



# POCONO MOUNTAINS

VISITORS BUREAU

2  
0  
1  
8



## ANNUAL REPORT

WAYNE • PIKE • MONROE • CARBON COUNTIES

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**SPECIAL THANKS** ..... 03

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** ..... 04

**EXECUTIVE MESSAGE** ..... 05

**MARKETING ANALYSIS** ..... 06

**MARKETING & ADVERTISING** ..... 08

**MARKETING: STREAMING** ..... 11

**POCONOMOUNTAINS.COM** ..... 12

**WEBSITE ENHANCEMENTS**..... 13

**SOCIAL MEDIA** ..... 14

**COMMUNICATIONS** ..... 15

**SALES**..... 16

**GROUPS** ..... 18

**MEMBERSHIP** ..... 19

**ADVOCACY** ..... 20

**FINANCIALS** ..... 21

**PICK UP THE POCONOS** ..... 22

## POCONO MOUNTAINS VISITORS BUREAU

1004 W. Main St.  
Stroudsburg, PA 18360

(570) 421-5791

pocomts@poconos.org  
PoconoMountains.com

@PoconoTourism  
#PoconoMtns



# SPECIAL THANKS

to our

## COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

### WAYNE COUNTY

Brian Smith\*  
Wendell Kay  
Joseph Adams

### PIKE COUNTY

Matthew Osterberg\*  
Rich Caridi  
Steve Guccini

### MONROE COUNTY

John Moyer\*  
Charles Garris  
John Christy

### CARBON COUNTY

Wayne Nothstein\*  
Tom Gerhard  
William O'Gurek

\* denotes chairman

## SENATORS & REPRESENTATIVES

### US SENATORS

Robert Casey, Jr.  
Pat Toomey

### STATE SENATORS

Lisa Baker  
John Blake  
Mario Scavello  
John Yudichack

### REPRESENTATIVES

Rosemary Brown  
Jonathan Fritz  
Doyle Heffley

### REPRESENTATIVES

Jerry Knowles  
Maureen Madden  
Michael Peifer  
Jack Rader

## 2017-18 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Arthur Berry III  
Camelback Mountain Resort

\*Andrew Forte  
Stroudsmoor Country Inn

Rob Howell  
Shawnee Inn & Golf Resort

\*Jeff Rudder  
Skytop Lodge

Jim Cahill  
Pocono Manor Resort & Spa

\*Bridget Gelderman  
East Shore Lodging

\*John Kiesendahl  
Woodloch Resort

\*Donna Smith  
*Treasurer*  
Bushkill Falls

\*Bill Colavito  
*1st Vice Chairman*  
Great Wolf Lodge

\*Justin Genzlinger  
*3rd Vice Chairman*  
Settlers Hospitality Group

Mark Major  
Intl. Sports Training Camp

Drew Snyder  
Pocono ProFoods

Bob Dunlop  
Crescent Lodge

\*Barbara Green  
*Second Vice Chairperson*  
Blue Mountain Ski Area

\*Ben May  
Pocono Raceway

\*Jim Tust  
Shawnee Mountain Ski Area

\*Eric Ehrhardt  
*Chairman of the Board*  
JABE Consulting LLC

Pete Helms  
Davis R. Chant Real  
Estate Inc.

Don Pleau  
Kalahari Resorts &  
Conventions

\*Andy Worthington

\*Tony Farda  
Hideaway Hills Golf Club

Martin Horowitz  
Brookview Manor Inn

\*Genevieve Reese  
*Chairperson*  
French Manor Inn & Spa



\*Denotes Executive Committee

## PAST CHAIRMEN

1934-1953	Ted Jenkins	1969-1972	Charles Poalillo	1992-1995	Frank Kelley
1953-1954	Jack Shinn	1972-1973	Glenn Kissel	1995-1998	Jeanne Genzlinger
1954-1955	Henry Arneberg	1973-1974	Paul Asure	1998-2000	W. Jack Kalins
1955-1956	Harry Ahnert	1974-1976	Peter Ahnert	2000-2002	Larry Greene
1956-1957	Paul Asure	1976-1978	Joan Toms	2002-2007	Andrew Forte
1957-1958	Leroy Guccini	1978-1979	Wes Smith	2007-2009	Edward Mayotte
1958-1963	William J. Altier	1979-1981	Bill Van Gilder	2009-2012	Andy Worthington
1963-1964	Eric Schuchard	1981-1985	Tony Farda	2012-2014	John Kiesendahl
1964-1967	Harry Kiesendahl	1985-1989	Ron Logan	2014-2016	Eric Ehrhardt
1967-1969	Robert Ahnert	1989-1992	Donald H. Pierson		

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The PMVB's annual report gives you a look back over the past fiscal year to see how tourism continues to grow and drive revenue to our four-county region. Here's what you'll find inside:*

**ANALYTICS** allow us to measure visitation patterns and confirm that our paid media attracts visitors to the region.

**MARKETING** is the nuts and bolts of what we do to support, engage, develop awareness, attract and build relationships with our audience. We aim to increase visitation to the Pocono Mountains and keep guests coming back year after year.

**STREAMING** original content from the Pocono Mountains through our IPTV channel is another way we're working to engage visitors while they're here and showcase the unique people, places and activities in our region. We continue to share scenes from the Poconos every day through our 29 live streaming cameras. Not only are these cameras streaming on our site, they're on our members' sites, on TV stations, and social networks.

**POCONOMOUNTAINS.COM** is a portal and powerful tool for new visitors, returning visitors, PMVB members and local/regional residents to learn about things to do, events, festivals, attractions and lodging options throughout the Poconos. We've developed this site to be the search engine of the Pocono Mountains.

**WEBSITE ENHANCEMENTS** show what we've been doing to make PoconoMountains.com a user-friendly site across all devices, serving personalized, varied content based on user location and interests.

**SOCIAL MEDIA** and tourism have a unique relationship because they both tell very powerful and personal stories. We look at social media as one of the strongest ways to showcase our destination. By developing engaging content and relevant contests and utilizing our audience to help tell the story of the Poconos, we've seen substantial growth that has

allowed us to reach new audiences and bring more visitors to the region.

**COMMUNICATION** is a key role that we have embraced and changed our strategy to stay relevant in the new world of public relations. In doing so, we have doubled our reach, which has allowed us to tell our story to new audiences.

Our **SALES** team is constantly out developing relationships to bring events, meetings, groups and teams to the Pocono Mountains.

**MEMBERSHIP** is a cornerstone of our organization and our members are the best tool for helping us tell the story of the Pocono Mountains. We've developed new training methods and refined tools to help our members over the past year. We continue to find ways to enhance relationships with current and new members.

