DISCOVER

Lehigh Valley

ANNUAL REPORT

FY23-24



OUR MISSION

Discover Lehigh Valley® builds the region's economy and image through destination marketing that increases the number of leisure and business visitors, the number of nights they stay, and the number of things they do in the two-county area of Lehigh and Northampton Counties. These marketing efforts also enhance the quality of life and sense of hometown pride for Lehigh Valley, PA residents.



Dear Partners,

This past year has been extraordinary, marked by many successes. As we entered FY 23/24, we did so with renewed confidence and cautious optimism. Over the course of this year, we've seen the incredible impact of collaboration, the application of industry-leading practices, and the strength of steady leadership within our sector.

The Discover Lehigh Valley® (DLV) team has consistently demonstrated adaptability and resilience, refining our programs to successfully navigate the ever-changing landscape of tourism.

I want to express our deep appreciation to our dedicated board members, elected officials, and loyal partners. Each day, I feel fortunate to work alongside such a talented team whose passion, commitment, and professionalism give me full confidence in our continued growth and future success.

On behalf of our entire team, I extend our sincere thanks for your unwavering support of DLV and the broader hospitality industry. Your contributions have been essential in helping us overcome obstacles and create a brighter future for our region.

Sincerely,

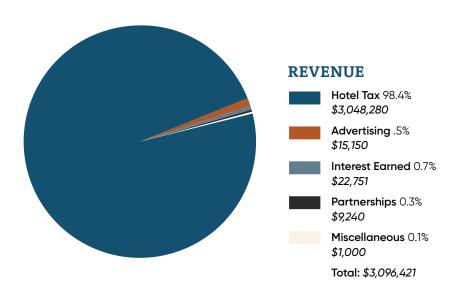
Alex Michaels

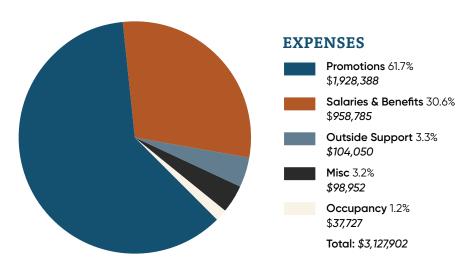
President & CFO

Financials

Net hotel tax revenues finished the year at \$3,048,280, \$280,280 (10.1%) ahead of budget. Net operating loss finished the year with a \$31,481 loss / use of reserves, \$268,518 better than the budgeted \$300,000 loss due to promotional spending of \$1,928,388 exceeding budget by \$76,558 (4.1%).

Fully-loaded labor costs were \$958,785, \$53,715 (5.3%) under budget. Cash balances decreased by \$113,423 (2.8%) year-over-year.





Funding Structure HOTEL TAX PRIMER

Guests pay a 10% tax on Lehigh & Northampton county hotel rooms. So, how is that money divided and who gets it?

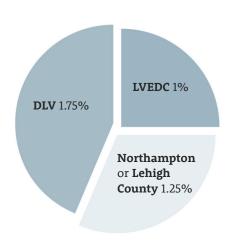
SALES TAX (6%) goes to Commonwealth of PA

HOTEL TAX (4%) is shared by four entities:

1.75% DLV

1.25% Lehigh County / Northampton County

1%: Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation



Research & Data

DLV contracts with Smith Travel Research (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 at \$132 in July 2023.
- **Hotel Occupancy** is the percentage of available rooms sold, and occupancy in Lehigh Valley peaked in July 2023 and June 2024 at 71%. U.S. Hotel National Average: 62.8%
- Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) is the revenue generated per hotel room regardless of if rooms are occupied or not. RevPAR peaked in July 2023 at \$93.
- Total Hotel Room Supply rose 5.2% year-over-year.

