

VISIT
THE WOODLANDS
TEXAS

2018 QUARTER 2 REPORT



Top Projects

Brand Development: Creating a brand story and identity is a key component in developing a solid foundation for Visit The Woodlands that is the driving force behind all marketing efforts, including advertising placements and website design. To accomplish these goals, Visit The Woodlands utilized Adcetera's One Voice Program (OVP). Adcetera is Visit The Woodlands' Agency of Record. As part of the OVP project, the team and key stakeholders participated in several discovery sessions. These meetings resulted in the development of a new positioning statement, key selling points, brand narrative and value proposition for The Woodlands. In addition, a new mission statement, along with a final creative concept, was presented to the Board of Directors in June. Both were quickly approved and met with many positive comments. Advertising that reflects this new creative is expected to rollout in September.

Group Sales

The Convention Development Department works throughout the year to bring meetings business to The Woodlands. This is accomplished by attending trade shows, sales conferences, working leads and hosting site tours. In Quarter 2, the Convention Development team worked on the following:

Austin Cinco De Mayo Sales Blitz: Josie Lewis represented Visit The Woodlands on a sales blitz in Austin, Texas on Wednesday May 2, 2018. This Cinco De Mayo themed event allowed 89 association based planners to come out and mingle with partners representing Visit The Woodlands and 13 other Houston area partners. As part of the event, each partner offered a fun giveaway to a selected association planner and Visit The Woodlands provided a weekend shop and stay in their destination to the head Texas Society Association Executives planner. Partnership opportunities such as these offer an incredible platform to cultivate new relationships with future clients.

International POW WOW: Visit The Woodlands joined destinations from across North America at the U.S. Travel Association's 50th Annual IPW Travel Show, held in Denver, CO, May 20-23, 2018. Visit The Woodlands had a double-booth in a prime location within the Texas aisle, across from Texas Tourism and in between Visit Houston and Visit Austin ensuring the best position for engaged conversations and networking. On May 21, President Nick Wolda and Sales & Servicing Specialist Mariana Almanza conducted 20 media appointments with both U.S and International journalists and media outlets. On the marketplace floor, Assistant Director Elizabeth Eddins, Marketing Manager Ashley White and Jayson Garcia, Area Sales Leader for The Woodlands Marriott Waterway conducted dozens of appointments plus on-site interactions with travel trade planners, receptive operators and industry leaders to position and promote The Woodlands as a premier destination for leisure travelers.

Meeting Planner International World Education Congress: June 1, 2018 through June 5, 2018, the Visit The Woodlands Convention Development team attended Meeting Planners International World Education Congress (MPI WEC) in Indianapolis, IN. MPI WEC is one of the leading educational conferences for meeting planners internationally and in 2018 brought in over 2,000 active meeting planners from all meeting segments. Visit The Woodlands participated in the Hosted Buyer Program which offered the opportunity to meet with 20 meeting planners for 20 minute private sessions to discuss with them all that The Woodlands has to offer their group business seeking host destination. In addition, Visit The Woodlands had a booth presence on the trade show floor. In an effort to boost booth traffic from the year prior, Visit The Woodlands sponsored the Dress For Success program that worked in conjunction with Kendra Scott. Through this sponsorship, Kendra Scott set up a booth within the Visit The Woodlands booth area which brought in over 120 meeting planners to hear more about The Woodlands area.