**ADVOCACY** allows our members and tourism in the Pocono Mountains to have one voice in local, state and national matters. From building relationships with local and state officials to working with regional and state tourism agencies, we are working toward a common goal of bringing visitors to the region and keeping them happy while they are here.

**FINANCIALS** show the state of the organization over the past fiscal year.



**POCONOMOUNTAINS.COM**

# EXECUTIVE MESSAGES

I want to take a moment to thank all of you on behalf of the PMVB for the opportunity to serve you and the great Pocono Mountains. The past year was exciting as well as challenging. The weather has been both a help and a hindrance and remains a complete wild card. Our hope is to end the year with strength and continue that trend well into 2019.

We would be remiss if we didn't recognize our elected official partners from state, county and local government. They have supported us over the past year in many ways that we are grateful for and they have always positioned us for success. We look forward to continued partnerships in the upcoming year.

As we turn our attention toward 2019, I would like to review what we had presented to you at the last annual meeting as our primary commitments for the preceding year:

1. Enhance our product offerings to ensure value for our members
  2. Enhance our marketing/advertising products to provide value to our members
  3. Continue to refine in-house advertising and marketing services to ensure maximum use of hotel tax dollars and tell the story of the Poconos more effectively
  4. Transparency in all that we do
  5. Utilizing research and data to provide effective campaigns that reach the correct audience and compel it to visit the Pocono Mountains
  6. Continue to educate guests and residents on all the great resources the Poconos has to offer
- These "planks" as we term them, will continue to be hallmarks for all our activity day in and day out.

Finally, we want to re-emphasize one point, we will listen. We want you to know that we are open to your ideas and suggestions. We are committed to this course so that we can make informed decisions. We hope that all of you will be partners in that endeavor. Thank you again for your dedication and commitment to our unique destination, for all of you are the true heart and soul of what we call the Poconos.

Sincerely,

*Chris*

Chris Barrett  
President/CEO

I would like to thank the staff of the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau for their dedication and hard work this past fiscal year. Our team continues to strengthen the Pocono Mountains brand with its commanding presence in key demographics such as New York, Philadelphia, and Washington DC/Baltimore. We have continued to expand into new markets including Virginia and northern New York. Our team continues to work with new technologies as well as bringing most of the marketing in house. This has allowed us to develop more comprehensive campaigns that can be adjusted in real time. We can now target and re-target audiences that are more suitable based on data and analytics.

Under the leadership of Chris Barrett, we have expanded our broadcast reach by adding regional and local partners in addition to our key markets in New York and Philadelphia. Creating new, longer-form content for top-rated news segments with Pocono Mountains Magazine, we have produced content for other digital media, as well as tools to spread the message of the Pocono Mountains.

Our elected officials continue to support us in all they do. They understand the importance of tourism, the number one industry in our region, and have been working tirelessly with the Pocono Mountains to ensure that the hotel-tax-funded marketing initiatives will continue to strengthen the overall destination.

I thank each and every one of our members, townships, partners and affiliates for your efforts to grow the Pick Up the Poconos campaign. Our product is our natural beauty; our rivers, lakes, parks, and our "mountain majesty". Preserving this is preserving our product, and ensuring our future growth and success. Please continue to be an example, and the PMVB will continue to raise awareness and be the steward of the Pocono Mountains.

I have been honored to serve as your Chairperson and look forward to another exciting year in the Pocono Mountains!

Sincerely,

*Genevieve*

Genevieve Reese  
Chairperson

# MARKETING ANALYSIS

## ARRIVALIST



IMPRESSION



MOVEMENT



ARRIVAL



MEASUREMENT

The PMVB marketing team uses Arrivalist A3 platform, a Location Attribution Analytics platform, to measure visitor trends and boost tax ROI.

This past fiscal year, we utilized the platform to meet the following objectives:

1. Measure visitation patterns from exposed and unexposed groups
2. Measure the average length of time visitors are spending in market
3. Identify if media influenced additional arrivals and time in market
4. Identify visitor origin markets

From the data collected, we were able to pinpoint specific origin markets where our media influenced the most arrivals to the Poconos, with the New York City and Philadelphia metro areas at the top of that list. We were most surprised by one key finding: there was an opportunity to capitalize on interest from the D.C. and Baltimore markets. We decided to increase ad spend in all four markets for summer and winter 2017.

After upgrading to Arrivalist A3 in 2017, we were able to monitor raw visitation patterns and measure the rate in which visitors exposed to PMVB's media stayed in market compared to a similar, but unexposed control group. A3's unique dataset gave us the ability to prove whether our paid media effectively attracted additional arrivals to the Poconos, and if those arrivals spent more time in market, including the rate of overnight stays.

After the summer campaign ended, Arrivalist found that users who were exposed to summer 2017 ads were 25.1% more likely to travel to market compared to a balanced control group; and users exposed to winter 2017 campaigns are 6.2% more likely to travel.

**"USERS WHO WERE EXPOSED TO SUMMER 2017 ADS WERE 25.1% MORE LIKELY TO TRAVEL TO MARKET."**

**SKIP THE  
CROWDED BEACHES.**

  
**POCONO MOUNTAINS™**



# SUMMER 2017 RESULTS

OVERNIGHT ROI  
**\$208,199.26**

SAME-DAY ROI  
**\$23,153.95**

BED TAX ROI  
**\$15.74**

## ORIGIN MARKET

Origin DMA	Visitor (%)
New York, NY	49.1%
Philadelphia, PA	26.0%
Harrisburg, PA	5.0%
Wilkes Barre, PA	2.7%
Washington, DC	2.6%
Baltimore, MD	1.5%
Hartford, CT	0.9%
Boston, MA	0.8%
Pittsburgh, PA	0.7%
Syracuse, NY	0.7%

## STAY LIFT



# WINTER 2017-18 RESULTS

OVERNIGHT ROI  
**\$251,826.87**

SAME-DAY ROI  
**\$33,058.18**

BED TAX ROI  
**\$4.14**

## ORIGIN MARKET

Origin DMA	Visitor (%)
New York, NY	59.5%
Philadelphia, PA	25.2%
Harrisburg, PA	3.1%
Wilkes Barre, PA	2.4%
Washington, DC	1.8%
Baltimore, MD	1.4%
Hartford, CT	0.5%
Syracuse, NY	0.5%
Pittsburgh, PA	0.4%
Johnstown, PA	0.4%

## STAY LIFT



# MARKETING & ADVERTISING

## Fall 2017 Marketing Campaign

September 12 - October 25, 2017



ZIP THROUGH THE FALL FOLIAGE IN THE POCONO MOUNTAINS.

