



FY2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Florida's Historic Coast
www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com



ST. AUGUSTINE
PONTE VEDRA
FLORIDA'S HISTORIC COAST®





Alpine Groves Park



FY2023 Annual Report

- 03** Message from the President & CEO
- 04** Importance of Tourism
- 05** Board of Directors/Committees/Staff
- 07** Lodging Performance
- 09** Tourist Development Tax Collections
- 10** VCB Operating Budget
- 12** Golf Tourism ROI
- 14** Paid Advertising
- 18** Website/eCRM
- 19** Communications, Public Relations & Social Media
- 21** Sales
- 22** Co-Operative Advertising
- 23** Local Tourism Industry Programs
- 25** Tourism Economic Impact

Message from the **President & CEO**



As we reflect on the year gone by, we are grateful to share the continued success story of tourism on Florida's Historic Coast in 2023.

Despite the headwinds of a challenging economic landscape and a drop in demand, our tourism community stood together, resilient and ready to adjust course as needed to meet the demands of new and returning visitors.

Despite the challenge, we took bold steps to adapt and innovate. Our team and tourism community worked tirelessly to redefine the visitor experience, introducing more unique offerings that resonated with the changing needs of our guests. By fostering creativity and embracing a spirit of adaptability, we were able to navigate FY2023.

In celebrating our destination's remarkable achievements, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our county and city government leaders, Tourist Development Council, elected officials, tourism stakeholders, Florida's Historic Coast team, and every individual who played a role in making this past year a historic year for tourism. Together, we have showcased the best of Florida's Historic Coast to the world, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of those who have visited.

Looking ahead, we are filled with optimism and enthusiasm for our future. Our commitment to excellence, sustainability, and community engagement remains unwavering and we are excited about the continued responsible growth and prosperity of tourism on Florida's Historic Coast.

Thank you for being an integral part of this journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Phillips". The script is elegant and cursive.

Susan Phillips
President & CEO

St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches
Visitors and Convention Bureau

Importance of **Tourism**

Travel is essential to driving economic growth and job creation in destinations and communities across America.

The United States Travel Association (USTA) estimates that travel accounted for **\$1.2 TRILLION** in direct spending in 2022 – which produced an economic footprint of **\$2.6 TRILLION** – a return to 2019 levels. In 2022, travel supported nearly 15 million American workers and directly employed 8 million.

This economic and job growth has largely been due to the robust return of domestic leisure travel, which far outpaced the recovery of the business travel and international travel segments.¹

Tourism, the largest industry in Florida, has long been a major driver of quality of life and economic development. Florida's tourism industry was responsible for welcoming 137.4 million visitors in 2022, the highest number of visitors in the state's history. In 2021, Florida visitors contributed \$101.9 billion to Florida's economy and supported over 1.7 million Florida jobs.²

How does tourism benefit **St. Johns County**?

