

**New Hanover County  
Tourism Development Authority  
2020/2021  
Strategic Recovery Plan/Program of Work**



# State of Tourism

- 2019 Tourism Expenditures of \$658.78 million – 7.5% increase
- NHC tourism generated \$57.91 million in local/state taxes
- More than 6,680 employed in travel & tourism related jobs - \$158.15 million in payroll
- Each NHC resident's taxes were offset \$245.85
- Maintained:
  - #8 ranking among NC's 100 counties
  - #2 ranking among coastal counties



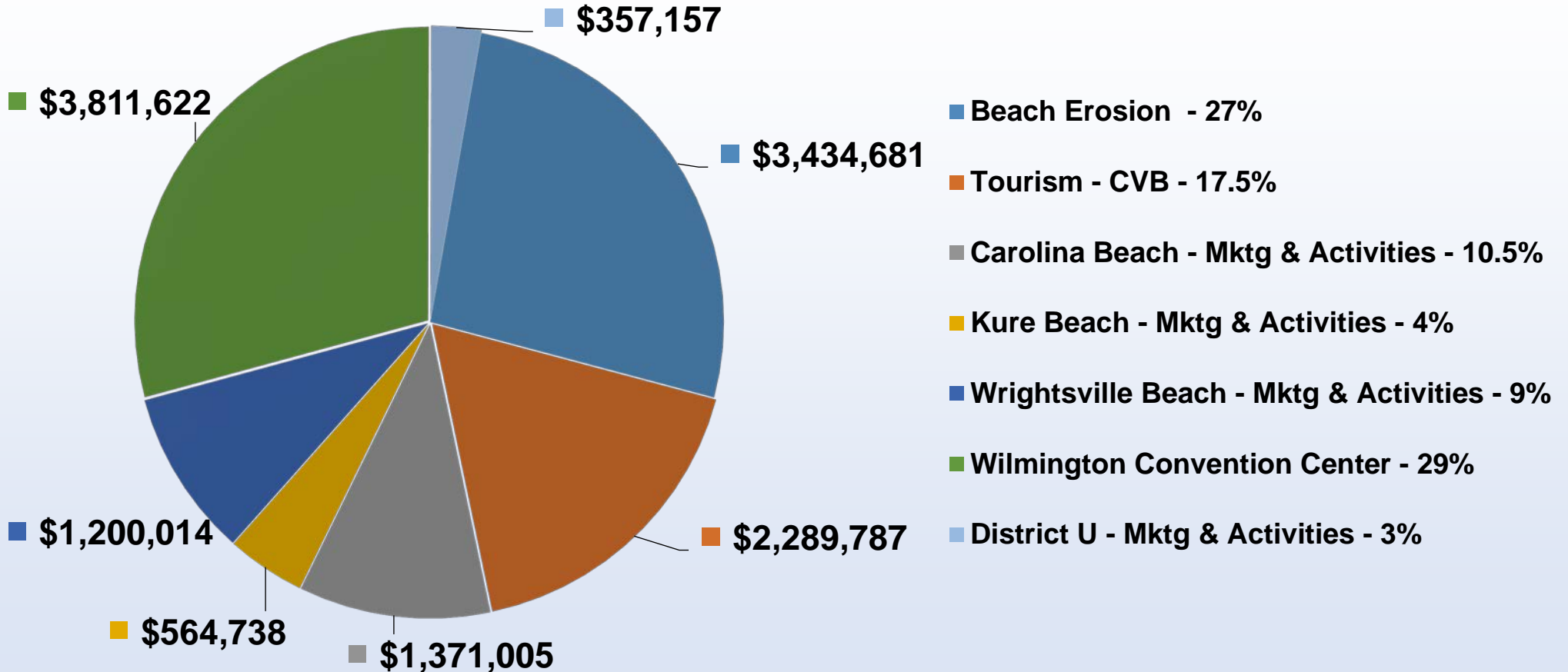
Wilmington.C.  
River District & Island Beaches

# 2019/2020 ROT Collections

- FY 2019/20 ROT collections down **15.92%**
- CY 2020 down **6.43%** (January thru June)
  
- 2<sup>nd</sup> 3% collections – FY 2019/2020
  - CB – **-4.29%**
  - KB – **-3.52%**
  - WB – **-8.52%**
  - Wilmington – **-27.36%**
  - CC District – **-20.59%**
  - District U – **-0.53%**



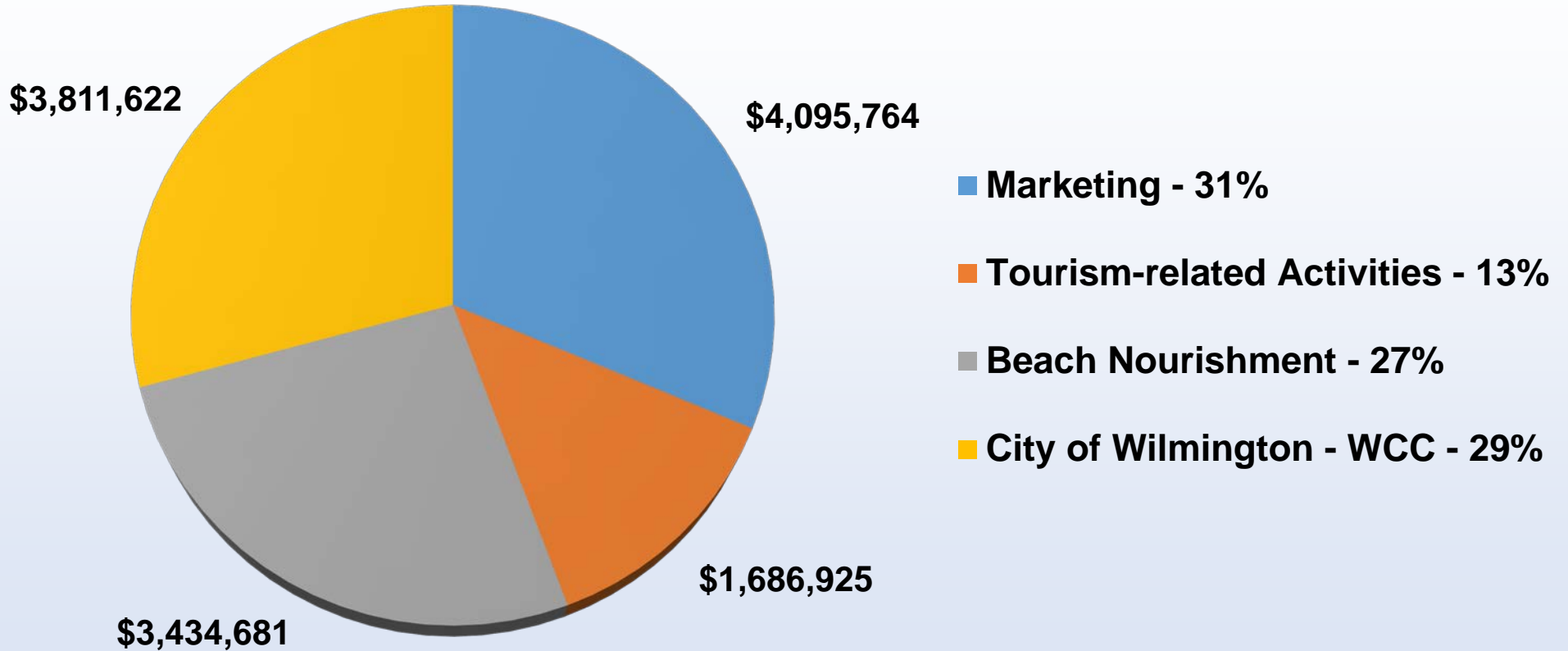
# 2019/2020 ROT Distribution



**Total 2019/2020 ROT Collections: \$13,029,004**

# 2019/2020 ROT Collections

## Distribution by Category



**Total 2019/2020 ROT Collections: \$ 13,029,004**

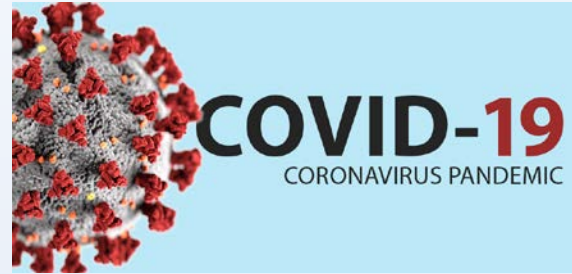
# Legislative Issues

- **COVID Relief Session**
- **Industry Reopening**
- **School Calendar Law**
- **Occupancy Taxes**
- **Beach Renourishment & Inlet Dredging Funding**
- **Environmental issues**



# Challenges

- **Industry Reopening**
  - Capacity limits
  - Safety protocols
  - Resident & Visitor Sentiment
- **Budget Impacts from COVID**
- **Marketing**
- **Safety**
- **Industry Participation**
- **Infrastructure & Parking**
- **Environmental Issues**
- **Social Issues**



Wilmington.C.  
River District + Island Beaches

# Summer Campaign Results Marketing During COVID






creative overview



# display

**OPEN FOR ESCAPE**

Whether it's a sunrise over the waterway or a beachfront view, Wilmington and our beaches – Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville – are open for whatever helps you get away.



