



Visit Estes Park

The Destination
Marketing Organization

VisitEstesPark.com

ESTES PARK LOCAL MARKETING DISTRICT

VISIT ESTES PARK 2017 OPERATING PLAN

September 29, 2016

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Introduction

Visit Estes Park is a data-driven, research-based organization. The 2017 Operating Plan supports this strategy by not only detailing where we are now and where we are headed; but also by including comprehensive research to substantiate our approach. Although Estes Park is a unique and extraordinary destination, our challenges are quite similar to destinations around the world. Understanding our similarities while recognizing our unique qualities will propel the Estes Valley forward in an efficient and sustainable way.

Our entire team at Visit Estes Park is extremely dedicated and committed to the success of everyone in the Estes Valley. The achievements thus far, validated by all key performance indicators, creates a momentum that is not easily sustained; however, we will continue to invest in professional and qualified staff along with local business partnerships and agency partners to support and grow a healthy and balanced year-round economy. We will continue to focus on community accomplishments, while providing education for and encouraging collaboration with all community partners.

Thank you for your encouragement and hard work in helping us successfully accomplish our past initiatives and supporting those on the horizon.

We welcome your feedback regarding the 2017 Visit Estes Park Operating Plan.

In partnership,
Elizabeth Fogarty
President & CEO
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Visit Estes Park Organizational Structure

Organization

The Estes Park Local Marketing District (LMD) is the legal entity formed and funded by the 2% lodging tax. The registered “doing business as” name is Visit Estes Park.

The formation of the Local Marketing District and the 2% lodging tax were approved by District voters in November 2008 and lodging tax collections became effective on January 1, 2009. Staffing and operations began in January 2010.

The Visit Estes Park Board of Directors focuses on the long-term strategic planning of the organization. The Board also provides strategic direction to the President & CEO. All operational duties, including the implementation of the marketing plan, is handled at the staff level. Any necessary communication and direction to be given to the President & CEO during periods between board meetings are handled by the Visit Estes Park Board Chair. In the absence or incapacitation of the Chair, this responsibility would be handled by the Vice Chair.

The Local Marketing District (LMD) Model

According to Colorado State Statute, the Local Marketing District may provide any of the following services within the District:

- (a) Organization, promotion, marketing, and support of public events;
- (b) Activities in support of business recruitment, management, and development; coordinating tourism promotion activities;
- (c) To have the management, control, and supervision of all the business and affairs of the district and of the operation of district services therein;
- (d) To appoint an advisory board of owners of property within the boundaries of the district and provide for the duties and functions thereof;
- (e) To hire employees or retain agents, engineers, consultants, attorneys, and accountants;
- (f) To adopt and amend bylaws not in conflict with the constitution and laws of the state or with the ordinances of the local government affected for carrying on the business, objectives, and affairs of the board and of the district; and
- (g) To exercise all rights and powers necessary or incidental to or implied from the specific powers granted in this article. Such specific powers shall not be considered as a limitation upon any power necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes and intent of this article.

Visit Estes Park Board of Directors

Scott Webermeier, Chair – Owner, National Park Village
(Term end – 12/31/16)

Karen Ericson, Vice Chair - Owner, Serendipity Trading Company (Sworn in January 2016)
(Term end – 12/31/18)

Lindsay Lamson – Secretary/Treasurer – Owner, Rocky Mountain Resorts
(Term end – 12/31/18)

Jon Nicholas, – President & CEO, Estes Park Economic Development Corp.
(Term end – 12/31/16)

Adam Shake – Director Communications & Business Dev, Estes Park Economic Development Corp.
(Term end – 12/31/17)

Steve Kruger – Manager, Solitude Cabins (Sworn in July 2016)
(Term end – 12/31/19)

Morgan Mulch – Owner, Marys Lake Lodge (Sworn in March 2016)
(Term end – 12/31/19)

The seven-member board is appointed, with five members appointed by the Town of Estes Park Board of Trustees and two by the Larimer County Board of County Commissioners. Each serves a four-year term. Board members are limited to two consecutive full terms.

Visit Estes Park Staff

Elizabeth Fogarty – President & CEO (Hired May 2014)

Brooke Burnham – Director of Marketing & Communications (Hired August 2012)

Suzy Blackhurst – Director of Operations (Hired July 2004)*

Michael Bodman – Finance & Administration Manager (Hired April 2015)

Adam Concannon - Content Coordinator (Hired December 2015)

Abi Huebner – Partner & Group Development Manager (Hired April 2016)

Seasonal, Part Time and Intern Staff: Catherine Moon, Jean McGuire, Chelsea Hernandez, Josh Harms

*Former employees of the Town of Estes Park were hired by the Local Marketing District when operations were transferred in 2010.

Key Partner Organizations

Town of Estes Park Elected Officials & Staff	Estes Park Economic Development Corp.
Rocky Mountain National Park	Larimer County Elected Officials & Staff
Colorado Tourism Office	State of Colorado Elected Officials & Staff
Colorado Office of Economic Development & Int'l Trade	
Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organizations	
Colorado Front Range Regional Partners	Tourism International Association of Colorado
Colorado Hotel Lodging Association	Rocky Mountain Conservancy
Estes Park Medical Center	Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center
Estes Area Lodging Association	Estes Park Sports & Fitness Association
Estes Valley Partners for Commerce	Area Associations & Nonprofits
Tourism & Community Partners	

Visit Estes Park Mission, Vision, Core Values

Mission: Attract guests to the District through effective and efficient destination marketing and management in order to drive year-round economic growth.

Vision: To be a year-round tourism, group, and event destination that supports our healthy mountain village with a balance of financial success, positive and memorable experiences for guests, and quality of life for our community.

Core Values: Accountable, Ethical, Proactive, Respectful, Responsive, and Transparent

Timeline

Projects & Marketing Partners

- 2008: Lodging tax passed with voter approval in November
- 2009: Two-percent lodging tax collections went into effect January 1
- 2010: Strategic Marketing Plan (Hannah Marketing)
Hired Turner Public Relations
- 2011: Year-round visitor study (Hannah Marketing)
National Consumer Brand Awareness – Perception Study (YPartnership)
Began Destination Brand Strategy (Duane Knapp)
- 2012: Destination Brand Strategy (Duane Knapp)
Economic & Fiscal Impact of Tourism on the Estes Park Economy research study
(Tucker Hart-Adams, Summit Economics)
IGA between LMD and Larimer County was established and confirmed distribution of payments in lieu of taxes (PILT) for 2% of rental fees for all camping and cabins operated by Larimer County
- 2013: New marketing creative & advertising (Cultivator Advertising & Backbone Media)
New website & mobile site (Simpleview)
Customer Relationship Management system (Simpleview)
Destination Brand Strategy - Began Phase 4, Culturalization
Earned DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International) DMO
(Destination Marketing Organization) accreditation; effective for four years
Digital Communications Manager added to staff (July)
Eliminated two positions post-flood
Confirmed partnership with Town of Estes Park and their Comprehensive Annual
Financial Report with Clifton Larson Allen, LLC
Total 2013 post-flood grant award: \$75,000
- 2014: Began using Barcelona Principles for PR tracking
State of Colorado amended law to enable monthly, rather than quarterly, lodging tax disbursements to regulate cash flows for Local Marketing Districts; began receiving monthly lodging tax disbursements in July
Received the Award of Excellence, along with Turner PR, from the Public Relations Society of America for Crisis Communications after the September 2013 flood
Total 2014 post-flood grant and contributions awarded: \$421,560
- 2015: New advertising Century of Adventure creative campaign – evolved to a historical and more sophisticated ad creative to resonate more with adventure travelers and connect with the RMNP & NPS Centennials
Expanded influencer programs and relations through deskside & influencer visits to Estes
Added a Texas deskside media tour
Attended Go West Summit for the first time
Hired Office Manager in April, and Partner & Group Development Manager in August
Executed two video production projects to ultimately yield 10 brand and activity videos for Estes Park
Expanded in-market, out-of-home reach with brochure/visitor guide distribution and mobile visitor center
Hired Tourism Intelligence

- Converted Visit Estes Park website to responsive design and CMS 2.0
- 2016: Attended the US Travel Association's IPW for the first time, the largest international travel tradeshow in the US
- Rolled out Extranet 4.0 to upgrade access and expanded use of the extranet for partners
- Conducted a cohesive, multi-media winter advertising campaign that received the Governor's Award for outstanding marketing program at the Tourism Conference for the State of Colorado in September 2016.
- Expanded the winter campaign for winter 2016-2017 with in-market ice sculpture installments, street teams in the Denver area, and additional advertising and public relations efforts.
- Expanded in-house video, photo, and written storytelling to promote the multi-faceted destination experiences and brand representatives
- Created Virtual Tours allowing partners to highlight their businesses inside and outside, including VEP investing in over 20 drone aerials showcasing the Estes Valley.
- Hired CrowdRiff to integrate user generated content on the VEP website, providing opportunity for local businesses to highlight their experience, as well as allow VEP to tap into the immense power of authentic and original content to further power our message.
- Awarded the 2016 Governor's Tourism Award for *Outstanding Marketing Program* at the Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference in Breckenridge for the 2015 – 2016 winter campaign.

Past Catastrophic Events

- 2012: In 2011-2012, Colorado had an extremely dry winter. This resulted in over 21 wildfires during 2012 and garnered national media attention. The most notable in regards to destruction and/or proximity to Estes Park were: Woodland Heights Fire (Estes Park), Fern Lake Fire (Rocky Mountain National Park), Waldo Canyon Fire (El Paso & Teller Counties), Flagstaff Fire (Boulder County), and High Park Fire (Larimer County).
- 2013: Summer season again started with catastrophic wildfires in Colorado and the west, and again garnered much unwanted national media attention. The Black Forest fire, near Colorado Springs, began on June 11, 2013. The evacuation area covered 94,000 acres, 13,000 homes and 38,000 people. The fire was 100 percent contained on June 20, 2013, but 14,280 acres had burned, at least 509 homes were destroyed, and two people had died. This was the most destructive fire in the state's history.
- The natural disaster of the 2013 Colorado flood began on September 9, 2013 and peaked in Estes Park on September 13. A slow-moving cold front stalled over Colorado, combined with warm humid monsoonal air, caused up to 20" of rainfall in some areas. This resulted in catastrophic flooding, causing President Obama to declare a state of emergency for Larimer County (a total of 14 counties received state of emergency designations). The devastation isolated the town for weeks, due to the immense damage to Highways 7, 34 and 36. Homes and businesses were destroyed, leaving many displaced and seeking temporary housing.
- A federal government shutdown began on October 1, 2013 and caused Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) to close, further delaying Estes Park's flood recovery. Thankfully, an agreement was reached between the Interior Department and Governor John Hickenlooper to re-open the park with donated state funds on October 12.
- 2014: In 2014, Visit Estes Park was charged with mitigating the negative impact the September 2013 flood had on the perception of Estes Park and the consumer demand to travel to Estes Park. There were businesses that could not re-open due to lost revenue and the cost of repairs. Others tried to hold on, but also eventually closed due to decreased sales. Many residents and businesses applied for loans and grants. Continued media coverage of the tragic flood proved challenging, yet the community joined efforts to create a consistent message that Estes Park was open and welcoming guests.
- Visit Estes Park sought every available resource to effectively combat misperceptions of devastation, to overcome challenges of road closures and to reposition a "damaged" Estes Park as a rebuilt destination

offering renewed and expanded high-quality guest experiences. These efforts included applying for and obtaining alternative funding in the form of contributions, increased investments and grants. The additional funds were used by Visit Estes Park to conduct both short-term and long-term investments in advertising and public relations.

Emergency funding through regional & partner contributions and grants awarded in December 2013 totaled \$75,000 as follows:

Northern Colorado Community Foundation	\$ 74,000
Individual Contribution	\$ 1,000

Emergency funding through regional and local contributions and grants awarded in 2014 totaled \$421,560 as follows:

Regional Contributions	\$ 45,000
Economic Development Administration	\$ 126,683
Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery	\$ 149,877
Town of Estes Park	\$100,000

2015: According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the recovery from a flood disaster of this caliber takes an average of three to five years to complete. Although Estes Park continued to show signs of resiliency and renewed strength since the flood, many businesses were still recouping lost revenue and paying off past flood-recovery expenses.

2016: Highway 34 reconstruction efforts began in August and closures begin in October of 2016. Proactive efforts had been ongoing with continuous engagement with CDOT, Town and County officials. VEP also played an active role in educating and soliciting feedback from district residents and businesses on construction plans. As CDOT plans solidified, we began strategizing and proactively engaging partners to help prevent misperceptions surrounding early construction.

Ongoing outreach, specific ad messaging and public relations monitoring will continue throughout construction to help reduce the impact to our local industry partners. Additionally, we are working with state disaster recovery officials to engage local partners with grant programs. Visit Estes Park will also apply for tourism marketing grants, all meant to help alleviate the impact of the road closure.

With record visitation to Rocky Mountain National Park in 2015 and the national Find Your Park campaign being conducted ahead of and during the NPS centennial in 2016, an increased focus has been placed on sustainable tourism for our area. Visit Estes Park has increased collaboration with the national park around messaging, incorporating talking points and travel tips into our communications. This will continue to be a focus for VEP moving forward.

Local Marketing District Overview

The Estes Park Local Marketing District continues to be organized by Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) between the LMD, the Town of Estes Park, and Larimer County.

Funding, Revenue, and Financial Management

The primary funding source for the district continues to be the 2% lodging tax which is collected by district lodging properties from their guests for stays of fewer than 30 days. This tax is remitted to the Colorado Department of Revenue on a monthly or quarterly basis (depending on size of business) and then distributed to Visit Estes Park. The history of the LMD 2% lodging tax collections is as follows:

2010: \$ 1,250,538	2013: \$ 1,365,383
2011: \$ 1,343,156	2014: \$ 1,596,347
2012: \$ 1,513,414	2015: \$ 1,902,902

The 2015 lodging tax revenue total was 19.2% higher than 2014. This was a record-breaking increase since the establishment of Visit Estes Park in 2009. Marketing the destination brought more people to visit both Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park, which led to increased business opportunities for our partners in the community.

Through July 31, 2016, lodging tax receipts are 14.47% higher than those received during the same seven-month period in 2015. However, when adjusting for late payments, the year-to-date increase is estimated at 10.28%.

For spring, defined as March through May, the most recent season for which data is available, lodging taxes were up 9.36%, and the winter season (December through February) was up 8.44%. Visit Estes Park continues to invest strategically in the winter and spring seasons to support sustainable visitation levels and a more balanced, healthy economy.

This year's strong level of tax receipts is the result of many factors, such as successful marketing campaigns including the award-winning winter campaign; continued momentum from the 2015 RMNP Centennial; the 2016 National Park Service Centennial; a stronger national economy; and a growing travel & tourism industry. The year-end lodging tax revenue for 2016 won't be available until February 2017.

As part of the annual audit process, Visit Estes Park works with the Town of Estes Park and an independent auditor to ensure that our financial management is safe and sound. As in years past, our 2015 audit results showed no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. The annual audit is conducted as an integral part of the Town of Estes Park's audit, and Visit Estes Park results are reflected in the Town's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). In 2017, Visit Estes Park will continue to emphasize prudent financial management.

Visit Estes Park works with the State of Colorado Department of Revenue to monitor compliance with lodging tax remittances. We are making concerted efforts to ensure that all lodging properties located within the district and renting for less than 30 days, including vacation home rentals, are in compliance. In addition, we are working with the Town, vacation home owners, Estes Area Lodging Association, and Larimer County on the issue of sensible vacation home regulation, neighborhood integrity, and enforcement.

Aside from lodging taxes, Visit Estes Park receives revenue from stakeholder advertising sales. Stakeholder advertising provides partners the opportunity to promote their businesses by leveraging the reach and impact of VEP marketing. For local businesses that do not have the marketing budget or expertise to grow their marketing beyond a basic level, VEP is a supportive partner providing multiple options to produce a high return with accountable results. Moreover, as a not-for-profit public organization, all the revenue VEP receives from stakeholder advertising contributes directly to marketing the destination and increasing consumer engagement.

We have continued to manage our funding and revenue responsibly. Our budgets are balanced and priorities are funded, while keeping sufficient reserves to provide for emergencies and risk. Below is a comparison between Visit Estes Park's expense categories and the DMO industry average from the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), the official organization of the industry:

Expense Categories	Visit Estes Park	Industry Average
Program (marketing)	70.00%	51.50%
Personnel	21.00%	37.00%
Administration	9.00%	11.50%
Total Expenses	100.00%	100.00%

Through prudent financial management, we are able to exceed industry benchmarks across the board. We invest a higher percentage of our revenue in marketing than our peers, while keeping our operating expenses comparatively low.

Travel & Tourism

Tourism: The Basis of the Estes Park Economy

In 2012, Visit Estes Park commissioned a first-ever study to define the impact of tourism on the Estes Park economy. The Economic & Fiscal Impact of Tourism on the Estes Park Economy research study was conducted by Tucker Hart-Adams of Summit Economics. The study found that:

- Tourism is the basis of the Estes Park economy.
- Estes Park welcomes over 2 million visitors per year (Per Summit Economics 2012 report).
- Estes Park's 2 million visitors spend about \$187 million per year in the area.
- Tourism provides more than half the jobs in Estes Park.
- Tourism jobs result in \$46.7 million in earnings each year.
- Guests provided the Town with about 54.1% of its revenues, almost \$18 million annually.
- The tourism industry saves each Estes Park resident \$418 annually in municipal costs.
- Tourism enhances the quality of life for each resident.
- Every \$1 spent on Visit Estes Park tourism advertising generates \$6.70 in return to the state of Colorado; city and county governments receive additional tax dollars.

**Data from 2012 Summit Report, not adjusted for inflation*

The Global Travel Landscape

In the past, legislation dictated and guided industry. Now, industry is trumping legislation and innovation is revolutionizing the business landscape. These forward-thinking start-ups have identified unexploited niches in the marketplace. They are creating new ecosystems and unseating corporate giants while they do it. Billion-dollar valuation players include Uber/1, Airbnb/2, Snapchat/16, Lyft/27 and many other shared-economy start-ups.

The global travel industry continues to be disrupted in a variety of ways. Many of the changes in travel are positive, with new opportunities to travel once-restricted countries like Cuba, but some are tragic with the escalation of terrorism continuing to be an ongoing and increasing threat.

Still-strong Western economies, weakening Eastern economies, war and strife in vast regions of the world leading to migrations on a scale not seen in a century, the escalation of terrorism fears in Europe and the U.S., Russia as the global wildcard, and other geopolitical upheavals, it all converges in travel, the bellwether sector.*

**Rafat Ali Founder and CEO, Skift, Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

Economic uncertainty surrounding recent developments, like Brexit, are presenting challenges to the affordability of travel into the US, while also making international travel less expensive for Americans.

