

Myrtle Beach
2017 Economic Impact Study
—May 2018—

Objectives:

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

Who we talked to:

- The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce provided us with a list of VisitMyrtleBeach.com visitors and E-newsletter recipients.

	n-size
Email - Website Guide Order	1,058
E-newsletter	1,506
Website survey	101
Panelists	255
Total completes	2,920
Margin of Error	±1.8%

- Respondents were surveyed in April-May 2018.



- Among those who consider/inquire, over half convert with a high return per marketing dollar
- Once here, visitors are spending more than in previous years
- Visitors are extremely satisfied (Net Promoter Score is extremely high)
- The Internet continues to be a primary source of information and influences the consideration of Myrtle Beach as a destination

Marketing communications continue to generate and convert a significant volume of visitors, while the proportion of new converts is increasing

The conversion rate is an estimated **54%** among website visitors, resulting in an estimated 4,380,000 travel parties in 2017.

Among visitors, **46% are Repeat Converts** and **41% are New Converts**—visiting the Myrtle Beach area for the first time ever in 2017. 13% are Lapsed Converts (last visited 3+ years ago).

Returns on our marketing spend are substantial and sustained

On average, guests spent \$2,933 per group over the length of their Myrtle Beach stay – that’s an estimated **\$524 dollars of revenue per marketing dollar** spent from *converted site visitors alone*.

Our Net Promoter Score of 83% beats competitive destinations and reveals powerful word-of-mouth equity for the Myrtle Beach area

A significant majority of Myrtle Beach visitors highly recommend us, which likely accounts for the sustained high levels of Repeat Converts and New Converts.

Among all Converts, **39% are already making 2018 plans**, while an additional 37% would 'definitely consider' returning. Furthermore, 22% of New Converts are already making 2018 plans.

The Internet remains the most utilized information source for trip planning, with 83% using it in vacation planning

Among those who use the Internet in planning, **VisitMyrtleBeach.com is a vital resource: it is used by 82% of Converts. Furthermore, 60% say the site influenced their decision.**

Half (50%) of Converts begin planning their visit 1 to 4 months in advance, and 36% begin planning 4+ months in advance. Advance trip planning coincides with VisitMyrtleBeach.com usage.

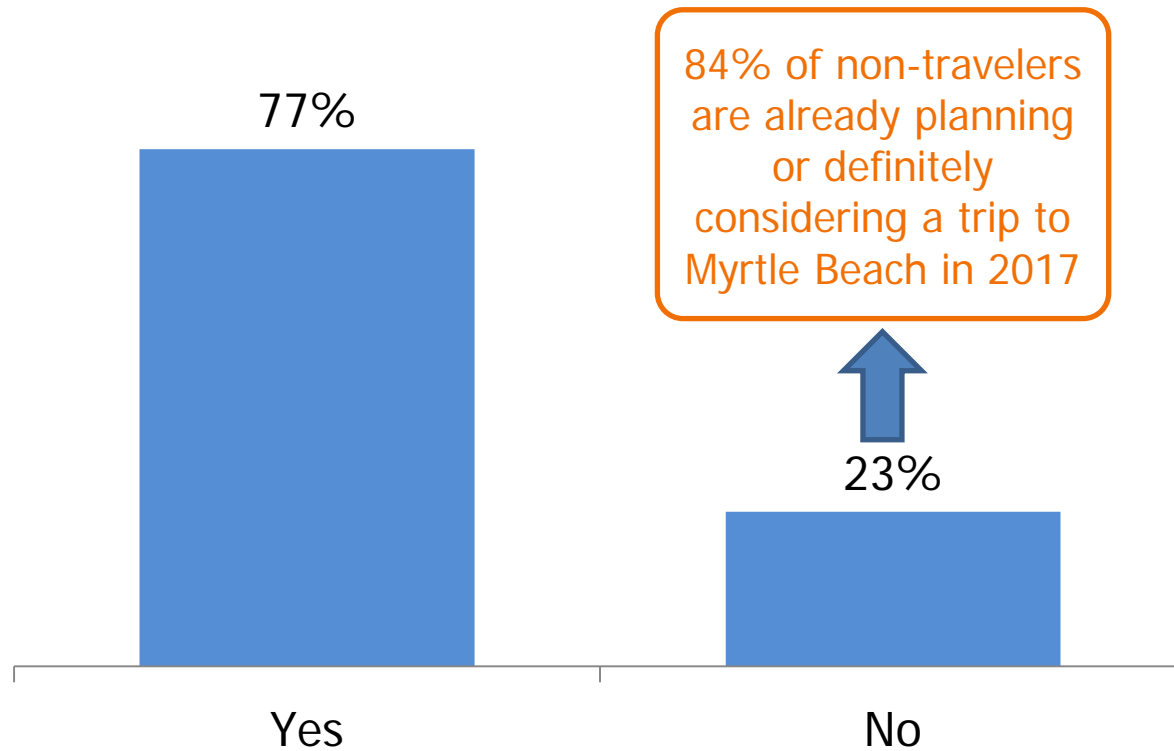


Myrtle Beach Visitation

2017 Leisure Travelers

77% of Inquirers took a leisure trip in 2017. Among those who did not take a trip in 2017, 84% are planning a trip to Myrtle Beach in 2018.

Took a Vacation in 2017

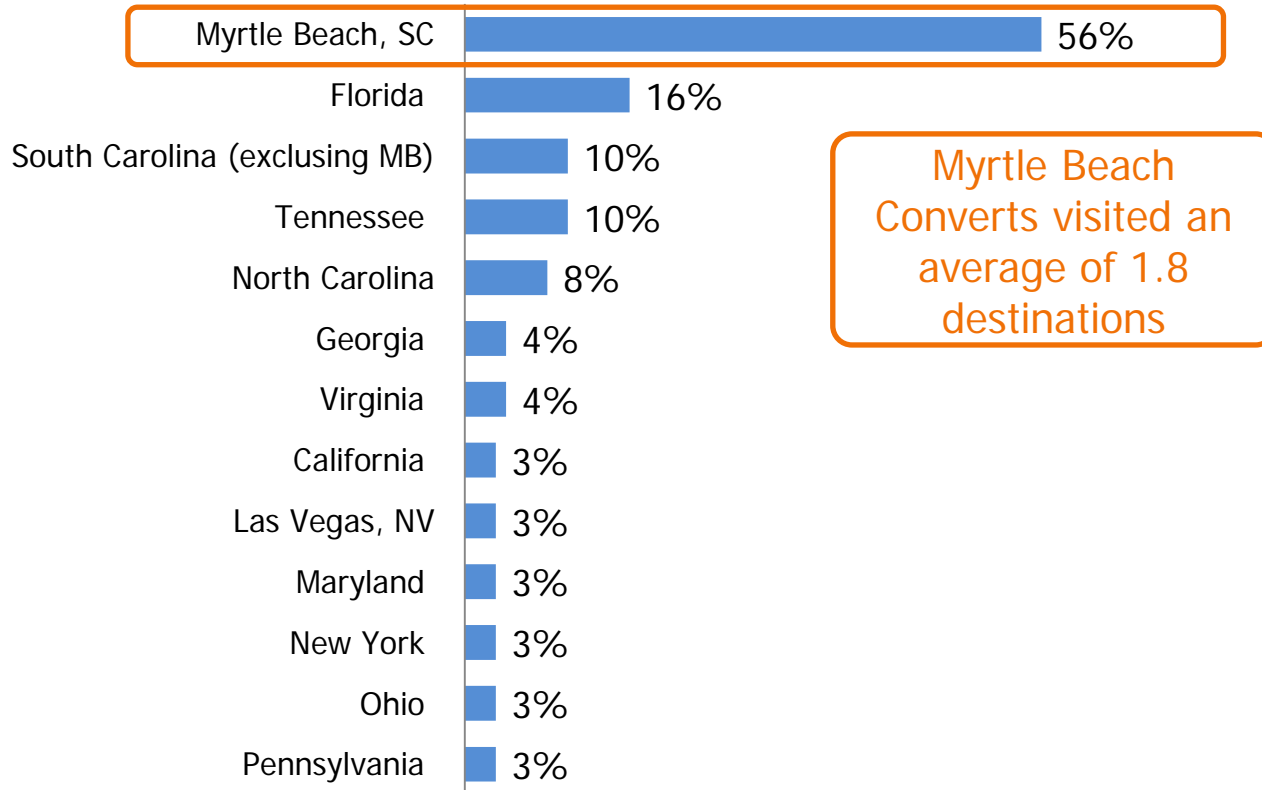


Base: Total Inquirers (n=2,957)

Vacation Destinations

Among inquirers/site visitors, 56% of those who took one or more vacations in 2017 went to Myrtle Beach.

Destinations Visited in 2017



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

Base: Took a vacation in 2017 (n=2,288)

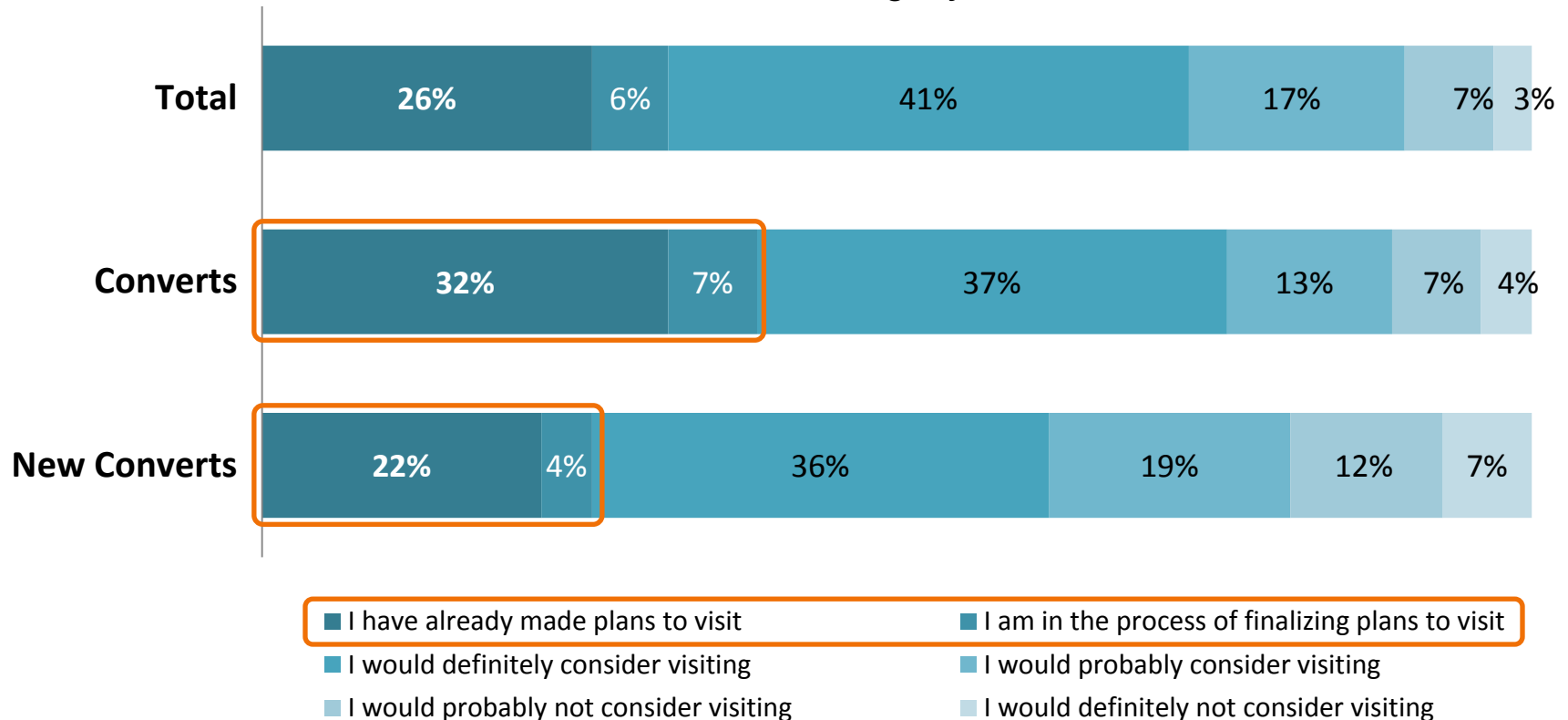
Q7. Where did you vacation in 2017? [Unaided]

Q8. Please indicate when, if ever, you vacationed overnight in each of the following destinations?

Likelihood of 2018 Myrtle Beach Visit

Among Converts, 39% are already making 2018 plans and an additional 37% would 'definitely consider' returning. In addition, 26% of first-time visitors (New Converts) are already making 2018 plans.

