



Maryland Tourism Development Board Meeting

January 9, 2025

**The Hotel at Arundel
Preserve**





**Maryland Department of Commerce
Office of Tourism and Film**

WELCOME!

**Ben Seidel
Chair**



AGENDA

- I. Call Meeting to Order - Ben Seidel**
- II. Executive Director Reports - Liz Fitzsimmons & OTD Team**
- III. Reports from the Industry**
- IV. Adjournment**





**Maryland Department of Commerce
Office of Tourism and Film**

**Liz Fitzsimmons
Managing Director**



TOURISM:

Tourism is an economic ecosystem that delivers opportunity and quality of life for Marylanders, which is derived from visitor spending.



Vision Statement

Maryland leads the way as one of America's most exciting, diverse and welcoming destinations - creating memories and experiences for visitors worldwide to enjoy.

Mission Statement

OTD stimulates and drives Maryland's *thriving tourism economy*, with a primary goal of creating a great place for all Marylanders to live, work and play.



Three Measurable Objectives = One Outcome

The Maryland Office of Tourism measures its programs against four strategic objectives:

- **MARKET EXPANSION**
 - Further promotional pushes in Cleveland, Pittsburgh and New York metro
- **LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS**
 - Working with the private sector and county tourism offices on grants to generate overnight stays
- **MAXIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES**
 - Looking for those events, trends and opportunities to showcase Maryland in a positive light - domestically and internationally

**Transactional Outcomes = CUSTOMERS SPENDING TIME AND MONEY
IN OUR STATE**



Maryland's Leading Five Differentiators

1. The Most Powerful Underground Railroad Storytelling Destination in the World
2. The Great Chesapeake Bay Loop/Beaches
3. Maryland's Trail System Second-to-None
4. 18 Scenic Byways
5. Fish & Hunt Maryland





Update from Agency of Record

Rob Levine

Partner, President
Marriner Marketing



Spring 2025 Advertising Campaign

- Spring 2025 campaign will build on the success from the Spring 2024 campaign which delivered \$85.3M in revenue and \$40:1 ROI
- The campaign objective is to increase multi-night hotel stays and awareness of Maryland
- Advertising will run from March through August
- Campaign will promote summer travels in Maryland and Maryland's key differentiators
- New You're Welcome creative refresh
- Two new TV spots
- Media outlets include Broadcast TV, Connected TV, online video, radio, digital display, out-of-home advertising
- Total media: \$4MM



You're Welcome Creative Refresh



Maryland
visitmaryland.org

Food so good
it's served by
the dozen.

STAY FOR DAYS



YOU'RE WELCOME



Maryland
visitmaryland.org



Let
Maryland
surprise you.

STAY OVERNIGHT

YOU'RE WELCOME



Maryland
visitmaryland.org



There's
always a
new trail to
explore.

STAY OVERNIGHT

YOU'RE WELCOME



Maryland
visitmaryland.org



See our
history,
and make
your own.

STAY FOR DAYS

YOU'RE WELCOME



Two New TV Ads





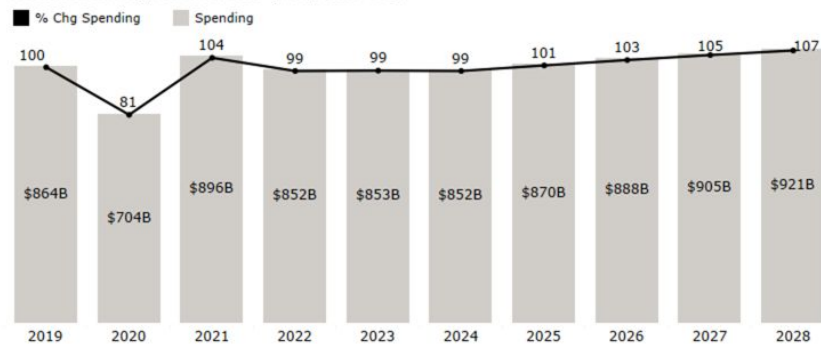
**Office of Tourism
Report Card:
Tourism Economics Forecast,
Maryland Hotel Lodging Monitor
And
2024 Year End Web Stats**



Domestic Travel Forecast

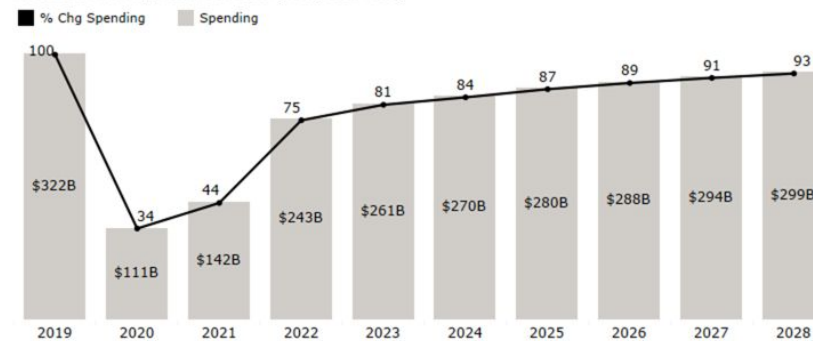
Real Domestic Leisure Travel Spending

Forecasted recovery, relative to 2019 (index, 2019=100)



