


# —VISIT— MERIDIAN MISSISSIPPI

  
THE **FOCUS** GROUP





**We're Excited to Be in Meridian!**

# **Your Team Has Already Done a Lot of the Heavy Lifting**

It's time to take that great foundation, infuse new excitement into the branding and campaigns.

You have so much to offer, we just need to get the attention of more visitors!

## Our Goal Today

Make the case that we are the best choice to get the best ROI on your Tourism Recovery II funds

# Six Reasons

1. Our Talented Team & Organization
2. Multifaceted Experience With Both Business and Government Clients
3. Our Experience Developing and Executing Diverse But Cohesive Strategies for Driving Tourism Demand
4. Our Ability to Illustrate Return on Investment
5. Our Suggestions to Address Current and Forecasted Travel Sentiment
6. Great Creative Abilities/Creative Concept

01

Our Talented Team & Organization

# Reason 1

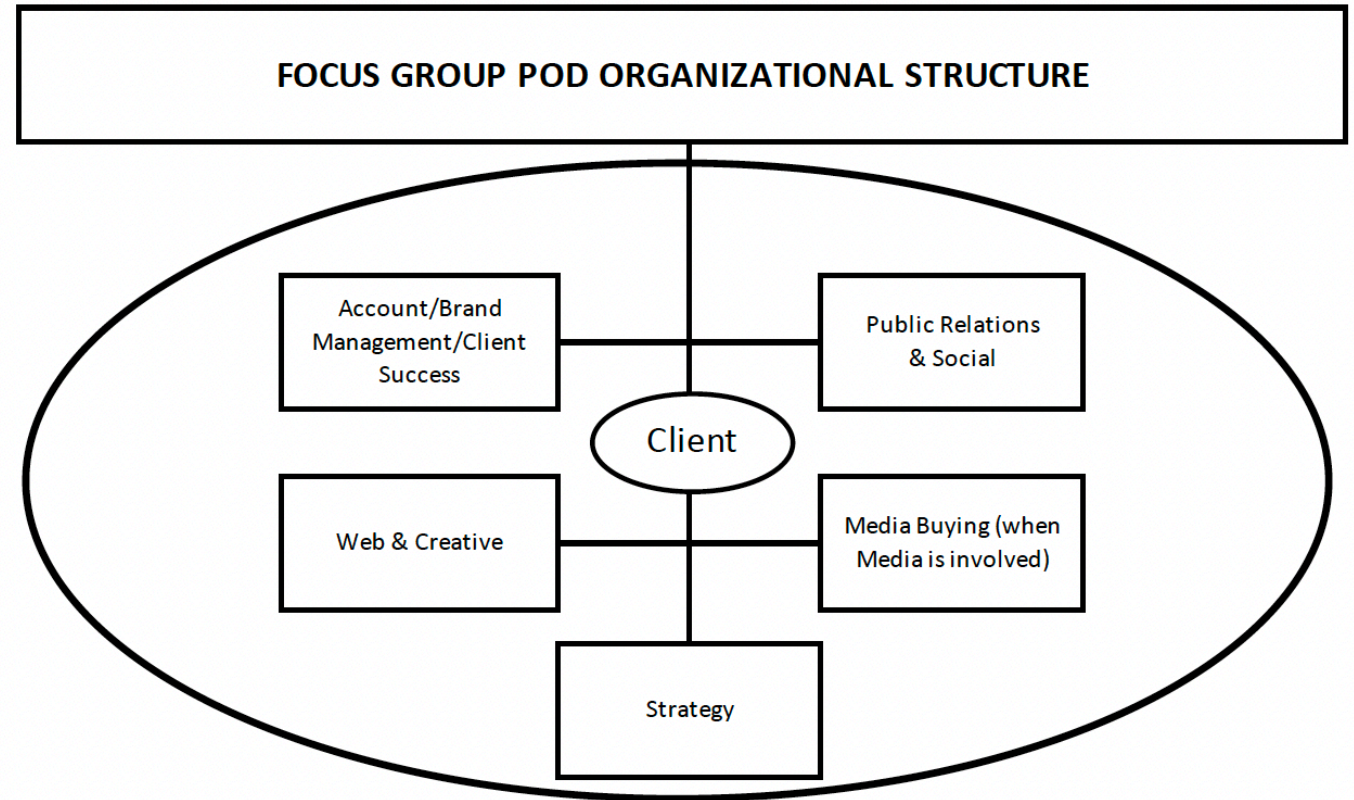
## Our Talented Team & Organization

- In business 15 years
- Full-service agency Marketing, PR, Digital, Creative, Web
- 17 employees
- Based on the Coast, Jackson Office
- Meridian Account Manager lives in Ridgeland
- Involved in Mississippi Tourism Association and Southeast Tourism Industry Associations

# Pod Structure

Puts Client at the Center of the Conversation

Our team is accessible to our clients.



02

Multifaceted Experience With Business and  
Government Clients

## Reason 2

# Multifaceted Experience With Business & Gov't Clients

- Strategic selection of business and government clients
- Particular attention to which CVBs in Mississippi
- Every CVB competes for virtually the same visitors
- We seek CVBs with both differentiation and distance from each other
- Tourism experience in peripheral industries enriches our CVB approach: attractions, hotel, restaurant, museum, food and airport experience
- Work in unrelated industries infuses fresh ideas as well
- Business clients have taught us to focus on R.O.I.

03

Experience Developing and Executing Diverse,  
Cohesive Strategies to Drive Tourism Demand

## Reason 3:

Experience Developing and Executing Diverse But Cohesive  
Strategies to Drive Tourism Demand

## Greenwood Case Study



- Greenwood, Mississippi's Agency since 2016
- Constantly challenge ourselves to stay fresh and ahead of the competition
- Growth momentum has never been greater



## New Brand Cohesive Approach

- Previous brand, 2016, Visit Greenwood: Delta Spirit Delta Soul
- Introduced a “brand evolution” in 2023 to build on the equity of the previous brand:

**Experience Greenwood**  
The Heart & Soul of the Delta

3

**Cohesive Across Diverse Topics**  
Every headline ties to the heart  
and finding your beat.



3



Print, digital,  
website, social,  
visitor guides

## Cohesive Theme Across Diverse Topics & Strategies

Every headline ties to the heart and finding  
your beat.



