

DESTIN
FORT
WALTON
BEACH
FLORIDA



THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Destin-Fort Walton Beach Tourism
Annual Meeting
February 8, 2023

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BEACH
FLORIDA



Welcome!

**Elected
Officials**

Cities

**TDC
Members**

Chambers

Partners

Touchpoints



2022

A year in review

Public Safety

Tourism Works for Okaloosa

Coastal Resources

Parks + Facility Maintenance

Partner Program

Research

Brand + Advertising

Public + Community Relations

Digital Marketing + Social Media

DFWBCC

Destination Stewardship

Tourism Works for Okaloosa

\$38.7 million



of visitors

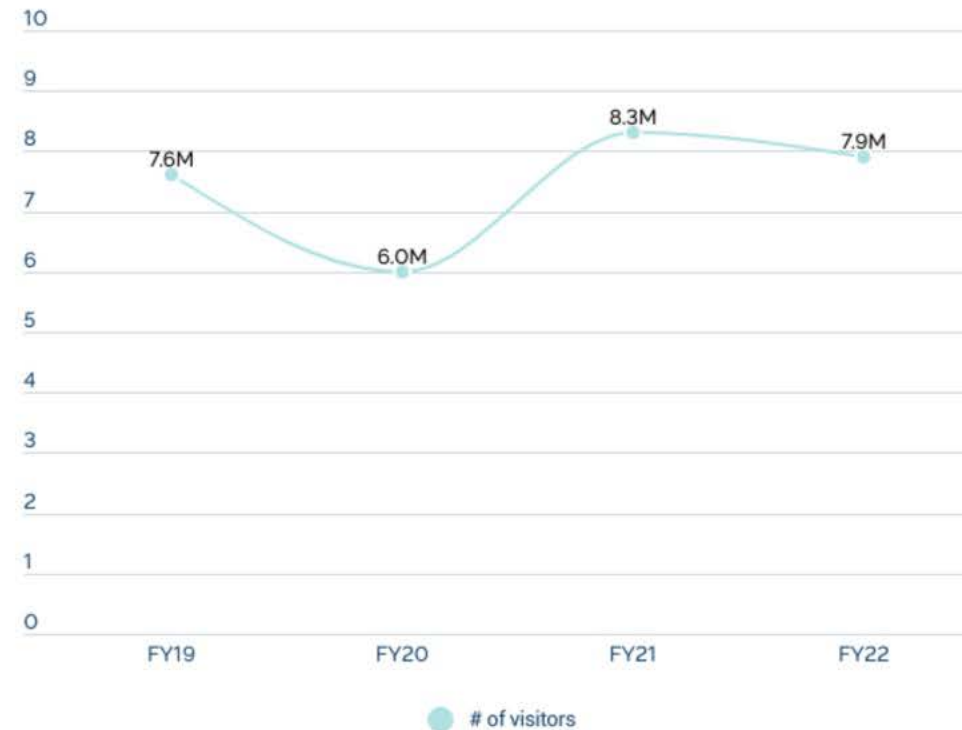
FY19 - 7.6M

FY20 - 6.0M

FY21 - 8.3M

FY22 - 7.9M

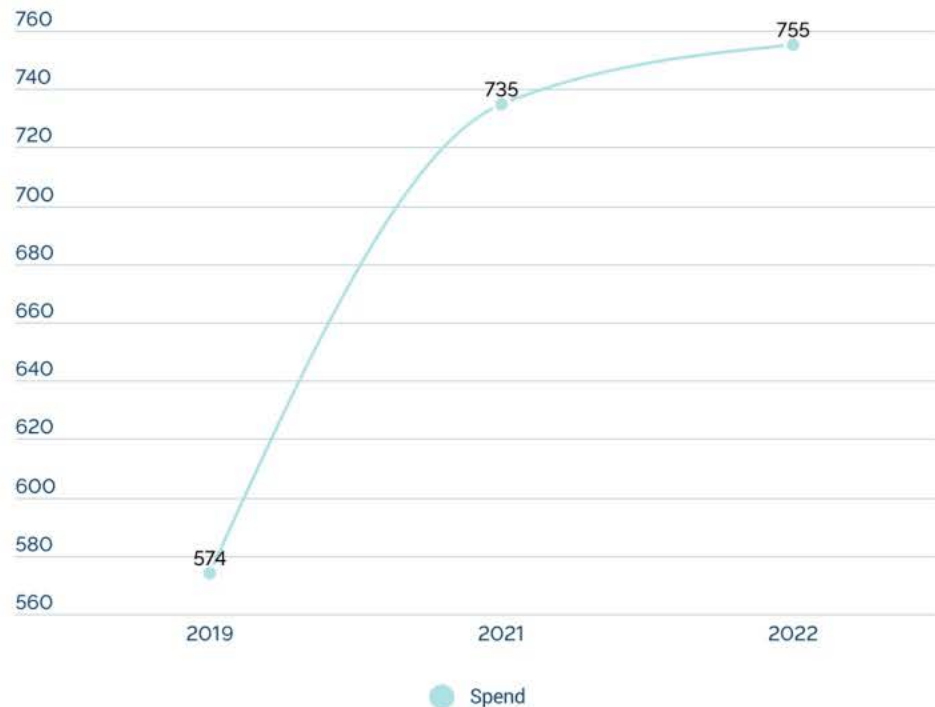
of visitors (million)



Visitor spend locally

2019 - \$574 million
2021 - \$735 million
2022 - \$755 million

Visitor spend (million)



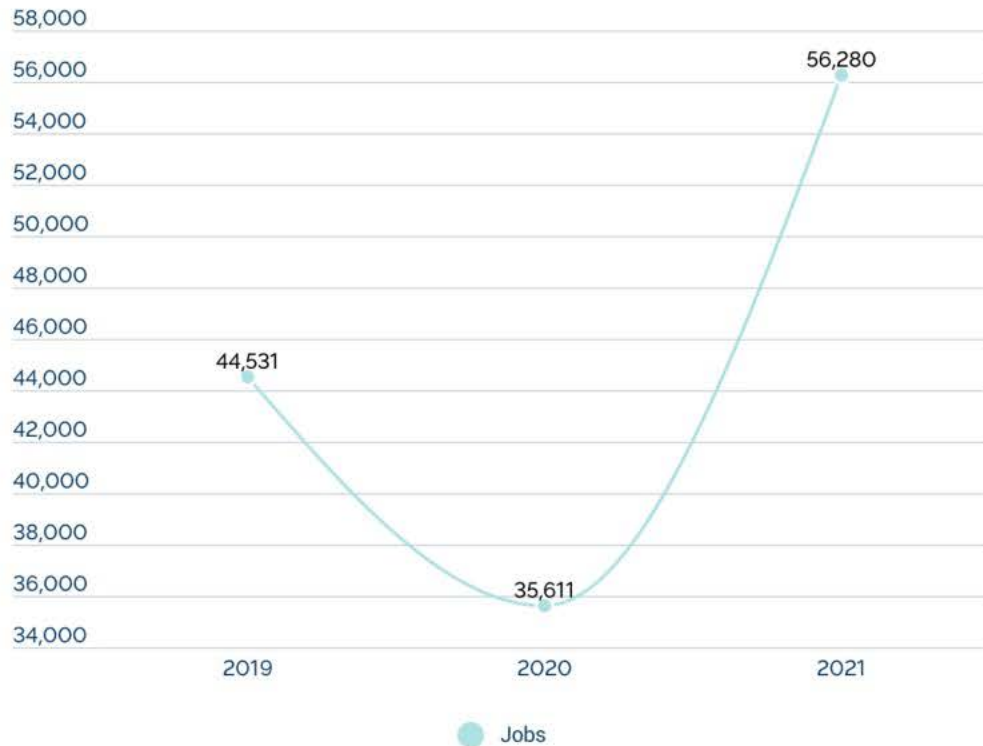
tourism jobs

2019 - 44,531

2020 - 35,611

2021 - 56,280

tourism jobs



Welcome Center visitors

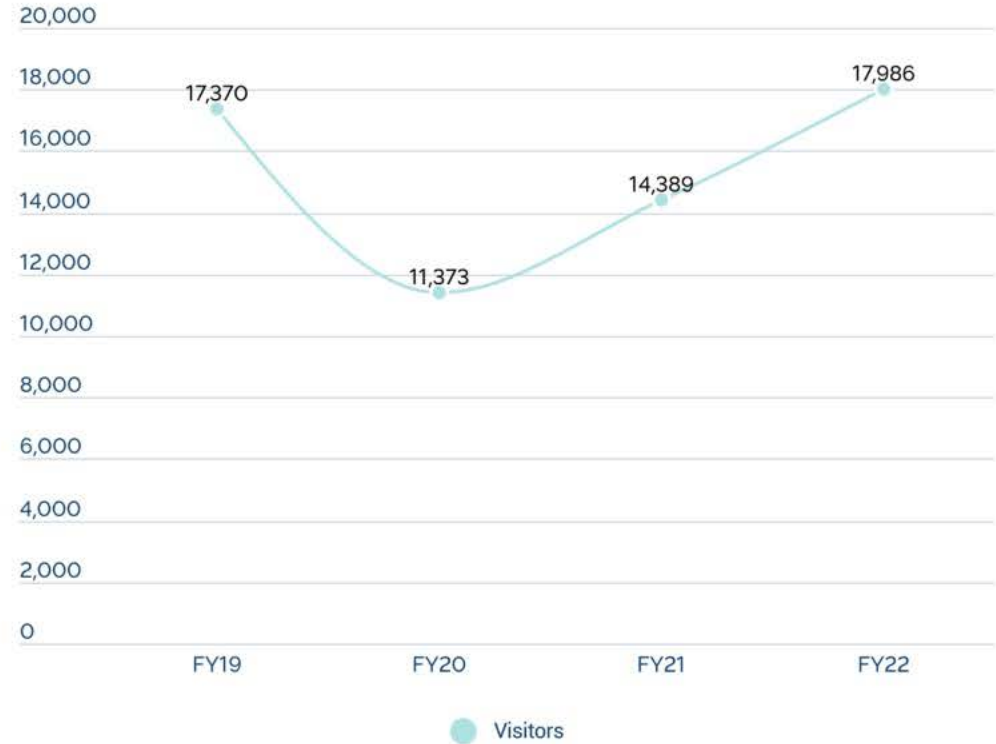
FY19 - 17,370

FY20 - 11,373

FY21 - 14,389

FY22 - 17,986

Visitors greeted



Tourism Tax Revenue

FY19 - 23.1M

FY20 - 18.7M

FY21 - 32.3M

FY22 - 36.9M*

Tourism tax revenue (million)



County-wide tourism # units/breakdown

14,584 total units

	Subdistrict	Expansion
Condo	7,035	12
Hotel/motel	4,318	1,841
Single family	1,212	120
Other	34	12
TOTAL	12,599	1,985

