



NORTH  
**Dakota** | Tourism & Marketing  
Be Legendary. COMMERCE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism  
and Marketing Division Report on Marketing  
North Dakota and the Travel and Tourism Industry



# HELLO North Dakota



I am pleased to share the 2024 annual report for North Dakota Tourism, highlighting the industry and our results over the past year. Through strategic marketing, industry partnerships, and a commitment to showcasing all that North Dakota has to offer, we continue to see growth in visitor interest, economic impact, and engagement with our Be Legendary brand.

## KEY MARKETING METRICS INCLUDE:

- In 2024, our campaigns reached 438 million people, generating 132 million digital impressions, over half a million clicks, and 17 million video views.
- NDtourism.com saw record traffic, with 3.6 million users—a 30% jump from last year—demonstrating that more people are actively researching and planning trips to North Dakota.

## KEY VISITOR STATISTICS INCLUDE:

- Airport Arrivals: Exceeded 1.23 million, an 8.8% increase
- Border Crossings: Increased by 10.2%
- 7.4 million U.S. domestic road trips recorded in North Dakota
- Hotel Revenues: Reached \$548 million, a 5.8% increase
- Tax Receipts for Accommodations & Food Services: \$2.2 billion
- Arts, Entertainment & Recreation Tax Revenue: 8% increase

Looking ahead, we remain committed to building on this momentum with our fresh new “HELLO” campaign and working with our 3,000-plus partners across the state to inspire travelers and drive additional economic benefits for our communities.

Thank you for your continued support and delivering on the Be Legendary brand promise. Together, we will keep sharing our legendary stories and welcoming visitors from near and far.

Be well,

Director, Tourism and Marketing Division

North Dakota Department of Commerce

## SIGNALS OF INTENT TO TRAVEL

### WEBSITE TRAFFIC

3,663,567 SESSIONS

⬆️ 30.3% increase from 2023

4,134,929 PAGEVIEWS

⬆️ 33.6% increase from 2023

### TRADITIONAL INQUIRIES

24,397

⬇️ 16% decrease from 2023

### META PAGE VISITS

138,923

⬇️ 14% decrease from 2023

### LIVE CHATS

2,317

⬆️ 15% increase from 2023

### EBOOKS

#### • TRAVEL GUIDE

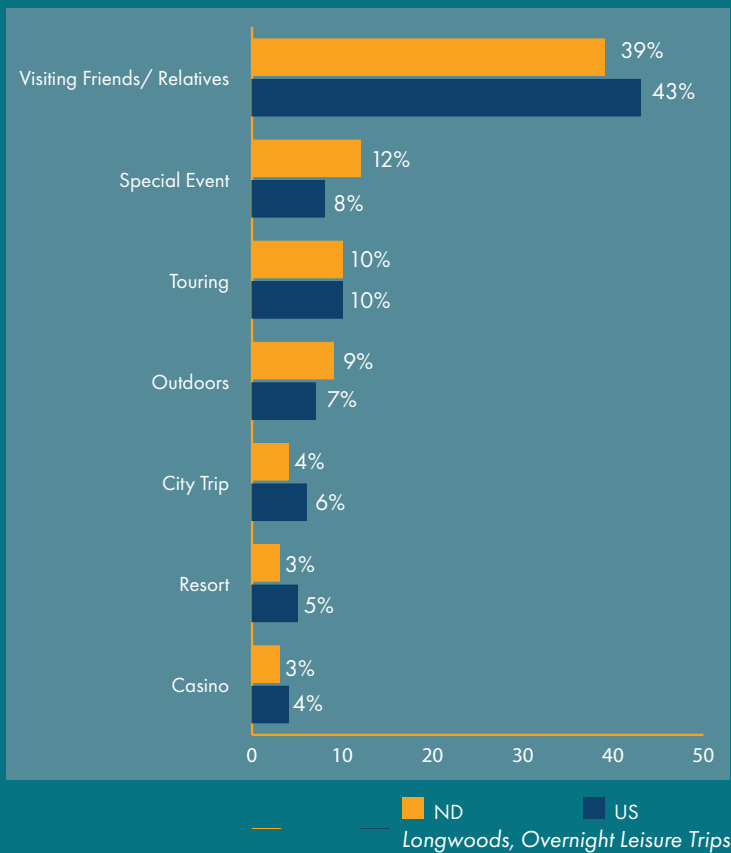
9,300+ Monthly Users  
110,000+ Pageviews

#### • HUNTING & FISHING GUIDE

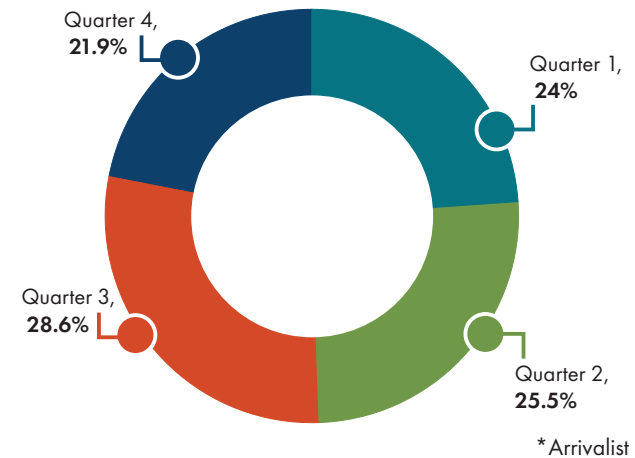
830+ Monthly Users  
8,600+ Pageviews

## Visitor Study Shows North Dakota Travelers Planning Longer Stays, Engaged in More Activities

North Dakota Tourism partnered with Longwoods International in 2024 for a deep dive into their American Travel Sentiment Survey on trips taken to North Dakota in 2023. According to Longwoods, travelers to North Dakota are more active on their trips than before, outpacing national averages on visits for outdoor recreation, sports tourism and special events.

