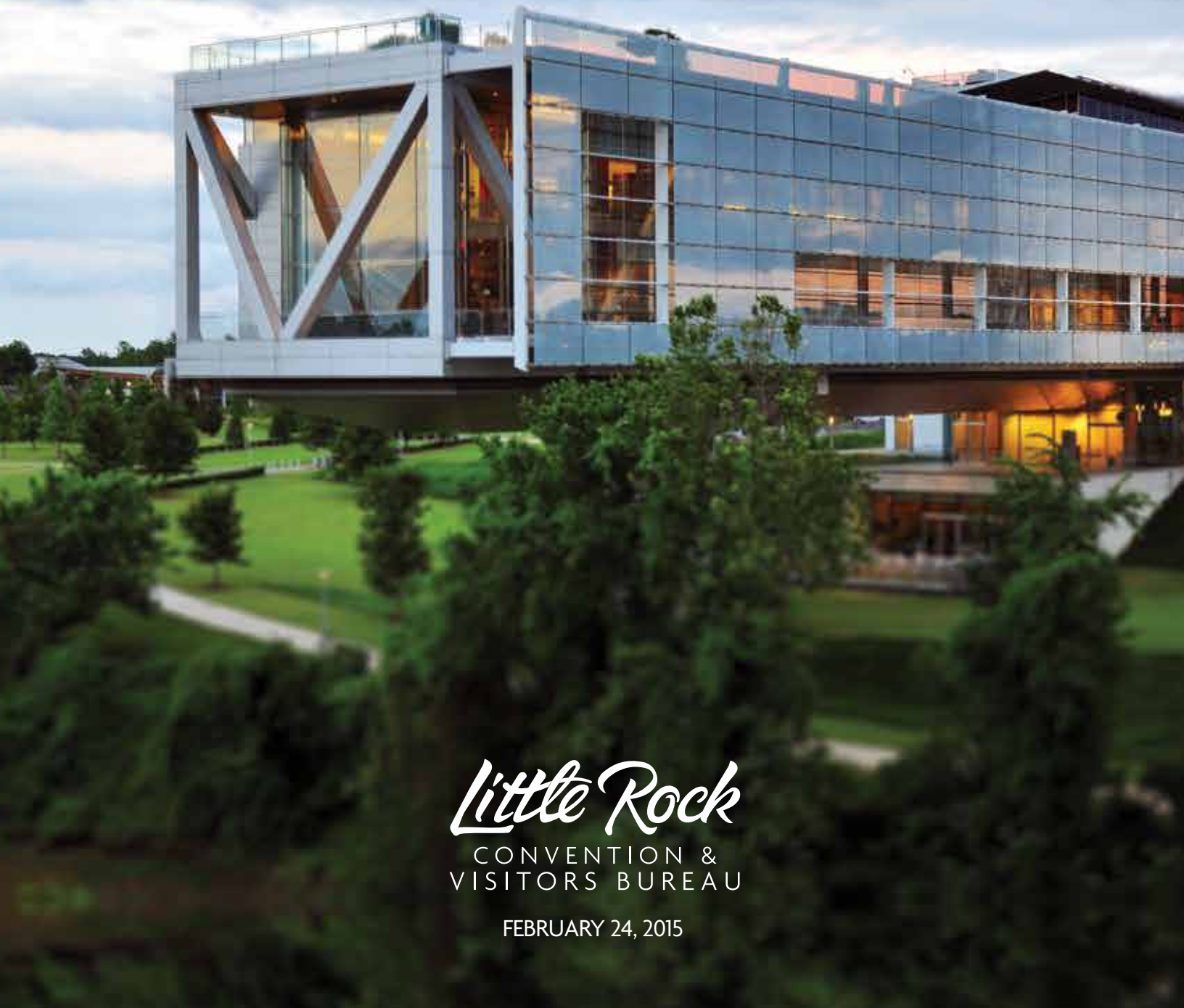


**LITTLE ROCK  
CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAU  
2014  
ANNUAL REPORT**



*Little Rock*  
CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAU

FEBRUARY 24, 2015

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



2014 proved to be a banner year for tourism in Little Rock and a milestone year for the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau (LRCVB). The destination experienced a lot of positive movement toward continued revitalization with numerous projects completed, and more on the horizon. Highlights included the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Clinton Presidential Center; national recognition as one of Forbes Top Five Secret Foodie Cities; continuing developments along Main Street and in SoMa; and the addition of hotel rooms throughout the city.

One of the most significant accomplishments in 2014 for LRCVB was the official closing of historic Robinson Center along with the commencement of the \$70 million renovation and expansion. Scheduled to reopen in late 2016, the center will once again be one of the South's finest performing arts facilities, while offering magnificent views of the Arkansas River, via a new conference center. The closing of Robinson Center also required the relocation of LRCVB offices to the Cromwell Building across Markham Street. Approximately 35 employees are now housed in the new offices, which ends a 43 year office history at Robinson Center.

While celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Clinton Center, LRCVB kicked off our "Decade of Progress" campaign. This media campaign focused on the positive growth central Arkansas has experienced over the past ten years. Visitor numbers continue to rise, as well as hospitality related jobs and economic impact related to tourism.

Financially, LRCVB continues to experience significant revenue growth, with total tax collections up 3.33% over 2013, fueled by strong performances in both prepared food and hotel room sales. Since 2004 A & P tax revenue has increased by 56%.

THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM  
INDUSTRY CONTINUES  
TO BE RECOGNIZED  
INTERNATIONALLY AS A  
MAJOR ECONOMIC DRIVER.  
AS THE #2 ECONOMIC  
INDUSTRY IN THE STATE OF  
ARKANSAS, LITTLE ROCK  
NOT ONLY SERVES AS  
THE STATE'S CAPITAL, BUT  
THE LARGEST HUB FOR  
TOURISM.



The sales team had its strongest annual room night production since 2006, securing 128,326 convention room nights, sending 347 leads for future bookings, and confirming 241 tourism/motor coach tour bookings. Over the past three years, hotel occupancy in Little Rock has increased 4.7%, ADR has increased by 14.7%, and RevPAR has increased by 20.1% – all of this despite the fact Little Rock has added 376 hotel rooms through new construction over the same period. Additionally, we continue to reap the benefits of hosting several meeting planner and motor coach tour operator conferences, as well as media tours, in order to have decision makers experience the destination first hand.

Little Rock continues to garner tremendous media coverage, and the marketing and communications department continues to build on the new destination brand strategy that was presented in 2013. The “With a Southern Accent” campaign is used to illustrate the true southern charm and authenticity of the city and our people. Additionally, web traffic and all social media platforms continue to experience large increases.

The facility operations team continues to shine in customer service scores received by our client surveys, as well as our secret shopper reports. The Statehouse Convention Center experienced an increase in both number of events and annual attendance, a trend expected to continue due to the temporary closure of Robinson Center. In 2013 the team played a huge role in converting the city owned convention hotel into the Marriott Little Rock. In 2014, the team once again assisted with a lease transfer of the second city owned hotel, the DoubleTree. Our overall facility usage at the convention center is slightly higher than many recognized national averages, and in 2014 our facilities, combined, welcomed more than 800,000 patrons.

The travel and tourism industry continues to be recognized internationally as a major economic driver. As the #2 revenue generating industry in the state of Arkansas, Little Rock not only serves as the state's capital, but as the largest hub for tourism. Pulaski County welcomes more than 5.7 million visitors annually. With the exciting progress in 2014 – coupled with on-going destination development and announcements for future growth – Little Rock will certainly continue to enjoy significant growth in the travel and tourism sector!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Gretchen Hall". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "H" and a signature mark at the end.

Gretchen Hall, President & CEO, Little Rock CVB



# LEADERSHIP

## LITTLE ROCK CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU (LRCVB)

The Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau (LRCVB) is the official destination marketing organization for the City of Little Rock, charged with marketing and selling the city as a meeting, convention and visitor destination. The LRCVB also operates the Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, River Market and multiple parking facilities. The organization is divided into four primary divisions: finance & administration, facility operations, sales & services, and marketing & communications.

## LITTLE ROCK ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION COMMISSION

The Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission is the governing body for LRCVB. It is a volunteer board consisting of seven members: two City of Little Rock elected officials, four business owners within the Little Rock hospitality industry and one at-large position.

**Warren Simpson, Chair**  
**Capi Peck, Vice-Chair**  
**Mayor Mark Stodola**  
**Larry Carpenter**  
**City Director Gene Fortson**  
**Tim Morton**  
**Philip Tappan**



## LRCVB EXECUTIVE TEAM

**Gretchen Hall, President & CEO**  
**Jim Rice, Sr. Vice President & COO**  
**Leigh Ann Biernat, Sr. Vice President - Finance & Administration**  
**Alan Sims, Vice President - Sales & Services**  
**John Mayner, Vice President - Marketing & Communications**

## LRCVB MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Ionette Neal**  
*Senior Director of Tax Revenue*

**Susan Sanders**  
*Controller*

**Kim Sanders**  
*Human Resources, Payroll and Benefits Representative*

**Kim Berry**  
*Executive Assistant to the SVP/COO*

**Johnny Loney**  
*Auxiliary Services Manager*

**Phyllis Lucas**  
*Senior Director of Event Operations*

**Randy Guptill**  
*Director of Technical Services*

**James 'Doc' Doolittle**  
*Sr. Director of Facilities Maintenance/Engineering*

**Diana Long**  
*Director River Market Operations*

**Trudie Long**  
*Parking Manager*

**Bobby Green**  
*Security Supervisor*

**Gwen Stallings**  
*Building Services Supervisor*

**Ricardo Henderson**  
*Building Services Supervisor*

**Libby Lloyd**  
*Communications Manager*

**Dan Limke**  
*Creative Services Manager*

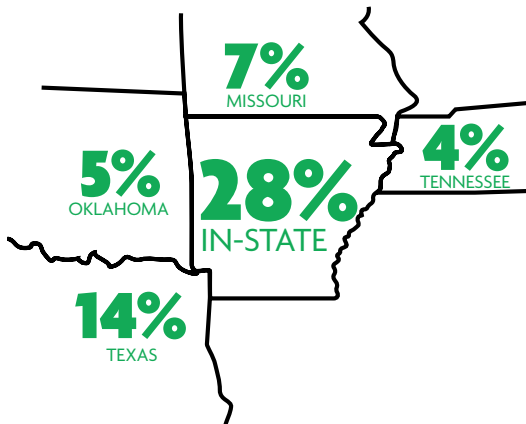
**Charlie Oppedisano**  
*Retail Sales Manager*

