National Office

Activity Report
2022 | Q4 October-December

EXPERIENCEMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM WEBSITE

Takeaways

Most visited Pages:
- The homepage was the # 1 visited page last quarter with 12,200 pageviews, accounting for 13.3% of all website traffic
- The Webcams page was the most visited specific page of interest with 6,271 pageviews
  - Google was the #1 contributor of traffic to this page (4,853 pageviews, 77.39% of pageviews)
  - The metro area with the most traffic to this page was Cedar Rapids-Waterloo-Iowa City & Dubuque IA (393 pageviews , 6.27% of this page's traffic)
- 4 of the top 10 most-visited pages were articles
  - https://experiencemississippiriver.com//locks-and-dams-of-the-upper-mississippi/
  - https://experiencemississippiriver.com//explore-these-charming-mississippi-river-cities-towns/
  - https://experiencemississippiriver.com//explore-the-southern-great-river-road-with-this-itinerary/
  - https://experiencemississippiriver.com//fun-facts-trivia-about-the-great-river-road/

Referring Sites:
- Google Search was the #1 referring source and accounted for 51.90% of all site acquisitions (22,900 Users)
- Facebook was the #1 referring social media source and accounted for 58.65% of all site referrals (3,561 Users)

Top 10 Metro Areas:
- Chicago IL was the #1 metro area of visitors to the website and accounted for 20.53% of all website users.(4,173 Users)
  - The most visited page of interest from the Chicago IL metro area was the Locks & Dams of the Upper Mississippi River article (476 pageviews)
- Minneapolis-St. Paul MNI was the #2 metro area of visitors to the website and accounted for 12.17% of all website users (2,050 users)
  - The most visited page of interest from the Minneapolis-St. Paul MN metro area was the Locks & Dams of the Upper Mississippi River article (343 pageviews)

Top 5 Channels:
- Organic search accounted for 57.32% of all website traffic and was the highest channel of acquisition traffic (25,254 users)
    - This means that the majority of users that found the website (over 51%) were actively looking for specific information on Mississippi River destinations and travel via web search engines

User Demographics:
- The top age group of users was 55-64 (22.46% of all site users)
- Boomers ages 58-67 born between 1955 - 1964 are more likely to travel than any other of today's age groups
    - Average 27 travel days per year
    - $44,370 average income
    - Usually have a budget set aside for travel, book longer stays, prefer active relaxation activities (golf, hiking, massages, wine tours, etc.), Bucket listers, more likely to stay at a repeat accommodation

Device Usage:
- 55.85% of all users viewed the site on mobile devices (industry standard is 53.74%)

Web Maintenance
- Monthly website checks
    - Tested and updated links as necessary
    - Checked copy and photos, ensured content was current
    - Monthly Mailchimp check to ensure lists are performing/functioning correctly
    - Renewing Instagram Tokens: Refreshing long-lived tokens before expiration, ensuring granted feed app permissions
    - Scanned the site for malware
- SEO/analytics monitored weekly
- Flipped website content to winter on 11/21

Web Updates
- Created a page, form and enewsletter to promote the Great River Road Ambassador Membership
- Added Ambassador program buttons to the site

Blog Posts
- 10/4 - Fun facts & trivia about the Great River Road
- 11/7 - Explore the southern Great River Road with this itinerary

