



# VISIT ESTES PARK

## MARKETING STRATEGY

### Summer 2023

#### Introduction

Visit Estes Park creates and manages destination marketing programs to raise awareness regionally, domestically and internationally. Our marketing task is to attract and incrementally increase Estes Park visitation to maintain and grow its economic benefits for the community. This calls for strategic and integrated marketing efforts founded on research, with a keen eye on travel trends.

We closely monitor visitor volume, spending and domestic and international leisure travel booking windows, as well as data on professional meetings and events. This includes consistently reviewing national and regional data on the state of the industry, consumer confidence and the impact of inflation on consumer spending. Paired with the intel gained through local stakeholder meetings, we analyze how current travel trends may be impacting Estes Park. And with this information in hand, we continuously optimize our marketing campaigns.

Striking the right balance between promoting economic vitality and preserving resident quality of life is critical to Estes Park's future, therefore destination stewardship is also an integral part of our approach to destination marketing. In our busy season, we encourage a guest experience where mindfulness and respect are top priorities.

#### How we position Estes Park

We position Estes Park as an authentic, vibrant mountain town offering outdoor experiences, activities, dining, shopping and an environment that is welcoming and approachable. Estes Park is affordable to families and offers a multitude of activities in every season while serving as a basecamp for sustainable travel and world-class adventure.

#### Our summer target audiences/markets

##### *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
- Travelers celebrating milestones

##### *Demographics*

- Demographic: AD25-54 and an emphasis on 45+, 60+
- Household Income: \$100K+
- Summer Interests: Scenic Beauty, Relaxing Mountain Getaway, Mountain Biking and Hiking, Outdoor Adventure, Backpacking, Trails, National Parks, Road Trips, Craft Beer and Breweries, Romantic Getaways, Family Friendly, Eco-Tourism, Golf, Horseback riding, Rocky Mountain National Park, Wildlife Viewing, Easy to get to

Markets: Texas (Dallas and Houston), Kansas City, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Nebraska (Omaha)

Secondary Markets: Florida (Tampa, Orlando, Miami-Ft. Lauderdale), Laramie, Cheyenne, Iowa

Drive Markets: Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Boulder, Loveland, Longmont, Greeley

#### How we reach them

We utilize comprehensive, location-based data, as well as national and regional travel insights, to guide an always-on marketing strategy that promotes Estes Park during all seasons. We place a heavy focus on digital media for sophisticated targeting capabilities and the ability to optimize messaging and delivery for maximum results.



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#### How we are marketing summer and supporting current need periods

##### *Programmatic Digital Display*

- Digital ads using sophisticated targeting to drive awareness, engagement and increased travel spend.
- Mobile-based digital content that draws in engagement through dynamic and gamified user experiences.
- These ads are shown on popular websites such as CNN, Fox, USAToday, Conde Nast and Bon Appetit.

##### *Sponsored Galleries and Landing Pages*

Custom content to engage with travelers when they are dreaming, researching or purchasing, to drive booking and engagement.

- TravelZoo
- Expedia Group - Expedia, Hotels.com and VRBO

##### *Targeted Email Blasts*

Dedicated eblasts to share special experiences and other promotional content to high-value subscribers.

- Travel + Leisure Summer Co-Branded Emails - April, June, August

##### *Print Ad and Advertorial*

Placement in a national hotel and destination guide offering a storytelling opportunity to reach a highly targeted audience.

