



# ST. AUGUSTINE PONTE VEDRA

FLORIDA'S HISTORIC COAST®

Annual Report – Fiscal Year 2012



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## **Introduction**

### ***FY2012***

**Richard Goldman, Executive Director**

St. Johns County tourism achieved another successful year in 2012. Despite economic uncertainty and lagging consumer confidence amplified by a divisive national election, the VCB accomplished its mission to market Florida's Historic Coast® (FHC) as a premier leisure, convention and incentive, beach and golf destination. The VCB's performance metrics tell the tale as they were consistently up (TDT collections, hotel Occupancy, ADR and Demand) even when compared to the strong growth of FY2011. FHC lodging metrics growth also exceeded those for the State of Florida.

While some of the physical results are still taking shape, the VCB actively assisted with the development and facilitation of new touristic assets for St. Johns County in FY2012 and those efforts will continue in the years to come.

In its advertising, the VCB continued to invest in and expand its award-winning "Red Couch Chronicles" campaign with the over-arching and differentiating brand message "Our History Is Not The Same Old Story." This campaign has won multiple industry awards, including a gold HSMAI Adrian Award, multiple bronze Flagler Awards, plus a gold at Travel Weekly's Magellan Awards. And in 2012 the campaign enjoyed more robust participation from lodging and attraction partners who have increasingly taken advantage of exciting and affordable, cooperative marketing opportunities.

FY2012 was also a big year in the digital arena, with exciting online enhancements to advertising, publicity and web sites. The VCB achieved broader reach with well-performing ad networks and placements on high-traffic sites like TripAdvisor, Google and Facebook. In fact, due to the VCB's destination profile pages on TripAdvisor, the site ranked Florida's Historic Coast in TripAdvisor's "Top 15 Destinations on the Rise for 2012." The redesigned website, launched late in FY2011, and new mobile site continue to show increased visitation and engagement with gains in all metrics including visits, time spent on the site, page views and, particularly, partner profile views. Bi-monthly e-mail communications to the growing database, and vastly expanded social media presence have also built engagement between consumers, the destination and its partner businesses.

Sales and publicity programs aimed at boosting international visitation were increased in FY2012 and have begun to gain significant traction including the capture of the host destination for Florida Huddle in January 2013 and international media coverage of Florida's Historic Coast.

Marketing the 500th anniversary of the European discovery of La Florida (1513) began in earnest in late FY2012 as execution for events, advertising and publicity activities commenced.



## Introduction (cont'd.)

***FY2012***

Richard Goldman, Executive Director

The VCB, in partnership with the experts at MMGY Global and Miles Media Group, along with local, regional and statewide tourism-related organizations, strives to maximize and refine its marketing efforts on all fronts. Please review this report for details of how in 2012, the entire VCB staff accomplished their key objectives. And, “stay tuned” as the team is looking forward to even more success driving tourism to Florida’s Historic Coast in 2013.

Sincerely,

Richard Goldman  
Executive Director  
St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches  
Visitors & Convention Bureau





## St. Johns County Visitors and Convention Bureau

### **2012 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

#### **Executive Committee Officers**

- Chairman:** Bob O'Neill, General Manager,  
Hilton St. Augustine Historic Bayfront  
[bob\\_o'neill@hilton.com](mailto:bob_o'neill@hilton.com)  
32 Avenida Menendez, St. Augustine, FL 32084
- Vice Chairman:** David Mariotti, General Manager,  
The Lodge & Club at Ponte Vedra  
[dmariotti@pvresorts.com](mailto:dmariotti@pvresorts.com)  
607 Ponte Vedra Blvd, Ponte Vedra, FL 32082
- Past Chairman:** John Fraser, Owner,  
Fountain of Youth Archeological Park  
[fountain@aug.com](mailto:fountain@aug.com)  
11 Magnolia Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084
- Secretary:** Jeffrey Oliasami, General Manager,  
Renaissance World Golf Resort  
[jeffrey.oliasami@jqh.com](mailto:jeffrey.oliasami@jqh.com)  
500 South Legacy Trail, St. Augustine, FL 32092
- Treasurer:** Tina Klinkenberg, Director of Sales  
Hampton Inn Vilano  
[tina.k@jalaramhotels.com](mailto:tina.k@jalaramhotels.com)  
95 Vilano Road, St. Augustine, FL 32084

#### **Board Members**

- Charles Cox, Owner, San Sebastian Winery  
[cgc Cox@seavin.com](mailto:cgc Cox@seavin.com) ; 157 King Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084
- Kathy Fleming, Executive Director, St. Augustine Lighthouse & Museum  
[kfleming@staugustinelighthouse.com](mailto:kfleming@staugustinelighthouse.com) ; 81 Lighthouse Ave., St. Augustine, FL 32080
- Irving Kass, Owner, St. George Inn  
[ikass@stgeorge-inn.com](mailto:ikass@stgeorge-inn.com) ; 4 St. George Street #101, St. Augustine, FL 32084
- Virginia Whetstone, Owner, Whetstone Chocolates  
[vaw@whetstonechocolates.com](mailto:vaw@whetstonechocolates.com) ; 1 Dolphin Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32084

#### **Ex-Officio Board Members**

- Commissioner Errol Jones, City of St. Augustine  
Commissioner Jay Morris, St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners  
Commissioner Andrea Samuels, St. Augustine Beach City Commission  
Kirk Wendland, Executive Director, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



## **2012 VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU COMMITTEES**

### **Conference Sales Committee**

- Scott Selvaggi, *Chair*, Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village
- Anthony Lazzara, Casa Monica Hotel
- Chris Bracken, Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa
- Clay Buchanan, Ponte Vedra Inn & Club
- Chris Quinlan, Hilton Historic Bayfront

### **Leisure Sales Committee**

- Tina Klinkenberg, *Chair*, Best Western, S.A. and Hampton Inn Vilano
- Gina Villacorta, Days Inn Historic
- Michele Kuziola, Courtyard & Fairfield
- Adam Shockey, Tour Saint Augustine, Inc.
- Joyce Ochocki, Holiday Isle Oceanfront Resort
- Cindy Stavely, St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum
- Amanda Sims, St. Augustine Ocean & Racquet Club

### **Advertising Committee**

- John Fraser, Fountain of Youth Archeological Park
- Tina Klinkenberg, Best Western, S.A. and Hampton Inn Vilano
- David Mariotti, Lodge & Club at Ponte Vedra
- Jeffrey Oliasami, Renaissance World Golf Resort
- Bob O'Neill, Hilton Historic Bayfront

## **2012 VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU STAFF**

### **Administration**

#### **Richard Goldman, Executive Director**

[RGoldman@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:RGoldman@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4426

#### **Rick Hensler, Director of Promotions and Strategic Alliances**

[RHensler@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:RHensler@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4430

#### **Carey Cramer, Office Manager**

[CCramer@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:CCramer@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4421

#### **Erin Masters, Special Events/Database Manager**

[EMasters@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:EMasters@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4422, Database and Website Administration, Annual Florida's Birding  
& PhotoFest, Photography Workshops



## **2012 VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU STAFF (CONT'D)**

### **Communications Department**

**Jay Humphreys, Communications Director**

[JHumphreys@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:JHumphreys@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4424, Media Relations, Travel Press  
Communications, Editorial, Social Media

**Barbara Golden, Communications Manager**

[BGolden@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:BGolden@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4425, Calendar of Events Coordinator,  
Media Relations, Travel Press Communications,  
Publicity & Promotions

### **Sales Department**

**Evelyn Vazquez, Director of Leisure Sales**

[EVazquez@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:EVazquez@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4431, Travel Industry, Leisure, Religious & International Sales

**Glenn Graham, Director of Conference Sales**

[GGraham@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:GGraham@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4432, Corporate & Association Meetings & Incentives Sales

**Jaya Larkin, Sales & Services Manager**

[JLarkin@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:JLarkin@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4429, Executive Group Sales (35 rooms & less peak night, all segments. All  
military, reunion, government meetings & weddings.)

### **Advertising**

**Stacey Sather, Creative & Advertising Manager**

[SSather@FloridasHistoricCoast.com](mailto:SSather@FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

904.209.4434, Collateral, Print, Web Site and Email Advertising Development  
and Production

### **St. Augustine Beach Visitor Center**

**Anna Helfinstine, Visitor Center Staff**

**Barbara Garriss, Visitor Center Staff**

**Robert MacDowell, Visitor Center Staff**





## St. Johns County Visitors and Convention Bureau

### 2012 LODGING PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

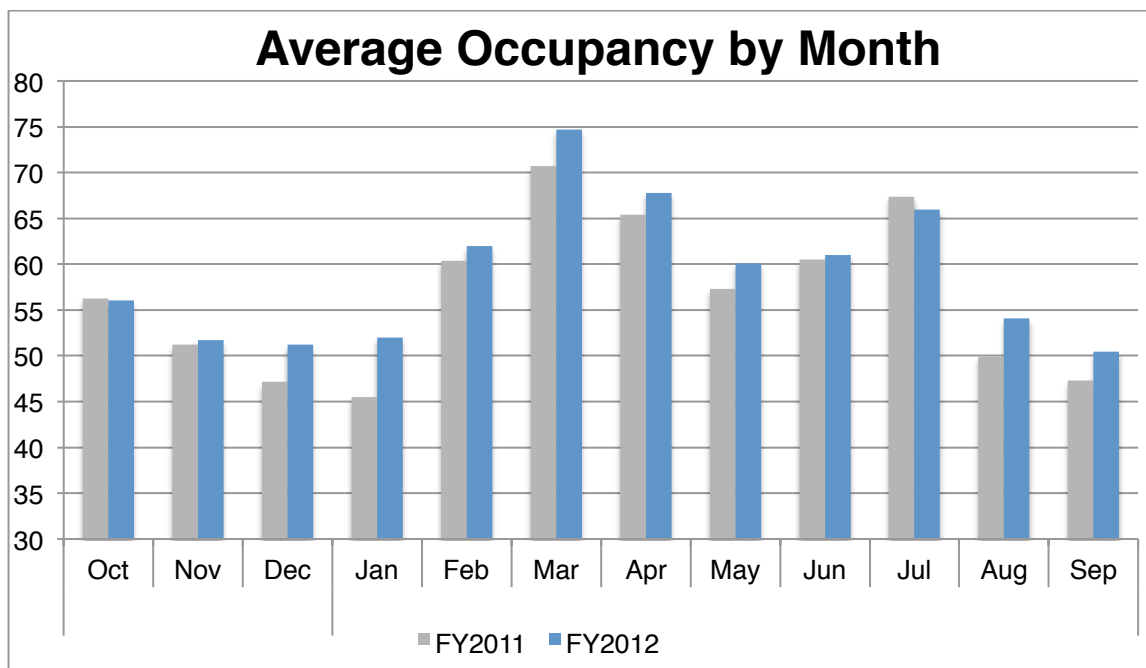
#### Smith Travel Reports

The VCB subscribes to Smith Travel Research (STR), recognized leader for lodging industry benchmarking and research and the world's foremost source of historical lodging performance trends providing valuable market share analysis for hotels in our destination. The data provided by STR allows the VCB to track monthly performance in occupancy, average daily rate, RevPAR, Demand and Room Revenue of 42 reporting hotel properties in St. Johns County. *It does not include B&Bs, Vacation Rentals, Condos or Campgrounds.*

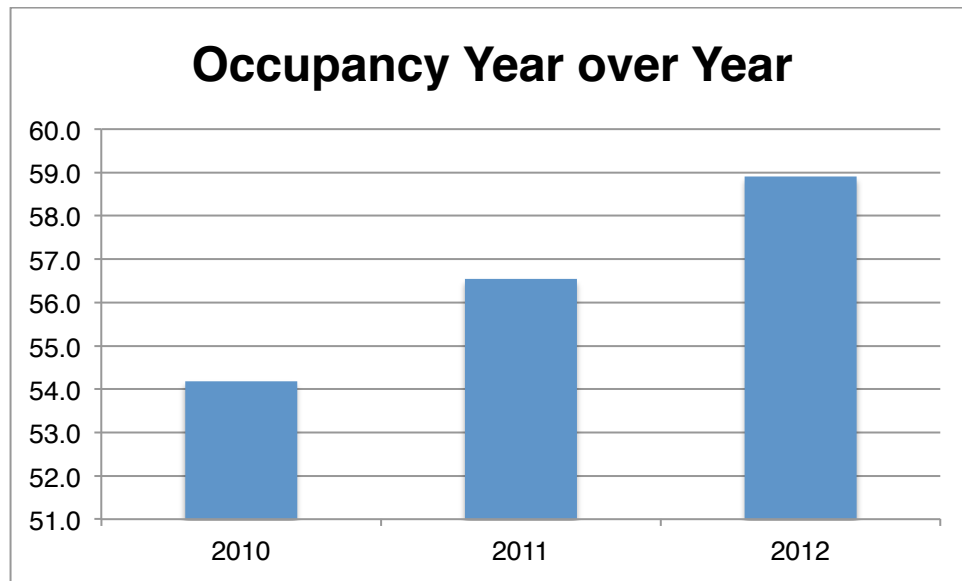
#### Occupancy

Average occupancy grew 4.2% to a fiscal year average of 58.9%. Across Florida overall occupancy was up 3.3%.