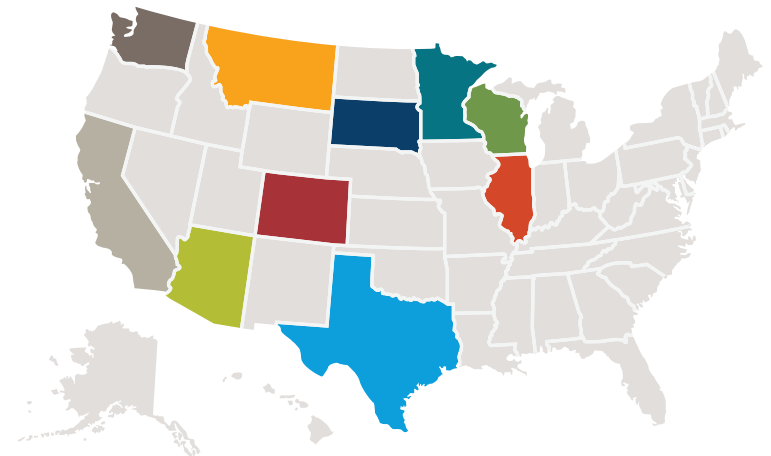


## North Dakota: A Year-Round Destination\* SEASONAL VISITATION



## Top 10 Out-of-State Markets\*

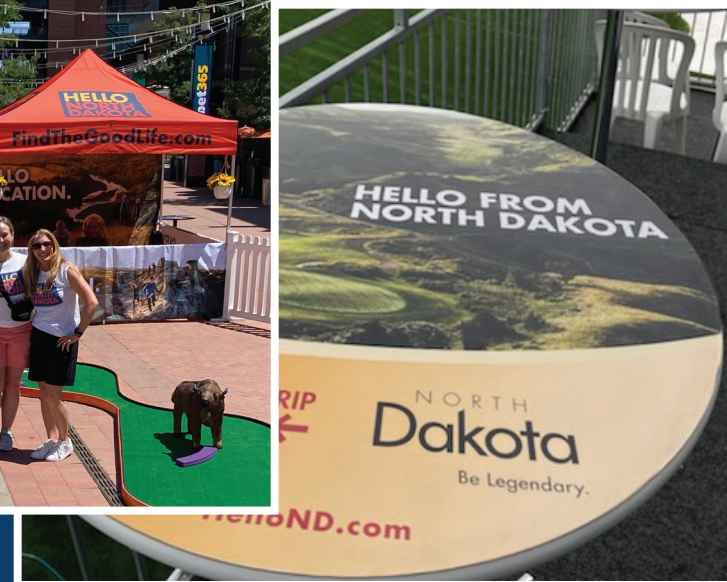
- 1 Minnesota
- 2 South Dakota
- 3 Montana
- 4 Texas
- 5 Illinois
- 6 Washington
- 7 California
- 8 Wisconsin
- 9 Colorado
- 10 Arizona



# Advertising & Marketing

## HELLO

North Dakota's HELLO campaign entered its second year with \$4.2 million in planned media budget. The campaign aims to boost tourism and overall awareness of North Dakota by showcasing the state's warm hospitality, scenic landscapes, and vibrant communities.



To view the campaign, visit [NDtourism.com/information/advertising-campaign](https://NDtourism.com/information/advertising-campaign)

## MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS AMPLIFIED MEDIA SPEND

Partnerships amplified North Dakota's advertising reach through leveraged audiences and increased visibility. The 2024 campaign partnerships netted more than 117 million impressions.

Several partnerships were also co-branded with *Find the Good Life in North Dakota*, inviting the audience to visit, explore and consider relocating to North Dakota. In 2024, more than 4,812 visitors of NDtourism.com further accessed online information about jobs and relocation to North Dakota. (A 33% increase.)



## EXPANDING PARTNER REACH

Expanded advertising reach that motivates travelers is the goal of North Dakota Tourism's cooperative marketing programs. In 2024, these programs included digital advertising, social media promotion, website and email advertising, print presence and more.

- 13 Opportunities Offered
- 15 Partners Participated
- \$32,576 Matching Dollars
- 9,505,242 Partner Impressions



## CAMPAIGN RESULTS

PAID IMPRESSIONS  
**438.8 million**  
INCREASED **15.5%**

DIGITAL AD CLICK-  
THROUGHS TO WEBSITE  
INCREASED **9.5%**

VIDEO COMPLETIONS  
**17.1 million**  
DECREASED **9.6%**

TRAVEL GUIDES  
DISTRIBUTED  
**190,000+**

EBOOK PAGEVIEWS  
**119,000+**

DIGITAL AD CONVERSIONS  
**80,900**  
INCREASED **25.8%**



## VISITATION PERFORMANCE

Visitation	-5.3%
Border Crossings	+10.2%
National Park Visitation	-1.85%
Air Arrivals	+8.8%
Hotel Occupancy	+0.39%

## REACH

TV/RADIO  
**21,027,917**

Significant decrease of impressions, as budget and focus shifted to digital video and audio.