Online Travel Agencies

Online travel agencies (OTA) continue to be acquired and the once-broad landscape is now down to two major players, Expedia and Priceline. Amazon was ramping up to be a game changer as they have successfully done with the retail industry, but quickly exited once they realized that the travel industry is a whole different dynamic best shared by Expedia CFO Mark Okerstrom, who said at a financial conference, without specifically mentioning Amazon, "I think that, like many before them have found, it's not as easy as coming up with a website, it's different."

The two leading players within this sector, Expedia and Priceline, registered strong performances, although it was the Chinese player Ctrip that achieved the strongest growth to become the third global OTA giant. The next few years are expected to see the rise of new key players in online travel bookings, such as Google and TripAdvisor, which are currently challenging OTAs (and DMO lodging bookings) in terms of brand loyalty and which are even posing a disintermediation threat in the travel industry. OTAs are expected to respond to this challenge by changing their business models, shifting their focus from that of pure online bookings providers to offering services throughout the travel experience.*

**State of Online Travel Agencies, Angelo Rossini, Euromonitor - July 07, 2016*

Travel Agents

With technology providing for all the conveniences a consumer needs, travel agents have to reinvent themselves to stay relevant. The most successful agents nurture an environment of exclusivity, secret itineraries, and create a confidant-type relationship.

It's true that travel agents have mostly disappeared from the public eye in the U.S., but the voice of the travel agency community continues to be a meaningful force in the travel industry. Contrary to their relative invisibility in the U.S., travel sellers worldwide have the power to push back against travel providers looking to edge out intermediaries or take advantage of consumers.*

**Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

Travel agents are still a very strong resource for international travelers and present an important opportunity for marketing to potential overseas audiences. The use of agents is also growing in the US, a trend that appears to be led by millennials with one-third having used an agent in the previous few months, according to a study by the American Society of Travel Agents.

Destination Marketing Association International

Destination Marketing Association International—a travel industry organization supporting global tourism bureaus—wrapped up its two-year DestinationNEXT research in 2015. Many bureaus are faced with shrinking budgets and growing oversight from government and special interest stakeholders, making their organizations extremely political and at-risk. So DestinationNEXT was designed as a roadmap into the future. Strategies focus on new technology platforms to spur two-way communication between cities and visitors. There's a growing emphasis on smarter content marketing to differentiate city brand identity for both leisure and group markets.*

**Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

Social Media Shifts

Social media platforms continue to evolve, get acquired, and lose million-dollar values practically overnight as the culture continues to be unpredictable with what is important to them and their communication style. With [Pokémon Go](#), we see new platforms explode overnight that continues the gamification of the travel industry.

This year, photo-centric Instagram eclipsed Twitter to claim more monthly active users than the microblogging platform – more than 400 million compared to Twitter's 307 million. Besides having the highest user growth rate when compared to Facebook and Twitter, Instagram also has the most engaged community. According to Forrester, 4.21 percent of brands' total followers have engaged with their content in comparison to 0.03 percent and 0.07 percent of brands' total followers on Twitter and Facebook, respectively.*

**Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

U.S. Visa Waivers

A growing number of businesses in Estes Park have become reliant on the visa programs, as housing continues to be a challenge. With tightened U.S. restrictions on the program as a result of the increased fear of potential terrorists entering the country, Estes Park will need to expedite solutions to housing as the tourism market continues to grow outside of what was once mainly a summer – fall primary season.

Virtual Reality (VR)

The first step for a tourism destination is to inspire the prospective visitor to consider their location for a future trip. It's no surprise that destinations are finding ways to tap into VR with real-life moments that will hook the individual into booking their trip. Most of us are already using Google Street View to get our bearings of a future location, so it's no surprise that we have an expectation that future vacation destinations provide us a taste of what they have to offer.

Research shows that approximately two out of three US travelers say they would be influenced by being exposed to VR experiences, according to Caroline Coyle, vice president of brand strategy for the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA).*

**Mashable by Las Vegas, April 22, 2016*

Data

Visit Estes Park continues to recognize how marketing has become a science as we use data-driven research to guide our marketing strategies. The new tagline for just about any global industry is that data is the new oil. As the tourism industry learns to organize and manage the data, we get closer to marketing to prospective visitors via one-on-one conversations with potential travelers, customized to their interests and hobbies.

This torrent of change continues to engulf the travel industry. Travel companies have traditionally helped consumers go on a journey. Now, the industry is mining the customer's journey to do a better job. In the past, a hotel would know when a guest has booked and could track some behaviors while they are on site, but understood much less about that consumer's overall trip — where they were traveling to next and how they would be getting there. That is changing with the wide adoption of mobile and the willingness of consumers to interact with travel brands in a growing number of ways.

The speed with which solutions providers are rushing to tap into the increasing amount of available consumer data, and evolving technology means that in the coming year, marketers will approach an all-encompassing view into customer behavior and preferences.*

**Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

This data-rich era may not last long as sophisticated privacy and ad-blocking software continues to evolve. These new tools present consumers with dynamic ways to easily opt out of such digital tracking and ad serving. It will be up to the creative brand marketer to find ways to be relevant and prevent consumers from wanting to block their content.

Culinary

There is one sub-sector of the tourism industry that continues to trump everything – food. Whether a wellness destination, theme park, ski resort, mountain destination or visiting family, food remains king when planning a vacation and enjoying it once arrived at the destination. If you do not have a quality food scene, it can erode your brand, as guests critique your destination based on the food scene and will quickly move on to other destinations who are positioning themselves at the forefront of what is trending in the culinary world for both beverage and food.

Perhaps that's why culinary travel experiences are now the most popular method for driving tourism business. Food has an unmatched ability to communicate a unique sense of place. Local cuisine provides a direct connection to the history of a region, the soul of its people and the rhythm of daily life. Travelers today are hungry to explore behind the scenes of any given destination, and they're using culturally specific food to discover and understand the world like never before.*

**Greg Oates, Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

Women Travelers

Nearly two-thirds of travelers today are women, reports the George Washington University School of Business. Women also comprise 54 percent of coveted affluent travelers with annual incomes of \$250,000 or more, up from 42 percent in 2010, according to the travel and hospitality marketing firm MMGY Global. More than 11 percent of adult leisure travelers are women on their own, the US Travel Association says. There are 28 million single women 35 and older in America, the Census Bureau says. Women also live longer, and therefore, outnumber men at the other end of the age spectrum: in retirement, when many people travel. An estimated 32 million single women traveled at least once in the last year, about a third of them five times or more, according to the Travel Industry Association.

Millennial women have given even greater momentum to this trend. Industries are adjusting. Hotels in Europe and a few in the United States have set aside female-only floors with special amenities and all-female staffs. The

InterContinental Hotels Group's Hotel Indigo brand was launched with larger bathrooms, more colorful design, and other women-focused changes.

Boston Globe, By Jon Marcus Globe Correspondent, August 11, 2016

Brands who pay attention and cater to this growing trend will realize the benefit of this lucrative market. Women are more independent and adventurous than ever before and one of the results is increased travel.

Video

Video has been identified by Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg as a mega-trend and his social media channel, among other digital platforms, remains committed to optimizing for the delivery of the medium. Visit Estes Park continues to invest in video both in-house and through agency partners, to aid in creating an emotional connection with travelers, a necessary component to staying relevant in the highly competitive tourism industry. Also, as many consumers cut their TV cords and move to online entertainment, having a steady stream of video across all channels is increasingly important.

Smart brands have learned that a customer's feelings, in many ways, determine what they buy. Instead of selling hotel rooms and airplane seats as commodities, brands are learning to tell stories using video that create an emotional connection with a specific audience.*

**Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

Google estimates that at any given time 106 million of YouTube's monthly unique visitors are travelers. Among travelers who watched travel-related videos, 64% watched when thinking about taking a trip. And 37% watched when deciding which web site to book on.*

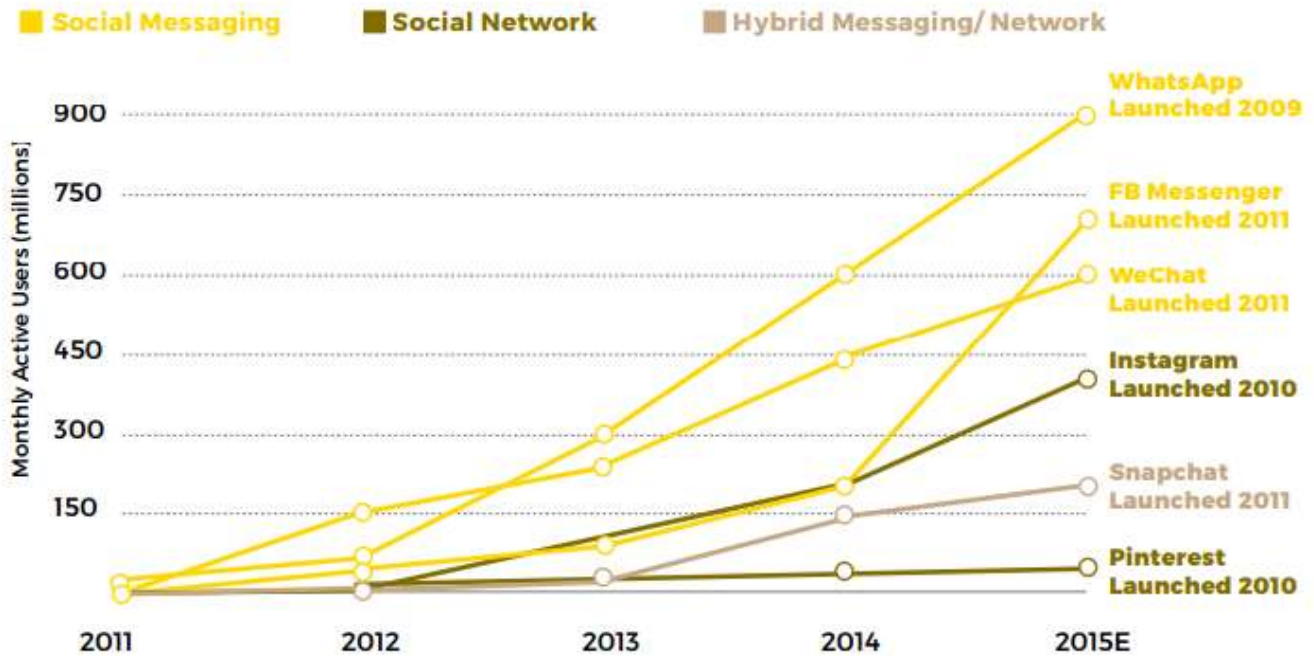
**Travel Trends – Google Think*

Messaging Apps

Initially messaging apps were a way to avoid cell fees and also allow for easy group messaging across various devices. With SnapChat, the popularity grew as many people wanted to capture moments in time, but not with any permanency. FireChat is a new app that doesn't need Wi-Fi, and allows you to communicate with anyone within 100 feet of you. It's popular at trade shows and sports venues, but has also been proven valuable during natural disasters when Wi-Fi is down. Many have heard of the Tinder app, another example of messaging apps serving specific groups. As consumers grow more comfortable with messaging apps and they find the niche that best suits them (Americans are late to the party compared to Europeans), the travel industry is finding innovative ways to keep up with this rapidly growing communication segment.

Messaging has been the fastest-growing online behavior within the social landscape over the past five years, surpassing social networks

Growth of Messaging Platforms vs. Network Platforms, Monthly Active Users (MAUs), 2011 - 2015E*



Sources: Business Insider, Fortune, Mashable, Instagram, AppAnnie, Adweek, Quartz, Yahoo Finance, Experian, TechCrunch, Forbes, Tech in Asia, eMarketer, Compete, Activate analysis

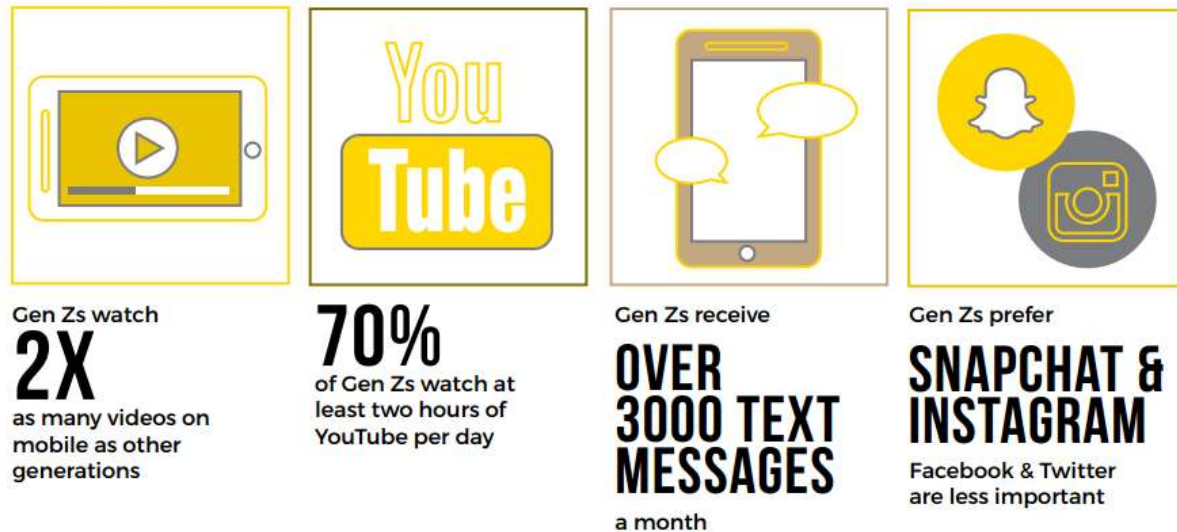
Messaging apps are a place for connection where the one-size-fits-all booking search box is not. Messaging is how you break out of the tyranny of the online travel search box. These communities feel more intimate than tweeting at a brand or commenting on an Instagram photo. Messaging groups are focused and committed to their topics, and that is the mindset global travelers yearn. Industry figures point to social messaging as the fastest-growing online behavior within social media during the past five years and WhatsApp, WeChat and Facebook Messenger all individually have more monthly active users globally than Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest put together. Social messaging will account for 2.5 billion global users by 2018, more than the 2 billion general social media users. Travelers will increasingly turn to messaging for a one-stop shopping experience where they can book anything and communicate everything that doesn't remove them from mobile apps that have increasingly become their primary digital interface with the world.

**Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT*

Generation Z: Age 6 – 20 years

We are moving on millennials! With Gen Z already one-sixth of the world's population, and in five years they'll make up 40 percent of the U.S. population, industries are gearing up and learning how Gen Z will operate differently than the Millennials. A few differences include: They'll be more conservative with their money (due to crash of 2008). Eight seconds is all that Gen Z will use to process information and then will move on to the next thing that catches their eye. You guessed it; images will replace words more than ever. They process information much faster, but do not retain that data.*

* Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT



Data source: Upfront Analytics, November 2015

* Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT

Visit Estes Park will continue to mine data on Gen Zers and curate content accordingly. What we are learning so far is that although Millennials travel for the experience, it is often trumped by checking the bucket list and showing off photos on social media. Gen Z travels for a deeper purpose so the challenge will be for us to speak to them in their language in a meaningful and memorable way.

All that said, in spite of the emerging generations capturing our collective consumer attention, the Boomers and Xers still make up the vast majority of travel totaling 64% of trips in 2014 according to the USTA. With retirement at hand or on the horizon, empty-nesters are seeking out engaging and active, yet relaxing travel. And they are passing along the travel bug – the USTA reports that 35% of grandparents traveled with grandchildren in the prior year.

Year of the American Traveler

Last year we discussed the increase in global travel, but with unstable economies, fluctuating currency, and terrorism, 2017 will be the year of the American Traveler.

The U.S. dollar is stronger now that it's been in recent memory, and unemployment levels are back to pre-Bush levels. The dollar is now at a 10-year high against the euro. It's even improved its position against the British pound since the latter's low in 2009, but better than the preceding 10 years when the rate was as poor as \$2 to £1. But Americans don't have to go abroad to get a deal. Domestically, oil prices are so low — already down 25 percent year over year — you can get two road trips for the price of one.

Skift-Magazine-2016-Megatrends-DT

State of the American Traveler*

The following are excerpts from the 2016 editions of the *State of the American Traveler* study conducted by Destination Analysts, a San Francisco-based research firm. Developed specifically for the needs of destination marketing organizations, the bi-annual study reviews the travel intentions, interests, visitor behavior, technology, and media usage of American travelers. The findings are based on a nationally representative sample of American leisure travelers.

Market of Opportunity Continues

The *State of the American Traveler*, now one decade old, continues to report a more positive travel outlook. Americans are feeling confident about their travel prospects in 2016. The average traveler said they could spend \$3,445 this year, an increase of 7% compared to last year. One traditional barrier to increased travel – gas prices – is a “non-issue,” according to the study. The share of Americans cutting back on leisure trips due to gas prices fell to 16.9%, a new record low.

While consumer perceptions of airfares being too high have risen to 22.8% from 19.6% a year ago, due in part to industry consolidation, these perceptions remain low when viewed from a long-term perspective. Tourism continues to be a market of opportunity.

Mountain Destinations and National Parks

Approximately one-third of American travelers expect to visit one of the U.S. national parks this year. Enthusiasm for national parks and mountains as destinations ranked below beach resorts and metropolitan cities but ahead of theme and amusement parks like Disneyland, according to the report. In terms of destination appeal, the only national park considered by the survey, Grand Canyon, ranked number two, below Hawaii but ahead of New York City.

Destination Selection: Word of Mouth Makes the Difference

More than half of travelers ranked the opinions of friends and relatives as “important” or “very important” to their reason for destination selection. Face-to-face conversations are still by far the primary mode of word-of-mouth communications at 90.4%. But social media is also important in this regard, with 35.6% of respondents citing social media as the way in which they communicated about destination selection with friends and relatives.

Hyper-Informed Travelers Get More Hyper

Reaching travelers via the right device and media is becoming even more complex. Almost every media and content type that travelers are accessing provides more information from more places, for both digital and traditional media. Social media and user-generated content both surged as sources of information to 49.8% and 59.4% respectively of U.S. travelers; however, print usage also topped 50.3%, about the same as last year. Every marketing plan needs to support a complex and ever-growing range of media types and channels, making engaging content and smart analytics even more important.

