

A wide-angle photograph of the Chicago skyline at dusk. The sky is a mix of blue and purple. In the foreground, the Cloud Gate sculpture (The Bean) is highly reflective, mirroring the surrounding buildings and the sky. A large crowd of people is gathered around the sculpture. The background is filled with various skyscrapers, some with their lights on, and others with a more classic architectural style. The overall scene is vibrant and captures the essence of a busy city at twilight.

chICAGO  
CHOOSE CHICAGO

19  
ANNUAL REPORT



2018

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.



## 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.



## 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.**



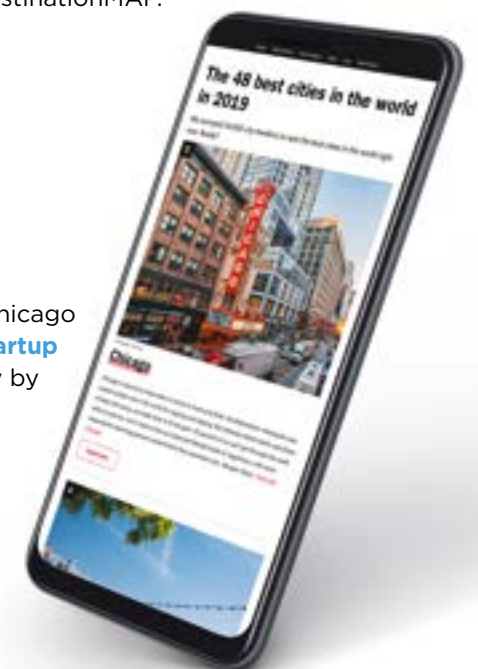
## MEETINGS

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



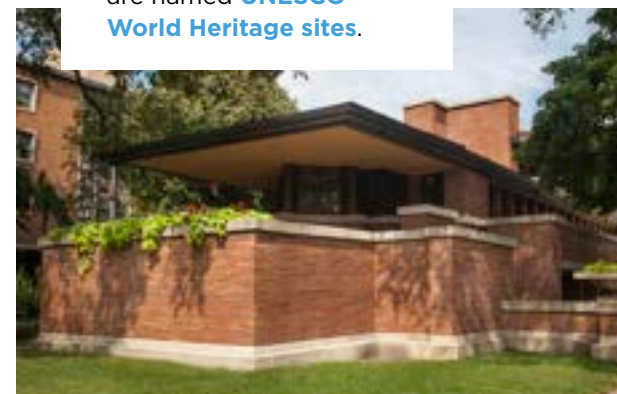
## BUSINESS

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.



## ATTRACTIONS

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



## 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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# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR & CEO

## Dear Partners,

**O**n 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 within the next 36 months and 18 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.



