



TRAVEL ALBERTA 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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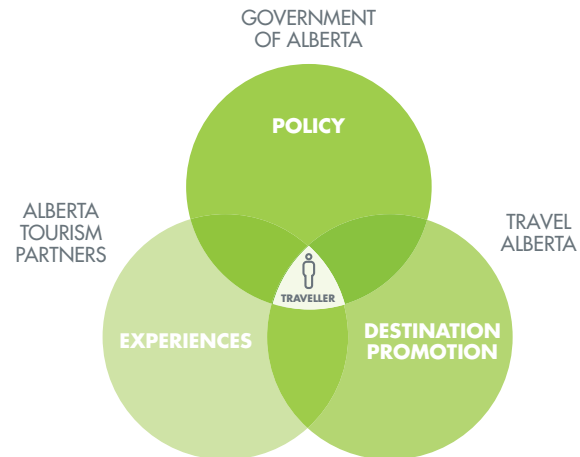
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THE BIG PICTURE

WHO WE ARE

Travel Alberta is the destination promotion organization of the Government of Alberta. Established as a Crown corporation on April 1, 2009, we operate under authority of the *Travel Alberta Act* within the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Innovation (formerly Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism).

WORKING TOGETHER



WHAT WE DO

We grow Alberta's visitor economy by promoting Alberta as a place to travel, work, live, play, invest and learn. Working with Alberta businesses from all regions of the province, we leverage our breathtaking landscapes and world-class hospitality to develop unique experiences for travellers to enjoy. We use leading-digital-marketing techniques to showcase these experiences on the world stage, and we work with travel trade partners around the world to promote Alberta as a must-see destination.

Our team builds on our partnerships with tourism organizations, private industry, airlines and airports, as well as international travel providers to drive visitation and expenditures to Alberta businesses — in all regions, in all seasons — and pave the way for continued, responsible growth now and in the future. Our work directly and indirectly benefits our province, providing jobs, encouraging economic investment and diversification, and increasing quality of life for Albertans. More than ever, the tourism sector will play an important role in Alberta's economic recovery and job creation.

OUR VISION

To inspire the world to experience Alberta.

OUR MISSION

To create economic value and prosperity with compelling invitations to explore Alberta.

OUR STRATEGY

Mobilize Team Alberta to double the visitor economy.

CONNECT

- #ExploreAlberta | #TourismsWorthIt
- industry.travelalberta.com
- atis.travelalberta.com
- @travelalbertaco
- linkedin.com/company/travelalberta
- info@travelalberta.com
- @travelalbertaco

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Travel Alberta is pleased to present our 2019-20 Annual Report. It is like no other report we have ever written. In one short year we went from an \$8.2 billion industry to one that is examining ways to restart and rebuild from the impacts of COVID-19.

For the first three quarters of our fiscal year, Alberta's visitor economy was thriving. Our industry and its 20,000 tourism businesses continued to be an economic driver and diversifier, supporting nearly 68,900 jobs for hard-working Albertans. Through our partner engagement and continued commitment to developing and implementing best practices, Travel Alberta worked with tourism partners to develop new experiences in every region of the province and promote Alberta nationally and internationally.

In January 2020, everything started changing quickly, as the pandemic began sweeping across countries and continents, effectively shutting down the world economy. In a matter of weeks, planes were grounded, businesses closed, and the travel and tourism industry came to a stop.

The Travel Alberta team quickly mobilized, connecting with partners to determine their immediate needs, and shifting from international promotional activities to supporting the Government of Alberta's actions to protect Albertans. Our "Stay Home. Stay Healthy." campaign encouraged Albertans to do their part to prevent the spread. As the province began to re-open with its phased approach, we focused on responsible inspiration through our "Worth the Wait" messaging to encourage Albertans to explore their own province as health conditions allowed.

Turning the page to a new fiscal year, Travel Alberta has continued our work in support of our industry, from developing tools and resources to help our Team Alberta partners navigate this difficult time, to creating our Alberta (re)Bound Strategy to reinvigorate the province's visitor economy.

Global tourism is facing its most formidable challenge yet, however, the Government of Alberta, together with Travel Alberta, is committed to helping Alberta's tourism industry recover. Travel Alberta is providing input for the 10-Year Tourism Strategy that is being led by the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Innovation. This new strategy will address current conditions and ensure there is a solid plan in place to rebuild Alberta's tourism industry, while laying the groundwork for long-term growth.



A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink.

LINDA A. SOUTHERN-HEATHCOTT

BOARD CHAIR
TRAVEL ALBERTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STRATEGIC PLAN



MOBILIZE TEAM ALBERTA TO GROW THE VISITOR ECONOMY*



GROW TOURISM REVENUES

Invest in Alberta's industry-led initiatives to support provincial growth.
Drive incremental revenue from high-potential markets and segments.
Leverage tourism innovators to create new opportunities in the province.



STRENGTHEN ALBERTA'S COMPETITIVE POSITION

Support provincial economic diversification strategy by strengthening awareness of the value of the visitor economy.
Develop a critical mass of experience offerings.
Evolve into a destination brand for Alberta.






DRIVE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Shape the organization to ensure responsiveness, agility, and relevance for the future.
Uphold Travel Alberta's reputation as an industry leader and trusted partner.

*New Government of Alberta goal: \$20 billion by 2030 as part of the development of a new 10-Year Tourism Strategy for Alberta prior to onset of COVID-19.

2019-20 CORPORATE SCORECARD

As a data-driven organization, Travel Alberta relies on key performance indicators to measure success. Our balanced scorecard aligns business activities to the vision and strategic direction of the organization and enables us to measure organizational performance.

FOCUS AREA	WHAT WE MEASURE	2018-19 ACTUALS	2019-20 TARGET	2019-20 ACTUALS	STATUS
 GROW TOURISM REVENUES	Booked room nights	2,313,652	2,300,000	2,522,428	9.6% above target
	Qualified travellers	3,461,469	2,822,516	2,376,696 ¹	-15.8% of target
 STRENGTHEN ALBERTA'S COMPETITIVE POSITION	Marketing Performance Index	101	100	103 ²	3% above target
	Number of new experiences (annually) – export and market ready	72	75	87	16% above target
	Industry satisfaction	75%	75%	79%	4% above target
 DRIVE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE	Team member engagement	80%	80%	83% ³	3% above target/ 3% over 2018
	Maintain general and administrative costs below 10% of total Travel Alberta budget	6.6%	<10%	6.9%	Achieved

¹ Annual Qualified Travellers result fell short of projections due to in-year budget reductions in the second and third quarters in the Alberta Regional and Canada long-haul markets. Pausing all consumer marketing channels globally in March due to COVID-19 also had an impact as this is typically our ramp-up period in some markets.

2019/20 QT Target = 2.8M

2019/20 QT Result = 2.4M

² Marketing Performance Index (MPI) is a calculated score of many indicators measuring direct-to-traveller marketing performance in driving awareness, consideration and visit intent. The MPI is a performance measure for Canada, the U.S., U.K. and China and a performance indicator for other markets globally. Travel Alberta developed the MPI and launched the tool in 2015.

³ Team member engagement refers to the overall workplace satisfaction rating of Travel Alberta team members. Employee engagement is measured through an annual survey and includes categories such as work-life balance, open communication, learning and development, and leadership.

