



2025

Annual
REPORT

PREPARED BY
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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CHAMBER MISSION

The Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce is an organization whereby many different business interests have joined together in a combined manner to maximize their ability to attract and increase the number of visitors to Chincoteague Island.

The ultimate goal of the organization is to communicate the message that Chincoteague, the "Beautiful Land Across the Water," is the most desirable location to visit and/or vacation with family or friends.

DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION

AS DESIGNATED BY VIRGINIA TOURISM CORPORATION

As the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the Town of Chincoteague Island, the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce is tasked with increasing visitation to the island to support hospitality and related businesses who depend on tourism for their livelihood.

Tourism is the #1 economic driver on an island where wild ponies, natural attractions, and rocket launches are key tourism products.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN “JACK” H. TARR

John “Jack” H. Tarr, owner and operator of Jack Tarr Electrical, faithfully served on the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce Board since 2017, holding the position of Treasurer since 2021. Jack loved Chincoteague Island, giving of his time and leadership through 7 years on Town Council and 17 years as Mayor.

He was honored as the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce 2002 Citizen of the Year and 2023 Business Person of the Year. He volunteered at many festivals over the years, most recently with the Supply Truck and courtesy shuttle.

Jack was an honest, hardworking, and kind individual who consistently inspired excellence in those around him. His leadership, insight, integrity, and friendship are deeply missed.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cynthia Leonard, President
Refuge Inn / Bike Depot /
The Rookery at the Refuge

Lee Chisholm, Vice President
Taylor Bank

Jack Tarr, Treasurer
Jack Tarr Electrical

Angie Abell - Beach Bay Realty

Austin Brodin - Island Foods Great Valu Grocery Store

Jocelyn Grover - Chincoteague Cultural Alliance

Dustin Mears - NFP Property & Casualty Services

Kate Moot - Pico Taqueria

Jeannie Rose - Comfort Suites Chincoteague Island
Bayfront Resort / Key West Cottages

Elaine Stitcher - Seaside Vacations & Sales

Jimmy Vasiliou - Capt. Steve's Bait & Tackle

TEAM MEMBERS

Joanne Moore
Executive Director

Moriah Lemming
Marketing & Event Coordinator

Shellie Menzoff
Membership & Visitor Services Coordinator

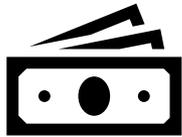
Andrea Adams
Tourism Counselor

Kristin DeBolt
Summer Tourism Counselor



TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS ACCOMACK COUNTY 2024

Source: 2024 Economic Impact of Visitors in Virginia,
Virginia Tourism Corporation



\$192.2M

Visitor Spending
42.7% ↑ 2024/2019
7.0% ↑ 2024/2023

\$72.4M - Lodging
\$55.0M - Food & Beverage
\$27.6M - Transportation
\$19.9M - Recreation
\$17.3M - Retail



\$11.9M

Visitors generated in
state and local taxes



1,468

Tourism jobs supported



EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

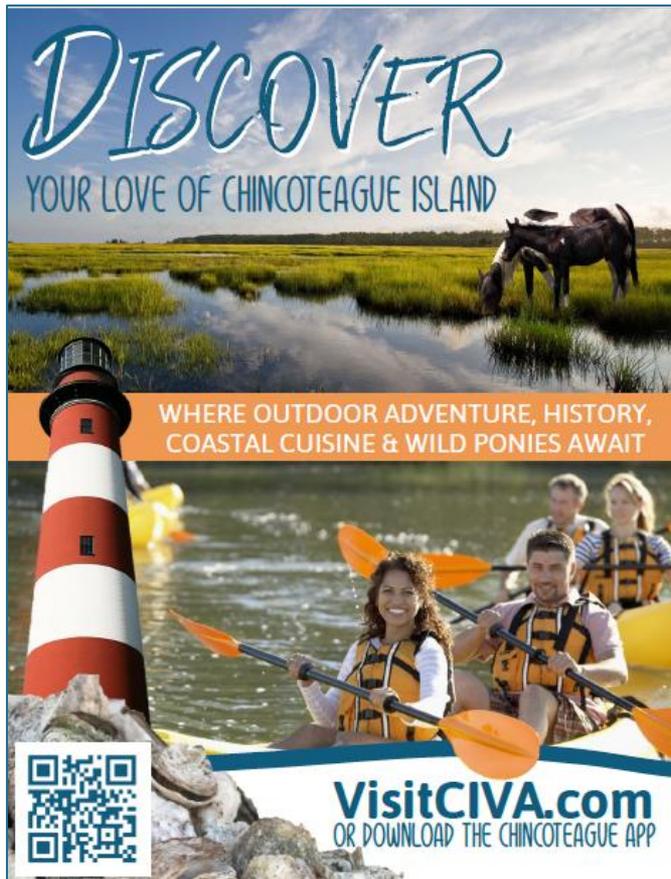
(Accomack & Northampton Counties)

