



2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Pennsylvania
pursue your happiness™

THE
Alleghenies

explore
Altoona
Blair County, Pennsylvania

explorealtoona.com



Explore Altoona is a partnership-based 501-c(6) non-profit organization designated by the Blair County Board of Commissioners to serve as the county's official Destination Marketing Organization, or Visitors Bureau. Our organization's seasonal strategies involve a fully-integrated marketing program consisting of various digital, online, print, and broadcast communications with the consistent plan of sharing with potential visitors the unique, authentic experiences you will find on our website and other forms of media.

The MISSION of Explore Altoona is to market Greater Blair County as a premier visitor destination, offering a positive experience and fostering economic development.

HOTEL ANALYTICS

SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH

Explore Altoona subscribes to Smith Travel Research, the leading global provider of hotel analytics, for three individual reports: one for the aggregate hotel data for Blair County, one for seven comparative markets across the state, and one for the aggregate hotel data for PA. This invaluable information provides the organization with useful insights on the county's overnight lodging performance as well as a gauge into comparisons across several levels. The reporting includes data on room occupancy percentage, average daily rate (ADR), revenue per available room (RevPAR), demand, and total hotel revenue which allows for benchmarking, analysis of the current market, competitor analysis, and subsequently, some strategic seasonal marketing analysis.

2022 YEAR OVER YEAR INCREASES

Significant increases when compared to 2021 and pre-pandemic 2019 numbers!

Occupancy Rate

2019
+2.2%
2021
+7.9%

Average Daily Rate

2019
+18.6%
2021
+11%

Revenue per Room

2019
+18.8%
2021
+19.7%

Total Hotel Revenue

2019
+17.7%
2021
+19%

"Explore Altoona's concentration of strategic seasonal marketing plans have greatly assisted the Hampton Inn in drawing overnight leisure visitors to our hotel and to Blair County for the variety of classic fun we are so well known for."

- Jeff Cipriani, General Manager, Hampton Inn Altoona

BRAND PERCEPTION STUDY FINDINGS

WITH H2R MARKET RESEARCH



80%

Visitors to the area that stay overnight



2.8 days

Average length of Stay



40%

Visitors to the area that travel with family

TOP 5 ACTIVITIES WITH GREATEST INFLUENCE ON DECISION TO VISIT:

Shopping	23%
Local Restaurants	22%
Outdoor Recreation	17%
Festivals & Events	15%
DelGrosso's Park and Laguna Splash Water Park	15%



BRAND STRENGTHS

- ✓ Affordable
- ✓ Safe Environment
- ✓ Diverse Lodging Options
- ✓ Easy to Navigate
- ✓ Consistent, Quality Experience
- ✓ Filled with History, Culture, and Heritage Attractions

OUTCOME SUMMARY | JERRY HENRY, CEO, AND JILL RENNER, PRESIDENT, H2R

"Blair County's visitor conversion rate (43%) runs 20% above the H2R Norm. And the Altoona area does even better with retention (58%) once they visit ---- 11 points above average.

The Altoona area has an excellent road map with the Brand Study and Scout Report that have both been conducted this year. The decisions made for the area are informed by third-party, objective data not guessing. The future of the area marketing is based on demographic and psychographic data to help target those more interested in visiting in the future. **Now is not the time to take your foot off the proverbial marketing pedal but instead to double down on current marketing efforts.** The area benefits most from a focused marketing effort highlighting its strengths. This consistent marketing will help visitors understand the reasons to visit and return."

"Altoona is a small but mighty destination poised for growth."

- Jill Renner

2022 MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

EXPLORE ALTOONA Blair County Hotel Tax Dollars Invested



EXPLORE ALTOONA Building Upon Travel Spending Milestones



Additional investment in Explore Altoona provided the opportunity to enhance marketing assets and initiatives, reaching new audiences and expanding brand awareness of Altoona in target markets.

These efforts include:

- Launch of NEW Website
- Market Research and Brand Analysis Study
- Robust, integrated digital campaign with USA Today reaching millions of potential visitors
- TV Commercials in Major Target Markets
- Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA) Co-Host, welcoming dozens of Travel Writers to the area.
- Enhanced advertising partnership with VisitPA, showcasing Explore Altoona in print, online, and digital

"Among PA amusement parks, DeGrosso's Park is one of the smallest in terms of size. Explore Altoona's tag line, 'Small Destination Big Adventures,' rings true for us. Over the past two years, we had visitors at our park from 48 of the 50 states and over 8 foreign countries. We take great pride in being 'The Home of Family Fun and Famous Food' and hope that visitors will plan a multiple day getaway, spend a day with us, stay overnight, and spend more time exploring all that Blair County's variety of experiences has to offer."

