

# *VISIT Austin*

MARKETING PLAN 2017-2018

REVISED 11.16.17



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Message from the President	5
II.	About Visit Austin	9
III.	Department Overviews	13
IV.	Tourism Impact & Forecast	16
V.	Destination & Industry Objectives	21
VI.	Key Accomplishments (FY 16/17)	26
VII.	Department Plans	
	a. Convention Sales	33
	b. Sports Commission	37
	c. Convention Services	39
	d. Marketing	40
	e. Communications/Public Relations	42
	f. Strategic Alliances	44
	g. Tourism	47
	h. Film Commission	48
	i. Music Office	51
	j. Visitor Services	53
VIII.	Visit Austin Activities	56
IX.	Offices & Contact Information	62

Revisions to the Marketing Plan are noted in red text throughout the document.

In response to the \$2 Million reduction to Visit Austin’s original operating budget, we have provided an updated marketing plan outlining reductions to programs within the following departmental plans:

- Communications and Public Relations
- Strategic Alliances
- Tourism
- Film
- Music
- Visitor Services
- Marketing and Advertising


While this marketing plan reflects 2017-2018 fiscal year activities, Visit Austin is responsible for selling and marketing Austin up to 7 years into the future. As an example on page 33, you will see groups booked last year for meetings that take place in 2020 and 2021. Any sales or marketing barriers today have implications on our ability to book business and drive local economic impact into future years.

The most significant impact is to our Marketing and Advertising budget, which has implications across various programs including:

- Reductions to digital, print and experiential marketing and advertising efforts
- Scaled back promotion of Austin music resulting in fewer local artist bookings
- Limited marketing for new airline routes and airline partnerships in international markets
- Fewer opportunities to market to international audiences who stay longer and spend more when they travel to Austin
- Significant reduction in dedicated marketing dollars previously used to promote the destination directly to meeting and convention planners

It is important to know that Visit Austin’s organizational goals are interconnected. As you can see, a reduction in one area impacts our ability to deliver in another.

Enclosed, you will find updates to the marketing plan originally presented to you on June 15, 2017. In spite of these across-the-board reductions, we are committed to making every effort to meet or exceed these outlined goals.

  
**Tom Noonan**  
President & CEO  
Visit Austin





We are excited to submit our fiscal year ‘17-‘18 marketing plan and recap of this past year. One of our top priorities this year was to rebrand. Our ultimate goal in changing our name to “Visit Austin” was to make it easier for visitors and meetings planners alike to find relevant information and resources when researching Austin as a destination. We will continue to be Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau, but we are doing business as “Visit Austin.” We are also very proud of the recent J.D. Power ranking, naming Austin as the number two destination in the U.S., as well as our additional accomplishments and record bookings.

In January of 2017, Austin was host city to the Professional Convention Management Association’s (PCMA), Convening Leaders annual conference. This convention, truly the “Super Bowl” of the global meetings, conventions and business event industry, attributed a record of over 4,000 attendees who generated an immediate economic return of an estimated \$11 million. The residual economic impact will be felt for years to come as attending planners bring repeat business back to the area.

Conventions like PCMA grow our economy in a way that allows us to expand our industry, such as hotel expansion and growth. In downtown Austin, our room numbers have grown from roughly 6,500 to 13,000. This year, Austin hotel rooms will grow citywide from 37,511 to 38,090 in 2018 and 39,052 in 2019.

We consistently see a record number of visitors, both business and leisure, creating a need for this new inventory. Our Austin tourism community will continue to serve as advisors to the City Council as they determine the best pathway forward for the future of the tourism industry as they study the Visitor Information Task Force report this year.

As Visit Austin continues to promote Austin’s rich heritage and diversity, we’ve increased efforts in this space, including the addition of a Heritage and Diversity Marketing Specialist to our staff. In 2017, we announced the launch of a diversity travel brochure series. Beginning with a resource for travelers interested in Austin’s African American heritage and attractions, this series will be expanded to include additional audience segments including Hispanic, Asian and LGBTQI in the coming year. While this year sets strong benchmarks for heritage and diversity marketing, we will strive for continued growth in this area.

In addition, we recently launched our new digital meeting planning guide. The Austin Meeting Planner Guide is a digital planning tool, providing information on Austin’s meeting facilities, accommodations, convention services and more. The tool is already receiving rave reviews from clients.

During 2017, U.S. Travel Association’s National Travel and Tourism week’s initiative was “Faces of Travel.” In May, we highlighted individuals in the Austin hospitality industry. You will see many of these individuals throughout the marketing plan, putting a spotlight on the importance and impact of our industry in our community.

We are excited to establish and launch the Visit Austin Foundation in FY ‘17-‘18. In an effort to support the local Austin hospitality community and build recognition for the travel and tourism and music industries locally, as well as support tourism workforce development, we are looking forward to assisting the growth of our industry through this foundation.



**Tom Noonan**  
President & CEO  
Visit Austin





**Ed Kargbo** is a native Texan and has spent more than 10 years in the hospitality industry. Although he was born and raised in Houston, when the opportunity arose to relocate to Austin and take over the largest ground fleet, on-demand transportation company, he took it. Ed is the President of **Austin Yellow Cab** and serves as a Board Member for the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce. He is excited about the future of transportation in Austin and is looking forward to helping resolve issues surrounding traffic and mobility. Since serving on the Austin Chamber of Commerce, he has become increasingly aware of the broader issues surrounding transportation in larger American cities.

"The most impactful memory from my job that has stayed with me was the recognition my team received from ADAPT (a disability advocacy group) for the continued work we do to improve services to those with disabilities. Austin is dynamic and innovative. I'm extremely proud that Austin is very thoughtful and considerate about how we bridge the great advancements in technology with the humanity of our citizenry. We're a shining example for the world. Solutions are coming and I'm excited to be a part of the solution."





# MISSION

The Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau (Visit Austin) is the official destination marketing organization for the city of Austin. An accredited member of Destinations International, Visit Austin is contracted by the city to market Austin nationally and internationally as a premiere convention and leisure destination. In addition, Visit Austin houses the Austin Film Commission, Music Office, and Sports Commission. The organization is a private, nonprofit 501 (c)(6) corporation in its 21st year of operation as an independent agency.

Visit Austin is funded primarily through a portion of the 15 percent hotel occupancy tax. For each dollar collected of the 9 percent city portion of the tax, per city agreement, Visit Austin should receive 1.45 cents. In comparison, the Austin Convention Center receives 6.5 cents, the state of Texas receives 6 cents and Austin Arts organizations receive 1.05 cents. Visit Austin operates on a fiscal calendar that runs from October 1 through September 30. To accomplish its mission and objectives, the organization also seeks partnerships with hotels, the Austin Convention Center, local tourist attractions, private sector businesses, publishing and media companies, airlines, car rental companies and many other local partners.

## OBJECTIVES

Visit Austin presents the 2017-2018 Marketing Plan to be implemented as the approved budget allows. In pursuit of its mission, Visit Austin seeks to:

- Serve as an economic engine for the City of Austin.
- Increase demand in the Austin MSA for hotel rooms, attraction visits, package tours, retail sales, restaurant receipts, local transportation and other events and activities that positively affect the economic impact of the local tourism industry.
- Serve as the primary booking entity for the Austin Convention Center for all future groups and special events that, in turn, draw attendees to stay overnight in Austin hotels.
- Support the economic viability of Austin's growing film industry through activities of the Austin Film Commission, while maintaining a strong relationship with the local film community.
- Support the efforts of the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) in soliciting and expanding air service to the city.
- Gain national and international media exposure for Austin's diverse attractions, natural environment, rich history, culture and unique personality to further education and understanding of the Austin product.
- Utilize the Austin Sports Commission to recruit, grow and retain sporting events in the Austin area and continue to expand visibility of Austin as a premier athletic destination, especially in the amateur sports market.
- Promote Austin's multicultural, performing and visual arts, historic, recreation, education, sports, business and entertainment communities.
- Market and promote tourism and conventions among heritage, cultural and minority markets.
- Through the Austin Music Office, stay at the forefront of the music industry and local community through active participation in the Austin Music Commission and organizations such as Austin Music People and the Health Alliance for Austin Musicians (HAAM).
- Solidify Austin's reputation as the Live Music Capital of the World® by identifying and recommending live music acts for conventions and corporate meetings, and by encouraging patronage of Austin music venues.
- Actively participate in and contribute to the overall strategic planning for the growth and sustainability of the visitor industry in Austin, through strong community outreach and with recognized expertise in the tourism industry.
- Provide a welcoming environment to all visitors. Visit Austin continues to scrutinize all programs and pay careful attention to those that do not directly impact hotel occupancy. Visit Austin's Board of Directors carefully monitors our efficient and accountable fiscal controls to ensure resources are invested carefully and efficiently. To allow for adjustments to changing market conditions, select marketing plan objectives and/or tactics may change throughout the year.

**Andrea Perry** has been in Austin for 26 years and is the Business & Programming Director at the **Neill-Cochran House Museum**. She manages and promotes Neill-Cochran's series of lectures, community events and children's and family programming. Andrea is also the go-to for conference and special event rentals at the museum. Andrea returned to Austin in 2011 after living in the west for five years. "Like something out of Austin in the '90s," she moved back to play rhythm in a band that was gearing up to tour Eastern Europe.





**Patsy Stephenson** has been with **Visit Austin** for eight years and has worked in the hospitality industry for 20. Patsy was born and raised in Austin, spent a few years in Dallas, but “high-tailed it back” to Austin as soon as she could. She coordinates walking tours and acts as a guide for public and private tours around Austin. One of her favorite memories was when she created a special tour for new workers in the Downtown Austin Alliance’s newly formed Ambassadors program.

“I’m proud that Austin was designed from the beginning to be the capital city of Texas, and that we have super heroes like Sam Houston and Stephen F. Austin to inspire us. I’m also grateful for the unique characters like Susanna Dickinson, Alphonse Dubois, O. Henry, and Willie Nelson, whose life stories make it easy to be a tour guide. I’m proud of Austin’s citizenry, who have created a beautiful city hall and an enlightened form of government, and who keep electing excellent leaders who are valiantly working at holding onto Austin’s quality of life in the midst of rapid growth. I’m proud of Austin’s historic sites, and I hope we can hang on to most of them — people don’t come here to see skyscrapers.”





**Erin Slade** is the head of operations for **Allens Boots Center Inc.** and has been in Austin for 14 years. Erin is a native Texan who relocated to Austin from Houston. She has been a member of the hospitality industry for 10 years, all of which have been with to Allens Boots; she even met her husband of seven and a half years at Allens. She cherishes relationships she has developed over the years and loves seeing familiar faces in the store. “They’re like family!”

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEWS

### Convention Sales

The Convention Sales Department promotes Austin nationally and internationally to meeting professionals. The department generates high-impact revenue for the hotels in greater Austin and secures citywide conventions that benefit multiple hotels and the Austin Convention Center.

### Austin Sports Commission

Working as an extension of the Visit Austin sales team, the Austin Sports Commission (ASC) actively recruits, retains and grows sporting events in the Austin area.

### Convention Services

The role of Convention Services is to provide destination support, guidance and resources to booked meetings and conventions to ensure the highest level of success.

### Marketing

The multidisciplinary Marketing Department delivers targeted messaging about Austin and Visit Austin to consumers, meeting professionals, travel trade professionals and the hospitality industry. The team drives top-of-mind awareness and, ultimately, travel to the destination through integrated efforts that include digital and print advertising, publishing, content, social media, experiential and other promotions.

### Communications & Public Relations

As the official voice of Visit Austin, the Communications Department delivers compelling and consistent messaging about Austin and Visit Austin to the press and the hospitality industry at large. The department creates awareness of the destination through a variety of strategic integrated efforts including: media relations, public affairs, securing partner support, press familiarization tours (FAMs), dissemination of timely and relevant content and information, proactive pitches, press releases and inquiry fulfillment.

### Strategic Alliances

The Strategic Alliances Department furthers the mission of Visit Austin by building and growing strategic alliances with hospitality and corporate partners. Opportunities range from event sponsorships to fully customized brand marketing initiatives.

### Tourism

The Tourism Department promotes the Austin travel product to domestic and international travel markets through strategic activities, attending trade shows, sales missions, familiarization tours (FAMs), educational seminars and cooperative marketing campaigns. In addition, the department coordinates with the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in maintaining and increasing air service to Austin.

