

2019 ANNUAL REPORT





**\$6.5** BILLION

RECORD-MATCHING VISITOR SPENDING IN 2018

**31.4** MILLION

VISITORS TO DENVER IN 2018

**64%**

INCREASE IN DENVER TOURISM SINCE 2006

**396,107**

DENVER CONVENTION DELEGATES IN 2019

**\$89.5** MILLION

ADVERTISING VALUE CREATED BY DENVER PUBLICITY  
STORIES AROUND THE WORLD IN 2019



Two TID-funded MEET (Meet. Experience. Enjoy. Tell.) Denver meetings brought 130 new planners to Denver.



*Claude Monet: The Truth of Nature* at Denver Art Museum was just one of many wildly popular exhibitions in Denver in 2019.



Lonely Planet named Denver one of its 10 Best in Travel 2020 Destinations.



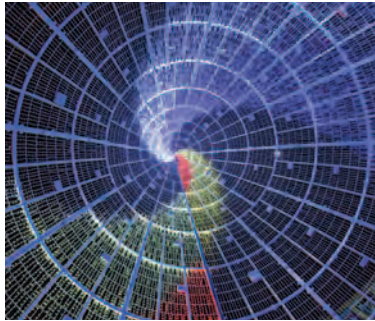
A Chicago takeover in June included advertising, festivals and client events.



The 110-foot-tall Mile High Tree launched in 2019 as part of Mile High Holidays.



The UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup and Barbagazi Winter Festival brought visitors to Civic Center Park in February 2019.



In 2019, VISIT DENVER celebrated 110 years as the marketing arm of The Mile High City, matching or beating nearly every record in tourism and convention sales and business development.

This report details VISIT DENVER's many successes in 2019, many of which were made possible with new funding available through the Tourism Improvement District (TID) and impacted both leisure marketing and convention sales efforts.

#### A FEW 2019 HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

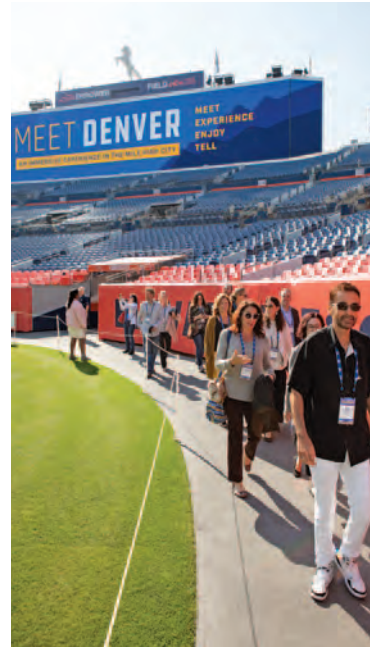
- The Convention Sales Department had one of its best years ever in 2019, booking a total of 1,138 future meetings that will draw 435,021 delegates and generate \$879 million in future spending. To date, Denver has 1,872 meetings on the books for all future years that will generate an estimated \$4 billion in spending!
- Two TID-funded MEET Denver buyer education trips brought 130 new meeting planners to The Mile High City.
- A June market takeover in Chicago included increased advertising, festival sponsorships and client events in a dual effort for both leisure visitors and convention sales.
- According to the Longwoods International report, Denver welcomed 31.4 million visitors in 2018 (the latest figures available), including a record 7.1 million "marketable" visitors, those most influenced by marketing. Visitors spent a record-matching \$6.5 billion in 2018.
- Annual marketing campaigns, including the always-on, TID-funded "Reclaim the Weekend" campaign, generated more than 800 million impressions in 2019, while the website and social media set records with 10.6 million visits and nearly 7 million social media engagements.
- The PR department generated a record-breaking \$89 million in national and international media coverage. Overall, the team worked with 613 journalists from around the world.

We could not achieve this level of success without the help of our 1,300 partners, and our strong relationship with Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock and the Denver City Council.

On behalf of the Bureau staff and Board, thank you for your support and we wish you continued success in 2020 and beyond.

**Jerome E. Davis, 2019 Chair**  
Regional Vice President  
Xcel Energy

**Richard W. Scharf**  
President & CEO  
VISIT DENVER



In 2019, VISIT DENVER celebrated 110 years as the marketing arm of The Mile High City, matching or beating nearly every record in tourism and convention sales and business development.



## 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. Tourism is the second largest industry in Denver, generating 31.4 million total visitors (17.3 million overnight visitors) and \$6.5 billion in annual spending.

In 2019, the Bureau had a budget of \$38.8 million, which comes from a dedicated portion of the Denver Lodger's Tax, and from advertising, private fundraising and partnership fees. 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.

## SPOTLIGHT: TOURISM ROADMAP

Four years ago, VISIT DENVER created a Tourism Roadmap to guide the city's tourism efforts through 2025. The roadmap included six goal areas with more than 70 initiatives to help increase overnight visitors, grow visitor spending and continue to keep Denver's tourism industry strong and competitive.

## HERE ARE SOME OF THE SUCCESSES THAT WERE ACHIEVED IN 2019:

## GOAL 1: EXPAND MEETINGS &amp; CONVENTION BUSINESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- The National Western Center Authority, which will oversee programs and operations of the redeveloped campus, hired Brad Buchanan as the first CEO, and is actively seeking year-round programming ideas.
- Rider Levett Bucknall, a company that has worked on convention centers around the world, was selected to serve as project manager for the Colorado Convention Center expansion.

## GOAL 2: ATTRACT VISITOR-DRIVEN EVENTS

- In February, Denver hosted the UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup at Civic Center Park, the first time the event was ever held in a large city, and it drew the largest ice climbing audience ever. A free winter festival was held in conjunction with the competition.
- Denver welcomed world-class soccer in a sold-out match between the U.S. Women's National Team and Australia at Dick's Sporting Goods Park. The CONCACAF Gold Cup brought more than 52,000 fans to Empower Field at Mile High.
- VISIT DENVER supported the promotion of blockbuster events and exhibitions, including *Dior: From Paris to the World* and *Claude Monet: The Truth of Nature* at Denver Art Museum, along with the AMA Supercross and the Denver BBQ Festival events at Empower Field at Mile High.
- VISIT DENVER installed the Mile High Tree at the Denver Performing Arts Complex, attracting more than 113,000 visitors during December 2019.

## GOAL 3: CREATE WORLD-CLASS ATTRACTIONS AND SERVICES

- VISIT DENVER and the Tourism Improvement District (TID) are supporting and collaborating with various stakeholders, including CU Denver's CityCenter, to advance workforce development efforts that will support the tourism and hospitality industry.

## GOAL 4: ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY AND MOBILITY

- United Airlines launched a new, nonstop flight between Denver International Airport (DEN) and Frankfurt, Germany, while Norwegian Airlines announced new service from Rome to DEN.
- DEN received the top U.S. airport ranking from industry publication Skytrax and ranked 7th in the world, while work continued on gate expansion and Great Hall projects.
- RTD partnered with both Lyft and Uber to integrate transit and ride share information into their respective online platforms.

## GOAL 5: IMPROVE DOWNTOWN VISITOR EXPERIENCES

- VISIT DENVER joined with public, private and philanthropic partners to support new and expanded day shelter and supportive services.
- The redesign of the 16th Street Mall was approved and will move into the next phase of construction.

## GOAL 6: STRENGTHEN DESTINATION BRANDING

- The TID-funded "Reclaim the Weekend" campaign ran all year to increase short-term visits from regional residents.
- The Chicago "takeover" marketing effort, also funded by the TID, included highly visible billboards, high impact transit entrances and a large festival sponsorship.







