



Visit Estes Park Operating Plan



DRAFT



Table of Contents

The Significance of Tourism	3
Lodging Tax	4
Letter from the Larimer County Commissioners	5
Letter from the Estes Park Mayor	6
Letter from the Visit Estes Park Board of Directors	7
Introduction to Visit Estes Park	8-20
Destination Stewardship	21-25
Extend the Season	26-44
Paid Media	45-55
Content Development	56-62
Social Media	63-65
Public Relations	66-70
Tourism Advocacy & Community Relations	71-80
Sales & Services	81-88
Finance & Administration	89-97
Key Terms	98-99
Additional Opportunities	100
Visit Estes Park Staff	101





The Significance of Tourism

Tourism is the backbone of the Estes Valley economy. It anchors the community around us and has driven significant growth in the area for generations. Because of tourism and events, local businesses have the opportunity to thrive and job opportunities remain ample. And beyond its economic advantages, tourism significantly enhances the **quality of life** in Estes Park, funding year-round amenities and essential public safety services that protect the community.

Recognizing the potential impacts of sustained growth, Visit Estes Park places **destination stewardship** at the heart of our mission. We collaborate closely with destination development counselors, as well as local businesses and residents, to foster a dynamic, responsible tourism industry that benefits both visitors and the community.

Our efforts ensure that the natural beauty and unique character of the Estes Valley are **preserved for future generations**, maintaining the delicate balance between economic stability and growth, and environmental conservation.

What Tourism and Lodging Tax Means to Our Workforce

The availability and affordability of workforce housing and childcare has been a significant challenge in the Estes Valley for decades. Until Visit Estes Park's lodging tax extension (ballot initiative 6E) passed on November 8, 2022, a consistent, meaningful funding mechanism to finance these issues had not been available.

As of January 1, 2023, the lodging tax in Estes Park increased from 2% to 5.5% and is collected on overnight stays at hotels, motels, RV parks, campgrounds, guest ranches, rental properties, and other lodging facilities. Two percent is used to fund the Estes Park Local Marketing District. The remaining 3.5% is for funding dedicated workforce housing and childcare projects, with 90% of the funds going to the Town of Estes Park and 10% remaining with VEP for marketing and visitor education, as required by the Colorado statute, such as the Estes Experiences workforce initiative, the community roundtables and the Estes Inspired community initiative. In 2023, this meant \$5.9 million in lodging taxes would be earmarked for workforce housing and childcare in Estes Park.

Thanks to tourism and lodging taxes, a pathway to significant, positive impacts on these two issues is now in action. In addition to funding public safety services and local amenities, tourism is the engine that drives funding for our community's workforce housing and childcare programs.

What does this mean? A strong tourism economy is crucial in order to create a sustainable community ecosystem where local workers can live and prosper. Tourism success is more significant than ever.



Letter from Larimer County Commissioners

Estes Park's beauty, recreational opportunities and cultural offerings are among the many reasons Larimer County is a remarkable place to live and visit.

Built on sustainable tourism principles, Visit Estes Park's important work in destination stewardship contributes to a welcoming destination that thrives economically and conserves the area's natural beauty for residents, visitors and future generations. This approach addresses the pressure visitors can place on the environment and quality of life in communities like the Estes Valley that serve as gateways to some of Colorado's most spectacular natural areas. Alongside Visit Estes Park, we value these important principles to ensure this delightful destination retains its wonder for our residents and guests.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate toward a future where our shared community is a welcoming place for all to thrive.

John Kefalas
Commissioner, District 1

Kristin Stephens
Commissioner, District 2

Jody Shadduck-McNally
Commissioner, District 3

Letter from the Mayor of Estes Park

Estes Park is a vibrant mountain community that is fortunate to be a place visitors choose to travel to each year. The town's proximity to Rocky Mountain National Park complements a welcoming destination full of irresistible services and amenities for locals and visitors. This results in a strong tourism economy that supports the quality of life our residents enjoy every day.

In 2025, we look forward to continuing our collaborative relationship with Visit Estes Park to serve the Estes Park community. Shared missions of destination stewardship that strive to balance our community's needs while conserving our natural resources and creating a positive visitor experience drive both of our organizations. Collaboratively, we aim to be good stewards of our destination so that it continues to be a wonderful place to live and visit.



Mayor Gary Hall





Letter from Visit Estes Park Board of Directors

Through the dedicated work of local businesses, organizations and community partners, Estes Park is on its way to becoming a true year-round destination. This extended economic opportunity is integral to our tourism economy and our community's quality of life.

In support, Visit Estes Park remains committed to sustainable destination development and responsible tourism marketing that prioritizes inclusion and sustainability. In 2025, staff will continue establishing destination drivers like Catch the Glow Holiday Season while using technology and data-driven marketing strategies to attract guests who value our community.

This community-driven approach is rooted in our commitment to being good partners in destination stewardship and focuses on conserving our vibrant mountain town for future generations.

Sean Jurgens
Board Chair

Deborah Gibson
Jerusha Rice
Kirby Hazelton

Vice Chair
Secretary/Treasurer
Director & Town Trustee

Pat Murphy
Rich Chiappe
Nick Smith

Director
Director
Director

Introduction:

Building a Better Future

Here in Estes Park, we are building a better future. From the infrastructure improvements that surround us to the ever-changing digital landscape at our fingertips, it's evident that Estes Park is evolving for generations to come.

This 2025 Operating Plan outlines how Visit Estes Park will be responsible destination stewards throughout this significant growth period, by implementing proactive marketing and management tactics that foster sustainable visitation, drive economic opportunity and support our workforce.

We are setting our sights on innovation to help deliver the right message, to the right travelers, at the right time through the use of powerful data and technology. This will attract travelers who will care for our destination and align with our community values. And our destination development objectives are designed to better serve these conscientious travelers while they are in town.

Our work to become true destination stewards is the underlying foundation for these marketing and development efforts. In alignment with the industry best practices found in the Colorado Tourism Office's state-wide Destination Stewardship Plan, we are embracing action, both short and long-term, that demonstrates how we can share Estes Park responsibly. This includes responsible messaging and content, a new level of community engagement and active stakeholder participation across all categories.

As stewards of these lands and this community, Visit Estes Park strives to increase the strength of tourism to ensure economic vitality, while protecting community character and resident satisfaction. Collectively, we can take proactive steps to encourage tourism success and mitigate its impacts. And together with the community, we can safeguard the natural wonders that draw visitors to our doorstep.

Mission

Visit Estes Park nurtures visitor reverence of this vibrant mountain town for business success, environmental sustainability and community harmony.

Vision

To be a year-round, family-friendly tourism and event destination that supports our vibrant mountain town with a balance of financial success, positive and memorable experiences for guests and a meaningful quality of life for our community.



Values



Collaboration



Innovation



Empathy



Passion



Resilience



Stewardship

Destination Stewardship is Our Cornerstone

Destination stewardship allows us to work toward striking the right balance between achieving economic vitality, enhancing the visitor experience and preserving the quality of life in the Estes Valley.

Becoming a true steward of Estes Park is a paradigm shift in how we optimize our visitor economy and leverage tourism sustainably. Evolving the important work of promoting and managing our destination, stewardship emphasizes long-term community vitality, active stakeholder involvement and preserving Estes Park's authentic character, while working to conserve the lands that brought us here.

Through our Destination Stewardship Plan, we defined underlying principles that inform our annual operating plans and guide our daily decisions by carefully considering our work's economic, social and environmental impacts. Alongside our partners, we're building a shared vision for how tourism supports and contributes to our community's future.

Estes Park's long-term sustainability depends on this work, found through destination stewardship, both as a place for our guests to visit and as a thriving, vibrant community.



Organizational Stewardship Imperatives

To ensure that Estes Park's visitor economy evolves in a way that not only attracts more higher-spend visitors and enhances the overall quality of the visitor experience, but also cultivates the town's authentic character and contributes to the town's quality of place, Visit Estes Park will continue to address four imperatives to care for the destination in the long-term:



Provide Best-in-Class Visitor Experiences

Continue to provide an excellent visitor experience and evolve the product to attract target audiences who appreciate and seek the quality, authentic experiences that Estes Park offers.



Steward the Environment

Lead the visitor economy in adopting and implementing practices that protect the Estes Park's natural resources and ensure the area's long-term vibrancy.



Share Estes Park Responsibly

Prioritize the needs of residents when encouraging enhancements to the Town's product and working to grow visitation.



Optimize the Positive Impacts of the Visitor Economy

Ensure that the visitor economy continues to drive the Town's economic vitality and provide opportunities for engagement from all stakeholders in the community.

Partners in Destination Stewardship

Effective destination stewardship is rooted in strong partnerships between governmental agencies and partner organizations within a destination. Knowing this, Visit Estes Park actively maintains collaborative partnerships with the the Town of Estes Park, Larimer County, Estes Park Visitor Center, Estes Park Chamber of Commerce and Rocky Mountain National Park.

Visit Estes Park will continue to strengthen relationships with Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest, Hermit Park Open Space, Rocky Mountain National Park visitor centers, and the Colorado Welcome Centers through communications, information exchange and programming development.

Together with these partners, Visit Estes Park will continue implementing its Destination Stewardship Plan, which was developed in collaboration with destination development counselors Clarity of Place and the Colorado Tourism Office.



Brand Attributes

Community Oriented

We support and foster relationships with local businesses, leaders and community members while identifying new opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

Sustainable

We embody sustainability and empower guests to do the same. This is key to preserving the natural beauty that surrounds us.

Educational

We educate guests about how to experience Estes Park and the surrounding public lands so they have the best experience while maintaining the charm of our local community and natural environment.

Inclusive & Accessible

We strive to welcome all to Colorado's Original Playground and emphasize that everyone can experience and thrive in the great outdoors.

Data & Tech-Driven

We make decisions based on data to sustainably attract guests and proactively adjust our strategies. Through the latest AI technology, we drive real-time conversation, booking and advanced content creation.



Messaging for an Evolving Travel Landscape

Here in Estes Park, visitors and residents share a common goal for an uncommon land. We treat our guests as we do our neighbors, just as we ask them to treat the local wildlife: with awareness and appreciation. Together, we are supporting our community. Promoting sustainability. And focusing on social, economic and environmental impacts. Because if we take care of this beautiful place that has drawn us together, we can continue to honor what brought us here.

Deciding Factors

When travelers are considering a destination, we position Estes Park as an authentic, vibrant mountain town, offering activities, events, dining, shopping and an experience that is welcoming and approachable.

Estes Park is affordable to families and offers a multitude of activities in every season, while also offering a basecamp to world-class adventure and outdoor experiences.

Messaging Key Points

Outdoor Experiences

Easy Access

Unique Local Offerings & Events

Year-round Affordability

Inclusion

Sustainability-focused Travel



Target Audiences

- Estes Park loyalists who have traveled to the destination in the past
- Active adults, outdoorsy couples and outdoor enthusiasts
- Couples looking for a romantic getaway
- Multigenerational travelers visiting as a family with grandparents
- Adults and families interested in events
- Meeting planners and travel advisors
- Travelers who value sustainable tourism
- Digital Nomads, remote workers who travel while working
- Pre-tirees, travelers reaching retirement age and work part time

Demographics

- Age: 25-54 with an emphasis on 45+
- Family-friendly audience: 60+ with an emphasis on Multi-generational
- Household income: \$100K+

Target Audience Interest



Overall Interests

Scenic beauty, relaxing mountain getaway, mountain biking and hiking, outdoor adventure / enthusiast, backpacking, trails, national parks, road trips, craft beer, romantic getaways, family friendly, easy access, eco-tourism, wildlife viewing, events



Winter/Spring Interest

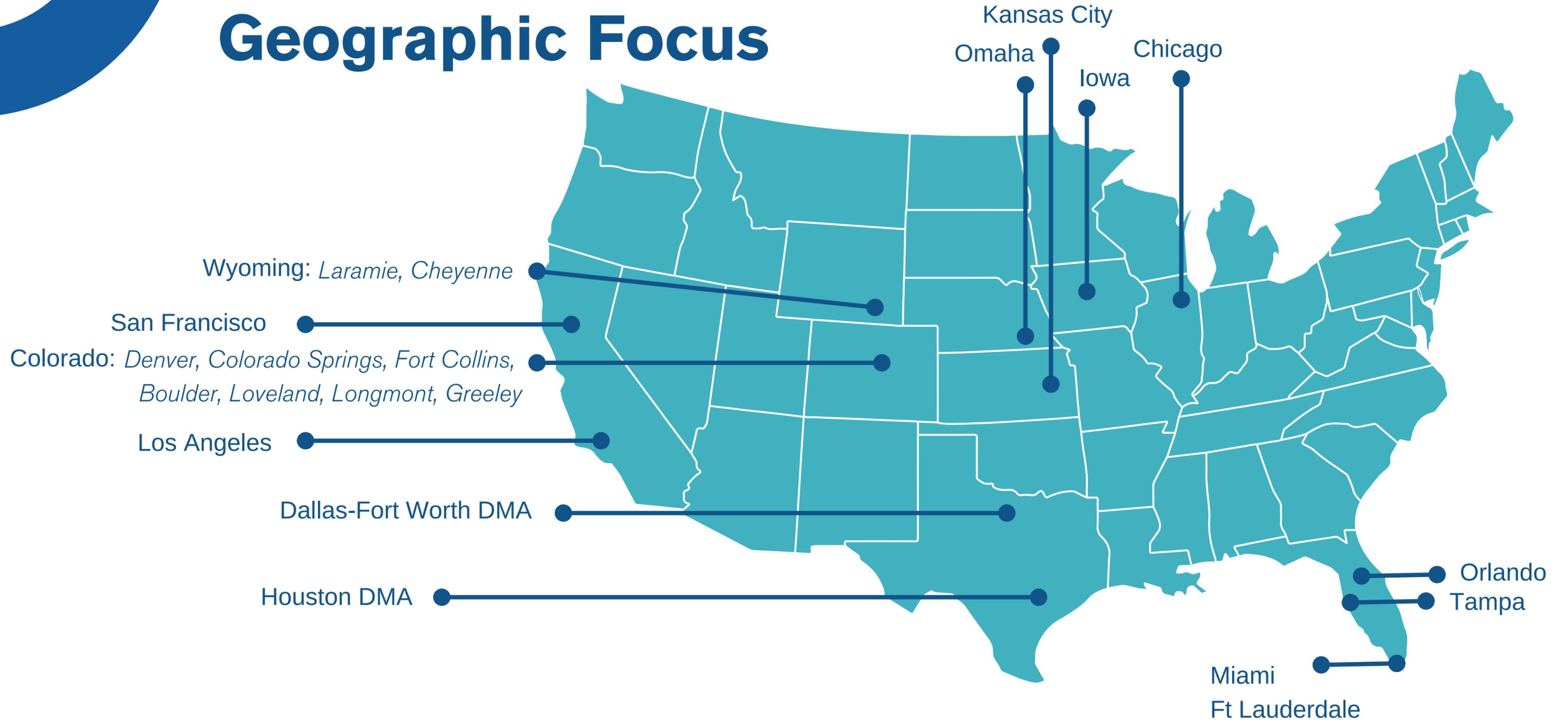
Cross country skiing, winter climate, snowboarding, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing and split boarding, avalanche education, sledding, ice climbing, mountain town, concerts, events



Summer/Fall Interest

Mountain biking, outdoor adventure/enthusiast, backpacking, golf, hiking trails, live music, events, road trips, craft beverages/breweries, fall colors, change of season, spooky travel

Geographic Focus



Categories of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)



Destination Focus

- Tax Revenue
- Occupancy
- Average Daily Rate (ADR)
- Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)
- Stakeholder Engagement



Marketing Focus

- Advertising
- Public Relations
- Social Media
- Website
- AI Travel Planner



Destination Stewardship Goals



Key Organizational Goals

- Continue executing the Destination Stewardship Plan
- Execute programming to support the workforce and contribute to community sustainability efforts
- Communicate the Destination Stewardship Plan and generate support from key partners

See the outcome of last year's goals in our [2023 Annual Report](#).

Goal

Develop existing and introduce new programs that contribute to the pillars of sustainable tourism within our destination.

Strategy

Track and support important destination issues within the community related to tourism.

Tactic 1

Regularly meet with the organizations working on these issues, including the Town of Estes Park, Larimer County, The Estes Chamber Economic Development Workforce Council, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Valley Housing Authority and EVICS. and the NOCO Hospitality Partnership.

Tactic 2

Contribute to solutions by supporting these organizations' initiatives with Visit Estes Park resources where appropriate.

Tactic 3

Partner with organizations and services that are working to make Estes Park more inclusive and sustainable and track the progress to establish benchmarks.



Goal *Cont'd*

Develop existing and introduce new programs that contribute to the pillars of sustainable tourism within our destination.

Strategy

Build on the Estes Experiences momentum to support our workforce.

Tactic 1

Increase workforce participation by 10% to educate tourism workers about the destination, improve visitor experience, and contribute to economic opportunity at a foundational level.

Strategy

Bring the Colorado Green Business Network (CGBN) to Estes Park.

Tactic 1

Partner with the Community Recycling Committee to introduce and implement the program.

Tactic 2

Recruit local facilitators to do the in-market work of the CGBN.

Tactic 3

Promote the program through Visit Estes Park partner channels to encourage participation.



Goal *Cont'd*

Develop existing and introduce new programs that contribute to the pillars of sustainable tourism within our destination.

Strategy

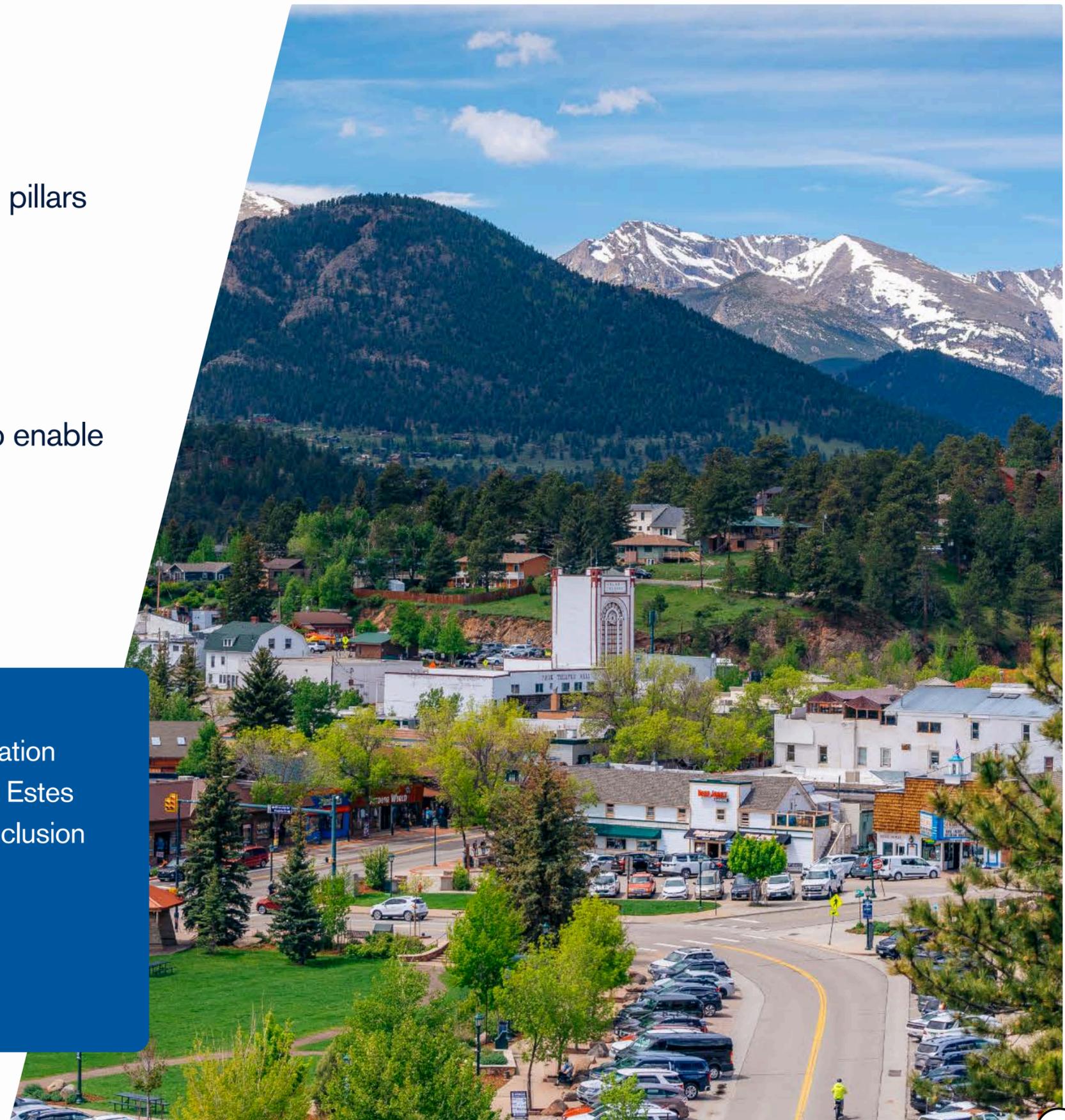
Support the Estes Nonprofit Network's effort to "tap into tourism" to enable their support of Estes Park nonprofits.

Tactic 1

Support the Be a Giving Guest program by including it across owned media channels, such as inclusion in blog posts, social media posts and short-form videos and on [VisitEstesPark.com](https://www.visitestespark.com)

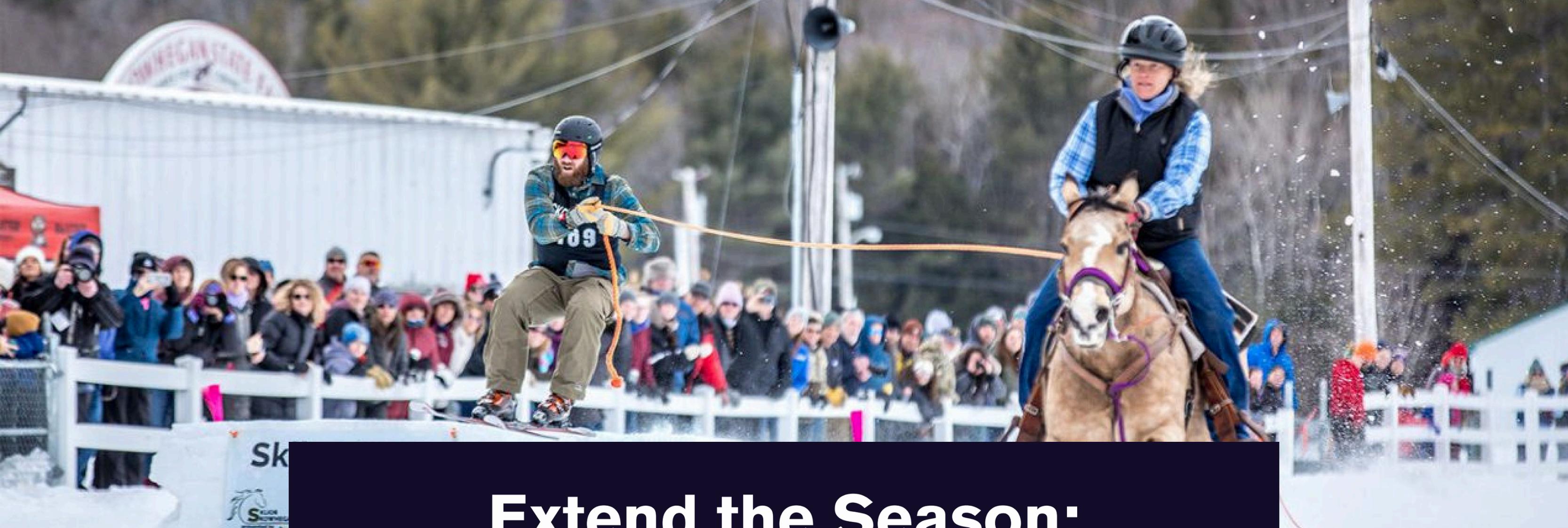
Tactic 2

Support the accommodation donation program through inclusion in Visit Estes Park owned media and in other inclusion and sustainability efforts.





