

SALES & MARKETING

# ROAD MAP

2020-2021



*LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN*



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Like all of you, the team at Visit Knoxville is looking ahead to FYE21 with cautious hope. As members of an industry hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to move toward a light at the end of a tunnel. It may be hard to see at times, but it's there, and together we will reach it.

Over the past several months we have worked diligently to be both reactive and proactive – shifting in the moment to remain in compliance with local and state mandates while accommodating the needs of our partners and clients. The ability to reschedule rather than cancel has helped us hold on to key bookings. These events, alongside upcoming film production and future hotel bookings we're able to track within the leisure travel market, encourage us about what lies ahead for our destination.

This year, we are excited to host the Tennessee Health Occupations Students of America and welcome USA Cycling and the TYR Pro Swim Series back to Knoxville. Coming off a second straight year of being named one of the Best Places to Live and Work as a Moviemaker, Knoxville will again take center stage as the Visit Knoxville Film Office hosts production companies for a variety of projects including a feature film.

Visit Knoxville continues to work directly with our board of directors, committee members and stakeholders to identify and seize opportunities that will enhance our ability to attract top-tier meetings and events as well as visitors. As always, we strive to uncover opportunities that benefit not only our tourism partners, but the community at large.

Knoxville is and will continue to be promoted as a nature-loving-adventure-seeking-artsy-kind-of-town. As our newest campaign says, we are also ready-and-excited-to-welcome-you-ville. We look forward to partnering with you to accomplish the goals outlined in this Road Map and new opportunities we will encounter along the way. As always, we welcome your input.

Sincerely,

Kim Bumpas  
President  
Visit Knoxville

visit  
knoxville  
TENNESSEE

## 2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Visit Knoxville is the  
official Convention  
and Visitors Bureau  
for Knoxville and  
Knox County.

Our mission: to accelerate sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business to our community. It is our privilege to support community initiatives encompassing art and culture, history, entertainment and outdoor adventure to promote Knoxville regionally, nationally and internationally to leisure travelers, conference/event planners, sports events planners and film/television production companies.

Visit Knoxville is grateful to be governed by a highly supportive and engaged board of community leaders. These individuals willingly commit their time and talents to help us promote Knoxville and generate tourism dollars that benefit our local economy.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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**BECKY HANCOCK**

Vice-Chair

**MICHAEL RILEY**

Secretary, Sales Committee Chair

**JAY KRAMER**

Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair

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Marketing Committee Chair

**BRAD ANDERS**

**RICK EMMETT**

**BRYAN HAIR**

**CHRIS OOTEN**

**CORTNEY PIPER**

**CARMEN TEGANO**

VISIT KNOXVILLE  
**FILM/KNOX**  
FILMKNOXVILLETN.COM

### ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Tennessee State  
Film Commissioner

**CHRIS CALDWELL**

Knox County  
Senior Director of Finance

**KRISTIN SHRADER**

Founder, Shrader Communications



### ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Aimbridge Hospitality

**TARA BROOKS**

University of Tennessee  
Athletics Department

**BRANDON COULTER**

MLF Pro Angler

**JIMMY DELANEY**

University of Tennessee  
Athletics Department

**SHERYL ELY**

City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation

**CAROL EVANS**

Legacy Parks Foundation

**ROB HARDIN**

University of Tennessee  
Sports Management

**BUCK JONES**

University of Tennessee  
Sports Management, retired

**BRANDON PARKS**

Vol Network / IMG College

**RANDY SMITH**

Knox County Commissioner

**PAUL WHITE**

Knox County Parks and Recreation



# CONVENTION SALES & SERVICES SPORTS COMMISSION

The VK Sales Team (Convention & Sports) is tasked with recruiting convention business and sporting groups to Knoxville, creating the highest possible economic impact for facilities including the Knoxville Convention Center, the Knoxville Civic Auditorium & Coliseum, Chilhowee Park & Exposition Center and World's Fair Exhibition Hall. To accomplish this, VK actively promotes Knoxville as the ideal destination for meetings and events.

The Convention Services Team traditionally supports and services 230+ festivals and events as VK books 130+ events for future years. As festivals and events schedule and reschedule for FYE21, the Team will continue to support meetings, sporting events and festivals by conducting pre-planning visits, providing pre-promote assistance, offering partner and service provider referrals, assisting with logistical needs and more.

## SALES GOALS

The following goals for the VK Sales Team (Convention & Sports) will remain fluid due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and the possible other needs for the city's facilities. VK will make every possible effort to book the below venues as available.