The largest monthly increases for SJC were in December 2011 (up 8.7%), January 2012 (up 14.3%) and August 2012 (up 8.4%). Only one month saw a decline in occupancy over 2011. July was down 2.1% to 66%.



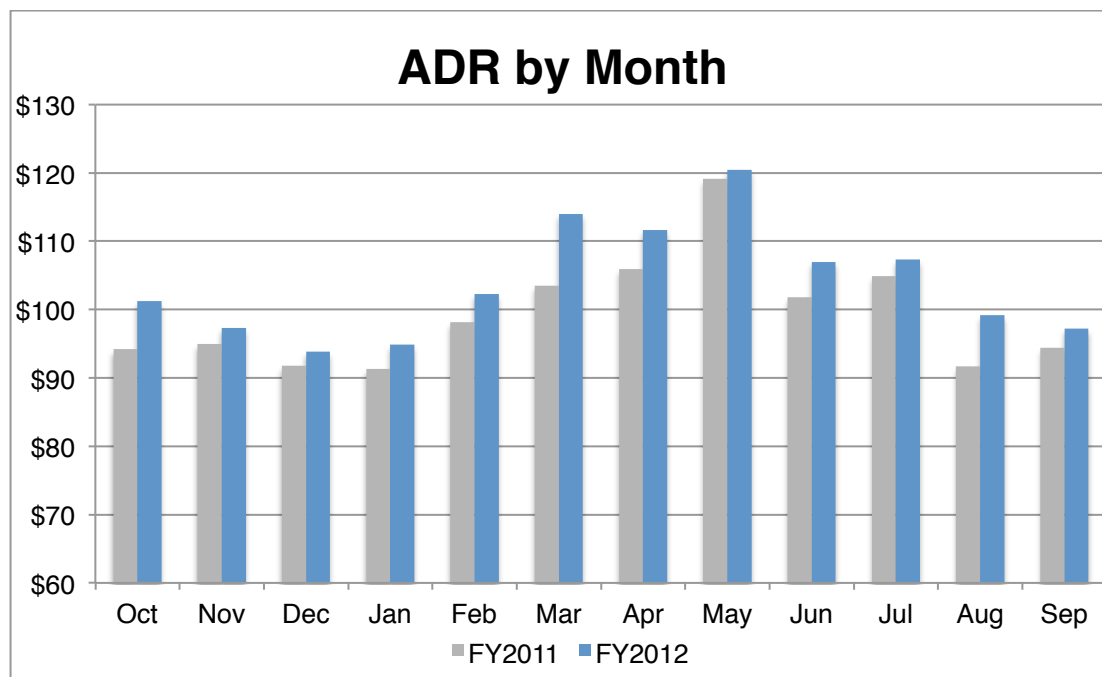
Source: Smith Travel Research



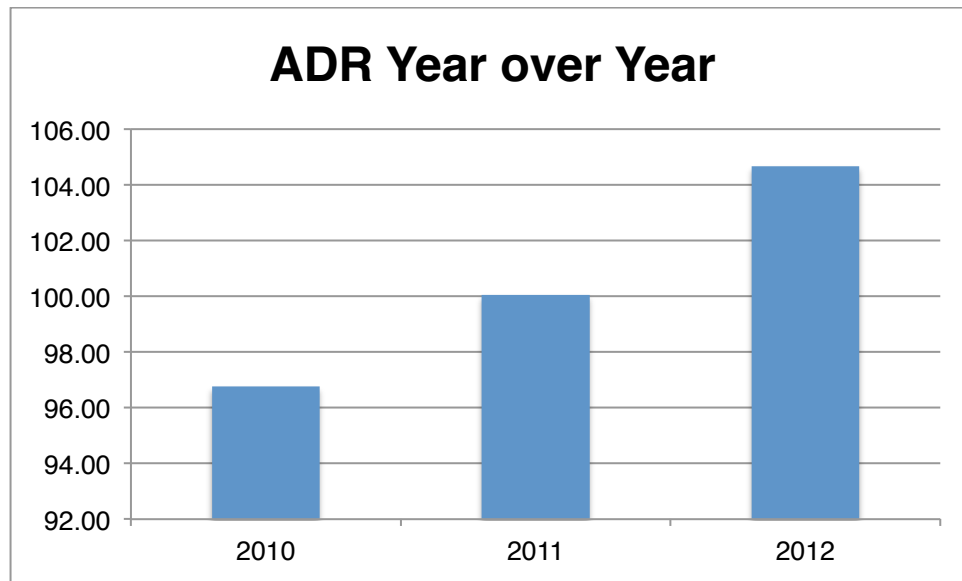
Source: Smith Travel Research

#### ADR

The Average Daily Rate (ADR) exceeded last year's growth of 3.4% to reach 4.6%, the final FY2012 average closing at \$104.66. March showed the highest percentage change growing 10.1% over 2011 (\$103.51 to 114.00). August (up 8.1%) and October (up 7.5%) round out the top three. There were no months that exhibited declines in ADR.



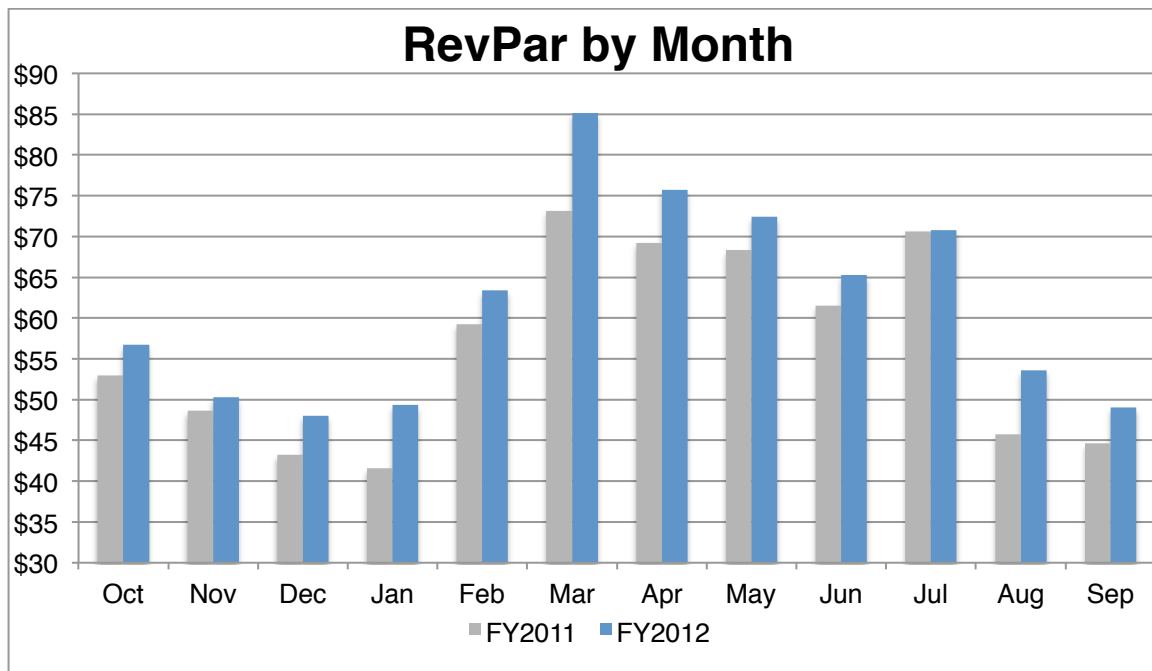
Source: Smith Travel Research



Source: Smith Travel Research

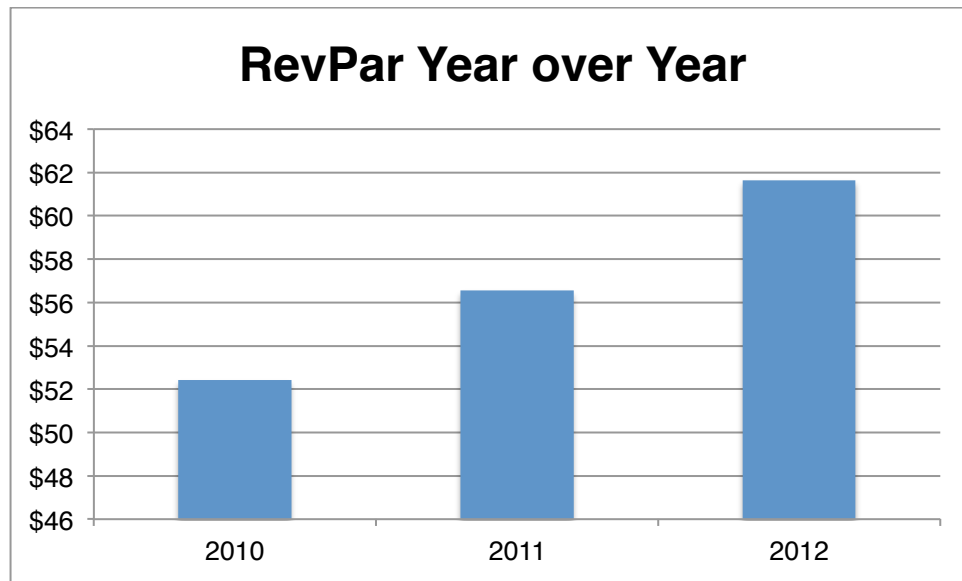
#### RevPAR

Revenue per available room showed improvement every month of 2012 and closed out almost \$5 higher than 2011 and \$9 higher than 2010 at an average of \$61.65. January, August, and March saw the highest gains with double-digit growth over 2011. Overall, 2012 RevPAR grew an average of 9%. This 9% is 0.8% higher than the 8.2% gain seen in Florida lodging overall.



Source: Smith Travel Research

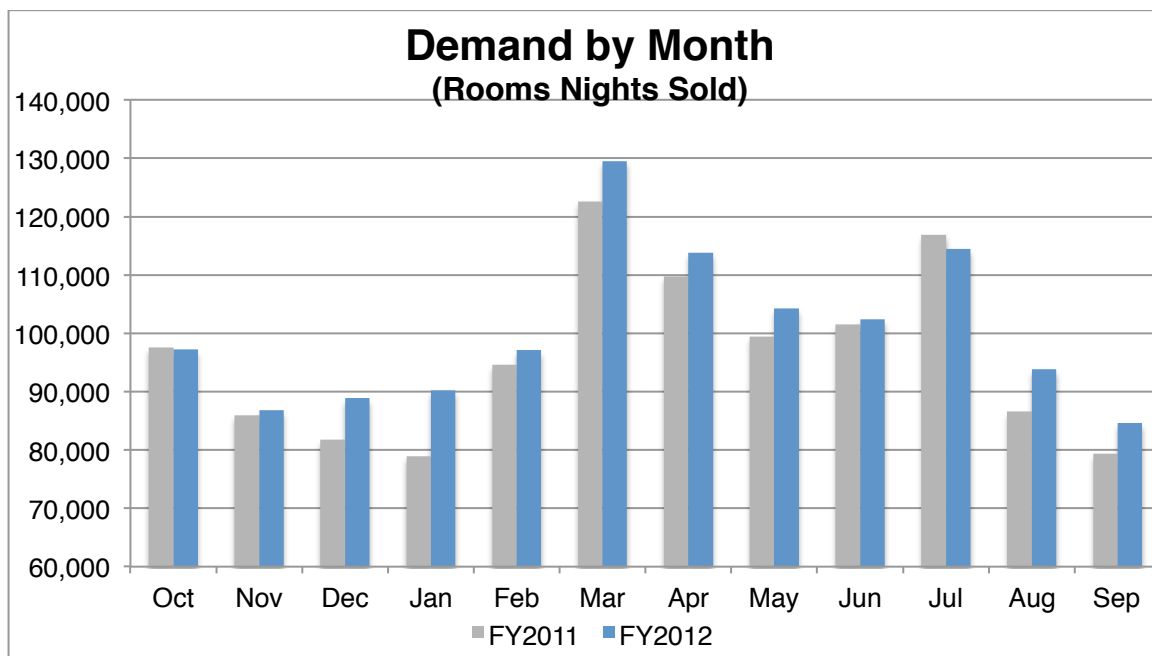




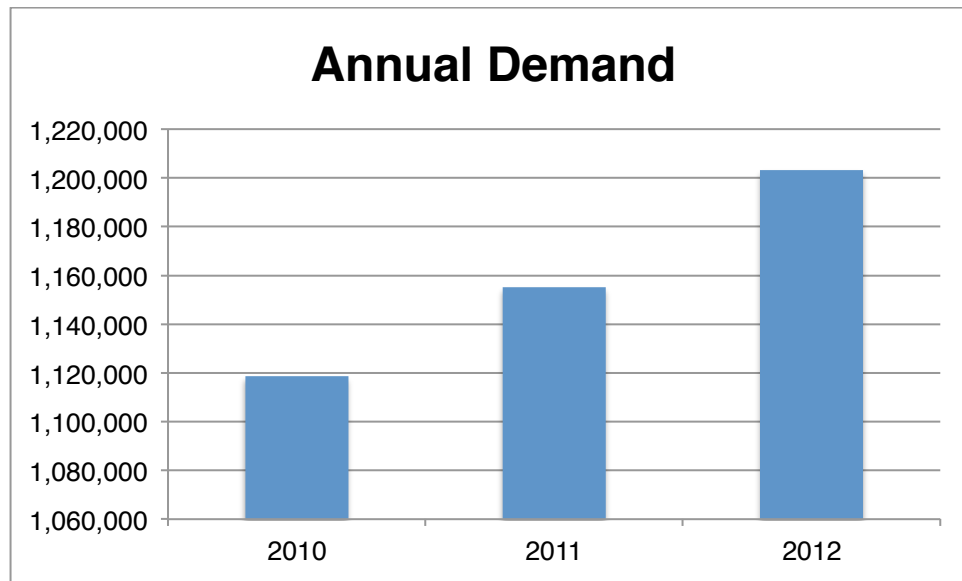
Source: Smith Travel Research

#### Demand

Demand for rooms and nights sold continued its upward trend in 2012. Only July saw a modest decline YOY, and this was likely due to the extremely competitive environment and big budget spending by Gulf Coast destinations flush with BP millions. Nevertheless, overall, demand finished the fiscal year up 4.2%. For comparison, YOY reports for Florida overall show a 3.3% increase.



