



ANNUAL REPORT

FY2022–23





## Dear Partners,

It's been a remarkable year, filled with its fair share of challenges. Yet, as we ventured into FY 22/23, we did so with renewed confidence and a carefully balanced optimism. Throughout this journey, we've witnessed the power of collaboration, the embrace of best practices, and the consistent presence of strong leadership in our industry.

The Discover Lehigh Valley® team has proven to be adaptable and responsive, making the necessary adjustments to our programs to navigate the ever-shifting terrain of tourism successfully.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to our dedicated board members, elected officials, and our steadfast partners. Every day, I am grateful to work alongside an incredibly talented team. Their unwavering passion, commitment, and professionalism provide me with the utmost confidence that we are destined for ongoing growth and success.

Speaking on behalf of our entire team, I want to extend our sincere thanks for your support and commitment to Discover Lehigh Valley® and the broader hospitality industry. Your contributions have played a pivotal role in our collective efforts to overcome challenges and illuminate a brighter path forward for our region.

With the highest regard,

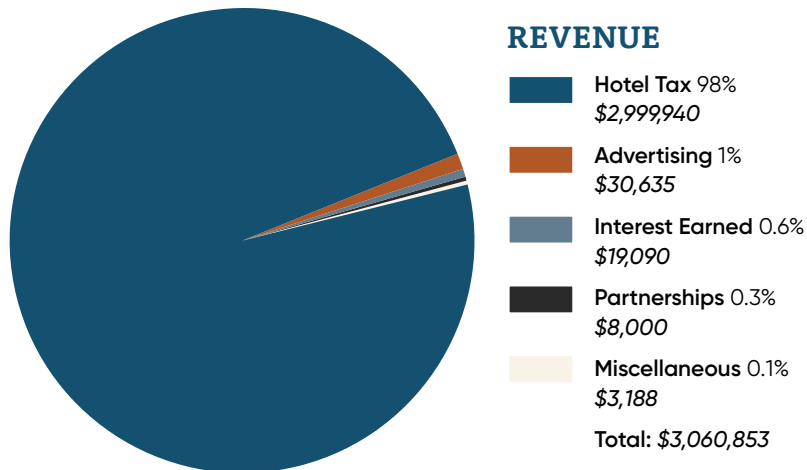
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alex Michaels". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alex" and last name "Michaels" clearly distinguishable.

**Alex Michaels**  
President & CEO

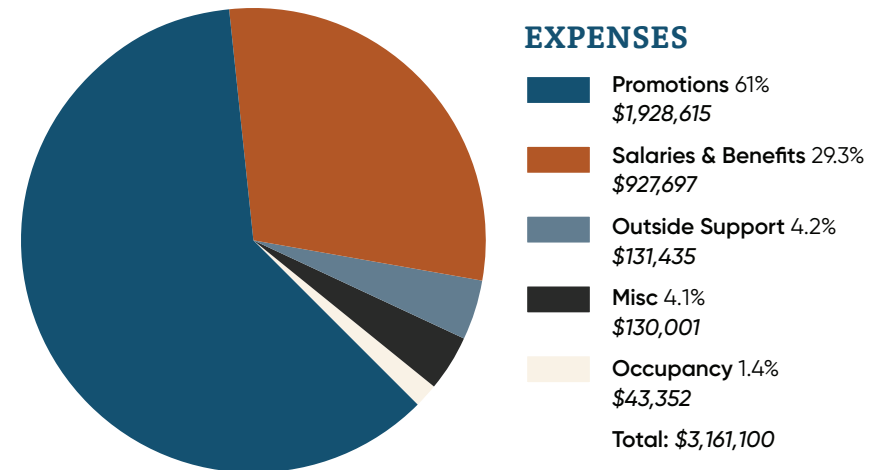
## Financials

Net hotel tax revenues finished the year at \$2,999,940, \$289,160 (10.7%) ahead of budget. Net operating loss finished the year with an \$83,840 loss / use of reserves, \$268,867 better than the budgeted \$352,707 loss due to promotional spending of \$1,928,615 exceeded budget by \$85,460 (4.6%). Fully-loaded labor costs were \$927,697, \$81,910 (8.1%) under budget. Cash balances grew by an additional \$455,939 (12.9%) year-over-year.

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES



## Research & Data

Discover Lehigh Valley® contracts with Smith Travel Research, also referred to as STR, the recognized leader in hospitality benchmarking around the globe. DLV analyzes a monthly report and utilizes traveler sentiment derived from Longwoods International and insights from migration data on behalf of Tourism Economics to aggregate destination insights.

