

# ANNUAL REPORT

2018

CHOOSE  
**CHICAGO**



IT WAS A GREAT YEAR FOR CHICAGO.  
 OUR CITY WAS RECOGNIZED FOR ITS OUTSTANDING  
 CULINARY COMMUNITY, THRIVING CRAFT BEER SCENE  
 AND FOR BEING ONE OF THE ALL-AROUND BEST  
 PLACES IN THE COUNTRY.

OUR AWARD-WINNING HOME



**THE 21 MOST INFLUENTIAL CITIES IN THE WORLD**  
*Business Insider, June 2018*

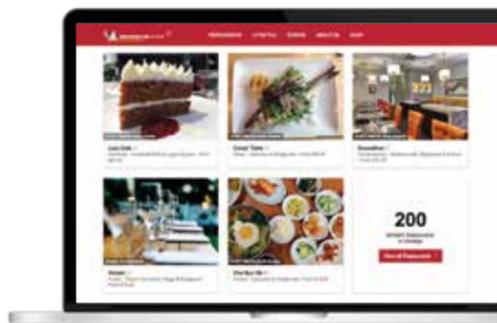
**WORLD'S BEST CITY FOR HAVING IT ALL**  
*Time Out, January 2018*



**READER'S CHOICE AWARDS: BEST BIG CITY IN THE U.S.**  
*Conde Nast Traveler, October 2017 & 2018*



**TOP METRO AREA FOR CORPORATE RELOCATION AND INVESTMENT**  
*Site Selection, Five Consecutive Years*



**MICHELIN STARS AWARDED TO 25 CHICAGO RESTAURANTS**  
*Michelin*

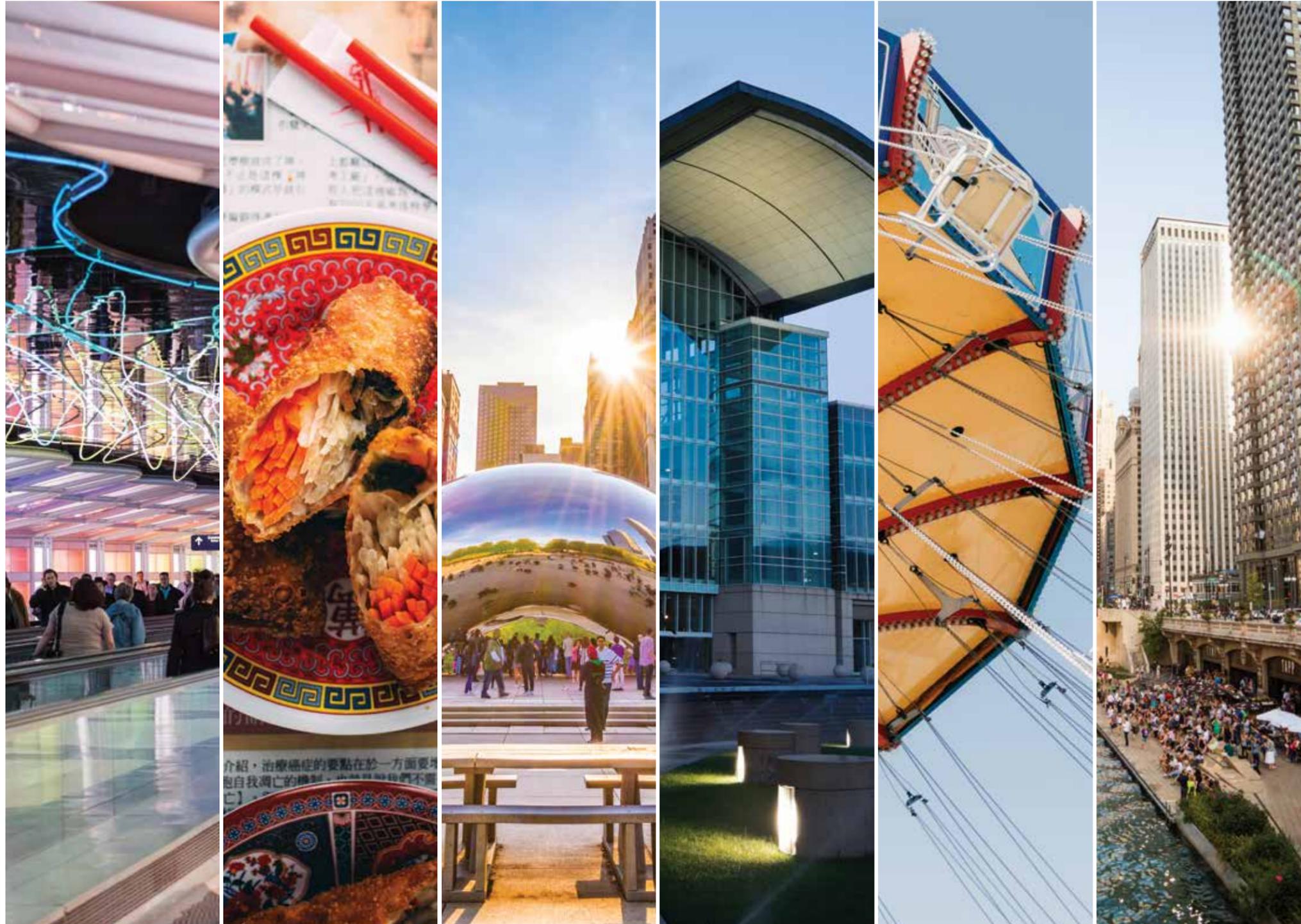


**DESTINATIONS WITH EXCELLENCE IN TOURISM: BEST TOURISM MARKETING**  
*Illinois Office of Tourism Honors, 2018*



**HOME TO THE MOST BREWERIES IN THE U.S.**  
*The Brewers Association, 2018*

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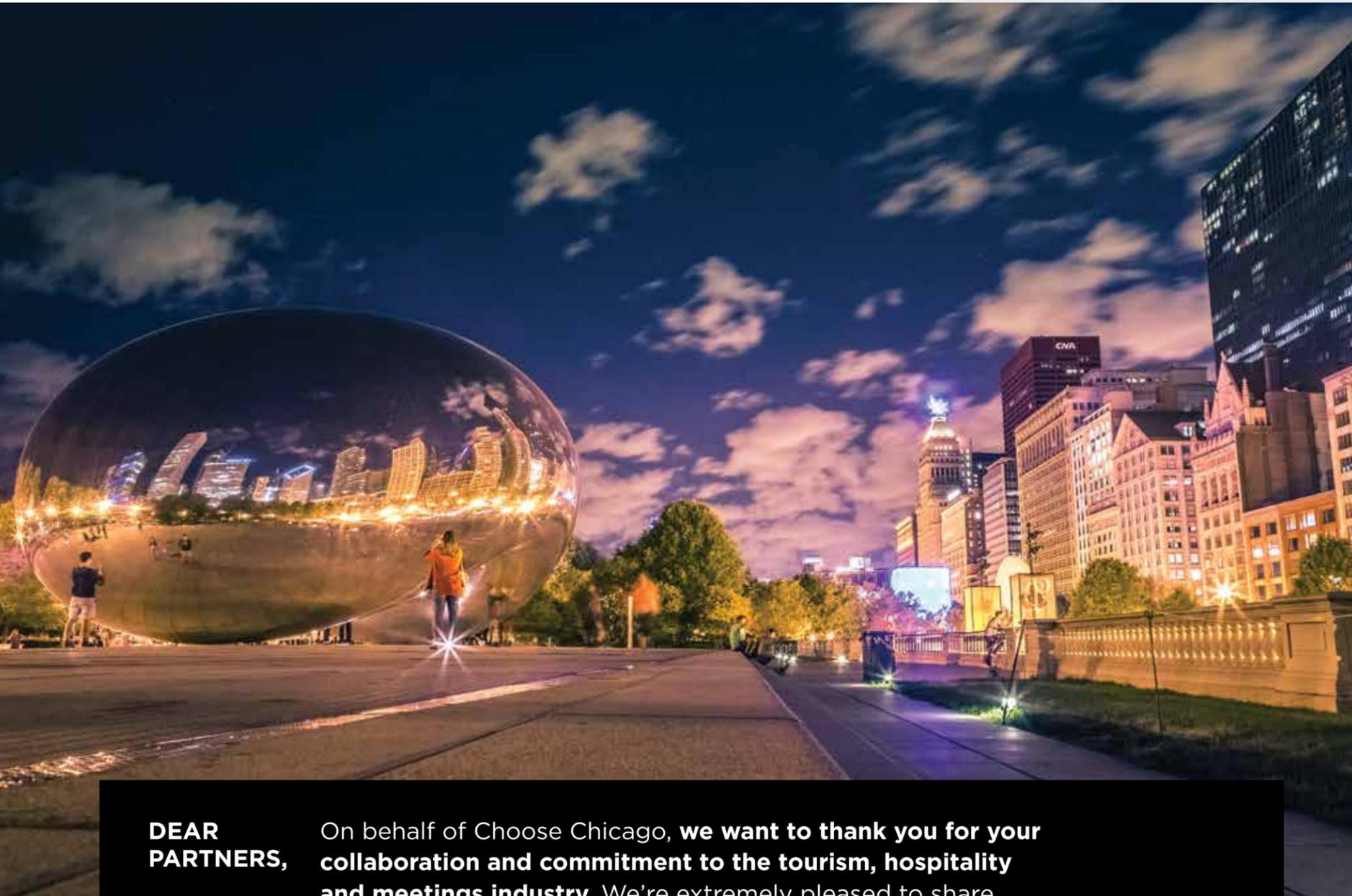
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# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR & CEO



**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 extremely pleased to share our 2018 Annual Report, which highlights many of the key accomplishments of our organization and the results of our valued partnerships.

The year resulted in many historic milestones. Chicago welcomed a record 57.7 million visitors, an increase of 4.3% from 2017. This growth resulted in a 4.4% increase in overall hotel room demand and an encouraging 4.6% growth in average daily rate for our hotel partners.

For the second year in a row, Chicago was selected as the best big city in the United States by the readers of *Condé Nast Traveler*. This type of significant buzz increased engagement with our digital and social media platforms and generated publicity around the globe.

