



SANDY SPRINGS™

GEORGIA

ADDENDUM NUMBER 3 Destination Marketing Strategic Plan REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS #20-008

Schedule of Events

- **Bid Due Date:** August 30, 2019, no later than 2:00 PM EDT

Bids received after the above time or any proposal submitted in any other format (email, paper, fax, mail, etc.) than online submissions for this ITB through the Bonfire Portal at <https://sandysprings.bonfirehub.com/projects/view/17847> will not be accepted for any reason.

Procurement/Administrative

- ❖ Can we submit the proposals via email?
A: No.
- ❖ Do we have to be incorporated under the laws of the State of Georgia to respond to this RFP? Does our business have to be created within the State of Georgia or is it sufficient that we have been incorporated under the laws of the state in which we reside?
A: No.
- ❖ Should all of the Exhibits - listed on page 21 - be included in the proposal?
A: Yes.
- ❖ Is Exhibit E relevant to companies responding to this RFP?
A: Yes.
- ❖ Exhibits E and F need to be notarized. Can we skip notary if responding digitally? We are happy to complete notarized documents within 10 days if we win the bid.
A: We accept scanned copies.
- ❖ As we were going through some of the required documentation we were wondering if you were open to revisions to the Services Agreement that is required to be sent with the RFP response.
A: We believe the contract is written in the best interest of the City. You can advise changes but we do not guarantee these changes will be considered.
- ❖ I see that Attachment C is just a sample model contract. Can you confirm that it does NOT need to be signed?
A: A signed Model Contract will expedite the process if selected.
- ❖ Can you confirm that we need to provide signed forms for Exhibit C (Certification of Contractor),

Exhibit D (Certification of Sponsor Drug-Free Workplace), Exhibit E (Affidavit Verifying Status for City Public Benefit Application), Exhibit F (Contractor Affidavit)

A: Signed forms are required for this RFP.

- ❖ Is there a particular format that we should follow for our RFP response and responding to the 5 elements outlined?

A: We did not set a required format. The below is the preferred proposal format:

- **Company overview (one (1) page)**
 - **Names and resumes of proposed team members (include in appendix – no page limit)**
 - **Team members' roles on Project (two (2) pages)**
 - **Examples of three (3) to five (5) similar (in type, scope and size) projects the firm and/or team members have worked on in the past five (5) years and client reference contact information (one (1) page for each similar project). Client reference contact information shall include agency name and address, contact name, contact phone number and contact email address.**
 - **All proposed subcontractors, if any, with company description and involvement in example projects, if any (one (1) page each)**
 - **Brief discussion of Offeror's approach to the work in order to meet Project goals. The City welcomes suggestions for any innovative delivery approaches that can expedite the schedule or reduce Project costs (five (5) to seven (7) pages)**
- ❖ Do you need us to follow a particular format for the cost proposal? If so, do you have a template we should follow?

A: Please see above.

Background

- ❖ Who are your biggest competitors? What other organizations do you admire?

A: Competitors: Our neighboring metro Atlanta communities and some of the cities represented as aspirational. While we all work well together, we know we're competing for visitors who want to explore the Atlanta area. Aspirational communities: Visit Greenville (SC), Visit Franklin (TN), Experience Scottsdale (AZ), Visit Knoxville (TN)

- ❖ Is this a rebid of RFP #19-015 for Destination Marketing Strategic Plan, which closed on Feb 6, 2019? If so, what is the difference between this new solicitation?

A: It was rewritten to make explicit the fact that we're not looking for new branding (new name, new logo). We are looking for marketing and sales strategy. And while the City handles our finances through an IGA and consequently manages this RFP process for us, we wanted to make clear that the City is not awarding this contract nor is this RFP for a marketing plan for the City; it's a marketing and sales strategic plan for the CVB for Sandy Springs.

- ❖ Is the City accepting out-of-state vendors for this work? Or is the City looking to hire a local vendor?

A: The vendor doesn't have to be in state. Must be able to travel to City for meetings.

- ❖ When are you looking to begin the project? What is your desired project deadline?

A: Right away. There's no real deadline, but I would prefer to wrap it up in less than 3 months.

Budget

- ❖ Does the City have a budget range they would like to stay within for this work?

A: The City of Sandy Springs does not provide this information. We are looking for proposals that offer the best value for the city.

- ❖ Can you please submit a budget range for this project?

A: We usually do not provide this information.

Research/Analysis

- ❖ Could you provide more insight into your past audience targeting efforts?

- How do you balance your efforts against business vs. leisure stay currently?

A: Due to the high concentration of corporate headquarters in the Central Perimeter area, our hotels see a very strong occupancy on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; however, all nights are strong with the exception of Sunday. The ADR drops \$50 on weekends, highlighting the heavy discounting that occurs in the market to attract weekend demand as the hotels compete with properties all through the metro area. Clearly, our opportunity is limited to weekends and our hotels have indicated that they believe we should focus on social group business to fill those times.

- Do you have an idea for how you'd like to shift this balance in the future or is this up to the selected vendor to recommend?

A: If there is any opportunity to shift that balance or markets we haven't explored, we are looking to the selected vendor to make recommendations.

- What about the balance of individual vs. group business? Or driving key actions among individual travelers vs. travel agencies? Etc.

A: We've explored tour/travel and some of our hotels do want that business. Some don't.

- ❖ What marketing initiatives and tactics do you currently employ or have you used in the past?

- Can you share anything related to your past marketing budgets and how that investment was divided across various efforts?
- What were the goals of these efforts?
- What tactics worked vs. what didn't in reaching those goals?

A: We will share this information with the vendor that we select to perform the work.

- ❖ Is it possible to receive a copy of the research analysis which was performed in the past year?

A: It is posted to Bonfire.

- ❖ Is it possible to receive a copy of the recent lodging survey?

A: We will provide this information to the vendor that we select to do the work.

- ❖ Is there old research that has identified target audience profiles?

A: The research study we did in FY2018 did not identify specific target audience profiles. We are not aware of any research that did so prior to that. No one on the current staff was employed by the CVB before 2014.

RFP

- ❖ We understand that a minimum of 5 stakeholder interviews, not including members of the board or DMO staff, should be included in our scope. Can you provide more details on who you consider to be “stakeholders”? Could this be with past and current community partners (such as hotels and other organizations)? Or are you using stakeholders to mean only internal individuals?

A: Stakeholders in this case refers to community partners – hotels and attractions, primarily.

Prospective Proposers

- ❖ Would like to understand if a vendor outside the state of Georgia and outside the city of Sandy Springs is eligible to participate in this RFP.

A: Answered above.

- ❖ Is the City of Sandy Springs looking for media buying expertise?

A: We already work with a media-buying agency.

- ❖ Are there certain categories of tourism that need to be added to the area?

A: That is one of the things we’re hoping to determine through this process.

- ❖ Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)

A: No. We prefer that the vendor have or acquire some direct experience with our City and region.

- ❖ Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

A: See answer above.

- ❖ Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)

A: See answer above.

Branding/Marketing

- ❖ What marketing efforts has Sandy Springs employed in the past? How successful were those efforts?

A: In the past 5 years, the CVB has developed a new website, engaged agencies to handle PR and some social media and moved toward much more digital advertising. We have moved from general awareness campaigns to more targeted efforts over the years. Using digital media and developing a new website increased traffic to our website exponentially. Using targeted campaigns and working on SEO have increased engagement on our website substantially. With regards to the specifics of those efforts, we will share that information with the vendor that we select to perform the work.

- ❖ Over the past fiscal year, what is the average size of your largest group (group tours and/or group meetings/conferences)?

A: 200

- ❖ The RFP says that brand development is NOT a part of the project, but as a bullet point it includes “Develop confirmed purpose statements (mission, vision and values).”

- Often, we see these terms used in different ways across our clients. From your perspective, is this developing an internal facing way to communicate the brand positioning already created to key partners and employees? Or is it a separate initiative that may require additional discovery around the organization’s purpose?

A: We developed a logo, tagline and style guide 2 years ago, adopting as our logo a close variation of the City’s new logo. We did this because we’re a relatively new city, we have a

new city center, and we're establishing an identity. We wanted to be consistent for this reason and we still do. We also changed the name of the organization to Visit Sandy Springs from Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism. When we say that we don't want to re-brand, we mean that we don't want to change the name or logo at this time. We do want, however, a way to clearly explain our mission and values to partners and a vision to be shared internally to keep us focused on the strategy.

- ❖ We understand that in the last few years, the DMO has developed its brand positioning statement, logo, tagline and style guide.
 - Can we see a copy of the brand positioning and the style guide?
A: We will share this information with the vendor that we select to perform the work.
 - Is the brand positioning/tagline used as an internal reference point only? Or have external messaging priorities also been developed?
A: It's used primarily as an internal reference point. We have worked on an external messaging breakdown with our current creative design agency.
- ❖ Are we able to receive the marketing and branding research that was already done for this project?
A: It will be attached to the addendum

I hereby acknowledge receipt of Addendum Number 3 for Invitation to Bid #20-008 Destination Marketing Strategic Plan. I have incorporated the necessary changes into my response for the abovementioned RFP.

COMPANY NAME _____
CONTACT PERSON: _____
ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____
STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
PHONE: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____
SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

End Addendum Number 3
20-008

2018 Sandy Springs, GA Visitor Profile Study

Understanding Visitor Types, Especially Leisure



GRAYRESEARCH
S O L U T I O N S

Objectives & Method

□ Objective

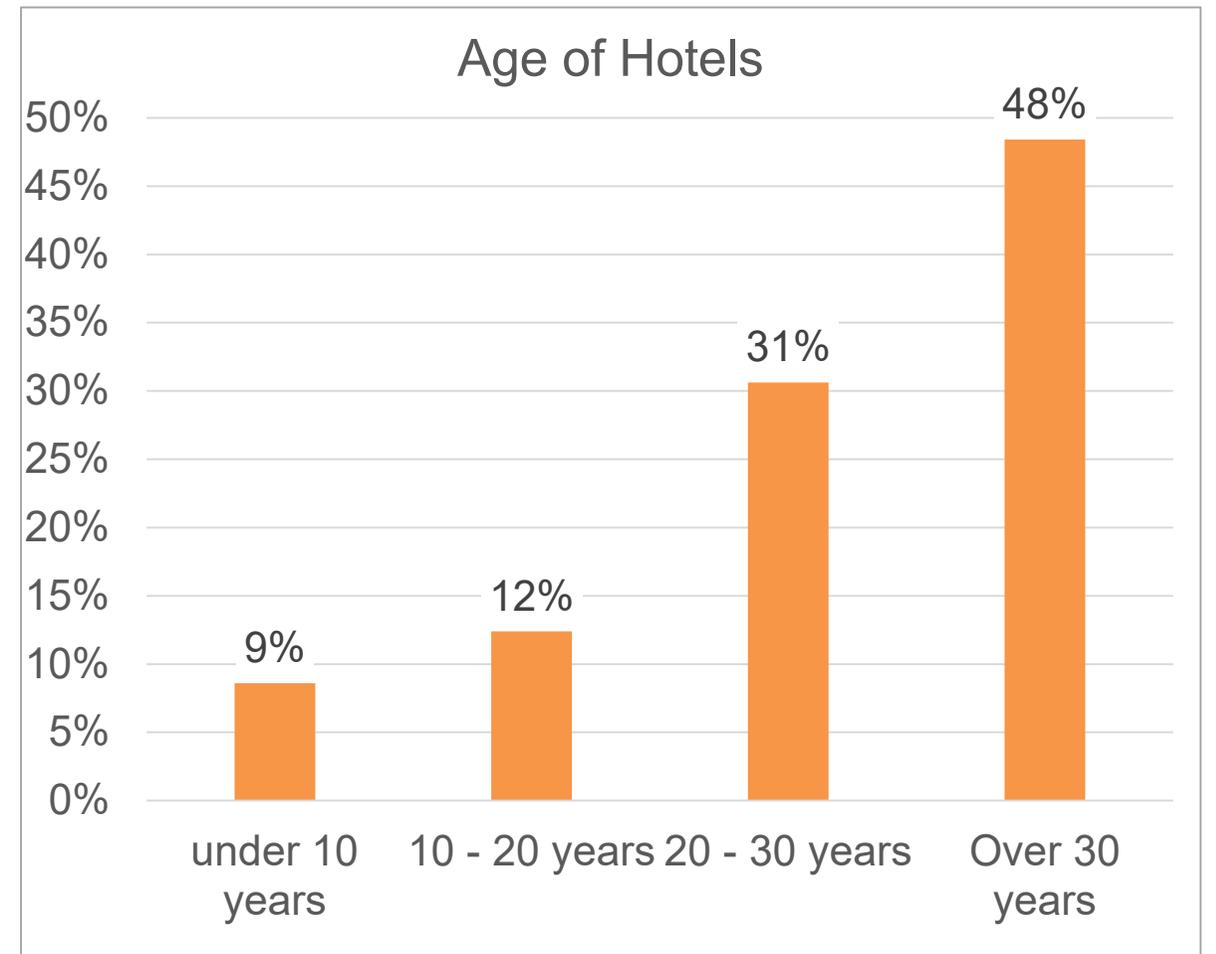
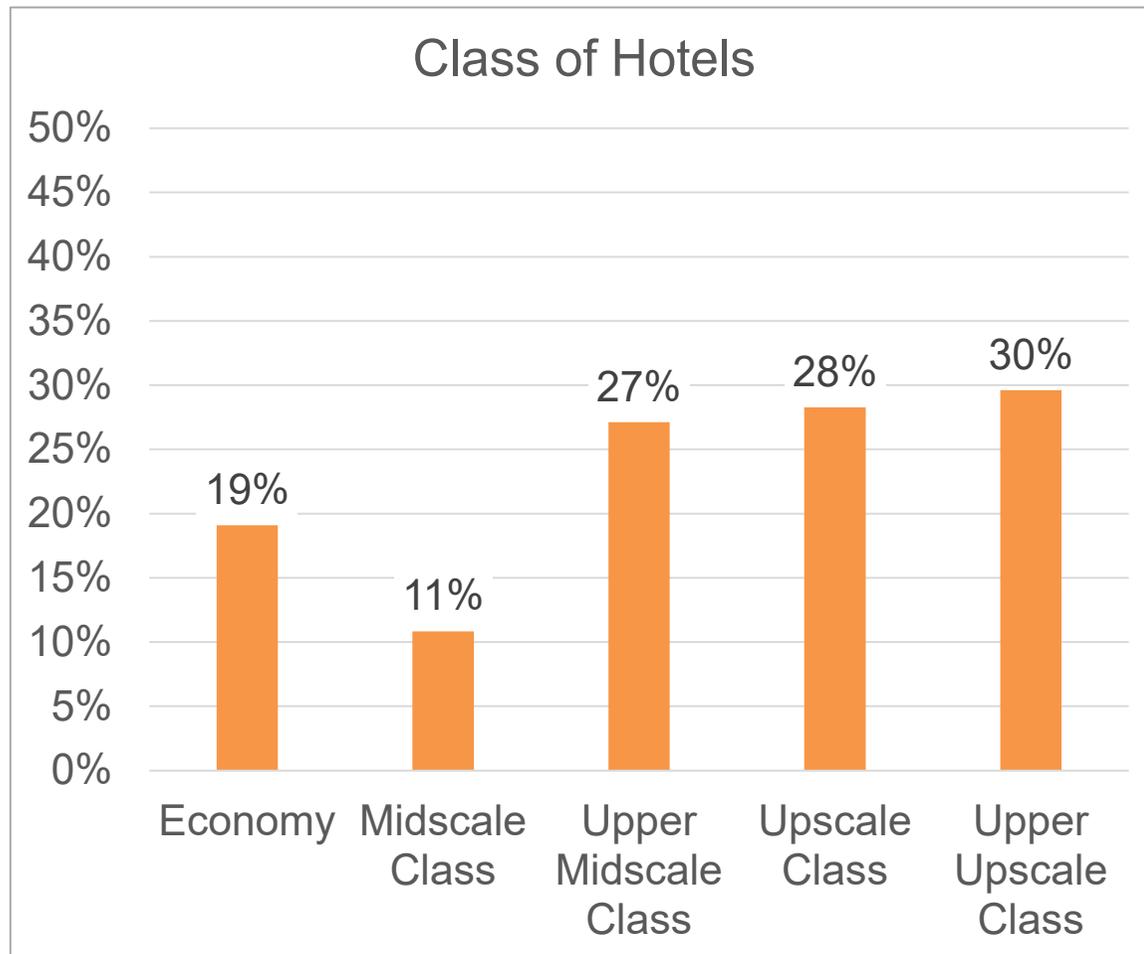
- Thoroughly assess various visitor types to Sandy Springs
- Understand what drives visitation for these groups in order to grow tourism