Scan the code for our full list  
of Greenwood restaurants.

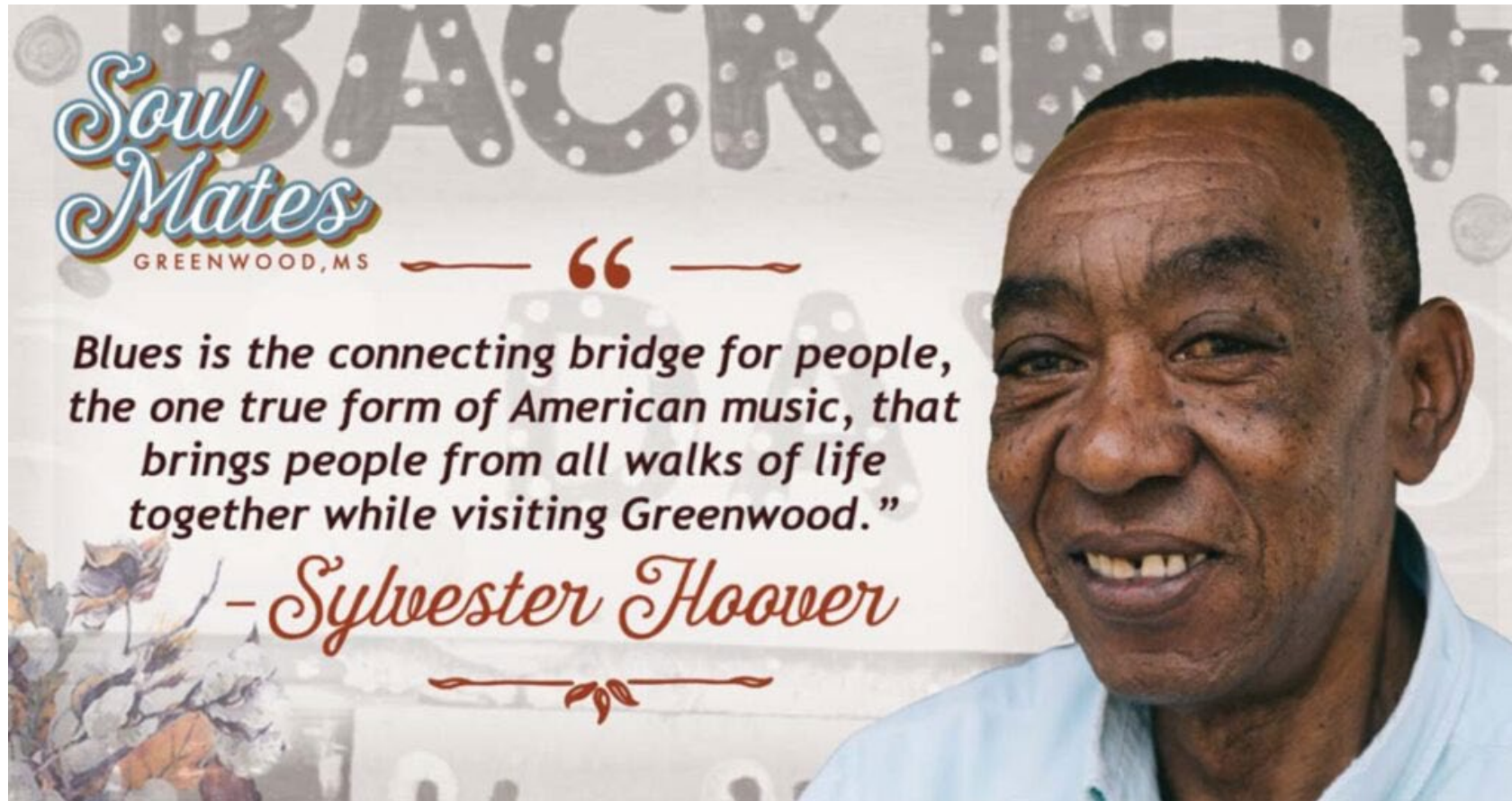


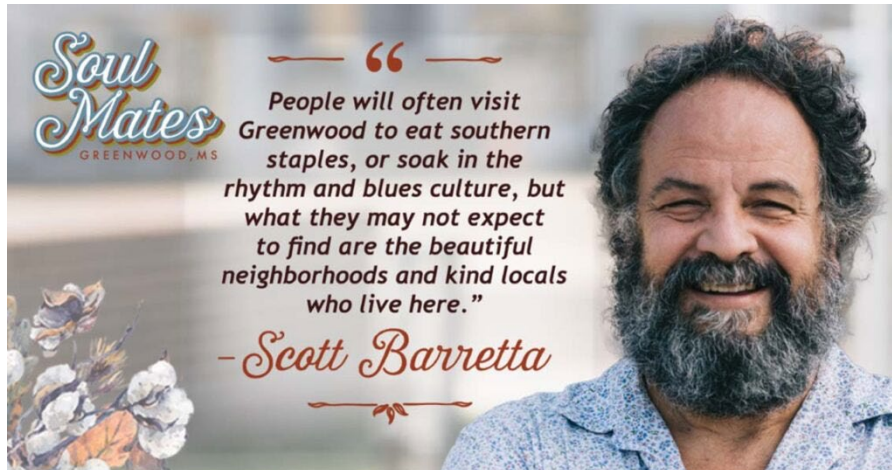
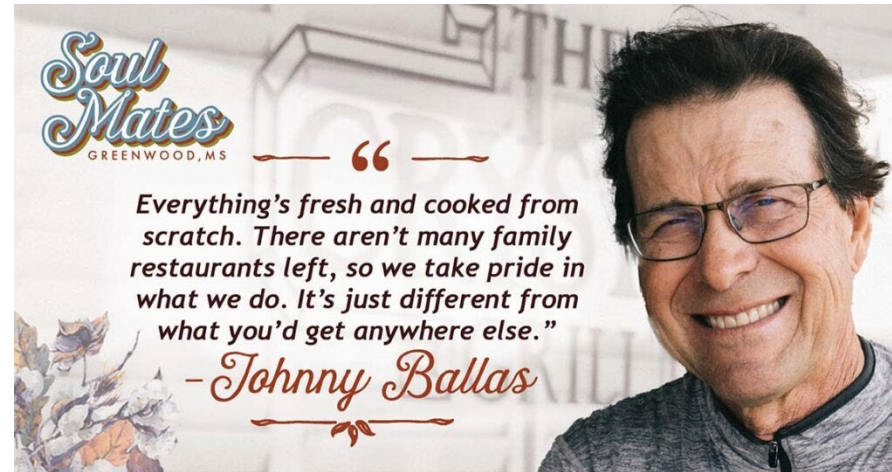
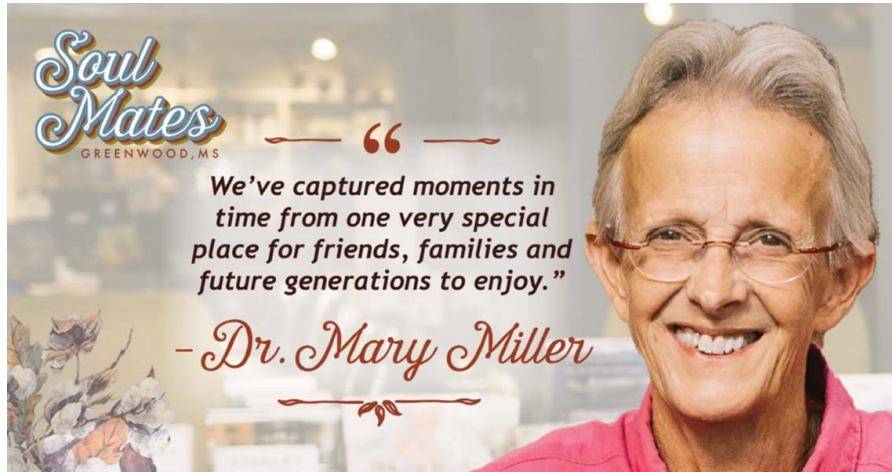


## **NEW: Soul Mates Storytelling Strategy**

About Interesting People in Greenwood  
Launched This year

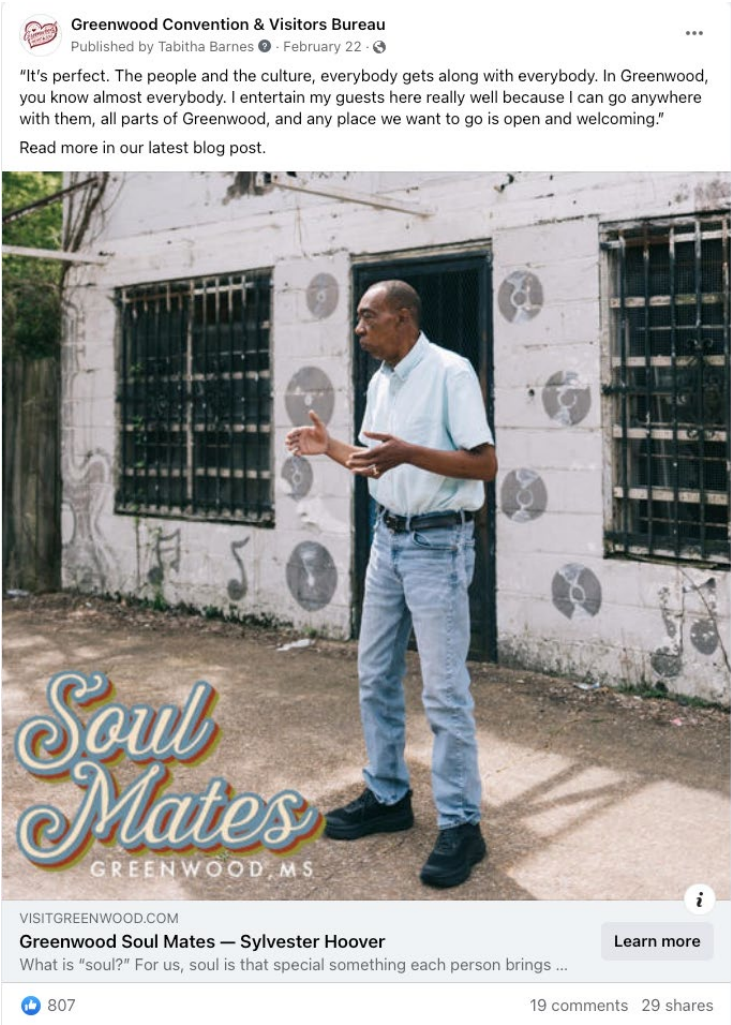
**A Cohesive Offshoot of the  
Heart & Soul Brand**





3

Cohesive  
Consistent  
Across  
Social Media



Sylvester Hoover  
807 Likes | 19 Comments | 29 Shares



Johnny Ballas  
696 Likes | 79 Comments | 121 Shares



3

## Cohesive Consistent Theme Even The Visitors Guide



### *Heartwarming Hospitality*

**THE ANCHOR OF DOWNTOWN** Greenwood is the Alluvian Hotel, the Delta's first boutique hotel and a top-rated luxury hostelry recreated from the 1917 Hotel Irving. From its elegant lobby, the scene of live music and quiet conversations, to the skyline views outside the 4th floor Terrace Room, you're going to have to remind yourself that you're still in the heart of the Delta.



