



# MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING

April 16, 2024  
11:00AM





# Advertising Agency RFP

# Draft Ad Agency RFP & Timeline

|                |                                                                           |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 04.16.24       | Draft RFP / RFP concepts discussed with marketing committee               |
| 04.25.24       | Edits to RFP made, documents sent back to Mktg Committee for final review |
| 05.01.24       | RFP published                                                             |
| 05.22.24       | Questions due                                                             |
| 05.31.24       | Responses to questions published                                          |
| 06.20.24       | Proposals due                                                             |
| 06.21.24       | Proposals distributed to Marketing Committee to review & score            |
| 06.21 to 07.03 | BLOCK TIME ON YOUR OWN                                                    |
| 07.03.24       | Marketing Committee scores due by EOD                                     |
| 07.09          | Marketing committee meets to discuss proposals, select finalists          |
| 08.06          | Finalist Interviews (times TBD); determine best agency(s)                 |
| Week of 08.12  | Contract negotiations and pricing finalized                               |
| 08.28.24       | Recommendation on agency(s) to hire made to full BOD                      |
| 09.01.24       | Contract begins                                                           |



## Public Relations Scope of Work

# PR Scope of Work

## Fiscal Year 2024 - 2025

\$100,000 Public Relations Budget includes:

- Agency Fees
- Admin Fees
- Immersion Trip

*Optional Addition:*

Photography FAM - \$15,000

Develop a small group FAM specifically featuring photographers and photojournalists with large audiences and editorial outlet relationships to showcase the beauty and culture of the region.





VISITNC  SMOKIES

# Historical Advertising Recap

Frankies  
italian trattoria



# Historical Advertising Challenges

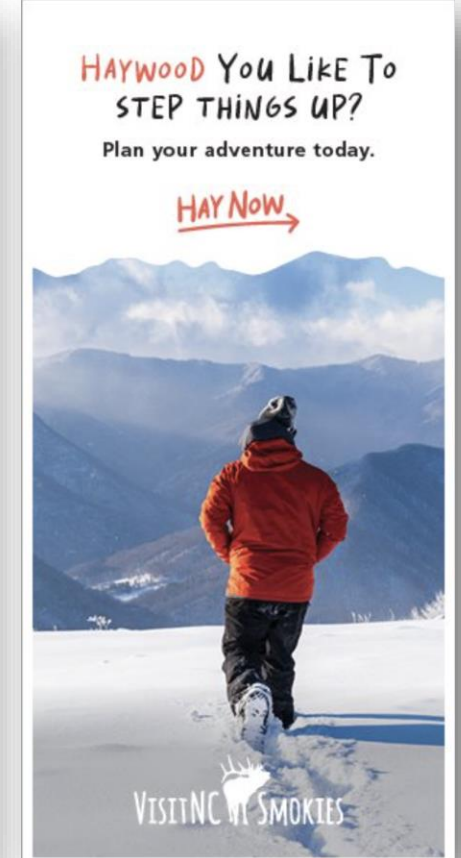
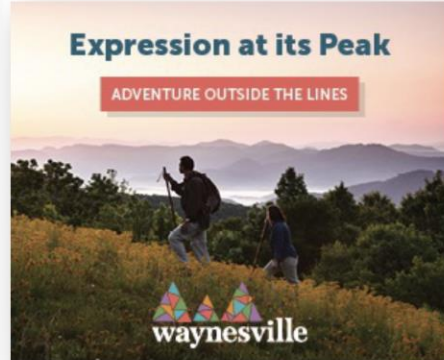
## Concerns:

1. Campaigns are disparate, leading to poor brand awareness of entire destination\*  
*[unaided awareness = 7.9%; aided awareness = 47.1%]*
2. Advertising spend to agency fee ratio is disproportionate (upside down)
3. Paying the following x 4 (5 for creative)
  - a) Account Management & Strategy
  - b) Media Management & Reporting
  - c) Creative Design

## Proposed Solution:

- If we can eliminate the duplication, we can
  - a) Invest in more advertising
  - b) Strategically invest in additional unique opportunities
  - c) Increase brand awareness for all towns and the entire destination

