




VISIT DENVER
2020 ANNUAL REPORT

VISIT DENVER, THE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Bringing Visitors and Conventions to Denver Since 1909



MISSION: To bring conventions and leisure visitors to Denver for the economic benefit of the City, the community and our partners.



VISIT DENVER is a non-profit trade association, contracted by the City & County of Denver to act as the City's official marketing agency.

In 2020, the Bureau wound up with a budget of \$13 million, down from \$41.4 million in 2019, a reduction of nearly 69%. Normally, funding comes from a dedicated portion of the Denver Lodger's Tax and from advertising, private fundraising and partnership fees. In 2020, all partnership fees were waived, and many private-dollar fundraising efforts such as the Fall/Winter

Official Visitors Guide to Denver & Colorado were suspended.

In addition, VISIT DENVER contracts with the City & County of Denver to administer marketing funds from the Tourism Improvement District (TID), which began collecting funds on January 1, 2018. These funds are tied first to paying bonds for the expansion of the Colorado Convention Center and therefore, the marketing component was essentially eliminated in 2020.

CHAIRMAN & PRESIDENT REPORT

2020 was on track to be a record-breaking tourism year, a continuation of the success that VISIT DENVER had achieved in sales, marketing, partnership and administration. On top of that, the City and our partners were planning billions of dollars of investment in transportation, venues, hotels, restaurants and cultural attractions across Denver's diverse neighborhoods.

Instead, the city – indeed the entire globe – has been humbled by the smallest forces of nature.

The Leisure & Hospitality sector accounts for a whopping 39% of jobs lost to the pandemic – the largest number of workers hurt in any industry by far – according to a Department of Labor National Jobs Report.

No one in the industry who experienced 2020 will ever forget it; not the pain and suffering that came with COVID-19; the protests that led to historic discussions on race equality; and the ways the industry came together in the spirit of collaboration that this time required.

There are at this moment, 20 new hotels scheduled to open in the Denver metro area in 2021 with 2,653 new hotel rooms. There are amazing new projects underway such as the expansion of the Colorado Convention Center, the new National Western Center, the opening of Meow Wolf, the Denver Art Museum expansion, 39 new gates at Denver International Airport, a revitalized 16th Street Mall and so much more.

With vaccines already being distributed, we aren't being overly optimistic when we say that it's time to enact Henry David Thoreau's quote, "Never look back unless you are planning to go that way."

Of course, the purpose of an annual report IS to look backwards. And there is much to be proud of in a review of 2020. The work of VISIT DENVER never stopped for a moment. In this report, learn of the many programs VISIT DENVER ran to mitigate the economic chaos of the pandemic, keep businesses going, evaluate our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, to keep the inspiration for travel alive and help our more than 1,300 partners.

Of course, there are devastating numbers that are part of 2020's history and need to be reported. But there are positive numbers too, such as the \$71 million of rebooked conventions and \$354 million of new convention business booked in 2020, the half-million visits to the website from the recovery ad campaign and the return of the Mile High Tree!

This annual report is different this year, which we hope will make it easier to read and absorb. You'll see the numbers and hear the stories that break our hearts, and the ones that fill them up.

We would be remiss not to thank Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock, Colorado Governor Jared Polis, the Denver City Council, our Board of Directors and our 1,300 partners for all they have done in this historic year. Thank you!

GREG LEONARD

General Manager, Hyatt Regency Denver at Colorado Convention Center Hotel
2020 VISIT DENVER Board Chair

RICHARD W. SCHARF

President & CEO, VISIT DENVER



GREG LEONARD



RICHARD W. SCHARF

Scottish poet Robert Burns could have been thinking about 2020 when he wrote:

“
*The best laid
schemes of
Mice and Men
often go
awry...*”

DENVER TOURISM & CONVENTIONS BY THE NUMBERS 2020

“ We have never, ever seen a collapse of business fundamentals like we have experienced in the last nine months globally in the hotel industry. It has never, ever happened. 9/11 wasn’t even close. ”

Darren Powderly, co-founder of online real estate investment market CrowdStreet. Denver Post, December 27, 2020

NUMBER OF CONVENTIONS

(SOURCE: VISIT DENVER)

2019 1,026 2020 163

-84%

DOWNTOWN HOTEL OCCUPANCY

(SOURCE: SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH)

2019 77.5% 2020 34.7%

-55.2%

DENVER METRO HOTEL AVERAGE ROOM RATE

(SOURCE: SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH)

2019 \$146.14 2020 \$104.53

-28%

NUMBER OF CONVENTION DELEGATES

(SOURCE: VISIT DENVER)

2019 396,107 2020 80,033

-80%

DENVER METRO HOTEL OCCUPANCY

(SOURCE: SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH)

2019 74.0% 2020 43.1%

-41.8%

DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
PASSENGER TRAFFIC

(SOURCE: DEN)

2019 69 MILLION 2020 33.7 MILLION

-51%

CONVENTIONS ECONOMIC IMPACT

(SOURCE: VISIT DENVER)

2019 \$787,023,800

2020 \$154,859,620

-80%

DOWNTOWN AVERAGE ROOM RATE

(SOURCE: SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH)

2019 \$184.01 2020 \$128.10

-30.4%

U.S. TOURISM SPENDING NUMBERS

(DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL; SOURCE: USTA)

2019 \$1.2 TRILLION 2020 \$680 BILLION

-42%

CORONAVIRUS & THE COLORADO HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TIMELINE

FEBRUARY 29

American Physical Society cancels their 2020 Denver convention.

MARCH 5

First COVID case in Colorado.

MARCH 10

Governor Polis declares a State of Emergency.

St. Patrick's Day Parade is canceled.



MARCH 11

VISIT DENVER holds the Denver & Colorado Tourism Hall of Fame dinner with 450 attending; this will be one of the last large meetings staged in Colorado in 2020.

MARCH 12

Mayor Hancock declares State of Emergency.

MARCH 13

All Denver venues closed, including the Colorado Convention Center.

MARCH 14

All downhill skiing in Colorado is suspended.

MARCH 16

All bars and restaurants in Colorado are closed for dine-in service.



MARCH 20

VISIT DENVER launches ToGoDenver.com that will ultimately promote the to-go and delivery options from nearly 1,000 area restaurants.

MARCH 23

Mayor Hancock issues a "Stay at Home" order.

APRIL 1

Airline traffic at Denver International Airport drops by 94%. The airport would ultimately go 75 days without an international flight (April 2-June 15).



APRIL 1

VISIT DENVER launches Virtually Denver to promote the online and virtual offerings of dozens of partners.

APRIL 2

Outdoor Retailer cancels 2020 summer convention.

APRIL 6

State announces plan to convert the Colorado Convention Center into an Alternate Care Site, a potential overflow hospital, essentially canceling all conventions for what would become the remainder of the year.

APRIL 7

The Brown Palace Hotel voluntarily closes for the first time in 128 years.

APRIL 10

Red Rocks Amphitheatre 2020 summer concert season is canceled.

APRIL 30

380,000 Coloradoans have applied for unemployment benefits.

MAY 2

Mayor Hancock orders face masks to be worn in Denver in public places.



MAY 24

Restaurants can start re-opening for dine-in service.

MAY 29

Denver Center for Performing Arts cancels 2020 season.

JUNE 11

The Brown Palace Hotel reopens.

JUNE 19

Bars in Colorado can open for in-person service for up to 50 people.



JUNE 29

VISIT DENVER launches "You Deserve Some Denver" recovery marketing campaign.

JUNE 30

Colorado bars are closed again.

JULY 4

July 4th celebrations are canceled, including Independence Eve at Civic Center Park.

JULY 15

Governor Polis orders masks to be worn in all public places.

