

EXPLORE **m** MINNESOTA™



ANNUAL REPORT

2016

#ONLYINMN



A Message From The Director

#ONLYINMN

Greetings,

2016 was an exciting year for Explore Minnesota, and the state's tourism industry as a whole. The centennial of the National Park Service, the Ryder Cup, the new U.S. Bank Stadium, and other exciting developments in cities and towns across the state all contributed to increased visitation, spending and jobs in Minnesota's leisure and hospitality sector.

In the latest evolution of the popular #OnlyinMN campaign, Explore Minnesota generated **3.5 million trips** to Minnesota and more than **\$388 million in traveler spending**. We engaged hundreds of thousands of people through social media, surpassing **500,000 uses of the campaign hashtag**. And we made a big splash in cities like Chicago, Denver, Kansas City and Dallas with cutting-edge PR and advertising efforts.

On top of all this, we reached an all-time record **private sector match of \$10.3 million** to further our marketing reach. Our co-ops and partnerships grew to new heights.

Internationally, Minnesota continued to grow as a global destination. We worked with you, multi-state groups and Brand USA to promote Minnesota to markets from **France to China to the UK**. We continued our group tour efforts, substantially increased our public relations, and engaged with millions of consumers through welcome centers, at trade shows and online, and reached a record number of prospective travelers through our e-newsletters.

Looking forward to 2017 and beyond, there has never been a more exciting time for Minnesota tourism. From major events like the X Games and Super Bowl to the Defeat of Jesse James Days, Eelpout and everything in between, more travelers are realizing **there's something happening in Minnesota**, and they want to be a part of it.

The following 2016 Annual Report gives you a very quick look back at some of the things we accomplished this past year. Take a look and let us know what you think.

Thank you for all of your hard work this past year bringing both new and returning travelers to our great state and ensuring they leave with a smile on their face. Minnesota would not be the amazing destination that it is without you.

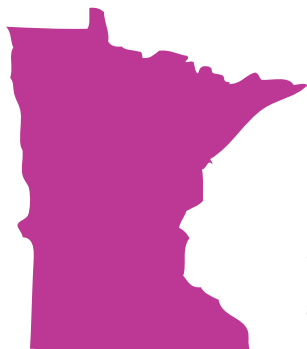
Here's to another great year!

Sincerely,
John F. Edman, Director

Explore Minnesota



Economic Impact of Minnesota Tourism



The general fund operating budget for fiscal years 2016-17:

\$13.988
Million Annually*

*Includes \$500,000 in supplemental state funding available when private sector support generated by Explore Minnesota is at least \$3 million. **Explore Minnesota generated a record amount of match dollars in FY16**

Private Industry Match

Cash **\$3.1 million**
In-kind **\$7.2 million**
Total **\$10.3 million**

2005
\$10.2

2010
\$11.3

2015
\$14.4



growth in Billions

sales at leisure and hospitality businesses
41% from 2005 to 2015, including 6% annual growth for 2015.

(Note: data not available yet for 2016)

Percentage of Budget



SALES

Grow gross receipts/sales of tourism in Minnesota

Leisure & hospitality
\$14.4 billion
gross sales annually
Almost \$40 million a day



REVENUE

Generate state and local sales tax revenue from tourism

State sales tax
\$930 million
generated annually
17% of all state sales tax revenues

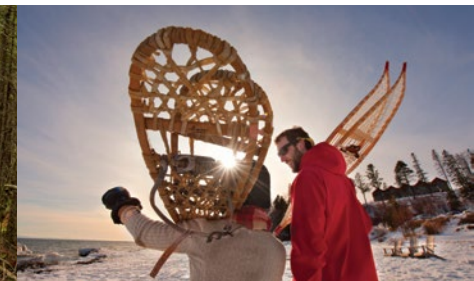
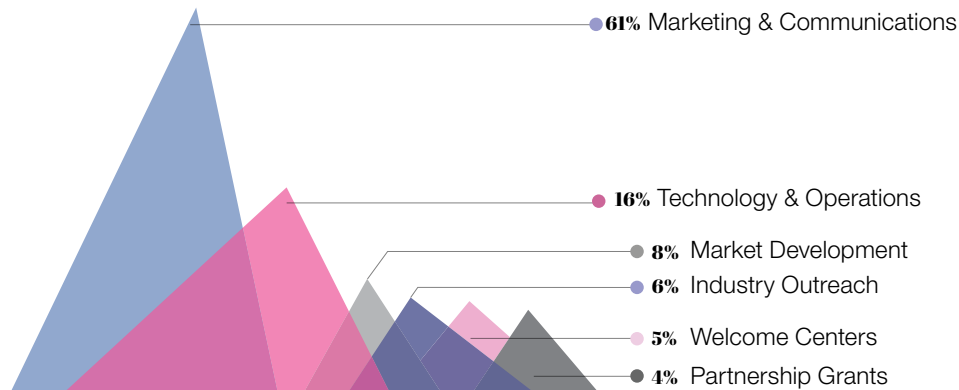


