Mission:
To create an environment and unified voice that promotes job creation; economic development; enhanced quality of life; and education & workforce development.
The Industrial Board had a busy 2017 receiving 65 RFI’s with an average 398 new jobs per industry, in 2017. This is more than double the prospect activity and potential jobs, compared to recent years. Roane County fit the criteria for ½ of the RFI’s, adding us to the short list for quite a few new or expanding industries. In fact, one of the most anticipated visits in a long time came in August when the state flew in prospective clients, landing directly at the Jones Road Site. The Alliance staff, working with Designsensory, was well prepared with a print and video presentation in both English and Korean, highlighting Roane’s assets. According to the site selection team, the visit was not only “well executed” and organized, but Roane was also on the short list. In the end, they chose property that was flat and shovel ready in west Tennessee. An increasing number of industries are requiring the same – so in order to be competitive, we have to prepare existing sites. In 2017, the first phase of a grading project at the Jones Road certified site began, which will provide 17 flat, pad-ready acres in early 2018.

Soak in Roane, our first-ever tourism campaign, kicked off with a media blitz on March 23. On September 9, a $1,000 grand prize was given away to wrap up the campaign, but we didn’t stop there – on the heels of its success we continued to tell people how they could Soak in Roane in the fall and during Christmas. To gauge the campaign’s success we looked at website traffic patterns, specifically referrals vs organic traffic since we used digital marketing to drive people to our website, particularly soakinoane.com, our new landing page. We also looked at visitor behavior since our goal is always to promote Roane County and its assets – explicitly our tourism partners (where to stay and eat, things to do and buying local). We also looked at the number of email subscribers since we purchased two email campaigns through WBIR and Chattanooga Times, with a combined opted-in contact list of 35,000. We increased our email contacts with 4,906 new subscribers (4,491 of those were interested retirees), a 14% ROI.

The Chamber’s goal is to help drive business to its members. One of those drivers is RoaneChamber.com. In 2014, the Chamber began using ChamberMaster to help with operations, providing new capabilities to not only the Chamber staff but also to its members with a user-friendly website that allows members to post hot deals, job openings and events, as well as an easier-to-navigate member directory. In 2017, the Chamber website reached an all-time high of 115,166 pages viewed, with nearly 50% of those views being the directory and member-posted pages.

The Tennessee Scholars program is about workforce preparedness, the number one factor businesses consider when looking to locate in a community. Businesses will not relocate or expand in communities without a skilled workforce. The Education Matters program, in partnership with Roane County Schools, recognized a record-high 132 graduating seniors as Tennessee Scholars in 2017, a 23% increase over 2016 that accounted for more than 27% of the 2017 graduating class. This is also an 80% increase in Tennessee Scholars graduates since the program began in 2007.

The first Customer Service Academy was held, expanding the Alliance’s professional development courses beyond the core SCORE workshops. The three 2.5-hour sessions were geared to front-line employees who provide service to customers, specifically in the hospitality industry.
Since 2014 when the Gala came home, it has been a special event for Roane County and a successful one for the Alliance’s fundraising efforts. Without the funds raised at Gala, the Alliance team could not continue working collectively through economic and retail development, education, workforce development, marketing and recruiting – all to increase prosperity for all of Roane’s citizens.

As this chart shows, and based on documented historical data, the 2017 Gala was one of the most successful, gaining $61,079 in net profit. And since its been in Roane, the Gala has grown more successful in other ways as well, and all thanks to our supporters and partners – with double the sponsorships and tables purchased that also led to 146% increase in total attendance when compared to ten years ago.

