

# 2017

SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER CONVENTION  
AND TOURIST BUREAU



# BUSINESS PLAN



[www.Shreveport-Bossier.org](http://www.Shreveport-Bossier.org)

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## **DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

**is going beyond marketing to leading our partners in the constant rejuvenation of the destination for enhanced visitor experiences.**



**Stacy Brown, President**  
Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau

The staff and board of directors of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau have carefully compiled this 2017 business plan. The strategies all point to four important goals with the overarching theme of staving off hotel occupancy decline.

In 2017, it will be extremely important to focus our efforts on markets that provide a positive return on investment given the current depressed economic conditions that affect the state and region, particularly in the oil and gas sector.

This has adversely affected hotel occupancy, and in 2016 Shreveport-Bossier saw a steady decline in that area. On the upside, sports tourism saw increases, as well as the convention and group sales market tracked through the Tourist Bureau. So, there will be a heavy focus on sales efforts in these two market segments. Leisure tourism is the number one driver of hotel occupancy with the casinos, expanded tourism offerings like the Shreveport Aquarium slated to open in 2017, and the revitalization of downtown Bossier City.

Product development will be key in driving tourism for future years as the gaming product ages and visitors continue to seek new reasons to visit Shreveport-Bossier.

# **SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER CONVENTION AND TOURIST BUREAU** **2017** **GOALS**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau is the official destination marketing organization attracting sports, meeting, leisure and gaming visitors resulting in economic growth through visitor expenditures and enhancing the quality of life in Louisiana's Caddo and Bossier Parishes.



Increase direct, trackable hotel rooms generated by the staff of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau to 96,253, which represents a 3.3 percent increase over 2016 hotel room nights booked among leisure visitors, groups, conventions and sports markets for current and future dates.



Raise brand awareness of Shreveport-Bossier by measuring the effectiveness of brand image, brand equity, and brand value in local and regional drive markets with a continued focus on research, strategic marketing, and public relations.



Align resources to identify and drive product development in downtown Shreveport and Bossier City riverfronts to foster greater economic development that spurs a larger tourism base for the entire destination.



Add value to key partnerships to strengthen tourism in the hotel, restaurant, attraction and retail segments and with civic and political leadership through resources, education, networking, and regular communication.


# COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

# GOALS:

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**GOAL**  
**1** Increase trackable hotel rooms generated by the communications department to 20,900 hotel room nights sold and tracked through popular booking engines like Expedia.com as a result of leisure marketing in East Texas, Dallas and surrounding drive markets.

 **STRATEGY**  
Position Shreveport-Bossier, Louisiana as a year-round destination that offers gaming and other leisure events and activities to targeted audiences in key drive markets.

## TACTICS

- 1 Execute three marketing campaigns in drive markets that target potential overnight visitors – Mardi Gras, Summer Fun and Fall Festivals.
- 2 Execute incentives with print advertising via trackable website URLs to engage potential visitors and drive website traffic.
- 3 Increase targeted content marketing and social media support surrounding major concert events, festivals, attractions and culinary opportunities that appeal to specific drive markets.
- 4 Promote a stronger “book now” message in e-newsletter, print ads, digital campaigns, social media, blogs, video content and graphics.
- 5 Use social media to include an overt call to action to book a hotel room through video content, graphics shared on social media, blog posts, etc.

**GOAL**  
**2** Raise brand awareness of Shreveport-Bossier by measuring the effectiveness of brand image, brand equity, and brand value in local and regional drive markets with a continued focus on research, strategic marketing, and public relations.

 **STRATEGY**  
Measure brand awareness through regular research in local and regional drive markets to further enhance marketing initiatives.