- **Average Daily Rate (ADR)** is the measure of average rate paid for rooms sold. The top performing month for Average Daily Rate was July 2022 at \$131.
- **Hotel Occupancy** is the percentage of available rooms sold, and occupancy in Lehigh Valley peaked in August 2022 at 78%.
- **Revenue Per Available Room** is the revenue generated per hotel room regardless of if rooms are occupied or not. RevPAR peaked in August 2022 at \$99.

Supply is the amount of nightly rooms available at the destination. Total room supply peaked in the region in June, 2023 at 6,865 nightly rooms available.

**\$119.62**

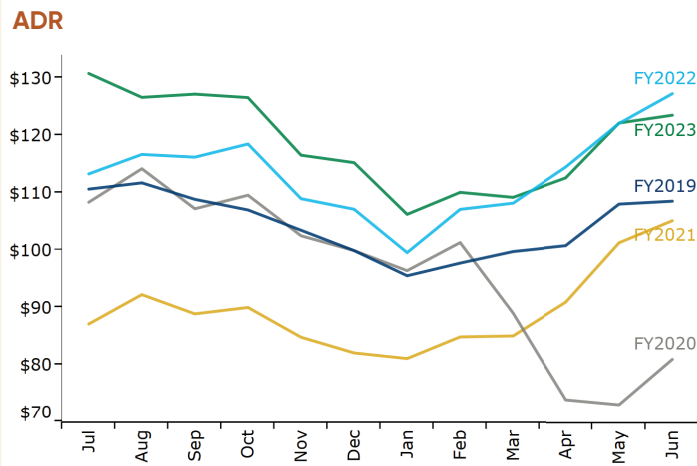
AVERAGE DAILY RATE

**67.6%**

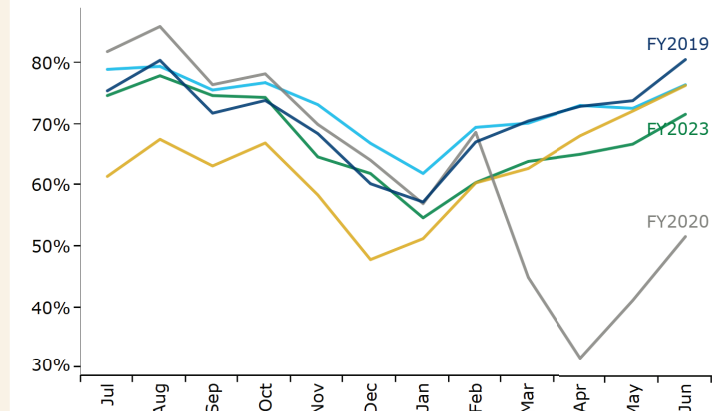
HOTEL OCCUPANCY

**\$80.84**

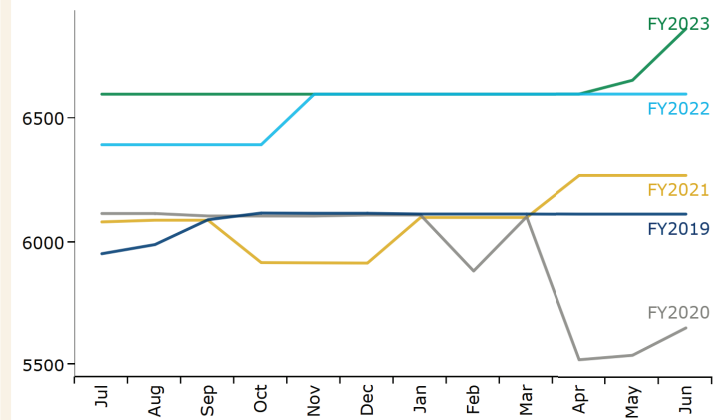
REVENUE PER  
AVAILABLE ROOM



### Occupancy



### Daily Supply





## Research and Data, *continued*

### Lehigh Valley Travel Market (Day & Overnight Trips)

- 16.6 Million Total Trips (+3.5% vs. 2021)
- \$681M Overnight Visitor Spending
- \$1.3 Billion in Total Visitor Spending (Day and Overnight) (+20.1% vs. 2021)

Source: 2021/22 Travel USA Visitor Profile, Longwoods International

### Season of Trip for Overnight Trips

- January–March: 23%
- April–June: 25%
- July–September: 25%
- October–December: 27%

