2021 Year in Review

Barcelona restaurant in Columbus

find it here.

ohio.org
comeback in 2021

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland

Donna’s Delicious Dozen in Columbus

The Book Loft in Columbus

Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad North Pole Adventure in Peninsula
In 2021, we empowered communities to succeed through grants and regional marketing that supported and promoted Ohio’s tourism businesses. This has put Ohio in a strong position to continue to increase visits and visitor spending to quickly return to the record-setting 2019 numbers when Ohio achieved 226 million visits and $48 billion in visitor spending.

The Ohio. Find It Here. message resonated with the millions of travelers who sought drivable destinations in 2021. AAA reported the second-highest Independence Day travel volume on record in the United States, and it reported a 33 percent year-over-year increase in year-end travel with 109 million Americans traveling during the holidays. These dramatic increases in travel took place as pent-up demand from the onset of the pandemic turned into family visits, road trips, and summer, fall, and holiday vacations in mostly drive-to destinations.

Working with our 10-member TourismOhio Advisory Board, we leaned into the consumer’s increased desire to travel with one of the largest regional marketing campaigns ever in which we featured Ohio road trips. The 2021 Ohio. Find It Here. campaign began with Ohio Tourism Day on May 5, when I joined Governor Mike DeWine and tourism industry leaders for news conferences at Toledo’s National Museum of the Great Lakes and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Our message was to encourage Ohioans to plan their Ohio trip and support local retailers, restaurants, lodging, and attractions. Ohio Tourism Day events generated 213 media placements and kicked off the tourism season.

Also in May, we restarted our regional marketing campaign encouraging travel to Ohio and used a multi-channel approach with broadcast television, digital, social, and radio advertising that ran across Ohio and in Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. The $7 million marketing campaign continued through December and resulted in 384 million impressions in core advertising, 248 million impressions through the co-op advertising program, and more than 800 million impressions from our public relations.

Governor DeWine and the Department of Development also helped with grants. In the summer, the Governor established a record $115 million in grants to support Ohio’s tourism industry. These grants to lodging, food and beverage establishments, entertainment venues, and new small businesses helped thousands of businesses recover in time to accommodate the increasing number of travelers.

Our successful promotions and the increased travel during 2021 have laid the groundwork for a promising 2022 in Ohio. We are looking forward to continuing our regional marketing campaign and working with the tourism industry to spur economic growth in our state and show even more consumers that Ohio is a great place to visit and live.

Sincerely,

Lydia Mihalik
Director of the Ohio Department of Development
partnerships with epic events

FC Cincinnati match at TQL Stadium

Solheim Cup in Toledo media promotions

Promotions during the NFL Draft in Cleveland

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Cleveland
Your future. Ohio. Find It Here. The challenges of COVID-19 continued for the world but in Ohio, we persevered. Because of the Ohio tourism industry’s safety procedures, responsiveness, and customer service, our state had a good tourism season throughout the summer, fall, and holidays. Together we enhanced our image as a state where people want to visit and live.

Ohio’s 2021 tourism season kicked off with the NFL Draft in Cleveland on April 29. The city did an incredible job hosting what was one of the first major events in the nation since the pandemic began. The draft was one of four “epic events” we helped promote in Ohio this year. The other events included the Pro Football Hall of Fame Inductions in Canton on August 7 and 8, the Solheim Cup in Toledo from September 4 through 6, and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Cleveland on October 30.

Soon after the NFL Draft, Ohio. Find It Here. hosted Ohio Tourism Day on May 5. The modified event included media interviews on the Statehouse lawn and tourism-focused press conferences led by Governor DeWine at the National Museum of the Great Lakes in Toledo and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Within weeks, Ohio experienced a strong increase in travel that resulted in the second most travel ever during Independence Day weekend and the fourth most travel ever during Thanksgiving, according to AAA.

The Ohio. Find It Here. paid marketing ran from April to December and targeted all Ohioans and major markets in every bordering state, encouraging people to take road trips. The campaign was timely as research showed people began traveling again in 2021 in record numbers. The campaign was supported by one of TourismOhio’s largest-ever budgets for marketing, including a strong cooperative marketing program with a record 130 partners whom we helped sell tickets, secure reservations, and book overnight lodging.

Ohio’s tourism industry is extremely resilient. I am grateful to the thousands of Ohio retailers, restaurants, lodging, attractions, and more that found a way to safely host guests this year. I am proud of the success Ohio. Find It Here. had promoting leisure travel for thousands of Ohio destinations and working with hundreds of Ohio tourism businesses directly to help their customers return. Together, we enhanced the positive image of Ohio as a great place where, no matter what is going on in the world, our visitors and our residents can find joy, happiness, and excitement. Ohio. Find It Here.