Likelihood of Visiting Myrtle Beach in 2018



Base: Inquirers who took a vacation in 2017 (n=2,288)

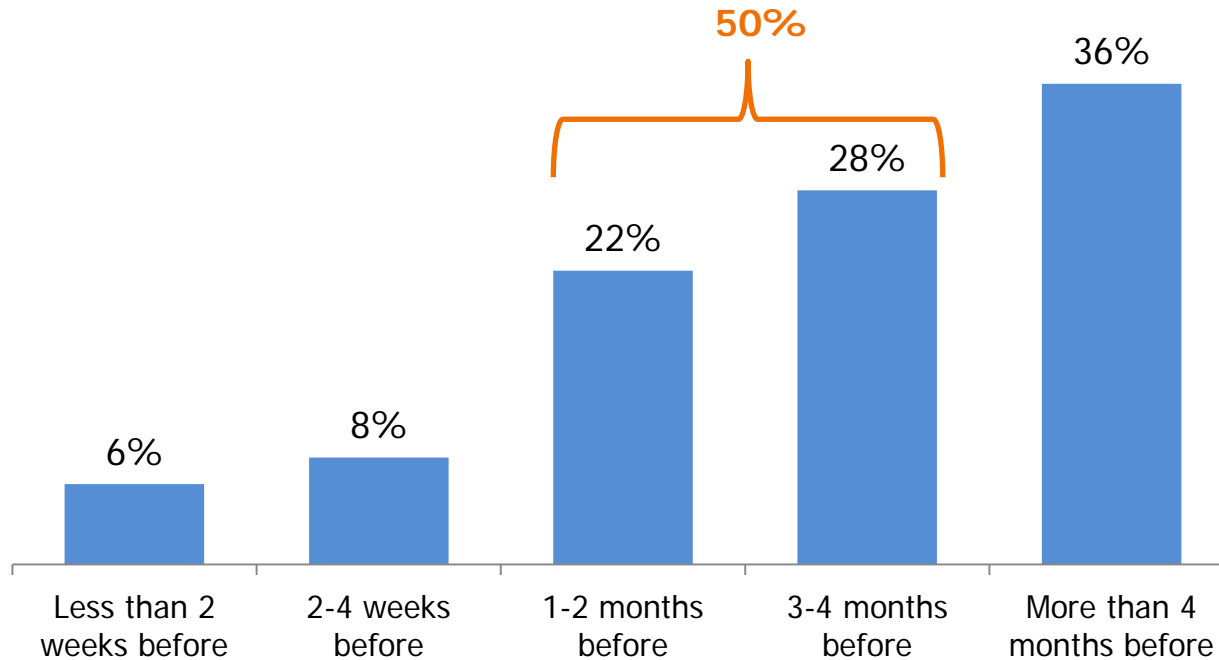


Vacation Planning & Information Sources

Vacation Planning

Half (50%) of Converts began planning their visit 1 to 4 months in advance, and 36% began planning their trip more than 4 months in advance.

How far in advance did you plan for your trip?



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 (n=1,472)

Information Source:
 Internet/Online

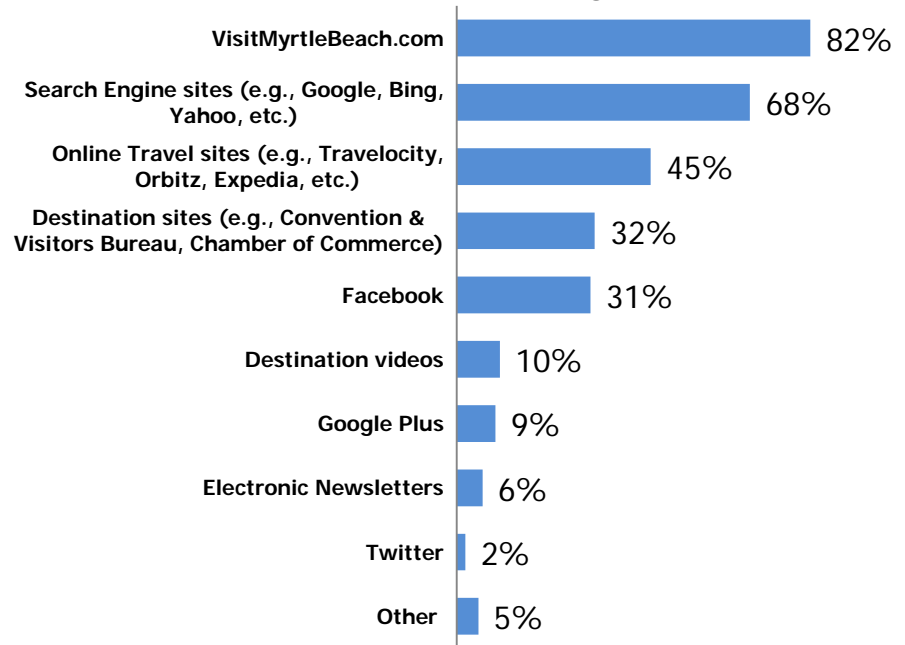
The Internet is by far the most utilized information source for trip planning (83%). Among those who use the Internet to plan their Myrtle Beach vacation, VisitMyrtleBeach.com is the most popular resource at 82%.

*Used the Internet
 in Planning*



*Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017
 (n=1,472)*

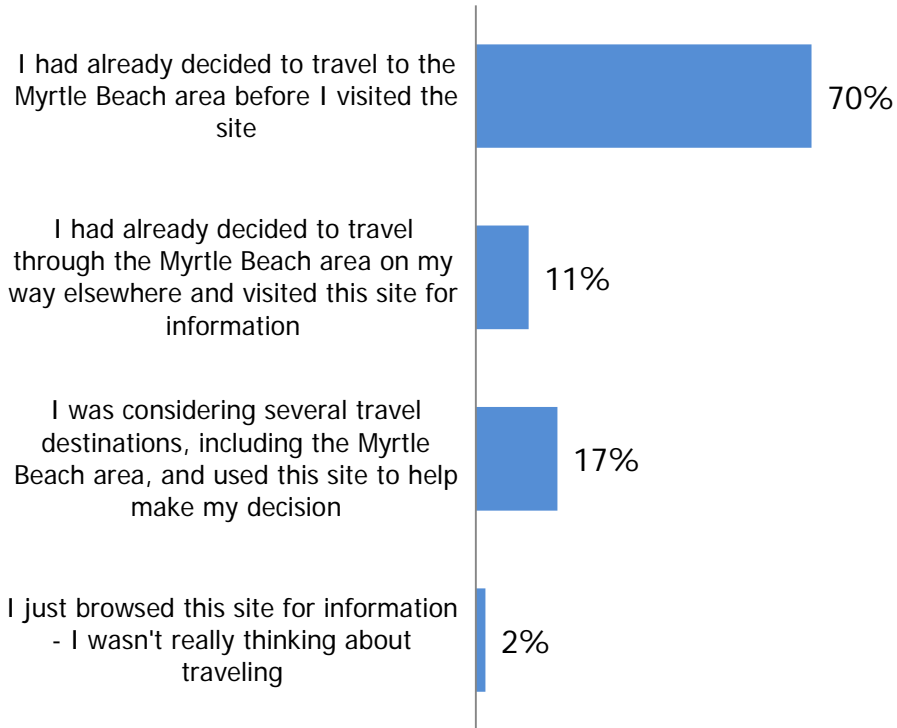
*Online Sources
 Used in Planning*



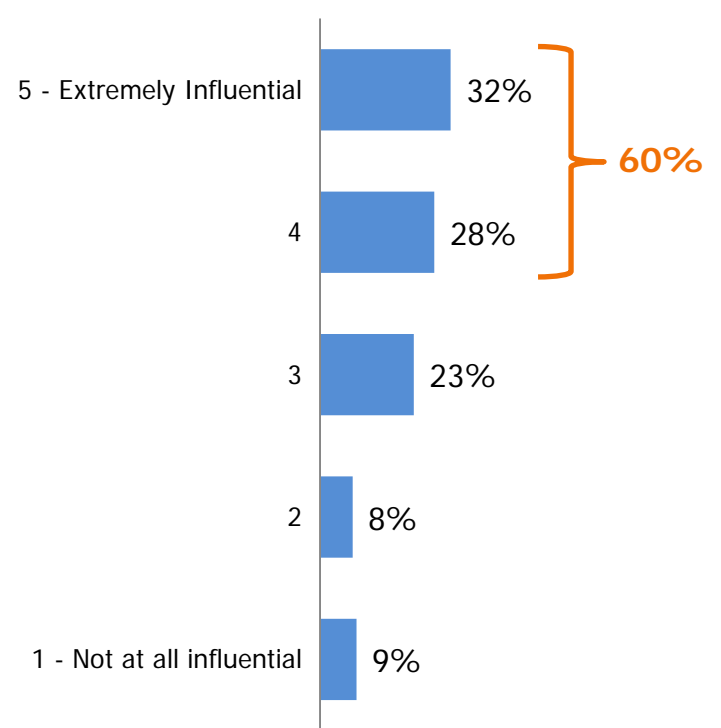
*Base: Converts who used the Internet for planning
 (n=831)*

Although the majority of visitors already decided to visit the area before going to VisitMyrtleBeach.com, 60% say the site influenced their decision – reinforcing an already strong desire to vacation here.

Role of VisitMyrtleBeach.com in MB Visitation



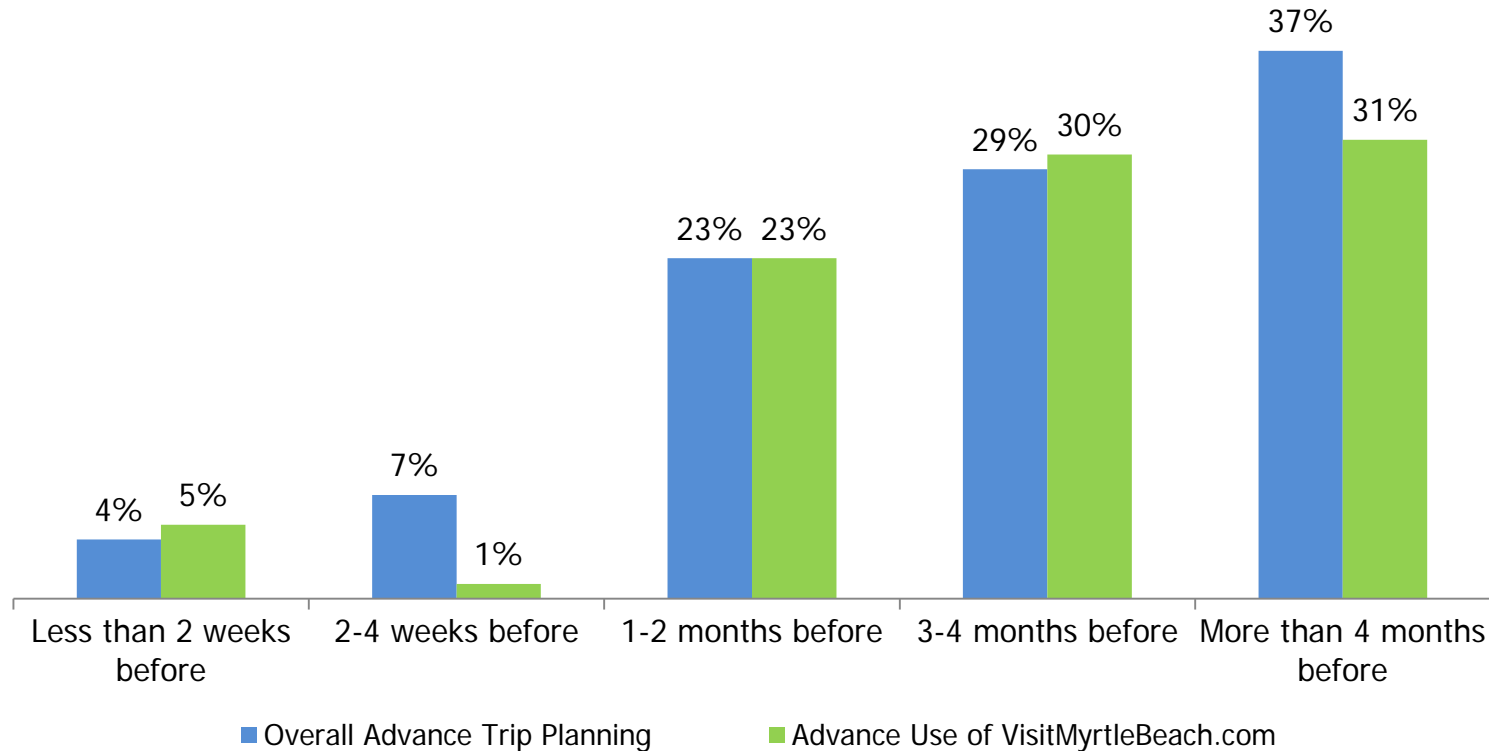
Influence of VisitMyrtleBeach.com in MB Visitation



Base: Used VisitMyrtleBeach.com in planning (n=684)

Initial VisitMyrtleBeach.com visitation mirrors overall advance trip planning, indicating the site continues to be a first step in the planning process.

