KANSAS CITY

2024 Annual Report

VISIT KC

Igniting Global Passion for Kansas City

WHAT THE WORLD IS SAYING

Noteworthy News from 2024

The 10 Best Places to Visit in 2024 — *The Wall Street Journal*

Kansas City: A Budget-Friendly Alternative to Big City Prices — *The Compass magazine*

"All eyes are on Kansas City right now." — *Wanderlust (UK)*

52 Best Places to Go in 2024 — *The New York Times*

14 reasons Kansas City should be your next trip — *Lonely Planet*

The World's Greatest Places 2024 — *TIME*

"The US city that's the true heartland of America" — *The Australian*

25 of the USA's most underrated destinations — *CNN*

How Kansas City Aims to Bring the 'Magic' to the 2026 FIFA World Cup — *Forbes*

5 Ways Kansas City is Prioritizing Health and Wellness — *Meetings Today*

Kansas City Will Soon Be Home to the Tastiest Museum in the US — *Thrillist*

ABOUT US

Attracting millions of visitors to the Kansas City area annually, Visit KC is the internationally accredited chief hospitality sales and marketing organization for the region.

With a mission to create global passion for Kansas City, Visit KC collaborates with nearly 900 community partners to drive marketing, sales and service of the destination's convention and tourism industry – a sector that supports more than 122,000 local jobs and generates millions of dollars in community spending and sales tax revenue each year.

WHO WE ARE

Structure

Visit KC is a nonprofit, 501(c)6 organization contracted by the City of Kansas City, Missouri. Formerly the Kansas City Convention & Visitors Association, we began doing business as Visit KC in 2014.

People

Visit KC is supported by a full-time staff of 47 and directed by a board of 11 civic and business leaders. The organization is comprised of four teams in the areas of convention sales/services, marketing/communications, finance/administration and partnerships/events.

Budget & Funding

Visit KC has an annual operating budget of $15.8 million. We receive public funding from the hotel lodging tax in Kansas City, Missouri, and private funding from nearly 900 community partners in the region.

WHAT WE DO

Sell Kansas City

- Destination branding to position Kansas City as a vibrant, creative community
- Convention sales efforts to attract conventions, meetings and sporting events to Kansas City
- Integrated marketing campaigns to drive visitors to Kansas City through advertising, public relations and social media

Welcome & Connect Travelers

- Assist with the successful execution of nearly 500 meetings and conventions each year
- Creation of maps, guides, content and other visitor resources to help guests discover all there is to do in Kansas City

Support Local Businesses & Events

- Advance our community's economic well-being by sharing the heart of Kansas City with the world
- Organize and support major events including KC Restaurant Week, Tap Tour and the Big 12 Men's and Women's Basketball Championships, to name just a few
- Enhance the quality of life for the residents of Kansas City through tourism marketing and promotion

Annual Total Attendance Driven by Tourism

% OF VISITORS TRAVELING 50+ MILES

30% Kansas City ZOO & AQUARIUM **41%** UNION STATION **52%** Royals **64%** FIORELLA'S JACK STACK BARBECUE

KC cultural offerings, attractions, sports venues and restaurants listed illustrate the percentage of annual total attendance driven by tourism (leisure + business combined). These attractions/cultural institutions/stadiums/restaurants are immediately identifiable, impactful and relevant to our local residents.

Source: Placer.ai

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Tourism sustains so many of the things we love about Kansas City, including our iconic institutions, beloved attractions, sports venues and celebrated restaurants. With millions of people visiting Kansas City annually, tourism also supports thousands of local jobs and contributes millions to local sales tax revenue, helping to provide essential services.

Economic Impact

Tourism generates **$6.7 billion** in economic impact for the region annually, including indirect and induced impact. Tourism produces $636 in visitor generated taxes per household every year.

- Annual Visitor Spending / **$4.0 Billion**
- Local Sales Tax Revenues / **$280.5 Million**
- Hotel Rooms Sold / **8.14 Million**
- Daily Spending / **$10.8 Million**
- Daily Visitation / **80,000**

Local Jobs

More than **122,000 jobs** in the region are sustained by tourism either directly or indirectly, supporting billions in wages.

