



# 2022



## Tourism Community Report



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## Celebrating the People Who Made Tourism Magic

### To Our Valued Partners, Community Members And Stakeholders:

And just like magic, the pandemic's impact on travel and tourism was over!

Well, not really. But we were all surprised and amazed at how positive 2022 was for SoIN's tourism economy. Hotel sales beat forecasts; festivals were packed full; attraction admissions grew and people were dining out again with reservations required in many restaurants.

So, things were good. Or better. But it sure wasn't magic. Lots of hard work by businesses, their employees and communities during and since the darkest days of the pandemic set the stage for our destination's success last year.

What did Covid reveal about the people of SoIN who practice the craft of hospitality? They are flexible, determined, ingenious, full of grit, and most of all, dedicated to serving our community and our visitors. A disappearing workforce and ballooning costs still make businesses feel like they're on stage, about to get sawed in half. But the smooth delivery of friendly visitor experiences continues, thanks to the hours of training and rehearsal (preparation) carried out backstage.

It's not a trick how SoIN Tourism contributes to a successful community. A talented team, backed by a board and elected leaders, supports tourism's growth as we all put on a great show for visitors that improves our residents' quality-of-life.

Whether you're the server, the ticket-seller, the performer, the spotlight-operator, the manager, or you just offered a smile to the audience – I mean to a visitor, maybe we do make a little magic in the show that is tourism in SoIN.

We certainly know how to send people back home with great memories of a vibrant and friendly place. So, yeah, that's pretty magical. Thanks for performing your role and for supporting ours.

**Jim Epperson, CDME, CTA**  
*Executive Director*

**Dylan Fisher**  
*Board President*

# Tourism in Clark & Floyd Counties

## Tourism's Economic Impact, 2020\*

**\$340**  
**Million**  
in Tourism Spending

- Visitor spending on hotel, food & beverage, rental homes, shopping, recreation, etc.
- From visitors from Indiana, other states, & international destinations
- On leisure & business trips
- Overnight or day trips



Total traveler spending supported **4,751** Jobs

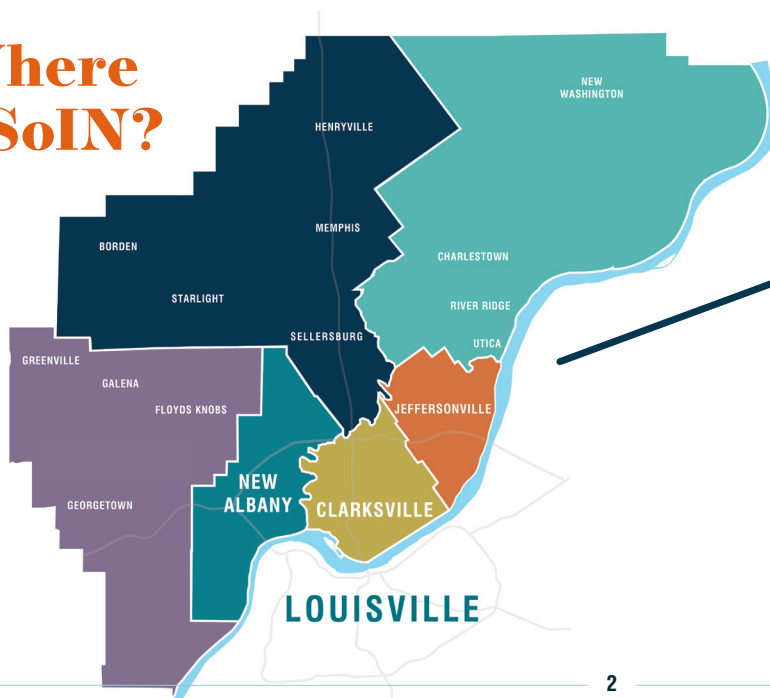


**57¢** of every tourism dollar stayed in Clark and Floyd Counties

\*Most recent economic impact data

Source: 2020 Economic Contribution of Tourism in Clark-Floyd Region, Rockport Analytics

## Where is SoIN?



# Partner Support

SoIN Tourism leads and supports the visitor industry, marketing our destination as a whole to individuals, groups, and others to drive visitation. Partner support is a critical part of our mission.