Extend the Season Goals



**Extend the Season:
SkiJor Estes Park**



Key Organizational Goals

- Drive visitation during January need period through the sponsorship of a new multi-day signature winter event, which encourages overnight stays.
- Collaborate with Estes Valley businesses to foster economic stability by creating ancillary offerings through the Beyond program to complement this new flagship event.
- Develop an advertising, paid social media, public relations and content creation campaign to attract consumers interested in winter sports to experience Estes Park's newest cold weather event and ancillary offerings.

Goal

Support large-scale, multi-day events that reflect community character and are able to draw overnight visitors during off-peak and need periods.

Strategy

Collaborate with Running Wild Events by sponsoring the inaugural Ski Jor Estes Park in January 2025 with financial and marketing support.

Tactic 1

Collaborate with event producers to aid in developing the Ski Jor event weekend and satellite events.

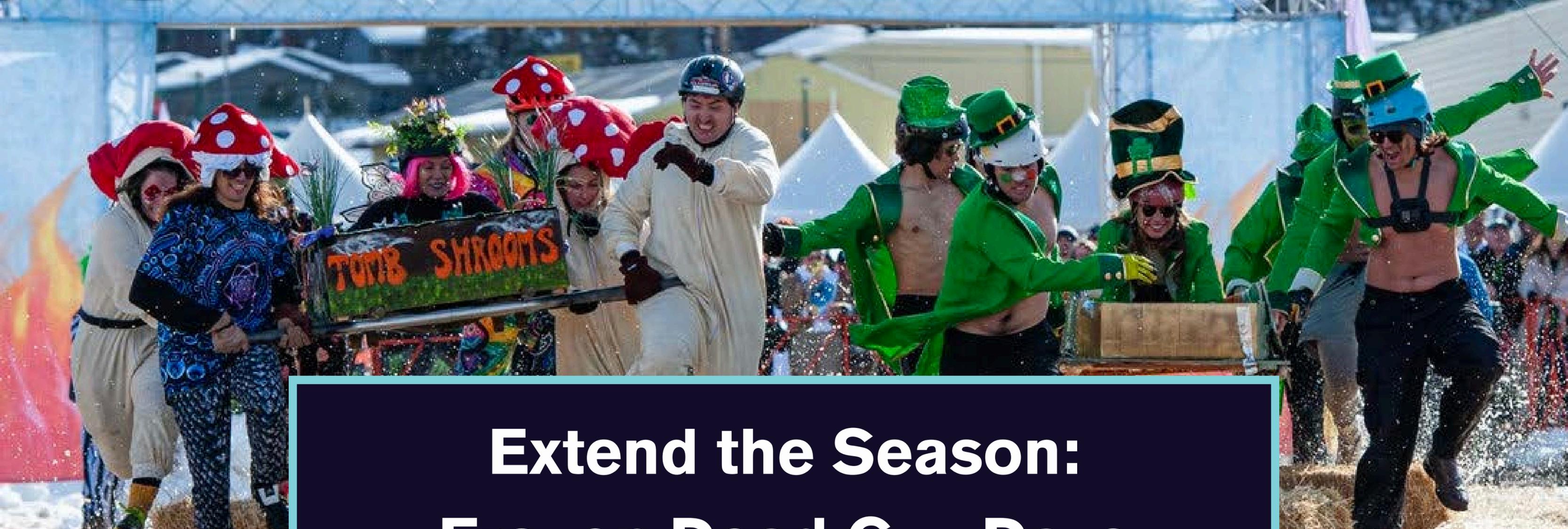
Tactic 2

Launch an integrated marketing campaign to target travelers interested in winter sports, events and experiences, highlighting unique selling propositions.

Tactic 3

Work with partners to create lodging packages, satellite events, transportation options and special offers to boost the economic impact in the community.





**Extend the Season:
Frozen Dead Guy Days**



Key Organizational Goals

- Increase the Frozen Dead Guy Days (FDGD) festival attendance to 7,000 attendees, boosting both overnight and day visitation during a slower season
- Continue to enhance the FDGD festival experience to include more elaborate and immersive experiences
- Secure a strong lineup of FDGD-themed offerings from lodgers, restaurants and local businesses to encourage spending beyond the festival footprint and within the destination
- Develop an integrated marketing campaign and include new relevant content on FDGD website
- Expand FDGD marketing to reach a national audience in key target markets

See the outcome of last year's goals in our [2023 Annual Report](#).

Goal

Expand the Frozen Dead Guy Days festival with new and elevated Estes twists.

Strategy

Partner with Bosco Productions to produce Frozen Dead Guy Days 2025 with more elaborate and immersive experiences to engage attendees and visitors.

Tactic 1

Develop additional activities and areas for different audiences, including families and other niche audiences.

Tactic 2

Increase local partners' participation in the food village and expand bar offerings.

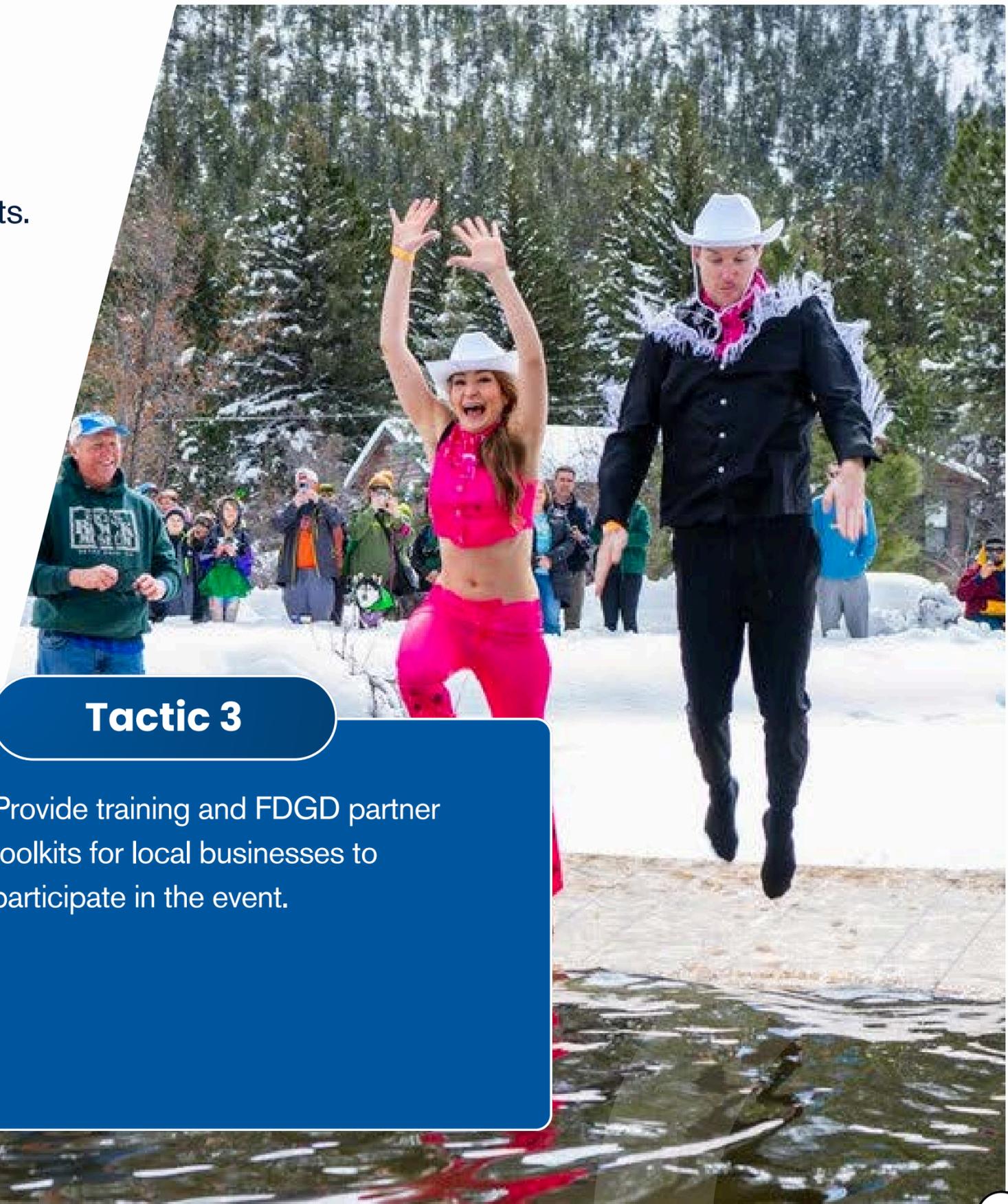


Goal *Cont'd*

Expand the Frozen Dead Guy Days festival with new and elevated Estes twists.

Strategy

Foster stakeholder collaboration during Frozen Dead Guy Days to strengthen community partnerships and enhance the festival experience.



Tactic 1

Increase community and partner participation in the festival, garnering their support and enthusiasm for this signature destination event.

Tactic 2

Increase partner participation with pre and post-festival events to encourage longer stays and increased visitor spending and attendance.

Tactic 3

Provide training and FDGD partner toolkits for local businesses to participate in the event.

Goal

Generate awareness and visitation to Estes Park during Frozen Dead Guy Days through an integrated marketing strategy.

Strategy

Create a multi-channel marketing campaign complete with advertising, public relations, social media and content strategies to maximize awareness, tickets sales and travel booking.

Tactic 1

Formulate an advertising campaign reaching new and return attendees through digital display, out-of-home (OOH), television and radio promotions.

Tactic 2

Activate paid social media efforts aimed at increasing ticket sales, email sign-ups and awareness by targeting FDGD fans and band followers, as well as consumers with similar interests.

Tactic 3

Align ticket sales launch with the spooky season in October, leveraging the national interest in Estes Park during that time and offering a longer sales window to secure more ticket sales.



Goal *Cont'd*

Generate awareness and visitation to Estes Park during Frozen Dead Guy Days through an integrated marketing strategy.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Create a multi-channel marketing campaign complete with advertising, public relations, social media and content strategies to maximize awareness, tickets sales and travel booking.

Tactic 4

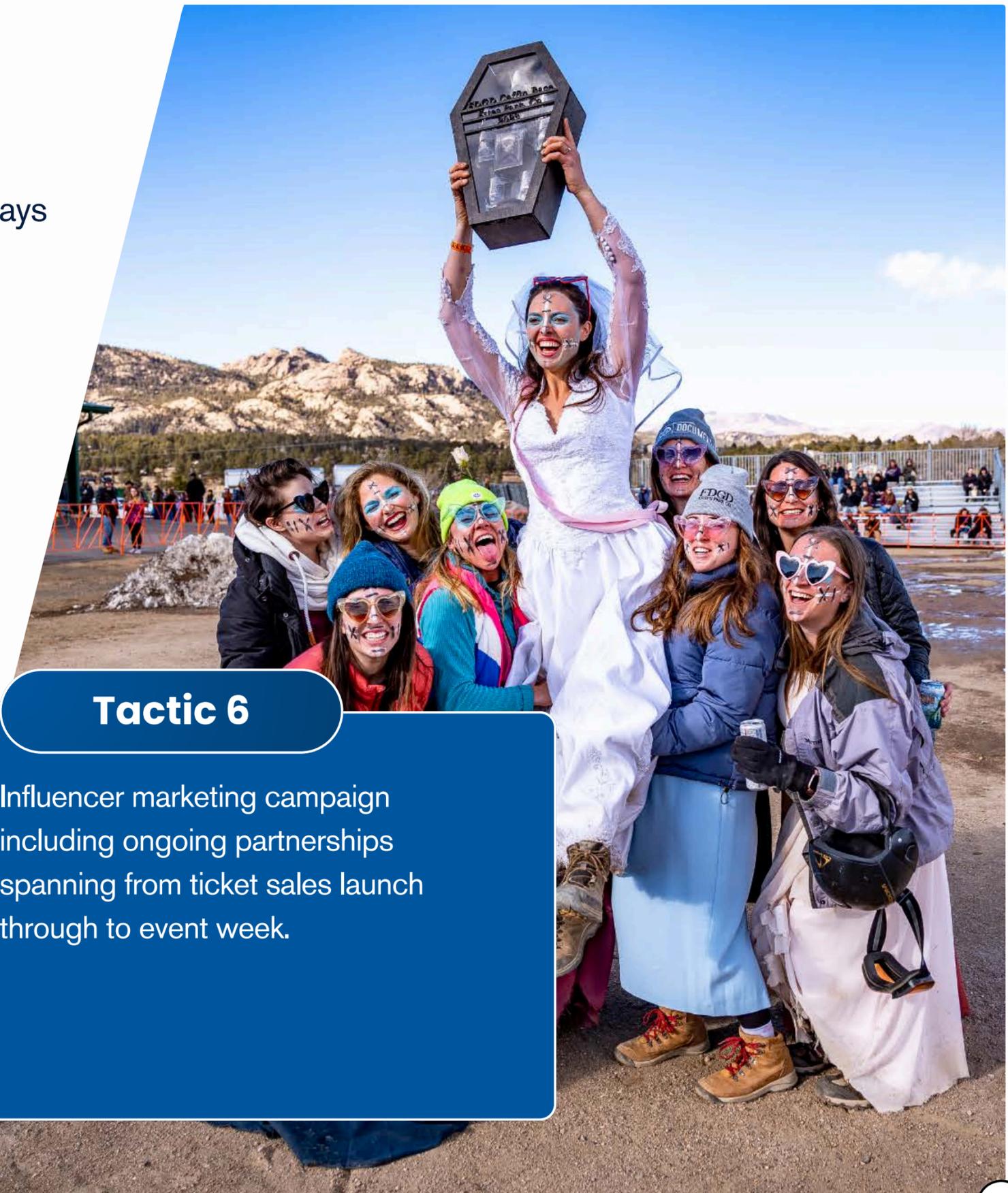
Public relations efforts including press releases, pitches and TV appearances centered around the major event milestones including tickets on-sale, line-up announcement and headliner announcement.

Tactic 5

Execute an ongoing editorial calendar to manage a consistent stream of website content, social media and blog posts covering the event.

Tactic 6

Influencer marketing campaign including ongoing partnerships spanning from ticket sales launch through to event week.





**Extend the Season:
April & August**



Key Organizational Goals

- Drive visitation during need periods of April and late August by sponsoring and developing signature events.
- Develop an advertising, paid social media, public relations, and content creation campaign to attract consumers likely to travel in April and late August, including couples, milestone travelers, and retirees/pre-retirees.

Goal

Boost visitor numbers in April, a critical period in spring before the bustling summer season.

Strategy

Collaborate with community partners to plan a successful event season in April, including sponsoring a variety of local events and organizing VEP's 2nd Annual Earth Week.

Tactic 1

Work with community partners to aid in developing, promoting, and marketing local events.

Tactic 2

Execute the 2nd Annual Earth Week as an authentic Estes Park experience.

Tactic 3

Launch an integrated marketing campaign to target travelers most likely to travel in early spring/April.

Tactic 4

Support event and project development through a sponsorship program and marketing and staff support.



Goal

Increase visitation in the late August need period when summer occupancy levels soften.

Strategy

Support and promote an enticing late August visitor experience, including arts-focused events, while encouraging destination development of ancillary local events.

Tactic 1

Support local event and activity development through a sponsorship program.

Tactic 2

Launch an integrated marketing campaign to target travelers most likely to travel in late August, with a focus on extended locals.





Extend the Season: Winter & Holidays



Key Organizational Goals

- Prolong the busier season and foster economic stability by implementing initiatives that attract visitors seeking memorable and rewarding winter travel experiences.
- Achieve sustainable destination development by sponsoring Winter/Holiday programs to enhance the area's appeal, attract more visitors and bolster the local economy during a critical need period.
- Increase winter/holiday visitation by positioning and promoting Estes Park as a non-ski outdoor adventure getaway. Enhance our winter wonderland image through advertising, paid social media, public relations and content creation efforts.

See the outcome of last year's goals in our [2023 Annual Report](#).

Goal

Extend the tourism season to support local businesses, retain skilled employees, and increase revenue streams for the community.

Strategy

Leveraging the success of last years Catch the Glow launch, continue to enhance the winter experience in Estes Park by transforming the destination into a classic winter wonderland through the collaborative efforts of the community and stakeholders.

Tactic 1

Enhance and grow a signature Catch the Glow weekend event series to enhance, support and encourage overnight stays during the holidays.

Tactic 2

Encourage business owners to decorate for the holidays through development and sponsorship of decoration contests.



Goal *Cont'd*

Extend the tourism season to support local businesses, retain skilled employees, and increase revenue streams for the community.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Leveraging the success of last years Catch the Glow launch, continue to enhance the winter experience in Estes Park by transforming the destination into a classic winter wonderland through the collaborative efforts of the community and stakeholders.

Tactic 3

Encourage lodging partners to create or enhance holiday packages to encourage overnight stays.

Tactic 4

Continue to enhance Bond Park, Elkhorn and main arterial corridor lighting.

Tactic 5

Support event and destination development of ancillary events to enhance existing programming through a sponsorship program and marketing support.



Goal

Increase awareness and visitation to Visit Estes Park in the Winter and holiday season through an integrated marketing strategy.

Strategy

Use comprehensive tracking, combined with travel data, to guide season-specific targeting for media placements to prospects in key markets. Support the marketing plan with public relations and content efforts.

Tactic 1

Execute a dedicated winter marketing campaign with season-specific interests and targeting.

Tactic 2

Position Estes Park as the picturesque winter wonderland, offering an affordable family-friendly getaway, through media pitches, social media and blog content.

Tactic 3

Promote winter events, activations and activities through paid, owned and earned media channels, as well as social media influencer partnerships and engaging collateral pieces.





Leisure Consumer Marketing

A scenic landscape at sunset with mountains and a river. The sky is filled with warm, orange and yellow clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the scene. The mountains are dark and silhouetted against the bright sky. A river flows through the foreground, reflecting the light from the sky.

Key Organizational Goals

- Generate 900 million paid and earned media impressions
- Exceed 10 million paid and organic social media impressions
- Drive 2 million views on VisitEstesPark.com
- Deliver 400,000 referrals to lodging partner booking engines and websites
- Obtain 20,000 engagements on Rocky Mountain Roamer AI travel planner
- Integrate messages of sustainability, inclusion and preserving community character at all levels of guest communications

See the outcome of last year's goals in our [2023 Annual Report](#).



Paid Media

Goal

Increase destination demand in all market segments, specifically during need periods, to ensure economic stability, disperse visitors and moderate congestion.

Strategy

Generate an increase in demand for overnight lodging stays by driving intent to visit Estes Park during need periods including April, late August, fall weekdays, winter and spring.

Tactic 1

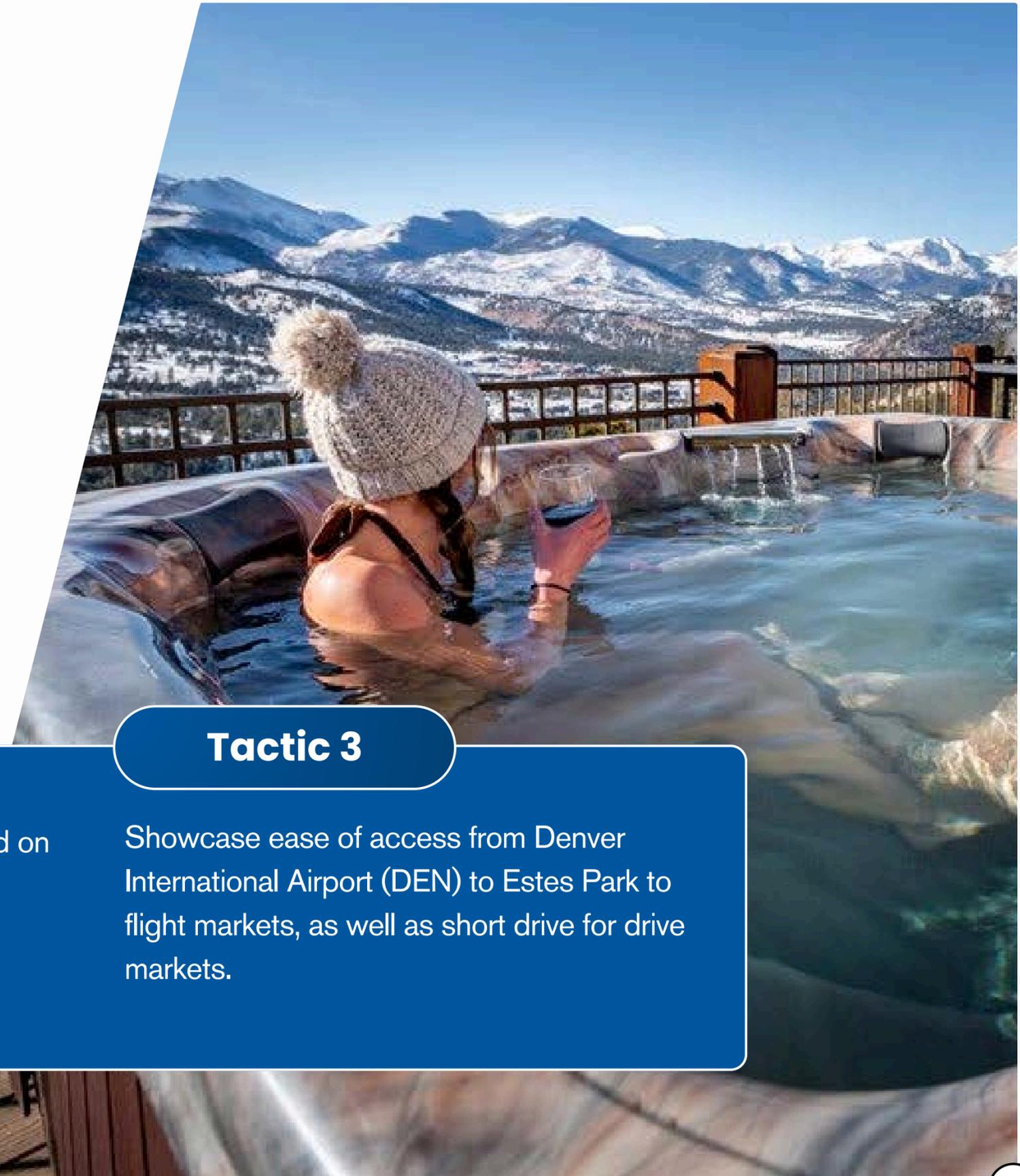
Engage with potential visitors through mass reach and niche targeting, ensuring we capture the interest of all key audiences.

Tactic 2

Continually optimize campaigns based on data and analytics.

Tactic 3

Showcase ease of access from Denver International Airport (DEN) to Estes Park to flight markets, as well as short drive for drive markets.



Goal *Cont'd*

Increase destination demand in all market segments, specifically during need periods, to ensure economic stability, disperse visitors and moderate congestion.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Generate an increase in demand for overnight lodging stays by driving intent to visit Estes Park during need periods including April, late August, fall weekdays, winter and spring.

