



2021 Visit Estes Park

OPERATING PLAN





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Executive Summary

The Visit Estes Park Local Marketing District, DBA Visit Estes Park (VEP) is a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) and lodging tax district. Following is the 2021 operating plan for use of lodging tax dollars collected for this statutory district.

Within it readers will find:

- Key ideas that were foundational to the creation of this operating plan and are a driving force of the VEP mission and vision
- Audiences and goals
- Colorado Tourism Office data and research supporting VEP's goals
- A high-level outline of VEP goals, objectives and metrics used to measure success
- An overview of the expected variance between 2020 and 2021 budgets
- A letter from the CEO
- The 2021 budget

The plan reflects careful consideration of the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic has had, and will have, on demand and budget in the coming year, as well as our vision to positively affect the quality of life for our community through our execution of it.

Mission

We drive sustainable year-round economic growth by encouraging visitor demand.

Vision

To offer positive and memorable experiences for guests and quality of life for our community.

Key ideas, audiences and goals

Colorado's Original Playground

Our tagline. It reflects the fact that the Estes Valley was founded on leisure, recreation and adventure travel, and evokes the feeling that the best of Colorado exists – in its purest form – in Estes Park.

Sustainable Tourism

We seek to inform and educate visitors and potential guests on the Colorado Tourism Office's Leave No Trace principles so they can join the Estes Park community in preserving the forests that surround us for future generations, and contribute to the sustainability of our community.

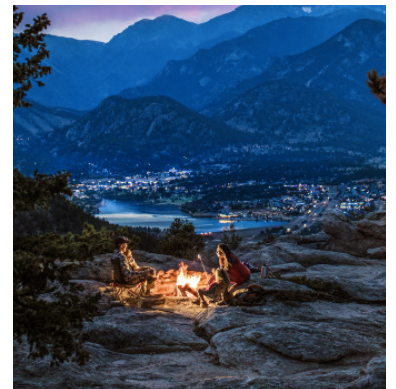
High Quality Guests

We strive to attract high-quality guests; this is not a “come one, come all” approach. Our strategy encourages guests to stay longer and spend more, while our content educates them on all Estes Park has to offer in order to spread visitation throughout the area and throughout the year.

These guests will make greater contributions to the economic vitality of our town, positively affecting the quality of life of our community.