**GLENN EDEN**  
Board Chair  
Choose Chicago

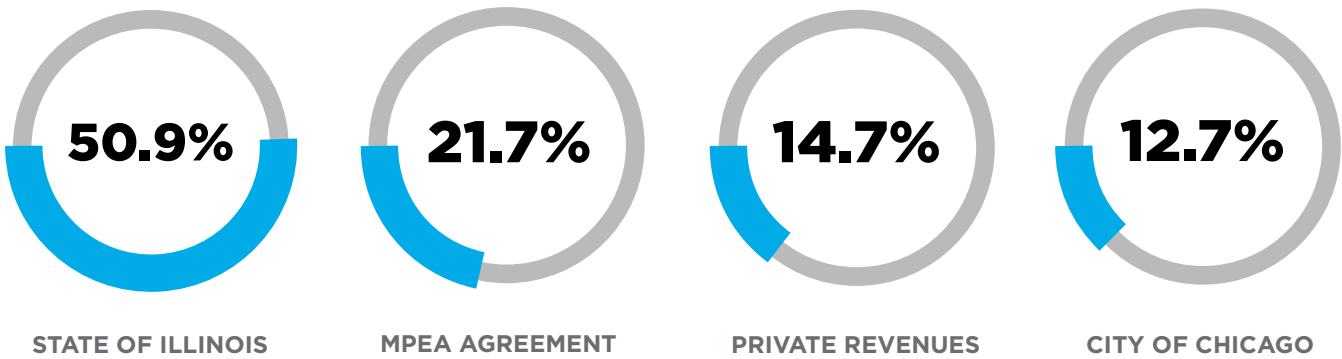


**DAVID WHITAKER**  
President & Chief  
Executive Officer  
Choose Chicago



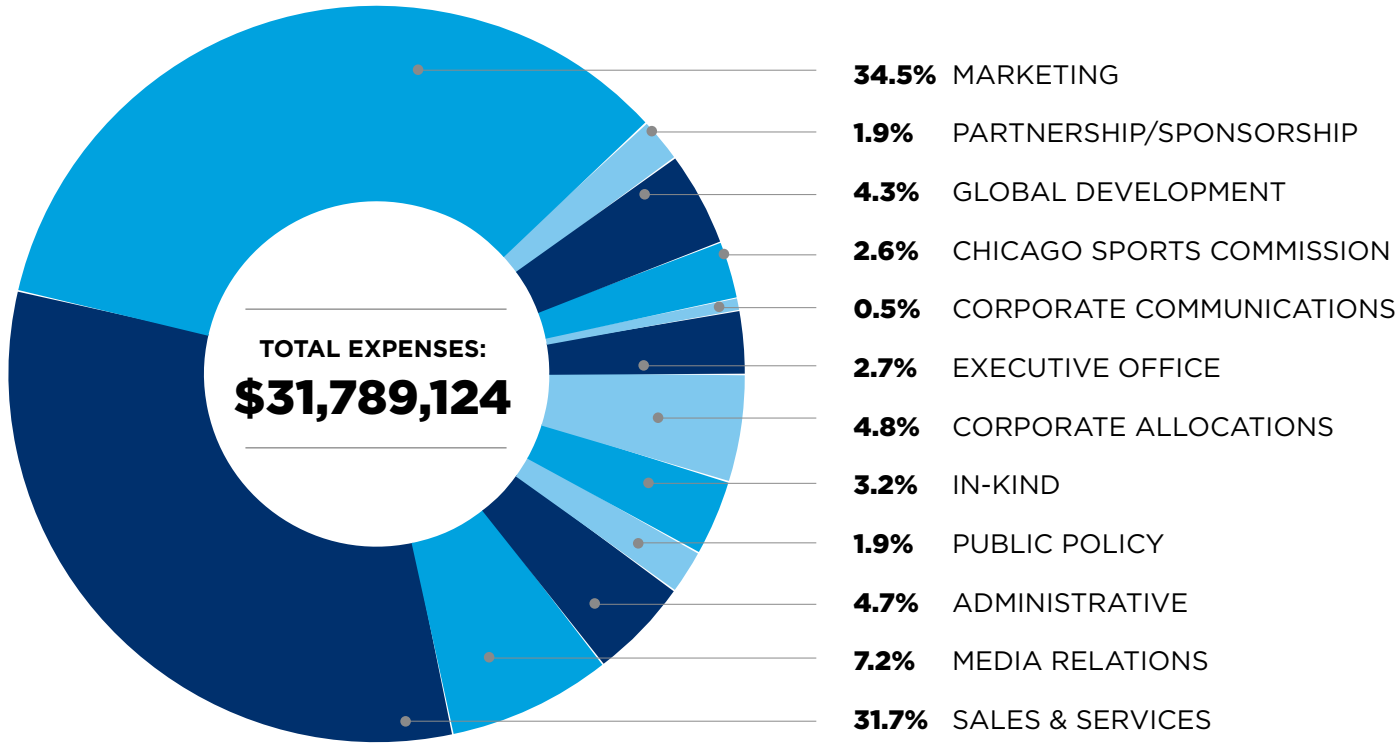
2019 OPERATIONS

REVENUE BY SOURCE



**\$30,621,305** OPERATING REVENUE

EXPENSE BY DEPARTMENT







# ECONOMIC IMPACT

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

136.0K	140.5K	145.1K	148.8K	152.0K	153.7K
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
					+1.1% FROM 2018

## DIRECT TOURISM SPENDING

\$14.1B	\$14.6B	\$14.9B	\$15.4B	\$16.2B	\$16.5B
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
					+1.7% FROM 2018

## TOTAL TAX REVENUE GENERATED

\$885.2M	\$891.6M	\$953.2M	\$1.0B	\$1.1B	\$1.1B
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
					+1.7% FROM 2018

## CHICAGO HOTEL TAX REVENUE

\$113.6M	\$123.9M	\$127.1M	\$128.5M	\$140.2M	\$138.3M
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
					-1.4% FROM 2018

## STATE HOTEL TAX REVENUE

\$125.6M	\$137.0M	\$140.5M	\$142.1M	\$155.0M	\$152.9M
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
					-1.4% FROM 2018



HOTEL SNAPSHOT — CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

OCCUPANCY RATE

74.2%

AVERAGE DAILY RATE

\$205.97

(-3.3%)

REVENUE PER  
AVAILABLE ROOM

\$152.77

(-4.9%)

ROOMS AVAILABLE

16.2M

(+3.7%)

ROOMS OCCUPIED

12.0M

(+2.0%)

REVENUE

\$2.5B

(-1.4%)

CHICAGO HOTEL TAX REVENUE

\$138.3M

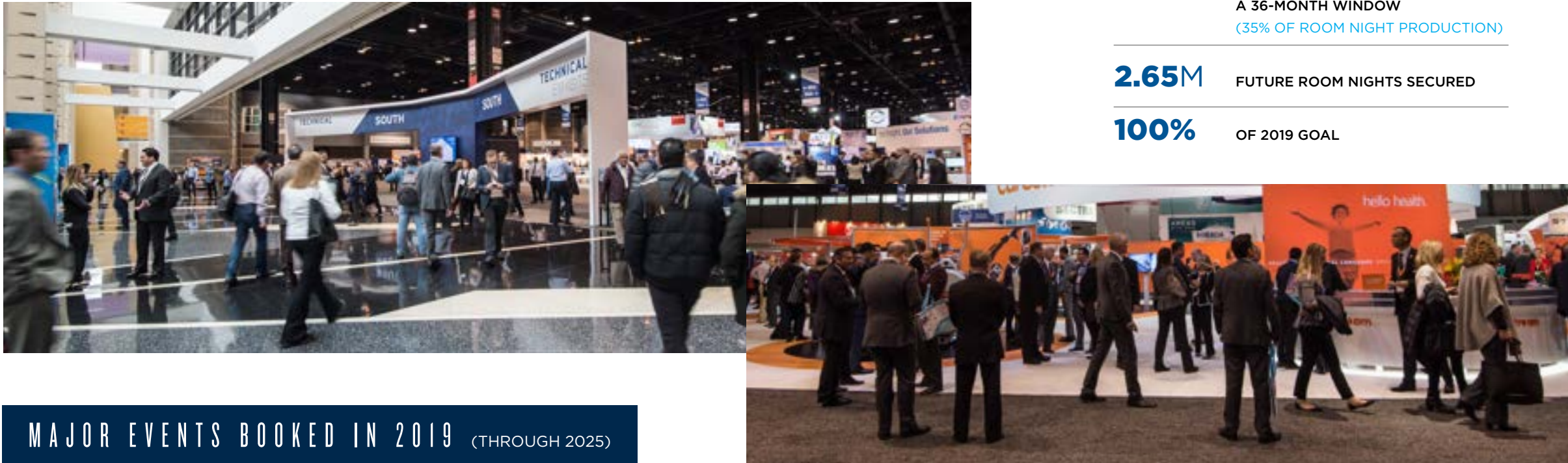
(-1.4%)





MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

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.