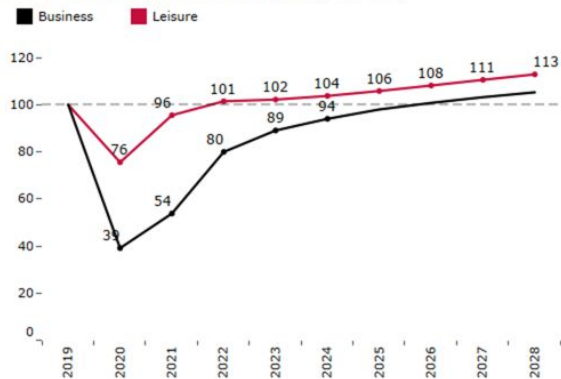
Real Domestic Business Travel Spending

Forecasted recovery, relative to 2019 (index, 2019=100)



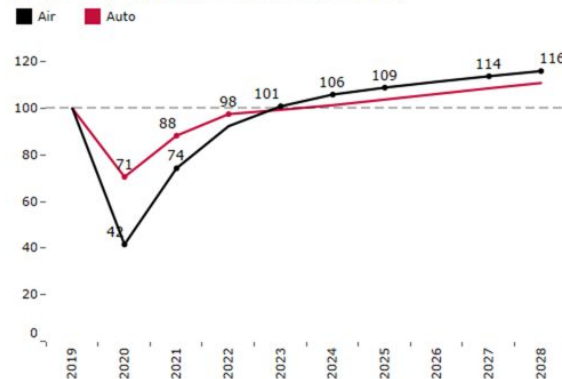
Leisure vs. Business Travel Volume

Forecasted recovery, relative to 2019 (index, 2019=100)



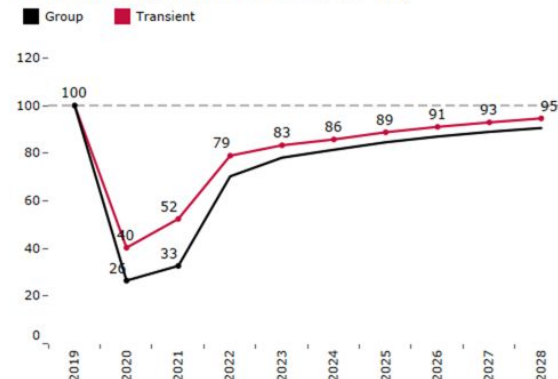
Auto vs. Air Travel Volume

Forecasted recovery, relative to 2019 (index, 2019=100)



Group vs. Transient Travel Spending

Forecasted recovery, relative to 2019 (index, 2019=100)



Scenario Forecast for Maryland's Visitor Economy (up to 2026)

Baseline, Upside, and Downside Scenarios

– In our Upside scenario, near-term inflation prospects improve further. Core inflation proves less sticky than expected and oil prices ease as fears of Middle East escalation fade. Inflation expectations edge lower as a result. Central bank caution fades as inflation quickly returns to target. Financial markets strengthen, with investors surprised by the speed and scale of near-term policy easing.

-- In our Baseline scenario, we assume economic growth slows modestly in 2025 where U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) grows 2.6%, versus 2.8% growth in 2024. We expect inflation to moderate in the coming months which will prompt the Fed to cut rates three times in 2025. However, persistent inflation in late 2024, combined with robust consumer spending and a healthy labor market, reduces the urgency to stimulate the economy through rate cuts, thus the risk is to fewer cuts than currently expected. Household finances are generally in good shape, but the regressive nature of inflation and high interest rates are disproportionately pressuring low-income households to curtail spending.

-- In our Downside scenario, core inflation proves stickier than expected. At the same time, an escalation of the Israel-Hamas war triggers a historically significant degree of disruption to global oil supply. Oil prices spike, equity markets decline, and central banks pause policy easing. Real incomes are squeezed, weighing on consumption.

Key indicators in Maryland's hotel sector

Levels

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Room revenue (millions)								
Upside	\$2,319	\$1,163	\$1,810	\$2,302	\$2,493	\$2,570	\$2,801	\$2,939
Baseline	\$2,319	\$1,163	\$1,810	\$2,302	\$2,493	\$2,565	\$2,683	\$2,788
Downside	\$2,319	\$1,163	\$1,810	\$2,302	\$2,493	\$2,559	\$2,555	\$2,665
Room demand (millions)								
Upside	18.9	11.7	15.5	17.3	17.8	18.1	18.8	19.2
Baseline	18.9	11.7	15.5	17.3	17.8	18.1	18.4	18.7
Downside	18.9	11.7	15.5	17.3	17.8	18.0	17.9	18.3

