

Independence Tourism Commission



INDEPENDENCE ★ MISSOURI ★

A GREAT AMERICAN STORY



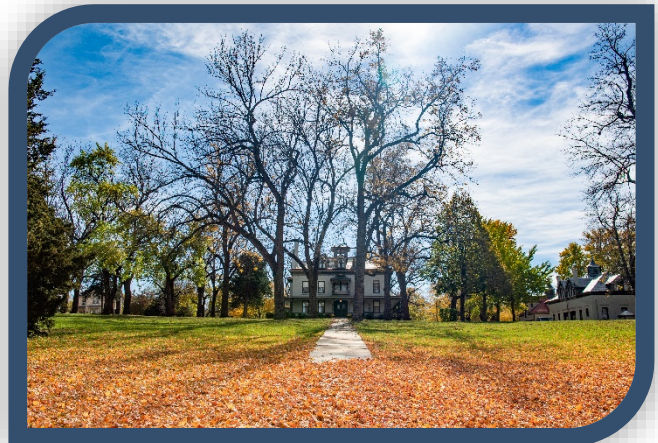
INDEPENDENCE
★ PARKS ★ RECREATION ★ TOURISM ★

10th Transient Guest Tax Program Report
April 19, 2021

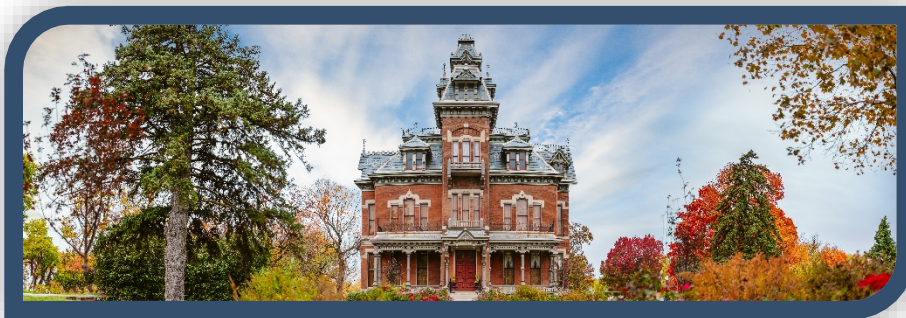
Executive Summary

The Independence Tourism Advisory Board was established by Ordinance in 1997. The Board became a Commission in the summer of 2016. The Commission's primary mission is to serve as an advocate for the tourism industry in Independence, provide avenues for tourism attractions and sites to communicate form partnerships and recommend policies and programs that will benefit tourism in Independence. The Commission also serves as the Transient Guest Sales Tax Oversight Committee.

It is the opinion of the members of the Independence Tourism Commission that the activities, initiatives, and projects funded by the Transient Guest Sales Tax are in keeping with the sales tax program's intent, and that the sales tax program is critical in supporting the work of the Department to attract visitors to our community and preserve our city owned historic sites.



Bingham-Waggoner Estate



Vaile Mansion



Truman Home

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Transient Guest Tax Review

The original Transient Guest Tax was approved in 1970. Voters at that time approved a 4% gross receipt tax for hotel stays. The tax was increased to 5% in 1979, and later increased to 6.5% by voter approval in 2002. The tax remains at this rate today and typically generates approximately \$1.9 million for Tourism promotion and Tourism related activities.

The continuing effects of COVID19 have been devastating for Transient Guest Tax receipts.

From July 2020 through March 2021, the tax was down 40% or \$571,182 (as compared to the previous year). Given these sustained declines in revenue, the decision was made to keep the National Frontier Trails Museum as well as the Historic Sites closed to reduce expenses and also help limit exposure to COVID19 for staff, volunteers and visitors.