The economic impact of our industry and our partners is vivid. Overall tourism expenditures exceeded \$16 billion, including almost \$1.1 billion in tourism tax revenue. Hotel tax revenues alone generated \$437 million.

Due to this growth, state hotel tax revenue increased by \$12.9 million and Chicago hotel tax revenues increased by \$11.7 million. Equally important, our industry supported 150,616 tourism-related jobs here in Chicago including 1,786 new opportunities added in 2018.

This year, we once again surpassed our annual goal and confirmed more than 2.6 million future room nights by securing commitments from 60 major bookings at McCormick Place and 2,340 future meetings in and with our partner hotels.

In total, these meetings will welcome over 3.9 million future attendees — meeting, staying and playing in Chicago.

The success also translated into positive results for our clients. In 2018, 20 of the 50 major meetings in Chicago broke either all-time attendance records and/or exhibitor participation records.

Our thriving meetings and events industry is augmented by a growth in leisure visitors. The number of leisure visitors increased 4.8% in 2018 — more than double the growth generated in 2017. This increase also helped support new hotel investments; Chicago welcomed nine new hotel properties in 2018.

Attracting more international visitors to Chicago remains a priority. There was a 3.8% increase in passport holders arriving on non-stop international flights at O'Hare and Midway airports, reversing a negative trend in arrivals over the past several years.

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 Exhibition Authority and dozens of corporate sponsors 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 appreciate the support from our 1,552 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.