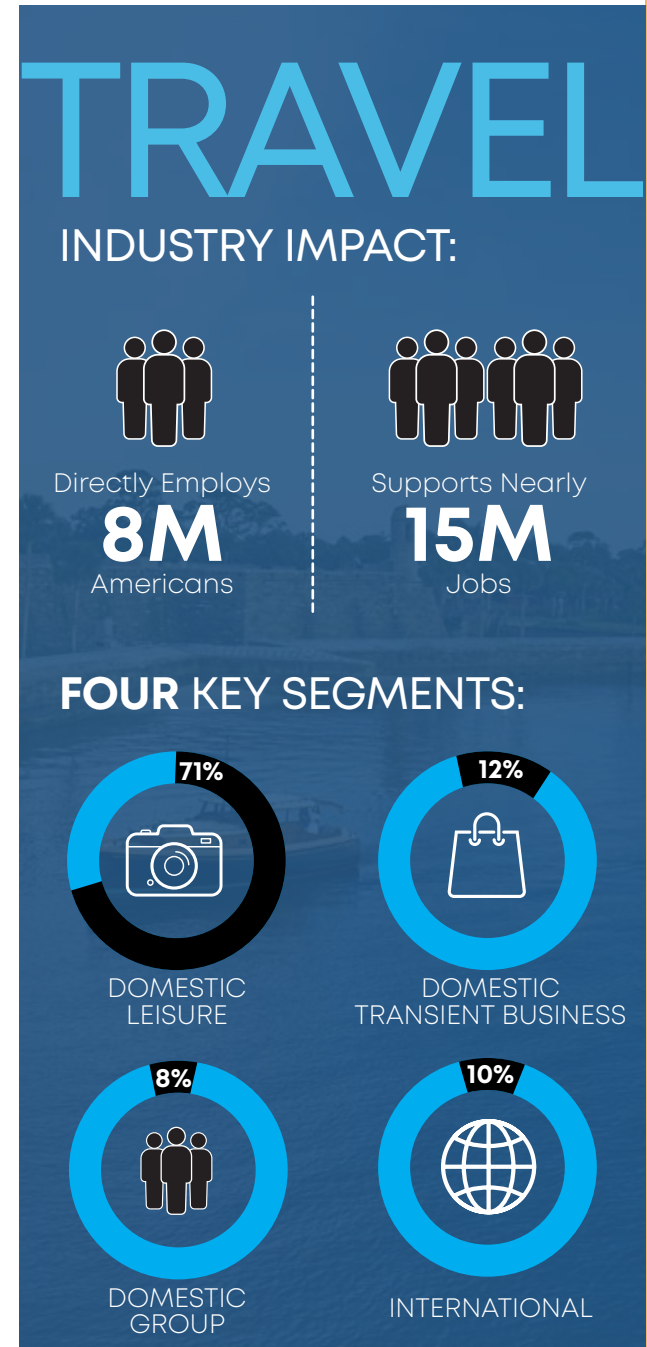
The latest Economic Impact Report on Tourism in St. Johns County reflected a total impact of \$3.8 billion (up 58.3% from 2017) on an annual visitor spend of \$2.5 billion (up 47.1% from 2017) from July 2021 through June 2022. This visitor spending supported 32,400 jobs representing \$854.2 million in direct tourism payrolls throughout our local community (up 1.1% from 2017).³

Tourism impacts the local community in other ways. It provides the largest number of private sector jobs in St. Johns County. Those employees use their wages to purchase goods and services, including housing, transportation, food, clothing, healthcare, and entertainment. The money invested into our local economy by tourists circulates throughout our economy several times over, providing an ongoing economic impact which would disappear entirely without tourism. Tourists also pay taxes. Transaction taxes collected from tourists include sales tax, fuel tax, and accommodations tax.

1. U.S. Travel Association

2. VISIT FLORIDA® Longchamps 2022 Economic Impact Report

3. St. Johns County 2022 Economic Impact Report



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

COMMITTEES AND STAFF

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Chairman

Kimberly Wilson
Casa Monica Resort & Spa

Vice Chairman

Jason Kern
Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine

Treasurer

Cindy Stavelly
St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum

Secretary

Craig Schoninger
Ponte Vedra Resorts

Past Chairman

Virginia Whetstone
Whetstone Chocolates

BOARD MEMBERS

Shannon Dearin
Courtyard St. Augustine, I-95

Lorna MacDonald
Raintree Restaurant

Samantha Palmer
Flagler's Legacy Tours

Charles Robles
The Collector Luxury Inn & Gardens

GOVERNMENT LIAISONS & EX-OFFICIOS

Commissioner Henry Dean
St. Johns County Board of
County Commissioners

Commissioner Dylan Rumrell
St. Augustine Beach
City Commission

Commissioner Cynthia Garris/Melissa Wissel
City of St. Augustine Commission

Isabelle Renault
St. Johns County Chamber
of Commerce

Jaime Topp
Northeast Florida Regional Airport

Christina Parrish Stone
St. Johns Cultural Council

Susan Phillips
St. Johns County VCB

VCB COMMITTEES

Conference Sales Committee

Stephen Baker
Hammock Beach Resort

Joni Barkley
Casa Monica Resort & Spa

Jennifer Jenkins
Hyatt Place Vilano Beach

Christian Joransen
World Golf Villages Renaissance
St. Augustine Resort

Michelle Kuziola
Courtyard St. Augustine I-95
& Fairfield Inn & Suites

Meredith Livingston
Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa

Jennifer Moore
Guy Harvey Resort

Chris Pranis
Embassy Suites St. Augustine
Beach Resort

Chris Quinlan
Hilton St. Augustine Historic Bayfront

Daniel Walsh
Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and The Lodge & Club