Visitors

Kansas City hosts **29.3 million visitors** each year. Of these, 46% of visitors stay overnight.

Sources: Tourism Economics, Longwoods International, U.S. Travel Association, 2023

Annual Economic Impact

Annual Visitor Spending / **$4.0 Billion**

Local Sales Tax Revenues / **$280.5 Million**

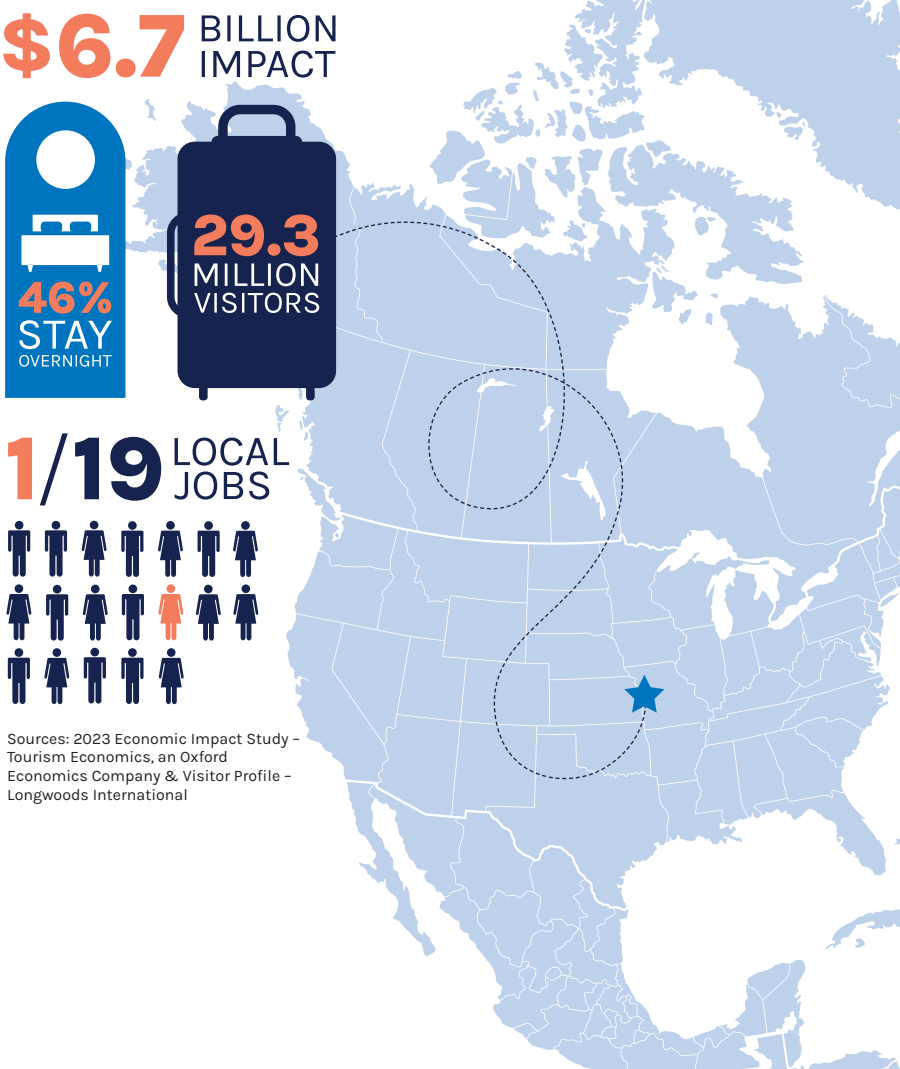
Hotel Rooms Sold / **$8.138 Million**

Source: Tourism Economics; CoStar

Kansas City Tourism's Daily Economic Impact

Daily Spending / **$18.4 Million**

Daily Visitation / **78,000**



Sources: 2023 Economic Impact Study – Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company & Visitor Profile – Longwoods International

CONVENTION SALES & SERVICES

2024 Key Accomplishments

Achieved **102.5% of room night production goal**, generating 523 bookings and 527,917 future definite room nights and creating an estimated economic impact of nearly $370 million.

