

HITTING THE HIGHWAY *for weekend getaways*

by Wendy Bernstein, MBACC research manager

The Myrtle Beach area has always had an abundance of visitors during the summer months, and over the past decade, the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber/CVB has looked for ways to increase visitation during the “shoulder seasons.” This focus has been placed on the spring (March, April, May) and fall (September, October, November) months with the objective of providing events to attract visitors to the area, and enhance the visitation of travelers who already have plans to visit during these months.

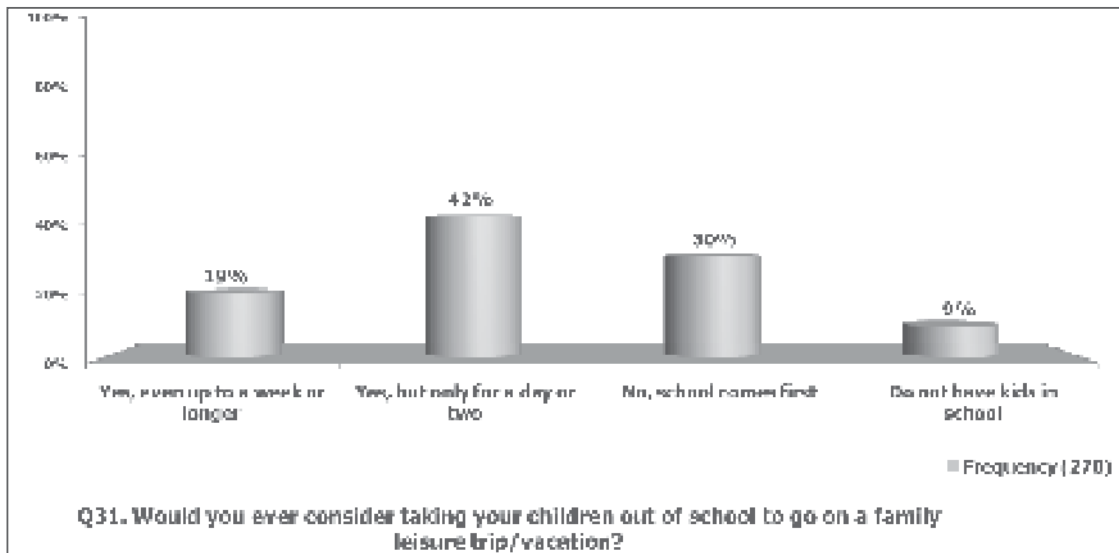
The last week of July 2009, the “Myrtle Beach Fall and Spring Travel Planning Survey” was conducted

online by Equation Research, and the respondents were individuals who were part of the eRewards survey panel. The survey respondents had to be over 18 years old and live in FL, NC, SC, GA, VA, TN or MD. Over 800 responses were obtained, and the results were monitored to receive an equal number of responses by gender and age group for each state. The final qualifying participation criteria was that the respondent had to do most of the travel planning or shared in the planning, and have traveled during the spring/fall seasons in the past 2 years or would be motivated by a Myrtle Beach event to do so.

The findings of the survey show 59 percent of the participants were willing to drive four to six hours for a weekend getaway/three to four day vacation with 40 percent stating the spring season was their favorite time to travel, while another 39 percent preferred the fall. Typically 35 percent started planning their leisure trips two to four weeks in advance, and 47 percent made their overnight accommodation reservation between seven days and two weeks prior to their arrival. When making their reservations, 61 percent of the respondents did so online and 22 percent booked their arrangements directly through the airline/hotel/car rental company.

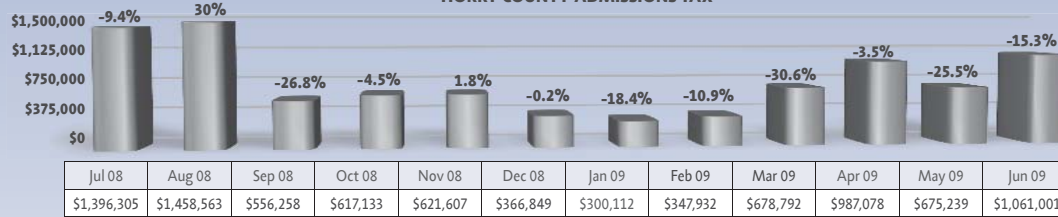
In fall 2009, 66 percent of the respondents plan to take one to two weekend getaways and only 50 percent had already planned their trip. Eighty-four percent will be traveling with their spouse/partner and 27 percent will be traveling with children under 18 years of age. The top three events that would motivate the respondents to take their fall vacation are a beach and oldies music festival, a country music festival, and a classic/alternative rock music festival.