Wilmington.c. River District + Island Beaches

escape

**OPEN FOR JOY**

Whether it's catching a wave or digging into the catch of the day, Wilmington and our beaches – Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville – are open for whatever brings you happiness.



Wilmington.c. River District + Island Beaches

joy

**OPEN FOR SAVORING**

Whether you dine alfresco or bring seafood pots home, we're open for whatever flavors you're craving.




Wilmington.c. River District + Island Beaches

savoring

**OPEN FOR UNWINDING**

Whether it's a garden walk or stroll along the riverfront, we're open for whatever brings you peace.




Wilmington.c. River District + Island Beaches

unwinding

**OPEN FOR WANDERING**

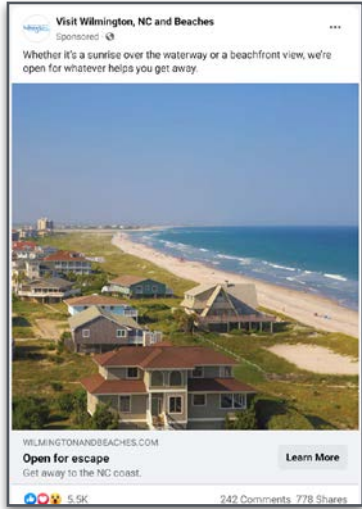
Whether it's a paddle for two or a state park hike, we're open for whatever helps you get out.



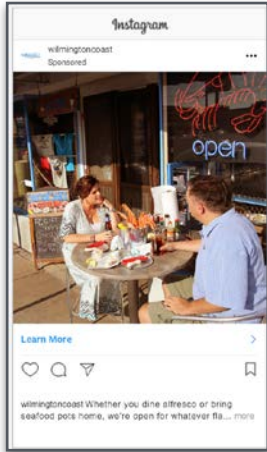
Wilmington.c. River District + Island Beaches

wandering

# social



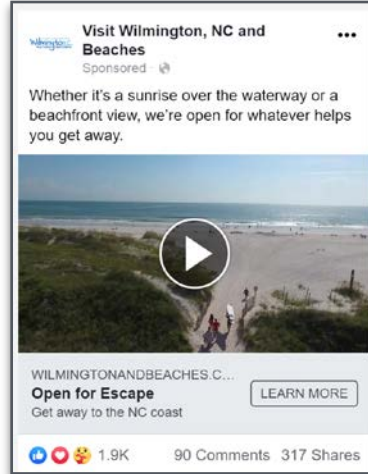
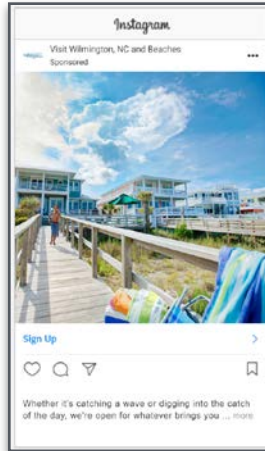
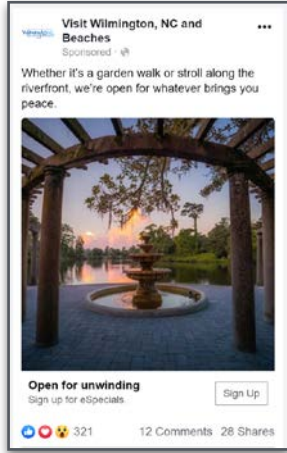
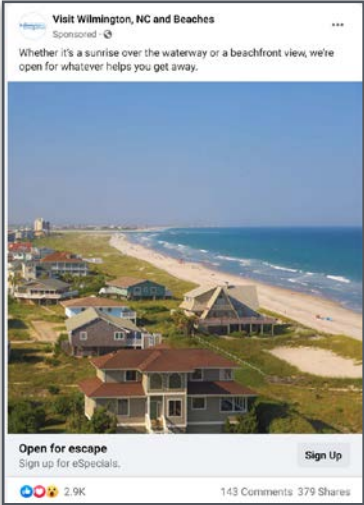
newsfeed



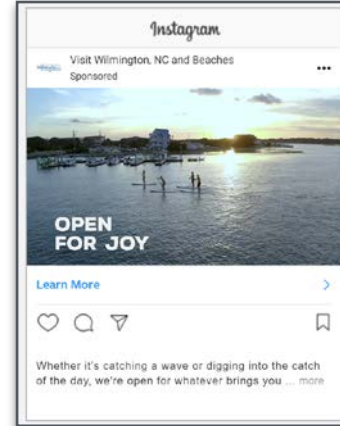
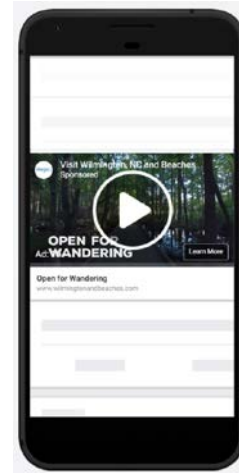
stories



# social

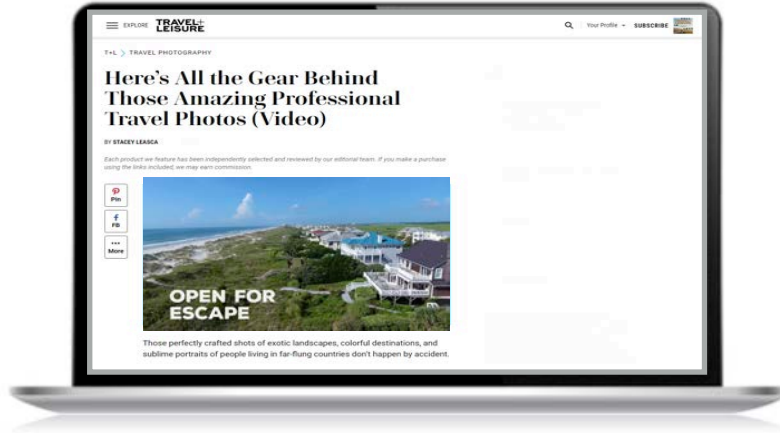


video



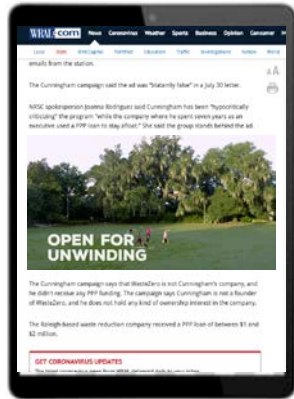
lead

# preroll / video



CTV

preroll



**GET AWAY THIS SUMMER**

SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

### OPEN FOR ESCAPE

In Wilmington and our Island Beaches, we're open for whatever helps you get away. Much has changed, and we're here to help you plan a safe, relaxing vacation in our beaches, parks, gardens, and more. We invite you to travel safely and responsibly to the best of the Carolina Coast for a getaway full of activities ideal for social distancing. Please visit our COVID-19 page for what to expect when visiting Wilmington and Island Beaches.

### OPEN FOR WANDERING

Join us for the weekend with these family road trip ideas or stick around for a week of activities. Head to Downtown Wilmington for sightseeing, self-guided tours through the Historic District, al fresco dining options with water views, and scenic strolls on the Riverwalk or through premier gardens. Make your way to Carolina, Kure or Wrightsville Beach for family time in the sand or water-based adventures. Rent from local outfitters and take new trails or take out kayaks and paddle boards to explore island waterways. Hike through Carolina Beach State Park for an unplugged excursion. Discover peaceful sanctuaries when you head to Fort Fisher Recreation Area or a SunFun Rentals. Jeep out or kayak to the uninhabited Zeke's Island Reserve on a self-guided tour. No matter where you wander, you're sure to find hidden gems around every corner.

### OPEN FOR UNWINDING

Relax safely with lodging options for every vacation style and find the perfect place to unwind. Whether you're looking for comforting days spent with resort amenities or full-service hotels to rest after daily adventures, you'll find exactly what you need for your family or friend's summer vacation. Wake up to the sound of ocean waves at seaside rentals and resorts or stay in a historic B&B in the heart of the city. Our rentals and hotels are upholding cleaning and safety standards that will help you find comfort and peace of mind, no matter where you stay.

Start planning your summer full of everything that brings you joy.

[REQUEST A FREE VISITORS GUIDE](#) [SIGN UP FOR E-SPECIALS](#)

**Wilmington.C** Carolina Beach Kure Beach Wrightsville Beach

Facebook Twitter Instagram

Carolina Beach Kure Beach Wrightsville Beach

**ENJOY SUMMER ON THE COAST**

SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

### OPEN FOR ESCAPE

Summer has arrived, and after a stay-at-home spring, we're open for whatever helps you get out and explore. Whether you join us for a fun-filled family vacation or a relaxing escape, we'll be here to help you plan a rejuvenating getaway to Wilmington and Island Beaches. To ensure everyone's safety, face masks or coverings are required in public places - both indoors and outdoors. When social distancing can be maintained, a mask isn't required while enjoying our parks or time on our beaches. For full details, please visit our COVID-19 page for what to expect during your visit.