Relative to 2019

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Room revenue							
Upside	-50%	-22%	-1%	8%	11%	21%	27%
Baseline	-50%	-22%	-1%	8%	11%	16%	20%
Downside	-50%	-22%	-1%	8%	10%	10%	15%
Room demand							
Upside	-38%	-18%	-9%	-6%	-4%	0%	2%
Baseline	-38%	-18%	-9%	-6%	-4%	-2%	-1%
Downside	-38%	-18%	-9%	-6%	-4%	-5%	-3%

This workbook contains three forecasts for Maryland. Economic scenarios are based on Oxford Economics' December 2024 US Outlook (released Dec 10)

November 2024 Maryland Lodging Performance

STR data through November 2024

MARYLAND MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS — NOVEMBER 2024 vs NOVEMBER 2023

57.4% Occupancy 0.8% ▲	\$131.13 ADR 1.2% ▲	\$75.29 RevPar 2.0% ▲	Room Rev 1.9% ▲	Room Supply -0.1% ▼	Room Sold 0.7% ▲
--	-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

MARYLAND CALENDAR YEAR TO DATE HIGHLIGHTS THROUGH NOVEMBER 2024

62.9% Occupancy 1.3% ▲	\$143.60 ADR 1.5% ▲	\$90.39 RevPar 2.8% ▲	Room Rev 2.8% ▲	Room Supply -0.0% ▼	Room Sold 1.3% ▲
--	-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

CURRENT MONTH PERCENT CHANGE NOVEMBER 2024 vs NOVEMBER 2023

GEOGRAPHY	Occ %	ADR	RevPar	Room Rev	Room Supply	Room Sold
Baltimore City	-1.3	7.5	6.0	3.6	-2.3	-3.6
MD Western Region	-4.3	0.8	-3.6	-8.1	-4.7	-8.8
MD Capital Region	-1.8	-0.5	-2.2	-2.2	0.0	-1.7
MD Central Region	2.9	2.4	5.3	5.5	0.1	3.0
MD Southern Region	0.5	4.5	5.1	5.1	0.0	0.5
MD Upper Eastern Shore	-0.5	-1.3	-1.8	-1.8	0.0	-0.5
MD Lower Eastern Shore	3.6	4.4	8.2	8.8	0.5	4.2

PERCENT CHANGE CALENDAR YEAR TO DATE 2024 vs 2023

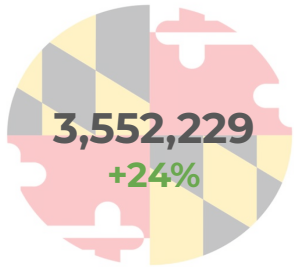
REGIONS	Occ %	ADR	RevPar	Room Rev	Room Supply	Room Sold
Baltimore City	5.1	5.0	10.3	8.1	-2.1	2.9
MD Western Region	-5.0	2.4	-2.7	-5.4	-2.8	-7.7
MD Capital Region	-0.2	1.7	1.6	1.4	-0.1	-0.3
MD Central Region	4.4	2.2	6.7	6.0	-0.7	3.7
MD Southern Region	-0.4	3.0	2.6	2.6	0.0	-0.4
MD Upper Eastern Shore	2.0	-0.2	1.7	9.7	7.8	9.9
MD Lower Eastern Shore	-3.2	-0.8	-4.0	-3.5	0.6	-2.7

November 2024 presented mixed results for the state's lodging sector. Hotel demand grew by 1.3% YOY, with supply holding steady, leading to 1.3% increase in Occupancy, which reached 63%. Room rate averaged at \$144 for the month reflecting a 1.5% YOY growth, while total revenue rose to \$2.4 billion, a 2.8% YOY increase.

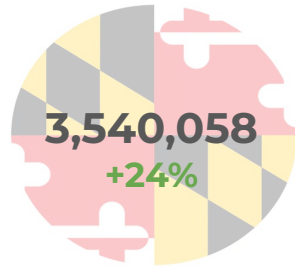
Source: STR & Tourism Economics

2024 Site Visitation

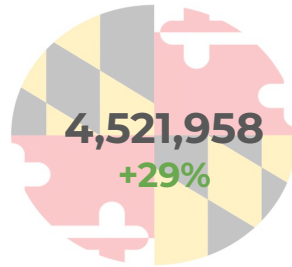
(2024 vs 2023)



