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THIRD QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS, FISCAL YEAR 2022

Incredibly, in just nine months, Georgia has surpassed fiscal year 2021’s record-breaking year-end totals for job creation and investment in our state.

The Global Commerce team reports that the more than 35,400 new jobs secured between July 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022, is a 6% increase in new jobs over the total for the prior year. Additionally, there was a recorded increase of 54% in total investment compared to the same time period last year. Nearly 78% of both projects and investments were outside the 10-county metro Atlanta area, and more than half of the jobs created were outside the 10-county metro Atlanta area.

Key industry sectors include automotive, advanced manufacturing, logistics and distribution, software and technology, and food processing. Over the past year, Georgia’s electric vehicle (EV) and sustainability ecosystems have grown tremendously. Georgia is continuing to recruit the entire EV supply chain to ensure an effective, efficient, and affordable environment for EV production.

Georgia Council for the Arts received 301 FY23 Bridge, Project, and Arts Education grant applications requesting more than $4 million in funding. Panels are working diligently on awarding grants to support education projects for K-12 students as well as arts festivals, concerts, exhibits, and other events, which will help spur tourism and economic recovery across the state. Awards will be announced this summer.

At the Center of Innovation, the team hosted the first-ever Georgia AgTech Summit on March 2 in Tifton, as well as the 2022 Georgia Logistics Summit on March 16 in Macon. The 13th Georgia Logistics Summit, where experts offered insights on the digitalization of the logistics industry and on harnessing needed talent. These opportunities reached hundreds of Georgians in the state, helping exchange ideas, strengthen relationships, and discover new connections and opportunities.

Related to both Film and the arts, the Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the 210% growth of the creative industries in Georgia between 2008-2019 is the largest percent jump of any state. Recently, the Georgia Film Office has participated in two studio groundbreakings: Electric Owl Studios near Stone Mountain, and Cinelease Studios-Three Ring, marking the beginning of a $144-million studio expansion that will bring additional productions, new jobs, and a positive economic impact to the region.

Calendar year 2021 was a record year for Georgia’s international trade: Georgia’s exports grew 9% to $42.36 billion, breaking export records. Georgia products covered the globe reaching 215 unique countries and territories in 2021. Exports strengthen and sustain Georgia businesses across the state by diversifying their customer base, and our International Trade division provides extensive support opportunities. In 2021, nearly 60% of bilateral trade and 52% of exports involved markets where the state maintains international representatives dedicated to supporting Georgia exporters.
Keeping pace with GDEcD colleagues who are setting records in trade and investment – and embarking on new initiatives and PR campaigns, the Marketing, Communications, and International Engagement team has kept up a steady stream of good news via PR and media interviews, blog posts, events, digital media, marketing campaigns, and international meetings and missions. Two new video series were also launched. With an eye on workforce, one series focuses on piquing interest in Georgia as a place of opportunity, while the other outlines the recipe for creating a perfect state for business in a fast-paced format designed to capture attention.

Explore Georgia has released its 2022 Official State Travel Guide to inspire travel to and within Georgia and support tourism recovery in the state. Informed by traveler sentiment research and key trends from Explore Georgia’s website and social media channels, the guide tells the story of what Georgia travelers are interested in, with trip ideas for exploration throughout the state.

Economic development is a team effort, and the results and plans underway are evidence of the hard work that Georgia has placed into helping companies and communities of all sizes create opportunities for Georgians.
DIVISION PROFILE
Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) empowers the arts industry in Georgia and artists around the state to cultivate healthy, vibrant communities that are rich in civic participation, cultural experiences, and economic prosperity. As a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Georgia Council for the Arts provides grant funding, programs and services statewide that support this vital industry, preserve our cultural heritage, and create increased access to high quality arts experiences.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS
1. Grant deadlines
Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) received 301 FY23 Bridge, Project, and Arts Education grant applications requesting more than $4 million in funding. Panelists review these applications in April and May, and grant announcements will be made at the beginning of July. These grants will offer general operating support to arts organizations, most of which had to limit their ticket sales to adhere to COVID-19 protocols. In addition, grants will fund arts education projects for K-12 students as well as arts festivals, concerts, exhibits, and other events, which will help spur tourism and economic recovery across the state.