2.5K	TOTAL MEETINGS BOOKED
\$4.0B	ECONOMIC IMPACT AS A RESULT OF ALL CONVENTIONS AND MEETINGS BOOKED
2.4K	MEETINGS BOOKED FOR HOTEL IN-HOUSE BUSINESS
925.7K	ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED WITHIN A 36-MONTH WINDOW (35% OF ROOM NIGHT PRODUCTION)
2.65M	FUTURE ROOM NIGHTS SECURED
100%	OF 2019 GOAL

MCCORMICK PLACE

64

FUTURE MEETINGS SECURED

52

NEW MAJOR FUTURE MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

21

MEET WITHIN A 36-MONTH PERIOD

18

WILL CONVENE IN CHICAGO FOR THE FIRST TIME

\$1.1B

ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM 52 NEW MEETINGS BOOKED AT MCCORMICK PLACE

MAJOR EVENTS BOOKED IN 2019 (THROUGH 2025)

<b>JANUARY 2020</b> <b>Amazon Web Services AWS SKO/TKO Summit</b> Anticipated attendance: 19K Room nights: 79K	<b>MARCH 2021</b> <b>International Antiviral Society – USA CROI</b> Anticipated attendance: 4K Room nights: 16.2K	<b>MARCH 2022</b> <b>Oracle Modern Business Experience</b> Anticipated attendance: 6K Room nights: 15K	<b>JUNE 2023</b> <b>Endocrine Society Annual Meeting &amp; Exposition</b> Anticipated attendance: 8K Room nights: 18K	<b>APRIL 2024</b> <b>Informa Media Aviation Week Network</b> Anticipated attendance: 15K Room nights: 15K
<b>OCTOBER 2020</b> <b>Sitecore Symposium</b> Anticipated attendance: 3.3K Room nights: 9.9K	<b>AUGUST 2021</b> <b>National Conference of State Legislatures Summit</b> Anticipated attendance: 6K Room nights: 11K	<b>APRIL 2022</b> <b>National Automatic Merchandising Association Show</b> Anticipated attendance: 4.6K Room nights: 4.2K	<b>OCTOBER 2023</b> <b>ANCC National Magnet Conference: Nursing Excellence</b> Anticipated attendance: 10K Room nights: 21.8K	<b>JULY 2024</b> <b>Cardinal Health Pharma National Meeting/Retail Business Conference</b> Anticipated attendance: 5K Room nights: 14.9K
<b>JANUARY 2021</b> <b>Amazon AWS AKO</b> Anticipated attendance: 29K Room nights: 44.3K		<b>JUNE 2022</b> <b>American Society of Safety Professionals Conference &amp; Exposition</b> Anticipated attendance: 8K Room nights: 17K	<b>OCTOBER 2023</b> <b>LinkedIn Talent Connect</b> Anticipated attendance: 6K Room nights: 12.4K	<b>OCTOBER 2025</b> <b>True Value Fall Reunion</b> Anticipated attendance: 11K Room nights: 10.9K



# PARTNERSHIP

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.



238  
NEW PARTNERS

1,601  
TOTAL PARTNERS  
*NEW RECORD*

90.6%  
RETENTION RATE



**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.







“

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

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

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.





CULINARY EVENTS

Our city is known as one of the 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.



SPONSORED BY:



FIRST BITES BASH

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.



SPONSORED BY:



JAMES BEARD AWARDS

Choose Chicago, in partnership with the Illinois Restaurant Association, is proud to host the prestigious James Beard Awards at the Lyric Opera of Chicago through 2027.

Congratulations to our 2019 Chicago James Beard Award winners!

Outstanding Restaurateur

Kevin Boehm and Rob Katz  
Boka Restaurant Group

Best Chef: Great Lakes

Beverly Kim and Johnny Clark  
Parachute

Outstanding Baker

Greg Wade  
Publican Quality Bread

Restaurant Design:  
76 Seats and Over

Pacific Standard Time

JAMES BEARD EATS WEEK

The 5th annual James Beard Eats Week featured 139 restaurants, each offering unique dishes or menus as an ode to James Beard. Each participating restaurant provided a \$100 donation to benefit the James Beard Foundation EATS Week Scholarship, which is awarded to a deserving Chicago-based culinary student.





# OUR UNION PARTNERS

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.



Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters

IATSE Locals 2 & 110

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 134

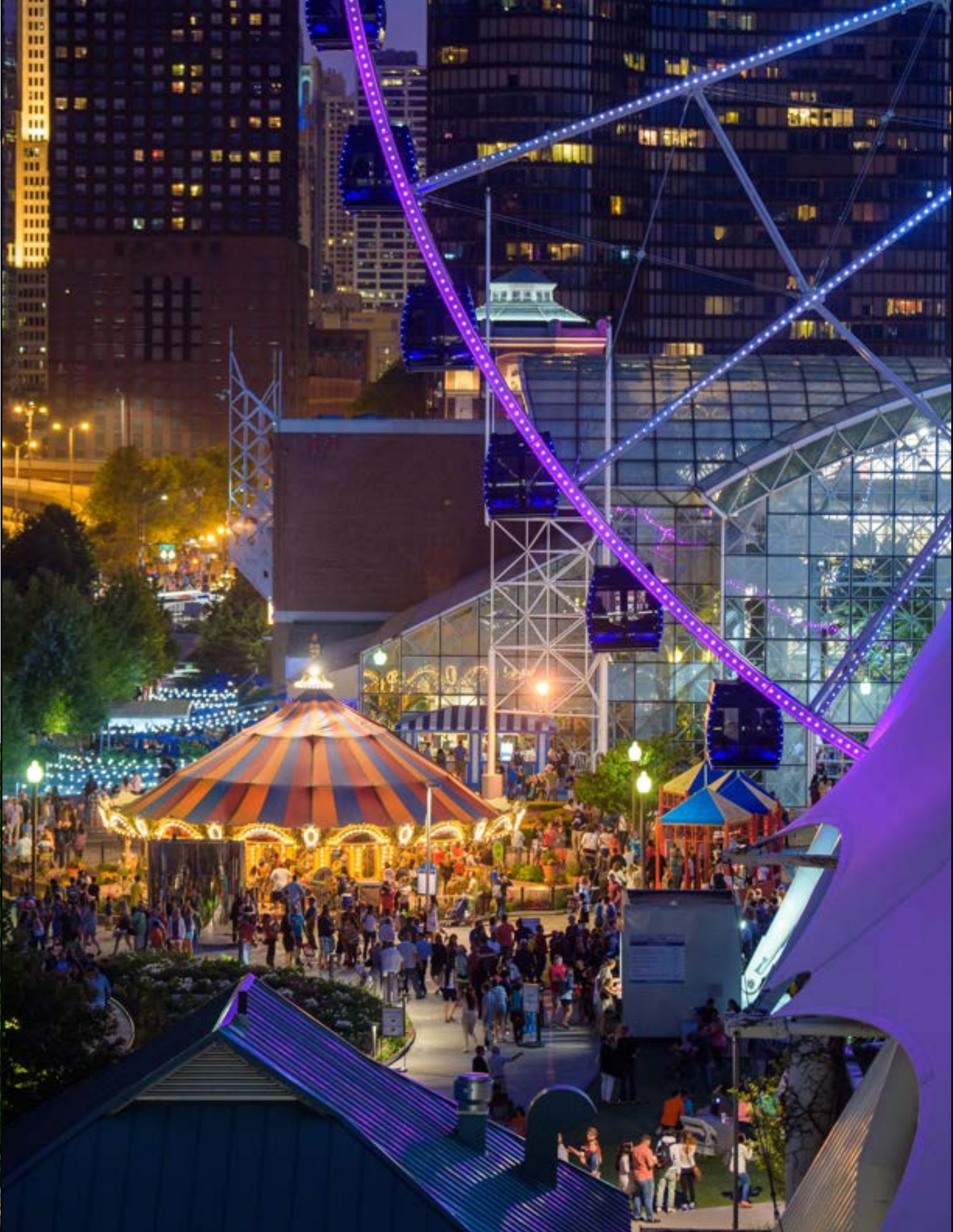


Riggers, Machinery Movers, & Machinery Erectors Local Union 136

Teamsters Joint Council No. 25

UNITE HERE Local 1

United Steelworkers Local 17 Decorators Union





CLIENT SERVICES

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.



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



FIRST-TIME EVENTS IN CHICAGO

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Marriott Select Brands General Managers Conference | ComplexCon                                |
| STAR WARS CELEBRATION                              | VenueConnect                              |
| AUVSI Xponential                                   | Tessitura Learning & Community Conference |
| CPHi North American                                | Starbucks Leadership Experience           |
| Reed Outdoor Experience                            | ASIS – Global Security Exchange           |

RECORD CONVENTIONS IN 2019

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

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

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY – AACP ANNUAL MEETING

- Record attendance

SALESFORCE.COM – SALESFORCE CONNECTIONS

- Record attendance

TECHNOSOLUTIONS – SLATE INNOVATION SUMMIT

- Record attendance
- Record hotel room pickup

GLOBAL BUSINESS TRAVEL ASSOCIATION – GBTA

- Record attendance
- Record registration revenue and sponsorship sales

TRUE VALUE COMPANY – TRUE VALUE FALL REUNION

- Record number of stores participated

EDUCAUSE – EDUCAUSE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

- Record attendance

SOCIETY OF MANUFACTURING ENGINEERS – FABTECH

- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sold

ROCKWELL AUTOMATION INC. – AUTOMATION FAIR

- Record attendance

THE MIDWEST CLINIC – INTERNATIONAL BAND AND ORCHESTRA CONFERENCE

- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sales
- Record housing pickup

TESSITURA – TLCC

- Record attendance

MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY – MAS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

- Record attendance
- Record exhibit space sold
- Record housing pickup

KEHE DISTRIBUTORS – KEHE HOLIDAY SHOW

- Largest show to date, including over 1,000 retailers
- Sold out exhibit floor
- Over \$30M orders placed on the show floor

THE MIDWEST CLINIC – THE MIDWEST CLINIC 2019 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



MARKETING

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.