JOBS

Increase leisure & hospitality employment in Minnesota

Total payroll: \$5.1 billion
260,000 jobs
size of employment
11% of total private sector

(Note: data not available yet for 2016)



#OnlyinMN Campaign

Continued the **acclaimed**

#ONLYINMN campaign

throughout the **Midwest, Denver, Kansas City and Chicago**

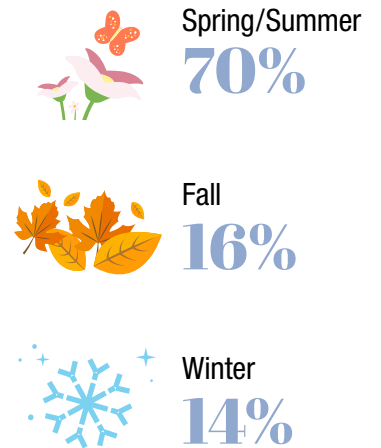
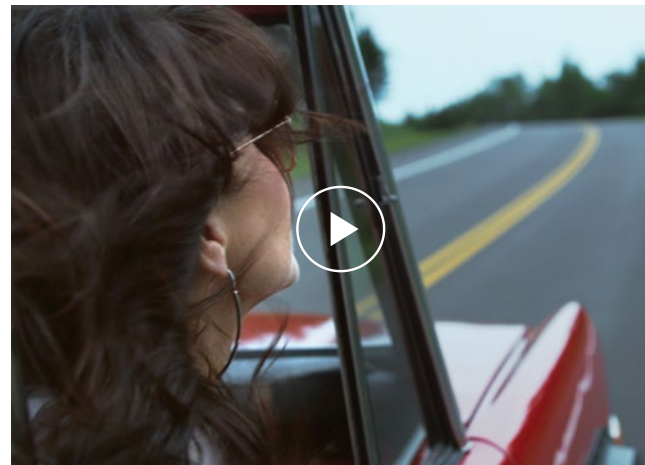
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\$388.8 Million

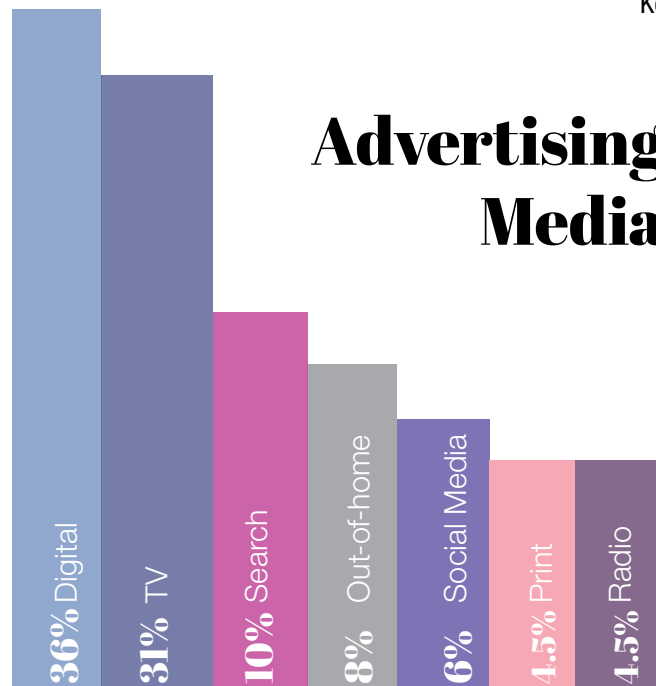
in traveler spending



- MNstagram Booths traveled to events in Denver, Chicago, Kansas City and the Minnesota State Fair
- Debuted three new TV spots with evolved look and feel
- Continued a robust digital marketing program in all seasons, featuring high-impact executions designed to deliver engaging brand experiences
- Partnered with golf pro Tom Lehman to highlight Minnesota as a premier golf destination; launched a pilot golf campaign in Dallas-Fort Worth
- Debuted new Hike MN initiative to inspire travelers to get outdoors
- Sponsored MPR's "Prairie Home Companion" for Garrison Keilor's farewell season