2. Poetry Out Loud finals
Approximately 6,000 students from 39 counties and 60 schools participated in Poetry Out Loud this year! Amaya McGee of DeKalb School of the Arts won the Georgia Poetry Out Loud state championship and Justice Carswell from Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta was the runner-up. The competition was held virtually on March 13. Amaya will go on to compete in the national finals. This competition in Georgia is funded annually by the state’s Poet Laureate, Chelsea Rathburn. A winner will be announced in May.

By the Numbers
Poet Laureate’s Prize:
151 entries received from students at 43 schools for the Poet Laureate’s Prize.

The award is for original poetry by a high school student and is presented annually by the state’s Poet Laureate, Chelsea Rathburn. A winner will be announced in May.

Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation Jobs:
2.21 million nationally as of January 2022,* which is 12% lower than pre-pandemic, but is a rebound from being down 53% between February and April 2020.

*According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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3. Economic impact study
GCA is partnering with Americans for the Arts (AFTA) to carry out a statewide economic impact study for the arts sector as part of their Arts and Economic Prosperity project. This study will take place during 2022 and provide data such as total state and local government revenue received due to the arts community, total industry expenditures, and full-time equivalent jobs. The cities of Macon, Augusta, Savannah, and Atlanta will also participate and receive data specific to their areas. To see the results of AFTA’s previous Arts and Economic Prosperity study, click here.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

• Town hall meetings: statewide through June
Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) is holding town hall meetings across the state through June to receive input for a new five-year strategic plan. GCA encourages GDeC Board Members to participate in any of the feedback sessions to provide input on how GCA can support GDeC and its goals for the state. To find out more information or to RSVP for one of the meetings, contact Tina Lilly at tlilly@gaarts.org.

In-person meetings were held:
April 20 – Atlanta, 1 p.m. at Dad’s Garage Theatre (569 Ezzard Street SE)
May 2 – Tifton, 1 p.m. at the Tifton Museum of Arts and Heritage (255 Love Avenue)
May 3 – Savannah, 11 a.m. at the Jepson Center/Telfair Museum (207 York Street)

Virtual meetings:
June 21 and 22 – held online.
*An online survey will be available later in 2022.
**DIVISION PROFILE**

Exclusive to Georgia, the Center of Innovation helps Georgia businesses “clear the path” to innovation and growth through expert advice and navigation to the right resources through six key industries: Aerospace, AgTech, Energy Technology, Information Technology, Logistics, and Manufacturing. While providing a wide range of services and programs to businesses of all types and sizes, the Center of Innovation connects new and expanding businesses to expert staff members, external partners, and independent mentors who can help spark inspired solutions for challenges and opportunities of any size.

**QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS**

1. **Center of Innovation hosts inaugural AgTech Summit in Tifton**
   The Center of Innovation’s AgTech team hosted the first-ever AgTech Summit in Tifton on March 2. The event, co-sponsored by the Georgia Research Alliance, saw more than 100 registrants and featured the latest research from Georgia’s universities, AgTech-focused startup companies, an investment panel, and an existing industry panel where current businesses shared their best practices. Attendees were able to gain knowledge about the industry and find additional ways to work together.

2. **Grant approved for Kennesaw State University to help Ellijay Mushrooms embrace new technology**
   The Center of Innovation team has a very small, limited grant budget designed to help companies do applied research with a Georgia university. In February, the Center approved a grant application from Kennesaw State University to support Ellijay Mushrooms as they seek to move their traditional greenhouse style operations to controlled environment agriculture. Led by both the AgTech and Energy Technology teams, this project seeks to connect the company to a leading researcher in this field at Kennesaw State University to help the company implement this new technology at their operations in Ellijay.