# 2022 CREATIVE



2023 CREATIVE

HAYWOOD You LIKE  
TO STAY IN  
MAGGIE VALLEY, NC?  
Find a Perfect Stay



MAGGIE VALLEY  
NORTH CAROLINA SMOKIES

HAYWOOD You LIKE  
TO CHILL IN  
MAGGIE VALLEY, NC?  
Explore More



MAGGIE VALLEY  
NORTH CAROLINA SMOKIES

HAYWOOD You LIKE  
TO WAKE UP IN  
WAYNESVILLE, NC?  
Plan Your Stay



waynesville

HAYWOOD You LIKE To  
SEE WHAT'S IN STORE?  
Plan your adventure today.

HAY NOW →



VISITNC.AT.SMOKIES

HAYWOOD You LIKE  
CHARM WITH YOUR ADVENTURE?  
HAY NOW → Explore Canton at  
VisitNCSmokies.com



CANTON  
NORTH CAROLINA

# Streamlining Ads – 2024 Test Creative

HAYWOOD YOU LIKE TO  
EXPERIENCE THE NC SMOKIES?

Make Haywood County your base camp for an unforgettable NC Smokies adventure! From weekends away to extended vacation stays, discover all the things you can see, and the fun you can have, in our charming mountain towns.

HAY NOW → Plan your Getaway at  
VisitNCsmokies.com.



Experience downtown Waynesville's one-of-a-kind boutiques, farm-to-table restaurants, and seasonal markets.



Witness Maggie Valley's beautiful elk in Cataloochee Valley graze the landscape and roam the hillsides with their majestic presence.



Relax on river time as you float through Canton, refreshed by the crisp, clean waters of the Pigeon River with family and friends.



After a day of adventure, climb into comfort in one of Clyde's unique lodgings, from a luxury yurt to a cozy cabin to a colorful caboose.

VISITNC W/ SMOKIES

HAYWOOD YOU LIKE TO MAKE  
NEW FRIENDS IN WAYNESVILLE, NC?

Plan Your Getaway



VISITNC W/ SMOKIES

HAYWOOD YOU LIKE TO WANDER  
IN WAYNESVILLE, NC?

Plan Your Getaway



VISITNC W/ SMOKIES

HAYWOOD YOU LIKE TO EXPLORE  
MAGGIE VALLEY, NC?

See What's Up



VISITNC W/ SMOKIES

HAYWOOD YOU LIKE TO CATCH THE  
MOMENT IN MAGGIE VALLEY, NC?

