

A man and a woman are standing outdoors at night, engaged in conversation. The man, on the left, is wearing a white button-down shirt and has a beard. The woman, on the right, is wearing a white turtleneck and a brown skirt, and is holding a glass with a red straw. They are both smiling. The background is a blurred cityscape at night, with various lights and buildings. A large blue diagonal shape is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Little Rock

CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 18, 2020

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ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP

Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau (LRCVB)

Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau (LRCVB) is the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for the City of Little Rock, charged with promoting the city for convention and leisure travel. LRCVB also operates the Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, Cromwell Building, River Market (Ottenheimer Hall, First Security Amphitheater, and the pavilions) and multiple parking facilities. LRCVB is primarily funded by a lodging and prepared food tax. The organization is divided into four primary divisions: finance & administration, sales & services, marketing & communications, and facility operations.

Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission

The Little Rock Advertising & 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.

- Jim Keet, Chair
- City Director Gene Fortson, Vice Chair
- Mayor Frank Scott, Jr.
- Yogesh Asudani
- Rajesh Mehta
- Nick Roye
- Pamela Smith

LRCVB Management Team

Gretchen Hall, President & CEO

Jim Rice, Sr. Vice President & COO

Nikki Parnell, Sr. Vice President - Finance & Administration

Bill Fitzgerald, Vice President - Marketing & Communications

Gina Gemberling, Vice President - Sales & Services

James “Doc” Doolittle – Senior Director of Facilities Maintenance/Engineering

Phyllis Lucas – Senior Director of Event Operations

Kasey L. Summerville – Senior Director of Tax Revenue

Chris Phillips – Controller

Bobby Green – Director of Security

Randy Guptill – Director of Technical Services

Diana Long – Director of River Market Operations

Greg Johnston – Software Systems Engineer

Art Edwards – Facility Maintenance Manager

Tracy Graham – Accounting Manager

Cortez Jackson – Facility Maintenance Manager

Christin Byrd – Creative Services Manager

Libby Lloyd – Communications Manager

Johnny Loney – Auxiliary Services Manager

Charlie Oppedisano – Retail Sales Manager

Kim Sanders – Human Resources Manager

Gwen Stallings – Building Services Manager

Gaby Valentin – Event Setup Manager

Jennifer Willis – Destination Services Manager

Katina Brown – Destination Services Specialist (staff representative)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of the entire LRCVB team, I am pleased to share our 2019 annual report. Little Rock is thriving! Our travel and tourism industry reached new heights this year, and we have a lot to celebrate.

LRCVB plays a fundamental role in ensuring that tourism continues to provide positive economic growth for Arkansas's capital city. According to the most recent figures released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the hospitality and leisure industry in Little Rock puts 35,600 people to work each day. Travelers to Pulaski County generated over \$108 million in local and state tax collections, according to the most recent U.S. Travel Association analysis. Clearly, the hospitality and travel industry is vital to ensuring the continued success of our local economy.

When early summer brought unprecedented water levels on the Arkansas River and major flooding in some areas of the city, we were able to launch a communications campaign to mitigate canceled travel plans while the city worked to recover damaged areas. LRCVB is the economic engine for travel and tourism in Central Arkansas, working to strengthen the brand of Little Rock, sustain growth in visitation, and improve the quality of life for our residents. Highlights for 2019 include:

- Lodging tax collections hit an all-time high in 2019.
- First full year with new advertising agencies.
- Launch of the River Market Entertainment District, a designated area in downtown allowing open containers of alcoholic beverages in public spaces, enhancing the visitor experience and increasing nightlife options.
- Initiated a new promoter partnership agreement to produce concerts in the First Security Amphitheater. Two concerts were conducted in 2019, and a six-concert series to be announced for 2020.
- Comprehensive study of Ottenheimer Market Hall, development of possible renovations, and potential future private sector investment.
- Feasibility studies for indoor and outdoor sports facility development were initiated.
- Conducted a Google audit of more than 500 Little Rock restaurants, hotels, attractions, and festivals and shared step-by-step tips for increasing individual Google business rankings.

The meetings and tradeshow industry in Little Rock is anchored by the Statehouse Convention Center (SHCC), and we saw record-breaking event and attendance numbers at SHCC in 2019. Robinson Center and the River Market also had steady event numbers. We welcomed almost 622,000 attendees to events that convened and performed in LRCVB managed facilities.

Our sales and services team hosted 160 individual site visits, planning meetings, and familiarization (FAM) tours, and secured 374 future meetings, conventions and sporting events, representing an estimated \$81.45M in direct spending. Additionally, the team transitioned to a new sales customer relationship management (CRM) platform that allows for increased client communication, reporting and database management capabilities.

Technology continues to disrupt the travel sector in significant ways. From the increased growth of online travel agencies like Expedia to the latest Google Travel products, from Airbnb to Uber, the way we plan travel is rapidly changing. Technology is also disrupting the way consumers interact with advertising, however various platforms can now provide extraordinary data to help us reach specific target markets and truly micro-target and maximize advertising investments. In addition to utilizing advanced technology and research in our ad campaigns, the marketing and communications team also generated 24.4 million impressions on all social media networks, 685,000+ social engagements, and hosted 30 travel journalists and influencers.

At LRCVB, it's our job to keep industry partners, community leaders, elected officials, and the public up to date on how the state's #2 economic engine is generating positive impact and enhancing our quality of life. I hope you find this annual report resourceful.



GRETCHEN HALL, CDME, CMP
PRESIDENT & CEO

2019 BY THE NUMBERS

**\$1.8
BILLION**
TRAVEL SPENDING
GENERATED IN PULASKI COUNTY

**\$108
MILLION**
LOCAL AND STATE
TRAVEL TAXES
GENERATED IN PULASKI COUNTY

**542
EVENTS**
HELD AT
LRCVB MANAGED FACILITIES

**621,989
ATTENDANCE**
IN LRCVB MANAGED FACILITIES

**4.65
ON A 5-POINT SCALE**
AVERAGE SCORE
LRCVB STAFF AND FACILITIES
RECEIVED ON CLIENT SURVEYS

**5.93%
HOTEL REVPAR
GROWTH**

**350
MEETINGS,
CONVENTIONS AND
SPORTING EVENTS**
HOSTED IN 2019 ATTRACTED
**333,884
ATTENDEES**
AND GENERATED
**\$75,256,123
DIRECT
ECONOMIC IMPACT**

**374
FUTURE MEETINGS,
CONVENTIONS AND
SPORTING EVENTS**
SECURED REPRESENTING
144,250 ROOM NIGHTS AND 384,289
ATTENDEES WITH AN ESTIMATED
\$81.45M IN DIRECT SPENDING

**160
CUSTOMERS**
HOSTED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL SITE
VISITS, PLANNING MEETINGS AND
FAMILIARIZATION (FAM) TOURS.

**232
GROUPS
SERVICED**

**10,500 +
NEW SOCIAL
MEDIA FANS AND
FOLLOWERS**

**24.4
MILLION
IMPRESSIONS**
ON ALL
SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS

**685,000+
SOCIAL
ENGAGEMENTS**

**30
JOURNALISTS,
WRITERS, AND
INFLUENCERS**
HOSTED

**891,733
WEBSITE
PAGE VIEWS**

**381,397
UNIQUE VISITORS**

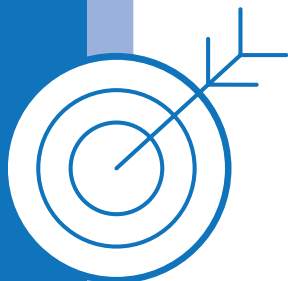
**11
LITTLE ROCK
BRAND TRAINING
SESSIONS CONDUCTED**



CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

MISSION

Improve the quality of life and the local economy in Little Rock by
bringing visitors, meetings, conventions, and events to the city;
Responsibly manage public funds in its charge;
Efficiently operate the facilities it manages;
Serve customers, visitors, and delegates with courtesy, knowledge, and skill.



BRAND PROMISE

Discover the pleasant surprise of Little Rock.
Enjoy our charming hospitality, sincere service, genuine people and
engaging experiences. Welcome to our brand of new southern style as you
experience our history and culture.



CORE VALUES

BE THE PLEASANT SURPRISE

- a mix of both personality and remarkable customer service.

MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

- be present in every moment and aware that even the smallest actions can make the biggest impact.

ALWAYS ENGAGE

- sincerely engage in the guest experience.

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

- treat others better than they expect to be treated.

BE EXTRAORDINARY

- anticipate customer needs and deliver personalized service that exceeds expectations.

TAKE OWNERSHIP

- produce a result that you can be proud of and take pride in the outcome.

LRCVB STAFF

AWARDS & RECOGNITION



GRETCHEN HALL
2019 ARKANSAS TOURISM
PERSON OF THE YEAR



KAYLA KESTERSON
2019 FINEST YOUNG PROFESSIONAL,
CYSTIC FIBROSIS FOUNDATION



KIKI MANNEAR
2019 MARKETING COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP,
SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY



DAVID RUSSELL
2019 SILVER CUP AWARD,
ARKANSAS HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION



SETH ELI BARLOW
WRITER OF THE YEAR,
INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL MAGAZINE AWARDS



NIKKI PARNELL
FINALIST FOR CFO OF THE YEAR,
ARKANSAS BUSINESS PUBLISHING GROUP

20+ YEAR EMPLOYEES

PHYLLIS LUCAS, EVENT OPERATIONS – 45 YEARS
DAVID RUSSELL, SALES – 36 YEARS
LORETTA MITCHELL, BUILDING SERVICES – 32 YEARS
ARTHUR PRUITT, EVENT OPERATIONS – 31 YEARS
GWEN STALLINGS, BUILDING SERVICES – 31 YEARS
LISA SIMMONS, EVENT OPERATIONS – 31 YEARS
JOHNNY LONEY, AUXILIARY SERVICES – 30 YEARS
DEE JAY RUSSELL, PARKING – 29 YEARS
ALINE BROTHERS, VISITOR SERVICES – 27 YEARS
HERBERT SMITH, SECURITY – 27 YEARS
JAMES WILLIAMS, SECURITY – 25 YEARS

KEITH WINFREY, BUILDING SERVICES – 25 YEARS
RANDY GUPTILL, TECHNICAL SERVICES – 24 YEARS
JIM RICE, FACILITY OPERATIONS – 22 YEARS
KATINA BROWN, DESTINATION SERVICES – 22 YEARS
CHERYL BARNES, PARKING – 21 YEARS
SHERYL COLCLOUGH, RECEPTIONIST – 21 YEARS
JOY COGSHELL, RECEPTIONIST – 20 YEARS
LEE COULTER, SECURITY – 20 YEARS
LLOYD MOBLEY, VISITOR SERVICES – 20 YEARS
MARILYN KOEHLER, SALES – 20 YEARS
MICA FARMER, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – 20 YEARS

EMPLOYEE COMMITTEES:

Many LRCVB staff members are engaged in organizational volunteer committees.



Health & Wellbeing Committee – to encourage a healthier lifestyle for mental and physical wellbeing, the committee hosts daily 10-minute walks in the morning and afternoon. Additionally, they conduct chair yoga each Friday, 30 minutes of non-strenuous body movement to help with relaxation and mobility. In 2020, the committee will assist in the implementation of United Healthcare's Motion plan, a plan that helps employees earn financial rewards for out-of-pocket medical expenses just by walking.



Office Celebrations Committee – this committee is committed to celebrating employee birthdays and special office parties, hosting quarterly office pot-lucks with good food and fellowship, planning all-staff and family events, and coordinating our annual holiday luncheon.



Volunteer & Community Development Committee – our organization has long been a huge part of the local community, but this committee is increasing the opportunities for our team members to get involved. In 2019 the group provided volunteer assistance at several local festivals and created an LRCVB float for the annual Holiday Parade. Additionally, LRCVB created a casual dress policy where employees can donate \$1 to dress casual on Fridays. Over \$1,300 was donated and used to provide gifts to two sponsored families during the Christmas season.

MEDIA ACCOLADES

Little Rock

CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

was honored with

**CONVENTION
SOUTH'S
ANNUAL READERS'
CHOICE AWARD**

as selected by
meeting planners for
exhibiting excellence,
creativity, and
professionalism
in the meetings and
conventions industry.

**TOP 12
PLACES TO LIVE**

– OUTSIDE MAGAZINE

**10 U.S. CITIES
TO WATCH IN 2020**

– WORTH MAGAZINE

**NEXT HOTTEST
FOODIE DESTINATION**

– FOODIE FLASHPACKER

**8 AWESOMELY
DIVERSE U.S. CITIES**

– MATADOR NETWORK

**BEST PLACE TO LIVE
IN EACH U.S. STATE**

– BUSINESS INSIDER

**TOP TEN
“MOST DOG-FRIENDLY
VACATION
DESTINATIONS
IN U.S.”**

– LIVABILITY.COM

**LITTLE ROCK
RANKS #23 OF
“AMERICA'S 50 BEST
SMALL CITIES”**

– RESONANCE CONSULTANCY

**LITTLE ROCK
RANKS #7 OF
“AMERICA'S TOP 10
SMALL CITIES
FOR PROSPERITY”**

– RESONANCE CONSULTANCY

**2019 TOP 100
BEST PLACES
TO LIVE**

– LIVABILITY.COM



LITTLE ROCK TOURISM

NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK

Celebrated the first week of May, special events are designed to promote the value of the tourism industry. In celebration of the 2019 National Travel and Tourism Week, LRCVB, the City of Little Rock, and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage & Tourism hosted a Travel Rally Day at the Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport to welcome guests to the city. The national theme of "Hospitality Matters" looked at the importance of tourism and the hospitality industry in local economies. At the rally event, LRCVB employees greeted arriving guests with pompoms and welcome signs. The Mabelvale Elementary drumline greeted everyone as they waited for their bags, while free ice cream from Loblolly Creamery and therapy dogs were offered to those arriving in Little Rock.



HOSPITALITY MARKETING MIXERS

LRCVB hosts quarterly meetings for area hospitality partners to discuss happenings in Little Rock, destination development initiatives, cooperative opportunities, and packaging opportunities as well as share industry news.

