



# VISIT *Sarasota* COUNTY

## QUARTERLY REPORT

FY25 Q2

January 1 - March 31, 2025



# WHY THE WORK OF VSC MATTERS

- To Attract Visitors: Tourism drives economic benefits and introduces people to the community.
- To Encourage Residency: A Great place to visit becomes a desirable place to live.
- To Stimulate Employment: When people move here, businesses follow, creating job opportunities.
- To Drive Investment: A Strong workforce and vibrant community attract business and infrastructure investments.

By managing branding, promotion, and stewardship, a DMO keeps the wheel turning, ensuring long-term success and vitality for its residents.

# OVERALL DESTINATION CONDITIONS

## REPORT FOR Q2 FY 2025

VSC uses third party research to monitor overall destination conditions such as visitation, spending, rooms sold, average daily rate, occupancy.

### Economic Impact

Q2 FY 24	Q2 FY 25	% Variance
\$893,844,500	\$857,363,600	4% ▼

### Average Daily Rate

Q2 FY 24	Q2 FY 25	% Variance
\$302.56	\$330.07	9% ▲

### Occupancy

Q2 FY 24	Q2 FY 25	% Variance
83.3%	83.3%	0%

### Room Nights Sold

Q2 FY 24	Q2 FY 25	% Variance
990,100	987,600	.2% ▼

### Visitation

Q2 FY 24	Q2 FY 25	% Variance
347,300	340,500	2% ▼

### Visitor Spending

Q2 FY 24	Q2 FY 25	% Variance
\$560,232,600	\$559,303,200	.16% ▼

\* March 2024 figures were revised using Key Data (replacing AirDNA) for consistency. Original ADR appeared higher due to differences in data sources.

# FY25 VS. FY24 PERFORMANCE

## Sarasota County Indicators of Destination Tourism Health

	FY24 Jan-24	FY25 Jan-25	% Variance	FY24 Feb-24	FY25 Feb-25	% Variance	FY24 March-24	FY25 March-25	% Variance	Q2 Total FY24	Q2 Total FY25	% Variance
Economic Impact	\$237,170,600	\$226,792,000	4.4% ▼	\$289,100,800	\$274,099,500	5.2% ▼	\$367,573,100	\$356,472,100	3% ▼	\$893,844,500	\$857,363,600	4% ▼
Average Daily Rate (ADR)	\$258.59	\$268.54	3.8% ▲	\$312.57	\$335.68	6.3% ▼	\$336.51	\$386.00	14.7% ▲	\$302.56	\$330.07	9% ▲
Occupancy	67.8%	69.4%	2.4% ▲	81.9%	84.1%	2.7% ▲	83.3%	83.3%	0%	77.6%	78.9%	1.6% ▲
Room Nights Sold	269,800	283,900	5.2% ▲	334,500	330,700	1.1% ▼	385,800	373,000	3% ▼	990,100	987,600	.2% ▼
Visitation	80,300	78,900	1.7% ▼	107,600	105,800	1.7% ▼	159,400	155,800	2.2% ▼	347,300	340,500	1.9% ▼
Visitor Spending	\$144,616,200	\$144,453,500	0.1% ▼	\$182,975,200	\$180,328,600	1.4% ▼	\$232,641,200	\$234,521,100	.8% ▲	\$560,232,600	\$559,303,200	.16% ▼

# FY25 PROMISED DELIVERABLES

**\*Note:** The lower-than-expected metrics for Q2 (January-Marchr) are largely attributable to the significant impact of **Hurricane Helene (September 2024)** and **Hurricane Milton (October 2024)**. These storms caused widespread disruptions, infrastructure damage, and economic slowdowns, affecting the ability to meet certain promised deliverables. Recovery efforts and resource reallocation during this period further contributed to the shortfall.

