

Commerce

NORTH
Dakota
Be Legendary

North Dakota Tourism Industry Newsletter

August 24, 2021





Q2-2021 Tourism Report shows steady growth in several measurables

The North Dakota Tourism Q2-2021 Report was recently released and can be accessed on the [Tourism Industry page](#). Some key findings include:

Q2 statewide updates

- North Dakota’s hotel occupancy saw continued recovery in Q2, meeting statewide occupancy numbers seen in 2016.

- Theodore Roosevelt National Park visitation tracked 78% higher than a year ago with June seeing the park's highest ever recreation visits for that month (150,232).
- North Dakota's ports-of-entry recorded just 27,330 personal vehicles from Canada through Q2 (YTD), roughly 10% of normal. To date, North Dakota has lost approximately 672,000 trips from Canada.
- Visitor interest, as indicated by website traffic, remained high at 31.58% higher than 2020's record traffic year.

Q2 marketing efforts

- North Dakota's combined paid marketing and public relations efforts have led to a 30% increase in organic traffic to NDtourism.com.
- During Q2, more than 139 million ad impressions were served, the largest of which was in digital advertising. Those efforts generated more than 200,000 click-throughs to the website and have been associated with 2,916 arrivals YTD.
- Out-of-home advertising can be seen on buses and trains in the Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago markets. As travel and commuting increased, this effort generated 42 million impressions in Q2.
- North Dakota advertising is present in 19 U.S. publications with a circulation of 5.3 million.

[View the full report](#)



U.S.-Canada Border restrictions extended

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced extended restrictions on nonessential travel at the U.S.-Canada border until Sept. 21. Canada reopened its border to vaccinated U.S. citizens for nonessential travel on Aug. 9.

North Dakota's congressional delegation and Gov. Doug Burgum have urged the federal government to safely

reopen the northern border.

“This continues to cause real pain for North Dakota’s retail and tourism industries that depend on Canadian travelers, and for the friends and family members who are separated by these border restrictions and have repeatedly had their hopes dashed by unnecessary delays.” - Gov. Doug Burgum.

North Dakota Tourism estimates a loss of nearly 1.5 million visitors since the border closure and lost visitor spending of more than \$192 million.

**Find the best places to
mountain bike in
North Dakota!**



The popularity of mountain biking in North Dakota is no surprise. The state offers plenty of space, a variety of trails for all skill levels, and no crowds. Mountain biking in North Dakota has earned its reputation for great rides on trails you are likely to have all to yourself.

In response to the growing popularity of this sport/recreational activity, ND Tourism has begun a campaign promoting all the wonderful opportunities North Dakota has for all those who are looking for a one-of-a-kind adventure on two wheels and no motor!

As part of the campaign, NDtourism.com now offers an easy-to-follow guide for the best places to mountain bike in North Dakota.



MAAH DAAH HEY TRAIL - LITTLE MISSOURI NATIONAL GRASSLANDS

The MDH Trail is the premier mountain bike trail in North Dakota that traverses the million+ acre Little Missouri National Grasslands. The 140 mile trail can be done in segments or as an epic adventure. Note points of interest like Devils Pass, The Ice Caves and China Wall.
<http://mdhta.com/>
[Maah Daah Hey Trail Map](#)



BISON PLANT TRAIL - MINOT

The Plant is a heavily wooded natural area and mountain biker's playground southeast of Minot along Hwy 52. The loop trail features river views along rolling wooded prairie.
[Bison Plant Trail Map](#)



NUX BAA GAA TRAIL - INDIAN HILLS STATE RECREATION AREA

Nux Baa Gaa is Arikara for "All the People". The six-mile trail system features stunning views of Lake Sakakawea near Indian Hills Resort.



HARMON LAKE TRAILS - MANDAN

Harmon Lake north of Mandan features 13.1 miles of mountain bike trails. Check out the popular Epic Loop & Otter Creek Trails.

Check it out today!





ND Tourism reaches marketing milestone!