- 11/30 - Uncover engaging stories at these museums & historical sites

Analytics

www.experiencemississippiriver.com/		
Total Pageviews	91,701	
Total Unique Pageviews	77,227	
Total Sessions	51,649	
Unique Users	43,626	
New Users	88.9%	
Returning Users	11.1%	
Pages Viewed Per Session	1.8	
Time Spent Per Page Visited	0:49	
Avg. Session Duration	1:28	
Top 10 Most Visited Pages	Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page
homepage	12,200	1:14
/interactive-tools/webcams/	6,271	1:33
/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/	6,213	1:40
/locks-and-dams-of-the-upper-mississippi/	4,707	3:29
/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/	4,432	2:01
/river-attractions/	3,294	2:41
/app/	2,972	3:57
/explore-these-charming-mississippi-river-cities-towns/	2,905	2:33
/explore-the-southern-great-river-road-with-this-itinerary/	2,516	3:02
/fun-facts-trivia-about-the-great-river-road/	2,232	1:56
Top 10 Referring Sites	Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
facebook.com	3,874	0:32
thediscoverer.com	1,156	1:36
tn.gov	188	1:23
kiddle.co	161	2:25
(sweepstakes) wufoo.com	136	1:19
(e-newsletters) mailchimp.com	130	5:31
classroom.google.com	112	1:24
onlyinyourstate.com	102	1:19
search.aol.com	40	1:09
pinterest.com	33	1:56

Top 10 Metro Areas	Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Chicago IL	4,829	1:27
Minneapolis-St. Paul MN	3,131	1:51
St. Louis MO	1,670	1:14
Milwaukee WI	1,604	1:38
Dallas-Ft. Worth TX	1,343	1:28
Atlanta GA	1,066	1:24
Washington DC (Hagerstown MD)	998	1:14
Cedar Rapids-Waterloo-Iowa City & Dubuque IA	904	1:21
New York, NY	825	1:44
Memphis TN	737	1:21

Top 5 Channels	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Organic Search	57.2%	1:35
Direct	29.5%	1:23
Social	7.6%	0:33
Referral	5.7%	1:50
Email	0%	0:00

User Demographics

Age	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
55-64	20.4%	1:34
35-44	19.9%	1:25
45-54	18.2%	1:30
65+	17.1%	2:01
25-34	14.4%	1:34
18-24	10%	1:29
Gender	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Male	53.7%	1:27
Female	46.3%	1:44

Device Usage	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Mobile + Tablet	61.2%	1:34

	Desktop	38.8%	1:48

MRPCMEMBERS.COM WEBSITE

Web Maintenance
- Updated plugins
- Updated WordPress version
- Fixed broken links
- Added security to improve email deliverability
- Created backups and restore points monthly

Web Updates
- Added a legislative packet to the resources page
- Added images to the annual meeting gallery
- Updated meeting agendas
- Added minutes, budgets, docs and meetings to the site

(Website updates and maintenance on both sites, experiencemississippiriver.com and mrpcmembers, average 10 hours per month.)

TOURISM E-NEWSLETTERS *(Each monthly enewsletters averages 5 hours)*

Takeaways
The MRPC tourism e-newsletter performed well in Q4 2022, nearly doubling industry averages for open rate and click rate. The best-performing newsletter was sent out in November and included an itinerary for a trip along the southern Great River Road and an article about the charming river towns along the route. Interestingly, clicks were pretty evenly spread across the lead and secondary frames in each newsletter (53.4%/40.7% in October, 53.5%/42.5% in November, 44.4%/35.5% in December), which shows that subscribers are interested in all the content we put in the newsletters, not just the lead story.

Results

E-newsletter Subscriber Growth

48,450   48,453   48,322   47,858
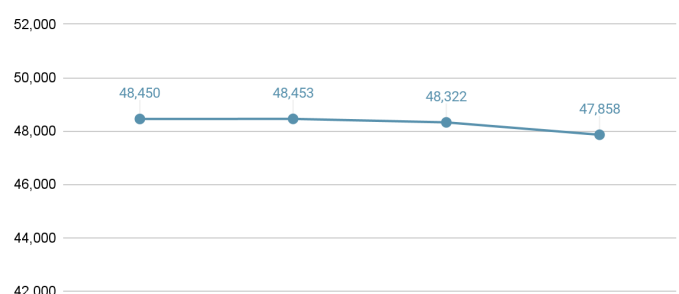
- Average open rate: 39.8% (industry average: 20.2%)
- Average click rate: 4.0% (industry average: 2.2%)

10/17 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: Did you know…? Great River Road fun facts & trivia
- Wrote article: Fun facts & trivia about the Great River Road
- Also promoted: What makes the Great River Road an All-American Road?
- Open rate: 39.4%
- Click rate: 3.6%

