



# **Manatee County Destination Visitation Branding**

## **GOAL**

*To define a single, overarching brand for the destination that will positively set the area apart from its competition, encouraging visitation for years to come.*

# Manatee County

## Destination Visitation Branding

### WHAT'S A DESTINATION "BRAND"?

*A destination "Brand" is the image an area has in the mind of the target, relative to the competitive set.*

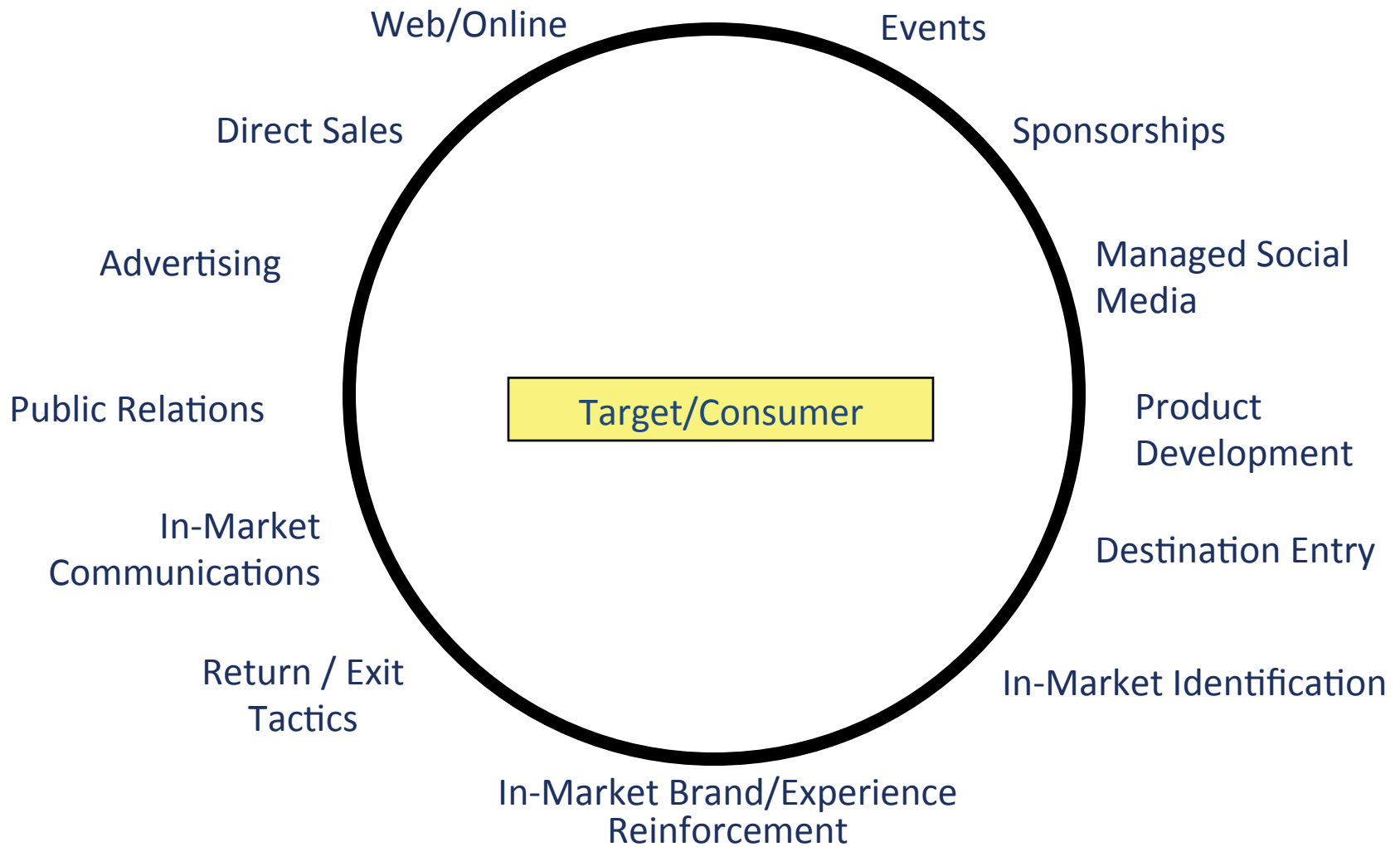
*In order to positively affect visitation to the area, the brand should define the destination as offering a visitation experience that is unique relative to alternative choices. Additionally, potential experiences within the destination must be perceived as desirable to the targets.*

# Manatee County Destination Visitation Branding

Why a single, overarching Brand?