□ Methods

- Immersion, Meetings & Reconnaissance March 4-6, 2018
- Lodging Product Assessment and Survey
- Group Travel Analysis
- Leisure Visitor Profile Study

Lodging Product Assessment & Study

Hotel Inventory Age & Class

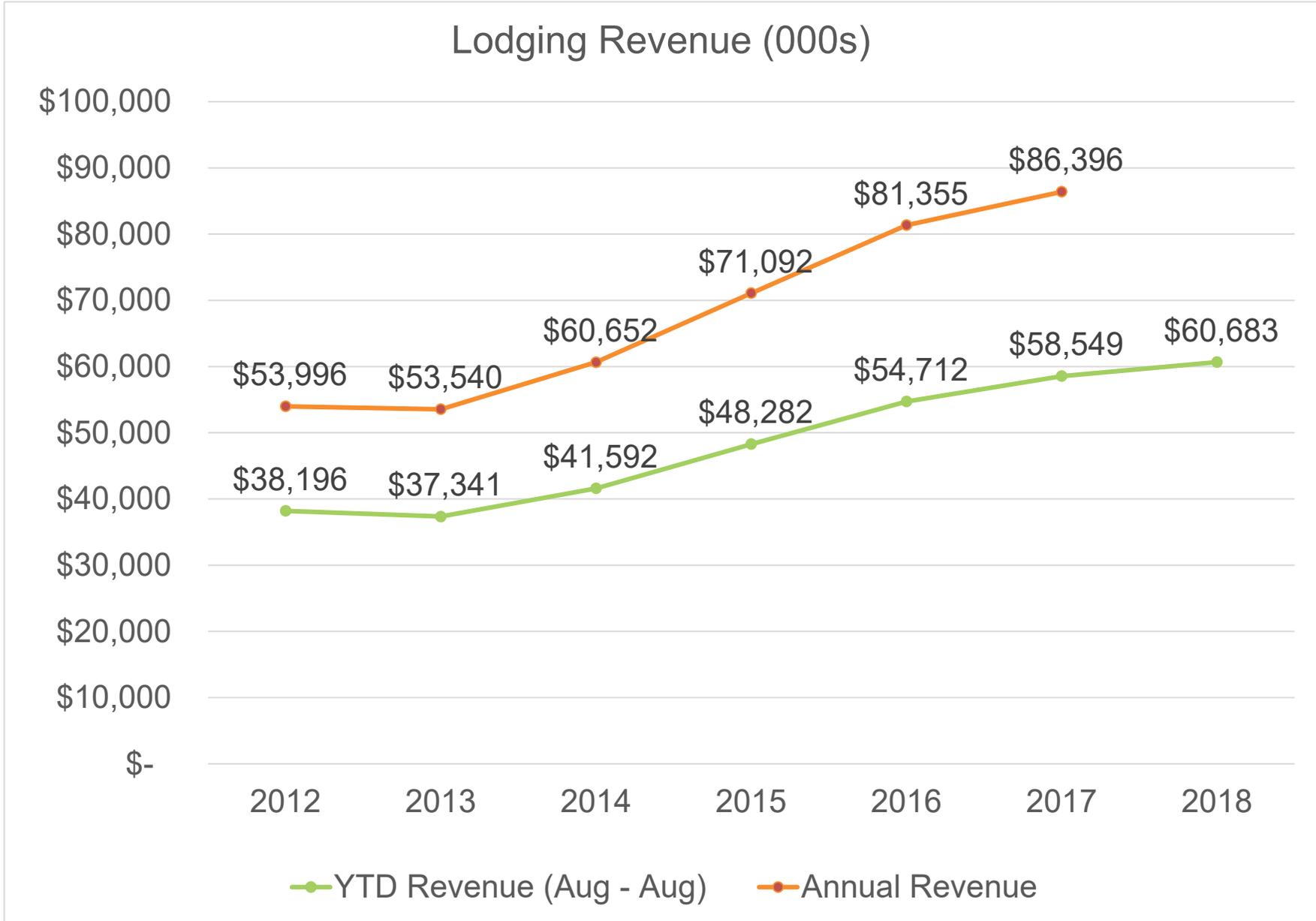


Out of 2,865 rooms analyzed by Smith Travel Research, the majority of rooms (85%) are Upper Midscale class or higher.

The majority of rooms (79%) are also over 20 years old.

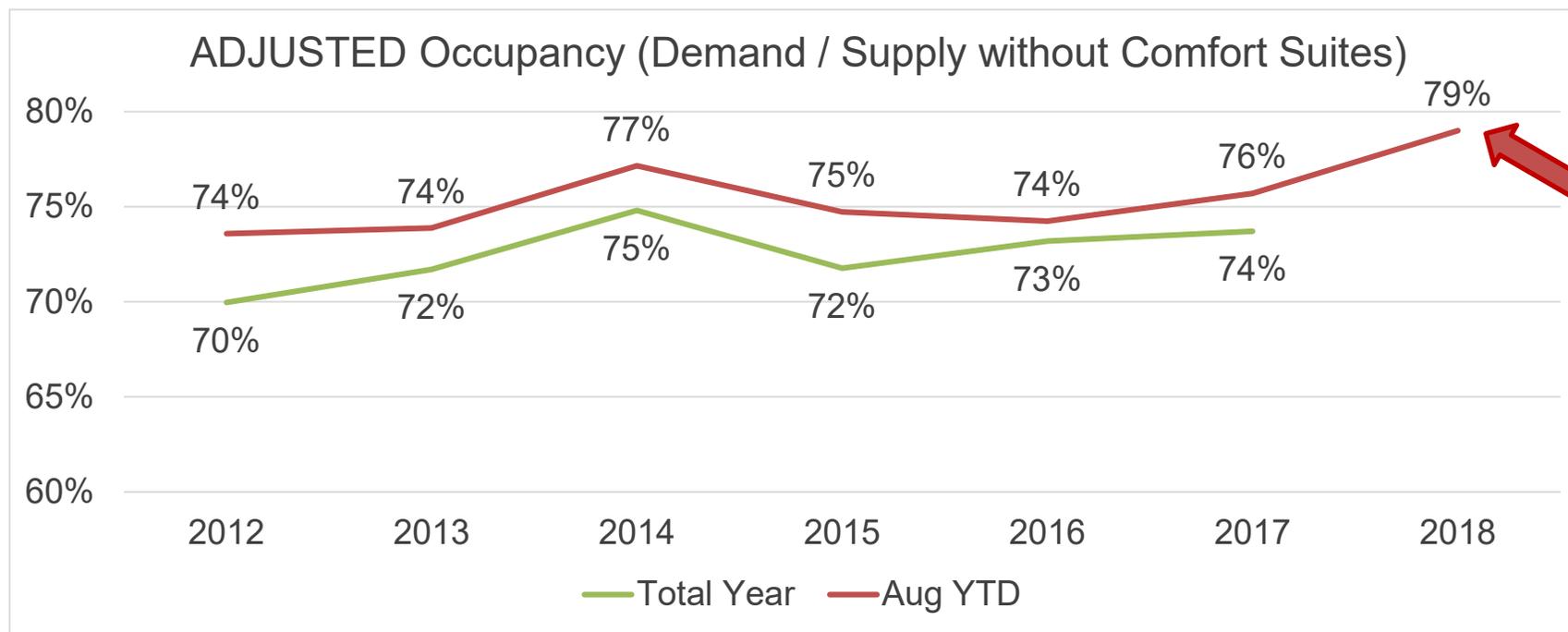
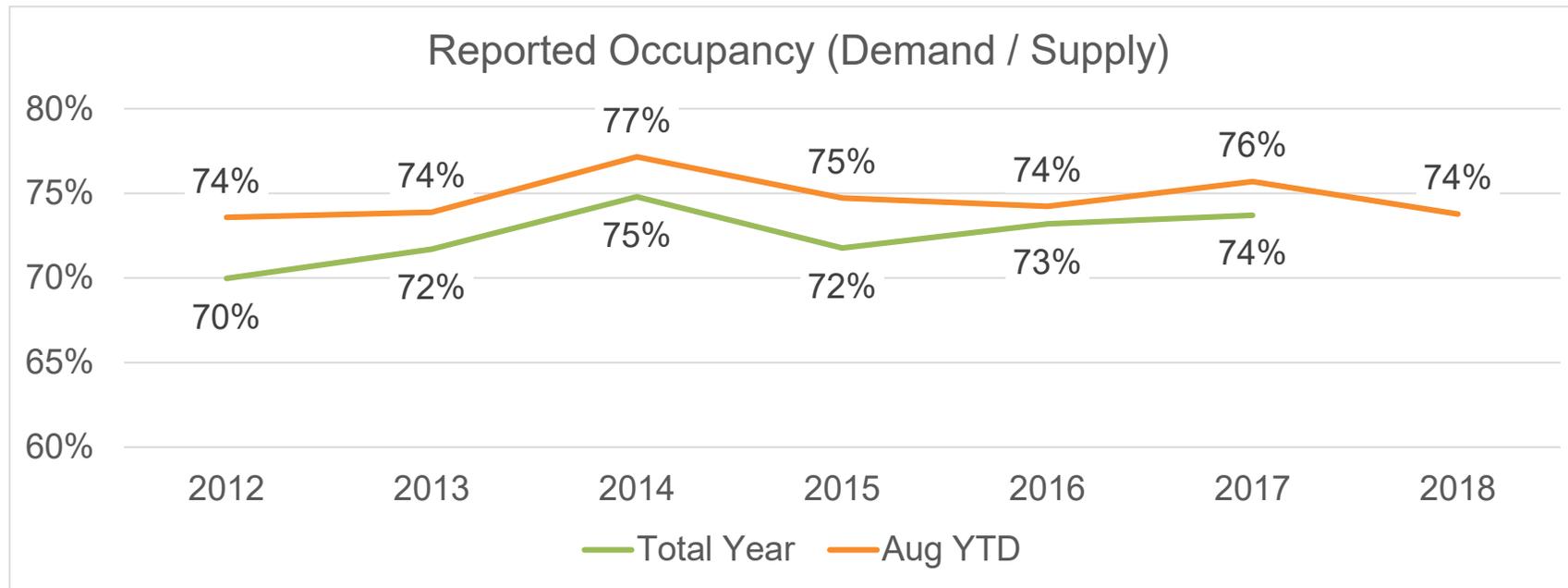
Lodging Property	Class	Open Date	Rooms	Age	% of Rooms
Over 30 Years Old (1,387 rooms)					48%
Comfort Inn Sandy Springs Perimeter	Upper Midscale Class	Jun-71	80	47	
Wyndham Atlanta Perimeter	Upscale Class	Jan-81	296	37	
Westin Atlanta Perimeter North	Upper Upscale Class	Nov-86	372	32	
Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham Atlanta Perimeter Center	Midscale Class	Aug-87	128	31	
Hilton Atlanta Perimeter	Upper Upscale Class	Mar-87	224	31	
Courtyard Atlanta Perimeter Center	Upscale Class	Dec-87	145	31	
Sheraton Hotel Atlanta Perimeter North	Upper Upscale Class	Apr-87	142	31	
20-30 Years Old (877 rooms)					31%
Sonesta ES Suites Atlanta Perimeter Center North	Upper Midscale Class	Sep-89	122	29	
Comfort Suites Perimeter Center	Upper Midscale Class	May-95	121	23	
Hyatt Place Atlanta Perimeter Center	Upscale Class	Feb-97	150	21	
Extended Stay America Atlanta Perimeter Hammond Drive	Economy Class	May-97	129	21	
Fairfield Inn & Suites Atlanta Perimeter Center	Upper Midscale Class	Oct-97	114	21	
Extended Stay America Atlanta Perimeter Peachtree Dunwoody	Economy Class	Jan-97	99	21	
La Quinta Inns & Suites Atlanta Perimeter Medical Center	Midscale Class	Oct-98	142	20	
10-20 Years Old (355 rooms)					12%
InTown Suites Sandy Springs	Economy Class	May-99	71	19	
Holiday Inn Express & Suites Atlanta North Perimeter Mall Area	Upper Midscale Class	Jan-99	107	19	
Extended Stay America Atlanta Perimeter Crestline	Economy Class	Apr-00	97	18	
Microtel Inn & Suites by Wyndham Atlanta Perimeter Center	Economy Class	Jul-01	80	17	
Under 10 Years Old (246 rooms)					9%
Homewood Suites Atlanta Perimeter Center	Upscale Class	Jun-15	114	3	
Hampton Inn Atlanta-Perimeter Center	Upper Midscale Class	May-16	131	2	

Revenue



Lodging revenue has consistently grown over the last six years, from \$54 Million to over \$86 Million annually.

