



**Currituck County Department  
of Travel and Tourism**

***FY 2024-2025  
Strategic Marketing Plan***

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism was established in 2005 by Currituck County to promote the county's diverse assets to prospective visitors to our area. The main office of the department is located at the Currituck Welcome Center in Moyock, NC with an additional Visitor Center located in Corolla, NC. Tourists, experiencing the beauty of the Currituck Outer Banks and Mainland, spend money on lodging, entertainment, food and other goods and services, which generates economic relief to County residents in the form of sales tax collected. An estimated 500,000 tourists visit Currituck County during the 10-week peak summer travel season each year (in addition to our strong and growing off-season visitation rates during spring and fall months). Below is a snapshot of the local economic impact of tourism in Currituck County, resulting in significant tax relief for every resident.

### Currituck County Tourism Economic Impact

Currituck County levies a local occupancy tax on the short-term rental of rooms, lodging or similar accommodations. Occupancy tax revenues are the primary measure of success for Currituck's tourism department and the source for sustainable funding.

**Currituck County tourism is strong and continues to grow in record numbers, producing \$549,910,000 million in direct consumer spending in 2022, an increase of 16.7% percent from 2021.**

**2022 Impact Highlights** (*Prepared for Visit NC by Tourism Economics in collaboration with the U.S. Travel Association (building on the historic Travel Economic Impact Model (TEIM)).*)

- Travel and tourism businesses directly employ more than 2,437 individuals in Currituck County.
- Total payroll generated by the tourism industry in Currituck County was \$109.4 million.
- State tax revenue generated totaled \$16 million through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income.
- Approximately \$21.4 million in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.
- As a result of taxes generated by visitor spending in Currituck County in 2022, **each resident of Currituck County pays \$1,208 less in local and state taxes and each household unit pays \$3,105 less in local and state taxes.**
- Economic Impact reports from Visit NC are always a year behind. The numbers for 2023 will be available in August of 2024.

#### **RECENT ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CURRITUCK COUNTY SALES TAX COLLECTIONS\***

2020 – County sales tax collected = \$17,600,000; Tax Savings per resident = \$1,083.00

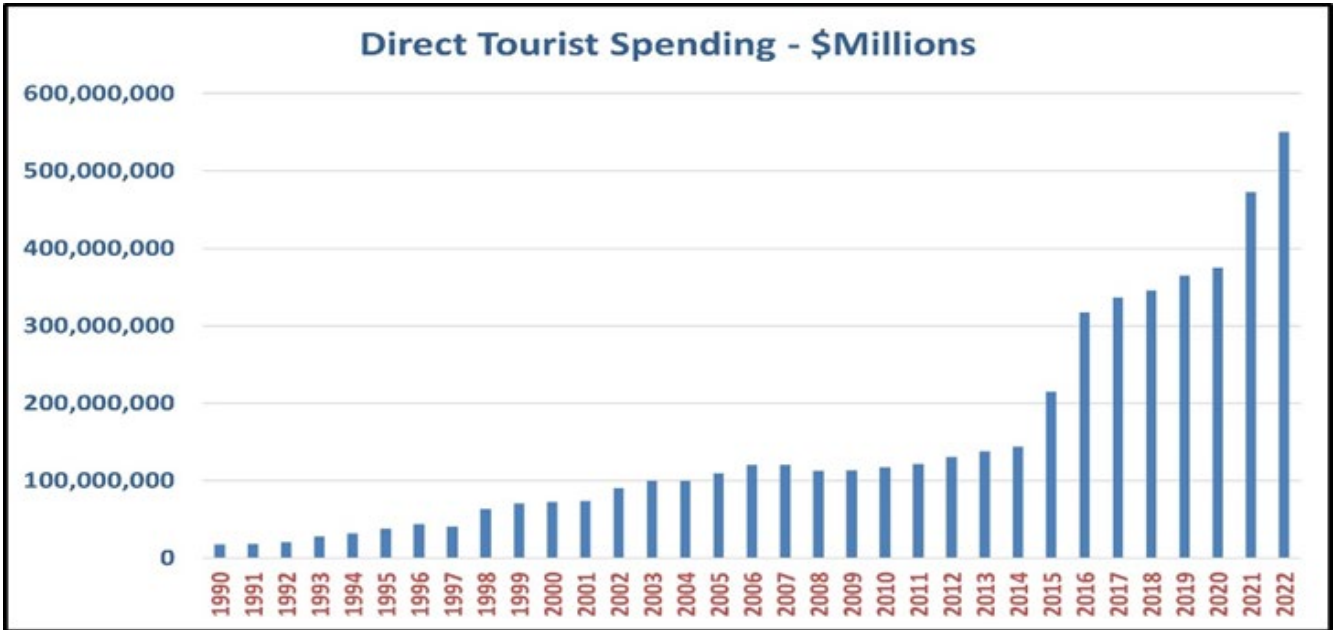
2021 – County sales tax collected = \$21,500,000; Tax Savings per resident = \$1,257.58

2022 – County sales tax collected = \$21,400,000; Tax Savings per resident = \$1,208.03

*\*Population: 2020 =27,763; 2021=29,653; 2022=31,015*

## Occupancy Tax Collections

Currituck County began collecting occupancy tax on accommodations in 1990. The following is a graph showing how these taxes have increased over the years.



This graph was prepared using information provided by Visit NC and calculated by Tourism Economics in collaboration with the U.S. Travel Association (building on the historic Travel Economic Impact Model (TEIM)). The unexpected growth that you see from 2014 to 2015 is a result of US Travel recalculating and including vacation rentals in 2015. Again, there is unexpected growth from 2015 to 2016. This is the result of the new model used by Tourism Economics and the recalculation of historic data beginning in 2016.

## MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

### Our Mission:

The mission of the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism is **promotion of the county's beaches and Mainland to attract guests for the purpose of visitation spending.**

#### **ENCOURAGING VISITOR SPENDING:**

The collection of local and state sales taxes that are generated by visitor spending – because of the county's promotional efforts – enhances the quality of life for Currituck County residents and encourages tourism-related business growth.

The Travel and Tourism department encourages visitor spending by:

- Providing visitors with information on tourism-related businesses, attractions, activities, events, accommodations, services, and historical sites located in Currituck County through various marketing channels and at our Welcome and Visitor Centers
- Assisting county tourism-related businesses with advertising, marketing, and promotional support
- Creating and producing select events to draw visitors to stay in Currituck specifically for those events, as well as drawing day trip visitors from neighboring counties to visit Currituck on those specific event days, thus growing sales tax revenues at local shops and restaurants.
- Administering Event Grant funding to Currituck County businesses and organization to assist in growing events to draw visitors to stay in Currituck to attend these events as well as drawing day trip visitors to attend these events and thus grow sales tax revenues at local shops and restaurants.

#### **THREE GUIDING MISSION GOALS:**

The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism has identified three goals to guide its strategic marketing plan to fit its mission:

- **Be the voice of Currituck County tourism**
- **Grow overnight lodging and tourism revenue**
- **Advance the Currituck County tourism experience beyond the beach**

### Our Vision:

The vision of Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism is to **encourage and inspire visitation to our beaches and Mainland for the pursuit of adventure, the love of history, the warmth of Southern hospitality and the making of family traditions.**

