



# MAY 2023 DESTINATION UPDATE

A MONTHLY DASHBOARD AND QUALITATIVE REPORT

**PATRICK J. KALER, PRESIDENT & CEO**

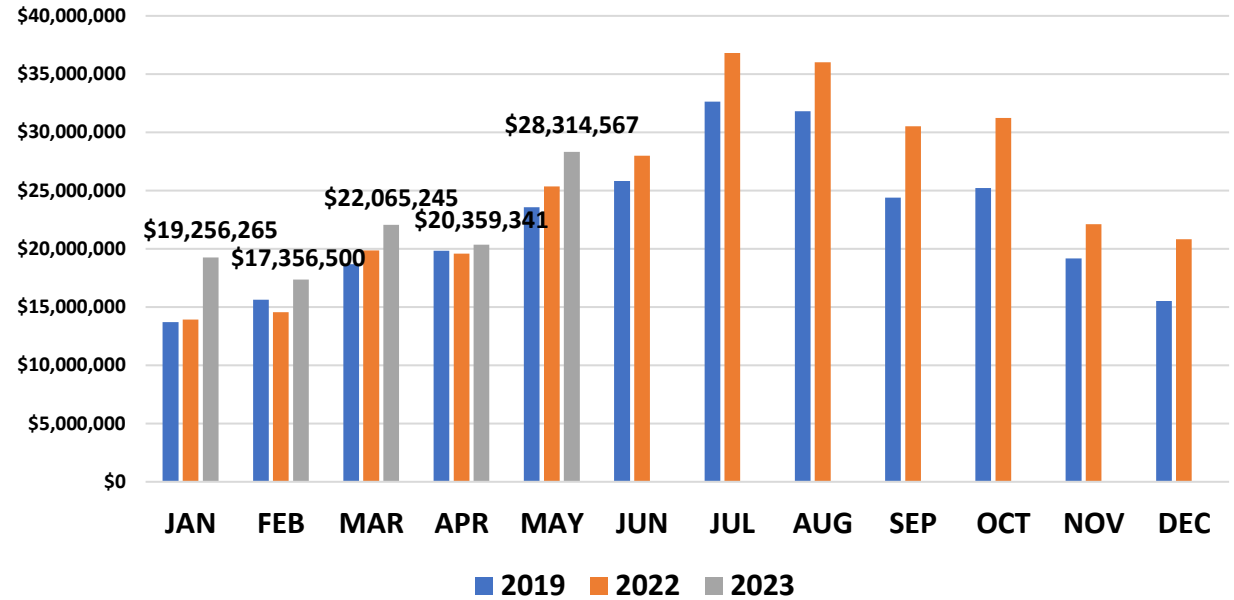


## ERIE COUNTY HOTEL REVENUE – MAY 2023

May Hotel Revenue	
<b>\$28,314,567</b>	
May 2022	11.6%
May 2019	20.1%
YTD Hotel Revenue	
<b>\$105,363,793</b>	
2022	12.7%
2019	15.0%

**Hotel Revenue** is the lodging revenue for all hotel/motel properties in Erie County reported for the month.

May 2023 hotel revenue collections totaled, **\$28,314,567** which was a **11.6%** increase compared to May 2022. May 2023 hotel revenue was **20.1%** higher than 2019.



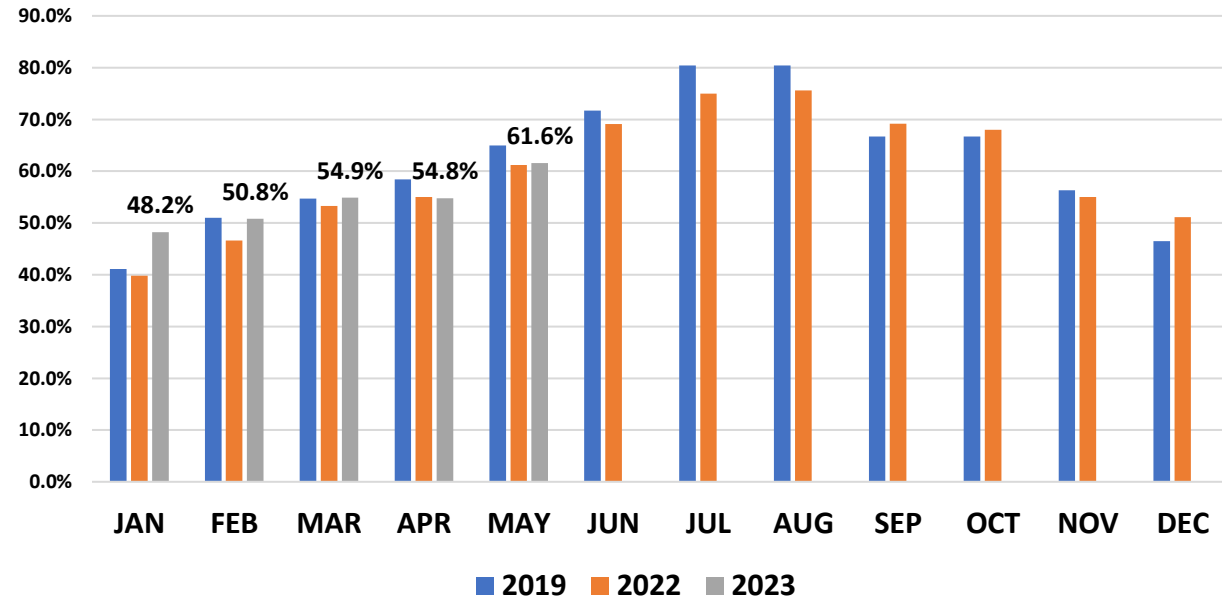
## ERIE COUNTY HOTEL OCCUPANCY – MAY 2023

May Hotel Occupancy	
<b>61.6%</b>	
May 2022	0.7%
May 2019	-5.2%
YTD Hotel Occupancy	
<b>54.1%</b>	
2022	2.2%
2019	-3.7%

**Hotel Occupancy** is the percentage of available rooms sold during the month in Erie County. Occupancy is calculated by dividing the number of rooms sold by the number of rooms available.

May 2023 occupancy measured **61.6%**, which was up **0.7%** compared to May 2022. May 2023 was **-5.2%** lower than occupancy in 2019.

*In comparison, for the U.S., May occupancy was up **0.5%** compared to 2022 and down **5.7%** compared to 2019. The State Of New York, was up **1.8%** in occupancy in May 2023 compared to 2022, and down **6.0%** compared to 2019.*



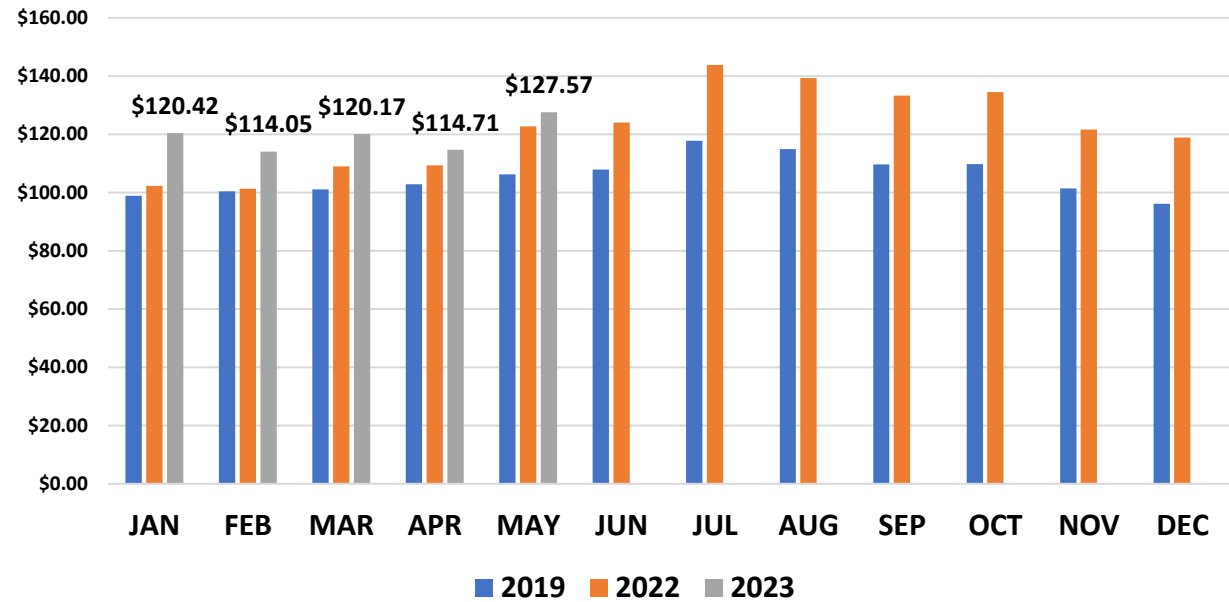
## ERIE COUNTY HOTEL AVERAGE DAILY RATE (ADR) – MAY 2023

May Hotel Average Daily Rate	
<b>\$127.57</b>	
May 2022	3.9%
May 2019	17.8%
YTD Hotel Average Daily Rate	
<b>\$119.84</b>	
2022	8.6%
2019	17.1%

**Hotel Average Daily Rate (ADR)** is the measure of the average rate paid for hotel/motel rooms sold for the month. It is calculated by dividing room revenue by the number of rooms sold for that time period.

In May, Erie County ADR was **\$127.57** an increase of **3.9%** over 2022, and a **17.8%** increase compared to 2019.

