



## Fall 2004

The Louisiana Travel Pulse is a seasonal industry travel barometer designed to present recent trends in travel industry performance. This issue's emphasis is on the **Fall 2004** season (**September 2004 –November 2004**). Performance measures are primarily presented to show differences in levels from one year ago. However, much of the following data also illustrates the most recent twelve to eighteen-month trend as well. Some indicators also show comparisons of national and/or regional trends when data is available. The following Pulse has three primary parts. The first part shows statewide indicators for hotels, airports, visitor centers, riverboat gaming, parks, and attractions (pages 2-10). The second part of the Pulse contains a regional analysis of the **Fall** season using some of these same indicators (pages 11-12). The final element contains leading indicators (pages 13-14).

The Louisiana Travel Pulse is published quarterly by the Office of Tourism within the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Any questions or issues concerning this Pulse should be directed to the Research Section, Louisiana Office of Tourism, Post Office Box 94291, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9291 or by calling 225-342-8100.

### Fall 2004 Performance At-A-Glance

Hotel Occupancy Rate: +3.6%  
Hotel ADR: +3.4%  
Hotel Room Supply: +2.6%  
Hotel Room Demand: +6.0%  
State Visitor Center Visitors: +2.4%  
Riverboat Gaming Revenue: +0.6%  
Airport Enplanements: +3.6%  
State Parks and Historic Sites Visitors: -9.5%  
Local Information Center Visitors: -3.5%  
Attractions Visitors: -21.4%

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*Note: These Louisiana indicators show the percentage difference from Fall 2003 to Fall 2004.*

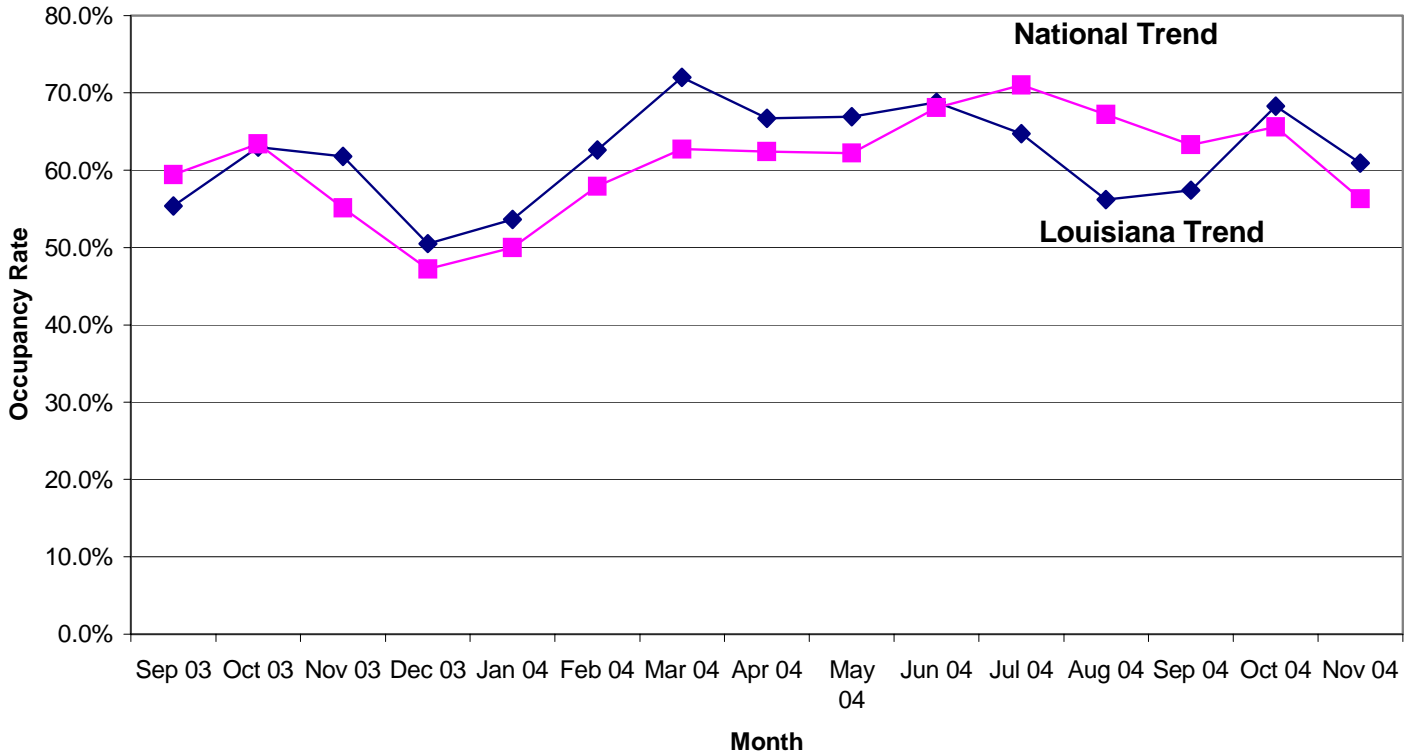
### Factors Influencing Fall 2004 Travel To Louisiana

A strong Fall nationwide in 2004 helped Louisiana attract more visitors even though parts of the industry show declining attendance.... Large Louisiana Purchase exhibits in 2003 had very healthy attendance and were not replaced with comparable exhibits in 2004, therefore several attractions' Fall attendance this year were well below the same period in 2003.... Low airfares continued to boost air travel... Fuel prices were still very high across the U.S. but sufficient supplies did not hamper demand... The value of the dollar provided clear advantages for international travelers to come to the U.S. and Louisiana.... September stormy weather in the Southeast U.S. hampered some travel but weather conditions improved toward the rest of the Fall months.

