



**PULSEPOINT:  
VISIT  
JACKSONVILLE**

**LEVELVING**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

2.....	<b>INTRO</b>
3.....	<b>TOP REASONS TO VISIT JACKSONVILLE</b>
4.....	<b>TOP ACTIVITIES WITHIN EACH CATEGORY</b>
5-7.....	<b>CONVERSATIONAL TREND ANALYSIS</b>
8-9.....	<b>MARKETING IMPACT ANALYSIS</b>
10-12.....	<b>RESEARCH IN ACTION</b>
13-14.....	<b>APPENDIX</b>

The contents of this Pulsepoint: Visit Jacksonville social conversation analysis were developed using Visit Jacksonville's key objectives of better understanding traveler perceptions regarding the destination, measuring the impact of previous marketing initiatives, as well uncovering trends and themes to inform future marketing and promotional activities.

Included within this analysis are the following elements: an introduction to the project scope and methodology, a ranking of the top reasons for visitation as well as prevalent activities within each visitation category, a deeper insight analysis of the conversation categories surrounding visitation, a promotional/marketing impact analysis and finally, key recommendations for future marketing and business operation initiatives. Each section of this analysis leverages unsolicited consumer feedback occurring on digital social channels during the 2013 calendar year.

## INTRODUCTION

This custom report was designed and developed by the Levelwing Research Team to help Visit Jacksonville understand current traveler choices and perceptions regarding Jacksonville, Florida as a tourist destination. The research was produced using data procured through innovative conversation aggregation technologies and analyzed using highly customized and proprietary research methodologies.

This report analyzes conversation across numerous social media platforms (e.g. forums, blogs, Trip Advisor, Yelp!, Facebook, and Twitter) with the objective of identifying travelers' reasons for visiting the destination, activities engaged while in Jacksonville and perceptions upon leaving. Once relevant data was mined, the analysis of aggregated conversation was carried out by a dedicated team of analysts using Levelwing's proprietary analytical methods. This analysis uncovers potential opportunities and actionable insights surrounding relevant themes, patterns and trends surrounding Jacksonville as a tourist destination.

Eight key trends in conversational content emerged and are described using the relevant and associated verbiage below:

- Beach—snorkeling, diving, swimming, surfing, laying out, paddle boarding, tanning, ocean
- Shopping—shopping, outlet, mall, stores, Jacksonville Landing/Jax Landing
- Sports—Jaguars (NFL Franchise), football, NFL, MLB, NBA, baseball, basketball, minor league, Suns (Minor League Baseball)
- Outdoor Activities—outdoor, camping, canoe, fishing, kayak, bird watching, boat ride, rafting, golfing, hiking, adventure
- Romance—anniversary, romantic, romance, celebrate, getaway, wedding, honeymoon, married, time together
- Family—family fun, family friendly, rides, amusement park, attractions, good for kids
- Cruise—cruise, port, Fantasy, Carnival, cruising
- Medical—Mayo Clinic, hospital, surgery, medical, hospice, recovery, medical center, health, patient, Memorial Hospital

# TOP REASONS TO VISIT JACKSONVILLE

The following is a ranking of the top 8 reasons cited for visitation to the Jacksonville area, as determined through the use of an algorithm leveraging the volume and sentiment of consumer conversation occurring for each visitation category.

1.  FAMILY FUN
2.  ROMANCE
3.  BEACH
4.  CRUISE
5.  SHOPPING
6.  ADVENTURE/  
OUTDOORS
7.  SPORTING EVENTS
8.  MEDICAL

# TOP ACTIVITIES WITHIN EACH CATEGORY

The following activities or sub-themes were positively mentioned most frequently in association with each conversational trend listed below:



## FAMILY FUN

1. ZOO
2. BEACH
3. SHOPPING



## SHOPPING

1. JACKSONVILLE LANDING
2. OUTLETS
3. ST. JOHN'S TOWN CENTER



## ROMANCE

1. WEDDINGS
2. VACATION FOR TWO
3. BEACH



## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS

1. CAMPING
2. RIVER WALK
3. PARKS



## BEACH

1. OCEAN
2. PIER
3. SAND



## SPORTING EVENTS

1. JAGUARS
2. FLORIDA FALCONS CLUB
3. KNIGHTS



## CRUISE

1. CARNIVAL FANTASY
2. PORT
3. FAMILY



## MEDICAL

1. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
2. MAYO CLINIC
3. ST. VINCENT

## Pulsepoint: Visit Jacksonville

# Conversation Trend Analysis

---



### FAMILY FUN

---

In the Family Fun category, most comments were neutral in nature with travelers most often seeking advice on where to take their kids; however, when a specific sentiment was shared, 25% of comments were positive, while only 12% were negative. Positive comments included parents sharing pleasant sentiment surrounding first time visits to the zoo with their children, playing in the ocean and building sand castles. On the opposite end of the spectrum, travelers negatively commented on zoo exhibit closures and the volume of intoxicated beachgoers not being suitable for children.