 Occupancy
 FY2020
 FY2021
 FY2022
 FY2023
 FY2024

 80%
 70%
 60%
 50%
 0
 0
 0
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JULY 2023 -JUNE 2024

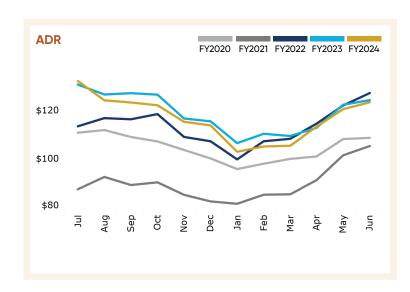
\$117.34

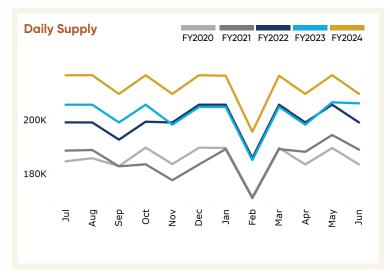
AVERAGE DAILY RATE

64%
HOTEL OCCUPANCY

\$75.13

REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM





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)

Season of Trip for Overnight Trips

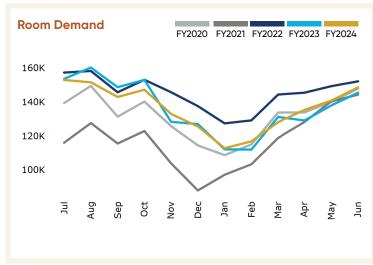
- January-March: 23%
- April–June: 25%
- July-September: 25%
- October-December: 27%

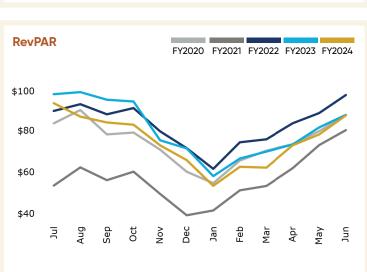
\$1.3B

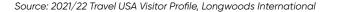
TOTAL VISITOR SPENDING (DAY & OVERNIGHT) +20.1% VS. 2021

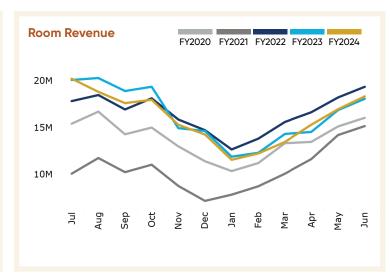
\$681M

OVERNIGHT VISITOR SPENDING









Looking Ahead:

DLV has partnered with Longwoods International to conduct a 2023/2024 Travel USA® report. The findings will be delivered in July 2025. 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.

Public Relations

Regional and national media outlets consistently covered events and updates from Lehigh Valley, thanks to the successful partnership between DLV and its PR agency of record, Vault Communications. This collaboration resulted in 670 media placements promoting the area. Lehigh Valley achieved significant visibility through a well-crafted media strategy that included focused pitches, seasonal press releases, and customized media invitations for FAM Trips. The coverage amassed a total publicity value of \$372 million and reached an audience exceeding 16 million readers.

























EDITORIAL HEADLINES

- "Lehigh Valley Ambassadors passionately prove there's no place like home *Lehigh* Valley News
- "Meet the Iron Menace, Dorney Park's newest rollercoaster with a 152-feet drop" *Philadel*phia Inquirer
- "LVEDC and Discover Lehigh Valley team up on marketing" Lehigh Valley Business Journal
- "Where to book your next stay: Best hotels and resorts across the United States" 10 Best USA Today
- "5 Iconic American Road Trips" AAA
- "Who doesn't like bacon?' PA Bacon Fest takes over Downtown Easton" Lehigh Valley Live
- "This Christmas Market in Pennsylvania Rivals Anything in Europe" *Thrillist*
- "PA city among the best destinations across the globe for Christmas, travel magazine says" *Yahoo!*

- "9 Local Galentine's Day Events" Lehigh Valley Style
- "Race the Easton Twilight Criterium With Bicycling!" BICYCLING
- "Destinations International Foundation Reveals 30 Under 30 Class for 2024" Travel Pulse
- "Dorney Park officially opens for the 2024 season" PHL17
- "Da Vinci Science Center officially opens, expects to attract 400K+ annually" *Lehigh* Valley Business
- "World-class cyclists return to Easton for Twilight Criterium" *Bucks County Herald*
- "21 Steely Things To Do in Bethlehem PA: PA's Moravian Town" *Getaway Mavens*
- "The Best Drive-In Movie Theaters Within 2 Hours of NYC" Thrillist

EARNED MEDIA

670

MEDIA PLACEMENTS

16,406,502

IMPRESSIONS

\$372,441

PUBLICITY VALUE

EARNED & ORGANIC MEDIA

1,955

MEDIA PLACEMENTS +114% INCREASE

281,493,293

IMPRESSIONS +198% INCREASE

\$3,917,382

PUBLICITY VALUE +339% INCREASE

Collaboration is Key

Successful partner coverage included HangDog Outdoor Adventure, Dorney Park's new Iron Menace roller coaster and the grand opening of the Da Vinci Science Center.

