

CHATTANOOGA AREA  
CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

# TOURISM REPORT





# THE ECONOMIC POWER OF THE VISITORS

# \$1.1 BILLION

**DIRECT VISITOR SPENDING**  
**5% GROWTH**

## TOTAL VISITOR SPENDING

FOOD & DRINK:

**\$320**  
MILLION

ENTERTAINMENT:

**\$224**  
MILLION

LODGING:

**\$188**  
MILLION

SHOPPING:

**\$271**  
MILLION

GETTING AROUND:

**\$134**  
MILLION



**5.1 MILLION**  
TOP 10 ATTRACTION  
ATTENDANCE



**2.3 MILLION**  
HOTEL ROOMS SOLD  
UP BY 4%



**470,000**  
AIRPORT ENPLANEMENTS

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

**8,840**

TOURISM JOBS

TAXES SAVED:  
EACH HOUSE PAYS

**\$660 LESS**

IN STATE & LOCAL TAXES

TAXES CREATED:

**\$90 MILLION**

IN LOCAL & STATE TAXES

PORTION FOR  
OUR SCHOOL SYSTEMS:

**\$12.5 MILLION**

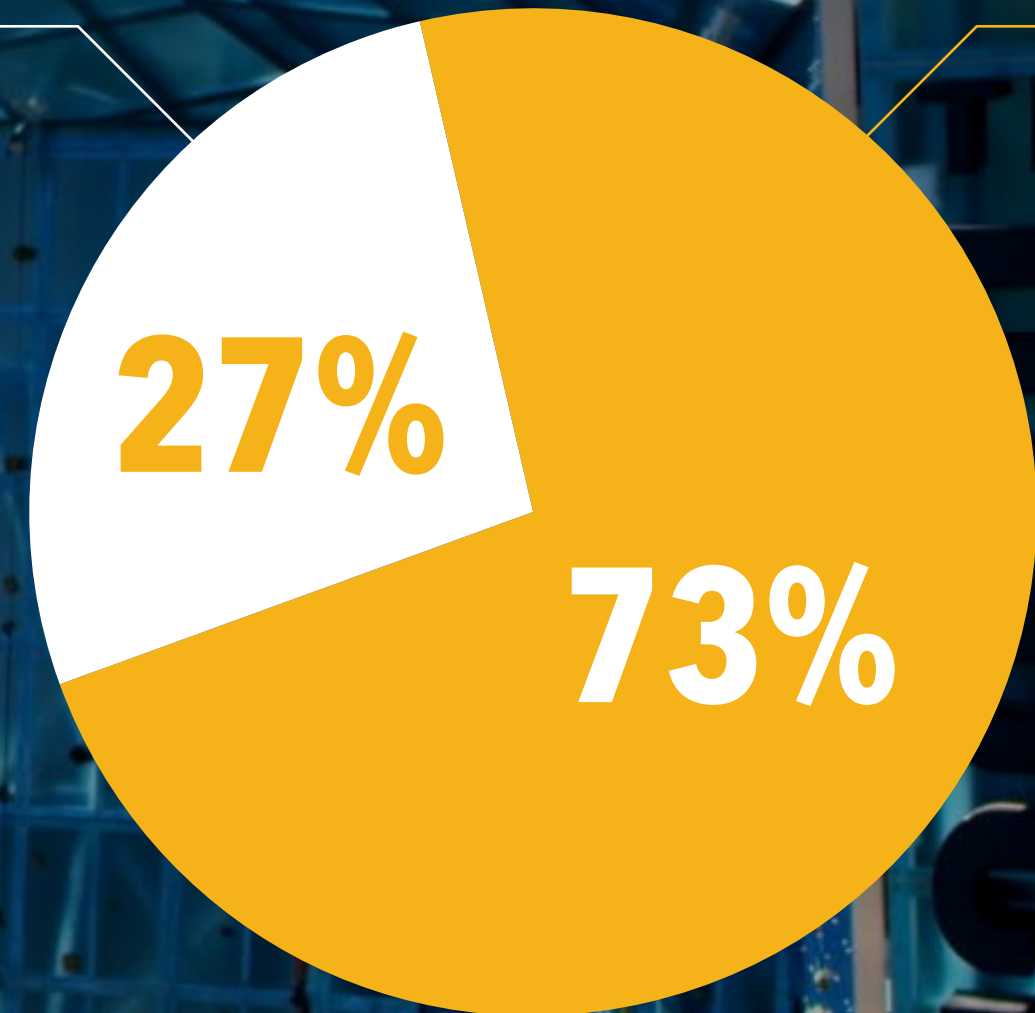


## VISITOR HIGHLIGHTS

**\$15.6 MILLION**  
**VISITORS**

**OVERNIGHT TRIPS**  
4.3 MILLION

**DAY TRIPS**  
11.3 MILLION



## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

**89%**  
LEISURE TRIPS

**11%**  
BUSINESS TRIPS

**2.1 NIGHT**  
AVERAGE STAY

**ATLANTA**  
#1 ORIGIN MARKET



# CVB INITIATIVES

## New Leadership

In November 2017, the CVB Executive Committee chose Keith Sanford, Executive Director of the Tennessee Aquarium, to be Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Chattanooga CVB. The first task of the new leadership was to form a local committee to conduct a nationwide search that yielded Barry E. White, CDME and native of Tennessee, as the top candidate. Barry took over as CEO in February 2018.

A list of current Executive Committee and Board Members can be found at [ChattanoogaFun.com/Corporate](http://ChattanoogaFun.com/Corporate).

### HIGHLIGHT

**Barry E. White,  
CDME, Named New  
CEO of Chattanooga  
CVB**



## DestinationNEXT

A Destinations International DestinationNEXT survey was administered and subsequently analyzed based on 133 responses received from the CVB Board members, staff and Chattanooga community and visitor industry proponents. This assessment tool which focuses on the rating of destination strengths and community engagement determined that Chattanooga area tourism is in the Trailblazers stage. This indicates the need to agree on an overall renewed destination vision with related compelling marketplace experiences within the city and surrounding county areas. Simply, Chattanooga is recognized as an evolving tourism destination with further community and visitor industry dialogue and buy-in required to proceed. In comparison to other reporting DestinationNEXT DMOs in the United States, Chattanooga is higher than the nationwide average of being an established destination with some further community tourism engagement needed.