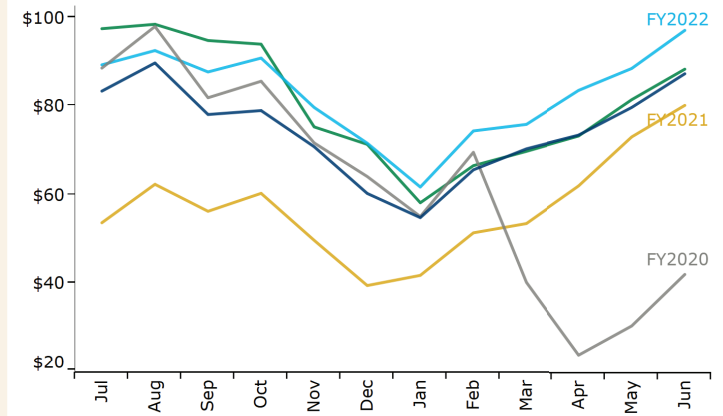
**\$1.3B**

TOTAL VISITOR SPENDING  
(DAY & OVERNIGHT)  
+20.1% VS. 2021

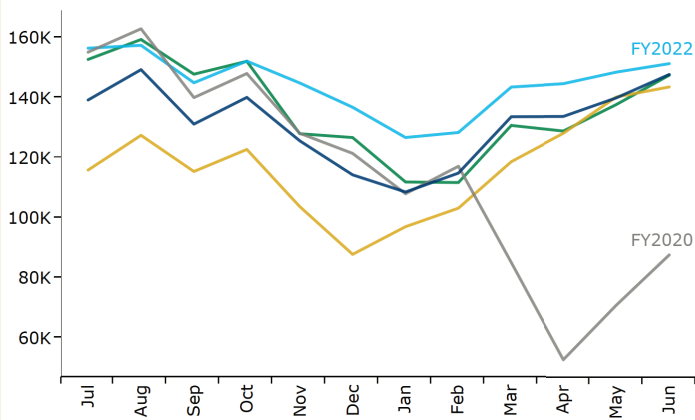
**\$681M**

OVERNIGHT VISITOR SPENDING

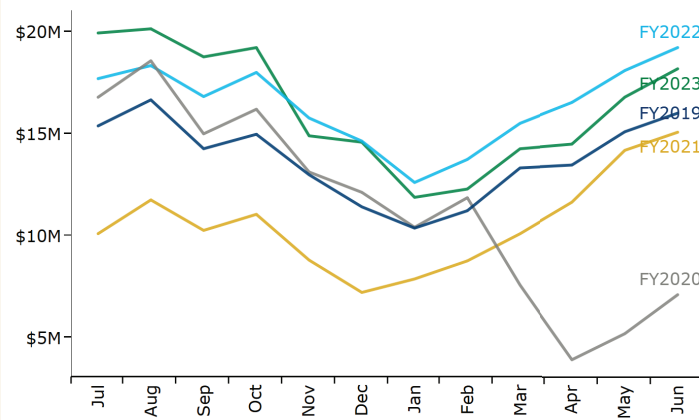
### RevPAR



### Room Demand



### Room Revenue



### Looking Ahead:

Discover Lehigh Valley® will continue to analyze travel patterns regionally, nationally, and internationally. By examining data related to lodging, air passenger visits, visitor behavior, and traveler opinions, DLV will be well-prepared to provide valuable insights to our partners and community. These insights will, in turn, support the promotion of our local tourism economy.

## Research and Data, *continued*

The region continues to experience growth in attractions and hotel room supply. In the upcoming fiscal year, there are intentions to expand well-known attractions while simultaneously introducing entirely new ones. There will also be significant spotlight on the Historic Moravian Bethlehem District, which is a nominee for UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Greater focus is being placed on the utilization of digital marketing strategies and tactics. Discover Lehigh Valley® (DLV) has solidified a year-long partnership with Visit Pennsylvania to fully leverage our marketing resources. This partnership represents the largest grant match that DLV has ever engaged in with the state.

DLV's efforts are also dedicated to residents and local businesses. We are diligently expanding the Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program, empowering individuals and enterprises to serve as ambassadors of our vibrant community.

41%

of the out-of-town visitors to Lehigh Valley attractions are from New York & Newark.

80%

of overnight visitors are repeat visitors

35%

of festival patrons are from out-of-town and predominantly from Philadelphia.

