



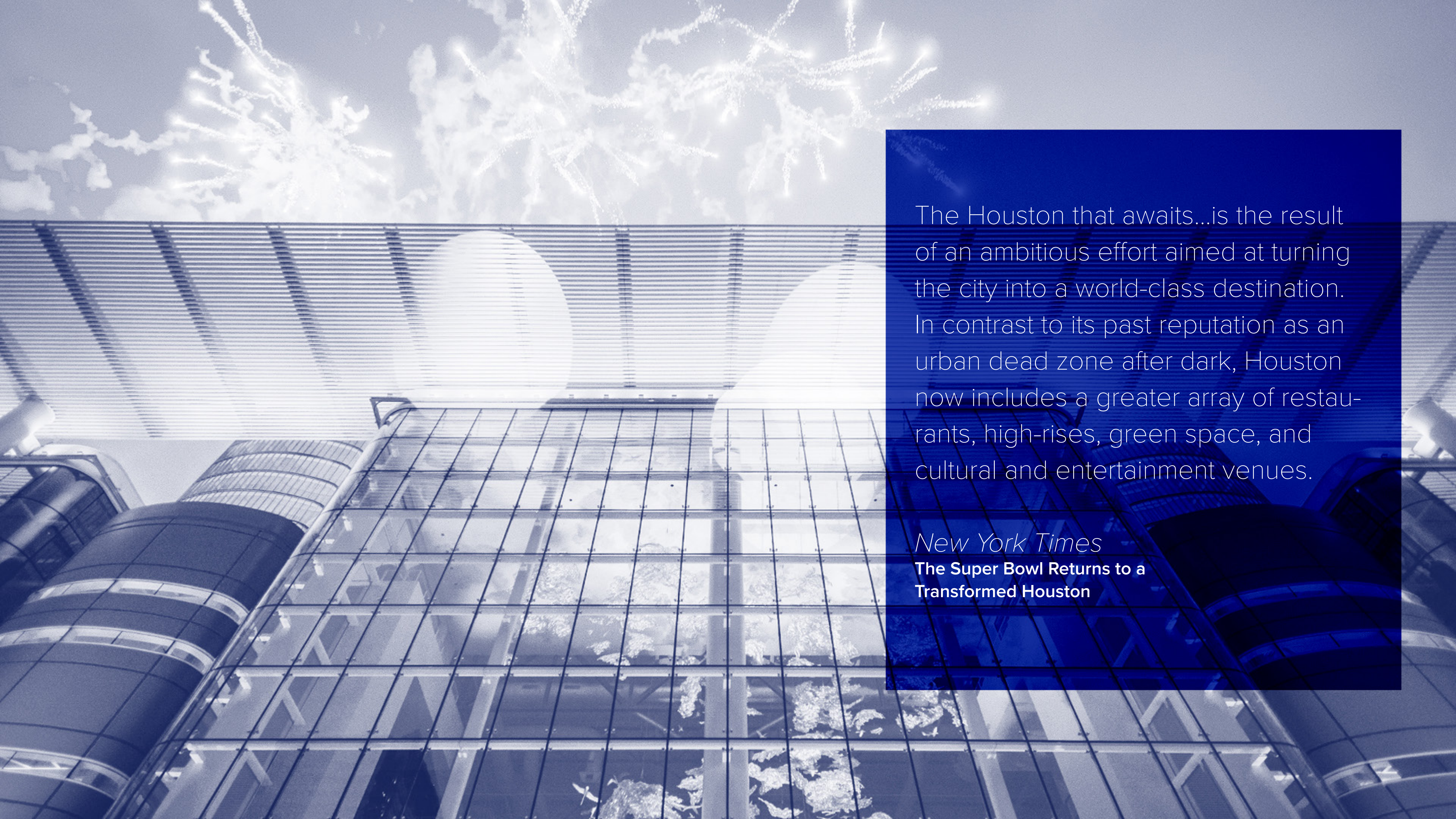
GREATER HOUSTON CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT



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The Houston that awaits...is the result of an ambitious effort aimed at turning the city into a world-class destination. In contrast to its past reputation as an urban dead zone after dark, Houston now includes a greater array of restaurants, high-rises, green space, and cultural and entertainment venues.

