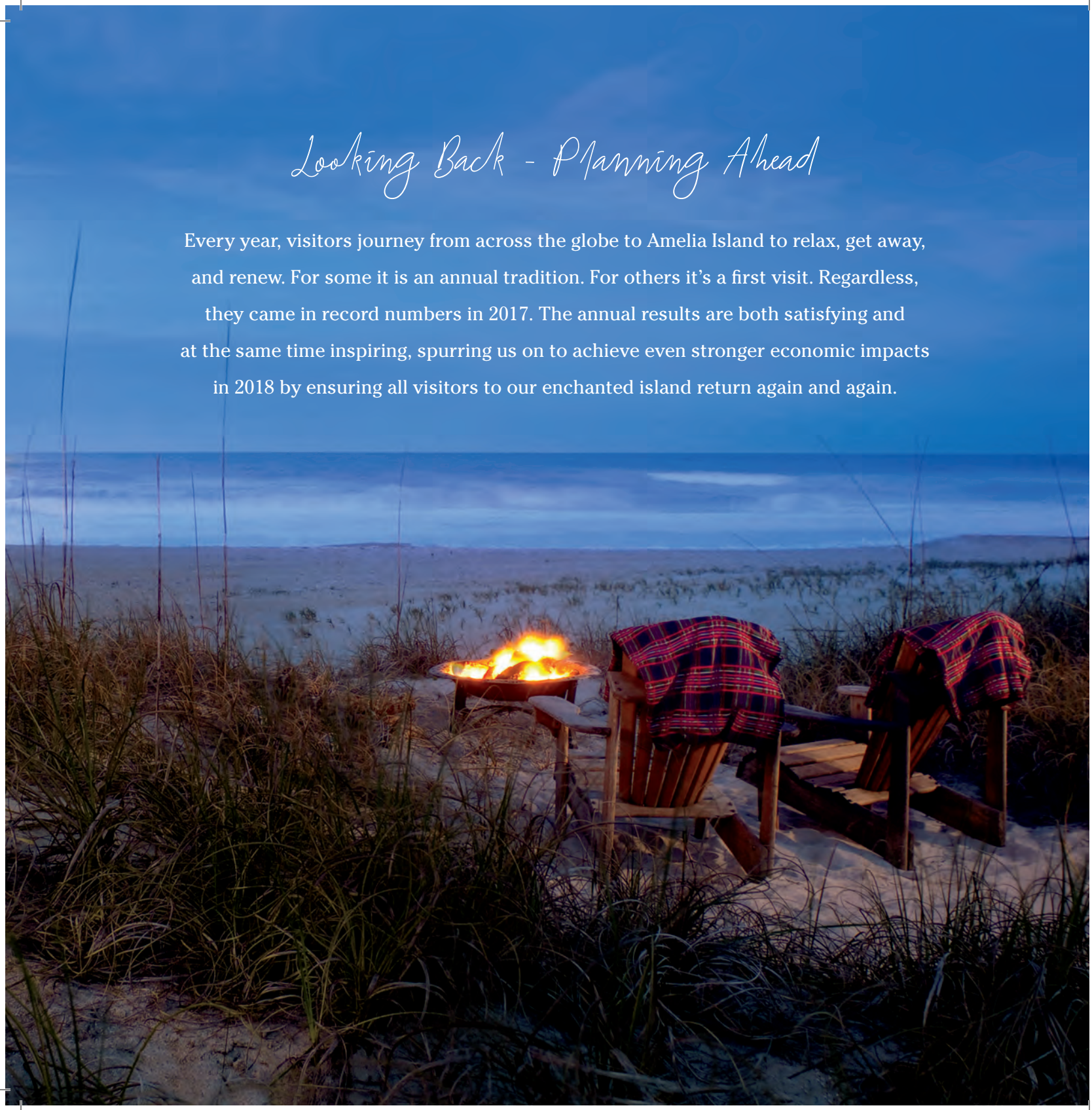
2017
YEAR IN REVIEW
AMELIA ISLAND
COME MAKE MEMORIES
WWW.AMELIAISLAND.COM

Looking Back - Planning Ahead

Every year, visitors journey from across the globe to Amelia Island to relax, get away, and renew. For some it is an annual tradition. For others it's a first visit. Regardless, they came in record numbers in 2017. The annual results are both satisfying and at the same time inspiring, spurring us on to achieve even stronger economic impacts in 2018 by ensuring all visitors to our enchanted island return again and again.



