



FISCAL YEAR 2022

ANNUAL REPORT

EXPLORE ST. LOUIS

FY 22

AMERICA'S CENTER
America's Center Expansion Groundbreaking
NVT GEN

AMERICA'S CENTER
America's Center Expansion Groundbreaking
NVT GEN

TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS



\$1,201

Tourist's taxes save St. Louisans money.

Taxes paid by tourists reduce the tax burden of each St. Louis household by an estimated \$1,201. (2020 D.K. Shifflet/IHS Markit)

78%

Tourism is good for the community.

St. Louis bested Chicago, KC and Memphis with 78% of residents agreeing that tourism benefits the region according to the 2022 St. Louis Ad Impact Study.



300

We represent.

Explore St. Louis mobilizes some 300 volunteers to serve guests at six visitor centers throughout the region, and at the America's Center Convention Complex.



Tourism is among the largest employers in the region.

St. Louis' tourism industry supports the jobs of 91,000 hospitality professionals throughout the region, and 3,400 at America's Center.

I'M FROM THE LOU AND I'M

PROUD

Civic pride among St. Louisans was higher than KC, Chicago and Memphis with **66%** agreeing with the statement.



\$210M

We're building for the future.

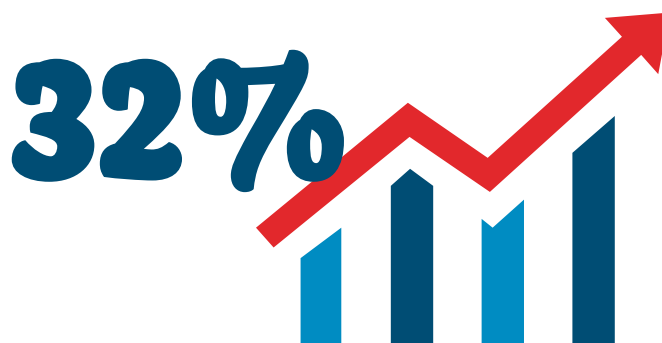
AC Next Gen is a \$210 million project in the heart of St. Louis' downtown innovation district.

WWW



We serve as St. Louis' virtual front door.

Explore St. Louis' website hosted 3.6 million visits in FY22.



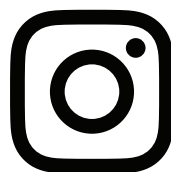
We're growing.

Pandemic aside, visitation to St. Louis grew 32% in the last 10 years from 21.6 million to 28.2 million in 2019.

877,000

We connect Partners.

We generated 877,000 clicks for tourism entities featured on explorestlouis.com.



We're social.

Our social media platforms including Facebook, IG, Twitter and TikTok racked up 30,909,171 impressions and have a combined following of 361,778.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

St. Louis' tourism industry continued recovering from the depths of the pandemic, fueled by a strong demand for leisure travel and large group event activity at America's Center. Hotel occupancy in St. Louis city and St. Louis County improved 36% over the prior FY to 52.2% and RevPAR was up approximately 79%, reaching \$64.61. As encouraging as these numbers are, they remain below levels experienced prior to the pandemic, as the recovery of midweek business travel and corporate event activity has lagged.

With the support of the Missouri Division of Tourism and a grant from the EDA, our leisure marketing campaign was instrumental in driving leisure demand year-round from feeder markets within a 350-mile radius of St. Louis. The campaign features well-known St. Louisans, including Sterling K. Brown, Jenna Fischer and Nikki Glaser, and it achieved some of the highest awareness and impact assessments we've ever experienced. We augmented our paid media with earned media by hosting 22 journalists and influencers who filed more than 175 stories, reaching millions of prospects in our target markets.

Event activity at America's Center improved sharply over the year prior by hosting 52 events, generating 185,418 contracted room nights and attendance of 395,034 delegates. Amateur sporting competitions, including three Capital Sports volleyball tournaments and USA Fencing's October North American Cup, played a key role in our recovery. Among the events we hosted were conventions for several St. Louis-based organizations, including AB InBev, Dot Foods and the Electrical Services Apparatus Association (EASA). The Dome at America's Center also played host to several high-profile events, including the Rolling Stones in September and WWE Royal Rumble in January.