HelmsBriscoe Hotel Crawl Familiarization Tour: Over the past few months, the Convention Development Department has been planning and preparing to host the Houston area HelmsBriscoe Representatives in The Woodlands. HelmsBriscoe is one of the nation's leading third party sourcing companies and helps place many meetings in The Woodlands hotel properties. Visit The Woodlands staff welcomed 10 representatives to come and meet hotel partners at a networking luncheon and then did brief hotel tours along with out-of-the-box-group activities at each property to help forge great relationships between hotel partners and the HelmsBriscoe Representatives. The group toured The Embassy Suites where they did an omelet making competition, the Hyatt Centric where they did a hotel operations obstacle course, The Westin where they did a guacamole making class, and The Marriott Waterway where they were hosted for a reception. The Marriott Waterway also hosted the group to stay overnight at their property so that they could experience more of The Woodlands on their own agenda for Saturday. The Visit The Woodlands team coordinated optional activities of a Wine and Food Week Event, a flight at iFly, kayaking at RivaRow Boathouse, a pool pass for some signature hotel pools in The Woodlands, and the opportunity to experience a Pavilion concert. This was a great way to show off new amenities within The Woodlands that can help keep The Woodlands fresh in the HelmsBriscoe Representatives minds when sourcing their next group.

Rendezvous South Site Visit: Visit The Woodlands Convention Development Department Staff has been working closely with the Rendezvous South 2019 planning team to bring this event to The Woodlands. After submitting an official proposal for the event earlier in 2018 staff welcomed three Rendezvous South representatives to experience The Woodlands. During this three day site visit the team was able to tour two hotel properties that fit the group's needs, explore over 10 locations for offsite event options, and experience some of the best dining in The Woodlands. The Woodlands is being considered for the event along with two other destinations. After being selected in the top three out of 9 submitted proposals. Staff intends to hear back with a final decision in early August. The Rendezvous South tradeshow brings in 50-60 meeting planners and close to 200 attendees acting as both a familiarization trip for the meeting planners and a viable piece of business for hotel properties through the conference set up.

MPI Chicago Chapter Partnership: Visit The Woodlands is partnering with the Chicago area MPI chapter by providing a weekend getaway in The Woodlands for an upcoming silent auction event. This event will offer

additional exposure of The Woodlands area to meeting planners in the Chicago area and will help spread the word on all The Woodlands offers to groups and meetings.

TACVB Annual 2020 Proposal: The Convention Development Department staff worked on putting together and submitting an official proposal for the TACVB Annual Conference in 2020. The top 3 destinations that are chosen will be asked to prepare a bid presentation at the upcoming TACVB Annual Conference being held in Sugarland.

Leads & Servicing

- 5 Site Tours Conducted
- 26 Organic Leads Worked and Distributed
- 48 CVENT Leads Received and Distributed
- 2,082 Welcome Bags Distributed
- 10 Groups Serviced
- 29 Meeting Connections
- 6 groups submitted through our incentive fund request with estimated room revenue over \$995,700

Public Relations

The Marketing Department works to garner media coverage for The Woodlands through editorial pitches, content development, and relationship building. In Quarter 2, the Marketing Department worked on a variety of public relations initiatives.

National Geographic Journalist Hosted: In June, the team welcomed Carlos Valerio with National Geographic Traveler Latin America Magazine to The Woodlands. The publication boasts more than 600,000 subscribers and 4.4 average monthly online impressions along with a large social media presence. While in town, Carlos visited the George Mitchell Nature Preserve, Market Street, Hughes Landing, The Woodlands Resort and other areas throughout town.

Editorial Pitch Calendar: The team developed an editorial pitch calendar targeting relevant leisure and meeting publications. With roughly 8-10 personalized pitches going out each month, the department's goal is to bring in additional travel journalists to experience The Woodlands and receive more story placements.

Major Media Placements:

- **Click2Houston:** Nearly 500 Pound Man Beats Odds, Competes in IRONMAN Texas
<https://www.click2houston.com/news/nearly-500-pound-man-beats-odds-competes-in-ironman-texas>
- **Houston Chronicle:** Endurance Community to be Tested in The Woodlands IRONMAN Exhibition
<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Endurance-community-to-be-tested-in-Woodlands-12870823.php>
- **Houston Chronicle:** Wine and Food Week Slated for June 4-10 in The Woodlands
<https://www.chron.com/neighborhood/woodlands/news/article/Wine-and-Food-Week-slated-for-June-4-10-in-The-12955300.php>
- **Houston Chronicle:** Makeover planned for Market Street in The Woodlands
<https://www.chron.com/business/retail/article/Makeover-planned-for-Market-Street-in-The-12966079.php>

