



Visit Occoquan *Virginia*

Marketing, Social Media & Tourism FY27 - QUARTER 1 REPORT

July 1 - September 30, 2026

Report produced by Sarah Hitchcock Burzio

Visit Occoquan Executive Director | sarah@visitoccoquanva.com

Volunteer Board & Staff

Sarah Hitchcock Burzio, *Executive Director*

Petra Carden, *Interim President*
vacant, *Vice President*

Gillian Gonzalez, *Treasurer*
vacant, *Secretary*

Tammy Hassett, *Member/Town Seat*

Gretchen Chapman, *Member*

Walt Seiberling, *Member*

Contract Scope of Work

Quarter 1 investment: \$6,925

Fall Arts & Crafts Show

Most of the first quarter's contract is focused on the design, marketing, and promotion of the festival. I designed and coordinated printing for one rack card, three marketing banners, three logistics maps, and eight print/digital advertisements for InsideNOVA, Virginia Living, Instagram, and Facebook.

For the show itself, I designed and coordinated printing of one map/program, one volunteer shirt, two merchandise shirts, six merchandise stickers, four vinyl banners, 24 other signs, and 109 digital graphics (15 for vendors promotion, the rest for emails, social media, sponsorships, volunteer recruitment, and the website). I also responded to comments and direct messages on Instagram and Facebook with visitor questions about shuttles, times, links to parking info, accessibility, vendor questions, and more. While this only accounts for about 8-10 hours of work, it is something that needs to be monitored constantly from 7 days before the event, through the weekend of the event. At our level, visitors have an expectation of a quick reply, during and immediately before an event.

In addition to the design/marketing, I coordinated media promotions with digital influencers. The Town paid \$550 to a local content creator @virginia.adventure.family to post a video reel promoting the event (with b-roll and script curated by Visit, in coordination with Town events office). I also curated and prepared photos and video b-roll for the press and other influencers.

Four marketing emails were also designed and sent, by Visit Occoquan (*not paid for as part of the current Town contract*).

No formal photography on Visit's contract for this year.

Trivia Nights

Reduction in number of social media graphics/post from FY26, but ticket sales held strong and there were two record breaking attendance nights!

Email marketing continues to be the best way to digitally promote this series. After 5 years, this event has a solid following and doesn't need as aggressive marketing as it did in earlier years, to fill the space.

