

2021 Social Trends to work into your Social Strategy

2020 taught us A LOT both as people and as marketers. We learned how to make the most of our situations, come together when we're apart and prove just how resilient we can be. And as what tends to happen, the changes we see in the real world directly impact how we showcase and interact as a brand on social media. So, in the name of a brighter tomorrow, here are some tips and trends to keep an eye out for in the tourism industry in 2021 and beyond.



Platform Use:

Lets start broad to begin with. Here are some broad overviews for the growth we saw in 2020 and how we plan to use our channels in 2021.

4%



Even with slower growth, aging audiences and dropping engagement rates, Facebook still remains king of the social networks. Here you will find the most eyes and some of the most intuitive social advertising tools available to you. Facebook will be our lead social advertising platform in 2021.

18%

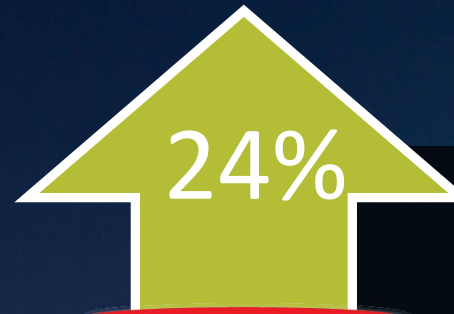


ND Tourism gained the most followers on Instagram in 2021, and as the most visual channel, that's no surprise. Stories remain a vital piece to organic success on Instagram and the introduction of reels will challenge marketers to present their content in different ways to appeal to what younger audiences are biting on.



-1%

The 2-year downward trend of followers continues, at least for our efforts. Although speaking and engaging with our audiences (especially writers and influencers) remains a high priority on this platform, we have unfortunately seen little reward for our efforts. Currently we have no plans for paid advertising on Twitter in 2021.



YouTube was a pleasant surprise for us this year! We saw the largest subscriber growth on our YouTube channel this year despite not having an organic strategy. Paid campaigns performed exceptionally in comparison to previous years as well. Currently, we are planning on shifting more ad dollars to this platform in 2021.



Coming into 2020, ND Tourism had goals of testing Pinterest as a potential platform for organic and paid promotions. Unfortunately, due to a shift in priorities during the pandemic, we were not able to gather enough evidence to show real potential on this channel and look forward to continuing to test it into 2021.

Activate Your Locals!!!

2020 forced many destinations to shift from focusing outside their borders to primarily the people they see walking down the street every day. Supporting local businesses, keeping residents informed and reacquainting the people living here with their amazing home were all pieces of the puzzle. That trend is set to continue in 2021 when (hopefully) we focus on visitors once again. Locals and “boots on the ground” tourism advocates are the people potential visitors want to hear from. Here are a few ways ND Tourism will accomplish this in 2021.

- Small business takeovers/features run by owners and employees.
- Local expert interviews (example: requesting the most photographic spot in North Dakota via recommendations from local photographers).
- Local influencers.
- New and improved “Come Meet My ND” video series.
- UGC incorporated/repurposed into additional content pieces

5

Additional Tips

- Emphasis on organic. Social isn't just a "pay to play" arena anymore (depending on your goals). If you're trying to build your social presence, it most likely will not be through paid. You need to stay present and punctual on your accounts to grow them.
- This is nothing new, but an important reminder that just posting is not enough. Remember that the greatest strength of social is that it's a conversation with your audience. Making sure to message them back and responding to comments in a timely manner continues to be key to social algorithms showing content to your audience.
- Stay socially conscious. COVID, elections and the battle against disinformation and hate language has the social world holding brands to a higher standard than ever. Many audiences want to know how you're helping the community make progress that is important to the world today.
- eCommerce is becoming a huge focus of more "brand friendly" pages like Instagram. If you have something to sell, keep up to date with the changes that are set to roll out in 2021.
- "Culling social channels" or the less-is-more approach. Many brands report cutting back on their number of profiles to focus on more niche platforms or invest time in higher quality content rather than posting more often.



Thanks for reading! If you have any questions or anything else you would like to learn more about, please email Alicia Jolliffe at ajolliffe@nd.gov

Click on the icons below to follow North Dakota's Tourism social channels here. Use the hashtag #BeNDLegendary or tag us so we can build up North Dakota together!