2.7M

OVERALL SESSIONS

+8% FROM 2018

1.4M

MOBILE NEW USERS

+19% FROM 2018

2.0M

NEW USERS

+8% FROM 2018

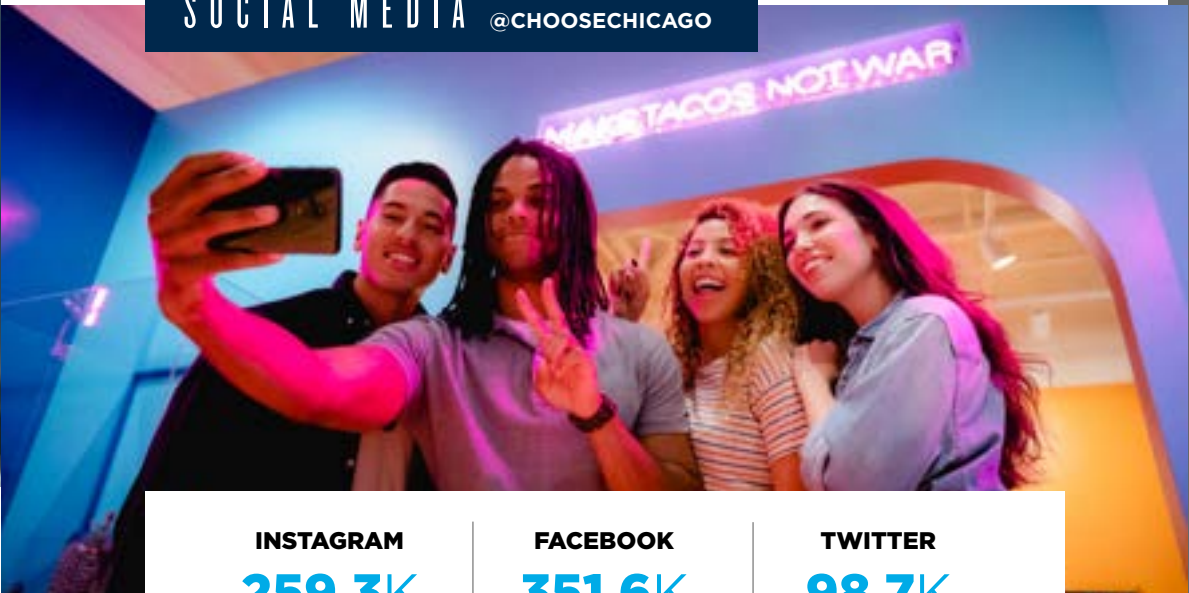
321K

EVENTS CALENDAR SESSIONS

+190% FROM 2018



SOCIAL MEDIA @CHOOSECHICAGO



INSTAGRAM

259.3K

FOLLOWERS

+14% FROM 2018

FACEBOOK

351.6K

LIKES

+22% FROM 2018

TWITTER

98.7K

FOLLOWERS

+3% FROM 2018

Engagement +303% from 2018 | Link clicks +72% from 2018



WELCOME HOME CAMPAIGN RESULTS

\$4.5M

TOTAL MEDIA INVESTMENT

\$1.3B

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
(+9% FROM 2018)

1.2M

INCREMENTAL TRIPS GENERATED  
(+30% FROM 2018)

59M

AVERAGE IMPRESSIONS PER MONTH

\$305

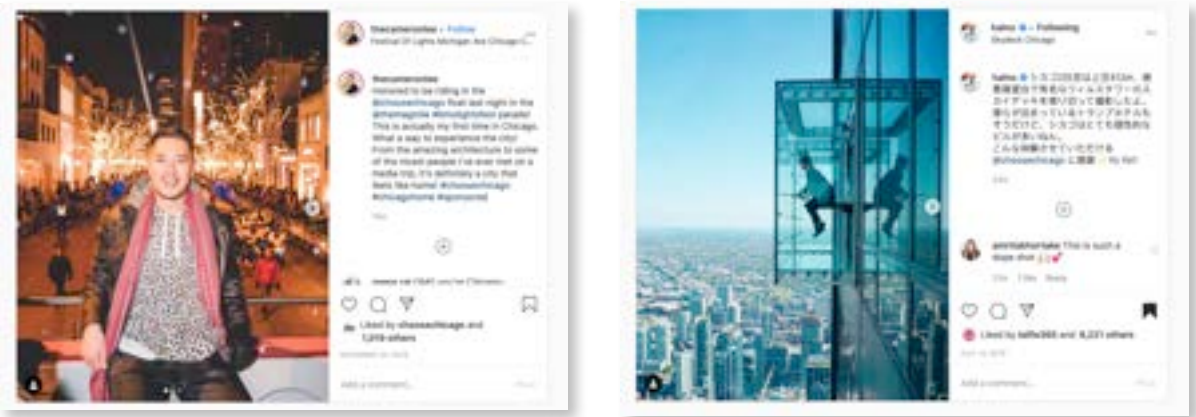
RETURN ON MEDIA INVESTMENT

\$9.62

HOTEL TAX RETURN ON INVESTMENT  
(+48% FROM 2018)