Previous copies of the Louisiana Travel Pulse are available on the web at: [www.latour.lsu.edu](http://www.latour.lsu.edu)

# 1. Hotel Trends - Occupancy Rate

## Fall 2004 – Occupancy Rate Trend



### Fall 2004 Season

**Louisiana hotel/motel occupancy: 62.2%**  
 % difference from prior year: +3.6%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -3.4%

**U.S. hotel/motel occupancy: 61.7%**  
 % difference from prior year: +4.1%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -3.4%

### 2004 Performance (January-November)

**Louisiana hotel/motel occupancy: 63.5%**  
 % difference from prior year: +2.8%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -4.2%

**U.S. hotel/motel occupancy: 62.4%**  
 % difference from prior year: +3.7%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -3.5%

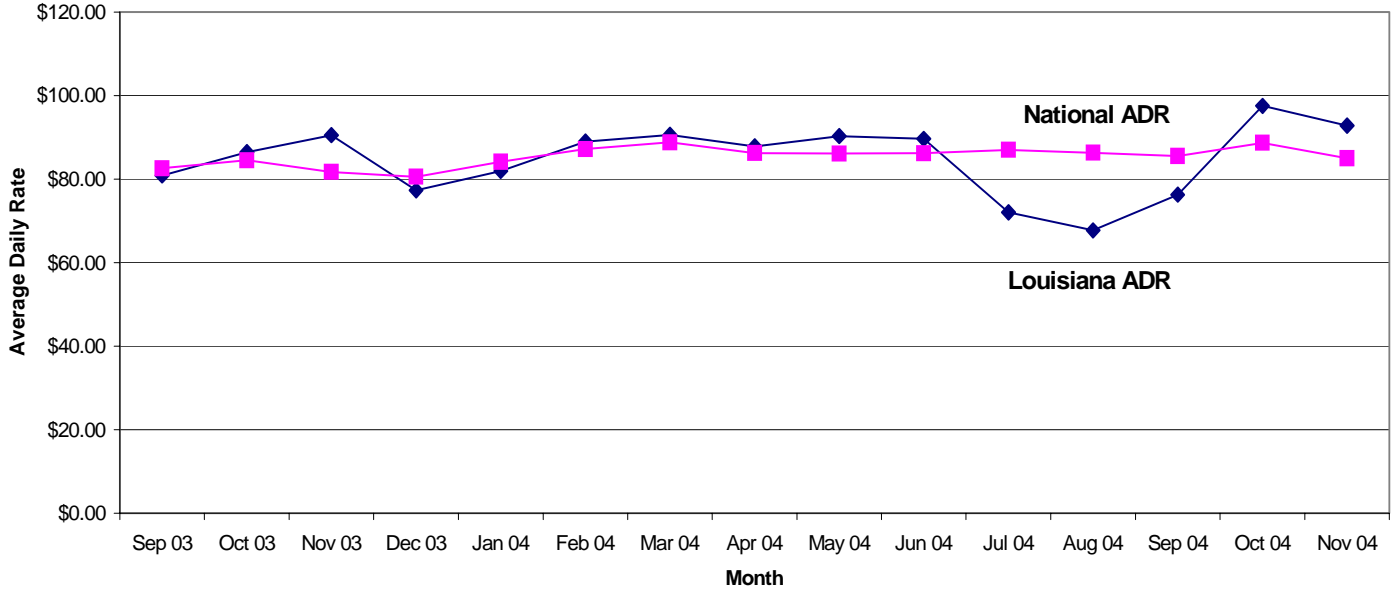
Source: Smith Travel Research

“The U.S. Commerce Department’s Bureau of Economic Analysis said third-quarter sales rose to \$973.3 billion from \$970.7 billion in the prior quarter. The travel industry, which has recorded eight straight quarters of growth, has handily exceeded the significant pullback it felt in consumer travel spending after the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States. Hotel accommodations, airfares and souvenirs, or direct tourism sales, accounted for \$550.9 billion of the total. Indirect tourism-related sales that include toiletries for hotel guests, airline meals and the materials used to make souvenirs provided \$422.4 billion of the total.”

Source: *USA Today*, January 3, 2005  
 ([USA Today http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2004-12-20-us-tourism\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2004-12-20-us-tourism_x.htm))

## 2. Hotel Trends - Average Daily Rate

### Fall 2004 – Average Daily Rate Trend



#### Fall 2004 Season

**Louisiana hotel/motel average daily rate: \$88.84**

% difference from prior year: +3.4%

% difference from 5 years ago: -1.7%

**U.S. hotel/motel average daily rate: \$86.39**

% difference from prior year: +4.2%

% difference from 5 years ago: +5.3%

#### 2004 Performance (January-November)

**Louisiana hotel/motel average daily rate: \$85.46**

% difference from prior year: +2.2%

% difference from 5 years ago: -1.9%

**U.S. hotel/motel average daily rate: \$86.55**

% difference from prior year: +3.9%

% difference from 5 years ago: +6.3%

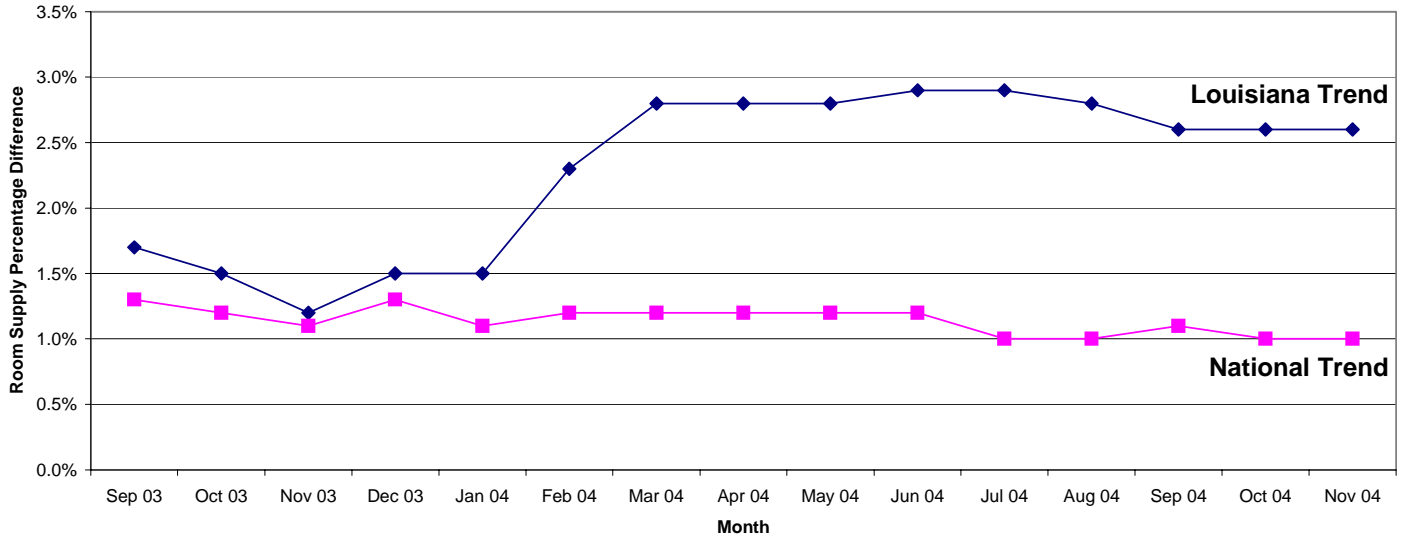
Source: Smith Travel Research

“In 2004, gains in rooms revenue (RevPAR) have been dominated by the increases in occupied rooms. In 2005, ADR will be the main driver of Rev Par improvement, and when ADR dominates RevPAR growth, profit growth is more efficient. The lodging industry is a cyclical industry and the major U.S. city lodging markets currently are experiencing a classic recovery scenario. When coming out of a recession, hotels initially see an increase in occupancy, followed by gains in operating expenses, room rates, and finally profits. In 2004, U.S. hotels have achieved significant increases in occupancy and we are projecting even stronger ADR growth in 2005.”