FISCAL 2019-20 YEAR AT-A-GLANCE

MAY 28-31, 2019 **RENDEZ-VOUS CANADA TOURISM MARKETPLACE TORONTO**

Alberta partners conducted 2,966 appointments with international travel buyers

AUGUST 11-15, 2019 **GOMEDIA OTTAWA**

Alberta tourism businesses showcased their experiences, holding 400 appointments with international travel media

AUGUST – OCTOBER 2019 **WINTER MARKETING CAMPAIGN WITH WESTJET THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Campaign in the United Kingdom to support winter seasonal service from London to Calgary resulting in 12.4 million impressions (number of times the campaign was seen)

NOVEMBER 17-20 **CANADA'S WEST MARKETPLACE RICHMOND, B.C.**

Showcasing Western Canada tourism products to international and domestic tour operators and buyers

MARCH 9-12, 2020 **SHiFT CALGARY**

One of Travel Alberta's most popular training programs, partnered with Tourism Calgary to deliver experience development program

MAY 27-JUNE 2, 2019 **TOURISM WEEK CANADA**

Shone a spotlight on tourism in Alberta and its positive impact on the economy

ULTIMATE TRAVELLERS PROJECT

In-depth research to identify Alberta's highest-potential customers and stimulate future growth and industry profitability

OCTOBER 27-29, 2019 **20TH ANNUAL TRAVEL ALBERTA INDUSTRY CONFERENCE**

The conference was attended by 500 tourism industry professionals

DEVELOPMENT OF A 10-YEAR TOURISM STRATEGY FOR ALBERTA

More than 700 tourism partners participated in stakeholder engagement sessions while 600 Albertans completed an online survey

MARCH 2020 **COVID-19 RESPONSE**

Worked with Government of Alberta to communicate safety messages to Albertans and developed resources and support measures to help tourism partners through the pandemic

HOW TOURISM WORKS AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER

DIRECT, INDIRECT AND INDUCED IMPACTS OF TOURISM. A CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The Andersons, a Grande Prairie couple and their two children, take a road trip to Castle Provincial Park for their summer vacation. They moved to Alberta five years ago from British Columbia and have heard great things about the region but haven't gotten around to visiting.

The family plans most of their vacation online, but also want to leave some space in their itinerary for unplanned activities. They stop at attractions along the way, eat in local restaurants, and stay overnight in Red Deer so they can take in some of the sights with friends. The next day they stop in Pincher Creek to pick up a few provisions they forgot to buy at home.

While on a hike in Castle Provincial Park, they run into some locals who suggest they visit Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park, recently named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. They are keen on learning about the culture and history of the area, so they plan a day trip, making pit-stops and spending money along the way.

This is the “direct” impact on the visitor economy: travellers spending money at businesses, boosting the local economy and creating jobs. These businesses are supported by outside vendors such as cleaning, maintenance and food-production companies. This is known as the “indirect” impact of tourism spending.

The employees hired by local businesses and their vendors now have money to spend on clothes, food, transportation and entertainment. They also pay taxes, contributing to the well-being of their communities. This is the “induced” impact of the visitor economy.

Finally, as the Andersons post their experiences to social media and share them with their friends and family, more people are inspired to experience Alberta attractions and hidden gems, generating economic growth and jobs across the province.



Writing-on-Stone/
Āisínai'pi Provincial Park



Bar U Ranch

FOCUS AREA

GROW TOURISM REVENUES

Travel Alberta works with our government partners, communities, and destination marketing organizations to develop authentic experiences and itineraries to attract travellers to all areas of the province, in all seasons, to drive revenue.

FOCUS AREA	WHAT WE MEASURE	2018-19 ACTUALS	2019-20 TARGET	2019-20 ACTUALS	STATUS
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COOPERATIVE MARKETING INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Through the Cooperative Marketing (Co-op) program, Travel Alberta invests in tourism businesses. Funding was matched by the recipient organizations, allowing the partnership to leverage Travel Alberta's support to grow their business and drive return on investment. This program was paused in June 2019, pending the passing of the Government of Alberta budget. Applications already submitted and approved prior to the pause totalled \$3.9 million. In response to the extraordinary circumstances and challenges that tourism businesses were dealing with in our province, Travel Alberta relaunched the Cooperative Marketing Investment Program (newly named Cooperative Investment Program) in early 2020. The redesigned program assists tourism operators and regions across Alberta to RESTART consumer marketing activities and aids in the development of traveller products, experiences, and packaging in a COVID-19 travel environment.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM

Indigenous tourism has the power to protect and share culture, language, and traditions, and there is a growing demand for authentic Indigenous and cultural experiences by Albertans and visitors to our province. Growing Indigenous tourism in Alberta is a strategic priority for Travel Alberta as well as the provincial and federal governments. In 2019, Travel Alberta entered its second year of a three-year partnership agreement with Indigenous Tourism Alberta (ITA) to support its promotional strategies. ITA hosted its first Indigenous Tourism Summit on April 2, 2019. Attended by 200 industry partners from around the province, Travel Alberta supported the event through program development.

ALBERTA TOURISM INFORMATION SERVICE (ATIS)

Ninety-nine per cent of tourism businesses are small- to medium-sized with limited marketing budgets. The ATIS is a free web platform that helps Alberta tourism operators increase their online exposure while connecting their content to travellers.