Occupancy



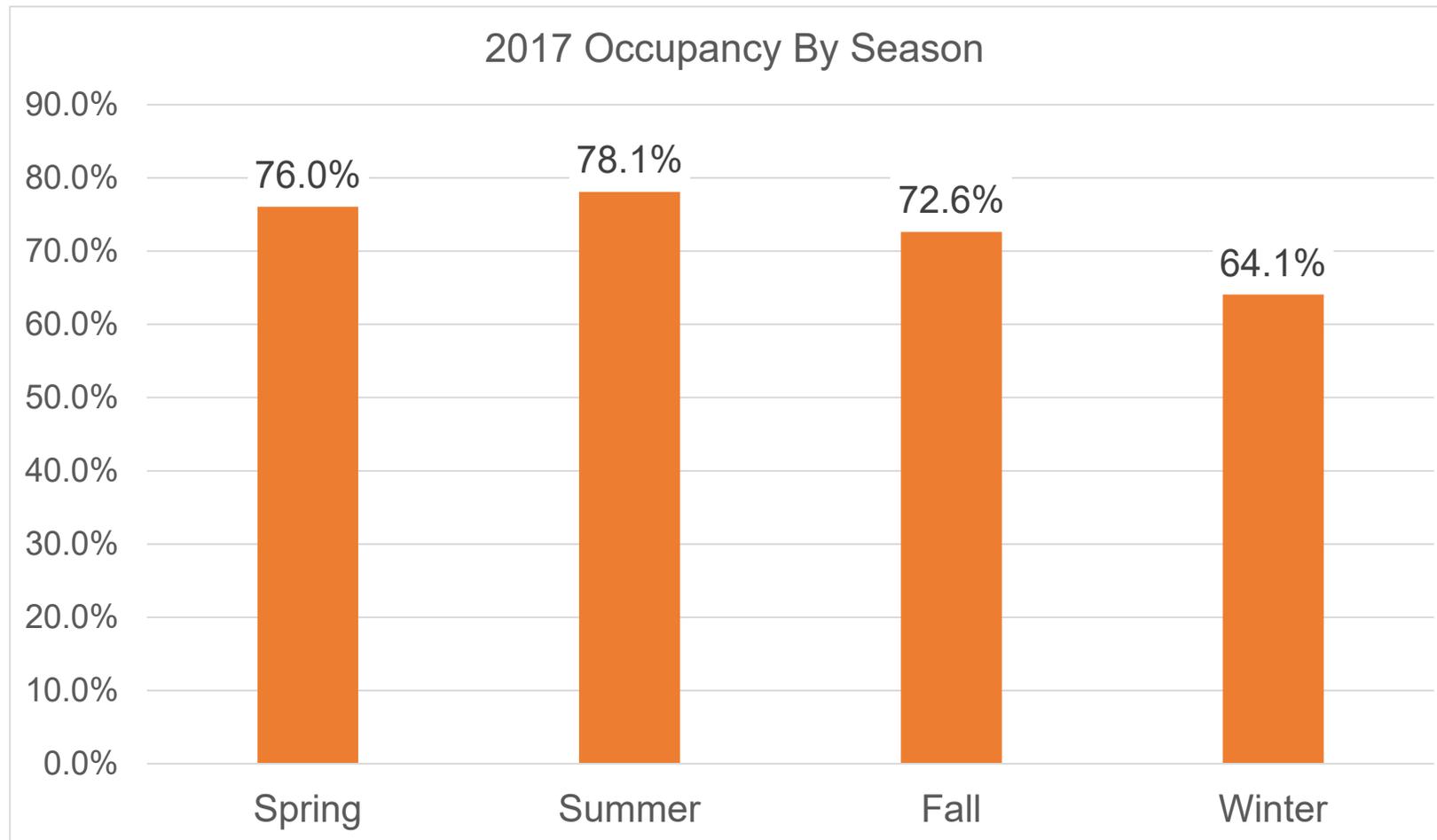
Occupancy, or rooms sold divided by rooms available, has remained between 70% and 80% since 2012. This is a very high rate (since 80% is about the maximum possible annually).

Actual numbers from 2018 show a drop in occupancy, however, the rooms at the **Comfort Suites** have remained in **STR's reported supply**.

When that supply is removed from the occupancy rate equation, we see that actually occupancy **INCREASED 2% in 2018 to 79%**.

Comfort Suites represents	121 rooms, or	44,165	room nights
2018 reported supply	696,164		
2018 adjusted supply:	651,999		
2018 demand:	513,542		
Keeping demand the same, the adjusted occupancy rate is:			79%

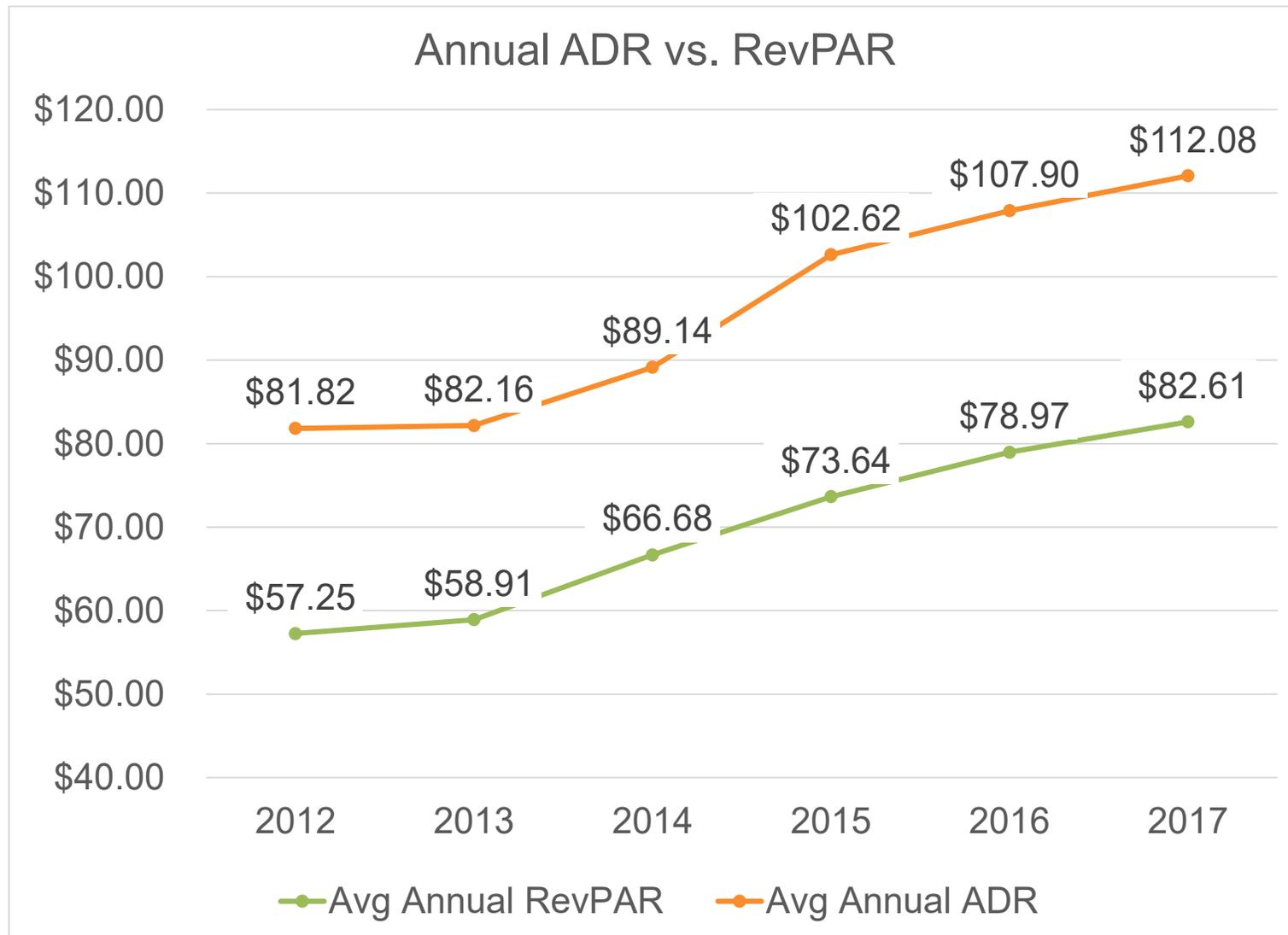
Sandy Springs STR



Summer is Sandy Springs' busiest season, when rooms are 78% occupied.

Effort should be made to build tourism during winter and the shoulder seasons in order to fill in overall gaps.

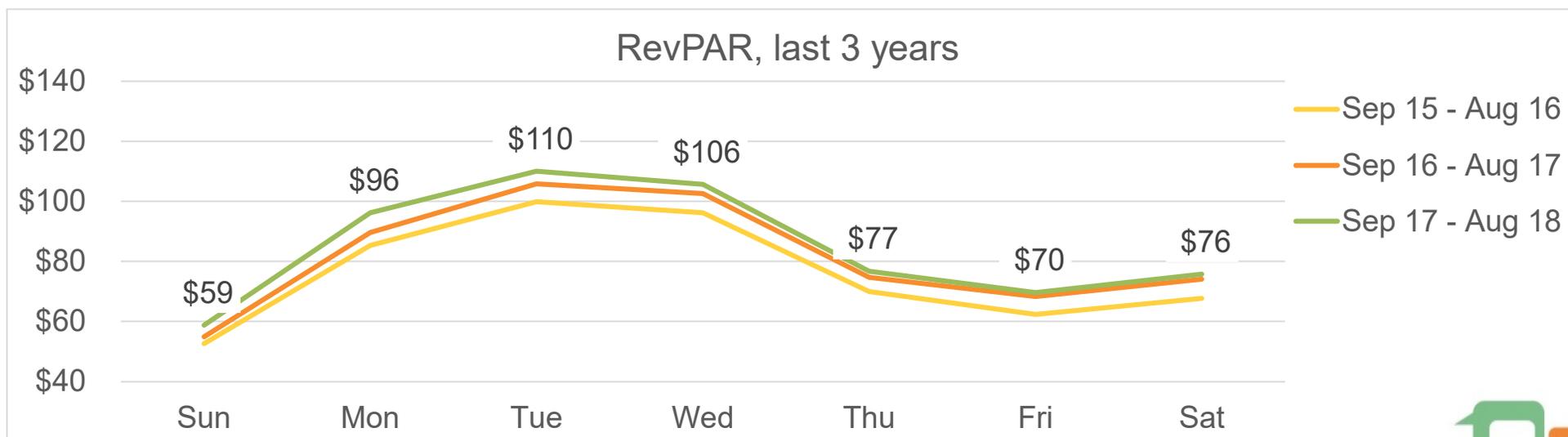
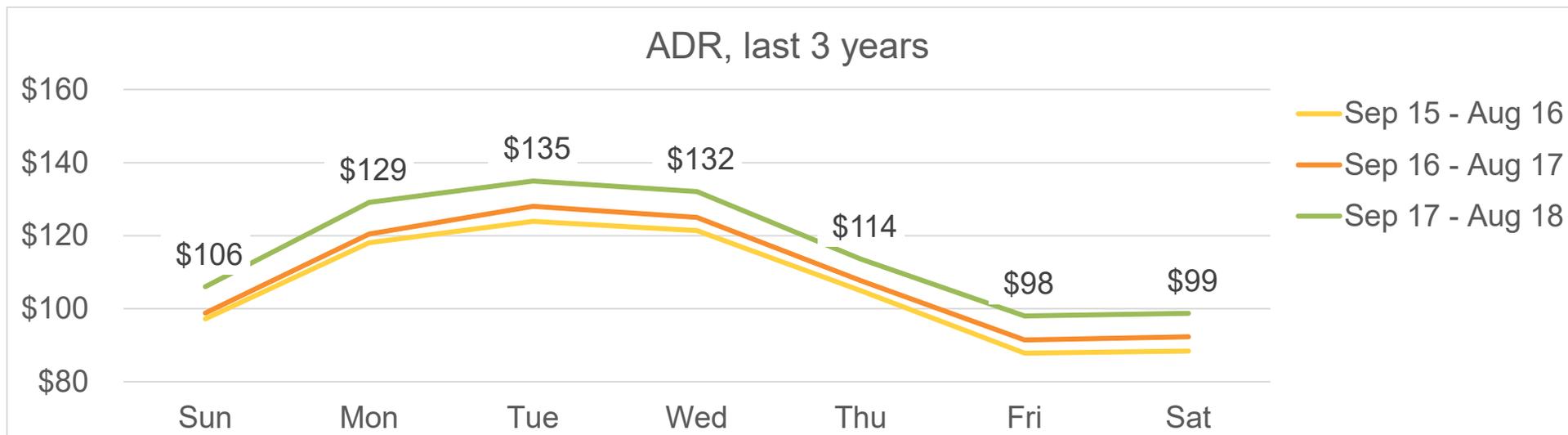
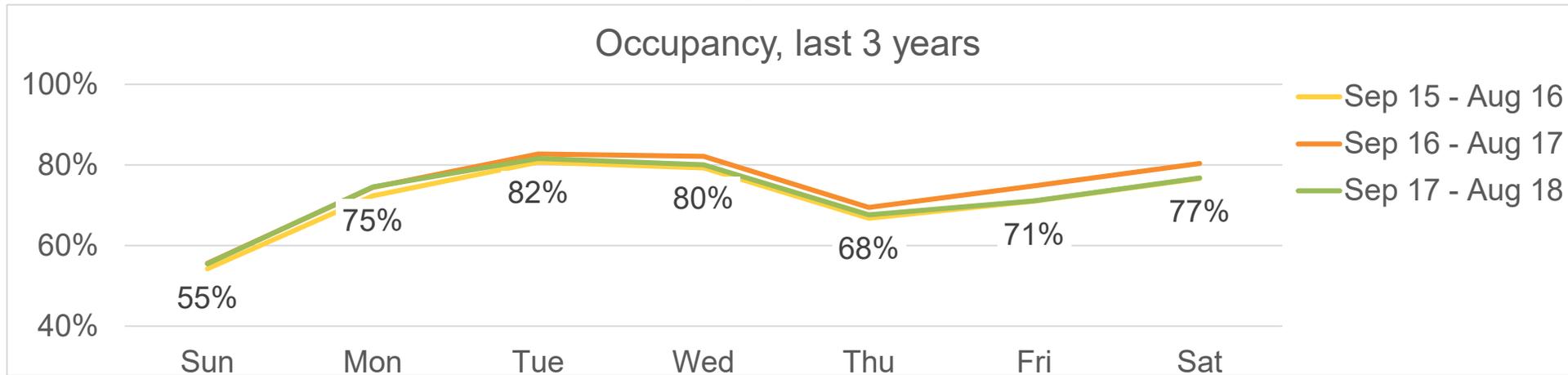
Average Daily Rate vs RevPAR



Annual Average Daily Rate (ADR) has consistently risen since 2012, along with occupancy. ADR has increased \$30.26 over the past five years.

Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR—a measure of lodging profitability) has also increased steadily. RevPAR has risen \$25.36 over the past five years.

Day of the Week



Tuesday is the most profitable day of the week with the highest occupancy (82%) and ADR (\$135) yielding the highest RevPAR (\$110).

Saturday nights have high occupancy (77%) but low ADR (\$99), yielding a \$76 RevPAR. This suggests rate dropping/ releasing rooms to OTAs.

