



2025 KENTUCKY TRAVEL INDUSTRY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

November 5-7, 2025 | Louisville, Kentucky

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

All conference events will take place at the Galt House unless noted otherwise in the schedule. Louisville is in the Eastern time zone.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION

Registration Area

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

VOLUNTOURISM EVENT

American Printing House for the Blind

Since 1858, APH has operated in Louisville as the world's largest nonprofit organization creating accessible educational, workplace, and independent living products and services for people who are blind and low vision. Voluntourism participants will get hands-on experience helping visually impaired students assemble program boxes packed with learning materials and will also receive special tours of the Helen Keller archives/collections, which includes letters, scrapbooks, audio-video materials and more. Other tour stops include APH's factory floor and the new DOT Experience, APH's re-imagined museum set to open in 2026. In all this you will come away with a new understanding of how to confront many barriers that still exist for those that are blind or low vision, and how you can help make your community more accessible for all.

***Registration required (visit ktia.com/annual-conference to register)*

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

TRADESHOW SET UP

Grand Ballrooms B & C

12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

CITY TOURS

City of Ali

Walk in the footsteps of greatness while visiting locations that helped shape Louisville's most famous native son's life, career and legacy.

People come to Louisville from around the globe to pay their respects and celebrate the legacy of "The Greatest, Muhammad Ali." Having lived most of his young life in Louisville, the city is full of "landmarks" that are the backdrops of the events and experiences that molded Ali into the man who was both loved and respected as a legendary sports figure as well as a global humanitarian.

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Gatsby's Louisville

Experience sites that inspired author F. Scott Fitzgerald as well as ones that will make you feel like you're in the pages of "The Great Gatsby". Over a century ago, Fitzgerald was stationed in Louisville at Camp Taylor during World War I. Something of the splendor stayed with him because a few years later, on April 10, 1925, to be exact, he published the classic novel "The Great Gatsby," which mentions Louisville frequently throughout the story. Get a glimpse at some of the places and experiences that inspired many of the book's most romantic, nostalgic scenes.

***Registration required (visit ktia.com/annual-conference to register)*

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

BOWLING FOR BOURBON

Strike & Spare JTown

***Registration required (visit ktia.com/annual-conference to register)*

7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

ICEBREAKER OPENING RECEPTION

Paristown

In recent years our CVB hosts have taken the conference opening Icebreaker event to a whole new level. And this year Louisville Tourism will keep that going with Paristown as the venue. Paristown, "a place made for memories," is home to Louisville Stoneware & Co, The Café Restaurant and Louisville's newest Bourbon experience Uncle Boogie's Distilling Company. There will be plenty of surprises in store for the event. And get ready to make some memories!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION

Registration Area

8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

SILENT AUCTION

Willis & Clements

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

OPENING BREAKFAST

Grand Ballroom A

SPEAKER: Kathleen Driskell – Kentucky Poet Laureate

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Bronze Traverse Award Winners, Member of the Year and Emerging Leader Award

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

TRADESHOW BREAK

Grand Ballrooms B & C

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

GENERAL SESSION

Grand Ballroom A

Kentucky Tourism: A Look Back to the Future

Adam Sacks and Tourism Economics have conducted Kentucky's annual tourism economic impact study since 2018. That, along with their many other clients around the country adds up to a wealth of knowledge about tourism, overall, and about Kentucky in particular. During this presentation, looking back at Kentucky tourism changes and growth, Adam will offer insights about what the future can hold for Kentucky tourism, both domestically and internationally, and what the tourism industry can do to get there.

SPEAKER: Adam Sacks – President, Tourism Economics, An Oxford Economics Company

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Attracting Tour Operators: Sales 'Mission Accomplished'

Jones (Third Floor)

Over the years the group tour market has proven its value to Kentucky destinations, attractions and hotels, but much more progress can be made in attracting tour business. One underutilized strategy is sales missions. Presented by one of Kentucky's most experienced group tour marketers and a respected tour operator who has been on the receiving end of successful sales missions, this session will explain the value and affordability of these face-to-face visits with tour companies and how to plan and conduct them. And as an added value, you will learn how sales missions can strengthen destination and regional partnerships.

SPEAKERS:

- Jeannie Sadaphal, CTA, CKTP – Ark Encounter, Business Development Representative
- James Murphy – President, Art Henry Tours

What I Wish I'd Known Sooner

French (Third Floor)

This interactive (and fun!) session will have our highly accomplished four most recent recipients of KTIA's Mangeot-Oaken Award for Distinguished Service will form a panel to share what they know now that they wish they'd understood earlier in their careers. Although of particular interest to younger tourism professionals, the session will offer learning opportunities for industry veterans and to also contribute their own career and personal lessons learned.

SPEAKERS:

- Jeff Crowe – Director, Kentucky Experiences, Heaven Hill Distillery
- Sherry Murphy – Executive Director, Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Rhonda Nix – Assistant Director, Kentucky Department of Tourism
- Mary Quinn Ramer – President & CEO, VisitLEX

By the Numbers: Effective Use of Data in Telling Tourism's Story

Segell (Third Floor)

It is not unusual for those in the Kentucky tourism industry to be questioned by legislators, local elected officials and others about tourism economic impact data, even including questions about its validity...that it seems overstated and unrealistic. And even when doubts aren't expressed, it can still be challenging to connect the dots from the data to local tourism impacts. During this session you will receive ideas and advice for data-based communication to explain the power of tourism and the benefits it provides. And the advice will go beyond visitor economic impacts to include ways to measure and articulate marketing impacts and program ROI.