View the full guide [at this link.](#)

# 3

## Cohesive Consistent Theme, Upcoming Co-Op



### STAY & STRAY FROM THE DELTA'S HEART GREENWOOD

At the literal "heart" of the culture-rich Delta of Mississippi is Greenwood, a town infused with a bit of everything that makes the Delta the bucket-list experience you've been hearing about. Settle in and stay in our great accommodations ranging from the luxurious Alluvian Hotel & Spa to boutique and brand name offerings, or even short-term rentals with a history all their own. Enjoy Greenwood's rich culinary offerings, music, historic sites, arts and culture, and then from our Delta-centric location, stray out in every direction to take the pulse of all that the Delta has to offer.



Greenwood Convention  
& Visitors Bureau  
225 Howard Street  
Greenwood, MS 38930  
662-453-9197  
[visitgreenwood.com](http://visitgreenwood.com)

# 04 Our Ability to Illustrate Return on Investment

## Reason 4:

# Our Ability to Illustrate Return on Investment

Focused on your

R.O.I.

## First, Our Rates

- Recently competed for contracts similar in size outside the state and have further insight into rates
- We've decided to make an adjustment and offer an \$88 blended hourly rate to Visit Meridian

**Media Commission:** 10% on Paid Traditional Media  
6% on Paid Digital and Social Media

# 4

## Greenwood ROI: Getting Their Money's Worth

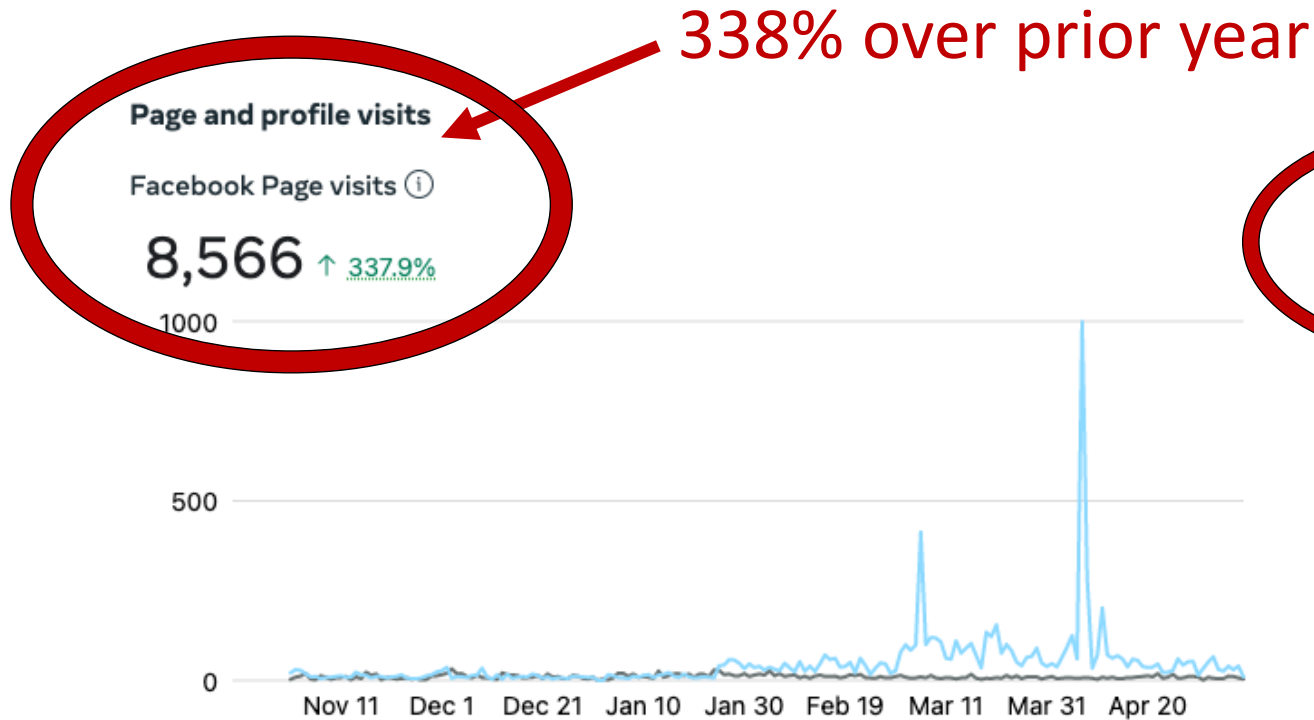
- Named “CVB of the Year” for their size category four times by the Mississippi Tourism Association
- Tourism tax collections (the ultimate ROI) have increased every year except 2020, and that year was only down \$11,000 overall
- New reporting platform will integrate Greenwood’s Tourism Tax into dashboard
- We started helping with Greenwood’s social media in 2022 (they handled it in-house previously.)
- We’ve grown Facebook followers from 2,500 to 14,672 (Meridian currently has 9,600)
- Facebook ad metrics for Greenwood: Industry Average Click Through Rate (CTR) is .9%. We have been averaging 2.5% (177% above industry average)