Sundays are the least profitable at \$59.

Lodging Survey

- ❑ **14 responses representing 1983 rooms (approximately 69% of lodging inventory)**
 - ❑ Results have been weighted by # of rooms and hotel class (Economy, Midscale, Upper Midscale, Upscale and Upper Upscale)

- ❑ **Overall, according to managers' best estimates:**
 - ❑ 17.7% of hotel guests are walk-ins
 - ❑ 71.5% of hotel guests are adults traveling without children
 - ❑ 34.1% of hotel guests book their reservations through an OTA
 - ❑ Hoteliers report that visitors are most likely to come from Georgia, Florida, Texas and North Carolina
 - ❑ Corporate groups, conferences/meetings, sports, and film cast/crew are the highest priority segments for hoteliers; however sports and film are not viable targets for Sandy Springs as a destination.
 - ❑ Hoteliers would like support from the CVB with weekend groups, corporate relocations, and by keeping them informed of what's going on in the market

2017 Market Mix

2017 Category**

69% Response Rate

Corporate/Business

56.6% Total Business

47.09% Individual business travelers (white collar)

9.50% BUSINESS: Blue collar workers (mineral industry, commercial, construction, etc.)

Groups

14.94% Total Groups

6.43% Conference/meetings/corporate groups

2.9% Weddings

2.77% Reunions

0.87% Film/entertainment cast/crew

1.97% Other groups including family/social events (anniversaries, birthdays, graduations, etc.)

Leisure

11.65% Total Leisure

5.44% Typical sightseeing tourists visiting Atlanta

2.81% Tourists passing through for one night as part of a longer trip

1.8% Visiting local friends & relatives

1.6% Attending a local festival or event

Sports

5.18% Total Sports

4.38% Youth sports events (soccer, baseball/softball, etc.)

0.80% Adult sports events

Other

11.63% Long-term stays, relocations, locals

According to lodging partners' best estimates, out of every 100 overnight visitors to Sandy Springs, 57 are business travelers, 15 are with groups, 12 are leisure, 12 are "other" (locals, long-term stays, relocations), and 5 are sports.

Q: Please tell us what percentage of your TOTAL 2017 guests fell into each category.
**Average has been weighted by # of rooms and hotel class

Source: GRS Lodging Study 2018

Lodging Partner Priorities for Market Segments

Visitor Segment	Priority Ranking (where 1 is highest)	2018 Rank
Corporate Groups	1.63	1
Conferences/Meetings	3.00	2
Team Sports Events	3.14	3
Film/entertainment cast/crew	3.14	4
Leisure/Vacations	4.50	5
Nature/Outdoors Tourism	5.60	6

Hoteliers report that their highest priorities for developing marketing segments are corporate groups, conferences/meetings, team sports events, and film/entertainment cast/crew.

*However, Sandy Springs does not have adequate **sports** facilities to realistically target sports tournaments, and the city is not considered to be “**film-friendly**.” Both of these make it difficult for the CVB to be successful in growing those segments.*

Q: Please rank the following customer segments to indicate your priority order for future tourism marketing efforts. Place a 1 next to the segment you deem highest priority, a 2 by the segment next highest and so on until you have ranked all segments.

Group Travel Analysis

Methodology

- ✓ 10 interviews were conducted by phone with Sandy Springs event planners
 - ✓ Planners mostly managed weddings, mitzvahs and small business/corporate events
- ✓ \$10 incentive offered; increased to \$15 after low response
- ✓ Interviews conducted July – September 2018



To date, most of the Group travel in Sandy Springs is made up of weddings, mitzvahs and other family events. The city has not had a strong selection of space for meetings larger than approximately 150-200 heads.

The development of City Springs opens up potential for larger meetings (up to 1000) to generate room nights. While currently focused on local events, City Springs will eventually reach outside the city boundaries for leads. The addition of a hotel connected to the venue will be a huge benefit to groups coming from out of town.



Group Travel Insights

- ❑ Planners (especially for weddings and Mitzvahs) don't have a good understanding of Sandy Springs' borders
 - ❑ They often mistake Dunwoody hotels for Sandy Springs, but don't think it is relevant as all is "The Perimeter." In any case, the geography is unimportant to them.
- ❑ Planners need more options for space that suits different types of events
 - ❑ Heritage is popular for wedding ceremonies and receptions; Christ the King is popular for ceremonies.
 - ❑ Heritage is limited in space as typically either the ceremony or reception is held outside; weather is a factor.
- ❑ Mitzvahs utilize area temples and synagogues, and book far in advance
 - ❑ Benefit is the ability to bring in your own liquor—to not have to pay the hotel liquor fee is huge.
 - ❑ Mitzvahs book 3 years in advance at temples and with DJs. DJs are a hot commodity that are hard to come by.
- ❑ City Springs is not currently realistic for out of town conferences or weddings
 - ❑ Meetings and conferences want hotel space connected to their meeting space. Until this is available, City Springs is not an easy sell for out of town groups.
 - ❑ Wedding planners can't visualize how the space would be used for their clients—there is no clear ceremony space (outdoors is public and off the table) or bride ready-room.

Perceived Strengths & Weaknesses of Sandy Springs

Strengths

- ❑ Conveniently located
 - ❑ Sandy Springs is “right in the center of things” and mitzvahs/weddings want to stay local to ATL while making sure it is accessible to out of town family/friends
 - ❑ MARTA access to downtown/airport
 - ❑ Especially for those coming from the north side of town
- ❑ Scenic
 - ❑ Green, less urban feel
- ❑ Good shopping and retail available
- ❑ Variety of restaurants
 - ❑ Great for rehearsal dinners
- ❑ “Safe”
 - ❑ While difficult to market, safety and security are important draws to Sandy Springs.

Weaknesses

- ❑ Congestion and traffic
 - ❑ Esp. Roswell Rd; adds 30 mins commute time to breakfast or dinner event
- ❑ Not a lot of venues to choose from
- ❑ Meeting spaces are small
 - ❑ Heritage can hold 150 (ceremony must be outside)
- ❑ No central walkable area outside of Perimeter (City Springs will be a good development as a central area)
- ❑ Weekend groups experience service disconnect between sales staff (don't work on weekends) and front desk during their event
- ❑ Weekend groups have fewer transportation options (no shuttles)

People underestimate the value of a smaller venue. It can be hard to find the right venue for a small group; you need something that can hold 30-50 people.

They have to have something with a wedding vibe or a personal feel to it. Everything there screams business and corporate—Westin was the largest and they just weren't equipped to do weddings.

Mostly the bride has either been to a wedding at a location or is familiar with the area and has her heart set on a space. They typically plan their date around that.

Most stay around the perimeter area just for activities sake; for having other things to do they go several exits over.

Outside of Perimeter there's nothing. If there was more stuff it would be better. City Springs will be good... If they put in a nice hotel (like a Marriott) they could fill it up.

I would encourage Sandy Springs to invite local meeting planners once a year to come tour some of the venues; like a FAM tour for 3 hours, show the renovation in this hotel, see Stars and Strikes' banquet room. That's how I find out about new venues/banquets.

If I ever get a bride on the front end before she's selected her venue I suggest Heritage because it's like being at the botanical gardens with a lower budget; and you can have both your ceremony and reception at one place.

Sandy Springs is so corporate oriented, focused on corporate meetings. We had a challenge finding a fun place for reception dinner; hotels were very stuffy.

•I think they're doing a wonderful job with City Springs; it's great. What hurts them is they don't have a hotel within walking distance. Avalon has a hotel right there; that's going to be their main downfall.

❏ **To truly be a room-night generator, City Springs will need an attached hotel.**

- ❑ Meeting Planners prefer to accommodate their attendees on-site.
- ❑ Connected hotel and walkable restaurants/retail would enable more out of town meetings and conferences to consider City Springs as a viable option.

❏ **Planners want to be educated on how they can utilize the space as they struggle to visualize it.**

- ❑ As the newest venue in the area, there is a high level of interest in City Springs. However the space is still presented as a “template” and planners are forced to try to figure out how their event would fit.

❏ **Spaces are great for local corporate/association meetings; weddings and mitzvahs are a bigger challenge.**

- ❑ No bride ready-room, no clear bride entrance/aisle placement
- ❑ Mitzvahs typically book three years out and need a firm reserved date.

❏ **Planners love the flexibility of the space and complimentary audiovisual equipment.**

- ❑ But guests need transportation help/shuttles from hotels and MARTA.



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Implications & Recommendations

- ❑ Supply meeting planners with information on area venues and restaurants
 - ❑ Which restaurants have private dining? What is the capacity?
 - ❑ What meeting spaces are available and at what capacity?
 - ❑ Conduct FAM tours for local meeting planners (weekends and summers are good times)
- ❑ Send e-newsletter out to regular meeting planners to keep them abreast of developments and continue to push out information on meeting space and restaurants:
 - ❑ Capacity
 - ❑ Which venues allow outside catering
 - ❑ Which restaurants have private dining rooms
 - ❑ Which hotels have shuttles
- ❑ Brides often put together area information for guests on the sites such as the Knot, and planners find new venues on Instagram and blogs
 - ❑ Use these sources to market Sandy Springs
- ❑ Planners need incentive to keep their meetings in Sandy Springs.
 - ❑ Put together alternate hotel suggestions for Dunwoody area hotels.
 - ❑ Help negotiate volume of meetings and menu flexibility with hotels

Visitor Profile Study

Visitor Origins



- LEISURE** 
- BUSINESS** 
- SPORTS** 
- GROUPS** 

Intercept Respondent Mix

Intercept Segment	Intercepts conducted	% of total intercepts	Actual Market Mix*
LEISURE	134	51%	12%
BUSINESS	54	21%	57%
SPORTS	40	16%	5%
GROUPS	30	12%	15%
TOTAL	258	100%	100%

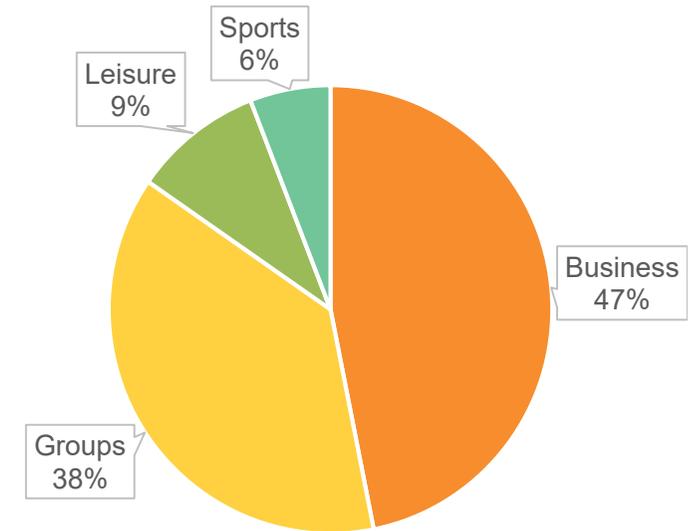
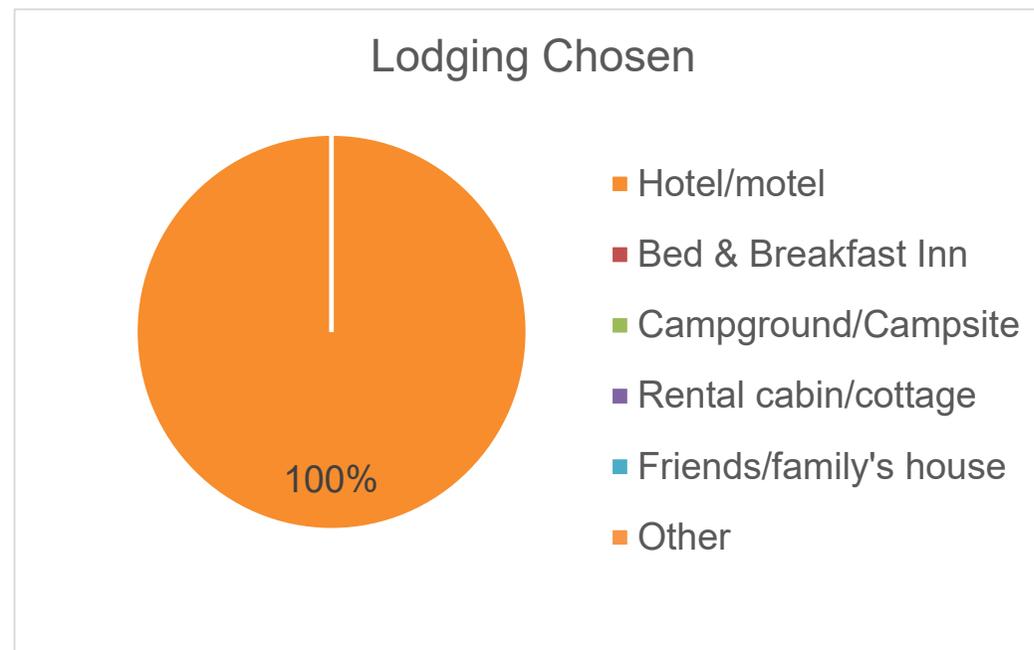
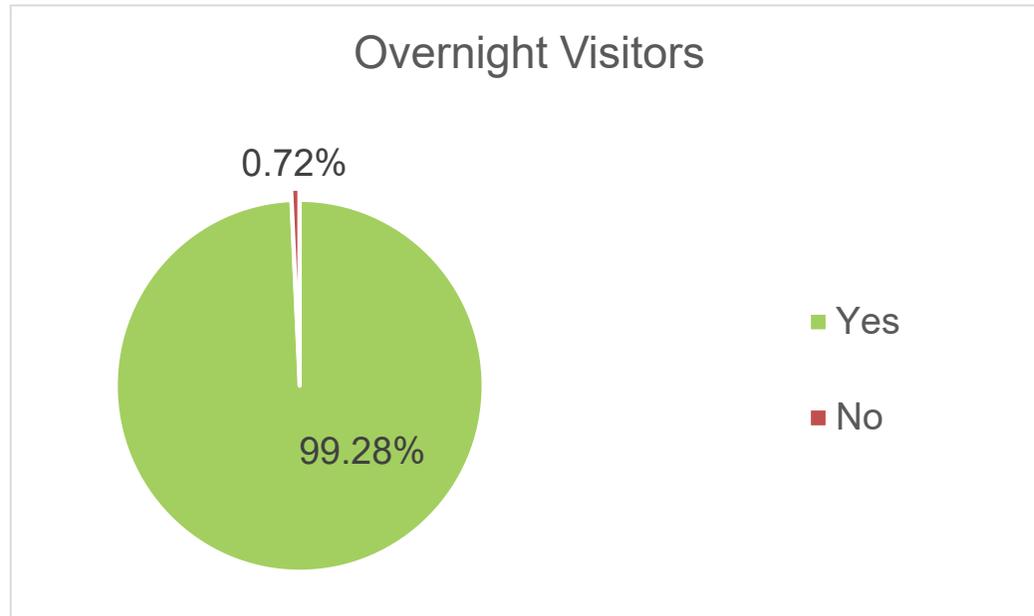
This study was focused primarily on the LEISURE visitor. Therefore, while the true incidence of leisure visitors is 12%, more than half of the interviews conducted were with leisure visitors.

