



Photo: Devaan Ingraham

UNITED

BANFF & LAKE LOUISE TOURISM 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT & CEO

As we write this letter to stakeholders—a letter traditionally intended to summarize and celebrate the year gone by—the tourism industry, and the world, is facing unprecedented challenges navigating the COVID-19 global pandemic. While future health and economic implications are unknown at this time, we are optimistic we will emerge from this pandemic even more united as a destination.

Our business is about people and our success is based on trust. What we have witnessed here to date has been inspiring. Despite early tension about the need to close our destination to guests, our community's unified, responsible approach has served us well and set us up for future success.

As we take the appropriate time to reflect upon 2019, the fourth year of our five-year strategic plan, we are extremely proud of what we have accomplished as a destination and the lessons we have learned that will inform 2020.

No question, we have strong partnerships in place with the Town of Banff, Parks Canada, ID9, advocacy organizations and others to help support visitors, members, Banff National Park and its people. This dedication to collaborative, constructive conversations allows us to work alongside one another to achieve our objectives. A testament to this is our success working toward a more sustainable tourism model, which includes moving people onto mass transit and supporting ambitious municipal goals to reduce food waste.

Work done in 2019, nurturing and maintaining relationships within the tourism industry—Travel Alberta, Destination Canada, Destination BC and more—has been critically important. This investment of time and energy means we are at the table for strategic conversations at the provincial and national level. In 2019, we provided input into Travel Alberta's 10-year plan and accessed \$250,000 in funding to support SnowDays and visitation growth in January. Last year, perhaps more than ever, our voice was heard.

At Banff & Lake Louise Tourism, we truly believe the way forward will be through collaboration. Our focus for 2020 will be to continue to gather with like-minded partners and work together as a destination to make the best decisions about the future of tourism and rebuild a sustainable economy in Banff and Lake Louise.

We are grateful for the commitment you have made to inspiring indelible awe in Banff and Lake Louise in 2019. We are proud to share our Annual Report with achievements that would not have been possible without your trusted insights and support.

Sincerely,



Pete Woods
*Board Chair,
Banff & Lake Louise
Tourism*



Leslie Bruce
*President & CEO,
Banff & Lake Louise
Tourism*

OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Our strategic framework is at the core of our annual plan. It outlines our purpose and approach as well as the annual targets we have established, so that our team and our Board know how we are performing. The foundation of this framework is our purpose, vision, strategy, mandate and most importantly, our brand promise, which is the value proposition that drives us to deliver indelible awe.

OUR PURPOSE

Inspire the world to experience the indelible awe of Banff and Lake Louise.

OUR VISION

A bold and disciplined marketing organization committed to the growth of our tourism economy and the curation of our brand.

OUR STRATEGY

We will grow member revenue to \$10.6 million by 2021, by working with our partners to share the indelible awe of Banff and Lake Louise with high yield travellers in growth markets.

OUR MANDATE



















Banff & Lake Louise Tourism (BLLT) focuses on building year-round visitation. To achieve this, we will:

- » Work with our members, Parks Canada, and the communities of Banff and Lake Louise
- » Be governed by an elected Board of Directors
- » Partner with Travel Alberta, Destination Canada and like-minded partners

OUR BRAND PROMISE

Providing moments of indelible awe. The rare experience that hits so hard, it stays with you forever. In Banff National Park, these life-changing moments are born from a seemingly inexhaustible supply. It's a sudden connection between people and the natural world that instantly brings both to life. It's real, overwhelming and unforgettable. And it is the unique point of difference for Banff and Lake Louise.

2019 AT-A-GLANCE

GENERATE YEAR-ROUND DEMAND	OBJECTIVES	GOALS	RESULTS
	Grow visitation in winter and shoulder season	 14,266 ROOM NIGHTS' GROWTH EXCLUDING JUNE TO SEPTEMBER	(11,877) 
	Defend summer revenue	 2 MILLION LEADS TO MEMBERS	2,191,326 
		 INCREASE AVERAGE ANNUAL OCCUPANCY TO 71.9%	70.7% 
LEAD WITH BRAND	OBJECTIVES	GOALS	RESULTS
	Build destination brand alignment	 BRAND AWARENESS RANKED: 2 ND IN CANADA 4 TH IN U.S.	CANCELLED FOR 2019 
	Fuel traveller advocacy	 SOCIAL MEDIA: 1.35 MILLION ENGAGEMENTS	2.3 MILLION 
STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT	OBJECTIVE	GOALS	RESULTS
	Work together as a destination	 \$10,103,470 MEMBER REVENUE	\$10,318,626 
		 NET PROMOTER SCORE: ≥76	78 
OPERATE A PERFORMANCE-BASED BUSINESS	OBJECTIVES	GOALS	RESULTS
	Promote employee effectiveness	 MARKETING COSTS ≥85% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE	90% 
	Optimize investments		
	Deliver exemplary fiscal processes and outcomes	 CLEAN AUDIT OUTCOME	YES 