GLOBAL INFLUENCER PROGRAM



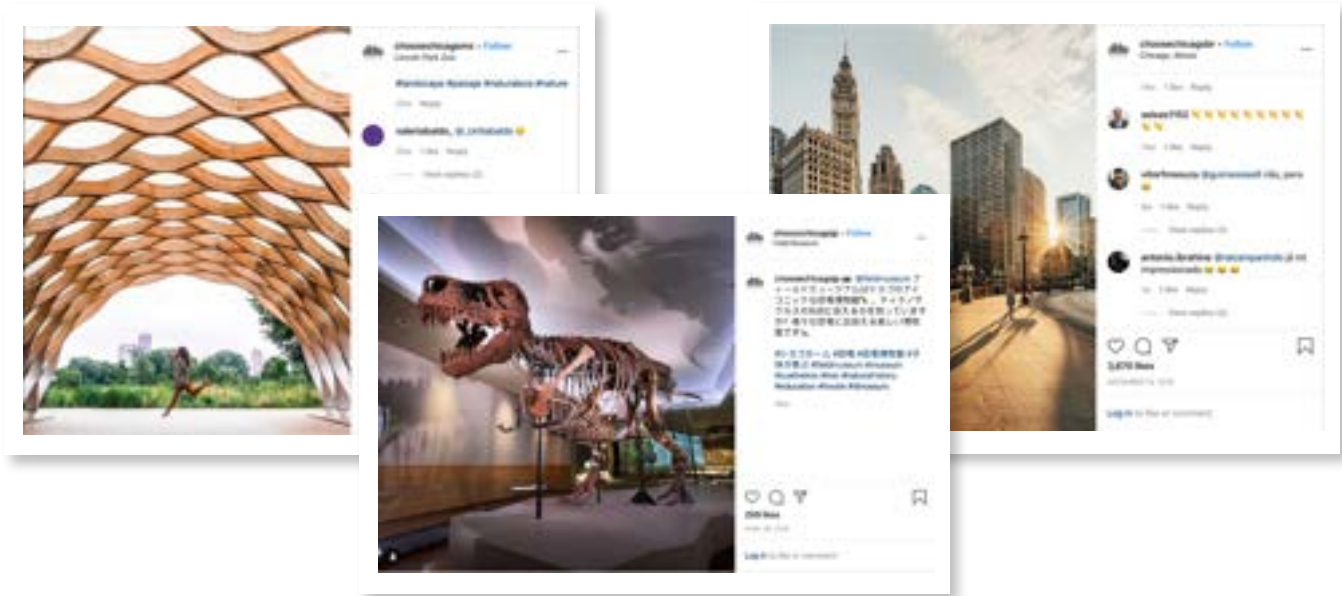
BRAZIL	FRANCE	JAPAN	CHINA	GERMANY	CANADA	MEXICO
 	 	 	 	 		  

GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA	INSTAGRAM 27.4K FOLLOWERS +84% FROM 2018	FACEBOOK 108.6K FOLLOWERS +26% FROM 2018	WECHAT 2.2K FOLLOWERS +12% FROM 2018	WEIBO 558.9K FOLLOWERS +2% FROM 2018
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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	10.7M
Facebook	3.4M
Weibo	3.6M
WeChat	1.8M





# YEAR OF CHICAGO THEATRE

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.

272.4K  
PAGEVIEWS

18.5K  
CLICKS FOR  
TICKETS, SPECIAL  
EVENTS, AND  
PROGRAMS



The Year of Chicago Theatre was also featured in our blog, newsletters, and the Official Chicago Visitors Guide, including the cover image.



### 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 EVENTS AND VISITS

10 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

7 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





MEDIA RELATIONS

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.

GERMANY

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



USA

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



MEXICO

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



BRAZIL

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



WHO'S GOT THE BLUES IN CHICAGO?

Chicago is much more than America's Second City. It is a city of music, art, and culture. The Blues is a part of the city's heritage, and it's a part of the city's soul. The Blues is a music that has been around for over 100 years, and it's a music that has inspired generations of musicians. The Blues is a music that is full of emotion, and it's a music that is full of life. The Blues is a music that is a part of the city's history, and it's a music that is a part of the city's future.



AUSTRALIA

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



FRANCE

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

JAPAN

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



U.K.

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



CANADA

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

CHINA

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

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

\$41.1M  
EARNED  
MEDIA VALUE

6B  
READERS,  
LISTENERS,  
AND VIEWERS

2.7K  
ARTICLES AND  
BROADCASTS  
HIGHLIGHTING  
TRAVEL TO  
CHICAGO

413  
MEDIA  
HOSTED IN  
CHICAGO

44  
DOMESTIC AND  
INTERNATIONAL  
MEDIA TOURS

647  
MEDIA HOSTED  
AND/OR  
SUPPORTED







SPECIAL EVENTS

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





CULTURAL TOURISM

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.



- 4.5K GREETER PARTICIPANTS
- 2.7K INSTAGREETER PARTICIPANTS
- 1.6K SEASONAL INSTAGREETER PARTICIPANTS
- 477 PARTICIPANTS ON 74 TOURS FOR MEDIA RELATIONS & GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT TEAMS