New York Times
The Super Bowl Returns to a Transformed Houston

The mission of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau is to position Houston as a global destination and to improve the economy of greater Houston by attracting national and international conventions, trade shows, tourists and film projects to the area through sales, marketing and public relations efforts.

STRUCTURE & FUNDING

The Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau is a 501(c)6 nonprofit corporation. The GHCVB is a marketing and service organization with a budget comprised of certain reserved funds and private funds raised through a variety of means, including investment in events, membership dues, advertising and in-kind contributions.

The board of directors of the GHCVB and Houston First Corporation enjoy a strategic alignment between the organizations to create a more efficient approach to marketing and selling Houston to tourists and conventions. GHCVB employees became employees of Houston First in 2014 while the GHCVB continues to maintain its own board of directors and seats on the HFC board.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

2017 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

802,859

CONVENTION AND MEETING
ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED

365,578

ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED THROUGH
INTERNATIONAL LEISURE AND REUNIONS

7.8M

VISITORS THROUGH THE VISIT HOUSTON
NETWORK OF WEBSITES

179

MEMBERS ADDED TO THE CITY'S LARGEST
NETWORK OF HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES

\$47M

GENERATED FOR LOCAL ECONOMY THROUGH
FILM AND COMMERCIAL PROJECTS

Dear Members,

2017 will go down in history as one of the most remarkable years for our city from a global image and branding perspective.

We started the year with what many consider (including ESPN) to be the most remarkable Super Bowl in history.

By far the biggest winner was Houston!

Our global exposure and the estimated economic impact of just shy of \$350 million, coupled with all of the development prior to the Super Bowl has set us on a new trajectory!

We hosted 3 major client events post Super Bowl and welcomed over 1,000 new meeting planners to Houston, many for the first time.

We hosted and ultimately weathered a remarkable storm in Harvey – a storm that brought out our true character and showed the world what taking care of each other looks like.

Then our very own Astros showed the world what hard work, true grit and determination can do for a city and ultimately a champion!

Finally, I am pleased to report, for the third consecutive year, your sales and event teams broke another convention sales record and booked over 800,000 group rooms. A 46% jump from their 2015 goals. A truly amazing team effort!

The team is motivated and excited to continue the momentum. Our 2018 is shaping up to be another amazing year. 2018 has more group rooms on the books than what we ended with in 2017, with Super Bowl and World Series in that number.

We have never been more proud to represent our city and will continue to do all that is possible to make sure we succeed together.

MIKE WATERMAN

President, Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau



FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

These are great times for Houston! After a record-breaking year, the extraordinary attractions and talents of this city have been seen around the world. Keeping with this momentum, we continue to improve deliverables to our members in a number of ways, including launching Visit Houston's AR browser (the first augmented reality CVB tool in the US), bolstering partnerships and driving economic success with events like Comicpalooza, and changing the face of consumer interaction through the new Marketplace Experience.

Houston has also shown the world resilience, strength and innovation, so too must the GHCVB. The time is now. So I challenge every member, including my fellow board members, to join me in bringing at least 3 new members this year to the GHCVB.

To that end, as a CVB, we must continue to position Houston as the best place in the world for leisure and business travelers. Our role in doing this continues to evolve and develop. We are an important and necessary voice to advocate for the hospitality, tourism and travel industry. We have been on the leading edge of making sure everyone knows Houston is open for business and welcomes everyone!

Last year, when the "bathroom bill" was introduced in the state legislature, we were at the forefront of the discussion over how it would impact the tourism industry. We met with

legislators, made public statements, responded to media, and we ultimately helped make a difference. We must continue to advocate and add our collective voice to those types of discussions that could be good for or detrimental to hospitality and travel in our state and of course Houston.