Visitor Spending grew 42.8% 2024/2019 and 5.5% 2024/2023

MARKETING SPEND

TOTAL SPEND - \$ 83,732

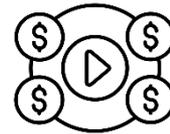
TOTAL VALUE - \$806,225



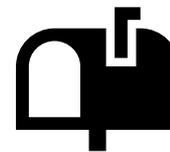
PRINT COST \$ 20,993
VALUE \$ 50,436
113.6M potential reach



DIGITAL \$ 37,457



EARNED MEDIA \$693,050
550 outlets featured Chincoteague Island/Assateague Island, VA in print and/or digital
(Value based on VTC Media Tracking Calculator)



TRAVEL GUIDE DISTRIBUTION \$ 19,101
80,000 copies

Shipped to VA Welcome & Visitor Centers, AAA Offices, Welcome Centers in NJ, MD, NOVA, DE & PA, & to Visitation Inquiries



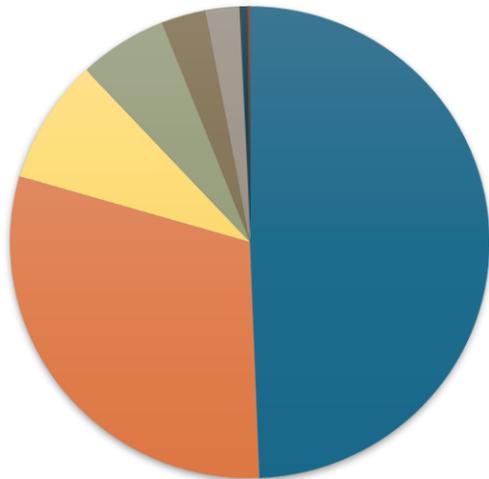
RADIO \$ 1,960
Shop Local Campaigns & Festivals

BY THE NUMBERS

5.4M TOTAL REACH

The Certified Visitor Center, staffed by the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce, assists 1.3 million visitors annually who come to enjoy the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Assateague Island National Seashore.

TOURISM & MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT



Category	Increase Over 2024
WEBSITE – 336,198 users / 1,919,062 page views	15.1% / 213.4%
EMAIL DISTRIBUTION – 205,027	120.9%
WEBCAM – 57,986	49.3%
VISIT WIDGET – 41,098 users / 333,817 page views	72.3% / 65.9%
ONLINE VISITOR GUIDE – 20,435 users / 393,901 page views	-13.0% / 9.3%
OFFICE INTERACTIONS – 15,815	16.1%
CHINCOTEAGUE APP – 3,727	9.0%
KIOSK – 641 – (out of service for 2 months)	-46.8%

SOCIAL MEDIA

 4,459,809

 276,608

 26,595

PONY SWIM BY THE NUMBERS

Earned Media **\$326,500**

182 outlets featured Pony Swim in print and/or digital
(Value based on VTC Media Tracking Calculator)

Website Traffic **46,036**

Visits to Pony Swim related pages in July

Visitor Center Traffic (10-day) **1,527**

93% increase over 2024

Phone Calls (10-day) **528**

33% increase over 2024

Social Media in July

Views **2.8M**

Interactions **82,893**

Link Clicks **16,129**

VTC Collaboration **190,225**

Instagram Impressions



Official Pony Swim Guide

Overhauled by chamber staff with new content and maps in partnership with the Town and Fire Company

Reached
91K

Distributed to all accommodations and property management companies

Email Recipients **36,987**

Print Distribution **850**

650 Chamber office

200 Carnival Information Stand

Guide Downloads **5,671**

Organic Facebook Post and Facebook Ad targeting zip codes Cape Charles to Salisbury

Reach **47,702**

Views **85,660**

Clicks **3,308**

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

328

Chamber Members
56 New Members in 2025
94.1% Retention Rate
(National Average 81%)

21

Workforce Development
Job Fairs, Partnerships, &
Collaborations

23

Networking Opportunities
General Membership Meeting, Beacon
Awards, Morning Mingles, Member
Luncheons, Business After Hours, Open
Houses, & Festivals

9

Ribbon Cuttings



OFF-SEASON TOURISM DRIVERS

Easter Decoy & Art Festival

1,500
Attendees

Easter
Weekend

Showcases local & national decoy carvers & artists. Complements spring waterfowl migration and early pony foaling.