**Jennifer Willis**  
*Convention Sales Manager*

# VALUE OF TOURISM

## ARKANSAS VISITOR PROFILE

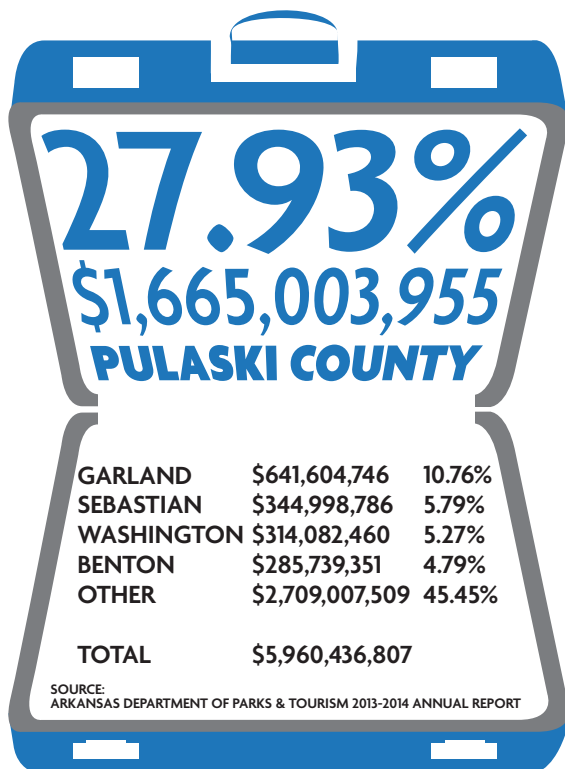
PRIMARY ORIGIN MARKETS FOR OVERNIGHT LEISURE TRIPS



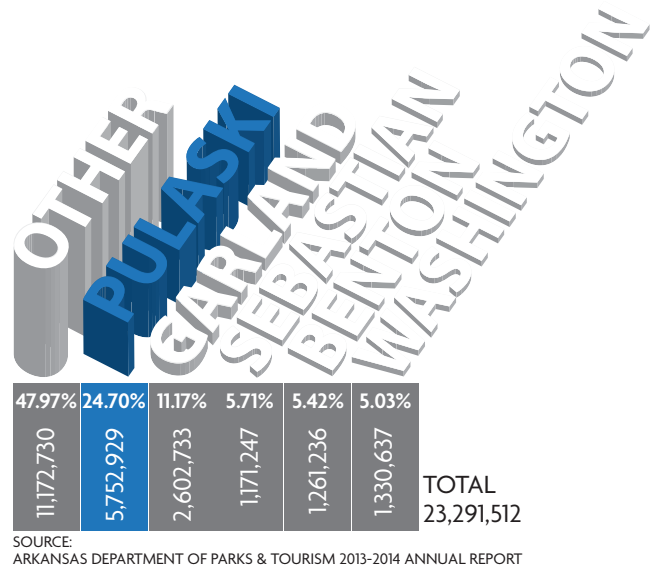
## TOURISM IMPACT IN ARKANSAS



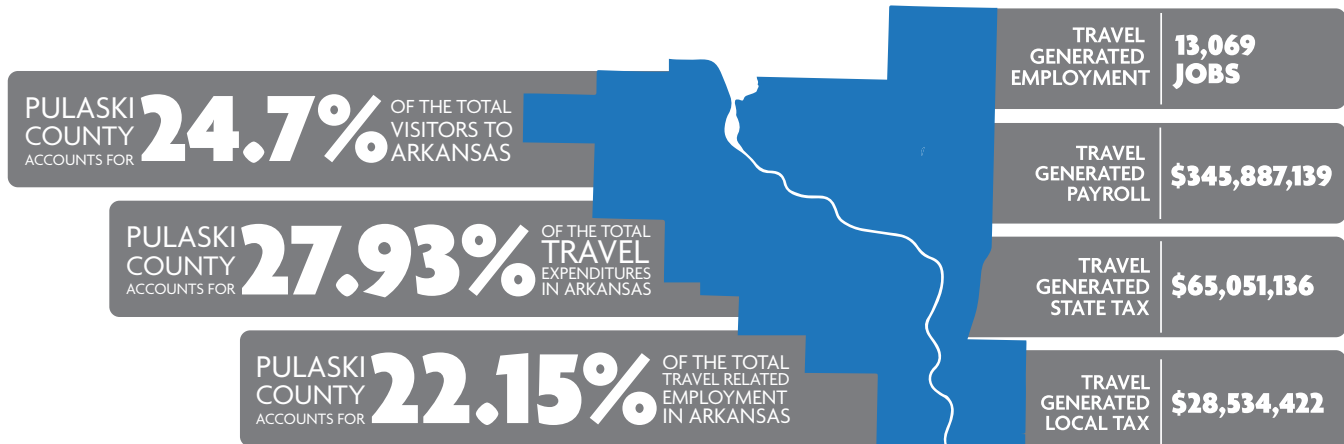
## 2013 TRAVEL SPENDING IN ARKANSAS COUNTIES



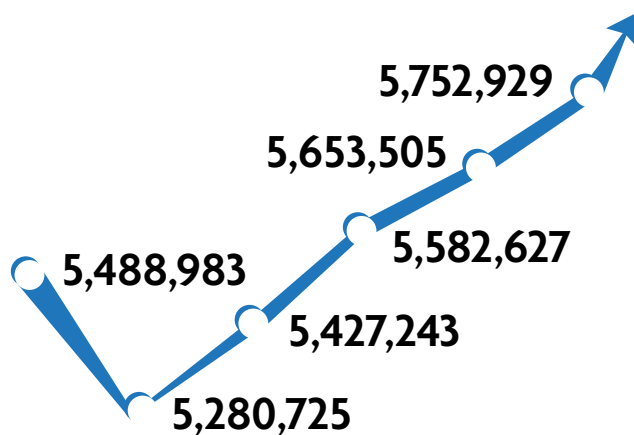
## 2013 ANNUAL VISITORS IN ARKANSAS COUNTIES



## TOURISM IMPACT IN PULASKI COUNTY



Source: Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism 2013-2014 Annual Report



**2008-2013**  
**PULASKI COUNTY**  
**ANNUAL VISITORS**



# FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Finance and Administration Division's Tax Department collects the Advertising & Promotion two percent (2%) tax, also referred to as the "A&P Tax" or the "hospitality tax." This is collected on gross receipts of Little Rock hotels and prepared food establishments. 2014 was a notable year with over \$12 million in tax collections. Over the last ten years, A&P tax collections have increased nine of those years, and a total of 56% when compared to 2004.

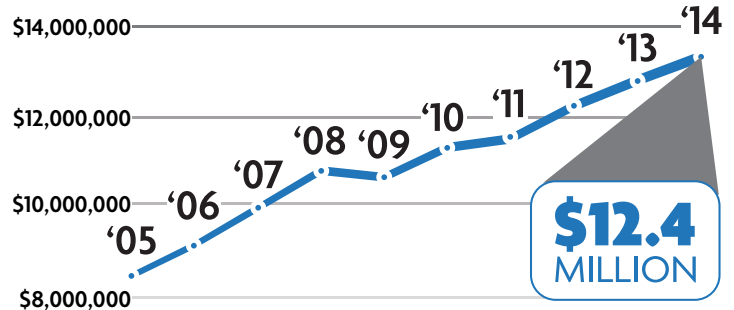
LRCVB has experienced a \$1.5 million increase in A&P tax collections over the last five years. Collections from prepared food establishments reached \$9.8 million in 2014, increasing 15% from 2010, while hotel tax collections reached \$2.6 million in 2014, increasing 10% in five years. LRCVB began offering online payment of taxes for the first time in 2014 and continues to look for ways to improve and streamline collections.

In addition to relocating network infrastructure during 2014, the Information Technology Department focused on connectivity between all LRCVB facilities and Wi-Fi improvements throughout the organization. This effort resulted in an improved client experience at LRCVB facilities. In addition the IT department implemented several enhancements to equipment, technical upgrades, and computer systems and software improvements. These enhancements provide more efficiency to the organization at lower operating costs.

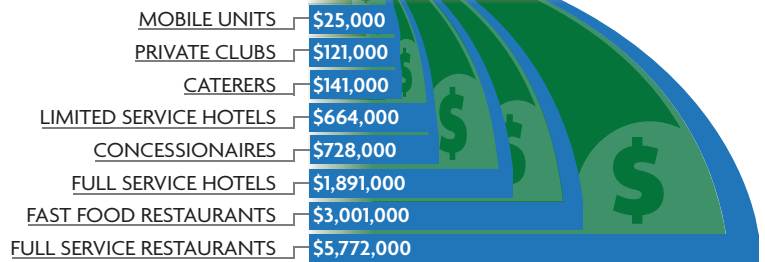
The Accounting Department began streamlining processes to link the event management system to the accounting system, while simultaneously experiencing over fifty percent turnover in the department. The department provides services including cash management, financial statement preparation for multiple locations, recordkeeping and reporting, budget and cost benefit analyses, as well as coordination of the annual external audit.

Purchasing and Human Resources are other departments within Finance & Administration. Purchasing coordinates contract renewals, vendor bidding and procurement for the entire organization. Human Resources is responsible for personnel and payroll administration, as well as serving as the primary liaison to the City of Little Rock Human Resources Department, which provides certain contracted services.