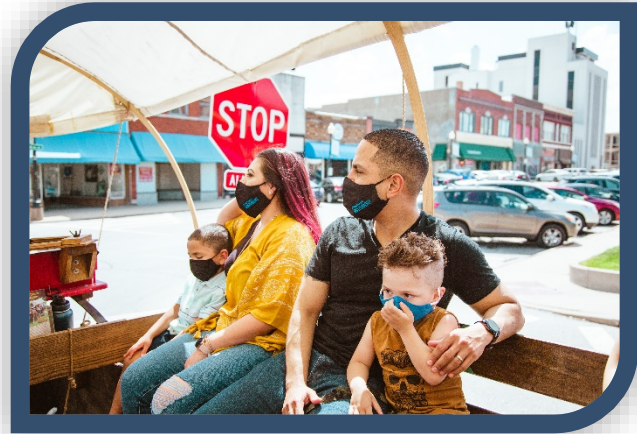
Current Commissioners

The Tourism Commission is currently comprised of 9 voting members, all appointed by the City Council. Current members of the Tourism Commission include: Chairperson Sam Rushay, Vice Chair Kris Zerr, Secretary John Thornton, Steve Kohn, Russ Cannon, Jodi Krantz, Michelle Shanahan-DeMoss, Nancy Kerr, and Jen Vitela.

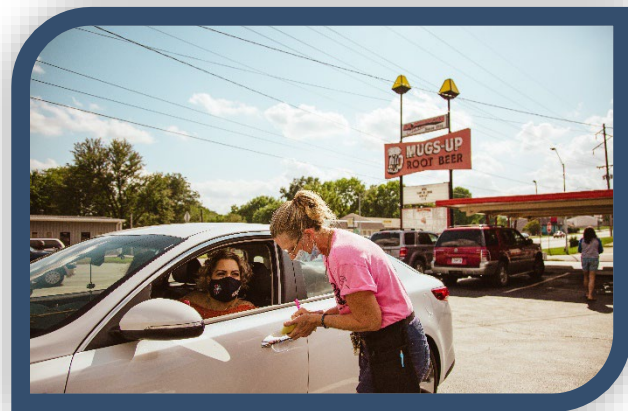
Current Operating Status

Under the Parks/Recreation/Tourism Department, operational support and resources are shared by each Division, funding is not. The Transient Guest Tax is solely dedicated to supporting the promotion, operation and development of Tourism related activities and can only be used for this purpose. The Tourism Commission continues to serve as the transient guest tax oversight committee and is responsible for submitting a committee report biannually to City Council.

Due to the COVID19 Pandemic, Historic Sites and the National Frontier Trails Museum remain closed in compliance with the City and Jackson County COVID19 operational protocols.



Pioneer Trails Adventures



Mugs Up Drive-In

Marketing and Promotions:

Executive Summary

Executed and completed CARES Funding provided by Missouri Division of Tourism
Created eNewsletter email and sent to database
Launched Paranormal Campaign
Created new Landing Pages for History and Truman niches
Began Tourism Economics Study
Produced 2021 Visitors Guide
Holiday season filming for marketing campaigns that ran in December
Set up Trip Advisor Page
Created 2021 Content Calendar
Began building Genealogy Campaign



Refreshed creative for 2021
Refreshed Paranormal campaign for 2021
Complete Jan-June 2021 Campaign Calendar
Received results for Ad Effectiveness Study
Received MMG 2.0 funds and created marketing campaign
Negotiated KC Royals sponsorship agreement
Continued work on VisitIndependence.com
Building Local Volunteer Campaign
Building KC Royals Campaign
Built Group Tour Itineraries



Paranormal Path - Adrian Award **GOLD**



Paranormal Path - Adrian Award

Independence, MO won a 2020 **GOLD** Adrian Award in recognition of their tourism marketing excellence for the Paranormal Path campaign! The HSMIA Adrian Awards recognize hospitality brands and agencies for creativity and innovation in advertising, digital marketing, and public relations.

This award is presented by HSMIA and is one of the most prestigious awards given to the tourism industry. Three levels are awarded, Gold, Silver and Bronze.





Paranormal Path - Adrian Award



Results

The Paranormal Path was a giant success both quantitatively and qualitatively—exceeding all KPIs and generating high engagement and enthusiasm from visitors and social media users. In addition to overperforming paid media metrics (see below), the Paranormal Path generated high organic media engagements and comments from people who were inspired by the concept.

