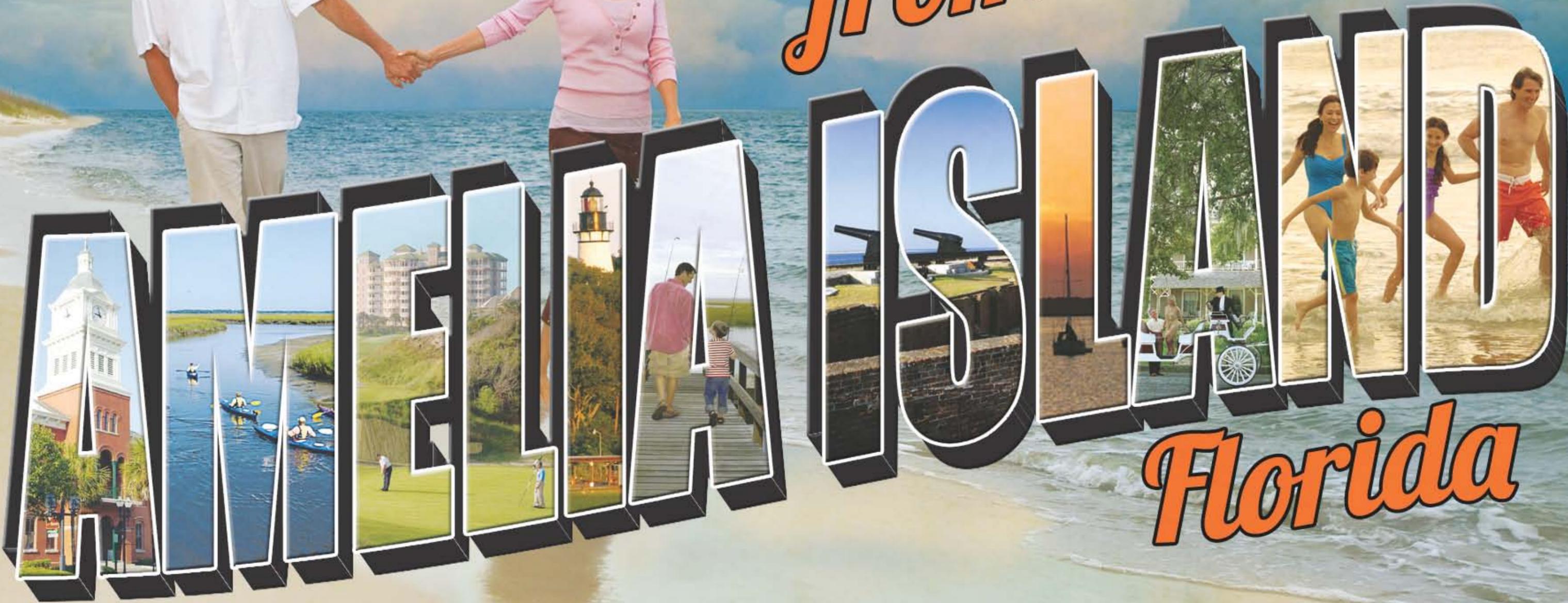


*Greetings  
from*

**MALDEN ISLAND**



*Florida*

**MARKETING PLAN 2013**

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### *Key Amelia Island Selling Points:*

- Amelia Island breaks with the physical world, and with the world's constraints of time.
- Amelia Island allows its visitors the ability to disconnect in order to reconnect; letting life go in order to get it back.
- Although a destination with a beach, it is not only a beach destination. Amelia Island represents the best of "authentic" Florida.
- Consistently recognized as one of North America's premier island destinations, 97% of Amelia Island visitors would recommend it as a vacation destination to their friends.
- The variety of lodging opportunities offers a tremendous value no matter what the vacation budget.

***“It's the things you fight for and struggle with before earning that  
have the greatest worth.”***

**Sarah Dessen**

## Executive Summary

One of the earliest producers of personal success literature, American author Napoleon Hill once wrote that “strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle.” A basic tenet of Hill’s “science of success,” truer words have never been spoken about Amelia Island tourism. For it is only through the efforts of the Amelia Island TDC and its industry partners that the island’s vital tourism industry has continued to grow during difficult times.

Amelia Island has seen her fair share of change in the past several years – from the completion of the Residence Inn in 2009 and the five-year renovation at the Ritz-Carlton, to the OMNI Amelia Island Plantation’s grand re-imagination. Change on this scale is disruptive to say the least, and as the Ritz-Carlton and OMNI continued their renovations, the industry braced for an unavoidable decline in occupancy, average rate and revenue per room in 2012. Yet the past fiscal year has been promising, with some 459,600 visitors generating more than \$360 million in economic impact, and increases in occupancy (5.6%), ADR (2.5%) and REVPAR (8.6%) for the 12-month period ending in September.

Adding to these positive numbers and the dramatic improvements among key accommodators, 2012 brought with it a variety of new experiences and offerings from the island’s other industry partners. New restaurants now fuel Amelia’s culinary scene, while businesses old and new offer exciting and novel ways for visitors to explore and enjoy the island, from helicopter tours and standup paddleboard yoga, to Segway tours of Fort Clinch State Park, a children’s exhibit at the Amelia Island Museum of History, and more.

What does this kind of strength and growth mean to the county? Between January and July 2012, sales from these and our other tourism related businesses (accommodations, restaurants, attractions) generated 35.4 percent of all retail sales in Nassau County. For every dollar invested by the TDC, the county received \$105.76 in economic return. Moreover, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 4,170 people are employed in the hospitality industry in Nassau County – a full 27 percent of the workforce. As our tourism product improves and our appeal as a destination grows, so does the positive impact on the local job market and economy.

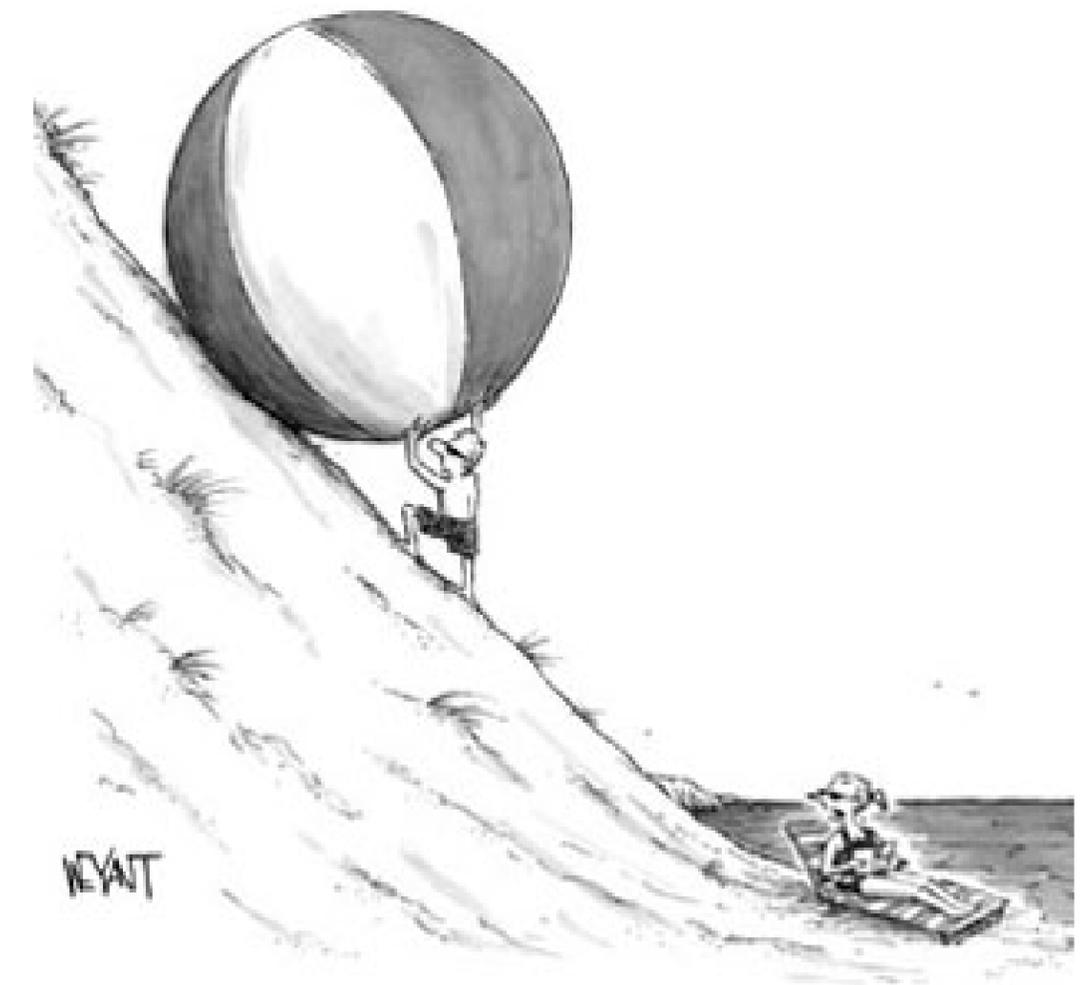
In March 2013, the \$90 million OMNI Amelia Island Plantation re-imagination will be complete, marking the final step in the collective \$225 million investment the Residence Inn, Ritz-Carlton and OMNI have made in Amelia Island’s hospitality industry. With its 155 additional guest rooms (bringing them to 404 oceanfront guest rooms and 320 villas), nearly 80,000 square feet of meeting space, and breathtaking new lobby and pools, the OMNI will greatly expand their capabilities for hosting the next generation of groups and leisure guests. Without a doubt, the landscape of local tourism has literally changed, with the island now offering a product that looks significantly different than it did even a few short years ago.