PLAN YOUR FALL GETAWAY TODAY  
▶ GET STARTED

POCONO MOUNTAINS™  
#PoconoMtns

**MEDIA BUY: \$100,000**

**MEDIA VALUE: \$120,000**

**MEDIA: online advertisements**

### METRICS

- SESSIONS TO WEBSITE: 99,555**
  - 48% increase
- NEW SESSIONS: 83.46%**
  - 6% increase
- NEW USERS TO SITE: 83,093**
  - 52% increase

**KEY INSIGHT:** This was the first marketing campaign managed in house. It produced an overall CTR of 0.30%, which is a 75% growth YOY.

## Winter 2017 Co-Op

January 1- March 11, 2018



CONNECT TO EACH OTHER WHILE DISCONNECTING FROM EVERYTHING ELSE.

TRY OUR \$69 BEGINNER LESSON PACKAGES USING CODE "LEARN17"  
▶ BUY NOW

BlueMountain RESORT  
POCONO MOUNTAINS™

**PARTNERS: 7**

**MEDIA BUY: \$994,000**

**MEDIA VALUE: \$1,227,200**

**CO-OP INVESTMENT: \$686,500**

**MEDIA: TV, billboards, online advertisements**



**SWEET DREAMS ARE COMPLIMENTARY.**

The French Manor INN & SPA  
POCONO MOUNTAINS™

**GET A FREE NIGHT ON THE HOUSE**  
▶ BOOK NOW



**KEY INSIGHT:** This was the first co-op campaign managed in house. The campaign produced an overall CTR of 0.18%, 354,314,941 impressions and 629,964 clicks.

# MARKETING & ADVERTISING

## Pocono Mountains Magazine

January 12 - March 7, 2018



**MEDIA BUY: \$252,000**

**MEDIA VALUE: \$327,600**

**MEDIA: local & regional broadcast**

WNEP, WBRE, WYOU, WFMZ, BRCTV13, WPMT, WHTM

**METRICS: 35,541 YouTube views  
228 subscribers**

**SYNOPSIS:** Hosts Chris Barrett and Ashley Brooks showcase some of the Poconos' most unique attractions, lodging amenities, historic sites and more. These in-depth vignettes air on local and regional TV stations during evening newscasts.

## Summer 2018 Co-Op

June 20 - August 31, 2018



**PARTNERS: 7**

**MEDIA BUY: \$1,375,000**

**MEDIA VALUE: \$1,608,750**

**CO-OP INVESTMENT: \$1,237,500**

**MEDIA: TV, billboards,  
online advertisements**

HERE, RELAXING COMES  
NATURALLY.

  
POCONO MOUNTAINS<sup>SM</sup>

  
THE LODGE  
AT WOODLOCH  
A DESTINATION SPA RESORT

**KEY INSIGHT:** Also managed in house, this campaign produced an overall CTR of 0.34% at an average CPC of \$1.48.

# MARKETING & ADVERTISING



**NTD Campaigns**  
Winter/Summer 2017-18

**MEDIA BUY: \$80,000**

**MEDIA:** online advertisements,  
print placements, pre-roll videos,  
social media WeChat & GPS  
Travel guide advertisement



**KEY INSIGHT:** Combined impressions for the summer and winter campaigns exceeded 2.3 million. The campaigns produced an overall CTR of 0.65%.

## Golf Co-Op 2018



**PARTNERS: 6**

**MEDIA BUY: \$25,500**

**CO-OP INVESTMENT: \$18,000**

**MEDIA:** online advertisements



**TIMEFRAME:** Flight 1 ran January 22-April 20, 2018, flight 2 ran May 4-June 17, 2018, and flight 3 was set to run July 31-September 7, 2018.

## Pocono Television Network

Created in early 2018, the Pocono Television Network (PTN) is Internet based protocol television (IPTV) delivering short videos on PMVB members.

Videos are comprised of interviews between our President/CEO Chris Barrett and member representatives, Pocono Mountains Magazine commercials, PMVB branded commercials and time lapse videos from our live cameras.

Visitors centers in Stroudsburg, Jim Thorpe, Lake Wallenpaupack and Milford stream the channel on smart TVs, providing the inside scoop on the region's historic towns and the activities, lodgings and eateries in and around them.