Mobile-Centric Content and the In-Market Challenge

Mobile usage also reached 49.4% of U.S. leisure travelers now accessing a smartphone in travel planning, with 15.6% using a travel-related app on a tablet or mobile device.

Travel Intentions Increasing Significantly

The report indicates that 34.2% of leisure travelers plan to increase the number of trips taken, up from 31.1% in 2015. In addition, 34.4% of travelers expect to spend more, up from 32.1% a year ago. While demand is forecast to be strong across all regions of the country, destinations types, and income brackets, expectations are highest for younger, urban Americans. The study indicates that 57.1% of Millennials and 42.6% of big city residents are planning to travel more in 2016.

Masses of Media

Media use in travel planning remains highly complex and multi-channeled, with mobile devices continuing to rise as a source of travel information (both before and after travel) and a similar percentage of travelers (50.3%) still using print as a source of information (about the same as last year). This intersection of mobile and print use is likely to be an important staging post in the use of print in travel planning. To complement digital channels, augmented reality software, virtual reality (VR) headsets, and real-time video feeds will drive users to destination content. This sparks traveler interest even more to the dreaming and inspiration stage of travel planning. 46.6% of travelers would be interested in using a VR headset and 45.7% would be interested in using real-time video to plan travel, provided that compelling content is available.

Peer-to-peer lodging technologies such as Airbnb have risen to prominence in the last several years. However, despite rapid growth, these technologies are not yet widely used by American travelers. Only 13.9% of travelers used peer-to-peer lodging technologies in the past year.

Content is Still King

Investment in deep, rich, and relevant information about a destination is highlighted as central to the decision of travelers to visit a destination. Relevant content on activities and food are the most influential drivers. This shows that powerful and inspirational imagery and editorial content should be complemented with practical planning tools.

DMO websites remain an important source of information for travelers. 36.4% of travelers used an official DMO website when planning trips. DMO content performs well as a contributor to a travel planner's toolkit, with trust and usage rates that are about the same as friends via social media. Use of the DMO site occurred at all stages of the travel process: before booking a trip, after booking, and in-market.

Google-curated content is growing in online search results. Travelers value and trust this source of information when planning trips. However, DMOs have a trust advantage over Google-curated content. When asked which source was more trustworthy, official DMO or Google-curated content, 39.5% trusted DMO content more while only 11.5% trusted Google more.

Print Remains Strong

There is clearly no evidence of a long-term decline in print or DMO guide usage. The *State of the American Traveler*, which is independent research, has consistently shown strength and even slow growth in print usage over the last five years.

Takeaway: Print is not dead—or even showing signs of decline in travel planning use—but its purpose, content, distribution and how it integrates with digital platforms, especially mobile, is rapidly changing. Print needs to evolve to remain relevant. As noted, the percentage of travelers currently using print is 50.3%, about the same as last year.

Despite the high rate of Millennials using smartphones in trip planning compared to Baby Boomers, Millennials are just as likely to use print overall, almost as likely as Baby Boomers and Gen Xers. Millennials are more likely to visit a DMO website.

Baby boomer: 51 – 70 yrs.

Gen X: 35 – 50 yrs.

Gen Y/Millennial: 18 – 34 yrs.

Millennials number 75.4 million and represent more than one quarter of the nation’s population. Their size exceeds that of the 74.9 million baby boomers according to the U.S. Census.*

Destination Analysts’ Traveler Psychographic Intensity™ shows that members of the Millennial Generation are active, highly connected travelers (mobile-centric) with a desire for urban culture and culinary experiences. Cultural experiences are characteristics that describe Millennial travelers. Takeaway: Destinations seeking younger travelers need to take a closer look at their specific product offering and tailor their content, marketing and media accordingly.

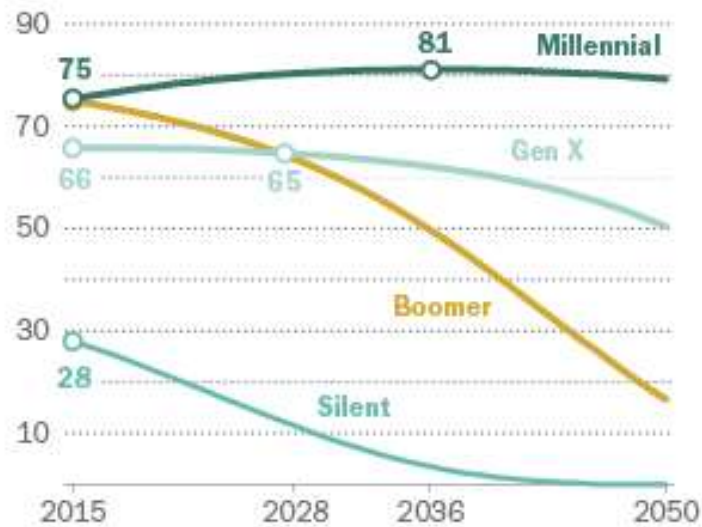
**Sources: Miles Media and The State of the American Traveler*

Baby Boomers are more interested in less active, rural experiences that yield a sense of exploration.

GenX sits at the halfway point between the two generations, with one key unique differentiator – slightly higher levels of price sensitivity.

Projected population by generation

In millions



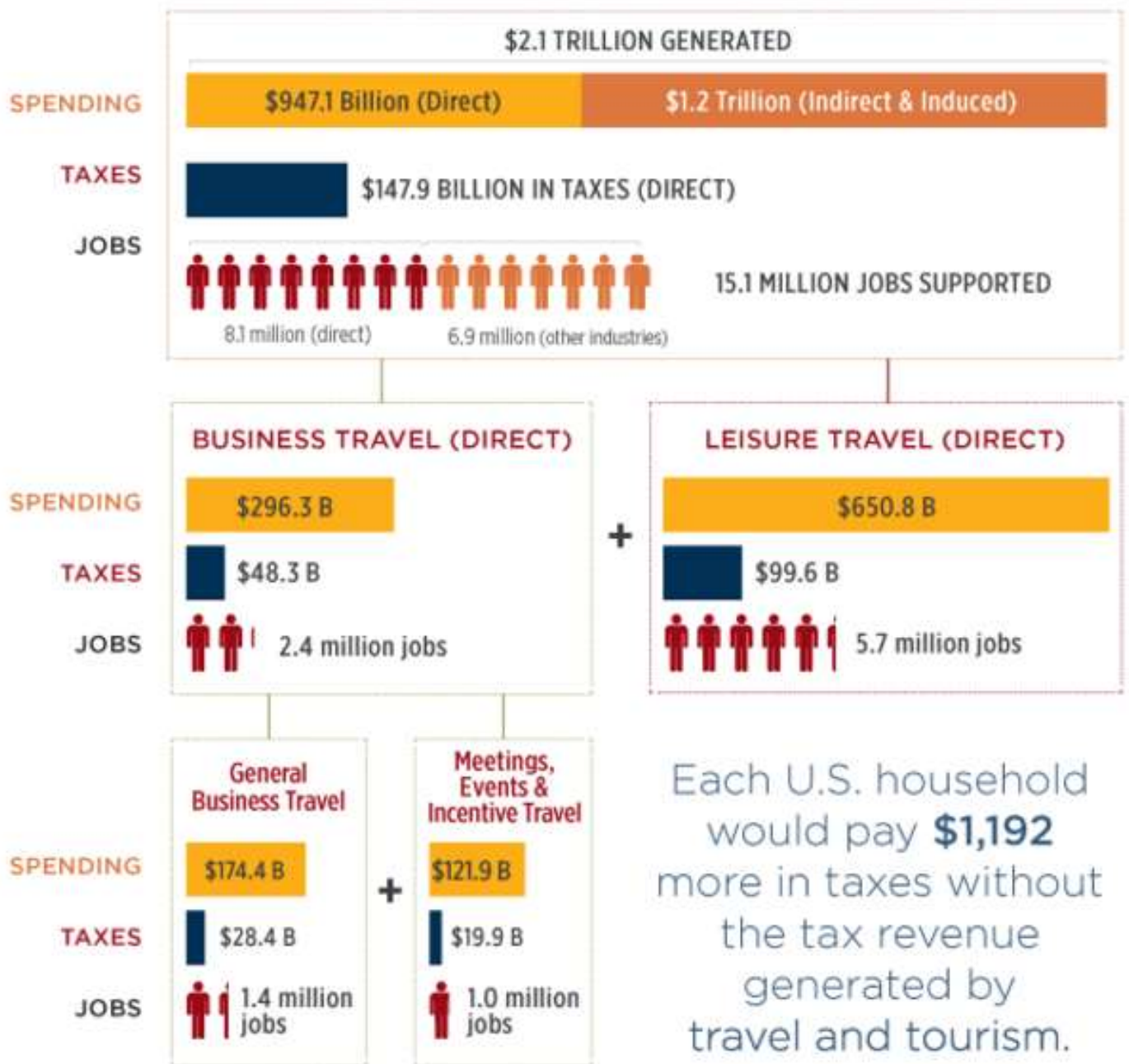
Note: Millennials refers to the population ages 18 to 34 as of 2015.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of U.S. Census Bureau population projections released December 2014 and 2015 population estimates

PEW RESEARCH CENTER


The Power of Travel & Tourism Promotion

U.S. TRAVEL INDUSTRY IMPACT



Source: U.S. Travel Association

Note: Direct spending totals do not include international passenger fares

 = 1 million jobs

While advertising and promotion spending may be seen as easy targets in a time of tight budgets, experience shows that failing to invest in promotion reduces a destination's competitiveness in the travel marketplace. States and cities that neglect their promotion budgets weaken their destination brands and lose market share, and end up receiving lower tax revenues.

Unlike jobs in industries such as manufacturing and information technology, travel jobs cannot be shipped overseas.

The travel industry continues to outpace the rest of the U.S. economy when it comes to adding jobs.

Travel represents an important and growing source of revenue for cash-strapped state and local governments.

In addition to helping states and localities build a strong tax base, a vibrant travel and tourism industry improves the quality of life for local residents and makes a community more attractive to potential employees and businesses. Developing a region's travel-related assets, therefore, serves the dual purpose of attracting both. More guests and new business is a win-win proposition for a local economy.

We do not need to look beyond the stark reality of Colorado's experiment in 1993, when the tourism budget of \$12 million was slashed to zero (dropped the state from 1 to 17 in national ranking for summer visitation, and lost over \$2 billion in tourism revenue). It has taken over 20 years for Colorado to recover from the lack of tourism funding in 1993.

The Bottom Line: Legislators and policymakers often face a hard task in balancing the desire for fiscal responsibility with the need to make strategic investments that produce long-term benefits for states and communities. When it comes to investing in travel promotion efforts, however, the decision should not be difficult. Wise investments in travel promotion programs feed a virtuous cycle of economic benefits, growing the number of travelers boosts spending at community businesses, which supports more jobs and increases tax revenue.

Study after study points to a consistent outcome in relation to the tourism industry. Travel is a vital contributor toward local communities. Travel spending not only sustains local jobs and businesses; it represents a critical source of tax revenue for funding local services such as fire and police protection and education. Additionally, it creates an appealing environment to recruit businesses of all types.

**U.S. Travel Association – The Power of Travel Promotion 2013*

- In 2015, Travel & Tourism in total contributed \$7.2 trillion to world GDP, representing 9.8% of global GDP.
- The sector supported 284 million jobs, or 1 in 11 jobs in the world.
- Travel & Tourism grew by 3.1% in 2015 - the 6th consecutive year of growth for the sector.
- The sector's contribution to GDP is forecast to grow by 3.3% in 2016.
- Travel & Tourism will outperform the global economy throughout the next decade, growing by an expected 4% on average annually over the next ten years.

**World Travel & Tourism Council, Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2016 Annual Update Summary*

While the U.S. trade deficit in 2014 was \$505 billion, the travel and tourism industry boasted a trade surplus of \$75.6 billion that year. Without this trade surplus, America's 2014 trade deficit (-\$505 billion) would have been 15 percent larger. *

**U.S. Travel Association*

Colorado welcomed 36.0 million visitors on overnight trips in 2015, 7% more than in 2014. This included record numbers of people coming on marketable leisure trips (17.1 million or 6% more than in 2014), and on trips to visit friends and relatives (which rose 10% to 14.5 million trips).

Compared to 2014, Colorado attracted more visitors for touring, outdoor, and special events.

As marketable leisure travel to Colorado rose at a much greater rate than this type of travel nationwide, Colorado's overall share of marketable trips grew from 2.7% to 2.8%.

Colorado's overnight visitors spent a record total of \$14.1 billion in 2015, up 13% from the previous year.

People on marketable leisure trips spent \$7.7 billion, 16% more than in 2014, and people visiting friends and relatives increased their spending by 10% to \$4.4 billion.

Expenditures on lodging, restaurant food/beverage, and transportation increased the most, gaining 18%, 15% and 11% respectively. Visitors' spending on recreation, sightseeing and attractions grew 8%, and retail purchases edged up by 6%.

**Colorado Tourism Office, 2015 Longwoods Study*

Destination Product Development

A destination cannot promote products and experiences it doesn't have. Destination product development (DPD) is a continuous process of coordination and development of amenities, facilities, products and services that supports a community, delivers quality experiences for visitors and enhances residents' well-being. Managing destination development is fundamental to successful implementation of tourism management, where destination managers and stakeholders put into action the priority strategies and plans developed during the destination planning process. *

*Sustainable Tourism Online, <http://www.sustainabletourisonline.com/destinations-and-communities/implementation/destination-development>

Destination product development is the primary reason why many destination marketing organizations have evolved to destination management organizations around the globe and Destination Marketing Association International leads the path with DestinationNEXT. Tourism grows increasingly competitive within this rapidly evolving industry. As our world becomes smaller, destinations now compete directly with each other across the globe. As destinations take on additional responsibility toward a sustainable business plan, their roles have evolved to destination developers, primarily by acting as a catalyst and facilitator to create tourism opportunities and developments.

**Skift, December 22, 2014*

Although marketing will continue as the principal focus for Visit Estes Park, the shift towards a management role becomes a necessary evolution for destinations seeking to remain relevant. You can only market the same assets for so long before it is necessary to refresh your product within the destination, even with Rocky Mountain National Park in your backyard. Niagara Falls, NY, a natural wonder of the world and once known at the #1 honeymoon destination globally, is a perfect example of what happens when a destination rests on its laurels. Tourism in Niagara Falls, NY has failed due to lack of product development, and the population has plummeted from 102,000 to 50,000, along with tourism visitation. If the population falls below 50,000, it will lose its classification as a city, and will lose federal financial support as a result. Niagara Falls, Canada, however, has invested in product development and has flourished over the years. One destination, literally separated by the ¼-mile-long Rainbow Bridge, had two very different business plans. The conclusion couldn't be more clear: investment in tourism infrastructure is a necessity.

In 1993, Colorado eliminated its tourism marketing budget of \$12 million and cost itself \$2 billion in the process, according to Longwoods Research. People thought that Colorado was so well naturally endowed that it did not need to promote. But it took 21 years for Colorado to recover its market share since that disastrous experiment in 1993, according to Kathy Ritter, President of the Colorado Tourism Office. "When you cut travel promotion, the engine stalls," said Ritter at the 2016 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference.

Marin County, California, eliminated tourism marketing from the budget because it was reasoned that there were too many tourists taking all the best parking spots in front of the coffee shops and other places in town. A year later, after tourism funding was cut, the coffee shops and other attractions in town were out of business. There was no longer a reason for local residents to use those same parking spots because the businesses were gone, according to Radcliffe Company's presentation at the 2016 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference.

San Diego lost its tourism marketing funding in 2013. As a result, San Diego experienced a steep economic decline relative to competitors, which reversed once funding was restored, according to Tourism Economics.

We have witnessed the most dramatic effects of tourism infrastructure expansion as other Colorado mountain communities grow their seasons to attract year-round visitors. Primarily, the ski resorts have ignited their fall, spring, and summer season by developing national forest land and investing in high-adventure activities that cater to multi-generational families. Estes Park must begin to analyze our current assets and evaluate what can be expanded, what needs to be replaced, and what development opportunities are available that could attract private investors and developers.

Destination product development also allows us to evaluate our current natural assets and find new, innovative ways to maximize their impact. Our efforts in partnership with the Recreation District proved fruitful in 2015 with the addition of paddle boards as part of the amenities available for guests at Lake Estes. Continuing such relations with Larimer County and the national forest will afford us opportunities that Rocky Mountain National Park cannot and will also allow for much-needed relief to the park during peak visitation.

The visitor economy is a catalyst for broader economic development, according to Tourism Economics' presentation at the 2016 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference. Specifically, transportation networks, brand identity & familiarity (raising the destination profile), events, and quality of life are pillars of the visitor economy. When businesses are looking to invest and create jobs, they look at these exact same assets that are central to the visitor economy. The reasons that people look to visit are the reasons that CEOs look to invest from a business perspective, according to Tourism Economics.

Visit Estes Park's involvement in the arts scene also represents our focus in finding opportunities to highlight our community's creative assets in such a way that allows Visit Estes Park to market the experience for maximum guest appeal. We will continue to champion "Only in Estes" products that includes craft beverages, wood carving, pottery, paint, glass blowing, leather goods, jewelry, photography, soaps, lotions and sculpture.

To expand on the local involvement, VEP is reaching out to residents who are brand ambassadors as part of an "I am Estes" program that we will launch as part of the 2017 Official Visitor Guide and support with blog and video content.

Visit Estes Park will stay involved with other opportunities like the Community Center, which will provide additional product and services for both guests and residents to enjoy year-round.

In partnership with the Town of Estes Park, we hope to coordinate opportunities we can partner on that may include river surfing, climbing boulders, splash pads, climbing walls, and interactive sculptures or games throughout town.

Visit Estes Park is not just the marketing arm of the community, providing for a quality and memorable experience for guests. We also work with community partners to cultivate a quality of life for our residents that will strive to strike a balance between sustainability and calculated, profitable growth.

Visitors are now storytellers who turn experiences into stories, primarily through social media. They share not only their story, but their reviews and recommendations as well. In the past, the DMO was the primary storyteller, and thus controlled each chapter of the brand. Because the DMO is no longer the most important storyteller anymore, managing the destination experience is more important than ever. The only way to control the stories that are told is to manage the experience. The only way to manage the experience is to get involved in destination management, which includes destination product development.

Visit Estes Park plans to continue our destination management conversations and serve as a catalyst to inspire and influence better trail connectivity, new activities with the Estes Valley Recreation and Park District and create a relationship with the National Forest Service to utilize the available terrain in a responsible way.