Source: *Quarterly Trends in the Hotel Industry – United States*, PKF Consulting, December, 2004.

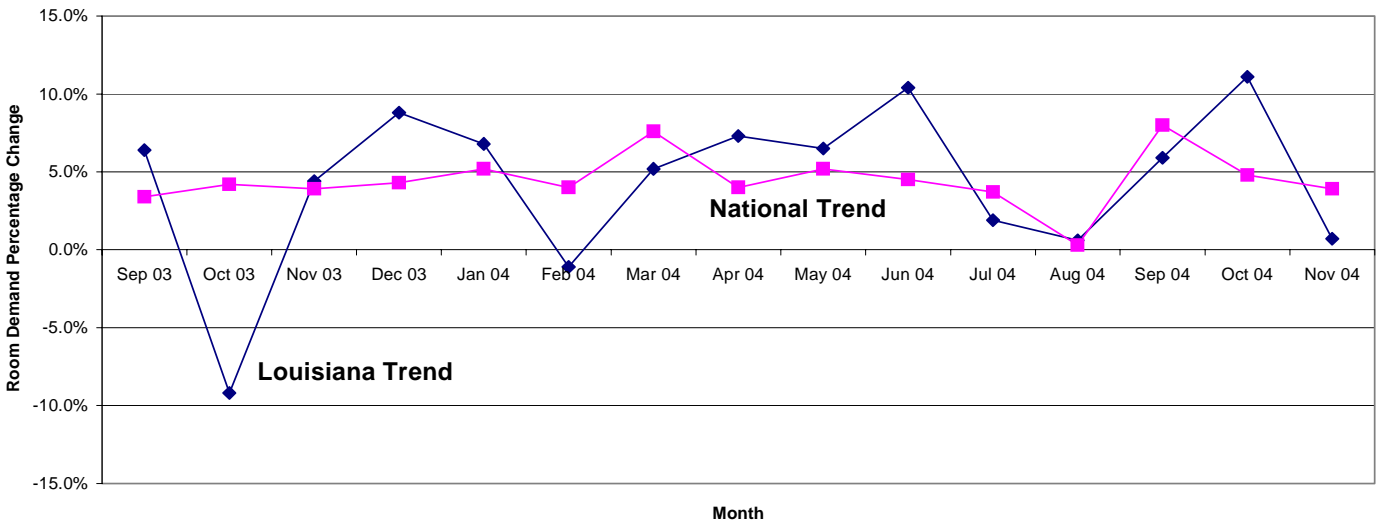
### 3. Hotel Trends - Room Supply

#### Fall 2004 – Room Supply Trend



### 4. Hotel Trends - Room Demand

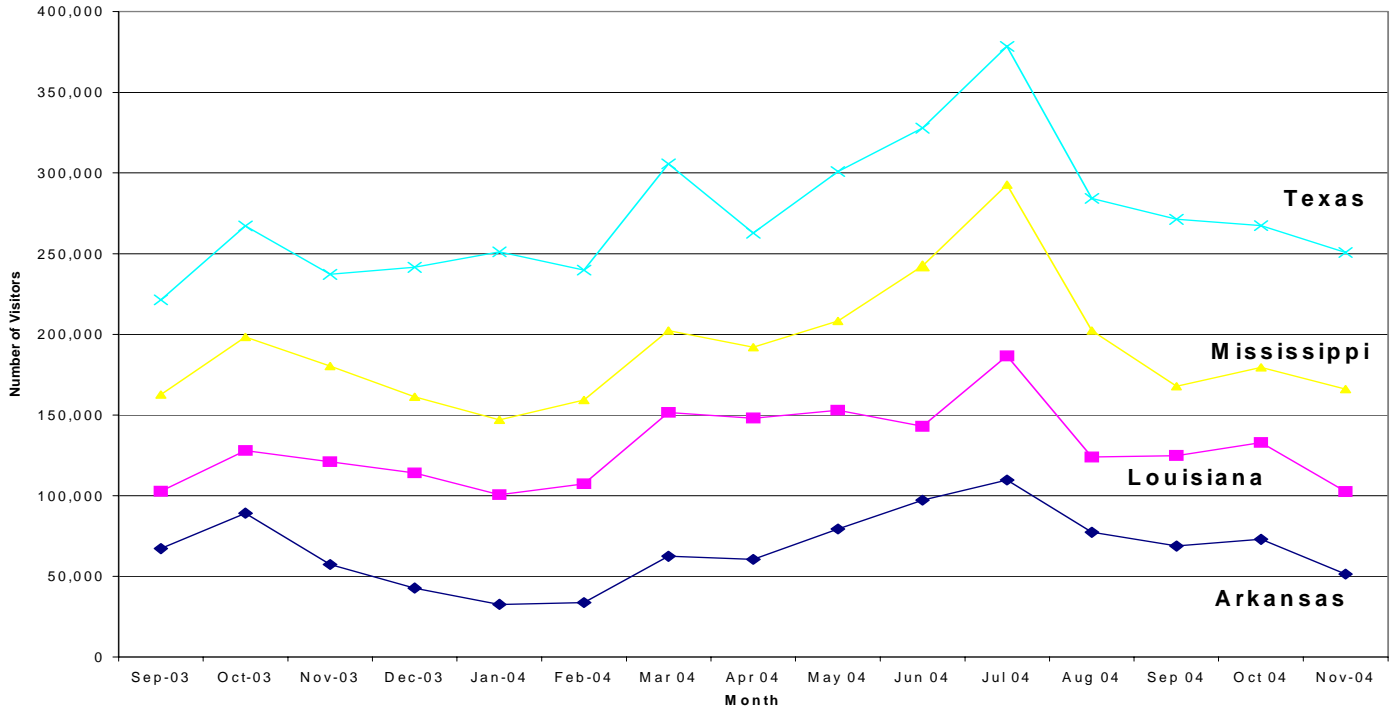
#### Fall 2004 – Room Nights Sold Trend



<b>Year</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>
Number of hotel/motel properties in Louisiana	725	713	699
Number of hotel/motel rooms in Louisiana	78,888	77,217	76,160
Source: Smith Travel Research			