As 2012 comes to a close, we look to the coming year with great expectations, fully prepared to leverage these major renovations and improvements in our ongoing effort to market this premiere vacation and meeting destination to the world. We will do so utilizing our expanding set of tools tailored for the meetings and leisure markets. These award-winning resources include the official Amelia Island Visitor Guide, which won “Best of Show” in VISIT FLORIDA’s 2012 Flagler Awards, Florida’s annual statewide tourism marketing competition. A fitting cap to a challenging yet successful year, this recognition confirms the value of island-wide research conducted to ensure the Amelia Island brand properly evolves to meet the changing expectations of our visitors. In the coming fiscal year, the TDC will continue to enhance and add new programs and projects to better connect with our growing consumer base.

We are growing and becoming stronger as an industry and a destination thanks to the continuous effort and struggle of the many partners who are so deeply invested in Amelia Island’s future – what Napoleon Hill would no doubt recognize as a recipe for success. As we enter 2013, we do so with renewed energy and excitement for the next great era in Amelia Island’s history.

***"Strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle."***

**Napoleon Hill**



## Background

Created by the Board of County Commissioners in 1988, the (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. Serving as the umbrella organization for the visitor industry, the mission of the Council is to serve the citizens and businesses of Amelia Island/Fernandina Beach by maximizing the economic impact of tourism and enhancing the quality of life. By doing so, the AITDC strives to raise the awareness and importance of tourism to the economic development of Amelia Island. The efforts of the AITDC are crucial to generating more than \$361 million in overnight visitor impact annually and maintaining the industry as Nassau County's largest private sector employer, responsible for 1 in 5 jobs. The tourism industry generates over 36% of the sales tax revenue collected in Nassau County, twice that of the average Florida county.

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 the support necessary for beach renourishment, and ensure a viable hospitality industry. A healthy tourism industry also supports the operation of city, county, and state-owned facilities, such as the Fort Clinch State Park, Amelia Island Museum, beachfront parks, and the Fernandina Beach waterfront.

The Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau (AICVB) was created in October 2008 to serve as the catalyst for tourism development on Amelia Island. A 501(c)6 corporation, the AICVB serves as the management company for the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council, and is responsible for implementing the programs of the AITDC. Among the duties of the Convention & Visitors Bureau is the operation of the official Amelia Island Visitors Center in historic Fernandina Beach, execution of the FY 2013 Marketing Plan, and management of the advertising, interactive, and public relations programs.

By adopting this plan, the Tourist Development Council seeks to:

- Define the goals, objectives, strategies, and programs for the marketing efforts of the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council in calendar year 2013.
- Communicate those matters to firms and individuals who make up the local tourism industry for their information or use in establishing their own marketing programs.
- Communicate those matters to other interested parties, including the Nassau County Commission and the City Commission of Fernandina Beach.
- Serve as the coordinating tool for the staff and marketing agencies of the AICVB, to integrate advertising, promotions, public relations, sales, special events, and interactive services into a comprehensive program of work.
- Provide a foundation upon which the operating budget can be based.

## Strategic Objectives

The vision of the AITDC is to position Amelia Island within the top 10 island destinations in North America. As an organization, we shall be responsible for promoting the island, its diversity of offerings, and natural resources. We are committed to creating a world-class organization through visionary leadership, partnerships, and effective appropriation of resources.

1. Protect and enhance our number one tourist asset – beaches.
2. Enhance the overall image of the island to visitors and residents.
3. Provide a high quality experience for visitors, while protecting the quality of life for residents.
4. Nurture relationships that help with the unified marketing and selling of the destination.
5. Increase revenues from tourism related businesses, maximize ROI, and support the local economy – increasing jobs and the local tax base.
6. Insure a world-class customer service experience for guests.
7. Coordinate Amelia Island's resources for the development, production, marketing, and funding of promotions and special events.
8. Develop special events which reinforce the Amelia Island brand image.
9. Develop new product offerings and support tourism related development.
10. Build respect, credibility, and trust among our peers and in the community.

# Market Analysis

## Target Markets

The primary market for Amelia Island is the six-hour drive market with an emphasis in Jacksonville, Atlanta, and Orlando. The secondary market includes the Northeast and Midwest states with New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Illinois, the Carolinas and specifically, the cities of New York City, Chicago, Charlotte, Washington D.C. and Boston.

According to the FY2012 Visitor Profile, our guests:

- ⊗ Age HH - 50.2
- ⊗ Generally female decision maker
- ⊗ Household income of \$118,469
- ⊗ Average Party Spending is \$1,637
- ⊗ First visit for 47.4% of visitors

## Seasonality

Amelia Island is a potential 12-month market. However, January, September and December have traditionally been the slowest months of the year for overnight travel. Peak season is during the months of March, April, June and July. Shoulder seasons are late winter and early fall. Throughout the year, the slowest days are Sunday through Wednesday.

## History

Amelia Island is the only community in the United States that has lived under the rule of eight different flags. Amelia Island has experienced many historical benchmarks in its colorful 4,000-year-old past, which includes being run by smugglers and pirates, establishing the modern shrimping industry, sending to Washington America's first Jewish U.S. Senator, and being home to Florida's oldest continuously operating bar!



## Supplementary Research

Amelia Island Visitors:

- ⊗ 81.4% of visitors travel to the island for leisure
- ⊗ Average party size is 2.8
- ⊗ Average length of stay is approximately 4.3 days
- ⊗ 72% arrive by car