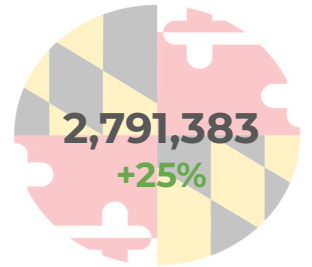
Users



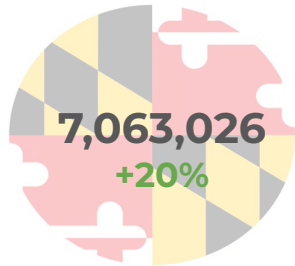
New Users



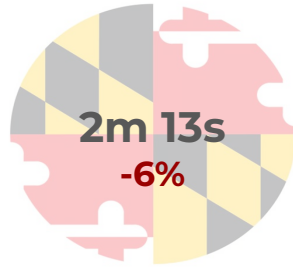
Sessions



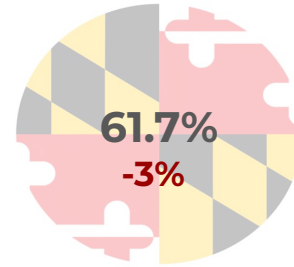
Engaged Sessions



Views



Average Session Duration



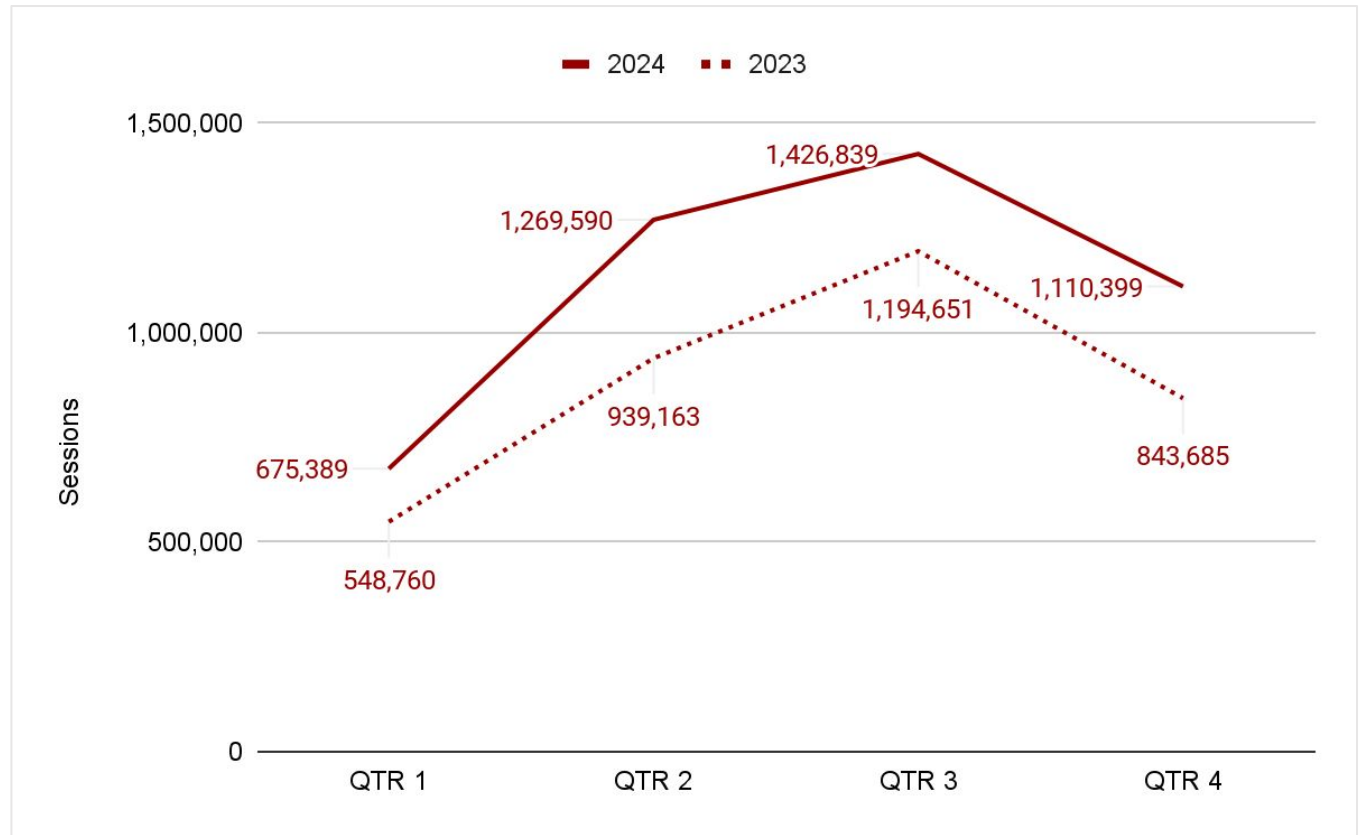
