

S o c i a l M e d i a

Facebook

Followers 1,975
 Reach 25,725
 Average Reach/post 807
 Likes per post 8.19
 Followers 73% women

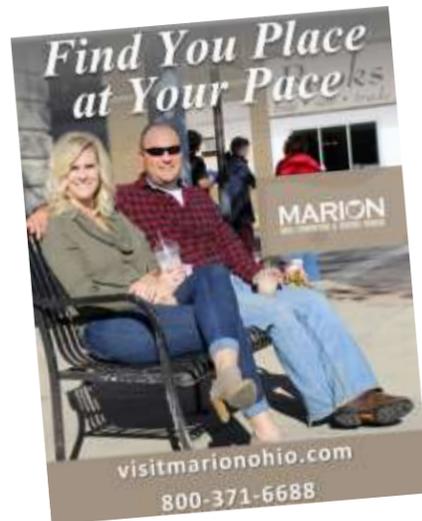


Twitter

Followers 929
 New Followers 44
 Following 337
 Followers 57% women
 67% married

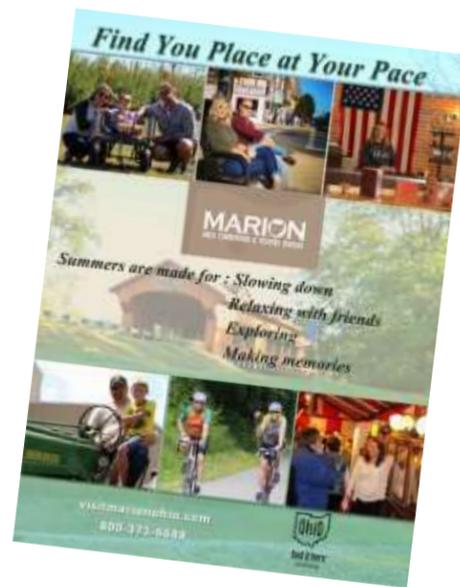
VisitMarionOhio.com

Top 5 web page visits:
 Home page, Calendar, Eaterarian Trail,
 Cultural Corridor, About Us



Advertising Campaign

2018 was the second year for our "Find Your Place at Your Pace" advertising theme. Ad placements included Ohio Magazine, Heart of Ohio Magazine, OhioTraveler.com, Seasonal Guides, Ohio Camper guide, the Ohio State Travel Guide, and Experience Columbus Travel Guide, plus promotional items such as ink pens and coffee mugs.



2018 Annual Report



Executive Director Mark Holbrook
 Office Coordinator Sarah Stalter

Marion County Commissioners
 Andy Applefeller
 Kerr Murray
 Ken Stiverson

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Chairperson Bev Ford, Palace Theatre
 Vice-Chairperson Kathy Wink, Goodwill Industries
 Secretary Cindy Wood, Marion County Fairgrounds
 Treasurer Jean Obenour, Custom Professional Accounting
 Board members
 Ellen Messenger, Tri Rivers Career Center
 Hal Clase, All Occasions Catering
 Nathan Riddle, Nathan's Barbershop
 Mayor Scott Schertzer, City of Marion
 Mary Hamby, Fairfield Inn & Suites
 George Lawrence, Lawrence Orchard
 Joe Sansotta, Sansotta's Quick Italian
 Jeff Manley



Vision to Reality

Driving two hours for a gem and jewelry show in the Fairgrounds Coliseum, loading the car with family and heading to Lawrence Orchard for a day of apple picking, attending a conference at Marion Technical College, spending the weekend in Marion to see a national touring artist at the Palace Theatre, taking a leisurely ride with girlfriends to have lunch at an Eaterarian Trail restaurant, taking in a visit to the Wyandot Popcorn Museum as part of a seniors group. This is what tourism looks like in Marion County.

While many of us think of tourism as grand vacations to famous destinations, the truth is the majority of travel in the United States are weekend getaways and day trips. This fact explains why tourism is booming in Marion County. With a host of fascinating attractions, memorable local eateries, and a growing number of special events, more and more people in Ohio and beyond are choosing to make Marion a destination. Double digit increases in hotel stays and numbers of visitors prove that we are doing something right in our community.