## TACTICS

- 1 Establish consistent messaging across all advertising/marketing/social/public relations platforms to support regional marketing campaigns.
- 2 Grow overall website visitation by 5 percent above 2016 year end numbers to generate awareness about the destination, inspire travel and encourage hotel bookings.
- 3 Use traditional advertising, social media and web marketing to increase email newsletter sign-ups, requests for visitor guides, brochure downloads and clicks on electronic brochures as measurements of intent to travel.
- 4 Increase public relations efforts through news release distribution, familiarization tours and ongoing news story pitches locally, regionally and nationally to consumer, convention and group trade outlets.
- 5 Create special events in key regional drive markets, i.e. like a Mardi Gras Party in Tyler, Texas at a barbecue restaurant or a Pop up Pub in Arkansas. Use social media and traditional media to drive interest and awareness of Shreveport-Bossier in these key drive markets.
- 6 Work with the local think-tank Connect, comprised of city leaders, chamber members, economic development, tourism and other industry executives on community branding.

**GOAL**  
**3** Align resources to identify and drive product development in downtown Shreveport and downtown Bossier City riverfronts to foster greater economic development that results in a larger tourism base for the entire destination.

 **STRATEGY**  
Provide consultation, public relations, social media, advertising and web marketing assistance to new tourism products in the downtown Shreveport and downtown Bossier City riverfronts.

## TACTICS

- 1 Work with group experience partners and the convention and tourism sales department to promote bookings through direct sales to increase downtown group experiences and visitors.
- 2 Focus additional marketing efforts on events that support Christmas holiday product development in downtown Shreveport and downtown Bossier City.
- 3 Utilize research to determine what visitors want to see and experience that the destination currently does not offer.

**GOAL**  
**4** Add value to key partnerships to strengthen tourism in the hotel, restaurant, attraction and retail segments and with civic and political leadership through resources, education, networking, and regular communication.

 **STRATEGY**  
Provide consultation, public relations, social media, advertising and web marketing assistance to new tourism products in the downtown Shreveport and downtown Bossier City riverfronts.

## TACTICS

- 1 Strengthen Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association through regular networking, education and resource assistance.
- 2 Teach hotel partners best practices for responding to online reviews, both negative and positive at a regularly scheduled Shreveport-Bossier Hotel and Lodging Association and/or the Director of Sales meeting.
- 3 Award local businesses that bring the most room nights at PRIDE Awards and create template news releases and graphic icons that all PRIDE winners can use in their marketing materials throughout the year to tout their PRIDE honor.
- 4 Utilize the message board feature of the new Extranet to make sure that partners are aware of opportunities such as press release assistance, social media training, and social media ad dollars.



# GOALS:



**GOAL 1** Increase total room nights by three percent over 2016 results. In 2017, the tourism and convention sales goal will be to book 46,350 room nights. Current trends indicate the department will end the year at 45,000 definite and assist room nights.

 **STRATEGY**

Continue to focus on markets that have proven return on investment (ROI).

**TACTICS**

- 1 Attend national and regional tradeshows to foster new relations, while maintaining existing relationships with clients that currently book in the destination.
- 2 Continue to leverage the partnership with the Shreveport Convention Center, meeting venues, casinos and hotels with meeting space to book conventions and groups that increase overnight room production.
- 3 Focus on SMERF and motorcoach group markets to generate positive room nights for properties by attending tradeshows, making sales calls and enhancing other sales initiatives.
- 4 Generate leads through prospecting, direct mail, promotions, e-newsletters, advertising, familiarization tours and sales missions that target primary and productive markets.
- 5 Increase efforts with the international market by working with receptive tour operators and industry partners to create packages to attract international visitors.

**GOAL 2** Raise brand awareness of Shreveport-Bossier through positive promotion of the destination through meeting and group sales efforts.

 **STRATEGY**

Market Shreveport-Bossier as a premier convention and group tour destination at tradeshows, in trade publications and through direct sales efforts.

**TACTICS**

- 1 Ensure all marketing collateral is current and represents the brand to keep a consistent message in the marketplace.
- 2 Research clients and customers to gauge their awareness, experiences in the destination and intent to book in the future.
- 3 Host familiarization tours and site visits to expose potential, new and existing customers to the destination.



**GOAL 3** Align resources to identify and drive product development in downtown Shreveport and downtown Bossier City riverfronts to foster greater economic development that could spur a larger tourism base for the entire destination.