Leisure Sales Committee

James Adams
Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa

Jennifer Jenkins
Hyatt Place Vilano Beach

Shannon Lake
Beacher's Lodge Oceanfront Suites

Darlene Lancaster
Courtyard St. Augustine I-95
& Fairfield Inn & Suites

Diane Lane
Ancient City Tours

Melissa Mezick
Old Town Trolleys

Samantha O'Boyle
Holiday Inn Express & Suites Vilano Beach

Laura Pazzini
Hammock Beach Resort

Lane Schaffer
DoubleTree by Hilton St. Augustine
Historic District

Cindy Stavelly
St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum

Advertising Committee

Jason Kern
Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine

Samantha Palmer
Flagler's Legacy Tours

Christina Parrish Stone
St. Johns Cultural Council

Craig Schoninger
Ponte Vedra Resorts

Virginia Whetstone
Whetstone Chocolates

Kimberly Wilson
Casa Monica Resort & Spa

VCB STAFF

Susan Phillips
President/CEO

Christina Pulido-Lopez
Office Manager

Erin Masters
Website Content &
Database Manager

Lisa Mondello
Marketing & Database Manager

Barbara Golden
Communications Manager
Stacey Sather
Creative & Social Media Manager

William McBroom
Director of Conference Sales

Evelyn Lopez-Kelley
Director of Leisure Sales

Jaya Dillard
Sales & Services Manager

LaNae Keating
Sales Coordinator



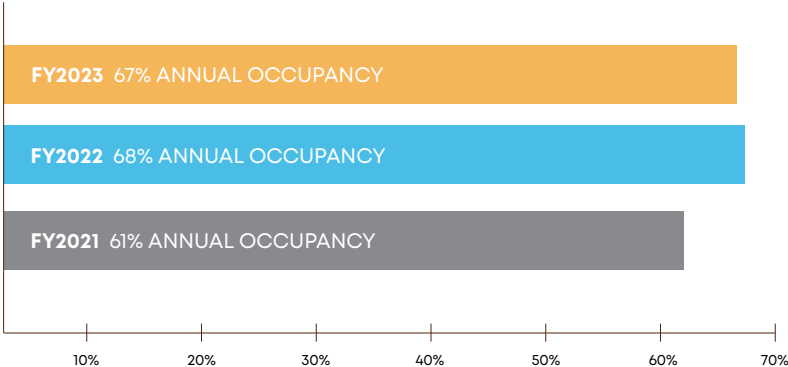
View of sunset over the bayfront
from Marker 8 Hotel & Marina

