Denver: The Early Years

- Founded in 1858 on the banks of Cherry Creek and South Platte River
- Gold Rush territory, railroad influence
- Capitol City, known as a pass-through city
- Rampant boosterism...steamship travel, anyone??
- Theaters, brothels and restaurants...then a church!
- Highways and Trains create: The Switzerland of America!
VISIT DENVER

History

• 1884: DBoT becomes Denver Chamber of Commerce
• 1895: creates Denver Convention League (DCL) within the Chamber
• 1908: Denver Hosts the Democratic National Convention
• 1909: DCL becomes Denver Convention Bureau
• 1918-1931: Denver Tourist & Publicity Bureau
• 1938-1951: Denver Convention & Visitors Bureau
• **1951: Denver & Colorado Convention & Visitors Bureau becomes an independent organization!**
• 1971: first Lodger’s Tax funding
• 1982-2008: Denver Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau
• 2008-Today: VISIT DENVER!
Denver Brand Milestones

- Railroad era spurs leisure travel to the west
- The Rocky Mountains become popular
- Early 1900s: City Beautiful...and still a cow town
- 1950s: the automobile age, a gateway city
- Coors marketing helps brand the Rockies
- 1970s & 80s: oil boom...and bust...and Dynasty!
1990s...Gaining Speed

• 1993: First leisure campaign to focus on Denver as a destination vs. gateway

• 1995: Rockies and LoDo accelerate, entertainment, arts & culture development

• Restaurant scene expands

• Major infrastructure development, sports venues, convention center, airport, attractions, light rail, DUS, etc.

• LoDo, LoHi, RiNo, etc. drives neighborhood development
2005...Hitting Our Stride

“Awaken the Senses in Denver”

Denver is a stimulating, world-class city that awakens the senses. The Mile High City’s natural beauty, crisp mountain air, warm sun and blue skies leave you feeling energized and ready to try new things.

Voters approve 1% Lodgers Tax increase for Marketing!
VISIT DENVER POSITIONING REFRESH

Denver is an energizing and vibrant outdoor city that awakens the spirit of urban adventure.
VISIT DENVER
Board of Directors Retreat

VISIT DENVER Branding

Andrea Stone &
Amanda Cook
BrandJuice
VISIT DENVER

2023 BRAND RESEARCH & STRATEGY FRAMEWORK
Agenda

I. EXPLORATORY RESEARCH
II. BRAND FRAMEWORK
I. EXPLORATORY RESEARCH
Research Objectives

1. Explore travel behaviors and uncover the drivers that attract travelers to urban destinations

2. Understand travelers’ perceptions of Denver and if/how/why they have changed over the past five years

3. Identify the resonance and appeal of VISIT DENVER’s current brand strategy and opportunities for optimization

4. Define differences between regional and national travelers, as well as visitors who have previously visited Denver and those who have not
**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### MARKETS
1. Albuquerque
2. Cheyenne
3. Kansas City
4. Phoenix
5. Chicago
6. Dallas
7. Los Angeles
8. New York City

### TRAVELERS
Recruited 74 travelers across the eight markets including 40 travelers who have visited Denver and 34 travelers who have never visited Denver.

### PRONG STUDY
Travelers completed a 10-minute online survey prior to participating in a 90-minute roundtable discussion.
In each market, two roundtable discussions were conducted, one with travelers who have visited Denver and one with travelers who have never visited Denver.
Traveler Truth: Travelers view places through personal lenses, creating comparisons between different destinations – those that stand out do so with a unique hook.

Denver Insight: Travelers who have been to Denver agree that there are a combination of factors that make the city great, but they struggle to articulate one singular selling point.

Opportunity: Defining clear differentiation from a kaleidoscope of elements can ensure Denver’s appeal as a standout destination is more immediately recognized and understood.

Traveler Truth: Travel is inherently linked to health and wellness with travelers being drawn to places that offer a balance of relaxation and the ability to stay active.

Denver Insight: Denver is “the best of both worlds” offering the amenities of the city with the outdoor setting of a mountain town.