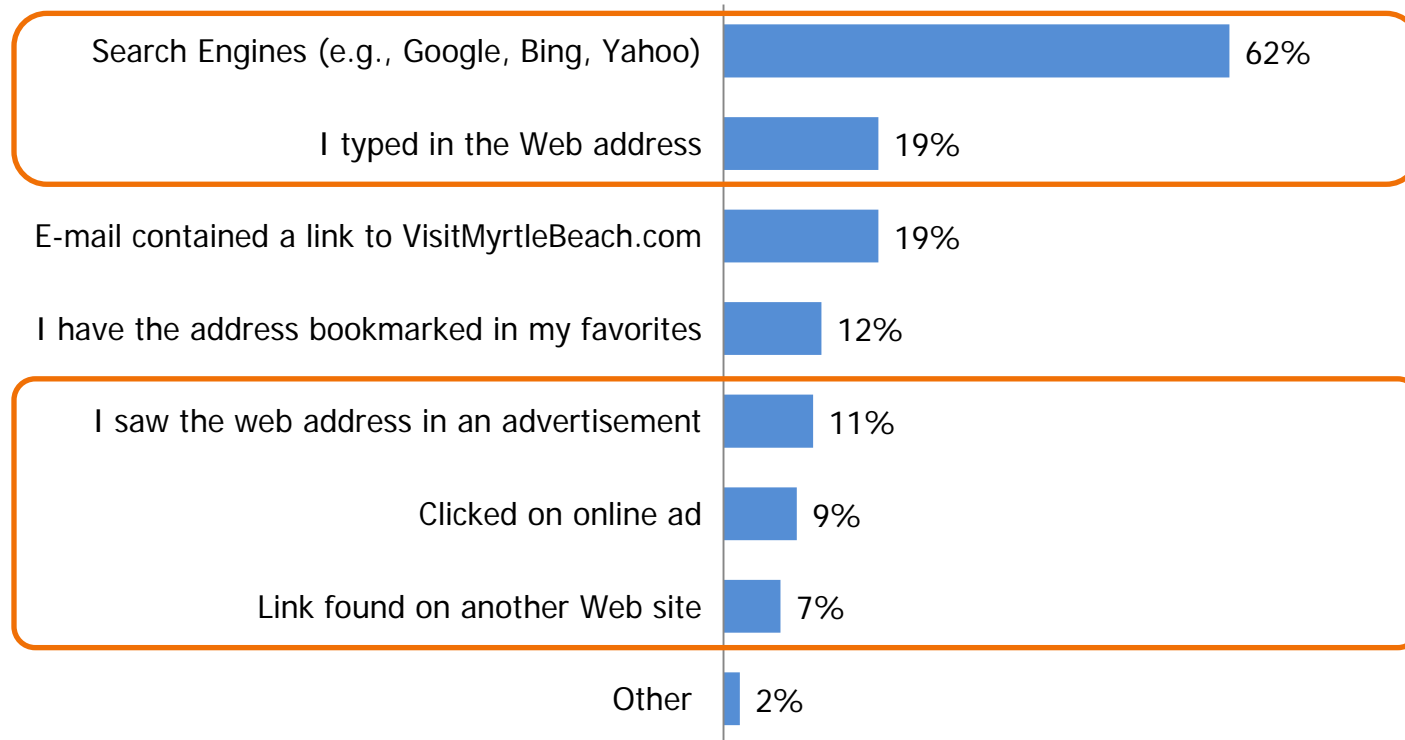
Advance Visitation of VisitMyrtleBeach.com



Base: Used VisitMyrtleBeach.com in planning (n=684)

At 62%, search engines continue to be the primary source of discovery of VisitMyrtleBeach.com. Beyond search engine optimization, other online efforts (e.g., e-mail campaigns, digital ads) are also successful at driving site visitation.

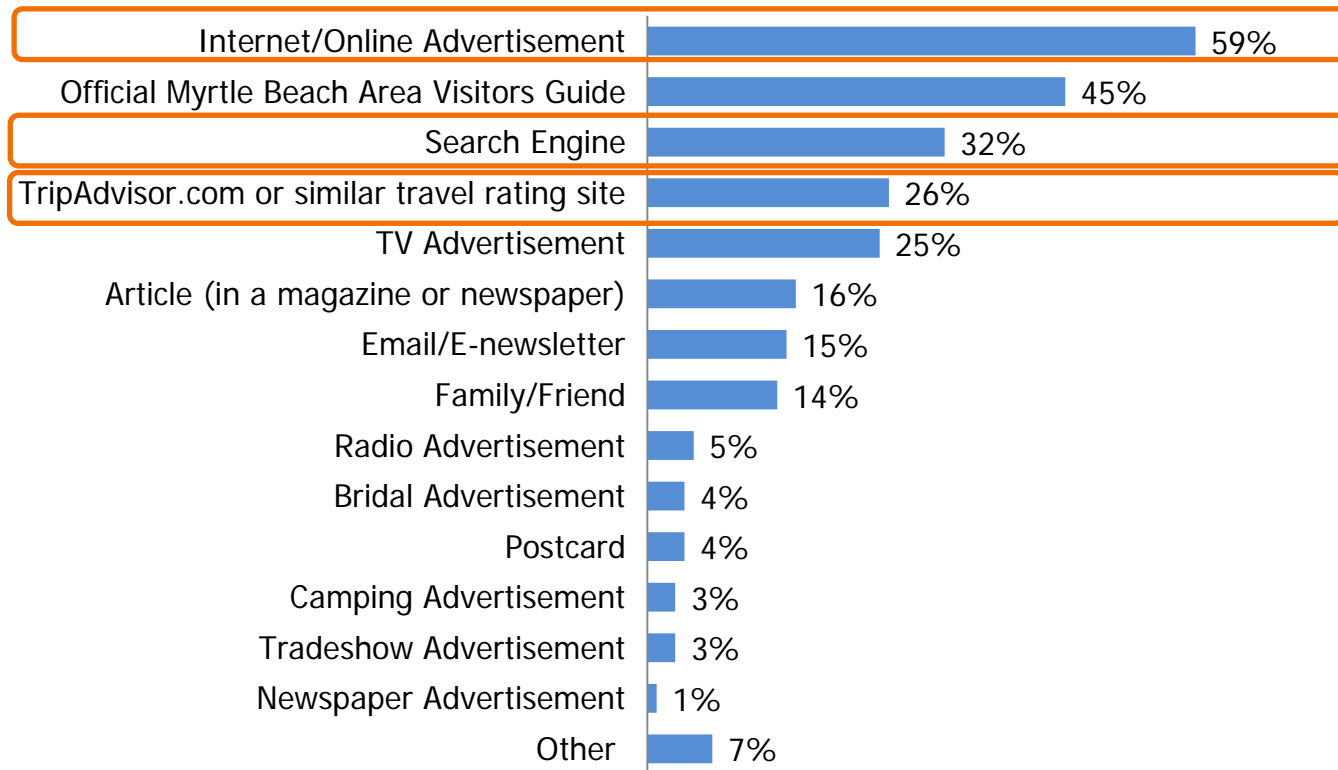
Means of Finding VisitMyrtleBeach.com



Base: Used VisitMyrtleBeach.com in planning (n=684)

Among those who mention advertising as the source of their awareness of VisitMyrtleBeach.com, 59% learn about it through the Internet, followed by the Visitors Guide (45%).

Ad Source of VisitMyrtleBeach.com



Internet
Reach:
77%

Base: Learned about VisitMyrtleBeach.com through an advertisement (n=73)

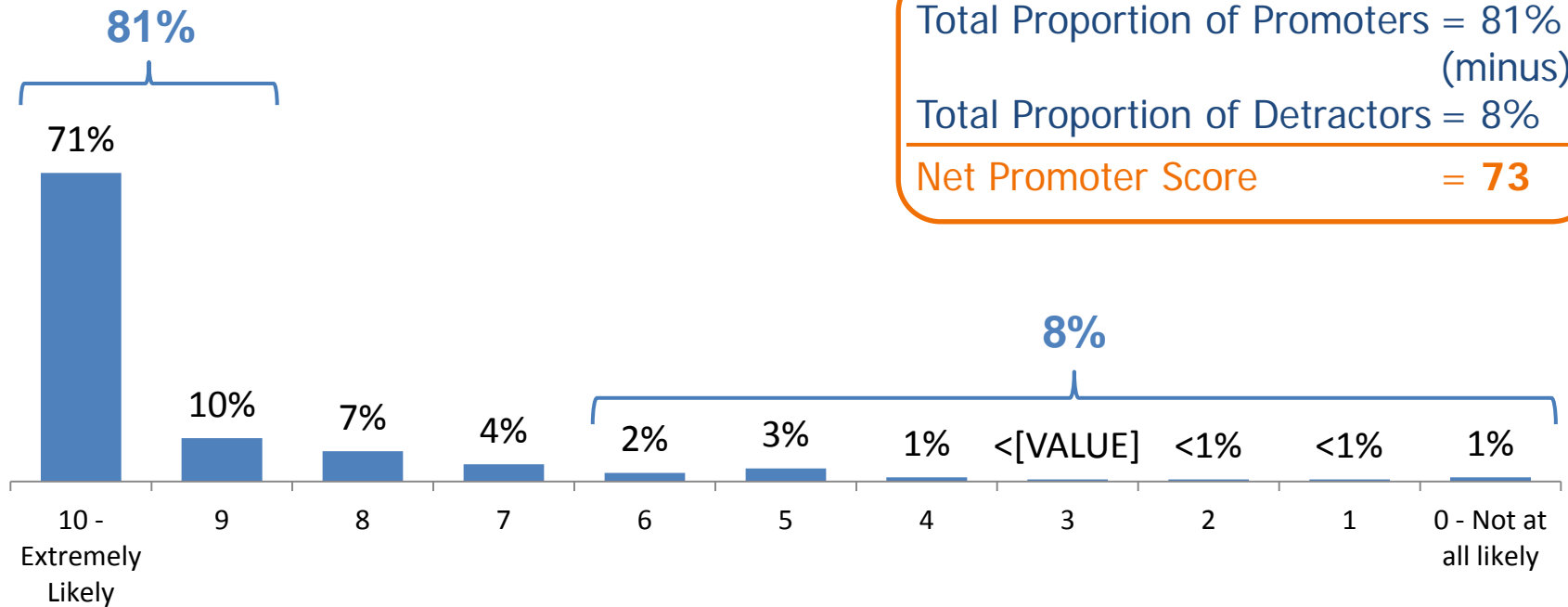


Net Promoter Score & Interest in Visiting

Net Promoter Score Index Explained

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

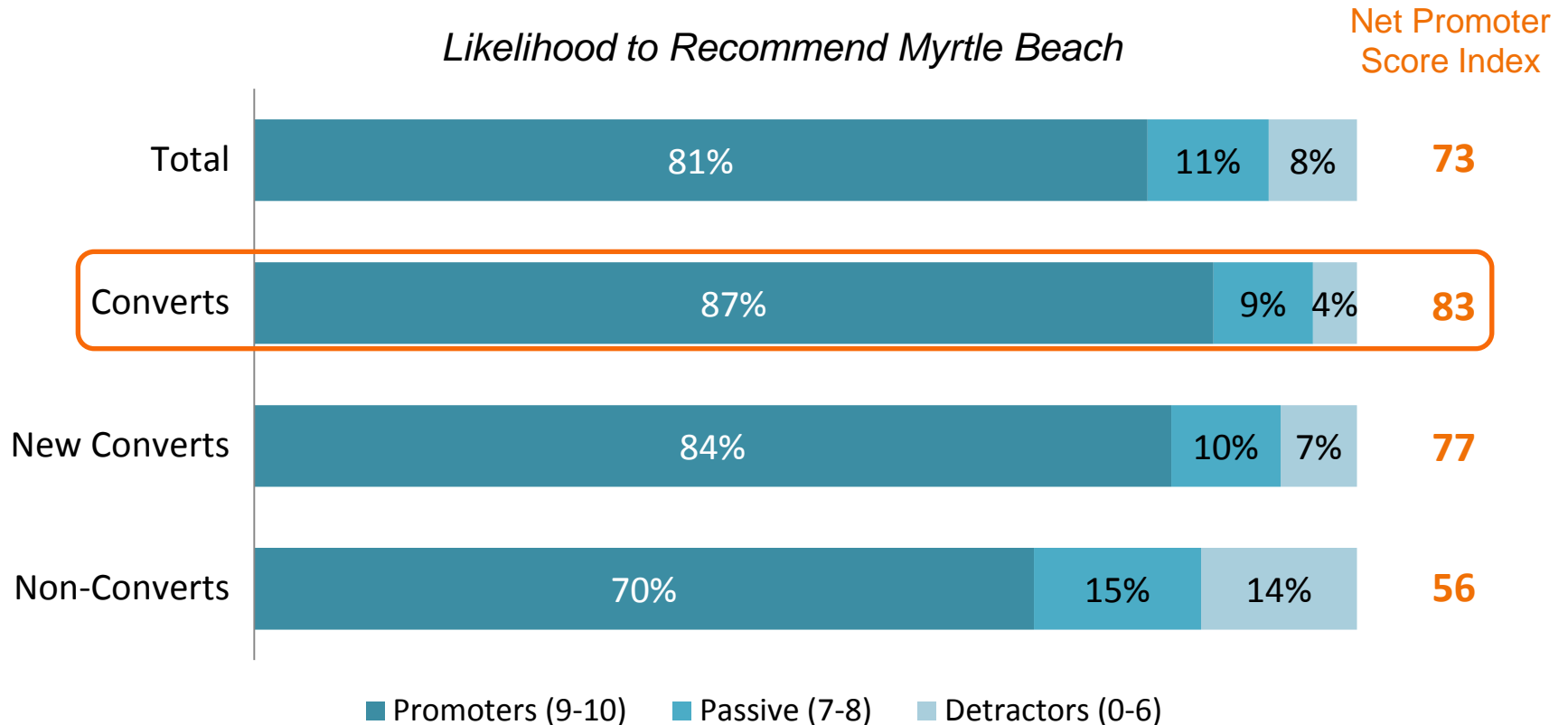
- The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a brand in and of itself and correlates extremely highly with satisfaction but is a more sensitive measure to high and low scores.
- 'Recommendations' are what every brand should aim for – we need to set that bar.