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**By the Numbers**

Through FY22Q3:

- **328** client engagements
- **188** industry partner engagements
- **44** engagements linked to economic development recruitment, expansion, or other activity in the state

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3. Center of Innovation hosts annual Georgia Logistics Summit in Macon
Now in its 13th year, the Center of Innovation's Logistics team hosted its annual Georgia Logistics Summit in Macon on March 16. The sold-out event welcomed more than 500 registrants. Two main panels were featured, representing workforce resources in the Middle Georgia region and the latest technology trends in the supply chain. Organizations represented included Amazon, Bluebird, Accenture, RaceTrac, Middle Georgia State University, Central Georgia Technical College, and Macon-Bibb County School District. In addition, attendees received an update from the Georgia Department of Transportation and were welcomed to Macon by Mayor Lester Miller.

4. Support for Georgia Tech's application for U.S. Economic Development Administration $100M grant
Center of Innovation Executive Director David Nuckolls and members of the Aerospace and Manufacturing teams supported Georgia Tech’s recent application for a $100 million U.S. Economic Development Administration “Build Back Better” Regional Challenge Grant. The proposal titled “The Georgia AI Manufacturing Technology Corridor” includes eight different projects designed to advance AI technologies in manufacturing in all parts of the state. The Center's team will help with industry engagement and connect the proposal team to other industry partners who are interested in advancing these technologies. The grant award will be determined later in the spring.

5. IT and Manufacturing teams host Spanish delegation
Introduced to the COI team by GDEcD’s Europe Office, members of both the IT and Manufacturing teams hosted a delegation from the Spain’s Center for the Development of Industrial Technology during their visit to Atlanta in March. This group also signed an agreement with Georgia Tech that paves the way for 20 Spanish technology entrepreneurs to be in Atlanta this fall.
DIVISION PROFILE
The Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office develops the state’s film, television, and commercial production industries by marketing the state to production companies; location scouting; and coordinating the filming needs of companies with other state agencies, local governments, and citizens. The office actively works to develop the industry’s infrastructure and workforce, certifies projects under the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act, and oversees the Camera Ready community program to engage municipalities throughout Georgia.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Cinelease Studios - Three Ring
Cinelease Studios - Three Ring held a ceremonial groundbreaking on March 22 with Governor Brian Kemp, marking the beginning of a $144-million studio expansion that will bring additional productions, new jobs, and a positive economic impact to the region. The initial phase opened in 2020 in Covington as a purpose-built film and television campus with six sound stages, three mill spaces, 12 office bungalows, and an expansive wooded and developed backlot. The studio has been leased at 100% capacity since its opening and clients have included Lionsgate, Paramount Pictures, and Skydance Media.

2. Electric Owl Studios
On March 24, Electric Owl Studios also held a groundbreaking event at their Redan Road building site. Capstone South Properties and Domain Capital Group purchased a vacant, 17-acre site in Stone Mountain last year to launch the new studio. Billed as the world’s first ground-up, LEED Gold-certified film and TV studio campus, Electric Owl Studios will be located adjacent to Interstate 285 about 15 miles east of downtown, just south of MARTA’s Indian Creek station.

3. United Talent Agency office
On March 1, United Talent Agency (UTA), one of the largest talent agencies in Hollywood, held a kickoff party for their new full-service office in Atlanta, the first of its kind in the state. All 40 of its divisions will be actively represented in Atlanta, from film and TV to gaming and sports to podcasting and music.

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By the Numbers
Creative Sector Economic Impact:
210% growth in Georgia - the largest percentage in any state between 2008-2019.

Georgia is followed by:
#2: Montana - 169%
#3: South Carolina - 167%
#4: New Hampshire - 166%
#5: Connecticut - 164%

*According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis
4. Feature film and TV update
In addition to notable infrastructure growth, the film and television project numbers remain strong. Notable projects in the state in production include “Ghosted” for Skydance, “Doom Patrol” Season 4, “Guardians of the Galaxy 3,” and the feature film remake of “Teen Wolf.”