GENERATE YEAR-ROUND DEMAND



Photo: Devaan Ingraham



Photo: Devon Ingraham

RESIDENT AND MEMBER ENGAGEMENT INFLUENCES EVENTS STRATEGY

In 2019, we introduced a new process for planning and programming events. This approach leaned heavily on community engagement to generate ideas and inspire residents to be more involved in events and festivals, while also making them more appealing and authentic for visitors.

In late 2018 and early 2019, we convened key stakeholders to create a new vision for events, making Christmas and SnowDays more appealing so people will travel for them. The plan is to attract domestic and international guests during slower periods—January, November, December—with authentic Banff and Lake Louise experiences that engage and involve the local community.

“There were two things we wanted to accomplish: create a comprehensive vision of where we want to get to and involve people in the process, so we aren’t just throwing something against a wall and hoping it sticks; listen and reflect back what we heard from people,” said David Matys, Director, Events and Animation, BLLT.

To support idea generation, we facilitated a workshop focused on Christmas and SnowDays



Photo: Noel Hendrickson

involving 60 members of the Banff and Lake Louise community. Participants were taken through a series of exercises to uncover the essence of Christmas in Banff and Lake Louise to help guide our event planning.

We asked attendees: How can we better use the space in each town? What programming represents a uniquely mountain Christmas? What activities would differentiate Banff and Lake Louise from other Christmas destinations? Answers to these questions supported ideas implemented in 2019—an expanded Christmas Market, more community participation in the Christmas parade—and identified future opportunities to explore, like forest bathing along a lightly-lit pathway.

“An event has to be something the community wants, something that businesses see value in and something that enhances the quality of life for residents. You can’t get that without community engagement and support,” said Matys. “An interesting revelation was that winter is about contrast—warm and cold, active and cozy, dark and light, inside and outside—and that needs to be reflected.”

In each discussion, Christmas and SnowDays, connecting over food and drink was a key component. One idea introduced in 2019, was

the Hot Chocolate Trail. Throughout the month of December, visitors and residents could stop by eight cafés and restaurants to try unique takes on the popular drink.

Developing SnowDays into a globally-recognized, world-class festival was a key goal of the workshop. The intention is not to compete on size and scale, but to create something unique and distinct to the destination and that is executed on par with other first class festivals.

Some ideas brainstormed in 2019, found their way into the 2020 festival plan, including an expanded SnowDays Play Zone in the Banff Community High School field and Skijoring and Community Races on Banff Avenue—an idea based on research from historical Banff Winter Carnival activities. These ideas complemented annual offerings, including Ice Magic in Lake Louise, Snow Sculptures on Bear Street and the return of the Tribute Craft Spirits Celebration.

“An interesting revelation was that winter is about contrast—warm and cold, active and cozy, dark and light, inside and outside—and that needs to be reflected.”



INFORMED AND AGILE APPROACH LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN

A new marketing agency was brought on to help refresh the 2019 Transportation Shift strategy and campaign, an annual collaboration we have with Parks Canada and the Town of Banff. The new creative approach was meant to energize and innovate an already successful marketing communications plan focused on reducing congestion, while ensuring a great visitor experience.

In addition to this new creative partner, we expanded the working group to include participation from Parks Canada's Lake Louise, Yoho, Kootenay Field Unit. We also worked more collaboratively with service partners, ROAM Transit and On-It Regional Transit—ensuring a more unified approach.

Audience research was conducted in 2019, to inform future elements of the campaign. A key component was an in-person survey of over 137 visitors: 19 per cent from Calgary, 81 per cent from key geographic markets, including Ontario, B.C., Germany and California.

Research showed an awareness of the specific parking issues affecting Banff National Park is a big driver for taking transit. Concern for the environment did not motivate decisions, but plays an important role in helping visitors

rationalize wait times, specifically in Lake Louise.

