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# Research *focus*

## *Greetings from the new Assistant Secretary*

It is my privilege to have the opportunity to continue working with industry partners and stakeholders, during this new venture as assistant secretary for the Louisiana Office of Tourism under Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne.

During my six-year tenure as president of the Ruston Lincoln CVB, I served as vice chairman, treasurer and secretary of the Louisiana Travel and Promotion Association. I also served on the executive committee and board of directors of the Louisiana Association of CVBs, and acted as its president in 2009.

I am currently vice chairman for Louisiana on the board of directors of the Southeast Tourism Society; a member of the U.S. Travel Association's board of directors; a membership committee delegate for Destination Marketing Association International and a seat holder on the National Council of State Tourism Directors.

As assistant secretary, I am pleased to say our spring advertising campaign is going well and we foresee a great return in markets where we are advertising. We at the Office of Tourism look forward to maintaining our strong partnership with the industry as we increase consumer awareness and ultimately visitation to Louisiana.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

*Kyle Edmiston*



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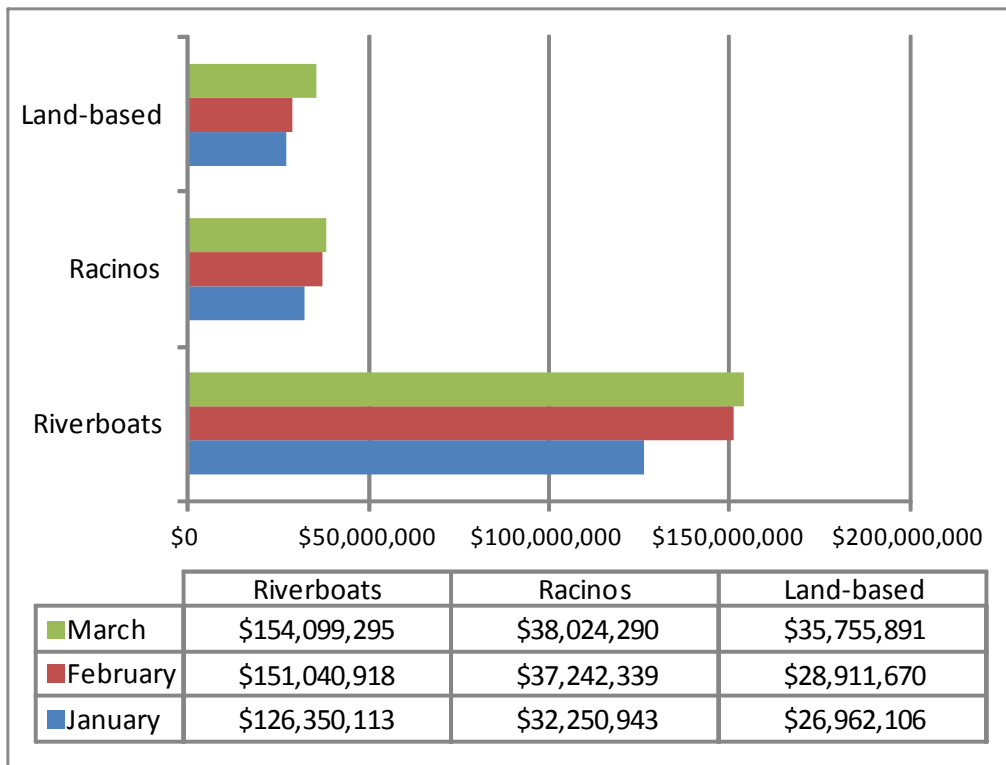
LouisianaTravel.com

### Louisiana Lodging Statistics

	Occupancy (%)		
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
<b>2012</b>	53.8	64.3	71.5
<b>2011</b>	52.3	61.2	69.0
<b>YTD Percent Change</b>	2.9	5.0	3.7
Average Daily Rate (\$)			
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
<b>2012</b>	107.7	107.8	108.8
<b>2011</b>	92.5	98.0	104.6
<b>YTD Percent Change</b>	16.4	10.0	4.00

Louisiana statewide occupancy rates saw an increase in March's occupancy compared to February (7.2 percent); and ADR was slightly up from February (1.07 percent).