VSC Performance	Q2 Total FY24	Q2 Total FY25	% Variance	
Use of Brand Toolkit (SarasotaCountyBrandToolkit.com)	200	273	36.5% ▲	*TripAdvisor Accolade peaked interest for Images
Signals of Intent to Travel (Virtual Views and Visitor Guide Orders)	12,271	5,823	52.5% ▼	
Signals of Intent to Travel (Newsletter Subscriptions)	5,593	5,158	7.8% ▼	*Signals of intent to travel are down as organic searches now appear beneath AI summaries, reflecting a shift in how people consume information in today's evolving digital landscape.
Signals of Intent to Travel (Relocation Packets Sent)	283	261	7.8% ▼	
Leisure Lodging Leads Sent	487	543	11.5% ▲	
Meetings (Groups) Booked	13	16	23% ▲	*Attended new tradeshow focusing on corporate and incentive market.
Meetings (Groups) Leads Sent	135	154	14.1% ▲	
Sports (Groups) Booked – New Metric for FY2025	N/A	12		
Sports (Groups) Leads – New Metric for FY2025	N/A	24		
Future Sports Event Bids Submitted	12	2	83.3% ▼	*New Metric combining Leads and Bids. Numbers have increased



## What Arts & Culture Points of Interest are visitors going to?

POI Name	% of Residents	% of Visitors	% Out of State Visitors
Venice Performing Arts Center	90%	10%	50.6%
Regal Hollywood - Sarasota	85%	15%	55.5%
Smugglers Cove Adventure Golf	62%	38%	73.9%
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art	61%	39%	49.1%
Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall	81%	19%	60.0%
PopStroke	77%	23%	49.9%
Historic Asolo Theater	64%	36%	52.4%
Asolo Repertory Theatre/The Sarasota Ballet	85%	15%	55.4%
Sarasota Opera	81%	19%	47.9%
Venice Theatre	85%	15%	55.9%

## What Arts & Culture Points of Interest are visitors going to?

POI Name	% of Residents	% of Visitors	% Out of State Visitors
Escape Rooms Unlocked/Djonisi's Restaurant	86%	14%	54.1%
Sarasota Art Museum	84%	16%	54.1%
The Circus Arts Conservatory	82%	18%	34.5%
McCurdys Comedy Theatre & Humor Institute	84%	16%	47.1%
Sarasota Contemporary Dance	88%	12%	63.4%
Florida Studio Theatre	75%	25%	63.6%
Jazz Club of Sarasota	82%	18%	53.5%
Urbanite Theatre	86%	14%	56.5%
Venice Art Center	92%	8%	51.8%
Venice Chorale	91%	9%	54.7%

## What Arts & Culture Points of Interest are visitors going to?

POI Name	% of Residents	% of Visitors	% Out of State Visitors
Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe	83%	17%	51.0%
Burns Court Cinema	76%	24%	72.0%
Lemon Bay Playhouse	85%	15%	42.2%
Art Center Sarasota	78%	22%	52.8%
Englewood Art Center	87%	13%	53.2%
Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center	88%	12%	54.6%
Marietta Museum of Art & Whimsy	59%	41%	68.9%



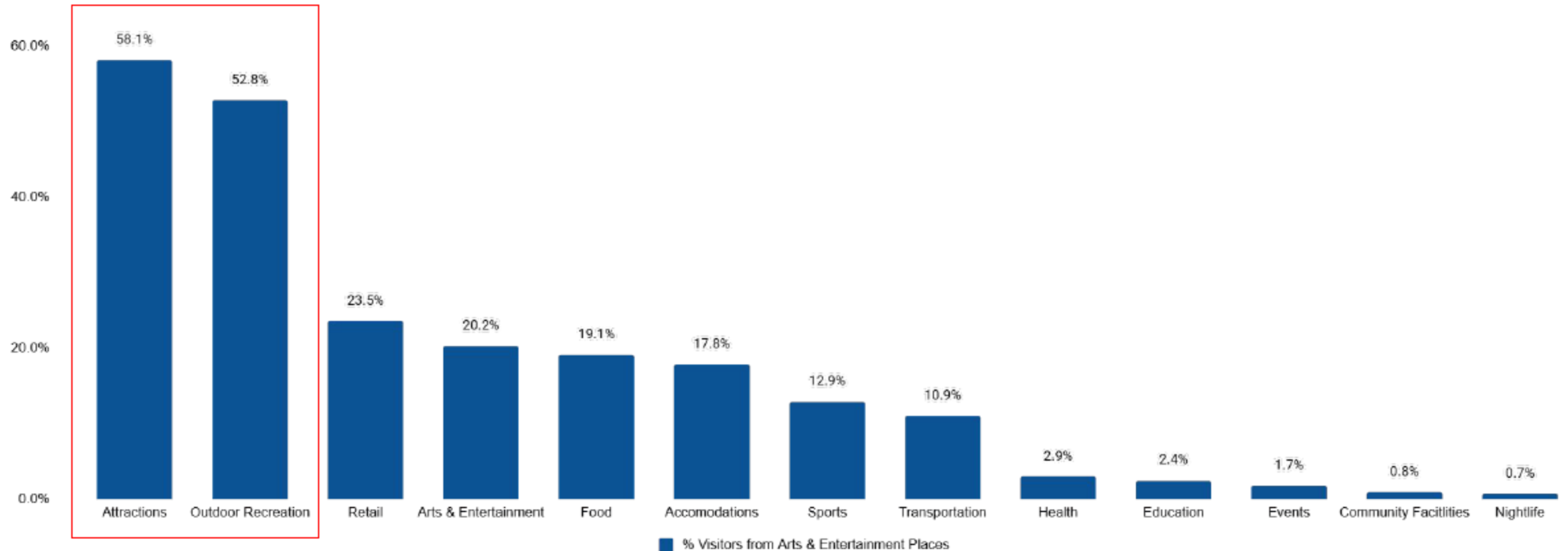
## Where are Arts & Entertainment visitors going?