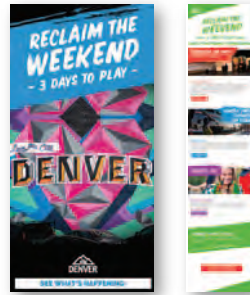
To ensure that Denver's tourism industry remains competitive in the future, VISIT DENVER worked with the Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association (CHLA) and the City & County of Denver in 2017 to create a new Tourism Improvement District (TID).

The TID adds a 1% tax to the guest folio of hotels with 50 or more rooms in the City & County of Denver. There is no cost to the hotel properties. TID-eligible hotels supported creation of the TID with 96% support (50-2). Collection of the 1% tax began on January 1, 2018.



#### SOME OF THE PROJECTS FUNDED WITH TID FUNDS IN 2019 INCLUDED:

- An annual, always-on regional "Reclaim the Weekend" advertising campaign
- The February UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup and BARBEGAZI winter festival
- Two MEET Denver buyer education trips in May and October



- A June marketing and sales takeover of Chicago



- The new 110-foot-tall Mile High Tree



#### TID GOVERNING BOARD 2019

VISIT DENVER thanks the members of the Tourism Improvement District Governing Board for their time and their commitment to the future success of Denver tourism.

**Navin Dimond** (President), President & CEO, Stonebridge Companies

**Walter Isenberg** (President-Elect), President & CEO, Sage Hospitality

**Greg Leonard** (Secretary/Treasurer), General Manager, Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center

**Tracy Blair**, Director of Sales and Marketing, Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel

**John Everett**, General Manager, The Westin Denver Downtown

**Laura Lojas**, General Manager, The Westin Denver International Airport

**Allen Paty**, General Manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Denver

**Richard W. Scharf**, President & CEO, VISIT DENVER (ex officio)





### RECLAIM THE WEEKEND CAMPAIGN

Using the new marketing funds from the TID, the Bureau ran an annual, always-on advertising campaign designed to increase short-term regional visits to Denver, specifically on weekends when hotels need additional business. The campaign represents a new marketing effort aimed at regional audiences who view Denver as an exciting, urban destination, and one that they can easily and quickly make plans to visit. The ads are focused on specific events, such as the Winter Park Express ski train, summer holiday weekends, blockbuster exhibitions, festivals, Broadway shows and only-in-Denver sporting events. The ads also highlight reasons to visit The Mile High City, including the incredible food scene, craft beer, art and cultural attractions, diverse neighborhoods, professional sports and outdoor adventures.



### UIAA ICE CLIMBING WORLD CUP AND BARBEGAZI FESTIVAL

More than 22,000 people watched the UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup in February 2019 in Civic Center Park, the largest crowd to ever watch such an event. Brought to Denver with TID funding, this event attracted the world's top men and women ice climbers competing for glory on a 50-foot-tall wall of sheer ice. BARBEGAZI, a free winter festival with axe throwing, an outdoor beer garden and fire pits helped bring visitors to downtown Denver at a traditionally slow time for visitation.



### MEET DENVER BUYER EDUCATION TRIPS

In 2019, with help from TID funds, VISIT DENVER staged two buyer education trips focused on clients who book their meetings in single hotels versus convention centers. These trips, called MEET (Meet. Experience. Enjoy. Tell.) Denver, were for planners who have not been in Denver in many years, and offered a chance for them to experience and learn about all the new things that have happened in the city recently. The two events brought a combined 130 planners to Denver for hotel showcases, venue tours and evening receptions. To date, the 2019 MEET Denver events have produced \$4.7 million in new meeting business.



### CHICAGO TAKEOVER

In June, VISIT DENVER conducted a joint sales/tourism marketing "takeover" in Chicago, funded by the TID. Chicago is a key tourism driver, as well as one of the top cities for meeting planners due to the many associations headquartered there. Over the course of the takeover, Denver ads could be seen everywhere, from billboards to transit stations, one of which included a huge Red Rocks replica. The convention sales team hosted clients at nine different events over seven days, a total of 143 clients representing more than \$530 million in convention spending. The team also returned to Taste of Randolph, where more than 10,000 people experienced the Denver brand hands on with whiskey tastings, an oxygen bar and live street art painting with renowned Denver muralists Pat Milbery and Pat McKinney.





## THE MILE HIGH TREE

Denver's newest, free holiday attraction, the Mile High Tree, was made possible by funding from the TID and support from the City, and brightened Denver's Mile High Holidays marketing efforts. It was the tallest digital tree in North America, as well as the tallest art installation in the history of Denver. At a stunning 110 feet tall and 39 feet in diameter, the tree featured dynamic, pre-programmed light shows every 15 minutes throughout the evening using pixel LED technology choreographed to multi-cultural holiday music. Between November 30 and December 31, more than 113,000 people visited the tree. Research done in December indicated that 29 percent of the visitors were from outside the metro area, with 16 percent of the total visitors using paid lodging in Denver. The research also found that 88 percent were aware of the Tree prior to visiting it, and 94 percent of the visitors said they would highly recommend it.



BETWEEN NOVEMBER 30  
AND DECEMBER 31,  
MORE THAN **113,000** PEOPLE  
VISITED THE TREE





The Convention Sales Department markets Denver as a meeting destination and is contracted by the City & County of Denver to book the Colorado Convention Center and area hotels for national meetings, conventions and tradeshows. Once a meeting is booked for Denver, the Convention Services Department works with meeting professionals to help with all their local service needs.

VISIT DENVER had a great sales year in 2019, booking the largest number of future conventions in the Bureau's history with some 1,138 future conventions booked, which will attract 435,021 delegates and generate \$879 million in spending. Denver now holds total future commitments for 1,872 conventions that will attract 1,864,395 delegates who will spend a staggering \$4 billion.

In hosting conventions, 2019 was also a very strong year with 1,026 meetings held in the city, attracting 396,107 delegates who spent \$787 million. This included 80 groups that used the Colorado Convention Center and 946 individual hotel groups.



### CCC EXPANSION UPDATE

In 2019, the City of Denver hired Rider Levett Bucknall, a company that has worked on convention centers around the world, to serve as project manager for the Colorado Convention Center expansion. The City is on track to select a contractor and architect early in 2020. That will allow for the development of timelines, which will enable the sales team to begin selling.

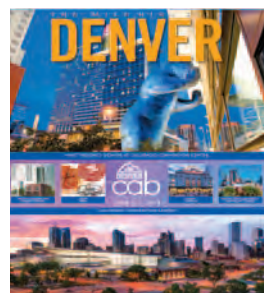


### METRO & DOWNTOWN HOTEL OCCUPANCY & AVG RATES

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>METRO HOTELS</b>					
OCCUPANCY	75.9%	75.0%	74.9%	73.7%	74.3%
AVERAGE ROOM RATE	\$ 133.65	\$ 140.46	\$ 143.68	\$ 144.03	\$ 146.14
<b>DOWNTOWN HOTELS</b>					
OCCUPANCY	77.8%	77.1%	79.0%	77.3%	79.3%
AVERAGE ROOM RATE	\$ 179.45	\$ 183.67	\$ 186.26	\$ 187.10	\$ 187.09

Source: Rocky Mtn Lodgers Report





## CONNECT FINANCIAL

In March, Denver hosted Connect Financial, which brought 41 financial planners to The Mile High City for two days of 1-on-1 appointments and education. VISIT DENVER sponsored the opening reception at The Milk Market to highlight Denver's culinary scene and showcase Denver's LoDo neighborhood.

## CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

VISIT DENVER hosted two Customer Advisory Board (CAB) meetings in 2019. The CAB is comprised of some of the Bureau's top meeting planner clients. These convention professionals donate their time to help the Bureau's marketing efforts, while offering suggestions on how to improve Denver's image as a meeting destination. During the November meeting, CAB members also attended the Bureau's Annual Meeting, allowing them to interact with VISIT DENVER partners.