Base: Took a vacation in 2017 (n=2,284)

Net Promoter Score Index

At 83% among Converts, we have a very strong Net Promoter Score. This represents substantial word-of-mouth equity for the Myrtle Beach area.

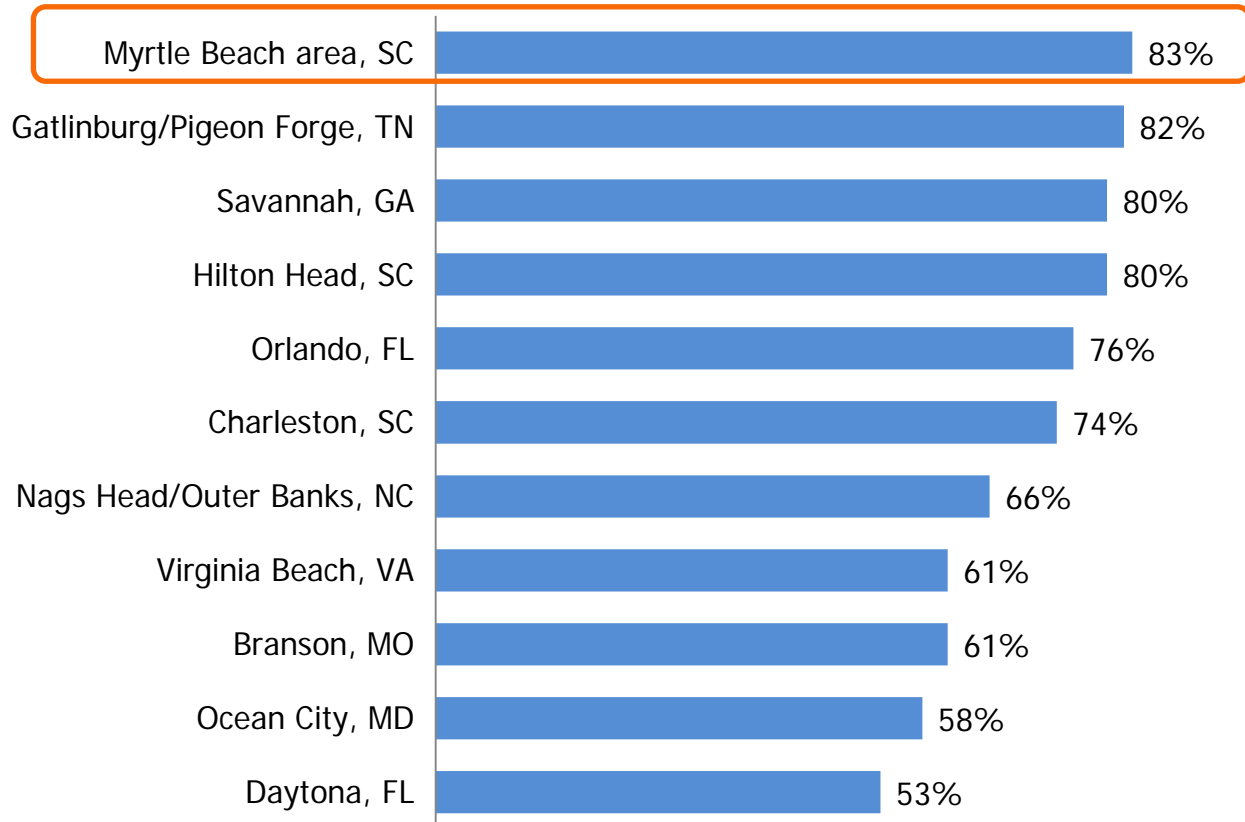


Base: Took a vacation in 2017 (n=2,284)

Net Promoter Score Index vs. Others

Among past and present visitors of these vacation destinations, the Myrtle Beach area's Net Promoter Score is the highest at 83%.

NPS Scores



Base: Varies, based on those who visited respective destinations in 2017.



Myrtle Beach Website Traffic, Inquiries & Conversion Rates

Website Conversion Calculation

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

	Stated Intent*		Factor		Resulting Intent
I will travel to the Myrtle Beach area soon and have made my reservation	65%	×	75%	=	49%
I am planning to travel to the Myrtle Beach area soon but have not made my reservation	20%	×	20%	=	4%
I may be traveling soon and am considering Myrtle Beach as a possible destination	14%	×	5%	=	1%
I do not have plans to travel to Myrtle Beach anytime soon	1%				

54%
Conversion Rate

* Source: VisitMyrtleBeach.com website survey.

Website Conversion Rate & Return

The website conversion rate of 54% is based on those who have already made reservations, planned, or are considering, a trip to Myrtle Beach.

2016 Visitor Conversion & Marketing Return*

Website Visits	13,554,881
Adjusted Website Visits ¹	8,132,929
Conversion Rate ²	54%
Converts	4,383,649
Spend Per Trip	\$2,933
Visitor Expenditures ³	\$12,857,495,347
Total Marketing/Media Expenditure	\$24,536,991
Revenue Per Marketing Dollar Spent	\$524

1. Adjusted Website Visits: Weighted down to 60% to adjust for repeat web site traffic, such as those viewing from multiple devices and/or locations over time.
2. Percentage of web site visitors who stated they have already made arrangements or are planning to visit Myrtle Beach. Factored for accuracy to 49% of "made reservations", 4% of "planning to visit Myrtle Beach", and 1% of "considering Myrtle Beach".
3. Visitor Expenditures: Projection of average trip expenditure of what visitors spent during their stay on lodging, dining, shopping, entertainment, and transportation and the conversion rate of visitors to annual web site traffic.

* Figures based on VisitMyrtleBeach.com site traffic metrics and 2017 website survey results.

Myrtle Beach Visitor Spending Patterns

The average party spent \$2,933 in total – accommodations were the largest single chunk at \$761 for the total stay (\$152/night on average).

Trip Expenditures Among 2016 Visitors

	Average Expenditure per Party
Accommodations	\$761
Restaurants/Groceries	\$593
Golf	\$49
Entertainment/Attractions	\$460
Shopping	\$469
Daily transportation (excluding rental car)	\$133
Rental car	\$128
Miscellaneous	\$341
Total Expenditure:	\$2,933

Median Party Size:
4 people

Avg. Length of Stay in Paid Accommodations:
5 nights

Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 (n=1,472)

Website Conversion Rate & Return by Visitor Type

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

*2017 Marketing Return by Visitor Type**

	Repeat Converts (visited 1-3 years ago)	Lapsed Converts (visited 4+ years ago)	New Converts (never visited before)
Proportion of Converts	46%	13%	41%
Travel Parties	2,016,478	569,874	1,797,296
Visitor Expenditures	\$5,914,447,860	\$1,671,474,395	\$5,271,573,092
Revenue Per Marketing Dollar Spent	\$241	\$68	\$215

* Figures based on VisitMyrtleBeach.com site traffic metrics and 2017 website survey results.

Three key indicators demonstrate very strong performance...



54%

Conversion rate among site visitors, with 41% being completely New Converts.

\$524

Revenue generated per dollar spent. \$2,933 spent per party over the length of their stay.

83

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



Respondent Profile

Respondent Profile

	Total	Converts	New Converts
Age			
18 to 24	2%	2%	2%
25 to 34	10%	11%	12%
35 to 44	19%	20%	20%
45 to 54	26%	27%	28%
55 to 64	27%	27%	26%
65+	15%	13%	12%
Mean (years)	51	50.1	49.5
Gender			
Male	29%	27%	23%
Female	71%	73%	77%
Education			
HS graduate or less	23%	23%	20%
Some college/technical/trade school	31%	31%	31%
Associate's degree	14%	14%	13%
Bachelor's degree	21%	20%	23%
Post-graduate study/degree	11%	11%	11%
Other	1%	1%	1%

Respondent Profile (cont'd)

	Total	Converts	New Converts
Marital Status			
Married/Partnered	70%	73%	72%
Single	16%	14%	13%
Separated/Divorced/Widowed	14%	13%	15%
Annual Household Income			
Less than \$45,000	27%	22%	22%
\$45,000 - \$74,999	29%	31%	29%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12%	14%	13%
\$100,000 or more	16%	17%	19%
Prefer not to answer	16%	16%	17%
Mean (\$000s)	\$118	\$118	\$117
Ethnicity			
White	84%	87%	87%
Black	13%	11%	10%
Other	3%	2%	3%

Respondent Profile (cont'd)

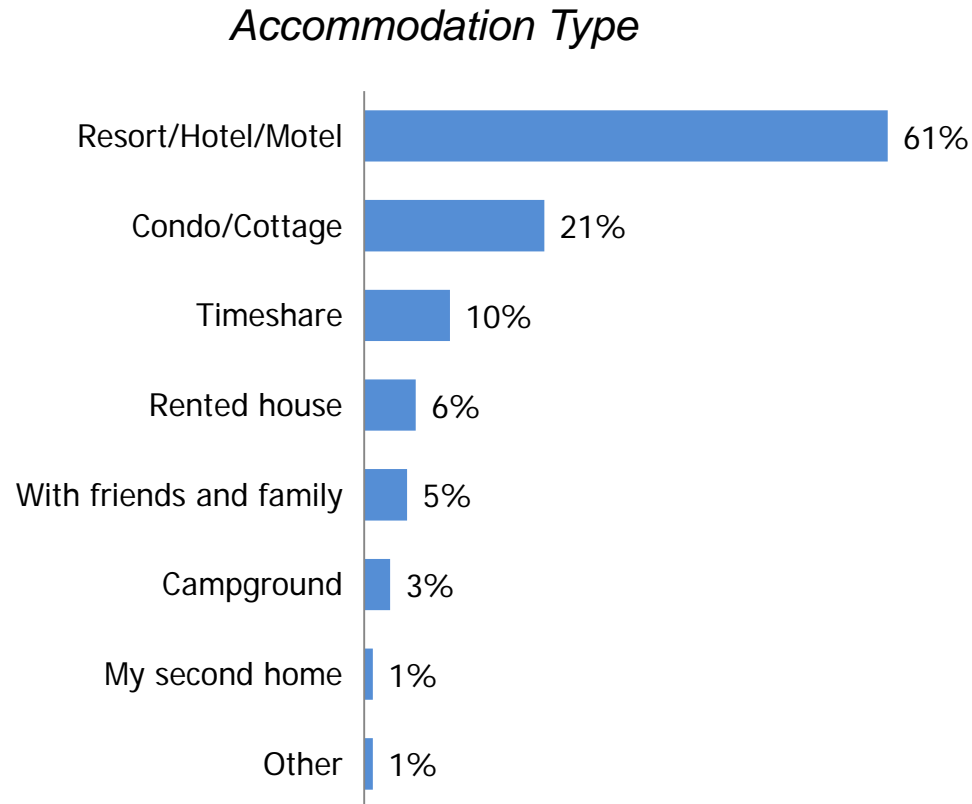
	Total	Converts	New Converts
Employment Status			
Employed full time	56%	60%	62%
Employed part time	8%	8%	8%
Not employed, in between jobs	2%	2%	2%
Homemaker	6%	6%	7%
Retired	22%	19%	16%
Student	1%	1%	1%
Other	5%	4%	4%
Occupation (if employed)			
Executive/Owner	4%	4%	3%
Manager/Technical	17%	18%	18%
Sales/Purchasing	9%	9%	9%
Other professional	31%	32%	34%
Craft/Factory	6%	6%	3%
Education	8%	9%	8%
Self-Employed	4%	4%	4%
Other	21%	19%	21%
Get Paid Vacation (if employed)			
Yes	83%	83%	83%
Days off allotted (mean)	18.5	18.7	19.4
Days off used (mean)	14.9	15.6	15.3