Source: 2022 Near Census Bureau, Tourism Economics



## Public Relations

Any event and new happening within the Lehigh Valley was captured by regional and national media as Discover Lehigh Valley's relationship with Vault Communications secured 430 placements for Lehigh Valley. While leveraging a strategic media relations plan inclusive of targeted pitches, seasonal press releases, and personalized media invites, Lehigh Valley landed in national and regional headlines totaling a publicity value of \$273,090.97, while reaching more than 33 million readers.

### 2022-2023 Earned Media

430

Media placements

33,390,421

Impressions

\$273,090.97

In publicity value



## EDITORIAL HEADLINES

"19 Fun Things To Do in Allentown PA" *MSN Travel*

"We love Philly and Pittsburgh, but check out these smaller Pennsylvania cities" *USA Today*

"Pennsylvania hotel named Best Historic Hotel for second year in a row" *USA Today 10Best*

"The best fall day trips from NYC" *TimeOut*

"The Most Charming Holiday Markets in the USA" *MSN Travel*

"Bike racers to descend on Easton once again for late May's Easton Twilight Criterium" *Lehigh Valley Live*

"Discover Lehigh Valley launches new website" *Lehigh Valley Business*

"Fall foliage: Where to go leaf peeping in Philly and beyond" *Metro Philadelphia*

"Rejoice! 10 Magical Christmas Vacations in the U.S." *MSN Travel*

"The 15 Best German Christmas Markets in the U.S." *Fodor's Travel*

"Art aficionados will love these 9 hotels with museum-worthy collections" *USA Today*

"Why the Lehigh Valley is meant to be your new spring destination" *Metro New York*

"This is Pennsylvania's 'most underrated' spot: Reader's Digest" *PennLive.com*

"Discover Lehigh Valley launches new Ambassador program" *Lehigh Valley Business Journal*

## Marketing & Advertising

### VISITPA CAMPAIGNS

This past year, we strengthened our relationship with the PA Tourism Office (VisitPA.com) to market Lehigh Valley. Discover Lehigh Valley® contributed **\$500,000**, which was matched by the state for a total spend of **\$1,100,000** advertising the region to the DMAs of New York, Northern New Jersey, Philadelphia, HLLY, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. This was the largest advertising spend during a fiscal year in Discover Lehigh Valley's history.

The co-operative spend allowed for use of many tactics, otherwise not available based on budget limitations for these top markets. Tactics included cable television and video streaming networks like Roku and Apple-TV, programmatic video & pre-roll on YouTube, high trafficked digital bulletins, transit, Google Responsive Display, and more. A combined 53,437,606 impressions were served through this collaboration.

Creative elements transitioned with the seasons, while pairing with VisitPA.com's "The Uncommon is Calling".

### Additional Advertising: New Jersey Family, Lehigh Valley, and Adams Outdoor

DLV repurposed campaigns to speak to Lehigh Valley locals, to enhance regional pride and show off quality of life. Local billboards with Adams Outdoor aligned to the VisitPA.com co-operative through both digital and static bulletins. Lehigh Valley Style and New Jersey Family magazines touted relatable campaign content through digital newsletters and glossy print ads.

### International Marketing

The marketing team continued supporting Historic Moravian Bethlehem's progress towards **World Heritage Site status** as the trans-national nomination was signed, along with the Moravian communities of Denmark, Germany, and Northern Ireland (the first of this kind spanning multi-countries). DLV reached international connections through a paid partnership with **BrandUSA** and **VisitTheUSA.com** (15 sites & 8 languages), as well as collaborative efforts through **VisitPA.com** and **IPW**, the nation's leading international travel trade show.

53,437,606

Total Digital Impressions

902,428

Total Clicks

1.69%

Click Through Rate (CTR)

8,180,921

Total Video Completions





## Marketing & Advertising, *continued*

### EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is one of the most important tools in DLV's arsenal. It's cost-effective, time efficient, and can be used to create highly personalized messages to specific target audiences highlighting various partners and content pieces created by our team. DLV implemented new automated email programs to improve our overall email metrics, deliverability rates, and ensure our audience is staying engaged.

#### Automated campaigns

**Welcome Campaign:** Over the course of three emails, the program ensures enews consumers stay engaged.

**Re-Engagement Campaign:** Encourages consumers to update their email preferences. This program improves our inbox deliverability and organically ensures that we have clean marketing lists.