## AMERICAN EXPRESS GLOBAL BUSINESS TRAVEL, INTER[ACTION]

In December, Denver hosted more than 550 planners from American Express Global Business Travel (AMEX) for their 2019 Annual INTER[action] event. VISIT DENVER was the proud sponsor of the welcome reception, hosted at Empower Field at Mile High, highlighting Denver's outdoor city/urban adventure vibe through a "glamping" theme. AMEX primarily represents short-term, in-house corporate business with a strong emphasis in pharmaceuticals.





- The Convention Sales Department exceeded all 2019 sales goals, booking 1,138 future conventions that will attract 435,021 delegates, which represents \$879 million of future economic impact for Denver.
- A total of 3,883 leads for individual hotel meetings were sent to partners in 2019.
- As of December 31, 2019, there were a total of 1,872 future conventions scheduled to meet in Denver, attracting a total of 1,864,395 delegates for a total projected future economic impact over all future years of \$4 billion.

## 2019 SALES RESULTS

FUTURE MEETINGS: **1,872**

FUTURE DELEGATES: **1,864,395**

FUTURE ECONOMIC IMPACT: **\$4 BILLION**

## DENVER MEETINGS BY YEAR

## COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER (CCC)

# OF GROUPS  
ATTENDANCE  
ROOMS  
REVENUE

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
73	66	84	67	80
236,828	242,686	235,578	269,417	254,134
432,253	440,258	420,697	481,017	422,240
\$546.6 mil	\$538.5 mil	\$529.1 mil	\$561.7 mil	\$555.3 mil

## NOT USING CCC

# OF GROUPS  
ATTENDANCE  
ROOMS  
REVENUE

674	792	850	859	946
138,450	125,773	154,496	129,588	141,973
250,943	256,303	300,788	283,823	315,566
\$226.0 mil	\$205.2 mil	\$252.1 mil	\$211.5 mil	\$231.7 mil

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT  
TOTAL GROUPS

\$772.6 mil	\$743.7 mil	\$781.2 mil	\$773.2 mil	\$787.0 mil
747	858	934	926	1,026



## CONVENTION SALES TACTICS

Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with meeting professional clients is one of VISIT DENVER's primary goals and is accomplished in numerous ways. The Bureau's convention sales and services teams maintain a database of more than 15,000 meeting planners and regularly make phone calls, send emails and take sales trips to keep in contact with these groups, pitching Denver as the perfect site for conventions. Further contacts are established at convention industry trade shows and special events. Some of the convention sales efforts in 2019 included:

### SALES EVENTS

VISIT DENVER staged 18 out-of-town sales events in 2019, along with three events for local clients. In addition to the markets below, events were hosted in Atlanta, Dallas and Phoenix.

In Washington, D.C., VISIT DENVER and local hotel partners hosted 42 clients who represent more than \$206 million in potential future economic impact.

Nine events were staged in Chicago during the media "takeover" in June. A total of 143 clients attended these events, representing more than \$530 million in potential future economic impact.

A signature New York City event took place again in October at the James Beard House highlighting Denver's culinary scene. During this annual event, VISIT DENVER hosted eight NYC-based clients who represent more than \$173 million in potential future economic impact.

VISIT DENVER also hosted an immersive one-day "Daycation" educational experience for 28 local clients that included hotel tours, venue tours and a convention center tour. The clients who attended the event represented more than \$445 million of future economic impact.

The meeting planners who attended VISIT DENVER's 2019 client events represented nearly \$2.4 billion in potential future economic impact to Denver.

### TRADESHOWS & CONFERENCES

In 2019, VISIT DENVER participated in more than 60 meeting and convention tradeshows, marketing The Mile High City as a destination to thousands of influential meeting planners. These shows are also a great way to reach out to niche markets such as government meeting planners, religious meeting planners, etc. Some of the shows attended in 2019 included:

**Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) Convening Leaders**, where thousands of meeting professionals – including many Denver citywide clients – gather. The Bureau staged two client events for 65 top customers.

- Six team members attended **Connect 2019**. Connect is the premier hosted-buyer event that brings together planners, suppliers and experts in Corporate, Association, Specialty, Expo and Sports meetings and events for preset appointments, education and networking. The Denver team had more than 220 appointments over two days and



also put Denver messaging on the conference hotel keycards.

- The sales staff also attended third-party meeting planner shows such as Conference Direct's annual partner meeting and Spring CDX; HelmsBriscoe's Annual Business Conference; and Experient's e4.
- Specialty market tradeshows included the Society of Government Meeting Planners National Education Conference; Connect Diversity; and Religious Conference Managers Association Annual Conference.

### MEETING PLANNER SITE INSPECTION TRIPS

Another powerful sales tactic is to bring the meeting planner to Denver so they can see the city in person, tour hotels and meeting venues and dine in Denver restaurants. The Sales Department conducted 244 site inspection tours of Denver in 2019.

### MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

The Bureau conducts a \$1 million trade advertising campaign to develop

Denver's brand as a meeting destination and keep the city top-of-mind with meeting planners, scoring millions of impressions with influential planners. Ads on meeting planner trade websites and in publications such as Meetings & Conventions, Successful Meetings, USAE, Convene and others are mixed with web promotions, guerrilla tactics such as the Chicago takeover, industry sponsored events, a direct mail program and the annual Destination Planning Guide, which is the premiere resource for anyone planning a meeting in Denver.



Once a meeting is booked for Denver, the Convention Services Department becomes their contact to assist them with all their local needs to help them secure Denver companies to work with. The department assisted 1,026 meetings in 2019.



#### HERE ARE SOME OF THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- For 28 years straight, the Convention Services Department has helped VISIT DENVER win all major convention industry service awards, including the Northstar Stella Award and Corporate & Incentive Travel's Award of Excellence.
- In 2019, the department sent out more than 921 business referrals and 88 service leads to VISIT DENVER partners, representing 12,927 total business opportunities.



- To help boost attendance, the department staged 15 pre-promotion events in 2019 for customers who will be meeting in Denver. This involved staffing a Denver booth at the group's 2019 conventions to hand out brochures, answer questions and encourage delegates to attend the 2020 convention in Denver.
- The department also conducted 83 site tours with clients that have future business booked in Denver and provided assistance to 80 groups using the convention center and hundreds of meeting groups using single hotels.
- Finally, the department helped arrange many of the Bureau's special meeting planner events such as the MEET Denver, which was staged twice in 2019 for 130 meeting planners who book hundreds of short-term, single-hotel meetings.

#### RIMS 2020 InSiteTour DENVER | JUNE 2-4, 2019



#### SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

In 2019, Denver became just the fourth city in the U.S. to join the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index) and the highest ranking North American city listed. The GDS-Index seeks to engage, inspire and enable urban centers to become more sustainable places to visit, meet and thrive.

VISIT DENVER also became a Gold Leader under the Colorado Environmental Leadership Program (ELP), a statewide environmental recognition and reward program. VISIT DENVER joined the ELP in 2017 as a Bronze Leader, and is proud to have achieved Gold level by continuing to improve internal sustainability practices.

Giving back continues to be part of VISIT DENVER's sustainable strategy. Staff members joined the Colorado Convention Center and Centerplate in their annual park clean-up. In November, team

members wrapped holiday gifts for underprivileged children with Amp the Cause.

The VISIT DENVER annual sustainability challenge continues to be a popular event hosted by the VISIT DENVER Green Team. Fifty staff members participated in the 2019 Sustainability Challenge. Collectively, the participants walked 1,660,649 steps in four days!