### Austin Film Commission

The Austin Film Commission markets Austin to filmmakers, industry producers and entertainment studios at tradeshow, festivals and other industry functions. In doing so, the Austin Film Commission works to bring ready-to-film features, commercials, still shoots and television productions to Austin — advising and assisting with local crew hires and locations, vendor referrals, permitting guidance and advocating on behalf of the productions on a local level.

### Austin Music Office

The Austin Music Office promotes Austin as the Live Music Capital of the World® and serves as a clearing house for music inquiries.

### Visitor Services

The Visitor Services staff help market Austin by promoting activities that will generate new and repeat visitors to both leisure and business travelers.





**Jason Weems** is a Tour Guide for **Austin Detours** and has been in Austin for more than 18 years. He found a community in Austin and begun playing and hosting shows, like the long running Austin Songwriters Showcase that owned the Tuesday night slot at Trophys (now C-Boy's) for nearly a decade. As soon as he recognized Austin's stature as a cultural magnet, there was never a question of where he'd grow roots - he was in from day one.

"Tour Guide is the job function and I adore telling folks about the sights, but that isn't really what we do. We help people find that story of Austin that they'll share with all their friends and family and neighbors for years to come. What an honor! I hear again and again that our city is so friendly. That we're so creative. That there's something different going on here. That's exactly what I sounded like when I got here. So many people think that old Austin is gone, but nothing could be further from the truth. It just got bigger. I'm so proud that while learning to balance a whole new set of issues and opportunities, our community has kept its center in so many important and relevant ways. I hope we always keep it weird."



# TOURISM IMPACT & FORECAST

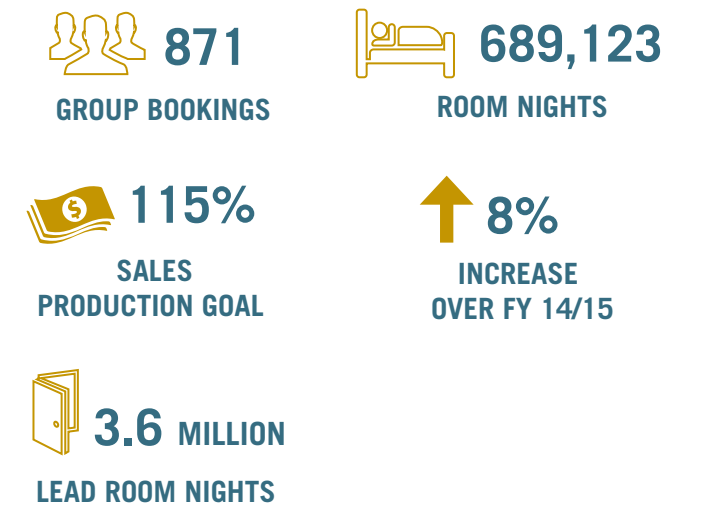
## FY 17/18 Austin Outlook

Austin's hotel supply growth slowed slightly in 2016, with downtown inventory remaining flat and about 1,800 rooms added to the market (+6.4%). Year-end hotel occupancy was still strong at 76.5% for downtown, and 72.3% for the market.

Average daily rate (ADR) grew YoY, although at a more modest rate (+3.1%); still, the nearly \$139 ADR for the market was 28% higher than the next highest competing Texas city.

Hotel room demand posted double digit growth downtown (+13.3%) and +7.6% for the market, even with the additional supply.

## IN FY 15/16, VISIT AUSTIN CONFIRMED



FY 17/18 will see another period of tremendous hotel supply growth for Austin, with at least 2,600 additional rooms by the end of 2018, most of which will be located downtown.

A third major convention hotel, the 1,048-room Fairmont (opening fall of 2017), along with the 422-room combined Aloft/Element hotels (opening summer of 2017), will contribute to a significant change in the downtown hotel product.

Meanwhile, the current capacity and date availability challenges, accounting for 58% of lost business at the Austin Convention Center, will make 2017-2018 a transformative period for hotel demand and convention bookings. Visit Austin will continue to support the marketing and pre-sale of the new hotels. *Should convention center expansion become a reality, Visit Austin will take a leadership role in marketing and selling to prospective convention groups as well as supporting plans for the space to meet appropriate needs for the local community.*

Without the travel and tourism industry, residents in the Travis County MSA would have to pay an additional \$1,080 per household in state and local taxes to maintain current levels of service.



Source: Dean Runyan and Associates, Economic Impact of Travel on Texas, July 2016

## International Outlook

In 2016, Austin again saw considerable growth at 7% percent in overnight stays from international travelers. In 2017, we are forecasting a smaller increase due to unfavorable currency exchange and other political factors in key markets. Successful flight service continues to Austin from London, Frankfurt, Toronto, Mexico City and Guadalajara, and we anticipate additional international service announcements in the upcoming year.

## Top inbound markets for Austin overnight stays include:



\*Source: Oxford Economics, Global City Travel Report

## International Opportunities

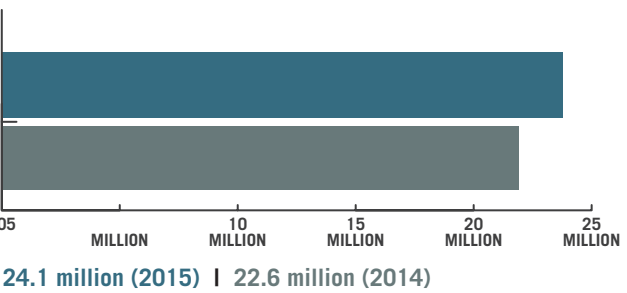
Brand USA is the destination marketing organization for the United States and continues to be our partner on promotional media opportunities and activations in the international markets. The organization's current advertising campaign, running in sixteen international markets, features Austin highlights (music, outdoors, etc.) in all mediums. Additionally, Austin will be one of the cities featured in the new IMAX film focusing on the culture and music of the United States. This past year, we participated in several programs, including the Royal Garden Show in London, which resulted in 21,377,173 total impressions and a total value of \$306,359.

Texas Tourism also provides us with multiple cooperative opportunities to target travel trade and media in select international markets through tradeshow participation (World Travel Market, ITB Berlin, AR-LAM and ARLAG), sales and media missions (UK, Germany, Mexico, Australia and France) and by hosting delegates on familiarization

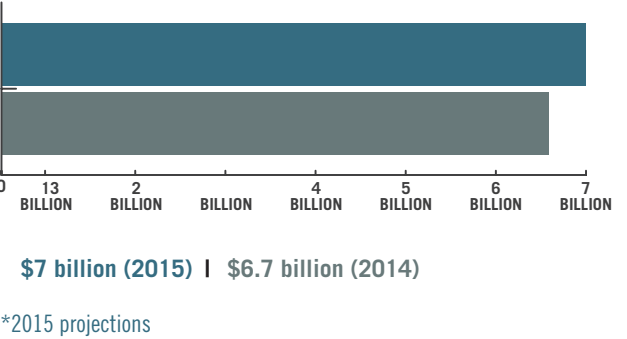
tours of the destination.

## Austin Economic Impact Facts 2015 Economic Impact\* (Austin MSA)

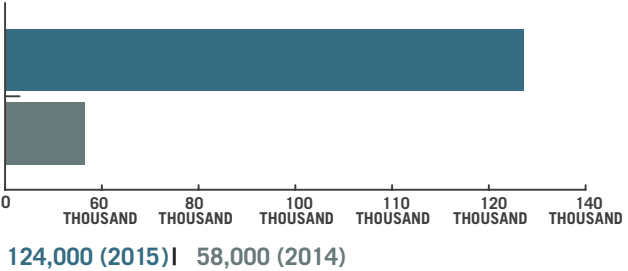
### Visitor Volume



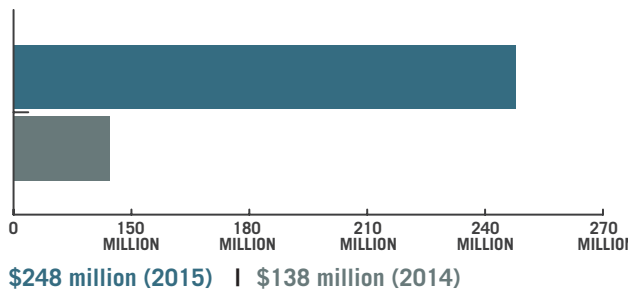
### Total Direct Travel Spending



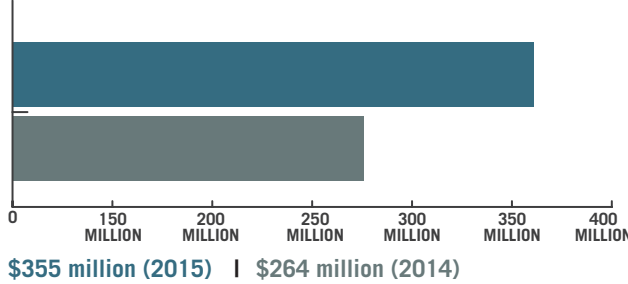
### Travel Industry Employment



### Local Tax Revenue



### State Tax Revenue



Regina-Leslie Estrada has been in Austin for 36 years, 22 of which have been dedicated to the hospitality industry. Regina is the General Manager of Joe's Bakery & Coffee Shop, Inc. where she started working at 14 years old, cleaning tables on the weekend. During business hours, you will find Regina answering the phone and taking take-out orders, however, she represents just a quarter of the powerhouse that keeps the business going. Together with her Mother, Rose, Aunt, Carolina, and Grandmother, Paula, they run and operate Joe's Bakery.





**Michelle Fitzpatrick** has a 20-year career in the hospitality industry under her belt and is currently the Department Chair and Professor of Hospitality for Meeting, Event Planning and Tourism at **Austin Community College**. Michelle grew up in Pittsburgh, PA and began working in hotel operations and training after college while teaching a hospitality course at a local community college. She ended up in Austin because of beer and love. She currently oversees the Hospitality programs at Austin Community College and teaches and trains the future of the industry while working hand-in-hand with professionals within the hospitality, meeting and event planning and tourism segments in Austin.

“Shortly after moving to Austin and starting my role at Austin Community College, I learned what a family-like and supportive community the hospitality industry was. Some of the high school hospitality instructors had reached out to the Austin Hotel and Lodging Association looking for support when there were threats of their funding being cut. AHLA was quick to react and put together an event at the Hilton Austin where they invited all relevant parties to be there and share their stories about our industry, the career opportunities and successes of those students who have benefited from the programs. Watching so many people take the time and efforts to educate and promote the impact of our industry on the community made a strong impression on me about what this industry means to this town.”





**Marlon Davis** is a sales manager at the **Four Seasons Hotel Austin** and has been in Austin for more than 20 years. Originally from Dallas, he attended the University of Texas at Austin and has been here ever since. He has been in the hospitality industry for a little more than 15 years, with positions in the hotel ranging from Front Desk Manager to Assistant Director of Housekeeping to Sales Manager.

# DESTINATION & INDUSTRY OBJECTIVES

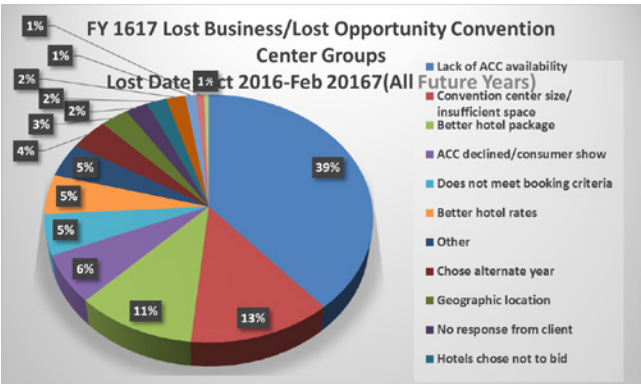
Austin is a creative, collaborative and innovative city that is constantly evolving. As we look to the future, Visit Austin will continue to adapt its approach to solidify our position as a premier leisure, convention and meeting destination.



## DOING BUSINESS AS VISIT AUSTIN

Beginning May 2017, the public-facing name of Austin Convention & Visitor’s Bureau (ACVB) is now “Visit Austin.” Cities across the country are moving away from calling their destination marketing arms “CVBs” or “bureaus,” because the target of their marketing efforts – the visitor – doesn’t know what that means or what they do. Visit Austin helps us address the following:

- The “Convention and Visitors Bureau” terminology doesn’t truly capture the role of our organization for the city of Austin.
- The ACVB is often confused with the Austin Convention Center.
- The goal is to make it easier for visitors and meeting planners alike to find relevant information and resources when researching Austin as a destination.



