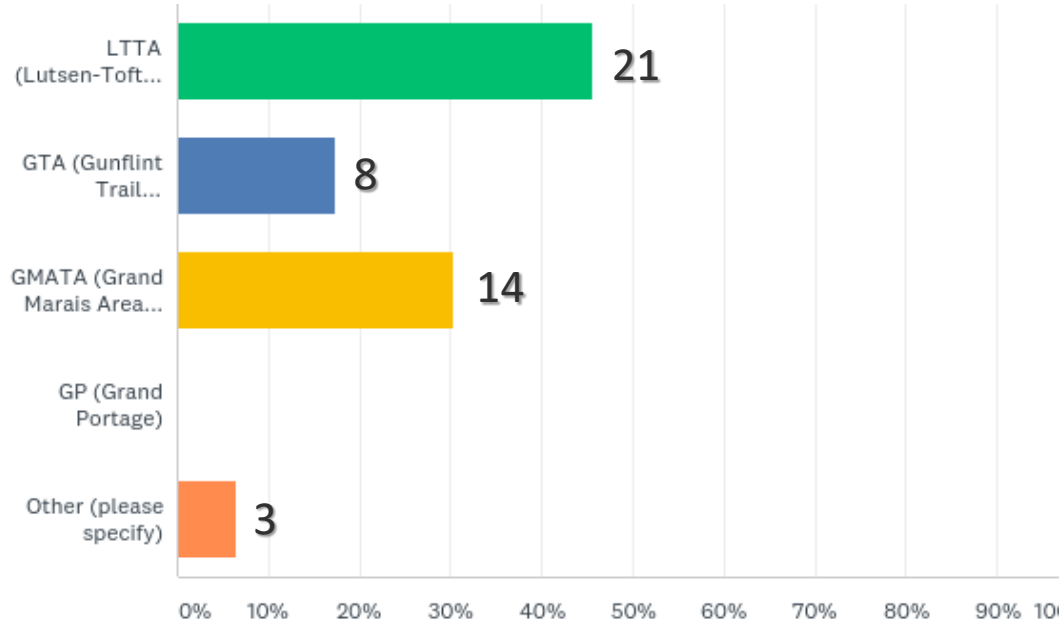


VCC WINTER Association Directives 2018-19

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

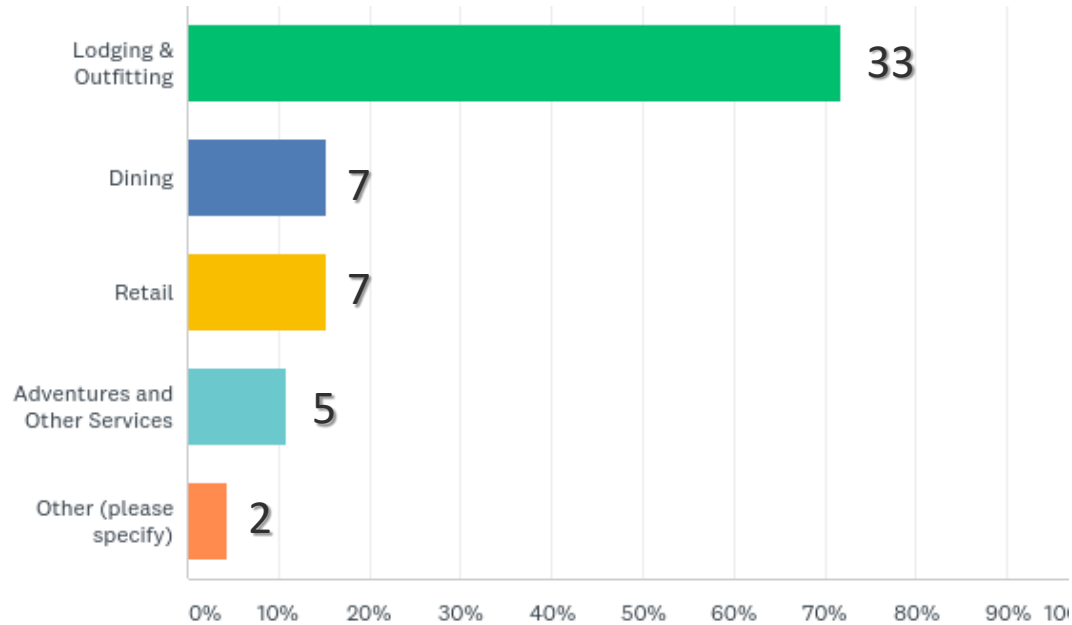
Q1: Which association are you a member of?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



Q2: Which best describes your primary business?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