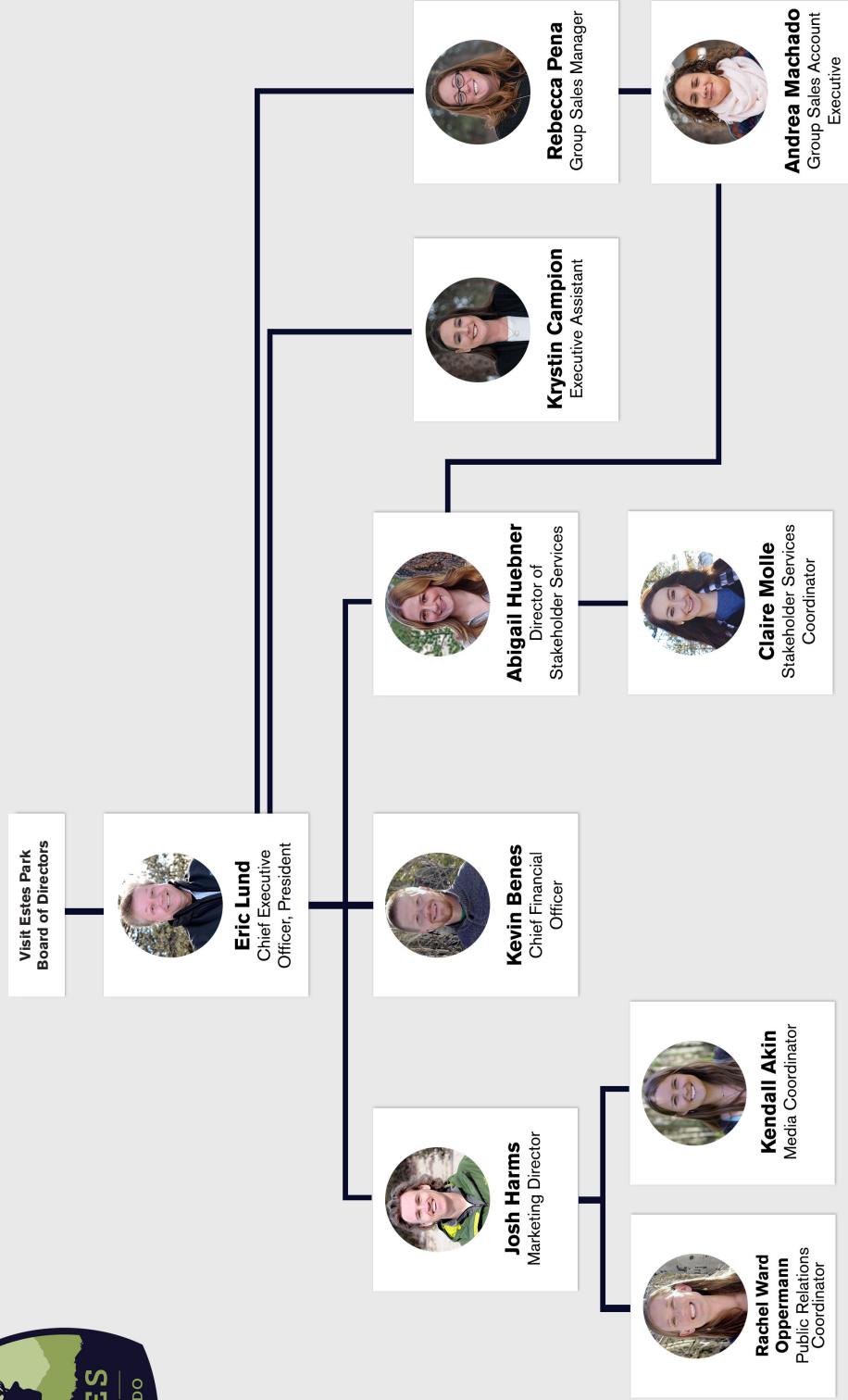
Target Leisure Audiences

- Families with children learning remotely
- Outdoorsy urbanites
- Professionals working remotely, looking for safe extended stays
- Empty nesters looking for a safe heritage destination
- Colorado and feeder market states that represent major drive markets



2021 Organizational Goals

1. Create a stronger year-round leisure market
2. Improve group marketing
3. Support stakeholder and community engagement
4. Promote the Estes Park “experience” and our safe destination in national markets



The Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) suggests that aligning with a more adventure-seeking, outdoor-loving audience is where real long-term growth potential lies. We agree, the outdoor recreation industry is a powerful force in the overall U.S. economy, with consumers spending \$887 billion annually on outdoor recreation and creating 7.6 million American jobs. Outdoor recreation is included in the top reasons folks visit Estes Park.

According to the CTO

“COLORADO SETS VISITOR SPENDING RECORD IN 2019, BUT CHALLENGES AHEAD”

- In 2019, Colorado welcomed a combined total of 86.9 million overnight and day visitors, up 2 percent from 2018. These included a record 39.0 million overnight visitors, up 3 percent from 37.8 million in 2018.
- In 2019, Colorado's discretionary leisure traveler spent an average of \$516 per person per trip, compared with \$372 nationally.
- The average length of a Colorado vacation trip fell from 5.0 nights in 2018 to 4.8 nights in 2019, still well above the typical U.S. leisure trip of 3.8 nights. Travel spending also directly supported a record-high 181,200 jobs, up 3.1 percent from 2018 and well above the national average increase of 1.1 percent.
- Colorado travelers spent \$4.996 billion last year on lodging, generating \$574.8 million in state and local taxes, up 9.2 percent from 2018. For 2020, however, Oxford Economics currently projects that Colorado lodging taxes will decline by \$253 million.
- The biggest challenge for tourism by far will be overcoming fear of coronavirus. The latest wave of U.S. Travel research with MMGY Global shows that COVID-related fears outstrip every other consideration for travel, including concerns about personal finances.

“The key to this recovery is clear, but far from simple: restoring consumer confidence and making it safe to travel.”
- Cathy Ritter, Director of CTO



Marketing Program Overview

Goal #1

Create a stronger year-round leisure market

Goal #4

Promote the Estes Park “experience” and our safe destination in national markets

- A** Supported by a dedicated marketing team of three people
- B** Create stronger leisure market visitor demand through innovative year-round marketing programs
- C** Dedicate more resources to video for storytelling on VEP website and social media channels
- D** Target overnight stay, drive market travelers and balance demand with marketing to improve and maximize ROI
- E** Utilize social media platforms and influencers to communicate memorable Estes Park experiences
- F** Leverage marketing budget with collaborative opportunities where they are in alignment with VEP marketing
- G** Continue our trend into a digital-centric plan with a hyper-analytic approach to ROI
- H** Content partnerships: target meaningful, national media outlets to create custom editorial to support key messaging.
- I** Elevate our own brand approach: be our own media house regarding production where possible
- J** Work with CTO to leverage available grant programs to extend marketing reach to key national markets
- K** Reinforce the Estes Park brand and build upon successes in community brand development
- L** Support marketing and promotion of local events that help to build overnight demand to the Estes Park local marketing district

All to: Continue the evolution of local storytelling, building on brand success, being flexible with budget to respond to major external pressures, as we recover from the impacts of Covid-19

How we will measure success: total search impressions, organic sessions, paid clicks, time on site, website users, booking referrals, book direct data, public relations data

Group Sales & Marketing Program

Goal #2

Improve group marketing

- A** Supported by one fulltime and one part-time staff member
- B** Improve RFP process to generate high-quality leads, in order to increase room nights and revenue
- C** Continue stakeholder group sales committee to build optimum group tradeshow and outreach efforts
- D** Adjust group marketing budget for 2021 and target the most effective audiences for the maximum ROI
- E** Develop new marketing materials dedicated to support group sales efforts (printed and digital)
- F** Adjust trade show schedule, continue to improve RFPs, target key group markets for Estes Park
- G** Track room nights generated and continue to build group database for future bookings

How we will measure success: number of total leads generated, number of total rooms generated, economic value of group bookings, lead prediction (off season vs. prime demand periods).