#### Overall Enews Metrics:

- Average Open Rate: 37.21%
- Average Click to Open Rate: 8.41%
- Average Click Rate: 3.15%

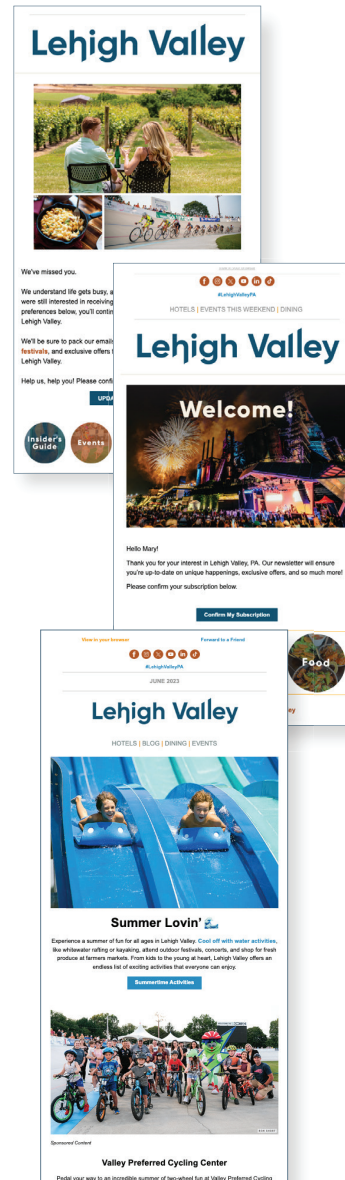
#### Consumer Leads

Leads are the sources from which we receive requests for info about Lehigh Valley. Leads come from our website through forms, social media posts and ads, Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program enrollments, as well as our presence in Visit PA's Happy Traveler Guide and VisitPA.com. Leads educate us about our reach, consumer interests, and how we are getting in front of them.

9,525

Total Leads

Source	# of Leads
DiscoverLehighValley.com Enewsletter Sign Ups	5,602
Lehigh Valley Ambassador Enrollment	472
VisitPA.com Inquiries	1,945
VisitPA Happy Traveler Inquiries	1,506



## Lehigh Valley

### A shared vision for destination marketing

In FY2022-23, DLV and Lehigh Valley Economic Development developed new branding for our organizations, as well as the region. Alisa Lopano, Director of Creative Services, spearheaded the project.

#### REBRANDING GOALS:

- Unify brands of DLV + LVEDC through consistent use of logos
- Improve the prominence of Lehigh Valley
- Create a practical and usable logo; successful in all our use cases, and for partners to utilize in future

#### THE TIMELINE:

- November 2022: Project kick off
- January & February 2023: Design
- March–May 2023: Concept reviews with DLV & LVEDC teams; Tweaking of the concepts
- June 2023: Finalize logo and brand guidelines
- July 2023: Announced to boards of directors
- August 2023: Announced to public



## Social Media

Discover Lehigh Valley's social media channels aim to provide those traveling to the area or the locals with all the great offerings in the Lehigh Valley area. Whether you are looking for activities to do around the holidays, a new restaurant or brewery to try or ready to explore a few incredible hiking trails, DLV has what you are looking for. Through organic content to build up engagement and awareness, running targeted social media advertisements and joining new channels, the marketing team has driven traffic and engagement on the website over the last year. For the 2022-23 FY, DLV saw a **+8% growth YoY** in total social follower count and a **+86% growth YoY** in new users to the website. The DLV TikTok account was launched to expand on its current audience through video content as well as posting more Reels content to Instagram. With the rise in short-form video content, this was a great opportunity for DLV to share what is happening in the Lehigh Valley area through a new lens.

## PAID SOCIAL EFFORTS

DLV saw success in boosting several posts and running several dark ads on a holiday campaign, touting things to do, lights displays, and of course the Christmas City. We also ran an ad for e-newsletter sign-ups for 11 months out of the year.

## Boosting social posts

Taking some of the budget to boost a few Facebook and Instagram posts to help increase awareness and engagement

### Facebook boost totals

- 1,211 landing page views
- 32,753 reached
- 55,701 impressions
- 2.52% CTR
- \$0.12 cost per landing page view
- 1,641 total post engagements

### Instagram boost totals

- 2,348 link clicks
- 57,569 reached
- 78,290 impressions
- 3.00% CTR
- \$0.22 per link click
- 10,420 total post engagements

# 275,350

fans (+8% growth YoY)

### Channel Growth

- **Total Social Fans**  
275,350 fans  
(+8% growth YoY)
- **Facebook**  
159,755 followers
- **Instagram**  
48,294 followers
- **X (formerly known as Twitter):** 50,200 followers
- **TikTok:** 9,143 followers
- **LinkedIn:**  
6,658 followers
- **YouTube:**  
1,300 subscribers

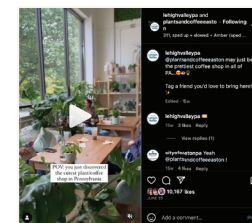
### Looking ahead

Looking ahead, we plan to increase paid social efforts in 2023-24.

