

VISIT KNOXVILLE

TENNESSEE

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



This past fiscal year has surpassed our expectations with Visit Knoxville's work as the Official Convention and Visitors Bureau for the City of Knoxville and Knox County.

Our year was filled with **events and announcements for future events**, including our second annual FILM FEST KNOX (which also earned an incredible inclusion as a young festival in *MovieMaker Magazine's* "50 Film Festivals Worth the Entry Fee" 2025 list), partnership with Bike Walk Knox to co-produce Tour de Lights, Santa at the Sunsphere, the Visit Knoxville Open, Syndicate Crown (a CrossFit® Games North American qualifying event), and an incredible finale with hosting the 2025 AAU Girls Basketball World Championships—an event that has chosen Knoxville as its home until 2030. We hosted our partners at B.A.S.S. to announce the return of the Bassmaster Classic in 2026, and it was also announced that the TEAMS Conference & Expo (one of the world's largest gatherings of sporting event organizers) will be hosted in Knoxville in 2030.

Some **additional highlighted events** throughout the year include hosting the Mayors Innovation Project's Summer Meeting (with approximately 90 mayors from across the country in attendance), the 2024 Visit Knoxville Collegiate golf tournament held in partnership with the University of Tennessee Athletics, the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Cheer & Dance State Championship, and the return of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® for their 93rd South Eastern Regional Conference—turning downtown into a sea of pink and green this past March.

The second quarter of this past fiscal year will be memorialized in history, as the new **Sunsphere Welcome Center** opened in November. The Welcome Center now acts as a hub for the attraction, allowing us to better tell the story of the 1982 World's Fair and its theme of "Energy Turns the World." This event marks the first buildout to Knoxville's iconic structure since its creation in 1982, and we could not be more thrilled to have played such a pivotal role that will impact visitors and locals for generations to come.

This year has been deeply rewarding for our entire team. As you explore this report—highlighting hotel bookings, trade shows, site visits, volunteer hours, FAM (familiarization) tours, website traffic, film productions, journalist visits, and blog posts—keep in mind that these are just the highlights. For a more in-depth look at this past year and prior years, visit the [Media section](#) of our website to view our quarterly highlights.

On behalf of the entire Visit Knoxville (VK) team, thank you for the ongoing encouragement you provide. The incredible support of our board and stakeholders is what makes this nature-loving-adventure-seeking-artsy-kinda-town all that it is for visitors and locals alike.

Sincerely,

Kim Bumpas, CDME, CMP
President
Visit Knoxville



CONVENTION SALES & SPORTS COMMISSION

THE VISIT KNOXVILLE SALES TEAM ONCE AGAIN MET SEVERAL GOALS IN ANOTHER EXCITING YEAR. DETAILS ARE LISTED BELOW. THESE NUMBERS INCLUDE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONVENTION SALES TEAM AND THE VISIT KNOXVILLE SPORTS COMMISSION (VKSC).



BOOKED EVENTS

219

(EXCEEDED GOAL OF 200)

Of the **219** events, **57%** were new business. **50** events were booked at the Knoxville Convention Center.

HOSTED

39

SITE VISITS

Among them, the Colson Center, International Cycling Safety Conference, Tennessee Chapter American Public Works Association, and Hold the Line K9.

PRODUCED OVER

\$ 141.1 MILLION

OF FUTURE ECONOMIC IMPACT

TOTAL LEADS

653

(EXCEEDED GOAL OF 550)

Of this, **37%** (**243**) went to the Knoxville Convention Center.

EXECUTED

4

EVENT SCOUTING TRIPS

These included AAU Cross Country Nationals, Savannah Bananas, Korn Ferry Tour, and Bassmaster Classic.

ATTENDED

14

TRADE SHOWS

478 appointments and meetings were conducted by the Convention Sales Team and Sports Commission Sales Team and attending partners. Shows included Connect Marketplace, Connect Sports, HelmsBriscoe, TEAMS, Sports ETA Symposium, and Professional Fraternity Association.

380

VK CONCIERGE VISITS

VK Concierge is a way for VK to engage with local hotel partners, providing updated information through personal contact with a VK staff member. Scheduled visits take place quarterly and ongoing contact is provided for additional needs and requests.