## Strategic Planning

The process to develop a strategic plan for the Chattanooga CVB was embraced by the Board of Directors. Don Anderson, Executive Partner of Destination Consultancy Group was selected to lead the process. Don has worked with more than 250 destinations on strategic planning and created the industry's highest-level education certification program. Input from the DestinationNEXT survey and meetings with more than 100 staff, board members, civic leaders and community stakeholders contributed to the development of the strategic plan (Completion September 2018).

## Research

Chattanooga CVB commissioned the 2015-2017 Longwoods Travel USA Research Study. This study has been the industry's gold standard for travel research for decades. The data provided the CVB with new findings that will guide the priorities of the organization in marketing and branding for years to come. The research also comes with access to a powerful database that can answer ongoing travel research questions as they arise. A summary of the research and key findings can be found at [ChattanoogaFun.com/Corporate](http://ChattanoogaFun.com/Corporate).

## Financial Technology & Governance

An assessment of the financial operations and governance of the CVB was approved and undertaken in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. The financial assessment identified several opportunities to improve efficiency of the CVB finances. CFO By Design, that works with dozens of CVBs, was contracted to implement the financial technology upgrades for the CVB. Additionally, a review of the CVB governance structure presented several opportunities for modernizing best practices in non-profit governance. Both finance and governance recommendations were approved by the Board of Directors and implementation is in process.



# CVB PARTNERSHIPS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

## PARTNER PROMISE:

Champion tourism-related economic opportunities for our community.

**780**  
**PARTNERS**

**\$1.1 MILLION**  
**PARTNER INVESTMENTS**

780 regional businesses partnered with the CVB and invested \$1.1 Million in cooperative marketing and sponsorship opportunities.