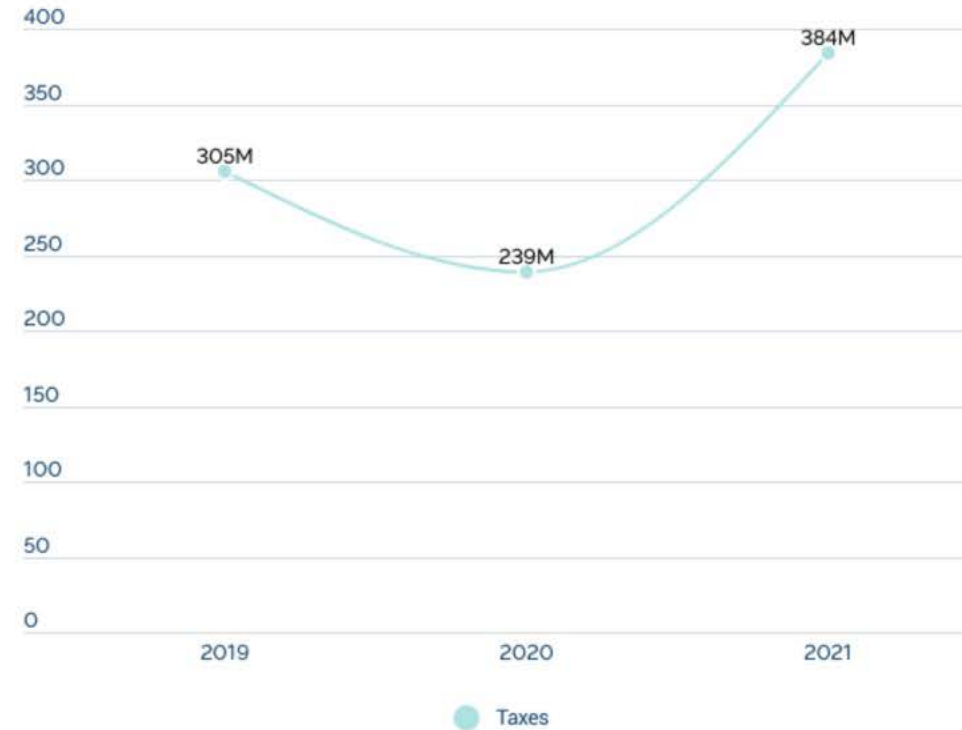
State + local taxes generated

2019 - 305M

2020 - 239M

2021 - 384M

State + local tax revenue (million)



VENTION
ATED



Press conferences with the Governor



Public safety

\$2.4 million



Beach census

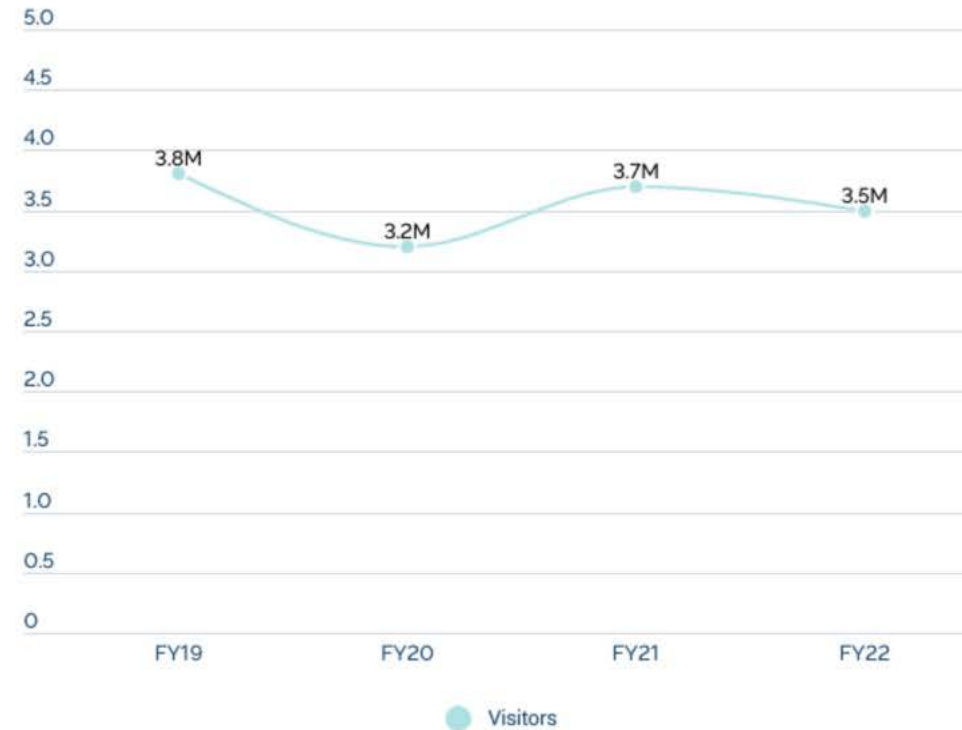
FY19 - 3.8M

FY20 - 3.2M

FY21 - 3.7M

FY22 - 3.5M

Beach census



rescues

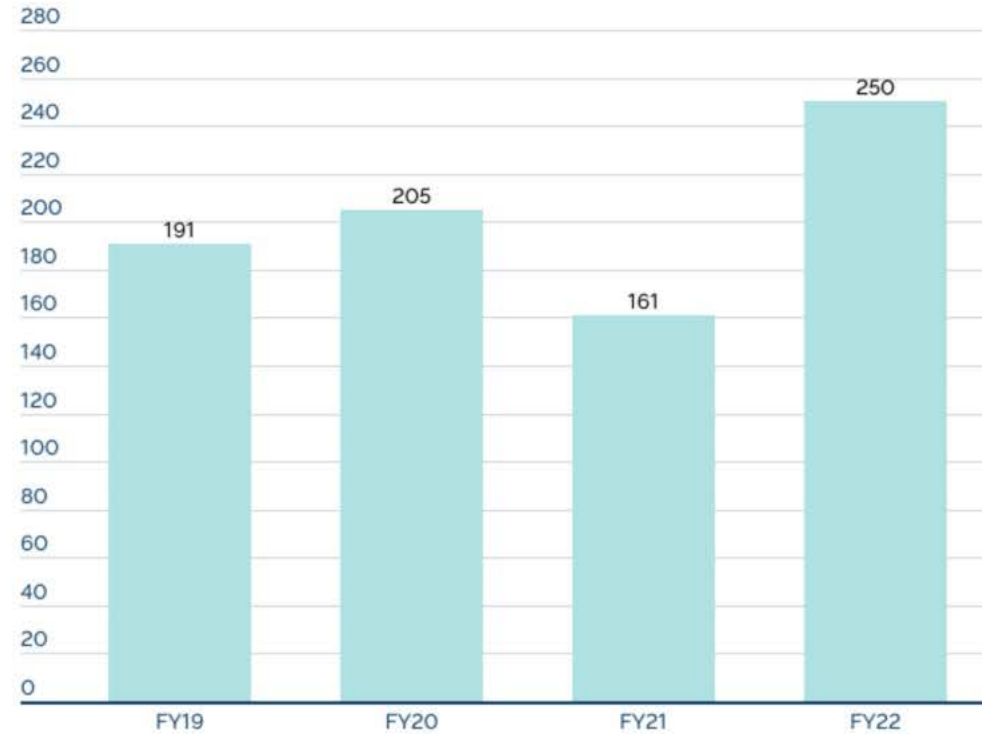
FY19 - 191

FY20 - 205

FY21 - 161

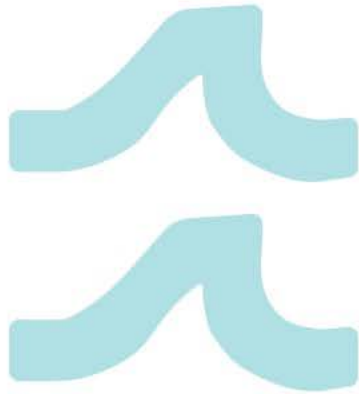
FY22 - 250

rescues





Beach Safety Signs



The Island Pier



Text BEACH to 44144

1:47



< 221



44144

Destin-Fort Walton Beach:
Yellow flag: moderate hazards
exist, use caution: Purple flag:
Hazardous marine life (jellyfish).
Reply STOP to end

Thu, Oct 13 at 10:06 AM

Destin-Fort Walton Beach: Single
Red flag: hazardous surf and rip
currents present. Knee deep is
too deep. Purple flag: Hazardous
marine life. Reply STOP to end

Fri, Oct 14 at 10:23 AM

Fort Walton Beach: Single Red
flag: hazardous surf and rip
currents present. Knee deep is
too deep. Purple flag: Hazardous
marine life. Reply STOP to end

Sat, Oct 15 at 9:54 AM

Destin-Fort Walton Beach:
Yellow flag: moderate hazards
exist, use caution: Purple flag:
Hazardous marine life (jellyfish).
Reply STOP to end