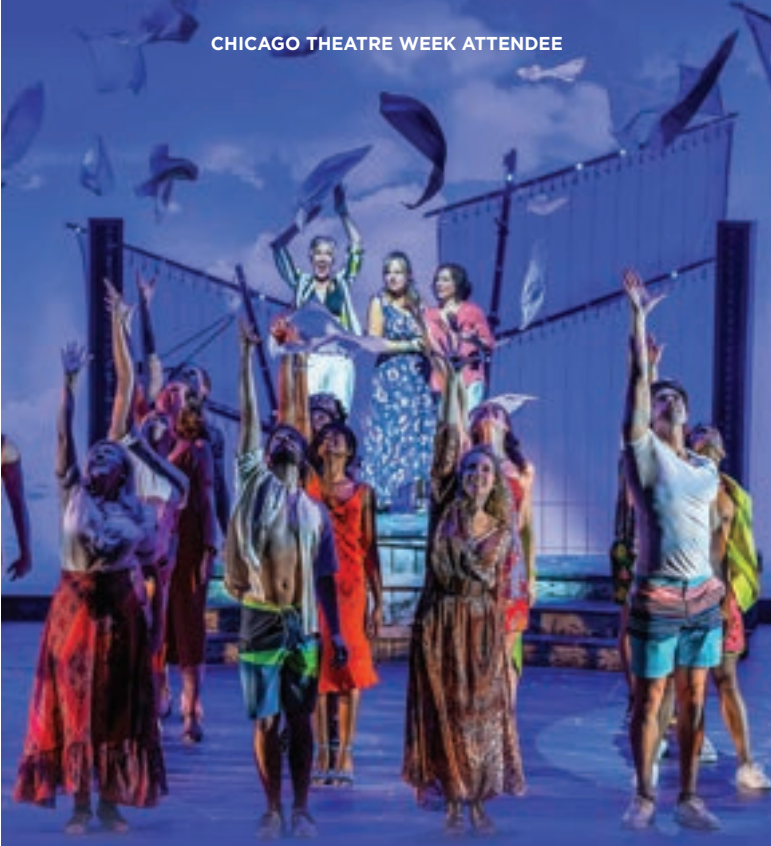
**CHICAGO FRIDAY NIGHT FLIGHTS**  
The third season of Chicago Friday Night Flights showcased our city’s thriving craft beer community, in partnership with the Illinois Craft Brewers Guild.

6  
EVENTS IN DIFFERENT CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS

3.9K  
TASTING PASSES SOLD  
+8.8% FROM 2018

“WE LOOK FORWARD TO THIS EACH YEAR AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND PERFORMANCES WE WOULDN’T NORMALLY GO TO.”

CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK ATTENDEE



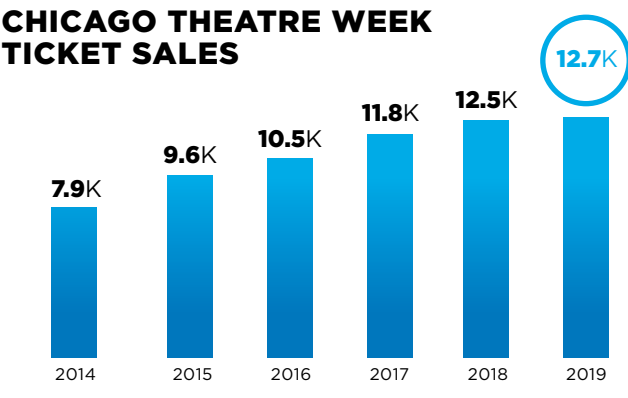
CHOOSE CHICAGO & CHINA

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

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.



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.



31  
COUNTRIES  
REACHED

100%  
OF GOAL REACHED  
IN FAMILIARIZATION  
(FAM) TRIPS

100%  
OF GOAL REACHED  
IN TRADE SHOWS  
ATTENDED



4.7K  
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 47K

50  
INITIATIVES  
TO PROMOTE  
INTERNATIONAL  
AND DOMESTIC  
TOURISM TO  
CHICAGO



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.**



# CHICAGO SPORTS COMMISSION

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](http://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



