

OUTDOOR
ART

THE FRESHWATER
SURFING
SANCTUARY

OF CYCLING



THE SETTLEMENT
OF SAUSAGE

HOME OF THE
ROLLING
TAVERN

THE CITY WHERE
BEER FLOWS BENEATH
BOROUGH OF BEERMOSAS

OME
THE
NK
QUIRREL

FROZEN CUSTARD
CAPITAL
OF THE WORLD



ANNUAL REPORT

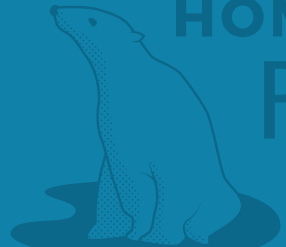
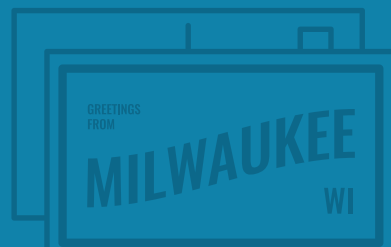
2019



THE INDEPENDENT MOVIE THEATER
MECCA OF THE MIDWEST

414

THE BEER BARON BURIAL GROUND



HOME OF THE
PLUNGING
POLAR BEARS

HOME TO AMERICA'S OLDEST ALLEY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As I write this letter from my home office, I hope you are safe and healthy. This time has given me the opportunity to reflect on my nearly 30-year career in the hospitality industry. After spending the last 22 years with Marcus Hotels and Resorts,

I was so grateful to continue to celebrate Milwaukee by landing the opportunity to lead VISIT Milwaukee. As I came into the role, I couldn't have imagined a more exciting time to lead this instrumental organization. As you will see, 2019 was an incredible year for the tourism industry in Milwaukee, and 2020 was bound to solidify Milwaukee as a major tourist destination for the next decade. We were on the verge of letting the world know what we already knew, that Milwaukee is the coolest city in the Midwest.

Obviously, that changed within months of my arrival. But before we get there, let's look back on 2019. I would like to emphatically thank the team at VISIT Milwaukee who worked diligently, thoughtfully, and expeditiously in 2019 to promote Milwaukee as a top destination, sell our city for meetings, conventions, and sporting events, and actively welcome our visitors.

Tourism was up in Milwaukee in 2019. Over 29 million visitors experienced our destination, bringing a total of \$5.9 billion into the Greater Milwaukee area (up 3.5 percent over 2018). Visitor spending totaled \$3.3 billion. This helped to support 53,200 fulltime jobs (which is more than enough to fill the American Family Amphitheater 2.5 times!), with labor income totaling \$1.84 billion.

Total business sales as a result of tourism in Milwaukee County grew by nearly 4 percent to \$3.9 billion. Direct visitor spending increased by over 4 percent to surpass \$2.2 billion in 2019. State and local tax revenue generated by tourism was \$260 million in Milwaukee County, up 3.2 percent over 2018. Without the state and local taxes generated by tourism, each Milwaukee County household would need to pay an additional \$687 in taxes to maintain the current level of government services.

Our hotel partners also saw a positive revenue growth on their investments. The year-end STR report data showed occupancy for the City of Milwaukee at 71.6 percent and 66.8 percent for Milwaukee County. RevPar was \$103.39 in the City and \$78.59 in the County, and ADR was \$144.37 in the City and \$117.66 for the County. These are encouraging numbers.

We forged an even stronger relationship with our colleagues at the Wisconsin Center District and worked with the new Travel Wisconsin leadership to highlight Milwaukee as part of their marketing strategy. Success like this does not happen organically.

The year would not have been nearly as successful for the city without the team, led by Megan Suardini on the marketing side, Kristin Settle in communications, Brittany Korth in event experience and visitor information, Meg McKenna who heads up partnership, and our entire sales team, which was led by Marissa Werner and Lauren Hyps in the absence of a Director.

Looking ahead, I wish I could say that 2020 will live up to the hype we were expecting and that it would be the banner year for tourism that we imagined, but that would be untrue. COVID-19 has decimated the travel and tourism industry. We have seen hotels suspend operations, we have seen over 75 percent of restaurants close for business, and our tourist attractions, arts, sports have all been postponed or canceled. In addition, we had many large meetings and convention cancellations. Unfortunately, the speed of recovery is still very much unknown at this time.