North Dakota Tourism has had the rare opportunity to continue advertising into the fall, extending our marketing presence through digital, television, cooperative advertising and out-of-home tactics.

Niche campaigns targeting motorcycling enthusiasts, golfers and mountain bikers have been added to the mix. Each advertising effort has a goal of keeping North Dakota as a top-of-mind vacation destination and driving referrals to the businesses and travel partners in the state.



Early results have set milestones. For the first time in a campaign, North Dakota Tourism has served more than 100 million digital ad impressions, which have created over 53,000 website conversions. Website traffic is 17% higher than last-year's record. And traffic from Colorado, a new ad market, is up 69% from 2020.

Extended advertising continues into November and December. Find out more during the next Industry Chat presentation, Sept. 20 at 2 p.m. CT, and at the Tourism Industry Marketing Summit, Oct. 26 in Bismarck.

Contact Heather LeMoine for more information



Annual ESTO seminar provides insight and education on several current tourism topics

Commerce Tourism and Marketing Director Sara Otte Coleman attended the U.S. Travel Association's Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO), Los Angeles, last week.

The National Council of State Tourism Directors (NCSTD) discussed ongoing recovery and reinvention strategies for their state's tourism and hospitality industries still plagued with the impacts of the pandemic. U.S. Travel reported on efforts to expedite international travel, immediate needs for the upcoming IPW marketplace, and the dire concerns in workforce shortages further impacting the industry's recovery. NCSTD members also elected Otte Coleman as the vice chairman of the group.

The annual ESTO was attended by over 700 masked participants with topics ranging from diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) needs and strategies, consumer behaviors mid-pandemic, transformational workforce strategies, data and privacy changes, the future of destination management as well as various marketing case studies.

ESTO is the premier conference for state tourism offices and destination marketing organizations. Next year's ESTO will be held Aug. 6-9, 2022 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Legendary Road Trips Influencer Program is underway!!

North Dakota Tourism's PR team worked to create a program that elevates the state's presence with iHeartRadio. The program will feature North Dakota tourism experts as they share their passion and enthusiasm for the state's experiences and motivate listeners to make up for the past year of lost time and travel experiences.

The iHeartRadio integration will leverage influential radio personalities to share their experiences/wish lists to create buzz and desire among listeners and followers with content and messaging developed by the PR team and amplified through additional paid elements to maximize the reach and effectiveness of the on-air endorsement.

In addition, the on-air and hosting integrations for radio talent, iHeartMedia has extensive experience in hosting promotional sweepstakes and included a contest for listener engagement. The sweepstakes component enables people to enter daily for the chance to win the Legendary Trip(s) they would most like to experience. The program will highlight all 10 of the Legendary Road Trip experiences and be given away to five lucky winners (for a family of four). The promotion will be highly targeted to audiences in key road trip markets for North Dakota.

Find out more about the program and listen to the complete interviews [here](#).

IPW remains on schedule for September

IPW is still on! The show will be the first step back into welcoming our international guests to North Dakota.

The 2020 spring show was canceled; however, 2021 is still on the books for Sept. 18 in Las Vegas!

What do we know? Borders are still closed. So how will the international trade and media get into the U.S.? Many of the

international media are already based in the U.S. Some of the international tour operators also have offices in the U.S. Many of the meetings held in the past have been with U.S.-based international inbound tour operators like ATI, America 4 You and Rocky Mountain Holiday Tours.

U.S. Travel, the host of IPW, is also doing everything it can to work with the U.S. Department of State to open the borders to Europe to the U.S., following strict safety and health protocols.

North Dakota Tourism will be attending on a very limited basis, still showcasing everything we have to offer the travelers of the world. North Dakota Tourism has built the “Be Legendary” brand through relationship building and personal contacts. IPW will be our first opportunity to reengage our partners and propel the awareness of North Dakota.

If you are planning to travel overseas, keep close contact with your travel agent and enroll in step.state.gov to receive alerts and make sure you can be located in case of an emergency.

Working with a travel agency has never been more important than it is today with the speed of change for travel restrictions from country to country being rapid or unpredictable.

