

VISIT FLORIDA Crisis Response

- As the state's official tourism marketing corporation and Florida's travel planning source, VISIT FLORIDA plays a vital role in the state's crisis response and recovery efforts. VISIT FLORIDA is the only organization solely committed to safeguarding Florida's brand perception and the tourism industry that generates billions of tax revenue for the state.
- During a crisis, like a hurricane threatening the state, VISIT FLORIDA supports the state's emergency response including communicating life safety information directly to travelers through web and social media and at our three welcome centers.
- Following a crisis, VISIT FLORIDA works with tourism businesses and state agencies to mitigate the effects on the tourism industry and help the impacted destinations recover as quickly as possible. Also, because travelers often do not understand the state's geography, VISIT FLORIDA works to correct misperceptions as to which areas of the state are open for business.

Example – Red Tide & Hurricane Michael



According to Nielsen, during last year's red tide event, Florida saw more than \$22 million in negative news coverage and more than \$35 million in negative news coverage related to Hurricane Michael. **VISIT FLORIDA is the only organization with the reach to combat this type of negative attention that affects the entire state and threatens the economic stability of the tourism industry as well as the revenue it generates.**

Because of VISIT FLORIDA's aggressive marketing efforts, 2018 was another record-breaking year for tourism, clearly demonstrating that the marketing efforts mitigated the negative impacts these events had on Florida's economy. This includes record visitation during the third and fourth quarters of 2018, when the state was impacted by these events.

VISIT FLORIDA Actions Taken

- **VISIT FLORIDA executed a nearly [\\$9 million marketing plan](#) to highlight the Sunshine State**
 - Less than two weeks after Hurricane Michael made landfall in Northwest Florida, VISIT FLORIDA executed a multi-phased marketing plan, which included more than \$5 million to support the Panhandle and nearly \$4 million to assist areas impacted by red tide. This innovative marketing plan included partnerships with airlines, social, digital and broadcast components to inform travelers which areas of the state were not impacted. This marketing campaign directly reduced vacation cancellations and ensured people were still traveling to Florida.





- **VISIT FLORIDA Launched four marketing assistance programs to assist impacted businesses**

- Awarded nearly \$1.1 million to communities in Northwest Florida to execute post-storm marketing plans through the [Tourism Recovery Grant Program for Hurricane Michael](#). The plans directly contributed to the increase of visitors to affected counties once hurricane-damaged areas were open. The grants were awarded based on the amount of funding requested.

Tourism Development Council	Grant Funding Awarded
Franklin County Tourist Development Council	\$174,000
Holmes County Tourist Development Council	\$55,000
Washington County Tourist Development Council	\$47,598
Jackson County Tourist Development Council	\$60,000
Gulf County Tourist Development Council	\$250,000
Panama City Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau	\$250,000
Panama City Community Development Council, Inc.	\$250,000
	\$1,086,598.00

- VISIT FLORIDA provided complimentary partnerships to 99 tourism businesses in **NORTHWEST FLORIDA** through the [Hurricane Recovery Marketing Program](#). Through these partnerships, VISIT FLORIDA assisted these businesses with marketing, research and advertising.
- VISIT FLORIDA awarded nearly \$900,000 to communities in **SOUTHWEST FLORIDA** to execute marketing plans through the [Tourism Recovery Grant Program for Red Tide](#). The efforts supported by this grant funding directly contributed to the increase of visitors to affected counties once red tide had subsided.

Tourism Development Board	Grant Funding Awarded
The Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor and Convention Bureau	\$100,000.00
Naples, Marco Island, Everglades CVB	\$92,500.00
Visit Tampa Bay	\$50,000.00
Indian River County Chamber of Commerce	\$80,025.00
Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel	\$100,000.00
Bradenton Area Convention and Visitor Bureau	\$100,000.00
Discover Martin	\$59,987.15
Visit St Petersburg/Clearwater Area CVB	\$83,624.00
Visit Sarasota County on behalf of Collier, Lee, Charlotte, Sarasota and Manatee Counties' Destination Marketing Organizations	\$22,500.00
Visit Sarasota County	\$77,500.00
Visit St. Lucie	\$125,000.00
	\$891,136.15

- VISIT FLORIDA provided complimentary partnerships to 236 tourism businesses in **SOUTHWEST FLORIDA** through the [Red Tide Recovery Marketing Program](#). Through these partnerships, VISIT FLORIDA assisted these businesses with marketing, research and advertising.