



# Promoting Connecticut Towns as Visitor Destinations

Presentation to Connecticut Council of Small Towns

*January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019*



# Tourism is Connecticut's 8<sup>th</sup> largest industry.



**\$14.7 billion**

in sales supported by  
traveler spending.



**\$1.7 billion**

in tax revenues including \$910 million  
in state/local and \$778 million in federal  
tax generated by visitor activity.

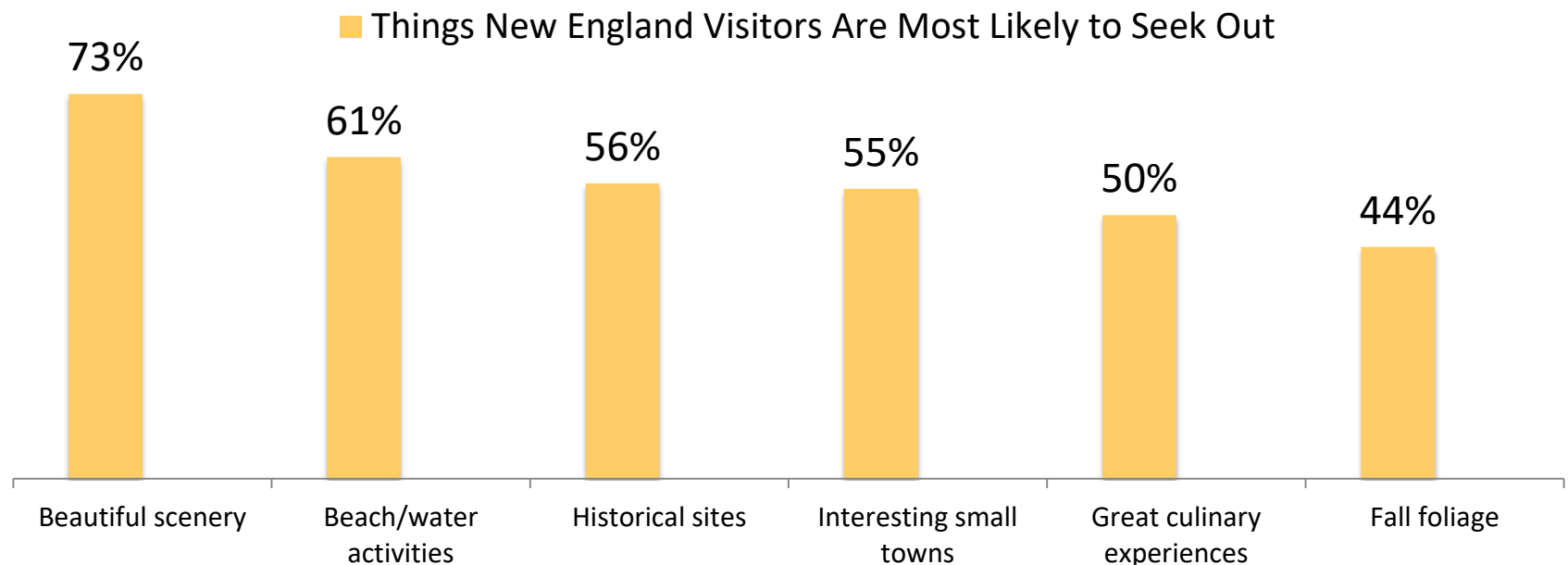


**82,688 jobs**

directly related to tourism,  
and 121,527 jobs supported by  
tourism activities.

Research shows us that “*interesting small towns*” is one of the most important things potential travelers to New England are looking for.

Even more than “fall foliage”!





# Pinterest's Top 10 Travel Trends for 2019 includes:

***“Out-of-the-way towns”...***

***“...People are seeking out small towns for their bucolic views, unique B&Bs and low-key R&R!”***

Searches for “small town travel” are up 276%!



