





Memphis
TOURISM

The New York Times
52
PLACES TO
GO IN 2026

**Destination
Memphis**

New and Continued Goals for 2026 & Beyond:

1. Develop and implement new Consumer Campaign - Art & Soul designed to invite visitors from local, proximity, regional and national markets
2. Update new and enhanced brand pillars-new museums & art/cultural events & activity, live music & entertainment, outdoor assets, music attractions, family friendly attractions, and culinary
3. Build itineraries, marketing tools, website pages, content plans across all owned media for repeat visitors, extending the length of stay of likely Memphis visitors prior to finalizing their visit
4. Identify and target new audiences with interests in Art/Culture especially our NEW and enhanced museums as well as the 2026 milestone/anniversaries taking place
5. All aspects of consumer marketing including tour/travel trade segments are focused on overnight night stays
6. Actively use new AI technology to make sure we keep up with changing marketing technologies
7. Track & monitor paid media results monthly
8. Continue to make data driven decisions and adjust plans accordingly

Trip Planning Journey



Dream

Inspiration begins here. Beautiful imagery, storytelling, and authentic voices spark curiosity about Memphis—inviting travelers to imagine themselves in the rhythm, flavor, and culture of the city.



Consider

As interest grows, travelers seek validation and ideas. They explore itineraries, read reviews, and engage with social content that reinforces Memphis as a welcoming, vibrant, and affordable destination.



Plan

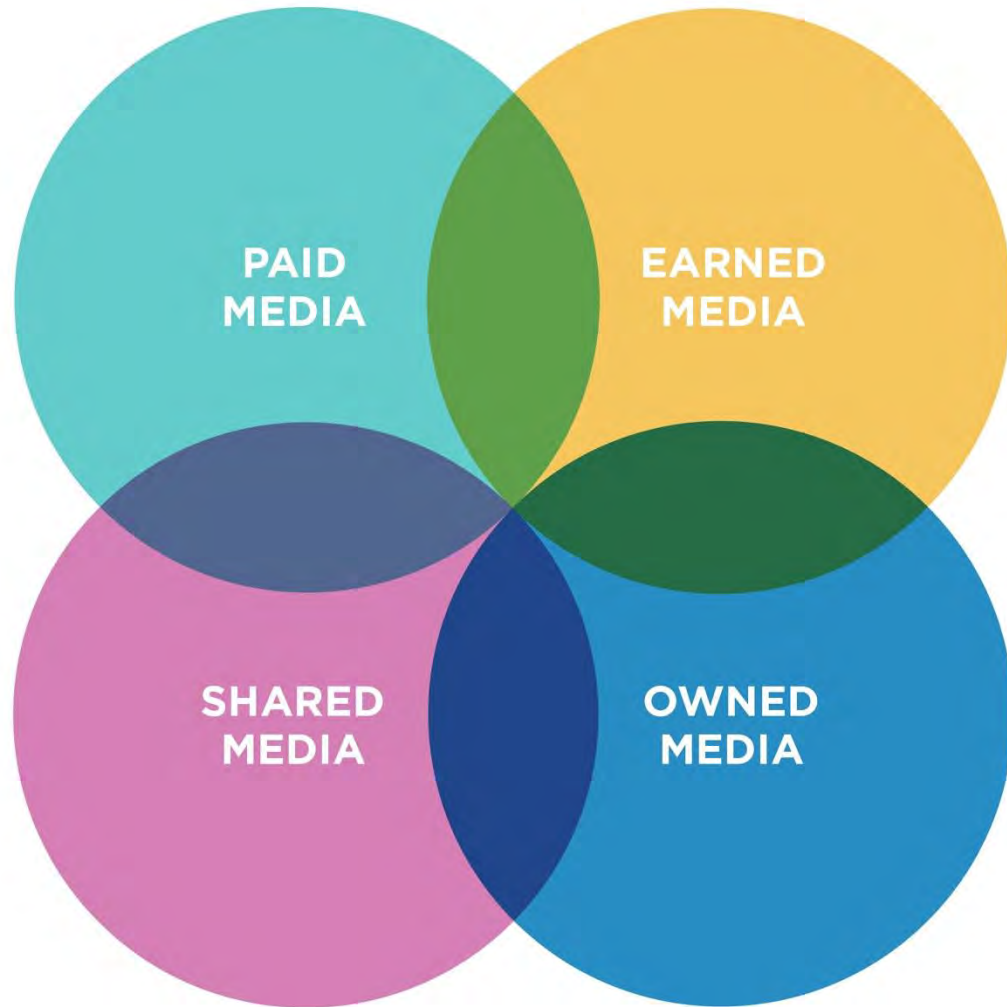
With excitement turning into action, travelers research lodging, dining, and events. Clear navigation, timely information, and accessible trip-planning tools make it easy to shape a Memphis experience that fits their interests and schedule.