OCTOBER 27

Denver drops back to Level 3 restrictions.

OCTOBER 28

Public and private gatherings in Denver limited to no more than 10 people from two households.

NOVEMBER 6

"Home by 10 p.m." order issued, Denver residents are encouraged to be home by 10 p.m.

NOVEMBER 20

Denver drops to Level Red: all indoor dining is closed, last call for alcohol at 8 p.m., gatherings limited to members of the same household.



NOVEMBER 20

VISIT DENVER lights the Mile High Tree for the second year. Ultimately, more than 92,000 people would view the tree, including more than 28,000 who safely entered the site, and the remaining viewers socially distanced from the 16th Street Mall.

DECEMBER 1

Third wave of COVID proves to be the deadliest. One quarter of Colorado's 4,000 COVID deaths occur in a three-week period between late November and early December.

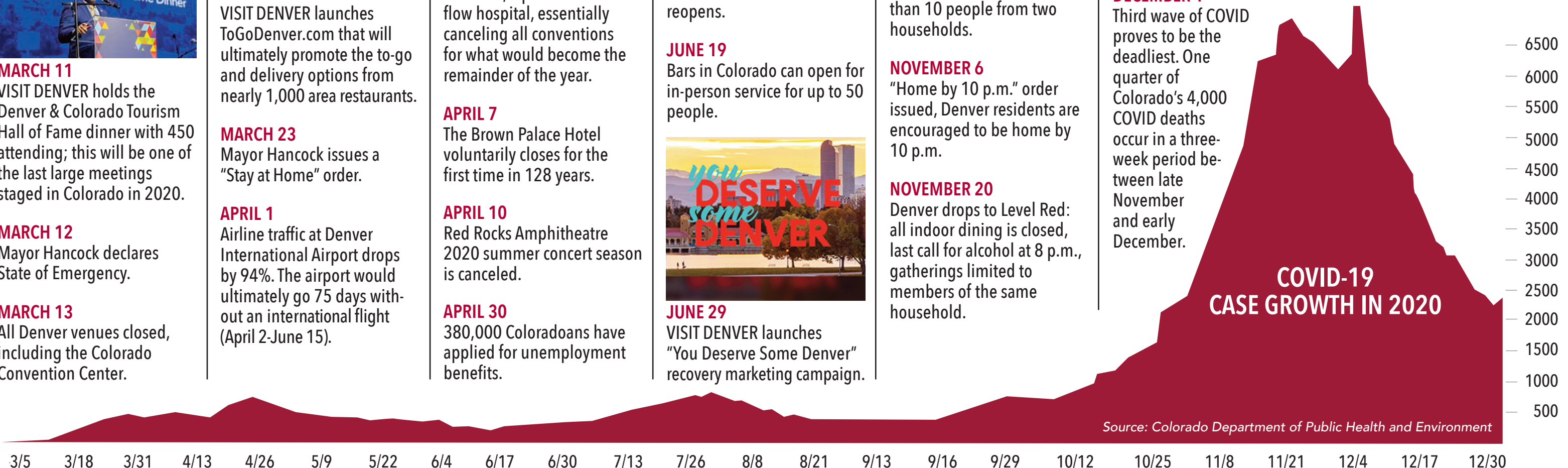
DECEMBER 28

65,282 frontline Colorado healthcare workers and those in greatest need have received the COVID-19 vaccine.



VISIT DENVER begins working with the City to develop and launch the State's 5 Star Certification program for a potential 7,000 businesses to apply.

COVID-19 CASE GROWTH IN 2020



VISIT DENVER'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION



2020 will also be remembered for the historic protests and marches around the country and the world, all of which shined a long-needed spotlight on racial injustice and systemic racism.

VISIT DENVER responded by creating a new board-led committee on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) to ensure that we are doing everything we can to support fairness and equal opportunity across our operations. We are reviewing all practices, enhancing community affiliations and strengthening our already-strong track record of representing the city's vibrant diversity within our marketing efforts.

For more information contact Rachel Benedick, executive vice president, Sales & Services at rbenedick@visitdenver.com.



VISIT DENVER'S RESPONSE TO THE 2020 PANDEMIC

Richard Scharf, President & CEO

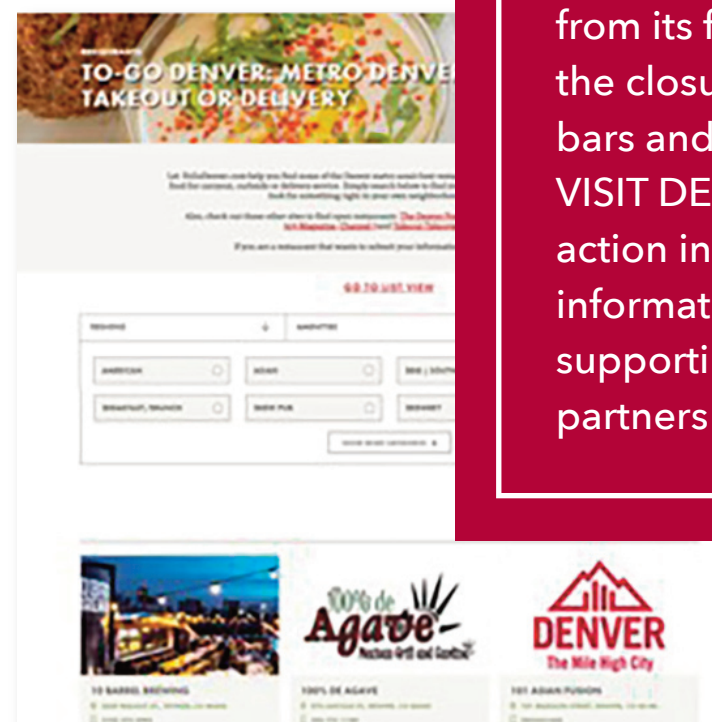
Every single operation of VISIT DENVER was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Ironically, despite the drop in business, we had to work twice as hard with a quarter of the resources in order to help our clients cancel (and hopefully rebook) their Denver meetings, launch thoughtful and well-timed consumer promotions, develop new assistance programs for our partners and advocate for our industry. All of this was done while keeping the health and well-being of our staff in mind as we transitioned to working in this new environment.

The issue of diversity in the hospitality industry became of extreme importance in 2020 following the demonstrations over the death of George Floyd, and that too became a priority with our board of directors and across our entire operation.

Here are some of the programs we instituted this year.