Rocky Mountain National Park

The Visit Estes Park staff and board maintain close relationships with national park staff, including their communications team, to ensure alignment between our marketing efforts and the park's needs and objectives, including resource protection and conservation. We include park efforts such as 'hike early/hike late', weekdays in the fall, emphasizing winter and spring travel, "help your friends behave better" and being responsible and good stewards of the land. It is important to note our partnership with the national park and the responsibility we have in marketing the "two parks in one" experience that is virtually seamless for our guests.

Visit Estes Park works closely with our partner Rocky Mountain National Park to provide accurate and timely information on park activities, programs and events. Our programs constitute a large amount of advertising and publicity highlighting activities and programs in Rocky Mountain National Park in addition to Estes Park.

Through August 31, 2016, Rocky Mountain National Park recreational visitation has increased 7.8% year-to-date compared to the same eight-month period in 2015. In 2015, Rocky Mountain National Park became the third-most visited national park in the country, after the Great Smoky Mountains and Grand Canyon, and ahead of Yellowstone and Yosemite. If this trend continues, we will focus on innovative strategies beyond our current programs, in partnership with Rocky Mountain National Park, to balance visitation with resource protection.

As the National Park Service celebrates its centennial, the agency is turning its focus to making sure both visitors and staff are more diverse. The National Park Service had record high attendance last year — 307 million visitors — but fewer than 20 percent of those attendees were minorities. This is a stark contrast from the country's actual makeup. According to Census data, minorities comprise nearly 40 percent of the nation.

Led by Sen. Michael Bennett of Colorado, the group sent President Barack Obama a joint letter last month asking him to issue a presidential memorandum to direct the "federal land management agencies to broaden the diversity in the sites protected, stories told, communities engaged." In a statement to NBC News, Bennett said, "This effort will help increase the cultural and geographic diversity of protected sites and improve opportunity and access for visitors from all backgrounds and communities. It will also help us diversify the workforce that manages our public lands."

**NBC.com, AUG 7 2016, 12:03 PM ET AUG 7 2016, 12:03 PM ET,
Among Both Visitors and Staff, National Park Service Looks to Grow Diversity*

Partnership with the Town of Estes Park

Visit Estes Park will continue to work collaboratively with applicable areas of the Town's Community Services Division, including the Visitor Center staff, Ambassadors, and Events staff, all funded and managed by the Town of Estes Park. We look forward to partnering with the Town as the downtown strategic plan, wayfinding signage, parking solutions, flood mitigation, new and redesigned events, and destination product development come into focus as part of the blueprint for the Estes Valley.

Regional Tourism

Visit Estes Park will continue to collaborate on and participate in regional tourism that complements our current branding direction and enhances our ongoing marketing plan.

Northern Colorado Regional Partnership (formerly the Front Range Travel Region) – The exposure that we receive through the NoCo cooperative allows Estes Park to be regionally positioned and reminds guests of the incredible variety of experiences they can have within the six participating destinations. We will continue our collaboration with marketing multi-day Northern Colorado trip itineraries, craft brewery tours, history, and scenic byways.

Grand Lake – Collaboration with Geocache program, and scenic regional byways promotion.

Colorado National Park Destinations - Working together to promote the Colorado national park experience and encompassing itineraries.

State Tourism*

According to the Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade, outdoor recreation and tourism are woven through the fabric of Colorado's culture and define the state. Domestic and international visitors are invited to "Come to Life" in Colorado. And while experiencing the outdoors is a large part of the lifestyle in Colorado, it is also a significant economic driver. Colorado's tradition and passion for outdoor access is due in large part to unparalleled natural resources, as well as a long history of environmental conservation and stewardship.

The most visible outdoor recreation activities for the state are skiing and snowboarding. Colorado continues as #1 in the nation for overnight ski visits. In addition to winter recreation offerings, the state offers numerous opportunities for hiking, backpacking, camping, visiting state and national parks, biking, rafting, boating, mountain climbing and hunting.

Colorado is building health and wellness into the state brand and aims to be the healthiest state in the nation. The state is collaborating with the public and private sectors, as well as nonprofit foundations. With more than 253,000 health and wellness workers across the state and an \$11.3 billion annual payroll, the health and wellness industry has a compelling economic impact within Colorado.

**Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade*

We will continue discussions with the State of Colorado, Colorado Tourism Office and Colorado national parks and destinations to consider a state-wide campaign, similar to Utah, celebrating the national parks of Colorado. Rocky Mountain National Park, Mesa Verde, Great Sand Dunes and Black Canyon of the Gunnison, are home to some of the world's most breath-taking and diverse scenery.

International Tourism

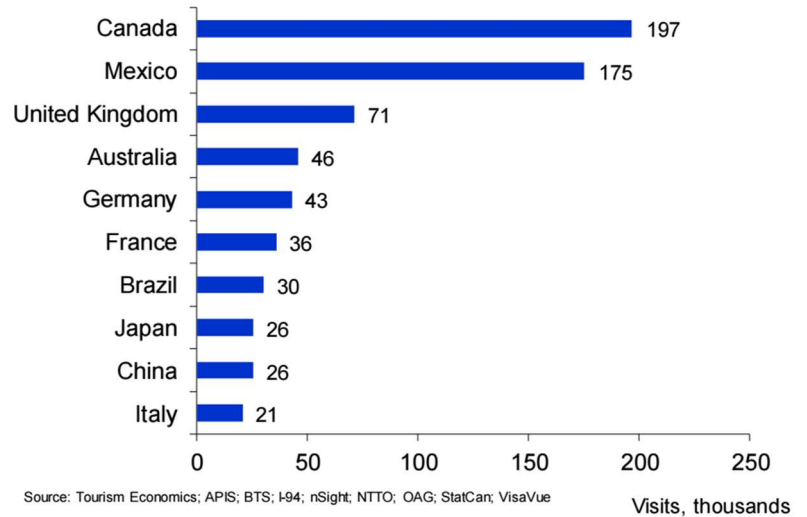
International travelers continue to pose a formidable opportunity for Estes Park to fill in otherwise unused capacity in shoulder and winter seasons with guests who spend more than domestic travelers. According to a recent study commissioned by the Colorado Tourism Office, international visits to the state have increased 28% in the five years from 2010 to 2015. Annually (2014 to 2015), international visits to Colorado grew by 4.5% compared to 0.1% for the country. Overseas visits to Colorado grew by 11.1% when such visits only grew by 4.3% for the US (2016, Tourism Economics).

Denver International Airport continues to add new direct flights for international and overseas markets. Iceland continues to be the main connection hub, however new nonstop flights to Munich (Germany), Monterrey (MX), Belize City, and Montreal in 2016 demonstrate the growing demand for travel to the state. Direct and easy flight connections are critical for our state to have appeal to overseas travelers.

With all of the good news, it is important to note that the outcomes of upcoming elections could play a major role in the productivity of travel to the US. Economic outcomes, Brand USA investment and the attractiveness of travel the US are all key forces that could be affected by politics, both at home and abroad.

The positive statistics, however, show the incredible potential for Estes Park to continue to develop product for and grow awareness with international travelers. VEP has increased our investment each year in this area, attending two international trade shows in 2016 where we personally met with over 70 representatives and we received contact information for 580+ people from almost 50 different countries. Additionally, in collaboration with the Colorado Tourism Office and Brand USA, VEP hosted 60 trade and press representatives from nine countries, and is currently planning upcoming visits from India, Canada, China, Japan, and France.

Top markets for Colorado, 2015



We also continue to provide information and education for local industry partners to learn about why and how to engage with international travel. We hosted the CTO International Team in Estes Park in January to present on the value international travelers can bring to local businesses, as well answer questions about how best to engage in the efforts of VEP and CTO.

VEP continues to participate in the CTO’s International Promotion Committee as the CTO is taking a strong look at past efforts and clarifying strategies for future investments. Currently, this appears to mean a deeper investment in fewer regions, focusing more on established markets, such as Europe, Japan and Canada, while keeping limited, preliminary efforts in place for emerging markets like China.

In 2017, VEP will continue efforts to grow product through local, regional and international relationships. We will work toward a better understanding of the international traveler in Estes Park through surveys at the visitor center and via email. We will increase awareness through international marketing and public relations. All these efforts will help VEP and our local industry partners better target and take advantage of the shoulder- and winter-season international travelers, engaging otherwise unused capacity in our destination.

Wellness Tourism

We have been partnering with the Estes Park Medical Center, Grand Heritage Hotel Group, University of Colorado and local businesses to further promote and cultivate the wellness tourism industry in Estes Park. As Colorado weaves wellness into the state branding, we will also continue to do the same based on the experience we can deliver in Estes Park.

This year we have worked with EPMC to provide photography, information, and maps for the wellness publication, *Be Well, Live Well Estes Park*, and for their Trails Rx program. Currently, we are exploring further collaboration on the trails guide, looking for ways to align wellness promotion across organizations for consistent messaging, branding, and information.

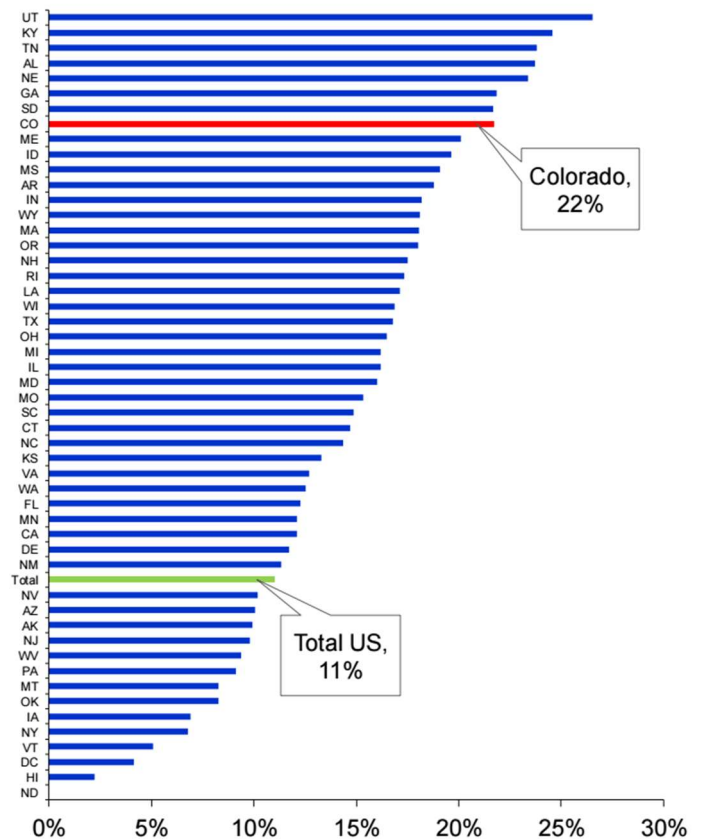
These efforts were also strengthened through our partnership with the emerging Estes Park Sports & Fitness Association. VEP is represented on the steering committee and continues to help the group of local leaders in planning for a more formal organization to represent these interests in the Estes Valley. This includes planning for the 2016 Estes Park Sports & Fitness Expo, an event designed to highlight the active opportunities and organizations available throughout the Estes Valley for both locals and guests of all ages.

Additionally, VEP worked with EPMC and others to host the Wellness Summit as the lead-in to the VEP annual Tourism Summit. This effort enabled local tourism partners to learn and share more about integrating wellness into their existing products, expanding on active guest pursuits and making healthy lifestyle options more prevalent in their businesses and guest experiences.

Moving forward, we will continue to explore additional ways to brand Estes Park as a sanctuary that can be defined by each guest’s interest and level of adventure. This angle could include everything from the awe-inspiring wildlife that is already part of our established brand; high-altitude training; arts; spas that cater to wellness in the form of massage, acupuncture, or essential oils; a respite for active and retired military personnel and families; and finally adventures at every level from rock climbing to hiking in your car. This approach allows each guest to determine their own meaning of “sanctuary.” Visit Estes Park’s role will be to help define the facets within the wellness brand to

Growth in international arrivals from FIA data, 2015

Percent change



Source: Tourism Economics; NTTO

support our local businesses in creating profitable wellness business plans and to market such products to this growing travel sector.

We will continue to cultivate year-round business interests within the wellness industry through collaboration with various local and regional partnerships. We will maintain active endeavors as a key part of the Estes Park brand experience and destination product offerings in our informational and promotional programs.

2017 Marketing Plan

Marketing Plan Overview

An effective marketing campaign must be diverse, strategic and integrated across owned, paid and earned media. Visit Estes Park accomplishes this by providing the connective tissue between our content creation (internal & contracted), advertising creative (internal & creative firm), media management (internal and media agency) and public relations (internal and PR firm) teams. We accomplish this through strategic planning, hands-on program and partner management, and constant communication. While complex, the continued emphasis on breaking down silos between these partners and programs enables the Estes Park marketing program to thrive in an ever-changing communications world.

The new Century of Adventure 2015 ad creative continued in 2016 and shifted from emphasizing the Rocky Mountain National Park Centennial to the National Park Service Centennial. In the campaign, we kept outdoor and nature experiences at the center to create emotional connections with potential travelers.

2016 Marketing objectives include:

- Reinforce the awareness that Estes Park is the premiere Rocky Mountain destination.
- Build awareness of the NPS 100th Anniversary programs and celebrations.
- Encourage overnight stays in Estes Park by highlighting all amenities, activities, and events.
- Reinforce the emotional connection with guests.
- Drive awareness, attendance and lodging for key events.
- Position Estes Park as a unique mountain village getaway by emphasizing our unique wildlife viewing, RMNP, and adventure opportunities.
- Convey the diversity of outdoor adventure.
- Increase awareness of Estes Park as a year-round and winter destination.
- Highlight affordability and accessibility during the winter season, including lack of traffic jams, and peaceful, serene village & landscapes.

In 2016, we continued to refine our marketing strategies with the goals of growing awareness of Estes Park, inspiring travel to Estes Park and engaging with guests while in Estes Park. To reach these goals, we have employed tactics from the international to the local levels, created targeted messaging, refined our target audiences and further integrated our programs in paid, earned and owned media.

In paid media, or advertising, we have continued to evolve the campaign to grow awareness and increase conversions. The creative has done this through new, inspiring photography for all seasons and by creating new ad sets for digital with video and HTML5. In the media plan, we have expanded our media mix to include video ads and out-of-home, while going deeper with current, well-targeted print partners.

Earned media, or public relations, has been a major focus of Visit Estes Park since the beginning. From award-winning crisis communications to pro-active, goal-focused media relations, Visit Estes Park continues to increase our investment in earned media to include influencer programs, additional international press relations, additional story pitching and an increased emphasis on quality, targeted stories over smaller stories with larger reach.

Owned media, which includes content marketing through our website, social media, email and collateral, enables Visit Estes Park to directly manage the stories we tell, enabling us to get deeper into niche markets, drive the consumer down the purchase funnel and influence conversions. They also give us the opportunity to directly connect with the guests at all stages of the travel purchase cycle, extending the brand experience and guest conversation before, during and after a guest's visit. To this end, we continue to expand on in-market engagement.

Visit Estes Park has formed a team of marketing experts to extend our internal resources in the areas of advertising, media strategy & buying, public relations, website solutions and social media management, among others. Cultivator Advertising and Design, Backbone Media, Turner PR, Simpleview, Destination Travel Network, JackRabbit BookDirect and Crowdriff have come together to create an extended marketing team to support Visit Estes Park's ongoing efforts.

Through all of these efforts, in 2016 we have been able to maintain a solid mix of national and regional marketing to reach our target audiences with the right message at the right time. We have also continued the practice of large, inspiring creative in both print and digital. As we look to 2017, we will expand on the programs and tactics that are performing well, and engage new tactics that help us inspire targeted travelers to become guests in Estes Park.

Paid Media: Advertising

Advertising Objectives

Advertising Ongoing Focus

In 2016, Visit Estes Park worked with Cultivator Advertising to build new ads as part of the Century of Adventure campaign and with Backbone Media to develop and employ a targeted, efficient media strategy. By pairing the enhanced creative, with targeted, nimble media placement, we are able to reach audiences at all levels of the purchase funnel, reduce waste and positively affect who is visiting Estes Park and when.

The new hero photography in 2016 included winter snowshoeing, family fly-fishing at Sprague Lake, fall elk-viewing and group hiking, all by Allen Kennedy, the photographer for previous campaign "hero" shots. We continue to focus on featuring a diverse set of ages, groups and ethnicities to appeal to a variety of audiences, pairing breathtaking photography with rustic wood treatments and inspiring quotes from Estes Park's historical characters. This combination depicts the sophisticated legacy of Estes Park and Rocky.

2016 began with reimagining the existing *Century of Adventure* campaign creative to serve as the seasonal award-winning *Forge a New Path* winter campaign, carrying over the photography, wood treatment, and fonts. This approach allowed for a consistency in brand look and feel with the delivery of a new, targeted campaign message. Coloradans were reminded that Estes Park is easier to access than destinations on I-70 and hosts many compelling winter adventure activities. Ad tactics included billboards; digital and traditional radio ads; distributed coasters and coffee sleeves; social media; magazine and digital banner ads. This was punctuated by public relations and content development tactics to fully integrate the campaign across all channels and media. This innovative campaign received recognition from the Colorado Tourism Office, presenting VEP with the 2016 Outstanding Marketing Program award.

For summer and fall, the *Century of Adventure* campaign was further developed into expanded HTML5 digital banners and video ads. We took cues from the larger advertising 'mega-trend' of online video, shifting the bulk of digital banner ad dollars into YouTube video ads for summer and fall. High-performing digital banner programs, such as TripAdvisor and Colorado.com, were maintained. Print advertising was refined in 2016 to put emphasis on efficient brand placements, such as USA Today GoEscape, Outdoors and Backpacker magazines, and regional event ads in 5280, Elevation Outdoors and Colorado Parent, among others. Social media ads on Facebook and Instagram continue to be a large part of both brand and event advertising programs, utilizing new ad formats, videos and promoted content to tell a variety of stories.

The Forge a New Path campaign will be expanded and re-engaged for winter 2016-2017. New tactics will include in-market event installments with street teams, video ads on YouTube and Facebook, and intensified regional public relations efforts. Targeted messaging will be delivered to audiences that would traditionally use US Highway 34 to educate them on the ease of the detour and incite excitement for visiting Estes Park during the closure period. Once

available, VEP will pursue additional CDBG-DR funding to help with the campaign, with the goal of extending it into the spring months.

2017 Advertising Strategy

Through the implementation of a progressive and forward-thinking strategy, the 2017 advertising strategy will continue to raise awareness, increase competitive share of voice and build relevancy to grow overnight visitation. Together with VEP, Cultivator and Backbone will develop the advertising plan to maintain a focus on creating emotional connection through a healthy mix of national and regional advertising. They will create a well-balanced, integrated media mix comprised of print, digital, radio, video and social media. Throughout the program, there will be an emboldened emphasis on content development (internal, contracted and earned) and marketing – enabling a broader and more strategic storytelling of the Estes Park guest experience and folding in opportunities for contests and co-marketing.