Media Placements Value (Q2 Totals):

- **Ad Equivalency:** \$321,918
- **PR Value:** \$965,764
- **Daily Impressions:** 5,359,310

Press Releases:

- Visit The Woodlands Rallies in Support of Travel & Tourism Industry
- Request for Interest for a New & Innovative Water Vessel Operation on The Woodlands Waterway
- Request for Interest for the Sale, Removal, Transportation and Proper Use, Reuse, and/or Disposal of Water Vessels

Advertising

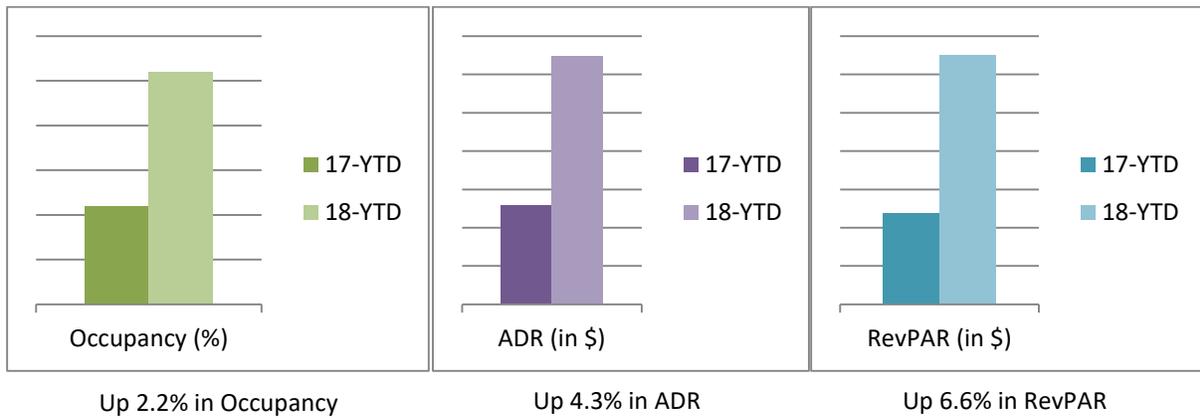
The Marketing Department works in conjunction with Adcetera to develop a Strategic Marketing Media Plan with an emphasis on peak planning times, market research, strategic media buys and trackable advertising campaigns. An overview of Quarter 2 media placements and their results is below.

- **Q2 Media Placements: Meetings**
 - Meetings Professional International
 - Smart Meetings
 - Convention South
 - Connect Corporate
 - Connect Meetings – Content Activation & 360 Program
 - Programmatic Display / Mobile: Amplified storytelling w/presentation layer, Boomerang program (pixeled meeting planner phones), Retargeting (website visitors)
 - Social: Facebook, Instagram
 - Search: PPC Targeting those searching for meeting & event planning in Greater Houston Area
- **Q2 Media Placements: Leisure**
 - TourTexas.com
 - Social: Facebook, Instagram
 - Search: PPC Targeting those searching to vacation to or stay-cation in Houston
 - Domestic Programmatic Display / Mobile: Targeting Dallas to Galveston, SE Louisiana, Greater Houston Area – 150 mile radius)
 - International Programmatic Display / Mobile: Targeting Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Columbia
- **Advertising Leads:**
 - Visitor Guides Mailed – 330

HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX COLLECTIONS

2018			3 Year Data				
	2018 Budget	2018 Actual		2016	2017	2018	Change
JAN	\$ 445,057	\$ 517,157	JAN	\$ 459,264	\$ 443,786	\$ 517,157	16.5% up
FEB	\$ 675,875	\$ 769,611	FEB	\$ 620,075	\$ 673,504	\$ 769,611	14.3% up
MAR	\$ 827,580	\$ 789,850	MAR	\$ 692,966	\$ 847,172	\$ 789,850	6.8% down
APR	\$ 778,548	\$ 859,519	APR	\$ 700,284	\$ 795,667	\$ 859,519	8.0% up
MAY	\$ 775,180	\$ 876,653	MAY	\$ 739,255	\$ 774,946	\$ 876,653	13.1% up
JUN	\$ 763,637	\$ 837,722	JUN	\$ 830,188	\$ 762,479	\$ 837,722	9.9% up
JUL	\$ 713,765	\$	JUL	\$ 678,009	\$ 715,396	\$	
AUG	\$ 627,345	\$	AUG	\$ 576,869	\$ 625,963	\$	
SEP	\$ 666,979	\$	SEP	\$ 634,423	\$ 698,035	\$	
OCT	\$ 763,045	\$	OCT	\$ 633,081	\$ 800,509	\$	
NOV	\$ 839,518	\$	NOV	\$ 747,181	\$ 872,491	\$	
DEC	\$ 529,717	\$	DEC	\$ 559,137	\$ 707,999	\$	
TOTAL	\$ 8,406,256	\$	TOTAL	\$ 7,870,732	\$ 8,717,946	\$	
YTD	\$ 3,502,250	\$ 4,650,511	YTD	\$ 7,870,732	\$ 8,717,946	\$ 4,650,511	8.2% up

2018 COMPARED TO 2017



Digital Marketing

The Marketing Department consistently works to develop a 360-degree approach to digital marketing that encompasses the website, social media, email marketing, video production, content development and a variety of technology initiatives. A high-level overview of these programs & their results is below.

- **Website**
 - **Published Content: Blog**
 - 22 custom blog articles
 - **Reporting**
 - 89,065 Page Views
 - 40,332 Users
 - 1.87 Pages/Session
 - 1:20 Average Session Duration
 - **Conversions**
 - Visitor Guides Requested – 90
 - **Technology Initiatives**
 - Website Rebuild – RFP to be issued July 2018
 - Simpleview CRM – Data cleanup, training & customized setup in progress
- **Email Marketing**
 - Monthly Consumer Spotlight eNewsletters
 - Monthly Event Spotlight eNewsletters
 - Monthly Meetings Spotlight eNewsletters
 - Weekly Update eNewsletters
- **Social Media**
 - 2.8 million Impressions across Facebook, Instagram & Twitter (*381% increase from Q1*)
 - 10,600 Engagements across Facebook, Instagram & Twitter
 - 4,493 Website Conversions via Social (*424% increase from Q1*)
- **Video Production**
 - Tourism Means Business in The Woodlands
 - HelmsBriscoe Meeting Planner Video

Print Collateral

The Marketing Department produces a variety of print collateral to further The Woodlands message to meeting planners, leisure travelers, media and hospitality industry partners.

- **Media Kit:** In quarter 2, the team produced a professional media kit which includes facts and a destination overview, along with information on hotels, transportation, entertainment, museum/arts, meeting facilities, outdoor recreation, sporting venues and events in The Woodlands. The document also contains contact information for Visit The Woodlands marketing team members.
- **Current Newsletter:** The Spring 2018 Edition of the Current Newsletter was produced and distributed to 6,500 people who have expressed interested in The Woodlands.
- **Visitor Guide:** The Visitor Guide was updated to include The Woodlands Trolley expansion to Hughes Landing, along with details on Mobike. In addition, Waterway Cruiser information was removed from the guide.

- **Hotel / Restaurant Tear-Off Map:** A valuable resource to hotel partners, the hotel/restaurant tear-off map was updated to include The Woodlands Trolley expansion to Hughes Landing and Waterway Cruiser information was removed from the map. The list of restaurants was also updated.

Partnerships

Visit The Woodlands works with industry partners and local stakeholders to amplify the destination message. This is accomplished through regular communication, attending industry events and participating in partner initiatives. Below is an overview of the team’s Quarter 2 partner initiatives.

