

The
Florida Keys
& Key West
... come as you are®

2025-2026 Marketing Plan

visitfloridakeys.com





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Executive Summary

Tourism is the indisputably largest economic engine of Monroe County. Each year, visitors spend approximately \$3.5 billion in The Florida Keys, generating almost \$400 million in tax revenue and supporting over 24,000 local jobs in an island chain with 80,000 residents. This visitor economy saves each household approximately \$11,500 (including \$1,124 in property taxes) while funding projects that directly benefit the community.

These results are no accident. They are the direct outcome of strategic destination marketing, responsible tourism management, and targeted investment of the tourism taxes that visitors—not residents—pay every time they visit Monroe County.

This FY 2025–2026 Marketing Plan outlines the priorities, programs, and accountability measures for Visit Florida Keys (VFK), the organization contracted by Monroe County to manage the marketing and promotional responsibilities of the Tourist Development Council (TDC). The plan is structured around the TIDE Strategy, a clear framework developed by VFK to ensure all marketing efforts are:

- **Trajectory-Driven:** Storytelling and branding that guide traveler behavior and seasonality.
- **Integrated:** Unified messaging across advertising, public relations, social media, digital, and partner channels.
- **Data-Informed:** Decisions grounded in real-time visitor data, economic impact, and sentiment research.
- **Engagement-Focused:** Community-aligned strategies that connect tourism with local benefits.

Together, these pillars guide VFK in delivering on our statutory responsibilities while also increasing transparency, efficiency, economic prosperity, and quality of life for residents.

Key Objectives for FY 2025–2026

- Drive responsible visitation that balances economic impact with destination stewardship.
- Strengthen traveler conversion through digital campaigns, paid media, and enhanced website performance.
- Support community alignment by elevating partner programs, resident communications, and event promotion.
- Leverage data from reputable sources and visitor perception studies to drive return on investment (ROI).
- Ensure fiscal accountability and transparency through regular reporting, measurable key performance indicators (KPIs), and alignment with Monroe County’s new scope of services with VFK.

Return on Investment + Destination Stewardship

Visit Florida Keys will invest tourism development tax (TDT) revenues to generate strong returns under the framework of destination stewardship by:

- Generating economic prosperity by attracting visitors whose spending sustains our local workforce and businesses.
- Promoting social well-being and quality of life for residents.
- Amplifying environmental conservation and protecting our ecosystem.
- Paying homage to our history and cultural treasures.

This plan also complies with the updated scope of services outlined in the amended contract between Monroe County and VFK (July 2025), including media oversight, grant program execution, and regular reporting to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), Monroe County Clerk and TDC Board.

Tourism is not a byproduct of our economy. It is the foundation of it. This plan ensures Monroe County’s tourism marketing efforts remain accountable, forward-looking, and resident-conscious. It reflects a commitment not only to promoting the Florida Keys but to protecting what makes this destination worth visiting and living in for generations to come.



Diane
Diane Schmidt
Chairperson



Kara
Kara Franker
President & CEO

About Visit Florida Keys and the TDC

Visit Florida Keys (VFK) is a Florida not-for-profit corporation contracted by Monroe County to serve as the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for the Florida Keys. VFK is responsible for developing and executing a comprehensive tourism marketing and public information program that supports sustainable economic growth throughout the island chain.

VFK operates under the direction of a nine-member Board of Directors, which also serves as Monroe County's Tourist Development Council (TDC)—an advisory board to the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The corporation functions in accordance with applicable Florida Statutes and Monroe County ordinances, including regulations tied to the use of tourist development tax (TDT) revenue generated by visitors (not residents). The annual marketing plan is approved by the TDC and BOCC and is used by the Monroe County Clerk's Office as a reference document to verify compliance and process reimbursements.

VFK is committed to delivering measurable results and maintaining accountability to Monroe County and the public. Through a robust framework of data reporting, performance tracking, and contract compliance, VFK ensures that every marketing initiative is evaluated against clear metrics and strategic objectives.

New this year, organizational efforts are guided by the TIDE Strategy, which is a destination marketing framework that focuses on Trajectory, Integration, Data, and Engagement. This strategy informs both long-term planning and day-to-day execution across all functions of Visit Florida Keys. In addition, we are in the process of implementing a three-year strategic plan and attaining Destination International's DMAP certification focused on best practices in the industry.

VFK also works closely with five District Advisory Committees (DACs I, II, III, IV & V) and three umbrella committees: Dive & Ecotourism (updated to include ecotourism for this fiscal year), Fishing, and Cultural. This methodology ensures that each region and sector has input into marketing strategy, project selection, and resource allocation. This community-based framework ensures that tourism benefits are equitably distributed and that local values are reflected in destination storytelling.

Led by an in-house staff of subject matter experts, VFK collaborates with the following agencies: Starmark (advertising), Turner PR (public relations), MMGY (website), Overseas Media Group (social media and webcams), in addition to others that play a smaller role in the operations.

Visit Florida Keys Leadership



Kara Franker
President & CEO
kara@fla-keys.com



Ed Simon
EVP & Chief Sales Officer
ed@fla-keys.com



Julia Stephenson
Executive Assistant
julia@fla-keys.com

Questions? Contact Julia and she will connect you with the right person.



Heidi Barfels
SVP, Marketing & Communications
heidi@fla-keys.com



Jeanne Quinn
SVP, Partnerships & Technology
jeanne@fla-keys.com

Monroe County Board of County Commissioners

Jim Scholl – Mayor

Michelle Lincoln – Mayor Pro Tem

Craig Cates – Commissioner

Holly Merrill Raschein – Commissioner

David Rice – Commissioner

Tourist Development Council Board

Diane Schmidt – Chairperson

George Fernandez – Vice Chairperson/Treasurer

Mayor Danise DeeDee Henriquez – Co-Treasurer

Mayor Jim Scholl – Board Member

Council Member Robyn Still – Board Member

Peg Laron – Board Member

Bobby Mongelli – Board Member

Rachel Oropeza – Board Member

Patti Stanley – Board Member



The Role of Tourism in Monroe County

Tourism is the cornerstone of the Monroe County economy, generating jobs, sustaining businesses, and funding essential public services. The Florida Keys welcome millions of visitors annually who support the region through lodging, dining, attractions, and recreational activities. This visitor spending ripples through the economy, creating employment and tax revenue that benefits every resident.

According to the most recent study in The Florida Keys, tourism generated approximately \$3.5 billion in visitor spending, directly supporting more than 19,000 local jobs, with an additional 5,500 jobs created through secondary economic activity. Wages, benefits, and proprietor income from tourism totaled over \$1 billion, a 4.8 percent increase year-over-year.

Visitor contributions also provided nearly \$400 million in total tax revenue, including \$305 million in direct travel-related taxes. This includes state and local tax benefits, such as sales and lodging taxes, that reduce the burden on Monroe County residents. In fact, visitor-supported tax revenue equates to an estimated \$11,500 in annual savings per household, including over \$1,100 in property tax relief.

Over the past five years, Tourist Development Tax (TDT) revenue has helped fund:

- \$15 million for the local fishing and diving industries
- \$12 million for beach restoration and facilities
- \$10.8 million for community events
- \$8 million for cultural programs
- \$4.3 million for coral restoration and marine sanctuary conservation
- \$19.2 million for tourism-related attractions

These investments improve the quality of life for residents while enhancing the visitor experience. In short, tourism is not only Monroe County's largest economic driver—it is also a powerful funding engine for environmental stewardship, infrastructure, and cultural vitality. Through thoughtful destination management, Visit Florida Keys ensures that the benefits of tourism are sustained and equitably shared across the island chain.



Understanding Funding and Why Tourism Matters in The Florida Keys

Tourism is the economic engine of The Florida Keys. Visitor spending supports local businesses, creates jobs, and funds critical public services that benefit residents across Monroe County. The impact is both direct and far-reaching.

Key Benefits of Tourism:

- Generates \$3.5 billion in visitor spending annually
- Supports 34% of all jobs in Monroe County
- Saves each household \$11,500 in local and state taxes
- Visitors pay more than 24% of Monroe County's sales tax revenue
- 100% of the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) is paid by visitors—not residents

How the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) Helps Residents:

The TDT is a bed tax collected on hotel rooms and short-term vacation rentals. These funds are reinvested into the local economy in ways that support both tourism and quality of life for residents, including:

- Beach and park maintenance
- Restoration of historical and cultural sites
- Tourism promotion and visitor services
- Local infrastructure improvements
- Environmental conservation and sustainability initiatives

The strength of our tourism industry is directly tied to the well-being of Monroe County residents. When visitors thrive, our community benefits.

On June 17, 2025, the TDC Board approved the following FY 2025-2026 budget strategy.

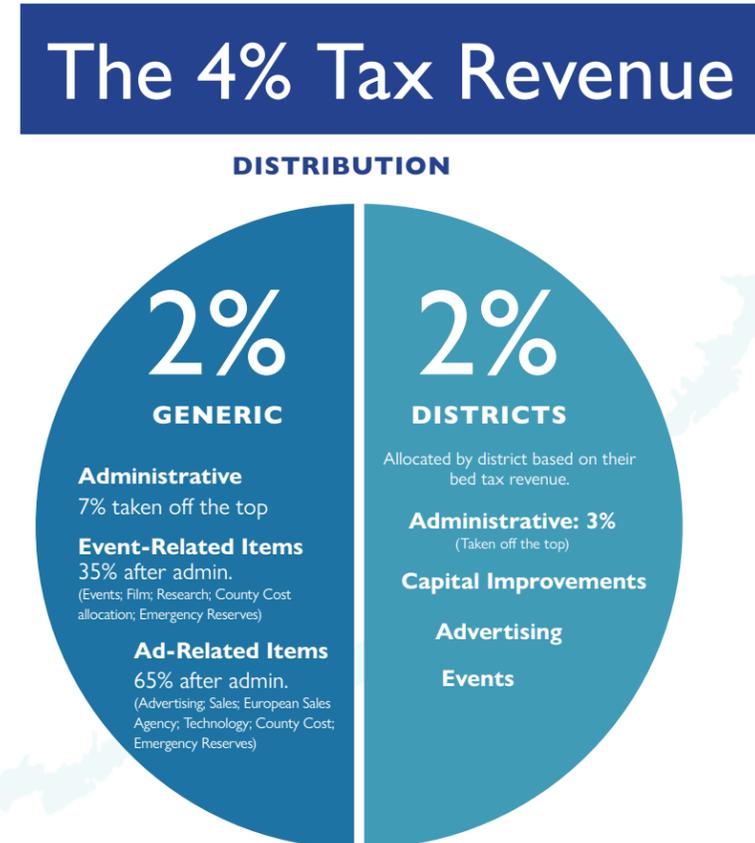
Revenue

Projected FY 2026 Annual Four Penny Revenue:	\$57,000,000
Less 5% non-collection allowance (F.S.129.01):	(\$2,850,000)
Total FY 2025-2026 Bed tax revenue:	\$54,150,000

*The TDC line-item budget, including emergency reserves and fund balance forward, is available upon request.

VFK operates with full transparency and in compliance with Monroe County ordinances, Florida statutes, and its scope of services as outlined in the approved agreement with the Board of County Commissioners.

All expenditures are reimbursed only after submission of detailed invoices and supporting documentation to the Monroe County Clerk's office.



Destination Assessment & Strategic Planning

In 2025, VFK is in the process of completing an operational strategy for the future of the destination. In partnership with MMGY NextFactor, VFK is utilizing the DestinationNext diagnostic tool to develop a multi-phase strategic and transformational roadmap for future global destination marketing.

This roadmap examines practical actions to measure the organization's efforts and outcomes. The roadmap addresses relevant gaps, opportunities, amenities, education, programming, and experiences that would benefit the tourism industry. Between 2026 and 2028, VFK will focus staff resources on executing the roadmap recommendations.

Over the next three years*, the four main categories of strategic goals and strategic initiatives revolve around:

1. Marketing & Sales

- Develop a cohesive marketing strategy called TIDE that highlights the assets of the entire island chain.
- Enhance the destination brand with data-driven insights.
- Continue growth in bed tax revenue.
- Develop a need period strategy for both group and transient visitors.
- Build a new website and continue to adopt AI and technology to serve visitors and the community.

2. Destination Stewardship

- Develop programs and initiatives for industry alignment with stewardship efforts.
- Create frontline service and ambassador training programs.
- Enhance visitor education to create awareness of our sensitive environment.
- Develop a long-term Destination Stewardship plan.

3. Community Alignment

- Review committees and umbrella programs to determine allocations and impact.
- Review and revise the grant process.
- Enhance the centralized calendar of events.
- Develop a resident engagement and education program.
- Develop a strategic engagement plan for the tourism industry.
- Become a data resource for industry and community.

4. Organizational Resilience

- Create an official 501(c)3 federal determination.
- Work toward achieving official DMAP accreditation.
- Develop a strategic advocacy plan.
- Work with Monroe County Commissioners and the TDC Board to develop a comprehensive governance review.
- Develop an organizational measurement strategy and benchmarks.
- Create a compliance and operational efficiency strategy in cooperation with the Clerk's office.
- Review and analyze the tourism management plan with the County Attorney's office including funding sources.
- Conduct a compensation study and culture development plan to retain talent.

2025 Research & Strategy Initiatives



Assessment Survey

Received 198 responses from an audience of tourism partners, community and government leaders, TDC/VFK team, media (not visitors).



1 on 1 Interviews

Dozens of interviews were conducted with key leadership from Monroe County, local governments, and tourism businesses.



Focus Groups

104 people attended 12 group discussions, with participants representing DACs and Umbrellas, community leaders, environmental sustainability, grants/events.



TDC Leadership Workshop

Comprised of 17 people and 2 moderators. Included participation from the TDC Board of Directors and VFK Leadership.



A New Approach to Marketing the Destination: The T.I.D.E. Strategy

With this 2025-2026 marketing plan, Visit Florida Keys is launching the TIDE Strategy—a bold, future-facing approach to destination marketing that re-imagines how we promote our region, engage our partners, and drive measurable impact. TIDE stands for Trajectory, Integration, Data, and Engagement: a roadmap that defines our path forward and guides marketing efforts in the coming year.

The TIDE Strategy transitions VFK into a destination platform, where our organization leads with collective intelligence, empowers our partners with tools and data, and creates meaningful touchpoints for travelers across the full marketing funnel.

Trajectory: Now more than ever before, we have the opportunity to guide travelers on the path, and to the destinations, attractions, and experiences that are right for them in The Florida Keys. We use cinematic storytelling, branded content, and anticipatory, funnel-based marketing to shift the destination's perception and influence traveler behavior from inspiration through planning. This concept defines the path the traveler takes and sets a new standard for what destination marketing can achieve.

Integration: To remain competitive, we are creating a collaborative environment with our industry partners that fosters a sense of belonging, educates and empowers, and focuses on common goals. To that end, we have a restructured partner engagement model that offers scalable tiers of participation for hotels and other tourism stakeholders, each tied to specific moments in the traveler journey, from awareness to booking. Through our educational programs, each partner will have the opportunity to learn about the robust offerings available from VFK and to share knowledge, keeping the destination top of mind.

Data: Our actions are data-informed, as well as intentionally and creatively expressed. In addition to best-in-class research, we are building a comprehensive analytics system, supported by AI, that delivers program and campaign intelligence in real time and provides insights to both internal teams and external stakeholders. These insights guide our efforts to improve marketing communications and our relationships with our audiences, industry partners, community leaders, and stakeholders.

Engagement: Many destinations can create a first impression. But the ones that win hearts, minds, and wallets figure out a way to engage, inform, and delight. Each of our audiences has a set of engagement techniques, including content, channels, tools, and events that inspire. For leisure travelers, we have a cadence of relevant stories and practical information about their trips. For partners, a robust framework for communication and involvement, including transparent reporting dashboards, stakeholder outreach, training opportunities, and activation campaigns designed to keep them informed, connected, and invested. For meeting planners, a comprehensive program and people to help them understand destination offerings. And for stakeholders, a professional series of meetings, events, and roundtable discussions that inform on the health of the organization, its economic impact, and its activities. Filling this engagement gap increases the flow from first touch to booked stay and telegraphs the high-touch service all our constituents can expect from a world-class, welcoming destination.

“With the launch of the TIDE Strategy, Visit Florida Keys is redefining what it means to market a destination in today's world. TIDE—Trajectory, Integration, Data, and Engagement—is more than a framework; it's a commitment to cinematic storytelling, smarter data use, deeper partner collaboration, and real-time traveler engagement.

This strategy helps us move beyond promotion and into true destination leadership.”

Kara Franker – President & CEO Visit Florida Keys



Key Organizational Goals for Marketing & Communications

Our goals focus on increasing paid, earned and owned media reach while launching a refreshed brand that captures the destination's authentic character.

 1.2 BILLION

Goal 1

Generate 1.2 billion paid media impressions in 2025, an increase of 200 million from last year.

 3 BILLION

Goal 2

Generate 3 billion earned media impressions in 2025, and a rise of 2 billion from last year.

 29 MILLION

Goal 3

Exceed a reach of 29 million on organic social media, an increase of 2 million from last year.

 BRAND REFRESH

Goal 4

Develop and launch a refreshed brand that reflects the unique identity of The Florida Keys.

A Deeper Look at Marketing, Communications, Demographics & Our Target Markets

Marketing and communications are among the most powerful tools we have to support the visitor economy in The Florida Keys. In 2024, 46% of visitors recalled seeing or hearing advertising for the destination, and 55% confirmed that marketing materials and press articles influenced their decision to visit. Insights like these send a strong signal that our efforts are reaching the millions of visitors who come to the island chain each year, strengthening the community's number one economic driver.

For FY 2026, we will continue to execute data-informed marketing and communications strategies designed to reach high-value travelers, drive visitation across all five districts and strengthen awareness of what makes the Keys unlike anywhere else.



Questions? Please contact
Heidi Barfels
SVP, Marketing & Communications
heidi@fla-keys.com



Target Audience, Demographic & Origin Market Information

Destination Performance

The Florida Keys saw record-setting visitation in 2024, welcoming 4.7 million domestic visitors, a 4% increase compared to the previous year. This number has been steadily increasing each year, for the past four years.

When choosing their accommodations, 62% of visitors stayed in a hotel in The Keys. Short-term vacation rentals accounted for 16% of stays, and bed and breakfasts made up 10%. The remaining percentage stayed at campgrounds, RVs or with family and friends.

Hotel Performance

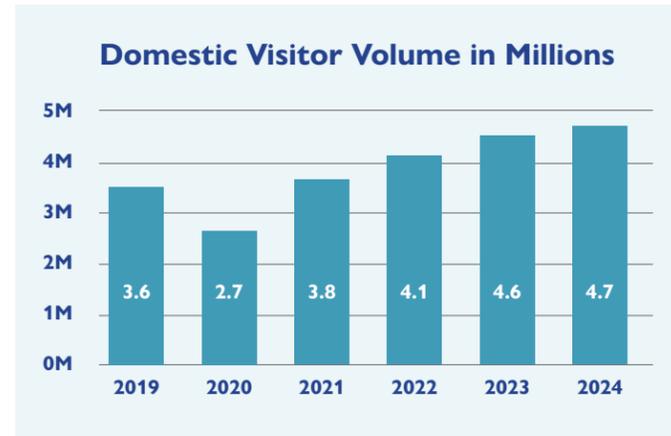
In the hotel category, which also includes motels and resorts, The destination has continued to command the highest average daily rate (ADR) in the United States. In the past year, The Keys have seen a small dip in occupancy that is also showing up in revenue per available room (RevPAR). This represents a “leveling off” after the post-pandemic peak that occurred in 2022, which is being experienced across the country. ADR remains steady and high at \$390.

Short Term Vacation Rentals

The availability of short term vacation rentals (STVR) in The Florida Keys continues to grow. A 2025 economic impact study indicated that since 2018, the number of STVR listings had increased 36%. In this category, the average daily rate, revenue per available room and occupancy are holding strong.

Visitor Volume

Source: Datafy



Competitor Destinations

Competitors of The Florida Keys offer similar natural beauty, outdoor adventure and culture that draws in visitors. Hawaii and California attract visitors with ocean views and relaxed vibes, while the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos, and the Virgin Islands offer clear waters, diving and boating. The Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Puerto Rico highlight music, heritage and history, and Bonaire draws divers with its protected reefs. These destinations appeal to travelers seeking fishing, snorkeling, sailing and island scenery, similar to the Keys.

Hotel Occupancy



Source: Smith Travel/CoSTAR and VISIT FLORIDA

Competitor Destinations

Hawaii	California	The Bahamas	U.S. Virgin Islands	British Virgin Islands
Jamaica	Dominican Republic	Puerto Rico	Turks & Caicos	Bonaire

Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVRs)

Source: KeyData

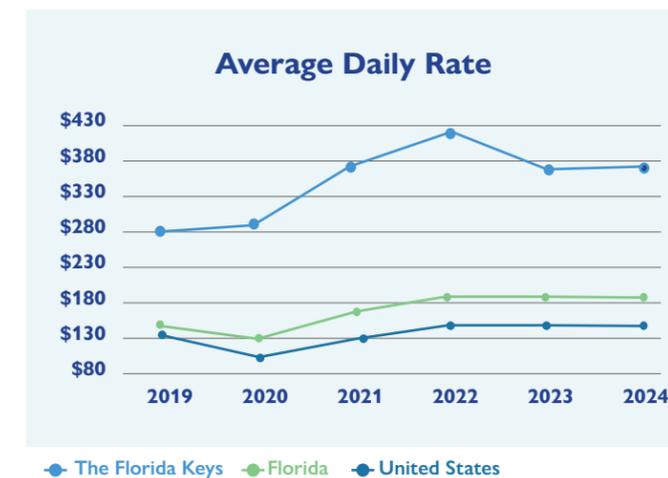
KPI	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Adjusted Paid Occupancy	60.10%	58.30%	3%
Adjusted RevPAR	\$509	\$506	1%
ADR	\$306	\$295	4%

Flight Destinations in Key West (EYW)

*Beginning in October 2025

Akron-Canton (CAK)	Asheville (AVL)	Atlanta (ATL)	Boston (BOS)	Charlotte (CLT)	Chicago (ORD)
Cincinnati (CVG)	Dallas (DFW)	Houston (IAH)	Indianapolis (IND)	Knoxville (TYS)	Newark (EWR)
New York (JFK)	New York (LGA)	Philadelphia (PHL)	Pittsburgh (PIT)	Raleigh-Durham (RDU)	Washington D.C. (DCA)
Washington-Dulles (IAD)	Miami (MIA)	Orlando (MCO)	Orlando-Sanford (SFB)	Tampa (TPA)	

Hotel Average Daily Rate



Source: Smith Travel/CoSTAR and VISIT FLORIDA

Hotel RevPAR



Source: Smith Travel/CoSTAR and VISIT FLORIDA

Origin Market Overview

Airlift

Key West International Airport (EYW) continues to reach new heights. In 2024, the airport reported a record-breaking 1,449,649 total passengers, marking a nearly 10 percent increase over 2023.

The momentum carried into 2025 with the opening of Concourse A in April 2025, delivering upgraded amenities and new air-conditioned boarding bridges. Breeze Airways launched nonstop flights to Orlando and Tampa in June 2025, with service to Akron-Canton and Raleigh-Durham starting in October 2025. Allegiant will begin new nonstop service to Knoxville in October 2025 as well.

Who is coming here and from where?

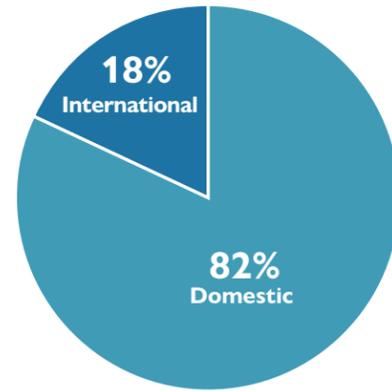
Visitors to The Florida Keys hail predominantly from the United States, with 82% coming from domestic markets in 2024. Of the domestic markets, Florida claims the top spot with 20% of visitors coming from within the state. New York maintained its spot as the top out-of-state market drawing nearly 8% of visitors, a 2% increase over the previous year. California, Texas, Ohio, Illinois and Michigan all saw gains in the past year. Georgia, Pennsylvania and North Carolina saw a modest decline, indicating opportunity to shore up marketing efforts in these areas.

International visitation represented 18% of travelers to The Florida Keys, with Canada remaining the largest source for international travelers in 2024. Notably, international travel was up in 2024, increasing from 12% to 18% of all visitors.

In Florida, Miami-Fort Lauderdale, Tampa and Orlando were top origin markets. With the ease of drive-to travel for South Florida, and the new airlift from major hubs like Tampa and Orlando, we will continue to target these important markets in 2025-2026.

Domestic vs. International Visitation

Source: Rockport Analytics



As we plan for FY 2026, leadership and staff understand the challenges associated with both domestic and international travel to the Florida Keys. We anticipate economic headwinds will affect our previously dependable domestic and sometimes inconsistent international markets. Based on this information, staff intends to maximize the value of our budget to assure the Florida Keys economies remain strong in this time of uncertainty.

Top Domestic Origin Markets

1	Florida	6	Ohio
2	New York	7	Illinois
3	California	8	Pennsylvania
4	Georgia	9	Michigan
5	Texas	10	North Carolina

Source: Rockport Analytics

Top In-State Origin Markets

1	Miami/Ft. Lauderdale	4	West Palm Beach
2	Tampa	5	Fort Myers
3	Orlando	6	Jacksonville

Source: Datafy and Adara

Top International Origin Markets

1	Canada	5	Germany
2	UK	6	Mexico
3	Brazil	7	Italy
4	France	8	Scandinavia

Source: Adara and VISIT FLORIDA

Demographics and Generation

The average age of overnight visitors to The Florida Keys is 43, aligning with Millennial travelers, who are entering the middle age phase of life associated with peak earnings.

Millennials represented 34% of travelers. Gen X was the second largest group, followed by Baby Boomers. Nearly 1 in 4 travelers to The Keys in 2024 were Baby Boomers, which was an 11 percentage point increase for this group, many of whom are entering the retirement phase of life.

Household Income

The Florida Keys primarily attract travelers from affluent and moderate household income groups, a trend likely driven by the destination's consistently high average daily rate. Marketing efforts will continue to align with these core audiences while also targeting the aspirational young traveler, ensuring we connect with visitors at various life stages.

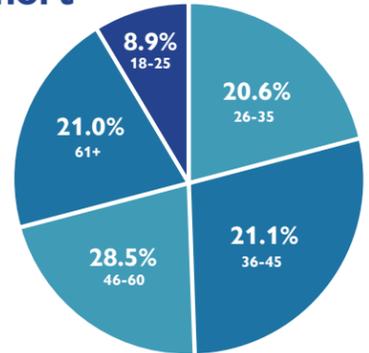
Booking Window

Aligning with domestic and international booking windows allows us to reach travelers at the right moment in their decision-making process, ensuring messages resonate when they're most likely to convert.

Key Demographic	AD35-64+, focus on 45+
Secondary Demographic	AD25-44

Generational Cohort

Generation	Percentage
Baby Boomer	25%
Gen X	33%
Millennial	34%
Gen Z	9%



Source: Dean Runyan Associates

Moderate	35-54, \$100K+
Affluent	35-54, \$150K+
Moderate Mature	55 or older, \$100K+
Affluent Mature	55 or older, \$150K+
Aspirational Young Travelers	18-34, any income

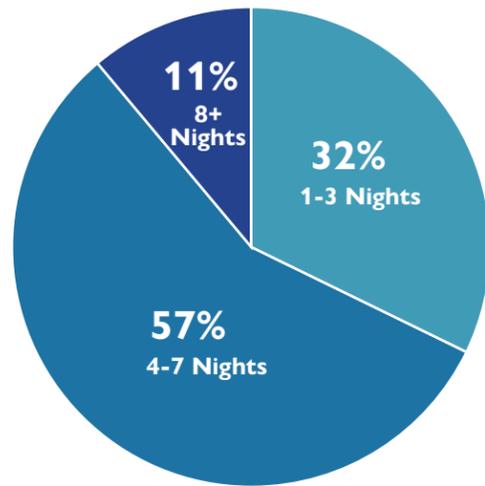
Location	Typical Booking Window
United States	1-3 months, average is 45-60 days
Canada	3-5 months
UK/Ireland	6-8 months
Germany	4-8 months
France	3-6 months
Brazil	3-5 months

	International Visit Periods											
	10/25	11/25	12/25	1/26	2/26	3/26	4/26	5/26	6/26	7/26	8/26	9/26
Canada												
UK/Ireland												
Germany												
France												
Brazil												

Marketing Approach

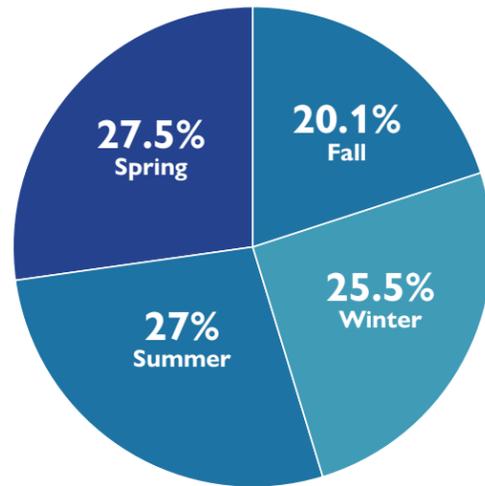
Our marketing approach is shaped by insights into visitor demographics, origin markets, seasonality, length of stay, and traveler interests. These factors help guide how and when we deploy campaigns, ensuring that creative and messaging resonate with target audiences. This data-driven strategy supports smarter investment and stronger engagement across platforms.