Media Visits Secure Wins

DLV secured several coveted media familiarization trips, including overnight stays in the region's award winning hotels, meals at the finest dining establishments and adventures galore. Writers from *Delaware Today, Washington Post*, and *Main Line Today.*

Public Relations (continued)

MEDIA RELATIONS SUPPORT

Da Vinci Science Center

DLV provided the Da Vinci Science Center with public relations services to support the grand opening of the new science center on May 22, 2024. The state-of-the-art, 67,000-square-foot facility includes interactive experiences, including exploring the inner workings of the human body in the LVHN My Body exhibit and an up-close visit with North American River Otters in the Pocono Ravine presented by Alvin H. Butz, in the Lehigh River Watershed exhibit.

Tactics & results

- Distributed VIP media preview invites to select journalists, offering exclusive access to the facility and overnight stays at local hotels
- Secured interview opportunities for Executive Director and CEO for the Da Vinci Science Center. Lin Erickson
 - PhillyVoice Allentown's expanded science museum now has animatronic dinos, live otters and a waterfall
 - WDIY: New Da Vinci Science Center Filled with Excitement Ahead of Opening | WDIY Local News
 - Quality Magazine: Da Vinci Science Center at PPL Pavilion Opens with Dinos Alive!
 - BlooLoop: Roto designs over 50 innovative experiences for Da Vinci Science Center
 - Lehigh Valley Business Journal: Da Vinci sets opening date for new Allentown science center
 - Lehigh Valley Live: Da Vinci's new digs: Long-awaited science center opens in heart of Allentown (PHOTOS)



Moravian Church Settlements-Bethlehem inscription.





Da Vinci Science Center at PPL Pavilion

Moravian Church Settlements – Bethlehem

DLV provided public relations services to support the recent addition of the Moravian Church Settlements – Bethlehem to the UNESCO World Heritage Site list. Working with Vault Communications and Orion PR, an agency in India where the official vote occurred, we delivered a powerful strategy and world-wide media coverage.

Results to-date

- Press Release Pick Up
 - 305,400,000+ impressions
 - 698 media placements
- Total Media Results
 - 93,374,560 National Impressions
 - \$20,311,508 National Ad Value
 - 747,629 Regional Impressions
 - \$263,156 Regional Ad Value familiarization

Looking ahead

PR efforts in FY 24/25 will include:

- Steady drum of earned media coverage during the region's peak holiday season & beyond
- New pitch angles
- Seasonal press releases
- Continued media familiarization trip outreach
- Influencer research and potential activations

Marketing & Advertising

VISITPA CAMPAIGNS

This past year, we strengthened our relationship with the PA Tourism Office to market Lehigh Valley. DLV contributed a record \$750,000, matched by the state, for a total of \$1,650,000, advertising 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 65,600,000 impressions were served through this collaboration.

Creative elements featured *It's Always Playtime* (Crayola Experience, Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, Martin Guitar), *Holiday Magic* (Easton Winter Village), *A Mountain Bike Playaround*, while pairing with

VisitPA.com's "The Uncommon is Calling."



The marketing team continued supporting Historic Moravian Bethlehem's progress towards World Heritage Site status, 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.







VISITPA CO-OP CAMPAIGN RESULTS

65.6m

Total Digital Impressions

990,200+

Total Clicks

1.56%

Click Through Rate (CTR)

\$0.39

Cost Per Click (CPC)

6.1m

Total Video Completions



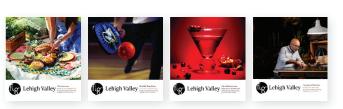


Fig Lehigh Valley, Adams Outdoor

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. Fig Lehigh Valley magazine touted relatable campaign content through multiple 5 page spreads and in digital newsletters.

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.

