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York County Economic & Tourism Development Wins 2025 VIRGO Award for Independence Day Celebration Digital Marketing Campaign

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The Virginia Association of Destination Marketing Organizations (VADMO), an association supporting destination marketing organizations and the development of tourism and travel professionals in Virginia, announced awards to the winners of the 2025 VIRGO Awards at their Annual Meeting and Spring Symposium in early April in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Yorktown was announced as a winner this year for their entry – *Independence Day Celebration* - in the *Best Digital and/or Social Media Initiative* category.

York County Economic & Tourism Development (ETD) implemented a dynamic digital marketing campaign on a tight budget, executing preplanned and real-time content that drove engagement prior to and during the event. Creative strategies included live streams and interactive and spontaneous posts, which led to enhanced participation and excitement. The campaign resulted in resounding success on social media, with an increase in metrics across the board.

“We could not be more thrilled about this award. York County Tourism’s marketing team works hard to keep our followers and visitors informed about everything they need to know for Yorktown’s Independence Day festivities,” exclaims Deirdre Roesch, Marketing and Communications Manager for York County ETD. “Each year, we begin planning several months in advance, brainstorming creative ways to generate interest in the event—relying on digital marketing trends, analytics, and compelling storytelling through video, email, and social media outreach.”

Historic Yorktown's Independence Day digital marketing campaign launched in mid-April and ran through July 5. Between April 17 and July 5, 2024, York County ETD’s marketing team published 34 promotional posts highlighting the event – from deadlines and reminders to shopping guides and behind-the-scenes live streams and photographs. On July 4, the marketing team provided real-time storytelling, submitting 24 posts across social media, capturing the excitement of the celebration.

Success of this campaign was measured by analyzing the engagements, impressions, net engagement rate, net audience growth, website traffic, and earned media coverage.

- ❖ Facebook and Instagram saw increases in engagements, impressions, net engagement rate, and net audience growth.



- ❖ Website traffic surged, with the Fourth of July landing page growing to 3,624 users and 16,920 page views on July 4—a 333% increase in users and a 363% increase in page views from the previous week.

The VIRGO Awards, now in its fifteenth year, celebrates the success of destination marketing organizations along with their respective staff members and volunteers. Theresa Earles, Tourism Development Manager with Suffolk Tourism, manages the VIRGO Awards on behalf of VADMO, and said “Each year, VADMO honors the best and brightest in Virginia’s tourism industry. Whether it is an innovative marketing campaign, a successful an impactful destination event, or a top-notch digital promotion; the VIRGO Awards showcase the immense talent and dedication of VADMO’s members.”

Judges for the awards were industry peers. Submissions were evaluated on the quality of the submission, economic efficiency, and the economic or community impact. The awards were for projects, campaigns, and efforts completed between January through December 2024.

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About Visit Yorktown

Visit Yorktown, a unit of York County Economic and Tourism Development, promotes year-round tourism through storytelling, aiming to attract audiences to its rich history, waterfront views, and engaging events. Visit Yorktown works closely with local businesses to market their products and services to a variety of audiences, including leisure tourists, educational groups, hospitality organizations, and event planners.

About VADMO

The Virginia Association of Destination Marketing Organizations is a not-for profit 501(c)(6) membership organization made up of destination marketing organizations, visitor bureaus, and the companies that support them. Since it started in 1978, the organization has been promoting professionalism within the Virginia tourism industry and has worked on behalf of its members to make sure that tourism and travel continue to be strong economic drivers in the Commonwealth’s economy.

Additional Info:

- York County: 757-890-5900
- Website: www.visitryorktown.org
- Facebook, Instagram & TikTok: Visit Yorktown

Additional photos are available at <https://bit.ly/42LXoet>