## 5. State Information Center Visitors

### Fall 2004 State Welcome Center Visitor Trend



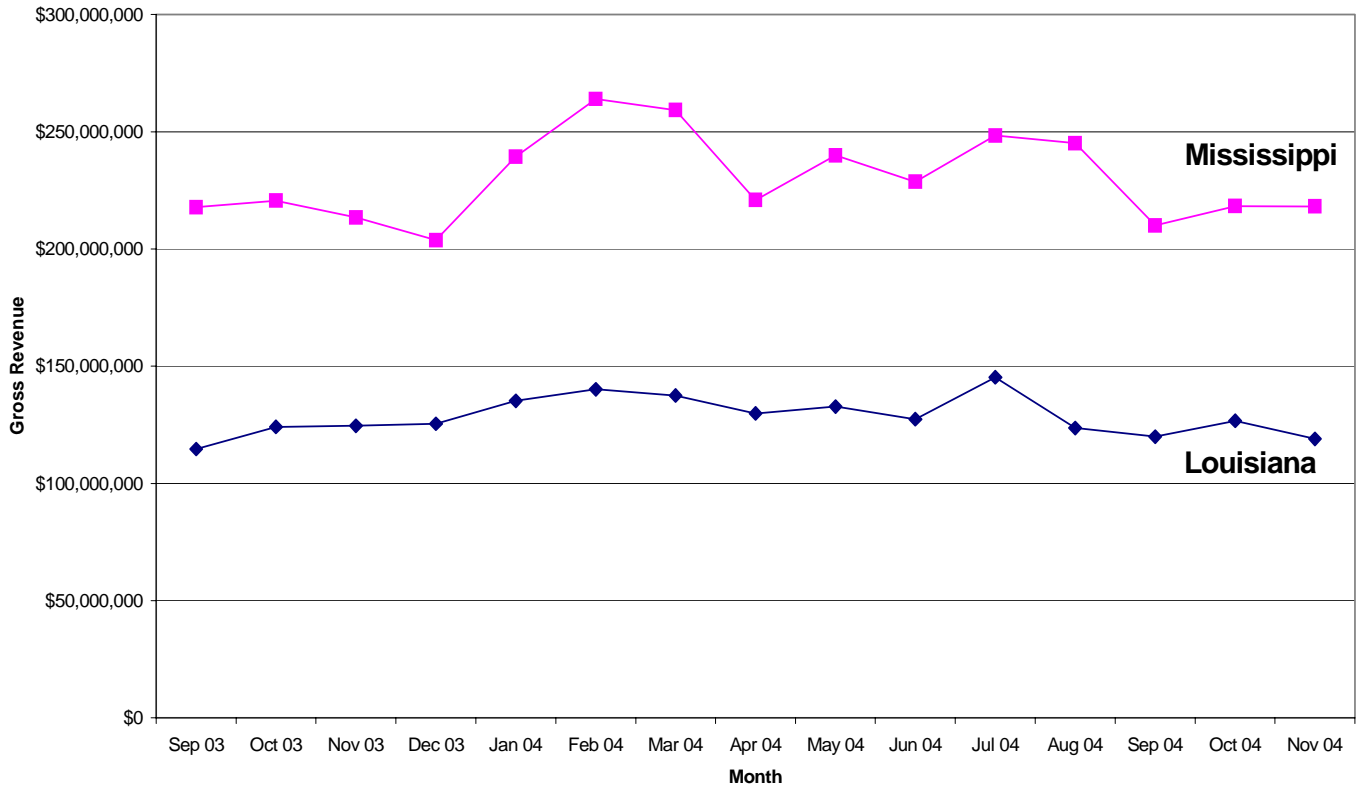
	Arkansas	Louisiana	Mississippi	Texas
<b>Fall 2004 Trend*</b>				
Number of Visitors	193,158	360,215	513,264	789,175
% difference from prior year	-9.6%	+2.4%	-5.2%	+8.7%
<b>Year-To-Date Trend (January-November)</b>				
Number of Visitors	746,210	1,474,202	2,159,616	3,139,799
% difference from prior year	-7.9%	-1.3%	-0.1%	+2.8%
*While each state uses a different method to calculate welcome center visitors, there have been no changes to the methods used over the last 15 months.				
Source: Louisiana Office of Tourism				

### Travel Facts

- Louisiana's Pearl River Center located on I-59 was reopened in October, 2004 after total reconstruction of the original center.
- Arkansas is putting out the welcome mat at four new state-of-the-art facilities, the first opened in November and the second in December 2004. Prior to the building of these new centers, the average age of the 13 state centers was 23 years, with seven centers over 25 years old. The new centers were planned in cooperation with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department.