Rank: Winter OUTDOOR Activities

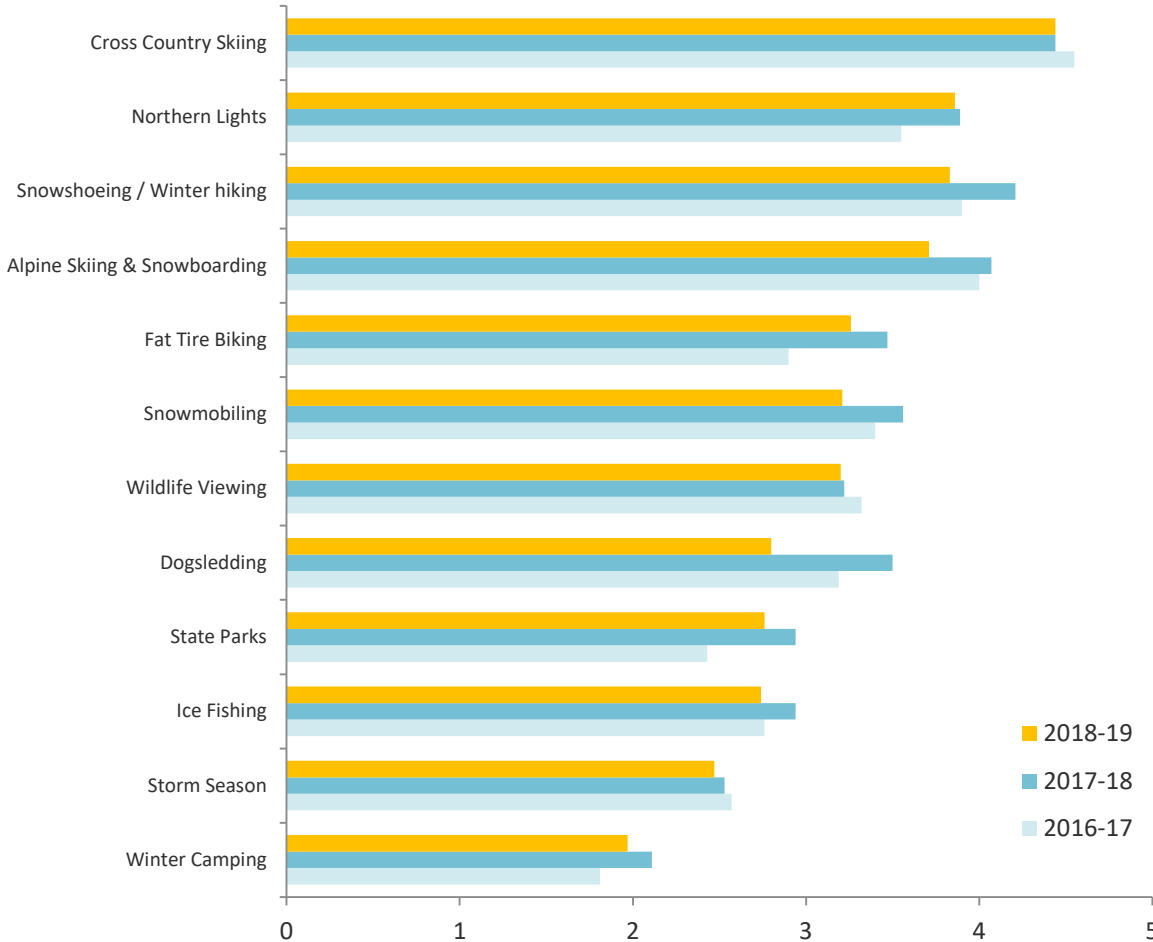
Q3: Please rate the WINTER Outdoor Activities to focus on for Winter (2018-19).

Answered: 36 Skipped: 10

Traditional winter activities remain highest on the list however, Northern Lights/Dark Skies continues to climb up the list. Fat Tire Biking has seen continued growth as well. Dogsledding loses a few points as well as Storm Season a little bit. Snowmobiling holds steady in the middle behind various skiing and snowshoeing activities.

Comments from the survey:

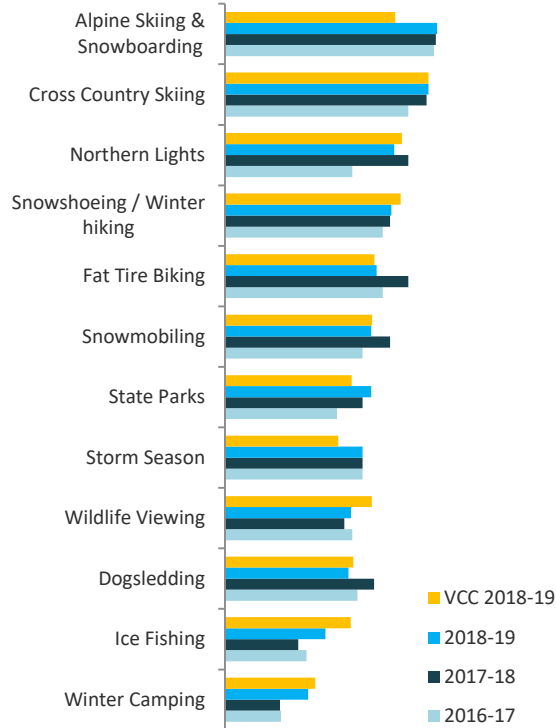
- I listed Alpine skiing as "Very" rather than "absolutely" since Lutsen Mountains is probably already doing the lions share of marketing for Alpine skiing.
- Music Events, Paired Dinner Events (Craft Beer, Wine, or Spirits).
- Hygge