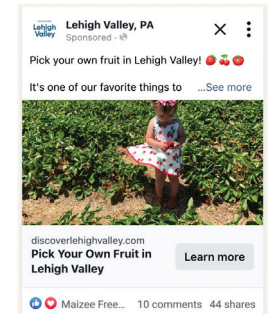
## TOP POSTS



**TOP ORGANIC**  
**Best Playgrounds**  
182,985 reached  
807 reactions  
229 comments  
247 shares



**TOP ORGANIC**  
**Plants & Coffee**  
200,470 reached  
10.1K likes  
218 comments



**TOP PAID**  
**Pick Your Own Fruit**  
29,069 reached  
42,785 impressions  
1,067 link clicks  
2.85% CTR



**TOP PAID**  
**LV IronPigs Opening Night**  
42,137 reached  
59,518 impressions  
1,596 link clicks  
2.68% CTR

## Social Media (continued)

### Driving traffic to DiscoverLehighValley.com

Facebook advertising focused on driving users back to the homepage on DLV's website, information on holiday events and signing up for DLV's newsletter.

#### Holiday Landing Page

- Optimized for traffic
- Scheduled from 11/10/22 - 12/15/22
- 7,798 landing page views
- 170,329 reached
- 371,347 impressions
- 2.37% CTR
- \$0.32 cost per landing page view

#### Holiday Light Displays

- Optimized for traffic
- Scheduled from 12/1/22 - 12/20/22
- \$1,250 spent
- 9,115 landing page views
- 161,944 reached
- 346,425 impressions
- 3.11% CTR
- \$0.14 cost per landing page view

#### Christmas City

- Optimized for reach
- Scheduled from 11/10/22 - 11/30/22
- \$1,250 spent
- 219,073 reached
- 721,254 impressions
- 0.09% CTR
- \$5.71 cost per 1,000 people reached

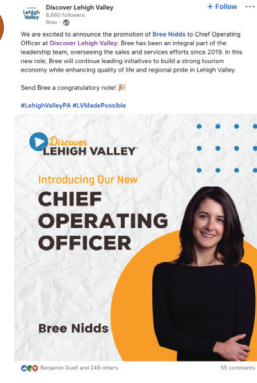
#### Newsletter Sign Up – Aug 2022

- Optimized for conversions/newsletter sign ups
- Scheduled from 8/19/22 - 6/30/23
- \$6,283.47 spent
- 14,836 newsletter sign ups
- 390,479 reached
- 1,389,392 impressions
- 1.25% CTR
- \$0.42 cost per newsletter sign up

## TOP POSTS



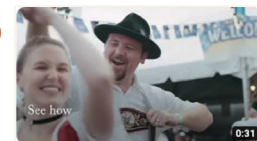
**TOP TIKTOK**  
**Plants & Coffee**  
505.5K views  
58.1K likes  
649 comments  
10.7K saves



**TOP LINKEDIN**  
**Bree Nidds Promotion**  
7,506 impressions  
295 clicks  
250 likes  
55 comments  
8.01% engagement rate



**TOP TWEET**  
**Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program**  
1,278 impressions  
5 link clicks  
1.3% engagement rate



**TOP YOUTUBE VIDEO**  
**See How Lehigh Valley Does Festivals**  
333K views

## Website

The team's marketing tactics to engage visitors across social channels, very targeted paid media efforts, and sponsorships contributed to an increase in website traffic to DiscoverLehighValley.com. Nearly 2 million users engaged with Discover Lehigh Valley® from July 1, 2022 through the fiscal year, ending June 30, 2023. Those users searched content resulting in 5.7 million pageviews.