Text Message



Parks + Facility Maintenance

\$2.4 million







Women Veterans Memorial Park





The Boat Basin on Okaloosa Island



Coastal Resources

\$1.6 million



PBS NOVA
Ocean Invaders
100M viewers/
month

Outdoor
Channel - Feral
1M viewers/
month

New Yorker
Killing Invasive
Species
1.2M viewers/
month

Food & Travel
Magazine - Eat
em to beat em
81K viewers/
month

Spearing
Magazine (x2)
5K viewers/
month

Get the Coast
(33 coastal
articles)
700K people
reached

get the Coast

MANITA



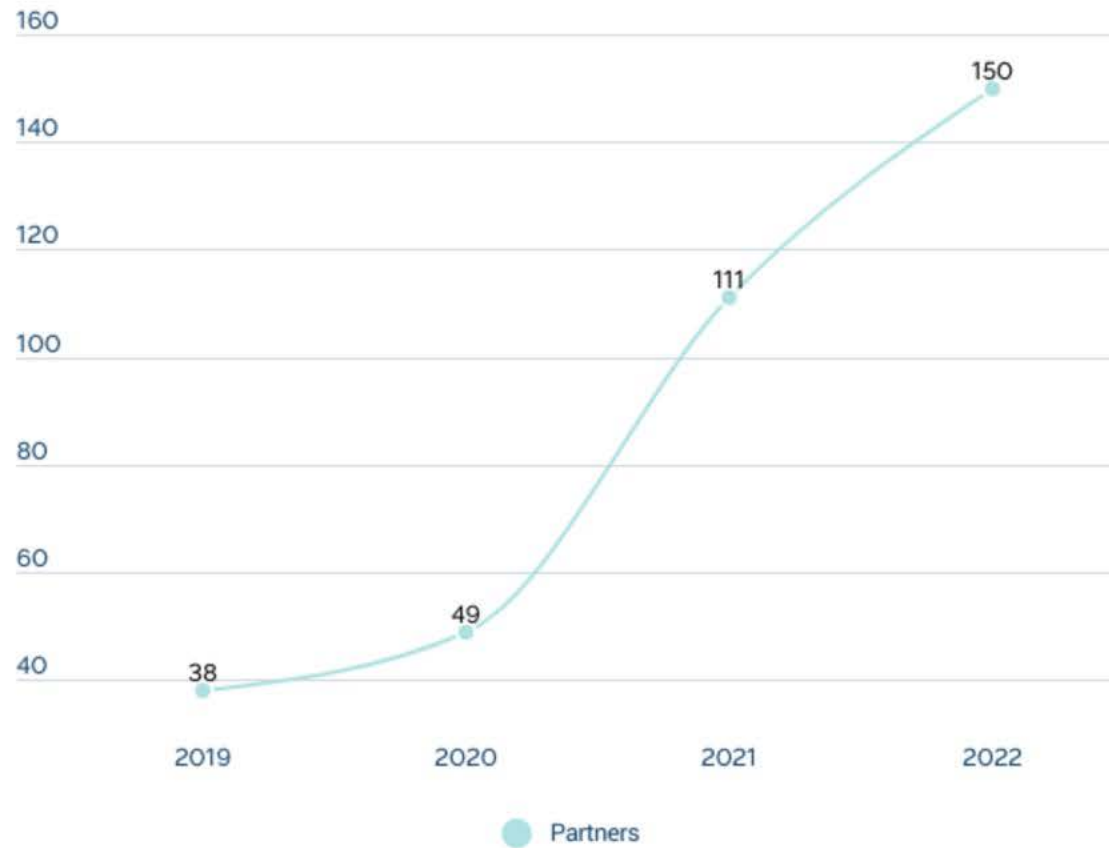
GULF & CARIBBEAN FISHERIES INSTITUTE

NOVEMBER 7-11, 2022 | FORT WALTON BEACH, FL



Partner Program

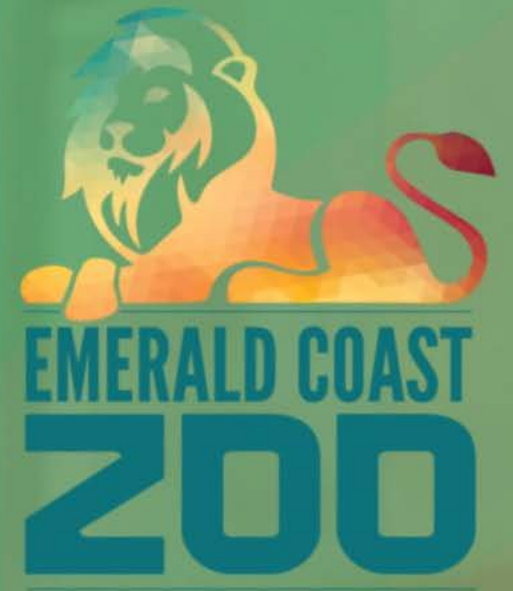
Partner Program Growth







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FLORIDA



Chef Al - Brotula's



Research

\$497K





Perception

Behavior

- 3,000-4,000 consumers per year.
- 15 Primary quantitative and qualitative studies.
- 5 economic impact measures.





- 53% opinion had improved
- 8.26 enrichment score
- 73% tried something new

Average Spend Per Cardholder By Quarter

Q1 2017 - Q3 2022



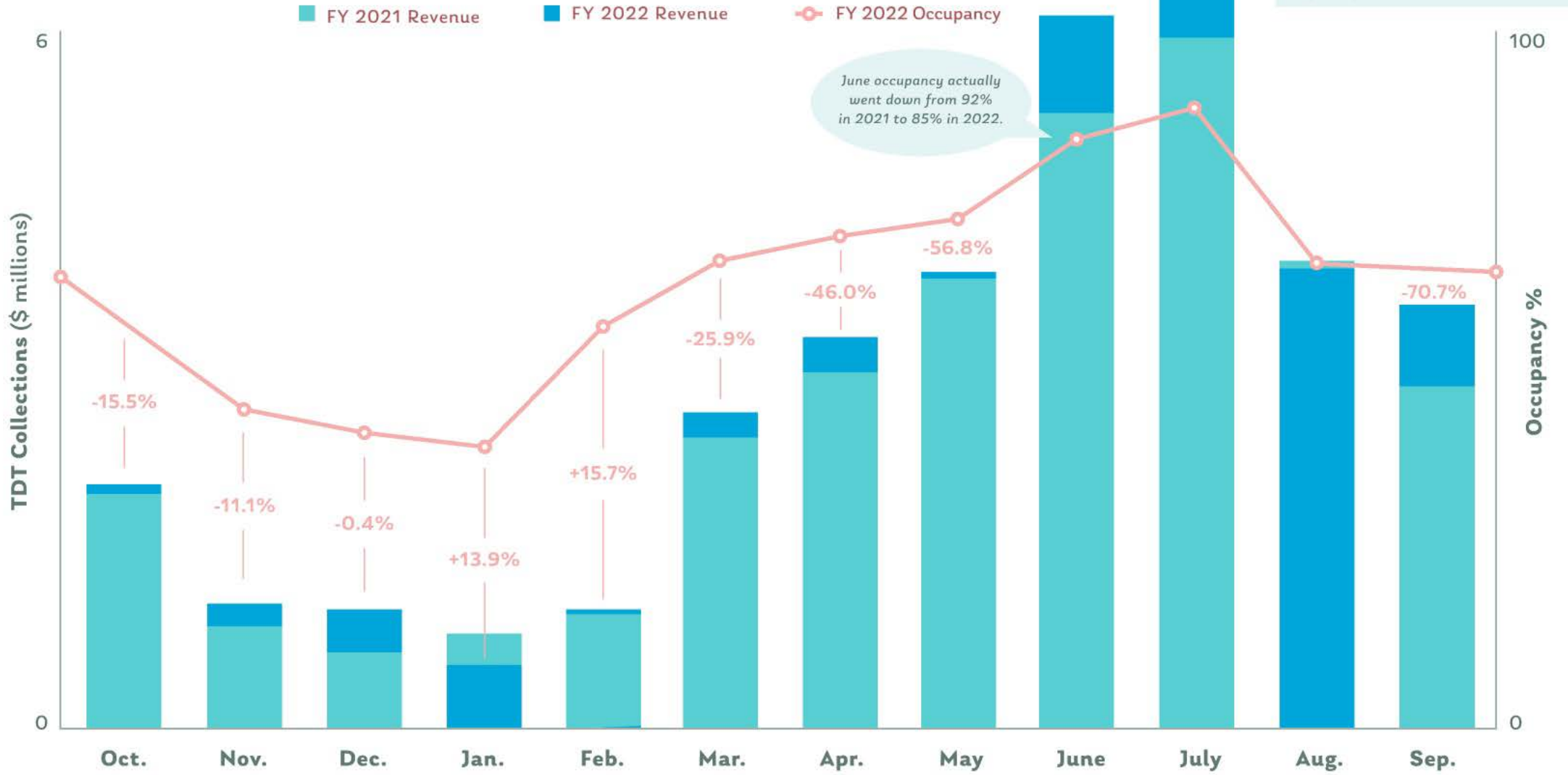
NOTE: These are not TDC financial year quarters, these are year-specific quarters

FY19 vs FY22

Markets	Oct 18- Sept 19	Oct 21 - Sept 22	% Change
Atlanta	\$163.92	\$185.80	13.3%
Dallas/Ft Worth	\$231.40	\$233.00	0.7%
Nashville	\$205.12	\$232.69	13.4%
St. Louis	\$232.31	\$253.43	9.1%
Cincinnati	\$228.28	\$241.10	5.6%
Chicago	\$232.50	\$244.54	5.2%
Indianapolis	\$232.98	\$254.74	9.3%
DC/NoVa	\$254.07	\$257.56	1.4%
Detroit	\$224.18	\$228.57	2.0%
Minneapolis	\$254.34	\$256.33	0.8%
Average (No Houston)	\$206.41	\$221.92	7.5%

Are we narrowing the gap?