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

**OUR VERY BEST WISHES TO YOUR CONTINUED SUCCESS.**



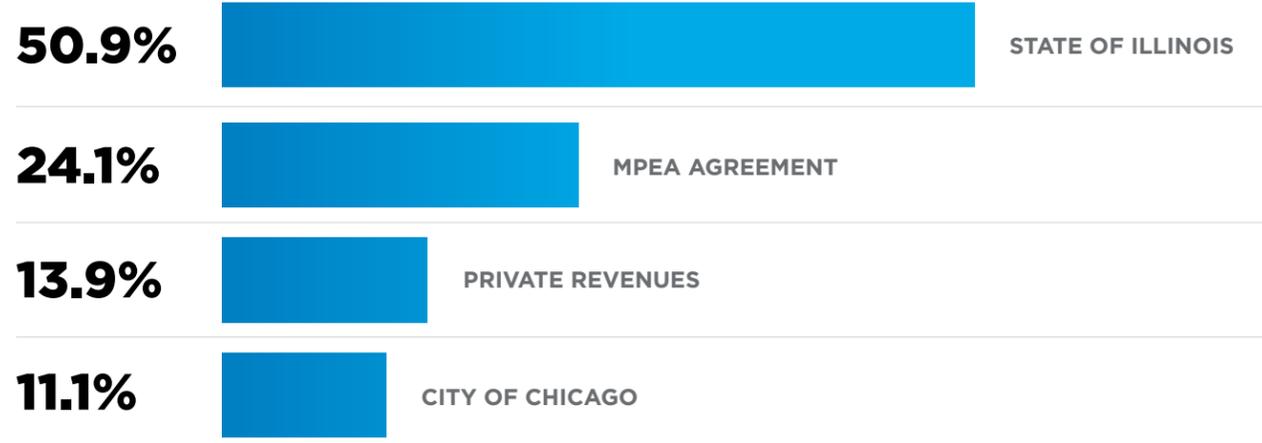
**DESIREE ROGERS**  
BOARD CHAIR,  
CHOOSE CHICAGO



**DAVID WHITAKER**  
PRESIDENT & CEO,  
CHOOSE CHICAGO

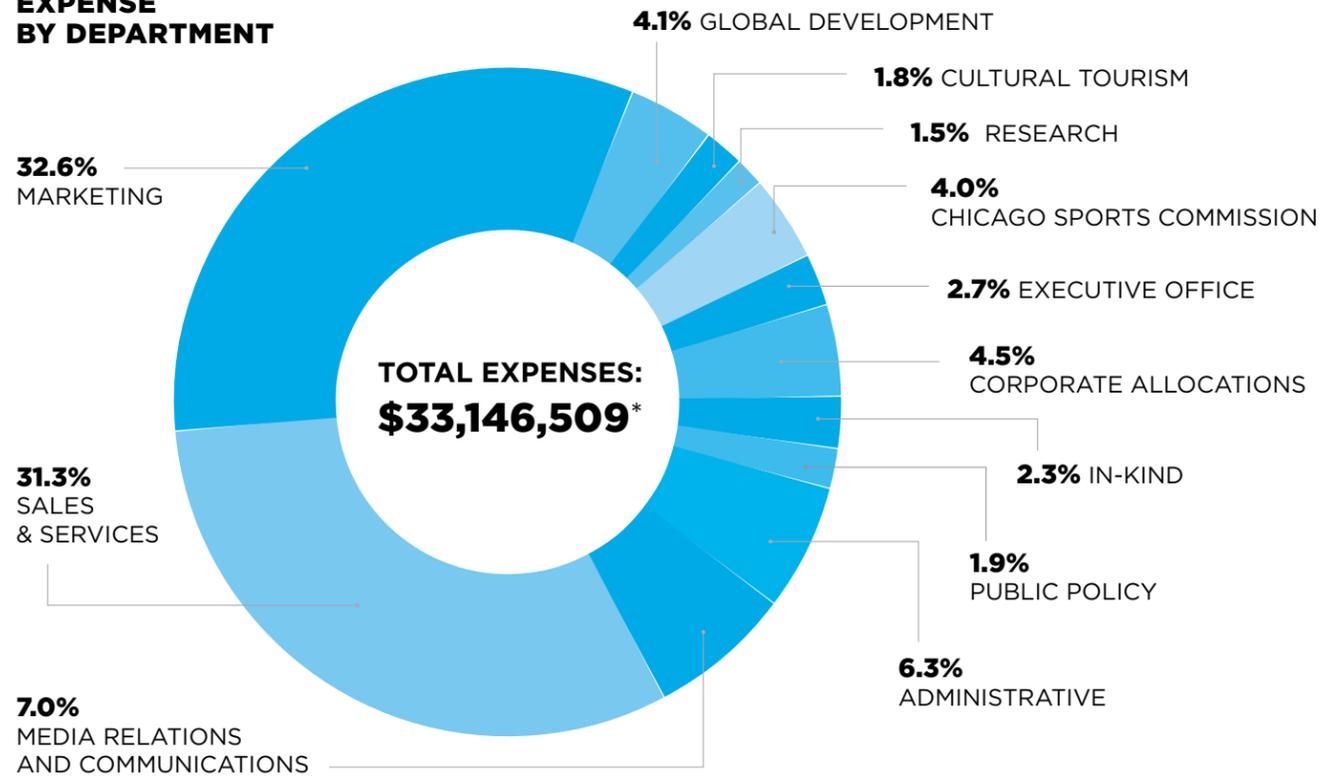
# 2018 OPERATIONS

## REVENUE BY SOURCE



**\$29,136,677** OPERATING REVENUE

## EXPENSE BY DEPARTMENT



\* Includes Board-approved draw-down of \$4,009,832 in operating reserves to support 2018 initiatives





## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Tourism is a crucial part of the city's economic growth and job development. Chicago continues to benefit from the revenue and employment generated by its thriving tourism industry.

### TOURISM-RELATED EMPLOYMENT

133.5K	136.0K	140.5K	145.1K	148.8K	<b>150.6K</b>
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	<b>2018</b> +1.2% from 2017

### DIRECT TOURISM SPENDING

\$13.3B	\$14.1B	\$14.6B	\$14.9B	\$15.4B	<b>\$16.0B</b>
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	<b>2018</b> +4.0% from 2017

### TOTAL TAX REVENUE GENERATED

\$836.1M	\$885.2M	\$891.6M	\$953.1M	\$1.0B	<b>\$1.1B</b>
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	<b>2018</b> +4.0% from 2017

### CHICAGO HOTEL TAX REVENUE

\$106.3M	\$113.6M	\$123.9M	\$127.1M	\$128.5M	<b>\$140.2M</b>
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	<b>2018</b> +9.1% from 2017

### STATE HOTEL TAX REVENUE

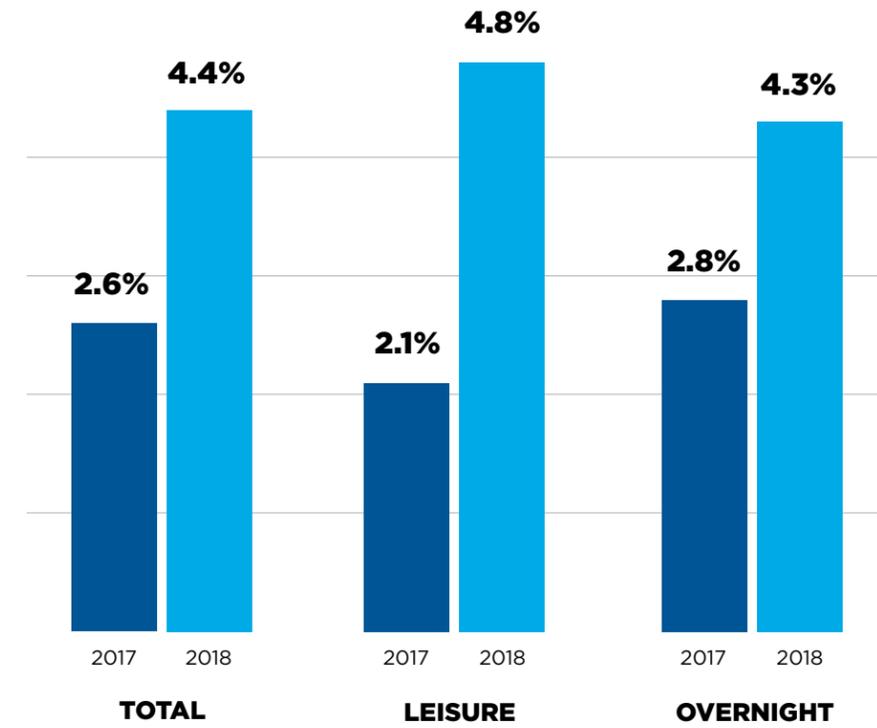
\$117.5M	\$125.6M	\$137.0M	\$140.5M	\$142.1M	<b>\$155.1M</b>
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	<b>2018</b> +9.1% from 2017

# VISITATION

In 2018, Chicago set a new tourism record with **57.7 MILLION VISITORS**, 2.4 million more than the previous year.



## DOMESTIC VISITATION (% CHANGE)



These increases are the result of a continued focus on growing our overnight and leisure visitors to Chicago, who tend to spend more and stay longer.





## HOTEL SNAPSHOT - CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

OCCUPANCY RATE

**75.36%**

AVERAGE DAILY RATE

**\$213.11**

RECORD

+4.5%

REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM

**\$160.61**

RECORD

+5.4%

ROOMS AVAILABLE

**15.6M**

RECORD

+3.5%

ROOMS OCCUPIED

**11.8M**

RECORD

+4.4%

REVENUE

**\$2.5B**

RECORD

+9.1%

CHICAGO HOTEL TAX REVENUE

**\$140,237,989**

RECORD +9.1%



# MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

Hosting events, meetings and conventions contributes to the economic health of the city and state. Our collective teams help bring meetings and events to McCormick Place and Chicago hotels and event venues.