 **STRATEGY**

Continue to identify new tourism products that would enhance the downtown area, as well as support existing tourism products.

**TACTICS**

- 1 Support holiday events by generating more motorcoach and group travel visitors to boost the November to December shoulder months.
- 2 Foster more group visitation and off-site meetings at downtown attractions to enhance groups' experiences and increase economic impact on attractions, hotels and restaurants.
- 3 Work with booked groups to ensure their awareness of event happenings while they are in town to boost visitation and exploration.

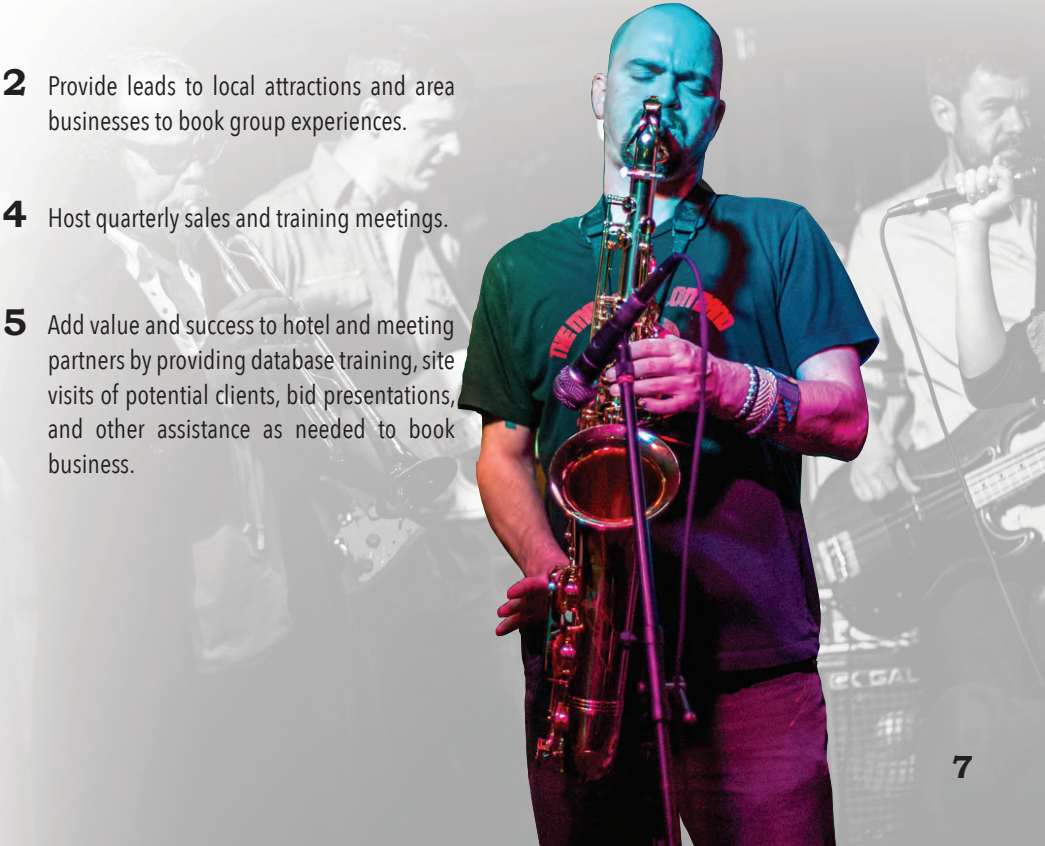
**GOAL 4** Add value to key partnerships to strengthen tourism in the hotel, restaurant, attraction and retail segments and with civic and political leadership through resources, education, networking, and regular communication.

 **STRATEGY**

Actively promote and sell the group experience programs, area attractions and events.

