

Economic Benefits from the Chumash Indians
Economic Impact to Local Tribe members to the Community

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Summary: The Chumash Indians have been in a constant struggle for hundreds of years to rise back up to greatness where they once were when they peacefully roamed over the western coast of beautiful California. To the Beaches of Malibu and all along inland Los Angelos and northward, the Chumash have roamed for thousands of years. They have rebuilt theirselves once again and are again starting to prosper economically.

Background:

The band of the Santa Ynez Chumash Indians has a very rich history. They are known of taking care of one another and giving back to the community. The Chumash tribe, even before their economic success, have been treated very horribly and treated similar to second class citizens. They have been through speculations of racism and other means of non humanitarian acts against them. They have had their land taken from them and not treated fairly at all. With the opening of the monumental Casino and Resort right off of highway 246 located in the Santa Ynez Valley in central California, they have finally seen what economic success is all about. Before the opening of their casino in 1994 and the grand opening of the larger resort in 2002, they had not been very accustomed to the perks of financial success and clarity. After seeing the success of many different tribes, creating a casino was a strong idea. Since the grand opening of the second part of the resort in 2004, it has brought a huge economic impact to the Chumash tribe and the people in the community despite constantly receiving heavy wip lash and negative reviews about having the casino. The Chumash Indians are working very hard to eliminate that negative public image and working towards improving their relationship with the public. What they need in return is the local community to help embrace them and accept the Chumash for everything they have done in the past and the rightful fact that they everyone is living off of their land

that they once prospered in for hundreds of years before the Europeans even appeared.

In researching about the history of Chumash Indians, the main theme you see along with almost all of the tribes in North America has to do with the elimination of Native culture and carving them into modern day society in the 19th and 20th century by the United States government. As the Indian wars were in full force in the 1800's, Native lands were being taken over and the native culture was being replaced by current American ideology. For the Chumash it was a little different being on the west coast of California. They first had to deal with the Spanish missionaries and conquistadors before even dealing with the first Americans traveling west. Their land was first intruded on in 1789 by Spanish missionaries and would prove to never be the same. The moment those missionaries stepped foot on their native soil, things started to go downhill from there. Economically they have never been able to recover and stay afloat. After many years of looking for ways to raise money for the tribe and to help fund it, they finally came up with the proper solution. The Chumash has looked for many ways of creating revenue for the tribe. Their dreams came true when they created the Chumash Casino Resort. In 1994 This economic boom restored economic hope back to the members of the tribe once again, which is similar with most tribes in America who own resorts and gaming facilities. (Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians)

In researching about internal tribal conflict of the Chumash Indians, the main problems that we found almost had everything to do with external problems that the tribe had to face. When the Spanish first arrived on Chumash land in 1769 they immediately were impacted. The Spanish brought European disease and famine that the Chumash and nearly all native people in America had no tolerance for and did not have the antibodies to fight off any type of disease. In turn this quickly eliminated a once promising Chumash population of 22,000 all the way down to just 2,788. This is a huge loss of life, and it would be nearly impossible for any large group of people to come back from a deficit like that. It would have been a very tough time for the tribe and would prove to be a blow that would devastate the Chumash for nearly 225 years until they could start to prosper once again. With the numbers of Chumash Indians dwindling so did the culture and stories that were past down to generation to generation.

Many Tribes don't like the idea of having a casino that is named after them because it doesn't display the full culture of their tribe and what they stand for. Many think that gaming and gambling is a sin and destroys families and individuals. There are many tribes that monitor how often the tribal people can gamble and go into the casino's in order to limit problems. That is the case with the tribal casinos in western Washington. They do a good job of monitoring how often their tribal members can gamble, so they don't in turn gamble all their money away and use it responsibly. The Chumash have a lot

of success in the gaming operations in the Santa Ynez valley despite public negativity in the community. With the new dynamic add on to the Casino the community is asking the Chumash to scale down the large new operation that was built in 2004. It is difficult for the tribes to operate the facilities because of all the public draw back that it causes and negative influence that gambling brings with it.

Its often difficult for the tribes to keep up with their tribal culture in the casino's. The main means of having built the casinos in the first place to receive revenue. The casinos have been focusing more on marketing the casino to make money rather than to market the overall culture of the tribe. So often the tribe is very poorly represented in the casino and mis represented like in many Washington casinos with the dream catcher. The Chumash fail to give little representation of the tribe in the casino especially on the online website. You would never guess that the casino was owned by a tribe if you didn't look at the name.

Findings:

Online media and social network plays a large role in the casino. For the Chumash casino resort, they have a facebook and twitter page. The facebook has over 33,000 likes and followers and do a great job of displaying shows and performances on their page. They frequently post shows and events prior to the performances and book great and popular performances. The twitter isn't used really at all, having only 1 tweet and very few followers.

The tribe itself has no twitter and has a facebook page for the Chumash Indian Museum and another page of the Chumash Indian village, both receiving likes and followers. The Casino is much more represented on social media, and does a poor job of representing the tribe itself on social media.

