

Purpose of the Study

The City of San Juan Capistrano is well known in Southern California for being the major equestrian city in Orange County. It has an exceptional network of trails that has become more and more extensive over time, superb facilities to board horses, highly regarded trainers, and events that attract horse riders from other states as well as from other countries. It is the objective of this study to quantify as much as possible the economic impact that the facilities and the stables have on the city.

Methodology

One survey instrument is used to gauge the impact that those who board horses in one of the stables in SJC have on the city. Another survey instrument is used to gauge the impact of the variety of tournaments and events that take place in SJC. And a third instrument is developed to gauge the impact of those who ride horses in SJC without being a boarder or an exhibitor. Copies of the survey questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1. Some questions in the survey relate to information about the respondents such as whether they are residents of San Juan Capistrano, how many horses do they show or exhibit, and why do they show and exhibit their horses in SJC. The rest of the questions pertain to expenditures on horses such as on stall fees, shavings, tack, supplies, equipment, grooming, trainer and insurance, and expenditures on accommodations, meals and groceries.

The first section of this report shows detailed results of the boarders and the second section shows the detailed results of the exhibitors. The total economic impact is subsequently exhibited together with some recommendations.

Total Economic Impact

Knowing the economic impact of the boarders and the exhibitors we are now able to compute the total impact by adding the two impacts of the two groups. Total expenditures by boarders and exhibitors, which represent the direct impact on the San Juan Capistrano economy, amount to \$49,091,685, leading to an indirect economic impact equal to \$1,013,743. Hence the total economic impact of the boarders and the exhibitors on the SJC economy amounts to \$50,105,428.

	Boarders	Exhibitors	Total
Direct Impact	37,560,568	11,531,117	49,091,685
Indirect Impact	775,626	238,118	1,013,743
Total Impact	38,336,193	11,769,235	50,105,428

Conclusion and Recommendations

One of the main reasons for boarders to board their horses in the city of San Juan Capistrano is the trail system. The boarders have indicated that it is an extensive system and that it is well maintained. Hence it is very important for the long-term sustainability of attracting boarders to SJC, to keep the system very well maintained and to expand it whenever funds are available.

Another reason for boarding in SJC is the quality and number of stables in the city. Keeping the stables in very good shape and making sure that they are safe for the horses and the boarders who come to visit them is of utmost importance.

There were raving comments about the grounds in SJC whether at Sycamore Trails or at the Rancho Mission Viejo Riding Park. Maintaining the beauty, cleanliness and appearance of these grounds will keep exhibitors wanting to exhibit their horses in SJC.

Exhibitors are very happy with the type of events that take place at the Rancho Mission Viejo Riding Park operated by Blenheim Equisports. This is apparent from how far exhibitors come to SJC to exhibit their horses and more so by the amount of money they are willing to pay to participate in, attend and enjoy the events. Eliminating the Blenheim Equisports events will have very severe economic consequences on the city of San Juan Capistrano. It will decrease income and lead to the loss of jobs in various sectors of the city's economy. Although one might think that boarding horses in the city is independent of the Blenheim Equisports' events, the survey data show that this is not the case. Many respondents indicated that the reason they board their horse in SJC is due to the existence of a variety of events in the city first among them the Blenheim Equisports' events. The beauty of the Rancho Mission Viejo Riding Park, the extensive array of equestrian events that take place in the park, and the highly professional operation run by Blenheim Equisports management have played an important role in the reputation of the City of San Juan Capistrano as an equestrian community. Comments such as "The facility at Blenheim is unparalleled", "High quality show property" and "Good management" should not be disregarded and neither should their impact.

A large number of respondents wrote that they bring their children to SJC to participate in competitions such as at dressage events, Interscholastic Equestrian League competitions (IEL), and Orange County Horse Show Association competitions (OCSHA). Keeping these events running will guarantee the survival of the equestrian business since the children of today if satisfied and happy with the events are the ones who will make decisions to board and exhibit their horse in SJC once they grow up.

Survey respondents mentioned repeatedly the high quality of the trainers available in SJC. The trainers seem to be a very important asset to the equestrian community and the city as a whole.

Since non-residents of San Juan Capistrano compose 72.5% of the boarders and 89.2% of the exhibitors, one can easily conclude that the expenditures by non-residents provide the bulk of the economic impact of the equestrian business in SJC. This means that if any advertising funds are available from the city or any other source, those funds should target the non-residents hence

they should be made in media that reach residents in outlying cities even outside Orange County. A close look at the Tables 2, 12 and 13 would provide information about which cities to target.

Aside from advertising, a sizable amount of money is spent by non-residents on accommodations. Adding more hotels and motels in the city will bring additional expenditures and generate more jobs in SJC.