Appendix I: Accommodations Patterns

Accommodations Patterns

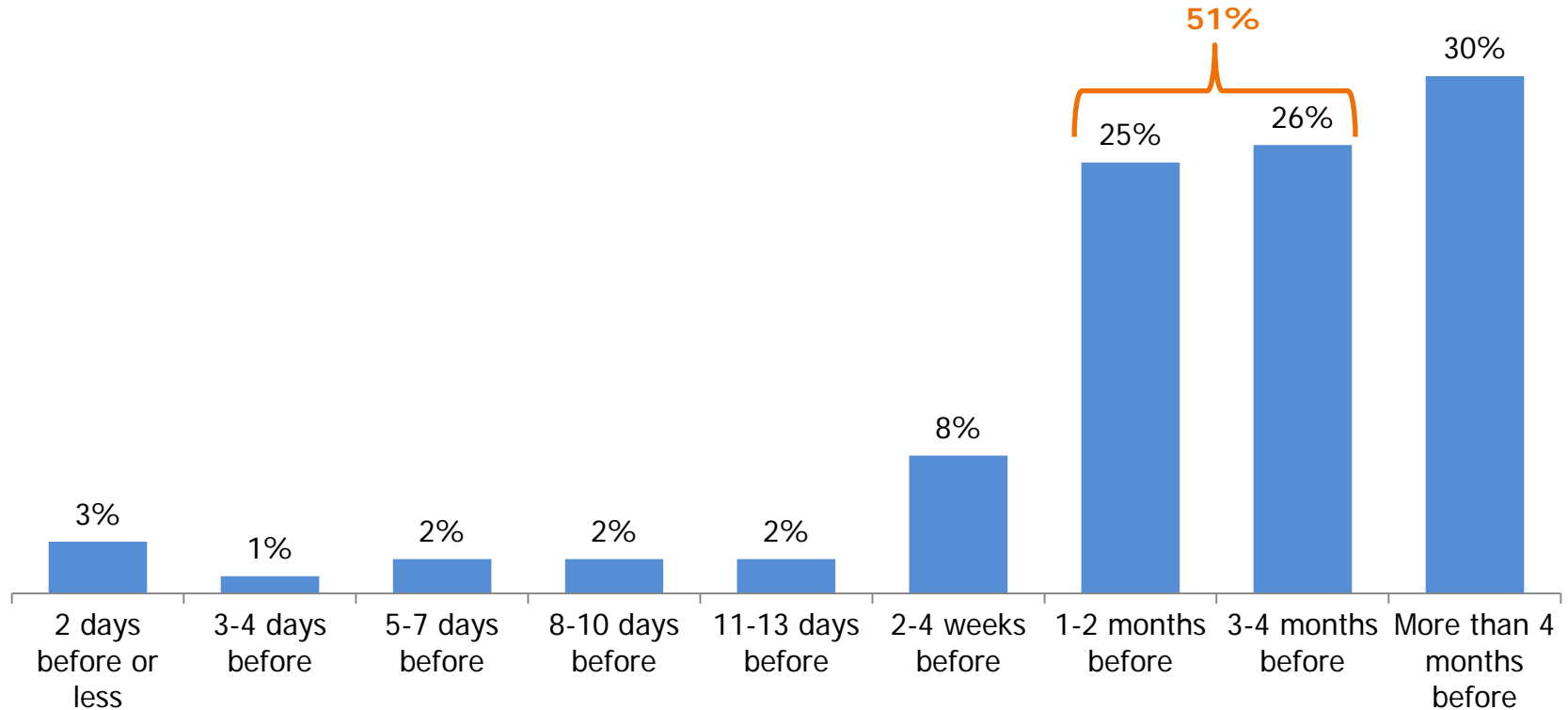
Most Converts stay in paid accommodations, with resort/hotel/motel accommodations being the most common (61%) and condo/cottage a distant second (21%).



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 (n=1,474)

51% of Converts make lodging reservations 1 to 4 months prior to arrival, and 30% of Converts reserve 4+ months in advance.

Advance Booking of Accommodations

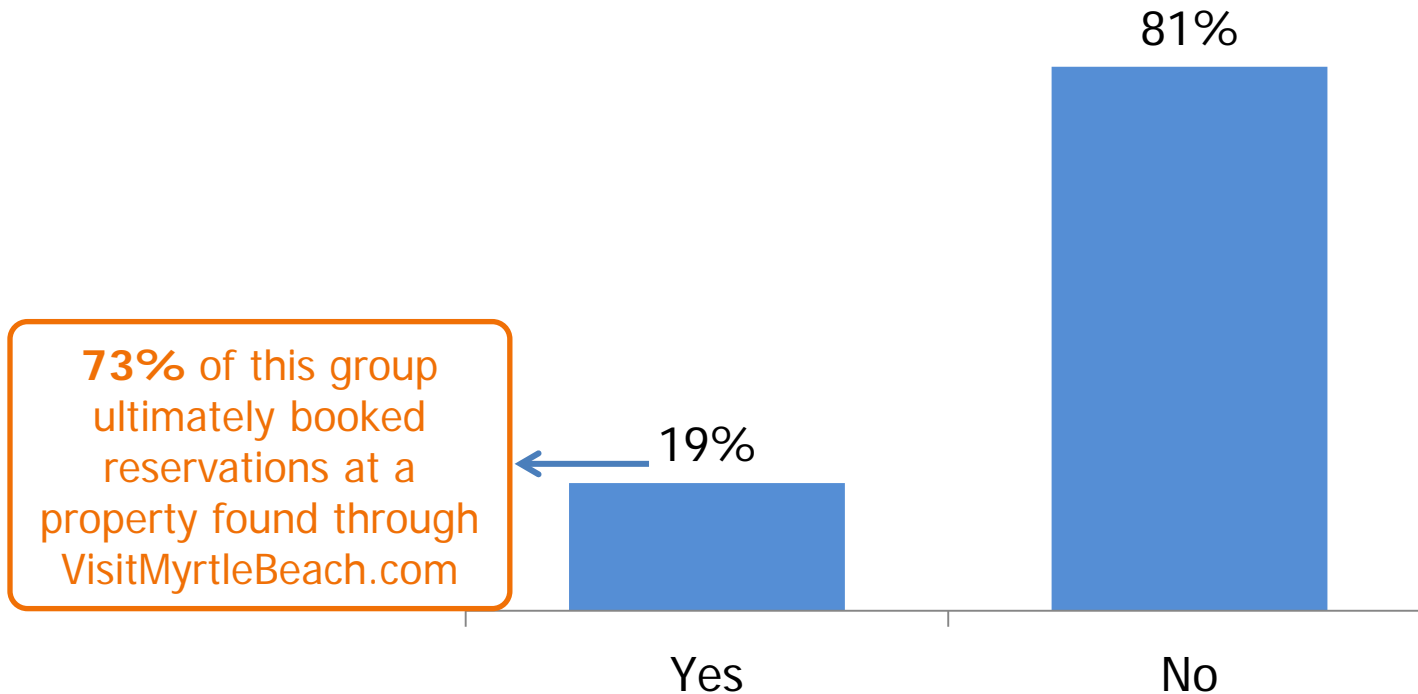


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=1,420)

Accommodations Patterns

19% use VisitMyrtleBeach.com to locate and secure accommodations. Among those who use it, 73% ultimately book at a property they find through the site.

Use of VisitMyrtleBeach.com to locate and secure accommodations

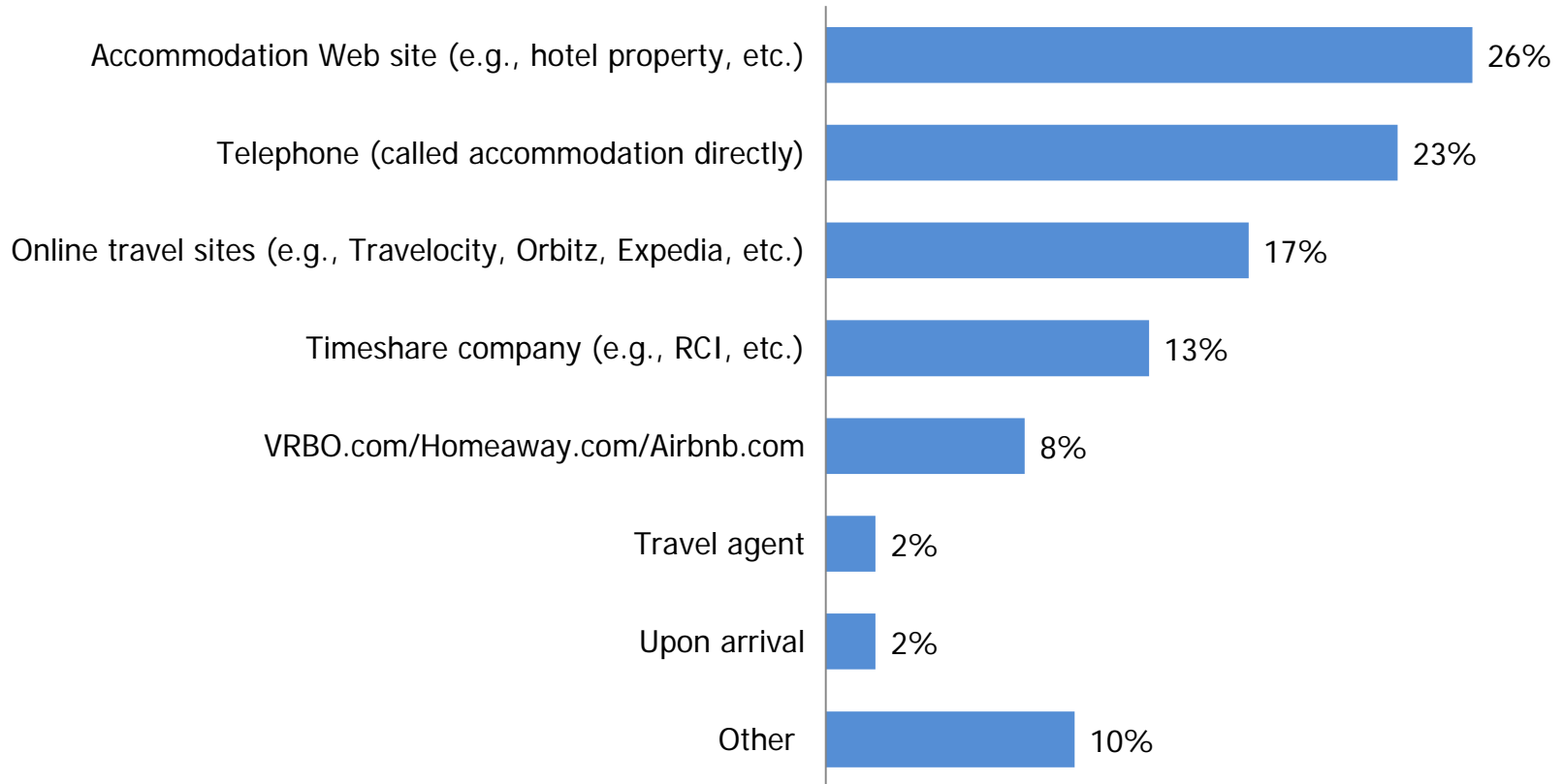


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=1,422)

Accommodations Patterns

Among those who stay in paid accommodations on their trip, 26% make reservations on the property's website, and 23% call the accommodation directly.