*The U.S. ADR for May 2023 was up **4.2%** compared to 2022, as well as up **18.0%** from 2019. New York State ADR for 2023 was up **7.1%** compared to 2022 and up **13.7%** compared to 2019.*



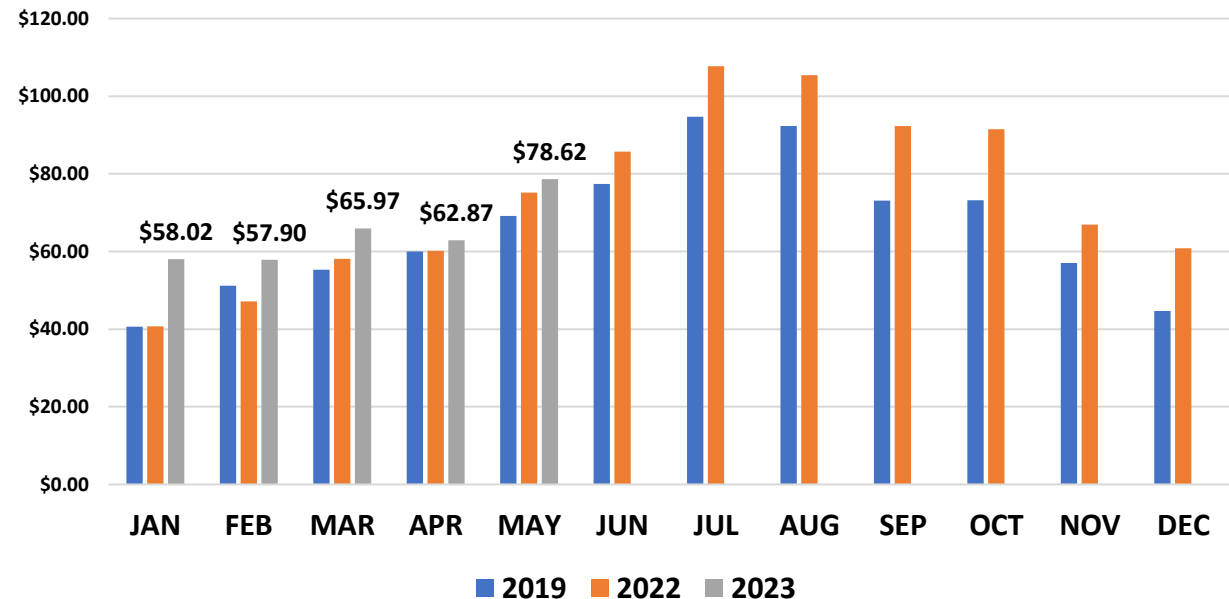
## ERIE COUNTY HOTEL REVPAR – MAY 2023

May Hotel RevPAR	
<b>\$78.62</b>	
May 2022	4.6%
May 2019	13.7%
YTD Hotel RevPAR	
<b>\$64.83</b>	
2022	14.9%
2019	16.9%

**Hotel Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)** is the total room revenue for the month divided by the total number of available rooms.

2023 May RevPAR was **\$78.62** which was an increase of **4.6%** over 2022, and **13.7%** compared to 2019.

*RevPAR for the U.S. was up **3.9%** for May 2023 over 2022, and up **11.3%** compared to 2019. The State of New York also had year-over-year increases for RevPAR in 2023 with a **9.2%** increase over 2022 and **6.9%** increase compared to 2019.*



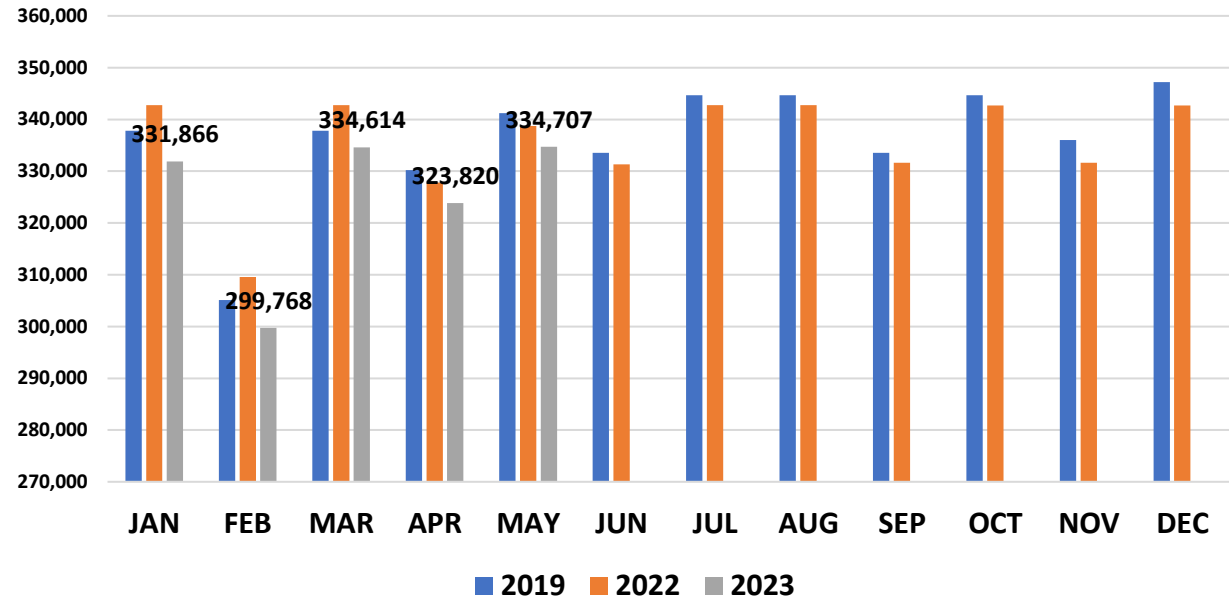
## ERIE COUNTY HOTEL SUPPLY – MAY 2023

May Hotel Supply	
	<b>334,707</b>
May 2022	-0.9%
May 2019	-1.9%
YTD Hotel Supply	
	<b>1,625,155</b>
2022	-1.9%
2019	-1.6%

**Hotel Supply** is the number of rooms in a hotel or set of hotels multiplied by the number of days in a specified time period.

In May 2023, Erie County’s hotel supply totaled **323,820** which was a **0.9%** decrease from 2022 and a **1.9%** decrease compared to 2019.

The number of Erie County available hotel rooms totaled **10,794** which is a **1.9%** decrease compared to 2019.

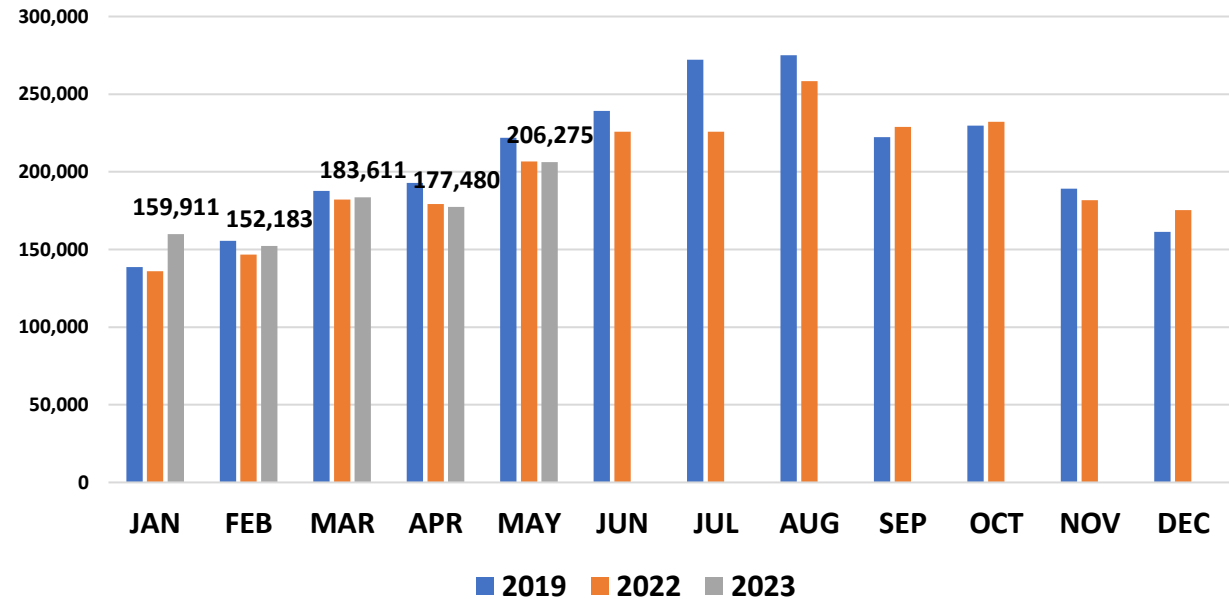


## ERIE COUNTY HOTEL DEMAND – MAY 2023

May Hotel Demand	
	<b>206,275</b>
May 2022	-1.1%
May 2019	-7.0%
YTD Hotel Demand	
	<b>879,207</b>
2022	3.8%
2019	-1.8%

**Hotel Demand** is the number of hotel/motel rooms sold in a specified time period (excludes complimentary rooms).

May 2023 hotel demand totaled, **206,275** which was a **1.1%** decrease compared to 2022 and a **7.0%** decrease compared to 2019.



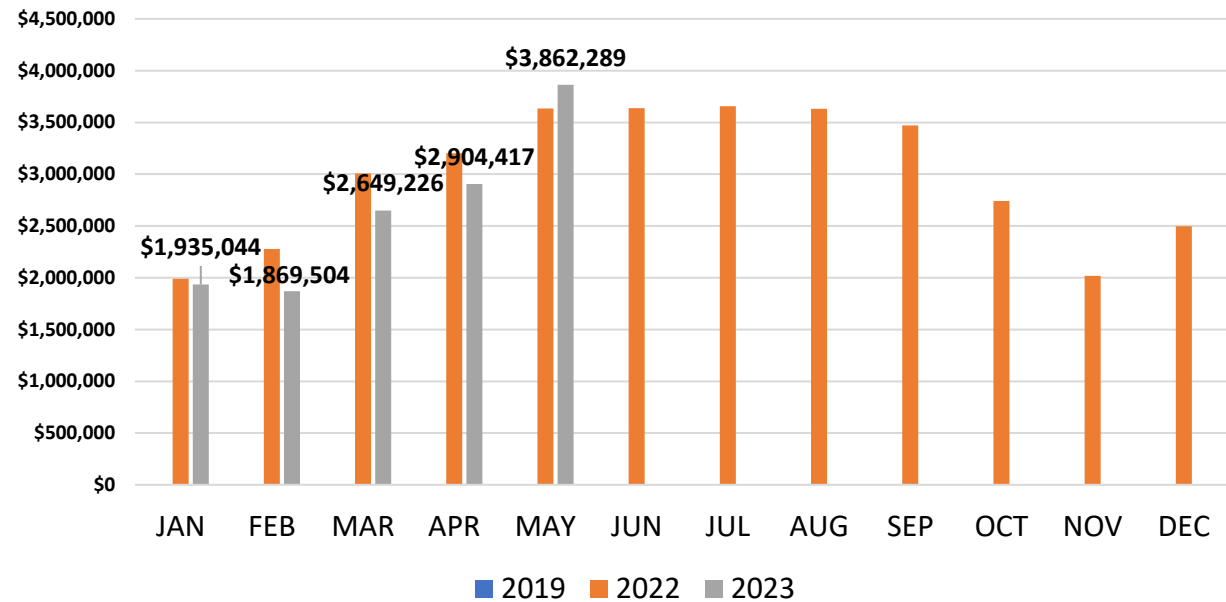
## ERIE COUNTY SHORT TERM RENTAL REVENUE – MAY 2023

May Short Term Rental Revenue	
<b>\$3,862,289</b>	
May 2022	<b>6.3%</b>
May 2019	NA
YTD Short Term Rental Revenue	
<b>\$14,430,718</b>	
2022	<b>9.2%</b>
2019	NA

**Short Term Rental Revenue** is the total lodging revenue for all short-term rentals reported for the month.

In May 2023, Erie County’s short term rental revenue generated **\$3,862,289** which was up **6.3%** compared to 2022.