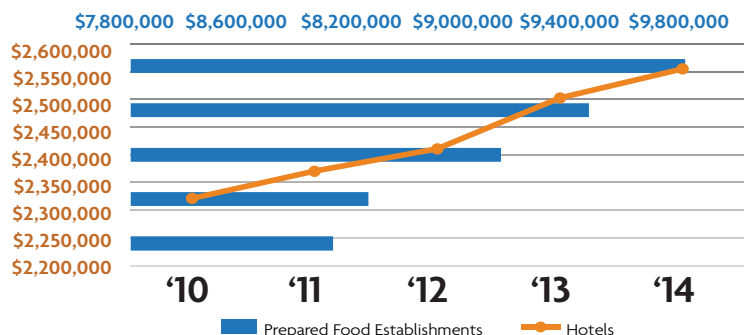
## A&P TAX COLLECTIONS 2005 -2014



## 2014 TAX COLLECTIONS BY BUSINESS TYPE

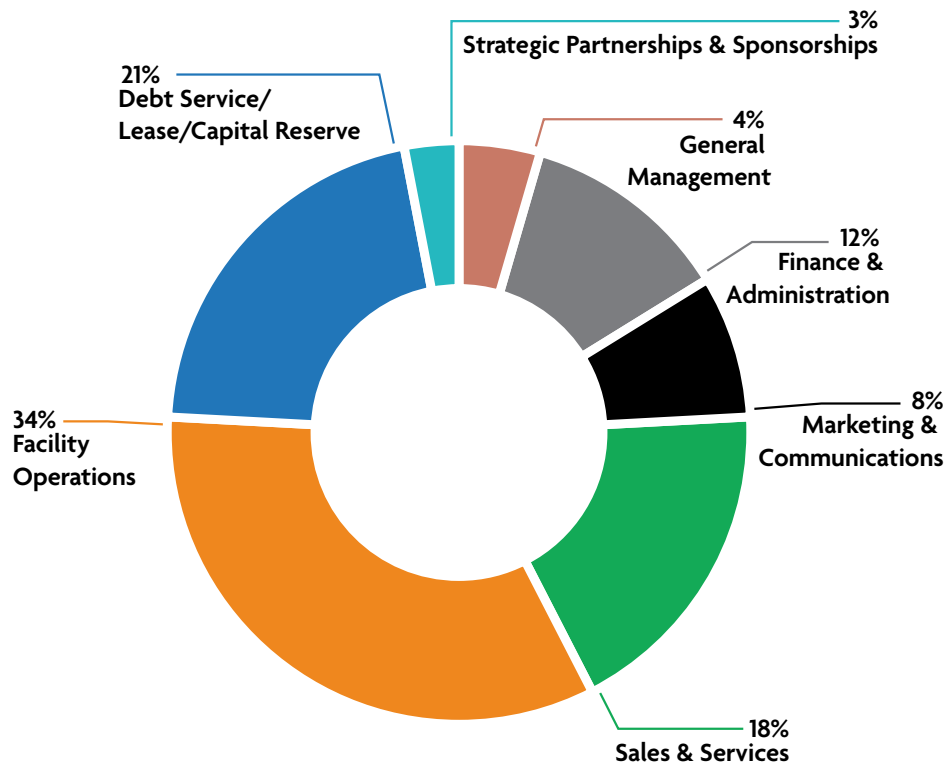


## TAX REVENUE BY TYPE

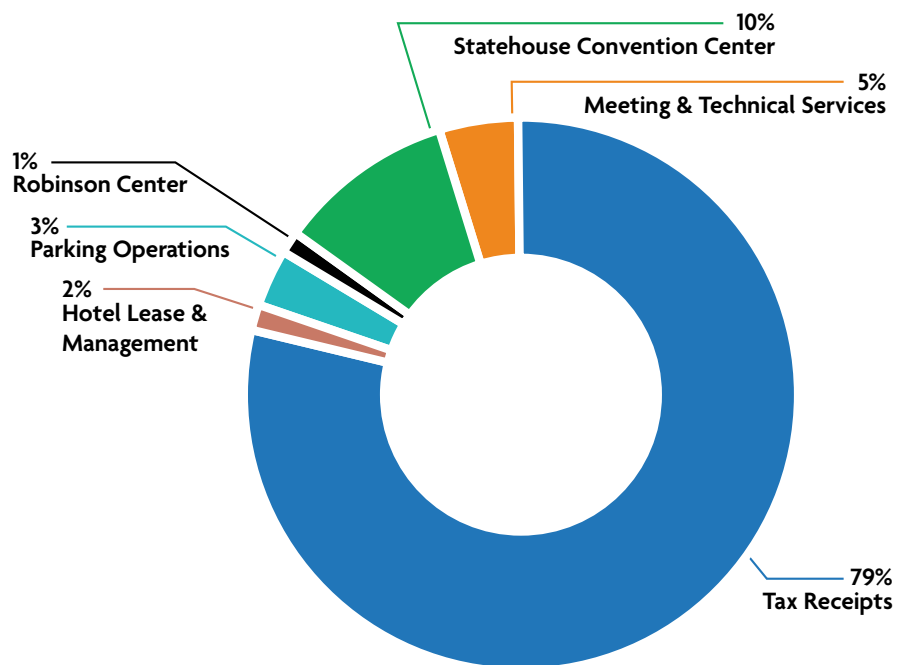




## 2014 TOTAL EXPENDITURES



## 2014 TOTAL REVENUE - \$15.7 MILLION



# FACILITY OPERATIONS

The Facility Operations division, under agreement with the City of Little Rock, is responsible for the operation of Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, the municipal parking garage at Robinson and the parking decks at 2nd and Main Streets as well as 2nd and River Market Avenue.



Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the city, LRCVB is also the management entity of the River Market. These responsibilities include Ottenheimer Market Hall, two 6,000 sq. ft. outdoor pavilions, the 7,500 seat First Security Amphitheater and all surface parking within Riverfront Park.

Additionally, the division has direct operational responsibility, and serves as contract liaison, between the city-owned hotel properties and the Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission. Hotel contractors include FAC-W Markham, LLC, a partnership affiliate of Fifth Avenue Capital and Waterford Hotel Group (Double Tree Hotel); and FWH II of Memphis (Marriott Hotel), managed by Davidson Hotels & Resorts. Lastly, the facility operations division manages the commission owned parking lot on block 2, CLR, directly across from the Statehouse Convention Center.

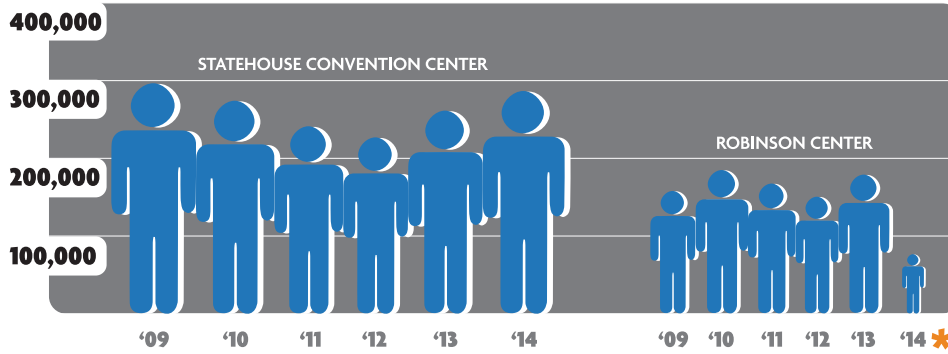
## 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

2014, though challenging due to major facility related projects, proved to be a very successful year for LRCVB managed properties. Following successful seasons by our resident companies, the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Celebrity Attractions, Robinson Auditorium closed on July 1 to begin the 27 month scheduled renovation.

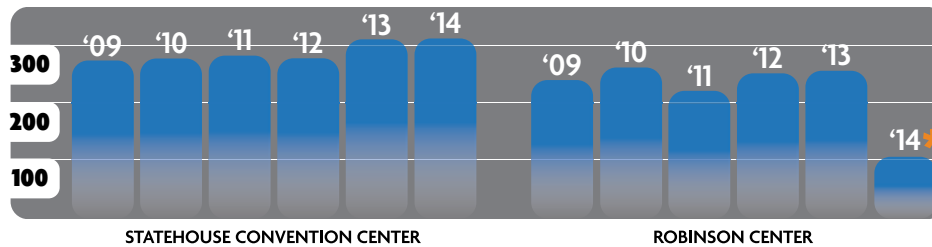
In spite of the Robinson project and the extensive office move to the Cromwell building, Statehouse Convention Center and the River Market continued servicing our convention, meetings, special event and entertainment clients. The division, as a whole, continues to receive high service scores on client surveys as well as secret shopper reports. In addition, numerous capital projects were completed throughout the year, including:

- Replacement of River Market parking equipment and related software
- IT server room relocation to Statehouse Convention Center
- Painted Second and Main parking deck
- Robinson Parking Garage upgrades to entrance
- Chiller One rebuild and re-installation at Statehouse Convention Center
- Robinson Garage Structural Engineering Study in process
- Chiller replacement engineering and retention of contractor – Statehouse Convention Center
- Governor's Halls electrical floor trench refurbishment
- Lighting conversion to LED in Statehouse Convention Center atrium
- Ice guards installed on metal roof at Ottenheimer Market Hall in the River Market
- Kitchen and 3rd floor meeting room upgrades in Ottenheimer Hall
- Began exterior painting of Statehouse Convention Center

## ANNUAL PATRONS



## DAYS UTILIZED



\* REPRESENTS 6 MONTHS – CLOSED JULY 1 FOR RENOVATION

## STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER 2014

EVENT TYPE	# OF EVENTS	PATRON DAYS
Convention	53	160,446
Shows	4	2,050
Dance/Party	7	2,602
Banquets, Receptions & Luncheons	37	27,508
Meeting	46	28,138
Consumer Show	15	58,701
Sports	1	2,950
Graduation	6	8,850
Recital/Competitions	4	2,725
Exams	5	1,086
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>295,056</b>

## ROBINSON CENTER 2014

\*REPRESENTS 6 MONTHS - CLOSED JULY 1 FOR RENOVATION

EVENT TYPE	# OF EVENTS	PATRON DAYS
Convention	3	1,950
Shows	30	44,689
Dance/Party	2	1,250
Banquets, Receptions & Luncheons	11	2,520
Meeting	19	4,802
Consumer Show	2	1,100
Sports	0	0
Graduation	3	3,150
Recital/Competitions	21	18,625
Rehearsals/Other	28	2,820
Exams	7	1,012
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>81,918</b>

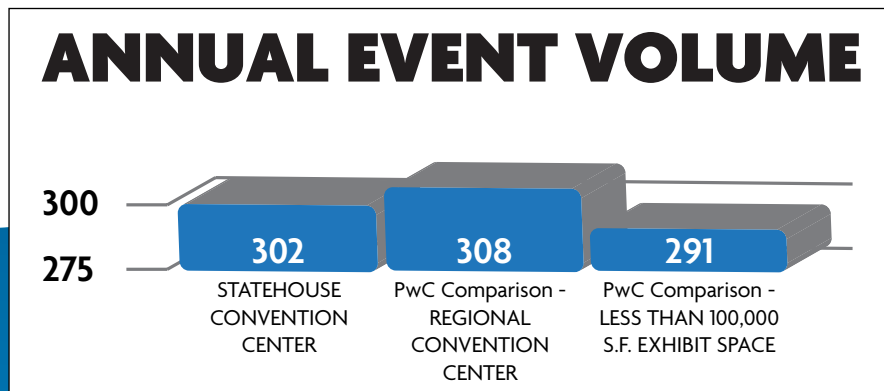
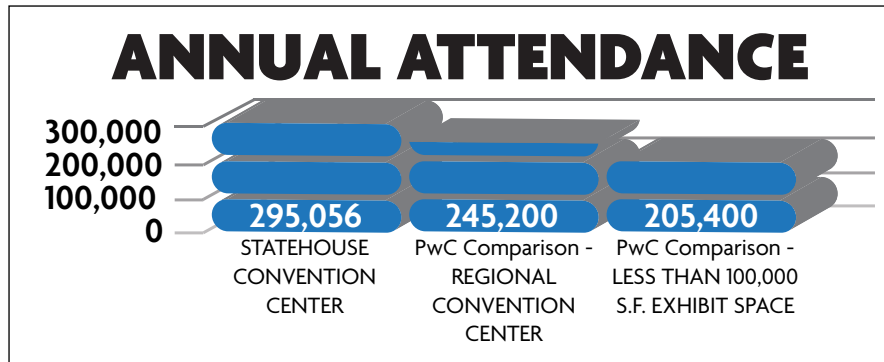
## RIVER MARKET 2014

EVENT TYPE	# OF EVENTS	PATRON DAYS
Convention	1	190
Shows	33	299,547
Dance/Party	6	654
Banquets, Receptions & Luncheons	56	12,596
Meeting	24	2,714
Trade Show/Exhibits (including Farmers' Market)	41	107,053
Sports/Hobby	23	24,520
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>447,274</b>

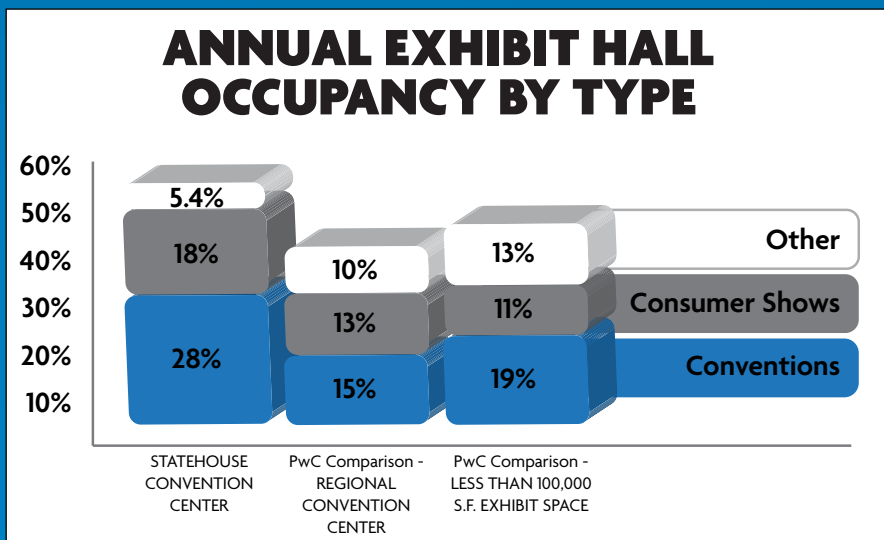


## CONVENTION CENTER COMPARISONS

Comparison information provided via 29th volume of PwC Convention Center Report 2013, which evaluates trends in the North American convention industry.