Opportunity: While the notion of an “Outdoor City” resonates, more can be done to define what it means to get outdoors within city limits.
Traveler Truth: Weather is a key consideration for travelers as they are looking to enjoy the current season or escape extremes they experience at home.

Denver Insight: Denver’s 300+ days of sun are a surprise to travelers who often associate the city with winter.

Opportunity: To sway winter-weary travelers, the brand should explore interesting ways to position the city as a year-round destination.

Traveler Truth: At all stages of travel planning, travelers look for destinations that allow them to experience the most they can within their budget.

Denver Insight: The rising cost of living and proximity to resorts has created a perception that Denver is expensive, but previous visitors did not find this to be true.

Opportunity: In terms of cost, the brand must show the value it offers to help attract new visitors.
Traveler Truth: Travelers are looking for change of pace, scenery or weather from what they have at home and visiting somewhere “urban” doesn’t always appeal to city dwellers.

Denver Insight: Travelers, at best, believe the phrase makes sense with “Outdoor City” but, at worst, don’t believe it is a true (or desirable) description of Denver compared to other cities.

Opportunity: Removing “Urban Adventure” from the strategy is the first step to repositioning Denver as a destination.

Traveler Truth: Travelers rank the ability to experience new places and/or different cultures as one of the most motivating reasons to travel.

Denver Insight: For some, defining Denver as a cultural destination was difficult but others believed the city could lean more into the western history.

Opportunity: The brand should consider leaning into the spirit of Denver’s pioneering roots to create an authentic sense of local culture within the city.
Traveler Truth: Since COVID, travelers are prioritizing travel, and in particular trips that allow them to spend quality time with their loved ones.

Denver Insight: Former Denver visitors believe that the city has something for everyone while those unfamiliar think of it as an adult-only destination.

Opportunity: The brand pillars and messaging should reference more family-friendly attractions to show Denver is a destination for all ages.

Traveler Truth: Events and festivals are one of the top three things that make travelers excited about a destination; with music, sports and hobbies being the most common draws.

Denver Insight: Red Rocks and four major sports teams make Denver an event destination for both regional and national travelers.

Opportunity: The brand should further leverage the appeal of Denver’s events to attract travelers from both regional and national markets and spur repeat visits.
II. BRAND FRAMEWORK
Uplifting by Nature

Denver is a vibrant outdoor city at the base of the Rocky Mountains with a natural energy that heightens every moment.
Uplifting by Nature

Denver is a vibrant outdoor city at the base of the Rocky Mountains with a natural energy that heightens every moment.

Positive energy is in Denver's DNA, giving visitors a breath of fresh air that comes from a unique location.

Positivity is in Denver’s DNA, giving visitors a breath of fresh air that comes from a unique location.

Maintains the “Outdoor City” description that captures the duality of Denver in a phrase that resonates with travelers.

Elevates activities, emotions and senses beyond expectation.

Captures the refreshing feeling that stems from a natural setting, one that is inherent to Denver and recharges visitors throughout their stay.

Emphasizes the range of experiences, each made better by the one-of-a-kind Denver feeling.

Evocative of the city spirit that is full of life and activity.

Positioning around the feeling of being in Denver; an energy that brings optimism and happiness.
Our brand promise is to be an energizing destination that blends outdoor and urban experiences, where visitors can create a one-of-a-kind escape that inspires a sense of wonder and connection.
Lively
Down-to-earth
Open-minded and inviting
Dynamic
Inventive
Invigorating sense of relaxation and exhilaration
POI NTS OF DIF FERENCE ONL Y D E NVE R CAN C LAIM

– The only Mile High City with dominating Continental Divide views in a sophisticated city setting

– Denver’s pioneering roots inspire a thriving, enterprising community that comes together to create unique experiences

– The Rocky Mountain spirit creates a warm, open-minded atmosphere that invites visitors to come as they are