*Note: VBN did not collect Short Term Rental Data in 2019.*



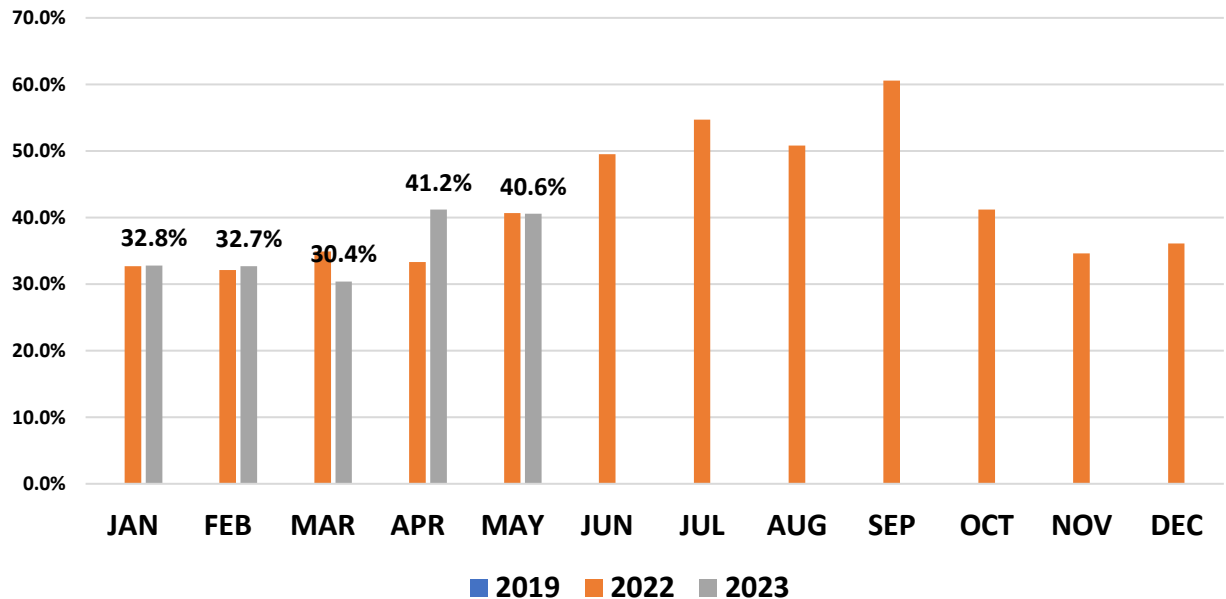
## ERIE COUNTY SHORT TERM RENTAL OCCUPANCY – MAY 2023

May Short Term Rental Occupancy	
<b>40.6%</b>	
May 2022	<b>-0.2%</b>
May 2019	NA
YTD Short Term Rental Occupancy	
<b>38.6%</b>	
2022	<b>7.5%</b>
2019	NA

**Short Term Rental Occupancy** is the percentage of available rental units sold during the month in Erie County. Occupancy is calculated by dividing the number of sold units by the number of available.

May 2023 occupancy measured **40.6%**, which was down **0.2%** compared to May 2022.

*Note: VBN did not collect Short Term Rental Data in 2019.*



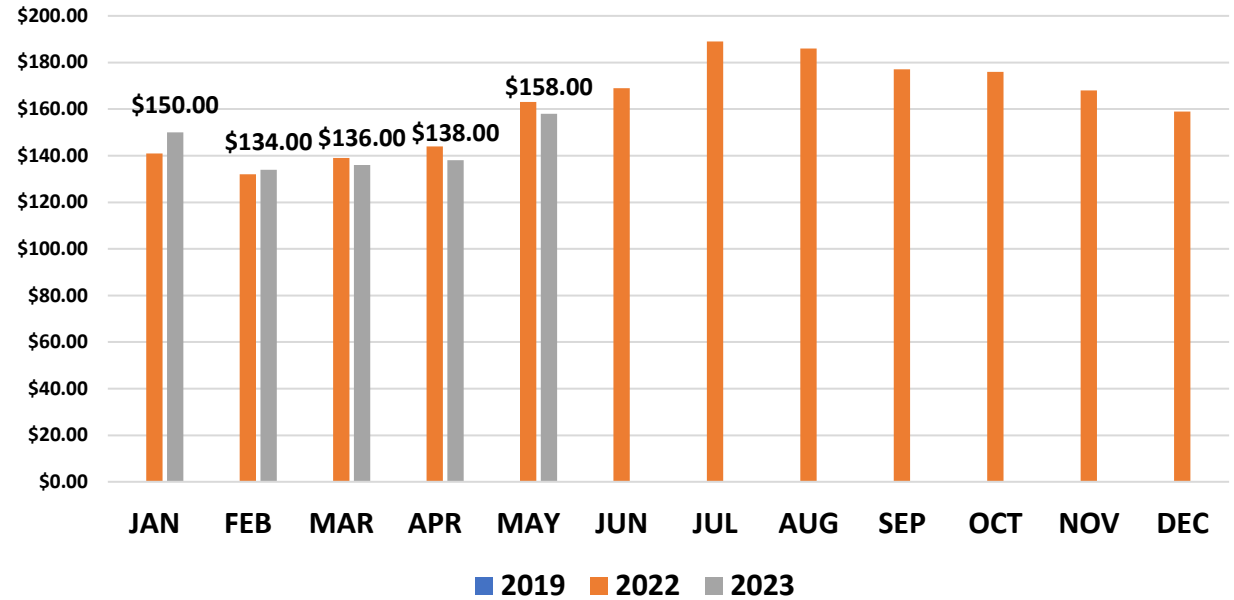
## ERIE COUNTY SHORT TERM RENTAL AVERAGE DAILY RATE – MAY 2023

May Short Term Rental ADR	
	<b>\$158.00</b>
May 2022	-3.1%
May 2019	NA
YTD Short Term Rental ADR	
	<b>\$149.00</b>
2022	5.7%
2019	NA

**Short Term Rental Average Daily Rate (ADR)** is the measure of the average rate paid for short term rental units sold for the month. It is calculated by dividing rental units' revenue by the number of units sold for that time period.

In May, Erie County Short Term Rental ADR was **\$158.00** a decrease of **3.1%** compared to 2022.

*Note: VBN did not collect Short Term Rental Data in 2019.*



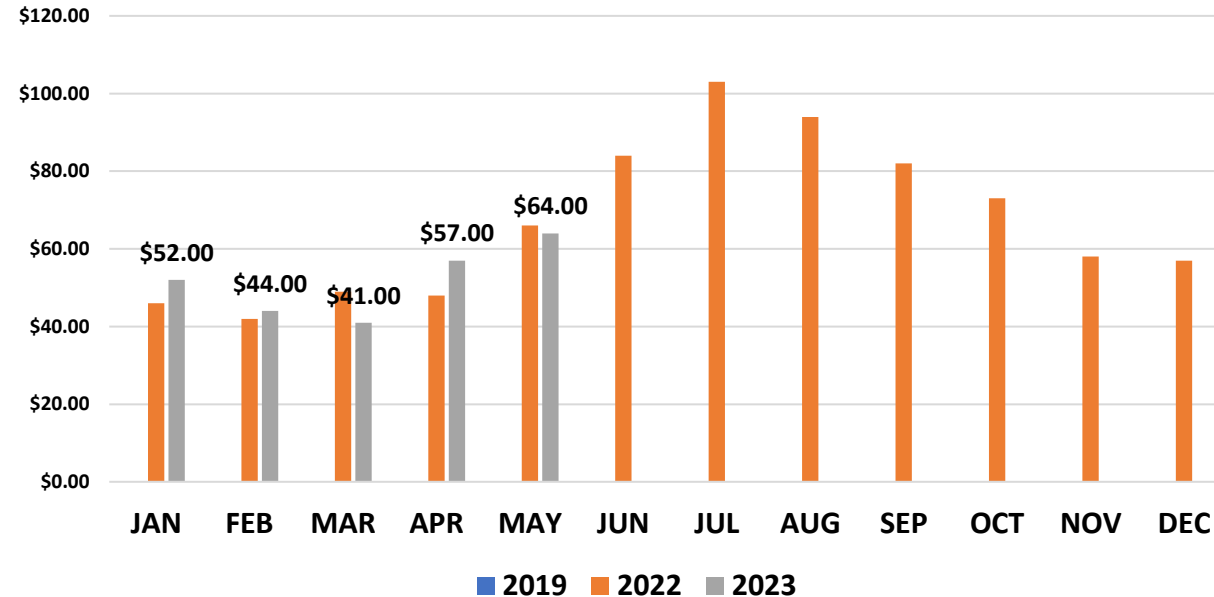
## ERIE COUNTY SHORT TERM RENTAL REVPAR – MAY 2023

May Short Term Rental RevPAR	
	<b>\$64.00</b>
May 2022	-3.0%
May 2019	NA
YTD Short Term Rental RevPAR	
	<b>\$57.00</b>
2022	9.6%
2019	NA

**Short Term Rental Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)** is the total short term rental revenue for the month divided by the total number of available short term rental units.

