CHOOSE CHICAGO IS THE OFFICIAL DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION FOR CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, THE CITY THAT FEELS LIKE HOME. OUR MISSION IS TO BRING VISITORS AND MEETING ATTENDEES FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO CHICAGO FOR THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF OUR COMMUNITY — WHILE BEING AN ADVOCATE FOR THE VISITOR INDUSTRY AND OUR PARTNERS.
2019 AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

It was another great year for our award-winning city. Chicago was recognized for our outstanding dining scene, hotels, cultural landmarks, and for being one of the best cities in the country.

FOOD & DRINK
Global Time Out Index 2019 named Chicago the best food and drink city in the world. 22 Chicago restaurants were awarded Michelin stars.

BUSINESS
For the third year in a row, Chicago was named the No. 1 best startup city in the Midwest in a study by Chicago VC firm M25.

TOURISM
Condé Nast Traveler Readers’ Choice Awards rank Chicago #1 on their list of Best Large Cities in the U.S. for the third consecutive year.

ATTRACTIONS
The Frederick C. Robie House and Unity Temple are named UNESCO World Heritage sites.

MEETINGS
One of the top North American markets for meeting planners over the next two years, according to STR’s 2019 DestinationMAP.

HOTELS
U.S. News & World Report names three Chicago hotels among best in the country. TripAdvisor’s Travelers’ Choice Awards rank three Chicago hotels among the top luxury hotels in the U.S.
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Dear Partners,

On behalf of Choose Chicago, we want to thank you for your collaboration and commitment to the tourism, hospitality, and meetings industry. We’re pleased to share our 2019 annual report, which highlights many of the key accomplishments of our organization and the results of our valued partnerships.

While 2019 was followed by unprecedented challenges in the spring of 2020, it is important to remember many of the fundamentals that helped drive our economy in 2019. The economic engine that is the tourism, hospitality, and meetings industry will be called upon like never before in the year ahead.

As illustrated in this report, 2019 represented continued momentum in a number of key areas. Chicago established another record year with a 2% overall increase in visitors. This included a record 32.1 million overnight visitors, a 2.3% increase over the prior year. This growth was fueled in part by a 2.0% increase in overall hotel room demand, including an encouraging 5% growth in leisure demand for our hotel partners.

Speaking of momentum, Chicago was selected as the best big city to visit in the United States by the readers of Condé Nast Traveler for the third consecutive year.

The economic impact of our industry and our partners is significant. Overall tourism expenditures exceeded $16.5 billion, including $1.1 billion in tourism tax revenue. Hotel tax revenues alone generated $431 million in support of state and local government.

Our partner hotels generated $153 million in state hotel tax revenue and $138 million via Chicago hotel tax revenue. Our tourism, hospitality, and meetings industry supported 153,676 tourism-related jobs here in Chicago, including 1,672 new jobs added last year.

In 2019, we once again surpassed our annual goal and confirmed more than 2.6 million future room nights by securing 52 major bookings at McCormick Place and 2,406 future meetings in and with our partner hotels. And 21 of the new major bookings at McCormick Place will be meeting in Chicago for the very first time (a major focus of the team).

Chicago’s momentum also translated into positive results for our clients. In 2019, 18 of the 41 major meetings held in Chicago broke either all-time attendance records and/or exhibitor participation records.

A thriving meetings and events industry and a growing leisure audience not only supports increased jobs, but stimulates further investment. Chicago welcomed eight new hotel properties in 2019.

Our accomplishments are due in large part to the tremendous support and cooperation we receive from the State of Illinois; the City of Chicago, including the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events and the Chicago Department of Aviation; the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority; and dozens of corporate sponsors each celebrated within this report. These include the Chicago Federation of Labor and our union partners focused on serving our customers, clients, and guests.

And finally, we value the collaboration and support from our 1,601 partner members representing the best of Chicago’s accommodations, arts, culture and entertainment, attractions, dining and nightlife, trade associations, transportation, convention-related services, and countless community groups.

While Choose Chicago and our partners accomplished a lot in 2019, we undoubtedly are facing great challenges in 2020. To address these obstacles, we fully support Mayor Lori Lightfoot’s COVID-19 Recovery Task Force and pledge to be a part of Tourism & Hospitality Forward.

