

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

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DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
SPECIAL COUNSEL

SUZANNE M. RAINEY
CLERK TO COUNCIL

AGENDA

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monday, October 20, 2014

2:00 p.m.

Conference Room, Building 3

Beaufort Industrial Village

104 Industrial Village Road, Beaufort

Committee Members:

Rick Caporale, Chairman
Steve Fobes, Vice Chairman
Brian Flewelling
William McBride
Stu Rodman
Jerry Stewart

Staff Support

Alicia Holland, Chief Financial Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER – 2:00 P.M.
2. PRESENTATIONS / DESIGNATED MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS' BUDGET OF PLANNED EXPENDITURES
 - A. Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce ([backup](#)) ([powerpoint](#))
 - B. Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce ([backup](#))
3. UPDATE / AVAILABLE 2015 2% ACCOMMODATIONS TAX MONIES ([backup](#))
4. UPDATE / SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSAL TO CREATE A PROCESS TO ESTABLISH MILLAGE VALUE AND RATE ([backup](#))
5. DISCUSSION / A RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS BEAUFORT COUNTY'S REQUEST THAT THE SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY INCREASE THE ALLOCATION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND TO BOTH PROVIDE PROPERTY TAXPAYERS WITH THE RELIEF THEY HAVE BEEN PROMISED AND ALLOW COUNTY GOVERNMENT THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER STATE LAW ([backup](#))
6. CONSIDERATION OF REAPPOINTMENTS AND APPOINTMENT
 - A. Accommodations Tax Board
7. ADJOURNMENT

2014 Strategic Plan: Committee Assignments

Budget Document/Process and Financial Reporting: Revision

Debt Reserve Policy (*Goal Accomplished, April 2014*)

General Fund Fund Balance Policy (*Goal Accomplished, April 2014*)

Mitchelville Historic Site Development: Funding



Budget

Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce
 FY 2014-15 Southern Bluffton County Budget

	VCB TOTALS	Paid by Bluffton DMO	Paid by Beaufort Co DMO
Revenues			
Town of Bluffton DMO	85,000	85,000	
Southern Beaufort County DMO	219,000		219,000
Total Revenues	304,000	85,000	219,000
Expenses			
Research & Planning	10,000	3,220	6,780
Social Media			
Bluffton Facebook page	4,000	1,288	2,712
Blog/Writers	5,500	1,771	3,729
Video Production			
Sub-total	9,500	3,059	6,441
Digital Marketing			
SEM Marketing	37,400	12,043	25,357
Website SEO	7,400	2,383	5,017
SCPRT Digital Co-ops/DG Mediamind	1,200	386	814
VisitBluffton.org upgrades	12,000	3,864	8,136
Southern Living Idea House/Wedding Sponsorship	39,000	12,558	26,442
Sub-total	97,000	31,234	65,766
Broadcast & Print			
SCPRT TV Co-ops	11,000	3,542	7,458
Ad Production	2,500	805	1,695
Sub-total	13,500	4,347	9,153
Insiders/Collateral/Fulfillment			
Bluffton Quarterly newsletter	10,000	3,220	6,780
Bluffton Collateral	16,000	5,152	10,848
Bluffton Map	2,000	644	1,356
Bluffton Fulfillment	8,500	2,737	5,763
Sub-total	36,500	11,753	24,747
Group Sales & Marketing			
Group Tour	1,750	564	1,187
Religious	3,000	966	2,034
Military	400	129	271
Sub-total	5,150	1,658	3,492

Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce
 FY 2014-15 Southern Bluffton County Budget

	VCB TOTALS	Paid by Bluffton DMO	Paid by Beaufort Co DMO
Daufuskie Island Marketing	15,000		15,000
TOTAL MARKETING EXPENSES	186,650	60,101	126,549
Bluffton Destination Marketing Operations & Management			
Marketing, Sales & Administration/Operations Town of Bluffton DMO	117,350	29,750	87,600
Sub-total	117,350	29,750	87,600
TOTAL EXPENSES	304,000		
TOTAL REVENUE MINUS EXPENSES	0		

Marketing
Plan



HILTON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2014-2015

Southern Beaufort County Marketing Plan

Mission

Mutually lead our membership and travel and tourism industry by marketing and guiding the Hilton Head Island, Bluffton, Daufuskie Island and Southern Beaufort County destination brand experience to generate sustainable economic vitality.

Bluffton's Brand Commitment

The Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Town of Bluffton, began working with research partners from the University of South Carolina Beaufort and USC as well as marketing firm Rawle Murdy Associates in May of 2013. In February of 2014, the new brand was revealed: Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry, reflecting the deep emotional connection shared by Bluffton residents and the burgeoning business community. Mayor Lisa Sulka states it best: "The heart indicates we are a beating pulse of the Lowcountry, not just an afterthought or a two-hour detour for tourists. As a heart, we have our own beat as well as keeping other parts of the Lowcountry alive and well."

Bluffton Brand Positioning Statement

Bluffton, South Carolina, is a quintessential Southern town on the banks of the Historic May River. Dedicated to a strong, progressive economic future, Bluffton is the center of our Lowcountry coastal region, providing abundant opportunities for a desirable, work/life balance.

The Bluffton Branding project is described below by stage:

Stage One: Benchmark Establishment of Core Values

- Bluffton Marketing Audit-May and June 2013
- Interviews and charrettes-approximately 40 people were interviewed one on one in June and July 2013 and 4 public charrettes (100 people attended total) were held in June and July 2013.
- Social Media Monitoring June 19-August 31, 2013
- Interim Report Presentation given to Bluffton Branding Task Force on September 19, 2013

Stage Two: Brand Identity/Positioning Development

-Alternative Positioning Statement Development Approval-September 2013

-Quantitative Survey was deployed in October-November 2013 for the following groups:

- Existing businesses-survey emailed
- Potential Economic Development Prospects -survey emailed
- Local leaders-survey emailed
- Visitors to Bluffton-
- Town of Bluffton residents
- Over 500 surveys were completed.

Onsite Surveys at Bluffton Farmers Market and Kroger (Belfair) Grocery Store during October 2013

-Data analysis/report development-November-December 2013

-Presentation of quantitative survey findings given to Bluffton Branding Task Force December 2, 2013.

Stage Three: Creative Messaging/Marketing Recommendation Development

-Logo/ Theme Line Alternatives Development Approval-January 2014

-Marketing Recommendations Development/Approval-January 2014

-Brand Guideline Development-January 2014

-Creative Messaging Presentation to Bluffton Branding Task Force/Approval session-January 21, 2014

-Full Marketing Plan Presentation to Town of Bluffton and Bluffton Branding Task Force February 19, 2014

-Unveiling of the new Bluffton Brand at the Bluffton Regional Business Council Luncheon February 19, 2014

Bluffton is the heart of the Lowcountry. It speaks to the town's central location; its lovable characteristics; and Bluffton is the pumping, economic life force of the Lowcountry. Most importantly, it's a tone and a feeling. When you're in Bluffton, you can see and feel the love. It's real and authentic. It's the heart symbol in your logo, on a window, the pride residents have in their downtown or the warmth shared with strangers at an oyster roast. The town of Bluffton is a well-kept secret. Nowhere else in the Lowcountry do you feel the love like you do in Bluffton.

Bluffton's core distinctions:

- Old Town Charm
- Bluffton Attitude
 - Authentic/Realness
 - Eclectic/Expressive
 - Unique/Pride
 - Town on the Move/Progressive

- Nature
- May River
- Live Oaks
- Location

Daufuskie Island's Brand Commitment

Daufuskie Island is Hilton Head's closest neighboring sea island, yet it remains a world in itself, unspoiled and at peace with nature. The Island moves at a slower pace, which visitors find seductive. Daufuskie evokes a simpler and more elegant time. Its championship golf courses, equestrian and waterway experiences envelope the visitor in nature. Artist enclaves and historic sites are a special cultural discovery for visitors. And life-long residents are eager to share Island hospitality with their guests.

Guiding Principles

- Serve as a voice and advocate for the business community
- Maintain the highest ethical standards in all we do
- Work to preserve and enhance the prudent growth, quality of life and character of our region
- Develop collaborative partnerships only in areas where the partnership can accomplish that which our organization cannot do alone
- Develop and implement programs and services that benefit the economic well-being and common interests of our members
- Initiate programs for which there is funding and staffing resources
- Make decisions based on long-term perspective

Bluffton Marketing Committee

The Visitor & Convention Bureau's destination marketing plan recognizes the fact that major socio-political and economic forces on the macro/global level as well as changing consumer cultural and behavioral trends on the micro level have significantly impacted the travel and tourism industry, along with the entire business community – both globally, across the US and locally here in Beaufort County, South Carolina.

The Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau has approached long range strategic planning for Bluffton as a destination. Our steps:

Proactive engagement with local stakeholders, influential and industry thought leaders.

Expansion of the Bluffton Marketing Committee representing lodging, sports, cultural, retail, restaurants, attractions and Town of Bluffton local stakeholders.

Bluffton Marketing Plan

A. Bluffton Creative Brief Highlights

Main Idea

Bluffton is the Heart of the Lowcountry.

Brand Personality

Authentic and real, eclectic and expressive, unique and pride

Support:

- Old fashioned Southern Hospitality with a coastal flair
- Tapestry of eclectic arts, crafts and shops
- Historic sites, characters and stories
- Lowcountry cuisine-local, coastal and fresh
- Natural beauty of the May River
- Bluffton is open for Business: Economic Development

Key Attributes:

- Rich history and heritage
- Legacy of creative and cultural appreciation
- Strong arts presence
- Independent spirit
- May River
- Balance of tradition and new ideas
- Bluffton retail, business and residential centers
- Complementary contrast to resort luxury image of Hilton Head Island
- Fast growing residential community with a new brand identity

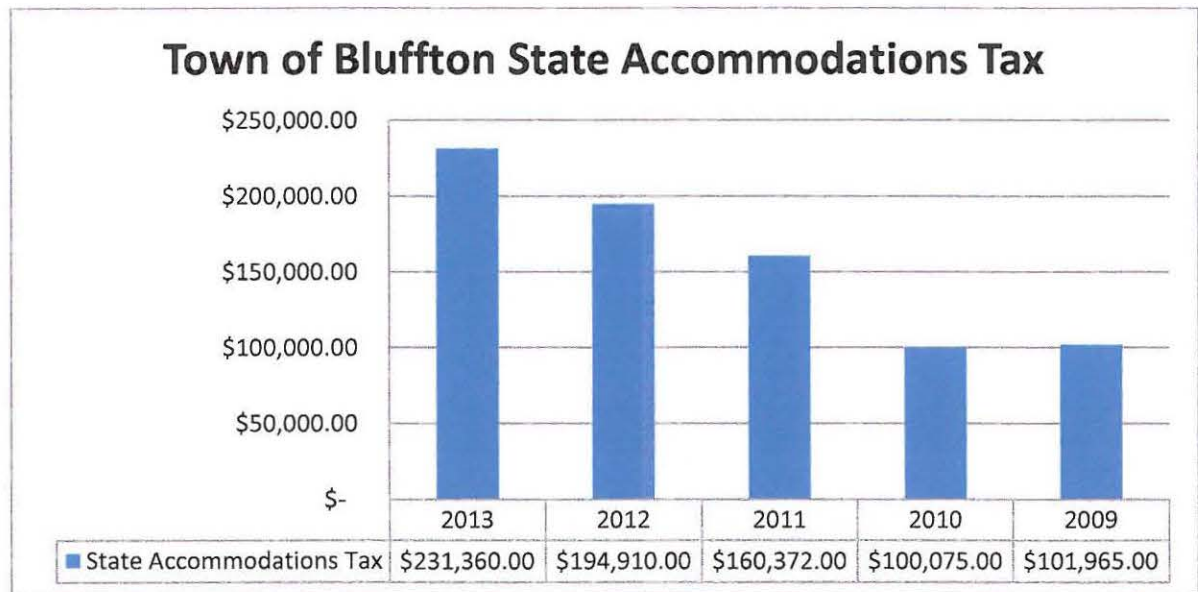
Bluffton Marketing Committee Goals and Markets

The Bluffton Marketing Committee became an official Chamber standing committee under the Bluffton-Okatie Business Council in early 2003, with two appointed co-chairs, and became a standing committee of the Chamber’s Visitor and Convention Bureau in 2008.

The group is committed to the following goals:

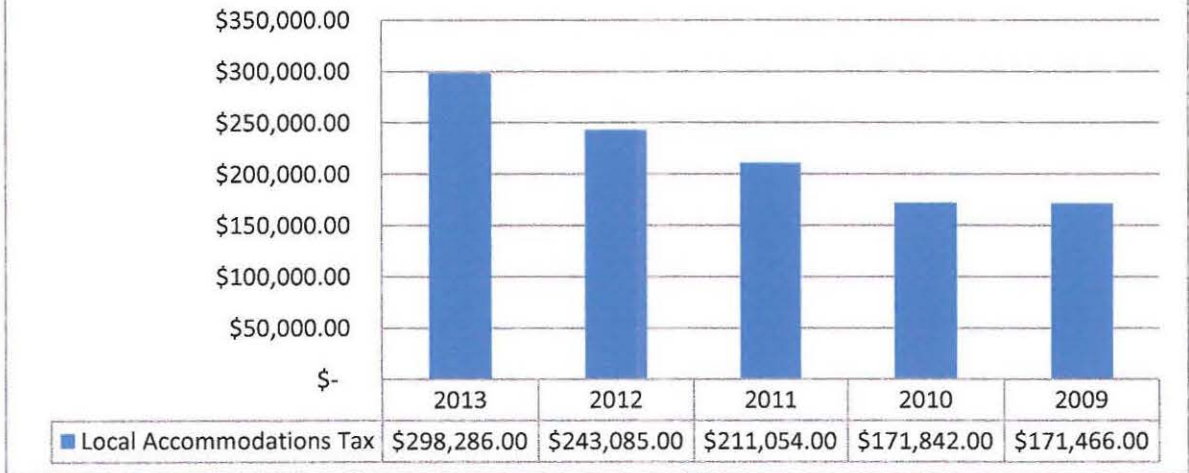
1. Support the destination’s brand position throughout all marketing programs.
2. Increase overnight visitation in Southern Beaufort County, particularly Bluffton and Daufuskie Island, which together contribute over 50% of the county’s accommodations taxes collected.
3. Increase visitor’s expenditures at Beaufort County attractions, retail and dining facilities, particularly in Bluffton. Thus, increase Bluffton and Beaufort County’s attraction, hospitality, and sales taxes collected.
4. Goal for 2014-2015 is 2% overall visitor spending increase and visitor tax base

Research and data related to Bluffton



Source: Town of Bluffton Finance Department, Special Revenues

Town of Bluffton Local Accommodations Tax



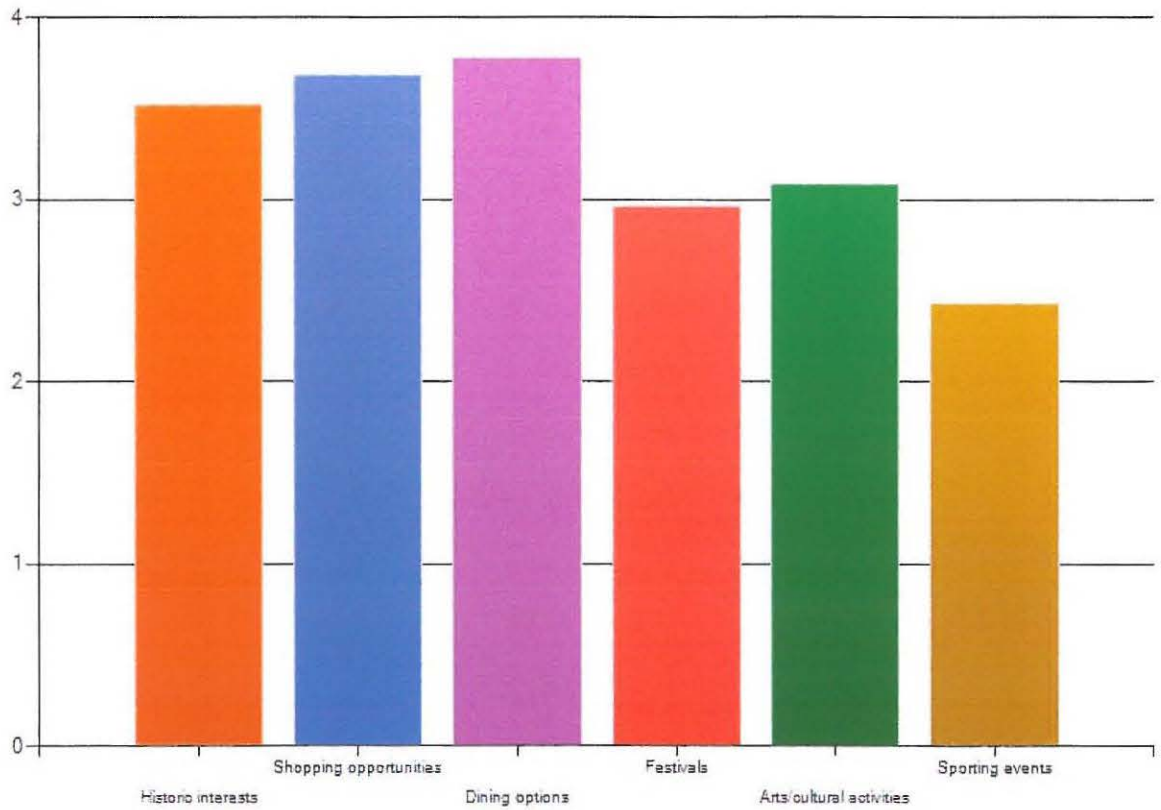
Source: Town of Bluffton Finance Department, Special Revenues

Town of Bluffton Local Hospitality Tax



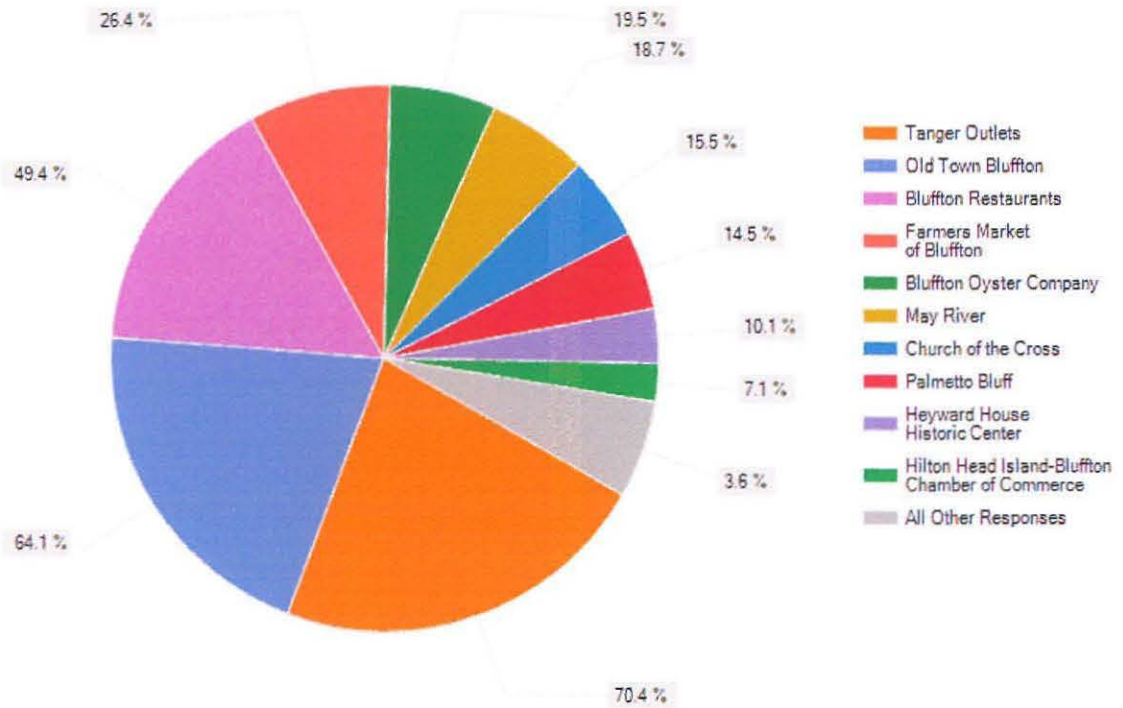
Source: Town of Bluffton Finance Department, Special Revenues

How important were the following factors in deciding to visit the Bluffton area?



Source: 2013-2014 Bluffton Visitor Profile Study

Which specific areas of Bluffton did you visit?



Source: 2013-2014 Bluffton Visitor Profile Study

B. Marketing Tactics

Marketing tactics and strategies will focus on the following markets:

1. Affluent consumers visiting Old Town Bluffton for cultural, historic, tours, shopping and culinary activities as day visitors.
2. Overnight stays in Bluffton for new visitors as well as repeat visitors to region.
3. Group Tour Planners and their customers with interest in Southeastern destinations, particularly as a central location for hub and spoke coastal, historic, shopping, cultural, heritage, cuisine, and environmental tours.

Hilton Head Island’s Visitor & Convention Bureau’s investment in destination digital content management, capable and qualified staff content managers/ editors and a professional, well executed public relations, digital social media and promotion program is key to operating a robust destination marketing program in today’s competitive and cluttered travel communications environment – particularly with limited funding available for paid space media – this aspect of our work has become increasingly important – even over the past 12 months -- as new communications channels emerge and evolve to give consumers more choices, more channels and more content.

Leisure Brand Marketing

Over the past eleven (11) years of managing the Bluffton Marketing Committee and destination marketing program for the Town of Bluffton, the Chamber's VCB has expanded our branding efforts through buys in national historic/cultural niche publications and websites in key drive markets targeting travel and cultural enthusiasts with a HHI of \$100,000.

In 2014-2015 we plan to continue this national branding campaign with a core focus on digital platforms and a scaled back print presence.

Print & Digital Ad Production: Budget \$2,500

We plan to use a local graphic designer/agency to produce all print and digital advertising components.

1. Bluffton-specific e-newsletter: Budget \$10,000

September 2014 issue: 10th Annual Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival sent to full Insider database (Bluffton and Hilton Head Island)

Below newsletters will be sent to Bluffton Insider database

November 2014 issue: Bluffton Christmas Parade Weekend events

January 2015 issue: Spring Art Walk

March 2015 issue: 36th Annual Bluffton Village Festival

May 2015 issue: May River/On the water

2. Bluffton's Facebook page: Budget \$4,000

Bluffton's Facebook page will be launched in the second half of 2014.

Facebook Audience

55% Female as compared to 45% Male

Key Age Ranges: 43% are between the ages of 18-34; 20% are between the ages of 35-49

Somewhat Affluent: 30% earn between \$60 - \$100K; 32% earn \$100K or more

Engagement Tactics

- User Generated Content
- Contests/Sweeps
- Interactive/ Targeted Apps
- Follow local attractions & events to re-post

Facebook “Like” Campaign

With more than 750 million users worldwide, Facebook is the leading social network. The average Facebook user spends 50 minutes on Facebook a day. We will continue to use Facebook as an opportunity to efficiently drive “Like” fans that we can then market to via our ongoing social media program.

3. **Website Search Engine Optimization (SEO): Budget \$7,400**

The VCB plans to continue the program for expanding and broadening our organic keyword search engine rankings on Google, Yahoo, YouTube and Bing for a targeted list of key search terms that best correlate with Bluffton’s target visitor and visitor experiences.

4. **Monthly Bluffton Blog: Budget \$5,500**

The Chamber’s VCB plans to continue the monthly Bluffton Blog and connect it to **VisitBluffton.org**. We will feature local freelance bloggers and bi-monthly posts with interviews of locals, Bluffton local events and happenings, photography, storytelling and interactive online engagement with Bluffton aficionados.

Identify key influencers, affinity groups, associated blogs and Facebook/ Google+ communities to share and syndicate blog stories to attract engagement and content consumption

- Encourage partners to re-post blog content
- Add more visual content to blogs – larger photos, more video, infographics
- New posts in each category twice per month= 16 posts per month and 192 posts per year.

5. **Search Engine Marketing (SEM) PPC Campaign: Budget \$37,400**

SEM/PPC marketing is a key driver of VisitBluffton.org website visitation and measurable conversions. 2014-2015 campaigns will include the following:

- Local Search
- US Search
- Contextual
- Remarketing
- Interest categories

We will expand the PPC effort to build on the most efficient and effective channels plus banner ad campaigns. We will add mobile and video campaigns.

- Additional ad groups and keywords-Consumers continue to search in new ways resulting in the need to continually expand and optimize.
- This SEM program will drive traffic to specific pages on **VisitBluffton.org** based on the messaging in the PPC ads. We will also set up tracking for the PPC ads to measure success for these ads.

Bluffton Search Ad Example 2013

Google bluffton vacation packages

Web Maps News Shopping Images More Search tools

Any time All results Orlando, FL

Bluffton Vacation Package - HiltonHeadIsland.org
www.hiltonheadisland.org/Bluffton
 Plan Your **Bluffton Vacation** and Find the Best Packages Here!
 Hilton Head Island has 372 followers on Google+
 Festivals & Events - Shopping & Antiques - Hotels & Lodging - History & Museums

Bluffton Vacation Rentals, Condo Rentals & more in Bluffto...
www.vrbo.com ... Hilton Head Island - Off Island Areas
 Browse and book **Bluffton South Carolina vacation rentals** on VRBO - Vacation Rentals By Owner. Inquire directly with owners and plan your next vacation here.

Visit **Bluffton South Carolina! The Official Travel & Tourism ...**
www.bluffton.com/
 A complete **Bluffton, SC Travel & Tourism Guide** specializing in hotels, real estate, restaurants, attractions and local business ... Savannah Vacation Rentals ...

Bluffton Contextual Ad Example 2013

TRANSFORMERS THE RIDE - 3D JOIN THE FIGHT NOW OPEN AT UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT

About.com **Southeast US Travel**

Southeast US Travel Plan a Trip Things to Do Best of the Southeast

Inn at Palmetto Bluff - Bluffton, South Carolina
 By Sherran Alexander

Free Southeast US Travel Newsletter
 Sign up

Ad: South Carolina Travel Luxury Travel Savannah Airport US Scenic Travel Palmetto Bluff, SC

Description:
 Located about 12 miles from Hilton Head and 30 miles from Savannah Airport along the picturesque May River, the Inn at Palmetto Bluff offers a haven for relaxation in the beautiful South Carolina Lowcountry. Accommodations include an array of cottages and village homes, many with fireplaces and scenic water views. The May River Golf Club, an 18-hole Jack Nicklaus signature course, meanders through the May River Forest and along the banks of the river and the Spa at Palmetto Bluff offers a delicious list of therapies and treatments.

Address:

Ads:
Bluffton Vacation Package
www.hiltonheadisland.org/Bluffton
 Discover Bluffton - Local Insight & Great Hotel Deals. Plan Your Trip!
Harry Potter™ Theme Park
www.harrypotter.com/theme-park/
 FL Residents Save Over \$30! Buy Tickets Now for Harry Potter & More.

Included in our fee by the digital agency are monthly reports on the measurable metrics of the SEM program. We will measure cost per click, resulting time/pages viewed on our website, conversion to the VCB visitor database, fulfillment ordered, and where appropriate, conversion to partner websites.

Total Website Visitation – HHI Bluffton

December 2013: 4,177 Website Visits



6. South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) 2014-2015 co-op plan: Budget \$12,200

Through the SCPRT co-op marketing program we are able to leverage the buying power of the State in order to place cost-effective media buys with the goal of driving visitation to Bluffton.

Digital: A digital display banner campaign which will utilize a combination of strategies to include behavioral targeting, and contextual targeting in order to deliver the Bluffton brand messaging to qualified prospective visitors interested in visiting the area.

Television: We will use the :30 second spot created by Rawle Murdy and Crescent Moon Pictures to run a :30 second spot schedule in multiple near-drive markets to include Augusta, Charleston, Columbia, Florence-Myrtle Beach, Greensboro-High Point-Winston-Salem, Greenville-Spartanburg-Andersonville-Asheville and Raleigh-Durham. There will be a maximum reach of TV audiences by combining local broadcast stations (FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC) and cable (NCC).

7. *Southern Living* 2014 Idea House (Palmetto Bluff) Sponsorship/*Southern Living* Weddings Sponsorship Campaign

Budget: \$39,000

**Remaining portion of the total cost to come from Town of Bluffton Supplementary Grant

Part One: Sponsorship of the 2014 *Southern Living* Idea House in Palmetto Bluff

The *Southern Living* Idea House program has been in existence for 24 years and has built 58 upscale beautiful homes. The purpose of the annual Idea House is to provide design inspiration to *Southern Living's* loyal followers. Strategically, the location of the *Southern Living* Idea House being at Palmetto Bluff allows for the entire community of Bluffton to leverage the tremendous earned media reach of the *Southern Living* Idea House with the promotion of the new Bluffton brand to target visitors.

As the official travel sponsor of the *Southern Living* Idea House, Bluffton will be spotlighted through exposure on SouthernLiving.com, in the printed magazine, and onsite at the Idea House located at Palmetto Bluff.

In 2013 the *Southern Living* Idea House was in Nashville, Tennessee. The 2013 Idea House campaign generated over 34.4 million public relations (PR) impressions and that number is still growing. In addition there were 110 media mentions in over 50 publications, blogs and broadcast outlets. Online the Nashville *Southern Living* Idea House webpage garnered 3,400,785 total page views, 378,332 visitors, 2,647,764 photo gallery views and 246,805 video views. The *Southern Living* August 2013 special issue had a readership of 16 million.

The sponsorship of the 2014 *Southern Living* Idea House in Palmetto Bluff is designed to create exposure for Bluffton through the following components:

Digital Strategy

- A digital display banner campaign will run on SouthernLiving.com
- The Idea House will be featured on SouthernLiving.com and blog posts on The Daily South with links to the 2014 Idea House main page. The Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry logo will be featured on the 2014 Idea House main page on SouthernLiving.com. This will click-through to the VisitBluffton.org website.
- The Idea House editorial photos will be featured on a dedicated *Southern Living* Pinterest board with links back to the 2014 Idea House main page on SouthernLiving.com where the Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry logo will appear.
- Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry listing will be included in the online room by room resources guide at SouthernLiving.com

Onsite at the Idea House from June 2014 until December 2014

Estimated visitors to the Idea House: 25,000. Source: *Southern Living*

- Bluffton will be featured with dedicated signage throughout the kitchen
- A 5 foot by 5 foot dedicated space in the Idea House will be provided to display Bluffton visitor and relocation information
- Bluffton photos will be displayed throughout the Idea House
- Bluffton video looping on the Idea House TV(s)
- Sponsor listing will be included in the room by room resources guide distributed to visitors as they enter the Idea House
- Opportunity to host an event at the Idea House

Print Strategy

- The new Bluffton logo: Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry will be featured in a sponsor listing in the August 2014 *Southern Living* Idea House issue. The listing will include the VisitBluffton.org website and Bluffton logo. The tablet version of the August issue will include a hyperlink to VisitBluffton.org

Part Two: Sponsorship of *Southern Living* Weddings

The *Southern Living* Weddings sponsorship is designed to increase awareness of Bluffton as a premier wedding destination. Bluffton's surroundings, including the May River and majestic live oaks, make it an ideal location for destination weddings. The recently released new Bluffton brand (Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry) with its romantic undertones, is perfectly suited for a wedding centric campaign.

With the sponsorship of *Southern Living* Weddings, Bluffton will be spotlighted through exposure on SouthernLiving.com. *Southern Living* brides are between the ages of 18-34 with a median household income of \$83,500.

The sponsorship of the 2014 *Southern Living* Weddings is designed to create exposure for Bluffton through the following components:

- Sponsor logo will be featured on the 2014 *Southern Living* Weddings main page on SouthernLiving.com
- Comprehensive banner ad rotation will be featured across SouthernLiving.com
- Sponsor will receive all opt-in data captured through the sweeps entry form (name, address, email, wedding date, fiancé name) and a list of attendees from each of 6 *Southern Living* Wedding Workshops.

Part Three: SouthernLiving.com Digital campaign

- Video Interstitials on SouthernLiving.com
- 2 *Southern Living* main page ads: the only featured advertiser on the SouthernLiving.com homepage for 24 full hours
- Editorial e-newsletter sponsorship ad on one weekly e-newsletter
- Desktop and tablet geotargeted banner rotation across SouthernLiving.com in NC, SC, TN, OH, NY, MA and GA

Added Value

- Run of SouthernLiving.com-2 banner ad sizes (728x90 and 300x250)

8. Religious Market: Budget \$3,000 (Rejuvenate and Going on Faith Conferences)

**Portion also budgeted from Beaufort County/Hilton Head Island

VCB staff will attend two religious conferences and then use those one on one appointments to qualify planners, who will then be invited to participate in a religious FAM trip in fall of 2014.

- **Going on Faith (GOF)** is an association of 3,000+ religious travel planners, serving the religious travel community. Travel Industry of America (TIA) reports that the religious travel community travels twice as often on a group package tour as the population as a whole and GOF acts the source between these Travel Planners and the Travel Industry. GOF offers access to over 20,000 travel planners who organize tours for 4.5 million seniors and boomers who belong to AARP Chapters, Bank Travel Clubs, Church Groups, and Retirement Villages.

The GOF conference is being held in Charlotte, NC in August 2014 and partners will have the option to attend the conference either as an appointment taker (separate from the DMO) or attend as a networking attendee and have access to the conference social events and workshops.

\$895 –cost for hotel properties to attend all social, and workshop events – No appointments

- **Rejuvenate Marketplace**, a religious based conference and trade show offering in-depth, targeted content for planners of faith-based events. The conference encompasses three days of educational seminars with continuing education units available, panel discussions and roundtables, well-known keynote speakers, networking and top-notch entertainment. It is an exciting gathering where planners, suppliers and experts in many fields have the opportunity to share ideas and best practices, as well as develop valuable relationships. Business gets done on the Marketplace floor as RFPs are placed and dates booked for future meetings, making the event a success for all parties. The Rejuvenate Conference is scheduled to be held in Atlanta, GA in October 2014.

9. **Military Budget \$400**

With Parris Island in our own backyard, it is important that we reach out and strengthen our destination's relationship with the many families who come to attend graduations, as well as those soldiers on active leave that are required to take some R&R once they return home. We intend to do this by participating in the annual **Travel EXPO Parris Island** hosts every March. The visitor bureau will be participating in this annual travel show, and select service partners will be able to partner and represent Southern Beaufort County. \$100.00 to exhibit.

- **The Alliance of Military Reunions** is a membership organization for the military reunion groups, and for DMO's, hotels, attractions, tour operators, and others who provide assistance in hosting reunions. Over 600 reunion groups are military members of the Alliance. They represent all U.S. services and all eras from WWII through Vietnam and the Cold War, to present day active duty groups. Collectively they have conducted over 10,000 military reunions. About 300 CVB's, accommodations, and attractions are supporting members of the Alliance. Membership includes a member listing on their website as well as in their printed membership directory. Once a member, you are then able to access potential military reunion RFP's or to host a FAM in our destination.

The VCB will become a member of this Alliance, and present this opportunity to the select service properties who wish to become a member as well. Leads generated will be tracked and reported as part of group sales metrics.

10. **Group Tour Budget \$1,750** **portion also budgeted from Beaufort County/Hilton Head Island

Group Tour remains to be an important market to maintain current and new relationships. Hilton Head Island and Bluffton continue to be attractive destinations for a hub and spoke opportunity. With Savannah 40 miles away, Beaufort 30 miles, and Charleston just under 2 hours, the Hilton Head Island- Bluffton region is ideal for groups to stay in one location for up to a week, and focus on day trips from one central area. We intend to draw group tour visitors by:

- Build relationships with operators through ABA.
- Leverage group tour
- Educate our partners on what it means to be a group friendly community
- Offer tiered pricing/packaging attractions with accommodations
- Expand promotion of group experiences on our website and special group ticket pricing

The American Bus Association (ABA), every January, ABA welcomes the travel and tourism community to the first conference of the year – the industry's premier business event – Marketplace. More than 3,500 tour operators, suppliers and exhibitors come together to kick off a new year of business opportunity and growth. Marketplace is truly

a market-place – an active, vibrant forum of buyers and sellers where business gets done. With more than 140,000 pre-scheduled appointments and 900 pre-qualified operators, Marketplace offers a year’s worth of sales meetings in one week. And with legendary networking and social events, attendees turn conversations from the conference floor into long-term business relationships. Couple this with leading education seminars and the industry’s largest exhibit hall, and Marketplace is really unmatched as the best industry event each year.

In January 2015, Visitor Bureau staff will attend the ABA Marketplace, and take advantage of up to 60 pre-scheduled appointments with pre-qualified operators to promote and sell the Hilton Head Island and Bluffton region.

11. VisitBluffton.org upgrades, Insiders Program & mobile site
Budget \$12,000

Bluffton Insiders Program: Continue growing our specific e-mail marketing distribution list. Visitors will sign up to become a Bluffton Insider and receive our bi-monthly Bluffton “insider” blog posts, Bluffton e-newsletters plus an information package including a regional vacation planner and our Bluffton walking tour map.

12. Festivals and Special Events

We will continue to work with local partners who produce area destination events to generate regional and national attention to the events and to support corresponding travel packages. There are many special events in Greater Bluffton including:

- Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival
- Palmetto Bluff Music to your Mouth
- Bluffton International & Craft Beer Fest
- Bluffton Village Festival
- Art Walks
- Palmetto Bluff Half Marathon
- Bluffton Christmas Parade
- Bluffton Historic Preservation Society/Heyward House events
- Historic Bluffton Farmers Market
- Buckwalter Place Farmers Market
- Hampton Lake Market Days
- Bluffton Sunset Party Series
- Palmetto Bluff Concerts on the Green
- Other opportunities that may develop in the year ahead

Visitor focused events are promoted in a variety of ways:

- Vacation Planner
- Online Calendar of Events

- Facebook, Twitter, Google+ , Blogs
- Rotating features on VisitBluffton.org
- E-newsletters to insiders
- Mobile site & app

C. Bluffton Collateral and Fulfillment

1. 2015 Vacation Planner Print and Online: Budget \$16,000

The Visitor & Convention Bureau completed, refreshed and expanded content promoting Bluffton in our 2015 Vacation Planner, including a 10 page color section with a map of Calhoun Street and all merchants, art galleries, restaurants, and shops highlighted. In 2015, we would like to expand this map.

2. Fulfillment: Budget \$8,500

Postage, Shipping and Mail Operations for Bluffton fulfillment for 12 months.

3. Greater Bluffton Map Budget \$2,000

Maps would be provided to the Heyward House Historic Center/Official Bluffton Welcome Center, the Bluffton and Hilton Head Island Chamber offices. The map would include the call to action: VisitBluffton.org. This map would incorporate the new Bluffton brand: Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry.

Pages 1 and 2 of the map plan to be used to promote the new brand for Bluffton with images and content reflecting Bluffton's core distinctions:

- Old Town Charm
- Bluffton Attitude
- Authentic/Realness
- Eclectic/Expressive
- Unique/Pride
- Town on the Move/Progressive
- Nature
- May River
- Live Oaks
- Location

Budgeted research programs for FY 2014-2015: Budget \$10,000

- Updating and maintenance of www.ThinkBluffton.com, the Chamber's online economic metrics portal.
- Smith Travel Research weekly and monthly reports. Measures lodging occupancy, average room rates, room demand and RevPAR for hotels only. Includes monthly comparative report with competitive destinations.
- V-Trip monthly Home & Villa lodging reports on occupancy, average room rates, RevPAR and six month forward booking pace reports. Two-source V-Trip report crunches back end Smith Travel hotel data with V-Trip back end home and villa data to produce a monthly destination report on total destination accommodations tax paying occupancy, average room rates and RevPAR.
- Monthly and YTD Visitor Traffic and Segmentation Reports by USCB's Dr. John Salazar.
- Economic Impact of Tourism on Hilton Head Island, Bluffton and Southern Beaufort County Study. A comprehensive study of the past 10 years of tourism in our region and its economic impact. The study will include comparatives with South Carolina, Southeast and US Travel economic impact data. We will also include US Travel forecast information for the next several years, as available, and our own V-Trip booking pace data.
- Subscription to the US Travel Association's Travel Monitor Program and related reports.

Appendix A



January 15, 2014

Overview

- ▶ Online Search Trends

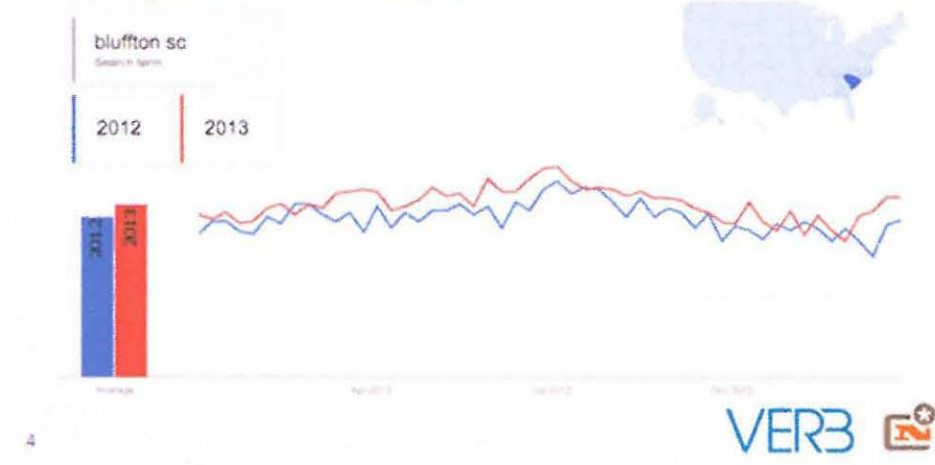
- ▶ Website Performance
 - ▶ Visitation
 - ▶ Origin Markets
 - ▶ Conversion Rate Overview

- ▶ Online Marketing Performance
 - ▶ Bluffton Paid Media
 - ▶ Trends
 - ▶ Packages YTD



Google Bluffton Brand Interest

- YTD, Interest as measured by the average of US Google searches for branded 'bluffton sc' related terms are up vs. 2012
- Most Regional Interest came from South Carolina



Total Website Visitation – HHI Bluffton

- December 2013: 4,177 Website Visits



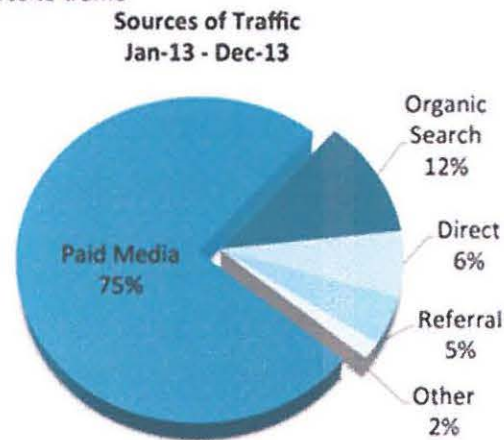
Top US DMA Visitation - HHI Bluffton

- YTD, The US drives 98% of Total Website Traffic
- The Savannah GA DMA drives 28% of Total Website Traffic



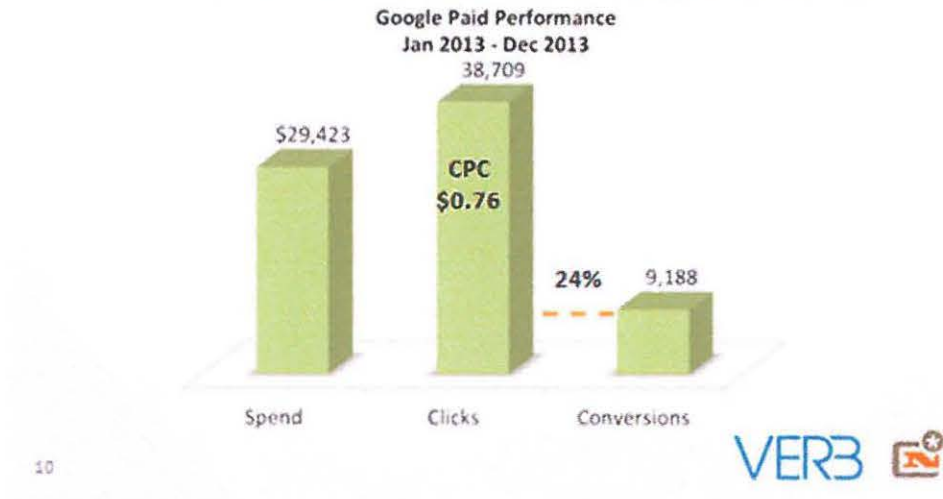
Hilton Head Island Bluffton - Visits by Source

- Search Traffic drives 87% of total website traffic
- Paid Media has driven an incremental +40k visits to the site and is the largest source of website traffic



Bluffton – Online Marketing Performance

- ▶ YTD, Bluffton Google Paid Campaigns drove Clicks at \$0.76 and Converted at 24%.
| December 2013 CPC of \$0.71 and Conversion Rate of 24%
- ▶ 97% of Google Paid Bluffton Conversions were Outgoing Links to Partners

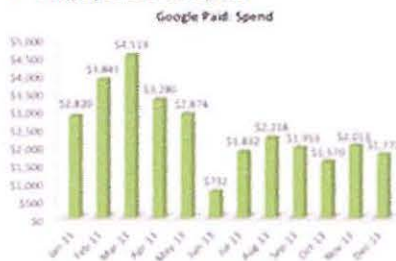


10

Google Paid Metrics – Bluffton

*Bluffton off in June
Fiscal June includes days in May

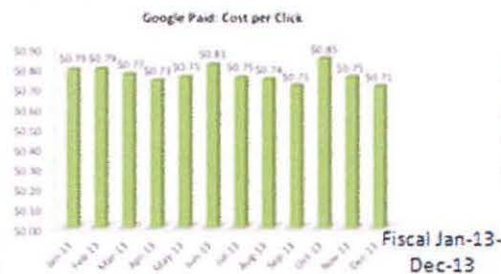
- ▶ YTD, Spend of \$29,423



- ▶ YTD, Clicks of 38,709



- ▶ YTD, Cost per Click of \$0.76



- ▶ YTD, Conversion Rate of 24%



Bluffton Packages Page



Jan-13 - Dec-13

Bluffton Packages Page

- ▶ YTD, 4,934 Total Pageviews
- ▶ 2,920 from Paid Campaigns
 - ▶ 59% of Total

Partner Link Outs

- ▶ YTD, 2,202 Total
- ▶ 973 from Paid Campaigns
 - ▶ 44% of Total



Appendix B
Digital Ad results

Charlestonmag.com digital ad:
of impressions: 23,493
Click thru rate: 26%



DAUFUSKIE ISLAND
the paradise beyond

Daufuskie Island Marketing and Fulfillment

While the Resort on Daufuskie Island remains in a period of uncertainty, there continues to be some active visitor attractions, restaurants, tours, and cottage rentals on the Island.

In the year ahead, the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber's Visitor & Convention Bureau plans to continue to promote Daufuskie through:

- Content and image updates and revisions to our microsite: www.VisitDaufuskie.org
- Local filming of a series of three short videos about Daufuskie Island experiences that visitors can participate in -- with the themes of:
 1. History and Historical Sites Self-Guided Tour
 2. Hosted Tour of Shops, Artist Galleries and Restaurants
 3. Boating in and around Daufuskie

These videos will be featured in a series of e-blasts to our Hilton Head Insiders database, as well as posted on YouTube, featured on our VisitDaufuskie.org website, promoted through our social media channels and shared with our partners at the regional and state tourism offices for distribution, as well as through the Beaufort County Channel.

Daufuskie Island Marketing Budget Total:

\$ 15,000

Hilton Head Island

MKT.Plan



HILTON HEAD ISLAND
VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU

2014-2015 Hilton Head Island Destination Marketing Plan

This tab includes the FY 2014-15 Destination Marketing Plan for Hilton Head Island. It is funded through Town of Hilton Head Island accommodations tax, private sector investments and our South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism Destination Specific 2:1 private-public fund match grant.

Although Beaufort County DMO funds do not directly fund the budget figures in this plan, there are a number of joint programs that the Beaufort County DMO funds for Southern Beaufort County support in combination with the Hilton Head Island specific plan. In this way, we drive cost efficiency and effectiveness. Some examples include:

- Research
- Vacation Planner & collateral fulfillment costs
- Website
- Social Media
- Public Relations
- Shared costs of some group tour & travel market programs

Reading this plan will also give you a fuller understanding of the entire scope of work our organization performs annually to promote tourism in our region.



HILTON HEAD ISLAND
VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU

2014-2015

Destination Sales & Marketing Plan

Mission

Mutually lead our membership and travel and tourism industry by marketing and guiding the Hilton Head Island destination brand experience to generate sustainable economic vitality.

Brand Commitment

Hilton Head Island renews and enriches a visitor's body and spirit through a sophisticated, relaxing, aesthetically beautiful and lush South Carolina seaside resort environment. The community offers a fun and restorative beach culture, world-class golf and tennis, vibrant arts, history and culture, and refreshing outdoor recreation in an ecologically sensitive setting.

Guiding Principles

- Serve as a voice and advocate for the business community
- Maintain the highest ethical standards in all we do
- Work to preserve and enhance the prudent growth, quality of life and character of our region
- Develop collaborative partnerships only in areas where the partnership can accomplish that which our organization cannot do alone
- Develop and implement programs and services that benefit the economic well-being and common interests of our members
- Initiate programs for which there is funding and staffing resources
- Make decisions based on long-term perspective

Hilton Head Island Marketing Council

The Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau's destination marketing programs have been clearly focused on the following short term and long term goals, as set by our Hilton Head Island Marketing Council, under the leadership of VCB Vice Chairman Jay Wiendl, General Manager of the Sonesta Resort Hilton Head Island.

Short Term Focus (Now through Calendar 2015)

Top 5

1. Make group sales and marketing a major focus, to drive shoulder and off-season occupancy and compression. Special attention to corporate segment.
2. Expand our Social Media Strategy & Allocate Resources (Staff and Outsourcing) to fully optimize our brand voice, particularly to next gen travelers, and evaluate ROI metrics.
3. Continue to enhance *our Get Louder! Campaign* to better communicate the story of our destination, the Renaissance effect, and our organization's marketing programs and successes locally and regionally. Expand public relations efforts.
4. Emphasis on marketing the shoulder and off-seasons across all destination market segments.
5. Invest in sustaining and strengthening of digital SEO and keyword search.

Long Term Focus (Up to 10 Years)

Top 4

1. Funding – Grow destination marketing funds; explore opportunities to develop new funding sources.
2. Target the affluent traveler with household income of \$150K+.
3. Support the retention and growth of new JetBlue service as well as legacy carrier service, and back the expansion of additional service at both HH Airport and Savannah-Hilton Head International airport. Evaluate and work to improve destination ground transportation services.
4. Tourism Product Development and Packaging – destination engagement in working with attractions to bundle and package experiences that differentiate and sell the destination to group as well as leisure segments, both domestically and internationally.

NEXT GEN IS HERE

The major shift in generational travel is now well underway; it defines changes in consumer thinking and behavior that will last well into the next decade and beyond.

Peter Yesawich, head of The MMGY Travel Group, first called this change *The New Normal*.