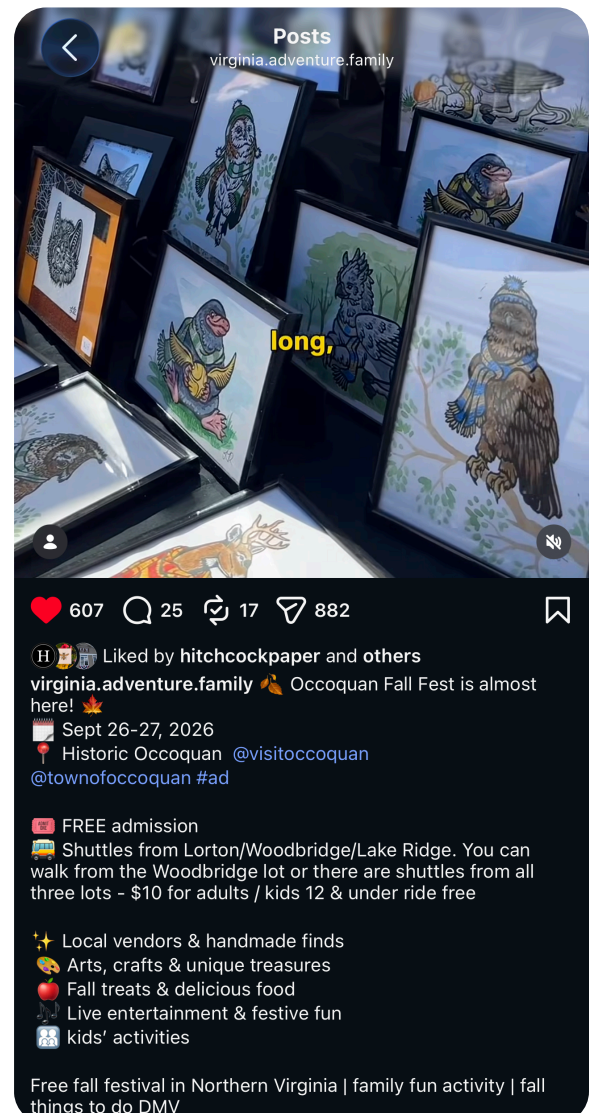
Holiday Events

Preparations for holiday events has continued from FY26 Q4. General design updates and initial graphics have been made, the website has received substantial updates and revisions, promotional posters have been produced for RMP, and a rack card has been printed and is now in kiosks around town.

Marketing and promotion will gear up in Q2 for the Annual Tree Lighting, Shop Small Weekend, and the Holiday Artisan Market.



One of the merchandise stickers for FCS 2026



@virginia.adventure.family paid video ad on Instagram

Visitor's Guide

Part of the Town/Visit agreement is that Visit Occoquan Inc. will pay for and produce Visitor Guide's for the full fiscal year. The Fall/Holiday 2026 guide launched September 1 and runs through December 31, 2026.

This program is paid for by advertisement sales alone. In event of low ad sales, the deficit is covered by Visit Occoquan, Inc.

General Tourism

On July 28, I attended the InsideNOVA Awards Reception, along with Town Events Director Tammy Hassett. Town businesses Ballywhack Shack Cafe and Forever Young were among the winners and were also present at the event.

On August 18, I took part in a virtual session about the PWC Tourism Master Plan. Tourism partners were invited to share their thoughts on the current state of tourism, discuss opportunities and challenges, and help identify where they would like to see tourism progress in the years ahead.

On September 10, I attended the first quarter meeting of the Calibrate Committee, as the Occoquan district rep. Calibrate connects Prince William County's small businesses and entrepreneurs with the resources, mentorship, and networks to start and grow in business.

On September 17, I met with a bus tour group arranged through PWC Tourism, to give them visitor guides and give them information about their visit to Occoquan.

On September 21, I attended the *RV There Yet* Episode Premiere at 2 Silos in Manassas, VA. The episode highlighted Occoquan and Prince William County.

Coming up in October, I have interviews scheduled with Potomac News and WTOP to promote general tourism and Occoquan's events and businesses.

In late September, PWC Tourism recommended we look into two National Park Service grants that could be beneficial to marketing and events in Occoquan. Information has been sent to Town Hall for coordination and initial discussions are ongoing.

Business Liaison

On July 7, I co-hosted the Town & Business Quarterly Meeting at Town Hall, along with representatives from Town Hall.

New resources through SBDC (masonsdbdc.org) were brought to my attention in September, by PWCDED. These include two in-person trainings that Occoquan can coordinate for our businesses. I am working on dates for January/February to hopefully host this at Town Hall. I plan to survey the businesses to see which topics would benefit the group the most.

For reference, prior to the new resource options, free digital SBDC workshops and classes have been promoted to business owners for the last few years, via our online OCQ Business Hub, in business emails updates, and spoken about at several Town & Business Quarterly Meetings.

Beyond the Contract

2026 Make Your Mark Awards

On October 15, Visit Occoquan Inc. was announced as a finalist in the "Destination Experience" category for this year's PWC Mark Your Mark Awards. The award ceremony will take place November 12, 2026 at the Marine Corp Museum.

Board of Directors

Some board member terms will come to an end in December 2026. Outreach to fill those seats has been active since last spring. The board is currently narrowing down candidates.