VISIT Milwaukee is ready to promote our city once this pandemic has ebbed, and Milwaukee as a destination for all travelers will recover. Tourism will be a key driver in Milwaukee's economic recovery, and VISIT Milwaukee will lead the way. I know

without a doubt that our hotels will once again be ready to welcome overnight guests, our restaurants will be once again set their tables in anticipation of celebrations and meetings, our arts and attractions will open their doors, and our bars will be ready with a cold beer.

Even with the uncertainty of the times, I could not be prouder to lead this extraordinary team of talented individuals into this decade. The VISIT Milwaukee staff is dedicated and hard working. I've never seen such passion for the community or such enthusiasm in the office. This team works every day to make Milwaukee a better place, and it shows in the year-end numbers.

Stay safe, be well.

Peggy Williams-Smith

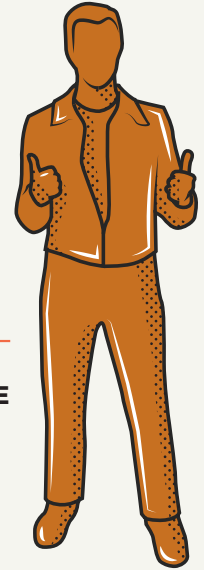
President and CEO

VISIT Milwaukee

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM IN MILWAUKEE



IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY:
STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
BENEFITED BY COLLECTING
\$260 MILLION
IN TAX REVENUE FROM VISITORS

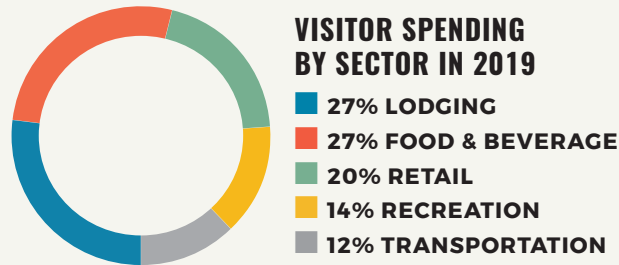


WITHOUT TOURISM, EACH MILWAUKEE
COUNTY HOUSEHOLD WOULD
NEED TO PAY AN ADDITIONAL
\$687 IN TAXES



TOURISM DIRECTLY
SUPPORTS OVER
53,200 JOBS
IN THE GREATER
MILWAUKEE AREA
*THAT'S ENOUGH TO FILL
FISERV FORUM 3 TIMES*

IN 2019, TOURISM BROUGHT IN
OVER \$5.9 BILLION
TO THE GREATER MILWAUKEE AREA
(Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington, and Ozaukee counties)