Choose Chicago and our partners will rely on many of the partnerships and strategies deployed this past year to fuel our recovery and help Chicago reach its full potential once again. And when we do, we will have a chance to fuel future growth by harnessing not only the power of the visitor and meeting industries, but the collective voice of our residential, civic, and business communities.

Thank you to each of you who share in our mission and a special acknowledgement to our Board of Directors, committees, and, of course, our team of professionals at Choose Chicago.
REVENUE BY SOURCE

- **STATE OF ILLINOIS**: 50.9%
- **MPEA AGREEMENT**: 21.7%
- **PRIVATE REVENUES**: 14.7%
- **CITY OF CHICAGO**: 12.7%

$30,621,305 OPERATING REVENUE

EXPENSE BY DEPARTMENT

- **TOTAL EXPENSES**: $31,789,124
- **MARKETING**: 34.5%
- **PARTNERSHIP/SPONSORSHIP**: 1.9%
- **GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT**: 4.3%
- **CHICAGO SPORTS COMMISSION**: 2.6%
- **CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS**: 0.5%
- **EXECUTIVE OFFICE**: 2.7%
- **CORPORATE ALLOCATIONS**: 4.8%
- **IN-KIND**: 3.2%
- **PUBLIC POLICY**: 1.9%
- **ADMINISTRATIVE**: 4.7%
- **MEDIA RELATIONS**: 7.2%
- **SALES & SERVICES**: 31.7%
Tourism is a crucial part of the city’s economic growth and job development. Chicago’s record-breaking tourism industry generates revenue and employment for those who call the city home.

### TOURISM-RELATED EMPLOYMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>136.0K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>140.5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>145.1K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>148.8K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>152.0K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>153.7K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+1.1% FROM 2018

### DIRECT TOURISM SPENDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$14.1B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$14.6B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$14.9B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$15.4B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$16.2B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$16.5B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+1.7% FROM 2018

### TOTAL TAX REVENUE GENERATED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$891.6M</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$953.2M</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$1.0B</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$1.1B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$1.1B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+1.7% FROM 2018

### CHICAGO HOTEL TAX REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$113.6M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$123.9M</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$128.5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$140.2M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$138.3M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-1.4% FROM 2018

### STATE HOTEL TAX REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
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</thead>
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<td>2016</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$155.0M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$152.9M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-1.4% FROM 2018
### Hotel Snapshot — Central Business District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupancy Rate</strong></td>
<td>74.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rooms Available</strong></td>
<td>16.2 M</td>
<td>(+3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rooms Occupied</strong></td>
<td>12.0 M</td>
<td>(+2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Daily Rate</strong></td>
<td>$205.97</td>
<td>(-3.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue Per Available Room</strong></td>
<td>$152.77</td>
<td>(-4.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$2.5B</td>
<td>(-1.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chicago Hotel Tax Revenue**

$138.3M

(-1.4%)
As the premier sales and marketing organization that promotes Chicago’s world-class assets to global leisure travel, meeting, and convention business, Choose Chicago is proud to contribute to the economic vitality of the city and state. We are privileged to have a strong partner community to achieve this goal.

**MAJOR EVENTS BOOKED IN 2019 (THROUGH 2025)**

**JANUARY 2020**
Amazon Web Services AWS SKO/TKO Summit
Anticipated attendance: 19K
Room nights: 79K

**OCTOBER 2020**
Sitecore Symposium
Anticipated attendance: 3.3K
Room nights: 9.9K

**JANUARY 2021**
Amazon AWS AKO
Anticipated attendance: 29K
Room nights: 44.3K

**MARCH 2021**
International Antiviral Society – USA CROI
Anticipated attendance: 4K
Room nights: 16.2K

**AUGUST 2021**
National Conference of State Legislatures Summit
Anticipated attendance: 6K
Room nights: 11K

**MARCH 2022**
Oracle Modern Business Experience
Anticipated attendance: 6K
Room nights: 15K

**APRIL 2022**
National Automatic Merchandising Association Show
Anticipated attendance: 4.6K
Room nights: 4.2K

**JUNE 2022**
American Society of Safety Professionals Conference & Exposition
Anticipated attendance: 8K
Room nights: 17K