We understand the value of tourism and travel to our local economy. We help create the jobs and pump dollars into our city. The GHCVB remains a critical driver to ensuring Houston's growth as a travel and tourism destination.

My thanks to each one of you for all you have done to make our organization stronger and even more relevant in 2017.

I look forward to your commitment to work together as we continue to break records for Houston and make 2018 another successful year for the GHCVB.

DEAN R. GLADDEN

Chair, Board of Directors

Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau

CITY OFFICIALS

Mayor

Sylvester Turner

Controller

Chris Brown

City Council

District A - **Brenda Stardig**

District B - **Jerry Davis**

District C - **Ellen Cohen**

District D - **Dwight Boykins**

District E - **Dave Martin**

District F - **Steve Le**

District G - **Greg Travis**

District H - **Karla Cisneros**

District I - **Robert Gallegos**

District J - **Mike Laster**

District K - **Larry Green**

At-Large 1 - **Mike Knox**

At-Large 2 - **David Robinson**

At-Large 3 - **Michael Kubosh**

At-Large 4 - **Amanda Edwards**

At-Large 5 - **Jack Christie**

County Judge

Ed Emmett

Commissioners

Precinct 1 - **Rodney Ellis**

Precinct 2 - **Jack Morman**

Precinct 3 - **Steve Radack**

Precinct 4 - **R. Jack Cagle**



With robust international influences from a diverse population, the sprawling metropolis offers plenty of diverse neighborhoods to explore, along with exotic cuisines, of-the-moment boutiques, and innovative art offerings. Truly, H-town radiates a supersize mix of high style and downhome charm.

Vogue

**Beyond the Super Bowl: Where to
Eat Global and Shop Local in Houston**

2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Alley Theatre

CHAIR-ELECT

TOM SEGESTA
Four Seasons Hotel

SECRETARY

SCOT COTTON
Marriott Marquis Houston

TREASURER

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American Liberty Hospitality, Inc.

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DJH Consulting, LLC

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Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County

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Greater Houston Partnership

JOHN KEELING

Valencia Group

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Lemond Kitchen

TOM NETTING

Hyatt Regency Houston

KEVIN O'BRIEN

Freeman

STEPHANIE STEGALL

Houston Astros

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HOTELIERS

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Hotel & Lodging Assn. of Greater Houston

JACQUES D'ROVENCOURT

Hilton Americas-Houston

CHRIS MILLER

Wyndham Houston West Energy Corridor

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JOHN P. MOORE

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CHRIS PAPPAS

Pappas Restaurants Inc.

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The Honorable

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County Judge - Harris County

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Philamena Baird

Houston Arts Alliance

Alan D. Bergeron

Bergeron Mgmt. Services

Susan Bischoff

Susan Bischoff Community
Marketing

Helen Perrone Bonsall

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Houston Hobby

Galen Cobb

Halliburton

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Texas Southern University

Edgardo E. Colón

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Gayden L. Cooper

Space Center Houston-Manned

Space Flight Education
Foundation

Scot Cotton

Marriott Marquis Houston

Joel Cowley

Houston Livestock Show
and Rodeo

Fernando Cuellar

Hilton University of Houston

Jacques D'Rovencourt

Hilton Americas-Houston

Kim Davis

The KD Company

Marcus Davis

TBK Foods LLC

Julie Farr

Houston Museum District
Association

John Ferrari

AFC Transportation

William Fitch

Staging Solutions, Inc.

Terence H. Fontaine

Metropolitan Transit
Authority of Harris County

Mike Giangrosso

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Alley Theatre

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MKG Art Management

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Sugar Land

Andy Icken

Office of Mayor

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John Johnson

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Valencia Group

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United Airlines

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Lemond Kitchen

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Medical Center

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Wyndham Houston West
Energy Corridor

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Restaurant Assn.