GREATER MILWAUKEE
REPRESENTS 26%
OF THE STATE'S TOURISM ECONOMY

OVER 29 MILLION VISITORS CAME TO MILWAUKEE IN 2019



2019 STR REPORT

5.5%

INCREASED
ROOM DEMAND

3,600,330

ROOMS SOLD

7.9%

INCREASED
REVENUE

\$353,723,772

TOTAL REVENUE

GREATER MILWAUKEE LODGING OVERVIEW

COUNTY / DOWNTOWN



157
TOTAL HOTELS

34
TOTAL HOTELS



19,289
TOTAL ROOMS

5,537
TOTAL ROOMS



66.8%
OCCUPANCY

71.6%
OCCUPANCY



\$117.66
AVG. DAILY RATE


\$144.37
AVG. DAILY RATE

2019 BY THE NUMBERS

SALES

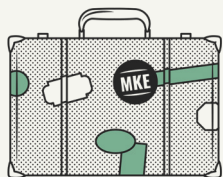
401,944

CONVENTION ATTENDEES BROUGHT TO MILWAUKEE

70 MEETING PLANNER
SITE VISITS 

31 CONFERENCES ATTENDED

TO MARKET MILWAUKEE AS A HOST CITY



369

MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS
BOOKED FOR 2019-2026



285
VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS
773
VOLUNTEER
SHIFTS

3,174
VOLUNTEER
HOURS



243,377

DEFINITE ROOM NIGHTS

\$177 MIL

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

55
SPORTS
EVENTS

9
FAITH
EVENTS

BOOKED IN 2019

LARGEST CONVENTION

**LEAGUE OF UNITED
LATIN AMERICAN
CITIZENS**

15,000 ATTENDEES



4.6 / 5 STARS

EVENT EXPERIENCE
STAFF RATING BY CLIENTS



10
CRUISE SHIPS
WELCOMED TO
MILWAUKEE

EVENT EXPERIENCE

369 EVENTS
SERVICED

PARTNERSHIP

754
TOTAL MEMBERS

134
NEW MEMBERS

91%
RETENTION RATE

21
EVENTS HOSTED

29 CORPORATE
PARTNERS

7 NEW
IN 2019

LARGEST VISIT MILWAUKEE EVENT
ANNUAL MEETING → 640 ATTENDEES

PUBLIC RELATIONS

1,197
EARNED MEDIA PLACEMENTS

121
TV APPEARANCES

83
TRAVEL WRITERS HOSTED

474
LEISURE-FOCUSED STORIES



979,035,258
EARNED MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

2019 BIGGEST PLACEMENTS

Bloomberg Wisconsin is the Best Golfing Road Trip You Can Take Right Now | **Food + Wine** There's Never Been a Better Time to Eat and Drink in Milwaukee | **Wall Street Journal** An Insider's Guide to Milwaukeee | **Travel Channel** 10 Reasons to Make Time for Milwaukeee | **New York Times** 36 Hours in Milwaukee

MARKETING



LEISURE CAMPAIGN
86.4 MILLION
IMPRESSIONS

GROUP TOUR AND MKE365 HAD A COMBINED 27.9 MILLION IMPRESSIONS



MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS CAMPAIGN
23.7 MILLION
IMPRESSIONS

20%
OVER
GOAL

1,827,0687
VISITS TO VISITMILWAUKEE.ORG



MOST POPULAR VISIT MILWAUKEE INSTAGRAM POST BY @ROZEKCHRIS

MOST POPULAR DEARMKE INSTAGRAM POST BY @CHELSEA_C3



37%
INCREASE IN VISITS TO MEETINGS SECTION

14%
INCREASE IN VISITS TO MILWAUKEE365 EVENT CALENDAR

TOP WEB PAGES

EVENTS → 237,022 PAGE VIEWS



TOP EVENT → SUMMERFEST
30,568 PAGE VIEWS

@VISITMilwaukee

f FACEBOOK
63,287

i INSTAGRAM
42,366

t TWITTER
49,212

@DearMKE

f FACEBOOK
19,678

i INSTAGRAM
41,664

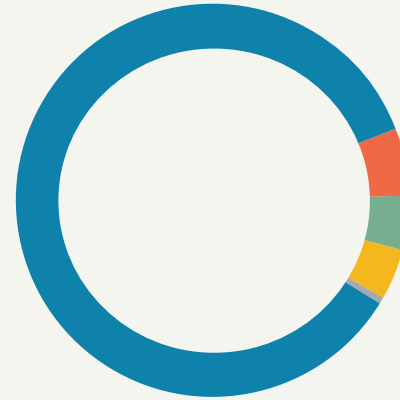
t TWITTER
5,596

MILWAUKEE WILL MOVE FORWARD AFTER ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY

VISIT Milwaukee has begun a strategic and comprehensive plan to jumpstart our hospitality economy. Our plan includes:

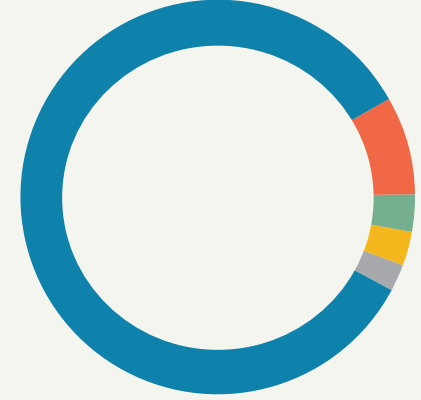
- Promote key conventions and leisure events in 2020
- Perform proactive sales outreach in key verticals that are likely to resume meetings first
- Focus on rebooking canceled and postponed events for late 2020 and future years to recapture lost business
- Launch an aggressive “Bring It Home” marketing campaign to encourage local decision-makers to host annual meetings, association meetings, and other business events in Milwaukee
- Initiate a strategic earned media and marketing push to highlight the Greater Milwaukee area as an affordable, drive-in vacation destination once travel restrictions have lifted

VISIT MILWAUKEE 2019 BUDGET



FUNDING

- 83.2% HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAXES & PUBLIC FUNDING
- 6% PARTNER DUES & PROGRAMS
- 5% PROGRAM & SERVICE REVENUE
- 4.8% MARKETING SPONSORS & AD SALES
- 1% OTHER



SPENDING

- 85.8% CONVENTION SALES & DESTINATION MARKETING
- 6.8% COMMUNICATIONS
- 2.9% CONVENTION SERVICES
- 2.5% ADMINISTRATIVE
- 2% PARTNERSHIP