Engagement Rate



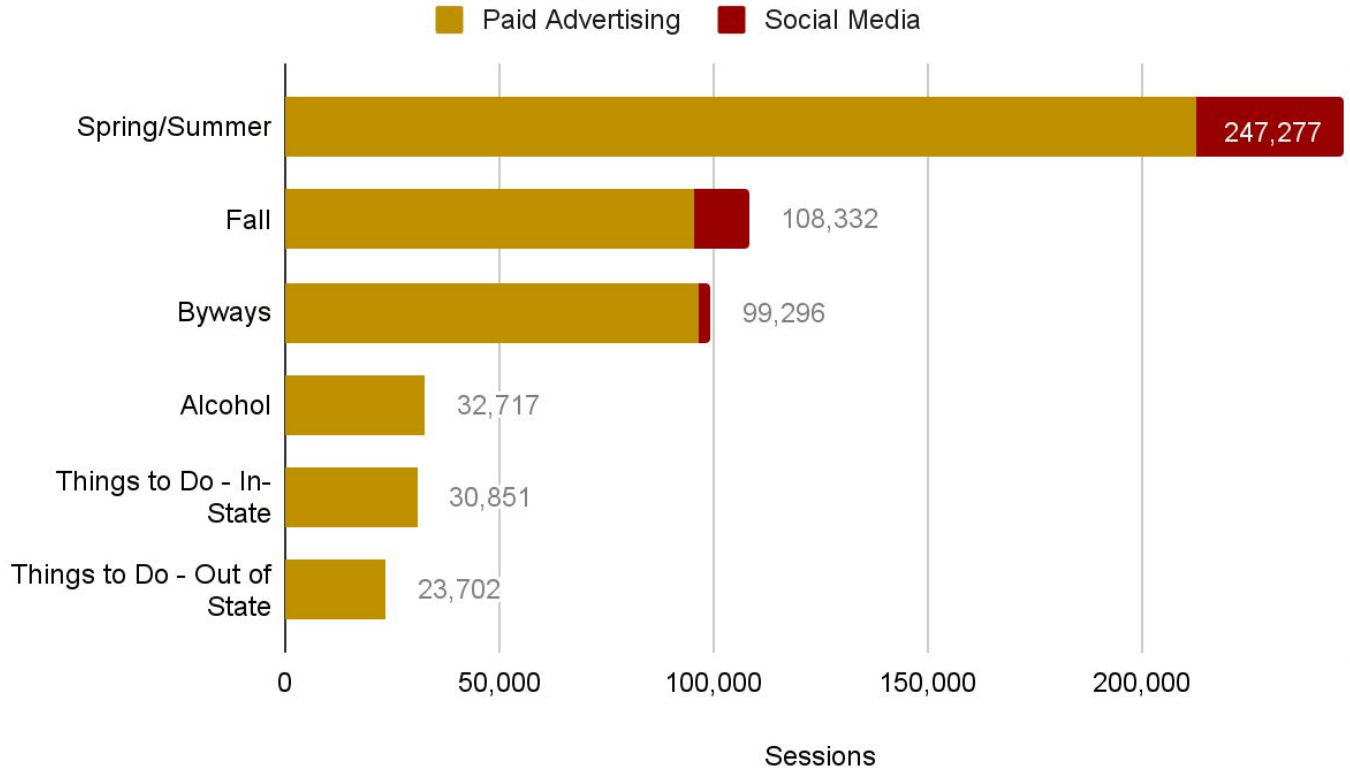
Site Visitation by Quarter

Key Highlights:

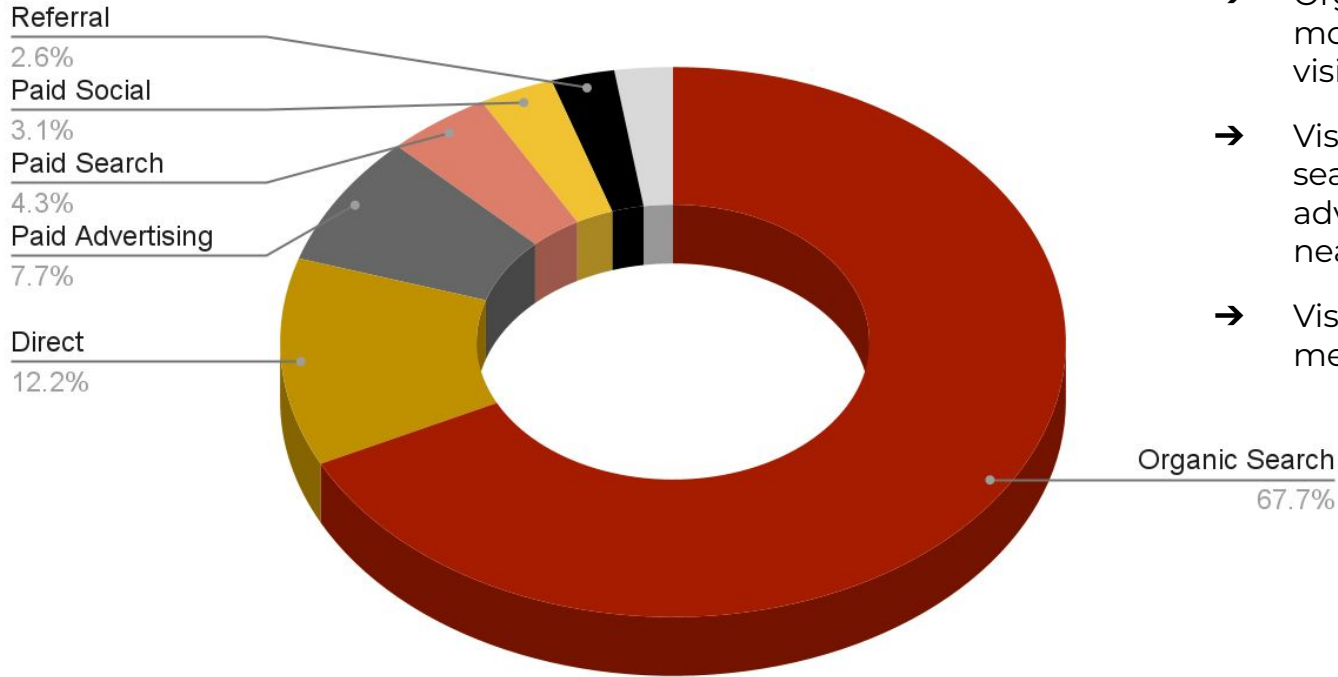
- Visitation increased every quarter with the highest increase in Q2 (Apr. 1 - Jun. 30) with 35%. The second highest increase being Q4 (Oct. 1 - Dec. 31) with 32%.