### Total Booking Goal - 133 Groups (56 by Sports Commission)

- Knoxville Convention Center - 34 bookings
- Chilhowee Park - 3 bookings (if available)
- Knoxville Civic Auditorium & Coliseum - 2 bookings (if available)
- Hotel & Other Venues - 94 bookings

### Total Lead Goal - 349 Leads (110 by Sports Commission)

## ADDITIONAL GOALS

- Host 1 Convention Sales FAM Tour
- Host a minimum of 25 site visits
- Host 5 Meeting Sales Blitzes to targeted markets
- Execute a minimum of 5 Sport Scouting Trips

Face-to-face interaction with meeting planners and sporting event organizers through trade show participation is an essential component to VK's annual sales strategy. While VK is scheduled to participate in the following trade show activity, this may shift within the year due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19. VK will make every possible effort to attend the following in-person events and/or virtual options as available.

## CONVENTION SALES

**September 2020**  
Professional Fraternity Association

**October 2020**  
Small Market Meetings Conference

**November 2020**  
TNSAE Annual Lunch & Trade Show  
(Virtual)

**January 2021**  
Religious Conference Management  
Association (RCMA) Emerge

**January 2021**  
Professional Convention  
Management Association (PCMA)  
Convening Leaders

**February 2021**  
Connect Diversity

**March 2021**  
Rendezvous South

**Spring 2021**  
Experient Envision Conference

**Spring 2021**  
Cvent Connect

**Spring 2021**  
HelmsBriscoe Annual  
Business Conference

**Spring 2021**  
ConferenceDirect  
Annual Partner Meeting

**June 2021**  
Fraternity Executives Association

## SPORTS COMMISSION

**September 2020**  
S.P.O.R.T.S.  
The Relationship Conference

**October 2020**  
TEAMS

**November 2020**  
USSSA National Convention

**April 2021**  
Sports ETA Symposium

## VK CONCIERGE

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



# VISITOR SERVICES

**Visitor Services provides a personal experience for visitors through face to face interaction and a high level of service. There are several ways our friendly staff typically supports the visitor experience. In FYE21, services will be subject to change based on needs and requirements related to COVID-19.**

## DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE VISITORS CENTER

Our center opens directly to our guest services desk where 361 days per year you'll find friendly and knowledgeable staff ready to assist with directions, recommendations, and other needs. In FYE21 our center will continue to provide the most up to date materials, including:

- Brochures and other collateral on local and regional areas and attractions
- Local and regional maps
- Driving and walking tour information
- Local magazines
- Video monitors showcasing local attractions, festivals, and events

The retail section of our center provides a variety of souvenirs. It also provides local businesses with gifts and locally made items for clients, guests, and staff. In FYE21, VK's retail products will continue to be available at festivals and events throughout Knoxville, as well as online via our website and app. We will continue to expand our online store, making more items available, and develop more promotion of our merchandise and local gifts.

Our venue space allows for free, live music Monday – Thursday and Saturdays during the WDVX Blue Plate Special. In FYE21 we will look at additional ways to utilize our space for various events.

## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS (VICs)

In FYE21, we will work to find creative ways to showcase the Sunsphere and opportunities to make it accessible to visitors and locals alike. We will also continue to look for opportunities where we can add VICs to meet the needs of visitors to Knoxville.

## CURRENT LOCATIONS INCLUDE

- Knoxville Convention Center
- Knoxville Museum of Art
- Tommy Trent's
- Knoxville Adventure Collective
- University of Tennessee Visitor Center & Information Desk
- The Sunsphere Observation Deck
- Backstage at the Tennessee Theatre
- World's Fair Park Security Office
- The Tennessean Hotel Offices
- The Pinnacle Offices at Turkey Creek



## ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION CENTERS

We work with several distribution services, tourism partners and organizations to distribute Knoxville information at the following locations:

- Hotel locations in the Knoxville Metropolitan Area
- Tennessee State Welcome Centers
- Locations within I-75 from Powell, TN to Richmond, VA and 25E from Bean Station, TN to Corbin, KY
- AAA Offices
- Seasonally we coordinate additional distribution to even more locations to include Corporate/Public Buildings from Greeneville, TN to Abingdon, VA, New River Valley, and within the Virginia/Kentucky Mountains.

## GOTTA KNOW KNOXVILLE (GKK)

GKK provides tourism partners (and Knoxville residents) the opportunity to spend one afternoon learning more about Knoxville. Attendees become Ambassadors for Knoxville, encouraging their further engagement in the community. This program is presented once each month, April to October. In FYE21 we expect to produce over 120 Knoxville Ambassadors.

In FYE21 we will continue to develop Gotta Know Knoxville programming to host a more specifically focused training, individually, on the north, south, east, and west regions of Knox County. This will allow us to provide area-specific trainings, as requested, for hotel properties in these areas who wish to enhance their staff on the offerings closest to their locations.

