

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

NEW ORLEANS  
NEW ORLEANS & COMPANY





# Travel and tourism boosts infrastructure, provides lifelong ca

In our region, nearly 80,000 people have meaningful



An aerial photograph of a large steel truss bridge spanning a wide river at sunset. The sky is filled with warm orange and yellow clouds, and the bridge's lights are visible. The water reflects the colors of the sky and the bridge structure. In the background, a city skyline is visible across the river.

drives our economy,  
instills civic pride and  
career opportunities.

ul work and careers in every aspect of this industry.

# Letter from Our



## Dear Friends of New Orleans & Company



Thank you for taking a few moments to read our 2024 Annual Report. Our team works every day to inspire, promote and encourage travel to our city for the economic, social and community benefit of New Orleans and its people.

This report highlights our work to deliver excellent results against four strategic goals, including how we:

### **Deliver the Most Innovative and Exceptional Sales and Service**

- Convention Sales booked nearly 1.5 million definite room nights in 2024
- The Tourism Sales team booked 566,268 hotel room nights for leisure group/travel trade visitors
- Convention Services assisted 298 definite groups, conducted 126 definite site inspections, sent 386 business leads and created 463 referrals
- Received numerous accolades including top three convention destination in the U.S. and silver Travvy awards for best domestic destination and best domestic culinary destination

### **Make New Orleans a Great Place to Live, Work, Visit and Invest In**

- Celebrated 20 years of COOLinary New Orleans with a record-breaking 92,000 unique visitors to restaurant listings
- Launched Home for Good New Orleans responsible for housing over 200 individuals from encampments since 2023 and focused on ending street homelessness by the end of 2025
- Expanded Recycle Dat!, the parade route recycling initiative diverting over 10 tons of waste from landfills
- Launched a Hospitality Training Program with an initial cohort of 20 professionals
- Conducted a French Quarter Accessibility Survey and launched a partnership with Wheel the World



# President & CEO

## Create and Own a Clear, World-Class Brand for New Orleans

- Debuted a completely redesigned website on-budget and on-time, NewOrleans.com, which received nearly 28 million page views and more than 11 million visits in 2024. We know that people who engage with our website stay longer when they visit the city
- Launched a new multimedia campaign created by Brand Society. It includes a new logo featuring a waxing crescent moon, which symbolizes growth, positive energy, optimism and abundance
- The social media team achieved over 4 million total engagements which was 300% of their goal, and their content had extraordinary reach of 36 million impressions
- The PR team exceeded its 2024 goal, assisting and/or hosting 1,592 journalists and placing 2,659 positive stories about the city

## Restore International Travel Tourism

- Launched the first Michelin Green Guide for New Orleans in French for 2024-2025
- Hosted Global Events like Bocuse d'Or and Pastry World Cup, the Taylor Swift Eras Tour and leveraged those events to engage a record number of international journalists
- Maintained representation of New Orleans in Germany, France, United Kingdom, Mexico and India. Approximately 490,000 international visitors came to New Orleans in 2024 according to Tourism Economics
- Partnered with a PR agency in Australia and earned positive news coverage
- Hosted a 25-person global press trip to showcase New Orleans as host city to Super Bowl LIX

In 2024, we showed the world why we are uniquely Built To Host Mardi Gras, Bocuse d'Or and Pastry World Cup, Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, sports championships, festivals and some of the world's most prominent conventions and meetings. Ultimately our incredible venues, hospitality, walkability and the way our community embraces visitors set us apart, but it is our people that make us world-class.

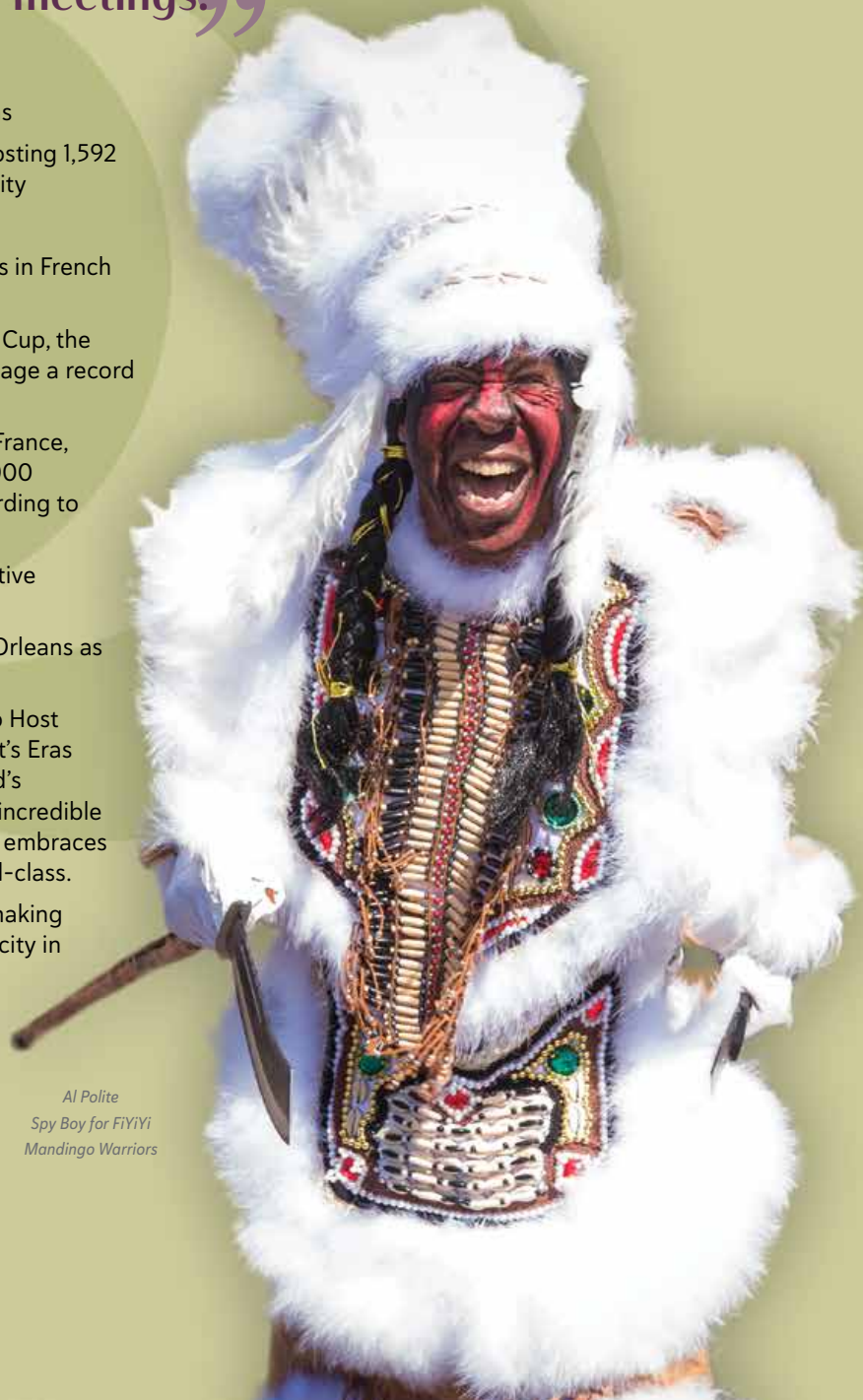
Thank you for your continued support and partnership in making New Orleans the most remarkable, unique and welcoming city in the world.

Sincerely,



Walter J. Leger III  
President & CEO  
New Orleans & Company

“In 2024, we showed the world why we are uniquely Built To Host Mardi Gras, Bocuse d'Or and Pastry World Cup, Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, sports championships, festivals and some of the world's most prominent conventions and meetings.”



Al Polite  
Spy Boy for FiYiYi  
Mandingo Warriors



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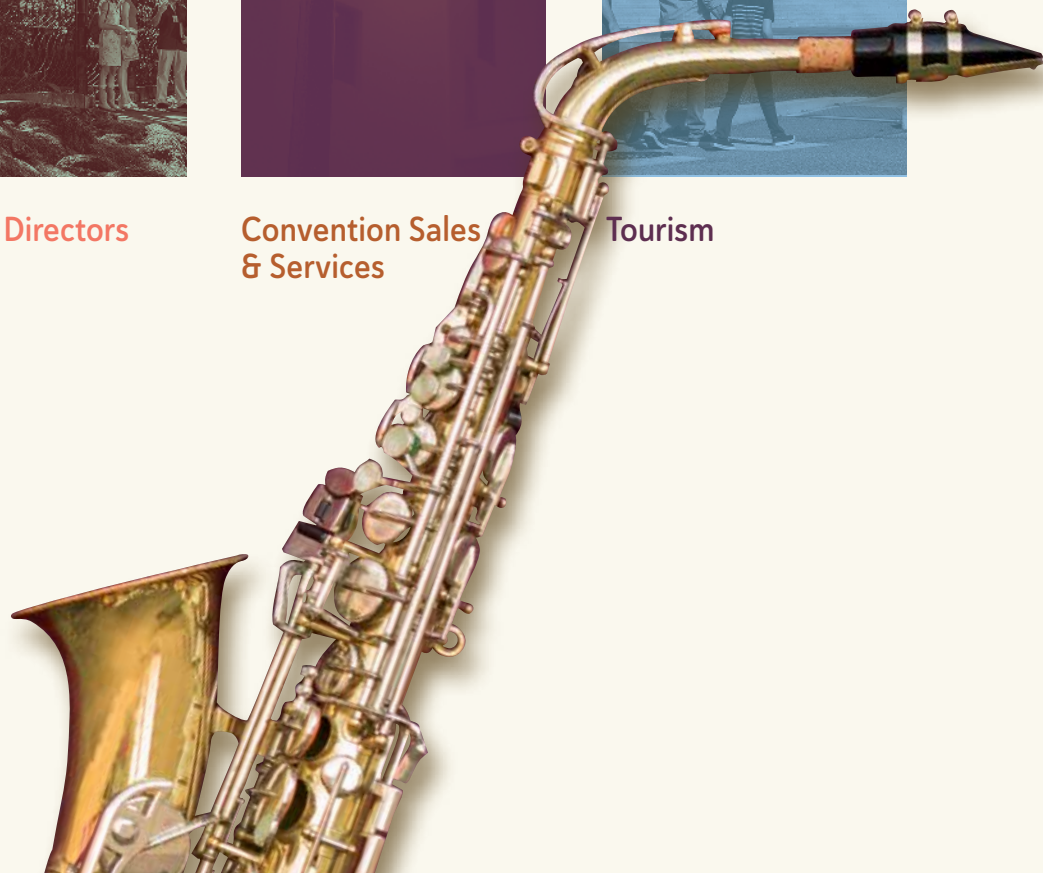


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# Our Leadership Team

**Walter J. Leger III**

President & CEO

**Alice Glenn**

Executive Vice President

**Mark Romig**

Chief Marketing Officer /  
Senior Advisor as of April 1, 2025

**Kim Priez**

Senior Vice President, Tourism Sales

**Stephanie Turner**

Senior Vice President,  
Convention Sales & Strategies

**Kelly Schulz**

Senior Vice President,  
Communications & Public Relations

**Jeremy Cooker**

Senior Vice President of Marketing

**Kevin Ferguson**

Vice President of External Affairs &  
Membership

**Tammie Boteler**

Vice President of Finance

**Brian Walker**

Vice President of Information Technology

**Laura Russett**

Director of Administration

**Rachel Avery, CMP**

Director of Convention Services &  
Events

**Tara Stackpole**

Director of Executive Operations







# 2024 Board of Directors

## Chair

**Mickal Adler, Managing Owner**  
Coleman E. Adler & Sons and Latrobe's

**Glen Armantrout, President**  
JMH Hospitality/Premium Parking

**Ryan Berger, Principal**  
The Berger Company

**Bonnie Boyd, Owner**  
BBC Destination Management

**Kyle Brechtel, President & CEO**  
Brechtel Hospitality

**Katy Casbarian, Proprietor**  
Arnaud's Restaurant

**Tod Chambers, General Manager**  
Roosevelt Hotel

**Gretchen Chase, CEO**  
Chase Hospitality Group

**Jim Cook, General Manager**  
New Orleans Sheraton Hotel

**Jill DiMarco, Owner**  
Signature DMC

**Kevin Dolirole, Director of Aviation**  
Louis Armstrong International Airport (MSY Airport)

**Daffne Enclard, General Manager**  
St. Christopher Hotel/Best Western Plus (GNOHLA)

**Ron Forman, President & CEO**  
Audubon Nature Institute

**Michelle Gobert, General Manager**  
TransMedia, LLC

**Al Groos, General Manager**  
The Royal Sonesta Hotel

**Stan Harris, President & CEO**  
Louisiana Restaurant Association (LRA)

**Tom Leonhard, President & CEO**  
HRI Properties

**Jessica Malecki, General Manager**  
Kimpton Hotel Fontenot

**Samir Mowad, Senior Vice President & General Manager**  
Caesars New Orleans

**David Piscola, General Manager**  
Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel

**Jerry Reyes, Vice President**  
Highgate

**Kenny Rubenstein, Owner & General Manager**  
Rubensteins

**Greg Rusovich, President & CEO**  
Transoceanic Trading

**Michael Sawaya, President & CEO**  
New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center (NOENMCC)

**Doug Thornton, Executive Vice President**  
ASM Global

**Stephen Watson, President & CEO**  
The National WWII Museum

**Ronald Wendel, President & CEO**  
Port of New Orleans

**Tifferney White, CEO**  
Louisiana Children's Museum

**Charlee Williamson, Executive Vice President**  
Ralph Brennan Restaurant Group

**Frank Zumbo, General Manager**  
New Orleans Marriott Hotel







# Convention Sales & Services

Construit pour Accueillir  
Built to Host

Dauphine



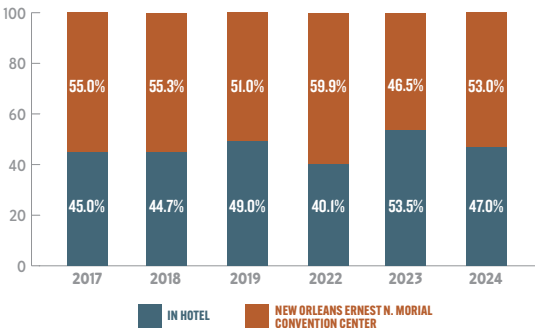
Convention Sales strategies focused on driving short-term bookings while building the booking pace for future years. Our sales and marketing strategies continually adapted to the changing market conditions to ensure maximum room night production.

### Goals & Metrics

At year-end, definite room nights net of cancellations reached 95.5% of the full-year goal of 1,500,000 room nights. Convention Sales strategies prioritized driving short-term bookings while reinforcing the future booking pace, with a particular focus on strengthening 2027 and 2031 pace. Sales and marketing efforts were strategically aligned to fill critical need periods and shape a robust convention calendar for sustained long-term growth.

2024 Annual Goal
1,500,000
Net Production*
1,432,557
% to Full 2024 Annual Goal
95.5%

*\*YTD reflects Simpleview activity through December 31, 2024.*



Source: New Orleans & Company Simpleview CRM, December 2024

### New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center & Hotel Bookings

The previous graph presents a percentage breakdown of room nights from convention center bookings and those from hotel-based bookings. In-hotel meetings played a crucial role in the success of the market, like citywide meetings, by creating compression and contributing to the growth of booking pace for future years.

### Convention Sales Business Reach

Meetings and conventions created economic opportunities that extend beyond individual travelers, benefiting small business owners across the city.



# 2024 in Review: Citywide Conventions – 2,500+

## First Quarter 2024

MONTH	ORGANIZATION	PEAK NIGHT
JAN	Clarion Events - POWERGEN International	3,600
JAN	Anheuser-Busch	3,400
FEB	True Value Company	2,500
FEB	American Rental Association	4,000
MAR	Association for Materials Protection & Performance	2,900
MAR	American Chemical Society	5,000
MAR	Tampa Volleyball Events	4,334

## Second Quarter 2024

MONTH	ORGANIZATION	PEAK NIGHT
APR	National School Boards Association	3,500
MAY	American Association of Orthodontists	5,400
MAY	Association for Talent Development	4,500
MAY	National Association of Foreign Student Advisors	4,225
JUN	The Pokémon Company International	3,400
JUN	National Athletic Trainers Association	4,000

## Third Quarter 2024

MONTH	ORGANIZATION	PEAK NIGHT
JUL	ESSENCE Festival	8,000
JUL	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	7,033
JUL	The Moose	3,342
AUG	Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists	2,900
AUG	Bronner Brothers	2,600
AUG	Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles/Mystic Shrine	3,650
AUG	The American Legion	3,000
SEP	Society of Petroleum Engineers	2,800

## Fourth Quarter 2024

MONTH	ORGANIZATION	PEAK NIGHT
OCT	Water Environment Federation - WEFTEC	8,000
OCT	American Dental Association	5,700
NOV	American Nurses Credentialing Center	7,000
NOV	Society of American Military Engineers	3,000
NOV	Bayou Classic	5,500
DEC	American Society of Health-System Pharmacists	10,500

Source: New Orleans & Company Simpleview CRM, December 2024

# Definite & Tentative Room Nights on the Books

Definite and tentative room nights for 2024 through 2031 are outlined below.

DEFINITE ROOM NIGHTS ON THE BOOKS				
Year	Booking Position	3 Yr Avg (17-19)	3 Yr Chg (17-19)	3 Yr % Chg
2024 - ITYFTY	1,340,927	1,468,284	-127,357	-8.67%
2025 - 1 Year Out	1,270,050	1,335,832	-65,782	-4.92%
2026 - 2 Years Out	1,056,192	978,625	77,567	7.93%
2027 - 3 Years Out	738,725	725,759	12,966	1.79%
2028 - 4 Years Out	627,899	565,072	62,827	11.12%
2029 - 5 Years Out	485,472	394,464	91,008	23.07%
2030 - 6 Years Out	466,268	316,799	149,469	47.18%
2031 - 7 Years Out	209,251	218,786	-9,535	-4.36%

CONVENTION SALES DASHBOARD TENTATIVE ROOM NIGHTS	
Year	Tentative Room Nights
2025 - 1 Year Out	188,359
2026 - 2 Years Out	373,585
2027 - 3 Years Out	350,133
2028 - 4 Years Out	231,444
2029 - 5 Years Out	194,363
2030 - 6 Years Out	171,786

Source: New Orleans & Company Convention Sales Dashboard, December 2024

88% of the top 250 conventions will meet in 20 destinations

In 2024, San Diego will host the largest number of the 250 conventions, followed by Orlando and **New Orleans**

DESTINATIONS	# OF TOP 250	PERCENTAGES
San Diego	21	9%
Orlando	19	8%
<b>New Orleans</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7%</b>
Chicago	17	6%
Las Vegas	15	6%
Denver	14	6%
Atlanta	11	5%
Boston	11	5%
Washington	11	5%
Anaheim	10	4%

# Built To Host Inspired Meetings

A new “Top 250” study found that 88% of the top 250 conventions in the country will meet in only 20 cities, and **New Orleans earned the No. 3 spot for two consecutive years.** This consistently high ranking reinforced that customers appreciate New Orleans’ **walkability, compact geographic footprint, world-class venues, unmatched culture and hospitality expertise.**

Source: Destination International, Simpleview CRM



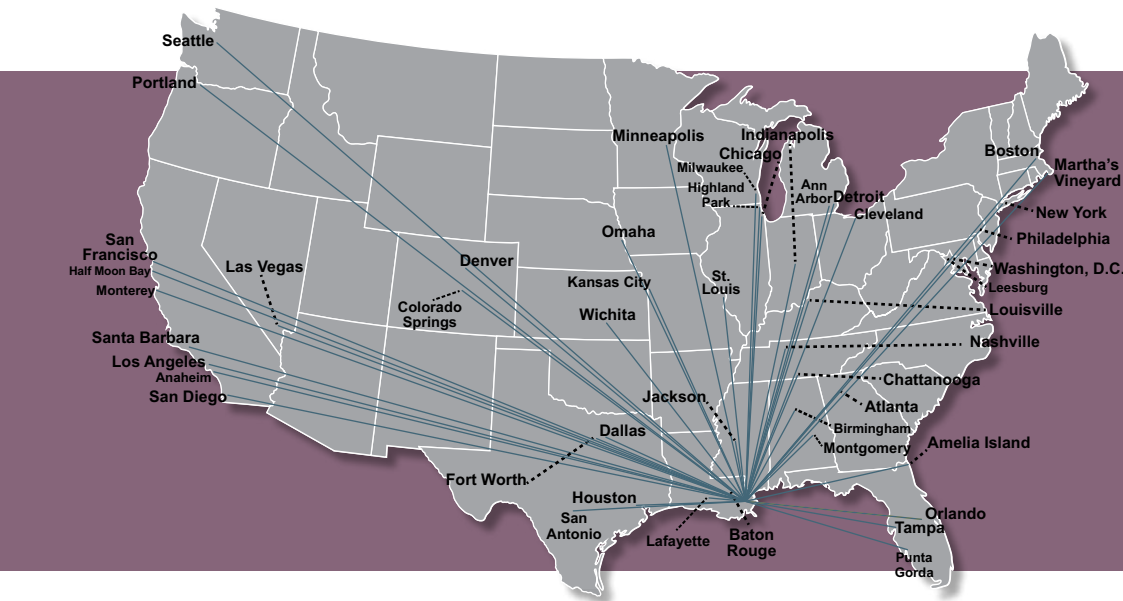
# Smith Travel Research Downtown New Orleans Performance 2024

Smith Travel Research reports showed an increase in YTD Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) of \$6.79 compared to 2023. ADR increased by \$2.49 and occupancy by 2.6%. Both Transient and Group segments saw better occupancy rates than in 2023 with a higher ADR.

SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH: OCTOBER YTD 2024 vs 2023											
TRANSIENT			GROUP			CONTRACT			TOTAL		
Occupancy (%)	2024	2023	Occupancy (%)	2024	2023	Occupancy (%)	2024	2023	Occupancy (%)	2024	2023
	42.9	41.7		20.0	18.7		1.3	1.1		64.2	61.6
ADR (\$)	2024	2023	ADR (\$)	2024	2023	ADR (\$)	2024	2023	ADR (\$)	2024	2023
	200.86	198.05		216.44	213.33		89.46	83.52		203.10	200.61
RevPAR (%)	2024	2023	RevPAR (%)	2024	2023	RevPAR (%)	2024	2023	RevPAR (%)	2024	2023
	85.98	82.61		43.20	39.97		1.14	0.94		130.31	123.52

Source: Smith Travel Research Downtown Custom Set, December 2024 - Full Year

## Convention Sales on the Road Booking Meetings



- Frankfurt, Germany
- Kona, HI
- Puerto Rico
- Vancouver, BC
- Tulum, Q.R. Mexico

The Sales Team Completed

79 TRIPS  
LAST YEAR

TO 51 DIFFERENT  
DESTINATIONS,

TRAVELING MORE THAN  
174,102  
MILES ROUND-TRIP.

Source: New Orleans & Company Convention Sales Travel Calendar, December

## Convention Services

The Convention Services team offered unmatched expertise, guiding clients through every stage of planning and execution to ensure seamless, successful events. With personalized support and deep industry knowledge, they elevated the meeting experience and set New Orleans apart from competitors as a premier destination.

CONVENTION SERVICES	2024
Leads Sent	386
Referrals Sent	463
Definite Sites Conducted	126
Promotional Trips Attended	18
Groups Serviced	298
Events Organized by Staff Event Planner, Hosted by Convention Sales	34
Convention Staffed Individual Shifts	46 972

GROUP MARKETING & ATTENDANCE BUILDING	2024
Marketing Presentations Given	184
Microsites Created	107
Community Services Projects/Donations*	22
Group Social Media Posts	71
Group PR & Media Alerts	16
Welcome Videos	37

*\*Group Marketing & Attendance Building Managers connect groups with local nonprofits & facilitate CSR projects and donations.*

## Built To Host Brand Development

Since its inception in 2019, **Built To Host** has evolved from a strategic initiative into a fully integrated brand that defines how our New Orleans & Company Convention Sales, Services and Marketing teams position the city in the meetings and conventions industry. Created in partnership with the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, the brand has been overwhelmingly well received and adopted by the entire destination—becoming not just a slogan, but a guiding mantra of our hospitality community.

**Built To Host** was intentionally developed to showcase consistent, complex event execution demonstrated by our community. Our experience extends beyond well-known, iconic events like Mardi Gras, Jazz Fest and major sporting exhibitions. At its core, **Built To Host** celebrates the people who shape our city—chefs, musicians, culture bearers and the entire hospitality community—who create an authentic, immersive experience for visitors. The meetings brand accurately positions New Orleans within a highly competitive landscape, serving as a driving force behind our success in building a consistent calendar of meetings and conventions into the future.

Over the last five years, **Built To Host** has undergone a transformative evolution, reaching a milestone with its 3.0 iteration in 2024, which introduced a refreshed suite of creative assets designed to enhance brand recognition and deepen engagement with corporate meeting planners. This latest launch further strengthened New Orleans’ position as a premier meetings destination across digital, print and experiential touchpoints, while broadening the brand’s

appeal to modern luxury and upper-upscale markets. Key updates included:

- **A refined visual identity** incorporating the new leisure brand logo, reinforcing a cohesive citywide brand
- **A full suite of creative assets** spanning six newly developed print ads, digital display ads optimized for LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and CVENT and a new sales video that captures the essence of New Orleans as a premier meeting destination
- **Brand integration across sales and marketing platforms**, including a complete web redesign with dedicated meeting planner, corporate meetings and a destination experience landing page, plus informative e-newsletters
- **Immersive brand touchpoints** such as branded amenities, note-taking placemats, GOBOs and an updated tradeshow booth to bring **Built To Host** to life in tangible ways
- **A landmark moment at PCMA Convening Leaders 2025** (developed in 2024), where **Built To Host** will take center stage for the first time with a featured presentation

The strength of **Built To Host** lies in its truth—New Orleans delivers an unmatched meeting experience that creates unforgettable moments. By embedding this brand into everything we do, from marketing campaigns to client interactions, we’ve solidified New Orleans as a premier meetings destination and a top competitor in an evolving industry landscape.



# BUILT TO HOST

## Built To Host Creative Assets



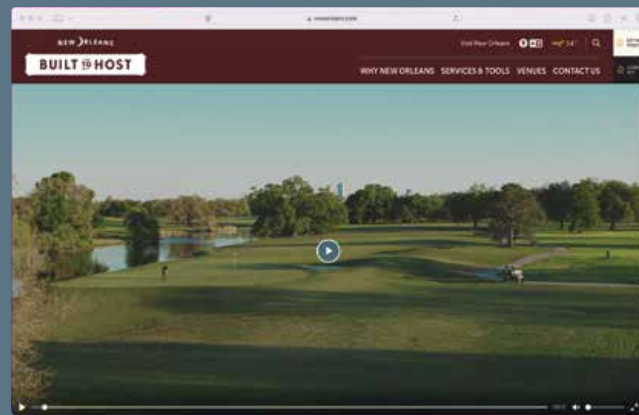
Main Stage at PCMA Convening Leaders 2025



Print Ads



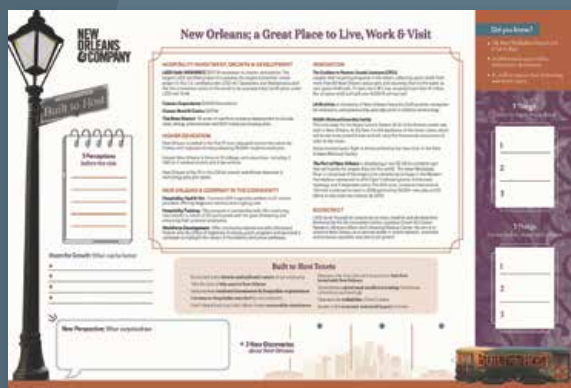
Poydras Street Mural



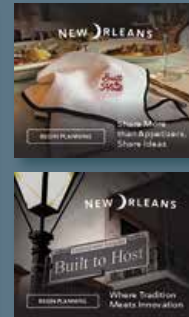
Destination Site Visit Resource Page



"Fairy Tale" Video



Interactive Placemat



Digital Display Ads

## Building Trade Media Relationships

New Orleans & Company's Convention Sales and Convention Marketing teams strategically cultivated relationships with top trade media to keep New Orleans and our **Built To Host** brand at the forefront of industry conversations. By actively guiding the narrative, we not only reinforced the city's position as a premier meetings destination but also broadened awareness of its lesser-known assets—from the expansive greenspace of City Park to our sustainability initiatives with organizations like Glass Half Full and the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.

These relationships are critical for brand development, ensuring that **Built To Host** is seamlessly integrated into how the industry perceives New Orleans. By engaging journalists who speak directly to meeting professionals, we helped shift perspectives beyond outdated perceptions and showcase what makes New Orleans the ideal location for hosting complex meetings and events.

Through targeted media outreach, editorial partnerships and high-impact press engagements, we secured coverage in leading publications such as *Associations Conventions & Facilities*, *Black Meetings & Tourism*, *Chief Executive Magazine*, *Corporate & Incentive Travel*, *Meetings Today*, *Prevue Meetings + Incentives* and *Smart Meetings*.

## Pre-Super Bowl Press Visit, November 8–11, 2024

One of the most impactful media initiatives of the past year was the Pre-Super Bowl Press Visit in November 2024. Hosting 25 leading global journalists, this immersive experience went beyond a standard site

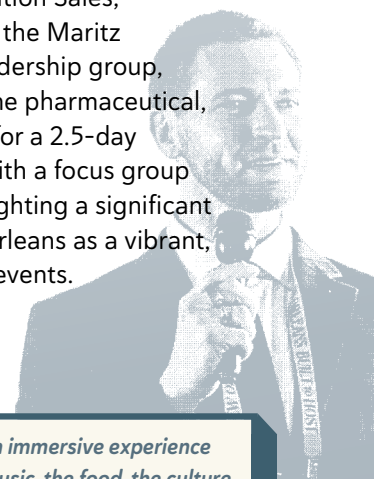


tour to showcase the full scope of what makes New Orleans **Built To Host**. Instead of focusing solely on well-known tourism assets, the itinerary highlighted key differentiators that set the city apart for meetings and conventions. Highlights included a New Orleans Police Department motorcycle escort, cultural storytelling in the Botanical Gardens and a sneak peek at the city's unparalleled collection of museums that offer unique, private event spaces and curated experiences for groups.

The results were immediate and significant, with multiple articles published in top trade outlets. As of January 2025, stories from this visit appeared in *Prevue Meetings + Incentives*, *Meetings Today*, *Sports Travel* and more. This coverage reinforced New Orleans' reputation not only as a city capable of hosting major events like the Super Bowl but also as a premier destination for high-impact corporate meetings and conferences.

## Immersive Destination Experience, November 18–20, 2024

The New Orleans & Company Convention Sales, Services, and Marketing team hosted the Maritz Strategic Meetings Management Leadership group, representing corporate clients from the pharmaceutical, life sciences and technology sectors, for a 2.5-day immersive experience. It concluded with a focus group that provided valuable insights, highlighting a significant positive shift in perceptions of New Orleans as a vibrant, safe and welcoming city for business events.



## Immersive Experience Customer Feedback

*"You can easily create an immersive experience between the arts, the music, the food, the culture and the architecture. It would be so easy to create the New Orleans experience..."*

*"When you're here, you don't feel like a tourist. You feel like you are part of the family, and you're so welcomed."*





## Convention Sales Awards & Recognition

The New Orleans & Company Convention Sales team continued to be recognized for its outstanding contributions to the meetings and events industry. Through innovation, exceptional client service and strategic positioning of the destination, the team earned prestigious industry accolades, reinforcing New Orleans' reputation as a top-tier meetings destination.

These awards highlighted the effectiveness of the **Built To Host** brand and its role in securing business for the city. By consistently delivering on the promise of a world-class meeting experience, the team strengthened New Orleans' competitive edge and demonstrated why the city remains a premier choice for major conventions and events.

### January 2024

*Tripadvisor*: New Orleans named the No. 1 Food Destination in the U.S. "With its famed culinary scene, New Orleans has held onto its title for number one Food Destination in the U.S. for a second year in a row."

### March 2024

*Smart Meetings* magazine: Stephanie Turner was inducted into the Smart Women in Meetings Hall of Fame. This movement is more than 1,000 women strong, all contributing in unique ways to make the meetings and events industry a powerful force for good in the world.

### August 2024

*AllClear*: New Orleans ranked as the Most Walkable City in the U.S. "New Orleans' pedestrian-friendly French Quarter and Central Business District span two miles and are packed with more than 500 eateries and nearly 100 attractions."

### September 2024

*NewGeography*: NewGeography.com writes that New Orleans is in the top five in the U.S. for Auto/Transit Ratio—that is, jobs reachable by public transportation. They say that, "somewhat surprisingly," New Orleans beats out Philadelphia and Boston.

*Travel + Leisure*: The magazine's Evie Carrick wrote that the internet believes that New Orleans is the best place to "work and still enjoy life."

### October 2024

*Meetings Today* magazine: The meeting planner audience voted New Orleans & Company a winner of their 2024 "Best of" award. The criteria for nominating destinations was the overall service they provided to planners for their meetings and events.

### November 2024

*Corporate & Incentive Travel*: Winners receiving the prestigious and coveted 40th Annual "Award of Excellence" were selected by C&I T's meeting planner subscribers who voted by ballot for Convention & Visitors Bureaus that best served their meeting needs.

*Prevue Meetings + Incentives* magazine: Visionary Award Gold recipient - Best CVB/DMO Meeting & Incentive Planner Support by Region - Southeast and Silver recipient - Best U.S. Destination for Meetings & Conventions - Small (under 500,000 population)





# Tourism

**The Tourism Sales and Marketing team promotes New Orleans as a leisure destination to both domestic and international travel operators, agents, group tour companies, online travel agencies (OTAs) and social groups.**

Domestic group and package tour visitors are crucial, but attracting international visitors is equally important due to their longer stays, higher spending and positive recommendations. The team uses a variety of strategies, including tradeshow, sales missions, training, sales calls, familiarization tours and in-market promotions, to ensure balanced growth and success.

The Tourism Department exceeded our definite room night goal, achieving 566,268, surpassing our goal of 520,000. The team also focused on identifying and developing both group and FIT (Free Independent Traveler) leads, generating a total of 1,497 tentative leads. These leads were distributed to our member hotels, restaurants, attractions, retail establishments and other stakeholders, helping them fill gaps in their visitor and group calendars over an 18-24-month period.

Additionally, the department participated in paid advertising campaigns that directly contributed to room night production. These campaigns were executed in collaboration with third-party companies such as Amadeus, Hotelbeds and Bonotel, as well as major online travel agencies with consumer booking platforms, including Expedia, Costco Travel, Priceline and Booking.com.

## Tourism Goals & Accomplishments

2024 Annual Goal
520,000
Actual Production
566,268
% of Actual Goal
109%



French Michelin  
Green Guide





India and Korea FAM Trip

The Tourism team organized **21 group familiarization trips**, hosting **235 clients** from Mexico, France, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Costa Rica, Japan, Korea, India and the United States.

## Domestic Travel Accomplishments

### Cruising from New Orleans

Both river and ocean cruises experienced strong demand, with high booking rates across all sailings. The greatest demand for Caribbean cruises centered on three-to seven-day itineraries departing from the Port of New Orleans, served by Carnival Cruise Line, Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean International. The bankruptcy of the American Queen Voyages in February resulted in many group cancellations for 2024 and 2025. American Cruise Lines and Viking River Cruises provided services to those passengers having to rebook their vacations. In 2024, the port recorded over 1.2 million passenger movements.

### Travel Professionals, Tour Operators & Cruise

The Tourism team maintained an aggressive schedule of tradeshow and presentations to engage with travel professionals. Additionally, the advisor/agent online training course and toolkit provided valuable resources, including the Cruise Coupon Program and the Travel Advisor VIP site visit guide, to encourage agents to promote and sell New Orleans as a destination.

### Key Initiatives:

- Registered 5,550 travel professionals for eligibility in the summer and holiday Travel Agent Educational Trips
- Participated in four cruise and travel advisor-focused tradeshow to strengthen river and ocean cruise passenger levels
- Hosted travel advisor seminars and training sessions to enhance destination knowledge and sales strategies

### Tour Operators & Group Travel

Tour operators remain a vital market for New Orleans, creating detailed group itineraries that connect the city with other destinations or promote stand-alone visits. Many tourism partners rely on these scheduled group arrivals to sustain business.

- Attended three tour operator tradeshow, engaging in one-on-one scheduled appointments to discuss future group bookings
- Led training sessions for sales teams at top-performing tour operators



Celebrating 30 Years of Carnival Cruise Line



Tourism Team at IPW





Olivia Markase Attends India Sales Mission

## Social Groups: Reunions, Celebrations, Student & Wedding Travel

Social group planners are often not industry professionals and require additional support. Our team provided expert guidance and essential planning tools to assist them in organizing their special events.

### Key Initiatives:

- Attended seven tradeshows focused on social group travel
- Provided a comprehensive toolkit to assist new group planners
- Engaged with couples at tradeshows and events, promoting our member services for wedding planning
- Launched a redesigned wedding website, enhancing user experience and visual appeal for future brides

## International Sales Highlights

- Led sales and marketing efforts for international representation firms promoting New Orleans in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Brazil and India. Managed budgets, approved projects and provided strategic direction and resources to maximize visitor awareness
- Partnered with Brand USA on multi-channel marketing campaigns in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, India and Japan
- Leveraged a successful IPW in Los Angeles to drive the continued growth of the international visitor market
- According to Tourism Economics, New Orleans welcomed approximately 490,000 international visitors, up from 340,000 in 2023

## Tradeshows & Sales Missions

- Conducted client meetings during six sales missions and participated in 24 tradeshows
- Joined the State of Louisiana on a sales mission to India, engaging with key travel buyers, industry leaders and media representatives



Lisa Ochomogo at Wedding Show



Rachel Funel at Cruise Show



Olivia Markase Presenting at LOT Canada West Mission

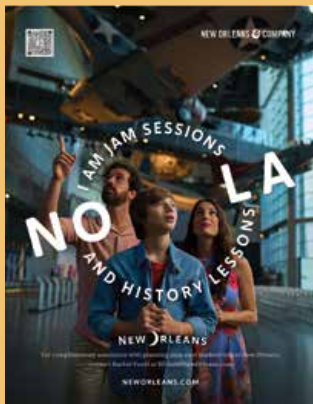




UK Brighton Pride Customer Event



Thu Tran with Client at FITUR Show



Student Group Ad



- Attended Brand USA's annual European Marketplace & Trade Week in London
- Met with key UK travel buyers and the British Airways team during London's World Travel Market

Overall, the Tourism Sales team participated in 42 tradeshows, sales missions and activations across nine international destinations and 14 domestic locations, covering more than 142,609 miles in round-trip travel. International missions included Canada, Mexico, Spain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Nordic and the team's first mission to India.

## Leisure Group Tourism Advertising, Marketing & Promotions

- Developed and implemented a strategic domestic and international advertising and promotion plan in key markets
- Partnered with British Airways on targeted advertising campaigns to promote the direct London-New Orleans flight
- Collaborated with *Wanderlust Magazine* on a 2024 partnership campaign
- Served as the Destination Sponsor for Brighton, England's Pride events, hosting 72 clients as part of a New Orleans float and walking crew in the official parade. The event attracted over 125,000 attendees
- Formed the **Spirit of Louisiana** sales, marketing and public relations partnership alongside Lake Charles, Lafayette and Baton Rouge
- Launched the new Rhythms of the South website and logo in collaboration with Atlanta and Nashville
- Secured participation in **Travel South USA's** Global Partner Programming, gaining expanded sales and marketing support in Canada, Italy, Brazil, Australia, Japan and the Netherlands
- Established a marketing partnership with **Michelin** to produce a *Michelin Green Guide* for New Orleans in French
- Executed a comprehensive marketing and promotion plan targeting travel trade buyers, OTAs and major travel marketing platforms, including **Expedia, Amadeus, Travel Weekly, Costco Travel, Price Travel Mexico and Priceline/Booking.com**

## 20 Years of COOLinary New Orleans

The 20th annual **COOLinary New Orleans** restaurant promotion featured 148 participating restaurants. The campaign attracted significant interest, with over 92,000 visitors exploring the website to plan their dining experiences. To celebrate the anniversary, New Orleans & Company partnered with **Second Harvest Food Bank** to raise funds to support the local community.

## The Clients Have Voted

New Orleans & Company was nominated for *Travel Weekly's* prestigious **Travvy Awards**, voted on by travel professionals. The city received the following honors:

- **Best US City - Domestic** (Silver)
- **Best Culinary Destination - Domestic** (Silver)

# Membership & External Affairs





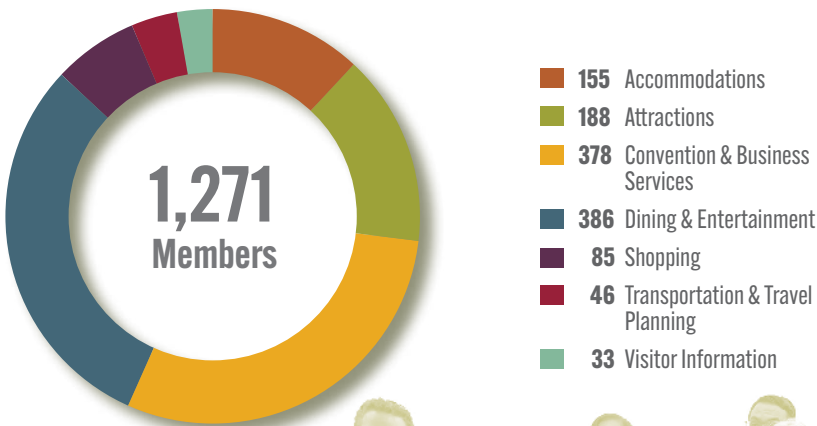


## Membership

**In 2024, our focus remained steadfast on supporting our members through high-quality programming, personalized outreach and expanded opportunities for promotion and engagement. Our efforts centered on equipping our members with valuable information, benefits and resources while also amplifying their visibility to visitors and meeting planners.**

We enhanced engagement efforts through a lineup of in-person meetings and events and strengthened communications to better prepare our members for Super Bowl LIX in 2025. In total, we welcomed 212 new members, ending the year with a thriving membership base exceeding 1,200 businesses.

A major success in 2024 was the creation of a Membership Success Coordinator position within our department, reinforcing our commitment to proactive engagement. This new role ensures we consistently provide meaningful support, resources and services to our members, strengthening our relationships with our members.



## Engagement

Throughout the year, we hosted four webinars and more than 20 in-person events to connect and educate our members. These initiatives provided essential insights, networking opportunities and training to support business growth and preparedness for Super Bowl LIX.



## Webinars

Our webinar series included:

- **Super Bowl Preparedness:** Sessions focused on vital topics such as human trafficking awareness and pest control, equipping businesses with crucial knowledge for large-scale events. Members showed strong engagement in learning how to identify and report human trafficking
- **Accessibility Training:** In collaboration with the U.S. Access Board, we provided guidance on making businesses more accessible to residents and visitors alike, reinforcing our commitment to inclusivity



Super Bowl Preparedness Webinars



## In-Person Events

In-person events saw outstanding participation, particularly our Coffee & Conversation series, Business After Hours and Tourism University education series. Coffee & Conversation offered a direct dialogue with the leadership team about industry developments, including Super Bowl LXI planning, and was well-received by all members. We saw impactful networking at our Business After Hours events.

In 2024, the Tourism University education series focused on timely and informative topics; Social Media 101, Working with Influencers and Understanding AI, each tailored to help members leverage digital tools for growth.

We continued to refine and expand our programming to provide maximum value, ensuring our events foster network building, collaboration and new business opportunities. These engagements not only strengthened connections among members and New Orleans & Company but also celebrated the hardworking individuals who sustain our city's tourism industry.

In addition to events, we produced a printed and digital Visitors Guide and Meeting Planning & Wedding Guides. These publications featured member listings, enhancing visibility among visitors, event planners and social groups. We also strengthened digital engagement through the Membership Directory, Post Board and Member Facebook Group, fostering community and connectivity among our members.

## Communications

The bi-weekly membership newsletter and Membership Minute email series remained vital tools in keeping members informed and engaged. In 2024, we focused on Super Bowl LIX updates, providing:

- Regular insights into infrastructure projects across the city
- Webinars and email alerts detailing Clean Zones, road closures and operational impacts for local businesses

These updates were instrumental in keeping members informed on items that may have affected their business operations, leading up to and during Super Bowl LIX.



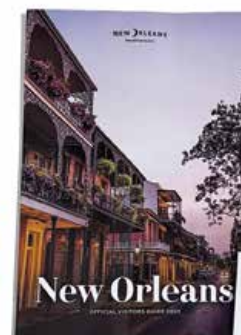
Coffee & Conversation



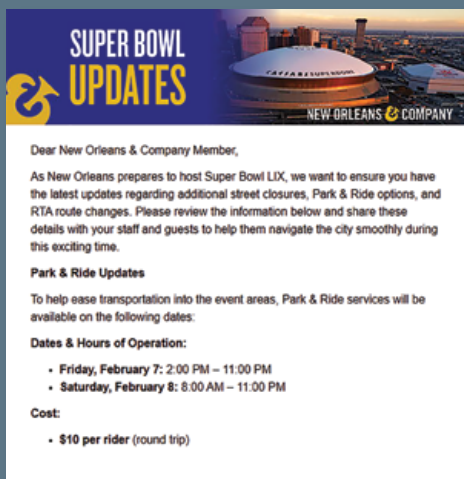
Tourism University



Business After Hours







## Collaboration & Partnerships

Throughout the year, we worked closely with other teams within New Orleans & Company to encourage and maximize member participation in promotional opportunities, including Museum Month, COOLinary and Holidays New Orleans Style.

A major initiative in 2024 was the development of a new membership recruitment video, featuring three members who shared firsthand how they utilize their membership benefits to grow their businesses. This video marked the beginning of an ongoing effort to showcase the real impact of a New Orleans & Company membership.

## Community Partnerships

Our commitment to fostering diverse business growth was reinforced through collaborations with:

- **New Orleans Regional Black Chamber:** Providing one-year, no-cost memberships to their members, along with discounted rates for businesses exhibiting at our **Connections** event in October
- **Jefferson CVB:** A new partnership established in late 2024 to jointly support restaurant businesses in Jefferson Parish

## Expanding Member Visibility & Accessibility

We launched two key partnerships aimed at increasing member visibility and advancing inclusivity:

- **Threshold 360 Partnership:** Offering complimentary 360-degree virtual tours to select members, integrating immersive video content into NewOrleans.com and Google My Business listings
- **Wheel the World Partnership:** Assessing the accessibility of 60 hospitality businesses, including hotels, restaurants and attractions, to better inform travelers with disabilities. As the first destination in Louisiana to receive accessibility verification, this collaboration is a landmark step toward making New Orleans a fully inclusive destination

These partnerships played a crucial role in reinforcing New Orleans' reputation as a welcoming and accessible city and also helped members expand their reach to a broader and more diverse audience.



Hospitality Certificate Training

## External Affairs

### Workforce Development

To support talent retention in the hospitality industry, we launched a pilot program in partnership with LSU Online & Continuing Education. The Hospitality Certification Program welcomed 20 participants who completed a five-week course covering effective communication, exceptional guest service, emotional intelligence, conflict management and career growth. This free program for members helped employers invest in their rising stars by equipping them with critical skills while fostering a workplace where employees feel valued and can see a long-term future in the industry. Both employers and participants praised the program's impact and strongly recommended its continuation with a new cohort in 2025.

As part of a broader workforce development strategy, we also partnered with the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center and launched a free online training program designed to prepare hospitality workers for Super Bowl LIX. This interactive program provided 1,200 workers with five engaging, 20-minute modules focused on delivering world-class customer service and ensured they were equipped to welcome the influx of visitors in 2025.

### Supplier Diversity

Creating more opportunities for small and emerging businesses to thrive in the hospitality industry remained a priority. In collaboration with the Hispanic Chamber of Louisiana, New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, New Orleans Chamber of Commerce,

Propeller and The Windsor Court Hotel, we hosted our first Connections Tradeshow. This event featured 25 minority-owned businesses showcasing their products and services to major hospitality entities and provided a vital platform for networking and business growth. The event reinforced our commitment to fostering stronger partnerships between local, minority-owned businesses and the hospitality sector.

### Accessibility

In 2024, we took even more proactive steps to improve accessibility in the city. In partnership with the Department of Public Works, we conducted a French Quarter sidewalk assessment and identified missing curb cuts, damaged sidewalks, obstructions and other barriers limiting pedestrian accessibility. The data helped prioritize critical repairs, improving mobility for all residents and visitors.

Additionally, we partnered with Roll Mobility to introduce a user-generated accessibility tool designed to assist individuals with mobility challenges. This app provides real-time, reliable information on the accessibility of restaurants, public spaces, businesses, trails and parking areas, ensuring more inclusive experiences for all.

### Sustainability

In 2024, we marked our third year partnering with LifeCity for its annual sustainability challenge, focusing on equity and the future of the workforce. Seventy-four participants



completed 812 impact actions, including advocating for local culture, supporting local vendors and offering paid or credit-based internships.

Through the Recycle Dat! initiative, our ongoing sustainability initiative with the City of New Orleans and other partners, we successfully **diverted 73,858 total pounds away from landfills during the 2025 Carnival Season**. This total includes:

- **3,828 pounds of aluminum**, which is roughly 100,000 cans
- **905 pounds of plastic bottles**, which is roughly 23,490 bottles
- **46,321 pounds of glass**
- **22,803 pounds of Mardi Gras beads and throws**

Additionally, we facilitated a key partnership between Engie, the official sustainability partner of Super Bowl LIX, and local nonprofits to upcycle and reuse event materials—which furthered our commitment to environmental responsibility and community impact.

## Corporate Social Responsibility

Giving back to our community remained a cornerstone of our mission, and in 2024, we expanded our corporate social responsibility efforts to make a meaningful impact across the city.

- **Feeding the Frontline:** We partnered with Councilmember Freddie King III to provide breakfast for police officers and show appreciation for their dedication to our community.
- **Volunteer Day at Second Harvest:** Our team dedicated a day of service at Second Harvest Food Bank, helping sort and package meals for families facing food insecurity.
- **School Supply Drive:** We organized a school supply drive, donating essential classroom materials to one school in each district. This effort helped ensure students and teachers had the resources they needed to start the academic year strong.
- **Holiday Toy and Bear Drive:** Through generous donations from our members and partners, we provided teddy bears to the New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation for officers to give bears to children in need, and we donated the toys to the children at Early Partners.

Through these initiatives, we continued to strengthen our connection with the community.



Connections Tradeshow



Volunteer Day at Second Harvest Food Bank



School Supply Drive

# Marketing & Communications





**In 2024, Marketing & Communications implemented a strategic, multi-channel approach to maximize awareness of New Orleans as a premier leisure destination, leveraging a robust mix of targeted paid, owned and earned media.**

### Highlights:

- Launched a new leisure brand and advertising campaign in 27 key markets
- Launched a complete redesign of NewOrleans.com
- Re-established marketing goals and metrics for success from advertising impressions to website visits (sessions) and social media engagements

We achieved over 11.4 million website sessions on NewOrleans.com, surpassing our annual goal by 1.6%, and cultivating more than 4 million social media engagements, nearly tripling our annual goal of 1.4 million.

The new leisure brand launched in May and included a new logo, updated fonts, colors, television spots, outdoor activations, print ads and digital display ads. The award-winning leisure campaign was developed in partnership with local creative agency Brand Society.

In October, the redesigned website launched with a striking new visual design, improved user experience and enhanced features that elevate how we showcase travel content.

The editorial team published more than 800 stories, pages and blog posts to NewOrleans.com, and the social media content team posted over 4,400 pieces of content across leisure and corporate social media channels.

Roughly 170,000 subscribers received our monthly e-newsletter with an average click-through rate (CTR) of 8.68% for the year, 286% higher than the industry average of 2.25%.

In 2024, we spent \$6 million in paid media, generating more than 514 million impressions across multiple campaigns.

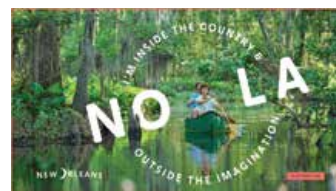
### Q1 Marketing

In the first quarter of 2024, New Orleans & Company deployed a series of strategic advertising campaigns aimed at driving visitation and engagement across key regional and national markets. A major highlight was a \$500,000 Louisiana Office of Tourism grant-funded campaign that reached potential travelers in Atlanta, Baton Rouge, Biloxi/Gulfport, Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth Houston, Jackson, Lafayette and Mobile/Pensacola. These commercials, which emphasized New Orleans' culinary experiences, friend group travel and overall visitor appeal, generated more than 39 million impressions throughout January.

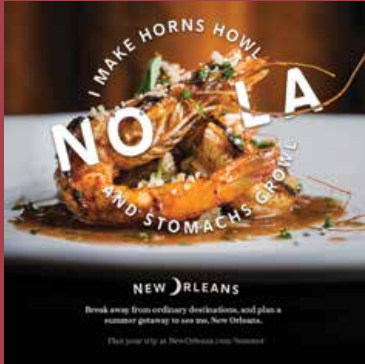
To further capitalize on seasonal opportunities, the team launched targeted digital display and social campaigns promoting New Orleans as a warm winter getaway, along with direct flight ads in Atlanta, Chicago and Dallas. Additionally, we leveraged paid social media to spotlight Mardi Gras travel, Leap Year hotel specials and our LGBTQ-themed “Everyone’s Welcome Here” campaign, which reinforces our city’s inclusive hospitality. Paid social

**NEW  
ORLEANS**

**NEWORLEANS.COM**



*New Orleans & Company  
New Brand Digital Assets*



Aspen Food & Wine Festival Email Blast



Bocuse d'Or Outdoor Signage



Kemoy Martin and BukuTriece Staycation Series



boosted visibility for major cultural events, including New Orleans Book Festival and New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, while a market activation in partnership with Jon Batiste's winter tour expanded our reach to 22 key cities.

In March, we continued to target travel intenders through a digital display buy via Amadeus' media solutions platform, along with additional promotions for Book Festival, New Orleans Entrepreneur Week and upcoming spring events. Collectively, these efforts helped exceed the department's Q1 goals, resulting in 3.29 million website sessions (104% of goal for the quarter) and nearly 690,000 social media engagements (176% of goal for the quarter). The team's data-driven approach laid a strong foundation for Q2, where efforts expanded to include a new leisure brand campaign, summer travel promotions and a targeted push for June visitation.

## Q2 Marketing

In the second quarter of 2024, New Orleans & Company's new leisure brand campaign repositioned New Orleans as a city where visitors become part of the experience and a part of the destination. Composed of entirely new creative assets including messaging, video, photography, fonts, colors and overall visual design, the \$2.9 million media buy reached 27 key markets through digital display, connected TV, online video, audio, paid social and search. The new campaign media placements generated over 174 million impressions in Q2 alone, and included a full-page print ad and digital placements in *Food & Wine* magazine, along with an on-site activation at the Aspen Food & Wine Classic in June.

New Orleans & Company's Business Strategies group, composed of Marketing and Communications, Tourism and Convention Sales team members, was established to identify need periods and subsequent solutions via data analysis and collaboration. Early in the year, the group flagged June as having weaker than normal occupancy. In response, the Marketing team helped develop and launch a focused campaign composed of influencer marketing, paid social and search, Expedia and custom content. This effort ultimately contributed to a 192% improvement in June hotel occupancy from February to June.<sup>1</sup>

Additional paid campaigns supported Restaurant Week, summer travel and cultural events like Bocuse d'Or, resulting in over 56 million impressions across various media channels.

Social media also played a crucial role in spreading our message, with influencer collaborations and boosted posts generating over 11 million impressions. High-performing campaigns featured content from influencers like Kemoy Martin and local favorite, BukuTriece, whose staycation video amassed nearly a million plays and 35,000 shares on Instagram.

## Q3 Marketing

In Q3 of 2024, New Orleans & Company marketing efforts continued to successfully drive travel intent, measured by website visits and social media engagements exceeding year-to-date goals by 102% and 293%, respectively. The Marketing team focused heavily on addressing the need for increased hotel occupancy in September, creating a targeted campaign utilizing influencer collaborations, paid media, Expedia advertising and earned media. This effort, combined with a strong group base, contributed to a 92% improvement in September occupancy from June to September<sup>2</sup>. Despite a slight year-over-year dip due to major concerts in 2023 and Hurricane Francine's impact, weekend occupancy averaged above 72% throughout the month.

<sup>1</sup> Source: TravelClick MSA Booking Pace reports for June 2024 dated February 28, 2024 (19.6% occupancy, transient down 32.1% YOY) vs again on June 26, 2024 (57.3% occupancy, transient down 2.9% YOY).

<sup>2</sup> Source: TravelClick Booking Pace report for September 2024 dated June 21, 2024 (28.5% occupancy) vs TravelClick Booking Pace report for September 2024 dated October 4, 2024 (54.8% occupancy). Weekend occupancy is calculated as average occupancy for September 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28.



Additionally, we began messaging for NOLAxNOLA and Music Month in August with campaigns on Vevo (YouTube and CTV), digital display and partnerships with WWOZ, *OffBeat* magazine and other local publications. By September, as media placements for the brand campaign concluded, these campaigns kept our messaging in front of potential visitors, with a focus on national fly markets like Atlanta, Chicago and Houston, as well as key drive markets within a 200-mile radius. The campaign leveraged TV, CTV, YouTube, digital display, search and local print and billboards. Additionally, we launched a refreshed direct flight campaign via paid social to encourage last-minute bookings from key fly markets.

## Q4 Marketing

The NOLAxNOLA and Music Month campaign, which concluded in October, delivered 43 million impressions, reinforcing New Orleans as a premier destination for live music. Additionally, Taylor Swift's three-night concert at the Caesars Superdome presented a unique promotional opportunity; a dedicated landing page, event guides and a concert-themed sweepstakes were created on NewOrleans.com, successfully driving website traffic and email acquisition for future marketing efforts.

We reallocated additional resources to paid search in November and December to counter the adverse effects of Google's generative AI on our organic search traffic, ensuring sustained visibility for holiday and winter travel messaging.

**NEW ORLEANS  
MUSIC  
MONTH**

NIGHTLY SHOWS, | INDUSTRY EVENTS  
WEEKEND FESTIVALS

● ● ●

**THE MUSIC OF NEW ORLEANS  
IS ITS BEATING HEART**

365 days a year, you'll find great music in New Orleans. This October, music lovers are invited to experience **New Orleans Music Month** — a celebration of the city's vibrant music ecosystem.

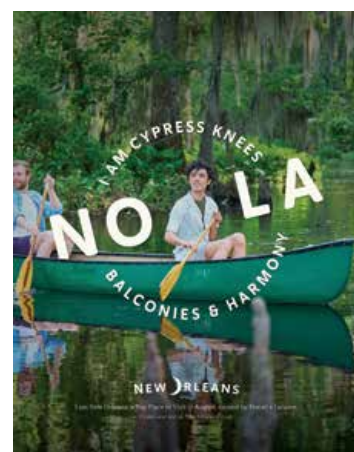
Find numerous festivals, shows and events throughout the month. **Plan your trip today.**

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Where Y'At Ad for New Orleans Music Month



*Gambit Ad for NOLAxNOLA*



Palm Desert Ad





The TODAY Show with HODA & JENNA 5th Anniversary





## Earned Media

The PR team exceeded its 2024 goals, assisting 1,592 reporters and placing 2,659 positive stories about New Orleans through press and influencer trips, satellite media tours, interviews, story development, hosting broadcast crews, pitches at tradeshow such as IPW, IMM, Travel South, World Travel Market, Brand USA and much more.

We also hosted 12 influencers, which generated 7.53 million impressions and 5.9 million engagements, through a mix of organic and paid collaborations. Key spokespersons, including Walt Leger, Mark Romig, Kelly Schulz and other industry leaders, conducted hundreds of media interviews, reinforcing New Orleans' reputation as a top-tier travel destination.

### Elevating New Orleans on the Global Stage

In 2024, our goal was to enhance New Orleans' international reputation, drive sales for member businesses and attract potential visitors through strategic media outreach and coverage that highlighted the city's vibrancy and appeal. We achieved this by leveraging high-profile events including Bocuse d'Or and Pastry World Cup, Aspen Food & Wine Fest, Princess Tiana's Bayou Adventure, Taylor Swift Eras Tour, Prospect 6, the 20th anniversary of COOLinary New Orleans, Super Bowl LIX and much more.

### Bocuse d'Or and Pastry World Cup

New Orleans made history as the first U.S. city to host the Americas selection of the Bocuse d'Or and Pastry World Cup, solidifying its status as a world-class culinary destination. The event brought global attention, with Chef Emeril Lagasse participating in a satellite media tour that reached 33 million viewers nationwide. To maximize media exposure, customized itineraries were created for journalists from Canada, Australia, Mexico, Italy and the U.S., ensuring international coverage and further promoting New Orleans' vibrant food scene.

### Aspen Food & Wine Classic

At the Aspen Food & Wine Classic, New Orleans made a major impact with the theme "The Next Generation Innovating Culinary Legacy." The activation highlighted the city's evolving culinary traditions, with Chefs Dook Chase and Meg Bickford showcasing modern takes on New Orleans cuisine, while Neal Bodenheimer put a fresh spin on the classic Hurricane cocktail. The city's presence was further elevated with a corner booth in the Grand Tasting Tent and a sold-out mainstage cooking demonstration, ensuring New Orleans remained top of mind among influential food and beverage industry leaders.

### The TODAY Show

During French Quarter Fest 2024, we hosted the TODAY Show with Hoda and Jenna for the third consecutive year. They spotlighted the culture, cuisine and creativity of the Crescent City with two full-hour broadcasts, as well as special streaming content, robust social media coverage and live events. These high-profile placements generated nationwide visibility for New Orleans as a must-visit destination, showcasing its culture, food and unique attractions. Given the massive reach of TODAY, the coverage was syndicated across multiple local NBC affiliates, significantly amplifying its impact.

The results were outstanding, with millions of impressions across broadcast and digital platforms, a surge in website traffic to NewOrleans.com and increased engagement on social media. The feature further solidified New Orleans as a top travel destination and reinforced the city's Built To Host messaging leading up to Super Bowl LIX in 2025.

### Disney's Princess Tiana's Bayou Adventure

Disney's Princess Tiana's Bayou Adventure, inspired by New Orleans and the legacy of Leah Chase, debuted at Walt Disney World on June 28, bringing the city's culture to a global audience. New Orleans & Company capitalized on this opportunity, securing hundreds of media stories highlighting the city's influence on the attraction. Disney executives and Imagineers encouraged visitors to experience the real New Orleans, further positioning the city as a must-visit destination for fans of the film and its rich cultural backdrop.

Visit Orlando and New Orleans & Company teamed up with Walt Disney World Resort and Southwest Airlines to treat 23 aspiring female chefs to a trip of a lifetime. Taking inspiration from another female chef—Princess Tiana—and the next chapter of her story with the new Magic Kingdom Park attraction, the collaboration sought to inspire future hospitality professionals and promote travel between the destinations.

Participants from New Orleans were treated to a remarkable four-day trip in July to get a taste of success, encouraging them to continue pursuing their culinary dreams and follow Princess Tiana's own journey as a beloved chef and restaurateur. The young women were treated to complimentary flights, accommodations and theme park tickets, plus educational opportunities with Disney chefs and professionals and more.



## Super Bowl LIX Media Preview Tour

From November 8 to 11, we showcased the best of New Orleans and why we are Built To Host in a pre-Super Bowl press trip, which was our largest ever press trip with 25 journalists from around the world.

They had the opportunity to sleep in brand-new rooms at Caesars; dine at NOBU and DAKAR; eat breakfast at Emeril's Brasserie and brunch with Chef Dook Chase; hear from Mrs. Benson, Marcus Brown and Super Bowl leaders; walk on the Caesars Superdome turf to find their names and photos on the big board; tour the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center followed by a police escort to City Park for a tour and lunch in the Botanical Gardens; and watch a Saints victory from the Entergy and New Orleans & Company suites. The journalists spanned meeting and convention trades, sports outlets and international consumer media including the Australia equivalent of the TODAY Show.

The journalists regularly commented throughout the weekend that this was one of the best and well-planned trips they have attended, with the right blend of scheduled activity and free time. Those who had been here many times also expressed appreciation for seeing a different side of New Orleans, which was our goal.

## Advocating for Travel & Hospitality

The PR team published four quarterly issues of *Tourism Matters* to help educate residents on the power and impact of our industry.

When there is a crisis, New Orleans & Company serves as the official source and messaging lead for all tourism industry employees, executives, customers, members, media, visitors, etc. Our goal is to preserve business as well as the destination's reputation. In 2024 we executed crisis comms for Hurricane Francine and other incidents throughout the year. When disaster struck in other cities, we assisted our colleagues in Asheville, North Carolina (Hurricane Helen) and Maui, Hawaii (wildfires) with PR strategies that have helped us since Hurricane Katrina.



## Special Projects

### Accessibility Video Series

The Marketing team produced a visually engaging and informative video series on Accessibility in New Orleans, hosted by advocate and wheelchair user Mark Raymond, Jr. Designed to empower travelers with mobility challenges, the series provides essential guidance on navigating the city by wheelchair, highlighting accessible attractions, transportation options and inclusive experiences.

As a valuable resource, the series was shared with organizers of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, held in New Orleans in July, to assist attendees in planning their visit. The videos resonated widely, garnering nearly 3,000 views across all episodes on YouTube, further reinforcing New Orleans' commitment to welcoming all visitors.

You can view the series at [bit.ly/accessnola24](https://bit.ly/accessnola24).



### COOLinary New Orleans 20th Anniversary

In 2024, COOLinary New Orleans celebrated 20 years. The campaign was one of the most successful in its history, with over 100 participating restaurants offering specially priced prix fixe menus that highlighted the best of New Orleans cuisine. A \$150,000 paid media investment fueled a robust promotional strategy, delivering 20 million impressions across TV, digital, OOH, social media and influencer collaborations.

To mark the milestone anniversary, special activations included exclusive chef collaborations, behind-the-scenes restaurant spotlights and a dedicated media push celebrating the evolution of New Orleans' dining landscape. Influencers and food writers were engaged to amplify the campaign, generating high social engagement and extensive press coverage. COOLinary's success not only drove significant restaurant traffic during a traditionally slow season but also reinforced New Orleans' reputation as a premier culinary destination. The momentum from this milestone year will serve as a foundation for continued growth and innovation in future editions of the program.

### Eat. Stay. Play. with Cam Jordan

In September, we partnered with Cam Jordan, star defensive end for the New Orleans Saints, to promote the city's hotels, restaurants and attractions through an engaging social media campaign. The collaboration featured an interactive Instagram poll and a collaborative reel, allowing fans to vote on their favorite local experiences. The campaign generated more than 79,000 views, nearly 800 shares and 500 saves, while also bringing in over 200 new followers to Visit New Orleans' social channels. By leveraging Cam's national influence and deep local ties, the campaign effectively engaged both sports fans and leisure travelers.

### Holidays New Orleans Style

The 2024 Holidays New Orleans Style campaign was one of the most successful to date, launching earlier than ever (October 21) to drive regional travel and capture holiday bookings. With a \$400,000 paid media investment, the campaign delivered 43.4 million impressions across TV, connected TV (CTV), online video (OLV), digital display, paid search and social media. Key regional markets—including New Orleans, Mobile-Pensacola, Baton Rouge, Houston, Jackson, Birmingham and Shreveport—were targeted to maximize visitation during the festive season.

The campaign successfully drove traffic to Holiday.NewOrleans.com, where visitors explored participating restaurants, holiday events and hotel packages. The combination of early launch timing, strategic media placement and influencer-driven storytelling resulted in amplified visibility for New Orleans as a top winter travel destination.





# Finance



## Revenue & Expenditure Recap

### 2024 & Beyond

Overall traditional revenue for calendar year 2024 is projected to increase by approximately \$1.4 million over 2023 calendar year receipts primarily due to an increase in hotel tax and tourism support assessment collections.

Federal funding through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) via the State of Louisiana in the amount of \$50,083,569 was received and allocated over calendar years 2021 through 2024. All funds were to be expended by December 31, 2024, which was accomplished as mandated and successfully reported on as required.

Overall traditional revenue forecasts are projected to exceed 2019 calendar year receipts by an estimated \$2.3 million. Revenue and expenditure figures for calendar year 2019 are being used as a benchmark due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic that began mid-March 2020.

## Annual Revenue Projection

2019 Actual Annual Revenue  
**\$38,826,647**

2020 Actual Annual Revenue  
**\$12,561,538**  
(Plus disaster relief totaling \$382,953)

2021 Actual Annual Revenue  
**\$21,551,172**  
(Plus disaster relief totaling \$9,782,770)

2022 Actual Annual Revenue  
**\$39,907,448**  
(Plus disaster relief totaling \$11,832,248)

2023 Actual Annual Revenue  
**\$39,787,980**  
(Plus disaster relief totaling \$15,097,661)

2024 Projected Annual Revenue  
**\$41,203,031**  
(Plus disaster relief totaling \$18,087,824)

2025 Budgeted Annual Revenue  
**\$40,775,000**

Disaster relief funding, as noted above, received includes Employee Retention Credits, Payroll Protection Program Forgiveness Loan, Louisiana Office of Tourism’s Sunshine Grant dollars and ARPA funds received via the State of Louisiana totaling \$55,183,456.

## Financial Summary

Expenditure projections for 2024 include multiple marketing campaigns throughout the year designed to drive attendance at cultural attractions, enhance restaurant visitation, drive short-term bookings at hotels and highlight cultural products through initiatives such as NOLAxNOLA. This new event was organized in 2021 to support local businesses and stimulate visitation over the dates of the October 2021 Jazz Festival cancellation and to highlight the city's return to normalcy and thriving music product. The event continues and has proven to be successful.

Additional expenditures in 2024 included major and minor festivals, national cultural shows, Holiday New Orleans Style to boost visitation during the holiday season, hosting Bocuse d'Or and Pastry World Cup, The TODAY Show, Bayou Classic, Sugar Bowl, ESSENCE Fest, Tiana's Bayou Adventure opening in Disney World, along with organizing Job Fests to help local businesses with staffing. International marketing and advertising continued and included representation in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Mexico, Brazil and India along with our continued partnership with British Airways to promote the flight to and from New Orleans.

In an effort on our part to provide enhanced public safety and a better visitor experience, we continued funding to the French Quarter Management District for operational costs and P.O.S.T certified officer patrols in the French Quarter area, which began December 2021.

### 2024 PROJECTED REVENUES

PRIVATE SECTOR	
Tourism Support Assessment	\$21,883,000
Membership Dues & Participation	\$1,724,600
Caesars Marketing Funding	\$1,000,000
Interest Earned	\$818,810
Other	\$477,150
<b>Total Private Sector Revenue</b>	<b>\$25,903,560</b>

PUBLIC SECTOR	
State % of Value Hotel Tax (.97%)	\$12,413,570
Short-Term Rental Tax (.25%)	\$2,885,901
Disaster Relief (ARPA via State of Louisiana)	\$18,087,824
<b>Total Public Sector Revenue</b>	<b>\$33,387,295</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$59,290,855</b>



## 2024 PROJECTED EXPENDITURES

Employee Related	\$14,178,000
Operational Costs	\$1,740,040
Insurance	\$382,218
Capital Expenditures	\$2,153,798
Mortgage/Loan Interest Expense	\$299,054
Professional Fees	\$85,700
Research	\$357,590
Governmental Relations	\$185,465
Sales, Promotion & Travel	\$4,207,700
International Representation	\$1,477,800
Client Service Initiatives (You're In Good Company)	\$1,220,850
Public Relations & Membership Promotions	\$825,700
Advertising & Marketing/Pledges & Partnerships	\$13,500,000
Membership Promotions & Events	\$344,000
Promotional Expenses (Photos/Collateral)	\$540,000
Festival & Other Sponsorships/Product Development	\$2,460,300
Convention & Super Bowl Commitments & Incentives	\$2,258,800
External Commitments (French Quarter Management District)	\$1,350,000
Major Event Hosting	\$990,000
Other Projects & Strategic Planning	\$455,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$49,012,015</b>

## 2025 Projections

Expenditures projected for the calendar year 2025 include cost-saving investments in building management, sales ramp up, marketing, promotion, travel, advertising, public relations and external partnerships. We return to our core capacities that we had in 2019 but then add significant enhancements even without federal funding as we continue to accelerate industry recovery and exceed expectations.

Funding is also included in the budget for ongoing efforts to continue major and minor festivals, national cultural shows and to keep our local businesses thriving as we continue to rebound.

The recurring budget also has a capital expenditure of \$3 million to repair the severely deteriorated uptown west wall of the New Orleans & Company building.

We must now focus on a strategic plan for future years as we celebrate the successes of 2019, the latter part of 2021, post COVID-19 pandemic and calendar years 2022 through 2024. Work has begun on the 10-year strategic plan and will be completed soon. We are excited and anxious to finalize the study so that we have an official plan with strategies and goals that will take us to the next level over this next decade.

***Note: Some figures contained within this report are projections and unaudited.***

# Awards & Honors

In 2024, New Orleans & Company and the city continued to earn outstanding national and international recognition. While some accolades stemmed from our organization's proactive outreach, the majority were the result of nominations from our valued customers—meeting professionals and travel advisors—as well as direct votes from consumers.

## New Orleans & Company Awards

A new “Top 250” study found that 88% of the top 250 conventions in the country will meet in only 20 cities, and New Orleans tops the list at No. 3 above top-tier convention destinations. New Orleans' high ranking reinforces that customers appreciate New Orleans' walkability, compact geographic footprint, world-class venues, unmatched culture and hospitality expertise.

- *Prevue Meetings + Incentives* magazine named New Orleans as one of the Ten Best Cities for LGBTQ-Friendly Conferences in the United States
- *Corporate & Incentive Travel* magazine picked New Orleans & Company for its Award of Excellence
- New Orleans & Company wins the Silver Awards for both Best Domestic Destination and Best Domestic Culinary Destination at the annual Travvy Awards
- New Orleans & Company's “COOLinary” Campaign wins Gold at the 2024 Travel Weekly Magellan Awards
- New Orleans & Company wins Best of Award: Best South CVBs/DMOs, *Meetings Today*
- Brand USA Outstanding Video Storytelling Award Showcasing Diversity
- Stephanie Turner named Smart Woman Hall of Fame by *Smart Meetings* magazine
- New Orleans & Company wins Platinum Choice Award by *Smart Meetings* Magazine
- New Orleans & Company wins Best of Award for Destination Marketing Organizations by *Meetings Today* magazine
- New Orleans & Company wins Distinctive Achievement Award by Associations Conventions and Facilities
- New Orleans & Company wins Gold for Best CVB/DMO Meeting & Incentive Planner Support by region (SE USA), *Prevue Meetings + Incentives* magazine

New Orleans & Company was honored as one of the Best Places to Work by *New Orleans CityBusiness*. The comprehensive employee survey assesses various aspects of a company's workplace culture, including employee engagement, leadership, work-life balance, career development opportunities, communication and overall satisfaction with their job and company.

New Orleans & Company was named a Great Place to Work in the 2024 Times-Picayune's Top Workplaces. The competition identifies stellar companies with a people-first culture, based on independent, anonymous surveys of employees.

## City Awards

- New Orleans ranked The Most Walkable City in the U.S. by AllClear
- New Orleans named one of The Best Places To Go for New Years, *Conde Nast Traveler*
- New Orleans is Top Five in the US for Auto/Transit Ratio (jobs reachable by public transportation), *New Geography*
- New Orleans named one of 15 Best Places to Travel in August 2024-*Travel + Leisure*
- “I can't remember enjoying eating anywhere in the USA as much as in New Orleans” The Most Fun City in All of America, According to Travel Expert Rick Steves, [www.explore.com](http://www.explore.com), 2024
- New Orleans has been voted one of the South's Best by the readers of *Southern Living*. New Orleans is No. 4 in the Top 25 Best Cities in the South
- New Orleans named Best Food Destination in the U.S. (for the second year in a row) in the 2024 Travelers' Choice Awards, *Tripadvisor*
- New Orleans named in Time Out's Best Cities in the World to Visit in 2024, *Time Out*
- New Orleans wins Silver for Best U.S. Destination for Meetings & Conventions (Small - under 500,000 population), *Prevue Meetings + Incentives* magazine







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