



FY23-24 | Q3 UPDATE

JANUARY 1 - MARCH 31, 2024

EXECUTIVE UPDATES

ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

It's official: Tourism's economic impact in Pennsylvania has recovered to pre-pandemic levels. The PA Tourism Office reports the Commonwealth's tourism industry generated **\$76.7 billion** in overall economic impact, realized **\$45.4 billion** in direct visitor spend, supported 486,871 jobs and contributed **\$4.7 billion** in state and local taxes in 2022.

The 2022 Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism report provides state, regional, and county level estimates. The list below represents tourism's impact in Dauphin County.

Total Economic Impact: **\$2.6 Billion**

Direct Visitor Spend: **\$2.46 Billion**

Federal Taxes Generated: **\$299 Million**

State & Local Taxes Generated: **\$268 Million**

DESTINATION INITIATIVES

Destination Alignment

VHH, in partnership with The Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC and Dauphin County Economic Development, is in the midst of a collaborative Destination Alignment strategy effort. The goal is to develop a unified positioning framework that aligns messaging across tourism, economic development, business development, student attraction, and talent attraction.

VHH hosted a reception and a series of stakeholder workshops in February to facilitate networking and familiarity across industries and to hear input from business, local government, and community leaders. The next steps for this project include the development of a messaging toolkit and a website.

DEI-A Efforts

Working with MMGY Global, VHH seeks to set the standard for a more welcoming, inclusive, and safe Dauphin County for visitors of all backgrounds and abilities through a commitment to inclusive storytelling, interactive programming, and community partnerships. In Q3, MMGY facilitated several listening sessions to collect important community stakeholder feedback about the guest experience in our region.

We look forward to sharing more notes about both of these important, ongoing efforts as the projects evolve.



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SPONSORSHIPS & EVENT APPEARANCES

Visit Hershey & Harrisburg and Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority proudly support various special events in the region. These strategic sponsorships allow our team to interact with the community and guests to gain important first-hand insights into the guest and event experience, as well as provide an opportunity for us to promote more aspects of our destination.

***NEW* 2024 PA Farm Show Concert** | January 10

Estimated Attendance: 5,000

Engagement: VHH Trails & Experiences signage appeared throughout the complex as part of an annual sponsorship with FSC. Brew Barons signage was displayed in the concert arena and supported via social.

Great American Outdoor Show | PA Farm Show Complex | February 3-11

Estimated Attendance: 250,000

Engagement: HHSE provided Will Call staffing for the duration of the show. (VHH Trails & Experiences signage appeared throughout the complex as part of an annual sponsorship with the Farm Show Complex.)

PIAA State Wrestling & Basketball Championships | Giant Center | February & March

Estimated Combined Attendance: 41,000

Engagement: HHSE sponsorship.

MCDA Chocolatetown Cheer & Dance | Hershey Lodge | March 2-4

Estimated Attendance: 2,000

Engagement: HHSE provided welcome gifts for athletes.

Harrisburg Ice & Fire Festival | Downtown & More | March 2

Estimated Attendance: 3,000

Engagement(s): VHH sponsorship included onsite event signage and social media promotions highlighting our Trails & Experiences programs. ExploreHBG sponsorship included onsite signage, plus website and social media recognition.

Dauphin County Maple Sugar Festival | Fort Hunter Park | March 3

Estimated Attendance: 2,000

Engagement: VHH sponsorship included hosting an onsite information booth featuring our Chocolate & More Sweet Treat Trail and other Trails & Experiences programs.

Harrisburg St. Patrick's Day Parade | Downtown Harrisburg | March 16

Estimated Attendance: 5,000

Engagement: ExploreHBG sponsorship included onsite signage and social media recognition.