LITTLE ROCK LODGING OVERVIEW

	CITYWIDE	CONVENTION DISTRICT
TOTAL HOTELS	71	9
TOTAL ROOMS	7,537	1,620
OCCUPANCY	59.7% ↑ 4.7%	72% ↑ 7.8%
AVERAGE DAILY RATE	\$89.10 ↑ 1.2%	\$130.28 ↑ 2.5%

GOOGLE DMO PROGRAM

LRCVB engaged Miles Partnership to conduct a Google audit of more than 500 Little Rock restaurants, hotels, attractions and festivals. Google is the number one search engine and map location finder on the web, and continues to grow their digital platforms and reach in the travel and tourism space. Through the audit, we discovered that several listings were incomplete. These listings on Google will hurt business rankings and prevent people from finding individual businesses.

LRCVB hosted an in-person workshop where Miles Partnership walked industry partners through best practices for Google My Business listings and step-by-step tips for increasing individual rankings. A special Google My Business Tips and Best Practices workbook was also distributed to hundreds of partners and 55 individual business audits were distributed with specific instructions to improve the business listings based on the audit findings. These efforts improved local business visibility and in turn improved the entire destination with increased rankings across all Google platforms.

BILL & HILLARY CLINTON NATIONAL AIRPORT (LIT)

For 2019, traffic was up 4.71%
over the previous year with

2,241,716
TOTAL PASSENGERS.

The Airport continues to have strong
passenger satisfaction scores; as measured
by Phoenix Marketing International,
Clinton National earned a

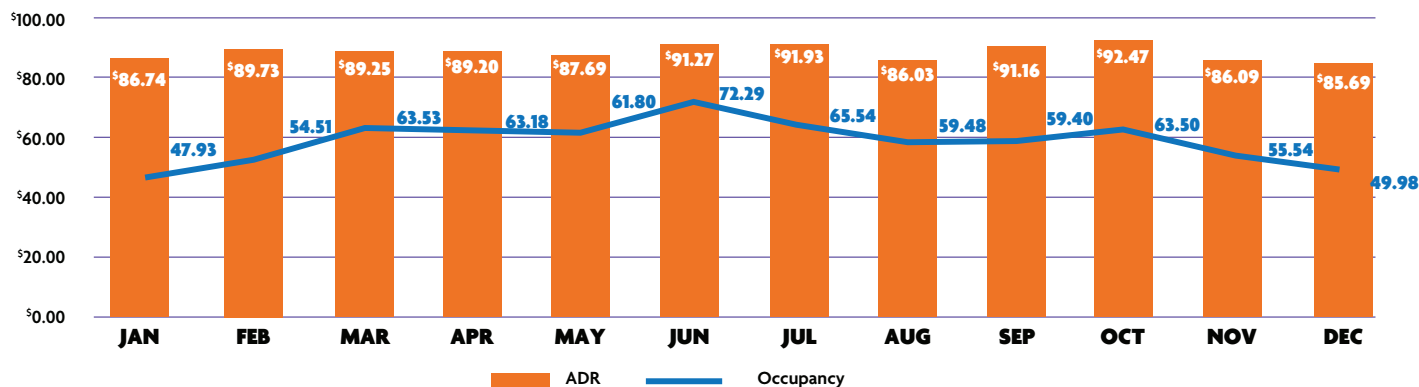
94%
OVERALL SCORE
in 2019 as compared to the
national benchmark of 86%.

2019 COMPETITIVE MARKET HOTEL INFORMATION

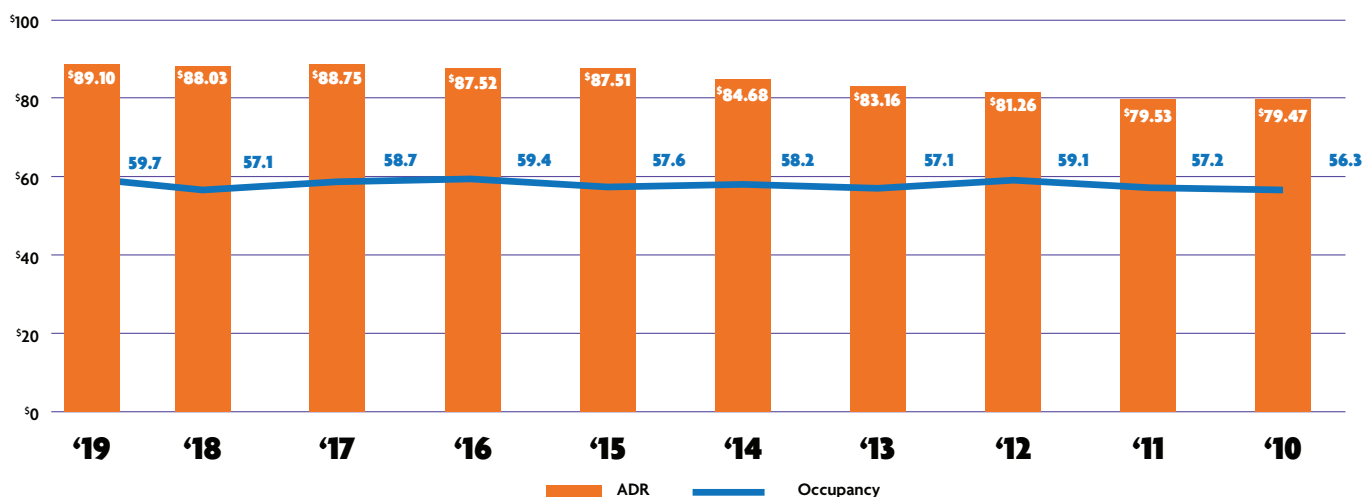
	Occ %		ADR (Average Daily Rate)		RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room)		Percent Change from YTD 2018					
	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	OCC	ADR	REVPAR	ROOM REV	ROOM AVAIL	ROOM SOLD
LITTLE ROCK, AR	59.73	57.07	89.10	88.03	53.22	50.24	4.7	1.2	5.9	7.1	1.1	5.8
LITTLE ROCK DOWNTOWN	71.99	66.81	130.28	127.15	93.79	84.95	7.8	2.5	10.4	10.3	(0.1)	7.7
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR	55.82	53.18	76.77	75.59	42.85	40.20	5.0	1.6	6.6	6.6	(0.0)	4.9
HOT SPRINGS, AR	47.00	43.16	100.72	101.18	47.34	43.67	8.9	(0.5)	8.4	7.1	(1.2)	7.6
NORTHWEST ARKANSAS	65.29	65.50	98.03	96.13	64.01	62.96	(0.3)	2.0	1.7	5.7	3.9	3.6
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	60.99	62.44	83.08	83.77	50.67	52.30	(2.3)	(0.8)	(3.1)	0.3	3.5	1.1
OMAHA, NE	61.18	60.03	97.43	97.69	59.61	58.65	1.9	(0.3)	1.6	3.5	1.8	3.7
LOUISVILLE, KY	62.82	62.39	115.20	111.51	72.38	69.58	0.7	3.3	4.0	8.5	4.3	5.0
BIRMINGHAM, AL	66.26	65.31	93.80	91.11	62.15	59.50	1.5	3.0	4.5	6.0	1.4	2.9
BATON ROUGE, LA	55.78	56.08	85.80	85.72	47.86	48.07	(0.5)	0.1	(0.4)	1.8	2.2	1.7
ALBUQUERQUE, NM	67.78	64.63	89.17	84.71	60.44	54.74	4.9	5.3	10.4	9.0	(1.3)	3.5
MEMPHIS, TN	66.53	64.74	96.90	96.49	64.47	62.46	2.8	0.4	3.2	6.0	2.7	5.5

Source: Smith Travel Research

2019 HOTEL OCCUPANCY & ADR BY MONTH



OCCUPANCY & ADR BY YEAR



SHORT-TERM RENTAL DATA & ANALYTICS

2019 vs 2018

	AVAILABLE LISTINGS			BOOKED LISTINGS			OCCUPANCY RATE			AVERAGE DAILY RATE			RevPAR		
	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG
LITTLE ROCK	436	517	18.6%	361	456	26.3%	52%	58%	11.5%	94	105	11.9%	49	61	24.7%
KANSAS CITY, MO	1,924	2,216	15.2%	1,769	2,082	17.7%	56%	58%	4.4%	127	134	5.2%	71	78	9.9%
TULSA, OK	758	937	23.6%	632	849	34.3%	56%	62%	9.6%	100	98	-1.4%	56	61	8.1%
SHREVEPORT, LA	173	237	37.0%	140	219	56.4%	52%	55%	5.1%	87	96	10.1%	45	53	15.8%
BATON ROUGE, LA	597	747	25.1%	520	656	26.2%	46%	53%	14.5%	126	126	-0.5%	58	67	14.0%
LOUISVILLE, KY	4,139	4,266	3.1%	3,389	3,690	8.9%	51%	54%	6.2%	206	231	12.3%	105	125	19.3%
MEMPHIS, TN	1,735	2,127	22.6%	1,598	1,998	25.0%	55%	57%	5.0%	123	134	9.4%	67	77	14.8%
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	1,204	1,413	17.4%	1,052	1,273	21.0%	56%	62%	10.3%	100	104	4.3%	56	65	15.1%
BIRMINGHAM, AL	726	830	14.3%	620	751	21.1%	58%	63%	9.0%	107	120	12.9%	62	76	23.0%
OMAHA, NE	1,399	1,456	4.1%	1,217	1,335	9.7%	52%	55%	5.6%	119	131	9.7%	62	72	15.9%

Source: AirDNA - data reflects all property types - entire place, private room, and shared room

SHORT-TERM RENTAL DATA & ANALYTICS

2019 vs 2018

	AVAILABLE LISTINGS			BOOKED LISTINGS			OCCUPANCY RATE			AVERAGE DAILY RATE			RevPAR		
	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG	2018	2019	% CHG
LITTLE ROCK	289	376	30.1%	234	328	40.2%	52%	59%	15.2%	119	123	3.3%	61	73	19.0%
FAYETTEVILLE	673	825	22.6%	620	769	24.0%	45%	46%	2.1%	204	199	-2.5%	92	92	-0.4%
ROGERS	197	245	24.4%	180	228	26.7%	45%	51%	13.5%	235	220	-6.2%	106	113	6.4%
HOT SPRINGS	935	1,233	31.9%	874	1,174	34.3%	39%	44%	11.8%	249	233	-6.2%	98	103	4.8%
NORTH LITTLE ROCK	47	77	63.8%	36	67	86.1%	61%	61%	-0.5%	90	136	50.4%	55	82	49.6%
BENTONVILLE	255	365	43.1%	237	337	42.2%	56%	61%	10.3%	149	152	2.1%	83	93	12.6%

Source: AirDNA - data reflects entire place properties only



@EricJonPhotos

VALUE OF TOURISM

TOURISM IMPACT IN PULASKI COUNTY



\$1,814,160,000

Total Travel Expenditures



13,650

Travel Related Employment



\$343,080,000

Travel Generated Payroll



\$73,020,000

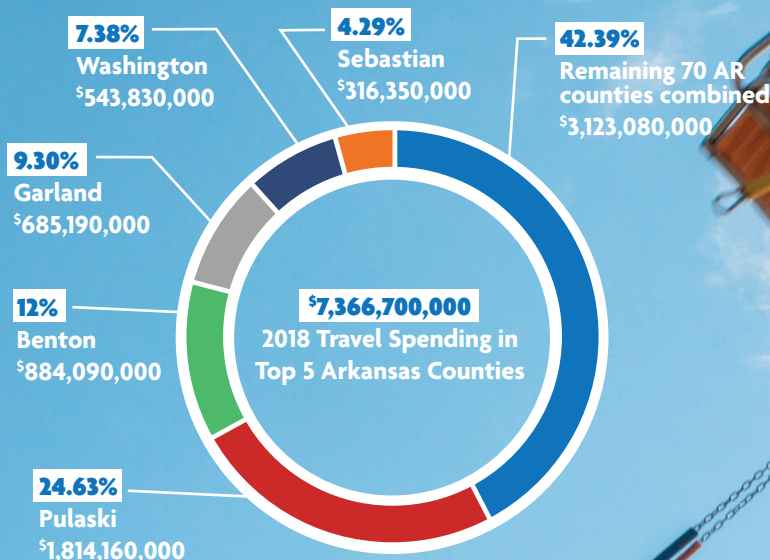
Travel Generated State Tax



\$35,080,000

Travel Generated Local Tax

TRAVEL SPENDING IN TOP 5 ARKANSAS COUNTIES



Source: Arkansas Tourism 2018 Economic Impact Report

Pulaski County accounts for **25%** of the **total travel expenditures** in Arkansas

Pulaski County accounts for **20%** of the **total travel related employment** in Arkansas

TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS NATIONALLY



IN 2018,
\$1.1 TRILLION
IN TRAVELER SPENDING...



GENERATED A TOTAL
\$2.5 TRILLION
IN ECONOMIC OUTPUT



SUPPORTED A TOTAL OF
15.7 MILLION
AMERICAN JOBS.



\$267.9 BILLION:
WAGES SHARED BY AMERICAN
WORKERS DIRECTLY
EMPLOYED BY TRAVEL



1 OUT OF 10:
U.S. JOBS
THAT DEPEND ON
TRAVEL AND TOURISM



\$170.9 BILLION:
TAX REVENUE
GENERATED BY TRAVEL SPENDING
FOR FEDERAL, STATE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



NO. 7:
WHERE TRAVEL RANKS
IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT
COMPARED TO OTHER MAJOR
PRIVATE INDUSTRY SECTORS



2.9%:
PERCENTAGE OF NATION'S
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)
ATTRIBUTED TO TRAVEL AND TOURISM



2.3 BILLION:
NUMBER OF PERSON TRIPS
THAT AMERICANS TOOK FOR
BUSINESS AND LEISURE PURPOSES

TRAVEL IS AMONG THE **TOP 10 INDUSTRIES**
IN 49 STATES AND D.C. IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT



TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS IN ARKANSAS

SPENDING

**\$7.1
BILLION**

PAYROLL

**\$1.3
BILLION**

JOBS

67,180

TRAVEL INDUSTRY
EMPLOYMENT
RANKING

4

TAX RECEIPTS

**\$1.0
BILLION**

- Domestic and international travelers to Arkansas spent \$7.1 billion in 2017 and generated \$1.0 billion to federal, state and local governments, dollars that help fund jobs and public programs such as police, firefighters, teachers, road projects and convention centers.
- The 67,180 jobs created by travelers to Arkansas in 2017 represent 6.7% of the state's total private industry employment.
- Without these jobs generated by domestic and international travel, Arkansas' 2017 unemployment rate of 3.7% would have been 8.6% of the labor force.
- For every \$1 million spent in Arkansas by domestic and international travelers, 9.5 jobs are created.