Convention Development Advisory Committee Meeting: The department held the Quarter 2 Convention Development Advisory Committee Meeting on May 3, 2018. During this meeting, the team was able to discuss 2019 strategic initiatives and several other topics including the HelmsBriscoe Hotel Crawl and the Rendezvous South bid.

All Hotel Meeting: The Convention Development Department had the opportunity to host several hotel partners for the all hotel meeting on May 24, 2018. This meeting allowed the team to educate partners on department initiatives including a medical tourism activation and virtual hotel tours.

Texas Tourism Media Mission: Residents of the United States are the leading source of travel to Texas. To reach these potential visitors, Marketing Manager, Ashley White, attended the Texas Tourism Media Mission in New York April 10-12, 2018. The New York media appointments targeted leading New York based media, including travel, consumer and meetings publications to promote new, continued and expanded media coverage of Texas as a premier travel destination. Ashley was able to meet face-to-face with several high caliber media companies including: TODAY Show, Conde Nast Traveler, ForbesLife, Fodor’s Travel, Meetings Today, Southern Living and others. Bringing awareness of The Woodlands as a meeting and leisure travel destination.

Texas Tourism Mexico Sales Mission: Mexico is the largest travel market to Texas with dozens of daily nonstop flights to multiple cities across Texas. To capitalize on this market, Visit The Woodlands Sales & Servicing Specialist, Mariana Almanza, attended the Texas Tourism Mexico Sales Mission April 16-20, 2018. The events planned included networking opportunities, product presentations and travel marketplaces in Mexico City.

Local Event Participation: The team participated in a variety of events and meetings to support our local partners including: The Woodlands Waterway Art Festival, Glade Cultural Center Grand Opening, Robard’s Steakhouse Re-Grand Opening, True Food Kitchen Grand Opening, Economic Development Partnership Quarterly Luncheon and others.

Product Development: The Waterway Cruisers

The Woodlands Waterway is a centerpiece of the “downtown” shopping district. The Waterway features some of The Woodlands most iconic venues and events, such as The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion and the Memorial Hermann IRONMAN North American Championship. Other events, like The Woodlands Waterway Arts Festival, The Red, Hot & Blue Festival and Lighting of the Doves consistently bring tens of thousands of people to The Woodlands Waterway each year.

The Woodlands Waterway currently has millions of square feet of Class A office space, numerous restaurants and hotels, and residential living.

Part of that success and notoriety has been the boat service on The Woodlands Waterway. The Waterway Cruisers operations first began as a private operation by Water Taxi, Inc. out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 2004.

For several years, The Woodlands Development Company owned and operated the boats until the company gifted them, free of charge, to The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau, the organization responsible to position The Woodlands as a regionally, nationally and internationally recognized destination for leisure, convention and business travel.

The Waterway Cruisers have logged over 434,000 trips along The Woodlands Waterway serving an estimated total number of passengers more than 500,000 in 14 years of service.

No property tax funding from The Woodlands residents was ever used in the operation; the CVB being funded by hotel occupancy taxes. The boats were operated until early 2016 by Brazos Transit District and at such time, the CVB issued a Request for Interest to assume ownership, operations and maintenance of the boats. Two proposals were received and Waterway Events LLC was selected. The company ran the boats for approximately 18 months up to Hurricane Harvey. Suffering damage from the hurricane and lack of attention to the boats by Waterway Events forced the CVB shut down the operations. The original useful life of the vessels was estimated at 15 years and the CVB Board, Staff and Consultants believe the boats have reached their useful life without investing tens of thousands of dollars to refurbish.

Over the past several months, the CVB has issued three different Request for Interest (RFI's):

1. RFI for Waterway Cruiser Assessment and Survey:

At its February 28, 2018 meeting, The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau authorized President Nick Wolda to seek a third party contractor to assess, investigate and/or provide recommendation regarding the current value of the assets for the purpose of the possible liquidation or disposal.