## Live Cameras

### LIVE CAMERAS



scenics



places

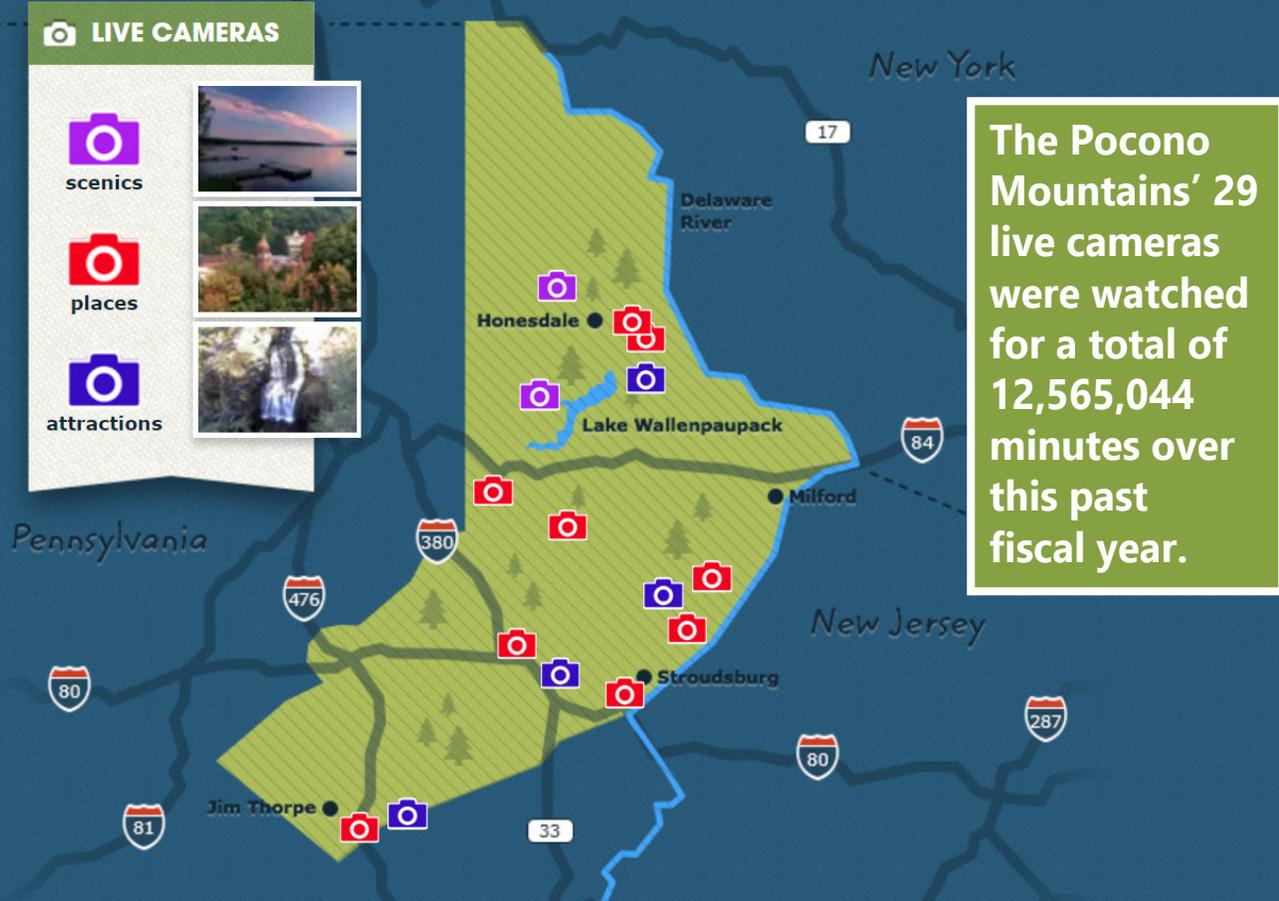


attractions



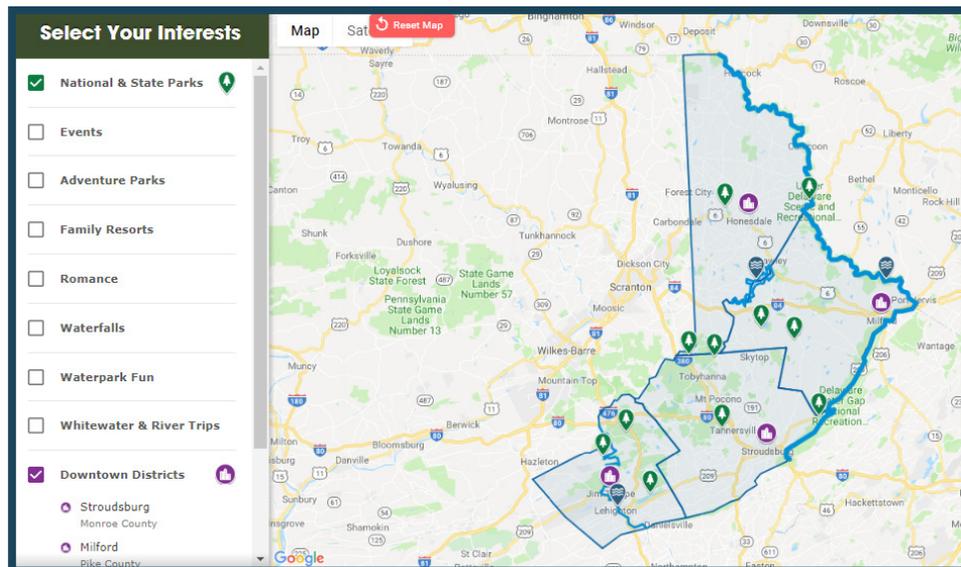
The following broadcast stations routinely feature scenes from our live cameras:

- WFMZ
- WCBS
- FOX 29
- WPIX
- WNEP
- WCAU
- WKYW



The Pocono Mountains' 29 live cameras were watched for a total of 12,565,044 minutes over this past fiscal year.

## INTRODUCING our interactive map



Launched in March 2018, this Google-based map designed with the mobile user in mind showcases the 2,400-square-mile Pocono Mountains region. Highlighting our state/national parks, downtown districts, and major waterways, the map guides users to high-traffic pages while showing proximity to points of interest.

### Blog Snapshot

[PoconoMountains.com/blog](http://PoconoMountains.com/blog)

- Total Sessions: **110,942 (+ 97.58% YOY)**
- Avg. pages per session: **3.75**
- Avg. time on site: **5:03**
- Bounce rate: **41%**
- Posts published: **58 (26 repurposed)**

**44.8%** of this year's blogs were repurposed. We repurpose posts with strong analytics and Google indexing to increase stats and site traffic.

**BLOG  
SESSIONS  
INCREASED  
97.58%  
YOY**

## WEB STATS

### TOTAL SESSIONS

**2016-17  
3,459,854**

**+16%  
YOY**

**2017-18  
4,005,225**

.....

### TOP PAGES

1. Homepage
2. Adults Only
3. Things to Do
4. Resorts
5. Places to Stay
6. Romantic Getaways
7. Romantic Stays
8. Family Resorts
9. Romance Packages
10. Family Fun

## Industry Averages

### Comparative Analysis

**July 1, 2017 - June 31, 2018**

ENGAGEMENT METRICS	INDUSTRY AVG.	POCONOMOUNTAINS.COM	% DIFFERENCE
TOTAL PAGES PER VISIT:	2.13	2.61	<b>18.39%</b>
TOTAL AVG. VISIT DURATION:	0:01:55	0:02:36	<b>26.28%</b>
TOTAL BOUNCE RATE:	54.64%	48.63%	<b>-12.36%</b>
ORGANIC PAGES PER VISIT:	2.09	2.99	<b>30.10%</b>
ORGANIC AVG. VISIT DURATION:	0:01:49	0:03:18	<b>44.95%</b>
ORGANIC BOUNCE RATE:	53.74%	40.00%	<b>-34.35%</b>

# WEBSITE & ENHANCEMENTS

## CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION

### Executive Summary

#### Goals and Outcomes

#### Referrals



In 2017, we continued our partnership with Simpleview to optimize our website and bolster marketing efforts driving traffic to PoconoMountains.com. The primary goal was to increase partner referrals.

FISCAL YEAR	REFERRALS
2016-17	1,008,462
2017-18	1,323,079

**31% INCREASE  
YEAR OVER YEAR**

From July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018, PoconoMountains.com saw a 46% increase in sessions where a partner referral occurred. Many of these sessions included multiple referrals where the total amount of partner referrals increased 31%, and the rate of conversion increased 33% relative to sessions

#### Outdoor Persona

##### Things to Do

Experience the thrill and excitement of our outdoor activities in the Pocono Mountains.

A myriad of nature-filled activities awaits just within reach, let out the water adventurer, outdoor explorer, hiker, or botanist in travelers of all ages. Fulfill your need for nature by camping and exploring our great outdoors. Tour and sightsee by boat or air, unwind in the afternoon at one of our state parks and enjoy seeing our unique wildlife. Ski the slopes by day and relax in a historic bed & breakfast at night. The adventure never ends in the Pocono Mountains and right here is the perfect place for it to begin. See below for our outdoor adventures that will provide you with a memorable vacation in the Pocono Mountains.