## CVB ACHIEVEMENTS

### Destination Marketing & Branding

- 600 Million positive earned, owned and paid media impressions
- New creative and logo developed for 2018 tourism season
- Grew ChattaFanatics brand advocacy program to 10,000 members

### Sales & Service

- 300 Convention, meetings and sports events supported by the CVB
- 266,454 Event attendees serviced
- Four IRONMAN events including the 70.3 World Championships
- Support leisure group travel: tour bus groups and school trips
- New music festivals and series: Moon River Music Festival & Levitt AMP Music Series

### Research & Advocacy

- DestinationNEXT Survey of 133 tourism and community stakeholders
- New Longwoods Travel USA Research Study 2015-2017
- Address state and local policies that impact tourism

### Visitor Services

- 133,324 Visitor center engagements
- Visitor center awarded TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence
- 20,000 Assisted online and in-person with retirement information
- 400,000 Visitors guides distributed

### Community Engagement

- 133 DestinationNEXT stakeholder interviews
- 780 Business partners investing \$1.1 Million with the CVB
- One million community event viewings on ChattanoogaFun.com
- 1,500 Hospitality training attendees
- 800 CVB annual meeting attendees



# 2018 STAFF & BOARD DIRECTORY

The Chattanooga CVB is governed by a board of directors that represents a cross section of business partners.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman	Keith Sanford	At-Large	Allen Corey
Vice Chairman	Mitch Patel	At-Large	Ken DeFoor
Secretary	Johnny O'Brien	At-Large	Hon. Randy Fairbanks
Treasurer	Lisa Maragnano	President & CEO	Barry White

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Bennett	Jeff Messinger	Carla Pritchard	Justin Strickland
Hon. Mike Carter	Bernie Miller	Meredith Roberts	Elaine Swafford
Karlene Claridy	Tricia Mims	Dan Rose	Stratton Tingle
Kevin Conley	Jennifer Mingola	Henry Schulson	Cindy Todd
Hon. Jim Coppinger	Hugh Morrow	Jack Sherman	Tom Underwood
Christy Gillenwater	Susan Moses	Jeff Sikes	Eda Ira Walldorf
Sheldon Grizzle	Molly O'Brien	Mike Steele	
Susan Harris	Reggie Piercy	Rob Stickley	
Dan Jacobson	Gladys Pineda-Loher	Annie Still	

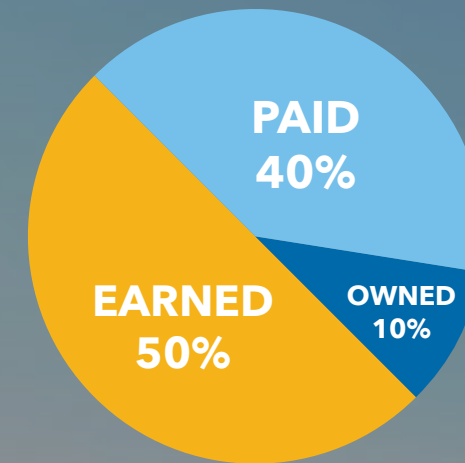
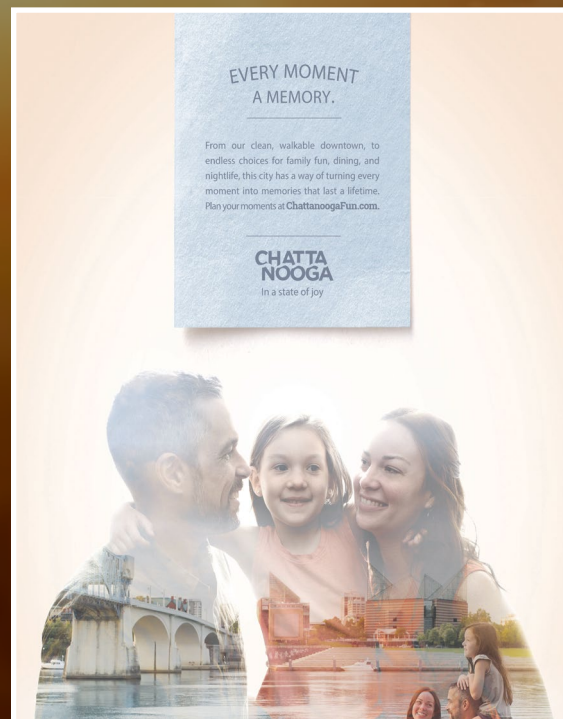
## CVB STAFF