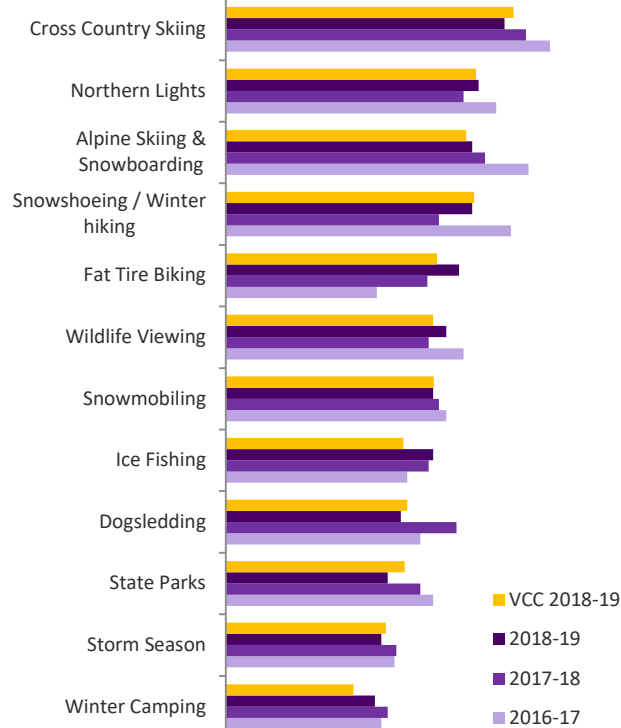
Q3: Please rate the WINTER Outdoor Activities

By Association

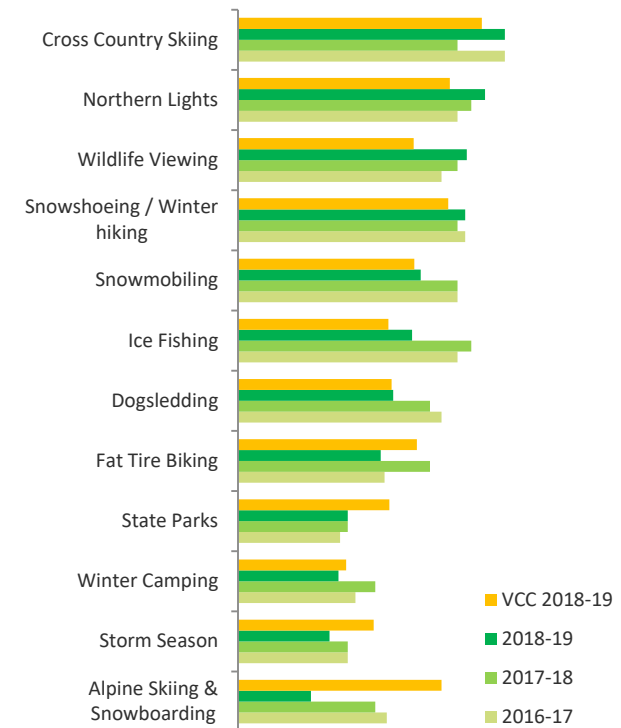
LTTA



GMATA



GTA



The biggest change YoY for LTTA was Northern lights climbing from 8th to 3rd. Dogsledding saw a decrease of 3 points.