90 million US Millennial generation travelers will begin to surpass the 72 million US Baby Boomers in their collective buying power and influence as each year passes. Both generations, as well as the smaller Gen Xers “in between” these two generational groups, have significant commonality within the burgeoning NEXT GEN travel segment, for both group and leisure travel:

Next Gen Travelers are not defined by age, gender, income or status in life. Rather, they are defined by their attitudes toward technology as an enabler of travel experiences, facilitator of transactions and a social vehicle to share provocative insights, opinions and commentary on travel destinations, experiences and travel service suppliers.

The Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau is engaged in long range strategic planning for the destination from a New Normal perspective, and focused on growing our appeal to today’s most influential and experiential travelers – Next Gen affluent travelers – a move that will benefit the destination now and through the next generation.

Our steps:

Proactive engagement with local stakeholders, influencers and industry thought leaders.

Elimination of single industry sector committees that silo our tourism community.

Direction from the Hilton Head Island Marketing Council with cross industry representation and voice.

Research Investment in understanding the motivations, decision making cycles, preferences and habits of today’s – and tomorrow’s - diverse and changing affluent travelers.

The job of embracing, understanding and serving today’s travel consumers is a **circle** that our organization has started, one that is dynamic & collaborative in nature and continuously moving forward as we work with the business community to lead along new pathways.

Renaissance Hilton Head Island

FY 2013/14 brought the literal dawn of a new day on the Island and in the region in terms of tourism product development and redevelopment. A recap of the current status:

- \$30 million complete restoration (flagship change spring 2012) of the Sonesta Resort Hilton Head Island, which re-opened in spring 2013.
- \$30 million renovation of The Westin Hilton Head Resort & Spa, completed spring 2013.
- Over \$40 million resort redesign and rebuilding including The Sea Pines Resort's Plantation Club into The Sea Pines Plantation Golf Club, with a Grand Opening on April of 2014, new oceanfront Sea Pines Beach Club, scheduled to open this summer, and Harbour Town Clubhouse scheduled to break ground immediately after the RBC Heritage this April.
- Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort's \$17 million renovation, with phase I completed and phase II scheduled for this fall/winter.
- Announced major renovation of the Hilton Head Marriott Resort & Spa, scheduled for this winter.
- Completion of a \$5 million renovation of the Beach House Hilton Head Island, completed spring 2012, and additional enhancements to be completed by mid 2014.
- \$74 million complete redevelopment of The Mall at Shelter Cove, renamed Shelter Cove Towne Centre, and the town's new Linear Park linking Shelter Cove to the Chaplin Beach Park. First phase opened this past winter, with additional phases to be completed over next two years.
- Plans to redevelop Coligny and the surrounding South End retail shopping and dining hub, including Pope Avenue, Coligny Circle, and public beach/ visitor parking.
- Town's acquisition of additional land and joint venture with USCB to develop a new Hilton Head Island campus of the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) off Pope Avenue on the Island's South End. The campus will house the university's expanded Travel, Tourism and Hospitality School, including a potential professional tennis program.
- A number of our Select Service properties have completed, or announced future renovations to include the following properties:
 - Red Roof Inn
 - Hampton Inn Hilton Head
 - Hilton Head Quality Inn & Suites
 - Comfort Inn South Forest Beach
- Longer term planning underway to develop a new historic and cultural site of national and international significance at the Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park by the Mitchelville Preservation Project on land leased from the Town of Hilton Head Island. Mitchelville was the first self-governed freedmen's village in the United States, and is featured on the VCB's new Gullah microsite: www.HiltonHeadGullah.com
- Extension of the runway of Hilton Head Airport to 5,000 feet, and other Airport improvements by Beaufort County with the FAA and Town.

- Construction planned for a new flyover on the main Hilton Head Island bridge to improve traffic flow and safety for vehicles traveling between the Island and the mainland, and addition of bicycling lanes.
- Commitment by the Town of Hilton Head Island to a community-wide sustainability benchmark assessment, key to putting our destination on the modern path to being a true sustainable 21st Century destination.
- Launch by USCB of a new Island Ambassador certified visitor services training program for front line and hospitality industry employees as well as public employees that interface with visitors, paid for through the Town of Hilton Head Island hospitality taxes.
- Continued investment by the Town in bicycling and walking pathways to enhance our potential move toward “complete streets,” which a growing number of locals advocate. Launch of a volunteer led Bicycling Ambassador program to assist visitors on pathways by the Bicycling Advisory Committee of the Chamber and Town.
- Opportunities continue to exist to create/improve:
 - WiFi access and Fiber Optic Network, on Island and countywide
 - Interconnected Digital Wayfinder System
 - Vacation Home & Villa product – encouraging owners and regimes to renovate product that is “tired” and outdated in some areas/ regimes
 - Ground transportation - cost and service improvements needed to improve competitiveness with other destinations
 - Historic, cultural, arts and parks experiences for visitors

9 Key Marketing Strategies

Strategically, the Visitor & Convention Bureau’s marketing, sales and visitor services staff will execute the day-to-day tactical implementation and management of the destination marketing program driven by these key strategies:

1. Sustain and grow Hilton Head Island’s travel and tourism market share.
2. Continue to change/evolve our destination travel planning, marketing promotions, sales and visitor services to meet the needs and expectations of the affluent travel marketplace and consumers in 2014-15 and beyond into the coming decade.
3. Let consumer research, benchmarking and metrics drive our marketing program.
4. Utilize the Hilton Head Island Marketing Council to actively and collaboratively engage our partners in working with us to help define changes needed in the local tourism

marketplace and give them the communications information and tools they need to become vocal advocates for the destination and organization.

5. Utilize the Hilton Head Island Marketing Council as well as the greater chamber membership to foster cross industry networking, co-operation, cross-marketing, packaging and sales, and opportunities for innovation in pursuing new market segments.
6. Create destination promotions with the business community that cooperatively market one of our destination's most compelling differentiators: Hilton Head Island, Bluffton and the Lowcountry's wide range of quality visitor experiences through attractions, both natural and man-made. As a destination differentiator, we can work together locally to make it easier and simpler for both group and leisure travelers to see, understand and buy packaged travel experiences.
7. Move the needle
 - : by doing our homework (research) to understand the changing consumer and the most powerful value proposition(s) we offer to meet their needs.
 - : by advocating for innovative and contemporary product redevelopment and packaging on Hilton Head Island with our members/ partners that own and sell the product.
 - : by advancing marketing promotions that target high value visitors with compelling, brand consistent messages.
 - : by championing authenticity and truth in advertising about Hilton Head Island as a travel destination and reflecting the community's and our organization's principles and core values in all we do.
 - : by beeline focusing our team on meeting the VCB's specific sales prospecting, lead and conversion goals, especially shoulder/off-season groups and corporate meetings.
 - : by energizing our partners to actively support and participate in co-op marketing and sales programs planned and executed by the DMO.
 - : by expanding ways to measure the collective sales performance and success by the destination and our partners.
 - : by empowering our partners to network with each other to cross market the destination on their own, particularly in ways that support the overall destination brand.

: by continuing to enhance a strong working relationship with the directorate at the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and leveraging state promotional opportunities and resources for our region.

: by developing a viable, long-term plan to grow public and private investment in destination marketing.

: by focusing on seasonal growth: In group & leisure markets, focus destination marketing and sales programs on driving *new fall and spring shoulder season business*, and supporting winter season business growth as funding and resources allow. Service peak season visitors. Monitor summer fill needs through the V-Trip pace reports and make adjustments to marketing campaign deployment if required.

: by supporting sustainability and growth in travel and tourism jobs, economy and tax base, and quality of life benefits garnered by a strong and healthy Island tourism industry.

8. Utilize the Hilton Head Island Marketing Council to serve as ambassadors for the local travel and tourism industry and Chamber's VCB, and advocate for its success. Continue to invest time and resources in educational forums, workshops, research investment, spreading awareness of our www.thinkhiltonheadisland.com economic metrics portal, online dashboard metrics and ROI reporting, enhance local communications program and advocacy that gives a cohesive voice to common concerns.
9. Champion development of a strong, collaborative plan for the future of tourism on Hilton Head Island.

Research-Based Destination Marketing & Planning

The Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau invests staff management time and resources, as well as significant budget investment with qualified research partners with these goals:

- Understand current and long term trends that drive consumer behavior.
- Develop strategic plans that weigh both local stakeholder input and the consumer's voice through quantitative and qualitative research.
- Follow the Destination Marketing Association International's DMO Best Practices in research, planning and reporting.
- Develop tools that both the VCB staff and the local tourism industry can use to improve marketing, sales and visitor services.
- Provide timely results metrics and tourism industry information, particularly through our economic and business metrics portal: www.ThinkHiltonHeadIsland.org
- Provide transparent accountability metrics and travel industry data that local and state government and related agencies can use to make better public policy and program decisions.

Budgeted programs for FY 2013-14 include:

1. Smith Travel: Monthly & Weekly Hotel Lodging Report and Monthly Competitive Set Report.
2. V-Trip: Monthly Home and Villa Lodging Report and Monthly Combined Home & Villa + Hotel Two-Source Report, including 6 month "on the books" booking pace report. Includes access to national travel and consumer trend reports for our "*ThinkHiltonHeadIsland*" web portal.
3. Raven / Google Analytics Web & Social Media: Year-long tracking tools.
4. Group Business Study – With the focus on building group business set by the Marketing Council, we will invest in a "deep dive" analysis of the Competitive Market Position and Economic Impact/ Potential Market Share Growth of the Island's Group Business Sector compared to other resort destinations without a convention center, including recommendations for new sales and marketing strategies by the Visitor & Convention Bureau and destination partners. RFP to be developed by VCB with input from Marketing Council Task Force in mid-2014.
5. 2013 Leisure Visitor Profile & Conversion Study - Completed by USCB in early 2014. VCB staff will work with USCB to expand mining of this rich source of new consumer data by visitors and target profile non-visitors, including 6-8 new niche market sub-sets of analysis. A comprehensive study of the economic impact of the tourism industry in our region will be completed in the fiscal year ahead, based on data from this study.

6. DMAI Group and Event Impact Calculator: Online tool to calculate economic impact of local meetings, groups and events, purchased through DMAI.
7. Festival and Event Co-Ops: Co-op cost sharing with local festivals and events of USCB conducted on-site, online events survey. Current partners include: HHI Motoring Festival & Concours d'Elegance, Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival and Island Rec Center events.
8. 2014 Bicycling Study: An analysis of the economic impact of bicycling in the Hilton Head Island region and the profile of bicycling visitors, followed by a Bicycling Summit in 2015.
9. 2014 VISA International Travel Study: Partnership with the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to study spending patterns of international visitors through VSA transactions.
10. Chamber Business Barometer: online survey of outlook, confidence levels and concerns of local business community, conducted by the chamber with USCB.
11. www.ThinkHiltonHeadIsland.com: Operate and staff ½ FTE to provide constantly updated Business Metrics web portal for members and public to assess local, regional and national/international research, including special monthly VCB Destination Dashboard.
12. Pop Polls: New series of short polls of our Insider database on current and future travel trends and media preferences.

Budget: \$92,000

Facilitated by: VCB Marketing Staff managing projects with USCB Travel & Tourism Institute, Smith Travel, V-Trip, US Travel, DMAI and SCPRT, and other potential research resources, TBD.

Meetings/Group Sales & Marketing

With the clear priority of group business development, particularly within the corporate meetings sector, set by the Hilton Head Island Marketing Council in FY 2014/15, here is a look at American Express' 2014 Global Meetings Forecast, followed by our local destination situation and plan:

American Express Meetings & Events 2014 Global Meetings Forecast:

Looking to 2014, our survey respondents and contributors indicate that the rising use of social media and mobile applications are certainly the largest anticipated trends in meetings across every region. Additionally, we see meeting planners once again pointing to budget challenges in 2014 and a continued shift to more local meetings and across every region.

Across all regions surveyed, respondents indicate that the approval process for meetings is becoming more rigorous. Given that meetings is often one of the least managed spend categories within many companies, this shift is natural as procurement turns their attention to the category in an effort to create more efficiencies for organizations.

Across all regions, group hotel rates for meetings and events are expected to rise in 2014. Meetings demand for mid-tier properties is also predicted to continue rising in 2014 as it has for the last two years suggesting that mid-tier properties have become the primary choice among meeting planners globally.

Mobile applications and social media are two technologies frequently used by attendees in their personal lives. As the use of meeting-specific apps and social media within meetings continues to rise, meeting planners are expected to face greater pressure to incorporate these technologies into their events as well. Expectations regarding interactivity with other attendees, the ability to share opinions and "review" a meeting in progress, as well as access to deeper information about presenters and content are growing among meeting attendees. The available tools and ease of use are also growing; however, incorporating these elements does not yet appear to be a consistent component of the planning process.

Another element receiving increasing attention is the incorporation of group air into the meeting planning process, a trend which appears to have plenty of room for growth. Group air rates are expected to remain relatively flat or see some very modest increases over the next two years. As planners become more aware of the cost advantages and flexibility associated with group fares, they are likely to focus more on this area. Many planners looking to find increased savings in a world where budgets are remaining stable but meeting needs are growing, are likely to turn to group air to help alleviate a bit of pressure. As a supplement to this forecast, we have included in-depth reports that offer perspective on three key issues facing the meetings industry today.

- Last year, we featured a report on virtual / hybrid meeting solutions. The continued interest in these solutions and growing conversation inspired us to feature this topic once again. Building on the foundation established last year, this report reveals updated statistics regarding actual and projected virtual/hybrid meeting solutions adoption rates, interest and more, including a region-by-region view. The authors also offer insight into the most effective use of virtual and hybrid solutions, and advice on building a business case for their use.
- Another topic that drew tremendous interest and was further researched for this year's forecast is meetings payment and expense management. Our expert discusses the latest policy and payment solution implementation data, as well as best practices and thoughts on closing the risk gaps associated with meetings payments.
- Our final in-depth report takes a look at the growing impact of social media on meetings from both the planner and attendee perspective. One of newest and fastest-growing influences on meetings, social media is already changing how attendees interact in many meeting settings. You'll learn about the trends and risks associated with the use of social media within the meetings environment and what planners and meeting owners should consider when looking to harness the power of social media for their own meetings program.

After years of upheaval and uncertainty, it seems there is a sense of stability returning to the meetings industry. However, we also see continued global expansion, and the importance of understanding the country-by-country dynamics given vast variances both within regions, as well as in emerging countries. Influencing this stability and expansion is a rise in meetings-related policies and programs designed to ensure meetings are executed in a way that complies with policy and delivers against strategic objectives.

As meeting owners and planners look to manage through the increasing complexity and execute on their meetings and events strategies, there are many new tools available to assist us today. The digital world in which we live gives us the ability to communicate, track and problem-solve in a real-time and more collaborative manner. By employing the right tools, we can alleviate many of the pressures covered in this forecast including safety and security concerns, globalization, changing attendee expectations and more, today.

Issa Jouaneh

Vice President and General Manager

American Express Meetings & Events

to download the full report , visit <https://businesstravel.americanexpress.com/meetingsforecast2014>

Local Situational Overview: With major investments of over \$100 million made by Hilton Head Island's major conference hotels and resorts in redevelopment, and more than an additional \$100 million in new retail and attractions investment, and an additional \$100 million plus by attractions and retailers, the Island is in a stronger product position than at any point in the last decade. We plan to leverage this newly refreshed product into new excitement about the HHI brand and interest in booking group business.

In addition, the variety and quality of experiences for group visitors that the Island offers has never been more diverse, including attractions both natural and man-made:

- Fresh new shopping and retail at The Shelter Cove Towne Centre
- Culinary offerings that are winning regional and national acclaim for its locally sourced and farm or fish to table appeal
- One of only two ZipLines in the state
- Six public marina villages, each with its own charm, unique environment and ambiance
- Internationally recognized and significant place in Civil War to Civil Rights history, particularly through the Mitchelville Freedom Park, the first self-governed Freedmen's Village in the US
- World class golf and tennis – for every player at every level of competition
- Silver level Bicycling Friendly Community – the highest rated in the state
- One of the top Farmer's Markets in the US in neighboring Bluffton and its charming Old Town
- One of the top Jazz Club's in America
- Eco-tours, Bird watching, Kayaking, Paddleboarding and Dolphin Watch Cruises – a thousand ways to explore our lush, subtropical environment
- Challenging and fun team building outings, health and wellness programs, historic and cultural tours and explorations
- Turn-key CSR Program, The Hilton Head Island Difference, offered by the VCB
- Broadway theatre, the symphony, dance and music comparable to an urban setting, but all set on a beautiful and intimate resort Island
- Quality enhancements to signature destination events, particularly the RBC Heritage PGA Tournament , HHI Motoring Festival & Concours d'Elegance and Music to Your Mouth Festival.

Sales Team Goals

The VCB Sales Team's purpose is to generate leads for group business from throughout the spectrum of market segments, with these overarching goals:

1. Corporate meetings in the shoulder & off-season is the top focus.
2. Market Hilton Head Island's unique point of difference as a meetings & group destination, with a focus on development of marketing and sales promotions of our destination's memorable and authentic Group Experiences.
3. Develop long-term goals based on perspectives gained from a competitive analysis of the Island's position as a group destination compared to other resort destinations (particularly those without a convention center), and the HHI VCB's group strategies compared with comparable CVB destinations.
4. Promote the Renaissance of the Island with over \$250 million dollars of private sector reinvestment in product development.
5. New initiatives to drive shoulder and off-season business (Flights for Sites, Cash Incentives for First Time Groups and creating a Group Closing Fund – see details to follow).
6. Targeted focus on affinity groups for shoulder & off-season business.
7. Assist our destination partners in their efforts to generate more meetings.

Planner Relationships and Service

The bureau's position is to represent the entire destination, identify lead possibilities in all meetings and group market segments, predispose our contacts to strongly consider Hilton Head Island for their meeting or group event and prepare our lodging partners, first and foremost, to make the sale. Referrals to other local businesses that service groups are also a focus of the VCB sales staff.

One of the many strengths of the Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau Meetings and Group Sales team has been its strong and loyal business relationships with clients and partners. Those relationships have been built on trust over the years and they have kept the bureau as a key and critical component in the business of business matchmaking. Those relationships are especially important an era when it's predicted that planners and suppliers will rely on existing relationships to work through challenges. (16 straight years of receiving the Pinnacle Award of Excellence for service to the Meetings Industry by the Visitor & Convention Bureau staff.)

Planners have also said that they "focus on destinations that are easy to work with and then we negotiate flexible attrition clauses and F & B costs." It all starts with service. And although technology is important, some planners indicate that service and a personal touch will still trump technology. One planner surveyed in Future Watch said "suppliers who want to get ahead need to focus on personal relationships instead of technology."

The VCB connects Hilton Head Island resources to site planners' facilities needs for retreats, educational seminars, state, regional and national meetings and conferences of all kinds.

Goals: Contact or Maintain Connections with Meeting Planners

	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Goal	2015 Goal
Phone	3,091	3,127	2,737	2,837	3,000	3,150
Email	6,141	5,977	4,582	5,349	25,500	25,600
Letter/Fax	246	225	231	229	229	230
SDR *	2,724	1,818***	2,700	3,080	3,275	3,350
DayBreak Promos	n/a	n/a	4,000,000	n/a	4,000,000	n/a
Total	12,202	11,147	4,010,250	11,619	4,032,004	32,330

DayBreak responses

400

425

Social Media Posts

12 times

12 times

*Includes calls for FAMS & Blitzes

**Partial year due to funding reductions

***Partial year due to funding reductions

Group Sales Goals

Goal: #1:

Increase the number of qualified leads by 32% in 2014

SALES	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Goal	2015 Goal
# of Leads	121	111	89	64	85	105
Potential Room	36,181	27,113	25,484	27,725	36,000	42,000
# of Definites	23	32	22	17	27	33
Definites (room nights)	3,467	3,285	3,387	3,153	5,550	6,780
Conversion	19%	29%	25%	27%	32%	31.5%

Tactics

1. Increase customer “touches” – calls, visits, FAMs, e-promos, invitations, social media, and interactive encouragement to keep Hilton Head Island top of mind with our planner clients.
2. The Hilton Head Island Sales Team is committed to respond to all group inquiries the same day they are received. The goal is to be the first responder to the client and deliver a clear service message that Hilton Head Island values their business and appreciates their consideration.
3. Commitment to continue to follow DMAI “best practices” for sales and marketing services.
4. Continue to attend AENC, GSAE and SCSAE state and regional association events and for the corporate market MPI-Carolinas, when budgets allow, bolstering marketing and direct sales efforts.
5. Work tradeshows that have the greatest amount of potential for generating leads and new contacts with particular emphasis on appointment-driven shows, including, Going on Faith Conference (GOF) & Rejuvenate Marketplace for the faith based segment, ABA for the group tour market, HSMIAI’s MEET, IMEX, DMAI Destination Showcase & AIBTM for the corporate & association market
6. Telemarketing/ lead generation/market and prospect research: Work with telemarketing vendor for continued data-cleansing and target acquisition, prospect qualification and lead generation.
7. Explore online marketing presence opportunities: Create enhanced destination profiles and actionable marketing offers in key planner search and source sites enabling destination searches of potential properties and direct RFP opportunities for new and existing customers.

Goal # 2:

Build on Hilton Head Island's identity as a meetings destination and develop spheres of influence within networks of decision makers

Tactics

1. Use past and upcoming booked business to identify affinity groups that would be inclined to consider Hilton Head Island based on testimonials from planner peers, as well as research by SDR to identify and prospect new potential corporate and affinity groups for the Island.
2. Feature promotions to planners of investments by our local partners in hotel, resort and attraction redevelopment and upgrades.
3. Network on a local, state and regional basis to keep the Hilton Head Island message in front of our target markets. Association groups include SCSAE, AENC and GSAE, corporate would be MPI-Carolinas and the New Carolina Council on Competitiveness which is a non-profit working to increase South Carolina's economic competitiveness through a cluster development strategy.
4. Produce electronic Meeting Planner Newsletters to update and engage our database of planners on new developments on Hilton Head Island in order to provide reasons to reconsider Hilton Head Island.
5. Work with VERB to develop the use of social media, specifically LinkedIn, as a portal to extend the Hilton Head Island message to targeted prospects.
6. Promote the consistent message "Inspiration as nature intended" in all marketing and communications -- a call to action that is uniquely Hilton Head Island.
7. Measure visitation to hiltonheadmeetings.org & evaluate meeting planner usage of our site through a monthly review of microsite analytics.

Goal #3:

Leverage communications for planners and partners

Tactics

1. Provide partnership opportunities to our members for tradeshow, FAMS and other industry events.
Upcoming co-op FAMS & joint promotions: (funded through public-private co-op)
 - a. **March 2014** – HHI to host a Meeting Planner Event in Boston (JetBlue Service)
 - b. **September 2014** – HHI to attend the SMU-SE event
 - c. **1st quarter 2015** – TBD (potentially targeting 3rd party planners)
2. Develop a plan with VERB to enhance search engine marketing, blogs, optimized press releases, video, social media integration and RSS feeds on our meetings microsite.
3. Update meetings microsite content regularly to ensure information is always current and accurate.

Goal #4:

New Initiatives

Tactics: VCB Sales Staff will develop and manage the application and award process for all of these new incentive programs in cooperation with local partners:

- **Flights for Sites**
 - Too many times the availability of a meeting planner being able to attend a pre-arranged FAM trip are difficult at best – so we want to offer them a “flight for a site” at their convenience – not ours
 - Goal is to support efforts of Hilton Head Island and Bluffton hotels & resorts targeting meetings and groups and to have 15 individual meeting planner sites during the fiscal year (*once the \$5,000 is depleted, the program is complete for the fiscal year*)
 - Would offer up to \$500 to pay for or subsidize a pre-qualified planner’s airfare for a site visit
 - Meeting planner must have a minimum of 100 room nights or more from their RFP and history
 - The site cannot be for a meeting or event that is held in peak season months.
 - The destination Hilton Head Island must be on the “short list” for consideration of this program
 - Meeting planner will be considered for this program regardless if they contacted the VCB initially or direct contact with resorts & hotels. A maximum of 1/3 of the flight for site dollars can be used for any one particular property and/or company
 - 15 meeting planners
 - 10 bookings
 - 1,500 room nights
- **Cash Incentive of up to \$4,000 when a meeting planner or group book their first meeting in the Hilton Head Island/Bluffton area**
 - \$1,000 for 50–100 actualized room nights
 - \$2,000 for 101-200 actualized room nights
 - \$3,000 for 201-300 actualized room nights
 - \$4,000 for 301+ actualized room nights
 - Eligibility is based upon new proposals, originated by the Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau and distributed to multiple properties, which booked for one or more nights Sunday through Thursday during the months of November – March. Cash incentives are paid to the master account within 10 days of the group’s arrival. Groups must actualize prior to January 1, 2016. The Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau reserves the right to end the incentive program at any time. Up to:
 - 5 bookings
 - 750 room nights

- **Create a Group Closing Fund (GCF)**
 - This would help offset some “disadvantage” when meeting planners compare the time and cost of ground transportation to/from the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport. In order to offset this disadvantage and secure more room nights, properties could request funds on behalf of the group to help offset their ground transportation costs.
 - The **GCF** could be \$15,000 in VCB funds to be used in the fiscal year of July 2014 – December 2015, matched with up to \$15,000 in private funds. Requires match from pass thru funds from the properties.
 - Group must have a minimum of 200 total room nights to qualify as documented by the host property.
 - Groups will only be considered for the **GCF** for shoulder and off-season dates, and priority will be given to first time groups.
 - Funds will be allocated on an annual basis and payments are limited by the availability of funds remaining in the **GCF**.
 - Should more than one property in the HHI/Bluffton area be competing for the same program, all of those properties will receive the same incentive to include in their proposals. Up to:
 - 8 bookings
 - 1,200 room nights

Engineering Group Experiences

The Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau’s Marketing Council, in concert with the VCB staff, will work to engage partners in the development of a group experience packaging program. This program is designed to package our unique Island experiences in an engaging way so that meeting planners and attendees are immersed in the Island’s culture leaving their meetings with “bragging rights” to share with family and friends.

By packaging our experiences, we will make the process of planning group activities easier for meeting planners and attendees to book so they can choose the experiences that match their interests.

Action Steps to Include:

1. As a follow-up to Joe Venito’s, “The Opportunity Guy”, Packaging Workshop in May 2013, VCB staff will attend the “Experience Lab” in Minneapolis, MN to train and evaluate how *Meet Minneapolis* executed their signature experiences program and assess how we can apply their group experiences packaging model to Hilton Head Island. Staff will then lead a workshop with local partners to develop 10 to 12 initial group experiences to feature on the new meetings microsite and in subsequent sales and promotional programs.

Budget:	Experience Lab	\$ 3,500
	Workshop	\$ 1,500

Facilitated by: Experience Lab and VCB Staff

2. Development of content, design and searchable Hospitality & Tourism Management Program (HTMP) programming for interactive section on new meetings microsite for searching and booking Group Experiences: 10 to 12 Group Experience Offerings, bookable online. Potential group experiences:

- Eco Adventures– Ziplining, parasailing, dolphin watch tours, beach walk, beach clean-up, kayaking
- Savor the Lowcountry Culinary and Historic Tours
- Coastal Discovery Eco and Historic Tours
- Gullah Cultural and Folkways Experience
- Marina Villages and Exploring Hilton Head Island by Boat
- Creative spark – art exhibitions, demonstrations and other creative opportunities
- Relax & Rejuvenate – spa package, brunch, wine & cheese sunset reception
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programs

Website Development Budget: \$ 7,500

Facilitated by: VCB Staff, local partner attractions and VERB interactive

3. Support Group Experiences Promotions with epromotions to the VCB’s Hilton Head Island Group Planner database, plus purchased access to trade media email promotions.

Budget: Series of 6 E-Promotions: \$12,000

Facilitated by: VCB Marketing Staff with local freelance writers (content) and VERB (deployment)

3. Support Package Promotions with Social Media Promotions on LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter and other social media as appropriate.

Budget: Included in VCB Social Media Budget

Facilitated by: VERB Interactive and Chamber Communications Staff

4. Support Package Promotions with SEM media and in-market intercept mobile promotions.

Budget: Included in NetConversion's Digital Media Brand Allocation
Facilitated by: NetConversion/VERB and VCB Marketing Staff

5. Support Package Promotions with PR pitches to appropriate specialty and general travel writers/editors and media outlets.

Budget: Covered in general PR fees
Facilitated by: Weber Shandwick Worldwide and Chamber Communications Staff

6. Feature Package Promotions and Results/ ROI in Local Business and Community Communications/PR.

Budget/ Facilitated by: Chamber Communications Staff

Workshops and Website:	\$ 12,500
Group Experiences E-Promos	\$ 12,000
Social Media Videos/Package Promotion	\$ Included in Social Media budget
SEM and Local Mobile Promotions	\$ <u>Included in Digital Media budget</u>
SUB-TOTAL	\$24,500

Conference Sales Initiatives

1. **Lead Prospecting:** SDR (Strategic Database Research) has been our telemarketer off and on for the last 6 years. Due to funding gaps, we've had to start & stop the process during a few of the years. The services they provide to the HHI VCB are:
- Lead Generation
 - Database Cleansing
 - Trade Show and Seminar Follow Up
 - Appointment Setting / Sales Blitz / Sales Mission

SDR generated on our behalf:

- 2,109 outgoing phone calls in 2009
- 9,106 outgoing phone calls in 2010
- 5,413 outgoing phone calls in 2011
- 9,657 outgoing phone calls in 2012
- 9,414 outgoing phone calls in 2013

The number of prospects that they have provided to the HHI VCB:

- 2009 - 52 prospects
- 2010 - 204 prospects
- 2011 - 91 prospects
- 2012 - 113 prospects
- 2013 - 197 prospects

The ongoing results of these leads are:

	<u>Total room nights tied to leads</u>	<u>Lost room nights</u>	<u>Booked room nights</u>
2009	3,430	2,492	938
2010	1,425	910	515
2011	3,407	3,347	60
2012	3,324	2,169	1,155
2013	1,348	1,348	161

Cost of this ongoing lead generation/database cleansing/trade show follow up, etc. is \$3,500 per month x 12= \$42,000 per year. **Specific focus for SDR** will be corporate meetings as well as affinity groups for the shoulder and off-season time frames.

- **Appointment Format Trade Shows**: Attend appointment-driven trade shows, which provide one-on-one connections with buyers specifically interested in Hilton Head Island as a meetings destination.
- **Trade Sponsorships**: Judiciously utilize sponsorship and bid fees to secure business opportunities (recognizing budget limitations) to score special groups with high potential impact for the whole destination.
- **Southeast focus** on vertical markets within the overall corporate sector, including incentive, pharmaceutical, healthcare and technology. Association focus geo-targets include South Carolina, Georgia and North Carolina along with the regional & national association market.
- **Select Service Co-op**: hotels partner with the VCB to work on various initiatives throughout the year in targeting Religious, Military, Government, and group tour markets.

Sales Support Budget:

Lead Prospecting	\$ 42,000
Trade Sponsorships/ Affinity Groups	\$ 30,000
Flights for Sites	\$ 5,000
Cash Incentive for 1 st time groups	\$ 10,000
GCF (Group Closing Fund)	\$ 30,000*
Select Service FAM	\$ 5,000
Site Inspections/ Out-of-Pocket:	\$ 3,000
<u>Sales Industry Dues and Subscriptions</u>	<u>\$ 3,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$138,000

*\$15,000 in DMO budget and \$15,000 in destination specific budget

Group Sales Marketing

1. **Group Experiences Initiative:** Workshops, Content and Digital development and digital e-promotions.
2. **Weddings:** Create a special new section on our website for brides and wedding planners. Capture database for future re-targeting for anniversaries, etc.
3. **Social Media:** Develop an editorial plan and allocate resources to train and manage a more robust strategy for LinkedIn with our sales staff toward relationship building.
4. **Sales Promotions Co-op:** The VCB is developing a multiple platform proposal with Successful Meetings Magazine for a co-op public-private sector co-op program using the SCPRT destination specific marketing match program to fund.
5. **Promotional Giveaways:** Hilton Head Island logoed items for giveaways during site inspections, FAMS, trade shows and sales events.

Budget:

Group Experiences Initiative:	\$24,500
Weddings Special Site: <i>Included in prior allocation to digital marketing</i>	
Group Social Media/ Linked In Promos:	\$ 5,000
Trade Media Co-op:	\$25,000
Promotional Giveaways:	\$ 6,000
Contingency	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$65,500

Select Service Hotels

Religious

VCB staff will attend two religious conferences and then use those one-on-one appointments to qualify planners, who will then be invited to participate in a religious FAM trip in fall of 2014.

The **Going On Faith Conference (GOF)** is an association of 3,000+ religious travel planners, serving the religious travel community. Travel Industry of America (TIA) reports that the religious travel community travels twice as often on a group package tour as the population as a whole and GOF acts as the source between these Travel Planners and the Travel Industry.

GOF offers access to over 20,000 travel planners who organize tours for 4.5 million seniors and Boomers who belong to AARP Chapters, Bank Travel Clubs, church groups, and retirement villages.

The GOF conference is being held in Charlotte, NC in August 2014 and partners will have the option to attend the conference either as an appointment taker (separate from the DMO) or attend as a networking attendee and have access to the conference social events and workshops.

\$895 –cost for individual hotel properties to attend all social, and workshop events – No appointments Limited to 3 hotel partners at this price.

Rejuvenate Marketplace, a religious based conference and trade show offering in-depth, targeted content for planners of faith-based events. The conference encompasses three days of educational seminars with continuing education units available, panel discussions and roundtables, well-known keynote speakers, networking and top-notch entertainment. It is an exciting gathering where planners, suppliers and experts in many fields have the opportunity to share ideas and best practices, as well as develop valuable relationships. Business gets done on the Marketplace floor as RFPs are placed and dates booked for future meetings, making the event a success for all parties. The Rejuvenate conference is scheduled to be held in Atlanta, GA in October 2014.

Military

With Parris Island in our own backyard, it is important that we reach out and strengthen our destination's relationship with the many families who come to attend graduations, as well as those soldiers on active leave that are required to get some R&R once they return home. We intend to do this by participating in the annual Travel EXPO Parris Island hosts March 2015. The VCB will be participating in this annual travel show, and select service partners will be able to partner and represent Southern Beaufort County. \$100.00 to exhibit

The Alliance of Military Reunions is a membership organization for the military reunion groups, and for DMO's, hotels, attractions, tour operators, and others who provide assistance in hosting reunions. Over 600 reunion groups are military members of the Alliance. They represent all U.S. services and all eras from WWII through Vietnam and the Cold War, to present day active duty groups. Collectively they have

conducted over 10,000 military reunions. About 300 CVBs, accommodations, and attractions are supporting members of the Alliance. Membership includes a member listing on their website as well as in their printed membership directory. Once a member, you are then able to access potential military reunion RFP's or to host a FAM in our destination.

The VCB will become a member of this Alliance, and present this opportunity to the select service properties who wish to become a member as well. Leads generated will be tracked and reported as part of group sales metrics.

Group Tour

Group Tour remains an important market to maintain current and new relationships. Hilton Head Island and Bluffton continue to be attractive destinations for a hub and spoke opportunity. With Savannah 40 miles away, Beaufort 30 miles, and Charleston 90 miles, the Hilton Head Island- Bluffton region is ideal for groups to stay in one location for up to a week, and focus on day trips from one central area. We intend to draw group tour visitors by:

- Building relationships with operators through ABA.
- Leverage group tour
- Educate our partners on what it means to be a group friendly community
- Offer tiered pricing/packaging attractions with accommodations
- Expand promotion of group experiences on our website and special group ticket pricing

The American Bus Association (ABA), every January, welcomes the travel and tourism community to the first conference of the year – the industry's premier business event – Marketplace. More than 3,500 tour operators, suppliers and exhibitors come together to kick off a new year of business opportunity and growth. Marketplace is truly a market-place – an active, vibrant forum of buyers and sellers where business gets done. With more than 140,000 pre-scheduled appointments and 900 pre-qualified operators, Marketplace offers a year's worth of sales meetings in one week. And with legendary networking and social events, attendees turn conversations from the conference floor into long-term business relationships. Couple this with leading education seminars and the industry's largest exhibit hall, and Marketplace is really unmatched as the best industry event each year.

In January 2015, Visitor Bureau staff will attend the ABA Marketplace, and take advantage of up to 60 pre-scheduled appointments with pre-qualified operators to promote and sell the Hilton Head Island and Bluffton region.

Trade Shows

Divergent trends surround the meetings trade show business these days. Planners who expressed preferences for face-to-face meetings seem at odds with recent deep declines in trade show attendance by the planners themselves. A relatively new approach – appointment-driven trade shows with transparent agendas and measurable touches has emerged. These are “hosted shows”, with the shows’ producers vetting planners to assure they qualify to attend and then paying their way. The Group Sales team will attend both traditional and appointment-driven shows in 2014–2015. The schedule has been determined through research into shows’ reputations for productivity and by reaching out to determine our partners’ preferences.

Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau’s 2014-2015 Tradeshow

Tradeshow	Market	Dates	Location	\$
The Going on Faith **	Religious	Aug/2014	Charlotte, NC	3,000
HSMAI’s MEET	Assn & Corp	Sept/2014	Washington, D.C.	9,375
IMEX*	Corporate	Oct/2014	Las Vegas, NV	22,500
Rejuvenate Marketplace	Religious	Oct/2014	Atlanta, GA	3,500
GSAE	Association	Nov/2014	Atlanta, GA	750
AENC	Association	Dec/2014	Raleigh, NC	3,000
SCSAE	Association	Jan/2015	Columbia, SC	2,500
American Bus Association**	Group Tour	Jan/ 2015	St. Louis, MO	4,000
DMAI Destination Showcase	Assn & Corp	Feb/2015	Washington, D.C.	9,375
Parris Island/Military	Military	March/2015	Parris Island, SC	500
Collaborate Marketplace	Corporate	May/2015	Orlando, FL	3,500
SUB-TOTAL:				\$62,000

* \$22,500 already approved - part of the VCB’s 2014 Town of HHI supplemental grant

** Included in Beaufort County/Bluffton Budget

Group Sales & Marketing Budget Summary Recap:

Sales Support:	\$123,500
Marketing Promotions:	\$ 65,500
Travel Trade Shows:	\$ 62,000
Meetings Co-ops Public-Private Match:	\$200,000
RBC Heritage Group Co-ops:	<u>\$175,000</u>
Sub-total:	\$626,000

Target Audiences

Leisure Target Brand & Specialty Interest Segments

Leisure Travel

Focus on growing shoulder season fall and spring business when there is greater available inventory of product and occupancy growth potential.

Target Affluent Leisure Travelers – domestically, defined as having a household income of \$150,000+ who take at least one leisure trip requiring overnight accommodations in the past 12 months to Hilton Head Island:

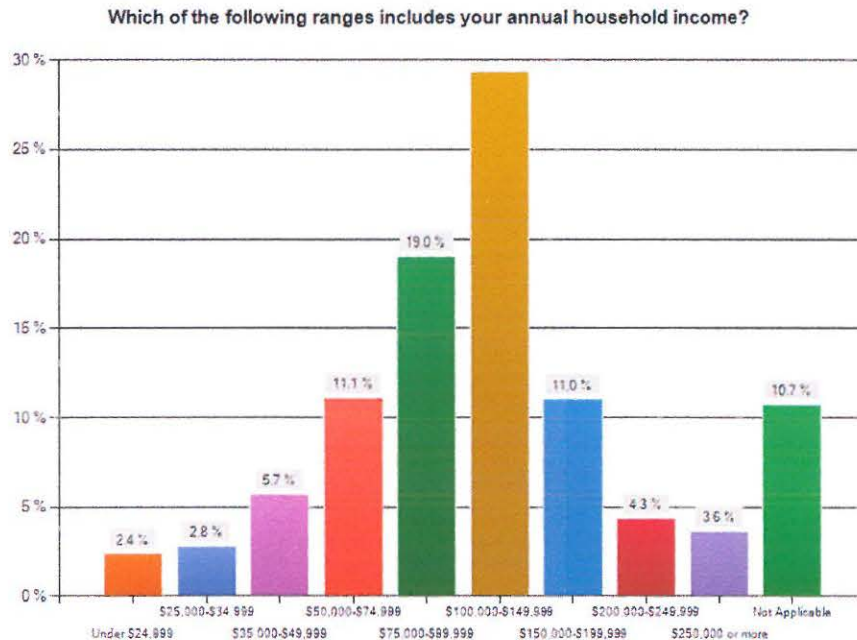
- 88% are married
- 50% are Boomers (born 1946-64)
- 31% are Gen Xers (born 1965-78)
- 3% are Matures (born before 1946)
- 16% are Millennials (born 1980 – 1997)
- Female (53%) – male (46%)
- Predominately white (85%) with 5% African-American, 4% Hispanic, 4% Asian
- Average 2-4 domestic travel trips per year

Note: Demographic information gained from the 2013 Hilton Head Island Visitor Profile Study conducted in partnership with Dr. John Salazar of the University of South Carolina Beaufort and SurveyMonkey.

**See attached appendix with 2013 Hilton Head Island Visitor Profile Study*

Segmenting the scope of this market further reveals that the majority (5% of U.S. pop) are in the \$150 - \$249K house hold income bracket; 2% in the \$250 - \$499K bracket and only 1% in the \$500K+ bracket.

Overall, this is a narrow segment of the U.S. and global travel market. However, here on Hilton Head Island, we have a greater share of the \$150K+ market segment with 19% of our visitors having a combined household income of \$150K+.



While the local business community, as a whole, wants to target this market, the consensus of the Hilton Head Island Marketing Council and professional DMO staff at the VCB is that the realities of our destination product set combined with the narrow size and scope of the luxury travel market in the U.S. mean that we must be prudent and also focus on marketing and sales to a wider demographic in particular gaining the loyalty of the younger generation in order to be successful in sustaining and driving growth in Island visitation.

Wider market segments (broadly) include:

- : Younger travelers (GenX and Millennial's) that spend a higher portion of their discretionary income on travel.
- : Mature travelers that spend a higher portion of their discretionary income on travel, and will only grow the multi-gen market as Boomers continue to retire.
- : NextGen visitors.
- : International visitors in targeted countries

Specialty Markets

Research points to a key to effectively marketing to specialty travel segments -- in today's New Normal, travelers want choices and options. They do not want to be "siloed" into a uni-dimensional travel experience. This makes the travel marketers job more complex, and the need to dig deeper to find and touch the emotional drivers of travel destination choices all the more critical.

Although any one of these types of vacations may be a travel passion, *the vast majority of travelers are seeking an overall trip and destination that offers a multi-dimensional travel experience* that may touch on any combination of two or more of these segments:

- : Couples Getaways
- : MultiGen Family Vacations
- : NextGen Travelers*
- : Deliberate Culinary Travelers
- : Avid Golfers
- : Avid Tennis Players
- : Nature-based Travel and Eco-tourism
- : Arts, History & Cultural Travelers
- : Outdoor Sports – active and passive
- : Locavores
- : Spa and Wellness Travel
- : Festival and Event Attendees
- : Travel with Pets
- : Weddings
- : Travel for Learning

*NextGen Travelers are a relatively new category - not defined by age, gender, income or status in life. Rather, they are defined by their attitudes toward technology as an enabler of travel experiences, facilitator of transactions and a social vehicle to share provocative insights, opinions and commentary on travel destinations, experiences and travel service suppliers.

Embracing the *NextGen* & Their Preferred Communications Channels: Social Media

Purpose

A social content strategy, similar to writing an outline for a novel or a movie, allows the writer to know what to write next and to make sure it aligns with the overall story. With a social content strategy, a communicator knows what to post next because he or she knows how the brand would behave, what it is passionate about, and what it seeks to accomplish. This social content strategy is meant to arm the brand, and the people who communicate about it online, with the knowledge, tools, and passion necessary to engage audiences and get them to convert on-site.

Objective

We want to generate conversions on the Hilton Head Island website by sending qualified traffic and establishing an ongoing relationship with potential customers.

Process

The process for developing and maintaining a social content strategy consists of:

- Developing an overall story to which all content ties
- Determining audiences and the online channels they use, and in what ways
- Creating a set of content units or categories that are consistent and measurable
- Developing a channel strategy for each major platform on which we will be posting content
- Sparking interest in existing content through online ads, contests, offers, etc.
- Measuring the relative success of each content unit and channel versus one another, and the absolute success of each based on number of qualified conversions versus level of investment
- On-going content creation and making adjustments based on measurement

Overall Story

The overall story of a social campaign ties an emotional connection to a tangible incentive. This is so that we can effectively write consistent, regular content that will interest our target. Our primary story, then, is "Enjoy a vacation packed with adventure at the best family-friendly destination in the world." We will encourage people to visit Hilton Head Island to relax in a beautiful seaside resort, enjoy the beaches and golf, and the art and culture, and have fun outdoors.

Audiences

Our primary outreach target are "Affluent Leisure Travelers":

- Household income \$150,000+ who take at least one leisure trip requiring overnight accommodations in the last 12 months
- 92% are married
- 51% are Boomers (born 1946-64)
- 29% are GenXers (born 1965-78)
- 11% are Matures (born before 1946)
- 9% are Echo-Boomers (born 1979-97)
- Evenly split, female (51%) to male (49%)

Additionally, we would target:

- Younger travelers (GenX and Echo-Boomers) who spend a higher portion of their discretionary income on travel
- Mature travelers who spend a higher portion of their discretionary income on travel, and will only grow the multi-gen market as Boomers retire
- NextGen visitors
- International visitors' in a targeted- country strategy

Our strategy for accomplishing our objectives will lead us to:

- Nurture existing profiles and grow the number of engaged followers and fans
- Seek out potential customers who have not considered Hilton Head Island yet or who are not aware of the brand
- Engage users and further develop as a trusted source of information about beaches and outdoor activities, family-friendly destinations, and vacations packed with adventure
- Demonstrate that everyone is a potential customer by regularly engaging in a meaningful, heartfelt, warm, and genuine way
- Encourage travelers to seek out adventure in their vacations
- Develop a community management guide that sets parameters for how often profiles should be updated, the tone and manner of updates, and the overall narrative we want to consistently demonstrate

Content Units

Content units are the major themes or categories of content that can be posted, updated regularly, and measured and monitored for success. These are initial examples, not an exhaustive list, and will be adjusted based on feedback and measurement.

- 1) In-market advertising – Consistency and familiarity
 - a. Messages consistent with ads in market
 - b. Copy lines/images from ads
 - c. Content that expands/delivers on the teases in the ads
- 2) Focus on family vacations – The best family-friendly destination in the world
 - a. Photos, videos, links
 - b. Bike trails and other nature experiences
 - c. Coastal Discovery Museum
 - d. Wildlife to see and photograph
 - e. Mini-golf and other family-friendly activities
 - f. Arts and crafts, museums, horseback riding, etc.
 - g. Tennis, cycling, etc.
- 3) 12 miles of beaches – What makes Hilton Head Island one of the most relaxing spots
 - a. Photos
 - b. Locations and what makes them unique
 - c. Equipment and rental information
 - d. What to see and do when you're heading out for a day at the beach
- 4) Golf packages and courses – Explore over 20 championship Hilton Head golf courses
 - a. Course designers

- b. Facts and tips
- c. History of the courses
- d. So many courses, something for everyone
- e. Itinerary ideas and suggestions
- 5) Deals/Offers/Packages – Book your trip today!
 - a. Golf packages
 - b. Specials and discounts
 - c. Variety of package options
 - d. Meetings and events
- 6) Culture and History – More than just a vacation
 - a. Cuisine, events, entertainment
 - b. Rich arts community
 - c. Gullah history and cultural impact
 - d. Bluegrass, choirs, jazz, quartets, etc.
 - e. Featured in “The 100 Best Small Art Towns in America”
 - f. Opportunities for families to learn and grow together
- 7) Romance
 - a. Weddings, getaways
 - b. Pictures, videos
 - c. Uplifting messages, quotes, etc.
 - d. “Family” vacations don’t necessarily mean vacations with children

Channel Strategy

Once the content units have been established and there are a stock of compelling, approved content categories and posts, we will need to roll out the content to each channel. These channels have unique requirements and, often, unique audiences. These audiences will need content that resonates with them and leads them to take action. Below are the major channels we may focus on, along with example updates and content.

Primary Outreach

- Target top-tier travel blogs and websites with information about a specific offer or promotion
- Provide exclusive content, high-res photos and focus on the main theme of “Vacations to Hilton Head Island are packed with adventure”
- Focus on 12 miles of beach, 20 championship golf courses, and the variety of outdoor activities
- Target “mommy blogs,” “daddy blogs,” etc., that post regularly about vacations and travel

Twitter

- Photos (will establish an Instagram account)
- Interesting links to other sites
- News and events
- Questions, polls
- Monitor and interact with community
- Drive qualified traffic with compelling links
- RT visitors/potential visitors’ tweets, photos, etc.

Facebook

- Undeniable, irresistible photos
- User-submitted content
- Branded content, using user-submitted photos and comments
- Offers, contests/super shareable content
- On-going stories: one update in each story each day for a week (e.g. example itinerary of a week-long family vacation on Hilton Head Island)
- Interact with people who ask questions, or post comments

Pinterest

- Continue to nurture existing account
- Regularly add photos and create new Pinboards for the different core areas of Hilton Head Island
- Increasingly focus on family-friendly theme
- Repinning other Hilton Head Island photos, or photos that are relevant to potential Hilton Head Island customers

YouTube

- Informal video tours and video blogs that have a relaxed, conversational feel
- Highlight different aspects of Hilton Head Island, including its history and culture
- Emails based on content units and specific customer interests
- Community Management Guide Outline

Tone and Manner

The voice of Hilton Head Island needs to match the voice of its target audience. That is, family-centered and fun loving. It says “we believe vacations should be packed with adventure and fun for everyone in the family.” Every post should be written as if it is coming from someone who loves adventures at Hilton Head Island and knows everything about the area. She is passionate about the experiences, accommodations, and amenities that can be found in Hilton Head Island and absolutely has to share it with everyone. This means if a visitor asks us a question related to Hilton Head Island, our voice needs to truly be knowledgeable about the area, and take the time to ensure our response is accurate. Additionally, we would not post about it being a beautiful day in South Carolina if, in fact, the weather is miserable, or there is another impediment.

Every post, then, should be written and reviewed through this lens. Questions should be posed, such as:

- Is this too serious or stuffy?
- Is this post genuinely interesting?
- Are we telling people things they don’t already know?
- Does this truly demonstrate our knowledge and excitement, or is it merely promotional?

Our Hilton Head Island personality should be the person at the party who’s so excited about what they do, and so knowledgeable about it, that people are interested and want to ask questions. We will develop a calendar of content ideas so that there is never a lack of posts or ideas. At any given moment, there will be a post that is ready to go live on every channel. By doing as much work up front as possible,

we can demonstrate to our audiences that we care about them and want them to visit by keeping in touch often, and showing them things that they will be interested in.

The calendar will include:

- Major events, promos, holidays, seasons that necessitate specific content
- Content ideas based on categories and channels
- Specific pre-approved posts that can be posted at any time
- Plans for integrating new or emerging channels
- Ways to align with in-market advertising

Metrics: How success will be measured?