CONDUCTED TWO FAMS WITH

30

TOTAL PLANNERS IN ATTENDANCE

VKSC hosted a FAM in South Florida with 12 other destinations and included over 25 rights holders. VK Convention Sales hosted a multi-day FAM in Knoxville with five event planners.

DESTINATION & SPORTS SERVICES

THE DESTINATION AND SPORTS SERVICES TEAM SUPPORTS MEETING PLANNERS AND ATTENDEES WITH SERVICES DESIGNED TO ADD VALUE, MAXIMIZE ATTENDANCE, AND RETAIN GROUP BUSINESS. PROVIDING AN ELEVATED LEVEL OF CUSTOMER SERVICE POSITIVELY INFLUENCES THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPEAT BUSINESS AND VISITS. THIS TEAM PROVIDES SERVICES SUCH AS PARTNER REFERRALS, ITINERARY SUGGESTIONS, VISITOR INFORMATION, AND OFF-SITE SPECIAL EVENT ASSISTANCE FOR CONVENTIONS, TRADE SHOWS, SPORTING EVENTS, AND FESTIVALS USING A CONSULTATIVE APPROACH BASED ON THE UNIQUE NEEDS, SPECIFIC GOALS, AND ATTENDEE INTERESTS OF EACH GROUP.



Team Knox supported a wide variety of opportunities throughout our entire community including sporting events, civic improvement projects, neighborhood cleanups, and more. Volunteers served as information table and registration assistants, greeters, and badge monitors.



TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER HOURS

989

TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS

170

PARTICIPATED IN

2

COMMUNITY CAREER FAIRS TO RECRUIT NEW VOLUNTEERS

SUPPORTED

310

CONVENTIONS, SPORTING EVENTS, FESTIVALS, & MEETINGS

PROVIDED

206

PARTNER REFERRALS

Partner Referrals are meeting planner requests for suppliers, products, vendors, and services in the community.

PARTICIPATED IN

13

EVENTS & WEBINARS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Tennessee Municipal League returned to Knoxville July 20-23, 2024 with 650 representatives from across the state for their Annual Meeting. The league is dedicated to helping Tennessee's towns and cities promote economic development and quality of life issues for their communities.



Mayors Innovation Project held their **Summer Meeting 2024** during August 8-10 at Jackson Terminal and various other downtown locations with approximately 90 mayors from across the country in attendance. Hosted in partnership with the City of Knoxville and Mayor Indya Kincannon, the meeting dug into cutting-edge city policy in a relaxed setting.

The **2024 Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) Cheer & Dance State Championship** was held November 15-16. The championship was followed by the 2024 Premier Athletics Showcase on November 17. Both events were hosted at the Knoxville Convention Center and drew record-breaking participation throughout the weekend with 3,700 TSSAA athletes from 190 schools competing, and an additional 1,600 Premier athletes displaying their skills on the final day.

Tour de Lights, an annual family-friendly holiday bike ride, was planned once again in partnership with Bike Walk Knoxville and the Downtown Knoxville Alliance. Held on December 14, 2024 at Mary Costa Plaza at the Knoxville Civic Auditorium and Coliseum, the event featured a non-competitive bike ride that loops through downtown Knoxville as well as new aspects including a custom race arch, a redesigned Holiday Market, a Peppermint Village including letters to Santa, professional photos with Santa, and marshmallow roasting.



The **2025 Tennessee RiverLine Annual Summit** took place February 23-25, opening with a Welcome Reception at the Sunsphere. The Tennessee RiverLine connects communities across the Tennessee River Valley and recognizes communities and leaders for their work in shaping the future of the Tennessee River. This event was their 6th Annual Summit and brought 200 partners and stakeholders together in celebration of 2024 award winners.

Regal Cinemas welcomed over 400 General Managers and District Managers at their **2025 Annual GM Conference** April 21-24 for a week filled with vital workshops, a conference trade show, and a "Boots & Suits" themed awards dinner. Regal, headquartered in Knoxville, operates one of the largest and most geographically diverse theatre circuits in the United States.