**Adventure Parks**  
Ride, slide, climb and glide through the adventure parks of the Pocono Mountains!

[EXPLORE](#)

#### Romance Persona

##### Things to Do

Add a little extra fun to your romantic getaway with these fantastic things to do.

A myriad of nature-filled activities awaits just within reach let out the water adventurer, outdoor explorer, hiker, or botanist in you and begin your exploration below. You can fulfill all of your vacation needs here, from the fast-paced excitement of your favorite outdoor activity to the exceptional performances of our theaters and concerts. Tour a living history museum in the morning, unwind at a brew pub in the afternoon and dine in an elegant restaurant in the evening. Slat the slopes of a resort by day and relax in a historic bed & breakfast at night. Browse countless antique shops or search for a bargain in our outlet stores. Stretch out on a sandy beach at a lake or marvel at the sights while floating down a river. The choice is yours and the links on this page could open new doors to a memorable experience in the Poconos.

**Outdoor Adventures Await!**  
The Pocono Mountains have an adventure for you. Start your exploration today!

[LEARN MORE](#)

### Optimization Summary

#### Dynamic Content Personas

PoconoMountains.com features persona dynamic content, allowing to serve unique content based off our visitors' interests. Through analysis, we discovered that adding an outdoors persona would be beneficial to our overall website strategy. The site currently has two other personas implemented: family and romance.

The outdoors persona was implemented on our Things to Do page (43.65% increase in partner referrals) and on our Homepage (36.56% increase in partner referrals).

### A/B Testing

#### Continuing Evaluation Calls to Action

Our a/b testing has continued with three tests consecutively running on PoconoMountains.com. We have evaluated visitor flows to find the highest converting path for partner referrals from specific pages. This allowed us to test calls to action (CTA) that lead visitors to higher converting pages.

One such test was performed on our Events page, where we tested adding a View Places to Stay CTA in the sidebar. With the added CTA, we saw a 31.28% conversion rate increase in partner referrals.

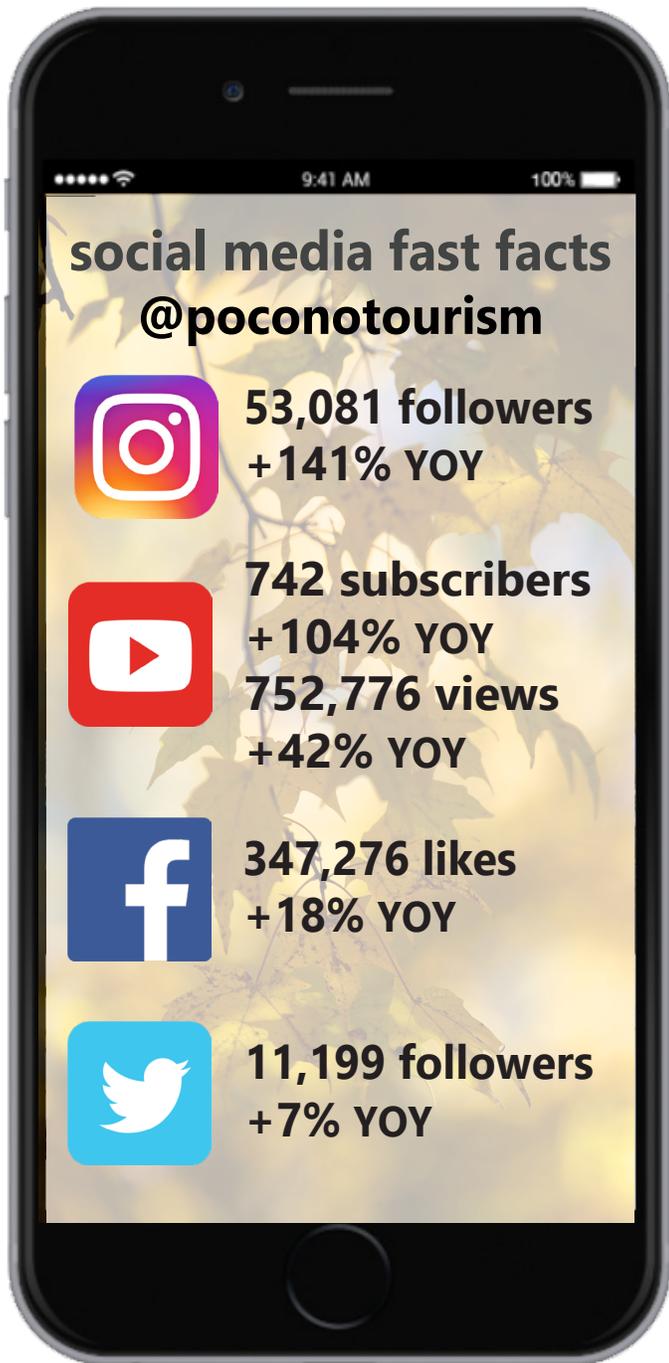
Original

➔

Variation 1

**We increased partner referrals by over 31% by adding this simple call to action.**

# SOCIAL MEDIA



## outstanding improvement

**Instagram** and **YouTube** were our shining stars this past year, **both growing over 100%** for followers/subscribers. We took more of an initiative with Instagram, finding what content our followers enjoy, and explored YouTube advertising over the winter, knowing that video is only projected to grow in popularity.

## ENGAGEMENT

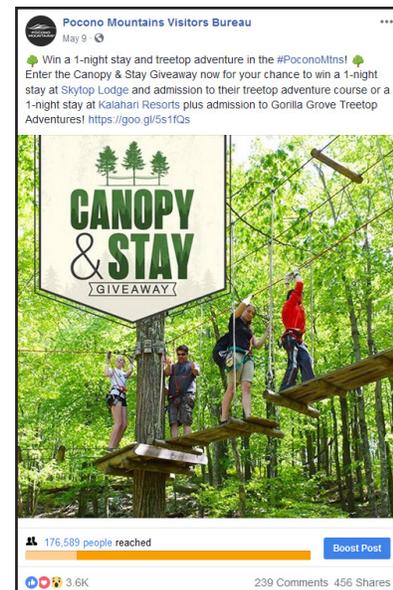
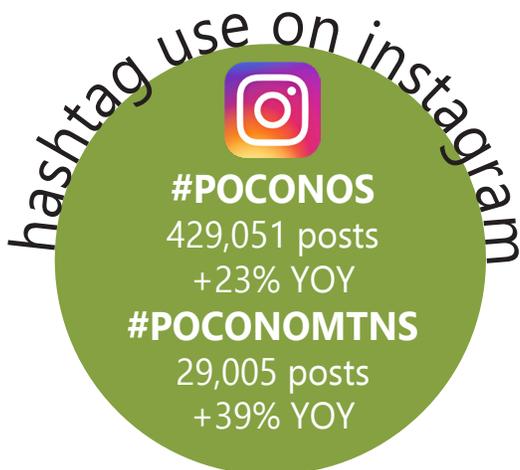
Facebook Engagement to Fan Ratio: **3.77%**  
Instagram Engagement to Fan Ratio: **1.94%**

## LINK CLICKS TO WEBSITE UP 201%

In targeting ads more efficiently and collecting new imagery by visiting properties and gathering user generated content, we were able to significantly increase link clicks to our website while saving thousands of dollars.