Our world class tourism assets continued to build momentum with the opening of The Factory, a live music venue in Chesterfield, the Food Hall at City Foundry in Midtown and the inaugural NASCAR Cup Race at World Wide Technology Raceway. The arts scene in St. Louis reached new heights with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis-commissioned *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, which opened the 2021 season at The Metropolitan Opera in New York, followed by the world premiere of STAGES St. Louis' production of *Karate Kid – The Musical* at the newly opened Kirkwood Performing Arts Center.

In May, we broke ground on the much-anticipated AC Next Gen project after receiving delayed bond authorization from the St. Louis County Council in April. Construction is underway and setting the stage for an exciting new era of convention activity in St. Louis. The year was capped off with the introduction of new non-stop flights to and from Frankfurt, Germany, on Lufthansa, which connect travelers throughout Europe directly with St. Louis.

Our industry has once again proven its resilience by working through an unprecedented public health crisis, and our future is promising. We could not succeed without the amazing support of our 900 plus partner organizations and approximately 90,000 hardworking hospitality professionals who make the magic happen for millions of guests each year. You are simply sensational, and I can't thank you enough for your tireless commitment to our guests and to making St. Louis shine!



Kitty Ratcliffe
President, Explore St. Louis

PROMOTING ST. LOUIS

Hosted

22

JOURNALISTS

— resulting in —

177

stories about tourism
in our target markets

Earned media reach
of over

\$1B

NATIONALLY

LEISURE MARKETING

Our St. Louis celebrity TV campaign featuring Sterling K. Brown, John Goodman, Jenna Fischer, Andy Cohen, Nikki Glaser and others continues to be an entertaining and engaging way to share the St. Louis story. Seasonal campaigns run throughout the year. During spring and summer, a media mix consisting of TV (including during Cardinal games on Bally Sports), Cardinals radio and digital advertising run in large feeder markets such as Chicago, Memphis and Kansas City, as well as smaller markets closer to St. Louis like Champaign, Springfield and Peoria in Illinois, as well as Springfield and Cape Girardeau in Missouri and Paducah, Kentucky. During FY22, TV and radio campaigns also ran in the St. Louis DMA to encourage staycations.

During the fall season, our celebrity TV spots ran in smaller markets and digital advertising was event-based, designed to attract visitors for the weekend. New holiday television spots were created last year to promote the wonderful array of holiday activities in St. Louis such as the numerous light displays and popular activities like the Polar Express and Winterfest at the Arch. During winter months, no broadcast airs, but the ongoing digital campaign consisting of Google Key Words, Display and Retargeting Ads and paid social media (Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok) continues to drive traffic to explorestlouis.com and encourage winter visitation.

An ad effectiveness study is currently underway for FY22's campaigns; however, early results show very positive numbers. Campaign awareness in our collection of smaller surrounding markets reached 62%. Campaign awareness in large markets was impressive as well, including Memphis (62%), Chicago (45%) and St. Louis (73%). Most importantly, the impact the ads had on perceptions and image attributes were some of the best we've ever experienced, ranking our ads among the top 10% evaluated by SMARI.

We also asked a basic question of all respondents in each market – an agreement scale on this question: I am proud of the city where I live. Pride among St. Louisans was higher than Kansas City, Chicago and Memphis, with 66% strongly or somewhat agreeing with the statement.

The FY22 spring advertising campaign reached nearly

8 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS

The creative ranked in the top 10% in almost all markets for communicating fun, spirit, vitality, and energy as well as being family-friendly.