- Carl Crider, Jr., President, DeGrosso's Park

2022 MARKETING INVESTMENTS

Gannett Media/USA Today – variety of digital niche campaigns – outdoor recreation, history and heritage, arts and culture, festivals, family fun – amusement and water parks, minor league baseball, seasonal and special interest escapes within targeted markets and audiences

- Search engine marketing
- Social mirroring impressions
- Targeted email blasts
- Retargeting
- Geofencing
- OTT and CTV streaming
- Digital display ad placements

TV Broadcast Campaign – targeted markets and demographics

- Pittsburgh
- Harrisburg/York
- Hagerstown/Cumberland, MD

H2R Market Research

- Brand Perception Study
- House Email List Response Study
- Comparison to Industry Norms Overview

Launch of NEW Web Site – www.explorealtoona.com

Mid Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance

- Co-host DMO for annual Media Marketplace
- Media Marketplace – travel writer/media show, Happy Valley, PA
- Three familiarization tours

Miles Media Partnership – the official marketing partner of the PA Tourism Office

- Happy Traveler – 2022 Pennsylvania Travel Guide – half page print ad placement within the Alleghenies co-op
- www.visitpa.com
- Online lead generations requesting 2022 Visitors Guide to Blair County and e-invitation to visit newly developed www.explorealtoona.com
 - Native ads
 - E-blasts
 - Custom content articles

DelGrosso's Park and Laguna Splash Summer Co-op

- TV and Radio – Pittsburgh, Harrisburg/York, Wilkes Barre/Scranton, and Hagerstown/Cumberland, MD
- Coupon/magazine publications and digital – Harrisburg, Williamsport, York, and WV

Guest Quest Travel Media – Spring edition and Summer edition

- VA/DC publication, OH publication, PA publication
- Print ad placements – targeted full page back cover and half page placements
- Landing page article, photo, web site link
- Video link

- Online lead generations requesting 2022 Visitors Guide to Blair County and e-invitation to visit newly developed www.explorealtoona.com

USA Today GO Escape – Northeast Summer edition

- Half page print ad placement
- Online lead generations requesting 2022 Visitors Guide to Blair County and e-invitation to visit newly developed www.explorealtoona.com

PA on Display and Getaways on Display – mass distribution of the 2022 Visitors Guide to Blair County

- 13 PA Welcome Centers and 2 Turnpike Service Plazas – Sideling Hill & Oakmont
- AAA Offices – PA and NJ
- Travel consumer areas – eastern, western, northern, and south central PA; northern VA; and MD

Mid Atlantic Events Magazine (solely digital) January/February, May/June, September/October themed editions

- Full page print ad placements – co-op with Blair County Convention Center
 - Half page – Small Destination Big Adventures
 - Half page – Blair County Convention Center
 - Editorial features
 - Dedicated e-blasts
 - E-newsletter banner placements

Official 2022 MLB Pittsburgh Pirates Commemorative Yearbook

- Half page print ad placement – Small Destination Big Adventures
- Half page print ad placement – Altoona Curve

Recreation News – March, April (PA Co-op), July, and September editions

- Print ad placements – targeted full page, half page, and back cover full page placements
- Online lead generations requesting 2022 Visitors Guide to Blair County and e-invitation to visit newly developed www.explorealtoona.com

Where and When Pennsylvania – Spring, Summer, and Fall editions

- Full page and back cover full page print ad placements
- PA Family Travel Fair – consumer show, Lancaster, PA
- Online ad placements

Martinsburg, WV Journal

Summer Vacation Guide – full page print ad placement
Holiday Feature Guide – full page print ad placement