# Other data proves the appeal of Connecticut's towns.

- Google users search on town names more than any other relevant theme.
- Within CTvisit, town names are the most searched theme.
- “Cities and Towns” is consistently one of the most popular topics on the CTvisit’s DO menu.
- Content marketing articles about exploring Connecticut towns are consistently among the top performers in:
  - Inspiring clicks to CTvisit*
  - Keeping readers on the page longer*
  - Generating referrals to partners*
  - Driving visitation to the state*
- The press often seeks information about Connecticut’s towns. (i.e. “most romantic towns”, “best towns for history”, “best town for a long weekend”)





# 2018 Campaign Overview



## \* Continually optimized array of modern content marketing tactics

- Search Marketing, Social Media, Content Distribution, Branded Content, Streaming Radio, Influencer Marketing, Video Marketing and Email Marketing

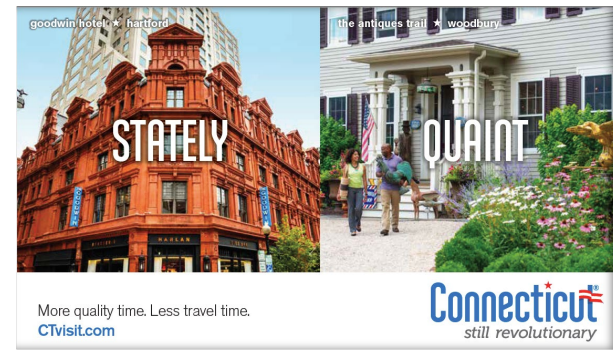
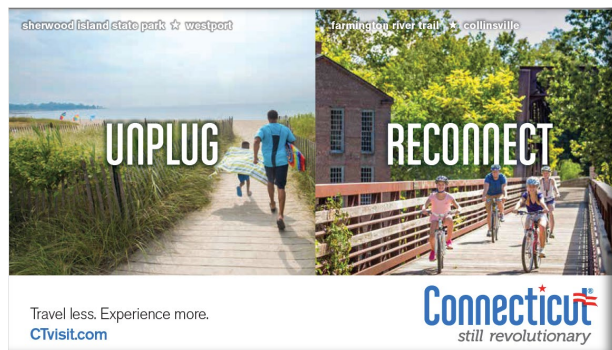
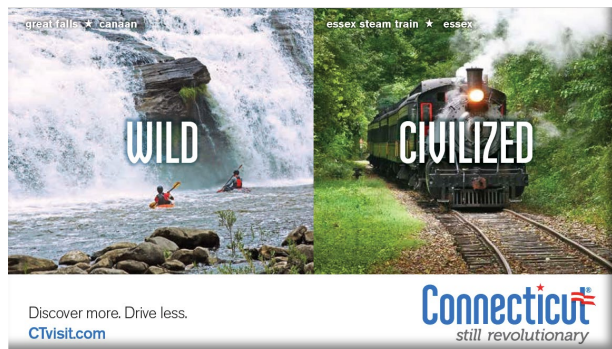
## \* 400+ Out of Home placements in key markets

- High impact “station domination” at Columbus Circle in Manhattan
- \* Billboards, bus shelters, and/or kiosks in Manhattan, Boston, Westchester, Long Island, Rhode Island, and Connecticut



# Campaign Features Over 1,000 Partners

*The award-winning campaign communicates Connecticut's unique offering: the opportunity to blend active & relaxing, historic & innovative, and outdoor-oriented & cultural activities that are close together and close by.*



**All 169 towns, all regions and over 1,100 hotels, restaurants, attractions, arts organizations, and museums have been prominently featured between our PR and advertising efforts.**

# PR Extends Reach with Credibility

In 2018, we have received over a **Billion impressions** from over **over 950 placements**, and **featured 920 different partners** from 160 different towns!

## DEPARTURES

### The Best New England Towns to See the Changing Autumn Leaves

Find your fall zen in these charming New England towns with the best views of changing autumn leaves.



New England glows bright red, yellow, gold, and orange in the fall thanks to the changing autumn leaves. The rich foliage transforms the New England states, brightening up the cities and allowing the charming little towns to really flourish. The Northeast can be a somewhat hazy place to visit in the winter if you're not

## The Boston Globe

### Smoking drinks and tower drops: Unexpected activities amp up the action at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun



By Jesse Hall and Pamela Wright | GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS | AUGUST 24, 2018

Between the time we took a smoking cocktail designed by Pitbull and a dip-off the roof of the Fox Tower, we realized that things had changed in Connecticut. Callie said: And that was before we discovered Foxwoods' Sky Drop that plunges you

## boston.com

### 6 New England towns to visit in September

Eat 'n' mores and chowder, head to King Richard's Faire and the Highland Games.