MEETINGS & CONVENTION MARKETING

Welcome to the Future of Meetings

To generate excitement around the AC Next Gen project, an advertising campaign highlighting the improvements and enhancements taking place at America's Center appeared in industry outlets such as PCMA's Convene, ASAE's Associations Now and MPI's The Meeting Professional, among several others. While the campaign was predominantly digital, several print ads also ran. An enhanced advertising package with Cvent, e-communications to potential clients and a newly designed tradeshow booth helped raise awareness of St. Louis with meeting planners and other decision makers.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Explore St. Louis is the virtual front door for the St. Louis region. Through various digital platforms, we engage a broad audience, influencing perceptions about St. Louis, giving visibility to local events and attractions and telling the story of what makes St. Louis an outstanding destination for leisure and business travel as well as meetings and conventions.

Our targeted e-communications are designed to spur action, whether digging deeper into a story on growth in regional travel in our weekly 5 in 5, or booking a trip to St. Louis to enjoy an event highlighted in our monthly "trip trigger" email. On social, we leverage each outlet to drive engagement. Impressions on Facebook in FY22 reached 24,632,188, on Twitter we hit 925,760, Instagram reached 2,801,984 and on TikTok, we clocked 2,549,239 impressions. On explorestlouis.com, we focus on delivering actionable, relevant content. Our top-performing page is consistently 25 Things To Do. Our visitors are hungry for event information and ideas on what to do while they're in St. Louis, along with kid-friendly activities and outdoor adventures. In FY22, the site saw a significant uptick in engagement, with 3,618,651 sessions (up 21.76% from FY21), 2,720,565 users (up 20.33% from FY21) and 6,562,951 pageviews (up 29.81% from FY21).

PUBLIC RELATIONS

During FY22, Explore St. Louis' media outreach efforts resulted in over one billion earned media impressions. We hosted 22 journalists, curating experiences that netted positive stories in national and regional outlets. Nationally, St. Louis was touted in publications ranging from Forbes Travel to Men's Journal to Condé Nast Traveler with a media circulation of 1,043,005,955. From our food scene to the groundbreaking for AC Next Gen, positive stories on St. Louis appeared in national outlets 177 times during FY22. Regionally, Explore St. Louis and the Dome at America's Center received extensive coverage, with the Rolling Stones concert, the WWE Royal Rumble, Nikki Glaser Day and the AC Next Gen groundbreaking leading regional coverage that received a cumulative 625 media hits through FY22 in digital, print, radio and broadcast outlets.

In an MSN article on drivable destinations, writer Monica Fish called St. Louis out as "one of the best places in the U.S. to experience Midwest Americana, a vibrant downtown, a National Park, award-winning new restaurants, microbreweries, and a rich array of cultural venues all in one destination." We couldn't have said it better ourselves.

The meeting of the future is closer than you think.

St. Louis' \$210 million upgrade of America's Center includes a 61,000 square foot ballroom, expansive outdoor green space and a state-of-the-art hybrid meeting broadcast stage.

The GBAC STAR accredited facility is set against the backdrop of a world-class city in the heart of downtown St. Louis' innovation center. We're not just looking ahead. We're looking forward.

To learn more, contact us at sales@explorestlouis.com.

[explorestlouis.com/forward](https://www.explorestlouis.com/forward)

explore st.louis

PR Highlights

Project Fire

PBS pit master Steven Raichlen shot the entire fourth season of his barbecue-focused cooking show, *Project Fire*, at Union Station in November. Featuring local chefs and restaurants, the show highlighted St. Louis favorites, including pork steaks and t-ravs.

NYC Media Blitz

In March, Chief Marketing Officer Brian Hall and VP of Communications Cat Neville hit the road for New York. Over a whirlwind two days, they met with about a dozen national reporters, pitching stories on St. Louis with an eye toward enticing them to travel to the Gateway City for a media visit.

German FAM

On June 1, as the first direct Lufthansa flight touched down at Lambert St. Louis Airport, we were readying our team to host a contingent of German travel planners and writers. The group was treated to a full St. Louis experience, including a trip up in the Arch, an in-depth look at the St. Louis Sound exhibit at the Missouri History Museum, a taste of Ted Drewes and brewery tours at Anheuser-Busch and Urban Chestnut.