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

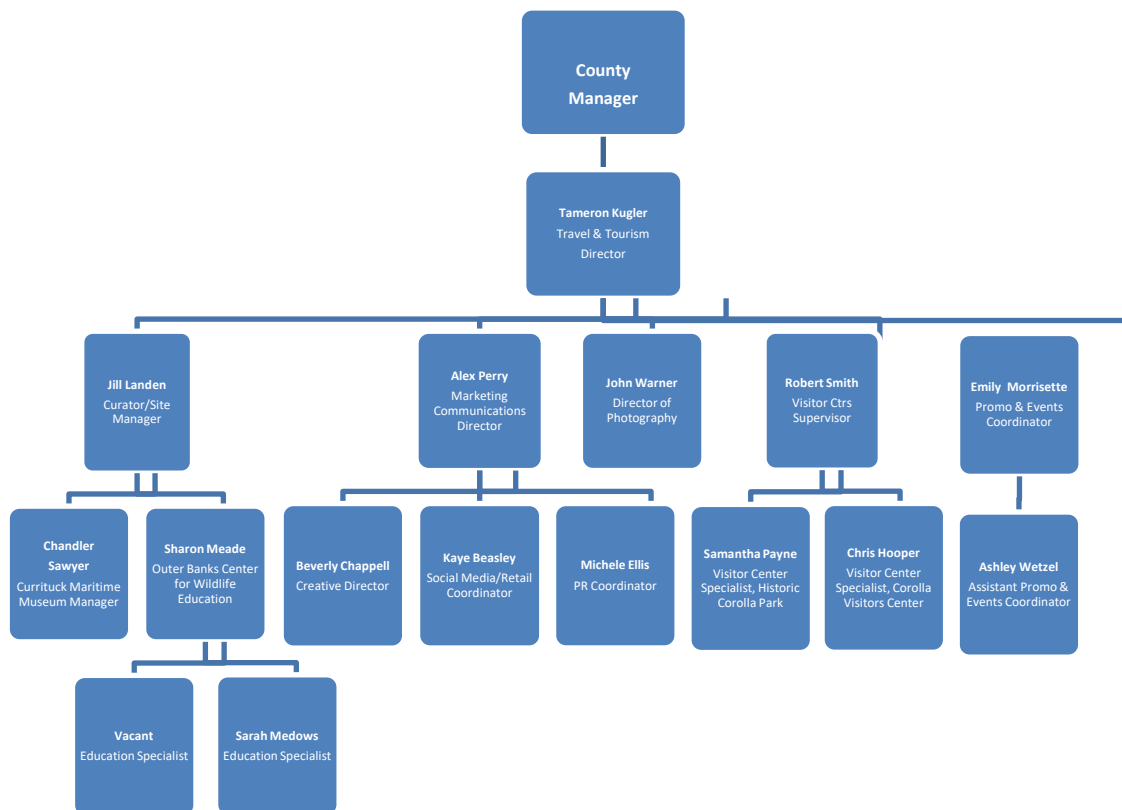
The North Carolina General Assembly has set rules into place that allow NC counties to collect an Occupancy Tax to fund their tourism marketing efforts. This can be up to a 6% tax added to rental accommodations that include hotel rooms and vacation rental homes. The occupancy tax rate currently collected by Currituck County is 6%, and the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism is funded entirely by one-third of the yearly occupancy tax collections by the county. These funds are used for the operations of the department and for the promotion of Currituck County to encourage visitation. The remaining two-thirds of the tax is used to fund tourism-related activities and is administered by the Tourism Development Authority.

## TRAVEL AND TOURISM TEAM

The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism is currently comprised of 14 full-time employees and several temporary, part-time employees whose number varies seasonally.

### Full-time employees, positions and staffing structure:

(as of 8/12/2024):



The Travel and Tourism Director reports to the County Manager who, in turn, reports to the Board of Commissioners, which also functions as the Tourism Development Authority (TDA). Each member of the TDA appoints an individual in the tourism industry to sit on the Tourism Advisory Board (TAB) and serve in an advisory capacity to the department. The County Manager, the Tourism Director, and a member of the TDA serve in an ex officio capacity.

## DEPARTMENTAL TEAMS & SITE OPERATIONS

Within the department, two teams have been created for communications and planning purposes and to ensure cohesive operations. These two teams meet twice monthly and report to the Director during the bi-monthly full staff meetings. These teams are:

Guest Services	Marketing & Communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Smith – Lead Visitor Centers Supervisor</li> <li>• Chris Hooper - Visitor Center Specialist, Corolla Visitors Center</li> <li>• Samantha Payne - Visitor Center Specialist, Historic Corolla Park</li> <li>• Jill Landen - Site Manager &amp; Curator</li> <li>• Emily Morrisette– Promotions &amp; Events Coordinator</li> <li>• Ashley Wetzel – Assistant Promotions &amp; Events Coordinator</li> <li>• Chandler Sawyer - Currituck Maritime Museum Supervisor</li> <li>• Sharon Meade – OBX Center for Wildlife Education Supervisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alex Perry – Lead Marketing Communications Director</li> <li>• Kaye Beasley – Sales &amp; Marketing Associate</li> <li>• Beverly Chappell - Creative Director</li> <li>• Michele Ellis - Public Relations Coordinator</li> <li>• John Warner – Director of Photography</li> </ul>

## DEPARTMENTAL SITE OPERATIONS

In addition to promotional activity, the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism is responsible for the operation, staffing and marketing of the following five cultural tourism sites:

- Whalehead in Historic Corolla Park
- Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education
- Currituck Maritime Museum
- Historic Jarvisburg Colored School

The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism also assists in various marketing and promotion efforts for the Currituck County Rural Center (CCRC), the tournament fields at Currituck Community Park and the Currituck County Regional Airport. These venues are woven into the marketing plan for the department. The Currituck Bulls & BBQ event is specifically staged at the CCRC annually, with the goal of drawing attention to this incredible multi-use equestrian park and the many amenities it provides, as well as to promote Mainland Currituck tourism.

## Understanding our Visitors

### 2021 VISITOR STUDY

In March 2021, a visitor study was conducted by [ChandlerThinks](#), with the main goal of understanding first-time visitors to the Currituck Outer Banks. With the global pandemic having a dramatic effect on leisure travel behaviors in 2020 and 2021, the Currituck Outer Banks saw unprecedented demand and bookings due to the remote appeal of our destination. We learned that a lot of these leisure travelers who chose to visit Corolla during this time were first-time visitors to the area. Below are some key takeaways and findings from this study.

### METHODOLOGY

The quantitative survey consisted of approximated 15 questions targeted to individuals who have inquired about the Currituck Outer Banks in the past 24 months. The survey was designed to understand travel intent and planning. An email was sent to over 39,000 inquiry records. Approximately 13,500 travelers opened the email and a total of 511 completed the survey equating to a 4% participation rate. The 511 completes provides a margin of error of +/- 4.42% at the 95% confidence level. The surveys were completed from March 26, 2021 through April 8, 2021.

### KEY INSIGHTS

#### #1 - Corolla meets and exceeds expectations of first-time visitors

Corolla is highly rated and first-time visitors are very satisfied with their experience. Corolla **met and exceeded the expectations** of first-time visitors (4.47 on a 5-point scale), and they are **extremely likely to recommend Corolla to a friend or colleague** (4.70 on a 5-point scale). Being satisfied and having a great experience often translates into future visitation. Ninety-four percent (94%) of first-time visitors plan to return to Corolla for a vacation in the future and sixty-five percent (65%) plan to make it an annual vacation. First-time visitors plan to return during the “travel season” between May and September.

#### #2 – Visitors plan travel to Corolla in advance

Over one-half (57%) of the first-time visitors plan their travel at least six months in advance and twenty-nine percent (29%) three to five months in advance.

#### #3 – Corolla is a family drive destination

The Corolla travel party composition is primarily families (75%) and travel with six or more people (43%).



## **OVERALL DATA RESULTS**

- Corolla is a place where visitors are likely to make a repeat visit. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the respondents have visited the area 20 or more times.
- Visitors are highly likely to recommend Corolla as a vacation destination to a friend or colleague (4.76 on a scale of 5).
- Corolla makes an impact on visitors with ninety seven percent (97%) planning to visit the area in the future.
- Eight in ten visitors plan to make Corolla an annual vacation destination.

## **FIRST-TIME VISITOR DATA RESULTS**

- Over one half (58%) of the first-time visitors had considered vacationing in Corolla in the past, signifying a rather strong brand awareness factor of the destination.
- First-time visitors are extremely pleased that Corolla lived up to their expectations, with the destination receiving a 4.47 rating on a scale of 5.
- Because Corolla lived up to first-time visitor expectations, they are likely to recommend to friends and colleagues, yielding a 4.70 rating on a scale of 5.
- Over ninety percent (94%) of first-time visitors are planning to return to Corolla for a future vacation.
- Approximately two-thirds (65%) of first-time visitors plan to make Corolla an annual event.
- The top five markets for first-time visitors (per the survey) were from: Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, Ohio, and New York.

## **2022 VISITOR STUDY RESULTS**

A visitor profile study was also conducted in 2022 by [ChandlerThinks](#), in which email addresses from the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism inquiry database were strategically geocoded for deeper insight. Findings included:

- Guests plan their trip in advance; Nineteen percent (19%) plan 5-6 months in advance and Forty-one percent (41%) plan more than 6 months in advance.
- Average party spending is \$5252.35 (up 28% since 2018)
- Average guest per person spending is \$743.90
- Average party size is 7.06 guests versus 4.7 in 2018
- Nights per visit: Eighty-three percent (83%) of guests stay five or more nights during their visit.
- Eighty-one percent (81%) of visitors stated that they would definitely return.
- Visitors spend most of their budget on lodging and only about ten percent (10%) of their budget on entertainment, shopping, or dining.
- Home and condominium rentals dominate lodging type (over 72%).
- The Currituck Outer Banks is a strong repeat visitor destination (82%). Twenty percent (20%) have visited 20+ times; More than sixty percent (60%) have visited 5+ times.