Eat so much chowder in Westport, Connecticut

You can help decide the best chowder in New England at the New England Chowderfest on Sept. 30 at Sherwood Island State Park. Festivalgoers will get unlimited samples of chowder and a ballot to vote for their favorite in five categories: classic, traditional, creative, soup-bisque, and vegetarian. The chefs making the iconic New England dish hail from 40 restaurants across New England. As a bonus, the park boasts a beautiful view of the Long Island Sound. Tickets can be purchased [here](#).

## MEN'S JOURNAL

### 12 Amazing Trips to Take This Fall to Avoid Big Crowds



Wethersfield, Connecticut

The brick days set a superb backdrop for taking on the historic district of Old Wethersfield, punctuated by centuries-old homes and bursts of orange and gold leaves. Check out one of the museums (our pick is the Wadsworth-Longfellow House), where our country's first President, George Washington met with Camille de Rochambeau, for the Wethersfield Conference or press the issue with "Wethersfield Along Main Street" (Whether you do, and the day with a meal at Blue, overlooking the Connecticut River and Putnam Bridge and dessert at Main Street Creamery. For accommodations, it's hard to beat the beautifully maintained grounds of the Silver W. Hadden House Bed and Breakfast.

## Forbes

### Why Old Saybrook, Connecticut Should be Your Next Weekend Road Trip from New York City

Adrienne Jordan Contributor  
Travel  
From adventures, outdoor, and insightful travel.



Located only an hour and a half from New York City, Old Saybrook, Connecticut is one of the New England state's oldest towns. It also happens to be the only town in Connecticut with a downtown along a waterfront. Being one of those New Yorkers with no car, my weekend trip started with renting a

## Forbes

### Savor A Connecticut Fall Foliage Vacation

Roger Sands Contributor  
Travel



In the coming weeks leaves from millions of trees throughout the country will experience a majestic transformation of colors via the annual fall foliage display. The most vibrant fall foliage is anticipated to occur throughout the northeast, according to AccuWeather.

## Smithsonian.com

### The 20 Best Small Towns to Visit in 2018

Mystic, Connecticut (Population: 4,685)



Even when visiting a spot in the middle of 19th-century coastal business with a stunning side in the face of the ocean, the historic precincts and its surrounding woods provide an old-fashioned view of the past. Mystic is now embracing its role as a coastal town. There's a delightful event in every season. Weekends throughout summer and fall the village springs to life with everything from a celebration of local art to a kid-friendly "Mystic Summer" festival. An autumn highlight is joining the annual boat race for fresh apple cider and donuts at B. F. Child's Cedar Yacht Club, the country's last remaining steam-powered cedar mill. In winter, Mystic's historic Lighthouse Boat Parade illuminates the night with a procession of decorated ships, and boats arriving by tugboat. Mystic's food and drink scene ranges from creative seafood dishes to ingenious wine bars like M/B, housed in a restored gas station. "Travel + Leisure" voted Mystic "best town to visit" (Citi as one of America's Most Creative Towns, while locals and visitors alike love the French-inspired Café de la Ville, where no-meat and party chef Adam Young recently competed for "Best Baker in America" on the Food Network's "Baking Championship").

## Newsday

### Connecticut River Valley day trip: Where to go, what to see



Fifteen years after Katharine Hepburn died at age 96, the screen legend is still big box office in her ancestral hometown of Old Saybrook, a quaint New England village a day trip away from Long Island in the Lower Connecticut River Valley. On a recent afternoon, moviegoers were streaming out of the 250-seat Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center, where Kate's movie classics are presented along with live music performances (200 Main St., Old Saybrook, 860-530-0453, 11:00am-10:00pm). Fans can see her Emmy Award and other memorabilia displayed in the center's small museum. On Main Street, her former neighbors still recall her sightings of the famously exclusive star who spent her retirement years in a nine-bedroom mansion in Old Saybrook's Fenwick section. Old Saybrook's busy Main Street can be the starting point for a day trip to a handful of other riverbank towns.