Tactic 4

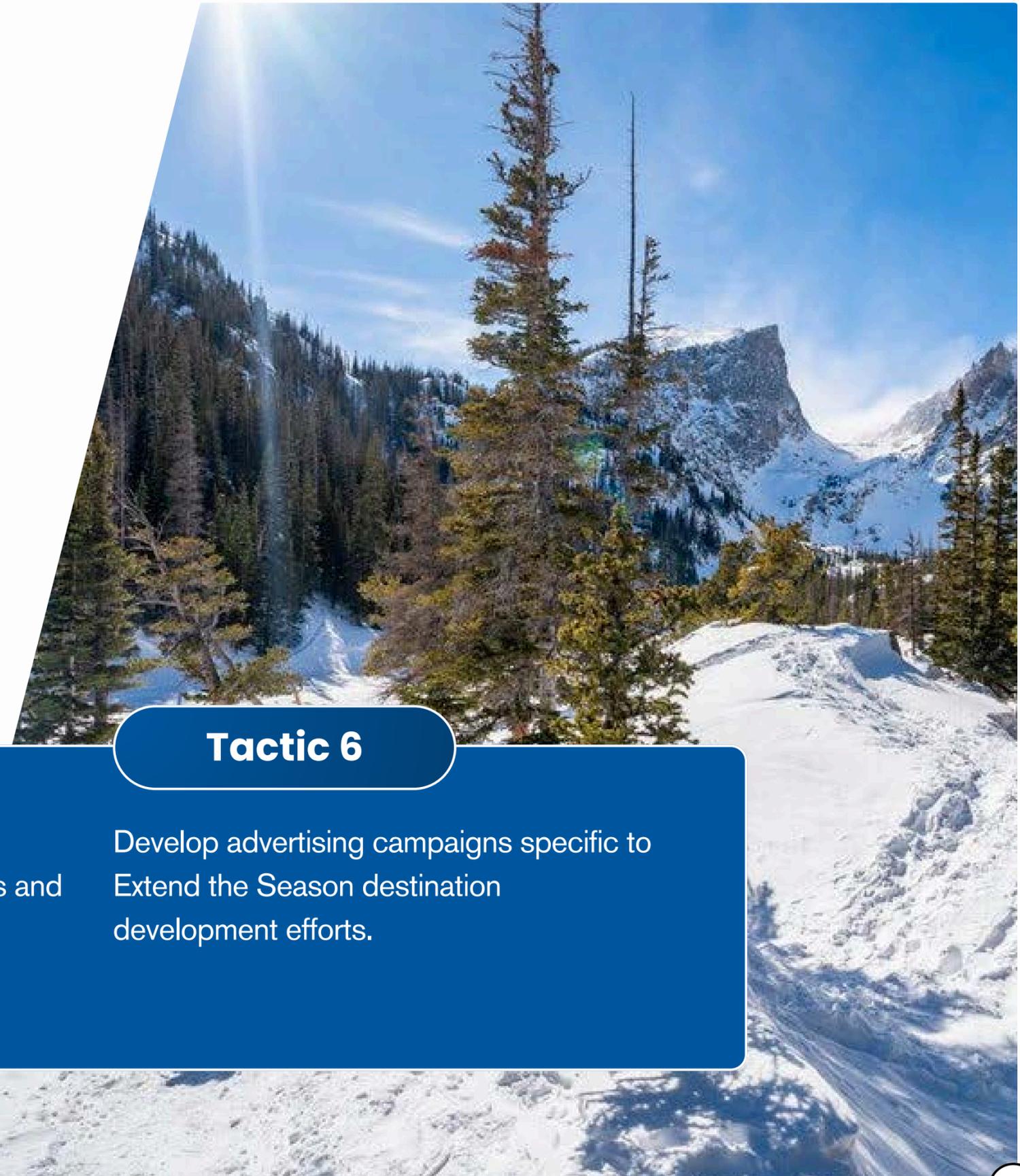
Leverage the power of analytics and strategic regional NoCo partnerships to identify and tap into emerging markets, staying ahead of trends and capturing new opportunities.

Tactic 5

Market to visitors more likely to travel during slower times, including couples and milestone travelers.

Tactic 6

Develop advertising campaigns specific to Extend the Season destination development efforts.



Goal

Maximize analytics & data optimization.

Strategy

Build strategy and tactics on robust analytics leveraging data to optimize efforts.

Tactic 1

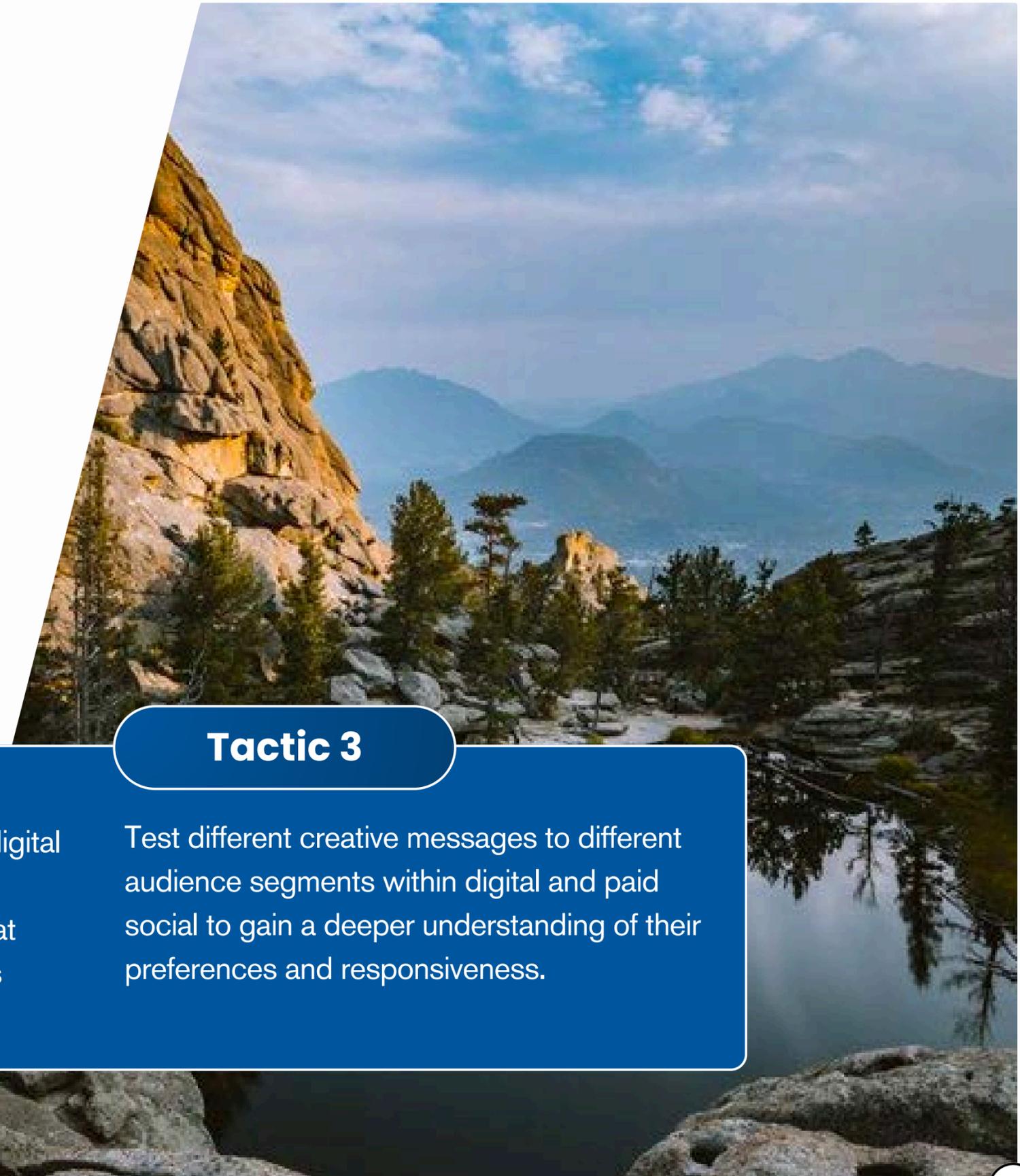
Utilize sophisticated targeting and retargeting strategies to reach and engage the right audience with personalized messages, delivered at the optimal time for maximum impact.

Tactic 2

Leverage analytical tools to optimize digital messaging and delivery to maximize performance and goal conversions that deliver on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Tactic 3

Test different creative messages to different audience segments within digital and paid social to gain a deeper understanding of their preferences and responsiveness.



Goal

Obtain maximum value from advertising campaigns through optimized media plans.

Strategy

Distribute advertising on media channels specific to the media usage habits of each audience segment.

Tactic 1

Use effective media partnerships to reach consumers most likely to visit.

Tactic 2

Monitor key performance metrics by using media that delivers measurable results in the form of impressions, click-through rates and net economic impact.

Tactic 3

Focus budget on the most effective measures and added value must-haves.

Tactic 4

Maintain paid social media throughout the year to continue consumer conversations and promote year-round offerings.



Goal

Leverage marketing assets to target audiences.

Strategy

Harness the power of video and image assets to craft inspirational narratives which create emotional connections and amplify aspirational desire among travelers.

Tactic 1

Develop high-impact interactive gamified units with proven success to deliver a high-end user experience driving engagement and clicks.

Tactic 2

Engage potential visitors through dynamic visual storytelling including listicles, search engines and print ads prioritizing attractive creative assets.

Tactic 3

Integrate video assets into cross-channel units maximizing views and increasing click-throughs. Utilize staff photographer to continuously refresh assets.



Goal *Cont'd*

Leverage marketing assets to target audiences.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Harness the power of video and image assets to craft inspirational narratives which create emotional connections and amplify aspirational desire among travelers.

Tactic 4

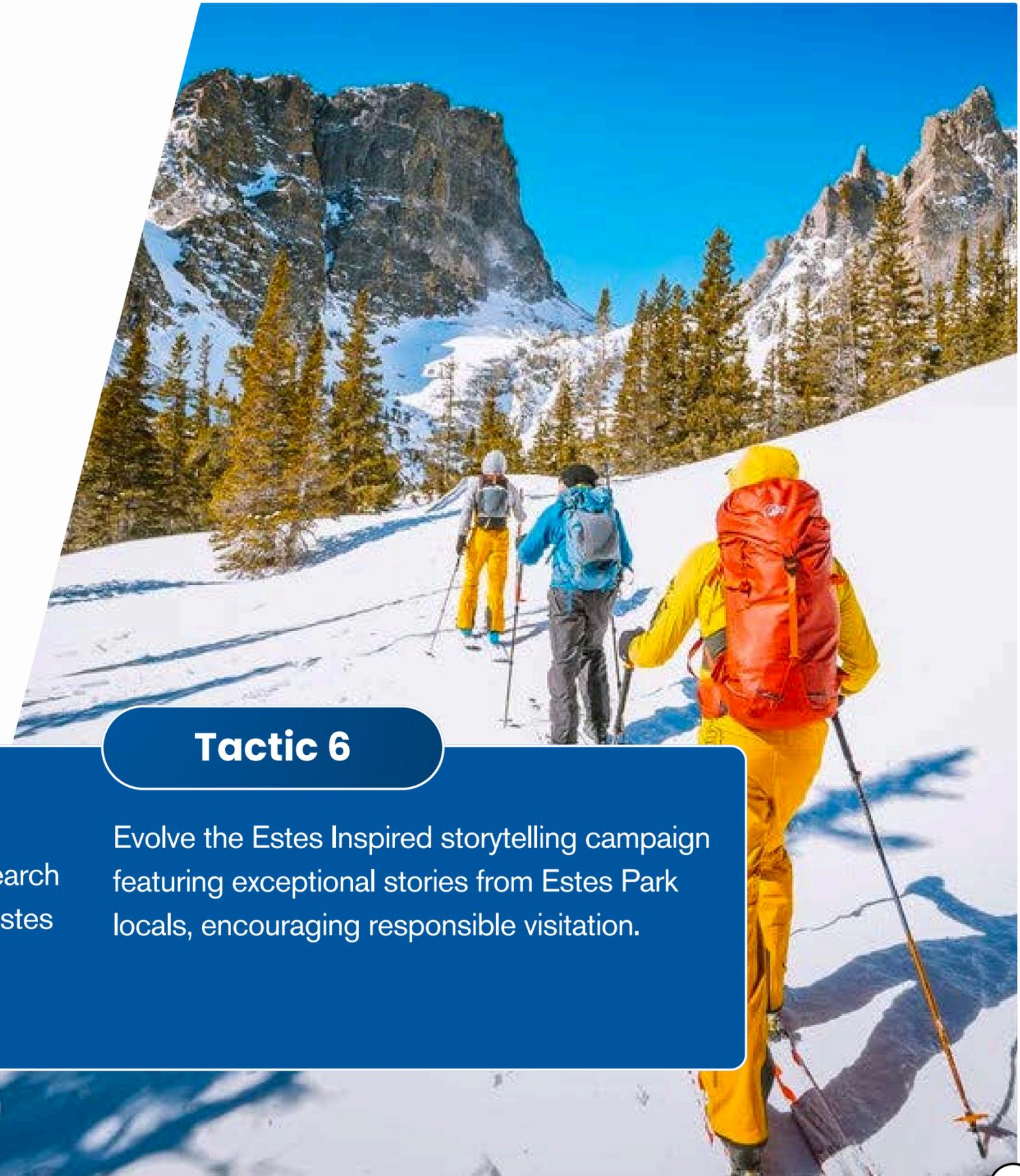
Present Visit Estes Park as an outdoor destination offering activities accessible to all ages and abilities, in all seasons.

Tactic 5

Create a dedicated sustainability campaign on paid social media and search promoting the second season of Do Estes Right educational PSA videos.

Tactic 6

Evolve the Estes Inspired storytelling campaign featuring exceptional stories from Estes Park locals, encouraging responsible visitation.



Goal

Utilize paid media to drive visitors to new travel planning tools and resources using AI and social media.

Strategy

Develop a dedicated paid media strategy for travel planning tools in order to reach visitors in unique ways.

Tactic 1

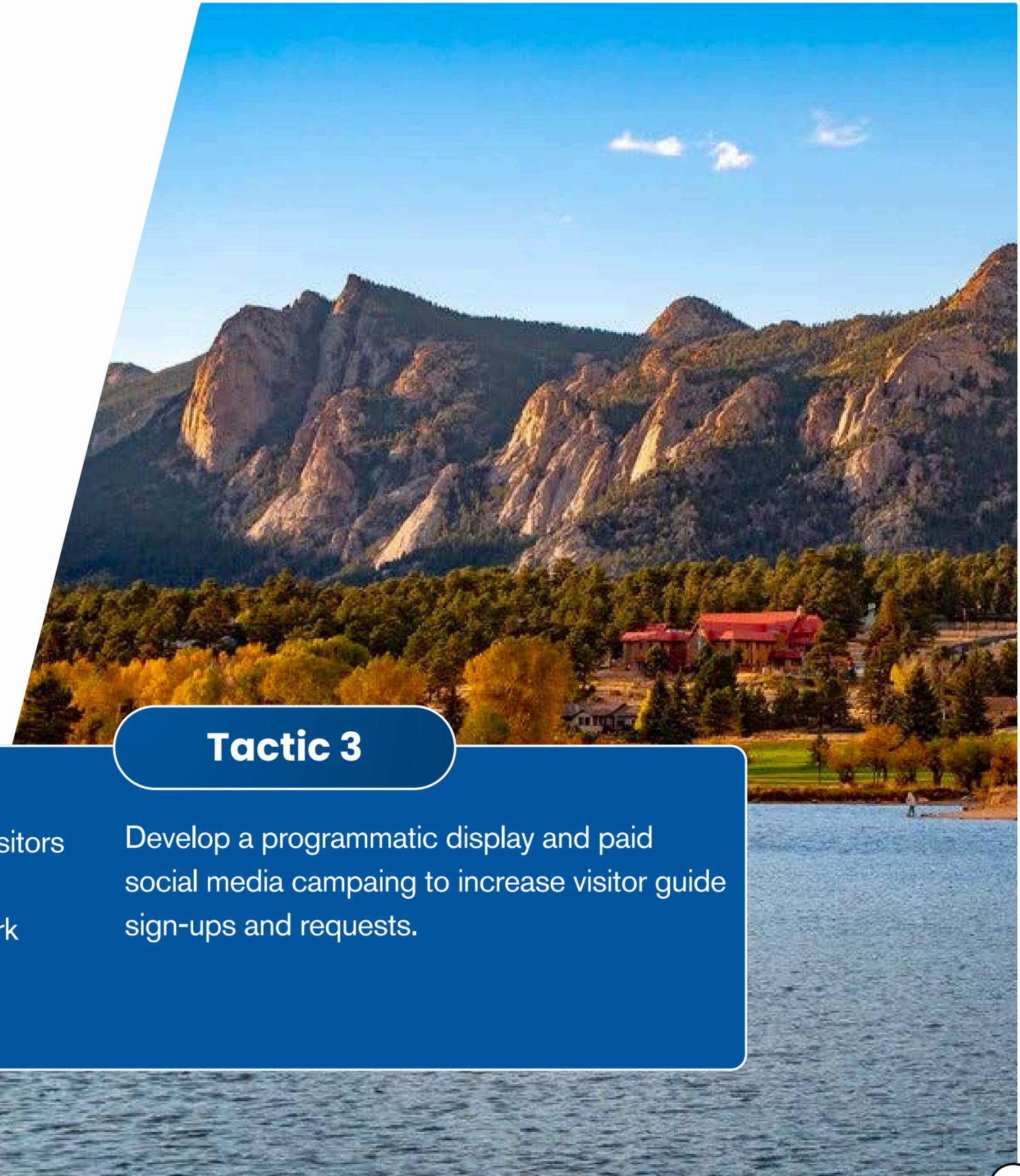
Utilize programmatic display and paid social media to drive potential visitors to Rocky Mountain Roamer AI travel planning tool, available on our website, WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram.

Tactic 2

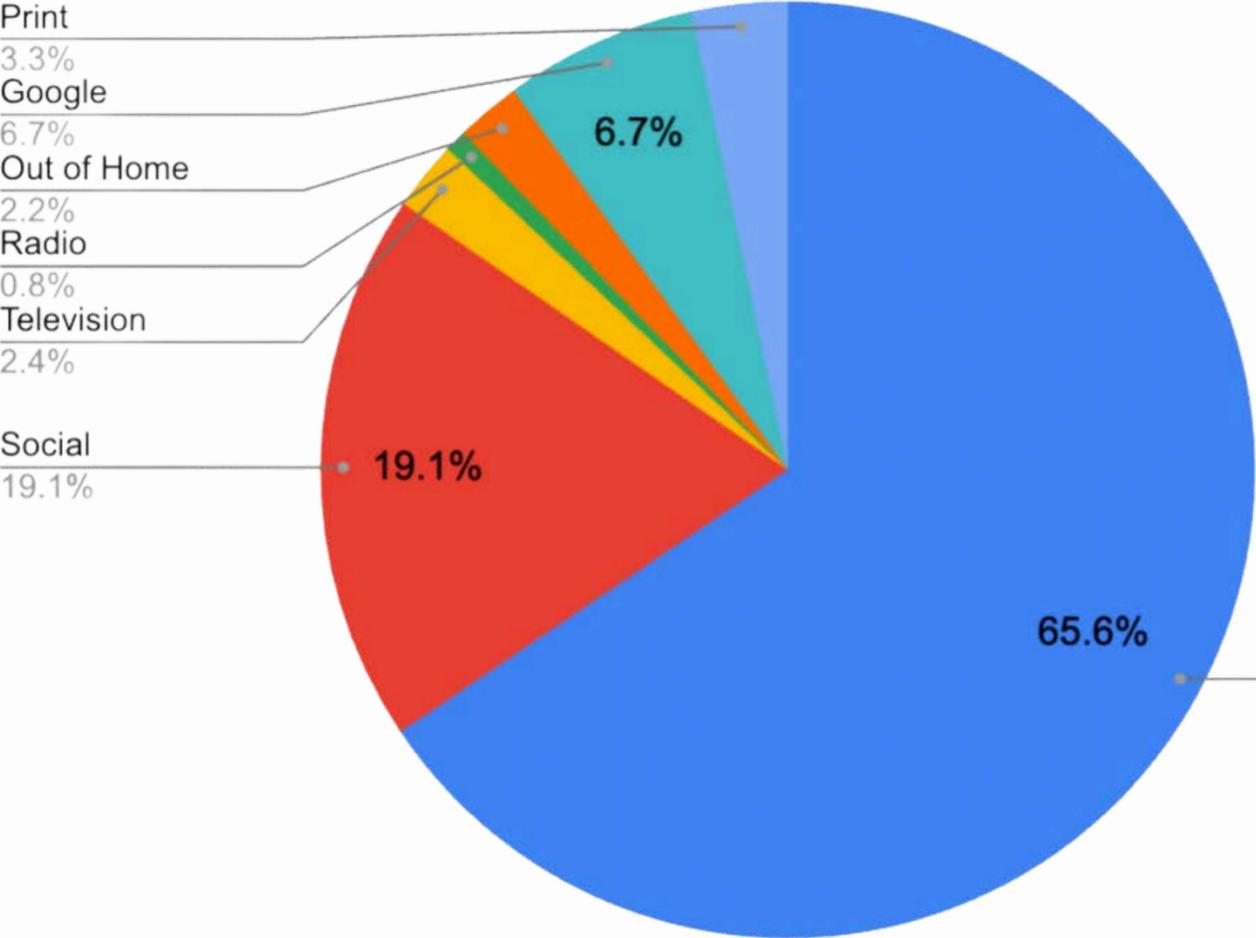
Leverage paid social media to drive visitors to VEP influencer page, for firsthand information and tips from an Estes Park local.

Tactic 3

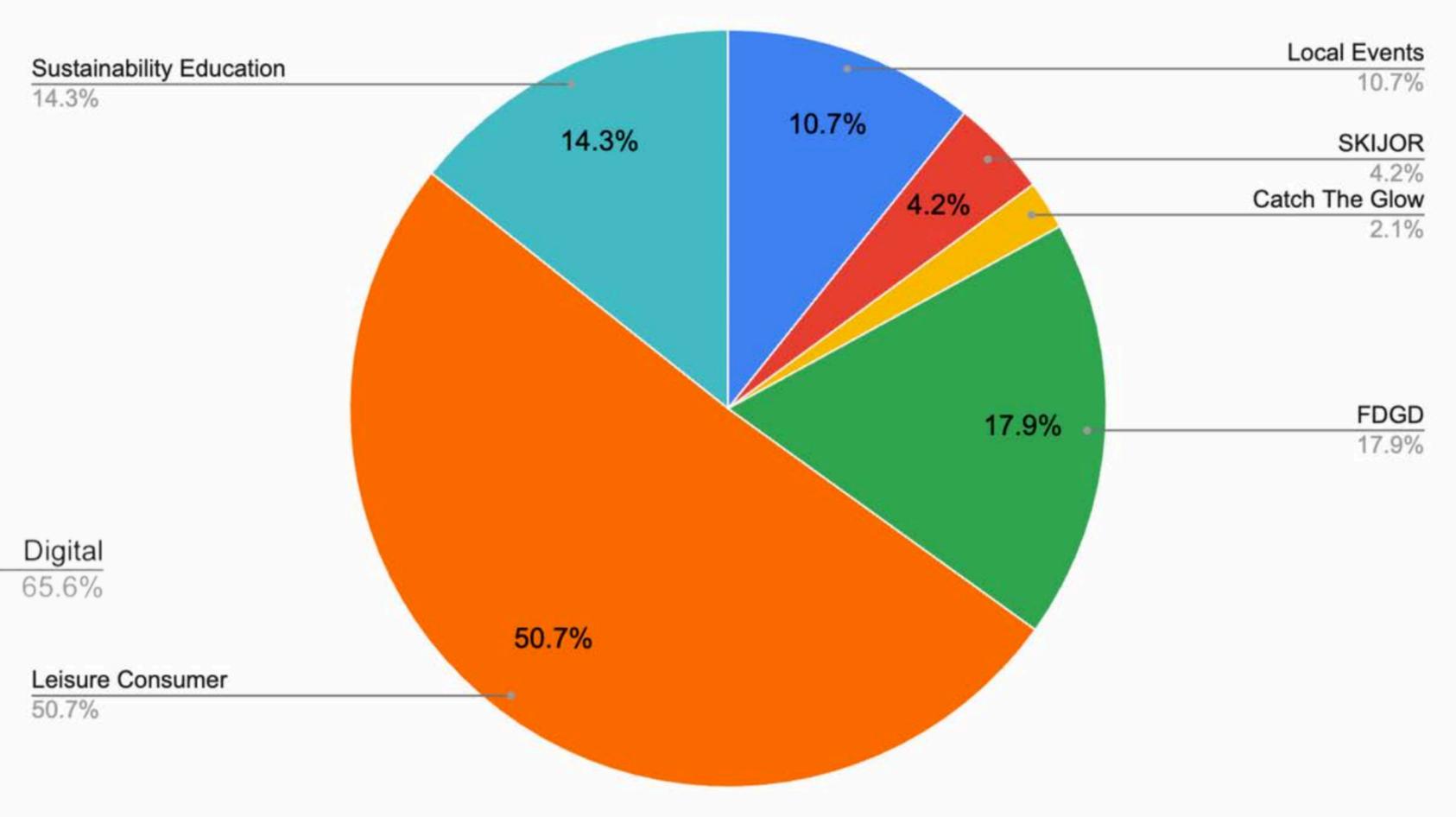
Develop a programmatic display and paid social media campaign to increase visitor guide sign-ups and requests.