As always, it's critical that all online marketing that is deployed to drive exposure for Hilton Head Island is based on driving business results for its partners, and exposure for the destination. It's more than just online marketing – it's about results and understanding what is working and what is not. These social content initiatives need to be viewed both on a standalone basis, and holistically as each strategy will ripple up into the overall Hilton Head Island digital marketing plan. We need to watch how one initiative helps to push the needle forward for the website as a whole. Similar to other initiatives, primary website objectives that will be tied to each campaign are focused on conversion metrics, which are reported on each month following the model below:

- Continuously improving campaign performance over time
- Individual posts will be tracked based on channel engagement (Likes, RTs, etc.), traffic driven to the site, and conversions from that traffic. We will look for correlations between these metrics to determine the best way to adjust content and increase conversions.
- Content units or categories will be similarly measured. Determining the aggregate success of a category will help us refine our focus.
- Each month, based on the previous month's data, we will revisit and refine the proposed content.
- We will measure levels of conversations over time, examine spikes and what caused them, and determine how conversation topics and volume relate to conversions on-site.

Budget:

Social Media Promotions – monthly with VERB Interactive:	\$45,000
Blog Center – Freelance Writers:	\$30,000
Series of 3 short experiential videos/locally produced:	<u>\$ 3,000</u>
Total:	\$78,000

Facilitated by: VCB Communications & Marketing Staff, Weber Shandwick, Local Freelance Writers, Local Videographers, and VERB Interactive.

Destination Public Relations

Earned Media is a critical way that the Hilton Head Island VCB's destination marketing program puts brand voice into our overall marketing program. Our ongoing destination public relations program is a well-oiled machine that churns out national and international stories, features, broadcast vignettes and mentions, news coverage on top travel digital sites, blogs, and video, syndicated stories, and non-paid media coverage that annually averages about \$10 million in ad equivalency value over the past 3 years.

In short, with limited media buying resources, we heavily depend on earned media/ PR to sustainably generate brand voice for Hilton Head Island. The \$10 million in ad equivalency is the result of roughly 4% of that investment in total PR firm and communications staff investment.

Several components remain critical to our PR success:

- Media relationships our staff builds and nurtures over time with key editors, journalists and publishers
- Connections and opportunities leveraged daily by our New York based PR firm, Weber Shandwick Worldwide, one of the most influential travel PR firms on the planet
- Our seasoned professional staff and firm that partner together on a daily basis to serve up the right information at the right time to target media
- Weber receives volume discounts through multiple vendors that are passed on to us as clients.
- Access to a variety of experts in specific industries throughout the United States, Canada and more.

We are planning new and ongoing public relations initiatives in the 2014-2015 fiscal year to support the overall destination marketing campaign:

1. Integrating Social Media and PR: As discussed in the previous social media section, we consider travel social media and PR to be twin sisters – they both are all about telling compelling, relevant and authentic stories that impact target communities of travelers. Therefore, our PR firm will continue to help us develop a strong and effective social media content.
2. Visiting Journalists Program: We will actively continue to pursue pre-qualified media travel journalists to visit Hilton Head Island and the surrounding region for story development. Traditional print and broadcast media outlets, freelance travel journalists and well-qualified travel bloggers, and the like will be pursued. We anticipate hosting at least 10-12 journalists on individual or collective customized visits in the coming year along with additional “one-off” journalists on customized itineraries.

Based upon our marketing council's directional decision to put a laser-like focus on the message of the Hilton Head Island Renaissance of redevelopment, we will be engaging in a “renaissance”

press trip targeting high-end media journalists to deliver the message of Hilton Head Island's redevelopment story.

Other areas of media outreach focus will include targeted Group and Meetings media outlets such as Successful Meetings and others.

3. New York Media Outreach Program Expands Senior staff will visit New York for pre-arranged desk-side media visits in concert with Weber Shandwick, our PR firm. Traditional journalists, bloggers and other social media experts will be considered. Staff will also work with SCPRT on media events they plan for 2014-2015.

This year, we will also be including an editorial outreach visit to Boston to capitalize on the new JetBlue air service to the Lowcountry and further reach that audience to tell the story of the Hilton Head Island Renaissance.

4. Broadcast monitoring:

Cision Broadcast Monitoring Service: In today's media world, the screen is king. Whether on a cell phone, iPad, computer, television or even the media screens found in skyscrapers and the back seats of taxis in major cities worldwide, video imagery is the way to catch the eye of today's heavily distracted consumer. With that in mind, it's not only critical that for our PR Agency Weber Shandwick and our internal communications staff are pitching broadcast but also when coverage results there is a mechanism for tracking ROI and showcasing results to our stakeholders. We will continue with our contracted vendor to monitor for broadcast clips or provide ROI data for clips or provide the actual clip of coverage.

Engaging such a vendor on an ongoing basis allows for economies of scale when ordering coverage clips and would provide for more accurate and consistent ROI tracking (for audience number and advertising equivalencies) rather than having to order these important assets ad hoc. Additionally, the vendor's continual monitoring better alerts our staff to serendipitous coverage that occurs without our direct involvement or knowledge—for example, a character on a television show mentioning Hilton Head Island in the script. Our annual contract is negotiated to include ongoing monitoring, a designated amount of coverage clips, ROI reporting for each clip and an end of year report.

5. Broadcast Media Working with Weber Shandwick, we will actively pitch and respond to broadcast media opportunities for travel related stories on national and regional broadcast outlets.

As part of the marketing council's request to continue to enhance and communicate the message of the Hilton Head Island renaissance, the destination will participate in a national SMT (satellite media tour) to garner additional broadcast coverage through top-tier news cities across the country.

6. Destination Travel Package PR: As covered in the package promotional section, the VCB will be developing a series of destination package promotion in concert with our partners to promote on a quarterly basis. Part of that promotion will be advanced long mead and short lead media pitches.
7. Festivals and Special Events: We will continue to work with local partners who produce area destination events to generate regional and national attention to the events and to support corresponding travel packages. Special Events that are being targeted include:
 - RBC Heritage PGA Tournament
 - Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival
 - Hilton Head Island Motoring Festival & Concours d’Elegance
 - Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park
8. Daily Communications Staff Management Writing regional and local media releases, monitoring news clips from Burrell’s news services, monitoring and responding to HARO requests for story development, hosting and coordinating visiting journalists and itineraries who are sourced from HARO, SCPRT and other sources, developing social media content that supports other destination initiatives (such as Getting Away Together national PBS television show and other national television commercial spots) and operational support.

Budget for Destination Public Relations:

Visiting Journalists, Broadcast Outreach, NY Media & PR Firm:	\$ 160,000
Cision Broadcasting:	\$ 8,000
Satellite Media Tour:	\$ 10,000
Photo and Video Online Library and Out-of-Pocket:	<u>\$ 22,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 200,000

Digital Marketing & Media Campaign

Placement Strategies:

Digital will be the primary media channel based on our budget parameters as well as its ability to offer cost-efficient message delivery to focused geography and lifestyle segments. Preference will be given to measurable SEM marketing strategies and sites that skew towards the affluent female audience, as they are the primary decision makers and vacation planners of the household, unless we are targeting a male oriented specialty market such as golf. Recent performance will also be considered in selecting sites and networks for the 2013-14 placements.

SEO Keyword Search

The VCB will execute an aggressive program to expand and broaden our organic keyword search engine rankings on Google, Yahoo, Youtube and Bing for a targeted list of key search terms that best correlate with the Hilton Head Island target visitor and visitor experiences.

In partnership with VERB Interactive, our digital marketing firm, the VCB accomplished one of its primary metrics goals in 2013 – increasing unique visitors to www.HiltonHeadIsland.org to over 1.7 million consumers, or a 17% year-over-year increase (see graph below).

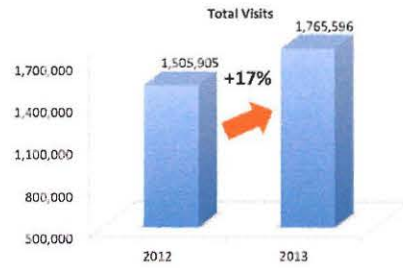
This was on the heels of a 25% users increase in 2012, and a 22% users increase in 2011. In both years we simultaneously extended time on our site, we improved our reach in both quantity and quality. A key focus area was keyword optimization by broadening and expanding our organic search engine marketing efforts.

Total Website Visitation – HHI.org



Key Engagement Metrics – HHI.org

- Visits are up +17% vs. PY



- Pages/ Visit are down -9% vs. PY



- Bounce Rate is up +7ppt vs. the PY

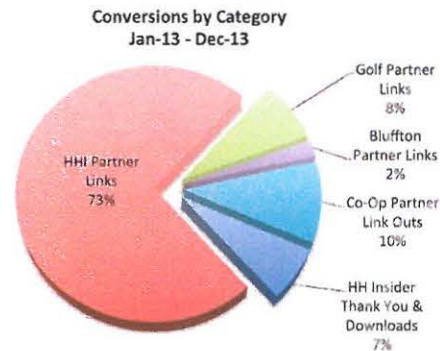
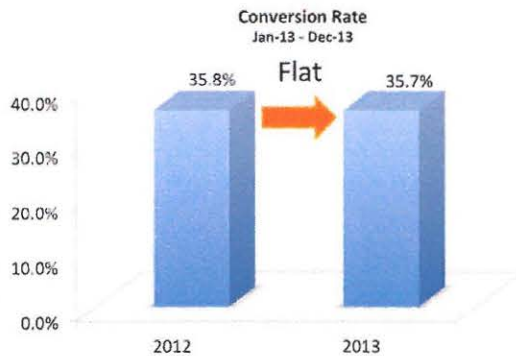


- Average Visit Duration is down -19% vs. PY



HiltonHeadIsland.org – Conversion Rate Overview

- YTD, HHI.org has had ~1.7m visitors and ~626k conversions
- YTD, The majority of Conversions are Outgoing links to Partners
 - Golf, Bluffton, and Co-op Partner Links account for 20% of conversions



Website & Monthly Web Content Audits

In addition to keyword content and search strategies, the VCB staff plans the blog, newsletter, site content and social media strategy to constantly add new content on our website and social media outlets, in order to boost our search engine rankings, drive more qualified traffic, and drive the conversion rate to our members' websites.

In 2014 we are adding a new staff position of Digital Marketing Coordinator. The Digital Marketing Coordinator will be working on developing more website content and creating more access points to turn our website visitors into conversions. This position will also work to increase our Insider database through engaging the subscribers to follow us through our social networking outlets-Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram. The staff will continue to work with area tourism businesses and event partners/providers to gather and write content/stories for the monthly web content refresh, as well as building out our video room on the site to pull in our YouTube video library and sharing tools.

Special Project/ Target Content Overhaul Areas of Site in FY 2013-14:

- Develop and Build New Meetings & Group Microsite: Summer/Fall 2014
- Develop and Build New Tennis Microsite: Fall 2014
- Refresh Culinary Microsite: Spring 2015
- Develop and Build New Weddings Microsite: Winter 2014
- Refresh Bicycling Microsite: Spring 2015

Hosting/Enhanced Analytics

Through Google Analytics and VERB/Net Conversion we receive enhanced reporting and tracking to understanding our visitor behavior and tracking results. With enhanced reporting and tracking, our campaigns, site navigation patterns, PPC, and SEO patterns are reviewed and reported weekly and in a comprehensive report each month.

Leisure Database

The VCB's investment in a dynamic new database in 2011 for leisure marketing has paid substantial dividends in our DMO's ability to market the Hilton Head Island business community to visitors. The Tourism Database feeds all of our digital platforms – our website, mobile site– and is used for business listings for the Vacation Planner. It pulls basic partner data from Ungerboeck (Chamber Membership database), allows for non-member's listings to be added, and includes an admin tool to empower town businesses to add dynamic additional information (description, photos, videos, amenities, etc.). For example, the VCB wanted to show which lodging partners allow pets, and we have added that attribute to the lodging listings under "Amenities".

The Leisure Database pushes information to the VCB Website (HiltonHeadIsland.org) to feed the Partner Listings, Interactive Google Maps, Event Calendar, Vacation Packages & Coupons Database; to the

listings on the mobile site. In the future, more interactivity to feed social media channels with member content will be explored.

Our staff will continue to hold our popular workshops to train local partners on how to update and manage their information assets in our database, and change our website and database platform to Word Press to give members easier access to update their listings.

WEBSITE CONTENT MANAGEMENT & DATABASE BUDGET

VERB daily site work \$3,300 per month x 12	\$	39,600
Ad Serving/ SEO/ \$2,000 per month X 12:	\$	24,000
SPECIAL PROJECTS/ Target areas	\$	<u>45,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$	108,600

Facilitated by: VCB Marketing Staff and VERB Interactive

Leisure Media Program

Media Objectives

- Continue to build upon the growth in website traffic to HiltonHeadIsland.org that we've seen over the past 2 years by driving qualified inquiries to the site with the goal of increasing conversion rates with link outs to our partner's sites.
- Leverage the story of the Island's Renaissance in our creative to entice the affluent traveler (\$150K+) to discover Hilton Head Island for the first time and to invite repeat visitors to experience our revitalization.
- Generate interest in brand Hilton Head Island as a preferred resort travel destination.
- Utilize the data received from the 2013 Visitor Profile Study conducted by USCB in December 2013 to make educated researched based marketing decisions.
- Expand and improve Hilton Head Island's online presence and performance, as measured by key metrics.

Media Strategies

The following factors were weighed in selecting the high potential target markets for 2014-15:

- Percentage of market that is considered high income (\$150K+ HHI)
- Number of households meeting target criteria including HHI of \$150K+, lifestyle preferences, etc.
- Select vehicles that index well with the affluent target audience and have performed well in the past; and test new online vehicles to see which prove to be the most responsive for Hilton Head Island

- Evaluate past performance against market trends and new opportunities
- Weigh overall media costs and frequency/reach
- Penetrate highest-potential Eastern U.S. markets with a mix of digital and traditional media.
- Support secondary markets with a digital presence as budget allows
- Time flights to run during key planning times for spring and fall travel; winter travel as budget allows.

12-month Comprehensive SEM Campaign

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Marketing

A key ingredient in any successful online marketing effort is keyword buys or pay-per-click search engine marketing.

We plan to sustain and expand our successful monthly PPC / contextual ad campaign with NetConversion/VERB, with more concentration during August through November to promote fall and winter travel and December through March to promote spring travel.

Google Paid Metrics - HHI

- ▶ YTD, Spend of \$102,592



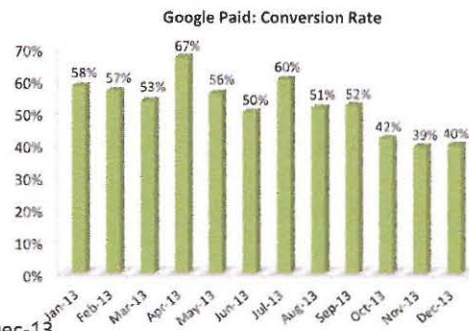
- ▶ Clicks of 150,000



- ▶ Average cost-per-click of \$0.68



- ▶ Conversion Rate of 51%



*Fiscal Jan-13 – Dec-13

d'Elegance and the Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival. Additional Hilton Head Island events to be promoted through PPC include:

- Hilton Head Island Gullah Celebration
- Tennis events
- Hilton Head Island Art Festival at Shelter Cove
- Arts Center of Coastal Carolina performances
- Hilton Head Island Public Art Exhibits
- Heritage Library special events
- Hilton Head Island St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Various food festivals; WingFest, Seafood Festival, Oyster Festival, etc.
- Performing & Visual arts events
- Swim, Run and Bicycling events

Included in our fee to NetConversion/VERB are weekly and monthly reports on the measurable metrics of the SEM programs. We will measure cost per click, resulting time/pages viewed on our website, conversion to the VCB Insider visitor database, fulfillment ordered, and where appropriate, conversion to partner websites. *See Marketing Plan Appendix for 2013 report.*

Contextual Campaigns on Google Display Network

Google users are actively searching/ready to search content online about travel or planning their next vacation. Hilton Head Island will target consumers utilizing Google's Ad Network with contextual display ads on a CPC basis. Placements on the Google Display Network will be used as a branding campaign, increasing awareness about Hilton Head Island's Insider programs; as well as, targeting niche markets through the use of keywords and themes.

- World's #1 ad network
- Reaches 90% of U.S. internet users, with ability to target consumers with combos of specific interests
- Response-based, efficient, cost-per-click pricing
- New similar users: targets users with similar profiles to current hhi.org visitors
- Placement Strategy for Hilton Head Island:

- Late summer/fall 2014 flight pushing fall and winter travel
- Early 2015 flight to promote spring travel and travel packages
- Target leisure and other niche markets
- Geo-target Hilton Head Island's main feeder markets: Expanded from Top 10 to Top 15 markets in 2014-15

Remarketing campaigns

This technique enables HHI to remain in front of qualified consumers after they leave the HiltonHeadIsland.org website. Advancements in targeting will allow more refinement of site visitors into multiple audiences. Consumer market origin, website content viewed, HHI video viewers and combinations of targeting elements will be used. The focus will remain on driving conversion.

Facebook "Like" Campaign

With more than 750 million users worldwide, Facebook is the leading social network. The average Facebook user spends 50 minutes on Facebook a day.

We will continue to use Facebook as an opportunity to efficiently drive "Like" fans that we can then market to via our ongoing social media program.

Content Creation and Distribution

Great content doesn't build your brand, it is your brand. Through our relationship with Madden Media we plan to implement a content creation and distribution program to increase visitation to our website and microsites. Madden Media will work with VCB staff and VERB to evaluate our current inventory of content, and make recommendations based on findings to build on successful content and fill in existing gaps where needed.

Madden's editorial team will then work with VCB staff and suggested local writers to produce the necessary content and facilitate distribution of these curated articles based on geography and by interest to premier news and lifestyle websites. This ensures that we're receiving qualified visitors to the site. Madden will work with VCB staff to monitor results monthly and optimize as necessary.

3 month campaign to run in fall 2014

29,842 guaranteed clicks

Cost-per-click .84 cents

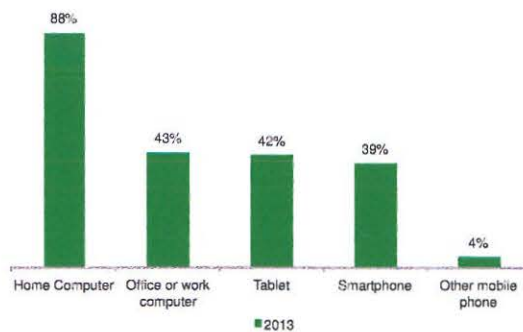
Mobile Campaigns

Mobile devices (including smart phone as well as tablets such as iPads) currently represent approximately 36% of overall website traffic to HiltonHeadIsland.org. Continued robust growth in the use of these devices by traveling consumers is expected in 2014-15. These users are also much more likely to visit our URL while in the destination, which reinforces the need for more in-destination relevant content and tools.



Over half of Affluent travelers (55%) access travel info on their smartphones or tablets for planning

Devices Used to Access Internet for Travel Info
(among those who use the Internet to plan trips)



Byline: User Internet Usage Study, 2013 (N=125)
CAN: From a list of the following 88 you access the Internet for travel-related information when planning your personal or leisure trips business trips? (Select ALL that apply)
Differentiated between "Smartphone" and "Mobile phone" in 2013. "Working on a laptop" and "Mobile Device/Tablet" in 2011 to "Tablet" in 2013.
Source: Google Travel Study, "Where's, World's, Anytime" May 2011, 2012 and May/June 2013. Access: Mkt227
Google LLC. All rights reserved. © 2013

An increase of SEM from \$12,000 to \$30,000 in mobile is planned to take advantage of this important consumer trend and buying audience.



Affluent travelers turn to online video throughout at all stages of travel

When Travel Videos are Viewed by Affluents

60% when thinking about taking a trip

64% when choosing a destination

67% when looking for ideas of things to do at a particular destination

62% when deciding on accommodations

22% when deciding which website to book on

Utilizing TrueView Video, NetConversion/VERB was able to deliver a remarkable 17 cents cost per view of our full :30 pre-roll video about Hilton Head Island to targeted consumers. Since the videos are skippable after :05 seconds, we only paid for the completed :30 views.

It represents a cost effective, upper-funnel branding, reach and engagement marketing channel. The spend level is recommended to increase from \$12,000 in the current FY to \$30,000 over the 12 months of FY 2014-15.

TOTAL DIGITAL MARKETING & MEDIA BUDGET:

VERB Daily Site Work:	\$ 39,600
Special Section Updates:	\$ 45,000
SEO/Ad Serve/Hosting:	\$ 24,000
SEM Marketing:	\$220,000
Madden Media Campaign:	\$ 25,000
SCPRT Co-ops	\$ 25,000
Media contingency	<u>\$ 15,000</u>
Digital Sub-total:	\$393,600

Facilitated by: NetConversion/VERB, VCB Marketing Staff and Madden Media

Videos

YouTube Destination Channel

YouTube ranks as one of the top search engines on the internet, along with Google and Facebook. Travelers are using YouTube to search for information about travel, to get a glimpse of their next vacation location, and to share their personal travel stories with their family and friends.

Statistics regarding YouTube: YouTube's demographic is broad, reaching a wide audience of 18-54 year olds. Over four million people are connected to YouTube and are auto-sharing to at least one social network, such as Facebook or Twitter. In addition, on mobile devices, YouTube mobile gets more than 100 million views a day.

Currently, the VCB has its own YouTube Channel, *Visit Hilton Head Island*, with the following URL address: <http://www.youtube.com/user/hiltonheadislandvcb>. On it, there are 49 videos we have produced over the past several years and 51,465 page views.

Digital Video Engagement Tactics

1. Work with VERB to keep content updated/fresh and optimized.
2. Use local videographer to shoot 3 new experiential video vignettes in 2013-14, plus adding the new video from the destination PGAT TV spot campaign.
3. Work with NetConversion/VERB to optimize integration of our video assets on YouTube within the pre-roll and related digital campaigns.
4. Embed compelling video content into our website, mobile site, mobile app and social media platforms.

Budget

Production 3 short videos: \$ Included in social media budget

Leveraging Partnerships

The VCB will leverage the larger media buying power of the state tourism office, SCPRT, as well by incorporating select co-ops they offer to DMOs within our media plan.

SCPRT Co-ops

SCPRT has not yet announced their co-op marketing offerings for 2015. Based on their 2014 offerings, we will budget a contingency to take advantage of their programs in our East coast drive markets to run in the spring of 2015. Their negotiated media rates due to their media buying volume and the state “buying down” the cost for co-op participants, make these buys compelling.

Net Media Contingency Budget for SCPRT Co-ops: \$25,000

EscapetotheSoutheast.com

We will continue our ongoing annual marketing campaign on the Southeast Tourism Society’s (STS) website, EscapetotheSoutheast.com, in the form of a customized destination section for Hilton Head Island. Our sections feature content about Hilton Head Island history and culture, culinary, accommodations as well as multiple images, downloadable brochure, and website link.

Added value: 3 Banner ads to run spring 2015

NET MEDIA COST: \$ 3,000

Media Contingency: \$12,000

Sub-total: \$15,000

Sweet Tea Partnership

The Hilton Head Island VCB has worked with the Charleston CVB, Savannah CVB and Amelia Island CVB on a variety of Southeast regional and national cooperative marketing and sales programs over the past four years. We call our program the Sweet Tea Partnership, as we are all authentically Southern coastal destinations where a refreshing glass of sweet tea is always a welcome visitor experience.

JetBlue New York City/ Boston Promotion

The recent addition of JetBlue’s nonstop service to the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport and existing service to Charleston provides our Sweet Tea partnership program the opportunity to combine marketing efforts in the NYC and Boston markets in order to leverage the forward momentum gained from the marketing surrounded by the initial launch in February 2013. Through our partnership with our neighboring destinations, we plan to negotiate an integrated media buy heavily weighted in digital marketing along with a combined media event in Boston.

Sweet Tea Partnership

NYC/Boston promotion \$30,000

(Hilton Head Island’s share of total \$120,000 program)

Facilitated by: VCB Marketing Staff, Sweet Tea Partners and MMGY.

Consumer Promotions

Broadcast Campaign

- We plan to run a winter 2014-15 broadcast campaign in New York City and Boston to enhance the addition of the nonstop JetBlue service to the Savannah/Hilton Head Island International Airport. Top cable television channels that reach our affluent travelers are clearly defined in the 2013 Visitor Profile Study conducted by USCB and include the following:
 - Fox/Fox News
 - ESPN/ESPN 2
 - HGTV
 - Food Network
 - The Discovery Channel
 - CNN

- We will also use our :30 spot creative as part of our SEM TrueView pre-roll campaign.

- In our separate golf budget, :30 spots will run on The Golf Channel, timed with key PGA TOUR events in targeted drive markets.

Media Budget for Spot Cable TV Campaign

Winter 2014-15 NYC and Boston: **\$60,000***

*\$40,000 from DMO budget and \$20,000 from Destination Specific Air Service Promo budget

Lead Gen

The print media prospect is typically in the planning stage of travel funnel, and orders a Vacation Planner. They are prospects that may not be ready to book, like those who visit our website, as **they are often on the front end planning cycle of their vacation.**

Destination Marketers do well to leverage the opportunity to promote our destination on the front end of the planning cycle, as well as at the end. Otherwise, we lose the opportunity to build demand.

In order to sustain this balance back in our media mix, we are recommending integrated marketing partnerships with a few key publications that match our affluent leisure traveler profile.

Garden & Gun

300,000 circulation, 59% in the Southeast including FL, GA, SC, NC, AL, TN, VA, WV

The Garden & Gun Reader

- 92% are 35+
- Average HHI: \$332,000
- Average Net Worth: \$2,255,000
- 43% own 2+ residences
- Take an average of 13 trips per year
 - 73% went to the beach
 - 70% shopped
 - 44% went fishing
 - One in three played golf

Source(s): 2013 Subscriber Study – IPSOS Mendolsohn Custom Division and Alliance for Audited Media June 2013

We plan to build upon last year's successful special advertising section by increasing the VCB and co-op partner's exposure in *Garden & Gun* through increased digital and in-book marketing to include promotion of the Hilton Head Island Motoring Festival & Concours d'Elegance.

E-marketing

- Talk of the South e-newsletter - 50,000+ opt-in subscribers

GardenandGun.com

1.7 million average page views/month

188,500+ unique visitors/month

- Featured listing on "Live the Life" section that includes 4 high res images, video, logo, URL and up to 200 words of copy
- Event listing on gardenandgunpromotions.com for Hilton Head Island Motoring Festival & Concours d'Elegance

Social Media

Stats

- 102,130+ Facebook fans
- 50,130+ Twitter followers
- 18,000+ Pinterest followers
- 24,000+ Instagram followers

Hilton Head Island Vacation Giveaway social media promotion during fall 2014.

Print

August/September – co-op ad, including in Destination Specific Match budget

October/November – Style & Entertaining

Interactive ad in at least one *Garden & Gun* digital edition.

MEDIA AND PRODUCTION COST: \$30,000 per page

**Note \$30,000 from VCB DMO budget and \$30,000 from destination specific co-op partners and state match funds.*

AD PRODUCTION: VCB staff along with *Garden & Gun*

Southern Living

In the 2013 Hilton Head Island Visitor Profile Study, *Southern Living* showed up as the most read magazine for Hilton Head Island visitors with a household income of \$150K+. We plan to negotiate an agreement with *Southern Living* to run in-book advertising with digital and e-marketing added value opportunities to include the following:

Added value:

Southern Living Travel Planner Exposure – Reaches 16M consumers each month

Travel e-Newsletter – sent to 40K opt-in travel only subscribers

Travel Planner Custom eBlast – sent to 40K opt-in travel only subscribers

MEDIA COST: \$37,000

Consumer Promos

Broadcast:	\$	40,000
<i>Garden and Gun</i> :	\$	30,000
<i>Southern Living</i> :	\$	37,000
Ad Production/ Misc:	\$	<u>5,000</u>
Sub-total:	\$	112,000

Insiders, Collateral & Fulfillment

Hilton Head Insider Program: Building on a Strong Foundation

In 2014-15, we will sustain and grow our successful “Hilton Head Island Insider” campaign to drive opt-ins to our database for ongoing Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM). We now have over 136,000 opt-in Hilton Head Island Insiders. Our website visitors are invited to opt-in to become a *Hilton Head Insider* and a subscription to our complimentary monthly enews letter access to travel offers and VIP benefits from our partners when they travel to Hilton Head Island. Our media messaging includes this value proposition with the call to action to *Vacation like an Insider*.

Hilton Head Island Insider Email Marketing

Email Marketing Best Practices

We currently have over 136,000 Hilton Head Island Insiders in our opt-in database. It is more difficult than ever before to get quality email results. For our ongoing Hilton Head Island Insider email marketing program to be successful, we are following these industry destination marketing best practices:

Engagement Tactics

1. Our staff develops an annualized editorial calendar for when messages will be sent, who will write them, how their success will be measured, managed by our Marketing team. *See appendix for the 2014 Digital Marketing Calendar.*
2. Continue to develop a quality opt-in database to receive Hilton Head Island Chamber/VCB messages.
3. Take a segmented marketing approach, but focus on cross marketing experiences to visitor segments in content and packaging.
4. Cultivate messaging that sustains or generates a sense of kinship with the destination brand and relationship with the sender so the messages feel personalized.
5. Create well-written messages that are optimized for click-thrus to the website; exemplify best practices in terms of unsubscribing, a link to a web version, etc., do not include spam trigger words.
6. Test to assure that the emails get through Spam filters and Outlook —Junk email settings.

7. We report actions based on the email including open rates and click-through rates in our dashboard reports.
8. Evaluate plans for improving performance.

Keep and build subscribers

9. Send an immediate response when people sign up.
10. Ask subscribers to include us in their address book or safe list.
11. We are careful about old lists, purchased lists and lead generation lists. They tend to dramatically underperform.

Segment lists Broadly

12. For e-newsletters, keep segments broad (family role, planning immediate vacation, golfer vs. shopper, etc.)
13. For destination marketing organizations, over-segmentation is sometimes a problem because top things people like to do includes the broad —sightseeing and women planning for their families need to know about all the activities available to their family.

Content and other considerations

14. One key that helps our open rate is simple but effective: we use Hilton Head Island in the "from" line, which tells recipients that we sent the email!

From lines help people evaluate which emails to open, which to delete and which to complain about. Testing shows that open rates and click-through rates increase when the "from" name, "from" address and subject line are appropriately branded. Exact target testing also shows that these practices reduce Spam complaints.

15. Design a plain text email version for AOL users and other subscribers who can't view HTML emails.
16. Add text to have recipients view your email via a webpage or mobile version of a webpage.
17. Include text stating the offer at the top of the email so that the offer will be visible even if images are turned off or blocked in the recipient's email client.
18. Design emails to be viewed in the preview pane.
19. Place our logo in the top left quadrant of the page.
20. Grab attention with headlines.
21. Make sure the main graphic reinforces the offer.
22. Make sure we have the proper footer so people can unsubscribe.

Email Marketing Plan:

Goals for leisure e-newsletters and e-blasts

- : Develop relationships and retain existing repeat visitors to Hilton Head Island
- : Build a following for our content
- : Convert email lists into active leads
- : Position the VCB as an expert
- : Educate or inform about events and activities
- : Drive traffic to our website, mobile site, and social media outlets
- : Promote packages tied to editorial content when appropriate

Strategies and Tactics

After we have segmented our Insider database early in the new fiscal year, we have the opportunity to build a series of periodic enews letters around broad themes. We also will continue to send emails/epromos that cross market the whole destination to the entire Insider database.

Some of the broader segmented themes may include:

- : Family Vacations
- : Golf, Tennis , Outdoor Adventures & Sports Trips and Events
- : Culinary Travel and Events
- : Cultural Travel
- : Marquee Events & Festivals

Promote Sharing

Many of our Insiders are already enthusiastic about Hilton Head Island. With a little prodding, we hope to turn these enthusiasts into sharers. Sharers are people who pass content onto others, trust what you write and respond to your advice, offers, recommendations and promotions. In addition to the email marketing, similar information should be provided through Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram.

Specific Conversion and Open Goals

Our marketing team on staff will develop the editorial plan, write/manage the content and program the enewsletters. We have been able to cut our email deployment costs in half by moving to a new provider, MailChimp.

Email Budget

Content Development	\$ 6,000
MailChimp Email Annual COST:	<u>\$12,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$18,000

Faciliated by: VCB Marketing Staff, VERB and MailChimp

Event Promotion

Marquee Events

In 2014-15, we will support our Special Contract Marketing Agreements with (3) event holders, including:

- RBC Heritage PGA TOUR Tournament
- Hilton Head Island Motoring Festival & Concours d'Elegance
- Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival

These are events that have a research-based, proven track record of generating significant overnight visitation to Hilton Head Island by consumers who came to the Island specifically to attend the event. Our promotion of these events will include:

- Rotational Website Features in current Events main page and on our home page.
- Special feature in our Vacation Planner
- Social media promotion via Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and Blogs
- Promotion via *Visit Hilton Head Island* mobile website
- Embedded content in website and blog feature stories
- RBC Heritage is promoted within the Golf Channel promotions, co-ops with local resorts to host planners during the event and our new Social Central lounge on #18 at Harbour Town Golf Links during the event.
- HHI Motoring Festival & Concours d'Elegance is promoted with special motoring media promotions and the Infinity PR promotion to host media during the event as well as themed tie-in with our Atlanta co-op sales mission.
- The HHI Wine & Food Festival is promoted within the culinary promotion and sponsorship co-op.
- Event holders can supply video content for use on VCB website

Other Island Festivals & Special Events

There are dozens of other wonderful events and festivals on Hilton Head Island, some of which are noted below:

- Chamber Restaurant Week in January
- Hilton Head Island Gullah Celebration in February
- Hilton Head International Young Artist Piano Competition in March
- Arts Center major performances year-round
- Picnic & Pops Concerts and Orchestra Performance Series year-round

- Choral Society Series
- Chamber Bike & Dine Week in May, with Town of HHI and Bicycling Advisory Committee
- Hilton Head Island Art Festival, Memorial Day Weekend
- HarbourFest at Shelter Cove Harbour & Marina
- Hilton Head Island Seafood Festival
- Hilton Head Island Oyster Festival
- Farmers Markets year-round
- Run, Bicyling, Swim and Tri-athlete events year-round
- Coastal Discovery Museum special programs year-round
- Historic Mitchelville Forums and Events year-round
- Heritage Library events year-round
- Taste of the Season in October
- Public Art Events, TBD
- Celebrity Golf Tournament, Labor Day Weekend
- Other opportunities that may develop in the year ahead

These events will be promoted a variety of ways:

- Vacation Planner
- Online Calendar
- Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and Blogs
- Rotating features on hiltonheadisland.org
- E-newsletters to Insiders
- Mobile site

2015 Vacation Planner Print and Online

Our new primary print fulfillment piece offers a comprehensive look at planning a vacation to the Hilton Head Island area. 81% of VCB visitor inquiries said the Hilton Head Island information they received was somewhat or very useful in planning their trip. 56% of VCB visitor inquiries tell us that the Vacation Planner and related fulfillment was effective or very effective in persuading them to visit Hilton Head Island. Many online, as well as media and home inquiries, still order our planner, as well as on-site use at state and local welcome centers, at trade shows and promotional events and with media.

In addition to working with a digital and print publisher, our in-house marketing staff provides the business directory, local photography and editorial content management, editorial review and proofing.

Qty: 100,000 printed Vacation Planners and Digital Tablet versions

Promotions/ Brochure Distribution at Airports

Included in our budget for fulfillment costs is a \$500/per month fee to support brochure distribution for all area tourism businesses at the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport's welcome center. A \$295/per month fee is also included in our budget for a four-sided display board and fulfillment distribution point in the lobby of the Hilton Head Island Airport.

Vacation Planner & Mail Fulfillment Budget

Creative, Content Development, Production & Printing:	\$	120,000
50,000 Fulfillment Envelopes:	\$	6,000
Mail Operations & Postage (all fulfillment except golf*):	\$	65,000
Toll-free phone number (annual cost)	\$	<u>5,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$	196,000

*Golf fulfillment is covered in the golf specialty marketing grant

International Marketing

BRAND USA and HILTON HEAD ISLAND

The U.S. Travel Promotion Act, finally passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Obama in early 2010, has truly opened the door for a new world of opportunity for the U.S. in promotion of our country to international markets. This landmark act will be up for re-authorization this year, and our DMO calls on all travel and tourism industry partners to become informed about the benefits this would bring to our destination. We need to encourage our South Carolina Congressional delegation to support re-authorization of the U.S. Travel Promotion Act.

Brand USA's mission:

Brand USA was created for the purpose of encouraging travelers from all over the world to visit the United States of America. In doing so, we aim to bring millions of new international visitors, who spend billions of dollars, to the United States, creating tens of thousands of new American jobs.

The public-private marketing entity was created to work in close partnership with the travel industry maximizing the social and economic benefit of travel in communities around the country. Brand USA, through its call-to-action "Discover America," encourages and inspires travelers to explore America's boundless possibilities.

The VCB has been working with Brand USA and their agency Miles Media, as well as VERB Interactive to develop a series of microsites for Hilton Head Island as well as on the Brand USA website. Currently we have microsites for the UK, Germany and France with Brazil coming online in April. Each site is fully translated and is tailored to the specific interests of each country.

In 2013, through the Brand USA international co-op, South Carolina was able to reserve an enhanced state page, and with full participation from Hilton Head Island, Charleston, and Myrtle Beach, each partner has received their own enhanced destination pages on DiscoverAmerica.com, and a wide range of promotional content including:

Hilton Head Island Partner Package Components:

1. **An Enhanced City (State) page** on DiscoverAmerica.com. This includes a custom selected hero image, 500 word custom description in all languages, links to our city URL, 20 photo image gallery, video player module, email opt-in form, destination guide promo and form.
2. **Five Native Content Packages** customized to our destination. Each content package includes one 2.5 minute video, one feature story and up to 20 photos all customized, written and hosted by a travel writer from HHI's selected target countries.
3. **Five Enhanced Experience Pages** on DiscoverAmerica.com. This expands the Native Content units produced through this program and evolves them into a separate and highly visible component of the BUSA content marketing platform in all languages (with the possible exception of Chinese).
4. **2014 Global Reach Program** (Official Discover America Inspiration Guides and online marketing program). Two page spread. Current distribution includes UK, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, China, India, Australia, and international show distribution. Print circulation is 400,000 and online impressions are guaranteed at 30 million.
5. **In-Country Turnkey Marketing Campaign** within Eastern Canada. This includes a 2-page spread within the print component in both the spring 2013 and winter 2014 editions. This also includes up to 10 million online impressions and up to 800,000 consumers for an email marketing promotion.

Bonus:

Brand USA is providing us with free translations for new languages added to DiscoverAmerica.com (excluding China) within the destination and experiences pages and free renewals of all content through the end of 2014. In addition, Brand USA will also offer a customized social media program for South Carolina and will offer a special early bird discount within their Global Reach Program (inspiration guides and online program). For partner agreements exceeding \$250,000 through this packaging, Brand USA will also provide a free homepage tile on DiscoverAmerica.com for two weeks.

The social media support for this program will include:

- Posts to highlight content on Facebook pages (Countries where we have current footprint and content will be available in language.)
- Image and video features within Facebook activity on appropriate DiscoverAmerica Facebook pages (Note: Brand USA is invested heavily in Facebook promotions and paid campaigns in 2013, driving incremental value and engagement, as well as visibility, to all your content that will be created within this program.)
- Twitter posts based on the content calendar of our social program (Note: Posts will also benefit from selective promoted posts campaigns running with our in-country social teams in Brazil,

Canada, UK, Japan and South Korea.)

- Cross talk opportunities based on appropriate fit for content and seasonality.
- Video content placement within the appropriate language and category in our current and future enhanced YouTube channel experience.

Distribution:

The Enhanced City and Experience Page program will live on DiscoverAmerica.com and present a special inspirational overview of our state, cities and experiences, customized to our individual needs. The Native Content packages are linked to the South Carolina enhanced state page and the enhanced city pages. Plus, there is direct navigation onto the travel journal pages from the homepage highlighting our extensive content. South Carolina will distribute this native content on Travel South USA's international sites and are available for South Carolina's International GSAs to use and to distribute. We are featuring the native language experienced based videos, feature stories and photographic content within our own marketing channels (website, social media channels, etc.). This investment in international content highlights South Carolina experiences and destinations and builds a strong international marketing foundation to best leverage Brand USA's \$100 million in annual marketing funds.

In addition, the VCB will work with Coastal South Carolina, USA, SCPRT and Brand USA :

1. Tour operator FAMS throughout the year, with special emphasis on an international tour operators pre and post FAM in concert with the mid-year IAGTO (International Association of Golf Tour Operators) meeting in Charleston, SC in June 2014, and a FAM during the RBC Heritage PGA TOUR 2015.
2. Coastal SC USA co-op promotions in tour operator and major consumer digital and print media, including:
 - *Golf Breaks*, with a Charleston-based international office of their UK Long Haul operation
 - *Your Golf Travel* in concert with SKY Sports TV campaign in the UK
 - *IMG's Golfing World* – 30 minute South Carolina coast broadcast program with 5-6 minute segment to feature Hilton Head Island, reaching 100 million households worldwide
 - *Golf Digest*, Ireland
 - *Bunkered*, Scotland
 - *Golf Monthly*, UK
 - *Golf International*, UK
 - *GolfHaus* Germany In-store Digital and Window Displays 2014
 - Extra Golf – Support for program to bring 8-10 German/ Austrian PGA Tour professionals for FAM and develop golf group program in 2014/15
 - UK's *Daily Telegraph*: Digital, print and event based promotional campaign
3. Visiting international journalists throughout the year

4. Trade Shows:
 - IAGTO (International Association of Golf Tour Operators) in Charleston, June 2014
 - World Travel Market in London, November 2014
 - ITB (International Travel Berlin), March 2015
5. Annual Sales Mission and training programs for reservation agents.
6. Specialty website for consortium.
7. Receptive operator services for smaller tour operators through Coastal SC USA.

In addition to these programs through the consortium, the VCB also plans to support international marketing through:

8. Hilton Head Island booth and one-on-one operator and media marketplace appointments at Pow Wow International, the largest U.S. Travel international trade show.
9. Special promotion with Ultimate Golf Vacations in Canada, owned by Merit Golf.
10. Co-op support for high producing tour operators with our product, in concert with Coastal partners, SCPRT and/or Brand USA.
11. Participation in Travel South International and WTM Latin America. Support LGCOA booth at Toronto Golf & Travel Consumer Show 2015.

Budget:

Coastal South Carolina USA	\$ 60,000
Brand USA Co-ops	\$ 80,000
ITB Trade Show	\$ 6,500
WTM Latin America	\$ 4,000
Travel South International	\$ 2,500
UK Sales Mission/WTM	\$ 5,000
Pow Wow International	\$ 8,000
TOTAL	\$166,000

Destination Specific Grant: Public-Private Sector Match Dollar Co-ops

Based on a strong track record of proven performance, the Visitor & Convention Bureau works with the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism as a partner in the state's Destination Specific Grant program. This program provides much needed funding for a wide variety of destination promotions and includes a fund targeted at public- private sector match dollar promotions.

While programs for the 2014 grant have not yet been finalized (the Destination Specific match grant will be submitted by the VCB in July 2014 for 2015 programs), preliminary plans call for match grants in these focus areas:

- RBC Heritage PGA TOUR Promotions
- NYC and Boston Promotions to support JetBlue Air Service and Packages
- New Group Sales Incentive Programs & Promotions
- Customer Facing Group Sales Events and FAMS
- Group Sales Trade Media Co-op
- Partner Advertising on VCB's new Group & Meetings Website and E-Promos
- 12 Month Digital Co-op Targeting Affluent Next Gen Travelers
- New Air Service Development Promotions, TBD
- Destination Affluent Lead Generation Co-ops in Print and Online
- Cultural and Culinary Travel Promotion in US Airways/ American In-flight, December 2014
- Hilton Head Island Motoring Festival & Concours d'Elegance Sponsorship Promotions
- Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival Sponsorship Promotions
- Sweet Tea Co-op with regional DMO's
- Social Media Promotions
- Affinity & Sports Event Promotions
- Co-op Promotions, such as Tennis, Golf, Outdoor, History & Heritage, Bicycling, and Bluffton

Brand
Results

Bluffton Branding: Quantitative Data Results



Summary Report:

December 2nd, 2013

Presented by: Dr. Simon Hudson

**SmartState Center of Economic Excellence in
Tourism and Economic Development**

Acknowledgement: This project is a joint collaboration between Rawle Murdy, the University of South Carolina, and the University of South Carolina Beaufort.

Segmented Quantitative Survey Development

- Using the qualitative data collected from the key informant interviews and charrettes, the researchers developed five surveys for five groups of stakeholders.
- The surveys included sections on:
 - Brand personality and attributes
 - Brand positioning
 - Economic development
 - Socio-demographics

Data Collection

- From October 3rd - November 10th, 2013, a Qualtrics electronic survey was activated for 3 of the targeted sectors: local leaders, existing businesses, and potential businesses.
- From October 10th - October 31st, surveys were collected for the 2 remaining sectors (visitors and residents) using an intercept surveying method employed at the Bluffton Farmers Market, Kroger Grocery Store-Belfair, and HHI-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce Bluffton office utilizing Survey Monkey through Ipad.
- 100 participants from each of the sectors were targeted.
- A total of 624 surveys were collected – Residents (223); Visitors (103); Existing Businesses (108); Local Leaders (46); and Potential Businesses (144).



Survey Results

Local Business Survey: Demographics and Brand Evaluation

- **Respondents:** Primarily male (62%), Caucasian (88%), married (70%), employed full-time (80%) and work in Bluffton (91%)
- **Words most used to describe Bluffton:** Growing, friendly, quaint, beautiful, and charming.
- **Attributes most important to them:** Special natural beauties such as the May River and the Live Oaks, as well as the unique Farmers Market.

Local Business Survey: Economic Development

- **Top three most important factors for creating jobs and economic development:**
 - Streamlining permitting process and cut gov't "Red Tape."
 - Financial incentives for businesses to create jobs.
 - Provide state and local government incentives to develop new business/industries (tax breaks, rebates, abatements).
- **Top two most important items for Bluffton's future:**
 - Access to quality education.
 - Access to quality health and medical services.
- Local businesses are overwhelmingly satisfied or very satisfied with the current business climate in Bluffton.

Local Leaders Survey: Demographics and Brand Evaluation

- **Respondents:** Primarily male (54%), Caucasian (71%), married (69%), currently work in Bluffton (63%), work full-time (74%), have lived in Bluffton for over 10 years and reported having a master's or doctoral degree.
- **Words most used to describe Bluffton:** Friendly, growing, laid-back, and quirky.
- **Attributes most important to them:**
 - Natural beauties such as the May River and Live Oaks.
 - Nice eating and drinking establishments.
 - Unique farmer's market.
 - Many cultural events and festivals.

Local Leaders Survey: Economic Development

- **Top three most important items to foster economic development:**
 - Financial incentive for business to create jobs.
 - Streamlining permitting process and cut government “Red Tape.”
 - Job training to improve worker’s skills.
- **Top two items most important for Bluffton’s future investment:**
 - Access to quality education.
 - Access to quality health and medical services.

Local Residents Survey: Demographics and Brand Evaluation

- **Respondents:** Primarily female (60%), Caucasian (82%), married (74%), full time employed (64%), working in Bluffton (50%), and reported having a Bachelor's degree (42%).
- **Words used most to describe Bluffton:** Friendly, quaint, growing, beautiful, charming, comfortable, eclectic and fun.
- **Attributes most important to them:**
 - Special natural beauties such as the May River and the Live Oaks.
 - Good lifestyle.

Local Residents Survey: Economic Development

- **Top three most important items to foster economic development:**
 - Provide state and local government financial incentives.
 - Streamlining permitting process and cut government “Red Tape.”
 - Financial incentives for businesses to create jobs.
- **Top two items most important for Bluffton’s future investment:**
 - Access to quality education.
 - Access to quality health and medical services.

Potential Business Survey: Demographics and Brand Evaluation

- **Respondents:** Currently employ an average of 861 employees, 38.46 % grossed over 2m last year, over half the respondents have been in business over 16 years with 23% over 41 years in business, 55.56% identify business-to-business as primary customer base.
- **Top business sector represented:**
Professional, scientific and technical services.
- 75.72% are either satisfied or very satisfied with their current business climate.

Potential Business Survey: Brand Evaluation

- **Words used most often to describe Bluffton:** Quaint, friendly, and growing.
- **Attributes most important to them:**
 - Special natural beauties such as the May River and Live Oaks.
 - Good access to outdoor recreation areas.
 - Family and friends would want to visit.
 - Southern charm.
 - Good lifestyle.

Potential Business Survey: Economic Development

- **Top three most important items for economic development:**
 - Job training to improve worker's skills.
 - Provide state and local government financial incentives to develop new business/industries (tax breaks, rebates and abatements).
 - Financial incentives for business to create jobs.
- **Top two items for most important for Bluffton's future:**
 - Access to quality education.
 - Access to quality health and medical services.
- **Top four most important features that would attract them to start a business in Bluffton:**
 - Location.
 - Skilled workforce.
 - Quality of life.
 - Infrastructure.

Visitors Survey: Demographics and Brand Evaluation

- **Respondents:** Primarily female (61%), Caucasian (92%), married (73%), half were 60 yrs. and above, 42% retired and 42% working full-time, 68% reported having a college or graduate degree, a majority reported a household income above \$75K (57%) and most were day trippers (60%).
- **Words used most to describe Bluffton:** Quaint, charming/lovely, beautiful/nice, friendly, historic, and fun.

Visitors Survey: Trip Characteristics

- **Attractions most visited:**
 - Farmer's Market-78%
 - Old Town-68%
 - Restaurants-43%
 - Outlets- 36%
- 73% of the respondents were overwhelmingly satisfied with their visit.
- 67% indicated that they were extremely likely to return to Bluffton.
- 73% would recommend Bluffton to others.