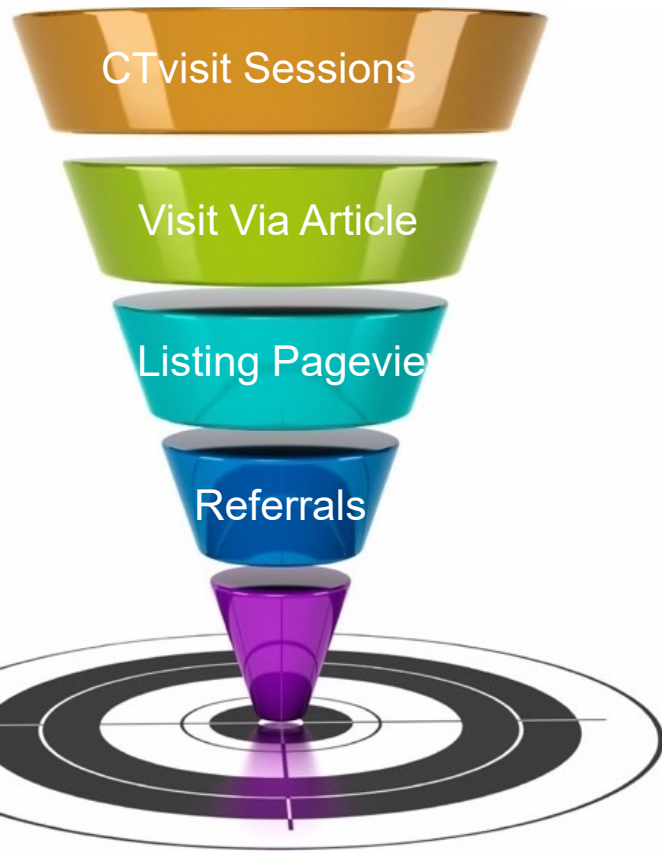


**Over 5 million visits a year**

**~50%** came to the site via an article

**~25%** of sessions view a listing

**Over 3 million** referrals to partners  
*(clicks to partner website, calls or emails)*



# How to maximize support for your town from the Office of Tourism



# Optimize Your Town Page on CTvisit.com

- Add more photos; change them out seasonally
- Make your “facts” as inspirational and motivational as possible — let your personality shine through
- Encourage more attractions, restaurants, hotels, B&Bs to optimize their pages on CTvisit.com
- Encourage all events managers to leverage this site to promote events in your town/city



# Respond Quickly to Press Inquiries

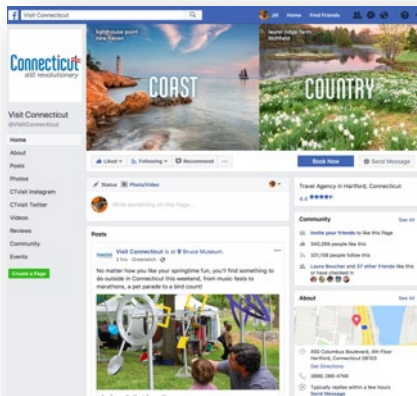
Establish a personal connection with our office. Respond quickly when we reach out — particularly regarding press inquiries.





# Connect with Us on Social Media

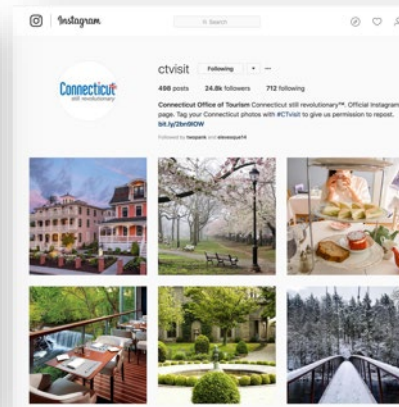
We have nearly ½ million fans/followers and actively use these channels to connect with travelers in-state and out-of-state.