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MARKETING

CAMPAIGNS

Market & Delivery Key: *BALT (Baltimore), PHL, (Philadelphia), NY (New York), PIT (Pittsburgh), WB-S (Wilkes Barre-Scranton), HLLY (Harrisburg, Lebanon, Lancaster, York), PA (Pennsylvania)*

Leprechauns & Lagers

What: Google Display Network
Where: HLLY
When: Feb. 19 - Mar. 28
Clicks: 39,124
Impressions: 7.2 Million

Great American Outdoor Show

What: Search Campaign
Where: Canada & US
When: Jan. 16 - Feb. 11
Clicks: 55,744
Impressions: 171,149

What: Social (Facebook/Instagram)
Where: HLLY
When: Feb. 16 - Mar. 28
Clicks: 8,620
Views: 2.1 Million

CONTENT COLLECTION & PRODUCTION

Short Form Video: Developed 7 unique interview clips and new photography to support longform content pieces featuring Reina76Artist (Millworks Studios) and Geno Goodman/Sweet T & Greens (Fresh Market.)

WEBSITE

ACTIVE USERS | **259,106**
SESSIONS | **320,182**
VIEWS PER SESSION | **1.62**

ENGAGED SESSIONS | **187,659**
AVG. ENGAGEMENT PER SESSION | **0m 45 sec**
ENGAGEMENT RATE | **58.6%**

TOP WEBSITE LANDING PAGES (ORGANIC)

Events | Index
Homepage
Family Fun | Hersheypark
Things To Do | Index
Events | PA Farm Show

TOP REGIONAL MARKETS (ORGANIC AUDIENCE)

New York City
Philadelphia
Ashburn (D.C. area)
Harrisburg
Hershey

GETAWAY GUIDE

TRAVEL GUIDES DISTRIBUTED | **7,392**
TOP 5 STATES | PA, NY, OH, MD, NJ



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COMMUNICATIONS & CONTENT

PUBLIC RELATIONS

EARNED MEDIA

- ABC 27 - Farm Show Visitors Experiencing the Region
- FOX 43 - Travel Smart Series "Indoor Winter Activities" featured PA State Museum, Midtown Scholar Bookstore, and AACA Museum
- FOX 43 - Travel Smart Series "Sweet Treat Trail" featuring Chocolates by Tina Marie, Grove's Brittle Works, Raising the Bar

CONTENT CREATION | WRITING PROJECTS

WEBSITE (UPDATED CONTENT) | 10+ content pages updated | Prepped spring seasonal changeover

WEBSITE (NEW CONTENT) | Longform highlights: Reina76Artist & Geno Goodman/Sweet T & Greens | Content page: Free Community Events

PHOTO CONTEST | Prepped Rules & Terms for Spring Photo Contest (Launching April 2024)

PRESS EVENT | City of Harrisburg Ice & Fire (Participated in media event to highlight Harrisburg Arts District.)

PAID SOCIAL MEDIA

Promoting various seasonally-appropriate content pieces, experiences, or events.

Chocolate & More Sweet Treat Trail

What: Facebook & Instagram

Where: HLLY (HBG, Lanc, Leb, York, Wilkes-Barre, Balt.)

When: February

Landing Page Views: 3,739

Impressions: 296,232

ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

VHH posts highlighting events, locations, trails & experiences, seasonal content, and user generated content.

ORGANIC IMPRESSIONS | **250K+**

COLLABORATOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Hosting/contracting regional and/or local creators to cover Partner locations or experiences.

COLLABORATOR POSTS (IG) | **6**

COLLABORATOR IMPRESSIONS (IG) | **43K+**

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

CONSUMER EMAILS | **5**
AVG. CONSUMER LIST SIZE | **25,008**

PARTNERSHIP EMAILS | **10**

EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW

VHH's series of experiences package tourism assets in a way that's easily accessible to a variety of specific audiences such as craft beer enthusiasts, outdoor adventurers, art & history buffs, etc.

BREW BARONS BEER TRAIL

A mobile passport featuring 25+ local craft brewery or tasting room locations. Guests win prizes as they reach mobile check-in milestones.