**2,421**  
TOTAL MEETINGS BOOKED

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

**2,336**  
MEETINGS BOOKED FOR HOTEL IN-HOUSE BUSINESS

**2.6M**  
FUTURE ROOM NIGHTS SECURED

**101%**  
OF 2018 GOAL

**954,056**  
ROOM NIGHTS  
(or 35.6% of room night production booked within a 36-month window)

## MAJOR EVENTS BOOKED IN 2018

**APRIL 2019**  
**STAR WARS CELEBRATION**  
Anticipated attendees: 140,000

**MARCH 2021**  
**ORACLE CORPORATION**  
Anticipated attendees: 6,000

**JUNE 2019**  
**SLATE INNOVATION SUMMIT**  
Anticipated attendees: 2,000

**MAY 2021**  
**AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF MUSEUMS ANNUAL MEETING & MUSEUM EXPO**  
Anticipated attendees: 5,000

**JULY 2019**  
**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF VENUE MANAGERS VENUECONNECT**  
Anticipated attendees: 2,500

**SEPTEMBER 2021**  
**NATIONAL BLACK MBA ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION**  
Anticipated attendees: 8,000

**AUGUST 2019**  
**NISSAN FY20 NATIONAL DEALER MEETING**  
Anticipated attendees: 2,400

**OCTOBER 2021**  
**OR MANAGER CONFERENCE & PACU MANAGER SUMMIT**  
Anticipated attendees: 2,000

**SEPTEMBER 2019**  
**STARBUCKS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**  
Anticipated attendees: 13,000

**MARCH 2022**  
**ACADEMY OF MANAGED CARE PHARMACY ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
Anticipated attendees: 4,000

**MARCH 2020**  
**ORACLE CORPORATION**  
Anticipated attendees: 6,000

**DECEMBER 2022**  
**AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION FALL MEETING**  
Anticipated attendees: 25,000

**AUGUST 2020**  
**INDEPENDENT GARDEN CENTER SHOW**  
Anticipated attendees: 6,500

**HEALTHTRUST UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE**  
Anticipated attendees: 3,200

**PANERA BREAD FAMILY REUNION**  
Anticipated attendees: 4,500



## McCORMICK PLACE

**81** total future meetings secured  
20 MORE THAN 2017

**60** new major future meetings and conventions  
10 MORE THAN 2017

**15** of these meetings will convene in Chicago for the first time

**6** of these meetings have not met in Chicago for 10 years or more

**\$1.2B** in economic impact from 60 new meetings booked at McCormick Place

## RECORD-BREAKING PARTNERSHIPS

Choose Chicago's Partnership Program empowers local organizations to expand their marketing reach and connect to visitors in innovative ways.

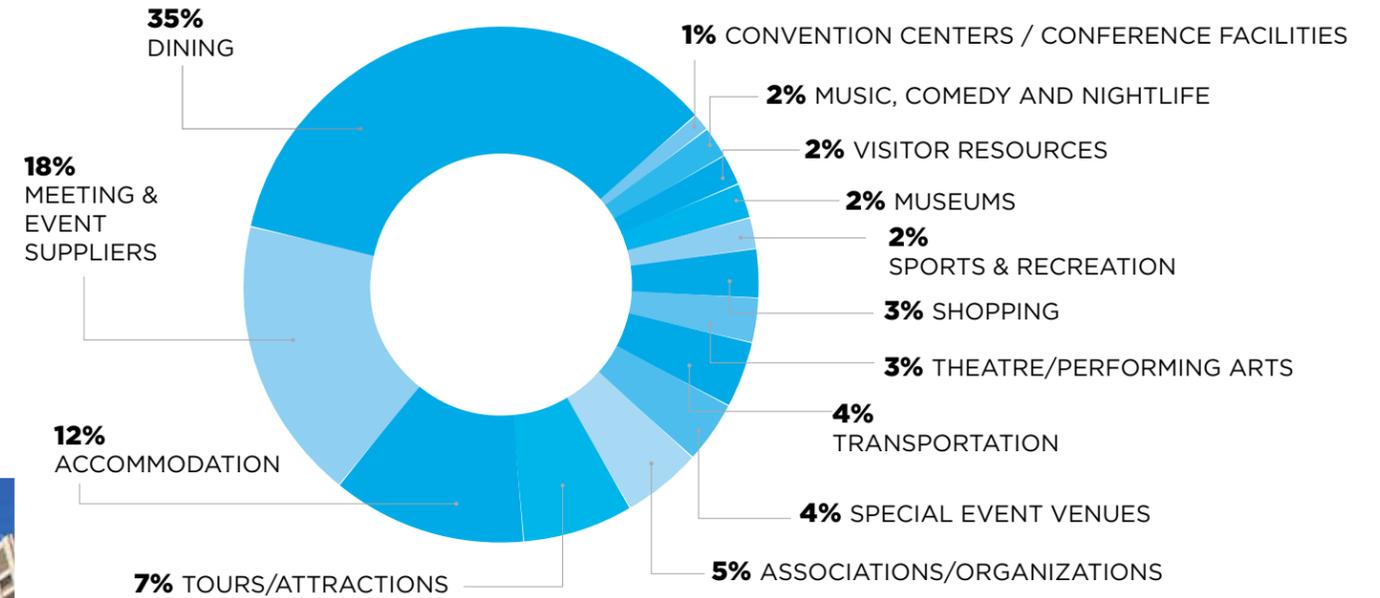
**1,552**  
TOTAL PARTNERS,  
A NEW RECORD

**242**  
NEW PARTNERS  
IN 2018

**90%**  
RETENTION  
IN 2018



## 2018 PARTNER BREAKDOWN



### PARTNER NETWORKING & EDUCATION EVENTS

Our annual events are designed to help partners build their network and expand their professional knowledge. Here's an overview of this year's innovative initiatives:

**MENU ENGINEERING:** Dining partners learned how to increase profits and lower costs with William Post, former President and COO of Levy Restaurants and co-founder of Roti Modern Mediterranean.

**TOP 10 TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS:** A group of Chicago's most passionate advocates spoke about the top tourism developments in 2018 and beyond that will impact the visitor experience in Chicago.

**MARKETING OUTLOOK:** Partners reviewed the results of Choose Chicago's summer marketing efforts and got a preview of 2019 plans from President & CEO David Whitaker and the leadership team.

**SOCIAL MEDIA MEET-UP:** This event helps partners pick up relevant skills and answer questions about making the most of social media.

### NEW INITIATIVES

**ONBOARDING VIDEO SERIES:** This series of emails and videos helps educate new partners about the benefits and resources available through their partnership with Choose Chicago.

**AMBASSADOR WELCOME PROGRAM:** This program empowers Choose Chicago Ambassadors to guide new partners on the many opportunities available to them during their first year of partnership.





## OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERS

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Thank you to our 2018 Strategic Marketing Partners for their unmatched level of commitment to Chicago. The support of Strategic Marketing Partners helps us strengthen Chicago's position as the top destination for leisure and business travel.



“THANKS TO OUR LONG-STANDING PARTNERSHIP WITH CHOOSE CHICAGO, WHICH HIGHLIGHTS THE DIVERSITY AND VIBRANCY OF OUR CITY, OUR AIRPORTS CONTINUE TO WELCOME MORE TRAVELERS TO THE CITY EACH YEAR.”