Stakeholder Services Program

Goal #3

Support stakeholder and community engagement

- A** 2.75 staff dedicated to support stakeholder services, our local business community
- B** Continue improvement and training for stakeholder businesses to take advantage of VEP marketing opportunities, including free programs that support local tourism businesses
- C** Improve advertising sales programs: VEP Official Visitors Guide, digital advertising and other programs
- D** Improve effectiveness for all stakeholders in their free Google business listings and Google travel pages
- E** Support local business marketing by returning to brochure distribution as the Visitor Center returns
- F** Provide added perceived value for stakeholders in their marketing by working with Visit Estes Park
- G** Communicate marketing and advertising opportunities effectively to stakeholders

How we'll measure success: generated advertising revenues to enhance marketing capabilities aligning with 2021 budget, listing click-throughs by account, listing views by account, total referrals by account, total number of stakeholders whose digital presence improved.

Community Engagement Program

Goal #3

Support stakeholder and community engagement

- A** Community outreach needs to be supported by the board, CEO and staff
- B** Communicate effective marketing program impacts and collaborative opportunities that support the community and helps us to compete in the tourism market
- C** Actively engage with the local community and foster an environment of cooperation and sharing of ideas and focus upon being effectively transparent to the community
- D** The community must be and feel safe and understand the effective working relationship that VEP has with our partners as we support the community and the tourism market
- E** Continue to develop and reinforce Estes Park's brand and support brand engagement in the community
- F** Efforts to support and reinforce positive engagement with visitors should be done in a responsible, safe and memorable way that reinforces positive experiences
- G** Address the need for destination marketing in Estes Park for the benefit and well-being of every person
- H** Work with community members including the Chamber, EDC, Town, County, Rocky Mountain National Park and other organizations to improve the quality of life to benefit our community and visitors

How we'll measure success: survey the community for VEP tourism support and sentiment, measure engagements with stakeholders and community members, continue to collaborate with local partners, attend community and business group meetings, support local government and boards, be an integrated and valued part of the community, communicate effectively the local stories that positively impact the community and reinforce the value of tourism marketing.

Budget Variance Overview

The following is an overview of budget variances looking at 2020 “projected/actuals” compared to the 2021 budget. As directed by the board of directors, VEP will fulfill its responsibility of driving tourism to the local marketing district and rebuild reserves depleted during the pandemic over the next three years. The full 2021 budget follows.

Primary Income Variances

District Tax Fund Income

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$1,496,201	\$2,050,000	\$553,799

The VEP Board recommended a conservative approach to budgeting for 2021 due to decreased lodging tax income in 2020 and substantial concern about future demand and the potential for Covid-19 impacts to carry over into visitor demand in 2021.

VEP staff reviewed actual and projected revenues through 2020 and believes that the 2021 budget numbers are reasonable and likely to be accurate if there is not another major impact to the economy. We do not anticipate a full recovery in 2021 and therefore have forecast lower lodging revenues as compared with past year’s actuals – 2018 and 2019 were about \$300,000 higher.

Visitor Guide Sales - Stakeholders

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$0 (Timing)	\$180,000	\$180,000

The District and Board made the decision to not produce a new Visitor’s Guide for 2020 and therefore will show \$0 as revenue for 2020. For 2021 we are anticipating softer sales for the Official Visitor’s Guide and this line item reflects that.

Other Ad Sales - Stakeholders

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$383,634	\$450,000	\$66,366

We expect business recovery to impact “other” ad sales so are taking a conservative approach to the total “other” advertising sales revenue we expect for 2021. The budget for 2020 was \$602,000 and this budget would be \$152,000 less than a normal year budget.

Primary Expense Variances

Personnel

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$1,081,000	\$1,100,000	\$19,000

The personnel budget was reduced in early 2020 and will continue to be held at a reduced level throughout 2021; three open positions will not be filled in this time. Staff collaborated to find efficiencies and personnel were willing to make adjustments to their job descriptions and take on more work, which will allow us to operate effectively. There is no plan to fill any further positions at Visit Estes Park into the future at this time and certainly not until we have fully recovered our reserves through 2023. The reduction in 2020 for total labor compared to budget was (\$132,000).