Experience

Once they arrive, every detail matters. Memorable encounters—live music, local flavor, friendly faces—turn expectations into stories worth sharing, deepening their connection and inspiring others to begin their own journey.

PESO Model



Paid Media

Social Media Ads
Lead Generation
Sponsored Content
Boosted Content
Paid Publishing

Shared Media

Organic Social Content
Customer Reviews
Employee Reviews
Social Forums
Media Sharing Sites

Earned Media

Media Relations
Investor Relations
Blogger Relations
External Hyperlinks
Word-of-Mouth

Owned Media

Content Marketing
Video Blog, Webinars
Image Galleries
Podcasts
Employee Strategies

Leisure Visitor Personas

1. Prosperous Suburbanites (21% of Market)

Upper-income (\$75k-\$150k) families aged 35-54.
They are active, sports-focused homeowners.

2. The Content Creators (19% of Market)

Gen Z and young Millennials (18-34), often single renters with variable incomes. They are "digital natives" seeking "Instagrammable" moments.

3. Rural Traditionalists (15% of Market)

Conservative, blue-collar tradespeople aged 35-59 from rural areas. Ethnically homogenous and value-conscious.

4. Culture Kings (16% of Market)

Working-class urban households (ages 25-59) deeply connected to Black culture and hip-hop history.

5. Luxury Explorers (17% of Market)

High-income executives (\$200k+) seeking exclusivity.
They are time-poor but budget-rich.

6. Savvy Savers (12% of Market)

Young single parents (25-34) with tight budgets (often <\$20k). They rely heavily on mobile and community networks.

PROXIMITY



85 percent Gen Z and Millennial
Budget-conscious travelers
Social media influenced.
Love finding local favorites.

NATIONAL



75 percent first-time visitors
80 percent will stay 3+ nights
57 percent over the age of 40
More likely to travel without kids

REGIONAL



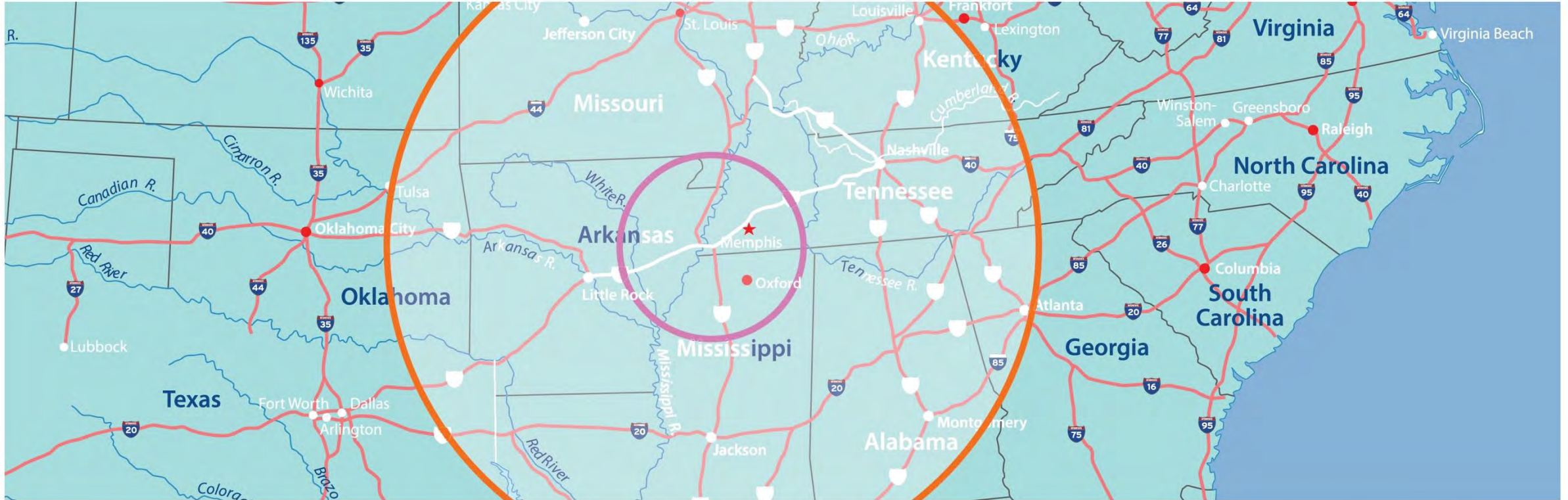
Most likely to travel with kids
72 percent 40 to 80 years old
48 percent are bargain hunters
Less frequent vacationers