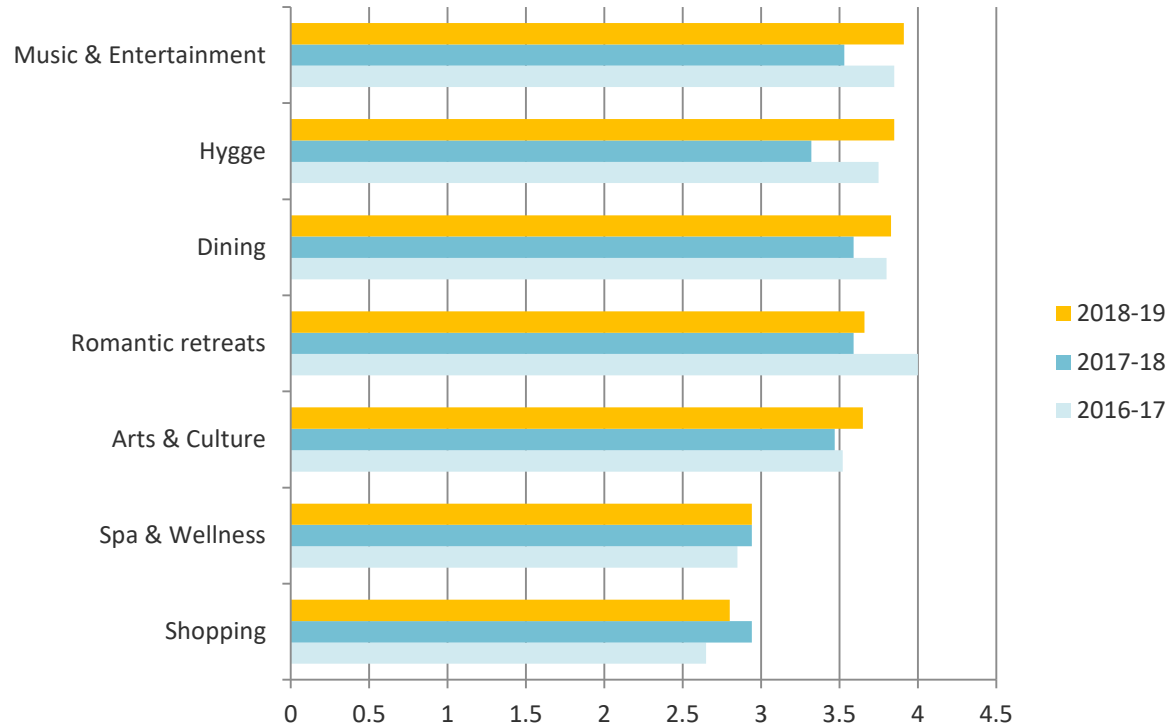
GMATA saw substantial increase in interest for Fat Tire Biking – climbing from 12th to 5th. Northern Lights also move a few points up ranking it at #2

Cross Country remains as a top priority for GTA. N.lights continues to increase as well as Wildlife Viewing. Alpine Skiing moves down by 4 points.

Q4: Please rate non-weather related activities to focus on this Winter (2018-19).

Answered: 35 Skipped: 11

Rank: Non-weather Related Activities



Music and entertainment takes the lead this year edging out Hygge slightly. Hygge remains a top initiative across all communities. All other general indoor activities remain at about the same rank.

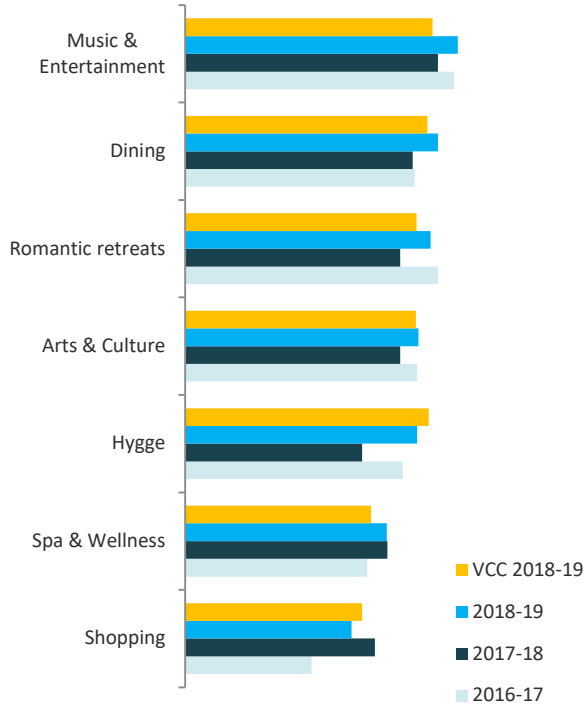
Comments from the survey:

- Relaxation should be a focus. Maybe that's Hygge but using the work relax should be important.
- Fireplaces. Reading a good book by the fire
- Craft retreats; family holiday activities.