## 6. Riverboat Gaming

### Fall 2004 – Gross Revenue Trend

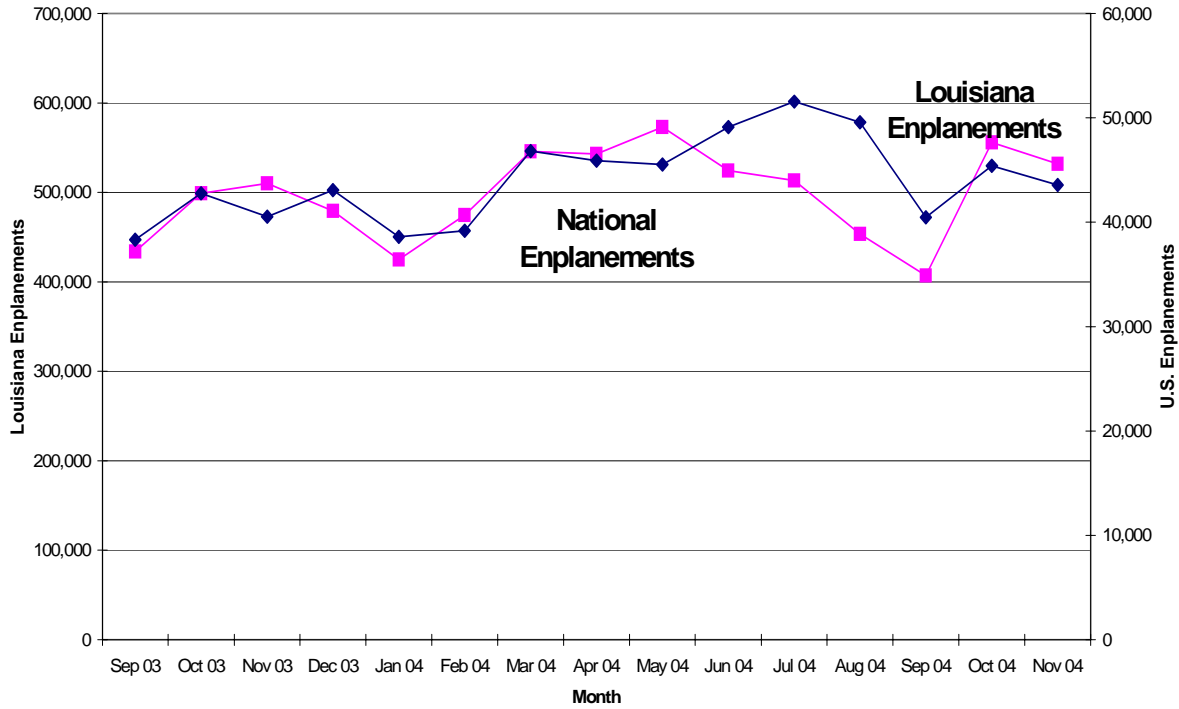


	Louisiana	Mississippi
<b>Fall 2004 Season</b>		
Total Gross Revenue	\$365,612,270	\$646,581,194
% difference from prior year	+0.6%	-0.8%
% difference from 5 years ago	+7.0%	+6.3%
<b>2004 Year-to-Date (January thru December)</b>		
Total Gross Revenue	\$1,562,062,597	\$2,782,589,222
% difference from prior year	-0.3%	+3.0%
% difference from 5 years ago	+12.2%	+10.6%
Sources: Louisiana State Police, and Mississippi State Tax Commission ( <a href="http://www.mstc.state.ms.us/index.html">http://www.mstc.state.ms.us/index.html</a> )		

- The gross revenue for Louisiana’s land based casino in New Orleans for the Fall 2004 was over \$79,375,436, 16% greater than the same period the year before.
  - The total gross revenue for Louisiana’s riverboats, land-based casino, and racetrack slot machines for the Fall 2004 was \$512,931,457, 7.8% greater than the year before.
- Source: Louisiana Gaming Control Board (<http://www.dps.state.la.us/lgcb/welcome.html>)

## 7. Airport Passenger Enplanements

### Fall 2004 Enplanements Trend



#### Fall 2004 Season

**Louisiana Airport Enplanements: 1,494,620**

% difference from prior year: +3.6%

% difference from five years ago: -3.2%

**U.S. Airport Enplanements: 129.4 million**

% difference from prior year: +6.4%

% difference from five years ago: -8.9%

#### 2004 Performance (January-November)

**Louisiana Airport Enplanements: 5,546,687**

% difference from prior year: +6.0%

% difference from 5 years ago: -1.5%

**U.S. Airport Enplanements: 495.7 million**

% difference from prior year: +5.9%

% difference from 5 years ago: -5.8%

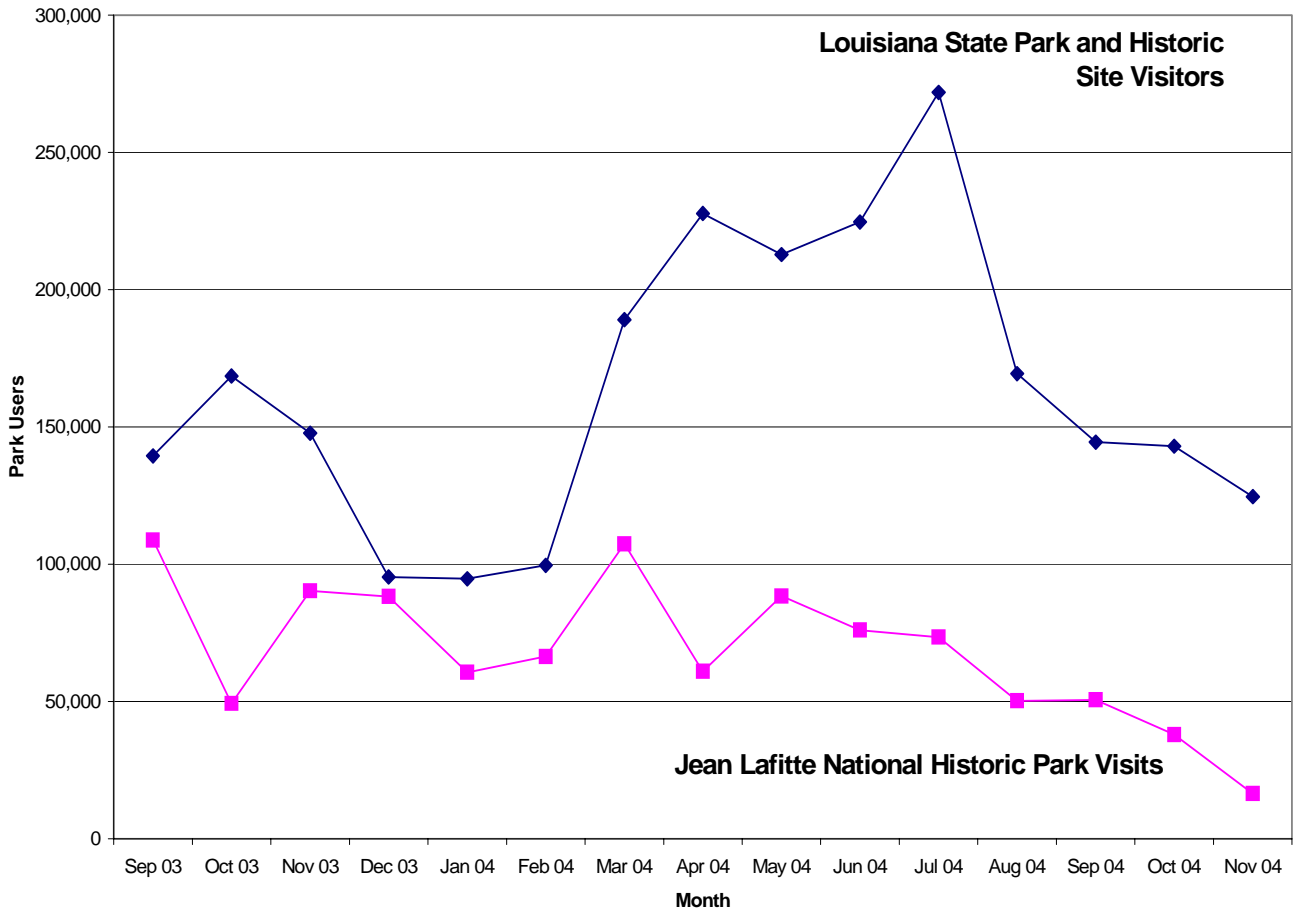
Source: Louisiana Office of Tourism, and the Air Transport Association (<http://www.airlines.org/>)

“Domestic travel trip volume by all modes showed an estimated 4.6 percent increase over last year. This is above our midyear estimate, and reflects a continuation of strong travel demand in the second half of the year, particularly business travel. This year’s gains end the prolonged slump in travel that began in 2001. Domestic airline enplanements rose an estimated 4.8 percent, outpacing travel by other industry modes for the first time since 2000. The strengths in air travel were driven by low airfares set by the discount carriers. Average domestic fares through October were 3.6 percent below the prior year.”