## SUPPORT CONVENTION CENTER EXPANSION ADAPT TO GROWING MARKET NEEDS

With the opening of the 1,012-room JW Marriott in 2015, the even larger Fairmont opening in 2017 and several more hotels under construction, the city is on pace to increase downtown’s available rooms by 64%. In 2017, Austin will have 10,359 rooms downtown and 38,188 city-wide. Austin’s demand has grown an average of 5% per year during the last decade, which is extremely healthy for a tourism market and points to support for additional inventory. The new hotels in Austin are already having an impact on convention business.

However, new businesses/groups also require larger amounts of contiguous space for meetings, tradeshow and breakout rooms; and currently, the number one reason for losing city-wide groups is the size and lack of availability of our convention center. In fact, in

the past year, 58% of new business for the convention center was lost due to lack of availability or insufficient space. **This represents approximately \$356,184,196 in potential economic impact.** Compared to other cities we frequently compete with for convention business (Nashville, San Antonio, Denver, New Orleans, Phoenix), Austin’s convention center is the smallest. **To address future needs, Visit Austin supports the expansion of the Austin Convention Center.** In addition to securing new and larger convention business, the expansion would increase economic activity and create local jobs for our community. **Presently, Visit Austin does not market expansion of the Austin Convention Center.**

## PROTECT AND EVOLVE THE AUSTIN BRAND, “LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD®”

Austin has been officially recognized as the Live Music Capital of the World® since the Austin City Council adopted this slogan in 1991. In recent years, research has shown the brand has gained significant traction among visitors. Consider, for example:

- A 2011 visitor profile study found that the clear majority of visitors (94.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that Austin is a destination to enjoy live music (up from 75% in 2003).
- In that same study, over half of the respondents (59.5%) indicated live music as the reason for visiting Austin.
- In 2014, the economic impact of Austin’s music industry grew to \$1.8 billion (12.5% increase), supporting over 20,700 jobs.

Sources: 2011 Austin Visitor Inquiry Study, University of Houston; The Economic Impact of Music in Austin, TXP, Inc., 2016

Even though Austin’s destination appeal goes well beyond live music, the brand has managed to successfully keep Austin top-of-mind among potential visitors and meeting professionals.

In 2016, Visit Austin continued to refine its marketing approach with LatinWorks, a locally based advertising agency, by developing integrated campaigns to expand the foundation of the Live Music Capital of the World® brand. **In 2017, the new campaign will continue to amplify our positioning through strategic sales and marketing tactics, separating the brand from other destinations and, ultimately, driving continued consideration, affinity and visitation. These tactics include:\***

- **Creating marketing and advertising materials that strongly reflect the Live Music brand, yet still appeal to many of the other facets of Austin.**
- **Working closely with Austin music talent for in-market events, conventions and various event and media opportunities hosted out-of-market.**
- **Promoting music attractions including festivals, venues and entertainment districts.**
- **Partnering with local, national and international music brands.**





**LaGina Harris** is a military brat from San Angelo who moved to Austin nine years ago and is currently the head bartender at **Oilcan Harry's**. While studying and playing Division 2 softball at Stillman College, LaGina worked for the Boys & Girls Club. She applied for a job with them in Austin and has been enjoying life in Texas ever since. She loves traveling, has a Master's Degree in higher education and most recently was named the event coordinator for the Texas International Food & Wine Roundup. She believes Austin is a city full of life and things to do and is humbled to be a part of "The Austin Experience."

\*Activities will be scaled back with less budget spent on consumer advertising. We anticipate fewer activities promoting music in the destination.

Visit Austin continues to work cohesively with the City of Austin and serves on the stakeholder group for the "Austin Music & Creative Ecosystem Omnibus Resolution" by addressing the needs that directly impact the local music ecosystem and tourism, we will continue to keep Austin's music product healthy.

**CONTINUE TO EXPAND AIRLIFT TO AUS**

The Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) has experienced tremendous growth in passenger traffic and cargo loads, as well as in newly announced service. The airport is currently under construction for nine new gates and recently re-opened the remodeled South Terminal to house more domestic nonstop flights on Allegiant Air and Sun Country Airlines. The new gates in the main terminal are scheduled to open in early 2019 to accommodate future domestic and international service to the city. International service is increasing with an expanded schedule on Condor Airlines with flights from Frankfurt, and on AeroM xico with flights from Mexico City.

Visit Austin will coordinate efforts with ABIA on global priorities marketing, including participation in airline meetings and World Routes. We also continue to serve on the Air Services Task Force, and to collaborate with the Greater Austin Chamber and the Austin corporate community to attract new service to the city.

\*Activities will be scaled back. Budget reductions will limit our efforts in marketing new airline routes and partnering with airlines in the international markets.



**CONTINUE TO EXPAND HERITAGE AND DIVERSITY MARKETING EFFORTS**

As Visit Austin continues to promote Austin's rich heritage and diversity, we've increased efforts in this space, including the addition of a Heritage and Diversity Marketing Specialist to our staff. This position works with our Director of Marketing to conceptualize and execute heritage and diversity-specific content promoting Austin in print and

online channels.

In 2017, we will announce the launch of the cultural field guide series. Beginning with a resource for travelers interested in Austin's African American heritage and attractions, this series will be expanded to include additional audience segments in the coming fiscal year.

Beginning with a resource for travelers interested in Austin's African American heritage and attractions, this series will be expanded to include additional audience segments in the coming fiscal year.

While the totality of our media plan and advertising creative is inclusive of a diverse audience, we've allocated significant investment to dedicated diversity media placements so far, through April 2017. So far, more than \$28,000 has gone to support multicultural community events and programs that inspire travel to the destination. We have increased our focus on heritage content across Visit Austin channels such as VisitAustin.org, the Austin Insider Blog, Insider Guide, eNewsletters, VisitAustinTX social platforms and more, and we are on track to distribute the full \$500,000 allocated to Heritage Preservation Grants.

At the local level, we've enlisted diversity consumer segment experts LatinWorks and SandersWingo to help develop advertising strategies targeting African American, Asian-American, Hispanic and LGBTQ travelers and convention groups. Additionally, a committee of Visit Austin staff and board members, diverse business owners, and community leaders are identifying new programs for building up and promoting Austin's multicultural offerings. Visit Austin Sales, Marketing and Tourism teams have conducted workshops and one-on-one meetings with the heritage community, acting as a resource to help develop "visitor-ready" marketing plans and qualify for heritage grants.

While this year sets strong benchmarks for heritage and diversity marketing, we will strive for continued growth in this space.

**VISIT AUSTIN FOUNDATION**

This industry provides career opportunities at all levels, to people of all ages and ranges of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, allowing for individuals to grow their careers over a lifetime if interested.

Plans are in place to establish the Visit Austin Foundation in an effort to support the local Austin hospitality community, build recognition for the travel and tourism and music industry locally, and support tourism workforce development.





**Don “Skeeter” Miller** is the Owner and President of **The County Line**, which was recently inducted into the 2014 Texas Restaurant Association (TRA) Hall of Honor. Skeeter was attending The University of Texas when the County Line first opened in 1975. He was hired as their first dishwasher 41 years ago. Ten new restaurants later, Skeeter was named President and continues to have full responsibility of the day-to-day operations at all of the restaurants, as well as supervision of all franchise locations. In 2010, Skeeter took home TRA’s Restaurateur of the Year title.

“Advocacy is a major part of our industry, and as President of our association, I take great strides to work alongside our local, state and federal authorities in order create relationships that help bring about laws that work the good of all. The most important thing is giving back to the communities that have supported me throughout the years.”



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CONVENTION SALES & SERVICES

PCMA SITE VISIT EXPERIENCE:

- 22 Hosted 22 citywide meeting planners for a pre-FAM
- 60 Awarded 60 of our top meeting planner clients with complimentary registration
- 169 Provided 169 meeting planner city tours
- 20 Conducted 20 Convention Center tours



Increased Medical Room Nights 128% over previous year



ESPA's Service Professional of the Year award given to Linda Atkins, Visit Austin VP of Services



Visit Austin hosted Tableau, with 16,000 attendees utilizing more than 40 hotels in the room block.

VISITOR SERVICES



\$1,051,236 (9% increase over previous year) (FY 16/17)



203,000 WALK-IN VISITORS (FY 16/17)



1,388 HISTORIC WALKING TOUR PARTICIPANTS



17 ONLINE/BOOKABLE TOURS (first year)



\$22,000 AMENITY INDUSTRY SALES

MARKETING



HOSTED MEDIA

RESULTING IN: \$11 MILLION IN VALUE

110 MILLION MEDIA VIEWS/ IMPRESSIONS

224 MILLION YTD TOTAL MEDIA VIEWS / IMPRESSIONS

\$67 MILLION YTD TOTAL MEDIA VALUE GARNERED

460,907 PAGEVIEWS

INSIDER BLOG 183% INCREASE OVER PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

VISITAUSTIN.ORG (Last 12 Months) 6.6 MILLION PAGEVIEWS 2.13 MILLION UNIQUE VISITORS

SOCIAL MEDIA (Last 12 Months) 46 MILLION SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS 539,877 ENGAGEMENTS



185,541 FOLLOWERS 208,017 ALL ACCTS COMBINED 13.6 MILLION ORGANIC IMPRESSIONS



312,849 FANS 32 MILLION IMPRESSIONS



57,920 FOLLOWERS 221,740 TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS 59,891 ALL ACCTS COMBINED

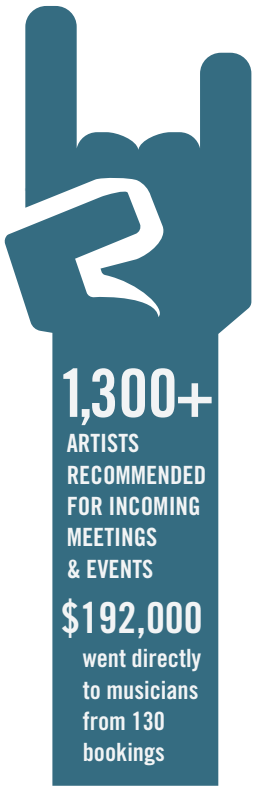


VISIT AUSTIN WON A DIGITAL MARKETING AWARD from Hotel Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) for the Condor Airlines flight launch promotion:

4,502,004 Total Impressions 2,493 Total entries 25,773 Total unique visitors 41,047 Total pageviews 86,122 Total campaign engagements (ads andmicrosite) 50 SECONDS Average time spent on site 97.31% % of users who reside in Germany 83,781 Link clicks from Facebook ads

MUSIC

"Close By, Far Out" Airstream Road Trip, June 2016 (Houston and Dallas)



122,500 Total Event Impressions 114,938 Road Impressions 800 Sweeps Entries 3.4 MILLION #ATXAirstream Impressions 80% Increase in website visits from Houston YoY 153% Increase in website visits from Dallas YoY

WINNER OF International Music City award Music Canada /Canadian Music Week



7.3% TWITTER & INSTAGRAM HANDLE GROWTH 82.6% ENGAGEMENT INCREASE 1.2 MILLION IMPRESSIONS

Spotify & Pandora "Sounds Great" Fly Market and Drive Market Campaign

- 10.2 million total impressions across Spotify's platform
- 9,200 unique visitors with 560 hours of total streaming
- 280 total shares and 903 total clicks to Visit Austin website
- 7 million total impressions across Pandora mobile platform
- 11,312 users added The Austin Mixtape, totaling more than 2,000 total listening hours

RANKINGS

Recipient of the J.D. Power and Associates 2016 Destination Experience Satisfaction Award. Austin is ranked #1 in the Southwest U.S. and #2 in the U.S. overall (Oct. 2016)



Ranked as the world's number one Tech City on Savills' Tech Cities 2017 report (Apr. 2017)



Travelocity ranks Austin on their list of "Ten U.S. Cities Foreign Travelers Should Not Miss!" (Dec. 2016)



Ranked #8 on Travel + Leisure's World's Best Survey - "The Best Cities for Food in the United States" (Nov. 2016)



On Condé Nast Travelers' 2016 Readers' Choice Awards for "The Best Big Cities in the U.S." (Oct. 2016)



Earned a perfect score of 100 (with 12 bonus points) in Human Rights Campaign's 2016 Municipal Equality Index (Oct. 2016)



Awarded Best Destination at the News UK Travel Awards, including the Sunday Times Magazine Editor's Award (Sept. 2016)



Bicycling Magazine names Austin #7 on list of "The 50 Best Bike Cities of 2016" (Sept. 2016)