SPEAKER: Adam Sacks – President, Tourism Economics, An Oxford Economics Company

Downtown Ideas and Opportunities

Stopher (Third Floor)

As we enjoy downtown Louisville during the conference, this session will be presented by a major contributor to what you are experiencing. The Louisville Downtown Partnership (LDP) provides an array of services and activities that foster the redevelopment, vitality, and economic growth of the Greater Downtown area through creating a safe, clean, and enjoyable environment. During this session you will learn about the work performed by LDP and about strategies they use in generating collaboration among downtown stakeholders, including tourism partners, all designed to provide ideas for your use with your downtown.

SPEAKER: Rebecca Fleischaker – Executive Director, Louisville Downtown Partnership

11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

COMMISSIONER & AWARDS LUNCHEON

Grand Ballroom A

SPEAKER: Commissioner Mike Mangeot – Kentucky Department of Tourism

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Silver Traverse Award Winners, Stars of the Industry Awards and CKTP Graduation

1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

TRADESHOW BREAK

Grand Ballrooms B & C

2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

GENERAL SESSION

Grand Ballroom A

Calm Your Inner Critic and Discover Your Authentic Self

At the heart of tourism lies the promise of an authentic experience. When we're in tune with our personal authenticity we're naturally better able to deliver on that promise. Our visitors win and our communities win when authenticity thrives. This dynamic general session explores how calming your inner critic and cultivating self-awareness can enhance both personal and professional fulfillment. Through new insights and strategies with real-world applications, you'll learn how embracing your authentic self can elevate the experiences you create for others.

SPEAKER: MaryAnn Gramig – CEO, AuthenticA Coaching & Consulting

3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Visiting Friends & Relatives: Kentucky's Hidden Treasure

Jones (Third Floor)

In 2024 travelers visiting friends and relatives (VFR) made up 44% of Kentucky's visitors – nearly half and more than the next five trip purposes combined. Ironically, this enormous group of visitors is one of the least understood and least targeted by tourism marketers and service providers. This session will dive into the trip characteristics of Kentucky's VFR travelers, including some surprises. The session will also offer a variety of ideas and opportunities for the industry to attract and serve this huge segment of Kentucky visitors.

SPEAKERS:

- *Leslie Miller – Vice President, Marketing, VisitLEX*
- *Kendahl Plank – Marketing Manager, Destination Toledo*
- *Brian Screptock – Vice President, Client Engagement, Longwoods International*

Customer Service Excellence: Best Practices that Elevate Hospitality

French (Third Floor)

There is no element of tourism that is more consistently vital throughout every facet of the industry than is customer service. Whether as practiced by an individual company or a collective and collaborative local focus, customer service is at the heart of what we do. This session will define customer service in the broader context of hospitality, provide best practices for customer service excellence, describe ways to create a culture of service across the community, and along the way offer plenty of examples and illustrations of key customer service points.

SPEAKER: Jason Fulvi, CDME – Chief Sales & Marketing Officer, MediaOne

A Holistic Lodging Portrait of Kentucky

Segell (Third Floor)

This presentation will combine AirDNA's short-term rental data with Kalibri Labs' hotel performance intelligence to provide a comprehensive view of Kentucky's lodging market. We'll examine how hotels and STRs have evolved together, where they compete directly, and where they serve different traveler needs. A closer look at demand acquisition will reveal why visitors choose Kentucky, where they stay, and how revenue is divided between STRs and hotels.

SPEAKER: Bram Gallagher – Director of Economics and Forecasting, AirDNA

Leading the Clock: Tools for Purposeful Productivity and Personal Well-Being

Stopher (Third Floor)

In a world of constant connectivity and multiple devices, we can be lured into thinking we're more efficient with these modern time savers. However, the result can easily become a never-ending 24-hour cycle. With demands coming from every direction and no clear end to the workday, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and off course. This session will focus on how to prioritize with purpose and protect your well-being, while still achieving your professional and personal goals. You'll gain valuable insights and practical tools to help you take control of your time and energy in a way that supports both success and sustainability.

SPEAKER: MaryAnn Gramig – CEO, AuthenticA Coaching & Consulting

4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

TRADESHOW RECEPTION

Grand Ballrooms B & C

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

GALA RECEPTION

Exhibit Hall

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

GALA DINNER

Grand Ballroom A

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Gold, Awards of Distinction, Most Innovative and Best of Show Traverse Award Winners and Mangeot-Oaken for Distinguished Service Award

9:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

NIGHTCAP PARTY

Evan Williams Bourbon Experience

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

7:00 a.m.

REGISTRATION

Registration Area

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

NETWORKING BREAKFAST

Grand Ballroom A

9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Grand Ballroom A

9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

GENERAL SESSION

Grand Ballroom A

Kentucky Talent Recruitment and Tourism's Pivotal Role

DCI, a national consulting firm, has been commissioned by the General Assembly to conduct an in-depth analysis of Kentucky's opportunities for talent recruitment – attracting new residents to the Commonwealth. Even before that initiative got underway, it was understood that tourism plays a crucial role in attracting new residents through their initial exposure to the state as visitors. During this session DCI will review findings, recommendations and plans for talent recruitment including the continuing role to be played by the Kentucky tourism industry.

SPEAKER: Robyn Domber – Senior Vice President, Development Counsellors International (DCI)

10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

TRADESHOW BREAK

Grand Ballrooms B & C

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

GENERAL SESSION

Grand Ballroom A

2026 Tourism Marketing Trends & Predictions

Join CrowdRiff for a look at the year to come. This session will include a sneak peek review of results from CrowdRiff's highly respected annual trends survey, dive into insights from marketers at the top of their AI game and discuss what to expect in 2026 on the social media landscape. Irrespective of your type of business or organization, this look into the 2026 crystal ball is a session you won't want to miss.

SPEAKER: Sydney Ermers – Account Manager, CrowdRiff

11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

CLOSING SESSION

Grand Ballroom A