## Understanding our Visitors *(cont.)*

### CONSUMER SEGMENTATION FINDINGS – based on 2022 research conducted by ChandlerThinks

Most Currituck County visitor inquiries fall within five LifeMode groups and account for almost three-fourths (74%) of all Currituck County visitor inquiry households. These include:

- Cozy Country Living (rural empty nesters) – 20.7%
- GenXurban (older GenXers with fewer kids) – 17.2%
- Rustic Outposts (older families) – 15.2%
- Affluent Estates (wealthy married couples) – 11.2%
- Family Landscapes (young families) – 9.9%

### Top Tapestry Segments and Findings

People interested in visiting Currituck County are most likely to be:

- Primarily white
- In their mid-to-late 40s
- Married and own their homes
- Enjoy country lifestyles
- ½ are college educated
- Have children, but some are also empty nesters
- Outdoor lovers
- DIYers
- Avid gardeners
- Cost-conscious
- Use technology as a tool, not a trend, and hence many are not up to date with the latest technology

### Other Tapestry Findings

- They are more likely to be interested in supporting the arts and NPR.
- They prefer domestic brand vehicles, such as Ford & Dodge but will also opt for Subaru
- They own stocks, bonds and shares in money market funds and are likely to own investment real estate and vacation homes.
- They own items such as hot tubs, fireplaces, separate freezers, HE washers and dryers, outdoor grills, and many additional household items.
- They are more likely to shop at Piggly Wiggly, IGA and Save-A-Lot grocery stores.
- When it comes to their home, garden and lawn, they seem to show a DIY attitude.
- They are more likely to listen to news radio and satellite radio (SiriusXM).
- They are pet lovers and own multiple dogs and cats.
- They regularly go to family style restaurants, but they are also more likely than average to eat at Hardee's or Captain D's.
- They are almost twice as likely as the average American to shop at Tractor Supply Company and buying American is 27% more likely to be a priority for them.
- They are more likely than average to enjoy hunting, fishing, target shooting and boating.
- They spend \$3,000 or more on their vacations

# 2023-2024 Visitor Bookings – Geographic Data

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Source: KeyData

Listed in order based on Total Bookings Revenue

Top 20 Visitor States	Top 20 Visitor Cities/Regions
Virginia	Pittsburgh, PA
Pennsylvania	Alexandria, VA
Maryland	Midlothian, VA
New Jersey	Arlington, VA
Ohio	Ashburn, VA
New York	Henrico, VA
North Carolina	Virginia Beach, VA
Connecticut	Fairfax, VA
West Virginia	Fredericksburg, VA
Massachusetts	West Chester, PA
Delaware	Washington, D.C.
Florida	Chesapeake, VA
South Carolina	Vienna, VA
Colorado	Leesburg, VA
Indiana	Frederick, MD
District of Columbia	Herndon, VA
Illinois	Charlottesville, VA
Kentucky	Haymarket, VA
Georgia	Philadelphia, PA
Texas	Reading, PA

## AVERAGE BOOKING WINDOW COMPARISON

Source: KeyData

2024 – 163 days

2023 – 177 days

2022 – 169 days

2021 – 164 days

2020 – 110 days

2019 – 144 days

# 2023-2024 Website Traffic – Geographic Data

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Source: Google Analytics

Listed in order based on Unique Users

Top 20 Website Visitor States	Top 20 Website Visitor Cities/Regions
Virginia	New York, NY
North Carolina	Ashburn, VA
New York	Atlanta, GA
Pennsylvania	Virginia Beach, VA
Ohio	Philadelphia, PA
Georgia	Roanoke, VA
Florida	Warsaw, VA
New Jersey	Raleigh, NC
Maryland	Charlotte, NC
Massachusetts	Baltimore, MD
Michigan	Washington, D.C.
Indiana	Corolla, NC
South Carolina	Columbus, OH
Tennessee	Kill Devil Hills, NC
Connecticut	Chesapeake, VA
Texas	Boston, MA
District of Columbia	Chicago, IL
Kentucky	Pittsburgh, PA
Illinois	Hampton, VA
California	Cleveland, OH

## AGE COMPARISON

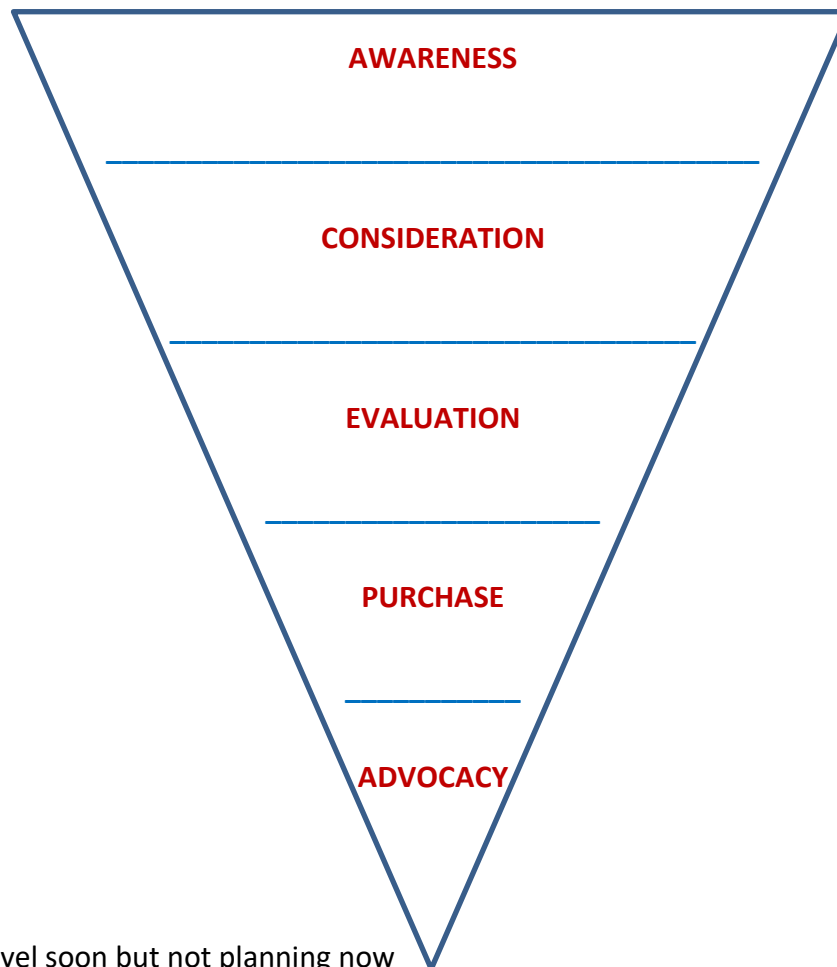
55-64	11.64%
45-54	11.22%
65+	10.78%
35-44	10.66%
25-34	11.1%
18-24	9.9%
Unknown	7.23%

## GENDER COMPARISON

Female	66.5%
Male	33.5%

Source: Google Analytics

PHASES OF TRAVEL PLANNING & STRATEGIC MARKETING TACTICS



**AWARENESS:** Travel soon but not planning now

*Marketing & Communications Tactics* – TV, Radio, Print, Outdoor, Digital: programmatic display, streaming audio, social media, sponsored content, Streaming (Roku + Amazon Fire), Public Relations,

**CONSIDERATION:** Multiple destinations being seriously considered

*Marketing & Communications Tactics* – Keyword-based targeting, content-based native and display advertising, paid search (PPC), video (pre-roll + YouTube)

**EVALUATION:** Narrowed down 2-3 destinations; now researching lodging, activities, restaurants, etc.

*Marketing & Communications Tactics* – Retargeting (keyword + display + native), social, video (pre-roll + YouTube)

**PURCHASE:** Final decision has been made

*Marketing & Communications Tactics* – Email

**ADVOCACY:** Word-of-mouth, email, social posting that the destination was awesome (or not)!

*Marketing & Communications Tactics* – Email and social media; encourage destination advocates to “spread the word!”