LODGING PERFORMANCE

FY2023 METRICS

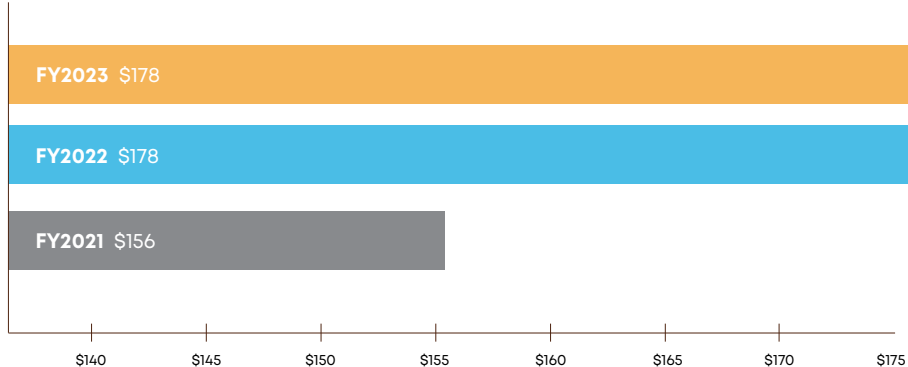
ANNUAL OCCUPANCY

TRADITIONAL LODGING



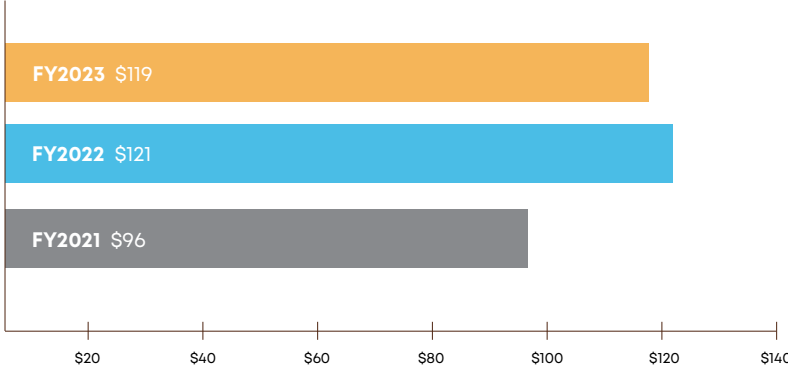
ANNUAL ADR

TRADITIONAL LODGING



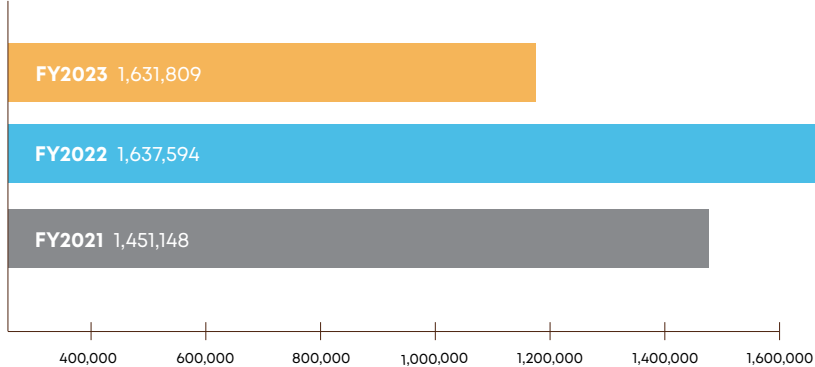
ANNUAL REVPAR

TRADITIONAL LODGING



ANNUAL DEMAND

TRADITIONAL LODGING



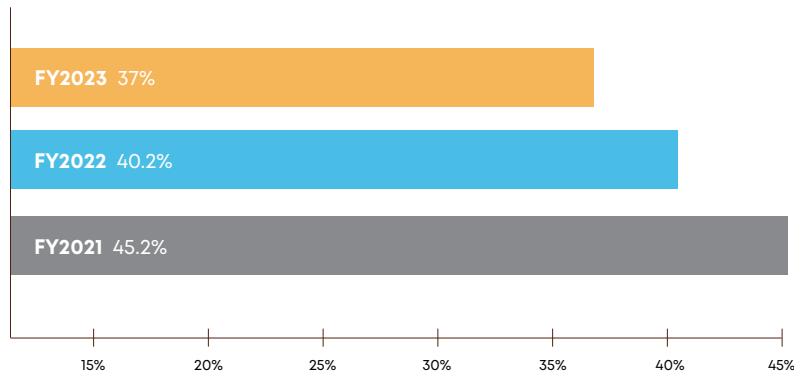
SOURCE: Smith Travel Research

LODGING PERFORMANCE

FY2023 METRICS

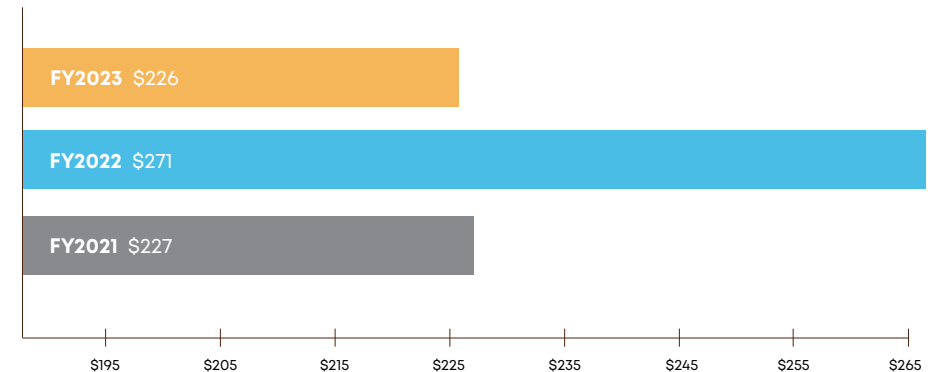
ANNUAL OCCUPANCY

VACATION RENTALS



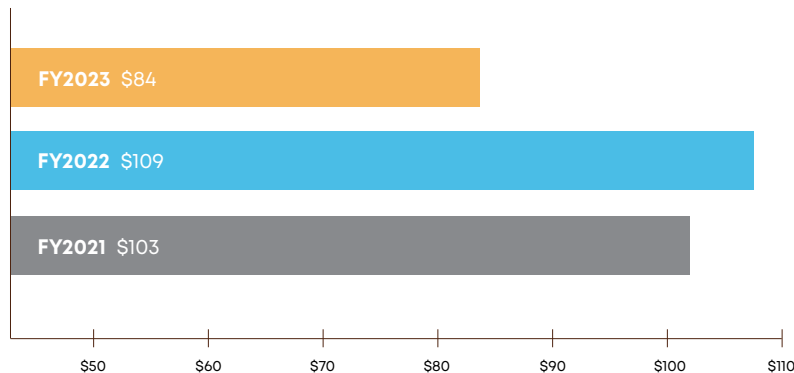
ANNUAL ADR

VACATION RENTALS



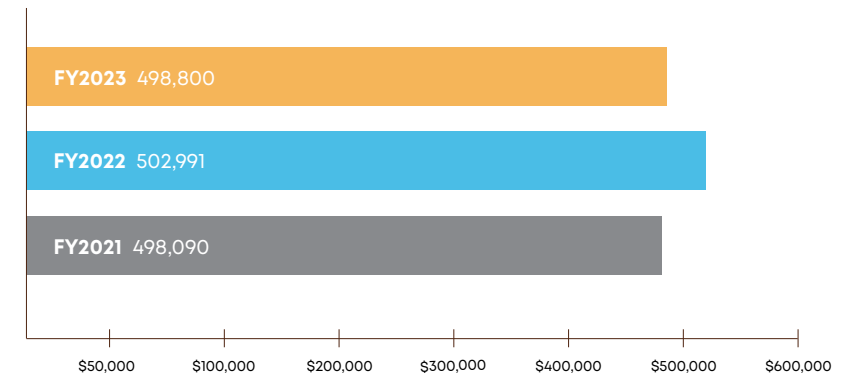
ANNUAL Rev. Per Avail Rm (RevPAR)

VACATION RENTALS



ANNUAL DEMAND (Room-Nts Sold)

VACATION RENTALS



SOURCE: Key Data

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX COLLECTIONS

\$23,192,092

FY2023 TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX COLLECTIONS