## CONTEST CONTACTS

Our social media contests helped us to add **31,058** new emails to our consumer database. With 19,728 in Feb-Jun 2018 alone. This increased our consumer email list to **148,257**: A 36% jump year over year.



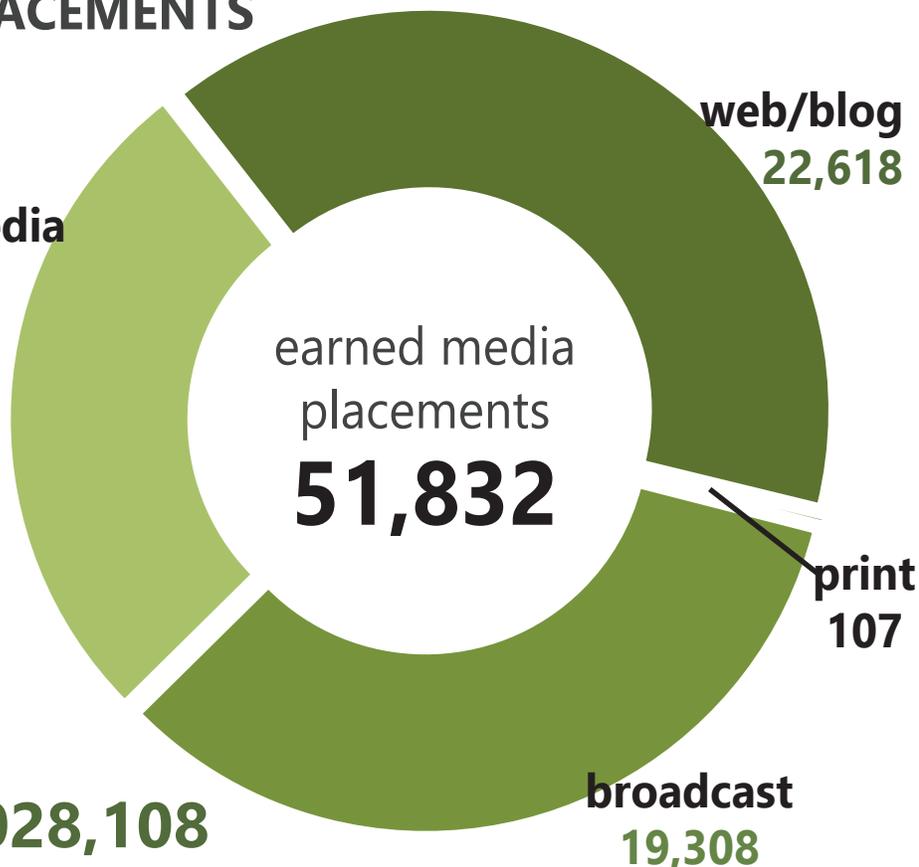
# COMMUNICATIONS

## BREAKDOWN OF MEDIA PLACEMENTS

**THREE-YEAR  
EARNED MEDIA  
GROWTH:  
96%**

**FY 2017-18  
GROWTH:  
63%**

**social media  
9,799**



**ad equivalency: \$57,028,108**

**total reach: 6,165,200,428**

We've tightened up our data and keywords to ensure we get the right eyes on our content. This allows us to obtain higher quality metrics and information. We have grown in sections we wanted to, and have been more strategic, to equal stronger placements. Over the past three years, our total earned media has grown by more than 96%. In the past year alone, it's grown over 63%.

## INFLUENCER IMPACT

This past fiscal year, we upped the ante on hosting writers, bloggers, and social media influencers in the Pocono Mountains. We typically work in a variety of media, but this past year, focused on a more granular level of coverage with micro-influencers; writers and social media users who have a niche, highly engaged audience of several thousand. Topics included family travel, wineries, adventure, fall foliage, and festivals. Our members were spectacular hosts to our FAM (familiarization) Tour attendees. Working with **22** different publications and influencers, the PMVB received **18** blogs/articles and **259** social media posts in exchange for coverage of the Pocono Mountains and co-operating members in 2017-18.



# SALES

## A Fiscal Year in Review

For this year's report, the PMVB sales team has chosen to tell their story using facts and figures complimented by the voices of those they look to impress. Quotes are from actual clients who have experienced what the Poconos has to offer and found it to be just what they were looking for.

### 1

#### LEAD GENERATION WHAT A LEAD IS TRULY WORTH

Leads mean business. A qualified lead can generate thousands of dollars for a property.

*"A very HUGE thank you so much for an outstanding FAM. I learned a lot and am very excited at the prospect of bringing an event your way. It was great to be updated and see all that's happening there, wow, so much going on!"*

**JANINE M. OWEN**

*Chief Education Officer*

Pa. Academy of Family Physicians & Foundation

### 2

#### KEY BOOKINGS MAJOR EVENTS, MAJOR PAYOFFS

It's great when a small group shares time in the Poconos. But when 500+ come for an extended period, they eat, drink, play and shop and the meter just keeps on ticking.

**REVENUES WERE UP TO 12% OVER LAST YEAR AND TO A LARGE DEGREE, MAJOR BOOKINGS PLAYED A PART.**

### 3

#### AWARD NOMINATIONS RECOGNITION OF OUR WORTH

It's nice to be recognized for your efforts. This year we were nominated for two prestigious awards. Meeting planners from the state and national levels have identified the Poconos and the PMVB as leaders in the meetings market.

*"Friends, a long overdue thank you for your visit last month. What an incredible group of resorts and people. You obviously have a wonderful world to represent and you do it well. The goodie bag was amazing. Thank you."*

**NANCY WAXMAN**

*Executive Assistant to the Dean*

Penn Law

#### QUALIFIED LEADS:

**236**

**LEADS GENERATED**

**47,261**

**POTENTIAL ROOM NIGHTS**

.....

#### NOTABLE GROUPS: AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY

**1,497 ROOM NIGHTS**

**PROJECT INSPIRE**

**1,240 ROOM NIGHTS**

**ODYSSEY OF THE MIND**

**800 ROOM NIGHTS**

**REV 3 TRIATHLON**

**770 ATHLETES**

**MALAKARA ARCHDIOCESE**

**658 ROOM NIGHTS**

.....