AMELIA ISLAND TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

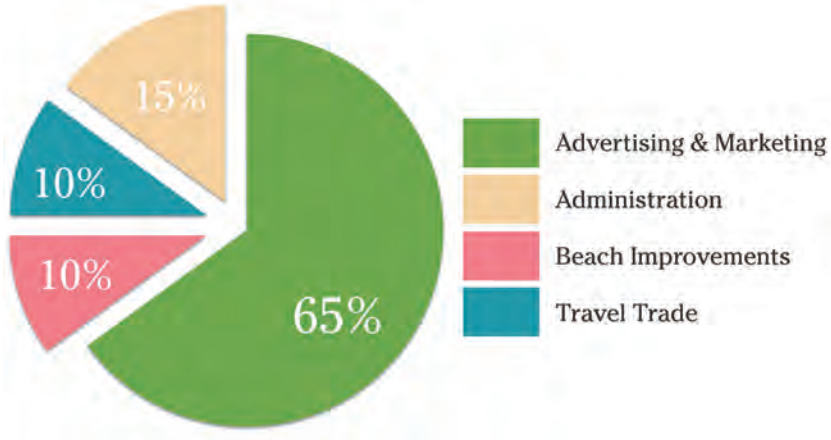
MISSION STATEMENT

Created by the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners in 1988, the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council (AITDC) oversees the development and marketing of Amelia Island as a world-class tourism destination. As provided by Florida law, the AITDC is responsible for the expenditure of revenues received from the levy and imposition of the tourism development tax.

The goals of the AITDC are to generate visitation to Amelia Island and its attractions/special events, thereby increasing tax revenues, including sales taxes and those imposed on the hospitality industry. In turn, those tax revenues may be used to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the community, provide support for our beaches, and ensure a viable hospitality industry.

FUNDING

The AITDC is funded by a 4% tourist tax on short-term accomodations. How these user fees must be spent was established and voted on by a county ordinance in 1988 and mandates the bed tax revenue breakdown as:



More than 75% of bed tax revenues are dedicated to advertising and promoting Amelia Island for leisure and business travelers. Most destination marketing organizations spend less than half their funding on sales and marketing.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

PERFORMANCE METRICS

What is a good measure of success? In 2017, despite two hurricanes* in one fiscal year, the AITDC achieved metrics that significantly increased visitor spending and therefore taxable revenues. We continue to meet benchmarks that help achieve our overarching goal of creating a sustainable tourism industry for Nassau County, with a focus on increasing visitor yield over volume. While our visitors make memories, our local businesses make money. It's a win/win!

Produced **$138M** in taxable room sales (+4.1% YoY)

Trend: +97% since 2010 | *Fun Fact:* Actual bed tax collections were 13% over projections

Achieved Occupancy of

72.4%*

(+2% YoY*)

Trend: +34% since 2010

Increased Average Daily Rate to

$223.30*

(+1.6% YoY)

Trend: +38% since 2010

Achieved Demand of

489,367*

(+1.9% YoY*)

Trend: +47% since 2010

Increased RevPAR to

$161.57*

(+3.6% YoY)

Trend: +84% since 2010

(Data reflects calendar year 2017)

* Smith Travel Research reports hotel & resort data only

Overnight guests spent a record

$485M

(+6.6% YoY)

Total economic impact

$638M

for the fiscal year (+6.75% YoY)

Total units rented

678K

(-1.6% YoY)

Overnight visitors increased by 5% from 2016, totaling

665K+

Each marketing dollar resulted in

$157 RETURN

for the Nassau County economy

Tourism payroll totalled nearly

$121M

from jobs in Nassau County

Tourism jobs represent

+24%

of total county employment

Tourism related business generated

38%

of sales tax in Nassau County (+6% YoY)