Figures for "All Events" represent all center events regardless of event type or space utilized (exhibit hall, ballroom, multi-purpose, etc.). Events are defined as one activity or a series of related activities. For example, either a three-day conference or single three-hour local banquet would be classified as a single event. Further, a banquet that is part of the conference would not be classified as a separate event.  
Event Volume = total days the facility was in use.





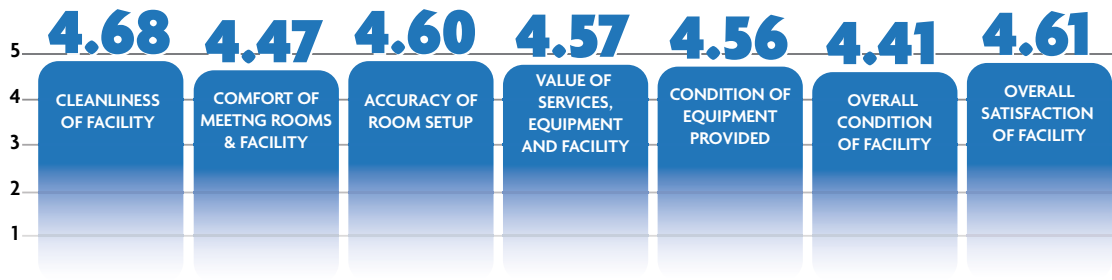
CLIENT SURVEYS

**LRCVB STAFF**

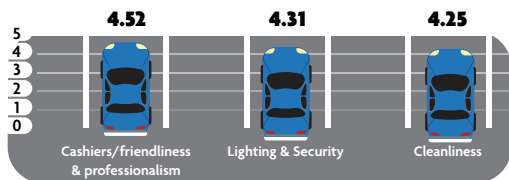


Staff and service scores for the 500+ annual events in LRCVB facilities. Scale of 1 to 5 (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=very good, 5=excellent)

**LRCVB FACILITY OPERATIONS**



**PARKING FACILITIES**

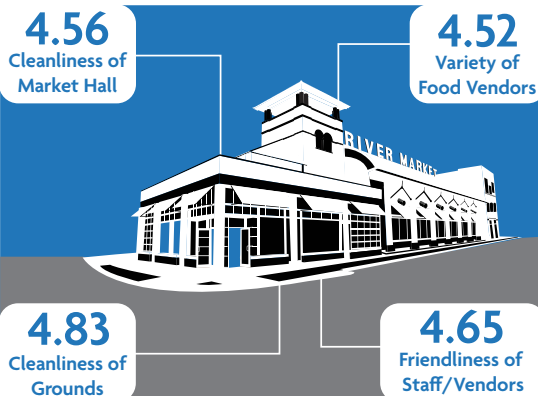


**SECRET SHOPPER SUMMARY**

JULY 2013			
	STAFF	PERFORMANCE	FACILITY
STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER, RIVER MARKET, PARKING OPERATIONS	48 touchpoints	73 touchpoints	22 touchpoints
	4.2	4.23	3.43
NOVEMBER 2014			
	STAFF	PERFORMANCE	FACILITY
STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER, RIVER MARKET, PARKING OPERATIONS	42 touchpoints	111 touchpoints	21 touchpoints
	4.5	4.5	4.0

5 = EXCELLENT • 4 = VERY GOOD • 3 = GOOD • 2 = FAIR • 1 = POOR

**OTTENHEIMER MARKET HALL**



**SECRET SHOPPER SUMMARY**

RSS Shoppers conducted an assessment (above) of the LRCVB managed facilities: Statehouse Convention Center; River Market Hall, pavilions, and amphitheater; parking deck at 2nd and Main; parking deck at 2nd and River Market Avenue and the parking garage at Robinson Center. The assessments took place October 29 – November 13, 2014.

The primary focus was to evaluate the overall quality of guest service provided by the staff at the facilities, in the following areas: General Facility Condition, Cleanliness, Preventative Maintenance, Guest Services, Event Services/Event Management and Security Services.

Quantitative scores were averaged to provide an overall rating by category – Staff, which includes touch-points such as appearance, proactivity, helpfulness and availability; Performance, which includes condition of facility, cleanliness, restrooms and maintenance; and Facility, which includes wayfinding signage, ingress/egress signage, and quality of lighting and other safety measures.

# ROBINSON CENTER RENOVATION



With the passage of a special Little Rock election on Tuesday, December 10, 2013, to dedicate the existing 2% A&P tax for the repayment of bonds to fund renovations and an expansion, Robinson Center officially closed for construction on July 1, 2014. LRCVB successfully coordinated the City of Little Rock's issuance of \$68,938,125 in hotel and restaurant gross receipts tax bonds for the purpose of financing a portion of the costs of renovations and additions to Robinson Center. LRCVB will provide annual debt service of \$4 million on the bonds, which have a final maturity of July 1, 2044.

Governor Mike Beebe joined members of the A&P commission, Mayor Stodola and other city officials in formally closing the building on July 1. The press event highlighted much of the building's history, and dubbed the renovation schedule as an "intermission", noting that the re-grand opening will be Robinson's "Second Act." Renderings, architectural finish boards, and a special video were all presented to provide details about the renovation and expansion.

The 1939 structure will be receiving major interior upgrades within the performance hall including, additional vertical volume creating a two tiered balcony, increased lobby space, acoustical improvements, theatrical upgrades, loading dock expansion, a larger stage area, and new dressing room

facilities. In addition, an enhanced and modern ballroom and small conference center will be added to the North side of the building. New technology, mechanical systems, and parking garage entrances into the facility are also included in the project.

The first six months of demolition have included erection of a huge tower crane that can be viewed for miles in the downtown area, and interior demolition of the previous exhibition hall and performance hall loading, seating and dressing areas.

In addition, utilities have been relocated on the north side of the structure, excavation for new public elevators and the loading facility, portions of the roof have been removed, brace frame steel and scaffolding installed, as well as on-going testing and hazardous material removal. 2015 will be crucial as far as successfully achieving critical path success in order to achieve substantial completion in late 2016.

Over \$42 million in construction contracts have been awarded thus far and more than 260 subcontractor employees are participating in the project to date. In addition, 85% of total construction waste and debris has been recycled. This includes dirt, steel, brick and concrete, totaling 4,874 tons! The facility is scheduled for substantial completion in November 2016.





Aerial photos by Aaron Stone







To provide on-going project updates throughout construction, the marketing team has developed a special website with renderings, construction photographs, press releases, and other project information. This website will continue to be updated until the official re-opening.

Construction of the Joseph T. Robinson Memorial Auditorium began in 1937 and officially opened in December, 1939. The structure was a WPA (Works Progress Administration) project, and is an excellent example of the Art Deco style architecture of the time. The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. The facility is owned by the City of Little Rock and managed by the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau.



[ROBINSONCENTERSECONDACT.COM](http://ROBINSONCENTERSECONDACT.COM)



# SALES AND SERVICES

The overall performance of the Sales and Services team in 2014 was phenomenal. The team recorded the highest total definite room night bookings, and generated more pure booking leads in more than seven years, surpassing pre-recession output in both categories.

Bringing more visitors to the City of Little Rock is our charge and we categorize these visitors by specific market segments. Visitors filling our hotels, restaurants, attractions and facilities – regardless of why they are visiting Little Rock – each have one thing in common, they spend money in our city. When this happens, they become “temporary taxpayers,” positively impacting the local economy and reducing the financial burden of every household within the community.

Quality of life issues don't only affect residents; visitors are attracted to the same amenities, and their participation benefits the entire community. It is so true – “if you build it they will come.” The Clinton Presidential Center, River Market District, Main Street Creative Corridor, Statehouse Convention Center and the new Robinson Auditorium are all new, or renovated, developments creating a better quality of life for residents, while also attracting new visitors.

## 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

Coming off of a great 2013, the team was challenged to outperform that success. In 2014, the Sales and Services team increased new business leads generated by 47.7% over a benchmark established in 2012. This increase in new booking opportunities was also reflected in definite room night performance which achieved an eight year high of 128,326, representing a 5.2% increase over goal.

In 2014 LRCVB hosted several large events with significant numbers of attendees, such as the American Taekwondo Association and the National Square Dance Convention. Additionally, we experienced a first for the sales team and facility operations by hosting the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers, the largest trade show in Little Rock's history. The group had 265 exhibitor booths, occupying more than 100,000 sq. ft. of exhibit space, and filling 3,500 hotel rooms with more than 2,000 attendees from 48 states and 6 countries. Their impact was more than \$2.2 million in direct local spending.

The sports market segment continues to be our top room night generator, producing more than 49,000 definite room nights in 2014. Continued growth in this market will be a challenge without sporting facility upgrades and new facility development.

The tourism market segment experienced increased levels of definite bookings and leads generated as a result of a 2014 strategic initiative utilizing our electronic lead distribution system to include additional industry partners. Expanded and enhanced partner relationships grew tourism leads and definite bookings to significantly higher levels year-over-year. New leads generated increased from 88 in 2013 to 169 in 2014, an impressive 92%. This increase in new business opportunities for our partners was also reflected in definite bookings up 57.5% over the previous year, achieving a new benchmark of 241.



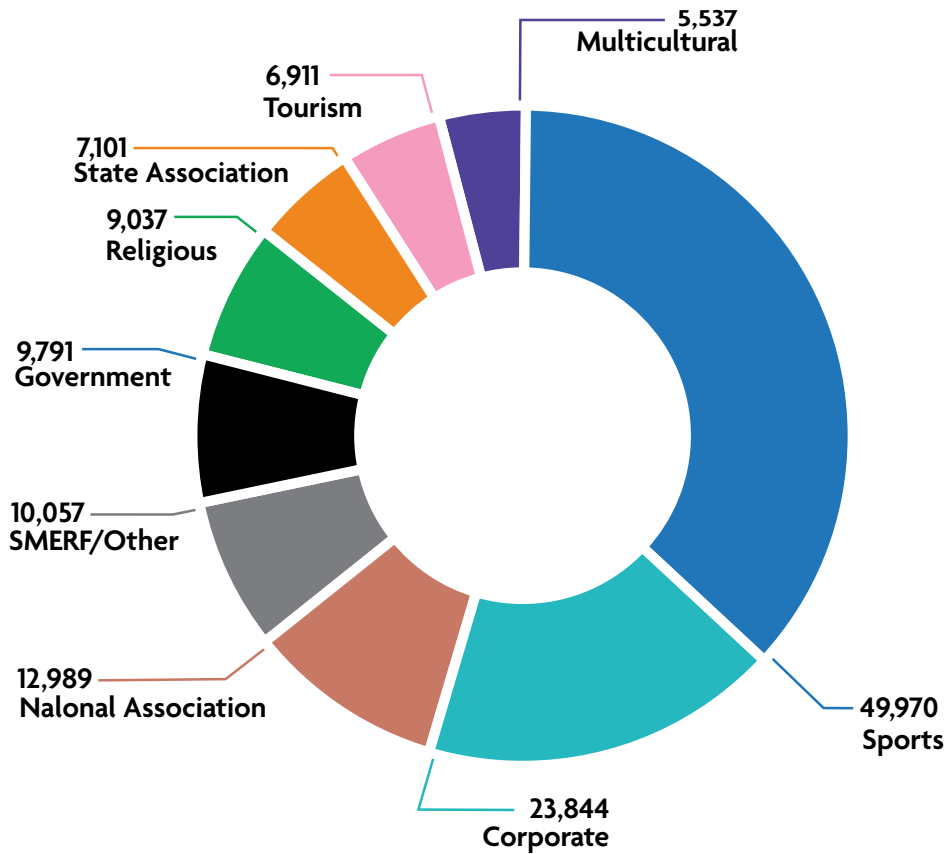
THE SALES AND SERVICES  
TEAM IS EFFECTIVELY  
DISCOVERING NEW  
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES,  
CONVERTING THEM INTO  
NEW BOOKINGS AND  
DEVELOPING THOSE INTO  
REPEAT BUSINESS  
FOR THE CITY.