**JUNE 2023**
Endocrine Society Annual Meeting & Exposition
Anticipated attendance: 8K
Room nights: 18K

**APRIL 2024**
Informa Media Aviation Week Network
Anticipated attendance: 15K
Room nights: 15K

**OCTOBER 2023**
ANCC National Magnet Conference: Nursing Excellence
Anticipated attendance: 10K
Room nights: 21.8K

**OCTOBER 2024**
Cardinal Health Pharma National Meeting/Retail Business Conference
Anticipated attendance: 5K
Room nights: 14.9K

**OCTOBER 2025**
LinkedIn Talent Connect
Anticipated attendance: 6K
Room nights: 12.4K

**APRIL 2025**
True Value Fall Reunion
Anticipated attendance: 11K
Room nights: 10.9K

**ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM 52 NEW MEETINGS BOOKED AT MCCORMICK PLACE**

**TOTAL MEETINGS BOOKED**
2.5K

**ECONOMIC IMPACT AS A RESULT OF ALL CONVENTIONS AND MEETINGS BOOKED**
$4.0B

**MEETINGS BOOKED FOR HOTEL IN-HOUSE BUSINESS**
2.4K

**ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED WITHIN A 36-MONTH WINDOW (35% OF ROOM NIGHT PRODUCTION)**
925.7K

**FUTURE ROOM NIGHTS SECURED**
2.65M

**OF 2019 GOAL**
100%

**FUTURE MEETINGS SECURED**
64

**NEW MAJOR FUTURE MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS**
52

**MEET WITHIN A 36-MONTH PERIOD**
21

**WILL CONVENE IN CHICAGO FOR THE FIRST TIME**
18

**ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM 52 NEW MEETINGS BOOKED AT MCCORMICK PLACE**
$1.1B
NEW INITIATIVES

Tourism/Hospitality Student Partnership Program: This program connects local students with the tourism industry through networking and educational events, internships, and volunteer opportunities designed for their professional growth.

Future Leader Award: This new merit-based award, funded by the Choose Chicago Foundation, recognizes students who demonstrate commitment and passion for the hospitality and tourism industries. Each year, four winners will receive a $5,000 award to apply to their education.

NETWORKING & EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Choose Chicago hosts a variety of events designed to help partners build industry relationships, promote their business, and expand their professional knowledge.

Online Review Management: This educational session in partnership with Yelp taught best practices for responding to customer reviews, leveraging reviews as a marketing tool, and managing them to drive new and repeat business across all digital platforms.

Year of Chicago Theatre Network Event: Hosted by Emmy-winning Chicago television writer, producer, and host Geoffrey Baer, this event delighted attendees with awe-inspiring performances and provided a behind-the-curtain perspective on the importance of arts in our community.

Marketing Outlook: President & CEO David Whitaker, along with key marketing partners Envisionit and Miles Partnership, unveiled the new choosechicago.com. The new site is designed to drive greater visibility to our partner organizations and provide refreshed digital advertising opportunities.

Partner Breakfast: Partners had the opportunity to join President & CEO David Whitaker for an intimate breakfast and update on all things Choose Chicago. This forum also provided an opportunity for our team to receive partner feedback.

YEAR OF CHICAGO THEATRE NETWORK EVENT

NEW RECORD

90.6% RETENTION RATE

1,601 TOTAL PARTNERS

238 NEW PARTNERS

NEW RECORD

Our Partnership program empowers local organizations to leverage innovative marketing platforms, programs, and opportunities to help them grow their business and connect with millions of annual visitors.
Thank you to our 2019 Strategic Partners for their unmatched level of commitment to Chicago and the visitor industry. The support of Strategic Partners is essential to maintaining our success and ensuring that Chicago remains the premier destination for leisure and business travelers.

"Our Strategic Partnership with Choose Chicago has expanded our reach in the meeting and events industry through greater exposure at industry events, as well as developing relationships with key alliance partners."