In spring 2010, 65 percent of the respondents plan to take one to two weekend getaways and only 11 percent had already planned their trips. Eighty-five percent will be traveling with their spouse/partner and 25 percent will be traveling



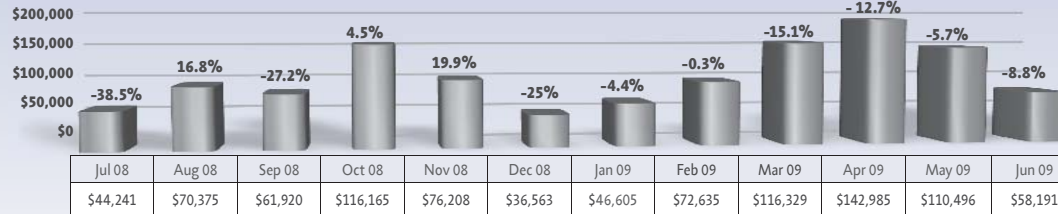
Weekend Getaways, See CVB Insider Back Page

HORRY COUNTY ADMISSIONS TAX

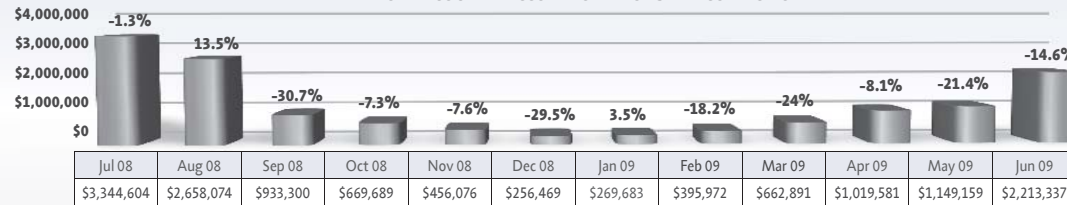


Percentages Shown Are Percent Change From Previous Year

GEORGETOWN COUNTY ADMISSIONS TAX

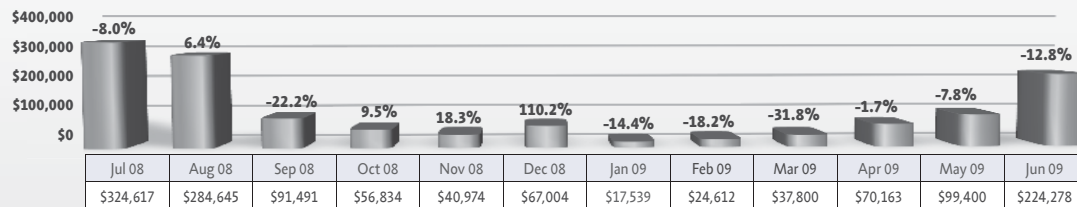


HORRY COUNTY ACCOMMODATIONS TAX COLLECTION

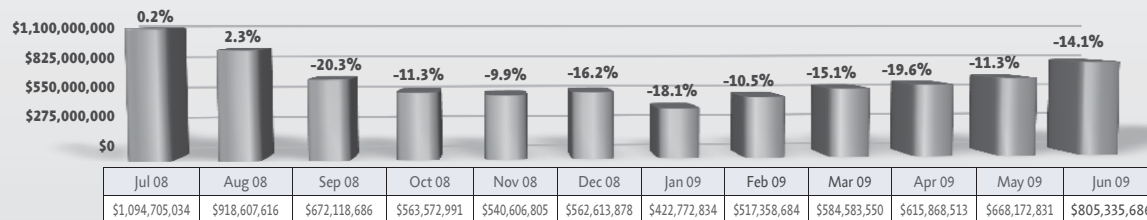


Percentages Shown Are Percent Change From Previous Year

GEORGETOWN COUNTY ACCOMMODATIONS TAX COLLECTION

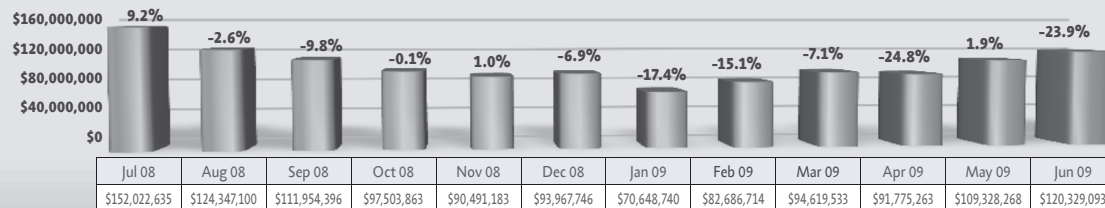


HORRY COUNTY GROSS RETAIL SALES



Percentages Shown Are Percent Change From Previous Year

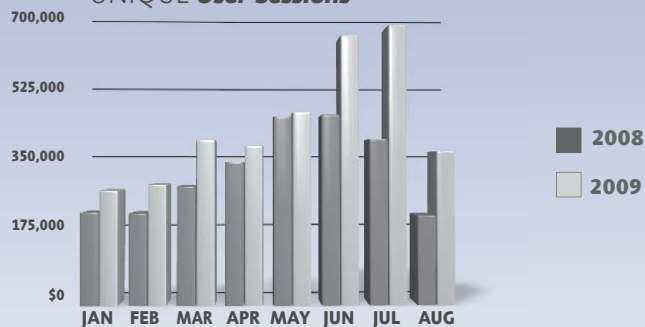
GEORGETOWN COUNTY GROSS RETAIL SALES



For more information regarding additional research conducted by the chamber, contact Wendy Bernstein at Wendy.Bernstein@VisitMyrtleBeach.com

Sources: S.C. Departments of PRT and Revenue

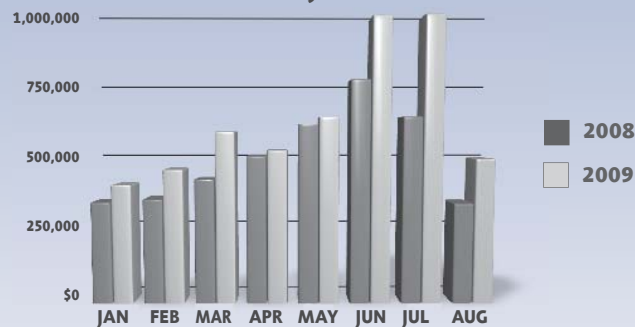
UNIQUE *User Sessions*



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
% Change	23.95%	31.85%	39.09%	11.52%	2.32%	42.12%
2009	269,285	283,597	388,477	374,741	454,265	636,928