19

EVENTS HOSTED IN 2019

93.2K

ROOM NIGHTS GENERATED IN 2019



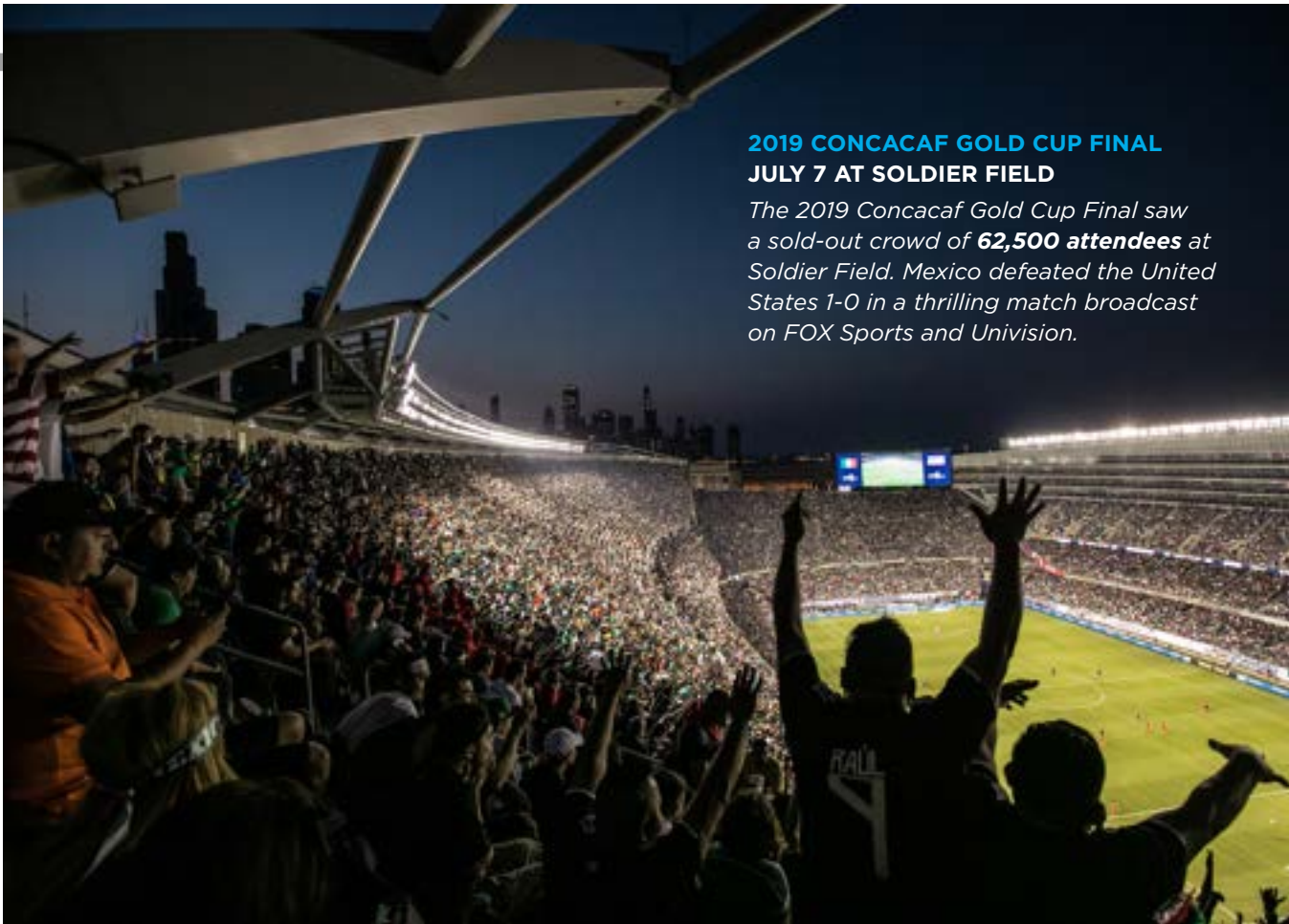
## UNITED SOCCER COACHES CONVENTION JAN. 9 - 13 AT MCCORMICK PLACE

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.

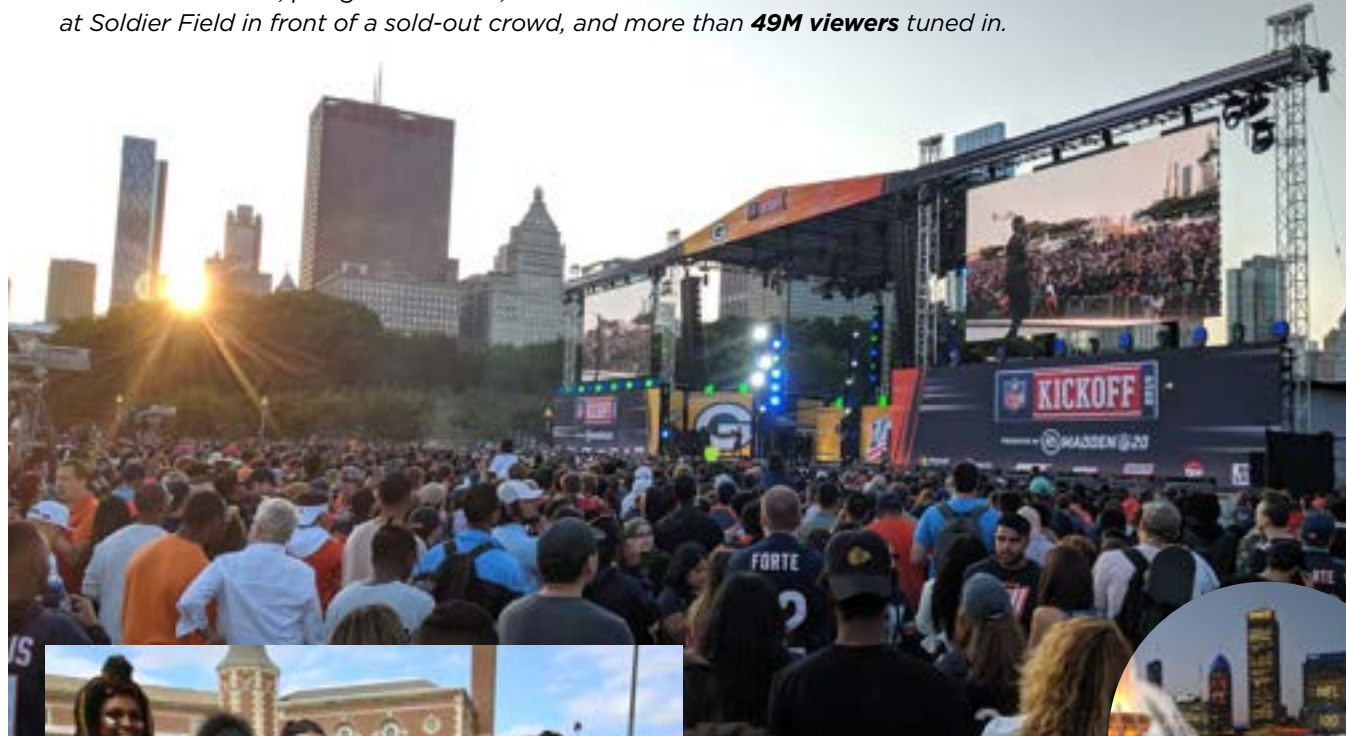




## NFL KICKOFF EXPERIENCE — BEARS VS. PACKERS

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.



☛ To celebrate the NFL Kickoff, **905 volunteers** donated over **115,000 minutes** to local Chicago community initiatives, culminating in a special event with the **Chicago Park District** and **Mayor Lori Lightfoot** at Douglas Park.



## NIKE TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

JULY 10 – 12 @ McCORMICK PLACE

The **NIKE Tournament of Champions** returned to McCormick Place in 2019, hosting **784 teams** from all 50 states and every Canadian province. More than **1,150 college coaches and recruiters** were in attendance.



## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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