*Gap Comparison is between FY 21 and FY 22





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FLORIDA

Mike Carroll



Stakeholder analysis

175 people in ecosystem



27 in-depth interviews



Nearly 100 local stakeholders attended 3 events

>30 site visits



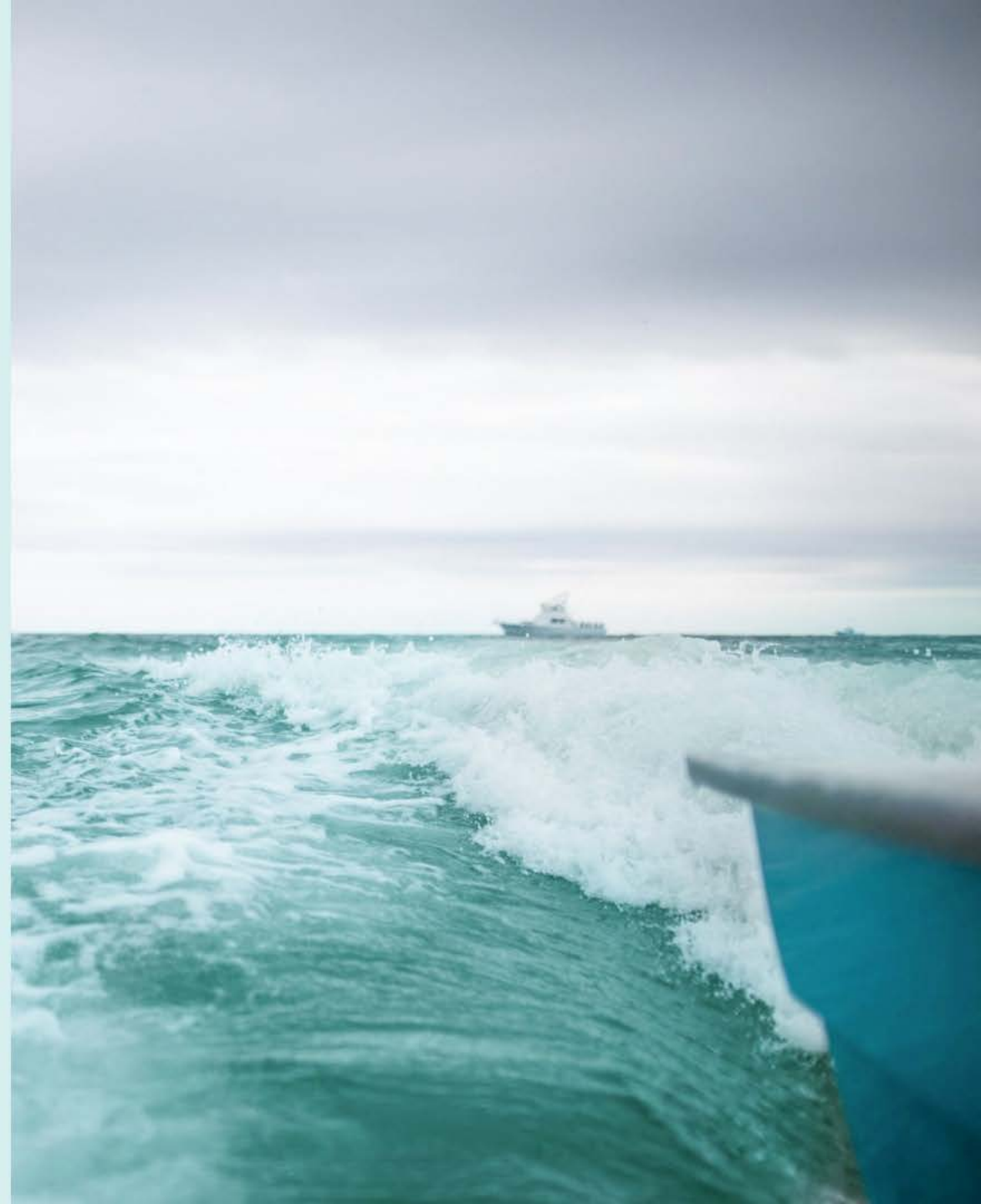
Brand + Advertising

\$7.4 million

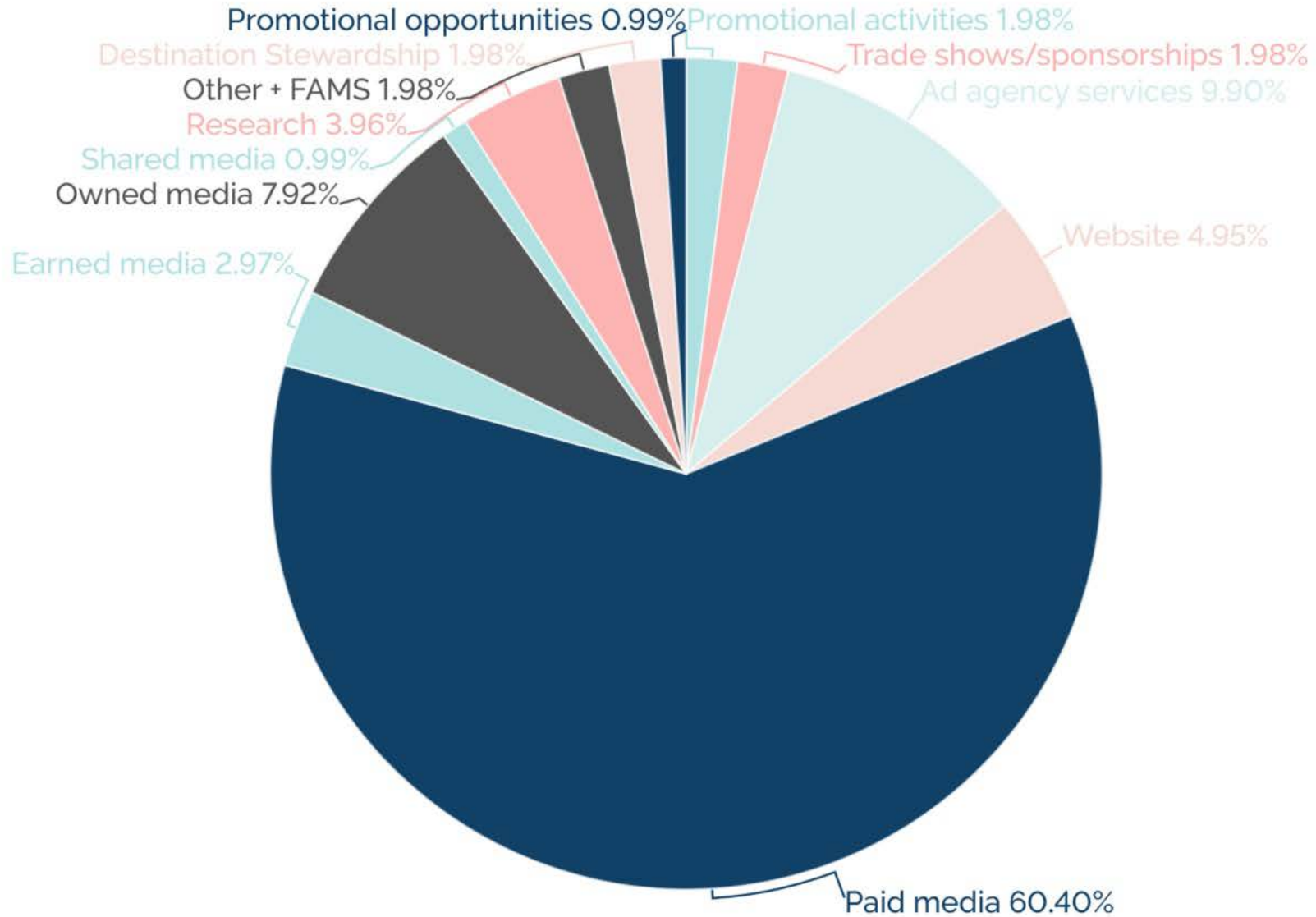


Media Objectives

- Increase visitor spend by 10%
- Increase arrivals from top markets by 15%
- Measure positive change of perception and intent to travel
- Measure increase in water-based, family adventures



2022 budget breakdown





Visitor Profile

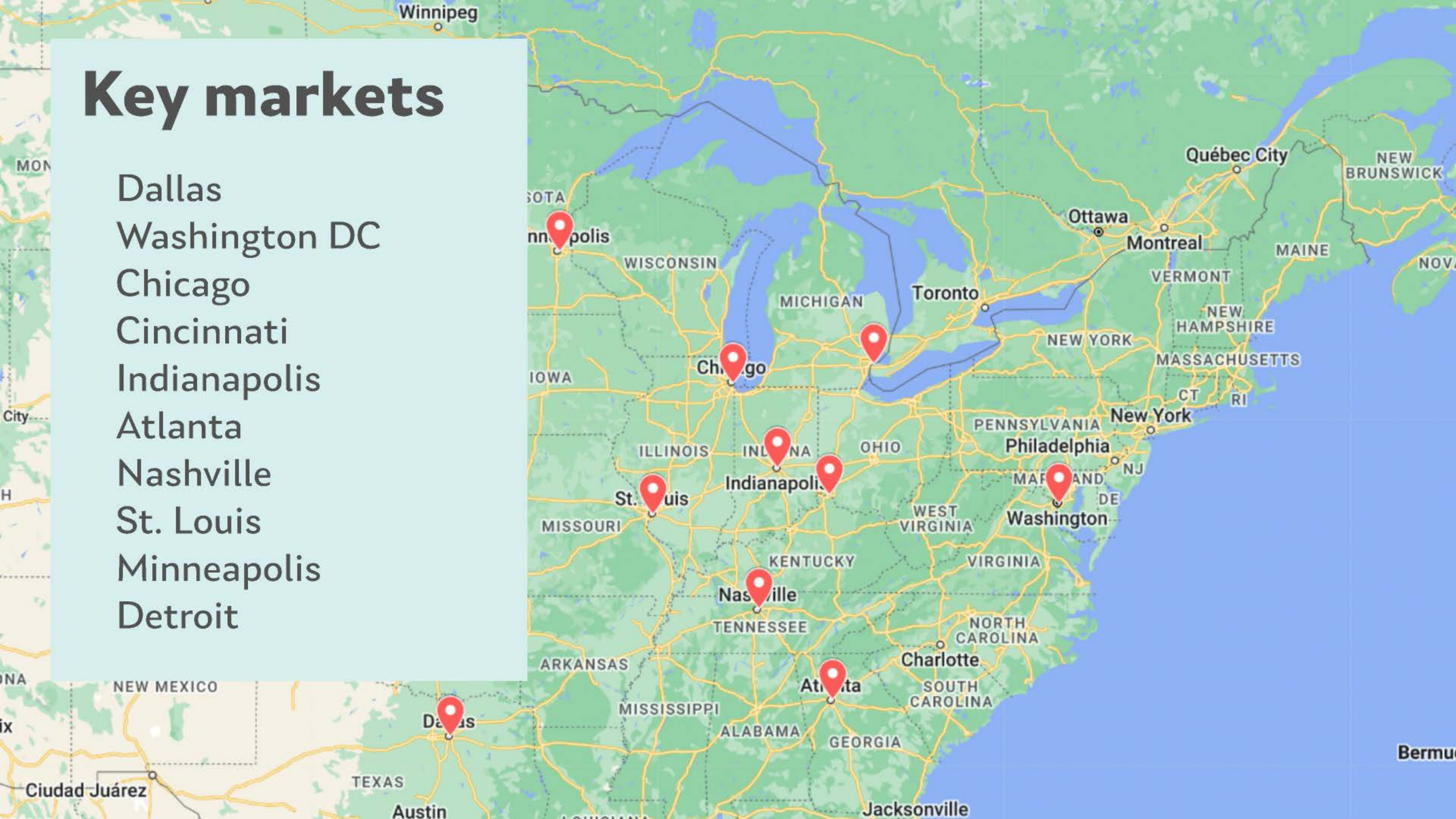
Millennial moms

Kids ages 3-10

Seeking adventures

Key markets

Dallas
Washington DC
Chicago
Cincinnati
Indianapolis
Atlanta
Nashville
St. Louis
Minneapolis
Detroit