Source: *Travel Industry Indicators*, December 15, 2004, James V. Commisa, Jr., Travel Industry Analyst

## 8. State and National Park Visitors

### Fall 2004 Park Visitors Trend



#### Fall 2004 Season

Louisiana State Parks and Historic Site Visitors: 412,106

% difference from prior year: -9.5%

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park Visits: 104,938

% difference from prior year: -57.7%

#### 2004 Year-To-Date Performance (January-November)

Louisiana State Parks and Historic Site Visitors: 1,902,116

% difference from prior year: -9.7%

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park Visits: 688,400

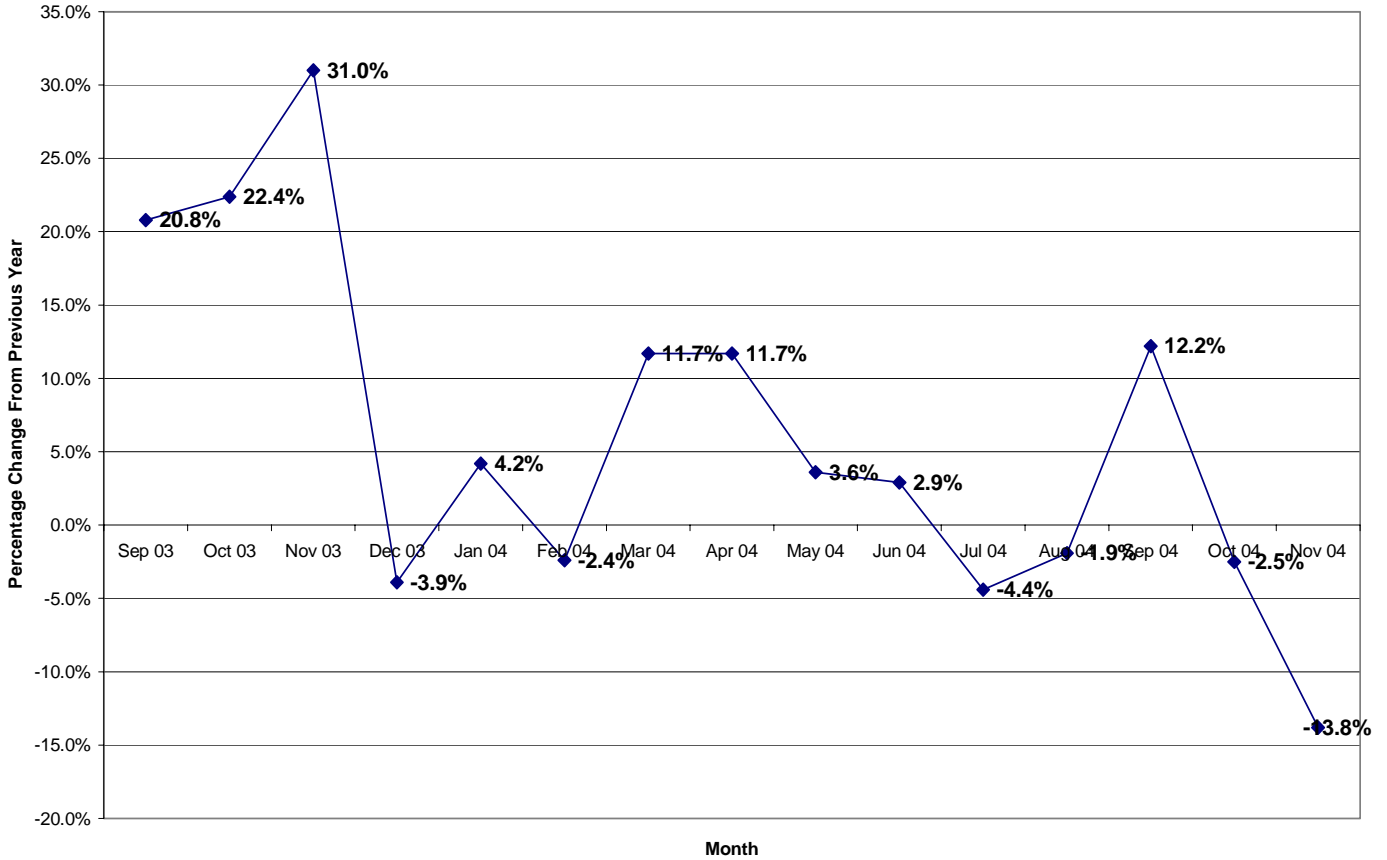
% difference from prior year: -20.3%

Source: Louisiana Office of State Parks, and the U.S. National Park Service (<http://www2.nature.nps.gov/stats/>)



## 9. Local Tourist Information Centers

### Fall 2004 – Tourist Center Visitor Trend



#### Fall 2004 Season

Louisiana local tourist information center visitors: 74,329

Percentage difference from prior year: -3.5%

During the Fall season, 13 information centers reported increased visitor volume and 12 information centers recorded a decrease in visitors compared to the previous Fall season.

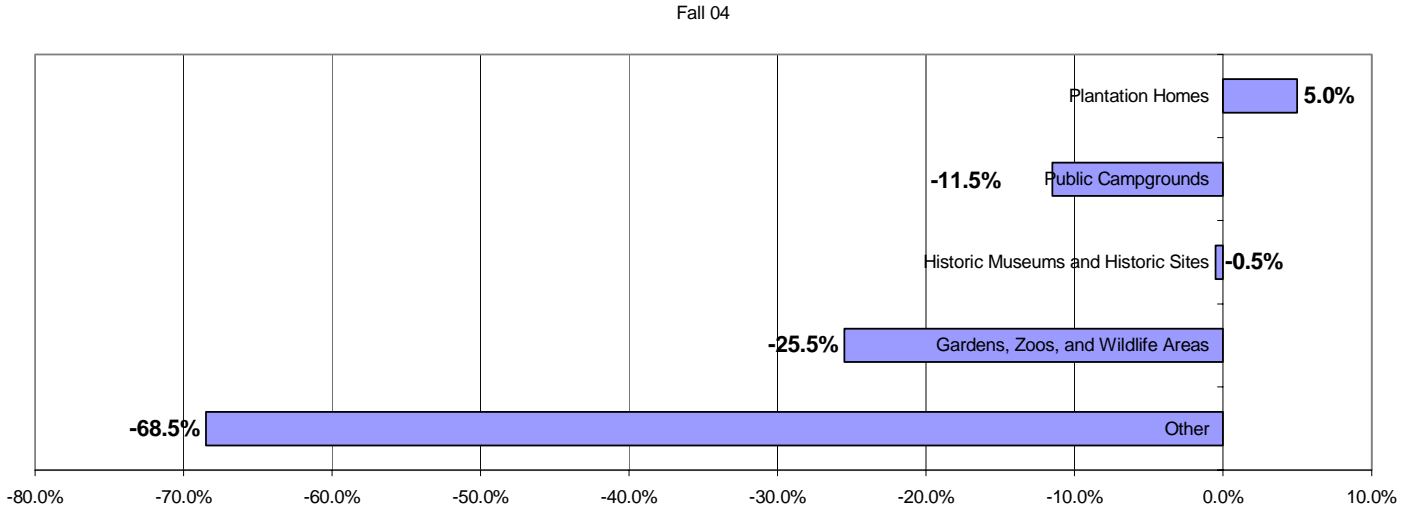
Source: Louisiana Office of Tourism. Local information center visitors are operated by municipal and parish tourist bureaus throughout Louisiana. Most use registration sheets to record the volume of visitors who enter the centers for travel information.