**TACTICS**

- 1 Educate potential, new and existing clients about group experiences and regional events through email marketing, printed collateral, advertising and follow-up communications.
- 2 Provide leads to local attractions and area businesses to book group experiences.
- 3 Provide excellent service such as customized itineraries, collateral material, and other assistance to help planners and tour operators optimize their experiences in the destination.
- 4 Host quarterly sales and training meetings.
- 5 Add value and success to hotel and meeting partners by providing database training, site visits of potential clients, bid presentations, and other assistance as needed to book business.



# SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER SPORTS COMMISSION GOALS:



**GOAL 1** Increase total room nights and overall attendees by 3 percent over 2016 results. In 2017, the sports commission sales goal will be to book 29,003 room nights. Current trends show the department will end the year at 28,159 definite and assist room nights. Total attendees for 2016 bookings will surpass 181,403. In 2017, the booking goal is for 184,105 attendees.

The SBSC plans to facilitate booking 100 new and returning events for 2017 and beyond compared to approximately 98 bookings in 2016. In 2016, 60 of the sporting events were new to the Shreveport-Bossier area and were not previously held in 2015. Some of these events will take place again in 2017, because of the successful execution of the event in 2016.



**STRATEGY** Continue to focus on events and sports organizations and venues that have proven return on investment and work collaboratively with sports community.

## TACTICS

- 1 Work with local/regional colleges and high schools to host events in Shreveport-Bossier.
- 2 Work with private and public venues of all sizes in the Shreveport-Bossier and the parishes and identify one or more key events for each venue to contract for 2017 and beyond. Potential sporting event leads will be generated by attending sports-related trade shows and through direct interaction and building relationships locally, regionally and nationally with venues and rights holders.
- 3 Provide superior service that differentiates Shreveport-Bossier from other destinations and help grow new and existing sporting events.
- 4 Provide volunteers to assist sporting events, thereby reducing their cost and providing incentive to hold or expand their events in Shreveport-Bossier. Also, grow the volunteer database and community support for these events.
- 5 Work with local, regional and national public and private partners to generate partnerships and sponsorship support that allows the destination to hold larger sporting events and conferences.



**GOAL 2** Raise brand awareness of Shreveport-Bossier through the positive promotion of the destination through hosting sporting events that generate positive publicity, locally, regionally, national and internationally.



**STRATEGY** Market Shreveport-Bossier as a premier sporting event destination at tradeshows and through direct sales efforts and relationships.

## TACTICS

- 1 Identify new events to bid on and work with local partners to secure, with an emphasis on that will enhance the downtown and riverfront areas.
- 2 Research the economic impact of sporting events to ensure the return on investment to the community.
- 3 Attend tradeshows, arrange site visits for rights-holders and host sports-related tradeshows in Shreveport-Bossier or within the state.
- 4 Work to add new venues, improve or expand current venues to host additional sporting events in the Shreveport-Bossier area.
- 5 Continue to work through the Team Louisiana Sports Association to advocate for the sports industry statewide and nationally.
- 6 Bring in sporting events that provide extensive media coverage for the destination locally, regionally, nationally and/or internationally.

**GOAL 3** Foster a greater opportunity to expand the number, types and sizes of sporting events to spur economic development thereby improving the quality of life for area residents.

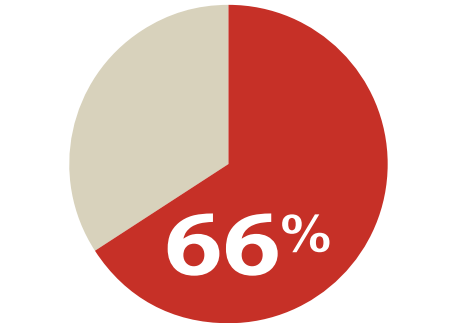


**STRATEGY** Identify the needs of sports venues for improvement, expansion or development in the Shreveport-Bossier area.