“Having an awareness of transportation options allows visitors to feel informed and make a decision that is best for them and the experience they’re after. When they are not aware of issues, there is a perceived loss of control. They don’t want to be told what to do when they aren’t aware of the reasons. They don’t want to be blindsided,” said Philip Coppard, Principal, Stormy Lake Consulting, the research firm who conducted the survey.

During the campaign, advertising performance echoed these findings. Messaging that educated the consumer on what to expect and guided them to the right solution performed well, while ads that spoke to preserving Banff National Park did less to encourage users to act based on the ad. These findings were true for campaigns used on Google Ad Words, TripAdvisor and Social Media. Data also showed ads containing new images from a photoshoot using buses in scenic locations had a higher performance.

In response to these findings, messaging was adjusted mid-campaign to focus on more direct language—parking fills up fast—and digital platforms were shifted based on performance, leading to more advertising spend on TripAdvisor in the later stages of the campaign.



Photo: Damian Blunt

These findings also informed the year-round campaign planned for future years.

“We found that it’s important to call out the issue and tackle it head on, particularly in Lake Louise. Consumers appreciate the honesty and the reality is they are more likely to change

their behaviour as a result,” said Sara Austin, Strategy Director, Will Creative, the marketing agency working on the campaign.

This past year’s informed and agile approach led to a successful campaign.

TRANSPORTATION SHIFT CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS:

 **215,708**
VISITS TO EXPLORETHEPARK.CA
95.5% INCREASE FROM 2018

 **1.1%** DECLINE IN BANFF
AVENUE BRIDGE
VEHICLE TRAFFIC

 **5.5%** RIDERSHIP INCREASES:
ROAM
TRANSIT

72.5% ON-IT REGIONAL
TRANSIT

50% PARKS CANADA
TRANSIT SHUTTLES

NOTE: Transit partners increased number, frequency and duration of routes from 2018 to 2019.

 **78** AVERAGE NET
PROMOTOR SCORE
(JUNE THROUGH SEPTEMBER)



Photo: Noel Hendrickson

ADDITIONAL 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

BEER FESTIVAL BRINGS IN OVERNIGHT VISITORS

The Banff Craft Beer Festival, organized by Alberta Beer Festivals, received support from us through advertising, media outreach, e-newsletter communications and web content. Our objectives were to build destination and event awareness and reputation as a 'must visit' for food and drink; support ticket sales; drive overnight visitation during November; encourage attendees to do more while in destination; and engage members.

Banff Craft Beer Festival survey feedback:

90% OF ATTENDEES ARE FROM OUTSIDE OF THE BOW VALLEY

26% STAYED ONE NIGHT

42% STAYED TWO NIGHTS

22% STAYED THREE OR MORE NIGHTS



MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL COMES DOWNTOWN

As lead co-sponsor of the Banff Centre Mountain Film and Book Festival, we coordinated the inaugural Banff Avenue Block Party to celebrate and compliment the 9-day event. Participating businesses offered product demos, marshmallow roasting stations, virtual reality adventure experiences, hosted programming with filmmakers/writers and more. The block party was launched to attract festival-goers to downtown and involve the community more wholly in the annual mountain culture-themed event.

EXPANDED PIXEL PROGRAM PRIMED TO PUSH MORE LEADS TO MEMBERS

Our industry leading pixel program, implemented in 2018, and with expanded participation in 2019, has been transformational. While we are still looking for opportunities to integrate members with ecommerce websites, the program is now in a position to capitalize on its efforts in future years and help generate a higher quality and quantity of leads to members.



2.1M LEADS TO MEMBERS

13.5% ABOVE 2018 | 5% ABOVE 2019 TARGET

MEGAFAMS AND MICE BRING IN BIG BUSINESS

The destination hosted Australia's largest ski wholesaler, Sno'n Ski, in March 2019. A 10-day itinerary included 22 sales agents and three Sno'n Ski staff on site to gain knowledge of the destination and support future bookings.

Connect Mountain Incentive, a well-known travel trade show for industry members, was held in Lake Louise in March 2019. This was the first time the group has met outside of the U.S. The invitation-only event connected 90 participants—meeting planners and mountain resort suppliers—through activities, face-to-face meetings and networking events. The multi-day itinerary included a focus on wellness sessions and winter activities. Our members reported more than 15 Requests for Proposals (RFPs) resulted from these business-to-business opportunities.