### Year-to-Date Louisiana Gaming Gross Revenue

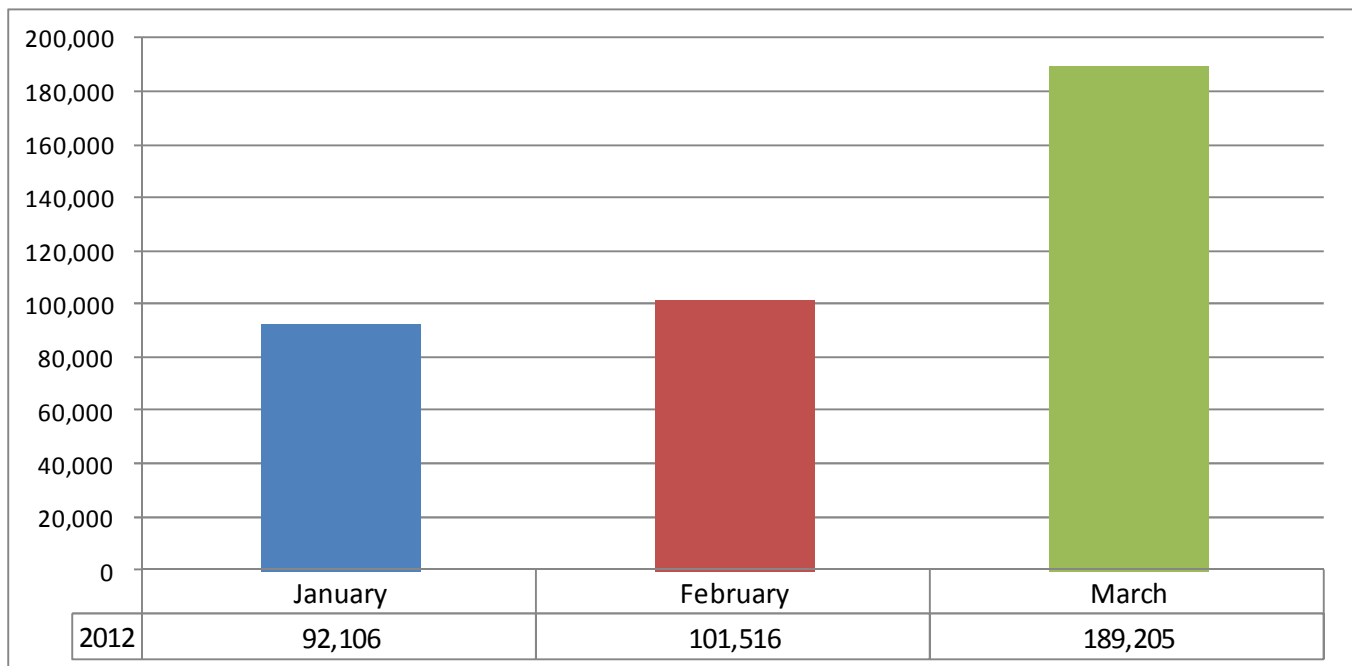


### Enplanements

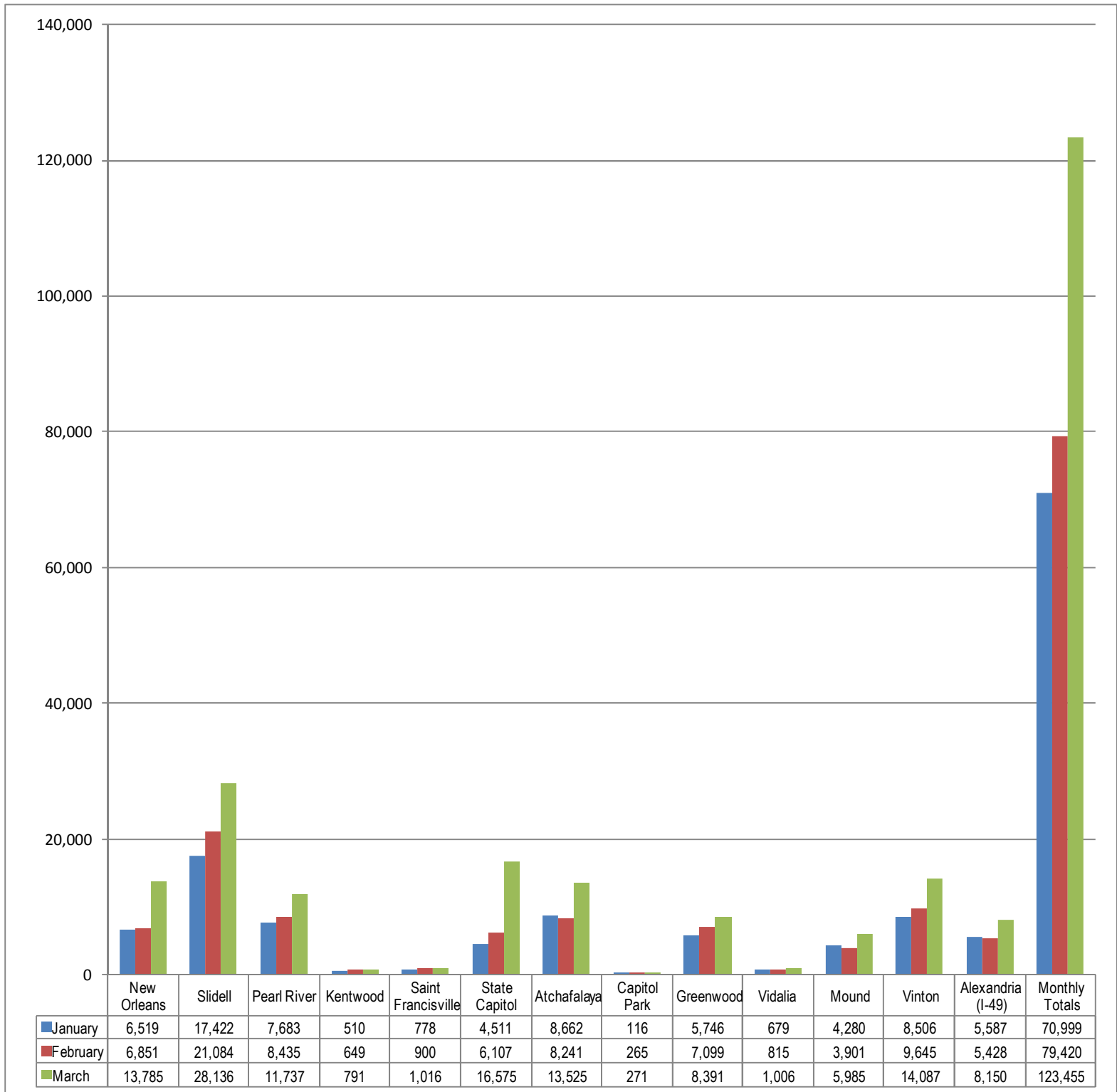
2012	New Orleans	Baton Rouge	Lafayette	Shreveport	Lake Charles	Monroe	Alexandria	Totals
January	328,744	30,708	18,497	20,047	4,082	7,700	13,495	<b>423,273</b>
February	338,657	31,730	18,281	20,091	4,356	7,131	11,725	<b>431,971</b>
March	385,536	37,784	unavailable	unavailable	4,256	unavailable	14,173	<b>441,749</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,052,937</b>	<b>100,222</b>	<b>36,778</b>	<b>40,138</b>	<b>12,694</b>	<b>14,831</b>	<b>39,393</b>	<b>1,296,993</b>

March enplanements are not reported for Lafayette, Shreveport or Monroe.

### Louisiana State Parks and State Historic Sites Monthly Visitation



## Welcome Center Visitation



**January — March 2012 Total Welcome Center Visitation = 273,874**

Welcome centers are always interested in partnering with tourism commissions and convention and visitors bureaus with programs or displays for the centers. For more information, contact Nancy Broussard at 225.342.8122.

### *Groupon says...*

Groupon says it's in the travel business. **Groupon Getaways** with Expedia is growing at a robust pace and attracting new customers.

The number of Groupon Getaways offered grew to more than 540 deals during the first three months of 2012, up 45 percent from the fourth quarter of 2011, according to Groupon CFO Jason Child, who revealed the numbers during the company's first quarter earnings call.

In North America, Child said, 30 percent of Groupon Getaways' purchasers during the quarter "were first-time Groupon customers."

The Expedia-supplied Getaways' offers largely revolve around hotel flash sales. "These are customers we might have [not] gained access to had it not been for expansion in the Getaways and we now have the opportunity to sell them products and services from across our entire suite," Child said.