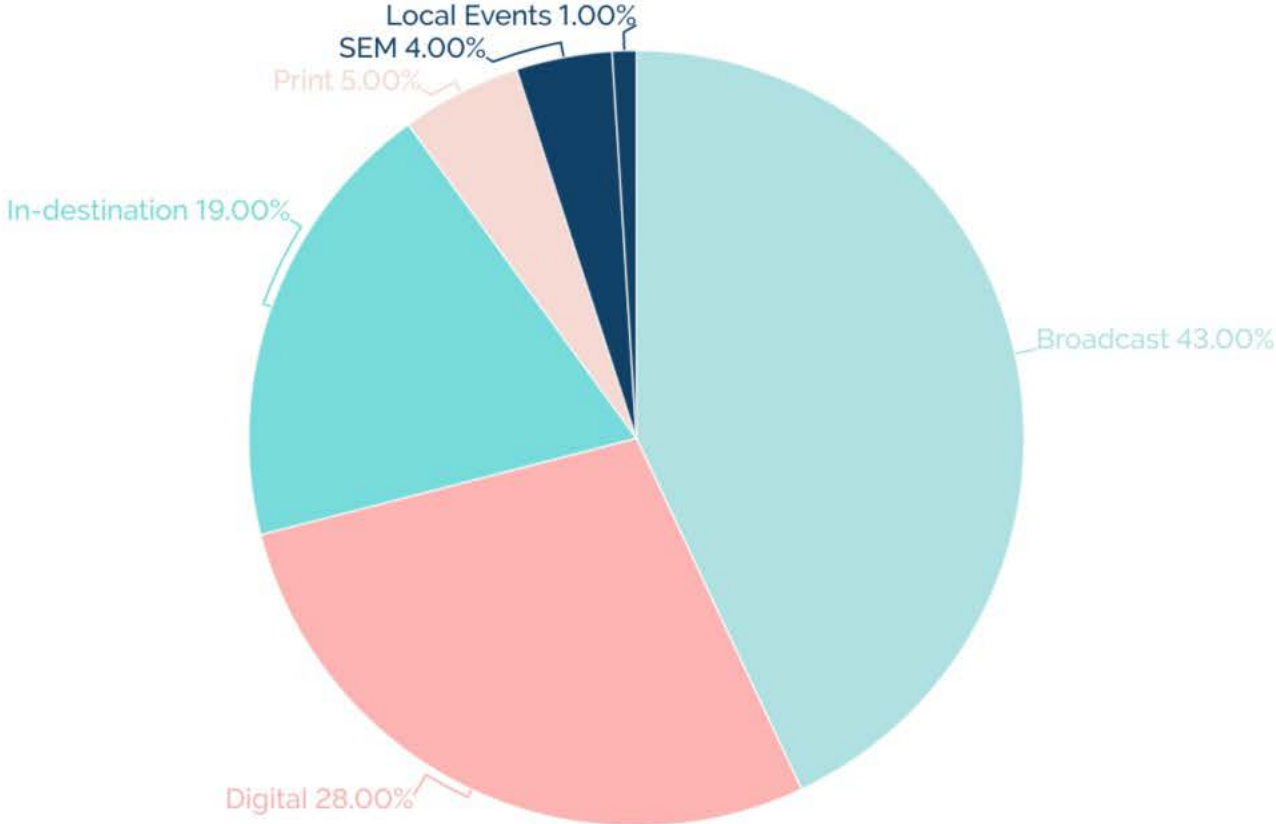


Established markets

Houston
New Orleans
Memphis
Louisville
Huntsville
Knoxville
Gulfport/Biloxi, MS
Columbus, GA



Media Breakdown



What is a Little Adventure?

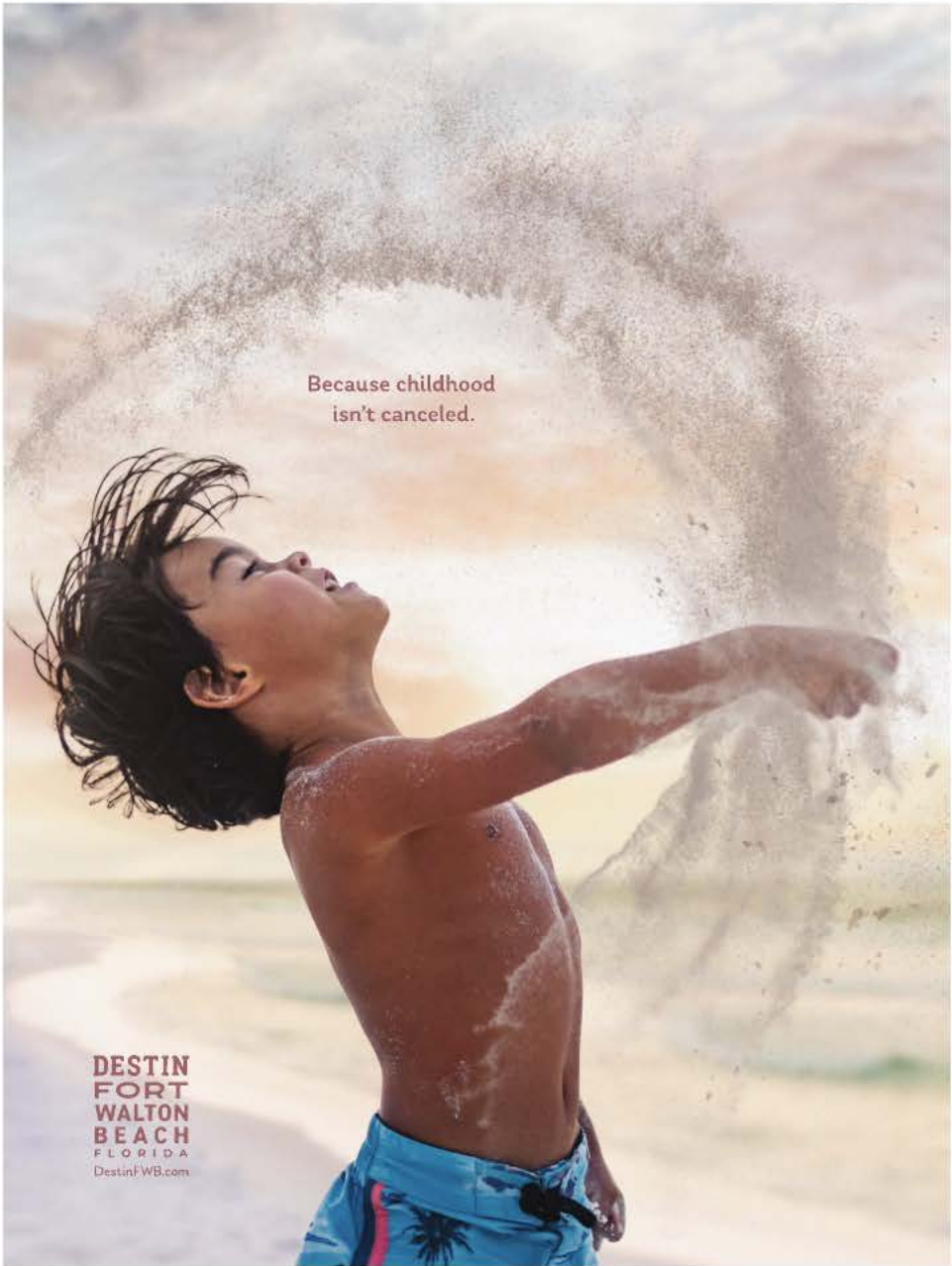
Print

In-destination



There are summits
that can only be reached
at sea level.

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DestinFWB.com



Because childhood
isn't canceled.

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DestinFWB.com



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FLORIDA



Wins

Flagler Awards
Destiny Award



Public + community relations

\$120K



ECO TRAVEL

Inside Destin-Fort Walton Beach's New Artificial Reef Expansion Plans



Boasting 24 miles of sparkling, crystal-clear waters, sugar-white quartz beaches, and vast wildlife on land and in the sea, Destin-Fort Walton Beach, Florida is undoubtedly an ecological paradise.



Ready to get away? 8 deals for your next summer vacation

By Jillian Ortiz

Skip TODAY's editorially independent. Our editors receive their deals and news because we think you will enjoy them as well.

Memorial Day marks the unofficial start of summer for some - and that means many of us are starting to think of where to head for our next getaway.

Larkyb, Mark Ellwood, Condé Nast Traveler contributing editor and the host of the podcast "Travel Genius," joined TODAY to share his top recommendations for summer destinations.

Before booking your plane ticket, be sure to check the safety guidelines for your destination and for your return home.

Read on for travel recommendations, near and far, that will have you packing your bags in no time.

Celebrate Earth Day with these Eco-Friendly Travel Experiences

April 24, 2022



Consciousness travel is trending and with Earth Day on April 22nd, there's no better time to pencil in that sustainable trip you've been wanting to explore.

TRAVEL+LEISURE

Home » Trip Ideas » Spring Vacations

10 Best Spring Break Destinations in the U.S.

By Patricia Delaney Updated: January 03, 2022

By Patricia Delaney

Destin, Florida

On Florida's Emerald Coast, Destin (along with Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island) offers sandy beaches, warm water boating, fishing, snorkeling, and plenty of water sports like kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, canoeing, and more.



LEIGHA/GETTY IMAGES

visitors to the Emerald Coast have lodging options to meet their needs.



Destin Fort Walton Beach's New Artificial Reef Expansion Plans, Ecotourism Experiences

Destin-Fort Walton Beach created more than 300 artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico in order to make essential habitats for marine species of fish and invertebrates.

The artificial reefs consist of concrete piles specifically designed to replicate large shipwrecks and other modules.

thrillist



TRAVEL » FESTIVALS

The Wackiest, Most Unusual Spring Festivals in the U.S.

From stuffing your face with grits to just watching ice melt, there's something for everyone.

By Vanita Sakshy

Published on 3/25/2022 at 9:37 PM

Business Traveler

"We have a responsibility to restore the ecology of our own backyards."



tiny house owners, we need to get with the times. Many people still see tiny houses as a novelty, but they're becoming a more practical and affordable housing option.



BEVERLY HANCOCK

BEVERLY HANCOCK



This Underrated Beach Town Is the Florida Destination You Didn't Know You Needed

By Britt Robinson

Revised on 3/23/22



DAVID J. PHILLIPS

A family trip to Destin, Florida, will have you wondering why you never considered this pitch-perfect panhandle spot before.

When people think of Florida vacations, a few obvious spots top the list: Orlando, of course, and then Miami, Tampa, and West Palm Beach.

Located on Florida's Panhandle along the Gulf of Mexico, it's home to stunning white sand beaches, emerald green water, and a fishing community so vibrant that the beach town has come to be known as "the world's luckiest fishing village."

Turns out, for many families with young children, the underrated coastal city is the ideal midstate to the typical Florida vacation.

Where to Stay in Destin, Florida

Whether you prefer to stay in a beachfront hotel or bed and breakfast, feel pampered in a luxury resort, or spread out in a vacation home or condo rental, Destin has lodging options that meet the needs of all families.

#TravelTuesday: Families Can Play All Day In Destin-Fort Walton Beach, Florida



A Destin-Fort Walton Beach vacation is an invitation to play. From sunup sea turtle tracking to sundown sand crab hunting, you won't want to miss a single adventure along Florida's Emerald Coast.

The recipe for a happy family vacation is a mix of early planning, engaging activities, and good food that you don't have to make or clean up.

MOMMY POPPINS

33 Fun Things to Do in Destin, Florida with Kids



Destin, Florida offers a wealth of family-friendly activities, from the city to the beach. Here are 33 fun things to do in Destin, Florida with kids.

Things to Do Outdoors with Kids in Destin, Florida



20 Best Small Towns to Buy a Vacation Home

By Sam Goss

Ready to buy a vacation home? Ask yourself whether you want to be on a lake, at the beach, in the mountains or close to a historic town square.



Okaloosa Island, Florida

Okaloosa Island is for vacationers who never tire of emerald-green waters and sugar-sand beaches. This small island on the Florida Panhandle is an 875-acre section of Santa Rosa Island.