In 2019, we laid the groundwork to host the Global Incentive Summit by Northstar in 2020. The annual event brings together highly-qualified incentive travel buyers from around the world. Attendees will participate in one-on-one pre-scheduled appointments, attend educational presentations, network with incentive specialists and participate in unique experiential activities showcasing Banff and Lake Louise.



Photo: Banff & Lake Louise Tourism

LEAD WITH BRAND

Photo: Devaan Ingraham

DRAMATIC WEATHER SHIFT—FROM SUNNY SKIES TO SNOWSTORM—SHOWCASES SCENIC SHOULDER SEASON

In October 2019, we partnered with Travel Alberta and the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) to hold the first ever AdventureWeek in North America. This mega-FAM tour targeted adventure-obsessed travel media and tour operators and showcased the incredible experiences available in Banff and Lake Louise during the shoulder and winter seasons.

The event involved 26 attendees—10 international tour operators, 13 travel journalists, one social media influencer and two ATTA storytellers—representing five of our key markets: U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia and Mexico. Over 60 member organizations took part, from itineraries to business-to-business meetings. Starting with sunny October skies, the week became a winter wonderland showcase when an early-season snowfall blanketed the destination.

“The unexpected ‘off-season’ delight of snow and spontaneity showcased how a destination can adapt in the best possible way, welcoming visitors any time of year with care, creativity and hospitality,” said Russell Walters, ATTA’s North America Strategic Director. “It was impressive to watch a team of top-notch

“Adventure in Banff and Lake Louise in shoulder season is the most amazing time to come here. That is the story we wanted to tell. To do it in a big punchy way with tour operators and media was appealing.”

professionals play the hand they’d been dealt and provide a first-class visit for guests.”

AdventureWeek was an opportunity to raise awareness of adventure-based activities, food, culture and wellness in Banff and Lake Louise. More than a dozen members helped build and calmly rearrange two itineraries entitled, Connect and Immerse. Connect focused on local culture, food and easily accessible outdoor activities. Immerse delved deep into backcountry experiences.

The ATTA coordinated a recruitment campaign and worked with us to select the right participants to promote the destination into the future. They provided guidance on itinerary development and hosted pre-trip training through webinars. All-in-all, we worked with ATTA for five months to plan this tour—meals, guides, activities and accommodations that balance adventure, culture and hospitality.



Photo: © ATTA / Josiah Holwick



Photo: © ATTA / Matt Corliss

“The unexpected ‘off-season’ delight of snow and spontaneity showcased how a destination can adapt in the best possible way, welcoming visitors any time of year with care, creativity and hospitality.”

The FAM Tour ended with a business-to-business meeting day with organizations representing accommodations, activities and experiences across the province. It established new partnerships with media and tour operators through ATTA’s member reach, and insights from the pre- and post-survey are being used to develop even more adventure products and itineraries.

While we are awaiting the final earned media results, the already published pieces demonstrate rich storytelling to our audiences. A few highlights include:

- » *Lonely Planet*: “Why you should visit Banff and Lake Louise this winter”
- » *PostMedia News Network*: “Experience these 3 adrenaline-pumping activities in Banff National Park”
- » *Matador Network*: “The best winter activities you can do in Banff”

“Adventure in Banff and Lake Louise in shoulder season is the most amazing time to come here. That is the story we wanted to tell.

To do it in a big punchy way with tour operators and media was appealing,” said Kira Lu, Director, Business Development, BLLT. “ATTA is an organization that has similar values to ours. It is a tight-knit community of adventure-based tour operators, media and consumers. Their audience and members trust each other.”

AdventureWeek events have been held across the globe, typically in countries or large regions, such as: Ecuador, Balkans, Nepal, Japan, Peru and Baja California Sur. Banff and Lake Louise was the first specific destination to host AdventureWeek and the first in North America. As part of the agreement, we’ll receive marketing exposure through ATTA for up to one year following the event.

“We are in the midst of expanding and need a new destination as part of our itineraries. We are U.S.-based and have a dedicated client-base who follows wherever we go. Our values and mission perfectly align with Banff and Lake Louise; we strive for sustainability and transformative travel through nature and outdoor experiences,” said Lea Joannis, Business Development & Guide, TrueNorth.

#MYBANFFCHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN INSPIRES VISITORS TO SHARE THEIR AUTHENTIC CANADIAN MOUNTAIN CHRISTMAS

A couple, happily holding hands in the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel with a beautifully decorated Christmas tree in the background was just one example of images and videos shared by visitors over the 2019 Christmas holidays.

