



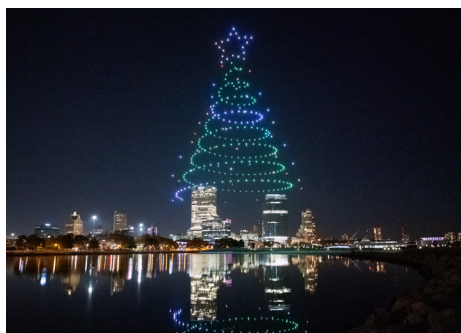
2021 MILWAUKEE HOLIDAY LIGHTS FESTIVAL RECAP

For 23 seasons, the Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival has made spirits bright with its animated sculptures, interactive displays and twinkling street décor. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, this festive backdrop continued to deliver oohs and aahs in a safe, “snowcially-distanced” environment, November 18, 2021 – January 1, 2022. Visitors created holiday memories by dropping letters into Santa’s Mailbox, picking up Jingle Joy bags, enjoying self-guided Jingle Bus tours, and spotting Santa at several events. Here are a few highlights from the 2021 season.

LAKEFRONT SPECTACLE BY FIREFLY DRONE SHOWS CREATES BUZZ

300 DRONES FILL THE SKY, CAPTURING THOUSANDS OF VIEWS

In a creative pivot, a 300-drone show was filmed at Lakeshore State Park on Oct. 18. The show featured holiday symbols programmed to music by Detroit-based Firefly Drone Shows. Filming was kept under wraps to build momentum for the Festival’s kickoff finale on WISN 12. Following its premiere, the show garnered over 100,269 impressions.



KICKING OFF THE SEASON SAFELY THROUGH PRE-RECORDED PROGRAMMING

124,300+ AT-HOME VIEWERS TUNE IN TO RING IN THE SEASON

The Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival Kickoff continued to amaze at-home viewers with a special broadcast on WISN 12 presented by Stein’s Garden & Home. The show was pre-recorded at the beautiful, historic Pabst Theater. The 30-minute program premiered on Nov. 18 and re-aired on Nov. 21 and Dec. 24.



DECORATIONS REMAIN THE TOP ATTRACTION

500,000+ LIGHTS SPRINKLED THROUGHOUT DOWNTOWN

“Community Spirit Park” at Cathedral Square Park, “HiBEARnation Station” at Pere Marquette Park and “Home is Where the Hearth is powered by We Energies” at Zeidler Union Square continued to delight guests with larger-than-life sculptures and a collective half million lights. Wisconsin Avenue shone bright with its succession of cascading chandeliers. Meanwhile, the mood at “Community Spirit Park” carried on as over 70 trees were decorated by schools and community organizations.





WEBSITE REMAINS GO-TO RESOURCE FOR AREA MOMS 72,000+ WEBSITE SESSIONS

Between November 1 – December 31, 72,284 sessions were accrued on the Festival's webpages. Approximately 63% of visitors were women and 49% were between ages 25 and 44.

VIRTUAL & SELF-GUIDED JINGLE BUS TOURS LINK MUST-SEE SCENES

1,669 JINGLE BUS TOUR DOWNLOADS

Visitors were acquainted with downtown's lights and sights via a free, self-guided audio tour available on the iHeartRadio app where five episodes were available in English and Spanish.

JINGLE JOY BAGS PROVIDE FAMILIES WITH A LIGHTS AND SWEET DELIGHTS EXPERIENCE

158 JINGLE JOY BAGS PURCHASED

The Festival partnered with Milwaukee Food & City Tours to once again offer grab-and-go treat bags at the pop-up drive-thru at Zeidler Union Square. Goodie bags were \$15 and were available for pre-order or day of, while supplies lasted.

SANTA'S MAILBOX CONTINUES TO CONNECT GENERATIONS

1,541 LETTERS PERSONALIZED TO BOYS & GIRLS

Thanks to Educators Credit Union, Serving Older Adults, and National Letter Carriers Association Branch 2, over 1,500 letters were personalized and mailed to children in our community. Letters were received at Santa's Mailbox in Cathedral Square Park.