VISIT DENVER continues to be a sustainability resource for the community and those who bring their events to the city. Our Voluntourism grid provides information and contacts for groups who wish to give back to the community through a volunteer activity. Our Green Vendor Directory and Hotel Sustainability Survey help event organizers get a better understanding of the sustainability initiatives of various vendors in the city.



While the VISIT DENVER Convention Sales Department continually call on meeting planners at trade shows and in person, or invite them here to experience Denver firsthand, it is also important to maintain a strong presence in the many websites and publications serving the meeting planning industry. In 2019, VISIT DENVER continued the "Conventions Elevated" advertising campaign, designed to reach meeting planners through print and digital media. The ads promoted Denver's craft beer scene, dining and unique meeting sites, as well as a renewed focus on Denver International Airport.



#### SOME OF THE OTHER MARKETING EFFORTS IN 2019 INCLUDED:

- To stand out from the clutter of advertising, VISIT DENVER continued an innovative advertising program with Food & Wine magazine, in which the Bureau purchases a three-month subscription for 1,000 top meeting professionals and wraps the cover of the magazine with a six-page cover wrap devoted to Denver's appeal, this year focusing on wellness.



- More than 1,500 attendees at ASAE's XDP meeting were greeted with a unique Denver branding message: the XDP Conference Playbook – an essential part of this hands-on meeting – included a three-page ad encouraging attendees to spot "The Denver Difference" with a whimsical "spot the difference" illustration.



- To celebrate the holidays at Chicago Forum's annual Holiday Showcase, VISIT DENVER produced two playful scenes of the Blue Bear enjoying the holidays!



- VISIT DENVER sponsored hotel room cards at three tradeshow this year: PCMA Convening Leaders, MPI World Education Conference and Connect. The cards generate "surprise and delight" where clients least expect it!

*These convention advertising and marketing programs generated more than 8.5 million impressions in 2019.*



The Tourism Department is responsible for increasing leisure travel to Denver, increasing the number of domestic and international travel companies that offer Denver as a destination and helping consumers plan their Denver trips.

Once again, Denver experienced an outstanding year in 2019.



#### SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Based on third party research, Denver welcomed 31.4 million total visitors in 2018 (latest figures available), including 17.3 million overnight visitors. Additionally, visitors spent a record-matching \$6.5 billion, including \$5.6 billion spent by overnight visitors.
- The Tourism Department exceeded all annual goals in 2019, including 509 leads and referrals distributed (194 international and 315 domestic). The department made 2,848 contacts, with 2,645 established at tourism tradeshows, sales missions and educational seminars and 203 from site inspections. Contacts and leads came from 33 international markets.
- A new nonstop flight to Frankfurt, combined with continued interest in Denver from hosting IPW 2018 brought international attention to Denver. The Tourism Department hosted 40 international site inspections and participated in 13 international travel trade shows in six countries and the U.S. The department represented Denver on four sales missions to Australia/New Zealand, UK/Ireland and Mexico, as well as the Colorado Tourism Office mission to Los Angeles targeting the West-Coast based Japanese and Chinese receptive tour operators.
- The department tracked 63,942 leisure room nights, which were generated by specific marketing efforts, primarily in international markets. 2018 Tourism
- Economics research reported 1,734,500 international room nights in Denver.
- The Tourism Department tracked 48 new or enhanced travel packages featuring Denver, including 43 from international markets, of which 26 resulted directly from hosting IPW 2018.



The annual Longwoods Visitor Profile Research provides an in-depth look at who is visiting Denver, their demographics, where they come from, how long they stay and what they do while here. This information is valuable in quantifying the success of past marketing efforts and determining future marketing strategies and tactics. The information for 2018 is the latest available; 2019 numbers will be available in June 2020.

### DENVER MAINTAINS TOURISM RECORDS IN 2018 WITH \$6.5 BILLION IN SPENDING

Denver's tourism industry had another amazing year in 2018, matching the record year of 2017 for spending and generating a 2-percent increase in marketable leisure visitors – the segment of travelers that has the most discretion on where they travel. These high impact travelers who spend more money are the focus of VISIT DENVER's marketing efforts. The city has experienced 15 years of consistent growth in marketable leisure visitors. Since 2006, Denver tourism has grown 64 percent compared to 22 percent nationally. Total visitor numbers were down slightly in 2018 with the reduction coming from those visiting friends and relatives and business travelers, two segments that VISIT DENVER's marketing can't easily impact.

### SOME OF THE 2018 HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- 31.4 million visitors (day and overnight)
- 17.3 million overnight visitors (including 83 percent from out-of-state)
- A record-matching \$6.5 billion total visitor spending, including

\$5.6 billion spent by overnight visitors and an additional \$919 million spent by day visitors.

For the second year in a row, "marketable" visitors were the biggest spenders, accounting for \$166 per day, followed by business travelers who spent \$146 a day. Hotels were the largest recipients of visitor dollars, receiving \$1.7 billion, while transportation took in \$1.6 billion and food & beverage almost \$1.1 billion.

### THE TOP FIVE STATES SENDING VACATIONERS TO DENVER IN 2018, APART FROM COLORADO ITSELF, WERE:

1. California
2. Texas
3. Florida
4. Illinois
5. Arizona

### THE TOP SEVEN CITIES FROM OUTSIDE OF COLORADO SENDING LEISURE VISITORS TO DENVER IN 2018 WERE:

1. Los Angeles
2. New York City
3. Chicago\*
4. Houston\*
5. Dallas-Fort Worth\*
6. Kansas City\*
7. Phoenix\*

\*Represents a VISIT DENVER advertising market

### TOP SHOPPING/ENTERTAINMENT AREAS

Shopping and entertainment were popular tourist activities in Denver in 2018. The top shopping and entertainment centers were (in order):

1. 16th Street Mall
2. Cherry Creek

3. LoDo "Lower Downtown" Historic District
4. Denver Union Station
5. Denver Pavilions
6. Larimer Square
7. Park Meadows Retail Resort
8. Outlets at Castle Rock
9. Flatiron Crossing Mall
10. Belmar
11. Shops at Northfield/Stapleton

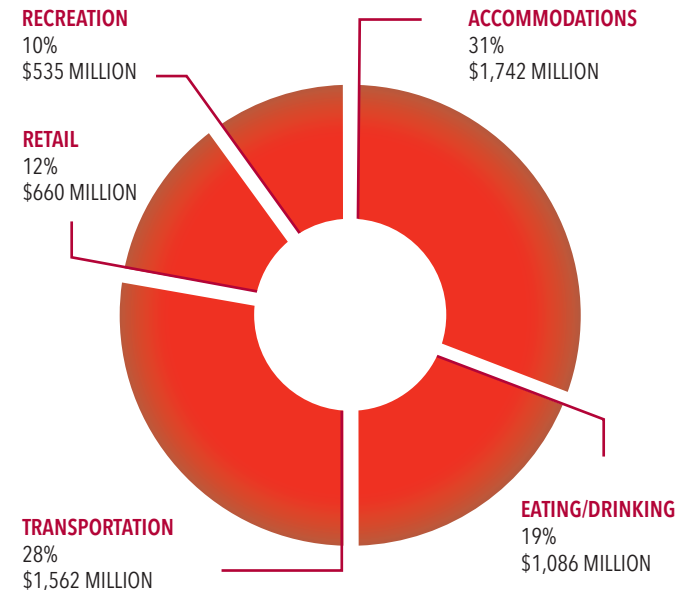
### THE TOP PAID ATTRACTIONS VISITED WERE (IN ORDER):

1. Denver Zoo
2. Denver Art Museum
3. Colorado Rockies
4. Denver Botanic Gardens
5. Denver Museum of Nature & Science/IMAX
6. Colorado Railroad Museum
7. Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave
8. Children's Museum of Denver at Marsico Campus
9. Denver Broncos
10. Downtown Aquarium