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

• Film Festivals
The film office sponsors and participates in numerous local film festivals, and typically has passes available if board members would like to attend a screening.

• Upcoming festivals:
  Atlanta International Documentary Film Festival (Atlanta DocuFest); Atlanta; May 27-29
  The annual Atlanta International Documentary Film Festival (Atlanta DocuFest) brings the best in independent documentary film and video from across the globe and showcases meaningful life stories that educate and entertain audiences of every demographic. The 2022 Festival will be held at RoleCall Theater in Atlanta’s Ponce City Market.

  American Youth Film Festival; Atlanta; June 16-19
  Held annually at the Westin Peachtree Plaza in Atlanta, entries for the American Youth Film Festival are open to students in three categories: middle school, high school, or college. Judging categories include animation, comedy, commercials, documentaries, feature films, music videos, public service announcements, science fiction, or short films. The festival includes screenings, panel discussions, and workshops for young people.
DIVISION PROFILE

The Global Commerce division seeks to increase jobs and investment through locating and expanding businesses, as well as growing small businesses. The Global Commerce division includes statewide and existing industry project teams, small business, and international representatives in strategic regions around the world.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. New jobs, investment records set in just nine months
   Through the third quarter of fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022), job creation and investments resulting from economic development projects have already surpassed fiscal year 2021 year-end totals. These 251 project locations supported by GDEcD's Global Commerce team will result in the creation of more than 35,400 new jobs and $12.9 billion in investment for the state. This is a 6% increase in jobs compared to the total jobs announced in fiscal year 2021.

2. New Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency office in Georgia
   In March, the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) opened a new overseas office in Atlanta. KOTRA is the Government of Korea’s trade and investment organization. On his most recent mission to Korea in early March, Commissioner Wilson met with the President and CEO of KOTRA, Mr. Jeoung Yeol Yu, as well as key business representatives, including leaders from Kia and SK Group. The mission re-confirmed the State of Georgia’s commitment to its Korean companies and international partners.

3. Georgia partnerships growing electric mobility future
   On the heels of Rivian’s announcement in December 2021 that it would locate its electric vehicle manufacturing facility in Georgia, the industry continues to impact the state throughout the supply chain. Ascend Elements (formerly known as Battery Resourcers), a lithium-ion battery recycling and engineered materials startup, will invest $43 million to open its first commercial-scale battery recycling plant in Covington.

By the Numbers

During three quarters of FY22:

- **35,400** new jobs created
- Areas outside the 10-county metro Atlanta region accounted for:
  - **52%** of jobs created, and nearly
  - **78%** of investment.

Top job-creating countries for FDI in the period include:

- **590** - Netherlands
- **520** - Korea
- **464** - Germany
- **334** - Canada

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The processing facility will become the largest of its kind in North America. The strategically located facility will have the capacity to process 30,000 metric tons of discarded lithium-ion batteries and scrap annually—the equivalent of 70,000 vehicle batteries per year. Its innovative recycling process will return battery-grade lithium, cobalt, and nickel back into the battery supply chain.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

• **RSA Conference (cybersecurity):** San Francisco, California; June 6-9
  Georgia will be represented along with partners at the world’s leading information security conference and exposition: RSA. With more than 75 cybersecurity companies generating an estimated $2.6 billion annually, Georgia is one of America’s elite cybersecurity hubs, ranking in the top five states for cybersecurity growth potential by Business Facilities Magazine in 2019.

• **BIO International Convention:** San Diego, California; June 13-16
  The BIO International Convention attracts 15,000+ biotechnology and pharma leaders who come together for one week of intensive networking to discover new opportunities and promising partnerships. In 2020, Georgia exported $1.8 billion in medical devices and pharmaceuticals. In May 2021, to further incentivize growth in life sciences manufacturing, Governor Kemp signed the Life Sciences Manufacturing Tax Credit, a bonus that is added to the Job Tax Credit for the creation of new jobs dedicated to manufacturing pharmaceuticals, medicines, and medical devices and equipment.