## MARKETING & ADVERTISING

### MARKET PROMOTION – FY 2023-2024 RECAP:

For the 2023-2024 period we anticipated that our numbers for occupancy tax, sales tax, and bookings would be lower than the previous 2 years due to transitioning into a post-pandemic era. Prior to this year there was an unheard-of record-setting increase in occupancy due to the perfect storm of remote workers and the increase in visitors being able to travel to our destination. Now visitors have many more choices for traveling and can go anywhere in the world at a much more reasonable cost than before. With this knowledge we started a new campaign that focused on the fact that your time here will always be awe-inspiring, in fact, your experience in Currituck Outer Banks never gets old. This was the campaign we led with telling visitors that no matter how many times you have been here or how many times you have experienced it, this is a tradition that you and your family will want to continue, “it never gets old.”

With a captivating campaign and goals for increasing our conversions on the website we partnered with Love Advertising to purchase and place media that fit our target audience and key feeder markets. They not only achieved our initial goals but exceeded expectations. Through content placement in trip advisor, digital display ads, native ads, social ads, connected-tv placement, and cable we were able to provide a 44% lift in conversions for the 2023-2024 season, with most of this increase associated with email signups on our website. Not including email, conversions were still up overall by 23%. The campaign delivered over 67.5MM Impressions and over 333k clicks to the website. The paid media channels delivered 28,966 out of the 93,788 total conversions.



During the months of November 2023 through April 2024 the paid media campaign made up for 64% (333k sessions) of all the traffic to the website (423,678 sessions) with the majority of that being paid social (184,695). This is followed by organic search and paid search. We will continue to use paid social and paid search tactics and we will increase our display ads for more consideration moving forward.

We have seen 7.4% fewer visitors on the website this year, but because of the increase in conversions we know that the website visitor was a more qualified visitor. Looking forward, our goals for 2024-2025 will not only be aimed at more conversions but also even more qualified traffic. We plan on doing this by increasing our consideration tactics through additional display and social media impressions.

Website Traffic – Key Performance Indicators – 2023-2024					
Total Users	Views	Engaged Sessions	Engagement Rate	Conversions	Conversion Rate
730,579 (-7.4%)	1,476,175 (- 14%)	466,070 (+38k)	51% (+ 7.47%)	93,788 (+ 44.5%)	7.88% (+ 45%)

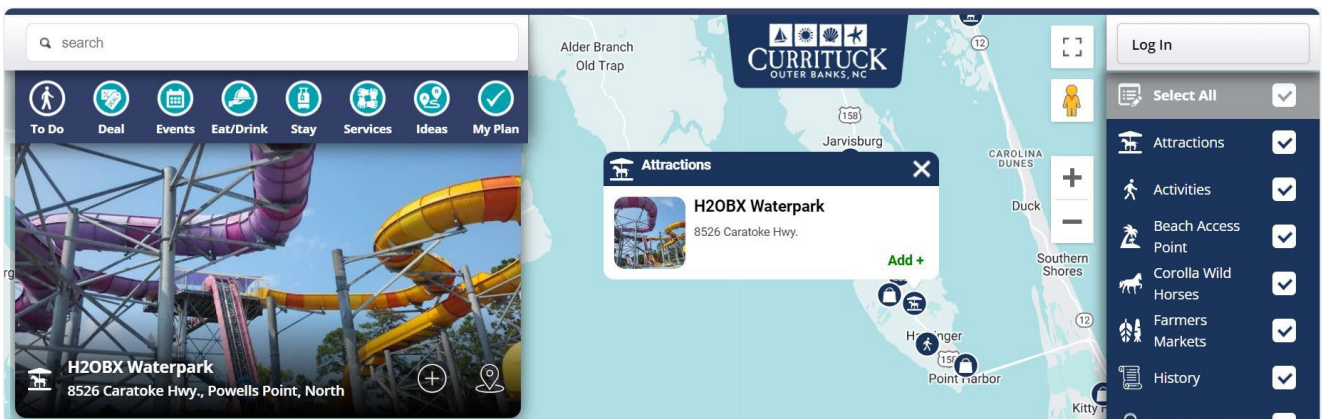
In 2023-2024 to increase awareness and visibility directly in our feeder markets we placed digital radio and print advertisements in more regional publications that were specific to each of our top 7 feeder market destinations. We also worked with Outfront Media and developed a bus, metro rail and billboard advertising campaign in our 2 biggest feeder markets. The goal was to increase awareness for those last-minute planners in their own backyard and we achieved that delivering over 6 million impressions during the 4-week time period (March-April). Part of this campaign also included a digital display campaign in those same markets that delivered over 2k clicks.



In 2023-2024 we also began our rebrand project with ChandlerThinks. The goal was to create a more cohesive brand that promotes not only the beaches of Corolla and Carova but all our destination including the Mainland and Knott’s Island and distinguishes us as a top Outer Banks vacation destination. The branding efforts are a combination of data driven evidence to support our goals and interview findings to make sure that the data is aligning with our community and tourism stakeholders. This research and development are in its final stages as of July 2024, and we should have a clear direction, brand marks, a brand standard guide and a marketing campaign in place for Q1 of the 2025-2026 promotional season.

As we start to build and grow towards a new brand, we have done some preliminary planning in anticipation of the changes that we know are coming for our 2025-2026 year. Part of this planning was to make sure we are set up for success with our communication between our department, visitors and business partners moving forward. We made it a priority to make sure that business resources are easier to update in the future. Also, we want to start collecting assets for our new brand now rather than when the brand is ready to roll out. All of this is to make sure, when we have a new brand, it is properly supported.

To make planning and itinerary building easier and more convenient for our visitors we worked with VisitWidget and Simpleview to update and develop a new app. The app works on the visitor’s phone as well as directly on the visitcurrituck.com website through a “Plan Your Trip” widget. Here, visitors are connected with all the local businesses and able to search for activities, shopping, dining, places to stay, seek out deals, events, and they can add them into their “my plan” so that it is saved for future use when physically in the destination. The app maps out the location and is customizable to the dates that they plan to visit.



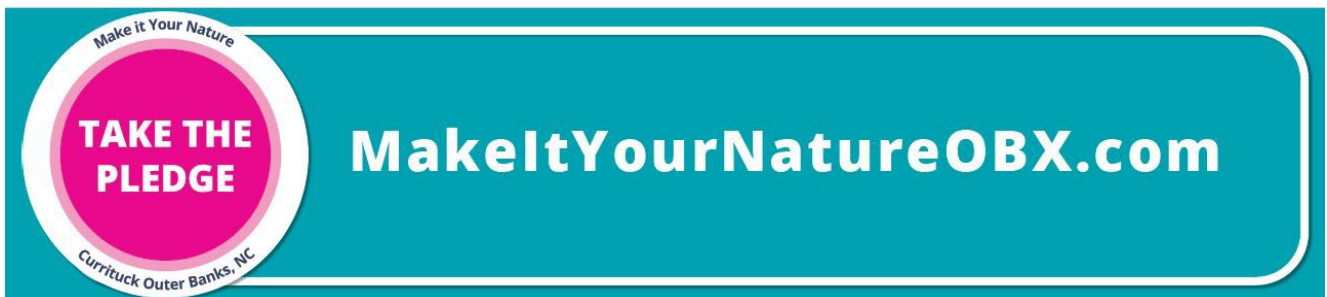
As we started to implement new planning tools into our website, we also realized that we needed an automation tool to help keep our partners content and information accurate and up to date, therefore we invested in a new Customer Relations Management platform (CRM). The CRM allows us to manage our marketing partner list and first party data (consumer list). This will allow all the business partner data to be stored and updated in one location and then automatically populated and promoted on our website, the new app (visitwidget) and our email marketing platform (ActOn).

Along with the automation of the CRM, we also are partners with Simpleview on their email marketing platform known as ActON. This email marketing tool works alongside our CRM to easily bring in our CRM list for communication with business partners as well as our visitors. Between the CRM, ActON, and Visitwidget platform we are making strides at being more efficient, communicating better with our guests, building relationships with our partners, and providing accurate information to our visitors moving forward.

As we plan for a new rebrand, we also made it a priority to update our photography assets for the future. We are working with a local photographer in the Outer Banks to provide us with a full gallery of imagery for not only Corolla but also the Mainland and Knott’s Island. We understand the importance of marketing not only our beach destination but all our county and the assets that it has to offer.



Along with promoting our destination it is also our duty as destination marketers to encourage traveling safely and responsibly. To do this, we tapped into our partnership with VisitNC and OutdoorNC on their Leave No Trace program. We developed and implemented the “Make It Your Nature” campaign to grow interest in how to protect our outdoor assets including the natural resources, wildlife, and to protect the visual and ecofriendly appeal of our destination. This program not only encourages responsible behavior when visiting our destination but also brings additional leads into our email marketing list for future communication and marketing of our tourism brand. The campaign includes a kids activity book, posters, flyers, landing page, and billboard.