2014 SALES PRODUCTIVITY					
MARKET SEGMENT	# OF EVENTS/ BOOKINGS	ROOM NIGHTS	ATTENDEES	% OF ROOM NIGHTS	TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT
Sports	82	49,970	346,685	36.95%	\$27,809,333
Corporate	61	23,844	28,419	17.63%	\$7,327,405
National Association	28	12,989	14,277	9.60%	\$5,665,560
SMERF/Other	109	10,057	16,297	7.44%	\$4,074,536
Government	24	9,791	9,385	7.24%	\$10,681,439
Religious	19	9,037	18,810	6.68%	\$4,541,889
State Association	39	7,101	12,045	5.25%	\$2,960,796
Tourism	241	6,911	11,176	5.11%	N/A
Multicultural	14	5,537	13,550	4.09%	\$3,017,983
TOTALS	617	135,237	470,644	100%	\$63,060,958

Strategic initiatives that contributed to a successful 2014:

- **SERVICES TEAM:** New housing technology, through Passkey, was implemented and significantly improved LRCVB services, client perception and efficiency. In 2012 all definite bookings began being turned-over to the services team, establishing them as the primary contact for future meeting needs. Excellent follow-up and account management by the services team has allowed the sales team to concentrate on new business development.
- **EXPERIENCE LITTLE ROCK:** Statistics confirm we have a much greater opportunity of converting potential business into a definite booking if the key decision makers actually visit and experience Little Rock. We successfully hosted Boomers in Groups bringing in almost 90 tour and group operators that market specifically to the fastest growing tourism market segment on the planet... Baby Boomers.
- **THIRD PARTY MEETING PLANNERS:** In 2014 LRCVB hosted 75 of the top producing representatives from HelmsBriscoe. The opportunity to host these critical partners represents a strategic goal for our organization to develop stronger relationships with third party meeting planners, and have them experience the destination first-hand. For many of the planners, this was their first experience in Little Rock. LRCVB received overwhelming accolades and appreciation. Additionally, we were featured in numerous HelmsBriscoe associate communications, and continue to receive new business leads and inquiries in response to hosting the event.
- **CONVERSION:** Success is measured in new business opportunities distributed to our partners as leads, and converting those leads into new definite bookings. We continue to focus on converting opportunities into actual business and this focus is represented by an increased team conversion ratio of 35%.
- **AWARENESS:** Continuing to build on the success of satellite sales representatives in the Chicago and Washington DC markets, in 2014 LRCVB engaged a new representative in Chicago who has a history in the Little Rock hospitality industry. Our Washington DC representative left for a new opportunity, mid-year, and we are currently searching for new representation in that market.

## ROOM NIGHTS



### LRCVB 2014 BOOKING PACE REPORT DECEMBER YEAR-END PERFORMANCE

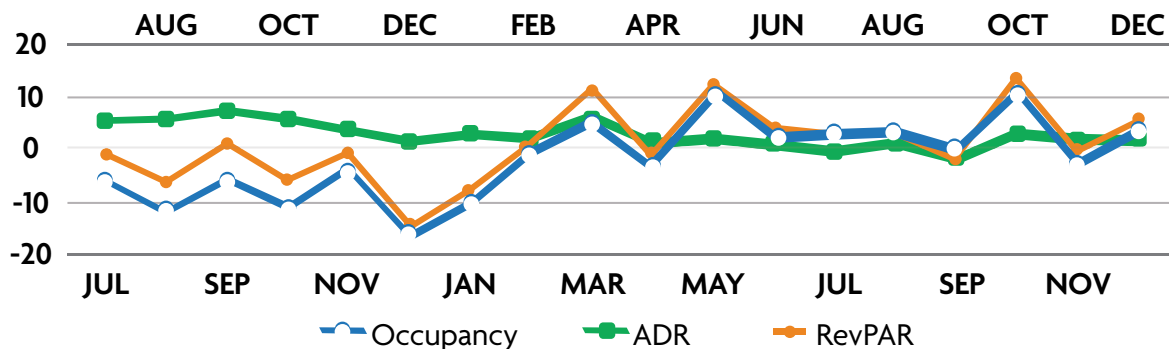
YEAR	ITYFTY RM NTS	FOLLOWING YR RM NTS	2 YEAR RM NTS	3 YEAR RM NTS	4 YEAR RM NTS	5 YEAR RM NTS	6 YEAR RM NTS	7 YEAR RM NTS	TOTAL RM NTS
2008	46,175	23,497	9,825	1,490	18,665	15,816	0	3,000	118,468
2009	45,475	40,527	9,398	8,600	5,694	12,650	0	0	122,344
2010	34,765	37,875	21,436	5,476	2,570	4,009	550	550	107,231
2011	43,204	26,071	8,885	4,514	5,143	3,452	6,994	1,639	99,902
2012	58,100	33,148	19,691	1,096	349	0	0	3,278	115,662
2013	86,151	23,857	8,129	5,234	1,382	0	2,745	0	127,498
2014	93,038	31,533	2,303	582	380	245	245	0	128,326
7 YR AVG	58,130	30,930	11,381	3,856	4,883	5,167	1,505	1,210	117,062

(ITYFTY = In The Year For The Year)

**2014 COMPETITIVE MARKET HOTEL INFORMATION**

	Occ %		ADR		RevPAR		Percent Change from YTD 2013					
	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	Occ	ADR	RevPAR	Room Rev	Room Avail	Room Sold
Memphis, TN-AR-MS	64.9	60.0	84.18	80.79	54.64	48.48	8.2	4.2	12.7	12.9	0.1	8.3
Oklahoma City, OK	63.8	65.7	82.59	78.30	52.71	51.44	-2.9	5.5	2.5	5.5	3.0	0.0
Tulsa, OK	58.8	57.1	77.75	75.32	45.74	43.04	2.9	3.2	6.3	7.0	0.7	3.6
Wichita, KS	59.9	59.1	81.50	78.32	48.78	46.32	1.2	4.1	5.3	3.8	-1.4	-0.3
Northwest AR	58.4	53.7	81.34	78.73	47.52	42.28	8.8	3.3	12.4	11.1	-1.2	7.5
Birmingham, AL	59.7	57.3	71.62	79.91	49.08	45.76	4.2	2.9	7.3	7.3	0.0	4.2
Montgomery, AL	60.6	56.8	84.68	66.88	43.38	38.00	6.6	7.1	14.2	15.7	1.3	8.0
Little Rock, AR	58.2	57.1	84.68	83.16	49.29	47.50	1.9	1.8	3.8	6.0	2.2	4.1
Jackson, MS	60.6	59.7	75.05	72.93	45.46	43.52	1.5	2.9	4.5	5.8	1.3	2.8
North Little Rock, AR	55.2	54.0	70.23	68.52	38.80	37.03	2.2	2.5	4.8	6.4	1.5	3.8
Hot Springs, AR	43.5	42.3	92.96	91.02	40.41	38.52	2.7	2.1	4.9	5.2	0.3	3.0

Source: Smith Travel Research

**MONTHLY HOTEL PERCENT CHANGE**

**TAP REPORT**

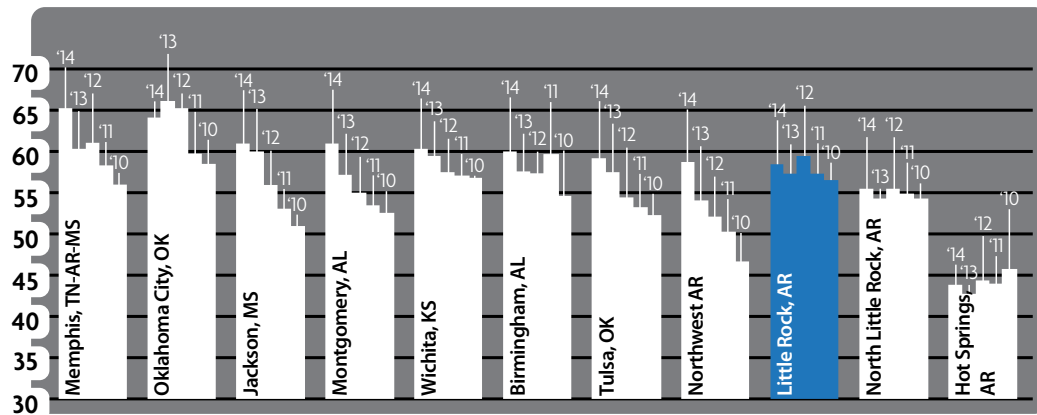
Trends, Analysis, and Projections, known as the TAP Report utilizes historical data to develop and apply algorithms to current booking data allowing us to more accurately communicate, forecast, identify, compete and close potential business and achieve definite room night booking goals.