• **SelectUSA Investment Summit:** Washington, D.C.; June 26-29
  The SelectUSA Investment Summit is the highest-profile event in the United States dedicated to promoting foreign direct investment (FDI). From fiscal year 2016-2020, more than 33,000 jobs and $10 billion investment was created in Georgia by companies headquartered internationally.
GDEcD’s International Trade team supported six Georgia companies at the 2022 Arab Health Exhibition in Dubai, UAE, in January.

DIVISION PROFILE
GDEcD’s nationally recognized International Trade Division works to bolster Georgia exports and brand the state as a competitive source of quality products and services. The team includes International Representatives located in 12 strategic global markets and assists Georgia companies with expanding their sales worldwide. GDEcD’s International Trade professionals provide Georgia businesses with the Global Insight and Global Connections they need to successfully diversify their international customer base.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS
1. Arab Health: Dubai, United Arab Emirates
   GDEcD’s International Trade team attended the Arab Health trade show in January for the ninth consecutive year. Arab Health is the Middle East’s largest exhibition for the healthcare and medical device industries, and attracts distributors and importers from Europe, the MENA region, and Asia. Six Georgia exporters co-exhibited in the Georgia pavilion:
   - Chemence Medical: Region 3 – Fulton County
   - GF Health: Region 3 – Gwinnett County
   - Marena Group: Region 3 – Gwinnett County
   - Pain Care Labs: Region 3 – DeKalb County
   - Poriferous: Region 4 – Coweta County
   - Smisson-Cartledge Biomedical: Region 6 – Bibb County

   Three Georgia companies (Tecme, Precision Global, and Caire) exhibited on their own. A fourth company (Aalto Scientific) exhibited at MedLab, which happens in tandem with Arab Health. Companies reported over 400 leads and projected sales of more than $3.5 million. The delegation was led by Senior International Trade Manager Maxine Bier and some of GDEcD’s international representatives facilitated B2B meetings for Georgia exhibitors. Georgia’s participation in the event was supported by Go Global Georgia, a partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration that provides reimbursement-based grant awards to eligible Georgia exporters for pre-approved export activities. For more information, read the blog post: Georgia Healthcare Exporters, Economic Development Department Represent at 2022 Arab Health Exhibition

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By the Numbers
- 93 Go Global Georgia applications approved
- 229 export successes supported
- 704 Georgia exporters assisted
- 3,318 trade leads provided
2. Trade numbers
2021 was a record year for Georgia's international trade, a testament to the resilience of local exporters and Georgia's competitive logistics ecosystem. Georgia's exports grew 9% to $42.36 billion, breaking export records. Georgia products covered the globe reaching 215 unique countries and territories in 2021. Exports strengthen and sustain Georgia businesses across the state by diversifying their customer base. More than 85% of Georgia exporters are small and medium-sized firms. In 2021, nearly 60% of bilateral trade and 52% of exports involved markets where the state maintains international representatives dedicated to supporting Georgia exporters.
Report Link: Trade Report
Press Release: Georgia Announces Record Year for International Trade

3. State International Trade Organization engagement
Deputy Commissioner Mary Waters traveled to Washington, D.C. on March 14, for the State International Development Organization's (SIDO) annual Washington Forum on March 14. Mary serves as President of the Board of the premier national organization dedicated to supporting state international trade agencies and state development programs, and chaired this year’s gathering. The Forum opened with a presentation by Ambassador Katherine Tai, U.S. Trade Representative. Additional sessions featured leadership from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Small Business Administration, and other private entities involved in International Trade. The Washington Forum included a roundtable meeting with the Senate Small Business Committee to discuss importance of export development for small businesses, as well as the State Trade Expansion Program grant. Georgia's leadership and partnership in this organization ensures Georgia businesses are represented and informed and elevates Georgia's reputation as a leading economic development agency in the U.S.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