# Outcomes and Deliverables

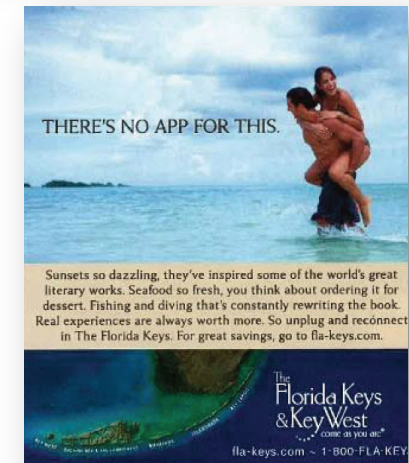
1. Competitive position, brand definition, brand promise
2. Expression direction
3. Application recommendations
4. Direction for future sub-branding

# Why Brand?

1. Message clarity
2. Ease of choice for targets
3. Efficiency in execution
4. Economic Benefits:
  - a. Higher visitation when times are good. Faster recovery when they're not.
  - b. Justifies price, driving ADR.
  - c. Helps ensure greater return on marketing investment.

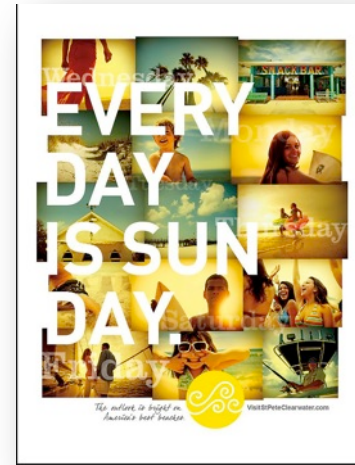
# Why Brand?

## Competitive Set



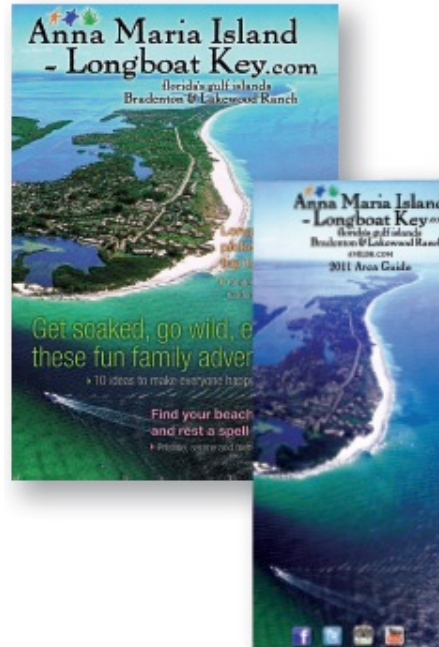
# Why Brand?

## Competitive Set



# Process

## 1. Review of current brand



 **Anna Maria Island**  
**- Longboat Key.com**  
florida's gulf islands  
Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch



# Process

1. Review of current brand
2. Destination Attributes Survey –  
*Over 70 points of Interest and Activity*



# Process

1. Review of current brand
2. Destination Attributes Survey –  
*Over 70 points of Interest and Activity*  
*Property survey – 8 property stays, 7 additionally surveyed*





# Process

1. Review of current brand
2. Destination Attributes Survey
3. Promotional history of the destination



# Process

1. Review of current brand
2. Destination Attributes Survey
3. Promotional history of the destination
4. Review of partner participation



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*A total of 57 separate interviews*

*Providing insights from:*

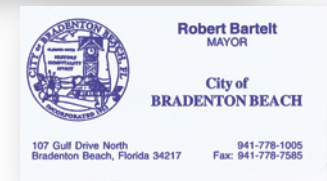
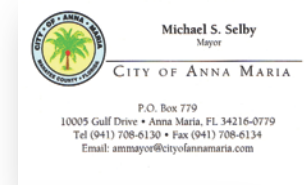
- *County Administration Officials*
- *Tourist Development Council*
- *County and Municipal Elected Officials*
- *County Governmental Departments*
- *Economic Development Interests*
- *Airport*
- *Area Attractions*
- *Area Chambers of Commerce*
- *Historical Interests*
- *Media*
- *Port Manatee*
- *Area Restaurants*
- *Area Sports Marketing Interests*
- *Area Properties*