**Top 10 Places Arts & Entertainment visitors were also observed.**

The Ringling  
Historic Asolo Theater  
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art  
Circus Museum - Tibbals Learning Center  
Sarasota Bradenton International Airport  
Nathan Benderson Park  
Ca dZan  
Circus Museum Historic Galleries  
Siesta Beach  
Siesta Beach Park

## Where are Arts & Entertainment visitors going?

Over half of all Arts & Entertainment visitors were also observed at attractions and outdoor recreation places.





## Goals & Metrics for FY 25

1. Emergency Preparedness
2. Engagement, Responsiveness & Collaboration
3. Working Towards Positive Resident Sentiment Towards Tourism
4. Using all Marketing Tactics to Promote to 9 Key Audiences



# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FY25 Q2 Activities

Continued to update the Inventory / Accommodation Update Status Shared with County via SmartSheet.

Monitored and updated VSC Website with Red Tide Information and Updates.

In response to lingering hurricane damage, renewing business partners are offered flexible payment plans to ensure they may remain connected with tourism promotions even while recovering.

# RESIDENT SENTIMENT FY25 Q2 Activities

VSC staff participated in Career Day Expos for Venice High School and Pine View School.

Secured 54 stories with local media (print & broadcast), garnering more than 43,000,000 impressions for initiatives pertinent to local businesses and residents, like VSC's partnership with SRQ Airport and VSC's Spring Campaign to boost traffic to the keys and barrier islands.

VSC leadership attended Florida Tourism Day in Tallahassee to meet with elected representatives to advocate for and educate on Tourist Development Tax.

Launched [VisitSarasotaCountyTransparency.com](https://www.visit SarasotaCountyTransparency.com) website to openly share the operation practices and reporting at Visit Sarasota County.



# INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT FY25 Q2 Activities

*This area of our organization is where we focus on generating private funds, a key component of our contractual requirement with Sarasota County. Through strategic partnerships, sponsorships, and cooperative marketing efforts, we work to supplement public funding and enhance overall program effectiveness.*

**Held a Marketing Task force** with 4 partners to garner feedback and brainstorm for FY26. Participants included both North and South County.

**Relaunched Tourism U professional development** series in partnership with regional Chambers of Commerce. The first session in February 2025 focused on video storytelling and social media strategy.

**Hosted 10 B2B networking events**, that connected more than 161 partners with VSC staff and stakeholders.

**Onboarded 12 new partners.**



# EFFORTS TO TARGET AUDIENCES

To maximize our reach and impact, we strategically target 9 key audiences with carefully curated messaging and imagery delivered across multiple tactics and channels proven most effective for each audience.





# DOMESTIC LEISURE

FY25 Q2

## Paid Media

Launched  
“Sarasota Keys Are Calling”  
Campaign

## Visitor Services

AVA was on-site at the  
Venice Area Chamber of  
Commerce Annual NonProfit  
Event.

## Website

Launched the Spring  
Campaign landing page and  
User Generated Content  
gallery.