**THE TAP REPORT**

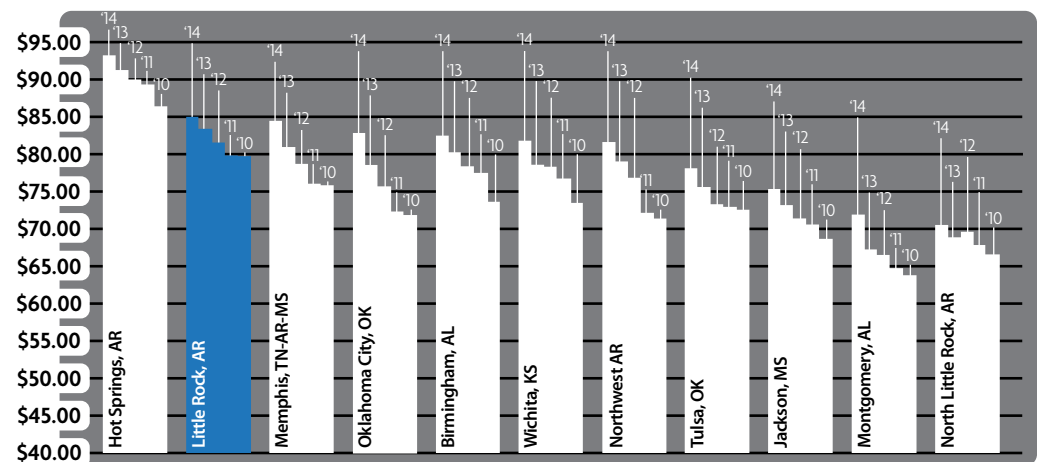
LITTLE ROCK ROOM NIGHTS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Definite Room Nights	143,905	56,958	13,651	11,507	2,019	4,629	1,884	0	234,553
LRCVB Pace Targets	121,999	62,270	30,642	20,003	13,136	7,857	3,908	1,292	261,107
Variance	21,906	(5,312)	(16,991)	(8,496)	(11,117)	(3,228)	(2,024)	(1,292)	(26,554)
LRCVB Consumption Benchmark	121,999	121,999	121,999	121,999	121,999	121,999	121,999	121,999	975,992
LRCVB Pace Percentage	118%	91%	45%	58%	15%	59%	48%	0%	90%
Total Demand Room Nights	279,623	189,267	90,085	45,431	35,990	16,476	9,084	0	665,956
Lost Room Nights	135,718	132,309	76,434	33,924	33,971	11,847	7,200	0	431,403
Conversion Percentage	51%	30%	15%	25%	6%	28%	21%	0%	35%
Tentative Room Nights	0	91,995	61,143	62,328	46,805	27,224	2,650	1,585	293,730



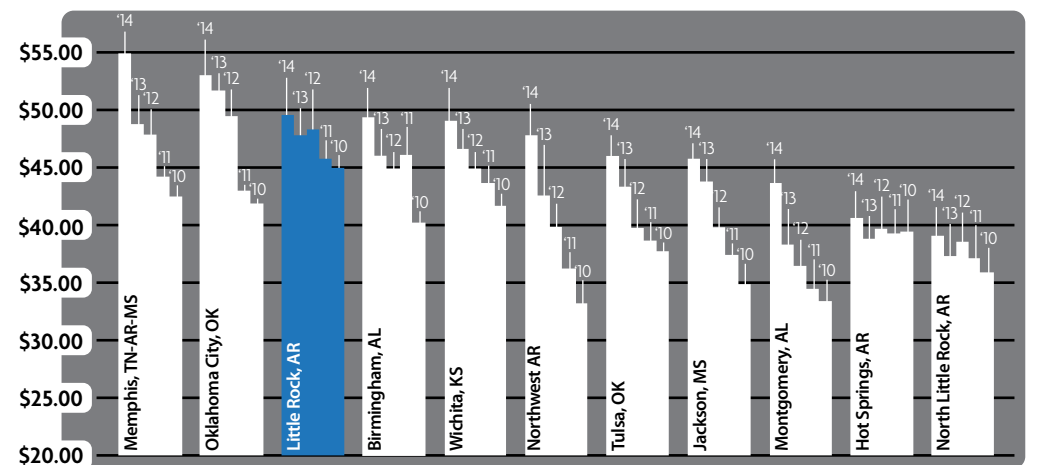
## OCCUPANCY



## AVERAGE DAILY RATE



## RevPAR



LITTLE ROCK IS FORTUNATE  
TO CONTINUE EARNING  
LOTS OF POSITIVE  
PRESS AND ACCOLADES  
THROUGHOUT THE  
YEAR, FOR BOTH THE  
DESTINATION AND  
INDIVIDUAL PARTNERS.

# MARKETING — AND — COMMUNICATIONS

The M&C division of LRCVB oversees the following disciplines: destination marketing and advertising; graphic design; special event promotions; visitor information centers and collateral distribution; public relations; retail operations; website and online marketing; sponsorship oversight; and assistance with Sales & Services marketing efforts.

## 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

2014 was focused on increased awareness of Little Rock as a meeting/convention and tourist destination. New advertising templates were developed, we assisted numerous travel journalists throughout the year with destination information and statistical studies, continued effective collateral development and distribution, and highlighted destination awards and accolades. Most notable in 2014 was the 10th anniversary of the Clinton Presidential Center. Working with local cultural partners, LRCVB created a 10-day citywide celebration, offering over 45 events and special exhibits and involving 20+ partners. A microsite dedicated to the event was also created, with a video timeline highlighting Little Rock's "Decade of Progress." Media efforts yielded nearly 700 media mentions, more than 1.8 billion media impressions, worth nearly \$1.5 million in publicity value. Highlights include multiple story placements on *ABC News*, *CNN*, *MSNBC*, the *Associated Press*, *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* among others.

Building on our new brand promise that was rolled out in 2013, we partnered with Duane Knapp of Brand Strategy Inc. to conduct brand and hospitality training for all LRCVB staff, local cab drivers, as well as front line staff by our hospitality and cultural partners. In addition, we partnered with MERJE Designs to develop a destination wayfinding program that is currently evaluating and creating a plan for a comprehensive vehicular and pedestrian directional signage system throughout the destination. Final design, mapping and phase one implementation will begin in 2015.

## MEDIA ATTENTION & SIGNIFICANT ACCOLADES

Little Rock is fortunate to continue earning lots of positive press and accolades throughout the year, for both the destination and individual partners. Some highlights include travel features in the following publications and outlets:

- Forbes Travel Guide
- Meetings Focus Magazine
- Huffington Post
- Late Night with Jimmy Fallon
- US Airways Magazine
- United Airlines Hemispheres
- Sports Events Magazine
- Southern Living
- TripAdvisor.com
- US News & World Report
- Smarter Travel
- Dallas Morning News
- CNN Travel
- Food Network
- Garden & Gun
- Southern Traveler
- National Tour Association



These stories, and more, have helped raise the destination's profile regionally and nationally. In addition to the increased media attention, the city received several significant accolades from national media outlets. The most significant include:

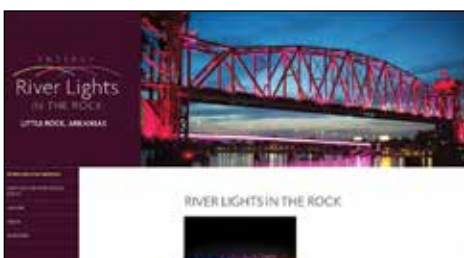
- “Five Secret Foodie Cities” by *Forbes Travel Guide*
- Esse Purse Museum named one of the “World’s Hottest Museums of 2014” by *Huffington Post*
- Top 10 “US Best Value Cities for Travel for 2015” by *Trivago.com*
- Top 10 student travel distinction by *National Tour Association*
- William J. Clinton Presidential Center named one of 27 “Most Interesting Libraries in the World” by *CNN Travel*
- Top 10 Southern Cities for Meetings by *Convention South Magazine*
- Named #3 “America’s Under-the-Radar Tech Hubs” by *The Sparefoot Blog*
- Named one of the “Nicest Places in the South” by *PorterBriggs.com*
- eCity Digital Capital Award Winner by *Google*

## WEBSITE MARKETING

The growing dependency on the internet makes the destination website the true lifeline for the overall success of destination marketing organizations, and we continue to experience increased web and social media traffic. The department is also adding enhancements and micro sites for niche audiences. Currently we operate the following websites:



- LittleRock.com
- RiverMarket.info
- LittleRockMeetings.com
- DineLR.com
- ShopTheRock.com
- RiverLightsintheRock.com
- RobinsonCenterSecondAct.com
- LittleRockDecadeOfProgress.com



INTERNATIONAL	VISITS
United States	949,400
United Kingdom	4,586
Canada	3,969
Germany	2,178

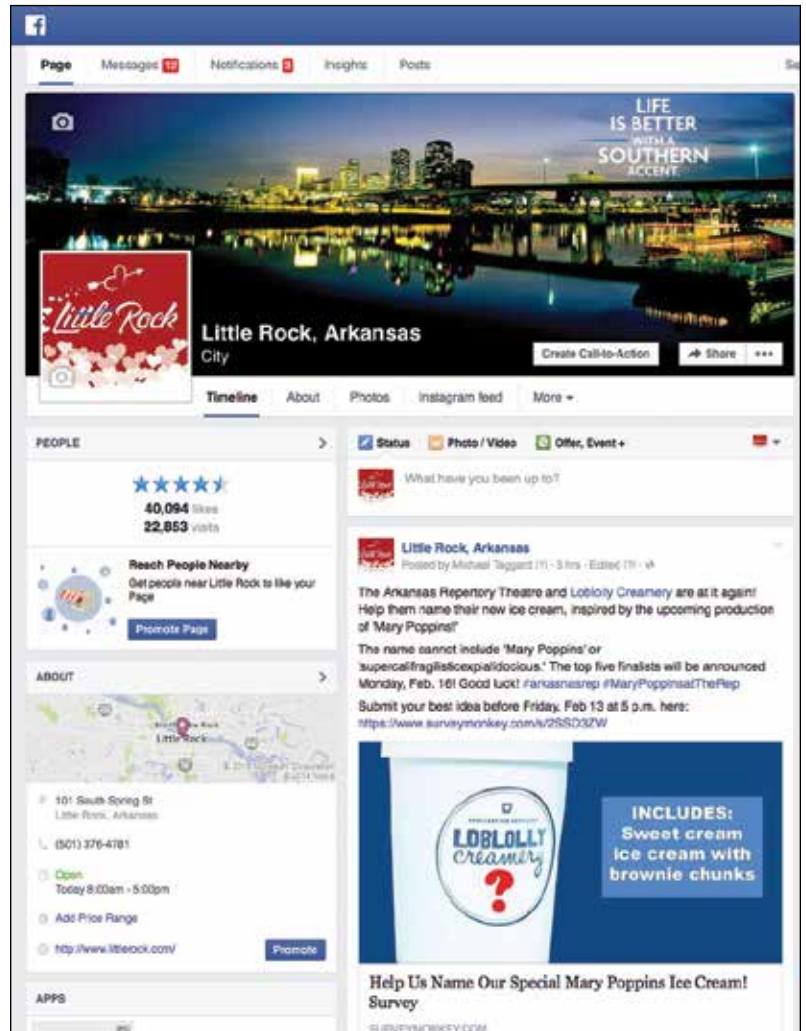
In 2014, LittleRock.com increased its website traffic by nearly 25%, with the number of sessions totaling 979,637 (up from 787,917 in 2013), and 687,559 total users. Of those sessions, 659,112 were new visitors (non-repeating). Additionally, users viewed more than 2.9 million pages, an increase of more than 250,000 page views. 67.2% of visits were first time visitors, and they spent an average of 2:29 minutes on the site, and viewed 3.0 pages on average. Device breakouts: mobile: 48.6%; desktop: 40.5%; tablet: 10.9%

The RiverMarket.info website saw an increase of nearly 11% in traffic this year, with 193,557 sessions (up from last year's 175,128 sessions), and 144,428 total users. Of the above sessions, 72.6% of those sessions were with new visitors, and all visitors viewed more than 550,000 pages. Device breakouts: mobile: 48.4%; desktop: 39.7%; tablet: 11.8%

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND E-NEWSLETTERS

LRCVB manages Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Flickr accounts. The bureau also produces two monthly newsletters highlighting events and activities for Little Rock and the River Market District specifically.

Subscribers are relatively flat for our Little Rock newsletter, but are up by more than 30% for our River Market newsletter, currently totaling 4,465 and 1,962 subscribers, respectively.