1,962,510

USERS

2,732,312

SESSIONS

5,683,485

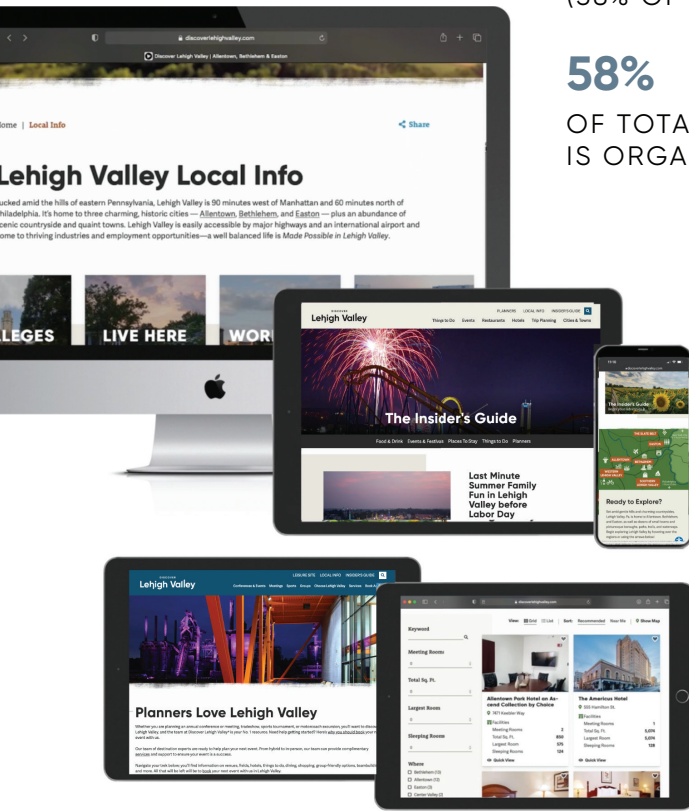
PAGEVIEWS

1,142,470

ORGANIC SEARCH USERS  
(58% OF TOTAL TRAFFIC)

58%

OF TOTAL TRAFFIC  
IS ORGANIC



### Top 10 Locations of Visitors to Website

1. Pennsylvania 694,371
2. New York 408,262
3. Virginia 135,316
4. New Jersey 127,342
5. Maryland 76,626
6. Georgia 71,944
7. Florida 68,984
8. Ohio 66,636
9. North Carolina 59,054
10. Michigan 57,021

### Visitors by Gender

56.4% FEMALE

43.6% MALE

## AN AWARD-WINNING WEBSITE



### Gold

#### dotCOMM awards

An international competition honoring excellence in web creativity and digital communication.



### Silver

#### Davey Awards

Honors the achievements of the "Creative Davids" who derive their strength from big ideas, rather than stratospheric budgets.



### Award of Distinction

#### Communicator Awards

Travel & Tourism website category for the 29th Annual Communicator Awards



### Honorable Mention

#### Hermes Creative Awards,

Website Design category



## Partnership

900+

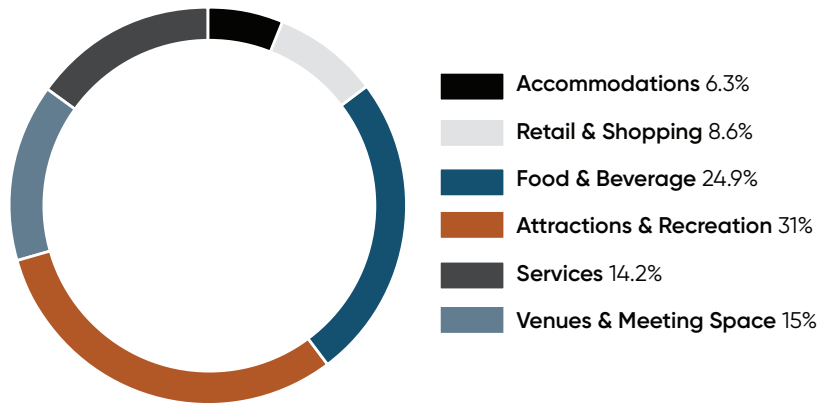
Total partners

43

New partners  
onboarded

266,852

Partner Referrals



290

Number of Partner Accounts that logged into Extranet

### Breakdown of what partners updated:

- **Accounts:** 93 vs. 85 previous year
- **Listings:** 98 vs. 63 previous year
- **Coupons Added:** 74 vs. 35 previous year
- **Leisure Events Added:** 486 vs. 254 previous year



## Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program

The Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program has proven to be a remarkable initiative that has had a profound impact on our community. This program, which aims to promote tourism, economic development, and quality of life in the Lehigh Valley region, has successfully ignited a passion and advocacy of residents. This initiative serves as a shining example of how collaboration and dedication can transform a region and create lasting positive change.

One of the most significant impacts of the Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program is its contribution to community pride. By providing residents with up to date information and training about our region, they are prepared to showcase all the new and fun experiences to tourists and visitors. The program has participants from various industries, such as hospital-ity, retail, corporate, nonprofit, education and entertainment.

