

The SOUNDTRACK of AMERICA
• MADE IN •
TENNESSEE®
☆☆☆

FY 2021 ANNUAL REPORT
Dept. of Tourist Development





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Brenda Brooks and Diann Higgins at Smith Co. Welcome Center's Information Counter separated by a plexiglass barrier.

WELCOME CENTERS

The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) operates 16 Welcome Centers across the state. All Welcome Centers have remained open through the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as essential rest breaks for travelers. Enhancements in safety, communication, and customer service include increased sanitization, plexiglass barriers around information counters, installation of 63 digital monitors, and transitioning to touch-less visitor satisfaction surveys, where centers average a rating of 4.9 out of 5 points.

4.9
OUT OF 5
Visitor
Satisfaction
Rating



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New traffic counter and solar panel on sign post at Dyersburg

STATE-OF-THE-ART TRAFFIC COUNTERS

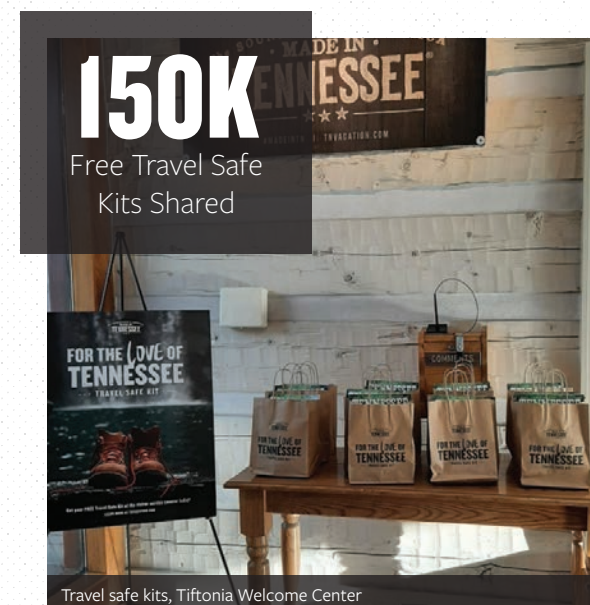
All Welcome Centers installed new, state-of-the-art traffic counter devices in 2020 that use microwave sensors to count each vehicle as it passes and collect vehicle size and speed information. The addition of solar panels allows for continuous data collection. As a result, Welcome Centers may now review up-to-date traffic count information at any time.

EDUCATIONAL FAMs

During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff participated in educational FAMs to learn about the destination's amenities and COVID-19 safety precautions. FAM tours allow staff to experience destinations firsthand and better promote Tennessee to millions of travelers each year. All Welcome Center participants followed local health and safety guidelines during these trips.



FAM tour group in Chattanooga



150K
Free Travel Safe
Kits Shared

Travel safe kits, Tiftonia Welcome Center

TRAVEL SAFE KITS

As part of the department's "For the Love of Tennessee, Travel Safe" campaign effort, urging residents and visitors to follow CDC guidance concerning COVID-19, Welcome Centers distributed over 150,000 "Travel Safe" Kits. These kits included branded masks, hand sanitizer, postcards, travel information and safety reminders that were given out on a first-come basis.

2020 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TRAVEL ON TENNESSEE

The data presented here is high-level information about travel within our state. For more local information, please contact our team or visit industry.tnvacation.com/industry/research.

TOTAL DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT INCLUDES DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL
Source: USTA, Tourism Economics // All percent change calculations are over 2019.

\$16.8B

Visitor Spending

⬇️ -31.6% DECREASE

Outperformed the national decline of -42%

\$1.4B

State & Local Tax Revenue

⬇️ -30.4% DECREASE

Outperformed the national decline of -31%

\$9.1B

Tourism GDP

⬇️ -26.1% DECREASE

149,800

Employment

⬇️ -23.1% DECREASE

Outperformed the national decline of -34%

\$5.5B

Labor Income

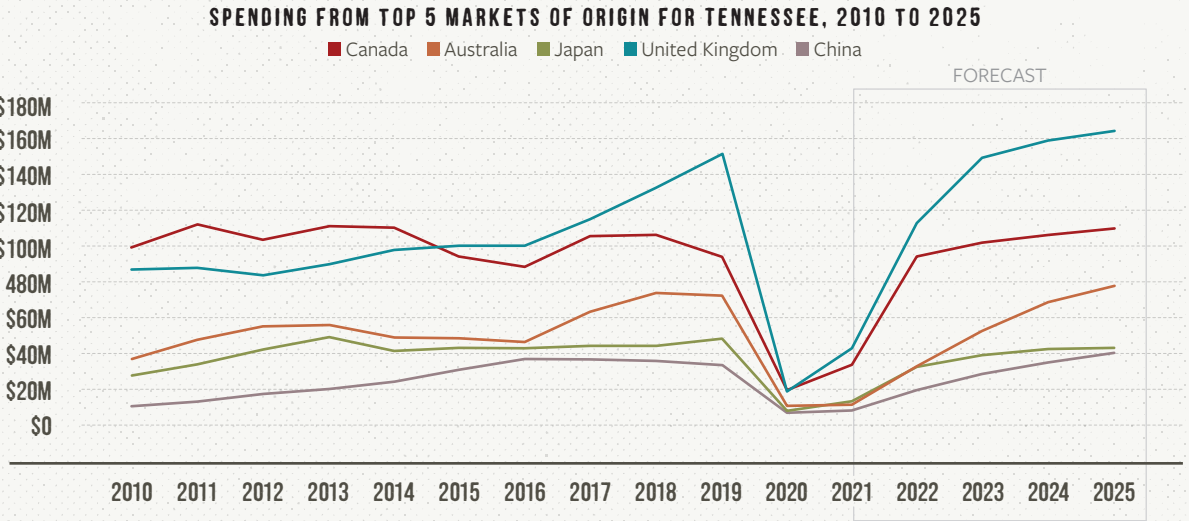
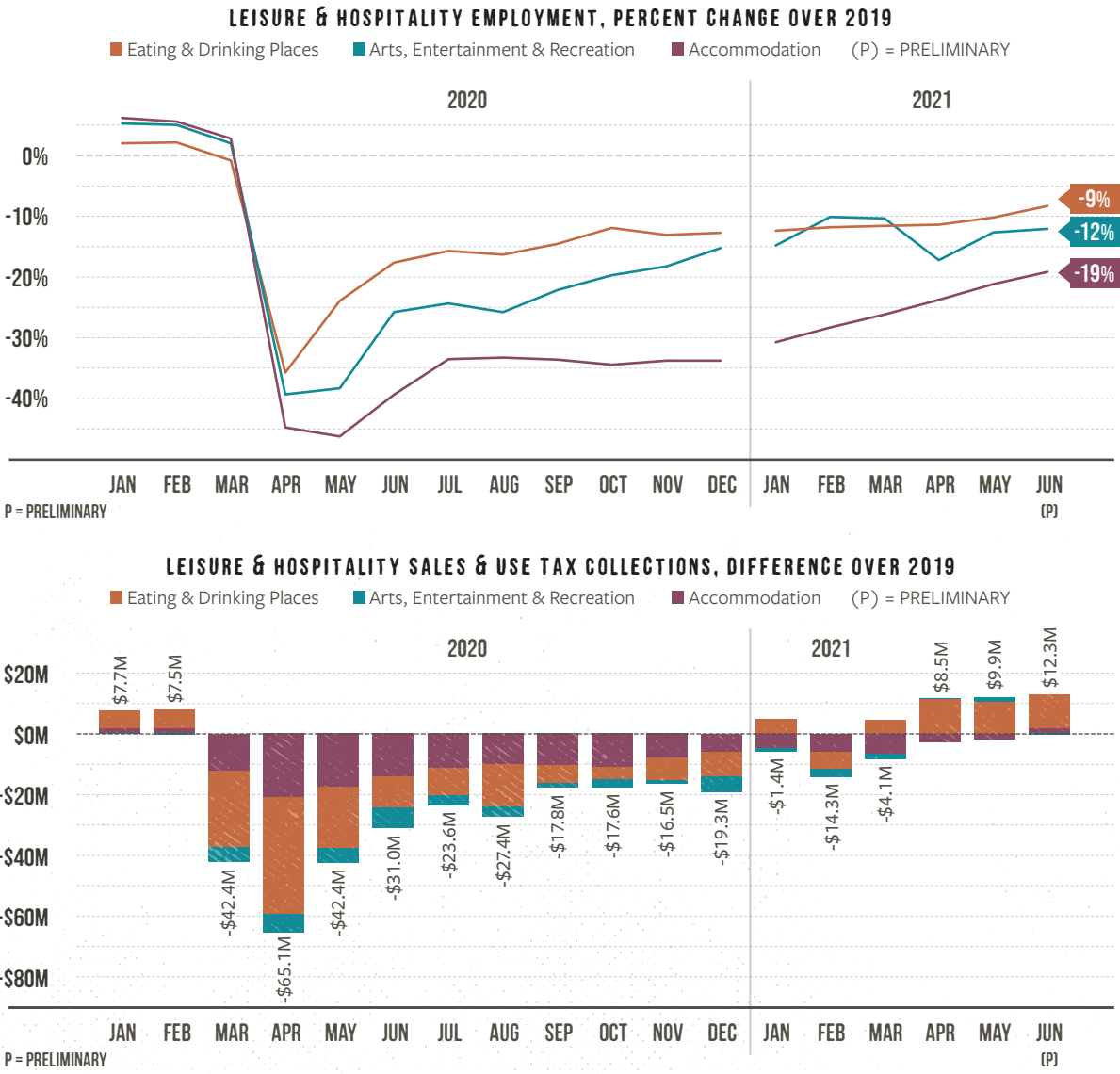
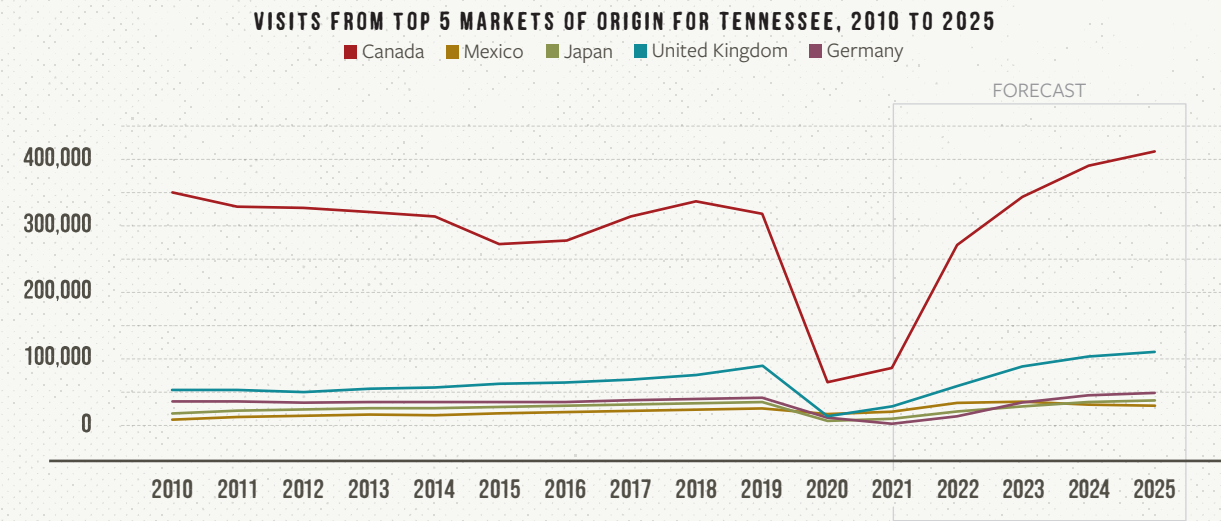
⬇️ -17.6% DECREASE