11/21 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: 5-day road trip along the southern Great River Road
- Wrote article: Explore the southern Great River Road with this itinerary
- Also promoted: Mississippi River cities & towns you should visit
- Open rate: 41.3%
- Click rate: 5.7%

12/12 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: Visit these interesting attractions, museums & historical sites
- Wrote article: Uncover engaging stories at these museums & historical sites
- Also promoted: Cultural attractions along the Great River Road
- Open rate: 38.6%
- Click rate: 2.8%

View this email in your browser
Forward to a friend

Great River Road
An All-American Road

Photo: Louisiana Office of Tourism

Explore the southern Great River Road with this itinerary

The southern Mississippi River states offer a wide range of experiences and places to visit, from tours of important sites in the Civil War and the Civil Rights movement to iconic music venues and attractions. This five-day itinerary will take you along the Great River Road in five states—Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana—and highlight some of this All-American Road's top offerings.

Learn more

Photo: Illinois Office of tourism

Mississippi River cities & towns you should visit

All along the Great River Road, you'll find villages, small towns, and big cities rich in the culture, history, and cuisine of the Mississippi River region. Here's a closer look at just a few river communities you shouldn't miss on your next Great River Road trip.

Learn More

Follow us on Instagram @greatriverroad

PILOT E-NEWSLETTERS

10/31 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: MRPC Updates
- Promoted: Annual Meeting Recap
- Open rate: 40.5%
- Click rate: 4.8%

FACEBOOK

Takeaways

The MRPC Facebook page performed well in Q4 2022, gaining more than 3,000 fans and finishing the year with nearly 80,000 fans overall. Facebook was a good way of driving traffic to the Experience Mississippi River website, as all three of the top posts in the quarter linked to blogs that appeared on the site. The most popular post of the quarter (a blog featuring historic photos of the Great River Road and the Mississippi River) highlighted two big interests of fans of the page: history and scenic photography of the river and the road.

Overview

- Facebook fans: 79,613
- New Facebook fans: 3,465
- Facebook updates: 43

Top Posts

- 11/18
    - "A blast from the past:
      Enjoy these historic photos from up and down the Mississippi River"
      w/link to blog on experiencemississippiriver.com
    - Description
    - 32,375 people reached; 1,941 reactions, comments, and shares; 836 link clicks
    - 6,508 people reached organically; 26,436 people via paid ad

Facebook Fan Growth

Facebook Fan Growth chart showing: October 76,148; November 77,166; December 77,977; January 79,613
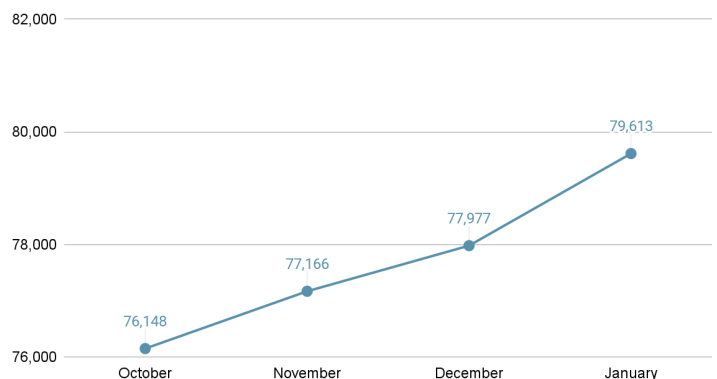
- 11/17
  - "Wonder why the Great River Road has been honored as an All-American Road? Here are just a few reasons why..."
  - Description
  - 23,003 people reached; 2,314 reactions, comments, and shares; 387 link clicks
  - 7,026 people reached organically; 16,297 people via paid ad
- 12/31
  - "We're wrapping up the year by giving you 22 great reasons to drive the Great River Road. Happy New Year!" w/link to blog on experiencemississippiriver.com
  - 12,101 people reached; 187 reactions, comments, and shares;, 238 post clicks
  - 12,101 people reached organically

The Great River Road
Published by Alan Hamari · November 18, 2022 ·

A blast from the past: Enjoy this historic photos from up and down the Mississippi River.

EXPERIENCEMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM
Historic photos: sights along the Mississippi River - Experience Mississippi River

| 32,375 People reached | 3,408 Engagements | ↑ +1.3x average Distribution score | Boost post |

1.6K   17 comments   141 shares
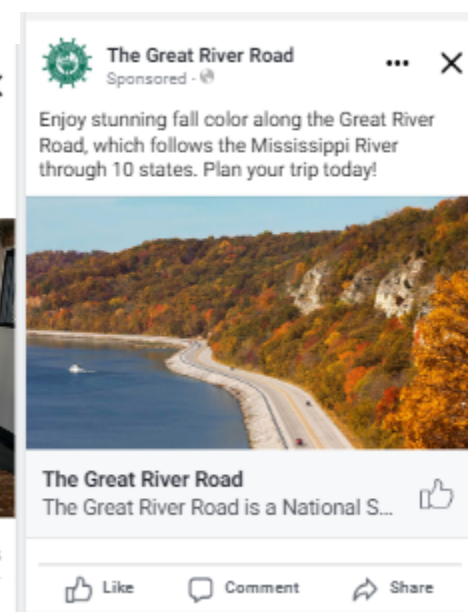
Like   Comment   Share

Demographics/Engaged Fans

- Top cities: Chicago, Davenport, Dubuque, Memphis, Alton
- Top gender: Women (62%)
- Top age range: 45-54

Post engagement ad

- Post engagement ad, updated regularly throughout year
- 195,892 impressions
- 12,092 clicks
- 6.17% click-through rate
- Received 10,322 post engagements

Page likes ad

- Post likes ad, updated regularly throughout year
- 316,711 impressions
- 12,012 clicks
- 3.79% click-through rate
- Added 2,868 fans

The Great River Road
Sponsored ·

From local specialties to wineries, distilleries, and breweries to famous sweet shops, you'll find lots of delicious flavors along   ...See more

Kenny Petersen a...   1 comment   3 shares

Like   Comment   Share

The Great River Road
Sponsored ·

Enjoy stunning fall color along the Great River Road, which follows the Mississippi River through 10 states. Plan your trip today!

The Great River Road
The Great River Road is a National S...

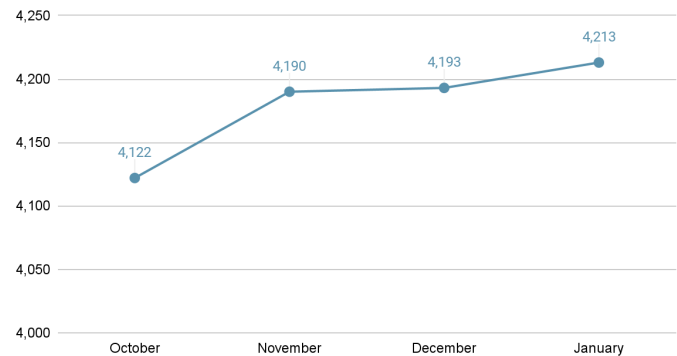Like   Comment   Share

INSTAGRAM

Takeaways
The Great River Road Instagram page had a great quarter with each top post receiving more than 4,000 people reached.

Overview

- Instagram followers: 4,213
- New Instagram followers: 91
- Instagram updates: 13 posts
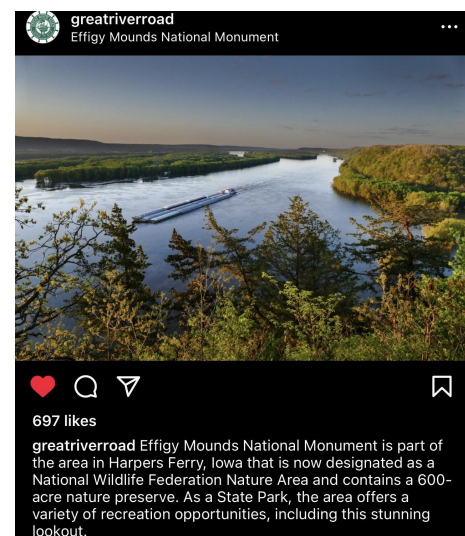- Regularly reviewed and replied to user messages

Demographics/Engaged Fans

- Top age range: 35-44 (27.4%)
- Top locations: Alton, Chicago, Godfrey, Minneapolis, La Crosse
- Top gender: Women (61.1%)

Top Posts

- 10/6
  - Caption: Effigy Mounds National Monument is part of the area in Harpers Ferry, Iowa that is now designated as a National Wildlife Federation Nature Area and contains a 600- acre nature preserve. As a State Park, the area offers a variety of recreation opportunities, including this stunning lookout.
  - 4,039 people reached, 712 reactions
- 10/26/22
  - Caption: It's football season, add LSU to your Great River Road adventure! Fun fact: their mascot, Mike the Tiger is a Live Bengal Tiger and lives on the stadium campus
  - 5,461 people reached, 723 reactions
- 12/29/22
  - Caption: Are views like this on your 2023 bucket list? Start planning your Great River Road adventure for the new year now. Link in bio
  - 9,262 people reached, 119 reactions

Instagram Follower Growth

- October: 4,122
- November: 4,190
- December: 4,193
- January: 4,213

greatriverroad
Effigy Mounds National Monument

697 likes
greatriverroad Effigy Mounds National Monument is part of the area in Harpers Ferry, Iowa that is now designated as a National Wildlife Federation Nature Area and contains a 600-acre nature preserve. As a State Park, the area offers a variety of recreation opportunities, including this stunning lookout.

greatriverroad
Louisiana State University

716 likes
greatriverroad It's football season, add LSU to your Great River Road adventure! Fun fact: their mascot, Mike the Tiger is a Live Bengal Tiger and lives on the stadium campus

Post engagement ad

- Post engagement ad, updated regularly throughout year
- 20,111 impressions
- 58 people clicked on the ad
- 0.29% click-through rate
- Received 2,163 post engagements

(Social media hours for developing a content calendar, locating images, scheduling posts and creating ads averages 10 hours per month.)

DRIVE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD APP

iOS
- # of downloads in Q4: 901
- # of downloads to date: 26,795

Android
- # of downloads in Q4: 580
- # of downloads to date: 13,829

Total (combined)
- # of downloads in Q4: 1,481
- # of downloads: 40,624

ADMIN/MISCELLANEOUS

Content Calendar
- Created Q1 content calendar detailing social media posts, e-news topics, ad budgets and goals.

Financial/Bookkeeping/ Budgets
- Drafted several versions of 2023 budget for discussion
- Paid bills
- Monitored state dues and related paperwork, communicated with states
- Processed donation checks and Stripe collections

- Followed up on outstanding registration invoices
- Monthly reconciliation
- Prepared financial reports for the board

Fulfillment *(An average of 30 hours per month is spent managing fulfillment.)*
- Fulfilled 2,341 requests this quarter (12,087 in total this year)
- Pulled requests from database, created address and shipping labels and mailed
- Prepped guides for fulfillment - made copies, stuffed envelopes, folded letters
- Answered phone calls, returned voicemails
- Corresponded to online inquiries

Ambassador Membership
- Developed budget and goals
- Create a form and landing page to explain the Great River Road Ambassador program and to collect annual and/or lifetime membership.
- Create and distribute an enewsletter to promote the new program.
- Create promotional items as keepsakes for signing up for membership
  - Window cling
  - Tote bag

Partnership Opportunities
- Present co-op advertising opportunities to partner with Mississippi River Parkway Commission
- Developed goals and budget

Meetings - National Office
- 10/21/22 Multiple individual meetings with executive committee members
- 10/31/22 Collaborative committee
- 11/3/22 ERA committee
- 11/10/22 Marketing committee

- 11/15/22 Culture & Heritage committee
- 11/28/22 Collaborative committee
- 12/9/22 Board of Directors
- 12/15/22 Sponsorships & Memberships subcommittee