That something right is the growing pride in Marion and a belief that we have something unique and special to offer visitors. Combined with a spirit of hard work and imagination, it is no wonder that tourism growth in Marion in 2018 was almost three times that of the state average. All of this before the Harding Presidential Center opens in 2020 and new attractions like the Explore-It-Torium children's museum come online later this year. There is great reason to be optimistic about the future in our community and tourism growth is an early indicator of substantial economic growth here in Marion. As we look back on the positive data for 2018, it is encouraging to know that this is just the beginning of a rebirth in our community led by industrious, creative, dedicated people who are making more than a difference, they are making a future for Marion.

Mark Holbrook
Executive Director, Marion Area CVB



Annual Tourism Breakfast

On May 11, some 100 people gathered to celebrate tourism in Marion County at the annual breakfast. Part of the event includes honoring those who have made significant contributions to the tourism industry in our community. Receiving the Customer Service Star Award was Jon Andersen of the Harding Presidential site for his work in researching the Hardings and bringing those stories to the public. The Tourism Ambassador Award, given to a person who has been instrumental in bringing visitors to our community over a period of years was presented to Mike Nicolosi of the Marion Popcorn Festival for his many years of involvement in the single largest tourism event in the County.



Local Events bring Visitors to Marion

Marion continues to attract new events to the area while maintaining a host of ongoing events that generate thousands of visitors. New events in 2018 included the International Gem & Jewelry Show in March and October that brought hundreds of vendors and shoppers to the Fairgrounds Coliseum. Newer events like Wings & Wheels, the Blues & BBQ Festival, and the Ohio Buckeye Classic Tractor Show grew their attendance. The Palace Theatre's touring artist season included *Flatt Lonesome*, *Lone Raven*, *One Night in Memphis*, and *Ambrosia* and *Orleans* in a double concert, and *Diamond Rio*, bringing many visitors from out of town, many staying overnight in Marion.

Board & Staff Retreat

On June 15, the Marion Area CVB board and staff convened a retreat to update our mission statement, create a vision statement, and develop core values for the organization.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Marion Area Convention and Visitors Bureau will work with passion to build tourism around the diverse experiences found in the Marion area.

VISION STATEMENT:

Within the next decade, the Marion Area CVB will be the driver of collaboration and growth amid a safe, thriving community - one in which the residents, local organizations, business owners and youth advocate with enthusiasm and pride for the authentic, not-to-be-missed Marion experience that they have helped to create.

CORE VALUES

Passion	Collaboration
Vision	Connection
Involvement	Diversity
Optimism	Innovation
Family-centric	Honesty
Friendly	

Visitor Info Packets

Distributed almost 3,000 packets to visitors, vendors, and event participants at 27 events.

Visitor Guide

30,000 printed, distributed through the Travel Information Centers in Ohio, Travel Plazas on the Ohio Turnpike, Ohio Travel Pavilion, and advertising reader responses.

AAA Travel Show, Columbus

January 19 - 21, participated in the annual AAA Great Vacations Expo at the Convention Center in Columbus. Distributed visitor guides and other materials to the 25,000 attendees.

Heartland Travel Showcase, Buffalo, New York

February 16 - 18, met with tour operators from the Midwest promoting Marion as a destination for future tours.

Ohio Conference on Travel, Cedar Point

September 25 - 27, attended the annual professional development conference. MACVB received a **Certificate of Merit** for the Annual Report.

Ohio Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus

December 20, attended the annual awards luncheon and received a **Star Award** for the Marion Cultural Corridor Walking Map.



Lodging Tax Revenue

The Marion Area CVB is funded through a 3% tax on hotel rooms within the county. 2018 revenue of \$215,5147.87 is an all-time high.



11 of the 12 months in 2018 exceeded budget projections for lodging tax revenue and May set a new single-month record of \$24,304.

The Convention & Visitors Bureau's 2018 budget topped \$200k for the first time with \$200,819.67 projected for spending. Of that total, \$100,461.67 went for salaries and benefits, \$42,809 for administrative costs, and \$57,549 for marketing.

Marketing as a percentage of budget held steady at 29%, up from the 2016 figure of 20.5%.