Q3: Please rate the NON-Weather based Activities

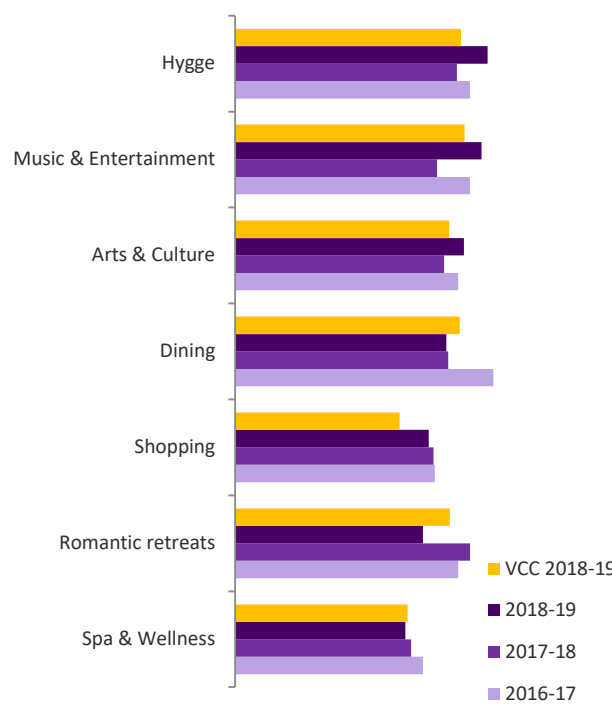
By Association

LTTA



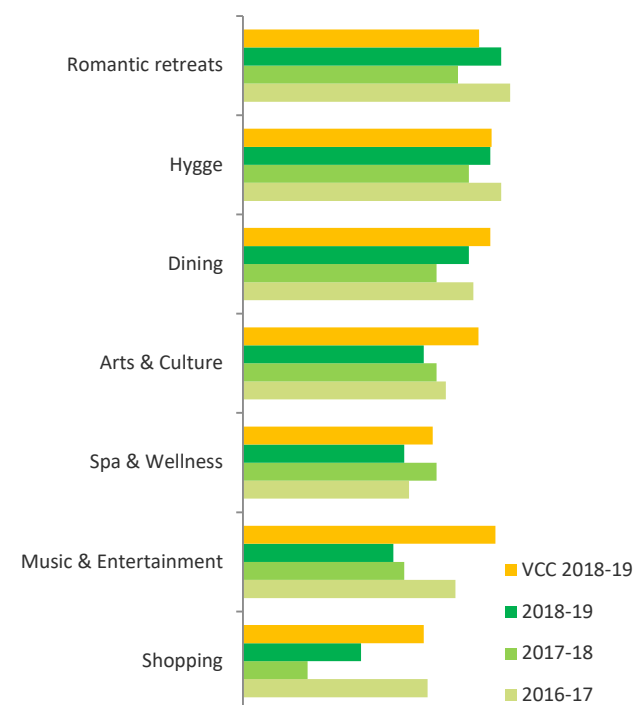
Music, dining and romance continue to hold the top spots. Hygge climbs up 2 points while Shopping drops 1 point.

GMATA

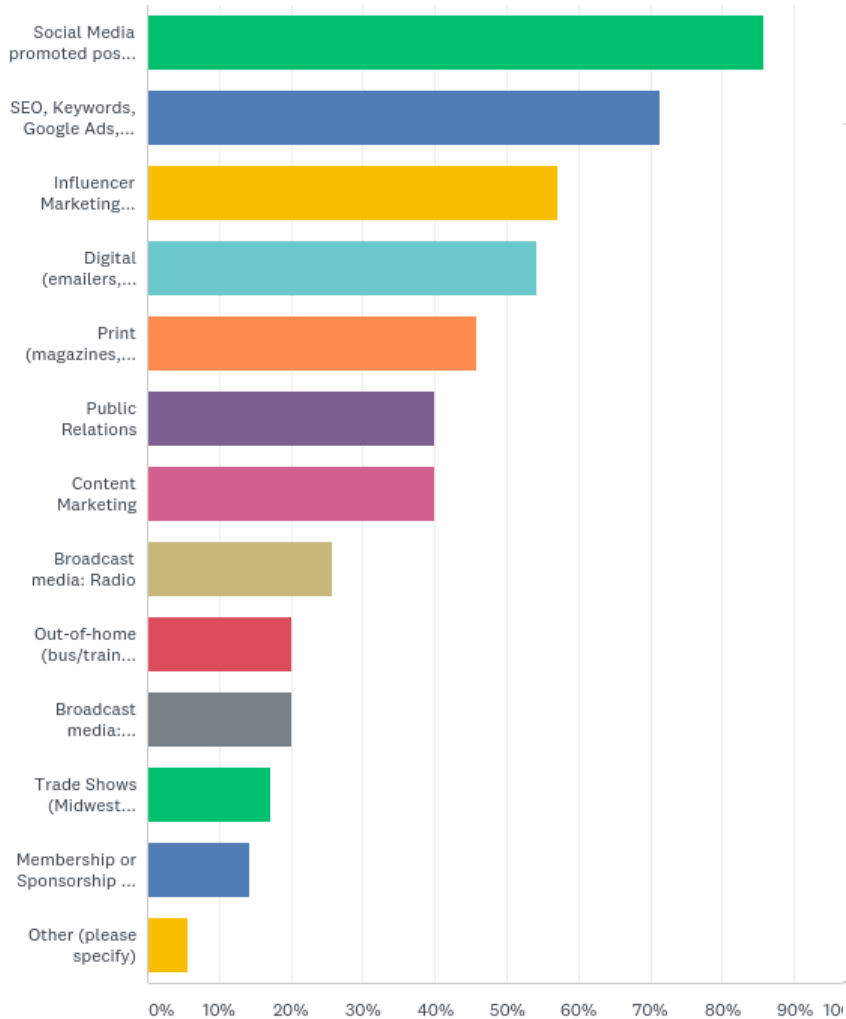


Finally climbs to the top of the list with music also gaining 3 points. While romance drops 5 points over last year.