INTERNATIONAL



Spend the most money, 82%
Gen X and Boomer, 4+ vacations
annually on average, Self-
proclaimed music history buffs

Domestic Target Markets



PROXIMITY MARKETS

Jackson, Tennessee
Columbus-Tupelo, Mississippi
Jonesboro, Arkansas
Paducah, Kentucky
Greenwood-Greenville, Mississippi

LESS THAN 350 MILES

Nashville, Tennessee
Little Rock, Arkansas
St. Louis, Missouri
Jackson, Mississippi
Birmingham, Alabama

350 TO 500 MILES

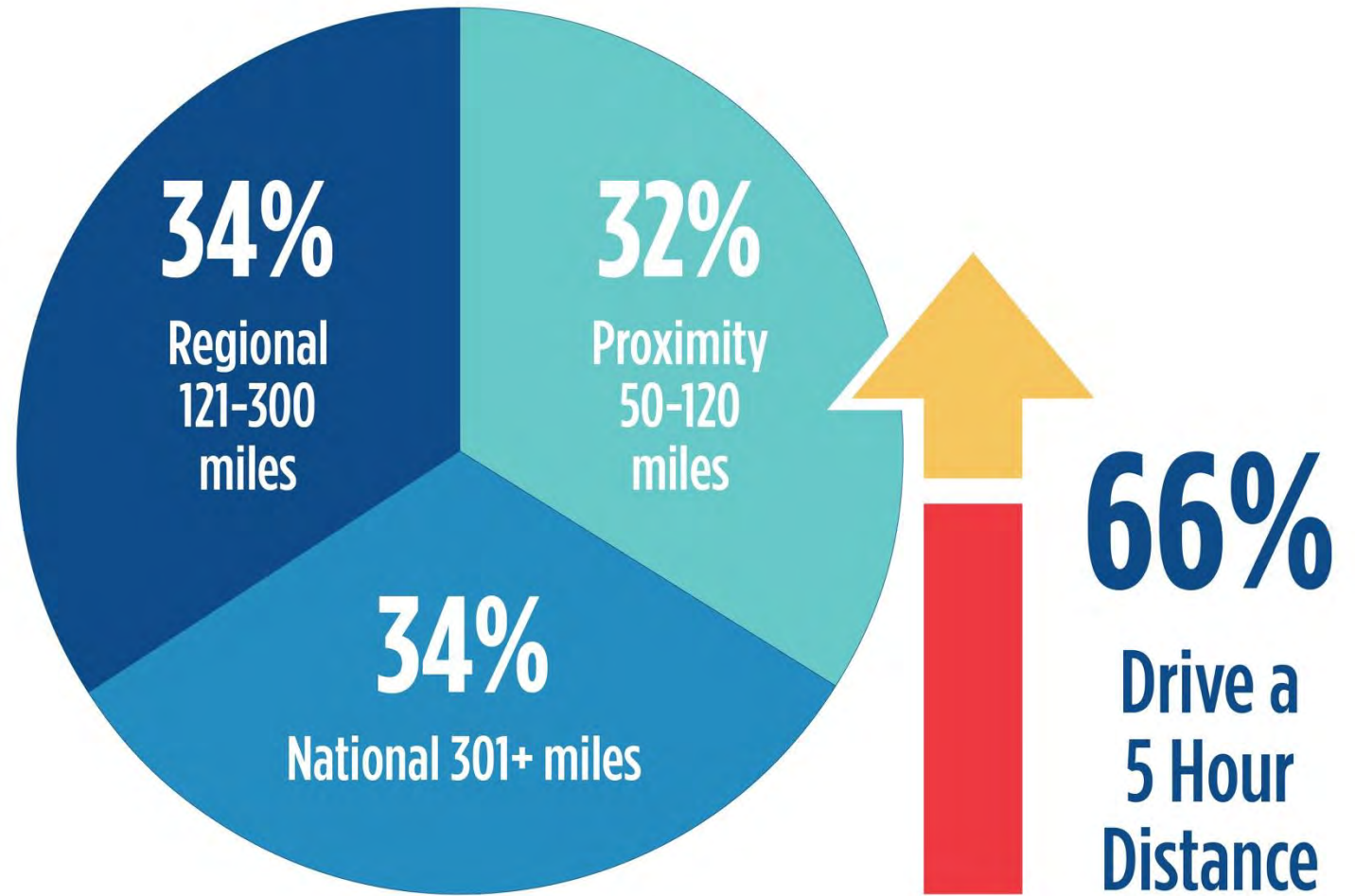
Atlanta, Georgia
Dallas, Texas
Chicago, Illinois
Houston, Texas
Indianapolis, Indiana