Length of Stay



Average Stay: 6 Nights

Seasonality



Target Audience Interests

Ecotourism/Sustainability
Diving/Snorkeling
Fishing
Boating
Culture/History/Art
LGBTQ+
Culinary
Romance
Weddings
Honeymoons
Family Travel
Luxury Travel
Music

Top Activities

Dining Out	79.4%
Beach Activities	68.3%
Sightseeing/Attractions	59.2%
Going Out to Bars	51.6%
Viewing Wildlife	46.8%
Boating	42.1%
Fishing	37.9%
Visiting Museums	29.0%
Snorkeling	23.8%
Cultural Events	22.0%
Spa/Health Club	19.1%
Scuba Diving	10.2%
Weddings	3.5%

Why Do Visitors Choose the Florida Keys?

To Relax and Escape	46.7%
To Experience Adventure	8.7%
Better Climate	8.6%
It's Somewhere New	6.7%
Fishing	4.4%
Culture, Arts, and History	4.0%
Family Friendly	3.0%
Nightlife and Live Entertainment	2.9%
Scuba Diving	2.5%
High Quality Accommodations	2.5%
Romance	2.1%
Safe and Convenient	1.7%
Good Value	1.7%

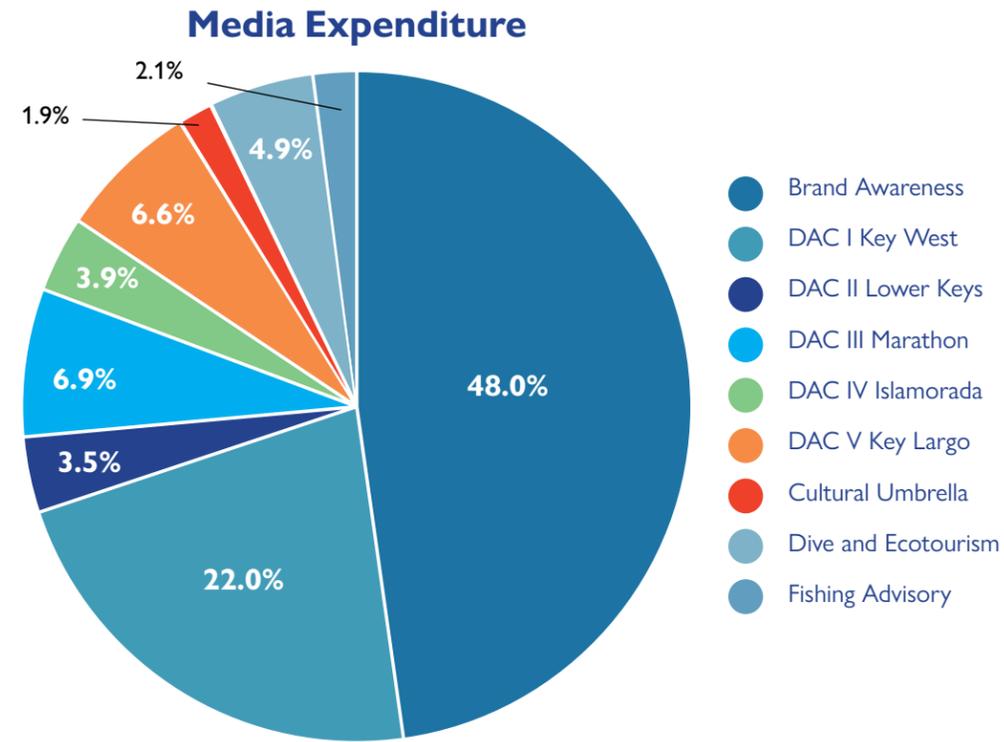
Source: Rockport Analytics

Source: Rockport Analytics

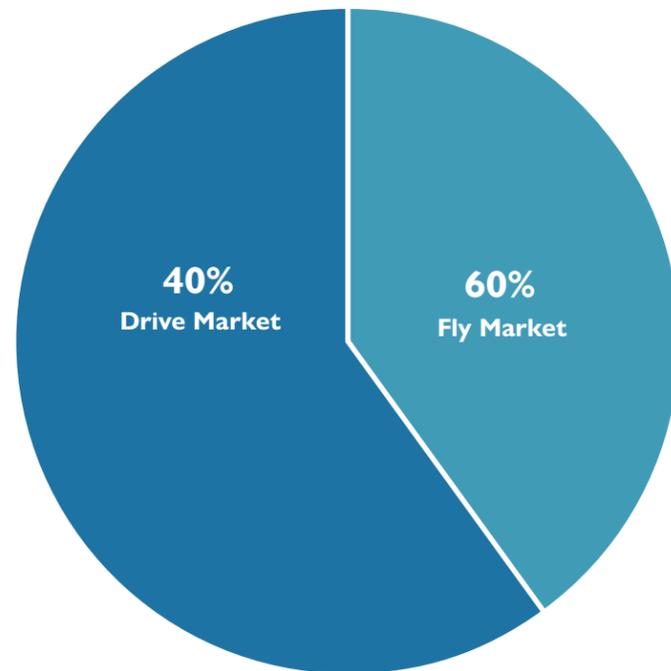


Media Spend

Below is a snapshot of our media expenditure. For detailed advertising goals and tactics, please refer to the forthcoming Advertising section and the Media Plans Addendum.



Drive vs. Fly Media Expenditure



Focus on Research and Data-Driven Results

VFK's strategies and decisions are grounded in reliable data and performance measurement. This includes tracking the economic impact of tourism, visitor sentiment, lodging performance, marketing attribution, and brand strength.

Research supports internal decision-making, transparency to stakeholders, and strategic alignment across departments. It also plays a key role in accountability to the public, empowering data-driven storytelling and policy advocacy.

Goals

- Empower Visit Florida Keys and its stakeholders with accurate, timely data and insights to guide strategic decisions and strengthen destination performance.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of marketing efforts and progress toward strategic objectives through consistent, data-driven measurement and analysis.
- Quantify the economic impact of high-profile projects and major destination initiatives to demonstrate return on investment and community benefit.
- Strengthen Visit Florida Keys' research leadership through ongoing professional development and strategic industry collaboration.

Tactics

- Implement industry best practices in data collection, visualization, and interpretation.
- Deliver regular reporting (monthly, quarterly, annual) to internal teams and stakeholders.

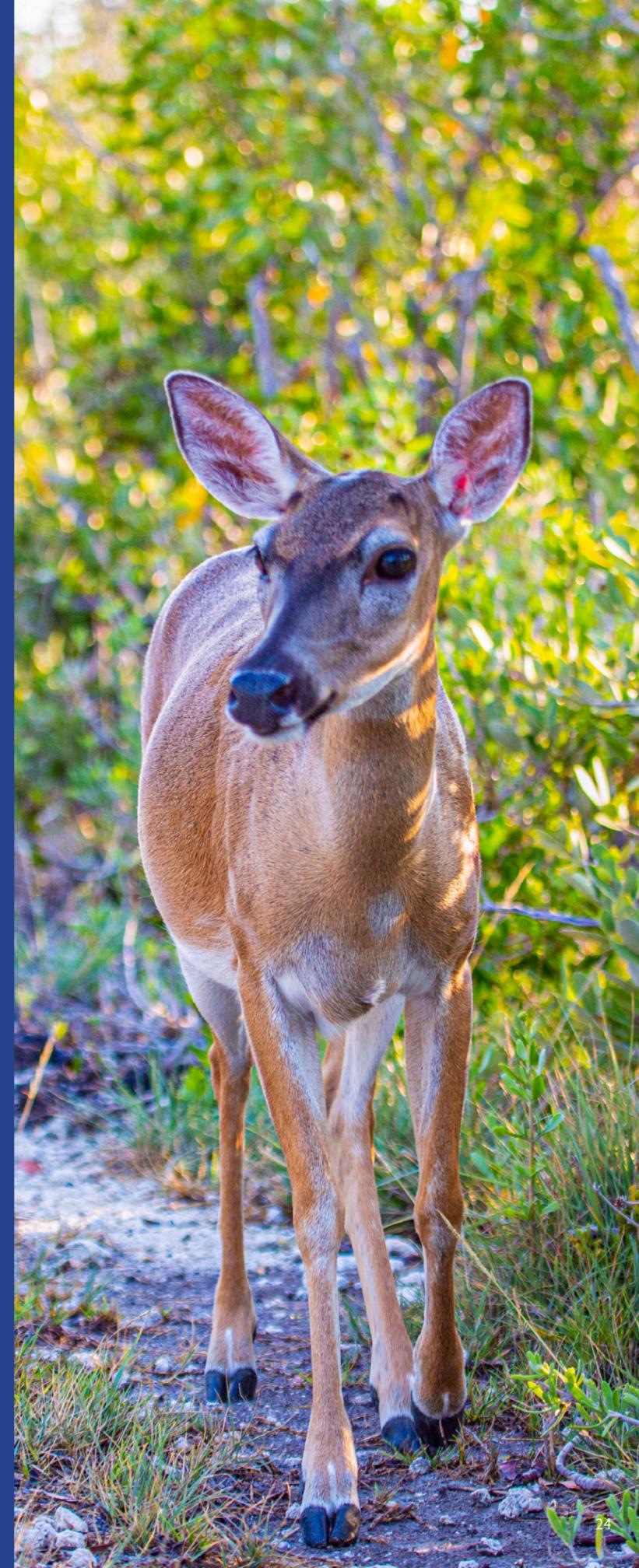
- Monitor evolving travel behavior, market trends, and economic conditions.
- Conduct ongoing visitor intercept surveys to measure demographics, behavior, and satisfaction.
- Measure visitor volume and spending using DK Shifflet estimates.
- Analyze lodging performance using Smith Travel Research (STR) data.
- Monitor vacation rental trends and occupancy through Key Data Dashboard.
- Track forward-looking booking trends with TravelClick's Demand360 platform.
- Leverage the Tourism Economics Symphony platform for: visitor behavior analysis, geolocation data insights, economic performance forecasting, and marketing performance measurement across time.
- Conduct targeted economic impact analyses for film productions and special projects to assess their contribution to the local economy and support future investment decisions.
- Participate in research-focused breakout sessions, trainings, and workshops, and attend key industry conferences, including Destinations Florida, Visit Florida's Governor's Conference on Tourism, US Travel Association's ESTO, and TTRA Marketing Forum.
- Engage with DMO peers and industry leaders via Destinations International membership and other professional networks to exchange best practices and stay ahead of emerging trends.



Kelli Fountain
Director of Market Research
kelli@fla-keys.com

Tourist Development Council Market Research

- [2024 Visitor Profile Study](#)
- [2024 Tourism Report - Datafy](#)
- [Examining the LGBTQ+ Market](#)
- [Benefits of a Tourism Economy](#)
- [2025 Economic Impact Report \(Analyzing 2023 data\)](#)
- [Affluent Traveler Brand Perception Study](#)
- [Example Monthly Summary Report](#)



Expand Sales & Promotions Abroad & Domestically

Goals

- Define and implement systems to measure room nights and economic impact influenced by VFK across all segments and sources.
- Strengthen the domestic leisure travel market and build seasonality during traditionally slower periods.
- Drive international market growth despite market headwinds.
- Develop and implement a robust Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) program.
- Boost niche markets like LGBTQ+, dive and ecotourism, fishing, and cultural.
- In concert with VFK research director, leverage research and key metrics to target geographic and vertical markets more robustly.
- Build new flexible digital presentation decks and planner guides.
- Collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA, U.S. Travel Association, Destinations International and Brand USA on initiatives.
- Develop co-marketing initiatives with trade (Signature, Virtuoso, Pleasant Holidays, etc.).
- Implement cross-promotional campaigns with other Florida destinations.

Tactics

- Identify, prioritize, and target specific traveler segments with the highest potential value and alignment with The Florida Keys' unique offerings.
- Measure VFK production and influence, and capture "sales effort" data and activity for individual employees, the Sales Department, and the entire VFK staff.
- Develop strategic relationships with OTAs and distribution platforms.
- Focus on high-yield markets with direct flights to Miami/Fort Lauderdale (UK, Canada, France, Germany, Brazil).
- Target secondary markets with strong interest in marine activities, land-based recreation, and ecotourism.
- Conduct targeted FAM trips for pre-qualified segments and planners.

THE TEAM



Ed Simon
EVP & Chief Sales Officer
ed@fla-keys.com



Sabine Chilton
Sr. Director of Sales
sabine@fla-keys.com



Yves Vrielynck
Director of Global Sales
yves@fla-keys.com



Liana Pyne
Director of Sales, Domestic Markets
liana@fla-keys.com



Destiny Bradley
Sales Assistant
destiny@fla-keys.com

- Establish presence at key international travel trade shows (including but not limited to: ITB Berlin, WTM London, IFTM, WTM Latam).
- Partner with luxury concierge services like Quintessentially or Abercrombie & Kent to include The Florida Keys in their curated travel portfolios.
- Create alliances with industry associations (MPI, SITE, FSAE).
- Collaborate with the Key West Business Guild and other partners to promote signature events and LGBTQ+-friendly accommodations and attractions and reflect these in group and trade itineraries.

PARTNERSHIPS



Events, Trade Shows and Conferences Calendar

October 2025

Name	Date	Location	Team
ILTM North America	October 6-9	Bahamas	Sales
IMEX America	October 7-9	Las Vegas, NY	Sales
Meetings Today Live Incentive/ Corporate	October 19-22	Los Cabos, MX	Sales
Brand USA	October 20-23	London, UK	Sales
IGLTA Global Conv.	October 21-25	Palm Springs, FL	Sales
DI Advocacy Summit	October 21-23	Sacramento, CA	Partnerships & Community Engagement
Austin Film Festival	October 23-30	Austin, TX	Film Commission
Travel Agency Owners Forum	October 25-30	Willikies, Antigua	Sales
Florida Keys Marine Science Conference & Workshop	October 27-30	Coral Springs, FL	Partnerships & Community Engagement
Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show	October 29-November 2	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Sales, Marketing
Canadian Sales Mission, LMA	October	Montreal, Toronto	Sales
Latam Sales Mission	October	Brazil, Argentina	Sales

November 2025

Name	Date	Location	Team
Sapphic St. Petersburg	November 1-9	St. Petersburg, FL	Sales
WTM	November 4-6	London, UK	Sales
Destinations Florida Annual Meeting	November 5-7	Fort Walton Beach, FL	Marketing & Communications
Palm Springs Pride	November 6-9	Palm Springs, CA	Partnerships & Community Engagement
Signature Travel Conference	November 10-13	Las Vegas, NV	Sales
American Film Market	November 11-16	Los Angeles, CA	Film Commission
Threads 2025 - AAA TA Conv.	November 17-18	Providence, RI	Sales

December 2025

Name	Date	Location	Team
Content	December 1-4	London, UK	Film Commission
FOCUS	December 8-9	London, UK	Film Commission
CCRA Chicago Chapter	December 9-12	Chicago, IL	Sales
ASTA Regional Event	December 10	Seattle, WA	Sales
Smart Meetings incentive	December	TBD	Sales
Northeast Sales Mission	December	TBD	Sales
Destinations International Board Retreat	December	TBD	Leadership

January 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
Vakantiebeurs	January 8-11	Utrecht, the Netherlands	Sales
Seattle TAS MAIN Sale	January 10-11	Seattle, WA	Sales
Seattle TAS- DIVE	January 10-11	Seattle, WA	Sales
Washington D.C. TAS with FAMTAS and LGBT booth	January 17-18	Washington, D.C.	Sales
IMM	January 21-22	New York, NY	Marketing & Communications
Sundance Film Festival	January 22 - February 1	Park City, UT	Film Commission
FITUR- trade show and pre show event/presentation	January 22-26	Madrid, Spain	Sales
New York TAS with Dest theater and FAM TAS and LGBT Booth	January 24-25	New York, NY	Sales
CDME Board Retreat	January	TBD	Leadership

Events, Tradeshows and Conferences Calendar

February 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
Florida Encounter & Huddle	February 2-4	Orlando, FL	Marketing & Communications; Sales
TTRA Marketing Outlook Forum	February 2-6	Charlotte, NC	Marketing & Communications
Realscreen/NAPTE	February 2-6	Miami, FL	Film Commission
IPEC	February 4-6	Phoenix, AZ	Sales
Berlin European Film Market (EFM)	February 11-18	Berlin, Germany	Film Commission
Chicago TAS and Chicago TAS DIVE	February 21-22	Chicago, IL	Sales
Destinations International Marketing and Communications Summit	February 23-26	Cleveland, OH	Marketing & Communications
ASTA Regional Event	February 24	Austin, TX	Sales
Fort Lauderdale TAS with FAM TAS- Possibly add LGBT booth and Fort Lauderdale TAS DIVE	February 28-March 1	Fort Lauderdale, FL	Sales
Florida Keys Tourism Advocacy Workshop	February	Florida Keys, FL	Partnerships & Community Engagement

March 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
USA Travel Show Nordics	March 1-3	Denmark	Sales
ITB with LGBT table in LGBT pavilion	March 4-6	Berlin, Germany	Sales
Los Angeles TAS	March 7-8	Long Beach, CA	Sales
SXSW (South by Southwest)	March 12-28	Austin TX	Film Commission
Bay Area TAS	March 21-22	Santa Clara, CA	Sales
Beneath the Sea	March 27-29	Secaucus, NJ	Sales
Travel & Outdoor Adv show	March 28-29	Montreal, Canada	Sales
Dallas TAS	March 28-29	Dallas, TX	Sales
Florida Keys Days	March	Tallahassee, FL	Partnerships & Community Engagement; Marketing & Communications
Italy Showcase and presentations	March	Italy	Sales
Florida Tourism Day	March	Tallahassee, FL	Marketing & Communications; Partnerships & Community Engagement
Destinations International CEO Summit	March 30 - April 1	Newport Beach, CA	Leadership

April 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
Phoenix Pride	April 1-6	Phoenix, AZ	Partnerships & Community Engagement
LA Mission/AFCI	April 7-11	Los Angeles, CA	Film Commission
Denver TAS MAIN and DIVE	April 11-12	Denver, CO	Sales
U.S. Travel's Destination Capitol Hill	April 14-15	Washington D.C.	Marketing & Communications
WTM Latam- Pre Show Event and Presentations	April 14-16	Sao Paulo, Brazil	Sales
Sunscreen Film Festival	April 30-May 3	St. Pete, FL	Film Commission
South Florida Film Fourm	April	Dania Beach, FL	Film Commission
eTourism Summit	April	TBD	Marketing & Communications / Partnerships & Community Engagement



Events, Tradeshows and Conferences Calendar

May 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
U.S. Travel Association's National Travel & Tourism Week	May 4-10	Florida Keys	Partnerships & Community Engagement
Film Florida Annual Meeting	May 6-7	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Film Commission
Travel Agent Forum	May 12-15	Las Vegas, NV	Sales
Cannes Film Festival	May 12-20	Cannes, France	Film Commission
Destinations Florida Marketing Summit	May 13-15	Bradenton, FL	Marketing & Communications
IPW	May 17-21	Fort Lauderdale, FL	Marketing & Communications / Partnerships & Community Engagement / Sales
Scuba Show	May 30-31	Long Beach, CA	Sales
GMITE or ULTRA SUMMIT	May	TBD	Sales
ASTA South Florida Regional	May	Ft Lauderdale, FL	Sales

June 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
TriBeCa Film Festival	June 3-14	New York, NY	Film Commission
Scuba Show	June 6-7	Atlantic City, NJ	Sales
PRSA Travel & Tourism Conference	June 7-10	Albuquerque, NM	Marketing & Communications
Incentive Live	June 21-23	Boca Raton, FL	Sales
Travel & Tourism Research Assn	June	TBD	Partnerships & Community Engagement
French Sales Mission plus presentation (NAAR)	June	France	Sales
Romance Travel Forum	June	TBD	Sales
BeNeLux Sales Mission	June	TBD	Sales

July 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
World Pride	July 25-Aug 8	Amsterdam, The Netherlands	Sales
Miami Film & Media Market	July	Miami, FL	Film Commission
Destination International Annual Convention	July	TBD	Marketing & Communications / Partnerships & Community Engagement
UK/Ireland sales Mission	July	UK/Ireland	Sales
LGBT Sales Mission	July	TBD	Sales
ASTA Regional Event	July	TBD	Sales
U.S. Travel Association Summer Board Meeting	July	TBD	Leadership

August 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
Chicago Market Days	August 9-10	Chicago, IL	Sales
ESTO	August 20-23	TBD	Marketing & Communications / Partnerships & Community Engagement
Virtuoso Travel Week	August	Las Vegas, NV	Sales
Destination Southeast	August	TBD	Sales
Connect Marketplace	August	TBD	Sales
VISIT FLORIDA: Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism	August	TBD	Marketing & Communications / Partnerships & Community Engagement / Sales

September 2026

Name	Date	Location	Team
Toronto Film Festival	September 3-10	Toronto, Canada	Film Commission
IFTM	September	Paris, France	Sales
ASTA Great Lakes Regional Meeting	September	Detroit, MI	Sales
Skift Global Forum	September	TBD	Leadership

Boost Partnership and Community Engagement

Goals

- Foster transparent, two-way communication between VFK and the community to build trust and mutual understanding, emphasizing the value of tourism.
- Refresh the events and capital grants program to make it more impactful for recipients while aligning with community needs.
- Create visitor education programs that align with the destination's sustainability and community goals.
- Build on The Florida Keys' music scene and events to create new opportunities for tourism growth and enhance visitor experiences.
- Strengthen partnerships with all the Chambers of Commerce, including the Key Largo Chamber of Commerce, the Islamorada Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce, the Lower Keys Chamber of Commerce, and the Key West Chamber of Commerce.
- Additionally, bolster partnerships with the Key West Business Guild, the Lodging Association of the Florida Keys and Key West, the Key West Attractions Association, the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) and the Rotary clubs throughout Monroe County including those of Key West, Key Largo, the Upper Keys, Marathon, Big Pine & the Lower Keys, and the Key West Sunrise Rotary Club, Leadership Monroe, along with all local government entities.

Tactics

- Develop a resident-first communication and education campaign using storytelling to spotlight how tourism positively impacts their daily lives.
- Partner with local media to publish regular features, highlighting stories of local businesses thriving because of visitor dollars.
- Create tourism impact graphics to highlight measurable benefits, like job creation and infrastructure investments, and share them through newsletters and social media.

- Create a public dashboard tracking TDC-funded projects, economic impact and sustainability efforts.
- Redesign the grant application process with community input to ensure alignment with local priorities.
- Reimagine the umbrella and committees to be more streamlined and cost-efficient (i.e., bring Cultural Umbrella in-house and expand Dive to include Ecotourism).
- Educate residents and stakeholders on the principles of destination stewardship, highlighting its importance in sustaining the local tourism economy and its relevance as a key consideration in grant funding decisions.
- Initiate a front-line worker education and ambassador program for tourism professionals in The Florida Keys.
- Develop a visitor-facing marketing and outreach campaign focused on responsible behavior, including leave-no-trace principles, wildlife interaction guidelines and community respect tips.
- Utilize Visit Florida Keys channels to promote upcoming events, highlight local talent and share itineraries tailored to music fans.
- Create a more robust events calendar.
- Utilize geofencing and polygons to track visitor impact and movement, while enabling targeted post-event marketing and re-engagement.
- Send staff to attend stakeholder and chamber events throughout The Florida Keys.

OUR TEAM



Crystal Blaskis
Sr. Director of Community Programs & Events
crystal@fla-keys.com



JoNell Modys
Sr. Director of Community Engagement
jonell@fla-keys.com



Sydney Schuhmacher
Administrative Assistant
sydney@fla-keys.com



Maxine Pacini
Sr. Director of Grants & Budget
maxine@fla-keys.com

PARTNERSHIPS



Ensure Financial Accountability & Organizational Transparency

Goals

- Produce every item required in Monroe County's Scope of Services with VFK listed under "Documentation Checklist for Compliance."
- Ensure Visit Florida Keys complies with all financial and budgetary requirements by adhering to Monroe County ordinances and Florida state statutes, Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) best practices.
- Work closely with Monroe County OMB, Clerk, and County Attorney offices to ensure all standards are being met, including annual financial and operational audits.
- Ensure proper governance and open communication for all TDC and DAC meetings.
- Work toward achieving accreditation through Destinations International's Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP).
- Provide management of all human resource functions to ensure a satisfying and productive work environment.

- Round out the finance and administration team by hiring a comptroller and dedicated human resources team to enhance financial and operational efficiency.
- Ensure regular reporting on the previously published Risk Assessment and adhere to Florida Ethics Institute (FEI) Recommendations for Enhanced Governance and Compliance.

Tactics

- Assign every item required in Monroe County's Scope of Services with VFK listed under "Documentation Checklist for Compliance" to senior staff members to ensure expectations are met, and create a spreadsheet with links to each of the items. (Link to Addendum #3 listed at the end).
- Update and continue implementing VFK Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual to align with ethical standards.
- Establish a framework for documenting and implementing the Conflict-of-Interest Policy for employees, vendors, and board members, including mandatory disclosures for vendors and contractors.

- Provide an Ethics and Compliance Training Program for employees and board members, with onboarding training within 30 days and ethics training within 90 days of new positions.
- Maintain compliance with all Florida Sunshine Law requirements, and adhere to the disclosure of information records section to strengthen compliance with Florida public records requirements and Visit Florida Keys agreement, while training employees on public records requirements.
- Produce and distribute an annual Visit Florida Keys budget that reflects the strategic and tactical needs of the organization.
- Produce timely and accurate organizational financial statements for board & management review, allowing for actionable decisions based on economic trends. Include monthly Four Penny reports.
- Advance the DMAP accreditation process to reinforce Visit Florida Keys'

- commitment to industry excellence, transparency and accountability.
- Utilize human resources best practices across the organization.
- Provide employees with training opportunities that are relevant to the needs of the organization, encourage professional development through programs like Destinations International's Professional in Destination Management (PDM) or Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME), and coordinate a strategic planning retreat for employees.
- Optimize the BAMBOO HRIS system for resource planning and team communication.
- Join and maintain active memberships in the following tourism organizations including but not limited to U.S. Travel Association, VISIT FLORIDA, Brand USA, Destinations International.
- Participate in boards and committees to gain first-hand experience with other DMOs and stakeholders on strategic tourism initiatives.

OUR TEAM



Kara Franker
President & CEO
kara@fla-keys.com



New Hire
Comptroller
new@fla-keys.com



Maxine Pacini
Sr. Director of Grants & Budget
maxine@fla-keys.com



Kaire Lindpere
Sr. Director of Strategy and Special Projects
kaire@fla-keys.com



Ammie Machan
Manager of Compliance and Contracts,
ammie@fla-keys.com



Jennifer Llagostera
Accounting Manager
jennifer@fla-keys.com



Kenni Gross
Accounting Associate
kenni@fla-keys.com



Paris Hudson
Accounting associate
paris@fla-keys.com



Enhance Partnerships Through Digital Technology and Website Design

Goals

- Launch & enhance a new destination website for travelers (VisitFloridaKeys.com, target 7.2 million annual visits) and affiliated microsites/portals for tourism partners, travel trade, and local stakeholders.
- Expand the Visit Florida Keys database/CRM to 2000+ tourism businesses and organizations throughout The Keys to be used for website listings, cooperative initiatives, and ongoing partner communications.
- Execute effective stakeholder communication efforts through regular, planned email sends.
- Ensure online events calendar is optimized and designed to promote events throughout The Florida Keys.
- Use AI and advanced technology to interact with visitors including showcasing the range of activities and businesses offered in The Florida Keys and educate guests on how to visit responsibly.
- Collaborate with VFK departments to enhance website functionality for all lines of business and microsites.

Tactics

- Work with internal staff and external partners to develop a user-friendly website that integrates: CRM, CMS and booking integration.
- Implement a robust SEO program, ADA-compliant design, translated content and mobile optimization to maximize accessibility and performance.
- Integrate website advertising and email marketing solutions, including launching an RFP for website advertising services and aligning efforts for co-op marketing with the VFK marketing department.
- Launch and optimize the use of cutting-edge technology including artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR) for interactive and engaging visitor experiences.
- Drive all potential visitors exposed to our advertising to the VisitFloridaKeys.com website for planning, and stay current on TDC research and initiatives, ultimately, bookings.
- Measure lodging referrals to stakeholder booking engines and websites.
- Expand and optimize the website calendar of events to become a centralized resource for visitors and the community.