	FOLLOWERS	% CHANGE OVER 2013
Little Rock Facebook	40,094	up 12.2%
Little Rock Twitter	4,029	up 39.65%
River Market Facebook	18,567	up 5%
River Market Twitter	10,420	up over 77.82%



## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS & COLLATERAL DISTRIBUTION

The LRCVB strives to provide exceptional visitor experiences with a focus on true hospitality by enhancing the visitor experience through accurate and helpful destination information. This year our Little Rock Visitor Information Centers assisted more than 70,500 guests. The LRCVB staffs locations at the Bill & Hillary Clinton National Airport, Shop the Rock in the River Market District, and Statehouse Convention Center.

The LRCVB also provides support for the visitor information center at Historic Curran Hall. Visitor information center representatives are true ambassadors for the destination, and in many cases the first contact or touch point experienced by a visitor.

Although an increase in mobile and web usage has alternatively created a decrease in face-to-face assistance at our visitor centers over the years, nothing replaces the personal touch that a visitor representative provides to guests. In spite of this trend, our collateral distribution has increased through targeted promotions via newspaper inserts and advertisements.



## COLLATERAL

The LRCVB publishes a variety of collateral materials to assist visitors with their future planning, and as helpful guides, while visiting the destination. Additionally, the LRCVB distributes multiple partner and third party brochures at our visitor information centers, as well as ensures coverage of Little Rock-related materials in all statewide and area visitor information centers and local brochure racks. The LRCVB also offers direct fulfillment services from phone, email and online requests and works with the convention services team to provide collateral materials for on-site meetings and conventions. Through all of the division's distribution efforts, 481,902 pieces of collateral were distributed in 2014, up from the 470,000 pieces distributed in 2013. In 2014, the department updated the following brochures:

- Little Rock's Top 12 brochure, in conjunction with the Mayor's Tourism Commission, was completely redesigned with new brand standards
- A redesign of the Dining & Entertainment Guide began in late 2014, and will be ready for distribution in early 2015
- The annual Arts & Attractions brochure
- A revised "Tour of President Clinton's Little Rock" brochure in conjunction with the 10th anniversary celebration





## LOCAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

LRCVB partners with the Angela Rogers Group to provide publicity and media coverage in conjunction with several LRCVB managed events, as well as large special events and activities that take place in Little Rock.

PROMOTION	2014 PR VALUE	2014 GROSS IMPRESSIONS
Farmers' Market	\$1,034,728.70	8,496,165
Jazz in the Park	\$250,604.00	2,947,496
Robinson Center Closing – July 1, Intermission	\$375,322.00	1,529,405
Movies in the Park	\$463,114	17,989,364
ATA World Championships and Annual Conference	\$475,111.60	5,313,122
Little Rock Restaurant Month	\$1,219,556.30	6,571,648
Big Jingle Jubilee Holiday Parade/Holidays in the Park	\$100,344.00	5,565,629
SEC/Big 12 Challenge	\$286,002.00	4,524,400
<b>GRAND TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$4,294,780.95</b>	<b>38,838,388</b>



## ADVERTISING

Little Rock's "Southern Accent" campaign capitalizes on our brand of new Southern style by articulating examples that showcase Little Rock as a progressive destination, ideal for tourism and business. The campaign features large, colorful images of people interacting with actual Little Rock scenery, locales and events. The headlines creatively deliver on the emotion of the moment and let the audience know verbatim that Little Rock does things "with a Southern Accent." This approach effectively provides heartwarming insight into Little Rock as a town that embraces a modern, fun twist on inspired life in the South. The photography reflects the liveley, lifestyle-centric Southern charm with real people and scenic shots.

**OUTDOOR ADVENTURES WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.**

Like our ride along the Arkansas River Trail, our memories of Little Rock are filled with wonderful discoveries. The breathtaking views from the top of Pinnacle Mountain. Touring the city's downtown by Segway and its neighborhoods, barbecue joints and breweries by bike. Enjoying the charm and convenience of riding the trolley from our hotel to explore the great shops, restaurants and clubs in the River Market, and being mesmerized by the city's beautiful illuminated bridges. These are the memories of a new Southern style. You can experience it all here. You can experience it all in Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

Big Dam Bridge > To see more, visit [LittleRock.com](http://LittleRock.com)

**LOCAL CUISINE IS BETTER WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.**

Little's morning we spent at the Little Rock Farmers Market, our memories of Little Rock were a feast for the senses. Discovering the city's burgeoning artisanal food scene, and enjoying incredible meals with locally-sourced ingredients. Grabbing a bite at one of the city's many food truck vendors, spending the afternoon exploring the lush scenery on the Arkansas River Trail, and ending our days tasting the award-winning brews and spirits at Little Rock's microbreweries and distillery. These are the memories of a new Southern style. You can taste it all here. You can taste it all in Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

The Little Rock Farmers Market > To see more, go to [LittleRock.com](http://LittleRock.com)

**NIGHT LIFE IS BETTER WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.**

Like a concert you never want to end, our trip to Little Rock was amazing. We loved the local music at South on Main, and enjoyed several great meals as we explored the city's eclectic neighborhoods and shops. With a rich and diverse local music scene and a vibrant arts community, Little Rock is a city to be savored. The city has a new Southern style and charm that's uniquely its own — and we experienced it all in Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

Local Live at South on Main > To see more visit [LittleRock.com](http://LittleRock.com)

**HOLIDAYS ARE BETTER WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.**

**MEETINGS ARE BETTER WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.**

*Little Rock*

**MEETINGS ARE BETTER WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.**

Like seeing the city's beautifully illuminated bridges for the first time, our meeting in Little Rock will never be forgotten. The elegant reception hosted within the Clinton Library's inspiring spaces. Exchanging smiles and greetings while the River Rail Trolley carried us to an evening's diversion. Filling the Statehouse Convention Center with applause. Our meeting here felt different — and such a pleasant surprise. All centered around the personal attention and charming hospitality of Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

Junction Bridge > To see more, go to [LittleRockMeetings.com](http://LittleRockMeetings.com)

RANKED IN AMERICA'S 10 GREAT PLACES TO LIVE BY 10 US NEWS PERSONAL FINANCE MAGAZINE

EDITOR'S CHOICE IN SOUTHERN MAGAZINE'S BEST TOWNS OF 2015

PHOTO: PAUL BARROW

**NATIONAL TREASURES WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.**

**LITTLE ROCK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**

In 1957, the world watched as Little Rock Central High School became the focal point for the integration of public schools and the Civil Rights movement. Today, its National Historic Site Visitor Center welcomes and educates thousands of visitors, and the school remains an icon of American history.

*Little Rock*

Little Rock Central High School > For a vacation planning kit, visit [LittleRock.com/USATodayNP](http://LittleRock.com/USATodayNP)



## LAS TRADICIONES DE LA TEMPORADA DE FESTIVIDADES INVERNALES CON UN ACENTO SUREÑO.

### CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS

**29 DE NOVIEMBRE AL 3 DE ENERO**

Celebración en el parque  
Goza un invierno de fantasía  
Con las luces navideñas  
Y música en el anfiteatro  
First Security del River Market

**SÁBADO, 6 DE DICIEMBRE**

Big Jingle Jubilee  
Desfile navideño / Iluminación  
navideña del Capitolio estatal

**DOMINGO, 21 DE DICIEMBRE:**

Women's SEC/Big 12 Challenge  
Texas vs. Texas A&M  
Arkansas vs. Oklahoma

¡Así como los duendes navideños tienen un cometido, a nosotros nos encanta explorar Little Rock durante la temporada de Navidad! Buscando por el regalo especial y perfecto en una tienda original de nuestro vecindario, gozando de una comida deliciosa mientras revisamos nuestra lista de obsequios, admirando la iluminación de los puentes y las luces decorativas en los parques antes de regresar al confort de nuestra casa. Little Rock tiene un nuevo sabor "sureño" propio que podemos disfrutar cada día, solamente aquí, en Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

Para una lista completa del calendario de eventos navideños en Little Rock, visite [HolidaysinLittleRock.com](http://HolidaysinLittleRock.com)

### SOOTHING SPIRITS WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.

Like a really great cocktail, our trip to Little Rock was something to be savored. Taking the trolley to tour Arkansas's first legal distillery, and sampling its award-winning spirits made from area grains. Enjoying the River Market district's vibrant nightlife and the city's unique craft beers that provide a perfect complement to the local cuisine. These are the memories of a new Southern style, and you can taste it all here in Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

Rock Town Distillery > To see more, go to [DineLR.com](http://DineLR.com)

### OUTDOOR DINING WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.

Like adventurers with appetites, we love dining under the stars and enjoying our favorite restaurants and our city's great local cuisine. There's nothing quite like a great night out with your family and friends to delight the senses and feed the soul. With more than 550 restaurants in Little Rock, be an explorer — there's plenty of restaurants to try and new favorites just waiting to be discovered. Whatever your dining preference, Little Rock has a new Southern style and charm that's uniquely its own that you can experience and taste each day — you can taste it all, right here in Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

The Promenade at Chenal > To see more, go to [DineLR.com](http://DineLR.com)

### EXPANDING HORIZONS WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT.

From the State Capitol to the Old State House, Central High School to the Little Rock Zoo, there are many incredible attractions and museums in Little Rock, that appeal to a variety of ages and interests. Many are located within walking distance of our River Market entertainment district, and the city's beautiful park, and more of them are free. When planning your next holiday, consider Little Rock.

*Little Rock*

Heifer Village > To see more, go to [LittleRock.com](http://LittleRock.com)

For group assistance, contact Kimberly Torres at [ktorres@littlerock.com](mailto:ktorres@littlerock.com) or 501-370-1228.

# LRCVB SIGNATURE EVENTS



LRCVB supports a variety of local festivals and events in order to enhance the economy through increased visitor travel into, and throughout, the City of Little Rock. There is an event funding application used to evaluate support provided, based on specific criteria. In addition, LRCVB directly manages several signature events.

**LITTLE ROCK RESTAURANT MONTH** celebrates dining in the city each August. The month long event celebrated its fifth anniversary, and included more than 100 participating restaurants that offered a variety of specials, and deals, for diners. LRCVB secured more than 50 interviews/TV segments/and media appearances, highlighting local restaurateurs, with a publicity value of more than \$1.2 million and more than 6.5 million gross impressions.

**HOSPITALITY MARKETING MIXERS**, hosted by LRCVB, are typically held quarterly for area hospitality partners to discuss what's happening in Little Rock, destination development initiatives, co-op & packaging opportunities and industry news.





**NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK** is celebrated the first week of May, and is designed to promote the value of the travel and tourism industry. Each year LRCVB participates by showcasing new destination amenities and reminding people in the community, and hospitality industry, of the wonderful features central Arkansas has to offer. In 2014, LRCVB focused on the importance of people taking paid time off (PTO) by sponsoring a video contest, asking people how they would spend a "Day Off in Little Rock." Also, LRCVB launched its Service Champion Award program developed to recognize local hospitality industry employees that exemplify Little Rock's Brand Promise. Both initiatives were rolled out at a press conference held at The Bernice Garden in SoMa, which also highlighted that neighborhood's continuing revitalization.