80%

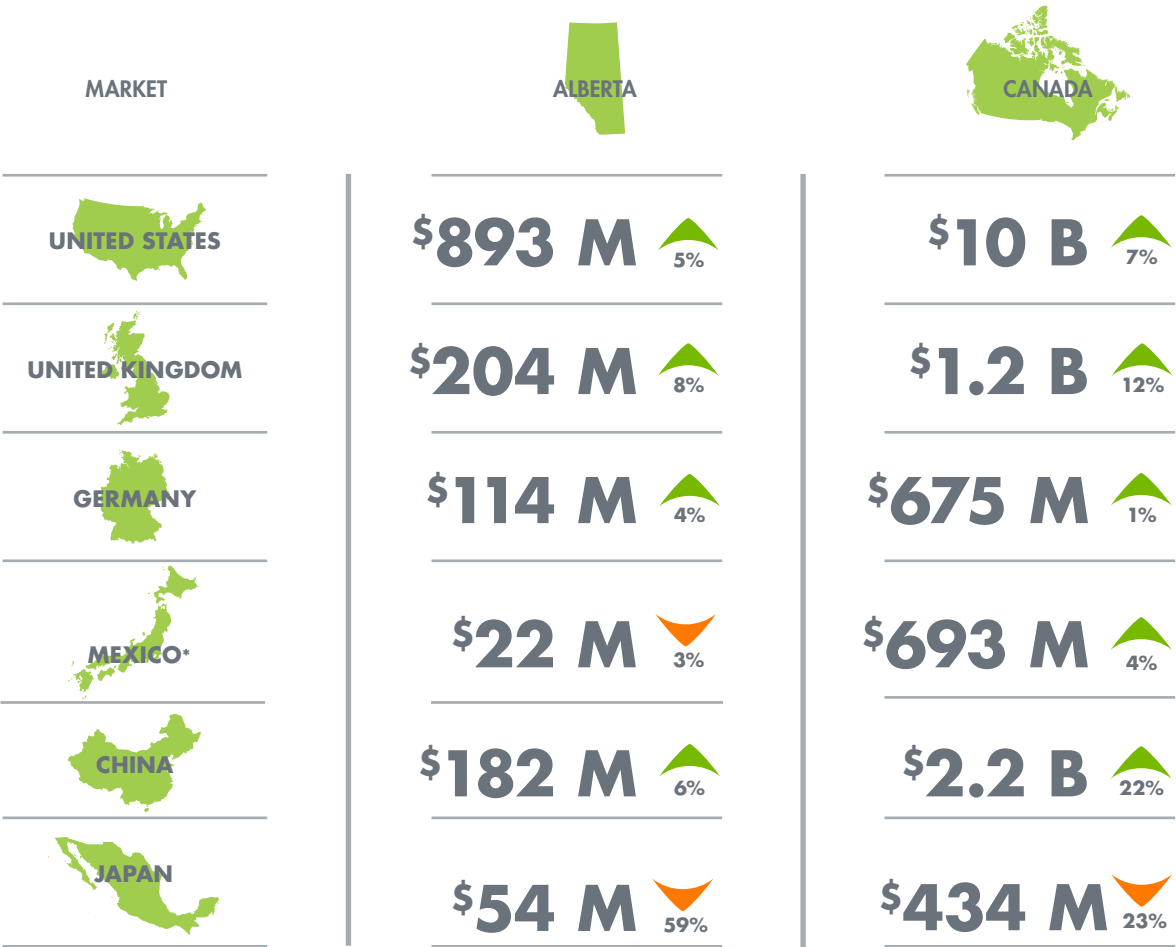
OF TOURISM
BUSINESSES USE
ATIS TO LIST EVENTS
AND OFFERS ON
TRAVELALBERTA.COM

Unique in Canada, ATIS enables tourism businesses to leverage Travel Alberta's networks by entering their offers, events, and detailed experience information into a central database that is then used by Travel Alberta websites nationally and internationally to drive direct leads to businesses. ATIS provides a competitive advantage for Alberta businesses and is integral to our marketing initiatives.



Maligne Canyon,
Jasper National Park

2018 INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EXPENDITURES



Source: Alberta - Statistics Canada, International Travel Survey 2018
*Small sample size. Data contain high margin of error and are subject to significant year-over-year fluctuations.

ALBERTA TOURISM INDICATORS

Numbers represent year-over-year change from 2018-2019



+1.8%

PASSENGER ARRIVALS
AND DEPARTURES
AT YYC AND YEG



+2.4%

FOOD SERVICES
AND DRINKING
PLACES RECEIPTS



2.5%

NATIONAL PARK ATTENDANCE
(BANFF, JASPER AND
WATERTON LAKES ONLY)¹



-1.8 PTS

ALBERTA
OCCUPANCY RATE
(EXCLUDING RESORTS)



-1.1%

EMPLOYMENT
(ACCOMMODATION
AND FOOD SERVICES)²



-0.3%

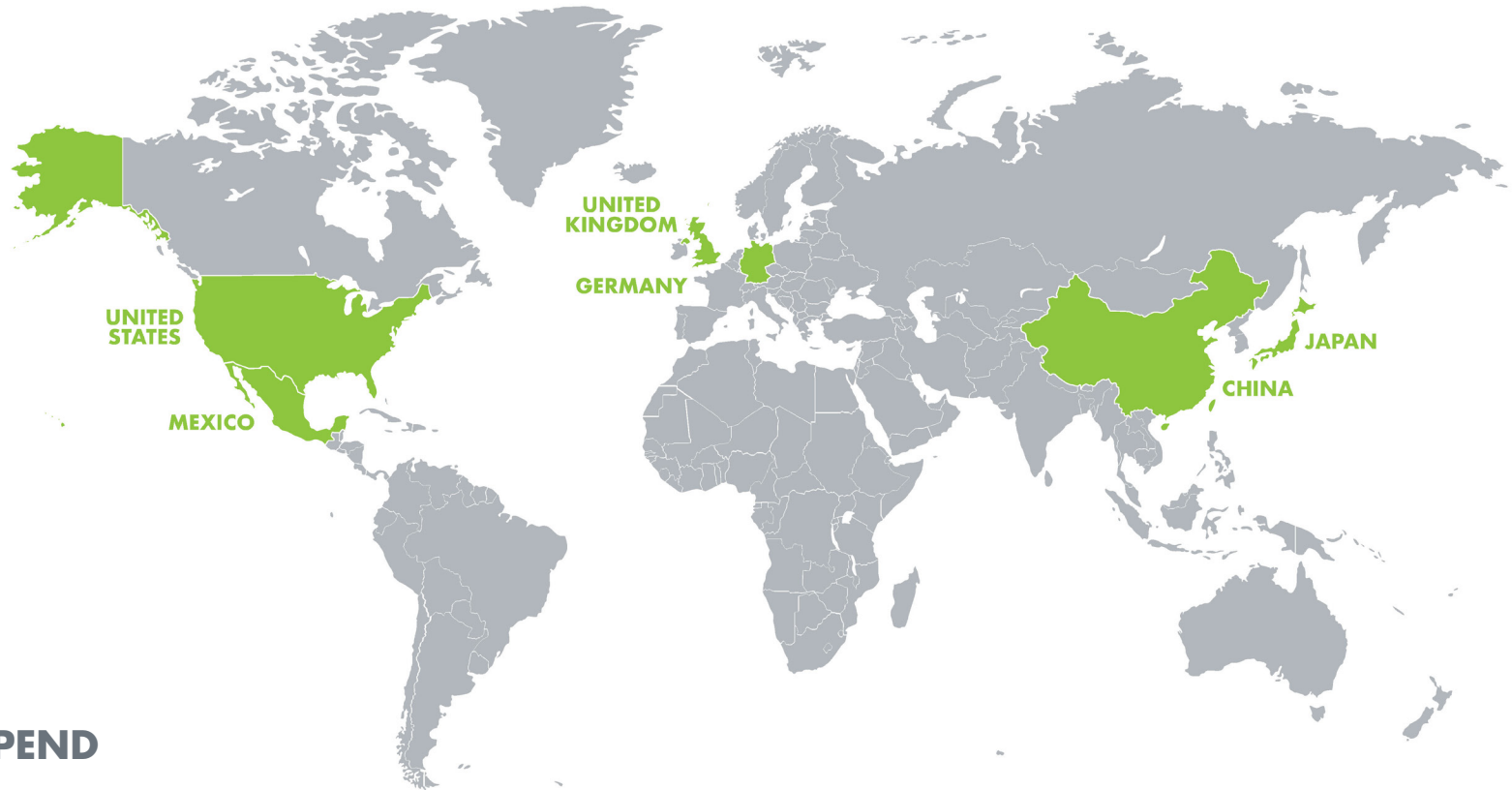
VISITS TO
HISTORIC SITES
AND MUSEUMS²

Source: Alberta Tourism Market Monitor (2019)
1. National park attendance in 2017 saw record numbers from Canada 150 free admission.
2. Continued economic instability in Alberta resulted in fewer Albertans travelling within the province.