500+ MILES

New York, New York
Los Angeles, California
Washington, D.C.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Boston, Massachusetts

State of the Traveler

- International Travel to the USA is down but forecasts indicate a rebound in will recover 2026 🙌
- Travelers are more budget concious, but luxury travel will continue to grow and is an opportunity for Memphis in 2026
- Increase in Hotel Room Supply outside of Memphis and Shelby County - Hotel Defense Strategy continues
- AI is impacting the way people acquire their information and plan trips. (Monitor, Adjust, Implement Changes)



Tour and Travel Sales

Memphis Tourism invests in 5 overseas offices, with representation in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, and Japan.

Our global travel trade team activated sales missions in over 20+ countries in 2025.

Now Memphis is featured in more than 1.6+ thousand global tour programs. In 2025, that translated to more than 250+ thousand hotel room nights booked in Memphis—and that's just what we can prove through direct documentation.

TOP ORIGINS IN 2025 BASED ON VISITOR SPENDING

Canada	Germany
United Kingdom	Japan
Australia	New Zealand

50+ COUNTRIES

VISTED MEMPHIS IN 2025

\$137,780,370

IMPACT

130

LEADS

407,329

ROOM NIGHTS

254

FAMS

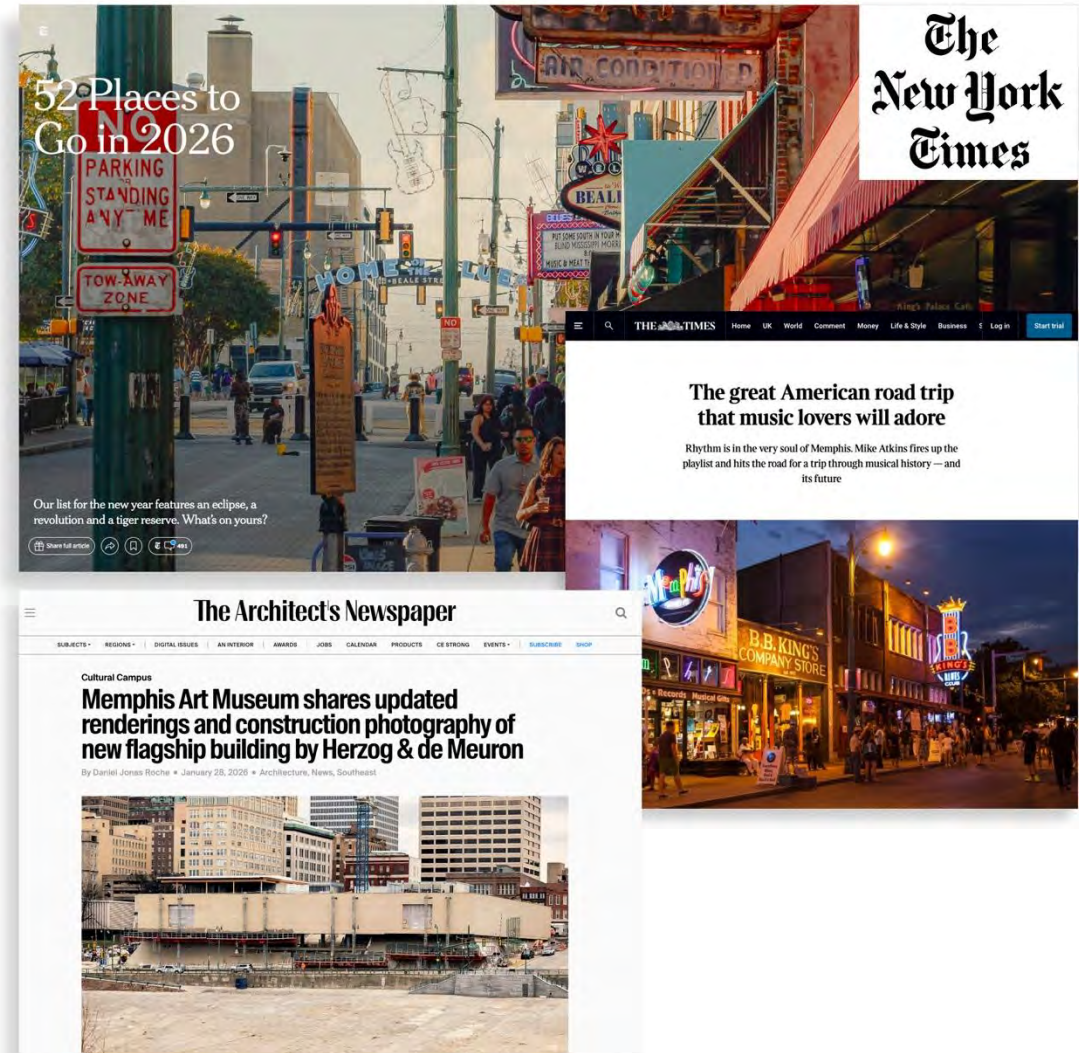


Memphis Tourism & Team
Memphis Grizzlies vs Orlando Magic
International Game - London

Public Relations & Earned Media

The team hosted over 105 media guests in 2025 with outlets ranging from Southern Living, Garden & Gun, Travel & Leisure, to regional publications like the Winston Salem Journal and The Herald Times. Our press trips centered around music in Memphis: from past to present, RiverBeat, BB King's 100th Birthday and more.

- Drive earned media to increase awareness, visitation, and economic impact
- Focuses on storytelling, media relations, influencers, and broadcast
- 2026 Priority: Arts & Culture, spotlighting the Memphis Art Museum opening, Metal Museum relocation, and National Civil Rights Museum Legacy Building renovation and anniversaring / milestones
