Tourism is a key economic driver — for every region of Connecticut.

Our tourism marketing budget has been highly variable — declining 73% since 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>YOY Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$15.0M</td>
<td>-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$9.6M</td>
<td>+25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$12.0M</td>
<td>-21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$9.5M</td>
<td>-32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$6.5M</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$6.4M</td>
<td>-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$4.1M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- We aim to allocate 50% of the budget to media, even with the budget reductions.
- Budget decreases have eliminated key activities: sacrifices have included staffing of Welcome Centers (eliminated 2016); mass media TV (eliminated 2016); marketing grants (eliminated 2016); Visitors Guide (eliminated 2019).

We’re also challenged by highly expensive and highly competitive media markets.

- Need to reach the #1 and #9 most expensive advertising markets (DMAs) in the U.S., since the majority of our tourism potential is from neighboring New York and Massachusetts.
- Can afford to reach only a fraction of our target audience: 31M people are in our target demographic households; the FY2019 media budget afforded us less than a 10% reach to that audience.
- Being outspent by the competition: nearby states spend a combined $114M on tourism marketing. (Comparative FY2018 budgets: NY $70M; ME $12M; MA $10M; NJ $9M; NH $7.2M; RI $5.5M)

Our highly integrated marketing strategy is delivering strong ROI.

Despite budget strains, what we are investing is working. Our research-driven marketing strategy leverages an array of modern tactics all supporting brand positioning based on extensive consumer research into what both residents and visitors value: Connecticut offers a dynamic blend of complementary experiences: relaxing and active, historic and contemporary, natural and cultural. Better yet, they’re all so close to each other — and all so close to you.

Key Stats:

- Consumers exposed to our advertising in NY were 6x more likely to actually visit Connecticut than those who weren’t exposed (new Arrivalist data for Spring/Summer 2018 campaign).
- All 169 towns, all regions and 1,100+ hotels, restaurants, attractions, arts organizations, and museums, have been prominently featured in our PR/advertising efforts.
- Our CTvisit.com website now attracts more than 5 million visitors a year — driven by search marketing, social media, content marketing, PR, email marketing, influencer marketing and a variety of other tactics.
We continually optimize a diverse array of modern marketing tactics.

**Paid Media |** Utilize real-time data/advanced algorithms to optimize ROI.
- Generated **280M impressions** in 2018 alone through paid support of content marketing, search, social media, video marketing, TripAdvisor, streaming radio, out-of-home, branded content placements and others.
- Created an **array of campaigns** including the core campaign, Find Fall Faster, Play in CT, Aer Lingus/TripAdvisor promo, Take Your Time, Fan Favorite Town, and What's On Your Connecticut Bucket List?
- Honored with over **30 awards** for advertising, PR and web development since 2014.

**Website Hub |** Launched state-of-the-art CTvisit.com in 2016; refresh daily.
- Increased site traffic **420%** — from less than 1M in 2011 to more than 5M visitors a year in 2018.
- Doubled number of partners featured on site — from less than 2,000 in 2011 to more than 4,000 in 2018.
- Send an average of **3M referrals to partners** each year from links on thousands of CTvisit.com pages.
- Add ~8 articles monthly — nearly each one featuring activities in all 5 regions.
- Promote all sectors of the tourism industry — with 48.6% of content highlighting arts, culture and history.

**Search Marketing |** Deploy advanced Search Engine Optimization/Search Engine Marketing (SEO/SEM) strategies to drive website traffic.
- Increased organic traffic to CTvisit.com from search **175%** since 2012.
- Grew paid search traffic to CTvisit.com **2,807%** since 2012.

**Social Media |** Actively engage consumers on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.
- Increased social media engagement (likes, comments, shares) by **483%** over 2015.
- Increased organic traffic to the website from social sites by **2.5x** over 2014.

**Public Relations |** Secure high-profile, positive coverage from local, regional and national media.
- Earned more than **1B media impressions and ~1,000 story placements** each year for past 3 years.
- Spotlight more than **900 different tourism partners** in press hits on average each year.
- Organize/host media/blogger familiarization (“fam”) tours. Work with partners; monitor coverage.
- Secured high-profile placements in leading outlets — including USA Today, Forbes, Smithsonian Magazine, Travel & Leisure, AFAR, and Conde Nast Traveler.

**Content Marketing |** Create, publish and drive viewers to hundreds of stories on an array of topics.
- Create/promote around **50 content pieces per month** that drive nearly 50% of the traffic to CTvisit.
- Promote/include links to **1,000+ CT partners** (attractions, hotels, restaurants and towns) from articles.

**Influencer Marketing |** Increase the authenticity of our message by partnering with other influencers.
- Develop ongoing relationships with local experts/key bloggers in Connecticut.
- Publish and promote 2-4 influencer-crafted articles per month.