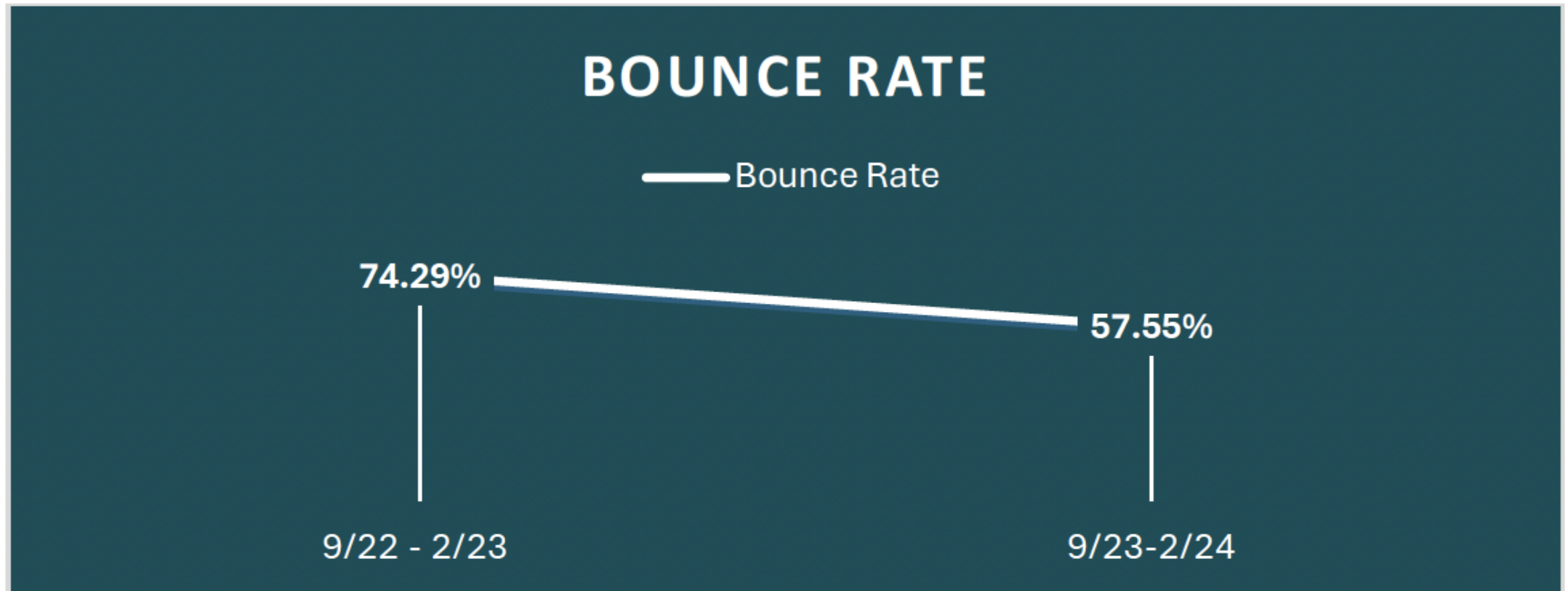
Explore More



VISITNC W/ SMOKIES

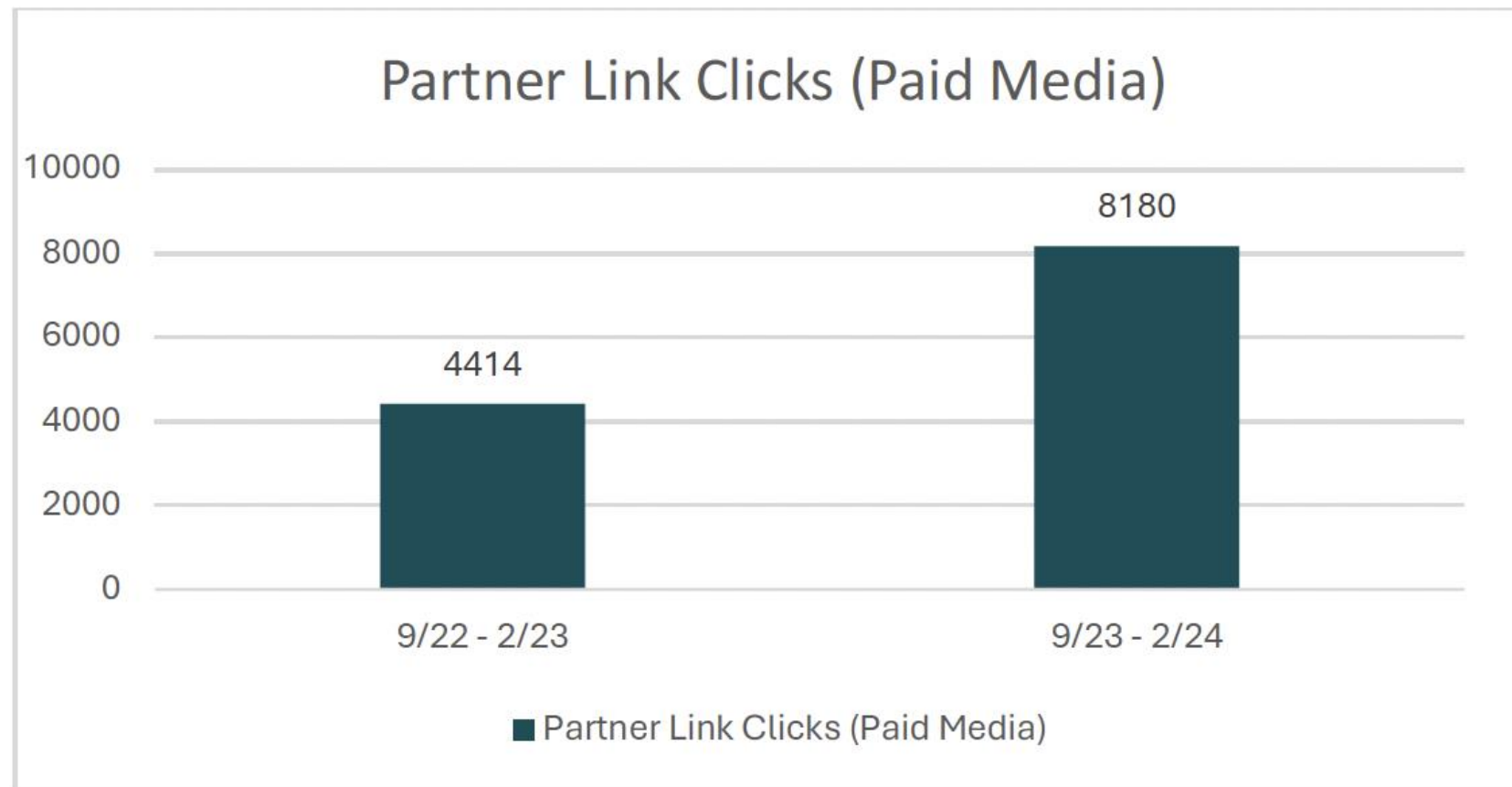
## Digital Performance Summary Sept. 2022-Feb. 2023 vs Sept. 2023 to Feb. 2024