[Learn more about IPW](#)



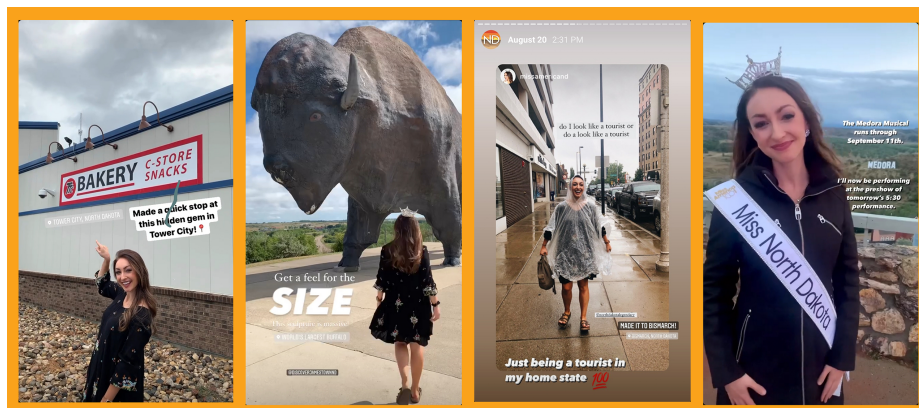
Upcoming events

[IPW](#) – Sept. 18-22 in Las Vegas, Nevada

[Main Street ND Summit](#) – Oct. 12 in West Fargo

Tourism Summit – Oct. 26 in Bismarck

Miss North Dakota takes over ND Tourism Instagram



Miss North Dakota 2021, Reyna Bergstrom, took over ND Tourism's Instagram account on Friday, Aug. 20.

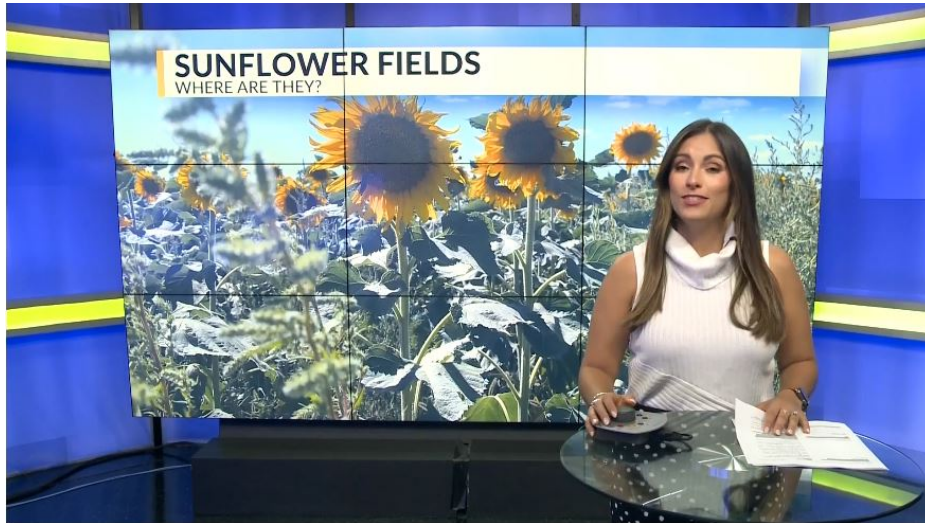
Her day-long road trip began in her hometown of Fargo and concluded at the entrance of the Medora Musical.

Bergstrom introduced her personal and Miss ND audiences to our social channels where she highlighted our travel partners along the I-94 route. This takeover resulted in about 30 stories garnering around 80,000 impressions.

Anyone interested in promoting upcoming events or attraction developments can connect with Alicia via ajolliffe@nd.gov to discuss a potential takeover of ND Tourism's social channels.



In the news



[Savor the summer and visit a sunflower field](#)



[Bully Pulpit Golf Course ranked on GOLF's Top 100 Value Courses in the U.S.](#)



[This tiny western town goes full Broadway in the Badlands](#)