Outperformed the national decline of -32%

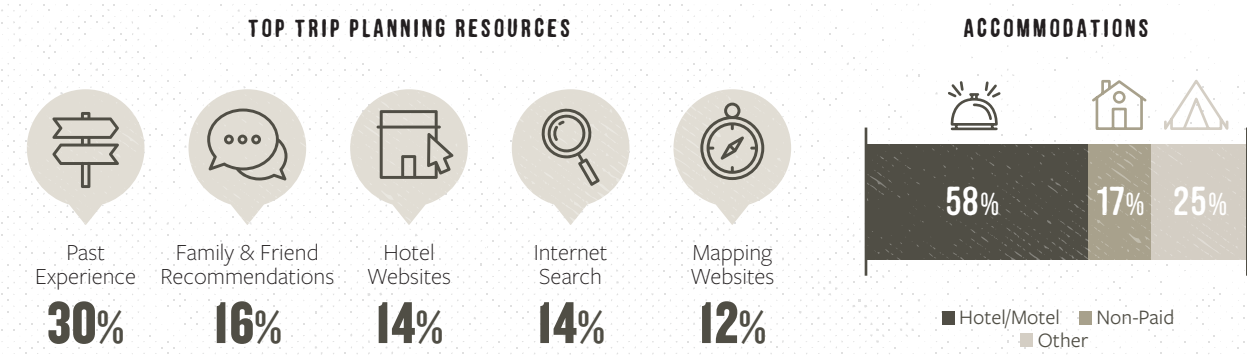
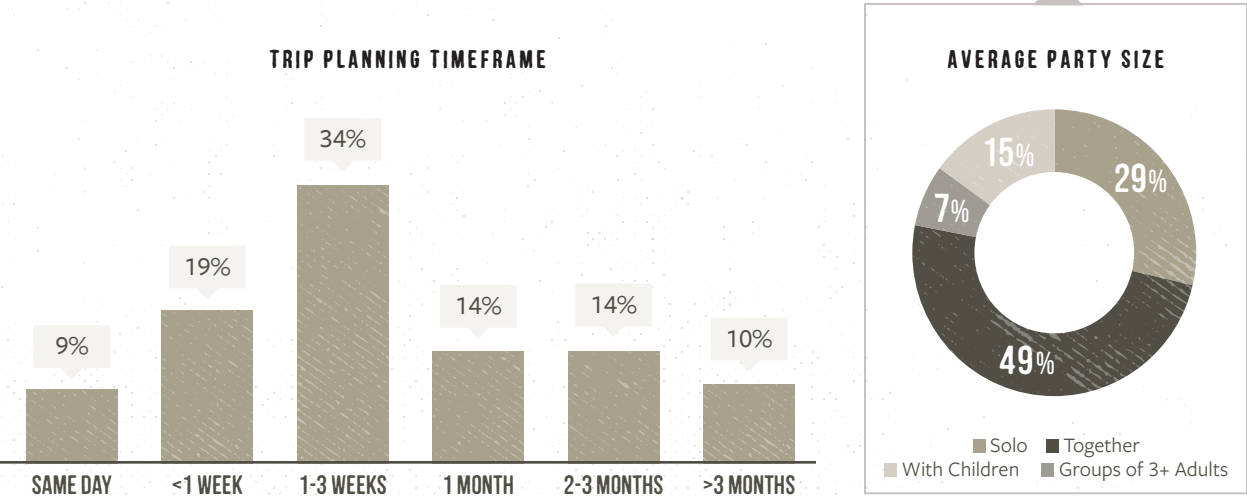
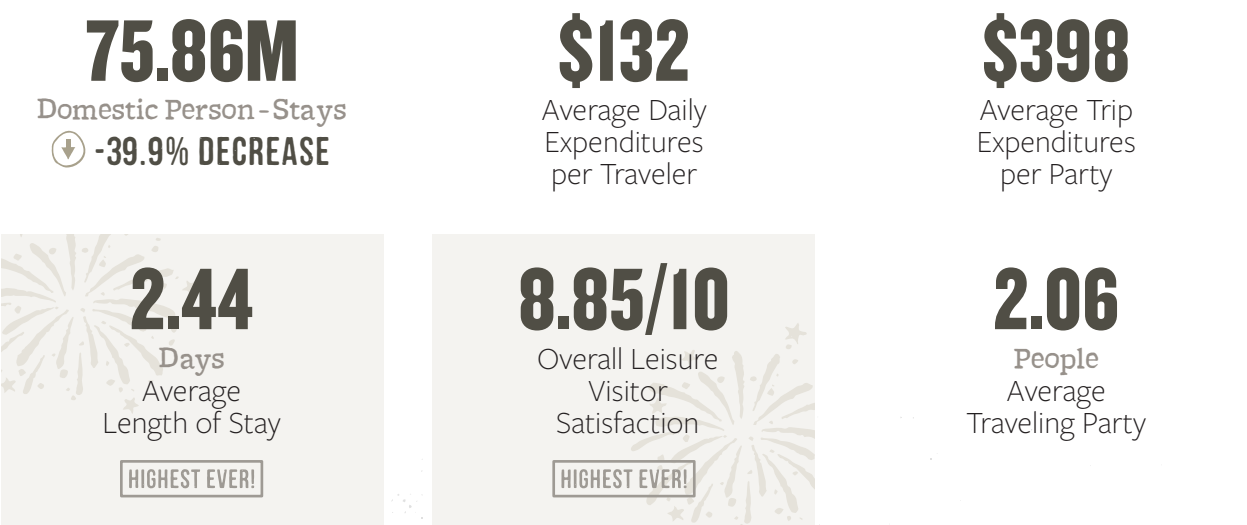
Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, travel-generated tax revenue lowered the average Tennessee household's state and local tax burden by **\$550 ANNUALLY**.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL RECOVERY

Source: Tourism Economics
International visitation declined by -78% in 2020. Tourism Economics forecasts international visitation will return to 2019 levels by 2024 and spending by 2025.



