

2024

Impact Report



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Letter From Our President & CEO

Tourism continued to be a steady driver of Baton Rouge's economy in 2024, highlighted by the launch of a brand-new annual holiday lights event and a steady stream of more than 300 conventions, meetings and sporting events throughout the year.

Louisiana Lights, our new month-long, elevated holiday event at Burden Museum & Gardens, attracted almost 40,000 guests from all over the country and received high acclaim online. With new light vignettes added each year, VBR plans to build on this momentum to drive end-of-year leisure visitor traffic. Through increased PR efforts and targeted advertising, we're encouraging drive-market visitors to choose Baton Rouge for a multi-day, family-friendly holiday trip.

Our sales team and industry partners stayed busy in 2024 hosting a long list of groups including the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative, the Southeast Museums Conference and the Alliance of Area Business Publishers. Sports visitation continued to be a major opportunity for our market, with events that ranged from youth baseball tournaments to the U.S. Police Canine Association 2024 National Trials.

Another sports-related highlight for Baton Rouge was hosting the Savannah Bananas' first ever game in a major collegiate stadium. Through a partnership with LSU, we hosted the popular comedic baseball team for three sold-out nights in Alex Box.

For these events and more, we welcomed 9 million visitors to the Capital City in 2024 and supported more than 38,000 local jobs. The impact of tourism in our city is continuing to grow, but we must prioritize major development throughout our community to continue to achieve this impact. VBR is working with the Mayor-President, all five of our municipalities and key partners on the expansion and new development of convention facilities and sports/event venues.

Already in 2025, we are hosting 58,000 bowlers, refining our local story, highlighting the everyday richness of our community and raising up local ambassadors to build community pride and create visitor connections. Our team remains dedicated to inviting leisure and business travelers to discover our place at their own pace.


Jill Kidder
President & CEO
Visit Baton Rouge

Who We Are



Mission

The mission of Visit Baton Rouge is to increase visitation to and awareness of the Baton Rouge Area thereby enhancing economic impact.

Vision

The Baton Rouge Area will be a nationally recognized premier destination providing a superlative Louisiana experience to all visitors. Residents of Baton Rouge will value the contributions that visitors make to the economy and quality of life.

Values

Visit Baton Rouge promotes a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion through its marketing efforts, hiring practices, vendor opportunities and visitor experiences while displaying a passion for and an appreciation of the travel and tourism industry offering an authentic Louisiana experience.

Strategic Initiatives

- 01 Increase sales performance goals year over year.
- 02 Provide top-level travel industry services and experiences for our visitors and groups.
- 03 Amplify our Baton Rouge brand story to targeted audiences with unique advertising, promotions and activations.
- 04 Lead, advocate and initiate work in reshaping Baton Rouge as a top destination.
- 05 Continue to advance Visit Baton Rouge as a great place to work.

