

9-14-23 Charter Captain's Meeting Notes

Introductions and Resource / Background Info:

- Susan Boggs kicked off meeting with introduction to Beth Gendler, CEO of Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism (bgendler@alabamabeaches.com)
- Kim Jones, GSOBT Community Liaison, introduced kjones@alabamabeaches.com; info below
 - o Become an industry partner
 - o Review industry partner benefits/services
 - o Training for use of industry partner portal, tech, etc.
- Easton Colvin introduced, PR coordinator, ecolvin@alabamabeaches.com
 - o Media connections (e.g., writers/influencers/bloggers, etc.)
- **NO COST – BECOME AN INDUSTRY PARTNER WITH GSOBT – BENEFITS INCLUDE:**
 - o Take advantage of over 6M website visitors (annually)
 - o In 2023, there have been:
 - 112,140 visitor sessions on the GSOBT fishing site
 - 46,273 referrals to fishing partners
 - o Advertise your business - Connect your *booking engine of choice*
 - o Post deals for potential customers (highly trafficked part of GSOBT site)
 - o Events Page: advertise a fishing tournament or create event-specific deals / coupons for incoming visitors
 - o Regular newsletters, informational emails, and destination updates from GSOBT marketing experts
 - o Display rack cards, cards, coupons, etc. to GSOBT welcome centers (Gulf Shores and Orange Beach)
 - o Snowbird welcome bags – bring to Kim by mid-December
 - o Visitors order brochures online (fishing, trails, birding, history) to be mailed and are asked if they *consent* to having IPs email them directly, allowing YOU to access these contact lists and solicit business

Key Statistics:

Guest Servicing Stats:

- o In 2023, GSOBT had over 1,277 new subscriptions to Coastal Catch!
- o This year, GSOBT mailed out over 9,000 fishing guides
- o To date, GSOBT had over 27,000 interactions in the visitor centers via email, walk-in, calls, texts and more
- o Welcome Centers: 9-10K visitors to welcome centers in January/February (snowbird season; FYI: Snowbirds often host family visitors (e.g., spring breaker families)) - 100s of visitors per week outside of snowbird season

Media Circulation Stats:

- Over 2B in total circulation (2023 YTD; views of blogs, magazine, newspapers, social media, TV, etc.)
 - Nearly 12M circulation for fishing-specific content
- Upcoming Fishing Events:
 - 9/21-24: @PondBoys Instagram influencer trip
 - 9/28-10/1: *We Caught That* fishing TV Show filming
 - Spring '24: *The Captain's Log* TV Show Filming
 - Spring '24: *Let's Fish* TV Filming
- One attendee indicates getting 15% of their business from a YouTuber/Instagram account that connects him directly with visitors who have never been fishing before

Other Statistics and Destination Information (e.g., visitor demographics, trends)

- Board Report Summaries and Other Reports:
<https://www.gulfshores.com/partners/resources/statistics/>
- Other resources (visitor demographics):
<https://www.gulfshores.com/partners/all-resources/>

Ideas and Discussion Items:

- Attendee recommended a *Book Now, Book Local* campaign
- Display FISHING as its own widget versus under the THINGS TO DO list
- Fish Outer Banks (Fish OB) – use as example/inspiration
- Reminder: visitors remember their experience in the destination (i.e., “orange beach fishing”) versus the name of a captain, deckhand or boat

ACTION ITEMS:

- Find out if GSOBT can create a BOOK NOW button
 - **November 2023 Update:**
 - GSOB Marketing/Communications team facilitated a study, where the ‘visit website’ button was changed to ‘book now’:
 - The results revealed a **-15.87% decrease** for partner referrals.
 - The team recommended a change back to the ‘visit website’ verbiage.
- Explore listing Fishing separately from THINGS TO DO on site
- Visit Fish OB (outerbanks) for campaign and advertising inspiration
- Include interviews with local captains and marina owners in newsletters



Destination Information

Find the latest destination information that could impact your business here at www.gulfshores.com/partners - access benefits, calendars, research and more!

Partner With Us

Become a Partner: <https://www.gulfshores.com/partners/promote/get-listed/>



Partner Portal Log-in Page:

<https://algulfcoast.extranet.simpleviewcrm.com/login/#/login>

Lost or forgotten login credentials?

Reach out to your **Community Liaison, Kim Jones:**

kjones@alabamabeaches.com | 251-228-2629

You can receive confidential business services at **no cost** from the University of Alabama SBDC (Small Business Development Council)

Register at www.asbdc.org.