- Also promotes Memphis' culinary scene (MICHELIN), music, outdoor offerings, and history
- Goal: Position Memphis as a top domestic and international leisure destination



Reach and Engagement

Over the past year, Memphis Tourism achieved strong visibility and engagement across every major communications channel. Strategic media placements, influencer collaborations, and compelling storytelling delivered measurable results that continued expanding Memphis's presence on the national stage and deepening its emotional connection with travelers around the world.

This reflects the strength of an integrated approach that combines earned media, social engagement, and authentic advocacy to build a dynamic, data-driven narrative about the city. Together, these efforts not only amplified Memphis's story but also reinforced its position as one of America's most talked-about, most loved, and most shared destinations.



MT
Social
Impressions:

42,040,026

Total
Stories
Placed:

1,441

Ad
Value:

\$15.5M

ILM
Social
Impressions:

29,889,897

Reader-
ship:

8.3B

ILM
Blog
Subs:

12,952

MT Social Engagements:

6.442M

Media Hosted

114

Q4 CAMPAIGN

- **Multi-Channel Digital Strategy:** Maintained an always-on digital presence using programmatic buying across Connected TV, Digital Out-of-Home, and display to target local and proximity markets.
- **Themed Commercials:** Successfully rolled out a full suite of commercials based on five key themes (Outdoors, Nightlife, Breweries, Dining)
- **Broad Local Reach:** Secured significant local broadcast and digital placements, including hundreds of 30 sec spots on top-rated news and sports programs, reinforcing awareness.
- **Enhanced Earned Media:** Established recurring, partner-led media segments (e.g., WREG-TV's Live at 9, WMC-TV's Destination Downtown) expanding reach.
- **Positive Outcomes:** The campaign is actively building positive perceptions, strengthening relationships with local / regional partners, and establishing a flexible framework for future Earned Media opportunities.