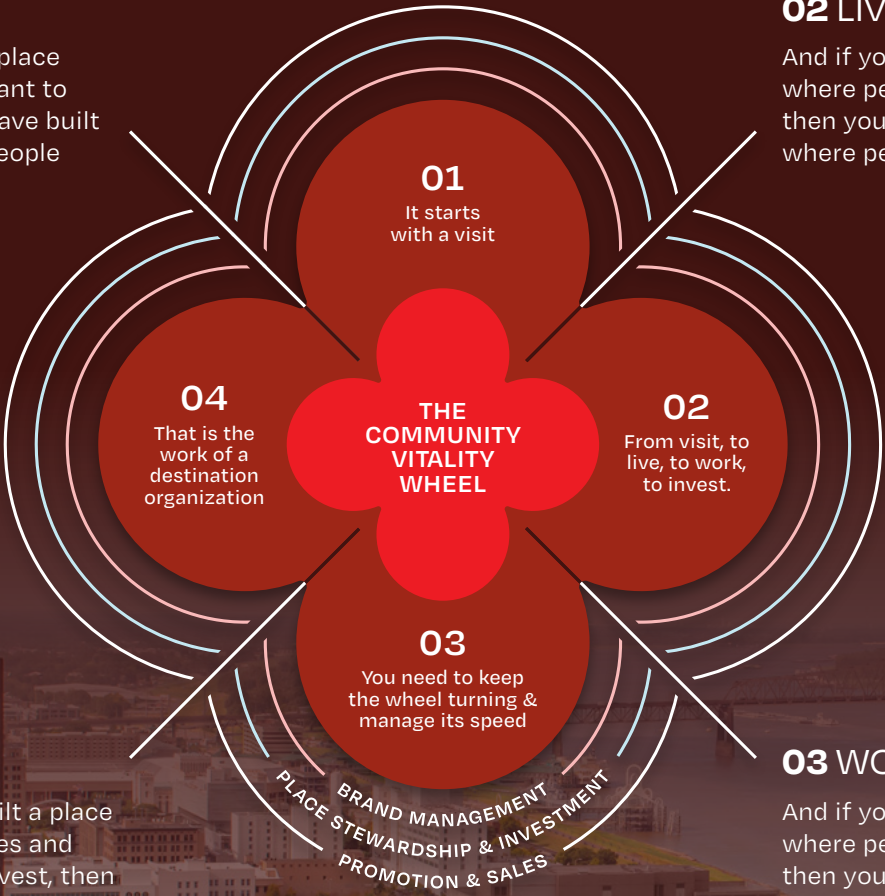
Destination Management Cycle

01 VISIT

If you've built a place where people want to visit, then you have built a place where people want to live.

02 LIVE

And if you've built a place where people want to live, then you have built a place where people want to work.



04 INVEST

And if you've built a place where businesses and residents will invest, then you have built a place where people want to visit.

03 WORK

And if you've built a place where people want to work, then you have built a place where businesses and residents will invest.

(Source: Destinations International)

Tourism =
Economic
Development



2024 at a Glance



9M

Visitors



\$1.7B

Total visitor spend

38,500

Jobs supported by tourism



\$180

Average visitor spend per trip



39.6%

of visitor spend was retail

60

Events sponsored by VBR's Festival and Cultural Events Support Program



\$4.8M

Economic impact of film industry



\$7.1M

In occupancy tax revenue collected locally

Source: STR, Tourism Economics

Top Visitor Origin Markets

New Orleans, LA

Houston, TX

Lafayette, LA

Dallas, TX

Slidell, LA

Hotel Statistics

Saturday

Most popular day to visit

64.6%

Average weekend occupancy

\$109.40

Average hotel daily rate

56%

Average East Baton Rouge Parish hotel occupancy

Key Events

✦ Louisiana Lights

VBR partnered with Burden Museum & Gardens to launch Louisiana Lights, a month-long walkable holiday lighting event with 10 unique displays. The event drew 39,263 guests, including visitors from six countries, 45 states and all 64 Louisiana parishes.

✦ Baton Rouge Blues Fest

To support the growth of one of the country's most historic blues music festivals, VBR partnered with the Baton Rouge Blues Fest to add a fourth stage and enhance the visitor experience.

✦ Louisiana Marathon

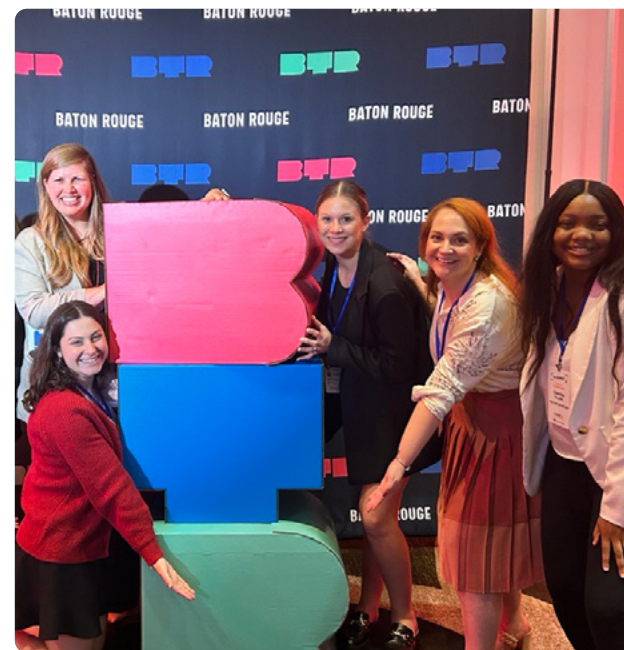
Runners from 47 states and 10 countries traveled to Baton Rouge for the annual Louisiana Marathon in Baton Rouge. The race generates between \$2 million and \$4 million in economic impact each year, with nearly every hotel in downtown Baton Rouge selling out.