<b>Barry White</b> President and CEO	<b>Katie Long</b> Receptionist
<b>Cindy Dupree</b> Project Manager and Assistant to CEO	<b>Tim Morgan</b> President, Chattanooga Sports Committee
<b>Mary Howard Ade</b> Music Marketing Manager	<b>Brian Murphy</b> Vice President of Sales
<b>Mary Berg</b> Database Administrator and Network Support	<b>Shelda Rees</b> Director of Tourism
<b>Jeanna Davis</b> Membership & Tourism Assistant	<b>Tina Riehle</b> Sports Tourism Specialist
<b>Lori Dodd</b> Director of National Accounts	<b>Kami Rowe</b> Public Relations Specialist
<b>Brant Donlon</b> Sports Account Manager	<b>Dave Santucci</b> Vice President of Marketing
<b>Dawn Gilbert</b> Sales Coordinator	<b>Marci Smith</b> Director of National Accounts
<b>Ashley Holden</b> Sports Account Manager	<b>Morgan Smith</b> Team Leader, Visitor Services
<b>Michelle Lawson</b> Director of Convention & Visitor Services	<b>Jeannie Tatum</b> Director of National Accounts
<b>Candace Litchfield</b> Marketing and Public Relations Manager	<b>Adrienne Terry</b> Director of Multicultural Accounts & Convention Services
	<b>Cameille Vlietstra</b> Controller



# BUILDING THE BRAND

- The “double exposure” campaign highlighted the city in a way that kept true to the unique photographic techniques used by the CVB for the previous campaign. Television commercials, print and digital advertising were medias developed and used during the 2018 campaign.
- **EARLY 2018:** A new Chattanooga Logo with “In a State of Joy” tagline was selected through visitor surveying in support of the new creative.
- **MID 2018:** What’s New was identified as a driver for meeting planners. New 360 videos were produced with supporting digital and print creative. The creatives stand out in the market with a unique way of highlighting the city’s newest additions.



**600 MILLION  
IMPRESSIONS**

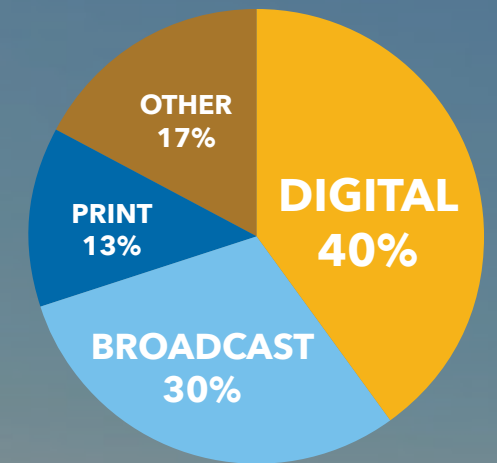


**OWNED MEDIA  
CHATTANOOGAFUN.COM**

**2.8 MILLION  
SESSIONS  
Up 13%**



**CONSUMER EMAIL DATABASE  
46,328 OPT-IN**



**PAID  
ADVERTISING**



**10,000 CHATTAFANATICS**

**4.5 MILLION  
IMPRESSIONS**



**400,000 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS**

**120 MILLION  
IMPRESSIONS**

## CULTURAL TOURISM

- \$3.2 million marketing arts & cultural activities and attractions in Chattanooga
- 70% of Chattanooga advertising and promotions include cultural tourism
- New music festival, series and convention
- 1,985 community events promoted



## TOP PLACEMENTS

**"Sneak a Peek inside the  
World's 10 Best New Museums"**

**Fodor's**Travel

**"Best in the U.S. 2018"**



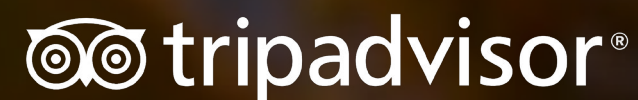
**"Best US Destinations for Views  
from Top to Bottom"**