The **Picture-Perfect Meetings Spring FAM** was held May 13-15, 2025. For the participating meeting planners, the Convention Sales & Destination Services Teams highlighted award-winning hotels, the state-of-the-art Knoxville Convention Center, distinguished cuisine, and a few surprises along the way to showcase Knoxville as an ideal destination for events.



The **2025 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Girls Basketball World Championships** was proudly hosted June 25-29 at the Knoxville Convention Center and World's Fair Exhibition Hall. This marked the first tournament of a five-year partnership with VK. Over 200 girls' basketball teams, third through eleventh grade, from 30 states and Canada competed during four full days of tournament play.

NOTABLE EVENTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



GRAND OPENING OF THE SUNSPHERE WELCOME CENTER

The **SunSphere Welcome Center** officially opened on November 20, 2024, with a ribbon cutting beneath the new solar entry canopy and a festive “Coffee and Clydesdales” celebration. Guests enjoyed photo ops, free Observation Deck admission, and a first look at the SunSphere’s newest addition. The Welcome Center, funded by the SunSphere Fund, now serves as the central hub for the attraction—offering tickets, exclusive merchandise, visitor brochures, and a place to share the story of the 1982 World’s Fair.

ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA

Approximately 4,500 members of **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® (AKA)** attended the **93rd South Eastern Regional Conference** March 13–16 at the Knoxville Convention Center. The conference included business meetings, training sessions, and community service projects benefiting the Knoxville community. The event was previously held in Knoxville in 2005 and 2020.



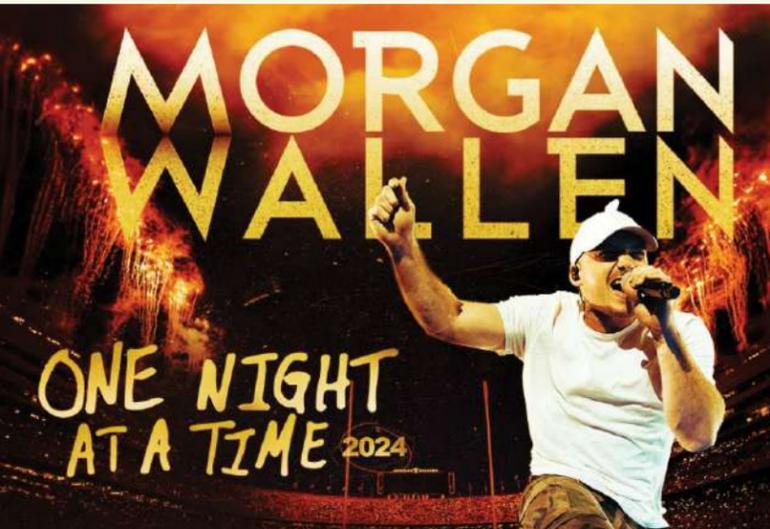
FILM FEST KNOX: TOP 50 FESTIVALS WORTH ENTRY FEE

The second year of **FILM FEST KNOX** at the Regal Riviera Theatre featured independent films from Knoxville and all around the world. The centerpiece of the festival, the American Regional Cinema Competition, was won by *Peak Season* directed by Kelsey Taylor. The festival included four days of film blocks, workshops, and competitions (like the Elev8or Pitch). It garnered the great honor of making *Moviemaker Magazine’s* prestigious list of “50 Festivals Worth the Entry Fee” in only its second year.



COVENANT HEALTH PARK: STADIUM OPENING & CONVERSION

To prepare for the opening of multi-sport Covenant Health Park, VK partnered with Earthadelic to convert the turf from a field designed for baseball to a field intended for soccer and back again. This implementation allows the stadium to host an overlapping baseball season for the Knoxville Smokies alongside One Knoxville Sporting Club. The **elaborate conversion process** takes 10 employees about 12 hours to complete, and the removal process takes around nine hours. The entire conversion process occurs nine times throughout the 2025 overlapping soccer and baseball seasons.



MORGAN WALLEN AT NEYLAND STADIUM

The University of Tennessee campus was “Neyland loud” for Morgan Wallen’s September concerts. Nearly 160,000 fans embraced the hometown superstar. VK was heavily involved in ensuring a successful partnership. VK created a landing page with regularly updated know-before-you-go information (including ticket, venue, shuttle, and parking details). VK promoted the event on social media and partnered with Olympus Car & Coach for transportation. The event was covered in publications like *Rolling Stone* to tell the story of visiting Knoxville through the platform of music.