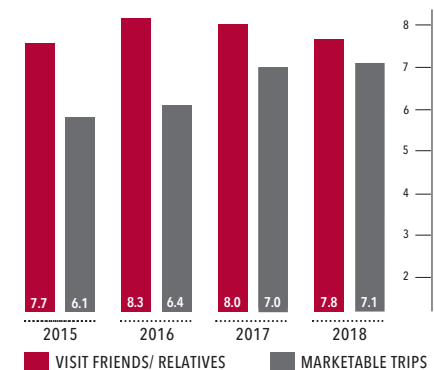
### TOP ATTRACTIONS - FREE ADMISSION

1. Red Rocks Park & Amphitheatre
2. Coors Brewery
3. Colorado State Capitol

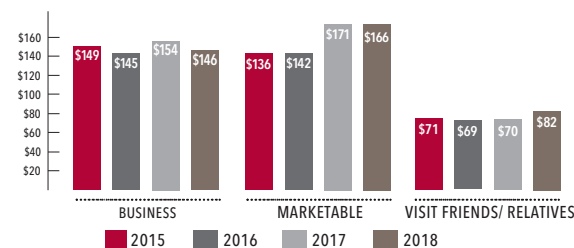
### DENVER OVERNIGHT VISITORS TOTAL SPENDING \$5.6 BILLION TRAVEL SPENDING IN 2018 BY SECTOR



### OVERNIGHT LEISURE TRIPS TO DENVER (MILLIONS)



### AVERAGE DAILY EXPENDITURES



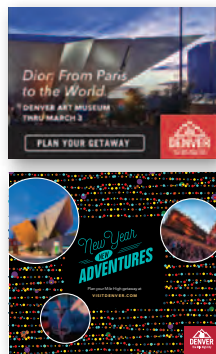




### RECLAIM THE WEEKEND CAMPAIGN

Thanks to new marketing funds from the TID, the Bureau ran an “always-on” campaign designed to increase short-term regional visits to Denver, specifically on weekends when hotels need

additional business. The ads focused on specific events happening within a short timeframe, such as the Winter Park Express ski train, summer holiday weekends, blockbuster exhibitions, festivals, Broadway shows and only-in-Denver sporting events.



### WINTER CAMPAIGN

For the fourth year, VISIT DENVER implemented a winter tourism consumer marketing campaign, targeting key in-state and regional markets, to encourage visits to The Mile High City in the first quarter of the year, as well as reaching the larger target markets of Chicago, Dallas, Houston and San Francisco to encourage early planning for summer vacations.

The integrated campaign promoted the stellar events taking place in Denver in the early part of 2019, including the UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup Finals; the *Dior: From Paris to the World* exhibition at the Denver Art Museum and *Leonardo da Vinci: 500 Years of Genius* at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science.



### SPRING/SUMMER CAMPAIGN

The largest tourism marketing campaign in Denver's history was created and launched to attract business from May through September. The \$7 million campaign targeted the specific markets of Chicago, Dallas, Houston and San Francisco, as well as nationally via digital media tactics.

The ads continued to lead with the tagline “Soak it All In!” They promote the city's 300 days of sunshine, craft beer and spirits, fine dining, live music, arts and culture, attractions and events.

The campaign included television commercials, newspaper inserts, direct mail, radio ads, animated banners and eNewsletters, along with extensive social media, search marketing and public relations efforts.

VISIT DENVER worked with multiple partners, including Denver Botanic Gardens to promote *Human|Nature: Figures from the Craig Ponzio Sculpture Collection*; History Colorado Center to promote *Beer Here! Brewing the New West*; and blockbuster events like the Colorado Classic professional bike race, the Denver BBQ Fest, PrideFest and Denver Pop Culture Con.

### FALL CULTURAL CAMPAIGN

Kicking off just after Labor Day, the Fall Cultural campaign highlighted the many arts and culture-related activities in the fall, all leading up to Denver Arts Week in early November. The campaign focused on everything from Biennial of the Americas and Denver Fashion Week to the Denver Film Festival and *Claude Monet: The Truth of Nature* at Denver Art Museum, which also received its own, dedicated regional advertising campaign in partnership with the Museum.

All combined, the tourism campaigns generated more than 800 million impressions in 2019.





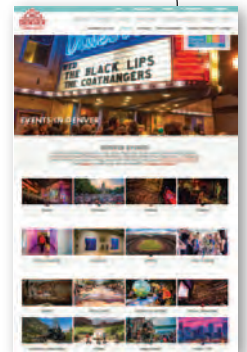


**Mile High Holidays and Mile High Tree:** The Mile High Holidays campaign received a huge boost in 2019 with the addition of the TID-funded Mile High Tree – the tallest digital tree in North America as well as the tallest art installation in the history of Denver. Standing 110 feet high and 39 feet in diameter, the Tree featured pre-programmed light shows every 15 minutes using pixel LED technology choreographed to multicultural holiday music. The Tree attracted more than 113,000 visitors in 2019. On-site surveys showed that around 29 percent of the Tree visitors were from outside the metro area, 21 percent from out-of-state; and 16 percent of the total visitors utilized paid lodging.

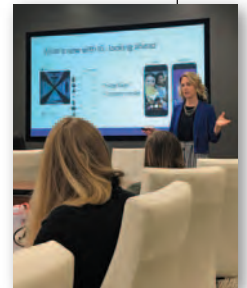
Entering its 16th year, the full Mile High Holidays campaign is valued at more than \$1 million. It is designed to increase hotel business at a traditionally slow time of year from Thanksgiving through the National Western Stock Show & Rodeo. The campaign showcases holiday events, shows at Denver Center for Performing Arts, lighting displays at attractions, and the New Year's Eve fireworks on the 16th Street Mall (which is co-sponsored by VISIT DENVER). An integrated ad campaign that includes social media and public relations, along with a dedicated website, all promote Denver as the perfect holiday destination. The campaign also included dedicated advertising and public relations efforts for the Latinx market.



**DENVER365 ONLINE EVENT CALENDAR:** This comprehensive event calendar is an important cultural resource for Denver, and also a major component of the City's IMAGINE 2020 citywide cultural plan. In 2019, the Denver365 section of VISITDENVER.com generated 1.7 million pageviews.



**CULTURAL TOURISM MARKETING WORKSHOP SERIES:** The Tourism Department launched new quarterly marketing workshops for cultural attractions, galleries and creative spaces designed to help them learn more about topics like Instagram and influencer marketing. The department works with Denver Arts & Venues, as well as SCFD (the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District) to promote and implement these free educational sessions. The workshops hosted a total of 81 attendees in 2019, many of which are SCFD Tier 3 organizations.



**DENVER 2-FOR-1 TIX:** This program aims to sell last-minute tickets and provide free exposure for arts & cultural organizations. The weekly e-blast reaches 13,751 subscribers with a 12 percent average open rate.



DENVER  
**CityPASS**

**MILE HIGH CULTURE PASS & CITYPASS:** Denver CityPASS, a private attraction discount program available in many major cities, started in Denver in 2018 featuring eight Denver attractions. A total of 1,678 CityPASS products were sold through the VISIT DENVER website in 2019. The Mile High Culture Pass offers a three-day pass to seven museums, with discounts to additional attractions. A total of 1,073 Mile High Culture Passes were sold in 2019.





### LGBTQ+ MARKETING

Marketing efforts target LGBTQ+ travelers throughout the year, with tactics aimed at increasing overnight visits during PrideFest, which in 2019 paid tribute to the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Inn uprising in New York City with a series of exhibits and events. VISIT DENVER hosted four LGBTQ+ journalists during PrideFest weekend in June.