“This year the nation is on track to post the first increase in inbound travel since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, according to the Travel Industry of America. What is fueling this is a combination of pent-up demand for travel to the U.S. and phenomenal exchange rates,” said Cathy Keefe, a spokeswoman with the travel association. The U.S. dollar is near an all-time low against the euro, which began circulating in January 2002, and is close to a five-year low against the Japanese yen. The British pound is trading at nearly two to a dollar.”

Source: CNN.com. December 22, 2004

## 10. Attractions Visitors

### Fall 2004 - Visitor Trend By Category Percentage Change From Previous Year In The Number Of Visitors



#### Fall 2004 Season

The Louisiana Office of Tourism received visitor counts from 72 attractions across the state. Numbers were received from 6 plantation homes, 18 public campgrounds, 31 historical museums and historic sites, 7 gardens, zoos and wildlife areas, and 10 other attractions. The total number of visitors to these Louisiana attractions decreased by 21.4% during the Fall Season 2004 (September-November) compared to the previous Fall season. For the fourth season in a row attendance at most of Louisiana's attractions were below previous year's levels. Comparisons to last year may be unusual since various Louisiana Purchase events and exhibits were going on at that time. For example, some museums which had Louisiana Purchase exhibits in 2003 (particularly the some very popular attractions) experienced much lower attendance in 2004. Record gas prices may also be affecting day-trip type travel patterns by deterring trips farther from their place of residence.

	Fall 2004	Summer 2004	Spring 2004	Winter 2004	Fall 2003
Number of Sites w/increased attendance	32	24	33	40	55
Number of Sites w/decreased attendance	39	48	49	36	23
Percentage difference from previous year*	-21.4%	-5.1%	-7.4%	-8.6%	+11.4%

\* Percentage difference in actual visitors recorded at all parks, museums, and attractions submitted to LOT.

## 10. Regional Trends - Fall

<b>Greater New Orleans</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>% +/-</b>
New Orleans International Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	1,187,081 .....	1,168,081 .....	+1.6%
New Orleans Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate			
September .....	55.4% .....	57.5% .....	-3.7%
October .....	74.5% .....	65.6% .....	+13.6%
November .....	64.7% .....	69.5% .....	-6.9%
New Orleans Visitor Center .....	29,065 .....	29,375 .....	-1.1%
Slidell Visitor Center .....	72,276 .....	96,157 .....	-24.8%
Kentwood Visitor Center .....	31,918 .....	35,104 .....	-9.1%
Pearl River Center .....	19,343 .....	Closed in 2003 for Renovation	
Parks, Attractions, Museums .....	601,594 .....	851,501 .....	-29.2%

<b>Plantation Country</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>% +/-</b>
Baton Rouge Metro Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	97,127 .....	92,788 .....	+4.7%
Baton Rouge Hotel/Motel Occupancy Rate			
September .....	60.4% .....	54.2% .....	+11.4%
October .....	67.6% .....	62.8% .....	+7.6%
November .....	62.2% .....	58.8% .....	+5.8%
State Capitol Visitor Center .....	19,837 .....	27,347 .....	-27.5%
St. Francisville Visitor Center .....	8,611 .....	10,313 .....	-16.5%
Parks, Attractions, & Museums .....	143,744 .....	140,669 .....	+2.2%

<b>Cajun Country</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>% +/-</b>
Lafayette Regional Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	41,979 .....	41,326 .....	+1.6%
Lake Charles Regional Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	11,636 .....	11,534 .....	+0.9%
Lafayette Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate			
September .....	57.7% .....	57.3% .....	+0.7%
October .....	60.4% .....	65.5% .....	-7.8%
November .....	55.4% .....	55.7% .....	-0.5%

<b>Lake Charles Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate</b>			
September.....	57.9%	52.5%	+10.3%
October.....	64.6%	59.6%	+8.4%
November.....	55.9%	55.0%	+1.6%
Vinton Visitor Center .....	35,245.....	46,273 .....	-23.8%
Atchafalaya Visitor Center .....	30,520.....	Opened June 2004	
Parks, Attractions, & Museums .....	188,940.....	174,525 .....	+8.3%

<b>Crossroads</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>%+/-</b>
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<b>England International Airport</b>			
Passenger Enplanements .....	50,219.....	24,505 .....	104.9%
<b>Alexandria Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate</b>			
September.....	59.9%	46.3%	+29.4%
October.....	61.7%	49.0%	+25.9%
November.....	59.8%	50.4%	+18.7%
Vidalia Visitor Center.....	7,449.....	6,62 .....	+19.0%
Boyce (I-49) Visitor Center .....	11,351.....	Opened December 2003	
Parks, Attractions, & Museums .....	64,545.....	136,655 .....	-52.8%