## Marketing

- Advertise to markets outside of SoIN (Clark and Floyd Counties)
- Provide cooperative marketing matching funds to tourism businesses/events in SoIN
- Produce high quality communications to social media and email marketing audiences (50,000)
- Acquire consumer leads for SoIN Tourism's marketing channels



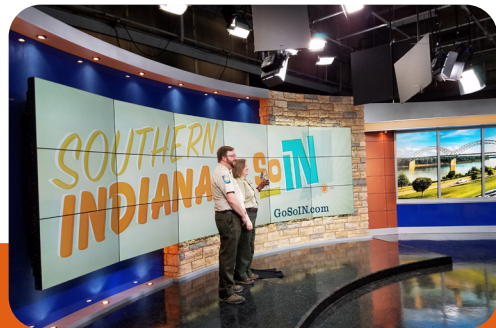
## Visitor Services

- Employ travel counselors who communicate with potential visitors as well as visitors who are already in SoIN
- Staff the mobile visitor center to extend outreach at community events
- Feature partners' info in SoIN Tourism's 2 visitor centers
- Attend regional travel shows to spread the word about SoIN



## Sales

- Sell group-friendly experiences in SoIN to group tour companies, leaders and other influencers
- Provide leads to partners for group business opportunities
- Help SoIN partners secure group business in the meetings, motor coach, event, and sports markets



## Communications

- Produce a Visitor Guide annually to tell the stories of SoIN
- Use media relations to help generate stories in local and national media outlets
- Host travel journalists and influencers in the destination

# Marketing Communications

SoIN Tourism uses focused, integrated marketing and communications campaigns to enhance awareness of the destination. These campaigns help convince people to visit our attractions, stay in our hotels, dine in our restaurants, shop in our retail outlets, and experience our parks.

## Marketing and Paid Advertising

SoIN Tourism uses a combination of traditional and digital advertising media to reach potential visitors.

### Brand Awareness Campaign

SoIN Tourism's brand awareness campaign continued using digital streaming platforms, retargeting, search engine marketing and social media ads. New commercial spots were introduced to the video ad lineup in 2022.



*Where is SoIN?*

*Who is SoIN?*

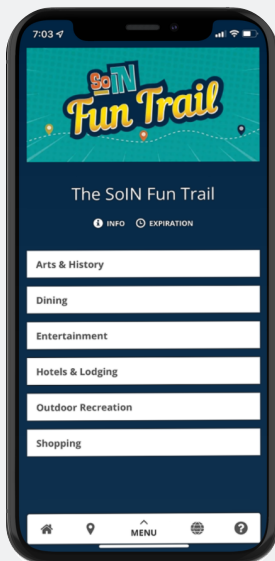


The campaign reached nearly **3.5M** in these target markets:

1. Chicago
2. Ohio: Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus
3. Michigan: Detroit, Grand Rapids and Lansing
4. Indiana: Indianapolis, South Bend and Lafayette
5. Local/regional: Louisville, Evansville and Paducah

## SoIN Promotions Activities

SoIN Tourism collaborated with partners to develop passport programs aimed at driving visitation to tourism businesses. The digital passports included the "SoIN Fun Trail" and "Southern Indiana Outdoor Adventures."



**1,113** passport signups in 2022

**42%** increase in participants over 2021

Participants checked in **1,754** times at **110** of the participating Clark and Floyd County businesses.

## Cooperative Marketing

Several partners took advantage of SoIN Tourism's cooperative marketing program, which uses dollar-for-dollar matching funds to drive awareness of and traffic to their businesses. These partners highlighted events and other specials.



Nearly **\$8K** spent; boosted posts reached **550,000** potential visitors.

\$3,950	Partners' funds
\$3,950	SoIN Tourism matching funds
<hr/>	
\$7,900	<b>Doubled partners' advertising dollars</b>

# Marketing Communications

Continued

## Media Relations

Integrated with SoIN Tourism's marketing campaigns is a media relations campaign promoting the region. In addition to monthly appearances on local NBC affiliate, WAVE TV, SoIN Tourism works with media relations professionals to obtain media coverage about SoIN.



**16** travel journalists and influencers visited SoIN and produced travel stories.



SoIN Tourism generated more than **70** media placements touting tourism in Clark and Floyd Counties.



- "Your Road Trip Guide to Southern Indiana," Robin Raven, Forbes
- "Journeys of Discovery with Tom Wilmer," NPR
- "Southern Indiana getaways that won't cost more than a tank to get there," Kirby Adams, Courier Journal
- "The Midwest Gets its First Climate Adaptive Park," David Kidd, Governing

## Communicating with Potential Visitors

SoIN Tourism engages fans and followers in meaningful conversations about the destination on social media and in email marketing. Our social media channels give potential visitors a positive first impression about Clark and Floyd counties. SoIN Tourism launched a TikTok channel in 2022 and gained 1,046 followers in its first year.