Assisted with **476 meetings & events** in Kansas City that welcomed 450,013 attendees and created an estimated **economic impact of $351 million** for the greater Kansas City region.

Hosted Maritz Global Events 2024 Together Conference in February, **welcoming over 60 key third-party meeting planners** to Kansas City, generating 71 leads and over 125,000 room nights in future opportunities (and counting).

Hosted a **KC Current familiarization tour**, welcoming 10+ customers to Kansas City in August to highlight the new CPKC Stadium and destination developments.

Executed sales missions in Chicago (September) & Washington, D.C. (November) **hosting over 100 clients** across multiple events and sales calls in these key feeder markets.

Coordinated **142 individual and small group site visits**, a 14% increase over 2023 efforts.

Achieved **98.4% client satisfaction** survey scores for convention services efforts.

Successfully executed **strategic annual partnerships** that elevate brand awareness and facilitate increased customer engagement with major associations and key third-party organizations such as Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), Association Forum, American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), HelmsBriscoe, Maritz, ConferenceDirect, Meetings Made Easy and HPN.

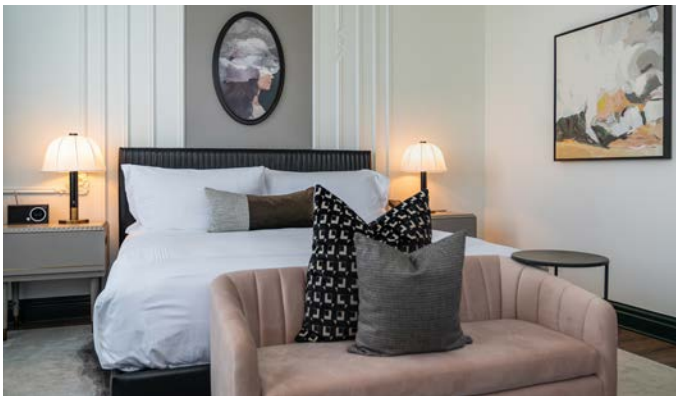
Attended 37 national, regional and local tradeshows across all markets to **elevate the awareness and visibility** of the Kansas City meetings & convention product.

Engaged in dozens of **targeted sales calls and event hosting opportunities** throughout the year with our customers in key markets such as Washington, D.C., Chicago, Denver, Philadelphia, New York City, Atlanta, Minneapolis and Indianapolis.

MEETINGS HELD IN KC	2022	2023	2024
Conventions	317	384	**476**
Room Nights	369,074	459,730	**454,543**
Attendance	391,362	780,081*	**450,013**
Economic Impact	$305,411,959	$428,529,449*	**$351,227,833**

*Elevated due to hosting NFL Draft in April 2023

CONVENTION SALES ACTIVITY	2022	2023	2024
Meetings Booked	318	447	**523**
Definite Room Nights	409,887	526,774	**527,917**
Leads Generated	1,103	1,441	**1,589**
Tentative Room Nights	1,370,340	2,046,397	**2,341,185**
Site Visits	85	125	**142**
Convention Center Bookings	36	57	**50**
Convention Center Room Nights	258,134	340,233	**285,750**



MAJOR BOOKINGS IN 2024 BY ROOM NIGHTS

Organization	*Dates*	*Attendance*	*Total Room Nights*
USA Volleyball	April 2027	30,000	**27,502**
College Board AP Reading	June 2026 & 2027	4,200	**27,400**
Big 12 Conference	March 2027	19,135	**19,615**
National Collegiate Volleyball Federation	April 2026	14,000	**10,150**
Heart of America Volleyball	January 2027	22,000	**9,695**
Destination Imagination, Inc.	May 2025	10,000	**8,640**
National Federation of State High School Associations	December 2027	2,000	**8,423**
Auto Care Association	January 2028 & 2030	3,000	**7,550**
The Salvation Army	April 2027	2,125	**7,240**
International Facility Management Association	October 2027	5,000	**6,740**
United States Institute for Theatre Technology	March 2028	5,500	**6,633**
Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology	April 2029	5,000	**6,559**
Emerald X, LLC	October 2026	4,000	**6,153**
American Academy of Family Physicians	July 2027	5,500	**5,790**