NEW AD AGENCY

VK partners with an external advertising agency for multi-channel ads that market Knoxville and Knox County as a premier destination. As a nonprofit, VK prudently conducts an agency review and/or renewal process using a formal request for proposal (RFP). In early 2025, VK launched a two-phase RFP process that included open proposals and invited presentations. Representatives from the VK Team and Board evaluated all submissions which concluded in the selection of The Zimmerman Agency. With nearly 40 years of experience in the hospitality/travel industry, Zimmerman maintains local staff in Knoxville to ensure close collaboration and local insight.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

THROUGHOUT THE 2024-2025 FISCAL YEAR, WE CONTINUE TO MARKET KNOXVILLE USING OUR ADAPTIVE TAGLINE: A NATURE-LOVING-ADVENTURE-SEEKING-ARTSY-KINDA-TOWN. WE ADJUST THE LANGUAGE TO CONNECT WITH DIFFERENT VISITORS. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN WE SPEAK TO DOG-LOVERS WHO WANT TO VISIT BARXVILLE, WE OFTEN ALTER THE TAGLINE TO A NATURE-LOVING-ADVENTURE-SEEKING-BELLY-SCRATCHING-KINDA-TOWN TO CONTINUE REACHING "PAWRENTS" THROUGH THE BARXVILLE CAMPAIGN.

In FYE24 alone, Visit Knoxville ads have generated over **5,000** hotel bookings and over **150** flight bookings, tracked by Adara. Top markets include Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Indiana. As with all VK marketing campaigns, digital ads direct users to a relevant VK webpage; for instance, foodie ads link back to visitknoxville.com/restaurants/.

The Visit Knoxville website continues to perform above tourism industry standards thanks to fresh, updated content and images, social media links, and search optimization.

TOTAL NUMBER OF WEBSITE VISITS
2.8M
SESSIONS
 (UP 12.19% OVER FYE24)

TOP 10 LANDING PAGES

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Events | 6. Pet-Friendly |
| 2. Events this Weekend | 7. Sunsphere Tickets |
| 3. Things to Do | 8. Restaurants |
| 4. Home | 9. Attractions |
| 5. Concerts & Live Music | 10. Downtown Dining |

TOP 10 CITIES FOR WEBSITE TRAFFIC

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Knoxville | 6. Miami |
| 2. Atlanta | 7. Dallas |
| 3. Nashville | 8. Charlotte |
| 4. Chicago | 9. Louisville |
| 5. New York | 10. Indianapolis |

ADDITIONAL WEBSITE UPDATES

68

NEW PARTNER LISTINGS

2,306

NEW/UPDATED CALENDAR EVENTS

82

BLOG POSTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF WEBSITE USERS

2.1M
USERS

(UP 10.3% OVER FYE24)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

New Beginnings: In FYE25, Visit Knoxville onboarded a new Senior Director of Marketing, Alyssa Sloan. Through cooperative teamwork, the existing Marketing Team helped to welcome and onboard the new leader. The Team's broad experience and commitment to VK enabled a positive transition to a data-first marketing strategy under Sloan's direction. Soon after onboarding, VK issued a request for proposal (RFP) to solicit a new ad agency for support of its ongoing digital advertising campaigns. The RFP process included multiple phases for advancing proposals and rigorous evaluation criteria for the VK Team and Board members who contributed their time and talents. The process concluded with the selection of a new ad agency, The Zimmerman Agency, who will work closely with the VK marketing team beginning in the new fiscal year.

Cross-Functional Success: VK's signature events are possible through the highly collaborative staff working within different VK departments. Events like FILM FEST KNOX, Tour de Lights, Visitors Guide Launch, Visit Knoxville Open, and other visiting events are achievable through countless planning meetings and subsequent action items assigned to VK's Marketing, Finance, Services, Operations, Sales, and Sports Commission Teams.