DRIVING INTERNATIONAL REVENUE

While international visitors make up only six per cent of arrivals to Alberta, they contribute 27 per cent of tourism expenditures. Before temporarily suspending international marketing strategies in March 2020 due to COVID-19, Travel Alberta invested in markets with the greatest potential for immediate and long-term growth.

Travel Alberta chooses our international investments based on evidence-based research. Using historical traveller trends (visitor numbers and expenditures), the maturity of the market (including population size, demographic information and economic data), direct air access and international connectivity (in the case of international markets), and travel motivators (how and when travellers will decide to book a trip to Alberta), we develop strategies to make the most efficient and effective investments in international markets.



2.2M
INTERNATIONAL VISITS IN 2018

\$2.2B
EXPENDITURES
TO ALBERTA

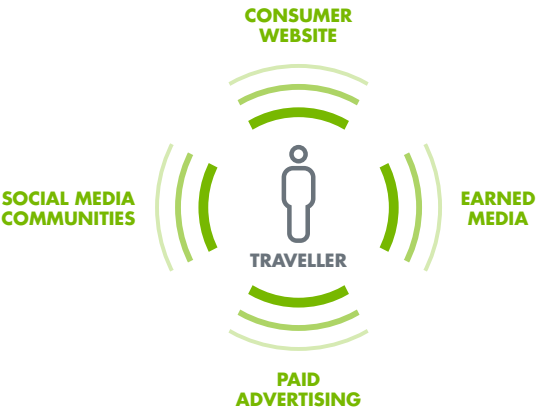
Source: Alberta - Statistics Canada, International Travel Survey; Canada (2018)

Direct-to Consumer Marketing

Travel Alberta promotes the province to new and potential travellers around the world. With more options than ever before, travellers are in control of their trip-planning experience. They are increasingly turning to digital and social media resources to plan and book their trip. Our destination promotion efforts focus on being present when and where travellers are looking. We see the greatest performance

of leads to Alberta tourism partners when we activate in multiple distribution channels.

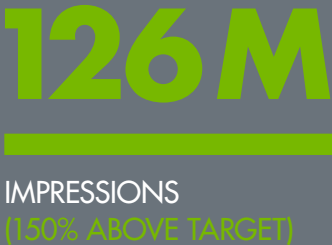
Destination promotion starts with compelling content. We create photos, videos, and stories specifically for our target audience. Using traveller insights, we determine the optimal mix of channels for distribution. We use social media, search engine marketing, advertising, publishers, and influencers to encourage travellers who don't know about Alberta to fall in love with our destination and engage with us. We inspire these engaged travellers with more content so they have opportunities to share Alberta with their friends. Because of the nature of digital and social media, these interactions attract a whole new set of potential travellers.



2019 Germany Winter Campaign

In partnership with Destination Canada, Air Canada, and tour operator partners, Travel Alberta led an extremely successful multi-channel winter marketing campaign in Germany. Running from September 2019 through February 2020, the objective of the campaign was to drive consideration of the Canadian Rockies and inspire German travellers to book winter vacation packages to Alberta.

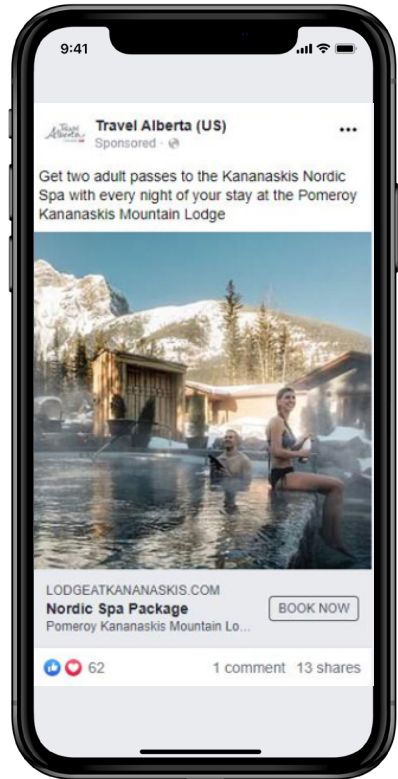
Ads ran across a variety of paid social channels, YouTube, online banner ads, and monthly email newsletters and featured packages from eight Germany-based tour operators as well as direct flights from Frankfurt to Calgary with Air Canada. The campaign featured a variety of unique Alberta winter experiences such as dog sledding, ice walking, skiing and snowshoeing.



Creating Demand Around Alberta

We continued our focus on generating interest in lesser-known parts of the province, elevating winter as a prime time to travel and influencing travel outside the peak summer season.

Travel Alberta promoted Alberta winter experiences in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Germany, and Mexico to generate demand for the winter season, using a mix of social media, search, and display tactics to reach travellers with compelling, relevant content. From April to December 2019, the campaigns delivered over **420,000 qualified travellers** (direct leads to industry partners).



Airline Relations

Travel Alberta continues to work with our airline and airport partners to attract and retain direct air service to the province. The collaboration of Alberta's tourism industry strengthens Alberta as a destination, which in turn increases direct air access into Alberta. In 2019, air service to Alberta from our key international markets increased nearly 120,000 seats.

Not only does Travel Alberta advocate for increased flight capacity into our province, but we also provide ongoing promotional support to our local airlines.

Travel Alberta supported WestJet's efforts to showcase Alberta at a trade and media event as part of the inaugural WestJet Dreamliner flight to London Gatwick on April 29, 2019. Travel Alberta partnered with WestJet to launch a joint campaign in the UK to support winter season service from London Gatwick to Calgary on the new 787 Dreamliner.

New direct services into the province are supported through all of Travel Alberta's promotions. In 2019, this included the following announcements:

MAY 17, 2019

WestJet launches its inaugural direct Dreamliner flight between Paris and Calgary

JUNE 1, 2019

WestJet launches its inaugural direct Dreamliner flight between Dublin and Calgary

DECEMBER 2019

Condor Airlines announces new direct, twice weekly service from Frankfurt to Edmonton

DECEMBER 2019

Air Canada announces daily non-stop service between Calgary and Boston

REACHING THE RIGHT AUDIENCE

In 2019, Travel Alberta continued to implement innovative strategies to promote our province to travellers around the world. This was achieved through strategic partnerships, tools and resources, and extensive research to understand our ideal customer.



Red Deer River

Alberta’s Ultimate Travellers

In alignment with our data-driven destination promotion practices, Travel Alberta led a comprehensive stakeholder engagement and analysis exercise to identify the travellers that can help us achieve our goals: stimulate sustainable growth and increase industry profitability across the province. This in-depth research builds on the findings of Destination Canada’s Explorer Quotient™ (EQ), which links traveller psychographics with their travel preferences, resulting in the development of two Ultimate Traveller personas – Curious Adventurers and Hotspot Hunters – which dig deeper to understand individual motivators and enable more focused targeting. Research demonstrates that both personas are attracted to the diverse, authentic experiences, and Travel Alberta had started focusing marketing efforts to reach these target audiences and drive additional revenue for the tourism sector before the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

18

DMO INTERVIEWS

6

FOCUS GROUPS

3

CITIES

2

COUNTRIES

Content Distribution

Travel Alberta partnered with Destination Canada’s 2019 consumer marketing programs in regions of the U.S., China, the U.K., and Japan. The programs focused on distributing new and existing content through market-specific publishers and Destination Canada’s owned channels to increase awareness of Alberta as a global travel destination and highlight the experiences our province has to offer.

