

Highlights of Visit Knoxville's Activities

1st Quarter FY 2014/2015

Sales & Services Highlights

- Visit Knoxville's sales team exceeded definite booking goal by 4 with a total of 25 bookings.
- Visit Knoxville and Knoxville Convention Center's sales teams traveled to Louisville, KY in September to execute a bid presentation for the 2016 US Trampoline & Tumbling National Championships, and Knoxville successfully won the bid against Kansas City, MO and Ft. Lauderdale, FL.
 - The 5-day competition will bring an estimated 1,700 athletes to Knoxville totaling 1,500 room nights.
- The sales team attended 7 trade shows and coordinated a multi-market sales blitz in the Nashville area in September.
- The sales team attended an event scouting trip in August for the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) World Summit.
- The sales team hosted 10 site visits for potential booking opportunities.
- The sales team hosted a sales committee meeting in mid-August with over 20 partners in attendance.
- Visit Knoxville's services team supported 44 events and meetings, including USA Diving and Congressional Medal of Honor Convention. The services team is also responsible for all logistics of the annual Boomsday festival and involves the services team working cooperatively with nearly 80 local partners (including government agencies) to bring together the largest Labor Day weekend fireworks show in the country.

Marketing & Communications Highlights

- Meeting Planners have a new way to learn about facilities throughout Knoxville and Knox County, including venues like Knoxville Convention Center and all of our hotels, with the new digital Meeting Planner Guide. The guide is available for viewing and downloading on VisitKnoxville.com and can be easily shared by our Sales Directors.
- Visit Knoxville partnered with the University of Tennessee Office of Admissions to develop a Knoxville Visitors Center within the UT Visitors Center. The project is underway and scheduled to be completed during the first month of second quarter FY 14/15.
- Visit Knoxville has begun meeting with stakeholders to improve social media understanding and improve community networking and promotion through independent training sessions.
- Visit Knoxville signed an agreement with the Knoxville Chamber to begin work on the 2015 Knoxville Visitors and Relocation Guide, the first combined publication for the two organizations. The guide is in production and will be available to the public January 2015. Visit Knoxville is also working with The University of Tennessee Office of Admissions to produce their spring guide

- A 2-page spread on Knoxville has been submitted for the 2015 TN Vacation Guide and includes a list of major festivals with individual websites for additional information and a link to the Visit Knoxville Events Calendar at VisitKnoxville.com.
- Visit Knoxville worked with local Google representatives to create an indoor virtual tour of the downtown Visitors Center; the tour is viewable at:

<http://www.visitknoxville.com/things-to-do/attraction/5548/knoxville-visitors-center>
- The communications team continues to work diligently to develop relationships with journalists from around the world, with a focus on a variety of tourism topics; the team hosted guests from Conde Nast and Expedia this quarter.
- In partnership with PlainviewTV, Visit Knoxville expanded the Visit Knoxville network to two new locations, the UT Visitors Center and Hilton Garden Inn. The network runs promotional videos on Knoxville and individual clips promoting specific events.
- The marketing and communications department facilitated the promotion of Boomsday 2014 locally, regionally, and nationally through in-house press releases, a press release service, and relationships with the local media.
 - Footage of the fireworks and Ben Merrell's water show aired during the UT game Sunday night on the new SEC network.
 - Power Boat Race held here this summer aired again on Sports South at 9pm the Friday night before Boomsday – providing a great deal of weekend publicity for Knoxville and Knox County.
- Visit Knoxville's marketing team worked to develop a unified promotional identity for Knoxville Museum of Art, East Tennessee History Center, and McClung Museum called Museums of Downtown Knoxville. The team worked with representatives from each museum to create a rack card and page on VisitKnoxville.com (visitknoxville.com/mdk) that links to each museum's website.
- The marketing team worked with the visitor services team to develop new signage for the interior and exterior of the Visitors Center. A new pole banner incorporates and reinforces the Crossroads branding. Social media icons and #visitknox were also added to the Visit Knoxville vehicles.
- Social media stats at the end of the first quarter are as follows:
 - Facebook Fans: 97,368
 - Twitter Followers: 15,000 (Visit Knoxville voted Knoxville's Best Twitter by Metro Pulse readers)
 - Instagram Followers: 1,080
 - Pinterest Followers: 627
- An article written about Knoxville by New York Daily News journalist Michael Kaminer was published in late August. Kaminer participated in the Jolley media tour in April 2014 hosted by the Knoxville Museum of Art and Visit Knoxville assisted. Unpaid publicity value for Kaminer's article totaled over \$22,000.

- The department produced four honoree videos and a living recipients video for the Medal of Honor Convention held at the Knoxville Convention Center in September. The department also made edits to an existing Knoxville highlights video, which was shown at the Tennessee Theatre prior to the Charlie Daniels Concert. All other videos were shown at the gala.

Visitor Services Highlights

- The Knoxville Visitors Center had 7,627 walk-in visitors and assisted 449 callers regarding Knoxville information.
- The team received 9,644 individual requests for visitor guides, serviced 43 local groups totaling 4,120 visitor guides picked up, as well as shipped 17,850 visitor guides in bulk.
- Total number of brochures moved from the Knoxville Visitors Center totaled 12,641.
- The Retail Manager worked with 8 vendors (3 new) to bring in 11 new items to the Visitors Center gift shop.
- Gotta Know Knoxville graduated 41 new ambassadors.
- TEAM Knoxville volunteers were utilized in 11 events, during which a total of 333+ man hours were provided as a no-cost, service-added benefit to VK's clients.
- In honor of WDVX Radio Station's 10th Anniversary, free coffee was provided all day in the Visitors Center.

Ongoing Initiatives:

- Visit Knoxville launched the new Film Office website (FilmKnoxvilleTN.com) and received local coverage from Metro Pulse and the Knoxville News Sentinel. Visit Knoxville also served as Producing Partner of the 2014 Knoxville Film Festival with Dogwood Arts to promote the efforts of this office.
- Visit Knoxville's Heritage Tourism Coordinator continued efforts to organize plans for the 2015 Civil War Sesquicentennial for which the primary event will be the Tennessee State Signature Event / Blue & Gray Reunion and Freedom Jubilee that will occur on April 30 – May 3, 2015. It was announced that the Blue & Gray Reunion and Freedom Jubilee was recognized as the American Bus Association's Top 100 Events in North America and will be listed in the ABA Top 100 publication for 2015.
- Visit Knoxville assisted with the promotion of the HoLa Festival, and Visit Knoxville was honored to receive HoLa's Unity in the Community Award at HoLa's Annual Hispanic Heritage Month Opening Breakfast in September.
- Knoxville is known as a "Bicycle Friendly Community." Visit Knoxville partnered with Outdoor Knoxville, Legacy Parks Foundation, Regions Bank, and Billy Lush Board Shop to provide Get Out & Play! bike rentals at the Outdoor Knoxville Adventure Center and the Knoxville Visitors Center.

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