Facebook Clicks to Site:

- Goal: 11,905 clicks
- Delivered: 15,939 clicks
- Percent of Goal Achieved: 133.88%
- Post Reactions: 2,530
- Post Comments: 322
- Post Saves: 381
- Post Shares: 1,441

Facebook Remarketing:

- Goal: 5,660 clicks
- Delivered: 15,988 clicks
- Percent of Goal Achieved: 285.5%
- Post Reactions: 1,770
- Post Comments: 88
- Post Saves: 207
- Post Shares: 624

Facebook Instant Experience:

- Goal: 632 clicks
- Delivered: 1,645 clicks
- Percent of Goal Achieved: 260.28%
- Post Reactions: 1,352
- Post Comments: 83
- Post Saves: 88
- Post Shares: 410

Google Video Distribution - YouTube:

- Goal: 83,333 Views
- Delivered: 150,847 Views
- Percent of Goal Achieved: 181.02%
- Watch Time: 1,470+ hours
- Impressions: 321,208
- View Rate: 46.96%

Google Discovery Ads:

- Goal: 1,744,000 impressions
- Delivered: 2,409,230 impressions
- Percent of Goal Achieved: 181.02%
- Clicks: 10,515

Content - Native Ads:

- Goal: 10,526 clicks
- Delivered: 10,734 clicks
- Percent of Goal Achieved: 102%
- Impressions: 5,341,824
- Click-Through Rate: 0.2%

2020 ADRIAN AWARD SUBMISSION: INTEGRATED MARKETING CAMPAIGN



Visit Independence Digital Marketing Results

October, 2020 - March, 2021

Facebook Campaigns

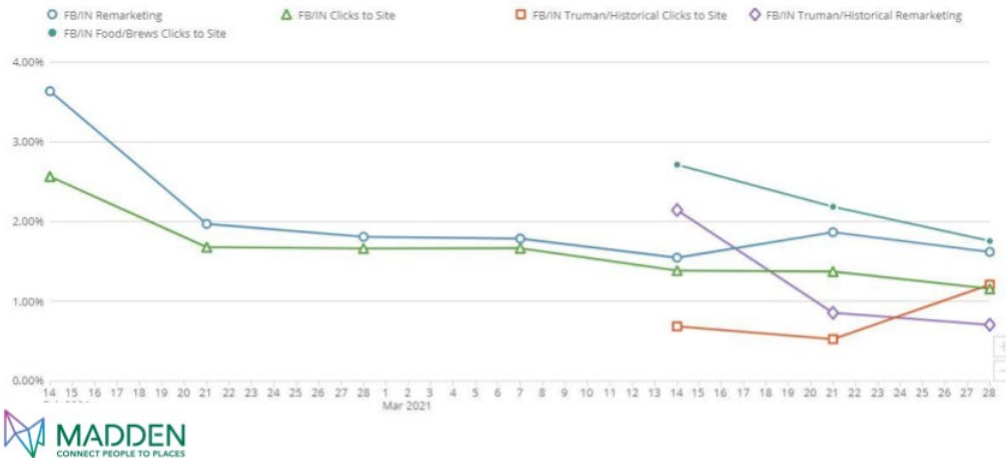
Video, Click to Site & Remarketing

Total Clicks	Post Engagements	Video Views
26,007	362,875	275,793



Visit Independence Digital Marketing Results

October, 2020 - March, 2021



Visit Independence Digital Marketing Results October, 2020 - March, 2021

Google Campaigns

Display, Video & SEM

Campaign	Month	Impressions	Clicks	CTR
Responsive Display Ads	February 2021	612,451	1,942	0.32%
Responsive Display Ads	March 2021	952,843	3,328	0.35%
Responsive Display Ads	April 2021	173,762	680	0.39%
GRAND TOTAL		1,739,056	5,950	0.34%

Campaign Totals:

Impressions: 1,739,056

Clicks: 5,950

CTR: 0.34%

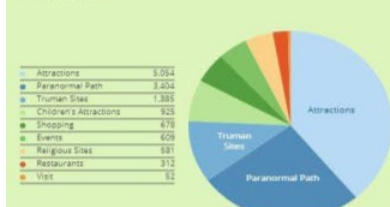


Visit Independence Digital Marketing Results October, 2020 - March, 2021

Google Campaigns

Display, Video & SEM

MDT SEM AD GROUPS 13,000 Clicks



13,000 Clicks

Keyword	Clicks	Impressions	CTR
things to do in missouri	2,079	16,742	12.42%
fun things to do in missouri	1,268	13,927	9.10%
haunted places in the south	545	18,248	2.99%
things to do in independence MO	511	2,357	21.68%
missouri haunted places	440	8,723	5.04%
haunted places in missouri	426	9,978	4.27%
harry s truman library and museum	385	1,873	20.56%
what to do in missouri	383	4,292	8.92%
day trips in missouri	370	6,134	6.03%
events in missouri	338	5,808	5.82%