American Airlines Group Sales
CULINARY EVENTS

Our city is known as one of the country’s best dining destinations. These events invite locals and visitors to experience Chicago’s restaurant scene, while driving business and awareness for our dining partners.

CHICAGO RESTAURANT WEEK

The 12th annual Chicago Restaurant Week was a record-breaking celebration of the city’s acclaimed dining scene. Diners enjoyed special prix fixe menus for brunch, lunch, and dinner and got a taste of why Chicago is one of the most celebrated culinary destinations in the world.

F I R S T  B I T E S  B A S H

First Bites Bash kicked off Chicago Restaurant Week at the iconic Field Museum, where guests sampled tastings from dozens of Chicago’s most celebrated chefs and restaurants. The evening was hosted by chef Joe Flamm, former Executive Chef of Michelin-starred Spiaggia, and Jarmel Doss, Assistant Bar Director at the Aviary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPONSORED BY:</th>
<th>SPONSORED BY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frost</td>
<td>161 Daisy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Sun-Times</td>
<td>CTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5 MILES</td>
<td>JAR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choose Chicago and our industry enjoy the strong support and service of the Chicago Federation of Labor and a collective team focused on serving our customers, clients, and guests.
The Client Services team is an award-winning resource for convention planners. With their expertise on all things Chicago, they help ensure planners, attendees, and exhibitors have an unforgettable experience — and keep them coming back to our city year after year.

**REED EXHIBITIONS — C2E2**
- Record attendance

**MATERIAL HANDLING INDUSTRY — PROMAT & AUTOMATE**
- Record attendance
- Record hotel room pickup

**WINSIGHT — NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION RESTAURANT, HOTEL-MOTEL SHOW**
- Record exhibit space sold
- Record sponsorship revenue sold

**NATIONAL CONFECTIONERS ASSOCIATION – SWEETS & SNACKS EXPO**
- Record number of exhibiting companies, including 200 new companies
- Record exhibit space sold

**TRUE VALUE COMPANY – TRUE VALUE FALL REUNION**
- Record number of stores participated

**AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY – ASCO ANNUAL MEETING**
- Record attendance
- Record funds raised at Conquer Cancer Foundation Dinner
- Record hotel room pickup
- Record exhibit space sold

**EDUCASE – EDUCASE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**
- Record attendance

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY – AACP ANNUAL MEETING**
- Record attendance

**SOCIETY OF MANUFACTURING ENGINEERS – FABTECH**
- Record exhibit space sold

**TECHNOSOLUTIONS – SLATE INNOVATION SUMMIT**
- Record attendance
- Record hotel room pickup

**ROCKWELL AUTOMATION INC. – AUTOMATION FAIR**
- Record attendance

**GLOBAL BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION – GBTA**
- Record registration revenue and sponsorship sales

**THE MIDWEST CLINIC – INTERNATIONAL BAND AND ORCHESTRA CONFERENCE**
- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sold
- Record housing pickup

**MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY – MAS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION**
- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sold
- Record housing pickup

**FALSE VALUE COMPANY – TRUE VALUE FALL REUNION**
- Largest show to date, including over 1,000 retailers
- Sold out exhibit floor
- Over $30M orders placed on the show floor

**FIRST-TIME EVENTS IN CHICAGO**
- Marriott Select Brands General Managers Conference
- ComplexCon
- VenueConnect
- Tessitura Learning & Community Conference
- Starbucks Leadership Experience
- ASIS – Global Security Exchange

**RECORD CONVENTIONS IN 2019**
- 89 CONVENTIONS SERVED
- 20 PROMOTIONAL TRIPS FOR FUTURE CONVENTIONS
- 5 OUT OF 5 AVERAGE CLIENT RATING OF CLIENT SERVICE MANAGERS
- 114 SITE VISITS EDUCATING CLIENTS ABOUT CHICAGO
- 110 VOLUNTEER AMBASSADORS DEDICATED OVER 600 VOLUNTEER HOURS AT 60 EVENTS