## Competition

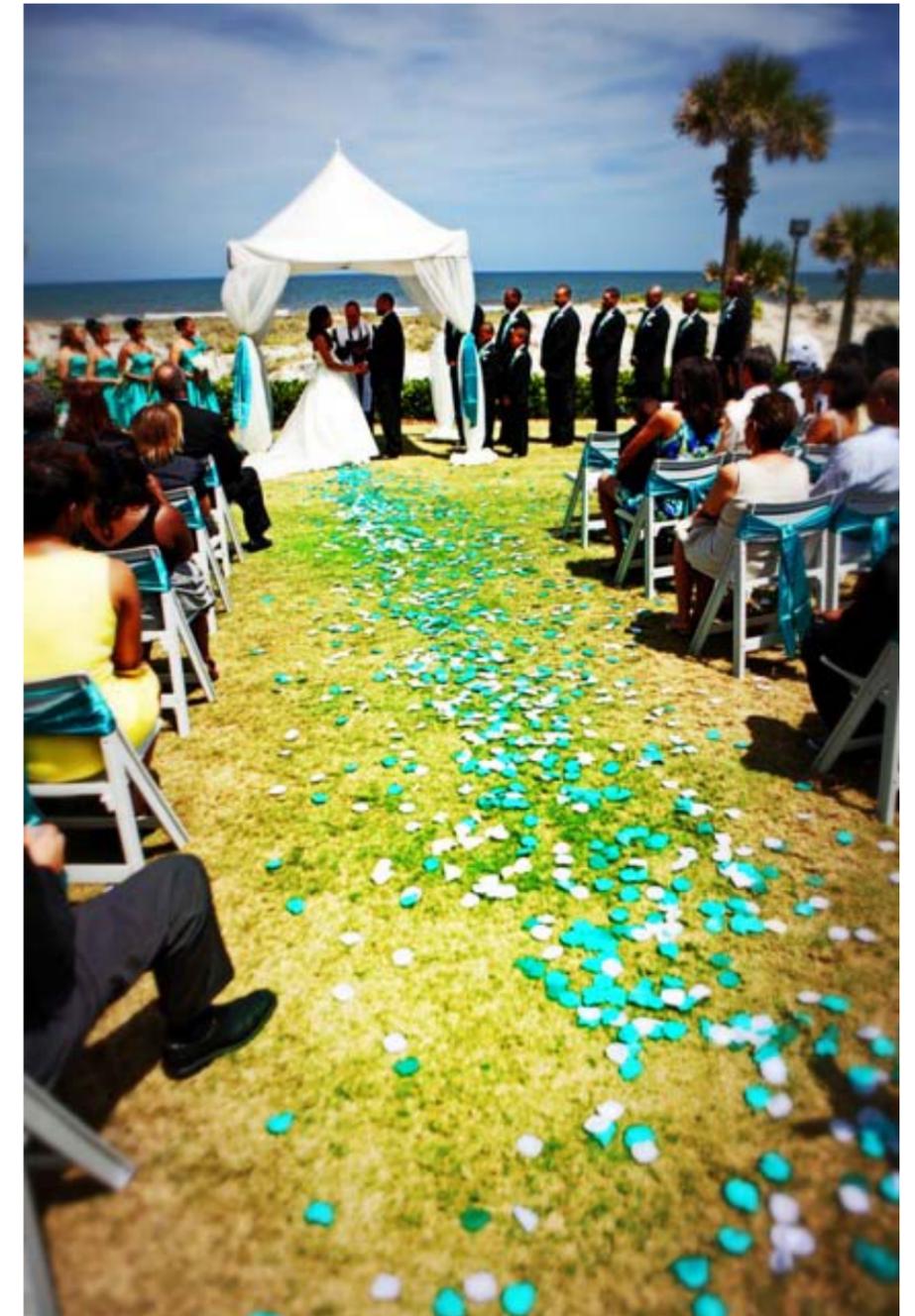
The competitive set consists of other historic destinations in the same six-hour drive market, including Savannah, Charleston, Hilton Head, Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Myrtle Beach, Daytona Beach, and Ft. Walton.

## Niche Markets

These targets include golf, nature-based tourism, and light adventure (fishing, biking, kayaking, surfing). Lifestyles niches such as spa, educational experiences, and gender-based activities (girlfriends, gay/lesbian) will also be considered.

## Social/Leisure Group

Emphasis will be put on targeting leisure group business, social activities such as weddings and reunions, and religious/fraternal organizations.



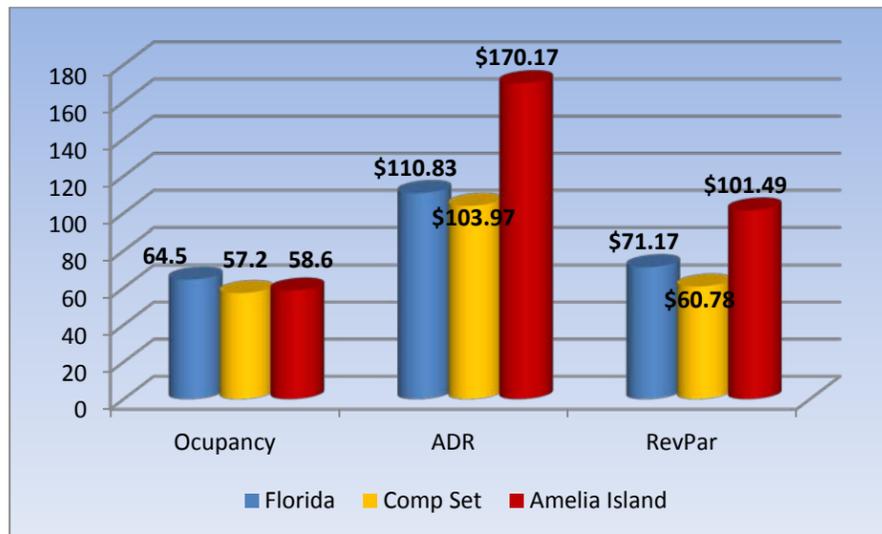
## Metrics

As in years past, Amelia Island continued to outperform our competitive set in FY2012.

For the running 12 months ending September, all lodging related metrics exceeded performance goals. Occupancy on Amelia Island for the period averaged 58.1%, a 5.6% increase over the previous year. This occurred despite The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island having room nights out of service due to completion of major renovations at the property and the extensive construction association with the "reimagination" of the OMNI Amelia Island Plantation.

The chart below outlines the performance of Amelia Island versus the average performance of our competitive set and the State of Florida. For the 12 months ending in September, 2012, occupancy statewide is up 3.3% to 64.5% - slightly above the island's. Our competitive set occupancy sits at 57.2%, up from 58.2% in 2011. Amelia Island's occupancy rate for the same period is 58.6%.

Fiscal Year 2012 Performance



Amelia Island significantly outperforms the State of Florida and our comp set on Average Daily Rate. For FY2012, the average rate on Amelia Island was \$170.17, versus \$110.83 statewide – a difference of 54%. Compared to our competitive set rate of \$103.97, our average daily rate is 64% higher.

REVPAR, or revenue per available room, is a ratio commonly used to measure financial performance in the hospitality industry. The metric, which is a function of both room rates and occupancy, is one of the most important

gauges of health among hotel operators.<sup>1</sup> Because the measure incorporates both room rates and occupancy, it provides a convenient snapshot of how well a company or community is filling its rooms, as well as how much it is able to charge.

Rising RevPAR is an indication that either occupancy is improving, or room rates are rising -- or some combination of both. It is not uncommon to see both figures rise together, though, as higher occupancy is usually concurrent with a stronger pricing environment. In the past two years, the converse is true, with weak occupancy putting downward pressure on room rates.

RevPAR for Amelia Island increased 8.6% for the fiscal year ending in September 2012. Both occupancy and rate increased over the previous year despite construction during the period at our two major resorts.

Strong performance in the peak summer season has led to a positive RevPAR figure through September of \$109.77, an increase of 6.1%. During the same period, the State of Florida saw RevPAR increase 7.7% to \$75.91 as the panhandle recovered from the oil spill of 2010 with a record year. Our competitive set saw an increase of 9% from \$61.75 to \$67.22.

## Sales Tax

According to Fitch Ratings, Nassau County is twice as dependent on tourism as the average county in Florida. Nowhere is this more evident than in the collection of local sales taxes. According to the Florida Department of Revenue, for the fiscal year 2011, tourism related businesses generated over \$254 million in taxable sales or 34% of the County total. This is an increase of 5.4% over the previous year.

For the fiscal year, Amelia Island hosted 459,600 overnight guests, who directly spent \$274,125,500 in the destination. The total economic impact of their spending is estimated at \$360,667,152, an increase of 8.7% over the previous year.