Wade Mark Morehead

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The Padgett Group

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Pierpont Communications

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Houston Astros

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Science

Linda Toyota

Houston Community College
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George R. Brown
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Lance Livingston

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Houston Rockets

Tad Brown

Houston Rockets

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Windsor Village United
Methodist Church

James R. Crane

Houston Astros

Tilman J. Fertitta

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CAMAC International Corp.

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Jim McIngvale

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Lakewood Church

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Pappas Restaurants, Inc.

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Chris K. Wilmot

Glory Infrastructure, Inc.

Mark Yanke

Hotel Emma



Home to Texas billionaire royalty, oil men and space travelers, this port metropolis rooted in a rebellious pioneer spirit also sports one of the country's most diverse ethnic populations. It has a hip, burgeoning millennial citizenry, some of the best museums in the world, a philanthropic predilection that keeps the arts well fueled, and a no-zoning ordinance that gives the city a quirky architectural patchwork-quilt feel.

Chicago Tribune

With or without Super Bowl LI, Houston is a winner

2018 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Alley Theatre

CHAIR-ELECT

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Four Seasons Hotel

SECRETARY

SCOT COTTON
Marriott Marquis Houston

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Silver Eagle Distributors

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La Maison in Midtown, Bed & Breakfast

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Houston Community College

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Greater Houston Partnership

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Hyatt Regency Houston

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Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

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Susan Bischoff Community

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Marshall Tyndall

Chris K. Wilmot

Glory Infrastructure, Inc.

Mark Yanke

Hotel Emma

“The famous Texas hospitality makes for a fun-filled visit but Houston is also full of surprises.”

London Evening Standard, 2017

“Houston, is, in fact, about as multicultural a city as exists in the country.”

CNN, 2017

“Houston is like New York City with its density of mom and pop ethnic restaurants.”

Esquire Magazine, 2017

“With robust international influences from a diverse population, the sprawling metropolis offers plenty of diverse neighborhoods to explore, along with exotic cuisines, of-the-moment boutiques, and innovative art offerings.”

Vogue, 2017

“The host city of Super Bowl 51 has a bustling arts scene and a slew of international restaurants. We found plenty of reasons to visit right now--or any time.”

Food Network Magazine, 2017

SALES

The mission of the Sales team is to generate hotel room nights through trade shows, conventions, meetings and special events while promoting and selling the Houston area as a world-class meeting destination.

The Sales team strives to reach annual goals through direct sales activity and networking with meeting professionals at major industry events and trade shows, direct marketing and city-hosted visits.

Conferences requiring convention facilities afford the opportunity to conduct business in multiple hotels and impact our hospitality partners. This year, the Sales team secured 34 citywide conventions from groups requiring the George R. Brown or NRG convention facilities. In addition to organizations requiring convention facilities, our team also facilitates single-hotel "in-house" groups.

In 2017, Sales contracted 429 groups for a total of 802,859 room nights, achieving 106% of its annual goal.

SIGNIFICANT NEW BOOKINGS IN 2017

- American Dental Association 2022
+30,000 attendees
- Health Occupations Students of America 2020
+10,000 attendees
- Professional SQL Server – 2020 & 2022
+4,500 attendees
- Association for Creative Industries 2023, 24 & 25
+8,000 attendees
- American Society for Microbiology 2023
+12,000 attendees
- American Society of Nephrology 2025
+13,000 attendees
- International Congress & Convention Assoc. 2019
+1,150 attendees
- John Deere 2018
+5,000 attendees
- National Association of Realtors 2025
+18,000 attendees
- World LPG 2018
+2,000 attendees

SIGNIFICANT MEETINGS HOSTED IN 2017

- Super Bowl
+150,000 attendees
- Bass Anglers Sportsman Society
+115,000 attendees
- FIRST Robotics
+29,468 attendees
- Anime Matsuri Convention
+20,000 attendees
- Texas High School Coaches Association
+10,823 attendees
- National Athletic Trainers Association
+10,331 attendees
- American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
+8,640 attendees
- American Nurses Association
+8,300 attendees
- Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences
+5,854 attendees
- Marriott Masters
+700 attendees
- Experient e4
+477 attendees
- Texas Society of Association Executives
+540 attendees

citywide bookings **+13%**

international bookings **+3%**

contracted room nights **802,859**

tentative room nights **2.9 MILLION**

TOURISM

Tourism is charged with the promotion of the Houston area as a travel destination with the goal of increasing leisure travel. These efforts are measured in increased returns for area hotels, attractions, restaurants and others in the hospitality sector. The department also works with the Houston hospitality industry to assist in leisure promotional efforts and encourage the creation of new leisure products.