### OPEN FOR FAMILY FUN

With spacious beaches, parks and gardens, scenic water views and delicious coastal fare, Wilmington is open for fun. Rent bikes and explore the 11-mile, on- and off-road River to Sea Bikeway, from downtown Wilmington to nearby Wrightsville Beach. Take in the fresh air of Crowded Ledge Park and Gardens for an afternoon kayak or walk along the lakeside trails. Or book onsite surf lessons in the birthplace of NC surfing. Enjoy fresh food cravings during Downtown Alive, as four blocks of Wilmington's cafes and shops expand to the streets for an al fresco experience. However you choose to spend your summer trip, safe family fun is around every corner.

### OPEN FOR RELAXATION

From where you play to where you stay, you'll find relaxation and places to unwind everywhere you go. Find soft outdoor adventure like golf, yoga on the pier, and state park hikes. Or venture to one of our nearby island beaches for a day on the sand. From people with all of the amenities to seaside rentals and historic B&Bs, our lodging options are upholding cleaning and safety standards that will help you find comfort and peace of mind, no matter where you stay.

Start planning your summer escape.

[REQUEST A FREE VISITORS GUIDE](#) [SIGN UP FOR E-SPECIALS](#)

**Wilmington.C** Carolina Beach Kure Beach Wrightsville Beach

Facebook Twitter Instagram

Carolina Beach Kure Beach Wrightsville Beach

The background features a complex, abstract geometric pattern composed of overlapping shapes in various shades of orange, red, and brown. The shapes include triangles, squares, circles, and semi-circles, some of which are nested or layered to create a sense of depth and movement. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

# campaign overview

# Strategy

- Educate prospective visitors on current status of destination, while promoting activities available during COVID reopening phases
- Flexible to accommodate any necessary shifts (timing, targeting, budget, research)
- Focus on in-state and surrounding drive markets
- Test multiple audience sets to match research findings of most probable Summer travelers
- Leverage a unified campaign to maximize exposure and combat increased competition for share of voice





# Target Audience

- demos:
  - social/display/video
    - adults 25-54, \$75k HHI+, families interested in coastal vacations
    - adults 25-44, \$60k HHI+, young couples & friends, interested in coastal vacations, special interest targeting in-state only
  - eblasts
    - all travelers 25-54, \$60k HHI+ and high intent for coastal vacations
- geography:
  - primary: North Carolina (focus on Triangle/Triad/Charlotte)
  - secondary: VA, SC, Washington DC, GA, PA, OH
- timing:
  - April - July 2020

paid media timeline

2020

paid search  
text ads

paid social

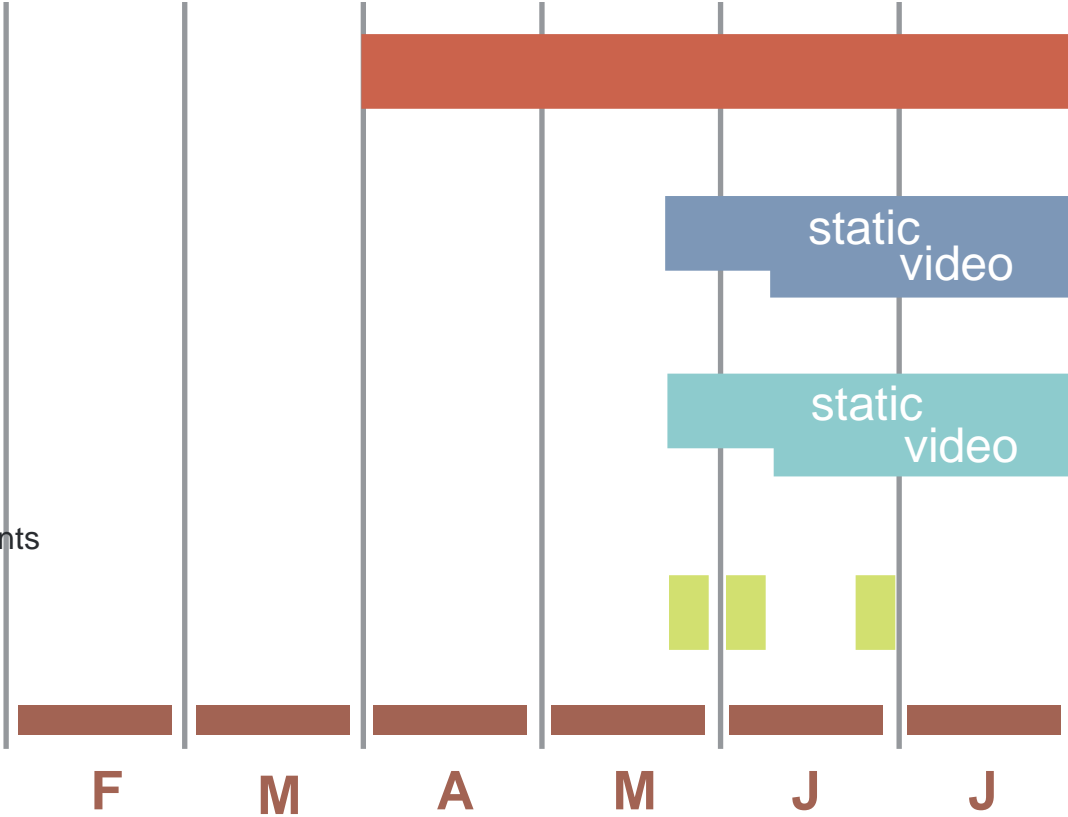
Facebook/Instagram  
newsfeed, lead, carousel, stories, video

digital display

Google Display Network  
multiple display + :15/:30s video  
includes retargeting for all audience segments

e blast

500k unique targets per deployment



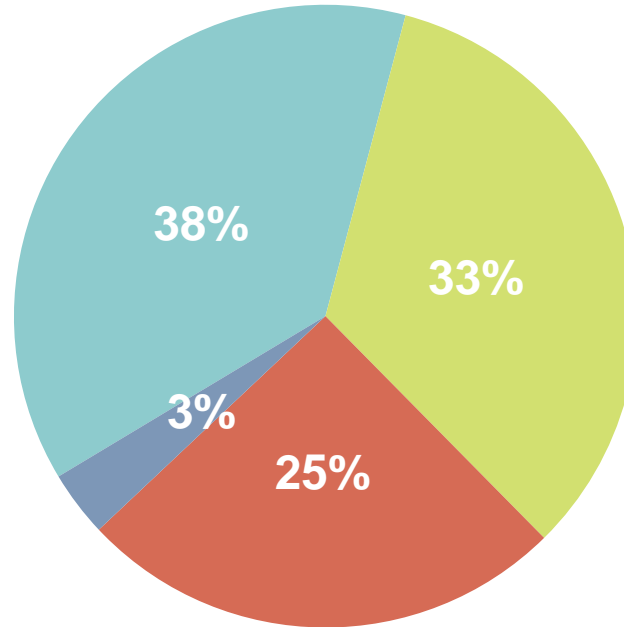
The background features a complex, abstract geometric pattern composed of overlapping shapes in various shades of red and orange. The shapes include triangles, squares, circles, and semi-circles, some of which are nested or layered to create a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is a vibrant, textured backdrop.

# media summary

**\$280,831.82\***

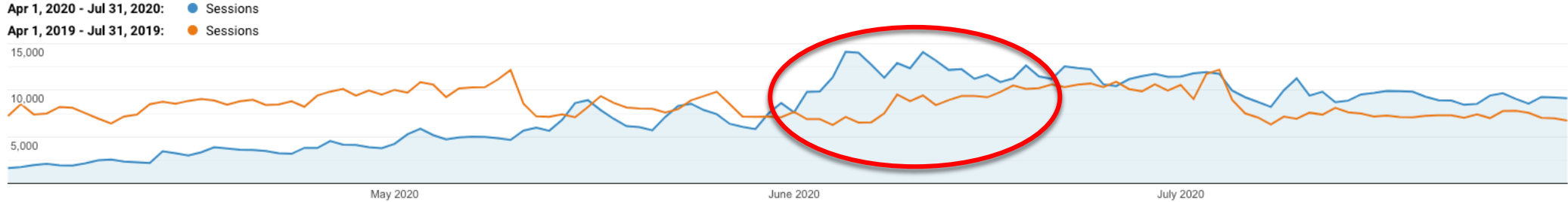
(4/1/20 - 7/31/20)

- display
- search
- social
- e-specials

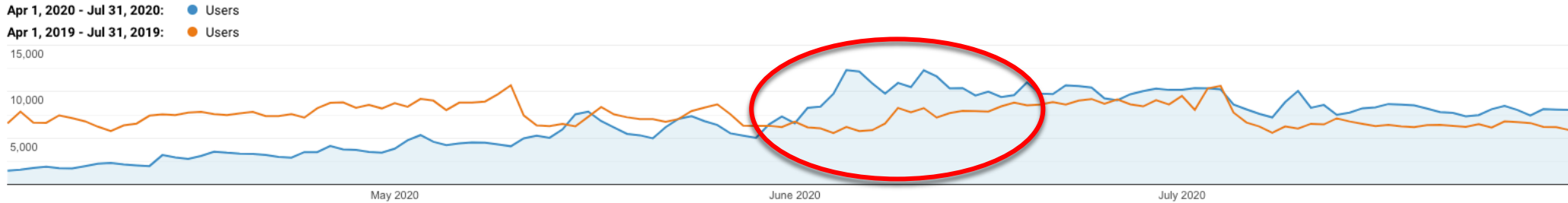


# google analytics campaign summary

## total website traffic overview



sessions



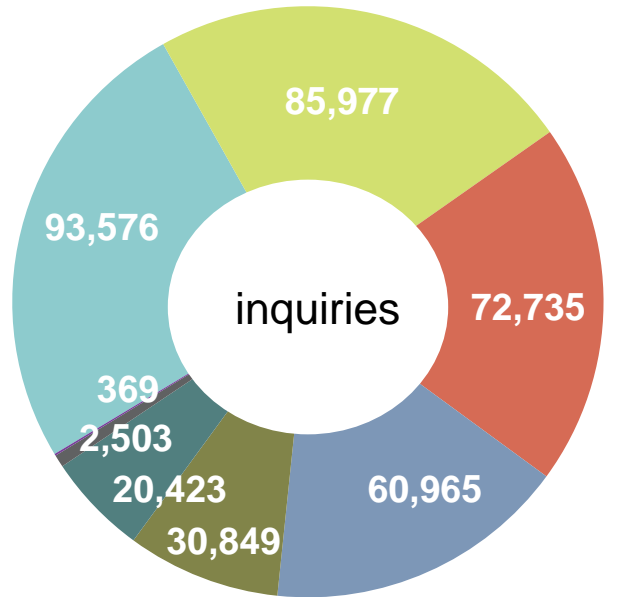
users

Comparison of traffic YOY shows result of heightened COVID reopen media activity- driving higher website traffic compared to historical Summer months (June/July)

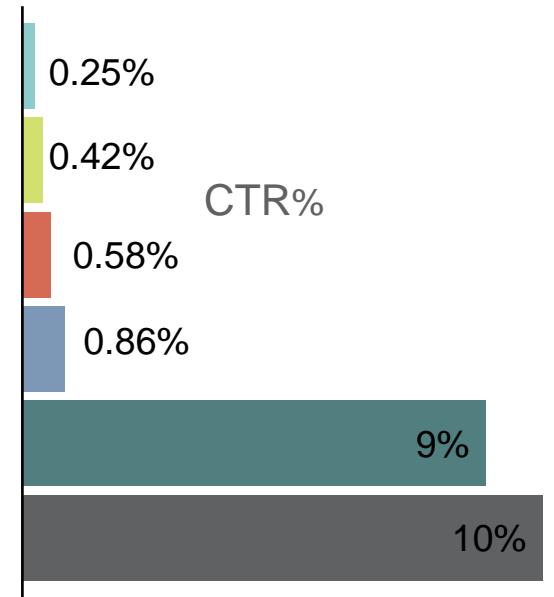
# results

campaign delivered:

- **367,397 total inquiries**
- **269,405 total clicks**
- **32,080,966 total impressions**
- **974,955 completed video views**
- 492,747 total interactions
- 0.84% CTR
- \$0.76 CPI
- \$8.45 CPM
- **807 VG downloads** (from eblasts)
- **3,240 especial signups** (eblasts/FB leads)



- especials
- display
- search
- social display
- eblasts
- social video
- video
- phone



- video
- display
- social video
- social display
- eblasts
- search

- Delivered **large campaign reach** (30m+ impressions) at **very cost effective CPCs** (\$1.01 overall)
- Unified digital campaigns are more efficient/cost effective than individual campaigns (compared FY17/18 - FY19/20 individual campaigns to unified campaign results (COVID/Hurricane campaign stats)
  - **CTR% 20-25% higher** than individual
  - **CPC 15-25% lower** than individual
  - **CPM 20-25% lower** than individual
- Overall campaign **CTR** (0.84%) is **16-20x higher than industry average**
- Search **CTR% increased 54%** from April to July while **CPC decreased 71%** (due to individual campaigns)
- Display CTR% stayed relatively flat across campaign
- Campaign especially **resonated on social** outside of normal KPI metrics (clicks, CTR, CPC)
  - **Social interactions were considerably higher** (especially on video)
  - **Lead ads** (e-special signups) had a **37% conversion rate** (industry average 15-20%)
- **Mobile and tablet placements** far outpaced desktop across all tactics (display, social, search, video)
- **Top geographies- Charlotte, Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro, Fayetteville (DC, VA- out of state)**

- During times of crisis, paid media has shown to be an efficient and productive method based on high intent among consumers; **don't shy away from paid media during crisis**
- **Continue unified digital campaigns** moving forward in spring
  - maximize reach with potentially limited budgets due to COVID
- **Expand focus on younger demos** during COVID-19 era
  - Analytics show a 10% increase in site visitation for 18-24 (drop of 5% in 65+ audience) without being specifically targeted through paid media
- Consider fewer creative versions of ads, but **more audience segments**
- Continue to align and **refine media targeting** using website analytics and other 1st party data
- Continue to **blend social tactics and expansion in lead generating ads** across formats
- Continue to design/optimize web content and creative for **mobile-first experiences**



# Summer Social Media During COVID



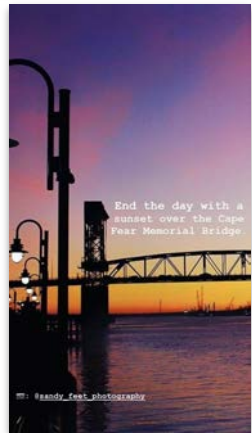
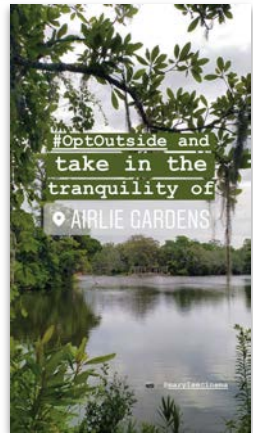
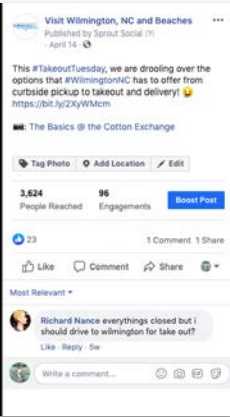
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# Summer April - July| Social Media

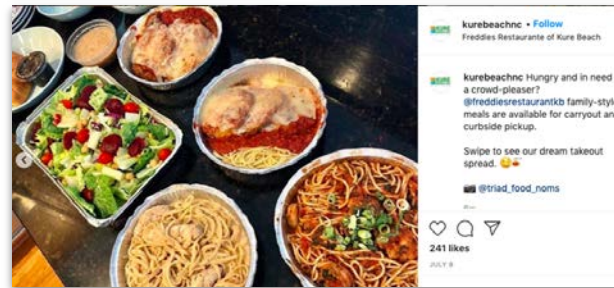
## Content Mix

- In initial COVID phase, spotlighted tourism partners relevant to the #StayAtHome trend, getting outdoors, inspiration for future travel
- Re-released relevant videos and FB/Instagram Lives
- Developed Zoom backgrounds and incorporated trending travel hashtags
- Developed Bingo cards featuring things visitors have done or wish they could do in the destination
- Developed Virtual Road Trip utilizing IG Stories
- Re-engaged influencers that previously visited the destination to share content
- **Offered guests a variety of dining experiences including takeout, dine-in and dining alfresco**
- **Promoted variety of lodging partners along with what guests could expect**
- **Introduced Count On Me NC statewide initiative and featured NHC participating industry partners**

# Summer | Virtual Tour Sample Social Posts



# Count on Me NC Sample Social Posts













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# Summer | Social Media

## Results (Wilmington & Beaches channels only)

- **297,894** Engagements
- **15,819,376** Impressions
- **1.4 Million** Video views
- **4,397** Bit.ly link clicks
- **\$0.01** Cost per Engagement
- **473,592 Total Social Followers with beaches channels included**

174,043 TOTAL SOCIAL FOLLOWERS		
	114,221	 1.7%
	36,216	 6.5%
	21,341	 0.3%
	1,826	 0.9%
	439	 11.4%

*% increase from 3/31 to 7/31*

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# Summer | Social Media

## COVID-19 Key Insights


- **Dining and inspirational posts were among the top performing content** across all channels
- **Pandemic has fueled summer social media usage**
  - Increase in impressions, engagements, video views, website traffic and subscriber growth
- **Lodging, dining and things to do posts were top drivers to the website**
- Users relied on the CVB social channels as a hub for information more than ever before

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# Summer | Paid Social Media Boosted Video

**Visit Wilmington, NC and Beaches** Sponsored · 🌐


Whether it's a paddle for two or a state park hike, we're open for whatever helps you get out. [...See More](#)



**Open for Wandering**  
Get Outside in Wilmington, NC. [SIGN UP](#)

**Visit Carolina Beach, NC** Sponsored · 🌐


Whether it's catching a wave or reeling in the catch of the day, we're open for whatever brings you happiness. [...See More](#)



**Open for Joy**  
Find Fun at Carolina Beach, NC. [SIGN UP](#)

**Visit Kure Beach, NC** Sponsored · 🌐


Whether it's surf fishing or surfing a wave, we're open for whatever brings you peace. [...See More](#)



**Open for Unwinding**  
Kick Back at Kure Beach, NC. [SIGN UP](#)

**Visit Wrightsville Beach, NC** Sponsored · 🌐

Whether you dine alfresco or bring seafood home, we're open for whatever flavors you're craving. [...See More](#)



**Open for Savoring**  
Find Flavor at Wrightsville Beach, NC. [SIGN UP](#)

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# Summer | Paid Social Media Boosted Video

## Results

- **Drove new visitors to website with an average of 70% being new vs. returning users**
- **1,672,326 impressions**
- **314,359 video views**
- **1,873 new email subscribers**
- Average cost per video view: \$0.05 (industry average \$0.10)
- Average cost per lead: \$8.47
- **TOTAL SPEND: \$15,218**



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# Summer | Content Marketing

## **Developed 8 Blogs**

- Virtual Garden Tour
- Road Trips/48-Hour Itineraries
- Family Summer Vacations
- Soft Outdoor Adventures
- Socially-Distanced Dining Roundup
- Diving Into History
- Ways to Experience the Water
- Places to Stay

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# Summer | Proactive Public Relations

## COVID-Related Results

- 6 Earned Placements
  - 5 Online
  - 1 Print
- 5.8M Reach/Impressions
- \$201k Ad Value
- \$604k PR Value

## General Results

- 8 Earned Placements
  - 6 Online
  - 2 Print
- 25M Reach/Impressions
- \$915k Ad Value
- \$2.7M PR Value

## Total

- **14 Earned Placements**
  - **11 Online**
  - **3 Print**
- **31M Reach/Impressions**
- **\$1.1M Ad Value**
- **\$3.3M PR Value**

COASTAL  
LIVING

Our State

CARY  
MAGAZINE

TravelingMom  
The Family Vacation Experts

trip savvy

NC

VISITNC.COM

ONLY IN YOUR STATE

The Fayetteville  
Observer

# Summer | WCC + Meetings

## General Results Coping with COVID (reactive outreach only)

- 1 Earned Placement, Print
- 45k Reach/Impressions

- \$4.6k Ad Value
- \$13.7k PR Value

**ConventionSouth**  
Married To The South For Over 35 Years & Still In Love.

**Rescheduling CONFLICTS:**  
Working With Your Vendors

**How To Host An Event On A Budget**

**GOING VIRTUAL**  
Event Planners Using Tech To Visit Sites

**PLUS:**  
Event Planners' Guides To Arkansas & North Carolina

CREATED WITH CANVA DESIGNER  
WWW.CANVADESIGNER.COM

**DOWNTOWN RALEIGH**  
North Carolina's largest city is the only growing downtown in the Southeast. With over 100 years of history, downtown Raleigh is a vibrant, walkable, and bikeable neighborhood. It's the heart of the city, and it's the heart of the region. It's the heart of the South.

**Coastal North Carolina**  
Wilmington and Beaufort  
Wilmington is a vibrant city with a rich history and a beautiful coastline. Beaufort is a charming town with a rich history and a beautiful coastline.

**EVENT PLANNERS' GUIDE TO NC**  
North Carolina

**Southern Piedmont**  
Charlotte  
Charlotte is a vibrant city with a rich history and a beautiful coastline. It's the heart of the South.

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WWW.CONVENTIONSOUTH.COM

**Crystal Coast**  
Crystal Coast is a vibrant city with a rich history and a beautiful coastline. It's the heart of the South.

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WWW.CONVENTIONSOUTH.COM

**New Bern/Croton County**  
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WWW.CONVENTIONSOUTH.COM

# PR/Communications COVID Highlights

- **Press Trips/Media FAMS:**

- Hosted 14 press trips (pre-covid)
- COVID cancelations = 9 confirmed spring press trips & Craft Beer media FAM



- **Quarantine Silver Linings:**

- Editor from Oprah.com +3 high-profile freelancers spent quarantine here—pitching fall stories
- Canceled press trips are interested in rescheduling in Fall or Spring
- Earned Media during quarantine in Carolina Country (April cover); New York Times (Museums section, March); Local Palate (June); fodors.com
- Opportunities: virtual webinars & media roundtables (SATW, PRSA, Visit NC)



- **Other Activities:**

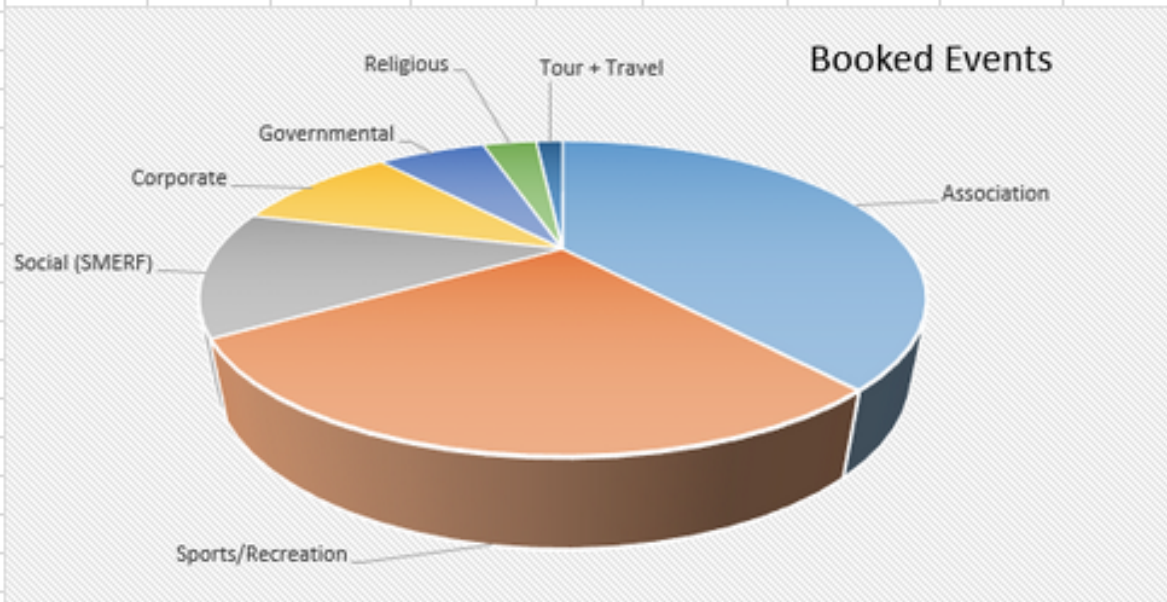
- Crisis Communications
- Electronic Press Kit Makeover
- Partner/Stakeholder Industry Updates and Surveys
- Media Leads

# FY19-20 Meeting Results



Booked Events							
2019-2020	2018-2019		2019-2020	2018-2019		2019-2020	2018-2019
Booked	Booked		Rooms	Rooms		Delegates	Delegates
62	87		27,383	35,292		25,246	42,186
<-29%>			<-22%>			<-40%>	

Market Segment	Bookings
Association	24
Sports/Recreation	17
Social (SMERF)	8
Corporate	6
Governmental	4
Religious	2
Tour + Travel	1