TWCVB inquired of experienced firms/professionals in the marine vessel ownership/operation business for initial qualifying proposals for interest in contracting to perform an assessment and suggestions for maximizing value of the watercraft through repurposing/final disposition of the vessels (including processes and cost for removal from The Woodlands Waterway).

TWCVB advertised, heavily promoted and contact approximately 20 boat companies and surveyors. Lone Star Marine Surveyors, located in Kemah area, visited the Waterway Cruiser marina in early April and submitted a bid to assist TWCVB.

At its April 18, 2018 meeting, The Visit The Woodlands Board of Directors authorized, President Nick Wolda to contract with a third party contractor to assess, investigate and/or provide recommendation regarding the current value of the assets for the purpose of the possible liquidation or disposal of six Waterway Cruisers.

Lone Star Marine Surveyors, located in Kemah area was chosen from two submitted proposals. Lone Star Marine Surveyors conducted an inspection of the six cruisers on May 1, 2018.

Results of Lone Star Marine Survey:

- Terminal Value: The value of an asset at the end of its economic or useful life.
- With an income producing asset, it may be its market value at the end of its economic life. It may still be useable but not in its original use or original design
- It may be a salvage value. It may be a scrap value.
- It may have a negative terminal value (fiberglass hull, black oil or asphalt barge, vessel with asbestos or red lead) this is where it will cost to remove and dispose of an asset at a greater value than the fair market value. I believe this fleet has a negative terminal value. (Captain David E. Ghidoni, Lone Star Marine Surveyors)

2. RFI for Water Vessel Operation on The Woodlands Waterway:

The CVB issued an RFI publically March 29, 2018 seeking an innovative approach to boat service on The Woodlands Waterway. All interested submissions are due by July 31, 2018.

Visit The Woodlands heavily promoted the issuance of the available RFI to local, state and national boat service operators, manufacturers and vendors. A colorful and dynamic ad was designed and placed in boating/manufacturing industry newsletters and publications. The ad was also used in online promotion on boating industry websites. Hard copy RFIs were compiled and mailed to dozens of TWCVB identified companies through web searches for companies offering similar services in other destinations. TWCVB reached out through their travel and tourism network to find additional vendors that other CVBs have worked with.

A full accounting of all correspondence with anyone seeking additional information or asking questions was recorded and filed by TWCVB staff.

President Wolda scheduled three days of site visits of the marina and area for vendors interested in seeing the facility in person. Vendors are visiting of their own interest and at their own expense.

This RFI will conclude July 31, 2018.

3. Request for Interest for the Sale, Removal, Transportation and Proper Use, Reuse, and/or Disposal of Water Vessels:

On June 21, 2018, the CVB issued an RFI to seek an experienced firm/professionals who are wanting six (6) Water Vessels currently located in The Woodlands, Texas.

The CVB is inquiring of experienced firms/professionals in boat sales and operations who are willing to purchase the Water Vessels, bear the costs of removal and transportation, and might make use of the Water Vessels in destinations like cities, amusement venues and other destinations. Alternatively, TWCVB is inquiring of parties or who specialize in purchasing and salvaging similar boats or who would be willing to safely remove, transport and dispose of the watercraft at their cost.

VISITOR SERVICES		
	Market Street	The Woodlands Mall
Q2 2018	7,315 guests	8,204 guests
2018 YTD	13,360 guests	17,447 guests
YTD Unique Texas Visits	3,433 guests from 226 Texas zip codes	8,690 guests from 521 Texas zip codes
YTD Unique State Visits	396 guests from 40 US States, districts & territories	552 guests from 47 US States, districts & territories
YTD Unique Country Visits	126 guests from 27 countries	556 guests from 56 countries
YTD Undetermined Visits	9,405 guests did not share their zip code	7,649 guests did not share their zip code