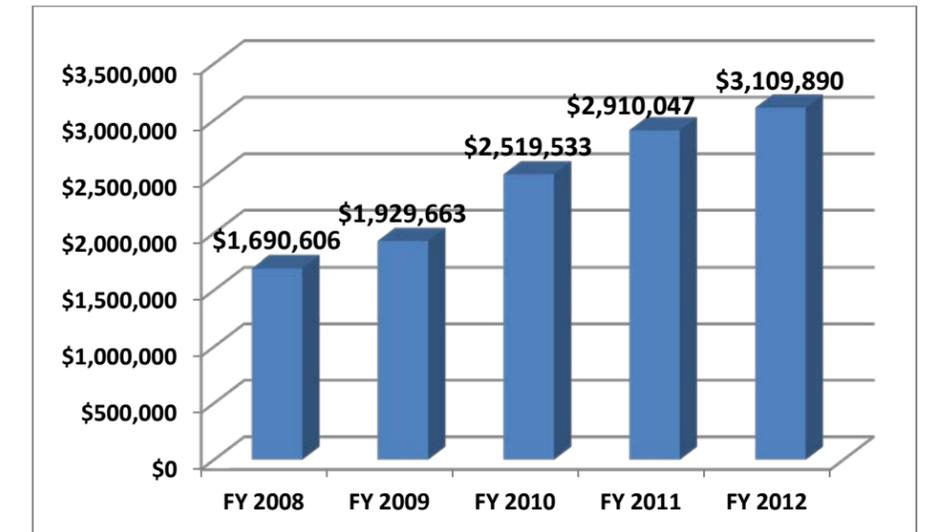
## Employment

According to the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, the hospitality industry provides 1 in 5 jobs in Nassau County. Of the 17,594 positions provided in the workplace, 4,200 of them were in tourism related businesses. Nassau County's hospitality related payroll increased 10% to over \$91 million.

The OMNI Amelia Island Plantation continues to be the largest private sector employer in Nassau County.

<sup>1</sup> StreetAuthority.com

## Bed Tax



The Nassau County Tax Collector's office reports on any given day there are 2,577 transient lodging units (hotel, condo, home, B&B, and units under property management) available on Amelia Island for rent by tourists. That translates into 940,769 available unit nights per year. In FY 2012, 502,222 units were rented at an average revenue per unit of \$155.49. Total revenue was \$78,088,011.66, generating \$5,466,160 in sales tax and \$3,109,890 in bed taxes.



## The Course Ahead

### Key-Selling Point

Amelia Island offers an escape from life where visitors have the ability to disconnect to reconnect; letting life go in order to get it back. Amelia Island is a pristine environment that is untouched, unspoiled, and non-commercialized.

### SWOT Analysis

- **Strengths:** Close proximity to Jacksonville International Airport and excellent access to I-95; strong customer satisfaction; variety of offerings from world-class resorts to quaint B&B's, golf, shopping, restaurants, nature-based activities; pristine beach. Strong meeting brands in the OMNI and Ritz Carlton.
- **Weaknesses:** Limited reach outside drive market; weak occupancy in fall and winter months; strong dependency on meetings market at resorts; limited investment in public tourist-related infrastructure. Inability to drive rate due to market conditions.
- **Opportunities:** Emphasis on authenticity and value; diversified product offerings through event development; leverage major brand's meetings marketing efforts; regional partnerships to expand marketing reach.
- **Threats:** Trend toward teleconferencing and other technology threats to meetings travel; inability to raise rate; lack of investment in public infrastructure to serve tourists; strong competitive set.

*“Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing.”*

Abraham Lincoln

### The Economy

The U.S. economy continues to dig out of the Great Recession with moderate success and mixed indicators reflect an uncertain outlook. Consumer confidence remains low, the unemployment rate continues to be high, the U.S. housing market remains weak and the price of oil continues to rise.

### Consumer Confidence

The Consumer Confidence Index has reversed its 2011 decline. As of November, 2012, the index stands at 73.7 up to its highest level in four and a half years. Only 14.4% of Americans think business conditions are good, while 31.5% think conditions are bad. However 22.2% of Americans think that conditions will get better over the next six months.

### Unemployment

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate in October 2012 was 7.8%, down from a high of 10.7% in 2009. The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta projects the unemployment rate to continue to show slight improvement. Even so, unemployment is projected to remain over 7% in 2013 due to increased worker productivity and continuing uncertainty in private sector expansion due to government inaction in dealing with fiscal and regulatory issues.

### Travel Indicators

The improving worldwide economy should support growth in the Florida travel and hospitality industry in 2013. The U.S. Travel Association forecasts domestic person trips to increase 1.1% in 2013. Business travel in the United States in 2013 is projected to grow to 464.5 million person-trips, about 4.3 million more than the 2012 level and 3.4 million more than 2008's 461.1 million.

### Competition

Travelers and meeting planners have many options when choosing a destination, and the competition for attention and travel spending is fierce. Each year, billions of dollars are spent on destination marketing. Nearly every dollar spent by competing destinations is targeted to a traveler who might otherwise consider Florida and Amelia Island for their next vacation or meeting.

### The Digital Challenge

The explosive advancement and utilization of new technologies continues to fundamentally change communications for both consumers and marketers. Successful marketing efforts will require the integration of evolving digital marketing technologies and practices into traditional marketing efforts. In this merger, digital marketing will take the lead.

In order to break through the digital clutter, marketers must use a new prism to view their role in destination marketing. Content is still king, but the destination marketers' challenge has moved beyond merely providing a destination website with good content. Marketers must now also provide that content wherever the consumer is engaged. That content must also be highly relevant, timely, authentic and personalized. In order to inspire and inform decisions at every level of the consumer travel planning process.

### Trends

- **The Beach Rules** - Globally, beach vacations are king. Twice as many respondents cited beach vacations as their preference, versus "romantic holidays with spouse." Also, Americans are creatures of habit: one of the least important criteria for Americans when selecting a beach location is the desire to find a new location. **Expedia.com**
- **Connection Matters** - Smart phones represent more than 50 percent of new mobile devices being purchased. And, the growth of connected devices will only continue to soar throughout 2013. Ericsson estimates there will be over 50 billion connected devices in circulation by 2020, including laptops, tablets and smart phones. In North America, 2013 will mark the first year that online access is greater from mobile devices than desktop or laptop. **Hospitality.net**
- **The Mobile Fingerprint:** Our smart phones are evolving to become wallets, keys, health consultants and more. Soon they'll become de facto fingerprints, our identity all in one place. **Fast Company**
- **Travel Is An Emotional Experience** - Despite the recent years of a challenging economic climate, we're seeing the revival of the most powerful motivation for traveling — the emotional connection between vacations and quality of life. Leisure travelers are doing less of the things that characterized the economic hardship of recent years and are now adopting more behaviors that confirm the importance of travel in their emerging lifestyles. **MMGY Global/Harrison Group 2012 Portrait of American Traveler.**

# ADVERTISING & MARKETING

## GOAL

Build name and brand awareness, drive inquiry and ultimately visitation resulting in increased occupancy, room rates and overall revenues.

## *Leisure*

### STRATEGIES:

- ⊕ Use media that reaches the primary geographic and demographic targets. When possible, use media that reaches both local residents and overnight visitors within the six-hour drive radius. Priority markets include Jacksonville, Tampa, and Atlanta followed by Orlando.
- ⊕ Effectively communicate Amelia Island beach offerings in the context of personal experience – such as romance, family, etc.
- ⊕ Use integrated media to drive inquiry to the website.
- ⊕ Correspondence requesting information from operators or the website should receive a Visitor’s Guide, which would accurately represent and reinforce the Amelia Island brand.
- ⊕ Develop collateral materials for inquiry fulfillment that maintain the brand and ideally provide a venue for the hoteliers, attractions and restaurants to convey the unique experience and value they offer.
- ⊕ Focus on April, May and June summer business followed by the fall season.
- ⊕ Develop cooperative media purchases and other partnerships that expand the budget.
- ⊕ Consider using a HIT (High Impact Targeting) campaign that reaches the most probable prospects with enough frequency to render maximum results.
- ⊕ Look at the website promotional budget and advertising campaign as one coordinated program designed to promote the continuity of the brand and generating inquiry and visitation.