“Fantastic place to set up camp for a day of picnicking, swimming, and building sand castles. The beach is clean and family friendly.”

*source: [tripadvisor.com](http://tripadvisor.com)*

“[The beach] is probably more geared to adults, singles, college kids, than families.”

*source: [tripadvisor.com](http://tripadvisor.com)*



### ROMANCE

---

In the Romance category, most comments were neutral in sentiment and often consisted of visitors sharing their experiences celebrating their anniversaries at romantic restaurants downtown. Many that traveled to Jacksonville also indicated that they were visiting for a friend or family member’s wedding. Twenty-four percent of comments in the Romance category were positive, discussing the sunsets by the beach, romantic strolls, or the overall wedding, while only eleven percent of comments were negative. Many visitors complained that Jacksonville was not an appropriate location for a wedding or was not romantic enough but did not provide further context or details.

“My husband and I attended our close friend’s wedding here a few months ago. Very beautiful ceremony, and Jacksonville had a lot to offer too!”

*source: [virtualtraveler.com](http://virtualtraveler.com)*

“I could find quite a few more places more romantic than Jacksonville Beach to have a wedding.”

*source: [facebook.com](http://facebook.com)*

## Pulsepoint: Visit Jacksonville

# Conversation Trend Analysis



### BEACH

Many travelers used social channels to solicit recommendations regarding beach activities and accommodations in the Jacksonville area. The positive comments included the sand on the Jacksonville beaches, the joy from relaxing by the ocean, and sunbathing; while negative comments talked about the amount of homeless people wandering on the beach, trash and beer bottles. Beachgoers also mentioned the “constant” amount of construction near the beach and its interference with parking and beach access. A notable amount of neutral comments (and a handful of negative mentions) discussed the \$1 fee to access the pier.

“We’ve vacationed at beaches all over Florida and I can easily say that Jacksonville Beach ranks right up there with the best of them. Jax Beach is the Best!”

*source: tripadvisor.com*

“My advice is that if you’re planning a beach getaway in Florida, don’t even consider Jacksonville Beach. We only stayed one day in Jacksonville because, to be honest with you, the beach was at best poor. Trash was everywhere.”

*source: tripadvisor.com*



### CRUISE

Many discussions via forums and Facebook surrounded the cruises that depart from Jacksonville. The majority of comments were neutral in sentiment, though there were still several positive comments regarding the proximity to the port. Nineteen percent of comments were negative, but they were mostly regarding the cruise ship itself and not Jacksonville as a destination.

“Jacksonville’s port is the best one I’ve been to. I wouldn’t go on a cruise anywhere else.”

*source: virtualtourist.com*

“We stayed at a hotel near where the cruises take off. Very convenient. I’d like to come back and visit Jacksonville next time.”

*source: virtualtourist.com*



### SHOPPING

Most comments in the Shopping category were about Jacksonville Landing (or as most referred to it, “Jax Landing”). Twenty-two percent of the Shopping comments were positive, saying that the shopping was located right by the beach and boasted great views, while thirteen percent of comments were negative. Most negative comments referenced the amount of closed shops at Jacksonville Landing and store hours not being convenient or properly listed.

“Great shopping just blocks from the ocean!”

*Source: tripadvisor.com*

“Was surprised by the lackluster shops. I hope since downtown is trying to better itself this will improve. Beautiful view. Great potential here. Good to walk around on a nice day.”

*Source: yelp.com*

## Pulsepoint: Visit Jacksonville

# Conversation Trend Analysis



### ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS

The majority of comments in the Outdoor Adventure category discussed the campgrounds in the Jacksonville area. Fifteen percent of these comments were positive, while only nine percent of all comments were negative in nature. However, across both the positive and negative discussions, there weren't many specific contextual clues provided as to what made the Outdoor Experience either positive or negative. Typically, the discussions were very general in the sense that visitors provided vague feedback regarding whether or not they enjoyed their campaign experience. Other neutral comments regarded the weather and wanting to experience the outdoors while others solicited advice regarding outdoor activities in the area.