Advertising Media



Marketing Partners



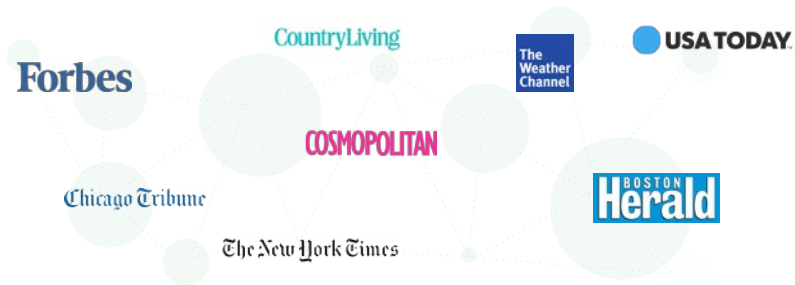
Generated roughly
1.5 Billion
 earned media impressions via
 internal and agency public relations



Quality information for travelers

- Drove record web traffic to exploreminnesota.com
- Inspired travel with monthly e-newsletter and weekly e-mail updates on events, fishing, fall colors, winter trails and more to a qualified, opt-in audience
- Served on-the-road travelers at Welcome Centers and wide network of affiliated centers, and provided printed materials at Mall of America, MSP Airport and Union Depot

High-profile placements



Debuted totally redesigned Minnesota Travel Guide
300,000 & 12,000
 distributed online views


Customers served 2016

Website visits
3.8 Million

Mail and digital inquiries
39,000

At Welcome Centers
2.7 Million

Website brochure requests
30,000

E-newsletter subscribers
201,000

Telephone inquires
4,300

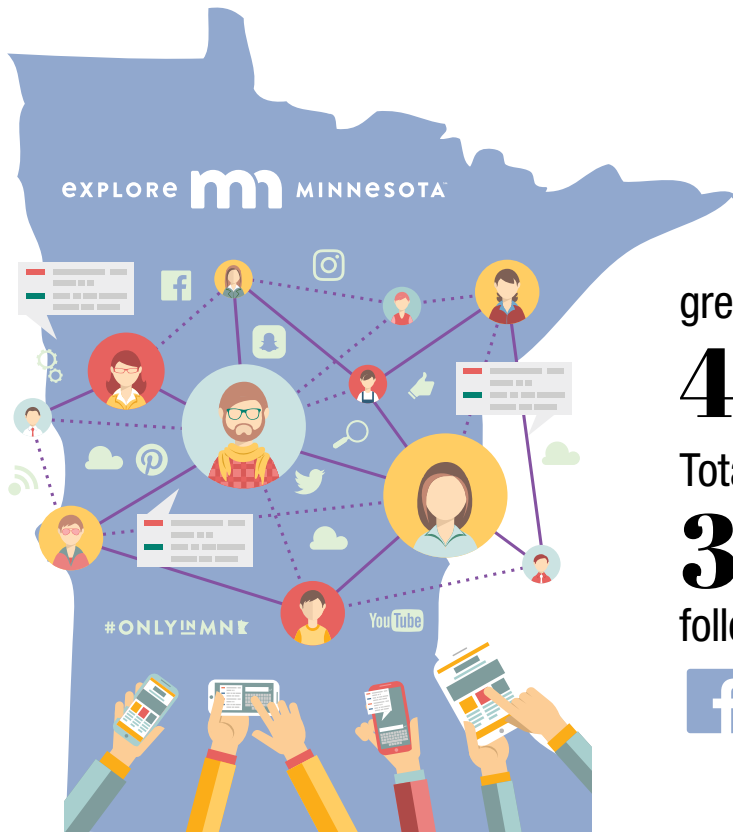


Offered seasonal trip ideas through Minnesota Explorer travel newspaper, published in partnership with Star Tribune
1.5 Million
 copies distributed



Provided customized
1-on-1
 travel planning services via phone, email, live chat and in person

Social Media



grew audience by
44%
 Totalling more than
344,000
 followers

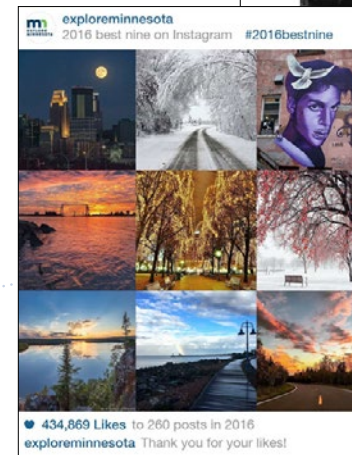


Tune in Tuesday, August 30 at noon CT

on Facebook Live w

#ONLY

Explore Minnesota @exploreminn - 21 Apr 2016
 Minnesota and the world are mourning the loss of a true star today Rest in peace, Purple One. 🍷 #Prince