Condé Nast Traveler names Austin #5 on list of "The 2016 Friendliest Cities in the U.S." (Aug. 2016)



Travel + Leisure places Austin #9 on list of "The Best Cities in the U.S." (July 2016)



Travel + Leisure places Austin-Bergstrom International Airport #4 on list of "The Best Domestic Airports" (July 2016)



Hamilton Pool makes Country Living's list, "27 of the Most Beautiful Places in America" (June 2016)



#6 on list of "Top 10 American Cities for Dogs (and the people who love them)" (June 2016)





FILM



#6 CITY TO LIVE  
AND MAKE MOVIES  
MOVIEMAKER MAGAZINE



MAJOR TV SERIES  
OR COMMERCIAL SHOTS  
IN 2016-2017



FEATURE FILMS

THE FOLLOWING HIGH PROFILE AUSTIN  
FILM AND TELEVISION  
SERIES WERE EITHER PRODUCED  
OR RELEASED IN THE PAST YEAR:

TELEVISION

- “Austin City Limits” (Season 44, PBS TV)
- “Crunch Time” (Season 1, Rooster Teeth)
- “Day 5” (Season 1, Rooster Teeth)
- “The Leftovers” (Season 3, HBO)
- “The Son” (Season 1, AMC)
- “The Long Road Home” (Nat Geo)

FILM

- “Alita: Battle Angel” (Robert Rodriguez)
- Dealt” (Luke Korem)
- “Discreet” (Travis Mathews)
- “Follow” (Owen Egerton)
- “Found Footage 3D” (Steven DeGennaro)
- “Homestate” (David Hickey)
- “Infinity Baby” (Bob Byington)
- “La Barracuda” (Jason Cortlund & Julia Halperin)
- “Mr. Roosevelt” (Noel Wells)
- “Quaker Oaths” (Louisiana Kreutz)
- “Slash” (Clay Liford)
- “Song to Song” (Terrence Malick)
- “The Big Spoon” (Carlyn Hudson)
- “The Golden Rut” (Josh & Nick Holden)
- “Through the Repellent Fence” (Sam Wainwright Douglas)
- “Voyage of Time” (Terrence Malick)

400 LOCAL  
INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

worked on “Alita: Battle Angel,” which was filmed in Austin in 2016-17. The production, directed by Robert Rodriguez.

40  
FILM FESTIVALS

now call Austin home —each bringing films and different cultures and genres to Austin audiences and attracting visitors from around the world.



THE SON  
AN AMC TELEVISION SERIES

Featured Pierce Brosnan and was produced in Austin during 2016; the series is based on the Central Texas historical novel written by Austinite Philip Mayer

TOURISM

The Visit Austin Tourism Department supported the arrival of several new air routes serving Austin, including a non-stop route from Guadalajara operated by Volaris and another from Mexico City operated by AeroMéxico. Tourism also partnered with the City of Austin’s Economic Development Department and the Greater Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on a business mission led by Mayor Adler to Mexico City, where we facilitated networking with the travel industry and press interviews.

Despite the strong dollar affecting international travel, the Tourism Department increased Austin’s domestic and international product mix by 8%. The department also facilitated a 28% increase in new agreements between local suppliers and key aggregators that can expand the sales and marketing reach of Austin hospitality businesses.

118

+8%

+28%

New packages identified

Overall Product Growth

Direct Contract Increase  
(from 64 to 82)

SPORTS

FORMULA ONE  
US GRAND PRIX

Attendance as reported by COTA: 69,889

2016 RED BULL  
GRAND PRIX OF THE AMERICAS

Attendance as reported by COTA: 131,881

USA TAEKWONDO  
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

6,447 Total Room Nights

USA WEIGHTLIFTING  
NATIONAL YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

6,447 Total Room Nights

USA BMX  
LONESTAR NATIONALS

1,976 Total Room Nights

NAGAAA’S GAY  
SOFTBALL WORLD SERIES

Estimated 900 Total Room Nights

COMMUNICATIONS  
2017-18 coverage in:









































**Nefertitti Jackmon** is the Executive Director of **Six Square**, where she works to preserve and celebrate the historic legacy of the African American community in Central East Austin. Six Square offers tours of the district so that visitors can learn the history of the people, places and stories that have contributed to the cultural diversity of Austin. They also produce events and exhibits that celebrate the various genres of African American culture: visual arts, music, food, spoken word and much more. Nefertitti loves engaging in work that she's most passionate about. Her background in African American Studies was the tool that helped her decide what type of non-profit organization she would dedicate her efforts to.

"I firmly believe that as people learn their roots and dig deeper into understanding where they came from, they have a greater capacity to stand tall, to have pride, to love themselves and to find purpose and meaning in their lives. That is what I'm here to do, and the story of Black Austin, is the story of Black America. To help unearth that powerful story of resilience is a powerful honor that I will never consider work. I have been energized by Austin and the great opportunities that exist to show the world how we can learn from our past mistakes and build better futures for our children."





**Robert Watson** began his career in the hospitality industry when he was only 12 years old, checking hats at the Fairmont Mayo Hotel in Tulsa, OK. He was inspired by his father’s 30-year career at the historic Mayo Hotel. Robert is now the General Manager of **Hilton Austin**, a AAA 4 Diamond 800-room hotel in downtown Austin.

# CONVENTION SALES

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH 17*	TOTAL RESULTS FY 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18
Class “A” Bookings (Utilizing the convention center)	240,000	131,914	224,688	231,000
Total Room Nights	630,000	355,740	726,899	660,000
Need Room Nights (over slow periods)	63,000	88,637	120,688	63,000
Citywide Conventions (2,000 peak or more) Booked	N/A	46,217	82,932	N/A
Room Nights Generated Through Leads	3,177,000	1,891,756	3,906,565	3,408,000
Number of Group Leads Sent	2,568	1,551	3,164	2,700

*Although the Convention Sales budget remains the same, the 17-18 goals will be impacted by budget reductions to the Marketing/Advertising and Communications departments. The anticipated decrease in room nights directly impacts HOT collections for FY 17/18*

\*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017

## MAJOR CONVENTION CENTER BOOKINGS IN FY 16/17

International Literacy Association	July 2018	19,000 Attendees
National Minority Supplier Development Council	Oct 2018	5,800 Attendees
Palo Alto Networks	June 2019 and 2020	18,000 Attendees/year
Blackboard	July 2019	7,200 Attendees
Keller Williams	Sept 2019 and 2020	7,400 Attendees
Emergency Nurses Association	Sept 2019	7,800 Attendees
Gerontological Society of America	Nov 2019	6,900 Attendees
Society for Neuro-Oncology	Nov 2020	5,300 Attendees
Texas EMS Conference	Nov 2020-2022	4,500 Attendees/year
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators	June 2022	7,500 Attendees
Texas Association of School Business Officials	Feb 2025	5,600 Attendees
Triple Crown Sports	July 2017	3,600 Attendees
Globoforce	April 2018	3,000 Attendees
Armstrong-McCall	Sept 2018	8,000 Attendees
Procore	Nov 2018	2,000 Attendees
OrangeTheory Fitness	Sept 2019	2,500 Attendees
Spiceworks	Sept 2019	4,000 Attendees
Rooster Teeth Productions	July 2020	15,000 Attendees
American Society for Clinical Pathology	Sept 2020	2,000 Attendees
National Association of Colleges and Employers	June 2021	2,000 Attendees
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology	June 2021	3,000 Attendees



PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

Objective 1: Maximize citywide and in-house bookings for hotels.

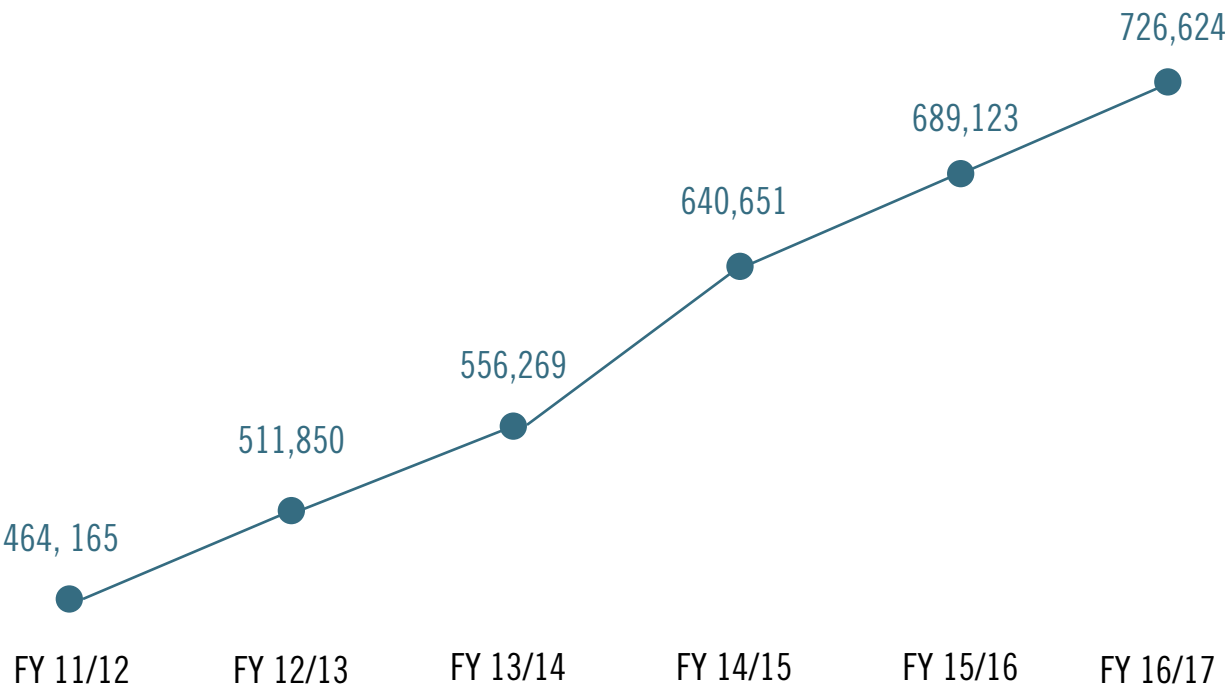
- Strategies:
- Continue to market the convenient overflow hotel meeting space surrounding the ACC because group needs are regularly exceeding the facility's capacity
  - Encourage citywide clients to book more than three years out due to building availability
  - Identify need time periods with wide-open availability at the convention center and hotels; proactively incentivize citywide groups to book.
  - Strategize with the pre-opening sales offices of the Fairmont (1,048 rooms, opening Fall 2017) and Marriott (613 rooms, opening late 2019) to drive new and incremental business to the market
  - Maximize multi-cultural and diversity convention opportunities

- Metrics:
- Booking pace in CRM system
  - TAP Report\*

\*The Trends, Analysis, Projections (TAP) Report, a product of the Strategic Data Resources, is a leading industry resource for measuring booking pace and convention sales performance benchmarks.

+48% increase in RN production over last 5 years

Visit Austin Total Room Night Production, FY11/12-FY15/16



Objective 2: Maximize bookings for the Austin Convention Center.

- Strategies:
- Limit move-in and move-out space being held at the convention center. Incentivize clients and work via the general contractors.
  - Stack groups on the north and south sides of the building to help build compression.
  - Identify high food, beverage and exhibit sales for prime dates in the future.
  - Target Sunday arrival mid-week as a priority

- Metrics:
- Convention Center Booking Pace
  - Compression Report

Objective 3: Maximize post-PCMA Convening Leaders ROI.

- Strategies:
- Continue to push our music incentive to PCMA attendees in sales and marketing efforts.
  - Monthly review of the PCMA target hit list, which was established prior to Convening Leaders 2017.
  - Quarterly review of leads and bookings in the CRM, as well as hotels that reported bookings that are not via the Visit Austin lead process.

- Metrics:
- Visit Austin CRM reports
  - Visit Austin Booking Pace
  - PCMA Target hit list

“Austin was a great conference location for us. We saw excitement regarding the location leading up to the event and attendance growth onsite. Our attendees had a wonderful time and everyone went out of their way to make sure our event was successful.”

- Jennifer Harman, National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors

“Austin appreciated our business and worked hard to ensure that our attendees and staff had the tools we needed to create a true experience. The city is an affordable destination for both the association and attendees for something beyond your average downtown.”

- Sally Ann DeBolt, Association for Middle Level Education

“I was beyond thrilled with all of the product options for hotels in Austin. The city itself is so vibrant - I fell in love! It will only continue to get better and better. What a wonderful destination for a myriad of clients.”