Top Campaigns



Where is the Traffic Coming From?



Key Highlights:

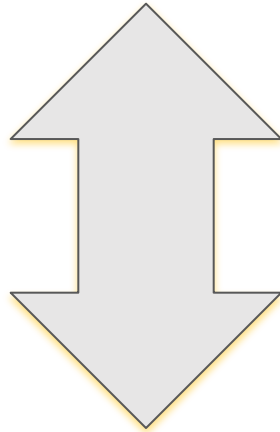
- Organic search generated more than half of the total visitation for 2024
- Visitation from organic search and paid digital advertising increased nearly 25% year over year
- Visitation from paid social media quadrupled YoY



Important Dates:

January 8, 2025 - General Assembly Session Begins

- January 15, 2025 - Governor introduces Budget Bill



90 Days from
Start of Session
Until the End

- April 7, 2025 - Adjournment “Sine Die”



Important Dates:

February 26, 2025 - 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

House Appropriations - Education and Economic
Development Subcommittee

Committee membership

- Chair - Smith, Stephanie - District 45 - Baltimore City - Democrat
- Vice Chair - Harris, Kevin M.- District 27A - Charles and Prince George's counties - Democrat
- Forbes, Catherine M. - District 43B - Baltimore County-Democrat
- Ghrist, Jefferson L. - District 36 - Kent, Queen Anne's, Cecil, and Caroline counties - Republican
- Wolek, Sarah - District 16 - Montgomery County - Democrat



Important Dates:

March 3, 2025 - 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Senate - Budget and Tax - Education, Business and
Administration Subcommittee

Committee membership

- Chair - King, Nancy J. - District 39 - Montgomery County - Democrat
- Bailey, Jack - District 29 - Calvert and St. Mary's counties - Republican
- Benson, Joanne C. - District 24 - Prince George's County - Democrat
- Corderman, Paul D. - District 2 - Washington and Frederick counties - Republican



Quick Talking Points for “Convos” with Elected Officials

Generating Revenue to the State’s General Fund Tourism Quickly Puts Money in Maryland’s Economy

- Tourism is an economic ecosystem that delivers opportunity and quality of life for Marylanders, which is derived from visitor spending.
- Forty-five million visitors came to Maryland and spent \$20.5 billion at tourism-related businesses.
- Tourism marketing and advertising **WORKS!** Invite consumers to Maryland - invest \$1 and the visitors spend \$34 at tourism-related businesses generating \$2 in sales tax revenue.
- The Maryland Tourism Development Board is a legislatively mandated group of professionals who volunteer their time, and tourism expertise to the Maryland Office of Tourism to ensure that the proper investment in tourism advertising will deliver the greatest return on investment.

Learn more about our OTD initiatives at our industry website: Industry.VisitMaryland.org



\$1=\$34

Spent

Returns

\$20.5B

Visitor Spending

\$10.1B

Labor Income

\$2.4B

State & Local Taxes

190K

Total Jobs Generated

Source: Tourism Economics, Economic Impact of Tourism in Maryland – 2023





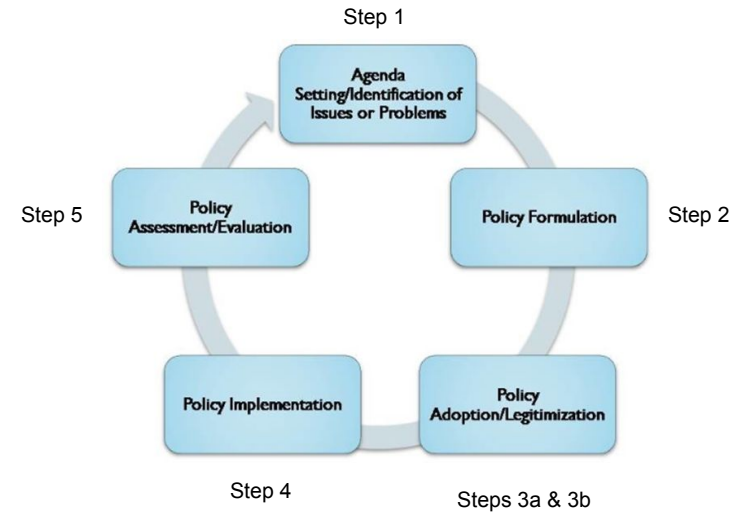
Marci Ross
Senior Assistant Director
Tourism Development



DMO Grant Program

FY25 Next Steps -

- 24 of 25 Grant Application Kits have been executed; Reimbursement Phase is underway
- Qualifying Expenditure Report training complete; Report forms sent to DMOs, Reports are due 3/31/25; QERs used to calculate FY26 awards
- OTD & DMOs kicked-off a future -facing discussion on 10/18; Timeline is set for FY26 potential policy changes