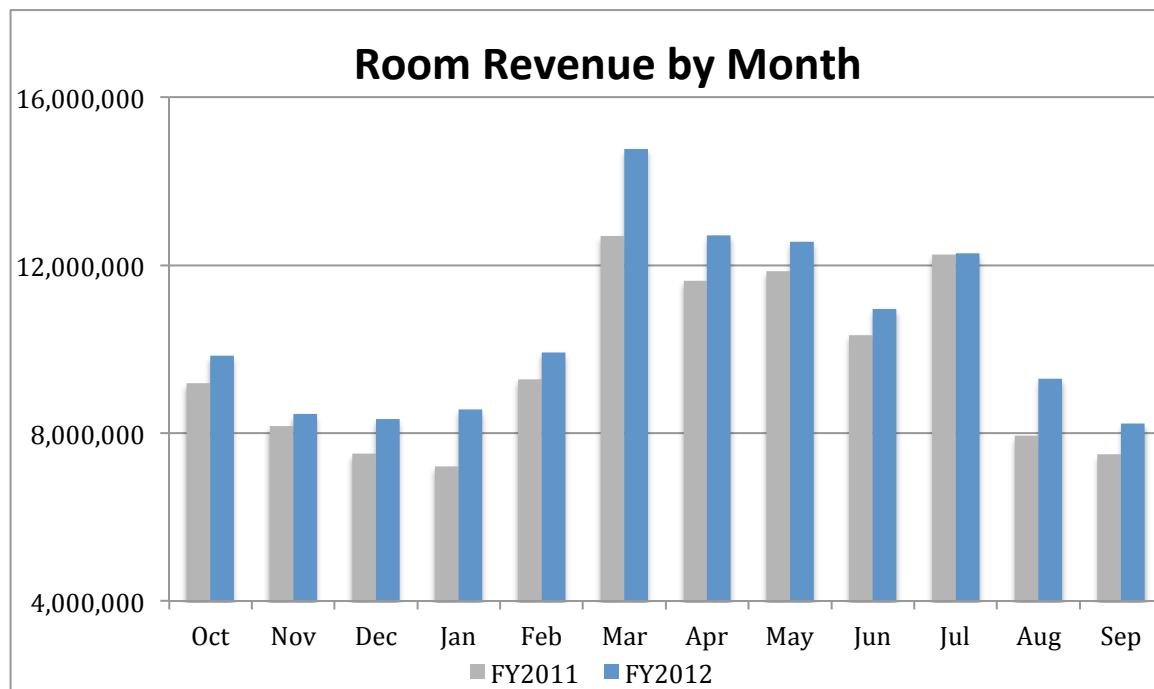
Source: Smith Travel Research



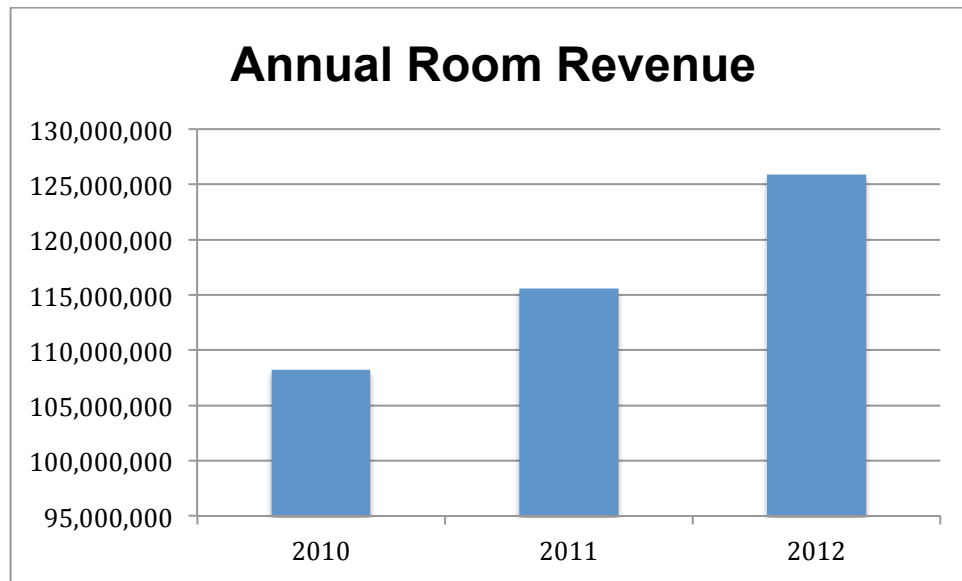
Source: Smith Travel Research

### Room Revenue

Monthly room revenue closed the year at \$125,908,581, 9% higher than 2011's \$115,557,104. January was the top-performing month for incremental gains, up 18.7%. August and March followed closely with 17.1% and 16.3% gains.



Source: Smith Travel Research

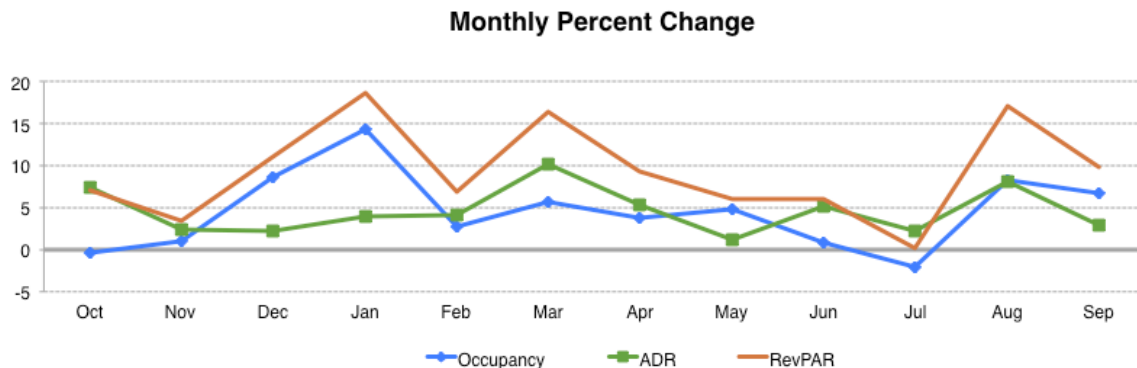


Source: Smith Travel Research

#### Lodging Performance Summary

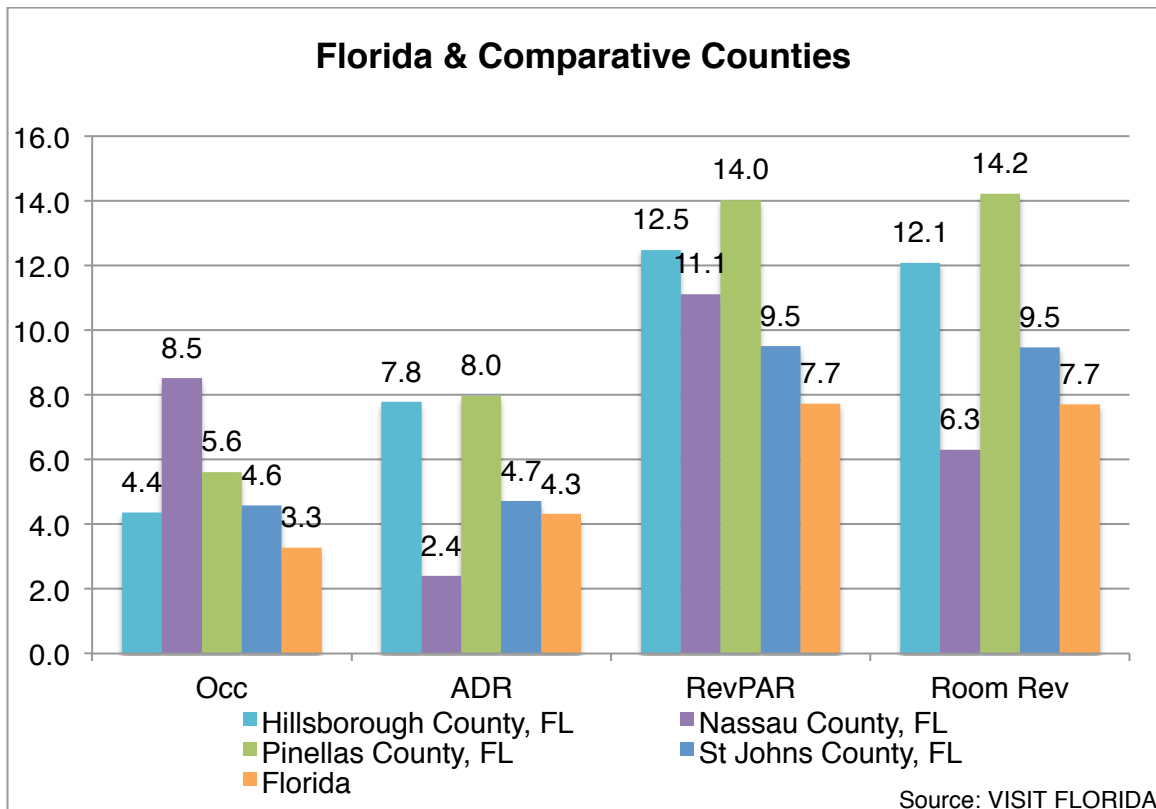
All indicators show strong positive growth for the industry in FY2012, so much so, that levels are finally beginning to reach or surpass pre-recession numbers.

Trending the three indicators shows that January gains in RevPAR were driven by occupancy and, to a lesser extent, increased ADR. The opposite was true in March. Larger ADR gains with more modest occupancy growth drove higher RevPAR. August exhibited the most balanced gains with ADR matching occupancy growth for incrementally higher RevPAR.

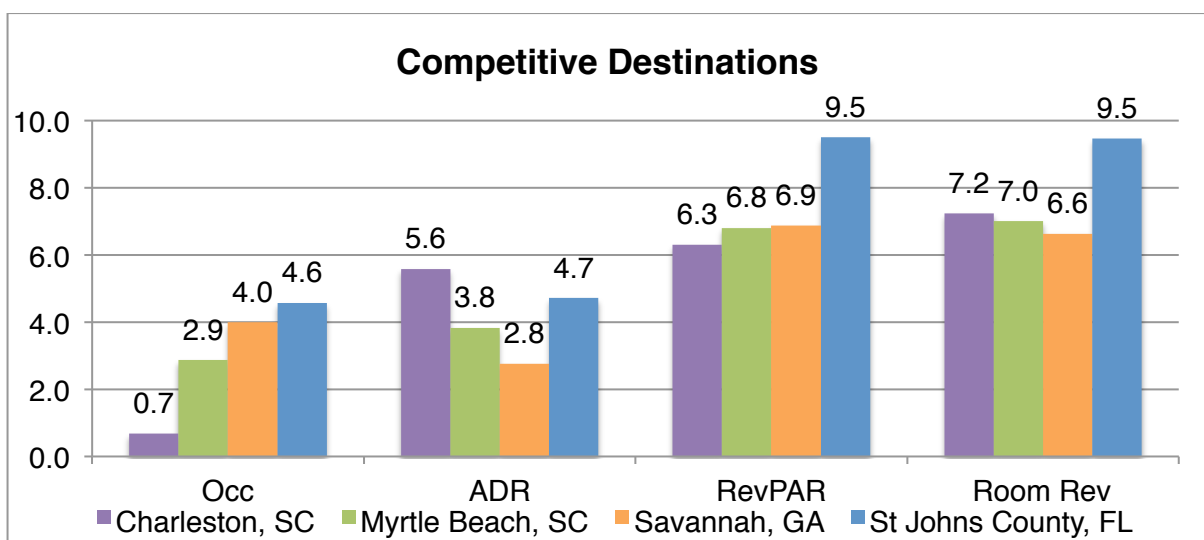


Florida's Historic Coast (FHC) lodging providers finished ahead of the State of Florida averages. And, across the board results for Florida lodging providers were positive. For the state, overall gains in occupancy averaged 3.3%, ADR 4.3%, RevPAR 7.7%, and room revenue 7.7%. Specific results for Florida and select counties are provided in the following chart. FHC results are comfortably in line with these averages, and the county enjoyed a fair share of the state's tourism overall.