Paid Media Allocation



Paid Social Media Allocation





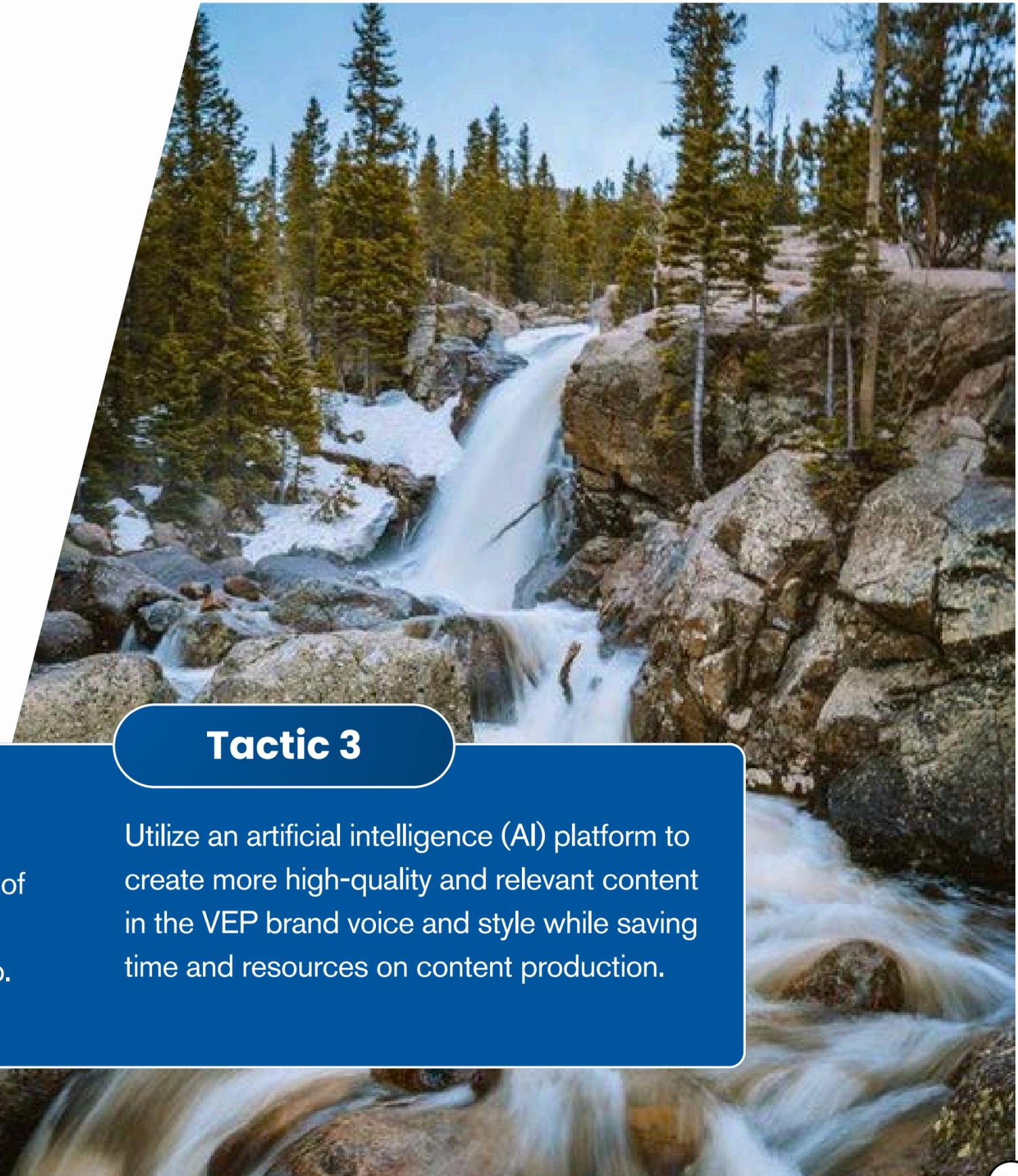
Content Development

Goal

Use storytelling to showcase the range of activities and businesses offered in Estes Park and educate guests on how to do Estes right.

Strategy

Develop, curate and promote world-class content through dynamic and diverse storytelling.



Tactic 1

Maintain and expand a robust content library to generate affinity for the destination, highlight distinctive brand attributes and evoke an emotional connection with the consumer.

Tactic 2

Partner with businesses on content development to bring a diverse range of perspectives and foster community involvement and a sense of ownership.

Tactic 3

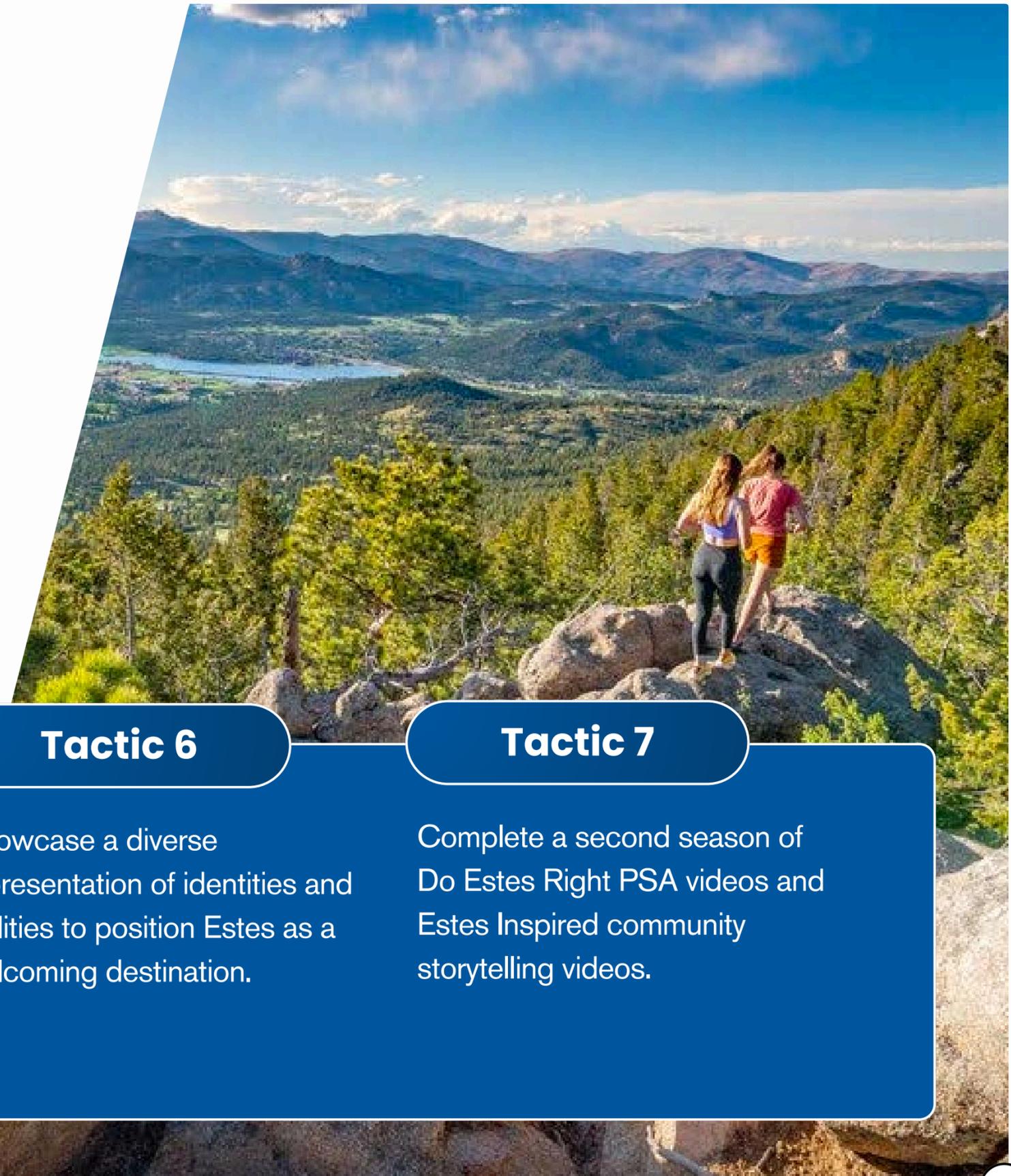
Utilize an artificial intelligence (AI) platform to create more high-quality and relevant content in the VEP brand voice and style while saving time and resources on content production.

Goal *Cont'd*

Use storytelling to showcase the range of activities and businesses offered in Estes Park and educate guests on how to do Estes right.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Develop, curate and promote world-class content through dynamic and diverse storytelling.



Tactic 4

Increase short-form video content to convey a sense of connection with the destination and to create a participation culture across platforms like TikTok, Instagram and YouTube.

Tactic 5

Highlight businesses implementing green practices to attract environmentally conscious guests and maintain a regular cadence of sustainable travel articles.

Tactic 6

Showcase a diverse representation of identities and abilities to position Estes as a welcoming destination.

Tactic 7

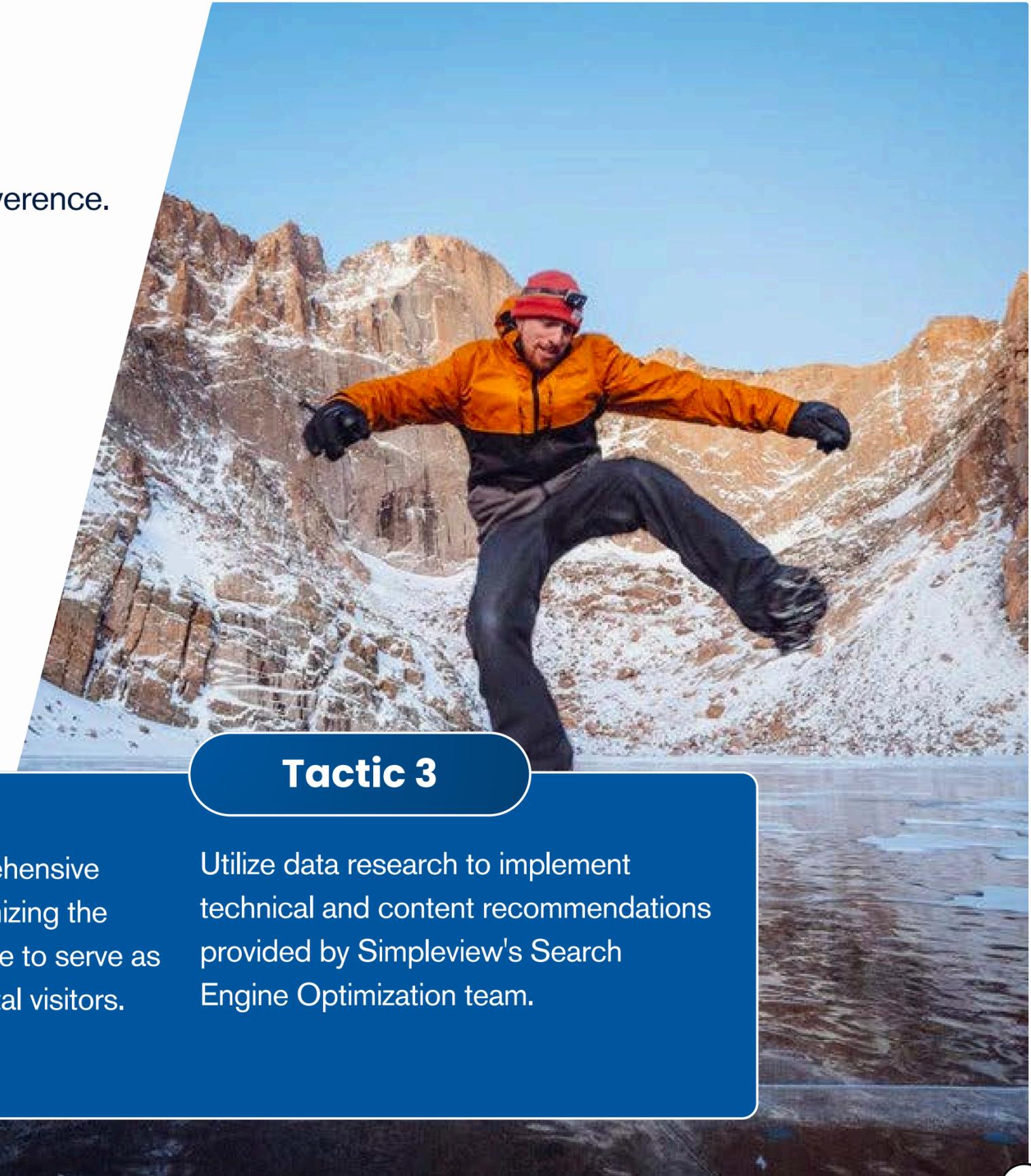
Complete a second season of Do Estes Right PSA videos and Estes Inspired community storytelling videos.

Goal

Develop strategic content to boost engagement, visitation and cultivate reverence.

Strategy

Optimize the Visit Estes Park online experience on VisitEstesPark.com, social media channels and Rocky Mountain Roamer artificial intelligence (AI) travel planning tool, in order to educate and inspire all audiences.



Tactic 1

Channel advertising and social communications towards the AI travel planning tool, in addition to VisitEstesPark.com content and landing pages, and track referrals to stakeholder booking engines and websites.

Tactic 2

Evolve and manage a comprehensive editorial calendar, while optimizing the VisitEstesPark.com homepage to serve as an ideal landing page for digital visitors.

Tactic 3

Utilize data research to implement technical and content recommendations provided by Simpleview's Search Engine Optimization team.

Goal *Cont'd*

Develop strategic content to boost engagement, visitation and cultivate reverence.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Optimize the Visit Estes Park online experience on VisitEstesPark.com, social media channels and Rocky Mountain Roamer artificial intelligence (AI) travel planning tool, in order to educate and inspire all audiences.

Tactic 4

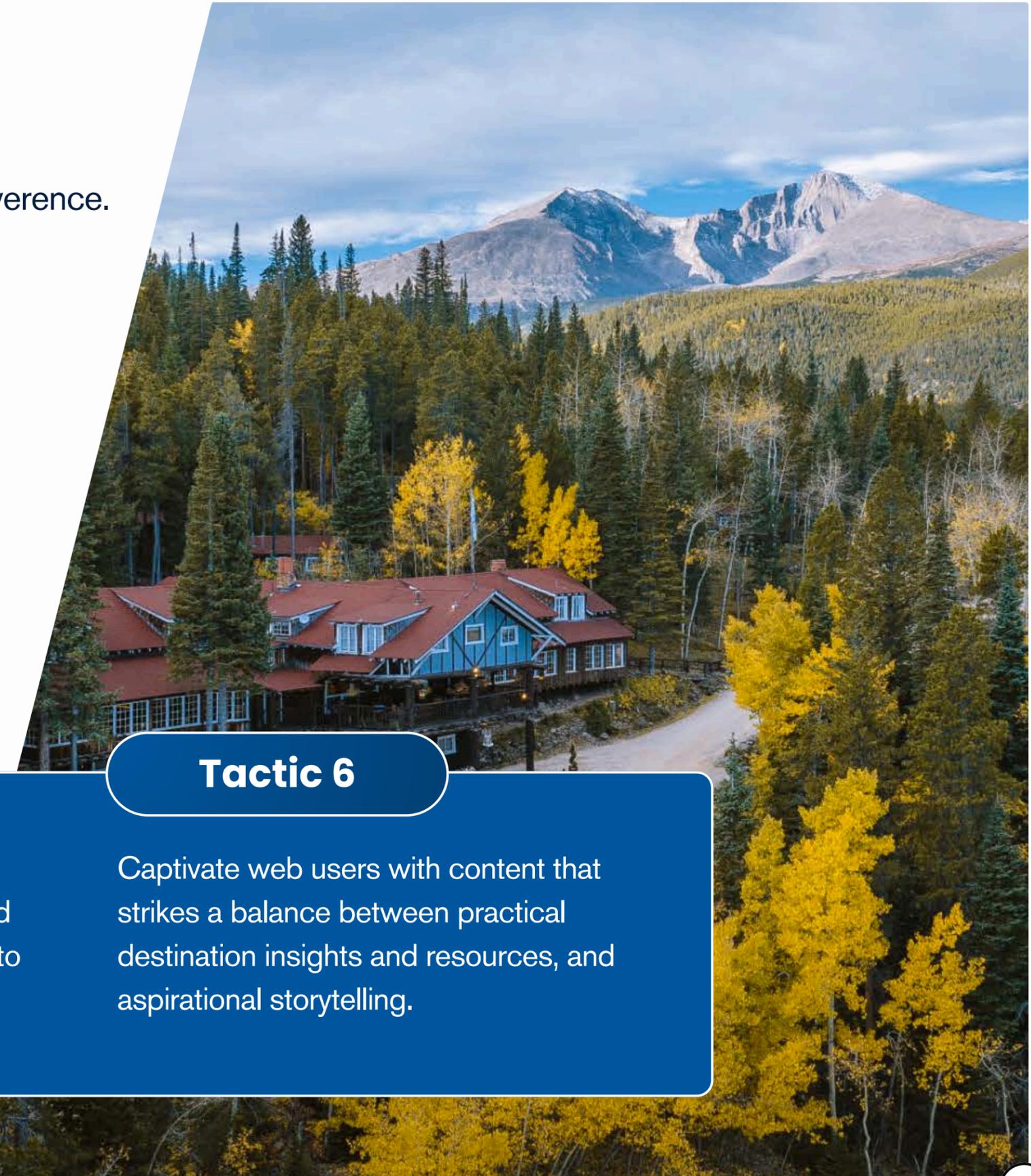
Create web content that aligns with Google priorities in a new AI era, by focusing on actions and content that is user and audience-focused and leads with key information and summaries.

Tactic 5

Apply search optimization techniques, including keyword research and best practices, to enhance new content pages.

Tactic 6

Captivate web users with content that strikes a balance between practical destination insights and resources, and aspirational storytelling.



Goal

Build visitor intent to travel through strategic outreach.

Strategy

Optimize an online outreach program that leverages email newsletters to consumers.

Tactic 1

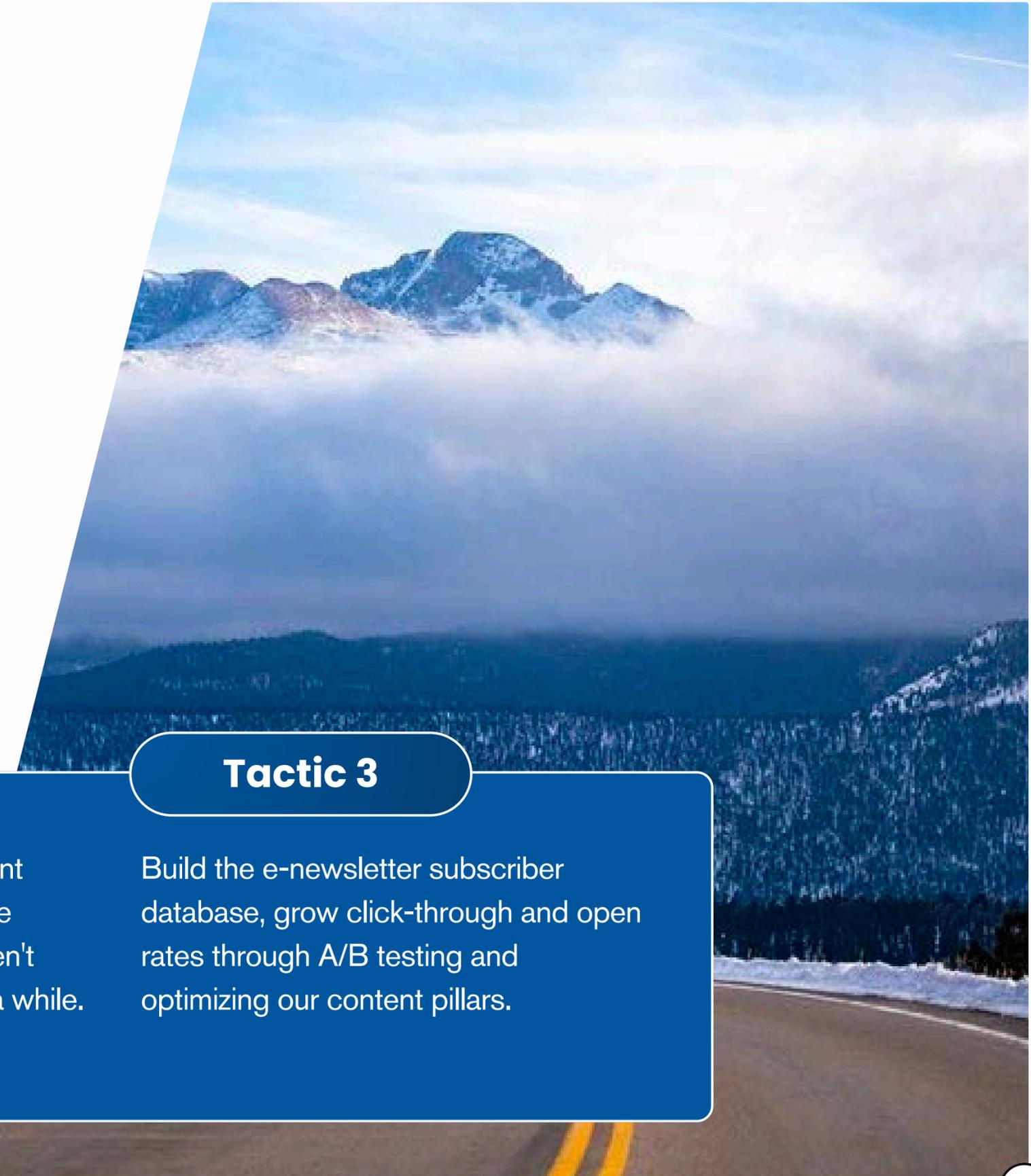
Create a well-crafted welcome email drip campaign for new subscribers consisting of responsible travel trips, an introduction to the destination and other ways to engage and make them feel valued from the start.

Tactic 2

Design targeted re-engagement campaigns to win back inactive subscribers or those who haven't interacted with our emails for a while.

Tactic 3

Build the e-newsletter subscriber database, grow click-through and open rates through A/B testing and optimizing our content pillars.



Goal

Provide comprehensive travel planning tools for potential visitors.

Strategy

Create travel planning tools available through various channels and mediums to reach consumers where and how they prefer to research.