## TACTICS

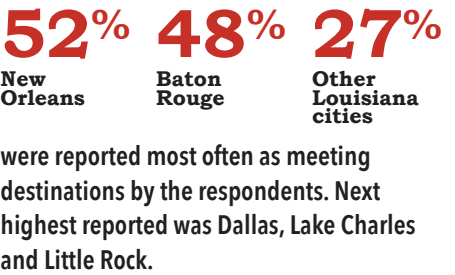
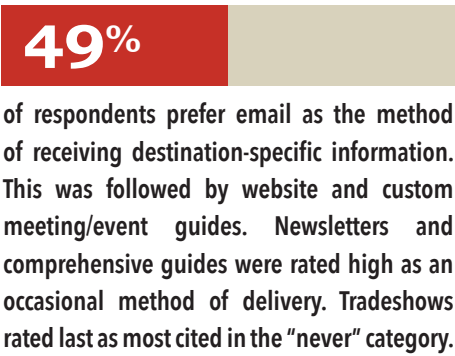
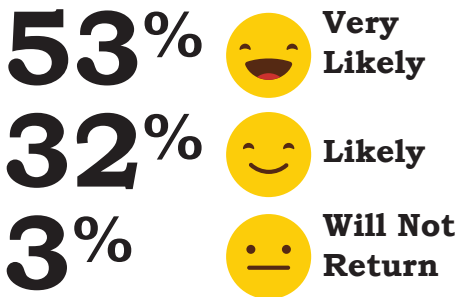
- 1 Meet with sports organizations locally to identify the needs of the local venues for upgrades or expansion.
- 2 Work with the cities, private and public agencies to determine if venue expansion or development is feasible.
- 3 Work with the cities and the organizations to assist with moving potential venue opportunities forward at the grass roots level or through public relations (limited funding opportunities other than assistance with feasibility or research studies).



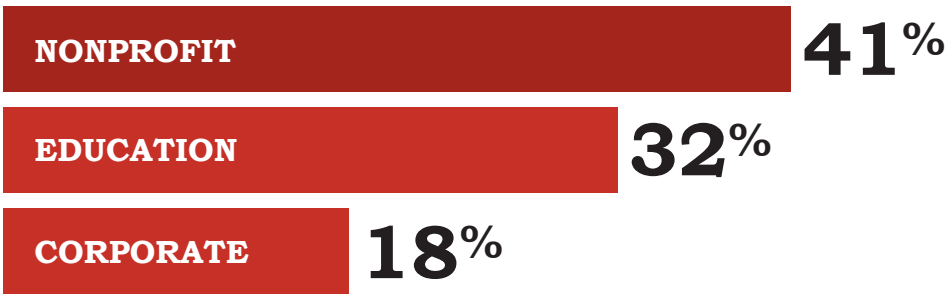


The majority of meeting planner respondents were from Louisiana.

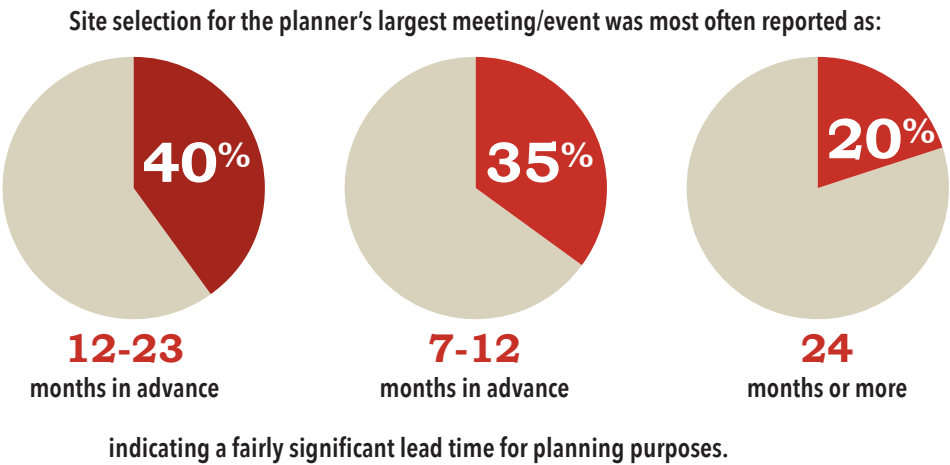
Likelihood of planning a future meeting in Shreveport-Bossier