Destinations in the FHC competitive set outside of Florida enjoyed a year of growth as well, but not to nearly the same degree as FHC and her Florida counterparts. Averages for Savannah, Charleston, and Myrtle Beach trailed FHC results. Again, the balance of demand and rate helped position FHC 2.5 percentage points ahead of this group for total revenue generated (9.5% compared to 7% group average.)



Source: VISIT FLORIDA



## **2012 ST. JOHNS COUNTY BED TAX COLLECTIONS**

Local Option Tourism Development Tax (bed tax) collections were up 9.1% over FY2011. March and July were the highest grossing months again this fiscal year. Impressively, March was up 15.5% and came very close to being the highest grossing month for the year. July, though being a high grossing month, was also down 4% from last year. April was the only other month to show decline. January grew the most with 22.1% change followed by May at 18% change. The January variance is encouraging as last fiscal it was at -1.2%.

Overall, spring and summer performance continues to be strong with both seasons enjoying the highest grossing months.

### **Fiscal Year 2012**

MONTH OF OCCUPANCY	GROSS	COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEARS		TC & CC	NET
		FY2011	FY2010		
October	\$ 475,354.48	10.5%	58.9%	\$ 9,507	\$ 465,847.39
November	\$ 392,318.52	2.2%	50.6%	\$ 7,846	\$ 384,472.15
December	\$ 420,846.67	10.2%	56.4%	\$ 8,417	\$ 412,429.74
January	\$ 472,116.41	22.1%	60.8%	\$ 9,442	\$ 462,674.08
February	\$ 587,926.25	11.7%	56.9%	\$ 11,759	\$ 576,167.73
March	\$ 834,997.21	15.5%	61.8%	\$ 16,700	\$ 818,297.27
April	\$ 621,302.90	-3.0%	2.9%	\$ 12,426	\$ 608,876.84
May	\$ 741,105.40	18.0%	27.1%	\$ 14,822	\$ 726,283.29
June	\$ 749,111.00	11.8%	10.9%	\$ 14,982	\$ 734,128.78
July	\$ 851,419.45	-4.0%	41.1%	\$ 17,028	\$ 834,391.06
August	\$ 520,842.58	13.4%	-13.7%	\$ 10,417	\$ 510,425.73
September	\$ 424,542.31	11.0%	-29.7%	\$ 8,491	\$ 416,051.46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 7,091,883</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>2270.8%</b>	<b>\$ 141,838</b>	<b>\$ 6,950,046</b>

	BUDGETED	COLLECTED	VARIANCE YTD	% of Total
Approved	\$ 7,019,414	\$ 7,091,883	\$ (72,469)	101.0%

## **2012 GOLF TOURISM ROI**

FY2012 investment in Golf-oriented marketing programs included \$172,000 supporting Florida's First Coast of Golf program. Aggregate results from the fiscal year experienced an ROI of 81 to 1. See below for how ROI was calculated.



**Investment** \$172,000

### **Returns**

Hotel	\$2,436,171	23,277 Nights @ \$104 ADR
Golf	\$4,130,753	54,7770 Rounds @ \$75.42
Spending	\$6,654,312	18,256 Golfers @ \$121.50 DAY x 3 Days
Sales Tax	\$793,274	Total @ 6%

Total Return \$14,014,510  
ROI 81 | 1



## FY2012 VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU OPERATING BUDGET

BUDLINES	2011-2012	October Actual	November Actual	December Actual	January Actual	February Actual	March Actual	April Actual	May Actual	June Actual	July Actual	August Actual	September Actual	TOTAL Actual	Total Budgeted	Remaining
53100-Research		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,780	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,780	\$ 35,000	\$ 29,220
53401-Indirect Fees						\$ -			\$ -			\$ 8,421	\$ -	\$ 8,421	\$ 8,421	\$ -
53120- Contractual Se	-746	\$ 56,311	\$ 70,659	\$ 59,659	\$ 56,493	\$ 57,926	\$ 76,755	\$ 50,840	\$ 59,487	\$ 49,575	\$ 58,775	\$ 95,670	\$ 86,092	\$ 778,242	\$ 860,000	\$ 81,758
53702-VIC Airport		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,260	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,260	\$ 8,500	\$ 1,240
54000-Travel & Per Diem		\$ 1,068	\$ 121	\$ 4,600	\$ 5,926	\$ 2,270	\$ 3,750	\$ 4,540	\$ 7,487	\$ 7,764	\$ 1,389	\$ 1,736	\$ 2,887	\$ 43,538	\$ 49,000	\$ 5,462
54010-Tradeshows		\$ 3,790	\$ -	\$ 4,315	\$ 1,627	\$ 12,878	\$ 8,030	\$ 2,886	\$ 5,458	\$ 2,164	\$ 8,091	\$ 4,444	\$ 1,521	\$ 55,204	\$ 56,000	\$ 796
54100-Communications		\$ 1,898	\$ 1,307	\$ 3,366	\$ 3,175	\$ 3,067	\$ 1,990	\$ 1,583	\$ 1,810	\$ 1763	\$ 1773	\$ 5,202	\$ 2,947	\$ 29,881	\$ 31,290	\$ 1,409
54102-Inquiry Services		\$ -	\$ 3,834	\$ 5,679	\$ 7,269	\$ 4,774	\$ 4,610	\$ 5,456	\$ 4,222	\$ 5292	\$ 4642	\$ 3,457	\$ 7,335	\$ 56,570	\$ 108,460	\$ 51,890
54110-Postage		\$ 1,451	\$ 1,695	\$ 3,392	\$ 7,176	\$ 2,705	\$ 3,742	\$ 8,073	\$ 5,208	\$ 4847	\$ 3515	\$ 2,910	\$ 5,874	\$ 50,588	\$ 83,592	\$ 33,004
54112-Brochure Distribution		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,999	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,999	\$ 6,000	\$ 2,001
54300-Utilities		\$ 107	\$ 418	\$ 945	\$ 379	\$ 591	\$ 467	\$ 405	\$ 416	\$ 427	\$ 509	\$ 509	\$ 509	\$ 5,682	\$ 13,000	\$ 7,318
54400-Rental Equip		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 447	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 447	\$ 7,000	\$ 6,553
54401-Rent of Build.		\$ 8,000	\$ -	\$ 8,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 8,000	\$ 4000	\$ 4000	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 48,000	\$ 58,300	\$ 10,300
54500-Insurance		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
54601-Equip Maint		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 133	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 133	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,867
54804-P R Services		\$ 6,640	\$ -	\$ 269	\$ 1,688	\$ 3,106	\$ 6,853	\$ 1,289	\$ 1,506	\$ 1706	\$ 0	\$ 2,579	\$ 1,289	\$ 26,925	\$ 49,000	\$ 22,075
54805-In house PR		\$ 130	\$ 372	\$ 5,527	\$ 4,988	\$ 338	\$ 1,794	\$ 4,623	\$ 9,467	\$ 976	\$ 737	\$ 5,670	\$ 4,498	\$ 39,120	\$ 49,000	\$ 9,880
54806-Sales Mission		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 15,840	\$ 10,840
54900-Advertising		\$ 197,249	\$ 258,853	\$ 158,761	\$ 181,292	\$ 193,007	\$ 154,413	\$ 87,869	\$ 88,641	\$ 137,885	\$ 165,855	\$ 186,278	\$ 121,377	\$ 1,931,480	\$ 2,088,495	\$ 157,015
55100--Office Supplies		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200	\$ 643	\$ 25	\$ 216	\$ 1,333	\$ 16	\$ 135	\$ 536	\$ 348	\$ 337	\$ 3,789	\$ 4,000	\$ 211
55102-Software		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 829	\$ -	\$ 239	\$ 10	\$ 498	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ 1,576	\$ 3,800	\$ 2,224
55200-Operating Supplies		\$ 356	\$ -	\$ 373	\$ 151	\$ 1,105	\$ 56	\$ -	\$ 326	\$ 303	\$ 152	\$ 493	\$ -	\$ 3,315	\$ 7,500	\$ 4,185
55401-Training		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 450	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0	\$ 750	\$ -	\$ 400	\$ 1,600	\$ 2,000	\$ 400
55405-Dues/Membership		\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 3,776	\$ 3,499	\$ (1,405)	\$ 50	\$ -	\$ 3,137	\$ 4139	\$ 47	\$ 180	\$ 2,430	\$ 16,353	\$ 24,000	\$ 7,647
56403-Office Equipment						\$ 1,000								\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ (1,000)
<b>Total Before Reserves</b>		<b>\$ 277,500</b>	<b>\$ 337,259</b>	<b>\$ 264,309</b>	<b>\$ 286,845</b>	<b>\$ 285,387</b>	<b>\$ 266,965</b>	<b>\$ 174,687</b>	<b>\$ 199,811</b>	<b>\$ 220,976</b>	<b>\$ 250,771</b>	<b>\$ 321,897</b>	<b>\$ 237,497</b>	<b>\$ 3,123,904</b>	<b>\$ 3,572,198</b>	<b>\$ 448,294</b>
59920- BR Reserve		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 126,349	\$ 126,349
59923-TPRD Reserve		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 80,082	\$ 80,082
59932- Part 1 Reserve		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 105,319	\$ 105,319
		<b>\$ 277,500</b>	<b>\$ 337,259</b>	<b>\$ 264,309</b>	<b>\$ 286,845</b>	<b>\$ 285,387</b>	<b>\$ 266,965</b>	<b>\$ 174,687</b>	<b>\$ 199,811</b>	<b>\$ 220,976</b>	<b>\$ 250,771</b>	<b>\$ 321,897</b>	<b>\$ 237,497</b>	<b>\$ 3,123,904</b>	<b>\$ 3,883,948</b>	<b>\$ 760,044</b>





## **2012 VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU OPERATING BUDGET**

### **FY2012 Budget Summary**

Actual spending to entice visitors to Florida's Historic Coast in FY2012 was purposely flat relative to FY2011, with the objective of moving savings into FY2013 when consumer and business uncertainties are expected to negatively influence travel. It is also expected that significant additional marketing resources will be required to successfully promote the 500th Anniversary of the European Discovery of La Florida.

- \$448,294 was saved from budgeted funds for use in FY2013
- Greatest savings from FY2012 budget were realized in Advertising (\$157,015), Fulfillment costs (Inquiry Services & Postage \$84,894) and Contractual Services (\$81,758)

Compared to FY2011:

- Total expenditures for FY2012 Destination Marketing were less than FY2011 by 1.9%
- Contractual Services were flat including salaries and benefits
- Travel and Trade Shows were up 20.9% reflecting increased focus on International sales efforts (Florida Huddle, Pow Wow and Int'l Assoc. of Golf Travel Operators)
- Fulfillment expenses were down 17.6% due to increased use of e-fulfillment (which costs less than printed matter) and fewer requests for traditional brochures
- Tourism Publicity was reduced 24.3% by co-opting more press tours and foregoing a trade show
- Advertising was reduced 8.6% by using more online and less traditional media



## **Advertising and Marketing Report FY2012**

Prepared by MMGY Global

### **CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES**

#### **Mission Statement**

Brand and market the destination globally as a premier leisure, convention and incentive destination; communicate the area's assets and inherent benefits to consumers, meeting planners, the travel trade, media, local community and constituents; and facilitate the opportunity for partners to promote their individual businesses within that framework.

#### **Florida's Historic Coast**

Based on its success – both in-market and through the receipt of various industry awards – the branding of Florida's Historic Coast continued in FY2012 via the “Red Couch Chronicles” campaign which conveyed the over-arching brand message “Our History Is Not The Same Old Story.”

- Differentiated destination from other Florida beach offerings by underscoring its unique historic charm and authenticity
- Combined destination's romantic Old World European allure with its distinctly Old-Florida quirkiness
- Ideal graphic communication vehicle to begin connecting the destination to Ponce de Leon's discovery 500 years ago as 2013 approached

#### **Primary 2012 Objectives**

The VCB aimed for continued improvement in its efficiency, effectiveness and leadership toward driving visitation to St. Johns County. Objectives were as follows:

- Increase Website visitation, our most powerful travel influencing tool
- Increase destination awareness (and its identity as Florida's Historic Coast)
- Introduce enhanced Website & Mobile site content and landing pages to specific niche segments and special events
- Increase co-op partner support and engagement with broader and more affordable media opportunities
- Continue support and development of 500th/450th Anniversary marketing plans

#### **Strategies**

- Improve efficiencies in media selection
  - More online and e-communications, less printed communications
  - Elimination of programs that generate marginal returns
  - Aggressively negotiate the best possible pricing on media purchases
- Develop enticing co-op opportunities to encourage more partner participation
- Continue to optimize performance of paid media while maintaining flexibility within the fiscal plan to move resources to best performing programs



## **TARGET AUDIENCE & MARKETS**

### **Consumer Target Audience:**

During the winter months, the core visitors tend to be couples 35+. While in the spring/summer months, visitation shifts more towards families with children.