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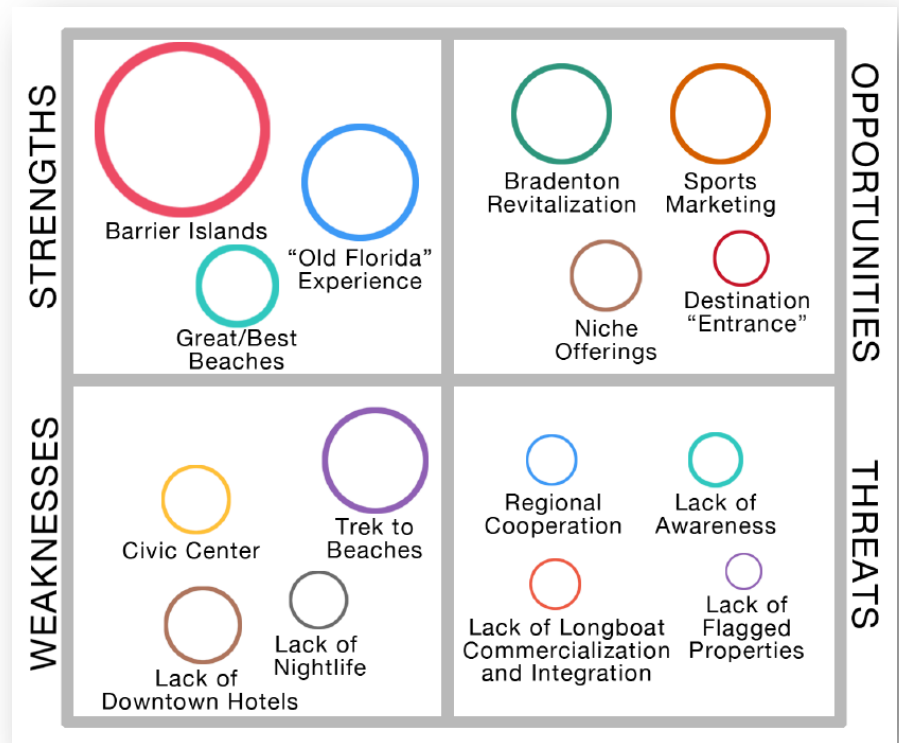
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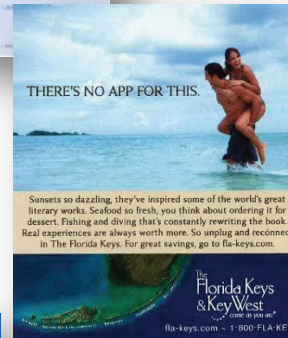
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5. Stakeholder input
6. Past visitor research
7. Target history and visitation patterns





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10. Strategic Brand planning and development, including name
11. Market testing

# Conclusions

## ***1. Attributes Survey –***

Broad array of highly marketable assets. Strong beach destination with the added competitive angle of an “island destination”.

## ***2. Promotional History –***

Inconsistency has lead to little “brand resonance”.

## ***3. Review of partner participation –***

Fragmentation. Market-wide inconsistency. Strong interest and support.

## ***4. Stakeholder Input –***

Strong community-wide unity. “Islands are the draw. Mainland the amenities.”

Less pretentious. We’re a real, authentic, laid-back Florida experience.

## ***5. Past Visitor Research –***

Has moved from in-state market to match comp. set’s. Divided between older couples and families. Strongest competitors: St. Pete/Clwr and Sarasota. Seeking “release.”

# Conclusions

## ***6. Comp. Review –***

Strong comp. set. Primary competitors had recently set their course. Others expected to transition as well. Primary set has vulnerabilities.