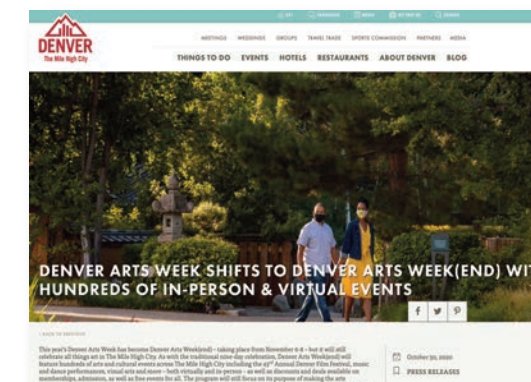
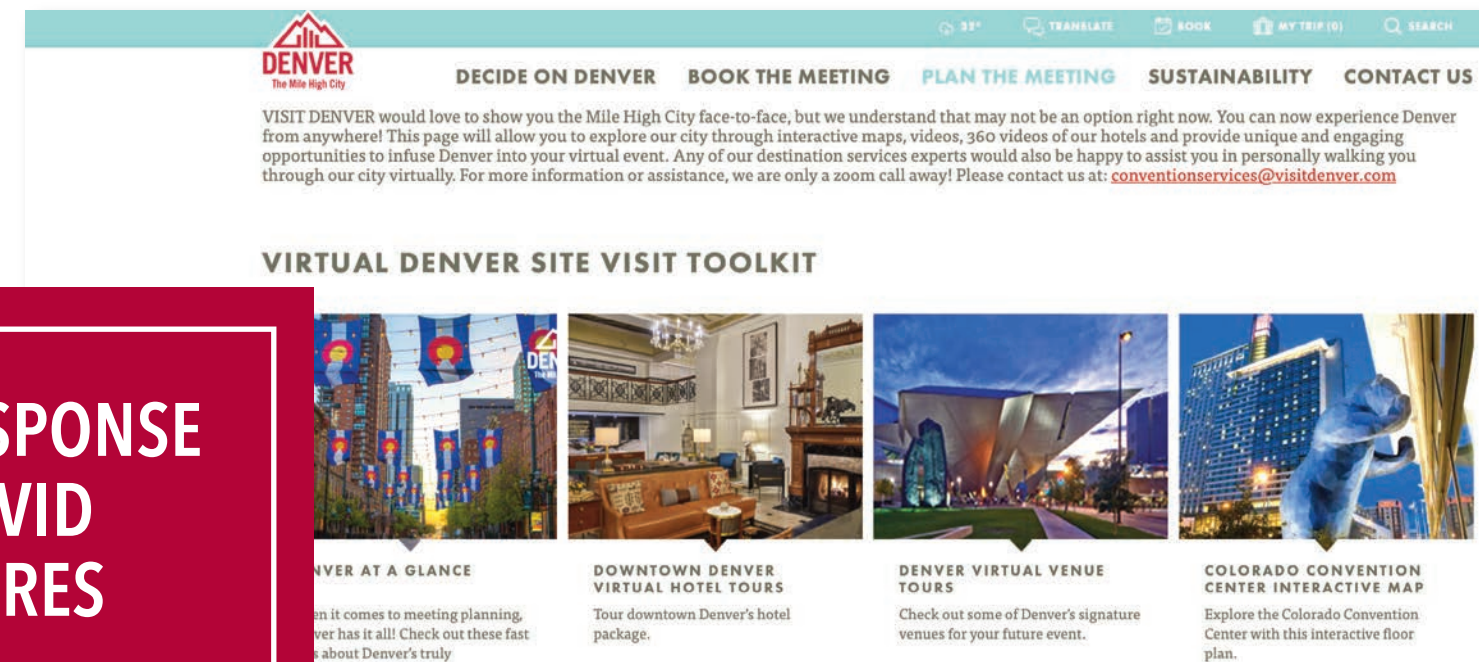




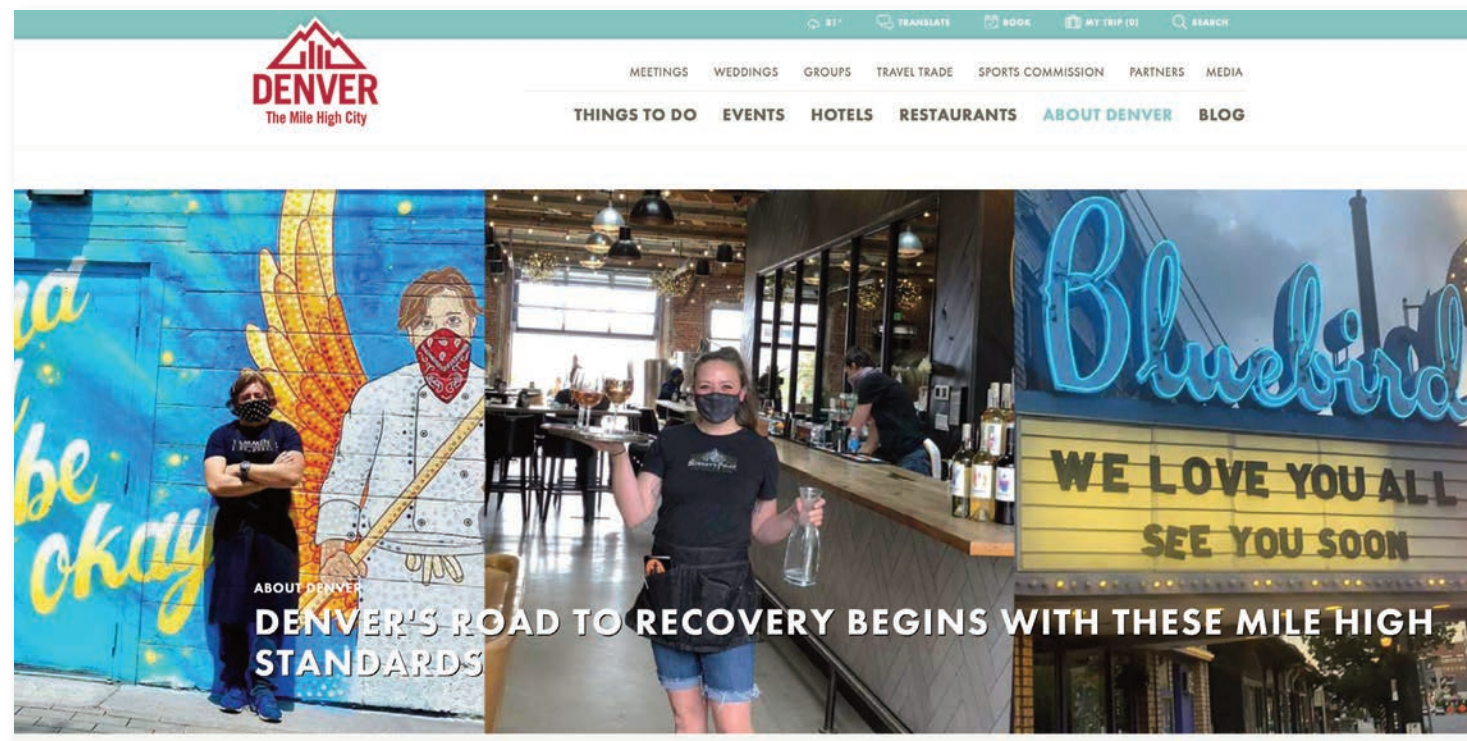
LOCAL RESPONSE TO COVID CLOSURES

In less than two weeks in March 2020, Denver went from its first COVID case to the closure of all restaurants, bars and public facilities. VISIT DENVER jumped into action in a new world, where information was key and supporting the needs of our partners was critical.

When restaurants shuttered for in-person dining, we quickly created an entirely new program, To Go Denver, which included a website for restaurants offering meals to go. Nearly 1,000 restaurants participated. The site was promoted through social media and gained 226,000 page-views, while local news stories about it earned \$2.2 million in equivalent advertising revenue.



With local attractions and cultural institutions closed, the team built Virtually Denver to promote online experiences and generate excitement for special exhibitions and cultural partners. The site had more than 100 online and virtual events, and earned more than \$2 million in media value.



OUR STANDARDS ARE A MILE HIGH

VISIT DENVER is continually monitoring developments surrounding COVID-19 and is following the lead of local, state and national health and travel authorities. The safety and well being of our community, partners and visitors is our number one priority. We are fully engaged with local and state officials to coordinate a safe return for visitors and meetings. Our hospitality community is working together to implement enhanced procedures to [safely welcome you back](#) with our Mile High Standards.