### LATINX MARKETING

VISIT DENVER continues to integrate Latinx marketing efforts throughout the year with Spanish-language ads. Targeted advertising promoted events like the CONCACAF Gold Cup soccer match, the Denver BBQ Fest and Mile High Holidays. The Communications Department works closely with a contracted PR agency to assist in placing travel stories in target markets to increase awareness of all there is to see and do in Denver.



### GROUP TOUR, WEDDINGS & REUNIONS

The Tourism Department generated 315 leads/partner referrals in these markets in 2019, and attended the American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace (Louisville, KY), meeting with 76 contacts during pre-scheduled appointments for travel companies that package and sell leisure group travel.



### TOURIST INFORMATION CENTERS

VISIT DENVER maintains four Tourist Information Centers that serviced nearly 358,000 visitors in 2019.

### GO THE EXTRA MILE

VISIT DENVER's Go the EXTRA Mile program continues to provide full-day and customized trainings for front-line staff in the hospitality industry with 149 people participating in 2019.



**GO THE EXTRA MILE!**  
Presented By VISIT DENVER, The Convention & Visitors Bureau





Denver's successful hosting of IPW 2018 was already paying off in 2019. U.S. Travel Association's IPW is the largest international travel trade show staged in the United States. Accolades about the Denver meeting continue from travel trade clients and journalists, many of whom experienced Denver for the first time. The final night at Red Rocks Park & Amphitheatre is being called "legendary," and the "best event in the history of IPW."

Since then, the Tourism Department has tracked 39 new international travel packages or programs (13 in 2018 and 26 in 2019), all as a direct result of the travel companies attending IPW 2018 and experiencing Denver first-hand.

VISIT DENVER also attended IPW 2019 in Anaheim, California with 149 pre-scheduled appointments with travel companies for Denver, as well as additional appointments in the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) booth. There were a total of 255 contacts generated at the show.

#### OTHER MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM IN 2019:

- To increase awareness of the Edelweiss Air nonstop flight from Zürich to Denver, yoga sessions with beer tastings were hosted in the main Zürich train station, along with videos showcasing Denver and Colorado. PR, radio, social media and print promotions were also implemented.



- For the first time, in collaboration with the CTO, Denver had in-market representation at the ITB China tradeshow, where meetings were held with 29 top Chinese travel companies.
- As a part of the March tourism sales mission to Mexico, VISIT DENVER partnered with CTO, Denver International Airport (DEN) and AeroMexico to host a VIP event for travel company representatives and journalists at a Colorado Rockies' pre-season game in Monterrey.
- To celebrate United Airlines' inaugural flight from Denver to Frankfurt in May 2019, travel company representatives attended a site inspection of Denver and Colorado. Frankfurt ranks as Denver's third-largest market in Europe. With United's new service, DEN had 50 weekly nonstop flights to Europe in the summer of 2019, a 13-percent increase over the summer of 2018.
- Denver was invited to be a founding member of the International Beer Festivals Alliance (IBFA) along with Munich, Toronto and Qingdao, China, home to the Tsingtao Brewery. In July 2019, VISIT DENVER attended the inaugural meeting of the Alliance at the Qingdao Beer Festival which also featured a press conference, opening ceremony and exhibition booths for the four cities during



- the three-week event that welcomed 50,000 to 100,000 attendees per day.
- VISIT DENVER created new "Denver Travelogue" educational videos and added translated subtitles to the new "Get a Feel for Denver" video in nine languages.
- In 2019, the Tourism Department conducted 40 site inspections for 188 international travel trade representatives from 13 countries.
- The department implemented 132 marketing initiatives to highlight Denver in international markets, including a Red Rocks promotion in Australia with touring musician Gregory Alan Isakov and the CTO; a magazine feature in America Journal (Germany) that included a 12-page Denver insert.
- The Tourism Department represented Denver at 13 international tradeshows and four sales missions in 2019, including:
  - Icelandair Mid-Atlantic Tradeshow (Reykjavik, Iceland): Appointments with travel companies and airline sales staff from 13 countries generating 45 contacts.
  - Connect Travel Marketplace (Kissimmee, FL): Appointments with travel companies from 18 countries generating 47 contacts.



- Go West Summit (Boise, ID): Appointments with travel companies from 19 countries generated 102 contacts.
- ITB Tradeshow (Berlin, Germany): Appointments were held with 116 travel trade and media contacts in this, the world's largest travel trade show.
- Mountain Travel Symposium (Whistler, Canada): Held appointments with 42 travel companies from 10 countries to promote Denver as a pre/post-ski destination.
- Rocky Mountain International (RMI) Roundup (Spearfish, SD): Held appointments with 40 travel trade contacts from 11 countries promoting Denver as the gateway to the region.
- ITB (China): Held appointments with 29 top Chinese travel companies in collaboration with the CTO.
- Brand USA Travel Week (London, UK): This new tradeshow hosted travel company representatives from across Europe; VISIT DENVER held 36 appointments and attended conference events that generated 62 contacts.



The Communications Department works with travel writers, influencers and social media to generate travel stories about Denver around the world. Through press calls, press trips, press releases and receptions, the department maintains contact with thousands of journalists across the globe, helping them with their Denver assignments.



In 2019, the communications team assisted 613 journalists with their Denver stories, generating 9,047 media placements and a record \$89.8 million in advertising value! Key stories appeared in Forbes, New York Times, Conde Nast Traveler, Lonely Planet, LA Times and Afar.

The communications team also hosted five travel writer receptions showcasing new and newsworthy hotspots with VISIT DENVER partners at Mythology Distillery, Woodie Fisher, Mission Ballroom and the *Science Behind Pixar* exhibit at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Additional press efforts included a press conference at IPW in Anaheim to an audience of nearly 300 journalists from 75 countries; a local press conference featuring Mayor Michael B. Hancock and local members of the U.S. Women's National Team prior to their departure to the FIFA Women's World Cup in France; the

annual Longwoods press conference, which generated widespread media coverage by announcing one of Denver's best tourism years ever; and successful press conferences for Bureau-sponsored events such as Denver Restaurant Week, Denver Beer Week, Denver Arts Week and Mile High Holidays.

In 2019, the team also distributed 53 press releases to local, regional and national media and hosted nine local press conferences to promote Bureau initiatives and illustrate the importance of the travel industry to Denver's economy.

The team hit the road to participate in various proactive media activities including the TravMedia International Media Marketplace in New York City and the IPW Media Marketplace in Anaheim, where 40 pre-scheduled appointments were held in one

day. Out-of-market efforts also included conducting 43 desk side media meetings in New York City, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Dallas, Los Angeles and Houston. Lastly, the team hosted a total of 87 media FAM trips with 64 international journalists from 10 countries, providing them with tours, photos and key information to showcase Denver.



In June, the PR team hosted 40 editors, designers and photographers from the Modern Luxury publication group's annual editors meeting, an event that could generate as much as \$500,000 in coverage across the country from these high-end publications.

## 2019 RESULTS

JOURNALISTS ASSISTED:

613

MEDIA PLACEMENTS:

9,047

AD VALUE EQUIVALENCY:

\$89,773,235



Thanks in part to PR efforts, including the hosting of IPW in 2018, Denver was selected in 2019 by both Lonely Planet and the Rough Guides as one of the Top 20 destinations in the world to visit in 2020.



VISIT DENVER hosts a number of annual programs to develop the city's brand, encourage local and regional tourism and generate national press.



### DENVER RESTAURANT WEEK

In its 15th year of promoting mile high dining, Denver Restaurant Week continued the established 10-day long format, spanning two full weekends, from February 22 – March 3 with more than 250 restaurants participating.