GTA



The love is strong on the GTA with Romance and Hygge at the top of the list. Cozy is the name of the game up on the trail.

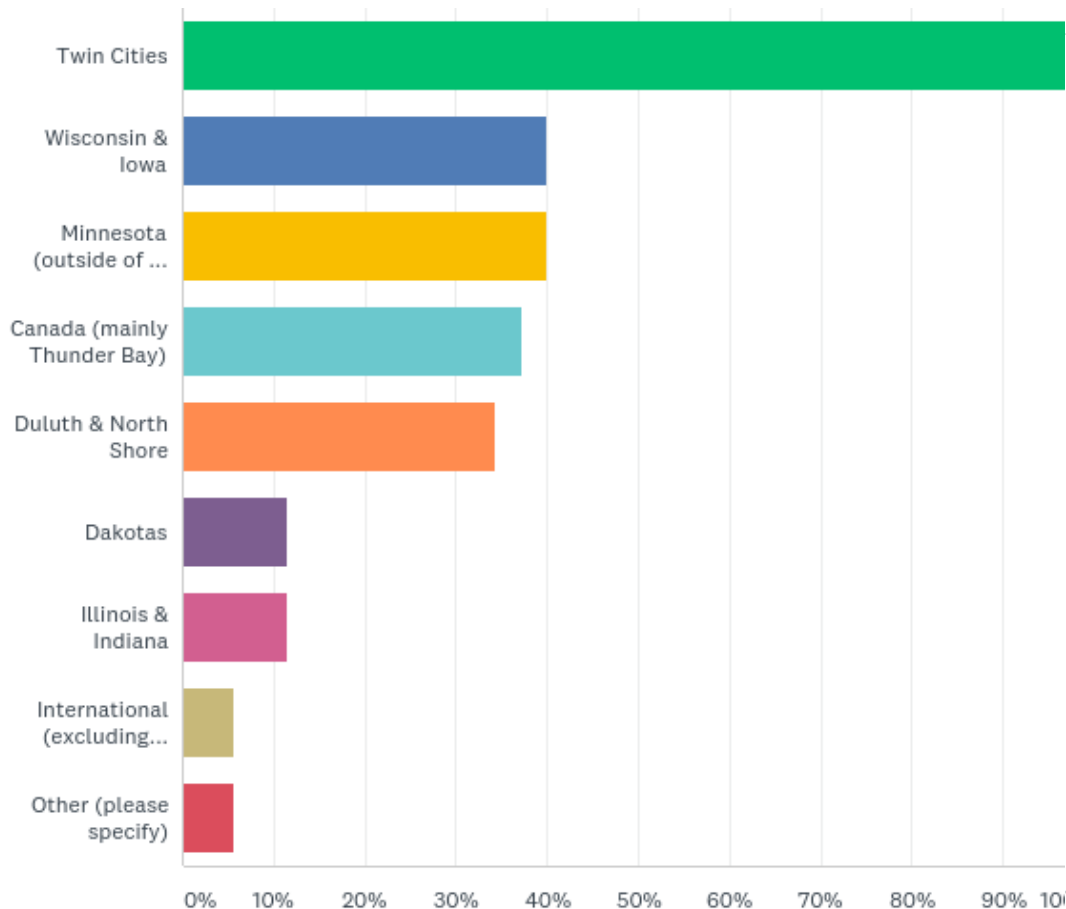


Q5: VCC uses a wide variety of marketing mediums to reach potential guests. Please rank the TOP 5 marketing mediums you feel are most important or effective.

Answered: 35 Skipped: 11

Q6: Where do the majority of your WINTER visitors come from?(Check all that apply)