It is of the utmost importance to make sure our residents and community understand the value that tourism has to offer not only to the visitors that come here but how the spending of those visitors affects the overall savings and comforts of life that we get to benefit from as residents of this county. In order to make this information available to all, we created and mailed out a [Report to the Community](#) in the summer of 2023. The report included questions and answers to what tourism is and why it is important. It also provided the tax savings and benefits that our residents receive. It not only made them aware of what we do but also why we do what we do. The report was mailed to every home in the county and was also made available at our visitor centers for anyone to pick up. We also produced a series of videos that explains the role we have in Tourism. The campaign shows our residents the value of tourism and builds a stronger relationship between the department and our community.



**Marketing team goals and objectives for 2024-25 fiscal year include:**

- Take ownership of the new brand name and carve out our destination’s piece of the Outer Banks.
- Develop a new brand architecture that can be utilized and executed across the following areas of marketing (update will be based on priority and timing):
  - Create a new brand standard guide
  - New graphic treatments and brand identifiers
  - New marketing campaign for Spring/Summer 2025
  - New landing page devoted to the new brand
  - Utilize New Photography
  - Develop a new website
  - Update the visitor guide
  - Update facility and wayfinding signage
  - Update all marketing channels (Website, Outdoor, Print, Digital, TV, Radio Social)
- We are setting a goal this year to not only increase conversions this year but also increase visitor traffic to the current website by using a blend of digital awareness and conversion tactics.

- We will create a brand partnership with a national consumer product this year to partner with us on our advertising efforts. The brand we partner with will already have a relationship with our key demographic.
- Continue to collect photography and video assets that help support our new branding efforts.
- Create and promote “owned media” to establish our own audience of followers, which will increase future website traffic and engagement.
- Utilize our new Customer Relations Management (CRM) software to update our business partner content on our existing and new website and create a go to resource for contacting and communicating with our partners through the CRM Partner Portal and ActOn email marketing software.
- Continue growing occupancy tax and sales tax revenues through tourism promotional efforts to attract visitation
- Continuing to position our destination as a remote, upscale, family-friendly destination that is abundantly rich in open space, private vacation rental homes and outdoor activities
- Continue growing our first party opt-in email database
- Audit our current website and plan for our new website to be optimized to increase conversions and increased engagement.
- Continuing to grow our social media reach and engagement levels with existing and new fans.
- Reach visitors directly in their markets with localized and regional print, tv, radio, and outdoor advertising.

#### **ADVERTISING STRATEGY & MESSAGING:**

With a new brand ready to roll out for Q4 we will begin to support the new brand with a campaign that points at where our destination is and what it has to offer, with a focus on carving out the fact that we are a large part of the Outer Banks, The Northern Outer Banks. This will help new and repeat visitors know that our destination hasn't changed, only our name. Not only will we increase our advertising awareness campaign, but we will also increase our PR and Social initiatives to increase awareness of the new brand.

With a longer summer season now creeping into fall, we tend to see more visitors in our shoulder season than we did in the pre-pandemic period, prior to 2019. Because of this change we are putting more effort in promoting our destination earlier for a Spring/Summer Booking in Q4 (October, November, December) and Q1 (January, February, March) and placing more media than ever before in Q2 (April, May, and June) to make sure we are still reaching those last-minute planners and to promote our summer events. We also started promoting our Fall Season earlier in Q2 rather than in Q3 to reach people who are in the middle of planning for a fall visit. Q3, we continue to promote general visitation, fall and holiday travel. The bulk of our budget will be focused on media buys for the Spring/Summer booking with promotion in Q4 and Q1.

Along with out-of-market advertising tactics to target our key feeder markets, we also invest in in-market advertising (Print, TV, Digital, Radio). This tactic drives visitors from the local region and surrounding counties to our destination with the goal of having visitors see our sites (Wild Horses, Beaches, Historic Attractions), experience our events, and more importantly spend money with local businesses on shopping, dining, and other visitation activities. Our primary message is to “Head North” to Corolla, the Mainland, and Knotts Island.

## REACHING OUR TARGET AUDIENCE

### DEMOGRAPHICS

**Primary:** The demographics of the visitors we seek to reach through our promotional efforts include:

- Household Income (HHI) of \$120,000 or higher
- Women between the ages of 35-64, in family groups that want to reconnect with each other, connect with nature and a relaxing environment and intend to travel in the next three to twelve months. These family groups include:
  - Families with school-aged children
  - Empty Nesters
  - Families with non-school aged children
  - Families with home-schooled children
- Targeted niche subcategories within this demographic also include:
  - Nature lovers
  - Adventure seekers
  - Holiday and reunion family groups
  - Golfers
  - Hunters/Sportsmen

**Secondary:** The demographics of our secondary audiences do not have a target HHI requirement and are generally comprised of a younger audience:

- Engaged couples – those interested in a destination wedding
- Eco-Tourism
- Foodies (including beer, distillery and wine enthusiasts)
- Experiential travelers

### CONVERSIONS

Tracking a direct correlation between our marketing efforts and actual rental home bookings has always been a challenge, as we do not serve as the direct booking engine for these transactions. We have, however, refined our marketing funnel over the past few years and tested a variety of different conversion actions throughout our website that showcase value and validate our marketing efforts to a certain degree. These actions are considered integral to the overall sales funnel, and we continue to drive traffic and retarget users to ensure they reach these conversion zones.

Current conversion actions include:

- Visitor Guide requests (mailing)
- Digital Visitor Guide downloads
- Email Signups
- Vacation Rentals Page and general Lodging Page visits and clicks. These pages/actions show a higher level of interest in the Currituck Outer Banks and encourage visitors to contact local rental agencies or the visitor centers for more information.
- Traffic to our website from our digital advertising efforts

## MARKETING TACTICS FOR 2021-22

### MARKETING BUDGET ALLOCATION

The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism utilizes several advertising channels to support our promotional strategy. The advertising/promotions budget for FY 2024-25 is \$3 Million and is allocated in the following manner:

Digital/Online	40.62%	Cooperative Golf Marketing	1.9%
Print (Includes Digital)	19.3%	Promotional Products	1.0%
Television	10.2%	Travel Shows	1.0%
Outdoor	6.5%	Support of Funds	<1.0%
Radio	4.2%	Video Services	<1.0%
Printed Materials	5.6%	Public Relations	<1.0%
Printed Materials	4.9%		

### PRINT:

Despite the recent shift of some of our budget dollars away from print and to various digital options, print is still a very important medium for general awareness and strategic visibility. We also partner with these publications through display ads, social ads, and email marketing which all fall into the digital media category. Following are the publications we intend to collaborate with for FY 2024-2025 based on demographic matches to our core target audience:

- **National:** Publications with strategic national reach ... *Travel & Leisure, Garden & Gun, Southern Living, Real Simple, Origin, Southern Home, Southern Lady* and *Cottage Journal*.
- **Regional:** Publications that reach some of our largest feeder markets at a great value and are used to saturate those markets, helping to keep consistent messaging in front of readers during peak vacation planning times ... *North Carolina State Travel Guide, Our State, The Local Palate, Pittsburgh Magazine, Philadelphia Magazine, New Jersey Monthly, Baltimore Magazine, Cary Magazine, Main & Broad, Carolina Country, Carolina Traveler, Carolina Heritage Guide, Northern Virginia Magazine* and *Virginia Living*.
- **Local:** Local publications target visitors who are already “in-market” during peak and shoulder seasons and are leveraged to promote weekly events (Historic Corolla Park other annual events) and to inspire day trips to Corolla and the Currituck mainland for attractions, shopping, dining, and exploration purposes ... *Outer Banks Magazine, OuterBanksThisWeek.com, North Beach Sun, Milepost Magazine, and Outer Banks Visitors Guide* (Vistagraphics).
- **Niche:** Publications that focus on specific niche topics such as hunting and weddings are used during those respective seasons to promote our area to those markets ... *American Waterfowler, Wildfowl, NC Hunting and Fishing Guide, Outer Banks Wedding Association Wedding Guide, Outer Banks Wedding Guide, and Birding NC*.

### DIGITAL:

Over ninety percent (90%) of travelers will do their research online and eighty-two percent (82%) will end up making their booking online as well.\* With the availability of online travel resources at a consumer’s fingertips, we have steadily increased our online marketing efforts over the last several years, with digital becoming the largest segment of our annual advertising budget.