DOWNTOWN LANDMARKS PRESERVED IN ORNAMENT SERIES

511 WARNER MARQUEE ORNAMENTS PURCHASED

Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival ornaments continue to be one-of-a-kind keepsakes. Each year features an iconic downtown landmark cast in pewter. The 2021 edition was the MSO Warner Marquee. Over the course of the season, 968 ornaments were purchased from the 21-edition collection.

56-PAGE GUIDE HIGHLIGHTS SHOPPING, DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS

10,000 BROCHURES DISTRIBUTED

The Festival continued to produce a comprehensive events guide that also detailed shopping, dining, and entertainment destinations. The brochure was made available online and mailed to Milwaukee Downtown's database of stakeholders, past fest goers, and friends of the organization.



SANTA, MRS. CLAUS, AND LOCAL ARTIST SARAH FIEREK ADD TO DOWNTOWN'S MERRIMENT

3 CAVALCADES WITH THE CLAUSES

Festival goers received a socially distanced glimpse of Santa Claus aboard the Historic Third Ward firetruck on three select nights in December.

PAID MEDIA REACHED FAMILIES AT HOME, IN THE CAR, AND AT WORK

3.7+ MILLION PAID MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

The Festival continued to partner with WISN 12 and 95.7 WRIT as its official media partners. Other print, digital and out-of-home outlets were utilized to target women 35 – 64 within a 15-mile radius of downtown.

PUBLIC RELATIONS BUILDS CONFIDENCE IN SAFE PRACTICES

\$678,900+ IN EARNED MEDIA

Throughout the six-week festival, over \$678,900+ in earned media coverage was obtained through broadcast, print, and web outlets.

CHRISTMAS' MOST FAVORITE COUPLE CONTINUED TO CHARM

900+ PARTICIPANTS AT COCOA WITH THE CLAUSES

Over 240 families gathered at Cathedral Square Park to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus. Elves and other holiday characters were present for photo ops while Sarah Fierek and the Midwest Vocal Express choir created a festive ambience. Free hot cocoa and cookies were provided, and over 400 goodie bags were distributed to kids.



TURNERS' ALLEY ACTIVATED FOR NEW OUTDOOR EVENT

1,000 REVELERS PARTOOK IN SANTA CAMP POP'S UP

Hot toddies, an ice bar, stocking stuffers from Pop's Kettle Corn and Pop's MarketPlace, and Christmas flicks brought a warm and inviting glow to the underutilized Turners' Alley. Also a crowd favorite was the marshmallow toasting station, which delighted 450+ guests.

A HOWLIDAY MADE SPECIAL FOR ALL

75 DOG PORTRAITS TAKEN TO BENEFIT MKE DOG PARK

Over 100 persons and 75 dogs visited Catalano Square for this first-ever portrait opportunity. Holiday props and adornments were provided as pooches posed in front of the Third Ward's 40-ft. Christmas tree. All proceeds benefited fundraising efforts for the MKE Dog Park, planned for Plankinton Avenue and Claybourn Street.



SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS SOAR AS FAMILIES SEEK WINTER ACTIVITIES

 880,974 IMPRESSIONS GENERATED

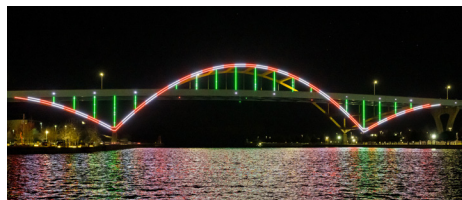
 2,609 FOLLOWERS GAINED

 44,796 VIDEO MINUTES VIEWED

 34,531 REACHED IN THE LATINX COMMUNITIES

 1,626 ENGAGEMENTS IN THE LATINX COMMUNITIES

Social media is a vital tool for informing consumers and demonstrating safe, socially-distanced activities. During the course of the season, the organic campaign generated over 880,000 impressions! In addition, the Festival partnered with Estamos Unidos to develop a vlog series geared toward the Latinx communities. The videos reach over 34,000 people and prompted over 1,600 engagements.



More information available at www.milwaukeeholidaylights.com. For sponsorship opportunities, contact Rebecca Sue Button at rbutton@milwaukeedowntown.com.