Even more important than the Gala results themselves – without businesses, municipalities and individuals supporting the Gala through sponsorships, tickets, donations and attendance, the Alliance could not have accomplished all that is documented in this report.
30 Business Retention & Expansion Visits
10 Prospect Site Visits
5 Site Selector Out-bound Trips

$17.5M Capital Investments by Existing Industries
Net Job Growth: 238
4 New Business Recruits

Soak in Roane Campaign Results
700% \(
earrow\) Email Subscribers
648% \(\nearrow\) Facebook Traffic
175% \(\nearrow\) First-Time Visitors
86% \(\nearrow\) First-Time Facebook Visitors
74% \(\nearrow\) Referred Traffic
15% \(\nearrow\) All Traffic

#3 Most Visited Page (soakinroane.com)

Retire Roane
7,426 Visitor & Retiree Requests for Information
5,607 Visitors & Retirees subscribed to quarterly emails

Visitor Spending
$1,730,000
(See Tourism Expenditures Chart)

$350,000 Total Motel Tax Collected
56,452 Pages viewed on tourism website, 24.4% were new visitors
490 Jobs Created in Tourism
$359 Saved in State/Local Taxes per family

$25,500 spent in sponsoring those events to get them here
$682,287 in economic impact from those events (estimated)
$26.76 ROI for every $ we spent to get them here

www.roaneecd.com #RoaneECD
Jump Into The Fun @ www.soakinroane.com #soakinroane #visitroane #roanesweetroane
RoaneChamber.com provides a platform for members to promote Special Events, Hot Deals and Job Openings. Each member gets a listing in the directory in the applicable category(s). The combined member-oriented pages on the website received 54,664 views, close to \( \frac{1}{2} \) of all roanechamber.com views in 2017 and equal to all website views in 2016.

Roane’s TN Scholar Graduates since 2007: 1,178

Approximate Number of Students Introduced to TN Scholars: 6,500

Get Involved www.educationmatters2roane.org
#educationmatters #achieveandbelieve #education
In 2017 three media shoots were held to capture professional-quality photos and videos depicting the quality of life in Roane that includes industry, recreation, lake life, shopping, eating, local business, landscapes, community events, live music, boating, history, family activities, camping, and more. This more than doubled our photo collection from the first photo shoot in 2016, giving us 2,493 photos to use in marketing and to share with our stakeholders. These photos, as well as many other high-resolution photos are available to download and use to promote Roane County at visitroane.smugmug.com.

### Increased Our Marketing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Marketing Channel</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>billboard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>websites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>social media pages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>print ads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>television spots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>days of theatre commercials (x18 screens)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>newsletters sent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215</td>
<td>tourism businesses &amp; attractions listed on visitroane.com</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>821</td>
<td>member listings on roanechamber.com</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>891</td>
<td>community events listed on website calendars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>social media posts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,215,219</td>
<td>social media impressions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,858,764</td>
<td>digital ad impressions</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Increased Our Reach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,170,500</td>
<td>magazines distributed with our ads</td>
<td></td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>838,337</td>
<td>annual social reach (or 2,297/day)</td>
<td></td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194,787</td>
<td>web pages viewed (all sites)</td>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>vehicles traveling on I-40 daily</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39,328</td>
<td>event calendar views (tourism &amp; chamber)</td>
<td></td>
<td>466%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27,231</td>
<td>visitors to roanechamber.com</td>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17,305</td>
<td>visitors to visitroane.com</td>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,638</td>
<td>1st time visitors to visitroane.com (&gt; SIR Campaign)</td>
<td></td>
<td>175%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,614</td>
<td>vendor pages viewed on visitroane.com (&gt; SIR campaign)</td>
<td></td>
<td>266%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,223</td>
<td>followers on social media</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,811</td>
<td>direct link to tourism website (using soakinroane.com or visitroane.com)</td>
<td></td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,191</td>
<td>opted-in email contacts</td>
<td></td>
<td>366%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,864</td>
<td>requests for information (leads)</td>
<td></td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>click-thru’s to visitroane.com from Facebook</td>
<td></td>
<td>330%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Chart of tourist expenditures (millions)](chart.png)

### Top 10 States (requesting info):

- Illinois
- Texas
- Ohio
- Indiana
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Florida
- Michigan
- Tennessee
- New Jersey
Roane Alliance Board of Directors
Dr. Chris Whaley, Chair

