



# ABILENE

EST. **TEXAS** 1881



ANNUAL REPORT  

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FISCAL YEAR  
22-23

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### 2023 LODGING INDUSTRY

62.3

Hotel Occupancy %  
(Texas Avg 61.4%)

6

% Increase in  
Hotel Revenues

5.1

% Increase in  
Average Daily Rate

## Executive Summary



As Vice President of the Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau, it's my immense pleasure to share with you the remarkable strides we've made this past year. Our journey was nothing short of inspiring.

We embarked on an exciting brand refresh, breathing new life into our messaging, and unveiling a vibrant new visual identity that truly reflects our spirit. Our innovative campaigns, "Authentically Abilene" and "Make History," brilliantly capture the unique charm and rich history of our beloved city, inviting visitors to experience the true spirit of Abilene.

In an era where data is king, we've embraced technology by integrating a data intelligence platform into our decision making. This strategic move has transformed our marketing efforts, maximizing the effectiveness of every dollar spent on advertising.

Recognizing the need to expand our capabilities, we've added two pivotal roles to our team - a Convention Sales Manager and a Sports Experience Coordinator. These positions are instrumental in amplifying our group sales efforts and guaranteeing that every event hosted in Abilene is more than just an event, it's a memorable experience.

Together, we've set a new benchmark for excellence in promoting Abilene, and I'm thrilled to embark on another year of growth and success. Thank you for your continued support and belief in our mission.

## Guiding Principles

### **Vision Statement:**

To shape the thoughts, feelings, and expectations people have about Abilene by providing a unifying framework for organizing the community around its competitive identity.

### **Mission Statement:**

To promote Abilene as an attractive travel destination by enhancing its public image as a dynamic place to live and work.

### **Destination Promise:**

Abilene represents the frontier spirit by honoring its heritage while embracing the future. Its storied past gives rise to a charming and flourishing historic Downtown Cultural District with educational museums, urban parks, and a public art scene featuring an unrivaled collection of storybook sculptures. Abilene's authentic, welcoming sense of community and Texas traditions make for enriching experiences that create lifelong memories for visitors.



## Key Accomplishments



### **Award-Winning Excellence:**

ACVB named Destination Marketing Organization of the Year by the Texas Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus; "Make History" campaign won 1st place in Meetings & Events Promotions category.



### **Exceeding Goals:**

Surpassed our ambitious target by booking 66,681 room nights, triumphing over our initial goal of 55,000 by an impressive 21%.



### **Revitalized Marketing Materials:**

Introduced a fresh suite of marketing collateral, including a new visitors guide, meeting planner handbook, and digitized passes, elevating our promotional tools.

## SOCIAL STATS

 **30,850**  
Page Likes

 **6,334**  
Followers

**999,948**  
Post Reach  
(86.7% increase from 2022)

**24,960**  
Social Link Clicks  
(44.6% increase from 2022)

## MEDIA RELATIONS

**40**  
Press Releases  
sent to Media

**4,132**  
Newsletter  
Subscribers

# Marketing & Communications

Our Marketing & Communications efforts were centered on three main objectives: gaining insights into our visitors' origins and activities while in Abilene, enhancing brand awareness, and effectively telling the story of our destination to better connect with our top markets, in so doing increasing our impact and success.

By implementing this approach, we've deepened our knowledge of visitor behaviors, boosted the visibility of our brand, and refined our storytelling and marketing tactics, positioning Abilene as a top travel destination and increasing tourist interest and visits.

**197k**

Organic  
Website  
Visits

**1:12**

Average  
Time on  
Website

**18**

Blogs  
Written

## Top 10 Visitors

VISITOR MARKET AREA	% VISITORS
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	24.6%
Abilene-Sweetwater, TX	10.7%
Odessa-Midland, TX	6.1%
Lubbock, TX	6.0%
Houston, TX	4.9%
San Angelo, TX	4.3%
San Antonio, TX	4.2%
Austin, TX	3.9%
Waco-Temple-Bryan, TX	3.2%
Wichita Falls, TX & Lawton, OK	3.0%



2,307

QR Code  
Poster Scans



112

FFB Customers  
Using Abilene  
Debit Card



# Authentically Abilene.



Escape the ordinary and experience the authentic charm of Abilene. Our city is brimming with rich heritage, cultural events, and Texas traditions. Whether you're looking for enriching adventures or a relaxing getaway, all roads lead to Abilene. **Discover the beauty and hospitality of West Texas and see why Abilene is authentically charming.**



[ABILENEVISITORS.COM](http://ABILENEVISITORS.COM)



# ABILENE

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Abilene's Downtown Cultural District is bursting with creativity, showcasing its rich blend of western heritage, art, and extraordinary authentic experiences.