- Kate Campbell, Helms Briscoe, Hyster-Yale Materials Handling

WHAT’S NEXT

- Enhance and elevate customer site visit experience in the city, and at hotels and venues.
- Develop local advisory groups for multicultural, diversity, medical and technology to help “sell Austin” and leverage our local thought leaders and businesses.
- Build upon our highly successful sales missions in Washington D.C., Chicago, Austin, Dallas, the northeast, west coast and southeast and continue to partner with local, iconic Austin brands.



**Christine Yang Cramer** has been in the hospitality industry for 25 years, 20 of which have been spent in Austin. Christine describes herself as a “data nerd” – she is the Research Director for **Visit Austin** and is also the database administrator, market analyst and resident foodie. She suggests visitors never miss an opportunity to try well-known favorites like Uchi and Franklin Barbecue, but also recommends exploring hidden gems, such as the Harry Ransom Center (HRC) at the University of Texas.





**Phillip Marburger**, the Director of Golf at **Omni Barton Creek Resort & Spa**, came to Austin in 1988 to attend the University of Texas. He has been in Austin for 29 years and in the hospitality industry for 28 of those years. What he loves most about his job are the amazing people he gets to work for and with every day. Phillip credits his relationships that he's formed through the years that have impacted him the most.

# AUSTIN SPORTS COMMISSION

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH 17*	TOTAL RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18
Room Nights	117,000	44,558	103,789	109,500
Event Leads Sent	82	28	74	72
Site Visits	12	8	13	10
Media Coverage/Press Communications**				
Significant Placements**				

\*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017    \*\*See Marketing section for coverage

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Continue to play a role in helping build a new sports venue in the Austin marketplace.

**Strategies:**

- Lead the way in aiding due diligence with multiple leading sports facilities owners/operators to identify best solution for sports complex.
- Work with COTA on best utilization of land on, and adjacent to facility for construction of new facility.
- Identify programming opportunities for sports venue.

**Metrics:**

- Launch construction of said sports complex by end of fiscal year

**Objective 2:** Unveil additional youth-focused sports programs to cultivate participation of Central Texas sports participants.

**Strategies:**

- Identify partners, like FCB's Escola Academy, to bring into Austin marketplace, which will provide sports programming for Central Texas youth.

- Develop youth programming opportunities for new venues like Hill Country Indoor and Junction Athletic Complex.
- Support existing local programs in their search for new/upgraded sports facilities.

**Metrics:**

- Ensure success of FCB's Escola Academy by assisting with registrations to reach a minimum of 500 participants

**Objective 3:** Position Austin as the ideal location for a proposed Major League Soccer (MLS) franchise.

**Strategies:**

- Continue to draw soccer programming and grow Austin's soccer fan base.

**Metrics:**

- Austin is positioned as a soccer destination.

## WHAT'S NEXT

Austin Sports Commission's goal of aiding in the creation of a sports venue led to the announcement of Fútbol Club Barcelona's (FCB) installation of a year-round soccer academy to be created at Circuit of The Americas (COTA). This exciting partnership will be accomplished with the creation of a new soccer venue on the grounds at COTA.

The Sports Commission's goal of launching an owned event is still ongoing, with discussions to create a LGBTQ multi-sport, multi-day event. These discussions with national LGBTQ sports organizations will hopefully lead to an announcement in FY 16-17.





**Robert Bjorn Taylor** is a Bartender at **Watertrade**, a cocktail bar adjacent to Otoko at the South Congress Hotel. He has been in the hospitality industry for 12 years, beginning his career as a barista and food runner. Bjorn played an integral part in the opening of Freedmens, Qui, Emmer & Rye, and now Otoko. Bjorn credits his move to Austin for changing the direction of his career and elevating his skill sets, from creating great drink menus to offering exceptional experiences for customers.

# CONVENTION SERVICES

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH 17*	TOTAL RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18
Meetings Served	1675	1,128	2,450	1,800
Housing Assigned	15,000	8,036	17,611	12,500**
Registration Hours	5,000	4,956	10,213	6,000***
Supplier Referrals & Leads	408	269	551	456
Community Outreach/ Supplier Meetings	96	144	242	168

\*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017    \*\*Housing goal reduced based on groups confirmed for housing  
\*\*\*Registration Hours goal is estimated based on the decision made to select an outsourced preferred staffing provider.

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Raise client awareness of services available to ensure successful conventions and repeat business.

**Strategies:**

- Continue to evaluate services and materials offerings to assist groups in achieving goals and hosting successful events.
- Build on the customer relationship through continuous outreach, by attending sales missions and pre-promotes and by maintaining regularly scheduled contact throughout the planning process.
- Evaluate current method for collecting surveys and responding to customer suggestions to result in improved services.
- Establish strategies to encourage booked groups to use marketing tools and content to capture and promote the destination.
- Promote resources available through the Austin Visitor Center.
- Review registration staffing best practices for outsourced preferred providers vs. maintaining staffing in-house. Continue to sell the services and track hours provided or referred to a partner vendor.

**Metrics:**

- Number of groups serviced
- Percentage of positive survey responses
- Website traffic
- Number of staffing hours provided or referred

**Objective 2:** Ensure community awareness of conventions and their economic impact.

**Strategies:**

- Educate industry partners on how to benefit from the convention industry and how to reach the convention client through utilization of convention alerts, response to service leads and referrals, partnership with Visit Austin's varied advertising opportunities and attendance at our hosted events.

## WHAT'S NEXT

As we continue to develop our digital assets, the services team will focus on anticipating group needs by proactively promoting these assets and educating customers on Austin's unique experiences.

- Technology updates to the CRM and CMS will allow us to streamline

- Continue community outreach efforts to develop relationships/partnerships with new businesses that offer services that would enhance either our customer's experience or the group attendee experience.
- Promote local values and vision to convention clients by connecting customers with community resources for sustainability, innovation and expanded corporate social responsibility.
- Work in tandem with Marketing and Strategic Alliances departments to engage local businesses and potential partners.
- Attend local and national industry meetings and events to network and build relationships with industry partners and customers.

**Metrics:**

- Number of supplier leads/referrals
- Number of meetings attended

**Objective 3:** Provide a resource for online housing services to actualize room nights and reduce attrition for multi-hotel conventions.

**Strategies:**

- Maintain partnership with preferred housing vendor to provide full service housing services.
- Promote preferred housing provider to all multi-hotel conventions during the booking/selection process and educate them and our hotel partners on the benefits of utilizing housing to manage room attrition.
- Proactively monitor group history and pick-up; communicate with hotel partners to ensure successful housing outcome.
- Utilize housing revenue share to support the development of the newly formed Visit Austin Foundation.

**Metrics:**

- Number of reservations actualized
- Revenue generated

some of our data collection and database management processes, which affords the team more time to further build the customer relationship.

- Development of pre-promote items and signature client amenities for services.



# MARKETING

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH 17*	TOTAL RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18
Unique Web Visits	1.92 million	967,442	2,122,341	2 million 1.8 million
Austin Insider Guide Conversion**	70,000	81,528	127,310	110,000 70,000
Digital Meeting Planner Tool Views***	2,200	285	2,480	2,000 1,250
Leisure eNewsletter Opt-ins	94,600	145,325	240,746	156,000 150,000

FY 17-18 Marketing/Advertising budget was reduced by \$973,500 from FY 16-17. While some adjustments are reflected here for the Marketing department, these cuts also impact Visit Austin's ability to deliver in other departments."

\*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017 \*\*In FY 16-17, Visit Austin combined print and virtual Insider Guide fulfillment goals into one goal. \*\*\*In May 2017, Visit Austin launched a new digital meeting planner guide. 17-18 goals are based on guide performance from 2016 with a 5% increase.

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Build upon Austin's brand equity as the Live Music Capital of the World® to drive consideration and, ultimately, visitation among target audiences.

- Strategies:**
- Maintain Visit Austin's position as a leader in destination marketing by breaking out of category norms with the Visit Austin campaign and innovative media placements.
  - Expand on equity as Live Music Capital of the World® and increase awareness of other destination offerings such as green space, art, culture, heritage, food and Austin icons, that appeal to key leisure and meetings target audience segments.
  - Deploy travel influencers who represent diverse travel interests and cultural perspectives to generate and promote Austin content relevant to fly and drive market audiences.
  - Explore partnerships that strengthen brand reach, such as New Musical Express (NME) and TimeOut Magazine.
  - Deepen consumer engagement by developing new ways to leverage live music as an effective communications platform for both leisure and meetings, including music-based content, promotions, tools and artist engagements.
  - Execute experiential marketing tactics that take unique Austin experiences to opportunity markets to increase brand awareness and travel to Austin.

- Metrics:**
- Website traffic and social media engagement
  - eNewsletter sign-ups, publication requests and online visitor and meeting planner guide views
  - Hotel bookings through select targeted digital buys, including Sojern and Adara tracking platforms
  - Experiential marketing impressions and engagement



**Objective 2:** Continue to build on digital, content and social media marketing strategies to keep Austin top-of-mind and provide resources for the leisure traveler and meeting planner audiences.

- Strategies:**
- Utilize VisitAustin.org, Austin Insider Blog, Austin Insider Guide and Meeting Planner Guide as portals for compelling content and as vehicles through which to deepen engagement with key audiences.
  - Continue to provide customer service through social media by evolving the True Austin program. Further leverage local influencers for content and outreach.
  - Maintain Visit Austin's position as a leader in destination marketing by exploring new technologies and trends and successfully applying them to reach key audiences.
  - Utilize key insights from Meeting Planner Guide research and customer feedback, initiate next phase of meeting planner digital guide program development.
  - Maintain strategic content plan for all online and offline channels.
  - Establish content partnerships to bring timely, rich content to Visit Austin digital channels and partner with online publishers to distribute Austin information to reach new audiences.
  - Continue development and implementation of strategies for growing maintaining eNewsletter database opt-ins and maximizing subscriber engagement.
  - Optimize existing video content and develop new video to be featured on applicable online channels.
  - Provide resources and expertise to assist meeting and event professionals with digital marketing.

- Metrics:**
- Number of unique website visits and conversions
  - Austin Insider Guide fulfillment and online engagement data
  - Meeting Planner Guide online engagement data
  - Social media follower/engagement metrics



Digital Campagin banners

**Objective 3:** Bolster existing marketing programs targeting diverse travelers and convention groups.

- Strategies:**
- Conduct segment research to gather insights on travel motivations and media usage among diverse audiences. Use findings to inform advertising messaging and media placements.
  - Reach diverse audiences through behavioral ad targeting and optimization.\*
  - Continue to engage in local and national organizations through outreach, event support, co-op marketing and promotion of attractions relevant to African American, Hispanic, Asian and LGBTQ travelers.
  - Utilize new Heritage and Diversity Marketing Specialist role to oversee diversity marketing efforts, content generation, convention sales support and community relations.
  - Launch diversity travel brochure series providing information on cultural history, attractions, points of interest and destination resources.
  - Form committee of diversity consumer segment experts, community stakeholders and members of the Visit Austin Board of Directors and staff to collaborate on Visit Austin marketing and community relations efforts.
  - Ensure campaign, editorial photography, publications, website, social media and general content reflect Austin's diversity.
  - Continually evaluate new opportunities to improve diversity offerings to visitors and meeting professionals.

- Metrics:**
- Targeted media impressions
  - Diversity brochure fulfillment and downloads

\*Activities will decrease due to budget reductions.



**Objective 4:** Promote and preserve Austin heritage through strategic content marketing efforts and grant fulfillment.

- Strategies:**
- Partner with heritage community to ensure comprehensive representation of Austin offerings in digital and social programs.
  - Solicit and fulfill \$250,000 in Heritage Preservation Grants (down from \$500,423 in FY 16/17), acting as a resource to heritage venues and organizations to develop visitor-ready strategies and marketing tactics.
  - In conjunction with Film Commission, promote Austin heritage through TV and film.

- Metrics:**
- Targeted media impressions
  - Heritage Grant fulfillment



Austin Heritage ad campaign in Texas Monthly Magazine

**Objective 5:** Improve the usability, design, content and conversion of Visit Austin programs through content development, execution and management efforts.

- Strategies:**
- Develop and maintain strategic content plan for VisitAustin.org.
  - Develop and maintain editorial calendar for content channels across organization.
  - Develop new video content to be featured on VisitAustin.org and Visit Austin social channels.
  - Continue development and implementation of strategies for growing eNewsletter database opt-ins and maximizing subscriber engagement.
  - Partner with online publishers to distribute Austin content to reach new audiences.