Overall Enews Metrics:

Average Open Rate: 41.76% (12% increase)

Average Click Rate: 3.65% (15% increase)

• Average Click to Open Rate: 8.81% (4% increase)

33,649

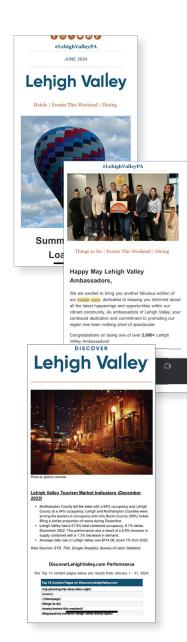
INBOXES REACHED

Looking ahead: Email Marketing

Partner Reminders: DLV is encouraging partner participation more than ever. All partners will receive a quarterly reminder with a direct link to their account to update their listings, add new photos, and submit events. This will ensure that new, relevant content can always be found on Discover-LehighValley.com

More Frequency: DLV will send a weekly, shorter leisure e-news highlighting the newest blog content and upcoming events.

Lehigh Valley Ambassadors: New residents, visitors, and businesses are joining the Lehigh Valley Ambassador program every day. Starting in October, Ambassadors receive a weekly newsletter sharing the newest perks and discounts added to the program to inspire them to continue exploring the region and promoting it to others.



Lehigh Valley

A shared vision for destination marketing

In FY2023-24, DLV and Lehigh Valley Economic Development pursued partnerships to utilize Lehigh Valley branding on locally made products, including, Weyerbacher Brewing and County Seat Spirits.





Consumer Leads

Leads are sources from which we receive requests for info about Lehigh Valley. Leads come to our website through forms, social media posts and ads, Lehigh Valley Ambassador

7,181

Total Leads

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.

Source	# of Leads
DiscoverLehighValley.com Enewletter Sign Ups	2,623
Lehigh Valley Ambassador Enrollment	1,800
VisitPA.com Inquiries	1,098
VisitPA Happy Traveler Inquiries	1,606

Social Media

ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Over the last year, DLV has engaged in various organic and paid social media efforts to drive followers, engagements, and traffic to DiscoverLehighValley.com. Our efforts were focused on platforms with the highest growth potential, including Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, which delivered the most significant engagement growth Year over Year (YoY). Our organic strategy included an increased focus on video content, a robust, forward-looking content calendar, and a goal of posting one organic video daily. These efforts resulted in a 403% increase in video views YoY and an increase in total published posts across Facebook (+19%), Instagram (+107%), and TikTok (+208%).

Geographic locations

The reach of our Facebook and Instagram audiences demonstrates an excellent mix of targeting, helping to raise awareness on a broader scale to those within driving distance of our region, and engaging interested residents.



Top Cities

New York, NY Allentown, PA Philadelphia, PA Bethlehem, PA Bethlehem, PA Easton, PA 3. Allentown, PA New York, NY Baltimore, MD Philadelphia Wescosville Newark, NJ 7. Pittsburgh, PA West Easton, PA

Washington, DC

Easton, PA

Jersey City, NJ

Top Cities

Emmaus, PA

Nazareth, PA

Fullerton, PA

10.

302,296

total social fans (+14.4% increase YoY)

CHANNEL GROWTH

Facebook

160,863 Followers (+.69%) 1,013,766 Engagements (+63.1)

Instagram

65,363 Followers (+35.24%) 571,253 Engagements (+222.5%)

X

50,567 Followers (+0.73%) 3,067 Engagements (-49.5%)

TikTok

16,914 Followers (+85%) 129,156 Engagements (+83.6%)

LinkedIn

7,229 Followers (+8.57%) 20,472 Engagements (-29.2%)

YouTube

1,360 Followers (+4.62%) 568 Engagements (-20%)

1,738,282

engagements (+92.1% increase YoY)

TOP POSTS





TOP ORGANIC FACEBOOK

Martin Guitar

16,788 engagements58 reactions11,876 post link clicks



TOP ORGANIC TIKTOK

Shankweiler's Drive-In

183,078 impressions 2,909 shares

111 comments





TOP ORGANIC INSTAGRAM

Wanderlust Beer Garden

48,495 engagements 16,080 likes 148 comments 24,646 shares 7,621 saves



TOP ORGANIC LINKEDIN

Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital

1,676 engagements 134 reactions

Social Media (continued)