The results of the creation of the Chumash Casino has made a huge positive impact on the tribe. Despite all of the negative feedback from the community, the Chumash continue to support local charities and institutions. They tribe continues to give back to local schools and keeps all of the tribal members afloat and up to date with expenses.

The Chumash have always paid their respects and continue to support the Santa Ynez school district. They have helped finance many different projects around the schools and support many of the students. Although, they continue to receive resentment from much of the community, they still provide huge projects and give out many scholarships to underprivileged people and students. The Chumash just recently provided a huge gift to the

Santa Ynez school district. Financed solely by the Chumash Casino and resort, they built a 3 Million dollar football and Track Stadium located at the Santa Ynez valley High School. This beautiful new facility is located right in their back yard and is a true example of the Chumash support. Despite this generous donation, there was still negative backlash. "Vincent Armenta was booed by some of the people in the audience. In addition, some of those in attendance threw the "spirit rags" the Chumash had provided to the ground, which had both the high school logo and the tribal seal on them." These types of the things should not be happening (Sherline).

They have continued to give back to their own tribal community like many other tribes do with their earnings from their Casino. The fact is though, that despite the public's negative draw back it brings in huge amounts of revenue and economic benefit. The casino brings in over 350 million dollars annually and supplies over 900 jobs for the community. This gives the tribe an opportunity to fund all of the things the tribe could not afford before. This money goes to individuals in the tribe and helps fund events like Pow Wows, Basket weaving, and other tribal meetings and functions that it hosts to its people. The Chumash are giving back a ton of the revenue back to the community as well. They built a health clinic in 2002, which has wonderful health care professionals and great doctors. Over 50% of the clinic's operational clientele is non-native. They contribute more than 14 Million back to the community. This is the real money that helps keep the

tribe culturally engaged and gives them a chance to keep up with all of their customs. All this money goes to local schools, public goods (fire department, police officers, hi tech equipment for officers in the county), and roads and other construction projects in the community. In 2005 they started the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Foundation, which has been giving back to the community and establishing a wonderful social environment. This foundation takes very good care of their local tribal community. They also contribute to tax allowance and tax cuts for the communal members as well. Many people do not know the true economic impact that the Chumash have on the community. There aren't many groups that donate this much to community and support their fellow society members like the Sanata Ynez Band of Chumash Indians do. The foundation is governed by their business council of the Santa Ynez. (Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Foundation)

They constantly give scholarships and grants to the people of the tribe. They provide them with health care and help pay for many of their expenses. They provide the elders of the tribe with the proper care and benefits to keep them living correctly and take very good care of them. Many people of the tribe would not be able to stay afloat if it weren't for the tribal support. They help out with unpaid bills and provide them with a great environment to live on. Many tribal members would be in dire straits if not for the extra care that the tribe provides them. There aren't many communities like the

Chumash who care and give their group members this much care and support. Members of the tribe are truly thankful and inspired by their tribal elders who take care of them.

The latest thing that the Chumash Indians have been up is, is purchasing land. The Chumash Indians have requested to have land placed into a federal trust or proposed action. The Bureau of Indian affairs has approved the tribes land consolidation plan. The Chairman Vincent Armenta announced the withdrawal of the plan before the supervisors had a chance to even take their vote during the last week of October. This land grant would give the Chumash Indians over 1,400 acres of land that the tribe would use for housing and other tribal needs. The Chumash would love to have this land to expand their tribal well being and their cultural identity. They are also running out of room on their current reservational lands that they are currently on (Votes to Fight Chumash Tribe Land-into-trust Application).

As you can imagine, there is a large amount of speculation coming from this. The Santa Barbara community is very out raged by this land grant, The land sits on agricultural lands and the county people do not want this land to get given away to a whole bunch of Indians. Supervisors in Santa Barbara county California voted 4-1 to oppose a land into-trust application submitted by the Santa Ynez band of Chumash Indians. The Public does not want this to happen, and they don't want their land being taken away from them. The same argument can be made for the Chumash Indians as well though. In turn

they could be simply make the same argument that the land was stolen from them, which in turn it was along with 6,000 more square miles of land that stripped from them from foreign invaders. The main problem here is that once again the public is not on the same side of the totem pole as the Chumash.

Conclusion:

In order for the tribe to stay successful and thriving, they must establish a positive relationship with the community. That is the main thing that is keeping them away from where they need to be. Once the tribe has support from the whole community they will prosper like never before. They will still continue to be economically superior with the casino resort running, and will have a constant flow of revenue and money coming into the tribe. In the last two decades the Chumash Tribe has been able to do things they have never been able to do before with the money from the casino. They have been able to finance cultural events that they couldn't before, and have been able to finance their tribal members so they can live good healthy lives. With the Casino doing as great as it has, they will continue to thrive culturally and be able to do things that they never could before. The one thing that I stated before that needs to improve, is their support from the community. If the Chumash want to continue to be successful they must win over the community around them and band together as one.

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