- Travel + Leisure - Summer Escapes Issue, on newsstands in May

##### *Television and Podcast*

- The Travel Mom travel television segments in target markets
- iHeart Media podcast advertising

##### *Paid Social Media*

Our paid social media strategy for Facebook and Instagram will:

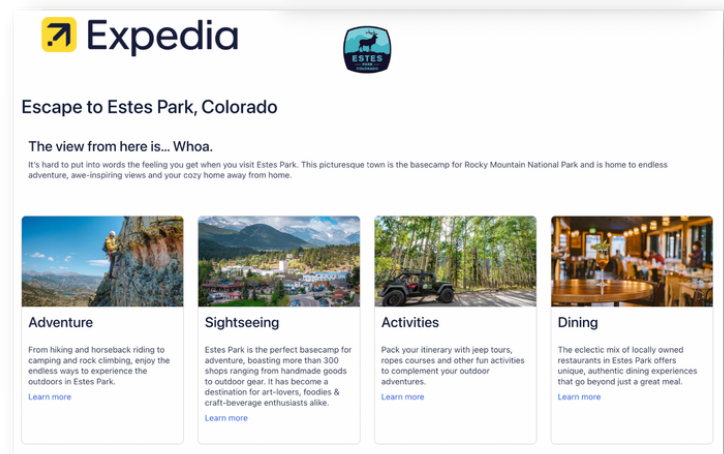
- Fill the pipeline with new prospective travelers
- Reach travelers early in their travel planning
- Re-engage with loyalist travelers to re-invite them to book
- Use impactful messaging to encourage responsible travel
- Drive awareness and visitation during popular events
- Utilize the fastest-growing social media platform: TikTok

##### *Paid Search*

Our paid search strategy will drive awareness and traffic to the Visit Estes Park website by targeting prospective visitors on Google and YouTube.

##### *Milestone Traveler Campaign*

In addition to traditional leisure marketing, we're continuing our campaign focused on milestone travel like honeymoons, babymoons, anniversaries and birthdays to fill periods when family travel slows down.





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#### Public Relations

PR efforts for the summer include media pitching and visits to garner awareness and support marketing goals.

- Proactive pitching
  - Summer pitch angles for local, regional and national outreach, plus local broadcast, include:
    - Summer festivals, including Rooftop Rodeo
    - Special event travel like Mother's Day, Memorial Day, July 4 and Labor Day
    - Outdoor/Sustainable Summer Adventure
    - Summer Family Travel
    - Isabella Bird-theme - foraging, women-led tours/itineraries, bird-watching, horseback riding, etc.
- Individual media hosting
  - In discussion with four national media and a major broadcast outlet for summer visits
- Summer group media visit, consisting of 4-6 journalists
  - Isabella Bird-focused itinerary with activities like horseback riding, hiking and bird-watching
  - August 17-20
- Diversity and inclusivity-focused content creator visits
- Press release distribution
  - Summer festivals, emphasis on Rooftop Rodeo
  - Isabella Bird 150th Anniversary and Events
  - Summer adventures
  - Frozen Dead Guy Days Grandpa Bredo announcement

## The New York Times

FRUGAL TRAVELER | ELAINE GLUSAC

### Rustic Comfort, Sometimes at Reduced Rates

Companies are creating accommodations for guests who love the outdoors.

#### Trailborn

Among the new outdoorsy inns, Trailborn targets nature lovers who appreciate contemporary design and full-service restaurants.

The first Trailborn location will make its debut in Estes Park, Colo., the eastern gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park, in July. Trailborn Rocky Mountains consists of two former motels about a mile apart from each other that collectively house 86 rooms, a restaurant, performance area and pools with loaner bikes to transit between them.

Use of organic materials such as light woods and paving stones in a sleek modernist style invites the outdoors into the main lobby at the more central of the two addresses, where a two-story tiled chimney divides the front desk and cafe seating from the Mexican restaurant. Rooms, heavy on blond wood accents, are trimmed in local art and are equipped with coolers for guests to use on day trips (from \$225).

The founding business partners, Ben Weinberg and Mike Weiss, hope to make

Trailborn a community hub with its restaurant and coffee shops and entertainment such as concerts.

Expect future Trailborns in Mendocino, Calif.; the Grand Canyon area; and two locations in North Carolina, including the mountainous Highlands community and oceanfront Wrightsville Beach.