2023 May RevPAR was **\$64.00** which was a decrease of **3.0%** compared to 2022.

*Note: VBN did not collect Short Term Rental Data in 2019.*



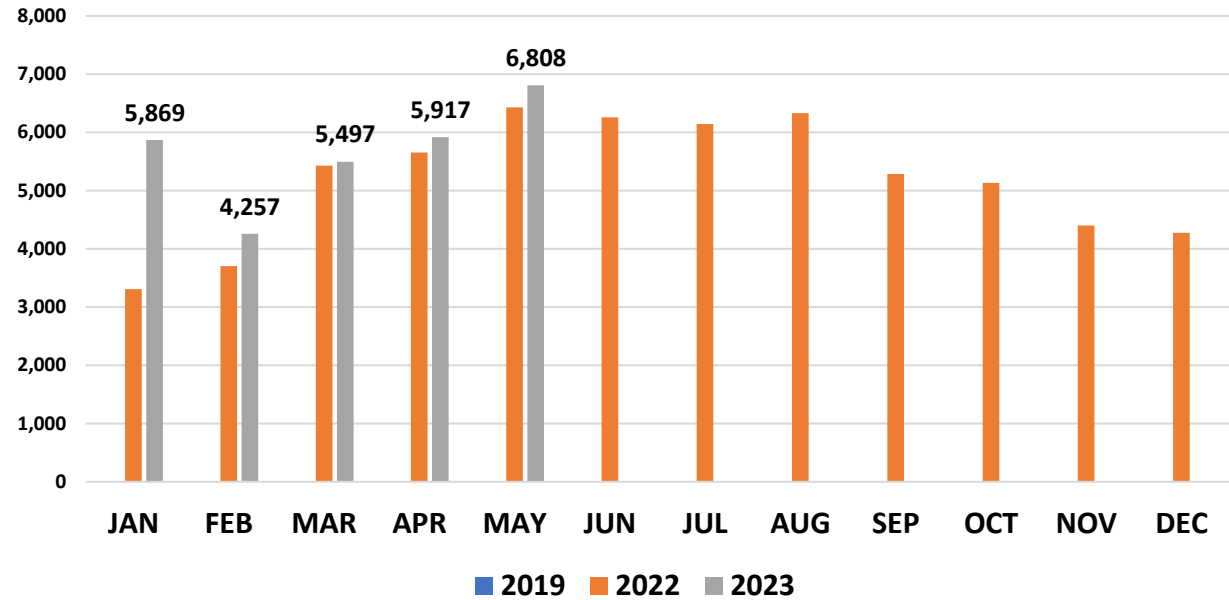
## ERIE COUNTY SHORT TERM BOOKINGS – MAY 2023

May Short Term Rental Bookings	
	<b>6,808</b>
May 2022	5.9%
May 2019	NA
YTD Short Term Rental Bookings	
	<b>28,811</b>
2022	23.8%
2019	NA

**Short Term Rental Bookings** is the measure of the total bookings in all Erie County short term rentals for the month.

In May, Erie County Short Term Rental Bookings totaled **6,808** which was an increase of **5.9%** compared to 2022.

Note: VBN did not collect Short Term Rental Data in 2019.



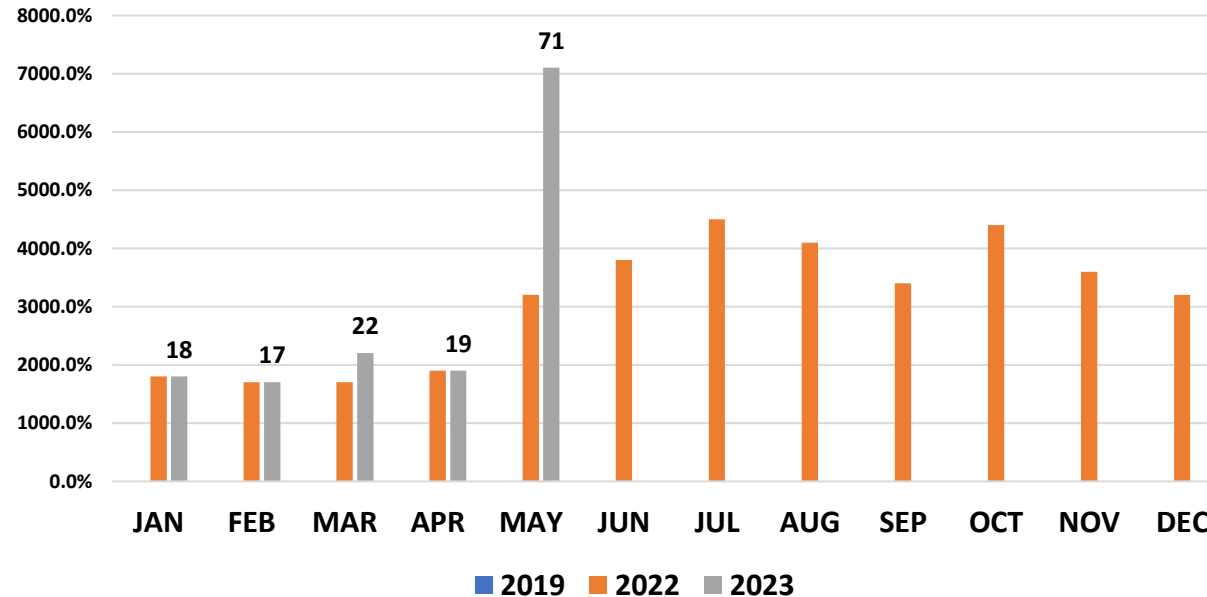
## ERIE COUNTY SHORT TERM BOOKING WINDOW – MAY 2023

May Short Term Rental Booking Window (days)	
	<b>71</b>
May 2022	121.9
May 2019	NA
YTD Short Term Rental Booking Window (days)	
	<b>23</b>
2022	4.5%
2019	NA

**Short Term Booking Window** is the average number of days prior to arrival/check-in of a short term rental booking.

In May 2023 the short term rental average booking window was **71 days** prior to arrival, which was an increase of **121.9%** from 2022.

Note: VBN did not collect Short Term Rental Data in 2019.

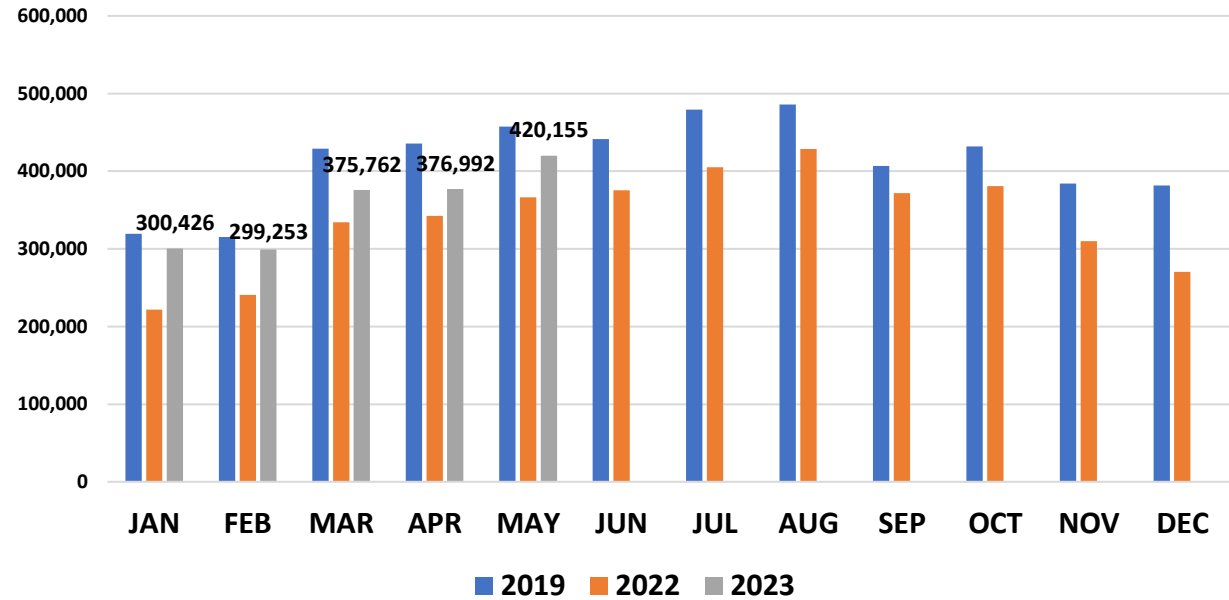


BUFFALO NIAGARA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PASSENGERS – MAY 2023

May BUF Airport Passengers	
<b>420,155</b>	
May 2022	14.7%
May 2019	-8.1%
YTD BUF Airport Passengers	
<b>1,772,788</b>	
2022	17.7%
2019	-9.4%

**Airport Passengers** is the total monthly air traffic passengers at Buffalo Niagara International Airport as reported by NFTA.

Passengers through BUF in May 2023 totaled **420,155** representing a **14.1%** increase over 2022 and a **8.1%** decrease compared to 2019.