Brand Personality Scale: Factor Analysis

Factor 1: Quality of Life

Factor	Mean
Peaceful	4.28
Laid-back	4.40
Charming	4.48
Outdoorsy	4.31
Artistic	4.49
Family Friendly	4.47
Down to earth	4.26

Factor 2: Economic Development

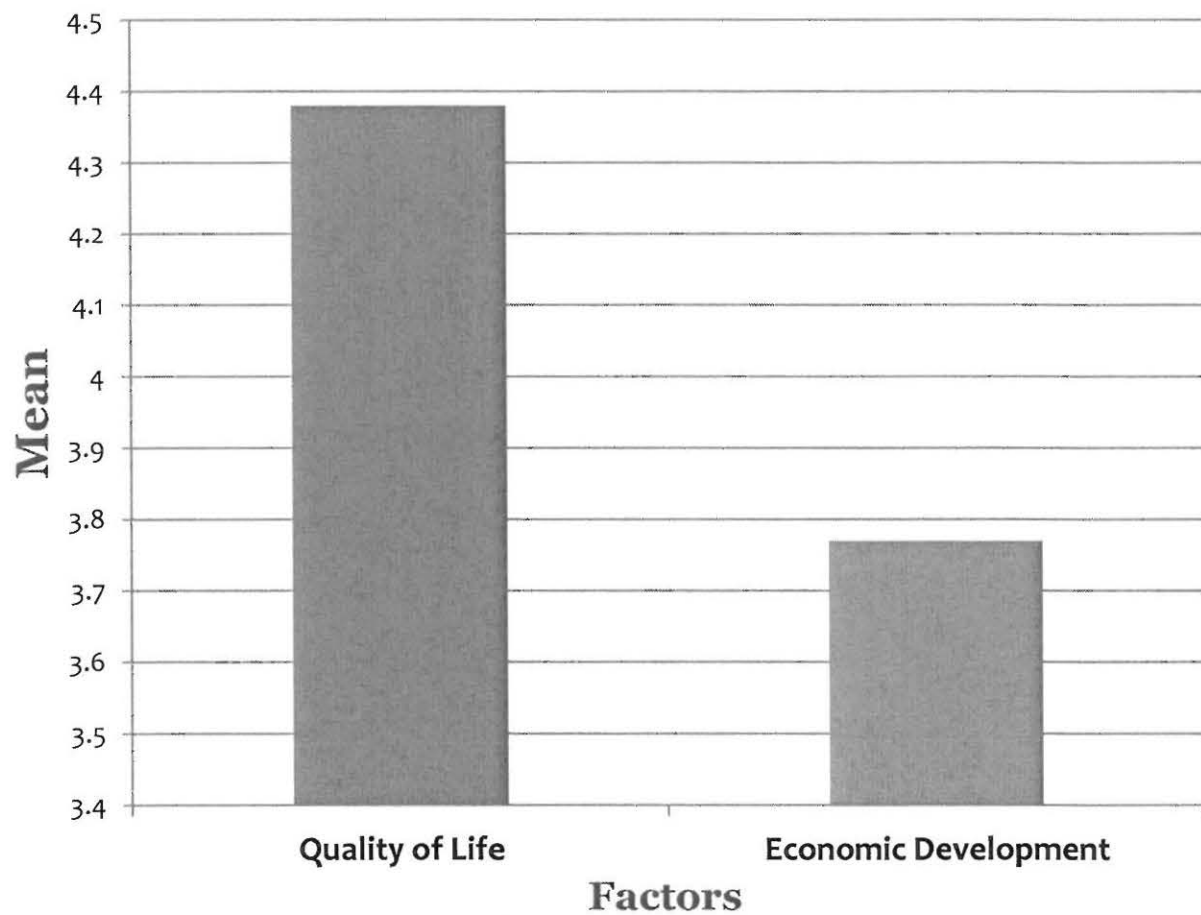
Factor	Mean
Innovative	3.63
Entrepreneurial	3.56
Exciting	3.92
Intelligent	3.58
Successful	3.90
Reliable	3.63

Brand Personality Scale: Mean Comparison



Brand Personality Factors: Mean Comparison

Brand Personality Factors



Positioning Statement Rankings:

	Local Leader	Local bus.	Pot. Bus.	Res.	Visitors
PS 1	2	1	2	1	1
PS2	1	2	1	2	3
*PS3	4	4	3	4	2
*PS4	3	3	4	3	4

*Positioning statements 3 and 4 were discarded due to lack of support as a top choice within most sectors

Positioning Statement 1

In the shade of the towering Live Oaks and located on the banks of the historic May River, Bluffton is charmed, small town southern living. The community's relaxed atmosphere complements its strong, forward leaning economic attitude, while a mix of Lowcountry living and a thriving art scene create an eclectic environment.



	Local Bus.	Local Lead.	Potent. Bus.	Res.	Visitors
Rank	1	2	2	1	1
Mean	3.8	3.71	3.71	3.85	4.25

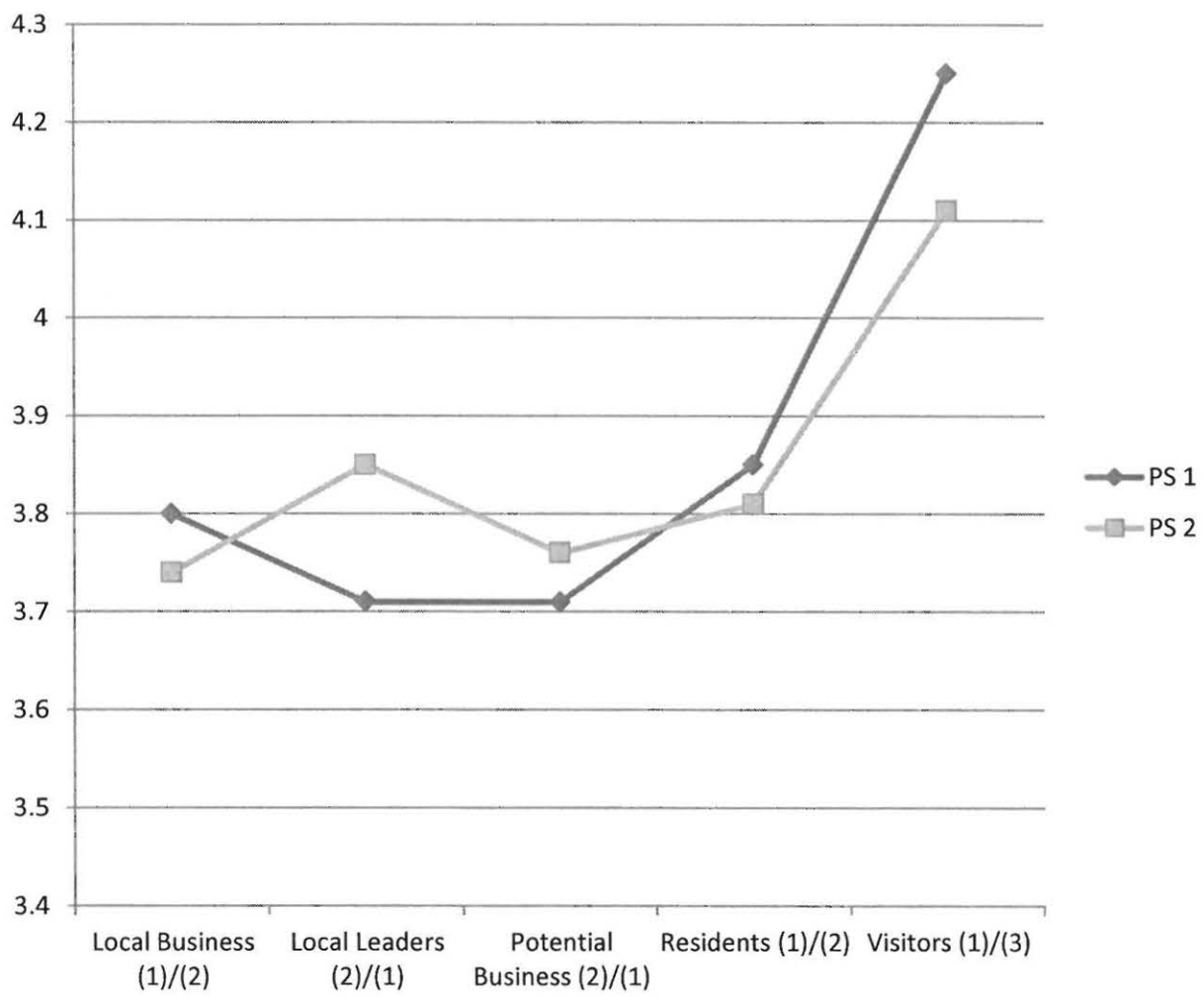
Positioning Statement 2

Bluffton, South Carolina, is a quintessential Southern town on the banks of the historic May River. Dedicated to a strong, progressive economic future, Bluffton is central to the best of Savannah and Hilton Head Island, providing abundant opportunities for a desirable work/life balance.



	Local bus.	Local Leader	Potent. Bus.	Res.	Visitor
Rank	2	1	1	2	3
Mean	3.74	3.85	3.76	3.81	4.11

Position Statements Key Findings



Recommendations and Observations from the Quantitative Findings



Executive Summary: Key Comparison Outcomes

- All five stakeholder groups described Bluffton as quaint, friendly, charming, and beautiful.
- The highest ranked attributes were the May River, Live Oaks and the laid-back nature of Bluffton.
- The lowest ranked attributes were the job prospects, education quality, and public transportation.
- Bluffton was perceived mainly for its southern charm, but not for being exciting, intelligent or innovative.

Executive Summary: Key Comparison Outcomes

- **Overall the key stakeholders had very similar perceptions of Bluffton**
 - Difference were mainly between residents and potential businesses with respect to Bluffton. Both groups indicated that Bluffton was laid back, peaceful and artistic, but residents ranked these attributes higher.
 - The consistencies between the Qualitative and Quantitative data analysis validate the credibility of the findings. The brand personality matched very closely the celebrities used to describe Bluffton during the Charrettes.



Executive Summary: Key Comparison Outcomes

- **Two highly rated positioning statements (#1 and #2), and both match the data collected during both phases.**

Which position is chosen depends on the direction of the community:

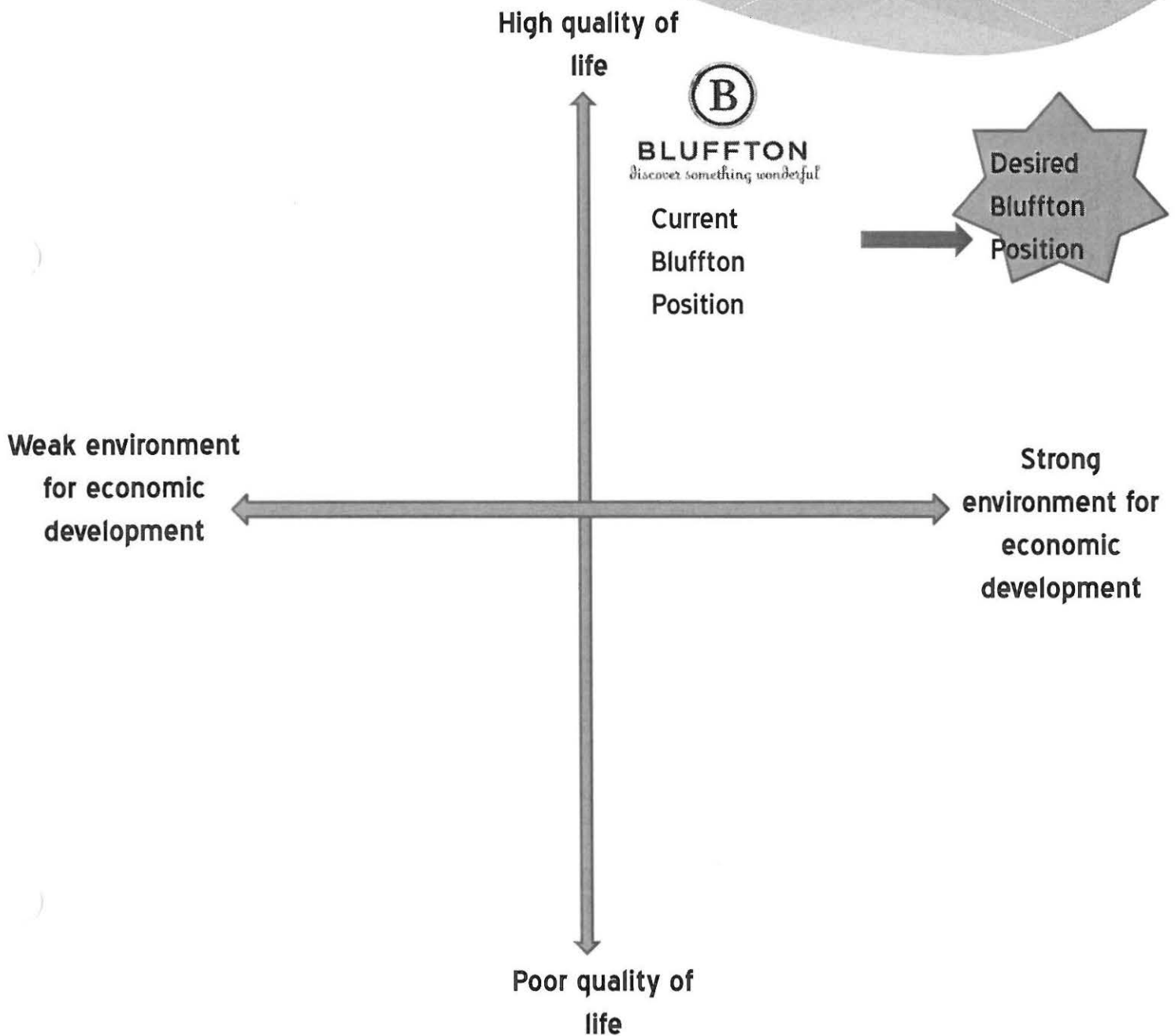
- Positioning statement #1 emphasizes the “charm”, “nature” and “quaintness” of Bluffton plus the importance of economic development, but quality of life is the focus.
- Positioning statement #2 emphasizes “economic development” and “location” of Bluffton with southern charm. Economic development is the focus.

Positioning Statement: Recommendations



It is our recommendation that Bluffton's brand communications should be built around Positioning Statement #2. It encompasses both the quality of life and economic indicators that are important to all stakeholders.

Future Directions



Economic
Development



Bluffton Branding
Economic Development Overview

February 19, 2014

RawleMurdy

Research

- Four public meetings (charrettes) with 100+ participants
- 30+ one-on-one interviews
- 40+ competitor town/regional brand reviews
- Tens of thousands of online conversations about Bluffton
- 500+ online and intercept interviews
- Dozens of press releases; print, online, and TV coverage



bluffton

HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

Economic Development

TV Commercial

VIDEO	AUDIO
<p>OPEN: DOWNTOWN BLUFFTON. A BUSINESS MAN STANDING WITH HIS HANDS IN THE SHAPE OF A HEART.</p> <p>LIVELY SHOTS OF DOWNTOWN. BUCKWALTER AND OFFICES. A PERSON WRITING ON A DRY ERASE BOARD.</p> <p>DON RYAN CENTER, FACILITY, PEOPLE TALKING, MEETING.</p> <p>SCHOOLS AND USC-BLUFFTON CAMPUS. PEOPLE</p> <p>END CARD: BLUFFTON (LOGO) THE HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY. VISIT TOWNOFBLUFFTON.SC.GOV.</p>	<p>VO: There's a reason why Bluffton, South Carolina, is the heart of the Lowcountry.</p> <p>The town is the beating, economic life force of the Lowcountry. Bluffton is dedicated to entrepreneurship, innovation and attracting high-tech industries.</p> <p>Look no further than the new Don Ryan Center for Innovation. It's an incubator for new technology startups in Bluffton.</p> <p>And with a great school system and public university in town, it's easy to why Bluffton is where it's at.</p> <p>It's time you looked at Bluffton. The heart of the Lowcountry.</p>

WOMAN: The heart of the South Carolina Lowcountry is a magical place. Days are filled with vast salt marsh views, while at night, Spanish Moss frames bright, glowing stars. Oyster boats go out as they have for decades, returning as shrimp begin to boil.

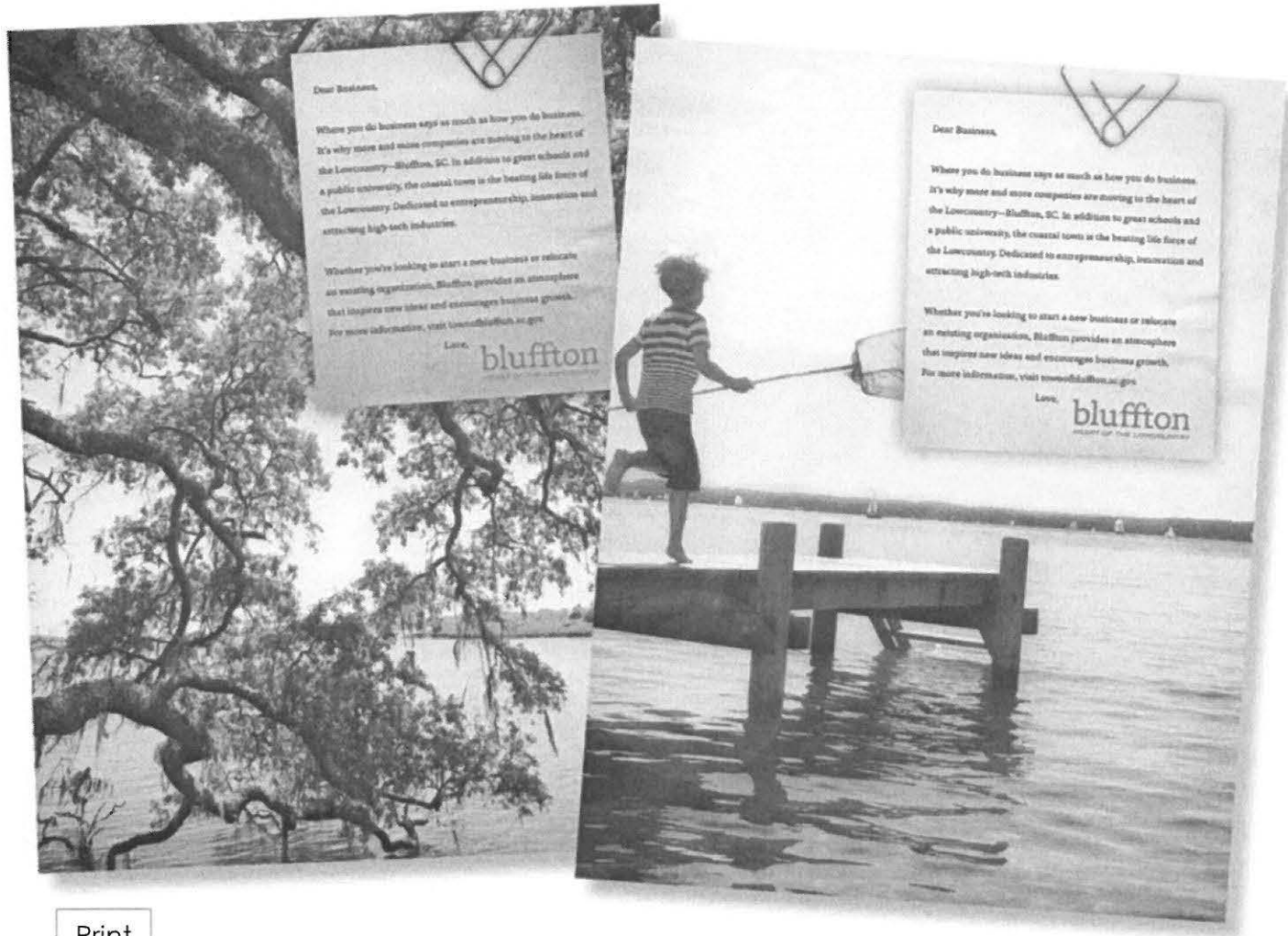
Here, against an effortless backdrop, things move at a different pace...life seems a little simpler...smiles last a little longer.

And in the middle of it all, hidden beneath majestic Live Oaks, you'll find Bluffton, South Carolina.

Come find your heart in Bluffton. Heart of the Lowcountry.

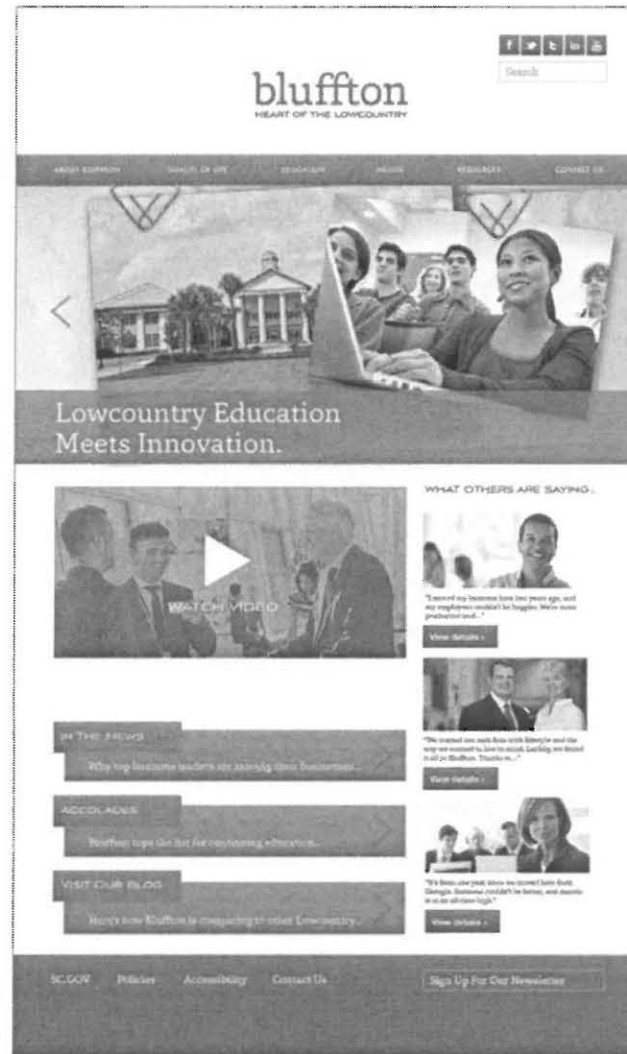
Radio Commercial

Economic Development



Print

Economic Development



Website

BLUFFTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MEDIA RECOMMENDATION 2014

Television

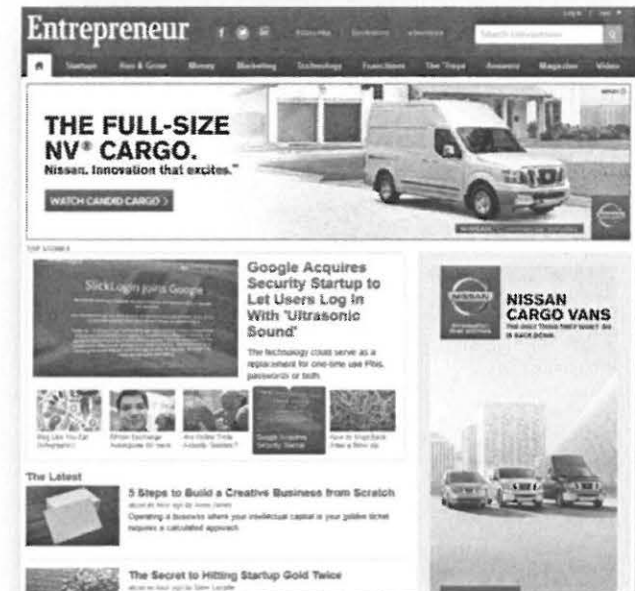
- Decision makers start their day with CNN, CNBC, and Fox News
- 30-second commercial
- Atlanta, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Knoxville, Raleigh



Digital

- Entrepreneur.com
 - Horizontal and vertical banner ads
 - 1,304,348 guaranteed impressions
 - Geo-targeted to key markets
 - Timing: January-March 2015

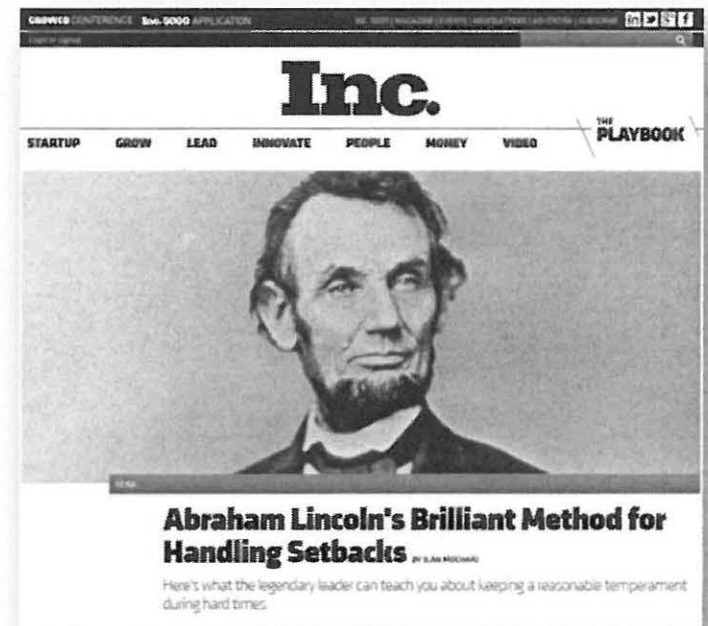
Entrepreneur®



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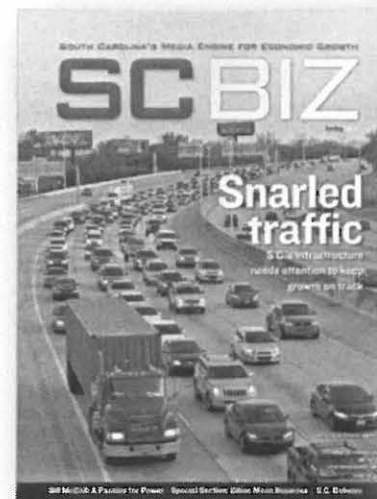
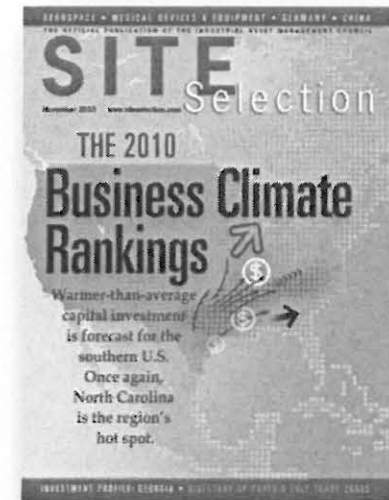
Inc.



Print

- Key site selection and business publications help executives narrow their focus when considering relocation
- State specific editorial, industry focus, and business amenities are key

- Editorial focus:
 - Locations of the Future
 - Business Goes Outdoors
- Industry Focus:
 - Data Centers
 - Digital Media
 - Call Centers



Community Profile

- 4 page insert highlights Bluffton as a premier economic development location

Business Facilities
THE LOCATION ADVISOR

COMMUNITY PROFILE: SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS IN *Southwest Louisiana*

WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE, A BURGEONING ENERGY SECTOR AND A CORNUCOPIA OF AVAILABLE SITES AWAIT EXPANDING BUSINESSES LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT PLACE TO PUT DOWN ROOTS AND NURTURE GROWTH.

BY ERIC CORMIER

Opportunity is a word used a lot when discussions about Southwest Louisiana are started. Bordered by the Gulf of Mexico to the south and Texas to the west, the sky is literally the limit for an area where an estimated \$42 billion in private investments already have been announced, including several mega-projects in the natural gas industry. Recent job-creating developments in the region—which includes Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron and Jefferson Davis parishes (counties)—will create more than 40,000 jobs in the coming years.

George Swift, president and CEO of the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance, asserts that prospects are great for any business that locates or expands in the area. "We have plenty of opportunity here. There are good sites to develop

because of our infrastructure which includes six ports, interstate highway, railway, airports, a large pipeline system, a loyal and productive workforce, and training facilities," Swift says.

Southwest Louisiana (SWLA) is home to the most extensive network of pipelines in the U.S.; hundreds of miles of pipe used to move crude oil and chemicals inside and outside the area. In an interview with a Lake Charles newspaper, Chris John, president of the Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association said this "second to none" infrastructure has made SWLA a magnet from some of the biggest energy-related projects in the nation.

"I can't imagine projects like Sand and Cheniere would exist without the kind of pipeline infrastructure that we have today. We are blessed to have natural resources like oil and gas, but

you have to be able to transport them and that adds value," he told the *American Press*.

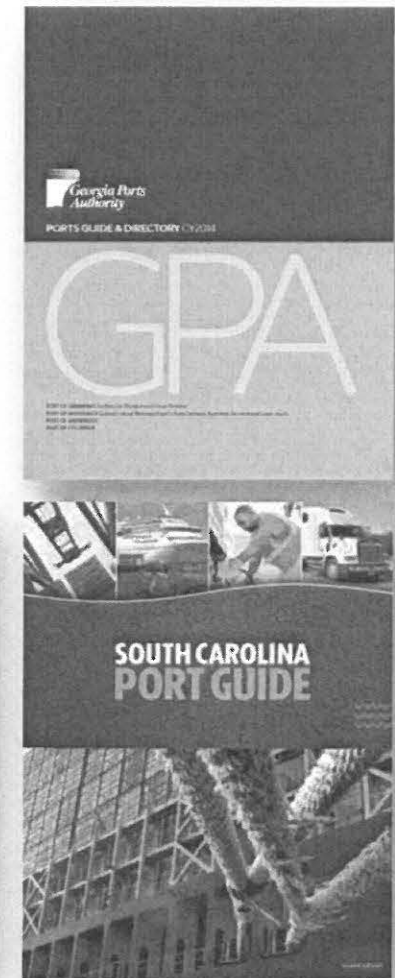
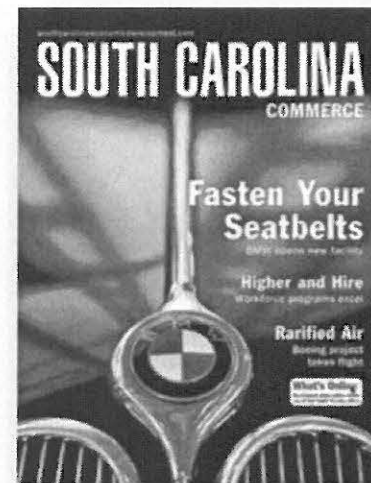
Saudi North America plans to invest up to \$21 billion on a gas-liquid and ethylene cracker/derivatives unit in Lake Charles, one of the largest foreign investment projects in American history. Chevron Energy is the first company granted approval by the U.S. government to export natural gas to non-free trade countries. As a result, the company is spending \$11 billion to retrofit its facility in Cameron Parish for exporting capabilities.

The region also boasts the nation's twelfth-largest seaport, the Port of Lake Charles. Its facility includes the City Docks—located 34 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico on the Calcasieu River Ship Channel, which is 40 feet deep and 400 feet

BUSINESS FACILITIES

Print

- 2015 Georgia Port Guide
- 2015 South Carolina Port Guide
- 2015 South Carolina Department of Commerce



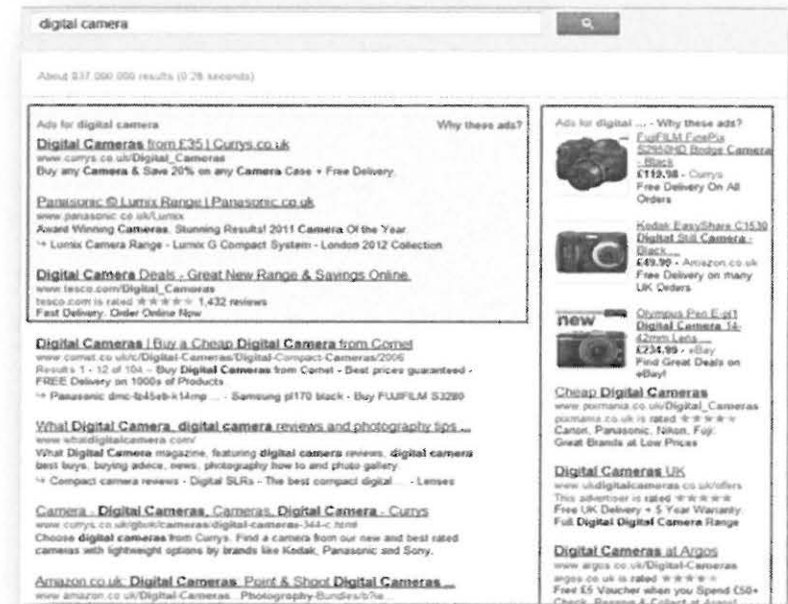
Digital

- SEM

- Text search ads that display when specific keywords are searched through Google

- Timing: August 2014 – March 2015

Google AdWords



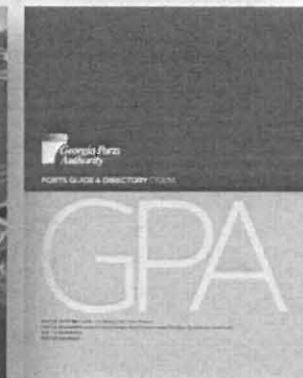
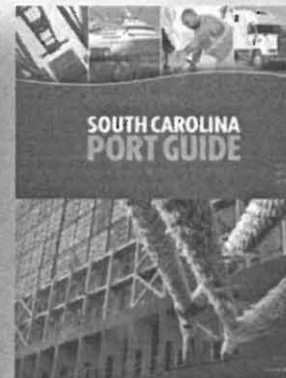
Economic Development



Inc.



Entrepreneur





Bluffton Branding Presentation

CONTENT MARKETING/ SOCIAL MEDIA/PR

Content Marketing

- Establish economic development website as hub of info. and activity
 - Steady stream of **high-quality, optimized** content—photos, videos and articles to stay relevant
 - Shared via **paid** (i.e., Pitch Engine), **earned** (i.e., online PR) and **owned channels** (i.e., email, social, etc.) to drive organic search and build **natural** links



Content Marketing cont'd.

- ***Heart of the Lowcountry*** blog

- Posts on the growth of the Bluffton economy, company and business leader profiles, local guest bloggers, etc.

- ***For the Love of Bluffton*** vignettes

- Series of 60- to 90-sec videos with biz leaders who chose Bluffton to start and grow their business

Social Media

- Initiate/cultivate conversation about doing business in Bluffton through an active, engaged presence across leading social channels.
 - Rally Bluffton community for support to extend reach of the conversation - #heartofthelowcountry #blufftonforbusiness
 - Curate content from local businesses and information relevant to target audiences - **80/20 rule – curated vs. brand content**

Social Media cont'd.



Follow Bluffton for economic development news, business climate, job growth and discussions among Bluffton professionals.



Online community to celebrate the Bluffton community, profile business and job opportunities, events and more.



Listening to overall Bluffton conversation and targeted industry discussions, curation of relevant content, prospecting and engagement with media and influencers.



Regular visual doses of Bluffton's unparalleled quality of life and unique vibe.



For the Love of Bluffton vignettes, testimonials and other relevant video content.

Media Relations / Influencer Outreach

- Seed / share the Bluffton story...more often
 - Leverage news-business/job growth, relocations, local company successes, etc.
 - Arm stakeholders and influencers with timely information about Bluffton
- Identify regional and national news opportunities
 - Highlight Bluffton's unique characteristics (i.e., quality of life, cost of living, talent, etc.) through business success stories
 - Utilize regular web/social content to stay on media's radar
- Strengthen awareness for Bluffton in targeted vertical industries
 - Media FAMs for site selectors, journalists, businesses



Visitor Intercept

- Capitalize on visitors with an affinity for Bluffton...
 - *Why go home when you can live, work and play here.*
 - Mini iPads in cottages at Palmetto Bluff
 - Loaded with content-blogs, photos and videos
 - Branded cell-phone charging stations
 - Farmers' Market presence on monthly basis
 - Reinforce brand locally while building awareness among visitors
 - *Crabs on Parade*
 - Invite businesses to display original Crab painting or their own interpretation with "Heart of the Lowcountry" branding



Local Market Activation

- ***Start a movement around the brand...***
 - Low involvement
 - Heart of the Lowcountry window clings
 - Email signatures –support brand rollout
 - Extend reach of content marketing / social media effort
 - High involvement
 - Attend sales trips or staff trade shows /events
 - Guest blogging / Video testimonials
 - Economic Development Advisory Group



Bluffton Branding Presentation

PLACEMAKING BRAND RECOMMENDATIONS

Placemaking Brand Recommendations

- Significant town Welcome Signs on major arteries (278, 170 ad 46)
- Consistent Bluffton street signage beyond “old town”
- Partner Programs with developer signage (e.g. Buckwalter-Bluffton; Hampton Lake-Bluffton, etc.)
- Increased pedestrian and bicycle connectivity (sidewalks, pathways, bike lanes, bikeshares, etc.)
- Live Oak “Canopy Creating” landscape guidelines
- Appropriately-sized Inn in the “Old Town”

bluffton

HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

- True
- Authentic
- Emotional
- Plans are ready to bring it to life

Success Requires

- Community Support
- Financial Support
- Consistent Execution

You can make it happen!

Thank you!

Website

Daufuskie Website



DAUFUSKIE ISLAND
the paradise beyond



ART GALLERIES & STUDIOS | CUISINE | GOLF | HISTORY & CULTURE | MAP | LODGING | OUTDOOR ADVENTURE | SHOPS | TRANSPORTATION

Inhale... Exhale... the Art of Daufuskie Island

Artists on Daufuskie draw inspiration from the beauty, balance, gentle temper and wild nature of the island. They express it in every medium, from the clay beneath our feet to paints that portray the "heaven-blue" sky, to the metal left over from an old tin roof. This calling – to breathe in life and breathe out art – has landed a remarkable community of artists on Daufuskie's shore for generations.

Browse a gallery, relax in the presence of original work and chat with the person who created it. Possibly a piece will find its way home with you. Certainly the memory will remain.



Chase Allen, Iron Fish

Hand crafted coastal sculptures

[Learn More >](#)



Silver Dew Pottery

Array of functional, aesthetic and art pottery since 1900

[Share](#) [Tweet](#) [X+1](#)

[Follow us on Facebook](#) [Friend us on Twitter](#)



H
WILSON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

South Carolina
Just right.

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Tourism Internet Marketing by VERB

Daufuskie Website



DAUFUSKIE ISLAND
the paradise beyond



ART GALLERIES & STUDIOS | **CUISINE** | GOLF | HISTORY & CULTURE | MAP | LODGING | OUTDOOR ADVENTURE | SHOPS | TRANSPORTATION

A Recipe for Life

Daufuskie Island cooking is anchored in the real, the wholesome and the local. Until recent times, if it wasn't grown here, it wasn't eaten here. That tradition left its trace on what we eat, even now that we can get anything – steaks from Kansas and Kobe, lobsters from Australia and Maine. You'll still notice the influence of local seafood, peas, lima and corn, butter beans and blackberries. The Daufuskie Island touch on the county is so distinctive that there's a book about it – *Quish home Cooking the Daufuskie Way*, by Belle Ann Robinson.

When you visit, you'll find everything from a roadside lunch counter to the beachside seafood. The only thing missing here is the fuss, or the pretentious. Just relax and enjoy. Go out and try something new, or have one of the island cooks deliver it to your door.

Restaurants



Bloody Point, Eagle's Nest

(843) 241-8888

[Learn More](#)



Marshside Mama's

(843) 788-4788

[Learn More](#)



Old Daufuskie Crab Company

(843) 788-8888



Fappy's Ice Cream

(843) 422-8034

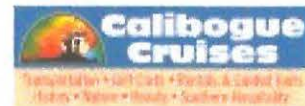
Share Tweet +1



Follow us
on Facebook



Friend us
on Twitter



Download the
Robert Kennedy
Historic Trail Guide

Historic Sites on
Daufuskie Island

Daufuskie Website

DAUFUSKIE ISLAND
the paradise beyond

ART GALLERIES & STUDIOS | CUISINE | GOLF | HISTORY & CULTURE | MAP | LODGING | OUTDOOR ADVENTURE | SHOPS | TRANSPORTATION

Arrive Already Changed

Getting here and getting around are two more unique things about Daufuskie Island. Choose from the ferry lines, the hum of the engine, the creak of the wheels and the whisper of the wind are the beginnings of your Daufuskie Island experience. Something good has happened already, by the time you arrive.

Remain a scenic spot for getting around while you're here. Use the perfect spots for hearing the animals around you. Oh, there are a few cars on the island – but you might go all day without seeing one.

Share | Like | Follow us on Facebook | Friend us on Twitter

Water Transportation

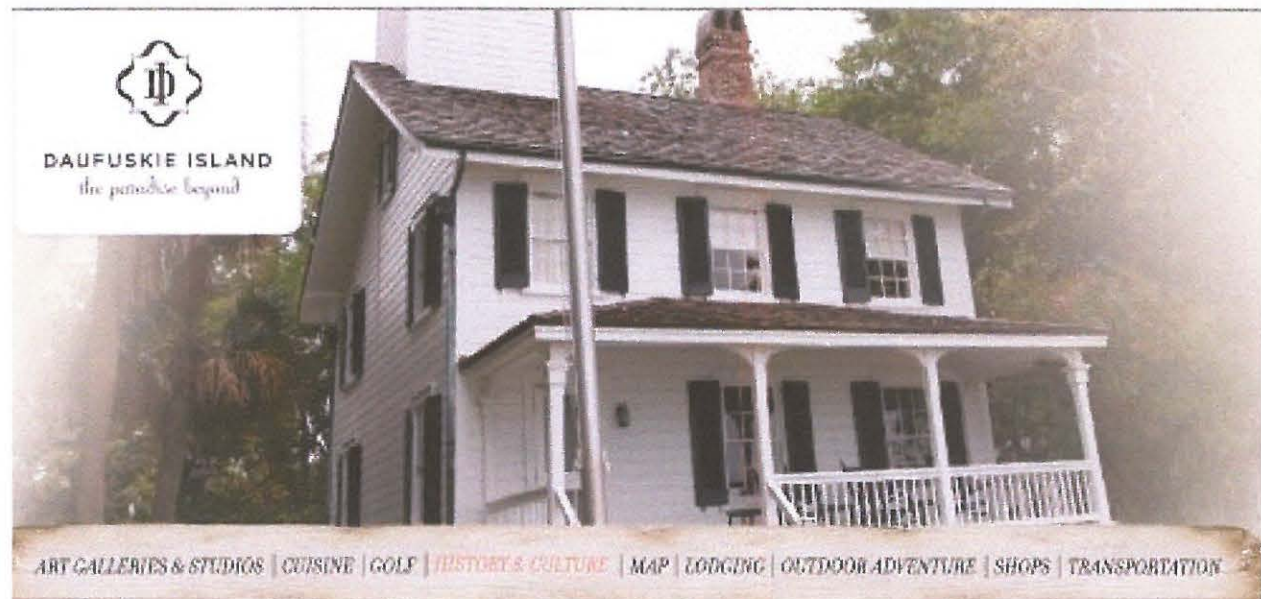
H2O Sports
(877) 222-4211
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Calibogue Cruises
(843) 242-8887
[LEARN MORE](#)

South Carolina
Just Right

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Daufuskie Website



Rich History & Authentic Lowcountry Culture

Since the days when history was family – their stories and ways, their myths and legends – when the only recorded history was in the hand-wrought designs pressed into pottery. For all these centuries, Daufuskie Island has been precious to the people who've lived here. It's no different today, and it will take you no time at all to sense why they've had this place so dear.

- [Time Without Counting](#)
- [Elephant Eggs](#)
- [What's Top to Stay](#)
- [The Industry of Nature's Gifts](#)
- [The Language of Enduring](#)
- [Some Bird & Beach Must to Leave](#)
- [Mooch Times](#)
- [Today's Plan to Have it All](#)
- [Robert Kennedy, Historic Trail Guide](#)

Time Without Counting

Native artifacts found on Daufuskie date back at least nine thousand years, so the European and American stories take place only in the past couple of minutes in the hour of history. Ancient piles of oyster shells testify that people found abundance and contentment on the island before time was counted. The name, Daufuskie, comes from the Muscogee language, meaning "sharp leather," for the island's distinctive snags. Learn more at the [Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation](#).



Planting Flags



Spain claimed Daufuskie Island – and all the coast from St. Augustine to Charles Town – in 1521, yet a French expedition sailed nearby anyway, giving Port Royal its name, in 1528. The native people who already thrived here took little notice.

When the Scots with Henry Spilone, Lord Cardross, settled on Port Royal in 1654, Spanish soldiers enticed native warriors to join forces with their three Spanish galleys and drive the Scottish sailors from their tiny Stewart Town. So began the sad chapter of native entanglement in European history that set a culture of nature against a culture of property. A so-called Indian uprising brought with it three battles on our southeastern shore between 1715 and 1717, and gave it the name it bears today, Boboy Point.

What it Took to Stay

The quest for religious freedom finally brought two European families to Daufuskie to stay. The French Huguenot family of David Mongin came to the new world in 1635. Mongin's great grandson sailed with his wife,




Share Tweet +1

Follow us on Facebook Friend us on Twitter



Download the Robert Kennedy Historic Trail Guide
Historic Sites on Daufuskie Island

A scenic sunset over a beach. The sky is filled with vibrant orange and red clouds, with the sun low on the horizon. The ocean waves are gently washing onto the sandy beach. A decorative white dotted line graphic, resembling a stylized wave or flourish, is positioned at the top of the image.

Beaches, history, Lowcountry charm...
and then some

We must tell our story...
if we want them to come

Beaufort County Tourism

A proposal to sustain and grow our regional economic impact



HILTON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Strengths



Strengths

DIGITAL



HILTON HEAD ISLAND
South Carolina

bluffton
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

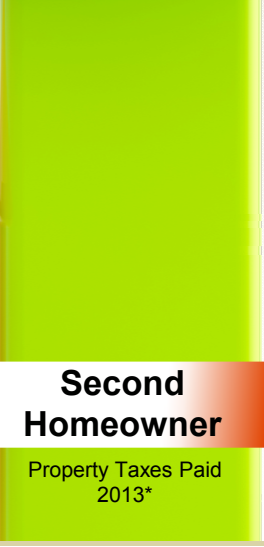


BEAUFORT, SC
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT
PORT ROYAL & SEA ISLANDS

Strengths



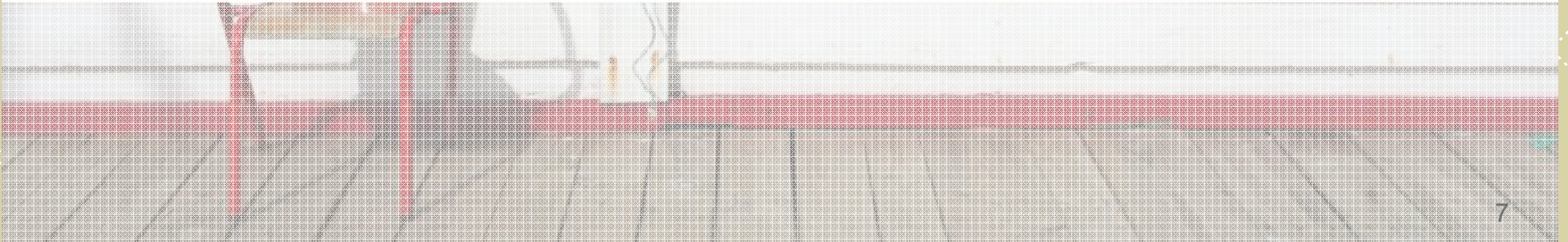
Strengths



*Source: Beaufort County

Weaknesses

- ❖ Aging vacation rental product



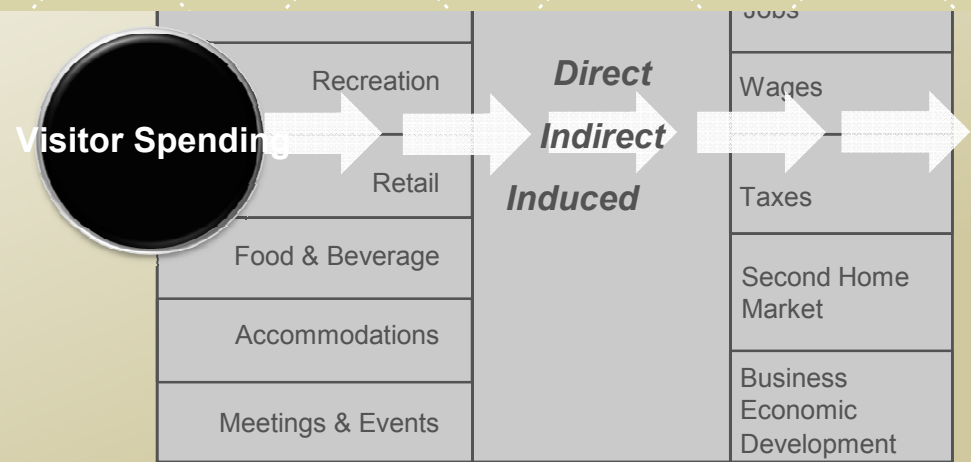
Weaknesses

- ❖ Flat level of product inventory limits visitor volume growth
- ❖ Destination marketing investment
 - ◆ US national average for combined local and state accommodations tax invested with DMOs = 58%*
- ❖ County-wide collaboration on strategic plan for NextGen product development and marketing resources

*Source: Destination Marketing Association International 2013

Opportunities

- ◆ Fills pipeline for second homebuyer market
- ◆ In turn, fills county coffers with property tax investments
- ❖ Grow shoulder & off-season travel by corporate, sports, social groups



Opportunities



Threats



Threats

- Underfunded destination marketing threatens sustainability at a time when the private sector is making major investments.



Available Funds & Resources



HILTON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



County Tourism Tax Revenues

\$9 million currently in reserve in Beaufort County's local tourism tax revenues for investment in destination marketing and tourism infrastructure.

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	3 Year Avg
ATAx	\$704,702	\$923,205	\$948,991	\$858,966
HTAx	\$1,338,394	\$1,691,724	\$1,675,677	\$1,568,598
Adm. Taxes	\$1,210,155	\$1,292,155	\$1,250,603	\$1,250,971
Totals	\$3,253,251	\$3,907,084	\$3,875,271	\$3,678,535

*Source: Beaufort County

Proposal



HILTON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE





BEAUFORT, SC
REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HILTON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

❖ Three year Average ATAX + HTAX Collections:		\$2,427,864
❖ Deduction of Beaufort County's 8% Admin. Fee:	-	\$194,229
❖ Remaining Balance:		\$2,233,635
❖ Est. Average New Allocation to Co-DMOs:		\$1,116,818
❖ Est. Average New Allocation to each DMO:		\$558,409

◆ *Retain dedicated funding to Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce.*



The destination
It ensures their return

The destination marketing
It ensures ours

Budget

Northern Beaufort County DMO - REVENUES

240,000

Total DMO

Paid By Bft Co DMO

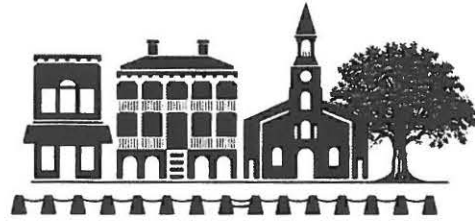
50000 · PERSONNEL EXPENSES		
Total 50000 · PERSONNEL EXPENSES	230,700	83,052
60000 · NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES		-
61000 · GENERAL EXPENSES		-
61300 · ADVERTISING		-
61310 · PRINT ADVERTISING	61,000	21,960
61320 · ELECTRONIC MEDIA	87,000	31,320
61340 · BILLBOARDS	21,500	7,740
61350 · SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING	27,500	9,900
61360 · EMAIL MARKETING	5,500	1,980
61370 · PUBLIC RELATIONS	30,000	10,800
Total 61300 · ADVERTISING	232,500	83,700
61700 · TRAVEL/MEALS/ENTERTAINMENT		-
61750 · BOARD MEETINGS/RETREATS	0	-
61760 · TRADESHOWS/EVENTS	4,000	1,440
61770 · FAM TOURS	5,000	1,800
Total 61700 · TRAVEL/MEALS/ENTERTAINMENT	9,000	3,240
61800 · DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS		-
Total 61000 · GENERAL EXPENSES	241,500	86,940
63000 · EQUIPMENT		-
Total 63000 · EQUIPMENT		-
64000 · CONTRACT SERVICES/PROF. FEES		-
64400 · RESEARCH	5,000	1,800
64500 · WEBSITE	34,000	12,240
64600 · DESIGN/PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES	21,000	7,560
64700 · FULFILLMENT SERVICES	21,500	7,740
64900 · OTHER SERVICES		-
64905 - Visitor Center Op	78,000	28,080
64910 - PROMOTIONAL ITEMS	1,992	717
64915 - MISC	24,000	8,640
Total 64900 · OTHER SERVICES	103,992	37,437
Total 64000 · CONTRACT SERVICES/PROF. FEES	185,492	66,777
69000 · OTHER EXPENSES		-
69300 · BOOKING ENGINE	7250	2,610
Total 69000 · OTHER EXPENSES	7,250	2,610
Total 60000 · NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES	434,242	156,327
Net Total Expenses	664,942	239,379

Marketing Plan



BEAUFORT, SC
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT
PORT ROYAL & SEA ISLANDS

Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce – Tourism Division | Marketing Plan 2014-2015



BEAUFORT, SC

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT
PORT ROYAL & SEA ISLANDS

2014-2015 Marketing Plan
Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce
Tourism Division

Objectives/Strategies/Tactics/Metrics

Objective #1: Develop & Execute Integrated Marketing Plan

Using current analysis from previous campaigns, we will deliver on an advertising campaign that allows us to draw more visitors into the area. With a focus on increasing overall economic impact for the destination, the campaigns will have a clear call to action that incorporates partner participation to increase our overall market participation.