- Employ e-newsletters and communications designed for segments including TDC leadership (BOCC, Board DACs and committees), tourism industry stakeholders, residents of Monroe County.
- Design and implement an email drip campaign designed to communicate with visitors to The Florida Keys.
- Engage web users with content balancing practical destination insight and resources with more aspirational content.
- Create a new digital travel trade training experience (Key Lime Academy) to educate and drive consistent engagement with travel professionals and meeting planners in support of sales initiatives & goals.
- Help the VFK film department redesign FilmFloridaKeys.com.
- Ensure webcams have maximum visibility on VisitFloridaKeys.com

OUR TEAM



Jeanne Quinn
SVP Partnerships
& Technology
jeanne@fla-keys.com



Christina Day
Sr. Dir. of Partnerships
christina@fla-keys.com



Olivia Newbold
Digital Activation
Manager
olivia@fla-keys.com

OUR AGENCY PARTNER - **MMGY GLOBAL**



Communicate Effectively through Public Relations, the Florida Keys News Bureau and Crisis Communications

Goals

- Partner with the public relations agency to expand reach and impact in target publications through curated pitches, influencer collaborations, and media missions. Expand key media market relationships to increase coverage across top and emerging markets.
- Through the Florida Keys News Bureau, enhance the visibility of the Florida Keys and its signature events through in-house news package development and distribution to regional, national, and international media channels.
- Showcase the Florida Keys as a destination for above-and-beyond experiences in music, events, food and dining, art and culture, wellness, weddings, fishing, diving, and eco-tourism in domestic and international markets.
- Promote responsible travel and environmental stewardship in The Florida Keys.

- Maintain a proactive and collaborative crisis communications program including hosting the annual Hurricane Preparedness Workshop to align tourism industry partners with emergency protocols and communication plans.
- Collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA, industry associations, and peer DMOs to amplify media impact and resource sharing.
- Launch a comprehensive media monitoring and analytics program to measure impact, guide strategy, and track earned media performance.

Tactics

- Manage daily public relations activities, including content creation, media relations and crisis communication in-house, ensuring alignment with the Visit Florida Keys strategic goals.
- Elevate the destination's earned media efforts by integrating travel trends, refining media targeting, and strengthening relationships with high-value journalists and outlets.

THE TEAM



Allison Morgan

Director of Communications
allison@fla-keys.com



Chad Newman

Film Commissioner & News Director
chad@fla-keys.com



Mary Haban

Director of PR
mary@fla-keys.com



Tracy McClellan

Manager of Community Outreach & Special Projects
tracy@fla-keys.com

- Inspire visitors to travel more mindfully through the “Connect & Protect” program showcasing the destination’s eco-experiences and sustainability initiatives.
- Evolve the “Stewards of the Keys” profiles to highlight the community working to protect the natural and cultural environment.
- Highlight the Keys’ rich music culture by pitching stories that tie together its historic role as a haven for songwriters and performers, its thriving live music scene, and its signature concerts and events.
- Create new messaging around wellness to focus on what sets the Keys apart, such as ocean immersion, sunset rituals, outdoor activities, and local wellness-minded businesses.
- Host targeted “Keys Cuisine” media visits that immerse journalists in the Keys’ culinary landscape. Itineraries can include experiences such as food tours, cooking classes, and conversations with local chefs.
- Target niche media verticals including culinary, music, art, LGBTQ+, wellness, and outdoor adventure with customized pitches that reflect the Keys’ layered experiences.
- Leverage timely events, cultural milestones, and high-profile platforms to generate media interest and consumer engagement such as America 250, FIFA World Cup 2026, IPW 2026 Fort Lauderdale, boat shows in Miami, Fort Lauderdale and Tampa, food festivals like South Beach Wine & Food Festival and LGBTQ+ events like Pride.
- Execute targeted outreach initiatives, including market visits and personalized media engagement, to build lasting editorial relationships and drive destination storytelling.
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive editorial calendar mapping annual events, seasonal activities, and recurring programs for proactive planning and resource coordination.
- Create customized pitch angles tailored to each market’s audience interests and editorial focus.
- Establish a standardized monthly reporting format highlighting coverage volume, earned media value, geographic reach, and messaging effectiveness.
- Create location-based content packages tailored to each district of the Florida Keys, along with themed packages focused on underwater environments, fishing, diving, and cultural storytelling.
- Upload all newly created media assets into the Digital Asset Management (DAM) system for organized, efficient cross-platform distribution.
- Review and update the crisis communications plan each year to reflect new protocols, contact changes, and best practices.
- Build and maintain strong working relationships with crisis partners, including Monroe County Emergency Management, the National Hurricane Center, and the National Weather Service.
- Coordinate with organizations like VISIT FLORIDA to host media visits, leveraging their resources to identify high-value journalists and influencers and facilitate familiarization trips.
- Actively participate in Destinations International, US Travel Association, PRSA and SATW to share best practices and collaborate on initiatives that enhance The Keys’ PR efforts.
- Enhance systematic news gathering and real-time content distribution across all districts to ensure consistent, high-impact media coverage that aligns with tourism priorities.
- Hire external skilled professionals for writing, photography, videography, and aerials to support efforts and ensure a consistent content pipeline and news gathering.

OUR AGENCY PARTNER - **TURNER PR**

Continued

- Review and update the crisis communications plan each year to reflect new protocols, contact changes, and best practices.
- Build and maintain strong working relationships with crisis partners, including Monroe County Emergency Management, the National Hurricane Center, and the National Weather Service.
- Coordinate with organizations like VISIT FLORIDA to host media visits, leveraging their resources to identify high-value journalists and influencers and facilitate familiarization trips.
- Actively participate in Destinations International, US Travel Association, PRSA and SATW to share best practices and collaborate on initiatives that enhance The Keys' PR efforts.
- Hire external skilled professionals for writing, photography, videography, and aials to support efforts and ensure a consistent content pipeline and news gathering.
- Ensure webcams have maximum visibility on VisitFloridaKeys.com

Expand Reach through Movies, Film & Television

Goals

- Establish strategic industry relationships and generate qualified production leads through targeted trade show engagement and industry events.
- Manage production requests and create a streamlined housing coordination system.
- Complete a comprehensive economic impact analysis to quantify the production industry's value and guide future strategy.
- Design a plan to launch the Florida Keys Film Incentive Program to drive destination exposure through strategic production partnerships.
- Design a plan to refresh FilmFloridaKeys.com as a mobile-first production hub that streamlines services, showcases marine advantages, and drives qualified leads.
- Manage production requests, create a streamlined housing coordination system, and update location database of video b-roll reels.

Tactics

- Leverage partnerships with Miami-Dade and Broward Film, Film Florida, and Film USA offices to maximize trade show ROI through cost-sharing, regional branding, and coordinated industry outreach.
- Partner with the VFK sales team to develop a centralized housing request process that connects productions with lodging providers through the existing hotel network.
- Partner with the VFK research department to evaluate the financial and marketing impact of major productions filmed in the Keys.
- Design a plan to develop a competitive marketing partnership grant system for qualifying film and television projects using a pilot incentive program supporting productions with strong destination branding potential.
- Partner with the VFK website team to design a plan to transform FilmFloridaKeys.com from a static brochure into an interactive production toolkit.
- Hire a photographer, videographer, and Drone pilot to update the location database and provide 4 K b-roll.



Florida Keys News Bureau Event Coverage Calendar

Planned events are as follows and this list is subject to change. Event social media coverage is planned separately.

October 2025

Name	Date	Location	DAC
Zombie Bike Ride	October 25	Key West	DAC I
Pet Masquerade	October 27	Key West	DAC I
Underwater Pumpkin Carving	October 29	Key Largo	DAC V
Locals Parade	October 30	Key West	DAC I
Fantasy Festival Parade	October 31	Key West	DAC I

November 2025

Name	Date	Location	DAC
Stone Crab Eating Contest	November 7	Marathon	DAC II
Hurricane Flag Burning	November 30	Key West	DAC I

December 2025

Name	Date	Location	DAC
Key Largo Bridge Run	December 6	Key Largo	DAC V
Underwater Santa	December 20	Key Largo	DAC V
Key West New Year's Eve Drag Queen Drop	December 31	Key West	DAC I

January - February 2026

Name	Date	Location	DAC
Orangebowl Swim Classic	January 3	Florida Largo	DAC V
Wounded Warrior Ride	January 7	Marathon	DAC III
Weinerpalooza	January 21	Key West	DAC I
Groundhog Conch	February 2	Marathon	DAC III
President's Day - Little White House	February 14	Key West	DAC I

March - April 2026

Name	Date	Location	DAC
Conch Shell Blowing Contest	March 8	Key West	DAC I
Underwater Easter Bunny	April 4	Key Largo	DAC V
7 Mile Bridge Run	April 11	Marathon	DAC III
Cow Key Bridge Run	April 19	Stock Island	DAC II
Earth Day (Turtle Release)	April 22	Marathon	DAC III
Drag Race	April 26	Key West	DAC I

May 2026

Name	Date	Location	DAC
Minimal Regatta	May 24	Key West	DAC I

July - September 2026

Name	Date	Location	DAC
Key Lime Pie Eating Contest	July 4	Key West	DAC I
Underwater Music Festival	July 11	Looe Key	DAC II
Hemingway Look-alike	July 23-25	Key West	DAC I
Lobster Mini Season Safety VNR	July 28	Islamorada	DAC IV
Tour De Turtles	August 1	Marathon	DAC III
Just A Few Friends	September 1	Key West	DAC I
Alligator Lighthouse Swim	September 5	Islamorada	DAC IV

Tell Vivid Stories through Interactive Social Media & Webcams

Goals

- Maintain a best-in-class social media program that drives engagement, brand affinity and visitor inspiration for The Florida Keys.
- Boost engagement to maximize reach across all social channels.
- Reinforce organic social messaging with strategic paid social support.
- Provide organic social media support for public relations, marketing, and sales teams' activations.
- Expand destination visibility and inspire travel by leveraging a strategic social media influencer program that authentically showcases the destination.
- Maintain webcams throughout The Florida Keys.
- Highlight influencer content and other user generated content for travel-inspired stories from the eyes of the visitor. Explore platforms for UGC digital asset sourcing and management.
- Monitor KPIs and optimize the program for follower growth, engagement rates, website referrals and reach.
- Continue a consistent posting cadence for each platform based on audience insights, ensuring a steady flow of engaging and inspirational content.
- Continue to use a combination of agency and in-house staff to create visually captivating posts and reels that showcase the Keys' natural beauty, culinary delights and cultural experiences to inspire travelers in the early stages of trip planning and engage past travelers.

Tactics

- Strengthen the social media and webcam program with in-house and agency support to deliver high-quality, on-brand content and real-time engagement across all major platforms including Instagram, Facebook, X, TikTok, YouTube and LinkedIn platforms.
- Use paid social media to target key demographics based on lifestyle preferences, promote key events that drive overnight visitation, and showcase the unique qualities of each community in Monroe County.
- Provide on-the-ground support for PR activations and select FAM tours, for both public-facing and behind-the-scenes storytelling.
- Activate a curated mix of direct influencer partnerships, VISIT FLORIDA collaborations, and media partner activations to highlight the region's unique experiences through trusted, high-reach content creators.

THE TEAM



Jules Powers
Content Coordinator
jules@fla-keys.com

OUR AGENCY PARTNER - OVERSEAS MEDIA GROUP



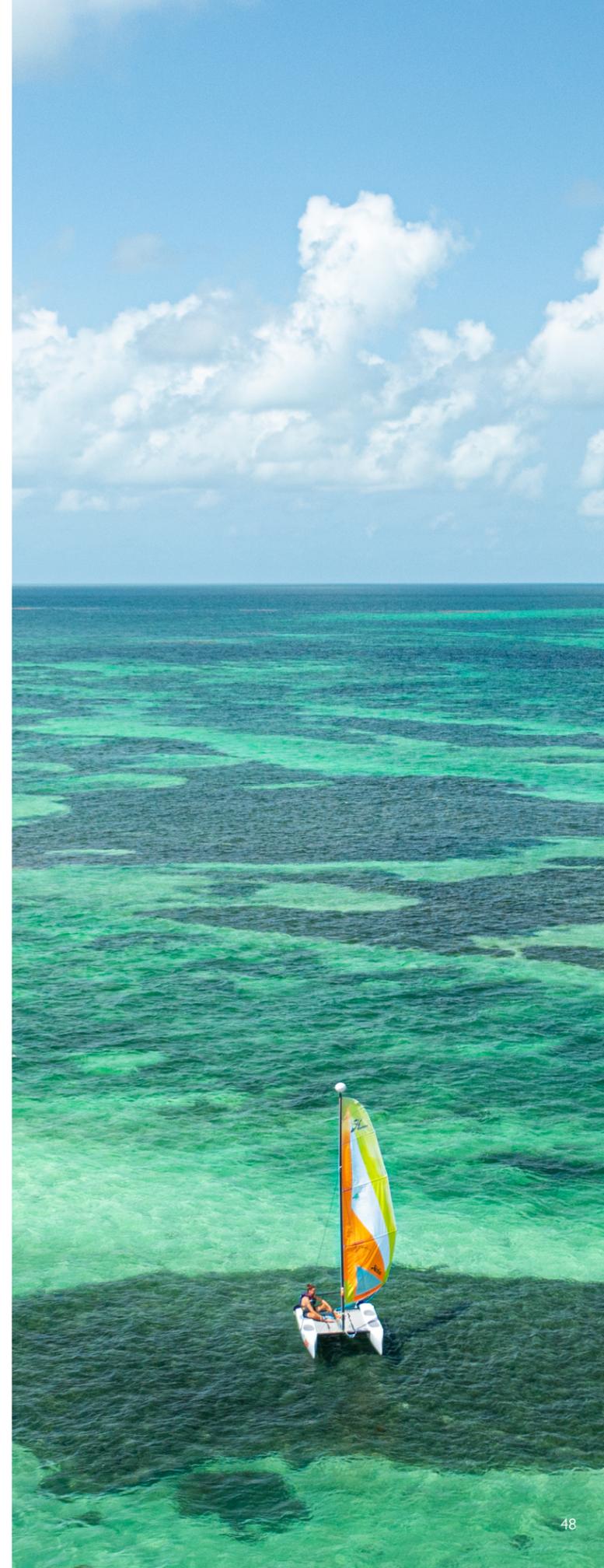
Produce Advertising that Delivers through Strategic Paid Media Campaigns

Goals

- Continue building a best-in-class, measurable and inclusive advertising program, with a focus on high ROI and continual optimization.
- Maintain a strong advertising presence in key domestic markets, with always-on tactics, supplemented by campaigns to support need periods and special initiatives.
- Establish a refreshed, unified brand for The Florida Keys that resonates with target audiences and reflects stakeholder feedback.
- Mine the destination's authentic stories to create compelling assets and to develop collateral, digital experiences and activations to differentiate The Florida Keys from competing destinations.
- Reinforce sustainability as a core value in destination management and marketing.
- Strengthen international market presence through a strategic advertising approach and partnership participation.
- Expand reach in the Groups and Meetings segment with enhanced campaigns, custom content, trade show and event participation, and partnership opportunities with industry leaders.
- Implement a comprehensive Leisure and Group co-op advertising program, providing cost-effective marketing opportunities for our partners.
- Increase awareness by leveraging significant national and international events and designations.

Tactics

- Prioritize media buys in high-performing domestic markets and expand through investment to tertiary markets.
- Invest in campaigns targeting Florida's drive markets.
- Use data to inform media placements, focusing on all points along the customer journey.
- Invest in programs that deliver unique audience, format and content creation opportunities, such as streaming radio, podcasts, paid advertorial and media partner email programs that deliver custom content and increase Visit Florida Key's contact list size and quality.
- Leverage partnerships with online travel agents (OTAs) such as Expedia, Hopper and TravelZoo to target domestic leisure travelers through co-op campaigns.
- Develop unique storytelling campaigns, focusing on the creation of video content in vertical, long and short formats. Topics include sustainability efforts, food/dining experiences, The Keys' history, watersports/boating and music.
- Increase and optimize the fishing paid media program. Create a baseline for media results to inform future media investments and programming.
- Launch an approach to promoting ecotourism in The Florida Keys, including a responsible traveler campaign and educational materials. Incorporate sustainability-focused themes and facts in content and continue to explore sustainable marketing programs for future efforts.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive new brand architecture to expand destination awareness, ensuring alignment across all marketing channels, leveraging insights from the Strategic Plan process, learnings from the Longwoods International Brand Health and Image Assessment and tests with leisure travelers.
- Execute a photo and video shoot to capture new assets needed as a result of brand research and creative testing.
- Develop creative that resonates with the new brand direction and newly developed personas along their customer journeys.
- Partner with paid media outlets with paid takeovers and in-person, out-of-market events that will deliver global earned media exposure, including ticketed events, strategic blitzing efforts and brand activations.
- Partner with travel trade organizations and tour operators in international markets during travel trade shows such as World Travel Market (London), ITB (Berlin) and inaugural ITB Americas to promote The Florida Keys.
- Develop an advertising program in top international markets, partnering with Visit Florida, Brand USA and international agency partners to amplify campaigns through their established networks and media platforms.
- Partner with CVENT to promote The Florida Keys as a premier destination for meetings, events and incentive travel to highlight venue offerings and services to group travel planners.



Continued

- Maintain strong advertising presence in Group/ Meetings media outlets and trade show media programs that can feature the unique aspects of meetings in The Florida Keys.
- Create custom content showcasing meeting venues, outdoor event spaces and team-building activities unique to The Florida Keys.
- Track performance of marketing channels through an Integrated Dashboard.
- Create and update a diverse collateral library tailored to key audiences.
- Provide cost-effective marketing opportunities for our partners through a comprehensive co-op advertising program for leisure (domestic and international), travel trade and, meetings and groups in top-tier media outlets.
- Include co-op advertising programs for specific sectors, such as DACs, diving & ecotourism, and cultural tourism.
- Align with the world-class and internationally recognized events driving regional domestic and US visitation to increase visibility of The Florida Keys, such as FIFA World Cup and America 250. Leverage partnerships such as Brand USA, US Travel Association and Destinations International to align with major campaign efforts.
- Establish an integrated marketing/communications presence at the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show (FLIBS) through sales booth activation and media partnerships.
- Leverage the presence of the 2026 IPW Conference in Fort Lauderdale for increased visibility through partnership opportunities, activations or FAMs arranged pre- or post-event for delegates to the trade show.
- Invest in world-renowned designations that elevate and celebrate The Keys' cultural and culinary offerings on the world stage, including a partnership with UNESCO to help Key West achieve designation as a UNESCO Global Creative City and a partnership with the Michelin Guide to explore the possibility of recognition for The Florida Keys' unique culinary offerings.

OUR TEAM



Sherene Irani
Sr. Director of Marketing
sherene@fla-keys.com



Ulysses Busch
Creative Director
ulysses@fla-keys.com

OUR AGENCY PARTNER - **STARMARK INTERNATIONAL**





ADDENDUM: 2025-2026 Marketing Plan - Media Plans

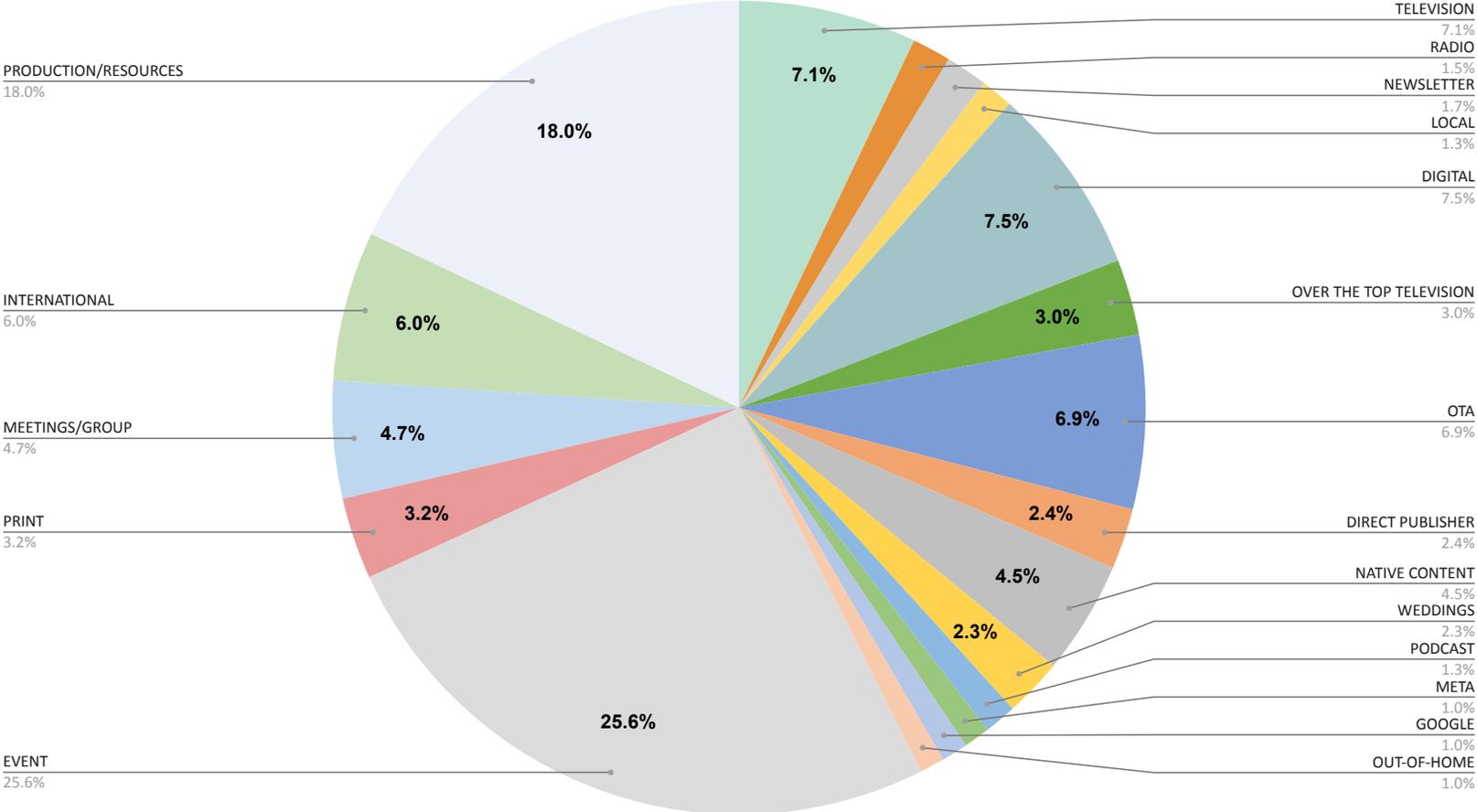


VISIT FLORIDA KEYS

BRAND AWARENESS MEDIA PLAN FY2026

MEDIA OUTLETS	IMPRESSIONS	*Lobster Mini Season (7/24-25), *Lobster Season (8/6-3												TOTAL																																						
		Oct-25			Nov-25			Dec-25			Jan 2026		Feb 2026		Mar 2026		Apr 2026		May 2026		June 2026		July 2026			Aug 2026			Sept 2026																							
		1	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15		22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7
display banners: Retargeting message	6,666,667	\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$60,000																				
ADARA																																																				
Video	6,620,690	\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$96,000																				
display banners: Retargeting message	8,571,429	\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$60,000																				
EPSILON																																																				
Video	4,800,000	\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$96,000																				
display banners: Retargeting message	6,666,667	\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$60,000																				
NEXXEN																																																				
Video/Display	4,639,923	\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$96,000																				
	3,692,308	\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000			\$5,000			\$5,000			\$60,000																				
MNI																																																				
	1,959,184	\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$96,000																				
NYTimes.com																																																				
	5,818,182	\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$8,000			\$8,000			\$8,000			\$96,000																				
DIGITAL																																\$1,122,000																				
CTV/OTT STREAMING																																																				
Discovery	2,700,000	\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000			\$108,000																				
Disney/Hulu	2,325,581	\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000			\$108,000																				
Peacock	2,571,429	\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000			\$10,000			\$10,000			\$108,000																				
Visit Florida Video Package	100,000	\$125,000																														\$125,000																				
OVER THE TOP TELEVISION																																\$449,000																				
OTA																																																				
HOPPER					\$50,000																											\$100,000																				
EXPEDIA	10,800,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000			\$270,000																				
TRIP ADVISOR	13,500,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000			\$270,000																				
Travelzoo.com	7,800,000	\$75,000			\$50,000			\$40,000			\$30,000												\$40,000			\$30,000						\$390,000																				
DIRECT PUBLISHER																																\$0																				
CNN.com																																																				
FoxWeather.com / FoxNews.com	9,667,025	\$15,000			\$15,000			\$15,000			\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000			\$15,000			\$15,000			\$180,000																				
	8,571,429	\$15,000			\$15,000			\$15,000			\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000			\$15,000			\$15,000			\$180,000																				
DIRECT PUBLISHER																																\$0																				
NATIVE CONTENT																																																				
TRAVEL AND LEISURE																																																				
Flip Card Unit					\$64,000																											\$128,000																				
Afar.com																																																				
Destination Spotlight Video	2,399,747				\$38,000																											\$76,000																				
CNTraveler.com - Conde Nast Traveler	1,905,118																															\$51,000																				
FoodandWine.com	1,200,000	\$45,000																														\$90,000																				
Atlas Obscura																																\$100,000																				
MATADOR																																\$150,000																				
Outside: The Road Less Eaten	1,622,323																															\$75,000																				
NATIVE CONTENT																																\$670,000																				
WEDDINGS																																																				
THEKNOT.COM	3,477,589	\$75,000																														\$135,000																				
BRIDES.COM	1,333,333	\$50,000																														\$100,000																				
VF Bridal Guide																																\$15,100																				
META (FB/IG)																																																				
		October			November			December			January		February		March		April		May		June		July			August			September																							