Social Media Activity:

Quarter 2-3 Results

General, Outdoors & History Niches

Paid Advertising Campaign

October, 2020 - March, 2021

Campaign Name	Month	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Views	View Rate %
PB/IN Remarketing	February	1,258	51,356	2.43%		
Lead Generation 2021	February	1,181	49,547	2.38%		
PB/IN Clicks to Site	February	3,342	169,716	1.97%		
PB/IN Remarketing	March	2,649	152,106	1.74%		
Lead Generation 2021	March	1,480	103,500	1.43%		
PB/IN Clicks to Site	March	6,950	470,973	1.48%		
PB/IN General Videos	March	87	148,405	0.06%	143,683	0.97
PB/IN Truman/Historical Videos	March	87	147,562	0.06%	132,110	0.90
PB/IN Truman/Historical Clicks to Site	March	760	98,670	0.77%		
PB/IN Truman/Historical Remarketing	March	1,282	110,201	1.16%		
PB/IN Food/Brews Clicks to Site	March	3,683	166,004	2.22%		
Lead Generation 2021	April	223	24,326	0.92%		
PB/IN Clicks to Site	April	1,308	116,942	1.12%		
PB/IN Remarketing	April	440	36,378	1.21%		
PB/IN General Videos	April	23	54,821	0.04%	52,788	0.96
PB/IN Truman/Historical Videos	April	31	43,738	0.07%	39,603	0.91
PB/IN Truman/Historical Clicks to Site	April	151	30,316	0.50%		
PB/IN Truman/Historical Remarketing	April	177	32,047	0.55%		
PB/IN Food/Brews Clicks to Site	April	1,123	70,955	1.58%		
GRAND TOTAL		26,235	2,077,563	1.26%	368,184	0.18

Campaign

Totals:

Clicks: 26,235

Impressions:

2,077,563

CTR: 1.26%



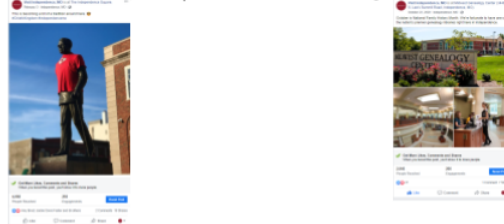
Quarter 2-3 Results

Facebook Analytics

October, 2020 - March, 2021

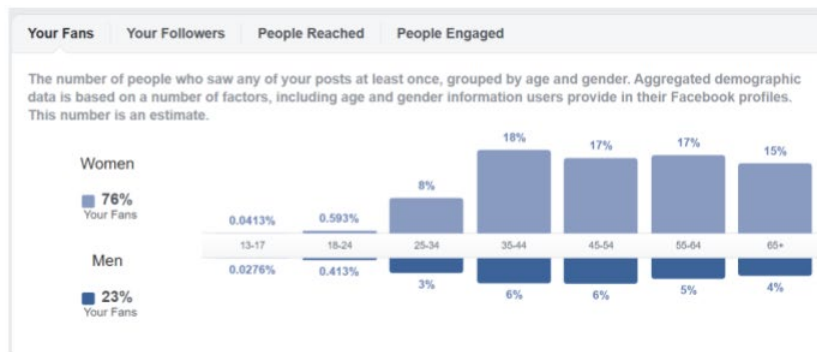
- 7779 followers, up 11% from previous quarter
- 7245 Page Likes

Organic posts with most engagement.



Quarter 2-3 Results

Facebook Analytics
October, 2020 - March, 2021



Tourism Sales and Services:



The Tourism Sales & Services Team worked with Cable Dahmer Arena and several hotels to secure room blocks for the Missouri State Wrestling Tournament on March 8-13, 2021. This event has never been held outside of Columbia, Missouri until this year. We worked with the contact to secure staff and officials' rooms as well as room blocks for teams and families. We are waiting to hear the impact of this event, but it was projected to have 1,000 room nights.