## Email Marketing



**4,501**  
New Email Subscribers  
33% Increase over 2021



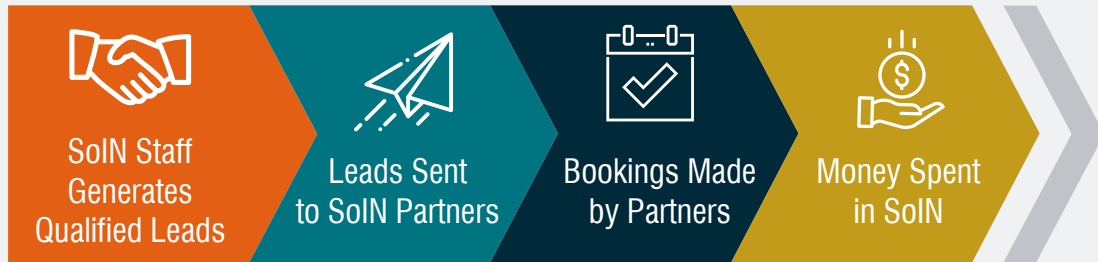
**50%**  
Open Rate  
Industry average: 33%

# Sales & Visitor Services

## Sales

SoIN Tourism staff sells the area to contacts within the group tour (motor coach), sports, event, and meeting markets. Sales activities in 2022 were all in-person shows as industries got back to business after the pandemic.

### How SoIN Tourism Works

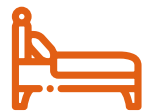


## Groups to SoIN

### Sales activities:

- Attended 5 travel trade industry shows
- Provided trade show notes to all partners on Team SoIN Partner Portal
- Conducted 2 sales missions
- Hosted a familiarization tour, resulting in several booked tours
- 2 site visits

### Tracked Group Tours Who Visited SoIN

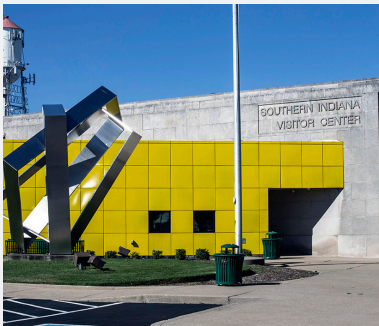


**58 Overnight  
Motor  
Coaches**



**214 Day  
Trips**

Motor coaches contributed **nearly \$1 million** in estimated economic impact



SoIN Tourism operates two visitor information centers: the SoIN Visitor Center in Jeffersonville, and the Henryville Welcome Center at the rest area on southbound interstate 65.

## Visitor Services

### Community Outreach

SoIN Tourism's staff used its Mobile Visitor Center to engage with visitors at events. Launched in 2021, its purpose is to enhance visitors' stay in SoIN.

- **Mobile Visitor Center at 8 events in 2022**
- **Acquired 1,474 consumer leads**
- **Community Events and Consumer Shows**
  - » Spring Street Festival
  - » Abbey Road on the River
  - » SoIN Pride Festival
  - » Jammin' in Jeff (8 weekends)
  - » Clarksville Touch a Truck
  - » AAA travel shows: Louisville & Columbus, Ohio
  - » Howard Steamboat Museum Car Show