Brand Awareness Media Expenditure

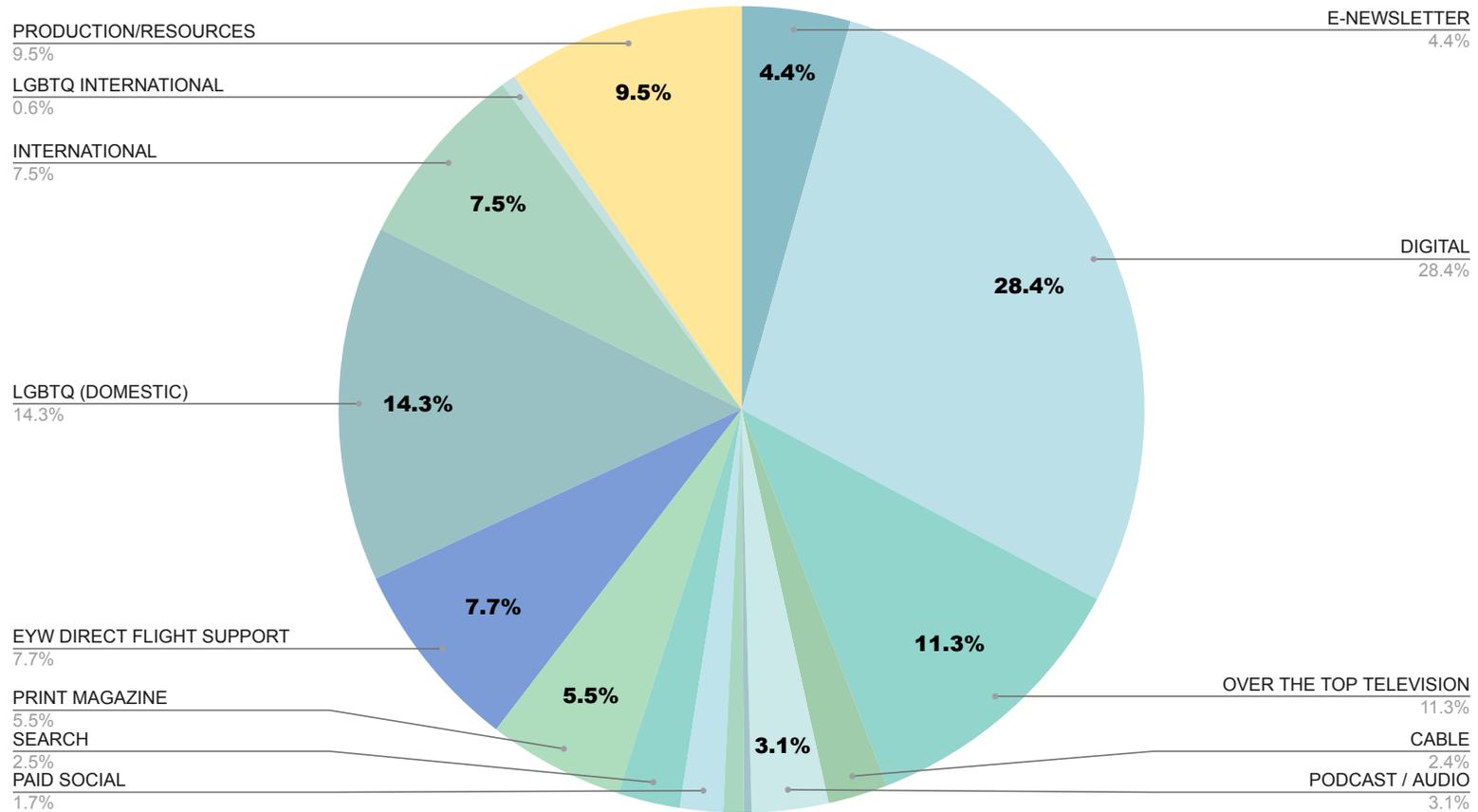


VISIT FLORIDA KEYS

KEY WEST MEDIA PLAN FY2026

MEDIA OUTLETS	Impressions / Circulation	Oct-25												Nov-25												Dec-25												Jan 2026												Feb 2026												Mar 2026												Apr 2026												May 2026												June 2026												*Lobster Mini Season (7/24-25), *Lobster Season (8/6-31)												TOTAL
		Oct-25				Nov-25				Dec-25				Jan 2026				Feb 2026				Mar 2026				Apr 2026				May 2026				June 2026				July 2026				Aug 2026				Sept 2026																																																																												
		1	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28																																																																				
DIGITAL NEWSLETTERS																																																																																																																										
Afar.com E-Newsletters	37,064					\$6,422								\$6,422								\$6,422								\$6,422								\$6,422								\$6,422								\$6,422				\$38,532																																																																
CNTraveler.com E-Newsletters	34,965	\$5,000								\$5,000												\$5,000								\$5,000								\$5,000								\$5,000				\$25,000																																																																								
LuxuryLink.com E-Newsletters	50,000					\$4,500																\$4,500								\$4,500								\$4,500								\$4,500				\$18,000																																																																								
Sherman's Travel.com	500,000	\$7,500								\$7,500				\$7,500				\$7,500				\$7,500				\$7,500				\$7,500								\$7,500								\$7,500				\$52,500																																																																								
Travel & Leisure co-branded email	200,000					\$10,000								\$10,000								\$10,000								\$10,000								\$10,000								\$10,000				\$60,000																																																																								
Food and Wine co-branded Email	100,000									\$10,000												\$10,000								\$10,000								\$10,000								\$10,000				\$50,000																																																																								
TravelSpike.com E-Newsletters	288,461	\$3,750								\$3,750								\$3,750								\$3,750								\$3,750								\$3,750				\$3,750				\$22,500																																																																								
FlamingoMag.com Dedicated E-Newsletter						\$3,000																																\$3,000								\$3,000				\$6,000																																																																								
E-NEWSLETTER																																								\$272,532																																																																																		
DIGITAL CAMPAIGN																																																																																																																										
SOJERN																																																																																																																										
Video	7,500,000	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
display banners: Retargeting message	10,000,000	\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$60,000																																																																								
DATAFY																																																																																																																										
Video	6,620,690	\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$96,000																																																																								
display banners: Retargeting message	6,666,667	\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$60,000																																																																								
ADARA																																																																																																																										
Video	8,275,862	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
display banners: Retargeting message	8,571,429	\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$60,000																																																																								
EPSILON																																																																																																																										
Video	6,000,000	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
display banners: Retargeting message	6,666,667	\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$60,000																																																																								
Padsquad																																																																																																																										
Squad Stories / Press and Hold Unit	16,363,636	\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$15,000				\$180,000																																																																								
NEXXEN																																																																																																																										
Video/Display	5,799,903	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
	3,692,308	\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$60,000																																																																								
Groundtruth																																																																																																																										
Video/Display	3,840,000	\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$96,000																																																																								
	8,608,321	\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$60,000																																																																								
Mobilefuse																																																																																																																										
Video	7,680,000	\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$96,000																																																																								
Display	10,000,000	\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$5,000				\$60,000																																																																								
NYTimes																																																																																																																										
Video/Display	5,818,182	\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$96,000																																																																								
Origin Media																																																																																																																										
	3,529,412	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
GUMGUM																																																																																																																										
	8,727,273	\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$8,000				\$96,000																																																																								
Travel and Luxury collection																																																																																																																										
	1,944,444	\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$8,500				\$98,000																																																																								
DIGITAL																																								\$1,778,000																																																																																		
CTV/OTT STREAMING																																																																																																																										
Disney/Hulu																																																																																																																										
	2,325,581	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$108,000																																																																								
Peacock																																																																																																																										
	2,857,143	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
Paramount																																																																																																																										
	4,363,636	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
Discovery / Max																																																																																																																										
	3,000,000	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
Samsung																																																																																																																										
	4,615,385	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
Roku																																																																																																																										
	5,555,556	\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$10,000				\$120,000																																																																								
OVER THE TOP TELEVISION																																								\$708,000																																																																																		
DIGITAL DEDICATED BRANDING: UNESCO																																																																																																																										
		\$150,000																																												\$150,000																																																																												
CABLE																																								\$150,000																																																																																		

KEY WEST PROPOSED SPEND: \$6,750,318

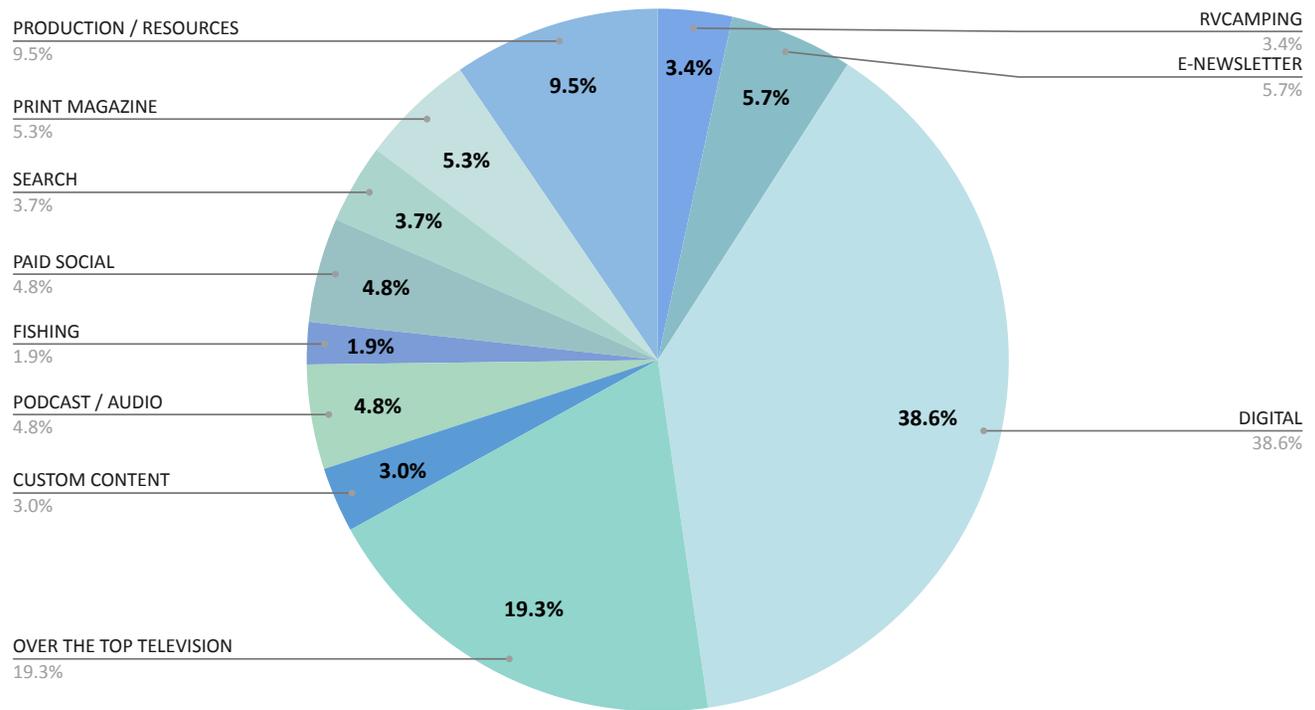


VISIT FLORIDA KEYS

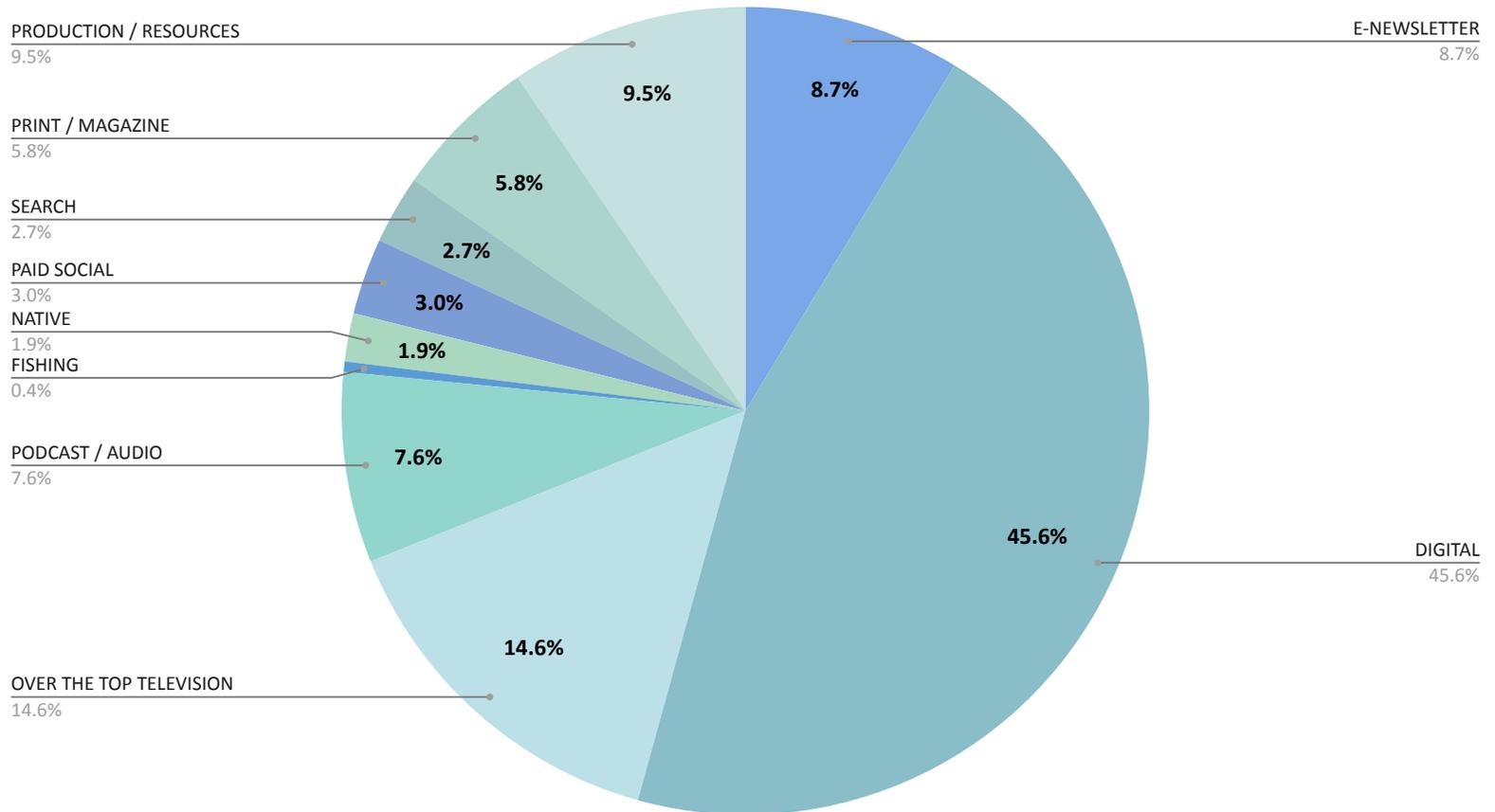
LOWER KEYS MEDIA PLAN FY2026

MEDIA OUTLETS	Impressions / Circulation	Oct-25												Nov-25												Dec-25												Jan 2026												Feb 2026												Mar 2026												Apr 2026												May 2026												June 2026												*Lobster Mini Season (7/24-25), *Lobster Season (8/6-31)												TOTAL
		Oct-25				Nov-25				Dec-25				Jan 2026				Feb 2026				Mar 2026				Apr 2026				May 2026				June 2026				July 2026				Aug 2026				Sept 2026																																																																												
		1	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28																																																																								
RV/Camping:																																																																																																																										
iheartliving.com Digital Package - Digital Print Ad/Sponsored Content/Social Boosted Post																																																																																																																										
RV.com Digital - Sponsored Content deploys in e-news																																																																																																																										
RVCAMPING																																																																																																																										
DIGITAL NEWSLETTERS																																																																																																																										
Afar.com E-Newsletters	37,064																																																																																																																									
CNTraveler.com E-Newsletters	34,965																																																																																																																									
Sherman's Travel.com	500,000																																																																																																																									
TravelSpike.com E-Newsletters	288,461																																																																																																																									
E-NEWSLETTER																																																																																																																										
DIGITAL EPSILON																																																																																																																										
Video	2,400,000																																																																																																																									
display banners: Retargeting message	4,000,000																																																																																																																									
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Video	4,363,636																																																																																																																									
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display banners: Retargeting message	2,571,429																																																																																																																									
Padsquad Squad Stories / Press and Hold Unit																																																																																																																										
3,636,364																																																																																																																										
DIGITAL																																																																																																																										
Paramount	3,490,909																																																																																																																									
Roku	4,444,444																																																																																																																									
OVER THE TOP TELEVISION																																																																																																																										
Weather Triggered:																																																																																																																										
Accuweather.com Custom Mobile Hero/App Background																																																																																																																										
Integration: 15 Pre-roll/320 x 50 Target Affluent Travelers: Trigger: Rain/Cold/Severe Weather/Snow.	1,953,125																																																																																																																									
CUSTOM CONTENT																																																																																																																										
Streaming Audio:																																																																																																																										
Katz Digital Audio: (Spotify, Pandora, iheart & streaming radio stations)	2,823,529																																																																																																																									
PODCAST / AUDIO																																																																																																																										
SportFishingMag.com/Saltwater Sportsman.com (Bonnier)																																																																																																																										
Video banner (video created by Bonnier on FISHING)																																																																																																																										
SOCIAL																																																																																																																										
META: FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM																																																																																																																										
EVENT SUPPORT																																																																																																																										
PAID SOCIAL																																																																																																																										
SEARCH																																																																																																																										
GOOGLE (INCLUDING PMAX)																																																																																																																										
SEARCH																																																																																																																										
P.R.I.N.T																																																																																																																										
Good Sam Camp Ground Annual Guide 2026	100,000																																																																																																																									
VF: Local Palette	100,000																																																																																																																									
Rova Magazine Includes 1 month leaderboard on rovamag.com (March)	100,000																																																																																																																									

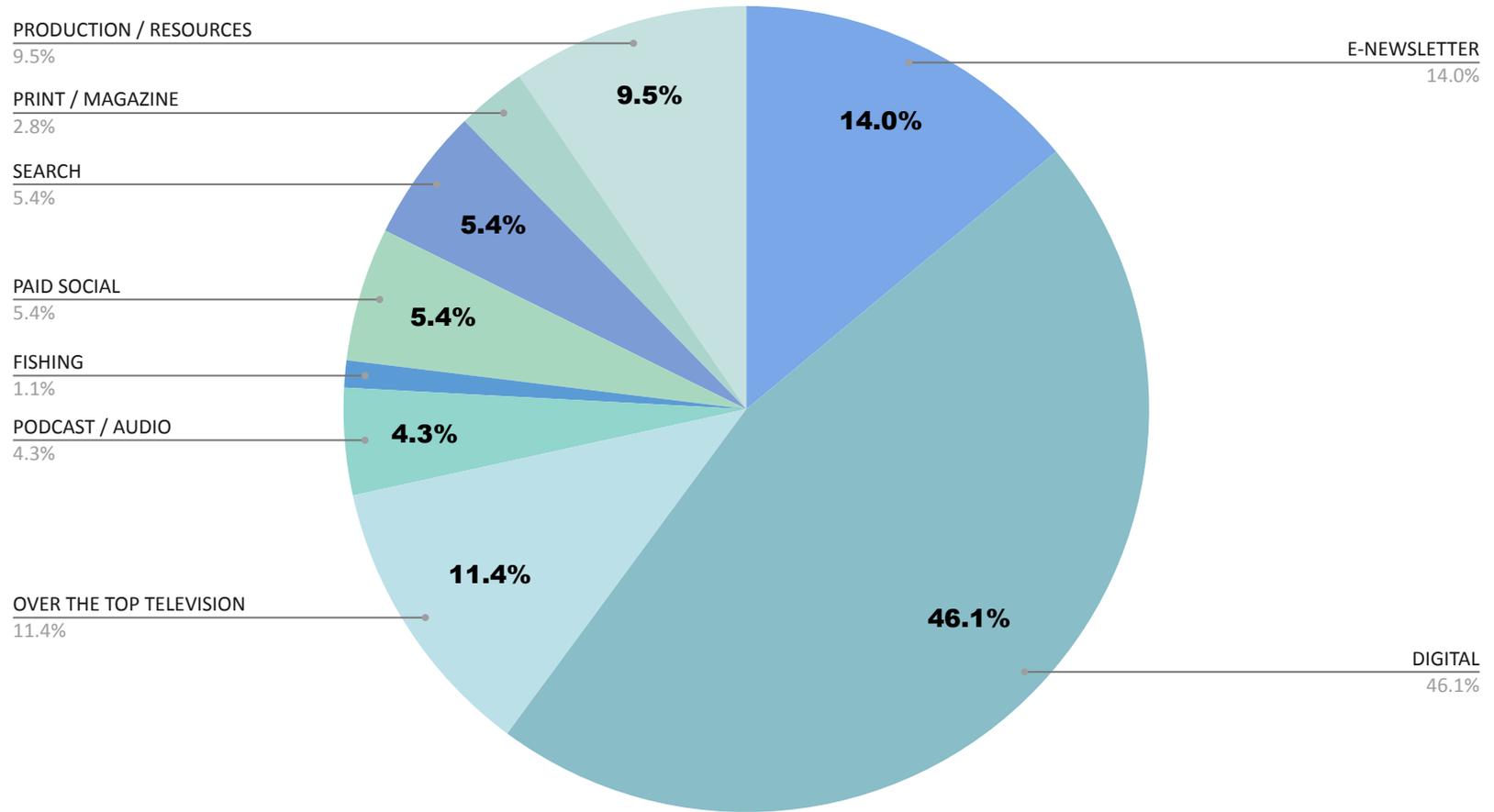
LOWER KEYS TOTAL PROPOSED SPEND: \$995,106



MARATHON TOTAL PROPOSED SPEND: \$1,966,955



ISLAMORADA PROPOSED SPEND: \$1,116,344

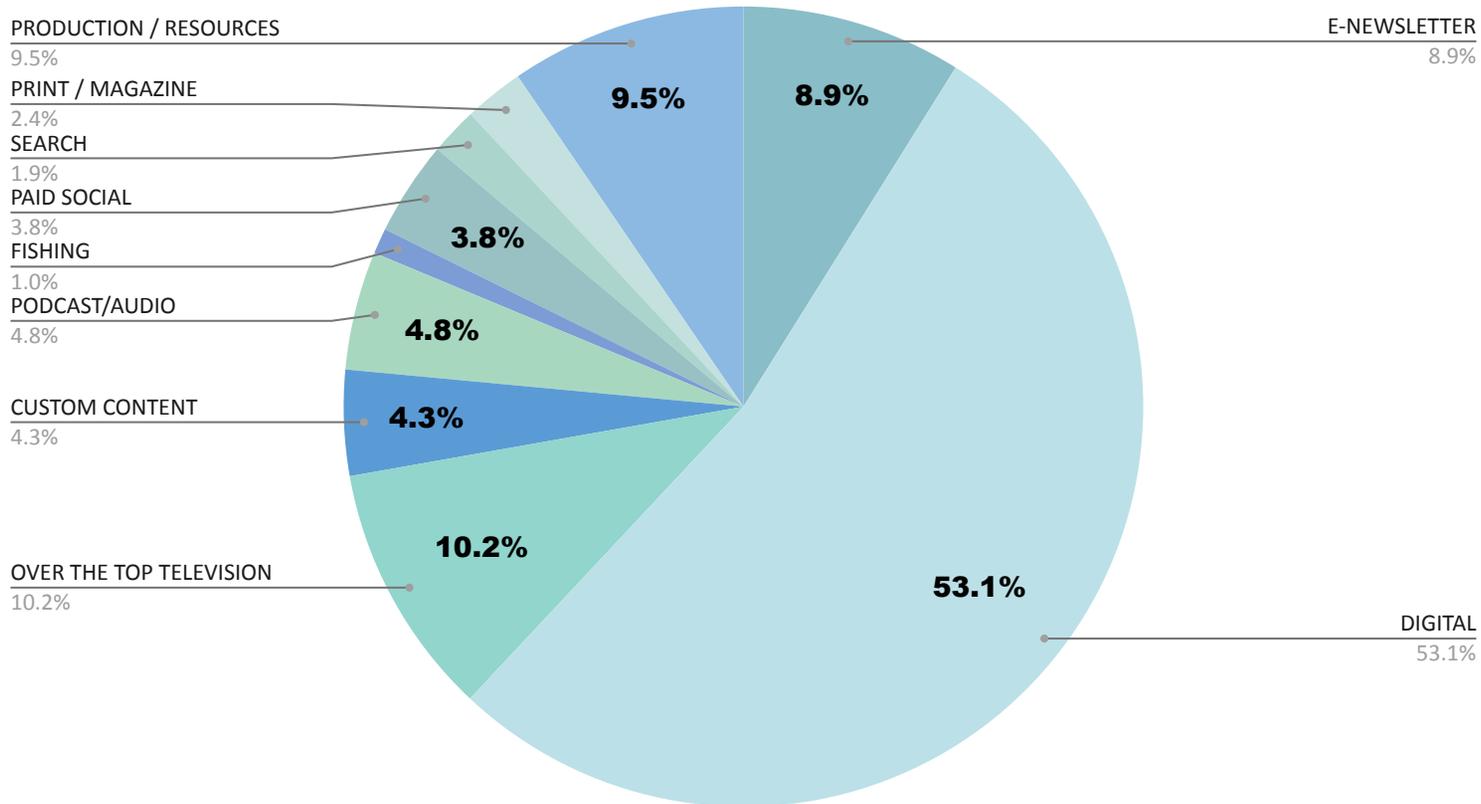


VISIT FLORIDA KEYS

KEY LARGO MEDIA PLAN FY2026

MEDIA OUTLETS	Impressions / Circulation	Oct-25			Nov-25			Dec-25			Jan 2026			Feb 2026			Mar 2026			Apr 2026			May 2026			June 2026			*Lobster Mini Season (7/24-25), *Lobster Season (8/6-31)			TOTAL																							
		1	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20		27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28
NetJet Magazine National Circulation	25,125									\$5,100												\$5,100								\$5,100								\$15,300																	
										November / December																												\$15,000																	
National Parks National Circulation	320,000																																					\$6,900																	
										October																												\$6,900																	
Saltwater Sportsman Magazine National Circulation	100,000																																					\$8,060																	
																						May																\$8,060.00																	
PRINT / MAGAZINE																																						\$45,260																	
CO-OP opportunities will be available in e-newsletter, digital and print channels																																																							
		KEY LARGO FY 2026 BUDGET SUMMARY																																																					
TOTAL	95,409,230																																					TOTAL BUDGET: \$1,876,285																	
																																						PROPOSED MEDIA SPEND: \$1,697,296																	
																																						PRODUCTION/RESOURCES: \$179,136																	
																																						TOTAL SPEND \$1,876,432																	

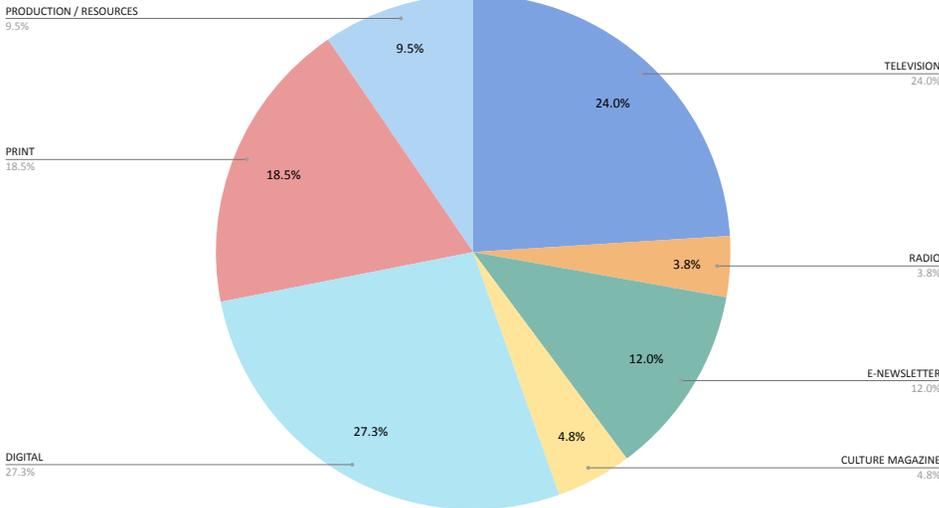
KEY LARGO PROPOSED SPEND: \$1,876,285



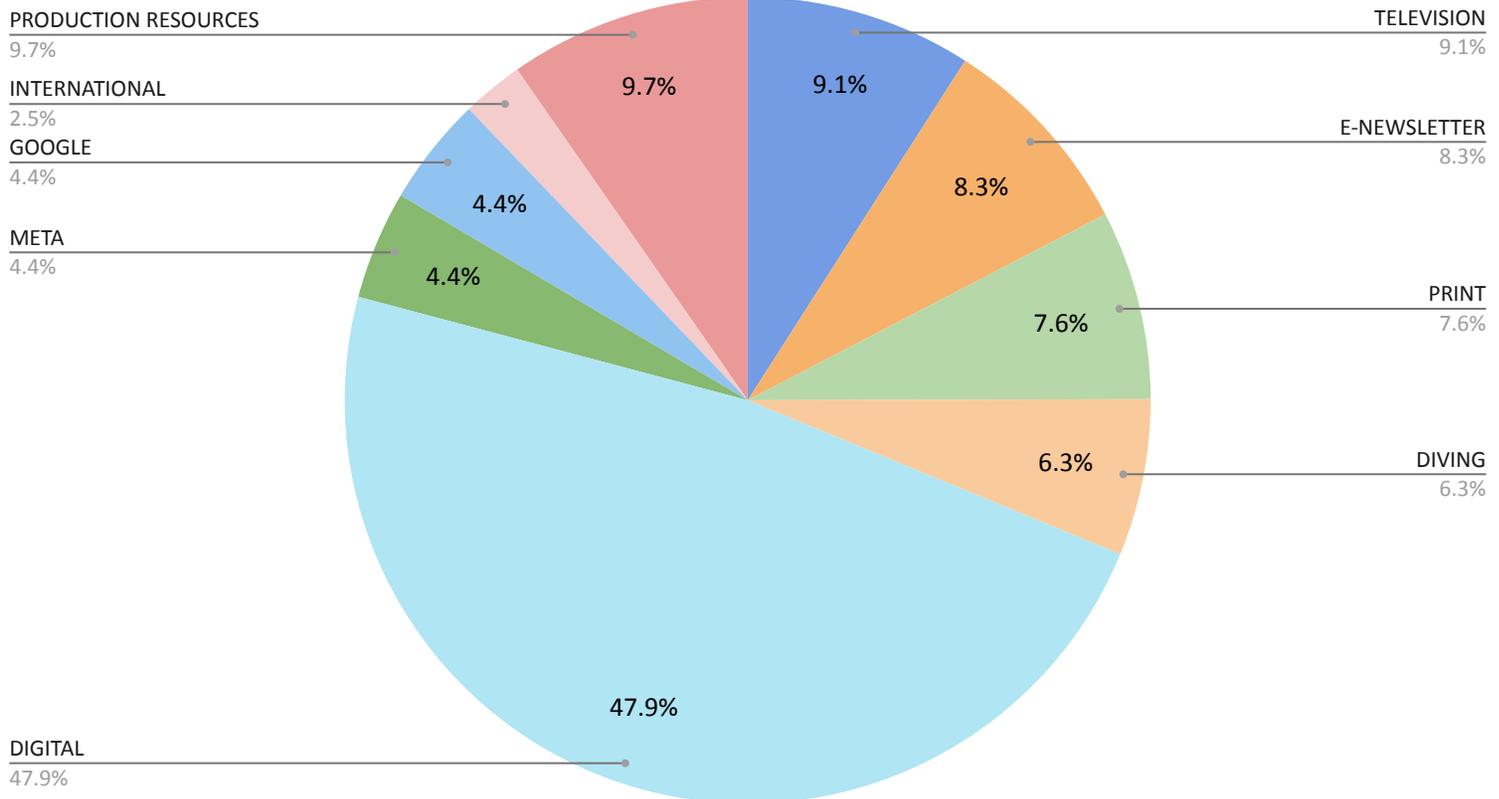
CULTURAL

TELEVISION	\$125,996
RADIO	\$20,000
E-NEWSLETTER	\$63,000
CULTURE MAGAZINE	\$25,000
DIGITAL	\$143,500
PRINT	\$97,380
PRODUCTION / RESOURCES	\$50,124
TOTAL SPEND	\$525,000