2.4% OVER FY2022



VCB FY2023 OPERATING BUDGET

\$5,208,222

FY2023 SPENDING ALLOCATION

100% OF BUDGETED TOTAL • \$20,189 REMAINING

FY2023 SPENDING ALLOCATION	ACTUAL	% OF TOTAL	BUDGETED	% OF TOTAL	REMAINING
ADVERTISING:	\$3,074,641	59.2%	\$3,037,988	58.3%	-\$36,253
PROMOTIONAL FUNDS:	\$69,115	1.3%	\$80,000	1.5%	\$10,885
WEB DEVELOPMENT & eCRM:	\$199,354	3.8%	\$195,000	3.7%	-\$4,354
PUBLIC RELATIONS:	\$236,064	4.5%	\$253,600	4.9%	\$17,536
SALES:	\$268,047	5.2%	\$263,600	5.1%	-\$4,447
FULFILLMENT & DISTRIBUTION:	\$115,720	2.2%	\$117,000	2.2%	\$1,280
RESEARCH/PROFESSIONAL FEES:	\$58,260	1.1%	\$53,700	1.0%	-\$4,560
TOTAL MARKETING RELATED SPEND:	\$4,020,800	77.4%	\$4,000,888	76.8%	-\$19,912
REMAINING OVERHEAD:	\$1,175,211	22.6%	\$1,215,312	23.3%	\$40,101
GRAND TOTAL:	\$5,196,011	100.0%	\$5,208,222	100.0%	\$20,189