The Amelia Island Welcome Center hosted

43K

visitors in the historic train depot

8th consecutive year for increased taxable revenue growth

GUIDING LIGHT

MARKETING CORE STRATEGIES

- Develop & Execute an integrated marketing program designed to strengthen the Amelia Island brand utilizing all channels.
- Create Opportunities for local stakeholders to participate in free and paid programs, platforms and cooperative advertising.
- Build brand enthusiasts utilizing social media channels to engage visitors.
- Improve brand consistency, awareness and relevancy to our target markets.
- Produce original content that is easily accessible and shareable.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Promote, protect, and preserve Amelia Island's tourism assets.
- Support infrastructure improvements and smart development that enhance tourism.
- Inform and educate local stakeholders on the economic, social, and cultural value of a sustainable tourism program. Operating in a transparent manner according to Florida's open records and Sunshine Laws.
- In times of crisis, provide leadership, foster communication, and serve as a liaison to key elected officials.
- Focus on high-income households in major markets likely to stay longer and spend more, thereby increasing yield and return on investment.

Fernandinas
FANTASTIC
FUDGE

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

VISITOR PROFILE SUMMARY

Effectively reaching and influencing travelers begins with understanding who they are, what they value and what they love most about Amelia Island. Our research efforts provide insight that allows us to strategically focus our efforts - matching our marketing message to our guests' desires and expectations.

49.8
AVERAGE AGE of Visitor

$133,355
Annual **HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

51.4%
FIRST TIME Visitors

2.9 persons
Average Party Size

TRAVEL **PARTY** COMPOSITION

52.3% Couples **31.3%** Families

27.9% Arrive by Airplane

54.4% of Visitors
Were influenced by Amelia Island messaging

$2,065 - Total Base Budget

97%
Visitor **Satisfaction**

96.9%
of visitors would recommend Amelia Island to friends & family as a vacation destination

89.1%
Plan to **Return**

AMELIA ISLAND VISITOR ORIGINS

KEY FEEDER CITIES

Ranked by Est. FY 2017 Visitation:
(% change YoY)

- Atlanta (+1.2)
- Jacksonville (+10.6)
- Greater Orlando (+3.8)
- New York/New Jersey (+10.8)
- Tampa/St. Petersburg (-7.4)
- Savannah (+2.3)
- Charlotte (-11.2)
- Boston (+3.8)
- Greenville/Spartanburg (-6.2)
- Chicago (+10.9)
- Washington, D.C. (-3.6)
- Philadelphia (-2.4)
- Tallahassee (+4.1)
- Nashville (+2.7)
- Dallas (+2.4)
- Houston (-6.9)

Ranked by Economic Contribution:

- Atlanta
- New York/New Jersey
- Jacksonville
- Greater Orlando
- Boston
- Chicago
- Washington, D.C.
- Philadelphia
- Greenville/Spartanburg
- Charlotte
- Savannah
- Tampa/St. Petersburg
- Nashville
- Dallas/Fort Worth
- Tallahassee
- Houston

INTERNATIONAL

International market visitation up 12.3% YoY.

- **Canada +6%**
- **German Speaking +19.3%**
- **U.K. +14.2%**

$12.8M

economic impact from German speaking visitors to Amelia Island

AMELIA ISLAND EVERYWHERE

DIGITAL MARKETING SUMMARY & RESULTS

Whether they are hearing about Amelia Island for the first time, researching, planning, or enjoying a trip, we reach targeted travelers where they are: online and often on a mobile device. According to 79.6% of visitors, the Internet was the most helpful source of information. From our far-reaching website to our engaging social media channels, our always-on digital efforts delivered in 2017.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Amelia Island messaging appears at least once a day, every day, across various social media platforms reaching an average of 250,000 people.

70,000 Likes (+21% YoY)

- 39,512,959 impressions on @AmeliaIslandFlorida Facebook page
- 54% more posts created in 2017, with 57% video posts
- 1.1M Facebook video views, 74% organic views
- Top performing posts regularly reach 20,000+ people

TOP VIDEO PERFORMERS

Now Boarding: Amelia Island Beach Guide
360 Amelia Island Video Adventure
#LOVEAMELIA Katie Ride
#LOVEAMELIA Secrets of a Romantic Getaway
#LOVEAMELIA Goes Shark Tooth Hunting

EMAIL

81,500 Email newsletter subscribers,+17.3% YoY
22.44% open rate, +29.4% YoY

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1.1M
Sessions

55%
Sessions on Mobile Devices

2.7M
Page Views

We measure website success based on the quality of traffic and their engagement with content, with a focus on conversions for newsletter sign-ups and visitor guide requests.