CHECK-INS | **2,899**
NEW USERS | **660**
PRIZES EARNED | **314**
TOP CHECK-IN LOCATIONS

YAH Brew, Ever Grain, SpringGate Brewery

LEPRECHAUNS & LAGERS

Brew Barons Bonus Tour: Special edition seasonal passport offering an exclusive prize to re-engage current users and encourage new sign-ups.

CHECK-INS | **3,380**
NEW USERS | **617**
PRIZES EARNED | **329**
TOP CHECK-IN LOCATIONS

YAH Brew, Ever Grain, Troegs

ADVENTURE TRAIL

An extensive guide featuring trails, parks, waterways, and attractions suited for adventurers of all ages. This trail does not have a check-in mechanism.

TOP CATEGORIES >> TOP PAGES

- 1) Hiking >> Hawk Rock
- 2) Fishing >> Yellow Breeches
- 3) Biking >> Stony Valley Rail Trail

INDEX PAGE VIEWS | **1,029**

CHOCOLATE & MORE SWEET TREAT TRAIL

A mobile experience offering guests the opportunity to check in with a digital PIN after making a qualified purchase at a participating sweet spot.

SIGN UPS | **423**
CHECK-INS | **72**
PRIZES EARNED | **18**
TOP CHECK-IN LOCATIONS

Hershey Story Museum, Desserts, Etc., Chocolate World

MURALS & MORE - A WALK OF ART

An audio mobile passport featuring two suggested routes through Harrisburg to experience murals, art, and architecture. Guests earn an art-themed prize by accumulating check-ins.

SIGN UPS | **45**
CHECK-INS | **100**
PRIZES EARNED | **1**
TOP CHECK-IN LOCATIONS

Capitol Fountain, Hartranft Statue, Eye on 3rd St.

SAVINGS PASS

NEW Launched in Q3, The Hershey Harrisburg Savings Pass is a mobile passport featuring deals and savings at 20+ Partner locations and experiences.

SIGN UPS | **308**
REDEMPTIONS | **43**
TOP REDEMPTION LOCATIONS

AACA, Englewood Brewing, Vineyard at Hershey

SALES

M&C, GROUP, INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED | **6,227**
ROOM NIGHT LEADS DISTRIBUTED | **43,181**
TRADE SHOWS ATTENDED | **8**

TRADE SHOWS ATTENDED

- American Bus Association (ABA)
- Brand USA India Sales Mission
- Intl. Inbound Travel Assoc. (IITA)
- Express Conferences - Association
- MPI Middle PA - Monthly Events
- PASAE Connections Conference

HIGHLIGHTS

Sales Marketing

- PA Tour Operator Reception at ABA (PA Tourism Co-sponsor.)
- Full page ad in Tours Limited 2024 catalog and website banner ad (Co-op with Chocolate World.)
- Meetings Delegate Promotional Video (Developed in collaboration with VHH Marketing & Content.)

FORECASTS & TRENDS

Domestic Group Tour Market Trends

- 75% of NTA Tour Operators reported they will finish 2023 the same or better than 2019.
- SYTA operators reported reaching 138% of their 2019 volume last year and anticipate a moderate increase in 2024.
- Elevated hotel rates with limited supply is a top challenge along with perceived safety issues, inflation, staffing, and unfavorable hotel terms.
- Group size is predicted to slowly increase in 2024.

Business Travel Forecasts & Trends

- 2023 was a banner year for events and planners, who expect to produce even more in 2024.
- Meeting attendance is hitting record numbers.
- Hybrid meetings are losing traction. Meetings are either fully virtual or fully in person.
- The average number of overnights for a meeting is expected to fall to help save costs.
- Event ROI is under scrutiny as costs are rising.