The bounce rate (% of visitors who leave site without taking action) from paid media decreased 22.5% from 74.29% to 57.55%.



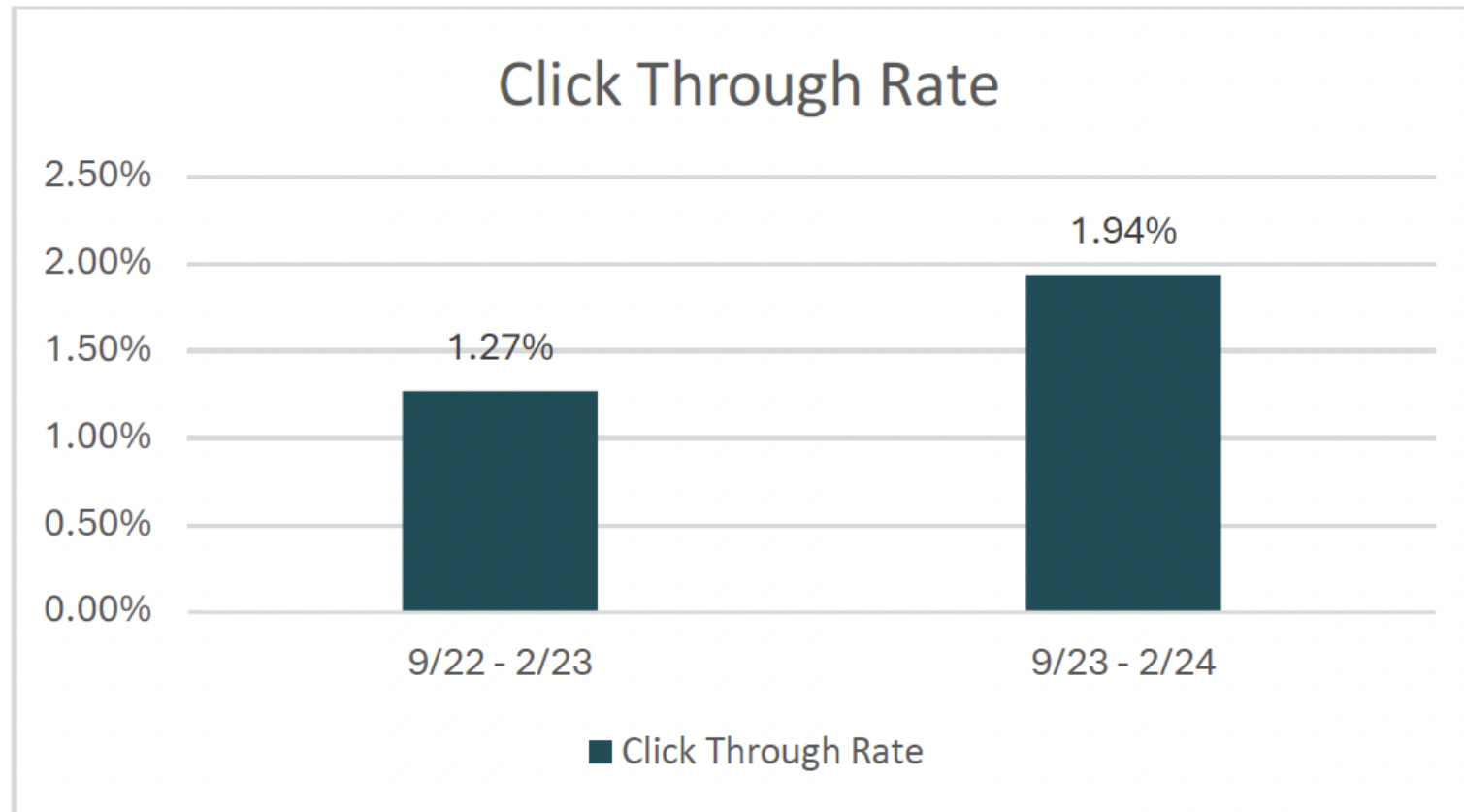
## Digital Performance Summary Sept. 2022-Feb. 2023 vs Sept. 2023 to Feb. 2024