Through this, Visitor Services will continue to serve as the face of Knoxville. With our in-house training, we are committed to equip and train our community in a way that anywhere a visitor might go, they will bump into a well-informed Knoxvillean.



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Visit Knoxville enjoys the privilege of sharing Knoxville’s narrative with a diverse and ever-increasing audience. The relationships we maintain with our hotels, attractions, restaurants, shops, venues and organizations benefit visitors, meeting planners, sports event planners, journalists, and production companies as well the partners involved.

Leisure travel marketing efforts in FYE21 will continue to rely heavily on the digital strategies VK has used to attract overnight visitors. These digital elements allow us to make in-the-moment adjustments to both spend and messaging, all the time keeping a focus on our primary goal: driving hotel bookings with extended stays.

## CREATIVE FOUNDATION

Last year, Visit Knoxville revealed a new branding campaign based on Knoxville being a “nature-loving-adventure-seeking-artsy-kinda-town”. Assets were produced to highlight our outdoor, music and culinary as well as art and culture offerings. The campaign was adapted and applied to marketing for Convention Sales and Services and the VK Sports Commission.

In June, leading up to the new fiscal year, this branding was tweaked as part of the relaunch of paid media to market Knoxville as “ready-and-excited-to-welcome-you-ville.” This theme is part of a phased marketing approach VK will take in FYE21.

## AUDIENCE PROFILE

As women continue to be identified as the household travel decision maker, VK will maintain focus on women ages 25-64 /leisure travelers (families and empty nesters). Marketing will also target adults ages 21-49/leisure travelers (young couples; no kids).

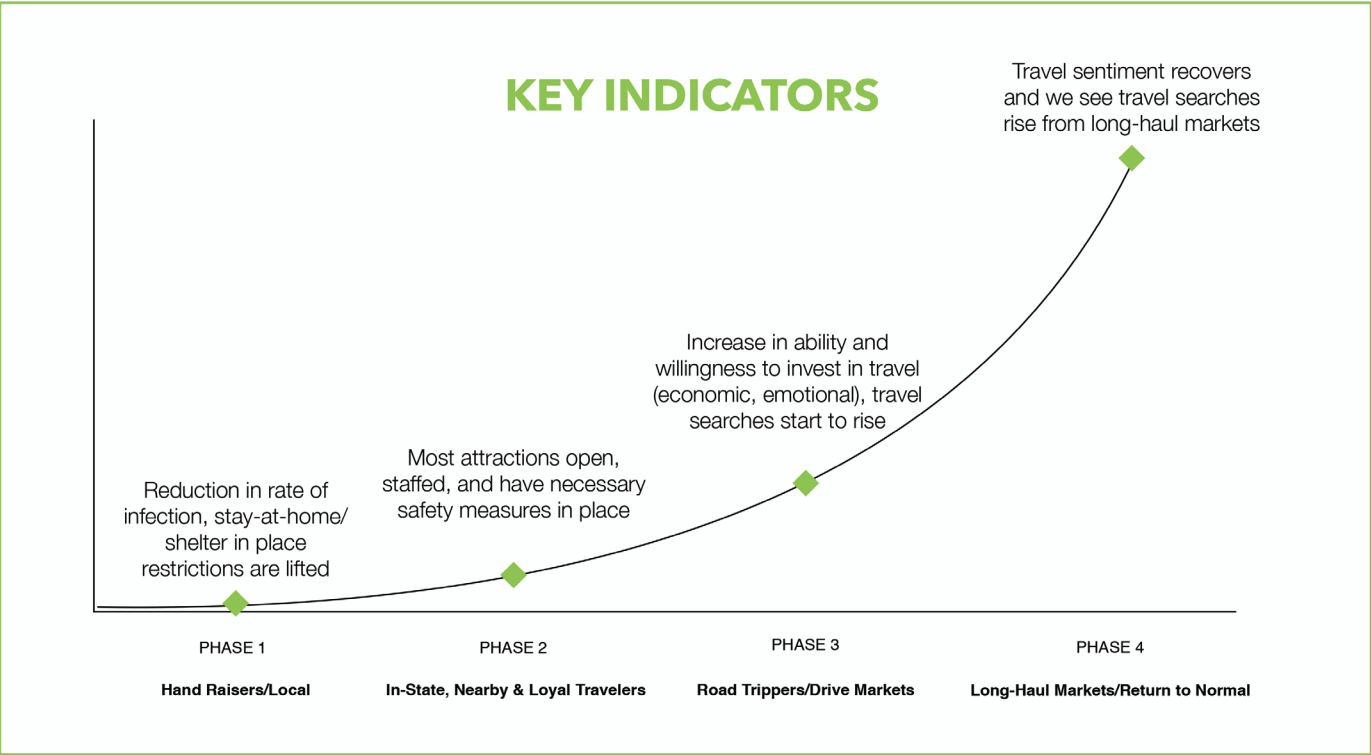
## TARGET MESSAGING

We will continue to evolve the “nature-loving-adventure-seeking-artsy-kinda town” campaign to ensure relevancy (given the changes in travel mindset due to COVID-19) and coverage across the following:

- Outdoor (scenic and adventure)
- Music
- Culture
- Culinary
- Family

## PHASED STRATEGY

Utilizing sources like Destination Analyst, the VK Marketing and Communications Team will work with agency partners to monitor traveler sentiment related to COVID-19. Using the key indicators in the chart below, we will then take a phased approach in our marketing efforts. The goal: reach early hand-raisers in 1Q and gradually shift to broader targeting (based on traveler behaviors and local regulations).



**PHASE 1:** Utilize heavy retargeting and online travel intent behaviors to inspire near-cations in Knoxville for adults ages 18+ within a 250-mile radius of Knoxville. Channels: paid search, programmatic video + display, online video, paid social and organic efforts via social and e-newsletter engagement.

**PHASE 2:** Expand geography to include the following drive markets: Nashville, Chattanooga, Tri-Cities, Memphis, Atlanta, Greenville (SC), Lexington, Charlotte, Birmingham, Raleigh, Louisville, Cincinnati and Indianapolis. Re-engage with Phase 1 hand raisers and broaden to include interest-based targeting. Expand media mix to include travel editorial.

**PHASE 3:** Build on Phase 2 to retarget past engagers and expand into similar audiences. Re-introduce key audience segments (Families, Couples/DINKs, Empty Nesters, Young/Free) based on travel data and time of year.

**PHASE 4:** Expand geographical footprint to include long-haul markets (Chicago and Tampa). Return to normal targeting of our four key target audiences (audience selection will be based on time of year).



ADDITIONAL MARKETING TOOLS

Visit Knoxville will continue to utilize the following to maximize exposure and spending:

- Co-Op Partnerships with the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development
- VisitKnoxville.com & the Visit Knoxville App
- The Official Knoxville Visitors & Relocation Guide - 225,000 copies printed annually (plus digital)
- UT Visitor Guide - 75,000 - 100,000 copies printed annually
- VKTV & VK Network now airing in 1,726 Knoxville hotel rooms & 32 high-traffic areas throughout Knox County
- Earned Media – includes, but is not limited to, unpaid/PR initiatives like press releases, FAMs and stories produced by hosted journalists/influencers
- New for FYE21: HootBoard – what started as a digital bulletin board for organizations has evolved into a sleek, smart, easy-to-deploy, versatile, touch-screen kiosk. The HootBoard is estimated to roll out as part of VK’s overall marketing mix in late 2Q/early 3Q. Updates will be provided via VK’s quarterly reports.

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

Analyzing consumer behaviors, industry and channel trends, and performance across owned and paid channels, VK will use ongoing data to make the most insightful and informed decisions.

Visit Knoxville will continue to partner with ADARA and Arrivalist to collect travel data to determine advertising campaign effectiveness to better target potential visitors.

**NOTE:** The methodologies referenced above are geared towards the leisure traveler. The Marketing and Communications department works in conjunction with Convention Sales and Sports to place advertising geared directly to meeting and sports planners. These methods include digital and traditional print advertising, email campaigns, trade show materials, and more.



**The mission of the Visit Knoxville Film Office is to successfully promote Knoxville and Knox County as a premiere filming location for productions to call home. The Film Office will continue to be very active in recruiting and winning projects from large production hubs for FYE21.**

Knoxville has proven itself to be an attractive city for film producers and media companies to choose as a filming location. We plan to maintain this momentum in FYE21 by continuing to highlight the importance of strong, competitive Film Incentives in our state, as well as providing top-notch assistance with locations, crews, talent, lodging, permits and city services. The Film Office will continue to work with out-of-town production companies on projects ranging from commercials, crime re-enactment television shows, and hit network television shows while generating exposure for our beautiful and versatile city.

GOALS AND TARGET PROJECTS FOR FYE21

- A Christmas film from the makers of *God’s Not Dead* with plans to shoot late 2020
- A romantic comedy feature film from Producer Boris Isaacs with plans to shoot late 2020
- An action film, *Accident on Relay Street*, from Director Rohit Bahtra with plans to shoot late 2020
- A Sony pictures film, *Heart of a Lion* with plans to shoot early 2021
- Goal of \$2 million in productions
- Obtain a minimum of \$250,000 in earned media for the Film Office and related projects
- Make the *MovieMaker Magazine* list of Top Cities to Live & Work as a Moviemaker for the THIRD year in a row
- Expand our partnerships with out-of-town production companies

FILM OFFICE





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

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