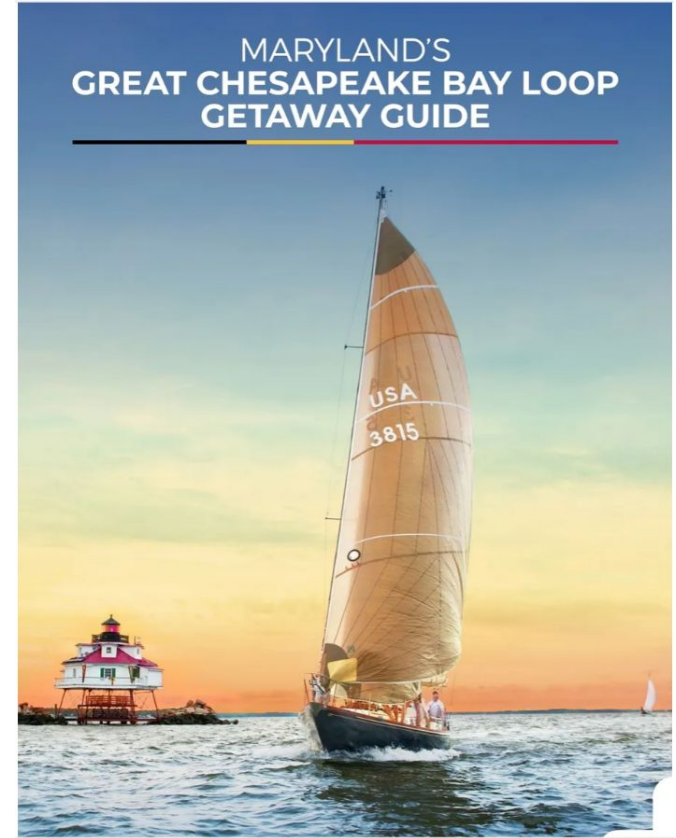
Timeline:

- nlt 1/31/25 – Steps 1 & 2
- nlt 3/31/25 – Step 3a
- nlt 6/30/25 – Step 3b
- FY26 & FY27 – Steps 4 & 5



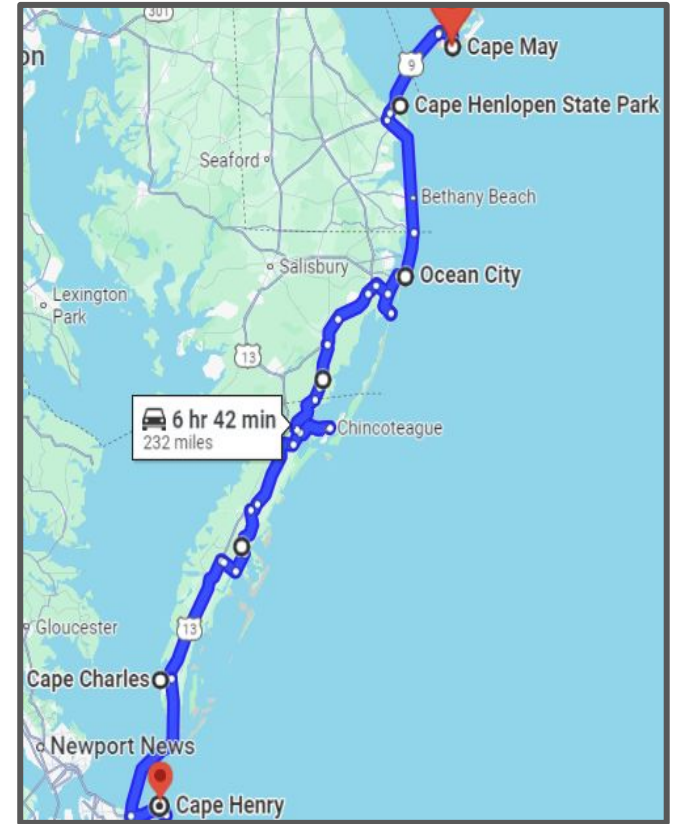
Leveraging Federal Funding Partnerships

- **National Park Service** Chesapeake Gateways Program -
 - A new 5-year cooperative agreement is under development; execution anticipated by end of FY25
 - Subsequent task orders will be developed creating new products and experiences inspiring multi-night travel
 - OTD is presenting at two destination development workshops funded in part with EDA funds OTD granted



Leveraging Federal Funding Partnerships

- **Federal Highway Administration:**
 - **\$824K Marketing Maryland Scenic Byways Grant Project** - Implementation is underway for four sub-projects; Social Media campaign plan is being finalized for 4/5/25 launch
 - **Cape to Cape Byway/Driving Tour** - Product development and preliminary marketing discussion phases are underway; Marketplace ready by 4/5/25



Map of the Cape to Cape Driving Tour



Leveraging Federal Funding Partnerships

- **Federal Highway Administration Grant Applications Submitted:**
 - C&O Canal Byway Corridor Management Plan & Implementation Project
 - Maryland's Chesapeake Country All-American Road Tourism Information Project