\* [Stratos Online Travel Booking Statistics](#) (4/18/21)

Following are our key strategic digital tactics to generate user interest to convert to actual visitors to Currituck:

- **Paid Search:** The largest percentage of our advertising dollars goes towards paid search/display on Google, Bing, and Yahoo. These are fluid campaigns that changes almost daily and are consistently monitored by our lead digital partner, Ciniva. Campaigns are split-tested and optimized to increase conversions and lower cost-per-click (CPC). Split testing (also referred to as A/B testing or multivariate testing) is a method of conducting controlled, randomized experiments with the goal of improving a website metric, such as clicks, form completions, or purchases. Incoming traffic to the website is distributed between the original (control) and the different variations without any of the visitors knowing that they are part of an experiment. The tester waits for a statistically significant difference in behavior to emerge. The results from each variation are compared to determine which version showed the greatest improvement.
- **Programmatic Display & Retargeting:** These campaigns start with building a pool of users who do not convert from our paid search campaigns. Our ads follow users around the internet for a given amount of time until they decide to click back to our site or convert by viewing/requesting a Visitor Guide. These user groups have already shown interest in our destination and typically convert at a higher rate than those who have never heard of the area.
- **Paid Social Media:** Paid social media ads on Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest allow us to target at a much more detailed level and gain valuable insights on which demographic groups are responding the best to certain types of ads. Social campaigns are also split tested to find the best headlines and images that convert.
- **Video Advertising:** We're extremely fortunate to have a talented videographer on staff who is continuously capturing amazing, inspirational, and educational footage for our destination and turning those into marketable assets for us to use. By creating videos for our various digital channels and platforms (website, social media, YouTube and Vimeo, and streaming channel ... as well as television spots) our ability to tell the Currituck Outer Banks story has grown immensely.
- **Native Advertising:** Native advertising is a type of advertising that matches the form and function of the platform upon which it appears. In many cases it functions like an advertorial, and manifests as a video, article or editorial without the occasional obtrusiveness of a stand-alone ad. **For 2024-2025 we will not be investing in Native Advertising but instead focus more on consideration tactics by using Display Advertising**, which are brand specific ads that do look like advertising.
- **Lead Generation:** In a changing digital marketing landscape where user privacy settings are making it more difficult to target potential customers, the importance of having a robust first party database is paramount. We are working with a variety of digital partners to grow our database through lead generation tactics in strategically placed online locations, with a focus on our key feeder markets.
- **Sponsored Content:** Working with several partner publications, our sponsored content offerings have steadily increased over the past several years, allowing for a controlled presence in a strategically placed outlet that matches our core audience extremely well.

**BILLBOARDS:**

- 12 static boards are used throughout the Currituck Mainland corridor of U.S.-168 and U.S.-158, along with one static board located on US-64. Our US-168 and US-158 boards that are facing southbound traffic are typically used to promote things to do in Corolla (or on the road to Corolla) ... i.e., wild horse tours, Whalehead, Currituck Maritime Museum, Historic Jarvisburg Colored School, Historic Corolla Park. Boards that are facing northbound traffic are generally used to promote things on the Mainland or activities that visitors can do on future visits ... i.e., CCRC, weddings, Knotts Island, and hunting).

**TELEVISION:**

We strategically place a combination of network, cable, and Over-the-Top (OTT)/Connected TV (CTV) buys across several of our key drive-time feeder markets. As we comprehensively do with all our media planning, we strategically align our television buys with the platforms, outlets and networks that will allow us to gain maximum exposure to our key audiences. Our reliance on CTV has grown in recent years, with many U.S. consumers “cutting the cord” from the traditional broadcast/cable television platform.

According to eMarketer’s [InsideIntelligence.com](https://www.insideintelligence.com), CTV investments in the United States grew by 40.6% year over year in 2020, to more than \$9 billion. Growth will continue to accelerate in 2021 as spending reaches \$13.41 billion—a figure that will likely more than double by the end of our forecast period in 2025.

Corresponding with our print, radio and digital components to our annual advertising and promotional plan, we focus most of our marketing budget on reaching consumers who may be planning their family’s upcoming leisure getaway and time that at the peak dreaming, planning, and booking months of January, February, March, and April.

Markets covered within our television campaign include:

- Northern Virginia
- Baltimore, MD
- Washington, DC
- Raleigh, NC
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Philadelphia, PA/Southern NJ
- SE Virginia (Hampton Roads)

**ROKU/AMAZON FIRE STREAMING CHANNELS:**

In September 2021, the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism, in partnership with The Vacation Channel, launched the [Simply Corolla](#) streaming channel with a Roku and Amazon Fire connected device. This year-long project provides a tremendous opportunity to showcase all the incredible video assets that Currituck has created within the department, in a well-organized way. Streaming users can access the channel and enjoy exclusive and inspiring content that showcases local businesses, attractions and more, with the goal of encouraging additional research and an eventual booking in our destination.

The launch of this streaming channel was accompanied by a strategic marketing and communications plan to grow awareness and increase channel download conversions. This effort will continue throughout the course of the year and will include paid Roku advertisements to raise our visibility and ranking within the “Travel” category within the Roku streaming service.

## MOBILE APP

In May 2021, the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism introduced our new [Corolla OBX app](#), available for download via the [App Store](#) and on [Google Play](#).

The app is your official source to discover activities, attractions, dining, shopping, events, specials and more during your visit to North Carolina's Currituck Outer Banks. App content highlights include:

- Local shopping, dining, accommodations, and attractions listings
- Currituck MORE Card specials
- Historic Corolla Park event details
- Corolla Beach access points
- Beach safety tips
- Beach driving and parking permit details
- Currituck County alerts
- ... and much more!

## RADIO:

- **In-Market** – Local radio is purchased largely through key partnerships with East Carolina Radio. These produced commercials, as well as live promotional reads and in-studio mentions, mostly focus on generating awareness and interest in seasonal events, as well as local attractions on the Currituck Outer Banks (i.e. – Whalehead and the Currituck Maritime Museum). The goal of local radio is to inform our visitors in Corolla, as well as those staying in Dare County, of the many reasons to visit Corolla and the Currituck Mainland for visitation spending purposes. We also utilize live remote broadcasts at our events to help spread the word even further and to drive traffic, in real-time, to the event.
- **Out-of-Market** –Through Currituck Outer Banks destination research conducted in 2018, it was discovered that the public radio format matches extremely well with the demographics of our core visitors. Out-of-market regions for these campaigns mirror those of our television advertising. The only difference in 2024-2025 is that we will work with NPR Music stations specifically rather than news specific stations because research from the Nielsen Report shows that Outer Banks visitors have a higher rating for these music stations over the traditional NPR news stations. These stations include **WXPN (Philadelphia), WTMD (Baltimore and Northern Virginia), WNRN (Richmond, Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia), and WYEP (Pittsburgh)**. We also are working with Audacy, one of the largest providers on terrestrial and digital radio, to provide us commercial air time on their top stations in several of our key feeder markets (**WBZZ Pittsburgh, WBEB Philadelphia, WIAD Baltimore/DC/Northern Virginia, and WWDE Hampton Roads**) with content focused on family and the holiday season in Q4, which is a prominent vacation planning time for our spring/summer visitors. Demographics line up with all the channels and the content that our visitors relate to.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Our public relations efforts incorporate several key aspects of our strategic efforts, including:

- Media relations (proactive outreach and reactive collaboration)
- Hosting travel writers and digital influencers in Currituck County

**PR Coordination and Writer Visits:**

- Rebecca Deurlein (Southern Living Magazine) – *Highlighting H2OBX - March 2024*
- Mark Kemp (Our State Magazine) – *Highlighting Jarvisburg Colored School - April 25, 2024*
- Linda Lange (Knoxville News Sentinel) – *Highlighting Corolla - May 17-18, 2024*
- Ronny Maye (Life of Ronny Blogger (VisitNC)) - *Highlighting H2OBX - June 2024*
- Tomiko Harvey (<https://ncblackheritagetour.com> & Her own channel) – *Highlighting Jarvisburg Colored School – June 10-12, 2024 (Visiting additional areas during her stay)*
- Lynne Brandon (Winston Salem Magazine) – *Highlighting Corolla - June 13-16, 2024*
- Rebecca Woltz (Our State Magazine) – *Highlighting Knotts Island - July 24-26, 2024*
- Amelia LeBrun (Wanderlust Magazine) – *Highlighting Corolla – July 31-August 2, 2024*
- Tara McCay (Southern Living Magazine) - *Highlighting Corolla – August 24-26, 2024*
- Jason Frye (AAA Calendar) – *Highlighting Events - July-Sept 2024*