Tactic 1

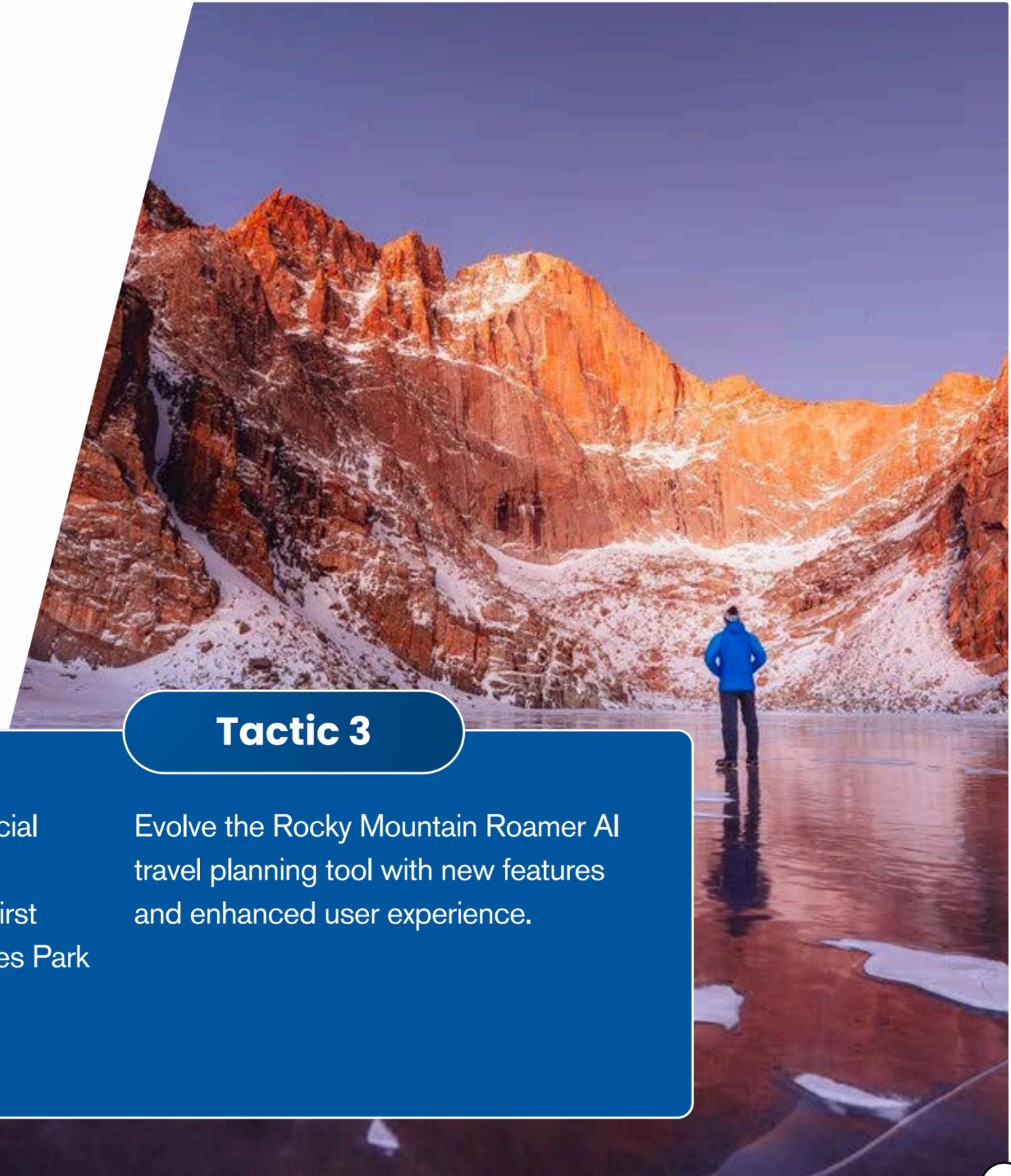
Research if a new visitors guide is necessary, which would pull the most valuable resources on VisitEstesPark.com into a print and digital guide. Continue guide partnerships for visitors in market via print and digital. Stay abreast of new guide partnership opportunities.

Tactic 2

Grow the Visit Estes Park social media influencer account @clairefromestes, providing first hand knowledge from an Estes Park local.

Tactic 3

Evolve the Rocky Mountain Roamer AI travel planning tool with new features and enhanced user experience.





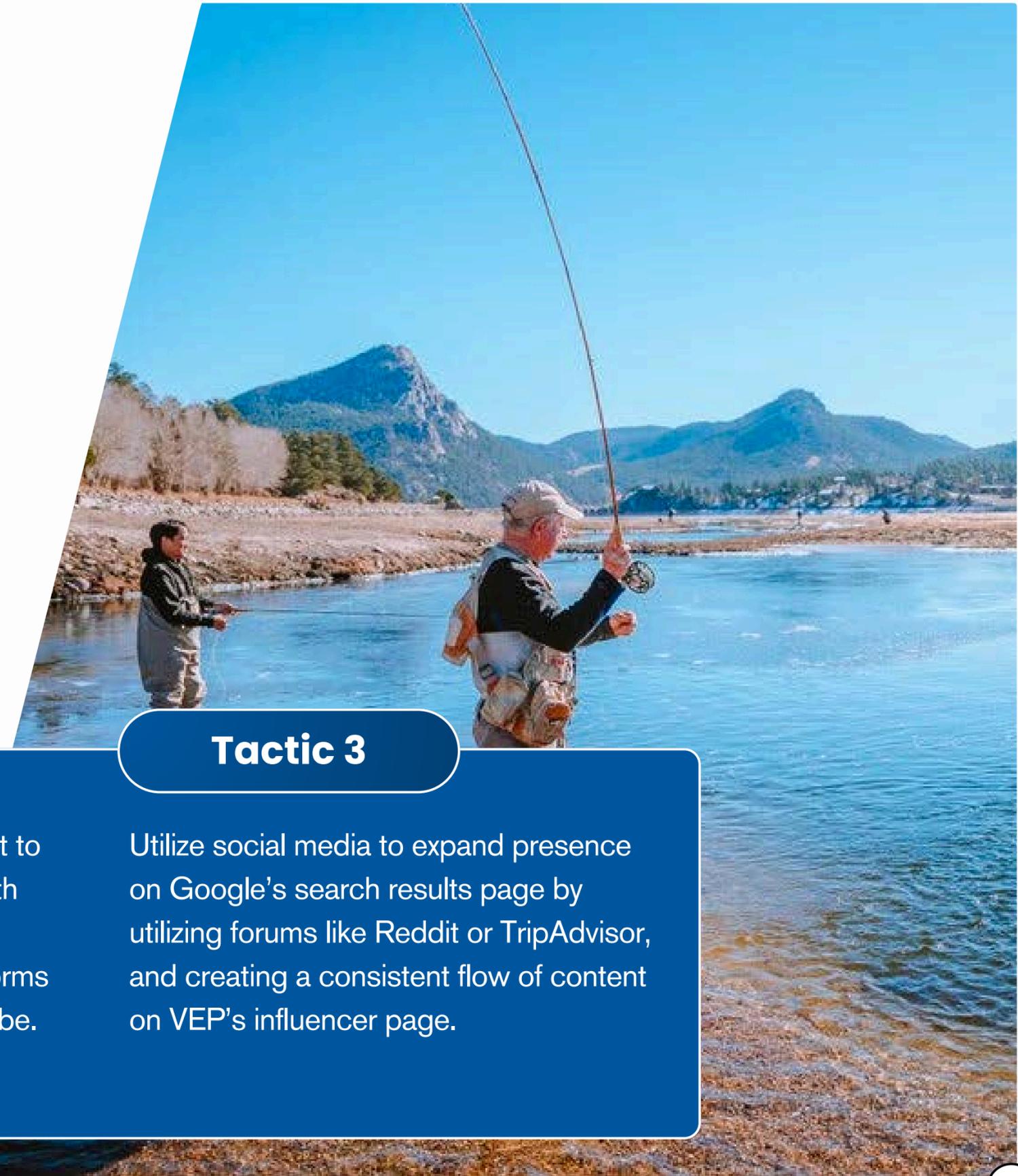
Social Media

Goal

Boost engagement to maximize reach across all social channels.

Strategy

Use key social media channels to drive awareness and create engagement with traveling consumers.



Tactic 1

Continue building a highly engaged community of followers by communicating regularly with them to influence and promote Visit Estes Park's Instagram, Facebook, X, TikTok, YouTube and LinkedIn accounts.

Tactic 2

Increase short-form video content to convey a sense of connection with the destination and to create a participation culture across platforms like TikTok, Instagram and YouTube.

Tactic 3

Utilize social media to expand presence on Google's search results page by utilizing forums like Reddit or TripAdvisor, and creating a consistent flow of content on VEP's influencer page.

Goal *Cont'd*

Boost engagement to maximize reach across all social channels.

Strategy *Cont'd*

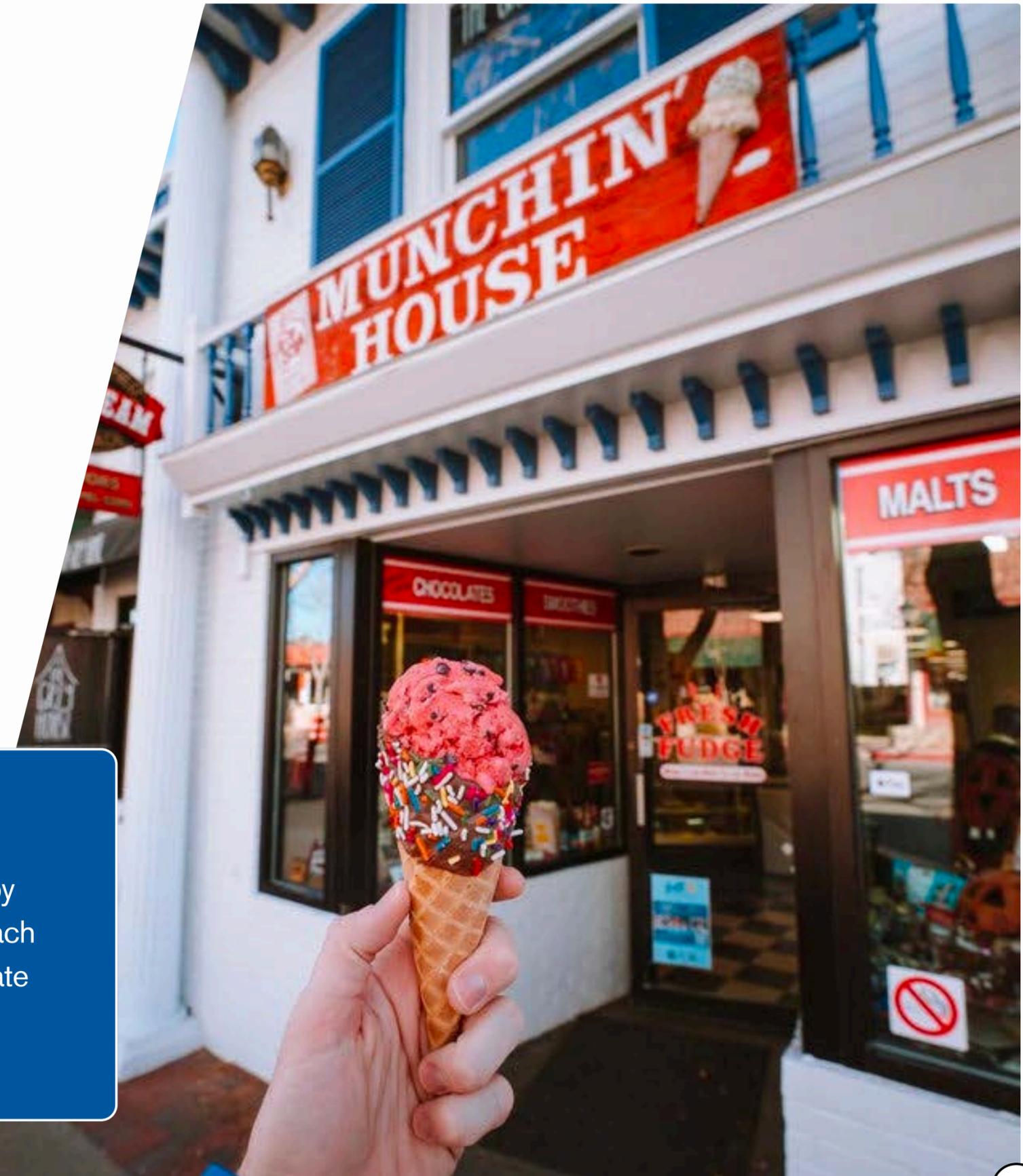
Use key social media channels to drive awareness and create engagement with traveling consumers.

Tactic 4

Highlight the Visit Estes Park team and board along with key stakeholders and their efforts on business-focused channels like LinkedIn.

Tactic 5

Use paid social media to reach our target markets and demographics by lifestyle preferences, expand the reach of marketing campaigns and generate awareness for destination events.





Public Relations

Goal

Earn coverage positioning Estes Park as an authentic, vibrant mountain town, offering sustainable recreation and dynamic activities to all.

Strategy

Communicate and emphasize all there is to see and do in Estes, including locally-owned shops you won't find anywhere else, exciting attractions, food for every taste and world-class recreational opportunities.

Tactic 1

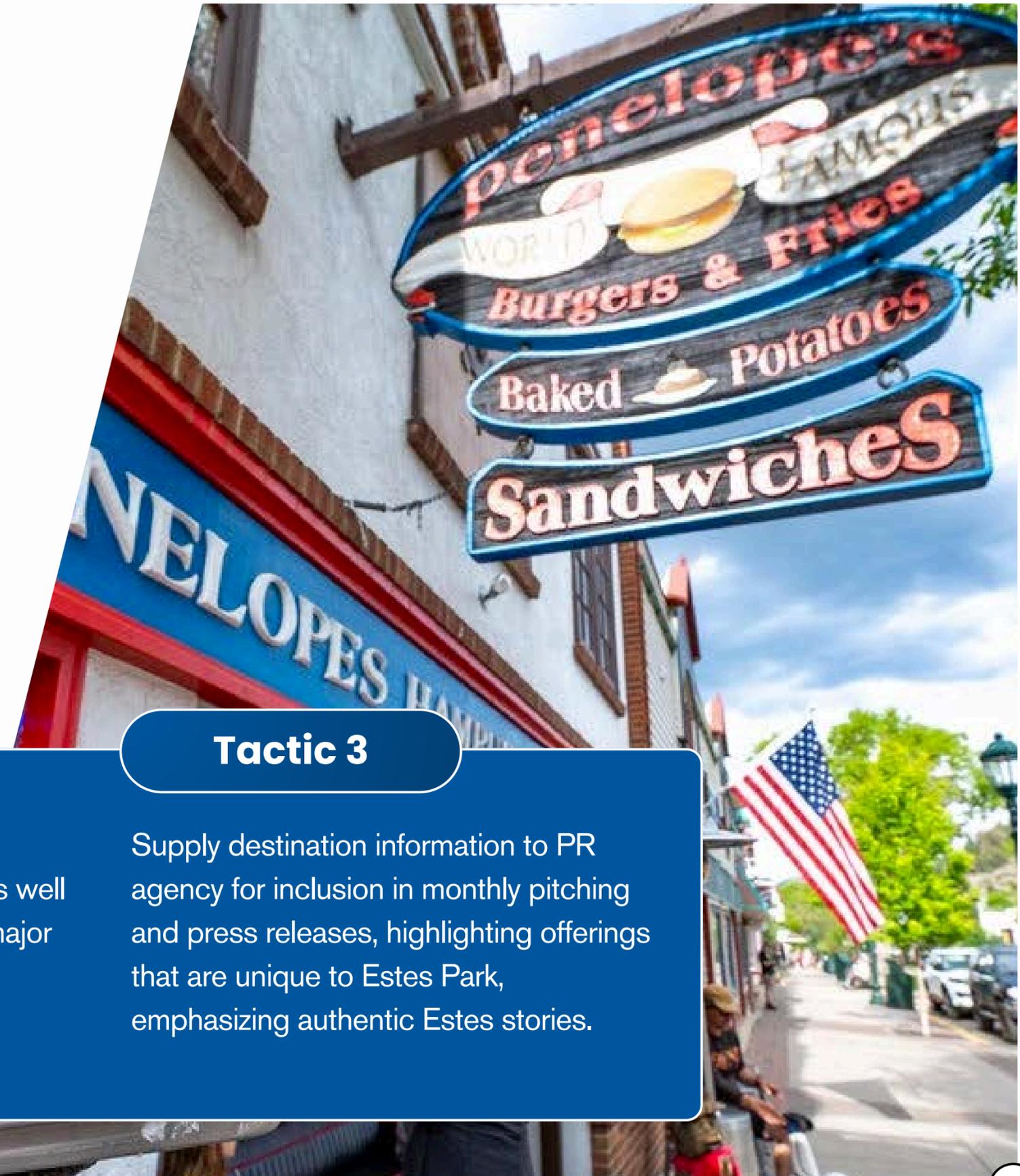
Host press trips, group FAMs and attend media marketplaces to develop and strengthen media relationships, including media from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Tactic 2

Write and distribute seasonal "what's new" press releases, as well as monthly press releases on major initiatives.

Tactic 3

Supply destination information to PR agency for inclusion in monthly pitching and press releases, highlighting offerings that are unique to Estes Park, emphasizing authentic Estes stories.



Goal *Cont'd*

Earn coverage positioning Estes Park as an authentic, vibrant mountain town, offering sustainable recreation and dynamic activities to all.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Communicate and emphasize all there is to see and do in Estes, including locally-owned shops you won't find anywhere else, exciting attractions, food for every taste and world-class recreational opportunities.

Tactic 4

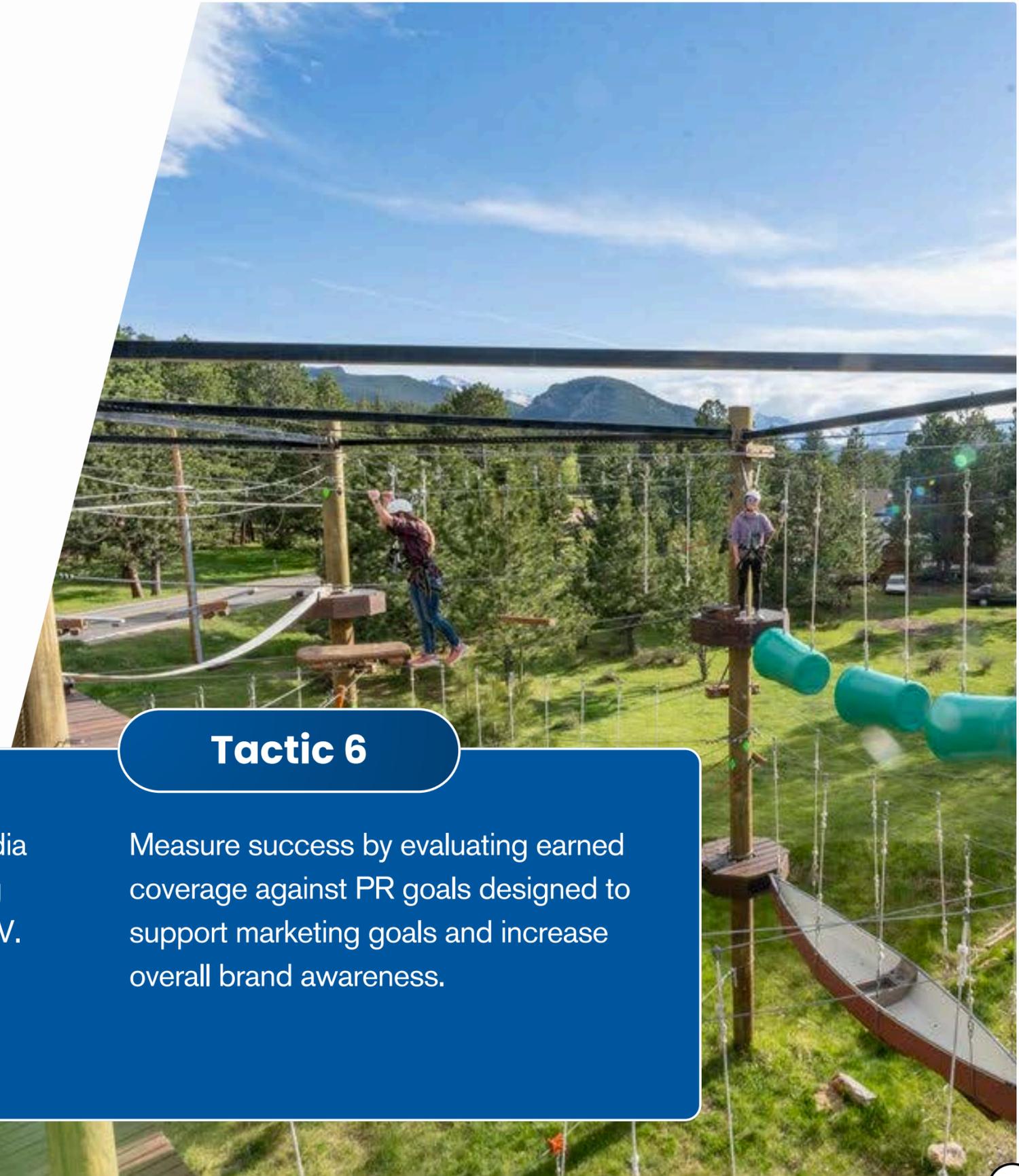
Continue to update the online newsroom and press kit collateral to meet journalist needs, including photo/video.

Tactic 5

Maintain an ongoing social media influencer program showcasing Estes Park from a firsthand POV.

Tactic 6

Measure success by evaluating earned coverage against PR goals designed to support marketing goals and increase overall brand awareness.



Goal

Increase national brand awareness of Estes Park.

Strategy

- A. Leverage national travel trends to increase national brand awareness.
- B. Create newsworthy communications of Estes Park's seasonal offerings to drive year-round media interest and coverage.

Tactic 1

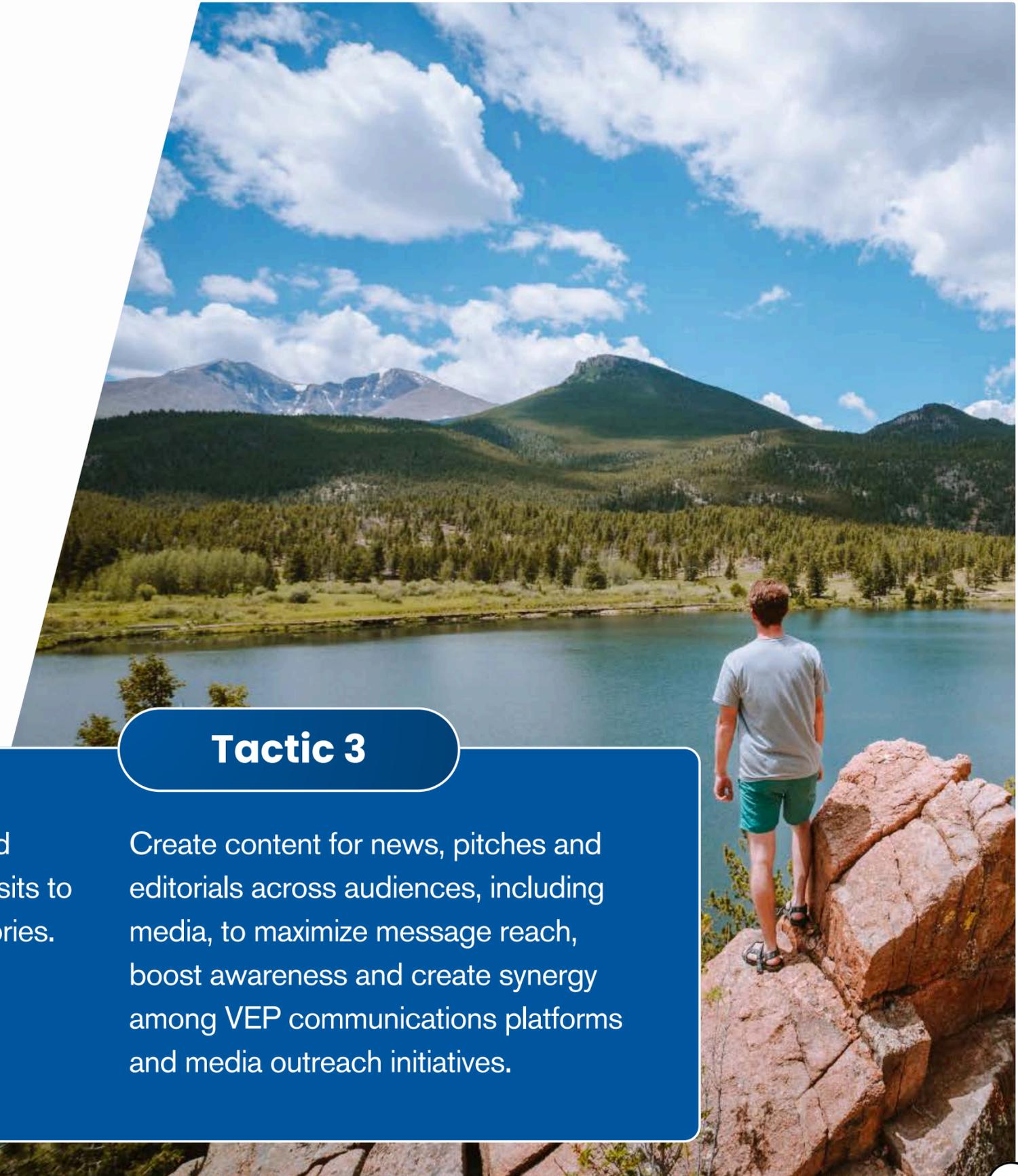
Attend PR events and media marketplaces to connect with publications reaching our target audiences.