## Earned Media & Public Relations

- Produced 2 Articles in Forbes & Yahoo Life! As a result of Hosting Media as part of a luxury FAM in December.
- Hosted an influencer in destination who produced reels on a Family-Friendly Spring Break in Sarasota County
- 2,566,660, 115 Media Impressions for Q2
- Met with 40 journalists at STS Travel Media Meetup, including SOUTHBOUND magazine, who has already featured Cirque hotel I their Spring Issue, out March 2025.
- Featured in Garden & Gun Instagram Stories

## Sports

Worked with Sarasota Lawn  
Bowling Club regarding future  
events and facilities

## One-Time Funding

**Creative production**  
Arts & Culture Photoshoot  
completed.

## Content & Social Media

- Custom Episode on Atlas Obscura Podcast, the #1 Travel Podcast, taking listeners on a journey about John Ringling and the Circus History in Sarasota County.
- #SarasotaKeysAreCalling Reels and ‘Pick your Paradise’ social polls

# INTERNATIONAL LEISURE

FY25 Q2

## Meeting & Group Sales

- Exhibited at ITB Berlin and held 35 appointments with Travel Trade.

## Sports

Hosted Unleash the Dragons Event. This is an international breast cancer survivors event that mixes leisure travel with friendly competition and camaraderie.

## Earned Media & Public Relations

International Media efforts resulted in 1,489,039 impressions in UK and Germany.

## Visitor Services

Provided French-translated visitor guide and VIP bags to visiting delegation from Perpignon, France. VSC Leadership spoke at community event with the delegation, in partnership with the City of Sarasota and the Sister Cities Association.

## International Sales

- Sales call with Holiday Pirates to discuss opportunities for drive market.
- Hosted 2 travel agents with Russo Luxury Travel for 2-day FAM.
- Hotelbeds 3 Month Campaign produced 2,411 Room nights, up 6% YOY.

## One-Time Funding

### Increased UK & German Retainer & Marketing Campaigns:

- Confirmed British Airways campaign with VISIT FLORIDA to run April/May.
- America Unlimited Campaign in final stages.

# NATURE & OUTDOORS

FY25 Q2

## Paid Media

Spring Campaign was focused on the Sarasota Keys, focusing on outdoor imagery.

## Earned Media & Public Relations

- Siesta Beach named #1 in US and #4 in World by Tripadvisor.
- Sarasota was a feature destination in Scuttlebutt Boating Magazine in a 2 page spread.

## Content & Social Media

Content on Beaches, golf courses and outdoor activities curated.

## Sports

Worked with the Bobby Jones Golf Club to bring 2 Golf Events.





Paid Media

- “The Circus Capital of the World” featured in Atlas Obscura Podcast.
- Full Page Print Ad in Encore Magazine across 15 markets in U.S.

## Earned Media & Public Relations

- Orlando Magazine featured the Newtown African American Heritage Trail for a reach of 53,100
- Sarasota Opera House Featured in a UK article on the “World’s Most Spectacular Opera Houses” for 125,300 Impressions.
- 3 German Publications featured the Arts & Culture Scene in Sarasota County, for a reach of 33,3000 impressions.

Sports

Took part in Welcoming the Mayor of Perpignan through the Sister Cities program. This focused on the exchange of information around Arts, Culture & Sports in each of our destinations. .



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**C**

## March 11, 2025 - 10:40 AM

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VISIT  
**Sarasota**  
 beaches and beyond  
[FlaRidesCulturalCoast.com](http://FlaRidesCulturalCoast.com)

# RELOCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

FY25 Q2

## Earned Media & Public Relations

Article on Public art & Luxury Living in Downtown Sarasota featured on German media website, Finanzen.net, resulting in 1,354,783 impressions.

## Website

Created and Launched “Live Where You Want To Play” landing Page to highlight living on Florida’s Cultural Coast. <sup>TM</sup> (Companion page to Work Where You Want To Live).

## Live WHERE YOU WANT TO **PLAY**

Join the many Sarasota County visitors who choose not to leave ... at least not permanently.

Sarasota County offers an exceptional quality of life for those looking to embrace their next chapter in paradise. From vibrant arts and cultural experiences to world-class healthcare, volunteer opportunities, and a welcoming community, there's something for everyone. Whether seeking a peaceful retreat or an active, socially engaged lifestyle, Sarasota County has the perfect place to call home.

[Click here](#) to bring your business or career to Sarasota—where work meets waterfront living!