Sincerely,

Matthew L. MacLaren
Director of TourismOhio
awarded to TourismOhio

+ Silver Telly in Regional TV: Campaign - Promotional for “In This Together Ohio” TV commercial
+ Bronze Telly in Online Commercials: Videography/Cinematography for 100K Instagram followers video
+ Public Relations Society of America Central Ohio Chapter PRism Award for the 2020 Ohio Travel Guide in the category of Non-Profit: Single Issue Publication
+ PRSA Greater Cleveland Rocks Gold Award for Best Use of Influencer Promotion for 2020 Brand Ambassador Program
+ PRSA Greater Cleveland Rocks Gold Award for Best Use of Influencer Marketing/Promotion for 2020 Brand Ambassador Program
+ PRSA Greater Cleveland Rocks Gold Award for COVID-19 Communications Response/External 2020 Brand Ambassador Program

“In This Together Ohio” TV commercial
The Co-Op Program promotes Ohio’s destinations and attractions through a strong collaboration with the tourism industry and amplifies the brand. In 2021, Ohio. Find It Here. paid 75% of content creation which resulted in a wealth of new assets—video, storytelling, and photography—for use by partners and Ohio. Find It Here.

**program benefits**

+ Open to any Ohio organization that contributes to a healthy tourism economy
+ Matching funds up to $25,000
+ Commitment by Ohio. Find It Here. to leverage partner assets in its marketing

**extensive custom content creation to tell Ohio’s distinctive stories**

+ 50 custom stories and landing pages
+ 40 video shoots
+ 60 photo shoots
+ 50 influencer visits and itineraries

**results**

- $1.5M in matching funds
- 248M impressions, +303%
- 2.2M ad clicks, +77%
- 601K video views, +110%

**partner highlights**

- $165K in revenue generated for a distinctive lodging partner based on $11.5K investment in paid research advertising
- 38K digital display ad clicks (1% CTR vs. industry benchmark of 0.06%) to create awareness for Ohio State Parks

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**We had a wonderful experience... thank you for providing these opportunities to us.**

Leiann Stewart, Executive Director
Miami County Visitors & Convention Bureau
seasonal campaigns

Landing pages on Ohio.org feature seasonally relevant information such as road trips, blogs and videos. Traffic comes from prominent placement on the Ohio.org homepage, public relations outreach and advertising including digital, social, and search, for instance.

### Fall in Ohio

+ Focused on the Fall Scenic Route Road Trip, 100 Things To Do in Ohio, events and the fall partnership with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources/Fall Color Report.

- 78.4M paid impressions, +261%
- 43M earned media impressions
- 367K ad clicks, +14%
- 5.8M video views, +26%
  (YouTube, CTV, and social)
- 496K Ohio.org pageviews

### Ohio for the Holidays

+ Focused on the largest-ever Ohio Holiday Lights Trail consisting of 43 stops and Shop Ohio for the Holidays which encouraged consumers to buy Ohio-made products and support local.

- 44.8M paid impressions, +106%
- 304M earned media impressions
- 317K ad clicks, +104%
- 1.9M Ohio Holiday Lights Trail video views, +1.1M
  (YouTube and social)
- 82K Shop Ohio for the Holidays video views
  (social)
- 351K Ohio.org pageviews
- 26K clicks to featured businesses from Made in Ohio

We all appreciate your great work in supporting Made in Ohio. We are one of the state’s biggest supporters of that goal. It’s in our DNA!

Michael Kennedy, Creative Director, Dresden & Company
Ohio. Find It Here. uses social media to spread positive Ohio travel information across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, captivating travelers through inspirational and functional social messaging. We have grown to have the second most social media followers of tourism brands in the Midwest.

947K ENGAGEMENTS ON INSTAGRAM
116K Instagram followers 12%
17% of clicks to Ohio.org came from social media

3M ENGAGEMENTS ON FACEBOOK
282K Facebook fans 4%
12%
4%
17%

Social Partnerships
This year, Ohio. Find It Here. established new partnerships that were promoted on social media. These included the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Hilton Cleveland Downtown hotel, Songs At The Center on PBS, Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad, multiple professional golf tournaments, multiple visitors bureaus, co-op partners and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

72K social click-outs to partner content

most liked Instagram pic in 2021
Ohio. Find It Here. partnered with seven Ohio influencers to create monthly content in alignment with the core seasonal marketing campaigns and reach a wider audience to help tell Ohio’s story.