– An active city that thrives in the beauty of every season
– Crisp air, 300+ days of sunshine and illuminating ever-present mountain views create a feeling of possibility for visitors of all ages
– History of discovery and collaboration is the foundation of the crafted experiences that make every trip to Denver distinct and memorable
– Accepting locals with diverse backgrounds and perspectives create an atmosphere that invites visitors to be a part of the culture and try new things
– Commitment to sustainability by residents and local businesses enhances Denver, making it a destination visitors feel makes a positive impact
– Green spaces in the city and close proximity to the mountain playground provide visitors unique access to outdoor activities alongside urban attractions (arts, culture, dining, events)
Youthful attitude (transcends age)
Welcoming, friendly, genuine
Active, vibrant, enthusiastic, intrepid
Bold, crisp, creative
Playful, laid-back, informal
Denver is a vibrant outdoor city at the base of the Rocky Mountains with a natural energy that heightens every moment. Known for crisp mountain air, sunshine and expansive blue skies, it’s a destination of discovery that thrives in the beauty of every season—offering an escape that uplifts and invigorates travelers with every visit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WE ARE NOT</th>
<th>WE ARE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary sites and attractions</td>
<td>Experiences that evoke an extraordinary feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A dusty “cow town”</td>
<td>Savvy enterprisers, born of industriousness and collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural or remote</td>
<td>Deeply connected to nature and the amenities of a big city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careless or lackadaisical</td>
<td>Active go-getters with an easygoing attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A small mountain town</td>
<td>A dynamic city with invigorating Rocky Mountain spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretentious or ostentatious</td>
<td>Thoughtful trailblazers and expert tastemakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuck in the past</td>
<td>Perpetual ingenuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A passthrough stop</td>
<td>A magnetic destination that entices repeat exploration and discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intense metropolis</td>
<td>Inspiring big city possibilities in a welcoming atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuffy or exclusive</td>
<td>Open and approachable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold concrete and endless skyscrapers</td>
<td>Walkable streets, parks, patios, blue skies, and sunny vibes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chains, big box stores, and mega malls</td>
<td>Crafted, one-of-a-kind shops, stops, and experiences; artisanal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultureless</td>
<td>An enriching global community; a convergence of diverse people and perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up-and-coming</td>
<td>Established and thriving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiny and new</td>
<td>Historic revival, ever building on a resourceful and resilient past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This or that</td>
<td>This and that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you.
VISIT DENVER
Board of Directors Retreat

J. J. Ament
Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce

&

Kourtny Garrett
Downtown Denver Partnership
ONE ORGANIZATION: THREE AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Government Affairs
- Colorado Competitive Council
- Marketing & Communications, Events and Member Programs
- Membership Sales
- Finance & Operations

- Corporate Attraction & Expansion
- Small Business Development Center
- Economic Competitiveness

- Leadership Development Programs
- B:CIVIC
- Alumni Network
The Elevation Effect is not just about the altitude of our beautiful state. It’s about the attitude embodied by those who call this place home, and those considering it. It’s a compelling way to communicate the spirit of doing business — and living life to the fullest — in the Metro Denver region.
Brand Alignment

Downtown Denver Partnership
Our Voice

Consumer

Business
The Downtown Audience:

Metro-wide
Residents
Employees
Visitors
Businesses

Downtown Denver is a place for everyone
People were proud of the city. They could name 10 things to do downtown, and now we can’t do that. So that's what we have to get back.

People use downtown in so many different ways, and I don't think they realize it. I think they separate the activity from the place for some reason.

They're constantly talking about individual businesses and people behind them, and the experience of the area. If we can get to that, we gain our swag and our coolness.

We do have good restaurants. We do have good shopping here. We do have great bars, but we're never telling that story.

People's sentiment is that downtown's a hassle because there's no place to park. They don't think of walking down 16th Street to get to where they're going as part of their night.