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

2024 Key Accomplishments

Achieved 189.5% of incremental room nights generated through marketing programs goal. Executed an innovative paid leisure marketing campaign "From the Heart", in partnership with agency of record MMGY, that generated **758,000 incremental room nights** and delivered an organizational record return on investment of $148 in visitor spending for every dollar spent on advertising.

Generated an estimated **326,000 incremental trips** to the Kansas City area, driving **$283 million in incremental spending**, through Visit KC's marketing campaign to 18 markets in 10 states.

Achieved 122.5% of website visits goal. Marketing efforts drove 4.5 million site visits to the destination website, VisitKC.com. Administered a request for proposals for website design services, selecting EnvisionIt to **redesign VisitKC.com** with an expected launch in Summer 2025.

Generated over **500 articles and television/ radio mentions** about Kansas City through public relations, leading to a **record 1.8 billion impressions** in publications like *The New York Times*, *TIME magazine*, *Forbes* and more.

Created a campaign for the **Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl run**, positioning Visit KC's "From the Heart" campaign on a national stage and resulting in 3.9 million impressions. Promoted the game and celebration with a custom landing page, email marketing and social media content, including the development and distribution of a custom marketing toolkit for local businesses.

Produced Visit KC's **first national holiday commercial**, airing on the Hallmark Channel during the premiere of a Kansas City-based film, capturing over **39 million impressions** across paid and owned channels.

Published over 30 new stories on VisitKC.com to enhance destination storytelling and website user experience, contributing to a **record 4.5 million pageviews**.

Continued significant growth on Visit KC's social media platforms, gaining over **14,900 new followers** and garnering **42.3 million impressions**.

Hosted **20 travel writers and content creators**, strengthening relationships in key domestic and international markets like Dallas, Chicago, London and Toronto.

Worked with over 20 outlets, both local news and trade publications, on convention news coverage to generate a **record 57 million** earned media impressions.

Supported sales & services initiatives with a **new multicultural promotional video** and **high-impact sponsorships and placements** at key trade shows and industry events.

ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS	2022	2023	2024
Leisure			
Media Budget	$1,712,558*	$1,903,455**	**$2,083,745*** **
Local Media Partner Investment	$289,400	$289,400	**$270,900**
State of Missouri Investment	$364,000	$455,000**	**$540,000*** **
Paid Media Impressions	183,836,569	368,073,679	**295,212,391**

*Includes Super Bowl paid media buy --- **Includes Super Bowl and NFL Draft paid media buys
***Includes Super Bowl, Hallmark national ad and paid search buys

Convention			
Advertising Impressions	24,850,238	13,779,831	**15,064,041**

INTERACTIVE MARKETING	2022	2023	2024
Website Visits	3,725,007	4,509,859	**4,532,154**
E-mail Lead Generation	18,250	21,695	**7,909**

COMMUNICATIONS	2022	2023	2024
Social Media Engagements	711,325	1,113,895	**884,490**
Earned Media Impressions	327,536,395	491,765,078	**1,886,661,641**

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2024 Key Accomplishments

Created official Visit KC Tourism Development department, defining its mission, goals and structure.

Built strategic marketing and community engagement plans.

Attended seven international trade shows accounting for over **140 appointments**.