**U.S. TRAVEL
ASSOCIATION**

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION



The Finance and Administration Division is comprised of the tax, accounting, information technology, and human resource departments.

The tax department collects the advertising and promotion tax, which is assessed on the gross receipts of lodging and prepared food sales in the City of Little Rock. Tax collections for 2019 exceeded \$14.8 million.

In 2019, MUNIREvs, Inc. was selected to develop a new comprehensive tax system that will increase efficiencies and reporting capabilities for staff while also providing a more seamless and improved experience for taxpayers. The project began in 2019 and will conclude in the second quarter of 2020.

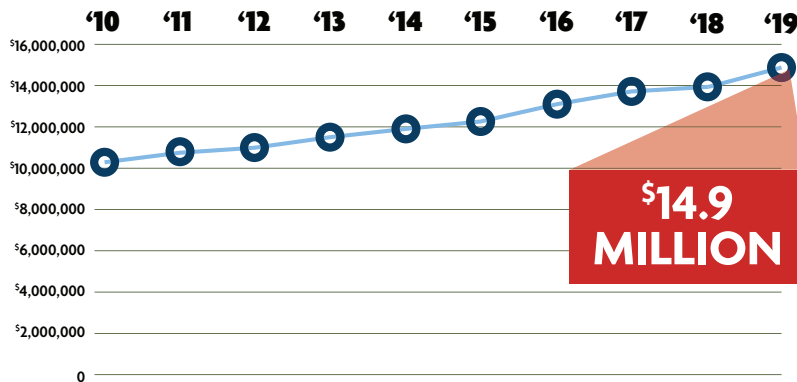
The information technology department continued to expand and update the infrastructure in LRCVB-managed facilities, including

replacement of various aged equipment, upgraded network security, an application management system, and an additional server to establish redundancy and reduce the risk of potential down time.

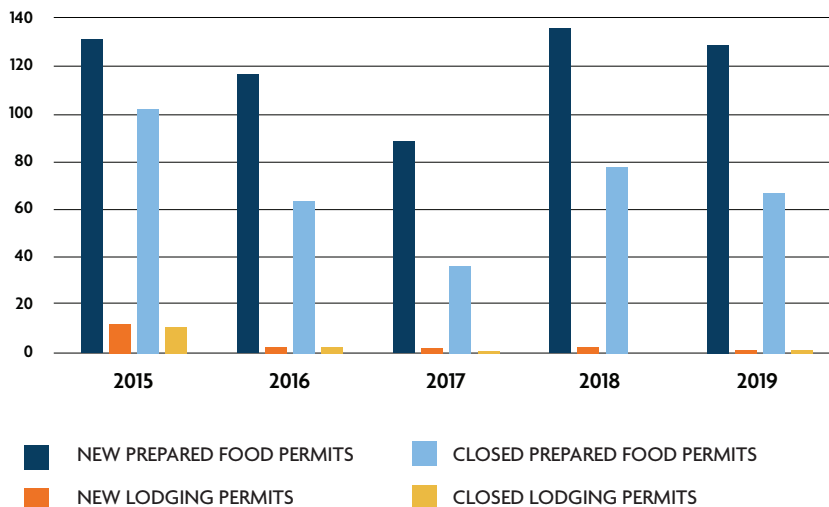
Accounting policies and procedures and the network security policy, along with various other policies were updated as a part of the Destinations International accreditation process. A comprehensive on-boarding program for new hires was developed to help ensure that all new employees are given consistent, thorough training. Additionally, an employee recognition program was developed to highlight outstanding staff for their contributions to the organization. This program will roll out in 2020. Internal staff training was expanded across all departments in 2019. In addition to our recurring safety and event management training, monthly lunch-and-learns, webinars, and other training was conducted on site. Investment in staff, through training, recognition programs, and dedication to securing good benefits continues to be a priority for LRCVB.



2010-2019 A&P TAX COLLECTIONS



2015-2019 NEW AND CLOSED PERMITS



2019 TAX COLLECTIONS BY BUSINESS TYPE



\$6,862,837
FULL SERVICE RESTAURANTS



\$3,615,586
FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS



\$1,927,490
FULL SERVICE HOTELS



\$974,012
LIMITED SERVICE HOTELS



\$909,002
CONCESSIONAIRES



\$203,694
FACILITATING PLATFORMS
(FOOD & LODGING)



\$164,280
CATERERS



\$121,719
PRIVATE CLUBS

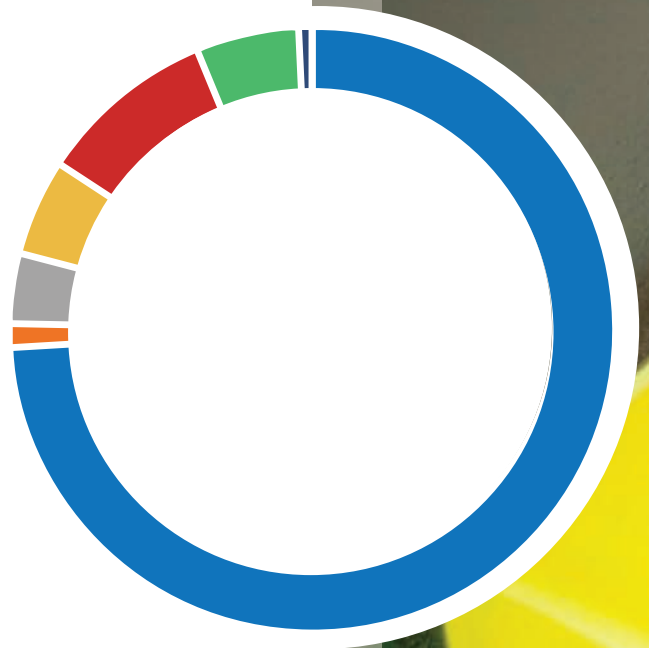
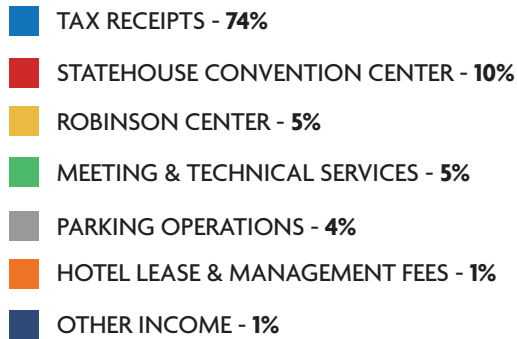


\$94,020
MOBILE UNITS

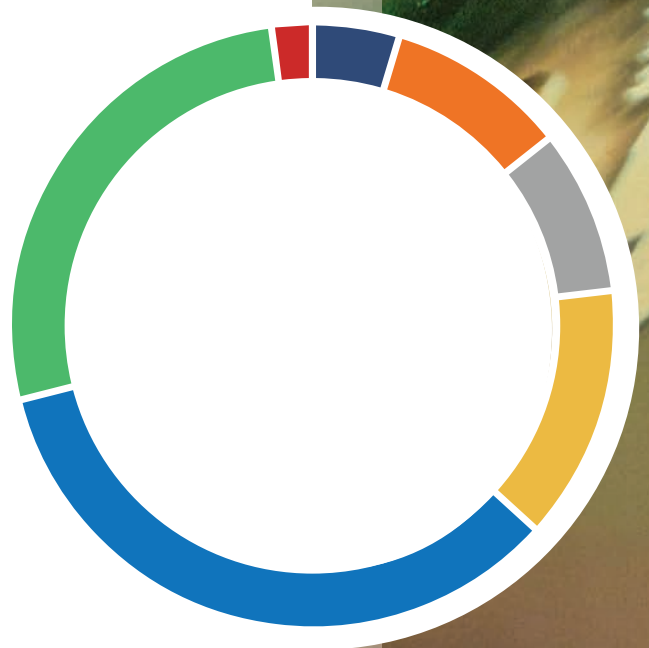
GRAND TOTAL:
\$14,872,640

2019 TOTAL REVENUE

\$20.1 MILLION



2019 TOTAL EXPENDITURES





FACILITY OPERATIONS

The Facility Operations division had an extremely productive year in 2019. Riding on the coattails of a great year for conventions and meetings, facilities got off to a fast start and continued the momentum throughout the year. Statehouse Convention Center and Meeting and Tech Services revenues exceeded the previous year by a combined \$475,000, due entirely to increased meetings business. Robinson Center lagged slightly behind budget and prior year due primarily to *The Lion King's* impressive run in 2018 and lack of a multiweek Broadway blockbuster during the 2019 calendar year. However, a three-week engagement of *Wicked* began on January 1, 2020 with record setting numbers..

The staff managed 21 capital projects that exceeded \$1.3 million. Major projects included replacing two cooling towers and the ballroom roof at the Statehouse Convention Center, airwall replacement in the Governor's Halls, and the construction of a new storage facility at Robinson Center.

In the Robinson Performance Hall, the Broadway Theater Series presented *Book of Mormon*, *Evita*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Escape to Margaritaville* during calendar year 2019. Our Broadway partner, Celebrity Attractions, continues to deliver great entertainment line-ups. The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra also had a very successful season with a total of 23 performances including the music of *Chopin and Mendelssohn*, *Classical Mystery Tour-Sgt. Peppers*, *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*, *Beethoven & Blue Jeans*, and *Home Alone*. In addition to our primary resident companies acts such as Dave Chappelle, Alison Kraus, Gabriel Iglesias, Tyler Perry, Bobby Bones, and more performed to sellout crowds in the Performance Hall.

Parking operations had another profitable year, reaching the levels required by the City of Little Rock to service the parking deck bonds while retaining a strong financial position in relation to outstanding debt. With the I-30 crossing on the short-term horizon, we also spent a considerable amount of time with city representatives and architects planning possible future parking options in the downtown and convention corridor areas. We are currently assembling plans for a 600-space parking facility.

BOBBY BONES & THE RAGING IDIOTS

IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US, SORRY



DAVE CHAPPELLE



NEW 2019 FACILITY GUIDES



2019 CLIENT SURVEY SUMMARY



LRCVB
STAFF AND
FACILITIES
RATING

ACCURACY • VALUE • SATISFACTION • RESPONSIVENESS
COORDINATION • SERVICE • KNOWLEDGE • PROFESSIONALISM
PRESENCE • EXPERIENCE • SAFETY • VARIETY • FRIENDLINESS
PROFESSIONALISM • CLEANLINESS • CONDITION



SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

LRCVB continues to implement sustainability measures throughout all managed facilities and continues to enjoy financial benefits from those efforts. Glass recycling was added in 2019, in addition to single stream recycling at all LRCVB managed facilities. The following data is based on the 2012 baseline year compared to November 2018 – November 2019.

ENERGY USAGE



STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER:

Energy: -8.10%

Water: -33.00%

RIVER MARKET:

Energy: -23.00%

Water: -23.90%

FIRST SECURITY AMPHITHEATER:

Energy: +33.60%

Water: -70.50%

CROMWELL OFFICE BUILDING:

Energy: -37.00% (due in part to unoccupied floors)

ROBINSON CENTER:

(2017 is the baseline year for this data, comparing November 2018 – November 2019)

Energy: -15.00%

Water: -13.30%

ROBINSON CENTER PARKING GARAGE:

Energy: -55.00%

Water: -.8%

CONVENTION DISTRICT PARKING GARAGE:

Energy: +1.70%

Water: +150.00%
(low water usage, but had a
water line freeze and burst)

RIVER MARKET PARKING GARAGE:

Energy: +14.70%

Water: -50.00%

WATER USAGE



2019 FACILITY USAGE



249
FACILITY USER DAYS

243
TOTAL EVENTS

EVENT TYPE	# OF EVENTS	PATRON DAYS
CONVENTION	29	28,512
PERFORMANCE/CONCERT	84	126,425
DANCE/PARTY	5	1,465
FOOD FUNCTION	48	9,924
MEETING/SEMINAR/EXAM	35	8,060
REHEARSALS	31	3,880
GRADUATION	2	3,300
RECITAL/COMPETITIONS	7	12,350
OTHER	2	98
TOTALS	243	194,014

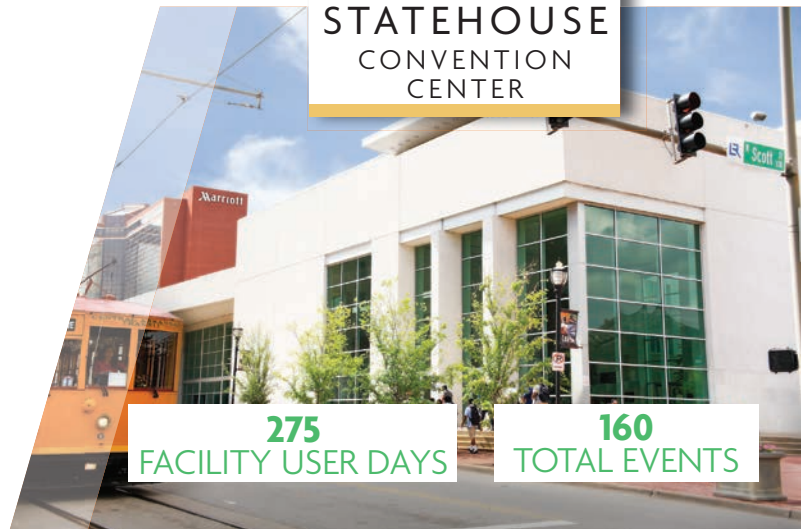
EVENT TYPE

OF
EVENTS

PATRON
DAYS

CONVENTION	16	57,325
CONVENTION W/ TRADESHOW	34	92,896
PERFORMANCE/CONCERT	1	300
DANCE/PARTY	2	1,720
FOOD FUNCTION	48	34,103
MEETING/SEMINAR	30	6,305
CONSUMER SHOW	12	47,526
SPORTS	5	25,100
GRADUATION	4	5,965
RECITAL/COMPETITIONS	2	1,745
EXAMS	3	393
OTHER	3	515
TOTALS	160	273,893

STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER



275
FACILITY USER DAYS

160
TOTAL EVENTS



RIVER MARKET



EVENT TYPE

OF
EVENTS

PATRON
DAYS

PERFORMANCE/CONCERT/MOVIE	24	52,613
DANCES	1	50
FOOD FUNCTION	49	8,817
MEETING/SEMINAR	26	2,127
CONSUMER SHOW (INCLUDING FARMERS MARKET)	29	73,800
SPORTS/HOBBY	4	10,025
FESTIVALS	4	6,600
OTHER	2	50
TOTALS	139	154,082

ROBINSON CENTER

2019 AWARD
**OUTSTANDING
NEW CONSTRUCTION
IN A HISTORIC SETTING**
BY PRESERVE ARKANSAS

2019 AWARD
SUSTAIN THE ROCK
BY THE LITTLE ROCK
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

SILVER AWARD
DESIGN IN EXCELLENCE
BY THE AMERICAN SOCIETY
OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS (ASID)



The Robinson Center historical timeline, developed in partnership with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Center for Arkansas History and Culture and the Windgate Center for Art + Design, received an **Honorable Mention for Outstanding Achievement in Preservation Education** by Preserve Arkansas.