Reservations Channel

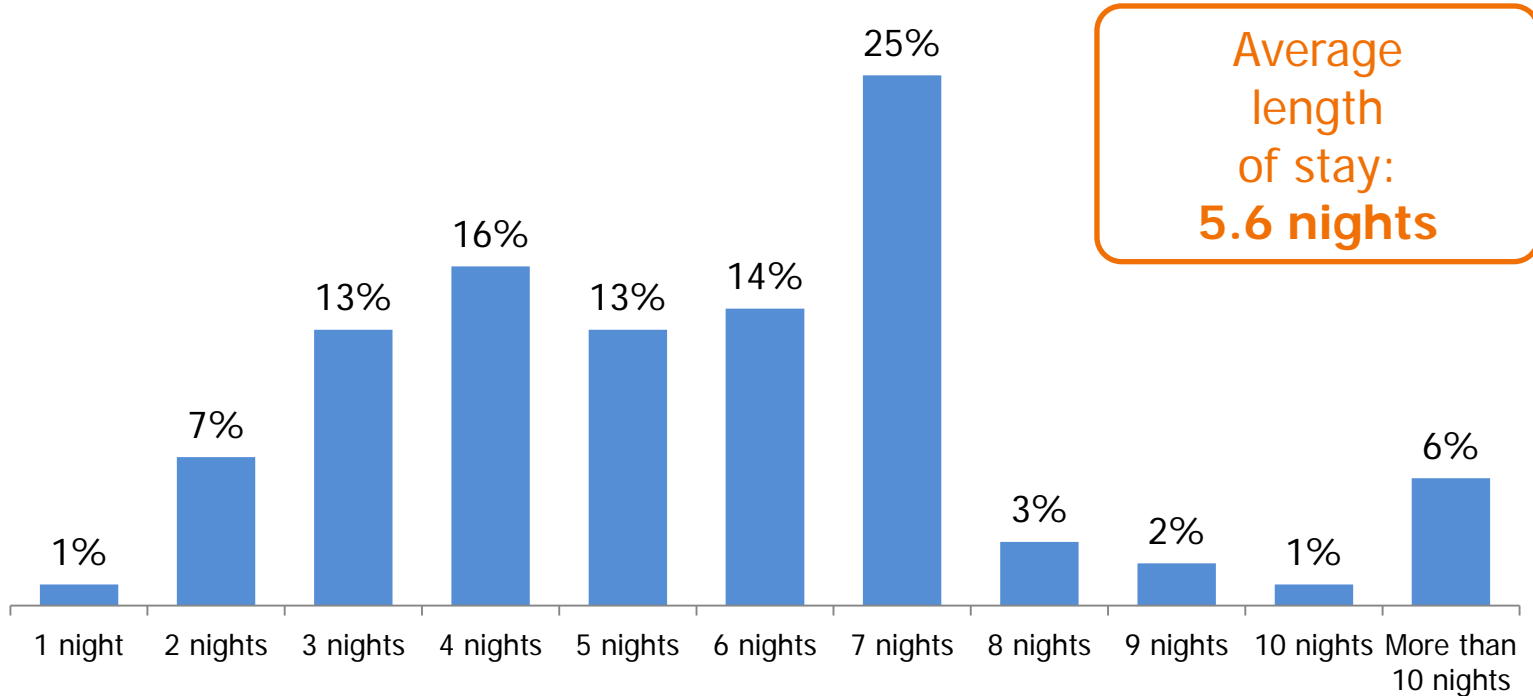


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=1,423)

Accommodations Patterns

Regardless of whether or not they pay for their accommodations, 25% of Converts stay in the Myrtle Beach area 7 nights (5.6 nights on average).

*Length of Trip
 (Paid and Unpaid Accommodations)*

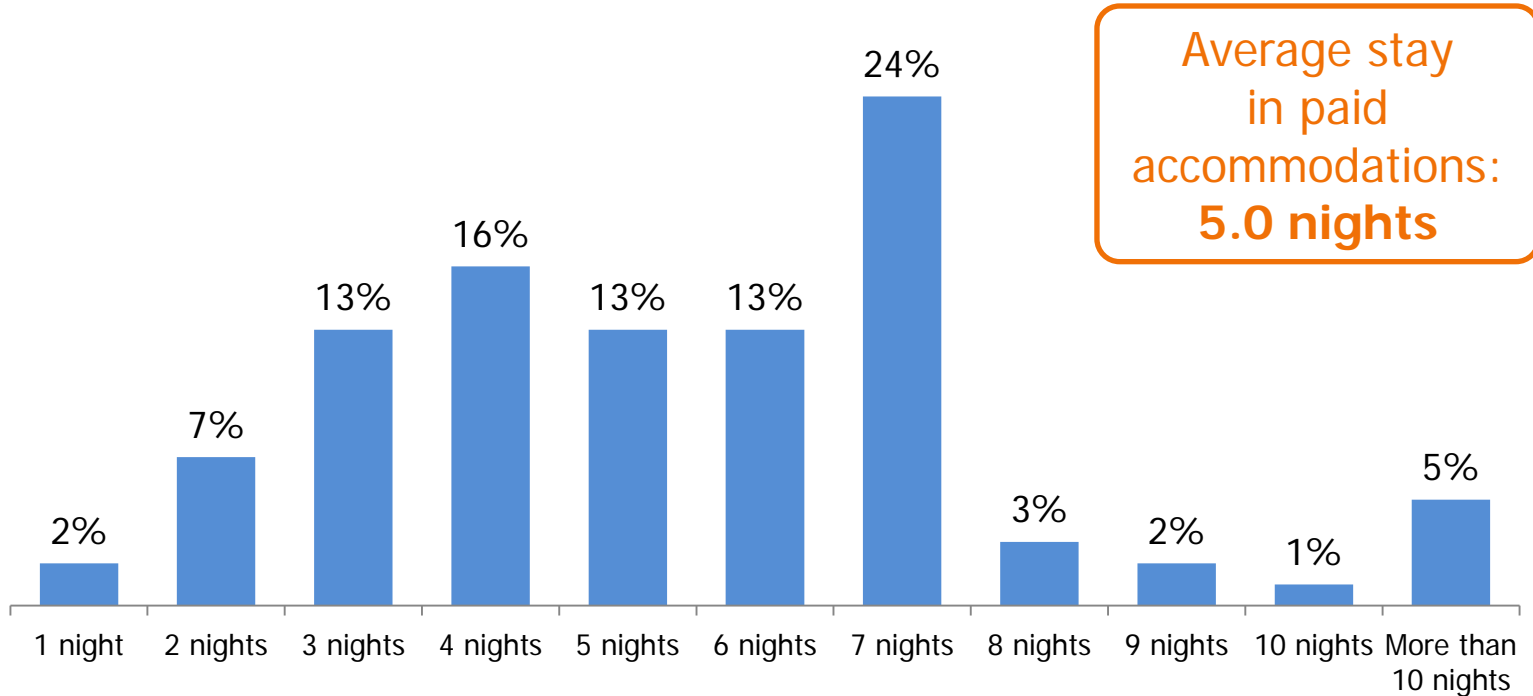


Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach In 2016 (n=1,474)

Accommodations Patterns

The majority of Converts stay in paid accommodations. A week (7 nights) is again the most common length of their trip to the Myrtle Beach area (24%, with an average stay of 5.0 nights).

*Length of Trip
 (Paid Accommodations)*

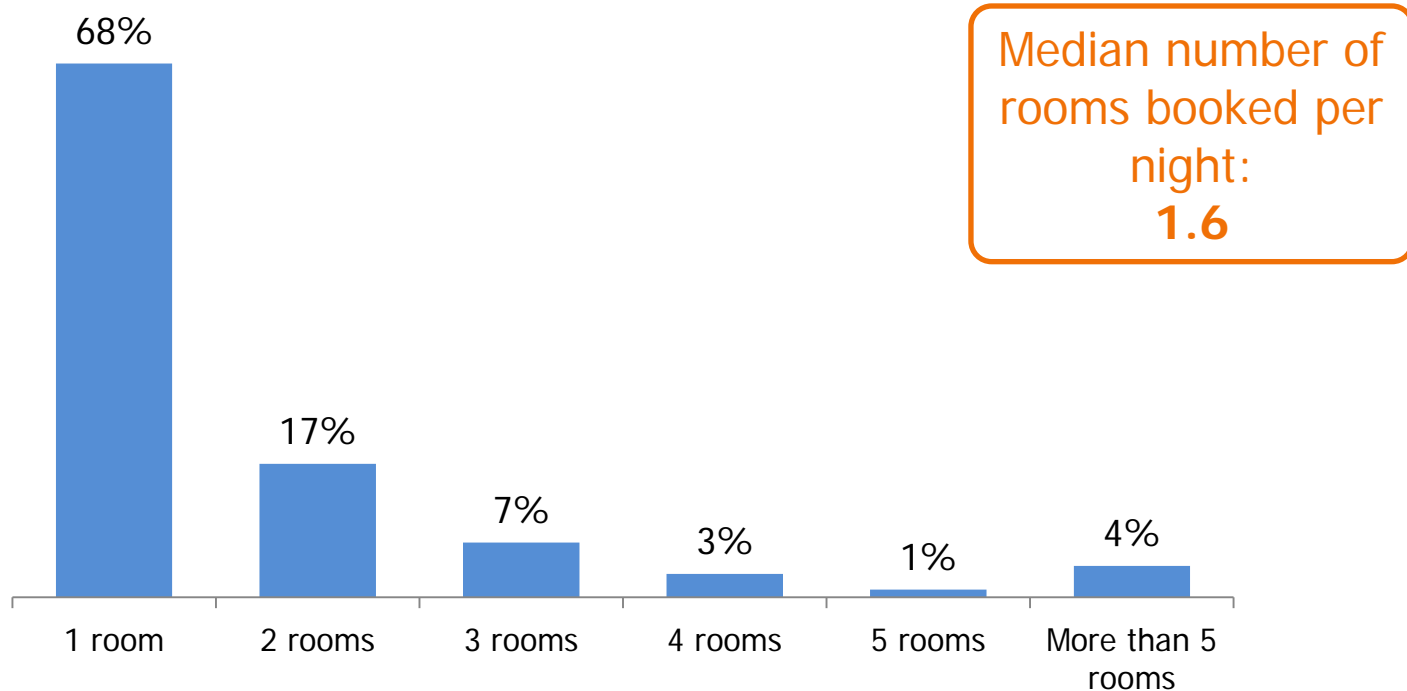


Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=1,342)

Accommodations Patterns

68% of visitors who stay in paid accommodations book 1 room per night.

Rooms Booked per Night



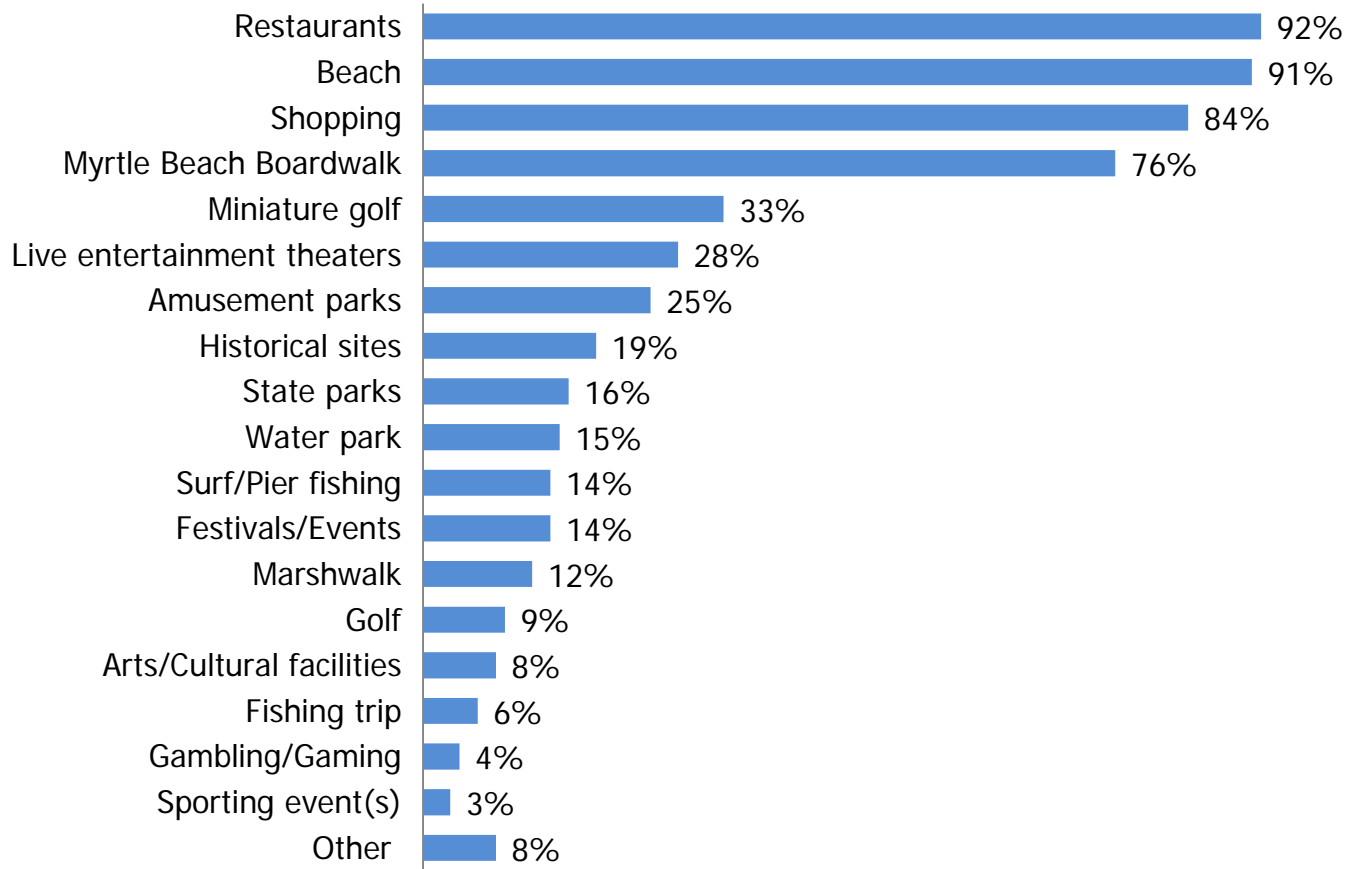
Base: Stayed in paid accommodations (n=1,420)



