



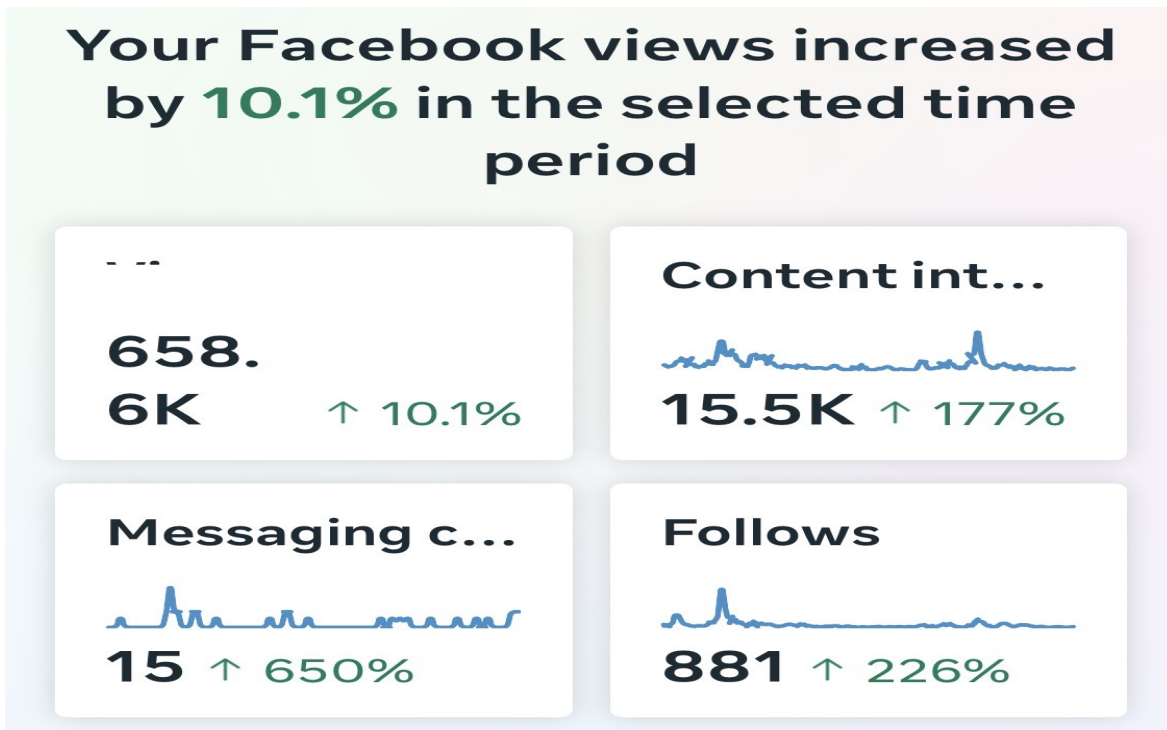
# **2025 Marquette County Visitor Bureau & Social Media Report**

**Prepared for the Marquette County Board Meeting  
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The Marquette County Visitor Bureau continued expanding tourism visibility, community engagement, and regional storytelling efforts throughout 2025. Major focuses during the year included strengthening digital outreach through social media, supporting local businesses through grant opportunities, promoting outdoor recreation, and preparing for long-term tourism infrastructure improvements.

## Social Media & Digital Reach

Social media growth and engagement saw significant increases during 2025, particularly during the final quarter of the year. Beginning September 15, 2025, updated content strategies focused on visual storytelling, tourism photography and video, community engagement, and regional branding helped significantly expand the reach of Marquette County tourism content. Throughout the full 2025 calendar year, Marquette County Visitor Bureau Facebook content generated approximately **2.3 million total views**. From September 15 through the end of 2025 alone, the page generated approximately **658,600 views**, reflecting strong momentum and measurable audience growth during the final months of the year. Additional increases during this period included: Growth in content interactions and audience engagement Increased follower growth and regional visibility Improved tourism-related video performance and organic reach Expanded promotion of local events, outdoor recreation, and small businesses Photography and short-form video content featuring lakes, trails, wildlife, local businesses, and seasonal experiences consistently performed strongest across platforms.



## Website & Tourism Marketing

During 2025, analytics showed that the existing Visitor Bureau website experienced relatively low traffic, engagement, and click-through activity compared to social media platforms. As a result, planning discussions began regarding a potential website redesign and rebuild anticipated during the third quarter of 2026. Future website goals include: Improved visual storytelling and mobile usability Clearer tourism navigation and event information Enhanced visitor resources and regional branding Stronger integration with tourism campaigns and social media Planning also began for the creation of a new Marquette County Visitor Bureau brochure scheduled for release later in 2026. The updated brochure will focus on outdoor recreation, lakes, trails, local businesses, dining, events, and seasonal tourism opportunities throughout the county.

## Business Support & Tourism Grant Program

In 2025, Marquette County administered tourism-related business support funding through a **\$50,000 Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) grant program**. During the first round of awards: **25 businesses** were selected to receive funding consideration. Just over **\$23,000** was awarded during the initial funding round. **15 businesses** utilized approximately **\$12,000** of awarded funds. Additional grant rounds are planned for 2026 to continue utilizing remaining grant funding and support tourism-related business development opportunities throughout the county.



## Ice Age Trail & Outdoor Recreation Initiatives

Outdoor recreation continued to play an important role in tourism development efforts throughout 2025. In October 2025, a new one-mile section of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail was added north of Westfield. This segment, known as the **Karner Blue Section**, highlights an important spring breeding habitat for the endangered Karner blue butterfly and adds to the county's growing outdoor recreation assets. The Marquette County Visitor Bureau also began partnering with the **Ice Age Trail Alliance: Marquette County Chapter** to pursue official designation of Montello as an Ice Age Trail Community. This designation would strengthen statewide tourism visibility while supporting local businesses, outdoor recreation, and trail-based travel opportunities.





## Looking Ahead to 2026

Key priorities for 2026 include continued tourism promotion, expanded regional storytelling efforts, website redevelopment planning, new brochure production, additional business grant utilization, and continued partnerships supporting outdoor recreation and community tourism initiatives. Additional tourism marketing efforts in 2026 will include continued development of the “**The Other Marquette County**” campaign, highlighting the county’s small-town charm, natural beauty, outdoor recreation opportunities, lakes, trails, and slower-paced visitor experience that distinguish Marquette County, Wisconsin, from larger destination markets. The continued growth of Marquette County’s digital presence and tourism partnerships positions the county for stronger regional visibility and visitor engagement moving forward.