4

# Greenwood ROI

## Recent Organic Social Media Success

Page and Profile Visits Comparison  
November 22 through April 23



4

# Greenwood ROI

## Recent Organic Social Media Success

Facebook & Instagram Reach Comparison  
November '22 through April '23

Reach

Facebook Page reach ⓘ

585,646 ↑ 51%

30.0K

20.0K

10.0K

0

Nov 11 Dec 1 Dec 21 Jan 10 Jan 30 Feb 19 Mar 11 Mar 31 Apr 20

51% over prior year

Instagram reach ⓘ

34,834 ↑ 537.6%

2000

1500

1000

500

0

Nov 11 Dec 1 Dec 21 Jan 10 Jan 30 Feb 19 Mar 11 Mar 31 Apr 20

538% over prior year

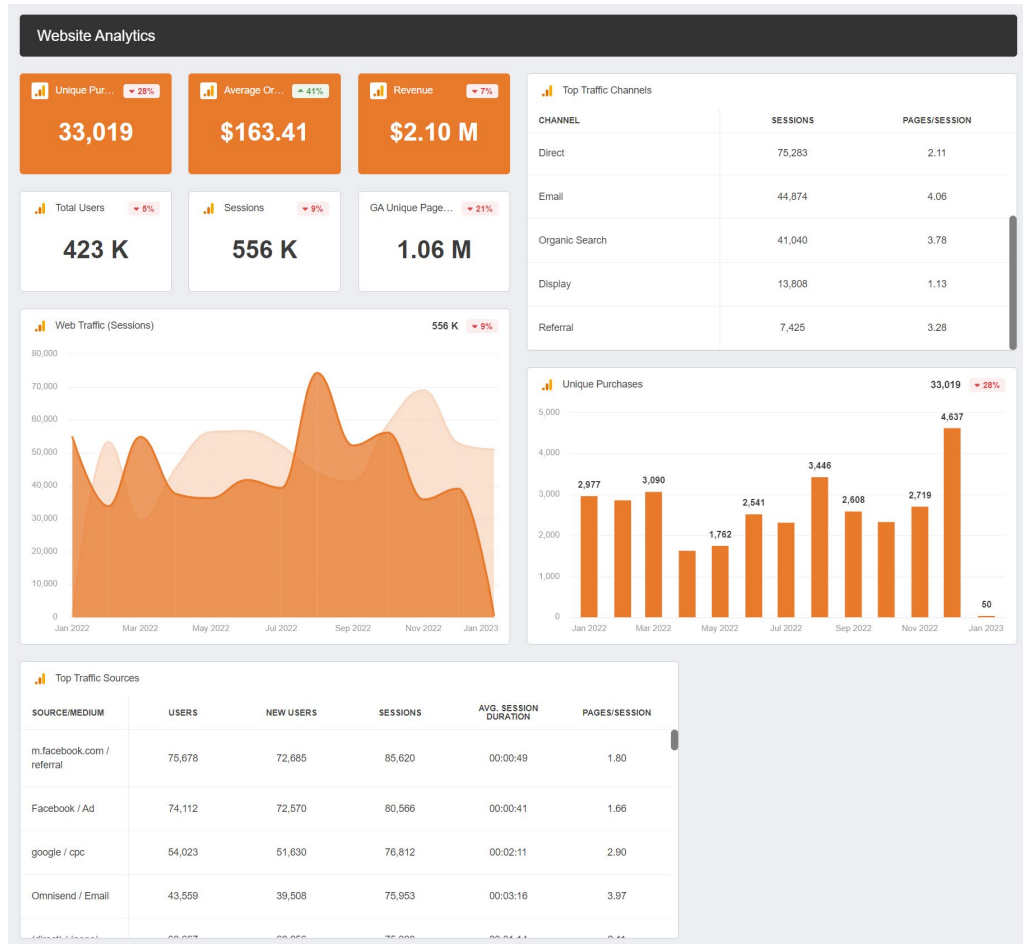
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# Greenwood ROI