✦ Savannah Bananas

In March, VBR partnered with LSU to host the Savannah Bananas as they brought their unique blend of baseball and entertainment to Alex Box Stadium. The three-night event brought in \$1.2 Million in economic impact with 142K people entering the ticket raffle.

✦ YP Summit

As a partner with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber for the "Better in BTR" talent retention and attraction campaign, VBR sponsored the Young Professionals Summit and launch party. The campaign encourages young professionals to consider building a life in the Capital City.



Awards & Recognition

#84 America's Best Cities

Baton Rouge, LA

America's Best Cities

Destinations International 30 Under 30

Fallon Tullier,
Research & Technology Manager

Destinations International

Best Half Marathon in Louisiana

Louisiana Half Marathon,
FRESH JUNKIE Racing

RaceRaves

Best College Football Stadium in America

Tiger Stadium

ESPN



Travel South USA Champion DMO

Visit Baton Rouge

Travel South USA

LTA Louey Awards: Major Event of the Year

U.S. Youth Soccer Southern Regionals

Louisiana Travel Association

STS Board of Directors: Immediate Past Chair

Jill Kidder,
President & CEO

Southeast Tourism Society

PRAL Certificate of Merit: The Savannah Bananas are Coming to BR (Instagram Reel)

Visit Baton Rouge

Public Relations Association of Louisiana Torche Awards

PRAL Award of Excellence: Holi Festival of Baton Rouge (Photo)

Tamaria Williams,
Communications Manager

Public Relations Association of Louisiana Torche Awards

LIAA Board of Directors: President

Fatima Gautier

Louisiana Institute for Administrative Assistants



Signature Events of the Southeast

Night Market BTR

Southeast Tourism Society

Baton Rouge Blues Festival

Southeast Tourism Society

STS Best Marketing Award

Visit Baton Rouge

Southeast Tourism Society

Best College Football Stadium in the U.S.

Tiger Stadium

Thrillist

2024 Readers' Choice Award

Visit Baton Rouge

Convention South

Louisiana Tourism Leadership Academy

Fallon Tullier,
Research & Technology Manager

Louisiana Travel Association

Bridget Gaffney,
Client Relationship Manager

Louisiana Travel Association

SPRF Lantern Award: The Savannah Bananas are Coming to BR (Instagram Reel)

Visit Baton Rouge

Southern Public Relations Federation



Meetings in Baton Rouge

By The Numbers

\$49.2 Million

Estimated Economic Impact of Meetings, Conventions & Sporting Events

Meetings, Conventions & Sporting Events

306 Events Hosted	207 Groups Serviced	256,045 Event Attendees
99 Sporting Events Held	90,918 Room Nights Booked	

Top 5 Group Segments

- Athletic & Sports/Recreation
- Government, Public Administration
- Fraternal
- Educational
- Trade, Commercial or Business

Meetings, Conventions & Sports Highlights

✦ Southeastern
Museums
Conference



✦ Delta
Waterfowl Duck
Hunters Expo



✦ Marucci
World Series



✦ Alliance of
Area Business
Publishers



✦ USA Masters
Weightlifting
National
Championships



"Our experience with Visit Baton Rouge was truly outstanding. Their meticulous attention to detail and exceptional hospitality created an unforgettable atmosphere for the AABP National Conference, earning high praise from longstanding publishers and attendees alike. We are sincerely grateful for their dedicated team and the remarkable collaboration that made this event the best yet."

Julio Melara, CEO
Melara Enterprises



What's New?