Marketing & Operations

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$1,396,375	\$1,415,000	\$18,625

Marketing and operations considers the high level view of combined expense line items, including all marketing, and is intended as an overall look at expenses. The budget for 2020 was \$2,172,500 and due to Covid-19 staff substantially reduced expenses to \$1,396,375 for a reduction from 2020 budget of (\$776,125). This was necessary due to much lower than normal lodging tax revenues.

Group Marketing

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$55,000	\$49,000	(\$6,000)

The group marketing budget will be reduced as a result of continued lower than normal anticipated demand for 2021. The focus will be on social markets, which represents our highest demand sector and remains the strongest market sector for 2020 and 2021. The budget for 2020 was \$110,000 and has been reduced compared with 2020 budget by (\$61,000).

Official Visitors Guide

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$140,000	\$200,000	\$60,000

The Estes Park Official Visitors Guide will be published through a new vendor and will be distributed by the vendor in 2021. The guide will be published based on a new production model for responding to demand levels rather than annual dates, and printed based on demand to avoid waste and improve distribution costs. No guide was produced in 2020 but distribution costs remained.

Other Expenses

Additional reductions in expenses have been made in many other line items of the budget to achieve full recovery of reserves by the end of 2023 as are shown in the full budget. A conservative approach to total income was forecast to be as realistic as possible. We believe this is a prudent and reasonable way to forecast the upcoming year's budget based on historical results and taking into account the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the likely business recovery in 2021.

Rent & Utilities

2020 Projected/Actuals	2021 Budget	Variance
\$75,000	\$36,000	(\$39,000)

Rent and utilities were completely revamped during 2020 with a new office location for Visit Estes Park and far improved rental conditions. The workplace is also an improvement for staff, making it more convenient for team-work combined with privacy. The new office location is \$39,000 less expensive than our previous location which will translate into annual savings for many years to come.

From the CEO

Dear Partners,

I would like to take a moment to thank the Visit Estes Park (VEP) team and Board of Directors for assisting in the creation of the 2021 operating plan as they all contributed and considered how best to approach this plan. Thank you also to our partners in the community and to our local government teams for their ongoing and generous support. Our entire board and team are dedicated and committed to the success of everyone in the local marketing district in 2021.

We believe this is a responsible and carefully thought out budget and operating plan that represents a commonsense approach to marketing Estes Park and will help to support our business community and assist our businesses in recovery in 2021.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, 2021 budget forecasts and operations were carefully considered. Supporting our local businesses will be our first and foremost concern, but with the objective to build back VEP reserves during the next two to three years.

2020 year-end net results are likely to be a loss of (\$565,227) therefore, we have built a budget designed to replenish reserves in 2021 by \$210,000 through reduction of expenses and realizing increased revenues, with the goal of reserves being balanced by 2023.

This is a challenge the VEP team has worked carefully to address and represents the true commitment of everyone on the team to reduce costs, while also keeping in mind our mission.

With the help and support of our partner agencies, local government and organizations, and local businesses we will help to grow a healthy and sustainable year-round economy to positively affect the quality of life of our community.

We are all in this together, and we look forward to working collaboratively to see an improved 2021.

Eric Lund | President/CEO | Visit Estes Park



2021 Budget



	2020 Budget	2020 COVID adjustments	2020 Variance	2021 tentative budget	2020 COVID vs. 2021 Budget		
Revenues							
District Lodging Tax	\$2,472,000.00	\$1,496,200.75	-\$975,799.25	\$2,050,000.00	\$553,799.25		
Non-Tax Revenue: Official Visitor Guide	\$280,000.00		-\$280,000.00	\$180,000.00	\$180,000.00		
Non-Tax Revenue: Stakeholder Services	\$602,000.00	\$383,634.21	-\$218,365.79	\$450,000.00	\$66,365.79		
Subtotal Non-Tax Revenue	\$882,000.00	\$1,879,834.96	\$997,834.96	\$2,680,000.00	\$800,165.04		
Town of Estes park Marketing Investment							
Larimer County Marketing Investment							
Larimer County Payment in Lieu of Tax (PILT)	\$5,412.66	\$5,412.66	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$5,412.66		
Subtotal Alternative Funding Sources	\$5,412.66	\$5,412.66	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$5,412.66		
Grants & Awards	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$40,000.00	\$15,000.00		
Other Income	\$1,900.00	\$1,900.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$3,100.00		
Total Revenues	\$3,386,312.66	\$1,912,147.62	-\$1,474,165.04	\$2,725,000.00	\$812,852.38		
Expenses							
Personnel Services	\$1,213,000.00	\$1,081,000.00	-\$132,000.00	\$1,100,000.00	\$19,000.00		
Marketing & Operations	\$2,172,500.00	\$1,396,375.00	-\$776,125.00	\$1,375,000.00	-\$21,375.00		
Grants & Awards	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$40,000.00	\$15,000.00		
Total Expenses	\$3,385,500.00	\$2,477,375.00	-\$908,125.00	\$2,515,000.00	\$37,625.00		
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Over Expense	\$812.66	-\$565,227.38		\$210,000.00			
Increase (Decrease) in Fund Balance	\$812.66	-\$565,227.38		\$210,000.00			
Beginning Fund Balance (does not include rese	\$680,200.63	\$680,200.63		\$114,973.25			
Ending Fund Balance*	\$681,013.29	\$114,973.25		\$199,973.25	*increase in fund balance minus the		
					\$125,000 proposed to partially replenish reserves.		
Restrictions							
Strategic Reserve	\$800,000.00	\$550,000.00		\$675,000.00			
TABOR Reserve: 3% of Expenses	\$101,565.00	\$101,565.00		\$97,431.00			
Total ending cash assets	\$1,582,578.29	\$766,538.25		\$972,404.25			