Strategy #1: Continue the Integrated Marketing Plan that focuses on achieving the goals set forth by the Tourism Advisory Committee

The strategy is to reach travelers as they are researching destinations for their vacations/get-away plans. The primary goal is to generate leads, with an undertone of **brand awareness**, which will mostly be taken care of with the creative.

GUIDING STRATEGIES:

- Total transparency
- Lean on continued research to confirm that our guests believe what we believe
- Influence product development consistent with the brand
- Total integration of all marketing channels, ensuring cross promotion of messaging, content and those products/assets

THE GAME PLAN:

- Target conversions from marketing campaigns (how the brand generates visitation and bookings)
- Embrace all things digital, maintaining a careful blend of traditional and new media
- “Be specific” ...by season, interest, profile and point of origin segmentation
- Create, maintain and update a dynamic database of signature assets, calendars, events and facts
- More conversions...from strategic social media to interactive communications tools
- Protect strongholds (Spring and Fall season and in-state saturation), while venturing out (Summer seasons and broader regional appeal)
- Develop private sector partnerships



Channel Saturation:

- **EARNED:**
 - i) -Amplify Beaufort's voice beyond imagination
 - ii) -Expand the brand's story

- **OWNED:**
 - i) -Claim our space
 - ii) -Constant communication
 - iii) -Clearinghouse for lead generation and cross-media
(a) Enhancements

- **PAID:**
 - i) -Balanced and purposeful
 - ii) -Targeted
 - iii) -Trackable

EARNED STRATEGIES = PR STRATEGIES:

- Leverage media relations to garner positive media coverage of Beaufort

- Foster open communication with area restaurants, hotels and attractions to maximize efforts

- Identify or create newsworthy events and celebrations

- Maximize efforts by keeping the SCPRT informed and up to date on Beaufort news

PR Tactics: Editorial calendar research, Added-value opportunities per paid channels, Media Hosting/FAM trips/Desksides/Tours, SCPRT media relations outreach, Field organic media inquiries and qualify leads, Solicit information from Chamber members fit for media distribution; Communicate media highlights and PR efforts to Chamber members, News release development, distribution and follow up

OWNED STRATEGIES = SOCIAL MEDIA

- Actively build and engage a social media fan/follower base

- Enhance existing platforms to amplify Beaufort's social media footprint and exposure

- Increase the number of fans, followers and viewers

- Utilize social media as a customer service tool

- Use Social Media to increase traffic to Beaufort's website

- Use Social Media to acquire more opt-in email addresses

PAID STRATEGIES = CORE OBJECTIVES

- Balance...even in the face of a massive shift to digital
- CTA is the new acronym for destinations...invite interaction in all we do
- Don't spread too thin. Claim a footprint and grow it
- Targets that are true to the brand
- Efficiency and measurability
- Quantitative, qualitative and consumer inquiries from current marketing campaigns and research continue to provide valuable insight into our current visitor profile.
- We continue to update the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce **visitor demand** profile of our destination in conjunction with the University of South Carolina – Beaufort.

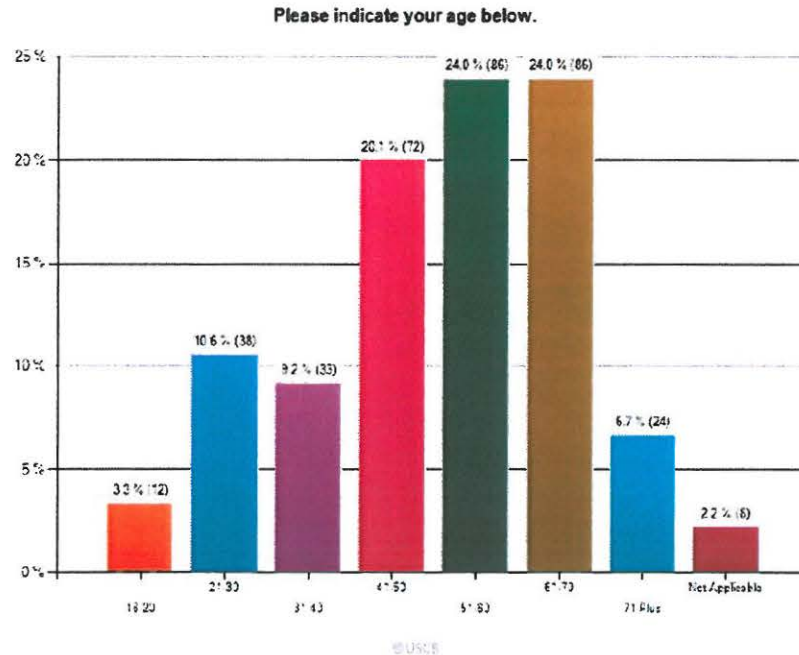
The analysis (below) provided insight into the markets that make up our core visitor.

Beaufort Leads Top 10 MSA Markets: According to Affinity Ranking

% Share Rank after Controlling for Population	Metropolitan Area	Sum of Zip Codes by MSA	% Share of Beaufort Inquiries	Arbitron Share	Nielsen Share	Scarb Share	BF%S-A%S	BF%S-N%S	BF%S-S%S
1	Greenville, SC MSA	187	8%	1%	2%	1%	6%	5%	6%
2	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA MSA	290	12%	6%	6%	7%	5%	6%	5%
3	Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord, NC-SC MSA	173	7%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%
4	Augusta-Richmond County, GA-SC MSA	114	5%	1%	1%	0%	4%	4%	-5%
5	Columbia, SC MSA	94	4%	1%	1%	0%	3%	3%	-4%
6	Charleston-North Charleston, SC MSA	52	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
7	Jacksonville, FL MSA	57	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%
8	Knoxville, TN MSA	39	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%
9	Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC MSA	60	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%
10	Pittsburgh, PA MSA	79	3%	3%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%

Our core target audience remains that of mature, married couples whose children do not currently reside in the home:

- Ages 45+ with a core age of 55-64
- Married
- College-educated
- Empty nesters
 - Of note: *US Travel Industry* reports that one-third of all leisure travelers are now grandparents.
- Moderate to high household income (\$100K+)



- Top four drive market states: South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida
 - Our Top 3 Markets (city MSA) all fall along the I-85 stretch between Charlotte and Atlanta (*2012 MSA Visitor Demand Beaufort, SC*). Additional states showing interest in our destination include: New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Our secondary target audience is that of a younger set who may travel with children, knowing that they are likely to book longer stays during the summer:

- Ages 30-44
- College-educated
- Moderate household income
- May have children in the home or may be younger, married couples
 - *US Travel Industry* also reports that eight out of 10 leisure travelers will take at least one trip each year with either their spouse or another adult, while family travelers take an average of 4.5 trips each year.
- Same drive market states as mentioned above



Psychographic descriptors of our audience can be explained by way of their areas of interest – drawing them to our destination:

- **History**
- **Outdoor Activities & Adventure**
- **Culinary**
- **Arts & Culture**

For timing, our primary goals are the Spring and Fall, while the secondary time period would be increasing Summer business.

Target

- Women 35+
- Geo: SC, NC, PA, NY, DC, MD, GA, FL, and eastern TN.
 - Highly targeting the following metros: Atlanta, Charlotte

Print

Country Living, Good Housekeeping, Woman's Day, circ: 3,611,468

- One-third page 4-color ad in the October 2014 issues of Country Living, Good Housekeeping, & Woman's Day
- Added Value includes bonus reader service listing in May travel issues

Oprah Magazine, Eastern circ: 700,000

- One-third page 4-color ad in the April 2014 Issue
- Added Value includes VacationFun.com listing and hyperlink, lead generation, and "eZine" listing

Southern Living, Southeast circ: 980,000

- One-third page 4-color ad in March 2014 Issue
- Added Value includes SouthernLivingVacations.com monthly bonus ad with hyperlink and .pdf of promotional materials as well as reader response service

AAA Go, circ: 1,120,000

- One-third page 4-color ad in Sept/Oct 2014 Issue
- Added Value includes reader service to full circulation, online virtual Go with direct links and YouTube video links

SC Official Vacation Guide 2014, circ: 400,000

- One-third page 4-color ad in 2015 edition
- Added value includes online leads



STS/Madden Media “Explore the Southeast” Newspaper Insert, circ: 851,000

- One-quarter page 4-color ad in Spring 2015 insert
- Added Value includes VacationFun.com listing, campaign launch eBlast, eZine, SEM, lead delivery

Carolina Living Hot Carolina Destinations Print & Online Package, circ: 500,000

- One-third page 4-color ad in Carolina Living Guide October 2014 and April 2015 Issues
- Added Value includes City Highlight Jumbo Banner Program (12 months), lead generation

Online

TripAdvisor.com

- Beaufort, SC Destination Page Sponsorship, content ownership with links for 1 year
- Display ads on SC Content Destination Pages, 300x250, 728x90, 300x600 banners in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, total impressions 375,000
- Charleston Destination Pages, 300x250, 728x90, 300x600 banners in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, total impressions 375,000
- Savannah Destination Pages, 300x250, 728x90, 300x600 banners in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, total impressions 375,000
- Added value includes bonus impressions

Travel Spike Travel Ad Network

- Lead Generation Program (CPL): Targeted 300x250, 728x90, 160x600 display ad banners, textlinks, and emails through travel platform, total leads 4,219

Carolina Living “Compass eNews” eblast

- August 2014 and March 2015 monthly personalized email sent to 25,000 prospects

Carbon Media Group

- ActionHub (hiking, boating, fishing) geo-targeted display ads in Spring 2015, 160x600, 300x350, 728x90, total impressions 1,000,000
- YouTube Multi-Channel Network geo-targeted pre-roll video and companion banner ads in Fall 2014, total impressions 666,667

Collinson Online Banner Ad Network

- Display ads geo-targeted to PA, NY, DC, MD, GA, SC, NC, VA, FL and eastern TN and demographically targeted to Women 35+ with a propensity to travel and a HHI of \$75k+ in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, total clicks 10,000

PPC

- Search Engine Marketing geographically, demographically and behaviorally targeted and retargeted

TOTAL 2014-2015 MEDIA SPEND: \$200,000

**Note: The above-mentioned tactics may warrant slight adjustments following results of the spring campaign currently underway. Should performance of the national and regional print publications not be satisfactory, we may consider alternate options.*

Objective #2: Conduct Research

*“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”
 ~ Zora Neale Hurston*

Strategy #1: Identify and secure research sources

Continue to promote and expand research to festivals and events. We desire to focus our efforts on expanding participation to conduct research at the festivals/events/attractions.

Timing: Ongoing throughout the year

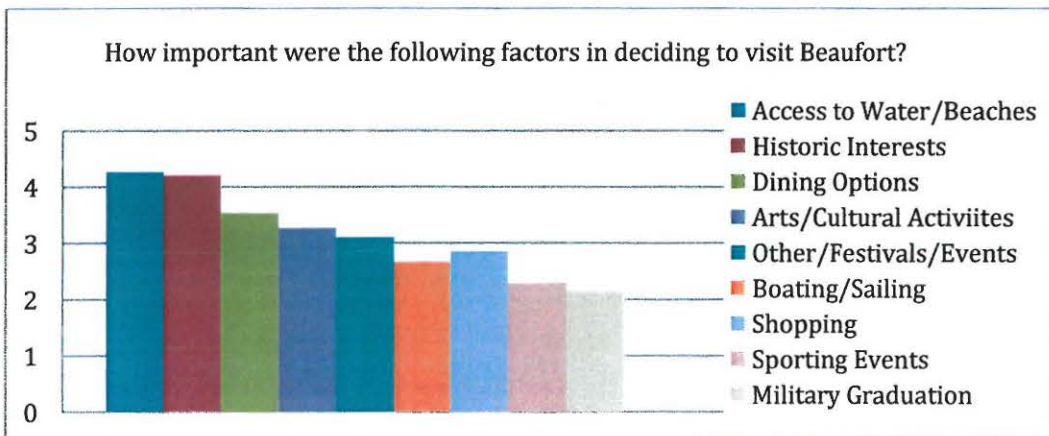
Success metrics: Secure at least two additional festivals/events in 2014-2015 to partner with an educational institution to conduct research.

Strategy #2: Baseline Visitor Profile Data

Utilizing the existing longitudinal databases, we will capitalize on the opportunity to capture key data on our existing customer base. The existing database is a derivative from our leads programs, as well as our email/e-newsletter opt-in form. We will initiate web based surveys at two new locations: Downtown Marina, Fripp Island, or two accommodations.

Timing: Ongoing – Begin process August 2014

Success metrics: Gain a better understanding to narrow our advertising/marketing focus for budget efficiency and effectiveness.



Strategy #3: Baseline Visitor Industry Data

Promoting and encouraging all accommodations partners to participate in the Smith Travel Research (STR) report is essential to accessing the full scope of visitor travel into our area. To date 13 out of 24 total properties are sharing their data with STR. BRCOC will also work with our vacation rental properties/VRBOs to develop a reporting plan and mechanism to deliver the most accurate picture of our diverse travel market.

Timing: Ongoing – To continue through FY 15

Success metrics: Finalize sign-up/registration for remaining 19 properties with STR; receive monthly reporting from 14 lodging properties

Strategy #4: Complete Competitive Set Analysis

To ensure we're remaining competitive in the marketplace and differentiating ourselves from the competition, it's essential that we conduct research on our competition. Information gathering is essential to marketing and advertising efforts, specifically with search-engine optimization, keywords & rankings. We will use 2 different sets. One will contain three comparative cities. The second set will be South Carolina small town specific.

Timing: Ongoing

Success metrics: Task completion. The Comparative cities are as follows: New Bern, NC; Brunswick, GA; St. Augustine, FL / Smith Travel Research SC Small Cities set.

Strategy #5: Conduct Research with Group Travel Tour Operators (Motorcoach, Cruise Ship, etc)

It's mutually beneficial to conduct an electronic survey for new learnings and to better understand how we can simplify their process for the financial benefit of Beaufort, Port Royal & the Sea Islands. If we can better understand their decision-making process, including travel routes/itineraries, there's a greater possibility that the region can increase the economic impact of such groups.

Timing: Surveying tour operators will begin in Spring 2015.

Success metrics: Completed survey with report analysis presented to the public via website. ***Based on funding***

Strategy #6: Complete Conversion/ROI Analysis per month

Monthly metrics will be provided by our partner agency that keeps the advertising campaigns in-line with the core goals set forth by Tourism Board.

Timing: Length of Advertising Schedule.

Success metrics: CPL will be the overall metric.

Objective #3: Sustain Stakeholder Relationships/Partnerships

Strategy #1: Continue and Expand Co-op Marketing Opportunities

Co-op marketing opportunities allow for an extension of marketing dollars and budget through negotiated advertising rates, which represent significant savings.

Timing: Begin of Advertising Campaign / Ongoing

Success metrics: Number of co-ops, industry participation volume and total revenue generated - \$20,000 Budgeted Line Item

Strategy #2: Conduct Regular Director of Sales/General Manager Roundtables

Roundtable discussions to be initiated to review results, share research, implement ideas, and continue communicating on a combined front. Developing packages for events, partnering for group travel promotion, tradeshow updates, lead generation suggested best practices are examples of industry data that will be shared during these meeting.

Timing: Quarterly Meeting (or as necessary)

Strategy #3: Strengthen partnership With Port Royal & the Sea Islands

It's important to ensure successful partnerships with Port Royal and the Sea Islands as they are also within our DMO. We will continue to strike a balance to effectively promote these areas – in conjunction to marketing Beaufort.

Timing: Ongoing

Success metrics: Public Relations tracking through Brandon Agency monitoring service

Strategy #4: Build on Existing Relationships with Festivals and Events

We will continue to play larger development roles in the marketing of events & festivals to increase the overall reach of audiences in markets that are key to overnight travel.

Timing: Conversations are in progress currently. Schedule a meeting of event/festival stakeholders.

Success metrics: Stakeholder participation and overall coordination.

Objective #4: Influence Product Development Consistent With Brand

Strategy #1: Serve as a Liaison between the Festivals/Events and Lodging Partners

The various festivals/events taking place every year in our area, is of significant opportunity for the BRCOC to develop packages that can assist in the increase of overnight stays.

Timing: To begin during Lodging Partners Roundtable

Success metrics: Stakeholder participation and overall coordination.

Strategy #2: Manage Content on Travel Sites Featuring or Promoting the Beaufort, SC, Area

It is a common and healthy practice to ensure destination information is being communicated accurately.

Timing: ongoing

Success metrics: Compile list & ensure accurate information on all partner sites

Cost: Time

Objective #5: Increase Group Travel

While we know group travel is an important part of our destination and our annual revenue, it's important that we qualify the extent that holds true. The DMO needs to lead a more concerted effort in quantifying the area's group market but also qualifying those segments to determine which are advantageous for us to pursue.

Strategy #1: Develop Protocol for Handling Group Leads

With a group lead form already in the works, finalizing the format and posting it to the web site is a priority in finalizing the group lead process. And to ensure a positive experience, the TTCD will confirm that once the lead forms are compiled on the front end, a protocol and execution process is in place on the back end, to ensure that the customer receives the information they requested. Group lead categories to be considered on the form:

- Meetings
- Motorcoach
- Weddings
- Students/Education
- Families/Reunions
- Religious
- Recreational Group

Timing: September 2014

Success metrics: Complete automation and back end fulfillment process

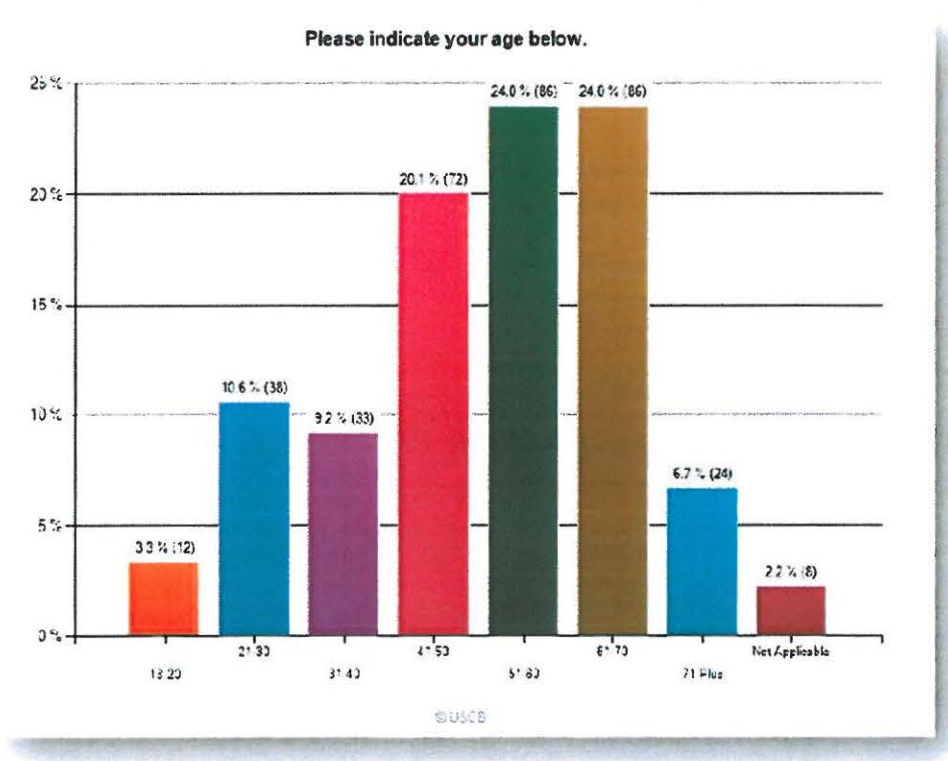
Strategy #2: Attend Industry Tradeshows/Sales Missions

Whether it is a face-to-face sales pitch at ABA Marketplace or a three city sales mission, we have to be where potential group business does their business. With the recommendations from area properties, we will develop a list of events, tradeshows, and missions that we will target in the next year.

Timing: Spring 2015

Success metrics: Compile list of events, tradeshows, and missions; determine budget and partners; and attend the events providing leads to those who partner for that event.

Research and data related to Beaufort/Northern Beaufort County

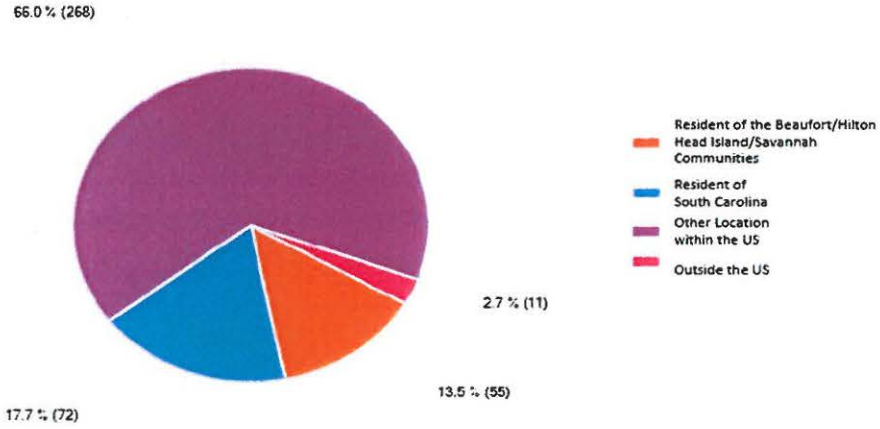




BEAUFORT, SC

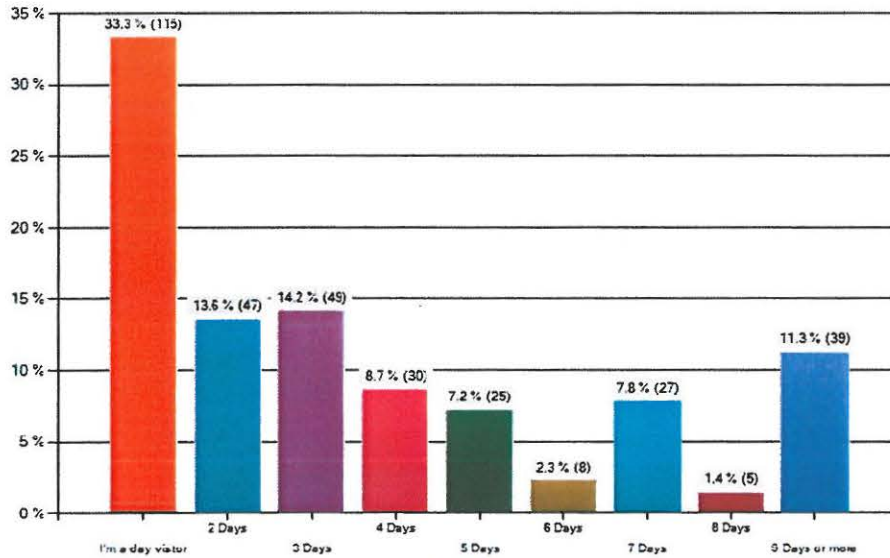
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT
PORT ROYAL & SEA ISLANDS

Where is your primary residence? (Tap the button to the left of your answer, then touch the NEXT button below to advance the survey.)



©USCB

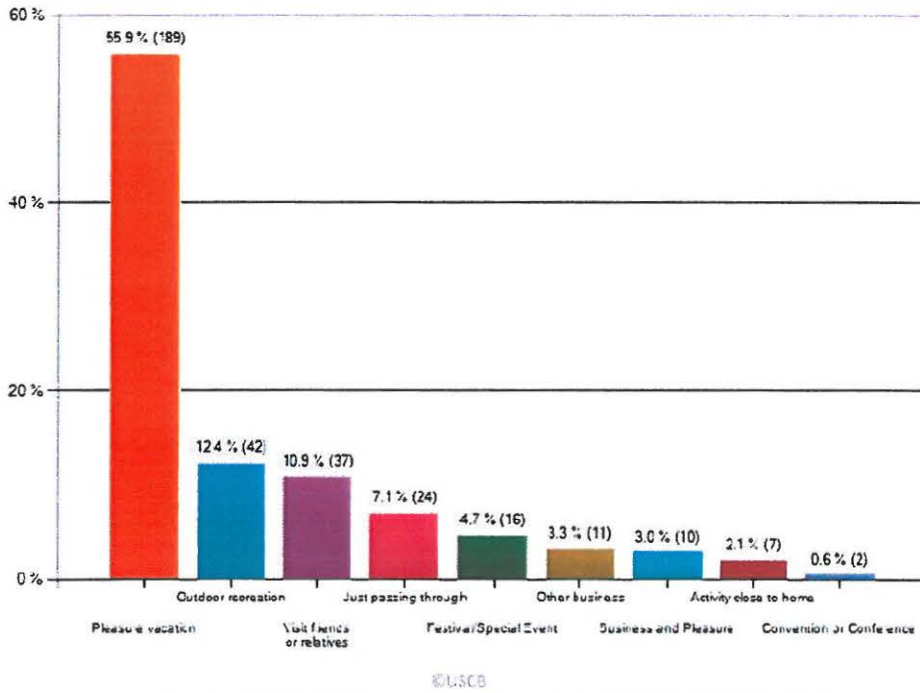
How many days do you intend to stay in Beaufort, SC?



©USCB



What was the primary reason for this visit to Beaufort, SC?



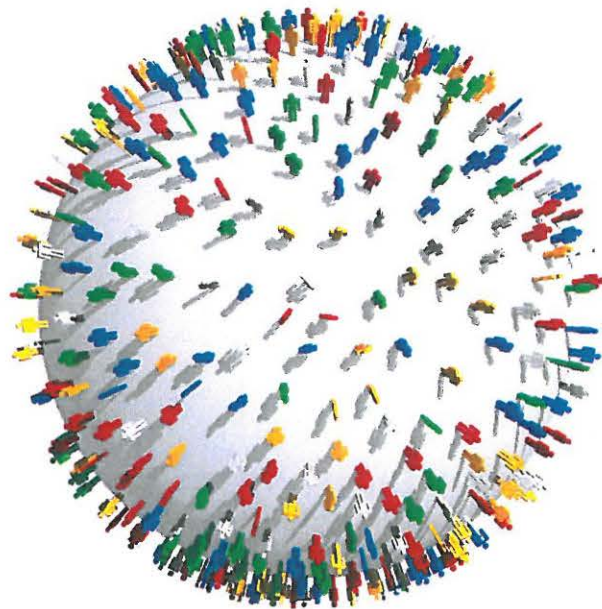
Research Analysis

The background image shows a wide, calm body of water under a clear blue sky. In the distance, a long bridge with a central truss section spans across the water. In the foreground, a paved walkway with a grid pattern leads towards the water, bordered by a series of dark, conical bollards connected by a chain. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

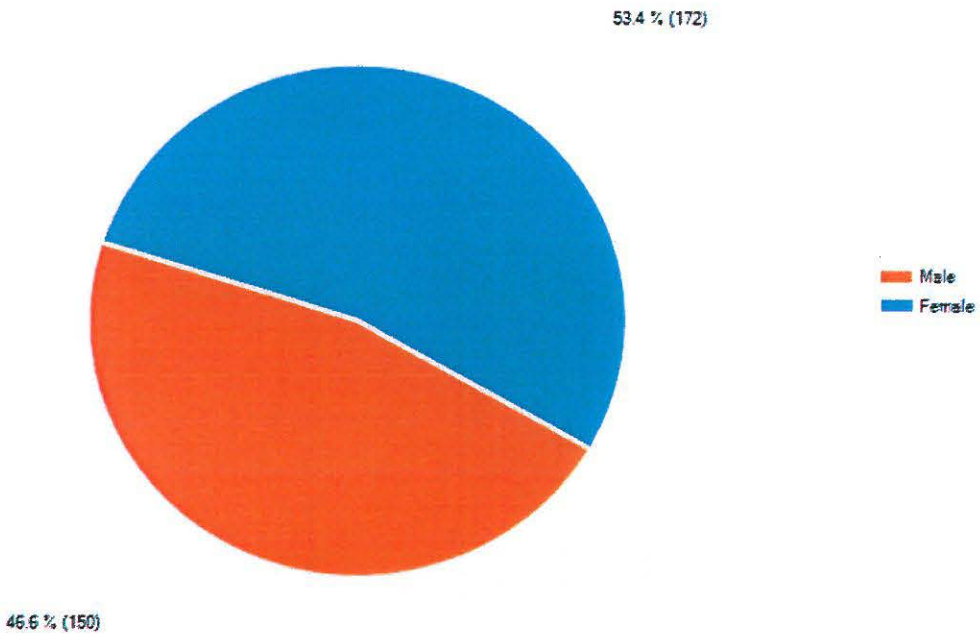
USCB/Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce Virtual Guestbook

Lowcountry and Resort Islands
Tourism Institute
at USC Beaufort
Kelli Brunson
Catherine Moorman
Dr. John Salazar

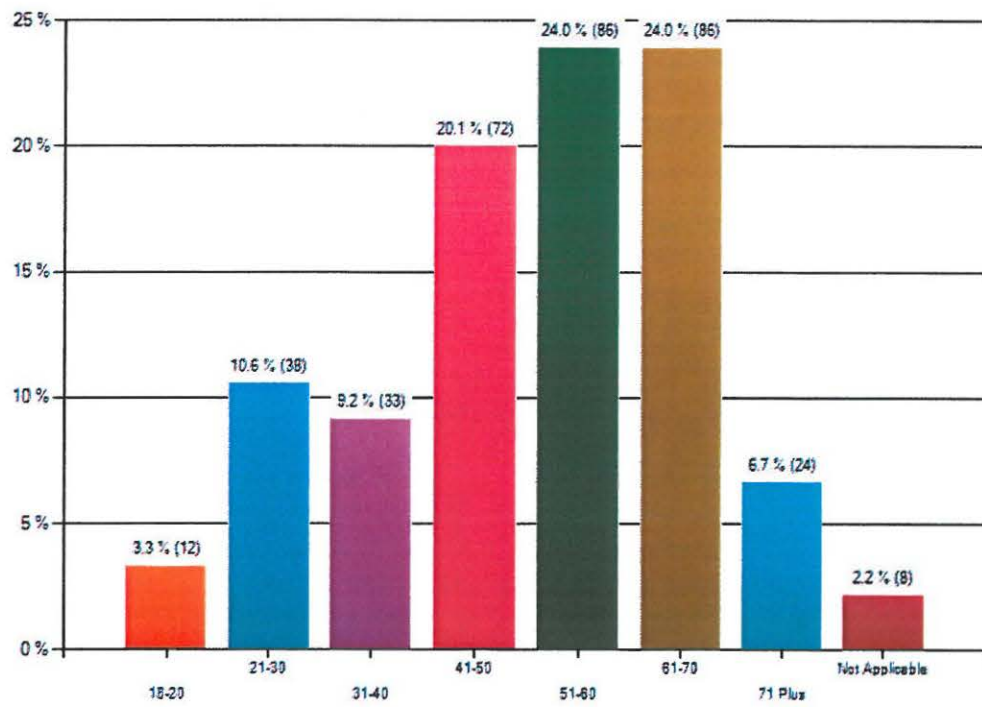
Demographics



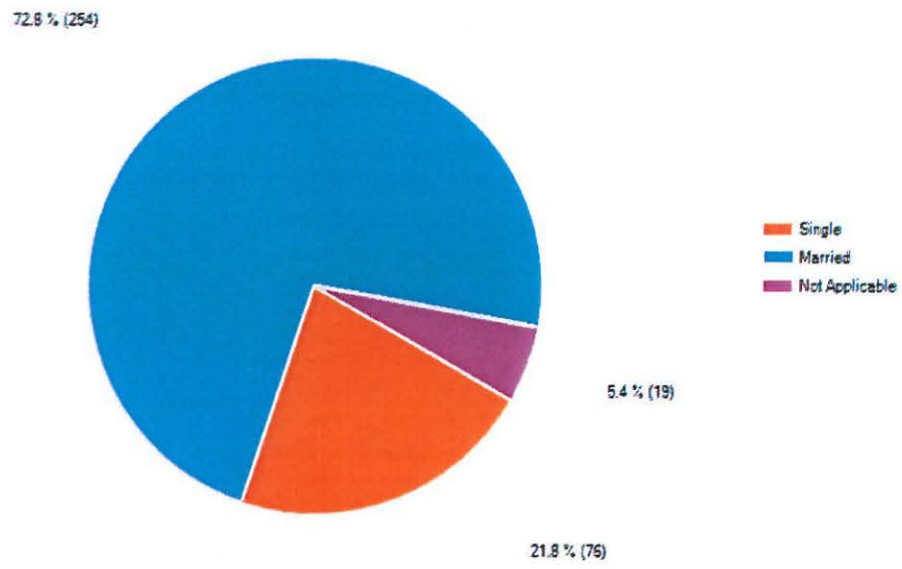
Please indicate your gender below.



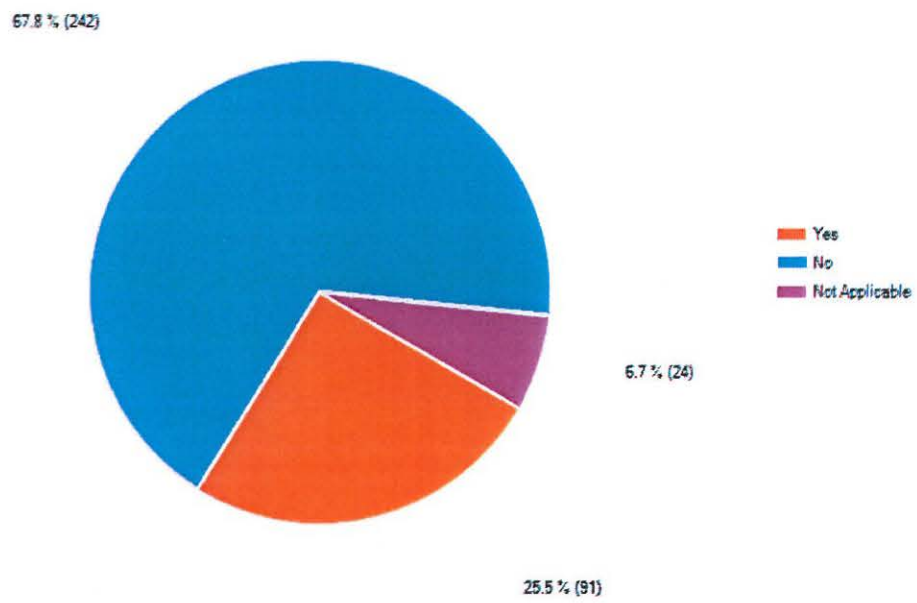
Please indicate your age below.



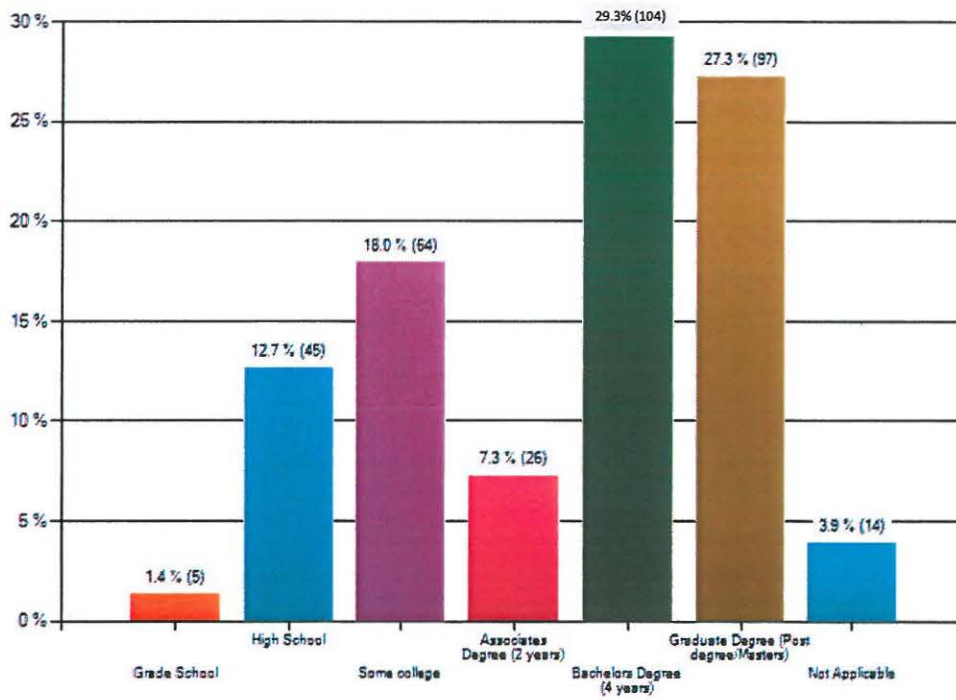
Please indicate your marital status.



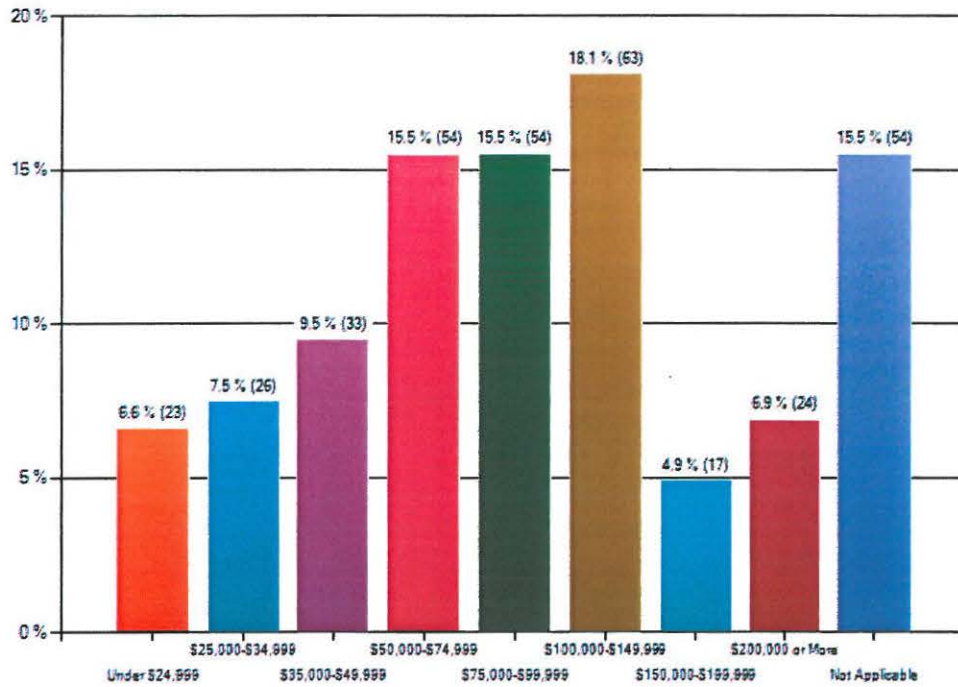
Do you have children under 18 living at home?



Please indicate your highest level of education.



Which of the following ranges includes your annual household income?



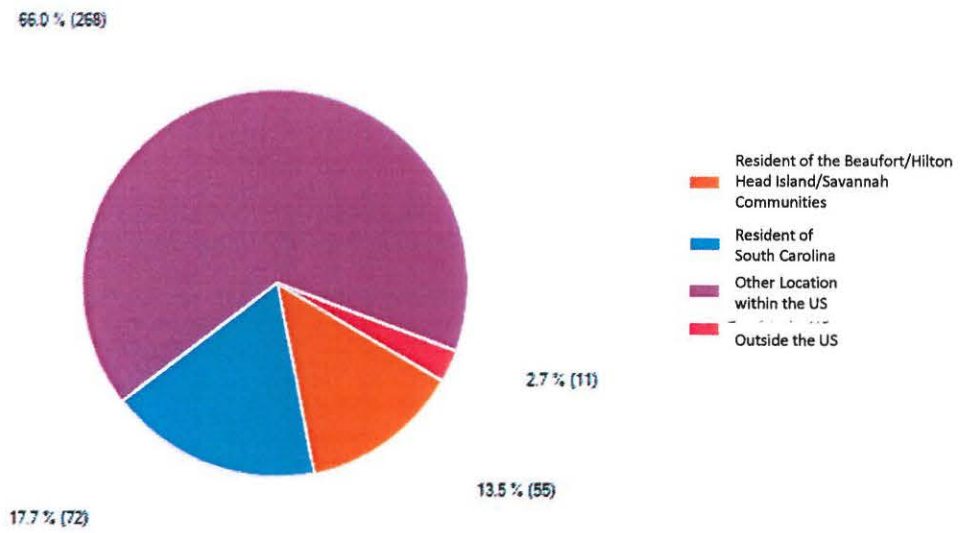
©USCB

Visitor Characteristics

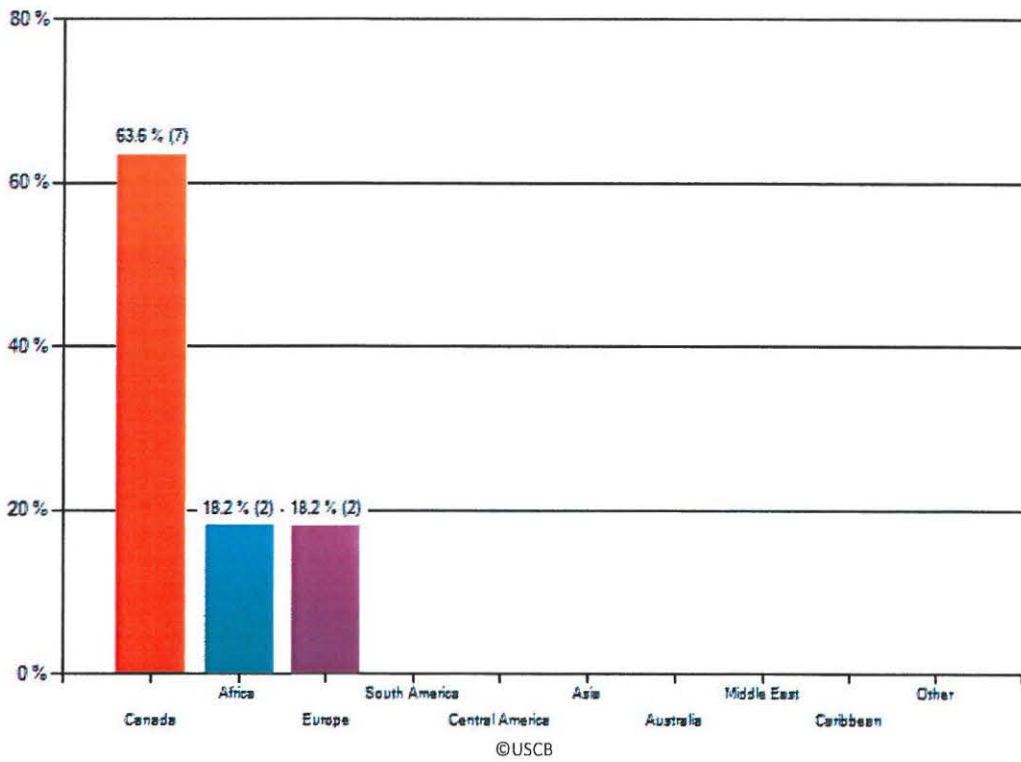


©USCB

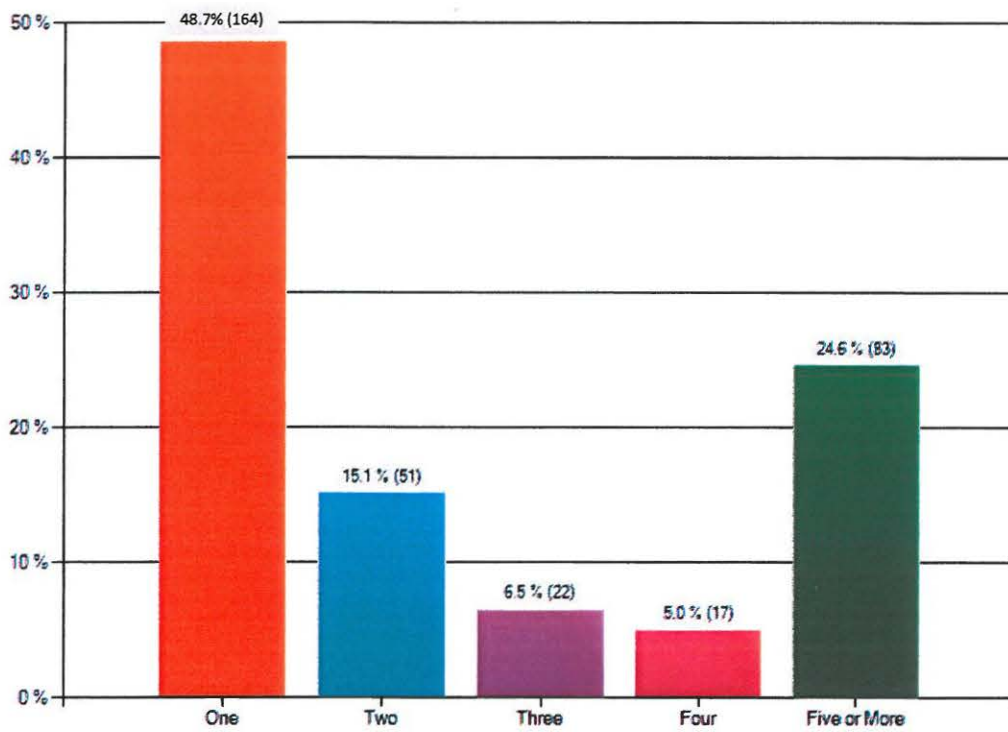
Where is your primary residence? (Tap the button to the left of your answer, then touch the NEXT button below to advance the survey.)



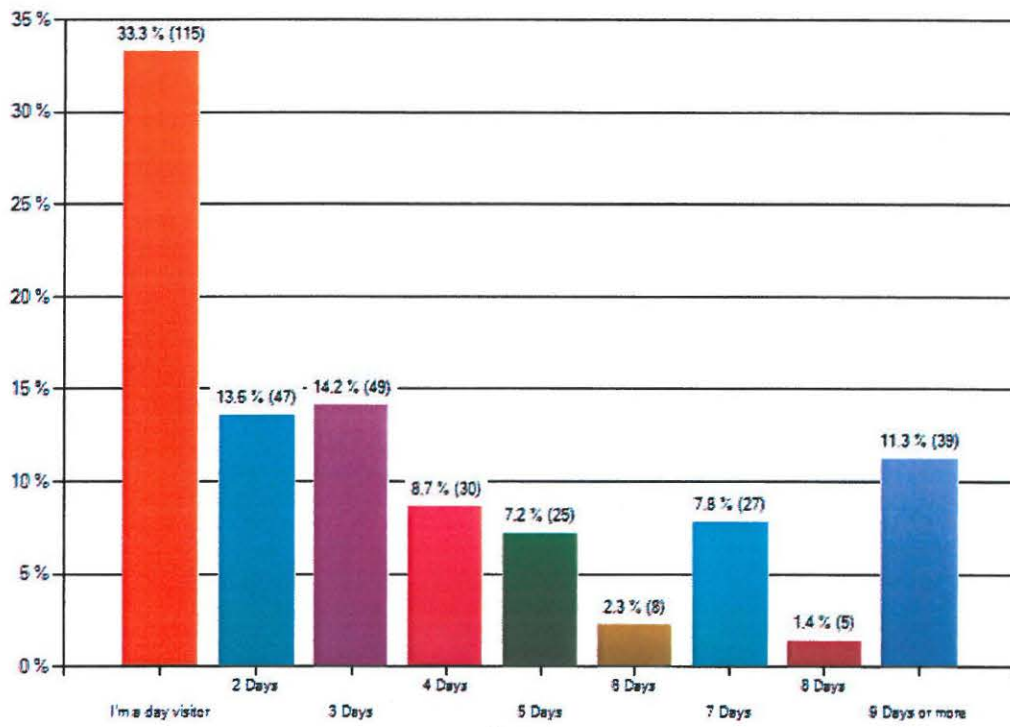
Please click on the button of the region in which your primary residence is located.



Counting this trip, HOW MANY trips had you taken to Beaufort, SC?

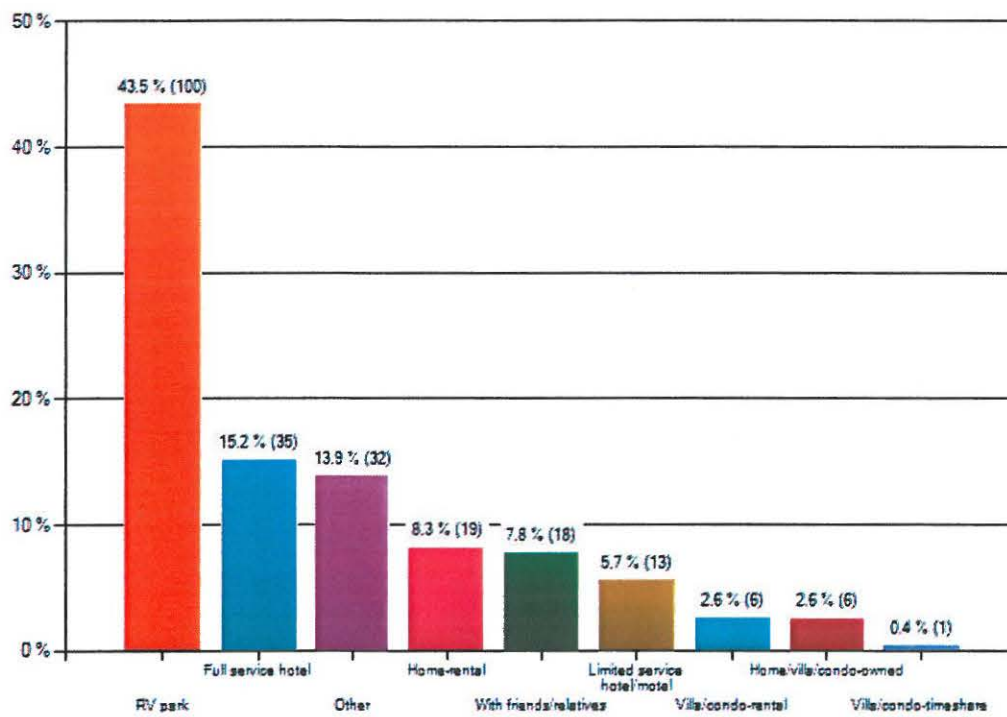


How many days do you intend to stay in Beaufort, SC?