There is no word on whether the upswing in Getaways' purchasers was similarly positive for Expedia and its brand, although in the past officials have said they are pleased with the Groupon partnership. In addition to Getaways and Groupon's standard deals, ranging from restaurant offers to teeth-whitening appointments, the company recently has been offering deals through a Goods category. The latter business includes everything from messenger bags to electronics.

For the first quarter of 2012, Groupon recorded a net loss of \$3.6 million, compared with a net loss of \$113.9 million a year earlier, on \$559.3 million in revenue, an 89 percent increase.

Groupon's operating income in the first quarter of 2012 was \$39.6 million compared with an operating loss a year earlier of \$117.1 million.

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### May — June Bicentennial Events

- 05.25.12      **Sulphur Heritage Days, Sulphur**
- 06.27.12      **Louisiana in 1812; A Lecture, Lafayette**



Visit [www.LouisianaBicentennial2012.com](http://www.LouisianaBicentennial2012.com) for more information.

## Industry Research and Trends

### Forecast optimistic for upcoming summer travel

Summer is around the corner, and Americans are busy researching destinations, booking hotels and looking forward to a big annual getaway. Optimism is high, and according to SpringHill Suites' Third Annual Vacation Attitude Survey conducted by TNS, 92 percent of Americans will hop into cars, planes, buses and boats in the upcoming months to spend quality time with loved ones.

Although the tradition of summer vacation remains a constant, planning methods and timing have evolved, aided by social networks and new booking websites that make travel faster, easier and more entertaining. In today's fast-paced society, people have transformed the way they plan and how they vacation.

"The American traveler is resilient, and people need their cherished summer break, whether they are going near or far," Callette Nielsen, vice president and global brand manager for SpringHill Suites, said. "People's expectations are the same, yet how and when they book has changed tremendously."

- ◇ 36 percent will spend two hours or less planning their summer vacation.
- ◇ Nearly 3 in 4 (74 percent) of social media users continue to use social media on vacation, with more than a quarter (27 percent) using it the same amount or more than at home.

(Source: [http://www.travelindustrywire.com/trends-detail-sid-63297-Forecast\\_Optimistic\\_For\\_Upcoming\\_Summer\\_Travel.html](http://www.travelindustrywire.com/trends-detail-sid-63297-Forecast_Optimistic_For_Upcoming_Summer_Travel.html))

### Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the ugliest tourist of all?

A survey of 5,600 people in five countries showed that Americans, Canadians and Australians all agree that the worst behaving tourists are—drum roll, please—Americans.

Perhaps a diploma from charm school should be a requirement for acquiring a passport.

Not everyone pointed a finger at us. The Irish tagged their British neighbors, while the British put the onus on the Germans.

(Source: Southeast Tourism Society newsletter, March 2012)

### Study shows traveler numbers are down

While travel spending is on the rise, the number of people making leisure trips is not, PhoCusWright reported. Results suggest that tourism dollars are being spent among a narrowing group of wealthier people.

According to a survey of more than 2,000 people, 62 percent took a leisure trip within the past year, about the same as a year earlier. That figure is down from about 70 percent prior to the recession. The number of regular leisure travelers is being constrained by challenges faced by people between ages 45 and 54 ("early boomers"), which account for a large chunk of the U.S. travel market.

About 60 percent of early boomers took a trip within the past year, down from 63 percent a year earlier, PhoCusWright said. And for early boomers who did take a trip, average spending fell by more than 10 percent. (Source: *Travel Weekly*, May 2012)

### 65-and-older population soars

There are now more Americans 65 or older than at any previous time in U.S. history. According to a recent Census Bureau report, there were 40.3 million people age 65 and older on April 1, 2010, up 15.1 percent from 35 million in 2000 (and just 3.1 million in 1900). "The population age 65 and older has increased notably over time," Carrie Werner, a Census Bureau statistician and author of the report, said. "It is expected to increase more rapidly over the next decade as more baby boomers start to turn 65." The 65-and-older population jumped 15.1 percent from 2000 to 2010, compared with a 9.7 percent increase for the total U.S. population. People age 65 or older now make up 13 percent of the total population, compared with 12.4 percent in 2000 and 4.1 percent in 1900. (Source: MSN, 3/13/12)



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This publication is designed to inform the reader on current Louisiana data and trends in the travel industry. Quotation and reproduction of the material is permitted with credit to the Office of Tourism.



**"The way to do research is to attack the facts at the point of greatest astonishment."**  
*--Celia Green, British writer and philosopher*

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