- ⊕ Use media that facilitates capturing a database for future prospecting.
- ⊕ Develop new campaigns that promote hotel packages.
- ⊕ Collect data and develop follow-up campaigns for potential visitors who have requested Visitor Guides or information from the website.
- ⊕ Promote offers that drive inquiry, such as the “Value Card Campaign” “Amelia Island BOGO” and/or “A Free Night, Any Night,” which would have appeal as it could apply to a third night free, fourth night free, and other combinations.
- ⊕ Hold a roundtable/ad fair meeting to discuss the 2013 co-op opportunities. Consider offering advertising promotional programs at no charge to the hoteliers and attractions.
- ⊕ In addition to hoteliers, other partnerships might include CVBs such as Jacksonville, Saint Augustine, Savannah, as well as, the Jacksonville International Airport.

### TACTICS:

#### **Media**

- ⊕ Broadcast/Cable TV: Use 30-second television commercials in the three geographic target areas. Use a combination of cable and television to reach upscale programming to a more affluent target. Alternate the TV schedule with radio to extend the campaign for the summer.
- ⊕ Radio: Use radio in the top geographic target markets. Front load the broadcast in the second quarter. The front-loading will accelerate inquiry, and word-of-mouth advertising.
- ⊕ Consumer Print: Take advantage of VISIT FLORIDA marketing and where possible, Jacksonville CVB marketing that will subsidize Amelia Island advertising. If the hotel and attraction co-op partners are receptive, run larger format and full-color ads. Without co-op participation, consider running one-half page and sometimes 1/3-page full color ads in pre-qualified Florida inserts.

- ⊕ Consumer Magazine: Use half or third-page full color ads when possible to reach individuals with higher household income in city magazines as well as regional magazines.
- ⊕ Niche Publications: Use half-page or third-page full-color ads in niche publications such as golf, spa, nature, seniors and others.
- ⊕ Direct Mail: Work with partners such as American Express, airlines servicing Jacksonville and other upscale partners to reduce the cost of direct mail. Direct mail will be aimed at highly targeted upscale prospects in the major feeder markets as well as niche markets.
- ⊕ Digital Marketing: Coordinate website promotion/advertising team to ensure consistency of the brand. Reaching them online as they check weather or dining opportunities can generate an immediate overnight stay, or an extended stay for the next business trip. Research has indicated that up to two-thirds of visitors coming to the attractions want a two-destination vacation.
- ⊕ Online: Highly targeted websites in feeder markets are an excellent device to drive business directly to the Amelia Island website homepage or niche pages. Examples include news sites such as ajc.com and geo-targeted ads on social sites and search engines. Oversized ads might run in weather and getaways sections, or specific niche areas such as golf and fishing.
  - E-Blast: Target prospects in feeder markets using a combination of paid and value-added databases. E-blasts can be used as follow up to CVB’s inquiry database. Targets for the e-blast include high-income prospects, golf, eco, and other niche markets.
  - Click through: Research the effectiveness of destination marketing in traditional hotel-booking engine sites. Also, look into other sites that may be used in gathering destination data such as Google. A test campaign will verify effectiveness of the media.
  - Utilize online video to tell the Amelia Island story.

## Production

- Website: Redesign the entire website with responsive design and expanded video content insuring it reflect the continuity of the Amelia Island brand.
- Visitor Guide: Extend the brand by producing a comprehensive Visitor Guide. Correspondence requesting information from operators or the website should receive a Visitor's Guide. Other uses include trade shows, inserts and fulfillment. The mail house will facilitate the distribution.
- Rack Brochure: Brochure should promote the brand while providing a directional map. This brochure could be used at trade shows, for additional fulfillment, and distributed at visitor centers throughout the four-hour drive radius.
- Insert: The insert should promote the brand and destination and may or may not include partners. Size is yet to be determined and based on price and involvement. The insert would be used in drive market publications such as newspapers or city magazines.
- Photography: New photo shoot would provide photos that could be used for all marketing, including advertisements, collateral materials and the website.
- Print Advertising: Develop multiple ads to be used in various leisure magazines via the Visit Florida cooperative programs. Niche ads for eco/fishing and historic/culture might also be developed.
- Co-Op: Develop an ad template to be used with partners that communicates the Amelia Island brand as well as the partner offer.
- Radio: Develop new 60-second commercials for each target market, perhaps with interchangeable donut/tag for co-op opportunities.
- Online: While maintaining the continuity of the brand develop new approaches which could include companion ads, online advertising on websites, e-blasts and the possibility of niche ads.
- TV: Develop new 30-second television spots targeting the leisure market.

## Consumer Print Media

- AAA Going Places
- Atlanta Magazine
- Coastal Living
- Collinson/Visit Florida In-State & Out-of-State Inserts
- Condé Nast Traveler
- Southern Living
- Atlanta Journal Constitution
- New York Times

*America loves Amelia:  
once again voted a Top 10  
Island in the U.S.*

It doesn't get any better than Amelia Island – once again voted a Top 10 Island in the U.S. by the *Condé Nast Traveler* Readers' Choice Awards. From historic treasures to breathtaking natural beauty, here you'll feel worlds away, and closer than ever to what matters most.

**Congratulations 2012 Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards:**

- Elizabeth Pointe Lodge - #3 In Top Florida Resorts
- Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island - #10 In Top Florida Resorts

**AMELIA ISLAND**  
FLORIDA  
*Come Make Memories™*  
www.AmeliaIsland.com

## Consumer Online Media

- AJC.com
- Coastal Living.com
- Condé Nast Travelscapes.com
- Southern Living.com
- Southern Living Hidden Treasures Digital Magazine
- Targeted upscale networks

## Niche – Bridal Media

- Atlanta Weddings
- Charlotte Weddings
- Jacksonville Magazine's Bride
- Orlando Weddings
- Visit Florida Bridal Guide

## Niche – Golf Media

- First Coast of Golf Co-Op
  - Sports Illustrated
  - Golf Georgia
  - Georgia Magazine
  - Golf Visit Florida.com

## Niche – Gay/Lesbian

- Visit Florida LGBT Co-op

# INTERACTIVE

## GOALS:

- Drive qualified visitor traffic to the Amelia Island websites
- Increase digital footprint of Amelia Island
- Expand content on Amelia Island websites
- Increase E-Newsletter subscriptions
- Increase use of Island promotions & sweepstakes
- Increase word-of-mouth through viral marketing
- Redesign website to reflect current technology

## STRATEGIES:

- Monthly Search Engine Optimization
- Email Marketing (monthly E-Newsletters)
- Website Maintenance (weekly updates to the website)
- Website Analysis
- Online Banner Advertising
- Mobile Applications
- Social Media Marketing
- Promotional Landing Pages

## Promotion Tools & Tactics:

- **MONTHLY SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION:** Appearing naturally, as opposed to buying your way in with pay-per-click advertising, on the major search engines like Google, Yahoo! and Bing is one of the most challenging internet marketing efforts.

### Importance of Organic Search

In order to extend their results, search engines access both human-edited directories and automatically-indexed searches and display their results under different headings. Even though many search engines use similar sources of technology, each has their own closely guarded proprietary formula which influences how their results are ranked.

- **EMAIL MARKETING:** Continue deploying monthly E-Newsletters featuring timely offers and news. Reports are presented monthly showing how many people signed up for the newsletter each month, the open rate, most popular links within the email, and many other details surrounding each email sent.

- **WEBSITE ANALYSIS:** Reports are generated on where consumers are going from page to page on the Amelia Island website. These reports provide us with information to better assess what needs to be done on the website. The goal is for consumers to get to our stakeholders' sites as quickly as possible, and to provide a website that is as user friendly as possible.
- **ONLINE BANNER ADVERTISING:** AITDC will participate in Visit Florida co-ops and other online advertising campaigns, increasing visibility and awareness on top travel sites, keeping Amelia Island top-of-mind during the travel shopping process.

### Travora Campaign

AITDC will partner with Travel Ad Network on an interactive geo-targeted ad campaign in the spring of 2013. Travora places banner ads on 300 exclusive travel sites in top markets, producing strong results for destination marketing.

### Southern Living Campaign

To supplement the print Southern Living campaign, AITDC will partner with Southern Living on online marketing in the Spring/Summer of 2013. Banner ads will be placed on SouthernLiving.com, linking back to the Amelia Island website.

AITDC will also participate in a Visit Florida co-op with Southern Living where Amelia Island will be featured in their **Florida's Hidden Treasures: Small Communities & Attractions** interactive digital magazine in the Winter 2012-2013. Campaign to include promotional channels to generate engaged readers.

