

# Highlights of Visit Knoxville's Activities

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2014/2015

### *Sales & Services Highlights*

- The sales team exceeded sales definite booking goal by 2 with a total of 23 bookings and closed one citywide booking.
- The sales committee met in October and December and meetings averaged 15-20 hotel, venue, and attraction partners.
- A sales e-blast was sent out to over 9,000 meeting planners that targeted multi-day, 500+ attendee meetings for 2016 and 2017.
- The sales team hosted 15 site visits for potential booking opportunities, and attended 4 trade shows which produced leads and site visits.
- The sales and services department hosted the 'Naturally Knoxville' themed FAM tour in October with 17 planners in attendance. RFPs have already been received.
- The services team supported 41 events and meetings with services including sourcing and coordinating event transportation and off site venues, developing event and tour itineraries, city and county permitting, and providing event volunteers.

### *Marketing & Communications Highlights*

- Visit Knoxville hosted the opening reception for the 2014 TN Governor's Conference on Hospitality and Tourism at the Southern Railway Station, as well as the opening breakfast on Thursday morning at the Knoxville Convention Center and showed a Knoxville video to a room of more than 500 guests.
- The team collaborated with the Knoxville Chamber to produce the official 2015 Knoxville Visitors and Relocation Guide, a 116-page flip-guide which will be premiered at an Open House on January 30<sup>th</sup> at the Knoxville Visitors Center.
- The team soft-launched #knoxrocks via social media.
- The team worked with Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) to coordinate a familiarization tour for journalists from France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and Great Britain. Stops on the tour included the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, Tennessee Theatre, Urban Wilderness, SunSphere, Market Square, and WDVX Blue Plate Special. The international media coverage from this tour has already exceeded \$400,000 in publicity value, with a circulation of over 1.2 million.
- The communications team hosted Jason Barnette of *Southern Traveler* for a story on Holiday Activities in Knoxville, and also hosted journalists from Expedia.com and Conde Nast Traveler in the first quarter with the team anticipating the Conde Nast story coming to fruition in the spring of 2015.
- Southbound/Atlanta Magazine featured Knoxville in an article in their October issue.

- Social media efforts:
  - Facebook Fans: 102,002 (up from 97,368 last quarter)
  - Twitter Followers: 16,281 (up from 15,000 last quarter)
  - Instagram Followers: 1,779 (up from 1,080 last quarter)
  - Pinterest Followers: 679 (up from 627 last quarter)
- The team incorporated more video into web and social campaigns to “engage viewers”; Visit Knoxville’s Christmas in the City video reached 83,904 Facebook views, garnered 830 likes, and was shared 231 times (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgMOrkihpt8>).
- The Meeting Planner Guide created in the first quarter was recently updated to include a new spread on unique meeting venues including pictures and capacity information for the Knoxville Museum of Art, the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame, Outdoor Knoxville and the Tennessee Theatre. The guide can be viewed and downloaded online at: (<http://www.visitknoxville.com/plan-a-meeting/planning-services/meeting-planner-guide>)
- The team represented the City and County partners as the lead contact for Google and the promotion of Google Trekker who was here this fall, and continue to work with Google for the big unveiling in the spring.

### ***Visitor Services Highlights***

- Visit Knoxville’s friends at WDVX informed Visit Knoxville that in December, the Visitors Center welcomed visitors from every continent except Antarctica to the Blue Plate Special.
- The visitor services team staffed an information table at the UT Homecoming Signature Event “Party In Circle Park” in October, and the UT Associate Vice Chancellor Lee Patouillet was very gracious in personally inviting several alumni to stop by the table for information about things to do while visiting Knoxville.
- The team hosted two groups of high school students from Powell and West High School’s Hospitality and Tourism classes on a tour of the SunSphere, Market Square, and the downtown area in October.
- The Visitors Center had 6,056 walk-in visitors and assisted 542 callers regarding Knoxville information.

### ***Ongoing Initiatives:***

- Visit Knoxville Film Office continued to support local production companies on a variety of television shows, assisted a Los Angeles based production company on filming in Knoxville, and worked closely with the Knoxville Entrepreneur Center on a new event to promote local production companies.
- Visit Knoxville’s Heritage Tourism Coordinator (HTC) continued to fine tune programming and event scheduling for the 2015 Civil War Sesquicentennial.
- As part of Visit Knoxville’s commitment to maintain and update satellite visitors centers, the creative team at Visit Knoxville designed a new map for the Outdoor Adventure Center.

- Bike routes throughout the city and county were added to the pad map that is handed out at the downtown Visitors Center and to the downtown map in the 2015 Visitors and Relocation Guide.
- Visit Knoxville completed several international marketing projects through BrandUSA, including approval of Spanish, German, French, and English/UK videos promoting travel to Knoxville (<http://www.discoveramerica.com/usa/travel-journals/knoxville.aspx>), and completion and approval of a half-page ad for the Culture | Travel South section of the Canada edition of the 2015 edition of Brand USA's Discover America Inspiration Guide. Visit Knoxville also worked with BrandUSA representatives to finalize travel articles compiled by international visitors on their experiences in Knoxville.
- In November, Regions Bank contacted Visit Knoxville to promote their Big Green Bike - in town for the SEC Network broadcast of the UT/Mizzou game. Visit Knoxville reserved space for the bike outside the Visitors Center and set up an information and giveaway table with Regions and Legacy Parks to further promote the Bike Share program.

### ***Quarterly Accolades – A few reasons why KNOXROCKS!***

- TripAdvisor named Knoxville among 10 Destinations on the Rise – United States
- The editorial research team of *ConventionSouth* magazine chose Knoxville as the SoHo City of Tennessee for their 2014 Hot Picks List of “Southern Hospitality Cities”
- Dogwood Arts Festival was recognized by *USA Today* as one of the 10 Best Southern Cultural Festivals
- Visit Knoxville was recently honored with *ConventionSouth*'s annual Readers' Choice Award (one of only 10 winners in the state). Of the *thousands* of meeting destinations in the South, 800 were nominated and only 175 were chosen winners by more than 4,800 readers and fans. This honor was highlighted in the December awards issue highlighting 175 of the South's Best Meeting Sites, CVBs, Hotels, and Facilities.
- Trivago named Knoxville a Top 10 “Best Value City” in the nation
- Livability ranked Knoxville Number 2 on “Best Places to Retire”
- *ConventionSouth*'s readers and destination Facebook fans selected Knoxville as one of their top 12 picks for “The South's Cool Spots For Groups To Meet During The Summer”

For more information on any of the above, please contact Lisa Coulter, VK Marketing & Communications Coordinator at [lcoulter@knoxville.org](mailto:lcoulter@knoxville.org).