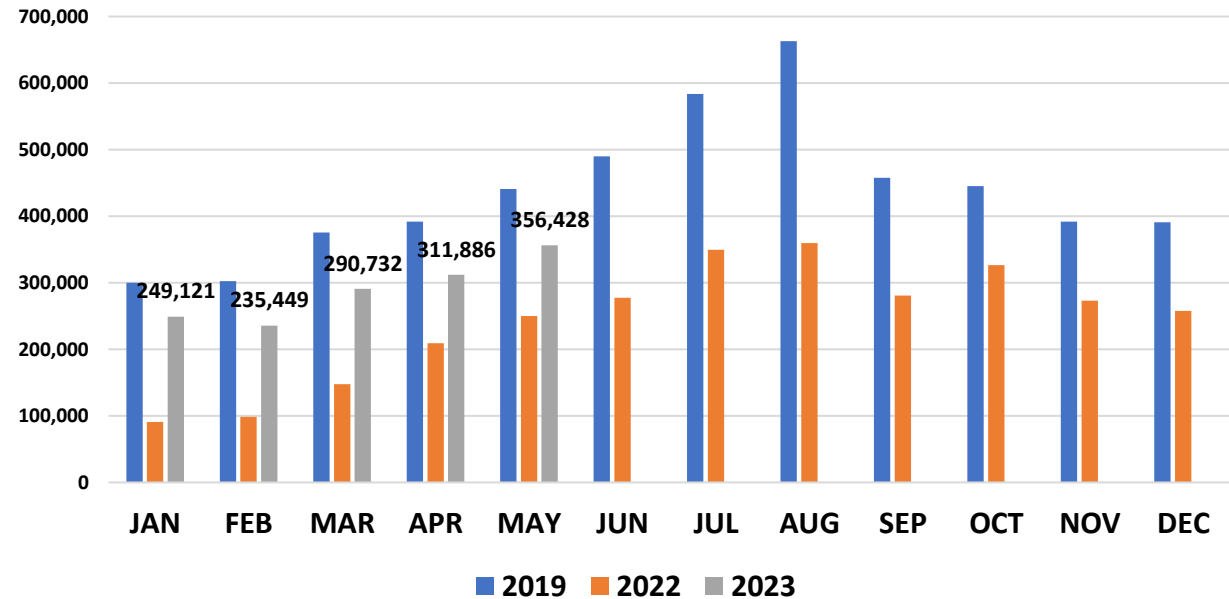


U.S. / CANADIAN CROSS BORDER TRAFFIC – MAY 2023

May US/Canadian Border Traffic	
<b>356,428</b>	
May 2022	48.9%
May 2019	-20.5%
YTD US/Canadian Border Traffic	
<b>1,443,596</b>	
2022	83.0%
2019	-20.3%

**Cross Border Traffic** calculates the monthly border crossings between the United States and Canada in Erie and Niagara Counties.

Travel between the two countries through the Erie and Niagara County access points for the month of May 2023 totaled **356,428** which was a **48.9%** increase over 2022 and a **20.5%** decrease compared to 2019.





## MONTH Sales & Services Department Dashboard - May 2023 vs. May 2022 and May 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)

Sales Lead Distributed		Sales Lead Room Nights		Lead Expected Attendance		Lead Economic Impact		Lost Business	
<b>50</b>		<b>29,970</b>		<b>28,784</b>		<b>\$51,243,764</b>		<b>18</b>	
May 2022	-12.3%	May 2022	47.2%	May 2022	114.8%	May 2022	257.7%	May 2022	-50.0%
May 2019	-25.4%	May 2019	-47.6%	May 2019	2.0%	May 2019	NA	May 2019	-28.0%
Definite Events Booked		Definite Room Nights Booked		Definite Expected Attendance		Definite Event Economic Impact			
<b>36</b>		<b>9,400</b>		<b>15,513</b>		<b>\$8,521,033</b>			
May 2022	-16.3%	May 2022	-45.8%	May 2022	34.0%	May 2022	-32.7%		
May 2019	-23.4%	May 2019	39.8%	May 2019	133.9%rd	May 2019	48.6%		
Events Held		Events Held Room Nights		Events Held Attendance		Groups Served			
<b>27</b>		<b>6,099</b>		<b>15,320</b>		<b>15</b>			
May 2022	17.4%	May 2022	4.6%	May 2022	292.1%	May 2022	50.0%		
May 2019	-40.0%	May 2019	-47.0%	May 2019	37.5%	May 2019	-66.7%		

## YEAR TO DATE Sales & Services Department Dashboard - Year Over Year Comparison 2023 vs. 2022 and 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)

YTD Sales Lead Distributed		YTD Sales Lead Room Nights		YTD Lead Expected Attendance		YTD Lead Economic Impact		YTD Lost Business	
<b>225</b>		<b>96,180</b>		<b>86,236</b>		<b>\$101,236,241</b>		<b>77</b>	
2022	-7.8%	2022	-7.1%	2022	42.8%	2022	16.6%	2022	-12.5%
2019	-31.8%	2019	-53.5%	2019	-42.4%	2019	NA	2019	-35.8%
YTD Definite Events Booked		YTD Definite Room Nights Booked		YTD Definite Expected Attendance		YTD Definite Event Economic Impact			
<b>152</b>		<b>49,653</b>		<b>63,771</b>		<b>\$39,496,253</b>			
2022	-4.2%	2022	-29.3%	2022	1.8%	2022	-35.6%		
2019	-35.3%	2019	-23.3%	2019	5.1%	2019	-34.7%		
YTD Events Held		YTD Events Heald Room Nights		YTD Events Held Attendance		YTD Groups Served			
<b>90</b>		<b>57,716</b>		<b>65,471</b>		<b>57</b>			
2022	Null	2022	9.1%	2022	33.9%	2022	23.9%		
2019	-43.8%	2019	-25.8%	2019	-12.5%	2019	-19.7%		

# SALES & SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE



**2023 May compared to April  
Sales & Services  
KPI Comparison**

Key Performance Indicator	MOM Percent Change
Leads Distributed	13.6%
Lead Room Nights	89.5%
Lead Attendance	28.3%
Lead Economic Impact	325.8%
Definite Bookings	24.1%
Definite Room Nights	-21.4%
Definite Attendance	-41.5%
Definite Economic Impact	-26.6%
Lost Leads	80.0%
Events Held In Month	92.9%
Events Held In Month Room Nights	-8.2%
Events Held In Month Attendance	235.9%
Groups Serviced	25.0%



**HelmsBriscoe Annual Business Conference**

Visit Buffalo Niagara’s National Sales Director, Shannon Jenkins attended the HelmsBriscoe Annual Business Conference in Denver, CO. HelmsBriscoe is a global third-party meeting planning leader working with association and corporate clients to plan their conventions, meetings and events. VBN is fortunate to have strong relations with the firm and has two planners on our Customer Advisory Council. While in Denver, VBN partnered with New York Tourism + Conventions to host an event for several HelmsBriscoe clients.

**June 2023 Trade Shows/Conferences Attended**

SHOW/ CONFERENCE NAME	LOCATION	ATTENDED BY
Society of Government Meeting Professionals NEC	Bloomington, MN	Shannon Jenkins
HelmsBriscoe Annual Business Conference	Denver, CO	Shannon Jenkins
Sports ETA Symposium & Marketplace	Kansas City, MO	James Adler & Greg Gelinas
U.S. Travel IPW	San Antonio, TX	Leah Mueller, Michelle Kearns & Patrick Kaler
CMCA	Lake Conroe, TX	Emma Carlo
AMP – Association of Meeting Planners -Golf Outing Hole Sponsorship	Woodbridge, VA	James Adler
Meet NY Dinner and Lunch Events	Albany and Saratoga Springs	Meaghan Zimmer

**May 2023 Site Visits / FAMs**

**12**



**Sports ETA Symposium and Marketplace**

Greg Gelinas and James Alder represented the Buffalo Niagara Sports Commission at the 2023 Sports ETA Symposium in Kansas City, MO meeting with existing and potential new sports rights holders.

**AMP’s Golf Outing Hold Sponsorship**

Buffalo Niagara Sports Commission Sales Manager, James Adler scored an assist by helping the meetings/convention department and staffing the Visit Buffalo Niagara hole sponsorship at the AMP’s annual golf outing in Woodbridge, VA. One of the most important aspects of AMP’s is its dedication to maintain a 50/50 planner-to-supplier ratio in its membership, to allow for equal opportunities for interaction between segments of the industry.





### Promoting Buffalo To The World

After a successful stand-alone booth in Orlando, FL at the 2022 U.S. Travel Association IPW, the largest international travel trade and media tradeshow in the United States, Visit Buffalo Niagara increased its booth size, doubled the number of pre-scheduled appointments and increased the destination's industry partners for the 2023 IPW in San Antonio, TX. Senior Director of Travel Industry Sales, Leah Mueller and CEO, Patrick Kaler handled three days of appointments with current, future and prospective international tour operators for Buffalo and Erie County. Communications Manager, Michelle Kearns handled press appointments during the one-day media marketplace. Special thanks to our booth partners: Graycliff/Martin House, Vision Hotels and National Comedy Center.

Prior to IPW, VBN hosted the new international tourism trade representatives for I LOVE NY, from Australia and Germany. This gave the new representatives the opportunity to experience Buffalo before attending the tradeshow. The reps were treated to a hard-hat tour of the Buffalo AKG, prior to the June opening.

Post-IPW, VBN partnered with Destination Niagara Falls to host nine international tour operators on a four-day FAM. Some of the experiential highlights included Riverworks, a boat cruise on the Buffalo River, lunch at RiverWorks, and dinners at The Vault and Lucia's on the Lake.



### Welcome Buffalo Niagara Sports Commission Intern

Joining the Buffalo Niagara Sports Commission team for the spring/summer is Intern, Zachary Taher. Zach is a native of Buffalo where he was a student athlete and captain of the Lackawanna City School football team. He recently earned his Associates Degree from Erie Community College and will begin pursuing a Bachelors degree in Sports Management at Canisius University in the fall.

### NYSDMO Events in Albany and Saratoga

Meaghan Zimmer, Visit Buffalo Niagara's National Sales Manager participated in the New York State Destination Marketing Organization's sales events in Albany and Saratoga targeting New York State Association Planners. In addition to in-office sales calls, destination marketing organization's hosted lunch and dinner events to further advance relationship building with these important clients who regularly host events in our cities.