2008	217,261	215,092	279,302	336,043	443,963	448,148

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
% Change	69.30%	72.76%				
2009	661,649	362,303				
2008	390,805	209,719				

ADVERTISER *Referrals*



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
% Change	17.01%	28.37%	38.07%	3.88%	3.76%	27.62%
2009	406,873	459,712	588,396	525,240	637,311	973,668
2008	347,720	358,112	426,144	505,598	614,243	762,952

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
% Change	53.25%	49.07%				
2009	979,218	495,876				
2008	638,973	332,636				

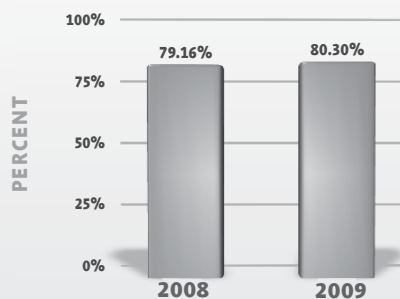
YEAR OVER YEAR YTD Referral Click % Change*

Category	% Change
Lodging	+33.78%
Amusements	+7.65%
Theaters	+14.34%
Dining	+56.20%
Shopping	+55.45%
Watersports	+158.34%
Weddings	+25.24%
Golf	+30.41%
Additional Services	+37.43%

* Jan. 1 - Aug 31

For more information, contact: Bill.Rosenthal@VisitMyrtleBeach.com

OCCUPANCY PERCENT PER ROOM WEEK* (July 19, 2009 – August 29, 2009)



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
2009	29.54%	40.09%	49.82%	52.82%	50.13%	67.79%
2008	32.12%	49.96%	55.21%	54.75%	45.91%	65.42%
2007	34.01%	53.01%	64.18%	69.10%	60.85%	74.59%

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2009	66.49%					
2008	70.42%	73.73%	52.17%	55.87%	39.88%	25.22%
2007	82.94%	75.78%	62.40%	54.25%	39.86%	24.74%