PAID SOCIAL EFFORTS

DLV committed to a consistent paid digital advertising spend across key platforms to support the promotion of events and happenings in the Lehigh Valley. An always-on approach to paid efforts allowed our social content and blog posts to reach new audiences of potential visitors and encouraged them to plan their trip to Lehigh Valley. Paid advertising campaigns ran on the following platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Outbrain, TikTok and LinkedIn. The main campaign objective was to drive traffic to the DLV website, with the exception of TikTok where the main objective was to grow the following, given it is a relatively new platform for DLV.

Results

24,783,188 200,904 4,148 IMPRESSIONS CLICKS FOLLOWS

PARTNER ADVERTISING SUPPORT

Throughout the year, DLV provided support for its partners by leveraging its relationship with Vault Communications to run custom digital advertising campaigns across Facebook and Instagram to drive traffic to their respective listings on DiscoverLehighValley.com. In total, these campaigns delivered 2,076,623 impressions, a \$0.32 cost per click (benchmarks are \$0.50 - \$0.70) and a 4.41% CTR (benchmarks are 0.80% - 1.3%).

Partners

- · Easton Book Festival
- St. Luke's D&L RaceFest
- Valley Preferred Cycling Center
- Steel City Smokeout
- ArtsQuest
- · Easton Twilight Criterium
- Valley Preferred Cycling Center
- National Museum of Industrial History
- Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley
- Bethlehem Carriage Factory

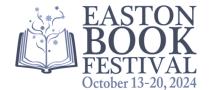


















Website

DiscoverLehighValley.com experienced an increase in visitation. Notably, **89.7% of traffic came from new users**, showing that DLV's strategy successfully attracts fresh eyes and visitors to Lehigh Valley. DLV continues its reach to neighboring areas, including New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore while continuing to engage our local communities.

2,755,039

TOTAL USERS (+41.1% increase)

2,472,120

ehigh Valley Local Info

NEW USERS (+39.11% increase)

3,786,437

SESSIONS (+38.58% increase)

7,392,532

PAGEVIEWS (+30.07% increase)

Top Acquisitions Channels

- 1. Organic Search 1,097,352
- **Display** 773,909
- **3. Paid Search** 401,058
- **4. Meta** 344,814
- Direct 237,833





Top 10 Locations of Visitors to Website

- 1. Pennsylvania
- 2. New York
- 3. Virginia
- 4. New Jersey
- 5. Florida
- 5. Georgia
- Ohio
- 8. Michigan
- North Carolina
- 10. Indiana

Visitors by Gender

61.8% FEMALE

38.2% MALE

Welcome! Willkommen! ¡Bienvenido!



TRANSLATED WELCOME PAGES

In spring of 2024, DLV launched custom content for foreign English, Spanish, and German speakers visiting DiscoverLehighValley.com. Content includes travel information from airports, UNESCO World Heritage, attractions, and more.

Partnership

DLV partners are tourism-facing businesses across Lehigh and Northampton Counties that contribute to the rich diversity of experiences available to visitors each day. These businesses can participate in a wide range of services enhancing their visibility and engagement with visitors and residents.

1,000+

Total partners

94

New partners onboarded

157,326

Partner Referrals



373

Number of Partner Accounts that logged into Extranet

Breakdown of what partners updated:

- Accounts: 150 vs 93 previous year
- Listings 132 vs 98 previous year
- Leisure Events Added 766 vs 486 previous year







Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program

The Lehigh Valley Ambassador Program is a community-centered initiative launched by DLV to inspire local pride and elevate our region as a premier destination. We designed this free program to transform residents into passionate advocates, giving them the tools and knowledge to promote the best of the Lehigh Valley—from its cultural heritage to its vibrant local attractions. Our goal is simple: empower people to tell our story and showcase why Lehigh Valley is such a unique and wonderful place to live and visit. Community members can become an ambassador in less than one minute.

1,559

Lehigh Valley Ambassadors

July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

















Looking ahead

A digital ambassador card will be available to ambassadors. The card will encourage ambassadors to experience the region by using special offers and perks exclusively for them. Exclusive perks currently include over 30 restaurants, hotels, attractions and businesses.