- Metrics:**
- Content engagement score
  - Website conversions



# COMMUNICATIONS

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH 17*	TOTAL RESULTS FY 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18	
Media Outreach (Releases/Pitches)	300	26,248	53,890	30,000	20,000
Number of Outlets Reached	336	13,124	26,668	15,000	12,000
Press Trips/Media Hosted	36	40	79	36	30
Dollar Value of Media ( Cision, Trendkite & website report)	\$27 million	\$67 million	\$103 million	\$30 million	26 million
Significant Placements	144	96	329	147	130
FY 17-18 Communications budget was reduced by \$126,500 from FY 16-17.					
*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017					



**Julie Chase** is a proud fourth generation Texan and has been in Austin for 22 years. She is the Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer for **Visit Austin**, where she oversees the marketing of the destination to international and domestic media, travel trade and consumers. In addition, she oversees the Film Commission, Tourism and Music Offices and spends a lot of time with the ABIA staff, working to secure new flight service. Julie has been in the tourism industry for 20 years. Julie started her career at the Texas Department of Commerce where she served in various roles such as the Canada Marketing Manager, International Sales and Media Relations Manager and eventually serving as the Texas Tourism Director in the Governor's Office.

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Continue to generate and shape positive and valuable media coverage of Austin in domestic and international print, broadcast and online media outlets.

**Strategies:**

- Secure feature stories in print, broadcast, online, social media and industry publications that provide prominent Austin coverage.
- Host qualified journalists on press familiarization trips. \*
- Drive support and awareness for Visit Austin's overall mission, goals and purpose by advocating tourism globally through U.S. Travel Association, Brand USA and local partnerships.

**Metrics:**

- Earned media value
- Media coverage produced in domestic and international markets
- Media coverage in outlets with circulation/impressions over 100,000
- Coverage in print, online, radio and broadcast media
- \*Due to budget reduction, Visit Austin will host fewer familiarization trips, resulting in less media coverage.

**Objective 2:** Target business and meetings-related publications to generate editorial coverage of the destination.

**Strategies:**

- Continue growing partner relations with existing and new hotels to secure coverage in publications that reach target audiences and that grow occupancy, city-wides and tourism-generated economic impact.
- Host writers and media on assignment from business specific print, broadcast and online outlets.\*
- Continually evaluate new opportunities to improve diversity offerings to visitors and meeting professionals.
- Work closely with local organizations to identify areas of potential synergy.

**Metrics:**

- Media value generated
- Diversity of coverage through a variety of mediums
- Number of articles placed in niche publications
- \*Due to budget reduction, Visit Austin will host fewer familiarization trips, resulting in less media coverage.

**Objective 3:** Expand upon the creation of publicity opportunities for community partners, local businesses and public relations teams to feature their clients in press coverage.

**Strategies:**

- Continue to work closely with hotel public relations teams to increase positive media exposure through sharing media leads, hosting press and collaboration with other community outreach programs. \*
- Coordinate site visits to both established and new businesses.

**Metrics:**

- In-kind donations value secured each month
- Diversity of Austin product reported by media
- Quality of coverage that includes tangible call to action and attribution
- \*Due to budget reduction, Visit Austin will host fewer familiarization trips, resulting in less media coverage.

**Objective 4:** Further develop awareness and exposure for Austin's arts, culture, multicultural and LGBTQ products

**Strategies:**

- Host writers/media on assignment from niche outlets and publications during relevant city festivals and events.
- Ensure editorial photography and general content (events, attractions, points of interest) reflect arts, culture and diversity.
- Promote Austin's diverse attractions, rich history, culture and unique personality.
- Maintain Visit Austin's association, outreach, collaboration and support of numerous local and national multicultural groups and events.

**Metrics:**

- Media value generated
- Diversity of coverage

**Objective 5:** Public Affairs: Work with city and state elected officials on matters related to the tourism industry.

**Strategies:**

- Monitor legislative bills that impact the tourism industry and Austin's ability to be a welcoming destination for visitors
- Remain a resource for Austin City Council and other elected officials in matters related to the tourism industry.

**Metrics:**

- Success of bills tracked during legislative session

## YEAR TO DATE 3-YEAR DOLLAR VALUE OF MEDIA:

FISCAL YEARS	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 (THROUGH MARCH 2017)
Dollar Value of Media (source: Cision)	\$30,648,762 million	\$46,256,115 million	\$92,349,163 million	\$42,808,193 million	\$67,297,420.12 million



# STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH '17*	TOTAL RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18**
Foundation Fundraising	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$100,000**
Donated Services/ Expense Offset	400,000***	\$1,146,264.35	\$1,575,499	300,000
Revenue	450,000***	\$477,565.48	\$782,606	<del>\$300,000</del> \$250,000

*Strategic Alliance 17-18 budget was reduced by \$40,000 from 16-17.*

\*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017    \*\*Dependent on date of 501c3 status acceptance.    \*\*\*Increased significantly due to PCMA in January 2017

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Establish and launch a charitable foundation to support the local Austin hospitality community, build recognition for the local travel, tourism and music industries and support tourism workforce development.

- Strategies:**
- Award scholarships to undergraduate students in Austin planning to pursue degrees in the hospitality and tourism industry at accredited, four-year universities, colleges or community colleges in Texas.
  - Support hospitality employees in Austin interested in advancing their career through additional certification, continuing education and other professional development.
  - Provide job training opportunities.
  - Conduct industry research.
  - Protect Austin brand as Live Music Capital of the World®.

- Metrics:**
- Fundraising goals actualized
  - Number of new donors secured
  - Donor retention
  - Number of scholarships and job training opportunities awarded annually

**Objective 2:** Provide event oversight, development and fundraising strategies/implementation for applicable Visit Austin-hosted industry events and Visit Austin marquee events.

- Strategies:**
- Work with other Visit Austin departments and event production partners to develop and execute events.
  - Solicit and secure sponsorships.
  - Ensure sponsorship fulfillment.
  - Develop opportunities for community outreach and engagement as applicable.
- Metrics:**
- Revenue actualized – meet/exceed designated revenue goals
  - Donated Services – meet/exceed designated goals for donated and in-kind services

**Objective 3:** Build strategic brand alliances that further the mission of Visit Austin.

- Strategies:**
- Promote the Strategic Partnership/Sponsorship Program.
  - Pursue and develop alliances with corporate partners and sponsors outside the hospitality industry.
  - Maintain and further develop catalog of Visit Austin, partner and other destination assets.
  - Identify gaps and opportunities for new value offerings and cobranded marketing opportunities that promote partner participation as well as customer and consumer engagement- both experiential and joint-venture value programs.
  - Identify, execute, manage and fulfill Strategic Alliance agreements.
  - Enhance partner tools and resources available on VisitAustin.org or partner microsites.

- Metrics:**
- Number of new partners secured\*\*\*\*
  - Partner retention
  - Revenue actualized\*\*\*\*\*
  - Donated services
- \*\*\*\*\*Reduced budget results in fewer dollars for solicitation efforts.

**Objective 4:** Develop and expand meetings industry partnerships.

- Strategies:**
- Serve as primary clearing house for all industry partnerships and agreements. Work with internal and external contacts regarding tracking and measurement of contract deliverables.
  - Provide oversight and ensure fulfillment of partnership agreements with Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE), and American Society of Association Executives (ASAE).
  - Continue long-standing partnership with Destination Management Association International (DMAI).
  - Work with internal departments to ensure all activation opportunities are maximized.
- Metrics:**
- Contract deliverables met
  - Activations captured

**Objective 5:** Engage traditional and non-traditional Austin hospitality partners.

- Strategies:**
- Develop and maintain an a la carte menu of year ‘round Visit Austin offerings and opportunities, including co-op advertising, partner programs and event participation.
  - Develop, catalogue and allocate destination assets.
  - Enhance partner tools and resources available on VisitAustin.org or partner microsites.
  - Identify unique ways to educate and further engage partners in the Austin hospitality, meetings/conventions and tourism industries.
- Metrics:**
- Number of new partners secured
  - Partner retention
  - Revenue actualized



**Ed Bailey** relocated to Austin from Cleveland, OH in 1998 when he brought an exhibition from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum to SXSW. Ed has been a member of the hospitality industry for 27 years and is currently the Vice President of Brand Development at **Austin City Limits** and **ACL Live at the Moody Theater**. Ed suggests all visitors to Austin go to Ranch 616 for their Silver Coin Margarita, followed by a night of venue hopping.





**Cathy Lippincott** is the Co-Owner and Manager of **Guero's Taco Bar** and has been in the hospitality industry for more than 30 years. Being the owner and operator allows Cathy to wear many hats. **Rob Lippincott** is the Co-Owner and Manager at **Guero's Taco Bar** and has been in Austin more than 50 years, 31 of which have been dedicated to the hospitality industry. He loves working with such a “family like” crew and having the opportunity to meet new people.

# TOURISM

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH 17*	RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18	
Product Placement	48	18	118	48	94
Destination Training	600	2,561	4,443	1,100	888
Tourism Partner Leads	235	70	323	235	242

*FY 17-18 Tourism budget was reduced by \$25,000 from FY 16-17*

*\*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017*

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Increase destination awareness in primary and emerging inbound markets.

**Strategies:**

- Organize targeted travel trade and public relations programs (presentations, client events and interviews) aimed at generating Austin exposure.\*\*
- Facilitate destination trainings for travel trade executive leadership and sales force teams at key travel companies.\*\*
- Partner with Texas Tourism and Brand USA in co-operative marketing efforts to strengthen awareness of Austin and drive sales increases.\*\*

**Metrics:**

- Room nights sold through receptive operators and, when relevant, other travel trade entities
- Key market production in the International Overnights Report
- Web traffic and impressions resulting from collaborations or promotions aimed at consumer audiences

**Objective 2:** Increase the supply of Austin hospitality product available for distribution by the international travel trade.

**Strategies:**

- Develop education initiatives aimed at preparing the local supplier community to capture international bookings.
- Support Austin businesses in expanding their sales and marketing reach in international and domestic leisure markets by facilitating new agreements between local suppliers and key aggregators.
- Create opportunities to market Austin to the travel trade through organizing sales and media missions in key markets, hosting familiarization trips and attending relevant trade shows.\*\*
- Assist top-tier aggregators and wholesale travel operators in the development of new Austin travel product.
- Coordinate efforts with Austin–Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) to attract and maintain new air service to Austin.\*\*

**Metrics:**

- Increases in the number of signed partner agreements between hotel suppliers and key aggregators (receptive operators)
- Room nights sold through receptive operators
- Overnights from key markets
- Annual brochure audit reflects increases and decreases in Austin product available

**Objective 3:** Stimulate demand in emerging markets through public-facing content and consumer promotions.

**Strategies:**

- Increase Austin's media coverage in premier online, broadcast and print (consumer and trade) channels.\*\*
- Create and sustain partnerships with airlines and key travel companies, thus, leveraging their reach to enact multi-channel consumer promotions.
- Continue to produce and procure translated content for the international pages of the Visit Austin website.\*\*

**Metrics:**

- Media value of Visit Austin–driven coverage in key markets\*
- Web traffic and impressions resulting from collaborations or promotions aimed at consumer audiences

*\*Refer to the Communications section of the marketing plan for comprehensive goals.*

*\*\* Activities will decrease due to budget reductions in Tourism, Communications and Marketing departments.*



FILM COMMISSION

DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH '17*	TOTAL RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18**
Production Leads	2,640	46,484	69,622	50,000 40,000
Fulfillment	126	181	248	140 120
Production Starts	42	79	107	45 35
Production Days	900	1506	2033	900 800

The 17-18 Film budget was reduced by \$3,000 from 16-17 and activities will also be affected by reductions in the Communication and Marketing/Advertising Departments.

\*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017

PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Work to increase film, television and commercial production in the Austin area.

- Strategies:**
- Scout for productions with directors and executives, familiarizing them with local filming locations and introducing them to Austin vendors and crew.
  - Enhance and increase the number of property listings in our online location database.
  - Promote and build the crew and vendor listing in the online production directory.

- Metrics:**
- Production starts
  - Production days completed
  - Production leads
  - Reel-scout database statistics

**Objective 2:** Promote Austin as a leading motion picture, commercial and television production hub.

- Strategies:**
- Continue to develop content and features for the Austin Film Commission website.
  - Partner with and promote local festivals—in doing so, welcome industry visitors and promote Austin as a film destination.
  - Continue to promote Austin film scene and help raise the profile of local filmmakers through press channels.
  - Utilize social media and targeted ads to market Austin film community globally.
  - Promote Austin film at events and tradeshows.