### LGBT Campaign

AITDC will partner with Visit Florida in an online co-op for Spring 2013 that will deliver over 600,000 rich media impressions geo-targeted to key markets in Florida and Atlanta with expanding banner ads linking to custom landing pages, then to Ameliainland.com.

### CEO Campaign

AITDC will partner with Visit Florida in an online co-op for Spring 2013 that will deliver over 1.5 million rich media impressions geo-targeted to key markets in Atlanta and Florida. Banner ads will feature destination with expanding in-banner video placed on TripAdvisor.com and other sites.

### Vacation Home Rental Campaign

AITDC will place banner ads on leading vacation home rental sites in Spring/Summer 2013, promoting the short term rental opportunities on Amelia Island.

- **MOBILE APPLICATIONS:** AITDC will maintain mobile applications for biking trails as well as the historic district walking tour and create others as identified throughout the year.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING:** With social networking remaining a critical component of online marketing, our continued presence on the top social sites is crucial. By continuing to grow our presence and streamlining our branding and look on these sites and networks, we effectively promote the destination of Amelia Island within the social media market.

Continue to enhance social networking for major special events including Great Southern Tailgate Cook-off and Restaurant Week as well as for sites such as AmeliaNature.com.

Facebook sweepstakes where guests can enter to win a vacation on Amelia Island. This campaign will allow AITDC to increase Facebook page likes and interactions.

Expand mobile site, providing visitors with information while in market. Visitors can sign up to receive updates on their mobile device, allowing us to grow our SMS database and continue to reach these guests via mobile and text campaigns.

Travel websites and blogs such as TripAdvisor.com, remain an important source for travelers before booking their trips. AITDC will monitor and post responses on these sites, becoming a resource providing Amelia Island information. AITDC will participate in the TripAdvisor Tourism Sponsorship for 2013 allowing for customized content for the destination.

AITDC will continue to work with stakeholders to increase their individual presence on social sites, providing support and information on how their businesses can benefit from such involvement.

These strategies will continue to expand and evolve with the introduction of new interactive sites and programs that will benefit Amelia Island.

- **Promotional Landing Pages:** We will continue to create promotional landing pages throughout the year for promotions such as the Gator Bowl and Florida vs. Georgia sweepstakes, Free Night Any Night, and those surrounding local special events. Banner ads on our website will be created for special events and TDC promotional programs.

## LEISURE TRAVEL

### GOAL :

The ultimate goal of the leisure sales effort this year is to utilize destination marketing strategies to impact more than 1.5 million consumers and travel trade representatives. Amelia Island will be presented as one of Florida's top island destinations, as ranked by Condé Nast *Traveler*, offering a variety of experiences to a broad range of leisure travelers.

### STRATEGIES :

- ⊗ Impact potential travelers in proven primary markets by our participation and visibility at VISIT FLORIDA Welcome Centers, Jacksonville International Airport, and at the Welcome Center in downtown Fernandina Beach.
- ⊗ Interact with retail travel agents, wholesalers and tour operators, consortiums, and Internet companies employing those working in the leisure market to increase their awareness of Amelia Island.



- ⊗ Develop six exclusive trade/sales blitzes and missions which allow us to invite select retailers and wholesalers to functions that promote Amelia Island through imaginative presentations.
- ⊗ Schedule two AAA sales missions in Georgia and Florida to call on AAA clubs and update them on seasonal offerings.
- ⊗ Utilize funds from "Other Travel" to cover fast-breaking opportunities such as new airline service into JIA, newly researched shows or events, and trade conferences.
- ⊗ Communicate periodically to our partners through electronic mailings with industry updates, special programs and co-operatives such as "Hot Rates" and "Third Night Free."
- ⊗ Continue strong alliances and partnerships with established tour operators, wholesalers, and Internet providers who sell our area. Continue to solicit imaginative co-op programs which are implemented through our advertising department.
- ⊗ Continue to monitor the ever-changing tourism industry through educational conferences, seminars, trade publications, meetings and interaction with key industry staff, including VISIT FLORIDA, VisitJacksonville, and First Coast of Golf.
- ⊗ Work with the marketing staff from JIA to assist in the promotion of air service to increase passenger counts and higher visitation to our area.

### International

Two international trade events will be attended. We also will conduct one international trade mission.

### STRATEGIES :

- ⊗ Attend the Travel Industry Association of America's International Pow-Wow in Las Vegas.
- ⊗ Actively participate in the Receptive Services Association of America by attending the annual convention and being active in the organization.
- ⊗ Working with the Jacksonville International Airport and VisitJacksonville, develop an international trade mission to Canada. Liaison with VISIT FLORIDA's international office and provide assistance for site visits, educational trips, industry updates, etc.



***"And will you succeed? Yes indeed, yes indeed! Ninety-eight and three-quarters percent guaranteed!"***

**Dr. Seuss**

# PUBLIC RELATIONS

## GOAL

Promote Amelia Island, its partners, events, and experiences as a relaxing and rewarding vacation retreat in Florida, attracting meeting guests and vacationers from around the world through frequent and varied positive print, online, and broadcast media coverage.

## STRATEGIES :

- ☛ Proactively pitch national media outlets and generate travel coverage of the destination
- ☛ Capitalize on established relationships with key media contacts to secure additional national print and broadcast coverage for the destination
- ☛ Identify opportunities to further expand the destination's presence through evolving social media tactics
- ☛ Execute creative ideas with broad media appeal to generate significant positive exposure
- ☛ Provide targeted pitches, based on research of each specific market, to media contacts in expanding drive markets, as well as certain air travel markets
- ☛ Invite writers and visitors to re-discover the destination and experience recently renovated accommodations and new attractions
- ☛ Leverage the destination's upscale venues, breathtaking scenery and ideal location to promote Amelia Island as an ideal option for destination weddings
- ☛ Position the destination as the premier vacation destination of choice over any other warm-weather location option for leisure guests utilizing the destination's brand "Come Make Memories"
- ☛ Identify and develop fresh story ideas to feed the ongoing editorial feature pipeline
- ☛ Direct individual media familiarization programs with well-respected, qualified travel journalists
- ☛ Connect like promotional partners with the destination for national and regional exposure through contests, sweepstakes, special events, and similar programs, with specific focus on big-box retail outlets

- ☛ Expand participation in existing on-island events through increased media coverage, with additional support for CVB-led events
- ☛ Maintain on-going and frequent interaction with past visitors, and create interaction with potential visitors, through the monthly e-newsletter
- ☛ Educate local industry to stimulate participation in and support of specific initiatives

## TACTICS:

- ☛ Present individual fam trips, promotions and pitches for specific target markets using VISIT FLORIDA research to determine approach for each market
- ☛ Create social media connection cards to be distributed to visitors. Available at the visitor center and participating island accommodations, the social media cards would include social media links for AICVB, hash tags and QR code, and offer contests for hash tag users.
- ☛ Incorporate keywords into press releases, e-newsletter copy and online copy in order to improve search engine performance and rankings
- ☛ Create and maintain a travel media blog to more broadly distribute press materials
- ☛ Initiate partnership with a new retailer, allowing the CVB to promote the destination to their consumers
- ☛ Create a social media contest focused around "Talk Like a Pirate Day"
- ☛ Work with CVB to offer "photo spots" as points of interest on the biking trail app
- ☛ Utilize local industry partnerships to launch a new "Memory Makers" program, randomly enhancing visitors vacations throughout the year
- ☛ Write and distribute press releases to national, regional and niche media outlets, which includes a quarterly round up announcing special events that currently draw/or have the potential to draw overnight guests; optimize eight press releases per year for SEO
- ☛ Host a minimum of 12 qualified writers through individual visits