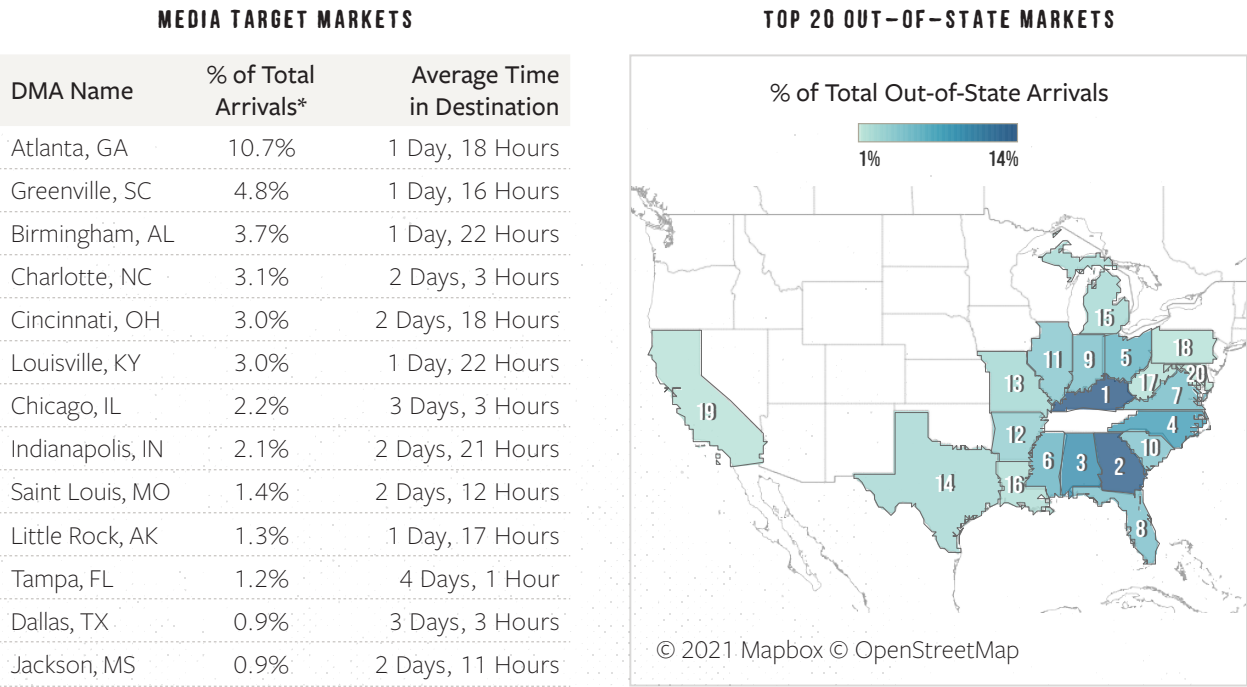
2020 DOMESTIC VISITOR PROFILE Source: MMGY Global, D.K. Shifflet & Associates*



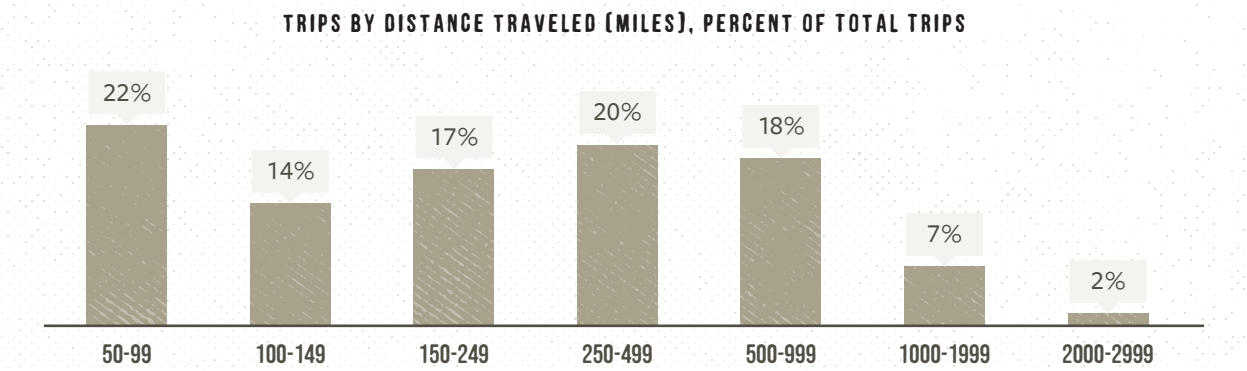
*The Travel Performance Monitor is a comprehensive study measuring the travel behavior of U.S. residents. An average of 50,000 distinct U.S. households are contacted monthly. For the 2020 Visitor Profile, D.K. Shifflet captured responses from 985 visitors to Tennessee. In 2019, the study captured 2,721 visitors and in 2018, the study captured 2,538 visitors.

2020 OUT-OF-STATE ARRIVAL BEHAVIOR Source: Arrivalist

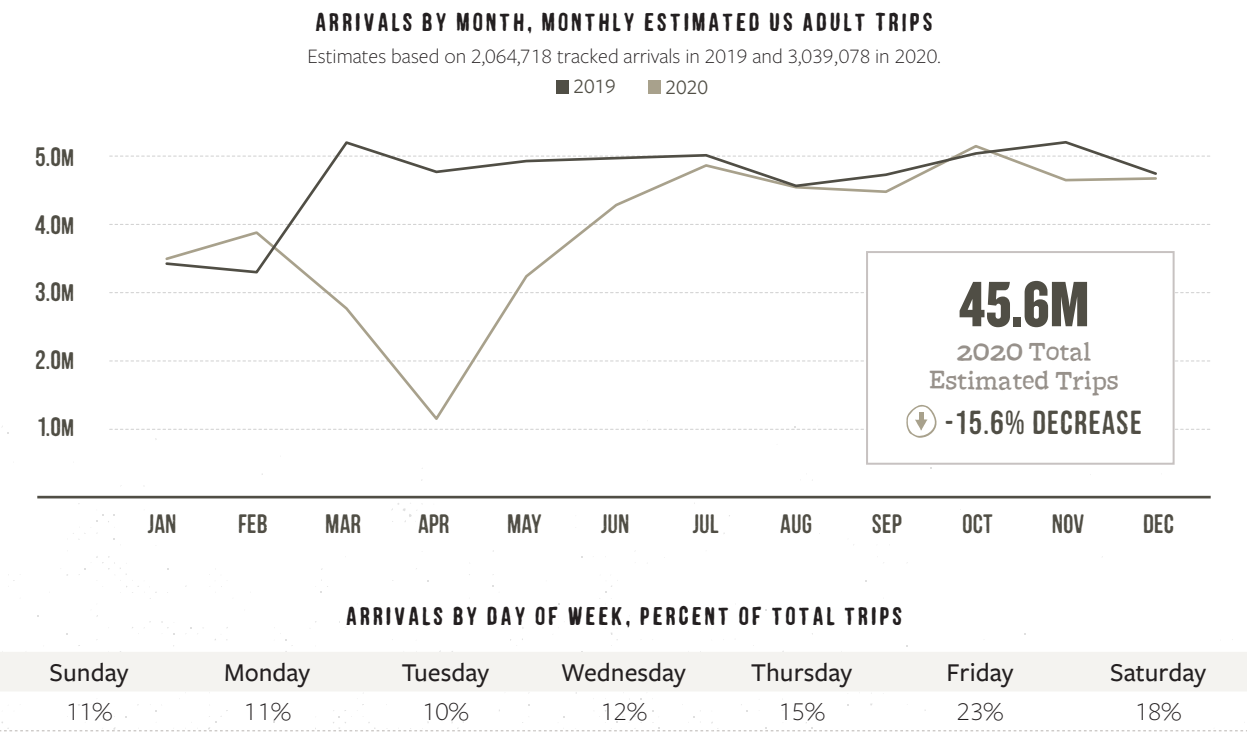
Arrivalist distills mobile location data to provide always-on consumer insights and is the most widely accepted independent media measurement platform by the digital media industry. Arrivalist sources information from 120+ million monthly active users. Arrival criteria requires visitors traveled at least 50 miles from their home (home can be both Tennessee residents, as well as out-of-state residents), spent a minimum of five hours within the state and spent the majority of trip time in Tennessee.



Arrivalist data on origin markets, travel patterns, length of stay, seasonality and historical media performance informs our strategy and media plans. The data allows us to better understand when visitors arrived in Tennessee, where they came from, booking timeframe and where they traveled throughout the state.



2020 OUT-OF-STATE ARRIVAL BEHAVIOR Source: Arrivalist



Using Arrivalist data, the department can analyze visitation patterns to drive better marketing decisions and gain a greater understanding of visitation across multiple regions of Tennessee.

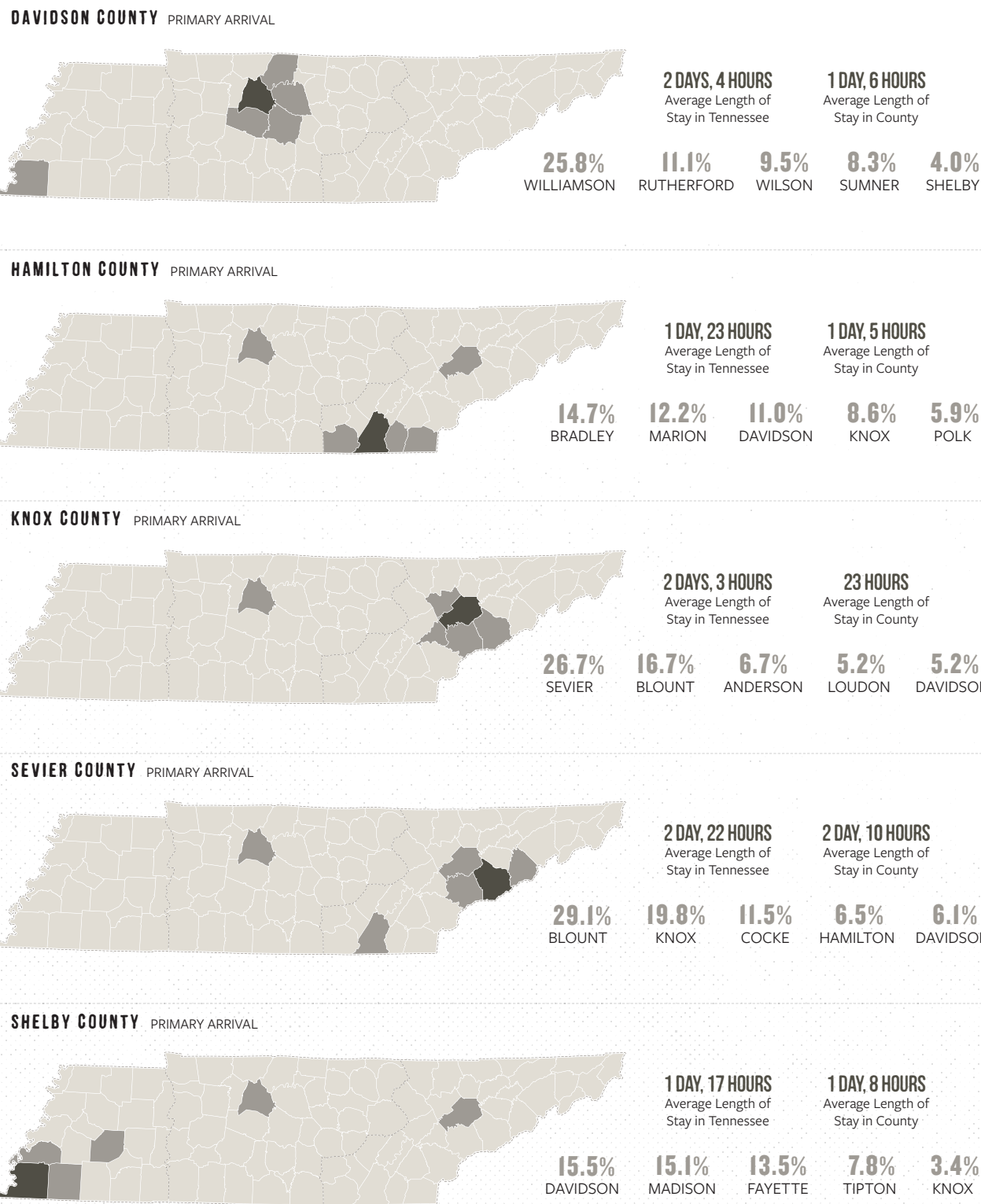
ARRIVAL REGION CROSS VISITATION											
PRIMARY ARRIVAL	Greater Nashville	Smokies	Middle East	Southeast	Upper Cumberland	Southwest	South Central	Memphis Delta	Northeast	Northwest	
	Greater Nashville	12%	17%	14%	25%	18%	21%	8%	3%	5%	
	Smokies	12%		67%	20%	18%	3%	1%	2%	14%	1%
	Middle East	18%	68%		27%	28%	4%	2%	3%	13%	1%
	Southeast	23%	33%	43%		11%	3%	16%	2%	4%	1%
	Upper Cumberland	54%	37%	58%	14%		11%	8%	6%	10%	2%
	Southwest	52%	9%	13%	6%	16%		13%	35%	3%	21%
	South Central	66%	4%	7%	30%	11%	13%		4%	2%	3%
	Memphis Delta	27%	6%	8%	3%	10%	42%	5%		2%	8%
	SECONDARY ARRIVAL										

Matrix of combinations shows the % of trips to one region that also make a trip to another region.

2020 ARRIVAL COUNTY CROSS VISITATION

■ Primary County/Arrival ■ Secondary County/Arrival

Analysis of Arrivalist data demonstrates visitors to primary destinations also visit additional counties during trips to Tennessee.



TENNESSEE TOURISM RESPONDS TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

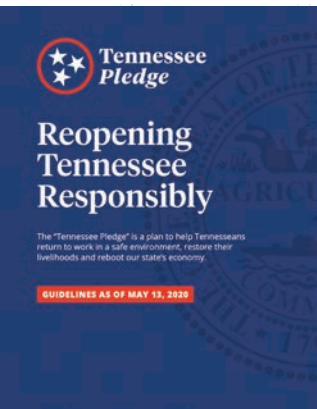
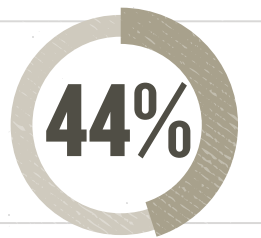
Following a decade of record-breaking growth, Tennessee tourism was on track for a milestone 2020 until COVID-19 halted nearly all travel. The single largest crisis to hit the industry, the pandemic represented \$303 million in lost state revenue between March and December 2020.

As tens of thousands of Tennesseans lost their jobs, leisure and hospitality was hit the hardest and struggled to rebound. The challenges were most acute in our big cities, which felt the loss of large events, conventions, music and business travel. Tennessee experienced gains in rural areas, on waterways, mountains and in our parks.

\$303M

In Lost State Revenue
(March-Dec. 2020)

Leisure & Hospitality industry
employment represents
44% OF NET JOBS LOST IN 2020.



TENNESSEE PLEDGE

As the pandemic forced business closures in April 2020, Gov. Bill Lee appointed Tourist Development Commissioner Mark Ezell as Director of the state’s Economic Recovery Group (ERG). The ERG created the Tennessee Pledge with input from health experts, state and local partners, industry leaders and businesses representing over 2.5 million Tennesseans. The Tennessee Pledge led the nation in a careful reopening plan, enabling business in 89 counties to resume safely without the burden of heavy mandates.

CARES ACT TOURISM MARKETING GRANT

As the COVID-19 crisis unfolded, TDTD worked alongside the Office of the Governor and Financial Stimulus Accountability Group to develop a relief program to directly support tourism through the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). To aid the industry’s recovery, **TDTD received \$25 million in CARES Act funding** to rebuild consumer confidence and communicate safe travel practices.

Did you know? TDTD received the largest CRF tourism grant in the United States!

\$15 million in grants provided much-needed support for 113 Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) in all 95 counties. The 100% reimbursable grants covered expenses related to health and safety precautions and marketing the safe resumption of tourism and hospitality activities incurred between Mar. 1 and Dec. 30, 2020.

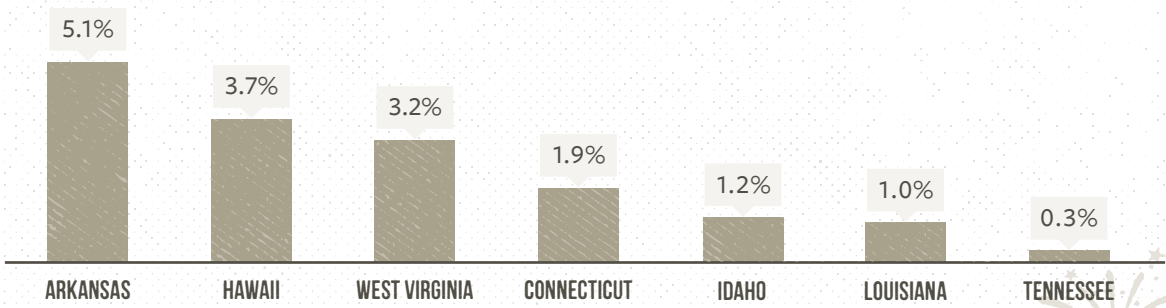
\$25M in Funds to Rebuild Consumer Confidence Allocated to:

- \$15M for Destination Marketing Organizations
- TDTD-Managed Marketing Campaign
- Welcome Center Communication Enhancements
- Tennessee State Parks
- Regional Tourism Offices
- Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

In addition to administering grants to support communities statewide, TDTD launched “**For the Love of Tennessee, Travel Safe.**” The campaign ran statewide and in drive markets on television, billboards, in print publications and digital channels. Ads highlighted safe activities such as outdoor recreation and demonstrated safe travel practices.

All 16 Welcome Centers remained open during the pandemic to serve as an essential rest break for travelers. Safety, communication, and customer service enhancements included the installation of 63 digital monitors, plexiglass barriers around information counters, digital comment cards and distribution of 150,000 free “travel safe” kits.

AVERAGE % CHANGE IN CONSUMER SPENDING
(Source: Opportunity Insights Economic Tracker, April 13, 2020-January 17, 2021)



Tennessee was one of only seven states to see an increase in consumer spending in 2020.

FOR THE LOVE OF TENNESSEE, TRAVEL SAFE



For the Love of Tennessee, Travel Safe: Songwriters Drew & Ellie Holcomb embarked on a 1,600-mile trip across Tennessee with their three children and filmed a six-episode video series showcasing beautiful parks, outdoor activities and how to travel safe in their native state.

OCTOBER–DECEMBER FLIGHT DATES			
275,514,997 Impressions	61,951,844 Completed Video Views, 82% Completion Rate	44,379,900 Broadcast Impressions	567,163 Clicks to Site, 0.21% CTR

"COME PLAY" MARCH – MAY FLIGHT DATES			
38,220,641 Impressions	9,995,641 Completed Video Views, 78% Completion Rate	154,042 Clicks to Site, 0.40% CTR	

KID REVIEWED



Kid Reviewed: A campaign featuring family attractions, which launched in Spring 2019, resumed alongside our “Now Playing” campaign. The innovative “laugh trackers” and website featuring reviews from kids provided ROI, based on results measured using Adara tracking software.

MAY–JULY, 2021 FLIGHT DATES			
31,071,110 Impressions	14,601,986 Completed Video Views (includes broadcast), 91% VCR	10,628,975 Broadcast Impressions (estimated based on 25% of broadcast buy)	69,416 Clicks to Site, 0.22% CTR

NOW PLAYING IN TENNESSEE



Now Playing in Tennessee: As vaccines became widely available, capacity restrictions waned and events resumed, TDTD launched the, “Now Playing in Tennessee” campaign in May 2021. CARES Act Funding and a grant from the Department of Economic & Community Development provided TDTD with a budget that allowed for expansion into new test markets. This expansion increased potential reach by population from **41.8 million to 74.3 million**.

MAY–JULY, 2021 FLIGHT DATES			
159,594,039 Impressions	76,528,633 Completed Video Views (includes broadcast), 92% VCR	42,515,900 Broadcast Impressions	287,733 Clicks to Site, 0.18% CTR

SUMMER 2021 MARKETS

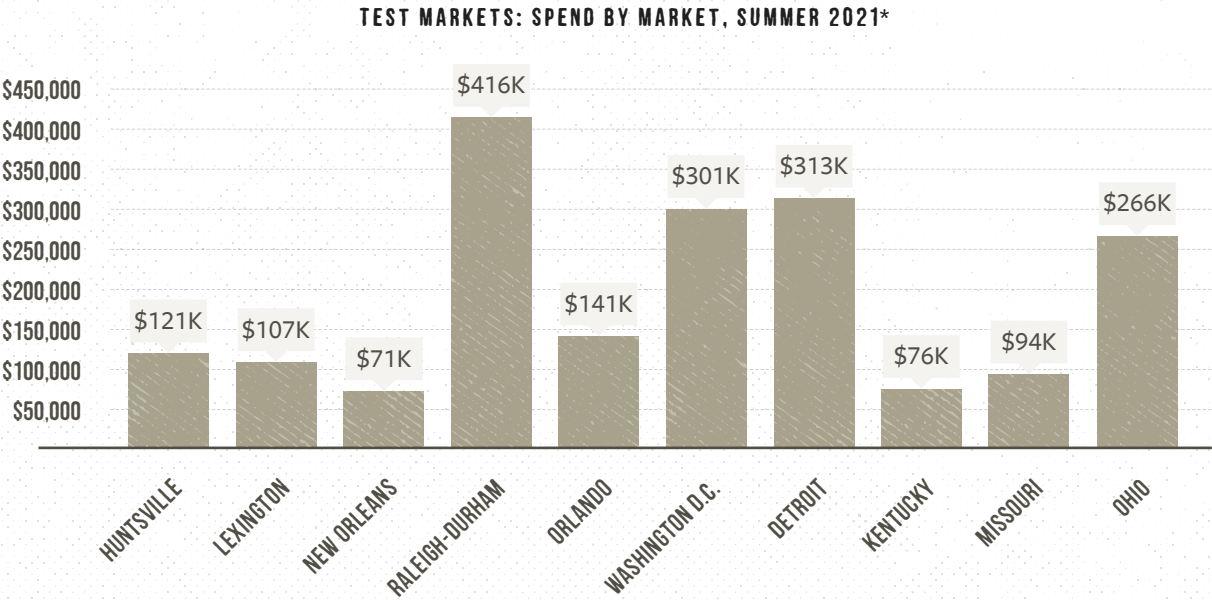
- Priority Markets

 - Atlanta
 - Birmingham
 - Charlotte
 - Chicago
 - Cincinnati
 - Dallas
 - Greenville
 - Indianapolis
 - Jackson
 - Little Rock
 - Louisville
 - Saint Louis
 - Tampa
- Test Markets

 - Detroit
 - Huntsville*
 - Lexington*
 - New Orleans
 - Orlando
 - Raleigh-Durham*
 - Washington D.C.
- Statewide Markets**

 - Kentucky
 - Missouri
 - Ohio






*Test market includes television



*Huntsville, Lexington, and Raleigh-Durham include broadcast and digital, budget by market determined based on market population, Kentucky total does not include Louisville or Lexington, Missouri total does not include Saint Louis, Ohio does not include Cincinnati.

KID REVIEWED AWARDS

The Kid Reviewed campaign’s innovative Laugh Tracker technology, a wearable that measures laughs and excitement levels, was honored throughout the industry. Laugh Tracker won awards like the Gold Lion and Super Reggie, beating out companies such as IBM, IKEA and Frito Lay.

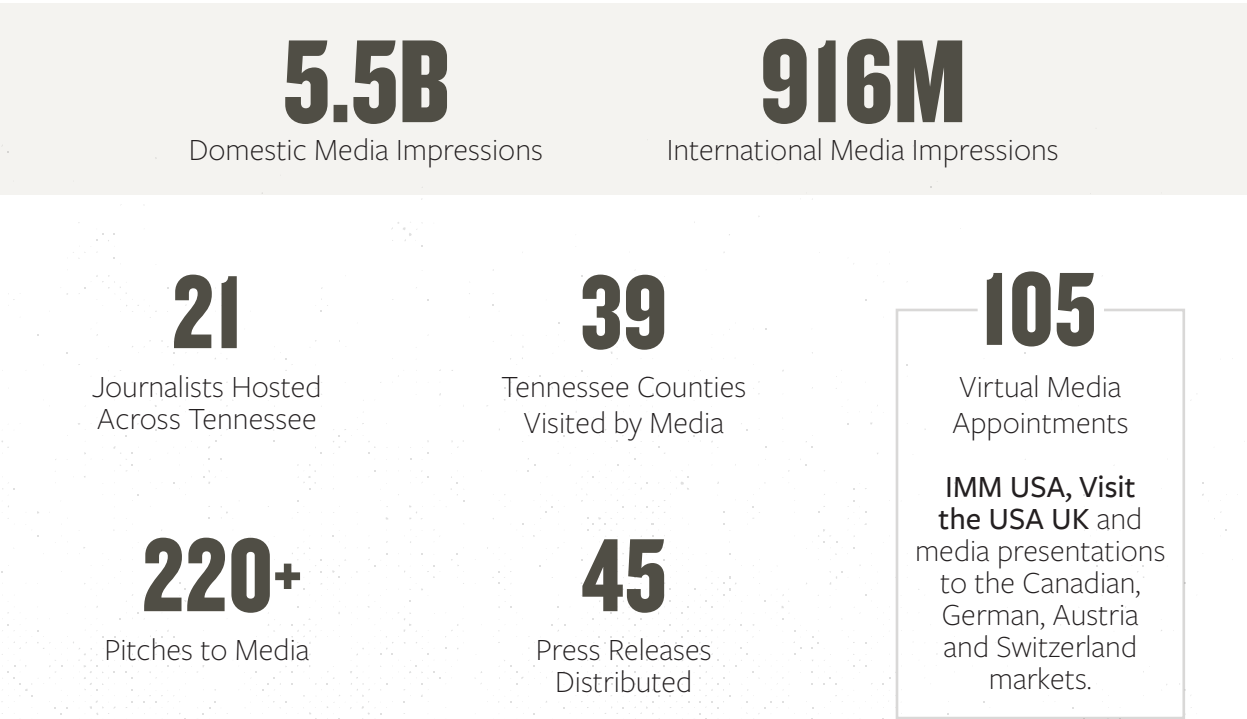
CANNES LIONS: INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CREATIVITY AWARDS		
Laugh Tracker	Gold Creative Data: Data Enhanced Creativity	
	Shortlist Creative Data: Data Storytelling	
	Shortlist Creative Data: Data Technology	
REGGIE AWARDS		
Laugh Tracker	Gold + SUPER Reggie Creative & Innovation Campaigns	
U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION'S ESTO AWARDS		
Laugh Tracker	Mercury Special Projects	
AME AWARDS		
Laugh Tracker	Gold Best Use of Discipline/Creative Use of Tech	
NORTH AMERICAN EFFIE AWARDS		
Laugh Tracker	Bronze Media Innovation-Emerging & New Channel	
	Bronze David vs. Goliath	

TDTD DIGITAL MARKETING TACTICS

CONNECTED TV (CTV)	
Spots running within full-episode content on a smart TV or streaming through a connected device.	
TDTD Tip	Utilize CTV to increase TV reach since audiences are moving to this format.
Example	TDTD ran :30 second Drew Holcomb spots on Hulu, creating a story within a story. Programmatic vendor placements efficiently targeted travel specific audiences.
PRE-ROLL VIDEO	
Videos running prior to video content on publisher sites and content sharing sites.	
TDTD Tip	Pre-roll delivers video at scale to audiences across sites where they are already spending time for a lower cost per view (CPV).
Statistic	The industry benchmark for Video Completion Rate (VCR) is 70%. This is much higher engagement than the industry standard for display Click Thru Rates (CTR) of 0.11%.
DISPLAY ADS	
Animated, rich media, native or static imagery delivered alongside or in-feed with website content.	
TDTD Tip	Display campaigns often serve as a second touch point to ‘remind’ consumers and keep Tennessee top of mind or urge consumers to ‘book now’ after inspiration.
Example	Display campaigns range from brand banners to rich media carousels that highlight multiple interests across the state with the goal of pushing traffic to trvacation.com.
SOCIAL-ADS (VIDEO / STATIC)	
An ad that runs alongside User Generated Content (UGC) within feed on social media platforms.	
TDTD Tip	Social continues to be a growing inspiration source for travel. Ads on these platforms keep Tennessee top of mind in environments where audiences spend time.
Example	Static social content links to itineraries that drive trip planning utility. Shorter videos are more successful across social platforms.

MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

TDTD’s Communications team elevates Tennessee destinations through strategic outreach to domestic and international media. Tactics include small group and individual FAM trips and curated, on-trend content to bring Tennessee stories to life. Additionally, the department oversees industry communications, building awareness for the industry and its impact through advocacy.



MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

- Domestic and international media FAM tours:
 - Knoxville, Jonesborough and Greeneville FAM tour (Oct. 6-10, 2021)
 - Chattanooga + Southeast Tennessee (Oct. 11-15, 2021)
- IPW Media Marketplace (Sept. 18-22, 2021)
- Travel South International Showcase (Nov. 28-Dec. 3, 2021)
- TravMedia’s IMM USA (Jan. 26-27, 2022)
- STS Domestic Showcase (Feb. 13-15, 2022)
- Quarterly “What’s New” releases and ***NEW*** monthly themed press releases

Explore TDTD’s editorial calendar for submission ideas and deadlines at industry.tnvacation.com.

For industry updates and breaking news, subscribe to our eNewsletter at industry.tnvacation.com.

SHARE YOUR NEWS & PHOTOS!

- Share tourism-related news at press.tnvacation.com
- Submit photos via our Photo Release Form on industry.tnvacation.com

CONNECT WITH US

For information about TDTD marketing campaigns, research, industry news and those in the industry making an impact in their communities, please visit:

- Website: industry.tnvacation.com
- Twitter: @TNTravelNews
- Facebook: TDTDIndustry
- LinkedIn: company/TDTDindustry

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INITIATIVES



Tennessee’s landscapes are filled with vivid greens, fiery reds, warm oranges and bright yellows. But not everyone can fully experience its beauty. So, the first-ever **Colorblind Viewfinder**, outfitted with innovative EnChroma® lenses that alleviate red-green colorblindness, was created. The lenses allow those with colorblindness to see a broader range of clear, vibrant colors. There are 12 colorblind viewfinders installed across the state. Learn more at tnfallcolor.com.



The **Discover Tennessee Trails & Byways** program is designed to extend visitors’ major market stays and explore Tennessee’s back roads. Touching all 95 counties, the 16 extensive driving trails integrate portions of the state’s five National Scenic Byways, strengthening the promotion of these established treasures. Discover the trails for yourself at tntrailsandbyways.com.



Fish Tennessee inspires anglers from around the world to experience the many unique fishing experiences that only Tennessee can offer. Visitors can experience angling adventures such as reeling in a trophy trout on the South Holston River or giant catfish from the Tennessee River, legendary smallmouth bass on Dale Hollow Lake or largemouth bass on Lake Chickamauga. Fish Tennessee helps cultivate an angling community in our lakeside towns that encourages generational visitation and drives economic impact. For more information, please contact Dennis.Tumlin@tn.gov or visit fishtn.com.



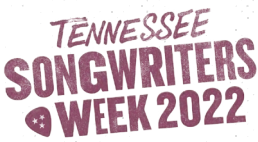
Retire Tennessee continues to market the state’s mild seasons, lower cost of living and slower pace of life to baby boomers. A record number of inquiries are showing that Tennessee is a popular retirement destination. Retirees are visitors first! Not only do they visit but they move and contribute to the economy. For more information, contact Zach.Ledbetter@tn.gov or visit retiretennessee.org.



The **Tennessee Civil War Trail** program is part of a multi-state effort that identifies, interprets, and creates driving tours of significant and lesser-known Civil War sites. Travelers who visit Civil War sites stay longer and spend more than the average visitor. Learn about the program at cw.tnvacation.com.



The **Tennessee Music Pathways** initiative connects visitors to the people, places, and genres significant to music history. Tourism partners are encouraged to submit local music history and related assets that meet the criteria to be considered for inclusion. Explore tnmusicpathways.com.



The state statute annually designates the last full week of February as **Tennessee Songwriters Week**, designed to celebrate the foundation of the craft, recognize past and present songwriters and pave the way for future artists. Statewide events include in the-rounds, songwriter showcases, open-mic nights, educational workshops and more. For more information on how to get involved, please contact Jill.Kilgore@tn.gov or visit tnsongwritersweek.com.



The **Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame** enshrines and honors athletes, teams, coaches, sports writers and sports administrators who have made an impact on the history of sports in Tennessee. For more information, please contact bradwillistshf@gmail.com or read more about the 2021 class at tshf.net.



The Tennessee portion of the **U.S. Civil Rights Trail** inspires travel from visitors seeking to learn the stories of brave Americans who fought for racial equality by visiting sites in Memphis, Nashville and Clinton. Applications can be downloaded at industry.tnvacation.com or explore tncivilrightstrail.com.

TNVACATION.COM

Every tourism partner is eligible for one or more FREE Partner pages on **tnvacation.com**. This complimentary web page is the building block of your exposure on Tennessee’s official tourism website. Partners are encouraged to include restaurants, adventure outfitters, nature centers, historic landmarks, music venues, unique shops and upcoming events to tnvacation.com.

If you have multiple tourism businesses, such as a restaurant, winery and bed-and-breakfast, you are encouraged to have a Partner page for each. These can be linked together using the Related Partners field. Each Partner page is linked to the landing page for its region, subregion and city. It’s also linked in relevant Experience pages, tourism categories and sub-categories.



TOP 3 MOST VISITED PAGES


- Travel Safe (tnvacation.com/travel-safe)
- Vacation Guide (tnvacation.com/guide)
- Homepage (tnvacation.com)

COVID-19 RESPONSE

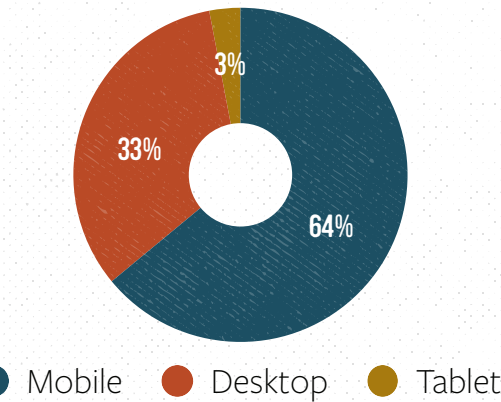
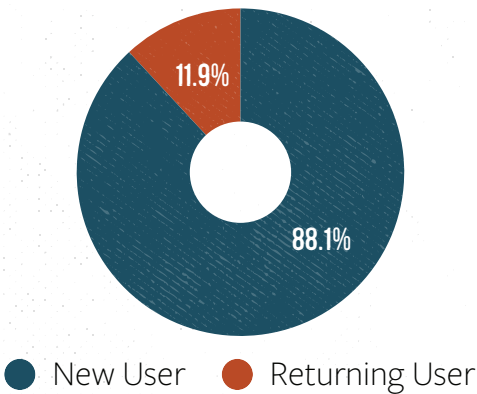
TDTD launched the Travel Safe page, which became the most visited page for FY2020-21 accounting for 8.62% of all page views to tnvacation.com.

PARTNER PAGE SUPPORT

Visit industry.tnvacation.com for more resources.



Rob Sherrill
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615-532-8124

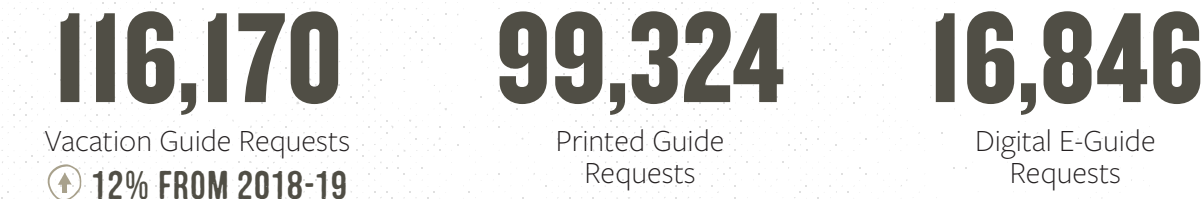


OFFICIAL TENNESSEE VACATION GUIDE

Designed to inspire travel, the magazine-style 2021 Tennessee Vacation Guide featured 146 pages of Tennessee’s music, scenic beauty, creative spirit, culinary excellence and history. Stunning photography and noted writers profiled the places, people and events that attract more than 119 million visitors to Tennessee each year. **NEW! Come to the Table Giveaway** - those who requested or downloaded the guide could enter to win a six-night trip through Tennessee’s culinary scene.



This year’s cover story focuses on our state’s vast food and culinary options.



Top Fulfillment Markets:

Domestic:
Tennessee, Illinois, Texas, Florida, Ohio

International:
Canada, UK, Germany, France, Puerto Rico

Top 5 ways to obtain an official Tennessee Vacation Guide:

- View online at tnvacation.com/guide
- Order at tnvacation.com or 800-GO2-TENN
- Pick up at any of the 16 Welcome Centers
- Partner distribution points
- Regional AAA offices and travel centers

The SOUNDTRACK of AMERICA MADE IN TENNESSEE®

The Soundtrack of America. Made in Tennessee. brand logo

BRAND GUIDELINES

The brand promise of Tennessee — the birthplace of the blues, bluegrass, country, gospel, rockabilly, soul and rock ‘n’ roll - is to be the global music destination of choice. To deliver an unparalleled experience of beauty, history and family adventure infused with music that creates a vacation that is *The Soundtrack of America. Made in Tennessee.*

LOGO USAGE

Use of the brand logo must be **pre-approved** by the TDTD marketing team. To ensure proper usage, partners should submit materials via email to their assigned Division Manager.



Alisa Kessler
Creative Services Manager
Alisa.Kessler@tn.gov
615-532-8071

WRITTEN WORD

To help us retain the power and integrity of ***The Soundtrack of America. Made in Tennessee.*** brand essence, please capitalize and italicize whenever it appears in a sentence, both digitally or in print. If italics are not available, quotation marks should be placed around the phrase. This also applies to ***Made in Tennessee.***

BRAND FONTS

Looking for web-safe fonts? Partners can find free, web-safe typography online! Fonts including: Oswald Medium, Roboto Slab, and Roboto are free Google Fonts that we recommend using to ensure fonts display the same for all users. These fonts do not require special licensing and may be downloaded at no cost on fonts.google.com.

Explore brand guidelines at industry.tnvacation.com/industry/resources/branding.

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING



Travel & Tourism Marketing Ltd. (TTM) is a full-service agency specializing in travel and tourism representation in the United Kingdom and Ireland. It focuses on product development, sales, public relations, training, consumer and trade marketing.



Julia Ueding Sales Consulting is a full-service destination marketing company that develops and facilitates sales and marketing initiatives with tour operators and travel agencies. In cooperation with other destination agencies, airlines and hotel partners, it aims to promote travel from Germany, Austria and Switzerland.



Texttransfer Communications provides public relations and editorial services as integrated elements in its unique Media-Powered Tourism Marketing – a concept of full-service tourism promotion in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, with a special emphasis on utilizing all facets of analogue and digital communications.



Mississippi River Country, USA (MRC) is a multi-state destination marketing organization for the 10 Mississippi River states, focused primarily on the Japanese and Canadian markets.



Travel South USA – Global Partnership Program offers participating Southern states shared, in-market travel trade and media representation in several countries. Tennessee’s 2021 partnerships include the markets of Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Netherlands, New Zealand and the Nordic Union.

TRAVEL TRADE

The TDTD sales team works with the travel trade industry, including Tennessee partners, travel agencies, tour operators, receptive operators, product managers and wholesalers to increase Tennessee product offerings in the domestic and international. Sales efforts include participating in travel trade shows, sales missions, FAMs, special event sponsorships and marketing investments.

Due to the pandemic, events moved away from in-person, making virtual meetings the standard.

586

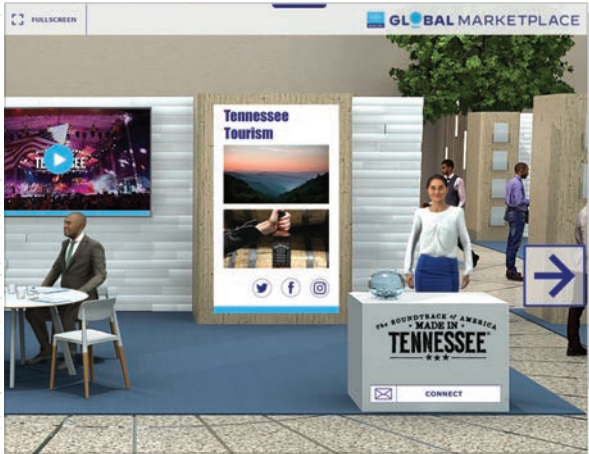
Engagements with Operators
(virtual and in-person)

2,776

Agent Trainings
(virtual and in-person)

70

Attendees at Special
Virtual Events



A stop on the Quilt Trail in Rogersville

OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



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In the past two years, the Outreach team has grown, adding four additional staff members to allow for even more touchpoints with tourism partners. With the goal of increasing economic impact in all 95 counties, the outreach team works closely with other state agencies and organizations to identify resources and new growth opportunities for tourism partners statewide. From strategic partnerships, grants and educational opportunities to identifying assets, marketing and PR assistance, Outreach is a direct conduit between resources and to tourism partners.

DIVISION MANAGERS

In addition, each grand division has a Division Manager. They are critical to keeping Tennessee tourism partners informed on the programs and resources provided by TDTD and ensuring the department has knowledge of new or expanded destination offerings



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OUTREACH RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In 2020, communication and engagement increased virtually due to COVID-19. Early on, there were multiple live industry Q&A sessions with Commissioner Ezell to keep everyone informed of the ever-changing effects to our industry and economic recovery plans during the pandemic. The CARES Act allocation to DMOs in August 2020 allowed TDTD to work even closer with partners. Outreach team members were assigned to assist each DMO with CARES Act needs. In addition, weekly Industry Connect Live webinars were offered to answer questions, encourage and keep partners informed. TDTD has continued to host virtual events to efficiently share department information industry wide.