* Actual Mix of segments was discovered through the Lodging Survey

Intercepts Conducted at:

- Anne Frank Museum
- Comfort Inn
- Courtyard by Marriott
- Fairfield Inn & Suites
- Holiday Inn Express
- Homewood Suites
- LaQuinta
- Sheraton
- Sonesta
- Westin

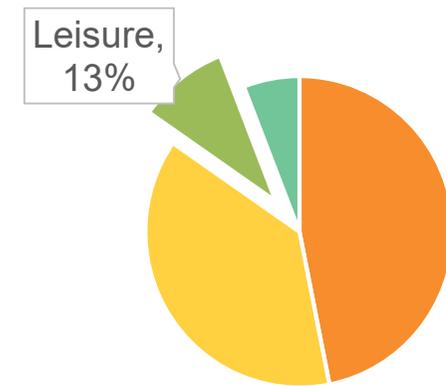
Overnight and Lodging



99% of visitors surveyed stayed the night in Sandy Springs, and 100% stayed in a hotel/motel.

Q: Are you staying overnight in Sandy Springs?
Q: IF YES: What type of lodging property?

Leisure Visitor Demographics



Demographics:	
Average Age	46.8
Gender: Male / Female	62%/38%
Point of Origin	GA, FL, NC
Generations:	
Founders (14-21)	1%
Millennials (22-37)	28%
Gen X (38-53)	36%
Baby Boomers (54-72)	31%
Silent Generation (73 or older)	3%
Travel Party Size:	
Adults Only	70%
Average # of Adults	2.20
Visitors traveling with children	30%
Average # of children	1.85
Education:	
Technical school	1%
High school graduate	7%
Some college	13%
College degree	54%
Graduate school	26%

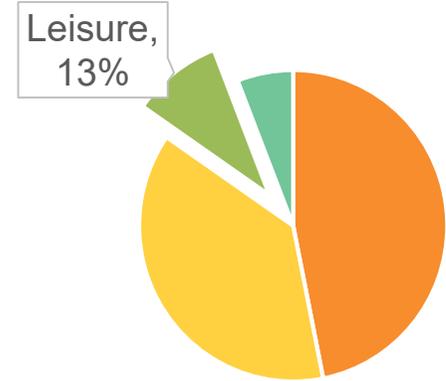
Leisure visitors to Sandy Springs are, on average, 47 years old, skew male, and tend to be from Georgia, Florida, or North Carolina.

36% of visitors are Gen Xers while 31% are Baby Boomers and 28% are Millennials.

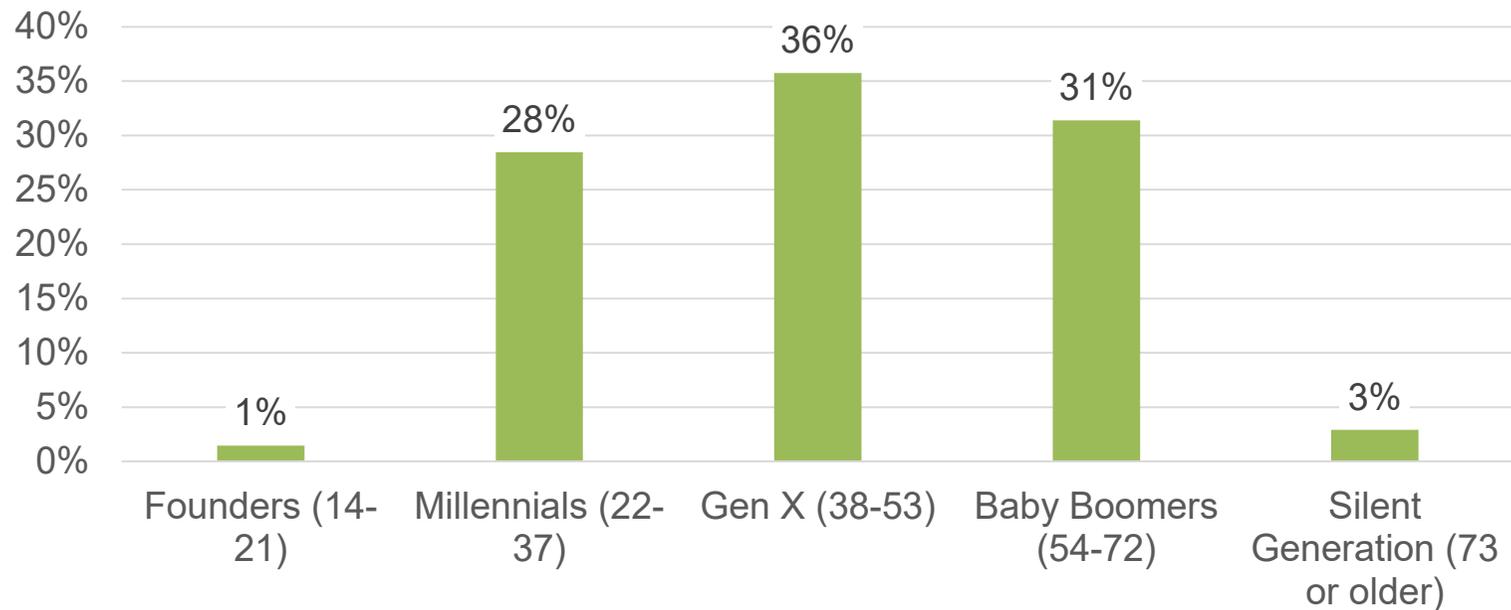
On average parties traveled with 2.2 adults. 30% of travel parties were traveling with children, and on average parties contained 1.85 children.

Most visitors (80%) have either a college or graduate degree.

Age / Generations



Leisure Traveler Generations

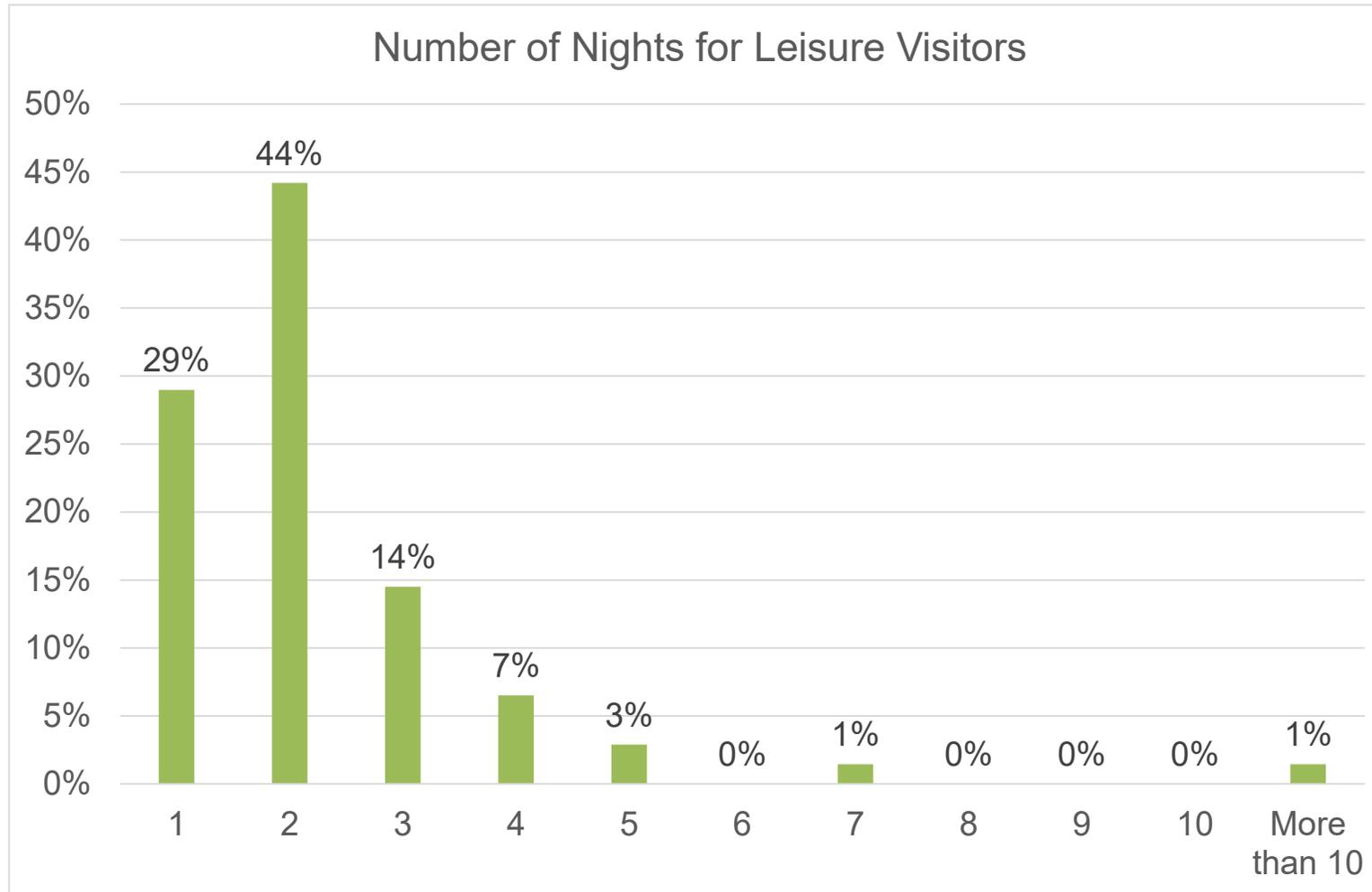
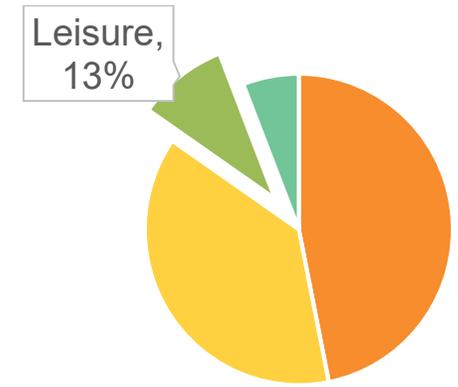


Most visitors to Sandy Springs are Gen X-ers, including leisure (36%), business (47%) and sports visitors (42%). Group travelers are slightly older, with 39% Baby Boomers.

	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
Founders (14-21)	1%	0%	0%	0%
Millennials (22-37)	28%	21%	33%	29%
Gen X (38-53)	36%	47%	42%	29%
Baby Boomers (54-72)	31%	32%	25%	39%
Silent Generation (73 or older)	3%	0%	0%	4%

Q: What is your age?

Length of Stay



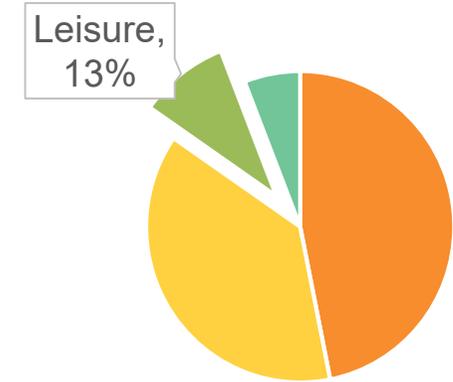
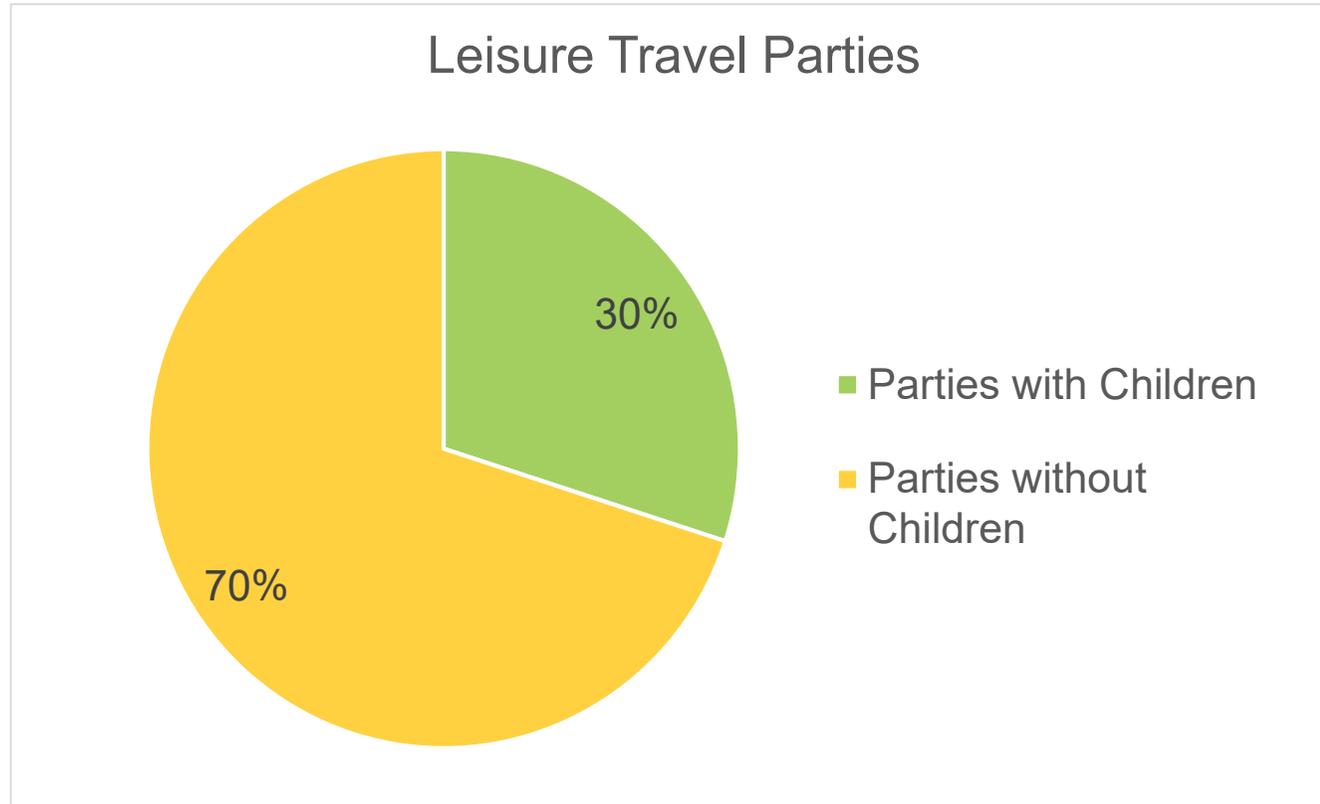
Most leisure visitors stayed 2 nights (44%), with 29% staying one night.

On average, leisure visitors stayed 2.29 nights while business visitors stayed 3.98 nights, sports 3.05 nights, and group visitors 2.57 nights.

Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
2.29	3.98	3.05	2.57

Q: How many nights are you staying?

Travel Parties



Leisure travel parties contained on average 2.20 adults. 30% traveled with children, whose parties had on average 1.85 children.

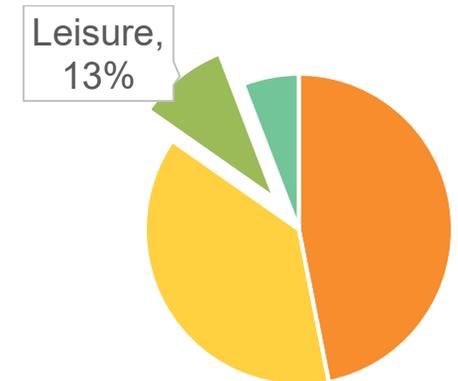
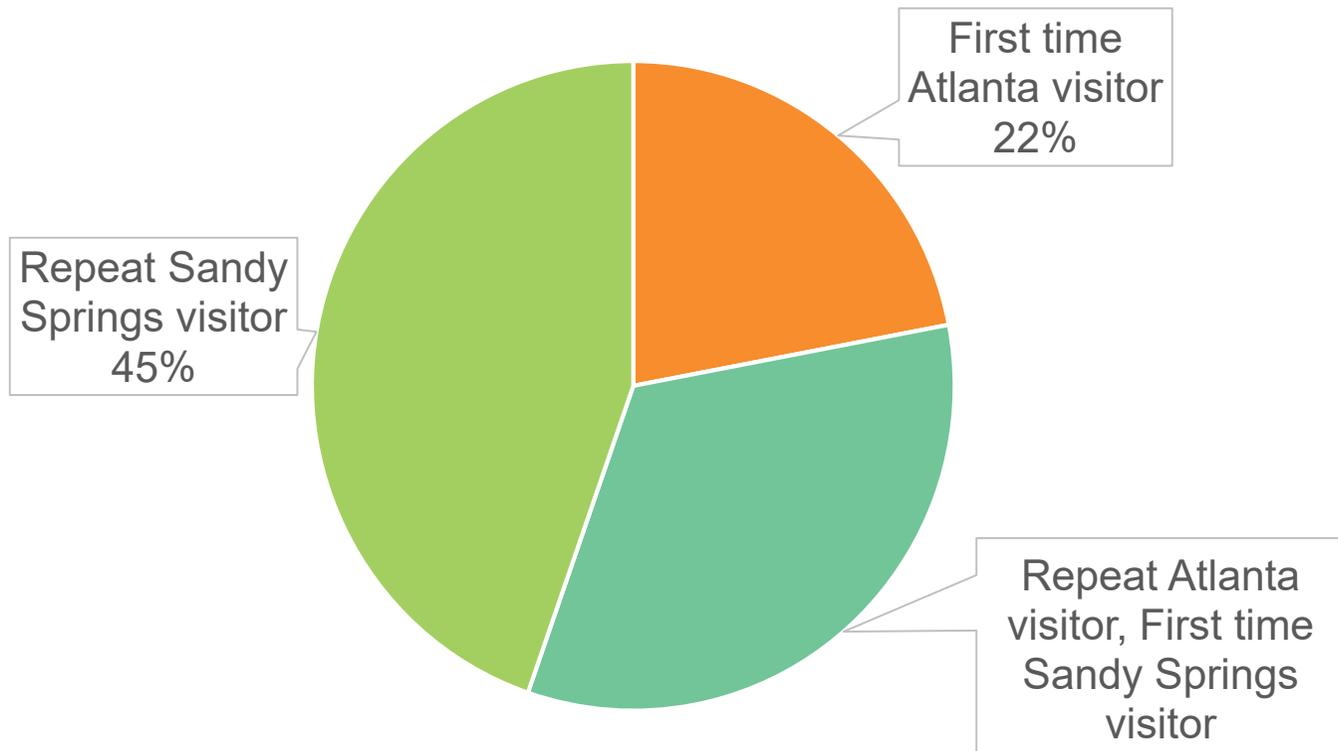
Sports parties had more adults and Leisure parties had children per party than other travel types, while business travelers had less.

	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
Average Adults in Travel Party	2.20	1.69	2.54	2.11
% of parties with Kids	30%	7%	65%	25%
Average # of Kids	1.85	1.55	1.63	1.86

Q: How many adults are you traveling with? Children?

Repeat Visitation

Leisure First timers vs. Repeats

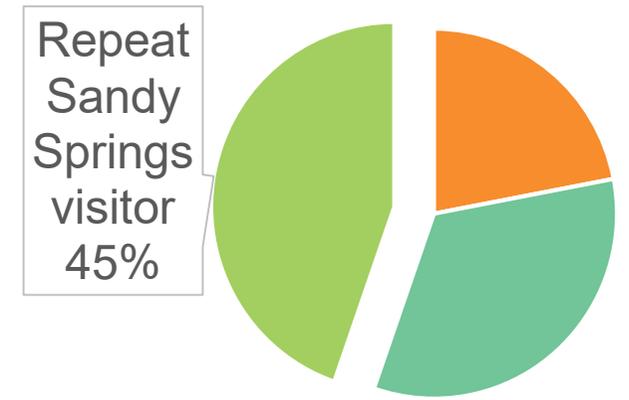
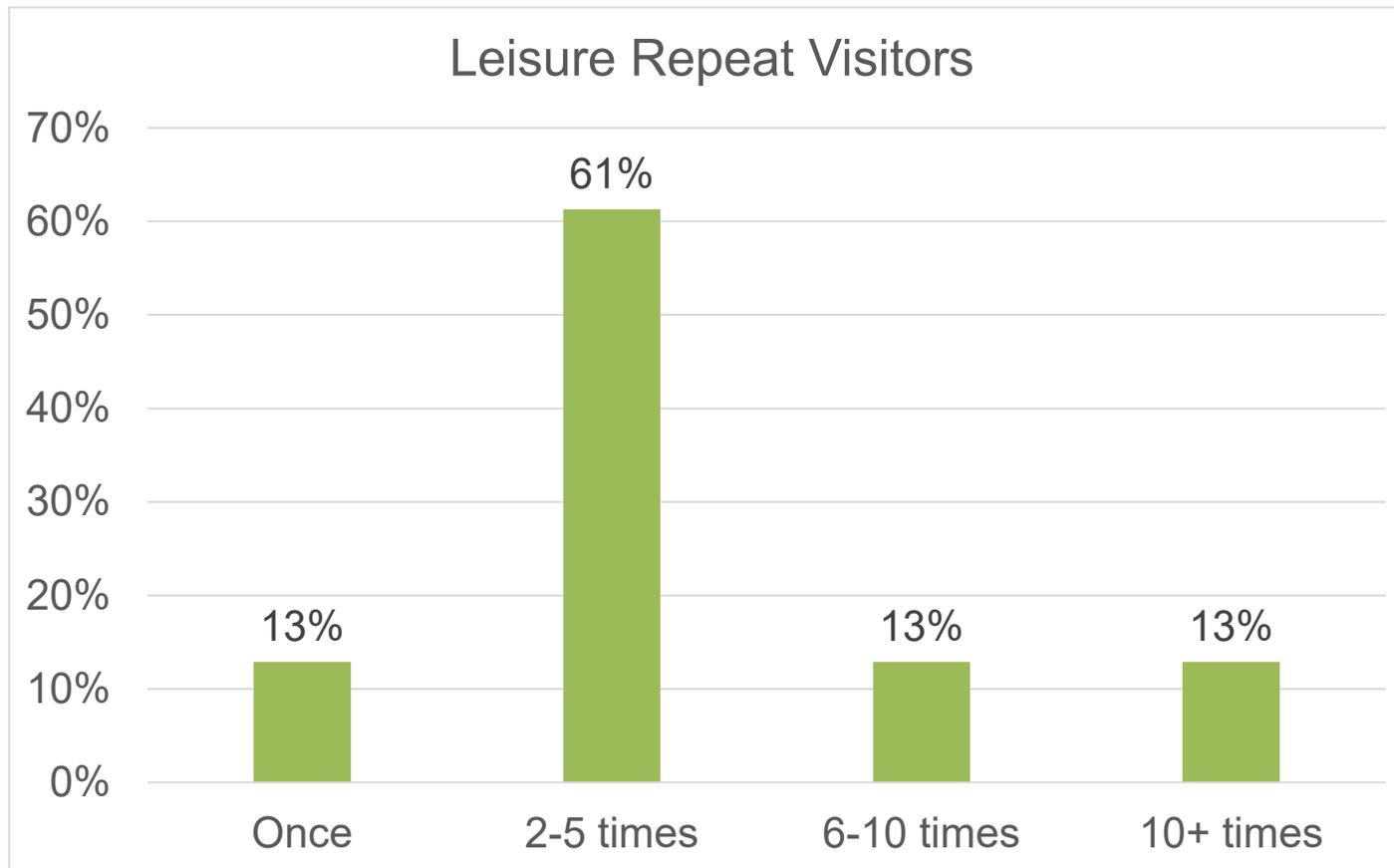


If a visitor comes once to Sandy Springs they are likely to come again; focus on attracting first time visitors.

	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
First time Atlanta	22%	26%	17%	24%
Repeat Atlanta, first time Sandy Springs	33%	15%	58%	41%
Repeat Sandy Springs	45%	59%	25%	34%

Q: Is this your first trip to Atlanta? First trip to Sandy Springs?

Repeat Sandy Springs Visitors



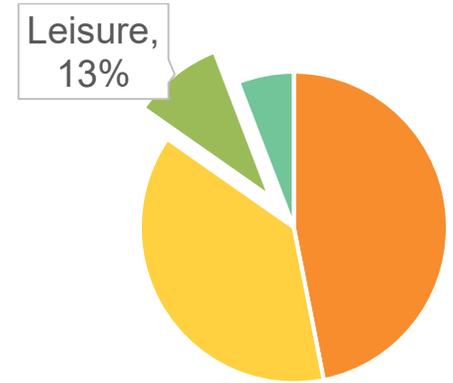
Visitors are most likely to have been to Sandy Springs 2-5 times.

Business and group travelers tend to visit more often.

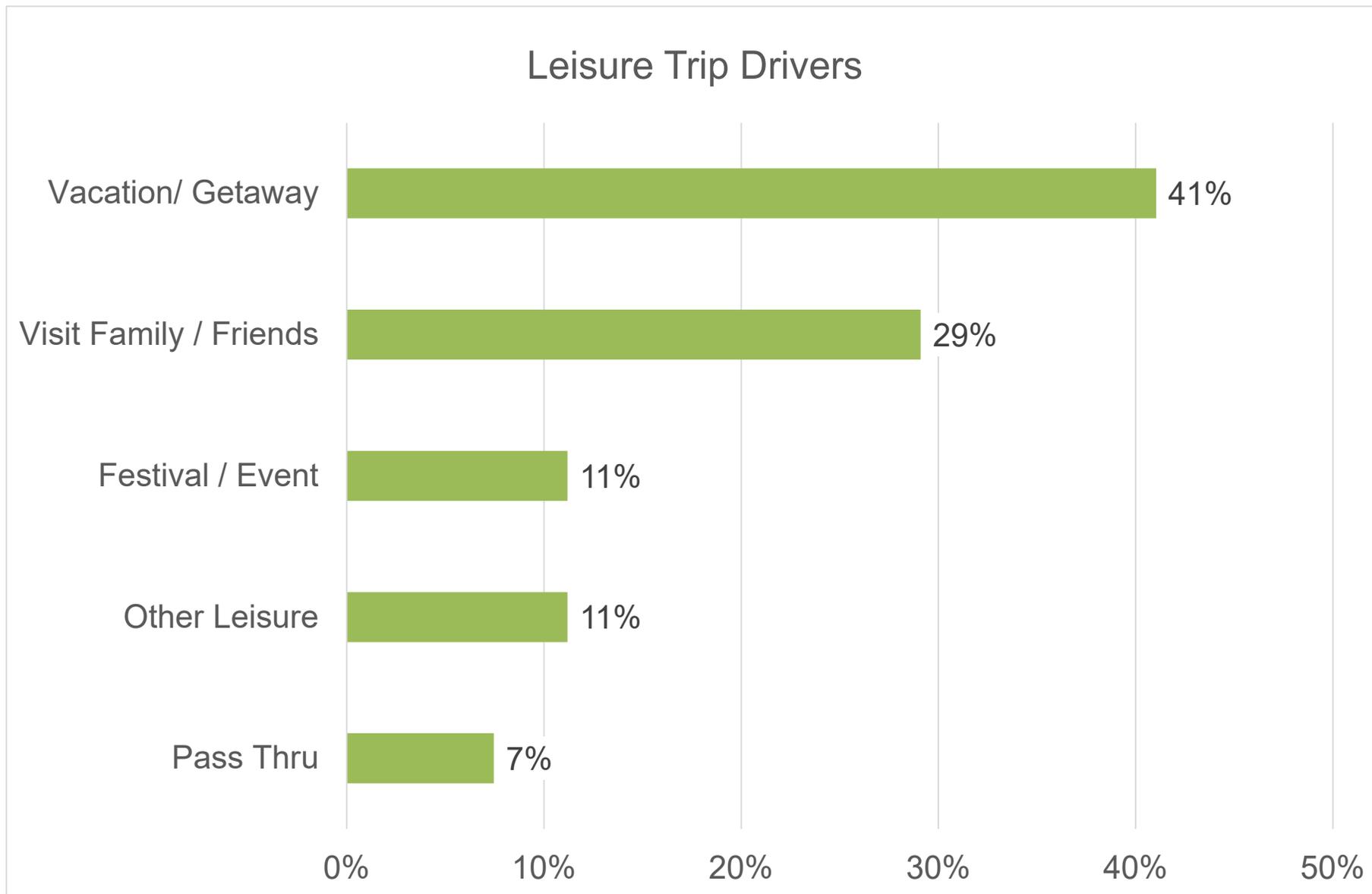
	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
Once	13%	6%	10%	10%
2-5 times	61%	48%	70%	50%
6-10 times	13%	23%	10%	30%
10+ times	13%	23%	10%	10%

Q: How many times have you visited Sandy Springs previously?

Reasons for Leisure Travel



Leisure Trip Drivers



Most people come to Sandy Springs for a vacation or getaway, while 29% come to visit family or friends.