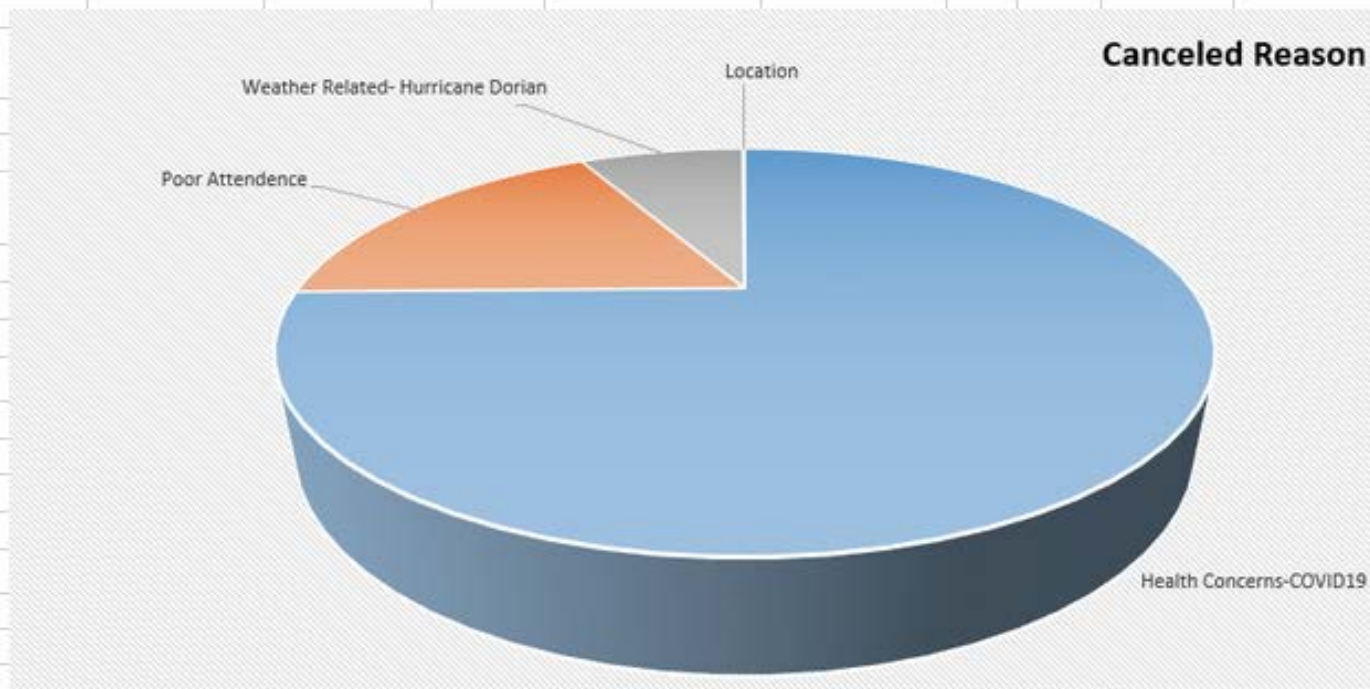


WCC Booked Events							
2019-2020	2018-2019		2019-2020	2018-2019		2019-2020	2018-2019
Booked	Booked		Rooms	Rooms		Delegates	Delegates
20	19		12,722	8,240		15,950	9,910
5%			54%			61%	

**Canceled Business- Health Concerns COVID-19**

2019-2020		2019-2020		2019-2020	
Cancel-COVID	Cancel-Other	Rooms-COVID	Rooms-Other	Delegates-COVID	Delegates-Other
46	12	15,198	2,472	21,511	9,380

Canceled Reason	Economic Impact	Cancel Count
Health Concerns-COVID19	\$31,058,815	46
Poor Attendance	\$7,299,444	8
Weather Related- Hurricane Dorian	\$3,174,024	3
Location	\$44,461	1



# FY20-21 Strategic Recovery Plan





# Community Building

**Strategic Goal #1** : Align public-private sector strategies and elevate community collaboration

## Tactics/Program Activity

Ensure organization and industry is at the table for recovery planning conversations and efforts

Work with industry partners and stakeholders to reopen the visitor economy with clean and safe visitor experiences through Count on Me NC initiative

Promote the value of tourism to my community

Strengthen strategic relationships with elected and appointed officials

Expand the content being promoted by the organization to extend beyond traditional industry partners and stakeholders

Work with relevant stakeholders to address social sustainability (e.g. diversity inclusivity, resident pride, support the arts and creative economy)

# Community Building

## Tactics/Program Activity

**Play a larger role in delivering education and training materials to the industry through research, trends and webinars**

**Ensure recovery plans include examination of long-term strategies and outcomes for the community and visitor economy**

**Work with relevant stakeholders to address environmental sustainability through Visit North Carolina programs and ensure sustainable practices and encourage responsible tourism**

**Work with technology platforms and partners to expand capabilities to deliver hybrid meetings**

# Customer Engagement

**Strategic Goal #2:** Reassess target markets and define best messaging for leisure and business/group travelers

## Tactics/Program Activity

**Evaluate target markets and evolve marketing strategies to attract more resilient travelers**

**Promote and highlight beaches, parks, wellness, nature and outdoor experiences; expand to promote attractions, arts and culture during Phase 2.5**

**Develop messaging related to health and safety to reassure visitors**

**Monitor data signals and trends through research to inform recovery timing and messaging**

**Expand content and messaging filters to ensure appropriate tone**

# Customer Engagement

## Tactics/Program Activity

**Repackage current content relevant to new audiences and demands**

**Focus marketing strategies on generating earned media**

**Reassess business/meetings market and target new groups (e.g. smaller, regional)**

**Adapt destination imagery to incorporate visuals with fewer people/crowds**

**Develop a content strategy to showcase local tourism businesses, heroes, and influencers**

# Customer Engagement

## Tactics/Program Activity

**Invest resources in building a library of virtual experiences to inspire future visitation**

**Utilize partner input to inform recovery messaging and timing (Partner Advisory Committee)**

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# Fall | Leisure Marketing

## Overview (Aug – Nov)

- **Fall paid media efforts will focus on promoting destination is ready for visitors, offering the same safe, fun and relaxing summer vacation experience available well into fall** based on social distancing activities and things to do visitors are seeking as a result of COVID
- **Latest research indicates that 70% of fall travelers say they are very likely to go to beach destinations and a previously visited destination, indicating there is a finite group that can be influenced for the remainder of 2020**
- Plans for spring will be revisited in September based on how COVID evolves and research

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# Fall | Leisure Marketing

## **Creative Strategy & Phased Messaging**

- **Campaign theme, “Fall is the New Summer,” highlights why fall is a perfect time to plan a trip to Wilmington and Beaches**
- Seeks to reassure potential visitors about COVID concerns related to safety
- **Calls to mind things that visitors love about Wilmington and Beaches in summer and reminds them they are all still available - or even better - in the fall, thanks to moderate temperatures, fewer crowds and off-season rates**

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# FY 20-21 | Leisure Marketing

## Fall Creative Concepts

**COOL ESCAPE.  
SAME WARM  
WAVES.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's the mild temperatures or warm water that extends well into fall, Wilmington and our beaches – Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville – are ready for whatever helps you unwind.





PLAN YOUR ESCAPE 

**SAME WAVES.  
NO WAITING.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's catching a wave in the birthplace of NC surfing or digging into the catch of the day, we're ready for whatever brings you happiness.



EXPLORE TRIP IDEAS 

**BREATHTAKING  
BLOOMS. MORE  
BREATHING  
ROOM.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's a walk in the garden or stroll along the Riverwalk and boardwalks, we're ready for whatever inspires you.



EXPLORE TRIP IDEAS 



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# FY 20-21 | Leisure Marketing

## Fall Creative Concepts

**SUN SALUTATIONS. MORE STRETCHING ROOM.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's yoga in the garden or stand-up paddleboarding on the sound, we're ready for whatever helps you find your flow.



PLAN YOUR ESCAPE **Wilmington.c.**  
+ Island Beaches

**COASTAL FARE. STILL IN SEASON.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's dining alfresco on the waterfront well into fall or taking seafood pots to go, we've got the flavors you're craving.

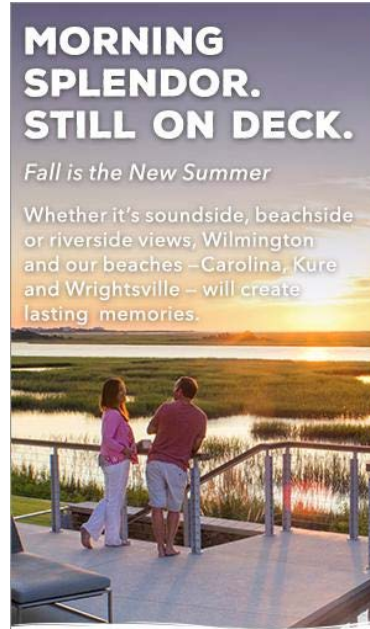


PLAN YOUR ESCAPE **Wilmington.c.**  
+ Island Beaches

**MORNING SPLENDOR. STILL ON DECK.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's soundside, beachside or riverside views, Wilmington and our beaches – Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville – will create lasting memories.




FIND FALL DEALS **Wilmington.c.**  
+ Island Beaches

**INSPIRING SITES. BACK IN SEASON.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether you're looking to explore historic sites, take in contemporary art galleries, or delve deep into local legends and lore, Wilmington and our beaches' attractions are open for whatever inspires you.

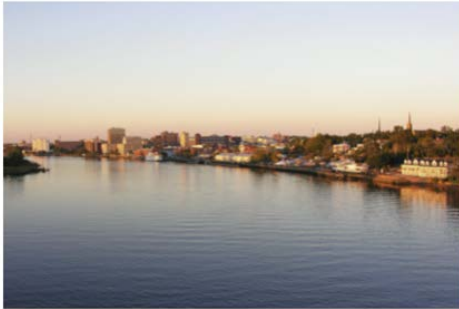


SEE THE SIGHTS **Wilmington.c.**  
+ Island Beaches

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# FY 20-21 | Leisure Marketing

## Fall Creative Concepts - Native Samples



**Golden hour view.**

**Happy hour mood.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's a sunset over the river or stroll along the waterfront, Wilmington and our beaches – Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville – are ready for whatever brings you joy.

**CTA: Plan your escape**



**Less crowds.**

**More room to explore.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's the stunning views or strolls along the waterfront, Wilmington and our beaches – Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville – are ready for whatever brings you peace.

**CTA: Plan your escape**



**Same adventures.**

**More paddle room.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's kayaking on an eco-adventure or catching a wave, we're ready for whatever brings you happiness.