**Clicks to partner pages from paid traffic (Google Ads and Meta) increased 85.3% YOY from 4,414 to 8,180.**



## Digital Performance Summary Sept. 2022-Feb. 2023 vs Sept. 2023 to Feb. 2024

**Paid media click-through-rates increased 52.76% YOY from 1.27% to 1.94%.**



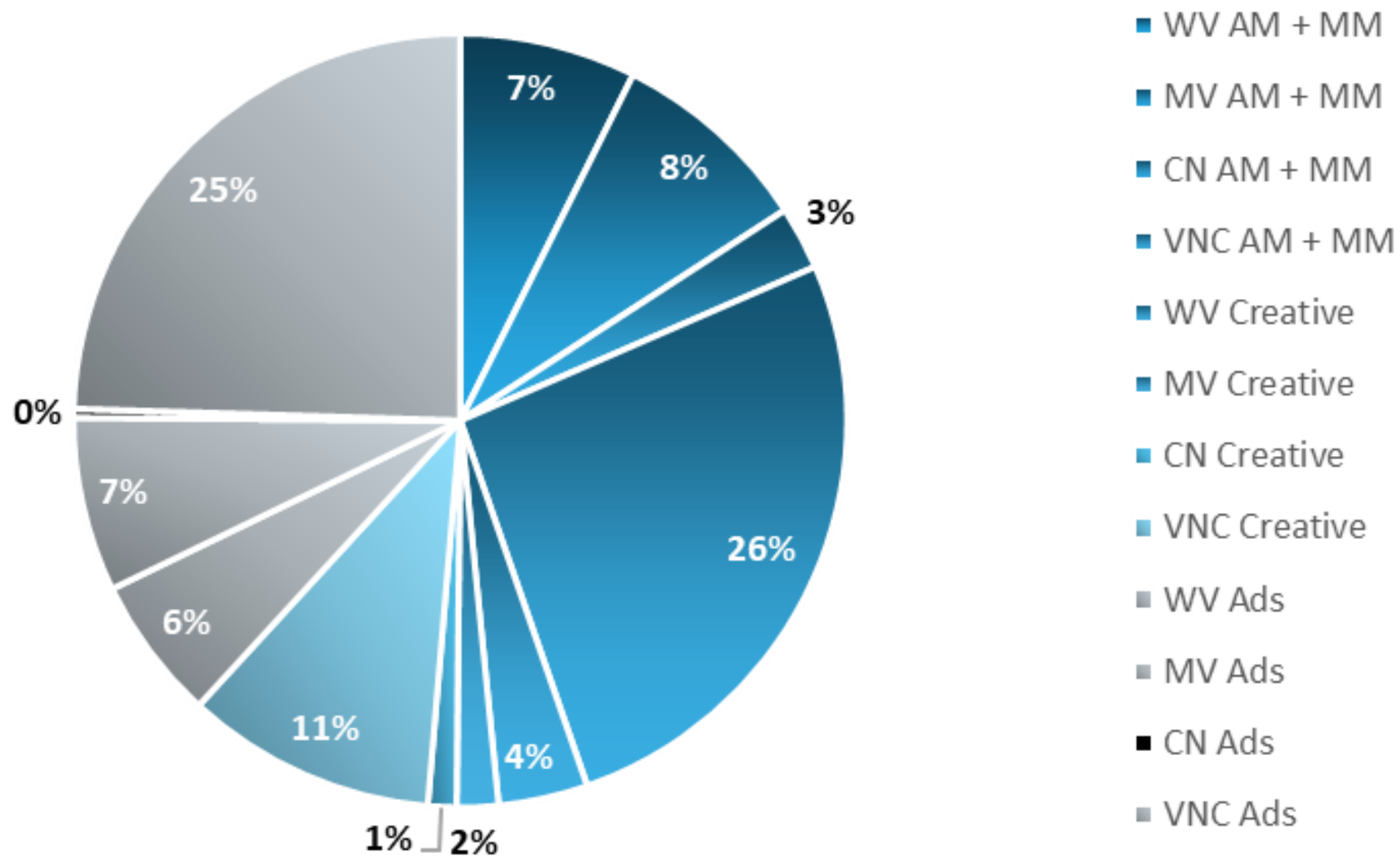


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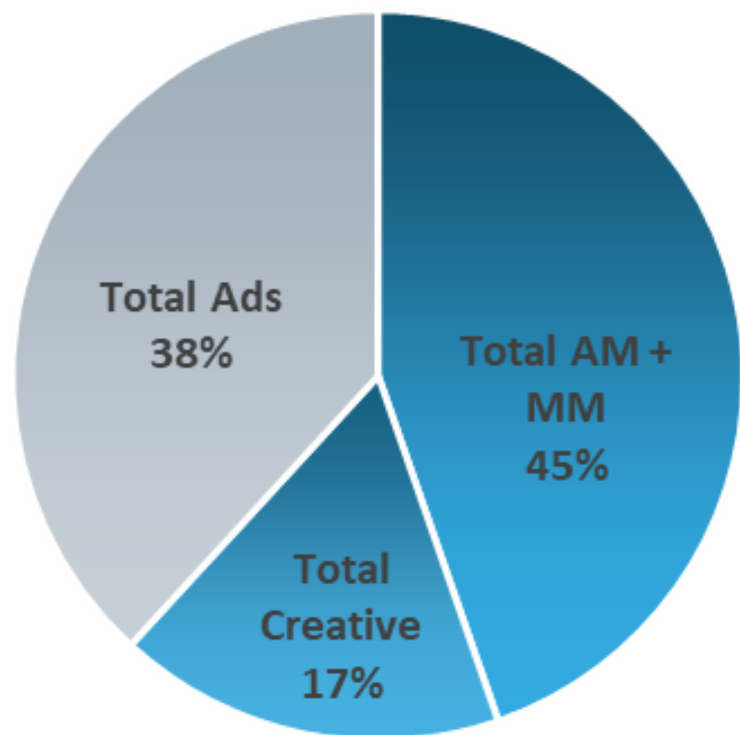
## Advertising Budget