PRINT/OUT-OF-HOME  
**234,372,811**

Sponsorships contributed to the 48% increase in impressions. Not included in the total is the 97 million bonus impressions in Chicago, with both the 2023 and 2024 train wraps still in operation.

DIGITAL  
**132,912,859**

Digital display and paid search motivated more than 300,000 additional click-throughs to the website YOY.

SOCIAL MEDIA  
**50,526,629**

Paid social strategies were implemented in Meta, YouTube, Pinterest and Snapchat leading to a 254% increase in impressions.

# Public & Media Relations

North Dakota's image was elevated through proactive media outreach and storytelling, resulting in increased awareness and positive media coverage.

## Where to Eat in North Dakota Amid Memorable Stops Along I-94

A road trip from Fargo to Bismarck and Medora reveals the culinary traditions and drinks of North Dakota.

By [Wendy Pramlik](#) | Published on September 5, 2024



PHOTO: PHOTO COURTESY OF WENDY PRAMLIK

**Food & Wine article featuring memorable stops along I-94**



**Krysten Potega ice fishing Devils Lake**

## 2024 MEDIA COVERAGE

MEDIA INSTANCES

**3,429**

AUDIENCE REACH THROUGH MEDIA

**6.1 billion**

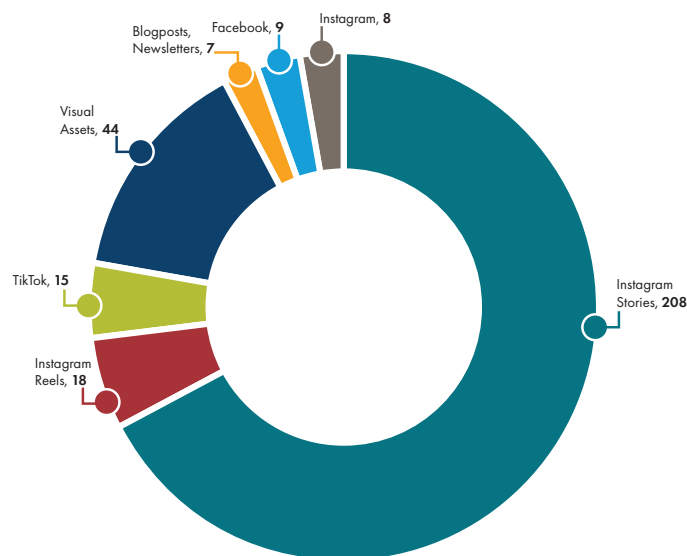
## INFLUENCER CAMPAIGN

AUDIENCE REACH – **2.1 million**

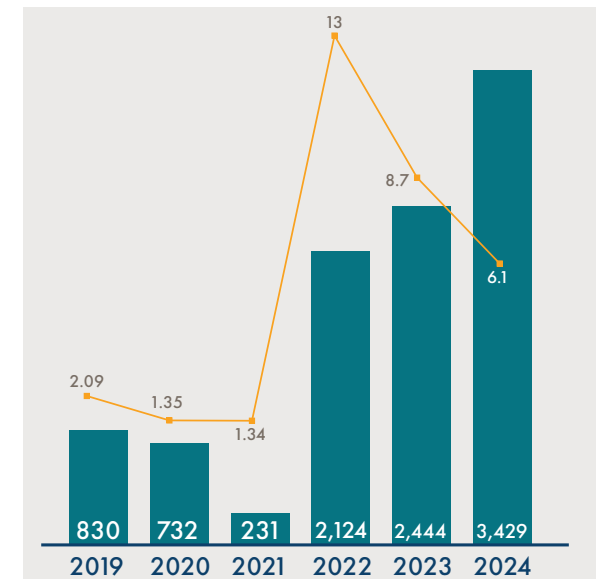
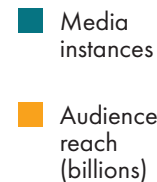
IMPRESSIONS – **128 million**

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS – **400K +**

## 2024 INFLUENCER CO-OP RESULTS



## EARNED MEDIA RESULTS



OUR EARNED MEDIA REACHED 6.14 BILLION PEOPLE—THAT'S LIKE SHARING NORTH DAKOTA'S STORY WITH EVERY SINGLE PERSON IN THE UNITED STATES ALMOST 19 TIMES OVER.



# Social Media



**192,487 FOLLOWERS**

↑ 12% increase



**1,201,218 ENGAGEMENTS**

↓ 44% decrease



**31,170,564 IMPRESSIONS**

↓ 22% decrease



**239,423 WEB TRAFFIC**

↑ 83% increase



**Profile visits:**  
**138,923**  
**(-14%)**

**Strong intent to**  
**travel indication**

The goal of North Dakota Tourism's social channels is to increase positive awareness of North Dakota as a place to travel and live.