**CTA: Plan your escape**



**Trails and ales.**

**More room to wander.**

*Fall is the New Summer*

Whether it's a state park hike or tasting tour along the Wilmington Ale Trail, we're ready for whatever helps you discover new paths.

**CTA: Plan your escape**

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# Fall | Leisure Marketing

## Target Markets

- **NC (primary)**
- SC, VA, GA and Washington, D.C. (secondary), based on website traffic and first party data arrivals from out-of-state
- \*70% media spent in-state / 30% out-of-state
- **\*Given that COVID research indicates things may level off with respect to fall travel, consider tightening target geographies to NC only in October**

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# Fall | Leisure Marketing

## Target Audiences

- **People traveling without kids including couples, quarantined friends, singles, etc.**
- **Families more receptive to fall travel than ever before due to pent up demand, school aged kids doing remote learning, adults working from home at the beach**
- Adults 25-54, \$75k+ HHI, interest in beach vacations and other activity interests
- Younger travelers (current research shows this segment continues to be willing to travel) - Adults 25-44, \$60k+ HHI, interest in beach vacations and other activity interests

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# Fall | Leisure Marketing

## Contextual Media Placements

- **Priority placed on premium travel-related content to reach people who are actively researching travel options (TripAdvisor, Expedia, KAYAK ,Travelocity, Trivago, etc.)**
- Research has shown people's openness to seeing travel messaging from destinations has fluctuated throughout COVID

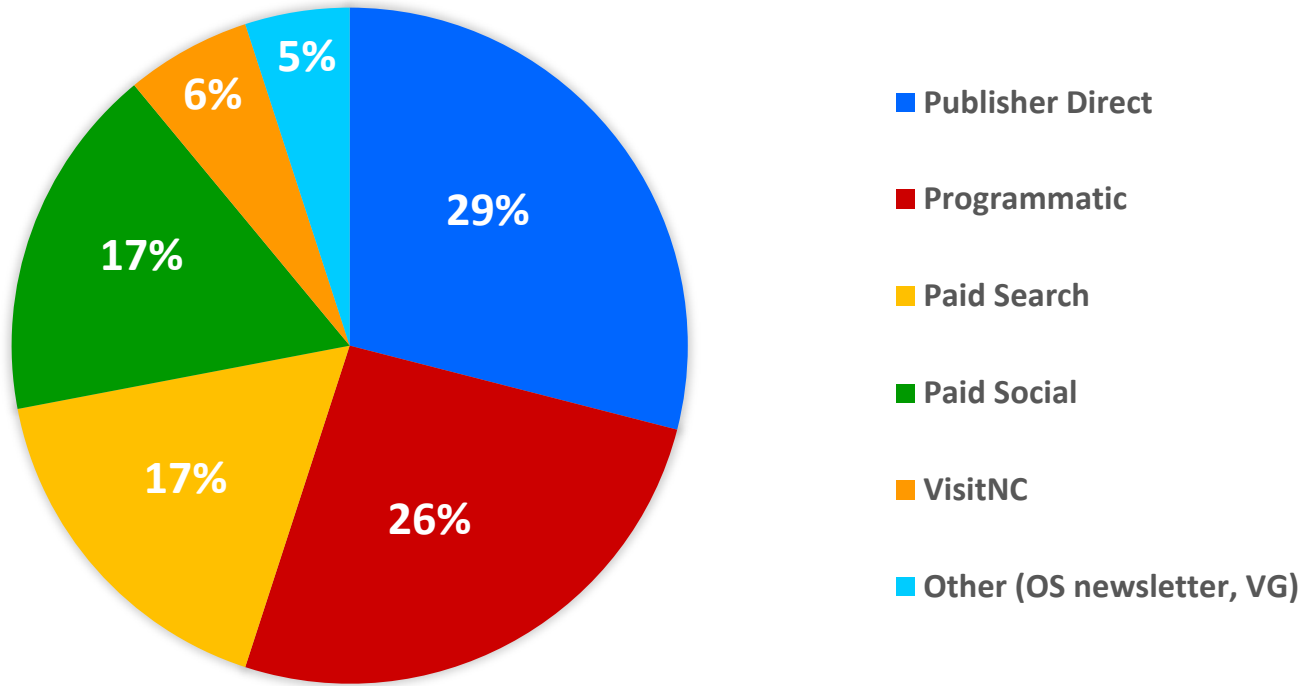
## Digital Media Channels

- **Paid Search**
- **Paid Social (Static, Carousel, Video, Leads)**
- **Programmatic Display/Video/Connected TV**
- **Targeted eBlasts**
- **Publisher-Direct Expedia, Trip Advisor, Visit NC**

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# Fall | Leisure Marketing

**Aug-Dec Digital Paid Media Spend (\$379,683)**



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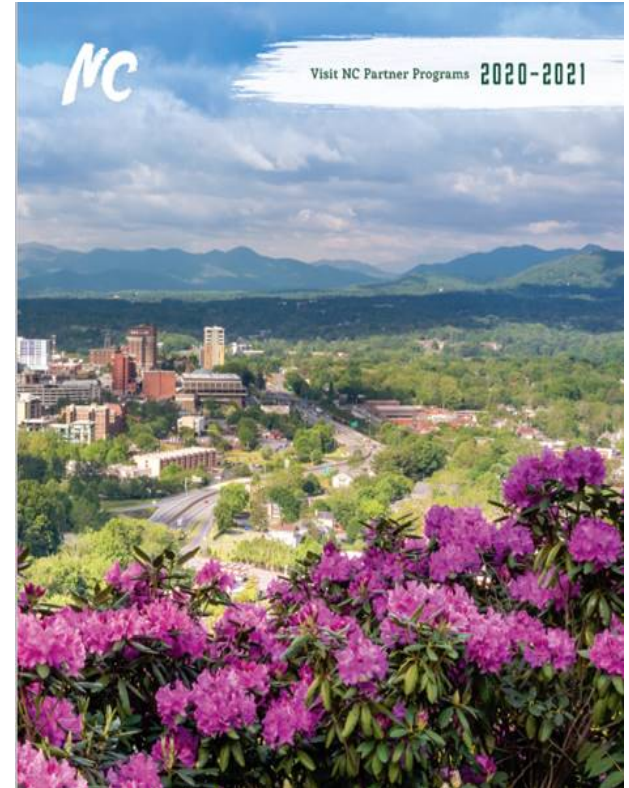
# FY 20-21 | Leisure Marketing

## Visit NC Co-Op Recovery Marketing Credit Program

- Destination marketing organizations are eligible for credits based on tourism revenue lost as a result of COVID-19, per the CARES Act
- All credits must be used October – December 2020
- CVB qualified for a maximum credit of \$180k

## Strategy

- Prioritize programs that allow us to "test" new channels
- Focus spending in NC (primary) and VA/SC (secondary)
- Complement the current paid campaign channels where possible



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# FY 20-21 | Leisure Marketing

## Visit NC Co-Op Recovery Marketing Credit Program Placements

**(Oct. - Dec)**

- Social-Powered Special Interest Mobile, Travel / Arts & Culture / Epicurean
- Digital Streaming Music Program (Spotify)
- Paid Social
- Travel eNewsletter Program (Our State)
- Garden & Gun (Digital)
- Connected TV (Cox)
- Custom Content (VisitNC.com)
- Travel Safety Insert in 2021 North Carolina Travel Guide (Full Page)



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# FY 20-21 | PR & Social Media

## Phase 2.5 New Strategies

- Promote reopening of museums and attractions through digital advertising and Visit NC Co-op Credit Program
- Feature individual museums/attractions in Stakeholder Spotlights on social media as they reopen
- Museum & Attractions Reopening blog



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# Fall | PR & Social Media

## Strategies (Phase 2.5)

- **Highlight beaches well into the fall** when beach season is typically not top of mind
- **Promote parks, outdoors, and wellness** experiences, and sustainability
- **Promote mid-week stays** as added opportunity for special rates/savings and availability
- **Develop itinerary-style content themed around short trips, saving money, ease of planning**
- **Showcase local businesses participating in Count on Me NC** initiative
- **Build video content** and share other virtual experiences to inspire future visitation
- **Make it easier for visitors to access visitor information** since most VICs are closed

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# Fall | Social Media

## Content Mix

- Feature a combination of current things to do, engaging video content and inspirational content to motivate future travel
- **Develop customized FAQs for Facebook Chat to help answer commonly asked questions**
- **Highlight open restaurants and outfitters to make it easy for visitors to know where to eat and visit when in-market, including Downtown Alive**
- Incorporate UGC featuring traveler groups who are more apt to travel during COVID
- Continue featuring stakeholder spotlights to showcase individual businesses
- Work with partners to discuss new changes and offerings to be featured
- **Develop a Coastal Nature Scavenger Hunt for fall**
- **Highlight new Outdoor NC initiative (stewardship program for NC's natural resources)**

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# Fall | Content Marketing

## Aug-Dec Blogs

- **Fall is the New Summer**
- **Multi-Generational Travel**
- Fun and Affordable Quickie Trip Ideas
- **Exploring Wilmington's African-American History at the Cape Fear Museum**
- **World's First World War II Heritage City**
- Museums and Attractions Reopen
- Sustainable Travel
- Otter Unveiling at the Aquarium
- Best Pet-Friendly Things to Do
- How to Experience the Holidays Outdoors
- **Shop Local This Holiday Season/Locally Made Holiday Gifts**
- **Holiday Food & Brews**