- Metrics:**
- Social media metrics
  - Website visit statistics
  - Event attendance numbers

**Objective 3:** Advocate for the film and television industry locally, while raising awareness of the positive impact that the production industry has for the community.

- Strategies:**
- Work with state and community film groups like the Texas Film Commission and the Austin Film Society to cross-promote production in Austin.
  - Participate in local meetings to educate constituents on the benefits of film and television production.
  - Identify and develop partnerships with local vendors, facilities and media companies to further local production business.
  - Act as an advocate for film and television production with local government and regulatory offices to make sure the infrastructure is in place for production.

- Metrics:**
- Participation and involvement in promotional activities\*
  - Promotional values generated from partnerships
  - Reel-Crew directory statistics
  - Reel-Scout database statistics
- \*Limited due to budget cuts in the Marketing/Advertising department.

WHAT'S NEXT

The Austin Film Commission continues to work with the Texas Association of Film Commissions, the Motion Picture Association of America and the Texas Motion Picture Alliance to push for a more robust film rebate program at the state level. This allows us to compete with other states for film and television business. The State of Texas Moving Image Industry Incentive Program took a hit during the 2014-15 Legislative Session with its funding cut by 2/3 (from \$90 million down to \$30 million). During the 2017-18 Legislative Session, the funding stayed flat. Based upon last year's activity with the state smaller budget, we saw less incentivized, studio level projects coming to Austin.

Because of Austin's healthy commercial and independent film scene, we don't expect steep declines in production. At the same time, we won't see growth in the large-scale television series which contributed to the industry's economic impact in previous years.

As the Texas Moving Image Industry Incentive Program is the number one tool to bring productions not only to Texas but also Austin, the Austin Film Commission is implementing new tools to help counterbalance the decrease in funding. We are refreshing the Film Discount Card (now known as the Austin Film Insider program) which gives filmmakers discounts while also promoting local businesses. This program not only helps filmmakers save money but also brings business to local vendors. The Austin Film Commission is also working with ReelScout to roll out our new online tool called ReelPost. ReelPost allows filmmakers to find and hire cast and crew easily as well as to market their project crowdfunding initiatives. The forum system will also be a community resource for the local cast and crew to find employment.



**Craig Parks** relocated to Austin from Jackson, Mississippi 28 years ago, and each of these last 28 years have been dedicated to the Austin hospitality industry. Craig is the Executive Producer and Principal at **Arts + Labor**, a local film production company. Arts + Labor has managed productions for each of the various entertainment districts across Austin, major local events such as SXSW and ATX Television Festival, tribute films honoring distinguished Texans and profiles of many unique gems in and around Austin. Parks' favorite part of the job is bringing stories to life by taking simple ideas and working with his team to convert those stories to the screen.





**Tje Austin** is a **singer/songwriter** who has been based in Austin for more than 16 years. Tje was born and adopted in Hawaii and moved around the globe before moving to Austin to attend the University of Texas at Austin in 2001. Although he found his passion for music later in life, he wouldn’t change it for the world. Tje was on the first season of “The Voice” and, today, he can be seen playing at local venues all over the city.

# MUSIC

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH ‘17*	TOTAL RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18**	
Booking Inquiries	900	681	944	960	900
Industry Contacts	840	580	900	840	820
Media Contacts	60	38	67	60	40
Media Event	12	23	28	12	8

*The FY 17-18 Music budget was reduced by \$10,000 from 16-17*      \*Oct. 2016-May 2017

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

### Objective 1: Market Austin’s music product to incoming visitors, meeting planners, conventions and press.

- Strategies:**
- Work with Convention Sales and Services departments to develop music programming as an added value and incentive tool for incoming meeting and event planners.
  - Continue to build and market the Hire an Austin Musician platform by assisting conventions, meeting planners, tradeshow and local business with various recommendations and booking support for local talent.
  - Assist Strategic Alliances department in all music-related needs and account support for ALL ATX/Keller Williams sponsorship fulfillment.
  - Partner with city of Austin to promote local daytime music series for visitors in coordination with various venues, including Austin Visitor Center.
  - **Manage all music inquiries, talent requests and artists contracting for sales, tourism, media, familiarization tours and other Visit Austin-related initiatives. \***
  - Support Communications Department with hosting media groups and fielding music-related inquiries to increase media coverage on the Austin music scene.

- Metrics:**
- Number of live music bookings and inquiries
  - Attendance for daytime programmed music series
  - Media coverage of the Austin music scene
- \*Activities will decrease due to budget cuts in other departments.*

### Objective 2: Foster music community relationships to effectively promote Austin’s music industry.

- Strategies:**
- Continue to work with the City of Austin Music & Entertainment Division on positioning and promoting the importance of the Austin music industry.
  - In partnership with ALL ATX/Keller Williams, collaborate on annual Austin music compilation to promote Austin artists.
  - Build deeper partnerships with key music community stake holders, such as the Austin Music Foundation, Health Alliance for Austin Musicians, Sims Foundation, Black Fret and others.

- Offer support to local industry to promote development and growth of: venues, recording studios, record labels, and music businesses as a whole.
  - Regularly attend music trade shows and community and industry events.
- Metrics:**
- Number of events in which Austin Music Office participates
  - Number of industry events attended
  - Number of CDs distributed

### Objective 3: Identify opportunities for Visit Austin to integrate local musician community.

- Strategies:**
- Maintain local artist inclusion and booking recommendations for various incoming events, meetings and conventions.
  - **Include Austin musicians in Visit Austin marketing activations.\***
  - Continue to grow Austin musician database within the Visit Austin website.
  - Support Austin musicians by marketing events and new releases on online calendar, social media channels and the Austin Insider Blog.

- Metrics:**
- Number of new musician entries in Hire an Austin Musician database
  - Number of musicians contracted for Visit Austin events
- \*Activities will decrease due to budget cuts in other departments; the Austin Airstream tour was eliminated due to Marketing/Advertising budget reduction.*

### Objective 4: Grow Austin Music Office’s digital and social media footprint.

- Strategies:**
- Monitor VisitAustin.org and continue to make recommendations to innovate visitor experience on the music portion of VisitAustin.org including: new content ideas, interactive district maps and music event discovery tools.
  - Partner with festivals and music events of all sizes, to creatively promote on @MusicAustin accounts (Twitter, Instagram) and the Austin Insider Blog.
  - **Create and promote ongoing playlists and stations on streaming services such as Spotify to help market Austin music to global listeners.\***

- Metrics:**
- Growth and engagement of @MusicAustin social handles
  - Number of visits to music section of VisitAustin.org and Austin Insider Blog
  - Music Austin Spotify streaming account plays and followers
- \*Activities will decrease due to budget cuts in other departments.*





# VISITOR SERVICES

## DEPARTMENT GOALS, FY 2017-2018

GOALS	ANNUAL GOALS 16-17	RESULTS THROUGH MARCH 17*	TOTAL RESULTS 16-17	ANNUAL GOALS 17-18
Downtown Visitors/ Walk-In Inquiries	180,000	58%	201,482	192,000
Call-In Inquiries	18,600	51%	17,980	19,200
Visitor Packets				
Retail Revenue	\$1,085,000	44%	\$1,217,440	1,110,000
Email Inquiries	900	26%	1,085	1000
Historic Walking Tours	5,496	15%	1,345	2,700**
Business/Industry Group Presentations	24	42%	16	24

The 17-18 Visitor Center budget was reduced by \$72,000 from 16-17 — the cost of a new POS system. \*Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017 \*\*Charging a participant fee for tours

## PLAN OBJECTIVES, FY 2017-2018

**Objective 1:** Provide additional visitor services to increase visitor volume, length of stay and visitor spending.

**Strategies:**

- Drive traffic to VisitAustin.org for tour and attraction bookings and online store.
- Continue to add tours and attractions to online reservation platform by partnering with OnceThere.
- Promote daytime music programming in partnership with City of Austin Music and Entertainment Office.
- Expand media wall capabilities such as virtual reality videos.
- Offer Certified Hospitality Training for staff to better service visitors to Austin.

**Metrics:**

- Distribution of visitor guides and maps
- Number of monthly visitors
- Tracking email addresses and zip codes through walk-in inquiries

**Objective 2:** Expand retail options to offset operational expenses.

**Strategies:**

- Research new Point of Sale system that integrates with accounting and online software.
- Expand intern/volunteer staff to better service visitors.
- Continue to market retail through social media to increase online, in-store and amenity package sales.

**Metrics:**

- Total revenue
- Incentive goals met
- Tracking of online and reservation sales

**Objective 3:** Plan and execute events at the Visitor Center that represent the Austin brand.

**Strategies:**

- Continue Daybird music series to support local musicians.
- Exhibit and sell local artist works throughout the year.
- Provide industry presentations for convention groups and local businesses to improve destination knowledge.
- Continue to offer custom historic walking tours to promote Heritage Marketing.

**Metrics:**

- Track tours and presentations conducted
- Event values

### WHAT'S NEXT

- Expand media wall capabilities by offering virtual reality videos of Austin's attraction districts.
- Offer Certified Hospitality Training (CHT) for Visitor Center employees.

**Harrison Eppright** is a native Austinite and has been in the hospitality industry for 24 years. He is the Manager of Visitor Services and a Tour Ambassador for **Visit Austin**. Because Harrison assists visitors from around the world, he has encouraged himself to be better informed about the world at large. Harrison suggests all visitors take a tour of the Texas State Capitol as it links Austin's history and identity; past, present and future. "I am amazed and impressed at the love that so many citizens of all colors, all walks of life and from all around the world have towards this beautiful building."





**Paula Bell** was born and raised in Austin and served six years in the United States Army. Paula is now responsible for meeting and directing all guests at **Circuit of The Americas (COTA)**. Her role creates the first impression of COTA and, with hospitality and customer service in mind, her goal is to make the first impression as warm and welcoming as possible.

"I have overcome being homeless for three years and I am grateful for my blessing. I have two adult daughters and four grandchildren; I was a single mom, and I raised my grandkids for 5 years until I became homeless. Being a positive and strong faithful woman has helped me live day to day... I just do everything from the bottom of my heart! My smile is sincere and my smile is meant to be warm. I wouldn't have it any other way!"



# FY 17-18 BUREAU ACTIVITIES

## First Quarter

October 2017			
10/2-10/4	Arlington, TX	TTIA Texas Travel Summit 2017	Tourism, Marketing
10/3	Austin, TX	Visit Austin Annual Luncheon	All Staff
10/6-8 and 10/13-15	Austin, TX	2017 Austin City Limits Music Festival	Marketing, Communications, Music Office, Strategic Alliances
10/10-10/12	Las Vegas, NV	IMEX America	Convention Sales
10/13-10/14	Austin, TX	Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival & Short Film Competition	Austin Film Commission
10/18-10/19	San Francisco, CA	eTourism Summit 2017	Marketing
10/20-10/22	Austin, TX	2017 Formula 1 United States Grand Prix	Austin Sports Commission, Tourism, Communications
10/25	New York, NY	Biz Bash Live - Event Innovation Forum	Strategic Alliances
10/26-11/2	Austin, TX	2017 Austin Film Festival	Austin Film Commission, Strategic Alliances
November 2017			
11/2-11/5	Austin, TX	Austin Polish Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
11/6-11/8	London, UK	World Travel Market	Tourism
11/9-11/10	Boston, MA	Center for Community Foundation Excellence Course	Strategic Alliances
11/12-11/15	San Diego, CA	FICP Annual Conference	Convention Sales
11/13/2016	Washington, D.C.	D.C. Sales Mission	Convention Sales
11/20	Austin, TX	Austin Sports Commission Golf Tournament	Austin Sports Commission, Convention Sales
11/28-11/30	San Antonio, TX	IAEE Expo! Expo! 2017	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Jewish Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	TBD	National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners Annual Conference	Convention Sales
December 2017			
12/7-12/10	Austin, TX	Other Worlds Austin	Austin Film Commission
12/7-12/10	Austin, TX	Austin Asian American Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
12/8	Austin, TX	TSAE Holiday Luncheon	Convention Sales
12/9	Chicago, IL	Chicago Holiday Event	Convention Sales
12/14	Chicago, IL	Holiday Showcase	Convention Sales
TBD	Washington, D.C.	Texas CVB Holiday Event	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	Big As Texas Short Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	TBD	Connect Sports LGBTQ National Task Force	Austin Sports Commission