**“Consistently Curious”**
Stephanie Taleghani  
Top performing content: Last Minute Summer Activities  
Total Impressions: 162,980  
Total Engagements: 1,158

**“A City Explored”**
Lindsey Wernecke  
Best Performing Post: Fall Activities  
Total Impressions: 113,337  
Total Engagements: 294

**“Lost in Laurel Land”**
Laurel Wilson  
Top performing content: Summer Bucket List  
Total Impressions: 144,733  
Total Engagements: 2,097

**“Eat Play Cbus”**
Megan Rivers  
Top performing content: Charming Towns  
Total Impressions: 93,517  
Total Engagements: 3,801

**“Shana Was Here”**
Shana Lee  
Best performing post: Ohio Ice Cream Trail  
Total Impressions: 75,081  
Total Engagements: 408

**“Eats with Claire”**
Claire Xu  
Top performing content: Charming Towns  
Total Impressions: 89,883  
Total Engagements: 1,442

**“Pursuit of Delights”**
Tiffany D and Tiffany B  
Top performing content: Summer Bucket List  
Total Impressions: 121,065  
Total Engagements: 912
Ohio.org is the primary call to action for all marketing—paid, earned and owned, and provides inspiration through blogs, theme-based road trip itineraries, thematic trails and over 5,000 event and destination listings to inspire consumers to plan their visit to Ohio. In 2021, Ohio.org outperformed 2019 and 2020 with 4.4 million pageviews and 2.4 million unique visits. This was driven by our spring/summer campaign and a strong Ohio for the Holidays campaign.
Ohio.org blogs

**1.2M blog pageviews accounted for 27% of the total pageviews for Ohio.org**

- The Travel Inspiration page on Ohio.org, which serves as the main blog page, received 170,597 pageviews
- The Content Contributor blog program features blogs about unique and authentic experiences throughout Ohio. The program consists of 5-10 bloggers, writing 3-5 blogs a month and/or season.

**Top blogs for 2021**

**Haunted Ohio: 9 Must-Visit Places**
87,224 pageviews

**5 Charming Towns that Go All Out for the Holidays**
59,225 pageviews

**100 Things To Do in Ohio this Fall**
47,244 pageviews

**100 Things To Do in Ohio this Summer**
37,372 pageviews

**Shop Ohio’s Charming Towns for the Holidays**
11,384 pageviews

**Top content contributor blogs for 2021**

- 5 Charming Towns that Go All Out for the Holidays: 59,225 pageviews
- Explore Public Art in Ohio: 11,539 pageviews
- A Weekend Staycation at Cherry Valley Hotel: 10,757 pageviews
- Unique Lodging: Hocking Hills Geodomes: 10,202 pageviews
Ohio. Find It Here. distributed more than 375,000 copies of its Ohio Travel Guide in 2021. The cover featured a family enjoying public art in Millersburg and the guide centered on the theme of art in Ohio, while emphasizing health and safety. The publication featured graphics and illustrations with a focus on high-quality photos. The Ohio Travel Guide showed hidden gems throughout Ohio as well as friends and families enjoying unique, only in Ohio experiences.

Ohio Travel Guide

PRism Award for 2020 Ohio Travel Guide

Ohio Travel Guide

375K+ distributed
features content from all 88 counties
content featuring all 5 Ohio regions

Ohio. Find It Here. consumer eNewsletter relaunched in the fall, aligning with the popular Fall in Ohio campaign. The eNewsletter is issued quarterly, with a bonus holiday issue, to 116K+ subscribers and features content from the Ohio.org blog page, Brand Ambassadors and co-op partners.

CONSUMER NEWSLETTER

eNewsletter metrics

Fall in Ohio - 11.8% open rate
top links clicked

+ Celebrate Fall Festivals & Events (Ohio.org blog)
+ 100 Things To Do in Ohio this Fall (Ohio.org blog)
+ The Scenic Route Road Trip

Ohio For The Holidays - 16.9% open rate
top links clicked

+ Only in Ohio: Holiday Attractions (Ohio.org blog)
+ Ohio Holiday Lights Trail landing page
+ 5 Charming Towns that Go All Out for the Holidays (Ohio.org blog)
earned media

Ohio. Find It Here. continued to strengthen its brand through a strong earned media campaign focused on supporting local businesses and seasonal campaigns, such as Fall in Ohio and Ohio for the Holidays. The first-ever Ohio Professional Golf Trail media briefing kicked off tourism week. State officials and tourism partners across the state came together on Ohio Tourism Day to earn record breaking media attention letting travelers know that Ohio tourist attractions are primed for visitors.