COMMISSIONER JAMIE L. RHEE, CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION

## CULINARY EVENTS

These annual events showcase Chicago's acclaimed culinary scene, from award-winning restaurants to celebrity chefs. They also help our dining partners build awareness for their business and bring in more guests.



### JAMES BEARD AWARDS

Choose Chicago and the Illinois Restaurant Association are proud to host the James Beard Awards through 2027. Congratulations to Chicago's Abraham Conlon of Fat Rice, named Best Chef: Great Lakes in 2018.



### CHICAGO RESTAURANT WEEK

**365** participating restaurants **NEW RECORD**  
**115** first-time participants  
**639,610** diners served  
**\$29.9M** in economic impact

SPONSORED BY:



### FIRST BITES BASH

**1,500** guests  
**65** participating restaurants  
**\$12,000** raised for the Greater Chicago Food Depository

SPONSORED BY:



**139**

restaurants participated in **JAMES BEARD EATS WEEK**, an 11-day culinary celebration leading up to the awards

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禮貌的揮手送別。中學同學，俄語系畢業分工作，曾擔任周總理的俄對我們談起當年蘇聯領導訪問中國時，他隨周總理州參觀訪問。晚宴後舉行姑娘早聞總理舞技高超，總理跳舞。總理無法拒寵陪每位跳一圈，再換一畫樣，也把總理累得夠嗆，同學出面擋駕才罷休。地方到中央，舞會盛極一

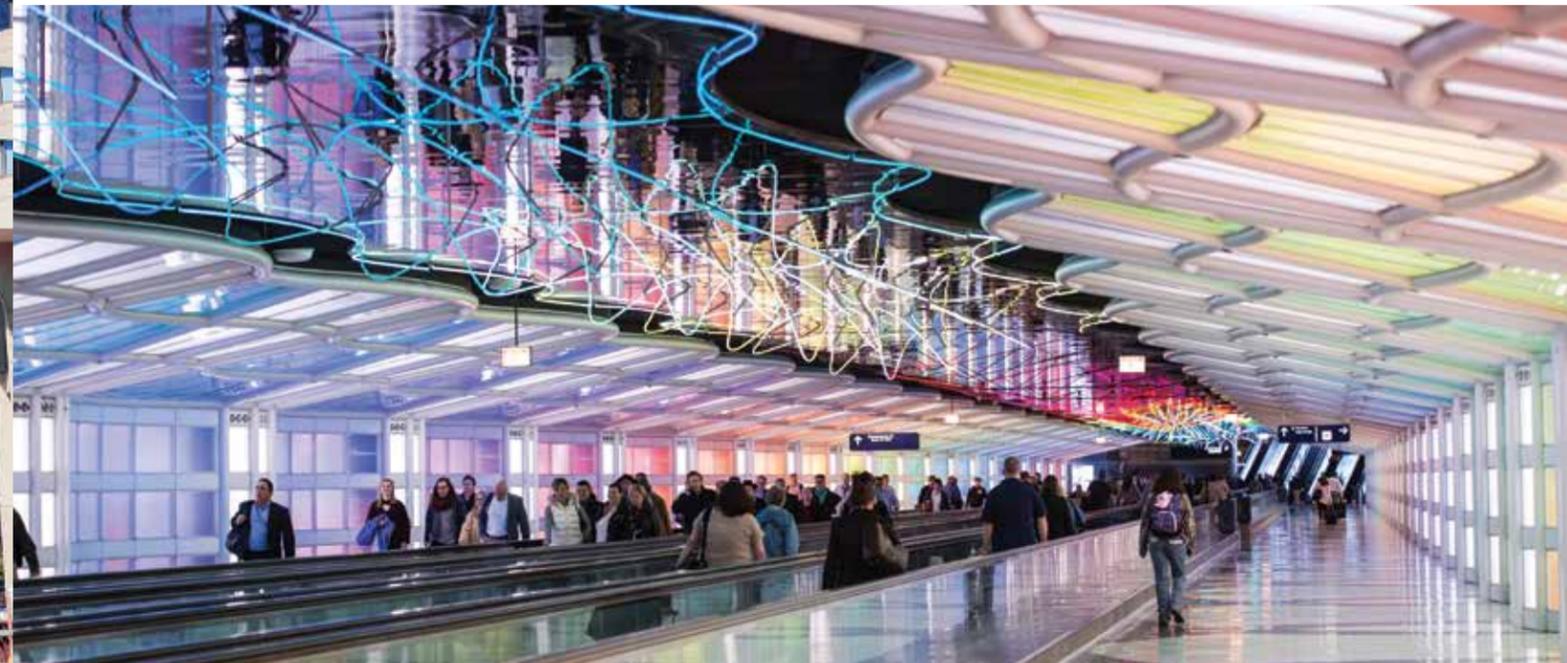
介紹醫生介紹，治療癌症的要點在於一方面要增強病患的免疫力，另病變細胞自我凋亡的機制，此時我們不需要直接攻擊病變細胞，自動凋亡】。秀導病變... 不會像化療般出



## OUR UNION PARTNERS

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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.



# CLIENT SERVICES

Our Client Services team serves as an expert resource to convention planners. They help ensure that meeting planners and attendees have a world-class experience in Chicago from start to finish — and help bring them back to our city year after year.

## TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**92**

conventions served in 2018, a new record

**17**

pre-promotion trips highlighting Chicago to conventions coming here in 2019

**4.8**

average rating out of 5 that our Client Services Managers received on their service performance in 2018 from client surveys

**217**

site visits educating clients about Chicago



**ROZ STUTTLEY**, Director of Client Services, was awarded the **2018 Convention Manager of the Year Award** by the national Event Service Professionals Association

**\$70,000 raised** for the **Greater Chicago Food Depository** and **Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly** during ASAE 2018



## RECORD CONVENTIONS IN 2018

**JAN. 2 - 7**  
**FELLOWSHIP OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY STUDENTS - SLS18**  
• Record attendance

**JAN. 22 - 24**  
**INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION COMPANY - AHR EXPO**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibit space  
• Record exhibitors  
• Record participating countries

**APRIL 14 - 18**  
**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH - AACR ANNUAL MEETING**  
• Record attendance

**MAY 6 - 10**  
**LIGHTFAIR INTERNATIONAL**  
• Record exhibit space

**MAY 7 - 19**  
**AMERICAN WIND ENERGY ASSOCIATION - WINDPOWER**  
• Record exhibitors

**MAY 22 - 24**  
**NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION - NATIONAL RESTAURANT SHOW**  
• Record exhibit space for the fourth year in a row

**MAY 22 - 24**  
**NATIONAL CONFECTIONERS ASSOCIATION - NCA 2018 SWEETS & SNACKS EXPO**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibit space

**JUNE 1 - 5**  
**AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY - ASCO ANNUAL MEETING**  
• Record attendance  
• Record fundraiser for the Conquer Cancer Foundation

**JUNE 11 - 13**  
**NEOCON**  
• Record attendance

**JUNE 17 - 20**  
**SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT - SHRM 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibit space

**JUNE 24 - 27**  
**INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION - ISTE CONFERENCE & EXPO**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibitors

**JULY 21 - 26**  
**ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION - 2018 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibitors  
• Record exhibit space

**JULY 29 - AUGUST 2**  
**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR CLINICAL CHEMISTRY - AACC ANNUAL MEETING & CLINICAL LAB EXPO**  
• Record exhibitors  
• Record exhibit space

**AUG. 8 - 10**  
**ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT - 2018 ANNUAL MEETING**  
• Record attendance

**AUG. 18 - 21**  
**AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES - ASAE 2018 ANNUAL MEETING & EXPOSITION**  
• Record attendance  
• Record funds raised for local charities

**SEPT. 10 - 15**  
**THE ASSOCIATION FOR MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY - INTERNATIONAL MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY SHOW**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibit space  
• Record exhibitors

**OCT. 14 - 17**  
**PMMI - PACK EXPO INTERNATIONAL**  
• Record exhibit space  
• Record exhibitors

**NOV. 4 - 6**  
**ASSOCIATION FOR FINANCIAL PROFESSIONALS - AFP 2018**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibit space  
• Record exhibitors

**DEC. 19 - 21**  
**THE MIDWEST CLINIC - INTERNATIONAL BAND, ORCHESTRA AND MUSIC CONFERENCE**  
• Record attendance  
• Record exhibit space

**DEC. 27 - 29**  
**MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY - MAS-ICNA 2018**  
• Record attendance

# MARKETING

Choose Chicago continued to build on its award-winning Welcome Home campaign, which helped bring in a record number of regional, national and international visitors to experience the city that feels like home.

## 5 KEY IMPROVEMENTS

1. Shifted from traditional media to a digital-first approach
2. Connected with people on their devices through behavioral targeting
3. Expanded from a regional-only focus to a national and international focus
4. Aligned messaging across nine key content pillars
5. Implemented a robust global influencer marketing strategy



### WELCOME HOME CAMPAIGN RESULTS

**\$5.3M**  
total media investment

**\$1.2B**  
economic impact

**929,269**  
incremental trips generated

**58.4M**  
average impressions delivered per month

+44% from 2017

+22% from 2017

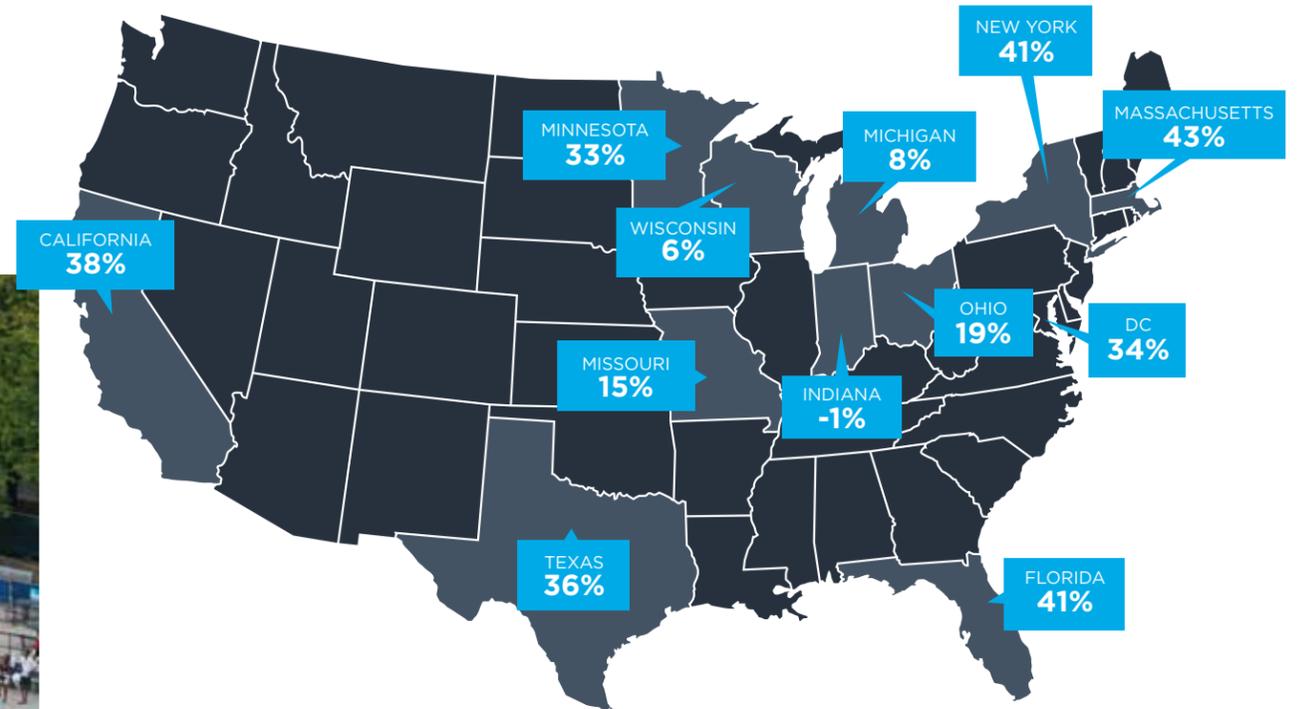
+37% from 2017

**\$238** return on media investment

**\$6.49** hotel tax return on investment

## WEBSITE ENGAGEMENTS (JANUARY - DECEMBER)

The expansion of Welcome Home to a national audience drove increased traffic from the states with the ten largest cities, along with our core regional audience.



## CHOOSECHICAGO.COM (JANUARY - DECEMBER)

**8.3M**  
+14.5% from 2017  
website visits

**6.0M**  
+17% from 2017  
new visitors

**4.7M**  
+23% from 2017  
mobile visits



## SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS @CHOOSECHICAGO

**287,346**  
LIKES  
+19% from 2017

**94,237**  
FOLLOWERS  
+2.5% from 2017

**227,158**  
FOLLOWERS  
+19% from 2017

# INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

## GLOBAL INFLUENCER MARKETING

The Marketing and Media Relations teams hosted 45 social media influencers and vloggers from several key countries. Influencers were taken on tours of Chicago, with itineraries covering different traveler interests, and then shared their experiences on social media.

**YOUTUBE**  
880,485 VIEWS

**INSTAGRAM**  
50.9M IMPRESSIONS

**WEIBO**  
5.1M REACHED

## SOCIAL MEDIA

In 2018, we saw increased engagement with our in-language social media accounts in many of our target countries.

