



NORTH OF NORMAL
FARGO
MOORHEAD | WEST FARGO

**2025 VISIT
FARGO-MOORHEAD
ANNUAL REPORT**

Creetings from Visit Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo!

As I step into the role of CEO, I do so with deep respect for the strong foundation built by this organization and with bold optimism for what lies ahead. This annual report reflects our work in 2025, a year that tested the tourism industry nationwide. Like many destinations, we felt the impact of shifting travel patterns, geo-political and economic pressures, and heightened competition. Yet even in a challenging year, our team remained focused and committed to progress.

Because of that commitment, we continued to generate meaningful economic impact for our community. By attracting visitors who stay in our hotels, dine in our restaurants, shop locally, and attend events, we help lower the tax burden on residents, create jobs, and support public services and infrastructure. Tourism remains a powerful engine for community prosperity and our mission to grow that impact is unwavering.

While overall travel demand softened in 2025, we saw encouraging growth in key segments, particularly in sports tourism. Investments in sporting events, tournaments, and facilities are building a pipeline of future opportunity bringing new visitors, increasing regional and national visibility, and positioning our community as a competitive host for high-value events in the years ahead. These gains are not only meaningful now; they are foundational for our long-term strategy.

Our success always is rooted in collaboration. We work alongside cultural organizations, sports partners, educational institutions, entertainment venues, local businesses, and civic leaders who share a belief in what our region can become. Together, we are not just promoting a destination. We are shaping its identity, strengthening its economy, and creating opportunity for the people who live and work here.

Looking forward, we are entering a bold new chapter. We are focused on accelerating growth, making strategic investments, expanding our reach, and elevating our destination on a national stage. The future will require innovation, courage, and a shared vision and we are ready to lead that charge with intention and ambition.

Thank you for your partnership, your trust, and your belief in this work. I am honored to lead this organization into its next era, and I am excited about what we will build together.

Shirley Hughes
President & CEO
Visit Fargo- Moorhead

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ABOUT US

MISSION: The Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo CVB works to position our distinctive community as a desirable destination and gateway to the region and nation, resulting in a superior quality of life for its residents.

VISION: The Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo CVB will be the respected authority on tourism as an economic development strategy that enhances the quality of life for the region.

The Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo CVB will collaboratively develop and promote a shared community vision to enhance the attractiveness of the region for visitors and residents alike.

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Doug Peters – Chair, Prairie Heights Church
Clare Hughes – Vice Chair, ClubHouse Hotel & Suites
Kember Anderson – Secretary/Treasurer, City of Fargo
Nicole Steen-Dutton – Executive Board Member, Thunder Coffee
Kimberly Busch – Blue Cross Blue Shield of ND
Derrick LaPoint – Downtown Moorhead Inc.
Emily Nielsen – Courtyard by Marriott Fargo
Kira Odenbach – SpringHill Suites
Casey Sanders-Berglund – City of West Fargo
Ramon Sosa – Maxwells Restaurant & Bar
James Stinsman – Hilton Garden Inn Fargo

HOTEL ROOMS IN THE COMMUNITY

5,616

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2026:

- 1 Strategically align organizational resources toward high value market segments
- 2 Advocate for destination development
- 3 Enhance community livability & sense of place
- 4 Continue to build organizational excellence