Tactic 2

Develop engaging, personalized itineraries for individual press visits to facilitate authentic, firsthand stories.

Tactic 3

Create content for news, pitches and editorials across audiences, including media, to maximize message reach, boost awareness and create synergy among VEP communications platforms and media outreach initiatives.



Goal

Increase international brand awareness of Estes Park.

Strategy

Leverage Colorado Tourism Office partnerships to increase brand awareness on an international level.

Tactic 1

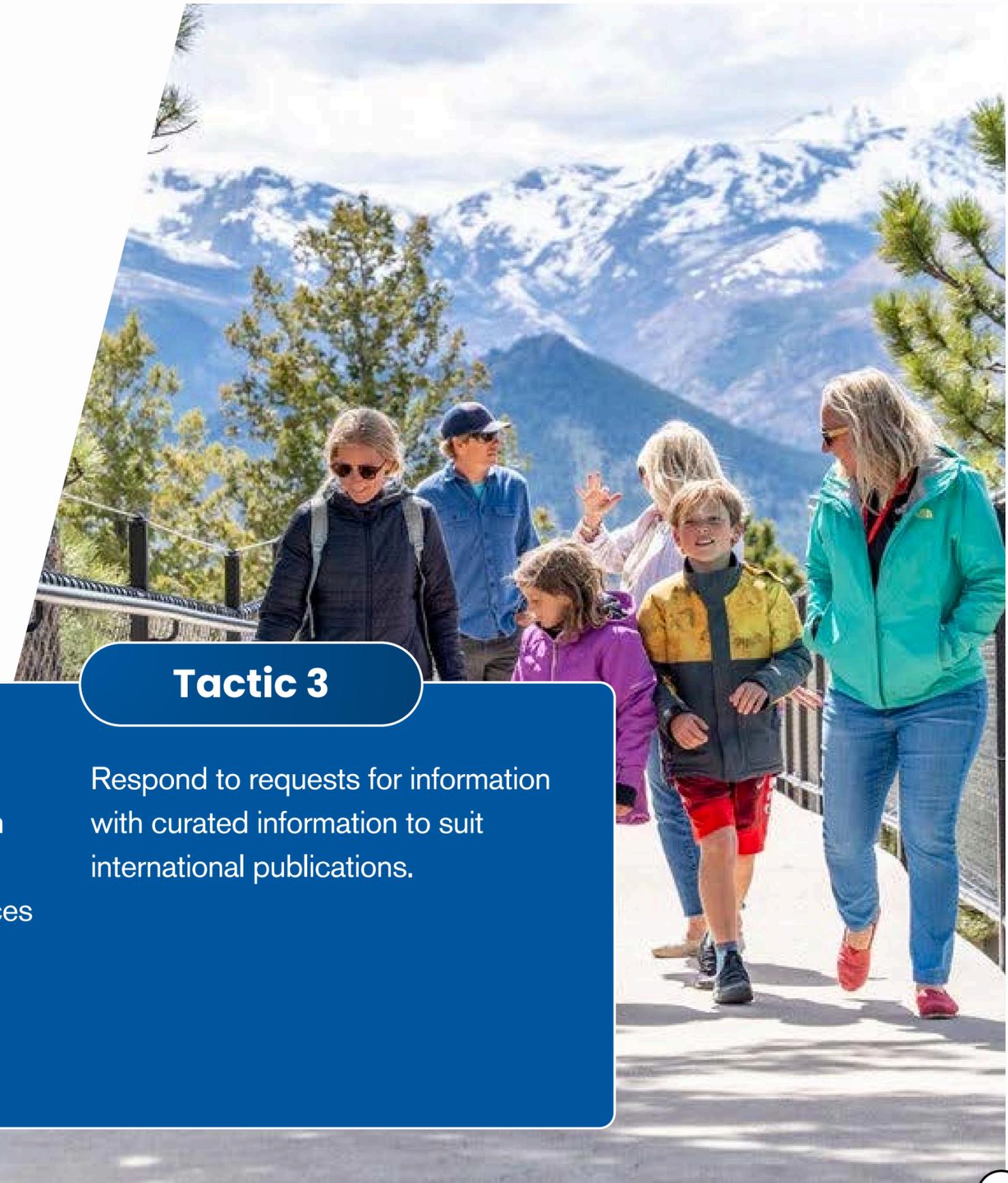
Develop a deeper understanding of Estes Park's top international markets and what inspires them to visit the destination. Attend Colorado Tourism Office calls and media missions reaching target international markets. Include the international team on VEP's media list.

Tactic 2

Participate in hosting press trips arranged by the Colorado Tourism Office to provide international journalists with firsthand experiences in the destination.

Tactic 3

Respond to requests for information with curated information to suit international publications.





Tourism Advocacy & Community Relations

Goal

Establish and strengthen partner relationships with Visit Estes Park.

Strategy

Support partners through education, connection and staff resource support and track personal communication in the CRM portal.

Tactic 1

Host an annual open-house event that provides partners with OLIVE training.

Tactic 2

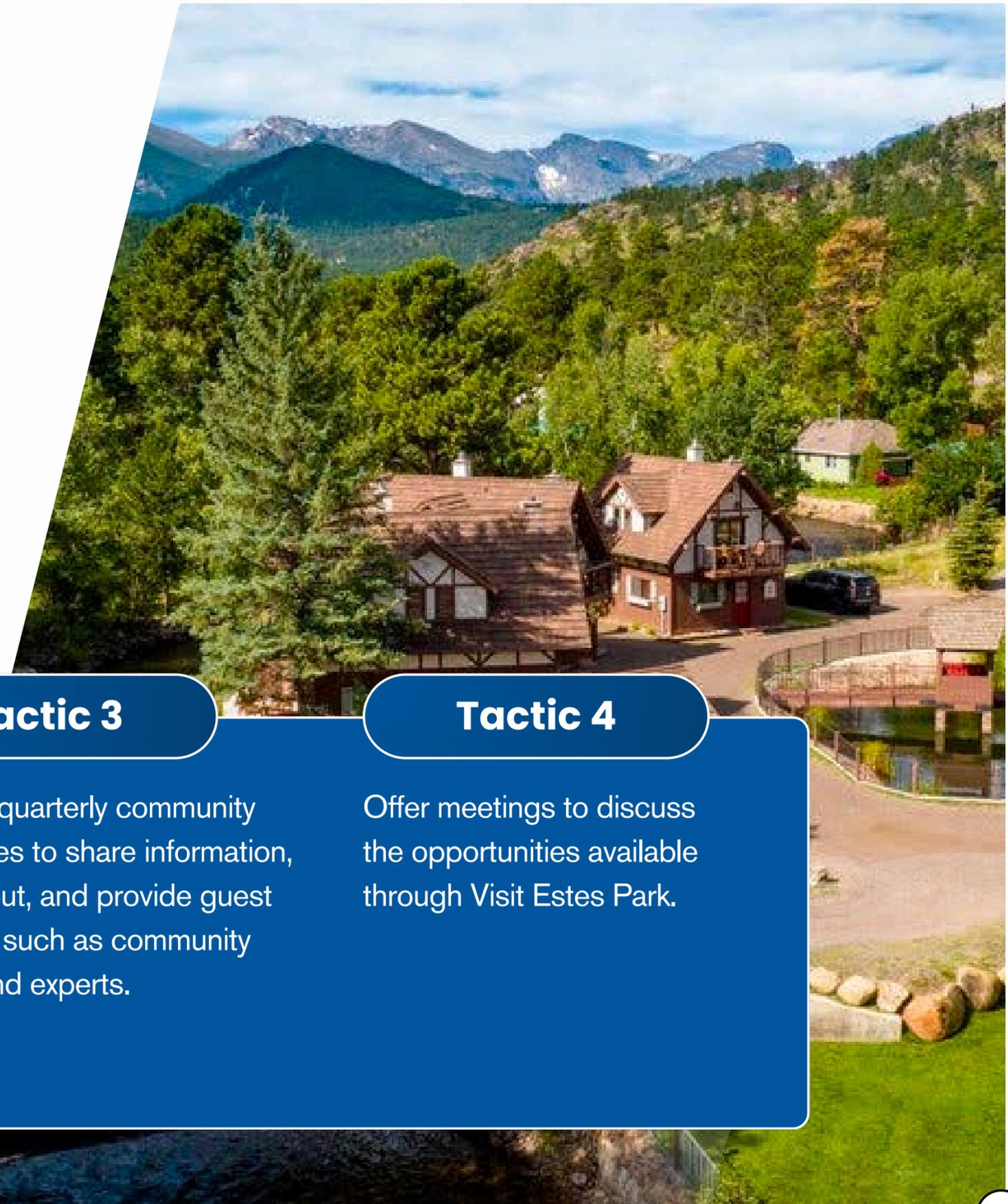
Host DTN to connect partners with advertising opportunities.

Tactic 3

Organize quarterly community roundtables to share information, gather input, and provide guest speakers, such as community leaders and experts.

Tactic 4

Offer meetings to discuss the opportunities available through Visit Estes Park.



Goal *Cont'd*

Establish and strengthen partner relationships with Visit Estes Park.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Support partners through education, connection and staff resource support.



Tactic 5

Engage partners in the Beyond Program.

Tactic 6

Continue to offer the Visit Estes Park sponsorship program to provide financial and in-kind marketing support for community and Town of Estes Park events and projects. See a list of [2023 sponsored events here](#).

Tactic 7

Host a state of the tourism industry event that allows for two-way dialogue.

Tactic 8

Maintain an increased presence at Estes Park and Larimer County events to serve as a community resource and demonstrate support during events.

Goal *Cont'd*

Establish and strengthen partner relationships with Visit Estes Park.

Strategy

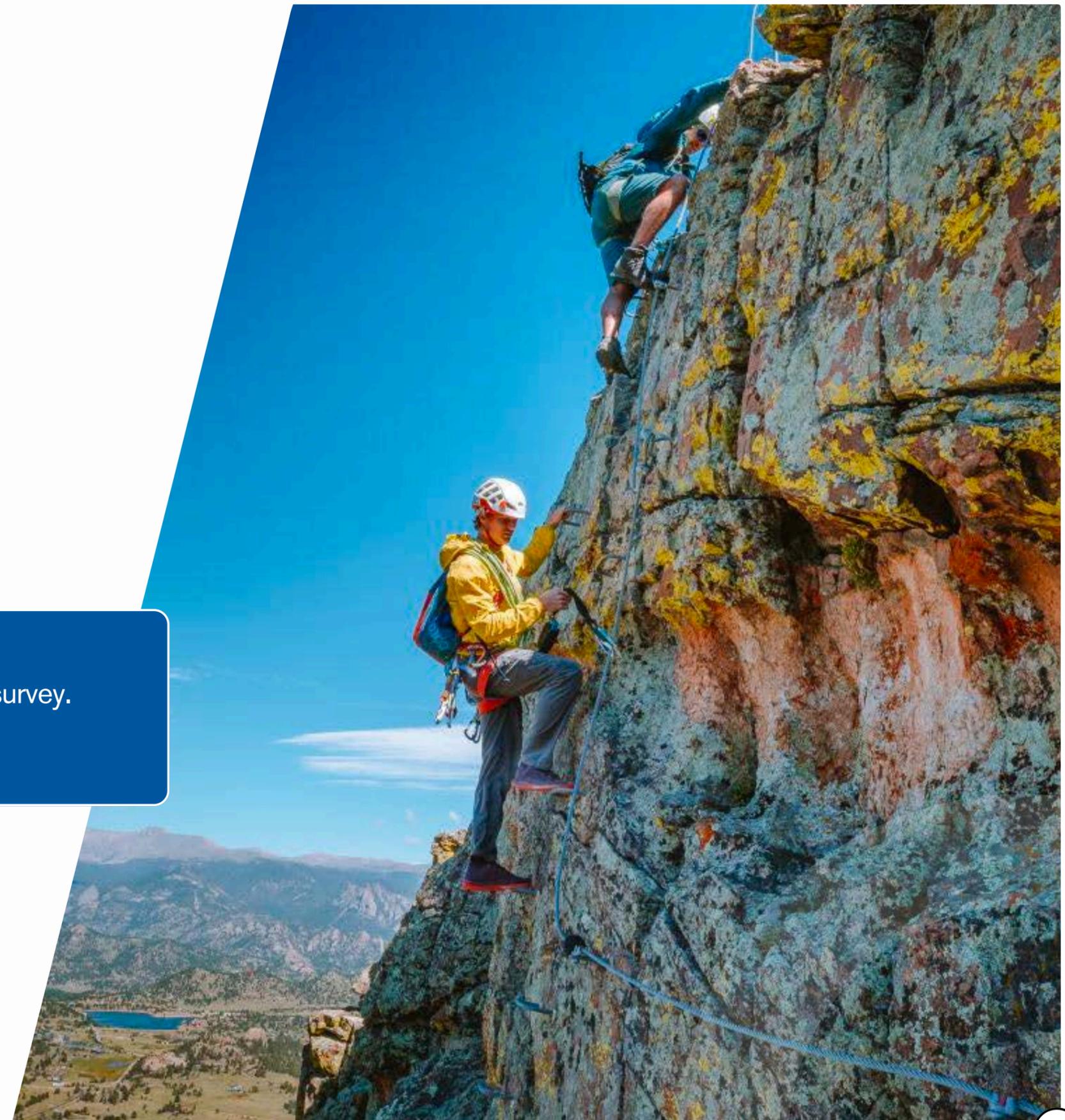
Benchmark resident and partner tourism sentiment.

Tactic 1

Conduct a resident sentiment survey.

Tactic 2

Conduct a partner sentiment survey.



Goal *Cont'd*

Establish and strengthen partner relationships with Visit Estes Park.

Strategy

Champion the community's interesting programs and local businesses' inclusion and sustainability efforts to Visit Estes Park audiences.

Tactic 1

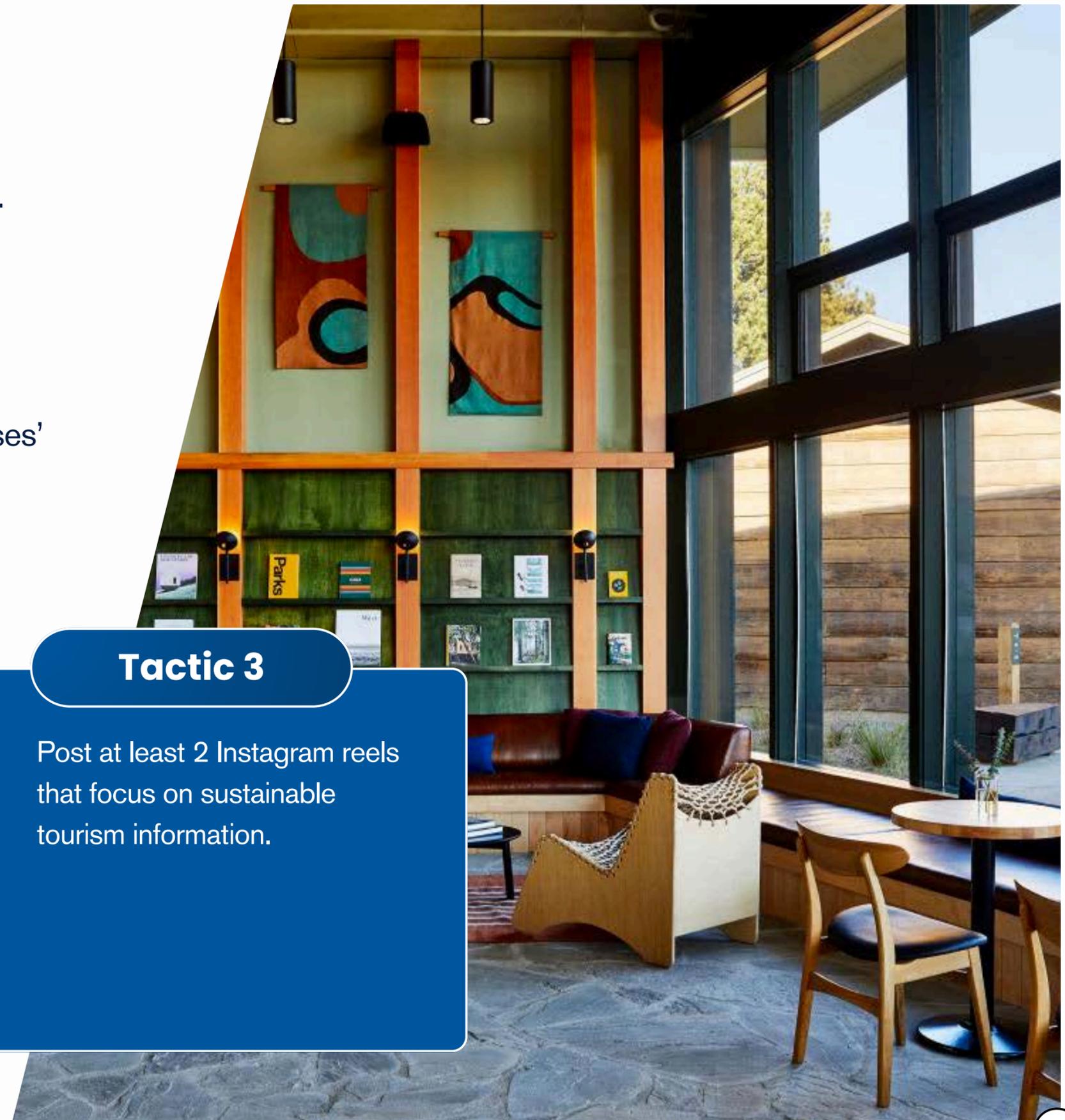
Post at least six blogs showcasing the interesting and admirable things local tourism businesses and organizations do.

Tactic 2

Post at least 12 Facebook posts that focus on sustainable tourism messages.

Tactic 3

Post at least 2 Instagram reels that focus on sustainable tourism information.



Goal

Communicate Visit Estes Park initiatives and programs to the community.

Strategy

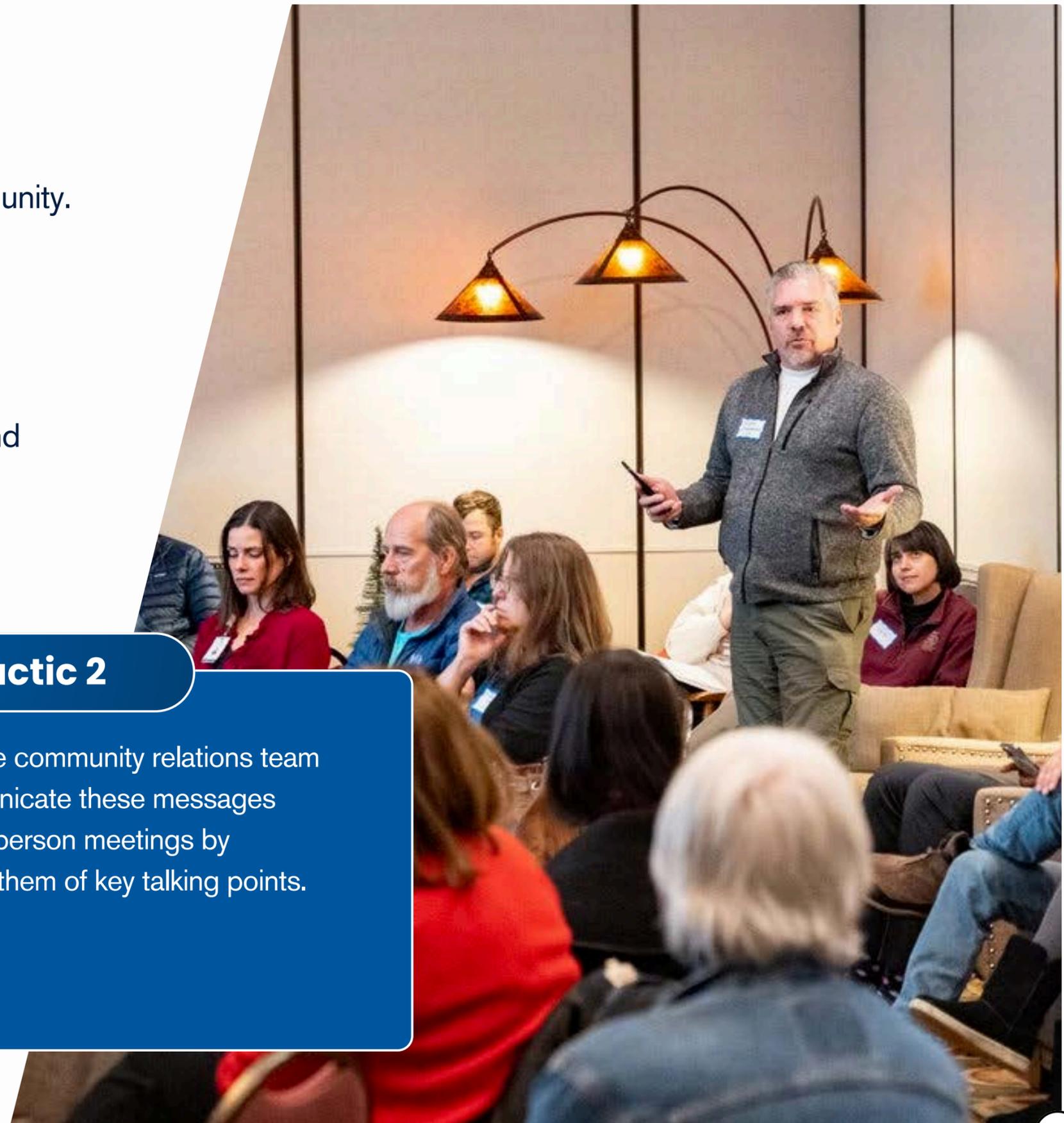
Reach the Estes Park community through written communication and in-person interactions.

Tactic 1

Develop a robust editorial calendar that leverages written content and video content distributed through advertorials in the local newspapers, Visit Estes Park's stakeholder e-newsletters, the Visit Estes Park Partners Facebook Group, press releases and the partner's pages on VisitEstesPark.com.

Tactic 2

Enable the community relations team to communicate these messages during in-person meetings by informing them of key talking points.



Goal

Leverage data to advocate for tourism in Estes Park.

Strategy

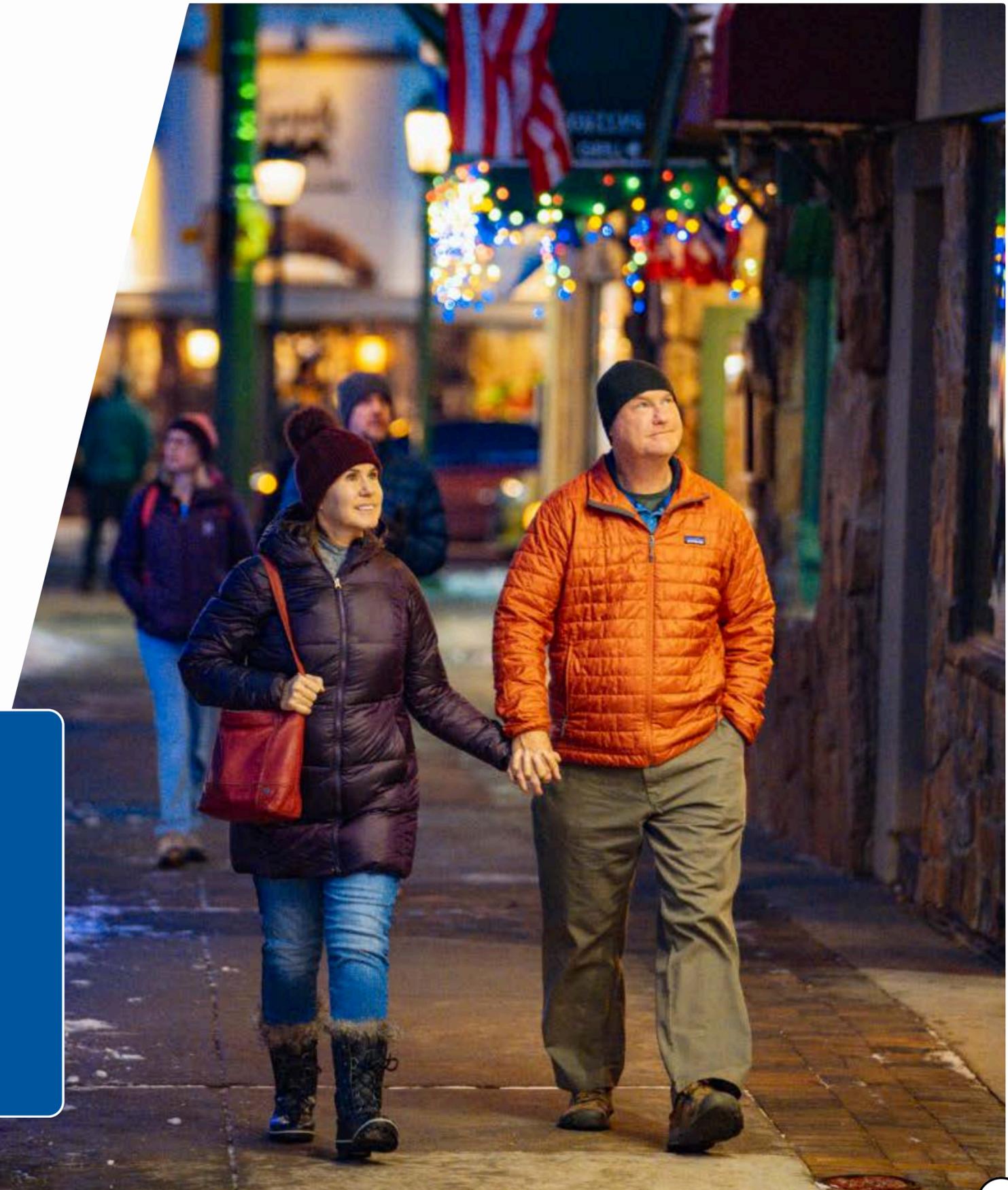
Develop a program to demonstrate the value of tourism to partners and residents using data.