- ☛ Conduct desk-side Media Missions in key markets, including New York, Florida, Atlanta and Texas, initiating one-on-one appointments with consumer and trade media outlets
- ☛ Participate in VISIT FLORIDA's Annual Toronto Media Event
- ☛ Represent Amelia Island at TBEX, an international travel blogger conference
- ☛ Utilize contacts at bridal publications to secure promotion and/or photo shoot for Amelia Island
- ☛ Work with VISIT FLORIDA to incorporate Amelia Island into the Viva Florida campaign
- ☛ Create and promote a giveaway focused on meeting planners
- ☛ Secure one national, seven regional and five in-state promotions, which will provide non-traditional exposure requiring no cash investment
- ☛ Confirm interviews for CVB staff, as appropriate, with trade editors at tradeshow
- ☛ Respond to crisis situations as necessary to ensure release of accurate information and minimize and negative impact on visitation
- ☛ Prepare copy for monthly e-newsletters for leisure guests
- ☛ Maintain current and useful information for media on the press section of the Amelia site
- ☛ Compile a comprehensive list of editorial opportunities, targeting a variety of media outlets, including – but not limited to – meeting trades; daily newspapers; regional, women's consumer, family, men's consumer and travel specific magazines; in-flight publications; syndicated articles; broadcast media; and specialty niche publications such as fishing, culinary, epicurean, outdoor, golf and spa
- ☛ Monitor and respond to appropriate media leads from VISIT FLORIDA, SATW E-news, Media Kitty, and HARO
- ☛ Respond to all media inquiries within 24 hours, and supply requested materials to journalists within 48 hours

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### GOAL:

Assist with current special event development and growth, and seek one or two major new events in order to create and increase overnight visitation for Amelia Island.

### STRATEGIES:

- Continue to support the Gator Bowl Association. Create a landing page for Gator Bowl packages and Hotel Availability where visitors and press can go directly to the Gator Bowl information on our website.
- Support Concours d'Elegance by hosting a "Taste of Amelia" luncheon and sponsoring the Judge's Breakfast.
- Support the 50th Annual Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival.
- Continue to support the Amelia Island Blues Festival.
- Support the Amelia Island Jazz Festival in its efforts to bring internationally known headliners in to perform at the event.
- Continue to promote Amelia Island Restaurant Week during the last week of January 2013.

## AMELIA ISLAND Restaurant Week

- Communicate the AITDC services available to community groups, non-profit organizations and production companies considering special events on Amelia Island.

- Educate event organizers with complimentary marketing services available to promote local events, i.e. Ameliainland.com listings, city event listing and area newspaper calendar.
- Outline and pursue potential funding sources to assist with the development and expansion of events through product development grants, cooperative advertising opportunities, stakeholder concession agreements and co-sponsorship opportunities with area businesses.
- Educate event organizers on how to gather event attendance, budget and lesson learned information for future grant and sponsorship possibilities with the TDC and area businesses.
- Work to educate hotels and other lodging establishments on the importance of tracking the impact of special events on their businesses.
- Work with the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners and the Fernandina Beach City Commission to adopt ordinances and regulations friendly to the conduct of special events on the island.

Provide tourist development co-op advertising programs to enhance Amelia Island as a visitor destination by contributing to the tourist development of the county and to support programs and events which can serve jointly to attract tourists to Amelia Island and provide a benefit to residents as well. The objective is to create a portfolio of activities that:

- Attract Visitors During Periods With Moderate to High Growth Capacity. Priority consideration will be given to proposals which will attract visitors, especially at times when tourism is relatively slow. Smaller events which do not attract visitors on their own may be clustered to maximize the tourist draw.
- Reinforce Existing Positive Images. Events which set Amelia Island apart from other destinations by focusing attention on the area's unique tourist offerings.
- Encourage Increased Visitor Spending. The TDC wishes to avoid supporting programs, which compete with private sector businesses. Events should stimulate additional economic activity rather than displace normal expenditure patterns.
- Provide Added Value To An Amelia Island Visit. Value can be defined in two ways. First events may provide "emotional value" by exceeding the anticipated satisfaction level of visitors (...that was a pleasant surprise). Events can also provide "financial value" by providing no-cost or low-cost activities of interest to visitors during otherwise slow times.



# TRAVEL TRADE

## **GOAL:**

Support the efforts of hotels and facilities targeting meetings and groups as a significant market segment.

## **Background**

The group meetings market represents a significant business for many of the hospitality industry stakeholders on Amelia Island. Both major resort properties maintain large meetings and convention sales staffs, while all but one hotel on the island has a dedicated sales person.

The AITDC has focused its efforts primarily as a support organization to these stakeholders, and as a leads generation organization for small groups, primarily SMERF, and specialty groups such as weddings.

In FY2013, the AITDC plans to be more aggressive in its solicitation of meetings and conventions through extensive partnerships with stakeholder properties. Sponsorship of familiarization tours in for both meetings and wedding planners will be a key component, as well as enhancements to RFP responses by properties. These enhancements could include function sponsorship, transportation subsidies, and booking rebates.

## **STRATEGIES:**

- ⊕ Identify, qualify, and pursue qualified leads from industry trade show attendees, sales missions, blitzes, telemarketing, and direct mail campaigns.
- ⊕ Attend six conferences/trade shows, two sales missions, two CVB team sales blitzes, 12 client events, and one VISIT FLORIDA sales opportunity.
  - Reunion Network Annual Marketplace
  - Georgia Society of Association Executive's Annual Meeting
  - Destination Showcase in Washington and Chicago, offering a co-op participation opportunity to local stakeholders.
  - Florida Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting
  - American Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting
  - Attend Florida Encounter
- ⊕ Participate in the Jacksonville Meeting Professionals International focusing on the local corporate market.

- ⊕ In conjunction with local industry stakeholders conduct a client function in Washington, DC targeting association meeting planners.
- ⊕ In conjunction with local industry stakeholders conduct a client function in Tallahassee targeting association meeting planners.
- ⊕ Conduct one sales mission to Atlanta area focusing on the corporate market.
- ⊕ Support the Southeastern Chapter of MPI Educational Conference at OMNI Amelia Island Plantation.
- ⊕ Research and identify current clients in the corporate market that have the potential of booking incentive travel in addition to their current corporate meetings.
- ⊕ Increase staff involvement in industry associations on state, regional and national levels in order to expand our individual relationships and client contacts.
- ⊕ Continue the Flights for Sites program with the goal of hosting 50 meeting planner site visits in 2013.



## **Group Media Program**

Continue our media campaign targeting meetings, conventions, and weddings. Components of that program could include:

### Group / Meeting Media Review - Offline / Print

#### ⊕ **Convention South**

Circulation: 18,000 Frequency: Monthly

Description: Convention South provides readers with investigative reports, diverse viewpoints from industry leaders, insightful columns and how-to stories. Each month, Insider's Guides to Southern destinations and special features give readers the latest information on trends, new technology and other up-to-the-minute news.

#### ⊕ **Florida Society of Association Executives (FSAE)**

Circulation: 1,100

Frequency: 10x/year (There are two combined issues, January/February and November/December. It is published monthly the rest of the year).

Description: With more than 800 executive and associate members in the State of Florida, including those who manage trade and professional associations, individual membership societies, charitable organizations and other not-for-profit organizations, FSAE is the recognized public spokesperson and leading resource for information on associations. It provides members with the resources they need to enhance their performance and ensure continued growth and success.

#### ⊕ **Meetings & Conventions**

Circulation: 65,000 Frequency: Monthly

Description: Meetings & Conventions is a national magazine edited for corporate meeting managers, professional associations, incentive houses, travel agencies and independent meeting planning companies. It addresses "how to" needs in articles by specialists; it reports on and analyzes new developments that have an important impact on the meetings field; it profiles individuals who work in the industry and it provides coverage of new services, facilities and products. M&C has 100% penetration of Fortune 500 companies.

⊕ **Meetings South**

Circulation: 25,038 Frequency: Monthly

Description: Meetings South delivers news features and destination information on the Southern United States, the Caribbean and Mexico meetings market to a national audience of qualified professionals who plan meetings in these areas. Meetings South informs readers about hotel and conference facilities, interesting event venues, renovation updates and topical articles of general interest.

⊕ **Rejuvenate**

Circulation: 5,000 Frequency: Bi-Monthly

Description: Rejuvenate provides information and insight to better perform meeting planning responsibilities, whether it's planning a major convention, an exposition or a retreat. It offers in-depth, targeted editorial content for planners of faith based events.