**"Places to go for Spring Break in the  
South (and What to do)"**



**"14 Best Fall Weekend Getaways  
that aren't in New England"**





## SALES AND SERVICES

### MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

**197**  
EVENTS

**82,834**  
ATTENDEES

**\$39.5 MILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT**

### SPORTING EVENTS

**104**  
EVENTS

**32**  
DIFFERENT SPORTS

**184,000**  
ATTENDEES

**\$74.5 MILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT**

### TOP 5 EVENTS BY ATTENDEES

**5,750**

HOT ROD POWER  
TOUR

**5,000**

CON NOOGA -  
FEAR CONNECTION

**5,000**

H.T. HACKNEY  
TRADE SHOW

**5,000**

SOUTHERN  
ASSOCIATION  
FOR PERFORMING  
ARTS

**2,300**

TENNESSEE HEALTH  
OCCUPATIONS  
STUDENTS OF  
AMERICA

### TOP 5 SPORTING EVENTS BY ATTENDEES

**21,000**

HEAD OF  
THE HOCH

**15,663**

IRONMAN  
70.3 WORLD  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

**6,175**

AAU SOUTHEASTERN  
GIRLS BASKETBALL  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

**11,500**

IRONMAN  
CHATTANOOGA

**8,790**

SCENIC CITY  
SUMMER  
SHOWCASE



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

## About the Process

Don Anderson, Executive Partner of Destination Consultancy Group, led the Chattanooga CVB through the strategic planning process. Don's experience includes more than 250 strategic plans for destinations. A DestinationNEXT survey collected input from community and tourism stakeholders, while meetings with staff, board members, civic leaders, and community stakeholders contributed to the development of the strategic plan.

## Defining Who We Are

**Mission** - Promote and develop visitor experiences for our community's economic and social prosperity

**Vision 2025** - The most competitive and innovative destination organization in the nation

**Value Proposition** - Improve our community's economic and social prosperity through tourism

## Defining Our Culture

- Collaboration
- Vision
- Unwavering Integrity
- Accountability

**Visitor Promise** - Connect visitors to Chattanooga experiences

**Partner Promise** - Champion tourism-related economic opportunities for our community

133

DESTINATIONNEXT  
SURVEYS

## MISSION FOCUS



01

## DRIVE VISITOR DEMAND



02

## STRENGTHEN VISITOR EXPERIENCES



03

## COMMUNICATE RELEVANCE AND VIABILITY



# 2019 - 2021 GOALS & PRIORITY INITIATIVES

## 1) DRIVE VISITOR DEMAND

### Enhance Brand Awareness

- Formulate an inclusive research-based destination brand strategy
- Develop and implement an integrated, measurable marketing and public relations plan
- Optimize digital marketing and social media programming
- Create dedicated Visiting Friends and Relatives and day tripper promotional plan

### Increase Business Development

- Formalize segmented group and leisure business development plan
- Create a comprehensive sports tourism strategy
- Review and improve all group and leisure visitor services

## 2) STRENGTHEN VISITOR EXPERIENCES

### Develop Visitor Experiences

- Assess and prepare a dedicated cultural tourism strategy
- Assess existing destination assets and commission a tourism master plan
- Create and market packages based on visitor interests
- Evaluate and provide an upgraded destination and hospitality training program

## 3) COMMUNICATE RELEVANCE AND VIABILITY

### Enhance Community Relations and Advocacy

- Create and implement a tourism advocacy plan
- Reinvent existing membership/partnership program
- Collaborate with partner organizations on common issues and opportunities

### Maximize Organizational Effectiveness

- Implement finance and governance assessment recommendations and best practices
- Evaluate Sports Committee relationship and determine optimal long-term plan
- Evaluate CVB office and visitor center location alternatives
- Ensure long-term commitment of existing public investment and investigate new funding sources
- Achieve Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) designation
- Conduct an organizational technology audit and plan



A person is seen from a first-person perspective, suspended in a paraglider harness. They are wearing a grey jacket and a helmet. The paraglider's lines and a portion of the canopy are visible at the top of the frame. Below, a vast, green valley stretches out, with rolling hills and dense forests. In the distance, blue-toned mountains rise against a clear sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of adventure and natural beauty.

# CHATTANOOGA

In a state of joy

A special thank you to our partners, especially the Hamilton County Commissioners and Mayor, for your dedicated and ongoing investment in improving our community's economic and social prosperity through tourism.

Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau  
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[ChattanoogaFun.com](http://ChattanoogaFun.com)