We accomplish this by prioritizing three main goals:

**Generating positive engagements to increase our reach to new audiences out of state.**

**Support existing social audiences by providing consistent, results-focused content and active engagement.**

**Increasing website traffic.**

## MOST SUCCESSFUL CREATIVE: WIDE OPEN SPACES

A lack of crowds, spacious and accessible communities along with beautiful landscapes shows the unique offerings North Dakota can provide visitors and residents.



Facebook and Instagram are North Dakota Tourism's most popular social platforms. This is represented by engagement rate - the number of interactions social content receives per follower.



**GROWTH**

Facebook 2.25%  
Stronger than all  
surrounding states

Instagram 6.77%

Second highest in  
the region



**ENGAGEMENT**

Facebook 0.38  
3x that of  
surrounding states

Instagram 0.75%

Highest in  
the region

## FOLLOW US

 @TravelND

 @NorthDakotaLegendary

 @NDTourism

 @NorthDakota

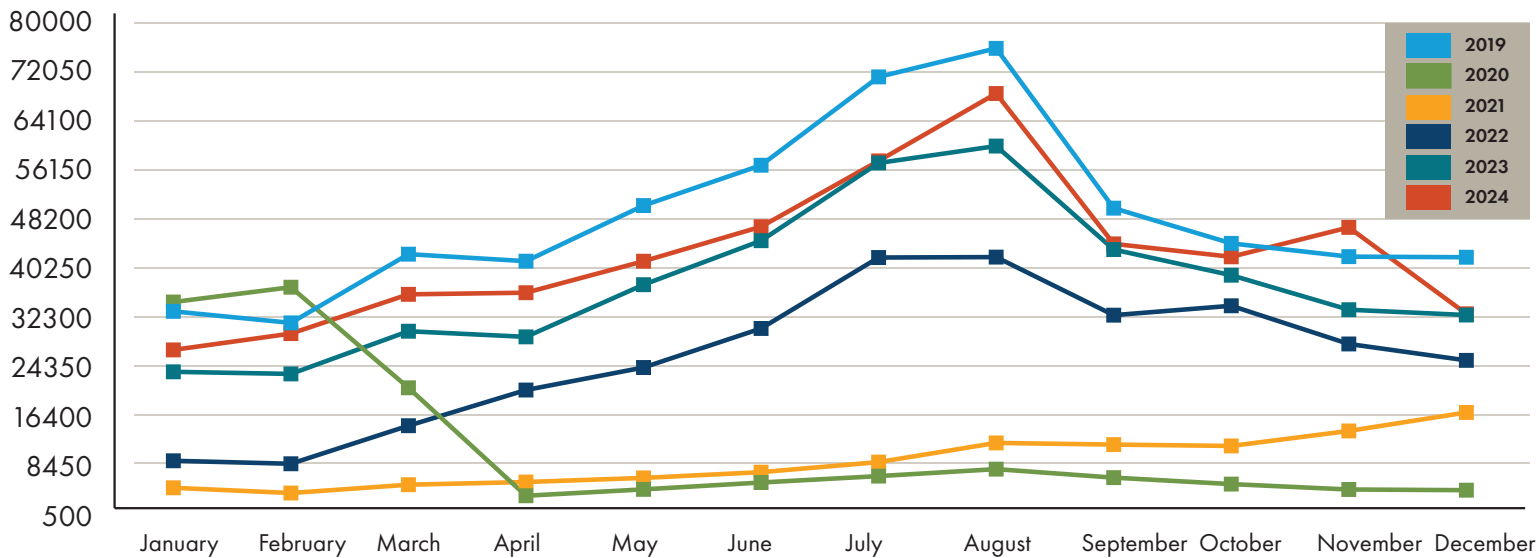
 @TravelND

 @NorthDakotaLegendary

# By the Numbers

## CANADA BORDER CROSSING INTO NORTH DAKOTA

Personal Vehicles



## NORTH DAKOTA TRAVEL INDUSTRY

TRAVEL SEGMENT	2023	2024	+/-
State Park Visitors	1,236,533	1,195,907	-3.3%
National Park Visitors	775,490	763,175	-1.6%
Major Attractions	4,793,135	4,484,336	-6.4%
Local Visitor Centers	43,269	47,578	10%
Cumulative Lodging Tax	\$8,529,581.52	\$9,646,232.71	13.1%
ND Airport Deplanements	1,137,485	1,237,781	8.8%
Canadian Border Crossing	439,866	484,969	10.3%
Statewide Hotel Occupancy Rate	57.6%	57.8%	0.3%