"We love staying at the [Flamingo Lake RV Park], it is very quite [sic] and well maintained. Many things to do bingo, cards, fishing, clean beaches, swimming pool, a wonderful cafe with great food. Friendly staff always willing to help whenever they can. Live music several times a month and many more great things to do. If you're ever in Jacksonville FL. You owe it to yourself to stop by and enjoy yourself. There so much to do you'll need a vacation to rest up!!!"

*source: yelp.com*



### SPORTING EVENTS

In terms of sporting events, the Jacksonville Jaguars were a strong driver of conversational volume throughout the course of the analysis, as well as other teams that were coming to Jacksonville to play against the Jaguars. Quite a few Dallas Cowboys fans traveled to Jacksonville for the game and made comments about it via social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter). Fifteen percent of comments were positive, speaking highly of the stadium. Only nine percent were negative (referring to lack of parking and "maddening" traffic). The majority of travelers to the games were from out of state and were fans of other sports teams.

"I came with my friend to see a Charger/Jags game. My friend is a Jags fan and I'm a Chargers fan. Often times if you attend an NFL game at an opposing field you get harassed by people but everyone (fans and staff) was so nice and welcoming."

*source: google reviews*



### MEDICAL

There were a multitude of comments from visitors traveling to Jacksonville specifically for hospital visits or medical reasons. Most comments occurred on Facebook and pertained to a loved one's surgery or recovery, however there were also both positive and negative comments regarding hospital stay conditions at various Jacksonville medical centers.

"All of the nurses have been very kind and considerate. I have major anxiety issues as well as social anxiety issues, which they have taken into account. My anesthesiologists have gone above and beyond when I've discussed my anxiety issues with them. The surgeries have always gone smoothly, and I've received excellent care in recovery before I've been sent home."

*source: yelp.com about the Memorial Hospital*



Throughout the course of the conversational analysis, attention was paid to 2013 Visiting Jacksonville Marketing initiatives and their impact on social conversation.

### *Winter on the Water*

The “Winter on the Water” campaign generated 2 social mentions as identified through the social research algorithms. These mentions were from local Jacksonville businesses promoting the campaign and both appeared on Facebook. There could have been further mentions among other users with private social accounts; however, only 2 appeared in the overall data set used for the 2013 analysis.

### *Jaguars in London Giveaway*

In terms of the UK targeted trip contest, analysis was focused on conversation occurring within the United States. There was engagement found surrounding the contest within the Visit Jacksonville owned social channels (namely the Facebook page) but there were no public mentions of the contest located outside of those owned channels. This could be due in part to the fact that people who shared the info may have had private accounts that could not be mined as part of the conversation aggregation process.

### *#OnlyInJax*

In terms of the #OnlyInJax hashtag, the tools were able to collect much of the 2013 dialog. Twitter searches can often be incomplete (as they have many limitations on number of searches by IP address, API time constraints, etc.) but the tool was able to collect 165 examples of the #OnlyInJax hashtag being utilized within social conversations in 2013. Of those 165 mentions, more than half were initiated by the Visit Jacksonville Twitter account. There was awareness around the hashtag within the Jacksonville community as several tweets used the hashtag around Jacksonville-based dialog. For example, some people used the hashtag when sharing their excitement for the upcoming Jaguars football season and others used it when they saw things throughout the community that they considered to be funny:

“It’s always interesting to me to see two roosters walking around the KFC parking lot. #onlyinjax”

source: [twitter.com](#)

“Ready for some @jaguars football. #ALLIN #ilovejax #onlyinjax”

source: [twitter.com](#)

### *Visit Jacksonville Social Content Engagement*

In terms of engagement with Visit Jacksonville initiated content, there was consistent activity when it came to the #OnlyInJax tweets posted by Visit Jacksonville. Based on the sample set, heavy engagement is when a tweet generated more than 2 engagement activities (comments, Retweets, Favorites), as 2 actions appeared to be the benchmark (especially in terms of comments). Tweets containing unique facts generated a great deal of response. For example, the tweets about the filming of 30 silent movie companies making films in Jacksonville, the Veterans Day parade being one of the largest in the state of Florida and Jacksonville being a Top 25 art destination all generated above-average activity. Specific events also generated above average engagement. Fourth of July (which isn't unique) garnered a lot of activity as did Sweet Pete's Summer Candy Class (which is unique). Finally, pictures of the Jacksonville area also generated above-average engagement. Often times #OnlyInJax was used when the desire "to share something beautiful" in the form of a picture was executed on Twitter. This often times resulted in multiple Retweets and favorites, which can lead to more impressions and a broader reach. There were a handful of tweets about Kayaking and those were the only pieces of content that were noted to have received no engagement.