**EDUCATING CLIENTS ABOUT CHICAGO**
- Marriott Select Brands General Managers Conference
- ComplexCon
- VenueConnect
- Tessitura Learning & Community Conference
- Starbucks Leadership Experience
- ASIS – Global Security Exchange

**KEHE DISTRIBUTORS – KEHE HOLIDAY SHOW**
- 20 PROMOTIONAL TRIPS FOR FUTURE CONVENTIONS
- 5 OUT OF 5 AVERAGE CLIENT RATING OF CLIENT SERVICE MANAGERS
- 114 SITE VISITS EDUCATING CLIENTS ABOUT CHICAGO
- 110 VOLUNTEER AMBASSADORS DEDICATED OVER 600 VOLUNTEER HOURS AT 60 EVENTS

**MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY – MAS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION**
- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sold
- Record housing pickup

**AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY – ASCO ANNUAL MEETING**
- Record attendance
- Record funds raised at Conquer Cancer Foundation Dinner
- Record hotel room pickup
- Record exhibit space sold

**EDUCASE – EDUCASE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**
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- Record hotel room pickup

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- Record registration revenue and sponsorship sales

**THE MIDWEST CLINIC – INTERNATIONAL BAND AND ORCHESTRA CONFERENCE**
- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sold
- Record housing pickup

**MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY – MAS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION**
- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sold
- Record housing pickup
Choose Chicago launched a completely rebuilt and redesigned website. The new choosechicago.com offers a seamless user experience that welcomes visitors to explore all that Chicago has to offer.

**Key Website Goals**

1. Create an immersive portal that encourages exploration throughout the consumer journey.
2. Help users discover and engage with neighborhoods and local events.
3. Integrate partner listings throughout the site and introduce new advertising opportunities.
4. Build a platform that allows for flexibility and scalability.

**Initial Website Performance**

SEPT – DEC 2019

*The new choosechicago.com has driven major increases in traffic to our website, including an exciting increase in new users. We’ve also seen growth in visitation and engagement from mobile visitors, who were a key focus during the redesign.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.7M</td>
<td>+8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile New Users</td>
<td>1.4M</td>
<td>+19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Users</td>
<td>2.0M</td>
<td>+8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events Calendar Sessions</td>
<td>321K</td>
<td>+190%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Welcome Home Campaign Results**

Total Media Investment: $4.5M

Economic Impact (+9% from 2018): $1.3B

Incremental Trips Generated (+30% from 2018): 1.2M

Average Impressions Per Month: 59M

Hotel Tax Return on Investment (+48% from 2018): $9.62

Social Media:

- **Instagram** @CHOOSECHICAGO
  - Followers: 259.3K (+14% from 2018)
  - Likes: 351.6K (+22% from 2018)

- **Twitter**
  - Followers: 98.7K (+3% from 2018)

Engagement: +303% from 2018

Link Clicks: +72% from 2018
The Marketing and Media Relations teams hosted 58 influencers from nine key markets on four tours highlighting different aspects of Chicago, including LGBTQ+, music, culinary, and holidays. Influencers were chosen based on reach, engagement, content quality, and brand fit.

**Total Influencer Reach**

- Instagram: 11.4M
- YouTube: 10.2M
- Facebook: 3.4M
- Weibo: 3.6M
- WeChat: 1.8M

**Global Social Media**

- Instagram: 27.4K followers (+64% from 2018)
- Facebook: 108.6K followers (+26% from 2018)
- WeChat: 2.2K followers (+12% from 2018)
- Weibo: 558.9K followers (+5% from 2018)
The Year of Chicago Theatre, the first initiative of its kind in the nation, was a citywide celebration of Chicago’s vibrant theatre scene. The year was supported by our Marketing and Media Relations teams, who helped promote Chicago theatre as a must-do activity for visitors in 2019.

**MARKETING CONTENT AND CAMPAIGNS**

**CONTENT**

The Year of Chicago Theatre landing page on choosechicago.com featured special events and programming around the city all year long. It also highlighted a rotating selection of shows that represented the diversity of Chicago theatre offerings.