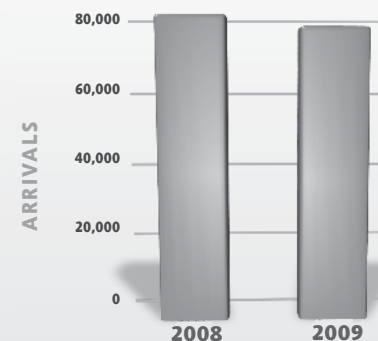
AVERAGE DAILY RATE PER ROOM WEEK* (July 19, 2009 – August 29, 2009)



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
2009	\$55.45	\$67.68	\$81.07	\$97.33	\$91.73	\$121.41
2008	\$58.54	\$73.02	\$82.28	\$99.05	\$89.34	\$124.70
2007	\$55.95	\$71.90	\$83.84	\$98.29	\$116.61	\$144.34

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2009	\$109.44					
2008	\$119.48	\$125.09	\$83.14	\$77.98	\$69.80	\$59.92
2007	\$162.96	\$129.77	\$93.15	\$76.80	\$68.82	\$59.20

JUNE AIRPORT ARRIVALS



	2008	2009	Change
Arrivals	80,013	77,081	-3.7%

*Dr. Taylor Damonte, Director • Clay Brittain, Jr.
Center for Resort Tourism • Coastal Carolina University
tdamonte@coastal.edu
Source: Horry County Department of Airports

HELP US HELP YOU
Provide data to CCU

By sending in your weekly numbers, you will be providing valuable data that helps us to keep updated information. For more information, please contact Dr. Taylor Damonte, director of Clay Brittain, Jr. Center for Resort Tourism at Coastal Carolina University, tdamonte@coastal.edu.

RESTAURANT BENEFIT

As a benefit of membership with the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce/CVB, member dining establishments are listed in a dining grid on GrandStrandRestaurants.com. Additionally, member restaurants can be highlighted in both the monthly "Featured Chef and Featured Restaurant" editorial vignettes for no additional cost simply by sending us the information outlined below.

Why should you participate? First, you have already paid for this benefit as part of your membership fee, so taking advantage of this is a great way to get the most for your membership dollars. Second, we are promoting the GrandStrandRestaurants.com site in television, print, radio and online advertising throughout

the Grand Strand. This is a wonderful way to get your business in front of the community by simply sending us a write-up about a wonderful recipe your establishment offers and/or by giving us a write-up about your dining establishment so we can promote you.

All we need to start giving your business the additional privileges you are entitled to is for you to forward us the following information:

Featured Recipe of the Month Submissions

- Chef picture (.jpg or .gif format) (Make sure to include name and correct title.)
- Information about chef (500 words or less)
- Recipe (no more than two)

Featured Restaurant of the Month Submissions

- Logo and/or photo of your restaurant (.jpg or .gif format)
- Address, phone and Web address
- Information about the restaurant (year established, cuisine, etc.) (750 words or less)

Provide your information in the format outlined to Shannon Haswell, membership coordinator, at Shannon.Haswell@VisitMyrtleBeach.com. Please take a moment to check out the grid information listed for your dining establishment on GrandStrandRestaurants.com and send any updates/changes.

For more information, contact Haswell at Shannon.Haswell@VisitMyrtleBeach.com or (843) 916-7240.

Weekend Getaways, Continued From Cover Page

with children under 18 years of age. The top three events that would motivate the respondents to take a spring vacation are a spring food and wine festival, a beach and oldies music festival and a spring arts and film festival.

The "Myrtle Beach Fall and Spring Travel Planning" study provides excellent information for advertising the Myrtle Beach area. While a four to six hour drive market provides a 25.2 million visitor potential, the percentage of individuals who would come for an event is low. Therefore, the chamber must make our core advertising/promotion the central part of the advertising plan and the events the icing on the cake.

A complete copy of the "Myrtle Beach Fall and Spring Travel Planning Survey" is available on the chamber's Web site at MyrtleBeachAreaChamber.com under the heading Myrtle Beach 2009 Visitation Outlook.

Where in the world is the CVB?

Oct. 13-17	2009 Travel, Events and Management in Sports	New Orleans, LA
Oct. 27-30	2009 Rejuvenate Marketplace,	Birmingham, AL

CVB-Group Sales is busy this month welcoming 10 groups with 1,380 attendees.

Myrtle Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau Insider is published monthly by the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, 1200 N. Oak St., Myrtle Beach, SC 29577. If you have story ideas or questions, please contact Pat Creed, membership programs manager and CVB member liaison, at Pat.Creed@VisitMyrtleBeach.com or (843) 916-7225. Printed by Inlet Printing Co.