In terms of growing the #OnlyInJax reach, we would recommend continuing to have a steady stream of content related Unique Facts, Noteworthy Events (some obscure) and Beautiful Jacksonville Imagery content buckets. The data shows that continuing to publish content in these categories can help drive engagement with the #OnlyInJax hashtag. The team can use a tool such as TweetDeck or Hootsuite to monitor this hashtag in real time (if not already doing so) and respond to some of the funnier uses of the #OnlyInJax hashtag. This could help further demonstrate the personality of the Visit Jacksonville organization and can further increase the visibility of the hashtag among influencers in Jacksonville's twitter community.

The following section of the report highlights some of the many opportunities stemming from this analysis of traveler conversation.



## FAMILY FUN

**Insight:** In the Family Fun category there was positive sentiment focused on building sandcastles as a family activity.

**Recommendation:** To capitalize on this trend, there is an opportunity to use imagery of families building sandcastles throughout marketing collateral. Since it is an activity that produces positive sentiment, adding visuals of families building sandcastles together (across websites and digital banner ads) could generate a positive feeling for potential visitors and create more engagement across digital channels.

**Insight:** Travelers negatively commented on zoo exhibits being closed when they traveled to Jacksonville for those exhibits specifically.

**Recommendation:** As the Jacksonville Zoo was often mentioned as a specific draw to the area for many families, adding additional content to the Visit Jacksonville website that positions this digital property as an authority on the attraction is recommended. The current 'Jacksonville Zoos and Gardens' section of the site can be expanded to include an exhibit calendar with updates regarding closures and new attractions. This initiative can be further bolstered with content support across Visit Jacksonville's social channels and media showcasing new and current zoo activities.



## ROMANCE

**Insight:** Two key romantic scenarios were highlighted as positive romantic experiences while visiting the Jacksonville area: sunsets on the beach and romantic strolls on the beach.

**Recommendation:** As a way of promoting the more “romantic” side of Jacksonville, creating banner ad creative that speaks to enjoying romantic strolls on the beach and/or promoting the best places to catch an amazing sunset on the Jacksonville Beaches could easily heighten the awareness around the more romantic elements of a Jacksonville vacation. Through display and social media campaigns, creative can target those who are researching Jacksonville as a place to celebrate an anniversary or couples looking for a quick and easy romantic getaway. The existing content on this subject on the current site can be enhanced to feature stunning imagery and additional specifics regarding locations and activities.



## BEACH

**Insight:** From a beach perspective, there was a negative sentiment around the number of intoxicated beachgoers, as well as a general displeasure around trash on the beach and the number of homeless people wandering the beaches.

**Insight:** There was largely neutral conversation around the \$1 pier access fee but it was something that visitors indicated was unexpected.

**Recommendation:** If there are more family friendly areas of the beach (which do not attract many of the previously mentioned negative elements), they could be the focus marketing efforts on family friendly areas of the beach which do not attract many of the previously mentioned negative elements.

**Recommendation:** While it is clear that there is a \$1 spectator fee on the Jacksonville Pier site, it may be worth promoting the pricing on any piece of marketing collateral so that a fair expectation is set for future pier visitors.



---

## SHOPPING

---

**Insight:** The bulk of the negative comments around shopping focused on the amount of shops being closed and not an easy way to find store hours for the Jacksonville Landing shopping location.

**Recommendation:** Currently, there isn't any simple way to find an hours directory for the complete list of Jacksonville Landing stores. It is recommended that Visit Jacksonville with their team to create a scalable solution that aggregates those store hours in a consumable way (including mobile friendly) and then promoting the fact that different stores have different hours and that store hours can be referenced prior to visiting.