ALBERTA CONTENT
RECEIVED A TOTAL OF

15.1 M

VIDEO AND ARTICLE VIEWS
(186% OF TARGET)

39,678

LEADS
(46% INCREASE OVER 2018-19)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic partnerships allow Travel Alberta to leverage the awareness and reach of strong brands globally. These important partners are critical to Travel Alberta's success in increasing distribution and ensuring the right content influences potential travellers and converts to sales.

Marketing Partnerships

Travel Alberta works with travel providers to increase the distribution of travel products, services, and experiences internationally and works in partnership with these important business partners to increase visitation, room nights, and revenue for Alberta. In 2019/20, marketing partnerships with travel trade in six international markets resulted in 2.5 million booked room nights with estimated economic impact of \$1.1 billion.

Education and Training

Travel Alberta conducts regular education sessions with travel trade to ensure Alberta is top-of-mind and easy to sell. These education sessions for international travel providers help to increase awareness of Alberta as a year-round travel destination, provide training on Alberta products and experiences, and diversify seasonality and regionality of travel.

6,787

TRAVEL PROVIDER STAFF TRAINED ACROSS TRAVEL
ALBERTA'S KEY TARGET INTERNATIONAL MARKETS



Pomeroy Kananaskis Mountain Lodge



ADVOCATES FOR TOURISM

Creator House

Travel Alberta partnered with Tourism Calgary on Creator House Calgary, building on the success of the inaugural Creator House in Banff (a North American first) last winter. This innovative program brought a select group of content creators to Calgary over three months (August to October, 2019) to independently explore and experience the city and promote the destination to their social media followers.

Creator House Banff won the top prize (best in show) at the W3 Awards, an international digital marketing competition, for social content and marketing.

“ Being a travel influencer myself for the past eight years at [HeckticTravels.com](https://www.hecktictravels.com), I know the struggle of having a jam-packed itinerary during a campaign. The idea behind Creator House is to open it up and give the creators free rein to develop the content that they would like while experiencing activities on their own terms. The content coming out of the campaign has been inspirational and you can really get the sense that the creators are relaxed and free. We are very thankful to Travel Alberta for collaborating with us to bring the idea to life. ”

DALENE HECK
HMI CEO

Travel Alberta Creator Community

In March 2019, Travel Alberta's content team launched its first social media ambassador program, the Travel Alberta Creator Community. Consisting of more than 50 Alberta-based content creators, including influencers, videographers, and bloggers from across the province, the group has ambassadors from the north (including Peace River and Grande Prairie), major cities, the Canadian Rockies and destinations in the south (including Lethbridge). Creators inspired visitation to Alberta, increased Travel Alberta's audience reach and provided the opportunity to engage with creators and tourism partners within our province. This is an incentive-based program (as opposed to paid) for creators to help facilitate content showcasing every corner of Alberta.

“ The Creator Community organized by Travel Alberta has been an incredible community in which I am honoured to be a part of. They have talented and diverse members—from wildlife and landscape photographers, to videographers and hikers, all of which highlight and promote unique aspects of Alberta. The events organized not only have given us the opportunity to meet all these remarkable creators but they have allowed us to experience and see new parts of this province as well as learn from guest speakers who have taught and inspired us to try new things. ”

ROBIN LAURENSEN
@MOTHERPIXELS



Programs Paused Due To Covid-19

- ▶ Business development trips, such as ITB Berlin (world's largest B2B tourism trade show) were cancelled.
- ▶ Influencer visits were cancelled due to travel restrictions.
- ▶ Japan sales mission, March 2020, cancelled due to travel restrictions and warnings.
- ▶ Training programs cancelled due to gathering restrictions but later replaced with webinars.
- ▶ Marketing partnerships paused.
- ▶ Promotions paused in international markets.
- ▶ Planning for Rendez-Vous Canada paused due to cancellation of the event.
- ▶ In partnership with five DMOs, project planning for China Reverse Sales Mission with marketplace component was cancelled.



Sulphur Mountain Gondola, Banff National Park

FOCUS AREA

STRENGTHEN ALBERTA’S COMPETITIVE POSITION

Travel Alberta works with our government partners, communities, and destination marketing organizations in all areas of the province to increase our competitive position and stand out as a bucket list destination around the world. This was achieved through several educational opportunities, programs, and investments to help Team Alberta businesses grow and thrive. We partner with the Tourism and Economic Development Division within the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Innovation to demonstrate the value of the industry and create new opportunities to grow Alberta tourism and diversify the economy.

FOCUS AREA	WHAT WE MEASURE	2018-19 ACTUALS	2019-20 TARGET	2019-20 ACTUALS	STATUS
STRENGTHEN ALBERTA'S COMPETITIVE POSITION	Marketing Performance Index	101	100	103 ²	3% above target
	Number of new experiences (annually) – export and market ready	72	75	87	16% above target
	Industry satisfaction	75%	75%	79%	4% above target

INDUSTRY STATUS

\$8.2 B
TOURISM
EXPENDITURES



35.2 M
PERSON VISITS

Source: Statistics Canada, International travel Survey (2018)
Statistics Canada's Visitor Spending Economic Impact Model; Statistics Canada
Business Counts 2018

ECONOMIC IMPACT

20,000
TOURISM
BUSINESSES

68,900
TOURISM JOBS
(FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT
EMPLOYMENT)

\$6.6 B
TO ALBERTA GDP
(DIRECT, INDIRECT AND
INDUCED)

\$1.1 B
TAX REVENUE
(FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND
LOCAL)

**10-YEAR TOURISM STRATEGY
FOR ALBERTA**

Travel Alberta worked closely with the Tourism and Economic Development Division to establish a framework for the creation of a 10-Year Tourism Strategy for the province. This strategy outlines the Government of Alberta's commitment to growing Alberta's tourism sector, including the future of Travel Alberta, and highlights the importance of tourism for the Alberta economy.

Stakeholder engagement workshops for the development of the strategy were hosted at the Travel Alberta Industry Conference on October 26, 2019, and then in Calgary and Edmonton January 13-17, 2020. During these sessions, industry partners provided valuable input and feedback to support the creation of a long-term strategy for Alberta.

In March 2020, the Government of Alberta pressed pause on the development of the 10-Year Tourism Strategy due to COVID-19, in recognition of the deep and significant impacts that the pandemic had, and continues to have, on Alberta's tourism industry.

1,300+

PARTNERS PARTICIPATED IN **EIGHT**
INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS
IN CALGARY AND EDMONTON AND
THE 10-YEAR TOURISM STRATEGY
INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY



Rouge Restaurant, Calgary

61%

INCREASE IN LINKEDIN
ENGAGEMENT OVER
2018-19

22%

INCREASE IN INDUSTRY
HUB WEBSITE VISITATION
(22% INCREASE OVER
2018-19)

TOURISM WEEK 2019

Travel Alberta leveraged the national grassroots initiative of Tourism Week to promote tourism's role as a major contributor to provincial job creation and economic growth and diversification and advance the #TourismWorks message on our corporate channels throughout the month of May 2019. This was an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the industry—from the tourism operators and hard-working Albertans who deliver a multitude of “goosebump” moments, to residents and communities that support the sector.