From mid-November throughout December, we ran the #MyBanffChristmas campaign on social media to prompt people to share their favourite Christmas moments in Banff and Lake Louise. The hashtag-based contest came with a chance to win weekly prizes and one grand prize—a free trip to Banff and Lake Louise in Christmas 2020. Over 1,000 photos and videos were posted and tagged by visitors. They shared high-quality content showing moments of connection with family, nature and the atmosphere of Banff and Lake Louise during the Christmas season.

“Leveraging and amplifying social media plays a big role in increasing exposure and building strong relationships with visitors. This creates unlimited opportunities to fuel traveller advocacy. By making it easy, and inspiring visitors to generate and share their stories, we increase the likelihood their enthusiasm will

motivate others to visit, and most of all, it’s an authentic representation of what it’s like to be here,” said Angela Anderson, Director, Media & Communications, BLLT.

In addition to being promoted on our own social media channels, the hashtag was promoted at events including the Santa Claus Parade, Banff Christmas Market, Hot Chocolate Trail, Mountaintop Christmas on the Banff Gondola and at Visitor Centres.

“Leveraging and amplifying social media plays a big role in increasing exposure and building strong relationships with visitors. This creates unlimited opportunities to fuel traveller advocacy.”

The campaign targeted Free Spirits, an Explorer Quotient (EQ) who eagerly posts photos and tells stories online. EQ goes beyond traditional market research of defining demographics and geographical data. It looks deeper at personal beliefs, social values and views of the world. Free Spirits are seen as a key audience for Banff and Lake Louise who can be





leveraged to promote the destination to people who are not already aware of the Banff and Lake Louise brand.

Like this post from @globeguide to her 30,000 followers: There's just something so magical about winter in #Canada, especially out in Banff National Park where you're surrounded by snowy mountain peaks. For one of the best views, head up the @banffgondola which zips you up to the summit of Sulphur Mountain where there's an interpretive centre, fabulous dining, observation decks and a wooden boardwalk leading to epic viewpoints. One of my all-time fave Banff attractions! #MyBanffChristmas

INAUGURAL #MYBANFFCHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS:

1.2M 
PEOPLE REACHED
55,957 SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS
1,200 HASHTAGGED POSTS

“We use social media to create touchpoints with travellers. The #MyBanffChristmas was one way to help build a network of influencers and storytellers to promote Banff and Lake Louise in 2019.”

Photos and videos will be used to create a video to promote Christmas in 2020. It will also be repurposed to assist in creating content that can be used throughout the organization: further engagement with social media audiences, Travel Trade, and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) business development.

“By facilitating the sharing of Christmas related social media posts by our contest entrants, we strengthen our Christmas story through personal testimonials. We also reach a wider audience, as entrants will be spreading the word among their own friends and followers,” said Anderson.

We use social media to create touchpoints with travellers. The #MyBanffChristmas was one way to help build a network of influencers and storytellers to promote Banff and Lake Louise in 2019.

LEAD WITH BRAND: ADDITIONAL 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION IN-PERSON AND ONLINE

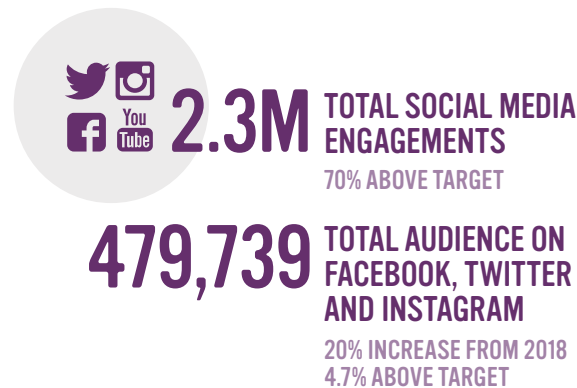
In 2019, we continued to provide in-person service at Visitor Centres, including Banff Avenue, Banff Train Station, Lake Louise and Field, as well as mobile sites at Lake Louise Lakeshore, Banff Avenue and other popular locations. We moved into the newly re-opened Lake Louise Visitor Centre in August. The team also focused on online channels and social media, listening and responding to visitors who had questions.



SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT EXCEEDS LOFTY EXPECTATIONS

We measure social media engagements and audience growth—this shows we are continuing to grow not just any audience, but an engaged audience. Our target for 2019 was 1.35 million

engagements. As things were progressing extremely well, in July we stretched the goal to 1.6 million. By year-end, we delivered 2.3 million engagements.



MEDIA POSITIONS BANFF AND LAKE LOUISE AS A DESIRABLE DESTINATION

In 2019, our average Media Quality Score was 8.8, one point above our annual target. Our 2019 reach was 587,971,230. We measure Media Quality Score as a way to understand not just volume of coverage, but whether it is relaying our messaging and positioning us as a desirable destination in target outlets.

We hosted 267 media in Banff and Lake Louise from Canada, US, Mexico, UK, Australia, China, South Korea, Germany and Japan. During these visits, media had over 450 interactions with member businesses.

Highlighted outlets that produced coverage on Banff and Lake Louise include:

» AFAR; Avenue Calgary; Bon Appetit; CBC; CNN; Dallas Morning News; Daily Beast; Daily Hive; Delta Sky; Departures; Escape (AUS); Explore Magazine; Forbes; the Independent UK; Lonely Planet; Marie-Claire; Matador Network; MSN; Narcity; National Geographic; National Post; New Zealand Herald; PostMedia; Reader's Digest; Thrillist; Travel + Leisure; Traveller Australia; the Times UK; USA Today; Vacay; Vogue Japan; Washington Post; and WestJet Magazine.



STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT

Photo: Noel Hendrickson



Photo: Devaan Ingraham

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM OFFERS LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Living and working in Banff and Lake Louise is an opportunity to discover one of the most unique places on earth. It is also a surefire way to be asked a lot of questions with expectations of an immediate answer: Why is that lake so blue? Where is the best place to see wildlife?

The Banff & Lake Louise Ambassador Program helps answer these questions and more. It is designed to educate the participants about the destination and acknowledges the important role frontline staff plays in each visitor encounter. Attendees learn how to safely explore Banff National Park and engage with the wider community of Banff and Lake Louise—short-term or long-term.

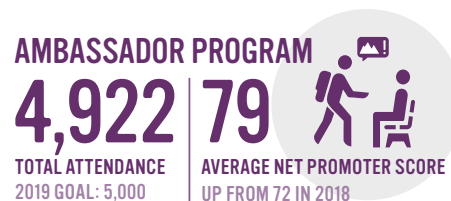
“The Ambassador Program allows our colleagues to better understand Banff and further connect with and promote the destination to guests, whether they are onsite at the hotel or downtown. The program also provides the opportunity for our colleagues to further find a sense of community,” said Jesse Dyer, Director of Learning and Development, Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel.

There are three parts to the Banff & Lake Louise Ambassador program: a classroom session, an interpretive sightseeing tour offered by member organizations and an Ambassador Pass to encourage participants to explore the destination. Participants gain an understanding of history and heritage, living with wildlife, how to explore safely, activities and attractions to experience and more. They are also supported in connecting with the community: learning ways to explore fun events and outdoor excursions, join a club or sports group or be a part of community meals, music and movie events.

The Ambassador Pass offers complimentary and discounted opportunities, including the Columbia Icefield, Canadian Rockies Hot Springs, ski hills and historic and cultural sites. These experiences allow Ambassadors to share knowledge of Banff National Park with visitors, friends and colleagues.

“We reframed the program around learning experiences that help inspire a deeper connection to this place. We wanted to emphasize... that the program is a tool that uses experiences to establish a stronger and ongoing passion for this special place.”

Feedback from stakeholders and program participants in 2018, helped enhance the 2019 Ambassador Program. Comparable to the previous year, almost 5,000 people attended and feedback from participants was positive; the program’s Net Promoter Score (NPS) increased to 79 in 2019, up from 72 in 2018. Work in 2019, included a refreshed webpage, with improved navigation and clearer calls to action to sign up for public sessions.



“We reframed the program around learning experiences that help inspire a deeper connection to this place. We wanted to emphasize to employers and employees that the program is a tool that uses experiences to establish a stronger and ongoing passion for this special place,” said Nancy Dadalt, Director, Visitor Experience, BLLT.

Banff Ambassador Program: Anonymous Testimonials

“The program is a great introduction to Banff National Park and inspires those who move here to not only get the best out of Banff, and to protect the environment, but also to make it a positive place for all others who visit.”