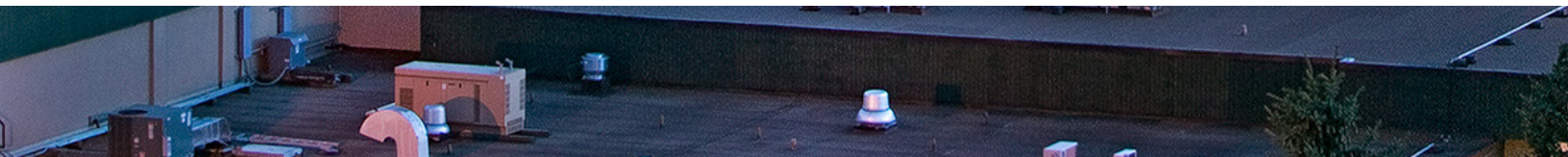
	2020 budget	2020 COVID Adjusted	2020 Variance	2021 budget	2020 COVID vs. 2021 Budget
Personnel Services	\$ 1,213,000.00	\$1,081,000.00	\$ (132,000.00)	\$ 1,100,000.00	\$ 19,000.00
			\$ -		\$ -
Marketing & Operations			\$ -		\$ -
Special Advertising & Marketing - Grants	\$ 25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$ -	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Search Engine Optimization	\$ 24,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$ -	\$ 12,000.00	\$ (12,000.00)
Media Placement - Regional	\$ 300,000.00	\$175,000.00	\$ (125,000.00)	\$ 275,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Medial Placement - Digital and Social	\$ 590,000.00	\$375,000.00	\$ (215,000.00)	\$ 259,000.00	\$ (116,000.00)
Media Planning & Buying	\$ 100,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$ (35,000.00)	\$ 60,000.00	\$ (5,000.00)
Creative Assets - Outside Fees	\$ 5,000.00	\$0.00	\$ (5,000.00)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Creative Assets- Agency Fees	\$ 5,000.00	\$0.00	\$ (5,000.00)	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Creative Expenses	\$ -			\$ -	
Agency Planning and Management	\$ 140,000.00	\$99,000.00	\$ (41,000.00)	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Advertising Contingency	\$ -			\$ -	
Group Sales & Group Marketing	\$ 110,000.00	\$55,000.00	\$ (55,000.00)	\$ 49,000.00	\$ (6,000.00)
International Promotion	\$ 14,500.00	\$500.00	\$ (14,000.00)	\$ -	
Research	\$ 50,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$ (20,000.00)	\$ 12,000.00	\$ (18,000.00)
Destination Product Development			\$ -		\$ -
Website	\$ 65,000.00	\$85,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 80,000.00	\$ (5,000.00)
Brand Strategy	\$ -	\$0.00		\$ -	
Trade Shows	\$ -	\$0.00		\$ -	
Economic Development	\$ 17,500.00	\$17,500.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ (7,500.00)
Audit	\$ 19,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$ (8,000.00)	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Bookkeeping	\$ 2,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ (500.00)
Contingencies - General Operations	\$ 2,500.00	\$0.00	\$ (2,500.00)	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Payroll Processing & Human Resources	\$ 4,500.00	\$375.00	\$ (4,125.00)	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,125.00
Legal	\$ 20,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$ (15,000.00)	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Office Supplies, Postage, Printing	\$ 22,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Office Equipment & Software	\$ 25,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$ (10,000.00)	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Rent & Utilities	\$ 75,000.00	\$75,000.00	\$ -	\$ 36,000.00	\$ (39,000.00)
Insurance	\$ 15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$ -	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Cell Phone & Mileage	\$ 11,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$ (5,000.00)	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 3,000.00