RIVER MARKET 2019 PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS



RIVER MARKET

The River Market operations team produced another great year of programming. Staff continued our efforts with the Saturday Farmers' Market, Jazz in the Park (eight events), Movies in the Park (eight events), multiple events surrounding the River Market Entertainment District in August, and Think BIG SHOP Small benefitting local retailers on small business Saturday.

In 2019, an extensive report completed by Market Ventures, Inc. outlined options for the possible redevelopment and repositioning of Ottenheimer Market Hall. Documents are being prepared now to solicit developers and investors to spearhead these efforts. Several capital improvements were completed at the First Security Amphitheater including, new steel covers for trench drains, I-beam extensions for sound production, side drains to eliminate standing water, and dressing room updates following the flooding early in the year. Additionally, our agreement with Awakening Events dba River Concerts LLC to be the exclusive promoter for ticketed concerts in the Amphitheater got off to a good start. Concerts produced in 2019 included Clint Black and Lynyrd Skynyrd. The season was limited due to the late start after contracts were finalized, but a five to six concert season will be announced in February for 2020.



Bizarre Bazaar – (March) This event featured unique shopping by local artists and craft vendors.



Jazz in the Park – Wednesday evenings in April & September – in partnership with the Art Porter Music Education Foundation. This was the series' 7th year.



Little Rock Farmers' Market Saturdays: May – September: Second Saturday Events featured "Lil' Farmers" – a program that educated kids about foods they can find at the market and Garden Gourmet Chef Series.



Movies in the Park – Wednesday evenings in June & July – featured eight movies.



Locally Labeled Pavilion Party – a free community event that promoted the Locally Labeled passport program and highlighted all of the local adult beverage companies.

Think BIG SHOP small
Small Business Saturday

Think BIG SHOP Small – on Small Business Saturday in November, a block party style shopping event highlighting local retail partners.



Rudy & Friends – a one-day family festival featured face painting, reindeer cookie creations, writing letters to Santa, making reindeer themed ornaments and crafts, and more.



Participated in **2nd Friday Art Night** (2FAN) several times through outreach, marketing and street vendor coordination.



River Market Entertainment District – The district launched in August, followed by several special events and weekend programming.

#LOVELITTLE ROCK



SALES & SERVICES



The Sales and Services division consists of 15 professionals who recruit groups to hold meetings and events in Little Rock, as well as provide support services to groups hosting events in the city.

The sales team is divided by market segment and dedicated to increasing the number of groups and group room nights in Little Rock through a proactive direct sales approach and participation at industry tradeshows. Groups include meetings, conventions, motor coach tours, sporting events, and social gatherings. Additionally, the team frequently invites decision makers to Little Rock to showcase the community as a potential host city for a future meeting or event. This has been proven to give us a greater chance of securing the business. The direct sales efforts have now been even further enhanced by our Rock Star program.

The destination services team provides on-site services to assist with customer and attendee satisfaction, increasing attendance, and encouraging increased visitor spending in Little Rock. The destination services team provides a wide variety of services to event planners hosting meetings and events in Little Rock. These services include information on local resources, on-site staffing services, and destination information booths, welcome services, name badges, media assistance and destination marketing materials including the new Big Savings in Little Rock program which provides special offers at area merchants for convention attendees.



2019 SALES & SERVICES ACTIVITIES

473 LEADS

DISTRIBUTED REPRESENTING 199,393
POTENTIAL ROOM NIGHTS

374 GROUPS

SECURED REPRESENTING 144,250 ROOM
NIGHTS AND 384,289 ATTENDEES WITH
AN ESTIMATED \$81.45M IN DIRECT
SPENDING

232 GROUPS

SERVED REPRESENTING 79,264 ROOM
NIGHTS WITH AN ESTIMATED \$41.81M IN
DIRECT SPENDING

142 MOTOR COACH GROUPS

REPRESENTING 4,417 ROOM NIGHTS AND
6,528 ATTENDEES

3,979

SALES/PROSPECTING
CONTACTS MADE

2,179

SERVICE/RETENTION
CONTACTS MADE

646

TRADESHOW
CONTACTS MADE

70 SITE VISITS

HOSTED IN LITTLE ROCK

90

PRE AND POST CONVENTION
PLANNING MEETINGS

1,806

REGISTRAR HOURS

PROVIDED TO 71 GROUPS

84,797 BROCHURES

DISTRIBUTED TO GROUP ATTENDEES

TRADESHOW MARKETING

To increase the awareness of Little Rock as a convention and meeting destination, LRCVB continued to enhance its presence at industry tradeshows in 2019. A variety of marketing efforts were activated including sponsorships at targeted shows that provided additional exposure and brand awareness as well as pre-show and post-show promotions sent to meeting planners.

GROUP TOUR/INTERNATIONAL

American Bus Association Marketplace	Louisville, KY
US Travel Association's IPW	Anaheim, CA
Travel South Showcase	Myrtle Beach, SC
TAP Dance	Cheyenne, WY
Travel South International Showcase	St. Louis, MO

SPORTS

National Association of Sports Commissions	Knoxville, TN
Connect Sports	Louisville, KY
TEAMS '18 Conference & Expo	Anaheim, CA

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

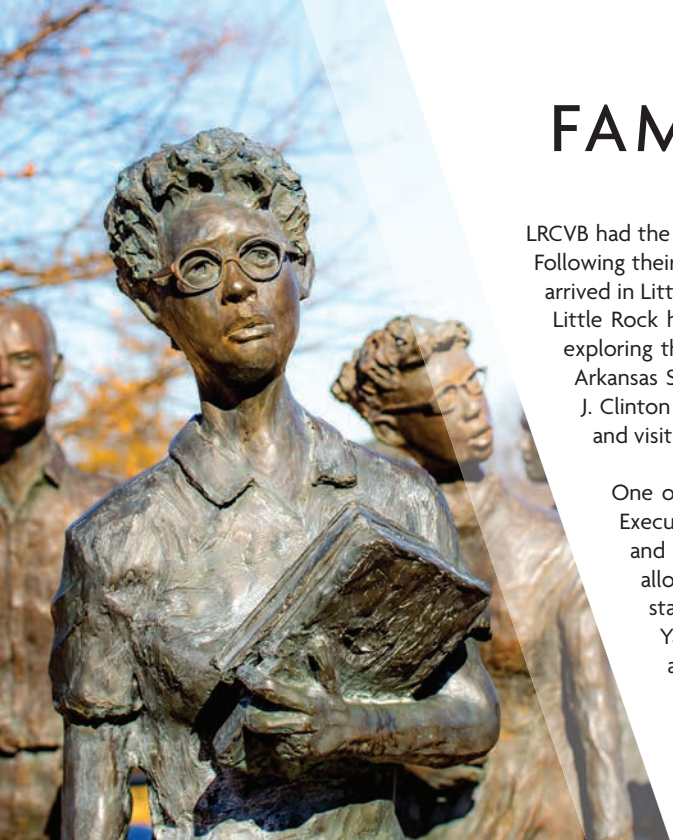
Prof. Convention Mgmt. Assn. Annual Meeting - Convening Leaders	Pittsburgh, PA
Religious Conf. Mgmt. Assn World Conference & Expo- EMERGE	Greensboro, NC
Destination International's Destination Showcase - DC	Washington, D.C.
Connect Chicago	Chicago, IL
Conference Direct Annual Partner Meeting (APM)	Atlanta, GA
Meetings Industry Council of Colorado Edu Conference & Tradeshow	Denver, CO
Connect Diversity (formerly Diversity Marketplace)	Birmingham, AL
Travel Professionals of Color	Memphis, TN
Fraternity Executives Association (FEA) Annual Conference	Las Vegas, NV
Helms Briscoe Annual Business Conference Partnership Mtg	Houston, TX
FortSPIN	Fort Worth, TX
American Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting & Exposition	Columbus, OH
Connect Marketplace 2019 (Corporate)	Louisville, KY
Connect Marketplace 2019 (Association)	Louisville, KY
Connect Marketplace 2019 (Specialty)	Louisville, KY
Congressional Black Caucus Foundation - Black Women's Agenda Luncheon	Washington, D.C.
Connect Faith 2019	Grand Rapids, MI
National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners Annual Fall Conference	New Orleans, LA
Connect D.C.	Washington, D.C.
KCSAE/Heartland (2)	Kansas City, MO



2019 SALES BOOKINGS

ARRIVAL YEAR	# OF BOOKINGS	ROOM NIGHTS	ATTENDEES
2019	213	32,410	107,419
2020	104	67,667	121,971
2021	31	18,840	22,481
2022	14	12,551	16,666
2023+	10	10,659	17,830

FAMILIARIZATION TOURS



LRCVB had the opportunity to host a familiarization tour for Travel Professionals of Color in May. Following their annual conference and trade show in Memphis, a group of 26 travel professionals arrived in Little Rock to spend a couple of days touring our attractions and experiencing all that Little Rock has to offer. They were able to experience music by local artist Dell Smith while exploring the Mosaic Templar Cultural Center, stop at the Little Rock Nine sculpture on the Arkansas State Capitol grounds, walk in the footsteps of our 42nd president at the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park, participate in a guided tour of Central High School, and visit Pyramid Art and Books, the Old Statehouse Museum, and Philander Smith College.

One of the highlights of the summer was hosting the Arkansas Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Summer Conference. ASAE membership includes association executives and meeting planners from around the state of Arkansas. Hosting the conference allowed us the opportunity to showcase many of our Little Rock treasures. The event started with a “pub crawl” stopping at Rock Town Distillery, Rebel Kettle, and the Rail Yard. The following day we transported the group to the new Rusty Tractor Vineyards and hosted lunch at Pulaski Technical College Culinary Arts & Hospitality Institute. Attendees also experienced events in LRCVB managed facilities. The conference trade show was held at the Statehouse Convention Center in the Wally Allen Ballroom and an evening event in the Hamilton-Porter room at Robinson Center. This allowed the attendees to experience our facilities first hand.

ACTUALIZED BUSINESS IN 2019

ARRIVAL YEAR	# OF BOOKINGS	ROOM NIGHTS	DIRECT SPENDING IMPACT
JANUARY	50,520	7,646	\$6,023,627
FEBRUARY	35,934	11,465	\$9,296,116
MARCH	22,299	13,142	\$8,612,771
APRIL	23,405	12,970	\$7,615,083
MAY	12,069	6,371	\$3,868,370
JUNE	26,745	15,563	\$7,334,485
JULY	23,063	18,156	\$10,698,836
AUGUST	24,030	6,170	\$3,187,217
SEPTEMBER	17,790	10,376	\$5,432,291
OCTOBER	31,760	8,869	\$4,991,388
NOVEMBER	52,775	7,421	\$5,850,659
DECEMBER	13,494	3,923	\$2,345,283
TOTALS	333,884	122,072	\$75,256,126

LITTLE ROCK CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

In May, we hosted LRCVB's 3rd Annual Customer Advisory Board. This impressive group consists of more than a dozen select meeting professionals from across the U.S. These individuals provide insight and perspective on their perceptions of Little Rock as a destination and how LRCVB can better position ourselves in the competitive marketplace of attracting more conventions.



2019 BIG WINS FOR NEW BUSINESS

ASSOCIATION	NAME OF MEETING	ROOM NIGHTS	ATTENDANCE	DIRECT SPENDING IMPACT*
National Baptist Convention USA, Inc	2022 Mid Winter Board Meeting	3,199	3,000	\$1,616,118
Solution Tree	2020 Professional Learning Communities at Work Institute	1,025	1,200	\$907,428
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization	2020 Interdisciplinary Conference	2,403	700	\$894,030
Voluntary Protection Programs Participants Association (VPPPA) Region VI	2021 Region 6 VPPPA Safety Conference	1,665	600	\$884,384
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States	2020 Annual Conference	3,492	800	\$807,646
Southern Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers	2021 SACRAO Annual Convention	1,257	500	\$729,901
National Association for Interpretation	2023 NAI National Conference	2,061	800	\$592,358
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association	2020 Region 8 & 10 Meeting	1,561	1,200	\$558,260
Neighborhoods, USA NUSA	2020 Annual National Conference	959	800	\$508,954
National High School Mock Trial Championship	2022 National High School Mock Trial Championship	1,470	500	\$452,269
USA Gymnastics	2020 USAG Men's Gymnastics Region 3 Championships	800	1,500	\$432,688
The Soaring Society of America, Inc.	2020 Soaring Society of America Biennial Convention	961	2,000	\$379,324
American Association for State and Local History	2021 Annual Convention	1,100	750	\$349,132
9th District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.	2020 International Undergraduate Leadership Summit	924	800	\$342,307
Southeast Tourism Society	2020 Connections Conference	538	350	\$283,118
National Association for Campus Activities	2021 Central Regional Conference	742	430	\$263,567
Southeastern Archaeological Conference	2021 Southeast Archaeological Conference	695	600	\$252,461
American Fisheries Society	2020 Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society Meeting & International Catfish Symposium	850	450	\$232,251
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.	2021 Southwestern Regional Convention	802	600	\$231,874
National Society of Black Engineers	2021 Regional V Fall Conference	420	800	\$227,082
The Green House Project	2020 Annual Meeting	533	300	\$224,538
South Central Region Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.	2019 South Central Region Undergraduate Round-Up	610	800	\$187,778
Women's International Network of Utility Professionals	2020 WiNUP Conference	577	300	\$184,059
Jack & Jill of America, Inc.	2020 Jack and Jill of America, Inc. Central Region	481	300	\$149,229

*According to the Destinations International economic impact calculator

ROCK STAR PROGRAM

The 2nd Annual Rock Star luncheon was held on December 2 on the stage at Robinson Center. The Rock Star program recognizes local individuals who strive to bring economic impact to Little Rock by inviting organizations that they are affiliated with to host an event or meeting in Little Rock. These honorees belong to a variety of clubs, fraternal organizations, professional associations, faith-based organizations, and sporting groups, and worked diligently to bring a meeting, convention or event to our community. Annually, LRCVB honors resident "Rock Stars" for their positive contributions in steering new meeting and event business to the city of Little Rock.