Influencers

@twinsidescoop



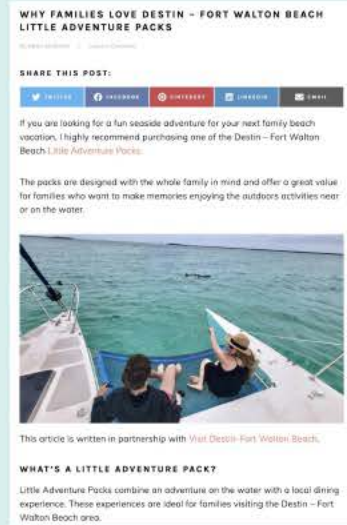
43 pieces of content
63.6K impressions

@ourlovelypak



52 pieces of content
+33K impressions

@adventuremom



38 pieces of content
+19K impressions

Totals:

5 influencer collaborations
+306K social media impressions
24.4K engagements
64K video views
200 pieces of content
83 image assets

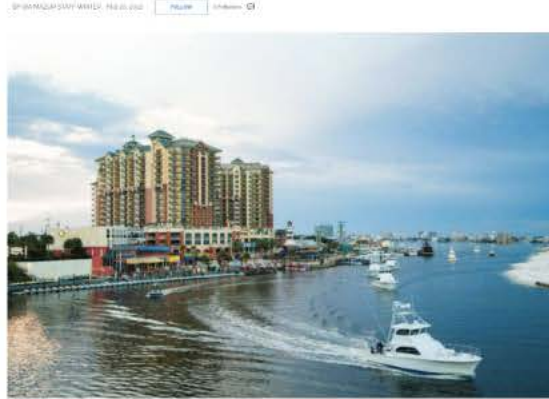
Celebrate Earth Day with these Eco-Friendly Travel Experiences



Destin-Fort Walton Beach created more than 300 artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico in order to make essential habitats for marine species of fish and invertebrates. The artificial reefs also provide fishing and scuba diving opportunities for visitors and residents looking to experience sea life up-close.

The artificial reefs consist of concrete piles specifically designed to replicate large shipwrecks and other modules. Travelers can even view these reefs through an interactive map. The continuing effort in creating these artificial reefs reflects the region's five-year plan to make the area one of Florida's best diving destinations. Part of this plan includes adding new large vessels to the reef area, installing the only active inshore reef program in the state of Choctawhatchee Bay and creating beachside, shore-accessible "snorkel reefs."

Destin, Florida: Beautiful beaches with emerald water, adventure parks and fresh seafood make for the perfect getaway



Sugar white sand beaches and crystal blue-green water await guests in Destin, Florida.

Nestled in the Florida panhandle, Destin is an eclectic beach town filled with restaurants, shops, activities and entertainment, all surrounded by the gorgeous Emerald Coast. This nickname came thanks to the jewel-like color of the sparkling Gulf of Mexico, and the gem of Destin continues to be its beaches.



With a reef network extending for miles, Destin-Fort Walton Beach is the premier diving destination in the US. Along with creating an essential habitat for marine species of fish and invertebrates, Destin-Fort Walton Beach's artificial reefs provide fishing and SCUBA diving opportunities for visitors and residents alike as well as novel scientific research opportunities. So far, the destination has created over 300 artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico, consisting of concrete piles to specifically designed modules and large shipwrecks, which are viewable to travelers via an interactive map. Last month, Destin-Fort Walton Beach announced a 5-year plan to make the destination one of Florida's best diving destinations, including adding new large vessels to the reef area, installing the only active inshore reef program in the state in Choctawhatchee Bay, creating beachside, shore-accessible, "snorkel reefs," and more.

PREMIUM FOOD
Eat 'Em to Beat 'Em: Lionfish Cuisine Puts an Invasive Species on the Dinner Table

In Destin-Fort Walton Beach, Florida, local chefs, conservationists, marine biologists, and tourism officials are working to turn an environmental threat into culinary and recreational gold.

BY ERIC LUCAS TIME APRIL 26, 2022 PRINT

TRAVEL, OCEAN LIFE, WILDLIFE TRAVEL MAGAZINE
DRIFT

ECO TRAVEL
Inside Destin-Fort Walton Beach's New Artificial Reef Expansion Plans



Boasting 24 miles of sparkling, crystal-clear waters, sugar-white quartz beaches, and vast wildlife on land and in the sea, Destin-Fort Walton Beach, Florida is undoubtedly an ecological paradise. From its growing artificial reef program and lionfish mitigation efforts to the new *NuShore Project* to support beach resiliency and the Gulfarium C.A.R.E. Center to spread awareness about sea turtle conservation, the destination features a plethora of sustainable travel experiences and educational activities for travelers of all ages.

thrillist



TRAVEL + FESTIVALS
The Wackiest, Most Unusual Spring Festivals in the U.S.
Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day Festival

Destin-Fort Walton Beach, Florida
May 14-15

Outdoor CHANNEL



TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Best U.S. Destinations for Summer Vacation Home Rentals in 2022

By Beth Lerner April 26, 2022



According to the survey, for those looking to rent vacation homes within the U.S., three spots reigned supreme. The top three summer destinations based on Vacasa.com searches with check-in dates for June, July, and August 2022 are none other than Ocean City, Maryland; Destin, Florida; and Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. And these seem to perfectly align with what Vasaca's survey found that people are looking for in a getaway this year, too.

eFlyer USA

Destin-Fort Walton Beach's New Artificial Reef Expansion Plans, Ecotourism Experiences

Destin-Fort Walton Beach created more than 300 artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico in order to make essential habitats for marine species of fish and invertebrates. The artificial reefs also provide fishing and scuba diving opportunities for visitors and residents looking to experience sea life up-close. [Read more.](#)

NYC Media Mission

VISIT **FLORIDA**™



World of Saltwater Fishing



Discovery



Destin-Fort Walton Beach Blog

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BEACH
FLORIDA



Menu



Family-friendly places to stay on Okaloosa Island

Escape the crowds and visit Okaloosa Island for family fun in a quiet environment.

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FLORIDA



Menu



5 questions to ask charter captains

If you're new to [charter boat fishing excursions](#), we have the frequently asked questions (and answers!) as you plan your trip out on the water in Destin-Fort Walton Beach, FL.

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BEACH
FLORIDA



Menu



3 snorkel tours in Destin Fort Walton Beach

If you love wildlife, especially the marine kind, odds

DESTIN
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WALTON
BEACH
FLORIDA



Menu



7 waterfront restaurants in Destin-Fort Walton Beach

Not often do you get to eat something that came from the very place you're looking at while you eat it.



HENDERSON
BEACH RESORT



Visit Florida-UK Media Mission

VISIT **FLORIDA**™

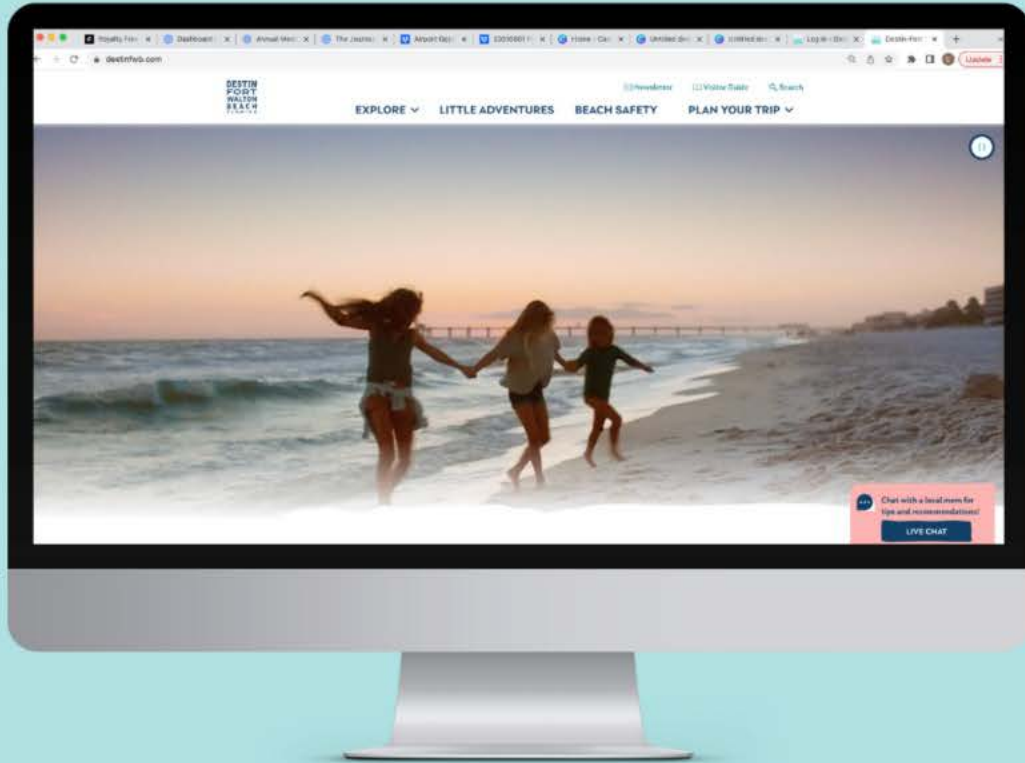


Digital Marketing + Social Media

\$306K



Website



Social



~500K likes



~60K
followers

Organic + boosted:

Impressions - 28,516,432

Engagements - 6,390,690



destinfbw
Henderson Beach State Park



1,999 likes

destinfbw Want to try surf fishing along the shores of Henderson Beach State Park? Rent a reel at Half Hitch Tackle or Bass Pro Shop in Destin Commons.



Visit Destin-Fort Walton Beach



Posted by Sprout Social
Dec 15, 2022 · 🌐

The Gulf is really hard to wrap, but it's still a gift.



13.4K

260 comments 1K shares



destinfbw
Destin, Florida



158,957 views · Liked by laurakbeebe

destinfbw We do the same exact thing when we see a dolphin.

[View all 16 comments](#)

2boujeebulldogs We've seen TONS on St. George Island this week

destinfbw @2boujeebulldogs That's such great luck! We hope you get to see even more 🐬🐬



Now is a good time to be friends





destinfb
snehpanchal97 · This is heaven

destinfb Pretty lucky we get to live in heaven.
📷: @destinmomentscaught
20h

destinfb #heaven #boardwalk #beachreel #DestinFWB #Destin #DestinFlorida #FortWaltonBeach #OkaloosaIsland #LoveFL #familyvacation #vacation #travel #explore #beachlife #beachvacation #instagood
20h Reply

e_tempest_mc Yep... Heaven. Right up until the onslaught of Spring Breakers & Summer tourists that treat our beaches like their personal trash can.
3h 1 like Reply
View replies (2)

mikellinda80 its HOME to me!
14m Reply

_jac_24 🥰🥰🥰🥰 #wefull
1h Reply

tmmom Can I come please?!?!? It's freezing here 🥶
20h Reply

wildernesswoman.nat Destin's Emerald Coast is my favorite. 💙🌊 I want to go back!