WATN-TV Now That's Memphis Outdoor Adventures Segment



WREG-TV's weekly Live at 9 with Kontji Anthony



WHBQ-TV's Mid-South Spotlight: Focused around Downtown Dining Options



VOTED TOP CULTURAL ATTRACTION
MEMPHIS ART MUSEUM



VOTED TOP HISTORY & HERITAGE ATTRACTION
THE NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM



VOTED TOP NATURE & OUTDOORS ATTRACTION
METAL MUSEUM



VOTED TOP UPCOMING OUTDOORS ATTRACTION
FLYWAY AT TOM LEE PARK

What's New in 2026?

New Attractions & 2026 Milestones

- Dixon Gallery & Gardens - 50th anniversary
- Hattiloo Theatre - 20th
- Overton Park Shell - 90th
- National Civil Rights Museum - 35th
- Ballet Memphis - 40th
- Opera Memphis - 70th
- **+ more**





Metal Museum

2026 Campaign Overview:

Art & Soul: Where Rythm Meets Renaissance

Campaign Vision

In 2026, a Memphis moment becomes a national stage where rhythm meets renaissance. While soul music and the smell of barbecue will always be in the air, this is the year that Memphis turns the spotlight on its creative heartbeat. Art & Soul positions Memphis as the South's Cultural capital, honoring historic anniversaries and unveiling trasformational spaces that deepen its legacy.

Target Audiences

- Cultural tourist seeking authentic, immersive arts and experiences (Local, Proximity, and Regional Markets)
- Music lovers with an interest in heritage and innovation
- Foodies and travel enthusiasts
- Visitors exploring civil rights and cultural education
- Event planners and National / Regional arts organizations and their members / audiences



2026 Campaign Overview:

Art & Soul: Where Rythm Meets Renaissance

Key Messaging Pillars

The Soul of Creativity

Memphis has always had soul - but in 2026, we celebrate the ART in soul. From Black Theatre to ballet, from opera to the art of food, this is a city where artistic flourishes and stories are told in every medium. Visitors will experience the powerful evolution of Southern authentic expressions.

A Landmark Year for Culture

2026 marks a transformative year for Memphis' cultural institutions:

- The National Civil Rights Museum - Legacy Build unveils its bold new expansion, reinforcing Memphis as a global center for justice and storytelling.
- The highly anticipated Memphis Art Museum opens its doors, a new landmark for visual culture in the American South along the Banks of the Mighty Mississippi River.

These milestones offer new ways for locals and visitors alike to engage with Memphis' past, present, and creative culture.

Honoring Creative Legacy

This year brings milestone anniversaries for Memphis' most treasured cultural institutions:

- **90 Years** of Overton Park Shell
- **50 Years** of Dixon Gallery & Gardens
- **70 Years** of Opera Memphis
- **40 Years** of Ballet Memphis
- **20 Years** of Hattiloo Theatre
- **60 Years** of the Memphis Youth Symphony Program
- **AND MORE**

Rooted in Rhythm

Of course, the music never stops. Memphis remains the city where blues, soul, and rock 'n' roll were born - and in 2026, they meet modern art, new voices, and collaborative innovation. Our cultural calendar blends music festivals, theatrical premieres, and visual art showcases with a legendary scene and live music venues across the city.

Partnering Hotels

Expanding Small & Short-Term Meetings Through Health, Medical, and Niche Markets

Objective

Grow short-term, small-to-mid-size meetings by targeting emerging resilient market segments - especially Health and Medical - while activating individual hotels to work close in close alignment with Memphis Tourism. The goal is to attract tradeshows and meetings that can comfortably fit within a single hotel, require shorter booking windows, and deliver consistent room nights year-round.

1. Target Markets

- **Health and Medical**
- **Priority Health and Medical Segments**
 - These Groups Typically Require
 - 50-300 rooms on peak
 - Flexible Meeting Space
 - Easy Access to Medical Districts and Airports
 - Competitive Pricing and Efficient Booking

2. Secondary Growth Markets

- Education and Workforce Development
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Nonprofits and advocacy groups
- Corporate Training, Sales, and Leadership Retreats
- Government and Public-Sector Regional Meetings
- Tech, Logistics, and Supply-Chain niche groups

3. Booking Strategy

Short-Term & Small-Meeting Focus

Many Smaller Organizations:

- Book within 90-180 days
- Are Flexible on Dates
- Value Speed, Simplicity and Price Transparency

4. Working with Smaller-Tradeshows

- Regional Tabletop Tradeshows
- Training + Exhibit Hybrid Events
- Vendor Showcases
- Association Annual Meeting with Light Exhibits

Thank You
QUESTIONS?