# One Pass, Endless Adventures.



## Explore More, Spend Less: Unlock Savings with the Roundup Pass!

Experience the genuine charm of Abilene with the Roundup Pass, your passport to authentic adventures at six iconic attractions. From the wild wonders of the Abilene Zoo to the captivating corridors of frontier history, embrace the spirit of adventure and education at an unbeatable value. Plan your visit now – scan the QR code to access your Roundup Pass.



# 5

Secured 5-year bid to host Little League West Texas Championships

# 8

sales trade shows & events attended

# 343

face-to-face meetings with event planners

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# 93

Convention groups serviced

# 69

Sports groups serviced

# \$224

Visitors Avg Daily Spend

## Group Sales

The ACVB sales team made huge strides in promoting Abilene as a top-tier destination for meetings, conventions, and sports events in Texas. Our primary objective for the year was to increase group bookings and establishing a foundation for future group business.

To accomplish this, we expanded our team by adding an additional sales manager, enhancing our capacity to reach and engage with potential clients. Recognizing the untapped potential in the faith-based market, we actively explored and pursued convention opportunities within this segment. Additionally, we hosted a unique, in-market event for Austin-based meeting planners, showcasing Abilene's offerings and hospitality firsthand.

The results of these efforts were remarkable. The team successfully booked 12 first-time groups to Abilene, and surpassed their room night goal of 55,000, achieving 66,681 bookings. This achievement highlights the success of their efforts in drawing group business and reinforces Abilene's status as a top group destination in Texas.

## Visitor Experience

The Visitor Experience team focused on crafting highly personalized and memorable experiences for visitors Abilene. Our main objective was to enhance the visitor experience by improving customer service across the ACVB, local hotels, and area attractions. A significant development in 2023 was the addition of a Sports Experience Coordinator to our team, further enhancing our capacity to deliver top-quality experiences. We also focused on upgrading our hospitality training program for front-line staff at local hotels and attractions, ensuring every visitor to Abilene enjoys a uniquely enriching and memorable stay.



# Abilene Center Stage

Abilene Center Stage, an initiative by the Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau, proudly holds the designation as a Music Friendly Community from the Texas Music Office. This recognition is a testament to our commitment to nurturing the local music scene. By actively supporting the growth and development of our music industry, we convey a clear message to music professionals that Abilene is dedicated to becoming a vibrant hub for live music and events in the region.

2

Center Stage  
After Hours Events

75

Attended  
After Hours



# \$167,250

Scholarships  
awarded to 152  
athletes

# \$94,500

Grants Awarded

## Abilene Sports Alliance

The Abilene Sports Alliance, an affiliate of the Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau, is dedicated to strengthening the local sports ecosystem. The volunteer organization is a group of individuals united by a passion for sports and a commitment to the betterment of our community. The steering committee, comprising three key subcommittees—Grant, Scholarship, and Corporate Olympics Organizing Committee—works tirelessly to drive initiatives that make a lasting impact on youth sports.

The Corporate Olympics is the Abilene Sports Alliance's primary fundraiser for its scholarships and grants programs.

2023 Corporate Olympics raised over \$25,000, which is the Abilene Sports Alliance's largest fundraiser to date.



## ACVB Staff

Our ACVB team consists of experienced professionals and talented newcomers, blending industry wisdom with innovative perspectives. This dynamic mix fuels our potential to create strategies that drive Abilene's tourism industry forward, combining knowledge, fresh ideas, and a deep understanding of the evolving landscape. Together, we create an enriching workplace dedicated to shaping the future of tourism in Abilene.



**Robert Lopez**  
*Vice President*



**Tiffany Nichols**  
*Senior Sales Director*



**David Waller**  
*Communications Director*



**Kim Boshier**  
*Sales Director*



**Courtney Eden**  
*Sales Manger*



**Pam Sites**  
*Visitor Experience Director*



**Terri Owens**  
*Office Administrator*



**Kailey Valadez**  
*Sports Experience Coordinator*



**Ashli Brooks**  
*Visitor Experience Associate*

## Board Of Directors

Donna Long Wolfer | *Chair*  
Travis Ruiz | *Chair-Elect*  
Ted Evans | *Secretary/Treasurer*  
Kelly Cheek  
Allison Carroll  
Brandon Osborne  
Tim Smith  
Sam Ferguson  
Charlie Quinonez  
Omar Ortiz  
Tyler Sitzes  
Molly Bellah  
Allison Alvarez  
Michael Hernandez  
Krista Hale  
Colby Marcee  
Lindsay Flores

## Designated Members

John Kukreja  
Monica Devora  
Moi Garcia  
Amanda O'Connor  
Rochelle Johnson  
Austin Connors  
Lori Dodd  
Tammie Virden  
Denae Duesler  
Jeff Salmon  
Jason Groves  
George Levesque  
Sylvia Woodall

## Ex-Officio

Doug Peters  
Laura Moore  
Ross Bennett  
Mari Cockerell



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**Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau**

1101 North 1st Street  
Abilene, Texas 79601

**[abilenevisitors.com](http://abilenevisitors.com)**