• SEUS-CP: Savannah, Georgia; June 19-21, 2022
The Trade team is pleased to bring the Southeast U.S.-Canadian Provinces (SEUS-CP) Alliance conference back to Georgia for the first time since the inaugural event in 2008. The SEUS-CP Alliance is the flagship of Georgia’s international economic development partnerships, and the team is delighted to welcome the State's Canadian friends back to Georgia. Since Georgia opened an office in Toronto more than 40 years ago, Canada has become the largest market for Georgia exports, we enjoy an $11 billion trade relationship, and our state is home to more than 325 Canadian companies. The conference brings together business and economic development leaders, and Southeastern and Canadian companies for two days of partnership building, B2B meetings, and engaging leadership discussions. The 2022 SEUS-CP conference features two key industry sectors: Transportation & Logistics and Food & Beverage. For information on registration or sponsorship, [click here].

• GLOBE Awards
Our Trade team will recognize GLOBE Award winners in May - which is designated as World Trade Month. GLOBE Awards highlight the contribution of exporters to Georgia's economy and the success of Georgia products and services that can be found across the world. Winners are required to have sold into a new international market in 2021 to be recognized and will receive a Governor’s commendation. Since the inception of the GLOBE Awards program in 2014, the State of Georgia has awarded a cumulative 251 awards to companies in 45 counties.

Upcoming International Trade Shows
As the impact of the pandemic declines, trade shows are ramping up, and Georgia businesses are eager to travel internationally to market their products and services in person. The trade team will lead two delegations to co-exhibit at top global trade events in June 2022.

• Eurosatory and Money 20/20 Europe
Senior International Trade Manager Taube Ponce will travel with four Georgia companies to Eurosatory, one of Europe's largest defense and security tradeshows, June 13-17, in Paris. Trade Manager Stefan Harrigan will travel with several Georgia companies and the Metro Atlanta Chamber to Amsterdam for Money 20/20 Europe from June 7-9, to highlight Georgia's FinTech ecosystem, identify leads, and secure B2B meetings for Georgia exhibitors. Both shows will be supported by Georgia’s Trade Representatives in Europe by supplying market intelligence reports, coordinating pre-arranged appointments with key contacts at the show, and providing post-show follow-up assistance.
DIVISION PROFILE
The Marketing, Communications & International Engagement (MCIE) division manages the agency’s reputation and promotes Georgia’s business, tourism, arts and entertainment assets throughout the state, U.S., and world. Through the creative integration of print, and digital channels, the team supports the department’s seven operating divisions. This includes new advertising campaigns, leveraging international relations and events, the creation of sales and marketing materials, digital advertising, all internal and external communications, media outreach, overseas missions, more than a dozen social media platforms across multiple divisions, and the growth of the department’s targeted websites.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS
1. **Sharing the good news**
   Keeping pace with GDEcD colleagues who are setting records in trade and investment—and embarking on new initiatives and PR campaigns, the MCIE team has kept up a steady stream of good news via PR and media interviews, blog posts, events, digital media, and marketing campaigns. Commissioner Pat Wilson was named James Magazine’s “Georgian of the Year” in the publication’s March issue. Commissioner Wilson used his feature interview to speak about the professionalism of the GDEcD team, its incredible track record in recruiting companies and supporting their success, and how Georgia has built on a foundation of forward-thinking leadership that has allowed the state to flourish. Lee Thomas, Deputy Commissioner for Film, was named one of the 2022 Most Influential Georgians in the same issue.

2. **Feature videos**
   Video has proven itself a powerful tool in storytelling and advertising. GDEcD wrapped two video series in March, and promotion and outreach began in April.