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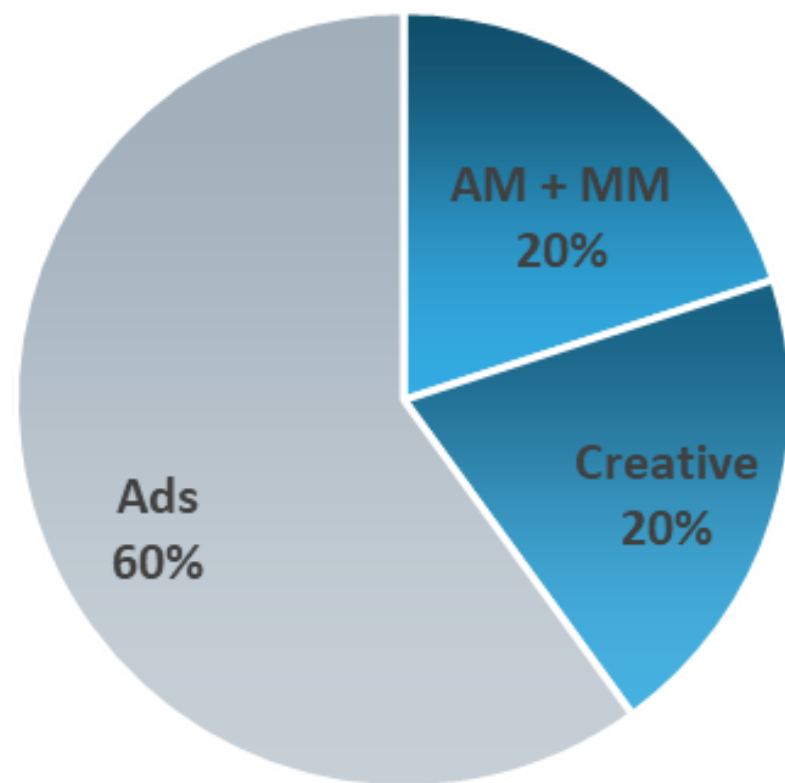
## 2022 FY Digital Ads; Account + Media Management



## 2022 Summary



## Estimated Future State FY 2024-2025



# E-mail Marketing

FY 2022/2023

Emails were sent based on budget

Maggie Valley – 9 Newsletters - \$20,350 (21,148 Subscribers)

Waynesville – 3 Newsletters - \$7,400 (5,186 Subscribers)

Canton – 2 Newsletters - \$4,600 (187 Subscribers)



26% decrease in spend & 63% increase in messages sent

FY 2023/2024

Emails were streamlined

12 Newsletters – now sent every month - \$24,000 (45,838 Subscribers)



**Maggie Valley Festival Frenzy**  
It's festival time in Maggie Valley with happenings all spring and summer long. The annual Southeastern Mini Truckin' Nationals will celebrate its 30th year right here at the Maggie Valley Festival Grounds and runs from April 19 to April 21. Then, immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere of the second annual Bobo Hoope Festival at the festival grounds on May 11 and May 12, featuring live music, vendors of all kinds, games, and more trucks (of the food variety). But, the excitement doesn't stop there! Amp up the energy at the first ever World Wide Beatbox Festival, May 16 to May 19, at the festival grounds. This epic event will feature live solo, duo, and crew performances, vendors, and tents for all age competitors. Don't miss out on these unforgettable celebrations in Maggie Valley.

Discover Maggie Valley



**Stop and Smell the Wildflowers**  
Embark on enchanting outdoor experiences and celebrate the vibrant beauty of a Haywood County spring. Take part in the Big Creek Wildflower Hikes, where you can join guided tours into the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Led by local enthusiast Donna Machen, revel in the diversity of spring wildflowers along the Big Creek Watershed trails on April 9 and 13, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm. Or, explore the beauty of Corneille Bryan Native Garden on the Lake Junaluska Wildflower Walks. Enjoy guided walks and discover the array of wildflowers that adorn Lake Junaluska, every Wednesday from March 27 to May 8 at 1:00 PM.