The Colonel's Club

2857 Perkins Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70808



Tsunami Highland

1 Smart Wy Suite 100, Baton Rouge, LA 70810



The Origin Hotel – Grand Opening

101 St Ferdinand St, Baton Rouge, LA 70802



Hotel Indigo – Renovation

200 Convention St, Baton Rouge, LA 70801



Offset Smoker BBQ

5335 Government St, Baton Rouge, LA 70806



BREC's Baton Rouge Zoo Phase 1 Renovations Complete

3000 Zoo Circle, Baton Rouge, LA 70807



Prima Après

4225 Nicholson Dr, Baton Rouge, LA 70808

Advertising & Public Relations



Paid Media

Paid Print, Digital and Traditional Media Placements



Key Publications & Placements

- Sports Events Magazine
- Sports Planning Guide
- Washington D.C. Airport
- Meetings Today
- Garden & Gun Magazine
- Food & Travel Magazine

Paid Media Channels		CONSUMER	MEETINGS	SPORTS
Search Engine Marketing <i>(paid placement on online search sites)</i>	Impressions	160K	+	+
	Clicks	21K	+	+
Display <i>(digital banner ads placed across various websites)</i>	Impressions	59M	1.8M	1.4M
	Clicks	23K	18K	13K
Social <i>(paid social ads Facebook and Instagram)</i>	Impressions	5.7M	480K	+
	Clicks	87K	10K	+
Video <i>(connected and streaming TV placements)</i>	Impressions	1.2M	73	37K
	Clicks	168	12	119

Earned & Owned Media

Traditional, Print and Digital Placements Earned By Pitching or Placed on Owned Channels

109,192,851

Total PR Reach

25

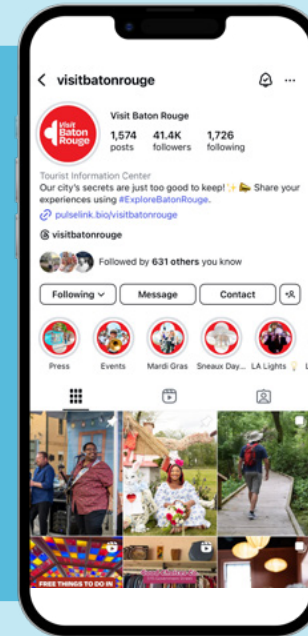
Journalists Hosted

16

Placements



Social Media



11.7 Million

Total Reach

Facebook Reach: **1,796,846**

Facebook Post Engagement: **up 98.8%**

Instagram Reach: **1,796,846**

Increase in Instagram Followers: **51.2%**

TikTok Views: **737,942**

Website



3.1 Million

VisitBatonRouge.com
Page Views
(8.4% increase YOY)

176K

Online Partner Referrals
(44% increase YOY)

Email



37.7%

Newsletter Open Rate

Board & Staff

Board

Mary Stein
Chair

Gary L. Jupiter, Jr.
Vice Chair

Kim Ginn
Secretary / Treasurer

Claude F. Reynaud, Jr.
Immediate Past Chair

Scott Michelet

Marty Engquist

Councilman Rowdy Gaudet

Gary Patureau

Stephen Hightower

Robyn Merrick

Administration

Jill Kidder
President & CEO

Lauralyn Maranto
Senior Executive Vice President of Administration

Danielle Prejean
Vice President of Finance

Lori Lasseigne
CTS, Executive Compliance Administrator

Katherine Lewis-Thompson
Receptionist

Joy Smith
Receptionist



Marketing & Communications

Laura Cating
Senior Vice President of Marketing & Communications

Emily Mastrantonio
Director of Marketing

Bridget Gaffney
Client Relationship Manager

Camryn McCarter
Communications Manager

Fallon Tullier
Research & Technology Manager

Tamaria Williams
Digital Content Manager

Destination Experience

Stacy Simon
Senior Vice President of Destination Experience

Fatima Gautier
CAA, Executive Assistant

Sarah Noles
Destination Experience & Program Manager

Elise Tauzin
Destination Experience & Creative Manager

Gary Traylor
Courier



Destination Sales

Geraldine Bordelon
CMP, Senior Vice President of Destination Sales

Triston Monte
Sports Development Manager

Jason Suitt
Director of Sports Development

Alison Piatkiewicz
Destination Sales Manager

Sydney Harris
Destination Sales Manager

Marie Stagg
CTP, Global Sales Manager

Our Place, Your Pace.

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