## TAXABLE SALES & PURCHASES

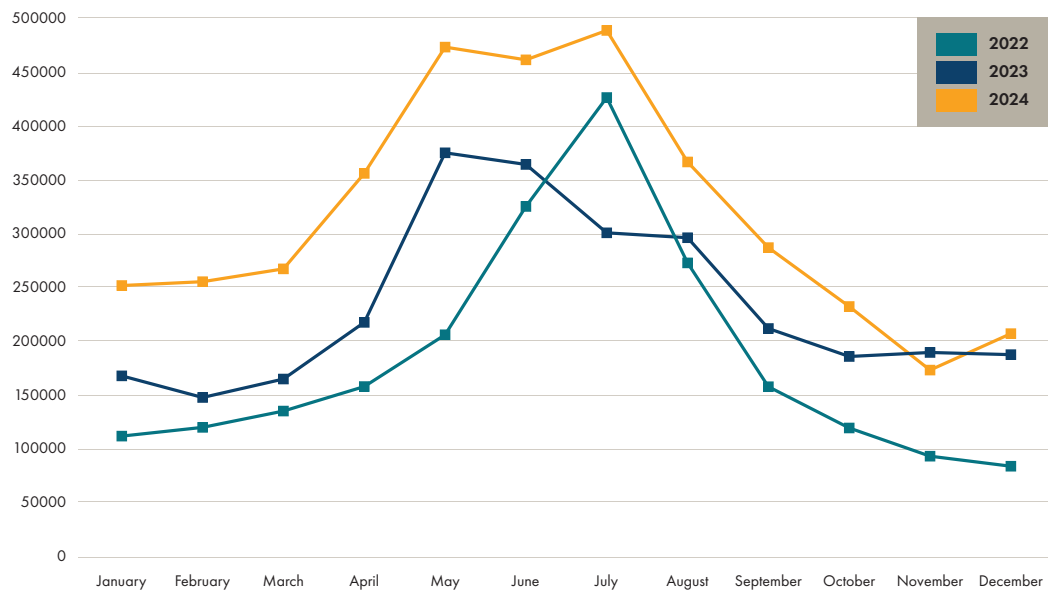
ACCOMMODATIONS/FOOD SERVICES		
2023	2024	+/-
\$2,167,330,348	\$2,210,367,345	1.99%

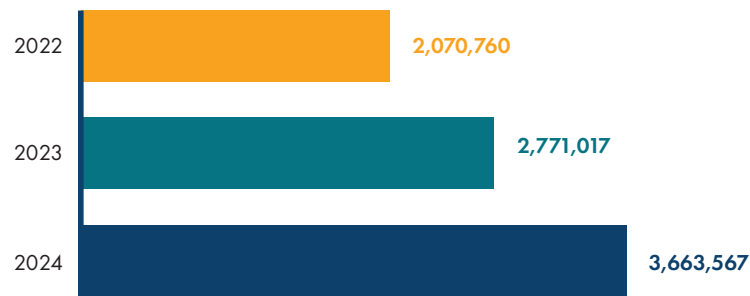
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION		
2023	2024	+/-
\$167,671,405	\$180,981,266	7.94%



TOTAL WEB SESSIONS BY MONTH



TOTAL WEB SESSIONS BY YEAR



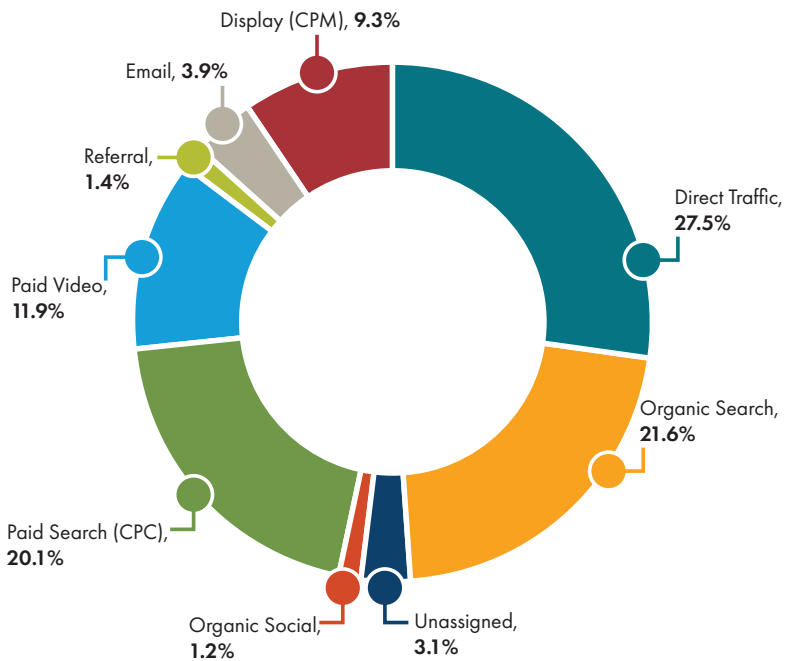
TOP LOCATIONS FOR WEBSITE TRAFFIC

RANK	LOCATION
1	Illinois
2	Minnesota
3	North Dakota
4	Iowa
5	Texas
6	Kansas
7	Colorado
8	Wisconsin
9	Florida
10	California

TOP LOCATIONS FOR INQUIRIES

RANK	LOCATION
1	Wisconsin
2	Minnesota
3	Illinois
4	Ohio
5	Michigan
6	Texas
7	Florida
8	Pennsylvania
9	North Dakota
10	Indiana

ORIGIN OF SITE TRAFFIC



# Global Marketing

International markets are rebounding, with U.S. arrivals at 2019 levels, though overnights and spending remain slightly behind. North Dakota's international growth is strong, thanks to our continued presence through the pandemic and recovery.