- BRAZIL**  
- FRANCE**  
- JAPAN**  
- MEXICO**   
- GERMANY** 
- CANADA** 
- CHINA**  



## GROWTH IN INTERNATIONAL FOLLOWERS

◉ **436%**  
**INSTAGRAM**  
(GROWTH FROM 2017 TO 2018)

◉ **32.8%**  
**FACEBOOK**  
(GROWTH FROM 2017 TO 2018)

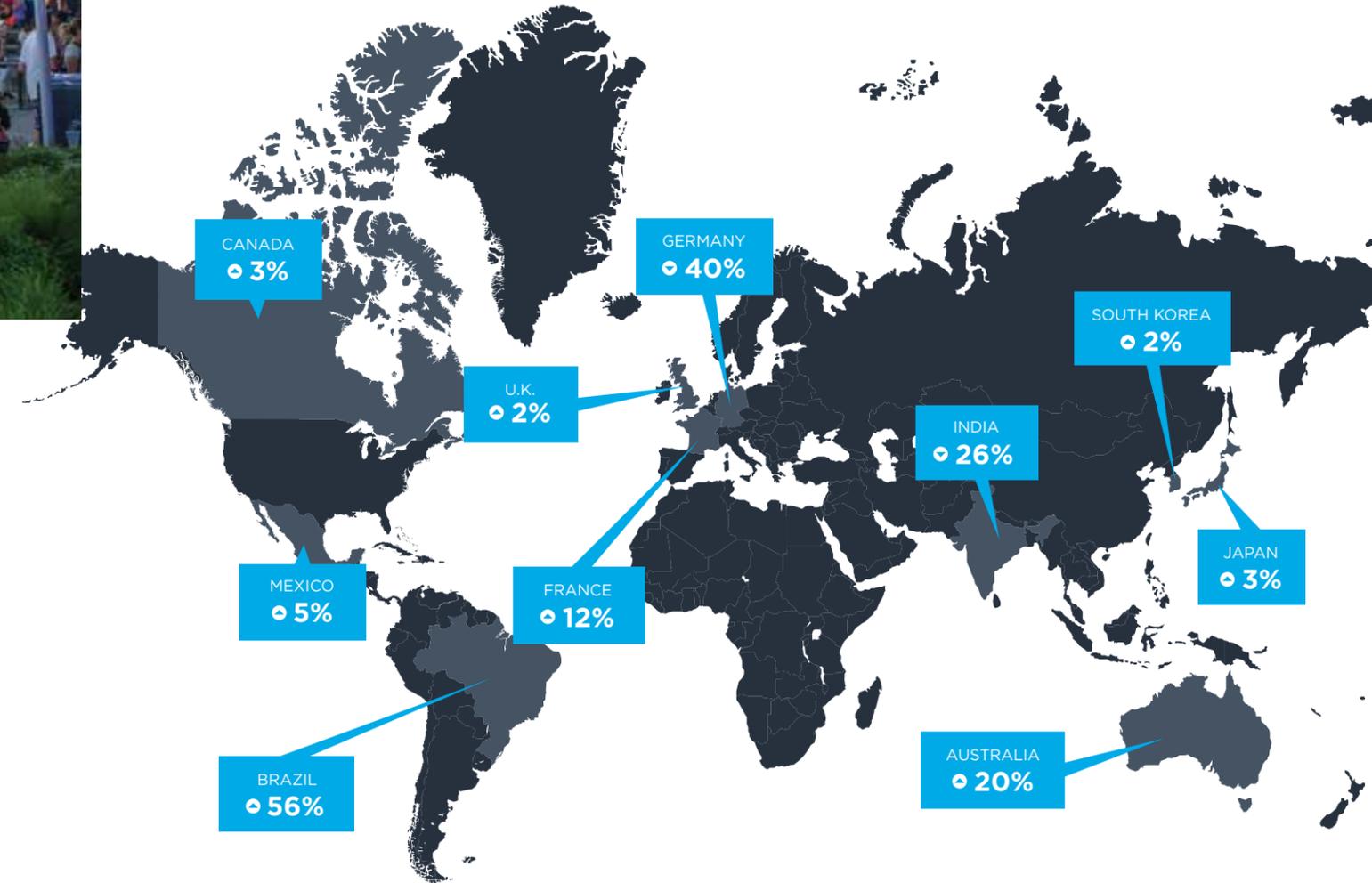
◉ **1,961**  
**WECHAT FOLLOWERS SINCE LAUNCH**  
(SEPTEMBER 2018 - DECEMBER 2018)



## GLOBAL WEBSITE TRAFFIC

(GROWTH FROM 2017 TO 2018)

Our international marketing efforts drove significant increases in traffic to our website from many of our target countries.



# MEDIA RELATIONS

Our Media Relations team generates print, online, social and broadcast media coverage of Chicago. We pitch and promote the destination across the globe to domestic and international journalists and host media in the city to experience firsthand all that Chicago offers.

## USA

**Travel + Leisure**  
Circulation: **969,266**  
Media value: **\$1.2M**

## MEXICO

**Milenio**  
Circulation: **104,244**  
Media value: **\$29,382**

## CHINA

**Men's Health**  
Circulation: **850,000**  
Media value: **\$310,590**

## GERMANY

**abenteuer und reisen**  
Circulation: **93,833**  
Media value: **\$200,882**

## JAPAN

**Agora**  
Circulation: **861,000**  
Media value: **\$90,000**

## FRANCE

**L'Obs**  
Circulation: **359,285**  
Media value: **\$139,060**

## BRAZIL

**O Estado de São Paulo**  
Circulation: **162,630**  
Media value: **\$318,843**



## DECEMBER - JANUARY 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

<b>\$37.5M</b> earned media value	<b>7B</b> readers, listeners and viewers	<b>2,000</b> published articles and broadcasts highlighting travel to Chicago	<b>449</b> media hosted in Chicago	<b>46</b> domestic and international press tours	<b>19</b> domestic and international in-market media events
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**U.K.**  
**Saturday Magazine (Daily Express)**  
Circulation: **370,632**  
Media value: **\$20,708**

**CANADA**  
**Toronto Star**  
Unique visitors monthly: **3.5M**  
Media value: **\$32,144**



## SPECIAL EVENTS

### ROAD SHOWS

Choose Chicago hit the road to visit our meeting prospects and clients in key markets. **Joe Flamm**, *Top Chef* Season 15 winner and Executive Chef at Spiaggia, joined the team for some fun, interactive demos.



### AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

We were excited to host the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting & Exposition from Aug. 18 - 21. The meeting brought in **5,505 hospitality industry professionals**, including almost **3,500 association executives** across industries. This event is an exceptional opportunity to showcase all that our city has to offer as a meetings destination.

CO-PRESENTING SPONSORS:



DIAMOND SPONSORS:



GOLD SPONSORS:



PLATINUM SPONSOR:



### CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

The Customer Advisory Board includes approximately 20 key meeting and event clients and prospects. We bring the board together on a regular basis, most recently in November 2018, to advise on marketing Chicago as a premier meetings destination.

### CHICAGO GOLF CLASSIC

The Chicago Golf Classic welcomed almost 200 golfers to Harborside International Golf Center on Oct. 4, 2018. Thank you to everyone who attended and supported this event.

## PUBLIC POLICY

We need the support of local and national leaders to secure funding and achieve our goals. Our Public Policy & Community Affairs team helps Choose Chicago build strong relationships with elected officials at all levels of government.

The team also helps develop policy solutions, particularly in the travel industry, and works to educate and empower our membership to join their advocacy.

In 2018, our Public Policy team was instrumental in securing 2019 funding for Choose Chicago from our state government. This year, the team will continue to work closely with elected officials and 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.

OUR HOSPITALITY HIRES CHICAGO PARTNERS:



### 2018 RESULTS

**500** job seekers connected with over 80 employers

**1,500** interviews conducted

**650** jobs generated in the hospitality industry since launch

## CULTURAL TOURISM

Our city is brimming with cultural events, attractions and neighborhoods. And our Cultural Tourism team is responsible for promoting them to the world. In 2018, they made groundbreaking strides in positioning Chicago 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.