CULTURAL UMBRELLA PROPOSED SPEND: \$525,155



DIVE AND ECO-TOURISM PROPOSED SPEND: \$1,400,000





ADDENDUM: 2025-2026 Marketing Plan - Department Budgets



Public Relations Budget for 2025-2026

Media and Content Creator Visits

U.S. Press Travel Expenses
\$50,000

U.S. Press Group FAM Travel Expenses
\$25,000

Content Creator Campaign Fees
\$30,000

Content Creator Travel Expenses
\$20,000

Conferences and Events

IPW June 2026 - Ft. Lauderdale
\$4,000

IMM NYC 2026 + New York Travel
& Adventure Show
\$8,000

Florida Encounter & Huddle
Feb. 2 - 4, 2025 Orlando
\$2,000

Florida Keys Day
March 2026 - Tallahassee
\$2,150

Florida Tourism Day
March 2026 - Tallahassee
\$2,150

Florida Governor's Conference Aug. 2026
\$3,000

Destinations Florida Marketing Summit
May 13 - 15, 2026 Bradenton, FL
\$2,700

Destinations International Marcomm Summit
Feb. 23 26 - Cleveland, Ohio
\$4,000

Destinations International Annual Convention
July 2026
\$3,900

eTourism Summit April 2026
\$4,600

PRSA Travel & Tourism Conference June 2026
\$4,700

Destinations Florida Marketing Summit
May 13 - 15, 2026
Bradenton, FL
\$2,700

Destination Capitol Hill
April 14 - 15, 2026 Washington DC
\$2,400

ESTO August 20 - 23 TBD
\$4,500

US PR Initiatives

Memberships (PRSA, TMAC, SATW, SE Tourism
Society, Outdoor Writers Assoc., Discover
America)
\$2,500

Media Missions (Atlanta, Charlotte,
Chicago, New York, Tampa, Orlando)
\$18,000

Brand Partnerships and Activations
\$50,000

Florida Keys News Bureau Support
\$50,000

Special Events Support
\$70,000

LGBTQ+ Sponsorship of South Beach
Wine & Food Festival's Drag Brunch
\$15,000

Domestic Distribution
(online press room, newswires, etc.)
\$16,000

Video/Still Photo Acquisition
\$5,000

LGBTQ+ Market PR Consultant
\$10,000

Content Creation:
Keys Blog/Stewards of the Keys/Fishing Releases
\$11,050

Canadian PR Initiatives

Canada Agency Fee (contract)
\$60,000

Canadian Newswire
\$4,000

Canada Individual Press Trip Support
\$18,000

Radio On Location Remotes Campaign
\$28,750

Sponsored media partnerships
\$5,000

Toronto and Montreal Media Missions
\$20,000

Influencer-Generated Keys Social Sharing Visits
(Canada)
\$7,500

Travel Media Association of Canada Conference
June 2026 TBD
\$4,600

Discover America Day Canada
Oct. 28, 2025 - Toronto
\$4,000



European PR Initiatives

UK/European Agency (contract)
\$225,000

UK: Media Partnership
\$12,000

UK: Media Mission
\$11,000

UK: World Travel Market
\$500

Germany: Social Media Boosting
\$2,000

Germany: TravMedia's IMM Berlin
\$8,000

Germany: ITB Berlin
\$500

Germany: Prestige Magazine Partnership
\$10,000

UK/Europe: Press Visit Expenses
\$20,000

UK/Europe: Resources
\$16,500

UK/Europe: Resources
\$16,500

Additional PR Budget

Additional Resources for the
Overall PR Program
\$750,000

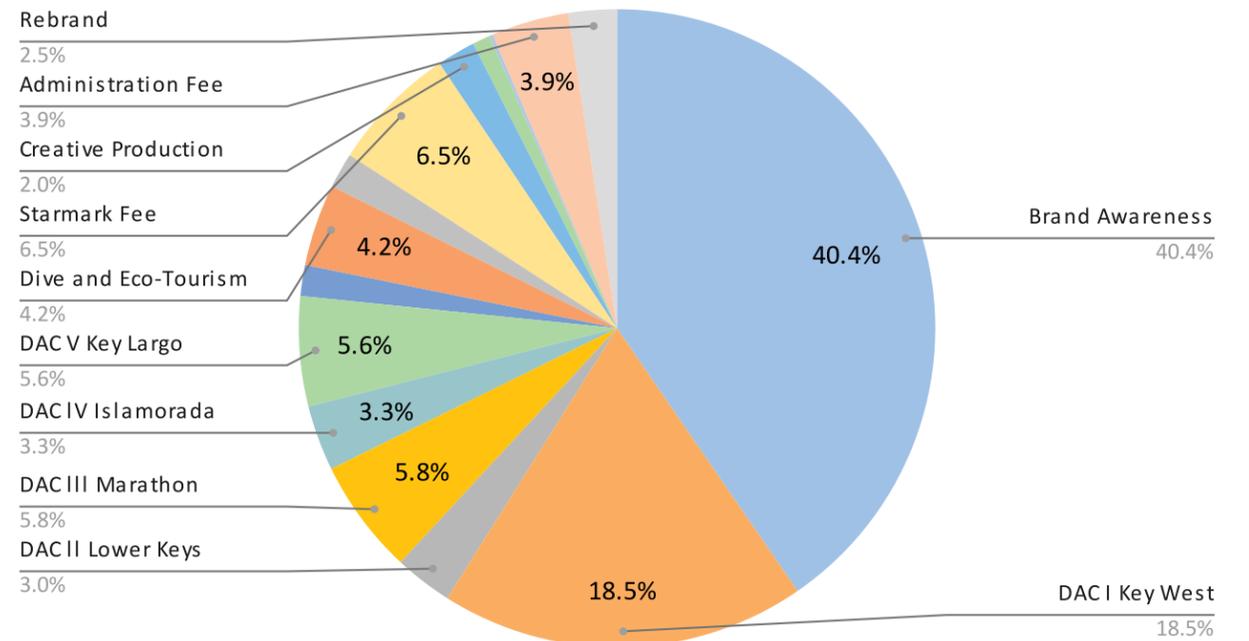
Turner PR Agency Fee
\$372,000

PR Budget Total: \$2,000,000

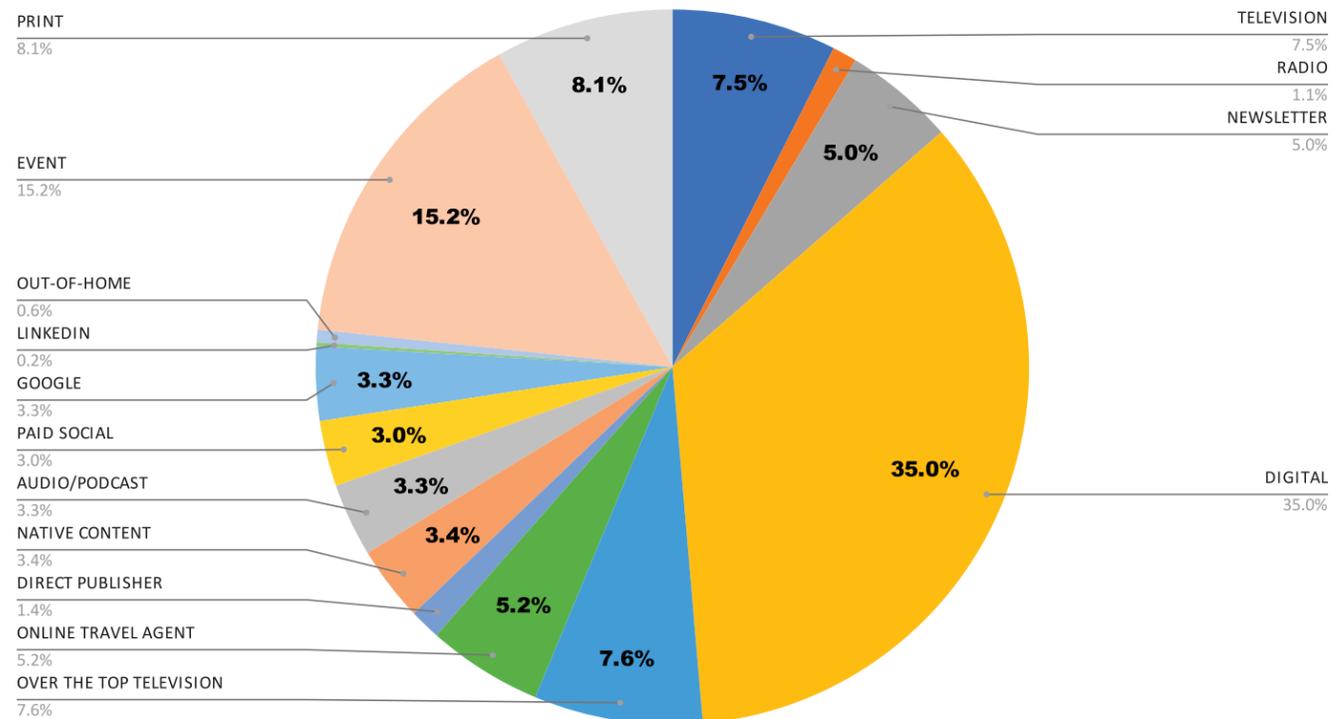
Advertising Budget for 2025-2026

Brand Awareness	\$12,313,211.94	40.40%
DAC I Key West	\$5,653,577.09	18.55%
DAC II Lower Keys	\$900,099.56	2.95%
DAC III Marathon	\$1,779,162.55	5.84%
DAC IV Islamorada	\$1,009,762.52	3.31%
DAC V Key Largo	\$1,697,149.15	5.57%
Cultural Umbrella	\$474,876.31	1.56%
Dive and Eco-Tourism	\$1,266,336.84	4.15%
Fishing Advisory	\$547,238.42	1.80%
Starmark Fee	\$1,968,120.00	6.46%
Creative Production	\$594,596.62	1.95%
Overseas Media Group Fee	\$275,700.00	0.90%
Media Support	\$50,000.00	0.16%
Administration	\$1,200,000.00	3.94%
Rebrand	\$750,000	2.46%
Total	\$30,479,831	100.00%

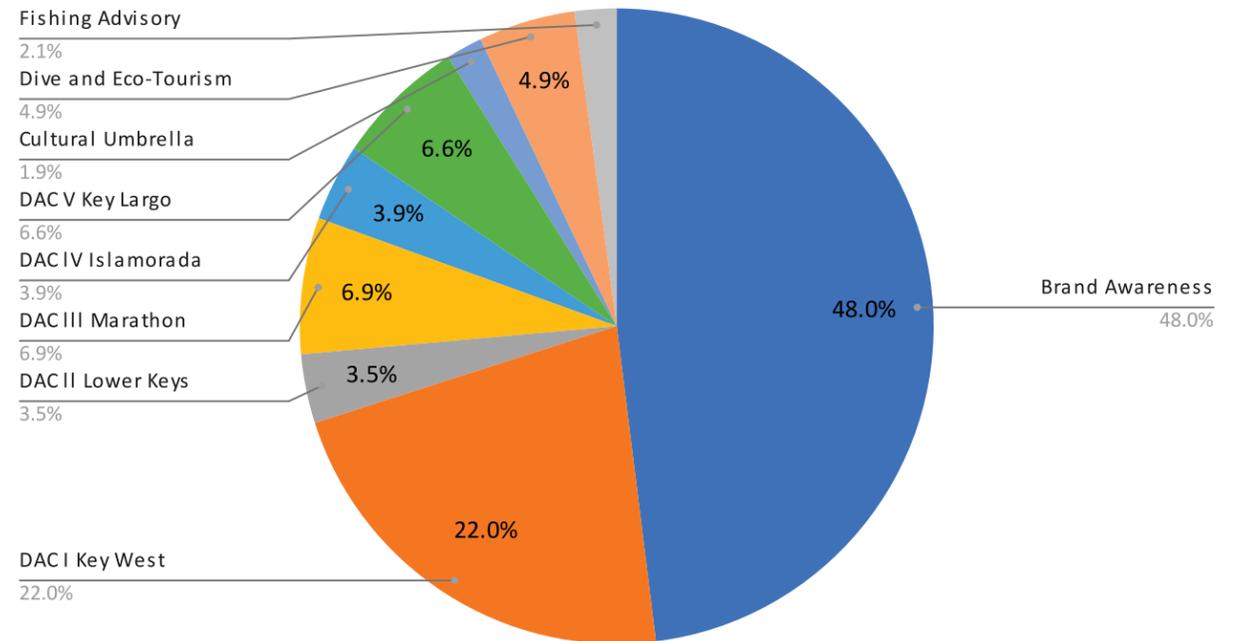
MARKETING BUDGET ALLOCATION



SPEND BY MEDIUM



MEDIA EXPENDITURE BY LINE OF BUSINESS



Advertising Budget Total: \$30,479,831

Website & Digital Technology Budget for 2025-2026

New Website Build and Enhancements

Optimization of the new VisitFloridaKeys.com website featuring an advanced content management system (CMS) for seamless updates, web hosting and accessibility, business listings for tourism partners, a comprehensive event calendar, customer data platform (CDP) for personalization, interactive elements, and translation for international visitors, all integrated to optimize engagement with visitors.
Estimated Cost: \$401,640

User-Generated Content Collection & Integration

Integration of a platform to secure & manage rights for visitor-sourced photos & videos, enriching the credibility & engagement of the destination's marketing efforts.
Estimated Cost: \$25,000

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Centralized database of contacts and organizations enabling personalized communication with travelers, travel trade, business partners and local stakeholders.
Estimated Cost: \$100,000

Online Booking/Reservation System

Enhancing visibility and functionality of the booking engine integrated with VisitFloridaKeys.com, with affiliate booking opportunities and redesigned experience to boost user trust and conversions.
Estimated Cost: \$40,000

Email Marketing Platform & Services

Best-in-class email communications including audience targeting, personalization, optimization to engage travelers, business partners & travel professionals.
Estimated Cost: \$126,360

Artificial Intelligence

AI solutions for website/social media visitor engagement & personalization, content creation, interactive digital advertising and compliance support.
Estimated Cost: \$45,000

Domain Name Renewal

Management and renewal of 80+ domain names associated with The Florida Keys & Key West for continued online presence and accessibility.
Estimated Cost: \$10,000

Partner Microsite & Portal

Website for local stakeholders and tourism partners to submit events, manage website listings, explore advertising options, and stay current on TDC research and initiatives.
Estimated Cost: \$10,000

Travel Professional & Tourism Ambassador Enablement

Interactive training and enablement platform to educate & activate travel professionals, meeting planners, and local tourism employees about The Keys.
Estimated Cost: \$96,000

Streaming Webcams

Maintaining and expanding a network of live webcams across The Keys to provide authentic, real-time views of the destination.
Estimated Cost: \$53,400

Geofencing for Event Attendance

Solution to measure and capture data about event attendance throughout The Keys
Estimated Cost: \$10,000

Visitor Information System (VIS)

Software for managing visitor data, fulfilling collateral requests, and analyzing visitor inquiries to align with marketing campaigns.
Estimated Cost: \$1,000

Tourism/Technology Conferences

Attendance at industry events to advance team knowledge: Destinations Int'l Annual Convention, eTourism Summit, U.S. Travel's ESTO, Travel & Tourism Research Assn
Estimated Cost: \$10,000

Website and Digital Technology Budget Total: \$928,400

(\$875,000 website, \$53,400 webcams)



Partnerships & Community Engagement Budget for 2025-2026

October 2025

27-30 Florida Keys Marine Science Conference & Workshop Coral Springs, FL
\$10,000

November 2025

6-9 Palm Springs Pride Palm Springs, CA
\$15,000

January 2026

TBA Florida Tourism Days Tallahassee, FL
\$10,000

February 2026

TBA Tourism Advocacy Workshop Florida Keys
\$30,000

March 2026

TBA Florida Keys Days Tallahassee, FL
\$10,000

April 2026

1-6 Phoenix Pride Phoenix, AZ
\$15,000

May 2026 4-10 National Travel & Tourism Week Nationwide
\$10,000

17-21 IPW 2026 Fort Lauderdale, FL
\$175,000

Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association Sponsorship
\$7,500

Responsible Visitor Education Activations at Local Events
Activate targeted presence at select TDC-funded events across the Florida Keys to promote responsible tourism in an engaging and visible manner.
\$25,000

Responsible Visitor Sponsorships with Community Partners
\$35,000

Community Education Sponsorships
Chamber events, sponsorships, networking events, educational programs
\$27,500

Resources, Shipping, Collateral, Travel Expenses, Memberships
\$30,000

Partnership & Community Engagement Budget Total: \$400,000



Sales & Promotions Budget for 2025-2026

SALES DEPARTMENT - CC 76066

Mail, Fulfillment Trade Fedex,

Postage and Freight

(Sales Category: SC 00040)

\$76,000

Resources (Contingency)

(Sales Category: SC 00039)

\$50,000

Travel (Expenses)

(Sales Category: SC 00400)

\$50,000

Entertainment/Promotional Activities

(trade show reg, activations, missions,

FAM/Group Incentive offers, booth stand

build and Resolution for FY 2027)

(Sales Category: SC 00400)

\$973,770

Memberships/Subscriptions

(Sales Category: SC 00085)

\$25,000

TOTAL

\$1,423,270

EUROPEAN AGENCIES

(Axis, GIA) - CC 76079

Trade Show/Missions/Activations

(Sales Category: SC 00066)

\$480,000

Memberships/Subscriptions/Agency Fees

(Sales Category: SC 00085)

\$120,000

TOTAL

\$600,000

DIVE UMBRELLA - CC 75033

Postage/Freight/Fulfillment/Warehouses

(Sales Category: SC 00040/00043)

\$10,000

Travel Expenses

(Sales Category: SC 00400)

\$17,000

Trade Show/Missions/Activations

(Sales Category: SC 00066)

\$64,760

Memberships/Subscriptions/Agency Fees

(Sales Category: SC 00085)

\$500

Contingency

(Sales Category: SC 00039)

\$7,740

TOTAL

\$100,000

Budget Details (All Sums Previously Accounted For)

ASTA Membership Annual membership

\$3,500

CCRA Annual Membership

\$3,000

IGLTA

Annual Membership is already included in the \$10K

reg fee for IGLTA Global Conference in Oct 2025

(typically \$3500 annually)

\$0

USA Pride

Annual Membership (a joint membership with InterPride is

included with the USAP membership)

\$1,000

TOTAL

\$7,500

Group/MICE

Lamont Co

RFP sales tool

\$5,500

SITE- Florida Caribbean Chapter

Membership

\$490

MPI

\$2,500

FSAE

\$2,500

TOTAL

\$10,900

Warehouses

PrintFarm (USA)

Storage warehouse Annual fee (does not include

shipping as shipping is charged directly to TDC

FedEx account)

\$24,096

BH&P (UK)

Estimated storage warehouse services and

shipping costs (annually)

\$20,000

Infox

Estimated storage warehouse services and

shipping costs (annually)

\$20,000

TOTAL

\$64,096

Agency of Record - Sales/Trade Only

France: RFP Needed ASAP

\$100,000

Canada: RFP Needed ASAP

\$100,000

TOTAL

\$200,000

AXIS

Agency Fees

\$60,000

Axis Sales and Marketing Co-op TBD by Axis,

UK, Ireland, Scandinavia, Italy

\$250,000

TOTAL

\$310,000

Get it Across

Agency Fees

\$60,000

GIA Marketing Co-op TBD by GIA, Germany,

Benelux, Austria, Switzerland

\$230,000

TOTAL

\$290,000

Registration Fee Total

\$654,530

Total Estimated Travel Expenses

\$315,500

Total Estimated Booth Build Expenses

\$315,500

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

IYFY Additional Sales Activities/Reserved Funds

\$50,000

FAM Expenses/Group Incentive Offers

\$50,000

Resolution

\$180,000

TOTAL

\$280,000

**Sales Activity Plan Budget Total:
\$2,123,270**

Research Budget for 2025-2026

Software Subscriptions (00084)

Occupancy and ADR reports STR
\$45,000

Travel Click Demand 360 reports
\$25,000

Tourism Economics
\$65,000

Key Data
\$30,000

DK Shifflet
\$24,000



Studies

Visitor Profile Study
\$130,000

Study Film
\$121,000

Memberships

Destinations International membership
\$30,000

Project Resources

Purchase of secondary research
\$25,000

Research Continuing Education
Category: sc_00066
\$10,000

Books, Publications, Subscriptions, Education
Category: education 00085
\$10,000

Other Project Resources and Salary
Category: contractual services 00036
\$170,000

Postage/Freight
Category: sc_00040
\$3,500

Phone
Category: sc_00040
\$3,500

Operating Supplies
Category: sc_00040
\$3,000

Conference/Seminar Attendance
Category: travel 000400
\$25,000

Research Budget Total: \$720,000

Film Commission Budget for 2025-2026

Film Incentive Program

Pilot Program
\$200,000

Film Industry Trade Shows and Events
Registration and Show/Event Expenses
\$55,300

Travel Expenses
Air Fare, Lodging, Meals, In-county mileage
\$62,700

Dues and Fees
Association of Film Commissioners International, Film
Florida, Women in Film
\$20,000

Website/Social Media
FilmFloridaKeys.com redesign, Reel-Scout database,
Maintenance and support
\$20,000

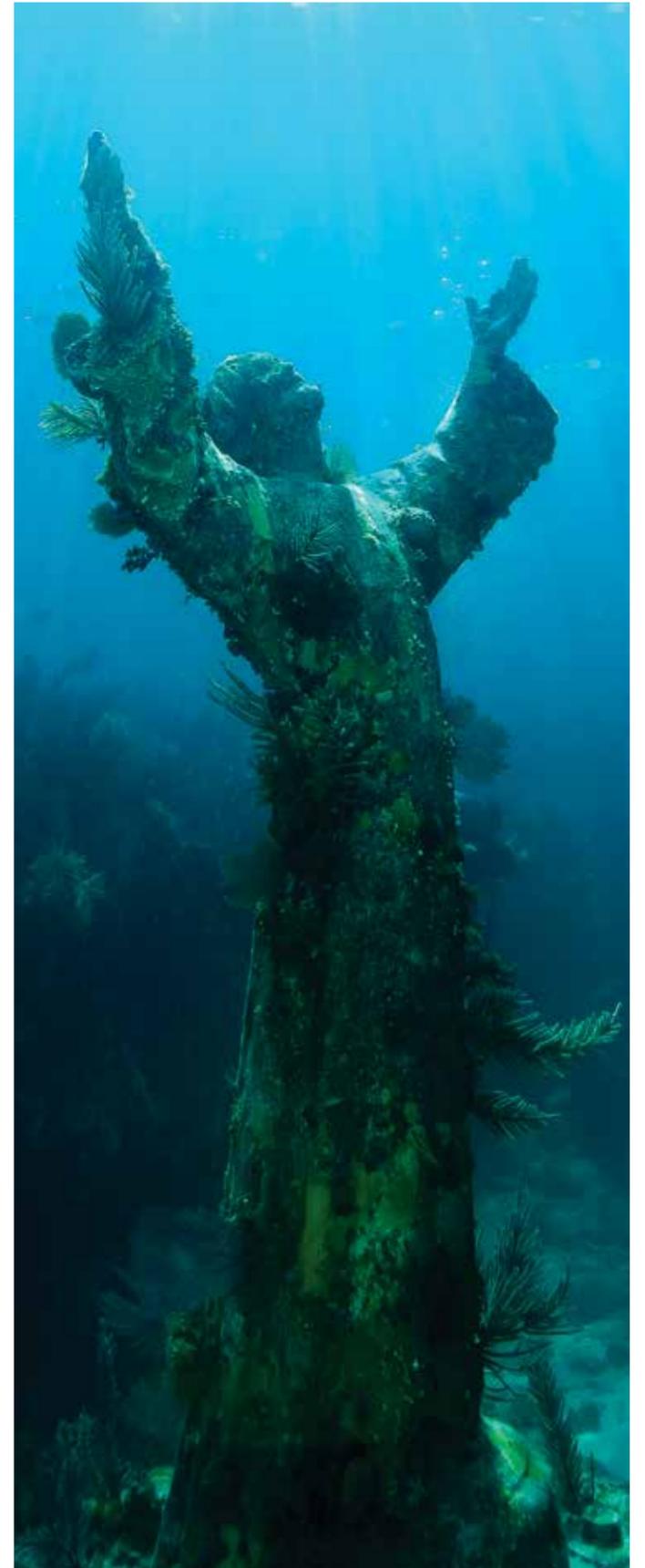
Communications
Postage, office phone, shipping
\$9,000

E & P for Production Personal
Crew Hospitality
\$3,000

Location Content
Photographer, Videographer, Location Site Surveys
\$35,000

Promotions
Targeted campaigns, industry outreach, and
promotional giveaways.
\$50,000

**Film Commission Budget Total:
\$455,000**





ADDENDUM 2025-2026 Documentation Checklist for Compliance



Documentation Checklist for Compliance

Pursuant to the Scope of Services agreement between Monroe County and Visit Florida Keys, Inc. (VFK), the following documentation shall be maintained, submitted, and made available for audit purposes upon request. The execution of this checklist is managed by the Visit Florida Keys president & CEO.

Administrative & Governance Documentation

Top Compliance Requirement	Team Member
Annual TDC Audit Report	Maxine Pacini / Comptroller
Expenditure Reports (quarterly)	Maxine Pacini / Comptroller
Letter of Determination confirming IRS 501 (c)(3) status	Maxine Pacini / Comptroller
Current general liability and required insurance certificates	Maxine Pacini / Comptroller
Annual corporate filings (e.g., Florida Division of Corporations, IRS Form 990)	
Records retention plan and sample records in compliance with GS1-SL schedule	Jeanne Quinn / Ammie Machan
Documentation of Sunshine Law, public records, and ethics training for staff and TDC members	Jeanne Quinn / Ammie Machan
Meeting agendas, minutes and public notices for: TDC Board meetings, DAC meetings, Umbrella committee meetings	Jeanne Quinn / Ammie Machan
DAC member vacancy notices, nomination forms, and appointment documentation	Jeanne Quinn / Ammie Machan

Marketing, Planning & Assets

Top Compliance Requirement	Team Member
Approved annual marketing plan	Heidi Barfels / Sherene Irani
Request for Proposals, contracts and amendments with all Agencies of Record (AORs)	Jeanne Quinn / Ammie Machan
Documentation showing retention of all TDC/County-funded assets, including domain names, digital libraries, advertising and promotional assets and research/data dashboards	Jeanne Quinn / Christina Day

Strategic Planning & Certification

Top Compliance Requirement	Team Member
Strategic Plan (every 3–5 years)	Ed Simon / Kaire Linpere
DMAP Certification documents and compliance (once attained, or document progress)	Ed Simon / Kaire Linpere
Crisis & Emergency Plan	Heidi Barfels / Jeanne Quinn

Performance & Research Reporting

Top Compliance Requirement	Team Member
Approved annual budget submitted to Monroe County	Maxine Pacini / Comptroller
Documentation of all TDT-funded grant agreements	Maxine Pacini / Comptroller
Monthly Four Penny (TDT) reports	Maxine Pacini / Comptroller
Hotel performance metrics (ADR, Occupancy, RevPAR)	Heidi Barfels / Kelli Fountain
Short-term rental performance reports	Heidi Barfels / Kelli Fountain
Traveler sentiment and visitor perception studies	Heidi Barfels / Kelli Fountain
Economic impact and visitor spending studies	Heidi Barfels / Kelli Fountain
Board reports on KPIs and ROI, including advertising performance, website performance and engagement, public relations outcomes, sales and international trade efforts and social media metrics	Ed Simon / Jeanne Quinn / Ammie Machan



The
Florida Keys
& Key West
... come as you are[®]

ADDENDUM: CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

June 2025



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INTRODUCTION: WHY HAVE A PLAN?

WHY HAVE A CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN?

Tourism is the economic lifeblood of the Florida Keys—fueling our economy, supporting jobs, and shaping our vibrant island communities. To ensure long-term stability, the **Monroe County Tourist Development Council (TDC)** is committed to strengthening and safeguarding the tourism sector, especially in the face of natural disasters and other unforeseen events.

Experience has shown that without effective preparation, response, and recovery strategies, crises can severely disrupt local businesses and communities. A coordinated communications effort is essential to rebuilding traveler confidence, restoring economic activity, and accelerating recovery.