DENVER'S SAFETY GUIDE AT A GLANCE

- Businesses and organizations across The Mile High City** are adopting new safety measures and cleaning standards for the well-being of locals and visitors alike. Please check with individual organizations directly for the latest information!
- Masks:** Face coverings are required in Denver for those age 3 and over. Rules in other cities may vary. Throughout Colorado they are required for those 11 and over in public indoor spaces.
- Airport:** Denver International Airport has implemented safety measures in the gate, train and terminal areas, including more than 100 hand sanitizer dispensers and plexiglass barriers at TSA check-in.
- Restaurants:** Indoor dining, outdoor dining, takeout and delivery service is available, with many restaurants offering expanded outdoor seating.
- Hotels:** Denver hotels are open for business, with rigorous cleaning procedures covering everything from the check-in desk to guest rooms.
- Museums & Attractions:** Most major museums and attractions in the Denver metro area are open for visitors, with many offering pre-reserved and timed tickets.
- Events:** Indoor and outdoor events are limited by capacity or number of people, whichever is less. See below for details.

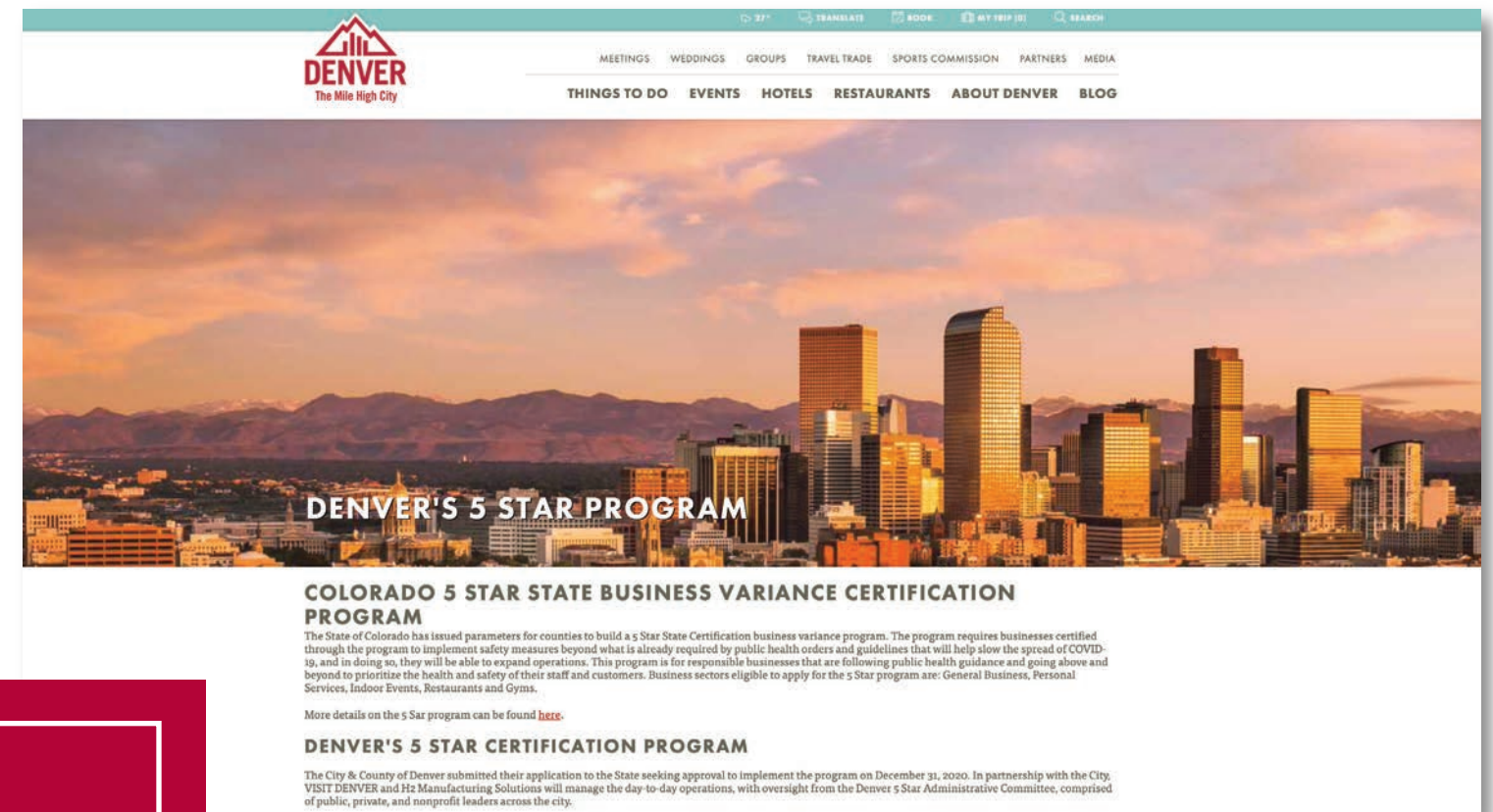
The screenshot shows the Visit Denver website with a navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, there are two news articles. The first article is titled 'DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (DEN)' and discusses the airport's new pilot program. The second article is titled 'ATTRactions & Cultural Institutions' and lists various museums and attractions in Denver.

LOCAL RESPONSE TO COVID CLOSURES



We created the "Clean & Safe Resource Guide to Denver," a COVID information web page letting visitors and clients know up-to-the-minute information about closures, openings, restrictions and ideas about how to remain safe in Denver. The page quickly became one of the most visited on the website.

As a sponsor, we partnered with the Colorado Restaurant Response, which delivered 300,000 meals to those in need and put restaurant staff back to work. We also helped them raise \$600,000 for local musicians and restaurant staff as a result of the Governor's Colorado Gives Back virtual concert headlined by Denver's The Lumineers.



LOCAL RESPONSE TO COVID CLOSURES

VISIT DENVER
May 15, 2020 · 🌐

Today's (5/15) #LoveThisCityDenver trivia prize is a future Stapleton staycation! Spend the night at Doubletree by Hilton Denver- Stapleton North and enjoy gift cards to Stanley Marketplace, Anette, Station 26 Brewing Co. and Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum.

Enter until 11:59 p.m. MST at lovethiscitydenver.com; winner will be selected and notified on Monday.



VISIT DENVER
June 1, 2020 · 🌐

We're excited to announce that the final week of our #LoveThisCityDenver has two Mile High City-sized grand prizes, each valued at more than \$3,000! Daily trivia questions on Monday through Friday of this week for five entries will win one of two grand prizes (prizes assigned at random).

Adventure seeker prize partners: The Crawford Hotel - Denver Union Station, Native Beers, Topo Designs, Denver Adventures - Zipline Tours, Confluence Outlaws, Ace Eat Serve, Coohills Restaurant, The Woods Restaurant, Wynne Denver Beer Co and Blue Moon Brewing Company. Plus, a custom "Love This City Denver" piece by Pat Milbery of So-Gnar Creative Division.

Art lover prize partners: Hyatt Regency Denver at Colorado Convention Center, Tattered Cover Book Store, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, City Park Tour, Paramount Denver, TAG Restaurant, The Crimson Room, Jovanina's Attimo Wine, Run For The Roses at Dairy Block and The Infinite Monkey. Plus, a custom "Love This City Denver" piece by Pat Milbery of So-Gnar Creative Division.

Enter at lovethiscitydenver.com.



★★★★★
**DENVER
5 STAR
CERTIFICATION
PROGRAM**



To boost resident morale, we partnered with local muralist Pat Milbery and created a "Love This City" campaign and trivia contest, using prizes purchased from local partners. The challenge asked a series of Denver trivia questions over a period of seven weeks, with weekly giveaways, culminating in a pair of grand prize packages. More than 20,000 locals entered the contest.

Beginning in December, we worked alongside our board members and the City to develop the State's 5 Star Certification program, which launched in January 2021, that could potentially help more than 7,000 businesses.

CONVENTION SALES & DESTINATION SERVICES



CONVENTION SALES & DESTINATION SERVICES



SENDING YOU A MILE-HIGH SMILE!