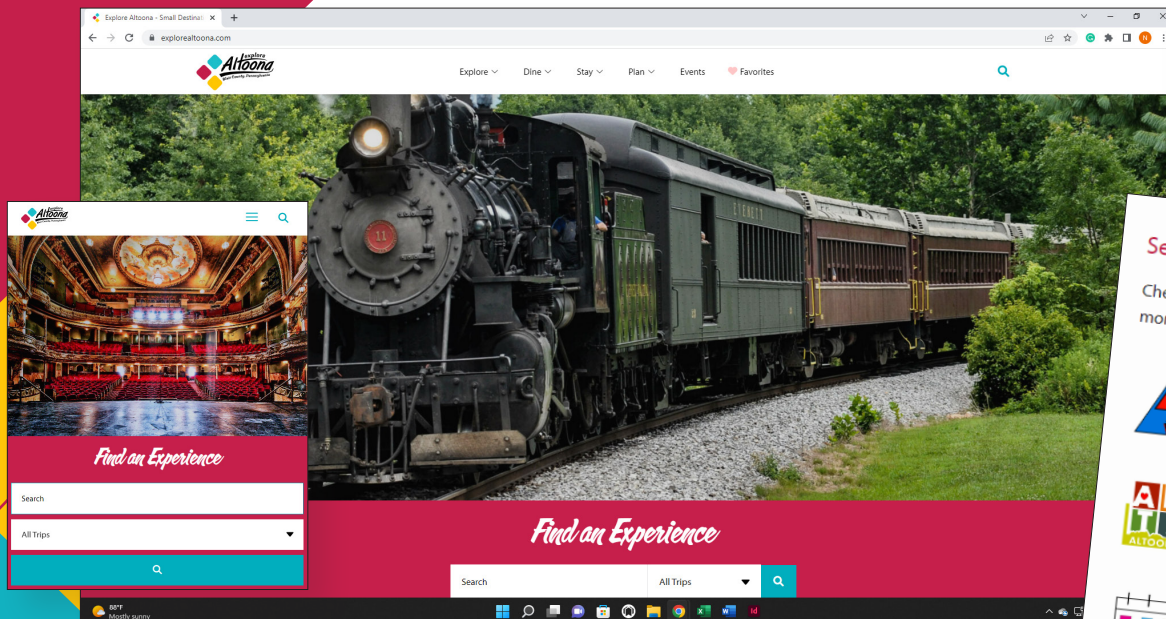
Penn State Sports Annual – Fall edition and Winter edition
Full page print ad placement

Summer of History Tour Broadcast – Forever Media Radio campaign across four radio stations featuring sixteen historical experiences