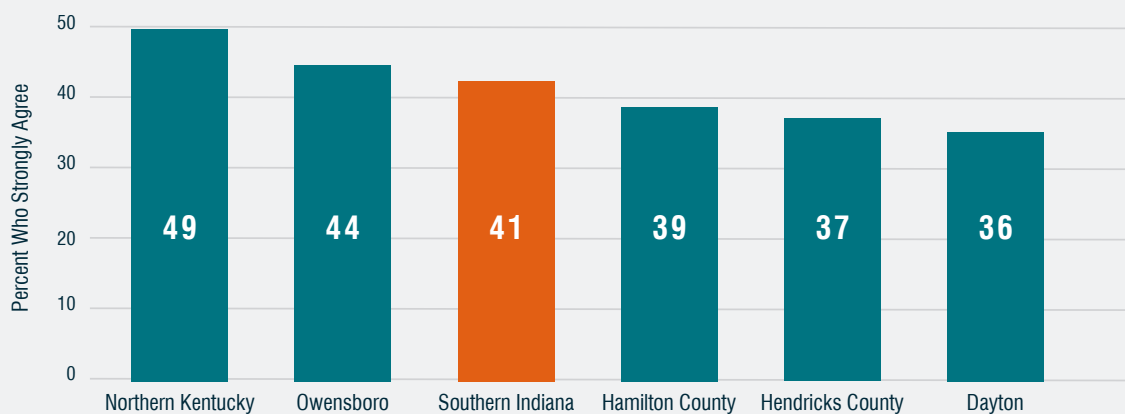


# Research: Image & Halo Effect Study

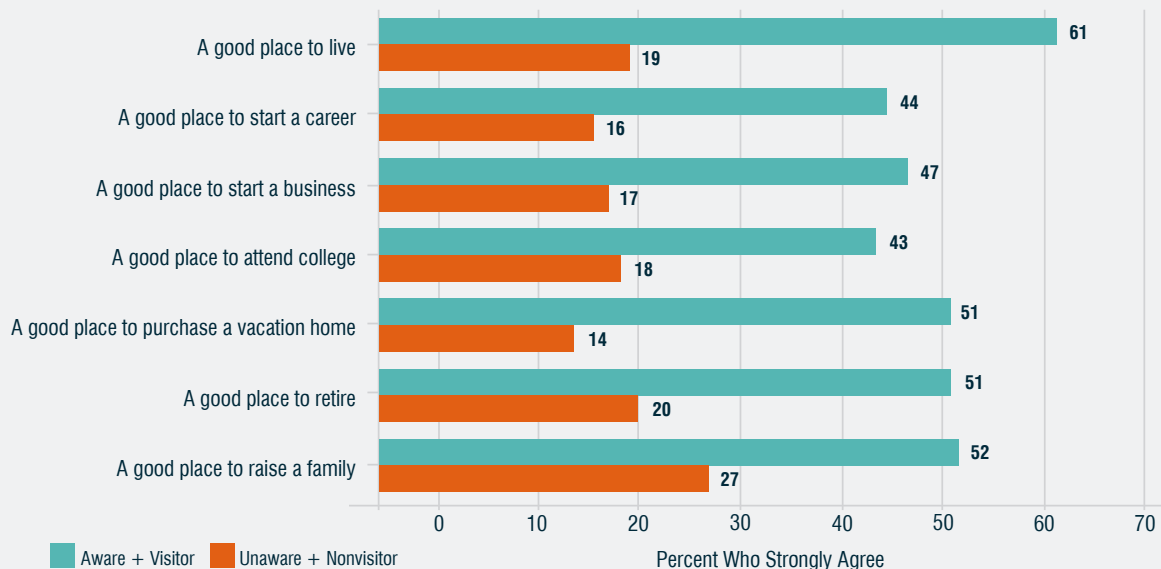
Travelers' perceptions of a destination change when they see the destination's advertising and when they visit the location. Longwoods International designed its Image and Halo Effect study to measure how advertising and visitation impacts travelers' perceptions. SoIN Tourism and Longwoods conducted the study in 2022 to assess SoIN Tourism's 2021-2022 advertising.

**Results showed that travelers who had seen SoIN Tourism's advertising and had visited had a much better perception of the area than those who hadn't.** This "halo effect" extends beyond tourism, creating benefits to the SoIN communities as a whole.

## Southern Indiana's Overall Image vs. Competition - "A Place I'd Really Enjoy Visiting"



## Impact of Ad Awareness plus Visitation on Southern Indiana's Economic Development Image

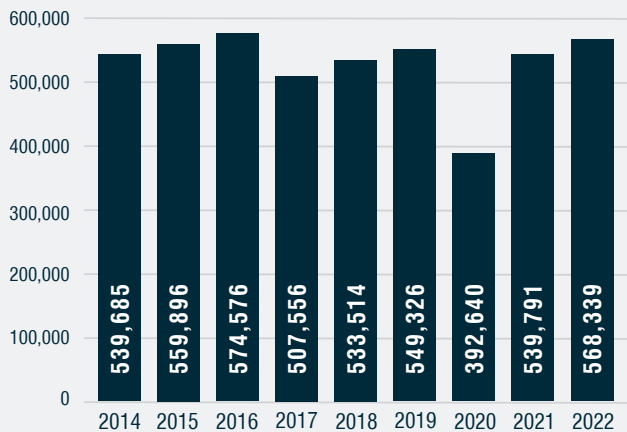


View the full study in the "Plans, Research & Reports" section of SoIN Tourism's business site, [GoSoIN.com/Business](https://GoSoIN.com/Business).