Tourism actively works with domestic and international travel trade to reach the traveling consumer. New market development includes engaging local hospitality partners to create travel packages for visitors to purchase. Tourism leads the newly launched Hospitality Insider program, an initiative that trains and engages front line hospitality personnel on how to more effectively support a positive visitor experience in Houston.

Tourism participates in travel trade shows and organizes sales missions and familiarization trips to reach key clients in its top markets. The department also handles international media visits and manages the Spanish website and social media presence. Additionally, Tourism manages agencies representing the city in its top five international markets: Mexico, Canada, the United Kingdom, China and Germany.

Building on efforts to both increase sales to Houston and provide an enhanced visitor experience, Tourism launched the Houston Experience Marketplace in October 2017 with a focus

on making it easy for consumers to discover, buy, and experience the wide variety of things to do in Houston. The marketplace contracts directly with tour and activity partners to create unique opportunities for visitors to explore Houston.

Tourism secured 808 international media placements, with a total of 924 million impressions which generated \$12 million in positive media value for the year. Tourism also trained 4,200 travel professionals on how to sell Houston as a leisure destination, nearly double the department's annual goal.

In 2017, Tourism executed a successful Houston Tourism Summit, giving members the opportunity to interact, learn tourism trends and discover marketing opportunities to promote their products to travelers.

Tourism also continued the Matching Grants Program in 2017. The program fosters tourism-related initiatives developed by local and regional organizations by allowing hospitality partners to join up to apply for funding for initiatives

that directly increase travel to Houston. This year saw 14 new projects awarded marketing grants.

The Tourism department continues leading the Visit Houston and Beyond cooperative marketing initiative, which brings regional destination marketing organizations under the Visit Houston umbrella. Visit Houston and Beyond includes Alvin, Beaumont, Conroe, The Woodlands, Galveston, Baytown, Deer Park, Sugar Land, Huntsville, Bay Area Houston, Tomball, Pearland, Port Arthur and Brazosport.

In October 2017, Tourism launched the first new official Visitor Center offering a combination of trained concierge and self-service options for visitors to curate their personal Houston experience. This state of the art center, located at Hobby Airport, served over 10,000,000 passengers by year-end. In 2018, Tourism will open a new Visitor Center at Avenida Houston, as well as a center at Houston Premium Outlets to enhance presence at Intercontinental Airport.

goal: total number of tourists by 2020 **25 MILLION**

total incremental room nights **365,578**

international publicity **\$12,120,193**

travel professionals trained **4,200**

visitors served through visitor information centers **5,244**

experiences sold through the houston experience marketplace **599**

Client Services works with meeting planners to provide a wide range of services once a meeting is booked and works as a liaison between the meeting planner and GHCVB members. Client Services organizes and coordinates site visits, promotional and educational attendance and the welcoming program.

Client Services works with meeting planners to provide a wide range of services once a meeting is booked and works as a liaison between the meeting planner and GHCVB members.

Client Services provides exceptional support to meeting planners, offering one-on-one attention and keeping Houston at the forefront as a destination for future events.

The Client Services team conducted 90 planning sessions. The team continues to expand the Convention Awareness Program highlighting 35 events in 2017.

This program helps connect with the GHCVB members, city departments and the community to effectively communicate the economic impact of conventions.

In 2017 the team conducted numerous attendance promotional trips and marketing support coordination representing 232,296 room nights and 194,750 attendees, with the goal of showcasing Houston as the host city for their next meeting.