Tennessee Songwriters Showcase in Knoxville: It's hard not to think of music when thinking of Tennessee, which is why the state's tourism tagline is Tennessee "Sounds Perfect." To continue Tennessee's lyrical legacy and to encourage the next generation of musical storytellers, the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) promotes an annual Songwriters Week where musicians from every genre compete at local venues for a chance to compete in a regional showcase. On February 25, 2025, in partnership with TDTD, VK co-hosted a regional showcase at the Bijou Theatre. This event required months of planning among TDTD staff, VK's Marketing Team, and the Bijou crew. This year's showcase included fourteen songwriters; Sarrena Johnson (pictured here) was the winner and went on to compete in the statewide showcase.

Hot Dogs to Haute Cuisine Foodie FAM: In spring 2025, in partnership with TDTD, VK hosted a Foodie FAM that welcomed five journalists/bloggers from across the United States. TDTD exposed the participants to memorable tours and restaurants in surrounding counties, and VK guided the group through delicious dining experiences in Knoxville. Relying on the FAM theme of Hot Dogs to Haute Cuisine, the multi-day tour included casual foods (like hot dogs and diner classics) and elevated experiences (such as the culinary delights of a James Beard Award-winning Best Chef). Of course, VK also steered the participating journalists toward local experiences like Bakers Creek Preserve, hiking at Ijams, a walking tour of downtown, a Smokies baseball game, and more. Post-FAM surveys revealed positive experiences, and all the participants are developing and pitching stories to regional, national, and international publications.

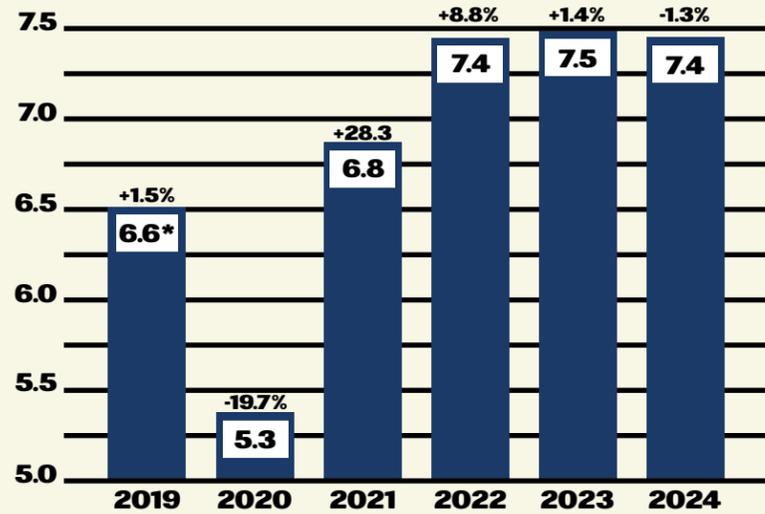


MARKET RESEARCH

VISIT KNOXVILLE COLLECTS AND ANALYZES DATA FROM SOURCES INCLUDING LONGWOODS INTERNATIONAL, SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH (STR), ADARA, AND ARRIVALIST TO COMPILE INFORMATION RELATED TO KNOXVILLE'S TRAVEL MARKET. A QUARTERLY TOURISM DASHBOARD IS AVAILABLE UNDER PUBLIC NOTICES IN THE [MEDIA SECTION](#) OF [VISITKNOXVILLE.COM](#).

TOTAL OVERNIGHT VISITORS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024

7.4 MILLION



* OVERNIGHT VISITATION HAS GROWN 12% FROM 2019-2024
BASED ON KNOXVILLE'S SHARE OF TOTAL US VOLUME COMPARED AGAINST STR ROOM NIGHTS
(SOURCES: LONGWOODS, STR, ARRIVALIST, VISIT KNOXVILLE)

HOTEL DATA

TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS
JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025

2,355,665

(FLAT OVER FY24)

Occupancy	FLAT
ADR	UP 3%
Room Revenues	UP 2.5%

Source: STR

BOOKING DATA

Visit Knoxville uses Adara to track hotel business generated from our digital ad placement and website visitation. Below is a summary of those findings.