International Forecast & Trends

- Overseas arrivals to the U.S. continued to improve with 2023 spending increasing 29% compared to 2022.
- International visitors injected nearly \$584 Million per day into the U.S. economy in 2023.
- Indian travelers lead the international market for intent to travel overseas. (84%)
- The number of visitors to the U.S. from India and Canada in 2023 surpassed pre-pandemic levels, indicating a full recovery in these markets.
- The number of visitors to the U.S. from European countries achieved 80-90% of pre-pandemic levels in 2023.
- The United Kingdom (1.2 million visitors) and India were PA's top markets for visitors in 2023.

PARTNERSHIP

EDUCATION, EVENTS, & PROGRAMMING

Partner Events

- Partner Portal Training (VHH offices) - New and returning Partners reviewed important portal functions like editing VHH website listings, submitting events, and best practices in maximizing RFP and Service Requests.
- Learn Over Lunch (Hershey Country Club) - This fun and interactive workshop connected Partners with other Partner businesses to find ways to team up, develop tourism packages, and cross promote.
- Marketing & Communications 101 (Chocolate World | Nineteen73 Room) - Director of Marketing Jason Brown and Director of Communications & Content Allison Rohrbaugh provided a look into marketing & communications tips, trends, tools, and best practices. They discussed important data notes that drive tourism marketing, opportunities to maximize exposure through social media, the role of User Generated Content, and more.

Professional Development

- Partnership and Community Development Engagement Forum (Madison, WI) - PACE covered topics including Membership/Partner Sales, Services, CRM, Events, Advertising Sales, Publications, Programming, Internal Processes, and more.

PARTNER PROSPECTS & ADDITIONS

Renewals

- Completed 2024 Partnership Renewals

Prospects

- Met with 40 Partner prospects

New Partners Added

- Boro Bar & Grill Riverview
- JB Lovedraft's Micropub
- Lovedrafts Brewing Company
- Nocturnal Nightclub
- Open Stage
- Sleep Inn and Suites Harrisburg
- The Hershey Partnership
- Zembo Shrine Auditorium



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HERSHEY HARRISBURG SPORTS & EVENTS AUTHORITY

SALES ACTIVITY

TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED | **23,375**
ROOM NIGHT LEADS DISTRIBUTED | **32,055**
TRADE SHOWS ATTENDED | **2**

SITE VISITS | **3**

EVENTS UNDER CONSIDERATION

EVENTS | **4**
EXPECTED ECONOMIC IMPACT | **\$4 Million**

EVENTS HOSTED

- PIAA State Championships (Competitive Spirit, Team & Individual Wrestling, Basketball.)
- Reflections Synchro Skating Championship
- MCDA Chocolatetown Cheer & Dance Nationals
- KRVA Lucky Charm Classic & Championships Cup
- Great American Outdoor Show

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT | **\$ 80.9 Million**

MARKETING & PR

- Hersheypark Sports & Entertainment Complex was voted #2 in the "Multi-purpose Venue" category of the SportsEvents Magazine Readers' Choice Awards.
- Social Media: HHSE platforms collectively gained 42 new followers and reached 3,600 accounts.
- Article: [PA Sports 20th Anniversary Celebrations](#)

DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY

Planning & Client Connections

- 2025 Air Show planning meeting (HIA)
- Zembo Shrine Auditorium site tour
- RFP review: Hershey Figure Skating Club | 2025 Eastern Synchro bid

Industry Meetings

- Compete Sports Diversity winter meeting
- PA Sports winter membership meeting

Professional Development

- Danielle was accepted into the SportsETA Mentor Program and will assist new members with onboarding.
- Tyler attended Social Media Marketing World (San Diego) for sessions highlighting trends and best practices.

BIG 26 BASEBALL CLASSIC

- Event prep: Toured Clipper Magazine Stadium for PA tryouts.
- Tryouts: Hosted the first of two (2) Maryland tryouts.
- Social Media (Paid): Maryland ad set reached 36,000 accounts with 800+ engagements.
- Social Media (Organic): Big 26 platforms collectively gained 52 new followers.