- 167 Tour Operators showcasing destinations across the state.
- 1,779 room nights, an increase of 193.
- Itineraries featured 29 North Dakota communities.
- 428 shareable leads generated from U.S. Travel's IPW, International Roundup, Nordic shows, International Inbound Travel Association (IITA), BrandUSA Travel Week, and BrandUSA Nordic Mission, plus 82 from missions to Germany, France, and the United Kingdom.
- Hosted 5 media Familiarization Tours (FAMs), visiting 16 communities over 26 days.
- Hosted 5 travel trade FAMs, also visiting 16 communities over 26 nights.



## TRIBAL TOURISM

North Dakota Tourism and the North Dakota Native Tourism Alliance (NDNTA) continue to collaborate to promote visitation to tribal lands, events, and attractions.

NDNTA raises awareness of the state's Tribes globally, participating in major tourism events like IPW, IRU, and Go West while hosting travel trade, media, and tourists. They've also engaged tribal colleges to involve youth in tourism and partnered with North Dakota Tourism to develop itineraries featuring tribal destinations. Their statewide alliance model, first funded by the NATIVE Act, is a leading example of Native tourism development in the U.S.

Together with North Dakota Tourism and the five Tribal Nations, NDNTA will continue enhancing tourism opportunities, attracting media, and showcasing Native culture. Native tourism strengthens communities, creates jobs, educates visitors, preserves culture, and empowers Tribes to share their stories in their own voices.



## GROUP TRAVEL

Group Travel efforts focus on sales missions, familiarization tours, product development and working with partners to develop itineraries to sell to groups, who primarily buy motorcoach tour packages.

North Dakota's tourism partners develop creative experiences that are presented to tour operators across North America.

In 2024, the interest in creating product and visiting North Dakota was strong, with over 5,100 visitors exploring attractions, cultural sites, historical landmarks, farms, technology, hands-on experiments and entertainment. Tour participants are excited to travel again.

The power of partnerships, familiarization tours, sales missions and site visits provide businesses a showcase and allows tour operators to fully experience the activities, entertainment, and sites. This investment can lead to new business and repeat business in the travel industry.

NORTH DAKOTA WAS  
FEATURED IN  
**113 STORIES**  
AND REACHED  
**231 MILLION**  
**READERS**  
AND EARNED AN  
EQUIVALENT OF  
**\$2.7 MILLION**  
IN EDITORIAL COVERAGE

OVERNIGHTS  
OFFERED IN THE STATE  
WERE INCREASED  
**12.2%**  
FROM 2023, WITH A  
REGIONAL MARKET  
SHARE INCREASE OF  
**8.2%**





# Outdoor Marketing

## PARTNERSHIP RESULTS

### Ron Schara Productions

- **Two** North Dakota episodes filmed in 2024 to air on Outdoor Channel in 2025.
- **Three** North Dakota episodes aired on Outdoor Channel in 2024.
- **Eight** podcasts featured North Dakota specific content with guests from North Dakota.

### Jason Mitchell Outdoors Episodes

- Best Bets from the Bank - Shore fishing in North Dakota
- Devils Lake fishing with Bottom Bouncers - Devils Lake Summer Walleye
- Crazy Pre-Spawn Smallmouth Bass Bite – Lake Audubon
- Small Secret Lakes Loaded with Walleye – Prairie Pothole Lake Ice Fishing
- Huge Crappie at Devils Lake – Early Ice Strategies on Devils Lake

### Linder Media

- Produced Lake Sakakawea Walleye and Lake Audubon Muskie Fishing content to air in 2025.

## MARKETING

### Hunting & Fishing TV

- Ron Schara Productions
- Jason Mitchell Outdoors
- Midwest Outdoors
- Linder Media Angling Buzz

### Print

- American Waterfowler
- Delta Waterfowl
- Ducks Unlimited
- In-Fisherman
- Outdoor News
- On Wisconsin Outdoors
- Pheasants Forever
- Shooting Sportsman



# Tourism Destination Development



North Dakota's tourism is a vital economic driver. Developed destinations attract visitors and encourage longer stays, while scenic adventures, cultural experiences, and unique culinary offerings enrich local lives. Investing in tourism infrastructure supports businesses, creates jobs, fuels community growth, and attracts a skilled workforce, making our state an attractive place to live and work.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

**Outdoor Recreation:** Offer year-round activities like hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, and water sports with packages that include guided tours, equipment rentals, and lodging.

**Agritourism:** Connect visitors with local agriculture through farm tours, farmers' markets, and seasonal attractions like pumpkin patches and sunflower fields.

**Arts, Culture & Heritage:** Enhance tourism by investing in Native American sites, historical reenactments, vibrant art districts, festivals, and public art installations.

**Venues & Unique Accommodations:** Develop event venues and distinctive lodging—such as boutique hotels, themed lodges, and glamping sites—to encourage extended stays.

**Culinary Tourism:** Highlight local flavors via food trails, culinary festivals, and hands-on cooking experiences using locally grown ingredients.

**Themed Attractions:** Create interactive museums, adventure parks, and immersive storytelling sites that offer engaging educational experiences.

Expanding these offerings can transform many of the **17 million day-trips from our total of 25.6 million trips into extended visits**, boosting visitor spending and further driving economic growth.

## AGRITOURISM



North Dakota's rich farm and ranch legacy is well known, and visitors are increasingly seeking farm and ranch experiences. Our agritourism development initiative aims to help farmers and ranchers diversify their operations by generating income through activities, accommodations, rentals, education, and on-site sales.