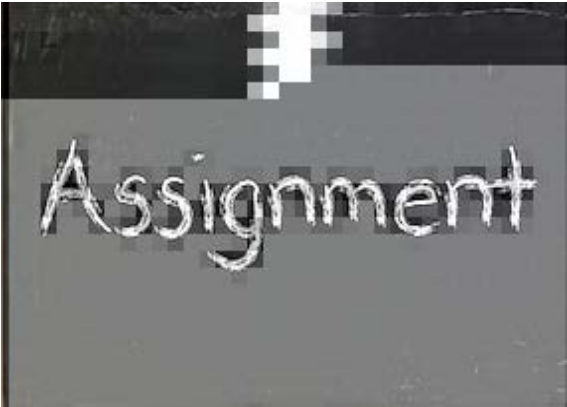
# Public Relations/Communications Fall Strategies & Tactics

- **Support Marketing Dept. Initiatives**
- **Media Outreach:**
  - Press Trips: Reschedule Covid-19 cancelations; Host drive-market journalists and Visit NC press trips
  - Pitch story ideas to in-state and regional journalists
  - Respond/fulfill new media leads and press trip queries
  - Virtual Events: SATW virtual convention & media marketplace (Oct.); Visit NC virtual media events
  - Local media outreach plan
- **Raise Local Awareness:**
  - Awareness of tourism importance & role of CVB
  - Increase Count On Me NC local participation
  - Community Engagement – partners, stakeholders, residents
  - Crisis Communications





What's Next?



Assignment



Thank  
you!

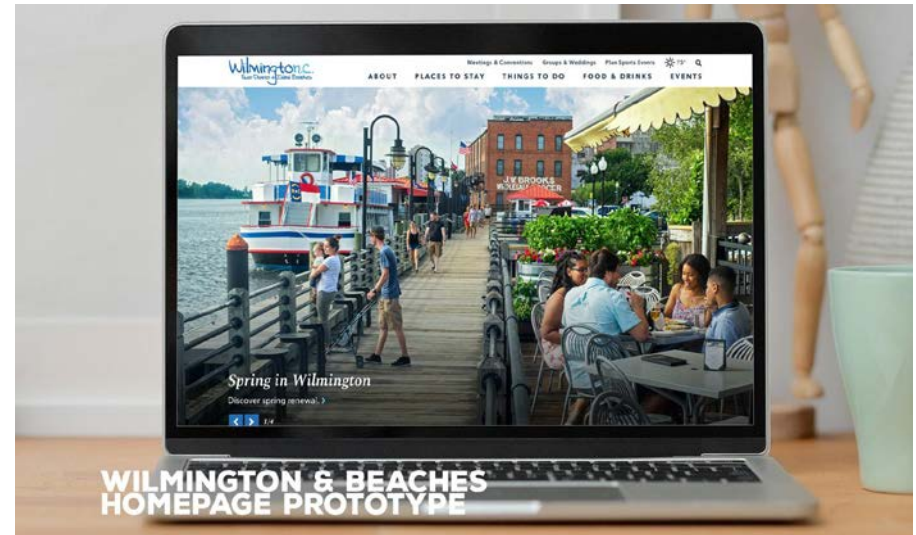
- ✓ Flexibility is key as CVB reschedules press trips & hosts journalists, bloggers, influencers.
- ✓ Travel publications are pivoting during Covid: Reporting on destinations/safety, science, environment, people/cultures. Many pubs are going digital; reducing staff; using more freelancers.  
  
“All assignments are written in chalk, in a rainstorm.” –*TravMedia webinar*
- ✓ Now more than ever, media comps and discounts are needed for rooms, meals, admissions to help stretch the budget.
- ✓ Increased media interest in safety and Count on Me NC businesses (sign up & earn your free certificate).
- ✓ **THANK YOU for your ongoing support!**

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# Fall | New Website Development

## Update

- CVB and Simpleview kicked off website redesign with a launch date of early 2021
- Redesign includes responsive strategy, custom interactive thematic maps, three beach microsites, enhanced blog program, advanced facility search and Quickview partner listings
- New/expanded content on FAQs, evergreen seasonal activities, parking options and projects that parking fees support, niche food & drink options, fresh food markets



# Wilmington Convention Center/Meetings





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# FY 20-21 | WCC + Meetings

## Target Media

- M&C trade publications
- M&C freelance writers
- Business outlets

## Public Relations Topics

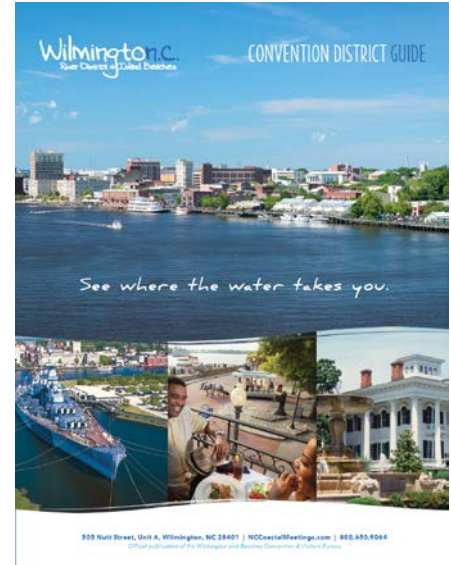
- Socially-Distanced Meetings (awaiting Phase 3 announcement)
- Outdoor Meetings & Events & New Event Venues (e.g. North Waterfront Park, Station No. 2)
- 10th Anniversary of the WCC (in 2020)
- Sustainable Meetings and Events, aligning with VisitNC's new Outdoor NC initiative
- Resources for Fintech Meeting Planners, eSports Event Planners
- Aloft Coastline Hotel Grand Opening (tentatively scheduled for June 2021)

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# FY 20-21 | WCC + Meetings

## Creative

- Develop two new creatives for current campaign concept:
  - Convention District Expansion/New Hotel & Fresh Air Meetings/Events
  - eSports
- Update several existing marketing materials based on new Convention District expansion:
  - Meeting Planner Guide
  - Trade show booth panels
  - Trade show booth tabletop display



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# FY 20-21 | WCC + Meetings

## New/Updated Assets

- Capture new photography:
  - New skyline photo including the Aloft
  - North Waterfront Park
  - eSports
  - Interior shots of the WCC
  - Events at 2-3 key off-site venues (i.e., Event Pier, North Waterfront Park)
- Shoot and produce new meeting attendee video
- SkyNav updates to Convention District Virtual Tour and drone video showcasing the updated skyline, Convention District's walkability through geo-coding

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# FY 20-21 | WCC + Meetings

## Paid Media Strategy

- Support efforts of CVB sales team by aligning with the trade show schedule in 2021, if applicable
- **Prioritize digital and print opportunities that target key market segments - i.e., state and regional associations** (AENC, Meetings Today, Small Market Meetings, Successful Meetings, Convene, etc.)
- **Select print issues in key publications with highly relevant editorial (NC, Carolinas, Coastal, Southeast)**
- Leverage ad spend to secure value-added editorial
- **Paid media spend: \$47,464**



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# FY 20-21 | WCC + Meetings

## Website

- Build COVID FAQ page for Meetings section of current website
- Advance facility search capabilities added to Meetings section of new website

## Email Marketing Campaigns

- eBlasts to targeted rented planner lists and CVB's meeting planner database featuring Phase 3 opening announcement and updates from sales team

## Map Publisher

- In-house development of special events venue map with descriptions



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# Fall | Sales Client Reengagement Strategies

## **Objective 1:**

### **Align sales efforts with current market situation**

- Seek meetings that align with maximum capacities/regulations for our meeting venues based on COVID restrictions
- Adjust scope of sales efforts to a predominantly drive in market. (6-hour maximum drive)
- Capitalize on client loyalty; retain and rebook groups that have met here before

## **Objective 2:**

### **Maximize opportunities for technology-based connections to rebuild convention center business**

- Set up and facilitate virtual site visits in conjunction with specific venues
- Plan and schedule virtual FAMs for clients not able to travel

# Organization Sustainability

**Strategic Goal #3: Ensure the health and the well-being of the CVB  
in the medium and long-term**

## Tactics/Program Activity

**Work strategically with hotel partners to ensure industry recovery and resilience**

**Identify reopening and recovery strategies to guide priorities**

**Reassess organizational roles and activities of the organization to identify priorities and potential adjustments**

**Expand advocacy and education role to protect funding sources and relevance**

**Assess organization structure to prioritize key roles and essential programs**

**Assess reserve funding requirements and policies**

**Review organization mission, vision and values to guide organization through the recovery and resilience phases**

**Use lessons learned from remote working to examine office flexibilities and efficiencies**

**Assess KPIs related to sustainability (e.g. off-peak visitation, dispersal)**

# Questions?

Carolina Beach • Kure Beach • Wrightsville Beach  
**Wilmington.C.**  
River District & Island Beaches