<b>Sportsman's Paradise</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>%+/-</b>
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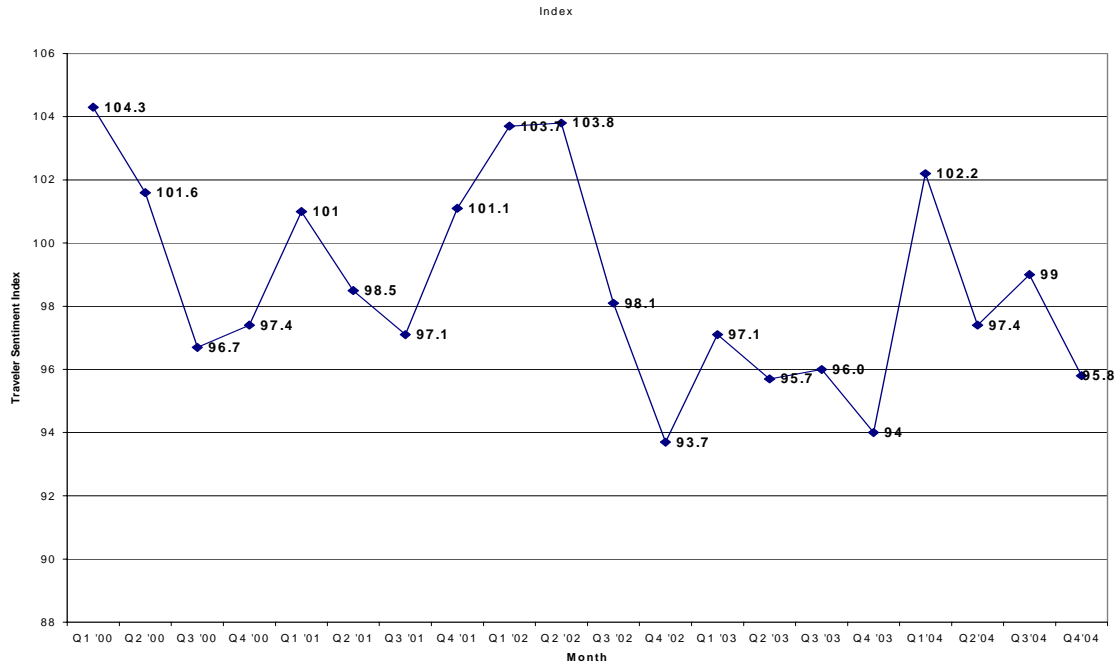
<b>Shreveport Regional Airport</b>			
Passenger Enplanements .....	79,091.....	78,583 .....	+0.6%
<b>Monroe Regional Airport</b>			
Passenger Enplanements .....	27,487.....	26,205 .....	+4.9%
<b>Shreveport Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate</b>			
September.....	64.9%	59.1%	+9.8%
October.....	64.2%	66.7%	-3.7%
November.....	60.8%	58.4%	+4.1%
<b>Monroe Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate</b>			
September.....	62.7%	57.1%	+9.8%
October.....	62.0%	59.1%	+4.9%
November.....	58.2%	55.1%	+5.6%
Greenwood Visitor Center.....	39,678.....	52,521 .....	-24.5%
Mound Visitor Center.....	54,922.....	48,446 .....	+13.4%
Parks, Attractions, and Museums .....	98,960.....	93,811 .....	+5.5%

*Notes on Regional Trends: Hotel/Motel statistics are from Smith Travel Research, Inc.; all other figures are from the Office of Tourism. Park figures include both day-use and overnight visitors. Attendance at parks, attraction and museums are self-reported to the Office of Tourism and include many different methods of recording visitors/customers.*

## 11. Looking Ahead

This section provides U.S. and Louisiana leading indicators which have predictive value for future tourism trends. They are called “leading” because their direction or magnitude historically “leads” the focus of our industry.

### A. U.S. Traveler Sentiment Index Trend\* Consumer Sentiment Falls Slightly In Fourth Quarter



\*Note: The Traveler Sentiment Index is conducted quarterly by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), and is based on responses of 1000 interviews with U.S. adults who have taken at least one trip in the past year. TIA began the Traveler Sentiment Index study in first quarter 2000 (January), which serves as the baseline period. In general, the Traveler Sentiment Index measures consumer interest in pleasure travel and their perceived ability to take pleasure trips.

### B. International Visitors Expected to Increase

Recovery began in 2004 when international arrivals are forecast to grow by 8.5 percent to reach a total of 43.8 million. Europe is still the top tourism generating region. European arrivals to the U.S. are forecast to increase by 11.3% in 2004. Arrivals from Asia and South America are forecast to increase by 17.3 percent and 7 percent respectively in 2004. The overall increases for the next two years are shown below.

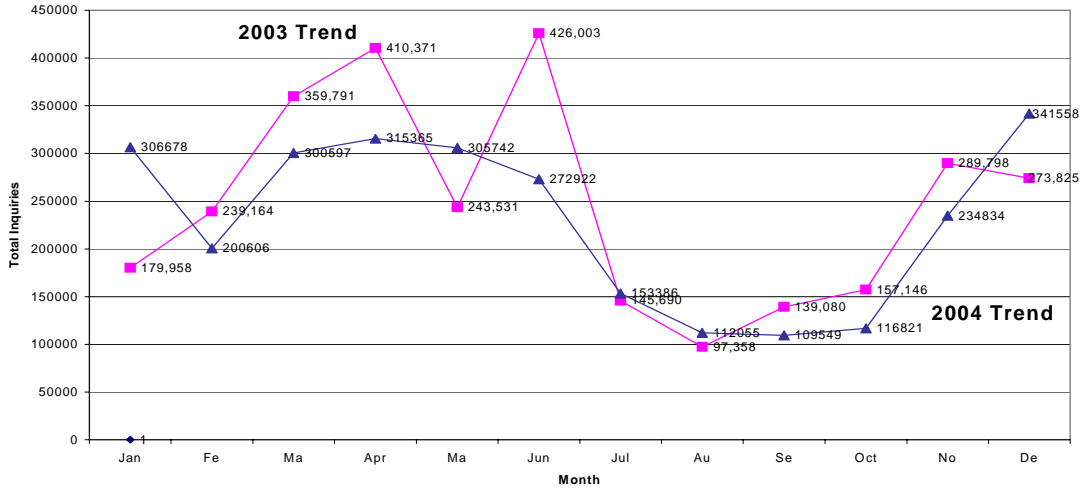
<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Visitors</u>	<u>Annual Percentage Change</u>
2004	43.8 million	+8.5%
2005	45.8 million	+4.5%
2006	47.5 million	+3.9%

(Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Travel Industry Association of America)

“International travel will continue its recovery process. The inbound market still has much further to go to reach the peaks of 2000. The driving force in 2005 for international travel will be currency factors, with a weak dollar slowing down outbound travel by Americans, but boosting rates of growth for inbound foreign arrivals to the U.S.”

Source: *Travel Industry Indicators*, December 15, 2004, James V. Commisa, Jr., Travel Industry Analyst

### C. Louisiana Office of Tourism Inquiry Trend\*



\*Note: These monthly figures reflect the number of mail, telephone, e-mail and internet requests for the Louisiana Tour Guide. These figures also reflect the number of visits received by the Office of Tourism’s website (louisianatravel.com) which contains all of the same information in the printed edition of the Tour Guide.