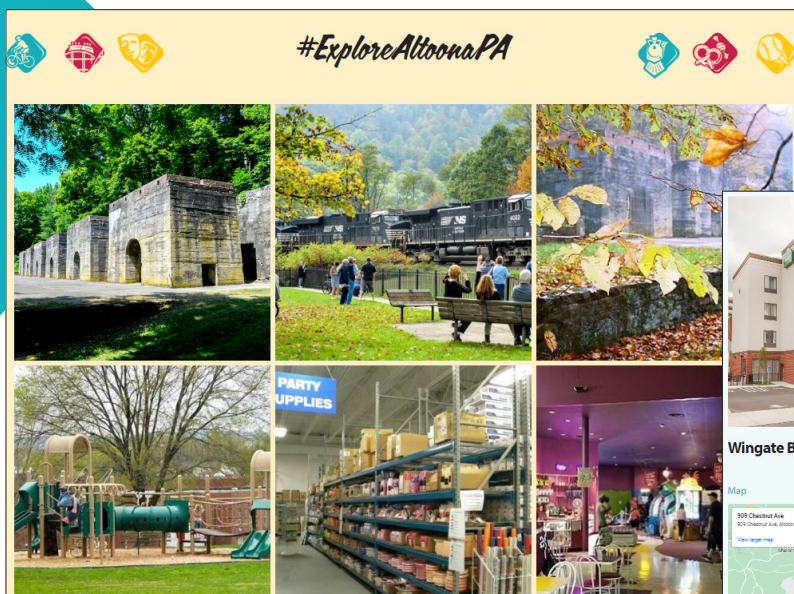
THE NEW WEBSITE

explorealtoona.com

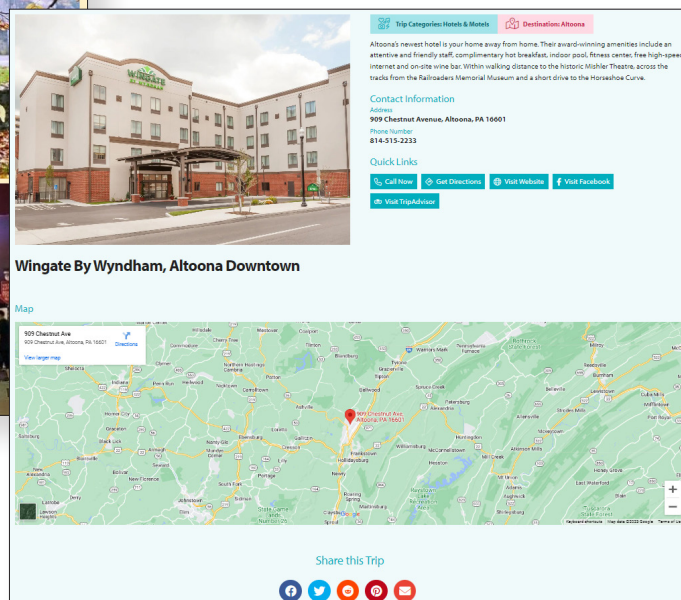
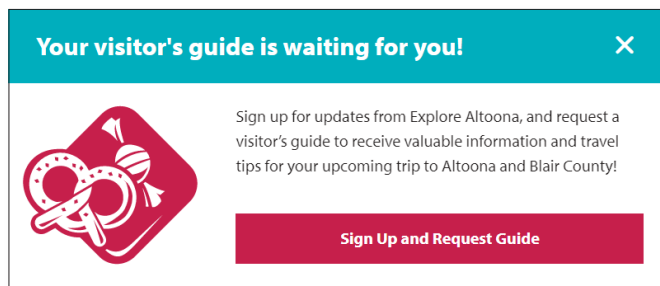
Mobile-friendly
Homepage Redesign
with Seasonal
Rotating Content



Integrated Events
Calendars



User-Generated Content



Robust Partner Listings with Integrated
Mapping & Trip Planning Capabilities

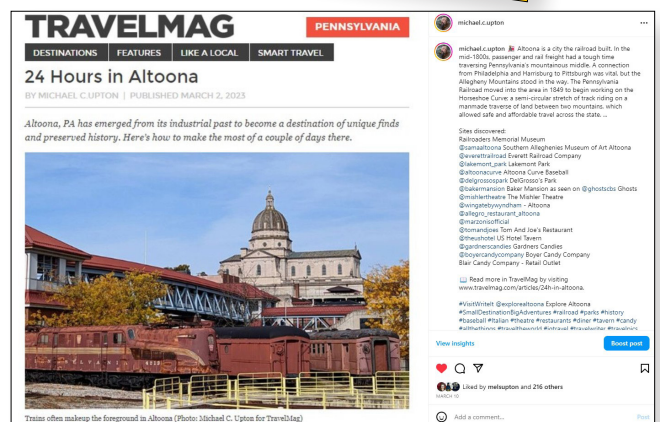
Embedded Call-to-Action Prompts for Increased Lead Generation

MID-ATLANTIC TOURISM PUBLIC RELATIONS ALLIANCE (MATPRA) MEDIA MARKETPLACE



In the fall of 2022, the Alleghenies Region played host to the annual Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA) Media Marketplace, bringing in travel writers and journalists from across the mid-Atlantic. The Marketplace serves as a great opportunity for both PR professionals and travel journalists to get together and discuss story ideas, arrange visits to our destination and talk about what's new in our backyards.

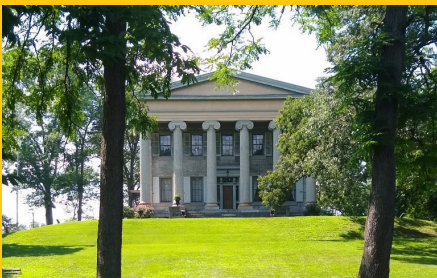
Explore Altoona developed and distributed more than 70 custom profile sheets for the visiting writers, highlighting the abundant tourism assets our area has to offer and securing interest from these writers for future features in their respective publications and media outlets. In addition, Explore Altoona hosted three Familiarization Tours, showcasing Blair County to more than 40 travel writers and guests.



TravelMag Altoona Feature, Michael Upton
March, 2023

TOURISM MARKETING CO-OP PARTNERSHIPS

The purpose of Explore Altoona's Tourism Marketing Co-Op Partnership is to offer financial assistance for the intended result of enhancing the leisure destination marketing efforts of Blair County's non-profit tourism assets; the goal is to generate overnight stays in the county. The partnership supports cultural, historical, and recreational assets and is awarded annually to eligible bona fide 501(C3) non-profits or an organization that qualifies for a deductible contribution adhering to IRS rules.