GOLF

Tourism ROI

Aggregate direct spending by golfers on rooms, rounds, and related food, beverage and retail

\$196,144

VCB INVESTMENT

IN FLORIDA'S FIRST COAST OF GOLF PROGRAMS

\$394.71

VCB RETURN ON INVESTMENT

FOR EVERY DOLLAR SPENT



THE FOLLOWING IS HOW ROI WAS CALCULATED

Hotel \$12,026,382 | 67,739 nights @ \$177.54 ADR

Golf \$21,363,870 | 260,535 tourist rounds @ \$82/round

Additional Spending \$ 44,030,415 | 44,920 golfers @ \$169/day x 5.8 nights

Total Spending \$77,420,667

Total Value of Ad, PR, Promos \$1,117,591 | **19,114,000 Impressions**

VCB to Spending ROI = **\$394.71: \$1.00 (\$77,420,667/\$196,144)**



Media value of the FFCG advertising, PR and promotions in which Florida's Historic Coast or its properties had a significant presence was \$1,117,591 (29 million impressions).

ROI/ECONOMIC IMPACT DATA SOURCES:

2017 UNF Public Opinion Research Laboratory concluded more than 28 publicly accessible golf courses tourist play, stay in St. Johns County commercial lodging

Tourist Round Data: Source - monthly rounds reported by St. Johns golf courses

Average cost per round: Source - CY2023 golf course average rates

2017 UNF Public Opinion Research Laboratory Concluded 52% of golf tourists stay in commercial lodging, 48% stay with friends/family and non-bed tax collecting accommodations

2023 ADR \$177.54: Source - St. Johns County STR report. Traditional Lodging

Average length of stay of 5.8 nights: Source - 2017 UNF Public Opinion Research Laboratory

