

*Creating a brand refresh for a tourism center to help educate visitors*

## The Opportunity

Although it is a destination town with a historic downtown area, Durango did not have a Visitor Center easily accessible to downtown visitors. In 2012, when the Durango Business Improvement District, the Durango Area Tourism Office, Fort Lewis College and the City of Durango came together to bring a Welcome Center to Durango, they turned to FASTSIGNS®.

## The Challenge

According to Bob Kunkel, Business Development Manager for the city of Durango, there were multiple challenges to face in developing the Welcome Center. First and foremost was that each year, hundreds of thousands of people come through Durango without fully realizing all that the town has to offer.

“A lot of people come through here and don’t even know there is a college here,” Kunkel provided as an example. “On the tourism side, we didn’t have an in-town facility that educated tourists in a way that a tourism community really should.”

Another challenge was that the Welcome Center needed a way to generate revenue. While serving as an information hub and valuable resource to visitors and tourists, welcome centers still need to cover their costs.

## The Solution

After meeting with representatives from the city of Durango, FASTSIGNS began putting together a



plan that would help solve the challenges presented.

“This was an exciting opportunity and I knew that we needed to wow them,” said Laurie Sigillito, owner of the Durango FASTSIGNS.

FASTSIGNS wanted to create a full-user experience and an atmosphere that showed all the aspects of Durango; not just the obvious tourist venues. The team wanted to make sure that the character and history of the Durango community was portrayed, while still meeting the needs presented by the city.



“We suggested a 5-year advertising concession contract that would allow FASTSIGNS the opportunity to create an engaging customer experience using wall mural graphics, brochure displays and digital signage,” said Sigillito. “Through this program, FASTSIGNS would create and manage an advertising program that guarantees the Durango Welcome Center \$12,000 in revenue each year from advertisers, while dazzling the tourists with all Durango has to offer.”

## The Execution

Once the proposal was approved, FASTSIGNS began by designing imagery that would completely transform the walls of the Welcome Center into picturesque murals. They used photos that portrayed the character of Durango including the historic Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, the Fort Lewis College campus and the beautiful, local scenery. FASTSIGNS also incorporated traditional street signs within the Welcome Center to direct visitors around to each of the different information areas, while keeping with the rich feel of the community.

In an effort to provide more of an interactive experience that would engage tourists, FASTSIGNS installed 13 digital displays of varying sizes throughout the center. Serving as the eye-catching centerpiece of the Welcome Center, is a large, state-of-the-art Christie MicroTile multi-screen digital display.

To address the challenge of building revenue for the Welcome Center, FASTSIGNS created a three-tiered advertising program called the “entice, attract and capture” program with each component designed to build upon the other. At the “entice” level, an advertiser is able to have a mini-brochure on display at the Welcome Center. If they choose the “attract” level, in addition to the mini-brochure, they are able to have a 15-second digital ad displayed on one of the many digital

displays. Finally, at the “capture” level, an advertiser is also given a dedicated wall mural graphic that is included within the overall campaign.

FASTSIGNS works with the advertisers on behalf of the Welcome Center, printing the brochures, producing the wall graphics and posters, and creating and managing the ads that go on the digital displays.

## The Results

Within two short months, the Durango Welcome Center became a living, breathing exhibit of the Durango experience for all who walk through its doors. The advertising program helps generate revenue for the Welcome Center, while encouraging local economic development and increasing spending by tourists.

“The Welcome Center has been transformed and serves as a solution to a number of issues that we had,” said Kunkel. “You’re not going to leave here without seeing the whole Durango experience.”

\*FASTSIGNS® of Durango, Colorado is owned by Laurie Sigillito.