Chincoteague Seafood Festival

2,700
Attendees

First Saturday
in May

Held to highlight the seafood industry & watermen heritage.



Chincoteague Oyster Festival

2,700
Attendees

Columbus Day
Weekend

Held to celebrate the world-famous Chincoteague "Salt" oysters & welcome oyster season.



Old-Fashioned Christmas Parade

Onlookers line a
mile of Main Street

First Saturday
in December

Ushers in the holiday season & compliments our "Shop Small. Shop Local." radio & social media advertising campaigns.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Leadership Transition

Successfully completed a leadership transition with the appointment of a new Executive Director, ensuring continued stability and strategic momentum.

New Initiatives

- Morning Mingles
- Beacon Awards
- Membership Benefits Rack Cards - Town Partnership
- Website/App Magnets – Distributed to All Accommodations
- Branding



Full Exhibitor Capacity at Easter Decoy & Art Festival

77 exhibitors including 20 new exhibitors filled the Chincoteague Combined School bringing the event back to pre-pandemic participation and third highest attendance since 2003.

Oyster Festival Early Access Passes

30 passes offered festival ground access for early set up. Along with VIP spaces, these new strategies prevented a \$5 ticket price increase to all attendees.

100th Anniversary of Pony Penning Worked with Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company and Town of Chincoteague to develop and promote the event and educate visitors on the new safety guidelines.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Completed VTC DMO Spring Grant

Partnered with USA Today to implement the “Fall In Love In Chincoteague Island”

Getaway Giveaway targeting PA, MD, & VA.

Encouraged visitation during the shoulder season with discounts from valued Chamber members received for entering contest. Data collection to grow our email database for future retargeting.

35-Day Campaign (July 17-August 20)

466,004 impressions

331,133 display ads

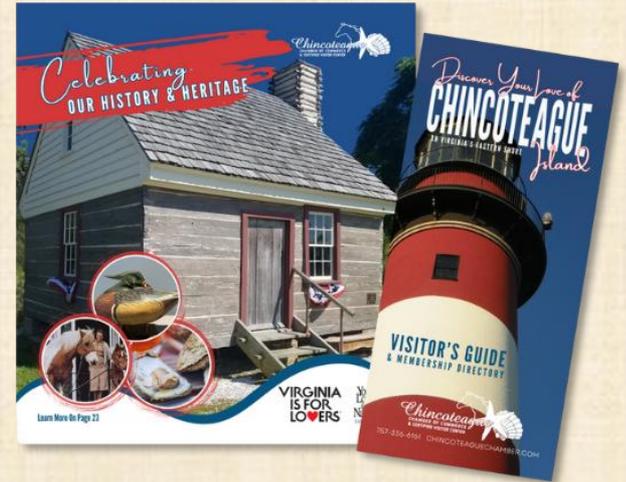
104,822 social media

30,049 email

15,926 clicks

10,347 entries

27 Chamber members participated



2026 Chincoteague Visitor's Guide & Membership Directory

Created tourism guide w/ 80,000 print distribution worldwide & digital guide on ChincoteagueChamber.com.

Lifeguard Housing

Partnered with Assateague Island National Seashore, Town of Chincoteague, and Accomack County to secure housing for contracted lifeguards in a time sensitive scenario.

2026 OUTLOOK

Tourism Action Plan

A two-part strategic planning workshop beginning in January 2026 bringing together curated community partners to develop short and long-term goals supporting the future of tourism on Chincoteague Island.

Chamber Strategic Plan

Internal planning in the fall of 2026 to establish clear priorities, align staff and board efforts, and ensure that our resources and initiatives support the long-term success of the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce and the community we serve.

Grow Chamber Membership & Membership Opportunities

Expand Professional Development & Educational Programming for our Membership

Evaluate & Improve Website for Enhanced User Experience

New Marketing Strategies

Continued Professional Development for Staff

- Virginia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (VACCE) conference in March
- VA-I Governor's Tourism Summit in November





CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& CERTIFIED VISITOR CENTER

6733 Maddox Boulevard
Chincoteague Island, VA 23336

ChincoteagueChamber.com
757-336-6161

THANK YOU

for your commitment and continued support of the Chamber and for empowering us to make an impact on Chincoteague Island's business community and tourism development.

We look forward to forming collaborations and working alongside our community, state, and federal partners and stakeholders to achieve even greater success in 2026 and beyond.

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