The majority of planners that responded represented the following meeting/convention segments:



Meeting planners indicate their meetings are most often held:

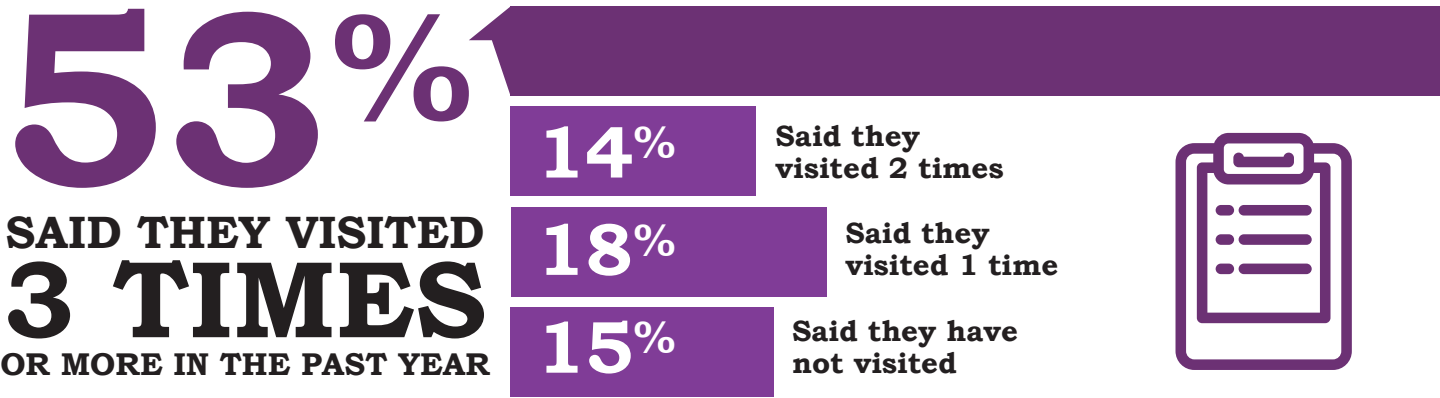


Perception of Shreveport-Bossier as a meeting destination

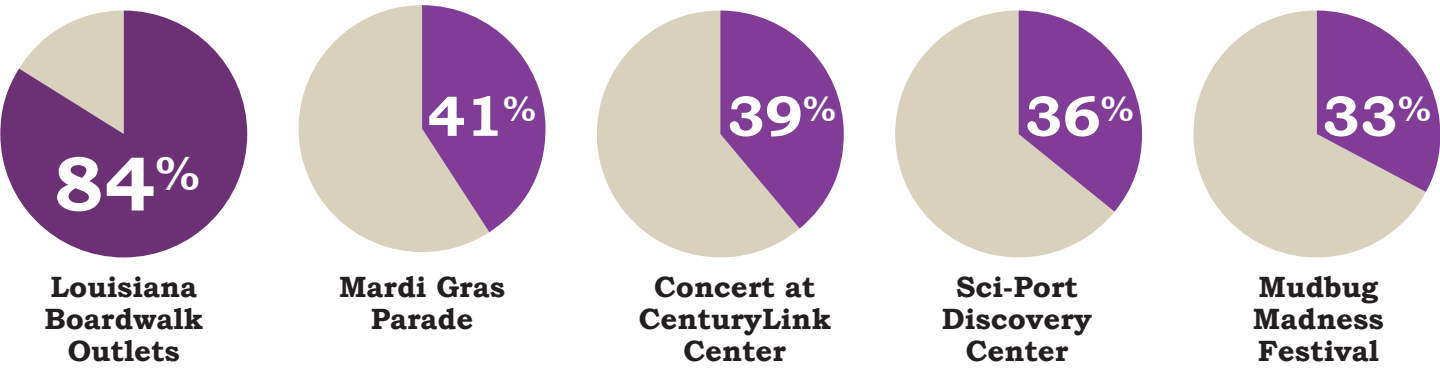
Shreveport-Bossier earns lower than desired ratings on a five-point scale where typically anything below a 4.0 is considered something that requires attention. The highest rated perceptions:



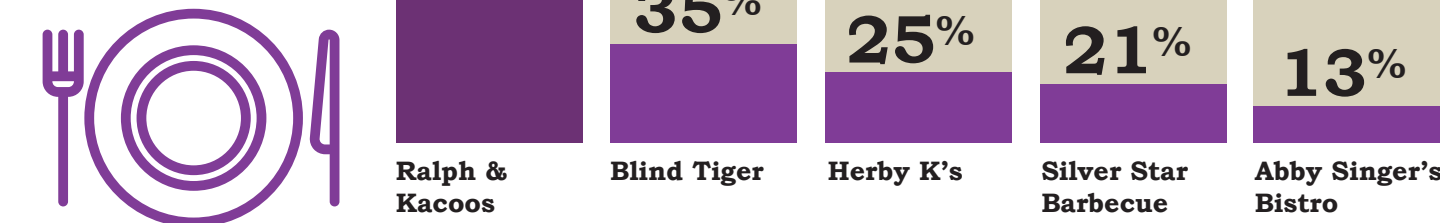
VISITED IN THE PAST YEAR



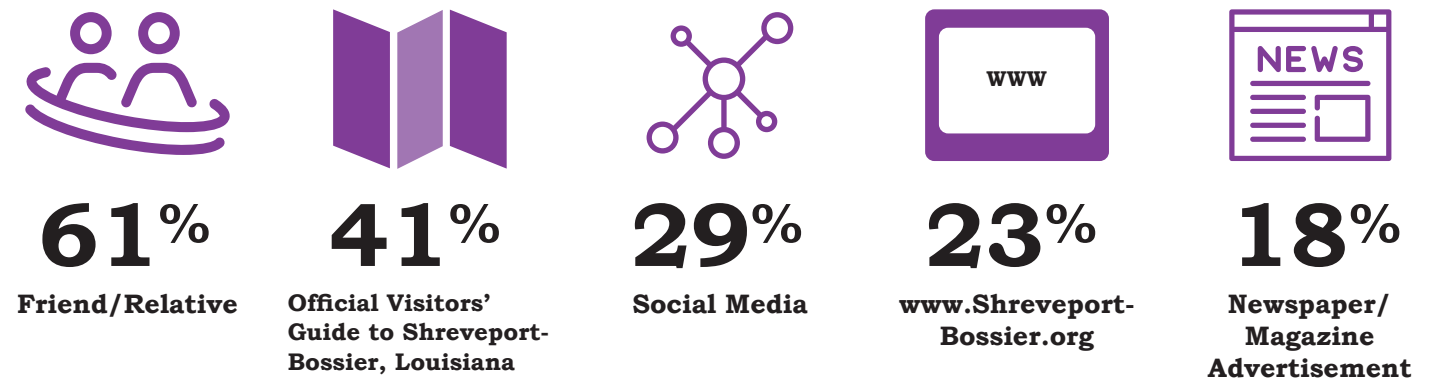
TOP 5 PLACES THEY VISITED IN THE PAST YEAR



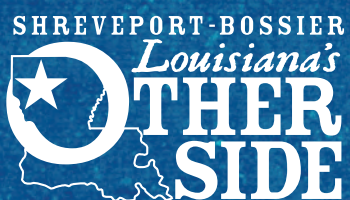
MOST VISITED RESTAURANTS IN THE PAST YEAR



GREATEST INFLUENCERS OF TRAVEL IN THE PAST YEAR



\*Source: Online email survey to meeting planners. 216 meeting planners responded from the 654 that were successfully delivered at 33% response rate.



**DOWNTOWN SHREVEPORT  
VISITOR CENTER**

629 Spring St., Shreveport  
318-222-9391 • 1-800-551-8682  
[www.Shreveport-Bossier.org](http://www.Shreveport-Bossier.org)