We also worked on securing room blocks for the ADIDAS REACHES Wrestling Tournament on April 8-11, 2021. This event will be held at Cable Dahmer Arena and is estimating 500 room nights. The team also worked to secure room blocks for hockey teams, cheer competitions, a historical society, and a wedding. We also secured hotels for Community Services League during frigid weather.



Trade shows became virtual and we were able to attend several over the last 6 months. We participated in shows for the National Tour Association, Heritage Clubs International, Southeast Tourism Society, and Brand USA. This gave us the opportunity to speak with over 100 group and travel planners from all over the world, attend educational seminars, and network with our peers. We attended NTA and HCI on our own and partnered with the Missouri Division of Tourism and other Missouri CVBs for STS and Brand USA. We sent out itineraries and promotional items to the planners we met with and continue to follow up to keep us top of mind. The team also attended the Missouri Division of Tourism's PR Summit.

Hotel & Lodging Alliance meetings were held in October, December, January, and March. We discussed lodging reports, and provided updates from Madden, IPD, Chamber, EDC, and the Health Department.

We provided over 600 welcome bags for 12 groups, resulting in over 2000 room nights.

We are currently working on bus group itineraries for June and September, as well as MACVB in April, a FAM tour with American Group Tour in May, and the Sunbeams United International (SUNI) car event in September. We hosted the second SUNI FAM tour in March so that the group contact could gather more information and prepare for their upcoming event.

Our team worked on several miscellaneous items over the last 6 months. We worked on promotional videos, itineraries, and a meeting planner guide. We participated in the Independence Chamber of Commerce's LEAD Program and assisted in planning their Government and Tourism Days. We attended the Independence Square Association's Promotions Committee meetings and assisted with the Square Lighting. We also sent out and collected volunteer forms to prepare for reopening.

Facility and Historic Site Operations:

Facilities remained closed due to COVID - 19

National Frontier Trails Museum

Facility remained closed due to COVID - 19.

Historic Site Programs:

Historic Sites remained closed for public tours due to COVID - 19.

Site Maintenance

Two trees were removed at the Bingham in order to allow for better air flow and sunlight around the main house. This should address mildew issues noted on the east elevation.

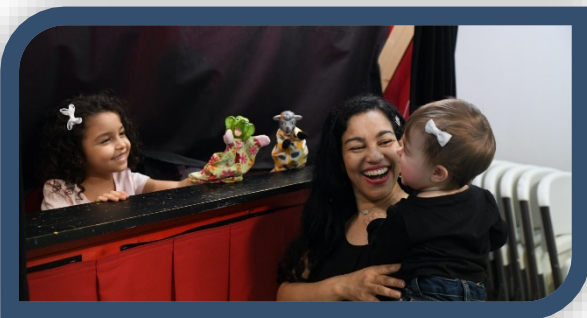
The north entry door and door surround at the Vaile are currently being restored. This door is the point of entry for volunteers off the parking lot and serves as the main exit for visitors. The door has often been difficult to open and close and is showing signs of wear and cracking. This project should address these concerns.

A small repair was made to the roof of the Log Courthouse.

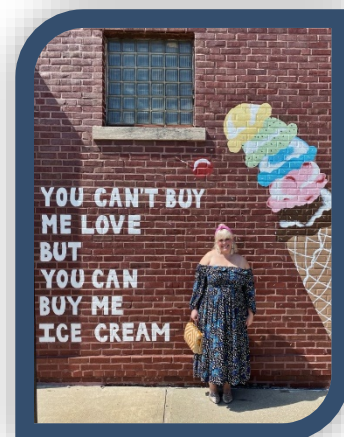
In Closing:

It is the opinion of the Tourism Commission that the activities, initiatives, and projects supported by the Transient Guest Tax are in keeping with the program's intent, and that the work of the Parks/ Recreation/Tourism Department continues to preserve our City-owned historic sites and attract visitors to our community.

The members of the Independence Tourism Commission, on behalf of the residents of Independence and the many visitors to our town, express our gratitude and appreciation to the Mayor and City Council for their continued interest in, and support of, providing the best possible historic sites, attractions and programs for the people of Independence and visitors to enjoy.



Puppetry Arts Institute



Independence Square

April 19, 2021