HOTEL BUSINESS GENERATED BY WEBSITE VISITORS

Bookings	20,664
Room Nights	55,315
Average Rate	\$167.16
Hotel Revenue	\$9,246,348

HOTEL BUSINESS GENERATED BY DIGITAL AD PLACEMENT EXPOSURE

Bookings	27,625
Room Nights	53,338
Average Rate	\$169.38
Hotel Revenue	\$9,034,396

ADARA tracks a 60-day booking window. The booking data above is current as of 7-17-25.

TOP 10 BOOKING MARKETS

Atlanta • Charlotte • Chattanooga • Chicago • Greenville
Knoxville* • Nashville • New York • Memphis • Washington, D.C.

*The Knoxville DMA (Designated Market Area) consists of 22 counties within East Tennessee and Southeast Kentucky

FILM OFFICE

THE VISIT KNOXVILLE FILM OFFICE ACTIVELY PROMOTES KNOXVILLE AND KNOX COUNTY AS A PREMIERE FILMING LOCATION. RECRUITING MOTION MEDIA COMPANIES THROUGH THE MARKETING OF LOCATIONS, ACCOMMODATIONS, SERVICES, CREW, AND TALENT FOSTERS THE CREATION OF JOBS IN THE AREA, STIMULATES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES, AND GENERATES EXPOSURE. THE VK FILM OFFICE ALSO MEDIATES THE PERMITTING PROCESS BETWEEN FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND THE FILM INDUSTRY. IN ADDITION TO SUPPORTING LOCAL AND OUT-OF-TOWN PRODUCTION COMPANIES WITH FILMING NEEDS AND ITS RECRUITMENT OF FILM PROJECTS, THE FILM OFFICE CONTINUED TO SHOWCASE KNOXVILLE AND KNOX COUNTY THROUGH FILM.

This fiscal year, the Film Office hosted a screening of the previously successfully recruited feature film *Treasure Trackers*. The kids' adventure film was screened at Regal Riviera in downtown Knoxville to a packed theater. The film was produced by Storyboard Entertainment out of Los Angeles. *Treasure Trackers* was initially released on MAX in foreign markets and is available to rent on major streaming providers.



The Film Office successfully recruited the feature film, *The Best Thing About Christmas*, a faith-based Christmas musical. Production took place in and around the Knoxville area and the film is currently in post-production.

A highlight of our work this fiscal year was producing FILM FEST KNOX. The successful second-year film festival took place over four days at Regal Riviera Theatre in downtown Knoxville and the audience doubled from its inaugural year. Packed theaters enjoyed great independent films including shorts, features, and documentaries from all over the world—as we well as shorts and features produced locally in Knoxville. The American Regional Cinema Competition was once again the centerpiece of the festival. Five films competed this year and *To Kill a Wolf*, directed by Kelsey Taylor, took home the big prize of an Oscar-qualifying theatrical release, courtesy of our partners at Regal.

Moviemaker Magazine honored FILM FEST KNOX by including the festival on their annual list of “50 Festivals Worth the Entry Fee” after only its second year.

With the goal of extending programming to keep FILM FEST KNOX front of mind in the community throughout the year, we continued our partnership with The Public Cinema by offering a free monthly film screening series at the Regal Riviera Theatre as part of FILM FEST KNOX.

Additionally, through the ongoing work of the Film Office, Knoxville was named by *Moviemaker Magazine* as one of the “Best Cities to Live and Work in as a Moviemaker.” This marks the fifth time Knoxville has made this prestigious list.



VISITOR SERVICES

THE VISITOR SERVICES TEAM SERVES AS THE FACE OF VISIT KNOXVILLE BY WELCOMING AND ASSISTING VISITORS. THE TEAM OPERATES FROM TWO LOCATIONS: THE VISIT KNOXVILLE VISITORS CENTER AT 301 S. GAY STREET AND THE [SUNSPHERE OBSERVATION DECK](#) & WELCOME CENTER IN WORLD'S FAIR PARK. THE TEAM COLLABORATES WITH OVER 80 LOCAL ARTISANS, KNOWN AS MAKERS, TO OFFER A DIVERSE RANGE OF HIGH-QUALITY RETAIL PRODUCTS IN BOTH [GIFT SHOP](#) LOCATIONS. ADDITIONALLY, THEY ORGANIZE TOURS, MONITOR AND MAINTAIN THE [EVENTS CALENDAR](#) AND [WEEKEND EVENTS NEWSLETTER](#), AND PROCURE MAPS AND BROCHURES TO ENHANCE VISITOR EXPERIENCES IN KNOXVILLE.