204,000

#OnlyinMN photos shared on Instagram

Generated nearly
263,000
 uses of the hashtag

#ONLYINMNE



Social Media reach

121 million

Total impressions
883 million

YouTube

Nearly
1.5 million
 video views



960,000
 Snapchat filter views

Conducted Governor's Opener events



in conjunction with DNR, host communities and other partners



Organized Spring Training Conference

focused on adaptive sports

THINK BIG IN BEMIDJI Held annual
**Explore Minnesota
Tourism Conference**
at the Sanford Center in Bemidji

Awarded
\$711,950 in Partnership
Marketing Grants
funding to 103 tourism &
Scenic Byway organizations



Launched New Events Grants Program

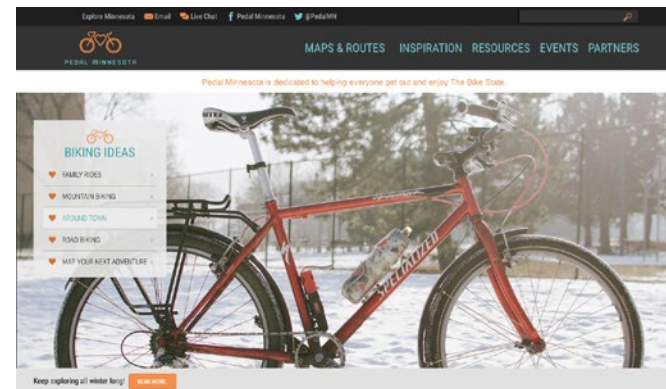


Implemented a multi-year, major event sponsorship with the **American Society of Association Executives** to increase Minnesota's visibility as a destination for meetings and conferences.

Coordinated **Meet in Minnesota** sponsorship at Connect



Coordinated participation in **Destination Capitol Hill** efforts to influence national tourism policy



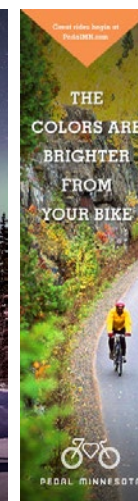
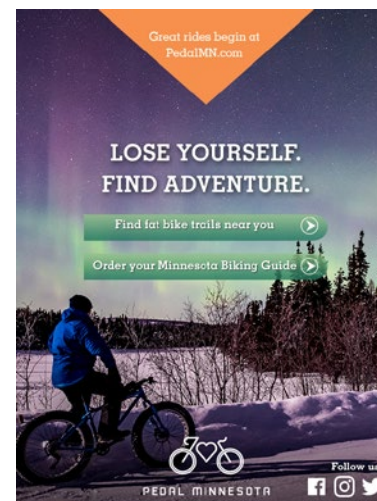
PEDAL MINNESOTA

PedalMN

Provided free bike maintenance at five events in coordination with **HealthPartners**

Promoted 3 Mile Smile initiative via live events and digital outreach

Increased page views on **PedalMN.com** by 94%



Market Development

Published

2016 Minnesota Group & Packaged Travel Planner

highlighting Minnesota's performing arts scene



- Exhibited at the **American Bus Association** show with 13 industry partners

Worked with

Delta Airlines

to host media and travel professionals in conjunction with new air service from Tokyo's Haneda Airport



Majority of visitors from Europe and Asia, including the **U.K., China, Germany and India**

1.7 Million Canadian visitors

(Note: 2015 data; not available yet for 2016)

Implemented extensive trade and consumer advertising program with Brand USA targeting **China, Germany & UK**

- Implemented a Weibo social media account in China, with an 18% monthly increase in followers since launch

International Visitation

311,000 international visitors not including Canada

Timely Research

Surveyed

Lodging business & campgrounds

on expectations and results of summer tourism business, revealing Minnesota accommodations experienced their **best summer since at least 2008**

Minnesota's lodging industry experienced growth in 5/6 tracked metrics, with

6.2% lodging revenue growth

Achieved a **9-to-1 return on investment** of Explore Minnesota spring/summer marketing

Collaborated with **Department of Revenue** on reporting of leisure and hospitality sales tax data used to track industry performance

#ONLYINMN

For more details on Explore Minnesota
marketing and programs, go to:
industry.exploreminnesota.com

Explore Minnesota

121 Seventh Place East
St. Paul, MN 55101-2146
651-757-1848 888-VISITMN