Backbone will deliver the best mix of reach and frequency that will speak to both current and new guests. The message will be scaled to effectively engage our target markets in an authentic and credible way. Our media will reach consumers at all stages of the funnel – from awareness to consideration to conversion, relying heavily on content and storytelling below the awareness stage. The Visit Estes Park team will work with agency, media, and contract partners to create and deliver compelling and inspiring content.

Estes Park's guests continue to encompass a spectrum of traveler types – our media will seek out the appropriate target audiences, always taking into consideration overall marketing goals and budget. Our partners will work closely with Visit Estes Park staff to identify the best media placements and executions for communicating on-brand Estes Park messaging to the target audience, working hard to deliver the best mix of reach and frequency.

The 2017 plan will be built with consideration of learnings from 2016 about engagement and conversion. While Backbone strongly supports a data-driven approach, they also understand the importance of the human element in the media planning process. Alignment with Visit Estes Park and our stakeholders' goals, thoughts, and objectives are paramount to the continued success of this campaign.

2017 Advertising Objectives & Tactics

- **Create an Emotional Connection:** Utilize the creative assets from recent years to build on the Century of Adventure and Forge a New Path campaigns, adding new scenic and inspiring photography.
 - **Creative Tactics**
 - Expand photography and video with large, scenic and inspiring images featuring experiences, people and places that inspire a sense of longing.
 - Add copy and quotes to the creative that speak to the legacy of Estes, Rocky and mountain nature travel.
 - Develop engaging, personal storytelling through video, written and photo content.
 - **Media Tactics**
 - Place large, full-page print ads whenever possible to capture attention and increase impact on viewer.
 - Use video and animated digital ads to capture attention, engage emotion and inspire action on digital ads.
 - Reach consumers in places they are already receiving compelling content – online, in social media, and through email.
- **Secure Summer Business:** Continue to focus on sustaining our summer season tourism numbers, while increasing per-person spending.
 - Speak to middle- and upper-middle class travelers.
 - Target both new and seasoned Estes Park travelers to make this their destination of choice for next season's travels.
 - Reinforce trip duration by helping guests understand the full scope of activities and amenities that Estes Park offers.

- Continue to support destination product development that is aligned with our brand and in demand from our guests, helping Estes Park to remain competitive.
- Define for guests why the national park experience is different and unique to other mountain and Colorado experiences.
 - **Creative Tactics**
 - Direct photos and videos to include a variety of models, activities and amenities, including high-end and high-quality scenes.
 - Utilize imagery in videos that is both emotionally engaging and highlights many activities to show a dynamic destination experience.
 - **Media Tactics:**
 - Secure ad placement in publications and with partners that have a higher-income audience.
 - Use dynamic demographic and behaviorist targeting to effectively and efficiently target higher-caliber consumer with intent to travel.
- **Generate Awareness for Diversity of Activities:** While visits to RMNP continue to lead the charge of destination activities, we want to build greater awareness for the diversity of activities that lead to extended stays and more “braggable” moments for our guests.
 - **Creative Tactics:**
 - Highlight active and recreational activities in Estes Park and the national forest – especially those that cannot be done within RMNP.
 - Celebrate the history and legacy of Estes Park, especially through the Estes Park Centennial celebration.
 - Feature stories, imagery and unique elements of the village, residents and local businesses, accentuating the personal, hospitable and adventurous nature of our community.
 - **Media Tactics:**
 - Use contextual and behaviorist targeting to place creative in locations that will complement the activities showcased and reach target audiences.
 - Match the content to the platform and the target audience in order to reach the right people with the right message at the right time & place.
- **Grow Our Year-Round Visitation:** Growing our shoulder season and winter business with more regional drive-market guests and high-adventure winter travelers is the single biggest opportunity for year-over-year growth, with lodging and businesses across the spectrum of guest services.
 - **Creative Tactics:**
 - Feature “adventures at every level” in and around Estes Park in every season.
 - Celebrate the differences between Estes Park and winter ski resort destinations.
 - Collaborate further with local and Nederland/Eldora businesses to grow awareness of our proximity to Eldora Ski Resort and build access for guests.
 - Create foreign language and non-voiceover content to appeal to international travelers.
 - **Media Tactics:**
 - Expand ad buy for winter-spring seasons.
 - Employ nimble, digital ad platforms that can be responsive to need times and real-time performance metrics.
 - Look for new, creative platforms to surprise Front Range residents with unique Estes Park messaging.
 - Engage with CTO international co-op promotions to grow overseas interest.

- **Increase Estes Park Brand Awareness:** Year-round strategies and tactics will enable VEP to have a consistent presence with target audiences, driving year-round and overnight visitation by being top of mind for potential travelers.
 - **Creative Tactics:**
 - Create high-impact ads and sizes with full-page ads, dynamic digital and video
 - Be thoughtful in creative direction and use the appropriate call-to-action in each and every application to drive results
 - Utilize content, storytelling and rich media to drive consumers through the conversion funnel
 - **Media Tactics:**
 - Data-driven, targeted approach to digital ad delivery with pixel tracking, learning plans, real-time tracking and continuous optimization for reach and frequency
 - Target people who have a high propensity to travel to Estes Park, having shown interest in Estes Park, Colorado and/or similar destinations
 - Drive awareness traffic to the website and social channels for conversion
 - Take advantage of new technologies, applications and opportunities to make ad programs more efficient and effective
 - Deliver the right message at the right time by utilizing complex targeting and strategic insight to ensure creative matches environment across all platforms
 - Maintain a dynamic mix of traditional, digital and emerging media to regional, national and international audiences
 - Target leisure travelers at low, mid and high adventure levels; adjusting target markets by season
 - Families & grandparents for summer, weekends & holidays/school breaks
 - Upper-middle-class couples and singles for shoulder seasons & winter-spring

In-Market Ongoing Focus

Visit Estes Park recognizes that, more than ever, the DMO's conversation with guests no longer ends at the entrance to the destination. To properly serve our guests and stakeholders, to keep the brand/guest experience alive, and to take advantage of potential guest referrals (word-of-mouth, social media sharing, in-app reviews, etc.) we need to keep Estes Park top-of-mind for our guests before, throughout and after their visits.

In order to meet that need, we increased our investment in "out of home" marketing in 2016. This investment included hiring staff to provide guest information in the new mobile visitor center at the Estes Park Farmers Market and various events, as well as to feature local artists and craftspeople. In-market efforts also included the distribution of the Official Visitor Guide in both paid and owned brochure racks throughout the destination.

In-Market Strategy 2017

Visit Estes Park will expand our guest reach into the destination, implementing tools that will engage guests while they are in Estes Park and having real-time experiences. The Estes Park Centennial presents an important opportunity to engage guests in the legacy of the destination. To be effective, these in-market engagement tools will need promotional support to drive awareness and increase interactions. These supportive tools could include elements such as posters, stickers, coasters and table tents.

Additionally, VEP will look for new opportunities to expand the reach of the Official Visitor Guide throughout the destination. Additional information and tools will be used to promote events, especially during high-visitation times.

Earned Media: Public Relations

PR Ongoing Focus

Coming off of a record PR year in 2015 has made reaching the bar very difficult in 2016. Strong articles with large syndications in the early part of last year gave Estes Park unprecedented coverage. Much of that coverage was

spurred by the RMNP Centennial and a spring group press trip. While VEP did our best to pitch RMNP-related NPS Centennial stories, many were run without including Rocky. Though there has not been a definitive reason for this, the RMNP Centennial in 2015 was cited at least once.

In spite of these challenges, 2016 has been a productive year in earning publicity and media interest for the Estes Park destination and our stakeholders. With much of the NPS Centennial buzz taking place in the previous year and early 2016, the focus has largely turned back to Estes Park. We have continued to work with media partners to gain recognition for Estes Park as a “top” destination for a variety of activities and have assisted with earning several such titles. We continue to work with Turner Public Relations (with offices in Denver and New York), to expand our media relationships, increase awareness of Estes Park, and garner attention from the media.

The media landscape continues to evolve with the changing demands of consumers. Shorter articles, round-ups, and more ‘bucket-list’ experiences continue providing strong relevance for readers and journalists. We are seeing consumer trust in online influencers grow, creating new opportunities.

Visit Estes Park hosted several influencers in 2016, including a group of foodie millennials as part of a Front Range Region ‘Wish You Were Beer’ campaign that reached over 30 million people. VEP continues to pitch stories and host writers from a variety of media, including a strong online and social media push.

In addition to the continued changes in consumer interests, media landscapes, and digital content needs; results tracking for PR measures also continues to evolve. With articles becoming shorter, moving to round-up formats, being published online and in social channels, the prior article measures of ad value and impressions become increasingly inaccurate. To keep up with these changes, and to balance these inaccuracies, Visit Estes Park began using the Barcelona Principles in 2015.

The Barcelona Principles assign a point value (based on a 100-point scale) to articles or published stories, based on predetermined goals and target publications – focusing on quality over quantity. While this system better enabled us to target, monitor and track the effectiveness of PR efforts, the traditional tracking methods of impressions and ad value often decrease as a result of this shift in focus. This is likely another factor contributing to the current decline in those indicators since 2015. Through Turner PR, VEP has also shifted tracking from the Burrelle’s Luce service to the more comprehensive TrendKite provider – allowing for more accurate measurement of online and social media exposure. With limited funding relative to our competition, Visit Estes Park depends heavily on earned media, or press exposure, to supplement our national, regional and local advertising campaign. For this reason, it is imperative that we continue to garner international, national and regional attention to increase awareness of the Estes Park destination brand, as well as to stay top-of-mind in the local and statewide markets. As of this writing (YTD July 2016), Visit Estes Park’s reach is 235.2 million people through media outreach with articles running in a variety of mediums from local to international, newspapers to digital. Press coverage is often measured by ad equivalency, the price paid for advertising of the same size in each publication. Often, businesses will put a multiplier on that number to represent the value added from the information being produced and delivered by the publication, rather than through a paid ad; however, Visit Estes Park does not use multipliers.

- Total advertising equivalency is \$3.1M YTD in August 2016, down from \$6.66M in 2015, a loss of 53.1%, primarily due to the coverage RMNP received during the 2015 centennial.
- Media impressions totaled 267.8M in August 2016, a decline from 598.7M in August of 2015. This is down 55.27% YTD, but up 19% from 2014.
- The Barcelona Principles average score for articles through August 2016 is 64.9 points, up 10.2 points from 2015’s August YTD average of 54.7 and 10.7 points above 2014’s YTD average of 54.2.

Notable 2016 Stories

- “The 4 Most Romantic Cities in Colorado”, [About.com](#) – 28.5M Imp.; \$263K AE; 40 pts
- “Insanely Unsettling Haunted Places You Can Actually Visit”, [BuzzFeed.com](#) – 20.4M Imp.; \$188K AE; 70 pts
- “4 New Ways to Experience Estes Park”, [About.com](#) – 28.5M Imp.; \$263K AE; 97 pts
- “2 New Breweries Worth Hopping Into”, [Denver Post](#) – 90 pts
 - Syndicated in Colorado Daily, Loveland Reporter Herald, Denver Post Newsletter – total 3.2M Imp.; \$30K AE

- “Vertical Camping in the Rockies”, Men’s Journal & [MensJournal.com](#) – 5.68M Imp.; \$181K AE; 96 pts
- “Ride Huge Peaks in Rocky Mountain”, Outside & [OutsideOnline.com](#) – 1.2M Imp.; \$106K AE; 100 pts
- “Celebrate National Parks Service Centennial This Summer with These Adventure Trips”, [MensFitness.com](#) – 1.37M Imp.; \$13K AE; 68 pts
- “The Best Part of Climbing isn’t the Summit”, [BBC Travel](#) – 32M Imp; \$296K AE; 86 pts
- “4th of July Travel Alternatives for Families Who Want to Unplug”, [GoBankingRates.com](#) – 53 pts
 - Syndicated in MSN Travel, Time Money & Philly.com – total 4M Imp. & 37.5K AE
- “All-American Drives with Google Maps”, [Parents.com](#) – 1.8M Imp.; \$16.7K AE; 61 pts
- “Cliff Camping Puts You on Edge”, [USA Today](#) – 22.5M Imp.; \$208.6K AE; 96 pts
 - Syndicated by 11 city & regional newspapers – additional 15.6M Imp & \$144.6K AE
- “Summer Vacation Spot in Every State”, [Weather.com](#) – 19.9M Imp.; \$184K AE; 75 pts

2016 Press Relations Highlights

- Conducted a desk-side FAM trip to New York in August 2016 to meet with 10 writers and editors to pitch year-round and winter travel stories.
- Hosted a group FAM in August with a “Legacy of Adventure” theme highlighting more than 15 local industry partners.
- In partnership with Front Range Region Partners and Grand Lake, hosted an influencer group FAM with ‘Wish You Were Beer’ theme highlighting nine local industry partners.
- Year-to-date we have hosted five domestic and 11 international individual media visits.
- Have hosted group press FAM trips from the Netherlands, the UK and India.
- Arranging regional desk-side visits to Front Range media through fall and winter.
- Seeking additional press hosting opportunities through the winter to highlight Estes as a 4-season destination.

PR Plan 2017

We will continue to integrate public relations (earned media) strategies and tactics with those of paid and owned media. Public relations efforts in the coming year will have an increased emphasis on reaching the national audience, targeting key national media with pitches geared at increasing awareness of the destination and positioning Estes Park as the ideal mountain base camp for low, medium and high adventure travelers. This will be done by highlighting the outdoor adventures and experiences unique to Estes Park within our media outreach, pitches, FAM tours, influencer relations, wire stories and press events.

In addition to traditional and digital media, Visit Estes Park will continue to expand efforts in 2017 to build relationships with online influencers – especially to promote niche markets such as adventure travel, weddings, group travel, and family travel. There are several hosting/partnership opportunities currently in the discussion or planning phases. Influencers will be a significant portion of our content-driven marketing program for 2017.

The coming year will continue to present challenges in educating the media and the public as to travel conditions and road construction. We will maintain efforts to proactively educate the public and to monitor conversations about the closure of Highway 34. Visit Estes Park will sustain collaboration with area and state officials to best position this information and to inform local, regional and state-wide stakeholder groups. This will be done through in-person education, the dissemination of talking points, and publishing up-to-date information for them and their guests in VEP communications. Visit Estes Park will also continue outreach efforts to the local news media both in anticipation of and reaction to potentially negative stories.

In 2017, Visit Estes Park’s PR team will continue to track and rate articles based on the Barcelona Principles, further refining this tool as needed. This system focuses on quantitative reporting for qualitative measures to create transparency and replicable results by setting tangible goals; measuring the effect of media placements on outcomes and business results, and by measuring both quality and quantity of coverage. Turner PR and Visit Estes Park will

continue to fine-tune this transition from a traditional advertising value/impressions measurement system to one that focuses on the following:

- A predetermined list of top 100 targeted publications.
- The inclusion of visuals, such as photos or infographics.
- Headline positioning for Estes Park and/or local tourism partners.
- Messaging.
- Coverage prominence (feature story vs. roundup).
- Syndication.
- Call to action/brand or partner mention.
- Advertising Equivalency.
- Impressions/reach.

Through stakeholder communications - utilizing educational sessions, the extranet and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) functionality, e-newsletters and traditional means - the team will increase the collaboration with stakeholders on developing media-friendly packages, specials and stories. In 2017, we will further expand our efforts in providing advice and education to stakeholders surrounding media relations. This may include media training, planning resources, FAM trip tips, product development ideas and story development.

We will continue to explore, through relationships with Cultivator, Backbone and Turner, the possibility of partnering with complementary brands to do cross-marketing or co-promotions in advertising, social media and/or public relations. This type of collaboration can be very beneficial in furthering our brand strength, expanding reach and awareness, increasing consumer trust, and creating long-term relationships and associations.

International Marketing & PR

International Marketing Ongoing Focus

Visit Estes Park will continue to collaborate with the Colorado Tourism Office's international division and its International Promotion Committee to engage with and learn from their efforts. Additionally, we will expand our relationships with foreign press, tour operators and planners through tradeshows, FAM hosting and sales tours. Additional funds will be added for consumer marketing to grow awareness of Estes Park in key markets and for research to better understand our current international guests.

In 2016, Visit Estes Park grew efforts in attracting international travelers through international travel trade and media outreach, as well as collaboration with local and state tourism partners. This included attending Go West, an international travel tradeshow, for the second time and IPW, the largest international trade show in the US, for the first time. At these shows, Visit Estes Park promoted the destination and met with trade representatives to increase interest in Colorado products featuring Estes Park.

Visit Estes Park is also working with Travel on Global to develop an international traveler survey to better understand the current international guest of Estes Park and to help identify opportunities. We are also contracting them to build foreign language landing pages for VisitEstesPark.com, to offer foreign-language and international guests a warmer welcome to Estes Park.

The positive growth seen by the state shows the incredible potential for Estes Park to continue to develop product for and grow awareness with international travelers. VEP has increased our investment each year in this area, attending two international trade shows in 2016 where we met with more than 70 representatives and we obtained contact information for 580+ people from almost 50 different countries. Additionally, in collaboration with the Colorado Tourism Office and Brand USA, VEP hosted 60 trade and press representatives from 9 countries, and is currently planning upcoming visits from India, Canada and France.

Growing product for international travel is a key goal for the coming years, as having tours and participating businesses is critical to attracting foreign guests. With this goal in mind, VEP will continue to provide information and education for local industry partners to learn why and how to engage with the international travel market. In January of 2016, we hosted the CTO International Team in Estes Park to present on the value international travelers can

bring to local businesses, as well answer questions about how best to engage in the efforts of VEP and CTO. During the 2016-2017 winter, we will continue to develop educational opportunities and informational tools for our partners in order to further develop international travel products.

Owned Media: Online & Collateral

2016 Website Ongoing Focus

Since June 2013, Simpleview, Inc., the leader in destination marketing solutions, has been our website partner. Through a planned and purposeful multi-year strategy came a website that elevates the online Estes Park experience through inspiration and information. Each year we look for new ways to enhance the website, stakeholder opportunities, and the guest experience with new technologies.

In 2016, this meant going responsive, integrating social media, and adding interactive elements.