Compared to 2016, sign-up rates increased by nearly a third (31.25%)

ARRIVAL EFFICIENCY

Amelia Island's digital marketing efforts work to not only grow brand awareness with our target audience, but to convert viewers to actual visitors. With our partner *Arrivalist*, we track the impact of digital advertising by measuring actual visitor arrivals within the destination after exposure to our online ads and website.

31% Percentage AmeliaIsland.com performs over the benchmark of 100+ DMOs in driving visitation to the destination.*

20% Percentage Amelia Island digital media performs over the benchmark of 100+ DMOs in driving visitation to the destination.*

**Average Arrivals per Thousand Impressions*

PROTECTING OUR BEACH

The AITDC is dedicated to building a sustainable and vital tourism economy on Amelia Island, working to protect and promote our valuable natural assets including the island's 13 miles of beach.

- Spent ~ $1.5M for beach related projects including regular beach cleaning, post-hurricane cleanup and covered 100% of the local expenses for beach renourishment for Amelia Island
- Cleaned over 500,000 pounds of debris from Amelia Island beaches in 2017
- Continue to work with local government and stakeholders to communicate the Leave No Trace (LNT) beach ordinance
- Executed the Seaside Sculptures program to raise awareness of the LNT ordinance. Five artful sculptures were created from debris collected on Amelia's shores and installed at four beach accesses as reminders of the island's commitment to protecting the coastline.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Imagine reading a beautiful article about Amelia Island. Or scrolling through your favorite blog and seeing high marks from the writer's personal Amelia Island experience. You could be as far away as the UK or as close as Jacksonville, but the result is the same – you want to visit!

In calendar year 2017, our public relations efforts:

- Earned 562,215,157 overall impressions from 276 placements in print, online and broadcast media in over 155 outlets
- Hosted 16 media visits such as ***Chicago Parent, Islands Magazine;*** digital influencers, ***The Fox & She, Palm Beach Lately and Happily Hughes;*** and a group "Man-Fam" targeting male travel writers.
- Participated in 8 consumer promotions including partnerships with Spartina 449, Harris Teeter, SE Toyota, and Jacksonville Sports Council
- Executed consumer activations with the Young Affiliates of the Mint Museum in Charlotte as well as the Boys & Girls Clubs in Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio
- Initiated media missions in NYC, Atlanta/Birmingham, South FL, Charlotte, Chicago, Orlando and Nashville

UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES

Highlights from 2017

EVENTS

- Hosted 9th annual Amelia Island Restaurant Week
- Promoted all car-related events in March for the 4th annual Amelia Concours Week, generating $22M in economic impact
- Launched new Amelia Island Wellness Festival, resulting in over 22 million earned media impressions from wellness influencers
- Redeveloped the Pétanque Amelia Island Open, bringing in $1M in economic impact
- Executed 3rd annual Dickens on Centre event, with a total economic impact of $2.8M
- Promoted Second Saturday Artrageous Artwalk
- Worked with 15+ destinations events including Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival featuring Itzhak Perlman

INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOWS

- World Travel Market London - the leading global event for the travel industry
- ITB Berlin - world's leading travel trade show
- IPW - U.S. Travel Association's IPW is the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the U.S.
  - Hosted northeast FL reception for international tour operators and media at the Florida House, in partnership with Air Canada and Florida's Historic Coast.

RECOGNITION & AWARDS

- Ranked as:
  - #3 in the Top 10 Islands in the U.S. by ***Condé Nast Traveler*** Readers' Choice Awards
  - Best Romantic Getaway by ***Jezebel***
  - #4 Happiest Seaside Town by ***Coastal Living***
  - Top Beaches in Florida by ***USA Today***
  - Best Adult Spring Break Trip for Grown-Ups by ***TripAdvisor***

- 7 Flagler Awards at VISIT FLORIDA's annual Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism: Henry Awards in Mobile Marketing and Niche Marketing, three Silver Awards and two Bronze Awards

The AICVB has received 30 Flagler Awards in the last ten years including 3 Best of Show

- 12 Adrian Awards by Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International for outstanding advertising and marketing efforts including two Platinum Awards for Leader in Sustainable Tourism and Digital Marketing Video

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The Amelia Island Tourist Development Council is a program of the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners.