

Myrtle Beach
2012 Economic Impact Study
—May 2013—

Objectives:

- **Determine the conversion rate for those exposed to Myrtle Beach marketing efforts**
 - How effective have our marketing efforts been in turning potential visitors into actual visitors, and how does the online channel contribute?
- **Determine the revenue our conversion efforts generated**
 - Who spent what and where - what was the average spend per vacationing group, where did they spend it, and how much overall revenue was generated?
- **Revisit our Net Promoter Score**
 - Does the Myrtle Beach experience continue to generate word-of-mouth recommendations?
- **Assess the use and usefulness of the Internet in general and VisitMyrtleBeach.com in particular**
- **Examine party composition, visitor types, trip duration and activity participation**

Who we talked to:

- The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce provided us with a random list of VisitMyrtleBeach.com visitors and E-newsletter recipients. Additional sample was sourced from Equation's Myrtle Beach Panel.

	n-size
Email - Website Guide Order	827
E-newsletter	1,846
Website survey	682
Panelists	41
Total completes:	3,396
Margin of Error	±1.7%

- Respondents were surveyed between March 27 – April 17, 2013.



- Travelers continue to utilize the Internet in their consideration of Myrtle Beach as a possible destination
- Of those that consider/inquire, more than half convert with a high return per marketing dollar
- First timers are considering MB in 2013 at higher rates than before
- Once here, people are spending more than in previous years
- For those that visit, they are hooked (Net Promoter is extremely high)

Key Finding

The Internet remains the most utilized information source for trip planning, with 71% using it in vacation planning

Among those who use the Internet in planning, VisitMyrtleBeach.com is a vital resource: it is used by 82%

54% of converts begin planning their visit 1 to 4 months in advance, and 34% begin planning 4+ months in advance. Advance trip planning coincides with VisitMyrtleBeach.com usage.

Key Finding

Our Net Promoter Score of 85 demonstrates considerable word-of-mouth equity for the Myrtle Beach area

The vast majority of Myrtle Beach visitors highly recommend us.
What are we doing to leverage this outstanding word-of-mouth?

Key Finding

Marketing efforts continue to successfully generate and convert a tremendous amount of leads

The conversion rate is an estimated **51%** among website visitors, resulting in an estimated 2,658,214 travel parties in 2012.

Among Converts, **54% were Repeat Converts**, and **38% were New Converts**—visiting the Myrtle Beach area for the first time ever in 2012. The remaining 8% of 2012 visitors are Lapsed Converts (last visited 6+ years ago).

Key Finding

We continue to see very high and encouraging returns on our marketing spend

On average, guests spent \$2,770 per group over the length of their Myrtle Beach stay – that’s an estimated **\$337 dollars of revenue per marketing dollar** spent from *converted site visitors alone*.

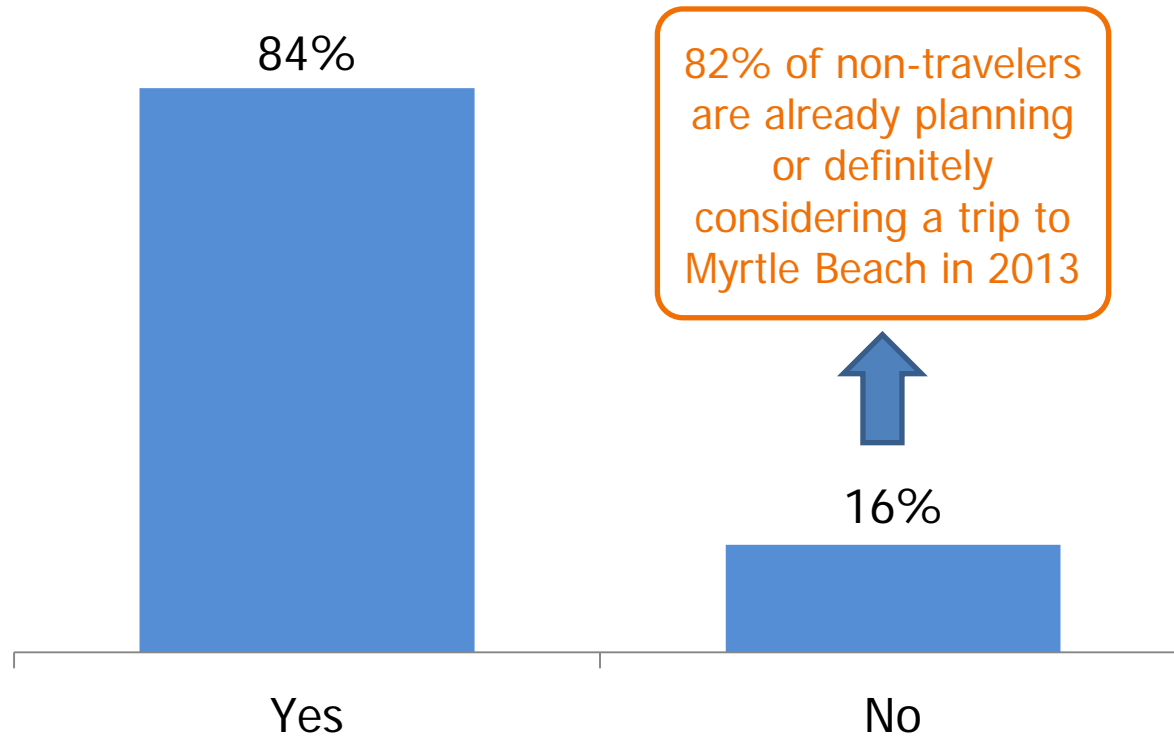


Myrtle Beach Visitation

2012 Leisure Travelers

84% of Inquirers took a leisure trip in 2012. Among those who did not, 82% are planning a trip to Myrtle Beach in 2013.

Took a Vacation in 2012

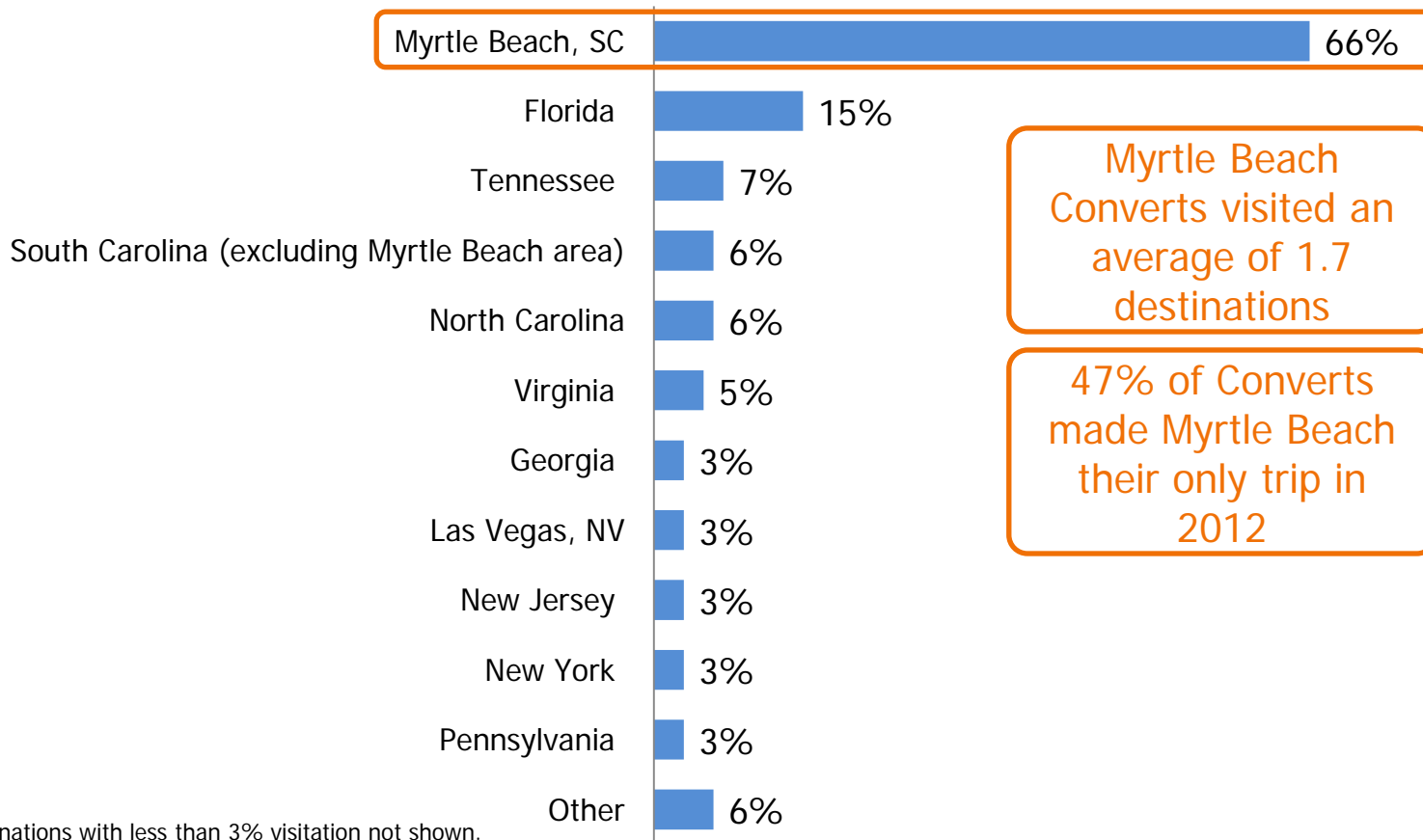


Base: Total Inquirers (n=3396)

Vacation Destinations

Among inquirers/site visitors, 66% of those who took a vacation in 2012 went to Myrtle Beach.

Destinations Visited in 2012

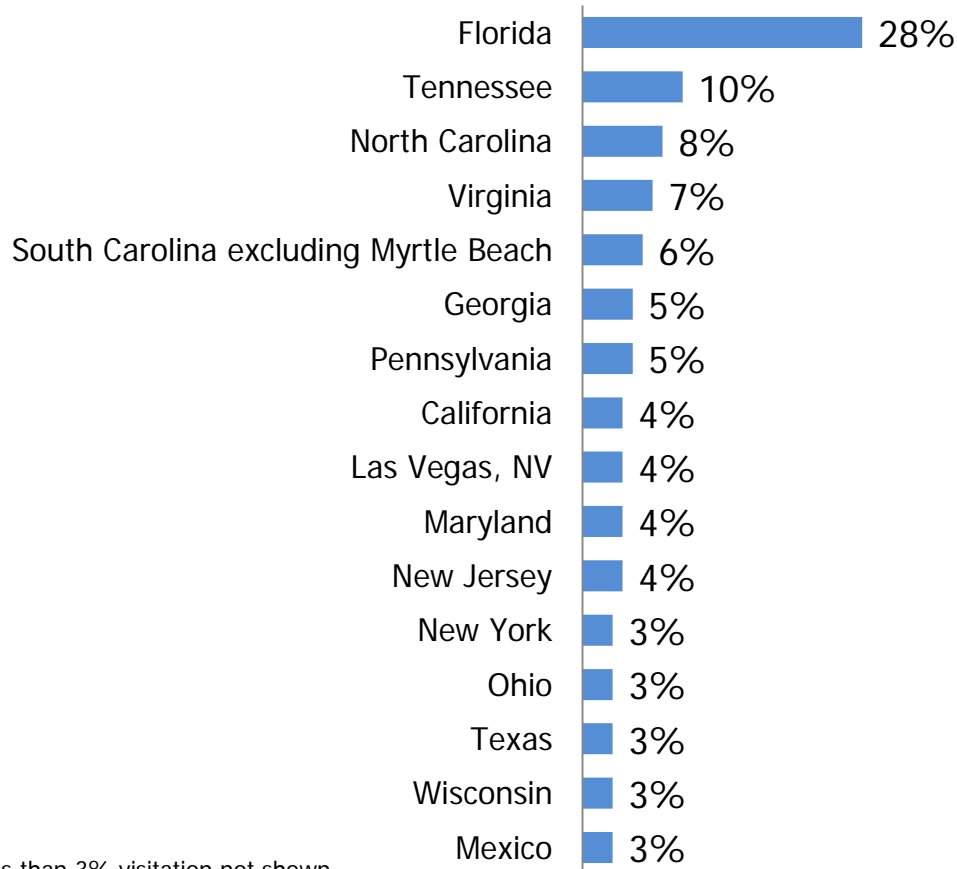


Note: Destinations with less than 3% visitation not shown.

Base: Took a vacation in 2012 (n=2932)

Florida remains the most popular destination for people we didn't convert after an inquiry.

Destinations Visited by Non-Converts



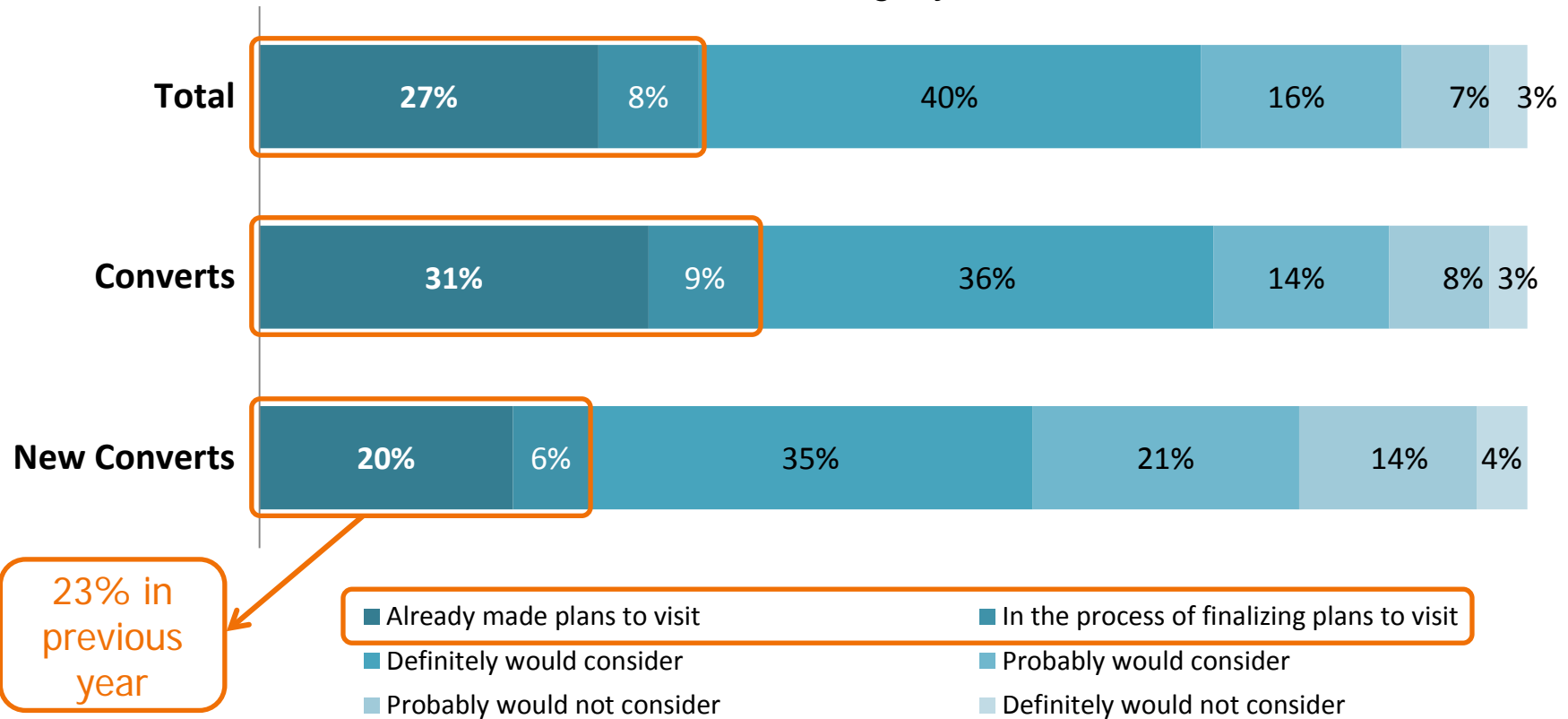
Note: Destinations with less than 3% visitation not shown.

Base: Non-Converts; did not visit Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=811)

Likelihood of 2013 Myrtle Beach Visit

26% of first-time Myrtle Beach visitors (New Converts) are already making 2013 plans, and 35% would 'definitely consider' returning.

Likelihood of Visiting Myrtle Beach in 2013



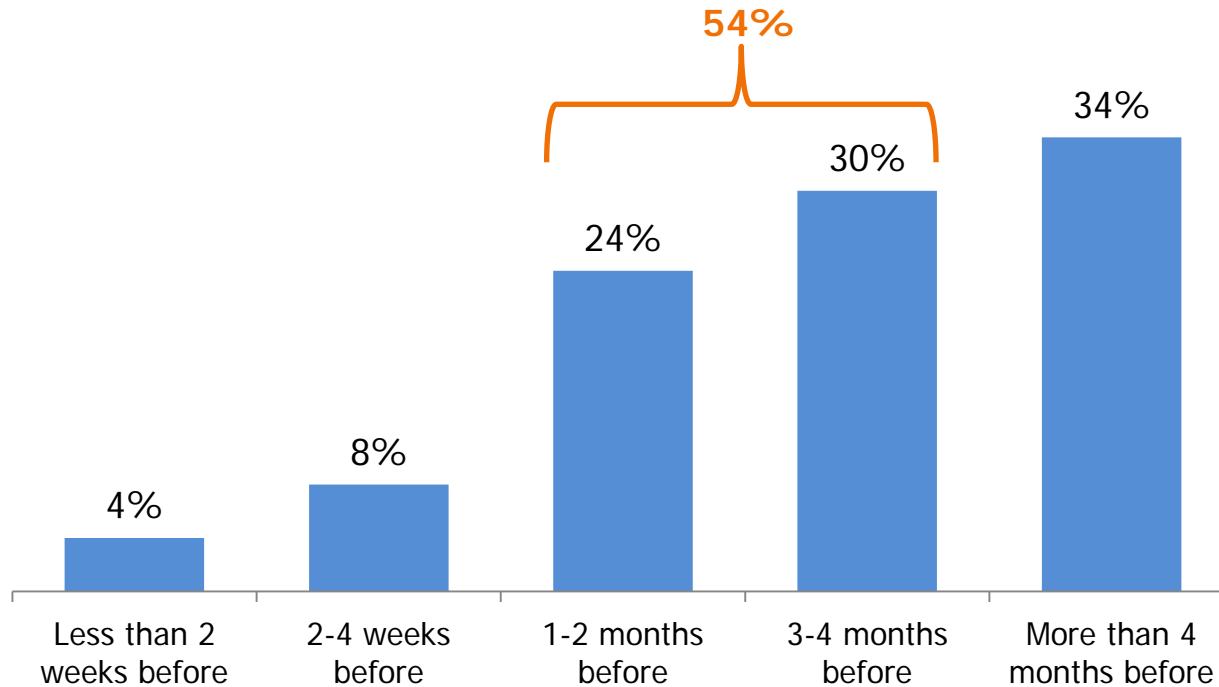
Base: Inquirers who took a vacation in 2012 (n=2942)



Vacation Planning & Information Sources

54% of Converts began planning their visit 1 to 4 months in advance, and 34% began planning more than 4 months in advance.

How far in advance did you plan for your trip?



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach In 2012 (n=2132)

Information Source:
 Internet/Online

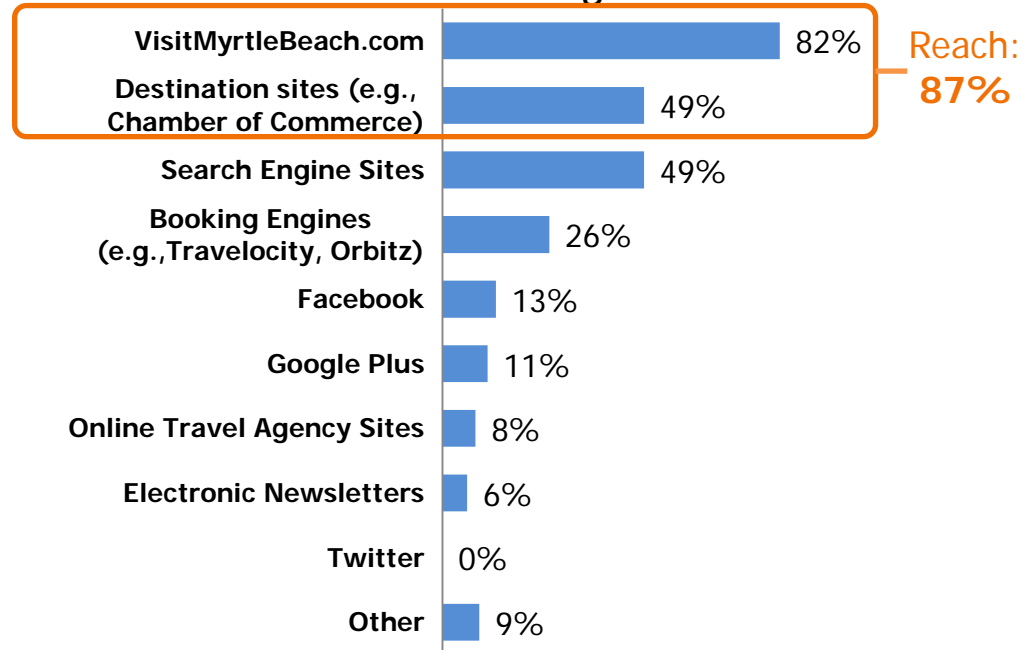
The Internet is the most utilized information source for trip planning. VisitMyrtleBeach.com is a fantastic resource for visitors, as it is used by 82% of people who are using the Internet to plan their Myrtle Beach vacation.

*Used the Internet
 in Planning*



*Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012
 (n=2132)*

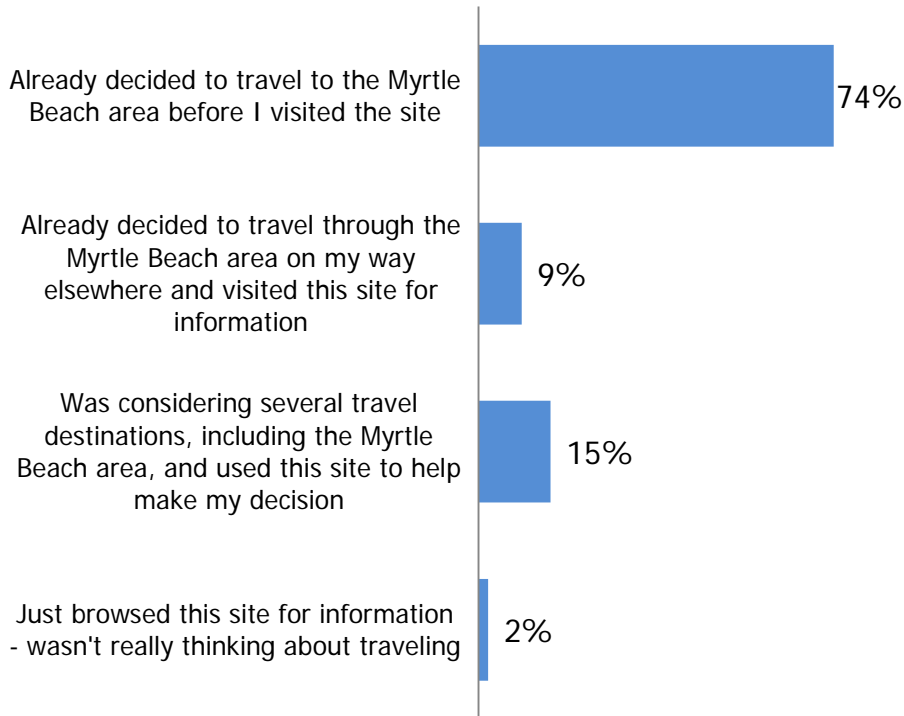
*Online Sources
 Used in Planning*



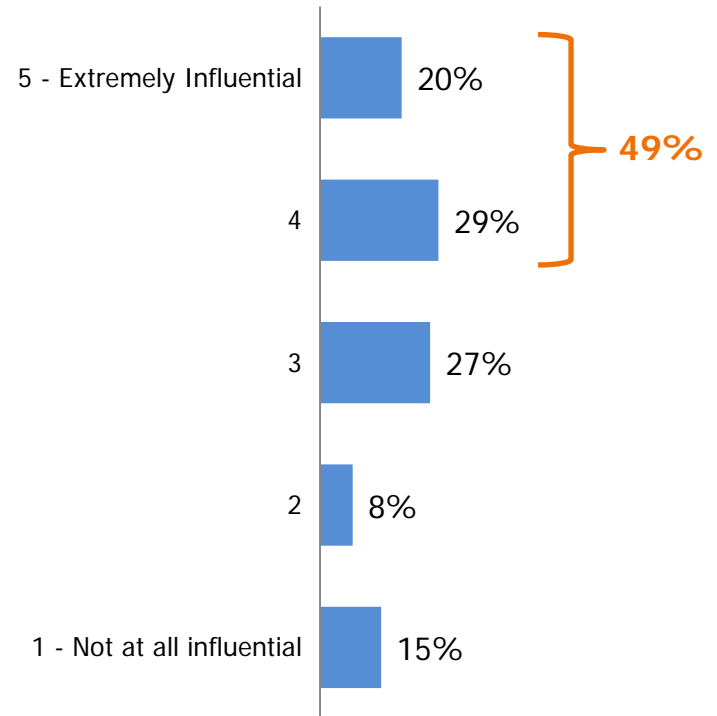
*Base: Converts who used the Internet for planning
 (n=1275)*

Although the majority of visitors say they already decided to visit the area before going to VisitMyrtleBeach.com, 49% say the site influenced their decision – reinforcing an already strong desire to vacation here.

*Role of VisitMyrtleBeach.com
 in MB Visitation*



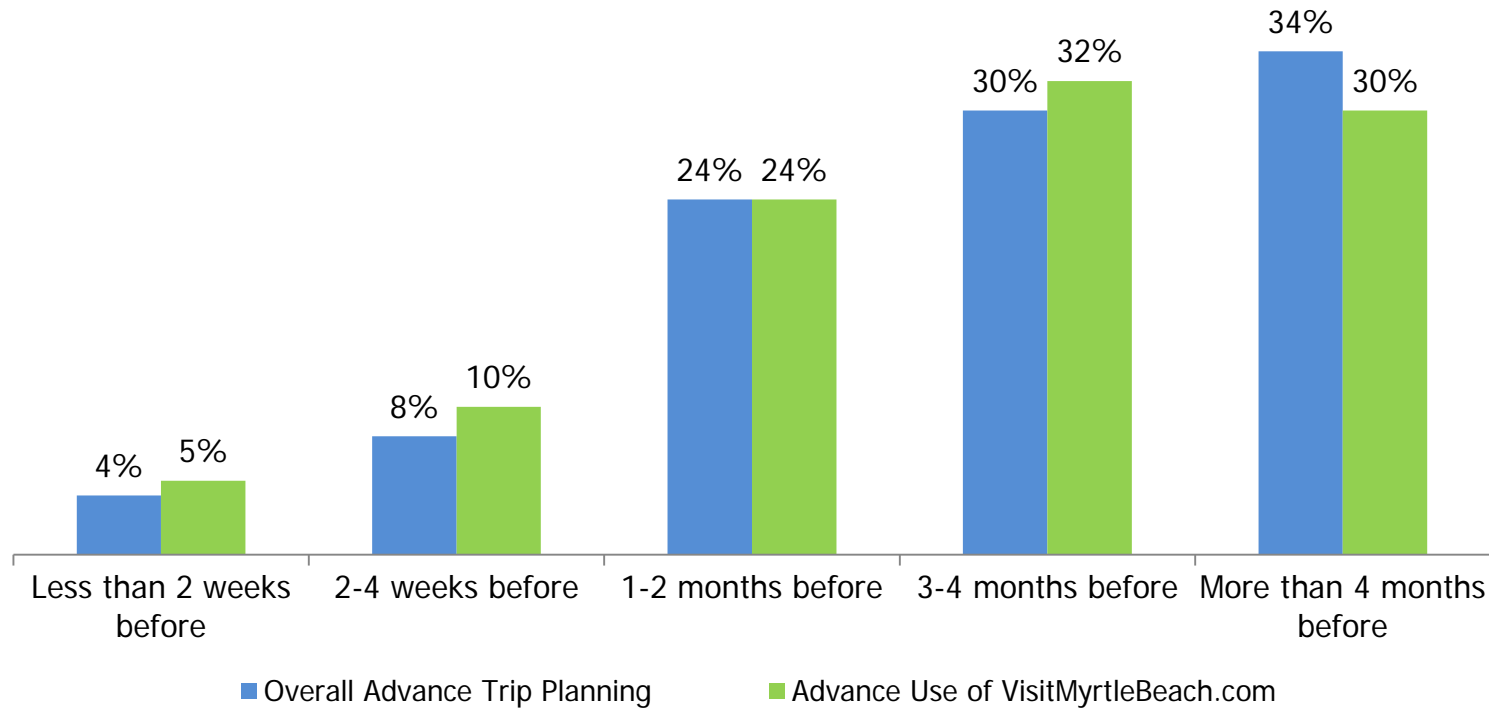
*Influence of VisitMyrtleBeach.com
 in MB Visitation*



Base: Used VisitMyrtleBeach.com in planning (n=1048)

Initial VisitMyrtleBeach.com visitation mirrors overall advance trip planning, indicating the site is an initial step in the planning process.

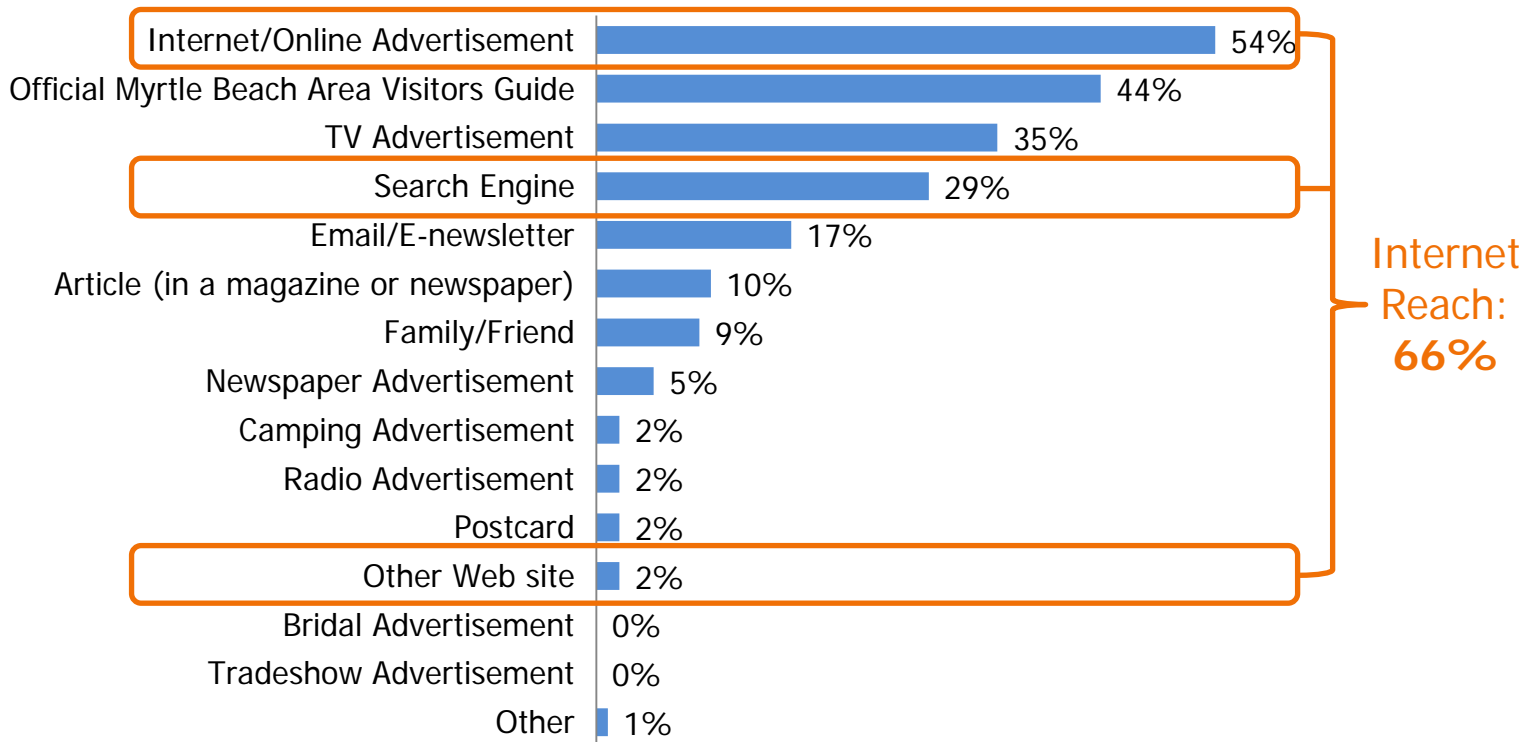
Advance Visitation of VisitMyrtleBeach.com



Base: Used VisitMyrtleBeach.com in planning (n=1048)

Among those citing advertising as the source of their awareness of VisitMyrtleBeach.com, 66% learn about it through the Internet, followed by the Visitors Guide (44%).

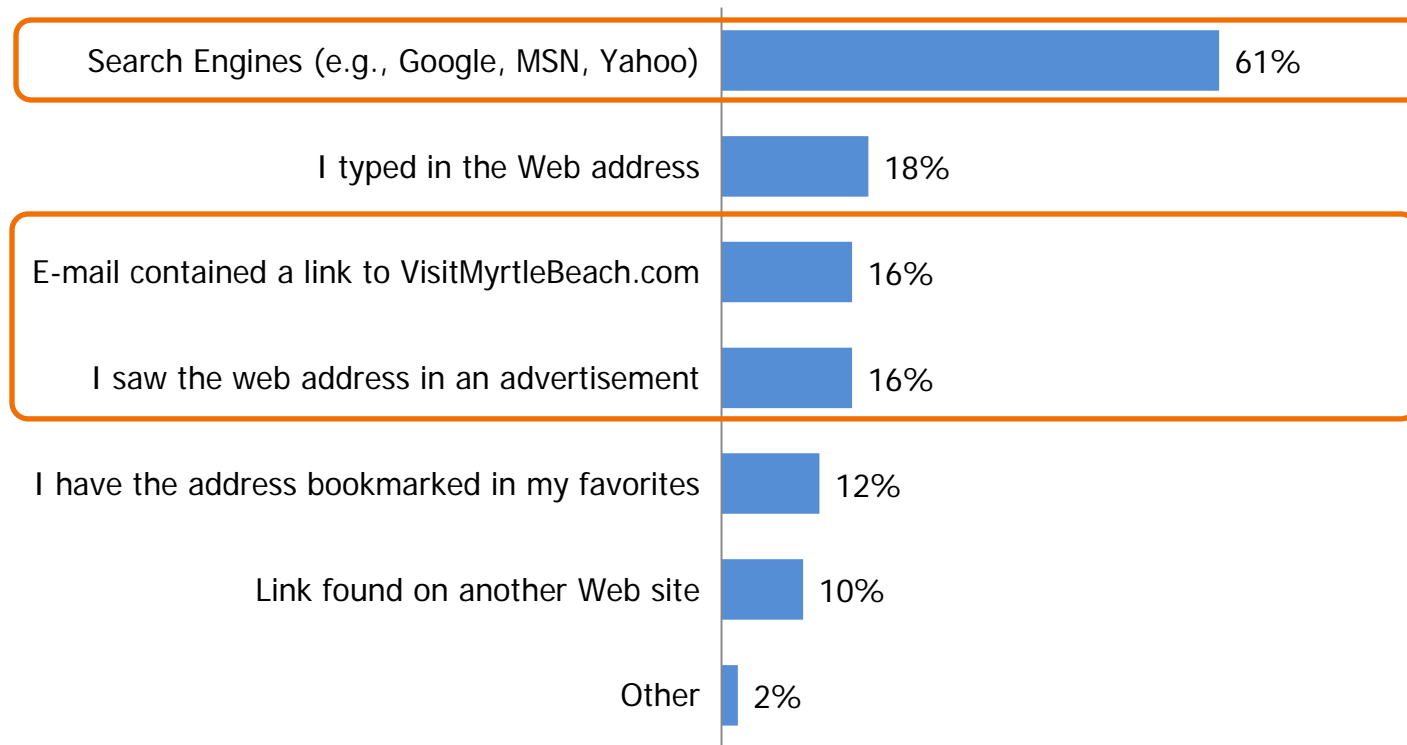
Ad Source of VisitMyrtleBeach.com



Base: Learned about VisitMyrtleBeach.com through an advertisement (n=163)

At 61%, search engines remain the dominant source of discovery of VisitMyrtleBeach.com. Beyond SEO, other online efforts (ads, email campaigns) are also successful at driving site visitation.

Means of Finding VisitMyrtleBeach.com



Base: Used VisitMyrtleBeach.com in planning (n=1048)

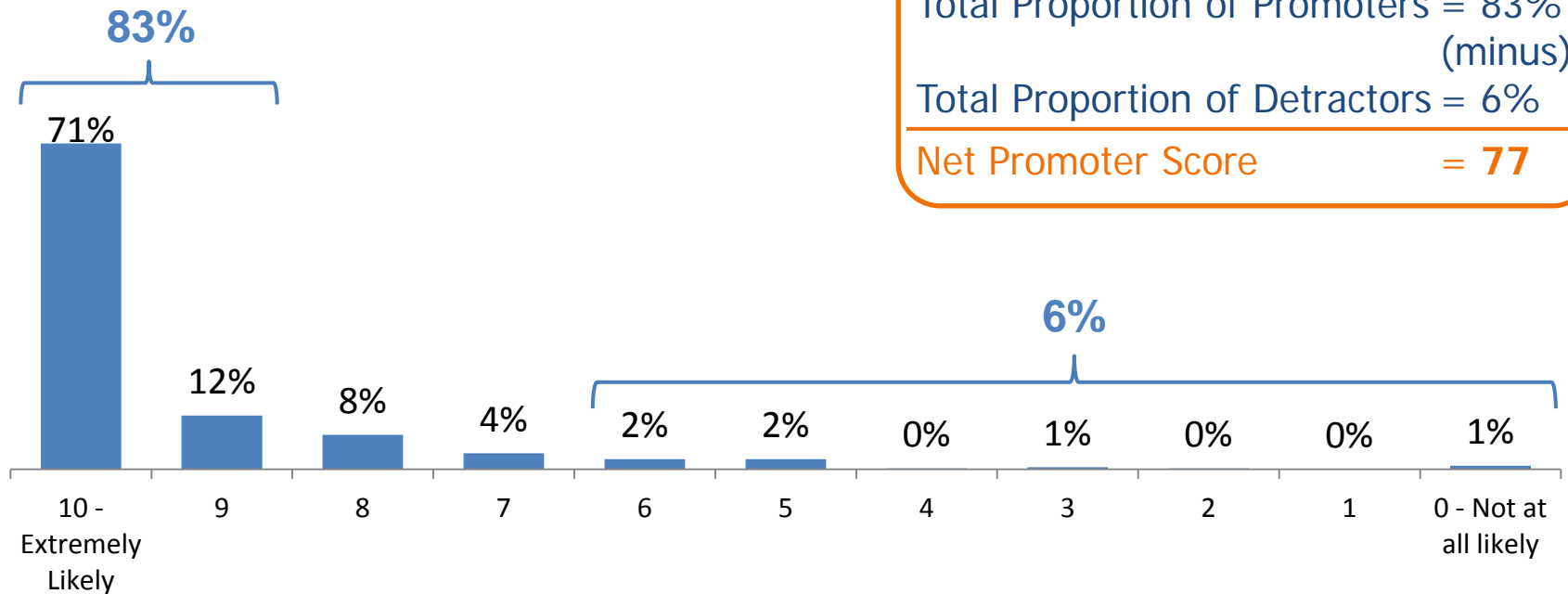


Net Promoter Score & Interest in Visiting

Net Promoter Score Index Explained

How likely is it that you would recommend Myrtle Beach as a vacation place to your family/friends?

- The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a brand in and of itself and correlates extremely highly with satisfaction but is a more sensitive measure to high and low scores.
- 'Recommendations' are what every brand should aim for – we need to set that bar.



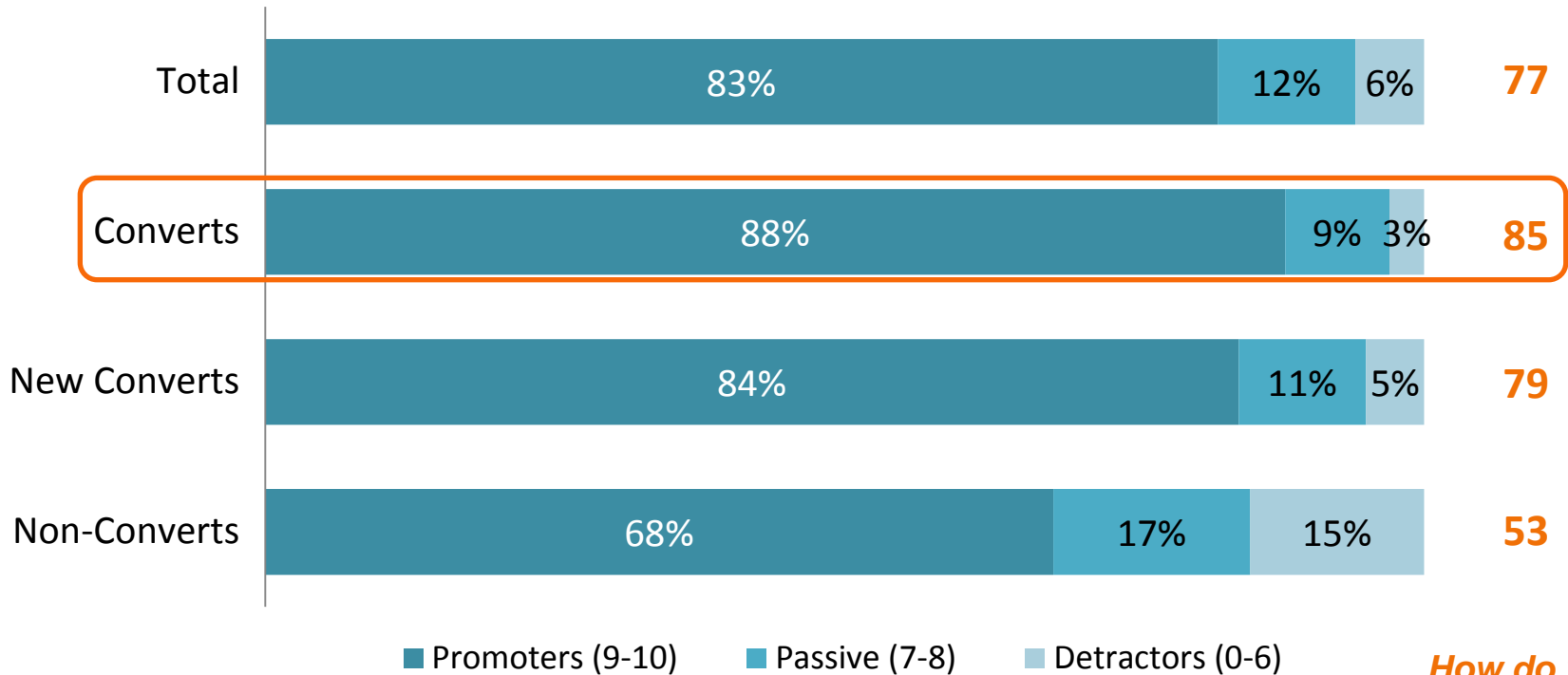
Base: Took a vacation in 2012 (n=2942)

Net Promoter Score Index

We have an outstanding Net Promoter Score – 85% among Converts. This represents considerable word-of-mouth equity for the Myrtle Beach area.

Net Promoter Score Index

Likelihood to Recommend Myrtle Beach

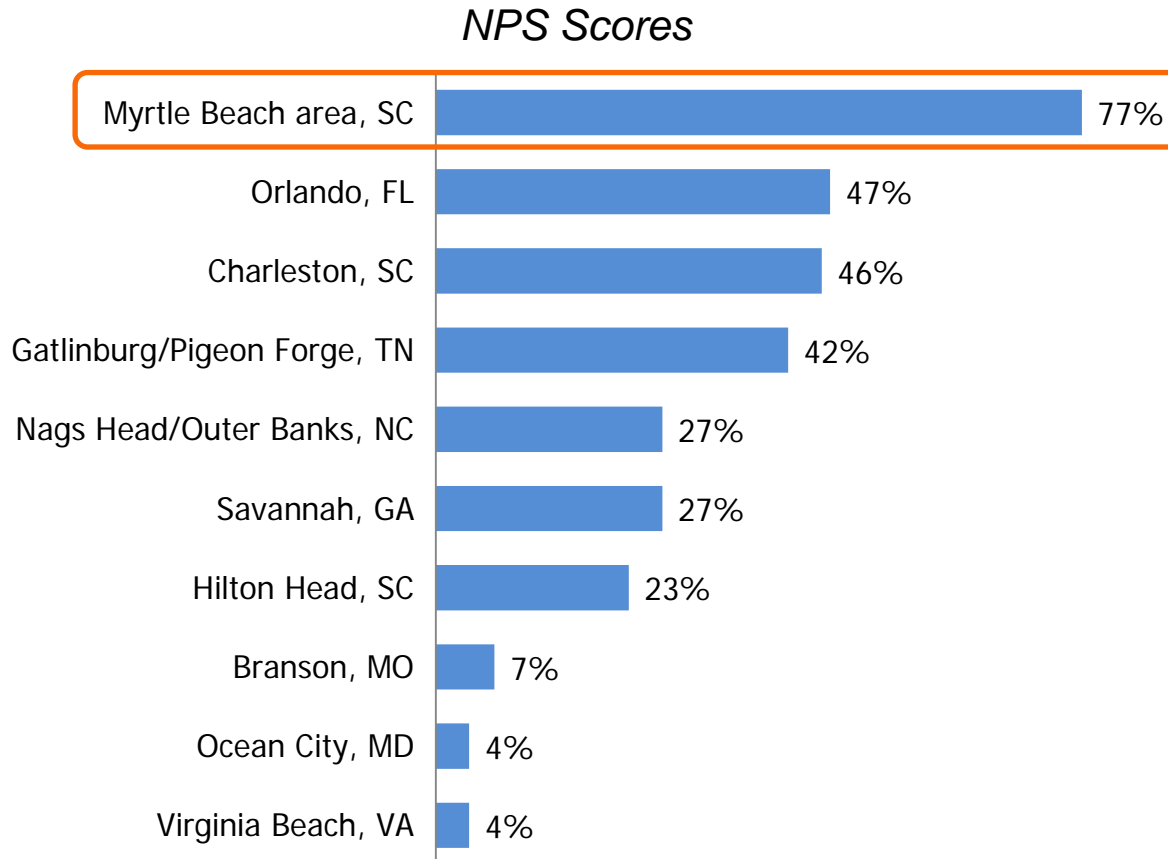


How do we leverage NPS?

Base: Took a vacation in 2012 (n=2942)

Net Promoter Score Index vs. Others

Among visitors of these respective vacation destinations, the Myrtle Beach area's Net Promoter Score is the highest.

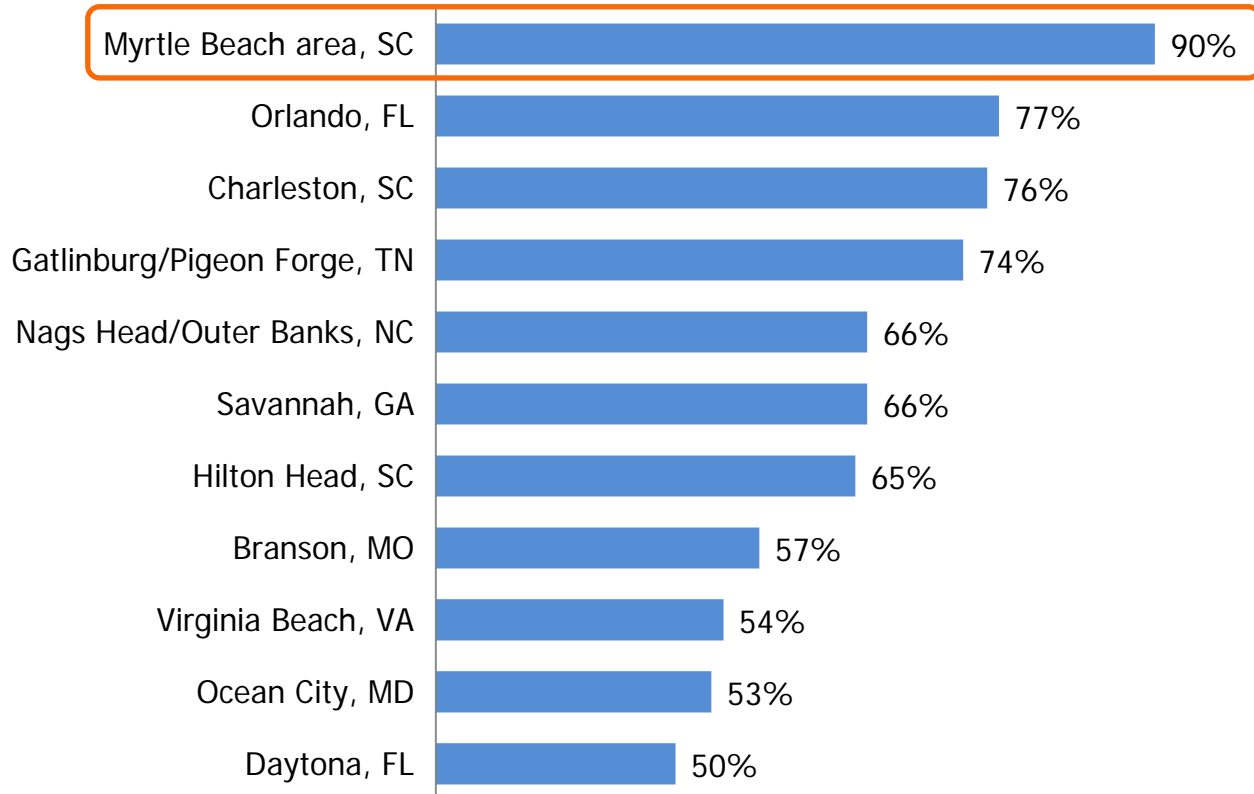


Base: Varies, based on those who have visited respective destinations.

Likelihood to Recommend

Myrtle Beach ranks first in likelihood to recommend among competitive destinations.

Likelihood to Recommend (Top-3-Box)



Base: Varies, based on those who have visited respective destinations.



Myrtle Beach Website Traffic, Inquiries & Conversion Rates

Website Conversion Calculation

The conversion figures are calculated using industry standard factors established to reconcile stated intention and actual behavior. These factors are then applied to the intent-to-visit responses, providing more realistic and conservative results:

	Stated Intent*		Factor		Resulting Intent
I have already made plans to visit the Myrtle Beach area	50%	×	80%	=	40%
I am in the process of finalizing plans to visit the Myrtle Beach area	19%	×	50%	=	9%
I would definitely/probably consider visiting the Myrtle Beach area [NET]	30%	×	5%	=	2%
I would definitely not/probably not consider visiting the Myrtle Beach area [NET]	1%				

51%
 Conversion
 Rate

* Source: VisitMyrtleBeach.com website survey.

Website Conversion Rate & Return

The website conversion rate of 51% is based those who have planned, or are likely to plan, a trip to Myrtle Beach.

2012 Visitor Conversion & Marketing Return*

Website Visits	8,686,973	
Adjusted Website Visits ¹	5,212,184	
Conversion Rate ²	51%	Travel parties increased by 23%
Converts	2,658,214	
Spend Per Trip	\$2,770	
Visitor Expenditures ³	\$7,362,661,931	Increased by 4%
Total Marketing/Media Expenditure	\$22,297,708	
Revenue Per Marketing Dollar Spent	\$337	

1. Adjusted Website Visits: Weighted down to 60% to adjust for repeat web site traffic, such as those viewing from multiple devices and/or locations over time.
2. Percentage of web site visitors who stated they have already made arrangements or are planning to visit Myrtle Beach. Factored for accuracy to 40% of "made reservations", 9% of "planning to visit Myrtle Beach", and 2% of "considering Myrtle Beach".
3. Visitor Expenditures: Projection of average trip expenditure of what visitors spent during their stay on lodging, dining, shopping, entertainment, and transportation and the conversion rate of visitors to annual web site traffic.

* Figures based on VisitMyrtleBeach.com site traffic metrics and 2012 website survey results.

Myrtle Beach Visitor Spending Patterns

The average party spent \$2,770 in total – accommodations were the largest single chunk at \$673 for the total stay (\$125/night on average).

Trip Expenditures

	Average Expenditure per Party
Accommodations	\$673
Restaurants/ Groceries	\$571
Golf	\$66
Entertainment/ Attractions	\$424
Shopping	\$506
Daily transportation (excluding rental car)	\$133
Rental car	\$82
Miscellaneous	\$315
Total Expenditure:	\$2,770

Median Party Size:
4 people

Avg. Length of Stay:
5.9 nights

Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=2132)

Website Conversion Rate & Return by Visitor Type

The impact of marketing can be categorized into different degrees by looking at visitor type. Repeat Converts are loyal to Myrtle Beach and thus marketing efforts largely serve to maintain and reinforce that loyalty. In the absence of destination loyalty, Lapsed and New Converts are more directly impacted by marketing. Distinguishing between these groups provides some insight to the amount of visitation we *influence* and the amount we actually *create*.

*2012 Marketing Return by Visitor Type**

	Repeat Converts (visited 1-5 years ago)	Lapsed Converts (visited 6+ years ago)	New Converts (never visited before)
Proportion of Converts	54%	8%	38%
Travel Parties	1,435,435	212,657	1,010,121
Visitor Expenditures	\$3,975,837,443	\$589,012,954	\$2,797,811,534
Revenue Per Marketing Dollar Spent	\$178	\$26	\$125

* Figures based on VisitMyrtleBeach.com site traffic metrics and 2012 website survey results.

Three key indicators provide demonstrate very strong performance...



51%

Conversion rate among site visitors, with 38% being completely New Converts.

\$337

Revenue generated per dollar spent. \$2,770 spent per party over the length of their stay.

85

Myrtle Beach Net Promoter Score which is exceptionally high – worth leveraging.



Respondent Profile

Respondent Profile

	Total	Converts	New Converts
Age			
18 to 24	1%	1%	1%
25 to 34	9%	9%	9%
35 to 44	22%	22%	23%
45 to 54	30%	31%	31%
55 to 64	26%	25%	25%
65+	12%	12%	10%
Mean (years)	50.4	50.0	49.6
Gender			
Male	30%	30%	25%
Female	70%	70%	75%

	Total	Converts	New Converts
Marital Status			
Married/Partnered	78%	82%	83%
Single	11%	8%	8%
Separated/Divorced/Widowed	12%	10%	9%
Annual Household Income			
Less than \$45,000	28%	23%	23%
\$45,000 - \$74,999	35%	35%	36%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	17%	18%	18%
\$100,000 or more	20%	23%	23%
Mean (\$000s)	67.4	71.2	70.8
Ethnicity			
White	86%	90%	87%
Black	11%	8%	10%
Other	3%	2%	2%

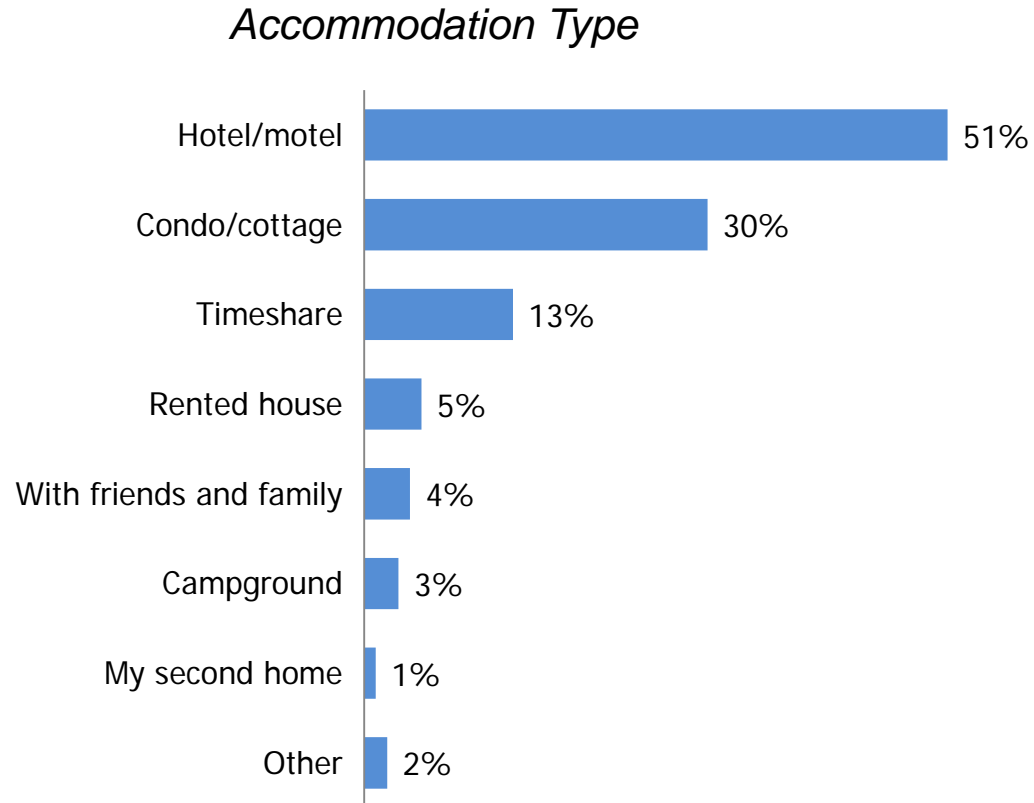
	Total	Converts	New Converts
Employment Status			
Employed full-time	61%	63%	63%
Employed part-time	13%	12%	14%
Other	26%	25%	23%
Education			
HS graduate or less	23%	22%	21%
Some college/technical/trade school	31%	30%	28%
Associate degree	13%	13%	14%
Bachelor degree	21%	23%	24%
Post-graduate study/degree	11%	12%	13%
Other	1%	1%	1%



Appendix I: Accommodations Patterns

Accommodations Patterns

Most Converts stay in paid accommodations, with hotel/motel accommodations being the most common, followed by condo/cottage.

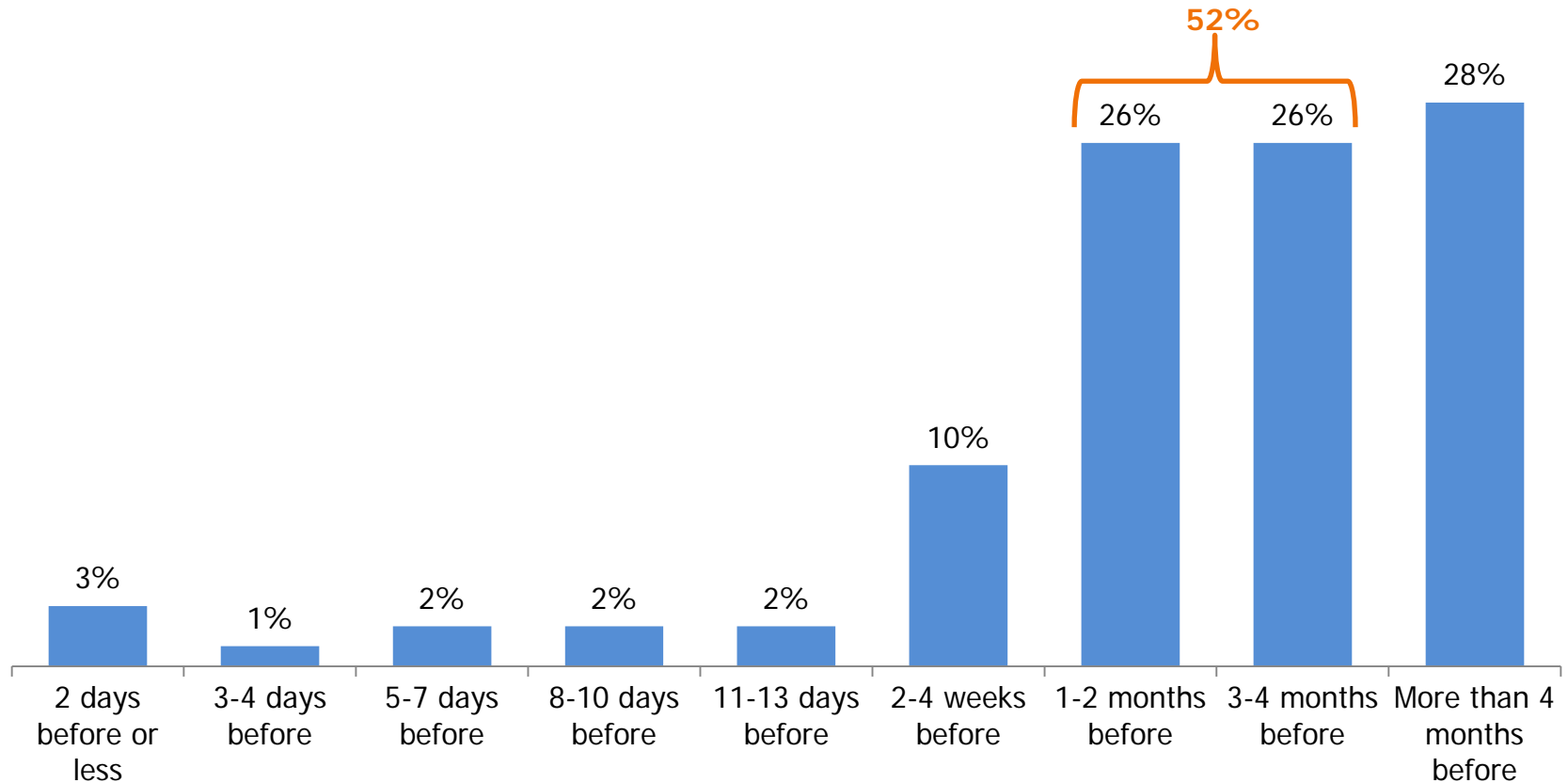


Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=2132)

Accommodations Patterns

52% of Converts make lodging reservations 1 to 4 months prior to arrival, and nearly 30% of Converts reserve 4+ months in advance.

Advance Booking of Accommodations

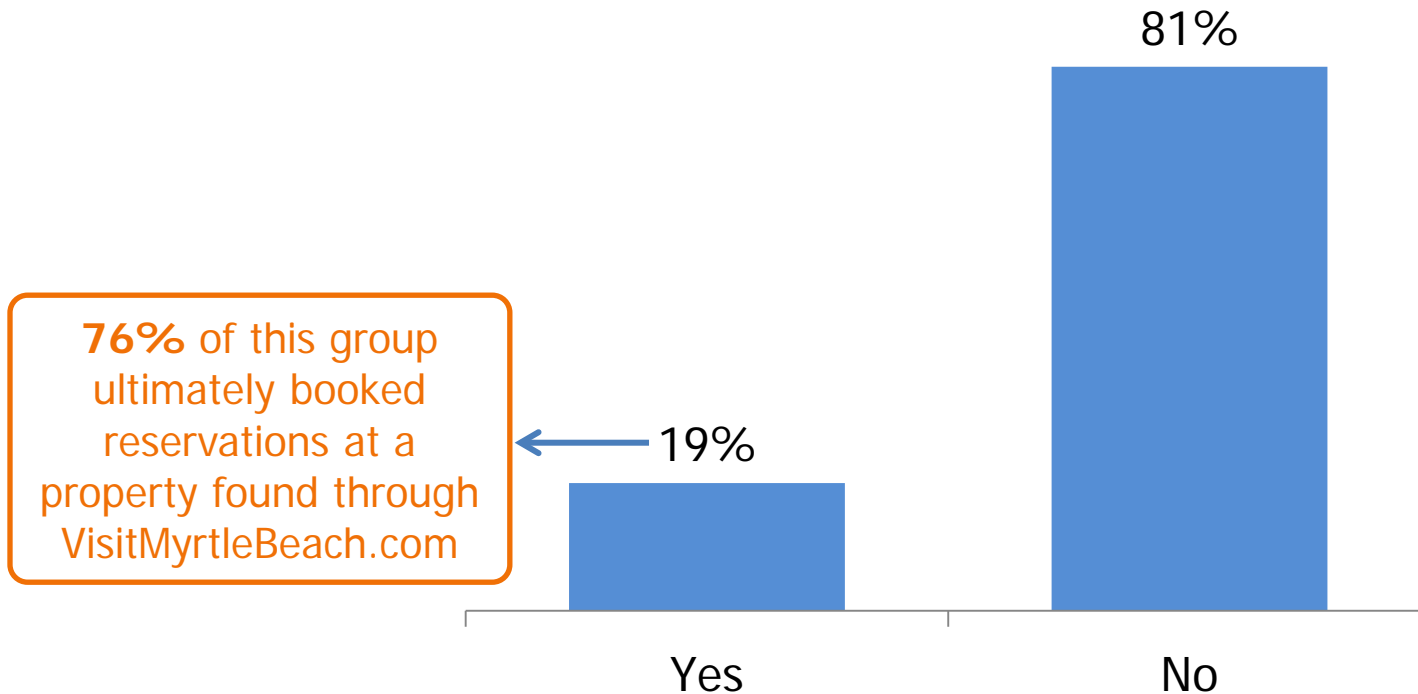


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=2080)

Accommodations Patterns

19% use VisitMyrtleBeach.com to locate and secure accommodations. Among those who use it, 76% ultimately book at a property they find through the site.

Use of VisitMyrtleBeach.com to locate and secure accommodations

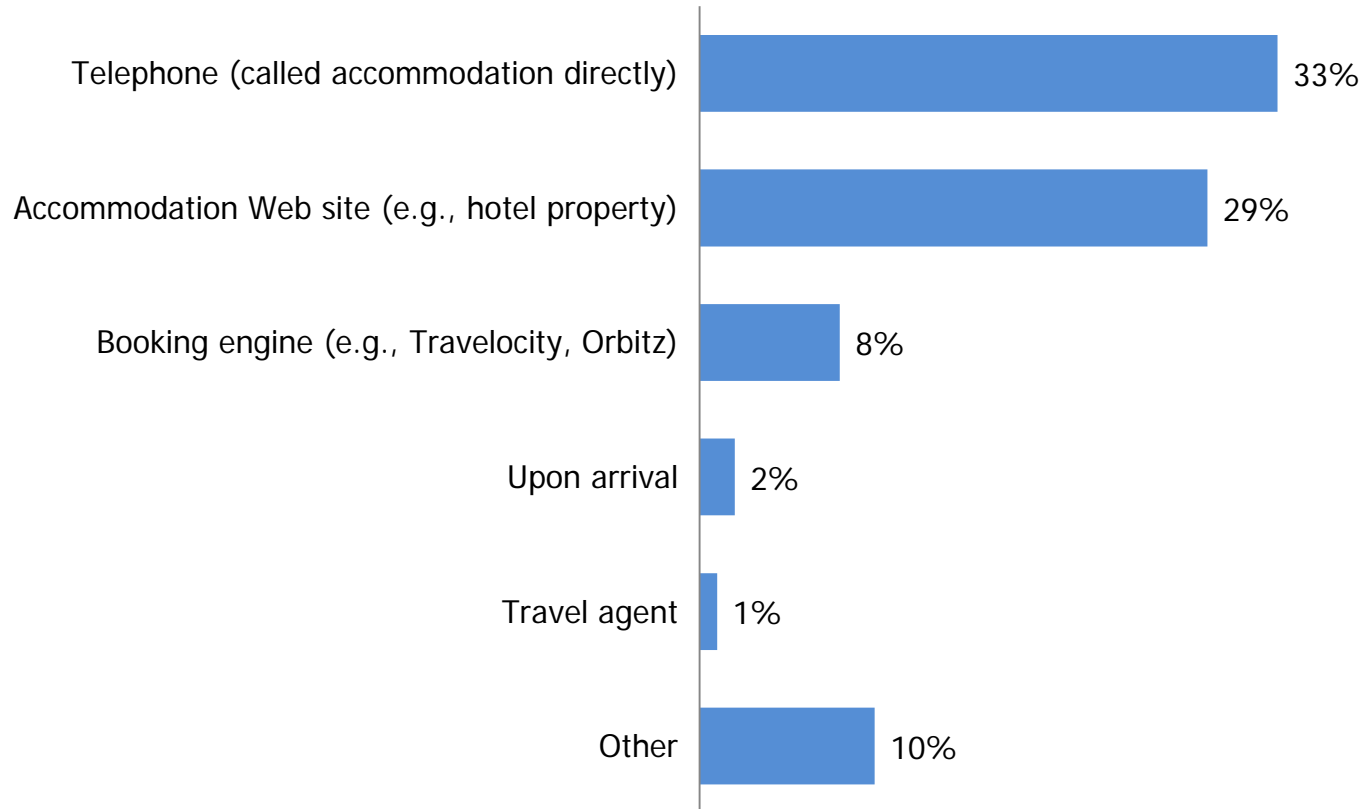


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=2080)

Accommodations Patterns

Among those who stay in paid accommodations on their trip, 33% make reservations via the telephone, and 29% use the lodging's website.

Reservations Channel

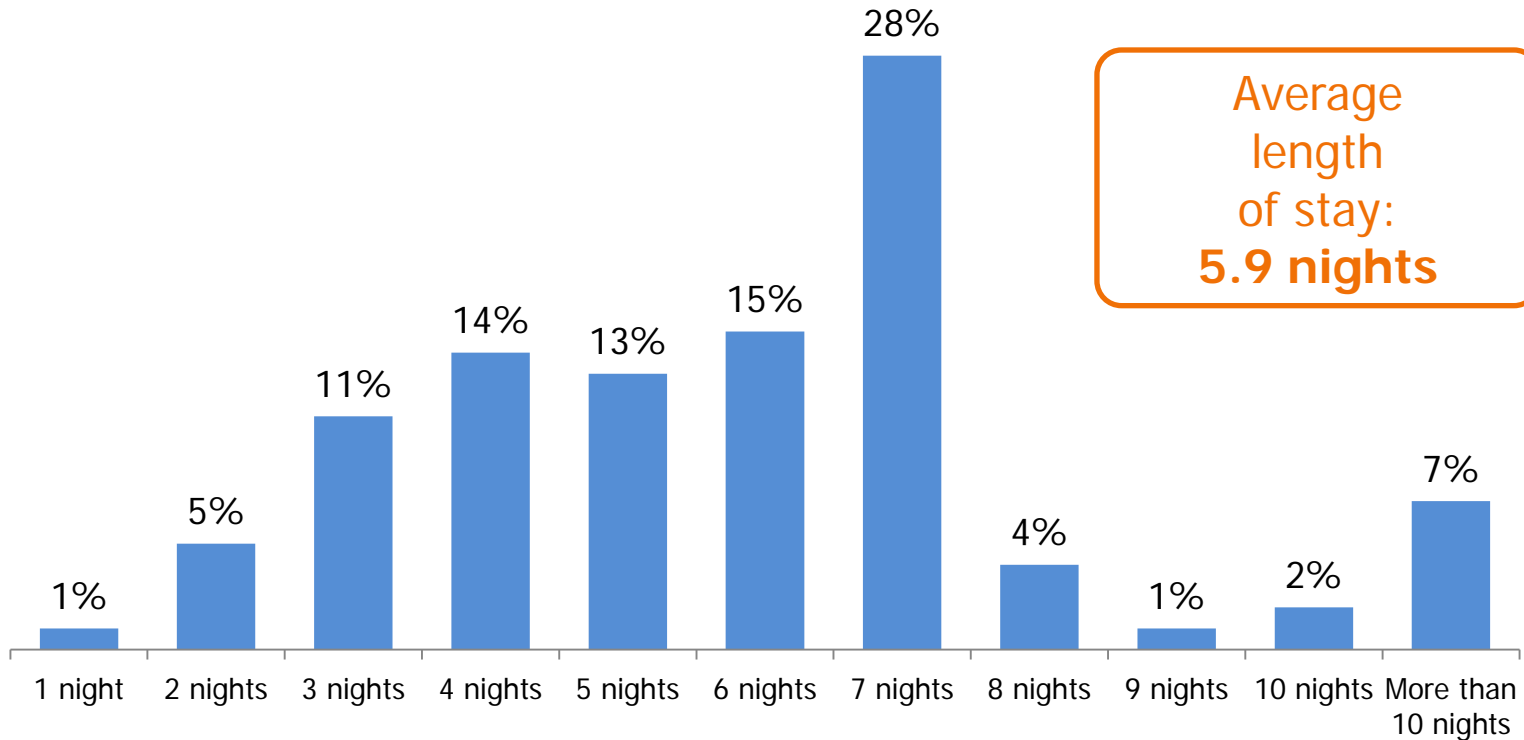


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=2080)

Accommodations Patterns

28% of Converts say they stay in the Myrtle Beach area 7 nights, regardless of whether they pay for their accommodations.

*Length of Trip
(Paid and Unpaid Accommodations)*

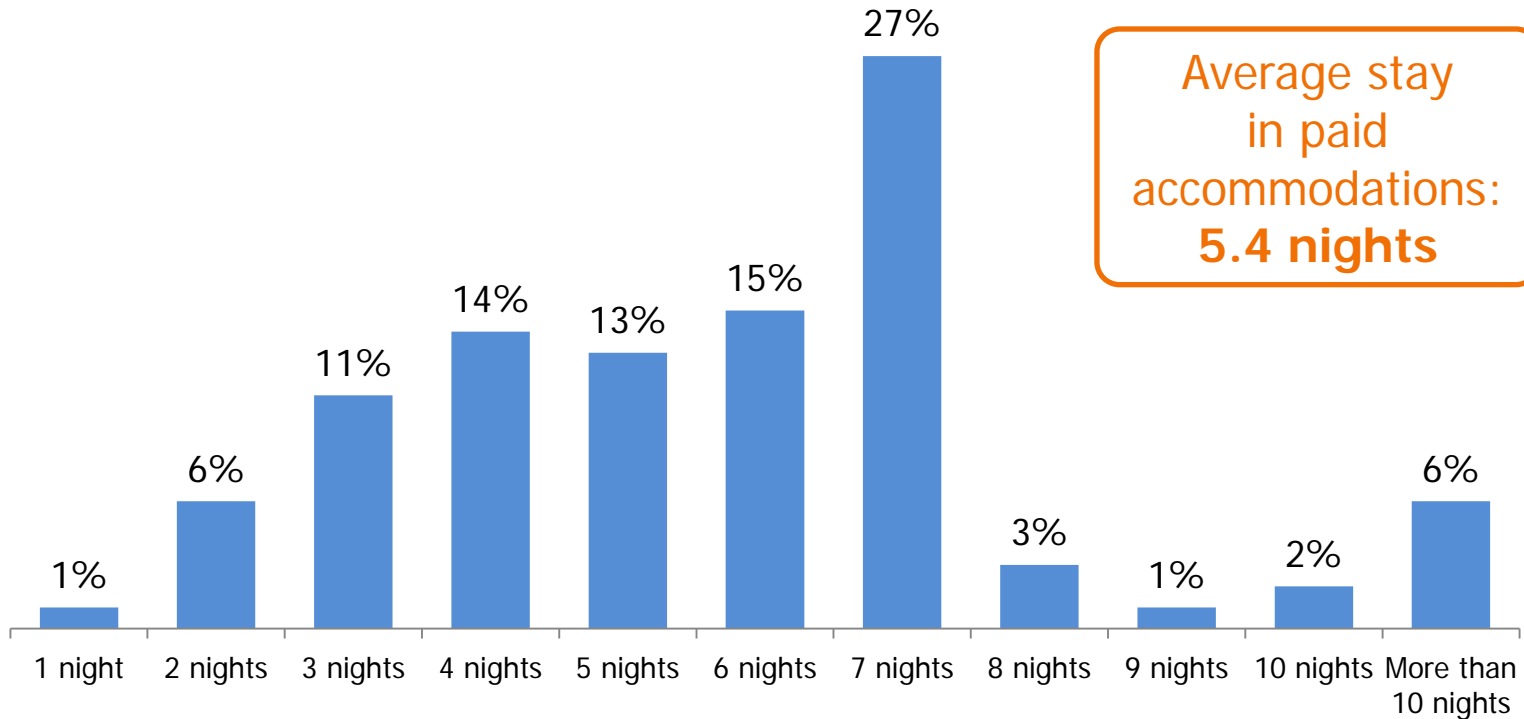


Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=2132)

Accommodations Patterns

As the majority of Converts report staying in paid accommodations, 7 nights is again the most common length of their trip to the Myrtle Beach area.

*Length of Trip
(Paid Accommodations)*

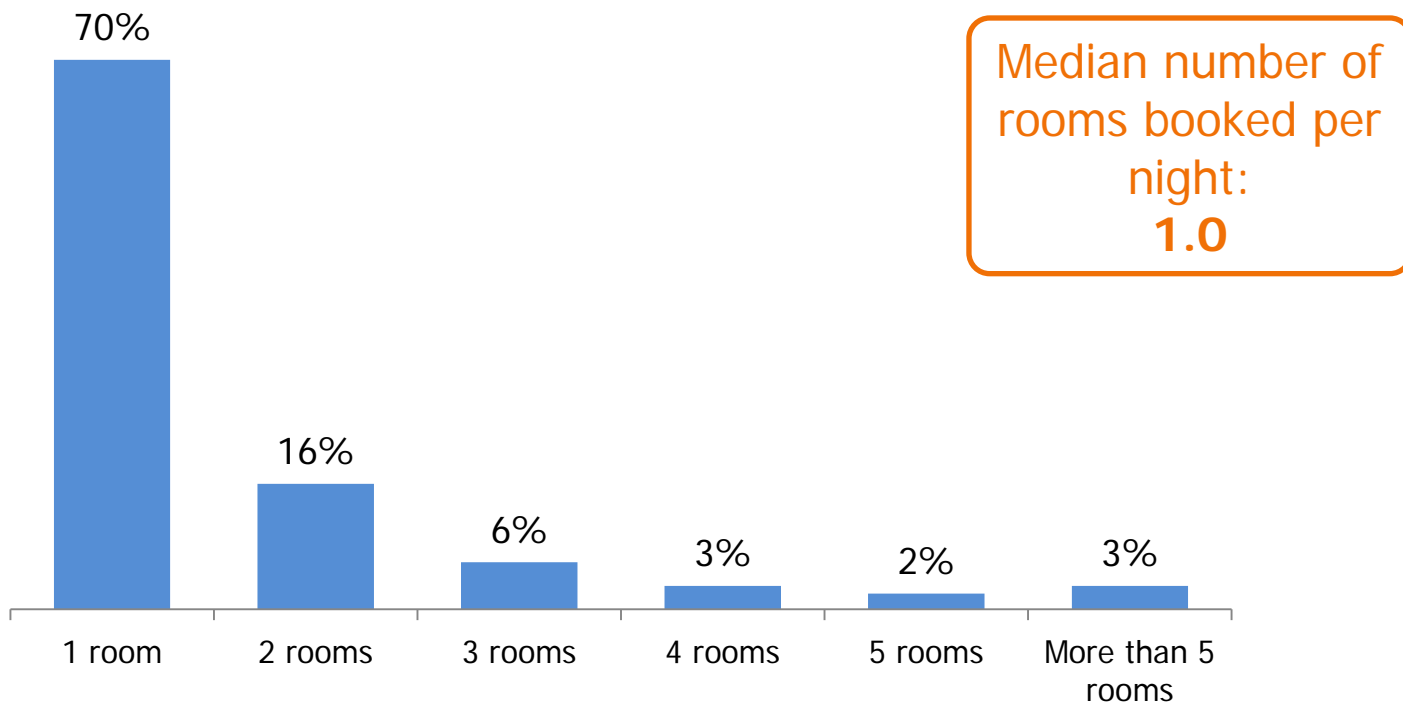


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=1951)

Accommodations Patterns

70% of visitors who stay in paid accommodations book 1 room per night.

Rooms Booked per Night



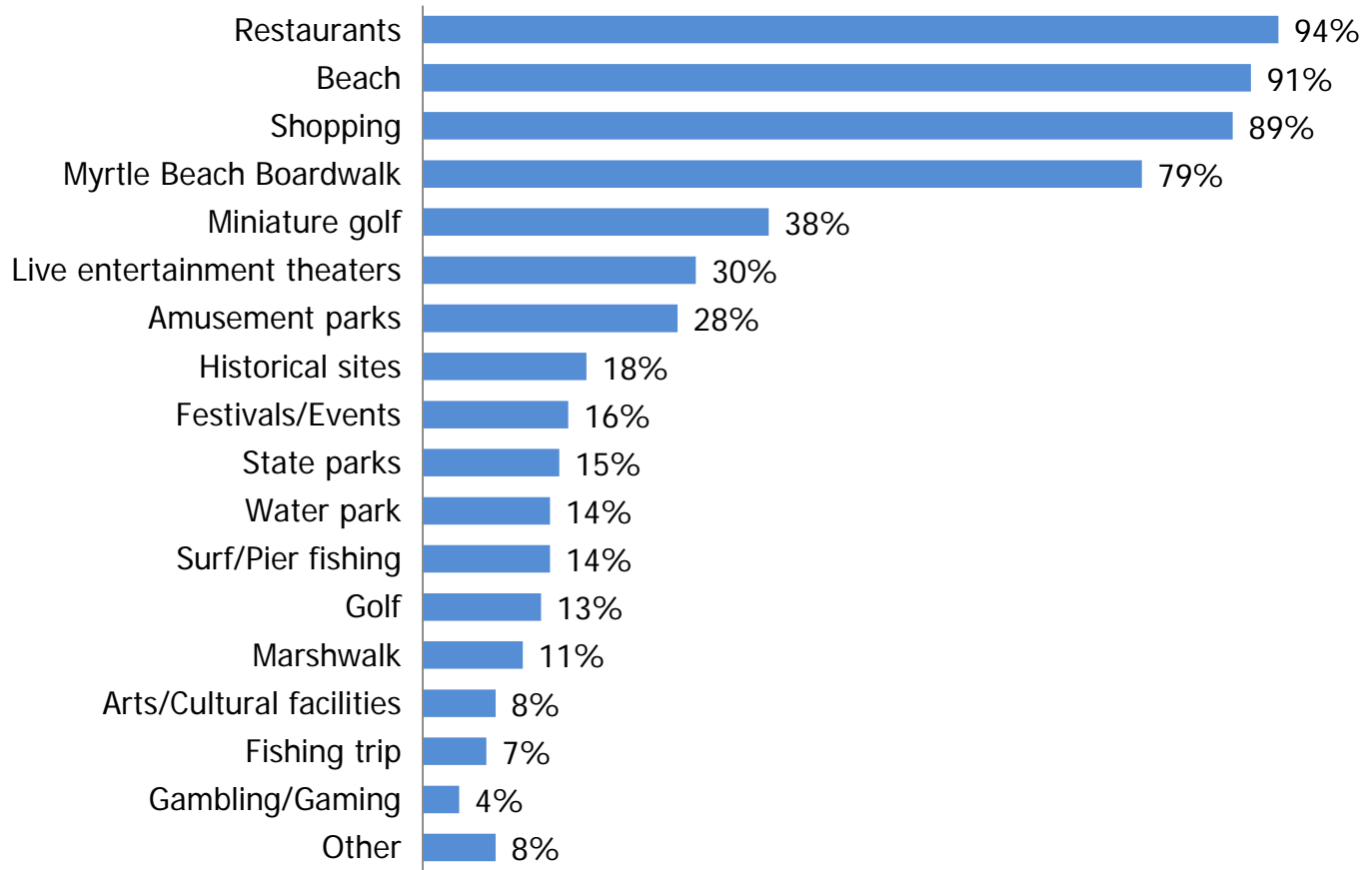
Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=2080)



Appendix II: Travel Patterns

Going to restaurants, the beach, and shopping are by far the most popular activities while in the Myrtle Beach area.

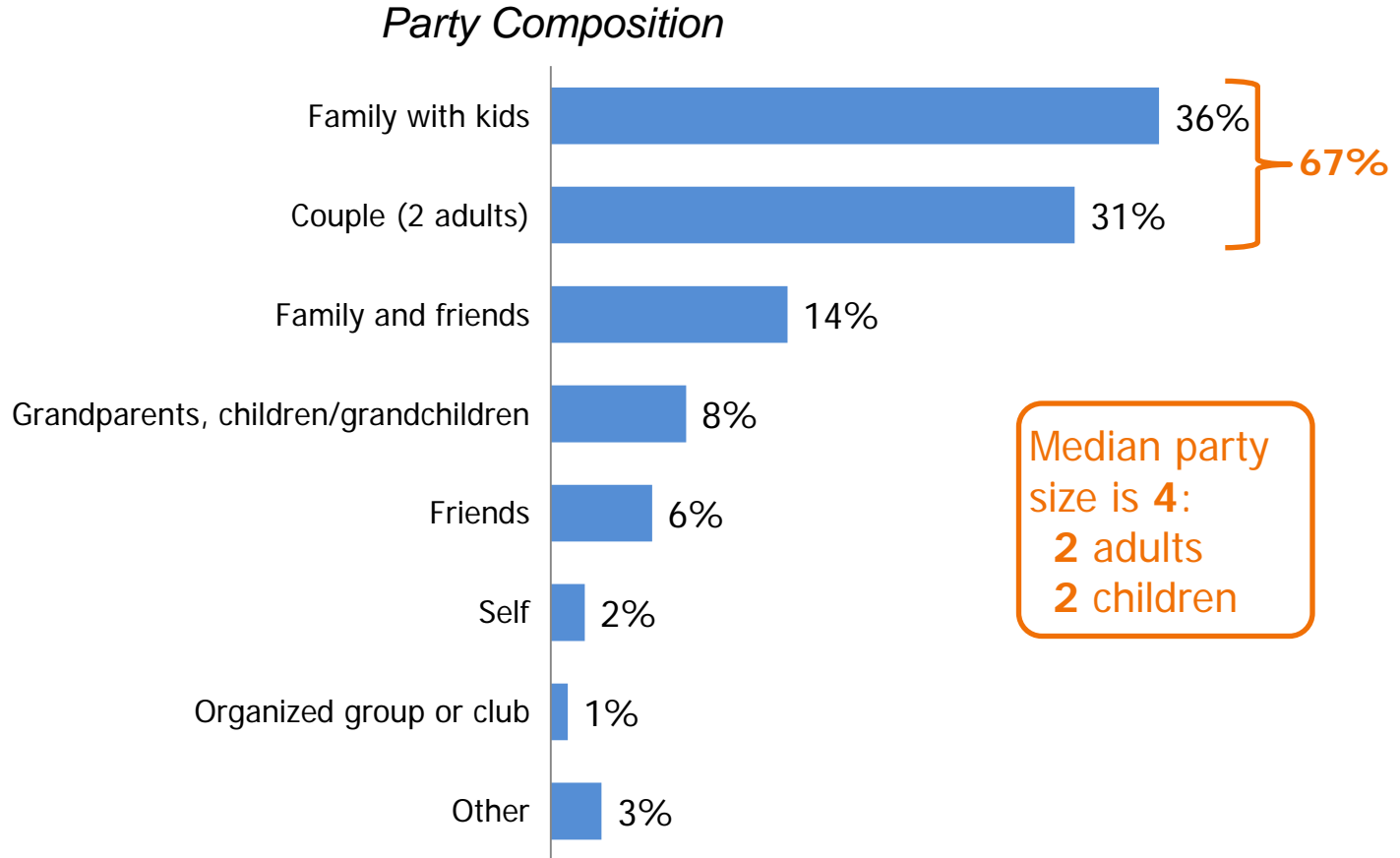
Activities Participated in at Myrtle Beach



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=2132)

Travel Party Composition

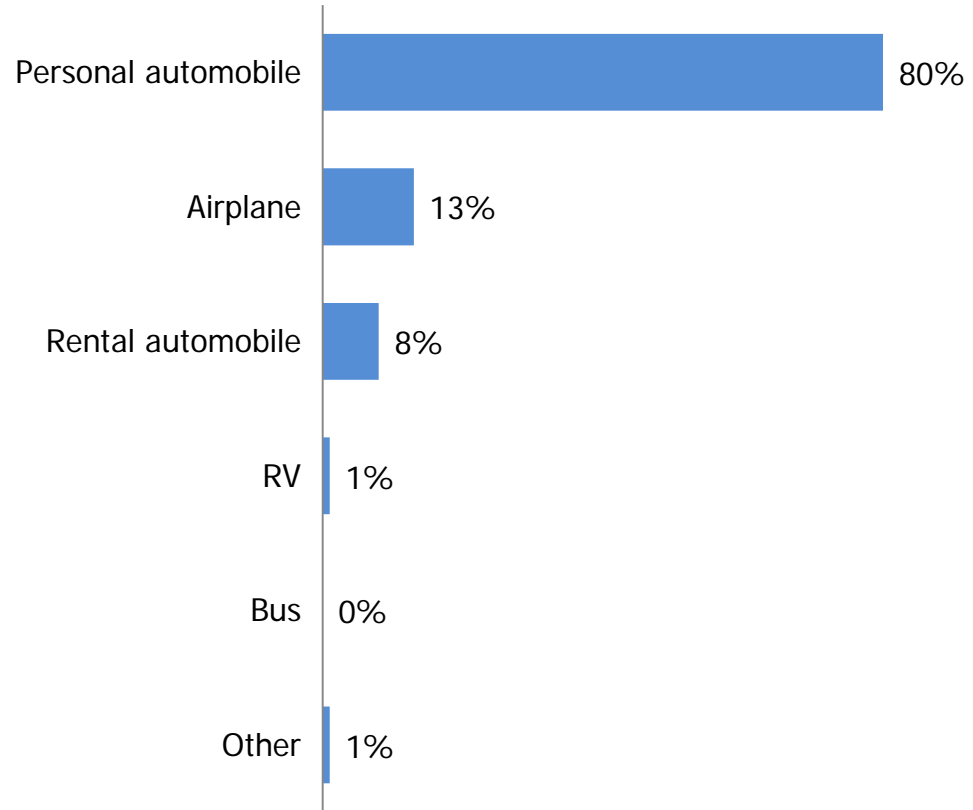
The majority of Myrtle Beach Converts travel in groups, with 67% traveling as a family with kids or as a couple.



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=2132)

80% of Converts arrive in the area via their own car.

Mode of Transportation

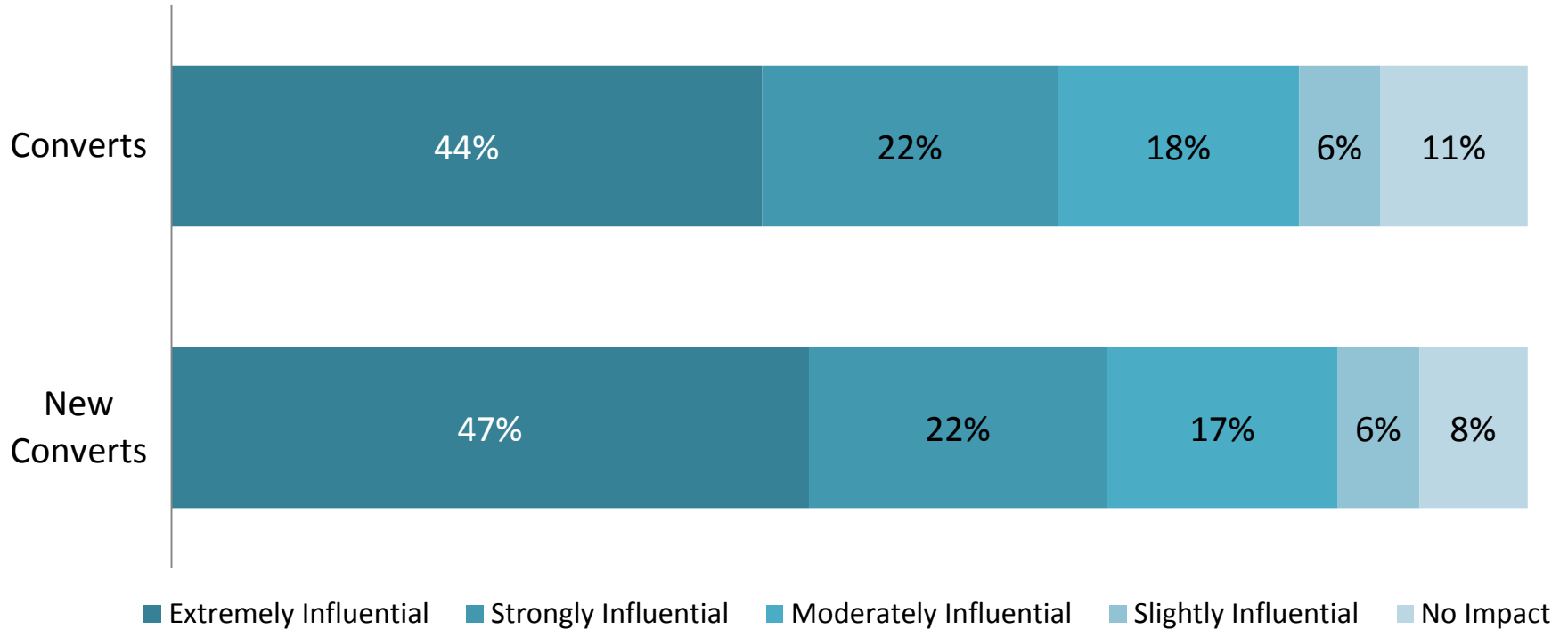


Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=2132)

Impact of Weather

Weather plays a major role in the decision to keep a vacation reservation for a weekend visit.

Impact of Inclement Weather



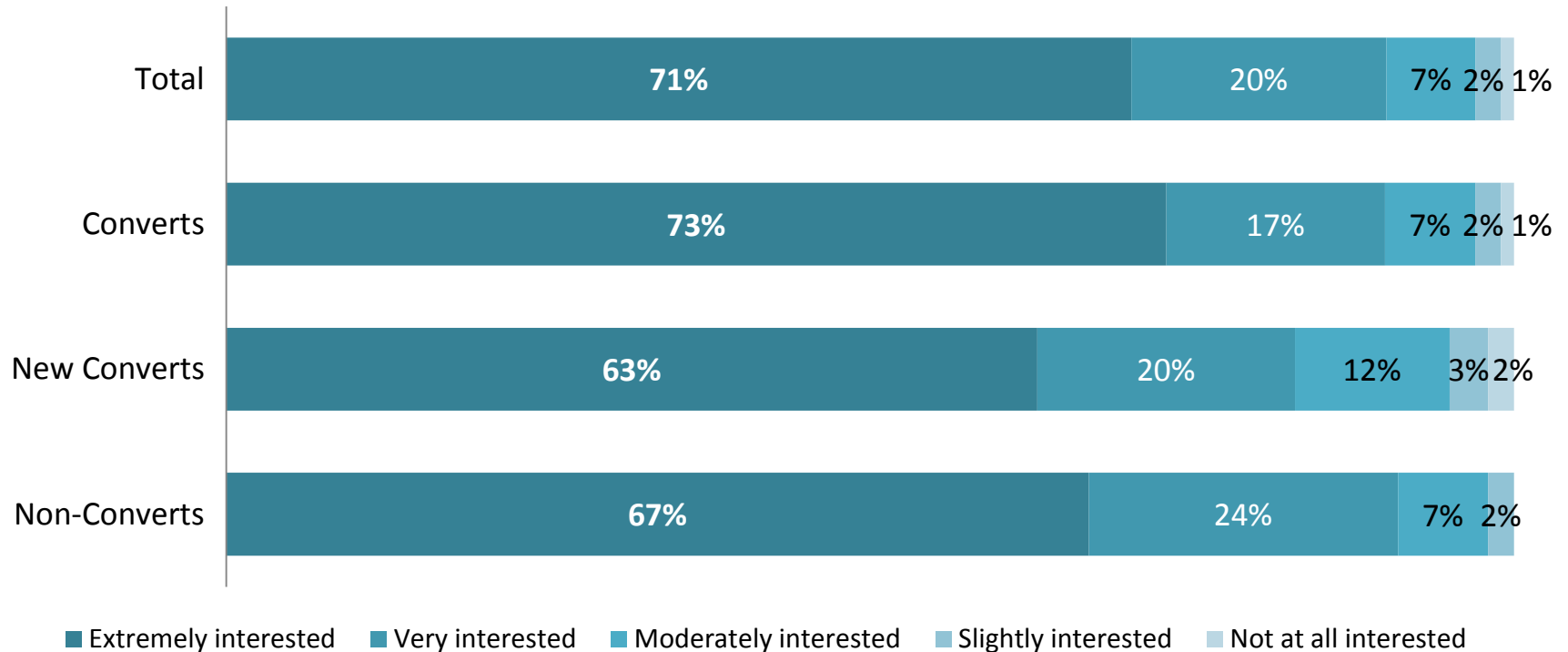
Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 (n=2132)

Q20a. If you were planning to visit the Myrtle Beach area for a weekend visit, how much impact would inclement weather (e.g., rain) have on your decision to keep your vacation reservation?

Interest in Visiting

The area's high Net Promoter Score translates into significant repeat visitation – an indication that the 'lifetime value' of a Myrtle Beach visitor is considerable.

Interest in Visiting Myrtle Beach



Base: Took a vacation in 2012 (n=3508)

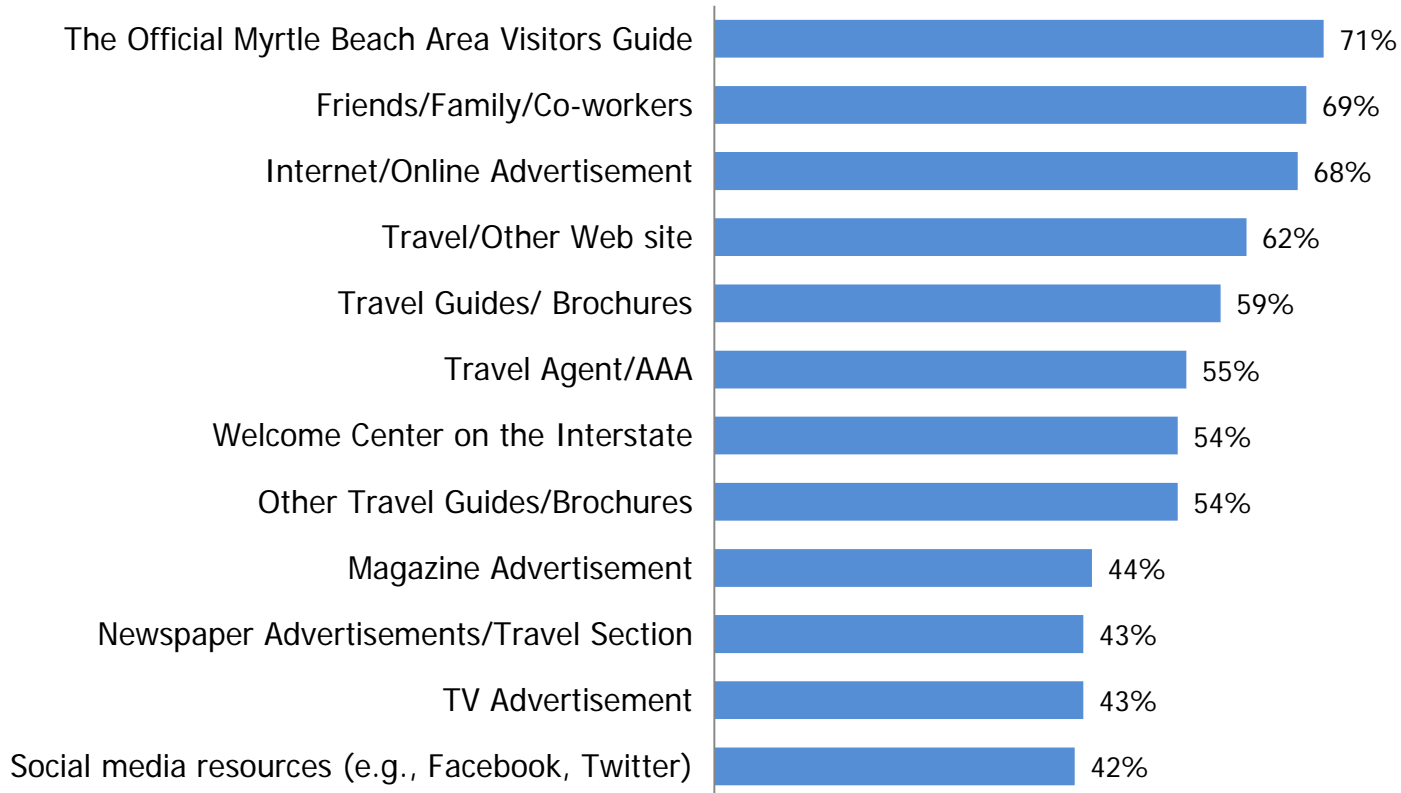


Appendix III: Information Sources & Planning

Information Source Usefulness

The Visitors Guide, the Internet, and Friends/Family/Co-workers are the most useful vacation planning information sources.

*Usefulness of Information Sources
 (Top-2-Box on a 0-10 Usefulness Scale)*



Base: Inquirers; visited Myrtle Beach in 2012 varies by type of source used. Note: Radio base too low to show data.