Appendix II: Travel Patterns

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

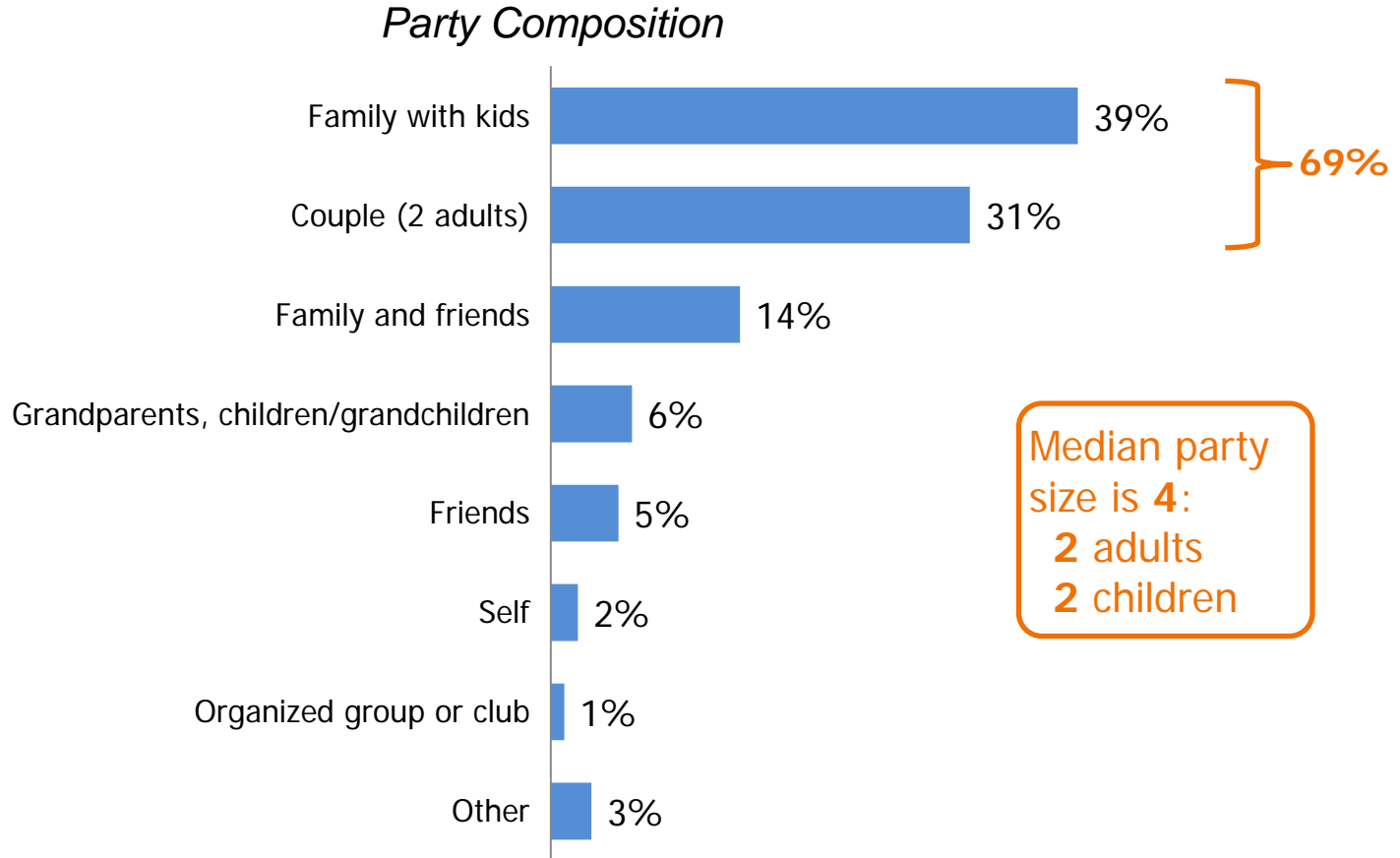
Activities Participated in at Myrtle Beach



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 (n=1,474)

Travel Party Composition

The majority of Myrtle Beach Converts travel in groups, with 69% traveling as a couple or as a family with kids.

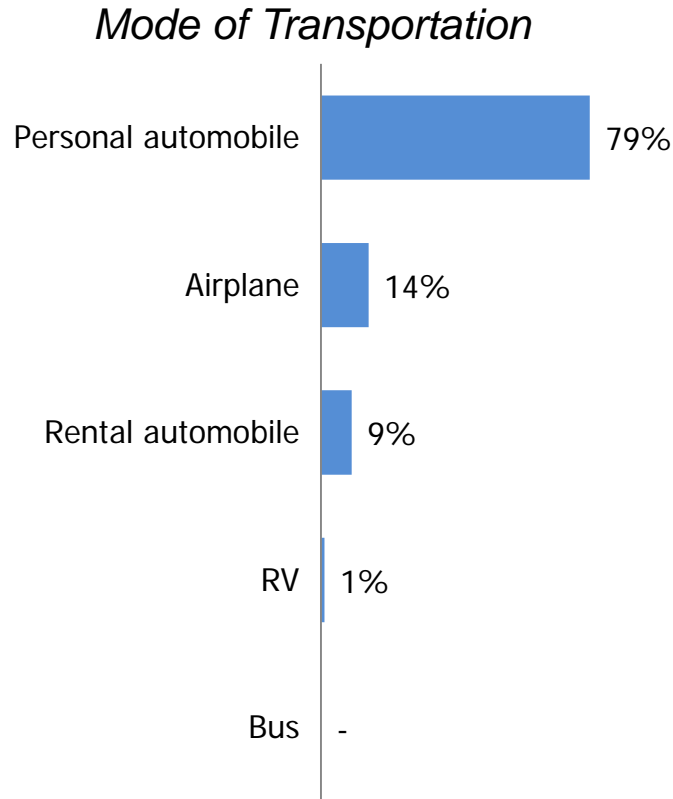


Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 (n=1,473)

Q28. Which of the following best describes the travel group you were with on your most recent leisure trip to the Myrtle Beach area?

Q29. How many were in your travel party, including yourself?

79% of Converts arrive in the area via their own car, with air travel a distant second (14%).

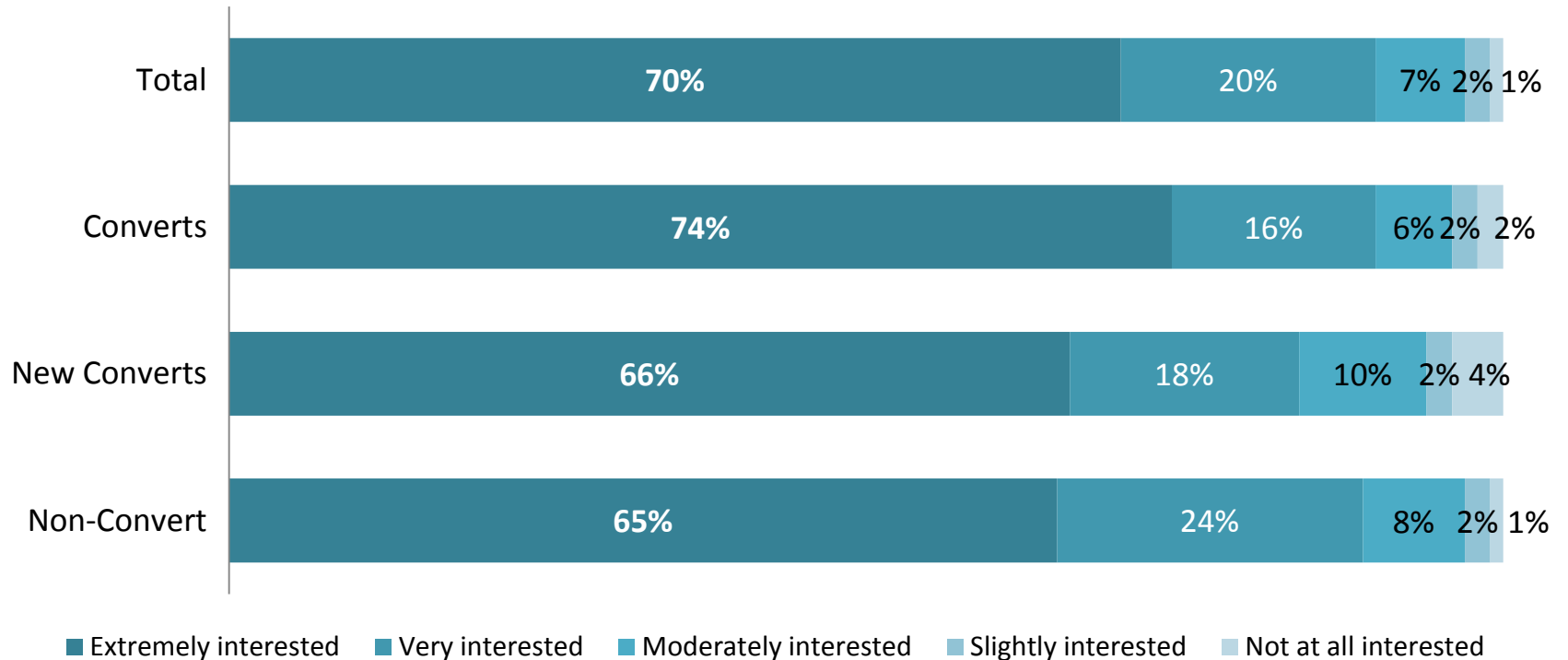


Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 (n=1,473)

Interest in Visiting

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

Interest in Visiting Myrtle Beach



Base: Total (n=2,955)

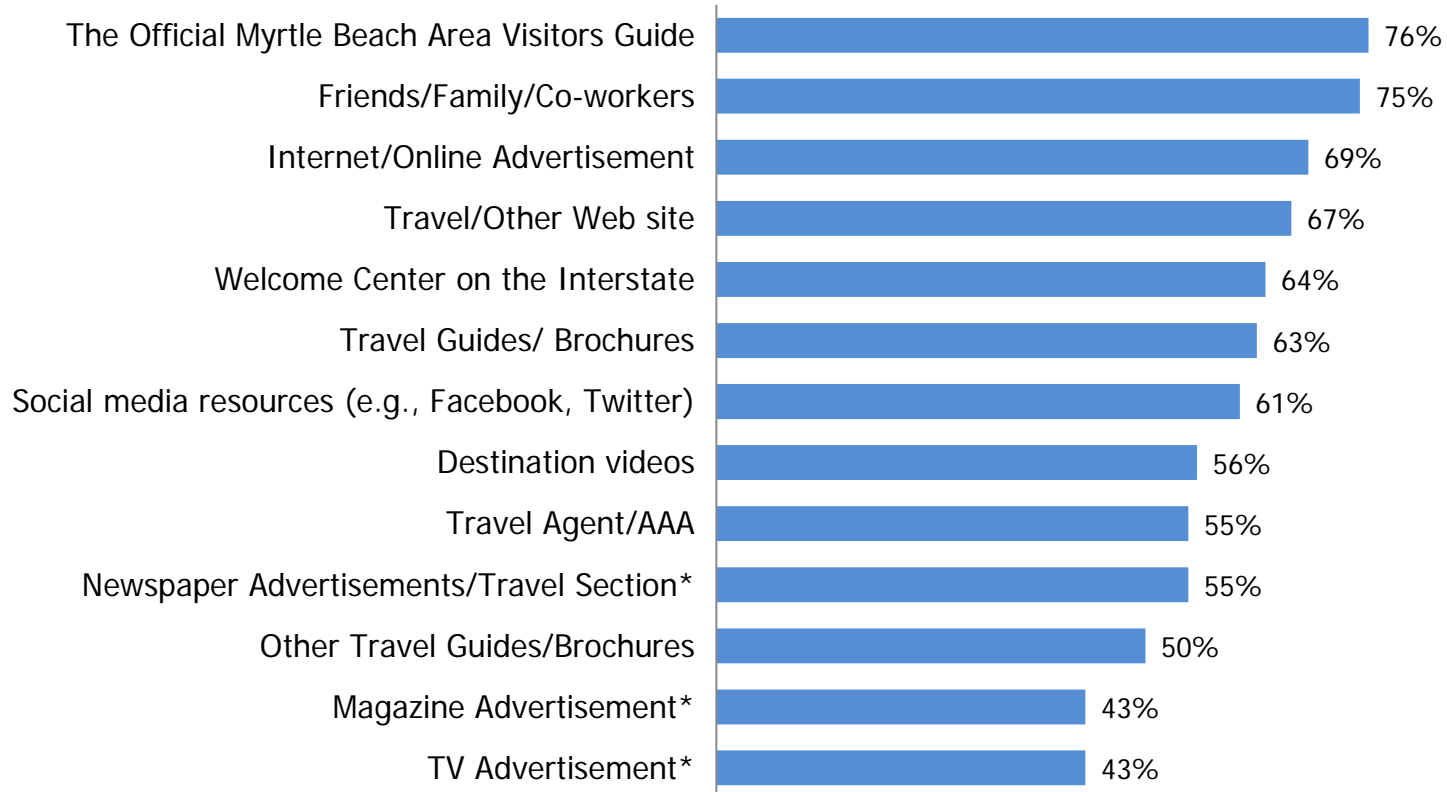


Appendix III: Information Sources & Planning

Information Source Usefulness

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

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



Base: Inquirers; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 varies by type of source used.