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

## MONTHLY Marketing & Communications Department Dashboard May 2023 vs. May 2022 and May 2019

Website Sessions		Mobile Website Sessions		Duration On Site		Website Page Views		Social Media Posts	
<b>147,596</b>		<b>89,203</b>		<b>1:52</b>		<b>272,959</b>		<b>184</b>	
May 2022	11.3%	May 2022	2.5%	May 2022	2 seconds	May 2022	19.9%	May 2022	8.2%
May 2019	14.8%	May 2019	11.5%	May 2019	18 seconds	May 2019	1.1%	May 2019	4.5%
Facebook Followers		Twitter Followers		Instagram Followers		TikTok Followers		All Video Views	
<b>101,079</b>		<b>29,822</b>		<b>62,045</b>		<b>20,726</b>		<b>1,531,539</b>	
May 2022	2.8%	May 2022	0.3%	May 2022	39.4%	May 2022	133.3%	May 2022	675.0%
May 2019	8.0%	May 2019	5.1%	May 2019	94.0%	May 2019	NA	May 2019	930.0%
Media Placements		Media Impressions		Media Social Shares		Media Touchpoints		Media Visits	
<b>9</b>		<b>81,575,311</b>		<b>55</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>1</b>	
May 2022	125.0%	May 2022	1237.3%	May 2022	100.0%	May 2022	50.0%	May 2022	100.0%
May 2019	NA	May 2019	NA	May 2019	NA	May 2019	NA	May 2019	NA

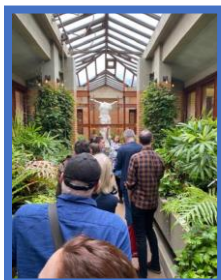
## YEAR TO DATE Marketing & Communications Department Dashboard. Year Over Year Comparison 2023 vs. 2022 and 2019

YTD Website Sessions		YTD Mobile Website Sessions		Duration On Site		YTD Website Page Views		YTD Shared Social Media Posts	
<b>698,322</b>		<b>452,099</b>		<b>1:52</b>		<b>1,105,431</b>		<b>888</b>	
2022	30.4%	2022	28.7%	2022	2 seconds	2022	16.5%	2022	-21.1%
2019	12.8%	2019	15.2%	2019	18 seconds	2019	-9.0%	2019	4.6%
Facebook Followers		Twitter Followers		Instagram Followers		TikTok Followers		YTD All Video Views	
<b>101,079</b>		<b>29,822</b>		<b>62,045</b>		<b>20,726</b>		<b>4,326,437</b>	
2022	2.2%	2022	0.3%	2022	39.4%	2022	133.3%	2022	324.8%
2019	8.0%	2019	5.1%	2019	94.0%	2019	NA	2019	726.7%
YTD Media Placements		YTD Media Impressions		YTD Media Social Shares		YTD Media Touchpoints		YTD Media Visits	
<b>38</b>		<b>1,048,249,597</b>		<b>2,503</b>		<b>74</b>		<b>6</b>	
2022	52.0%	2022	186.6%	2022	-25.6%	2022	-30.8%	2022	20.0%
2019	NA	2019	NA	2019	NA	2019	NA	2019	NA



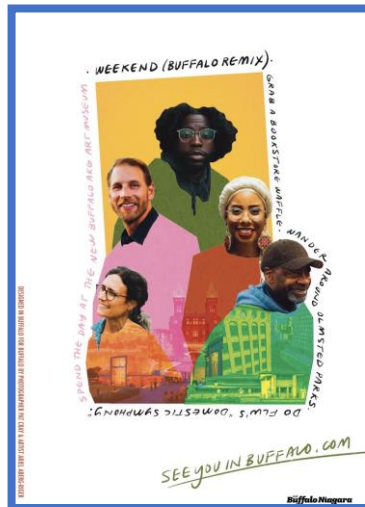
## 2023 May compared to April Marketing & Communications KPI Comparison

Key Performance Indicator	MOM Percent Change
Website Sessions	-35.7%
Mobile Website Sessions	-43.5%
Duration on Site	-2:13 seconds
Website Page Views	-43.6%
Social Media Posts	4.0%
Facebook Followers	0.2%
Twitter Followers	-0.2%
Instagram Followers	8.9%
TikToc Followers	9.1%
All Video Views	201.8%
Media Placements	Null
Media Impressions	-73.8%
Social Media Shares	-80.5%
Media Touchpoints	-7.7%
Media Visits	-50.0%



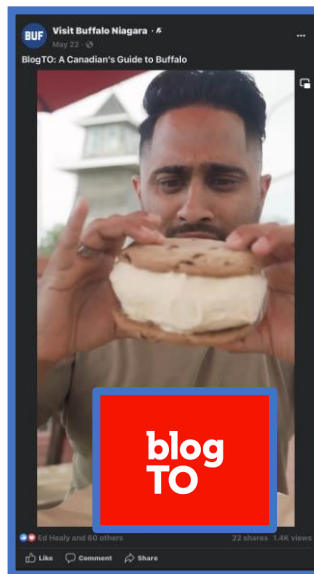
### Buffalo AKG / VBN Travel Media Familiarization Tour

Visit Buffalo Niagara and the Buffalo AKG hosted a two-day media fam for fourteen art, architecture and travel journalists prior to the June opening of the museum's expansion. VBN hosted the second day sharing the story of Buffalo's transformation and revitalization. Tour highlights included; overnight accommodations at The Richardson Hotel, Burchfield Penney, Martin House, Kleinhan's Music Hall, Hallwalls, Babeville, Colored Musicians Club, and Silo City.



### Spring / Summer Consumer Campaign

In conjunction with the reopening of the Buffalo AKG, Visit Buffalo Niagara's summer consumer advertising campaign centers around the destination's arts and culture and architectural attractions. The ad creative utilizes Pat Cray's photography and the artistic talent of Ariel Aberg-Riger. The print advertising appears through the Summer in Conde Naste Traveler, The New Yorker and The New York Times.



### Partnership With blogTO

In Visit Buffalo Niagara's continued effort to reach the traveling population in the Greater Toronto region, the marketing department has once again partnered with BlogTO to create original content to reach their combined following of over 3.3 million on four social media platforms. The content ran in time for the annual Canada Day holiday when previously Buffalo would see a surge in Canadian visitors. Highlights of the experienced included: architecture, murals, farmers markets, urban adventure, dining and live music entertainment.

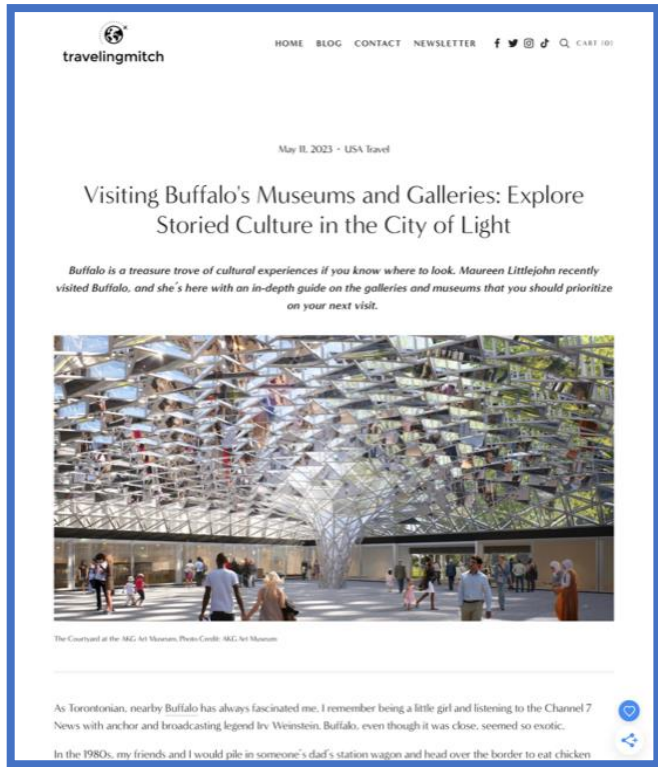


### VisitBuffaloNiagara.com Wins Gold

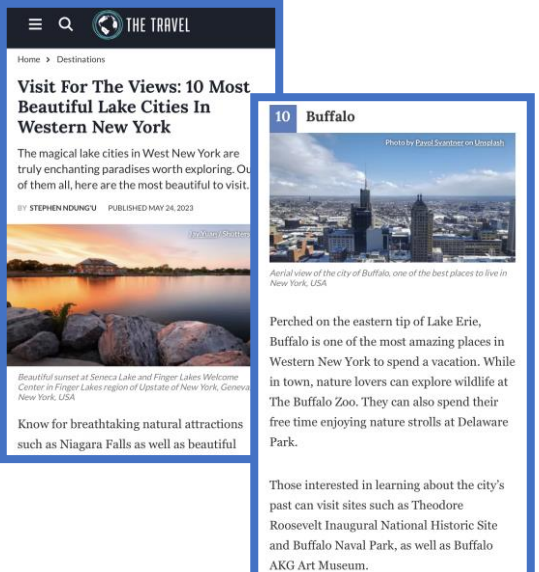
Visit Buffalo Niagara has won a Gold Hermes Creative Award for outstanding website redesign. This accolade could not have been achieved without the destination knowledge and creative writing of the VBN marketing team and the expertise of imaginative interactive website design and functionality. The newly redesigned website includes updates to overall content, functionality and creative vision, photography and video effects.

May 2023 Media Hits			
PUBLICATION/SOURCE	ARTICLE HEADLINE	READERSHIP	SHARES
Hotel Scoop	InnBuffalo: A Buffalo Inn With Historic Heart	3,987	NA
Traveling Mitch	Visiting Buffalo's Museums and Galleries: Explore Storied Culture in the City of Light	8,048	52
Art & Object	Buffalo's AKG Art Museum Opens in June with Major Updates and Expansion	85,269	NA
Forbes	Most Affordable Cities For Family Vacations	71,990,359	NA
Finger Lakes Family Fun	A Weekend in Buffalo, NY with Kids	4,281	NA
The Travel	Visit For The Views: 10 Most Beautiful Lake Cities In Western New York	2,175,959	4
Bucket List Journey	Buffalo NY Bucket List: 30 Fun Things to Do	437,393	NA
I LOVE NY Blog	35 Summer Events You Don't Want to Miss in New York State – Buffalo Juneteenth Festival	265,188	NA
Bon Appetit	The 8 Best Places to Eat Buffalo Wings in Buffalo	7,092,254	NA

*Media Hits in italics were not generated by Visit Buffalo Niagara and not included in monthly quantitative dashboard.*



**Buffalo, New York**  
 To combine affordable prices with comfortable summer temperatures, plan a trip to Buffalo, New York, where the average family trip cost is \$3,669. Summer is primetime for local festivals, with something nearly every weekend from June through August, giving you a great opportunity to add low-cost entertainment to your trip plans in addition to the city's permanent attractions, such as the Buffalo AKG Art Museum which reopens in June after a \$230 million renovation.  
 Only thirty minutes away, Niagara Falls is a can't-miss add-on to your Buffalo vacation. Kids will love getting soaked on the hurricane deck at Cave of the Winds, an attraction that takes you practically to the base of the waterfalls. No passport is required for families staying on the American side of the falls.