Explore Outdoors



**Take it Easy in Appalachia**  
Join us from April 18 to 20 for Carolina Heritage Weekend—a multi-day celebration of our mountainous region's rich culture. Start the festivities Thursday night with Folkmoor Live, featuring traditional music, dance, and storytelling from Appalachian performers. On Saturday, immerse yourself in the Mountain Market, where local artisans, performers, and demonstrators will showcase their craft. Then as the evening sets in, join us for the Haywood Made Celebration where you can indulge in artisanal crafts, culinary delights, and live entertainment. Carolina Heritage Weekend promises an unforgettable celebration of our mountainous region's rich culture. Don't miss out on this immersive experience!

Check Out Our Events

## Staff Recommendation:

One singular ad campaign strategy and creative – still highlighting unique towns as appropriate

This evolution will lead to

1. A shift in our investment from agency fees to ad spend
2. Increased brand awareness
3. Resulting in overall better results for all five towns and the entire destination



# FY 2024/2025 Proposed Budget

| MARKETING & SALES                                  |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Advertising &amp; Marketing</b>                 | <b>\$1,209,000</b> |
| <i>NJF Annual PR Contract</i>                      | <i>\$100,000</i>   |
| <i>PR Enhancement – Photography Fam</i>            | <i>\$15,000</i>    |
| <i>3-month temporary digital ads</i>               | <i>\$57,000</i>    |
| <i>Agency fee for 3-month digital</i>              | <i>\$43,000</i>    |
| <i>Visit NC Co-op</i>                              | <i>\$35,000</i>    |
| <i>Visit NC Travel Guide</i>                       | <i>\$20,000</i>    |
| <i>Our State</i>                                   | <i>\$30,000</i>    |
| <i>NC Smokies Ice Fest</i>                         | <i>\$18,000</i>    |
| <i>In-Market Advertising</i>                       | <i>\$10,000</i>    |
| <i>Oct-June New Ad Campaign (including agency)</i> | <i>\$658,000</i>   |
| <i>Photo &amp; Video &amp; Production</i>          | <i>\$70,000</i>    |
| <i>Brand Activation</i>                            | <i>\$55,000</i>    |
| <i>Contingency</i>                                 | <i>\$45,000</i>    |
| <i>Advertising Support</i>                         | <i>\$53,000</i>    |

| <b>MARKETING &amp; SALES, cont</b>         |                    |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Web Technology                             | \$15,000           |
| Media Relations, Influencers & Press Trips | \$20,000           |
| Visitor Guides                             | \$50,000           |
| Collateral + other printing                | \$12,000           |
| Promotional Items                          | \$10,000           |
| Postage - Fulfillment                      | \$20,000           |
| Dues & Subscriptions                       | \$16,000           |
| Trade Shows & Travel                       | \$10,000           |
| Research                                   | \$120,000          |
| Community Relations                        | \$4,000            |
| NC Smokies Ice Fest                        | \$30,000           |
| 3% Grants - Promo                          | \$0                |
| <b>Total Marketing &amp; Sales</b>         | <b>\$1,516,000</b> |

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| 3% Grants - Promo                          | \$0                |
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| Revenue Source   |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 3% Occupancy Tax | \$1,131,050        |
| 1% Occupancy Tax | \$224,000          |
| Fund Balance*    | \$160,950          |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>\$1,516,000</b> |

*\*\$79,000 from TMP; \$55,000 for brand activation;  
\$15,000 PR enhancement; \$11950 IFW*



National Travel & Tourism Week  
May 19 – 25, 2024

# Introducing: Mountain Mornings

**Mountain Mornings** will be a quarterly meeting hosted by the Haywood County TDA to give local tourism-related businesses a chance to come together and share ideas.

This will be an hour-long morning gathering at a local diner or coffee shop, where tourism-related businesses can come to network and brainstorm innovative ways to collaborate. We will guide the discussion and also share projects the HCTDA is working on in these meet-ups.

**Kick-Off Date: Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8AM |  
Location TBD**





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## Next Marketing Committee Meetings

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# Next Marketing Committee Meeting

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## *Virtual*

- May 2, 2024
- 11:00 am
- May 30, 2024
- 3:00 pm



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Thank You  
For Your Time

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