**TV Appearances:**

- Hampton Roads Show - April 16, 2024 - *Michele & Jill Landon focus Historic Corolla Park & Booking Early/Accommodations*
- Good Morning Washington – April 30, 2024 – *Michele & Samantha Payne focus events in Historic Corolla Park & Booking early/Accommodations*
- Good Morning Virginia – May 15, 2024 – *Sharon Meade & Samantha Payne focus events in Historic Corolla Park & events and classes held at OBCWE*
- Pittsburgh Today – May 17, 2024 – *Michele focus events in Historic Corolla Park and what Corolla has to offer guests - we filmed live in Historic Corolla Park*

- Regular distribution of press releases (Currituck Bulls & BBQ, Corolla Cork and Craft, Independence Day, Under the Oaks Arts Festival, Christmas in Corolla)
- Attending media missions in cooperation with travel partners (Visit NC)
- Overseeing the fulfillment of requests for guides
- Travel shows participation to promote our beaches and Mainland. For 2024-25, the following shows have been identified to showcase our area to emerging markets:

Chicago, IL – Jan 13-14, 2024  
 New York – Jan 27-28, 2024  
 Washington, DC – Feb 24-25, 2024  
 Atlanta, GA – March 9-10, 2024

Atlanta, GA, – Jan 11-12, 2025  
 New York, NY – Jan 25-26, 2025  
 Washington, DC – March 29-30, 2025

**SOCIAL MEDIA:**

Social media is integral to the success of our marketing strategy, supporting our three pillars, along with several other important desired goals and outcomes:

- Being the voice of Currituck County tourism
- Growing overnight lodging and tourism revenues to Currituck County
- Advancing the Currituck County tourism experience beyond the beach
- Sparking inspiration with visitors by posting beautiful imagery and links to captivating stories
- Boosting engagement and fostering relationships with current and prospective visitors by responding to comments, questions, and concerns in a timely manner



## FY 2024-25 Social Media Objectives, Goals, and Metrics

Business objective	Social Media Goal	Metric(s)
Grow the brand	Awareness <i>(these metrics illuminate your current and potential audience)</i>	Followers, shares, etc.
Turn customers into advocates	Engagement <i>(these metrics show how audiences are interacting with your content)</i>	Comments, likes, @mentions, etc.
Drive website traffic	Conversions <i>(these metrics demonstrate the effectiveness of your social engagement)</i>	Website clicks, email signups, Visitor Guide requests
Improve customer retention	Consumer <i>(these metrics reflect how active customers think and feel about your brand)</i>	Testimonials, social media sentiment, etc.

### **FACEBOOK**

**What it's best for:** inspiration, visitor engagement, encouraging return visits

**Target audience:** potential, first-time and returning visitors

**Types of content we share:** photos, videos, event information, links to stories

**Key performance indicators (KPIs):** engagement (likes, shares, comments, reach)

**Comments:** informational and inspiring, answering questions about the area

**Misc.:** 350K followers and 329K+ likes (and growing), we know our audience (loyal and engaging)

**Desired Posting Frequency:**

[@CurrituckOBX](#): 5x/week

[@HistoricWhalehead](#): 2-4x/week

[@CurrituckMaritime](#): 1-3x/week

[@CurrituckOBX Events](#): Driven by annual schedule and need to promote upcoming events

[@HistoricJarvisburgColoredSchool](#): 1-3x/week

### **INSTAGRAM**

**What it's best for:** inspiration, visitor engagement, encouraging return visits

**Target audience:** potential, first-time and returning visitors

**Types of content we will share:** inspirational photos and videos (visual medium)

**Key performance indicators (KPIs):** followers, likes and shares

**Misc.:** continuing to grow (17K+ followers), amazing visual opportunities to share

**Desired Posting Frequency:**

[@currituckobx](#): 3-5x/week

### **TWITTER**

**What it's best for:** information and updates

**Target audience:** potential, first-time and returning visitors

**Types of content we will share:** photos and news links/updates

**Key performance indicators (KPIs):** followers, likes and retweets

**Misc.:** continuing to grow (6,500+ followers)

**Desired Posting Frequency:**






[@currituck\\_obx](#): 2-3x/week

**2024-25 Key Social Posting Goals/Targets:**

Currituck Travel and Tourism will continue to utilize social media platforms to inspire current and prospective visitors (by using compelling imagery and videography), but also inform this audience of the many great things that are happening here. Ways to grow our engagement and education are:

- Continue to include a link back to VisitCurrituck.com, when possible, to assist with growing our organic social referral traffic
- Continue to share Currituck Travel and Tourism blog post (1-2x/mo.)
- Continue to share media mentions (articles and video clips) where we're mentioned/spotlighted
- Continue sharing our growing collection of videos
- Continue to incorporate non-business mainland images into the mix on a regular basis
- Leverage the strength of our Facebook audience to cross-promote our other digital assets (other FB pages, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Roku, mobile app, eNewsletter) to help grow those audiences
- Continue to co-host and share CurrituckOBX Events (FB event listings) to enhance awareness of and potential attendance to these events
- Continue to share other Currituck Travel and Tourism Facebook pages for increased engagement and awareness (Currituck Maritime Museum, Whalehead, etc.)

**Social Media Competitive Set (Facebook Insights – July 2024 Sample):**

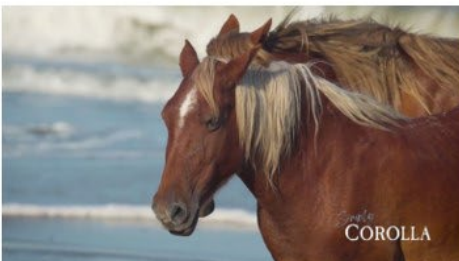
Page	Page likes ↓	Page likes change ↑↓	Published content
 <b>VISIT FLORIDA</b> VISIT FLORIDA® is the state's official tourism planning source. #VISITFLORIDA	998.5K	↓ 492	17
 <b>Visit The Outer Banks</b> The Official Fan Page of the Outer Banks of North Carolina.	738.7K	↓ 196	5
 <b>Currituck Outer Banks</b> Discover a land of wild wonder! <a href="http://www.visitcurrituck.com">http://www.visitcurrituck.com</a>	329.7K	↑ 613	25
 <b>Visit Virginia Beach</b> - Official #tourism organization for #VirginiaBeach - Get featured 🏠 #VisitV...	266.7K	↑ 59	11
 <b>Visit North Carolina</b> Whether you're planning a day trip, weekend retreat or weeklong vacation, t...	224.9K	↑ 325	10

## VIDEOGRAPHY:

In FY 2024-25, we will continue to capture footage that focuses on the beauty and uniqueness of our destination, as well as the interests of our visitors. Our videos will continue to promote the Corolla and Currituck brand by visually telling the unique stories that bring visitors back year after year and to inspire those, who have yet to come, to book their vacations.

### Accomplishments to Date (FY 2023-24):

- Roku
  - Our 'Simply Corolla' streaming channel continues to be in the top 10% of the travel genre, peaking at #9 in January of 2024 (OBXTV is ranked #38, Palm Beach is #72, Myrtle Beach is ranked #89), primarily due to our streaming ad campaigns.
- YouTube
  - 186,405 Impressions (July 2023 – June 2024)
  - 1,217,596 Views (July 2023 – June 2024)
- Vimeo
  - Over 3.5 Million Impressions (July 2023 – June 2024)
  - Over 225,000 Views (July 2023 – June 2024)
- Videos Produced to Date
  - Tourism department – “Report to the Community” Video Series
  - A Day in Corolla Website/Marketing Video
  - In-Market Summer Commercials (2)
  - Event Commercials for 2024
    - 2024 Cornhole Tournament
    - 2024 Under the Oaks Arts Festival
    - 2024 Yoga in the Park
    - 2024 Independence Day Celebration
    - 2024 Corolla Cork and Craft
    - 2024 Currituck Bulls & BBQ
  - 2023 Fall Campaign Holiday Commercials
  - “Make It Your Nature” Video Campaign
  - 2024 Summer Commercial Campaign (It Never Gets Old)



**Projects for 2024-25 to support our website, TV commercials, and various video and social media platforms include:**

- 2024 Fall and Holiday Campaign
- 2025 Summer Commercial Campaign
- 2024 Christmas in Corolla Series of Commercials
- New Branding Videos
- New Website Videos
- Owned Media Video Project – Horses and Letters Home
- 2025 In-Market Summer Commercials
- 2024 In-Market Fall/Winter Commercials
- Event Commercials for 2024-2025
  - 2024 Currituck Bulls & BBQ
  - 2024 Christmas in Corolla Series of Commercials
  - 2025 Under the Oaks Arts Festival
  - 2025 Independence Day Celebration
  - 2025 Corolla Cork and Craft
  - 2025 Cornhole Tournament
  - 2025 Yoga in the Park
- 



## EVENTS

The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism produces and staffs several events during the year, designed to enhance visitation to the area, as well as provide a value-added experience for our existing guests.