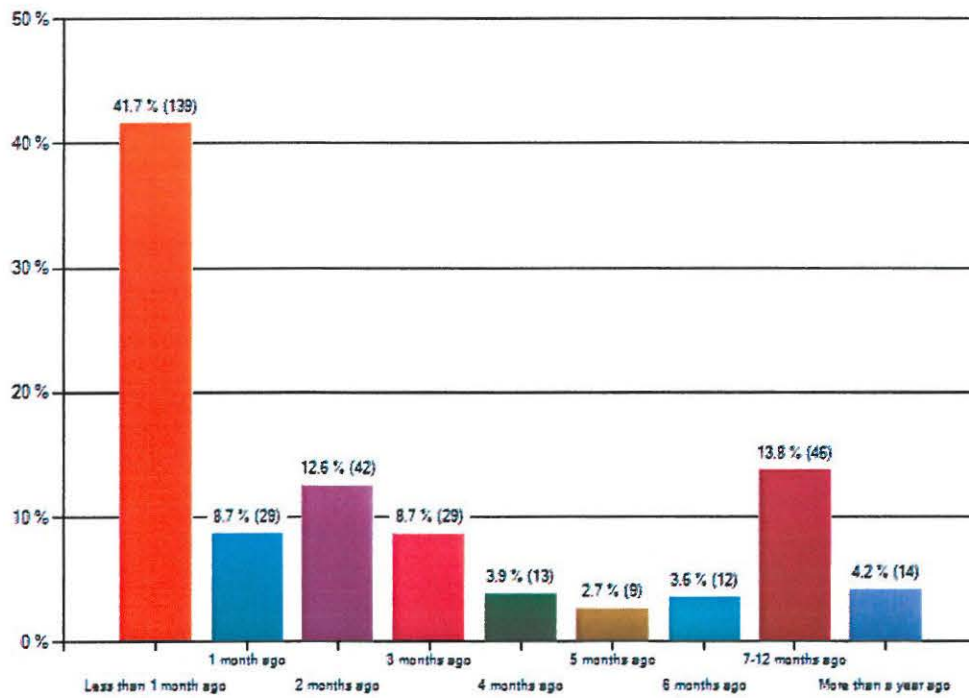
©USCB

What type of accommodations will you be using while visiting Beaufort, SC?

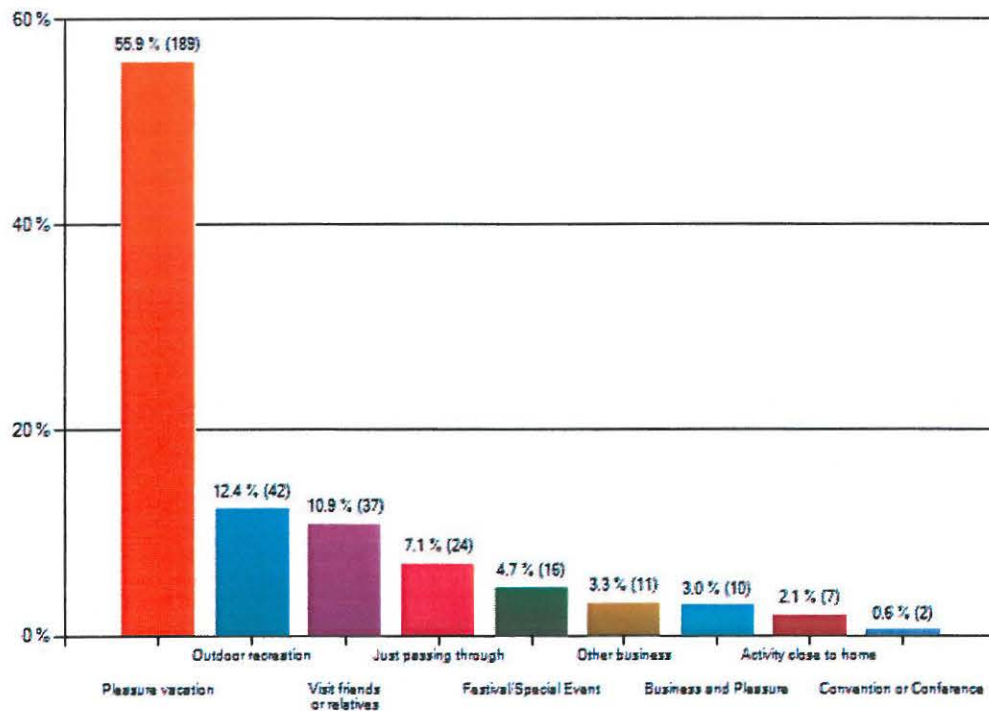


©USCB

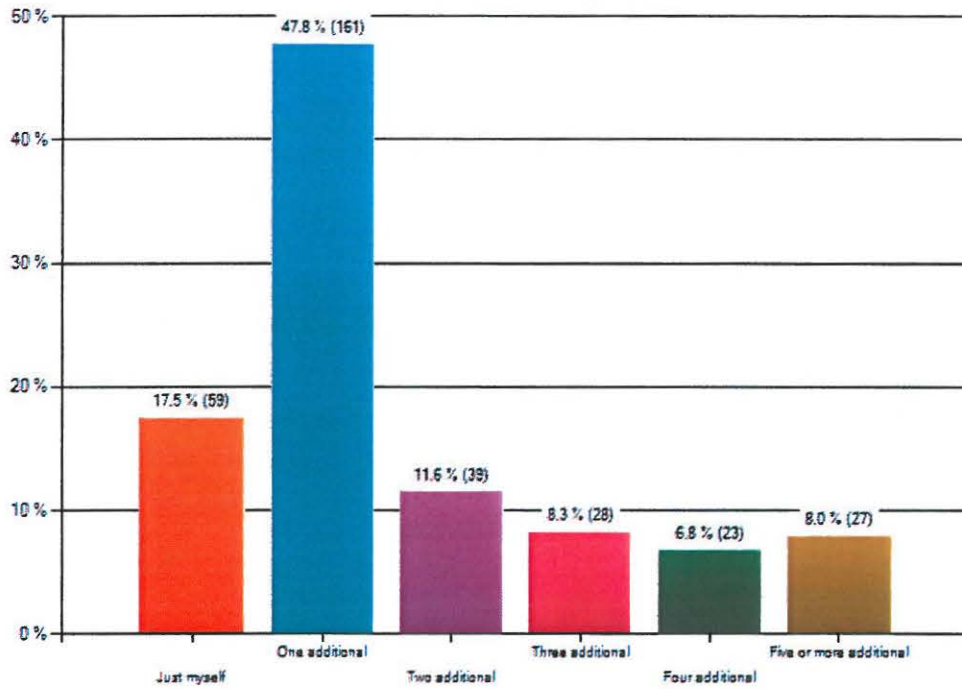
How many months in advance did you book this trip?



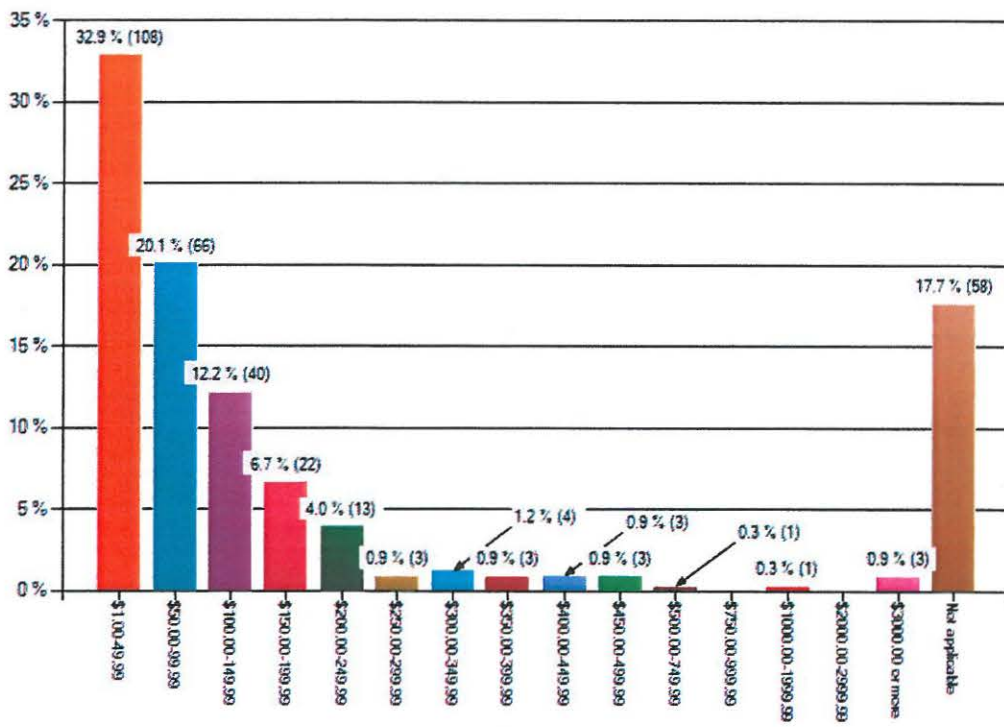
What was the primary reason for this visit to Beaufort, SC?



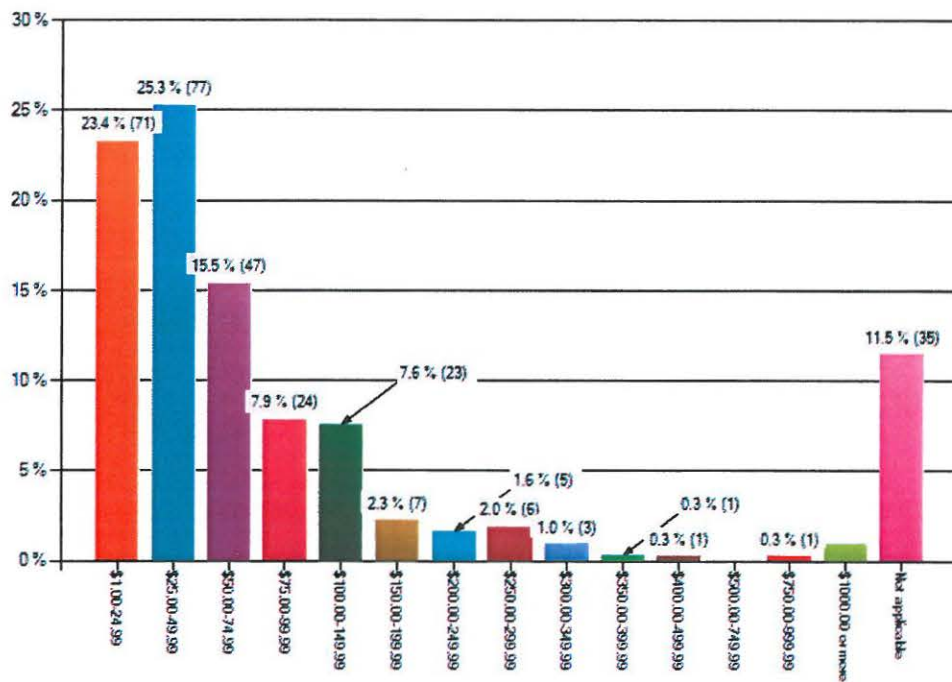
How many additional people are you financially responsible for during this trip?



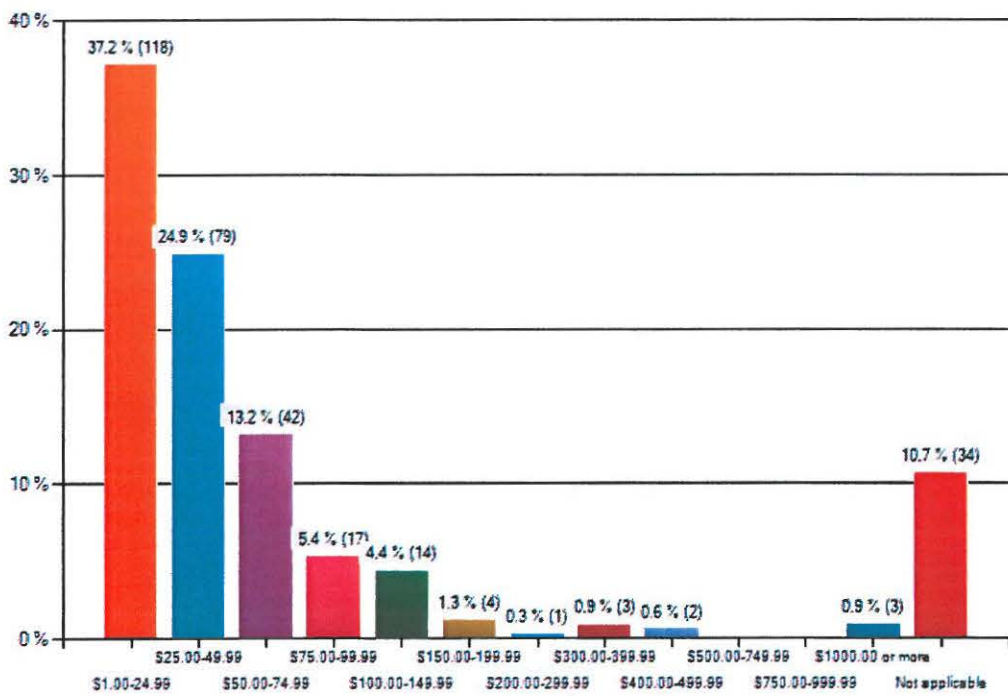
Approximately, how much will you spend on lodging PER NIGHT?



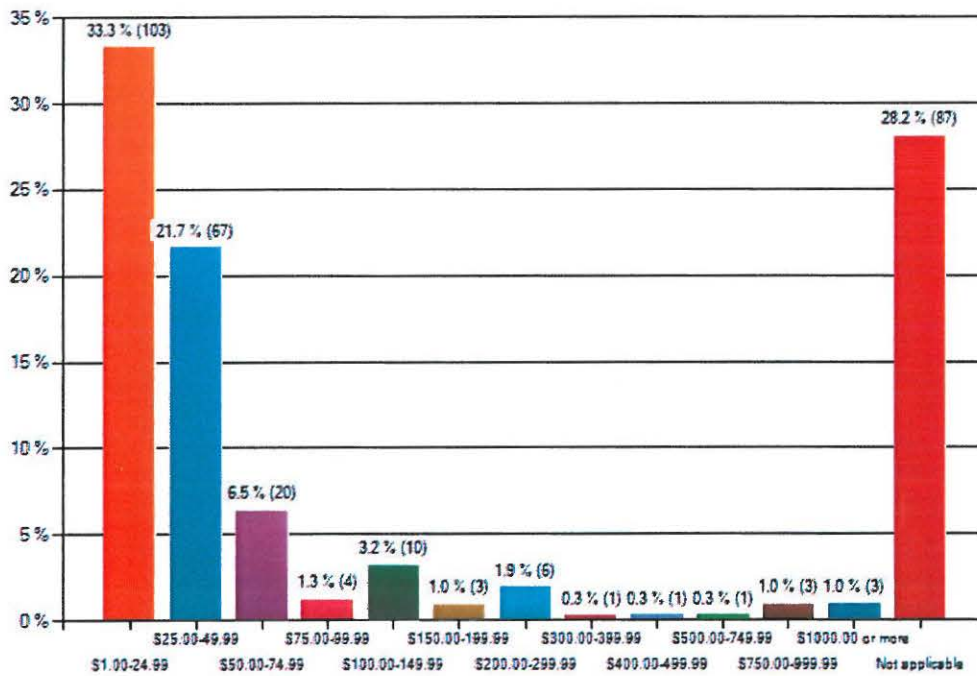
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on restaurant dining PER DAY?



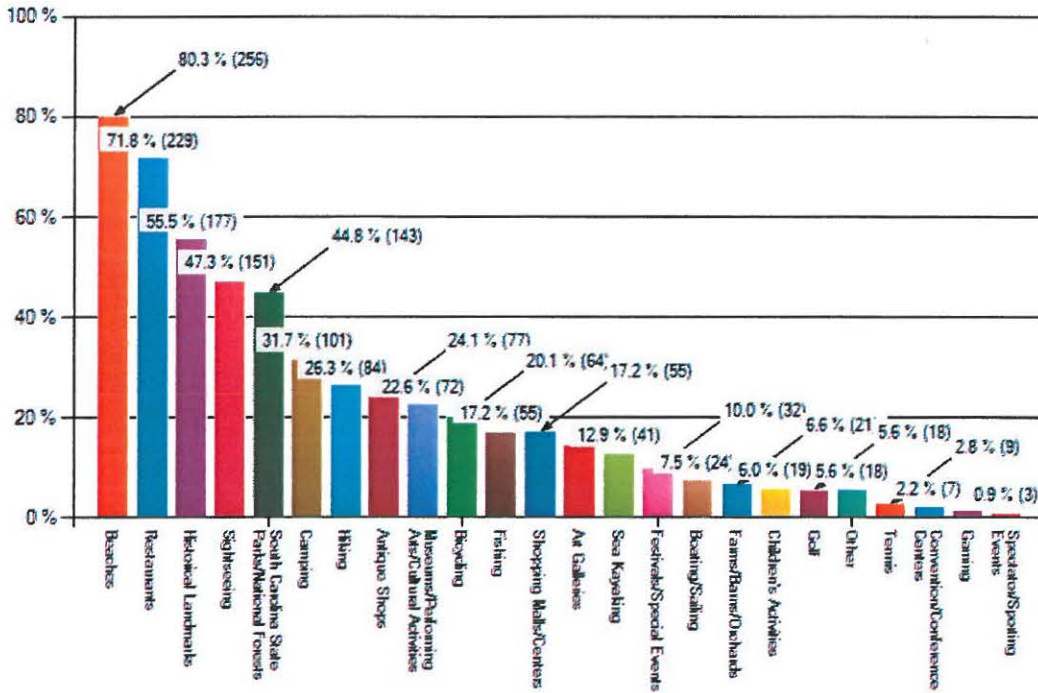
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on retail purchases PER DAY (i.e. clothes, gifts, souvenirs, etc.)?



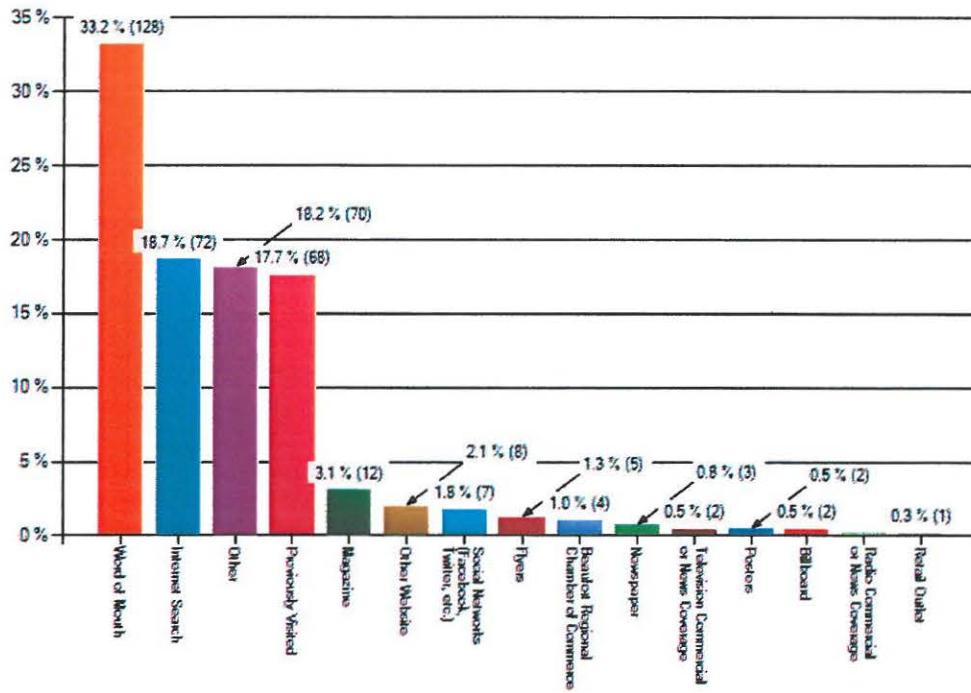
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on recreation expenses (i.e. golf, tennis, bicycling, etc.) PER DAY?



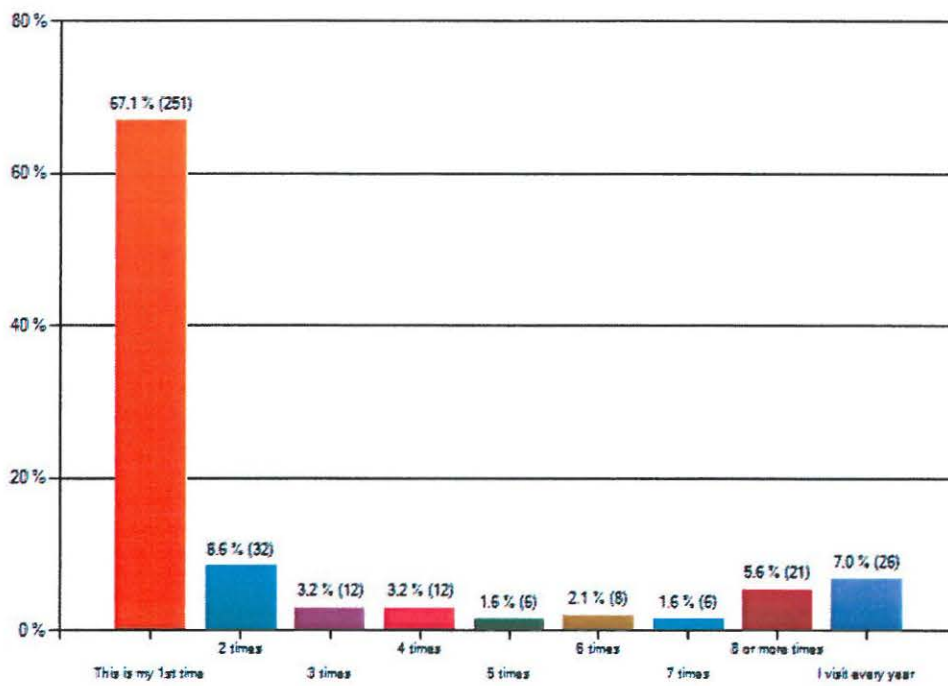
Please indicate if you intend on visiting (or have visited) any of the following tourist facilities or participating (or participated) in any of the listed activities during this trip to Beaufort. Choose all that apply.



How did you first learn of Beaufort, SC?



Including this visit, how many times have you visited the Beaufort Welcome Center?



How important were the following factors in deciding to visit Beaufort?

	Not Important	Not Very Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Total Importance	Rating Average	Rating Count
Access to Beaches	7.1%	3.7%	8.0%	18.0%	63.2%	81.0%	4.26	323
Historic Interests	3.6%	3.3%	13.3%	29.0%	50.9%	79.9%	4.20	338
Dining Options	7.6%	7.3%	30.6%	32.5%	22.1%	54.6%	3.54	317
Arts/Cultural Activities	11.5%	8.9%	35.5%	28.9%	15.1%	44.0%	3.27	304
Other Festivals/ Special Events	22.3%	8.9%	26.0%	22.6%	20.2%	42.8%	3.10	292
Boating and Sailing	33.7%	13.1%	21.0%	17.2%	15.1%	32.3%	2.67	291
Shopping Opportunities	21.0%	16.7%	30.8%	18.0%	13.4%	31.4%	2.86	305
Sporting Events	39.7%	15.2%	29.0%	9.3%	6.9%	16.2%	2.29	290
Military Graduation	50.3%	10.7%	22.8%	5.5%	10.7%	16.0%	2.16	290

How likely are you to return to Beaufort and recommend Beaufort as a vacation destination to friends and relatives?

	Very Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely	Not Sure	Extremely Likely	Very Likely	Total Likelihood	Rating Average	Rating Count
Return to Beaufort, SC	0.9%	0.9%	9.4%	64.0%	24.8%	88.8%	4.50	331
Recommend Beaufort, SC	0.3%	0.9%	7.3%	67.7%	23.8%	91.5%	4.57	328

**For More Information Contact
Dr. John Salazar
843-208-8217**



Beaufort Water Festival 2013

Lowcountry and Resort Islands Tourism
Institute at USC Beaufort

Kelli Brunson

Catherine Moorman

Dr. John Salazar

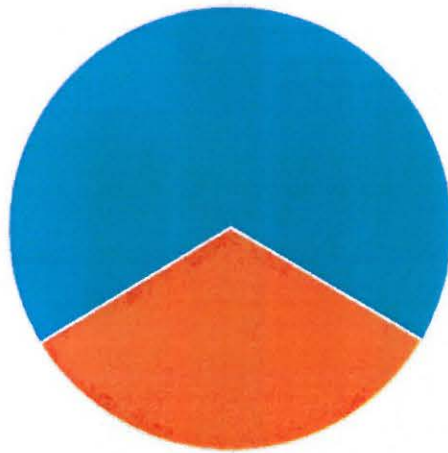
Beaufort, SC

Demographics



Please indicate your gender below.

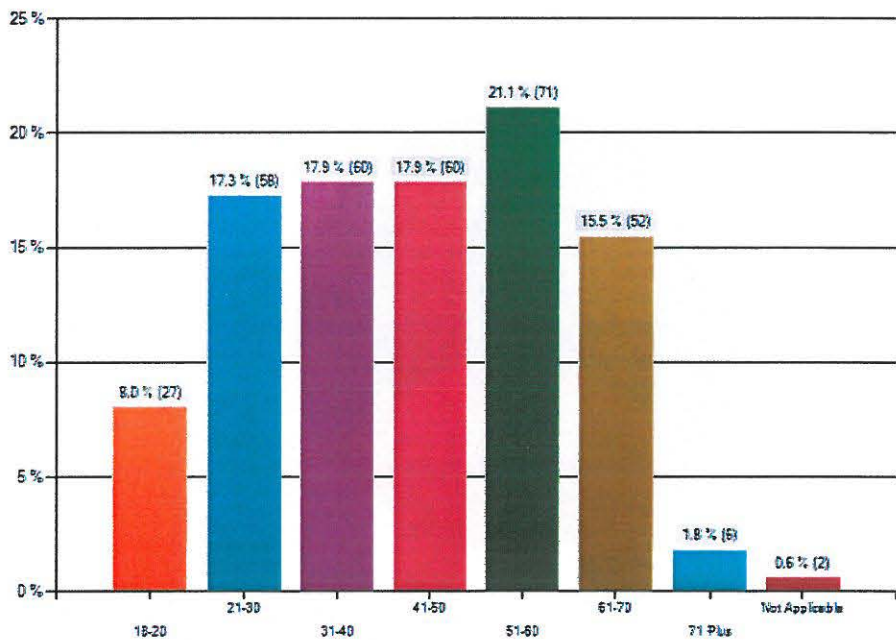
67.0% (183)



Male
Female

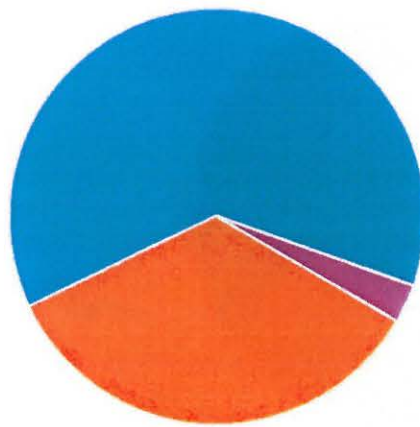
33.0% (90)

Please indicate your age below.



Please indicate your marital status.

62.5 % (208)



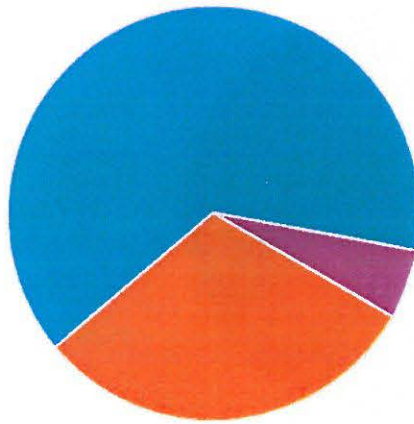
Single
Married
Not Applicable

3.0 % (10)

34.5 % (115)

Do you have children under 18 living at home?

64.0 % (212)

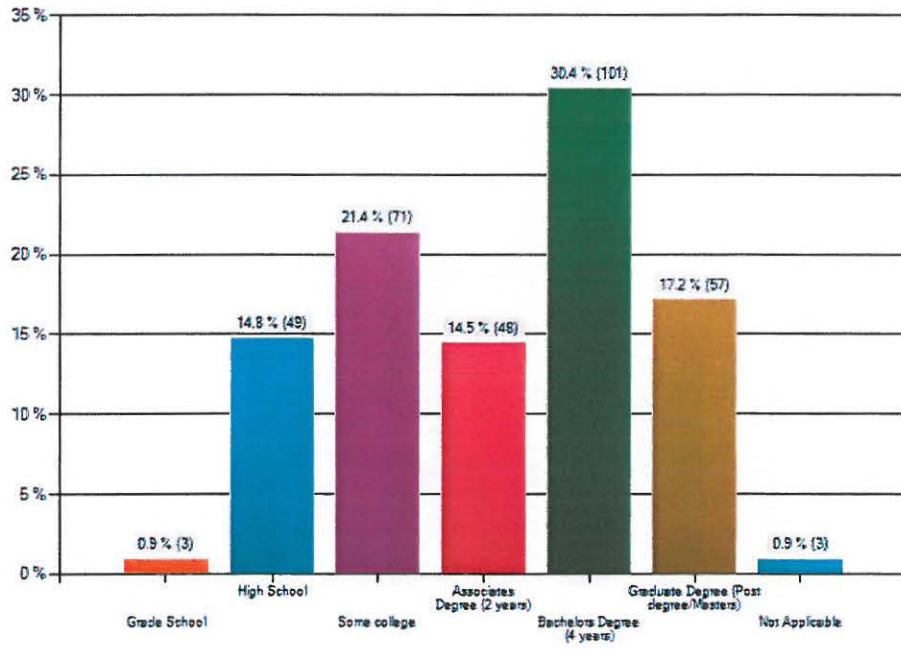


Yes
No
Not Applicable

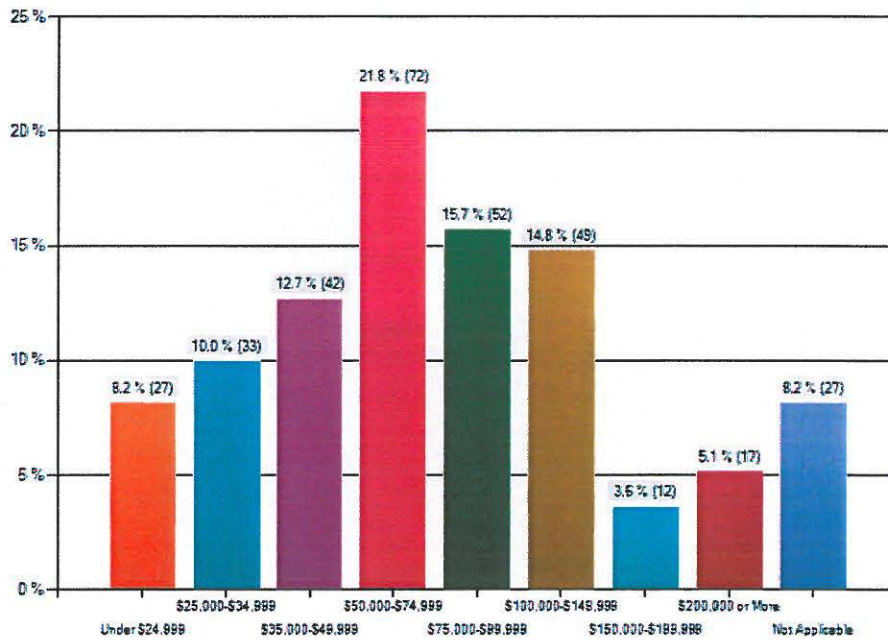
5.4 % (18)

30.5 % (101)

Please indicate your highest level of education.



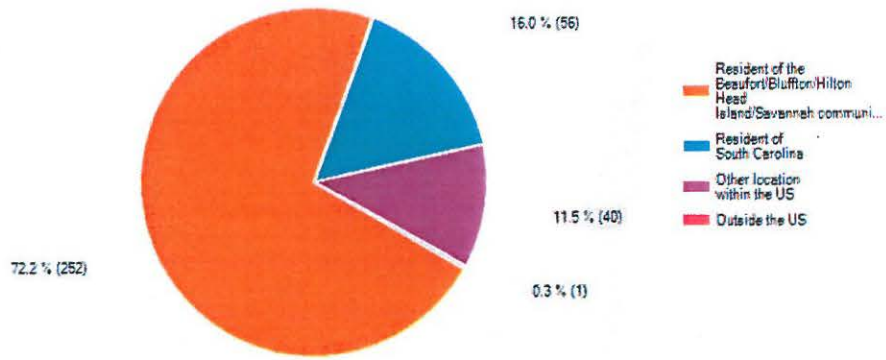
Which of the following ranges includes your annual household income?



Visitor Characteristics

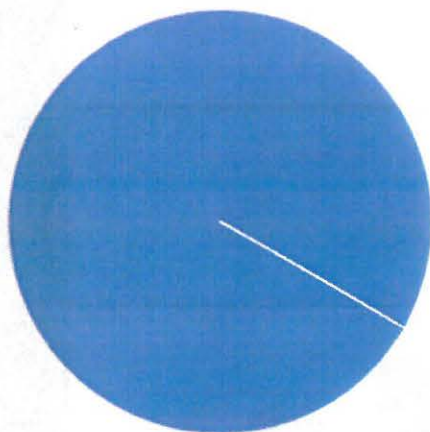


Where is your primary residence? (Tap the button to the left of your answer, then touch the NEXT button below to advance the survey.)



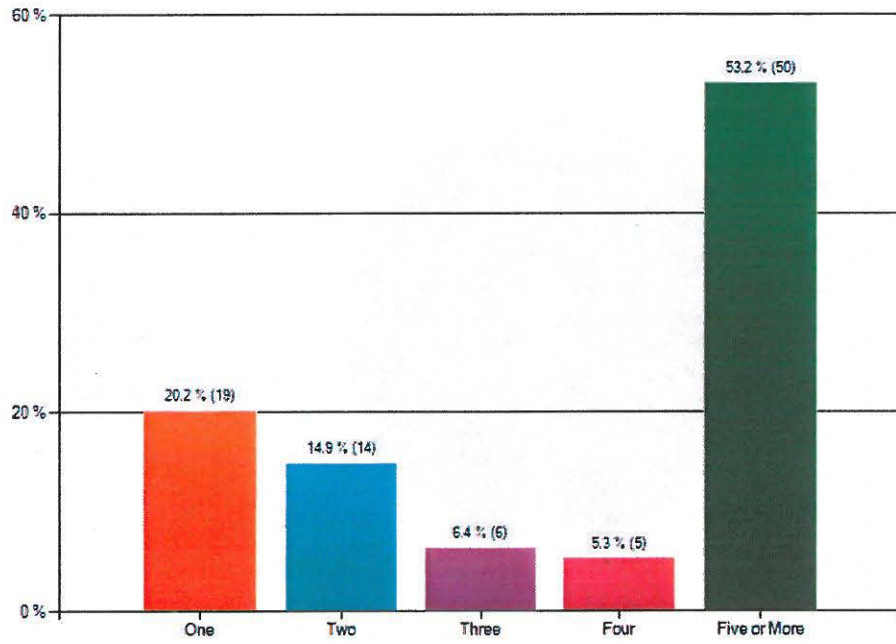
Please touch the region in which your primary residence is located.

100.0 % (1)

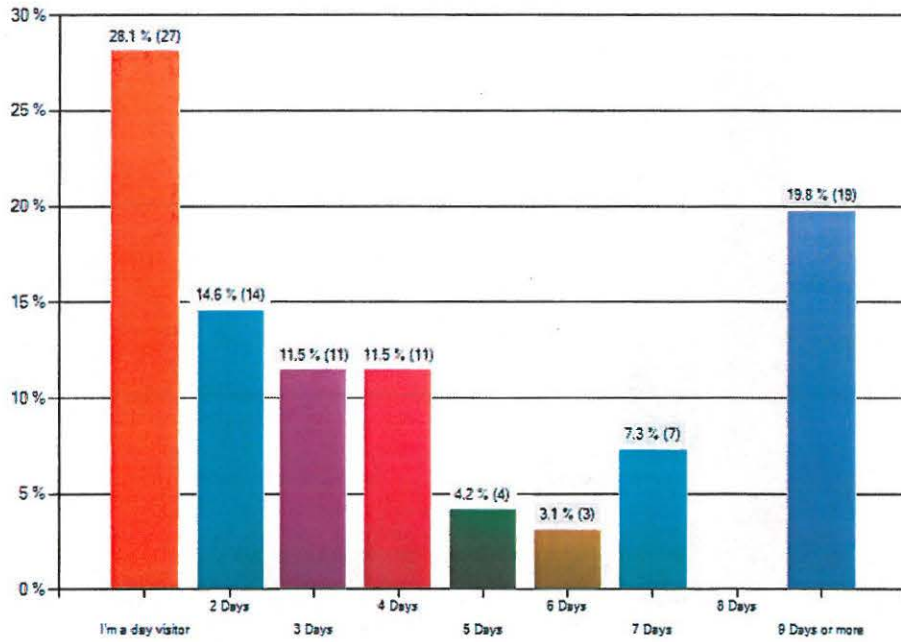


- Canada
- South America
- Central America
- Asia
- Africa
- Europe
- Australia
- Middle East
- Caribbean
- Other

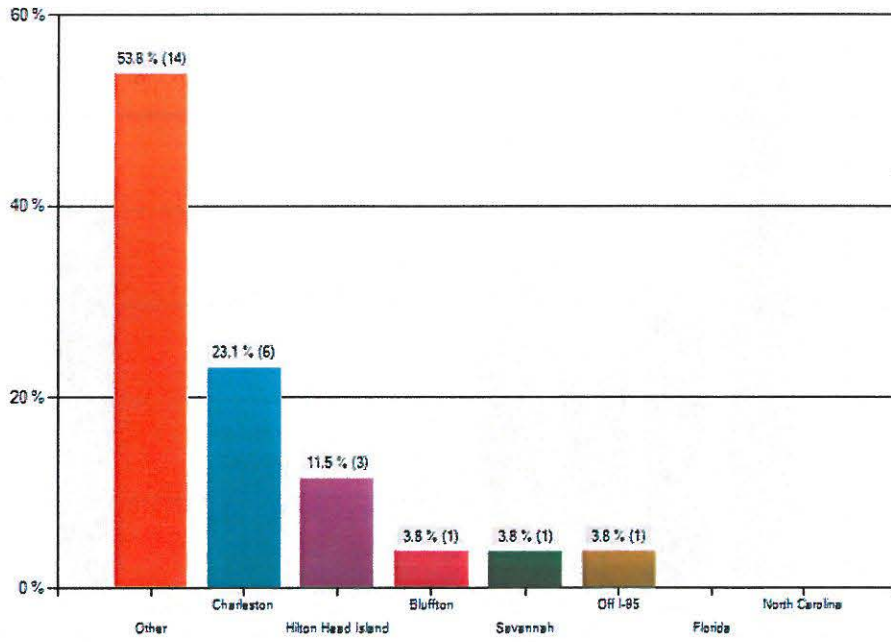
Counting this trip, HOW MANY trips had you taken to Beaufort, SC?



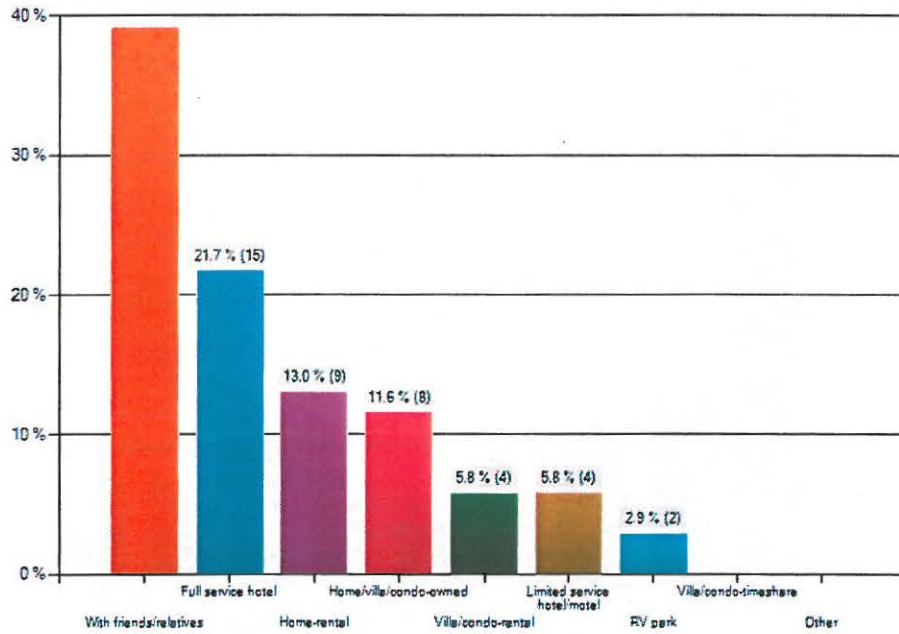
How many days do you intend to stay in Beaufort, SC?



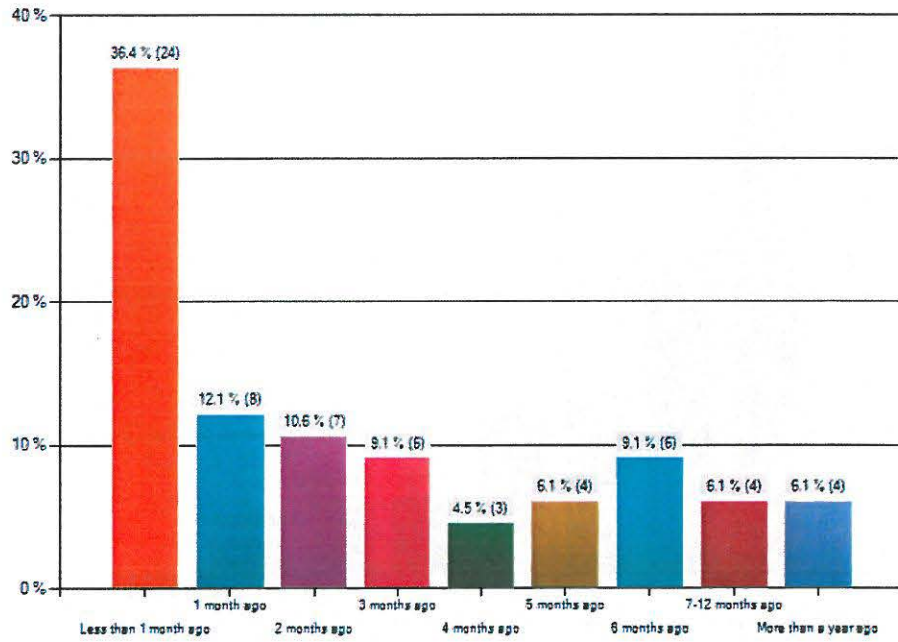
Where are you staying overnight on this trip?



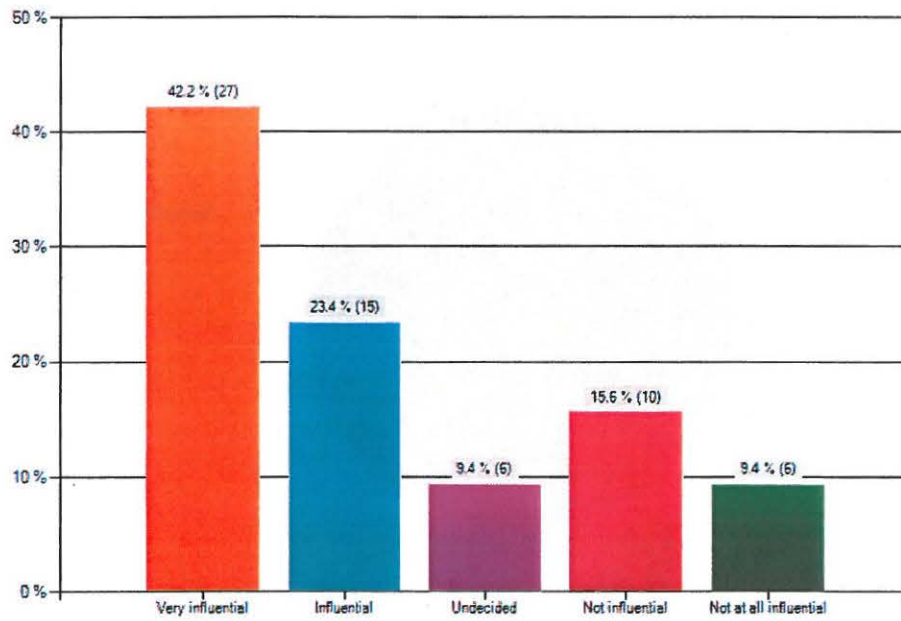
What type of accommodations will you be using while visiting Beaufort, SC?



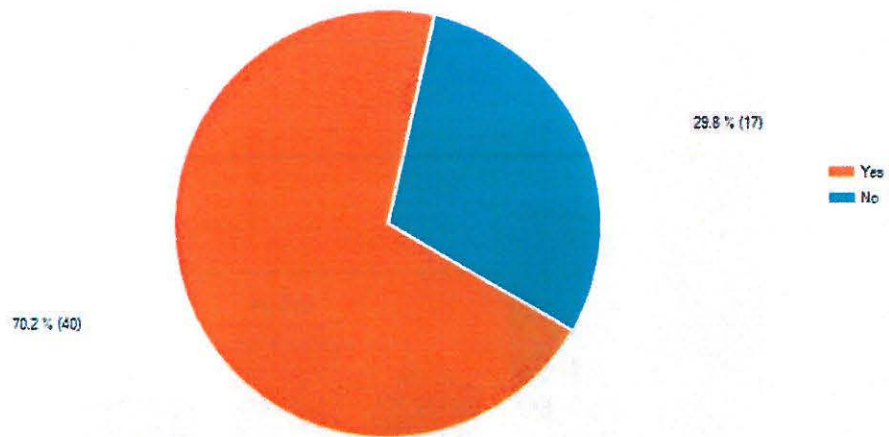
How many months in advance did you book this trip?



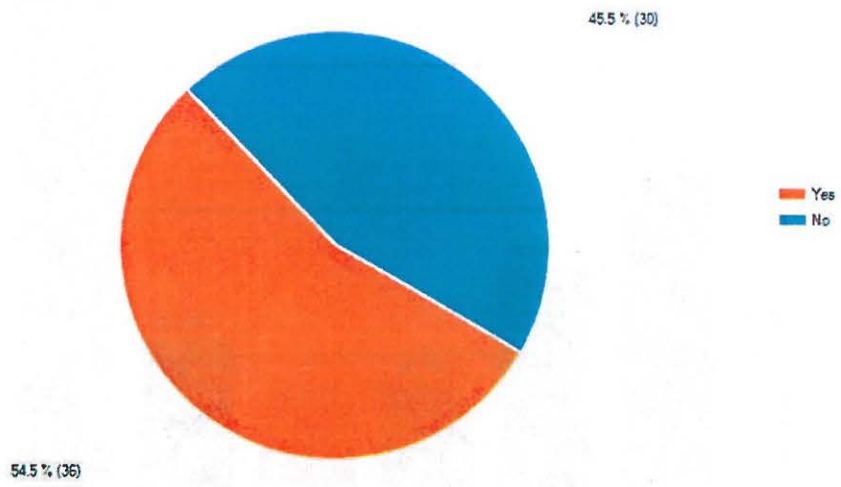
How influential was the 2013 Beaufort Water Festival when initially planning your trip to Beaufort, SC?



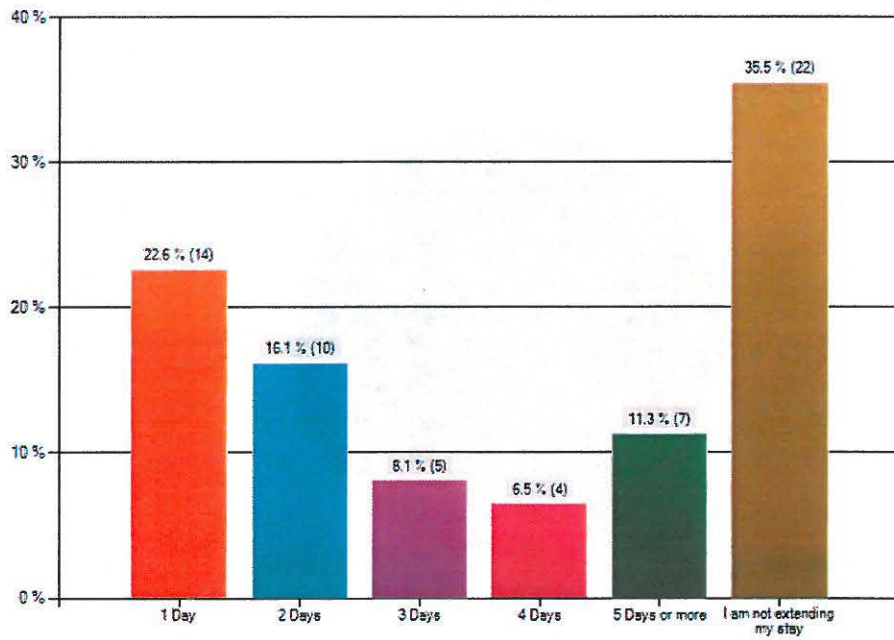
Would you have visited the Beaufort area AT THIS TIME even if this festival had not been held?



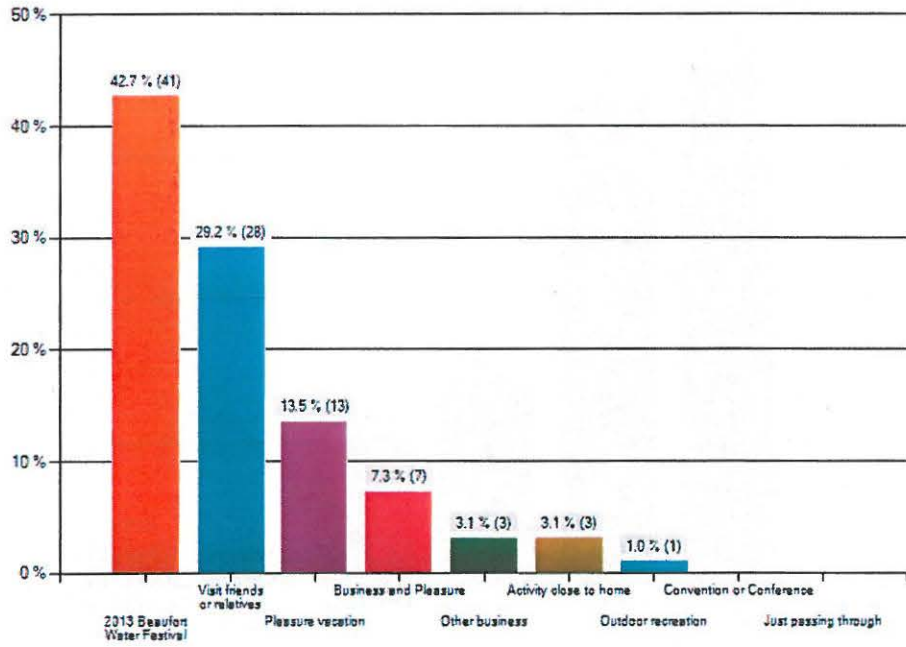
Did you extend your stay in the Beaufort area because you wanted to attend this festival?