Trivia Bar Fundraising

Visit Occoquan recently finished the 2026 season of running the Trivia Bar for the Town's Trivia Nights, taking place monthly from May-October. After expenses, the running fundraising proceeds for the season were just over \$4,100, which will go into Visit Occoquan's general fund to support non-Town contract tourism, website updates, social media, and business events and professional development.

Visit will supply two more bars this calendar year: Movie in the Park on October 24 and Holiday Artisan Market on December 5.

Non-Visit Public Remarks

On September 9, I spoke at a press event with Governor Spanberger, Delegate Sewell, and Senator Boysko, about the roll of small business and FMLA in Prince William County. I was invited by the Delegate's office as the owner of Hitchcock Paper, not as a representative of Visit Occoquan.

Email Marketing

Subscriber growth over time:

DATE	LIST TOTAL	GROWTH
October 1, 2026	16,888	1.8%
July 1, 2026	16,589	1.74%
April 1, 2026	16,306	7.99%
January 1, 2026	15,100	0.57%
October 1, 2025	15,013	10%
June 1, 2025	13,647	47%
June 1, 2024	9,285	35%
June 1, 2023	6,880	31%
June 1, 2022	5,265	

Breakdown

Comms Emails*:	14
Marketing Emails:	9

TOTAL EMAILS	23
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**Comms emails are logistical in nature and include things like the monthly Town newsletter, snow removal, business updates, business survey requests, and other informative details for Town businesses and residents.*

Investment by Visit Occoquan Inc.

FY27 Software (annual):	\$750
FY27 Design (annual):	\$3,000

Avg. cost per marketing email this quarter:	\$104.17
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NOTE: For FY27, Visit Occoquan will fund all town festival and event marketing emails, as they are not included this contract season.

Analysis

Direct email marketing is still one of our least expensive and strongest marketing platforms, making the ROI the best of any of our digital marketing platforms. While the growth of subscribers has slowed over the past two years, people are continuing to subscribe to our emails through the visitoccoquanva.com and occoquanfestivals.com websites.

Statistics

Recipients	117,250
Opens	48,935
Open Rate	42.35%
Click Rate*	1.68%
Unsubscription Rate	0.23%

Stats worth mentioning:

This quarter we had an average **5.23% click through rate (CTR)** specifically on marketing/events emails. This is the number of times someone clicked on a link or button within the email, bringing them to the occoquanfestivals.com or visitoccoquanva.com websites to purchase tickets or learn more about an upcoming event or program.

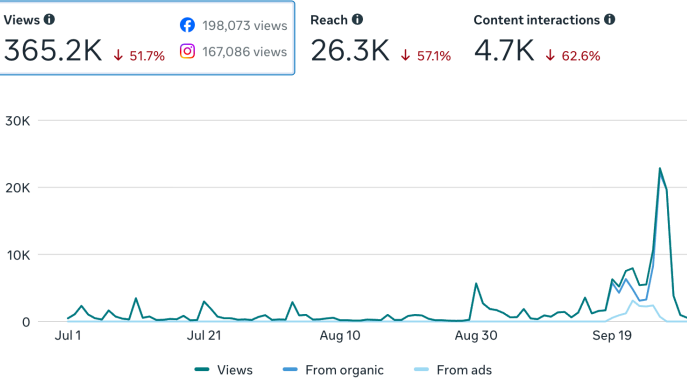
According to Salesforce (a national email marketing platform), a “good” CTR for email marketing **typically falls in the 2%-5%**. We are just above average on that mark.

**NOTE: The reason this overall click rate is so low, is because several emails to businesses and residents did not include links or anything to click, adding multiple 0% CTRs to the formula.*

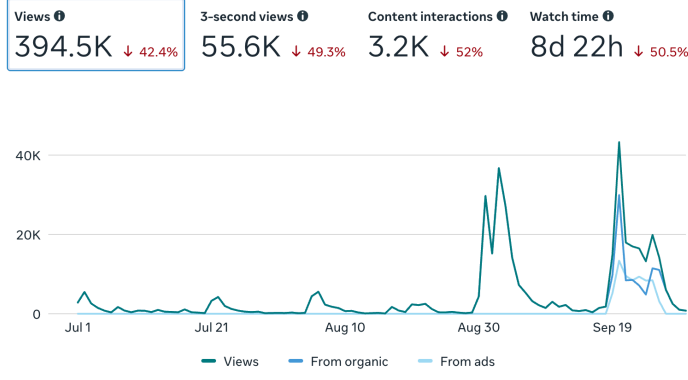


Social Media

Instagram



Facebook



Instagram Top Posts

It's almost Fall Arts & Crafts Show time! 🍁...

Sun Aug 30, 6:58pm

68.1K views, 513 likes, 24 comments, 117 shares

There is SO much to do at our annual autumn...

Mon Sep 14, 11:24pm

6.5K views, 154 likes, 7 comments, 87 shares

It's almost time for the annual Occoquan Fall...

Sat Sep 19, 12:59pm

128.7K views, 606 likes, 28 comments, 145 shares

Kevin and Patrice from @rvthereyettv on...

Tue Jul 21, 5:22pm

17.1K views, 237 likes, 8 comments, 13 shares

We are OPEN again today (Sunday Sept ...)

Sun Sep 27, 9:21am

7.7K views, 198 likes, 8 comments, 10 shares

Ad spend: \$425.06

Facebook Top Posts

It's almost time for the annual Occoquan Fall...

Sat Sep 19, 12:59pm

128.7K views, 606 likes, 28 comments, 145 shares

On Saturday, Sept. 12, the Town of Occoqua...

Wed Sep 2, 9:13am

72.4K views, 211 likes, 0 comments, 43 shares

It's almost Fall Arts & Crafts Show time! 🍁...

Sun Aug 30, 6:58pm

68.1K views, 513 likes, 24 comments, 117 shares

We are pleased to announce the openin...

Sat Jun 27, 10:51am

69.0K views, 1.1K likes, 45 comments, 74 shares

Come out to Occoquan this weekend for our...

Fri Sep 25, 7:24am

17.2K views, 55 likes, 7 comments, 15 shares

Viewership spikes in late September were due to Fall Craft Show paid advertisements.

Overall views and engagement are down, which was to be expected when we slowed down the number of posts per event.

Despite that, I think we are still in decent shape moving into the holidays! We knew the change in scope would plateau us for a bit before we see new growth.

Websites

OccoquanFestivals.com

July 1 - Sep. 30, 2026

33,355

Site Sessions

23,443

Unique Visitors

New vs returning visitors



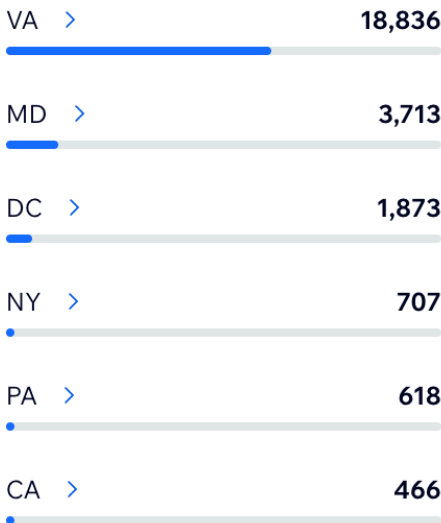
- New
93% • 21,706
- Returning
7% • 1,737

Sessions by device



- Mobile
83% • 27,625
- Desktop
16% • 5,449
- Tablet
1% • 281

Sessions by State



VisitOccoquanVA.com

July 1 - Sep. 30, 2026

17,278

Site Sessions

13,360

Unique Visitors

New vs returning visitors



- New
92% • 12,348
- Returning
8% • 1,012

Sessions by device



- Mobile
73% • 12,533
- Desktop
26% • 4,577
- Tablet
1% • 168

Sessions by State