## THE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT GRANT



The Destination Development Grant Program was designed to support new and expanded destination attractions, resulting in new or improved experiences for visitors and residents across North Dakota.

List of Recipients:

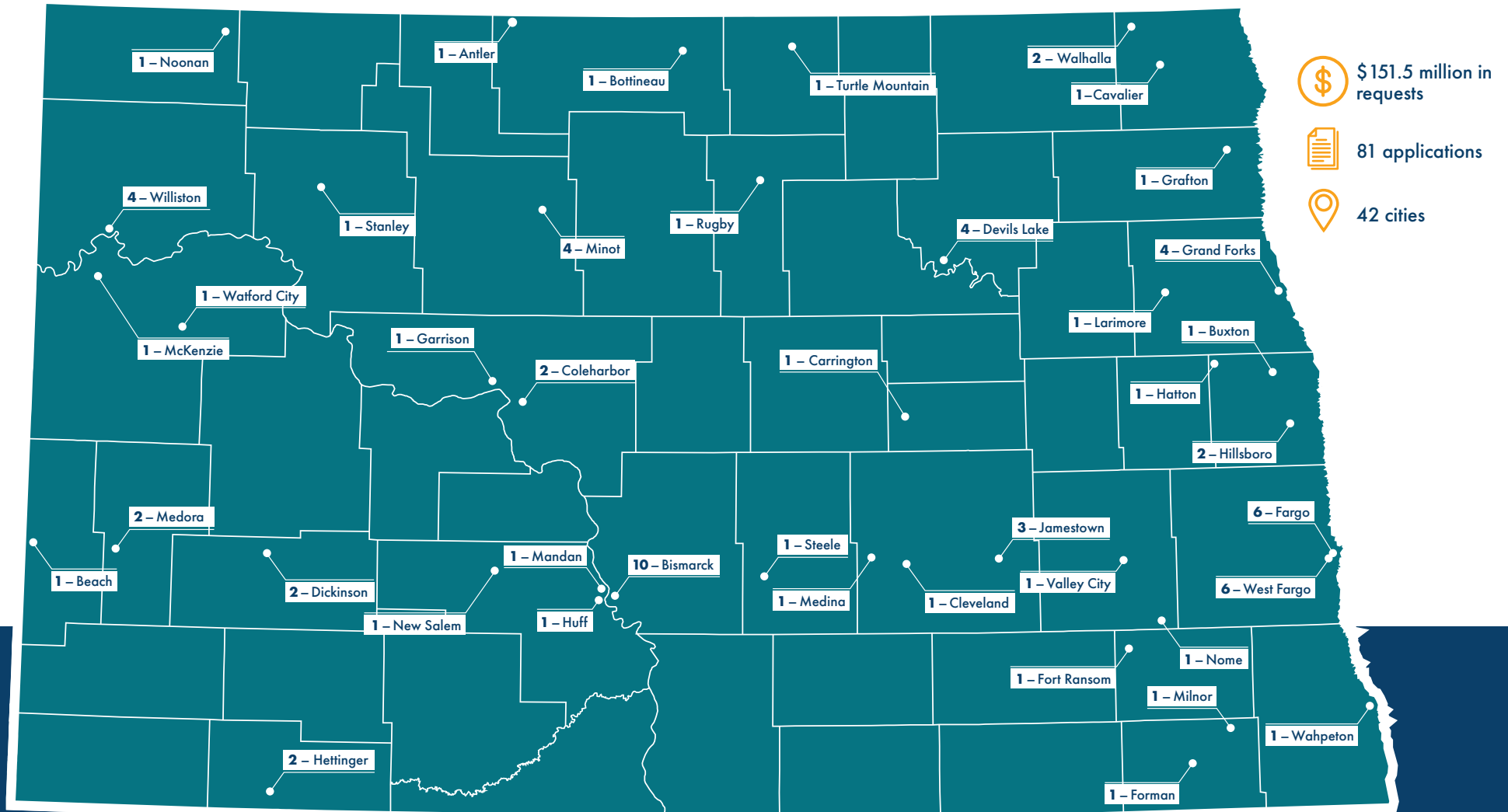
- Good Bear Lodge at Indian Hills - Garrison
- Bison World - Jamestown
- Bottineau Winter Park Snow Making
- Brews, Chews, and Views - Minot
- Dickinson Museum Center Expansion Project
- Frost Fire Park - Walhalla
- Huff Hills Ski Area
- Riverfront Festival Grounds - Bismarck
- Dakota Prairie Wings Lodge - Medina
- The Theodore Roosevelt
- Presidential Library - Medora
- Thrill Hills - Fort Ransom
- Turtle Mountain Comprehensive Tourism Plan - Dunseith & Belcourt
- Western Heritage - Medora
- Woodland Resort Guest Center - Devils Lake

\$25 million awarded to grow and expand tourism offerings in North Dakota.



# 2023 DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

The applications varied considerably in scope and appeal to unique visitor segments. New and expanded destination experiences will not only attract visitors but also improve our quality of life and workforce recruitment efforts.



Grant application projects varied considerably, appealing to various visitor sectors.



