

# 2026 MARKETING PLAN

Welcome to our neck of the woods! Take a look at the Mercer County Convention and Visitors Bureau's 2026 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.

In the 2026 fiscal year, our target audiences will be refined into the four key personas listed below:

- ATV persona
- Paranormal persona
- Hiking persona
- Golden Explorer persona

In addition, the geographical target market segments include:

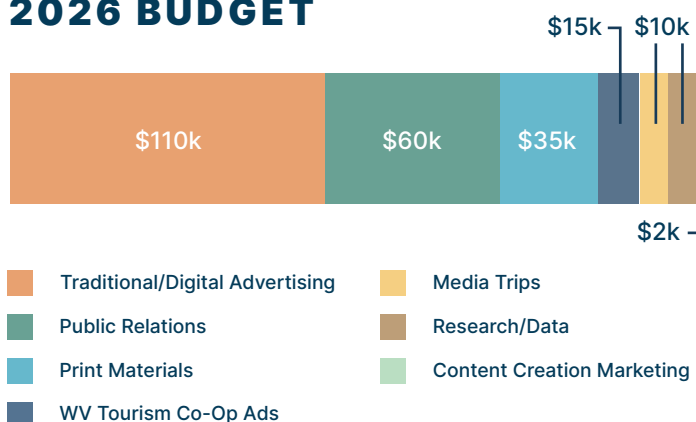
- Georgia
- Michigan
- South Carolina
- Indiana
- North Carolina
- Tennessee
- Kentucky
- Ohio
- Virginia
- Maryland
- Pennsylvania
- West Virginia

The ATV audience is expanded to other states within the southern, northern, eastern and midwest regions, since analytics show this expanded audience engages with Mercer County ATV content.

## TRAVEL GUIDE

The Mercer County Travel Guide is set for a reprint and distribution in 2026. 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](http://visitmercercounty.com/travel-guide).

## 2026 BUDGET



## 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
- Earned media
- Blog content
- Email marketing
- Analytics strategy

## BRANDING AND MESSAGING

We will continue using the updated Mercer County CVB branding along with the “Uniquely Appalachian” messaging in the 2026 fiscal year to reflect the distinctive spirit of Mercer County. The messaging will be used to promote ATV riding on the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System, as well as leisure outdoor recreation, arts and culture, dining and other unique activities and attractions in the area.

Mercer County’s brand voice reflects the authentic Appalachian culture that shapes the community. In 2026, we will continue to build on this identity, encouraging visitors to discover Mercer County in their own way through the established “Uniquely Appalachian, Uniquely You” messaging for general advertising and “All Terrain, All Yours” for ATV-focused advertising. With a more heartfelt tone, our brand voice aims to create deeper relationships with both travelers and residents alike.



## CAMPAIGNS

The 2026 campaigns will promote leisurely outdoor recreation, arts and culture and other unique activities and attractions in Mercer County, along with ATV riding on the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System.

- 2026 Things to Do Google Search Campaign
- 2026 Uniquely Appalachian Campaign
- 2026 ATV Campaign

## RESEARCH

In 2026, we are increasing our research initiatives to improve and refine our marketing strategies. These initiatives include the following:

- Continue using AirDNA insights on vacation rentals in Mercer County.
- Introduce an expanded look into hotel data through Kalibri on AirDNA’s platform.
- Continue to discuss ATV research projects with Hatfield-McCoy Trails on rider visitation and other metrics to better understand our audience.

## GOALS

Our overarching goal is to increase visitation to Mercer County in order to support the local economy. Below is an outline of the 2026 goals to drive positive growth in visitor numbers and overnight stays.

- **Goal 1:** Increase the number of potential visitors to whom we send information about Mercer County.
- **Goal 2:** Achieve year-over-year stability in actual visitation numbers.
- **Goal 3:** Build the Mercer County CVB’s photo and video asset library to showcase the area’s unique attractions and natural beauty.