---

## SPORTING EVENTS

---

**Insight:** Fans of opposing teams are using their teams games against the Jaguars as a catalyst to visit the Jacksonville area.

**Recommendation:** Using that insight as fuel, an opportunity exists to test a digital marketing campaign that promotes Jacksonville as a tourist destination to fans of opposing teams. For instance, it is already known that Cowboy fans are going to travel to support their team (as the data already supports this). However, the Jaguars also have non-divisional games against the New York Giants and Pittsburgh Steelers. Visit Jacksonville might consider allocating a small media budget to those markets promoting these games in conjunction with a broader 'Visit Jacksonville' call-to-action.

The following data was added at the request of Visit Jacksonville on May 21, 2014 to provide additional context regarding the original contents of this report.

**ADDITIONAL CONTEXT: FAMILY FUN  
(Zoo Exhibit Closures)**

Negative comments about the zoo exhibits being closed comprised 31% of total negative sentiment Zoo comments (5 out of 16) and 3% of all Zoo comments (5 out of 151). Three comments were complaints about the dinosaur exhibit being closed, while the other two regarded the crowds in some exhibits being so populated that the exhibit was “basically closed.” There were also three complaints about educational elements of the stingray exhibit being too inundated with children to ask any questions.

“We drove 2 ½ hours to take the boys to the dinosaur exhibit just to find out it was closed. Disappointment is not even the word.”

*source: Facebook*

**ADDITIONAL CONTEXT: FAMILY FUN  
(Zoo Exhibit Closures)**

The number of comments about homeless people and/or drunken people on the beach accounted for 54% of all negative beach comments (94 out of 174), and 2% of total beach comments (94 out of 4,606).

Common posts regarded empty beer bottles on the beach and the beach being unsafe for children at play.

“There were vagrants sleeping on the beach. We couldn’t even walk on the beach because grown men were blocking the board walk in front of our hotel. One guy stayed all day and ended up stealing our beach towel from our rented chair. We did retrieve it because we caught him red handed but that’s not the point. What else would they steal if given an opportunity? Then we find out that our hotel, that we are paying \$189 a night for, are feeding these people from our breakfast bar. I would hang around too if I were receiving free food. We actually tripped over 2 homeless people sleeping on the beach on the 3rd night. As 2 women traveling alone, I would never have chosen to stay here knowing that this activity is allowed. Not one policeman patrolled the beach while we were here. Not one! How can Jax Beach improve the area for tourist when they allow this to continue? I loved this place and now I will never return here again....please elect officials that will stop this and turn this city into the kind of place people will enjoy spending their money on.”

*source: TripAdvisor.com*

**ADDITIONAL CONTEXT: SPORTS  
(Dallas Cowboys vs. Jacksonville  
Jaguars)**

3,638 comments were identified about the Dallas Cowboys and the game against the Jacksonville Jaguars. The dates on these comments were in the year 2013, with the majority of comments coming from Twitter. As discussed in the Marketing Impact Analysis, Twitter's search functionality can be unreliable due to multiple searches by one IP address leading us to believe that these comments were being pulled into a 2013 data set, even though they were from a different date, given that Dallas did not play in Jacksonville in 2013. Though the majority of this trend's comments were from Dallas Cowboys' fans (often indicating that Jacksonville's stadium was friendly and clean) this type of discussion was also observed from fans of other visiting teams, namely the Eagles and Chargers:

**"In Jacksonville for the Eagles game. I love it here! People are friendly and the beer isn't as expensive as at our stadium!"**  
*source: Facebook*

**ADDITIONAL CONTEXT: SPORTS  
(Knights and Florida Falcons Club)**

Both the Knights and the Florida Falcons Club are minor league/college prep league football teams located in the Jacksonville area. Comments referencing these teams were mostly neutral in sentiment, primarily referencing stats, players and game locations.

**"Great game in Jacksonville tonight. Weather was perfect. So proud to cheer my man and his teammates on. Go Knights!"**  
*source: Facebook*





# THANK YOU

For questions regarding the contents of this Pulespoint Report, please contact **Steve Parker, Jr.** or **Lori Terrell**.

**Steve Parker, Jr.**  
CEO & Co-Founder  
[Steve@levelwing.com](mailto:Steve@levelwing.com)

**Lori Terrell**  
Marketing Communications Manager  
[Lterrell@levelwing.com](mailto:Lterrell@levelwing.com)

**LEVELWING**