They come first to a show at the DCPA or they'll come for dinner at one of our restaurants...how do we get them to start to think about the layers of what happens in our downtown?
Goal:

Increase the Number of People Downtown

(Denver Metro, Residents, Downtown Workers, Visitors)
How:

Curb Perception

(Outperform Negativity from the Media / Build Positive Sentiment)
Build Awareness

(Remind the community that there is so much They Love about Downtown)
The MyDenver Campaign is a celebration of our city. It shines a light on the people who make Denver all that it is, and the city’s unique ability to let people discover their true selves.

From the out-of-town transplants to the born-and-raised, the young and the old, the creatives and the suits, the outdoor enthusiasts and the ones who are a bit more...indoorsy, we all share one thing in common.

What we choose to experience in Denver, shows us our true selves. And that’s something worth celebrating.
Campaign Strategy

Find Yourself In Denver
Plans help us discover ourselves only when we walk away from them.
Awareness

To build awareness for mydenver we will have a 3-part approach. Comprised of a mydenver anthem film, out of home strategy and social toolkit.

01 Film
02 Out of Home
03 Social Toolkit
VOICE OF THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMY
CORE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS

Convene
Connect
Strategize

- **Business Recruitment.** Support large commercial tenant prospect outreach. Lead in building a groundfloor tenant pipeline.

- **Business Development.** Support and lead opportunities for growth among existing and pipeline businesses.

- **Business Retention.** Support and lead engagement with major employers and leaseholders. Administer small business retention grants.

- **Voice of the Downtown Economy.** Build a clearinghouse for downtown data that is readily accessible to stakeholders and the media.
RETENTION/RECRUITMENT RESOURCE

- **Data** - act as clearinghouse for broker data, including customer demographics, pedestrian counts, tourism, arts, and accessibility.

- **Website** - create "Why Downtown Denver" website as one-stop shop for data, downtown images and other resources.

- **Thought Leader** - maintain and update data monthly and message to broader public via conference panel participation, media interviews, site tours, and social media posts.
We are building a non-branded landing page to serve property owners and brokers, providing three key use cases.

1. **EDUCATE**
   Keeping partner organizations, property owners and brokers up-to-date with latest data surrounding downtown.

2. **EMPOWER**
   All info graphics will be easily downloadable and simple for others to implement into their individual sales decks.

3. **ASSIST**
   Brokers, owners and partner organizations will be able to send prospects to a single 3rd party source that holds power as a complimentary voice in their sales pitch.

4. **RECRUIT**
   Our team is out, boots on the ground, recruiting businesses of all sizes and working closely with organizations like the Metro EDC nationally and internationally.
DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC

Thriving Residents & Workforce

The Downtown Denver community is a thriving group of individuals, with a majority of its population made up of well-educated Gen-Z and Millennial individuals with an interest in supporting local businesses. The residential population has doubled since 2010.

- **33,026 RESIDENTS**
- **144,789 EMPLOYEES**
- **31.7M VISITORS**

**MAJOR SPENDING CATEGORIES**
- Food & Alcohol
- Apparel & Services
- Household Furnishing & Equipment
- Entertainment & Recreation

**AVERAGE EDUCATION**
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 71.3%
- 20-34 Years: 41.4%
- 35-49 Years: 22%
- 50-64 Years: 15.1%
- 65-79 Years: 9.7%
In 2022-23, DDP joined the Metro Denver EDC on out-of-market CRE recruitment visits to Austin, NYC, and San Diego; attended ICSC; and scouted retail/restaurant prospects in Chicago, Portland, D.C. and NYC. In 2023-24, the Business Recruitment Task Force will advise on specific tenanting strategies for key nodes along the iconic 16th Street commercial corridor.

In 2022-23, Popup Denver offered two tracks: one, to recruit neighborhood businesses downtown; and a second, for early stage retail entrepreneurs. In 2023-24, the Business Development Task Force will advise the design of a broader, intentional ecosystem approach.

In 2022-23, DDP focused its Return-to-Office efforts on supporting the needs of major lease-holders and employers. In 2023-24, the Business Retention Task Force will advise on the continued development of the "Why Downtown Denver" website and external resources needed to achieve an effective retention strategy.
Thank You