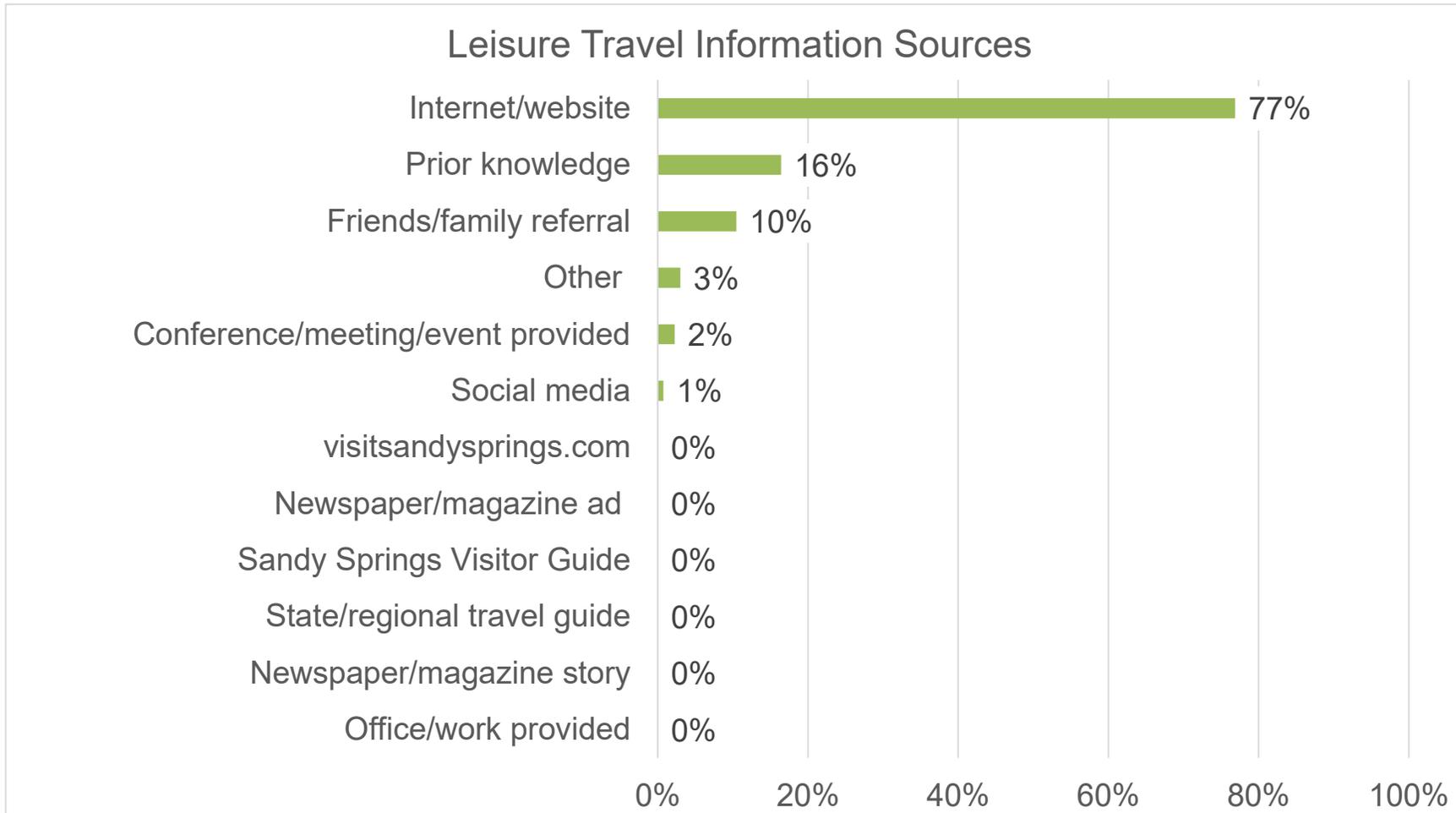
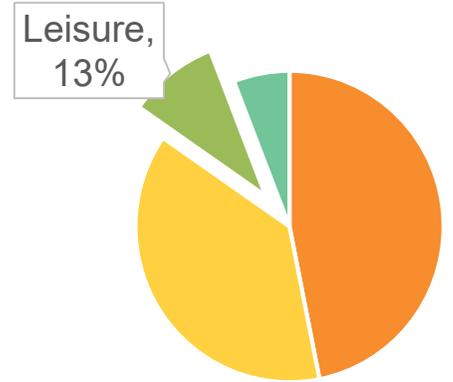
Q: What is the main purpose of this visit to Sandy Springs?

Why Sandy Springs?

Leisure Driver	Reason for Choosing Sandy Springs
Vacation/ Getaway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience, location • Close to MARTA for getting downtown • Close to stadium, Legoland, aquarium, LDS Temple, Six Flags, mall, drag strip • Picked because of hotel (Homewood, La Quinta, Westin) • Good reviews online
Festival / Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragon Con, Blade Show, Who Atlanta, Women's Soiree Fashion Show, Irish Dance Competition, women's expo, concert
Visit Family / Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to family/friends/grandkids, hospital, stadium
Pass Thru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient to interstate, easy to get around, nicer area
Other Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy car, medical (4), LDS temple, Art festival vendor, helping son/daughter move (2), visit wife who is here working, plan a wedding, Med school exam, considering relocation, volunteer training, schooling

Q: Why did you choose Sandy Springs for your leisure destination?

Information Sources



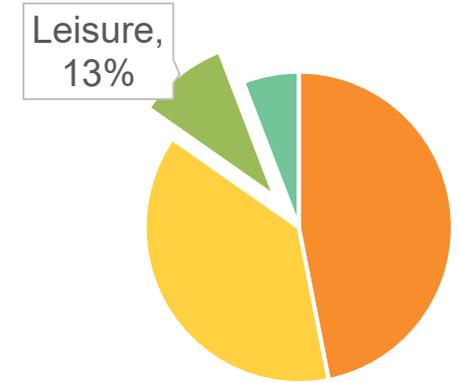
The internet is the strongest source of information for travelers. Very few are making use of visitor information such as visitors guides or travel guides.

Visit Sandy Springs should have a strong digital marketing focus.

Business	Sports	Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office/work provided Hotel websites & apps (Marriott, Hilton, SPG) Prior knowledge Priceline.com Visitsandysprings.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event provided Prior knowledge Friends/family referral Google Hotel websites & apps Orbitz.com, hotels.com, booking.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event provided Friends/family referral Hotel websites & apps Hotels.com Group tour Asked at temple

Q: What information source did you use to plan your trip?

Advance Planning



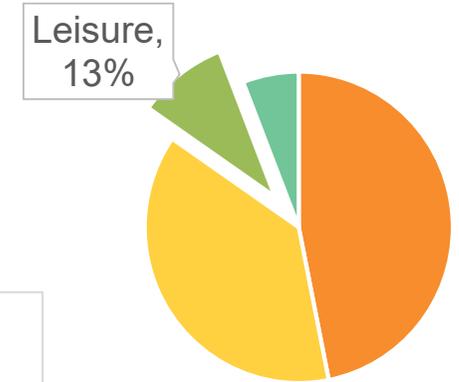
25% of leisure travelers plan 15-30 days before travel, but a strong 27% make last minute plans (0-7 days).

Sports and groups are most likely to plan ahead of time.

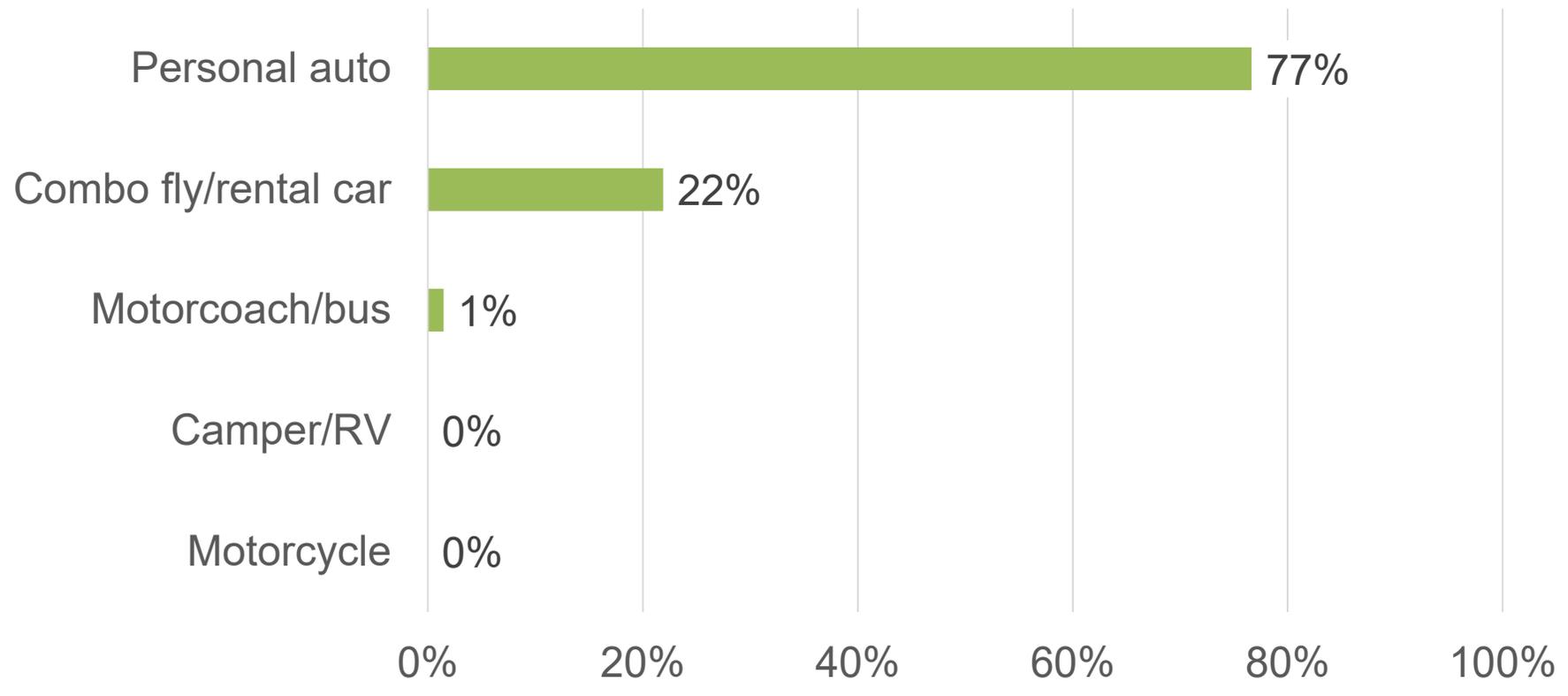
	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
0-7 days before travel	27%	28%	19%	15%
8-14 days before travel	15%	19%	14%	15%
15-30 days before travel	25%	31%	22%	19%
31-60 days before travel	15%	9%	8%	19%
More than 60 days	18%	13%	36%	33%

Q: How far in advance did you plan this trip?

Transportation



Leisure Transportation



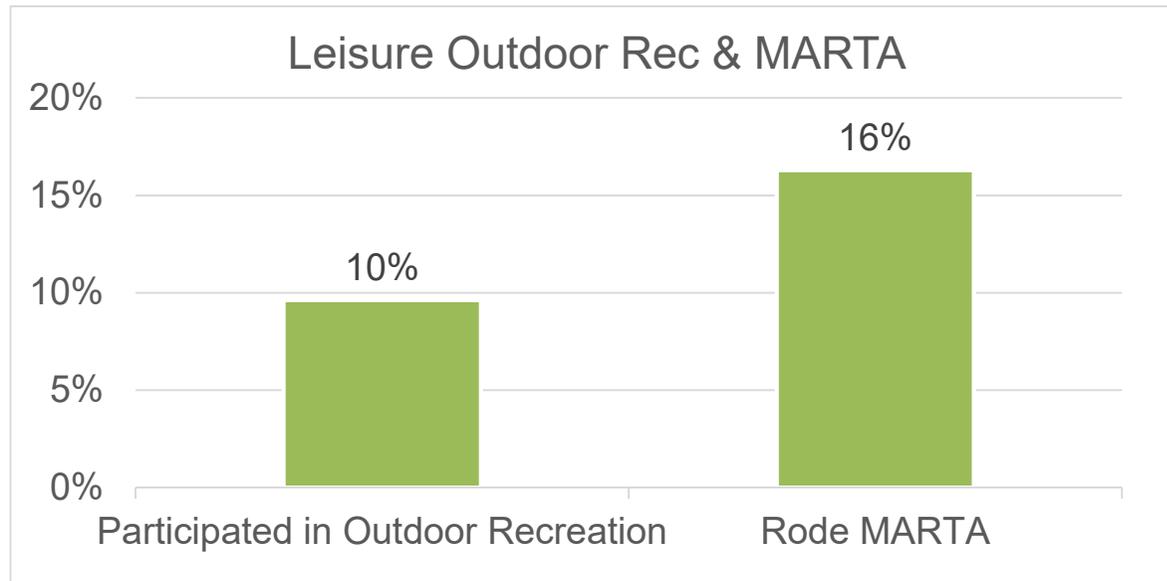
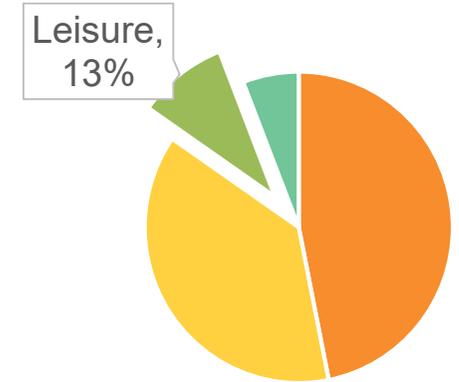
Over ¾ of leisure visitors drive to Sandy Springs; while 22% fly in and rent a car or take MARTA.

Business travelers are most likely to fly, while sports visitors are most likely to drive.

	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
Personal auto	77%	40%	89%	62%
Combo fly/rental car	22%	62%	11%	38%
Motorcoach/bus	1%	0%	0%	0%

Q: What modes of transportation did you use for this trip?

Trip Activities



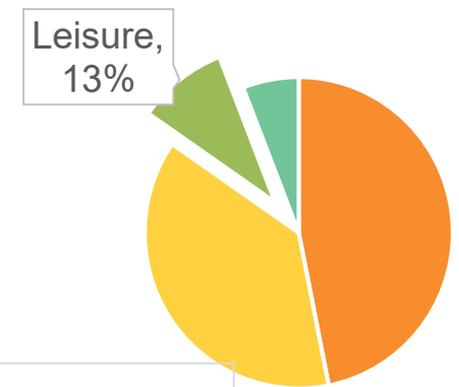
One in 10 leisure visitors participated in outdoor recreation, and almost 2 in 10 rode MARTA.

Sports and Groups are most likely to participate in outdoor recreation.