## ***7. Primary Market Research –***

- a. Confirmation of Islands with Mainland amenities. Less pretentious. Not as “over built”.
- b. Manatee experience seen as “Authentic”, “Casual”, “Relaxing”, “Another time and place”, “Great for getting in touch with each other”, “Total Escape” – Like the bridges. Great place to stay and see and experience other things in the region.
- c. Naming - “Bradenton/Anna Maria Island/Longboat Key” with “Florida’s West Coast” or “West Coast of Florida.”
- d. Within the competitive set, strongest competitors for Manatee are St. Pete/Clwr and Sarasota. Strong distinctions and reasons to visit need to be drawn with Sarasota.

# Conclusions

## Adjectives that describe experience:

- *Turquoise*
- *Unpretentious*
- *“Old Florida” – A place out of time/Non-commercialized/simpler time and place*
- *Relaxation, Serene, Lazy*
- *Escape/Release*
- *Island Living, romantic, more isolated*
- *Beach*
- *Memories*
- *Family*
- *The “Anti City”*
- *Disconnect*
- *Organic, real, in-touch*
- *Casual*
- *Florida as it once was*



# Recommendation

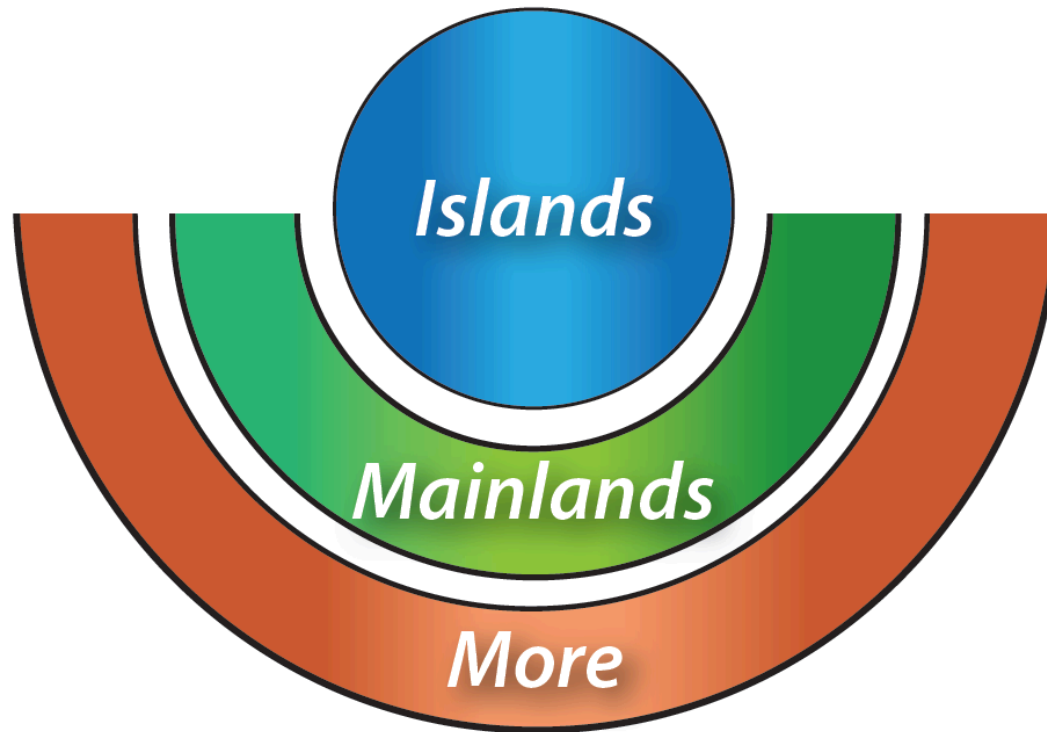
1. The power of islands
2. Unique island experience
3. Visitors willing to seek experiences beyond islands
4. Mainland experiences highly desired by many segments
5. Attributes and description of area resonate across county



# Recommendation

Branding/Marketing paradigm:

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# Recommendation

## BRAND DESCRIPTION

*The Bradenton/Anna Maria Island/Longboat Key area is a place offering one of Florida's most unique and relaxing island destinations, bolstered by mainland experiences, and is an area that provides a great geographic jumping off point to explore other areas of Florida.*