Little Rock **ROCK STAR** 2019 HONOREES



Carlos Corbin

2020 Omega Psi Phi International Undergraduate Leadership Summit

Charles King

2021 Alpha Phi Alpha Southwestern Regional Convention

Ben Batten

2020 Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting & 3rd Annual International Catfish Symposium

Bishop Kenneth L. Robinson

2019 Antioch Full Gospel Baptist Church Bishop Kenneth Robinson Quartet Convention

Joshua Townsend

Derek Brown

2019 Coalition of Residential Excellence Annual Convention

Trena Mitchell

2019 Arkansas Cancer Coalition SE Colorectal Consortium Symposium

Greg Hatcher

2019 Arkansas Wrestling Association Annual AAA High School State Wrestling Tournament

David Gill

Jeannie Ford Andrews

2020 Association of Presbyterian Church Educators Annual Event

Billy Brooks

2019 A State Corvette Club Car Show

Kamela Rowland

2019 Council of State Associations President's Annual Conference

Ray Rodgers

2019 Golden Gloves of America Annual Mid-South Tournament & 2020 Golden Gloves of America Tournament of Champions

Dick Browning

2019 Grand York Rite Masons 62nd Annual South Central Conference of York Rite Masons

Bryan Day

2020 Inland Rivers, Ports and Terminals, Inc. Annual Conference

Suzanne Ornelas

2020 Jack & Jill of America, Inc. Central Region Conference

Pam Garner

2019 Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant

Eric Munson

2019 National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities Executive Director Leadership Summit

Joe Thompson

2019 National Association of Health Data Organizations Annual Convention

Erma Peterson

2019 National Dunbar Alumni Association 5th Reunion of the Classes

Anthony McMullen

Jordan Tinsley

2022 National High School Mock Trial Championship

Dr. Jon Oden

2019 Pediatric Endocrine Society for the TOLA states (Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas) Conference

Roderick Smothers

2019 Philander Smith College's JusticeCon & 2021 Southwestern Regional Convention

Tjuana Byrd

2019 Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority South Central Region Undergraduate Round-Up

Chris Riggins

2021 Southern Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers Annual Convention

Wyn Norwood

2019 Southern Golf Association 113rd Southern Amateur Championship

John Montgomery

2020 The Green House Project Annual Meeting

Kay Tatum

2022 The National Society of the Dames of the Court of Honor 95th Annual Conference

Doug Zollner

2020 The Nature Conservancy Central US Region Science, Stewardship and Conservation Conference

Steve McClellan

2018 Arkansas Association of College and Business University Business Officers

Leslie Rush

2019 Arkansas Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children

Dr. Carl Drexler

Dr. Elizabeth Horton

Dr. Andrew Beaupré

2020 Southeast Archaeological Conference

Brian Kutsch

2020 American Zoo Association Orangutan Species Survival Plan

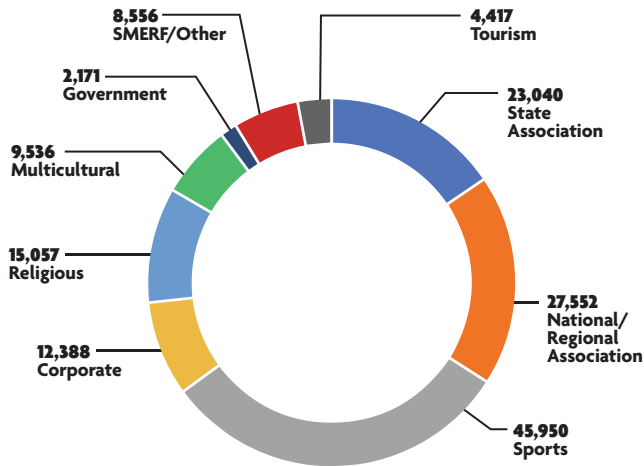
Jerry Adams

Bryan Barnhouse

Julie LaRue

2020 State Science and Technology Institute Annual Conference

ROOM NIGHTS BY MARKET SEGMENT



NEW BUSINESS THAT SELECTED LITTLE ROCK FOR 2019 EVENTS

GROUP NAME	ATTENDANCE
SOUTHERN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP	1,300
INTERNATIONAL CAKE EXPLORATION SOCIETY	1,200
NATIONAL BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION	1,000
NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE AND PROVINCIAL LOTTERIES	900
SOUTH CENTRAL REGION, ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INC.	800
SOUTH CENTRAL REGION ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INC.	800
NATIONAL AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM	600
GARVER, LLC. 100TH ANNIVERSARY	600
KAPPA ALPHA PSI FRATERNITY SOUTHWEST PROVINCE	500
ARNOLD PALMER CUP	478
OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.	250

LITTLE ROCK CVB SALES PACE REPORT

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
DEFINITE 2020													
ROOMS	10,187	10,997	12,636	12,126	3,467	9,712	15,019	6,305	4,273	9,337	1,798	1,049	96,906
STLY ROOMS	7,482	5,069	16,282	10,791	2,366	11,958	15,137	1,187	7,168	5,024	4,588	2,610	89,662
ROOMS VARIANCE	36%	117%	-22%	12%	47%	-19%	-1%	431%	-40%	86%	-61%	-60%	8%
DEFINITE 2021													
ROOMS	2,093	1,231	1,251	4,925	2,857	2,831	2,237	143	1,845	3,640	6,106	1,377	30,536
STLY ROOMS	3,500	1,284	2,520	1,322	1,382	915	9,329	1,942	586	3,991	1,798	670	29,239
ROOMS VARIANCE	-40%	-4%	-50%	273%	107%	209%	-76%	-93%	215%	-9%	240%	106%	4%
DEFINITE 2022													
ROOMS	4,086	143	630	4,122	4,820	2,831	1,763	143	745	0	0	587	19,870
STLY ROOMS	887	33	0	1,460	360	915	742	0	745	1,620	3,557	1,377	11,696
ROOMS VARIANCE	361%	333%	100%	182%	1239%	209%	138%	100%	0	-100%	-100%	-57	70%
DEFINITE 2023													
ROOMS	887	0	0	3,178	0	915	1,575	0	0	0	6,322	3	12,880
STLY ROOMS	887	0	630	867	2,987	915	288	0	745	0	0	0	7,319
ROOMS VARIANCE	0	100%	-100%	267%	-100%	0	447%	100%	-100%	100%	100%	100%	76%

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The marketing and communications division serves as an in-house marketing agency for LRCVB and works to increase the city's profile and awareness as a travel destination. This is accomplished by targeting and hosting travel writers, bloggers and influencers; designing and producing collateral materials for various clients; supporting the Sales & Services team through content marketing; managing various websites and visitor information centers; managing the Bureau's sponsorships and strategic partnerships; and traditional advertising of the destination. Additionally, we promote the city through press releases, attending strategic travel conferences and special events.

This year, 2019, was the first full year with our new Agency of Record (AOR), or in this case, Agencies of Record. At the end of 2018, we signed a contract with Paradise Advertising and Marketing of St. Petersburg, Florida, to develop and execute a strategic media and advertising plan. Paradise, in turn, contracted with local Little Rock agency MHP (Mangan Holcomb Partners) to handle the Little Rock and in-state portion of the media plan. Additionally, we work with Angela Rogers Group (ARG) for PR support of several local media campaigns and events (including the Locally Labelled passport, Rock Star program, Farmers Market, Big Jingle Jubilee Holiday Parade and ATA's World Expo), and TwoSix Digital of Brighton, MI for social media support for both marketing and sales initiatives.

With more targeted and strategic media placements, and through the use of the latest digital technologies and advertising research platforms, LRCVB was able to measure the impact of our media spending and better prioritize markets. We were also able to see how and where guests were spending money when they came to Little Rock, which city's residents most frequently searched online for Little Rock information and what other destinations those same people were searching for, as well.

PARADISE

LRCVB continued to grow its advertising efforts in 2019 by expanding the reach of the advertising into targeted out-of-state source markets. These markets included Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX, Memphis, TN, Kansas City, MO, Shreveport, LA, and Chicago, IL. The overall goal of this campaign was to increase awareness and elevate the Little Rock brand in these markets as a weekend getaway to foodies, outdoor adventure seekers, and culture/history enthusiasts. This was done through a variety of digital media including video, digital banner ads, and native content. In addition to the digital media running in these markets, LRCVB was featured as a sponsor of PIQNIQ, a music festival held in Chicago. With this sponsorship and activation, LRCVB had a six-week radio and social media schedule garnering over 4.4 million radio and 200,000 social impressions. Overall the 2019 out-of-state advertising campaign culminated in over 21 million impressions and a .16% click thru rate, which is well above industry standard.



LRCVB used a mix of digital media, streaming video, outdoor, content marketing, print, and search engine marketing (SEM) in 2019 to reach audiences in Central Arkansas. Beautifully produced video, vibrant photography, and well-crafted narratives were placed in paid social media posts, digital display ads, native and print ads, and on Connected TV and billboards, all showcasing dining, entertainment, events, and other opportunities unique to Little Rock. The cumulative impact of these media placements was 6.3 million impressions and nearly a quarter million digital engagements such as completed views or click-throughs.





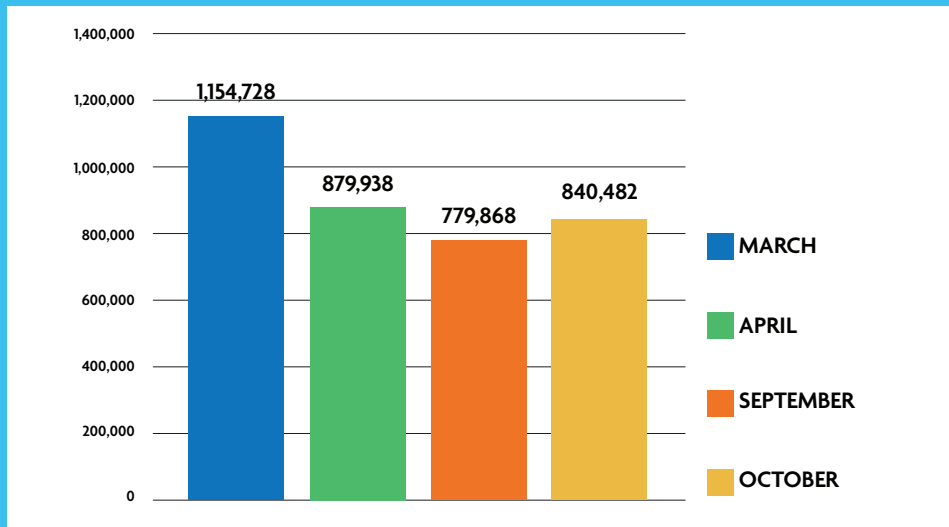
RESEARCH

LRCVB participated in two new research programs in 2019. Through Conversant, a media partner where we were able to measure our Return on Ad Spend (ROAS) and net economic impact on the destination. An additional research study was performed by AirSage to help us better understand our target markets, demographics, and peak points of interest within the city of Little Rock.

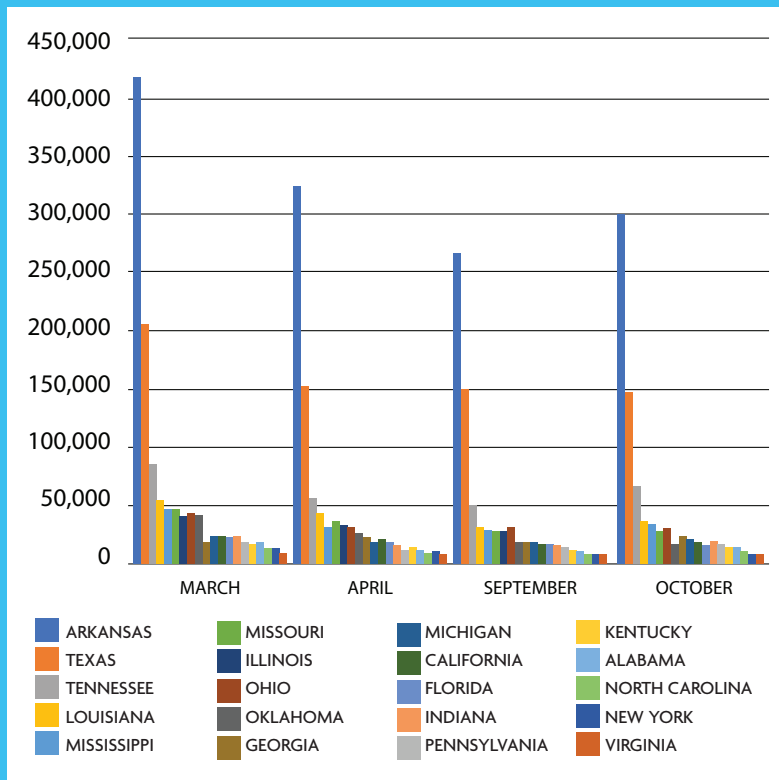


AirSage Data: AirSage has been a leading data solutions provider in the Location Intelligence and Population Movement Analytics market for more than a decade. The AirSage research took a snap shot of visitation to Little Rock for the months of March, April, September and October 2018. In addition to total visitation by month, the data provided insights into top feeder markets and most popular points of interest within the destination.