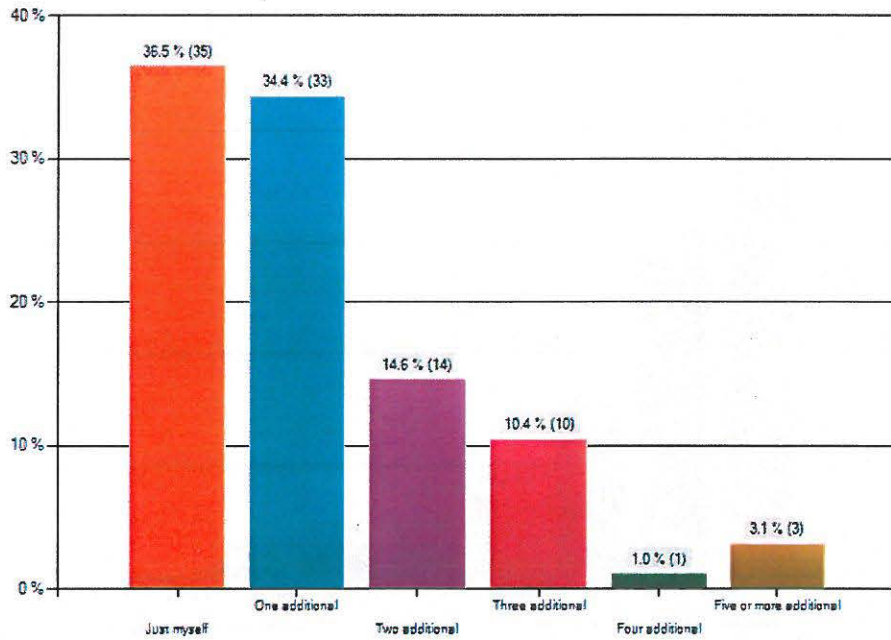
How many additional days are you staying because you wanted to attend this festival?



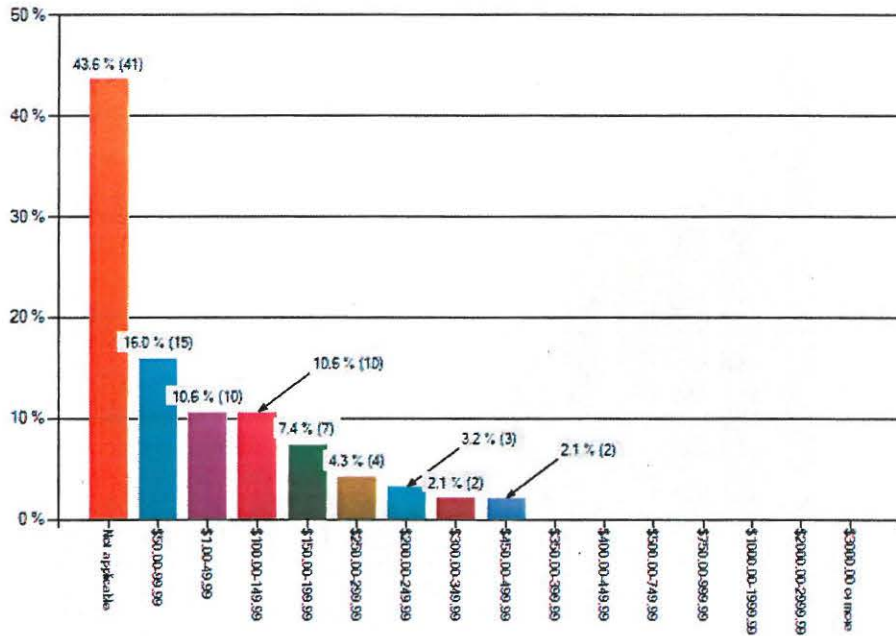
What was the primary reason for this visit to Beaufort, SC?



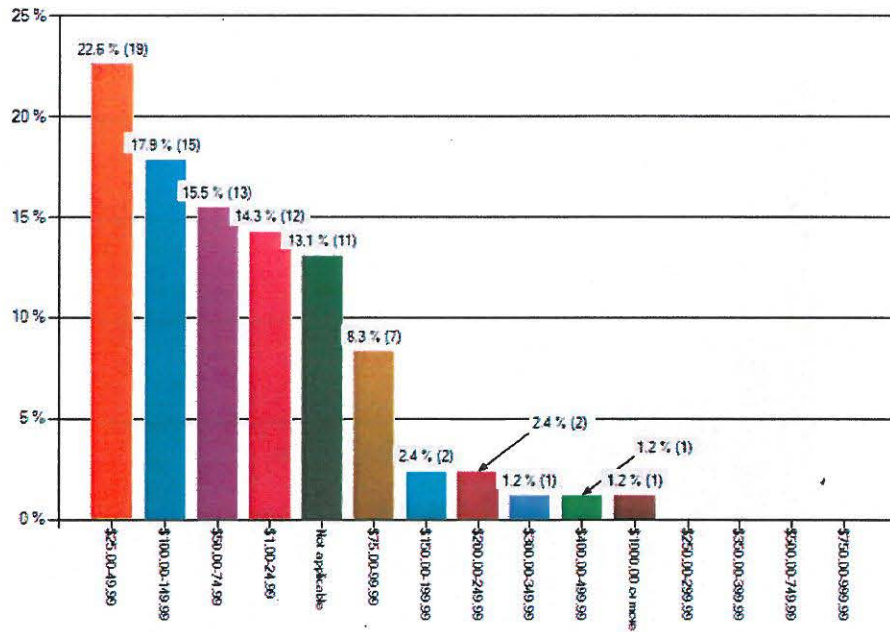
How many additional people are you financially responsible for during this trip?



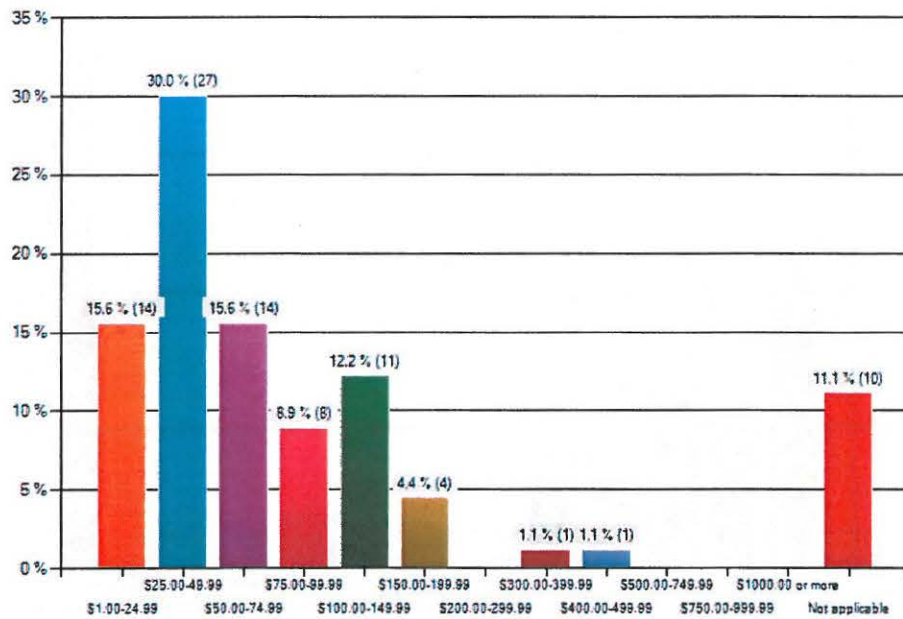
Approximately, how much will you spend on lodging PER NIGHT?



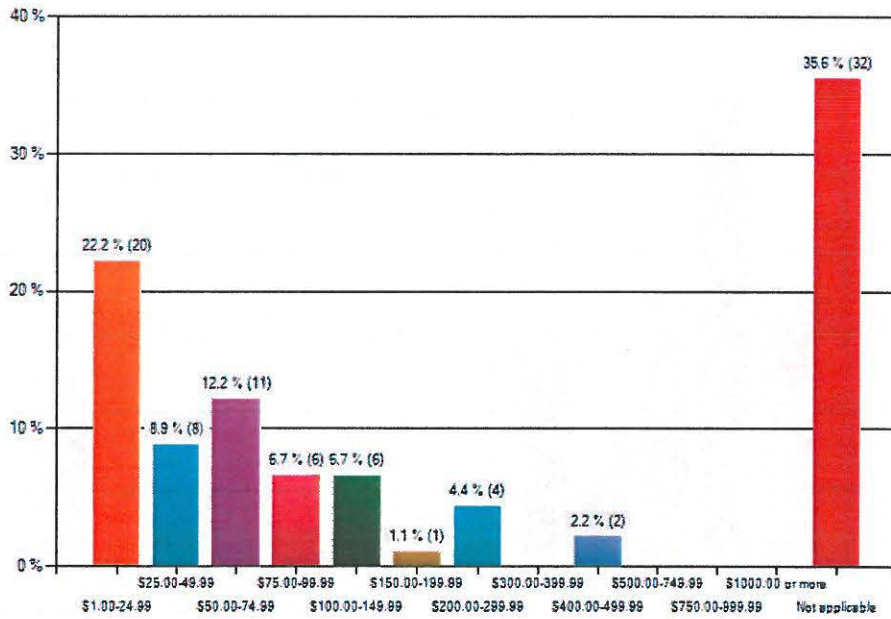
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on restaurant dining PER DAY?



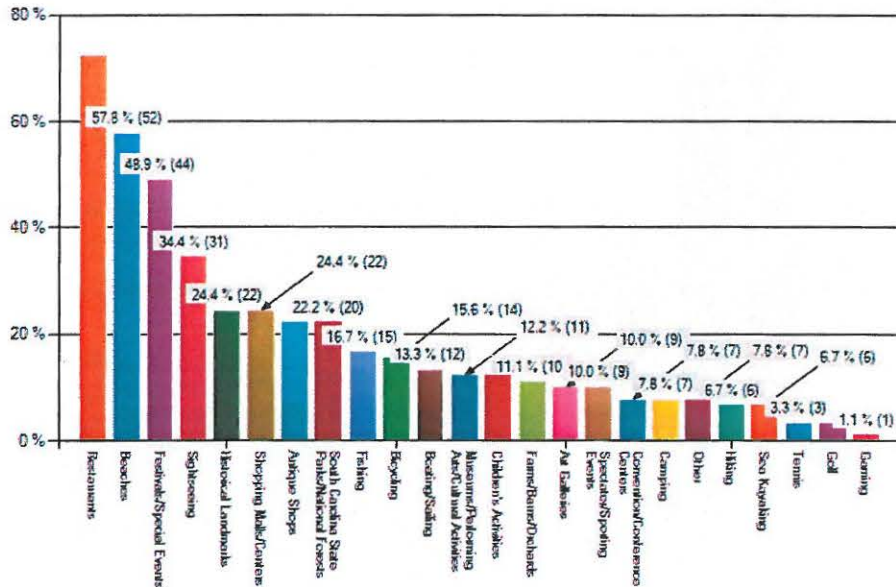
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on retail purchases PER DAY (i.e. clothes, gifts, souvenirs, etc.)?



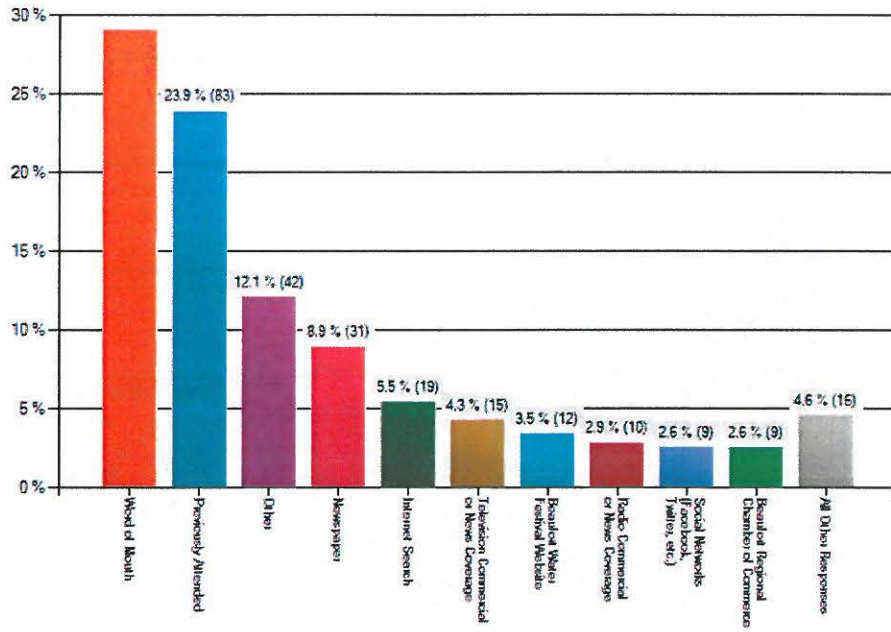
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on recreation expenses (i.e. golf, tennis, bicycling, etc.) PER DAY?



Please indicate if you intend on visiting (or have visited) any of the following tourist facilities or participating (or participated) in any of the listed activities during this trip to Beaufort. Choose all that apply.



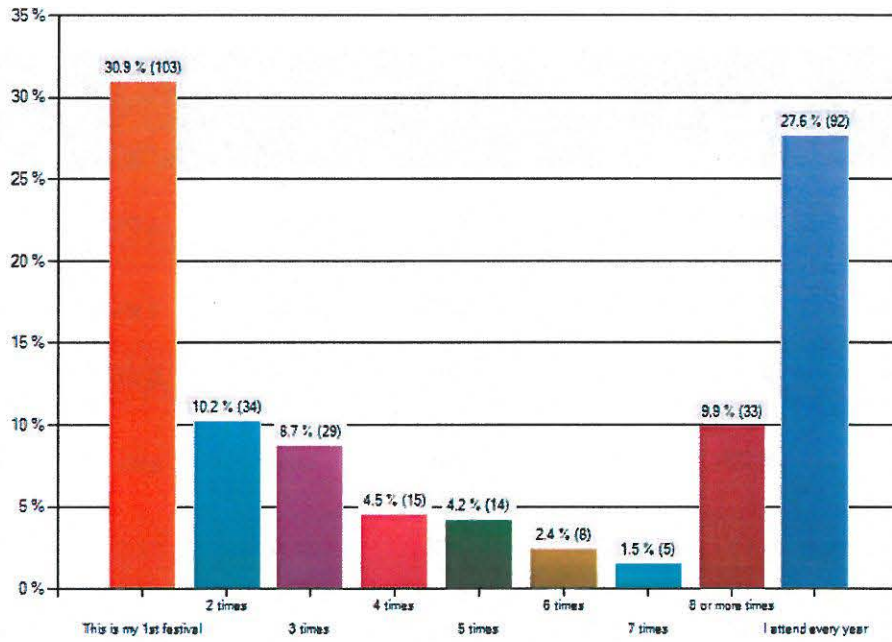
How did you first learn of the Beaufort Water Festival?



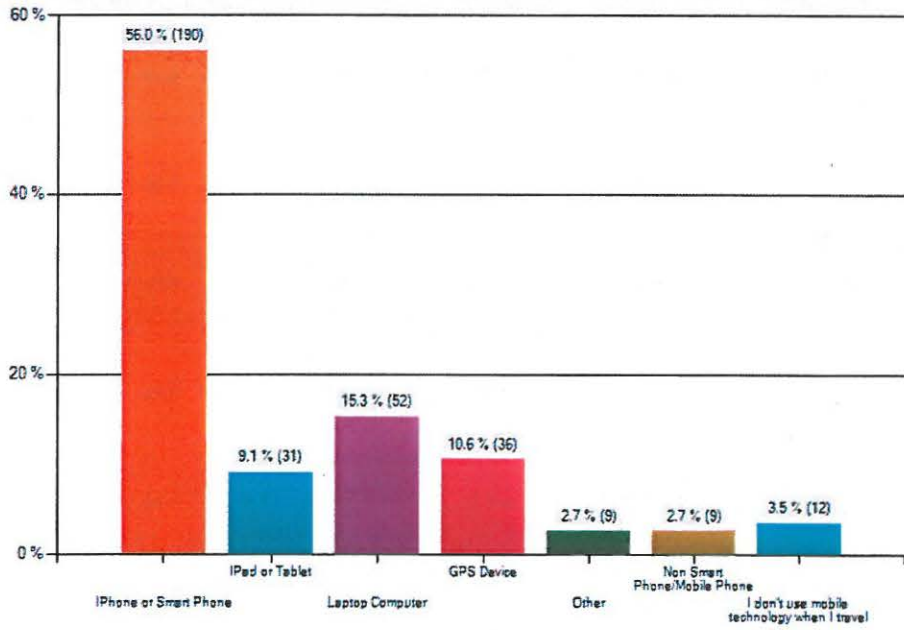
How would you rate the following festival characteristics?

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know/Not Applicable	Rating Average	Rating Count
Organization of the Event	74.9%	21.5%	2.7%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%	4.72	339
Event Staff	78.5%	16.7%	3.3%	0.6%	0.0%	0.9%	4.75	335
Location of the Event	88.6%	9.6%	1.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	4.87	332
Festival Programming	69.5%	25.3%	4.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	4.65	328
Duration of the Event	73.9%	19.9%	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	4.70	326
Overall Value of the Event	77.2%	18.5%	2.4%	0.9%	0.0%	0.9%	4.74	329

Including this festival, how many times have you attended the Beaufort Water Festival?



When traveling on vacation, what form of mobile technology do you mostly use when gathering information about the destination you're visiting?



The following items are related to your use of internet travel review sites when making travel plans. Please indicate your level of agreement for each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Rating Count
I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others.	36.2%	32.5%	21.6%	5.8%	5.8%	3.91	329
To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews.	34.9%	34.6%	20.8%	20.8%	6.1%	3.91	327
I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination.	29.5%	32.0%	25.2%	25.2%	7.8%	3.72	322
I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination.	30.4%	35.7%	23.0%	23.0%	6.2%	3.81	322
If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision.	17.9%	21.1%	27.0%	27.0%	19.8%	3.09	318
When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me confident in travelling to the destination.	28.2%	38.9%	23.4%	23.4%	5.4%	3.82	316

How likely are you to return to next year's festival and recommend the festival to friends?

	Extremely Likely	Very Likely	Not Sure	Very Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely	Rating Average	Rating Count
Return to Next Year's Festival	75.8%	18.7%	3.9%	0.6%	0.9%	4.68	331
Recommend the Festival to Friends	78.5%	18.7%	1.9%	0.3%	0.6%	4.74	316

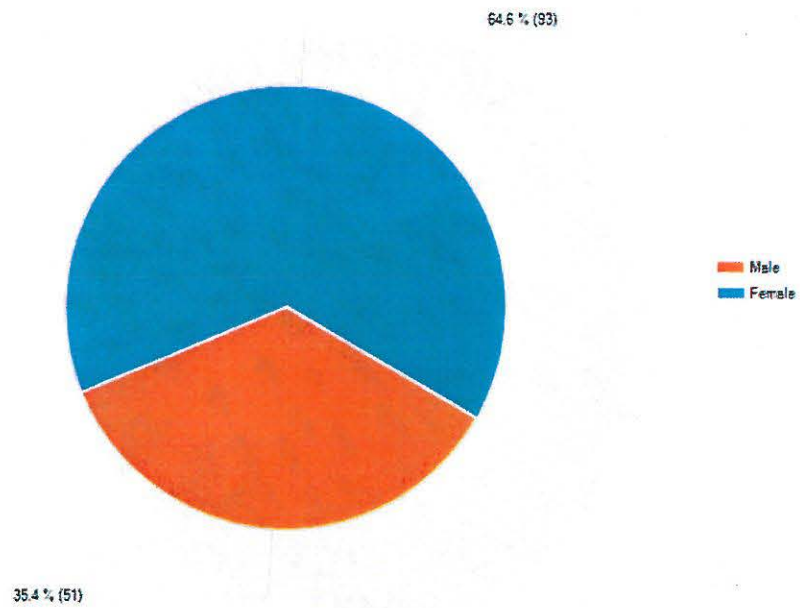
A photograph of a white bowl filled with cooked, bright red shrimp. The shrimp are piled together, and some green herbs are visible in the background. The text is overlaid on the center of the image.

Lowcountry and Resort Islands Tourism
Institute at USC Beaufort
Kelli Brunson
Catherine Moorman
Dr. John Salazar
October 5, 2013
Beaufort, SC

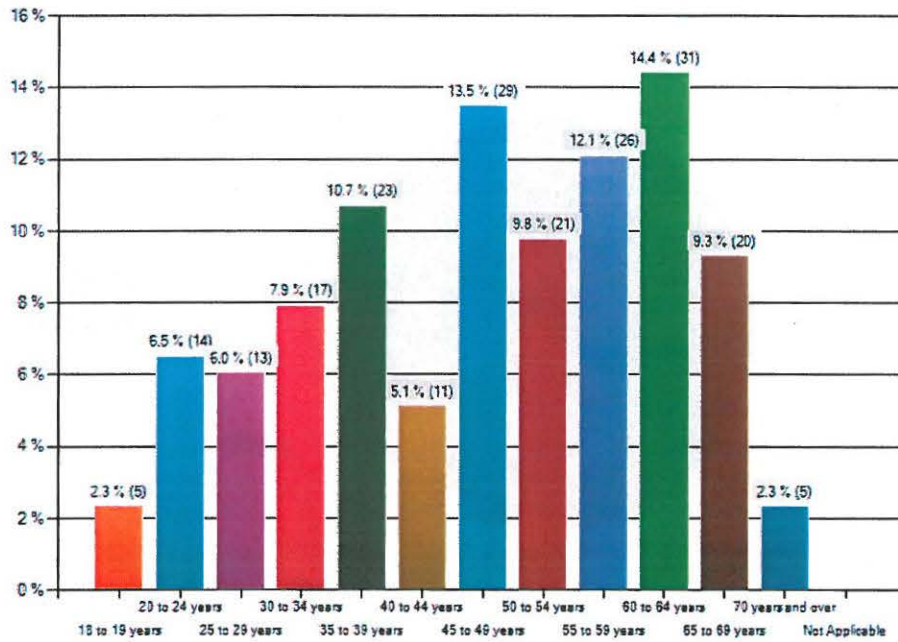
Demographics



Please indicate your gender below.

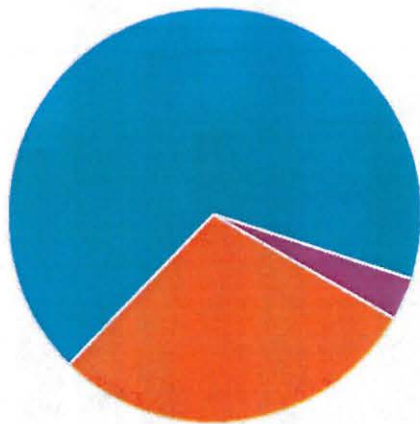


Please indicate your age below.



Please indicate your marital status.

67.8 % (143)

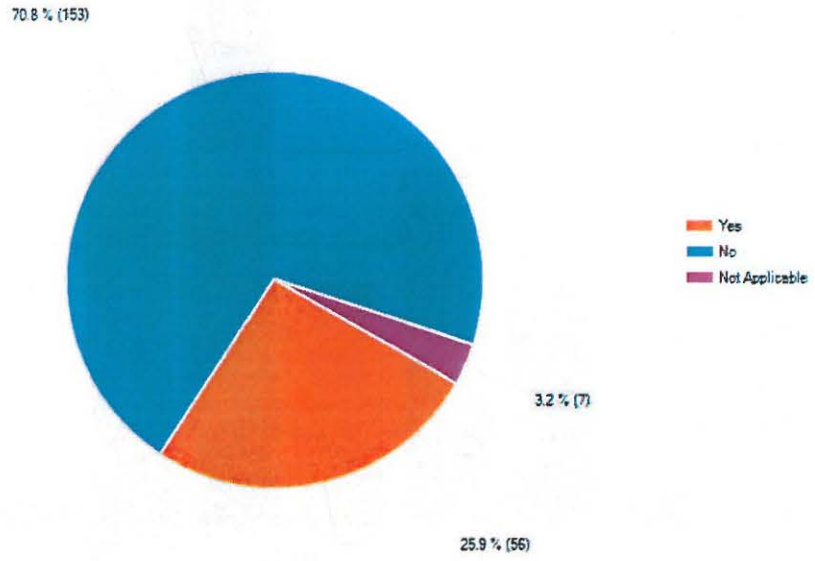


Single
Married
Not Applicable

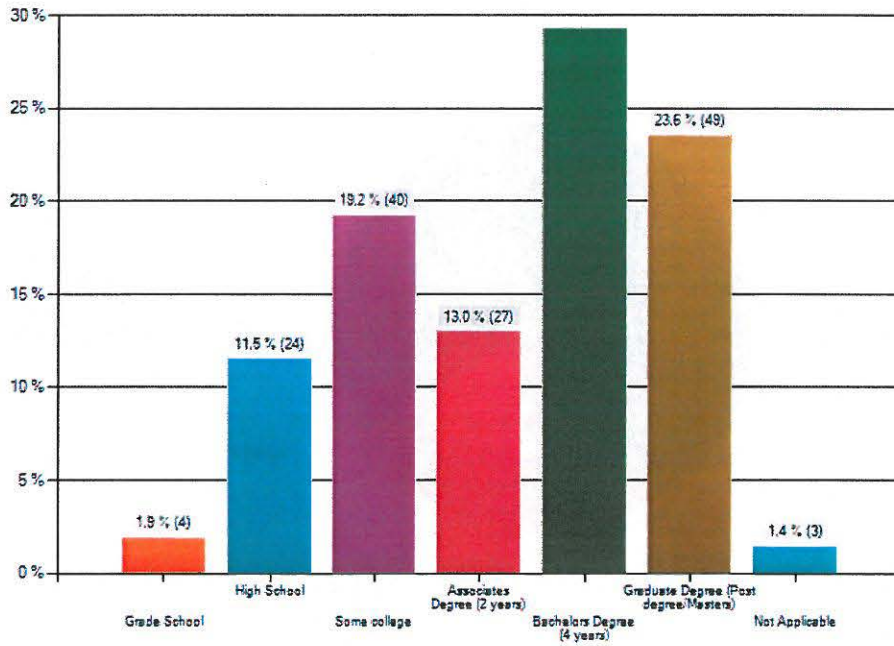
3.3 % (7)

28.9 % (61)

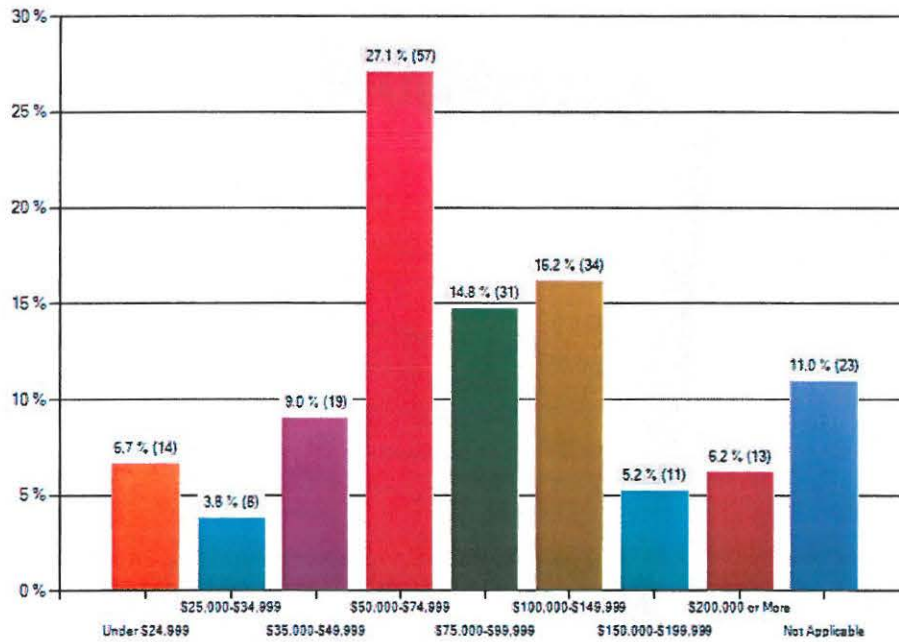
Do you have children under 18 living at home?



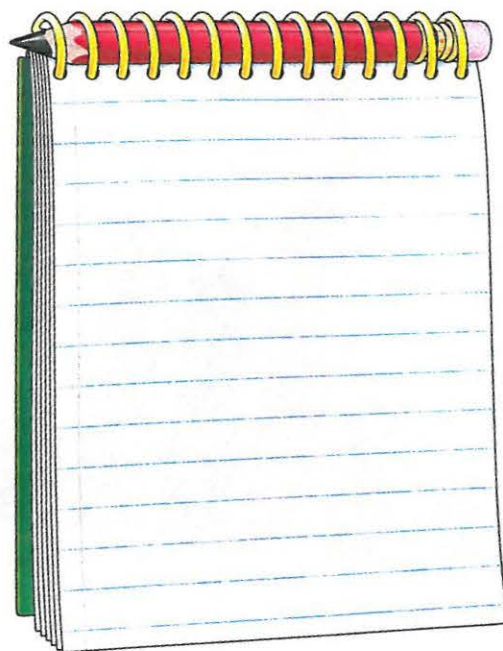
Please indicate your highest level of education.



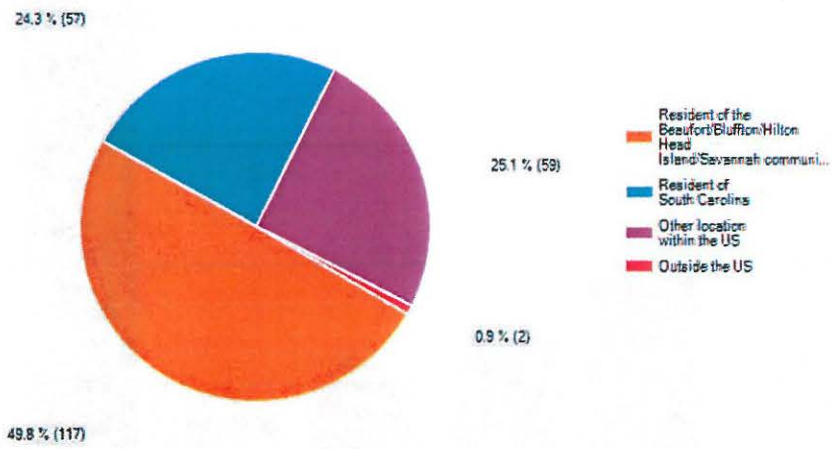
Which of the following ranges includes your annual household income?



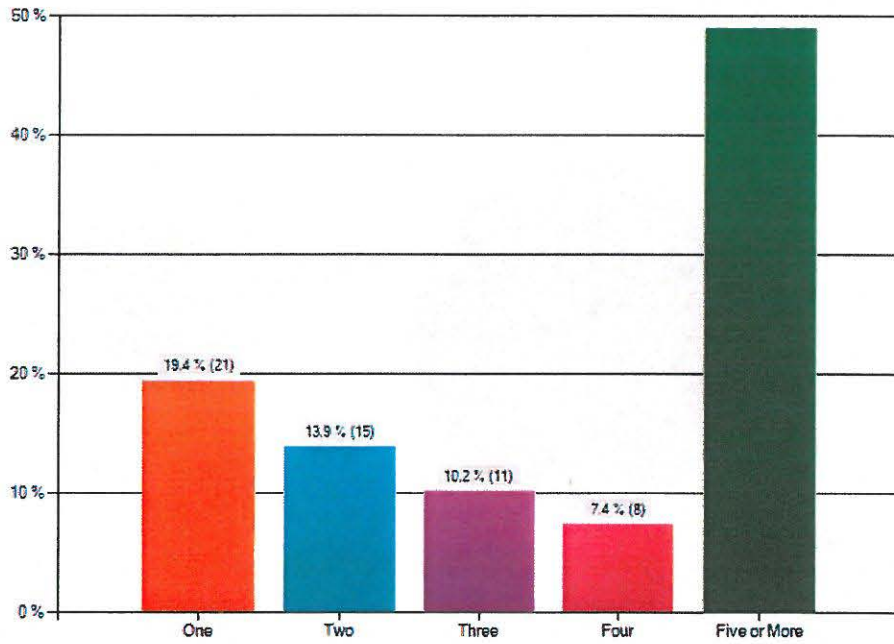
Visitor Characteristics



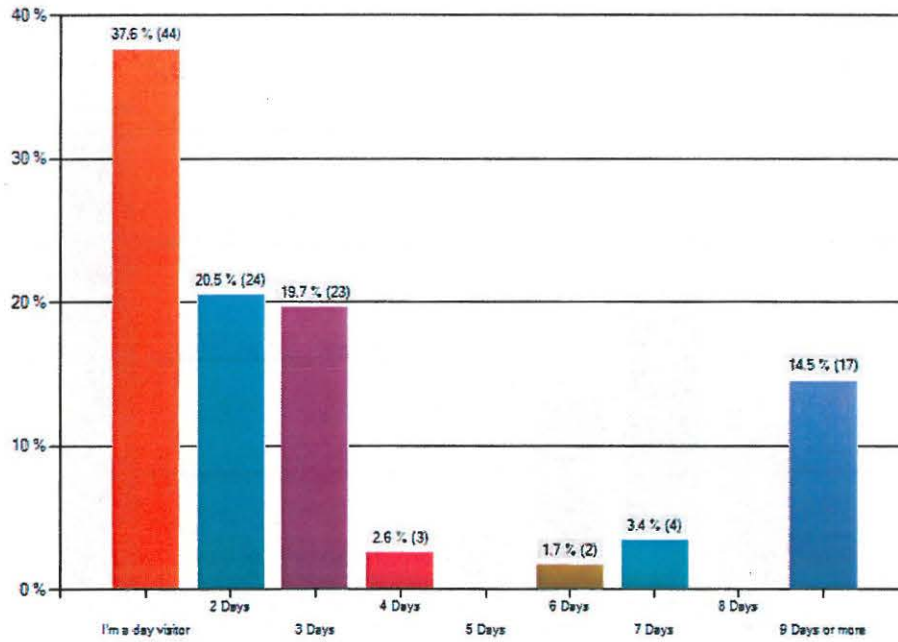
Where is your primary residence? (Tap the button to the left of your answer, then touch the NEXT button below to advance the survey.)



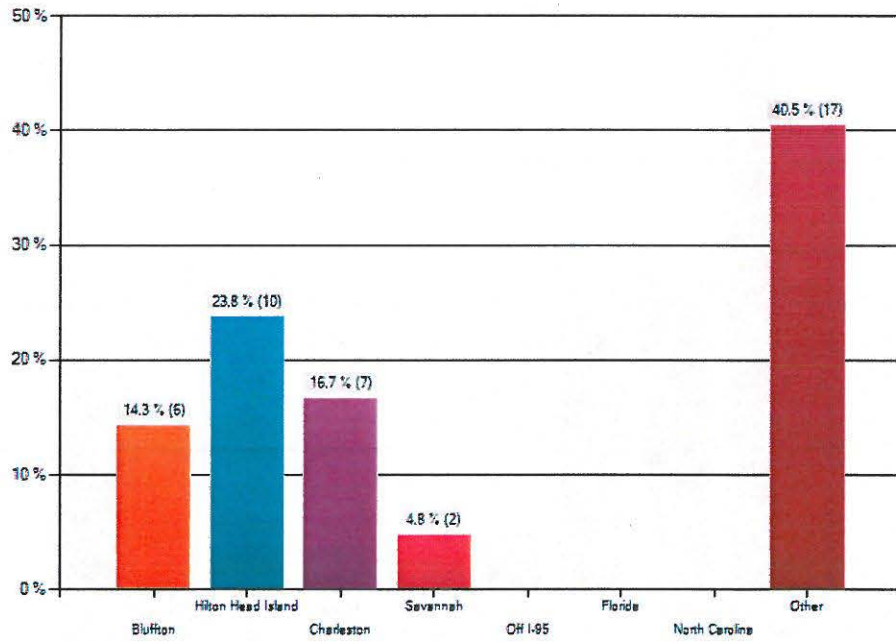
Counting this trip, HOW MANY trips have you taken to Beaufort, SC?



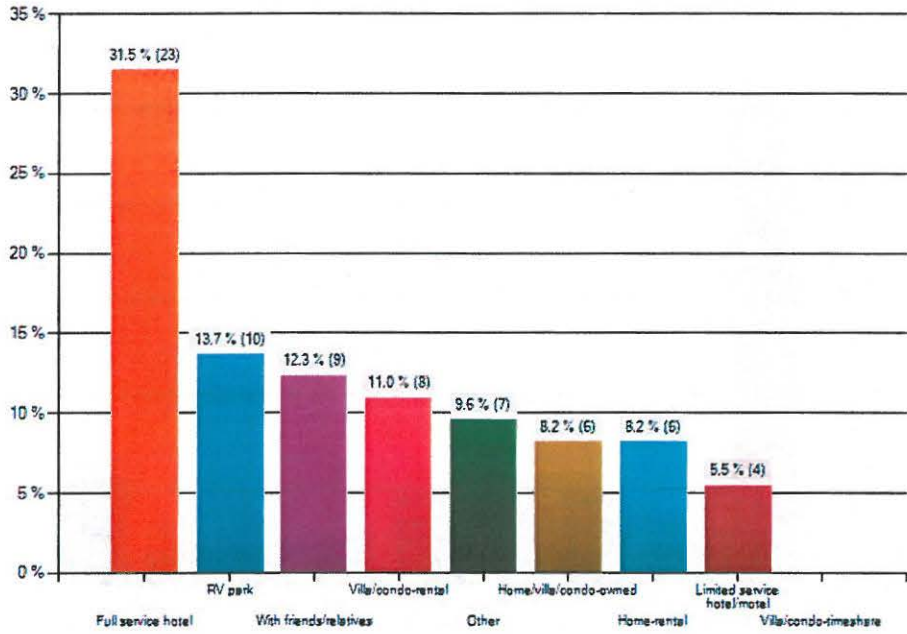
How many days do you intend to stay in Beaufort, SC?



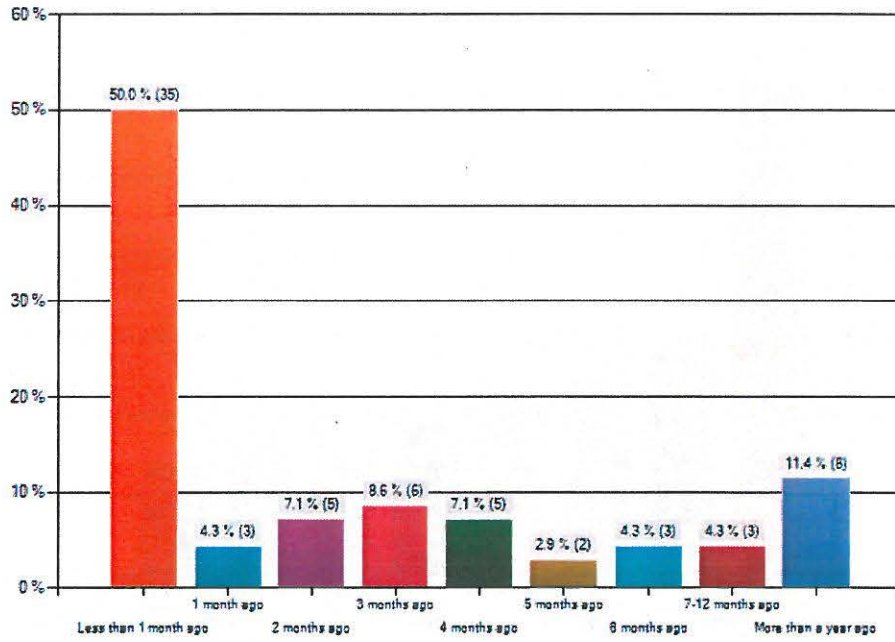
Where are you staying overnight on this trip?



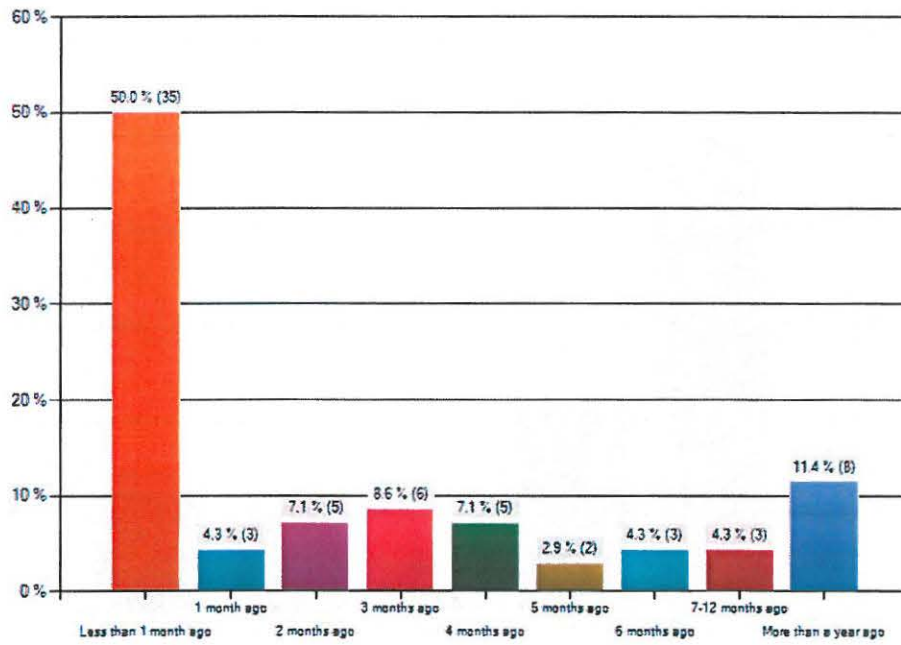
What type of accommodations will you be using while visiting Beaufort, SC?



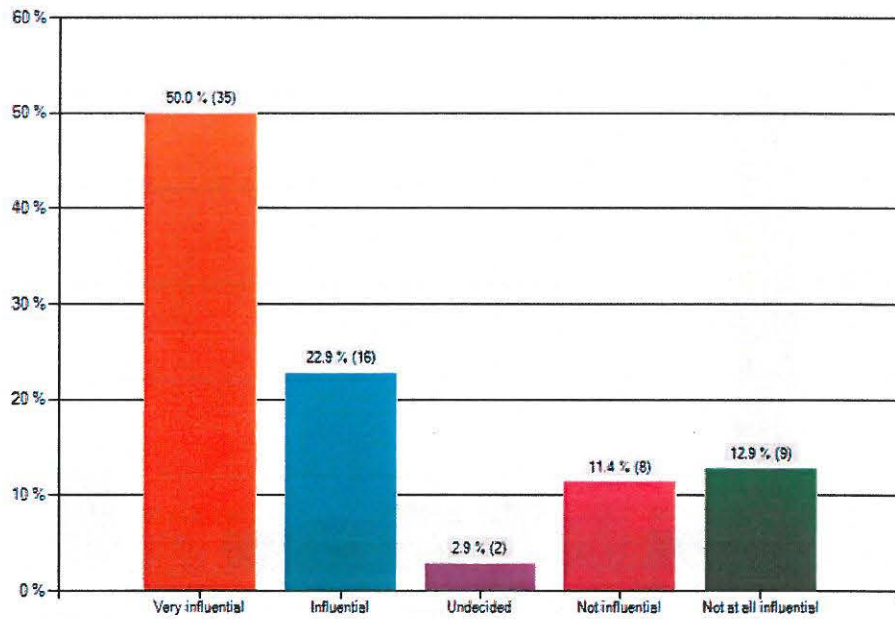
How many months in advance did you book this trip?



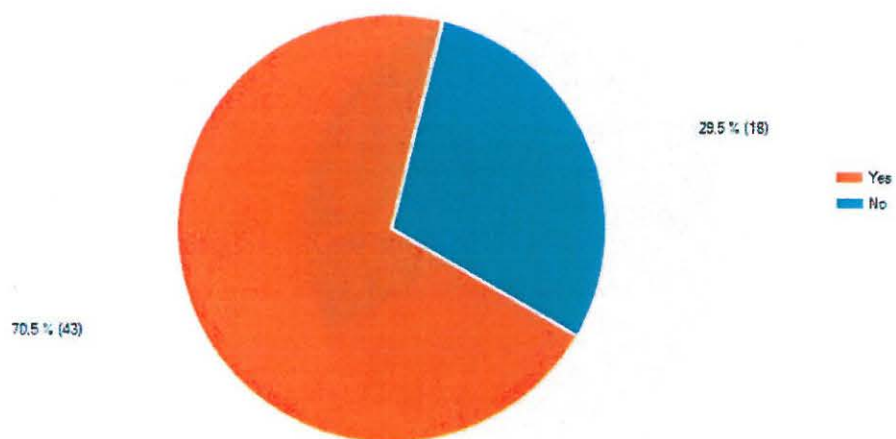
How many months in advance did you book this trip?



How influential was the 2013 Beaufort Shrimp Festival when initially planning your trip to Beaufort, SC?

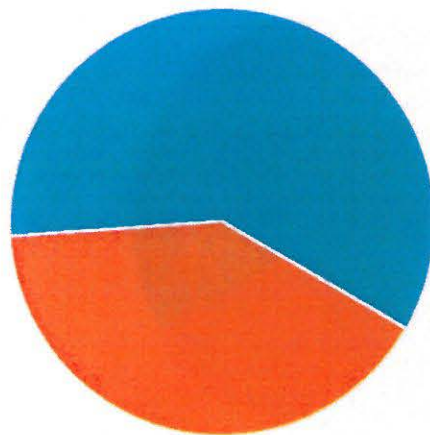


Would you have visited the Beaufort area AT THIS TIME even if this festival had not been held?



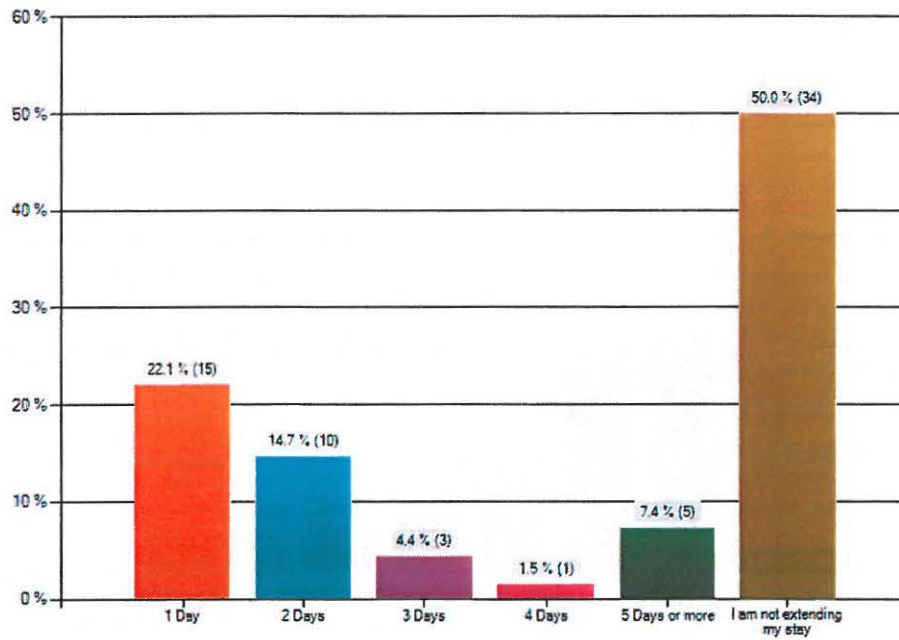
Did you extend your stay in the Beaufort area because you wanted to attend this festival?

59.4 % (41)

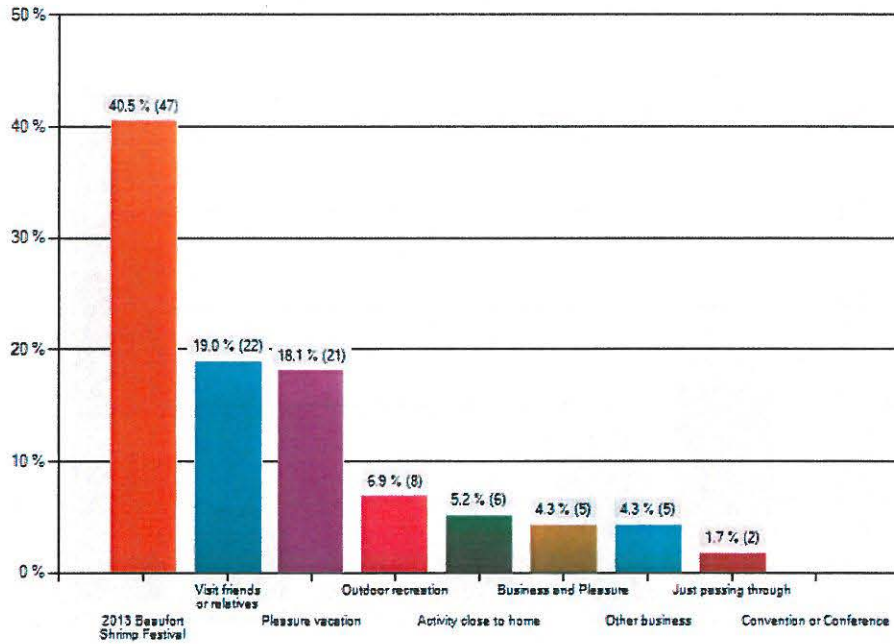


40.6 % (28)

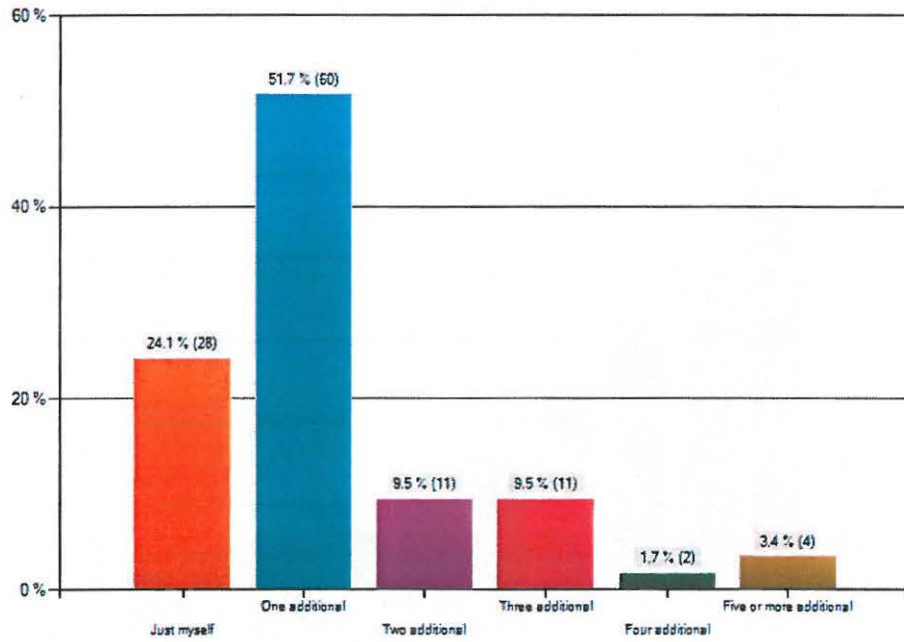
How many additional days are you staying because you wanted to attend this festival?