## Second Quarter

January 2018			
1/7-1/10	Nashville, TN	PCMA Convening Leaders	Convention Sales, Convention Services, Strategic Alliances, Marketing
1/16-1/19	Salt Lake City, UT	Go West Summit	Tourism
1/18-1/28	Park City, UT	2018 Sundance Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Southwest Showcase	Convention Sales
February 2018			
2/7-2/9	Vancouver, Canada	AMC Institute Annual Meeting	Convention Sales, Strategic Alliances
TBD	Austin, TX	OUTsider Fest	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Atlanta, GA	Southeast Sales Calls	Convention Sales
March 2018			
3/7-3/11	Berlin, Germany	ITB Berlin	Tourism
3/9-3/18	Austin, TX	SXSW Music, Film and Interactive Conferences and Festival® 2018	Austin Film Commission, Marketing Communications, Music Office, Strategic Alliances
3/10-3/12	Austin, TX	Brand Innovators	Strategic Alliances
TBD	Austin, TX	Films for The Forest	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Sonoma, CA	Sonoma Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	New York City, NY	Meet NY & Sales Calls	Convention Sales
TBD	Washington, D.C.	DMAI Foundation Dinner & Destination Showcase	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	Local Client Appreciation Event	Convention Sales
TBD	Chicago, IL	Midwest Sales Calls	Convention Sales
TBD	San Francisco, CA	West Coast Sales Calls	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	2018 Bomber Shootout	Austin Sports Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	World Golf Championships - Dell Match Play	Austin Sports Commission



FY 17-18 BUREAU ACTIVITIES

Third Quarter

April 2018			
4/8-4/11	Chicago, IL	IEG Sponsorships Conference	Strategic Alliances
4/23-4/26	Minneapolis, MN	National Association of Sports Commissions	Convention Sales, Sports Commission
TBD	TBD	Hill Country Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Indie Meme Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Comedy Short Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	TBD	AFCI Locations Tradeshow	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Attic Film Fest	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Atlanta, GA	Southeast Sales Mission & Client Event	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	2018 USA BMX Lone Star Nationals	Austin Sports Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Red Bull Grand Prix of The Americas	Austin Sports Commission
May 2018			
5/2	Washington, D.C.	PCMA Visionary Awards	Strategic Alliances, Convention Sales
5/7-5/10	Scottsdale, AZ	Simpleview Summit 2018	Strategic Alliances, Marketing, Convention
5/15-5/17	Frankfurt, Germany	IMEX Frankfurt	Sales
5/19-5/23	Denver, CO	USTA IPW	Tourism
<del>TBD</del>	<del>Mexico</del>	<del>Texas Tourism – Mexico Sales &amp; Media Mission</del>	<del>Tourism</del>
<del>TBD</del>	<del>Austin, TX</del>	<del>IAEE/CTC Golf Event</del>	<del>Tourism</del>
TBD	Austin, TX	Give Back Gig	Convention Sales
TBD	TBD	TSAE Summer Break	All Staff
TBD	Washington D.C.	Xperience Design Project	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	2018 AVP Tour	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Youth Film Festival	Austin Sports Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Cine Las Americas	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Off Centered Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Guadalajara, Mexico	ARLAG	Austin Film Commission Tourism
June 2018			
6/2-6/5	Indianapolis, IN	MPI World Education Congress	Convention Sales
6/10-6/13	TBD	PCMA Education Conference	Strategic Alliances
TBD	Austin, TX	24 Hour Film Project	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	ATX Television Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Los Angeles, CA	Texas Filmmakers’ Brunch	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Dallas, TX	DFW Sales Mission & Client Event	Convention Sales
TBD	Chicago, IL	Chicago Sales Mission & Client Event	Convention Sales
TBD	TBD	Airstream Summer Tour 2018	Music Office, Marketing Communications

Fourth Quarter

July 2018			
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Webfest	Austin Film Commission
TBD	CA	Corporate Event Marketing Association Annual Summit	Strategic Alliances
TBD	TBD	DMAI Annual Convention	Strategic Alliances
TBD	Austin, TX	2018 Triple Crown Southwest Summer Nationals	Austin Sports Commission
August 2018			
8/18-8/21	Chicago, IL	ASAE Annual Meeting	Convention Sales
TBD	TBD	Connect Marketplace	Sports Commission, Convention Sales
TBD	NYC & Philadelphia, PA	Northeast Sales Mission & Client Event	Convention Sales
TBD	TBD	Connect Sports	Austin Sports Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Capital City Black Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
8/11-8/15	Phoenix, AZ	ESTO 2018	Music Office, Marketing Communications
TBD	Sydney & Melbourne, AUS & Auckland, NZ	AUS-NZ Sales & Media Mission	Tourism
September 2018			
9/9-9/11	Dallas, TX	TSAE New Ideas Annual Conference	Convention Sales
TBD	Tampa & Orlando, FL	Southeast Sales Calls	Convention Sales
TBD	Toronto, Canada	Toronto Sales Mission & Client Event	Convention Sales
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Music Video Festival	Austin Film Commission
<del>TBD</del>	<del>Guangzhou, China</del>	<del>World Routes 2017</del>	<del>Tourism</del>
TBD	New York City, NY	New York Event	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Gay & Lesbian International Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Revolution Film Festival	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Austin Short Film Fest	Austin Film Commission
TBD	Austin, TX	Fatastic Fest	Austin Film Commission





**Monte Monreal** grew up in San Angelo, Texas, but he always knew Austin was where he wanted to be. Monte is now the Visitor Services Manager at the **Harry Ransom Center** and has been in the hospitality industry for three years. He is responsible for ensuring that the gallery at the Ransom Center runs smoothly, seven days a week. This includes training docents to guide visitors through exhibitions, coordinating with groups who want to experience the Center, and keeping the shop full of interesting items.

"I feel privileged to live in a city like Austin and work at a place like the Ransom Center. Just one or the other would be more than enough, but to enjoy both—and after such a circuitous journey—it greatly enhances my gratitude for all the people and experiences our wonderful city has afforded me."



# CONTACT INFORMATION

## Visit Austin

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PHONE*	NAME		TITLE
ADMINISTRATION			
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583-7213	Curry	Philip	Operations Manager
583-7249	Gonzalez	Gloria	Finance Coordinator
583-7205	Hart	Julie	Vice President of Finance
583-7207	Lang	Heather	Director of Human Resources
583-7254	Millham	Holland	Executive Assistant to the President
583-7201	Noonan	Tom	President & CEO
583-7203	Ormerod	Deb	Office Manager/Receptionist
583-7204	Palmertree	Gina	Director of Finance
583-7251	Palmertree	Rickey	Operations Coordinator

## MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS, MUSIC, FILM, TOURISM

583-7219	Brooks	Samantha	Marketing Coordinator
583-7228	Chase	Julie	Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer
583-7245	Cook	Katie	Director of Digital Marketing
583-7278	Dowgwillo	Ashley	Marketing Manager
583-7229	Felton	Christine	Marketing Coordinator
583-7209	Kerr	Tiffany	Director of Marketing
583-7246	Perez	Clarissa	Heritage & Diversity Specialist
583-7206	Richardson	Susan	Director of Content and Publishing
583-7232	Zahos	Lourdes	Tourism & PR Manager
583-7210	Wise	Katherine	Communications Manager

## STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

583-7215	Hackley	Mary Kay	Vice President, Strategic Alliances
583-7240	Washington	Stephanie	Partner Relations Specialist

\* all area codes are 512 unless otherwise noted

## CONVENTION SALES

583-7221	Isaac	Ali	Sales Coordinator
583-7257	Aldridge	Lance	Executive Director of Sports Commission
7243	Brittenham	Sarah	Sales Coordinator
7241	Brown, CMP	Amy	Director of Sales
7214	Cannon	Shannon	Senior Director of Texas Accounts
583-7258	Carlson	Liz	Sales Program Coordinator
583-7218	Cramer	Christine	Director of Market Analysis and Research
583-7261	Elliott	Lindsey	Director of West Coast Sales
583-7212	Motl	Matt	Account Director, Sports Commission
583-7259	Genovesi	Stephen	Sr. Vice President, Sales
583-7262	Jones	Chandler	Account Manager
583-7216	Mashaw	Val	Director of Southeast Sales
583-7220	Piper	Dane	Account Manager
583-7247	Rassasack	Amanda	Sales Coordinator
583-7200	Sculley	Courtney	Director of Northeast and International Sales
583-7217	Singleton	Paige	Account Manager
583-7266	Thomas	Kelly	Account Manager

## MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL OFFICE

703-647-7507	Doherty	Jim	Director of Eastern Regional Sales
843-767-1788	Parker	Kristen	Director of Eastern Regional Sales

## MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE

773-774-1342	McCabe	Sarah	Director of Midwest Regional Sales
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## CONVENTION SERVICES

583-7222	Atkins	Linda	Vice President of Services
583-7271	Edison	Michele	Senior Convention Services Manager
583-7224	Foster	Janice	Assistant Director Of Convention Services
583-7250	Johns	Chenisse	Convention Services Coordinator
583-7223	Trammell	Narisa	Convention Services Manager

## VISITOR CENTER - 602 E. Fourth St. Austin, TX 78701

Direct 512-478-0098 | Toll Free 1-866-60-AUSTIN (462-8784) | Fax 512-542-9327

583-7284	Bevins	Erin	Visitor Center Retail Manager
583-7237	Epwright	Harrison	Manager of Visitor Services
583-7242	Flynn	Tracy	Visitor Center Manager of Operations
478-0098	Stephenson	Patsy	Visitor Service Tour Coordinator
583-7235	Trenckmann	Cynthia	Visitor Center Assistant Manager
583-7255	Winterrowd	Cheri	Director of Retail & Visitor Services



# CONTACT INFORMATION

## VISIT AUSTIN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### 2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Albert Black** | Vice President  
Child, Inc.

**Greg Chanon** | At Large  
McGinnis, Lochridge, Kilgore

**Jill Griffin** | Immediate Past Chair  
The Loyalty Maker

**Teddy McDaniel** | Secretary  
Austin Area Urban League
- Gene McMenamin** | Board Chair  
Omni Austin Hotel Downtown

**Jeff Newberg** | At Large  
Endeavor Real Estate Group

**Tom Noonan** | President and CEO  
Austin CVB

**Lance Stumpf** | At Large  
Hyatt Regency Austin
- Mark Tester** | At Large  
Austin Convention Center Department

**Robert Watson** | At Large  
Hilton Austin

**Glenn E. West** | Treasurer  
Civic Leader

### 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Albert Black**  
Child, Inc.

**Scott Blalock**  
JW Marriott

**Jack Boone**  
Ameriprise Advisor Services, Inc.

**Billy Carter**  
Super Shuttle and ExecuCar of Austin

**Greg Chanon**  
McGinnis Lochridge & Kilgore LLP

**Jerry Conway**  
Austin Sonic® Drive In

**Jennifer Currier**  
Hyatt Place Austin-North Central

**John Daigre**  
Dell Medical School

**Michael Girard**  
Girard Diversified Interests

**Jill Griffin**  
The Loyalty Maker
- Rob Hagelberg**  
Four Seasons Hotel

**Kerry Hall**  
Texas Capital Bank

**Gary Manley**  
Iron Cactus Restaurants

**Archie McAfee**  
Texas Association of Secondary School Principals

**Teddy McDaniel**  
Austin Area Urban League

**Gene McMenamin**  
Omni Austin Downtown Hotel

**Drew McQuade**  
W Hotel

**Jeff Newberg**  
Endeavor Real Estate

**Tom Noonan**  
Visit Austin
- Forrest Preece**  
Patron of the Arts

**Tom Schurr**  
Radisson Hotel and Suites Austin

**Frank Spillman**  
United Airlines

**Tom Stacy**  
T. Stacy & Associates, Inc.

**Lance Stumpf**  
The Driskill Hotel

**Mark Tester**  
Austin Convention Center

**Mark Washington**  
City of Austin

**Robert Watson**  
Hilton Austin

**Glenn West**  
Civic Leader



**Cindy Y. Lo** is the President and Event Strategist for **Red Velvet Events** and has been in Austin for 23 years. Cindy has been a member of the hospitality industry for 15 years, getting her start in 2002 when she founded Red Velvet Events. Her favorite spot in Austin is the new boardwalk on Lady Bird Lake where she enjoys taking her kids and taking in the “invigorating” and “very welcoming” downtown Austin skyline.



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