Education & Conferences	\$ 49,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$ (42,000.00)	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 13,000.00
Information Technology Support	\$ 2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -
Meals & Incidentals	\$ 9,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$ (6,500.00)	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 3,000.00
Memberships	\$ 18,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$ (12,000.00)	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Media Familiarization Tours	\$ 64,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$ (49,000.00)	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Public Relations Firm	\$ 80,000.00	\$80,000.00	\$ -	\$ 80,000.00	\$ -
Public Relations Promotions	\$ 18,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ (8,000.00)
eMail Marketing	\$ 9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$ -	\$ 9,000.00	\$ -
Social Media	\$ 7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ (2,500.00)
Stakeholder Communications	\$ 10,000.00	\$4,500.00	\$ (5,500.00)	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,500.00
Marketing Data & Analytics Platform	\$ -			\$ -	
Official Visitor Guide	\$ 261,000.00	\$140,000.00	\$ (121,000.00)	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
Total Marketing & Operations Expense		\$1,396,375.00		\$ 1,415,000.00	\$ 18,625.00
Grand Total		\$2,477,375.00		\$ 2,515,000.00	\$ 37,625.00



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[VisitEstesPark.com/Transparency](https://www.VisitEstesPark.com/Transparency)



COVID-19 + Travel to Estes Park:

VEP staff recalibrated budget, operations in response to the outbreak in March of 2020.

Summer lodging tax numbers show Estes Park fared well compared to competitors.

Last spring, as COVID-19 spread to Colorado and the state issued Stay-At-Home orders, the staff at Visit Estes Park requested its Board of Directors declare a state of emergency, which restricted spending within the organization to personnel and marketing expenses, as well as allowed staff access to reserve funds to market the destination when it was safe to do so.

When Stay-At-Home orders and Estes Park's lodging ban were lifted, staff invested reserves and money saved during the spending freeze in marketing Estes Park to drive markets (Denver, IA, KS, MN, MO, Houston, Dallas, Austin, Chicago) determined using visitation data, as the travel industry predicted drive markets would resume travel prior to fly markets.

Visit Estes Park was one of the few DMOs marketing during this time, allowing staff to leverage an excess of supply in the advertising marketplace, maintain brand awareness as travelers were beginning to make summer travel plans, and obtain an excellent return on investment on both money spent and marketing metrics earned.

The results were substantial. Not only did lodging tax numbers come in higher than the best of scenarios the team projected, but summer numbers were among the best in the state and among competitors compared to the same months in 2019.

Staff will maintain its spending freeze into the new year, leveraging every available dollar to market our destination.

% change from 2019, same period - Transient Room Taxable Sales*

Location	March	April	May	June	July	Aug**	Sep**
Estes Park	-16%	-43.9%	-67.8%	-33.6%	-4.8%	11.11%	-4.89%
Breckenridge	-54.5%	-93.3%	-94.1%	-29%	-32.5%		
Glenwood Springs	-58%	-91.1%	-78.5%	-51.4%	-19.3%		
Moab, UT	-61.6%	-92.7%	-79.1%	-43.5%	-14.7%		
Steamboat Springs	-45.4%	-89.6%	-58.5%	-49.8%	-12.8%		
Cody, WY	-17.8%	-62.8%	-67.5%	-38%	-32%		

*This data set tends to be about 90 days behind.

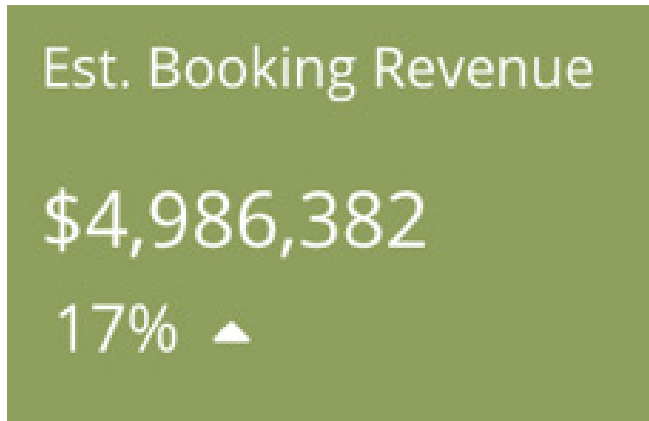
**We do not yet have data for the other cities listed in this chart.

2020 Marketing Highlights

BookDirect

With our conversion rate (we use a global conversion rate is an assumptive rate from BookDirect calculated by pixels connected to lodging chains across all BookDirect site's, and is very conservative as it does not include walk-ins, over-the-phone bookings, expired cookies, etc.) being down a percent in 2020 to 2.79%, we're still seeing an increase in Estimated Booking Revenue YOY (Fig. 1). There are two major factors here, our total lodging searches and referrals in BookDirect are up (Fig. 2), as is the Estimated Average Booking Amount (Fig 3). Traffic on the site has increased 2-11% YOY (Fig. 4) with traffic increases coming from organic and paid search. One reason traffic may not have increased quite as much as the lodging searches and referrals, is the A/B testing we completed w/ BookDirect and its related widgets and modules.