Denver is all about that outdoor lifestyle, which means staying active while enjoying the city's 300 days of annual sunshine. Your next workout at Red Rocks Park & Amphitheatre will have to wait a little longer, but until then, we're here to offer some mile-high fitness inspiration. Remember, your friends at VISIT DENVER are thinking of you!

GET THOSE ENDORPHINS FLOWING WITH THIS CUSTOMIZED, AT-HOME VERSION OF A RED ROCKS WORKOUT. GRAB YOUR SNEAKERS FOR A HEART-PUMPING STAIR RUN OR ROLL OUT YOUR MAT FOR A SOOTHING YOGA SESSION.

DOWNLOAD WORKOUT



SENDING YOU A MILE-HIGH SMILE!

Denver brews more beer than any other metropolitan area in the U.S., making it America's No. 1 beer city! More than 200 different brews are available at hot spots like Coors Brewery, the largest single brewing site in the world. Many Denver breweries are now open with social distancing measure in place, but if you're unable to grab a cold pint in person, we've brought a little beer culture straight to you. Cheers, from your friends at VISIT DENVER!

DON'T KNOW A SAISON FROM A SESSION? GET A LESSON ON BEER 101 FROM ONE OF DENVER'S TOP BREWERS.

DOWNLOAD NOW!



On February 29, 2020, the American Physical Society canceled their annual convention, despite the fact that many of their delegates had already arrived. This became the first of many cancellations among both citywide and single-hotel meetings that would ultimately lead to more than \$1 billion in lost future business in 2020 and 2021.

On April 6, 2020, the Colorado Convention Center was converted to an Alternative Care Site for COVID patients who might have overwhelmed the capacity of existing medical facilities in Denver, just as they had in China, Italy, Spain and across the globe. With strict state meeting mandates in place, this ended any remaining hope for meetings in the facility for 2020 and into the new year.

Thus, began the long effort to work with our clients on their cancellations and hopefully find new available dates to rebook this business, as well as essentially retooling the entire sales process.

CANCELLATIONS & REBOOKINGS

- Because conventions are booked from two to 10 years into the future, almost every convention group booked in Denver for 2020 already had a commitment for 2021 and the next few years. In 2020, 450,000 convention delegates were unable to experience Denver for a meeting that was booked by VISIT DENVER.

- The challenge was to find open dates in Denver that matched the next open dates for the convention group. This created a puzzle with hundreds of moving pieces, all in a period of great uncertainty.

Despite the challenges, VISIT DENVER was able to **REBOOK \$71 MILLION OF BUSINESS** lost in 2020.

REVAMPING SALES

- Future convention sales efforts continued throughout 2020, but in a new, virtual world with no industry meetings, no trade shows, no face-to-face meetings, no sales events and few site tours.
- VISIT DENVER created an entirely new sales program concentrated on strategic account contacts, long-term relationships and generating leads for future business.
- This included Mile High Mondays, a series of more than two dozen emails sent to clients that showcased various aspects of the city in whimsical illustrations.

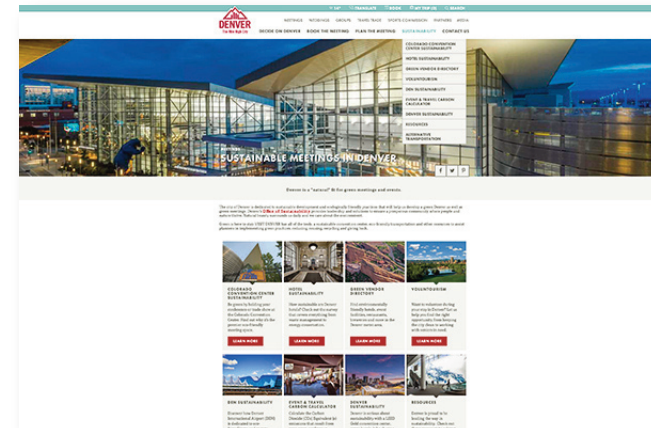
WE MISS YOU!



CLICK TO PLAY

Sales efforts resulted in
\$354 MILLION OF NEW MEETING
business booked for Denver.

- Virtual site visits, as well as a "We Miss You" video, were posted on a new web page to keep Denver top of mind for meeting planners. VISIT DENVER convention sales staff attended virtual trade show conferences and hundreds of Zoom meetings with clients.



CONVENTION SALES Situation Analysis

2019: Denver on Track

In the last 25 years, Denver has made major investments in infrastructure, resulting in a city that offers everything meeting planners are looking for in a convention destination: easy accessibility, outstanding facilities and affordability, all in an urban environment that is safe, walkable and provides exceptional service and destination appeal. According to several metrics, in VISIT DENVER's 110-year history, 2019 was a solid year finishing with 737,806 definite room nights (rank 2nd), 1,026 in number of meetings (1st) and attendance of 396,107 (3rd). Prior to the pandemic, 2020 was on pace to finish 796,407 in room nights (1st), 1,052 in number of meetings (1st) and 446,428 in attendance (1st).

In addition, a meeting planner perception study on the top 40 cities in the country ranked Denver as one of the top 10 convention destinations in the U.S. The Evidenz Research Group, which conducts the largest and most respected national meeting planner study, found that as of March 2020, Denver was regarded as one of the top convention and meeting destinations in the U.S. The pandemic hit the meetings industry shortly after

the study was concluded. However, many of the takeaways from the study are encouraging and will help in rebuilding Denver's meeting industry. Some of the key findings from the biannual study are outlined below:

► In early 2020, Denver was perceived as one of the top 10 convention destinations in the U.S., definitely considered Tier 1, and ranked in the same breath with more established destinations such as Orlando, San Diego, New Orleans, Chicago and Washington, D.C. In the key factors used to decide on a future meeting destination, Denver placed above the mean on all eight and improved on all measures in 2020 over 2018, except "accessibility in the city," which was rated the same.

► VISIT DENVER was ranked as one of the top convention and visitors bureaus in the nation. When asked, "Which cities made a pitch to you (formally or informally) in the last 12 months?" Denver was No. 1. Denver ranked fifth in "overall effectiveness of a pitch," i.e., the pitch that made the most favorable impression and was more likely to make the meeting planner choose a city.

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VISIT DENVER 2021 Marketing Plan

- These sales efforts resulted in \$354 million of new meeting business booked for Denver during the worst convention sales environment that has ever existed. A total of 1,640 leads for single hotel conventions were also distributed.

CONVENTION SALES & DESTINATION SERVICES



COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER EXPANSION

Throughout the pandemic, the expansion of the Colorado Convention Center was able to stay on track with a new design team and definite plans for a June 2021 construction start date with a late 2023 opening. The sales team worked closely with the City's team of Rider Levett Bucknall as project manager, Hensel Phelps as contractor and TVS Design as architect. The 80,000-square-foot, column-free ballroom/multifunctional space with pre-function and outdoor terrace space will have 150-mile views of the Rocky Mountains.

WORLD CUP 2026

The efforts to secure Denver's spot as a host city for the 2026 FIFA World Cup slowed down a bit, but never stopped. The team presented more bid materials to decision-makers remotely in July, provided updates to the local bid committee and worked on communications strategies in anticipation of FIFA site visits and their host city selection before the end of 2021.