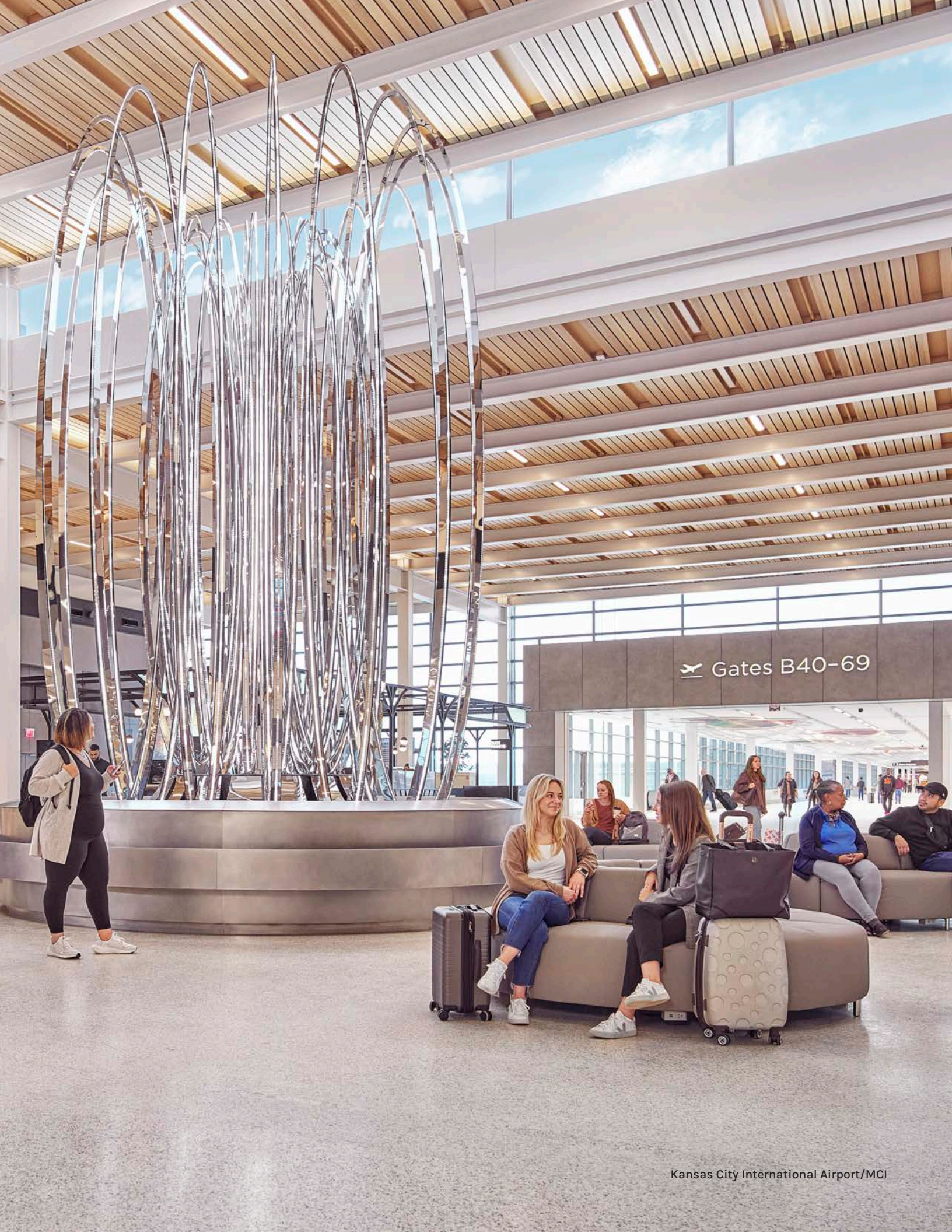
Achieved **growth in our top two international markets** with overall visitation from the United Kingdom increasing 6.1% and overall visitation from Germany increasing 2.6 %.

Launched **co-op marketing programs** in Australia and New Zealand to increase visitation.

Increased marketing strategies in top international markets.

Conducted sales missions in Canada and Denmark.

Successfully secured Travel South International's Conference for 2025.



Kansas City International Airport/MCI

PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

2024 Key Accomplishments

Worked closely with a network of 888 total active industry partners, including **69 new partners and 52 advertisers**.

Produced the 15th annual Kansas City Restaurant Week, featuring 10 days of special, multi-course menus at a **record 242 participating restaurants** including 32 first-time participants and 78 M/WBE owned restaurants. This raised more than $350,000 for local charities, including featured beneficiary Kanbe's Markets, giving back to charities dedicated to improving our community with service and educational opportunities in the hospitality community. To date, the program has raised over $3.9 million for KC causes.