In addition to a robust traditional and social media plan, Travel Alberta invited media and tourism partners to participate in culinary tours in Calgary and Edmonton. Led by Alberta Food Tours, participants were taken on a journey to sample and learn about local food and celebrate local businesses in our province.

MOBILIZE TEAM ALBERTA

Through several educational opportunities, programs and investments, Travel Alberta worked with industry partners in all areas of the province to help Team Alberta grow and thrive.

In 2019, Team Alberta created 87 new reasons to visit Alberta. These ranged from expanding and curating existing experiences to new offerings such as culinary bike tours, unique horseback adventures, and authentic Indigenous experiences.

87

EXPERIENCES CREATED
IN 2019-20
(21% INCREASE OVER
2018-19)



Tourism Businesses Pivot in the Face of Adversity

Metis Crossing is the premier centre for Alberta Metis cultural interpretation, education, gatherings, and business development. Programs encourage active participation of visitors in activities, and promote an appreciation of the Metis people, customs and celebrations.

Metis Crossing expanded their programming by building a stunning Cultural Gathering Centre where visitors can learn and share the Metis story. A grand opening celebration for the new Cultural Gathering Centre was planned but the pandemic required Metis Crossing to change their plans due to restrictions on public gatherings. The Cultural Gathering Centre was successfully unveiled through a creative virtual tour instead.

SHiFT EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING PROGRAM

One of Travel Alberta's most unique and sought-after programs is the SHiFT Experiential Training Program. SHiFT focuses on developing tourism experiences around the province in all seasons using a combination of classroom training and immersive learning at new experiences created for the course by local businesses.

OF THE
**87 NEW
EXPERIENCES
CREATED
IN 2019-20,**

24

WERE
DEVELOPED BY
GRADUATES
OF THE SHiFT
PROGRAM

SHiFT participants experience new winter and year-round tourism products and services, then discover how to transfer successful, proven concepts to their own business. The SHiFT program leaves a legacy in each host community through the memorable experiences created and the partnerships that last much longer than the initial program. This allows us to strengthen Alberta's competitive position through the development of new market and export-ready opportunities in each location where we host a SHiFT session.

The 2020 program was held March 9-12, with Tourism Calgary as our host community partner. In 2019 SHiFT received an Award of Excellence for curriculum design from the Institute for Performance and Learning.

“ One of the best things that I took away from SHiFT was the way you think. Thinking more in terms of partnerships, the way you work together and being Team Alberta. We don't have to do it alone. ”

HEATHER DAVIS
UPLIFT ADVENTURES

2019-20 INDUSTRY SATISFACTION SURVEY

Each year we reach out to our Team Alberta partners to ensure Travel Alberta is providing relevant tools, support, and resources to help businesses thrive. Results of the annual Industry Satisfaction Survey help to inform our strategy moving forward.

79%

2019 INDUSTRY
SATISFACTION SCORE
(4% INCREASE OVER
2018-19)

90%

OF RESPONDENTS
AGREE TRAVEL ALBERTA
EFFECTIVELY PROMOTES
ALBERTA AS A DESIRABLE
PLACE TO VISIT

86%

OF RESPONDENTS WILL
CONTINUE TO USE
TRAVEL ALBERTA SERVICES

84%

OF RESPONDENTS
WOULD RECOMMEND
TRAVEL ALBERTA'S
SERVICES



Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

20th Annual Travel Alberta Industry Conference

Held October 27-29, 2019, in Banff, the 550 participants enjoyed a mix of innovative and engaging keynotes, break-out sessions relevant to their business, networking opportunities, and the annual Alto Awards ceremony — the premier opportunity to recognize and celebrate tourism innovators across Alberta. Travel Alberta's annual Industry Conference is an opportunity for Alberta's tourism

sector to come together, learn about best practices from all over the world, hear from thought leaders about the future of tourism, be inspired about the work that we get to do, and connect with colleagues to continue to build on the strength that makes up Team Alberta.

A RECORD

83

NOMINATION
SUBMISSIONS
WERE RECEIVED
FOR THE 2019
ALTO AWARDS

“ *It was a pleasure to attend, reconnect with industry peers, and learn in an energetic environment.* ”

**TRAVEL ALBERTA INDUSTRY
CONFERENCE ATTENDEE**

Certified Destination Management Executive Program and Scholarship

Travel Alberta is the first location outside the U.S. to host Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME) training courses in partnership with Destinations International. As the highest educational achievement in the tourism industry, the program helps ensure we are better positioned, individually and collectively, to meet the opportunities and challenges facing our industry. Travel Alberta receives a percentage of net revenue from courses held in Alberta toward our CDME scholarship fund, which is available to partners working for Alberta destination management organizations.

\$16K

IN SCHOLARSHIPS
PROVIDED IN 2019-20

“ *I'm very appreciative of Travel Alberta's support for this program, and for extending the scholarship to help me achieve the designation. It was a great experience with many applicable take-aways.* ”

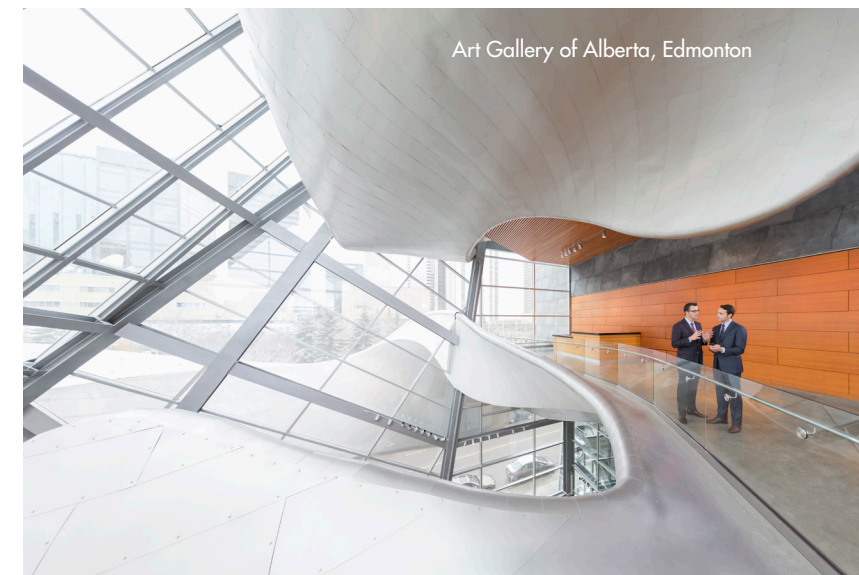
**CASSANDRA
MCAULEY**
VICE-PRESIDENT,
COMMUNICATIONS &
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT,
TOURISM CALGARY

Workshops and Webinars

Delivering relevant learning and development opportunities is a crucial part of Travel Alberta's strategy to ensure tourism businesses remain competitive in an evolving industry. Travel Alberta delivers our signature workshops, such as Experience Essentials and Partnering and Packaging, throughout the province, providing opportunities for industry partners in all regions of Alberta to participate.