LONGER & MULTI STATE ROAD TRIPS

28% of Road Trips are Long -
5 nights or more

45% of Spending
Longer Road Trips account for
almost half of spending

67% that Visit 3+ States
have a trip of 5+ nights





Cynthia Miller
Director
Strategic Partnerships, PR, Social
Media



Public Relations Strategic Goals

- To inspire multi-night travel through media placement and exposure through local, national and international outlets, FAMS, event support and social media.
- To procure placements on local, regional, national and international media outlets. Sample Media Outlets include
 - Garden and Gun
 - Southern Living
 - Conde Nast Traveler
 - Travel and Leisure
 - Major Broadcast Outlets
- Upcoming International media initiatives
 - UK Mission: March 16-22, 2025
 - Placements and FAMS with 4 PR agencies abroad including UK, Germany, France, Canada



Recent Media Coverage Successes

Outlet

WJZ - "Where's Dennis?"

Washingtonian

Southern Living

The Sunday Times
UK

Article

[Unique New Years Eve Celebrations](#)

[In Need of a Relaxing Vacation? Try a Sleepy Staycation in the DC-Area](#)

[Our 14 Favorite Southern Layer Cakes With Unique Stories Behind Them](#)

[The best thing to do in every US state in 2025](#)

Audience

3 Broadcast Segments: 65,000+
Online: 48+ million

Online: 54,000+

Online: 336,900+

Print + Online: 3.4+ million



Public Relations Support Projects

Significant Anniversaries/Notable Events

2025

- 60th Anniversary of Assateague Island National Seashore (Berlin, MD)
- 100th Anniversary of Deep Creek Lake
- 150th Anniversary of Ocean City
- 150th Anniversary of Preakness Stakes (Baltimore City)
- 175th Anniversary of completion of C&O Canal

2026

- America's 250th Anniversary



Social Media Audience

322.1K

Total Social Media Following

(Facebook, Instagram, Threads, X (formerly Twitter),
Pinterest, and YouTube)

107.9K



56.6K



130.3K



Social Media Strategy 2025

- In Q1, the Maryland Office of Tourism will expand its online reach by joining two platforms:
 - LinkedIn, to enhance industry communication.
 - BlueSky, a new rapidly growing social app to compete with X (formerly Twitter).
- April to October 2025, the Maryland Office of Tourism will launch a robust social media advertising campaign to promote the state's 18 scenic byways.
 - Scenic byways will be featured on our social media platforms, strategically timed to align with themed holidays or the season on Wednesdays (#WanderlustWednesday) and Sundays (#ScenicSunday).
 - These posts will inspire and educate audiences about the accommodations, attractions, restaurants, and shopping experiences along each byway.





Brian Lawrence
Assistant Director
Marketing and Communications



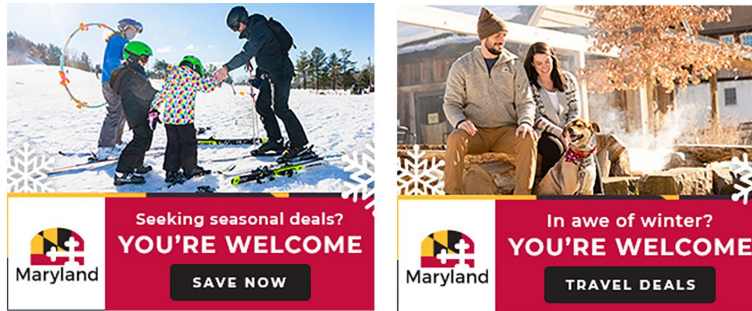
RFP Updates

1. **Publications:** Awarded to Miles Partnership; received BPW approval on 10/30
2. **Digital/Website:** Awarded to Mojo; awaiting BPW Approval on 1/29
3. **Video Production:** Vendor selected; awaiting delivery of contract for signatures; awaiting BPW date



Advertising Updates

- 2024 'Welcome Home for the Holidays/Winter' digital campaign continues to run through February of 2025; Winter TV spots run to showcase wintertime travel



- Active outreach for Deals & Discounts now part of both Holiday and Winter campaigns





Rich Gilbert
Manager
Travel Trade Sales



Upcoming Events

American Bus Association Marketplace

Philadelphia, PA

- One-on-One appointments (2 sets)
- Maryland Trade Show booth
- Marketplace Reception - will feature some type of Maryland fare



Upcoming Events

Motorcoach Expo

Oklahoma City

- February 20-23, 2025
- Booth display & seminar speaker

Brand USA - Connect Canada East

Toronto & Montreal

- April 28-May 2, 2025



Upcoming Events

IPW

Chicago, IL

- June 14-18, 2025
- Appointments with buyers from our primary international markets of Canada, United Kingdom, German, French markets, plus domestic inbound receptive operators





Reports from the Industry



Next MTDB Meeting Date

Google Poll will go out in consultation with Acting Managing Director, Marci Ross and Board Chair, Ben Seidel





THANK YOU

