

# 2024 MARKETING PLAN

Welcome to our neck of the woods! Take a look at the Mercer County Convention and Visitors Bureau's 2024 marketing plan, outlining our objectives and strategies for the year. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email us at [info@visitmercercounty.com](mailto:info@visitmercercounty.com).



## TARGET AUDIENCES

Mercer County seeks to attract individuals, couples and families for a short getaway during the weekend and throughout the week to participate in its unique offerings and encourage those traveling through the area to stop and explore the county.

The audiences are broken into four personas:

- ➔ ATV
- ➔ Local Traveler
- ➔ Hiking
- ➔ Paranormal Tourist

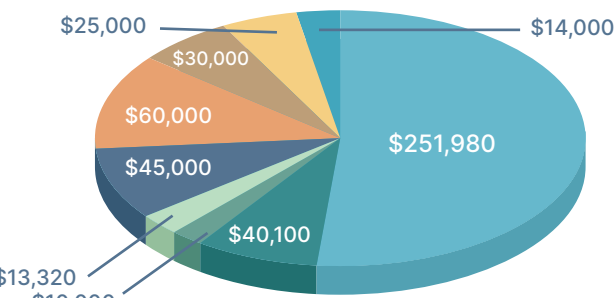
The personas will be expanded in 2024 to include potential visitors interested in "paranormal tourism" to capitalize on the growing interest in Lake Shawnee.

Additionally, the geographical target market segments include:

- ➔ West Virginia
- ➔ Virginia
- ➔ Kentucky
- ➔ Ohio
- ➔ Pennsylvania
- ➔ Washington, D.C. Metro Area

## TRAVEL GUIDE

The Mercer County Visitors Guide is set for a reprint and distribution in 2024, with an updated cover design to offer a modern and fresh experience to readers. This is our largest direct-mail response and is available throughout the county and state of West Virginia. Digital and physical versions can be requested on our website at [visitmercercounty.com/travel-guide-request](https://www.visitmercercounty.com/travel-guide-request).



### 2024 BUDGET

- Traditional/Digital Advertising
- Research/Data
- WV Tourism Cooperative Ads
- Social Media Marketing
- Print Materials
- Community Marketing
- Media Trips
- Public Relations
- Branded Expenses

## ADVERTISING MIX

To keep in accordance with the target markets and overall industry trends, we are maintaining a solid mix of advertising outlets, including:

- ➔ Print and digital advertising
- ➔ Social media
- ➔ Email marketing
- ➔ Boosted blog content
- ➔ Google Analytics 4 strategy

## BRANDING AND MESSAGING

We will continue using the established Mercer County CVB branding along with the recent "Uniquely Appalachian" messaging in the 2024 fiscal year to reflect the distinctive spirit of Mercer County. The messaging will be used to promote all four seasons and the variety of Uniquely Appalachian activities that visitors can experience in Mercer County such as:

- ➔ ATV trails
- ➔ Arts and culture
- ➔ Shopping
- ➔ Outdoor activities
- ➔ Dining

Mercer County's brand voice is an embodiment of the authentic Appalachian culture that defines the community. In 2024, updated creative styling will be implemented in branding and visuals to authentically represent the county's unique charm, catering to the appeal of both residents and visitors.



## CAMPAIGNS

The campaigns will promote local attractions and activities, including hiking, biking, fishing, dining, shopping, arts and culture, apple picking, unique lodging, Lake Shawnee and ATV riding, as well as the county's many festivals.

- ➔ Things to Do Search Campaign (ongoing)
- ➔ Summer 2024 Campaign
- ➔ Winter 2024 Campaign
- ➔ Spring 2024 Campaign
- ➔ Fall 2024 Campaign
- ➔ Holiday 2023 Campaign
- ➔ Festival Season Campaign

## RESEARCH

In 2024, we are increasing our research initiatives to improve and refine our marketing strategies. These initiatives include:

- ➔ Incorporating new AirDNA insights on vacation rentals in Mercer County.
- ➔ Introducing a forthcoming research product to better understand visitation patterns to Mercer County.
- ➔ Continuing our subscription to Smith Travel Research for occupancy data.
- ➔ Conducting grassroots surveys via email lists and on-site QR codes to gather ATV data and more.
- ➔ Creating a new persona to understand the Lake Shawnee phenomenon and Paranormal Tourism for deeper insights.

## SMART GOALS

Our overarching goal is to increase visitation to Mercer County in order to improve the local economy. Below is an outline of the 2024 SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) goals to drive positive growth in visitor numbers and overnight stays.

- ➔ Goal 1 → Improve brand awareness among the target audiences by 10% within 12 months.
- ➔ Goal 2 → Increase overall website sessions by 10% within 12 months.
- ➔ Goal 3 → Increase goal conversions, including Visitors Guide requests, newsletter sign-ups and partner clicks among potential visitors by 15% within 12 months.