The three-tiered pricing structure continued as well, offering diners a full, multi-course dinner for either \$25, \$35 or \$45. The pricing tiers, introduced in 2017, allow all restaurants to participate and provide an opportunity for Denver diners to explore different neighborhoods. A total of 254 restaurants participated.

**10 DAYS**  
**254 PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS**  
**HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS** OF MEALS SERVED



### DENVER BEER WEEK

Denver Beer Week promotes Denver as America's craft beer capital. It is staged around the Great American Beer Festival (GABF), the largest beer competition in the world. Denver Beer Week included a regional campaign promoting more than 250 beer-related events that happened around this suds-filled week. As part of Denver Beer Week, the popular Denver Beer Trail brochure was expanded to include all of VISIT DENVER's 40 craft brewery partners. Media efforts associated with Denver Beer Week generated more than \$3.4 million in earned media coverage and involved hosting a Denver Beer Trail press tour for nearly 60 beer journalists.

**254 EVENTS**  
**\$3.4 MILLION** IN AD VALUE  
**59 WRITERS** ON BREWERY TOURS



### DENVER ARTS WEEK

Denver Arts Week was created to promote Denver's vibrant arts scene to both a local and national audience. During its 13th year in 2019, Denver Arts Week once again offered a nine-day celebration of "all things art" in The Mile High City. There were more than 200 participating organizations and 400 cultural events, including Denver Film Festival and Denver Fashion Week, making it Denver's largest arts festival.

Event highlights include the popular "Free Night at the Museums," which attracted more than 15,000 visitors to 16 area museums; and "First Friday Art Walks" with more than 100 galleries and organizations participating in seven neighborhood art districts.

**400 CULTURAL EVENTS**  
**200 PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS**  
**15,000+** NIGHT AT THE MUSEUMS ATTENDEES



## SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE

Today, social media has become one of the major factors in travel marketing, and in 2019, VISIT DENVER broke all social media records with nearly 7 million social media engagements. An expanded social video marketing program provided a fun look at the city with the "Comedians Doing Stuff in Denver" web series. Five videos paired comedians with chefs, brewers, artists, cultural attractions and outdoor activities for an engaging look at the city.

On the web, VISITDENVER.com traffic has outpaced 2018 with a record 10.5 million visits. Traffic to the VISIT DENVER blog, named "best blog on Denver" by Feedspot, is up in 2019 with a very engaged audience. Average time spent on those pages has doubled to more than six minutes! A total of 73 new stories were added to the blog, which includes a popular weekend events post and "Only in Denver" posts that highlight unique stories across the city.

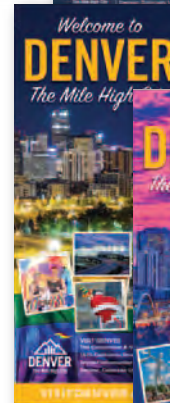
VISIT DENVER has also become a leader in website accessibility. The Bureau implemented AudioEye in 2019, a tool that offers disabled users a number of options to navigate the site. Those users can now better control their experience through audio, font size and contrast options no matter what device they are on. By partnering with AudioEye, VISIT DENVER was certified in meeting the globally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA Standards.



## PUBLICATIONS

Print still makes a major impression with visitors. The Bureau prints 450,000 copies of the Official Visitors Guide in two editions: Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. The guide is distributed at the Bureau's four tourist information centers, as well as inside nearly 20,000 hotel rooms. The Bureau also printed 15,000 copies of the 2019 Destination Planning Guide (DPG), which is distributed directly to a list of key meeting planners, tour operators and international travel professionals.

In addition, VISIT DENVER continually updates and prints guides to the city in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish and English. The Bureau also produces niche guides for the African-American, Latinx and LGBTQ+ markets, while the Denver Dining Guide catalogs all partner restaurants by neighborhood.







## DENVER SPORTS COMMISSION 2019

The Denver Sports Commission, an affiliate of VISIT DENVER, had a busy year in 2019 working to pursue new sports events for Denver, while preparing for major international sporting events coming to the city.

### COLORADO CLASSIC

In 2019, the Colorado Classic transitioned to become North America's premier standalone women's professional stage road bike race, and one of the most prestigious in the world. The race brought 100+ professional women cyclists competing in four stages: Steamboat Springs, Avon, Golden and a finale in Denver on August 25, 2019, with huge crowds cheering the riders on along the entire route.

Denver Sports also made connections and recruited business at several networking events, including CONCACAF Media Day in Los Angeles, ACES Conference in Colorado Springs and the NASC Symposium in Knoxville, Tennessee.



## WORLD CUP 2026

In June 2018, the United States, along with Canada and Mexico, won the rights to host the FIFA World Cup in 2026. Denver made the short list of cities to host up to six games in what would be the largest event in Denver's history, with economic impact in excess of \$300 million.

To help secure Denver's spot, which is expected to be announced in early 2021, Denver Sports spearheaded a far-reaching, statewide effort in partnership with Colorado Soccer Association and Denver Broncos (Empower Field at Mile High would be the site of the games).

An official bid committee convened that has broad representation among a wide group of stakeholders. To engage local supporters and raise awareness of the efforts, Denver Sports hosted a press conference and launched a statewide marketing campaign that included a new website, social media accounts, videos, and events to sign up nearly 8,000 supporters!



## KEY 2019 SPORTING EVENTS

**USA Fencing Junior Olympics** at the Colorado Convention Center

**UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup and BARBEGAZI Winter Festival** at Civic Center Park

**Colorado Crossroads Volleyball Qualifier** at the Colorado Convention Center

**U.S. Women's National Soccer Team vs Australia** at Dick's Sporting Goods Park

**Monster Energy AMA Supercross** at Empower Field at Mile High

**NCVF Collegiate Club Championships** at the Colorado Convention Center

**Division II Women's Softball Championships** at Metro State University

**North American Gay Volleyball Championships** at the Colorado Convention Center

**CONCACAF Gold Cup doubleheader** at Empower Field at Mile High

**Division II Women's Volleyball Championships** at Metro State University



The Partnership Department is responsible for generating private revenue for VISIT DENVER's marketing efforts, which totaled more than \$3.3 million in 2019. The Department also ensures that VISIT DENVER partners receive full value from their partnership investment. The Finance & Administration Department works to assist all other VISIT DENVER departments and to provide an efficient work environment.



The Partnership Department hosted 47 partner events in 2019, including New Partner Orientations to help partners learn more about how VISIT DENVER markets and sells Denver and how to get the most from their benefits.

Other events included the monthly Spotlight, which allows partners an opportunity to showcase their product and services to other partners and VISIT DENVER staff; and C.H.A.T., a monthly networking event held at new restaurants and attractions in Denver, such as The Jacquard Hotel & Rooftop, Acorn, The Kitchen, Bierstadt Lagerhaus, Sarto's and Blanchard Family Wines.

The Partnership Department also hosted two Industry Updates that combine presentations from VISIT DENVER's executive staff, followed by a reception and networking opportunity.

Additionally, the department staged several workshops, including a series of "Google My Business" seminars to help partners expand their exposure on Google's products. Other workshops included How to Conduct a Site Tour and How to Use the Convention & Meeting Schedule.

### NEW PARTNER BENEFIT 2019

VISIT DENVER partnered with Threshold 360 to create a new free partner benefit. Threshold 360 captures 360° interactive videos of partner locations. These videos now appear on partner listings.



### VISIT DENVER FOUNDATION

Since 2000, the VISIT DENVER Foundation has distributed more than \$1 million in scholarships to Colorado undergraduate students pursuing higher education in the fields of tourism and hospitality. Fundraising comes from two VISIT DENVER Foundation events: The Denver & Colorado Tourism Hall of Fame Dinner and the Chairman's Cup and Partnership Open Golf Tournament. In addition, since 2007, the VISIT DENVER Foundation has donated a total of \$120,000 to Denver's Road Home.