# Clark & Floyd Counties' Lodging Industry Performance

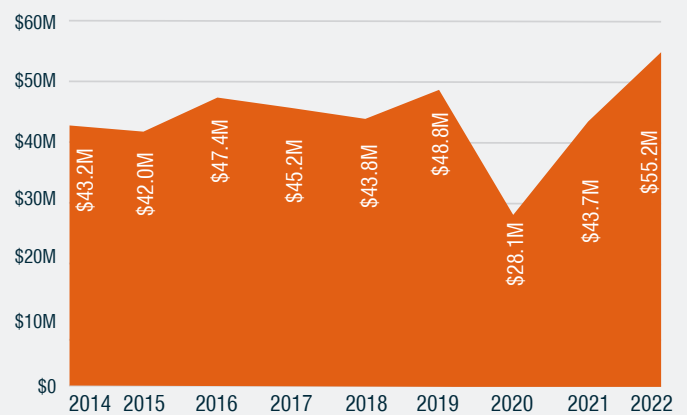
Lodging data is an indicator of the tourism industry's overall health. While increased hotel room inventory contributes to a dip in occupancy levels, demand, Fig. 2, and revenue per available room (RevPAR), Fig. 3, strengthened. Compared to previous years, 2022 lodging sector data show recovery to pre-pandemic levels.

**1 Room Nights Purchased**  
(Demand)



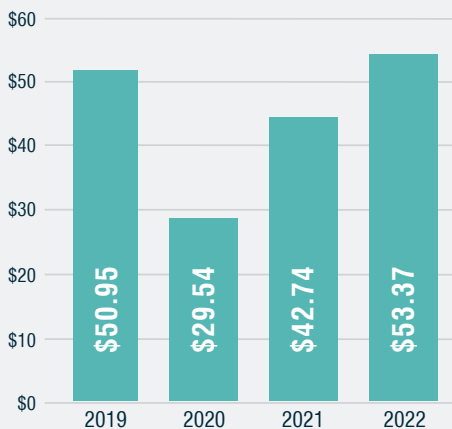
Source: STR, Inc.; republication or other re-use of this data without the express written consent of STR, Inc. is strictly prohibited.

**2 Lodging Revenue**



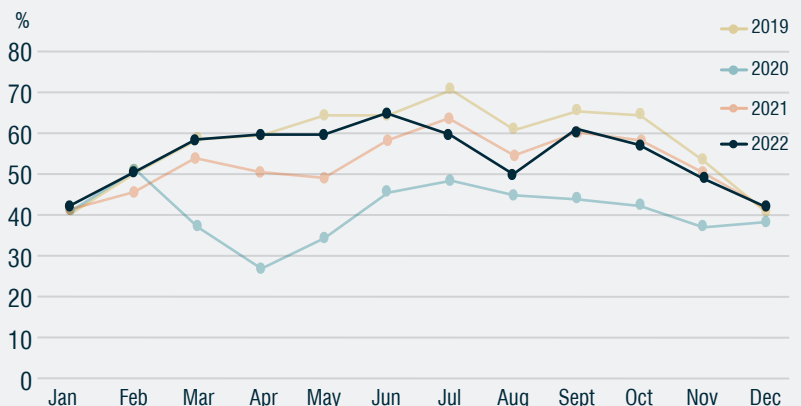
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**3 Revenue Per Available Room**  
(RevPAR)



Source: STR, Inc.; republication or other re-use of this data without the express written consent of STR, Inc. is strictly prohibited.

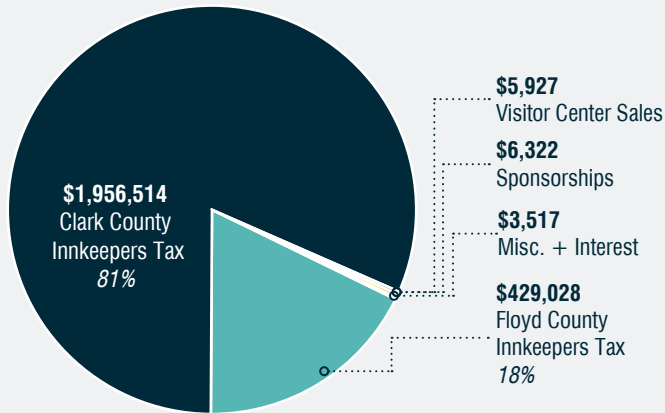
**4 Lodging Occupancy, Clark & Floyd Counties**