27

WORKSHOPS
AND WEBINARS
HOSTED BY
TRAVEL ALBERTA
IN 2019





FOCUS AREA

DRIVE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

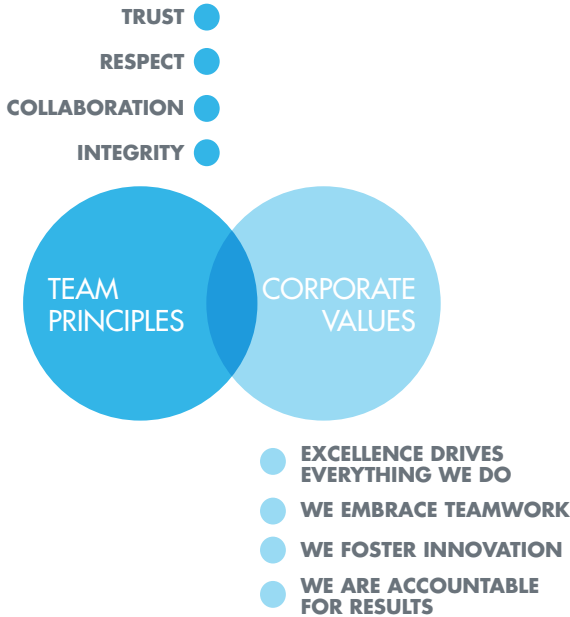
Our team members are passionate advocates for Alberta’s tourism industry, and it shows in our business results, industry relationships and culture.

FOCUS AREA	WHAT WE MEASURE	2018-19 ACTUALS	2019-20 TARGET	2019-20 ACTUALS	STATUS
DRIVE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE	Team member engagement	80%	80%	83% ³	3% above target/ 3% over 2018
	Maintain general and administrative costs below 10% of total Travel Alberta budget	6.6%	<10%	6.9%	Achieved

INVESTING IN OUR TEAM

Learning and Development

Travel Alberta promotes an innovative, performance-based culture, and we are committed to providing ongoing career and professional development opportunities to our team members, our most important asset. This ensures we are equipped to capitalize on industry trends that will help grow the sector, provide relevant support to industry stakeholders, and continue to position the industry as a job creator, economic diversifier and community builder.



Team Recognition

The **Alberta Experience Award** recognizes team members who demonstrate Travel Alberta's corporate values in their overall attitude, behaviour and accountability at work.

The **Crusader Award** is presented annually to a team member who demonstrates outstanding dedication and commitment to helping Travel Alberta achieve its mission and advocate for the tourism industry.

Culture Awards

Travel Alberta was named one of Alberta's Top 75 Employers for the fourth year in a row. Travel Alberta team members consistently rank the organization high on the annual workplace engagement scale, reflecting key strengths in the areas of leadership, learning and development, goals and alignment, diversity and inclusion and work-life balance.

Healthy Workplace Award

Travel Alberta's efforts to promote a healthy workplace for its team were recognized with the 2019 Canada's Healthy Workplace Month, Great Employers Award. Travel Alberta is one of only three organizations in Alberta, and 24 nationwide, to receive this award.



2019
Canada's
healthyworkplacemonth
Great Employer



TRAVEL ALBERTA'S 2019 CRUSADER LINDSAY GORDON

Lindsay is team-focused and process-driven and was an integral part of keeping finances and projects on track for the global marketing and business development teams in 2019-20. Her team members describe her as a very organized and an always-willing "financial rock star." Over her eight years at Travel Alberta, Lindsay has gained unparalleled knowledge of our industry and her winning combination of attributes support and guide her team's strategy.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Financial Transparency and Accountability

Operating in close concert with the provincial government requires excellence in reporting and governance and a commitment to transparency and accountability. It is an uncompromised standard at Travel Alberta, that every program and investment undertaken must demonstrate progress in achieving our stated business goals, mission and mandate. We continue to enhance internal controls and processes and adopt industry best practices.

Maximize Operational Performance

We are committed to responsible fiscal management and maximizing our shareholder’s return on investment. In 2019-20, Travel Alberta invested more than 71 per cent of its current funding allocation in direct marketing, industry services and support, and destination development activity.

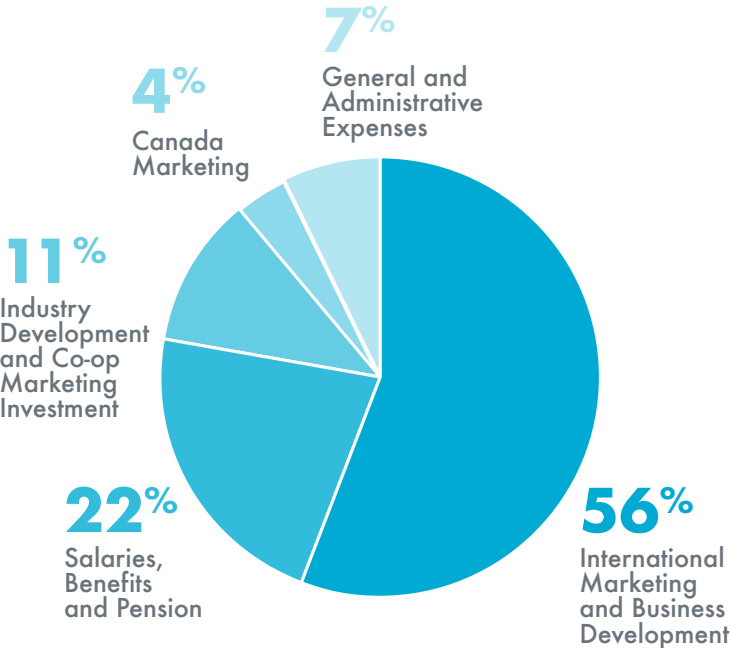
Travel Alberta’s performance reflects the successful execution of the organization’s tourism marketing strategy and investments

made in domestic, overseas, and high-growth markets. Since 2009, the corporation has aligned strategic goals to a corporate scorecard, further emphasizing our performance-based culture and commitment to transparency of the results of our objectives. Moving forward, performance metrics and data insights will continue to inform the strategic actions that are delivering value to our stakeholders, and which initiatives should be re-evaluated.



Fairmont Château Lake Louise, Banff National Park

2019-20 OPERATING BUDGET: \$41.4 M



FINANCIAL RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

FUNDING

In the 2019-20 fiscal year, Travel Alberta received annual marketing funding from the Government of Alberta totalling \$41.4 million.

\$41.4M

TRAVEL ALBERTA FUNDING FOR 2019-20

ACCOUNTABILITY

The *Travel Alberta Act* stipulates that the auditor for Travel Alberta is the Auditor General for the Government of Alberta. The Audit and Finance Committee of the Travel Alberta Board of Directors provides governance over financial matters and reporting, systems of internal controls, and the audit process while assisting the Board in fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities.