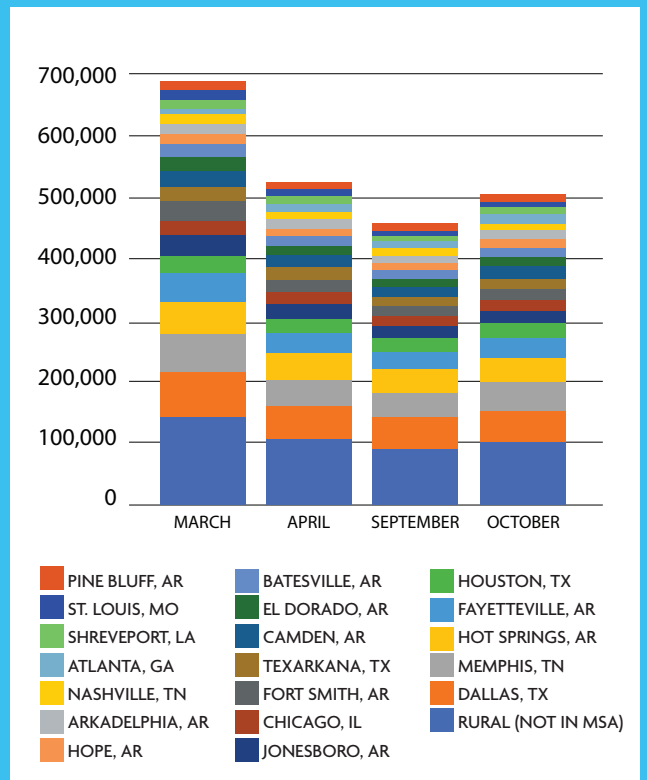
VISITORS BY MONTH 2018 TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITORS SEEN IN EACH MONTH



TOP FEEDER STATES - TREND



TOP FEEDER MARKETS - TREND





@LittleRockCVB



Conversant: CORE (Conversant one-to-one Relationship Engine) identifies all of our customers from among 200+ million privacy-protected consumer IDs. It then matches them to their devices and browsers with an industry-leading 96% accuracy, to create ongoing, meaningful connections wherever they go. LRCVB utilized Conversant to track paid advertising impact for our out-of-market campaigns.

Conversant was able to give us detailed data about travelers who were served LRCVB ads on their digital platform. The data included the number of transactions in-market, total value of those transactions, revenue by category (food, lodging, etc.) and origination market of the travelers. For every dollar spent on this platform, we were able to attribute a (ROAS) return on ad spend of \$84.16.

DIGITAL ROI

5.7 MILLION
PEOPLE REACHED

ALMOST **20,000**
VISITORS TO LITTLE ROCK

\$6.9 MILLION
SPENT IN MARKET FROM VISITORS TARGETED

128K
TRANSACTIONS

RETURN ON AD SPEND = **\$84.16 ROAS**

Campaign Flight: March 19, 2019 - July 12, 2019
Measurement Window: March 19, 2019 - September 10, 2019

OBJECTIVE

Drive awareness of Little Rock through cross-device video messaging, display and unique creative messages and measure the Net Economic Impact digital media has on an individual

STRATEGY/TARGETING

Audience Targeting to Destination Travelers, Foodies, Cultural Travelers + Creative Retargeting from Feeder markets: Chicago, Dallas, Kansas City, Memphis, Shreveport

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Only measures people who were served an impression. Does not account for multiple travelers in a party.
- Only measures 50-60% of non-cash transactions

\$84.16
MEASURED ROAS

\$6.9MM
MEASURED SALES

\$82K
MARKETING INVESTMENT
*NOT ENTIRE CAMPAIGN INVESTMENT

5.7MM
INDIVIDUALS REACHED

CAMPAIGN METRICS

\$6.9MM
TOTAL MESSAGED REVENUE

\$81,559
INVESTMENT

\$84.16
ROAS

5.7MM
UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS
REACHED

19,902
TOTAL VISITORS

0.35%
MESSAGE TRAVELER RATE

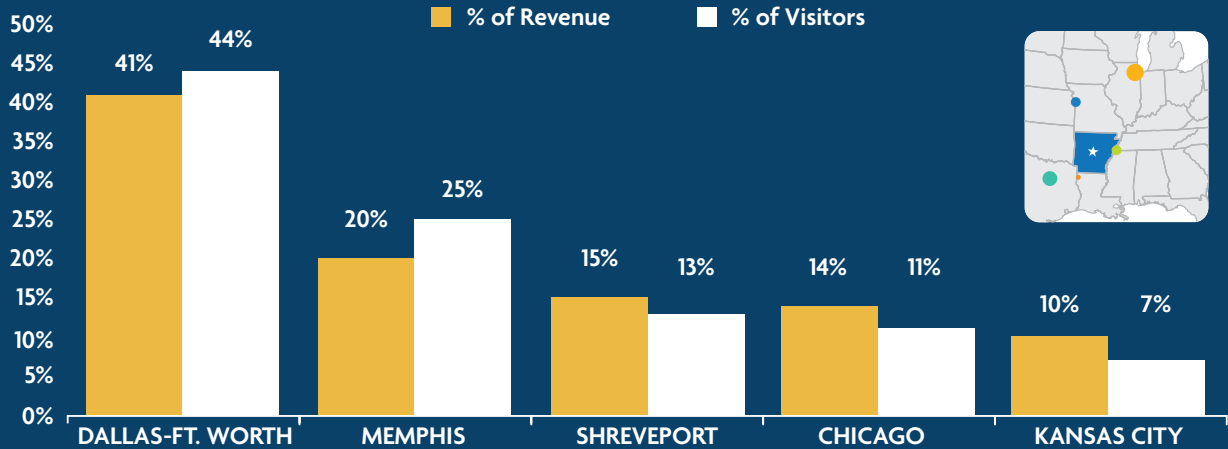
128K
TOTAL
TRANSACTIONS

6.5
AVERAGE
PURCHASES PER VISITOR

\$345
AVERAGE MEASURED
SPEND PER VISITOR

NOTE: NEI MEASURES ON AVERAGE ABOUT 50-60% OF NON-CASH TRANSACTION SPEND
MEASUREMENT WINDOW: MARCH 19, 2019 - SEPTEMBER 10, 2019

REVENUE BY FEEDER MARKET



- 41% of measured revenue generated in the Little Rock DMA came from Dallas-Ft. Worth; additionally, that measured revenue was driven by 44% of visitors, lastly, 33% of impression delivery came from the Dallas-Ft. Worth DMA
- Shreveport, Chicago and Kansas City represent feeder markets that have a high visitor yield; these individuals contribute to a large portion of revenue per visitor compared to other feeder markets

MEASUREMENT WINDOW: MARCH 19, 2019 - SEPTEMBER 10, 2019



FEEDER MARKET DELIVERY INSIGHTS

DMA	IMPRESSIONS	CLICKS	CTR	MESSAGED VISIT*
CHICAGO	5,700,157	8,572	0.15%	899
DALLAS	4,227,178	5,882	0.14%	650
KANSAS CITY	1,726,753	2,234	0.13%	248
MEMPHIS	779,700	1,326	0.17%	148
SHREVEPORT	326,561	539	0.11%	52
PRE UPDATED REPORTING	6,379,644	7,124	0.11%	674
TOTAL	19,139,993	25,677	0.13%	2671

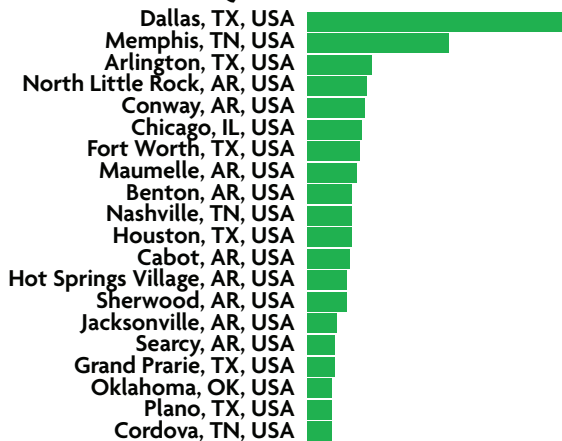
- Chicago and Dallas generated the largest amount of Messaged Visits while Memphis and Shreveport had stronger CTR engagement with .17% through out the campaign.
- Recommendation to increase deliver to top performers such as Memphis and Shreveport as well as consider testing into additional markets.

*Messaged visit means someone served an LRCVB ad on Conversant platform then made a trip to Little Rock

TOP MARKETS

TOP 20 US CITIES
SEARCHING LITTLE ROCK, AR

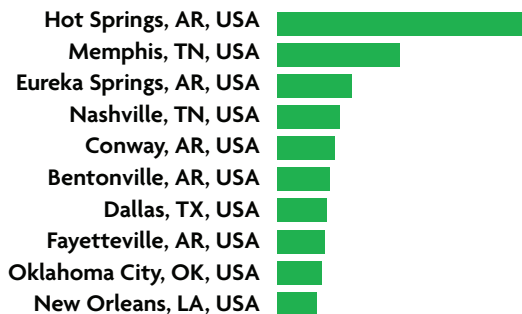
UNIQUE SESSIONS



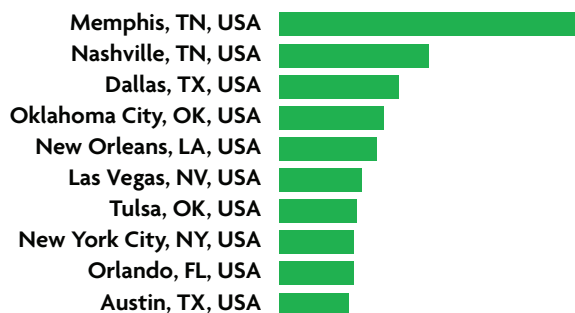
CROSS VISITATION

LITTLE ROCK, AR - TOP OTHER
DESTINATIONS VIEWED (US USERS)

OTHER DESTINATIONS VIEWED



OTHER DESTINATIONS VIEWED - OUT OF STATE



@qthanh2005

DIGITAL MARKETING

One way to tell how critical digital marketing is to our success is to look at how traditional marketing has changed. Over the last several years, the quantity of printed brochures we produce has steadily declined, and the number of ads we purchase in printed magazines has similarly decreased. Print is not dead, but it is a much smaller part of our overall efforts.

Our websites continue to be the prime source of information about our city for both visitors and locals alike. It's important to note that even that fact is changing, as people increasingly seek out third-party and word-of-mouth recommendations from websites like TripAdvisor, Yelp! and social media platforms.

LittleRock.com, our flagship website, underwent upgrades during 2019, while RobinsonCenter.com's redesign launched in the first quarter. LittleRockMeetings.com also received updates.






@headlineproductions

SOCIAL MEDIA

Recognizing that the most impactful way to inspire visitation is through referrals from friends and family, we elevated Little Rock's social media presence to even greater heights in 2019 by more fully implementing the social strategy recommended by TwoSix Digital. To grow our social media presence and engagement, we tested new content techniques, increased the use of video and animation, used user-generated content, and created a variety of GIF stickers. LRCVB earned more than 24.4 million impressions on social media across a total of nine accounts, over four social networks.

SOCIAL MEDIA ANNUAL STATISTICS

METRIC	TOTAL	AVERAGE	% CHANGE VS PREVIOUS YEAR
 FANS	46,744	N/A	3.92%
NEW FANS	1,833	153	89.31%
POSTS	280	23	27.50%
ENGAGED USERS	166,383	13,865	71.72%
ORGANIC REACH	1,602,977	133,581	61.07%
COMMENTS	1,503	125	35.00%
SHARES	1,970	164	60.66%
 FOLLOWERS	7,479	N/A	7.52%
NEW FOLLOWERS	523	44	-67.88%
TWEETS	614	51	58.63%
ENGAGEMENTS	9,833	819	67.16%
 FOLLOWERS	3,870	N/A	31.74%
NEW FOLLOWERS	1,236	103	28.16%
POSTS	298	25	50.34%
IMPRESSIONS	404,736	33,728	70.60%

LOVE
LITTLE
ROCK

LRCVB GREW TO
123,000+
FANS AND
FOLLOWERS
ACROSS ALL ACCOUNTS,
INCLUDING
10,500+
NEW FANS/
FOLLOWERS

24.4 MILLION
IMPRESSIONS
ON ALL SOCIAL MEDIA
NETWORKS AND
685,000+
SOCIAL
ENGAGEMENTS

PRIMARY FACEBOOK PAGE,
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS,
ACCUMULATED
50,200+
MINUTES OF
VIDEO VIEWS.
THAT'S 20,000 MINUTES MORE
THAN 2018 AND EQUIVALENT
TO WATCHING AVENGERS:
ENDGAME 275 TIMES

17 GIF
STICKERS
WERE CREATED FOR INSTAGRAM
AND ACCUMULATED
1.2 MILLION+
VIEWS
WITHIN SIX MONTHS

MULTIPLE
FACEBOOK
PROFILE PHOTO
FRAMES
WERE CREATED

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS,
FACEBOOK PAGE EARNED A
219% INCREASE
IN PAGE AND POST
ENGAGEMENTS OVER 2018

THE ROBINSON CENTER
FACEBOOK PAGE EARNED
10,000,000+
IMPRESSIONS
AND 331,000
ENGAGEMENTS

76 BLOG POSTS
WERE PUBLISHED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA
AS WELL AS ON LITTLEROCK.COM

WEBSITE ANALYTICS

The division manages the following websites:

LittleRock.com
RiverMarket.info
LittleRockMeetings.com
DineLR.com
RobinsonCenter.com
StatehouseConventionCenter.com
RiverLightsintheRock.com
ShopTheRockLR.com

891,733 PAGE VIEWS

381,397 UNIQUE VISITORS

1:44 AVERAGE
SESSION DURATION

103,000+
MOBILE SESSIONS

TOP 5 OUT OF STATE MARKETS:

1. Texas (14.14% of total traffic)
2. Illinois (9.33%)
3. Tennessee (6.73%)
4. Missouri (2.51%)
5. California (2.14%)

TOP DMA'S* FOR WEBSITE TRAFFIC (OUTSIDE OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS)

1. Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX (11.27%)
2. Chicago, IL (9.05%)
3. Memphis, TN (5.4%)
4. Ft. Smith-Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR (2%)
5. Nashville, TN (1.65%)
6. New York, NY (1.63%)
7. Washington DC (1.57%)
8. Kansas City, MO (1.44%)
9. Tulsa, OK (1.08%)
10. Los Angeles, CA (1.03%)
11. Houston, TX (1.01%)

*Designated Market Area

TOP 5 PAGES ON LITTLEROCK.COM:

- LittleRock.com Homepage (8.39%)
- Event Calendar (6.16%)
- Experience Little Rock (1.78%)
- Free Things to Do (1.45%)
- Little Rock Annual Festivals and Events (1.04%)

TOP 5 MOST READ BLOGS:

- Our Favorite Ways to Make Holiday Memories in Little Rock (4,800+ views)
- Six Cold-Weather Cocktails You Need to Drink this December (2,000+ views)
- Your Ultimate Guide to Fall in Little Rock (1,700+ views)
- Little Rock's Most Instagrammable Places (1,400+ views)
- Four of Little Rock's Most-Haunted Places (789 views)

TRAFFIC SOURCES

As we work with our partners at Paradise and MHP we are seeing growth in new traffic sources for the website.