With a significant number of TDC stakeholders across the Florida Keys & Key West—and the growing frequency of natural disasters—the region’s tourism industry remains highly vulnerable. Proactive planning is critical to ensure we can respond swiftly and appropriately when a crisis occurs.

Monroe County Emergency Management (MCEM) and its **Public Information Office (PIO)** takes the lead in communicating with affected residents and visitors during a crisis. The TDC provides vital support, sharing accurate and timely messaging with tourism-related stakeholders, including lodging partners, attractions, restaurants, other visitor-facing businesses, as well as with tourism-focused media. The TDC also plays an important role in post-crisis recovery by helping to reestablish the destination’s tourism brand and inviting visitors back responsibly.

This TDC Crisis Communications Plan provides a framework for managing internal, stakeholder and public-facing messaging during sensitive situations. It is not a safety or emergency operations manual, but rather a strategic communications resource for:

- Understanding objectives and preparedness priorities;
- Distinguishing between issues, emergencies and crises with varying alert levels;
- Defining the communications chain of command with emergency response teams and TDC roles;
- Determining if, when, and how to communicate with key audiences;
- Reviewing sample scenarios for a natural disaster, an infrastructure failure and an environmental threat;
- Ensuring swift and accurate messaging across all teams, channels, and platforms;
- Activating recovery phase action plans across marketing platforms.

By following this guide, the TDC and its partners can ensure clear, timely communication that protects the Florida Keys’ tourism economy and supports long-term community resilience.

INTRODUCTION: OBJECTIVES & PREPAREDNESS

KEY OBJECTIVES WHEN MANAGING A CRISIS

- Protect life, the environment, property and reputation;
- Ensure accurate, timely, and consistent communication to all TDC audiences;
- Support MCEM with supplemental messaging for tourism stakeholders and visitors;
- Coordinate with tourism stakeholders to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the crisis;
- Minimize misinformation;
- Support recovery, preserve long-term tourism economic stability and visitor confidence.

ENSURING CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PREPAREDNESS

The TDC is committed to crisis communications preparedness:

- Crisis communications protocol review and training annually (and integrate communications protocols into onboarding for key staff)
- Update the TDC's crisis communications plan biannually
- Execute a Hurricane Preparedness Workshop for TDC stakeholders annually (in May)
- Meet with the Emergency Management PIO team regularly to align
- Best practice of meeting/tour the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) annually
- Attend the county PIO Symposium annually
- Continue encouraging stakeholders to sign up for Tourism Advisory alerts [here](#)
- TDC Spokesperson media training, including mock interviews and Q&A
- Update all necessary phone and email lists, and distribute lists to key parties
- Encourage tourism stakeholders and the community overall to sign up for county alerts via Alert!Monroe and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office mobile app
- Consider adding a generator/back-up battery to two TDC offices to support power during a storm
- Explore switching to a satellite-based internet service provider in two TDC offices to increase the likelihood of reliable internet during/after storms so TDC can communicate with stakeholders
- Consider adding NOAA Radio to ensure TDC receives rapid storm shifts in real time (encourage stakeholders to do the same)
- Post-crisis debriefs to document learnings and update actions as needed

SCENARIO PLANNING: DEFINING A CRISIS

DETERMINING LEVELS OF RESPONSE: ISSUE, EMERGENCY OR CRISIS

To guide the effective allocation of resources and communication efforts, it is essential to distinguish between an issue, an emergency, and a crisis. Understanding the nature and scale of each allows for appropriate response strategies. There are different Alert Levels per issue, emergency and crisis, as outlined on the next slide.

Category	Definition	Examples/Triggers/Indicators	Response Approach	Escalation Potential
Issue	A disagreement, concern, or emerging topic with potential to affect reputation, perception, stakeholder or visitor confidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public concern over proposed policy changes or political views impacting tourism - Dissatisfaction that may affect public perception or stakeholder trust - Rumors or misinformation spreading on social media 	Monitor, manage proactively, communicate carefully	May escalate if ignored or poorly handled. Issues can be active (currently in the public or organizational spotlight) or dormant (lingering concerns that may resurface)
Emergency	A sudden, time-sensitive incident requiring immediate operational response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Major accidents - Severe weather, fires - Utility failure - Localized public safety threats - Medical emergencies at events 	Activate emergency response plan, inform key stakeholders	Can escalate into a crisis based on scope, harm, or media interest
Crisis	A major event causing widespread disruption, a threat to life, property and the environment. Crises attract intense public, media, and stakeholder attention and may lead to operational disruption, reputation damage, or long-term consequences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mass casualty event - Natural disaster - Major environmental hazard - Large-scale cybersecurity breach - National media coverage - Pandemic w/o vaccine 	Full crisis management team activation, central coordination, continuous updates	Highest level - full mobilization required

SCENARIO PLANNING: ALERT LEVELS

Whether dealing with an issue, an emergency, or a perceived or verified crisis, each situation may dissipate or escalate as it unfolds. Communication will vary based on the unique or unexpected circumstances.

ALERT LEVEL 1 - LOW NO INTEREST TO PUBLIC, LITTLE THREAT TO TOURISM BRAND

- Infrastructure remediation or maintenance
- Short-term closure (road or attraction)
- Short-staffed
- Social complaints and poor reviews
- Minor lodging housekeeping/room complaints
- Employee / group misconduct

Likely, no additional comms support needed, yet monitor for progression.

ALERT LEVEL 2 - MEDIUM POSSIBLE PUBLIC INTEREST, POSSIBLE THREAT TO TOURISM BRAND

- Environmental impact i.e. Sargassum (*alert level depends on volume, term*)
- Legal issues directed toward tourism industry
- Legal investigation
- Data breach

Some minor comms and social support may be needed at this level.

ALERT LEVEL 3 - HIGH PUBLIC INTEREST, INVOLVES DESTINATION, POTENTIAL FOR LASTING IMPACT TO TOURISM BRAND

- Infrastructure failure i.e. extended road closure
- Shark attack, serious injury, death
- Tropical Storm that dissipates or fire contained
- Data breach
- Environmental impact i.e. Sargassum or red tide (*alert level depends on volume, term*)
- Political views or policies shaping tourist visits

Reactive and some proactive comms and social support will be needed at this level.

ALERT LEVEL 4 - VERY HIGH NATIONAL AWARENESS ISSUE, IMPACT TO TOURISM BRAND

- Natural disasters, category 1-5 hurricanes, fire that spreads, evacuations
- Public health crisis causing shutdowns
- Active assailant/mass shooting, bombing
- Hazardous waste spill, environmental accident
- NPS-wide issue/conflict
- CEO/executive scandal

Proactive comms and social support will be needed at this level.

SCENARIO PLANNING: KEY AUDIENCES

INTERNAL + EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

While each issue, emergency and crisis will require different communication per audience, it's important to have key audiences defined and detailed distribution lists ready. All will gain reassurance and confidence from a well-planned and authoritative response.

INTERNAL

- TDC Staff + Contractors
- TDC Stakeholders i.e., lodging, restaurants, bars, attractions, tours, attractions, campgrounds & RV parks
- Emergency Management, Emergency Operations Center (EOC), County Public Information Offices (PIO)
- Emergency services, i.e. National Weather Service (NWS), law enforcement, fire department.
- Transportation partners

EXTERNAL

- Current visitors in county staying at lodges, rentals, campgrounds or dining at restaurants, visiting attractions or on a tour
- Future visitors if destination is impacted for future stays
- Select media outlets - local, regional, national, trade
- Domestic and international travel agents, tour operators
- Domestic and international event, meeting and incentive planners
- Government agencies i.e., FEMA, CDC
- Select social media users (owned channels); broader in the recovery phase

Primary Contact List for Comms Listed on Next Page. Links to Complete Contact Lists Below.

To [request](#) TDC Staff Contact List
[Link to](#) Emergency Management [Joint Information Center](#)

SCENARIO PLANNING: KEY CONTACTS

INTERNAL TDC TEAM - KEY COMMS CONTACTS, VFK ORG CHART, CLICK [HERE](#).

RESPONSIBILITIES LISTED BELOW ONLY RELATED TO CRISIS COMMS

Kara Franker, President & CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -TDC lead and primary decision-maker -Coordinates directly with EM director -Final comms approval -May serve as a spokesperson -Lead for all HR or legal needs
Heidi Barfels, Sr. Vice President of Marketing & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Oversees marketing, PR comms and agency partners -Gives comms approval -Leads internal TDC team crisis efforts for website, advisory and social media updates -Attends all county crisis comms update meetings
Jeanne Quinn, Sr. Vice President, Partnerships & Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensure website comms activated for interim website and new website (internal team able to add alerts and hurricane page + link to JIC page);- Build TDC version of JIC pg for future site.
JoNell Modys, Sr. Director Community Engagement & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leads internal TDC crisis communications -Drafts tourism advisories for natural disasters and other emergencies; drafts releases, other comms as needed -Attends all county crisis comms update meetings -Ensures messaging aligns with MCEM
Sherene Irani, Sr. Director of Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leads advertising efforts and directs marketing agency partner - Ensures paid media is turned off once decision is made by leadership
Mary Haban, Director of Public Relations Allison Morgan, Director of Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Serves as internal TDC back-up to JoNell for drafting tourism advisories or other comms during a crisis -Leads and/or supports media relations needs during a crisis or recovery phase (as approved by MCEM) with agency partner TURNER.
Chad Newman, Dir. of Florida Keys News Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In-destination media support as needed -Real time content support to show open, recovery
Jules Powers, Content Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social channel support with Heidi and OMG. -Real time content support.

TDC AGENCY PARTNERS - KEY COMMS CONTACTS

Christine Turner, President, TURNER PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leads crisis communications strategy for key situations
Naureen Kazi, Sr. Vice President, TURNER PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leads crisis communications for key situations -Supports media relations needs
Malcolm Griffiths, Sr. Vice President, TURNER PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leads crisis communications for key situations -Leads media relations needs for crisis situations
Stephanie Salama, Sr. Director, TURNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leads crisis communications for key situations -Supports media relations and monitoring/reporting
Emma Abbott, VP Digital & Social Media, TURNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leads digital monitoring; will lead if social media messaging support is needed
Jacqui Hartnett, President, Starmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Works with Heidi and Sherene to turn on/off ad campaigns; strategic campaign shifts as needed
Aimee Arnoldi, Account Director, MMGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Working with Jeanne on new website development and Klaviyo platform -May need to support posting content to current site
Jenny Lorenz, CEO, Overseas Media Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Manages webcams, resource for TDC, media -Works with Heidi/Jules on approved social messaging

SCENARIO PLANNING: KEY CONTACTS

Important [Monroe County Emergency Management](#), [Emergency Operations Center](#) (EOC), county contacts below:

MONROE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT - KEY CONTACTS LINK TO LIST ON WEBSITE
Cory Schwisow, Director, Monroe County Emergency Management
Kristen Livengood, PIO, Monroe County
Chip Kasper, Meteorologist in Charge, National Weather Service
Jon Rizzo, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service
National Weather Service Key West, link to staff
Michael Brennan, Director, National Hurricane Center, Miami
Public Affairs, National Hurricane Center
Rene Luis "RL" Colina, Fire Rescue Deputy Chief, (interview link , Keys Talk)
Rick Ramsay, Sheriff (Chief law enforcement officer, elected)
Adam Linhardt, PIO Sheriff's Office
Sean T. Brandenburg, Police Chief, Key West Police Department
Alyson Crean, PIO Key West Police Department & City of Key West
Joshua Empen, Captain, Coast Guard Sector Key West
Jodi Weinhofer, President and CEO, Lodging Assoc. of FL Keys & Key West
Lynne Hernandez, Monroe Chapter FL Restaurant & Lodging Association
Liam Rodriguez, PIO, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
MUNICIPALITIES - CITY OF KEY WEST, CITY OF MARATHON, KEY COLONY BEACH, CITY OF LAYTON, ISLAMORADA
Jim Scholl, Mayor, Board of County Commissioners
Danise DeeDee Henriquez, Mayor of Key West
Brian Barroso, Key West City Manager
Lynn Landry, Mayor, City of Marathon
Carlos Garcia, PIO, City of Marathon
George Garrett, City Manager, City of Marathon
Freddie Foster, Mayor, Key Colony Beach
John Bartus, City Administrator, Key Colony Beach
Mimi Young, City Clerk, City of Layton
Bruce Halle, Mayor, City of Layton
Ron Saunders, Village Manager, Islamorada
Stefanie Peel, Assistant to Village Manager, Islamorada
Sharon Mahoney, Mayor, Islamorada
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONTACTS
Dr. Taweb Beysolow, Medical Director, Health Department
Jennifer Leflar, PIO, Health Department

COUNTY & TDC ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE OF MONROE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IF SITUATION THREATENS RESIDENT / VISITOR SAFETY

While Monroe County Emergency Management and the TDC have the same goals when dealing with crises, it's important to distinguish the roles & responsibilities of each:

[Monroe County Emergency Management](#) is responsible for preparing the Florida Keys to handle any event that may threaten the safety of residents and visitors or impact property and infrastructure. As the lead agency during emergencies, Monroe County Emergency Management coordinates efforts among all municipalities, private sector partners, and state and federal agencies. The department develops and implements comprehensive emergency plans that strengthen the county's ability to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.

Emergency Operations and Communication Functions

Oversees strategic emergency coordination through the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and communication efforts via the Public Information Office (PIO) and Joint Information Center (JIC).

[Public Information Office \(PIO\)](#)

The PIO is responsible for providing accurate and timely information to the public and media about Monroe County actions, policies, and public meetings of the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and the County's 25 departments. The PIO provides the primary information for [Monroe County Emergency Management](#) and [Monroe County Fire Rescue](#).

[Emergency Operations Center \(EOC\)](#)

The EOC serves as a central command and control facility for managing emergency response and recovery operations (directing resources, coordinating agencies, and overseeing critical operations across the county). Located at 7280 Overseas Highway, Marathon, FL 33050 (shelter safe room, can protect up to 150 people for 96 hours, withstand 220 mph winds).

Operates under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to ensure consistency and coordination among responding agencies.

- Collaborates closely with the National Weather Service (NWS) Key West, National Hurricane Center (NHC) Miami, Sheriff's 911 Call Center, Fire Rescue Administration, local municipalities, private partners, and state and federal agencies to ensure streamlined and effective responses.

[Joint Information Center \(JIC\)](#)

The JIC is the public communications hub of the EOC, responsible for delivering timely, accurate, and coordinated information to the public and media during emergency events.

Gathers and disseminates information from multiple sources, including county departments, municipalities, and community partners.

Public Information Officers (PIOs) from involved agencies staff the JIC to ensure multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction coordination of public messaging.

Ensures the public receives reliable updates on safety measures, evacuation notices, emergency orders, and recovery efforts.

Resources

[About Emergency Management Department](#)
[National Weather Service Key West](#)
[National Hurricane Center](#)
[Evacuation Information and Shelter List](#)
[Emergency Orders & Declarations](#)
[Hurricane History & Info](#)
[Alert!Monroe](#)
[Monroe County Sheriff's Office app](#)

ROLE OF THE TDC DURING AN EMERGENCY

While **Monroe County Emergency Management** is responsible for emergency response and communication before, during, and after issues, emergencies and crises, such as hurricanes, wildfires, pandemics, and other significant events, the TDC plays a vital supporting role in emergency and crises by supplementing the communications efforts of Emergency Management and the Public Information Office (PIO) with targeted tourism stakeholder communications, particularly focused on visitor safety.

TDC's Role During Emergencies:

- **Supplemental Communication Support:** The TDC enhances the proactive communication efforts of Monroe County Emergency Management by sharing timely and accurate information with tourism-related businesses (lodging, restaurants, attractions) and selected media outlets. This ensures tourism employees and visitors stay informed with official safety updates.
- **Visitor and Travel Guidance:** During threats such as hurricanes, the TDC provides updates regarding travel conditions and alerts potential visitors when it is unsafe to travel to the Florida Keys. The TDC also supports evacuation efforts by helping communicate necessary information to stakeholders and visitors, promoting safe departures from the area when required.

How the TDC Supports Emergency Communication:

- **Dedicated Communications Program:** The TDC maintains a specialized program focused on delivering emergency-related information to front line hospitality teams to relay directly to visitors in-destination and those calling for information ahead of a planned visit.
- **Website Updates:** The TDC website includes vital emergency preparedness resources for visitors, such as evacuation guidelines and links to services like the Red Cross "Safe and Well" program.
- **Social Media:** The TDC posts regular updates sharing information from official sources.
- **Emergency Management Hotline: Visitors will be directed to a** dedicated hotline (1-800-955-5504) operated by Monroe County that can provide up-to-date emergency information to visitors during times of crisis. Phone lines will be transferred to this hotline in the event of office closure.
- **Coordination with Emergency Officials:** All TDC communications are developed in coordination with Monroe County Emergency Management to ensure consistency and accuracy.
- **Consumer and Travel Media Outreach:** The TDC team issues destination status or emergency messaging when appropriate to out-of-market consumer and travel media as well as trade (travel advisor, tour operator) contacts.

While Monroe County Emergency Management is responsible for emergency response and communication efforts, the TDC plays a critical supporting role in emergency and crises by supplementing the communications efforts of Emergency Management and the Public Information Office (PIO) with targeted tourism stakeholder communications, particularly focused on visitor safety.

Resources

[Emergency Information for Visitors to Florida Keys](#)
[Current Travel Safety Information – TDC website](#)
[Hurricane FAQ – TDC website](#)

While Monroe County Emergency Management is responsible for emergency response and communication efforts, the TDC plays a critical supporting role in emergency and crises by supplementing the communications efforts of Emergency Management and the Public Information Office (PIO) with targeted tourism stakeholder communications, particularly focused on visitor safety.

COUNTY & TDC ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

VISUAL OF ALIGNED COMMUNICATIONS ROLES

MONROE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- If situation threatens resident / visitor safety, MCEM evaluates severity and risk level of the situation with NWS, emergency services, other.
- Coordinates **emergency response** as well as coordinated **communication** with all EOC representatives
- Leads daily briefings, **ensuring timely and accurate information shared with all parties** - emergency services, municipality leaders and PIOs, TDC, etc. Outlined further on page 14.
- Leads **external communication and media briefings**, outlined further on page 15.

TDC COMMS TEAM

- **TDC execs / comms team** receive regular briefings from Emergency Management; aligns with County PIO on implications and supplemental messaging needed for **tourism staff, stakeholders and visitors**.
- Alerts **agency partners** for communications support and drafts messaging as frequently as necessary with all tourism staff, stakeholders, and select media (all messaging approved in advance of distribution by emergency management and NWS Key West and/or other agencies depending on nature of emergency).
- TDC uses a variety of communications tools including Tourism Advisories emailed and posted for stakeholders, website, social media, monitoring, webcams, media. Outlined on slide 15.

TURNER PR

- **Monitors media** activity and **online** sentiment.
- Tracks **coverage**, shares real-time updates and recommendations on **media response**.
- Supports internal TDC crisis comms with **stakeholder & media strategy**, statements, Q&As, etc.
- Leads proactive **media outreach**, supports inbound inquiries. Advises on coordinated messaging.

STARMARK

- Advises on **owned channel messaging, brand alignment** across platforms.
- Works with Heidi Barfels and Sherene Irani to **start / stop ad campaigns, partnerships, promotions**, based on crisis impact; **advises on strategic campaign shifts** and targeting in **recovery phase** i.e. thanking first responders, rebuilding or open messaging.

MMGY

- **Developing TDC's new website** – go-live Oct 2025. Will include Visitor Safety Information page; internal TDC team will have ability to add website alert banners and emergency updates in real time. Current site can have real-time updates to Current Travel Safety Information page pointed to by red/yellow/green alert home page banners as needed.
- Managing TDC email software for advisory email sends, with copy written by JoNell Modys.

OVERSEAS MEDIA GROUP

- Manages county **webcams**, resource for media, recovery comms, TDC internal comms.
- Handles TDC **social channel strategy, monitoring and messaging**.
- Works with Heidi Barfels and Jules Powers on approved crisis comms messaging, sharing NWS trusted source info.

Every issue, emergency and crisis is vastly different and the response and communication will vary based on the unique or unexpected circumstances that often require deviations from even the most exhaustively detailed crisis management plan.

For this communications guide, we have selected three sample crises/emergencies/issues outlining the chain of communication, key audiences, sample questions, messaging and recovery steps.

Natural Disaster: **HURRICANE** - Crisis, Alert Level 4

Infrastructure Failure: **ROAD CLOSURE** - Emergency, Alert Level 2-4

Environmental Threat: **SARGASSUM** - Emergency, Alert Level 2

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

SITUATION: THERE IS A HURRICANE APPROACHING

HOW DOES MONROE COUNTY AND THE TDC LEARN ABOUT A PENDING STORM?

- Typically, the National Weather Service (NWS) in Key West, along with its National Hurricane Center (NHC) division, notifies Monroe County Emergency Management Director, Cory Schwisow, and PIO, Kristen Livengood, livengood-kristen@monroecounty-fl.gov,
- Emergency Management/county PIO sends an email to the EOC distribution list, which includes the TDC, emergency services, primary agency and municipality contacts including the county PIOs and schedules 'County Coordinating Calls.'
- Emergency Management Director, Cory Schwisow, contacts TDC President & CEO, Kara Franker.

HOW DOES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONTINUE TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH COUNTY OFFICIALS?

Emergency Management follows all emergency response protocols for resident and visitor safety through the progression from storm to hurricane to recovery; they also ensure county officials have frequent updates:

- **Daily calls:** 10am and 3 pm (dependent upon progression of storm)
 - NWS gives an update
 - EM Director makes brief statement and calls on each public agency for updates (also includes schools, utilities, coast guard, etc.)
 - Open for questions
 - Announce the next meeting time
- **Email:** County PIO, Kristen Livengood, continues to share info via email to the EOC list.
- **WhatsApp PIO group:** County PIO, Kristen Livengood, creates the group and shares info.

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

HOW DOES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC DURING AN EMERGENCY OR CRISIS?

Emergency Management leads all external communication with residents, the public and the media for situations that threaten resident or visitor safety. Updates and emergency alerts are shared in many ways:

Emergency Updates posted on the [Joint Information Center website page](#).

Emergency Alerts: Monroe County Emergency Management [updates news and media sources](#) with the latest information, as well as their website (www.monroecountyem.com/turkeypoint) and social media accounts (Facebook: www.facebook.com/monroecountyem and X: <https://x.com/monroecounty>).

Other Information Channels:

- Monroe County BOCC updates on the Nextdoor application, and people can sign up for emergency text/email/call alerts at www.monroecountyem.com/alertmonroe.
- FM Radio: Primary emergency alert system stations include WFKZ 103.1, WEOW 92.7 and WWUS 104.1.

Responsibilities of the Public Information Office (as noted on website)

- Writes and distributes news releases.
- Maintains the County's official social media communications across all platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, NextDoor, and Flickr.
- Creates content and maintains Monroe County websites.
- Interacts with members of the media and public and responds to questions from County residents.
- Arranges press conferences, media briefings, and public meetings.
- Works with state and federal government entities to ensure County residents receive information about programs, grants, and opportunities.
- Creates the [State of the County Annual Report](#).

Monroe County Official Social Media Sites

- [Monroe County BOCC Facebook](#)
- [Monroe County Fire Rescue Facebook](#)
- [Monroe County's Key West International Airport Facebook](#)
- [Monroe County Guardian ad Litem Facebook](#)
- [X @Monroe County](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Flickr](#)
- [County News Releases](#)
- [Fire Rescue News Releases](#)
- [Emergency Management News Releases](#)

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

HOW DOES THE TDC SUPPORT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND ENSURE TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS AND VISITORS RECEIVE INFORMATION?

1. TDC CEO, Kara Franker, **shares initial info with staff and agency partners to prepare**, align resources for comms duties. Reminds team that TDC and partners are not the designated spokespersons for hurricanes and that they should direct all media inquiries to Heidi Barfels or TURNER PR.
2. TDC team join **daily EOC briefings** to identify important facts to share with stakeholders and staff (and media if/when needed). Frequency of briefings and info. sharing shifts as storm progresses.
3. TDC/agency partners **coordinate messaging to ensure timely and accurate flow of information to tourism stakeholders and visitors/public** via the following channels:
 1. **Tourism Advisories:** TDC internal crisis comms lead, JoNell Modys, drafts **Tourism Advisories emails which serve to prepare tourism stakeholders**; info from EM/NWS regarding storm level, forecast, protection orders, closures, shelter in place or evacuation, etc. (*Kara approves and send to Cory Schwisow and Chip Kasper for approval. Allison Morgan serves as back-up to JoNell Modys internally*). Tourism Advisories are shared via email with anyone who [signs up for industry communications](#) on the [Partner Resources page](#) of the TDC website. Tourism Advisory emails will also be posted to the [Current Travel Safety Information page](#) of the [TDC website](#).
 2. **Media and Social Monitoring:** TURNER sets up **media monitoring**, and TDC manages **social media monitoring**; reporting shared with TDC and agency partners (frequency based on situation). Look for misinformation that may impact visitors (ensure people use reliable sources). Measurement practices adhere to Barcelona Principles.
 3. **Social Media:** TDC will use social media to communicate with other PIOs to share and gather information.
 4. **Webcams:** OMG ensures all [webcams](#) are working as TDC, media, and public use as a resource.
 5. **TDC website:** working with JoNell Modys, Jeanne Quinn and Olivia Newbold will make real-time updates to existing Current Travel Safety Information page pointed to by red/yellow/green alert homepage banners as needed. The Travel Safety Information page includes links to official sources including [Monroe County JIC](#) and encourages the community to sign up for updates from Alert!Monroe and the MCSO's mobile app. When new TDC website goes live in October 2025, it will include the same information, stakeholders will be advised, and existing site URLs will redirect to the new site.
 6. **Internal TDC Text Group:** TDC creating a small group text in case Wi-Fi takes out internet – with approval, will include TDC team, crisis comms, Lodging Association, Chamber partners and TDC board. More information to come.
 7. **Media:** Monroe County PIO, Kristen Livengood, takes the lead with EOC officials on **all Keys and Miami-based media** updates before/during/after storms. **TDC will supplement** these efforts when there's important information that needs to be shared with current and future visitors via travel/lifestyle/news media. Messaging may be about safety warnings or closures or could be about openings and flights during the recovery phase to support tourism. Agency partner TURNER will work with Heidi Barfels, JoNell Modys, Allison Morgan and Mary Haban on messaging strategy, approvals and targeted distribution/media response.
 8. **WhatsApp:** TDC will use WhatsApp (set up by Kristen Livengood, County PIO) to communicate with other PIOs to share and gather information

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

COMMS TEAM WORKSHEET QUESTIONS

What is the **confirmed stage** and what are the confirmed **facts** of the **impending storm** from reliable sources (NWS/NHC)?

- **Tropical Depression** - cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 38 mph or less; usually smaller than tropical storms and hurricanes, with a diameter of 100-300 miles.
- **Tropical Storm Watch** - tropical storm conditions possible within 48 hours
- **Tropical Storm** - tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 39-73 mph or higher; more organized than tropical depressions and are given names.
- **Hurricane Watch** - hurricane conditions possible within 48 hours
- **Hurricane** - tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 74 mph or higher; categorized by the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, which measures the wind speed in miles per hour (shelter in place and evacuation order vary by storm based on storm's intensity and potential impacts - EM Department Executive committee decides evacuation timing:
 - Category 1:** Winds of 74–95 mph
 - Category 2:** Winds of 96–110 mph
 - Category 3:** Winds of 111–130 mph
 - Category 4:** Winds of 131–155 mph
 - Category 5:** Winds of 157 mph or higher

What is the path and timeline for **potential impact to Monroe County and which municipalities** are forecasted to have more impact?

Confirm **chain and frequency of communication** from MCEM to TDC/EOC list i.e. daily briefing schedule, PIO updates, etc.

What are the **MCEM response actions** taking place now?

Are all **media inquiries** going to Kristen Livengood, PIO, or someone else at MCEM or NWS?

Are there any **protective orders** being shared with residents and visitors? What important **safety information/action steps** should the TDC supplement so **tourism stakeholders and visitors** can prepare? Public safety advisories?

- Early stage, i.e., stay inside/out of water/off boats, avoid windows, get water/supplies, get [NWS updates here](#)
- Should visitors start looking for flights before roads or airports are closed?
- Are there any closures, i.e., roads, gas stations, grocery stores, attractions?
- Should we share links to any resources? i.e., [emergency orders and declarations](#), [list of shelters](#)
- Planning phased or mandatory evacuations?
- Has a state of emergency been declared (allowing local authorities to take protective action)?

Understand the proximity of storm pathing to the number of stakeholders, residents and visitors who might need to evacuate. Work with county EM/PIO to confirm accurate, timely communications for stakeholder and visitor safety. Do stakeholders or visitors need any type of assistance, i.e., evacuation support, supplies, meals, lodging, relocation?

Has there been **any misinformation** reported by the media or shared via social channels? If so, share reliable sources to mitigate.