#### Website, Content and Social Media

We maintain a robust content and organic social media calendar to paint the full picture of Estes through our website and social media channels. This includes a consistent stream of new assets by our in-house photographer.

Our summer content and photography plan includes:

- Refreshed photo assets of dog-friendly travel, camping, horseback riding, golf, couples travel, downtown Estes and scenic drives. New diversity and inclusivity content.
- Increased short-form video content on Instagram Reels, TikTok and YouTube Shorts with a sustainability focus.
- A new informational video, plus blog and website content explaining The Loop construction and supporting affected businesses and corridors.
- Isabella Bird blog series featuring interviews with experts including historians, professors and climbers.

#### How we measure success

We track the success of our campaigns using key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics, including impressions, reach, clicks and click-through rate, cost per click, engagement, video completion rate, conversion rate and data covering the net economic impact of our campaigns. We also track earned media coverage, social media impressions and website traffic and referrals.



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#### What are the experts saying about Summer 2023?

*Travel Weekly*

"On the heels of a wildly successful winter season, ski-centric mountain properties across the Western U.S. may be seeing a steep slowdown come summer.

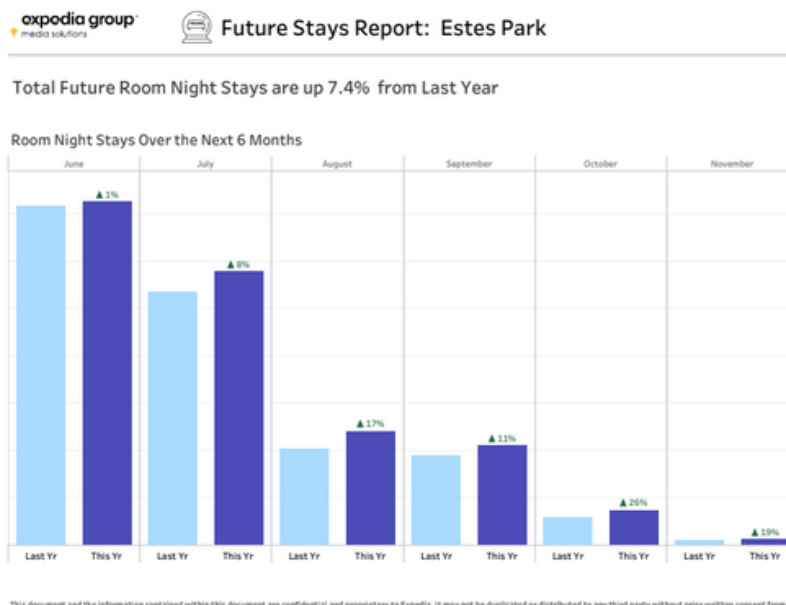
A report from Inntopia's DestiMetrics division, which tracks mountain lodging metrics, warns that "summer alarm bells are ringing" for mountain destinations across Colorado, Utah, California, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. March data indicates that on-the-books occupancy for the upcoming summer, May through October, is down 13.5% from last year. (Inntopia is owned by Travel Weekly parent Northstar Travel Group.)

Despite the stark drop-off in occupancy, the average daily rate for Western mountain destinations remains exceptionally strong, DestiMetrics found, with ADR up 6.8% from the summer prior and 45.3% compared with summer 2019."

*Expedia, Hotels.com and VRBO*

"Many people are still going to the mountains and are specifically staying in resorts. Demand will still be high but many people are booking rentals versus hotels. The good news there is that most people that get rentals are staying 2.5x longer than hotel stays. Also, we should start to see hotel bookings coming in over the next month or two for the summer. Domestic travel is still quite transactional.

Our Future stay report for Estes Park actually shows growth for the summer as we see it right now. This report looks at the last 12 months of bookings for the next 6 months of stays, specifically for hotels. Colorado as a whole is seeing positive growth YOY through August."



*Booking.com*

"Fairly normal advanced booking in Estes Park for summer with lighter than normal June and last half of August."