51.4% SEARCH ENGINES

33.9% UTILIZING THE DIRECT WEB ADDRESS

4.6% REFERRAL TRAFFIC (OUTSIDE WEBSITES)

3.1% DISPLAY ADVERTISING

3.1% ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA



Our Favorite Ways to Make Holiday Memories in Little Rock

Posted on December 10, 2019

Whether you're looking for dazzling lights or a little face-to-face time with Santa, there's an event in Little Rock for everyone. [READ MORE](#)



Six Cold-Weather Cocktails You Need to Drink this December

Posted on December 12, 2019

When the weather turns cold, it's normal to reach for a cocktail (or mocktail) to keep you feeling warm and cozy. And, of course, with as many fantastic watering holes as Little Rock has, there are plenty of must-try drinks this holiday season. [READ MORE](#)

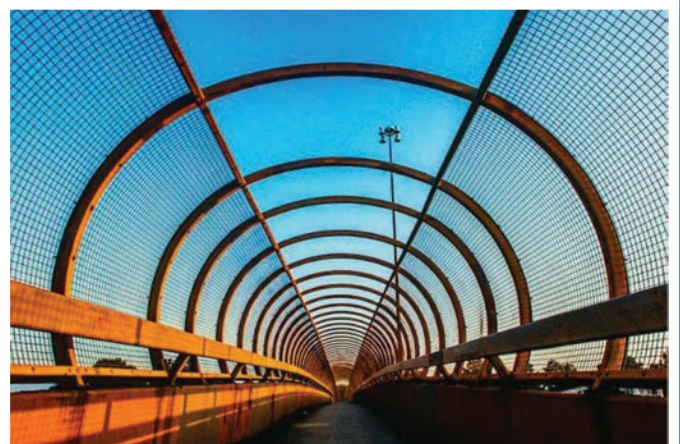
Tags: Riverdale, Midtown, Hillcrest, Wine, Eggnog, Downtown, Soma, Drinks, Mocktail, Cocktail



Your Ultimate Guide to Fall in Little Rock

Posted on September 6, 2019

If you've never been to Little Rock, it's time that we let you in on a little secret: Our city year-round, but fall is when things really get to rockin'. Check out our guide to Little Rock. [READ MORE](#)

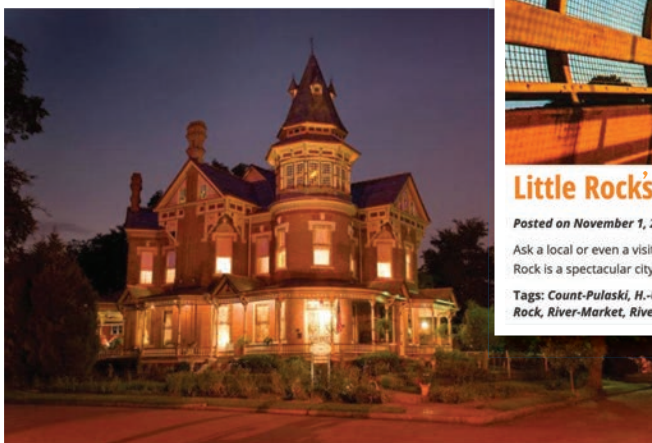


Little Rock's Most Instagrammable Places

Posted on November 1, 2019

Ask a local or even a visitor who's been in Little Rock for more than ten minutes and they'll tell you that Little Rock is a spectacular city full of stunning, photo-worthy sights. [READ MORE](#)

Tags: Count-Pulaski, H.-U.-Lee-International-Gate, Pinnacle-Mountain, Junction-Bridge, River-Lights-in-the-Rock, River-Market, Riverfront-Park, Capital-Hotel, MacArthur-Park



Four of Little Rock's Most Haunted Places

Posted on October 21, 2019

Little Rock is a city that's filled with history all year long, but October is when things get ghoulish in Arkansas's capital city. Little Rock was officially founded in 1821, meaning that there's been more than enough time for it to collect a few famous hauntings over the course of 200 years. Here are four of the most haunted sites in Little Rock. [READ MORE](#)

PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITY

The communications team, with the assistance of The Angela Rogers Group, distributed 77 press releases, both locally and nationally. Additionally, 666 media stories and segments, both in-market and out-of-market, were generated in 2019. In addition, 76 blogs were produced by LRCVB's content team.



TRAVEL JOURNALISTS

Every year, LRCVB hosts travel writers, influencers and bloggers. In 2019, Little Rock received national recognition from a number of different sources. We believe this recognition has positively influenced the number of writers who are interested in covering Little Rock for publications in 2020.

JOURNALISTS HOSTED IN 2019

Lisa Smith, Nancy Reid - Big Blend Radio
Bill Clevlen - Bill on the Road USA
Eric Althoff - Luxe Getaways Magazine
Jennifer Billock - Smithsonian Magazine
Max Hartshorne, Paul Shoul - GoNOMAD
Michael Satterfield - The Gentleman Racer
Rebecca Rusch - AR High Country Ride (cyclist)
Tori Goddard - Travel South, Brand USA (PR consultant)
Max Brearly, Sarah Hewer - Australian freelancers, Travel South
Wandering Darlings
Jennifer Sikora - Jen Around the World
Lauren Monitz - The DownLo
John Kruse - Northwestern Outdoors

Jack & Lisa Ballard - Lisa Ballard Outdoors
Carrie Wilson - California Outdoors
Nancy Sorrells - Freelancer
Glenn Sinkus - Freelancer
Melissa Pelkey-Hass - The Front Porch Gourmet, Drink Dine Do
Nikka Shae - Oh! Nikka, Drink Dine Do
Kishenya Durham - Kiwi the Beauty
Denise Romeo - Dining Out Atlanta
Serena Hale - God4BandMe
Latoicha Andino - Luxe Tips
Dawn Richards - DMR Fine Foods
Sharronda Williams - Pay or Wait
Eric McNew, Mandee Lasseter - Knox Foodie



OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (OWAA)

LRCVB, North Little Rock CVB, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage & Tourism hosted the Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) annual conference. In addition to hosting six journalists on local tours, we showcased the amazing variety of outdoor adventure that Central Arkansas has to offer, and hosted a welcome dinner on the First Security Amphitheater stage.

ATLANTA FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL 2019

For the third year, LRCVB, along with several local chefs and beverage specialists attended the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival to engage with nearly 50 credentialed journalists, bloggers and influencers who attended a “Savor Arkansas” media breakfast. In 2019, Visit Bentonville, Murphy Arts District (El Dorado, AR), Wilson Café (Wilson, AR), and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism joined to expand the overall Arkansas presence at the festival. The team was also joined by veteran journalist and culinary influencer Rex Nelson of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. Participation remained geared toward members of the regional and national media who were attending the festival. In addition to hosting the media breakfast, the team participated in the festival’s “Destination Delicious” event that drew hundreds of Atlanta residents and more than 100 credentialed local, regional and national journalists.

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS AND COLLATERAL DISTRIBUTION

Southern hospitality is an important component of Little Rock’s brand, and our Visitor Information Centers (VIC) supply it by the boatload. The VICs assisted some 57,000 visitors in 2019 with directions, tips, brochures, maps and even change for parking meters. VIC locations include the Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport, Shop the Rock in the River Market District, the Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, and the Cromwell Building.

In addition, LRCVB provides support for the Visitor Information Center at Historic Curran Hall. LRCVB produces several brochures and collateral material and distributes a variety of brochures from partner organizations. These pieces are meant to assist visitors in making their trip planning easier, extending the length of their stay, and enticing them to return more frequently. Over 286,000 collateral pieces were distributed in 2019.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

Brand USA markets the United States to other countries through their relationship with state and local DMOs. LRCVB signed a Letter of Agreement with Brand USA in 2019 to increase Little Rock’s presence on the Brand USA website, as well as in public relations, at international trade shows, and in consumer and trade advertising. The top countries for LittleRock.com visitation include India, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and the Philippines.



Our partnership with Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism, Brand USA and Travel South produced visits from Max Brearly and Sarah Hower—a writer/photographer team from Australia—and UK travel and PR consultant Tori Goddard.

Additionally, our sales team attends several international group tour tradeshows to market Little Rock as a stop on various motor coach trips.

BRAND TRAINING SUMMARY

Little Rock’s Brand Ambassador Training Program continues to be well received and provide value for attendees. Quarterly training sessions reach out to members of the hospitality industry and associated businesses and inform them of the impact of tourism and hospitality on city, county and state economies.

2019 BRAND TRAINING

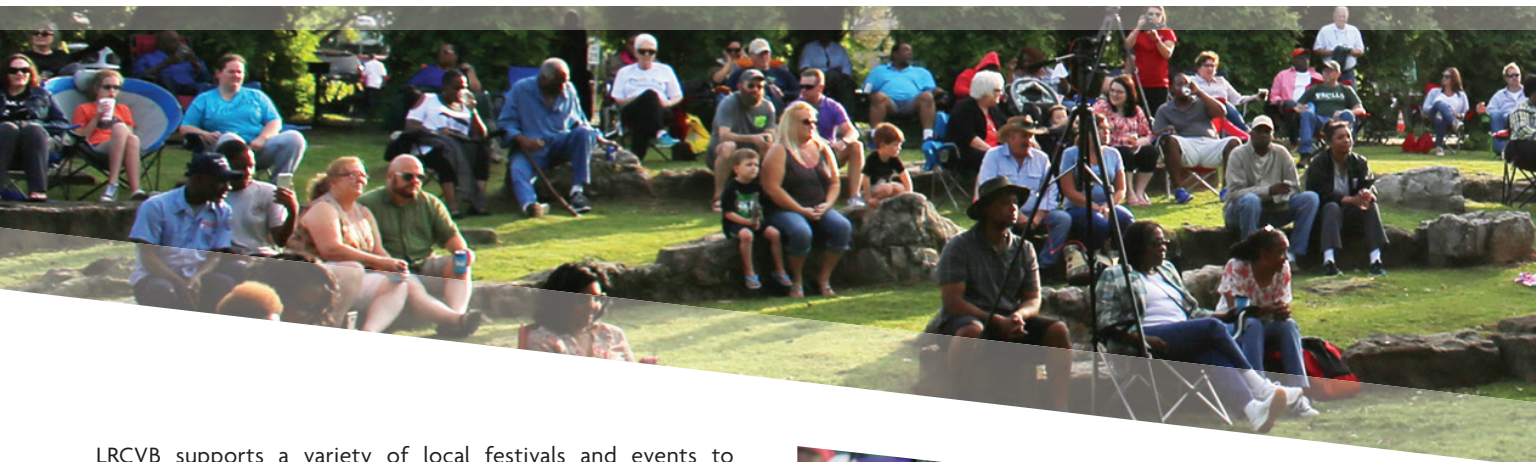
CONDUCTED
**11 TRAINING
SESSIONS**

**158
ATTENDEES**
— UP FROM 99 IN 2018

ATTENDEES INCLUDED:

LRCVB EMPLOYEES • ATTRACTIONS • HOTELS • CITY OF LITTLE ROCK
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS • HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY PARTNERS
LITTLE ROCK POLICE DEPARTMENT • CAB DRIVERS • COMMUNITY AT-LARGE
(REALTORS, CREDIT UNION EMPLOYEES, AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS, ETC.)

LRCVB SIGNATURE EVENTS



LRCVB supports a variety of local festivals and events to enhance the economy through increased visitor travel into and throughout, Little Rock. In addition, LRCVB directly manages several signature events.

Locally Labeled Program

The passport program launched in October 2015 to highlight the growing number of breweries, along with the state's first legal distillery since Prohibition and several wineries located in Central Arkansas. The passport encourages people to visit the various businesses and receive a sticker in their passport. Prizes are given to those who collect a certain number of stickers. The passport currently features: six breweries, one distillery, and two wineries. Since starting the program, 24,000 passports have been distributed. Of those returned for prizes, visitors were from 35 states, Australia, Germany, Puerto Rico, and Norway.



Locally Labeled Pavilion Party

The annual party continues to be a crowd favorite. Held in the River Market pavilions, the party features passport partner booths, samples, and products. Along with live entertainment and activities, this free event draws hundreds of attendees and celebrates Central Arkansas's popular adult beverage offerings.

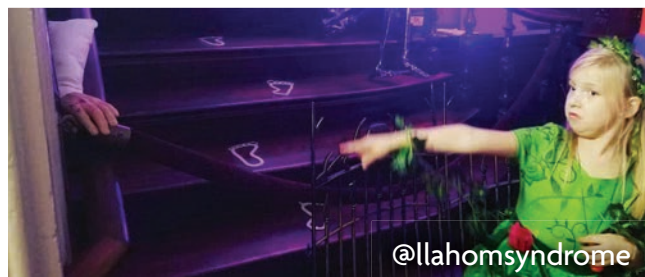
Movies in the Park

2019 was the 15th season of Movies in the Park. Held each Wednesday evening in June and July. This free event draws all ages who enjoy flicks, food and drinks by the river.



Jazz in the Park

Free weekly concerts feature local jazz artists performing in Riverfront Park's History Pavilion each Wednesday evening in April and September. 2019 was the 7th season and the 5th to partner with Art Porter Music Education Foundation. This event continues to draw 500 – 1,000 weekly with a rotating roster of new bands and favorites from past seasons.



Big Boo-seum Bash

Hosted by the Greater Little Rock Museum and Cultural Attractions Consortium and LRCVB, the free event provides a safe environment for kids and families to enjoy fun Halloween activities and treats, while experiencing several of the wonderful museums and cultural attractions in the downtown area. Fourteen organizations participated in 2019.