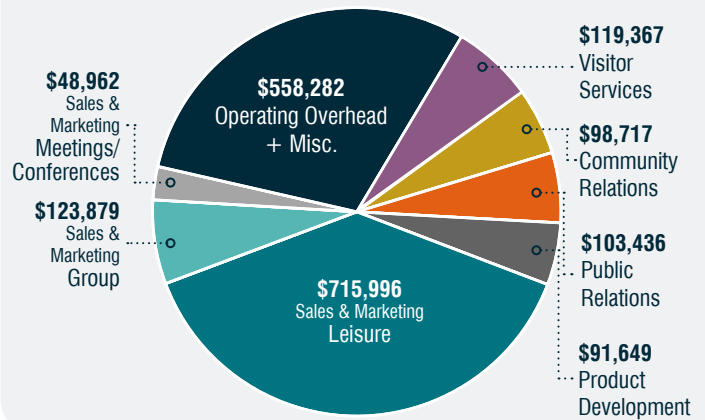
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# SoIN Tourism Financials

## Revenue by Source



## Expenses by Market Segment



## Capital Development

### Tourism Capital Development Bonds

Unique among Indiana's destination marketing organizations is SoIN Tourism's Capital Development Fund, which is used to retire debt in the form of municipal bonds. These bonds are held by our city, town or county partners. The bonds act as seed money for public and private investment in tourism projects within Clark and Floyd Counties.

Bond Description	Transactions	Balance
<b>Jeffersonville Arts &amp; Cultural District</b> September 2017, \$1,000,000 original issue	Beginning Balance 1/1/2022	\$375,138
	Payment on Principal	-\$375,138
	Interest Payment	\$12,810
	<b>Ending Principal 12/31/2022</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>New Albany Visitor &amp; Historic Tourism Generator</b> (Riverfront*, Loop Island & Culbertson), May 2018, \$825,000 original issue  <i>*\$380,000 transferred to Flow Park component from Riverfront component in 2019</i>	Beginning Balance 1/1/2022	\$345,702
	Payment on Principal	-\$345,702
	Interest Payment	\$17,411
	<b>Ending Principal 12/31/2022</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Floyd County new bond issue 8/19/2021</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jeffersonville Depot - \$500,000</li> <li>Clarksville South, parklets &amp; arts district study - \$500,000</li> <li>Floyd County Novaparque Whistlestop - \$200,000</li> <li>Vintage Fire Museum roof - \$125,000</li> <li>River Heritage Conservancy design - \$75,000</li> </ul>	Beginning Balance 1/1/2022	\$1,500,000
	Payment on Principal	\$40,000
	Interest Payment	\$62,441
	<b>Ending Principal 12/31/2022</b>	<b>1,460,000</b>



# SoIN Tourism Personnel

## 2022 Board of Managers

### Officers

**Dylan Fisher, CTA, President**  
Clarksville

**Carlene Bottorff, CTA, Treasurer**  
Jeffersonville

**Mark Bliss, Vice President**  
Floyd County

**Eric Ballenger, Secretary**  
Jeffersonville

### Board Members

**Rosalie Dowell\***  
Floyd County

**John Gilkey**  
Clarksville

**Darci Schiller\***  
Clark County

**Jill Stock\***  
Floyd County

**Pat Harrison**  
New Albany

**Courtney Lewis**  
New Albany

**Tony Singleton**  
Clark County

**Ed Zastawny\***  
Clark County

**Dana Huber**  
Clark County

**Rick Lovan, CTA**  
Jeffersonville

**Connie Sipes**  
New Albany

*\*Partial term*

### Board Attorney

**Michael Gillenwater**

## SoIN Staff

**Jim Epperson, CDME, CTA**  
Executive Director

**Clint Bryant, CTA**  
Digital Marketing Manager

*Travel Counselors*

**Cheryl Neal**

**Sharon Neal**

**Luanne Mattson**  
Chief Marketing Officer

**Nicole Kraemer, CTA**  
Operations Manager

**Athena Fleming**

**Glenn Haven, CTA**

**Katerina Guljas, CTA**  
Visual Content Manager

**Anna Rosales-Crone**  
Communications Manager

**Mike Johnson, CTA**

**Todd Read, CTA**  
Trade & Consumer Sales Manager

**Seth Lieber**  
Visitor Services Coordinator

## Appointing Authorities

Five authorities appoint SoIN Tourism's Board of Managers.

- **Clark County Commissioners**
- **Floyd County Commissioners**
- **Clarksville Town Council**
- **Jeffersonville Mayor**
- **New Albany Mayor**



# 25 +

## New Tourism Businesses Opened or Expanded in SoIN in 2022