“It was very informative and fun to listen to. I learned a few facts I didn’t even know after being here for 11 years. It gives a good sense of the community and the services available to residents. It’s a good reminder of why most people come and end up staying in Banff and Lake Louise.”



WORKSHOPS SUPPORT STORYTELLING AND SOCIAL MEDIA SKILLSETS FOR MEMBERS

Navigating down a river and through rapids on a raft leads to a very captive audience and creates an opportunity to use storytelling to fill the void between point A and point B. This was a key learning for Rocky Mountain Raft Tours' Operations Manager Chris Moneypenny after our inaugural Storytelling Workshop.

Moneypenny was one of 27 people who attended the two-part, interactive Storytelling Workshop in October 2019. Hosted by artist and storyteller Jason Thompson, the session was designed to help members identify their audience, understand their narrative, uncover the importance of character and place and learn proven frameworks for sharing an effective story.

"I was really motivated by the idea that storytelling can help us to connect better with our guests. Stories make our experiences more memorable and relatable. It will definitely transform what I'm looking for in future guides," said Moneypenny. "We're fortunate to have an opportunity to train from the ground up within our company. Focusing more on our staff's ability to connect with guests through storytelling will become a much larger part of the training and day-to-day practices."

"Stories make you feel something, they allow for a deeper connection than data. Emotions drive decisions on where to go, what to see and places to eat," said Thompson. "Storytelling allows a personal entrance into your business. It allows visitors to identify with a business in a unique and personal way. It builds loyalty."

These workshops and training programs increase knowledge of industry trends and the destination for members. They allow for industry alignment, bring the destination brand to life and increases marketing effectiveness. Overall, the satisfaction score for workshops in 2019 was 94 per cent.

In 2019, we partnered with Social School to deliver two custom events in October and November, hosted exclusively for members. The workshop helped participants increase modern marketing skillsets and social media toolkits. Social School is a marketing training institution that offers courses, workshops, conferences, certificate programs, custom training, online learning and more.

The workshop was attended by a 48 people and anonymous feedback was very positive.

"This workshop was by far the best social media workshop that I have attended with BLLT. It gave me the knowledge that I can use every day to improve my efficiency and get precisely what I want out of our digital marketing."



Photo: Via Ferrata / Mt Norquay



Photo: Kyle Mulder + Banff Sunshine Village

ADDITIONAL 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT ENHANCES EXISTING PRODUCTS, OFFERINGS

Travel Alberta, with our support, offered two Experience Essentials workshops: one focused on developing food, another on winter. Attendees explored fundamental elements of experience development, shared ideas, developed concepts, met potential partners and fostered industry relationships.

Here are just a couple experiences that were developed through support from this program:

- » Hut to Hut, Sunshine Village and Shadow Lake Lodge
- » Family friendly lift line activities, Mt. Norquay

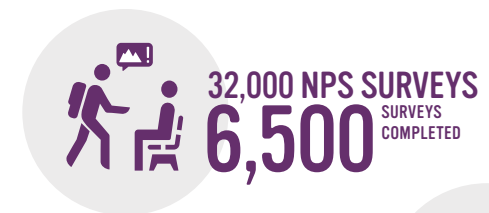
ATIS HELPS EXPAND MARKETING REACH FOR MEMBERS

We hosted a total of four Alberta Tourism Information Service (ATIS) Workshops. ATIS is a free, digital marketing service provided by Travel Alberta that members can access to expand the digital promotion of products and services. Members can add business listings, events and offers into ATIS and content is shared across multiple marketing channels and websites, including travelalberta.com and a growing network of publishers, websites and apps promoting Alberta.

To help expand each member businesses reach even further, a new system was used to integrate ATIS into banfflakelouise.com. The new system streamlines the event uploading process, allowing members to use one platform instead of two.

NPS CONTINUES TO PAINT A POSITIVE PICTURE OF THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Since 2016, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) has been used to measure success and predict future performance. This score reflects the likelihood a visitor will recommend Banff and Lake Louise to friends, family, or colleagues.



OPERATE A PERFORMANCE-BASED BUSINESS

Photo: Noel Hendrickson

MARKETING COSTS CONTRIBUTE TO 90 PER CENT OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES

As a member-based marketing organization, we are committed to responsible fiscal management. Each year, we aim to maximize our investment and be an efficient organization, making sure the bulk of our budget is spent inspiring indelible awe, not administering it.