**THE LITTLE ROCK FARMERS' MARKET** continues to be the state's largest market, operating 26 weeks per year. Approximately 40 local farmers and 150 other crafts vendors participated in 2014. New in 2014 was the development of a Tuesday Night Market, providing residents and visitors an opportunity to shop in the afternoons and evenings. Additional programming including music vendors, appearances by the "Dean the Bean" mascot, and the market's Fall Festival helped in boosting attendance. There is also a Second Saturday partnership with area organizations like the Central Arkansas Library System, Rock City Rescue, Master Gardeners, and others.

**MOVIES IN THE PARK** continues to be a family favorite, and celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2014. Movies are held each Wednesday night in June and July. The free family event provides a variety of options from animated favorites to comedy and acclaimed drama features. The series continues to average approximately 2,500 viewers per show, but experienced the largest crowd in its ten year history this year with over 7,000 people coming out to watch Disney's "Frozen."

**JAZZ IN THE PARK** was a successful new creation in 2013. It offers free weekly concerts featuring local jazz artists performing in Riverfront Park's History Pavilion. The event continued to grow in its second year and takes place each Wednesday evening in April & September.

**BIKETOBERFEST** has become an annual event for bike lovers. The one-day, "all things bike related" event, attracted over 1,000 attendees in 2014. It featured custom-built bikes, a BMX stunt show and other demonstrations.

**BIG BOO-SEUM BASH**, hosted by the Greater Little Rock Museum and Cultural Attractions Consortium, provides a safe environment for kids and families to enjoy fun Halloween activities and treats. In its nineteenth year, 2014 had increased participation, with 13 attractions, including: Museum of Discovery, Witt Stephens, Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center, Old State House Museum, Historic Arkansas Museum, Ron Robinson Theater, Curran Hall Visitor Information Center, Arkansas State Capitol, Arkansas Arts



Center, MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, Arkansas National Guard Museum, and Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum. Turnout was tremendous in 2014, with several partner venues hosting more than 1,000 guests.

**BIG JINGLE JUBILEE HOLIDAY PARADE** – this free community event is hosted each year by LRCVB and held the first Saturday in December, in conjunction with the lighting of the State Capitol and fireworks display. Crowds line the streets of downtown to enjoy marching bands and a variety of floats and parade entries, and of course a special appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus. There were more than 100 parade entries in 2014.

New in 2014 was **HOLIDAYS IN THE PARK**, a fantastic display of more than 63,000 dancing lights at Riverfront Park's First Security Amphitheater, transforming the area into a winter wonderland. A ten-minute light show, choreographed to popular holiday music, played approximately four times per hour each night throughout the holiday season. The show beautifully complimented the River Lights in the Rock bridges' nightly light shows. A special thanks to LRCVB's Technical Director, Randy Guptill for donating many of the lights and creating the spectacle.

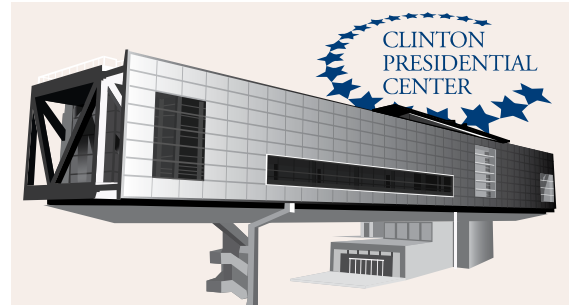
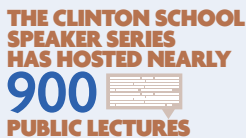
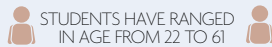
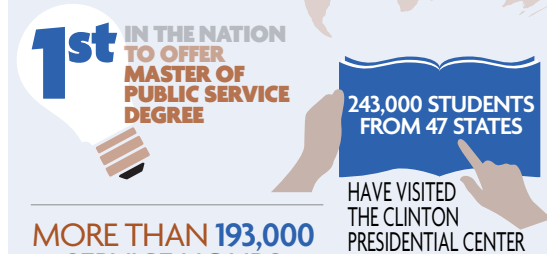


# DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN 2014

## 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILLIAM J. CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

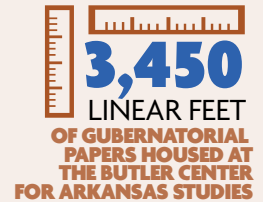
As a travel destination we cannot overstate the value the Presidential Library has had in terms of increased visitation, investment, development, and amplified awareness, both nationally and internationally.

Travel expenditures in Pulaski County have increased 68.1% since 2003.



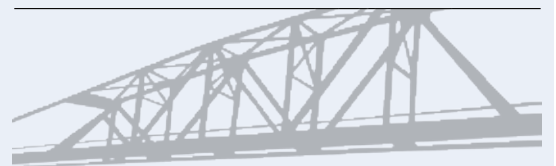
### PRESIDENTIAL ARCHIVES CONTAIN

**80 MILLION** PAGES OF DOCUMENTS  
**112,000** PRIVATE DONATIONS  
**2 MILLION** PHOTOGRAPHS  
**21 MILLION** EMAILS  
**79,000** ARTIFACTS



**\$3.3 BILLION**  
IN ECONOMIC IMPACT

LITTLE ROCK TOURISM TAX REVENUES **UP 64.5%** SINCE 2003





### RENOVATIONS COMPLETE AT ARKANSAS'S FIRST FULL SERVICE MARRIOTT HOTEL

Little Rock's largest convention hotel was officially flagged as Arkansas's first full-service Marriott Hotel in 2013, and an estimated \$16 million in renovations were completed during the year. Highlights include redesigned public spaces, new sleeping room amenities and case goods, and carpet and wall treatments throughout; resulting in a complete facelift of the hotel.



### GATEWAY TOWN CENTER

Following the opening of Arkansas's first Bass Pro Shop in late 2013, there will soon be approximately 75 new stores added with the development of The Outlets at Little Rock at Gateway Town Center. Scheduled to open in summer 2015, the center will be Arkansas's only major outlet mall. The location off Interstate 30 and Interstate 430 is the most highly traveled intersection in the state.



### NEW HOTELS

The new 133-room Hilton Garden Inn in West Little Rock opened in 2014. Located at 10914 Kanis Road, this hotel is in the center of the west Little Rock business district. The property offers suites, an indoor pool, fitness center and over 3,200 sq. ft. of flexible meeting space. In addition, the LaQuinta Inn & Suites Little Rock West also opened in 2014. This property offers 73 rooms, adding a total of 206 additional rooms to the Little Rock market. Three additional properties have begun construction, or been announced, in the downtown area.



### MORE IMPROVEMENTS COMING TO LIT

In August, the Little Rock Airport Commission approved a \$20.6 million concourse renovation, as part of its ongoing 2020 Vision Plan. This is a long term plan to improve, modernize and expand the airport which was designed in the 1960s and originally completed in 1972. The concourse renovations will include: a modernized concourse interior, new gate lounge seating, additional concourse restrooms and baggage claim restroom upgrades, enhancements to technology, including both increased Wi-Fi capabilities and improved cell phone connectivity, new jet bridges, new arrival and departure information monitors and visual paging,



### EXPLOSION IN CRAFT BREWERY AND WINERY OPTIONS

Blue Canoe and Lost Forty Brewing Company both opened in December 2014, bringing Little Rock's total count of microbreweries to seven, with a few more announced for the new year. Additionally, Raimondo Winery is set to open a winery tasting room in the River Market in early 2015; their winery production will remain based in North Little Rock.

### ARCADE BUILDING OPENS ON PRES. CLINTON AVENUE

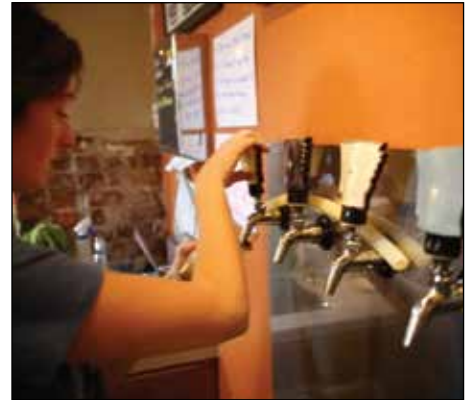
The new 60,000 sq. ft. Arcade Building is home to the state of the art, 315-seat, Ron Robinson movie theater and the nationally renowned Little Rock Film Festival, as well as the acclaimed restaurant Cache and a variety of retail stores.

### RIVER RAIL STREETCAR 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Central Arkansas Transit celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the River Rail Electric Streetcars in 2014. Service includes three replica vintage streetcars that operate on the 3.4-mile route linking some of the most popular destinations in the River Cities of Little Rock and North Little Rock. The streetcars operate on an overhead electric power supply and traverse the Arkansas River via the Main Street Bridge. The trolley system is critical in connecting tourists, visitors, and locals to the cities major art and entertainment venues, restaurants, museums, parks, shops, libraries, and neighborhoods located in the respective downtowns.

### NEW SPLASH PAD DEBUTS IN RIVERFRONT PARK

In April 2014, a "splash pad" designed to entertain young children up to age five was added to the Riverfront Park children's play area, located behind the Little Rock Marriott Hotel. This new amenity complements the Vogel-Schwartz Sculpture Garden and enhances the musical instrument area where children may play permanently installed instruments such as drums and xylophones.





# FUTURE OUTLOOK

Following a tremendous year in 2014, the momentum continues for the future of Little Rock. One of the largest projects underway is the major renovation and expansion of Robinson Center. When complete, it will increase our city's presence as a major arts & entertainment destination. The Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department has a lot of central Arkansas infrastructure projects in the works, including the redesign and expansion of the I630/I430 interchange, the reconstruction of Broadway Bridge, and early conversations regarding the replacement, and expansion, of I-30 in the downtown area.

Shopping is always a visitor favorite and Little Rock has developed a large array of new shopping options over the past few years. With Bass Pro Shop opening in November, 2013, and The Outlets at Little Rock, which is currently under construction, are sure to assist with visitor growth in the coming years.

Sporting events continue to be a large part of our sales efforts, generating the most annual hotel room nights and combined event attendees. In 2014, LRCVB retained Crossroads Consulting to conduct a feasibility study for a potential indoor, multipurpose, sports facility. The final study should be presented mid-year and will evaluate the overall economic potential and quality of life impact of sporting events, as well as provide an analysis for building and operating such a facility.

The Main Street Revitalization Plan, unveiled in 2012, continues to draw national attention with multiple award recognitions. Many of the outlined streetscapes and water quality demonstrations have been completed and new business continues to be added to the area. To further emphasize the name "creative corridor", the offices and rehearsal space for the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Ballet Arkansas should be finished in the first quarter of 2015, in the 500 block of Main Street, near the Arkansas Repertory Theater.

For the LRCVB, we will focus on the final year of our multiyear marketing and strategic plan, as well as develop our new plan for the future. On the sales front we will continue to leverage our relationships with third party meeting professionals and look for opportunities to identify local leadership that can assist in convention bookings. In 2015 we will be hosting the Small Market Meetings conference as part of our overall marketing strategy to have more decision makers experience the destination first-hand. In addition, we will continue to focus on the implementation of our new brand strategy, including continual citywide hospitality brand training and the implementation of a wayfaring signage program. In conclusion, we will continue to provide the leadership to ensure that the Robinson Center renovation becomes the showplace for central Arkansas's performing arts.



A HISTORIC  
**INTERMISSION**  
— WITH A —  
**SOUTHERN**  
ACCENT.