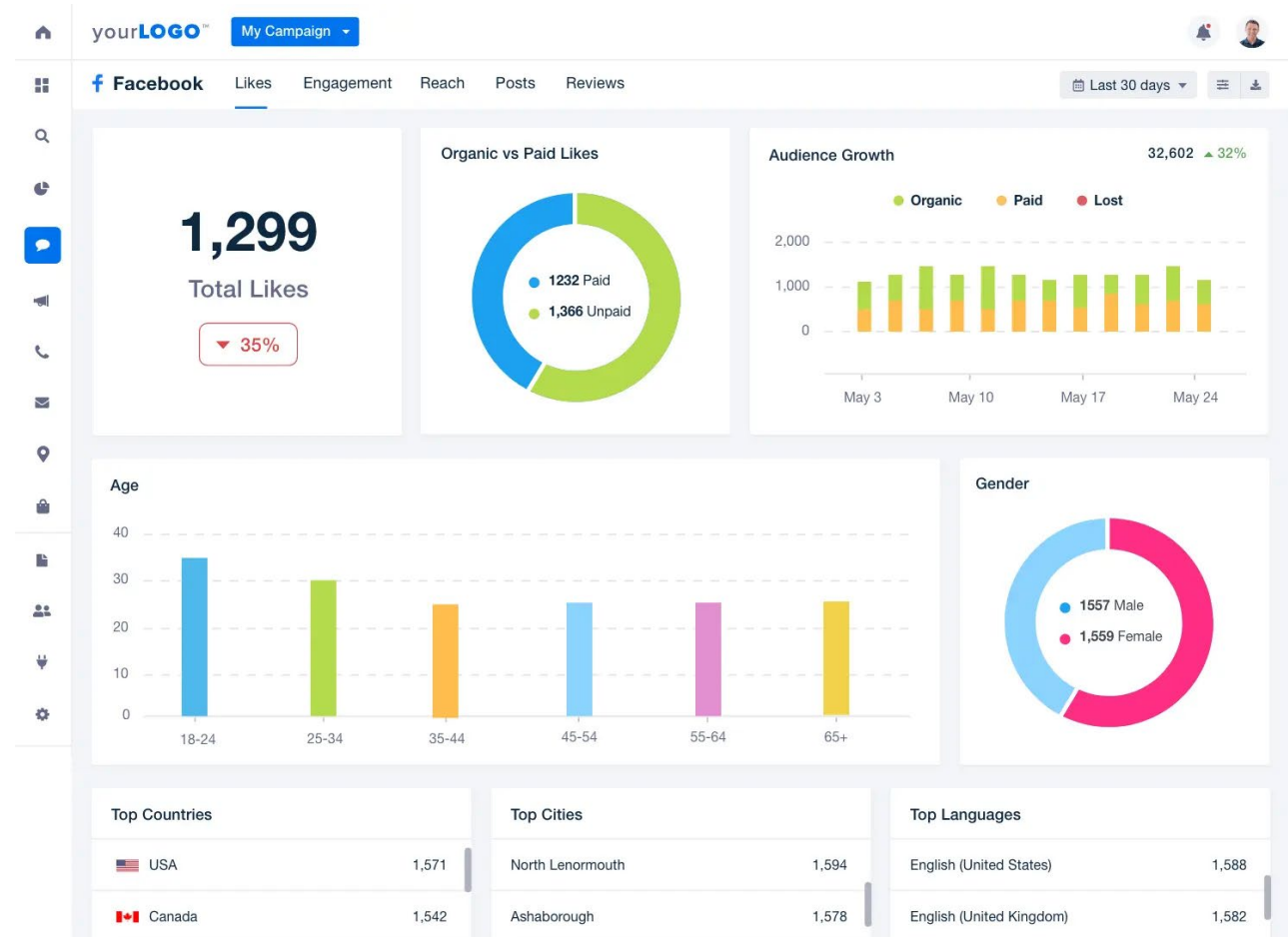
## Recent Paid Social Media Success



# Real-Time, Client-Accessible Dashboard Reporting

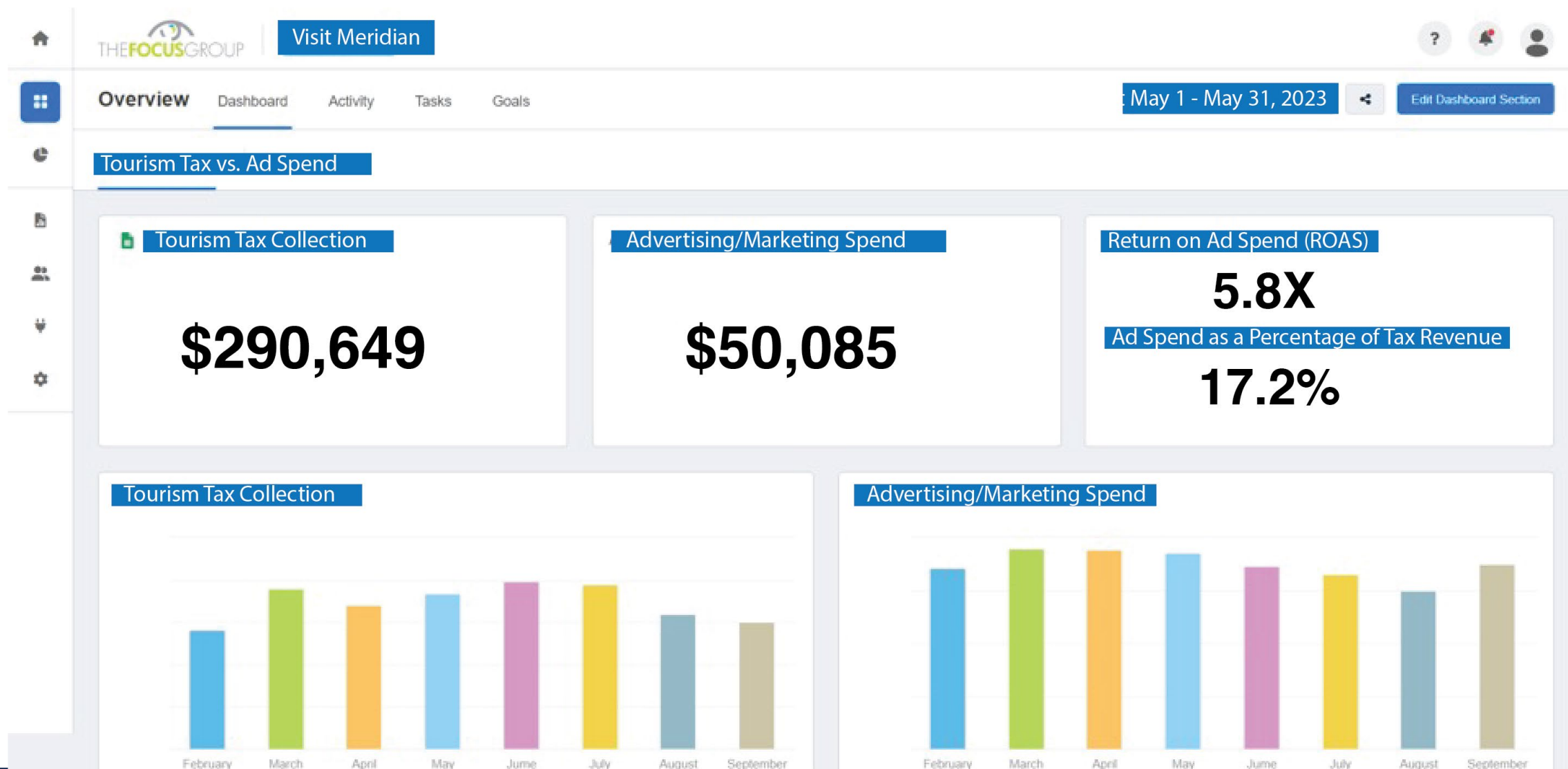


## Return on Ad Spend for All Paid Tactics



4

# Integrate Tourism Tax vs. Advertising/Marketing Spend Into Monthly Dashboard



# 05

Suggestions to Address Current and Forecasted  
Travel Sentiment

## Reason 5:

Our Suggestions to Address Current and Forecasted  
Travel Sentiment

## Our Name is The Focus Group for a Reason

### *Staying On Top of Trends*

- Member of Mississippi Tourism Association (MTA)
- Attend meetings twice a year
- Member of Southeastern Tourism Society
- Resources regularly read for research

*Skift: Skift is a travel industry media company; Phocuswright: Phocuswright is a travel research company, Tourism Economics: Tourism Economics is an Oxford Economics company, TripAdvisor Insights, Google Trends, The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)*

## 2023 Trends

“When we look at Expedia, Hotels.com, and VRBO data together, we see a detailed and robust picture of travel into 2023,” said Jon Gieselman, president of Expedia Brands.