The Visit Estes Park website is creative and feature-rich, utilizing the latest technology and destination marketing best practices. The goals of the website are to improve internal efficiencies, provide real value to our stakeholders, reflect the Estes Park brand promise, delight the consumer, effectively compete with other destination websites, and increase visitor conversion. The website was developed with the consumer in mind, giving them the features they have come to expect from a top-tier travel website.

Since the start of 2016, the Visit Estes Park website continues to see high performance and engagement, as reflected in the Key Indicators and Google Analytics reporting. As of July 2016, VisitEstesPark.com has been visited by 793,286 people. This is 25.1% more people compared to the same time frame in 2015. We are continuing to see that with additional and authentic content, easy navigation, intriguing features, and an SEO-friendly navigation structure, more first-time users are visiting the site, and engagement continues to beat industry standards. Visitors are also using the BookDirect – lodging referral feature more to research availability and book their stay.

Year-to-date July 2016 website stats:

- 25.1% increase in users – new & returning users that had at least one session within the time period.
- 2.5% increase in new visitors – more first-time visitors to the site.
- 157% increase in sessions on mobile devices.
- 1,710 average daily click-throughs to the JackRabbit BookDirect lodging referrals/booking engine.
- The Events page is consistently in the top four pages of the website, preceded only by the homepage and vies with two lodging-specific pages.
Home page: 338,831 page views
- Lodging-All: 117,653 page views
- Lodging-Cabins & Cottages: 110,773 page views
- Events Calendar: 114,634 page views

The VisitEstesPark.com blog continues to see increased traffic (76,376 sessions so far in 2016, compared to 22,717 sessions for the same time frame in 2015 and proves to be a powerful tool for hosting specialized content that users are looking for. Storytelling has become an essential part of marketing. VEP uses the blog, along with unique landing pages, to host engaging stories about the destination that are then distributed through digital ads, social media, e-mail marketing and other areas of VisitEstesPark.com.

2016 was Visit Estes Park's inaugural year with a responsive-design site. Responsive design offers an optimal viewing experience with easy reading and navigation by minimizing the need for scrolling, panning and resizing across a variety of devices. It allows the site to adapt to the layout of the viewing environment from mobile phones, to tablets, to desktop computers. Responsive also allows for more efficient management – utilizing a single content management platform rather than separate ones for mobile and desktop. This format allows all website advertisers to be featured on the mobile version without having to purchase separate, mobile-only listings.

As we see continued growth in the use of VisitEstesPark.com from mobile devices and we receive announcements from search engines, such as Google, that they are focusing on returning responsive and mobile-optimized search results, this upgrade will keep the Visit Estes Park website at the highest level of search optimization and user experience.

In addition to going responsive, VEP has added a number of cutting-edge features to the website, including an upgrade to our partner extranet, social media integration, a virtual tour and the Related Content Module. The next iteration of the Partner Extranet will allow for additional features, such as online payments, and could include modules like inventory management that would allow for partners to order Visitor Guides from VEP on-line. The implementation of Extranet 4.0 has begun and will continue through the latter part of 2016.

Contracting with Crowdriff, VEP has integrated a social media aggregator into a number of pages on the website, enabling us to feature user-generated content (UGC), thereby strengthening our brand by letting guests demonstrate for us their love of Estes Park. VEP will be beta-testing the option of putting sponsored partner content into these UGC displays.

This year also brought a virtual tour to VisitEstesPark.com, an interactive discovery-based platform that will allow guests to see the incredible beauty of Estes through twenty 360-degree aerial photos in which VEP invested. From these aerials, potential guests can explore local businesses and attractions through individual virtual tours – all without leaving the platform. Additionally, this tour is virtual reality (VR) friendly and can be viewed in VR devices for an immersive experience.

With the goals of making the navigation of our website easier and serving relevant content to website users, VEP implemented the Related Content Module offered by Simpleview. This module allows us to imbed widgets into pages and have them feature static or dynamic content with photos, links and copy, enticing them to engage more with, and explore deeper, into the website.

Visit Estes Park continues to partner with Destination Travel Network (DTN), an agency representing over 100 destination marketing organizations throughout North America. DTN enables our stakeholders to reach millions of prospective visitors with targeted, relevant advertising packages and solutions on the Visit Estes Park website. This partnership provides our stakeholders custom and expert assistance with website advertising that fits within their budget. The added exposure they receive drives traffic to their business websites and grows their revenue.

Website 2017

After seeing positive and affirming growth on the VisitEstesPark.com website, we will continue to make large, long-term enhancements and fine-tuning improvements. This includes website content and design, as well as behind-the-scenes platforms like the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, Content Management System (CMS) and the Extranet. These enhancements across various areas throughout the website will improve user satisfaction, increase website performance, and provide for more efficient management of related data.

We have maintained last year's support hours contracted through Simpleview, Inc., allowing us to continue to update, enhance and improve the site. In 2017, Visit Estes Park will be focusing on further implementing the enhanced social integration through our partnership with Crowdriff. We also plan to implement content enhancement, refresh the website design and further optimize the site to achieve optimal user experience.

VEP is currently considering multiple options and partners for the likely design update of the website. Part of the consideration is efficiency of content management, cost effectiveness and available features, including booking engine integrations. Options being considered include dynamic content (serving content based on the user's profile), trackable booking engine – including possible booking for events and attractions, OpenTable integration and more.

The process of monitoring, analyzing, and making necessary updates to the website is an ongoing and fluid process that develops with changes stemming from industry standards, internal review, website best practices, emerging technologies, analytic reporting and consumer use trends & feedback. As we update the creative design of the website, we will also likely update the blog's look and functionality to be more modern and dynamic.

Authorship is also under review, as are some of the blog functions, such as tags and categories. Changes will all be made with the goals of increasing the SEO power of the blog and creating content that reaches niche audiences through enhanced storytelling reflecting the pillars of our brand.

BookDirect Ongoing Focus

JackRabbit Systems' lodging online BookDirect (JBD) feature was implemented with the new website in 2013 with the goal of driving increased lodging revenue to the Estes Park market.

Visit Estes Park chose the BookDirect solution because unlike online travel agencies (OTA), such as Travelocity, Expedia, Priceline and Orbitz, – JackRabbit’s BookDirect (JBD) solution:

- 1) is the only solution dedicated to driving booking reservations directly to the lodging property website,
- 2) there is no cost to our stakeholders,
- 3) does not require lodging properties to manage separate inventory,
- 4) there are no additional ‘middleman’ fees incurred by our stakeholders,
- 5) provides a better guest experience through a direct relationship with the lodging property,
- 6) properties without an online booking engine can still participate and be listed,
- 7) includes Facebook and mobile integration for DMOs,
- 8) drives high quality leads directly to our lodging partners increasing bookings for our stakeholders from VisitEstesPark.com,
- 9) is cost effective.

Through 2016, VisitEstesPark.com was either the first- or second-most referring website in the country for JBD, reporting one of the highest referral numbers to stakeholder’s websites out of over 250 JBD clients. This exhibits the success in Visit Estes Park’s marketing strategies by driving guests to the website, thereby resulting in direct lodging referrals. Of course, driving highly-qualified and engaged traffic through VisitEstesPark.com also leads to growth for retail, restaurants and activities.

Highlights from 2015 JBD performance on VisitEstesPark.com include:

- 578,493 total referrals to lodging properties in 2015.
- Became the #1 most-referring site of over 250 BookDirect DMOs.
- Assuming 3.51% Conversion Rate (industry average):
 - 20,305 reservations made in 2015.
 - Estimated \$ 12,335,288 Booking Revenue (a 63% increase over 2014).

Highlights from year-to-date July 2016 JBD performance on VisitEstesPark.com:

- 364,279 total July 2016 YTD referrals to lodging.
- 1,710 average referrals per day YTD July 2016.
- 4,115 referrals for highest referral day on June 20, 2016.
- Referrals averaged 3,026 per day in July 2016.

Social Media Ongoing Focus

Social Media includes multiple digital channels where individuals interact in a virtual, yet social way. These channels also provide opportunities for brands and organizations, such as Visit Estes Park, to directly interact with consumers, guests and potential guests. These conversations can take place in real time and they allow consumers to become brand advocates by sharing their positive experiences with their followers, friends, and family. In addition to such posts being seen by the individuals’ followers, Visit Estes Park works to leverage these conversations to provide information, encourage engagement/sharing, answer questions and tell the Estes Park story to tens of thousands of ‘followers.’ These efforts grow the reach of the Visit Estes Park messaging and enhance the guest experience through transparent and authentic online engagement.

In 2016, the goals of the Visit Estes Park social channels have been:

- Continue increasing the number of fans & followers who are actively exposed to and engaged with the Estes Park brand.
- Create strategic content for all channels that encourages engagement through comments, shares, likes and retweets.
 - Maintain an appropriate mix of marketing and social content.

- Increase traffic from our social channels to the Visit Estes Park website.
- Expand the use of high-engagement content, such as photos, video and live broadcasts.
- Cultivate followers and influencers as ambassadors who share our message.

Social media continues to gain speed as a significant traffic driver to the VisitEstesPark.com website. Video has become a much larger piece of our content. We have created both experiential and promotion videos to increase awareness and conversion, putting paid dollars behind some key content and videos. So far in 2016, we have seen a 37.69% increase in referrals from social media platforms to VisitEstesPark.com. Specifically, we have seen (YTD, through August 31):

- 53.73% increase in traffic from Facebook
- 100% increase from Instagram
- .53% increase from Twitter (Twitter as a platform has seen a steady decline in use overall down 23.4% in Q1 of 2016 vs. 2015).

As social media continues to grow exponentially in both exposure and users, it will continue to be a vital part of telling the Estes Park story to key targeted audiences, creating brand ambassadors, converting past guests to returning guests, and being the tipping point for consumers considering booking a trip to Estes Park.

Notable Social Media Key Performance Indicators in 2016: Visit Estes Park has achieved considerable growth in social media followers in 2016, expanding our reach and increasing the delivery of branded messages. This has resulted in increased awareness of the destination, the cultivation of authentic relationships and the conversion of online fans into visitors to Estes Park.

- **Facebook:** We have reached over 100k total, cumulative likes and have grown by 78.39% in number followers so far in 2016, making us the third-ranked city DMO in Colorado for number of followers, led only by Visit Denver and Visit Aspen. Visit Estes Park’s Facebook engagement consistently leads the Colorado DMO industry; though we may not have the most followers, our fans are more engaged and interactive with the content we post. Engagement shows how compelling content is to the audience you are targeting.
- **Twitter:** Offering an opportunity to share real-time information, news and tidbits, Twitter has been a growing channel for direct communication to our followers, media, and influencers. Tracking of keyword mentions (such as “Estes Park” or “Rocky Mountains”) also gives us a chance to engage guests in conversation, to make recommendations and to dispel misinformation. Our following grew by 10.8% in number of followers, from 7,664 to 8,492 (828 new followers) as of July 2016.
- **YouTube:** 41,222 cumulative YouTube views since the account was formed in Jan. of 2011. So far in 2016, we have seen an increase of 12,661 views, or 44.32%.
- **Pinterest:** A virtual bulletin board for sharing images and linking to additional information, Pinterest allows branded messaging to potentially drive traffic to our website and blog. Our following grew by 9.5% in number of pin-board followers, from 3,372 to 3,692 (302 followers) so far in 2016.
- **Google+:** Used mainly as a tool to enhance our search engine optimization (SEO) by increasing our organic ranking by posting keyword-related content. In 2015, VEP launched a new Visit Estes Park Google+ page to increase SEO performance. We currently have a following of 339.
- **Instagram:** Instagram has given Visit Estes Park the opportunity to engage a new, younger audience through photo sharing and interaction with those who post photos taken in and around Estes Park. Our total, cumulative following grew by 75.29% from 8,840 to 15,496 (6,656 new followers) through August 2016.

Social Media 2017

Visit Estes Park recognizes that travel influencers aren’t what they used to be. Anyone with a cell phone and an audience of friends, family and followers is a potential influencer. With 74% of travelers accessing social media during their vacation and 76% of those travelers using a social platform to share their experiences through updates, photos, and videos while traveling, Visit Estes Park sees the critical importance of such applications. VEP uses social media to create authentic relationships, encourage sharing and celebrate social users with those Estes Park travelers, before, during, and after their visit.

In 2017, Visit Estes Park will continue to expand our social reach and engagement in both paid and organic efforts to attract followers and grow engagement through promotion, interaction and branded content creation. With increased hyper-targeted advertising options within social media, we are able to target key audiences with relevant content resulting in high engagement, better click-through rates and an improved user experience.

The goals of the content-driven marketing program are to deliver useful and entertaining content to our followers, drive traffic to the VisitEstesPark.com website and increase SEO performance. We will achieve these goals by using strategic online social tactics and a diverse social advertising mix that utilizes targeting tools over multiple platforms – including Pinterest, Facebook, Instagram, and potentially Twitter. Using authenticity and transparency as a guide, Visit Estes Park will develop content that is a mix of collaborative, user-generated, influencer and native content to tell diverse, compelling stories related to the Estes Park destination experience.

Additionally, as video content continues to overtake content consumption, we will continue to develop a variety of video to be delivered via the website, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. Our video production ramped up in 2016 with short social videos surrounding events and “slices of life.” In 2017, VEP will continue this investment in video production and development at a variety of production and cost levels to address asset needs across earned, owned and paid media.

Email Marketing Ongoing Focus

Email marketing continues to be a strong and successful method for awareness and engagement in Visit Estes Park’s digital communications mix. Email allows us to convey the Estes Park brand message with past and potential guests who have opted to receive email communication. Within the past year, our monthly targeted email newsletters have contained curated, strategically-placed content to encourage interaction and conversions to our blog and website.

We have introduced additional opportunity for industry partners to expand their own marketing efforts by offering paid placement in the email newsletters. Also in 2016, we moved email communications from Distribion to MailChimp. MailChimp offers efficiencies through a more intuitive user-interface, additional customization opportunities, and a cleaner, more modern design. We continue to see high open rates and engagement since switching to MailChimp email software in May 2016 (from Distribion).

Our visitor e-Newsletter gained 7,427 subscribers since July of last year, bringing the total to 36,468 subscribers, and maintains an average open rate of 28.13% (travel industry average of 22.2%) and average click through rate of 6.11% (travel industry average of 2.55%) for this same time period.

Email Marketing 2017

Each newsletter will continue to be strategically crafted to increase awareness of Estes Park news & events, focusing on driving traffic to pages that have high performance rates in conversions to lodging properties booking engines. The performance of every newsletter is carefully monitored and evaluated to identify opportunities for enhancements to increase views and conversions.

In 2017, the email newsletter program will include the new advertising opportunities for stakeholders with the goal of driving traffic to their listings or websites. These advertising opportunities provide participating businesses new exposure to a highly qualified audience, engaging them with partner-related services, news, or events. We will continue to evaluate industry trends and emerging opportunities for partner involvement in this high-performing platform.

The 2017 Visit Estes Park content strategy will include new, specialized emails that will highlight specific topics or campaigns, such as events, holidays, promotions and contests. These dedicated emails will be in addition to our highly successful monthly round-up newsletter, allowing Visit Estes Park to make more frequent appearances in our subscriber’s in-boxes and increasing our “top of mind” placements. These niche emails will provide more customized content and/or more in-depth information surrounding a specific topic or event.

Collateral Development

2016 Estes Park Official Visitor Guide Ongoing Focus

The 2016 Official Visitor Guide included major changes reflective of consumer-desired features: heavier paper on both the cover and inside pages, use of perfect binding versus a staple stitch, redesigned quality maps, including a fold-out map on the back cover with shuttle map, and content changes throughout to accommodate changing

reading habits. To better meet guest demand for specific content and recommendations, a few sponsored content (paid editorial) ad opportunities were added. Also new to the Official Guide in 2016 was the addition of stick-ease tabs so readers can mark their favorite pages, as they peruse the guide, for quick reference while planning their trip to Estes - a fun way to interact with the guide.

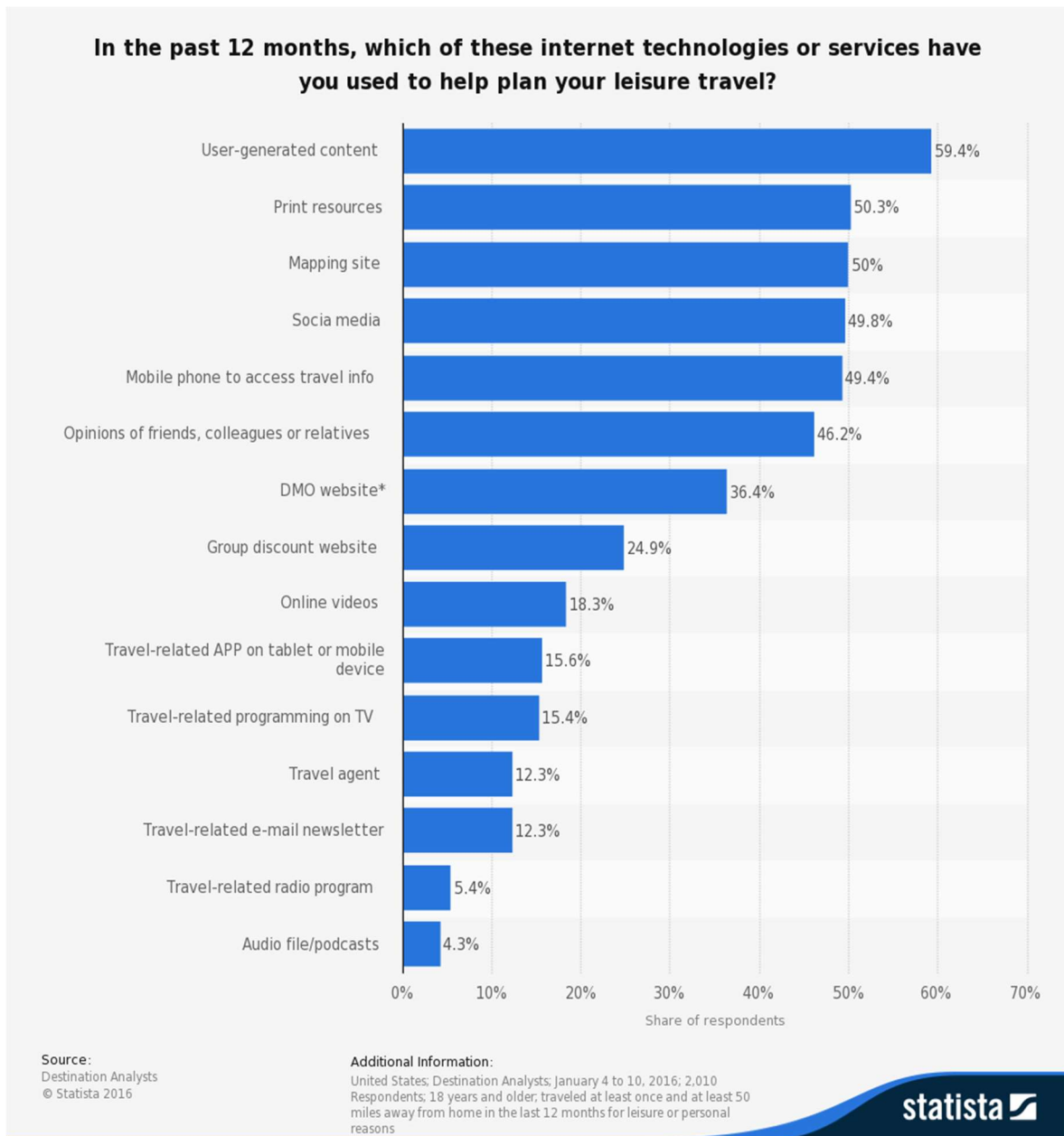
Advertiser support of the changes was so significant that VEP was able to increase the press run from 140,000 copies to 185,000 copies to accommodate growth in local distribution. In addition to being on display at the Estes Park Visitor Center, the Guide is distributed on Estes Park Shuttles on routes from DIA to Estes Park, through the Eve's Brochure Rack distribution system and in racks supplied by Visit Estes Park where the Eve's service is not available. As part of Visit Estes Park's efforts to partner with Rocky Mountain National Park, the remaining 2015 guides were shipped to 615 fourth-grade classrooms throughout Colorado, including Fort Collins, Denver, Colorado Springs and eastern Colorado along with an invitation to visit Estes Park and RMNP using the park system's 'Every Kid in a Park' free entry promotion.