PROGRAMS \$36,250

- (13) Targeted E-blasts
- (10) 30-second Video Segments
- (14) 15-second Video Segments
- (12) OTT Video Streaming Segments

PARTICIPATING NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

- Allegheny Ridge Corporation
- Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum
- Altoona Symphony Orchestra
- ArtsAltoona
- Baker Mansion History Museum
- Blair County Arts Foundation
- Blue Knob Mountain Bike Association
- Fort Roberdeau
- Hoops Fest
- Quaint Corner Children's Museum

"The tourism marketing co-op partnership awarded Blair County Historical Society grant funding for video and OTT streaming, which has provided invaluable opportunities to promote Baker Mansion History Museum to a targeted audience we would never be able to reach otherwise. The positive impact has created content to showcase upcoming exhibits and the opportunity to promote our historical site, as well as to support part of the BCHS mission of education on history, heritage and local culture."

-Kate Rimbeck, Executive Director - Blair County Historical Society

PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS



MARKETING

Unique page on www.explorealtoona.com with photo, Google Maps, and links to your social media platforms and website

Listing in Explore Altoona's Blair County Visitors Guide

Promotion of your events through Calendar of Events on www.explorealtoona.com

Co-op marketing opportunities

Opportunities for representation in seasonal and niche marketing campaigns

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Promotion on Explore Altoona's social media platforms

Representation at selected consumer shows and expos

Representation to travel writers

Promotion to group and meeting planners

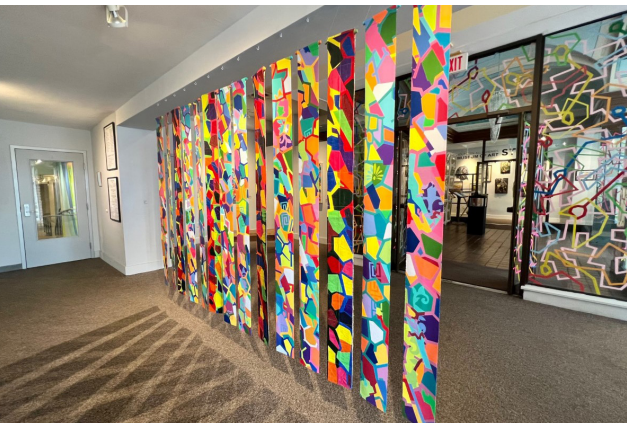
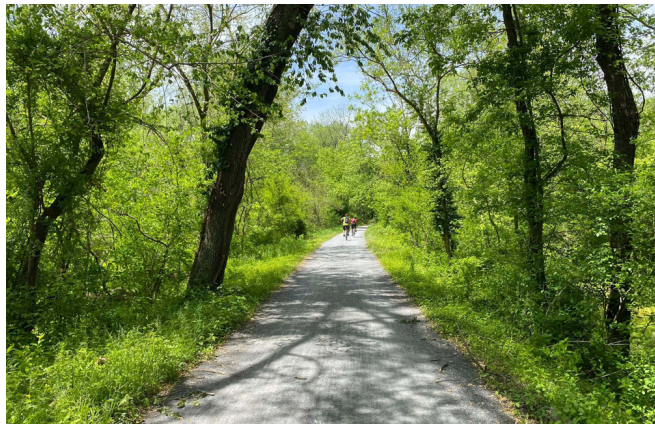
Opportunities for networking

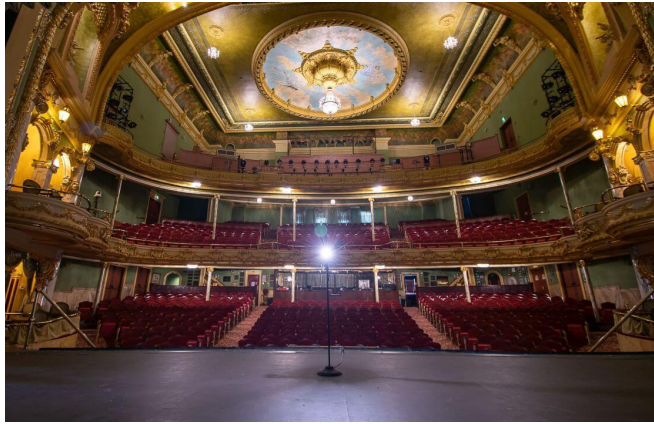
Educational seminars related to tourism and travel marketing

REFERRALS TO VISITORS VIA VISITOR REQUESTS

Mailing fulfillment of your brochures and rack cards and Explore Altoona's Blair County Visitors Guide in response to visitor inquiries

- ♦ Distribution of your brochures and rack cards at Explore Altoona's brochure rack locations throughout Blair County







Stay tuned for continuing highlights in 2023!