Figure 1



Estimated booking revenue per month, compared YOY

17% YoY growth in booking revenue, when compared to YoY lodging tax (which was down on average) shows that visitestespark.com is growing in market share in spite of the challenges of 2020, which led to a decline in visitation.

An increase in bookings made through Book Direct on visitestespark.com means an increase in savings for our stakeholders: Visit Estes Park does not charge fees to lodging owners for referrals as other online booking engines do.

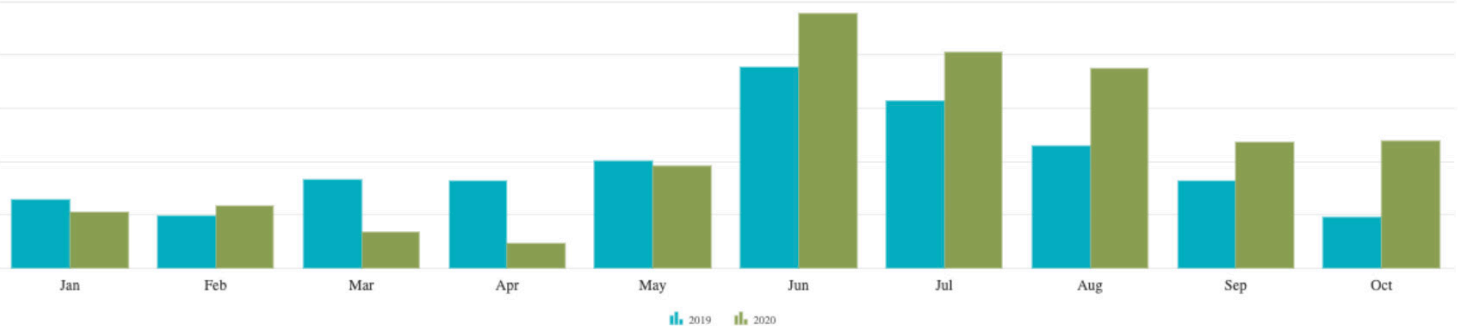


Figure 2

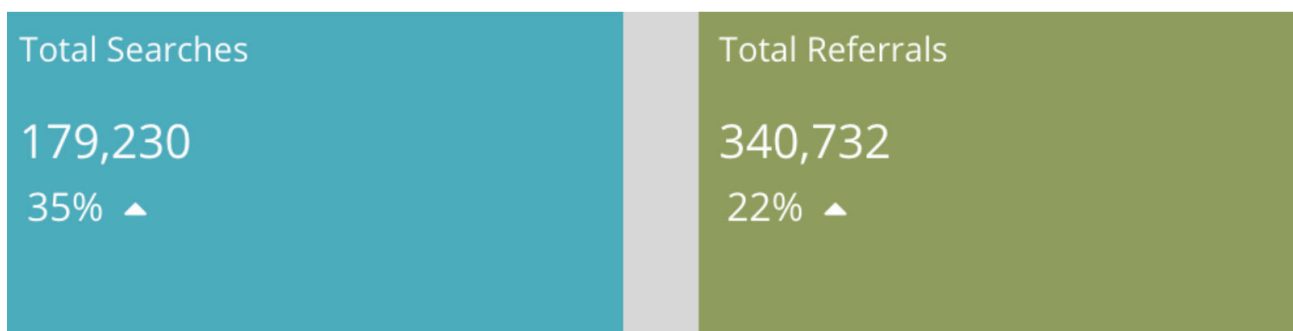
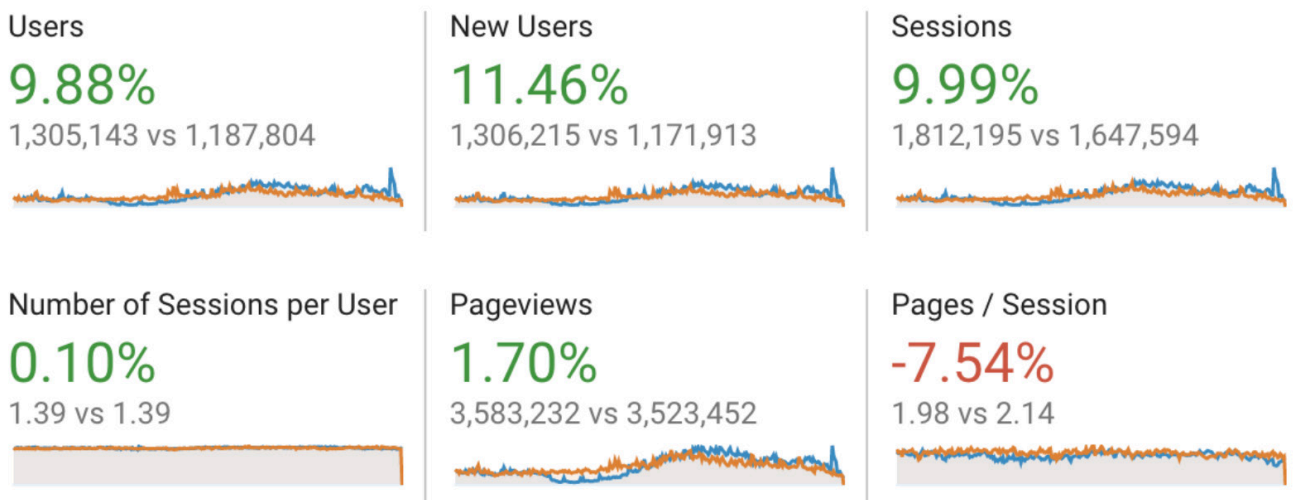