Little Rock Farmers Market

The LR Farmers Market celebrated its 43rd year in 2019. The market continues to thrive with both old and new vendors selling produce, locally raised meats, and a wide assortment of arts and crafts. Programming continued to include 2nd Saturday events such as Lil Farmers and Garden Gourmet Chef Series, as well as Lettuce Beet Hunger, the LR Farmers Market and AR Foodbank campaign to provide fresh foods from the Market to Our House. The market takes place at the River Market pavilions each Saturday, May through September.

Big Jingle Jubilee Holiday Parade

The City's annual holiday parade, held on the first Saturday in December drew over 80 entries and the crowd numbered in the several thousands. With marching bands, floats and more, this event is a crowd pleaser. This year the LRCVB Executive Team and staff children rode a float in the parade. LRCVB also hosted Rudy & Friends at the River Market, where families could make their own holiday themed arts and crafts, enjoy cocoa and cookies by Bea Blessed, meet Rudy, and take pics with Santa & Mrs. Claus.

Bizarre Bazaar

For the 2nd year, Bizarre Bazaar ushered in the event season in early March with over 50 vendors selling unique, interesting and sometimes bizarre items.



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Arkansas Arts Center Improvements

The Arkansas Arts Center closed in June to make way for demolition and construction crews to begin work on the museum's \$128 million transformation. LRCVB is providing \$31.2 million toward the project via a public bond funded by a 2% dedicated lodging tax. Warren and Harriet Stephens, Mayor Frank Scott, architects Jeanne Gang and Kate Orff, and Arkansas Arts Center Executive Director Dr. Victoria Ramirez broke ground on the new building on October 1. Construction will feature a new indoor/outdoor restaurant, a new north entrance featuring the original 1937 Museum of Fine Arts façade, a new second floor of gallery space, and expanded art studios. During construction, the Arts Center has relocated to the Riverdale Shopping Center where it continues to offer Museum School classes, design and rehearsal space for the Children's Theatre, and additional space for offices, retail, and educational programs. The reimagined Arts Center is expected to open in 2022.

River Market Entertainment District

The River Market Entertainment District (RMED) officially opened in August after the Little Rock Board of Directors passed two resolutions allowing for the creation of permanent "entertainment districts" within the city. RMED guests age 21 and older can now carry alcoholic beverages in designated RMED cups while wearing RMED wristbands into all public spaces and participating commercial properties within the district boundaries. The River Market District has long been Little Rock's go-to nightlife destination, and its establishment as the city's first official entertainment district only bolsters its reputation as the place to be during evenings and weekends.

Simmons Bank Arena

In October, Simmons Bank acquired the naming rights to the former Verizon Area. The change to Simmons Bank Arena is part of a 15-year agreement worth \$10.5 million. Coupled with renovations to the 18,000-seat arena that include new exterior siding, new concession counters, HVAC system upgrades, and a dedicated entrance for Simmons Bank cardholders. This cements Simmons Bank Arena as one of Arkansas's top entertainment venues.

Hotel Developments

In December, a ribbon cutting was held for the new Fairfield Inn & Suites near the Clinton National Airport, the first new hotel property to enter that space in nearly 30 years. Just minutes from downtown, the new hotel boasts a full bar and restaurant, fitness center and indoor salt water pool. Modern and stylish, the new hotel is surprisingly quiet, thanks to double-insulated windows and walls.

Free Streetcar

The historic replica streetcar went fare-free in late 2018 to boost ridership with a commitment from Rock Region Metro's local funding partners – the City of Little Rock, City of North Little Rock and Pulaski County, along with the following sponsors: Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, Argenta Community Theater, Big Whiskey's, Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus, P.C., the



Downtown Little Rock Partnership, Gus's Fried Chicken, North Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, Simmons Bank, and ACANSA Arts Festival. The move saw ridership increase by 197% year-over-year. More than 127,000 passenger trips were taken in 2019, up from the 42,923 passenger trips in 2018. The streetcar service covers 3.4 miles of track that connects many of Little Rock's top attractions including the River Market Entertainment District, the Main Street Creative Corridor, Robinson Center, and the William J. Clinton Presidential Center, with the Argenta district in North Little Rock. Free rides will continue in 2020.

Downtown Ambassadors

Downtown Little Rock is always bustling with activity, but the city's sidewalks are now home to a new set of friendly faces: Downtown Ambassadors. A program developed by the Downtown Little Rock Partnership, the Downtown Ambassadors are available to give directions, walk people to their cars, or step in to take a group photo. They work closely with the Little Rock Police Department and help serve as an additional set of eyes and ears on the street. When they aren't busy assisting citizens, they're keeping an eye out for maintenance issues such as graffiti, broken windows, trash, and malfunctioning streetlights.

Downtown Murals

In 2019, Little Rock got a face lift with a crop of new murals that blossomed across downtown. Sponsored by the Downtown Little Rock Partnership, these murals gave Arkansas artists the chance to brighten up their own unique parts of the city. From the block-long "Playtime" mural on Main Street to a trail of painted bison migrating through a downtown parking deck, these larger-than-life artworks, have added beauty and whimsy to Little Rock.





19th Amendment Sculpture and Plaza

Arkansas became the 12th state to ratify the 19th Amendment in 1919, a fact that was celebrated with the dedication of a new sculpture in Riverfront Park's Vogel Schwartz Sculpture Garden. *Every Word We Utter* by artist Jane DeDecker depicts some of the early leaders of the women's suffrage movement on both the national and local level. The names of more than a dozen Arkansas women suffrage leaders who worked between 1869 and 1919 are inscribed on the installation.



Bicycling

Cycling and outdoor adventure continues to be a key amenity for Little Rock tourism and efforts continue to expand the local cycling product. Several grants funded trail development in 2019 at Ottenheimer Park in Southwest Little Rock, MacArthur Park downtown, and Allsopp Park in The Heights. The Allsopp Park Gateway project created a brand-new entrance to the mountain bike trails in the mid-town park. The Arkansas River Trail got some love, with new connections and crossings built near Episcopal

Collegiate School on Cantrell Road. The Parks Department received even more grant funds for future work that will include a mountain biking skills course and more trails at Boyle Park, and new trails at three other parks around the city.

Bill & Hillary Clinton National Airport (LIT)

LIT experienced multiple terminal updates in 2019, including: updated restaurant offerings such as Chick-fil-A, Burger King, and Riverbend Bar and Grill. Planning for an updated Starbucks is also underway. The Airport is currently updating its pre-security lobby with a \$7 million project that, in addition to Riverbend Bar and Grill, will include new escalators and elevators to enhance customer convenience while modernizing the space to complement the new ticket lobby. This work will complete more than \$100 million in terminal updates during the past 10 years. Clinton National is also developing a sense of place initiative that will capture the beauty and essence of Little Rock and the state of Arkansas for passengers to enjoy. LIT also replaced all overhead and ground mounted traffic signs to help customers better navigate roadways and parking areas.



FUTURE OUTLOOK



@reisenmadchen

For LRCVB, the immediate future will be focused on the final year of our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, launching a new advertising campaign, completing \$2.4M in capital improvements at LRCVB managed facilities, and developing our future strategic plan.

In February we will be launching a new, but familiar, advertising campaign, “Big on Little Rock.” With the help of our agency partners, Paradise Advertising & Marketing, Mangan Holcomb Partners, Angela Rogers Group, and TwoSix Digital, we will be increasing our reach, sharing all the reasons to visit our ever-changing city through trade relations, in-market activations, press efforts, publications, and an extensive digital presence. Additionally, the communications team will continue to develop niche angles, including those that appeal to travelers interested in food, the arts, outdoor adventure, as well as history and culture.

Next year, 2020, will also mark the 50th anniversary of the Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission, the governing body for LRCVB. We have a lot in store to celebrate the impact the tourism industry has on our local community and our 200+ team of professionals at LRCVB will be celebrated as well. We will also continue to develop innovative ways to market the destination and support our various partners. Whether here on business or leisure, visitors greatly enhance our region's quality of life and economy. From attractions and accommodations to restaurants and retail, every industry in Little Rock benefits.

The DestinationNEXT Futures Study by Destinations International and MMGY NextFactor will play a large role in developing our next strategic plan. The study, published in 2019, identifies trends and opportunities that destination marketing organizations of the future will need to navigate. The DestinationNEXT diagnostic tool is based on a comprehensive stakeholder survey that measures destination strength and community engagement, based on a series of 20 variables, and is designed to help destination organizations and primary stakeholders assess the strength of their region's visitor economy and infrastructure.

We continue to refine our sales deployments, allowing us to cover additional market segments and focus on increasing new group business. The new CRM (customer relationship management) system implemented in 2019 gives us additional tools for increased customer and partner communication, as well as reporting and tracking capabilities. The growth and expansion of our local “Rock Star” program will also help us identify new business opportunities.

The facility operations team will be focused on numerous capital projects, increasing the number of shows and events within our facilities, working with our promoter partner to launch an official concert series at the First Security Amphitheater, and working with the City of Little Rock to build a new downtown parking deck as well as attract private partners to invest and re-imagine Ottenheimer Market Hall.

The Finance & Administration team will be focused on implementing a new tax software system that will not only improve the customer experience for permittees, but also increase communication and reporting capabilities.

As to the future of the destination as a whole, I think there is a lot to be excited about. Several major infrastructure projects are already underway, momentum to increase programming and place-making in the downtown core continues, private developments are happening in every corner of the city, and our Mayor has ambitious plans to expand the Little Rock Zoo, develop sports facilities within our public parks system, and increase the quality of life for all residents.

Although not slated for completion until 2022, the improvements to the Arkansas Arts Center and MacArthur Park will greatly enhance our arts and cultural offerings and provide a new world-class museum for the destination. While not anticipated for the immediate future, as mentioned in previous reports, we will continue to monitor the usage and feasibility of expanding the Statehouse Convention Center. Such a project would require urban planning studies, potential new market identification, hotel room development, and infrastructure support. Knowing that the meetings industry generates \$845 billion each year in the U.S., we want to ensure Little Rock is positioned to capture a sizable amount of that production.

I think the following quote sums up our focus for the coming year, “Think big, believe big, act big, and the results will be big!”
– Anonymous. **2020 is going to be a BIG year for Little Rock!**

GRETCHEN HALL, CDME, CMP
PRESIDENT & CEO



CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

2020 BUSINESS PLAN

In the final year of the comprehensive 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, the following outlines areas of concentration for 2020.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS:

- Direct the integrated advertising campaigns created by Paradise Advertising & Marketing, Inc. and Mangan Holcomb Partners to select target markets through advertising, social media, and PR outreach.
- Support sales division in attracting meeting, convention and sports business through marketing, social media and PR efforts.
- Develop and integrate a master calendar that displays all LRCVB advertising, promotions, PR campaigns, and travel dates.
- Utilize research to fine tune media placement and messaging as well as optimize content and targeting while continually monitoring stated goals, metrics and reporting for PR, social media, digital and advertising efforts.
- Focus on key product areas and increase social media engagement with compelling storytelling via video and blogs.
- Explore strategic partnerships with other DMOs and media/industry players, as well as target key travel writers and influencers to maximize media exposure of the destination.
- Increase distribution of story ideas to garner additional out-of-market exposure.
- Continue to audit and update LRCVB websites, per new processes and procedures.
- Work with large festivals and events on marketing and attendance building opportunities.

SALES & SERVICES:

- Expand Rock Star marketing components to include website, presentation, and digital advertising.
- Develop a new meeting & convention promotional video.
- Increase proactive sales outreach, focusing on new business development.
- Enhance client outreach through targeted digital efforts, including implementing a business content strategy to increase LRCVB's convention and meetings presence on LinkedIn.
- Implement a plan to strengthen referrals and customer loyalty by emphasizing a service/sales approach with annual accounts.
- Utilize partnership with Connect Meetings to increase awareness of Little Rock as a convention destination through tradeshow marketing, website ads, social media, e-newsletters and e-blasts.
- Enhance tradeshow sales and marketing efforts including pre- and post-show communications, geofencing and retargeting.
- Coordinate media plans for conventions that include local press, social media and gathering of video testimonials.
- Enhance meetings website to include testimonials, meeting planner search component, and market specific landing pages, as well as update available convention resource listings including local service providers and venues.

FACILITY OPERATIONS:

- Manage capital projects in all LRCVB facilities. (24 projects in excess of \$2.4 million)
- Work with the City of Little Rock to lead the design and construction of a new downtown parking facility.
- Find and implement a more efficient and technically advanced operating system for other LRCVB managed parking facilities.
- Oversee the continuation of operational and capital improvements in the amphitheater complex while managing the contract administration of the amphitheater promoter agreement.
- Work with the City of Little Rock to continue the planning and solicitation of private sector partnerships for Ottenheimer Market Hall.
- Continue staff training in all operating departments especially relating to patron and facility safety.
- Work with partners and entertainment providers to increase the number of shows and quality entertainment in the destination.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION:

- Manage the 2020 procurement process, including capital projects and the bidding of professional services.
- Increase efficiencies and compliance in the tax department by implementing the new tax software system, improving communications with permittees, updating A&P Tax Regulations and refining internal processes.
- Expand training across all lines of the organization by offering and tracking trainings that contribute to employees' success as supervisors and individuals.
- Engage a firm to complete a comprehensive compensation study to evaluate all aspects of LRCVB's compensation structure including pay bands, wages, and benefits.
- Implement the new lease standards, effective in 2020, and continue to monitor other updates from the Government Accounting Standards Board.
- Update purchasing policies to address process changes as a result of the implementation of the cloud-based purchasing and accounts payable system.
- Apply A&P tax regulations to the evolving sharing economy as it relates to the short-term lodging and prepared food industries.
- Enlist a firm to conduct a thorough review of the LRCVB network and provide a risk analysis report.
- Implement new employee orientation and on-boarding process as well as the new employee recognition program.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT TO MONITOR & SUPPORT:

- New Downtown Parking Deck
- Arkansas Arts Center/MacArthur Park redevelopment
- Development of various sports facilities
- I-30 expansion project
- Increase outdoor product offerings like mountain biking trails and natural areas
- River Market capital improvements for the Amphitheater
- Public/Private partnership for River Market Ottenheimer Hall



FirstSecurity

MARKET

SOMETHING
BIG
IS COMING