#### AWARD NOMINATIONS:

NorthStar Meetings Group

**2018 STELLA AWARDS**

for Best CVB in the Meetings Industry –  
Northeast Region

*Pennsylvania Meetings & Events Magazine's*  
**"BEST OF" AWARDS 2018**

.....



**ADD  
"LOVING EVERY MINUTE"  
TO THE MINUTES.**

# SALES

## A Fiscal Year in Review Continued

4

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

#### BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, BUILD BUSINESS

Building relationships is essential in our industry. Everyone we meet is a potential guest. One way we really get to know people is to host client appreciation and development events. We select an area with a record of booking business, and treat qualified meeting professionals to an evening of food, fun and education.

*"Thank you so much for hosting the Poconos Dine Around for Planners. It was a truly special event in my eyes, and gave me the ability to connect on a more personal level with many different vendors from the area. It was well thought out, and the effort did not go unnoticed. (The zucchini bread was quite a treat the next morning at breakfast.) I look forward to seeing you again, and hopefully interacting again down the line!"*

**ALLERY ELDER**

*Sr. Administrative Assistant, Tech Ops  
Spark Therapeutics*



**EVENT**

**PLANNERS HOSTED**

PHILADELPHIA DINE AROUND	30
NYC MEETING PLANNER APPRECIATION	40
HARRISBURG MEETING PLANNER APPRECIATION	38
LUNCH & LEARN LEHIGH COUNTY	20



### TRADESHOWS

#### HOSTED BUYER PROGRAMS SPARK ACTION

5

The PMVB participated in 21 tradeshow this year. Trends point to tradeshow with Hosted Buyer opportunity. This is where planners from various markets are sponsored to attend. Appointments are made prior to arrival with destinations offering what planners need such as meeting space, lodging and team building options. Currently, 62% of the tradeshow we participate in fall under the Hosted Buyer category.

*"Thanks for sharing all the great details of your property. I've recently heard the buzz from other planners who are looking at having events in your area. I have been attending Connect marketplace meetings since 2014 and I appreciate having access to such amazing resources of an exclusive destination like yours. Although I have only visited the area once, I wanted to let you know that your city ranks high on the list of our clients who are searching for the ideal location..."*

**LATRICIA CHISHOLM DAVIS**

*Power to Emerge, Inc.*



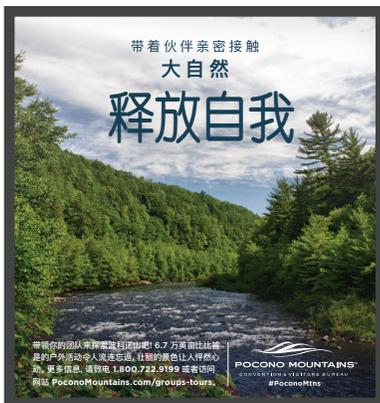
# GROUPS

## It's what we do!

- By booking conventions, conferences, retreats, sporting events, and meetings
- By marketing the Pocono Mountains as a premier destination for overseas visitors
- By selling the Pocono Mountains to the group tour market across the country

### OUR GROUP & CONVENTION SALES TEAM

hits the road every year, traveling all over the United States to promote the Pocono Mountains. During the 2017-18 fiscal year, our representatives promoted the Pocono Mountains at tradeshows and industry events such as IPW, NTA and Teams. Our team is gearing up to find new ways to drive even more demand for hotel room nights in years to come, while continuing to maximize the traditional sales strategies that demonstrate effectiveness.



### SPECIALTY MARKETS



## EFFORTS TO INCREASE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE IN 2017-18

- Partnered with the PA Office of Tourism for a sales mission to Germany
- Partnered with Brand USA for feature in Inspiration Guide (digital and print)
- Participated in North American Journeys series of appointment-based shows

## TOTAL INTERNATIONAL VISA SPENDING IN THE POCONO MOUNTAINS OVER THE PAST FISCAL YEAR EXCEEDED 10.8 MILLION DOLLARS.



## STRATEGY + PARTNERSHIPS = RESULTS. INTERNATIONAL VISA SPENDING

Canada leads our international visitation with China a close second.



**VISITATION**  **19.3%**



**VISITATION**  **9.7%**

## OUTDOOR ADVENTURE SPORTING EVENTS

Driving athlete and spectator visitation, room nights and economic impact.

**PA SPARTAN SUPER**  
Blue Mountain Ski Area  
July 8, 2017

**REV3 POCONO MTNS.**  
Split Rock Resort  
August 13, 2017

**D&L HALF MARATHON**  
Pocono Mtns.  
November 5, 2017

**RUN FOR THE RED**  
Pocono Mtns.  
May 20, 2018

**PA SPARTAN SPRINT**  
Blue Mountain Ski Area  
July 9, 2017

**WARRIOR DASH**  
Pocono Raceway  
August 26, 2017

**RIVER RAMBLE**  
DWGNRA  
November 12, 2017

**SAVAGE RACE**  
Skirmish Paintball  
June 23, 2018

**PA SPARTAN SPRINT 2**  
Blue Mountain Ski Area  
July 15, 2017

**USARA ADVENTURE RACE NTL. CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
Split Rock Resort  
September 21-23, 2017

**SHAWNEE MTN. COLOR RUN**  
Shawnee Mountain  
May 6, 2018



# MEMBERSHIP

The PMVB recognizes its valued members and partners with awards during two of its annual membership events: Pocono Mountains Tourism Day in the spring, and the Annual Report Luncheon in the fall. Below are the award winners from the 2017-18 fiscal year. We thank each for their dedication to our region, organization and industry.