Discuss stakeholder and public communications channels and messaging at each stage

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

AUDIENCE & MESSAGING

- ✓ Employees
- ✓ Tourism stakeholders
- ✓ Current visitors in the county
- ✓ Media
- ✓ Future visitors (if impact for future trips)

★ **Important Note on Messaging for Natural Disasters / Hurricanes:** The messaging examples in this document are intended as guidance only and will vary significantly based on the unique and unpredictable nature of each storm. As a system evolves, from a tropical depression to a tropical storm to a Category 1–5 hurricane, protective actions such as closures, shelter-in-place advisories, or evacuation orders will differ depending on the storm’s severity and projected impact, which includes storm surges and flooding. These protective orders are determined by the Emergency Management Committee. All communications issued before, during and after a storm will be tailored and aligned with Monroe County Emergency Management protocols.

TDC STAFF (EX: INITIAL COMMS)

TDC team,

Monroe County Emergency Management (MCEM) just informed us of a Tropical Storm Watch for Monroe County which means a Tropical Storm is possible within 48 hours. Our top priority during any natural disaster is protecting human life and our TDC role is to supplement information shared by MCEM to ensure our stakeholders and visitors can get prepared for any necessary actions. We will be attending daily Emergency Operations Center (EOC) briefings and as each new update comes in, and in alignment with the County, we will share a Tourism Advisory via email with tourism stakeholders and will send a text alert (*include if we have text notification system started*). We are updating the alert banner on our website and will add social media and media updates as necessary.

MCEM is forecasting (*insert level, pathing, timing info*), but they have not shared any protective orders at this time. Please stay tuned via [any of these Monroe County sources](#) and [sign up for alerts here](#) if you haven’t already.

Please refer all media inquiries to Heidi Barfels at heidi@fla-keys.com and cc: Christine Turner at christine@turnerpr.com. They will work with me and/or refer inquiries to MCEM.

If you have any immediate concerns or need assistance during the storm, please let me know. We will share updates as information becomes available (*add any directions on working remotely, or key people working from TDC offices due to power and internet needs, as well as support or leverage for key team members while they redirect attention to the storm*). Thank you for uniting to help us keep our colleagues, tourism partners and visitors safe.

Kara

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

AUDIENCE & MESSAGING (CONT.)

Examples only - every situation is different and statements will vary. All advisories and media information are approved in advance by Emergency Management.

TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS (EX: INITIAL COMMS)

Tourism Partners,

We want to make you aware that Monroe County Emergency Management (MCEM) just informed us of a **Tropical Storm Watch for Monroe County**, thus a Tropical Storm is possible within 48 hours. Our top priority during any natural disaster is protecting human life and our TDC role is to supplement information shared by MCEM to ensure that you, our tourism partners, and your guests/county visitors, can get prepared for any necessary actions.

We will be attending daily Emergency Operations Center (EOC) / National Weather Service (NWS) briefings and as appropriate, and in alignment with the county, we will send Tourism Advisory emails to anyone who [signs up for our industry communications](#) on the [Partner Resources page](#) of the TDC website. We will update the [Current Travel Safety Information page](#) of the TDC website and as appropriate, activate [home page](#) alert banners that point to that page. Communication updates will also be published on social media and sent to the media as necessary.

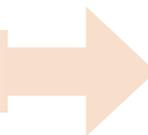
MCEM has disclosed ([insert any pertinent updates about supplies, closures, etc if any](#)), but has not shared any protective orders at this time. Please stay tuned via [any of these Monroe County sources](#) and [sign up for alerts here](#) if you haven't already. As you continue to follow updates, please only rely on reliable sources of information from MCEM, NWS and National Hurricane Center (NHC).

Please direct any media inquiries to Kristen Livengood, PIO, Monroe County, livengood-kristen@monroecounty-fl.gov.

Thank you for remaining diligent for your teams and guests/visitors.

Kara

ADVISORY EXAMPLES ON NEXT PAGE...



LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

AUDIENCE & MESSAGING (CONT.) ADVISORIES AT VARIOUS STAGES OF STORM

1 KEYS TOURISM ADVISORY

This advisory is based on information and instructions from the National Hurricane Center, Florida Keys National Weather Service Office and Monroe County Emergency Management.

Compiled and transmitted by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council

Sept. 24, 2022 • 12:00 p.m.

Keys Officials Watch, Discuss Tropical Storm Ian



Official National Hurricane Center five-day tracking map graphic, issued at 11 a.m. (ET) Saturday, Sept. 24, showing the forecast error track cone for Tropical Storm Ian.

Monroe County Emergency Management staged another coordinating preparation Zoom for Tropical Storm Ian Saturday.

Due to the slightly slower track of the storm, no decisions have been made on any possible visitor or resident evacuations, sheltering or other protective actions. Those decisions may be announced Saturday afternoon, according to Shannon Weiner, the county's emergency management director.

"It is still a little too early to discuss the magnitude of specific impacts to the Florida Keys at this time," said Jon Rizzo, the warning coordination meteorologist for the Florida Keys National Weather Service office. "However, this information is expected to become somewhat clearer beginning later today."

At 11 a.m. Saturday, the center of the tropical storm was located about 815 miles southeast of Key West with maximum sustained winds of 45 mph. It was moving west at 15 mph. The storm is expected to turn to the northwest late Saturday night and then turn to the north.

Rizzo reported that Ian is forecast to intensify to hurricane strength by Sunday night.

Ian is currently forecast to grow to major hurricane (category 3) strength while moving northward toward the southeast Gulf of Mexico near the latitude of the Florida Keys.

Tropical storm-force winds could arrive in some regions of the Keys as early as Monday evening. Therefore, any preparations should be complete by Monday afternoon. There is the potential for hurricane-force winds for some portions of the Lower Keys and Key West, with the most likely time frame for the roughest weather midday Tuesday through Tuesday night.

Airports and businesses remain open. Monroe County government offices are to be open Monday, with the exception of the County Clerk's office. Monroe County schools have not made decisions regarding school or office closings.

Another tourism advisory is expected to be transmitted Saturday afternoon.



Information Resources:

National Hurricane Center

Florida Keys National Weather Service

Monroe County Emergency Management

Monroe County Sheriff's Office

Florida Division of Emergency Management

2 KEYS TOURISM ADVISORY

This advisory is based on information and instructions from the National Hurricane Center, Florida Keys National Weather Service Office and Monroe County Emergency Management.

Compiled and transmitted by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council

Sept. 26, 2022 • 8:15 a.m.

Ian Now a Hurricane; Tropical Storm Warning Up for Lower Keys, Key West



Official National Hurricane Center three-day tracking map graphic, issued at 8 a.m. (ET) Monday, Sept. 26, showing the forecast error track cone for Tropical Storm Ian.

The National Hurricane Center Monday morning upgraded Ian to hurricane status and has issued a tropical storm warning for a portion of the Florida Keys, west of the Seven Mile Bridges to the Dry Tortugas including Key West.

A tropical storm warning means that tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of at least 39 mph, but not greater than 73 mph) are expected somewhere within the warning area within 36 hours. In this case, tropical storm conditions are anticipated to begin in the Lower Keys and Key West early Tuesday afternoon.

The center also issued a storm surge watch for all of the Florida Keys, identifying a possibility of flooding from rising water moving inland from the coastline during the next 48 hours.

At 7 a.m. Monday, the center of Hurricane Ian was about 425 miles southwest of Key West. It was moving to the northwest at 14 mph with 75 mph sustained winds.

The NHC expects rapid intensification Monday and forecasts that Ian will be a major hurricane by the time it crosses over the western tip of Cuba early Tuesday.

The contiguous Florida Keys remain out of Ian's forecast error track cone, but Keys residents and visitors should remain vigilant, as well as preparing for gusty winds, heavy rainfall and potential coastal flooding. Any preparations should be completed by Monday evening.

That said, the chances for sustained hurricane winds (at least 74 mph) are below 5 percent in the Lower Keys and Key West, and are about 1 percent in the Upper and Middle Keys, according to Jon Rizzo, the warning coordination meteorologist for the Florida Keys National Weather Service office.

Monroe County Emergency Management is likely to announce several protective actions for the Lower Keys and Key West Monday morning.

Another Ian advisory is to be issued later Monday morning.

4 KEYS TOURISM ADVISORY

This advisory is based on information and instructions from the National Hurricane Center, Florida Keys National Weather Service Office and Monroe County Emergency Management.

Compiled and transmitted by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council

Sept. 28, 2022 • 8:20 a.m.

Key West Airport Closed Wednesday



Official National Hurricane Center three-day tracking map graphic, issued at 8 a.m. (ET) Wednesday, Sept. 28, showing the forecast error track cone for Hurricane Ian.

Wednesday morning, Monroe County Airports Director Richard Strickland reported that **Key West International Airport** is temporarily closed due to surge impacts from Hurricane Ian.

Strickland said he would have an update later Wednesday regarding a timeframe for reopening.

Meanwhile, among road impacts, Islamorada Fire Chief Terry Abel reported that debris and seaweed washed up on the Florida Keys Overseas Highway (US1) near mile marker 74. Law enforcement officials are alternating traffic flow until Islamorada Public

3 KEYS TOURISM ADVISORY

This advisory is based on information and instructions from the National Hurricane Center, Florida Keys National Weather Service Office and Monroe County Emergency Management.

Compiled and transmitted by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council

Sept. 28, 2022 • 12:25 p.m.

Officials: Be Vigilant for Gulfside/Bayside Storm Surge



Official National Hurricane Center three-day tracking map graphic, issued at 11 a.m. (ET) Wednesday, Sept. 28, showing the forecast error track cone for Hurricane Ian.

Although Hurricane Ian is moving away from the Florida Keys, warnings and watches continue and officials are especially concerned Wednesday about the potential for the imminent onset of gulfside/bayside storm surge in the Lower Keys and Key West.

Storm surge in the Lower Keys and Key West may be as high as 4 feet above normal high tide levels, according to Jon Rizzo, the warning coordination meteorologist for the Florida Keys National Weather Service office.

Peak storm surge levels in the Lower Keys and Key West will likely occur from around noon through mid-afternoon, he added. Meanwhile, a storm surge watch remains in effect from Marathon through Ocean Reef. Storm surge flooding 1 to 3 feet above normal high tides is possible in this region, Rizzo said.

The highest storm surge for the gulfside/bayside of the Middle Keys is expected Wednesday during the afternoon hours, with storm surge on the bayside of the Upper Keys gradually peaking Thursday through Friday.

A tropical storm warning remains for all the contiguous Florida Keys and surrounding waters.

Impacts with street flooding and downed trees and power lines are prevalent throughout the Lower Keys and Key West.

Keys Energy, the region's utility, began Wednesday with about 10,000 of 30,000 customers without power. By noon, the outage number had been reduced to about 3,000 and crews are continuing efforts to restore power. The Florida Keys Electric Cooperative had only a few outages and is providing mutual aid to Keys Energy.

Keys Energy officials report that numerous power lines are down and warn of danger, especially when walking through flooded areas.

"Avoid touching any power lines that are down or walking in flooded areas with lines on the ground," said Julio Tornado, director of communications. "Consider them to be energized."

Winds are expected to decrease throughout the day today, but scattered squalls may briefly produce wind gusts of 40 to 50 mph today.

5 KEYS TOURISM ADVISORY

This advisory is based on information and instructions from the National Hurricane Center, Florida Keys National Weather Service Office and Monroe County Emergency Management.

Compiled and transmitted by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council

Sept. 27, 2022 • 5:30 p.m.

Severe Weather From Ian Impacting Keys; Tropical Storm Warning Up for the Upper Keys



Official National Hurricane Center three-day tracking map graphic, issued at 5 p.m. (ET) Tuesday, Sept. 27, showing the forecast error track cone for Hurricane Ian.

Although the hurricane forecast track cone from Major Hurricane Ian remains clear of the contiguous Florida Keys, severe weather including tropical storm-force winds, heavy rain

and some storm surge has begun impacting regions of the island chain.

A tropical storm warning is in effect for the Channel 5 Bridge through Key West and adjacent waters. At 5 p.m. Tuesday, the National Hurricane Center included the Upper

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

AUDIENCE & MESSAGING (CONT.)

Examples only, every situation is different, statements will vary. All advisories and media information approved in advance by Emergency Management, will not differ by outlet.

TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS (EX: ENCOURAGE DEPARTURE)

Tourism Partners,

As Hurricane **<Tk hurricane name>** approaches, safety is our top priority. Visitors are strongly encouraged to review their travel plans and consider departing the Florida Keys & Key West. Please communicate with your guests immediately to ensure this important information is being spread. Visitors should immediately contact airline providers to book earlier flights or explore options for staying in unaffected areas of Florida. The Overseas Highway / US Highway 1 may be closed soon. [Link to MCEM information](#). Please also communicate accordingly with guests that may be arriving for check-in in the coming days/week.

TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS (EX: MANDATORY DEPARTURE FOR VISITORS)

Tourism Partners,

A mandatory evacuation is in effect for all visitors and non-residents in the Florida Keys & Key West owing to Hurricane **<TK hurricane name>**. This evacuation order must be completed by **<TK Time>** on **<TK Date>**. Please communicate with your guests immediately to ensure they arrange flights as soon as possible or make driving arrangements for staying in unaffected areas of Florida. Be sure they get on the road before there are closures, remind them to have a full tank of gas and emergency supplies for their journeys. While this disrupts vacations, safety is paramount. [Link to MCEM information](#). Please also communicate accordingly with guests that are arriving for check-in in the coming days/week.

MEDIA STATEMENT (EX: EARLY STAGE)

Monroe County Emergency Management (MCEM) is closely monitoring Hurricane **<TK hurricane name>**, alongside the National Weather Service (NWS) and National Hurricane Center (NHC). All lodging, restaurants and businesses are open and operational at this time throughout the Florida Keys & Key West. We are actively coordinating with MCEM and NWS and following all guidance to ensure visitor safety. Please ensure you are using reliable sources when reporting, follow [Monroe County Emergency Management](#) and the [National Weather Service Key West](#) for updates.

MEDIA ALERT (EX: MANDATORY DEPARTURE)

As Hurricane **<TK hurricane name>** approaches, Monroe County Emergency Management (MCEM) has issued a mandatory evacuation for all visitors and non-residents in the Florida Keys & Key West. MCEM continues to work closely with the National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center as the safety of residents and visitors is our top priority. Please help us share [this evacuation order](#) via your media outlet and social media channels. Thank you for continuing to use reliable sources when reporting and follow [Monroe County Emergency Management](#) and the [National Weather Service Key West](#) for continued updates.

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

MEDIA RELATIONS TIPS

Working with media during a crisis is challenging but important to successfully manage the public perception of the crisis. While journalists are identified as one of TDC's "audiences", they are also a conduit to providing important information to our *other* audiences; thus, we must shape and control our key messages.

Please note that the designated spokesperson before and during (and sometimes right after) a hurricane is not a TDC representative – it is the designated emergency response representative (MCEM director or PIO, NWS or NHC). While TDC may be sharing information with the media throughout the storm cycle, emergency management and meteorology experts need to serve as spokespersons. A TDC executive might be interviewed in the recovery phase when the focus is on bringing visitors back to the destination (approved TDC spokesperson: Kara Franker, president & CEO).

SPOKESPERSON TIPS:

Execute Your Recovery Plan

- Execute your crisis communications recovery plan as soon as emergency response officials give the green light. This is important so you have the information needed for a safe return to visitors (recovery plan recommends sales team immediately supports execs and comms team by calling upon tourism stakeholders to verify conditions, openings, etc.)

Stick to Your Lane

- Only speak to tourism-related topics — hotels, restaurants and attractions are open and accessible.
- For storm-related phases, protective actions, or emergency response, defer to MCEM/NWS:
"For official updates on storm shifts and emergency response, please contact <TK contact name> at MCEM." (Remind journalist to use reliable sources from either MCEM or NWS)

Prioritize Clarity and Accuracy

- Always verify information before sharing with the most recent facts — if you're not 100% sure, say so and offer to follow up.
- Avoid speculation or exaggeration. If you don't know, say: *"That's being assessed now — we'll provide updates as soon as we have them."*

Be Calm, Confident, and Compassionate

- Your tone matters. Be professional but human — show empathy for residents, visitors, and workers.
- Example: *"We understand travelers have questions — our job is to give them the clearest, most helpful information possible."*

Use Talking Points

- Work from pre-approved, consistent messages to avoid going off-script (messaging you've discussed using consistently across platforms).
- Have a short, updated list of facts with you — open/closed businesses, hotel capacity, roads, etc.

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

MEDIA RELATIONS TIPS (CONT.)

SPOKESPERSON TIPS (CONT).

Anticipate Questions

- Be ready to answer: “Is it safe to visit?”, “What’s open now?”, “Are hotels operating?”, “How are residents impacted?”, “What’s being done to clean up?”
- Use real, vetted data and pivot back to facts and positivity.
- If on camera, work with PR team in advance on responses to any sensitive situations about this particular storm: “Why weren’t evacuation orders called earlier?,” “Do you feel emergency services did a good job when there were <TK number> of deaths?,” “Why are you inviting travelers back when some areas still need to be cleaned up?”

Know the Journalist and Their Outlet

- Understand the audience they serve (local vs. national, travel vs. news-focused).
- Tailor your message to meet their needs, e.g.:
 - National outlet: broad recovery and reopening message.
 - Travel: specific experiences available.

Offer Visuals and Positivity

- Provide photos/videos of recovery, open beaches, clear roads, open hotels, events — but only if safe and accurate. Send the content team to events, beaches, and boats.
- Share good news when possible: “*We’re seeing strong community support and local businesses are open again.*”

Avoid Overpromising

- Don't guarantee specific reopening dates unless officially confirmed.
- Use cautious, forward-looking language:
“*We expect more attractions to reopen in the coming days — we’ll share updates as that happens.*”

Stay Accessible and Responsive

- Work with the PR team, journalist has access to you and builds trust.

Debrief After Interviews

- Take time after each interaction to note: What you were asked, What went well, What to refine
- Discuss feedback with your PR team so everyone stays aligned.

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

RECOVERY PHASE - TDC EXEC OVERVIEW

Recovery timelines will vary based on damage, closures, accessibility, etc. The following pages provide a checklist of considerations for the broader marketing communications team using a three-phased example which assumes Hurricane damage. [This page](#) is an initial checklist/overview for TDC execs.

1: CHECK ON TEAM AND STAKEHOLDERS, ASSESS DAMAGE AND ALIGN WITH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMS

- Check on staff safety and availability; power and internet in homes and TDC offices.
- Debrief with EM officials on storm impact, infrastructure damage/road closures; deaths/injuries/rescues, power outages, etc. Understand impact and decisions that will impact tourism: a five-person team per city determines action steps for rebuilding and later determines when visitors return - Mayor, EM Dir, Sheriff, Fire Chief, City Administrator. Secure info for comms.
- Activate the TDC sales team immediately to call/visit tourism stakeholders, identify if lodges/restaurants/bars open, take notes on damage or needs to share info with TDC execs. Remind lodging stakeholders to share information in **Fla-keys.com/recovery-lodging database** [<add link>](#) about the state of hotel rooms, on-property F&B options and amenities. Database to be used by first responders, utilities, local officials, repair personnel or displaced residents seeking accommodations after a storm or other disaster (not used for visitors).

2: DETERMINE & COORDINATE RECOVERY RESPONSE

- Continue debriefs with EM and share regular updates with tourism stakeholders and agency partners.
- Discuss/agree on coordinated recovery response with EM/PIO. Ensure accuracy, road and lodging accessibility, etc., before sharing communications with the public.

3: IMPLEMENT RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

- Share the recovery comms plan with tourism stakeholders now that information has been gathered and TDC is aligned with MCEM.
- Coordinate messaging and timing for a unified response across all platforms (if rebuilding, share positive updates about progress; if open, hit misinformation immediately and showcase real-time video to showcase no damage).
- Work with agency partners to execute each marketing communications step (see considerations next three pages across channels i.e., VFK website, media relations (local, regional, national, international), social media, partnerships & events, sales, etc. Activate the content team to secure videos/photos to showcase beautiful, sunny beaches and marinas, images of visitors/fishing/boats, the first cruise ship, first flights, events, hotel and attraction re-openings, street party to thank recovery workers.

4: EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

- TDC/agency partner debrief to evaluate the effectiveness of communications efforts.
- Consider securing stakeholder feedback to ensure communications pathways reach them.
- Assess what worked, what didn't, and what changed. Document lessons learned. Update the plan as necessary.
- Final reporting - media and social media.
- TDC to archive all content and assets developed for future crisis use.

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

RECOVERY PHASE MARKETING/COMMS CHECKLIST/CONSIDERATIONS

Timing and actions will vary based on storm damage, locations, accessibility and recovery/reopening timing.

★ PHASE I – ASSESS/ACKNOWLEDGE (RIGHT AFTER LANDFALL, WEEK 1)

PR/COMMUNICATIONS/SOCIAL MEDIA (LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL)

- Implement hurricane recovery communications to responsibly share up-to-date information with stakeholders and the public i.e., travel advisory, website alerts, social channel copy, etc.
- Monitor media coverage and social conversation. Check for misinformation. Respond to social questions if you have accurate information.
- Assess upcoming activations, new timing/messaging.
- Continue to pause 'regular' earned media efforts. Identify safety, recovery info and thank first responders.
- Gather updates from partners. Secure tourism testimonials that support plans to have as proof points/assets when ready to reach out to the media.
- Capture content on key locations with timestamps.
- Address/reconsider timing for upcoming FAM trips.

PR/COMMUNICATIONS (INTERNATIONAL)

- Review the international media coverage audit.
- Assess upcoming activations, new timing/messaging.
- Pause all proactive media pitching.
- Address/reconsider upcoming international media FAM trips.

CREATIVE/WEBSITE

- Continue to update website copy to reflect advisory information/alerts.
- Discuss creative for a bridge campaign focused on maintaining and encouraging visitation plans targeting tourists, meeting planners and media for open/accessible areas.
- Develop a map highlighting areas open for tourists.
- Activate [Recovery Lodging website](#) for displaced residents, relief workers and emergency crews and promote site to the community via website links and community communication channels.

PAID MEDIA (TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL)

- Pause all paid media.
- Develop media strategy for bridge campaign, i.e. implement targeted paid media for publications mentioning hurricane to balance misleading coverage; redirect messaging to focus on open areas.

PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

- Assess current partnership activity and update messaging as needed.
- Pause/delay partnership activity that was to go live (social, digital, promotion).
- Assess out-of-market domestic and international upcoming events and identify messaging for pre-event comms, presentations and talking points.

TRADE / SALES (INTERNATIONAL)

- Pause proactive sales outreach, scheduled newsletters.
- Monitor trade media coverage.
- Share a proactive hurricane update with international trade, using approved messaging.

★ LEISURE & MICE SALES

- Activate the sales team to call and visit hotels/stakeholders so TDC has a damage/opening assessment.
- Contact hotels with meeting space/event spaces, assess damage and target dates for re-opening.
- Review pending site inspections and FAMs, determine feasibility as scheduled or postpone.
- Draft messaging for open, accessible spaces vs. properties with damage that need to be postponed.
- Contact group meeting planners re: status of property/meeting space contracted for upcoming event.
- Contact key leisure partners with status updates on hotels and air access.

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

RECOVERY PHASE MARKETING/COMMS CHECKLIST/CONSIDERATIONS

Timing and actions will vary based on storm damage, locations, accessibility and recovery/reopening timing.

★ PHASE II – ADDRESS (BY WEEK 2 AFTER LANDFALL)

PR/COMMUNICATIONS/SOCIAL MEDIA (LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL)

- Update leisure and MICE messaging, including website travel advisory, reactive and proactive statements/pitches, emails and social channel copy.
- Focus on positive comms about open areas (if open), visuals to offer accurate, reassuring info for media pitching, thank first responders, shoot live video from openings for social, first flights or cruise, respond to social questions.
- Continue to fact-check misinformation.
- Reactivate influencer programs, showcase open areas.
- Remain paused on social content and activations off topic.
- Assess needs for upcoming MICE activities.
- Ensure any links to charities and relief efforts are verified and accurate.
- Assess upcoming coverage due to be published and share updates with the media to advise on affected/non-affected areas included within the coverage.
- Activate [Recovery Lodging website](#) for displaced residents, relief workers and emergency crews and promote site to the community via website links and community communication channels.

PAID MEDIA (TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL)

- Finalize paid media plans (digital and traditional). Possibly implement staggered rollout strategy, national and then key markets.
- Possibly resume paid social amplification, leverage real-time imagery of the destination's readiness and ability to welcome tourists (in areas ready for visitors).
- Reassess resuming paid digital campaign – dial up or down on market-by-market basis, assess need to incorporate real-time imagery, combat lasting news coverage with longer-term focus on prospecting, ensuring max awareness of readiness, building on awareness. International may be ready for normal messaging earlier than national due to less hurricane

CREATIVE/WEBSITE

- Update website copy to reflect advisories and continue to utilize proper alert banners.
- Develop visuals/bridge creative to showcase real-time status of areas and attractions of interest to travelers – video, social posts, digital banners, print ads.
- Update the map showing areas open for tourists.
- Continue to update website information with the most up-to-date information for partners and travelers.
- Possibly resume any consumer-direct email campaigns that align with the messaging. Consider using it as a channel to inform upcoming and potential future travelers (share with stakeholders for their guest communications). Leverage UGC and real-time imagery.

PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

- Possibly resume scheduled partnership activity (social, digital, print, podcasts).
- Apply approved messaging to event briefings for scheduled speaking opportunities (open areas, swift recovery based on approved EM facts).

TRADE / SALES (INTERNATIONAL)

- Focus on messaging that demonstrates readiness.
- Share post-hurricane update with international trade email showcasing unaffected areas.

★ LEISURE & MICE SALES

- Activate the sales team to call and visit hotels/stakeholders so TDC has a damage/opening assessment.
- Revise messaging and utilize testimonials and photo assets to demonstrate readiness.
- Establish contact with upcoming group leads and offer resources to communicate status to attendees.
- Maintain roadshow and tradeshow schedule and refine messaging accordingly.
- Work through leisure partners to distribute status updates to travel advisors.

LEVEL FOUR

CRISIS: NATURAL DISASTER, HURRICANE

RECOVERY PHASE MARKETING/COMMS CHECKLIST/CONSIDERATIONS

Timing and actions will vary based on storm damage, locations, accessibility and recovery/reopening timing.

★ PHASE III – ACTIVATE (1-4+ WEEKS AFTER LANDFALL)

PR/COMMUNICATIONS/SOCIAL MEDIA (LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL)

- Pitch positive stories with visuals/testimonials to drive back tourism - openings, flights, cruise, etc.
- Update leisure and MICE messaging, including website travel advisory/banner info, emails and social channel copy. Monitor media coverage and social conversation.
- Activate social content related to bridge messaging.
- Amplify media relations - continue proactive outreach with the latest stats. Fact-check and correct. misinformation. Amplify calendar to drive tourism interest i.e., high season, holiday travel as well as upcoming events.
- Resume media, influencer FAM visits as appropriate.
- Continue planning/programming of leisure and MICE events in key US/international markets.
- Develop an earned-first activation that encourages visitors to plan future travel as tourism fuels local communities.
- Push on planning/messaging for higher profile events i.e. Fantasy Fest, Hemingway Days etc.

PAID MEDIA (TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL)

- Execute strategy built in phase I per campaign, channel i.e. continue bridge campaign or consider relaunch regular national campaign(s).

CREATIVE/WEBSITE

- Update website to reflect advisories, remove banner alerts, if applicable. Promote bookings, signups, etc.
- Evaluate opportunities to strategically leverage personalized content that tells consumers we're open.
- Continue consumer emails that align with PR and media messaging. Could revert to inspirational content. Leverage UGC and real-time imagery.
- Resume creation, amplification and promotion of PR activations and larger on-Island events.
- Maintain/update [Recovery Lodging website](#) with local property teams and deactivate the site at the appropriate

PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

- Shift focus away from hurricane messaging where it is possible.
- Communicate readiness by setting all activities live with partners as planned.
- Ensure that briefing docs for upcoming events include messaging that focuses on tourism strength and visitors already back.

TRADE / SALES (INTERNATIONAL)

- Amplify international trade efforts i.e., email blast with trade contacts emphasizing readiness/open, organize FAM trips that show we're open for visitors, confirm presence at key trade shows to increase destination visibility among decision makers and run training incentives.
- Assess suitable co-ops and campaign partnerships for trade support and sales driving strategy.

LEISURE & MICE SALES

- ★ □ Continue sales calls to tourism stakeholders as needed so execs and comms know what's open.
- Communicate with strategic partners to leverage activations at upcoming tradeshows.
- Synchronize messages with stakeholders attending tradeshow and roadshow events.
- Review contracts for the next 90 days to determine the feasibility of force majeure claims.

LEVEL THREE

EMERGENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE - ROAD CLOSURE FROM BRUSH FIRE

SITUATION: ROAD CLOSURE CAUSED BY BRUSH FIRE IMPACTS ACCESS TO THE FLORIDA KEYS & KEY WEST

HOW DOES EMERGENCY SERVICES, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OR TDC LEARN ABOUT A ROAD CLOSURE OR INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE?