Lake resorts



Accommodations



Multi-faceted venues



Museums



Activities



Rentals



Entertainment



Outdoor recreation



Amenities



New and enhanced complete attraction experiences

# Partner Engagement

North Dakota Tourism is dedicated to building and sustaining strong relationships with tourism and industry partners across the state. We offer a wide range of assistance, from research and presentations to content and promotional assets. North Dakota Tourism relies on and actively promotes partner-provided listings of attractions, events, and visitor services.

## 2024 Highlights



More than 220 Tourism Professionals attended the 2024 Travel Industry Conference in Fargo.



More than 100 tourism professionals attended the 2024 Tourism Industry Marketing Summit.



The Commerce newsletter had an engagement rate of 54% in 2024. Total subscribers had a growth of 96% over the past 12 months with over 50,000 subscribers. Tourism/Marketing special send newsletter had an engagement rate of 60% with 20 bulletins sent to over 1,600 subscribers.

**4,600+**

PARTNER LISTINGS  
ON WEBSITE

**1,700+**

PARTNER LISTINGS IN  
TRAVEL GUIDE

**318,000+**

REFERRALS TO  
PARTNER WEBSITES



## STATE MEDIA LIBRARY



**16,553**

DOWNLOADS (system-wide)



**7,908**

UPLOADS (system-wide)



**104,945**

ASSETS (system-wide)

**Most downloaded** assets include: Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota State Capitol, sunflowers, Missouri River rail road bridge, Killdeer Mountain Four Bears Scenic Byway, Little Missouri National Grassland, downtown Bismarck, Wahpeton Red Door Art Gallery and cultural landmarks, Medina Grade Raise, Nelson Carlson Lake, and 2024 Transportation Conference.

**Most viewed** assets included: sunflower fields, Wind Canyon, snow-covered terrain, North Dakota State Capitol, Downtown Wahpeton, wildlife in Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Pembina Gorge recreation, 2024 Transportation Conference, Pretty Point Yurts at Cross Ranch State Park, and travel resources such as the Highway 5 itinerary and tourism media visits.

Because of the GA4 (Google Analytics) conversion, only data from April–December is available. In that time-frame, more than 1,800 users accessed the system. Average engagement time is 19:57 minutes.

# Visitor Services & Sales

Commerce Tourism and Marketing plays a crucial role in promoting destinations and attracting visitors. One of their key responsibilities is to create information pieces that serve various purposes, such as fulfilling content on the website, providing resources at visitor centers, and offering information at rest areas. Here's how these information pieces can be utilized effectively in each context:

## Brochures

Digital versions of brochures can be uploaded to the website for visitors to download or view online.

## Interactive Maps

North Dakota Tourism has created interactive maps and more than 30 itineraries that allow visitors to explore different regions, attractions, and amenities.

## Rest Area Partnerships

Collaborate with partners and attractions to showcase their offerings at rest areas through their brochures.

By leveraging these information pieces effectively across the website, visitor centers, and rest areas, Commerce Tourism and Marketing can enhance the overall visitor experience, promote tourism activities, and contribute to the economic growth of the state. Individuals that take brochures gain knowledge on area attractions, events and amenities. Travelers are able to experience more and spend more time in destination, increasing the economic impact of each visitor.

## REST AREA PARTNERSHIPS

110 different rest area program partner brochures were displayed and distributed at 15 sites across North Dakota.

### 2024 Rest Area Distribution Numbers



**40,716**

2024 TRAVEL  
GUIDES



**58,750**

2024 HIGHWAY  
MAPS



**10,800**

2024 HUNTING &  
FISHING GUIDES

## TRAVELER TESTIMONIALS



### Visitors from Nebraska:

"Your tourism department is **ONE OF THE BEST** we have encountered in our travels."



### Testimony from Live Chat User:

Counselor May chatted with me immediately and provided me with all the information I needed without delay. Very thankful for her knowledge and quick assistance. She also gave me extra information she knew I would need and use. Very knowledgeable!

## LIVE CHAT TRAVEL COUNSELING



Online Travel Counselors have responded to **526 Live Chats** with potential North Dakota visitors.  
**Up 12% from 2023.**



### 1,700 INQUIRIES

In 2024, the virtual assistant handled over 1,700 inquiries by potential visitors.  
**Up 16% from 2023.**

## ONLINE PARTNER REFERRALS



**318,000+**

REFERRALS TO PARTNER  
WEBSITES



# Industry At A Glance

## SALES



**\$3.33 BILLION**

IN TRAVEL SPENDING IN 2023



**\$9.1 MILLION**

IN VISITOR SPENDING PER DAY



**5,227,426**

HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS SOLD  
(0.5% DECREASE FROM 2023)

## REVENUE



**\$307 MILLION**

STATE & LOCAL TAXES GENERATED



**\$548,225,314**

ROOM NIGHT SALES

## JOBS



**45,306**

AVERAGE ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT



**3,097**

INDUSTRY BUSINESSES



MORE THAN

**\$1 BILLION**

IN ANNUAL WAGES

**25.6 MILLION**

Total visitors to  
North Dakota in 2023



5.3% increase from 2022

**1,238,278**

AIRPORT ARRIVALS



8.8% increase from 2023

**484,969**

BORDER ENTRIES  
FROM CANADA



10.2% increase from 2023

NORTH  
**Dakota**

Be Legendary.

Tourism & Marketing

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@NorthDakotaLegendary



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@NorthDakotaLegendary