Most Viewed Video May 2023

D.A. Taste  
1,057,317

Sample of other video content for the month:

Westside Stories Used Book Shop

The Downtown Bazaar

Explore The Richardson Hotel

Pride Week Events

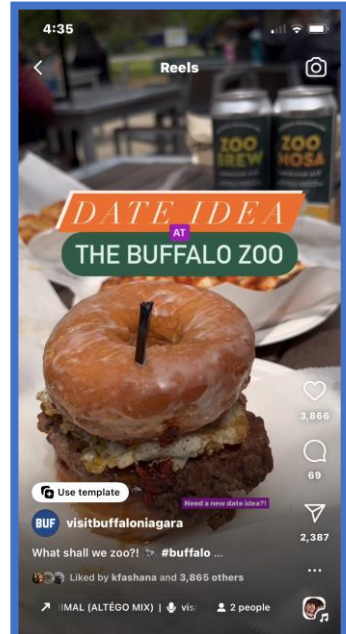
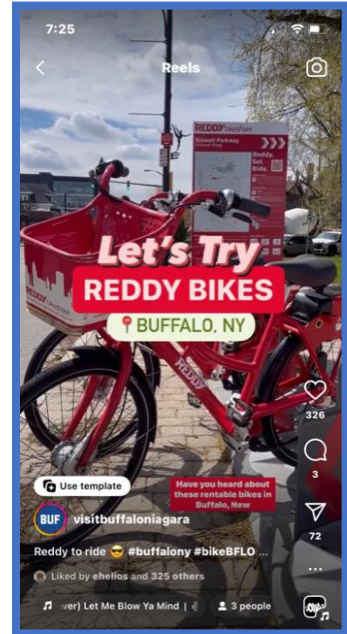
Let's Try Reddy Bikes

Historic Carousel Museum

Date Night At The Buffalo Zoo



Sample May 2023 Instagram Posts



### Town Ballroom amplifies the spirits of Buffalo's famous Casino

BY MICHAEL FARRELL  
PUBLISHED ON MAY 20, 2023

For nearly 20 years, Buffalo's Town Ballroom has earned its rep as one of downtown's most significant live music spots.

Since 2005, the locale has hosted some of the city's most legendary sets, with up-and-comers and established performers taking its stage with the same ferocity. Solo artists and bands have been embraced by its intimacy, EDM technicians have turned its tiered seating into dance floors; and Canadian legends have crossed the Peace Bridge to please cross-border legions within a home away from home.

But to truly understand the mystical significance of the Ballroom, one needs to hear the words of *Rock n' Roll Hall of Famer Patti Smith*, who during a tour of the building with now-owner Donny Kutzback, simply remarked, "There's a lot of spirits in here."

"She's an awe-inspiring person, but you meet her and she's so down to earth and kind," says Kutzback. "But she's also very spiritually attuned."

Sample May 2023 Web Content, Blogs, and Social Media

### The Next Chapter of Westside Stories Bookstore

BY ED HEALY  
PUBLISHED ON MAY 23, 2023

Keri Thomas-Whiteide is the new owner of *Westside Stories* secondhand book shop, a name familiar to book lovers in Buffalo since it has been an anchor to a revived Grant Street on the city's West Side since 2011. The store changed hands — and locations — in the last few years and Thomas-Whiteide is the third owner of the store. It has a new location at 398 Grant Street and new energy as Thomas-Whiteide brings her passion as a former librarian to the challenge of putting her own stamp on the shop, reaffirming the store's place in the neighborhood and, of course, selling books to Buffalo's many book lovers. Here's what she had to say about her own West Side story.

### Visit Buffalo Niagara

May 26 · 📍

This National Road Trip Day, plan your journey along the Upstate Eats Trail, a 225-mile food adventure sampling wings in Buffalo, garbage plates in Rochester, BBQ in Syracuse and spiedies in Binghamton!

Dig in by following @upstateeatstrail on Instagram or visiting [upstateeatstrail.com](http://upstateeatstrail.com) for all the goods!

10 likes · 5 shares · 418 views

### Restaurants with Amazing Views of the Waterfront

BY VISIT BUFFALO NIAGARA  
PUBLISHED ON JULY 19, 2016 | LAST UPDATED JUNE 30, 2023

A few years ago, dining on the waterfront in Buffalo meant finding a nice quiet area and packing a picnic. However, with the recent restaurant and downtown resurgence, the waterfront has exploded with life. Restaurants are popping up on Lake Erie, the Buffalo & Niagara Rivers and the Erie Canal and there's never been a better time to grab a drink or beer while watching the sunset. Here are our choices for the best places to go if you want to hangout with an awesome waterfront view:

# DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE

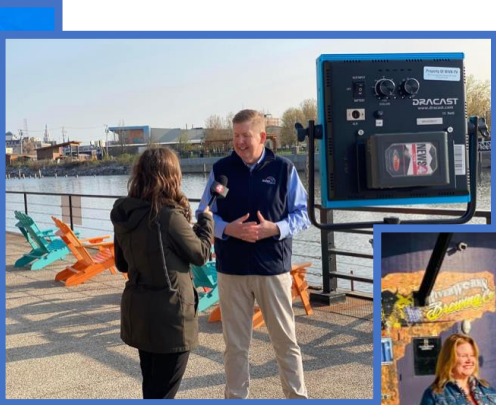
MONTHLY Destination Development Department Dashboard – May 2023 vs. May 2022 and May 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)							
Visitor Guide Requests		Weekly Lodging Dashboard Distribution			Tourism Insider Distribution		
<b>185</b>		<b>478</b>			<b>2,596</b>		
May 2022		May 2022			May 2022		
-87.2%		35.4%			-6.5%		
May 2019		May 2019			May 2019		
-69.9%		NA			-6.4%		
Number of Mobile Visitor Center Events		Mobile Visitor Center Volunteer Hours		Number of Convention/Sport Events		Conventions/Sport Event Volunteer Hours	
<b>1</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	
May 2022		May 2022		May 2022		May 2022	
-50.0%		-14.3%		-100.0%		-100.0%	
May 2019		May 2019		May 2019		May 2019	
NA		NA		NA		NA	
Industry Meeting Attendance		Industry Event Attendance		Extranet Training Attendance		Destination Customer Service Training Attend.	
<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	
May 2022		May 2022		May 2022		May 2022	
-100.0%		-100.0%		Null		-100.0%	
May 2019		May 2019		May 2019		May 2019	
-100.0%		-100.0%		-100.0%		-100.0%	

YEAR TO DATE Destination Development Department Dashboard – Year Over Year Comparison 2023 vs. 2022 and 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)							
YTD Visitor Guide Requests		YTD Weekly Lodging Dashboard Distribution			YTD Tourism Insider Distribution		
<b>2,603</b>		<b>478</b>			<b>2,596</b>		
2022		2022			2022		
-50.4%		35.4%			-6.5%		
2019		2019			2019		
-1.2%		NA			-6.1%		
YTD Number of Mobile Visitor Center Events		YTD Mobile Visitor Center Volunteer Hours		YTD Number of Convention/Sport Events		YTD Conventions/Sport Event Volunteer Hours	
<b>4</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>116.5</b>	
2022		2022		2022		2022	
-42.9%		-57.7%		133.3%		348.0%	
2019		2019		2019		2019	
NA		NA		NA		NA	
YTD Industry Meeting Attendance		YTD Industry Event Attendance		YTD Extranet Training Attendance		YTD Dest./Customer Service Training Attend.	
<b>275</b>		<b>61</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>5</b>	
2022		2022		2022		2022	
787.1%		-62.6%		-29.4%		-73.7%	
2019		2019		2019		2019	
29.7%		-88.5%		-20.0%		-92.4%	





# DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE



## National Travel & Tourism Week

Visit Buffalo Niagara kicked off National Travel and Tourism Week with a full morning live remote from Buffalo RiverWorks with several segments between 5:00am and 9:00am on Channel 4. CEO Patrick Kaler, was on hand to talk about tourism impact for Erie County and the excitement for the upcoming peak summer season. Also interviewed during the morning were representatives from: Buffalo RiverWorks, Silo City, Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House, Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo AKG, Explore & More Children's Museum and Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.



## Thank You To Our Industry Partners For Hosting Our Staff

Several of Buffalo's industry partners invited the Visit Buffalo Niagara staff to their locations to update on new and upcoming projects, and to gain first-hand experiences so that we can better market, sell and promote their businesses. Thank you to The Barrel Factory, Explore & More Children's Museum, Explore Buffalo (Silo City Tour), and Duende at Silo City for your gracious hospitality and sharing time with our staff.



# BUFFALO CONVENTION CENTER OPERATIONAL UPDATE



MONTHLY Buffalo Convention Center Operational Dashboard – May 2023 vs. May 2022 and May 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)																	
Total Events		Event – Convention		Event – Meeting		Event - Banquet		Event – Consumer/Public Show		Event – Social							
<b>10</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>0</b>							
January 2022	Null	May 2022	-0.0%	May 2022	300.0%	May 2022	-33.3%	May 2022	Null	May 2022	Null						
May 2019	-28.65	May 2019	-50.0%	May 2019	-40.05	May 2019	-20.0%	May 2019	100.0%	May 2019	Null						
Total Event Attendance				Number of Days Occupied				Customer Service Score									
<b>14,120</b>				<b>23</b>				New survey system being developed for mid-year.									
May 2022		14.6%		May 2022		-8.0%		May 2022		NA							
May 2019		-47.7%		May 2019		-17.9%		May 2019		NA							
Total Revenue		Revenue – Rent		Revenue – Food & Beverage		Revenue – Electrical Service		Revenue – Other									
<b>\$250,573</b>		<b>\$53,245</b>		<b>\$196,468</b>		<b>\$820</b>		<b>\$40</b>									
May 2022		-18.3%		May 2022		23.2%		May 2022		-90.8%		May 2022		-93.0%			
May 2019		-35.1%		May 2019		-18.2%		May 2019		-36.8%		May 2019		-91.7%		-83.7%	

YEAR TO DATE Convention Center Operational Dashboard – Year Over Year Comparison 2023 vs. 2022 and 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)																							
Total Events		Event – Convention		Event – Meeting		Event – Banquet		Event – Consumer/Public Show		Event - Social													
<b>35</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>0</b>													
2022		12.9%		2022		-9.1%		2022		40.0%		2022		16.7%		2022		-14.3%		2022		Null	
2019		-31.3%		2019		-9.1%		2019		-50.0%		2019		-26.3%		2019		Null		2019		Null	
Total Event Attendance				Number of Days Occupied				Customer Service Score															
<b>122,590</b>				<b>112</b>				New survey system being developed for mid-year.															
2022		10.0%		2022		3.0%		2022		NA													
2019		-31.9%		2019		-22.8%		2019		NA													
Total Revenue		Revenue – Rent		Revenue – Food & Beverage		Revenue – Electrical Service		Revenue – Other															
<b>\$1,666,811</b>		<b>\$421,418</b>		<b>\$1,063,713</b>		<b>\$73,171</b>		<b>\$108,479</b>															
2022		23.2%		2022		6.2%		2022		18.9%		2022		22.8%		2022		747.5%					
2019		-17.5%		2019		-11.3%		2019		-26.5%		2019		-24.3%		2019		8887.5%					