While Visit Sarasota County, the Arts Alliance of Sarasota County and the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County are separate organizations, each with a different focus, they work together on ensuring visitors, residents and those thinking about relocation or retirement know Sarasota County is a special place. Click a logo below to go directly to the home page of their website.

# LOCAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH & PROGRAMMING

FY25 Q2

## Sports

Promoted event such as the Sam Mikulak Gymnastics competition, Fox Lea Vet and MLK on the Beach to Local Audiences.

## Earned Media & Public Relations

Secured 54 local media stories (print & broadcast), earning 43M+ impressions for initiatives like the SRQ partnership and Spring Campaign.

## Visitor Services

AVA was at North Port Newcomers Day, Philippi Park History Day and Wellen Park Farmers Market.

## Website

Lunched VisitSarasotaCountyTransparency.com website to openly share the operation practices and reporting at Visit Sarasota County.





# MEETINGS & GROUPS

FY25 Q2

## Paid Media

- Meetings Today Leads Program generated 2,000 high-interest leads of meeting planners showing interest in Sarasota County.
- Hosted Frosch Luxury FAM in conjunction with Ritz-Carlton & St. Regis.

## Website

Started Development on Meeting Group Website Enhancements.

## Meeting & Group Sales

- Provided VIP Bags to meeting planners for 2 groups
- Provided destination registration bags for 5 groups, totaling 147 bags
- Sent out 154 RFP's
- 4 Meeting Shows attended
- 8 groups received meeting grants totaling \$8,615.00

## Sports

- Continued working with The College Swimming and Diving Coaches Association of America (CSCAA) on bringing in their annual coaches meeting and signature event to Nathan Benderson Park.
- Continued to work on Annual meeting of Presidents and Athletic Directors of HBC's.

## One-Time Funding

**New Meetings shows and economic development trade events:** Attended Smart Meetings Engage and Smart Meetings Health and Wellness

**Meeting Sales Representation:** Contract Sales Rep started March 1, 2025.





# SPORTS

FY25 Q2

## Paid Media

Site-Direct buys for Sports, including Sports ETA “Get in the Game” Newsletter.

## Earned Media & Public Relations

Ran Social Posts and Conducted Interviews for upcoming events.

## Content & Social Media

Developed curated article on being the premier destination for sports and training in Sarasota County.

## Sports

Hosted a FAM of sports events rights holders from the Atlanta Braves Nation to showcase Sarasota and SW Florida.  
19 events received Sports Grants for a total of \$38,490  
Booked 12 groups. Added 22 leads and 2 bids.



# NEW AIR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## Paid Media

- Ran advertising to promote Allegiant air service from Plattsburgh, NY and Portsmouth, NH.
- Finalized Creative for Car Wraps for the Lexington, KY area for “Car Swarms” at premier events to promote Lexington/SRQ route.

## Earned Media & Public Relations

- Provided Promo Items to Albany airport and Lexington airport for passengers of first flights to SRQ from these destinations.
- Held Indianapolis Media Mission with BACVB to Promote Southwest Non-Stop Flight to SRQ.

## FY25 Q2

## Website

Used personalization to target homepage content for fly markets.



## International Sales

UK Sales team participated in the Delta Airlines Sales Mission with VISIT FLORIDA.





## How Does VSC Help Meet These Goals:

### **World Class Quality of Life Amenities**

- Help Boost Tourist Development Tax to Pay for Amenities used by both residents and tourists.
- Developed LiveWhereYouWantToPlay.com to attract philanthropic-minded retirees to the area.

### **Robust, Growing Business Opportunities**

- Attract defined/targeted Businesses and Workforce in “Relocation” Audience Promotions in partnership with EDC.
- Expand Sports Tourism by promoting to event right holders and coaches for training opportunities.
- Promote Spring Training in “Leisure” Audience by collaborating with the Baltimore O’s and Atlanta Braves.
- Promoted understanding of the Tourist Development Tax at Florida Tourism Day.





For additional Community Resources, please explore the following:

[Destination Strategic Plan 2030](#)

[FY25 Scope of Services and Budget](#)

[Sarasota County Brand Toolkit & Image Gallery](#)

[Recaps & Research](#)

[Visit Sarasota County Transparency](#)

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VISIT  
*Sarasota*  
beaches and beyond