While we hosted the FAM in St. Louis, Explore St. Louis president Kitty Ratcliffe and a delegation of more than 40 officials from St. Louis touched down in Frankfurt. She hosted a media briefing at the IMEX conference with 17 European meeting and travel journalists, highlighting St. Louis as an international destination for leisure and business travel.

ASSISTING OUR MEETING & CONVENTION CUSTOMERS



DESTINATION SALES

Industry sources have reported widely that demand for future event activity was impacted around the world by concerns stemming from the pandemic. However, as FY22 progressed, signs of "green shoots" emerged as lead activity picked up substantially and optimism for the industry's recovery took hold. Explore St. Louis took several steps to build on its sales outreach activity by refining deployment strategy and adding several new positions focused on business development among large corporate and association accounts in key territories.

Sales strategies were designed with two overriding goals in mind. First, offsetting pace deficiencies in future years impacted by the pandemic. Second, mining for new customers that match the physical characteristics of AC Next Gen, the expansion and enhancement of America's Center that broke ground this year. The team had considerable success securing future commitments for America's Center by re-booking existing customers such as Capitol Sports, DOT Foods, Transworld Haunt Show, Presbyterian Church USA and the General Assemblies of God. Direct Selling Organizations showed resilience with several future bookings including MONAT Global (September, 2022) and Younique (July, 2024). By strategically rescheduling events postponed during the pandemic into the pace "need years," we were able to strengthen the convention calendar. Adding further to our recovery were several short-term bookings such as AB-InBev's Summer Spectacular event (May, 2022) and WWE's Royal Rumble (January, 2022).

Leading up to the groundbreaking of AC Next Gen on May 17, 2022, the team researched and assembled a database of more than 300 national accounts that align with the amenities offered by the enhancement and expansion. Presentation and marketing materials assisted team members in describing the project and creating momentum in the marketplace at high profile industry events such as PCMA (Educon and Convening Leaders), IMEX, MPI's World Education Congress and Connect.

MEET ST. LOUIS

The objective of Meet St. Louis is to understand the strategic meeting needs of clients and translate those needs – with the help of Explore St. Louis Partners – into unique, customer-focused service plans designed to make the most of their St. Louis experience.

The team kicked off the year with Leadership Team Development (LTD) in July, supporting the group's promotional and welcoming activity. This assistance allowed the organizer to register 25,000 delegates who gathered for general sessions in the Dome at America's Center, the largest venue they've met in. The American Public Works Association followed in August and included a virtual community forum in advance of the convention to encourage registration and reassure attendees of the COVID protocols in place throughout the St. Louis hospitality community and America's Center. After months of advance planning and leading the host committee, Meet St. Louis welcomed the United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation's GEOINT 2021 Summit, achieving strong attendance with robust COVID-19 protocols in place. The Association for Computing Machinery arrived in November and the Meet St. Louis team wrapped up 2021 in December, hosting members of the National Customer Advisory Board at the Ritz Carlton, St. Louis.

The winter season featured three Capitol Sports volleyball tournaments connecting thousands of athletes and their families with food, beverage, attractions and lodging options throughout the entire St. Louis metro area. The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association met at America's Center in April with an important "assist" from Hometown Hero and St. Louis Civic Pride Foundation Board Member, Asim Raza. Speaking of Hometown Heroes, the AB-InBev Summer Spectacular event took place in May at America's Center, followed in June by the St. Louis-based Electrical Apparatus Service Association (EASA) Annual Convention, with Hometown Hero "assists" from Denise Wallhermfecht at AB-InBev and Dale Shuter at EASA.

ASSISTED

257
GROUPS

including

24

CONVENTIONS
at America's Center and

27

PLANNING VISITS



The Explore St. Louis sales team booked

418,033

CONTRACTED HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS

America's Center room nights totaled 306,538, and 111,450 were hotel-only bookings.