Daily consumer spending: \$169 Source - VISIT FLORIDA 2019 Golf Visitor Profile



PAID ADVERTISING

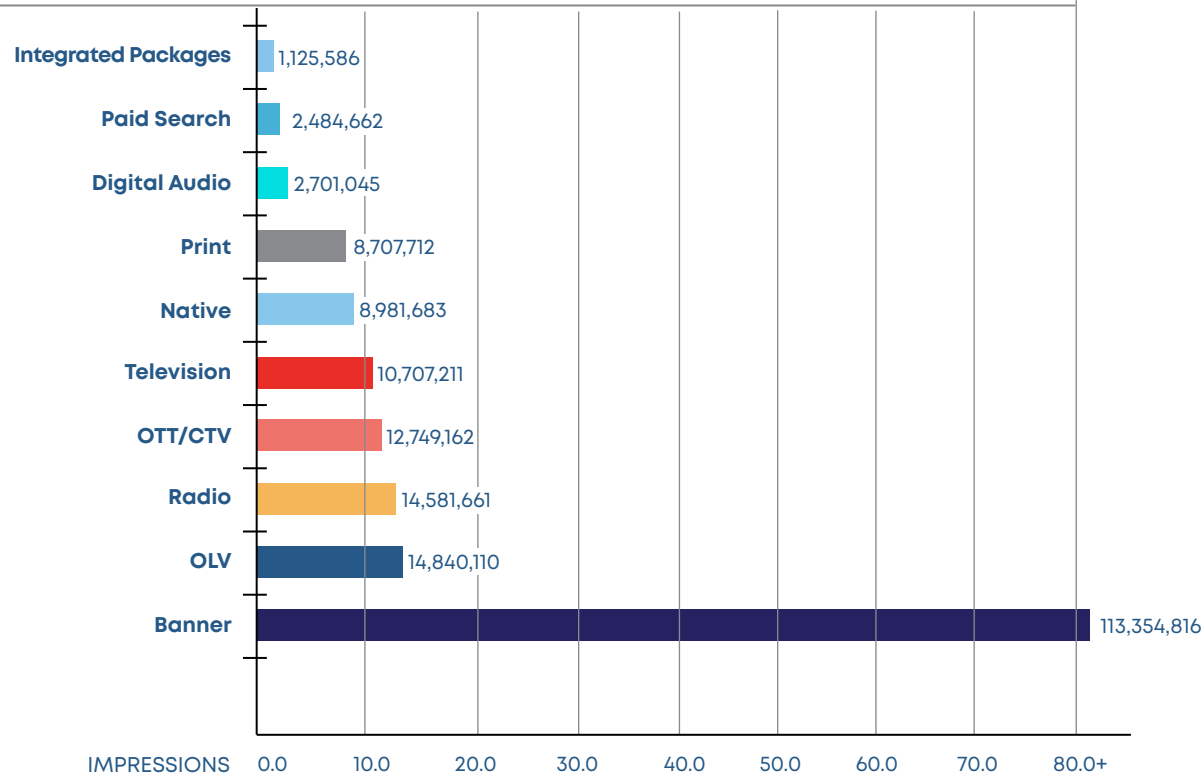
Traditional & Digital

190.2 MILLION
TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

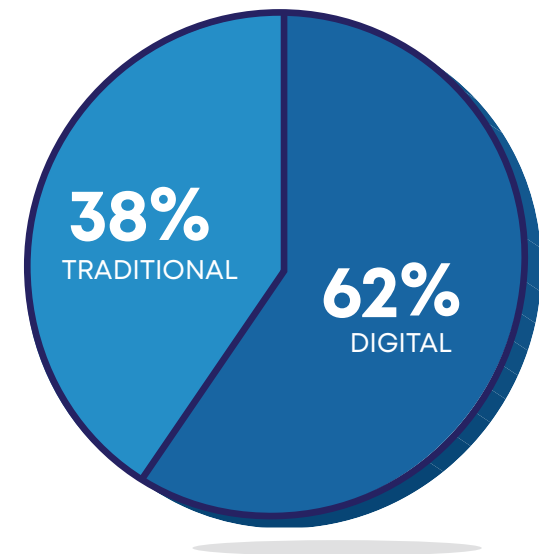
82%
DIGITAL IMPRESSIONS

1,186,918
CLICKS

ADVERTISING IMPRESSIONS (in millions)



\$1.9 MILLION
PAID ADVERTISING
SPEND

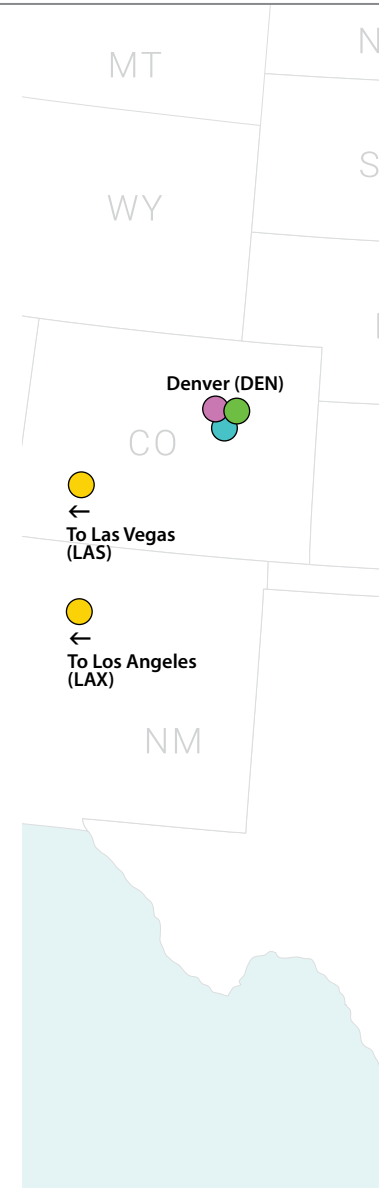


PAID ADVERTISING

Target Markets



-  **allegiant**
-  **American Airlines**
-  **Breeze**
-  **DELTA**
-  **FRONTIER AIRLINES**
-  **jetBlue**
-  **Silver AIRWAYS**
-  **Southwest**
-  **sun country airlines.**
-  **UNITED AIRLINES**





Key Drive Markets:

- Atlanta, GA
- Charleston, SC
- Charlotte, NC
- Miami, FL
- Orlando, FL
- Savannah, GA
- St. Petersburg, FL
- Tampa, FL
- plus additional nationwide markets based on travel search and purchase behavior





WEBSITE/eCRM

FloridasHistoricCoast.com

2,424,438

TOTAL WEBSITE VISITS

37% OVER FY2022

940,024

ORGANIC VISITS

17% OVER FY2022

165,392

BUSINESS REFERRALS

9% DECREASE OVER FY2022



E-CRM
221,265
SUBSCRIBERS

9% OVER FY2022



COMMUNICATIONS

Public Relations & Social Media

196.1 BILLION

TOTAL ANNUAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

+688% OVER FY2023 GOAL OF 25 BILLION

39.9 BILLION

VCB GENERATED MEDIA COVERAGE IMPRESSIONS

+191% OVER FY2022 IMPRESSIONS

237 MILLION

HISPANIC MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

138% OVER FY2023 GOAL OF 100 MILLION (INCLUDED IN FY2023 ANNUAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS ABOVE)

SOCIAL MEDIA



121

JOURNALISTS/INFLUENCERS HOSTED

8% over FY2022 media hostings



52,143

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

16.24% over FY2023 goal



535,723

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

1.7% over FY2023 goal



14,149

TWITTER FOLLOWERS

2.5% over FY2023 goal



478,811

YOUTUBE LIFETIME VIEWS

8.8% over FY2023 goal



1,706

NEW LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS

.83% over FY2023 goal



SALES

Sales Leads and Room Nights

141,153
ROOM NIGHTS
21.6% OVER FY2023 GOAL

2,137
PROSPECTING CALLS/EMAILS
4.7% OVER FY2023 GOAL

361
LEADS SOURCED
5.25% OVER FY2023 GOAL



GROUP CLOSING FUND (GCF)

\$115,679
DEFINITE & PENDING GCF OFFERS FOR
GROUPS STAYING IN FY2023-2030

40,195
ROOM NIGHTS

\$11,048,443
ROOM REVENUE

\$5,746,193
FOOD & BEVERAGE REVENUE

\$16,794,636
TOTAL REVENUE



FY2023 MILESTONES

- **HOSTED 99** meeting planners, tour operators, travel agents, group leaders and brides
- **ATTENDED 61** Sales Initiatives (Industry Events)
- **APPROVED 25** Group Closing Fund proposals, with a 40% closure rate

CO-OPERATIVE

Advertising

77

CO-OP ADVERTISING SPOTS

\$69,924

CO-OP MEDIA SPEND

68% FUNDED BY THE VCB



LOCAL TOURISM

Industry Programs

303

**TOTAL NUMBER
OF TOURISM
STAKEHOLDERS**

20

**TOTAL NUMBER
OF
NEW STAKEHOLDERS**

11

**TOURISM RESOURCE
TRAINING
ORIENTATIONS**



FY2023 TOURISM INDUSTRY ANNUAL PROGRAMS

February 21 & 23

Tourism Advisory Workshops

May 10

(Ponte Vedra Concert Hall)

State of Tourism Industry Meeting

September 13

Co-op workshop

September 19

(Classic Car Museum of St. Augustine)

VCB Annual Meeting



TOURISM

Economic Impact in St. Johns County

\$2.3 Billion

DIRECT SPENDING

IN JULY 2021-JUNE 2022 (+47.1% OVER 2017)

\$3.8 Billion

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

+58.3% OVER 2017

\$101.1 Million

**LOCAL TAXES PAID
BY VISITORS**

+94.4% OVER 2017

32,400

**JOBS SUPPORTED
BY TOURISM**

+11.1% OVER 2017

\$53.6 Million

**NET BENEFIT TO
ST. JOHNS COUNTY**
AFTER COST OF VISITOR SERVICES



LONGER STAYS & Larger Party Sizes

5.5 Nights + 3.2 People

(Up 111% over 2017)

(+28% over 2017)

NOTE: Previous economic data reported by TDC for 2017.





Anastasia State Park



ST. AUGUSTINE
PONTE VEDRA
FLORIDA'S HISTORIC COAST®