**top three earners**
- Ohio Tourism Day: 213
- Fall in Ohio: 40
- Ohio For the Holidays: 74

**top media outlet placements**
- Wall Street Journal
- Associated Press
- Good Morning America
- Miami Herald
- Cleveland.com

**total impressions**: 802M

**total media placements**: 364

**media breakdown**
- 119 TV
- 38 radio
- 207 print/online

**(51 for state of Ohio spokespeople)**

*In addition to the metrics above, the PR team helped promote the John Glenn Centennial Celebration in Ohio that earned more than 1,000 national and international placements.*
Ohio. Find It Here. invested $6.5M in core and co-op advertising to provide consistent, year-long messaging via broadcast, digital, print, social, search, and more. With COVID-19 travel restrictions lessening, advertising in all 17 DMAs resumed in May.

**core advertising results**

$5M spent, +2.8%

384M paid impressions, +4.4%

1.7M ad clicks, +34%

24.3M video views, +1.5%

(CTV, YouTube, Social)

47% of pageviews to ohio.org came from paid channels

**road trips**

With research suggesting desire for travel by car, Ohio. Find It Here. continued messaging of road trips. Advertising mainly included YouTube, social, native and digital. The following were promoted to align with Ohio events, consumer sentiment, etc.:

- Rock & Ride: celebrating Cedar Point’s 150th anniversary
- Art: new in 2021! Promoting an industry segment strongly impacted economically by COVID-19
- Foodie: continuing to support local
- Scenic Route: acknowledging consumer desire for outdoor social distancing opportunities

**awards**

- Silver Telly in Regional TV: Campaign - Promotional for “In This Together Ohio” TV commercial
- Bronze Telly in Online Commercials: Videography/Cinematography for 100K Instagram followers video

**frequency**

73% reach

8 weeks of broadcast May - October

18.3M impressions

116.6K ad clicks

5.3M video views

669K pageviews to RoadTrips.Ohio.org

56% of Road Trip page views came from paid advertising

530K clicks to partner websites
Ohio Professional Golf Trail

Capitalizing on consumer desire for outdoor experiences, Ohio. Find It Here, developed the Ohio Professional Golf Trail to bring awareness and drive ticket sales for the six professional golf tournaments held in Ohio in 2021 which included the Memorial Golf Tournament presented by Nationwide, Prasco Charity Championship, Bridgestone SENIOR PLAYERS Championship, Marathon LPGA Classic presented By Dana, Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship, and the Solheim Cup.

results

+ First-ever virtual media briefing that offered Ohio and national golf reporters access to organizers of The Memorial Tournament, Solheim Cup and Jack Nicklaus II.
+ The event kicked off an entire week of Ohio Tourism Day activities. A special video was created for the briefing and used by media outlets.
+ Placements included The Columbus Dispatch, Cleveland.com, GolfWeek, Akron Beacon Journal, and several Ohio TV stations.
+ All six Ohio tournaments were co-op partners.

11.4M paid impressions

41M+ earned media impressions

50 total media placements and $78K ad equivalency

53K paid ad clicks

46K golf landing page, trail and related content pageviews

2K click-outs from Ohio.org to golf partner websites
Outdoor activities, especially those in Ohio’s State Parks, were a key part of the Ohio. Find It Here. marketing in 2021. This included promotions of the Scenic Route Road Trip that primarily featured state parks, an Appalachian Ohio campaign that included state parks, and social media promotions including Ohio nature trail videos with footage from state parks.

Ohio. Find It Here. featured Ohio’s State Parks 108 times in 2021

Ohio. Find It Here. mentioned nature trails 54 times in Ohio.org blogs

Fall Scenic Route Road Trip video achieved more than 2 million views on YouTube
organizational excellence

TourismOhio Advisory Board

with an enhanced focus on digital content, we have produced 51 videos telling Ohio’s story in 2021

TourismOhio achieved a full staff of ten in 2021 with the addition of Public Relations Manager Kathleen Klingler, Social Media Coordinator Roxy Reminick, and two interns.
5 ways TourismOhio can help you grow

Supporting You is Our Mission

1. **Promote Your Event or Destination**
   Create a Free Listing on Ohio.org
   Visit www.ohio.org/industry/database

2. **Join Our Co-Op and Double Your Advertising Funds**
   Seize Opportunities You Never Thought You Could Afford
   Visit www.ohio.org/industry/advertising-co-ops

3. **Get the Word Out**
   Our Team Can Help Promote Your Biggest Events
   Email Juliana.Khusid@development.ohio.gov

4. **Stay in the Know**
   Sign Up for BuckeyeLine, Our Monthly Industry e-Newsletter
   www.ohio.org/buckeyeline

5. **Boost Your Social Presence**
   Connect With Us

OhioFindItHere
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