Client Services provides education, insight and awareness into Houston and promotes the city as a premier destination.

convention awareness program events **35**

housing program events **9**

attendance promotion trips **18**

planning sessions **90**

major association planners evaluated **22**
maintaining 90% return rate and excellent overall satisfaction rating

CLIENT SERVICES

MEMBERSHIP

The mission of Membership is to encourage stakeholders to invest in the GHCVB member programs to support our marketing efforts in promoting, branding and positioning Houston as a premier destination. Our programs provide value added ROI by implementing programs that support membership growth and revenue retention through education, engagement, business opportunities, resources and exposure.

Membership works with all other divisions to support and promote the organization's overall objective of attracting conventions, meetings and visitors to Houston. This collaboration enhances the membership program, helping retain existing members and grow the base.

The primary goal is to increase our annual membership investment by implementing a plan to actively identify and convert business prospects into members.

A total of 179 new members were added in 2017. Membership exceeded engagement goals with 32 engagements and member connection business opportunities. This included GHCVB Membership Annual Meeting & Showcase, National Tourism Week Celebration at The Shops at Houston Center & Food Plaza 4 Houston Center, annual GHCVB Membership Holiday Open House, Houston Tourism Summit and Membership Tutorial and bi-monthly Membership Orientation Connection & Showcase.

member retention **79%**

new members added in 2017 **179**

engagements and member connection opportunities **32**



Partnerships & Event Development implements and manages event assets on behalf of the GHCVB. In 2017, the group recognized promising results from its current portfolio of invested events.

SpaceCom, executed in collaboration with NASA-Johnson Space Center, continues to solidify a position as the aerospace industry show, but it's more than that. SpaceCom enables innovative businesses, research facilities, health care institutions, and universities to advance their own technologies and initiatives through the use of products, environments, knowledge, and resources employed by NASA, the International Space Station, commercial aerospace enterprises, and their partners.

Achieving year over year attendee growth, with representation from 40 states and 32 countries, SpaceCom drew the largest number of registrants outside Texas in 2017. The annual Commercial Spaceport Summit, a co-located meeting of representatives from domestic and international spaceports, had 38 representatives and the Entrepreneurial Workshop, an inaugural event drawing investors and innovators in the space industry, had 37 participants.

Comicpalooza continued to be an economic success with an increase in attendance to 45,377. Attendees came from all over Texas, 40 states, Canada, Mexico, and abroad. The largest pop-culture festival in Texas hosted a star-studded lineup that included Chuck Norris, Anthony Mackie, Jon Bernthal, Mike Colter, Finn Jones, and many more.

economic impact **\$17 MILLION**

room nights **11,000**

out of state spacecom registration **+20%**

PARTNERSHIPS & EVENT DEVELOPMENT

MARKETING

The Marketing department promotes the Greater Houston area as a convention, business and tourism destination and supports the goals of all HFC departments. These efforts include advertising, public relations, sponsorship, special events, promotions, website and collateral development.

The more people the organization is able to reach, the greater its influence. In 2017, just over 7.8 million people visited the Houston CVB's web network representing a 6.9% increase from the previous year. The CVB network includes:

- VisitHouston.com
- VisitaHoustonTexas.com (Spanish) (now HolaHouston.com)
- MyGayHouston.com
- HoustonCulinaryTours.com
- IDoHou.com
- HoustonReunions.com

Moreover, the network of websites generated 211,533 room nights in 2017 and direct spending of \$140.8 million from the leisure visitor market, a 11% increase.

The 2017 advertising efforts included a national print campaign in the Wall Street Journal and digital placement in New York Times' news, lifestyle and dining sections. The local TV

and cable broadcast ads aired in the Texas and Louisiana markets featuring the My Houston campaign. New in 2017, the Visit Houston leisure digital ads featured the Visit Houston Marketplace, making it easier for locals and visitors to purchase experiences.