### **Primary Markets:**

Drive markets within 3-4 hours drive, expanding in summer to families within 6-8 hours drive. They include:

Orlando, FL  
Jacksonville, FL  
Tampa, FL  
Atlanta, GA

## **MEDIA & CREATIVE**

### **Radio**

- Continued with 0:60 and 0:30 spots in Orlando, Tampa, and The Villages.
- In Jacksonville, maintained presence with short-form “reminder media” via live reads by Radiate Media 0:10 and 0:15 radio traffic sponsorships.
- Continued Orlando & Tampa trip giveaway contests and the Red Couch “Best Seats in the House” at Orlando-station sponsored events such as the Home Show, B-52s concert, and Spring Fiesta in the Park.



### **Outdoor/Out-of-Home**

- The VCB continued its series of billboards in FY2012 from central Florida to South Georgia, branding the destination as Florida's Historic Coast.
- Locations included: North Orlando/Daytona Beach, Jacksonville, Brunswick, and Savannah.



*Outdoor Billboards*





## Print

Award-winning layout featured collage of destination photos amidst illustrated imagery, poetic/enticing copy, and seasonal rates. Many executions included co-op partners.

- Leveraged Visit Florida co-op efficiencies
- Continued targeting niche areas of focus: Heritage, Fishing, Birding, Motorcoach
- Began incorporating the FL 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary message as 2013 drew closer



VCB Print Ads



Full Page Co-op Ad



## Bridal Programs

- VCB solo presence in *Bridal Guide* (national)
- Co-op presence in *Orlando Wedding* & *Jacksonville Bride* (regional)

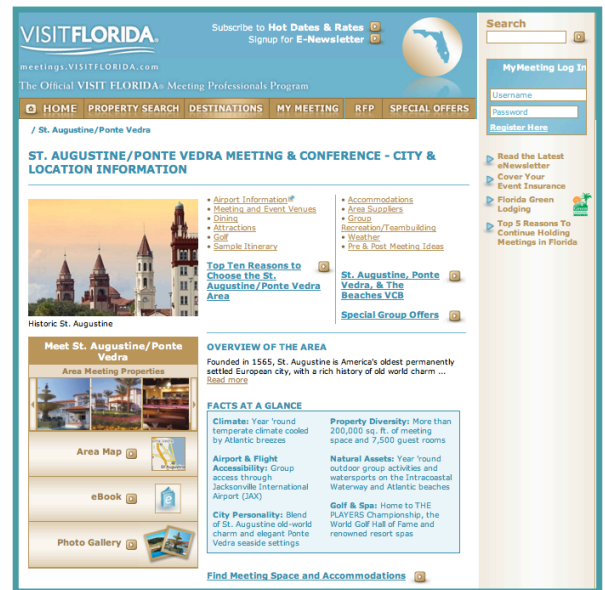
Orlando Wedding, Co-op Spread





## Meetings / Travel Trade / Group Sales

- Co-op spread in VISIT FLORIDA Specialist Program for Weddings (Winter 2012)
- VCB solo presence in print ads of *Collaborate, Connect, One+, and Prevue*
- *Prevue* E-newsletter blasts with co-op partners
- Updated and enhanced DMO profile page on VISIT FLORIDA Meetings website plus program elements including: Fabulous FL Getaway Contest (Nov. 2011), Featured Spotlight story, and e-news deals



**VISIT FLORIDA Meetings Program, DMO Page**

## Television

In FY2012, the VCB reserved regional broadcast and cable television in Orlando and Tampa markets at key times of the year.

- 30-sec. "Red Couch" spots with custom tags/Calls to Action
- Morning Shows and Evening News
- Promoting Flavors dining event (Oct. 2011)
- Promoting Summer travel with 2-week flights in May and June 2012

Additional TV exposure:

- UK Visitors targeted with in-flight video
- *U Travel! With Bob Waggoner!* on PBS (Feb. 2012)
- PGA TOUR- THE PLAYERS Regional TV (Jan.-March 2012)
- *Getting Away Together* second season on PBS (Feb.-April 2012)



**"Red Couch Chronicles" TV Spot**



**THE PLAYERS Championship TV**



**U Travel! on PBS**





## Online

### Digital Media Buys & Effectiveness

- In FY2012 the VCB continued its digital advertising presence with both new and familiar online network buys, pre-roll video units, and interactive banner technologies.
- All digital buys were geo-, demo-, and behaviorally targeted to reach the desired audiences.
- The most effective buys in FY2012 were Trip Advisor and Adara Media. These two buys drove the most traffic to the site of all the online publishers.
- Adara Media included :15 pre-roll video accompanied by a VCB banner ad. Between May and June, this video and its banner received over 30K clicks.
- Flite rich-media microsite banners continued from the previous fiscal during the first two quarters of FY2012. This ad unit continued its high engagement time and interaction by users on sites like Trip Advisor.
  - Creative execution featured “Red Couch Chronicles” :15 video, seasonal rates, and a tab for Fall Flavors, then Nights of Lights with each including a photo slide show
- In April and June, the VCB participated in VISIT FLORIDA’S Google Co-op campaign that served over 14 million impressions with a CTR of 0.27%. Clicks directed to a VISIT FLORIDA DMO page with multiple links to the VCB site.



Flite Microsite Banner Ad

### TripAdvisor.com



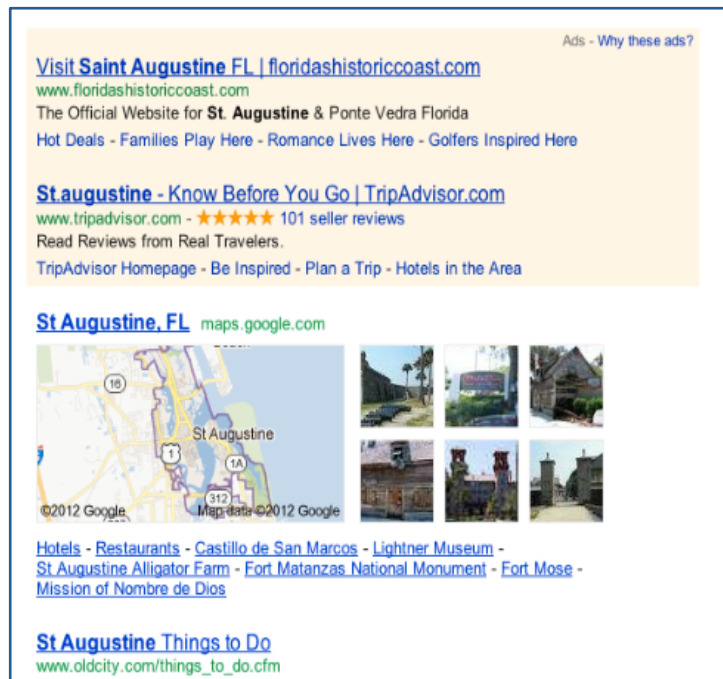
TripAdvisor.com St. Augustine Page w/ Co-op Banner Ad



- For FY2012 the VCB's custom destination pages for St. Augustine and Ponte Vedra were continued on this high traffic travel planning website.
- Ad space on page offered out to co-op lodging partners for prime visibility all year on the destination page. All available co-op space sold out fast. In fact for FY2013, twice as many partners as the max estimated signed up.
- Trip Advisor ranked St. Augustine 9th Place on its list of Top 15 Destinations on the Rise for 2012.

### Search Engine Marketing/Google Campaign

- The SEM strategy for FY2012 was maintained from the previous fiscal year, while optimized throughout the year to best provide the VCB prime positioning and exposure with somewhat limited budget of \$5,000 per month.
- Beginning Nov. 2012, to better maximize the smaller FY2013 budget, additional funds will be allocated to paid search to offer a more robust SEM campaign with many new keywords and pay per click ads tailored to a broad list of traveler interests, including events such as Fall Flavors, Nights of Lights, etc.



Google Search

### Digital Recommendations for FY2013

- Increase paid search budget to raise daily limits on branded terms and add broader, more competitive keywords and phrases to reach a wider range of relevant travel searches.
- Optimize all digital efforts against website visitation (clicks & views), and continue to research and identify new opportunities to supplement these high return vehicles.
- With the FY2013 budget less than the previous fiscal, reinvest broadcast TV budget into online video, rich media and online content distribution vendors.
- Develop aggressive lead generation program to stimulate qualified leads for partners.
- eCRM audit with suggested game plan to evolve email communication program into a more effective marketing channel.





## **DIRECT MARKETING**

Direct marketing to the consumer and the trade was developed in both print and online formats.

## **EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS**

In FY2012, the VCB continued the process of obtaining and segmenting opt-in email addresses for the purpose of developing Customer Relationship Marketing programs. These activities will continue in FY2013.

In tandem with the VCB's efforts starting mid-year 2012 to upgrade all digital performance, an initiative was launched to greatly improve email marketing efforts. Having begun 2012 with a consumer database of 4,200, the year-end total was 5,752, a sizeable 37% increase though still a modest overall base and one that will have to grow before plans for enhanced segmentation can be enacted.

Programs implemented near year-end (and, as of this writing, into FY2013) to secure more opt-ins through contests and other incentives are bearing fruit in healthy numbers, and the VCB team is confident of surpassing aggressive 2013 goals.

## **2012 Objectives**

- Develop a clear understanding of DMO best practices for email communications and achieve same level of performance.
  - Best practices identified and studied; enhanced plans are intended to achieve similar level of performance
- Initiate and maintain effective opt-in acquisition campaigns to build email databases.
  - Achieved, albeit late in the year.
  - New tactics for acquisition, content and design.
- Determine optimal segments for VCB business and target same.
  - Planned, awaiting growth of base.
- Continue ongoing email campaigns for all viable market segments with opt-in email addresses.
  - Continuing.

## **2012 Key Performance Measures**

- Opt-in email database grew to 5,752, 14% over goal and 37% over 2011.
- Achieved goal of deploying an average of two emails per month to targeted databases.



**VCB Consumer email blast**



- Developed aggressive targets for maximum tolerable opt-out (i.e., surpass industry average) and consistently came in under these ceilings.
  - Average 2011-12 industry unsubscribe rate is 1.64%.
  - VCB average unsubscribe rate for consumer emails was 1.36% in 2011 (13.1% below industry avg.) and .05% in 2012 (70% below avg.)

### **PRINT AND ONLINE: ANNUAL TRAVEL PLANNER**

Like most DMOs, the VCB publishes an annual Travel Planner, targeting prospective visitors through a broad-based description of our destination product with specific details and referrals that address the tastes of most any type of leisure traveler.

As consumer communications preferences move inexorably online, the quantity of print publications like the Travel Planner declines, in favor of a Web-based version. The VCB's press run in recent years reflects that decline, although 2012 shows that it is far from free-fall:

- **2010:** 200,000
- **2011:** 125,000
- **2012:** 125,000 projected, 150,000 actual

Surplus planners, if any, are distributed to incoming tourists at key visitor information locations.

### **PRINT AND ONLINE: WEDDING GUIDE**

A valuable niche within the romance market is the bridal/wedding segment, of prime importance to a number of our VCB partner categories. In 2012, the VCB developed a new Wedding Guide for brides-to-be, in both print and online versions. This has been the primary support vehicle for the VCB's overall sales and marketing efforts against this important market segment, and learnings are applied from 2012 to 2013 and beyond.

### **PRINT AND ONLINE: GROUP PLANNING GUIDE**

In 2012 the Group Planning Guide was updated and made more useful to meeting planners with relevant, up-to-date information on the destination, accommodations and venues relevant to the group and meeting planner market.

A press run of 4,000 was produced in FY2012 and distributed through the VCB to planners by request and, of course, at shows and sales missions. The online version is interactive, updated more frequently, and prominently featured on the VCB's micro site, MyFloridaMeetings.com.

There are no plans to sell advertising in this publication due to the limited size of its distribution.



*2012 Travel Planner*



## Website Analytics Report FY2012

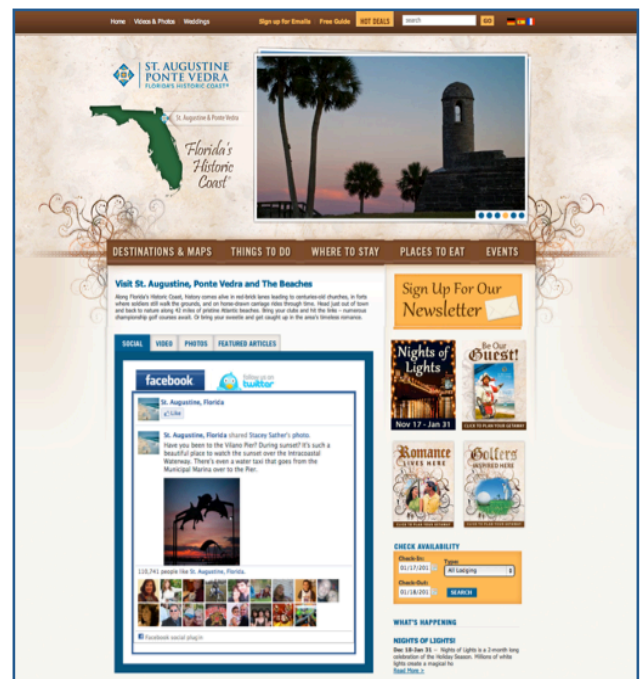
Prepared by Miles

### FLORIDASHISTORICCOAST.COM

In the fourth quarter of FY 2011, www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com underwent a site redesign resulting in a considerable increase in the site's year-over-year performance metrics. The redesigned website's full launch took place Nov. 1, 2011.