VISITORS CENTER GUESTS

29,000+

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

VISITORS GUIDES

157,000+

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



SUNSPHERE GUESTS SINCE FEBRUARY 2022

182,000+

TOP VISITING COUNTRIES FOR
JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Canada | 6. France |
| 2. United Kingdom | 7. Mexico |
| 3. Germany | 8. New Zealand |
| 4. Australia | 9. Panama |
| 5. Brazil | 10. Japan |

RETAIL PARTNERSHIPS

80+

CURATING KNOXVILLE INSPIRED PRODUCTS.
A FEW NOTABLE PARTNERSHIPS INCLUDE:

- Sunsphere Scents Amber Rountree
- Heather Whiteside Art
- Gayla Seale
- Strings & Earth Melissa Hale
- Natty Michele Paperie

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

As mentioned in the Notable Events & Accomplishments, the **Sunsphere Welcome Center** officially opened on November 20, 2024. Additionally, significant upgrades were made to the 4th Floor Observation Deck, including refreshed exhibits featuring donated World's Fair memorabilia, a Simpsons "Wigsphere" mural, and new interactive technology— such as touchscreens, real-time solar energy data, and a photo booth experience. A new educational display lists all participating countries from the 1982 World's Fair, with maps available both digitally and in print. The core walls on the second and third floors were painted in vibrant hues of a Rubik's Cube as a way of paying colorful tribute to one of the iconic historic elements from the 1982 World's Fair.



Seasonal programming helped grow community engagement. **Santa at the Sunsphere** returned to the Observation Deck in December, with over 900 children visiting and **400+ photo packages** sold. **Sunset at the Sunsphere** First Friday series continued through the winter months, coinciding with daylight standard time, attracting **over 150 attendees**. Shifting to saving time, First Fridays at the Sunsphere May-October (aligned with the months of the 1982 World's Fair) are now **"Free Local Days"** for Knox County residents, extending hours until 6 PM. **Annual passes** to the Sunsphere were launched this year (\$40 individual/\$120 family up to five) for frequent visitors to the attraction.



The Sunsphere welcomed many key groups, including Leadership Tennessee, Middle East Tennessee Tourism Council, the Tennessee Association of Museums, and several student groups. The Welcome Center was previewed in a familiarization tour for all 16 Tennessee State Welcome Centers, helping build tourism referrals from across the state.



Gotta Know Knoxville continues partnerships with local businesses to enhance the two-hour walking tour of Downtown Knoxville. More than **120 participants** were hosted this year.

The Visitor Services Team engaged with the following groups through presentations and distribution of informational resources: UTK Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Management (RHTM) Open House; RHTM Internship Expo; RHTM Part Time Job Fair; UTK Graduate School Fair; Hardin Valley Academy; Youth Leadership Knoxville; Introduction Knoxville; and UTK Haslam College of Business Spring Career Fair.

Community Partnerships include: Where's Waldo, Wicked Cool, Elf on the Shelf®, Peppermint Trail, Big Ears Festival, WDVX First Friday Live, RiverSports Egg Hunt, and Newts in Knox.



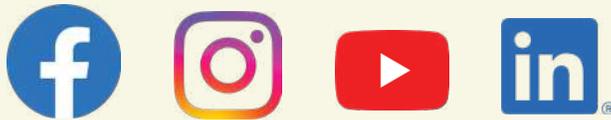
In celebration of **National Travel & Tourism Week**, the Sunsphere offered discounted admission to all visitors. Visit Knoxville also connected with each Tennessee State Welcome Center, sending Knoxville-themed gifts and visitor materials as a gesture of appreciation for their ongoing efforts to promote Knoxville as a destination.

VISIT KNOXVILLE TENNESSEE



TENNESSEE
SOUNDS PERFECT

**The Official Destination Marketing Organization for
the City of Knoxville and Knox County, Tennessee**



301 S. Gay Street Knoxville, TN 37902
865-523-7263

visitknoxville.com