Industry Briefs

Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne announced that in 2014 Louisiana attracted 28.7 million visitors, a five percent increase over 2013, resulting in $11.2 billion in total visitor spending and $3836 million in state tax revenue. The revenue generated through domestic and international visitors represents a more than 38-to-1 return on investment of state funding.

Louisiana is also leading the way with its online tourism presence. LouisianaTravel.com ranks fifth among state tourism websites with more than 2.2 million unique visitors, representing a 25 percent annual increase, and 4.9 million page views, representing an 18 percent annual increase. Louisiana Travel’s social media efforts ranked fourth among state tourism offices.

A travel media research trip throughout Louisiana held as part of the recent Travel South USA Domestic Showcase event in Shreveport-Bossier, March 22-25, has begun producing notable stories. In all, 27 journalists from throughout the U.S. did site research in Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Monroe, Natchitoches, New Orleans, Plantation County, St. Landry Parish and Shreveport-Bossier. Clips have surfaced so far on many participants’ websites and blogs and in outlets including The Philadelphia Sun and www.ansa.it, an Italian service.

Business travelers are bypassing the taxi queue with greater frequency, choosing instead ride-hailing services like Uber. Among the many pieces of public art, Shreveport has some of the most affordable destination in the state of Louisiana. The average hotel rate in Shreveport-Bossier is $74.56. By comparison, Lafayette is $79.44, Baton Rouge is $88.22 and New Orleans is $159.90. In 2015, the Sports Commission will work with and provide a variety of resources to more than 70 events. Those events will have an economic impact of more than $7 million to local hotels, restaurants, retail and other businesses. These events will take place all over Caddo and Bossier parishes and benefit numerous businesses of both cities and parishes. The additional dollars from the hotel occupancy tax would allow the Sports Commission to expand the number of sporting events that it partners with on an annual basis.

Membership Introduced for Attractions Association

The Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association is now a free membership organization. The association exists to strengthen the attractions community and to give voice to the ideas, challenges and concerns of its members. Membership includes exclusive benefits and opportunities.

One of the main benefits of the new membership is that the quarterly educational seminars will remain free for members only. All non-members must pay $20 to attend the quarterly seminars.

The next seminar, “Email Marketing 101: Using Creativity to Motivate Your Customers to Act,” will be held Monday, July 20, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Shreveport Downtown, 629 Spring Street. Charles Gaiennie and design staff from his agency, The W.L. Gaiennie Company, will be the featured speakers. Attendees will learn best practices in email marketing in this hands-on, engaging and interactive seminar. To register for the seminar or for more information, call (318) 222-9381.

For more information and/or to submit an application, contact Melissa Small, communications coordinator, at 318-213-8266 or msmall@sbcbt.org.

Log on to www.shreveport-bossier.org/partners for industry events and updates.

Revised Hotel Tax to Aid Airport, Independence Bowl and Sports Commission

The increased hotel occupancy tax will allow the Sports Commission to further assist venues and events such as Thunder Road Raceway Park. The average hotel rate in Shreveport-Bossier is $74.56. By comparison, Lafayette is $79.44, Baton Rouge is $88.22 and New Orleans is $159.90. In 2015, the Sports Commission will work with and provide a variety of resources to more than 70 events. Those events will have an economic impact of more than $7 million to local hotels, restaurants, retail and other businesses. These events will take place all over Caddo and Bossier parishes and benefit numerous businesses of both cities and parishes. The additional dollars from the hotel occupancy tax would allow the Sports Commission to expand the number of sporting events that it partners with on an annual basis.

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Among the many pieces of public art, Shreveport has some of the most amazing murals you’ll see anywhere. Shreveport is painted by Eric Magnani.
Follow the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and \Tourist Bureau’s new Instagram account @SeeShreveportBossier.

Each month in 2015, the account features photos of Shreveport-Bossier by a different local photographer. The featured photographer in June was Andrew Toups @hustleandtruthpath.

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau recently welcomed a new full-time staff member to the organization. Zachary Ebarb has taken on the position of convention and tourism assistant. Ebarb is a recent graduate of Northwestern State University and earned a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management and Tourism.

David Bradley, vice president of convention and tourism sales, Brandon Evans, vice president of communications, Pat Gill, internet and systems manager and Charlotte Rice, executive assistant, attended the Simpleview Summit in Tucson, Ariz., April 20-23, where they participated in training courses.

**P.R.I.D.E. Award Winners Recognized**

The 2015 P.R.I.D.E. Awards Banquet was held Thursday, May 7, at DiamondJacks Casino and Resort in Bossier City. The purpose of the annual event is to honor employees and more than 20 categories ranging from Outstanding Valet to Outstanding Convention and Tourist Bureau’s website. Advertisement

The Guide is also available in electronic format on the Tourist Bureau’s website. Advertisement sales close on September 30.

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau is taking reservations for the 2016 Official Visitors’ Guide to Shreveport-Bossier, Louisiana. This publication is the primary fulfillment piece for visitor inquiries. A minimum of 100,000 guide are printed annually and distributed to visitors in hotels and visitor centers across the state of Louisiana, as well as distributed regionally and nationally.

The guide is also available in electronic format on the Tourist Bureau’s website. Advertisement sales close on September 30.