The international advertising efforts increased with dedicated media buys targeting key markets in Mexico, including Guadalajara, Monterrey and Mexico City.

Marketing's domestic public relations efforts placed Houston in the national spotlight with more than 434 media placements generated by pitches and media visits.

High-profile placements included pieces in *Esquire*, *Elle*, *Food & Wine*, *Forbes*, *USA Today*, and *Vogue*, as well as networks including CBS Sunday Morning, CNN and ESPN, among several others.

room nights
generated from web **211,533**

visitors to
site network **7.8 MILLION**

media generated from
pitch or journalist visit **434**

coordinated
interviews **171**

The mission of the Houston Film Commission is to increase the number of film and video projects shot in the Houston area and build a sustainable film infrastructure. A healthy film industry puts heads in beds, creates jobs, expands the tax base and enhances the image and visibility of the greater Houston community.

In 2017, the Houston Film Commission recorded 249 film and video projects representing 1,129 shooting days. Direct spending locally by the film industry in 2017 totaled \$15.7 million with a total economic impact of nearly \$47 million.

Major projects filmed in Houston in 2017 included commercials for Ford, Gatorade, HEB, Mercedes, United Airlines and Verizon.

In other news, Texas Motion Picture Alliance recognized the Commission's deputy director, Alfred Cervantes, as the 2017 "Impact Person of the Year," and for the second consecutive year one of the leading publications for directors, producers and writers, MovieMaker, designated Houston as one of the "Best Places to Live and Work As A Filmmaker".

TELEVISION SERIES SHOT IN HOUSTON 2017

Billion Dollar Buyer
Brother vs Brother
House Hunters International
Keep it Real Estate
My 600-Pound Life
Outdaughtered
Texas Vet
The Bachelor
The Eleven
Queen of the South
Welcome to Sweetie Pies

FEATURE FILMS SHOT IN HOUSTON 2017

Fifth Ward
The Candidate AKA Lone Star Deception
The Trouble With Ray

economic impact **\$47,156,250**

direct expenditures **\$15,718,750**

shooting days **1,129**

film and video projects **249**

**HOUSTON
FILM COMMISSION**

FINANCE

GREATER HOUSTON CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

*STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	12/31/2017	12/31/2016
REVENUES		
Public Sector	\$ 666,775	\$ 663,073
Interest and Other Income	92,513	127,328
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>759,288</u>	<u>790,401</u>
EXPENSES		
Convention Sales and Services	1,532,272	2,372,613
Private Sector Services	5,644	7,140
General and Administrative	413,637	567,940
Investment Losses		130,876
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>1,951,553</u>	<u>3,078,569</u>
NET ASSET (DECREASE)	<u>\$ (1,192,265)</u>	<u>\$ (2,288,168)</u>

*Unaudited Report- Audited report available after August 31, 2018

GREATER HOUSTON CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

*STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

	12/31/2017	12/31/2016
ASSETS		
Current Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 6,265,808	\$ 8,388,974
Accounts Receivable	186,050	89,430
Prepaid Expenses	3,295	10,000
Total Current Assets	<u>6,455,153</u>	<u>8,488,404</u>
Non-current Assets:		
Property and Equipment - Net	115,061	207,835
Investments in Other Entities	806,577	531,577
Deposits	66,101	66,101
Total Assets	<u>7,442,892</u>	<u>9,293,917</u>
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	3,285	-
Deferred Revenue	145,809	151,092
Accrued Expenses	100,035	625,922
Total Current Liabilities	<u>249,129</u>	<u>777,014</u>
Agency Obligations	4,009	3,951
Accumulated Investment Losses	130,876	130,876
Unrestricted Net Assets	7,058,878	8,382,076
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	<u>\$ 7,442,892</u>	<u>\$ 9,293,917</u>

*Unaudited Report- Audited report available after August 31, 2018



VISIT HOUSTON

A Division of Houstonfirst.

701 Avenida de las Americas, Ste 200
Houston, TX 77010