1. USA Triathlon Prepromote
2. 88NINE Radio Milwaukee Music Awards
3. Visitors Guide Cover Photo Shoot
4. VISIT Milwaukee Annual Meeting
5. Sports Planning Press Trip
6. DNC Media Visit
7. 128th Air Refueling Wing Mission
8. Wisconsin State Fair Golf Outing
9. Tempo Milwaukee Mentor Event
10. NEWaukee Night Market
11. Bastille Days
12. VISIT Milwaukee Annual Meeting
13. PRSA Conference in Philadelphia
14. Sculpture Milwaukee Ribbon Cutting

VISIT MILWAUKEE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Omar Shaikh, Chair

SURG Restaurant Group

Steve Baas, Vice Chair

Metropolitan Milwaukee
Association of Commerce
(MMAC)

Lynda Kohler, Treasurer

SHARP Literacy Inc.

Peggy Williams-Smith

VISIT Milwaukee

DIRECTORS

Rafael Acevedo

City of Milwaukee
(Diversity and Inclusion
Committee Chair)

Grady L. Crosby

Johnson Controls Inc.

Jeremy Fojut

NEWaukee

Maxx Rodriguez

Milwaukee Brewers

Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd

City of Milwaukee

Dr. Eve Hall

The Milwaukee Urban League

Gerard Randall, Jr.

Milwaukee Education
Partnership

Howard Snyder

Northwest Side CDC

Mayor Dennis McBride

City of Wauwatosa

Kathy Causier

City of Wauwatosa

Melissa Weiss

City of Wauwatosa

Brian Dranzik

General Mitchell
International Airport

Jeremy Lucas

Milwaukee County

Danielle Bergner

J. Jeffers and Company

Curt Kluth

Saz's Hospitality Group

Bill Davidson

Harley-Davidson Museum

Mark Flaherty

Jackson Street Holdings

Kristine Hillmer

Wisconsin Restaurant
Association

Tracy Johnson

Commercial Association of
REALTORS Wisconsin

James Kanter

Sprecher Brewery

Tom Malloy

Potawatomi Hotel & Casino

Michael Evans

Marcus Hotels & Resorts

Jason Rae

WI LGBT Chamber of Commerce

Rose Murack

Radisson Hotel Milwaukee-West

Kate Braasch

Marquette University

Kathleen O'Leary

Wisconsin State Fair

Sarah Smith-Pancheri

Summerfest

Jim Villa

National Association for
Industrial & Office Properties

Chuck Wikenhauser

Milwaukee County Zoo

Marty Brooks

Wisconsin Center District

Beth Weirick

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21

Luis Ayala

VISIT Milwaukee

Thank you for your service!

Don Smiley - 15 years

Greg Marcus - 2 years

Mayor Kathy Ehley - 8 years

Alderwoman

Cheryl Berdan - 4 years

THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS

REGIONAL

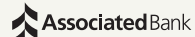


STRATEGIC



CORPORATE

FINANCIAL



SPORTS



MANUFACTURING



HIGHER EDUCATION



TRAVEL & TOURISM



.....



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(800) 554-1448



   
VISITMilwaukee.org
@VISITMilwaukee

VISIT MILWAUKEE STAFF

ADMINISTRATION

Peggy Williams-Smith
President & CEO

Charlotte Hayslett
Director of Human Resources

Sharon Alaniz
Guest Services Assistant

Ann-Marie Parker
Staff Accountant

SALES

Leslie Johnson
Director of Sales

Laura Lutter Cole
Convention Sales Manager

Jill Hauck
Group Tour & Tourism Coordinator

Megan Husband
Convention Sales Manager

Brian Hutchings
Group Tour & Convention Sales Manager

Lauren Hyps
Senior Convention Sales Manager

Connie Kopecky
Sales Account Executive

Emilie Page
Convention Sales Coordinator

Marissa Werner
Director of Sports Development

Christina Fox
Convention Sales Coordinator

EVENT EXPERIENCE

Brittany Korth
Director of Event Experience

Andrew Knuth
Event Experience Manager

Cathy Kreiter
Event Experience Manager

Tony Snell
Volunteer and Staffing Coordinator

Emily Boulden
Event Experience Coordinator

MARKETING

Megan Suardini
Vice President of Marketing & Communications

Bill Prange
Senior Marketing Manager

Amanda Buhrman
Digital Marketing Manager

Kathryn Lavey
Graphic Design Manager

Alex Zimdars
Graphic Designer

Jennifer Posh
Content Manager

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Kristin Settle
Director of Communications

Claire Koenig
Communications Manager

Lindsey McKee
Communications Manager

Emily Tau
Communications Coordinator

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Meg McKenna
Director of Development

Maria Strand
Partner Services Coordinator