Answered: 35 Skipped: 11

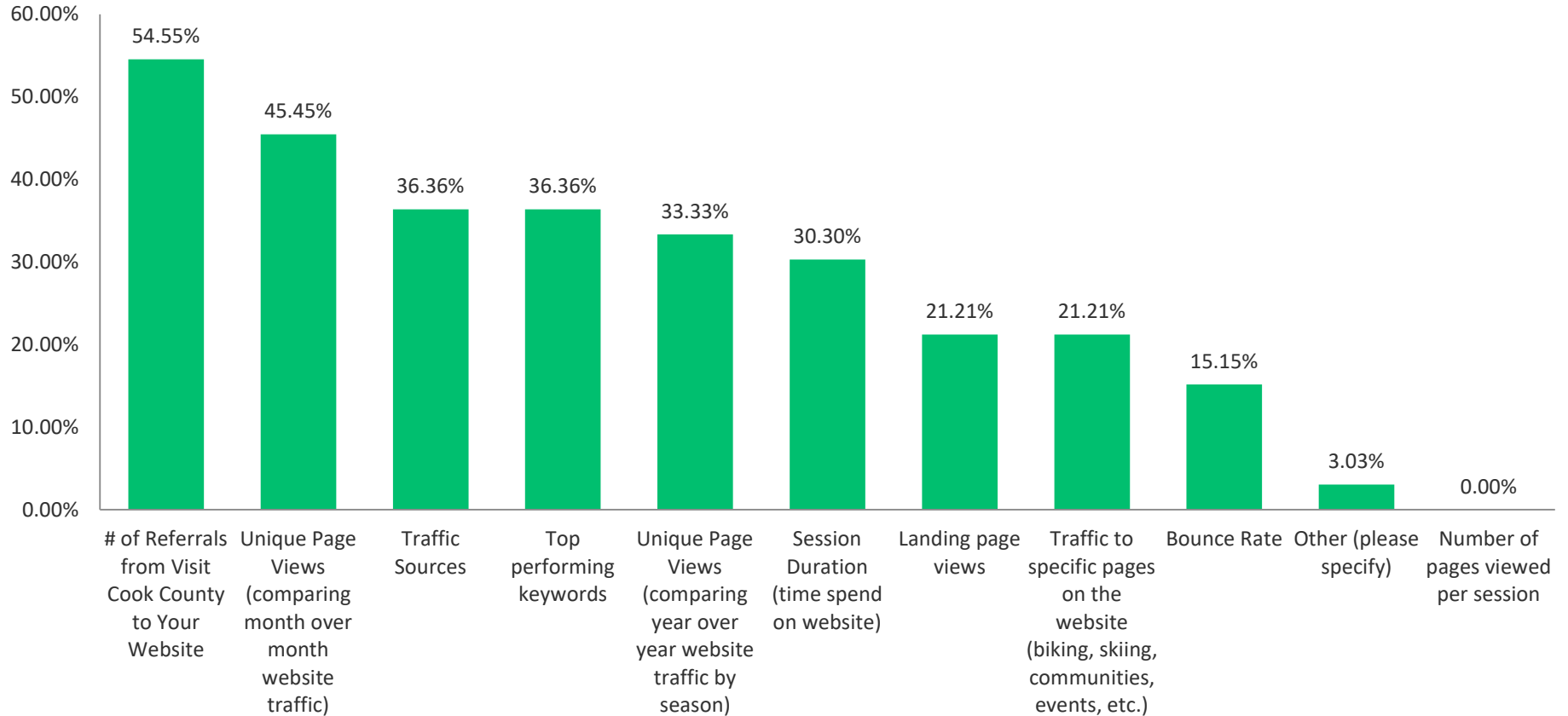


Q7: What kind of trends have you noticed the past few winters?

- Lutsen mountains ski and snow boarding continues to be primary attraction , fat tire biking with the race early January , XC not so much, not really an increase.
- New (younger) skiers in the decline., looking to attract more winter (General) enthusiasts.. more guests doing more than one recreational activity.
- Have been told that our local snowmobile trails consistently have snow earlier and better than other areas of the State and people seem surprised. Snowmobilers have \$\$.
- Ski & Stay, snowmobiling, landscape photography, fat biking
- The winter season brings a wide variety of guests. Couples, families, friend groups. Something we would like to see is more winter weddings.
- Pretty flat occupancy. XC skiing and downhill skiing continue to be important. People like music and dining.
- People traveling with pets. Wanting wood burning fireplaces.
- Rise in outdoor activity, desire for more of the summer Grand Marais business feel (having things open). Hygge spills into the rest of the year.
- Younger crowd. Bike events bring in new people. Winter is still pretty quiet, but it seems like each year it is slightly better.
- Coming for peace and quiet; to try new activities (snowshoeing, maybe ice fishing). Some for romantic weekends, some families who stay a week at a time. One family told me they usually go to Colorado to ski, but tried coming here and liked it as much or better. They said it was less expensive, fewer people and there were different things to try. They also liked the outdoor beauty (wilderness so close to town). They rented a snowmobile and next year they want to try dog sledding. They liked living in a house in town (more cozy and private) where they could cook their own meals. Another family enjoyed quiet reading and tried a North House class (spur of the moment)
- Winter enthusiasts - like to stay in cozy cabins in the woods - cross country ski, ice fish, snow shoe, snowmobile
- They wish that Grand Marais businesses would be open. they are so disappointed with how many stores and restaurants are closed during the ski season.
- EV charging
- Ski or snowmobile. They want more places to eat, mostly breakfast. More reasonably priced food. I hear the comment they can only afford to eat out once.
- winter to skis- about 50% returning or referred by past guests.
- More Iowa and Wisconsin
- Yes, we have many new guests and they are much younger than they were a decade ago. Our guests are coming to be outdoors, and have expectations for perfect snow conditions always. Grooming and trail maintenance is huge for these people. The Twin cities parks are setting very high standards for grooming, often more than once a day, and so current winter people have no patience with snow on the trail.
- We have been attracting a younger demographic with many first-time visitors. A large percentage of our guests come to get away from the city life and unplug from the digital age we're in. They come to relax at the lodge and enjoy winter activities like snowshoeing and cross country skiing.