“We’re seeing a surge in trips to culture capitals, a new wave of interest in wellness retreats, and a spike in demand for outdoor destinations beyond just beaches and mountains — not a new normal, but people branching out to unexpected trends in what we’re calling the ‘no-normal.’”

# 5

## 2023 Research To Stay On Top of Trends

- Transformation retreats for personal betterment and achieving one's full potential [1].
- Modular hotels that are more sustainable and cost-effective [1].
- Hybrid flight-light travel, which is more earth-friendly and turns getting from one place to another into part of the adventure [1].
- Off-the-grid vacations where travelers can disconnect from technology and enjoy a distraction-free trip [2].
- Exploring off-the-beaten-path destinations [2].
- Family and multigenerational travel [2].

References: [1] [17 Travel Trends You'll See in 2023, According to our Editors ...](#) [2] [These Will Be The Biggest Travel Trends in 2023](#)  
[3] [13 Top Travel Trends to Know for 2023 | TravelAge West](#)

(continued)

# 5

## Suggestions to Capitalize on These Trends

- Methodically identify all trending opportunities
- Match Meridian/Lauderdale County offerings to each trend
- Laser targeting and remarketing to travelers using data, analytics and niche specific creative
- New, well-done photography and video to bring Meridian's and Lauderdale Counties assets to life
- New creative headlines and imagery speaking specifically to these travelers
- Tell your stories through blogs and other content about your people, your natural beauty, your nightlife, your hip and cool downtown, music scene and more
- Target niche travelers to share this content
- DRIVE TOURISM DEMAND: Make more people realize that Meridian has something incredible for every one of these travelers

06

Our Creative Abilities

## Reason 6:

# Creative Abilities Preliminary Creative Concept

These examples are provided to demonstrate our creative skills and ability to tie a multidimensional tourist destination together under one umbrella.

This could be branding or simply a campaign.

We have many more ideas where this one came from.



COME ONE,  
COME ALL,  
COME SEE

MERIDIAN,  
MISSISSIPPI

THE  
CAROUSEL  
CITY

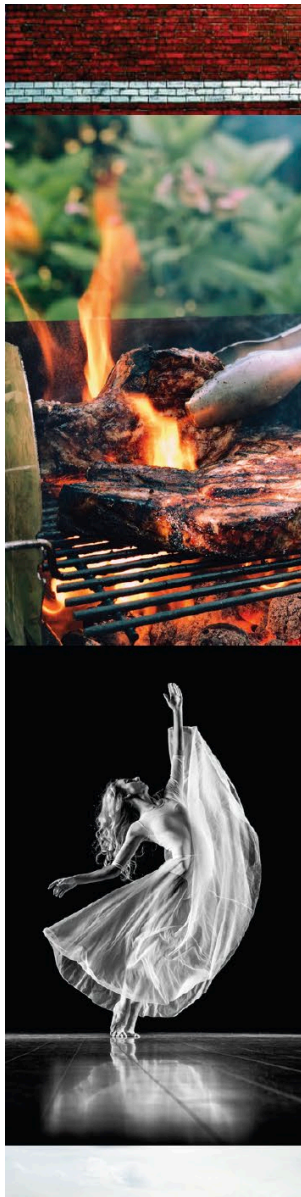


## **MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI: THE CAROUSEL CITY OF THE SOUTH**

Where the fun never stops, our story is ever-evolving, and we're always moving forward. (play on a carousel that never stops turning.)  
There's always something amazing just around the bend.

**SO ... COME ONE, COME ALL, COME SEE!**  
**COME EAT - COME STAY - COME LEARN - COME PLAY**

.....



**SO ... COME ONE, COME ALL, COME SEE!**  
**COME EAT - COME STAY - COME LEARN - COME PLAY**

.....

**COME TAKE A RIDE WITH US ON A...**

Carousel of fun  
Carousel of food

**JOIN US ON A...**

Carousel of good times  
Carousel of entertainment

**EXPERIENCE A...**

Carousel of adventure  
Carousel of hospitality

**INDULGE IN A...**

Carousel of culinary experiences  
Carousel of country music history  
Carousel of art and culture

.....





INDULGE IN A  
CAROUSEL OF  
**CULINARY**  
EXPERIENCES

**COME ONE. COME ALL. COME SEE.**  
[VISITMERIDIAN.COM](http://VISITMERIDIAN.COM)



**JOIN US ON A  
CAROUSEL OF  
GOOD TIMES**

COME EAT - COME STAY - COME LEARN - COME PLAY  
MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI - THE CAROUSEL CITY

## AT THE CROSSROADS OF COMMERCE AND SOUTHERN CULTURE, YOU'LL FIND MERIDIAN.

It's a city steeped in rich history, hospitality and tradition, but equally known as a place of progress with a keen focus on the future. With pillars of southern history such as Merrehope and the F.W. Williams home, and the Jimmie Rodgers Museum and Music Festival, those interested in celebrating our past will have no shortage of unforgettable experiences to discover.

Those who want to be immersed in the present, inspired by the future, and to explore the lasting legacy of all things southern can find themselves in awe at places like The Mississippi Arts and Entertainment Experience, The Meridian Museum of Art, and the soon-to-be-completed Mississippi Children's Museum. All of this has not even begun to mention the rich culture of the city itself, including fine dining, arts and entertainment, family fun, outdoor recreation, and a bustling night life. Meridian really does have it all. Some might say it's a carousel of good times.

As we've said, Meridian is more than just a convenient route to your destination. It is the destination.

**VISIT  
MERIDIAN**

.....  
**THE  
CAROUSEL  
CITY**  
.....