OPERATING ST. LOUISIS' LARGEST EVENTS FACILITY

America's Center
Convention Complex hosted

52 EVENTS

generating

185,418

CONTRACTED ROOM NIGHTS

attended by an estimated

395,034

DELEGATES

Event activity at America's Center and the Dome continued recovering by building on results achieved in the prior fiscal year and approaching levels experienced prior to the pandemic. The team executed 52 events including large conventions such as the American Academy of Audiology and Seventh-day Adventists, amateur sporting competitions including the Nike Mid-East Qualifier and USA Fencing, and public events in The Dome featuring The Rolling Stones, WWE Royal Rumble, Monster Jam and AMA Supercross.

As the pace of recovery hastened, a substantial challenge we faced (along with our peers across the hospitality industry) was recruiting personnel for roles in event management, building services, trades and security. Our team responded by cross-training on tasks outside of their job descriptions and finding new ways to improve efficiency consistent with delivering superior guest experiences.

The operations team remained committed to our top priority of enhanced health and safety measures for our guests. We are proud to have earned reaccreditation from the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) receiving a 2022 STAR Facility Accreditation for cleaning and Stream Stage awards for hybrid meetings venue.

While fans and guests come to the America's Center to enjoy world class events and entertainment, the behind-the-scenes work and improvements for the center often goes unrecognized. We undertook multiple projects that included upgrades and enhancements for chillers, lighting, seating, automated systems and cooling towers. Of course, the highlight of the year was the groundbreaking of AC Next Gen where we were joined by elected officials from the City, County and State along with members of the project team to celebrate the construction commencement of this landmark project.

AMERICA'S CENTER FY2022 EVENTS

SLMPD Police Sergeant Assessment	July 10-16, 2021
Dot Foods Innovations	July 16-26, 2021
BCCA CANvention 2.0	August 16-23, 2021
APWA Public Works Expo (PWX)	August 24-September 1, 2021
2021 USGIF GEOINT Symposium	September 1-9, 2021
St. Louis Police Foundation Luncheon	September 2-7, 2021
American Gear Manufacturers Association Gear Expo	September 8-18, 2021
The Rolling Stones	September 14-27, 2021
Procter & Gamble Employee Appreciation Event	September 23-24, 2021
EFM, Inc. Gateway to Innovation	September 26-29, 2021
2021 LTD Summit	September 28-October 5, 2021
Association for Computing Machinery	October 18-20, 2021
JuicePlus + LIVE St. Louis	October 18-24, 2021
Bands of America 2021 Super Regional Championship	October 21-23, 2021
SMRP Annual Conference	October 22-29, 2021
USA Fencing – North American Cup	October 26-November 2, 2021
Missouri Bridal & Wedding Expo	October 30-31, 2021
BKD, LLP Leadership Conference & Pride Program	November 2-5, 2021
The Gateway Dirt Nationals	November 22-December 6, 2021
Hot Chocolate 15K 5K Expo	December 2-4, 2021
TEDx Talk	December 2-3, 2021
The St. Louis Auto Show	January 8-18, 2022
Dino & Dragon Stroll	January 19-23, 2022
Monster Jam	January 19-24, 2022
WWE's Royal Rumble	January 24-31, 2022
Annual St. Louis RV Vacation & Travel Show	February 1-7, 2022
2022 Dennis Lafata Gateway Bid Classic	February 8-13, 2022
Capitol Sports President's Weekend Tournament	February 12-14, 2022
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Bank Wide Town Hall	February 22-23, 2022
St. Louis Classic Gymnastics Invitational	February 23-27, 2022
Builders Home and Garden Show	February 25-March 7, 2022
ACPA – College Student Educators International Annual Convention	March 4-9, 2022
Capitol Sports MEQ	March 8-14, 2022
TransWorld Tradeshows	March 14-21, 2022
American Academy of Audiology 2022	March 25-April 2, 2022
Terrain Media Outdoor Expo	March 30-April 2, 2022
AMP'D Mobile AMA Supercross Series	April 4-10, 2022
Dot Foods Innovations 2022	April 19-29, 2022
Marian Middle School – Marian Magic	April 22-23, 2022
Missouri Bridal & Wedding Expo	April 22-24, 2022
Legacy Dance Championships St. Louis Regional	April 22-24, 2022
American Short Line & Regional Railroad Association Annual Convention	April 27-May 4, 2022
Anheuser-Busch, LLC Summer Spectacular	April 30-May 5, 2022
EFM, Inc. Gateway to Innovation	May 2-5, 2022
2022 Fan Expo (Informa Pop Culture Events Inc.)	May 10-15, 2022
CPSI National Users Conference	May 13-21, 2022
The Waterways Journal, Inc. Inland Marine Expo	May 19-26, 2022
The Wesleyan Church General Conference	May 20-25, 2022
Seventh-day Adventist 61st General Conference	May 27-June 13, 2022
Southern Gas Association 2022 Operation Conference	June 12-16, 2022
BKD, LLP Leadership Conference & Pride Program	June 19-22, 2022
2022 EASA Annual Convention	June 23-29, 2022