#### Redesign Objectives and Strategies Accomplished

- Key searchable terms were used in the navigation to move users through the website. Terms like Things to Do, Where to Stay, Places to Eat and Events are straightforward and search engine-friendly, quickly and easily getting users to the information they are seeking.
- Homepage was updated to showcase two of the VCB's social media pages, Facebook and Twitter. When a user reaches the homepage, one of the first things he sees is the Facebook News Feed for St. Augustine, Florida. The feed includes images and information from the VCB, as well as interactions with Facebook users and the number of people who "like" St. Augustine, Florida, on Facebook.
- New, user-friendly Content Management System was deployed that allows the VCB to update articles, slideshows and other pages of the site at will. VCB staff also was given the ability to add videos, images and pages of content to the website.
- To show users how the VCB regularly interacts with its Facebook fans, the homepage was updated to display the St. Augustine, Florida, Facebook News Feed as soon as the page loads. Visitors to FloridasHistoricCoast.com can "Like" the VCB on Facebook and see photos, watch videos and join its e-newsletter mailing list – all on its Facebook page.



Homepage



### Key Performance Measures

- Average Time on Site **exceeded goal (increase 20 sec.)** by 20% to 3:56. (FY2011 average was 3:32.)
- Overall Bounce Rate goal was **exceeded by dropping to 36.9%**, 2.3 points below FY2011 and 3.1 points below 40% benchmark.
- Bounce rate for paid search traffic **exceeded goal by decreasing 11 points** from 36.31% in FY2011 to 25.03% in FY2012.
- Conversions rate of site visitors – views of partner property profiles and orders of the print Travel Planner – **significantly exceeded goal (20% increase) by reaching 24.7%** in FY2012, up from 12.7%.

### Performance

Domestically, FloridasHistoricCoast.com ranks 32,854 among all U.S. websites.

	FY2011	FY2012	% Change
Visits	476,928	477,961	2.17%
Page Views	2,077,020	2,520,780	21.37%
Pages Per Visit	4.35	5.27	32.64%
Average Time on Site	3:32	3:56	7.23%
Overall Bounce Rate	39.18%	36.92%	-5.77%
Property Profile Views	144,156	306,592	112.68%

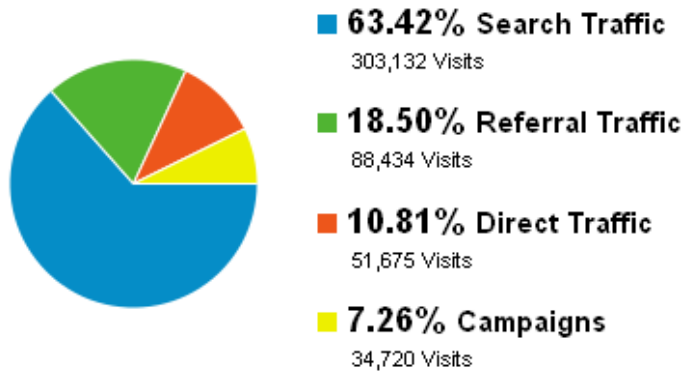
FloridasHistoricCoast.com visitation on international level:

	FY2011	FY2012	% Change
International Visits	13,304	15,441	16.06%
International Traffic	2.8%	3.2%	14.29%
Visits from Canada	4,344	3,864	-11.05%
Visits from UK	2,209	2,262	2.40%
Visits from Germany	1,157	1,334	15.30%



## Advertising

In FY2012, advertising campaigns drove 7.3% of site visits.



### ONLINE CAMPAIGN RESPONSE

1. Adara/Display	12,269
2. Quantcast Display	8,601
3. RMM+Video	2,006
4. TripAdvisor Display	1,889
5. Constant Contact/Eblast	1,147

**Total Campaign Responses: 34,736**

## WEBSITE USER DEMOGRAPHICS

FY2012 Visitors to [www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com](http://www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

### Gender

Male	37%
Female	63%

### Education

No College	38%
College	48%
Grad School	15%

### Income

<\$50K	52%
\$50-100K	29%
\$100-150K	11%
\$150K+	8%

### Age

<18	17%
18-24	10%
25-34	14%
35-44	20%
45-54	20%
55-64	12%
65+	7%

### Race

Caucasian	82%
Afr. Am.	7%
Asian	2%
Hispanic	7%
Other	1%

## Mobile Website Analytics – [m.FloridasHistoricCoast.com](http://m.FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

	FY2011	FY2012	% Change
Visits	36,700	95,944	161.43%
Pages Per Visit	3.31	5.16	55.89%
Average Time on Site	2:16	2:35	8.80%
Overall Bounce Rate	50.77%	35.80%	-29.49%



## VCB Partner Co-operative Opportunities Report FY2012

Prepared by Miles

### **CO-OP ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES**

In FY2012 the VCB offered 32 co-operative advertising opportunities to partners. Of the 32 opportunities, 16 were taken advantage of by 20 different partners.

- 22 Print Opportunities were offered
- 3 Online opportunities were offered
- 7 E-blast opportunities were offered

#### **Key findings FY2012**

- Co-op participation **increased by 11%** to 20 partners.
- Co-op value **increased by 42%** to \$20,400.
- Online was the most popular with 2 of the 3 opportunities selling out. This resulted in a **savings of \$1,750.00 for partners or an average of \$875.00 each.**
- Print opportunities were second with 10 of the 22 opportunities taken advantage of. This resulted in a **savings of \$20,795.00 for partners or an average of \$2,080.00 each.**
- E-blast had 3 of the 7 opportunities taken advantage of. This resulted in a **savings of \$2,100.00 for partners or an average of \$700.00 each.**

### **PARTNER PARTICIPATION ON WEBSITE**

The redesigned website also provided a simplified interface for updating and enhancing property profiles for each partner.

#### **Partner Profile Enhancements**

- Partners were offered the option to add videos and social media links to their profiles.
- Images displayed in each profile are much larger and special offers are easily identifiable to the consumer.

#### **Key Performance Measures**

- Partner Profile Updates
  - **2011** – 93 partners updated their profiles
  - **2012** – 127 partners updated their profiles, **a 37% increase**
- Interactions with Partner Profiles
  - **2011** – 2,053
  - **2012** – 17,352
- **A 745% increase of partners updating their profiles, 7x more than 2011!**





## Partnerships and Industry Programs Report *FY2012*

### LOCAL INDUSTRY PROGRAMS

The VCB develops business sessions to empower and educate the St. Johns County tourism industry about opportunities in the marketplace.

#### **Key Membership Programs:**

- May 24 – State of the Industry Report with guest speaker, Peter Yesawich of MMGY Global
- July 12 – Florida Huddle Industry Breakfast
- September 11 – Co-op workshop outlining upcoming advertising opportunities
- September 27 – VCB Annual Meeting
- Weekly PartnerCom emails average open rate for 2012 was 30.5%, a decrease of 9.2% from FY2011's 31.2%

#### **VCB Partnerships:**

Year-end **partnerships were down 7%** against both 2011 (262 vs. 281) and the 2012 goal of 280.

#### **Additionally in 2012:**

- The VCB conducted 28 partnership orientations, during which partners were given user names and passwords and shown how to update their profiles on the VCB's industry partner site, **www.sapvb.org**.
- A total of 23 businesses applied for partnerships; 21 were approved.

#### **New VCB Partners in 2012:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • J.P. Henley's                              | • Ignition Magazine (Music Magazine – local)                             |
| • Catholic Heritage Tours of St. Augustine   | • Ocean Extreme Sports Limited (SUP, Kite Surfing, Kites, Beach Rentals) |
| • Hampton Inn Historic                       | • Hyperscreens LLC   |
| • 2ghouls Paranormal Tours                   | • North Florida Fishing Charters   |
| • Comfort Suites Downtown                    | • Lukes Laterra LLC  |
| • Drum Man Charters                          | • Aviles Street Merchant Association                                     |
| • First Coast Technical College              |  |
| • Vilano Beach Main Street (non-profit assn) |  |
| • Rhett's Piano Bar and Brasserie            |  |
| • Scarlett O'Hara's Restaurant               |  |
| • Howard Johnson Inn & Suites – Historic     |  |
| • Conch House & Marina                       |  |
| • Mummy Cat Productions                      |  |
| • Spanish Military Hospital Museum           |  |
| • St. Augustine Historic Walking Tours       |  |





## Communications Department Report

**FY2012**

Prepared by Kathy Catron, Director of Communications

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

The goal of the Communications Department of the St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra and The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau (VCB) is to build mutually beneficial relationships with media and travel industry professionals and to engage consumers to generate positive awareness of the destination which results in greater travel to our area.

#### **Key Performance Measures**

- Communications with the media (print, broadcast and online) all increased, with significantly more outreach emphasizing features on the destination over date-specific or annual event coverage and more international media coverage.
- The key metrics are media impressions (the total number of readers or viewers) and the monetary value of the impression in comparison to what it would cost to purchase advertising to reach the same number of readers/viewers.

#### **FY2012 Actual Media Impressions Secured**

- **6.65 Billion, 177% over goal** (2.4 billion), and **48% over actual** (4.5 billion) in FY2011.
- Illustrated in Chart #1 on the following page.

#### **FY2012 Actual Media Value of Impressions Secured**

- Value of media impressions **exceeded goal (\$5.35 million) by 51%** to \$8 million, **5% over actual** FY2011 (\$7.6 million).
- Illustrated in Chart #2 on the following page.



Chart 1: FHC Total Media Impressions FY2006-FY2012

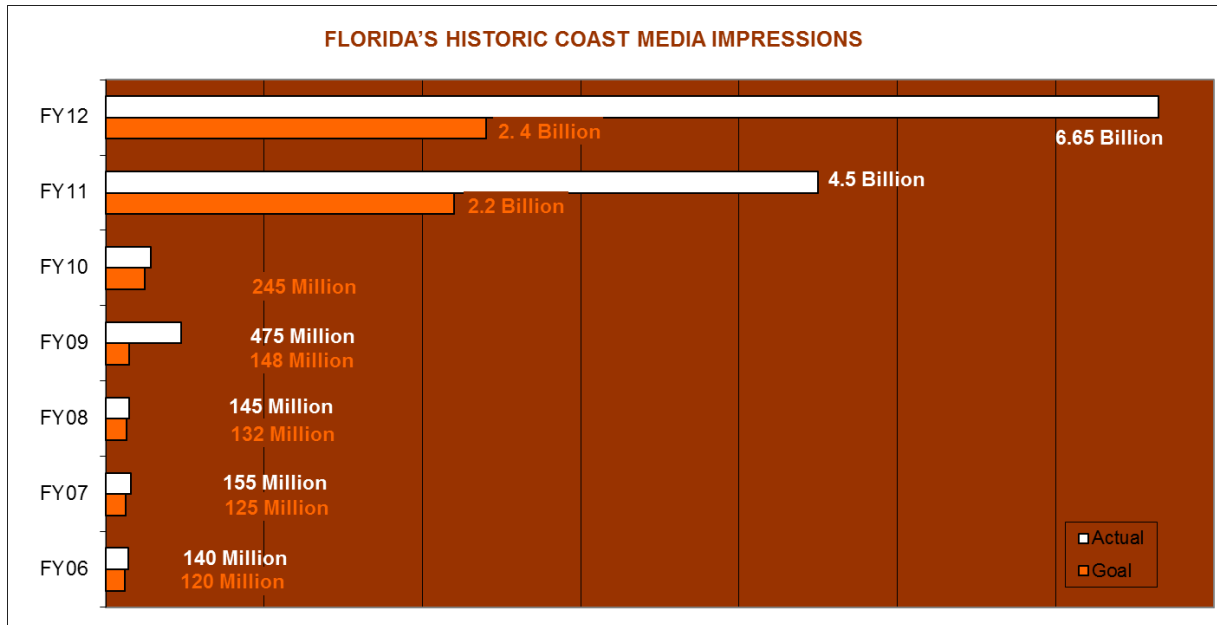
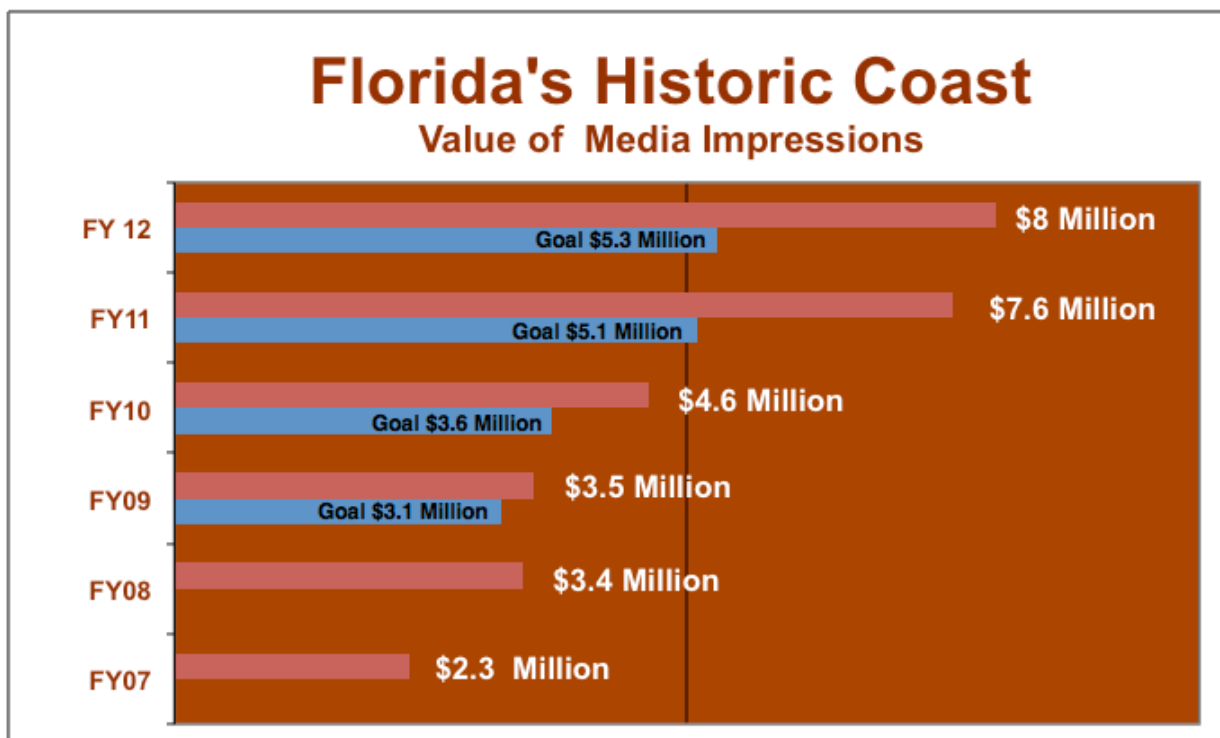


Chart 2: FHC Media Impression Value FY2007-FY2012





## **INTERNATIONAL MEDIA**

An objective of the VCB marketing plan was to increase media outreach in Hispanic, African American and International markets. International media impressions realized the greatest gains in overall VCB media coverage in FY2012.