Tactic 1

Incorporate monthly messaging into partner newsletters and Partners Facebook Group posts.

Tactic 2

Develop a partner communication program to share personalized data with individual businesses.



Goal

Prioritize partnerships within the Estes Valley, Larimer County and the state of Colorado.

Strategy

Collaborate with Northern Colorado partners on initiatives and projects that will lift the region.

Tactic 1

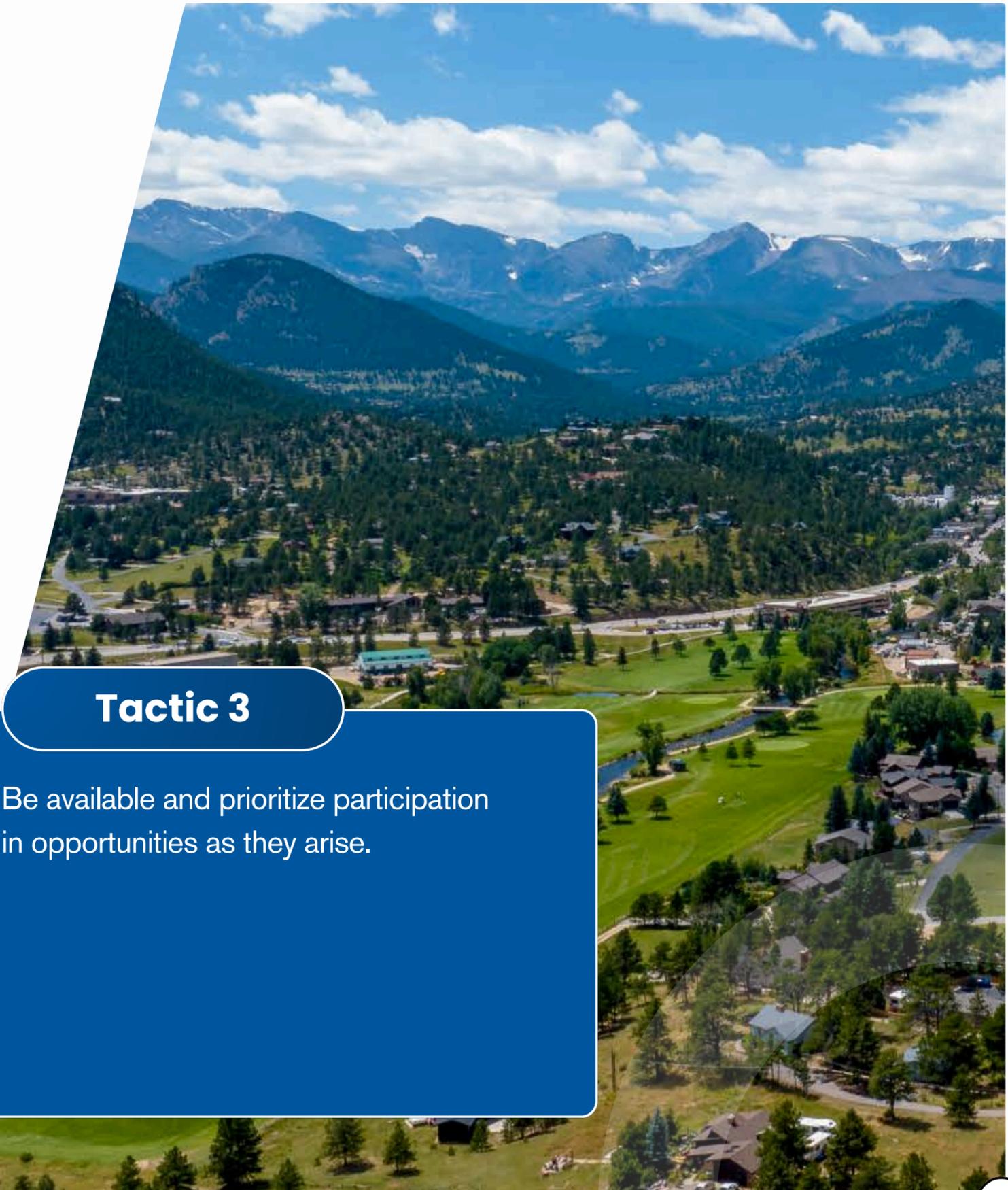
Participate in Northern Colorado winter marketing campaigns.

Tactic 2

Participate in Northern Colorado international travel trade familiarization tours and international promotion efforts like IPW.

Tactic 3

Be available and prioritize participation in opportunities as they arise.



Goal *Cont'd*

Prioritize partnerships within the Estes Valley, Larimer County and the state of Colorado.

Strategy

Continue to develop relationships with Roosevelt National Forest, Hermit Park Open Space, Rocky Mountain National Park Visitor Centers and Colorado Welcome Centers.

Tactic 1

Request biannual meetings with each organization to share information, explore how we can work together and report on shared projects.

Tactic 2

Host FAM tour with Colorado Welcome Center staff so they can better market our destination.



Goal *Cont'd*

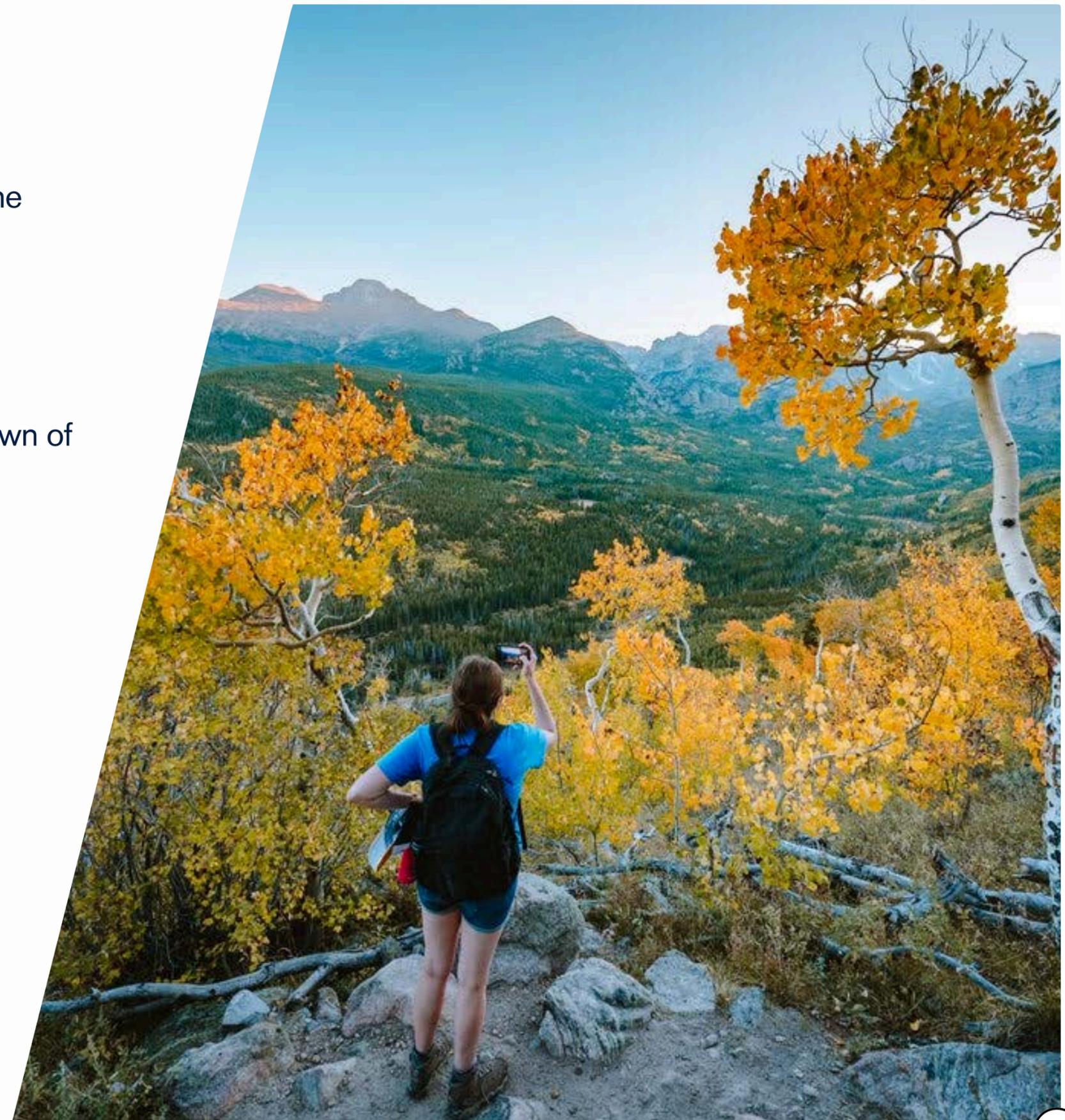
Prioritize partnerships within the Estes Valley, Larimer County and the state of Colorado.

Strategy

Strengthen relationships with Rocky Mountain National Park, the Town of Estes Park, Larimer County and the Estes Park Visitor Center.

Tactic 1

Continue building value in partnerships with these organizations, while regularly pursuing and developing effective ways to collaborate.





Sales & Services

Goal

Boost the number of travel trade bookings and sales both domestically and internationally.

Strategy

Participate in relevant domestic and international trade shows, conferences and industry events to connect with travel trade professionals and showcase Estes Park's offerings.

Tactic 1

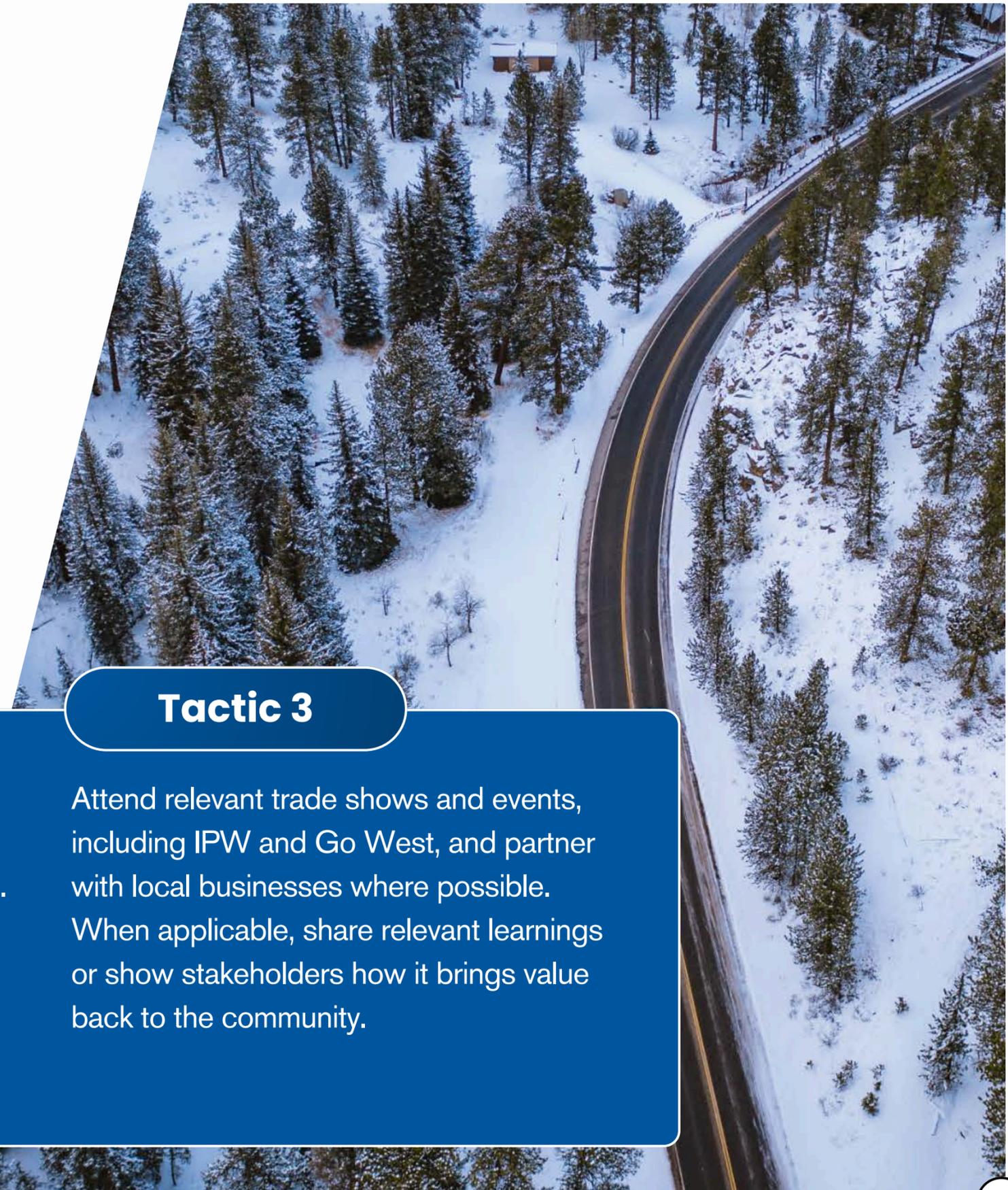
Build and maintain relationships with key travel trade partners, nurturing existing partnerships and exploring new collaboration opportunities. Connect partners with key receptive international operators in order to get them listed as participating hotels/lodges with static rates.

Tactic 2

Work with the Colorado Tourism Office to host domestic and international travel/trade FAM tours.

Tactic 3

Attend relevant trade shows and events, including IPW and Go West, and partner with local businesses where possible. When applicable, share relevant learnings or show stakeholders how it brings value back to the community.

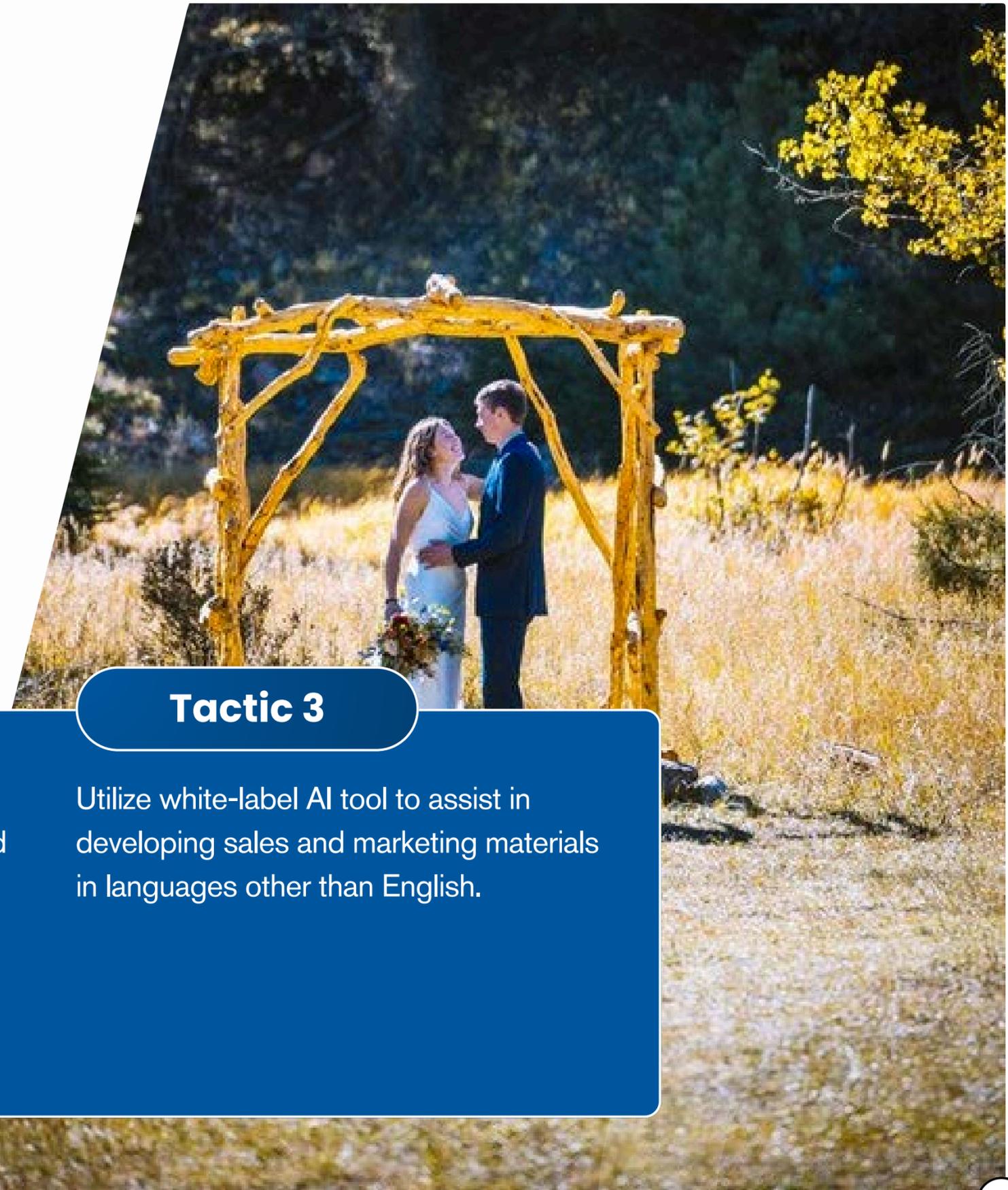


Goal *Cont'd*

Boost the number of travel trade bookings and sales both domestically and internationally.

Strategy

Develop compelling sales and marketing materials, including wedding and group/conference materials, itineraries, videos, and other online content, highlighting Estes Park's selling points.



Tactic 1

Create a comprehensive travel trade webpage with relevant information, resources, and tools specifically designed for travel trade partners, with a focus on group, wedding, and international travel.

Tactic 2

Utilize digital marketing channels to reach travel trade professionals and generate leads.

Tactic 3

Utilize white-label AI tool to assist in developing sales and marketing materials in languages other than English.

Goal *Cont'd*

Boost the number of travel trade bookings and sales both domestically and internationally.

Strategy

Encourage local businesses to increase travel trade inventory and encourage destination development opportunities.

Tactic 1

Provide education and training opportunities for local businesses to familiarize themselves with the travel trade industry and Visit Estes Park resources.

Tactic 2

Connect lodgers and attractions with receptive tour operators in order to contract, build and sell itineraries to the international traveler.



Goal

Increase the number of group bookings for meetings, conferences, reunions, weddings and events, encouraging occupancy during need periods.

Strategy

Participate in relevant trade shows, conferences and industry events to connect with meeting and event professionals and showcase Estes Park's offerings.

Tactic 1

Attend networking and educational events to connect with meeting planners and industry professionals.

Tactic 2

Renew and engage with industry groups that provide quality leads and RFPs.

Tactic 3

Attend valuable trade shows to grow meeting planner connections and collect leads for follow-up.



Goal *Cont'd*

Increase the number of group bookings for meetings, conferences, reunions, weddings and events, encouraging occupancy during need periods.

Strategy

Collaborate with local businesses to create a comprehensive network of event services and facilitate seamless planning for group bookings.



Tactic 1

Facilitate recurring and one-off educational events to empower partner businesses to engage with groups.

Tactic 2

Attend local wedding association and alliance meetings to connect with partners and stay informed.

Tactic 3

Establish strong partnerships with local wedding and event planners, offering them incentives or referral programs, when it makes sense, to bring their clients to Estes Park.

Tactic 4

Sponsor and host a familiarization trip in partnership with the Wedding Industry Professional Association (WIPA) to garner industry-wide exposure through firsthand experiences.

Goal *Cont'd*

Increase the number of group bookings for meetings, conferences, reunions, weddings and events, encouraging occupancy during need periods.

Strategy

Design marketing campaigns specifically tailored to reach meeting and event planners.

Tactic 1

Optimize website's meeting and event pages and online listings to highlight group, wedding and reunion offerings.

Tactic 2

Concentrate efforts on markets that are a good fit for Estes Park.



Goal *Cont'd*

Increase the number of group bookings for meetings, conferences, reunions, weddings and events, encouraging occupancy during need periods.

Strategy *Cont'd*

Design marketing campaigns specifically tailored to reach meeting and event planners.

Tactic 3

Produce group/wedding focused video and photography assets for use in sales pitch efforts and at trade shows.

Tactic 4

Promote specials, discounts and value-added packages specifically for mid-week, shoulder seasons and other need periods.

Tactic 5

Showcase testimonials from meetings and events held in Estes Park.





Finance & Administration



Key Organizational Goals

- Ensure adherence to financial and budgetary regulations and requirements.
- Foster a productive, fulfilling work environment for employees.
- Ensure that equipment, technology, and facilities adequately support the organization's needs.
- Empower the organization with comprehensive data and insights to facilitate informed decision-making.
- Continue to provide a transparent and accountable budgeting process.

See the outcome of last year's goals in our [2023 Annual Report](#).

Goal

Ensure that Visit Estes Park aligns its financial and budgetary practices with the standards established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and adheres to best practices identified by other Destination Marketing Organizations.

Strategy

Continue to adhere to and enhance established financial data reporting systems where applicable.



Tactic 1

Follow the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) by promptly addressing all public records requests.

Tactic 2

Create and execute an annual budget that corresponds with the organization's strategic and operational objectives.

Tactic 3

Produce precise and timely financial statements to assist the board and management in making well-informed decisions regarding the organization's financial matters.

Goal

Establish a work environment that is positive and supportive, ensuring employees feel valued and acknowledged.

Strategy

Align human resources practices with the organization's strategic goals.

Tactic 1

Ensure access to training programs that focus on enhancing employees' skills and knowledge relevant to their job responsibilities.