CORE VALUES

Start with Yes

Join Forces

Promote Proudly

ORGANIZATION VERTICALS

Marketing

Sports

Convention Sales

Leisure

Visitor Experience

VISIT FARGO-MOORHEAD STAFF



SHIRLEY HUGHES
President & CEO



RACHEL WILLIAMS
Director of Operations



PETRA VANDERFORD
Office Coordinator



DANNI MELQUIST
Director of Marketing



ASHLEY MOLINE
Graphic Artist



JAYCI ALTENBERND
Digital Marketing Manager



STEPHONIE BROUGHTON
Director of Sports



MARISSA WEIDEMANN
Sports Account Manager



LOGAN SCHAUER
Junior Sports
Account Manager



KALEIGH VON BANK
Housing Bureau Manager



JORDAN CASPERS
Print Services Designer

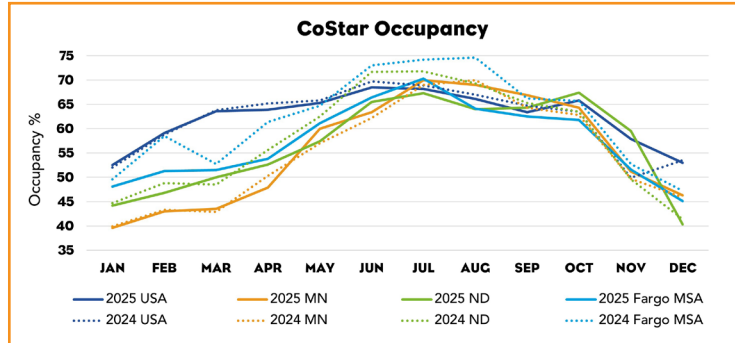
YEAR IN REVIEW

TOURISM IMPACT

Occupancy: 57.38% (-7%)

Demand: 1,207,819 (-6.5%)

ADR: \$118.89 (+1.5%)



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

\$2,103,580

The total amount given to local non-profits for capital projects in 2025

\$9,057,109

Lifetime amount given for capital projects

2025 PROJECTS:

- City of Moorhead - The Loop
- Fargo Theatre
- FMCT
- Folkways - Christkindlmarkt Shed
- Garden of Healing
- Jack Williams Stadium
- Jake Christiansen Field
- Plains Art Museum - Connections Campaign

EVENT ASSISTANCE

\$500,000 +

This is the total amount given to local organizations for events taking place in Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo in 2025. These events help to make our community a better, more welcoming, and exciting place to live, work, and visit.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

 **\$144 Million** revenue from just hotel room expenses in 2025

 **\$69 Million** direct visitor spending from sporting events VFM works with

 **\$12 Million** direct visitor spending from conventions VFM works with

 **\$1.8 Million** direct visitor spending from leisure events VFM works with

SPENDING & VISITATION

Using Datafy as our geolocation data partner, we were able to track over 5.7 million visitor days in 2025. Monthly visitor days remained strong and relatively consistent throughout the year ranging from 400-550,000 visitor days per month. Activity increased steadily through late spring and early summer, reaching a clear peak in July, before moderating slightly in August and September and stabilizing again into the fall. This sustained level of visitation across multiple months indicates a healthy mix of event-driven travel (especially sports), regional leisure trips, and routine drive-market activity supporting the destination year-round. Daily visitor trends further reinforce this stability, with baseline visitation remaining consistent and periodic spikes aligning with major events, tournaments, and seasonal attractions. Compared to the prior year, 2025 showed modest but meaningful gains during peak summer and early fall periods, suggesting continued growth in demand during

Fargo-Moorhead's strongest travel seasons. The consistency of daily visitor activity suggests a high degree of repeat and regional visitation, with travelers returning for familiar amenities, ongoing events, and seasonal attractions.