1,018 likes
20 HOURS AGO

Add a comment... Post



destinfb
Destin, Florida

destinfb We love a natural ombre.
Edited - 1d

gofamilyadventure Oh me too!!
2h Reply

holidayislander109 Gorgeous!!
1d 1 like Reply

visitflorida Great moment! We would love to share this on our website/social channels. If that's OK, can you give us permission by replying #yesvisitflorida and mentioning @visitflorida @
1d Reply
View replies (1)

chijiokeosuala_0001 Send pic on ❤️ @floridaempire_
1d Reply

chijiokeosuala_0001 Send pic on ❤️ @floridaempire_
1d Reply

homesandbeach 🥰🥰🥰
2d 1 like Reply

thatten1977 Gorgeous!!!! 🌊
2d 1 like Reply

1,124 likes
2 DAYS AGO

Add a comment... Post



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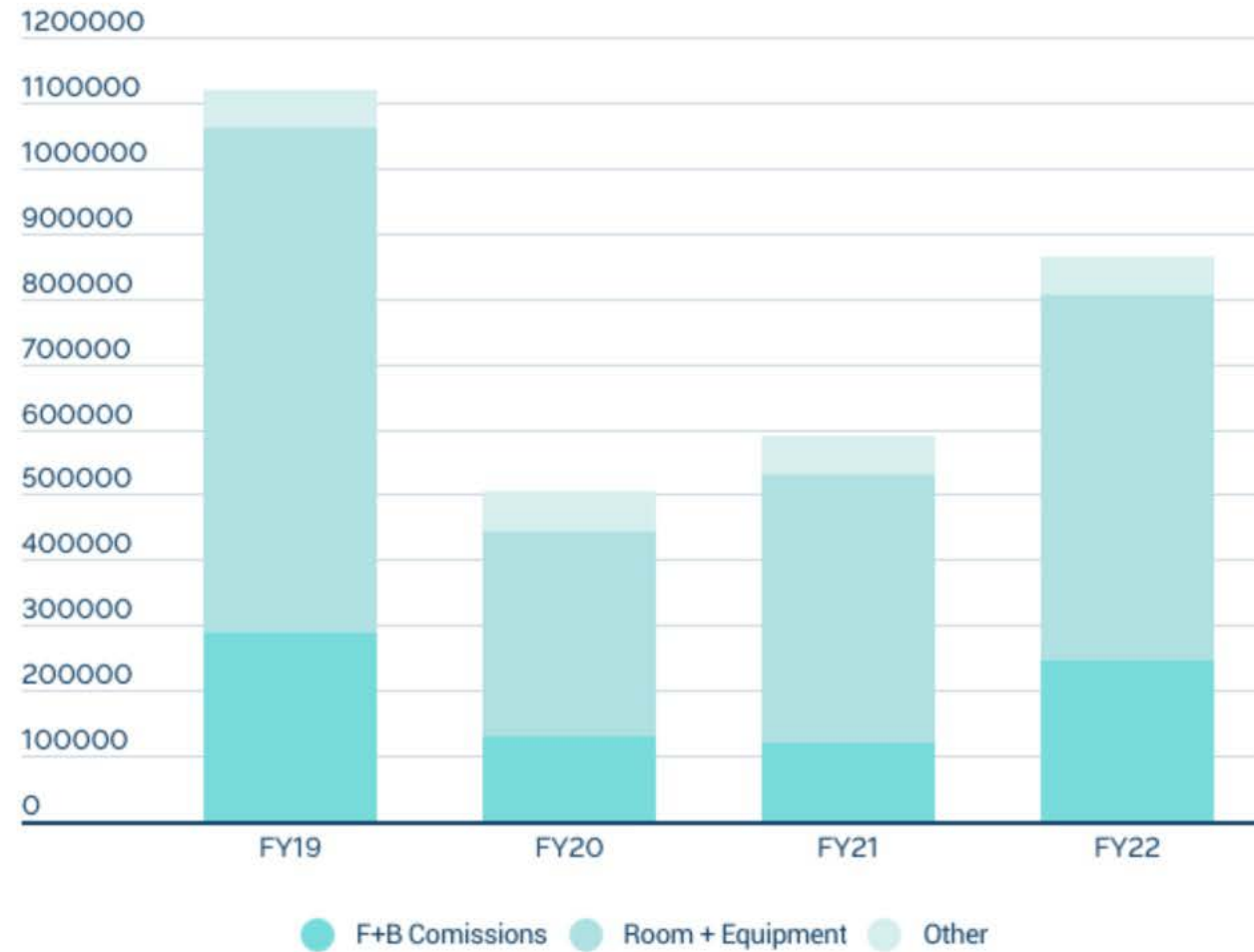


Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center

\$4.2 million



DFWBCC Revenues



To Chianti Cleggett, Sr. Sales Manager

"I love where you work!

I have a positive impression of everyone I've worked with in that area. Give them my love and support"