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**By the Numbers**
FY22Q3
Webpage visit increases:
- **23%** to Georgia.org homepage
- **18%** to Small Business grants/loans
- **5%** to Georgia.org/now-filming
- **95%** from Japan
- **58%** from India
- **56%** from Germany
- **45%** from France

Electric vehicles:
- **14,340** views of Georgia.org/EV

Additional communications:
- **34** e-newsletters distributed from GDEcD
- **16** press releases circulated
- **14** blog posts on Georgia.org
**MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS & INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

- An updated “Why Georgia?” video ad was created that outlines the recipe for creating a perfect state for business in a fast-paced format that features quick, energetic cuts, and a wry, likeable narrator. The main video is available in 60- and 30-second formats, and two accompanying video ads were also created, focusing on the logistics and EV industries. Keep an eye on [www.youtube.com/GeorgiaBusinessUSA/videos](http://www.youtube.com/GeorgiaBusinessUSA/videos) to see the new video ads in action.

- A series of “TikTok-style” short videos are lighthearted and eye-catching, aimed at capturing the attention of potential workforce and piquing interest in Georgia as a place of opportunity. The targeted videos will launch on TikTok as well as other social media platforms in April to a segmented audience based on interests, location, and age group.

3. **GaBiz, a new publication for Georgia business**
   
   In March 2022, a new publication was launched in partnership with Atlanta Magazine and the Georgia Chamber to spotlight the Georgia business community and its myriad of opportunities. *GaBiz* emphatically makes the case for why Georgia is the top state for business, celebrating our abundance of diverse talent, access to global markets, unmatched quality of life and leading industries. A hybrid business-lifestyle magazine, the publication features high-quality photography and in-depth looks at business leaders across the state, like Stuart Countess of Kia Georgia in West Point and Okabashi’s Sara Irvani in Buford. Don’t miss the “Off Duty” pictorial, which spotlights an array of Georgia executives and their surprising hobbies, ranging from surfing off the coast of Tybee Island to composing symphonies to running ultramarathons.

4. **Keeping up with the Georgia Center of Innovation**
   
   The Georgia Center of Innovation (COI) has been busy - and keeping the marketing team busy with PR and outreach campaigns. Following the fall launch of new COI webpages at [Georgia.org/center-of-innovation](http://Georgia.org/center-of-innovation), a marketing campaign featuring the Center with a friendly, approachable video on innovation was resumed in the spring. A new quarterly email newsletter was launched in February to communicate the Center’s initiatives and successes. Center of Innovation Directors were featured in an array of news stories and media interviews.

   The marketing team also helped make the Georgia AgTech Summit and 2022 Georgia Logistics Summit successful with branding and marketing materials, website design, event promotion, online registration, and on-the-ground support the Center of innovation events.

5. **International Relations: Spotlight on Korea’s Kia Motors**

   In late February, Commissioner Wilson traveled to Seoul, Korea, on a business development mission. He spent time with Kia, which opened its first manufacturing site in North America in West Point in 2009. Since that time, Kia Georgia has been an amazing corporate partner, revitalizing a region by employing over 3,000 Georgians, investing in school systems, and giving funds, time, and effort to local charities, while producing over 300,000 Georgia Made vehicles every year.
DIVISION PROFILE
Explore Georgia, the tourism division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, is the state’s official destination marketing organization. Through its home office in Atlanta, nine visitor information centers, and a network of representatives across the globe, Explore Georgia inspires travel to and within the state through marketing programs developed and executed in partnership with the state’s travel industry. Despite COVID-19’s impact on the travel industry, Georgia’s tourism industry drove $53.7 billion in total economic impact and supported more than 410,000 jobs in 2020.