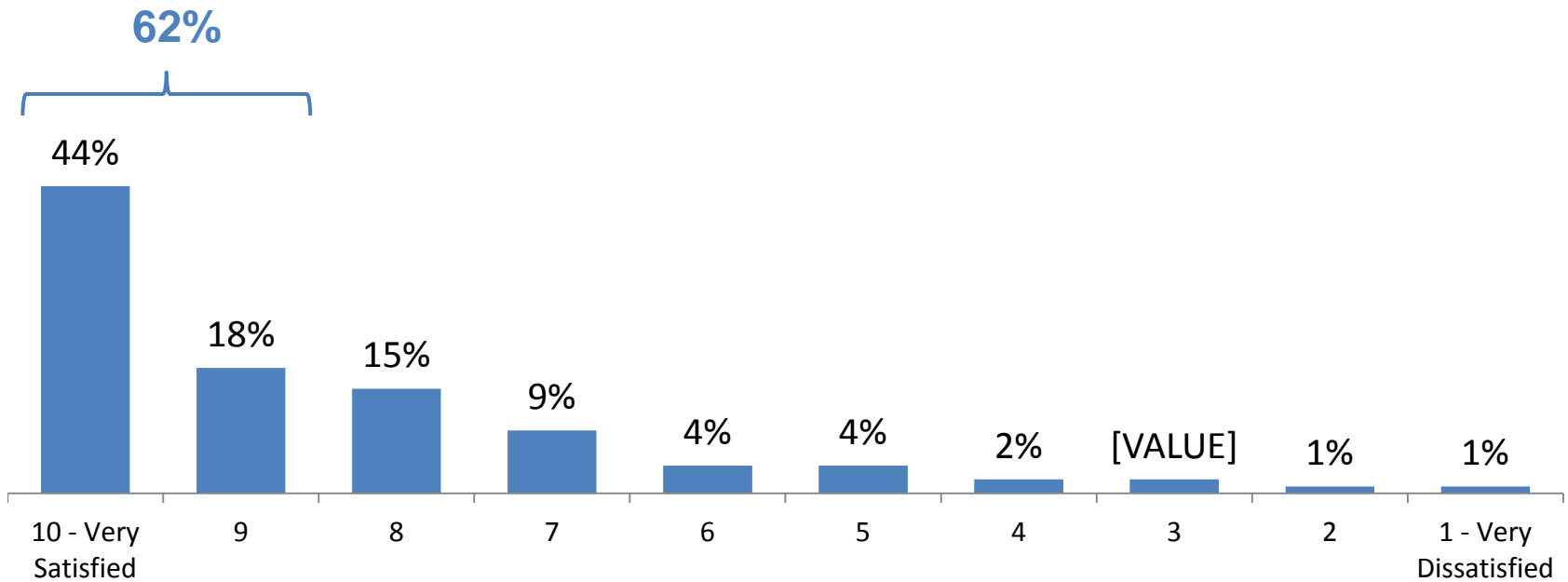
** Caution low base size for these sources; Note: Radio base too low to show data.*

Q14. How useful were each of the following in planning your vacation to the Myrtle Beach area? (10=Extremely useful, 0=Not at all useful)

Satisfaction with Weather During Visit

The vast majority of those who visited Myrtle Beach last year were satisfied with the weather during their stay.

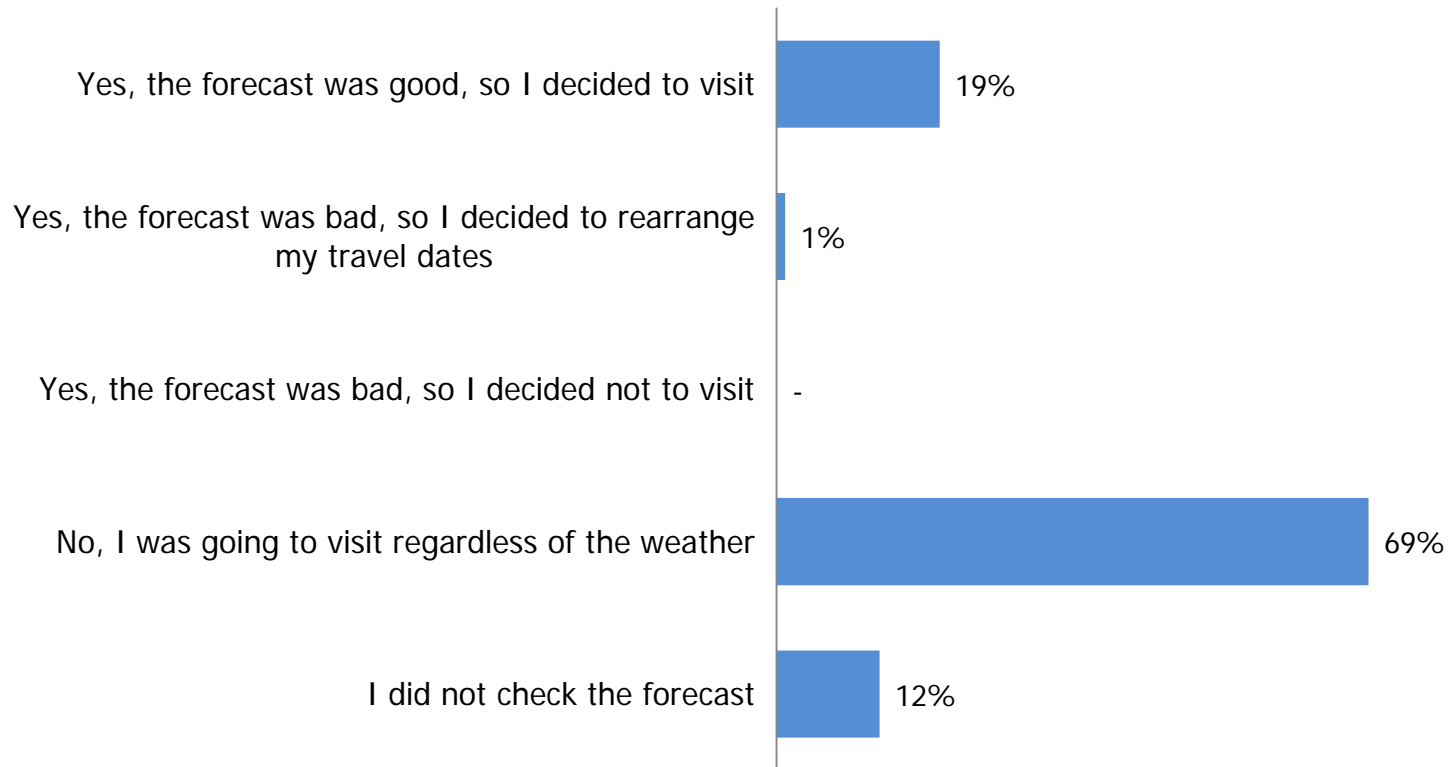
Satisfaction with Weather During Visit



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach In 2017 (n=1,473)

Relatively few who visited Myrtle Beach last year reported the weather forecast influencing their decision to visit the area.

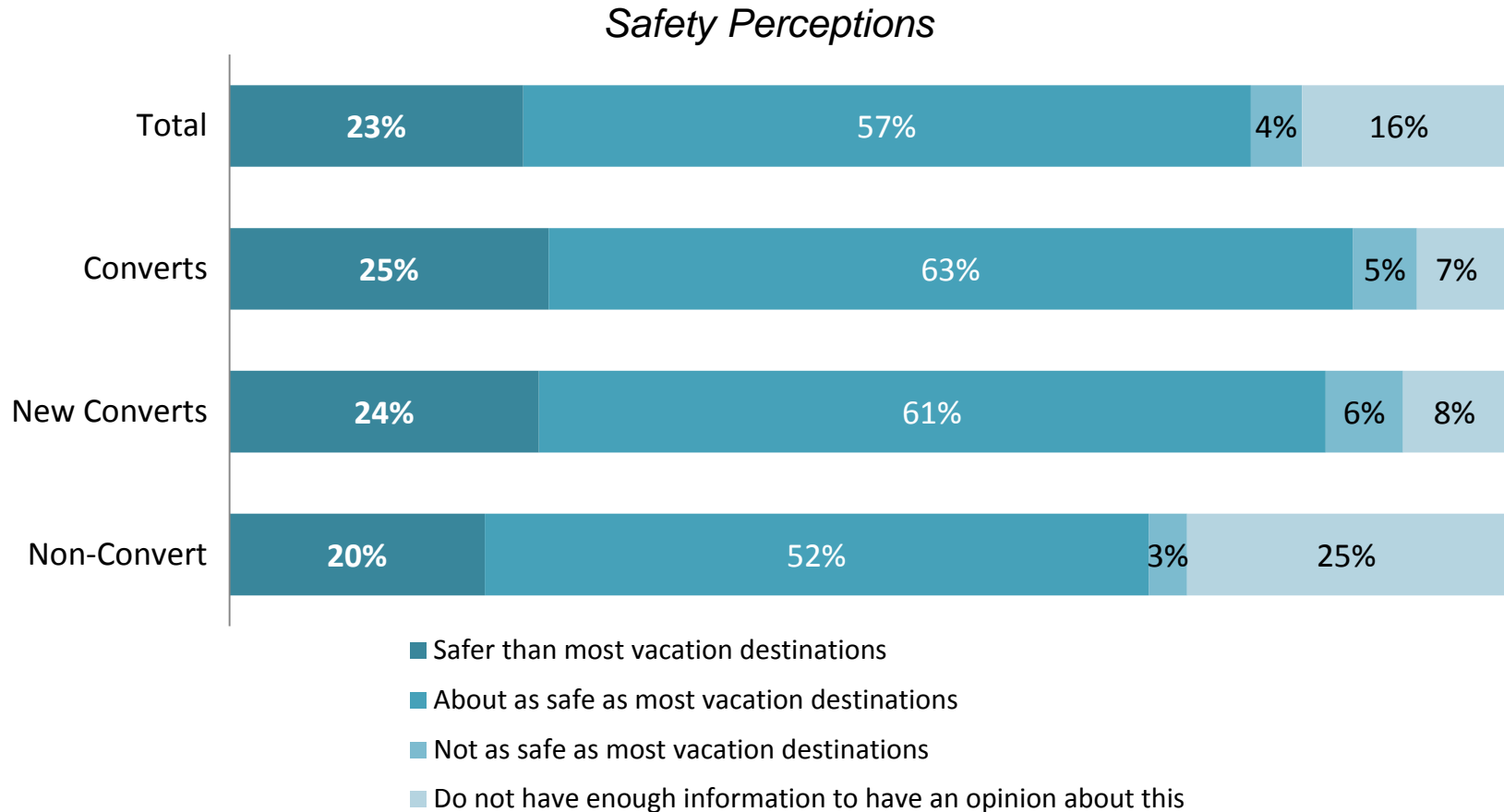
Impact of Weather Forecast On Decision to Visit



Base: Converts; visited Myrtle Beach in 2017 (n=1,473)

Perceptions of Safety for Myrtle Beach

The majority of Converts and Non-Converts feel Myrtle Beach is as safe as most vacation destinations.



Base: Total (n=2,959)