DISCLOSURE

In accordance with legislation administered by Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, Travel Alberta is committed to presenting the routine public disclosure of information to enhance public confidence by improving accountability and transparency. All detailed reports of expenses are publicly available at industry.travelalberta.com

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020 AND 2019 (in thousands)	2018-19 ACTUALS	2019-20 APPROVED BUDGET	2019-20 ACTUALS
REVENUES			
Government of AB Transfer	\$ 44,130	\$ 41,860	\$ 41,360
Investment Income	410	350	357
Premiums, Fees and Licences	295	390	291
Sponsorship	108	–	100
Revenue From Partners	639	450	394
TOTAL REVENUE	45,582	43,050	42,502
EXPENSES			
Global Marketing	30,416	29,997	29,183
Regional Industry Marketing	9,933	7,891	6,588
Corporate Operations	5,502	5,216	5,650
TOTAL EXPENSES	45,851	43,104	41,421
NET OPERATING RESULTS	(269)	(54)	1,081
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	6,604	–	6,335
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS AT END OF YEAR	\$6,335	–	\$7,416
SUSTAINABILITY FUND (NOTE 1)			
Balance, April 1, 2019 and 2020	6,441	6,240	6,240
Fund (Decrease)/Increase	(201)	–	1,137
BALANCE, MARCH 31, 2019 AND 2020	6,240	6,240	7,377

NOTE 1:
In 2019-20, Travel Alberta recorded an annual operating surplus that increased its sustainability fund by \$1,137Million. At the close of the fiscal year (March 31, 2020) the sustainability fund stood at \$7.4Million. Draws from the sustainability fund are approved by the Travel Alberta Board and the Government of Alberta’s Treasury Board.

Please refer to the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism’s [Annual Report](#) for full financial statements (pg. 110).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AS OF MARCH 31, 2020

The primary duty and responsibility of the Travel Alberta Board of Directors is to provide appropriate governance and strategic oversight, such that Travel Alberta fulfills its statutory mandate following good corporate governance practices.

Members of the Board, appointed by the Government of Alberta, were recruited from qualified applicants who collectively have the full range of competencies, experience or personal attributes required to provide effective governance of the Corporation.

The Board is subject to the provisions of the *Public Agencies Governance Framework*.

LINDA A. SOUTHERN-HEATHCOTT, ICD.D

CHAIR

President & Chief Executive Officer, Spruce Meadows Ltd.

SUROMITRA SANATANI, LL.B, ICD.D

BOARD MEMBER

Governance & HR Lead

KIREN SINGH, CFA, ICD.D

BOARD MEMBER

Audit & Finance Lead

DAVID MCKENNA

BOARD MEMBER

President, Banff Jasper Collection by Pursuit

NEIL YEATES

BOARD MEMBER



Medalta, in Medicine Hat's historic clay district

BOARD OF DIRECTOR LEADS

AS AT MARCH 31, 2020

GOVERNANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES

Governance and board nomination oversight duties:

- ▶ Monitor and make recommendations to the Board to enhance the effectiveness of Travel Alberta's corporate governance
- ▶ Monitor and make recommendations concerning applicable legislation, regulations and Ministerial direction or Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) concerning the governance of Travel Alberta
- ▶ Monitor and make recommendations concerning recruitment, compensation, performance evaluation and succession planning
- ▶ Make other reports as the Board may request or as the committee may deem appropriate

LEAD

SUROMITRA SANATANI

AUDIT & FINANCE

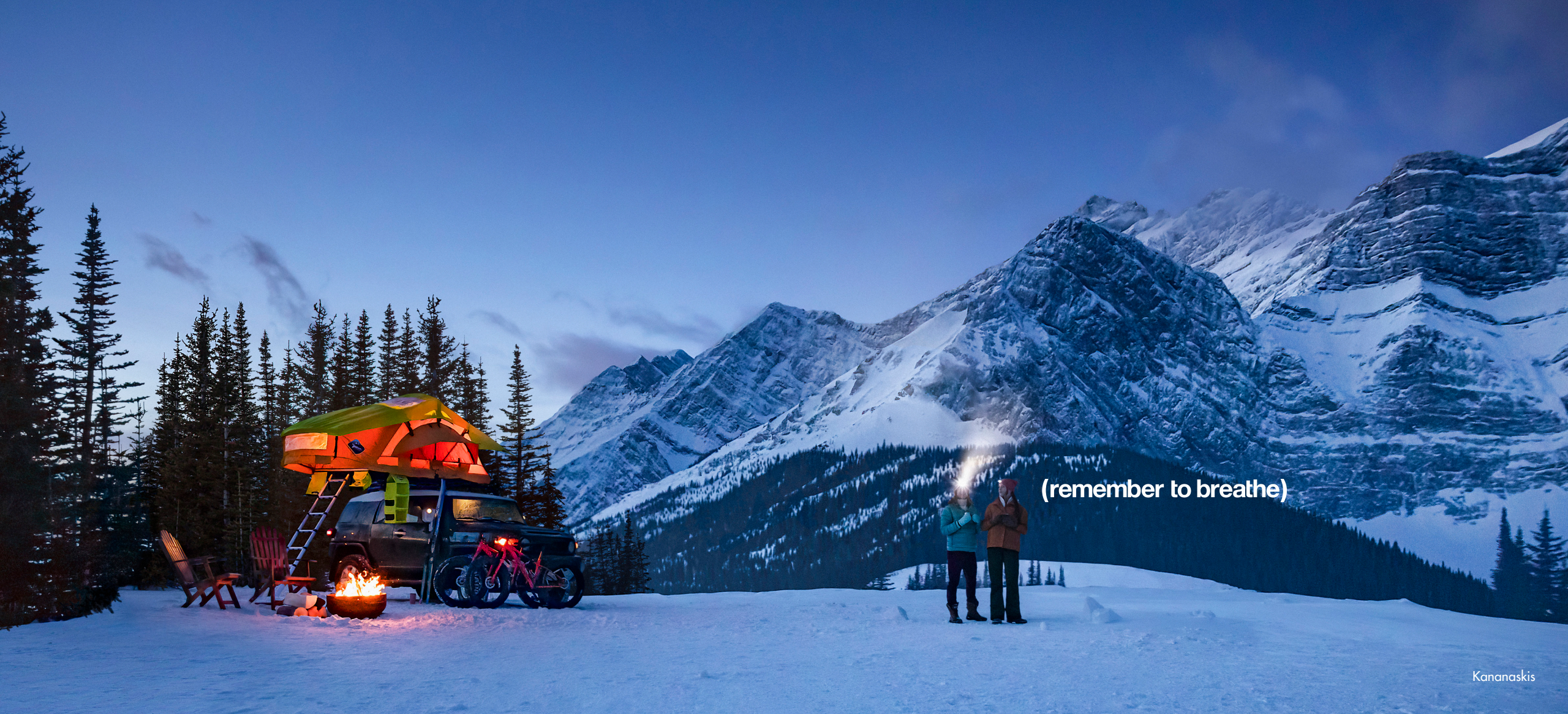
- ▶ Provide oversight and accountability to financial management processes
- ▶ Monitor and make recommendations to the Board on quarterly and annual financial statements and management, discussion and analysis of the organization
- ▶ Review and assess financial internal controls
- ▶ Provide oversight and accountability for the Sustainability Fund
- ▶ Address matters referred to it by the Board and report to the Board as requested

LEAD

KIREN SINGH

Silver Skate Festival, Edmonton





Kananaskis

TRAVEL ALBERTA

travelalberta.com
industry.travelalberta.com
#explorealberta | #TourismIsWorthIt

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Calgary, Alberta T2G 0H4
☎ 403-648-1000

🐦 @travelalbertaco | 💼 [linkedin.com/company/travelalberta](https://www.linkedin.com/company/travelalberta)
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@ industry.travelalberta.com/sign-up

Travel
Alberta
Canada 🇨🇦