**In-State Marketing |** While we spend a majority of our media budget out of state, we do focus a quarter of the budget on a variety of in state initiatives, including the following non-digital tactics:
- Create/run **Open House Day**, which attracted 225 partners and 564 story placements in 2018 alone.
- Installed permanent, in-state displays: wall murals at Bradley Airport; billboards at New London ferry terminal.
- Secured a Stamford “station domination”, saturating our message on every billboard, mural, poster or ad space at the train station—both indoors and out—in 2014 and 2015.
- Collaborate with WRCH-FM on weekly segment called “Tell Me Something Good About Connecticut.”
- Partner with FOX61 to promote ongoing campaign: “What’s on Your Connecticut Bucket List?”
- Created CTvisit.com window decals that local partners are using to cross sell other attractions in CT.
E-Mail Marketing | Send updates twice monthly to more than 100,000 opt-in, engaged consumers.
- Redesigned best-practices templates which have dramatically increased engagement/conversion.
- More than doubled open rate from 2014 to 2018. Continue to grow list through web/social sign ups.

Conventions/Conferences | Help fund CT Convention & Sports Bureau to market state as a premier destination for meetings and events.
- Booked events in 2018 that will generate future sales revenues of $72M.
- Contribute an additional $4.9M in state tax revenues from 2018 bookings alone.

Regional Marketing Support | Annually connect personally with 3,000+ partners to support their growth.
- Reach out to partners with PR opportunities to be included in international/national/regional travel press.
- Created/manage Regional Marketing Program which involves towns/organizations/partners and connects with over 3,000 partners annually to solicit input and help them maximize our no-cost marketing programs.
- Host biannual Strategic Marketing Input sessions which invite partners to review strategies/offer input.

Additional Tourism Partner Support | Provide additional support for the growth of our tourism businesses.
- Host Governor’s Conference on Tourism which offers networking/professional development opportunities.
- Sponsor the Governor’s Tourism Industry Awards to recognize outstanding contributors to the industry.
- Launch/maintain the Tourism Industry Partner Portal — an online hub reached via CTvisit offering all industry partners a wealth of information about the programs and opportunities with the Office of Tourism.
- Manage industry email outreach to more than 4,000 partners. Continually update email list.

Market Research | Conduct ongoing studies to glean consumer insights, monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) and track impact.
- Leverage Arrivalist® tracking, a state-of-the-art GPS-driven analytics tool, which allows us to see which media/content are driving actual visits to the state.
- Conduct Attitudes and Awareness Study, a survey conducted by a third-party organization annually that tracks changes in many key performance indicators over time.
- Conduct a tourism economic impact study every other year through Tourism Economics, which tracks the impact of tourism on Connecticut jobs, tax revenues, and business revenues.

International Tourism | Encourage international travelers to visit Connecticut.
- Promote Connecticut at major international trade shows, at least five annually.
- Chair Discover New England board (consortium of all New England state tourism directors).
- Host 10-20 familiarization (fam) tours for international media and tour operators each year.

Program management
Tourism marketing programs are managed by eight Connecticut employees, two Connecticut vendor agencies and a Tourism Advisory Council made up of industry hotel, attraction and cultural association professionals.
- Internal team of eight DECD/COT employees manage overall strategy, all programs outlined in this fact sheet, partner outreach, media inquiries, daily website activities/reporting, Regional Marketing Program, Big E, Open House Day, Governor’s Tourism Conference, market research initiatives and KPI collection.
- Avon-based Adams & Knight, one of the state’s largest woman-owned marketing firms, has led strategy/creative since 2014 (beginning 2 years after brand launch) and PR/social media since 2016.
- Norwalk-based Media Storm, a full-service media agency, has managed media strategy, buying and reporting since 2012.
- The Tourism Advisory Council, a board made up of industry leaders from around the state, reviews and guides Connecticut Office of Tourism strategies and initiatives.
Just a few samples of our diverse creative executions

Out of Home “Station Dominations”: e.g., Manhattan Subway, Grand Central

In-State and Out-of-State Highway Billboards

Bus Wraps Traveling In- and Out-of-State

Rich Media/Mobile/Social/Content Marketing

Traveler Resources Managed: WEB: CTvisit.com  |  FACEBOOK: Visit Connecticut  |  TWITTER: @CTvisit
INSTAGRAM: @CTvisit  |  PINTEREST: VisitCT
Partner Resources Managed: WEB: CTvisit.com CMS Partner Access  |  New Tourism Partner Portal

For more information, contact the Connecticut Office of Tourism, Department of Economic and Community Development, 450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 5, Hartford, CT 06103
(860) 500-2300  |  www.CTvisit.com