# BUFFALO CONVENTION CENTER SALES UPDATE



## MONTHLY Buffalo Convention Center Sales Dashboard – May 2023 vs. May 2022 and May 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)

Total Leads		BNCC Generated Leads		VBN Generated Leads		Confirmed Bookings	
<b>12</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>9</b>	
May 2022	20.0%	May 2022	-37.5%	May 2022	250.0%	May 2022	-10.0%
May 2019	33.3%	May 2019	-37.5%	May 2019	600.0%	May 2019	-35.7%
Total Solicitation Cals		Existing Business/Clients Solicitation Calls		New Business/Clients Solicitation Calls		Lost Business	
<b>76</b>		<b>37</b>		<b>39</b>		<b>9</b>	
May 2022	58.3%	May 2022	54.2%	May 2022	62.5%	May 2022	200.0%
May 2019	NA	May 2019	NA	May 2019	NA	May 2019	80.0%

## YEAR TO DATE Buffalo Convention Center Sales Dashboard – 2023 vs. 2022 and 2019 (RECOVERY BENCHMARK)

YTD Total Leads		YTD BNCC Generated Leads		YTD VBN Generated Leads		YTD Confirmed Bookings	
<b>66</b>		<b>43</b>		<b>23</b>		<b>49</b>	
2022	20.0%	2022	10.3%	2022	9.5%	2022	133.3%
2019	100.0%	2019	100.0%	2019	187.5%	2019	-19.9%
YTD Total Solicitation Cals		YTD Existing Business/Clients Solicitation Calls		YTD New Business/Clients Solicitation Calls		YTD Lost Business	
<b>312</b>		<b>120</b>		<b>192</b>		<b>34</b>	
2022	84.6%	2022	64.4%	2022	95.9%	2022	-61.9%
2019	NA	2019	NA	2019	NA	2019	-4.2%

## Current and Future Ongoing Buffalo Convention Center Business Booked

	2019 Year End	2023*	2024*	2025*	2026*
Number of Events	138	101	93	48	32
Expected Attendance	249,975	240,582	227,832	180,847	124,262
Number of Hotel Room Nights	25,000	26,636	23,100	15,364	14,250
Expected Economic Impact	\$34,063,840	32,814,539	29,955,472	24,423,741	14,182,863



## Michigan Street AAHC Visitor Center Ribbon Cutting

Visit Buffalo Niagara was pleased to attend the ribbon cutting for the new headquarters and visitor center of the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor. VBN has been working closely with the AACH as well as The Michigan Street Baptist Church, Nash House Museum, WUFO Buffalo and the Colored Musicians Club & Jazz Museum on a tourism product that will be visitor ready in 2024 when capital improvement projects at the sites are complete.



## BNP Hob Nob

Jeff Calkins and Collen Scozzafava from the BNCC joined VBN staff members Kate Scaduto, and Greg Gelinas, at the Buffalo Niagara Partnership's May Hob Nob at Resurgence Brewing Company.

## VBN Hosts 2023 Great Lakes USA / Cruise The Great Lakes Annual Meeting

As a new member of the Great Lakes USA/Cruise the Great Lakes multi-state tourism consortium, Visit Buffalo Niagara hosted the organization's 2023 Annual Meeting at The Westin Buffalo. Members from the states and destinations from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and New York and the in-market representatives from Germany and the United Kingdom to strategize and plan for 2024. The membership also shared their expertise regarding the cruise industry with representatives from Empire State Development, who is currently conducting an economic impact and feasibility study to bring cruise ships to Buffalo. Representatives of the Council of Great Lakes Governors, Travel Michigan and Visit Detroit joined VBN CEO, Patrick Kaler for a press conference to further the Cruise the Great Lakes initiative, and what it could mean for Buffalo and Western New York in developing a new visitor audience with a high propensity for repeat visitation.



**STOP HATE.  
END RACISM.  
CHOOSE LOVE.**



### Remembering and Respecting 5/14

On the anniversary of the horrific 5/14 tragedy that took ten innocent lives in a racially motivated mass shooting, Visit Buffalo Niagara put its social media messaging on pause. Only sharing the community’s “Stop Hate. End Racism. Choose Love.” message on all social media platforms. As the destination marketing organization, it is our responsibility to honor and remember the lives lost, the loved ones left behind, the first responders, and the East Buffalo community impacted by the events of that day with our customers, visitors and residents.

### Showing Off Buffalo

Visit Buffalo Niagara’s CEO, Patrick Kaler grew up in Illinois and spent the first twelve years of his professional career in tourism at various locations in the state including eight years in Chicago where he found his appreciation for Frank Lloyd Wright Architecture. He was recently reunited with three of his Illinois tourism colleagues including the State Travel Director when they attended the Great Lakes USA annual meeting. He couldn’t resist the opportunity to show them Buffalo’s Frank Lloyd Wright treasures including the Martin House.



### STAFF FUN FACT:

### Emma Carlo – VBN National Sales Manager



When Emma Carlo isn’t selling Buffalo and Erie County as a destination to religious groups, military reunions, and sorority and fraternal organizations, she is in the scrum as a member of the Ninja Women’s Rugby team. Emma started playing when she was in high school in Hamburg and continued playing in college at Niagara University. Another fun fact about Emma, she was valedictorian of her class at Niagara University. In the office and on the field, she is a force to be reckoned with.

## May CEO Meetings

Great Lakes USA Board Meeting
Cruise Great Lakes Meeting with Buffalo ESD/ECHDC Staff
VBN Executive Committee Meeting
Martin House Executive Committee Meeting
NYSDMO Meeting
Explore Buffalo Doors Open Committee Meeting
VBN Board of Directors Quarterly Meetings
World Canals Conference Steering Committee Meeting
NYS Assembly Member Rivera’s Tourism Industry Breakfast
Aunt Rosie’s 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ribbon Cutting
Destinations International DMAP Board Meeting
Explore & More Children’s Museum Tour
Martin House Board of Directors Meeting
Canal NY Board Meeting
Pierce Arrow Thomas Flyer Press Event
U.S. Travel Association IPW
Michigan Street AAHC Visitor Center Ribbon Cutting



## Visit Buffalo Niagara Board of Directors

Cindy Abbott-Letro, Law Offices of Francis A. Letro – Chair  
Kimberley A. Minkel, NFTA – Vice Chair  
Huseyin Taran, Buffalo Marriot HarborCenter – Treasurer  
Thomas Beauford, Buffalo Urban League - Secretary  
Mary F. Roberts, Martin House - Immediate Past Chair  
Mark Alnutt, University of Buffalo Department of Athletics  
Melissa Brown, Buffalo History Museum  
Daniel Castle, Erie County Dept. of Environment & Planning  
Matt Chiazza, Reikart House  
Anthony J.W. Chase, Buffalo State University  
Dottie Gallagher, Buffalo Niagara Partnership  
Mark Glasgow, Erie County Legislature Majority Caucus Appointee  
Patrick Kaler, Visit Buffalo Niagara – President & CEO  
Thomas Long, The Westin Buffalo  
William Paladino, Ellicott Development, Inc.  
Steven Ranalli, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation  
David Schutte, Schutte Hospitality Group  
Don Spasiano, Trocaire College  
Michelle Urbanczyk, Explore & More Children's Museum  
Gail Wells, Coppertown Blockclub & Buffalo Freedom Gardens

## Visit Buffalo Niagara Staff

James Adler, Sports Sales Manager  
Jo Ann Blatner, Industry Relations Assistant  
Drew Brown, Marketing Manager  
Michele Butlak, Accounting & Benefits Manager  
Emma Carlo, National Sales Manager  
Karen Cox, Convention Sales & Services Manager  
Mike Even, Vice President of Sales & Services  
Karen Fashana, Director of Marketing  
Greg Gelinias, Director Sports Development  
Ed Healy, Vice President of Marketing  
Patrick Kaler, President & CEO  
Michelle Kearns, Communications Manager  
Shannon Jenkins, National Association Sales Director  
David Marzo, Chief Financial Officer  
Leah Mueller, Director of Tourism Sales  
Heather Nowakowski, Business Intelligence Manager  
Kathryn Scaduto, Marketing and Social Media Specialist  
Judy Smith, Director of Administration  
Renata Toney, Vice President of Destination Experience  
Marisa Urbano, Administrative Sales Assistant  
Lauren Vargo, Sports Services Manager  
Meaghan Zimmer, National Sales Director

## Buffalo Niagara Convention Center Staff

Julie Brooks, Controller  
Melissa Burke, Senior Director of Sales  
Jeff Calkins, Vice President & General Manager  
Lorna Cullen, Office Manager  
Patrick Kaler, President & CEO  
Sue Kimmins, Sales and Catering Manager  
Craig Landseadel, Executive Chef  
Mary Ann Martin, Bookkeeper & Benefits Manager  
Mark McMahon, Maintenance Supervisor  
Terry O'Brien, Director of Operations  
Heather Petrino, Sales & Service Coordinator  
Ken Sanford, Chief Engineer  
Christie Walker, Convention and Event Service Manager  
Cory Watson, Food and Beverage Manager  
Michael Will, Assistant Director of Operations  
Colleen Willis, Sales Manager  
Danielle Winiarski, Assistant General Manager  
Alishia Vega, Front Desk Receptionist



## VISION:

**To be the most surprising destination you'll ever visit.**

## MISSION:

**Transforming our community by inspiring visitors and locals to discover Buffalo and Erie County.**

## Data Sources For This Report:

Cervis Technologies  
Cision  
Google Analytics  
Key Data  
Madden Media  
Momentus Technologies (formerly Ungerboeck)  
Sales Force Marketing Cloud  
Simpleview  
STR (Smith Travel Research)  
Tourism Economics