Welcomed more than 300 industry partners to our **2024 Annual Tourism Outlook** at The Midland, highlighting the many ways a robust travel industry is creating new opportunities for the Heart of America to shine on the world stage, strengthening our community and featuring a panel presentation from our leadership team and engaging reception with local vendors.

Held **three Partner 2 Partner events** at new partner venues, the Puttery, CPKC Stadium and Zhou B Art Center, hosting a total of 350 attendees.

Developed and produced **new educational programming** called the Spotlight Series. The first was a presentation from Joel Barrett with the KC Rainbow Tour, focused on the history of the LGBTQ+ community in Kansas City, held at Tom's Town. The second was a Social Media Workshop hosted by Visit KC's social media manager, Jasmyn Franks, at J. Rieger & Co.

Developed and communicated the **new Hotel Partnership Program** to our hotel partners, in lieu of lead share, to begin in 2025.

Facilitated consumer and small business involvement through Visit KC experiences: generated 680 **KC Attractions Pass** redemptions, included 19 breweries in **KC Tap Tour** Season 8, and featured 57 businesses through **KC Savings**.

Achieved **1,580 interactions** through Visit KC's Visitor Information Center. More than **2,200 referrals** were made to partner businesses.

PARTNERSHIPS BY CATEGORY	2022	2023	2024
Accommodations	102	104	**110**
Arts and Culture	134	131	**141**
Attractions	29	39	**40**
Breweries	32	32	**29**
Casinos	1	1	**1**
Convention Services	77	98	**107**
Dining	177	152	**170**
Entertainment	24	26	**32**
Organizations	30	34	**36**
Shopping	31	51	**41**
Sports & Recreation	145	118	**119**
Tours & Sightseeing	34	31	**33**
Transportation	24	24	**29**
TOTAL	**840**	**841**	**888**

PARTNER REVENUES	2022	2023	2024
Partnership Dues	$451,424	$415,192	**$422,754**
Hotel Lead Share	$324,535	$504,793	**$516,082**
Web/Collateral Advertising	$58,214	$56,331	**$86,984**
Marketing Campaign Partners	$311,000	$236,750	**$299,298**
TOTAL	**1,155,173**	**$1,213,066**	**$1,325,118**

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

2024 Key Accomplishments

Negotiated and **executed a 10-year lease**, sublease and parking agreements with a new landlord; completed an office renovation project at Town Pavilion, moving both Visit KC and the Kansas City Sports Commission to the new location.

Settled previous lease and membership agreements for Spark and Main Street locations.

Closed Fiscal Year 2024 meeting our budgeted goals and a clean audit opinion.

Funded **reserve accounts in full**, including three-month emergency, opportunity and event subsidy.

Executed $500,000 mid-year **budget amendment** to enhance planned programming.

Advanced **early payoff** of a $4.5 million Fiscal Year 2020 MDFB loan.

Procured and implemented a **new financial management system**, Sage/Intacct.

Onboarded **12 new team members**, including a controller, communications director and market research manager.

Revitalized the Visit KC Foundation, led by seven new community stakeholders, with a renewed focus on supporting the region's hospitality, convention and tourism industries.

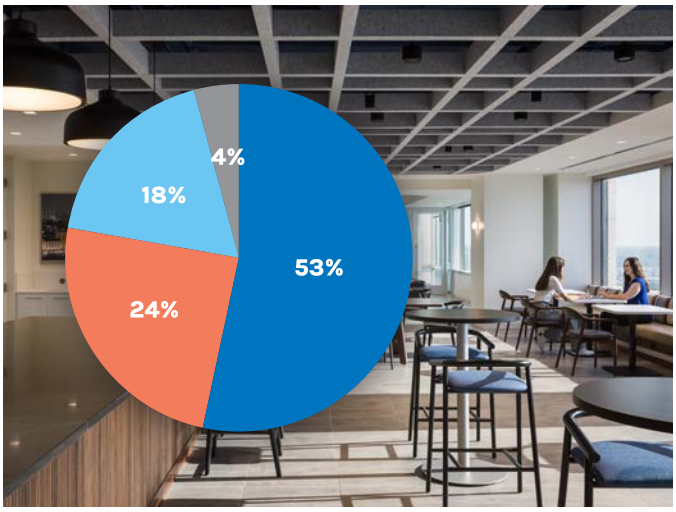
Carried out a request for proposals for **strategic planning services**, adding NextFactor as a consultant to develop and facilitate Visit KC's long-term goals and objectives for 2026-28.