### **International Media Secured**

Increased International Media impressions in FY2012 (77,762,163) by 187 times that of FY2011 (416,373).

The VCB hosted broadcast and film crews including *Callejeros Villajeros*, a nationally-broadcast travel show on Spain's Cuatro network. This 15-minute segment about St. Augustine broadcast nationally in prime time in September 2012 and was seen by an estimated 3 million Spaniards. In addition, the VCB hosted a crew from Univision's *Despierta America* morning show to film a segment about the First Thanksgiving, which aired nationally on Thanksgiving Day in 2011. The program had an estimated 15 million Hispanic worldwide viewers. Also, an episode of Univision's *Sabado Gigante* was filmed in St. Augustine and aired in November 2011.

Additional VCB generated media coverage in International and/or Hispanic outlets included Diario Americas (ongoing coverage of VCB contributed information); MundoFox Latino; Argentina's *Grancia de Viejos*; Mexican meetings publication, *Mercado de Convencione*; and various Brazilian travel news outlets, which included *Golf Turismo* and *ABN News*. The VCB and FFCG also hosted a Chinese Television crew which broadcast a *Golf Travel* program to more than 3 million Asian viewers.

In 2012, the VCB hosted journalists that represented several African American publications, which included *Black Meetings and Tourism* (story published in June 2012), *Atlanta Tribune* and *Denver Urban Spectrum*.

An RFP was issued for a public relations agency specializing in the Hispanic market, and an agency was selected to begin in December 2012.

In accordance with the VCB's marketing plan, media pitch and media fairs promoted St. Augustine's significant role and preferred destination in the Viva 500 celebration.

### **Media Highlights**

Media hosted included *National Geographic Traveler*, *Palm Beach Post*, *Florida Travel + Life Magazine*, *AAA Going Places*, *Golf Channel*, *Boston Globe*, *Black Meetings and Tourism*, *Golf Central Magazine*, *Huffington Post*, *Southern Living*, bloggers for *National Parks Latino Heritage* program, *Weather Channel* and the *Toronto Sun* among others.

Media coverage resulting from just a few of the VCB's efforts includes:

- *National Geographic* included St. Augustine in its Top 10 Places to See Holiday Lights



- *AAA Magazine* selected St. Augustine Beaches as one of the 14 Most Romantic in the Nation
- Whetstone Chocolate Selected as “Must See” by the *Food Network*

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media continues to grow as a significant communication tool for the VCB. Performance measures of the number of people engaging in VCB social media channels shows goals were strongly exceeded in all three identified media – Facebook, YouTube channels and Twitter.

### **Key Performance Measures**



**Exceeded Facebook goal for 2012 (45,880 followers) by 78%**, actual performance was 81,659 fans.



**Exceeded YouTube channel views goal (6,576, a 25% increase over 2011) by 580%** with a total of 44,691 views.



**Exceeded Twitter followers goal (1,125, a 15% increase over 2011) by 48%** with a total of 1,663 followers.

The VCB's strategy of posting more frequently, sharing partners' social media posts, including more video and photos, and running contests and promotions led to increased social media engagement (those people commenting, sharing and otherwise interacting with VCB through social media channels). Increasing reach through social media continues, and based on these outcomes, social media strategy for FY2013 incorporates more video, photography and social media contests and promotions.

## **VIVA 500/450th ANNIVERSARY**

FY2012 marketing plan objectives centered on making preparations to position Florida's Historic Coast as the foundation for the state's Viva 500 celebrations and the 450th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine.

### **The following strategies were achieved:**

- Incorporated the Ponce 500 logo and story into Florida's Historic Coast brand.
- Created a Ponce website and Facebook page.
- Created resources, storylines, photos and speaker resources to pitch the area's significant role in the discovery of Florida.
- Partnered with Visit Florida to develop media opportunities and promotions that place the Historic Coast as the top Florida destination for the anniversary.



- Worked with VCB partners, such as the Colonial Quarter and Fountain of Youth, to provide new content and storylines to media that highlight new attractions and events.

In FY2012, a new media monitoring system that includes social media measurement was implemented. Knowing that more media is consumed online – and that traditional publications and broadcast are utilizing online coverage as a major component of their content – this system is being employed to consistently measure value across all platforms according to the most current industry standards.



## Promotion & Strategic Alliances Report FY2012

Rick Hensler, Director

### INTRODUCTION

The job of the Promotion and Strategic Alliances Department in 2012 was to improve upon its 2011 performance and, simultaneously, refine and execute a comprehensive five-year 500/450 marketing plan approved and funded by the TDC in 2011.

**To do so, plans for 2012 were divided into five key program areas:**

1. Media Promotions
2. Sales Promotions/Events
3. Opportunistic Promotions
4. Florida's Historic Coast® (FHC) Brand Development
5. Commemoration (450/500) Marketing

### 2012 GOAL

To create promotional value in excess of FY2011's \$1.7 million.

### 2012 PERFORMANCE

During FY12, the VCB Promotion team created value as follows:

Leveraged Media Value	\$132,205 by MMGY (Adv. radio promo partners)
Partner Media Value	\$120,000 (Michelob Ultra FFCG)
TV Development Value	\$1.45 million ( <i>Getting Away Together</i> PBS)
Event Publicity Value	\$24,096 (Flavors of FHC)
Event Revenue Generated	\$453,292 (Birding Photo Fest FHC tourist spend)

<b>MEDIA VALUE CREATED</b>	<b>\$1,726,301</b>
<b>TOTAL VALUE CREATED</b>	<b>\$2,179,593</b>

Department Budget    \$25,000

### **Key Performance Measures**

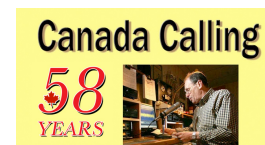
- Deliver gross media impressions valued at 5x costs incurred.
  - **Accomplishment:** Department budget: \$25,000. Value of promotional media secured: \$1,726,301.
- Deliver a major consumer promotion with the top recipient of our ad dollars in each market.
  - **Accomplishment:** Done and repeated with each new radio buy – in Orlando and Tampa (Oct. 2011); also in spring and summer in Orlando



- and Tampa (May/June 2012), accompanied by promotion with top stations in each market. (8 on-air promotions overall.) Also included an online promo on AJC.com for the Atlanta market (Oct.-Dec. 2011).
- To secure at least one new partnered retail promotion offering value to our destination and/or our partners.
    - **Accomplishment:** November 2011 Michelob Ultra/Florida's First Coast of Golf statewide promotion garnered 1,100 opt-in entries and destination inclusion in A-B (Michelob) radio in four Florida markets @ 1.2 million impressions. Valued, per A-B, at \$120,000. (150 TRPs x 2 weeks @ \$100 CPM x 4 markets.)
  - To develop a full calendar of sales promotional themes for the 2013-2015 commemorative period.
    - **Accomplishment:** Format and partner process defined. Calendar was developed as COSA and other events were announced. 2013 calendar currently includes 4-6 applicable themes. Initial theme: Picasso.
  - Provide Partners with online and offline graphic support, as well as a positioning copy block.
    - **Accomplishment:** Partners provided with VCB destination logos and variations; Great Seal of Ponce logo and variations; 500 commemoration and 30°8' copy.
  - Achieve front-line visibility at no less than 50% of all Partner properties.
    - **Accomplishment:** In progress through contracted Florida's Historic Coast licensing partner for 500.
  - Secure merchandise sales at 20% of all Partner properties with applicable retail operations.
    - **Accomplishment:** In progress through contracted Florida's Historic Coast licensing partner for 500; project achieving 20% hurdle in early 2013.
  - Achieve a discernable brand presence in the general marketplace.
    - **Accomplishment:** Begun fall 2012 and continuing through contracted Florida's Historic Coast licensing partner for 500.
  - FHC Commemorative merchandise at retail by December 1, 2012.
    - **Accomplishment:** Completed fall 2012 through contracted Florida's Historic Coast licensing partner for 500.
  - FHC brand merchandise at retail by December 1, 2012.
    - **Delayed but accomplished.** Opted to replace FHC-specific merchandise with FHC/500 merchandise, at retail fall 2012 through contracted Florida's Historic Coast licensing partner for 500.

## MEDIA PROMOTIONS

- Canada Calling – Nov '11-Mar '12, FL statewide sweepstakes targeting Canadians
- Orlando Fall 2011 WDBO All Seasons Pools Getaway Promo – prime spots on-air, third-party & station websites







- Orlando Fall 2011 WWKA Orlando Home Show – 0:30 & 0:15 promo spots, ROS online banners, booth presence
- Orlando Fall 2011 Sweepstakes/WWKA – Online contest with on-air spots
- Orlando Fall 2011 Sweepstakes/WMMO – On-air morning drive; live reads; endorsements
- Orlando Fall 2011 WMMO “Best Seats in the House” B-52’s concert– On-air morning drive; live reads; online contest page
- Orlando Fall 2011 Sweepstakes/WDBO – On-air morning and PM drive; traffic/weather sponsor inclusion; online contest page
- Tampa Fall 2011 Sweepstakes/WXGL – Online contest only (Nov. sweeps)
- Orlando Spring 2012 Sweepstakes/WMMO April “Spring Fiesta in the Park” – on-air promo spots, streaming online promo spots & banner, contest page, event signage and booth presence, re-enactors, stage announcements
- Orlando Spring 2012 Endorsement Promo/104.1FM – Jim Colbert visits FHC; pre/post chatter/endorsement live reads May-June
- Tampa Spring 2012 Endorsement Promo/WFLA – Jack Harris visits FHC; pre/post chatter/endorsement live reads May-June



## BROADCAST DEVELOPMENT

- **PBS *Getting Away Together* (30 min. FHC travelogue)** – Season two distribution of this 2011 project added 15 new broadcast markets in 2012, including New York’s WNYC and Los Angeles KCET with multiple airings each (both previously digital only.) On-air and online value estimated at minimum \$1.45 million.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

- **WMMO/98.9 Orlando Spring Fiesta in the Park** – Live event w/10K+ attendance; re-enactors used photo op to secure database leads; 2-week ad buy w/promo spots and live reads; above fold on WMMO web site; value generated 900+ opt-ins





- **Flavors of Florida's Historic Coast** – Integrated dining promo uniting 25 FHC restaurants with objective of increased awareness of destination cuisine; generated \$24,096 publicity value representing 7,587,456 consumer impressions. Cause marketing component raised more than \$3,000 for Home Again St. Johns.



- **10th Annual Florida's Birding and Photo Fest** – One of eastern U.S. major outdoor photo fests; generated \$453,292 in measured visitor spend in SJC.



### **COMMEMORATIVE MARKETING (450/500)**

Priorities and actions in 2012 (value to be generated in 2013 and beyond):

- Broadcast publicity and promotion – Contracted dedicated NYC rep; alliance w/Visit Florida
- Florida 500 Travel Trade – Secured Florida Huddle for Jan. 2013
- International Focus – Huddle and new Hispanic agency
- Solidify Launch Promotions – Created Picasso marketing plan and Colonial Quarter (CQ) 500 strategy
- Major Hispanic Initiative – Agency RFP; contracted Bauza & Assoc.
- All Ponce, All the time! – Non-stop effort; 30.8 initiative; ongoing media pitches





## Special Events Report FY2012

Prepared by Erin Masters, Special Events/Database Manager

### Florida's Birding & Photo Fest: April 25-29, 2012

Florida's Birding & Photo Fest is a birding and photography focused event featuring more than 100 seminars and field trips throughout FHC. This festival is unique in that it combines birding enthusiasts and photographers, specifically nature and bird photographers, by providing a range of events for both groups.