TOURISM & MARKETING



TOURISM & MARKETING



CLICK TO PLAY



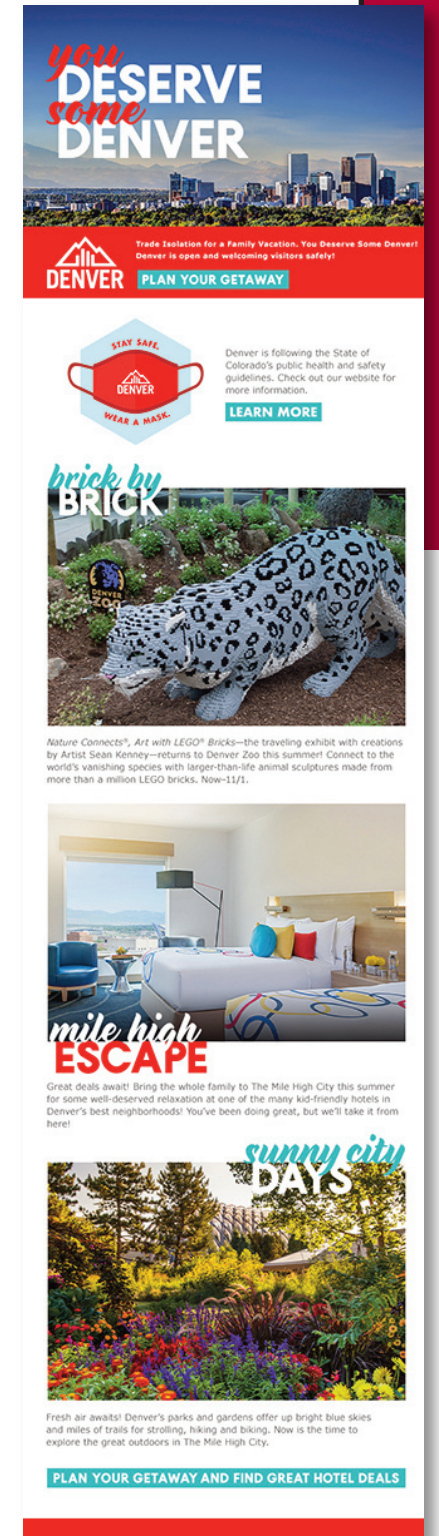
At the start of 2020, VISIT DENVER was conducting tourism marketing along a typical pattern that included a traditional Winter campaign, a first quarter Denver Restaurant Week campaign and the continuation of the TID-funded “Reclaim the Weekend” campaign. These efforts concentrated on drive and regional markets, promoting each weekend as another opportunity for Denver hotel stays.

Then on March 5, 2020, Colorado identified its first COVID patient and the world changed. Within two weeks, all Denver restaurants, bars and museums were closed, and public events were canceled. VISIT DENVER quickly suspended all advertising, including the spring/summer campaign, typically the largest of the year.

But just as quickly, the team sprang into action in an unprecedented fashion; first with a series of local programs designed to support partners on the verge of closing, before returning to the market with recovery advertising efforts designed to safely and smartly invite visitors back to the city.

SUMMER RECOVERY MARKETING

- When it appeared that Denver and Colorado were positioned to welcome back some safe tourism from travelers seeking an outdoor destination that could offer socially distanced, urban and cultural attractions, a new recovery campaign was created. “You Deserve Some Denver” launched for the spring/summer time period and drove traffic, including in regional markets and select long-haul markets like Chicago, to a dedicated landing page.
- The new campaign featured people following local and state guidelines by wearing masks and practicing social distancing, while continuing to promote Denver’s brand as an outdoor city that offered the combination of culture, dining, shopping and adventure – a perfect urban road trip destination for drive and short flight destinations.
- This campaign of digital ads, TV ads, website ads and social media posts resulted in 120 million ad impressions and 525,000 website visits from July through the end of October.



ONE OF THE “TOP TEN CITIES BEST-POSITIONED TO RECOVER FROM CORONAVIRUS”
– Forbes/Moody’s Analytics



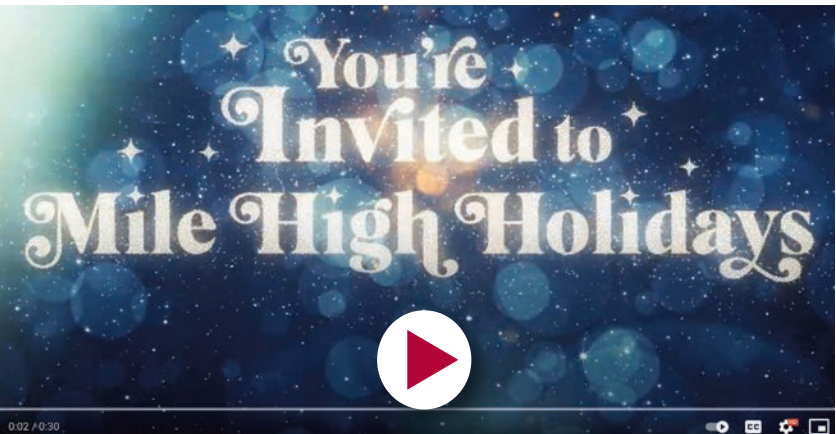
CLICK TO PLAY

FALL PROGRAMS

- Any type of large public gathering event had to be re-examined in 2020. So, Denver Arts Week in November had to forgo signature features like First Friday Arts Walk and Night at the Museums, and became Denver Arts Week(end) (November 6-8). The effort still managed to feature more than 200 events, many of them in-person, and also promoted the virtual Denver Film Fest. Denver Arts Week gained \$3.5 million of local, regional and national media coverage of Denver’s arts scene.
- A first-ever fall Denver Restaurant Week was held November 13-22 to help struggling restaurants with an emphasis not just on indoor dining, which was suspended in the middle of the program, but on takeout and delivery meals as well. More than 180 restaurants participated.

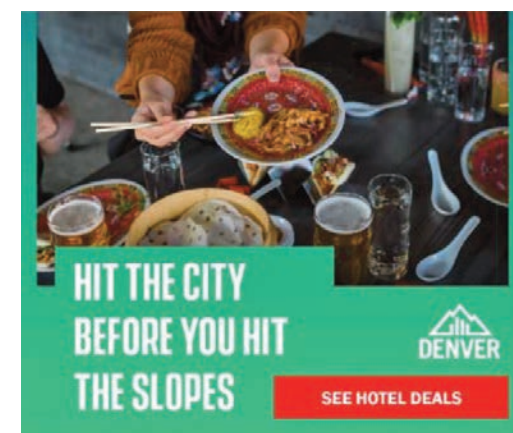
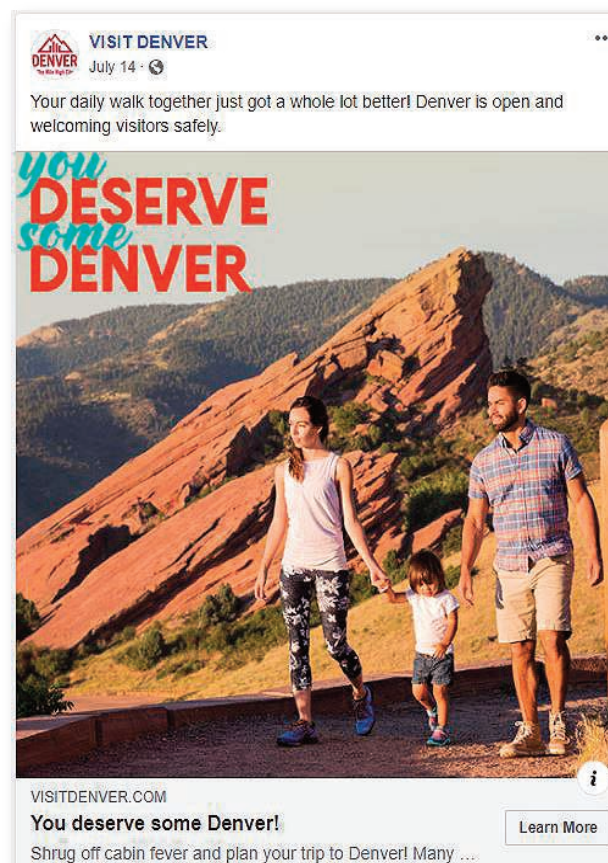
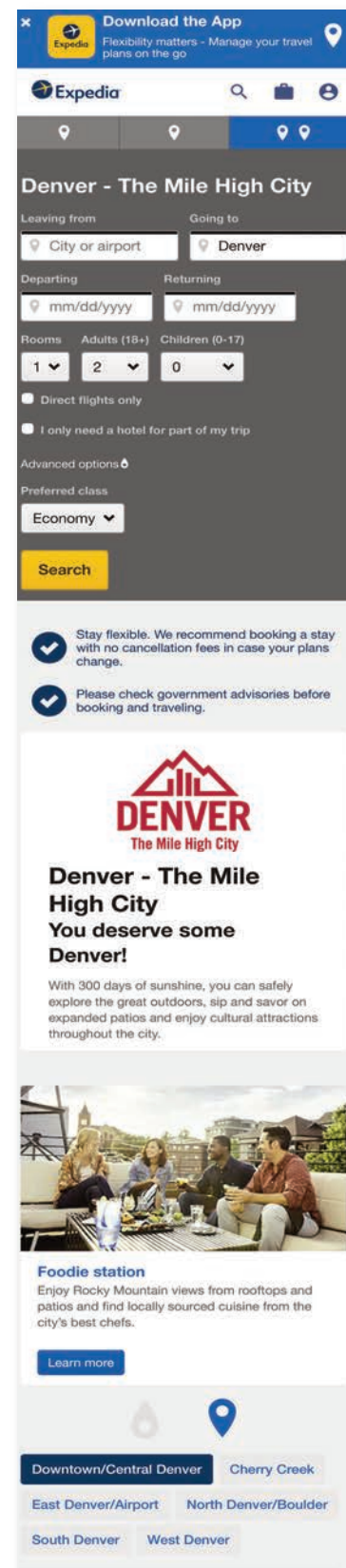
MILE HIGH HOLIDAYS