Tactic 2

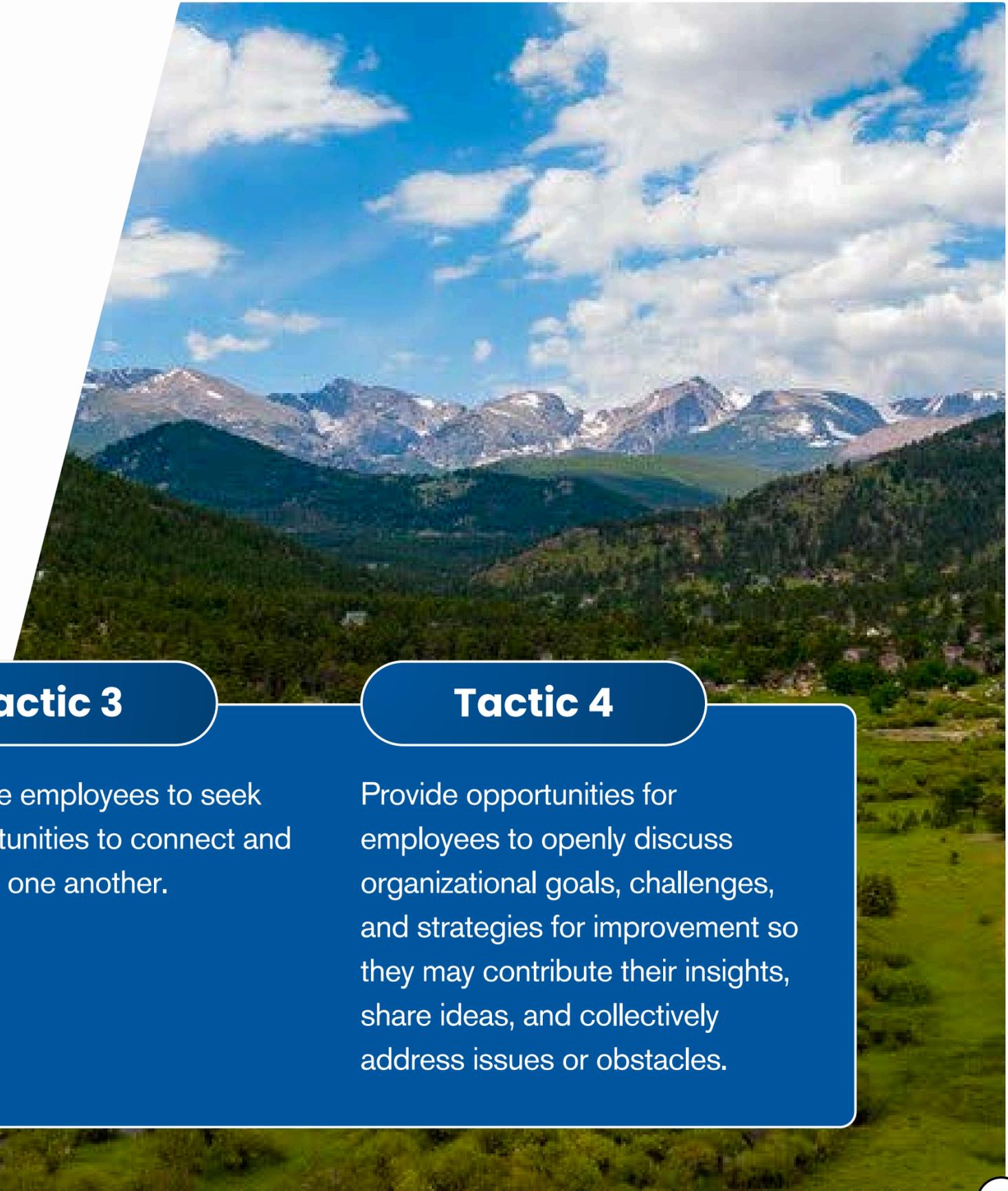
Provide a work environment that encourages continuous learning and growth which allows employees to seek out new challenges and opportunities to enhance their skills.

Tactic 3

Encourage employees to seek out opportunities to connect and learn from one another.

Tactic 4

Provide opportunities for employees to openly discuss organizational goals, challenges, and strategies for improvement so they may contribute their insights, share ideas, and collectively address issues or obstacles.



Goal

Make sure Visit Estes Park has the essential equipment, technology, and facilities to efficiently conduct its operations.

Strategy

Collaborate with all departments to optimize the delivery of support services, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness.

Tactic 1

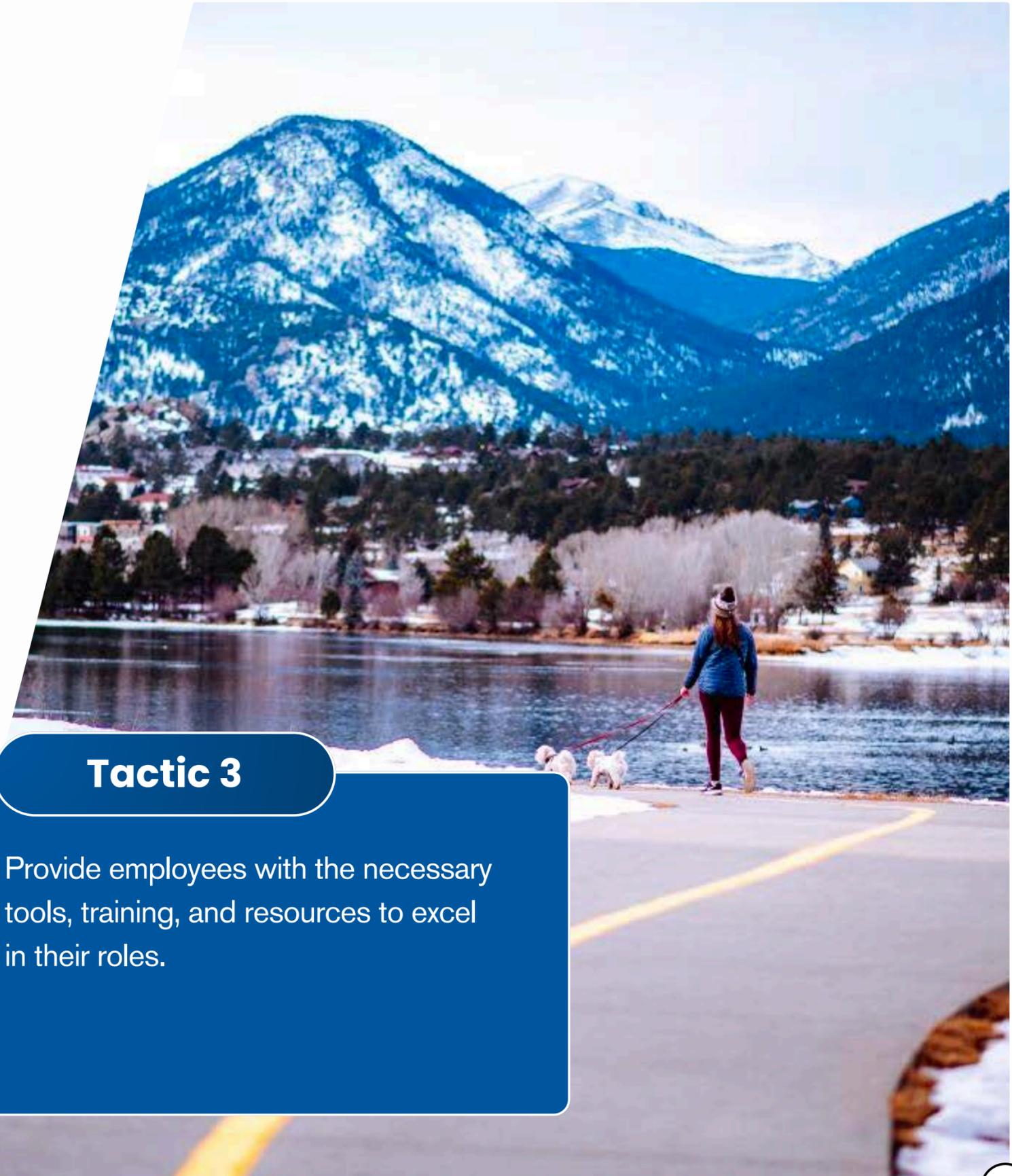
Embrace innovative technology solutions to optimize efficiency and effectiveness in our operations.

Tactic 2

Implement process improvement initiatives to eliminate bottlenecks and simplify workflows.

Tactic 3

Provide employees with the necessary tools, training, and resources to excel in their roles.



Goal

Establish a culture within the organization that is driven by data.

Strategy

Assist staff and stakeholders in utilizing various data sources, enabling data-driven decisions.

Tactic 1

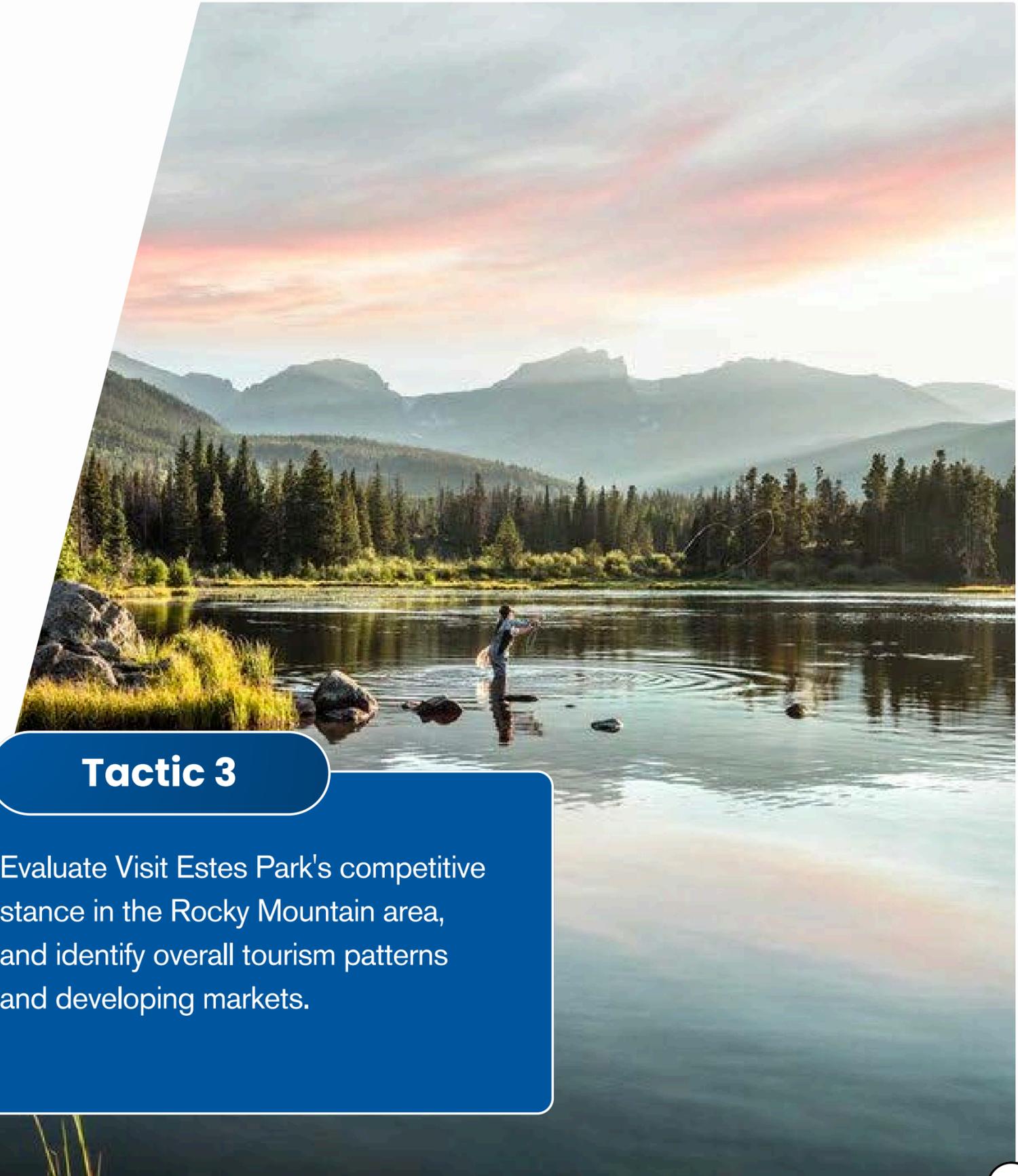
Assist Visit Estes Park staff by offering research and insights to support their decision-making for marketing and tourism projects.

Tactic 2

Collaborate with a Data Dashboard provider to establish a system that displays all relevant data clearly and concisely.

Tactic 3

Evaluate Visit Estes Park's competitive stance in the Rocky Mountain area, and identify overall tourism patterns and developing markets.

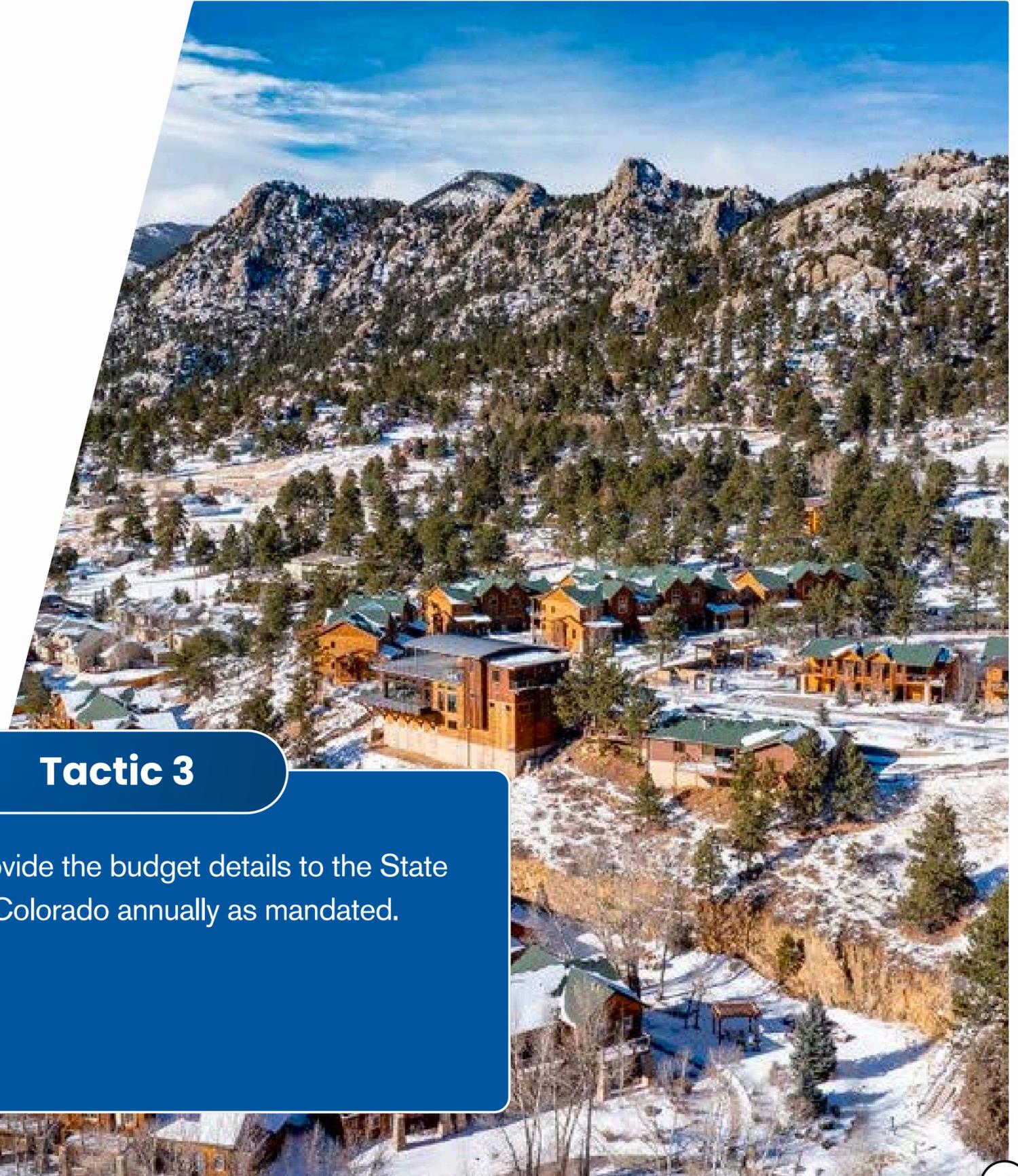


Goal

Create a transparent and accountable budget that aligns with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GASB) and industry standards.

Strategy

Establish a budget that is meaningful and beneficial for Visit Estes Park stakeholders.



Tactic 1

Work with all departments to establish the budgetary needs of the organization.

Tactic 2

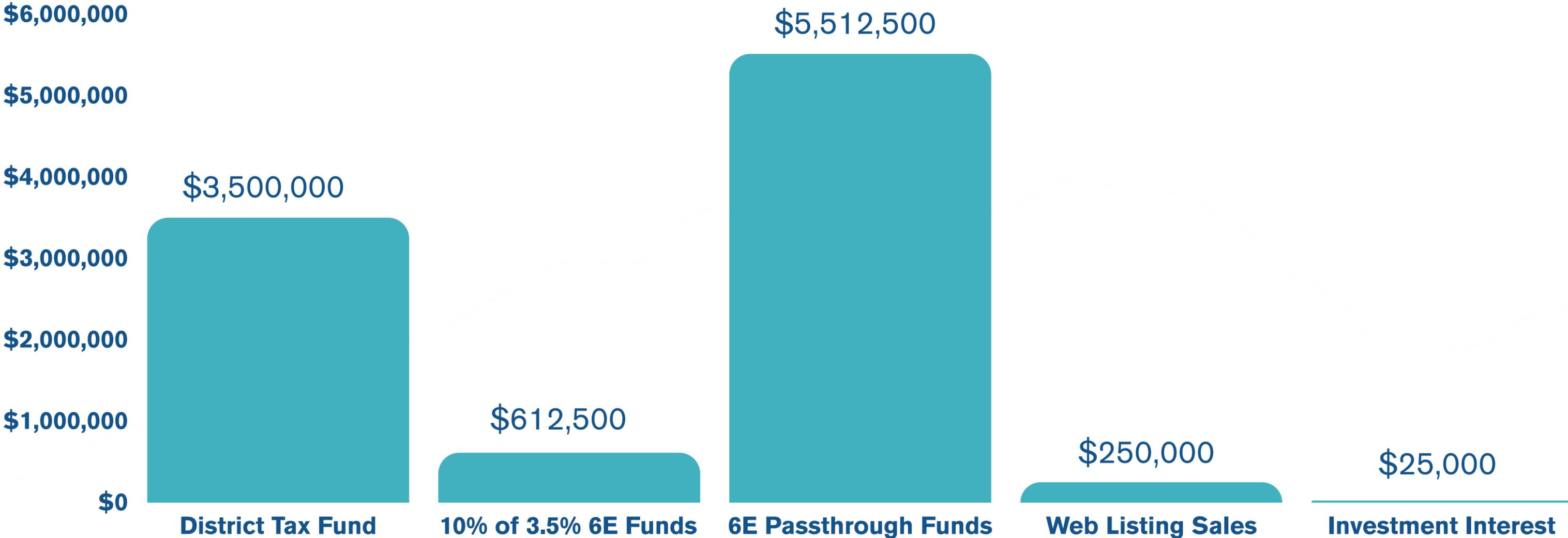
Incorporate flexibility into the budgeting system to streamline future years processes.

Tactic 3

Provide the budget details to the State of Colorado annually as mandated.

Operating Revenues: \$4,387,500

Total Budgeted Revenues: \$9,900,000



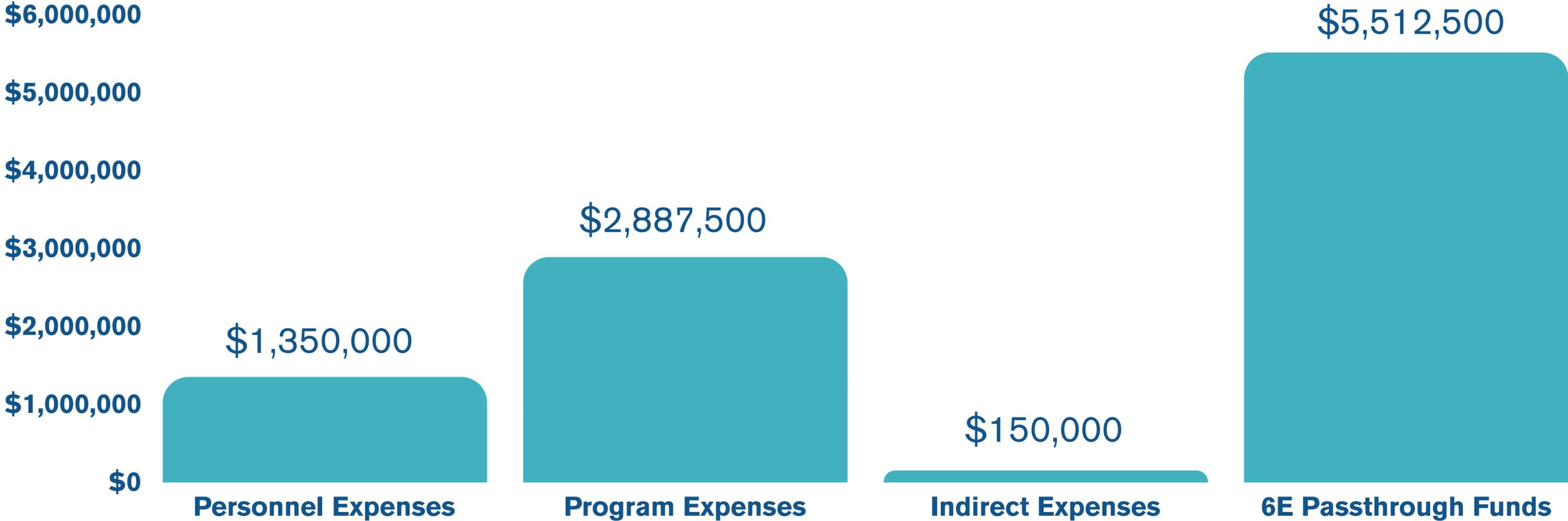
Lodging tax on stays less than 30 days in the District boundaries.
VEP receives the 2% base district tax fund, plus retains 10% of the 6E 3.5% incremental tax increase for marketing purposes.
The remaining 90% of the 6E funds are forwarded by VEP to the Town of Estes Park for workforce housing and childcare initiatives.

Income from paid placement on VisitEstesPark.com

Interest earned from reserve funds

Operating Expenses: \$4,387,500

Total Budgeted Expenses: \$9,900,000



Key Terms

Destination Stewardship

Colorado Tourism Office's official definition of destination stewardship is that it is "a transformational holistic approach that seeks to find harmony between quality of life for residents and a strong visitor economy while protecting our cultural and natural resources."

Responsible Tourism

According to the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO), responsible tourism is important because "[w]ith many Colorado residents voicing concerns about the impacts of travelers on special places and natural resources, the [CTO] Roadmap's steward pillar laid the groundwork for a new partnership aimed at protecting what makes Colorado such a special destination. As part of this initiative, the Colorado Tourism Office is encouraging travelers to explore off-peak seasons and less-visited destinations, while inspiring them to travel like a local, engage in voluntourism and support causes important to Coloradans."

Values-Based Approach

Additionally, Destination International makes the case that "words matter in politics, and those words need to be chosen carefully. If we are going to be successful in changing the narrative surrounding our industry, it starts with a values-based approach. That means talking to stakeholders in a manner that is simple and emotional and connects their values to your organization. In this policy brief, we demonstrate why our industry must utilize a new tourism vocabulary to connect with stakeholders in a meaningful way and better illustrate the value of destination organizations."

Key Terms

Travel Trade

Travel Trade is a tourism term referring to tour operators, travel agents, receptive operators and wholesalers. These professionals organize and contract to buy travel products to sell to groups or individuals. Typically located in the market they are selling to, the travel trade have an intimate knowledge of traveler interests and motivations, and promote tourism experiences and vacations.

BookDirect Lodging Referral

BookDirect lodging referrals are user referrals sent from VisitEstesPark.com's BookDirect booking engine directly to stakeholder booking engines. Referrals occur once a website user performs a search in the VEP BookDirect booking widget, reviews rates on the BookDirect results page and then clicks to be referred to a stakeholder website for more information or to complete their booking.

Paid Media Impressions

An ad impression is counted whenever an ad is displayed and seen on a website, social media, mobile application, digital newspaper or other digital source.

Earned Media Impressions

Earned media impressions refer to the total number of times an earned media article is likely to be seen by an audience; this includes views from various platforms including online news sites and social media shares. Public relations professionals use verified measurement tools that provide analytics to help track the reach and impact of earned media content.

Additional Opportunities

In order to continue in our mission of supporting economic vitality, Visit Estes Park may pursue additional opportunities, within the statutory authority of the District, that may present themselves, subject to budget appropriations & board approval.



Visit Estes Park Staff