QUARTERLY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

1. New Visitor Information Center (VIC) survey
Explore Georgia launched a new project in February across the state’s nine VICs, in partnership with the University of Georgia’s Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and their Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management Program. The survey results, delivered quarterly and annually, will be used to better understand and serve our VIC visitors and refine our on-site marketing programs and partner co-ops within the VICs. More than 2,300 surveys were collected in the survey’s inaugural quarter (January-February). Each VIC has a unique QR code visitors scan to take the survey online, and paper copies are available on-site, as needed. Visitors who take the survey are entered to win a quarterly drawing for an Explore Georgia branded prize pack.

2. Explore Georgia 2022 Official State Travel Guide
In February, Explore Georgia released its 2022 Official State Travel Guide to inspire travel to and within Georgia and support tourism recovery in the state. Informed by traveler sentiment research and key trends from Explore Georgia’s website and social media channels, the guide tells the story of what Georgia travelers are interested in, with trip ideas for exploration throughout the state. The guide’s cover features Atlanta, which was recognized in National Geographic’s “Best of the World” and Lonely Planet’s “Best in Travel” for 2022. The free guide can be viewed online at ExploreGeorgia.org, ordered by mail, or picked up at any of the state’s nine Visitor Information Centers.

By the Numbers
Tourism Research:
136% increase in overseas visitors YoY (YTD through February)
Source: Travel Market Insights
54% increase in total hotel room revenues YoY (through February)
Source: STR
7% increase in road travel volume YoY (through March 27)
Source: Arrivalist

ExploreGeorgia.org
Through March 24, YoY:
2.4M website sessions (up 6%)
6.7% increase in email sign-ups
30,529 Official Travel Guide orders, online views and downloads (up 31.8%)
Source: Google Analytics

@ExploreGeorgia
(Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter):
Through March 24, YoY:
882,845 followers (up 4.3%)
21,350,859 impressions (up 43.1%)
632,500 engagements (up 12.7%)
213,672 link clicks to site (up 177%)
1,144,111 video views (up 204%)

7th Most followed DMO Instagram account in U.S.
Source: Sprout Social Reporting

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3. “National Geographic Traveller”

The April 2022 print issue of the UK-based National Geographic Traveller magazine features a 10-page story that takes the reader on an enchanting journey along Georgia’s coastline, from Savannah to the Golden Isles. An online version of the story was published on the magazine’s website in March 2022. The story was written by Aaron Millar, an award-winning travel writer who Explore Georgia hosted on a press trip to Georgia’s coast in October 2021. This editorial comes at an important time for the restoration of overseas travel.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Georgia Tourism Foundation Board of Directors Meeting: Zoom; May 12**
  Georgia Tourism Foundation board meetings take place on a quarterly basis.

- **U.S. Travel Association’s IPW 2022: Orlando, Florida; June 4-8**
  IPW is the leading international inbound travel trade show, driving $5.5 billion in future travel to the United States. It is a national showcase of America, where U.S. travel exhibitors connect with travel buyers and media from more than 70 countries to promote their product, negotiate future business, and build relationships. IPW secures America’s position as a foremost global travel destination by increasing international visitation and showing the world the best of what the U.S. has to offer.

- **Georgia Tourism Foundation Board of Directors Meeting: Athens, Georgia; August 1**
  Georgia Tourism Foundation board meetings take place on a quarterly basis. The August 1 meeting will be held in conjunction with Explore Georgia’s Georgia Governor’s Tourism Conference in Athens.

- **Georgia Governor’s Tourism Conference: Athens, Georgia; August 1-3**
  The Georgia Governor’s Tourism Conference is the premier annual event for the state’s tourism industry. Presented by Explore Georgia each year, the event is attended by more than 500 tourism and hospitality professionals.

- **American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting & Exposition: Nashville, Tennessee; August 20-23**
  The ASAE Annual Meeting & Exposition is the leading trade show for thousands of association professionals and industry partners and the largest generator of business for Georgia’s convention destinations.

- **Brand USA Travel Week Europe 2022: Frankfurt, Germany; September 26-29**
  Brand USA Travel Week is an annual event that brings together key players in the U.S. and European travel industries to discuss opportunities to drive future visitation to the U.S.