- Typically, with a road closure or infrastructure failure, such as a bridge collapse, residents or visitors call 911 as they are stranded or injured. 911 calls go directly to the Monroe County Sheriff's office. Because this '25 situation was caused by a brush fire and the fire started in Miami-Dade County, it was Miami-Dade Fire Rescue who learned about the issue (and unfortunately did not notify anyone in Monroe County about the situation). The TDC team heard there were cars backed up and people stranded for up to five hours, thus called the Sheriff's office and County PIO to see if anyone had information.
- Road closures may also be posted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and listed via [FL511.com](https://www.fl511.com).

HOW DO EMERGENCY SERVICES OFFICIALS CONTINUE TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH OTHER COUNTY OFFICIALS?

- In the case of road closure or other infrastructure failures, the Monroe County Sheriff's office will make sure key county/municipality leaders are informed via their alert system:
- To receive Monroe County emergency info alerts, [click here](#).
- To download the Monroe County Sheriff's Office app:
 - Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/monroe-county-sheriffs-office/id794698931>
 - Google: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ocv.monroecountysheriff&hl=en_US

LEVEL THREE

EMERGENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE - ROAD CLOSURE FROM BRUSH FIRE

COMMS TEAM WORKSHEET QUESTIONS

- What is causing the road closure that is impacting access to/from Monroe County?
- Did I learn about this through a stakeholder call, thus am I certain that all the right county officials have been notified? (If not, contact the Sheriff and the Fire Department immediately.)
- Are there residents and visitors stranded due to the closure and do we need to ensure emergency services are helping with supplies, fuel, and other needs?
- This road closure was caused by a brush fire. What are the details from emergency services, Sheriff or Fire?
 - What is the current size, spread rate and direction of the brush fire?
 - What percentage of the fire is contained?
 - What impact are the wind conditions and humidity having on the brush fire?
- What is the Sheriff or FDOT and FHP reporting about the brush fire's impact on major access roads to and from the Florida Key & Key West (e.g., U.S. Highway 1, Card Sound Roads)?
 - Are all lanes closed, or is traffic still moving in one direction?
 - Are there any alternate routes open for traffic, not affected by the fire?
 - What impact is the smoke having on visibility for drivers?
 - Has the fire impacted the integrity of roads?
- Are FDOT traffic cams operational and viewable to local responders and media?
- Have there been any motor vehicle accidents and subsequent injuries?
- Are there any communities or critical infrastructure directly threatened by the brush fire and/or smoke haze?
- Is the Key West airport open, providing an alternative access point to Monroe County?
- Any misinformation being reported in the media? Has anyone posted that they are stranded and need help?
- Discuss stakeholder and public communications channels and messaging as needed.

LEVEL THREE

EMERGENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE - ROAD CLOSURE FROM BRUSH FIRE

MESSAGING

Examples only, every situation is different, statements will vary. All advisories and media information approved in advance by the appropriate emergency services PIO. Audience does not need to be segmented for this communication.

- ✓ Road Closure Announcement
- ✓ Fire Containment / Road Closure Update
- ✓ Reopening Announcement

ROAD CLOSURE ANNOUNCEMENT

Visit Florida Keys/Monroe County Tourist Development Council (TDC) is advising travelers that intermittent closures and significant delays are now occurring along the 18-Mile Stretch of U.S. 1 due to a brush fire in south Miami-Dade County. U.S. 1 is the main access road into and out of the Florida Keys, and the alternate route, Card Sound Road, is currently closed in both directions. The wildfire—officially named <INSERT NAME> Fire—is being managed by Miami-Dade Fire Rescue and the Florida Forest Service and has already burned <INSERT NUMBER> of acres.

Drivers should expect delays in both directions and are urged to avoid the area if possible. A Red Flag Warning has been issued by the National Weather Service due to low humidity and gusty winds, further complicating fire suppression efforts.

For updates, visit the Monroe County Sheriff's Office website at <https://www.keyso.net/> or follow <https://www.instagram.com/mcsoflkeys/> or <https://www.facebook.com/floridakeysheriff> and monitor [FL511.com](https://www.fl511.com) or the Monroe County Sheriff's Office mobile app for traffic alerts.

FIRE CONTAINMENT / ROAD CLOSURE UPDATE

Visit Florida Keys/Monroe County Tourist Development Council (TDC) is providing an update on access into and out of the Florida Keys following the brush fire in south Miami-Dade County. As of today, the northbound lane of the 18-Mile Stretch of U.S. 1 has reopened to traffic, while the southbound lane remains subject to intermittent closures. Card Sound Road continues to be closed in both directions.

The wildfire, known as the <INSERT NAME> Fire, is now <INSERT PERCENTAGE>% contained thanks to efforts led by Miami-Dade Fire Rescue and the Florida Forest Service. While fire activity has decreased, travelers should still expect delays and are encouraged to check traffic conditions before departing.

For updates, visit the Monroe County Sheriff's Office website at <https://www.keyso.net/> or follow <https://www.instagram.com/mcsoflkeys/> or <https://www.facebook.com/floridakeysheriff> and monitor [FL511.com](https://www.fl511.com) or the Monroe County Sheriff's Office mobile app for traffic alerts.

LEVEL THREE

EMERGENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE - ROAD CLOSURE FROM BRUSH FIRE

MESSAGING

Examples only, every situation is different, statements will vary. All advisories and media information approved in advance by the appropriate emergency services PIO. Audience does not need to be segmented for this communication.

REOPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

Both U.S. 1 and Card Sound Road are now fully open, restoring complete access to the Florida Keys after fire crews successfully contained a large wildfire in south Miami-Dade County. The Florida Forest Service reports the blaze is now 80% contained, with no further spread expected.

The fire, which ignited on <INSERT DATE>, burned <INSERT NUMBER> acres and was tackled by Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, the Florida Forest Service, and supporting strike teams. To protect the area and allow fire crews to work safely, road closures were necessary between <INSERT DAY> and <INSERT DAY> along the main travel routes into and out of the Florida Keys & Key West. No damage was reported to homes or businesses, and all local businesses are currently open and operating.

"We are deeply grateful for the dedicated firefighters, emergency responders, and partner agencies who worked tirelessly to contain the <INSERT NAME> Fire. Their swift and coordinated response has been crucial in protecting our roads and preserving the natural environment," said <insert approved spokesperson>.

Although no further disruptions are anticipated, travelers are encouraged to download the Monroe County Sheriff's Office app for real-time traffic alerts, including future road closures, re-openings, and slowdowns.



LEVEL THREE

EMERGENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE - ROAD CLOSURE FROM BRUSH FIRE

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: OWNED & EARNED MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Depending on the duration of the road closures and severity of the brushfire, the TDC may adopt a selective channel strategy for real-time updates leveraging X (formerly Twitter) as a primary platform for timely communication. Image-focused social channels can continue to post inspiring branded imagery and videos unless the situation escalates for an extended period.

The TDC should continue to monitor all of its social media channels and have prepped responses for community management with the latest updates and monitor sentiment from engagement.

VFK WEBSITE

Depending on the length of the road closure, the website home page can feature an alert banner that leads to up-to-date information on the road closure, the status of brush fire containment, and any impacts on visibility owing to smoke. This should be updated every time new information is received.

The messaging should also emphasize that the destination remains open for business, while noting any specific tourism areas or businesses that are directly affected and/or temporarily closed owing to the road closures or brush fire.

As access roads reopen and the brush fire largely contained, website content should be refreshed to reflect the latest updates, highlighting positive news such as the lack of damage to homes or businesses and confirming that all local businesses are open and operating.

PAID MEDIA

The TDC's Visit Florida Keys & Key West paid media plan should be reviewed during this period of crisis, however unless the road closure or infrastructure failure is going to last a long time, no changes to the paid media program are necessary.

Sustained road closure(s) may require paid media to be paused or messaging shifted in drive markets until emergency is over. Fly market and national paid media can likely remain unchanged.

EARNED MEDIA

Proactive pitching will be halted in Florida and other drive markets during the crisis period with time reallocated to monitor the situation in local/regional media.

TURNER will monitor and flag all media coverage in order to assess the proactive recovery plan if needed, caused by catastrophic damage to infrastructure that prevents road access to The Florida Keys & Key West for an extended period.

LEVEL THREE

EMERGENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE - ROAD CLOSURE FROM BRUSH FIRE

RECOVERY TIMELINE + CHECKLIST

Recovery timelines and actions will vary based on how long access to/from Keys occurs, media and social attention, etc.

1: ASSESS DAMAGE AND DEBRIEF

- Coordinate with appropriate emergency services offices (Sheriff, FDOT) to confirm:
 - Extent of physical damage to road infrastructure; confirm reopening of roads
 - Safety conditions for travel
 - Fire containment and likelihood for flare ups
- Internal debrief - TDC staff, agency partners, impacted destination stakeholders.
- Flag any outstanding misinformation online and correct. See if there were visitor complaints on social due to missed flights, stranded children, etc. Align messaging.

2: DETERMINE & COORDINATE RECOVERY RESPONSE

- Coordinate messaging for unified response if warranted. Emphasize positive updates.
- If needed, draft reactive holding statement to use if contacted by media (if media or social attention).
- Determine need and extent for a South Florida / drive market recovery campaign

3: IMPLEMENT RECOVERY RESPONSE IF WARRANTED

- If needed, launch integrated South Florida / drive market recovery campaign which could include:
 - Paid Media: broadcast TV, newspapers (online) and radio (*no need to change anything unless we have a bridge collapse or road closure and access to the Keys is lost for an extended period*)
 - Influencer Marketing: consider working with local content creators and community opinion leaders on road trip/hosted visit to The Florida Keys & Key West to share real time experience.
 - Owned Channels: amplify influencer content with paid boosting and collabs with VFK's social channels.
 - Earned Media: pitch compelling, upcoming events to drive incremental earned media with open access and for business messaging.
- Determine if need to sustain a piece of recovery messaging or shift to regular marketing activity.

4: EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

- TDC/partner debrief to evaluate effective of communication efforts. Keep key learnings list in how we work with county, emergency services, municipalities.
- Measure engagement, sentiment and conversion metrics if warranted. Utilize Barcelona Principles method.
- Update crisis communications plan with any learnings.
- Archive all content and assets developed for future crisis use.

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

SITUATION: NEGATIVE IMPACT OF SARGASSUM ON THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

HOW DOES THE TDC, EMERGENCY SERVICES, OR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT LEARN ABOUT SARGASSUM PILED UP ON A COUNTY BEACH?

- Any of the above parties may learn about sargassum impacts within the destination from:
 - Media exposure (typically very negative and exaggerated)
 - Visitor or resident complaints on social media
 - The Florida Department of Health (Monroe County)
 - NOAA's Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
 - Tourism industry or community partners
 - Local city council officials / PIO's within the broader county

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SARGASSUM BEACH CLEAN UP IN MONROE COUNTY?

If the health department issues an alert, then Monroe County emergency management will get involved. If not, it's up to the municipalities to determine if they want to clean up the decaying seaweed / sargassum from their public beaches. Hotel partners often clean up their own beaches regularly but there are instances where the hotel beach is clear, but the public beach next to it has a build up of the decaying seaweed. Florida State Parks can't clean sargassum off the beaches unless it's a hazard (to turtles, humans, etc.)

WHY IS SARGASSUM A THREAT TO TOURISM?

Sargassum can have a significant negative impact on tourism. Excessive amounts of sargassum washing ashore can create unsightly beaches, produce foul odors and respiratory irritation due to the gases released when it decomposes, and restrict recreational activities, all of which deter tourists from visiting affected areas. Sargassum, a type of floating brown algae, offers important ecological benefits in the open ocean but poses significant risks when it washes ashore in large quantities. Information and unsightly photos can spread quickly on social media and media outlets, with a spotlight placed on the beach / city. This can lead to a decrease in tourism revenue for local economies.

More info about Sargassum from [National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration](https://www.noaa.gov/our-work/monitoring/sargassum/) (NOAA).

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

COMMS TEAM WORKSHEET QUESTIONS

- Where in the Florida Keys & Key West is Sargassum currently landing? Are some hotels cleaning it up and it's piling up on public beaches?
- How did we learn of the Sargassum complaints?
- Is Sargassum affecting any other areas in South & Central Florida?
- What is the volume of accumulation being observed?
- Are any beaches / coast areas temporarily closed or have restricted access owing to Sargassum build up?
- Are there any public health or safety concerns from decomposing seaweed? Did the health department issue a warning?
- Have any tourism industry partners reporting operational disruptions from the Sargassum (i.e. cancellations, unable to operate etc.)
- Have visitors and/or locals been sharing and commenting about sargassum in the destination on social media?
- Has the media picked covered this information yet? where?
- What are the short / medium / long term forecasts for Sargassum landings this season in The Florida Keys & Key West?
- Which entities are responsible for Sargassum removal in each DAC?
- How quickly can clean up crews be mobilized?

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

AUDIENCE & MESSAGING

Examples only, every situation is different, statements vary.

- ✓ Local tourism industry
- ✓ Current visitors in destination
- ✓ Forward bookings from travelers
- ✓ Media (reactive if there are inbound queries)
- ✓ Travel Trade
- ✓ Meeting Planners

LOCAL TOURISM INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Sargassum is a seasonal, naturally occurring seaweed that can appear on shorelines in sporadic locations throughout Florida. Local community and hospitality partners are proactively working to manage the specific areas affected, to minimize impact for visitors. For current conditions, visit [the sargassum information](#) page on the TDC website.

CURRENT VISITORS IN DESTINATION

Sargassum is a seasonal, naturally occurring seaweed that can appear on shorelines in sporadic locations throughout Florida. It can be a valuable part of the destination's marine ecosystem. As it moves with tides, currents and wind, it can provide shade and a safe haven for baitfish, and gamefish such as mahi-mahi and sea turtles.

Local community and hospitality partners are proactively working to manage the specific beach affected, to minimize impact for visitors.

Florida Department of Health (FDOH) does not recommend beach goers to engage with sargassum. The agency has developed the following guidelines related to sargassum on beaches:

- Always supervise children at the beach.
- Avoid touching or swimming near seaweed to avoid irritation by tiny sea creatures that live in it.
- Stay away from the impacted beach if you experience irritation or breathing problems. Avoid or limit time if you have asthma or other respiratory problems.
- Close windows and doors if you are staying near an impacted beach.

For current conditions and other travel tips, visit [the sargassum information](#) page on the TDC website.

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

AUDIENCE & MESSAGING (CONT.)

FORWARD BOOKINGS (REACTIVE ONLY, CONSUMER)

Sargassum is a naturally occurring, seasonal seaweed that may appear along some shorelines in The Florida Keys. Its presence is influenced by ocean currents and weather patterns, and conditions can vary widely by location and day.

The majority of beaches in The Florida Keys & Key West remain unaffected, so there should not be an impact on your upcoming travel. *<insert tailored info if specific to one beach with attention i.e. if sargassum at <insert location>, the hotel cleans it up daily at 7 a.m. thus visitors don't experience seaweed on the beach>*. From world-renowned diving and snorkeling on offshore coral reefs to exploring historic sites, enjoying waterfront dining, and soaking in local culture and music, there are endless ways to enjoy the destination beyond the shoreline.

Local officials and hospitality partners actively monitor shoreline conditions and are committed to maintaining clean and welcoming environments wherever accumulation occurs.

For the latest updates, tips, and information on current conditions, travelers are encouraged to visit [the sargassum information](#) page on the TDC website.

MEDIA STATEMENT (REACTIVE)

Sargassum is a naturally occurring, seasonal seaweed that can accumulate in varying amounts along shorelines across Florida, including parts of the Florida Keys & Key West. Its presence is influenced by ocean currents and weather patterns, and it tends to vary widely by location and time of year.

The tourism industry across the Florida Keys & Key West actively monitors conditions in coordination with local municipalities and hospitality partners. Clean-up efforts are *<underway or handled daily by <TK hotel name> and/or in any areas where shoreline accumulation occurs>*, to ensure minimal disruption for visitors.

For the latest beach conditions, traveler tips, and updated information on affected areas, please visit [the sargassum information](#) page on the TDC website

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

AUDIENCE & MESSAGING (CONT.)

TRAVEL TRADE (REACTIVE)

Sargassum is a natural and seasonal seaweed that may occasionally appear along certain shorelines in the Florida Keys & Key West. It's carried by ocean currents and tends to vary from day to day and place to place.

For clients with upcoming bookings, there's no need to change plans as the vast majority of our beaches are unaffected and there are endless experiences that make The Florida Keys & Key West so special. From offshore snorkeling and diving to fishing, cultural tours, waterfront dining, sunset sails, and live music, The Florida Keys & Key West offers a wide variety of adventures.

<INSERT update if there was a question on specific location with attention/visuals> Local tourism and hospitality teams actively manage impacted areas to ensure visitors continue to enjoy a memorable and welcoming stay. For real-time updates and travel tips, clients can visit [the sargassum information](#) page on the TDC website

MEETINGS TRADE (REACTIVE)

Sargassum is a naturally occurring, seasonal seaweed that may appear along some shorelines in The Florida Keys & Key West, depending on ocean currents and weather patterns. Its presence is localized and changes frequently. Many beaches and waterfront venues remain unaffected.

Meeting planners with upcoming programs that include beach-based elements are encouraged to:

- Check with venues and/or local DMC partner to confirm current conditions at specific locations
- Explore alternative waterfront or indoor options if adjustments are needed
- Communicate with local hospitality partners, who are proactively managing any affected areas to ensure events continue smoothly

Importantly, the majority of meetings, group activities, and signature experiences in the destination, such as offshore excursions, cultural tours, group dining, and wellness offerings remain completely unaffected.

The Florida Keys and Key West continue to offer a compelling backdrop for successful gatherings, with warm hospitality, vibrant settings, and a wide array of flexible venues.

For current shoreline conditions and planning tips, visit [the sargassum information](#) page on the TDC website

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: OWNED & EARNED MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

During periods of sporadic Sargassum accumulation on destination beaches, rework social media posts to showcase non-beach scenes, other experiences across The Florida Keys & Key West (or show beaches without sargassum, as sometimes there can be an exaggeration that 'all' beaches are piled high with sargassum when it was one beach).

Monitor conversation and sentiment. Have prepared, approved responses for prompt community management shared via DMs.

Should social conversation escalate, generating negative sentiment, publicly join the conversation with pre-approved responses to provide balance to the issue.

VFK WEBSITE

Update existing [the sargassum information](#) linked from the homepage of [the TDC website](#).

PAID MEDIA

Should not be impacted, but Visit Florida Keys & Key West's paid media plan can be reviewed if a lot of attention paid to this topic in-state or nationally. If warranted, switch out digital creative showing beaches to other locations/experiences in the destination.

EARNED MEDIA

Monitor coverage of Sargassum issue - locally, regionally and nationally. Use prepared responses for media inquiries that warrant a response.

Pull back on pitching beach-related experiences (depending on coverage/attention), and upweight unique events, marine conservation, wellness, culinary and history/heritage story ideas.

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

RECOVERY TIMELINE + CHECKLIST

Recovery timelines and actions will vary based on media and online attention.

STEP 1: DAYS 1-3: IMMEDIATE IMPACT + SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

- Identify specific beaches/waterfront parks/public access points to the water impacted by Sargassum.
- Coordinate with local municipalities, DACs and industry partners to understand cleanup progress and ongoing needs. Confirm responsible clean-up agencies by DAC (city, county, state, private sector/industry).
- FDOH / NOAA evaluates health and safety: air quality/odors, water access restrictions at impacted areas.
- Create/update FAQ for visitors and the industry. Establish “clean beach” alerts with participating municipalities or partners to help guide visitors (if needed).
- Prepare holding language for stakeholder emails and media inquiries.
- Coordinate messaging with Visit Florida and/or other affected Florida DMOs for a unified tone.
- Flag misinformation online and correct.

STEP 2: DAYS 4 - 7 OPERATION RESPONSE + COMMS READINESS

- Update existing [sargassum information](#) page on the TDC website with link from homepage as needed. Page can include a map or a list of affected and unaffected beaches as well as updates on clean up (as long as it's updated frequently).
- Coordinate messaging with local municipalities, DACs, the tourism industry and other community partners.
- Capture video/images of clean-up crews and unaffected areas for use as needed in communications.
- Provide approved talking points to front-line hospitality staff.

STEP 3: WEEK 2 - POSITIVE MESSAGING + INITIAL RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

- If the impact of Sargassum is severe across the destination:
 - Begin daily media alerts outlining what's still open and not impacted across the destination.
 - Use onsite webcams across the destination to share real-time visuals to guide visitor expectations, amplify on VFK's social channels with paid boosting.
 - Encourage destination partners and residents to share firsthand photos of clear beaches using an approved hashtag.
 - Utilize owned and earned media channels to showcase alternative visitor experiences not impacted by Sargassum across The Florida Keys & Key West.
 - Monitor media daily and develop and utilize approved messaging to respond to negative coverage and journalist inquiries.

LEVEL TWO

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: SARGASSUM

RECOVERY TIMELINE + CHECKLIST

Recovery timelines and actions will vary based on media and online attention.

STEP 3 (CONT): WEEK 2 - POSITIVE MESSAGING + INITIAL RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

- If the impact is minimal across the destination:
 - Monitor for new accumulation points and successful clean-up activity to keep the microsite updated.
 - Use onsite live webcams across the destination to share real-time visuals to guide visitor expectations.
 - Monitor media daily and develop and utilize approved messaging to respond to negative coverage and journalist inquiries.

STEP 4: WEEKS 3-4: ONGOING REPUTATION MANAGEMENT + BAU

- Resume business as usual (BAU) marketing activity if halted.
- Continue to monitor social media sentiment and editorial coverage for lingering misconceptions. Correct as needed with approved messaging.
- Sustain visitor confidence with the ongoing paid amplification of real-time footage of web cams across the destination from Visit Florida Keys & Key West's social media channels.

STEP 5: WEEKS 4 - 6: EVALUATIONS & LEARNINGS

- TDC/partner debrief to evaluate effective communication efforts. Keep a key learning list.
- Update Sargassum response templates, checklists, and FAQ language.
- Archive all content and assets developed for future use.
- Measure engagement, sentiment and conversion metrics from recovery campaign activities if needed.

MONITORING & REPORTING DURING A CRISIS

For each situation, TURNER will provide real-time traditional and online media reporting that includes links to articles and online sentiment, as well as strategic guidance on media relations response/messaging; our measurement practices adhere to the Barcelona Principles. OMG will monitor social media and share activity, sentiment and response recommendations. Sample media reporting from the recent road closure due to the brush fires below:

NEWS COVERAGE

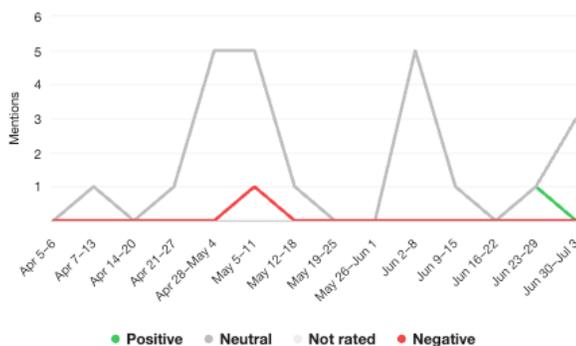
Sample below - real-time and flagged via email for trending stories.

Date	Outlet	Outlet Type	Article	Impressions	Florida Keys Mention
5/8/25	Boca News Now	Online	Florida Keys Burning: Major Roads In, Out Closed	217,492	☑
5/8/25	CBS News Miami	Online	"Growing brush fire impacts travel to Florida Keys	43927397	☑
5/8/25	CBS News Miami	Online	Access to Florida Keys cut off as 18-mile stretch and Card Sound Road shut down due to brush fire"	43927397	☑
5/8/25	CBS News West Palm Beach	Online	Brush fire shuts down northbound traffic on U.S. 1's 18-Mile Stretch out of Florida Keys	1024023	☑
5/8/25	Islander News	Online	Brush fire closes road leading into the Florida Keys	78801	☑
5/8/25	Local 10 News	Online	Crews battling brush fire in southwest Miami-Dade	1100933	☑
5/8/25	Miami Herald	Online	Some roads into the Keys reopen as fire crews try to contain a brushfire	3,676,949	☑
5/8/25	Yahoo! News	Online	All roads to Keys reopen as fire crews continue to battle brushfire	48,118,472	☑
5/8/25	NBC Miami	Online	Wildfire burns in Miami-Dade, strands drivers going in and out of Florida Keys	882144	☑
5/8/25	The Tampa Free Press	Online	Brush Fire Forces Closure Of 18-Mile Stretch And Card Sound Road, Disrupting Florida Keys Traffic	63,259	☑
	WPLG (Local 10)	Online	Brush fire continues to disrupt traffic to and from the Florida Keys and Florida City	1100933	☑
5/8/25	WSVN Miami	Online	Brush fire in South Miami-Dade burns nearly 350 acres, 25% contained; portions of US 1, Card Sound Road closed	903,413	☑
5/8/25	WPBF News (ABC)	Online	News To Go: May 9, 2025	256817	☑
5/9/25	CBS News Miami	Online	Card Sound Road Reopens as Brush Fire Continues	43927397	☑

SOCIAL DASHBOARDS

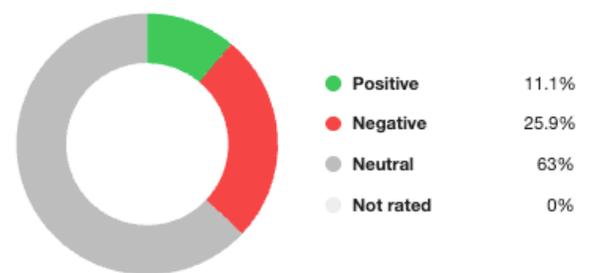
Sentiment Trend

Last 90 days



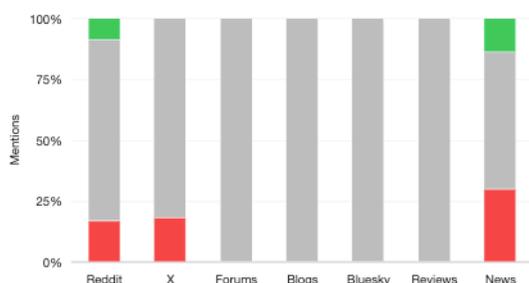
Sentiment Breakdown

Last 90 days



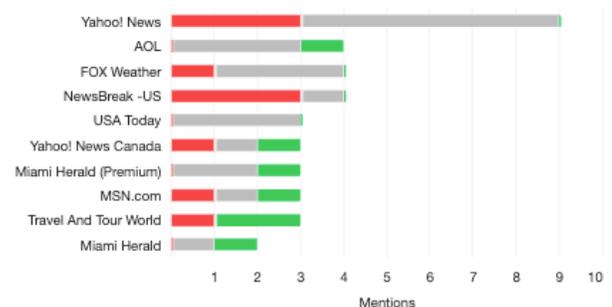
Sentiment by Source Type

Last 90 days



Top Publications with Sentiment

Last 90 days



POST CRISIS EVALUATION FORM

Debriefing after a crisis or emergency is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of the communications program, i.e. what worked, what didn't, did our avenues of communication reach stakeholders, media or social media reaction and how to improve future response strategies.

SAMPLE POST-CRISIS DEBRIEF EVALUATION FORM FOR COMMS TEAM

Situation Overview

- Issue/Emergency/Crisis with Alert Level 1, 2, 3 or 4 (name/duration of crisis):
- Cause of the situation:
- Has the situation been resolved or is it an ongoing issue:
- Perceived or verified impact on tourism:
- Which parties did we work with during this situation? MCEM, NWS, FDOH, Municipalities, Sheriff, Fire, etc.
 - Key learnings from chain of comms / needs for next situation:

Communications Objectives

- What were our key communications goals i.e., public safety, minimizing media coverage of an issue, reputation management, minimizing cancellations?

Audience & Messaging

- Who were our key audiences for this situation? (tourism stakeholders, visitors, media)
- Did we tailor messaging effectively for each audience?
- Were we transparent without causing alarm?
- Were we proactive with recovery messaging / plans?

Channels & Tools

- What communication channels were used and evaluate effectiveness by platform (website alerts, email, text, press releases, social media, media interviews)?
- Discuss summary of media relations and social media monitoring i.e. sentiment, misinformation, tone.
- Did stakeholders receive important messages?

Timing & Coordination

- Were we able to swiftly update communication as the situation evolved? any bottlenecks to improve?
- Did internal teams work together effectively (TDC, agency partners) i.e. roles clear? decision-making swift?

Lessons Learned

- What worked well?
- What didn't work and why?
- What can we do different?
- Did we save all content and assets for future use in shared file?
- Do we need to update our crisis plan i.e. different parties, new contacts, platform, messaging.



The
Florida Keys
& Key West
come as you are[®]