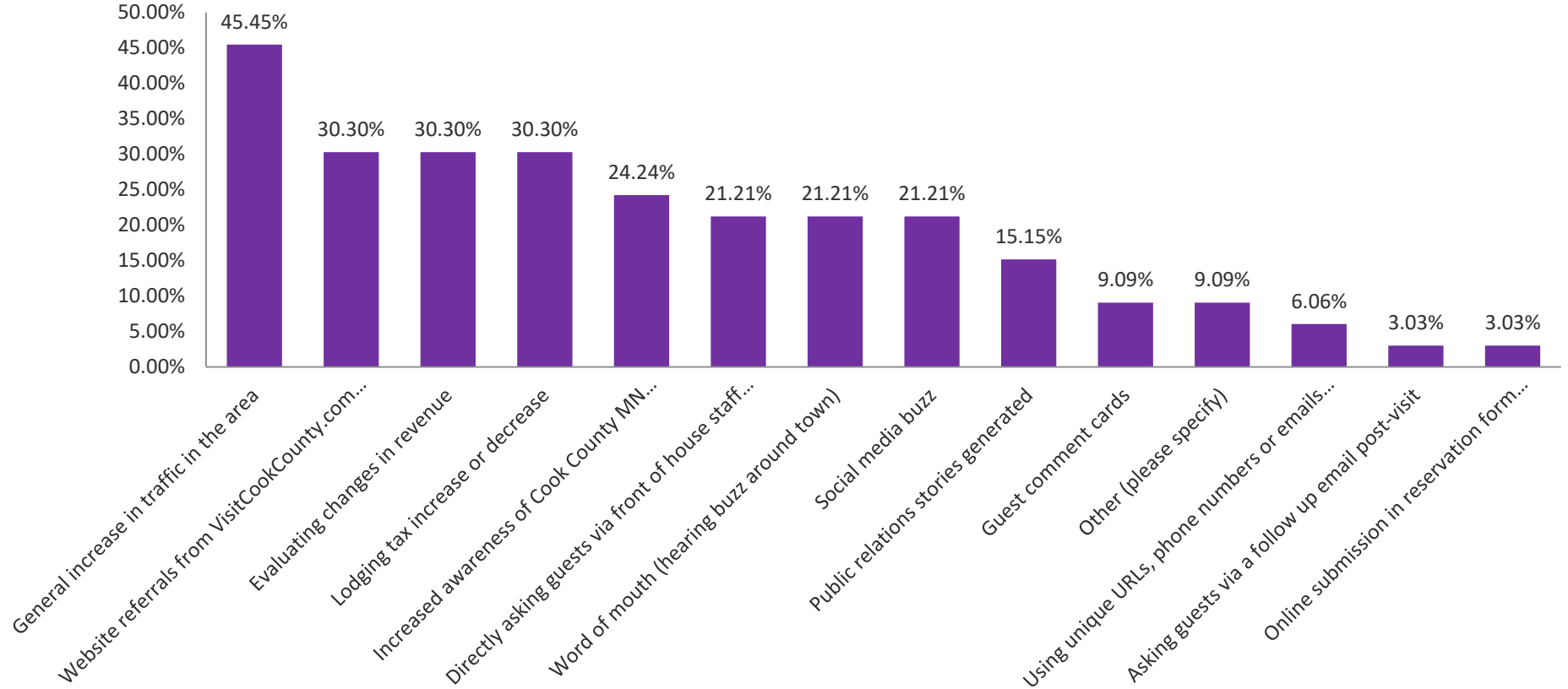
Q8: What website metrics are of most value to you? Select ONLY the TOP 3 metrics.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 13



Q9: How is your business tracking the effectiveness of Visit Cook County's marketing efforts? Select ONLY the TOP 3 measurements you use.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 13



Q10: Any additional comments or questions? How can Visit Cook County help you as we plan for winter?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 32

- We appreciate the great efforts.. more ideas like dark sky's, hygge and other uniquely north shore (very marketable) initiatives.
- Just keep being amazing!
- You do a splendid job!!
- You all do such a great job!!
- Can we try to put together a Christmas shopping destination concept? I bet the Downtown Businesses would be up for something.
- You're doing a great job. Any time I have an event /something for folks to do or see in town you are very responsive to helping get the word out. That's impressive, when sometimes the event is planned a mere month before it occurs, when opportunity presents itself.
- People need to know we have snow. So getting the word out effectively and consistently would be good.
- keep up the great work!
- Keep up the great work! Winter is the season to grow.
- We think you all do a great job!! Make it snow!
- By focusing more on each of five partner groups and less on Cook County
- Getting metro folks up here as soon as the snow is set is important -- they lag behind by a month or more
- Be kept aware or more outreach for assns that may be beneficial
- Telling everyone winter is pretty darn cool! :)