

Build a place where people want to
LIVE, VISIT, & WORK

Prepared by the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce, January 2022



A NOTE

from the president

“Live, Work, Play, and Stay in Port A” are words that center on the mission of the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce. The past two years have been an incredible time of change, growth, and investment into Port Aransas. In fact, it is fair to say that this period has been unlike any other in the history of the city. We each played a role in this era of change. Whether as residents, employers, employees, or visitors, our experiences and lives have changed, largely due to the pandemic and the revitalization of Port A since the hurricane.

This organization has been at the hub of much of the change. We’ve rolled with the challenges of coming back on board after a hurricane, dealt with the shutdowns and influx of visitors due to the pandemic, and we even shifted our vision and leadership for the organization. Now, we have an even more defined focus on the future, with a refined board and strategic plan leading the way.

Organization excellence and destination development are at the core of every activity and initiative we undertake. Yes, tourism promotion remains a major part of our focus. But, it’s done with a targeted focus on speaking to visitors with shared values of our community and on educating our visitors on what we call the Port A Way.

It is our combined commitment to Port Aransas, the business community, the residents, and the visitors to become better, to deliver an upgraded quality of life and discover new paths for Port Aransas to shine as the beacon of light for the future. Thank you for partnering with us. Enjoy the next few pages that walk you through just some of the success stories of 2021 and the road ahead.



BRETT STAWAR
PRESIDENT & CEO
Port Aransas Tourism Bureau
& Chamber of Commerce



ANNUAL REPORT



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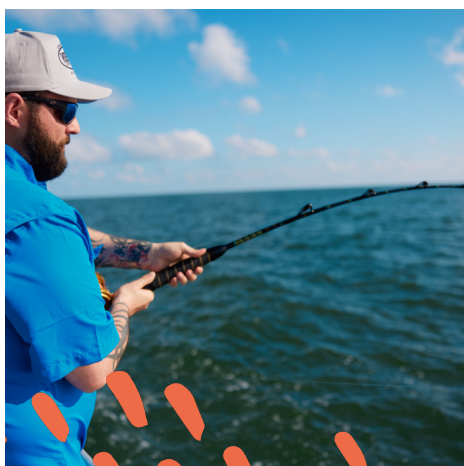
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Our Organization

THE VISION



Port Aransas will be known as the premier family beach destination in Texas.

THE MISSION

We work to enhance the community's quality of life by attracting visitors who share our love of the Texas Gulf Coast.

THE PURPOSE

We support our community by advocating for sensible development and leading the marketing of Port Aransas & Mustang Island.

Meet the Team

Brett Stawar
President & CEO

Lisa Shelton
Special Events & Community
Relations Manager

Kimberly Shaw
Visitor Experience &
Program Manager

Micayla Canales
Welcome Center Assistant

Shelley Witcher
Business Development &
Sales Manager

Candy Kelly
Bookkeeper

Melinda Mayden
Marketing & Digital Content
Specialist

Board Members

Brett Stawar
President & CEO

Keith McMullin
Secretary

Bill Bauder
Hotel/Lodging

Greg Carr
Hotel/Lodging

Laurie Soechting
Bar/Restaurant

Vince Vanorman*
Hotel/Lodging

Tanya Chambers*
Chairperson

Fred Samudio
Treasurer

Chris Collins
At Large

Jeff Lamkin
Hotel/Lodging

Marnie Pate
At Large

Will Cocke
Fishing/Marina

Marsha Starkey
Vice Chairperson

Deven Bhakta*
Immediate Past Chair

Chrissy Bell*
At Large

Kim Winton
Retail

Shawn Etheridge
Bar/Restaurant

David Parsons
Ex Officio

*Outgoing

Incoming 2022 Board Members:
Shannon Lafayette, Scott Clanton, Ed Buskey

Goals

These goals come directly from the 2021 Strategic Plan.
A series of strategies has been identified to support each goal.



DESTINATION GOALS

Support and Advocate for Sustainable
Destination Development



Build Demand Generators to Build
Meaningful Off-Season Visitation



Work to Enhance the Destination's
Sense of Place



Advocate for Transportation
Upgrades



ORGANIZATION GOALS

Continue to Develop Organizational
Excellence



Analyze Opportunities to Increase and
Diversify the Organization's Business
Partners to Better Serve our Community



Increase Outreach to Align the
Organization's Work with the
Community's Quality of Life



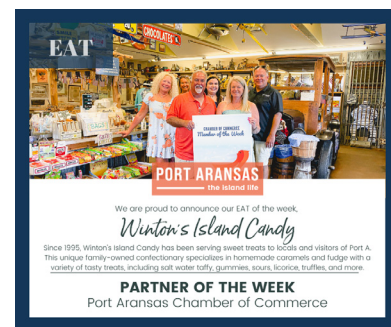
Analyze Opportunities to Increase
Organizational Resources

Partner Updates

Celebrating the Small Business Backbone of Port A

The Port Aransas experience would not be what it is without residents who make it their business, literally, to ensure that visitors have the time of their lives and will want to come back again and again. These entrepreneurs are truly the rock of this sandy island.

A partnership with the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce is an investment in your business and in the future of island life. It provides your business with a variety of benefits that include a partner directory, networking opportunities, advertising opportunities, a web presence and, of course, a professional and friendly staff promoting your business.



GIVING BACK TO PORT A

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce gave back nearly \$30,000 to the community of Port Aransas. Our partners, as well as the Chamber of Commerce Foundation, contributed to these awards through special events, sponsorships, and fundraisers.

\$12,550

Local Nonprofit Organizations

\$15,200

Local Scholarship Funds

361

TOTAL PARTNERS

Partner benefits include networking opportunities, referral services, advertising opportunities, a web presence, and more.

54

NEW PARTNERS

These businesses have made the leap to invest in the future of Port Aransas, promote island life, and keep business booming.

Destination Development

EVENTS & INITIATIVES



Restaurant WEEK

Local restaurants hooked visitors' taste buds on the local foodie scene by participating in Port Aransas Restaurant Week. This winter event generated buzz around the thriving food culture and drove visitors into restaurants for prix-fixe lunch and dinner menus.

Sand Sculptures

In the wake of Covid-19 impacts, we wanted to generate excitement for returning events and Port A as a holiday destination. This came in two sand sculptures—an Easter-inspired sculpture in spring and Sand Santa's Workshop in winter. The sculptures were a collaboration by Albert Lucio, Albert Lucio Jr., Abe Waterman, and community sponsors.



PORT ARANSAS shop local

We host four weekend-long Shop Arouns to boost in-store shopping at local boutiques (Chocolate Crawl in February, Spring Fling in April, Shoptoberfest in October, and Holiday Shop Around in December.) Shoppers in participating stores are treated to light refreshments and a plethora of deals that will make them want to return again and again.

Tourism Rally

The first week of May marked National Travel & Tourism Week, and to celebrate, we hosted the first annual Port Aransas Tourism Rally! The rally celebrated the industry that makes our island such a unique destination with music, food, networking, and more! The rally will return on May 3, 2022.

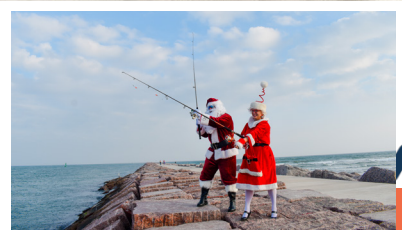


Shred Day

The annual Shred Day event, hosted by the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by local businesses, is a free event benefiting all Port Aransas businesses and residents. It's a great tax-season opportunity to clean out files and to do so responsibly.

Holiday Events

Each year, we are proud to host, with the help of our generous sponsors, the Holiday Lighted Boat Parade, Holiday Party in the Park, Holiday Parade, and New Year's Eve Fireworks. These events set Port A apart as a Winter Wonderland...on the beach!



Signature Events



To promote businesses hit hardest by the pandemic—bars and restaurants—Margarita Madness was created. This event coincided with the NCAA March Madness basketball tournament and pitted contestants' margaritas against each other in a single-elimination, bracket-style tournament.

The 2021 winner was MacDaddy's Family Kitchen with the Hot & Prickly margarita, a Tex-Mex style sweet and spicy margarita served on the rocks.



Port A Live Music Fest returned in September 2021 with a new event format and tons of fun! The weekend kicked off with a concert featuring the globally-recognized Jimmy Buffett tribute band, the Landsharks. At the kickoff concert, the Texas Music Office joined us to announce that Port Aransas had earned its official designation of "Texas Music Friendly Community."

More than 30 concerts across the island kept the festival going all weekend, as did the music-themed Taco & Margarita Trail.

8



235,435

Total Votes on Website for Margarita Madness

5,764

Facebook Lead-Gen Email Opt-Ins

2:31

Average Page View Length Compared to 1:01 Site Average





EARNED MEDIA

150+
EARNED MEDIA STORIES

Total earned mentions of Port Aransas in print, online, and broadcast throughout 2021

507 MILLION +
TOTAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

Including earned viewership and readership, combined with broadcast, print, and online coverage

\$6 MILLION +
EARNED MEDIA VALUE

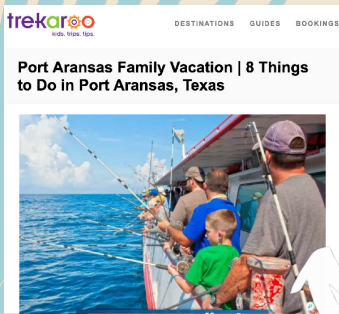
Total earned media value for Port Aransas

SOUTH JETTY NEWSPAPER

A partnership with the South Jetty Newspaper created a monthly column to share tourism trends, events, and happenings of our efforts. The newspaper is a crucial hub of information for this community and a leader of journalistic integrity. We are excited and grateful to continue this partnership for years to come.



Media
Mentions

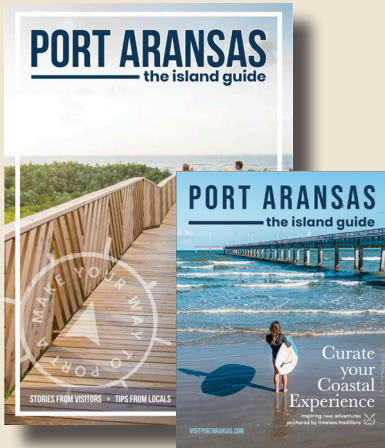


FAMILY TRAVEL FORUM
SOUTHERN LIVING* “Gear Up for a Family-Friendly Adventure Weekend in Port Aransas, Texas”
TEXAS MONTHLY
HOUSTONIA
RED TRICYCLE MAGAZINE*
THE WASHINGTON POST
THE BOSTON GLOBE
TREKAROO “8 Things to Do in Port Aransas, Texas”



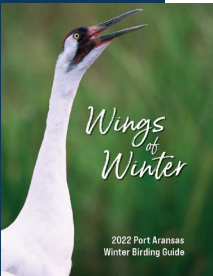
*Multiple features in this publication

Publications



ISLAND GUIDE

In March, we published and printed 50,000 copies of the official 2021 Island Guide. Distribution advanced through a partnership with Dallas-based magazine 360 West to distribute the guide to the demographic that shares our community values in their market. For an added San Antonio boost, we worked out a no-cost value to include our guides in key locations and attractions in San Antonio. The 2022 guide has already been printed—a whopping 75,000 copies—and a partnership with Texas Monthly for distribution in key markets like Austin, Dallas, and beyond is already in place.



WINGS OF WINTER

To keep momentum going for appreciation of the local birding scene amid a global pandemic and a canceled Whooping Crane Festival, we developed an eight-page digest celebrating winter birding experiences. 2,500 copies of the brochure were distributed at local, regional, and statewide levels. In addition, we directly mailed this brochure with a personalized note to all past participants in the Whooping Crane Festival. The result? Our birding visitors remained dedicated to coming to see Port A's natural wonders and the 2022 Whooping Crane Festival is seeing strong ticket sales.



BIRDING CHECKLIST

In partnership with the Port Aransas Parks & Recreation Department and Scott and Joan Holt, we developed and printed 2,000 copies of an updated Birding Checklist. The brochure maps a dozen birding spots within Port Aransas and lists the hundreds of species that make their way to Port A each year. This guide comes in handy for our designation as a Texas Bird City and for the many education groups who use it as a tool to explore the birds of Port Aransas.



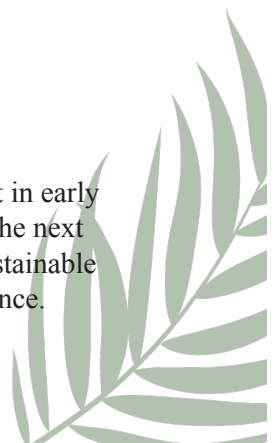
VISITOR PROFILE

The pandemic created a roller coaster of emotions and visitation on our tourism market in 2020. We conducted a Visitor Profile study that collected information from more than 200,000 visitors over the 2020 calendar year. This project helped us determine who was in Port A by measuring demographic information, visitor activity, and length of stay. This study will provide benchmarks for our destination as we fine-tune marketing efforts toward the visitors with whom we desire to share the island life.



STRATEGIC PLAN

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors met in early 2021 to map out a strategy for the evolution of the organization and destination over the next three years. The study resulted in two key focus areas: to support and advocate for sustainable destination development and, internally, to continue to develop organizational excellence.



Digital Marketing

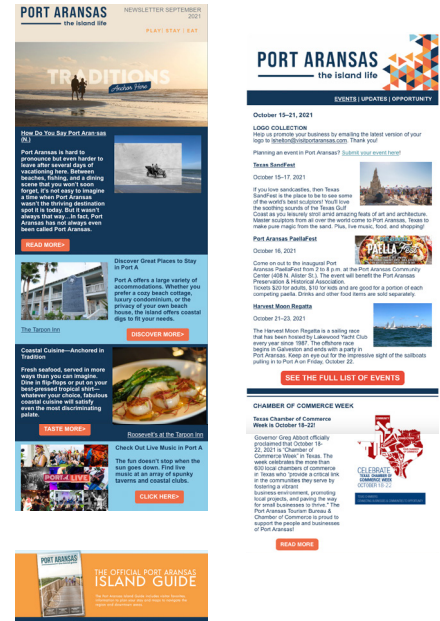
E-NEWS

A professionally-designed and artfully-branded consumer newsletter is sent out on the first Thursday of every month to over 45,000 salty fans. With plans to expand into targeted niche markets, a design revamp already in motion, and an open rate above industry standard, we are well on our way to leveraging email marketing to attract high yield visitors.

In addition to the consumer newsletter, the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce committed to a weekly partner newsletter to communicate with and celebrate the business community of Port Aransas.

18,745 CONTACTS ADDED TO NEWSLETTER LISTS IN 2021

45,000+ EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS



SOCIAL RECAP

2021 was a year of growth for Visit Port Aransas social media. We operate six active Facebook pages, with one solely dedicated to live music. Platforms are at record-breaking follow numbers (15.6k on Instagram and 57.4k on Facebook). We even joined a new platform, TikTok, and one video has nearly 20k views!

3.9M

Facebook Page Reach
727.8% increase over 2020

554.9%↑

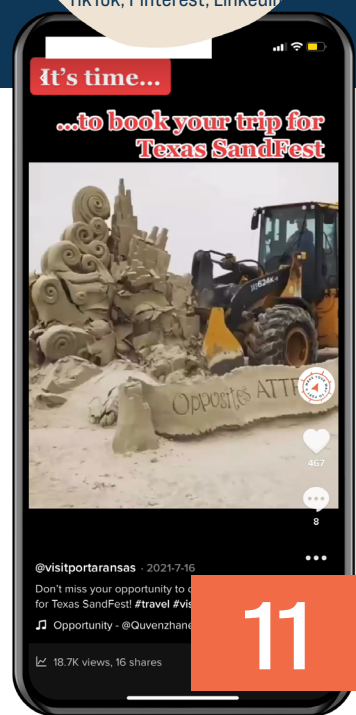
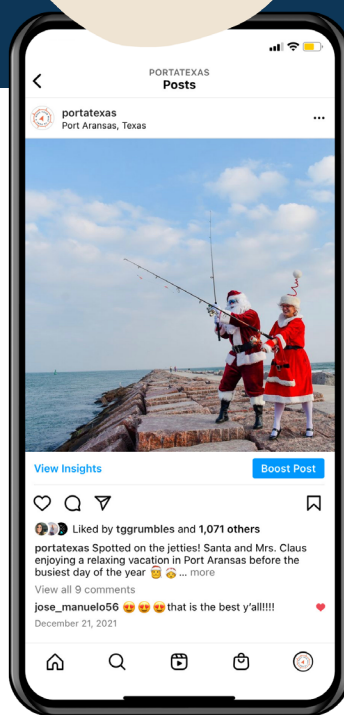
Instagram Reach
895,253 Total Reach

6,951

Twitter Followers
+557 from 2020

6

Active Social Platforms
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter,
TikTok, Pinterest, LinkedIn

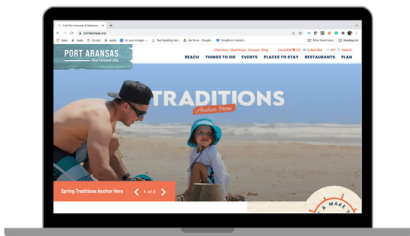


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Web Traffic

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH

At the end of June 2021, we launched a new and improved set of websites using Simpleview CRM and CMS software. The new software has allowed for an enhanced user experience, expanded partner feature abilities, and increased flexibility.



New Sites

Visit Port Aransas
San José Island
Whooping Crane Festival
Port A Live Music Fest
Port Aransas Chamber
Port A Live



PAGEVIEWS

2.4 MILLION+



SESSIONS

1 MILLION+



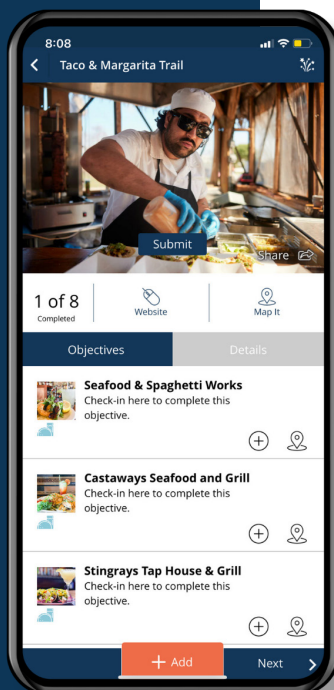
AVERAGE SESSION DURATION



1:50

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

In August, we relaunched the "Visit Port Aransas" app on iOS and Android platforms. The app is a helpful planning tool for travelers, but we've also used it to create "trails" for events like Shop Arounds and Restaurant Week. These trails enable visitors to easily follow along and engage in our event with opportunities to win unique prizes!



10,816
Total Users

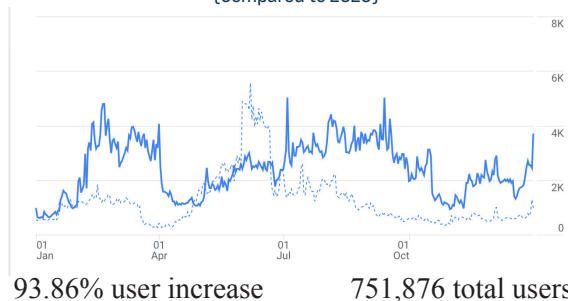
3:22

Average Session Duration

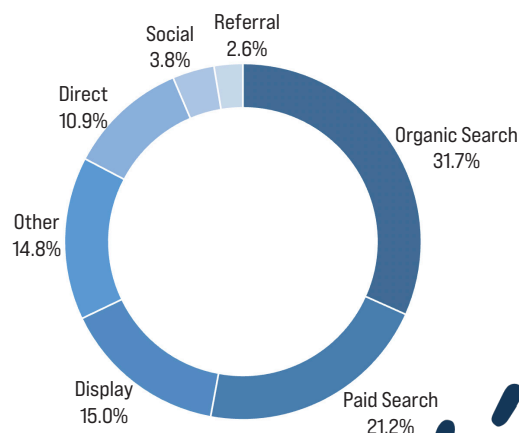
12

WEBSITE USERS

[Compared to 2020]



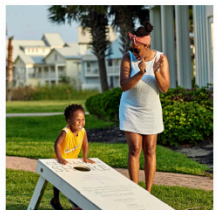
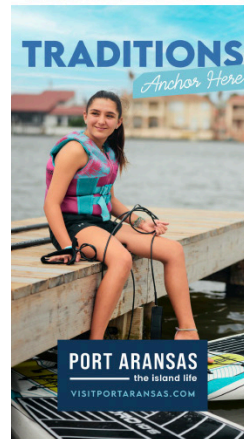
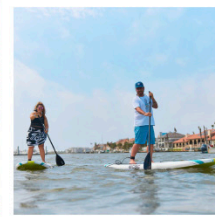
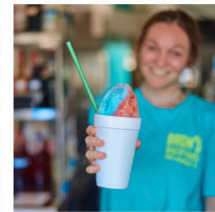
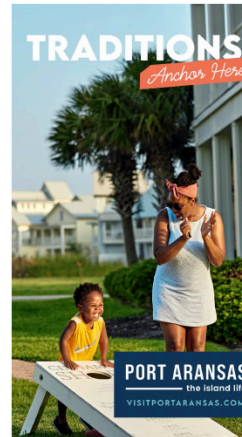
WEBSITE TRAFFIC SOURCES



Paid Advertising

TRADITIONS ANCHOR HERE

At the end of 2020, Madden Media became the official marketing agency for the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce. For the calendar year, Madden engaged in an aggressive marketing campaign to help bring targeted travelers to Port A. The campaigns were divided into seasonal focuses based on key target audiences within Texas and touch-states. A large part of the focus was to build awareness of Port Aransas as the premier island destination of the Texas Coast and engaged specific platforms and tactics to grow the core markets. Other platforms provided specific return on investments and return on advertising spend to demonstrate efficiency of efforts.



ANNUAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE

| VRBO (EXPEDIA) | CULTURE MAP | TEGNA | PINTEREST | SNAPCHAT | SPOTIFY | TEXAS STATE CO-OPS |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| 2.9 Mil+ impressions \$100-\$1 ROAS 7.8K short term rental nights | 5K+ custom content views 10 Mil+ combined vendor site impressions 66K+ social media callouts | 1,135 clicks 2.63 Mil+ impressions 1.36 Mil+ Connected TV views 97.54% Video Completion | 3.7 Mil+ impressions 46,179 clicks 72K+ platform engagements | 918K+ impressions 10,811 swipe ups 6,350 unique live music fest views | 1,098 clicks 502K+ impressions 100K unique listeners | 1.36 Mil impressions Expanded reach with Travel Texas Videos, Pinterest, & Instagram |

Paid Advertising

ANNUAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE



MADDEN
CONNECT PEOPLE TO PLACES



| PAID SEARCH | FACEBOOK LEAD GENERATION | GOOGLE DISPLAY | GOOGLE VIDEO | FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM CLICK-TO-SITE | CHOOZLE CONNECTED TV | CONVERSANT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 208,763 clicks 2.44 mil impressions 8.56% CTR 51% <i>bounce rate</i> 2.75 avg pages per session | 20,227 <i>e-newsletter leads</i> 1.5M+ users reached 42,000+ post reactions 758 post saves | 37.2M+ impressions 113,000+ <i>new site visitors</i> 213,476 clicks | 816,979 video views 42% view rate 2.04M+ Sequenced video views 12,743 <i>hours watched</i> | 70,284 clicks 9 million+ impressions 21,423 post reactions 2,380 post shares | 2,060 clicks 95K+ <i>video views by potential visitors</i> 1.5 Mil+ Impressions | 1.44 Mil video views 8 Mil+ display/video impressions \$21-\$1 <i>Spring ROAS</i> 8,395 clicks |



2021 Totals

664,362
Clicks

92M+
Impressions

20,227
Leads

1:50
Avg. Time
On Site

5.1M+
Video Views

Group Sales

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce works with fishing tournaments and other large groups to ensure they feel welcome and will continue to bring their group events to Port Aransas, the “Fishing Capital of Texas.” We encourage groups to choose our destination as their headquarters and to bring travelers with them! Once those visitors see Port Aransas in all of its glory, they are sure to return with family and friends to continue contributing to the growth of our destination.

Although the Covid-19 pandemic eliminated most group activities in 2020, they roared back to life in 2021. This year, we were particularly interested in drawing off-season groups, and saw success with a number of new events landing on our shores, like Bassmaster’s 2021 Redfish Cup Championship in November. We are looking forward to 2022’s groups and getting ready to welcome them with open arms!



Photos courtesy of B.A.S.S.

Sponsored groups include...

- Police Foundation’s Hook ‘em & Book ‘em Tournament
- Saltwater Anglers Redfish Series
- Teach Rhymes with Beach Conference
- Texas Legends Tournament
- Ultra Expeditions



- Anglers on Wheels
- Bass Master’s 2021 Redfish Cup Championship
- Deep Sea Round Up
- Elite Redfish Series Tournament
- Harvest Moon Regatta



2,774

WELCOME CENTER VISITORS

Visitor foot traffic at the Welcome Center
January 1 through December 31, 2021



9,641

VISITOR PHONE CALLS

Visitor phone calls to the Welcome Center
January 1 through December 31, 2021

Tourism Economics

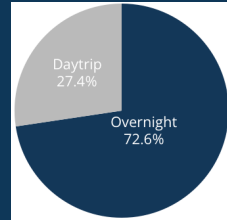
AVERAGE LOS* (DAYS)

2.1

*LOS: Length of Stay

AVERAGE # OF TRIPS

2.3



FERRY COUNT TO PORT A

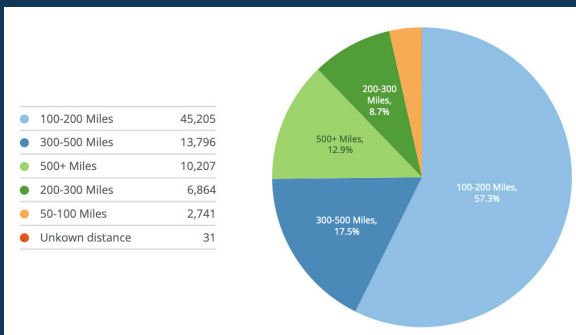
3,614,615

TOTAL PASSENGERS

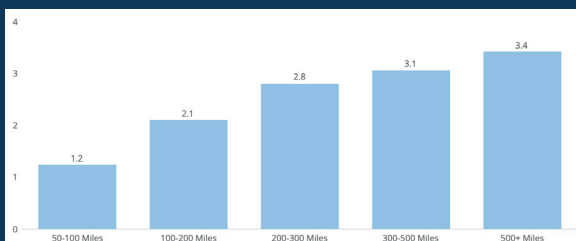
OCCUPANCY TAX COLLECTION

48.4% ↑

Device Visitation by Distance Traveled

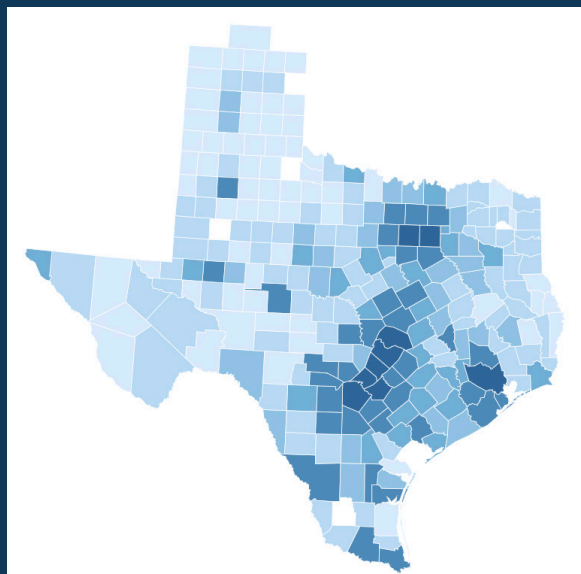


Average LOS by Distance Traveled



*LOS: Length of Stay

In-State Visitation by County



Looking Ahead

TRADITIONS ANCHOR HERE, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

The future of Port Aransas remains bright. We have so many initiatives under way that will continue to make this one of the best places in Texas to live, visit, work, and own a business. The City of Port Aransas is working on millions of dollars of grants, planning, and projects to improve Port Aransas. Our business community continues to invest in Port Aransas with improved facilities, new dreams, and the building of fresh amenities for us all to enjoy.

As your destination marketing and management organization, The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce is focused on shaping the road ahead. We're the content curators of the city, the voice of the brand, and we hold the organized capacity and oversight to bring Port Aransas to even more greatness.

In the coming year, we will continue to embrace our mantra of "Tradition Anchors Here." We will build out our digital presence even more, with an exciting "Salty Stories" series of videos and podcasts. We will develop campaigns to share our values and expected behavior to visitors while in Port Aransas. We will work on signage, wayfinding, and creating a better sense of place. We are excited to work with our city leaders, residents, and business community to make Port A thrive in 2022 and beyond. Things are going great, and they're only getting better. Yes, the future's so bright, we gotta wear shades.



Photo by Shannon Lafayette Photography

Wayfinding

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce has partnered with RSM Design, a principle-centered design agency, for a wayfinding audit. Experts examined the signage in and around Port Aransas and compiled a comprehensive report to help Port Aransas determine steps forward on ways to better welcome and guide our visitors. The role of wayfinding is to both communicate and reinforce the nature of a destination. With that in mind, the ultimate goal of this wayfinding project is to implement signage that will:



Photo by Shannon Lafayette Photography

Foster connectivity and walkability

Wayfinding helps create effective journeys within destinations by leading users efficiently through the best paths.



Celebrate our unique destination

Using districts and celebrating their uniqueness through design or even materiality can help increase their uniqueness.



Create a holistic and cohesive experience

A place that makes sense and connects users to place. "Discover the Salty Soul of Port A."



Create a sense of place

A coherent wayfinding system connects experiences, linking destinations to users and promoting that feeling of belonging.



Incorporate nature and education

Create awareness of all destinations available, how to use them, their history and keep users engaged.



Engagement and enhancement of the user experience

Inspired by the location and true to the community.

Destination Stewardship

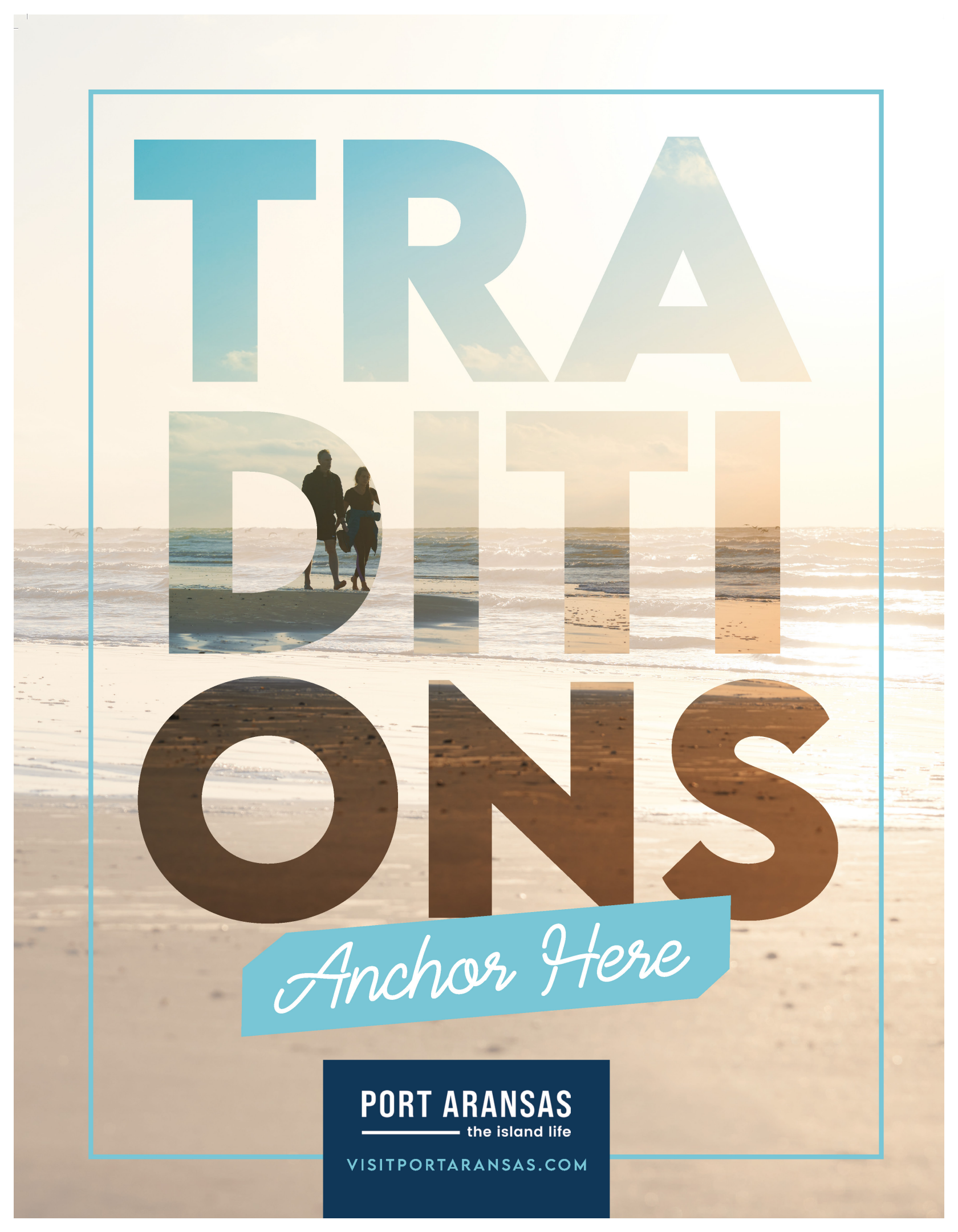
THE PORT A WAY

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce has launched a destination stewardship planning process needed to balance visitor growth with the long-term health and vibrancy of the Port Aransas community, beach, and residents' quality of life.

This program is an opportunity for the community to come together around ways we can encourage visitors to blend in with, not disrupt, our very special way of life. It's a four-month project that will enlist the entire Port A community in developing a new messaging campaign aimed at inspiring vacationers to "Live the Island Life—the Port A Way" while they are here.

The process is being led by Cathy Ritter, founder of Denver-based consultancy Better Destinations, and will incorporate market research from highly-regarded national tourism research firm, Strategic Marketing & Research Insights (SMARInsights) as well as coastal destination best practices research from The Travel Foundation.





TRADITIONS

Anchor Here

PORT ARANSAS
— the island life

VISITPORTARANSAS.COM