Figure 3



Figure 4



BookDirect A/B Testing

We've just completed a round of A/B testing on our BookDirect site and its related widgets in order to make that more effective. 5 of 6 tests were found to be winners, increasing lodging searches to our booking engine by 48.5%, which was nearly 44,000 referrals during the testing period.

Overall Summary

CRO testing started on July 10 and ran through October 21st. Below are the year-over-year improvements that the website experienced from the testing.

- 14,035 more booking widget submissions and a 2.20% conversion rate year-over-year (YOY) improvement
- 41,076 more referrals from the listings "Check Availability" button and a 28.55% conversion rate YOY improvement

Total Referrals YOY Increase

43,659

Conversion Rate YOY Improvement

48.53%

19-20 Winter Marketing was paused in early March, due to the outbreak of COVID-19. Funds/programs that were paused were pushed toward spring. We initially began marketing again, with those programs that had already been paid for and paused, in late May. At this point, plans paused included an influencer campaign and video shoot (Athlete in Residence and Anthem Video), as well as sponsored content across a variety of outlets. We also returned to running our paid search and social media campaigns. The influencer campaign that hosted athletes in late May, and featured ways to travel to Estes safely and respectfully, generated 113 social posts with 2.3 million impressions and over 84k engagements, while the videos produced have over 130,000 views on the website alone (they have also run, paid, on Facebook, Instagram and Hulu). A bit later in the summer, the board approved to allow access to financial reserves in order to continue marketing the destination. We booked more search, social and content partnerships. Search and social, specifically saw us get a larger bang for our buck, with less competitive spending, we were able to see great results.

Summer search saw cost decrease 47% (\$15.9k vs \$30.5k), resulting in a 99% decrease in impressions YoY. Even with spend being down, we did see a 20% increase in clicks and a 19k increase in CTR (15.71% vs 0.08%) YoY. Branded search brought in 97% of all clicks for summer campaigns, with a low average CPC of \$.65 and a CTR of 16.71%. 'Estes' specific terms had a CPC nearly \$4 lower than CO Summer terms. See search graphs directly below:



Summer social campaigns were focused on reaching a drive audience of Denver, IA, KS, MN, MO, Houston, Dallas, Austin, and Chicago, as fly markets weren't expected to rebound as quickly. Overall, YoY impressions were roughly the same with an increase of about 4%. Considering spend was down by 50%, this is a strong performance. Although YoY CTR was down, this was only by 14%. We had a CTR increase and peak in August and September despite lower spend and impressions. We suspect the end of summer audience was more comfortable with travel and likely to book as opposed to browse. Due to our traffic optimization (encouraging conversions) this summer, video views were down by 40% YoY. However, the AiR videos were most effective in driving strong CTRs. Targeting a core prospecting audience of dedicated climbers and outdoorsman surprisingly drove lower CTR's than our generic prospecting audience. The owned/lookalike audience performed well with CTR's over 5%. All CTRs are at the top end of benchmarks.



Fall saw a continuation of search and social spends, interrupted by wildfire. This drew a lot of traffic to VisitEstesPark.com - but not necessarily the kind we were hoping for. With the brave efforts of firefighters and first responders (and a little help from the weather) we are now welcoming guests to Estes again.

Transparency

All documents integral to the operation of Visit Estes Park are posted on an easily-accessed page on visitestespark.com.

The page, <https://www.visitestespark.com/transparency/>, can be accessed by searching for “transparency” using the search bar on visitestespark.com, by googling “visit estes park transparency” or through the Partners drop down menu in the footer navigation bar on visitestespark.com. This page is updated monthly, or whenever a new document is issued.

Included on the Transparency page:

- Coming year operating plan, once approved by the Town of Estes Park & County Commissioners
- Current year mission, vision and strategic plan
- Current year operating plan
- Current year budget
- Dashboard Report - Executive Summary
- Current annual report
- Current audit
- Seasonal marketing campaign updates
- Most recent visitor survey
- Board meeting videos, minutes, upcoming meetings
- Archived reports, budgets, plans
- Policies
- Bylaws