### Annual events that are free to attend include:

- Under the Oaks Arts Festival (June)
- Independence Day Celebration (July)
- Yoga in the Park (Thursdays – June through early September)
- Corolla Cork & Craft (Wednesdays – mid June through early September)

### Events with an admission fee, generating funds to help support Historic Corolla Park and Whalehead include:

- Corolla Cornhole Tournaments (Wednesdays – mid June through early September)
- Currituck Bulls & BBQ (early November)
- Whalehead Candlelight Christmas Tours (Fridays/Saturdays – late November through mid-December)

The image shows two promotional banners. The top banner is for the 'Under the Oaks Arts Festival' held on June 18th & 19th from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Historic Corolla, NC. It features a dark background with green oak leaves and a logo for Whalehead in Historic Corolla. The bottom banner is for the 'Independence Day Celebration' on Thursday, July 4, 2024, in Historic Corolla Park. It includes an American flag, the text 'FESTIVITIES BEGIN AT 5PM', and lists activities: Cornhole, Live Music, and Fireworks. The Corolla Outer Banks, NC logo is also present.



## ADDITIONAL REPORTING

### VISITATION TO OUR VISITOR CENTERS:

One of our key reports is visitation to our visitor centers. The following is a comparative year-over-year report on the Currituck Welcome Center in Moyock and the Corolla Visitor Center.

	July 1, 2020 to June 16, 2021	July 1, 2021 to June 16, 2022	July 1, 2022 to June 16, 2023	July 1, 2023 to June 16, 2024
<b>Currituck Welcome Center - Moyock</b>	*21,912	**53,025	**56,801	63,275
<b>Corolla Visitor Center</b>	*20,639	66,376	47,719	40,856

\*Covid Pandemic \*\* Data Missing for 1-2 months

Our visitor centers are extremely important to the department as they provide an opportunity to educate visitors on the attractions, assets, businesses, and amenities of our destination. They also provide an opportunity to educate our guests and make a lasting impression with them while they're here, whether they're staying in Currituck County or a neighboring county such as Dare. Those visitors staying in other counties can still have a positive impact on our tourism economy by spending money in Currituck County at restaurant and retail businesses (equating to property tax relief to county residents). Our Visitor Services team consistently provide our guests with exceptional service and are, in many instances, the first impression our visitors have of Currituck County.

### WEBSITE TRAFFIC – VISITCURRITUCK.COM:

Other vital statistics for the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism to closely monitor are website analytics. Below is a comparison of the last five fiscal years (July 1 to June 30):

	Fiscal Year 2019-2020	Fiscal Year 2020-2021	Fiscal Year 2021-2022	Fiscal Year 2022-2023	Fiscal Year 2023-2024
<b>Sessions</b>	931,361	1,099,267	838,985	978,708	914,745
<b>New Users</b>	877,905	1,031,825	778,869	777,331	730,579
<b>Bounce Rate</b>	36.77%	39.20%	33.91%	41.07%	49.05%
<b>Conversions*</b>	127,088 (14.47%)	181,262 (17.57%)	123,324 (15.83%)	99,320 (12.77%)	93,788 (12.82%)

\* The percentage point beside the conversion figure is the percentage of visitors to the website that completed a conversion action. The tourism industry conversion percentage is 3.5%, so efforts by the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism are paying off, enticing our web visitors to complete a conversion action.

These and other reports, along with the yearly Strategic and Marketing Plan, will be available in the Business Resources section of [VisitCurrituck.com](http://VisitCurrituck.com).

## ORGANIZATION AFFILIATIONS

The Currituck Department of Travel & Tourism belongs to several organizations to promote its assets, to have access to vital industry information, and to create alliances and partnerships throughout the state of North Carolina and regionally. These organizations include:

- [African American Experience of Northeast North Carolina](#)
- [American Alliance of Museums](#)
- [Civil War Trails](#)
- [Historic Albemarle Tour](#)
- [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#)
- [NC Association of Festivals & Events](#)
- [NC Coast Host](#)
- [NC Horse Council](#)
- [NC Sports Association](#)
- [North Carolina Travel Industry Association \(NCTIA\)](#)
- [Outer Banks Wedding Association](#)
- [Southeastern Museums Conference](#)
- [Southeast Tourism Society \(STS\)](#)
- [Visit North Carolina](#)

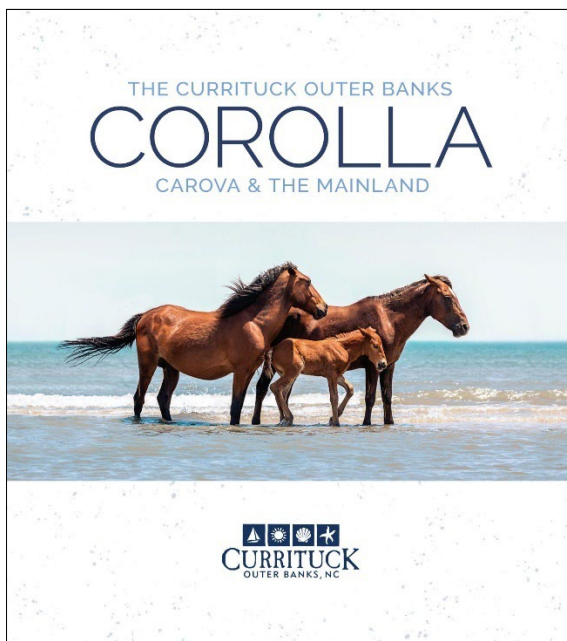
The Tourism Director also has a seat on the following boards:

- NCTIA Governor's Council Board & Vice President
- NC Coast Host Board & Vice President
- Historic Jarvisburg Colored School Board

## CURRITUCK COUNTY BUSINESS RESOURCES

Tourism-related businesses in Currituck that have a brick-and-mortar shop or an established home business enjoy a myriad of opportunities to promote their business (free of charge) with the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism. These opportunities include:

- Website listings on [VisitCurrituck.com](http://VisitCurrituck.com)
- Listing on VisitWidget App
- Business rack cards or brochures in the Currituck Welcome Center and Corolla Visitor Center
- Inclusion in Visitor Guide listings and other publications
- Listing on the North Carolina tourism website (VisitNC.com)
- Cooperative advertising opportunities with our media partners
- Lead sharing
- Display case promotion at the Currituck Welcome Center in Moyock
- Event assistance program which provides advertising dollars and marketing strategy assistance to non-profit and for-profit groups to boost their events.
- Event grant program which provides up to \$20,000 for events being held in the County. This is a competitive process as no more than \$100,000 will be awarded each year (applications due April 15)





**CURRITUCK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

- Bob White**, District 1
- Selina S. Jarvis**, District 2
- Mike H. Payment**, Chairman, District 3
- Paul M. Beaumont**, Vice Chairman, District 4
- J. Owen Etheridge**, District 5
- Mary “Kitty” Etheridge**, At-Large
- Kevin E. McCord**, At-large

**CURRITUCK COUNTY TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD**

The Tourism Advisory Board, comprised of seven tourism industry professionals who serve for two-year terms, meets five times per fiscal year and plays an integral part in the marketing strategy by reviewing and making suggestions utilizing their unique insights. This board also brings real-time, current issues to the table that allow the Tourism Director and Marketing Director to shift strategy and dollars to address a constantly changing tourism landscape.

Benjamin Beasley (Appointed by At-Large seat)  
BJ’s Carolina Cafe

Tracy Krizmanich (appointed by District 4)  
Great Bridge Battlefield History Foundation & Museum

Daryl Harlow (appointed by At-Large seat)

Kenneth Lankford (appointed by District 1 seat)  
OBX Beach Toy Rentals & OBX Beach Buggies

Sharon Price (appointed by District 3 seat)  
Always N Bloom

Damian Dondero (appointed by District 2 seat)  
H2OBX

Janice Farr (appointed by District 5 seat)  
Sun Realty

Tourism Development Authority Appointee:

**Paul Beaumont**, Commissioner

Ex-officio Staff Members:

County Manager

**Tameron Kugler**, Director, Department of Travel & Tourism