Completed the organization's **4-year accreditation renewal process** through Destination International's Destination Marketing Accreditation Program.

Revised existing Visit KC board policies regarding contracts and super tax increment financing.

2024 EXPENDITURES BY TARGET AUDIENCE

Operations	$8,416,069 - **53%**
Destination Marketing	$3,810,139 - **24%**
Sales	$2,894,440 - **18%**
Local	$703,549 - **4%**
Total Expenditures	**$15,824,198**



2024 REVENUES

Convention/Tourism Tax	$12,900,909
Arena Business Fees	$1,302,619
Marketing Campaign Partners	$281,710
State Co-op Funding	$562,958
Partnership Dues	$303,792
Hotel Lead Share	$712,171
Convention Services Revenue	$349,283
Web/Collateral Advertising	$111,887
Other	$909,815
TOTAL REVENUE	**$17,435,144**
TIF Expenditures	-$722,507
REVENUE (NET OF TIF)	$16,712,637

Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Leadership

Chair / **Stacey Paine**, President, Crown Center Redevelopment Corp.

Vice Chair / **Brian Johnson**, Managing Director, Loews Kansas City Hotel

Secretary / **George Guastello**, President & CEO, Union Station Kansas City

Treasurer / **Mike Cappo**, Partner, Shook, Hardy & Bacon, LLP

At-Large / **Adam Miller**, Founder, Bespoke Consulting

Members

Dr. DeAngela Burns-Wallace, President & CEO, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

Tyler Enders, Co-Owner, Made in KC

David Lopez, Director of Operations, Manny's Mexican Restaurant

Quinton Lucas, Mayor, City of Kansas City, Mo.

Brian Platt, City Manager, City of Kansas City, Mo.

Anne Scharf, Vice President, Community Impact and Civic Affairs, Kansas City Chiefs

Ex-Officios

Cindy Circo, Director, Contact & Business Care, Evergy

Melissa Cooper, Aviation Director, City of Kansas City, Mo.

Kimiko Gilmore, Deputy City Manager, Convention & Entertainment Facilities, City of Kansas City, Mo.

Amy Jordan-Wooden, President & CEO, AJW Consulting

Buddy Lahl, Executive Director, Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association

Patricia Macdonald, Director, Strategic Ventures & Operations, Healthcare Institute for Innovations in Quality

Derek McCann, Vice President, Avion Hospitality

Andrea O'Hara, Executive Director, Hotel & Lodging Association of Greater Kansas City

Kevin Pistilli, President, Raphael Hotel Group

Jeanette Prenger, Founder & CEO, ECCO Select Corporation

CiCi Rojas, President, Tico Productions & Tico Sports

2024 HONORS & AWARDS

Kathy Nelson
Individual Achievement Award,
Greater Kansas City Attractions Association

Bronze Adrian Award
Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International –
"From the Heart" integrated marketing campaign

Top 50 Meeting Destinations in North America
Cvent

Lee Prutsman
30 Under 30 Honoree, Destinations International

Courtney Meyer
Supplier of the Year,
Professional Convention Management Association,
Heartland Chapter

Marketing Campaign Award
Missouri Governor's Conference on Tourism –
"From the Heart" integrated marketing campaign

Becky Harsch
Sports Tourism Strategist Certification,
Sports Events & Tourism Association

Kathy Nelson
Milt Adams Achievement Award for
Community Contributions,
Kingswood Foundation

KANSAS CITY

FROM THE HEART

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