ENGAGING OUR PARTNERS

Engaging our partners during this past fiscal year remained a top priority for Explore St. Louis. The departmental focus on in-person engagement, recruitment of partners lost during the pandemic and outreach to community stakeholders allowed us to continue to learn how Explore St. Louis can best serve our industry during these ever-changing times. Overall, we welcomed over 60 new partners, including a number of new hotels and venues built in the region. All these efforts led to a 95% partner retention rate among our 900 partner businesses and organizations – one of the highest retention rates of any destination in the country since the pandemic began.

PARTNER CONNECTION EVENTS

As the industry and our destination returned to regular activities, the partnership department returned to hosting in-person events. Our largest in-person events returned and even smaller favorites like Coffee with Explore St. Louis were well attended. Webinars took on important topics such as corporate travel trends as well as orientation and training on the extranet. Partnership also took a strategic role supporting the St. Louis Civic Pride Foundation and hosted the new Civic Pride Explorer Series. These events gave partners the opportunity to explore new venues like City Foundry, Kirkwood Performing Arts Center and World Wide Technology Raceway.

ANNUAL MEETING

FY22 brought the Annual Meeting back to its usual in-person format, celebrating the enduring strength of our industry. Over 450 partners and stakeholders gathered at America's Center to celebrate our efforts and recognize the accomplishments of several All Stars along with over 100 Hospitality Heroes. In addition, we honored Steve Smith of The Lawrence Group as the inaugural winner of the Kim Tucci Heart of St. Louis award.

PARTNER HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

This year's celebration welcomed partners back to the America's Center to enjoy some Holiday Magic. Over 300 partners gathered in the "Jack Frost Ballroom" for delicious food, drink, dancing and holiday karaoke. Together, through the Virtual Food Drive and monetary donations at the event, we raised \$1070 for the St. Louis Area Foodbank. Combined with food donations gathered at the event, we were able to provide over 5,000 meals for local citizens and their families.

GLOBAL MEETINGS INDUSTRY DAY

Explore St. Louis again collaborated with Maritz Global Events and the St. Louis Chapter of MPI in recognition of Global Meetings Industry Day. This hybrid event was a panel discussion including local leaders and national meeting planners with a focus on how to conduct events and meetings safely. The discussion was broadcast live from the StreamStage at America's Center. The event was held on Thursday, April 7, with over 200 virtual and in-person participants.



NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK

One of the most exciting changes to our programming this year was our National Travel & Tourism Week celebration. We partnered with Channel 5 to produce a live broadcast celebrating tourism in St. Louis. With over 120 live audience members and hundreds more viewing from home, we took over the Midway at Union Station and highlighted St. Louis' new tourism developments, vibrant art scene, Hospitality Heroes and more.



We facilitate success for our more than 900 partners.

AT **95%**

OUR PARTNER RETENTION RATE
is one of the best in the country.