## TOURISM ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

**CHAIRPERSON'S AWARD  
FOR 50 YEARS OF INDUSTRY SERVICE**  
Donna Smith - Bushkill Falls

**CHAIRPERSON'S AWARD  
FOR 35 YEARS OF INDUSTRY SERVICE**  
Nancy Pilecki - Whitewater Challengers

**BRAND HERO AWARD**  
Terri Klee - Great Wolf Lodge

**GREEN AWARD**  
Stephanie Rath - Barley Creek Brewing Co.

**OUTSTANDING TOURISM EMPLOYEE**  
Brian Dye - Shawnee Inn & Golf Resort

## ANNUAL REPORT AWARDS

**GAIL STERRETT MARKETING AWARD**  
Ruth Jones - Kittatinny Canoes

**VALUED PARTNERS**  
Adam Skuba  
Woodloch Resort  
Representative Jack Rader  
Senator Mario Scavello  
Marlyn Kissner

**EXCEPTIONAL BOARD MEMBERS**  
Arthur Berry III  
Brandon Idgalsky  
Don Snyder  
John Warnagiris



## TOOLS & TRAININGS FOR OUR MEMBERS

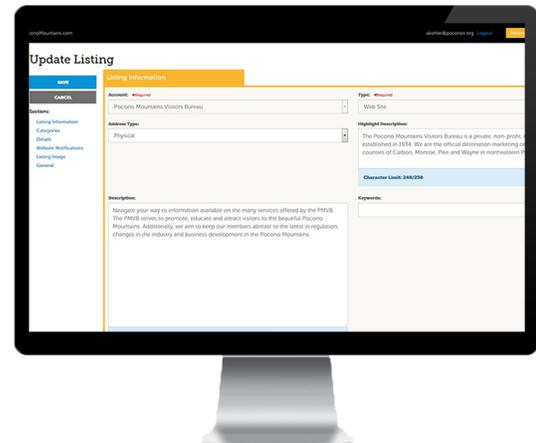
### EXTRANET 4.0

**WHAT IT IS:** The PMVB's member content management system

**WHAT IT DOES:** Helps members update their PoconoMountains.com content

**WHO IT'S FOR:** Any designated representative of a PMVB member property

**HOW WE PROMOTE IT:** The PMVB works to promote widespread use of Extranet 4.0 among members. This year, comprehensive user guidelines were created and distributed, and the platform was covered in depth during in-person training sessions. The first Extranet training session was held at the PMVB main office in spring of 2018. Over 20 members attended. The success of this training led to the scheduling of additional events through 2018.



### WAYFINDER

**WHAT IT IS:** The PMVB's interactive brand enculturation program

**WHAT IT DOES:** Teaches hospitality professionals about our region and service principles

**WHO IT'S FOR:** PMVB members and hospitality professionals in the Pocono Mountains

**HOW WE PROMOTE IT:** A link to Wayfinder - a Pocono Mountains Challenge is available on PoconoMountains.com under About PMVB. Upon completion, participants are considered Pocono Mountains Brand Ambassadors. Brand ambassadors earn a silver Pocono Mountains pin and eligibility to receive PMVB membership awards in the future.

# ADVOCACY

## LOCAL PRIORITIES

### RULES & REGULATIONS OBSTRUCTING THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The PMVB asks local units of government not to establish rules and regulations that place an unfair burden on the operation and growth of the hospitality industry.

### LODGING TAXES/TRANSACTIONAL FEES

The PMVB opposes the imposition of additional lodging taxes and/or transactional fees by county or municipalities on the hospitality industry.

### VACATION HOME RENTALS

The PMVB, in conjunction with county treasurers, is working to ensure that all short-term (less than 30 consecutive days) vacation home rentals are paying their fair share of State Sales Tax and County Hotel Tax.

## STATE PRIORITIES

### SUPPORTING HB 1511 UPDATES AND CLARIFIES THAT THE HOTEL TAX APPLIES TO ONLINE TRAVEL COMPANIES (OTC'S)

The PMVB, along with Milliron Goodman, worked to educate lawmakers and advocated the passage of the bill. This bill will help fund DECED and the State Tourism office.

### SUPPORTING SB 431 STRENGTHENS PENNSYLVANIA'S LITTER AND ILLEGAL DUMPING LAWS.

The PMVB supported this bill in accordance with our Pick Up The Poconos anti-littering campaign. With the support of Milliron Goodman, the bill was signed into law as Act 62 of 2018.

### SUPPORTING HB 1810 REQUIRES ONLINE HOME SHARING DOING BUSINESS IN PENNSYLVANIA TO REGISTER WITH THE STATE AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH TAXING AUTHORITIES.

The PMVB and Milliron Goodman submitted testimony in support of this bill and will continue to work with lawmakers in the new session to get this bill passed.

## NATIONAL PRIORITIES

### RULES & REGULATIONS OBSTRUCTING THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Concern is being expressed over the Administrations' interest in establishing actions that place unfair burdens on hospitality businesses, which would have the unintended consequences of reducing employment growth.

### CONGRESSIONAL TOURISM CAUCUS

We encourage our Congressmen to continue to participate in caucus.

*The PMVB works closely with PRLA, NTA, AHLA, US Travel and Destinations International on advocacy efforts and legislation that impacts the tourism industry.*



# FINANCIALS

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

<b>Revenue - Sources of Funding</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2018</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2017</b>
Membership Dues	\$ 168,877	\$ 170,322
County Hotel Room Tax Revenue	9,161,685	8,186,410
Cooperative Advertising	555,656	614,868
Committee Promotion & Other Revenue	225,344	193,497
<b>Total Revenue :</b>	<b>\$ 10,111,562</b>	<b>\$ 9,165,098</b>
<b>Promotional Expenses</b>		
Advertising / Public Relations / Social Marketing	\$ 5,639,390	\$ 4,957,671
Sales / Group Marketing	292,153	344,683
Postage	18,209	12,372
Travel / Entertainment	28,334	35,007
Personnel Benefits	1,107,050	983,406
County Tourism Expenses	1,208,907	1,367,553
<b>Total Promotional Expenses :</b>	<b>\$ 8,294,042</b>	<b>\$ 7,700,691</b>
<b>Operational Expenses</b>		
Consultants / Contractual Services	\$ 141,200	\$ 65,621
Operating Personnel Salaries & Wages	433,018	353,930
Utilities / Equipment & Insurance	246,286	237,975
Deprecation	125,390	130,000
Office Supplies / Materials	18,637	12,127
Loan (Principal & Interest)	24,866	36,745
Miscellaneous	48,928	99,723
<b>Total Operational Expenses :</b>	<b>\$ 1,038,325</b>	<b>\$ 936,121</b>
<b>Total Expenses :</b>	<b>\$ 9,332,366</b>	<b>\$ 8,636,812</b>
<b>Increase / (Decrease) in Unrestricted and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 779,195</b>	<b>\$ 528,286</b>



## PickUpThePoconos.com

— DO YOUR PART —



PICK UP THE POCONOS is an anti-littering campaign that was launched in the spring of 2018 at Pocono Mountains Tourism Day. The PMVB worked with county commissioners, and with numerous local waste disposal organizations, clean-up crews, community leaders, and others to address the problem of litter in our region. PickUpThePoconos.com was created to supply the public with information on trash disposal, litter impact, community resources, and PMVB members that routinely

take action to battle litter or stay green.

The initial goal of the campaign was to shine a light on litter. Awareness was spread through billboards, television and radio spots, social media posts, and news segments. The next step required becoming a part of the solution; the PMVB went on to contract trash removal along Routes 80 and 380, adopt two roadways for employees to pick up, and organize a clean up day in Monroe County. This campaign is constantly developing and unfolding new ways to combat litter in the Pocono Mountains. For more information, visit [PickUpThePoconos.com](http://PickUpThePoconos.com).



# PICK UP THE POCONOS

PUT TRASH IN ITS PLACE



## PickUpThePoconos.com