In 2019, similar to the previous year, we invested 90 per cent of our total budget into promoting the destination and enhancing the visitor experience, which included marketing, business development, events and animation. This exceeded the annual target of 85 per cent (or greater). Finance and administration—human resources, IT, Board Governance and salaries related to each of these efforts—made up the remaining 10 per cent.

“Return on investment and the responsible management of funds collected from our members has always been a top priority. Our people and culture play a big role with this. They balance efficiency and effectiveness, while remaining mindful of the responsibility that comes with being a member-based organization,” said Mandy Grant, Director, Finance and Administration, BLLT.

This goal for percentage of spend on marketing and promotion was benchmarked against other DMOs, including Destination Canada (90 per cent) and Travel Alberta (90 per cent). Staying focused on our core objectives—promoting employee effectiveness, optimizing investments, delivering exemplary fiscal processes—plays a big role in helping us deliver on this fundamental goal year-over-year.

“For our organization to be truly performance-based, we are focused on ensuring employees are engaged and working in the most effective way possible. This involves enabling the team to work with new tools, processes and systems,” said Grant. “By better utilizing and increasing the functionality of our existing technologies, particularly our financial and procurement systems, we have been able to streamline processes, enhance governance and simplify reporting requirements.”

Technology plays a big role in increasing productivity and minimizing our administrative burden. In 2019, we rolled out an improved approach to managing the employee recruitment process by implementing a recruitment platform offered through our payroll management system ADP. We also made efficient changes in our approach to

expense management by utilizing another online platform, Concur—two core initiatives from the past year.

In 2019, we continued to leverage our relationship with Destination Canada and Travel Alberta at key industry tradeshow, conferences and events. This coordinated effort amplifies our brand through business development approaches, Joint Marketing Agreements, strategic partnerships and itineraries with industry partners. Working with partners helps us strategically invest more into key markets.

Further developing the organization’s culture, reinforced through team principles and values, has led to even higher performance and greater outcomes for members. Increasingly, efforts to reach travellers in a digital landscape has also contributed to more efficient marketing and promotion, and a better understanding of which tactics are working and which are not.

“What’s important is to continue to evaluate marketing spend to make sure our investments are done in ways that truly make a difference. Our performance metrics and financial reporting processes are a meaningful and reliable resource for the Board and leadership team to make decisions,” said Grant.

ADDITIONAL 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

A PAPERLESS APPROACH TO EXPENSE MANAGEMENT

To help simplify employee travel claims, we launched a new expense management process through the digital platform Concur. Credit card charges and receipts are filed by phone or computer and are submitted, reviewed and approved online. The paperless system improves processing, simplifies expense management and allows employees to be reimbursed faster.

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT SYSTEM STREAMLINES APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

A new system to recruit and hire staff was rolled out. Applicants looking for careers with us can now create an online profile, upload a cover letter and resume and track the application process digitally. Hiring managers can quickly access and review applications. The process is offered through ADP, a system that already provides us with payroll, time and attendance, performance management, analytics and reporting services.

NEW ONLINE PROCESS TO PURCHASE NATIONAL PARK PASS IMPLEMENTED

A new online approach to purchasing a National Park Pass was launched. The form is accessed from our website and allows visitors to purchase a Day Pass or annual Discovery Pass in advance of their trip. Visitors enter their trip dates and details and the best value option is automatically determined for them. The new approach provides more convenience than stopping at the Banff National Park gates or Visitor Centres.



FINANCIALS

Photo: Noel Hendrickson

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019

	2019	2018
REVENUE		
Financial contributions	10,318,626	9,717,186
Partnerships and Leveraged Funding	719,726	823,845
Other revenue	720,654	561,123
Total Revenue	11,759,006	11,102,154
EXPENDITURES		
Marketing	7,516,991	6,943,159
Visitor Experience	3,328,768	2,783,151
Finance and Administration	1,153,615	1,176,734
Total Expenditures	11,999,374	10,903,044
Surplus (Deficiency)	(240,368)	199,110

NOTE:

This statement is abbreviated. Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are committed to transparency. Disclosing how funds collected from our members are spent instills confidence that we have the best practices in place. To ensure accountability, an Audit and Finance Committee, consisting of three Board of Directors, reviews and approves financial reporting and retains an external auditor. Our financial statements are audited annually.



Photo: Banff Sunshine Village

THANK YOU

TO OUR DEDICATED MEMBERS
WHO HELP US INSPIRE
INDELIBLE AWE.

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BANFF
& LAKE
LOUISE
Alive