SELLING ST. LOUIS TO GROUPS

Room nights booked
for group travel were

UP
340
PERCENT
in FY2022

ASSISTING FILM PRODUCTIONS

The Leisure Travel Sales department also takes point for the St. Louis Film Office. In FY22, the department worked with production crews on more than 65 productions ranging from short films to reality TV shows, assisting with locations, permits and general information. The Film Office also participated in several virtual networking events and attended the Association of Film Commissioners International Cineposium virtual conference.

The Leisure Travel Sales Department (LTS) is responsible for the group tour market, both domestic and international. We assist with family reunions, military reunions, motorcoach groups and the wedding market. We facilitate tours throughout the St. Louis area, and we take to the road to promote group travel as well. Participation in various events included representing St. Louis at the Student & Youth Travel Association Conference, the National Tour Association's Travel Exchange, Travel South's International Showcase, American Bus Association's Marketplace, the U.S. Travel Association's IPW events in Las Vegas and Orlando and IMEX-Frankfurt.

As a German contingent was being hosted in St. Louis to learn more about the destination, a press conference was held at IMEX in Frankfurt by Explore St. Louis. German media was hosted and treated to St. Louis treats and information about what German visitors can experience with our world-class attractions, vibrant arts and culture scene and so much more.

Get To Know Your St. Louis, an e-newsletter directed to the travel trade highlighting a member who works in the group tour market, launched this year. The content is highly engaging and enjoys a 33% open rate.

The LTS department booked 3,557 room nights, fulfilled 33 requests for the STL Track Pack for motorcoach tours and conducted 225 scheduled appointments during trade shows with travel planners.



WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

Thanks to significant increases in leisure travel and convention activity, Visitor Services engaged in 286,643 meaningful visitor interactions in the fiscal year, doubling the activity of the prior year.

In August 2021, we resumed volunteer service at the Forest Park Visitor Center, expanding us to five visitor centers operating year-round. In October 2021, we launched seasonal visitor services at Kiener Plaza in conjunction with Gateway Arch Park Foundation and Great Rivers Greenway. By year's end, more than 100 volunteers returned to regular recurring service, filling nearly 1,500 shifts.

From first impressions at St. Louis Lambert International Airport to on-the-ground assistance at America's Center Convention Complex, our team served 52 groups and events, providing warm welcomes and helpful guidance throughout the year.

Hundreds of volunteers came out to support major special events like the Great Forest Park Balloon Race, WWE's Royal Rumble at the Dome at America's Center, NASCAR's Illinois 300 and Lufthansa's first non-stop flight from Frankfurt.

On Earth Day, St. Louis' tourism community joined forces to create the Tourism Trash Force in partnership with the Downtown St. Louis CID. Our mission was to clean the streets and help beautify St. Louis for our visitors. The event was so well received that plans are underway for future clean up days.

Visitor Services also led an effort locally to celebrate and commemorate Missouri's Bicentennial. With the Missouri Bicentennial Commission and tourism partners, we developed a series of Missouri Explorer Challenges and Ice Cream Social celebrations culminating on Statehood Day on August 22, 2021.

Each year, our team enjoys sharing holiday spirit in December. Our mascot Snowflake and a crew of early rising volunteers join STL Airport and the USO on "Green Day" the year's largest military travel day. Throughout the season, volunteers share candy canes with airport audiences who gather for St. Louis Christmas Carols Association's caroling events. At St. Louis Union Station, our visitor center team always enjoys engaging with the pajama-clad families arriving for The Polar Express. And, this season, we welcomed back locals and visitors to Kiener Plaza for Winterfest



MORE THAN
280,000
visitors engaged with our first-impression force.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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President
APRI – St. Louis Chapter



County Executive Dr. Sam Page and Mayor Tishaura O. Jones at the AC Next Gen groundbreaking



St. Louis Deputy Comptroller LaTaunia Kenner leads the AC Next Gen Coordination Team

explore **st.louis**

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