- The holiday season offered another window of opportunity for safe, local tourism promotions, and Mile High Holidays 2020 created a bright spot of cheer. November 2020 brought the second lighting of the Mile High Tree, presented by Modelo® to the 16th Street Mall, where nearly 30,000 people safely viewed onsite and another 60,000 viewed from a distance. In addition, the campaign promoted Christkindl Market in Civic Center Park as well as lighting festivals in Cherry Creek North, Denver Zoo, Denver Botanic Gardens, Larimer Square, Union Station and many other places through New Year’s Eve, while encouraging safe, socially distanced, mask-wearing locals to “make a night of it” with overnight stays in Denver hotels.
- The Mile High Holidays campaign was supported by CARES Act funding in partnership with the City, allowing the promotions to extend even further.



CLICK TO PLAY





**TOP 10 BEST CITIES FOR
AN ACTIVE LIFESTYLE (#9)**
– WalletHub

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

- **Ski Targeting:** Beginning in early November, a new “ski targeting” campaign was launched to target visitors planning Colorado ski vacations, and encourage them to extend their trip and spend additional nights in Denver. The effort was made possible by innovative digital advertising technology and ran both domestically as well as in Mexico, which has a concentration of affluent customers with a strong interest in Colorado ski vacations, as well as direct flight access from Denver International Airport.
- **Expedia Co-op:** With hotels struggling to survive the pandemic, VISIT DENVER stepped in to fully fund a co-operative advertising program on Expedia for all lodging partners, which normally costs hotels thousands of dollars to participate. The program included a Denver landing page with links to deals from hotel partners and ran from July 1 – December 30, 2020. During that time, the co-op generated nearly 103,000 room nights and more than \$13 million in revenue for our partners.



#2 BEST PLACE TO LIVE
– U.S. News & World Report

TOP 10 BEST CITY FOR BIKING (#8)
– People for Bikes



INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

- The catastrophic collapse of international tourism in the world in 2020 hit the U.S. especially hard, causing a loss of \$155 billion in economic activity, which translates to \$425 million a day. Denver and Denver International Airport mirrored the country as a whole. International visitation dropped from a record 580,000 in 2019 to 115,900 in 2020, a decline of 80%. However, Denver is expected to retain most of its direct international flights, including direct service to Tokyo, London, Frankfurt, Zürich and a total of 13 international destinations.
- International tourism promotion moved to online tradeshow meetings. However, VISIT DENVER had representation at all these shows, continuing the long work and reputation that Denver has established as an international tourism gateway to America.

**BEST OF THE WORLD –
EIGHT SUSTAINABLE
DESTINATIONS
FOR 2021**
– National Geographic



**TOP 10 CITIES IN THE WORLD
TO VISIT IN 2020**

– Lonely Planet

PARTNERSHIP & VISIT DENVER FOUNDATION

SHAPE THE FUTURE

Celebrate the Past

21st Annual Denver & Colorado
Tourism Hall of Fame Dinner



PARTNERSHIP & VISIT DENVER FOUNDATION



Founded in 1909, VISIT DENVER is a public/private trade association with 1,300 private members and a contract with the City & County of Denver to act as its official marketing arm. Both the public and private sectors suffered catastrophic losses in 2020 due to the pandemic. VISIT DENVER was quick to react.

HALL OF FAME DINNER

- VISIT DENVER’s Hall of Fame Dinner went ahead as scheduled on March 11, and ironically became one of the last large gatherings to be held in Colorado in 2020. 450 guests attended to see long-time board member and former publisher of the Denver Business Journal Scott Bemis, Westword editor Patricia Calhoun, 35-year VISIT DENVER public relations director Rich Grant, and restaurateurs Denise and Kevin Taylor inducted into the Denver & Colorado Tourism Hall of Fame.
- More than \$40,000 was raised for tourism scholarships at the Hall of Fame Dinner, raising the total that has been awarded since inception to \$1.2 million. The work of this Foundation has become more important than ever since it will be more difficult in these troubling times for students to continue their higher education in tourism and hospitality.



Scott Bemis



Patricia Calhoun



Rich Grant



Denise & Kevin Taylor



PARTNERSHIP



- Once the scope of the pandemic was clear, and as VISIT DENVER understood the struggles that partners were experiencing, all partnership dues were suspended for one full year. This allowed partners to still take advantage of all benefits while also seeing that VISIT DENVER was in their corner.
- As the world moved to socially distanced Zoom meetings and events, VISIT DENVER joined in creating free workshops, webinars and regular meetings such as the Marketing Advisory Committee (MAC), Industry Updates, social media roundtables, virtual meeting management and more. Nearly 1,500 partners attended these meetings.

- In August, VISIT DENVER created a hybrid Board Retreat with 53 board members attending in person and 14 online. The meeting demonstrated the great challenges of meeting in person in 2020, where 8,094 square feet of space was needed for those attending in person, all meals had to be served individually to each participant, and everyone had to wear a mask the entire time. However, it also helped board members understand the situation and create a strategy for tourism industry recovery and new priorities for VISIT DENVER in these unusual times.
- In November, the Bureau's annual meeting went online and was free for everyone to view live or watch later at their convenience. Nearly 500 partners saw videos about the Year in Review, Hospitality Heroes and a tribute to Jayne Buck, VISIT DENVER's recently retired, 21-year veteran, Vice President of Tourism.



GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS



GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS



Throughout 2020, VISIT DENVER continued to closely monitor and stay engaged on local, state and federal pandemic guidance and policies impacting our industry and community. The Clean & Safe Resource Guide was created and updated frequently with useful information for our partners, visitors, planners and residents.