2017 Estes Park Official Visitor Guide

Best bets, insider insights and suggested itineraries all are key areas of coverage that will be included in the 2017 Official Visitor Guide. Other significant storylines include Estes Park's 100th Anniversary celebration, visiting Rocky Mountain National Park, viewing wildlife, the wide variety of guest activities and exploring Roosevelt National Forest. Photos showing people experiencing the destination will be essential to the content. Expanded sponsored content featuring things to do, dining opportunities and places to stay are also planned. Quotes from locals on their favorite activities and profiles of area artists will add new and authentic community flavor to the Guide. VEP's outreach to fourth graders as part of the national 'Every Kid in a Park' campaign will be renewed in 2017 as will the expanded local distribution of guides.

Is the Visitor Guide Still Relevant?*

As much as we're tied to our tablets, smartphones, apps and computers, there's still no substitute for holding something tangible in your hands. According to Destination Analysts July 2016 edition of the State of the American Traveler report, 50.3% of travelers used print resources to help plan their leisure travel - second only to user-generated content - something that VEP has invested in through the CrowdRiff platform. The Colorado Tourism Office also confirms the demand for their print materials continues to grow for both their state vacation guide and Alive magazine, which they doubled production of in 2015 due to high demand.



Printed brochures, maps and guides also impact travelers during their trips. A 2012 study by the Center for Marketing Technology at Bentley, University in Waltham, Massachusetts found that during the trip additional decisions were made as follows:

- 81% - Locally distributed brochures
- 70% - Internet
- 66% - Friends, relatives
- 63% - Maps or guides
- 34% - Mobile apps
- 31% - Billboards, signage and advertising

Seven out of ten visitors pick up at least one brochure while on a trip. Of those, nearly half (42%) plan on purchasing goods or services as a result of picking up brochure(s).

**Source: Roger Brooks International*

Happenings:

Visit Estes Park continues to publish Estes Park Happenings, a weekly publication designed to enhance the guest experience. Happenings is a very popular one-page publication that highlights Estes Park's upcoming events and entertainment. It is consistently published by the two local newspapers and shared on social media. The piece is posted online, emailed to all stakeholders and is used by our local businesses, Visitor Center and residents.

We are working with the Town of Estes Park to display Happenings at each of the public restrooms. One of the top questions guests have when they arrive to town is, "What is there to do in Estes Park?" Since not all guests visit the Visitor Center, especially if they have been to Estes before, we need to find unique ways to share what is "Happening" around town. When the sign code permits, we also hope to work with the Town of Estes Park with displaying touchscreen information kiosks outdoors to offer guests additional resources for this information in a more modern, efficient way.

Visitor Center 2016 Ongoing Focus

Providing visitor materials that reflect the Estes Park brand will continue to be of significant importance. To assist guests who visit the information desk in the Town of Estes Park's Visitor Center, Ambassadors and Visitor Center staff rely on an annual multi-page 'Resource Guide' publication that details the features of lodging properties, bed and breakfasts and campgrounds. The grid-format guide is created internally by Visit Estes Park. Cost to print the brochure is covered by The Town of Estes Park.

The Visitor Center will continue serving as one of the primary distribution points for the Official Estes Park Visitor Guide and an important touchpoint for the Estes Park destination experience.

Visitor Center 2017

Although our Visitor Center visitation numbers are strong, we follow the industry standard for lack of repeat Center visitation from return guests. It is important we constantly look for opportunities throughout town to share with guests the wide variety of activities there is to experience in Estes Park.

The Visit Estes Park portable visitor center has proved very impactful at the weekly Farmers Market and area events. This presence furthers our reach with guests who may not enter the Visitor Center, and allows us to share information with the guest directly, rather than hoping they find us. The booth has also provided us the opportunity to be more engaged with local residents, answer their questions, and ask for their input regarding their vision for Estes Park.

Partnership Development

Partnership Development objectives entail three main areas:

1. Destination Partnerships
2. Destination Brand Strategy
3. CRM & Extranet Enhancements

All three areas provide a great opportunity for Visit Estes Park to augment its role in the Estes Park community.

Destination Partnerships

The need for collaboration and partnership between Visit Estes Park and the community has become increasingly evident. It is clear that Visit Estes Park's relationships with local business owners and tourism stakeholders are an integral cornerstone to the success of the destination. Visit Estes Park's goal is to continue to build strong, productive stakeholder partnerships that help to enhance the destination experience and its associated growth. The Visit Estes Park role as DMO is essential to creating a community-wide effort to improve and elevate Estes Park industry, as well as the Estes Park destination brand.

Destination Partnerships 2016 Ongoing Focus:

- Focused on open communications and advocacy by continuing successful programs and launching new partner communication channels such as the VEP Partner Facebook Group.

- Continued to develop an in-depth, detailed partner communication strategy to define tactics that will allow Visit Estes Park to further enhance the quality of relationships between the Visit Estes Park team and the Estes Park community.
- Continued to enhance communication structure between Visit Estes Park and stakeholders, beyond traditional methods and utilizing new DMO tools, including the CRM and the enhanced stakeholder extranet.
- Continued to assume the role of destination partner with the Town of Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, tourism and business associations, and other community groups (Estes Valley Partners for Commerce, Estes Area Lodging Association, Estes Park Wedding Association, Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, Rocky Mountain Performing Arts Center, Arts District, Rotary, Estes Park Sports & Fitness Association, and others).
- Hosted the annual Visit Estes Park Tourism Summit, held on April 27, 2016 at The Rocky Mountain Park Inn. The Summit included general session review of 2015-2016 strategies & accomplishments, and agency partner presentations, as well as breakout sessions allowing for direct partner participation and feedback.
- Visit Estes Park's President & CEO, Elizabeth Fogarty, sits on the Estes Area Lodging Association (EALA) Board of Directors, representing Visit Estes Park as a partner of the local community.
- Visit Estes Park's Board Member, Jon Nicholas, sits on the Estes Valley Partners for Commerce Board of Directors.
- Visit Estes Park will continue to work with the Downtown Business Partners (part of Estes Valley Partners for Commerce), an organization dedicated to the promotion of downtown Estes Park as a center of business, culture and entertainment.
- Visit Estes Park Board of Directors Chairman Scott Webermeier represents the organization on the Estes Park Economic Development Corp. Jon Nicholas, Local Marketing District Board Member, is President and CEO of the Estes Park EDC. Adam Shake, also a board member, is Director of Communications & Business Development of the Estes Park EDC.
- By continuing to lead the Association Forum (which includes participation from the Town of Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park Economic Development Corporation, Estes Valley Partners for Commerce, Estes Area Lodging Association, Estes Park Wedding Association, Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, Arts District, and others), Visit Estes Park will look to increase the level of cooperation and collaboration for a destination-wide approach to driving travel and tourism in Estes Park, while cultivating and balancing a high quality of life for our community.
- Visit Estes Park's Marketing & Communications Director, Brooke Burnham, sits on the Steering Committee for the Estes Park Sports & Fitness Association.
- Hosted monthly Travel Buzz gatherings for local business partners to participate in a monthly tourism webinar, interact with VEP staff, and network with each other.
- Provide exceptional customer service to stakeholders, including one-on-one visits by all VEP staff.

Destination Partnerships 2017

In 2017, Visit Estes Park will continue to focus on community outreach to solicit ongoing feedback, and inform stakeholders about the role of Visit Estes Park as the marketing and destination expert in the Estes Park community. To further enhance and strengthen these relationships, Visit Estes Park will focus on educational programs based on the needs of stakeholders. The sessions will be designed to help businesses capitalize on Visit Estes Park's marketing efforts, as well as to enhance and improve their own marketing efforts. Sessions will include topics such as social media, delivering the Estes Park Promise, co-op advertising, and how to read and interpret website analytics reports.

Visit Estes Park will concentrate on further developing partner advertising programs for both in-market pieces and website opportunities. Strict attention will be paid to enhancing current offerings, appraising new products, reevaluating pricing and placement structures, and reporting current and accurate performance indicators. Visit Estes Park partner advertising programs allow local tourism businesses to participate in Visit Estes Park's national and international message, engage in the destination brand, and reinvest in Visit Estes Park's marketing efforts.

Revenues from ad sales stay with Visit Estes Park and are used to enhance the destination marketing, driving more traffic to the website, Estes Park brand channels and Official Visitor Guide.

Destination Brand Strategy

Integrated brand strategy creative content and messaging continues to be implemented across all marketing platforms including print, digital, social, broadcast, and website.

Brand Strategy Culturalization is an ongoing effort for all tourism destinations, where we help partners understand that creating and providing exceptional experiences for Estes Park guests is one of the most significant impacts they can have in creating a positive guest experience resulting in guest loyalty and return visitation. This is an ongoing process that VEP will continue to support and invest in, including finding new ways to engage the community in the process.

In 2017, Visit Estes Park will continue to share and implement destination brand strategy with the Estes Park community. It is imperative now more than ever as tourism grows increasingly more competitive, that Estes Park experiences are exceptional for guests, and this can be achieved by building emotional connections and delivering a consistent brand experience.

One of the new brand culturalization initiatives is celebrating Brand Champions in the community. A Brand Champion is an individual who exemplifies the “Everyone’s a Guest” hospitality. They will be celebrated by VEP in the local papers with a photo and an article outlining the details of how they represent the brand. They will also receive a pass for their exclusive reserved parking space (in partnership with the Town of Estes Park), gift package, area discounts, acknowledgment on the VEP website, and community-wide recognition. We look forward to hearing from the community with examples of their peers who exemplify Estes Park’s brand promise.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Enhancements

CRM Enhancements Ongoing Focus

In 2013 Visit Estes Park implemented the Simpleview Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System, which is integrated with the VisitEstesPark.com website. The Simpleview CRM, created specifically for destination marketing organizations, allows Visit Estes Park to centralize all operational data and as a result, work more cohesively across all aspects of the DMO. In 2016, VEP worked with Simpleview to add features and enhancements to the CRM to create greater efficiency and expand applications of the software.

CRM - Stakeholder Relations & Communications

The CRM’s effectiveness is based on the concentration and housing of all DMO interactions in one system to allow communications to be more effectively integrated across Visit Estes Park’s operations. The following are organized within the CRM: partner records, website listings, communication logs, amenities, invoices, media articles, reports, site visits, local business host records, leads, consumer information (including e-newsletter signups, Contact Us records, Visitor Guide requests, and more), and event calendar data. The CRM allows Visit Estes Parks operations and efforts to be integrated, rather than isolated in several different databases. This enables the Visit Estes Park team to work more cohesively and efficiently.

The Simpleview CRM also allows all staff members to effectively review other facets of stakeholder engagement, including responsiveness to group leads, participation in media visits, and more.

CRM - Public Relations

The CRM system allows for easier and more in-depth tracking of media relations. This includes tracking of media articles, press visits and press relationship management. Articles can be entered into the CRM and tagged to stakeholder accounts. Similarly, when media representatives visit Estes Park we are able to distribute hosting leads, linking those experiences to the associated stakeholder account. All of these entries, articles, and visits are also linked to the journalist and publication accounts so that we can easily track how productive a particular visit, journalist, or publication has been for Estes Park’s media exposure. Communications are also tracked in the CRM, making it easy to report on and keep up with media connections and relationships. Stakeholder benefits, such as media tour participation and/or article mentions, are also tracked in the CRM and will be displayed in the extranet, so both the stakeholder and Visit Estes Park can see, at a glance, the impact of our media efforts.

By having a single system where we track communications with media and with stakeholders, the Visit Estes Park team is able to keep current on connections and communications made with each stakeholder. This vastly improves the efficiency of our stakeholder relations and enables us to be more informed on how each relationship is developing.

CRM - Group Sales & Services

Features now available within the Visit Estes Park CRM have greatly improved reporting for the group sales business. Several reports, including leads sent to stakeholders and leads pending, are available in real-time in the CRM. This allows Visit Estes Park to more effectively monitor lead status information for each individual stakeholder. The communications feature makes it possible to track when the lead was sent, to see which stakeholder received the lead, and to continue communications with those stakeholders as additional requests are made by the group guest. This tracking through the CRM communication feature creates a clearer picture of the steps taken by Visit Estes Park to assist the stakeholder in booking the group.

This enhanced level of communication also extends to the Extranet, in which stakeholders are now able to track their leads from Visit Estes Park. By responding to leads via the Visit Estes Park Extranet, a stakeholder provides information which can then be used to better assist the guest. The collaboration between Visit Estes Park and the business stakeholder increases the potential for group business conversion. In addition, response data entered by stakeholders builds a more accurate record for each lead and allows Visit Estes Park to supply stakeholders with more definitive results.

Allowing increased opportunities for Visit Estes Park and our stakeholders' group sales managers to share information, and housing this information in one place, results in a better picture of how Visit Estes Park provides value to our stakeholders. It also gives Visit Estes Park a more realistic picture of how our group market business is being captured, leading to more effective and efficient destination-wide group sales and services efforts.

International Trade

While international press/media relations is tracked the same as domestic, international trade efforts are managed in a separate area of the CRM. New in 2016, this area helps to collect, manage and track relationships with in-bound and out-bound tour operators in the US and abroad. VEP can also now send leads for international trade FAM trips via the CRM and receive responses to these leads via the Extranet. Making management for these leads more efficient for both VEP staff and our local tourism partners.

CRM 2017

The Visit Estes Park CRM has allowed the DMO to work more effectively, and the full utilization of this system will continue in 2017.

Visit Estes Park will make it a priority to work with stakeholders to encourage and sustain the use of the newly-enhanced extranet. This forum allows stakeholders to view the benefits of their partnership and engagement with the DMO, while also allowing the DMO to expand their communications' reach and education of the partner base.

Additionally, stakeholders are able to use the extranet to manage their listings, calendar events and coupons directly, improving efficiencies and reducing errors. By the end of this year, our stakeholder extranet is scheduled to be upgraded to a new version – Extranet 4.0. This upgrade includes a new look, with improved navigation, and increased functionality.

Group Sales & Services

Visit Estes Park's group sales and services operates as an inside-sales operation and an extension of local business partners' sales teams. The goal is to increase guest satisfaction by connecting them with businesses that can provide lodging, dining and activities. By providing exceptional customer service, quickly qualifying leads, sharing lead information with stakeholders, and following through with both partners and guests, VEP plays an important role in increasing group business to the area.


When first interacting with a guest, it is important to immediately create a personal and positive connection. We help define their vision and connect them with the partners who can deliver that experience. VEP checks back in with the guest to ensure their needs are met. By diligently communicating with the guest, they feel welcomed and supported by the Estes Park community and therefore will be more likely to reserve a stay and spend time and money in the

Estes Valley. Our goal is to make the guest feel that they have a friend in Estes with insider information who cares about their event from beginning to end.

Primary sources of leads include Estes Park Visitor Center (phone and walk-ins), Visit Estes Park's website and trade show attendance. In 2017, groups will continue to be provided with utmost service by VEP.