Sales, Services, & Sports

During FY 23/24, the Tourism Development team achieved remarkable success by generating 140 business opportunities for Lehigh Valley hotels, venues, and sports facilities, resulting in over 22,000 hotel room nights booked. This represents an impressive 86% year-over-year growth in opportunities for DLV partners, marking a significant boost in business and showcasing the region's increasing appeal as a premier destination.

EVENTS ATTENDED

- Smart Meetings North East Regional with Wind Creek
- Connect Marketplace
- NCAA Symposium
- Travel Events and Management in Sports (TEAMS)
 Conference
- Travel Events and Management in Sports (TEAMS) Europe
- Connect DC
- MPI Middle PA Chapter & Educational Events (one hosted at Wind Creek)

- PCMA Chapter & Education Events (one hosted at Wind Creek)
- MPI NJ Meets Conference
- PASAE Connections Conference (hosted at Wind Creek)
- SportsETA Women's Summit
- SportsETA Symposium
- Destinations International Sales and Services Summit
- Pennsylvania Sports Annual Meeting and Committee Meetings

HOSTED GROUPS AND PLANNERS

- 2023 PA Sports Summer Summit
- Planner Holiday Appreciation Brunch in partnership with Wind Creek Bethlehem

DLV SALES / HOTELIER EVENTS

- 2023 Fall Hotelier Update Meeting
- 2024 Spring Hotelier Networking Event









LEADS GENERATED

140

total leads generated (85% increase YoY)

82

Meetings and Conventions (105% increase YoY)

58

Sports (132% increase YoY)

HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED for the future

6,300+

Meetings/Conferences

6,500+

Sports

Destination Product Development

This year, we saw a notable increase in **hotel room supply**, with a 5.2% growth compared to the previous year. Among our competitive markets in Pennsylvania, no other area experienced a supply increase greater than 1%, highlighting our region's exceptional expansion and appeal as a leading travel destination.

5.2% Growth

in hotel room supply

The region also welcomed thrilling and innovative **attractions** that are set to transform the region's tourism landscape. In downtown Allentown, the **Da Vinci Science Center**, bringing interactive exhibits and STEM learning to life in a vibrant urban setting. In Easton, **HangDog Outdoor Adventure** offers adrenaline-pumping zip lines and ropes courses designed to challenge adventure-seekers. Meanwhile, **Dorney Park and Wildwater Kingdom** introduced its newest thrill ride, Iron Menace, a record-breaking roller coaster that has been wowing visitors since its opening.







Look Ahead

As we move into FY 24/25, the travel landscape continues to evolve with shifting traveler behaviors and priorities. Economic concerns remain top of mind, as inflation impacts travel decisions for many in late 2024. At the same time, travelers are increasingly embracing technology to enhance their planning experiences, with 34% indicating they are likely to use ChatGPT or similar AI software for planning their next trip (Longwoods International).

History

The newly designated UNESCO World Heritage Site, Historic Moravian Bethlehem, will serve as a draw for regional, national and international visitors, generating renewed interest in our heritage.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing initiatives remain at the forefront, with a continued focus on maximizing our strategic partnership with Visit Pennsylvania. This collaboration has unlocked significant matching funds, allowing us to scale our marketing reach to unprecedented levels.

Destination Commercial

In the upcoming year, we are excited to debut a new destination commercial that will serve as a powerful tool in both attracting visitors and fostering local pride. This commercial will showcase the many beloved and unique aspects that make our region special—our vibrant arts and culture, scenic landscapes, historic landmarks, and thriving culinary scene.

Funding

The organization is actively exploring new avenues of additional funding in the next fiscal year to further elevate the Lehigh Valley's profile in the competitive travel market.

2026

Plans are underway as we set our sights on 2026. The FIFA World Cup 2026 hosted in the United States presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, with our region likely to host events that will draw international visitors and global attention. Additionally, America250—the national celebration of the United States' 250th anniversary—will further amplify the summer of 2026, with historic events that will attract travelers eager to connect with the nation's rich heritage.

DiscoverLehighValley.com

DLV has partnered with Tempest, a Philadelphia-based website and digital strategy agency for destination marketing organizations, to launch a new website in July 2025.