**9,780**  
TOTAL TOUR  
PARTICIPANTS  
IN 2018

+6.9% from 2017

**5,750**

international  
participants

**4,030**

domestic  
participants

**600**

tours conducted  
in a language  
besides English

**300**

participants  
on 60 tours for  
Media Relations  
& Global  
Development  
teams

### 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 fifth year of our Chinese New Year celebration, we invited the **Chongqing Chuanju Opera Theatre** and the **Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra** from China to perform to a sold-out audience at the Chicago Symphony Center. Choose Chicago also co-hosted the **Chinese Mongolia Band** for two concerts during the annual World Music Festival.



### CHICAGO FRIDAY NIGHT FLIGHTS

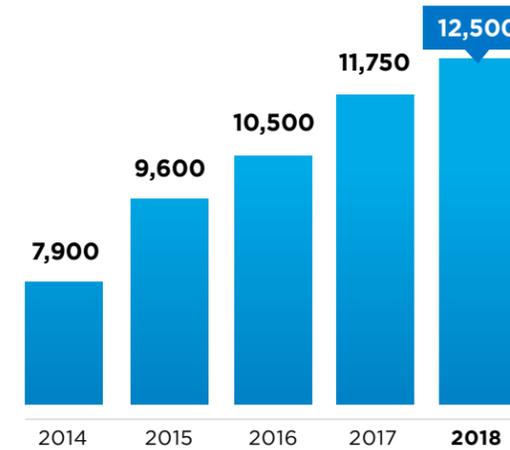
The second season of Chicago Friday Night Flights showcased our city as an epicenter of the craft beer movement, in partnership with the Illinois Craft Brewers Guild. More than 3,590 tasting passes were sold to six events in vibrant areas across the city.



### CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK

Chicago Theatre Week, back for its sixth year in 2018, showcases Chicago's world-class theatre scene. Choose Chicago partners with the League of Chicago Theatres to offer value-priced tickets to 115 shows from 100 participating organizations.

### CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK TICKET SALES



**17%** of attendees came from more than 50 miles outside of Chicago, including 40 states and Germany, Canada, Belgium, Mexico and the U.K.

**66%** of Theatre Week attendees visited a new theatre

"IT WAS AMAZING!  
THERE IS SO MUCH FABULOUS  
THEATRE IN CHICAGO —  
AND THIS MAKES IT MORE  
ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL OF US."

CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK ATTENDEE



### MOBILE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

The Mobile Visitor Information Center launched in 2018 in partnership with CTM Media Group. The center handed out 39,290 brochures & Chicago Official Visitor Guides over the summer.



# GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

International visitors stay longer and spend more, making them a vital part of the city's tourism goals. In 2018, our Global Development Team helped raise awareness of Chicago as a leading tourism destination in major markets around the globe.

**34**  
COUNTRIES  
REACHED

**108%**  
ABOVE GOAL IN  
FAMILIARIZATION  
(FAM) TRIPS

**100%**  
OF GOAL REACHED IN  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE  
SHOWS ATTENDED



\* Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg  
 \*\* Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden  
 \*\*\* Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates



**3,451** travel trade professionals reached through 31 sales missions and calls

**1,999** appointments at 13 international and 3 domestic trade shows

**12** key client events hosted

**27** FAM trips hosted in Chicago for 268 travel trade professionals

**81** international destination trainings held, reaching an audience of over 5,114

**76** 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 eight markets: **Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, China, India, Mexico, U.K. and Ireland.**

**1,440** agents certified to date

# CHICAGO SPORTS COMMISSION

Hosting major athletic events can be a game-changer for our city. The Chicago Sports Commission wins the rights to host high-profile, major sports events to drive economic impact, create jobs and generate positive media exposure.

**12**  
EVENTS HOSTED  
IN 2018

**#12**  
BCW 2019 RANKING OF  
SPORTS CITIES PLACED  
CHICAGO AS ONE OF THE  
WORLD'S BEST SPORTS CITIES

**106,800+**  
ROOM NIGHTS  
GENERATED IN 2018



**LAVER CUP** Sept. 21 - 23 at the United Center  
93,000+ attendees  
50+ countries represented by attendees  
35,485 room nights  
\$98.6M economic impact  
9.7M viewers in 205 territories



"WE KNOW THIS IS A SPORTS-CRAZED CITY.  
WE ARE VERY THRILLED TO BE HERE."

ROGER FEDERER

## THE RUGBY WEEKEND

Nov. 3 at Soldier Field

6 teams played in a historic tripleheader  
35,000 attendees

1st time New Zealand's national women's team competed in U.S.

1st time Italy's national men's team competed in Chicago



## MAJOR EVENTS IN 2019

### UNITED SOCCER COACHES CONVENTION

Jan. 9 - 13 at McCormick Place

14,070 attendees from all 50 states and 38 countries

\$21.3M in economic impact

10,306 room nights

### BIG TEN MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

March 13 - 17 at United Center

122,242 attendees over seven sessions — 2nd largest in event history

### CONCACAF GOLD CUP

July 7 at Soldier Field

60,000+ anticipated attendees

### FIVB VOLLEYBALL NATIONS LEAGUE 2019

July 10 - 14 at Credit Union 1 Arena

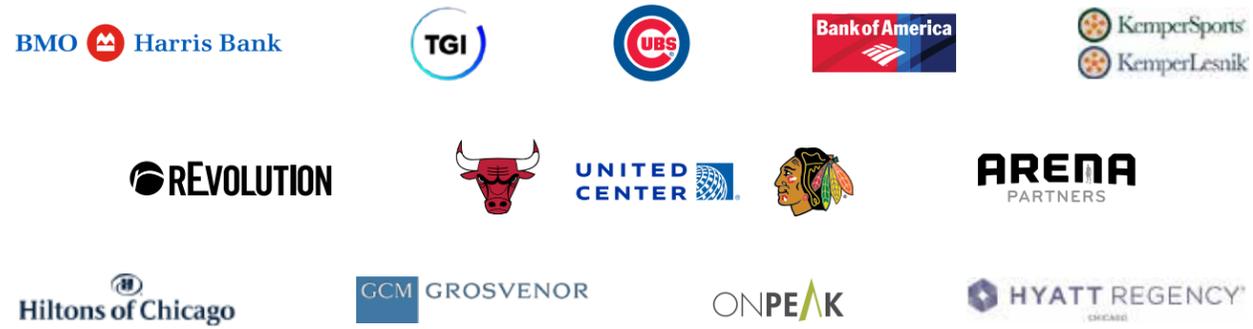
35,000+ anticipated attendance over five days





# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (HALL OF FAME)



## BOARD (MVP & ALL-STAR)



## IN AFFILIATION WITH



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Board Chair  
Choose Chicago

**GILLIAN DARLOW**  
Vice Chair  
CEO  
Polk Bros. Foundation

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President  
Broadway in Chicago

**PATRICK DONELLY**  
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Hyatt Regency Chicago

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United Brotherhood of  
Carpenters, Local 10

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Midway Broadcasting  
Corporation | WVON, WRLL

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Government Affairs  
American Airlines

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Chicago Department of  
Business Affairs and  
Consumer Protection

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