⊕ **Small Market Meetings**

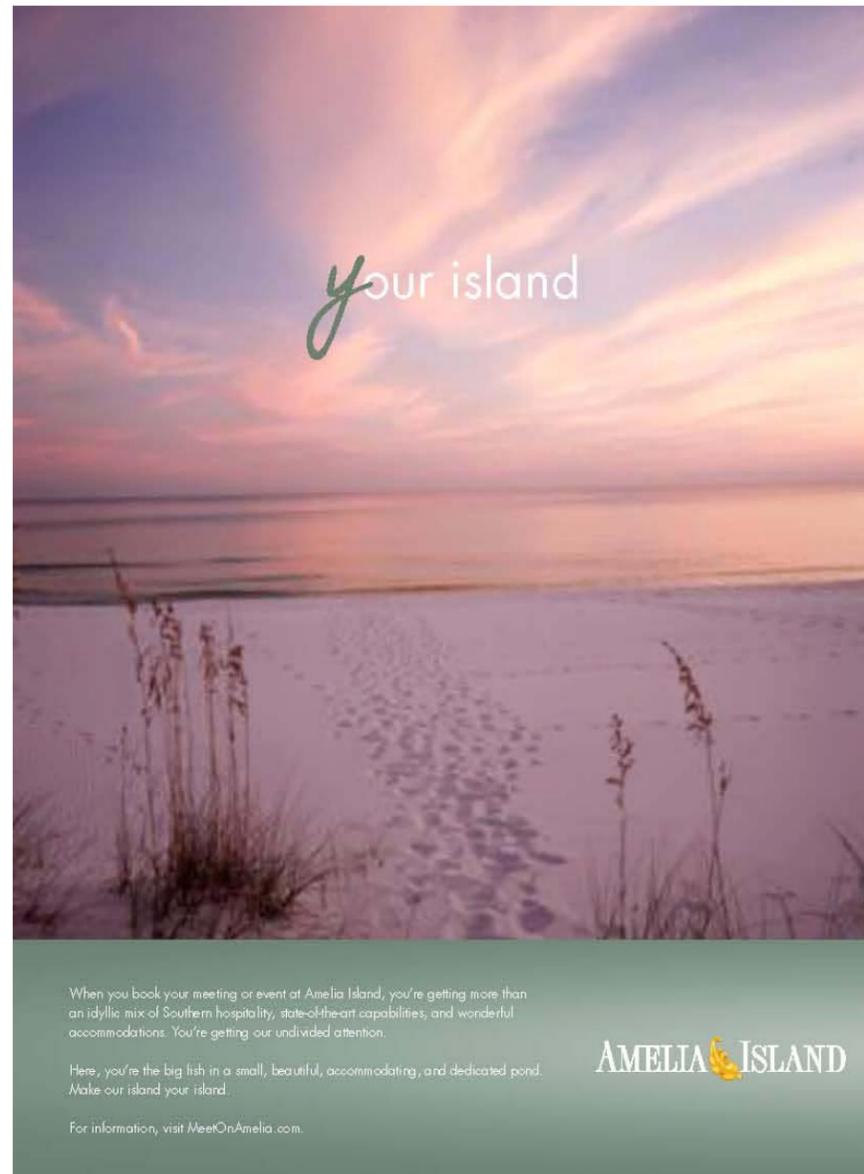
Circulation: 10,000 Frequency: Monthly

Description: Small Market Meetings is published for meeting planners whose planning includes, but not limited to, meetings for smaller groups and meetings in second & third tier destinations. Each issue features articles about trends in the meeting industry, in-depth features on destinations and individual meeting facilities. The newspaper carries news, features on meeting planners, regional coverage of destinations, profiles on specific meeting facilities and coverage of industry events.

⊕ **Successful Meetings**

Circulation: 72,050 Frequency: Monthly

Description: Successful Meetings editorial covers news of interest to the meetings industry with specific tips, techniques and ideas for better meetings. Domestic and foreign sites and destinations are regularly featured. Content also includes information about hotels, resorts, conference centers, convention centers and other meeting facilities. It contains feature articles, columns, special reports, interviews and surveys. Successful Meetings is edited for corporate and association executives who are responsible for planning and managing off-premise meetings, training programs, conferences, conventions, trade shows and incentive travel programs.



## Group / Meeting Media Review - Online

⊕ **StarCite.com/ Mpoint.com**

Description: StarCite is the world's leading provider of online technology that helps companies strategically manage their meetings and events. StarCite's e-products and services to the global meetings and events industry drive efficiencies and cost savings to both corporate buyers and suppliers. Mpoint.com provides corporate buyers and independent meeting planners with online sourcing through an eRF tool to drive requests for proposals for larger meetings and a small meeting solution (SMS).

⊕ **MeetingsFocus.com**

Description: MeetingsFocus.com is the online home of Meetings Media publications which includes Meetings West, Meetings East, Meetings South and Meetings MidAmerica. The site offers a regional focus covering news and information as well as meeting sites and destinations across four major regions of the U.S. In addition, the website provides a searchable database of over 10,000 hotels, resorts, conference centers and unique venues. Hotels may purchase a preferred placement listing with photos to compete more effectively.

⊕ **i-Meet.com**

Description: i-Meet, the professional and social network for meeting and event planners, is focused on building the industry's most relevant worldwide community for the meetings and events industry. With nearly 10,000 members from over 77 countries around the world to date, i-Meet brings social networking, web 2.0 tools, work flow opportunities, relationship opportunities and industry intelligence to its members and suppliers.

⊕ **E-Pro Direct Email Marketing**

Circulation: 27,500

Description: E-Pro Direct maintains a database of 87,000 corporate, association and SMERF meeting planners who have opted in to receive supplier offers, which may be segmented by geographic location and type of planner. E-Pro offers custom HTML or formatted e-brochure broadcasts. All email campaigns include follow-up tracking reports. Recommendation: This is one of the top performing email lists, offering the highest open rates of all group email marketing options. Utilizing this list to reach meeting planners on a regional level targeting key feeder markets to support group promotion or seasonal offers. Feeder markets to be targeted include: FL, GA, TX, D.C., NJ, NY, PA, IL and OH.

⊕ **Meeting Mailer**

Circulation: 56,000

Description: Meeting Mailer maintains and transmits a powerful database of 100% opt-in corporate, association, independent meeting planners and incentive travel buyers, while reaching more than 56,300 members throughout the U.S. & Canada. The database includes meeting planners from all major industry associations as well as those that opt-in directly at meetingmailer.com, including planners from Maritz, Carlson, HelmsBriscoe, and Conference Direct.

## Budget Recap

Description	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Budget
Net Tourist Dev. Funds	\$2,993,496	\$3,065,200
TDC Admin. 15%	\$449,024	\$459,780
Marketing - 65%	\$1,862,705	\$1,992,380
Travel Trade - 10%	\$199,944	\$306,520
Beach Improv-10%	\$135,867	\$306,520

## Marketing Breakdown

TDC Marketing - 65%		
ADV Placement	\$950,000	47.7%
Special Events	\$250,000	12.5%
Interactive	\$200,000	10.0%
Ad Productions	\$175,000	8.8%
E-Newsletter/Fulfillment	\$75,000	3.8%
P R - Agency Fees	\$72,000	3.6%
P R - Agency Expenses	\$65,000	3.3%
Focus Group/Research	\$60,000	3.0%
First Coast of Golf	\$52,000	2.6%
Miscellaneous	\$93,380	4.7%
<b>Total TDC Marketing</b>	<b>\$1,992,380</b>	

TDC Travel Trade - 10%		
Information Services	\$10,000	3.3%
Travel Trade Publications	\$40,000	13.0%
Hospitality Services	\$65,000	21.2%
Dues/Subscriptions	\$25,000	8.2%
Printing-Brochures	\$75,000	24.5%
Freight-Federal	\$5,000	1.6%
Registration-Trade Shows	\$20,000	6.5%
Other Travel Expense	\$25,000	8.2%
On Island-FAMS	\$22,500	7.3%
Promotional Supplies	\$19,020	6.2%
<b>Total Travel Trade</b>	<b>\$306,520</b>	

