

Has pent-up travel demand run its course?

DMOs are reporting declines in visitors but is this due to pent-up demand for travel petering out or natural disasters, which many destinations have endured?

Here are a few examples:

FLORIDA

The number of people traveling to Florida during the second quarter of 2023 decreased compared to a year earlier, according to estimates released by Visit Florida.

Florida drew an estimated 33.1 million visitors during the quarter, keeping the state slightly ahead of an overall record pace of visitors in 2022. But the figure from April through June represented a 1.2 percent decrease from the second quarter of 2022.

Domestic tourists from other parts of the U.S., who make up the bulk of Florida travelers, were off an estimated 2.4 percent from the same period in 2022.

Dana Young, president and CEO

Continued on page 2



Stayarlington.com

The message of abundance is abundant

It's abundantly clear what the popular messaging theme is lately. Here are a few examples.

Arlington County, Virginia's, new tourism slogan is "All In Arlington."

The Arlington Convention and Visitors Service announced the new slogan as part of a marketing campaign to evolve the perception of Arlington County as a tourism destination.

Arlington received a \$3.25 million grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation through its Tourism Recovery Program, which was funded

with American Recovery Plan Act funds appropriated by the Virginia General Assembly.

Last year, it began working with marketing agency Fuseideas LLC on brand research and development that included focus groups, which county tourism officials said revealed a significant shift in the perception of Arlington as a destination.

"All In Arlington" refers to the variety of things to do in Arlington County, from history to dining to arts.

Continued on page 2

Resident sentiment is crucial information

Knowing what visitors want is crucial to DMOs, but they are not the only audience that should be studied.

Resident sentiment studies can tell organizations how much support they have in the community.

The Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau (OPVB) is developing a five-year Tourism Master Plan. This plan will

consider how the tourism economy could grow on the Olympic Peninsula, while also enhancing local residents' quality of life.

There is no incentive to participate, but the visitor bureau is using two cute Olympic marmots in the pitch to residents to complete the survey.

— *cityofpa.us*

IS TOURISM GOOD FOR THE OLYMPIC PENINSULA?

We want to hear from you!



The Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau is developing a five-year Tourism Master Plan. This will consider how the tourism economy could grow on the Olympic Peninsula in a way that ensures tourism remains a vital economic driver while also enhancing our residents' quality of life. Everyone who lives on the Olympic Peninsula or has a business in the area is invited to participate in a short survey to give us your input. Survey closes September 30, 2023.

The survey can be accessed by going to the [TinyURL.com/OPask](https://tinyurl.com/OPask) or directly by scanning the QR code:



The message of abundance

Continued from page 1

Arlington County's previous tourism slogan was "National History, Local Flavor."

The Northern Virginia region, which makes up 42% of travel activity in the state, was the most negatively impacted by the pandemic and experienced a drastic decline in visitation and tourism revenues. Arlington was one of the hardest areas hit, with a significant 57% decline in visitor spending and a 65% decline in accommodation spending in 2020.

Ohio Tourism's slogan tells travelers that it is at "The Heart of it All" – a tourism slogan that it resurrected

from the 1980s.

Ohio is promoting its message in 28 markets with ads in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Eight of those markets are within Ohio, convincing residents to visit an attraction on the other side of the state.

Illinois Tourism puts a similar spin to Ohio's theme on its campaign message.

The "Middle of Everything" campaign highlights Illinois as the center of culture, food, history, architecture, nightlife and natural wonders—full of experiences for visitors to discover.

The campaign stars Illinois native, Emmy and Golden Globe award-winning actress, and New York Times best-selling author, Jane Lynch.

Visit Dallas retired an older campaign in 2021 and switched to an abundance message.

"Big Things Happen Here" launched a marketing campaign under a new slogan: "Find Your All."

The new campaign goes heavy on the city's cultural strengths, a big tent that includes food, theater, the arts, and music.

Sources: wtop.com, staylorlington.com, cantonrep.com, enjoyIllinois.com, dmagazine.com



Photo: wtop.com

Has pent-up demand for travel run its course, or is nature to blame?

Continued from page 1

of the Visit Florida tourism-marketing agency, pointed to increased competition from other states and countries that shut down longer than Florida during the pandemic. But she also touted an increase this year in international tourists in Florida.

"We compete globally, not just here in the U.S.," Young told The News Service of Florida. "Destinations are opening up. And when they do, they're going to be using all those dollars they didn't spend (during the pandemic) to try and lure their people back. So, the fact that we have these massive increases in international visitation is great."

– wusfnews.wusf.usf.edu

CALIFORNIA

The Kern River Valley's tourism industry is taking a hit and local

businesses say they are struggling.

Recovery efforts that continue months after the storms devastated the area three hours north of Los Angeles back in March.

Flooding has cleared up and recovery efforts have been moving forward but locals say its not moving fast enough.

Kernville Chambers of Commerce President, Orion Sanders, said they continue to feel the impact of these storms in the local economy.

Kern River Conservancy Executive Director, Gary Ananian, said there has been a lot of misinformation told to potential tourists on social media.

Anyone can come camping, Kernville did not "get wiped off the map," Ananian said.

– bakersfieldnow.com

TAMPA BAY

After a red-hot rebound in the post-

COVID tourism market, the Tampa Bay region's hospitality industry shows signs of cooling.

Tourist tax collections are off, compared to a year ago, for consecutive months in both Hillsborough and Pinellas counties, and the monthly hotel occupancy rate has dipped more than 5% in Pasco County.

Industry leaders, however, seem unfazed, attributing some of the declines to expanded options for travel as the rest of the world welcomed visitors after the pandemic.

"Last year was a record-breaking year, so gravity was bound to take affect at some point," said Ron Barton, assistant Hillsborough County administrator for economic prosperity.

– tampabay.com