa Clarita is a favorite venue for numerous Hollywood production companies, and is currently home to at least 20 sound stages and 10 movie ranches. Says Crawford, "After surveying the productions that are currently based in Santa Clarita, it was determined that an average of 30 percent of the crew of each production were local residents. An estimated \$21 million was spent in the local economy by film companies while on location in Santa Clarita during Fiscal Year 06-07. Production companies spend money throughout the community on hardware, lumber, plants, paint, clothing,

food, gasoline, car rentals, and much more. Not only is there an economic benefit in terms of revenue, but also in high paying jobs for our residents. According to a 2006 Labor Base Study by Alfred Gobar Associates, the film and entertainment industry directly employs at least 6,600 residents of the Santa Clarita Valley, or five percent of the total workforce."

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THE WRITERS' STRIKE: A BUMP IN THE ROAD AHEAD?

Optimists say there's no place to go except ahead when discussing the strike that began November 5, 2007, when members of the Writers Guild of America walked off the job over 2007 contract disputes. Key issues include DVD residuals, union jurisdiction over animation and reality program writers, and the evolving issue of compensation for "new media", defined as content written for emerging digital technology such as the Internet, and distribution of same. As of year-end, the majority of television productions filming in the SCV have postponed projects or shut down, causing lay-offs of crew and affecting thousands of workers, businesses and residents of Santa Clarita. The last such strike - in 1988 - lasted 22 weeks.

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Tips

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pate in special events. The main objective for doing this is to interact with other people, expand your network and market your business. Predict, Decide and Set Goals. This is an ongoing process in your business' life cycle. Plan and measure the output that you will derive after putting in all of your efforts. It makes no sense

if the output is minimal after you put in 100%. Focus on one tip for a week, compare it with your current business situation and then implement it. See the results and move on to the next one. Take steps to build a strong solid business – starting now. “You can get everything in life you want, if you’ll just help enough other people get what they want.” Zig Ziglar

Source: SBDC Network

SCV FILM BIZ

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Is there a downside? "The community has been extremely supportive of the film and entertainment industry. Since so many Santa Clarita residents are employed in [this] industry, or know someone who is, they generally understand the economic benefit to both the City and the State and they appreciate the opportunity to work locally. The biggest challenge the City faces, as far as location filming is concerned, is the potential impact to traffic. The City takes a proactive approach to implement traf-

fic plans that minimize the impacts to our businesses and residents. We do this by having the production companies use ITC versus a full road closure, restricting the hours ITC or a road closure can be performed (such as not allowing it during rush hour), and we find alternative streets and routes that can be used for filming. The Film Office also notifies residents and businesses when filming is occurring in their area. This approach keeps the community informed and therefore we rarely receive complaints," explains Crawford.

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