

## SALES, SPORTS & CONVENTION SERVICES

Highlights of Visit Knoxville  
3rd Quarter FY 2019/2020

Exceeded the quarterly sales definite booking goal by 2% with a total of 42 bookings equating to 85,756 delegate days.

Exceeded the quarterly sales lead goal by 25% generating 110 leads equating to 355,593 delegate days.

Attended 2 trade shows/conventions during 3Q. Trade shows included Connect Diversity and PCMA Convening Leaders. More than 45 appointments were conducted and/or contacts met because of 3Q trade show activity.

Hosted 10 site visits for potential booking opportunities, including the Bulldog Club of America, Tennessee Gas Association, AAU Girls Basketball and Hobie Kayak Bass Fishing. These groups, along with several other site visits, represent potential and booked business for the Knoxville Convention Center (KCC), Chilhowee Park, and multiple hotel properties.

The VK Sports Commission hosted TYR Pro Swim Series again in 2020. This brought some of the top swimmers in the country and was again televised on NBC Sports Network and the Olympic Channel.

The VK Sports Commission hosted the 2020 NAIA Swimming and Diving National Championships at Allan Jones Aquatic Center. Over 450 athletes competed at the largest NAIA Swimming & Diving Championship event in history. The University of Tennessee and Tennessee Athletics partnered with the VKSC to make the event a success.

Completed one sales blitz to the greater Nashville metro area. Conducted appointments with planners that consisted of state, corporate, government and religious markets for a total of 28 calls.

Hosted two in-office presentations to SmithBucklin and Experient headquarters in Washington, DC. Approximately 15 planners attended each 30-minute presentation which included Q & A, lunch, handouts and gifts. Both organizations are third party meeting management companies and are responsible for sourcing hundreds of meetings each year for their various clients.

The Convention Services Team supported 32 events/meetings and three festivals in 3Q and provided 45 partner referrals. Featured groups included Alpha Kappa Alpha 88th South Eastern Regional Conference, TYR Pro Swim Series and National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Swimming & Diving National Championships.

Partnership and support of local festivals included Chocolatefest, Dogwood Arts House & Garden Show and Mardi Growl.

Pre-planning visits included Alpha Kappa Alpha in January and February, Rubber Division of the American Chemical Society and USA Cycling.

Attended Event Service Professionals Association Annual Conference January 10 – 12 in Denver and Destinations International Convention Sales & Services Summit February 2 – 4 in Washington, DC.



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## MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS & FILM

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Hosted partners at the annual Knoxville Visitors and Relocation Guide party at Maple Hall. In light of recent events, the digital version of the guide is being updated to reflect new dates for events that have been rescheduled. The updated guide will be available in early April.

Partnered with the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD), The Bluebird Café, and the Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) to present the Knoxville Showcase for 2020 Songwriter Week at the Bijou Theatre. A total of 19 artists from a variety of cities and states (all of whom had won qualifying rounds) took to the stage. Adeem Bingham of Knoxville won the night.

Adjusted marketing and messaging around the COVID-19 crisis. All paid placement was paused mid-March to focus on promoting online events for future visitors as well as locals via our website, e-newsletter and social media.

Produced five e-newsletters and 27 blog posts.

The VK website had a total of 581,612 pageviews. Average length of session was 2 minutes 19 seconds. The top three metros were Nashville, Atlanta, and Chicago with a 76% increase in new visitors to the site. Social traffic to the site is up by 22% and email traffic is up by 248% (YoY).

The VK App had 649 downloads with a total of 2,552 sessions. The average time spent on the app was 7 minutes 41 seconds.

Hosted freelance journalist Amber Gibson on a quick overnight experience that included Wake Sanctuary at the Embassy Suites, brunch at the Oliver Royale, a walking tour through Market Square and Gay Street, followed by a driving tour through the Old City and Happy Holler. Gibson has since produced an article in USA Today that features Crafty Bastard Brewery.

The VK Film Office continues to recruit great film projects, engaging with several producers that have a strong interest in calling Knoxville home for their feature films later in 2020. This quarter, the Office assisted many local and out of town production companies on projects ranging from commercials and television shows that air on networks such as Investigation Discovery, TV One, the Oxygen Channel, as well as commercial and digital content shoots for Toyota, Luxedo Outdoor Projectors, and more. The VK Film Office has been working closely with the Tennessee Entertainment Commission and Offline Pictures on the filming of a music video for legendary musician, Keith Richards. In January, the VK Film Office announced that, for the second consecutive year, Knoxville was named as one of the “Best Places to Live and Work as a Moviemaker” by MovieMaker Magazine.





## VISITOR SERVICES

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In 3Q, the Visitors Center greeted 6,636 walk-in visitors, of which 2,690 were personally assisted, distributed 1,679 parking permits, where 537 logged themselves as visitors to the destination, and assisted 563 callers with Knoxville information. Of those inside the Visitors Center, 3,518 (including 669 out of region) were attending WDVX live shows. Live shows include: Blue Plate Special, Taps & Tunes and KidStuff.

The beginning of a new calendar year brings an almost full change over of brochures within the Visitors Center. During this quarter the Visitors Center changed out all annual guides and collateral; created a new tracking process for our reciprocal program, where our guides are showcased in attractions/cities we showcase; and contacts were updated for all brochures we stock. The information provided to visitors and used for in-house training is extremely valuable. This quarter brochure movement inside the Visitors Center totaled 6,353 pieces of collateral taken by visitors collecting information and tools to enhance their travel experience.

Created baskets for donation to many organizations, such as: UT College of Psychology, Shangri-La Therapeutic Academy of Riding, Knox Area Project Access, Beardsley Farms, Knox County Community Action, and UT Department of Retail, Hospitality, Travel and Tourism, to name a few.

Visit Knoxville Volunteers (VK Vols) were utilized in two events this quarter, during which a total of 250 hours were provided as a no-cost, service-added benefit to VK's groups and local events. At these events, VK Vols assisted 52 attendees with Knoxville information at the Alpha Kappa Alpha Regional Conference.

### Visitors Guide Requests – Requests are received from around the world.

#### The Top 10 states requesting guides during 3Q were:

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Tennessee      | 6. New York     |
| 2. Florida        | 7. Pennsylvania |
| 3. Illinois       | 8. Wisconsin    |
| 4. Ohio           | 9. Michigan     |
| 5. North Carolina | 10. Georgia     |

#### Visitors Center Traffic – The Top 10 states of visitors checking into the Visitors Center were:

- |                     |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Tennessee        | 6. Ohio/California         |
| 2. North Carolina   | 7. Texas                   |
| 3. Florida          | 8. Michigan                |
| 4. Virginia         | 9. Indiana/Kentucky        |
| 5. Georgia/Illinois | 10. New York/Massachusetts |

**In 3Q, the VK Visitors Center at the Sunsphere greeted 17,035 walk-in visitors, of which 2,592 were personally assisted.**

#### The Sunsphere saw visitors from these top 10 states:

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Tennessee      | 6. Ohio           |
| 2. North Carolina | 7. Michigan       |
| 3. Florida        | 8. South Carolina |
| 4. Georgia        | 9. Illinois       |
| 5. Virginia       | 10. New York      |

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