**PAGEVIEWS**

272.4K

**CLICKS FOR TICKETS, SPECIAL EVENTS, AND PROGRAMS**

18.5K

**MEDIA EVENTS AND VISITS**

in-market media events in London, New York City, Paris, Munich, Mexico City, Toronto, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, Beijing, and Tokyo with 385+ combined media in attendance

theatre-themed press tours from Canada, U.S., China, Japan, United Kingdom as well as two global tours, totaling 35+ media outlets

300+ Year of Chicago Theatre media results with a media value of over $3 Million

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

Our social media plan included Year of Chicago Theatre posts in Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, and China.

**ADVERTISING**

Choose Chicago ran a dedicated media campaign promoting the Year of Chicago Theatre to build awareness of the initiative and the Chicago theatre scene in regional markets as well as San Francisco and Toronto.
Media Relations generates valuable print, online, and broadcast media coverage of Chicago. The team shares the story of our city with media from around the globe and invites them to come experience Chicago — creating buzz and generating millions in earned media.

Chicago is much more than America’s Second City. In summer, you’d think Chicago was on the seaside. Locals sail, swim, kiteboard and play beach volleyball at one of America’s unlikeliest summer hotspots (there’s 26 beaches here). Then winter comes and its population hunkers down in the famous blues (and jazz) bars on the fringes of the CBD, and you’d need an icebreaker to get around Lake Michigan.

Chicago’s like that, it’s famous for its split personality. This is one of the world’s most prominent sports towns – home of the Bulls, the Cubs, the Bears, the Black Hawks and White Sox – but it’s an arty place too, where you’ll find the US’s second-biggest art gallery; and it’s where Frank Lloyd Wright – arguably the greatest architect who ever lived – came from and left his finest legacies. And while you might know it for the Chicago deep-dish pizza – and hotdogs (with mustard, never ketchup), it’s now America’s top culinary city.

I knew it as America’s Second City (to New York), but I’ve been spending a lot of time lately in Chicago and it’s no longer the bridesmaid. It’s easy to navigate and there’s jazz clubs, blues bars and live music across its 77 neighbourhoods.

But then, if you like live music, this is the city, there’s (free) blues festivals in the parks (there’s 580 of those), and it’s where Lollapalooza began – arguably the event that started the music festival scene in the modern era.

I take boat tours and like to stare up at the Chicago streetscape, or go where Al Capone went before me, to Prohibition-era speakeasies such as Green Mill Cocktail Lounge. Visitors tend to blend into the streetscape – they don’t stick out like they do in New York – probably because it’s easy to go beyond the CBD, into neighbourhoods as diverse as those in LA. It’s not hard to get here (there’s two international airports) – but it’s sure getting harder to leave.

Media Relations generates valuable print, online, and broadcast media coverage of Chicago. The team shares the story of our city with media from around the globe and invites them to come experience Chicago — creating buzz and generating millions in earned media.

USA
Hemispheres
Circulation: 562K
Media value: $795.8K

Germany
Spartacus Traveler
Circulation: 50K
Media value: $34.5K

USA
Ottawa Citizen
Circulation: 45.7K
Media value: $10.1K

Mexico
Aire
Circulation: 120K
Media value: $76.1K

Brazil
O Globo
Circulation: 315K
Media value: $192K

Canada
Travel + Leisure
Circulation: 720K
Media value: $335K

Canada
Ottawa Citizen
Circulation: 45.7K
Media value: $10.1K

UK
Time Out London
Circulation: 308.8K
Media value: $441K

Japan
Act 4
Circulation: 30K
Media value: $425.9K

Australia
Flight Center Australia
Circulation: 200K
Media value: $5K

France
Cosmopolitan
Circulation: 1.52M
Media value: $172.6K

Chicago is much more than America’s Second City. In summer, you’d think Chicago was on the seaside. Locals sail, swim, kiteboard and play beach volleyball at one of America’s unlikeliest summer hotspots (there’s 26 beaches here). Then winter comes and its population hunkers down in the famous blues (and jazz) bars on the fringes of the CBD, and you’d need an icebreaker to get around Lake Michigan.