By highlighting the area's unique cultural heritage, natural beauty, and recreational opportunities, the program has

**May 11, 2023**

LAUNCH DATE

**404**

ENROLLED AMBASSADORS  
(as of June 30, 2023)

**314**

AMBASSADORS FULLY  
COMPLETED PROGRAM

**78%**

COMPLETION RATE  
(average online course completion  
rate of 5-15%)

fostered a sense of pride and belonging among locals. It has also contributed to the preservation and enhancement of historical sites, parks, and public spaces, making the region more livable and attractive for residents and visitors alike.



### Looking ahead

Our vision for the Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program is to foster positive impact in our community by empowering individuals to take the pledge and become ambassadors of our region. Through education, engagement, and collaboration, we aim to continue creating a network of ambassadors who are passionate about promoting the Lehigh Valley's unique culture, vibrant economy, and exceptional quality of life. By showcasing the region's assets and opportunities, we believe the program will attract businesses, tourists, and residents, ultimately contributing to the continued growth and prosperity of the Lehigh Valley.

**48%**

of visitors are visiting friends and family

Source: 2021/22 Travel USA Visitor Profile, Longwoods International



## Sales, Services, & Sports

The Sales and Services team at DLV has cultivated collaborations with our valued partners, fostering engagements with both regional and national meeting and conference planners, as well as sports event organizers, across a variety of attended and hosted industry events.

### CONFERENCES ATTENDED:

- Meeting Professionals International (MPI) Middle Pennsylvania Chapter Meeting and Educational Events
- MPI New Jersey Chapter Meeting and Educational Events
- MPI Philadelphia Chapter Meeting and Educational Events
- Professional Convention Management Association Chapter Meeting and Educational Events
- MPI New Jersey Meets Conference
- Destinations International Sales & Convention Services Summit
- Sports Event & Travel Association, Annual Symposium
- Sports Event & Travel Association, Women's Summit
- TEAMS Conference
- Pennsylvania Sports Chapter Meetings

### HOSTED GROUPS AND PLANNERS:

- Pennsylvania Bar Association Familiarization Tour: October 19-22, 2022
- Keystone Welcome Centers Familiarization Tour: June 2, 2023

### DLV SALES / HOTELIER EVENTS:

- Sales Update Meeting – The Americus Hotel: November 10, 2022



### CONFERENCES & MEETINGS HELD:

**40**

Meeting and convention opportunities generated for the region

**4,500+**

Booked hotel room nights for the future  
(over double compared to FY 21/22)

### SPORTING EVENTS HOSTED

**25**

Sports event opportunities generated for the region

**16,000+**

Booked hotel room nights for the future



## Sales, Services, & Sports, *continued*

### THINKING GLOBALLY

Discover Lehigh Valley® was delighted to join the delegation of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in the City of Schwäbisch Gmünd in Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The city celebrated 30 years of the Sister City relationship formalized in 1991. The delegation from Bethlehem included the City of Bethlehem, Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Moravian University, Bethlehem Schwäbisch Gmünd Association, Arts Quest, and Artist, Ann Schlegel. July, 2022

Presented at IMEX America, the largest international meetings and conventions trade show in the USA. October 10-13, 2022.

Bree Nidds attended the IPW International Leisure Travel Trade Show in San Antonio, TX May 22-24, 2023.

### Other Noteworthy Items:

- Bree Nidds attended the Professional Convention Management Association Convening Leaders Annual Meeting: January 8-11, 2023.
- Maizee Freeman participated as a panelist at a Meeting Professional International Middle Pennsylvania Education Event: February 8, 2023
- Maizee Freeman and Bree Nidds attended the Destinations International Sales and Services Summit: March 8-10, 2023
- Celebrated Global Meetings Industry Day: March 30, 2023
- National Tourism & Travel Week Celebration, Partner Breakfast and Panel: May 8-12, 2023

### Wind Creek® Bethlehem Expansion

Wind Creek® Bethlehem's expansion, which officially opened in April of 2023, added a total of 37,000 square feet of meeting space and 260+ hotel rooms to the region. Wind Creek now has a total of 61,000 square feet of meeting space and 550+ hotel rooms at their property, making it the largest in Lehigh Valley. Looking ahead, there are 2,000+ booked hotel room nights at the property.

### Future events at Wind Creek® Bethlehem:

- Pennsylvania Municipal League, 2023 Municipal Leadership Summit
- Fraternal Order of Police, 2024 PA State Convention
- Color & Culture, 2024 Latino Health Summit
- Pennsylvania Society of Association Executives, 2024 PASAE Connections Conference
- Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association, 2024 & 2025 Conference & Expo