As the state reopened and safe travel could resume, the outreach team has been back in the field for in-person meetings with partners, presentations and attending events.



Dave Jones visits Adventure Distilling Company in Cosby



TDTD team at the Kix Brooks Tennessee Music Pathways Marker unveiling in Arrington



Marty Marbry and Commissioner Ezell attend the I-40 Press Conference in Memphis

RURAL TOURISM

Rural communities have seen an increase in visitation as travelers seek safe experiences in less-populated areas. We have a real opportunity to make a big impact through tourism. Additional investments in these communities will generate revenue and a sustainable return on investment.

\$2.1M

New! Recurring Budget

In July, the rural tourism budget went into effect. **The legislature passed a new \$2.1 million recurring budget for rural tourism.** Recurring funds enable us to take a multi-year approach, allowing time for transformation. This will be key in building a sustainable program with educational, financial, and developmental offerings to Tennessee’s distressed and at-risk counties.

In the past year, TDTD has worked to:

- Assist rural counties with CARES Act
- Create a steering committee for guidance as we build a curriculum and toolkit for partners
- Increase the Tourism Marketing Grant budget to offer a lower match for distressed counties
- Explore tourism educational offerings through partnerships with Tennessee’s universities
- Expand the budget for scholarships
- Roll out of the new Google Destination Optimization Program for distressed counties

What’s to come:

- Roll-out of multi-faceted, industry specific educational tools and resources
- Strategic planning and develop goals within each county
- Further assess needs and expand grant offerings
- Creation of a mentorship program
- Google Destination Optimization Program expanded to at-risk counties
- Develop marketing strategy for rural Tennessee
- Continue to work closely with other state agencies to align efforts

Abbie Gristy

Rural Tourism Program Manager

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Not sure if your county is distressed or at-risk?


Visit tnced.com/research-and-data/publications.

TOURISM GRANTS

Traditional grants issued last year were limited due to a minimal budget. However, TDTD provided more CARES Act funding to DMOs than any state in the form of 100% reimbursable pass-through grants. Partners were able to encourage safe travel through strategic messaging. We are thrilled to continue grant programs for Tourism DMOs, communities and marinas this year.

GRANTS	DESCRIPTION
Tennessee Tourism & Hospitality Recovery Fund	Designed to expedite recovery in the tourism and hospitality industry across the state. The reimbursable grant will offset budget losses and fund tourism marketing and development initiatives for DMOs to generate revenue increasing economic impact through tourism.
Tourism Marketing Grant	This grant provides tourism organizations such as CVBs, chambers of commerce and regional tourism organizations a way to expand their marketing message. This grant is a reimbursable matching grant for marketing projects. The grant opens each July.
Tourism Enhancement Grant	Historically, a joint effort of TNECD and TDTD, it is designed for cities and counties seeking to invest in local tourism infrastructure assets such as stages, signage, enhancement to attractions or venues and other resources that target expanding local tourism.
Waterways Accessibility for Tennessee Recreation (WATR) Grant	Tennessee water recreation has a significant economic impact on both local and state economies. The legislature provided \$500,000 in FY 2022 for grants to marinas to help promote tourism and enhance the visitor experience.

For more information, visit www.tn.gov/tourism/statewide-partners/grants-initiatives.



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The annual **Advertising Co-Op** program provides all tourism partners the opportunity to leverage TDTD media investments to receive discounted advertising rates on select vendors. Collective efforts between the state, DMOs and attractions results in greater media presence for Tennessee in target markets. Visit industry.tnvacation.com for up-to-date opportunities.

EDUCATION

Trainings and industry meetings were different in 2020-21. The good news is we were able to offer more virtually than ever before. Expanding our education offerings is a priority this year. Whether it is an opportunity to host a presentation, attend workshops through the department or educational conferences, it provides those working in the Tennessee tourism industry a chance to learn from and network with industry leaders and experts.

We asked and you answered. An educational survey sent out last spring invited you to voice how you would like to interact with TDTD in educational settings and what offerings you preferred.

Here are some of the hot topics:

- Showing the Value of Tourism
 - Partnering with TDTD
 - Marketing Trends
- Social Media
 - Photography
 - Customer Service

Have a workshop or webinar idea for TDTD? Send ideas to Tourism.Outreach@tn.gov.

TOURISM EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	WEBSITE
Hospitality TN Governor’s Conference on Tourism and Blizzard Tennessee’s hospitality and tourism businesses	hospitalitytn.com
Alabama-Mississippi-Tennessee Rural Tourism Conference An emphasis on tourism in rural areas	almstnruraltourism.com
Southeast Tourism Society Connections and STS Marketing College® Provides a unique education program for the travel and tourism industry	southeasttourism.org
ESTO // US Travel Association Educational seminar for tourism organizations	esto.ustravel.org
Destinations International Serving destination marketing and management professionals	destinationsinternational.org
American Association of Retirement Communities Trends and best practices on retiree recruitment	the-aarc.org

EVENT CALENDAR

FOCUS	EVENT	DATES	LOCATION
Travel Trade	U.S. Travel's IPW	Sept. 18-22, 2021	Las Vegas, NV
Public Relations	IPW Media Marketplace	Sept. 18-22, 2021	Las Vegas, NV
Industry Wide	STS Connections	Sept. 28-30, 2021	Spartanburg, SC
Industry Wide	TEAMS Sports	Sept. 28-30, 2021	Atlantic City, NJ
Public Relations	Small Group Media FAM	Oct. 6-10, 2021	Knoxville, TN
Public Relations	Small Group Media FAM	Oct. 6-10, 2021	Jonesborough, TN
Public Relations	Small Group Media FAM	Oct. 6-10, 2021	Greeneville, TN
Outreach	Governor's Rural Summit, West Tennessee	Oct. 7, 2021	West Tennessee
Public Relations	Small Group Media FAM	Oct. 11-15, 2021	Chattanooga, TN
Travel Trade	Brand USA Travel Week	Oct. 25-29, 2021	London, England
Industry Wide	SOAR Summit	Oct. 13-14, 2021	Corbin, KY
Outreach	AL-MS-TN Rural Tourism Conference	Oct. 18-20, 2021	Sweetwater, TN
Industry Wide	SportsETA Symposium	Oct. 25-28, 2021	Birmingham, AL
Travel Trade	OMCA	Oct. 31 - Nov. 3, 2021	Virtual Conference
Travel Trade	WTM London	Nov. 1-3, 2021	London, England
Retire TN	AARC Annual Conference	Nov. 3-5, 2021	Myrtle Beach, SC
Travel Trade	NTA Travel Exchange	Nov. 14-17, 2021	Cleveland, OH
Outreach	Governor's Rural Summit, East Tennessee	Nov. 19, 2021	East Tennessee
Travel Trade	Travel South International Showcase	Nov. 28 - Dec. 3, 2021	New Orleans, LA
Travel Trade	ABA Marketplace	Jan. 8-11, 2022	Grapevine, TX
Industry Wide	2022 Tennessee Vacation Guide Launch	Jan. 11, 2022	Statewide
Travel Trade	Tennessee Motor Coach Association	Jan. 15-18, 2022	Franklin, TN
Public Relations	National Plan for Vacation Day	Jan. 25, 2022	Nationwide
Public Relations	International Media Marketplace USA	Jan. 26-28, 2022	New York City, NY

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FOCUS	EVENT	DATES	LOCATION
Travel Trade	IITA Summit	Feb. 6-9, 2022	San Diego, CA
Travel Trade	STS Domestic Showcase	Feb. 13-15, 2022	Virginia Beach, VA
Industry Wide	Pick Tennessee Conference	Feb. 17-19, 2022	Franklin, TN
Industry Wide	Tennessee Songwriters Week	Feb. 20-26, 2022	Statewide
Industry Wide	HospitalityTN Blizzard Conference	Feb. 2022	TBD
Travel Trade	ITB Berlin	Mar. 9-13, 2022	Berlin, Germany
Travel Trade	NTA - Contact	Mar. 23-26, 2022	Anchorage, AK
Industry Wide	National Travel & Tourism Week	May 1-7, 2022	Nationwide
Industry Wide	U.S. Travel's IPW	Jun. 4-8, 2022	Orlando, FL
Industry Wide	ESTO Conference	Aug. 2022	TBD
Industry Wide	HospitalityTN Governor's Conference	Sept. 2022	TBD

For industry updates, resources, and the latest events — please visit industry.tnvacation.com.



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The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. August 2021.
This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$4.61 per copy.



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