Chicago’s like that, it’s famous for its split personality. This is one of the world’s most prominent sports towns – home of the Bulls, the Cubs, the Bears, the Black Hawks and White Sox – but it’s anarty place too, where you’ll find the US’s second-biggest art gallery; and it’s where Frank Lloyd Wright – arguably the greatest architect who ever lived – came from and left his finest legacies. And while you might know it for the Chicago deep-dish pizza – and hotdogs (with mustard, never ketchup), it’s now America’s top culinary city.

I knew it as America’s Second City (to New York), but I’ve been spending a lot of time lately in Chicago and it’s no longer the bridesmaid. It’s easy to navigate and there’s jazz clubs, blues bars and live music across its 77 neighbourhoods.

But then, if you like live music, this is the city, there’s (free) blues festivals in the parks (there’s 580 of those), and it’s where Lollapalooza began – arguably the event that started the music festival scene in the modern era.

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ROAD SHOWS

Choose Chicago hit the road to visit meeting prospects and clients in key markets, in partnership with our Strategic Partner, United Airlines. The team was joined by Sarah Grueneberg, James Beard Award-winning chef of Monteverde Restaurant & Pastificio, and Jarmel Doss, Assistant Bar Director at The Aviary, for some fun, interactive demos.

The team also went overseas for the first time to host the U.K. MICE Road Show with blues legend Wayne Baker Brooks and dynamic duo Thai and Danielle Dang of the James Beard Award-nominated HaiSous Vietnamese Kitchen. We also hosted some of our U.K. guests and prospects at the Chicago Bears game in London.

CHICAGO GOLF CLASSIC

The Chicago Golf Classic welcomed almost 200 golfers at Harborside International on Oct. 11, 2019. Thank you to all who attended and helped support our new Future Scholars Awards!

CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

Choose Chicago hosted our Customer Advisory Board in partnership with our Strategic Partner, American Airlines, in July 2019. The board includes approximately 20 key meeting/event clients and prospects who convene on a regular basis to advise our team on marketing Chicago as a premier meetings destination.

PUBLIC POLICY

Choose Chicago needs the support of local and national leaders to secure funding and achieve our goals. Our Public Policy & Community Affairs team helps build strong relationships with elected officials at all levels of government and works to help develop policies and legislation that promote our tourism industry.

In 2019, our Public Policy team was instrumental in securing 2020 funding for Choose Chicago from our state government. This year, the team will continue working to spread the word about the positive impact of tourism.

HOSPITALITY HIRES CHICAGO

Our partners spearhead Hospitality Hires Chicago, a hiring initiative launched in 2017 that connects job seekers to opportunities in the local hospitality sector.

2017 - 2018 RESULTS

- 5K+ JOB APPLICANTS SCREENED
- 300+ EMPLOYERS PARTICIPATED
- 800 CONDITIONAL OFFERS EXTENDED
The seventh annual Chicago Theatre Week put a spotlight on the city’s world-class theatre scene. Choose Chicago partnered with the League of Chicago Theatres to offer value-priced tickets to 139 shows from 100+ participating organizations.

Our city is full of cultural events, attractions, and diverse neighborhoods — and the Cultural Tourism team promotes them to the world. In 2019, they made groundbreaking strides in reinforcing Chicago’s position as a global tourism destination.

**CHICAGO GREETER**

This free service matches visitors with friendly, knowledgeable volunteers for guided tours of Chicago’s downtown and neighborhoods. In 2019, our 210 active Greeters donated 7,900 volunteer hours.

- **9.5K** total tour participants
- **4.5K** Greeter participants
- **2.7K** Instagram Greeter participants
- **1.6K** Seasonal Instagram Greeter participants
- **477** participants on 74 tours for media relations & global development teams

**CHICAGO FRIDAY NIGHT FLIGHTS**

The third season of Chicago Friday Night Flights showcased our city’s thriving craft beer community, in partnership with the Illinois Craft Brewers Guild.

- **6** events in different Chicago neighborhoods
- **3.9K** tasting passes sold (+8.8% from 2018)

**CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK**

“We look forward to this each year as an opportunity to attend performances we wouldn’t normally go to.”

CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK ATTENDEE

Our close relationship with the Ministry of Culture & Tourism of the People’s Republic of China strengthens cooperation between our communities and highlights both as global cultural destinations. During the sixth year of our Chinese New Year celebration, we invited the China National Peking Opera Company and the Hubei Chime Bells National Chinese Orchestra from China to perform to a sold-out audience at the Symphony Center. Choose Chicago also co-hosted Mabang Bang for two concerts during the annual World Music Festival.

**CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK TICKET SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>7.9K</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>12.5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>12.7K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MOBILE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER**

The Mobile Visitor Information Center was back for a second summer in partnership with CTM Media Group. The center handed out 41,700 brochures & Official Chicago Visitors Guides over the summer.
Global Development

Our Global Development team helps establish Chicago as a top tourism destination with international travelers, who tend to stay longer and spend more in our city. In 2019, the team traveled the world to promote Chicago in key international markets and help achieve our tourism goals.

Our team collaborated with Brand USA to add Chicago to their USA Discovery Program. The Chicago badge is now active in eleven markets (Australia, Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, South Korea, United Kingdom, and Ireland) with 2,110 agents certified to date.

Our team worked on.

- Promotions
- Fam trips
- Fam missions
- Trade shows
- Trainings
- Client events
- FAMs

We reached.

- 31 countries
- 100% of goal reached in familiarization (FAM) trips
- 100% of goal reached in trade shows attended
- 4,700 travel trade professionals reached through 29 sales missions and calls
- 765 appointments at 13 international & domestic trade shows
- 12 key client events hosted
- 25 fam trips hosted in Chicago for 329 travel trade professionals
- 43 international destination trainings held, reaching an audience of over 47,000
- 50 initiatives to promote international and domestic tourism to Chicago

We helped.

- Reach 100% ofgoal reached in FAM trips
- Attend 100% of goal reached in trade shows attended
- Help establish Chicago as a top tourism destination with international travelers.
The Chicago Sports Commission recruits and supports high-profile, major sporting events that drive significant economic impact and positive media exposure for Chicago.

@ChiSportsComm | chicagosportscommission.com

**BIG TEN MEN’S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT**
MARCH 13 - 17 AT UNITED CENTER

122.2K attendees – second highest attendance since Chicago’s 2013 record

8 of 14 Big Ten Teams advanced to NCAA Tournament (a new record)

13 games over 5 days, all with live broadcast

**UNITED SOCCER COACHES CONVENTION**
JAN. 9 - 13 AT MCCORMICK PLACE

14.1K attendees from 50 states and 38 countries

$21.3M in economic impact

10.1K room nights

350 exhibiting companies & 900+ booths

**2019 CONCACAF GOLD CUP FINAL**
JULY 7 AT SOLDIER FIELD
The 2019 Concacaf Gold Cup Final saw a sold-out crowd of 62,500 attendees at Soldier Field. Mexico defeated the United States 1-0 in a thrilling match broadcast on FOX Sports and Univision.

**FIVB MEN’S VOLLEYBALL NATIONS LEAGUE FINALS**
JULY 10 - 14 @ CREDIT UNION 1 ARENA
Six national teams from Russia, USA, Poland, Brazil, France, and Iran competed in FIVB Volleyball Nations League Finals at Credit Union 1 Arena. The event saw 12,500+ attendees over four days of high-powered matches.
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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CLAYCO 
JDecaux 
KemperSports 
KemperLevin 

TGI 
REVOLUTION 
United Center 

Arena Partners 

Hyatt Regency 

Board (MVP & All-Star)

Mayer Brown 
One Sixty Ninety 
MillerCoors 

McHugh 

Bannerville USA 

IN AFFILIATION WITH

ChooseChicago.com

NFL KICKOFF EXPERIENCE – BEARS VS. PACKERS
SEPT. 5 @ GRANT PARK AND SOLDIER FIELD

More than 42,000 attendees celebrated the kickoff of the 100th season for the Chicago Bears and the NFL with a fan fest, pre-game concert, and live broadcast in Grant Park. The Bears faced the Packers at Soldier Field in front of a sold-out crowd, and more than 49M viewers tuned in.

Thank you to our sponsors

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Vice President
Hear Music in the Key of Chicago