Dr. Julian Ahler
Kendall Bear
David Bell
Ron Berry
Marilyn Calfee
Suzie Clay
Cecil Crowe
Lynn Farnham
Kevin Helms
Junior Hendrickson
Jim Henry
Buddy Holley
Mitchell Kyker
Gail Lyke
Darryl Meadows
Kenyon Mee
Tim Neal
James Owens
Jim Palmer
Terry Payne
Dana Peterka
Jason Pilant
Al Reardon
Ken Rueter
Tom Rogers
Becky Ruppe
Jerry Stephens
Barry Stephenson
Jack Stockton
Sharon Templeton
Mark Watson
David Webb
George Wilson
Ron Woody
Bill Young

Roane Chamber Board of Directors
Marilyn Calfee, Chair

Gary Aytes
Eric Bacon
Chris Barton
Buddy Bowers
Angela Dougal
Joe Eskridge
Lynn Farnham
Sarah Harrison
Sean Hensley
Charlene Hipsher
Chris Marsalis
Kathy May-Martin
Dr. Jude Miller
Kathy Parks
Dana Peterka
Fran Puckett
Al Reardon
Rick Ross
Becky Ruppe
Ken Tobin
Danice Turpin
Dr. Leah Watkins
Dr. Chris Whaley

Industrial Development Board of Directors
Jim Palmer, Chair

Quentin Craig
Teddy Haywood
Bob Kite
Jeff Nichols
James Owens
Tommy Thompson
David Webb

Industrial Liaison Committee
Ron Berry, Chair
David Bell
Peggy Collier
Junior Hendrickson
Mike Hooks

Tourism Committee
Steve Kelley, Chair
David Bell
Ron Berry
Todd Fink
Junior Hendrickson

Thanks to our Roane Alliance Partners

City of Harriman
City of Kingston
City of Oak Ridge
City of Rockwood
CNS Y12
EnergySolutions

Kyker Funeral Home
Oak Ridge Utility District
Tennessee College of Applied Technology
East Tennessee Economic Council
Omni Visions
Roane County Board of Education

Roane Medical Center
Rockwood Electric Utility
TVA
UCOR
UT Battelle / ORNL
LETTER FROM OUR CEO

To Our Stakeholders:

2017 has been a unique year, relative to recent history. It will most certainly blend with 2018 regardless of what occurs, because of how developments in the past year are working to shape the near and distant future.

2017 saw the national economy rebound in ways that were somewhat historical. The state of Tennessee, including Roane County, experienced record-low unemployment throughout much of the year. This is great news for so many of the residents of Roane County to have gainful employment. But, many of our people remain underemployed. So, our economic development focus has changed from bringing more jobs into our area to bringing better jobs to our area.

One of our biggest hurdles is Roane County’s six-year decline in population. This makes it very challenging to convince new businesses to locate in the area because of concerns about available workforce. And, this issue, above all others, is what will, or should, guide the discussion going into 2018, an election year.

Looking forward to 2018, the most significant topic of discussion in our county will be a proposed new high school building plan by Roane County Schools. Coupled with the prospect of expanded partnerships between Roane County Schools, TCAT- Harriman, and Roane State, Roane County has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to educate our students much differently, provide for the workforce needs of existing local business, and reverse the negative population trend that threatens our current standard of living.

So many of our partners in the county are already working on initiatives to improve the culture and all of these initiatives will be impacted in some way by how the Roane County Commission and Roane County School Board work toward a common solution.

2018 will be one of the more interesting and impactful years of our lifetime. I encourage all of you to invest the time and energy to learn about the issues for yourselves. Don’t trust social media as your sole source of information.

Then push to help make Roane County the place where our potential is fully realized. And our potential is incredible… but only if we work to realize it together.

Together!

Wade Creswell, President & CEO
Pam May, Vice President/Director of Marketing & Tourism
Courtney Briley, Chamber Programs Coordinator
Teresa Jackson, Member Services Coordinator
Sam Jones Ledford, Marketing & Tourism Coordinator
Allen Lutz, Education & Workforce Development Specialist
Cary Parten, Office Manager/Fiscal Services
Alix Riter, Receptionist/Executive Assistant
Justin Snow, Director of Economic Development