# Recommendation

## BRAND DESCRIPTION

*Through its “anti-city”, non-glitzy, laid back experience – running from the islands to the mainland – the destination promises a liberating release from life that lets the visitor experience what’s real and what really matters, allowing the visitor to return to wholeness, getting in touch with themselves and others.*

# Recommendation

## BRAND DESCRIPTION

*Just as for many it takes a bridge to get here, the area acts as a bridge to what you need and where you need to be, disconnecting you from everyday life and allowing you to transcend to a space that's all your own. Removed. Off the beaten path. Unaffected by the world.*

# Recommendation

## POSITIONING STATEMENT

*“The Bradenton/Anna Maria Island/Longboat Key area is the one Florida destination that provides “total release” (beyond mere “escape”) through its range of authentic, “Old Florida” experiences that envelop you into another place, pace and time.”*

# Recommendation

## BRAND PROMISE

*“Through its ability to disconnect you from life and reconnect you to a simpler time and place, the Bradenton/Anna Maria Island/Longboat Key area provides the release you need to slow down, enjoy yourself and others, and let you just be you.”*

# Verification of Conclusions

1. Returned to focus groups conducted in Chicago and Boston
2. One Brand, but several potential expressions

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1. Returned to focus groups conducted in Chicago and Boston
2. One Brand, but several potential expressions
3. Goal:
  - a. Does the brand resonate?
  - b. Which approach receives the best reception?
  - c. Which approach may work best vis-à-vis the competitive set





# Verification of Conclusions



*“The Manatee ads presented in the groups are seen as relaxing and laid back. In the mind of the consumer... it invokes the promise of freedom, fun, romance, and yet, retains its low-key theme.*

*In short, given the intensive testing and analysis of the destination’s branding elements, the Manatee brand developed in the research is consistent with its implied promise.*

*The brand effectively connects with the consumers’ images and needs.”*

**-- Walter J. Klages, Ph.D.**

# Outcome

# Outcome

SARASOTA  
FLORIDA'S GULF COAST

LONGBOAT KEY | SARASOTA | LIDO KEY | SIESTA KEY | VENICE  
CASEY KEY | MANASOTA KEY | ENGLEWOOD | NORTH PORT

Anna Maria Island  
- Longboat Key.com  
florida's gulf islands  
Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch



# Outcome



FLORIDA'S WEST COAST

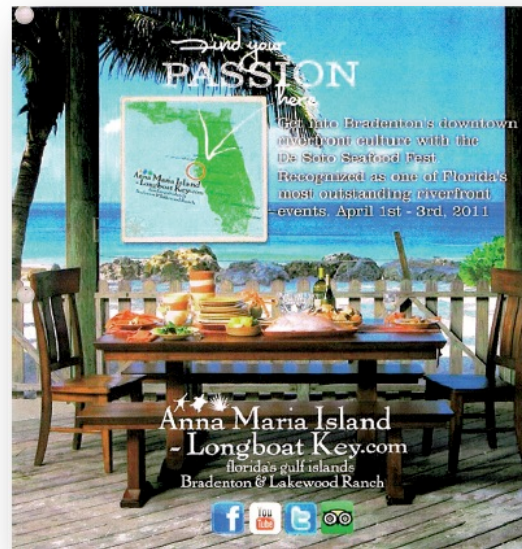


# Outcome



FLORIDA'S WEST COAST

# Outcome



# Outcome



# Traditional Advertising

Radio



# Traditional Advertising

Radio



# Traditional Advertising

Television



# Is the Brand Resonating?

## COMP SET:

- St. Petersburg/Clearwater – \$15 million monthly budget
- Sarasota – \$6.3 million monthly budget
- Naples – \$5 million monthly budget
- West Palm Beach - \$4.5 million monthly budget
- Bradenton Area - \$3 million monthly budget

## Last 5 Years – New Visitors to Destination:

- 2013 – 33%
- 2014 – 34%
- 2015 – 35%
- 2016 – 36%
- 2017 – 37% (to date)

# Outcome

Total Visitors:

Five-Year Growth Up 10.7%



2012  
2,796,500

2013  
2,839,300

2014  
2,916,100

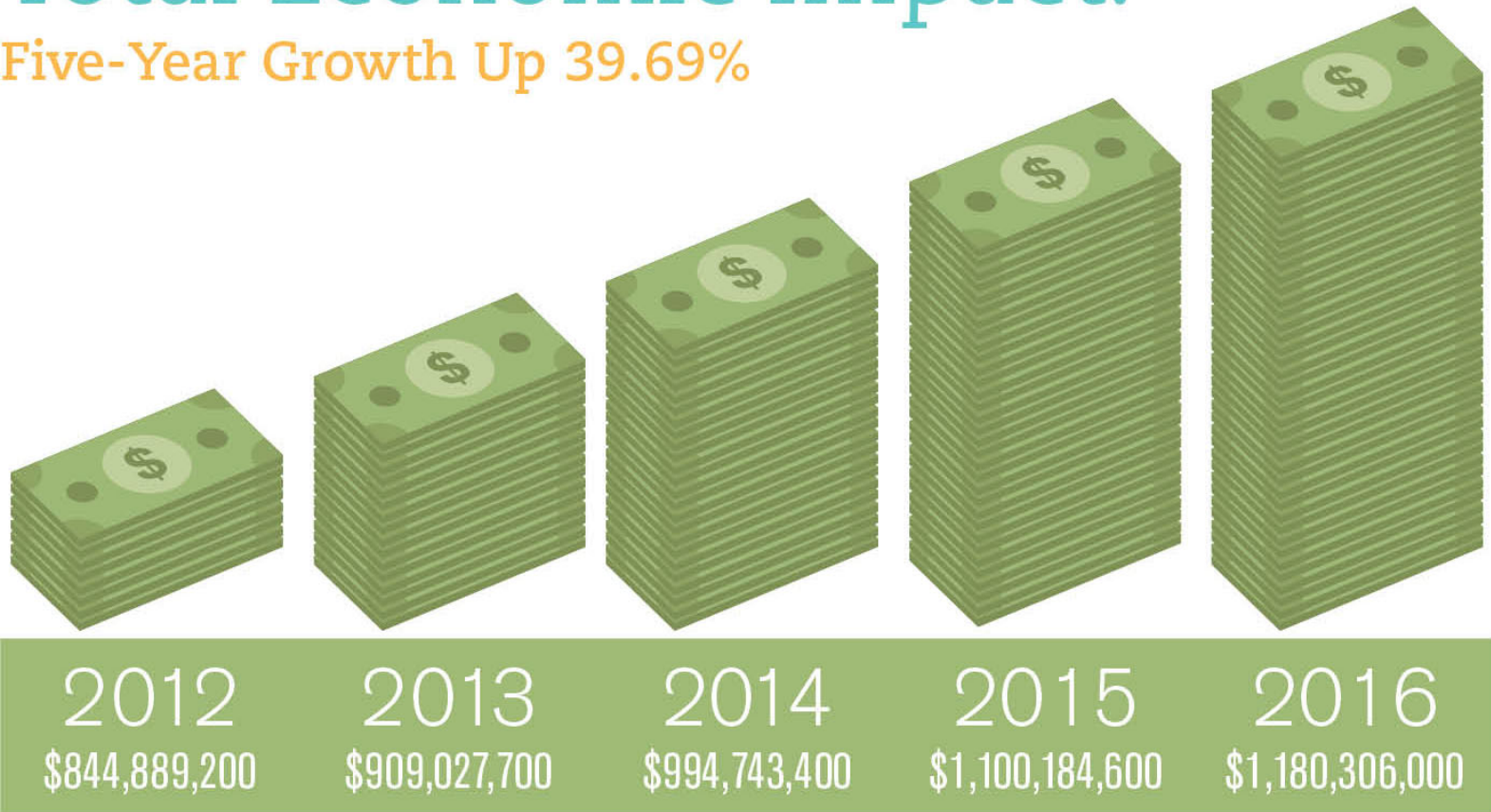
2015  
3,015,900

2016  
3,098,200

# Outcome

Total Economic Impact:

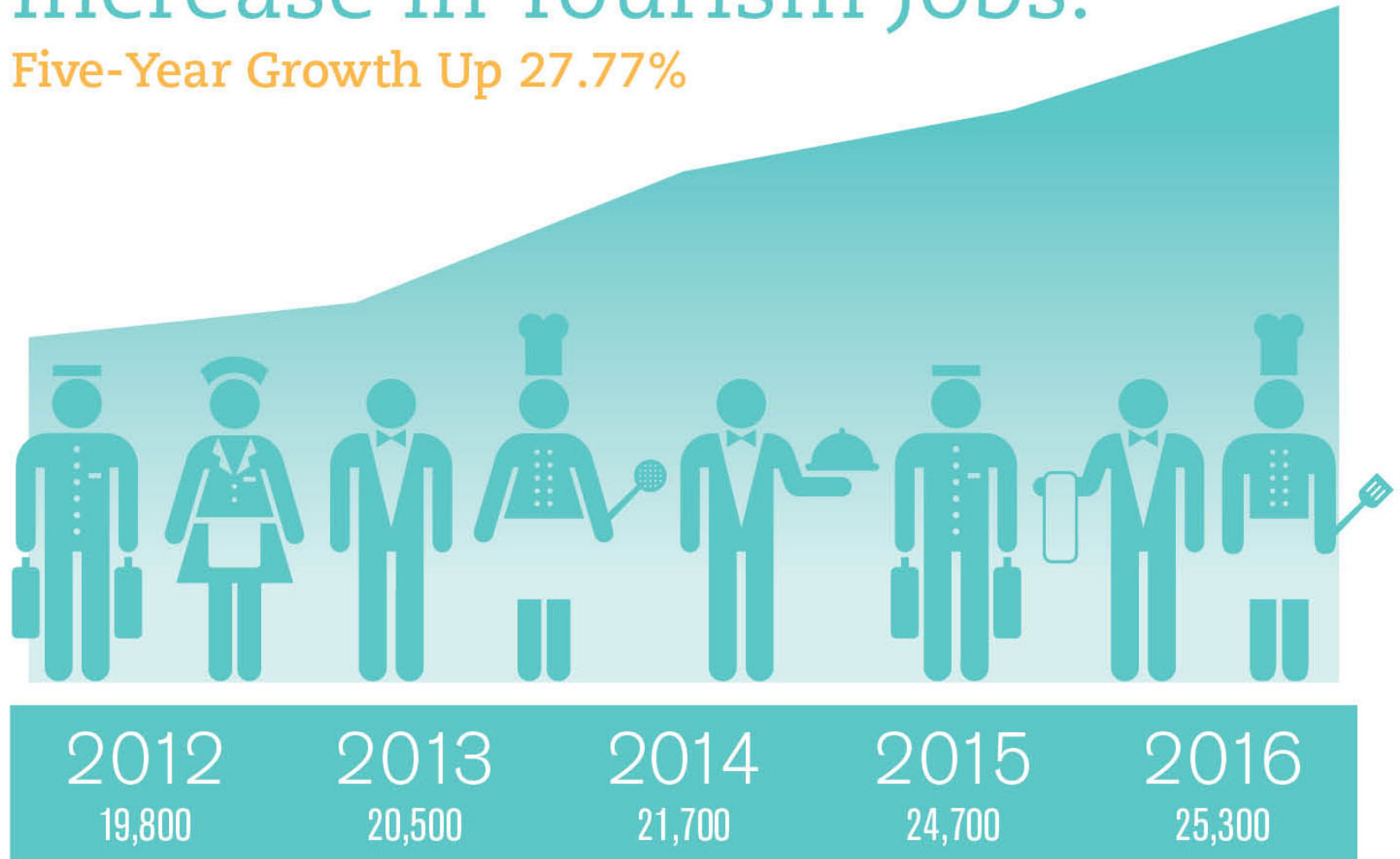
Five-Year Growth Up 39.69%



# Outcome

## Increase in Tourism Jobs:

Five-Year Growth Up 27.77%



# Sub Branding





# Segments and Niches

## MAJOR MARKET SEGMENTS:

- Leisure Visitation
- Sports Commission

## NICHE MARKET SEGMENTS:

- Agritourism
- Eco/Nature
- Arts & Culture
- Culinary
- Film Commission
- Corporate Meetings









FLORIDA'S WEST COAST