VISIT DENVER had a seat at the table with elected officials, decision makers and broad stakeholders advocating for our partners and industry through every step of the pandemic and recovery efforts. These include:

- At the local level, we have been an active member of the Long-Term Recovery Committee to ensure that recovery of the tourism industry is directly tied to the overall economic recovery of our community.
- At the state level, we worked closely with the Governor's team and public health officials and advocated for policies and resources to help our industry recover.
- At the national level, we engaged our Colorado delegation members regarding federal recovery programs and financial resources for our industry.

While the priority focus in 2020 was on pandemic response and recovery, we also championed for the redevelopment of the 16th Street Mall and VISIT DENVER's Board of Directors voted to support local ballot measures impacting sustainability efforts and homelessness solutions.

In addition, a Quarterly Policy Perspectives e-newsletter was sent to partners, highlighting policies at all levels that directly impact our industry, as well as a new bi-weekly Travel Trends e-newsletter with key industry data. Both newsletters consistently received high open rates.

2020 AFFILIATIONS

- Amp the Cause
- Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Biennial of the Americas
- The Center on Colfax
- CherryArts
- City Club of Denver
- Civic Center Conservancy
- Colfax Marathon Partnership
- Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organization
- Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce
- Colorado Business Committee for the Arts
- Colorado Competitive Council
- Colorado Concern
- Colorado Hotel and Lodging Association/ Metro Denver Lodging Council
- Colorado Restaurant Association
- Colorado Ski Country USA
- Colorado Society of Association Executives
- Colorado Sports Hall of Fame
- Colorado Tourism Office
- Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce
- Denver Architecture Foundation
- Denver Department of Housing Stability
- Denver Film Society
- Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Denver Police Foundation
- Denver Rescue Mission
- Denver Theatre District
- Destination Colorado
- Downtown Denver Partnership
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Colorado Holiday Commission
- EAT Denver
- Girl Scouts of America
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Denver
- I Have a Dream Foundation
- Inner-Neighborhood Cooperation
- Japan America Society of Colorado
- Kiwanis Club of Denver
- Meetings Industry Council
- Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation
- Metro Mayors Caucus
- Mizel Institute
- National Western Center
- NEWSED
- Rocky Mountain Business Travel Association
- Rocky Mountain Chapter of ASAE, IAEE, MPI, PCMA, SGMP
- Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce
- Rocky Mountain International
- Scientific and Cultural Facilities District
- Slow Food USA
- Su Teatro Cultural and Performing Arts Center
- Tour Colorado
- Tourism Industry Association of Colorado
- University Programs statewide
- Urban Spectrum
- World Trade Center

VISIT DENVER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VISIT DENVER: 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Andrews

President & CEO, National Western Stock Show Association

Luis Benitez

Vice President, Government Affairs & Global Impact, VF Corporation

Matthew Burkett

President & CEO, The Flyfisher Group

Jolon Clark

President, City Council (District 7)

Rob Cohen

Chairman & CEO, IMA Financial Group

David Coors

Vice President Next Generation Beverages, AC Golden Brewing Company

David L. Corsun, Ph.D.

Director & Associate Professor, Fritz Knoebel School of Hospitality Management, University of Denver

Navin C. Dimond

President & CEO, Stonebridge Companies

Evan Dreyer

Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

Tony Dunn

General Manager, Sheraton Denver Downtown

Joe Ellis

President & CEO, Denver Broncos Football Club

Greg Feasel

Chief Operating Officer, Colorado Rockies Baseball Club

Brent Fedrizzi

Co-President & COO, AEG Presents Rocky Mountains

Andrew Feinstein

CEO and Managing Partner, EXDO Development

Jack Finlaw

President & CEO, University of Colorado Foundation

Bruce Glazer

Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer, Kroenke Sports & Entertainment

Christian Hardigree

Dean, School of Hospitality, Events & Tourism, Metro State University

Christoph Heinrich

Director, Denver Art Museum

A. Barry Hirschfeld

President, AB Hirschfeld & Sons

Jeffery Hochstadt

Chief Strategy & Development Officer, Western Union

Walter L. Isenberg

President & CEO, Sage Hospitality

Bruce A. James

Shareholder, Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, & Schreck

Nick LeMasters

President & CEO, Cherry Creek North Business District

Greg Leonard

General Manager, Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center

Todd D. Munson

Executive VP and Director of Commercial Banking, Vectra Bank

Cindy Parsons

Principal, Parsons Consulting

Allen Paty

General Manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Denver & Denver-Stapleton North

Sharon Pierce

Regional Director - Corporate Sales West, United Airlines

Edward Robinson

Co-Chief Executive Officer, Robinson Management

Manny Rodriguez

Chief Marketing, Experience & Customer Officer, UCHealth

Steve Sander

President, Sander Marketing Group

Amanda Sandoval

City Council (District 1)

Dan Scherer

Vice President/General Manager Central Region, Outfront Media

Adam Schlegel

CEO, Cumulus Etc.

Frank Schultz

CEO/Owner, Tavern Hospitality Group

Janice Sinden

President & CEO, Denver Center for the Performing Arts

Shane Stickel

President & CEO, Presidential Worldwide Transportation

Hollie Velasquez-Horvath

Sr Director State Affairs and Community Relations, Xcel Energy

Rob Venus

General Manager, FREEMAN EXPOSITIONS

Sid Wilson

President, A Private Guide, Inc.

2021 COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS (non-voting)

John W. Adams

General Manager, Colorado Convention Center

J.J. Ament

CEO, Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation

Kim Day

CEO, Denver International Airport

Tamara "Tami" Door

President & CEO, Downtown Denver Partnership

Mike Ferruffino

President & CEO, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Denver

Lee Gash-Maxey

Executive Director, Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce

Ed Gerrity

Debra Johnson

Chief Executive Officer & General Manager, Regional Transportation District

Deborah Jordy

Executive Director, Scientific and Cultural Facilities District

Amie Mayhew

President & CEO, Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association

Melanie Mills

President & CEO, Colorado Ski Country USA

Sonia Riggs, CAE

President & CEO, Colorado Restaurant Association

Cathy Ritter

Director, Colorado Tourism Office

Murphy Robinson

COO and Executive Director, Denver Office of General Services

Laurence Rua

Regional Vice President, Centerplate

Joan Tezak

Executive Director, Colorado Society of Association Executives

Al Timothy

Retired, MillerCoors

Ginger White

Executive Director, Denver Arts & Venues

LIFETIME BOARD MEMBERS

A. Barry Hirschfeld

President, A. B. Hirschfeld & Sons

Edward A. Robinson

Co-Chief Executive Officer, Robinson Management, LLC

Galen Drake

Retired (Non-voting)

Ed Gerrity

Retired (Non-voting)

Jerry Goodwin

Retired (Non-voting)

Al Timothy

Retired (Non-voting)

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS

Jared Polis

Governor, State of Colorado

Michael B. Hancock

Mayor, City of Denver

TID BOARD MEMBERS

Navin Dimond

President & CEO, Stonebridge Companies

Walter Isenberg

President & CEO, Sage Hospitality

Greg Leonard

General Manager, Hyatt Regency at the Colorado Convention Center

Tracy Blair

Director of Sales & Marketing, Sheraton Hotel Denver

Laura Lojas

General Manager, The Westin Denver International Airport Hotel

Eric Walters

General Manager, Hilton Denver City Center

Allen Paty

General Manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Denver

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VISIT DENVER HEADCOUNTS

EMPLOYEE TYPE	2019	2020	% CHANGE
FULL TIME (FTE)	66	48	-27.3%
PART TIME	10	0	-100%
TOTALS	76	48	-36.8



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