In 2019, \$93,000 in scholarships was awarded to 28 students. To date, a total of 391 students have received scholarships to five Colorado universities that offer a degree in tourism and hospitality: Colorado State University, Johnson & Wales University, Metropolitan State University of Denver, the University of Denver and the University of Northern Colorado.

### GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 33rd Annual VISIT DENVER Chairman's Cup and Partnership Open Golf Tournament attracted 112 golfers to Arrowhead Golf Club on June 5. The team from FREEMAN took first place. Tournament sponsors included: Sage Hospitality, Radisson Hotel Denver - Aurora, Top Golf Swing Suite, Stonebridge Companies, Grand Hyatt Denver, Hyatt Regency at Colorado Convention Center, Karsh Hagan, Denver Broncos Football



John, Ken and Tom Gart



Mary Motsenbocker



John Hickenlooper and Richard Sharf

### DENVER AND COLORADO TOURISM HALL OF FAME

Nearly 500 partners turned out for VISIT DENVER's 20th Annual Tourism Hall of Fame Denver on May 21, 2019 at the Seawell Ballroom at the Denver Performing Arts Complex. The first event was cancelled due to bad weather.

Inducted into the Hall of Fame were former Denver Mayor and Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper; the legendary Colorado family of

John, Ken and Tom Gart of the Gart Companies; and long-time international marketing expert Mary Motsenbocker.

A posthumous award was presented to the "father" of Rocky Mountain National Park, naturalist, writer and guide Enos Mills.



Denver Art Museum



Denver Museum of Nature & Science



Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art



Denver Center for the Performing Arts



Wings Over the Rockies



Colorado Railroad Museum



Colorado Rockies

### TOURISM STARS OF 2018

Seven "Tourism Star" awards were presented to organizations, attractions and events that had a significant impact on Denver's tourism industry during the preceding year. Winning "Tourism Stars" in 2018 were Denver Art Museum - *Degas: A Passion for Perfection* and *Dior: From Paris to the World*; Denver Museum of Nature &

Science - *Dead Sea Scrolls* and *jCUBA!*; Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art; Denver Center for the Performing Arts - *Hamilton*, *Dear Evan Hansen* and *Come From Away*; Wings Over the Rockies - *Above & Beyond*; Colorado Railroad Museum; and Colorado Rockies 25th Anniversary and 2018 Playoffs.

Event sponsors were EKS&H, now part of Plante Moran, Cherry Creek Shopping Center, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, Johnson & Wales University, Molson Coors, Colorado Tourism Office, Impact Productions, Seawell Ballroom and Epicurean Group. Event Partners included 9News, Bouquets, CEAVCO Audio Visual, The Curtis, Photography G, OneTouch-Point, Event Rents, kiMotion, FREEMAN and Lyft.







### LOCAL LEVEL

In collaboration with the Colorado Hotel and Lodging Association and Colorado Restaurant Association, VISIT DENVER engaged municipal candidates seeking elected office through a tourism and hospitality questionnaire, the results of which were shared with all VISIT DENVER partners. The organization looks forward to partnering with newly elected and re-elected officials to promote the city.

VISIT DENVER continues to provide support to numerous organizations and programs that contribute to the betterment and progress of our entire city. In May 2019, we joined with public, private and philanthropic partners to contribute resources for expanded day shelter and supportive services. Additionally, VISIT DENVER is participating in the strategic planning efforts for the City's new Department of Housing Stability (HOST).

VISIT DENVER continues to participate in a range of community-focused committees and boards including the Short-Term Rental Advisory Committee, National Western Center Citizen Advisory Committee, Colfax Marathon, Denver Moves, and others.

### STATE LEVEL

The Tourism Industry Association of Colorado (TIAC) had another successful year engaging the Legislature on issues important to the state's vital tourism industry. Tourism leaders developed positive relationships with many new members of the House and Senate as well as with the new administration. TIAC's legislative reception was attended by approximately 25 legislators and nearly 100 tourism professionals from around the state.

### FEDERAL LEVEL

The U.S. Travel Association held its annual legislative fly-in in Washington, D.C. with several hundred travel industry partners from across the country attending. VISIT DENVER participated with fellow Colorado tourism representatives to meet with the Colorado delegation, including newly elected House members, to share details about the state's strong tourism economy, the importance of international travel and the need for maintenance of our national parks. Many thanks to members of the Colorado delegation, including lead sponsor Sen. Gardner, who supported the reauthorization of Brand USA, the U.S.'s marketing program to increase international visitation.

The Government and Community Affairs Department keeps members informed on these activities and more through the quarterly Policy Perspectives newsletter, which has an open rate of more than 30 percent.

### VISIT DENVER IS PROUD TO BE ENGAGED WITH THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS:

- Amp the Cause
- Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Biennial of the Americas
- 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
- Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
- Japan America Society of Colorado
- Junior Achievement
- Kiwanis Club of Denver
- Latinas First Foundation
- The Center on Colfax
- Meetings Industry Council
- Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation
- Metro Mayors Caucus
- Mizel Institute
- National Western Center
- NEWSED
- Rocky Mountain Business Travel Association
- Rocky Mountain Chapters of ASAE, IAEE, MPI, PCMA, SGMP
- Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce
- Rocky Mountain International
- Scientific and Cultural Facilities District
- Slow Food USA
- Tour Colorado
- Tourism Industry Association of Colorado
- University Programs statewide
- Urban Peak
- Urban Spectrum

The Government & Community Affairs Department works to establish positive relationships between VISIT DENVER and elected government officials, local communities, and neighborhoods.



**Paul Andrews**  
President & CEO  
National Western Stock Show  
Association

**Scott Bemis**  
Director of Business and Community  
Partnerships  
Plante Moran

**Luis Benitez**  
Vice President, Government Affairs  
& Global Impact  
VF Corporation

**Matthew Burkett**  
Founder & CEO  
The Flyfisher Group

**Jolon Clark**  
President, Denver City Council  
District 7

**Gabe Cohen**  
General Manager, Rockies Region  
Lyft

**Rob Cohen**  
Chairman & CEO  
IMA Financial Group

**David Coors**  
Vice President, Next Generation  
Beverages  
AC Golden Brewing Company

**David L. Corsun**  
Director & Associate Professor  
Fritz Knoebel School of Hospitality  
Management  
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**Jerome E. Davis**  
Regional Vice President  
Xcel Energy

**Navin C. Dimond**  
President & CEO  
Stonebridge Companies

**Evan Dreyer**  
Deputy Chief of Staff  
Office of Mayor Michael B. Hancock

**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**  
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**Christoph Heinrich**  
Director  
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Improvement District

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Hyatt Regency Denver at the  
Colorado Convention Center

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Director of Commercial Banking  
Vectra Bank

**Cindy Parsons**  
Vice President, Market Planning  
and Strategy  
Comcast Corporate

**Allen Paty**  
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DoubleTree by Hilton Denver  
DoubleTree by Hilton Denver-  
Stapleton North

**Steve Ross**  
Managing Director Central &  
Canada Sales  
United Airlines

**Steve Sander**  
President  
Sander Marketing Group

**Amanda Sandoval**  
Denver City Council  
District 1

**Dan Scherer**  
Senior VP, Mountain Plains Region  
Outfront Media

**Adam Schlegel**  
CEO  
Cumulus Etc

**Frank Schultz**  
CEO / Owner  
Tavern Hospitality Group

**Janice Sinden**  
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Denver Center for the Performing  
Arts

**Shane Stickel**  
President & CEO  
Presidential Worldwide Transportation

**Rob Venus**  
General Manager  
FREEMAN

**Sid Wilson**  
President  
A Private Guide, Inc.

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**Kim Day**  
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