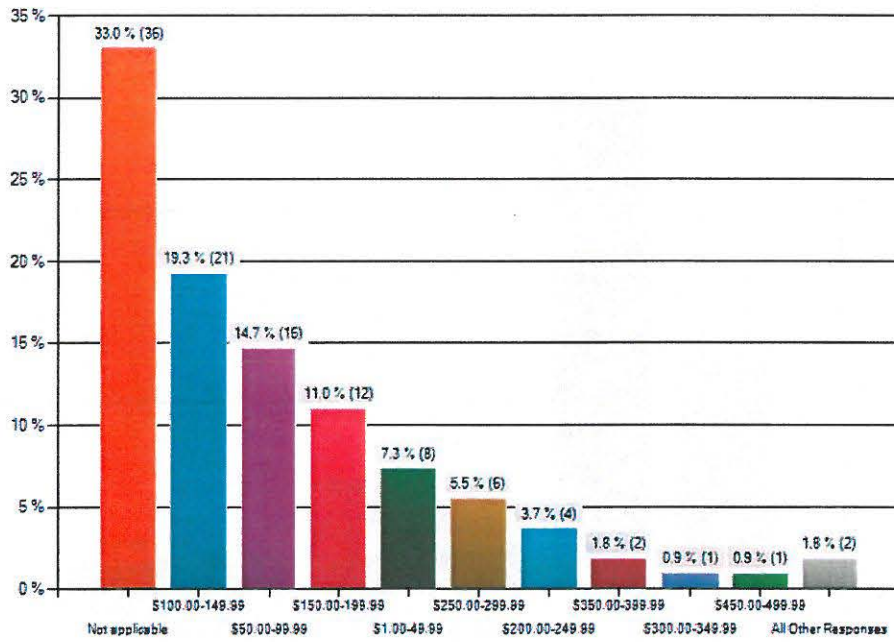
What was the primary reason for this visit to Beaufort, SC?



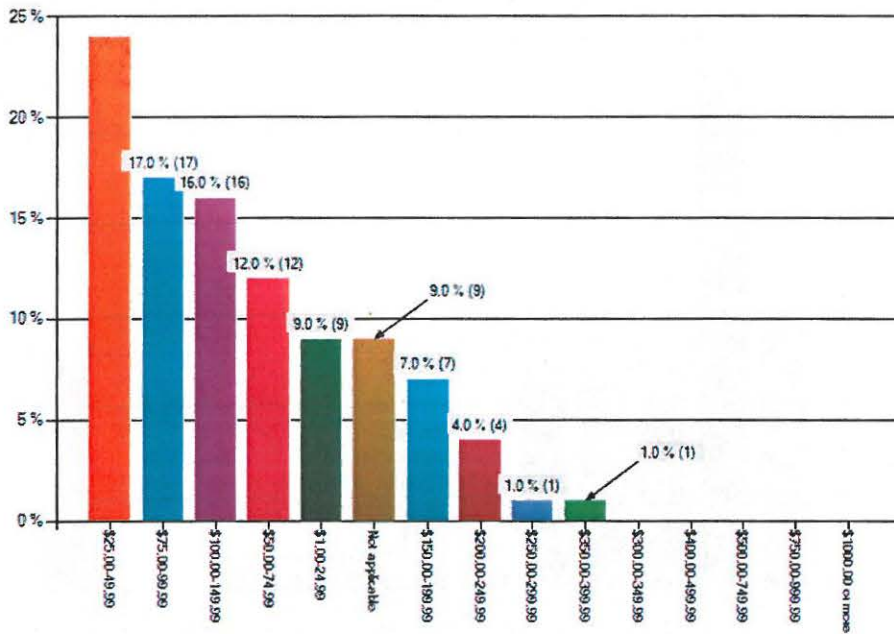
How many additional people are you financially responsible for during this trip?



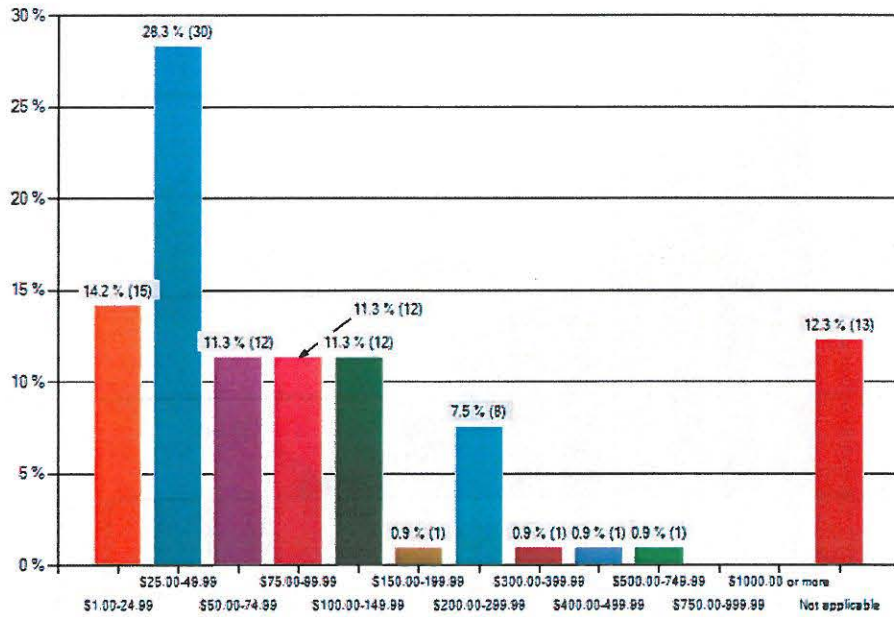
Approximately, how much will you spend on lodging PER NIGHT?



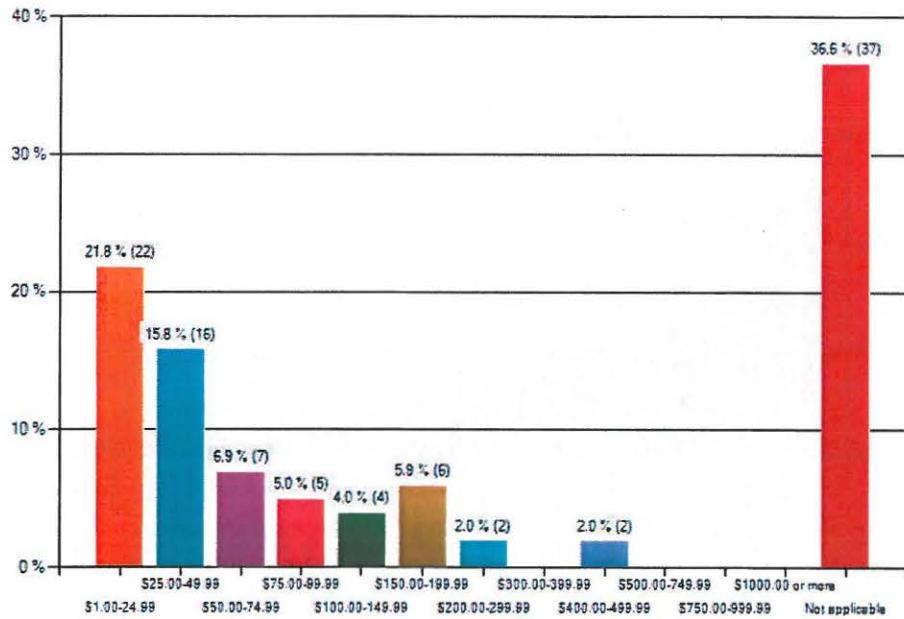
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on restaurant dining PER DAY?



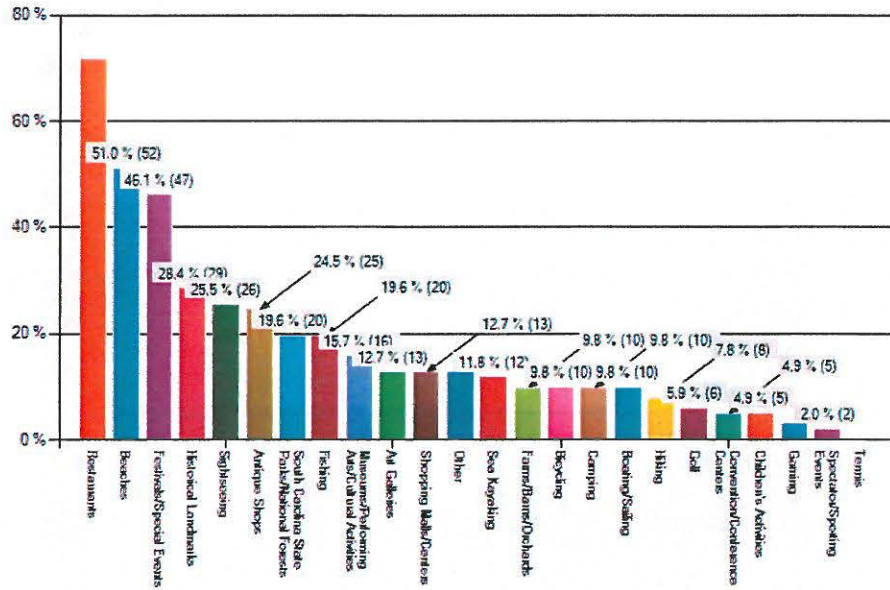
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on retail purchases PER DAY (i.e. clothes, gifts, souvenirs, etc.)?



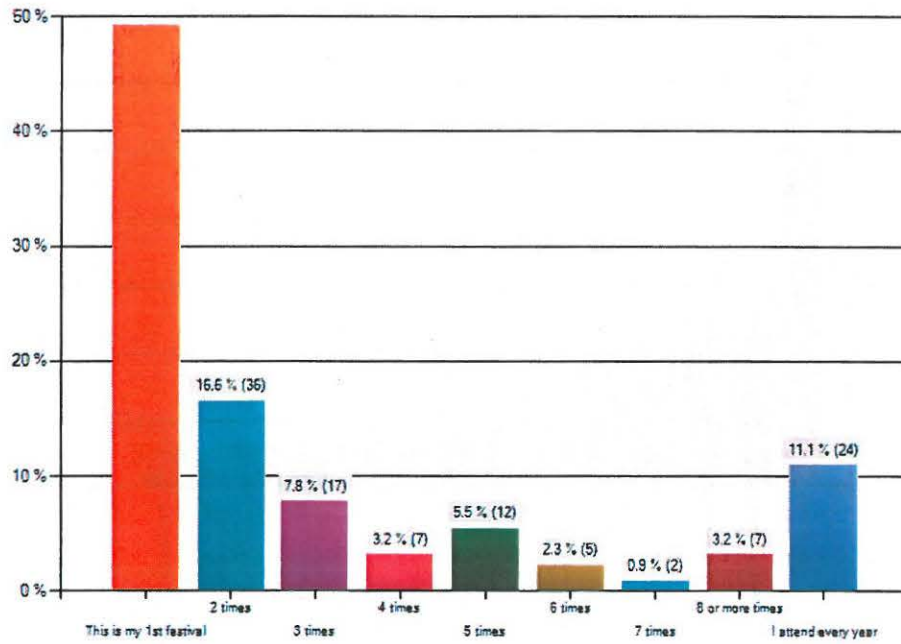
Approximately, how much do you think you'll spend on recreation expenses (i.e. golf, tennis, bicycling, etc.) PER DAY?



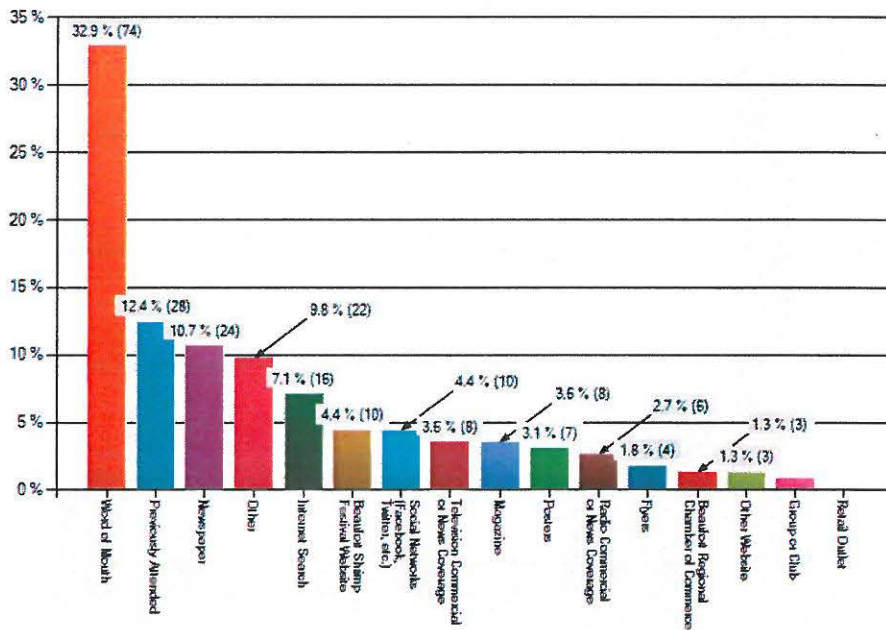
Please indicate if you intend on visiting (or have visited) any of the following tourist facilities or participating (or participated) in any of the listed activities during this trip to Beaufort. Choose all that apply.



Including this festival, how many times have you attended the Beaufort Shrimp Festival?



How did you first learn of the Beaufort Shrimp Festival?



How would you rate the following festival characteristics?

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know/Not Applicable	Rating Average	Rating Count
Music	61.0%	27.1%	6.4%	0.0%	0.9%	4.6%	4.54	218
Ambiance	60.7%	32.7%	4.2%	0.0%	0.5%	1.9%	4.56	214
Cost	40.8%	28.9%	22.7%	4.7%	0.5%	2.4%	4.07	211
Staff Friendliness	68.7%	23.4%	5.1%	0.5%	0.5%	1.9%	4.62	214
Kid's Area	33.0%	22.2%	7.9%	1.5%	0.5%	35.0%	4.32	203
Location	77.0%	17.4%	3.8%	0.0%	0.5%	1.4%	4.73	213

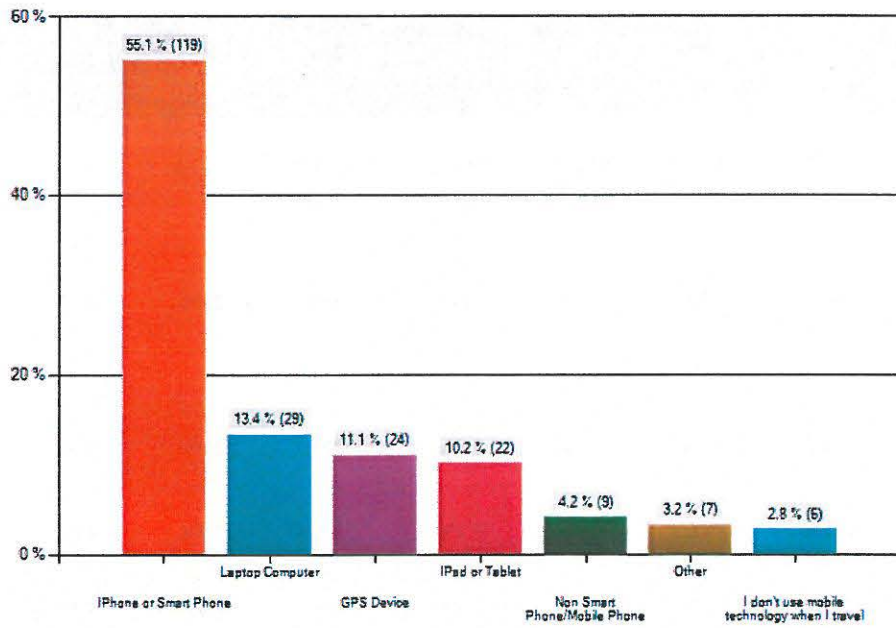
How would you rate the following festival characteristics?

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know/Not Applicable	Rating Average	Rating Count
Parking	15.1%	24.8%	33.9%	16.1%	6.9%	3.2%	3.26	218
Food Vendor Variety	48.8%	39.8%	7.1%	0.9%	0.0%	3.3%	4.41	211
Quality of Food Purchased	48.8%	36.0%	4.7%	0.9%	0.0%	9.8%	4.47	214
Quality of Beverage Purchased	39.7%	34.0%	8.1%	2.9%	0.0%	15.3%	4.31	209
Quantity of Food Purchased	40.1%	34.9%	11.8%	3.3%	0.0%	9.9%	4.24	212
Quantity of Beverage Purchased	39.7%	34.0%	8.1%	2.9%	0.0%	9.9%	4.15	208

How would you rate the following festival characteristics?

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know/Not Applicable	Rating Average	Rating Count
Availability of Public Seating	26.8%	29.1%	30.5%	9.4%	0.9%	3.3%	3.74	213
Consistency of "Shrimp" Theme Throughout the Festival	54.0%	35.5%	8.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	4.47	211
Event Layout and Design	48.6%	36.3%	12.3%	0.5%	0.0%	2.4%	4.36	212
Crowd Flow	36.2%	39.0%	17.6%	5.2%	0.0%	1.9%	4.08	210
Overall Value of the Event	49.8%	40.1%	7.7%	0.5%	0.0%	1.9%	4.42	207

When traveling on vacation, what form of mobile technology do you primarily use when gathering information about the destination you're visiting?



The following items are related to your use of internet travel review sites when making travel plans. Please indicate your level of agreement for each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Rating Count
I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others.	31.3%	33.2%	28.0%	5.6%	1.9%	3.86	214
To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews.	29.8%	38.0%	23.6%	7.2%	1.4%	3.88	208
I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination.	24.0%	34.1%	30.3%	9.6%	1.9%	3.69	208
I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination.	26.9%	38.9%	25.5%	5.8%	2.9%	3.81	208
If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision.	16.4%	23.7%	31.9%	14.5%	13.5%	3.15	207
When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me confident in traveling to the destination.	23.0%	39.7%	30.4%	4.9%	2.0%	3.77	204

How likely are you to return to next year's festival and recommend the festival to friends?

	Extremely Likely	Very Likely	Not Sure	Very Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely	Rating Average	Rating Count
Return to Next Year's Festival	59.0%	24.9%	13.4%	1.8%	0.9%	4.39	217
Recommend the Festival to Friends	64.4%	32.2%	3.0%	0.0%	0.5%	4.60	202

**For More Information Contact
Dr. John Salazar
843-208-8217**

Advertising Reports

Beaufort VCB SEO Report

Beaufort Monthly SEO Report

YTD SEO Report

July 2013 - March 18th, 2014



Report Summary

Traffic:

- There were 353,639 total visits to the site for the period; this is a 73.35% increase over the same period last year (204,006 visits)
- 230,267 of those visits were generated through natural search; this is a 121.56% increase over last year (103,920 visits)
- Natural Search made up 62.01% of the overall traffic to the site

Visitors Guide - Goal Completion:

- There were 5,852 "Visitor Guide Requests" for the period (versus only 640 for the previous period)
- 3,793 of those (65%) were generated through natural search (versus only 301 during the same period last year)

Email Newsletter - Goal Completion:

- There were 1,697 "Email Newsletter" Signups for the given period
- 994 of those (59%) were generated through natural search

Top Landing Pages - Natural Search:

- Homepage - 74,230 visits
- Events - 18,520 visits
- "50 Things To Do" - 15,653 visits

Keywords Rankings:

- #1 Ranking for 17 targeted keywords (things to do in beaufort sc; beaufort sc things to do; things to do in parris island sc; lady island sc; etc.)
- Top 10 Ranking for 50+ targeted keywords
- Consistently high performance for all "things to do", "Beaufort", and "Dining" related keywords



Beaufort VCB SEO Report

Beaufort Monthly SEO Report

Conversion Report

Monthly Conversions - Total Site & Natural Search (2014 vs 2013)



Landing Page Report

Monthly Top Landing Pages - Natural Search

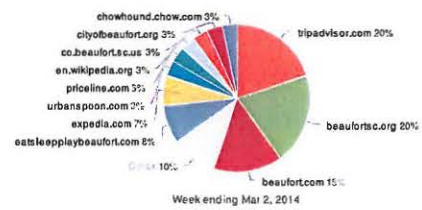
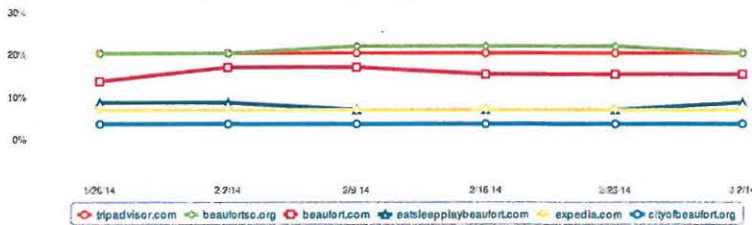
Landing Page	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions All Goals	
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Goal Conversion Rate	Goal Completions
Non-paid Search Traffic	221,130	82.91%	183,328	39.80%	3.10	00:02:45	2.17%	4,788
1 /	74,230 (33.57%)	86.48%	64,195 (28.92%)	28.63%	4.24	00:03:50	4.16%	3,089 (64.52%)
2 /events/	18,520 (8.38%)	68.59%	12,777 (57.7%)	33.86%	3.22	00:02:38	0.80%	148 (3.09%)
3 /50-things-to-do/	15,653 (7.08%)	79.09%	12,380 (55.9%)	42.84%	3.44	00:03:16	1.95%	305 (6.57%)
4 /not-set/	14,277 (6.46%)	161.85%	23,107 (104.9%)	0.00%	0.00	00:00:00	0.00%	0 (0.00%)
5 /restaurants/	7,746 (3.50%)	69.86%	5,411 (24.4%)	48.48%	2.51	00:02:51	0.35%	27 (0.57%)
6 /area-ist-helena-island/	6,590 (2.98%)	83.23%	5,485 (24.7%)	40.23%	3.34	00:02:47	0.93%	61 (1.27%)
7 /things-to-do/	5,147 (2.33%)	63.96%	3,292 (14.9%)	47.64%	3.34	00:03:00	0.51%	26 (0.55%)
8 /area-beaufort/	4,993 (2.26%)	74.12%	3,701 (16.7%)	46.32%	3.44	00:03:04	4.71%	235 (5.01%)
9 /lodging/	3,880 (1.75%)	67.60%	2,623 (11.9%)	48.08%	2.78	00:03:20	0.54%	21 (0.44%)
10 /area-hinting-island/	3,501 (1.58%)	83.12%	2,910 (13.2%)	44.36%	2.76	00:01:44	0.65%	31 (0.65%)

Beaufort VCB SEO Report

Beaufort Monthly SEO Report

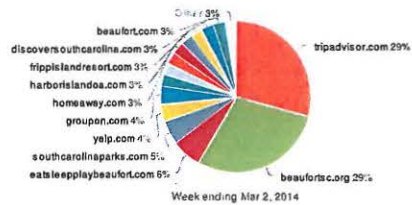
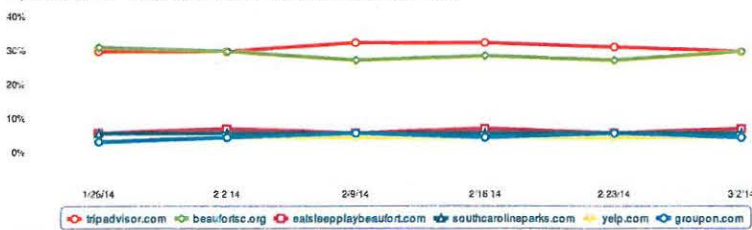
Top Competitors in "Beaufort"

Highest Rankers on Beaufort Keywords for Domains with URLs in Top 5



Top Competitors in "Things To Do"

Highest Rankers on Things To Do Keywords for Domains with URLs in Top 5



Keyword Categories for beaufortsc.org

Visibility performance segmented by category

Category Properties	Keywords	Monthly Volume	Local (US)	Google Rank					NR	Google Trend		TrueTraffic
				Avg Rank	1-3	4-10	11-20	21-40		41-100	Avg Rank	
All	114	129,320	129,320	12	38	25	23	10	7	11		1,400
Beaufort	12	45,090	45,090	3	10	2	0	0	0	0		1,000
Dining	1	1,300	1,300	2	1	0	0	0	0	0		31
Fripp Island	13	16,350	16,350	15	2	5	3	2	1	0		72
Harbor Island	13	5,340	5,340	8	4	7	1	1	0	0		18

Beaufort VCB SEO Report

Beaufort Monthly SEO Report

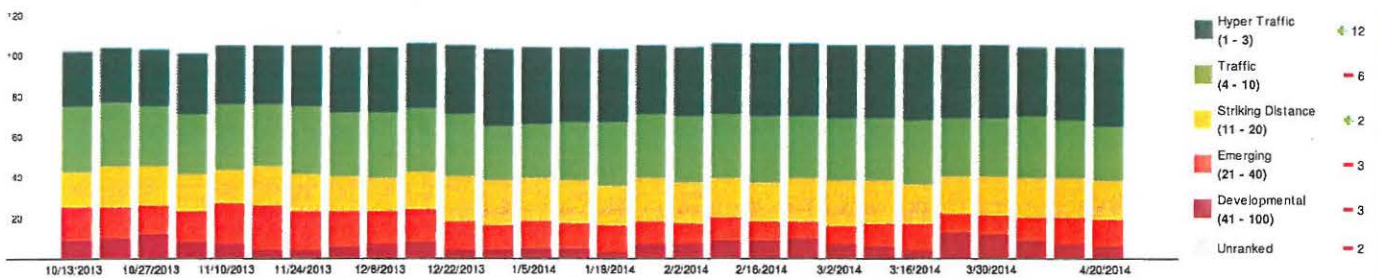
Keyword Categories for beaufortsc.org (cont.)

Visibility performance segmented by category

Category Properties	Keywords	Monthly Volume	Local (US)	Avg Rank	Google Rank					NR	Google Trend	TrueTraffic
					1-3	4-10	11-20	21-40	41-100			
Huntington Island	12	4,490		13	0	2	9	0	0	1		8
Huntington Island, Lodging	1	--		6	0	1	0	0	0	0		--
Ladys Island	13	1,170		6	8	3	1	1	0	0		47
Lodging	42	6,910		18	5	9	13	8	4	3		55
Non-Destination Specific	13	6,910		14	0	1	2	0	0	10		1

Keyword Pipeline

Rank distribution for active keywords in Searchlight



Keyword Rankings (Top 100)

A comprehensive view of your portfolio for active keywords in Searchlight

Keyword	Google Monthly Search Volume		Google Rank		Change	TrueTraffic
	Local (US)	Local Trend	10/13/13	3/30/14		
beaufort sc things to do	140		1	1	0	6
http://www.beaufortsc.org/50-things-to-do						
frripp island sc attractions			4	1	3	0
http://www.beaufortsc.org/50-things-to-do						



BEAUFORT, SC

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT
PORT ROYAL & SEA ISLANDS

Beaufort Public Relations Recap of Efforts (July 2013 – March 2014)

1. Media Coverage

From July 2013 through March 2014, Beaufort, S.C., received an estimated **\$1,749,870.90** in earned media coverage related to travel and tourism. The total media impressions from this are **446,547,397**.

Examples of national and regional media outlets that covered the city during this period include:

- *The Charlotte Observer*
- *USA Today*
- *Southern Living*
- *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*
- *The State*
- Bloomberg.com
- *The Washington Post*
- About.com
- Yahoo! Finance
- CNN.com
- Associated Press

II. Media FAM

The Chamber hosted a three-day media FAM during February that included the following media members and outlets:

- GirlsGetaway.com / Susan Barnes
- Gallagher's Travels / Mary Gallagher
- Freelancer (regularly contributes to Southeastern magazines and papers, such as the AJC, Getaways for Grownups and AAA) / Hope Philbrick
- Deep South Magazine / Erin Bass
- Traveling Mom / Christine Tibbetts

Coverage resulting from the FAM will appear later this spring and summer (run dates TBD.)



III. News Releases

Since July 2013, the Chamber has distributed eight news releases to support media relations efforts. The include the following:

- Shrimp Festival News Release
- Heritage Days News Release (wire distribution)
- Fall Tour of Homes News Release
- Beaufort History Museum News Release (wire distribution)
- Ghost Tours News Release (wire distribution)
- Spring Tour of Homes News Release
- Beaufort Film Festival News Release (wire distribution)
- ICW Rally News Release

IV. Awards and Accolades

Since July 2013, Beaufort, and its travel and tourism partners, have received a variety of national accolades, including:

- Coastal Living magazine and its readers named Beaufort "America's Happiest Seaside Town" for 2013.
- Beaufort ranked #1 for healthiest county in S.C. by the 2014 County Health Rankings.
- Smithsonian Magazine named Beaufort to its "Best Small Towns in the U.S." list.
- Hunting Island ranked #7 on TripAdvisor's list of "Top 25 U.S. Beaches" for 2014.
- TripAdvisor's Traveler's Choice Awards featured The Beaufort Inn on its "Top 25 Hotels in the U.S." list and City Loft Hotel on its "Top 25 Small Hotels in the U.S." list.
- The AAA Carolinas recognized The Cuthbert House and The Rhett House Inn with its prestigious AAA Four Diamond Award designation. The highly coveted award was given to less than five percent of the 30,000 lodging properties inspected.
- USA Today named Beaufort to its "30 Great Places for Business Travelers" list in 2014.



BEAUFORT, SC

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT
PORT ROYAL & SEA ISLANDS

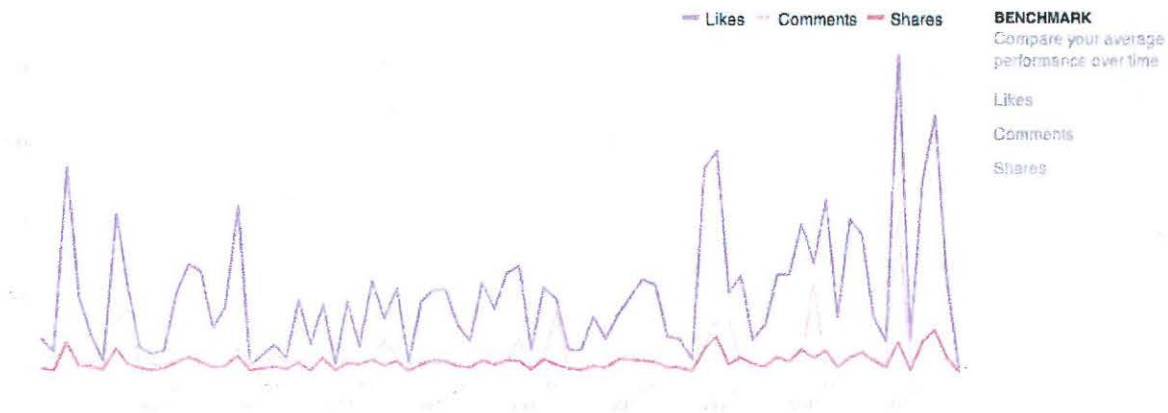
Beaufort Chamber of Commerce Social Media Report (July 1, 2013 – April 2014)

Synopsis:

- During the time of July 2013-April 2014, the Visit Beaufort, SC Facebook page grew 10,868 fans, bringing the total number to 35,038 (as of April 24).
- 6 million impressions made since July 1, 2013 by 3.2 million fans. This is the total number of times any Facebook user saw content associated with Visit Beaufort, SC in their News Feed or by visits to the page directly.
- Overall reach was 2.8 million with 152.5 million “talking about this”
- Facebook Fan Demographics have remained the same 73% women and 34% between the ages of 25-44.
- December 2013-April 2014, the Visit Beaufort, SC Twitter account gained 210 new followers for a total of 830 followers.
- Instagram was implemented. Visit_beaufortSC now has 31 medias posted with 29 followers.

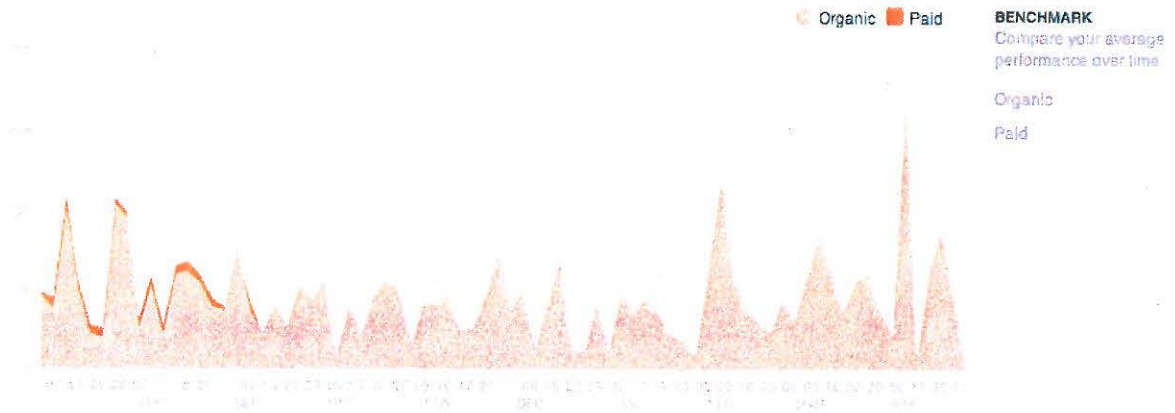
Likes, Comments, and Shares

These actions will help you reach more people.



Post Reach

The number of people who saw your posts.



Beaufort VCB

PPC Report YTD (July 2013 - April 18th, 2014)



Comments

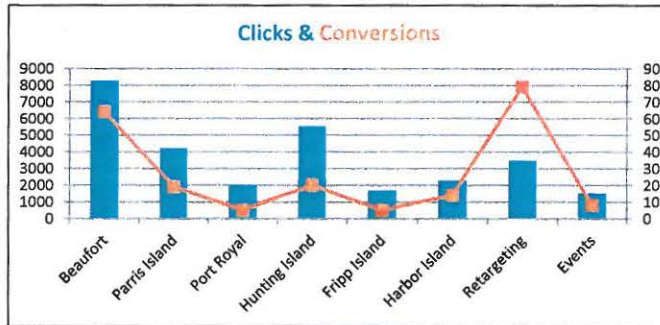
- Over the given period, the campaign saw 28,959 clicks to the site via PPC and generated 214 conversions
- The CTR was 1.74% and the conversion rate was 0.74%
- Overall CPC was \$0.79 leading to a total cost of \$22,817 for the period

Campaign Overview

Campaign	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Conversions	Conv. Rate
Beaufort	8274	379,578	2.18%	\$ 0.52	\$ 4,287.51	64	0.77%
Parris Island	4217	124,000	3.40%	\$ 0.51	\$ 2,145.11	19	0.45%
Port Royal	1996	133,850	1.49%	\$ 0.72	\$ 1,437.75	5	0.25%
Hunting Island	5546	72,517	7.65%	\$ 0.26	\$ 1,428.52	20	0.36%
Fripp Island	1669	65,394	2.55%	\$ 0.87	\$ 1,446.55	5	0.30%
Harbor Island	2263	67,071	3.37%	\$ 0.60	\$ 1,360.11	14	0.62%
Retargeting	3484	802,722	0.43%	\$ 1.10	\$ 3,825.19	79	2.27%
Events	1510	22,104	6.83%	\$ 0.37	\$ 554.27	8	0.53%
Management Fee	-	-	-	-	\$ 6,331.61	-	-
Totals and Averages	28,959	1,667,236	1.74%	\$ 0.79	\$ 22,816.62	214	0.74%

Top 10 Keywords

Keyword	Clicks
[hunting island state park]	3334
[beaufort sc]	3055
"beaufort sc"	1568
[harbor island sc]	776
"parris island"	709
[parris island sc]	705
[parris island]	699
[port royal sc]	693
[fripp island]	677
"port royal sc"	644



Ad Performance

Top Performing Ad

Campaign	Beaufort
Clicks	3568
CTR	2.22%
Conversions	23

Notes / Optimizations:

- Update events ads seasonally
- Optimize landing pages when ads change
- Identify / Eliminate Irrelevant Keywords Driving Traffic

[\[Key Word Visit Beaufort SC\]](#)

Get Your Visitor Guide For Beaufort
Your Vacation Can Plan Itself
www.beaufortsc.org



July Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	3,588	261,797	1.37%	\$ 2,380.48
TripAdvisor	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	38	23,366	0.16%	\$ 461.71
Collinson	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	169	69,078	0.24%	\$ 269.40

August Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	3,445	262,090	1.31%	\$ 2,378.95
TripAdvisor	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	293	280,309	0.10%	\$ 5,641.02
Travel Spike	300x250, 728x90, 160x600, text, email	Leads: 2,698	47,249 205,466; 70%		\$ 8,728.82
Compass eNews	Email	10,816		0.23%	\$ 582.35
SpotXchange	:30 Pre-Roll Video	2,478	Viewed Full Video	1.21%	\$ 4,705.88
Collinson	Shrimp Festival Creative	1,295	460,600	0.28%	
Collinson	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	2,207	942,686	0.23%	\$ 6,438.61

September Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	3,212	187,503	1.71%	\$ 2,332.00
TripAdvisor	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	241	209,707	0.11%	\$ 4,217.54
Travel Spike	300x250, 728x90, 160x600, text, email	Leads: 819			\$ 966.76
Collinson	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	1,695	662,003	0.26%	\$ 3,037.43
September Print	Ad Size		Circulation		Spend
Yankee Magazine	1/2 Page 4c		460,000		\$ 6,165.00
AAA Going Places	1/3 Page 4c		430,000		\$ 6,952.94
AAA Go	1/3 Page 4c		1,120,000		\$ 7,200.00

October Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	2,960	181,697	1.63%	\$ 2,378.17
TripAdvisor	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	48	41,980	0.11%	\$ 846.03
Collinson	160x600, 728x90, 300x250	521	208,024	0.25%	\$ 954.46
October Print	Ad Size		Circulation		Spend
Hearst Magazines	1/3 Page 4c (3 pubs)		3,611,468		\$ 25,294.12
Carolina Living Guide	1/3 Page 4c		500,000		\$ 6,258.82
Yankee Magazine	Leads Still Coming In		460,000		\$ -
AAA Going Places	Leads Still Coming In		430,000		\$ -
AAA Go	Leads Still Coming In		1,120,000		\$ -

November Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	2,808	145,387	1.93%	\$ 2,355.03
November Print	Ad Size		Circulation		Spend
Hearst Magazines	Leads Still Coming In		3,611,468		\$ -
Carolina Living Guide	Leads Still Coming In		500,000		\$ -
AAA Going Places	Leads Still Coming In		430,000		\$ -



December Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	2,773	152,849	1.81%	\$ 2,367.13
December Print	Ad Size		Circulation		Spend
Hearst Magazines	Leads Still Coming In		3,611,468		\$ -
Carolina Living Guide	Leads Still Coming In		500,000		\$ -
AAA Going Places	Leads Still Coming In		430,000		\$ -

January Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	2,887	144,049	2.00%	\$ 2,366.23
January Print	Ad Size		Circulation		Spend
SC Vacation Guide '14	1/3 Page 4c		400,000		\$ 7,505.00
Hearst Magazines	Leads Still Coming In		3,611,468		\$ -
Carolina Living Guide	Leads Still Coming In		500,000		\$ -
AAA Going Places	Leads Still Coming In		430,000		\$ -

February Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	2,785	134,010	2.08%	\$ 2,350.24
February Print	Ad Size		Circulation		Spend
SC Vacation Guide '14	Leads Still Coming In		400,000		\$ -
Hearst Magazines	Leads Still Coming In		3,611,468		\$ -
Carolina Living Guide	Leads Still Coming In		500,000		\$ -

March Online	Ad Size	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Spend
PPC	text	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
TripAdvisor	300x600, 300x250, 728x90	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Travel Spike	300x250, 728x90, 160x600, text, email	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 1,533.53
Compass eNews	Email	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Collinson	160x600, 300x250, 728x90	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
March Print	Ad Size		Circulation		Spend
SC Vacation Guide '14	Leads Still Coming In		400,000		\$ -
	April 2014 Reader Response Card - A/V to Oct. 2013 placement				
Hearst Magazines	Leads Still Coming In		3,611,468		\$ -
Carolina Living Guide	Leads Still Coming In		500,000		\$ -

July 2013-Mar 2014 Total Spend as of 3/31: \$116,667.65
July 2013-Mar 2014 Total Leads as of 3/31: 19,260
July 2013-Mar 2014 CPL as of 3/31: \$ 6.06

*Note: These numbers are as of 3/31/14

BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ACCOMMODATIONS TAX (2%)
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014
PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Revenues			
Intergovernmental	\$ 900,000	\$ 516,780	\$ (383,220)
Interest	<u>500</u>	<u>138</u>	<u>(362)</u>
Total Revenues	900,500	516,918	(383,582)
Expenditures			
Other - Subsidies	<u>947,500</u>	<u>752,861</u>	<u>194,639</u>
Total Expenditures	947,500	752,861	194,639
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(47,000)	(235,943)	(188,943)
Other Financing Sources (Uses)			
Transfers Out ¹	<u>(68,750)</u>	<u>(49,589)</u>	<u>19,161</u>
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(68,750)	(49,589)	19,161
Net Change in Fund Balance	(115,750)	(285,532)	(169,782)
Fund Balance - beginning	<u>586,969</u>	<u>586,969</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund Balance - ending	<u>\$ 471,219</u>	<u>\$ 301,437</u>	<u>\$ (169,782)</u>

Note 1 - South Carolina Code of Law, Title 6 Chapter 4 requires a certain annual amount based on the amount of revenue recognized during a fiscal year to be transferred to the Beaufort County General Fund with no restrictions on the expenditures.

BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA
 LOCAL ACCOMMODATIONS TAX (3%)
 For the Year Ended June 30, 2014
PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Revenues			
Licenses and Permits	\$ 940,000	\$ 980,983	\$ 40,983
Interest	-	2,429	2,429
Total Revenues	<u>940,000</u>	<u>983,412</u>	<u>43,412</u>
Expenditures			
Personnel	45,368	44,199	1,169
Purchased Services	8,243	3,697	4,546
Supplies	1,850	362	1,488
Other - Subsidies	<u>420,000</u>	<u>977,775</u>	<u>(557,775)</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>475,461</u>	<u>1,026,033</u>	<u>(550,572)</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	464,539	(42,621)	(507,160)
Other Financing Sources (Uses)			
Transfers Out ¹	-	<u>(3,971)</u>	<u>(3,971)</u>
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	-	(3,971)	(3,971)
Net Change in Fund Balance	464,539	(46,592)	(511,131)
Fund Balance - beginning	<u>2,607,097</u>	<u>2,607,097</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund Balance - ending	<u>\$ 3,071,636</u>	<u>\$ 2,560,505</u>	<u>\$ (511,131)</u>

Note 1 - April 21, 2014, Public Facilities Committee approved this transfer for the Albergottie Creek Trestle Renovations related to the Spanish Moss Trail.

BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA
LOCAL HOSPITALITY TAX
For the Year Ended June 30, 2014
PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Revenues			
Licenses and Permits	\$ 1,690,000	\$ 1,839,836	\$ 149,836
Interest	-	3,561	3,561
Total Revenues	<u>1,690,000</u>	<u>1,843,397</u>	<u>153,397</u>
Expenditures			
Personnel	45,368	44,199	1,169
Purchased Services	8,243	3,697	4,546
Supplies	<u>1,850</u>	<u>324</u>	<u>1,526</u>
Total Expenditures	55,461	48,220	7,241
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	1,634,539	1,795,177	160,638
Other Financing Sources (Uses)			
Transfers Out ¹	<u>(1,200,000)</u>	<u>(1,200,000)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(1,200,000)	(1,200,000)	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	434,539	595,177	160,638
Fund Balance - beginning	<u>3,478,146</u>	<u>3,478,146</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund Balance - ending	<u>\$ 3,912,685</u>	<u>\$ 4,073,323</u>	<u>\$ 160,638</u>

Note 1 - Transfer to the Beaufort County General Fund for purposes of law enforcement, in which police protection of tourist facilities is one of the purposes of the hospitality tax.

BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA
 LOCAL ADMISSIONS FEES
 For the Year Ended June 30, 2014
PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Revenues			
Licenses and Permits	\$ 1,290,000	\$ 1,495,249	\$ 205,249
Interest	<u>4,000</u>	<u>1,946</u>	<u>(2,054)</u>
Total Revenues	1,294,000	1,497,195	203,195
Expenditures			
Personnel	45,368	44,199	1,169
Purchased Services	8,243	3,609	4,634
Supplies	<u>1,850</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>1,512</u>
Total Expenditures	55,461	48,146	7,315
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	1,238,539	1,449,049	210,510
Other Financing Sources (Uses)			
Transfers Out ¹	<u>(1,500,000)</u>	<u>(1,500,000)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	(261,461)	(50,951)	210,510
Fund Balance - beginning	<u>1,950,788</u>	<u>1,950,788</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund Balance - ending	<u>\$ 1,689,327</u>	<u>\$ 1,899,837</u>	<u>\$ 210,510</u>

Note 1 - Transfer to the Bluffton Parkway Debt Service Fund

Subject: Proposal for Fin/Ops Committee regarding Millage Value and Rate

My concern is simple; the development of the rate to set for the mil in order to fund our budget has been inconsistent in the past. This last year is a good example of how the rate was set without full consideration or knowledge of the factors that impact only the school district's collections. The proposal has several parts:

1. Staff (Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer, etc.), compute the value of the mil for all government entities and make that value known.
2. Working with staff at the County, the District financial staff identifies the rate needed to fund the approved revenue portion of the budget as established by the County Council.
3. The School Board develops and implements a new fund balance policy that states that our fund balance will fall between 13% and 15% with a median expectation of 14%.
4. The County Council adopts a policy that automatically replenishes the District fund balance back to 14% if it ever falls below 13%; the District agrees that if the fund balance ever exceeds 15% we will automatically spend the fund balance down to the 14% level.
5. The agreement between the Council and the District ensures that this will take place automatically, and that any increase required is automatic and independent of any other budget requests.

Implementing such an agreement, ensures that both the Council and the District are protected against any events such as 6%-4% movement, appeals, reassessments, etc. This proposal also provides stability, becomes a plus as we work with bonding agents as they can see great stability in our fund balance. It also means that the mil value and rate are set in June with the approval of the budget and any events will automatically be addressed with the next budget, with the fund balance either being spent down or funded so that it remains at the 14% level.

Bill Evans

August 25, 2014

Council Meeting

COUNTY OF BEAUFORT)
)
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA) RESOLUTION 2014 / ____

A RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS BEAUFORT COUNTY’S REQUEST THAT THE SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY INCREASE THE ALLOCATION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND TO BOTH PROVIDE PROPERTY TAXPAYERS WITH THE RELIEF THEY HAVE BEEN PROMISED AND ALLOW COUNTY GOVERNMENT THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER STATE LAW

WHEREAS, the South Carolina General Assembly enacted the Home Rule Act, Act No. 283 of 1975, granting certain, but limited, powers to the Local Government bodies across the State; and

WHEREAS, the State, in addition to the powers and obligations enumerated the Home Rule Act, has chosen to utilize counties as an administrative arm of the State of South Carolina and as an additional funding source for state agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature proposed and passed the State Aid to Subdivisions Act in the FY 1991-92 budget; and

WHEREAS, this Act requires that the State appropriate 4.5% of general fund revenues of the most recently completed fiscal year to the Local Government Fund; and

WHEREAS, in FY 2009-10, FY 2010-11, FY 2011-12, FY 2012-13, FY 2013-14 and FY 2014-15 the General Assembly suspended the provisions of §6-27-30 and §6-27-50 in the budget and failed to fund the LGF at the statutorily mandated formula; and

WHEREAS, for FY 2014-15 the General Assembly funded the LGF at \$187.6 million in recurring dollars and \$25 million in non-recurring money. This amount represents \$75 million in lost tax relief to county taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, in 1999 the General Assembly passed §12-37-2735, the Personal Property Tax Relief Fund, to provide an additional \$20 million allocation to counties for property tax relief; and

WHEREAS, since FY 2001-02 the General Assembly has suspended the provisions of §12-37-2735 in the budget and failed to fund the Personal Property Tax Relief Fund at the statutorily mandated level; and

WHEREAS, state-shared revenue assists in the burden placed upon property taxpayers to fund both state and local services; and

WHEREAS, despite refusing to increase monies to the Local Government Fund, the General Assembly persists in statutorily requiring counties to assume the State’s administrative and financial responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the State further punishes county taxpayers by withholding additional revenue for a county’s failure to assume the state’s obligations; and

WHEREAS, this shift of financial responsibility creates a sham, giving the appearance of “clean hands”

at the state level of government while forcing local governments to raise taxes; and

WHEREAS, in addition to surreptitiously dismantling statutory property tax relief granted to their property taxpayers, the General Assembly has further restricted county government's ability to generate revenue, thereby preventing the counties from being able to pay for legitimate functions of county government and from mitigating the expected shortfalls resulting from the State's refusal to meet its statutory obligations; and

WHEREAS, despite the fact that the state general fund saw a 20.3% increase from FY 2010 to 2013, the General Assembly refuses to provide even a negligible increase for property tax relief, much less fund in accordance with state statutes; and

WHEREAS, this tax policy is unsustainable without substantial tax increases and service reductions; and

WHEREAS, a failure to fund the Local Government Fund requires taxpayers to pay twice for the same services they were receiving prior to the reductions in the Local Government Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED on this _____ day of _____ 2014, that Beaufort County urges the General Assembly to reestablish accountability by restoring State funding of State agencies and desist in the current policy which uses sleight of hand by forcing counties to levy property taxes to fund these agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Beaufort County urges the General Assembly to increase the allocation to the Local Government Fund to both provide property taxpayers with the relief they have been promised and allow county government the ability to provide the State and Local Government services required under State Law.

County Council of Beaufort County

_____, D. Paul Sommerville, Chairman

_____, Stewart H. Rodman, Vice Chairman

_____, Cynthia M. Bensch, Council Member

_____, Rick Caporale, Council Member

_____, Gerald Dawson, Council Member

_____, Brian Flewelling, Council Member

_____, Steven G. Fobes, Council Member

_____, William L. McBride, Council Member

_____, Gerald W. Stewart, Council Member

_____, Roberts "Tabor" Vaux, Council Member

_____, Laura L. Von Harten, Council Member