-Jayne Kuryluk, CMCA

Hosted in Destin-Fort Walton Beach Spring 2022



Main Entrance
Passenger Drop Off



Parking Garage (6'-6")
Elevator + Handicap Parking



South Parking Lot



North Parking Lot



Bayview Plaza



Loading Dock
Exhibitors, Vendors + Deliveries



**Women Veterans
Memorial Park**

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FLORIDA

CONVENTION
CENTER

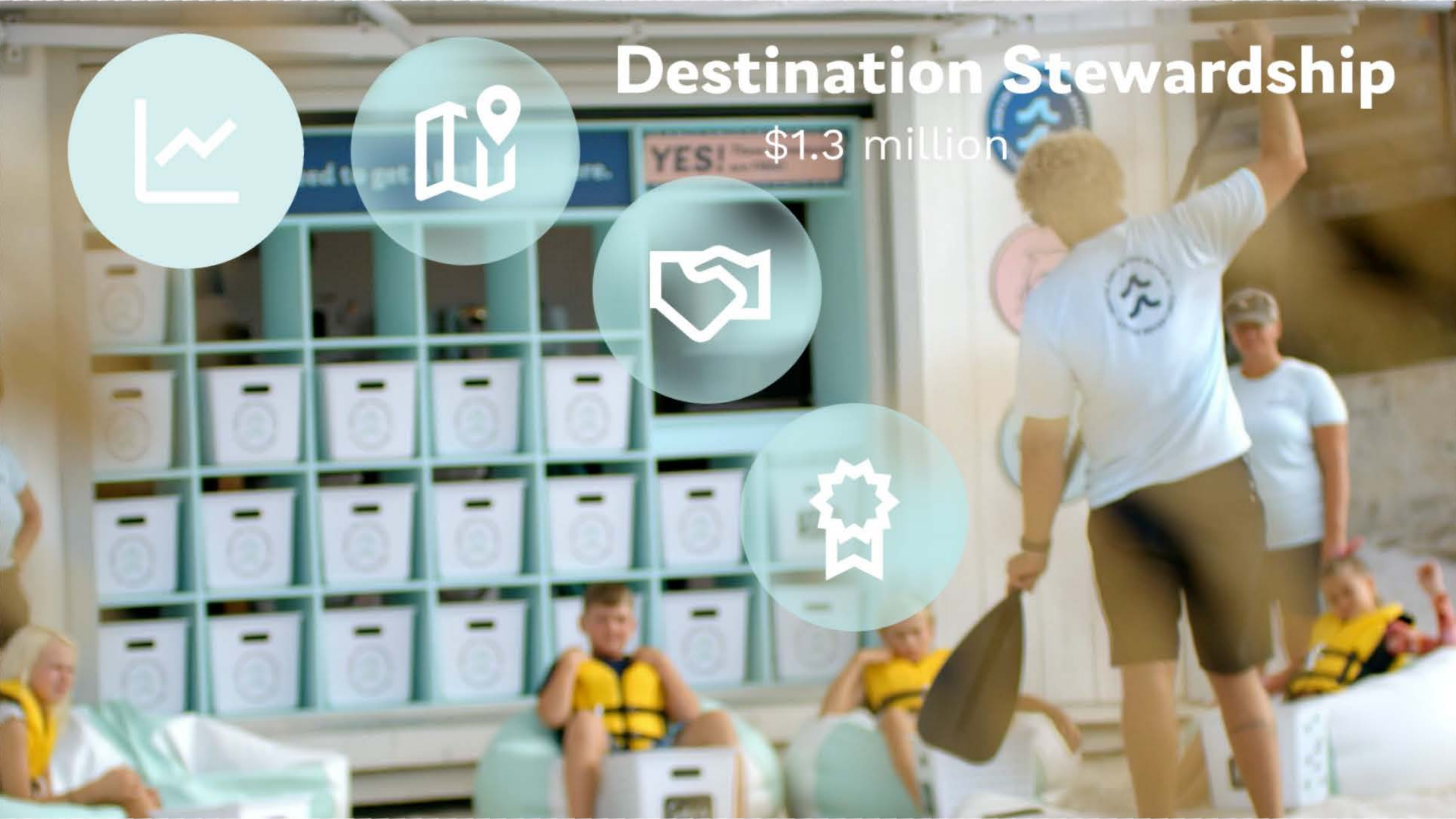
The Island
RESORT AT FORT WALTON BEACH



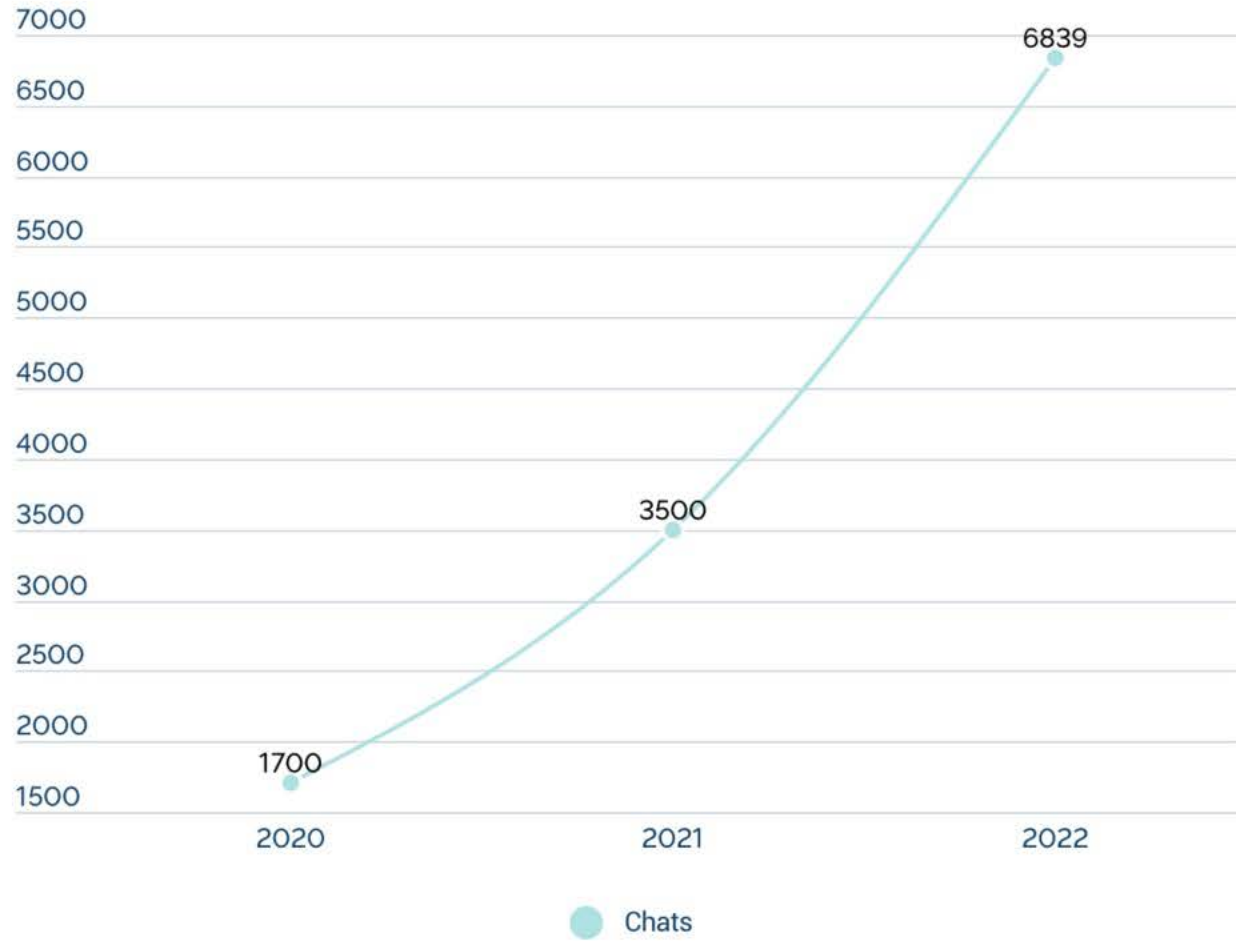


Destination Stewardship

\$1.3 million



Online chats



Packs

Kids

Classes

Scouts





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WALTON
BEACH
FLORIDA





2023

Looking ahead



Fostering strong partnerships

Product development

Be valuable

ADVENTURES HAPPEN HERE

scan me!



Coastal Resources

A diver in full gear is shown underwater, holding a large, striped lionfish in a white bucket. The diver is positioned in the upper left, and the lionfish is the central focus. The background is a clear, blue-green underwater environment with some coral and rocks visible at the bottom.

**Expanded Turtle
Patrol**

**Grow artificial
reef program**

**Grow Emerald
Coast Open
(ECO)**

A person wearing a blue wetsuit is shown from the chest up, leaning over the side of a boat and fishing in the ocean. The person is holding a fishing rod with a reel. The water is blue and has many bright, shimmering reflections from the sun. The background is a clear blue sky.

Partner Program

**Seek new and
valuable
opportunities**

Promotion

Brand + Advertising

Enhance
Visitor
Experience

Stay the
course

Media
Breakdown

New Digital
Creative

New
Website

LITTLE
ADVENTURES
HAPPEN HERE

DestinFWB.com

LITTLE
ADVENTURES



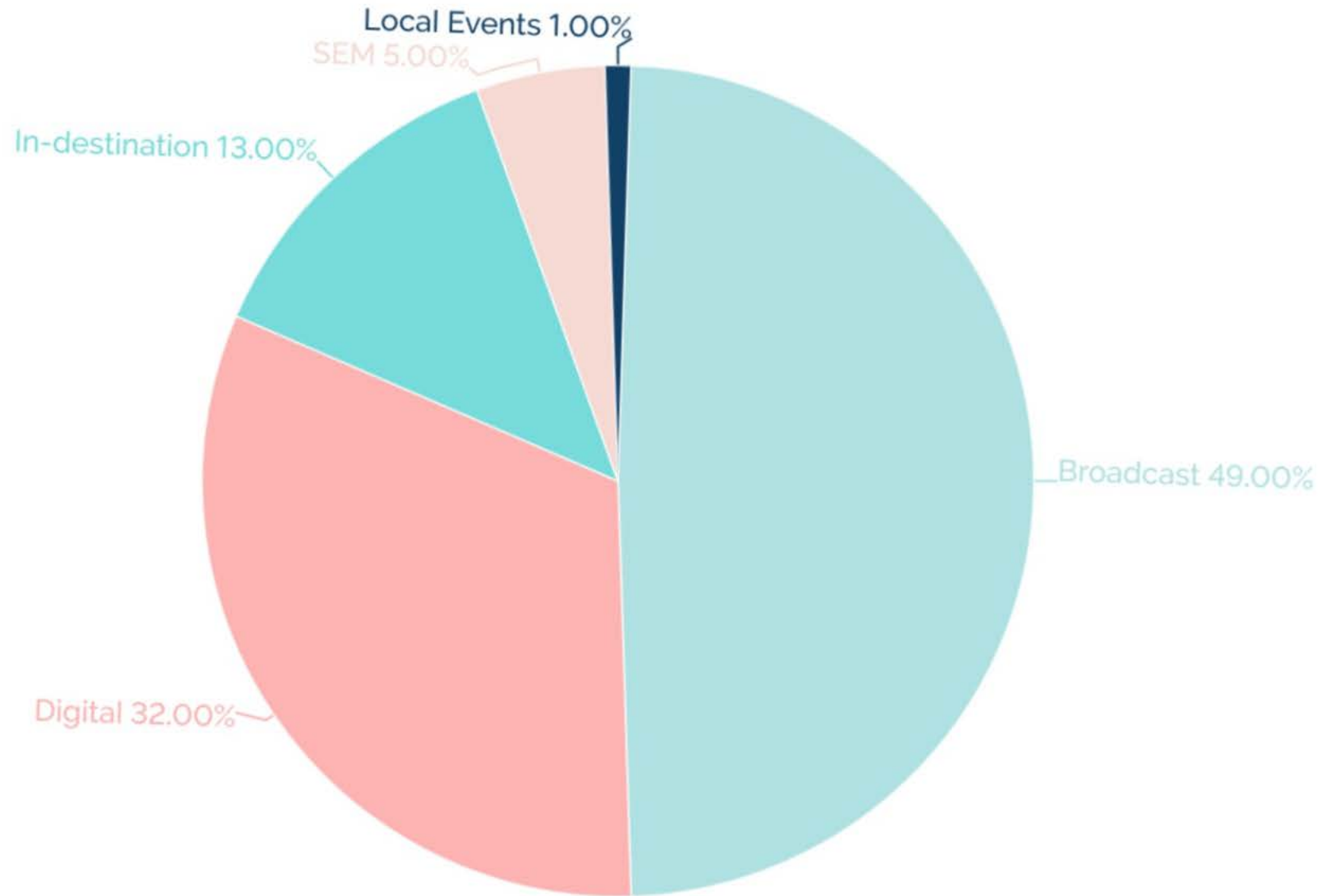


**Key
markets**

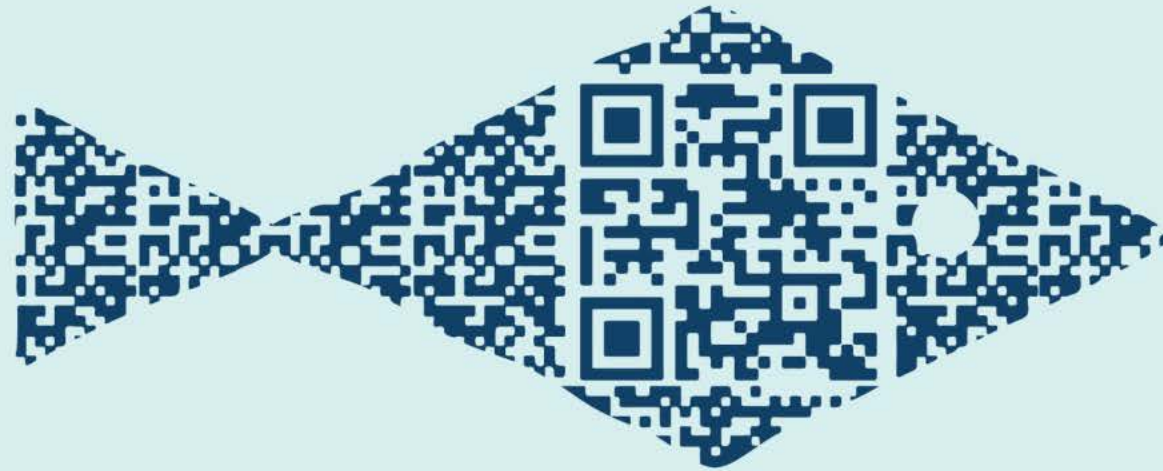
Atlanta

**Established
markets**

Media breakdown



Check out our new website!



Public + Community Relations

A photograph of a rocky coastline under a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a young girl with dark hair, wearing a pink floral swimsuit, is sitting on a large grey rock, looking down at something in her hands. In the background, a young boy in blue shorts is standing on another rock, holding a surfboard. The scene is bright and sunny, with some buildings visible in the distance on the left.

**Influencer
collaboration**

**Two virtual
events**

**Host adventure
media FAMS**

Digital Marketing + Social

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a pink one-piece swimsuit, is running through shallow, clear water. She is smiling and looking back over her shoulder. Her hair is blowing in the wind. In the background, there is a large body of water, a sailboat, and a sunset sky with a moon. The overall scene is serene and captures a moment of joy and freedom.

**Increase
engagement with
young families**

**Bring awareness
to filter tool**

**Establish
connection
between health +
wellness**

Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center

A photograph of a convention center interior. In the foreground, several people are seated at tables, viewed from behind. They are looking towards a large screen in the distance that displays a presentation. The room is dimly lit, with spotlights visible on the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is professional and focused.

**More mid-week
meetings
November-March**

**Increase revenue
by 15%**

**Finish capital
projects**

Destination Stewardship

An underwater photograph of two divers in clear, greenish water. One diver in the foreground is wearing a red wetsuit and a black mask, swimming towards the right. Another diver in a blue wetsuit is visible in the background, swimming towards the left. The scene is bright and clear, with light rays filtering through the water.

**Adventure
Pack
Program**

**Expand
Scout
Program**

**More
classes
county-wide**





Reel Time



Reel Time

The Charter Fishing Experience

Reel Time Leader Board

JOHN SMITH	
BOB REEL	
PAUL DE WIL	
LOU LOUW AT	

Reel Time

The Charter Fishing Experience

**Make time spent
here, whether
visiting, living or
working, more
valuable to all.**



The Journey Begins

DESTIN
FORT
WALTON
BEACH
FLORIDA

heather kevin
laurence james ginger
tori kevin
heather jessica leslie dan brian
emily alex ben joe
deb darrell melissa katie jim gina
lee kerry sharon leonard
bryan ryan judine mike aline
ty kim chelsea michael
joel gail kenny charlotte danielle
william william ron
emily chianti sabina
jokiah



Thank you.



DESTIN
FORT
WALTON
BEACH
FLORIDA