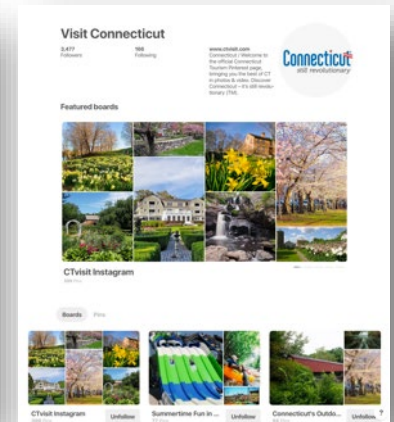
Visit Connecticut



CTvisit

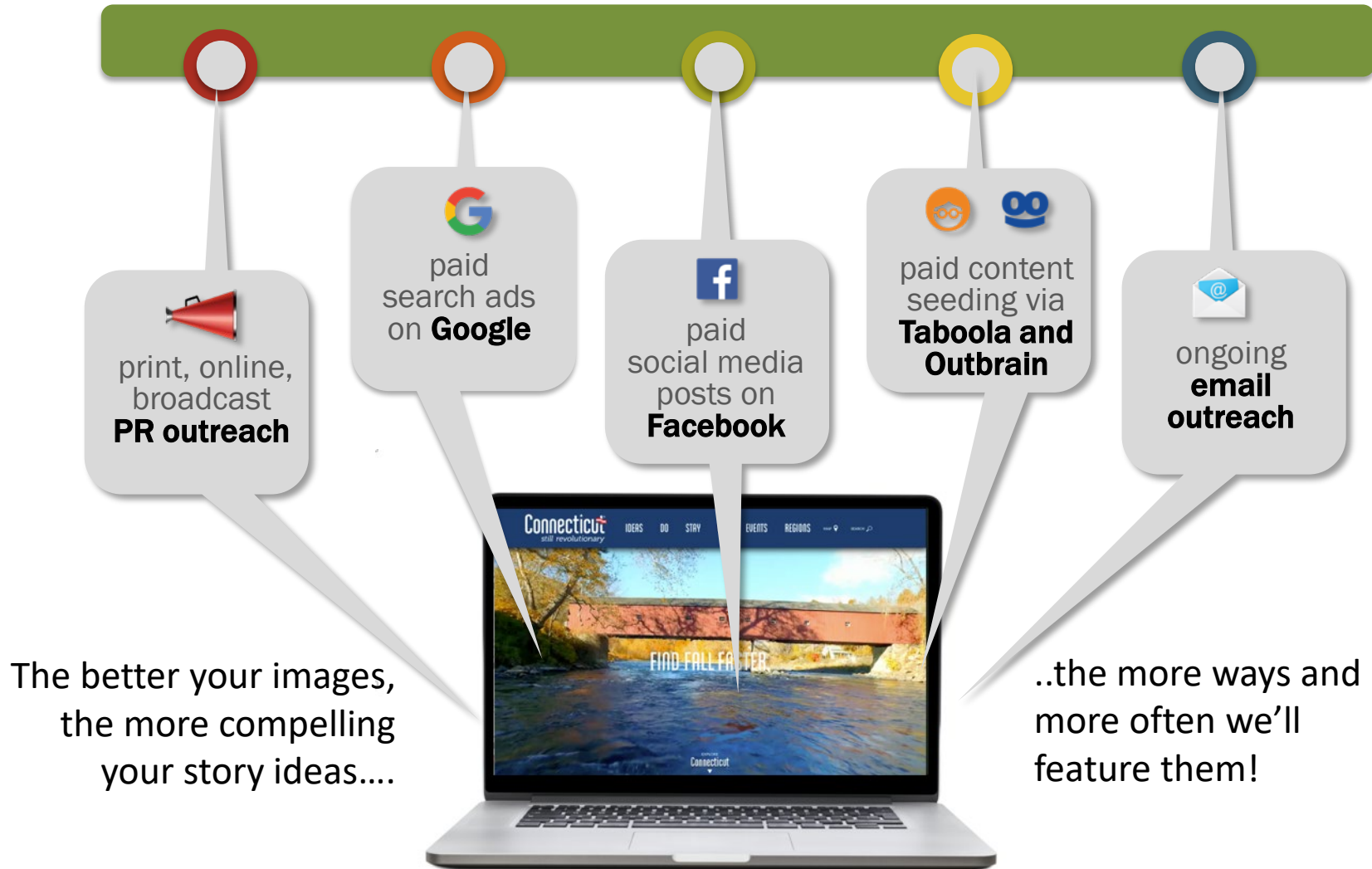


CTvisit



VisitCT

# Send Us Great Images and Stories



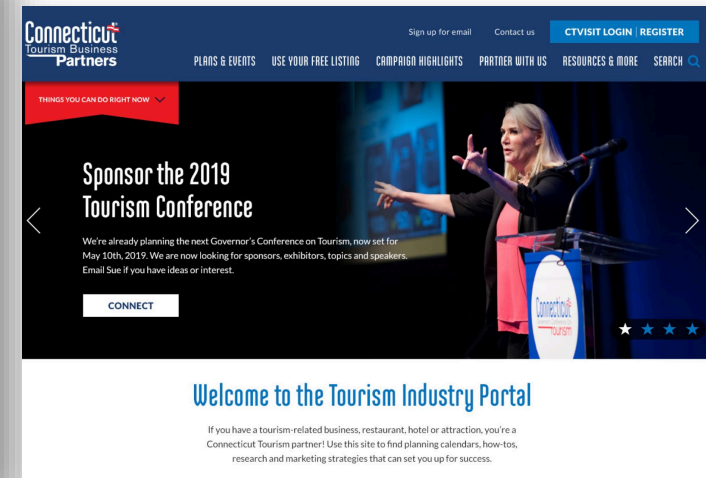
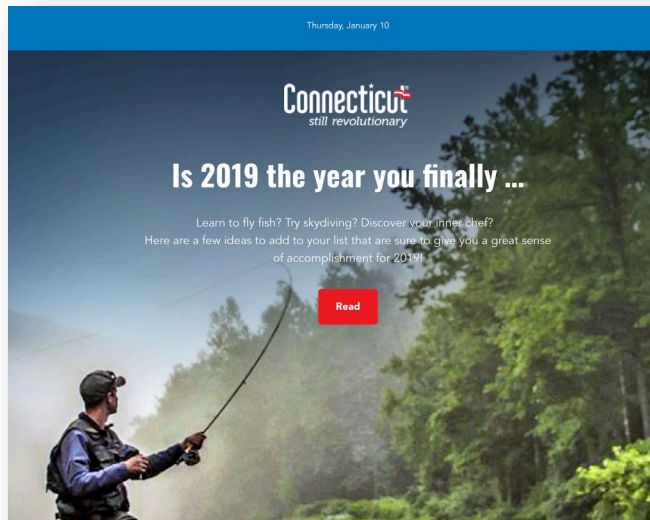


# Open Your Town on Open House Day



- Great way to encourage partnership among museums, attractions, historic sites, etc., in your town/city
- Encourage them to develop some type of Open House Day special, preferably a
  - free admission for first XX visitors
  - special tours/interactive experiences
  - even a town-wide experience
- Benefit from our statewide PR effort driving millions of impressions on CTvisit.com (500 media hits last year and 15% increase in website visits)

# Stay up-to-date on Connecticut tourism



Read/share our e-news for both the tourism industry and for prospective travelers.

Read/share our Tourism Tracker — recapping key stats about our marketing and economic indicators.

Coming Soon!  
New Tourism Industry Portal for industry news and opportunities.



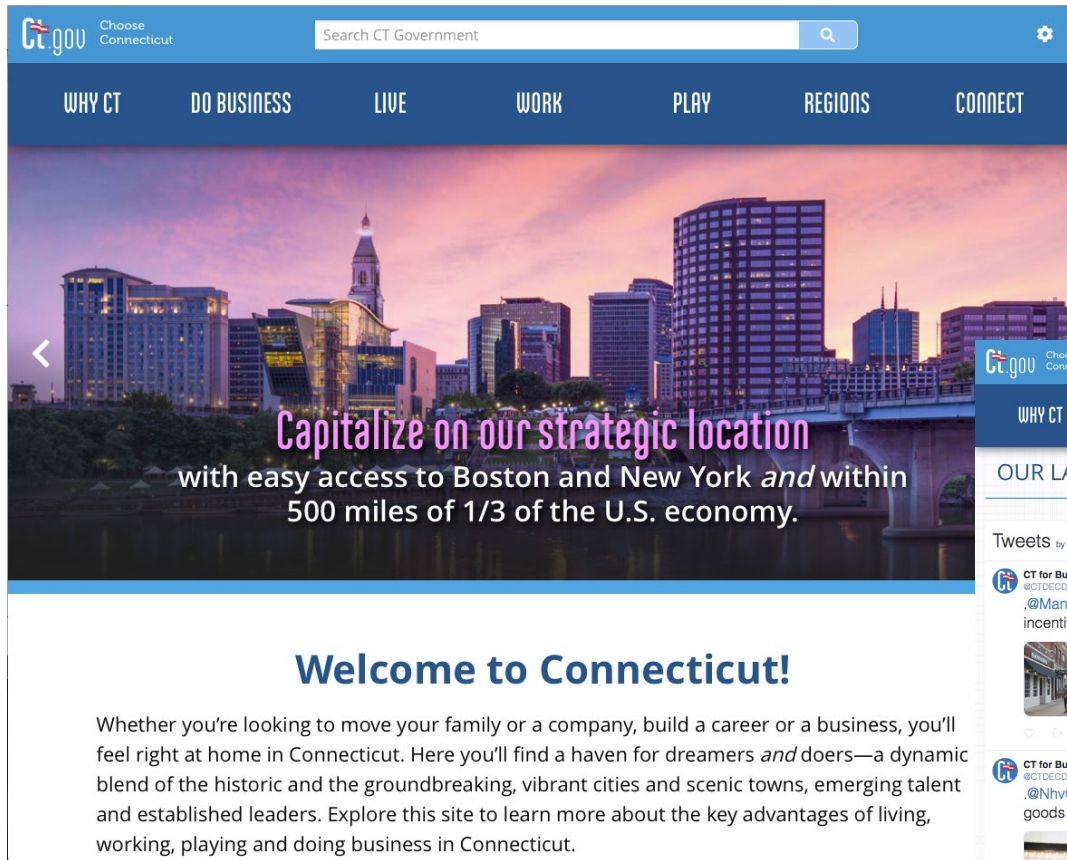
# Promote CTvisit to spread the word.



Let your *own* residents know what there is to see and do in Connecticut —making them brand ambassadors for your town.

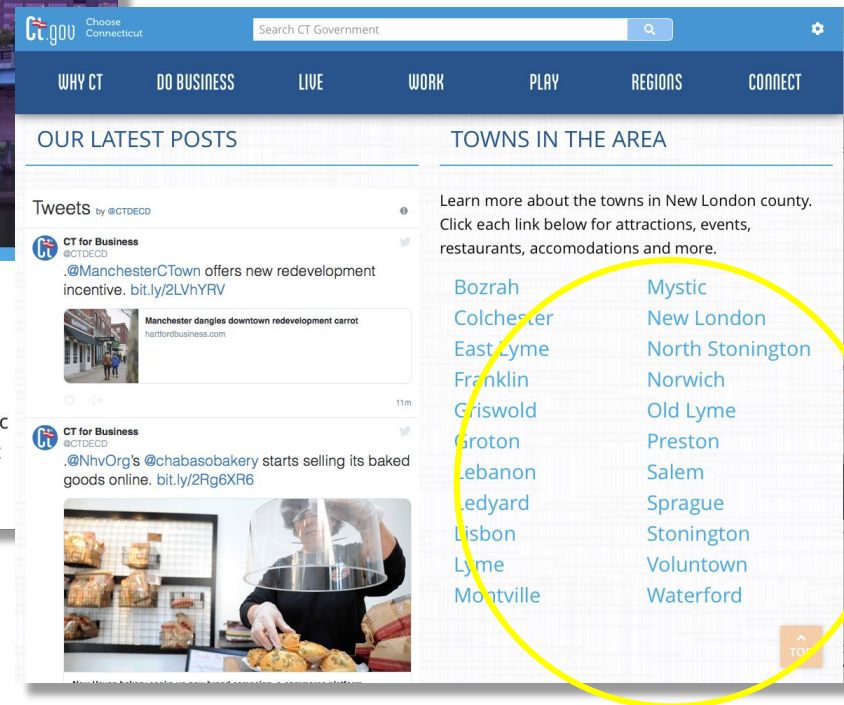
Ask the Office of Tourism for window decals.

# New ChooseCT.gov website that promotes Live, Work and Play



*Homepage*

*Links drive traffic directly to towns' websites*





Looking forward to partnering to  
promote your town