HEADLINES:

**AMAZING  
CIRCUS**

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The "Come One, Come All, Come See!" campaign will focus on getting people to experience all that the Queen City has to offer. The overarching idea is a nod to an attraction that is uniquely and wholly Meridian: The Dentzel Carousel and Carousel House. The carousel is an important national landmark, and we believe it is a key piece of Meridian's history that deserves to be a central concept of this tourism campaign. The carousel has long been a symbol of wholesome, affordable family entertainment. This, mixed with the unique importance and history of Meridian's Dentzel carousel, make it a perfect foundational theme on which to build an authentic and inspired advertising campaign. This idea will have an obvious intention to draw families in for a weekend of adventure, but when expanded to include mentions of other attractions like historical landmarks, entertainment, outdoor recreation and nightlife, will be equally attractive to a wide variety of audiences.

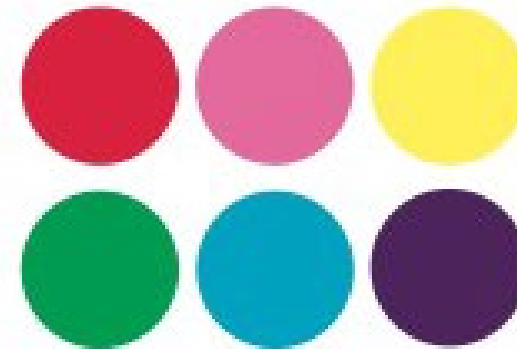
## SUBHEADERS: **LAPRESSE**

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BODY COPY:  
**Brandon Grotesque**  
(Regular, **Bold**, **Black**)

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## COLOR PALETTE:



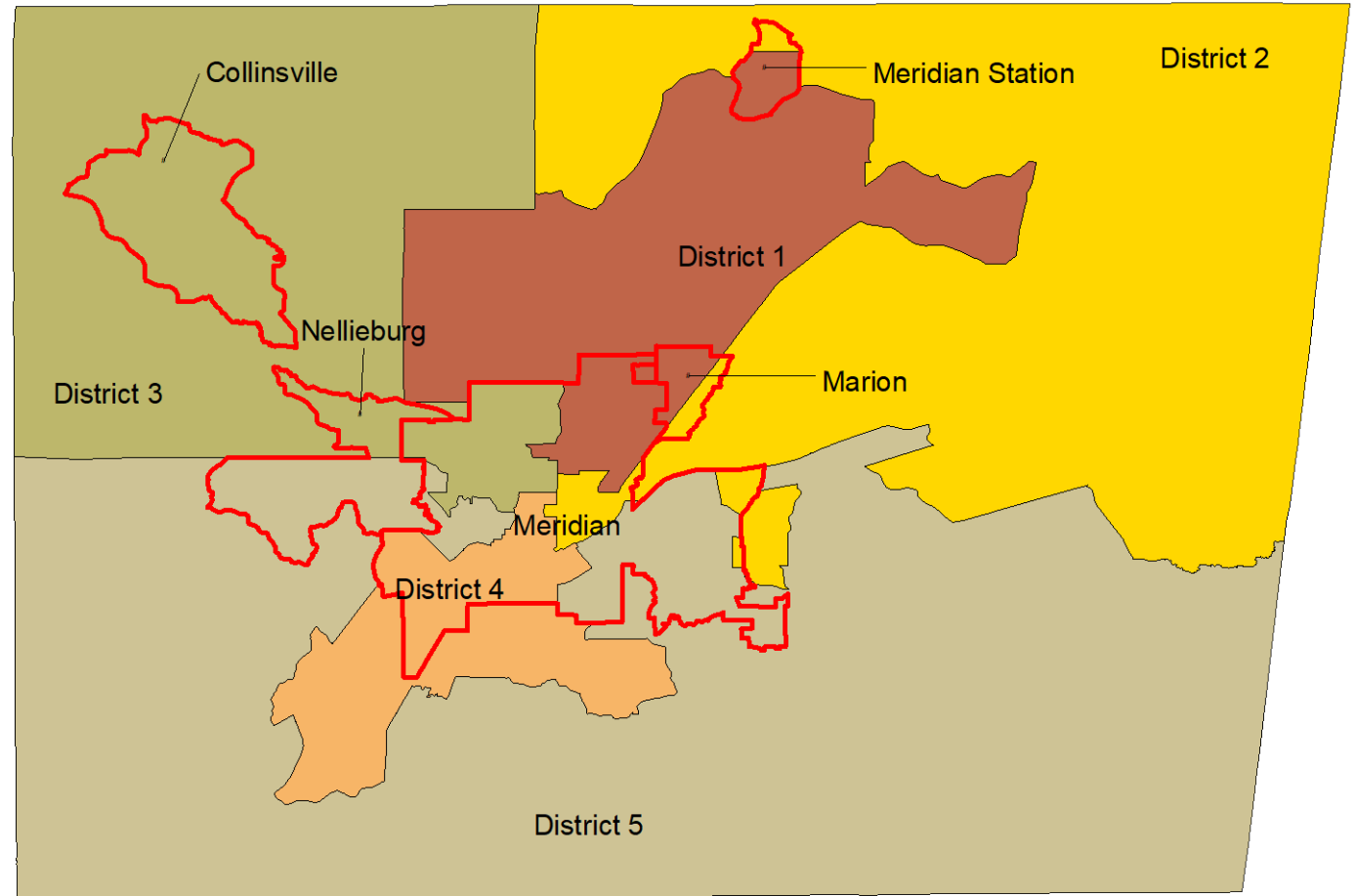


# Questions

## Supplemental Info

# We Understand Lauderdale County is More Than Meridian

- District 1: Meridian Station
- District 2: Sam Dale Monument & Gravesite
- District 3: Okatibbee Lake
- District 4: James Chaney Memorial Site
- District 5: Dunn's Falls Water Park



## Benefits of Choosing a Non-Local Agency

- New perspectives and ideas
- Broader network of contacts and resources
- Impartiality, avoiding complacency
- A fresh perspective on the local area
- Experience working with similar organizations, wider audience
- A sense of objectivity

## Other Case Studies

There are several case studies in the written RFP. The one below is not in the RFP.

**Wild American Shrimp:** <https://focusgroupms.com/portfolio/wild-american-shrimp/>