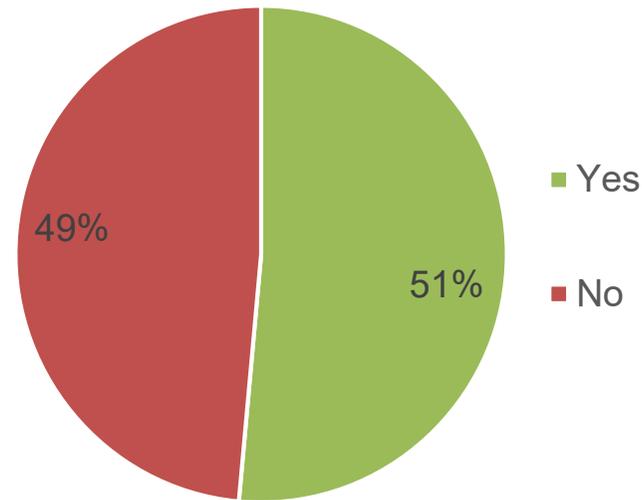
	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
Outdoor Recreation	10%	9%	11%	11%
Rode MARTA	16%	9%	8%	7%

Q: On this trip, will any member of your party participate in outdoor recreation? Will any member of your party ride MARTA?

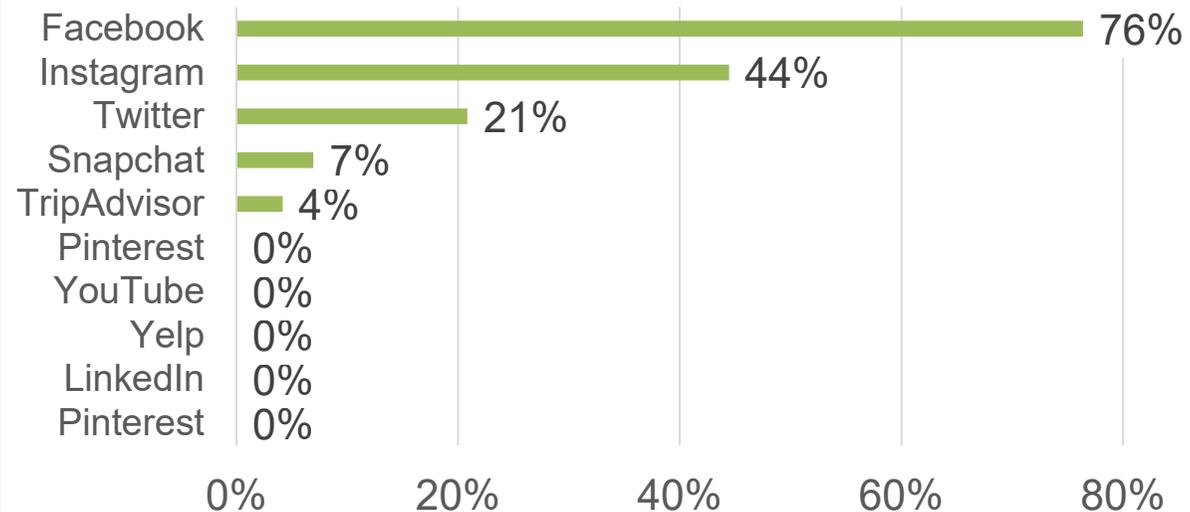
Social Media



Leisure Trip Social Media Use



Leisure Transportation



	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
Posting on social media	51%	50%	62%	44%
Facebook	76%	63%	91%	85%
Instagram	44%	52%	39%	62%
Twitter	21%	11%	13%	0%
Snapchat	7%	0%	13%	31%
TripAdvisor	4%	4%	0%	0%
LinkedIn	0%	4%	0%	0%
Yelp	0%	4%	0%	0%
YouTube	0%	0%	0%	8%
Pinterest	0%	0%	0%	0%

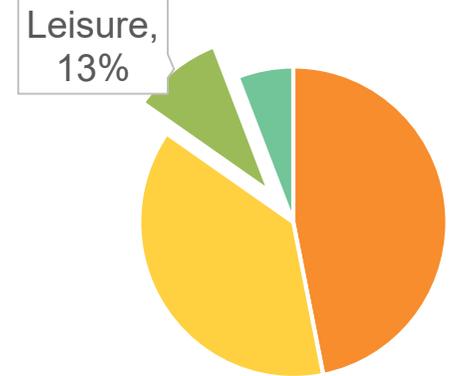
Over half of leisure visitors posted on social media during their visits, mostly to Facebook (76%) or Instagram (44%). Snapchat is used by 7% of visitors.

Sports visitors are most likely to post while groups are least likely.

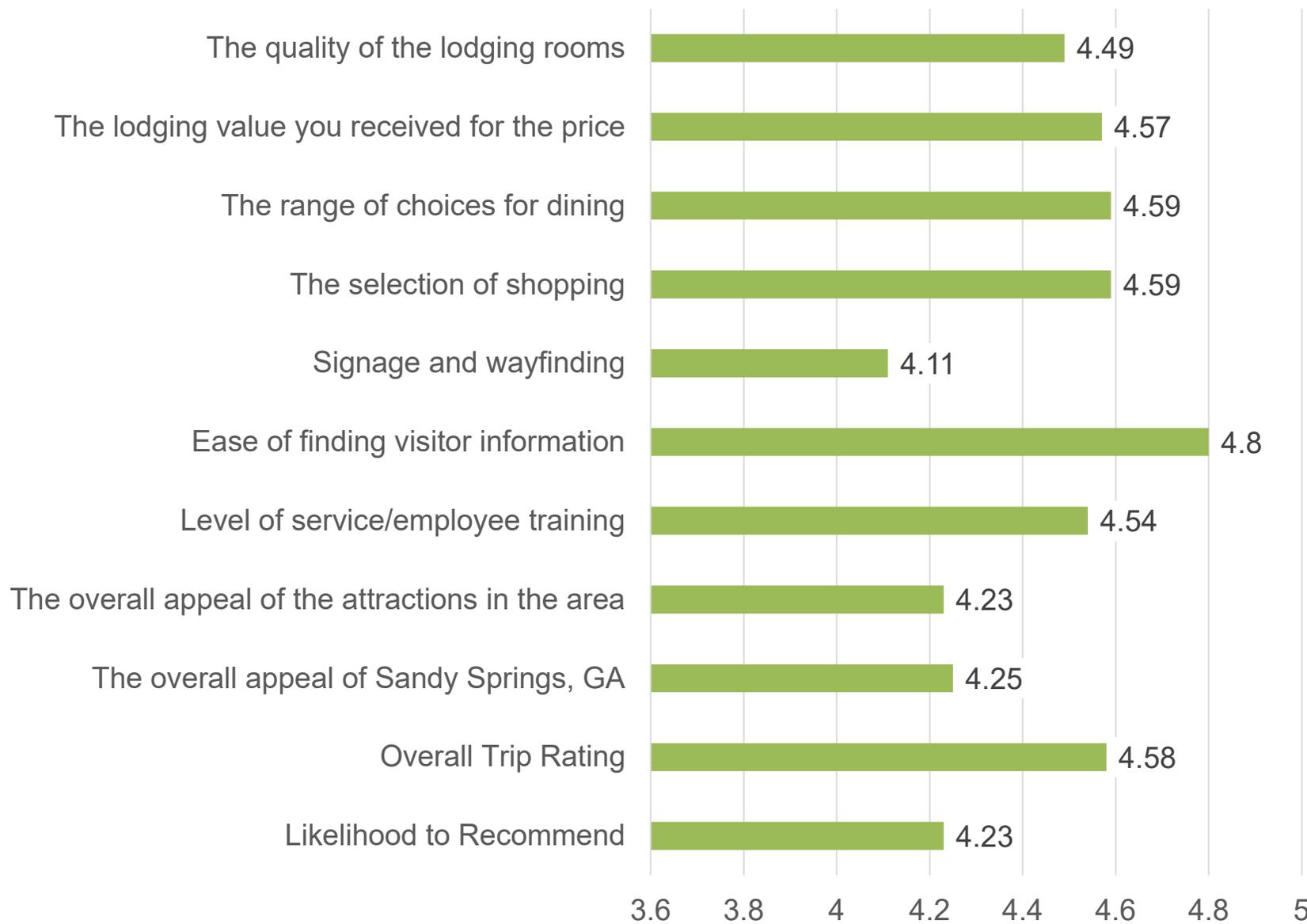
Q: During this trip to Sandy Springs, have you or will you utilize social media during your stay to update status, post pictures, etc.? Which platforms will you use?

Amenities/Trip Ratings

(where 1= poor/unlikely and 5=excellent/very likely)



Leisure Ratings



Leisure visitors scored Sandy Springs the highest on finding visitor information (4.8), dining (4.59), shopping (4.59), and lodging value (4.57). Overall, leisure visitors rated their trip a 4.58 out of 10.

Q: Rate the following amenities on a scale of 1 - 5.

Q: Would you recommend Sandy Springs to friends/family as a place to visit?

Q: Overall, how would you rate your visit to Sandy Springs?

Amenities/Trip Ratings

(where 1= poor/unlikely and 5=excellent/very likely)

	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups
The quality of the lodging rooms	4.49	4.2	4.5	4.43
The lodging value you received for the price paid	4.57	4.32	4.33	4.44
The range of choices for dining	4.59	4.59	4.62	4.72
The selection of shopping	4.59	4.53	4.65	4.67
The overall appeal of the attractions in the area	4.23	3.94	4.6	4.17
The overall appeal of Sandy Springs, GA as a destination	4.25	3.7	4.5	4
Signage and wayfinding	4.11	4.21	4.29	4.13
Ease of finding visitor information	4.8	3.0	5.0	4.5
Level of service/employee training	4.54	4.57	4.58	4.57
Overall Trip Rating	4.58	4.48	4.7	4.68
Likelihood to Recommend	4.23	3.72	4.46	4.42

Sports and groups tended to give high ratings for shopping, dining, and overall trip ratings.

Business travelers tended to give lower ratings, especially of attractions appeal (3.94), ease of finding visitor information (3) and likelihood to recommend as a place to visit (3.72).

Q: Rate the following amenities on a scale of 1 - 5.

Q: Would you recommend Sandy Springs to friends/family as a place to visit?

Q: Overall, how would you rate your visit to Sandy Springs?

Trip Spending and Sales Tax Generated

	Leisure	Business	Sports	Groups	
Lodging	\$ 140	\$ 161	\$ 175	\$ 142	
Food/meals	\$ 111	\$ 67	\$ 129	\$ 80	
Attractions/Amusement	\$ 52	\$ 6	\$ 76	\$ 10	
Shopping	\$ 27	\$ 9	\$ 6	\$ 25	
Transportation, fuel, airfare, etc.	\$ 1	\$ 2	\$ -	\$ 2	
TOTAL spending per day	\$ 296	\$ 218	\$ 272	\$ 202	Total
% of total hotel rooms	13%	64%	8%	15%	100%
Total rooms sold 2017	99,443	491,820	61,670	118,715	770,878
Total spending 2017	\$29,435,206	\$107,216,796	\$16,774,305	\$23,980,473	\$177,406,779
2017 State and Local taxes Generated (@8.9%)	\$2,619,733	\$9,542,295	\$1,492,913	\$2,134,262	\$15,789,203

Q: Approximately how much did/will your party spend PER DAY on your visit to Sandy Springs?

Increasing Tax Revenue

- Each room is worth \$230.14 in revenue and \$20.48 in taxes
- 2017 sold 770,602 rooms (73.7% occupancy) at \$112.08 per room
- *Growing occupancy by 5% and ADR by \$5 would generate over \$1.1 Million in Sales and Local taxes.*

	2017 (currently)	Growing Occupancy by 5%	Growing ADR by \$5	Growing Occupancy by 5% AND ADR by \$5
Rooms sold	770,602	809,422	770,602	809,422
Per room spending	\$230.14	\$230.14	\$235.14	\$235.14
Revenue	\$177,406,779	\$186,280,379	\$181,199,354	\$190,327,489
State and Local taxes Generated (@8.9%)	\$15,789,203	\$16,578,954	\$16,126,743	\$16,939,147
Difference		\$789,751	\$337,540	\$1,149,944

Implications & Recommendations

Visit Sandy Springs Findings & Implications

- ❑ Business travel and weekdays are strong; weekends are weaker
 - ❑ Low ADR but high occupancy on Fridays and Saturdays suggest price-driven last-minute bookings. There is room for ADR to be raised on weekends.
 - ❑ Weekend groups experience service struggles
 - ❑ Sales staff don't work on weekends, sometimes leading to disconnects between front desk staff and guest/planner expectations
 - ❑ Hotel shuttles don't run on weekends, so guests must Uber/Lyft between MARTA and hotels.
 - ❑ Work on building slow periods: Sunday night, Thursday night, weekends, winter
 - ❑ Work with hotels to solve weekend service and transportation issues
- ❑ Welcome Center is underutilized
 - ❑ Welcome Center resources would be better directed towards meeting/event planner outreach, social media marketing and digital marketing
 - ❑ Less than 1000 visitors per year (many of whom are actually looking for the Anne Frank Museum)
- ❑ Stay connected to area hotels; target Bleisure travelers
 - ❑ Continue to regularly visit (2x/month) with hotel managers, DOS and front desk staff. Be sure they are stocked with maps and know how to use them with guests.
 - ❑ Hotel staff changes quickly! Stay updated on contacts, make sure they know Visit Sandy Springs
 - ❑ Ask how their month is going, and what travel segments were strong that month
 - ❑ In return, keep them abreast of developments (businesses relocating, industry developments, etc.)
 - ❑ Stay informed on conferences/meetings coming in to hotels; send ahead or drop off welcome bags/visitor information on the area to extend visits.
 - ❑ Show business and meetings visitors why they should stay an extra day in Sandy Springs (especially Thursday/Friday nights) , and why they should bring their families next time they come.

Recommendations

- ❑ Target business/corporate, “Bleisure,” and small groups (mitzvahs and weddings)
 - ❑ When hotel space is available at City Springs, push on meetings/conventions.
 - ❑ Targeting groups/meetings requires a larger staff with a strong sales focus.
- ❑ Dedicate more resources to online, digital and social media marketing
 - ❑ Most visitors are online, and over half of the post to social media.
 - ❑ Event planners are strongly connected online.
- ❑ Create and distribute event planner e-newsletter, keeping planners up to date on new venues/spaces
 - ❑ Event planners have specific needs and requests, and make strong use of their networks for inspiration and solutions
 - ❑ Mine Instagram, blogs and wedding/mitzvah sites (e.g., the Knot) for advertising and co-op opportunities
 - ❑ Leverage work done to date on “Look Books”—these are perfect for e-newsletters and social media
 - ❑ Everyone is curious about City Springs and area developments; help event planners be the first to know what’s up and coming
 - ❑ Mitzvahs plan 3 years out; weddings 1-2 years out. Event planners are expected to be “in the know”
- ❑ Anticipate specific needs of event planners
 - ❑ Allow planners to book further out (3 years for Mitzvahs), guaranteeing the date.
 - ❑ DJs are a sore point; help connect them
 - ❑ Wedding planners use their own lingo; be able to speak their language (see cheat sheet)
- ❑ Offer transportation solutions, make it simple for visitors to get around
 - ❑ MARTA maps (highlight top visitor attractions and how to get there), Uber/Lyft coupons or incentives, which hotels have shuttles and their radii.
 - ❑ Create walking/jogging loop maps, offer to hotels to share with guests



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