Key Performance Indicators

We will continue to track the return on investment for 28 performance measures on a monthly basis. Measurements include: Lodging tax, Town sales tax, media impressions, PR value, website & Jackrabbit lodging-referral performance, Official Visitor Guide, social media engagement, Visitor Center traffic, and Rocky Mountain National Park visitor counts, among others. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Report is updated monthly, posted on our website, and has explanations of performance results. The most recent KPI Report is as follows:

 Visit Estes Park The Destination Marketing Organization VisitEstesPark.com	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS						
	Year-to-Date through the Month of: July 2016						
	Month Data Collected	Year to Date 2014	Year to Date 2015	Year to Date 2016	Percent Change 2016 vs. 2015		
OVERALL PERFORMANCE							
Visit Estes Park (VEP) Lodging Tax	July	\$ 816,679.34	\$ 1,003,984.83	\$ 1,149,243.35	14.47%		
Seasonal VEP Lodging Tax (most recent)	Spr: Mar-May	-	\$ 231,908.85	\$ 253,618.98	9.36%		
Media Impressions	July	225,137,108	598,695,817	267,804,970	-55.27%		
PR Value	July	4,697,585	6,660,993	3,121,678	-53.13%		
Average PR Points Per Article	July	54.20	54.70	64.90	18.65%		
VISITESTESPARK.COM WEBSITE PERFORMANCE							
Sessions	July	793,600	863,240	1,058,619	22.63%		
Users	July	552,422	634,146	793,286	25.10%		
Page Views	July	2,765,729	2,854,128	2,664,683	-6.64%		
Average Pages Per Session	July	3.33	3.31	2.52	-23.87%		
Average Session Duration (minutes)	July	5.25	4.44	3.28	-26.13%		
JackRabbitt Lodging Referrals	July	242,203	382,123	364,279	-4.67%		
OTHER CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT							
Digital Visitor Guide Unique Readers	July	12,086	7,878	8,442	7.16%		
Digital Visitor Guide Page Views	July	580,933	400,154	398,926	-0.31%		
Visitor Guide Average Visit Duration (minutes)	July	6.70	7.26	6.46	-10.96%		
Marketing eNewsletter Subscribers* Total: 36,468	July	3,723	8,417	7,427	-11.76%		
Facebook Followers* Total: 106,165	July	11,967	4,608	8,251	79.06%		
Instagram Followers* Total: 14,511	July	1,269	2,346	5,671	141.73%		
Visitor Guides Mailed to Households	July	-	35,258	30,773	-12.72%		
OTHER COMMUNITY BAROMETERS							
Town of Estes Park: Total Sales Tax**	July	\$ 5,100,277.53	\$ 6,446,294.40	\$ 6,903,105.46	7.09%		
Town Sales Tax: Lodging	July	\$ 1,387,449.15	\$ 1,931,667.07	\$ 2,034,020.79	5.30%		
Town Sales Tax: Dining***	July	\$ 872,626.92	\$ 1,187,421.24	\$ 1,317,251.53	10.93%		
Town Sales Tax: Retail	July	\$ 946,392.66	\$ 1,183,518.70	\$ 1,242,312.13	4.97%		
VEP Lead Responses (Weddings, Groups, Corp., etc.)	July	not tracked	not tracked	169	-		
Stakeholder eNewsletter Subscribers* Total: 239	July	not tracked	not tracked	239	-		
Town Visitor Center: Visitor Count	July	207,127	210,850	246,307	16.82%		
RMNP Recreational Visitor Count	July	1,803,633	2,162,248	2,384,717	10.29%		
*Updated monthly.							
**On July 1, 2014, the Town sales tax rate increased by 1% for a period of 10 years.							
***Dining receipts reflect restaurants and liquor, excluding grocery stores (e.g., Safeway) and other food-related tax receipts.							
ROCKY MOUNTAIN LODGING REPORT							
Lodging Occupancy: Monthly Change				Average Lodging Rate: Monthly Change			
Occupancy in	July	2015	91.90%	Average Rate in	July	2015	\$ 211.62
Occupancy in	July	2016	89.40%	Average Rate in	July	2016	\$ 237.51
Difference in	July	2016	-2.50%	Difference in	July	2016	\$ 25.89
Lodging Occupancy: Year-to-Date Change				Average Lodging Rate: Year-to-Date Change			
YTD Occupancy	July	2015	51.20%	YTD Avg. Rate	July	2015	\$ 167.65
YTD Occupancy	July	2016	51.30%	YTD Avg. Rate	July	2016	\$ 182.40
YTD Difference	July	2016	0.10%	YTD Difference	July	2016	\$ 14.75

Board Meeting Date: 09/20/16

Notes:

(Italics represent new performance explanation language.)

Visit Estes Park Lodging Tax and Spring Season Tax: *The total amount received in July was 7.53% higher than last year. When adjusted for late payments, the increase is estimated to be slightly higher at 8.59%. Year to date, lodging taxes are up 14.47%. When adjusted for late payments, however, the increase is estimated at 10.28%.*

Media Impressions, PR Value, and PR Points: In 2015, we had multiple early stories with large reaches and PR values - CNN.com, Smithsonian Magazine (20 syndications), Dallas Morning News (23 syndications), etc. PR results are highly volatile and come in sporadically throughout the year. Over the months that follow, we expect the disparity between 2015 and 2016 results to improve. However, we have shifted into the Barcelona Principles as the key measurement - focusing on quality of stories in key publications rather than simply quantity/reach. This approach may mean that volume-based measures like ad value and impressions decline.

Websites Sessions: The increase in visitation to our website is due in part from engaging Facebook content. We are directing our Facebook following to our website with more blog posts and more visual content.

Website Users: *The data on users has been updated to show year-to-date totals only, rather than the cumulative total over time. While using more ads on Facebook that link to the site, it is expected to see an increase in visitation to our website. We have also been running YouTube ads that link to our site that could account for this increase.*

Page Views and Pages Per Session (average): *These have gone down because users are finding the content they are looking for more quickly and efficiently. Related content modules are set to be placed throughout the website and hopefully encourage further exploration of the website and help to make these less intentional visits more actionable.*

Average Session Duration (minutes): As the number of website sessions and users increases, there is often a fluctuation of other key performance indicators — average session duration will go down, bounce rate may rise, etc. Since more people are coming to the site, there is a greater amount of variance to how long people are staying on the site, how many pages they visit, etc. Click throughs from social media can also account for this drop as people visit consume content and leave.

JackRabbit Lodging Referrals: *With a decrease in page views and duration this may affect people reaching the referral process. Related content modules are set to be placed throughout the website and hopefully encourage further exploration of the website and help to make less intentional visits more actionable.*

Digital Visitor Guide Unique Readers, Page Views, Visit Duration, and Mailed to Households: Digital visitor guide readership continues to pace well. The company hosting the digital guide says our readership is "outstanding in the industry." As this is the first year with this vendor, there are no residual users of the digital guide. In addition, in May, we learned of a miscommunication between the Colorado Tourism Office and Eagle-XM that resulted in the fulfillment house not receiving names and addresses of Visitor Guide requests in April or May. Those requests were recaptured in June, and thus the trend of a steep YTD decline in mailed guides has started to reverse.

Marketing eNewsletter Subscriber Growth: *The data on subscribers has been updated to show year-to-date totals only, rather than the cumulative total. Compared to last year, we are down in growth. However, growth varies month to month and a push on our social channels is underway to help correct this dip.*

Facebook Followers: *The data on followers has been updated to show year-to-date totals only, rather than the cumulative total over time, which is now shown in a footnote. Through strategic features, partnerships, and user-generated content, VEP's Facebook following continues to grow. Summer travel and planning has helped with this growth as social channels are becoming part of the planning process.*

Instagram Followers: *The data has been updated to show year-to-date totals only, rather than the cumulative total. Through strategic features, partnerships, and user-generated content, VEP's following continues to grow. Engaging #EstesPark through liking and commenting also helps to increase the following.*

VEP Lead Responses: Group leads originate from VisitEstesPark.com reunions, weddings, and meeting pages where guests complete a group inquiry form. VEP considers a group to consist of 14 people or more. In addition, VEP is including leads from the Estes Park Wedding Association in 2016.

Stakeholder eNewsletter Subscribers: *The data has been updated to show year-to-date totals only, rather than the cumulative total over time.*

Visitor Center - Visitor Count: The year-to-date increase at the Visitor Center indicates an increase in new visitors coming to Estes Park, since return visitors are less likely to enter the Visitor Center.

Local, Regional, National Advocacy & Professional Development

Actively engaged in leading industry associations, conferences, meetings and organizations.

- Four staff members (Elizabeth Fogarty, Brooke Burnham, Michael Bodman, and Abi Huebner) attended the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) Conference in 2016.
- Elizabeth Fogarty continues with CDME certification (Certified Destination Management Executive). Phase 1 began at the 2015 DMAI Annual Conference. It is a program that must be completed within four years.
- Tourism Industry Association of Colorado (TIAC) 2016 reception was attended by Elizabeth Fogarty, Scott Webermeier, Steve Kruger, Jon Nicholas, and Adam Shake and community members.
- Governors Tourism Conference attended by Elizabeth Fogarty, Brooke Burnham, Suzy Blackhurst, Abi Huebner, Michael Bodman, and Josh Harms.
- Michael Bodman is pursuing Google Analytics' Individual Qualification (IQ) certification.
- The Assembly – Year Round Mountain Tourism Symposium, sponsored by DestiMetrics, LLC, was attended by Elizabeth Fogarty.
- Simpleview Summit – An annual conference for online tourism marketing, sales, and administration for destination marketing organizations was attended by Michael Bodman and Adam Concannon.
- Camp 9600, a content marketing summit, was attended by Elizabeth Fogarty and Brooke Burnham.
- Staff participated in community key initiatives and committees including Association Forum, Rotary, Economic Development Corporation, Performing Arts Center, Arts District, Cultural Arts Council, Estes in Bloom, Estes Park Centennial Team, Shuttle Committee, Events Committee, Community Wellness Committee, Front Range Travel Region Partnership, Mayor's Coffee Chat monthly meetings, County Commissioners monthly meeting, and others.
- Several meetings per year with the Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organizations (CADMO) attended by Elizabeth Fogarty.
- Annual Estes Park Tourism Summit.

**Estes Park Local Marketing District
2017 Operating Plan Budget**

	2015 Actual	2016 Budget	2016 Forecast Year End	2017 Budget
Revenues				
2% District Lodging Tax	\$ 1,902,901.74	\$ 1,749,419.41	\$ 1,928,910.63	\$ 1,871,043.31
Official Visitor Guide	\$ 183,414.50	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00
Stakeholder Services	\$ 273,105.85	\$ 305,154.47	\$ 314,502.94	\$ 314,502.94
Town of Estes Park Marketing Investment	\$ 25,000.00	-	-	-
Larimer County Marketing Investment	\$ 10,804.96	\$ 25,000.00	-	-
Larimer County Payment in Lieu of Tax (PILT)	-	\$ 3,421.96	\$ 4,814.03	\$ 4,814.03
Grants & Awards	\$ 39,402.94	\$ 20,000.00	-	-
Retained Earnings Reconciliation*	\$ 117,703.09	-	-	-
Other Income	\$ 5,955.00	-	\$ 618.09	-
Investment (Interest) Income	\$ 104.33	\$ 78.60	\$ 180.03	\$ 180.03
Total Revenues	\$ 2,558,392.41	\$ 2,293,074.44	\$ 2,439,025.72	\$ 2,380,540.32
Expenses				
Personnel Services	\$ 473,569.43	\$ 607,899.00	\$ 462,928.43	\$ 623,207.00
Marketing & Operations	\$ 1,677,897.40	\$ 2,051,933.36	\$ 2,074,727.51	\$ 2,165,422.73
Grants & Awards	\$ 62,190.95	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -
Total Current Expenses	\$ 2,213,657.78	\$ 2,684,832.36	\$ 2,562,655.94	\$ 2,788,629.73
Total Expenses	\$ 2,213,657.78	\$ 2,684,832.36	\$ 2,562,655.94	\$ 2,788,629.73
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expenses	\$ 344,734.63	\$ (391,757.92)	\$ (123,630.22)	\$ (408,089.42)
Other Financing Sources (Transfers In)	-	-	-	-
Other Financing Uses (Transfers Out)	-	-	-	-
Increase (Decrease) in Fund Balance	\$ 344,734.63	\$ (391,757.92)	\$ (123,630.22)	\$ (408,089.42)
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 1,378,742.92	\$ 1,723,477.55	\$ 1,331,719.63	\$ 1,208,089.42
Ending Fund Balance**	\$ 1,723,477.55	\$ 1,331,719.63	\$ 1,208,089.42	\$ 800,000.00
Restrictions				
Strategic Reserve	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
TABOR Reserve: 3% of Expenses	\$ 66,409.73	\$ 80,544.97	\$ 76,879.68	\$ 83,658.89

*This is a budget reconciliation item related to one-time 2015 adjusting journal entries required by our auditor, who has confirmed that these 2015 adjusting journal entries have no negative impact on Visit Estes Park's compliance with applicable accounting and auditing requirements.

**Ending Fund Balance includes restricted funds.

Glossary

Ad Equivalency (AE): The dollar value of a public relations article or story as the estimated cost of purchasing an advertisement of the same size and reach in that publication. Visit Estes Park used TrendKite and a Burrelles Luce tracking service (via Turner PR) in 2016 and reports their estimated values with no multiplier.

Average Session Duration: The average amount of time a user has remained on a website in a single session/visit.

B-Roll: Raw video footage that can be used in multiple ways. Visit Estes Park uses b-roll to share with media and in video production projects.

Bounce Rate: The percentage of sessions that leave a site from the entry page without visiting other pages or taking a specified action (such as scroll to the bottom of a page, indicating they consumed the content). The bounce rate can be calculated for the website as a whole, by page or by keyword.

Click-Through Rate (CTR): The number (%) of users who click on a specific link out of the total users that view a page, email, or advertisement. It is commonly used to measure the success of an online advertising campaign, a piece of content, or the effectiveness of email campaigns.

Content: Information shared – typically online – via photos, videos, articles, blog posts, webpage copy (text), social media posts, etc.

Content Management System (CMS): A computer application (software) that allows publishing, editing and modifying content, as well as website maintenance from a central interface. Such systems also provide tools to manage workflow in a collaborative environment.

Conversion: A metric of a user's or consumer's intent to purchase. Without direct product sales on VisitEstesPark.com, non-sale conversions — such as clicks to 'Book Now' buttons, e-newsletter sign-ups, listing click-throughs, etc. — are used to measure the success of the website, a particular marketing effort, a campaign, etc.

Creative Assets: Elements used in advertising and marketing, such as photos, video, b-roll, graphics, etc.

Customer relationship management (CRM): A software application used to manage a company's interaction with current and potential customers. It often involves using technology to organize, automate, and synchronize sales, marketing, customer service, and technical support.

Deskside Tours: A series of meetings with members of the media in their location over a set period of time. VEP uses these meetings to present Estes Park to them, pitch their story ideas and learn about their needs with the goal of securing coverage/articles in the publications represented.

DMO: Destination Marketing Organization and/or Destination Management Organization

EALA: Estes Area Lodging Association. Their mission is to unify and promote the lodging and tourism industry in the Estes Area through marketing, services, education, communication, networking and cooperation with local businesses and to improve the profitability and success of all members and affiliates.

EDC: Estes Park Economic Development Corporation. Their mission is to build a stronger and more broadly-based economy and tax base; advise and assist existing local businesses to reach their full economic potential; attract new businesses that create primary jobs and new employment opportunities.

EPSFA: The Estes Park Sports & Fitness Association. Their vision is to grow the Estes Park sports and fitness culture through advocacy, promotion & collaboration.

EPWA: The Estes Park Wedding Association is a group of qualified wedding venues and wedding services, providing the very best in destination mountain weddings.

EVPC: Estes Valley Partners for Commerce. Their mission is to support existing and future business in order to drive economic sustainability, while enhancing the quality of life within the Estes Valley.

Entry (Landing) Pages: An entry page, or landing page, is the page on which a user entered a website. Such pages are often customized for ad campaigns to present users with a specific set of content to drive specific conversions.

Glossary Cont'd.

FAM Trip or Visit: Short for “familiarization trip”, a FAM brings those who are unfamiliar with or have outdated perceptions of Estes Park to the destination to experience first-hand. Visit Estes Park currently conducts FAM trips for media (domestic and international), influencers, front-line staff or volunteers, and international travel trade (tour operators). DMOs also conduct FAMs for meeting, domestic tour, or event planners.

Impressions: A term that typically refers to page views, impressions reference the number of times an ad, media article, or page is viewed. This does not mean a click on the ad, merely a view of the ad or page. Also see **Unique Impressions**.

Influencers: Individuals with a large and/or strong online following through their website, blog and/or social media channels. Visit Estes Park engages with influencers online and hosts them to share information, experiences or visuals on Estes Park with their followers. Most higher-value influencers charge for their time, as well as for creating and/or sharing content.

Keyword Search: The words and phrases that users enter into a search engine to find online information or a website. Organic keywords are the exact phrases or words that users type into the search engine that brought up a particular site in the results. Paid keywords are the words and phrases an advertiser bids on in SEM, triggering an ad to appear in the user’s search results.

Local Tourism Partners: Also referred to as ‘stakeholders,’ these are businesses, organizations, or individuals with a vested interest in Estes Park tourism and/or Visit Estes Park’s efforts.

Media:

In public relations: A term used to refer to members of the press, **influencers** or other writers/journalists.

In advertising: Media refers to the placement of ads, such as magazines, broadcast/radio, newspaper, digital, social media, SEM, etc. “Media plan” refers to the location, frequency, type and size of ads we plan to purchase for a year or campaign. “Media buy” could refer to the media plan or a specific ad purchase with a particular partner or outlet.

Out of Home: Advertising media that must be viewed outside the household (billboards, street furniture, shopping carts, skywriting, theatre advertising, etc.)

Open Rate: Open rate is a measure of how many email recipients open (or view) a particular email campaign (e-newsletter). The open rate is normally expressed as a percentage, and we calculate it as follows: A 20% open rate would mean that of every 10 emails delivered to the inbox, 2 were actually opened.

Organic Search (Traffic): Website traffic from non-paid online search engine results. Sometimes called natural search.

Page Views: Counted when an individual **user** observes a particular webpage, either the first time (unique view) or when a user refreshes or returns to a page. This metric is used to measure the number of views a page receives showing its effectiveness or popularity.

Pages Per Session: The average number of pages a user visits while on a website in each session/visit. This metric is used to measure how engaging the site’s content is overall.

Paid Search Traffic: The online traffic (number of sessions) originating from a search-engine-marketing (SEM) campaign to the website being advertised. This metric is reported by an analytics program, typically Google Analytics.

Pay-Per-Click: See Search Engine Marketing

Real Time: When a communication happens or information is updated as the data is received, as opposed to being delayed in any way.

Referral: The number of sessions transferred from one website to another. In JackRabbit Book Direct, these are counted when a user clicks on any Jackrabbit/BookDirect listing (check availability button, etc.) and is directed to the business’ reservation system or website.

Glossary Cont'd.

Responsive Website Design: Responsive web design (RWD) is an approach to web design aimed at crafting sites to provide an optimal viewing and interaction experience—easy reading and navigation with a minimum of resizing, panning, and scrolling—across a wide range of devices (from desktop computer monitors to mobile phones).

RMNP: Rocky Mountain National Park

Search Engine: A web-based application, such as Bing or Google, used to search for online content or information.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM): Paid keyword advertising via search engines, typically sold on a bidding basis, enabling the purchase of website placement in the search engine results for a particular word or phrase. Also known as 'pay-per-click' (PPC).

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): The process of affecting the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's unpaid results - often referred to as "natural," "organic," or "earned" results.

Sessions: The total number of visits to a website, counted each time a **user** visits a site, page, app, etc.

Stakeholders: See "Local Tourism Partners"

Unique Impressions: The number of different visitors to a webpage within a 24 hr. period. Calculated to filter out **users** who visit the same page several times in one session.

Unique Monthly Visitors (UMV): An estimate or reported number of unique **users**, or individuals, on a website, social media page, webpage, blog site, etc. For PR reporting, Visit Estes Park uses UMV numbers to estimate reach for a particular online press article, as reported by Burrelles Luce or TrendKite (via Turner PR). Often UMV numbers are self-reported to the reporting agencies by the media outlet/publication.

Users: The number of individual users who have visited a website. This is normally less than the "sessions" metric as it relies on cookies to determine if that user visited a site more than once in the specified time frame.