The festival has seen significant growth since its inception in 2003 and the event's 10th Anniversary edition in 2012 was no exception, attracting 584 attendees against the prior year's 571, a 2.3% increase.

#### Key Performance Measures

- Attendance missed the goal of 634 by 7.9% with 584 but exceeded FY2011 by 2.3%.
- Direct Visitor Spending missed goal (\$551,000) by a significant 17.7%, with \$453,292 based on survey results.

The attendance and spending data reflect two influences:

1. Aggressive goals
2. Slightly lower high-ticket workshop sign-up (to be addressed in next year's pricing strategy.)

#### Key Findings for 2012

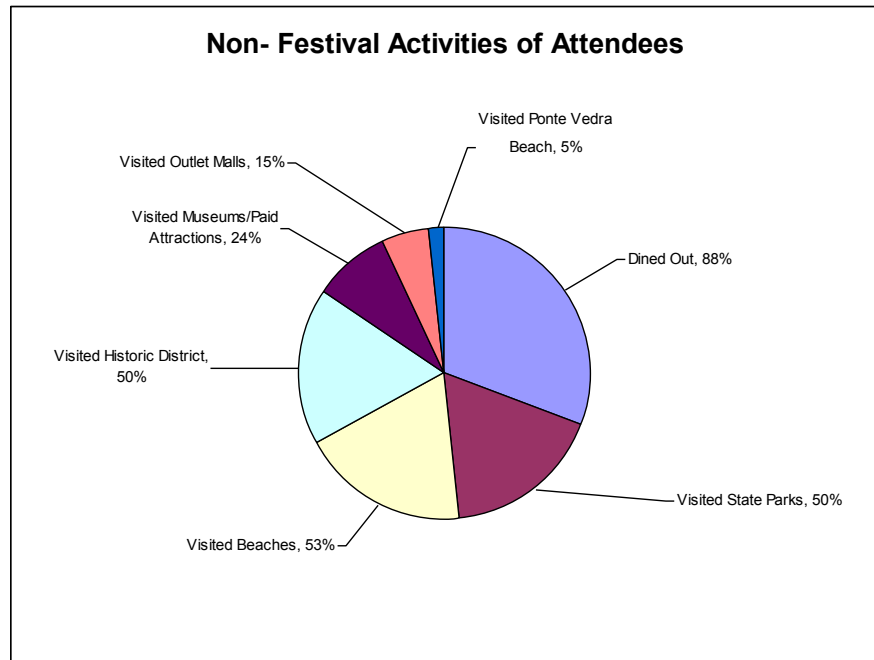
- 81% of attendees said that Photo Fest was their primary reason for visiting FHC
- 87% said they will likely return next year
- 63% were from out of the region/out of state
- 83% of attendees participated two or more days
- 63% stayed in hotels/motels, campgrounds, condos, or B&Bs in FHC

Non-Festival Activities included:

- 88% dined out
- 50% visited state parks
- 53% visited beaches
- 50% visited historic district
- 24% visited museums/paid attractions
- 15% visited outlet malls
- 5% visited Ponte Vedra Beach (2013 event moves to Guana facility in PVB)



*Source:  
Post-event survey of a  
random sample of 247  
Festival attendees  
yielded of 34%  
response rate.*





## Sales Department Report FY2012

Prepared by

Evelyn Vazquez, Director of Sales / Glenn Graham, Director of  
Conference Sales / Jaya Larkin, Sales & Services Manager

### FY2012 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

#### Combined Sales Leads and Room Nights

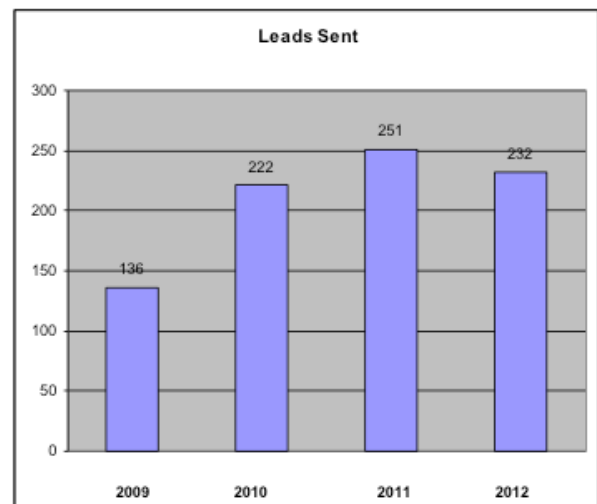
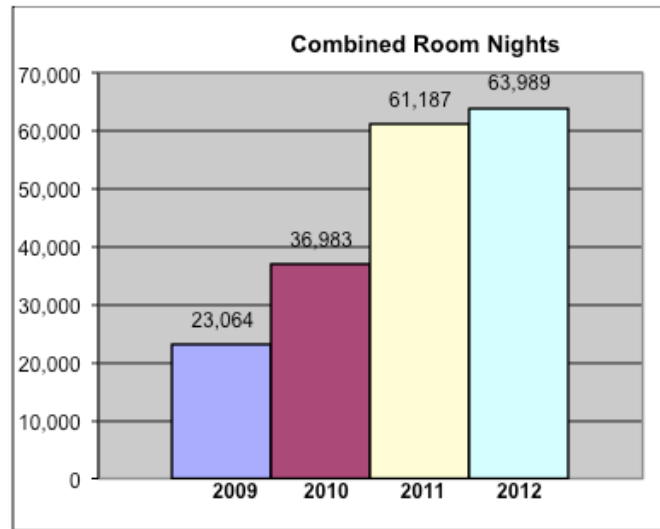
Both sales divisions performed well considering the VCB team's mid-year efforts to reduce spending to build next year's reserve and the newness of two staff members. Conference Sales made up for a slight under delivery by Leisure Sales which was attributed mainly to the training of our sales & service manager to take on executive sized groups as well as SMERF groups.

- **FY12 Objective:**
  - Send out **264 leads** representing **58,000 Room Nights**
- **FY12 Accomplishment:**
  - **Sent 232 leads** or 12% fewer than goal, but those represented **63,989 Room Nights** or 10% above goal

#### Conference Sales

The new conference sales manager began to aggressively provide leads to VCB partners. In addition, he familiarized himself with FHC meeting properties and their sales staffs and attended shows to increase qualified lead room nights.

- **FY12 Objective:**
  - Send out **90 hotel leads** representing **21,000 Room Nights**
- **FY12 Accomplishment:**
  - **Sent out 59 leads**, 34% fewer leads represented, however, **31,393** or 49% more Room Nights





### **Leisure Sales/Sales & Services**

A staff change permitted the department to redeploy staff to focus on historically strong market segments. The sales & service role began midway FY12, with an emphasis on the unique brand attributes attractive to small meetings, military gatherings, weddings and special event planners. This role is also responsible for groups of 35 rooms or less on peak nights.

Due to this mid-year change, Leisure Sales was able to concentrate on the religious and international markets in addition to the traditional leisure group segments. Therefore, FY12 Objectives and Accomplishments were combined for these two staffers.

- **FY12 Objective:**
  - Send out **175 hotel leads** representing **37,000 Room Nights**
- **FY12 Accomplishment:**
  - Sent out **173 leads or just 1% under the goal**, representing **32,596 Room Nights or 12% behind goal**

### **Combined Sales Calls/Emails**

Because of new procedures for recording these calls, there were major improvements in the accuracy and success of documenting these communications.

- **FY12 Objective:**
  - Make **1,000** prospecting **calls/emails**
- **FY12 Accomplishment:**
  - **1,401** prospecting **calls/emails recorded or 40% above goal**

### **Combined Site Visits – 63 for the year**

During FY12, the Sales Department hosted 63 meeting planners, tour operators, travel agents, group leaders and brides.

## **EXECUTIVE SALES INITIATIVES**

### **Internet Destination Sales System (iDSS)**

During FY12, the new approach the VCB sales team initiated resulted in more accurate reports to obtain all leads, events, etc. entered into iDSS. Ongoing training for staff and partners continues on a quarterly basis so staff and stakeholders use iDSS to its maximum capacity.

In all there were eight partners who had one-on-one training, six partners who were helped over the phone, nine who attended the quarterly orientation sessions, and there were four administrative training sessions where VCB staff received additional training. In addition a total of 221 partner account changes were updated throughout the year.



### Co-op Programs

In FY12 more than \$10,000 was collected from VCB Partners for their partnership with VCB Staff in sales missions and tradeshow.

### Databases

In FY12, the department managed several email Constant Contact databases – including one of 1,174 travel agents, and a 200+ residents list of The Villages. iDSS is the source used for meeting and leisure group planners from all market segments. These databases make it possible to send out special offers, events and e-newsletters to these groups on a timely basis.

### Combined Sales Initiatives – 34 for the year

Of the 35 Sales initiatives originally planned, nine (9) were added to replace ten (10) cancellations that resulted from unforeseen conflicts with other initiatives, unanticipated budget concerns, and lack of staff coverage.

CONFERENCE SALES INITIATIVES	
Florida Encounter	Nov 13-15, 2011
Florida Encounter Post FAM	Nov 16-18, 2011
HelmsBriscoe Partner Conference – Cancelled due to budget cut	12-Jan
Destination Showcase – DC	12-Feb
Meeting Planner Lunch	12-Feb
Smart Meetings Tradeshow – Atlanta	12-Mar
Collaborate Market Place	12-Apr
VF Reception & Sales Calls – NY Replaced w/ Quest Tradeshow in Sept., Raleigh	12-Apr
FAM/ THE PLAYERS Site Visit	12-May
Destination Showcase – CHICAGO	12-Jun
Meeting Planner Lunch – Cancelled	12-Jun
GSAE Annual Meeting & Tradeshow	12-Jun
Chuck Cook Tradeshow	12-Aug
IncentiveWorks, Toronto – Cancelled due to budget cut	12-Aug
Meeting Planner Lunch – Cancelled due to budget cut	12-Aug
Connect Marketplace	Aug-12
Small Market Conference	12-Sep
Corporate FAM – Cancelled	12-Sep
FL Encounter – Visit Florida cancelled	12-Nov
FICP Annual Conference – Registration & Sponsorship	12-Nov
SGMP Sales Calls* – Replaced w/ TSAE & MPI meetings and tradeshow	2012
Tallahassee Sales Calls* – Replaced w/ TSAE & MPI meetings and tradeshow	2012





<b>LEISURE SALES INITIATIVES</b>	
Rejuvenate Marketplace	Nov 7-9, 2011
Central FL Concierge FAM Tour	Nov. 28-29, 2011
16 Annual Ed HMP Conf/trade	Dec 7-10, 2011
NTA Luncheon Sponsorship	December 9, 2011
ABA Marketplace	Jan-6-10, 2012
Florida Huddle	Feb 2-5, 2012
International Pow Wow	April 21-25, 2012
Visit Florida Trade Event-Cancelled by VF	2012
Travel Agent FAM Tour	Ongoing
VF NY Roadshow – Sales Mission-Cancelled by VF	2012
VF Sales Mission – Brazil	March 26-30, 2012
Summer/Fall Villages Expo	May 1, 2012
VF Sales Mission – Chile/Argentina	May 14-18, 2012
VCB The Villages Expo – Cancelled	2012
RSA – Cancelled	2012

<b>SMERF SALES INITIATIVES</b>	
Welcome Center Qtr Visits	11-Sep
St. Augustine Bridal/Quince Expo	11-Nov
Jacksonville Bridal Connection	Feb 19,2012
Tri-Base Military Travel Shows	Mar 8-10, 2012
Reunion Friendly Network - Kissimmee, FL	Mar 14-15,2012
Tampa Bay Bridal Show	15-Jul-12
Going On Faith – Cancelled	2012



## **Touristic Development Report**

### ***FY2012***

Prepared by Richard Goldman, Executive Director

### **TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

While the VCB's activities in support of touristic development have been a consistent priority, those efforts have not been documented in this report. This section will begin the practice of reporting those efforts for the fiscal year. The reader will find that there are frequently few if any details when proprietary business activities are involved. Such is the nature of business and economic development work.

Also, there will be no key performance measures tied back to the marketing plan as this VCB function, while mentioned in the contract with the county, is not a graded marketing performance metric.

#### **Actions in FY2012**

- Compiled, consulted with and distributed tourism related information to five hotel development groups and one attraction developer for use with development and/or hotel purchases in St. Johns County. More than double the number in FY2011.
- Compiled tourism related information and consulted with four air carriers for the purpose of adding or starting service to Northeast Florida Regional Airport (NFRA) and JIA. One of those was a carryover from FY2011. All work was done in conjunction with NFRA and JAA senior staff.
- Assisted St. Augustine Distillery, LLC with touristic information in development and financing efforts.
- Actively participated in the Horizon Group, a team of business and government leaders who work on Economic Development opportunities for SJC.
- Participated in two Northeast Florida Regional Council Economic Development Workshops presenting tourism interests and opportunities.
- Worked closely with St. Johns County Chamber, St. Johns County Cultural Council and JaxUSA on tourism related economic development opportunities.