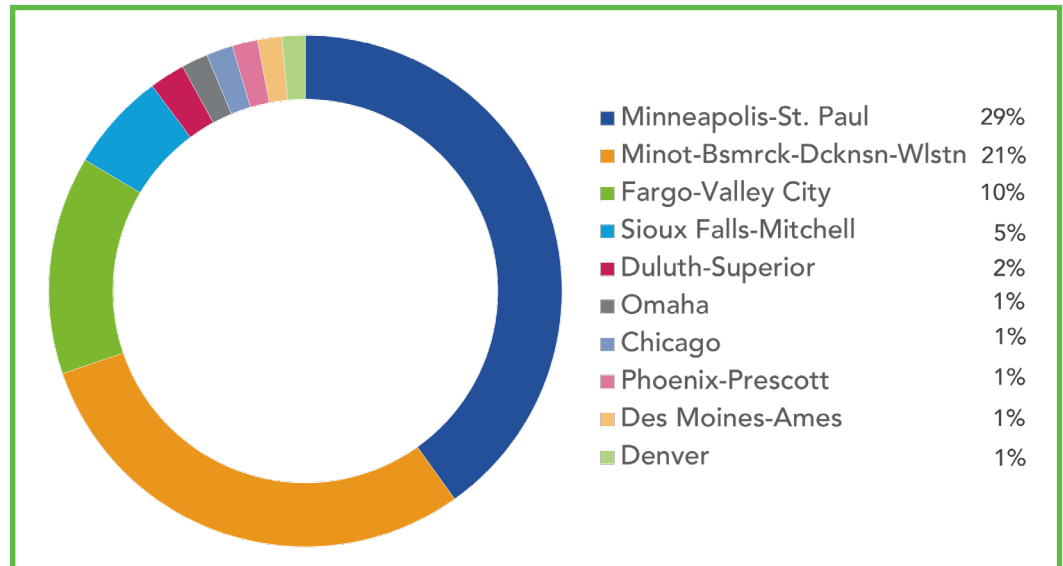
Rather than relying on a single peak period, Fargo-Moorhead maintains steady engagement across much of the year, indicating strong habitual travel patterns that support sustained spending and visitation. These visitation patterns provide clear insight for future planning and marketing, highlighting the importance of maintaining a strong event calendar while continuing to promote shoulder-season experiences. Sustained baseline activity, combined with predictable seasonal peaks, positions Fargo-Moorhead to strategically grow visitation by amplifying high-performing periods and strengthening demand during slower months.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Visitor demographics in Fargo-Moorhead skew toward a mature, established audience with strong household earning power and consistent travel behavior. Adults ages 45–64 represented the largest share of visitors (34.4%), followed by travelers ages 25–44 (28.7%) and 65+ (24.5%).

Age trends remained relatively stable throughout the year, with modest seasonal

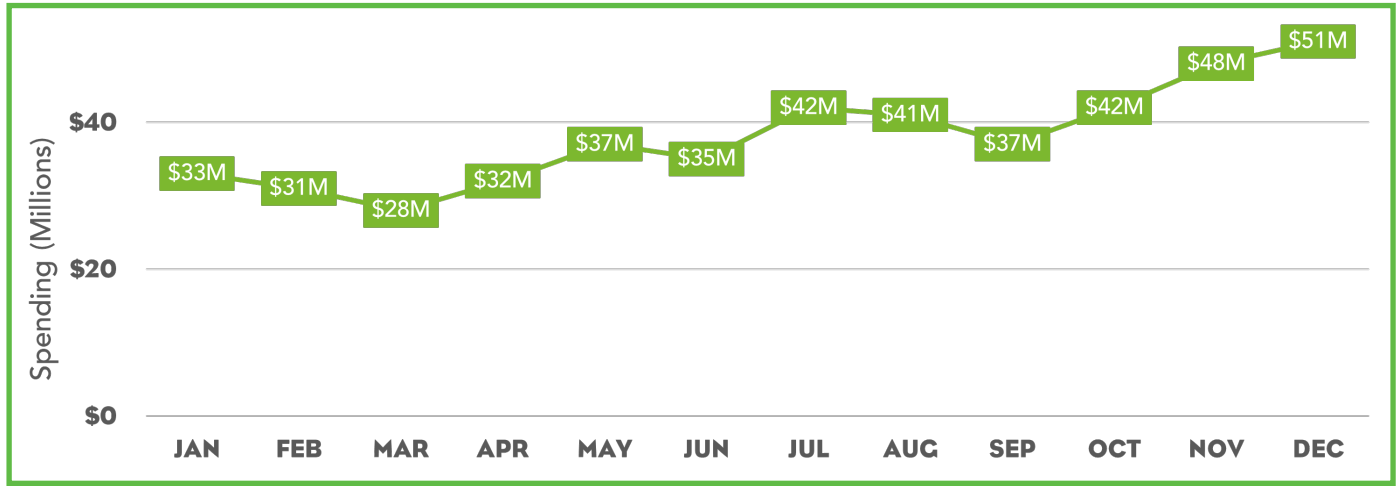
shifts during peak summer months driven by events, leisure travel, and family-related visitation. Visitors tended to come from higher-income, smaller households with a broad mix of educational backgrounds and demographics that closely reflect regional drive-market travel patterns and support engagement across retail, dining, sports, and entertainment experiences. Collectively, these demographic trends point to a visitor base that values convenience, quality amenities, and experience-driven travel.



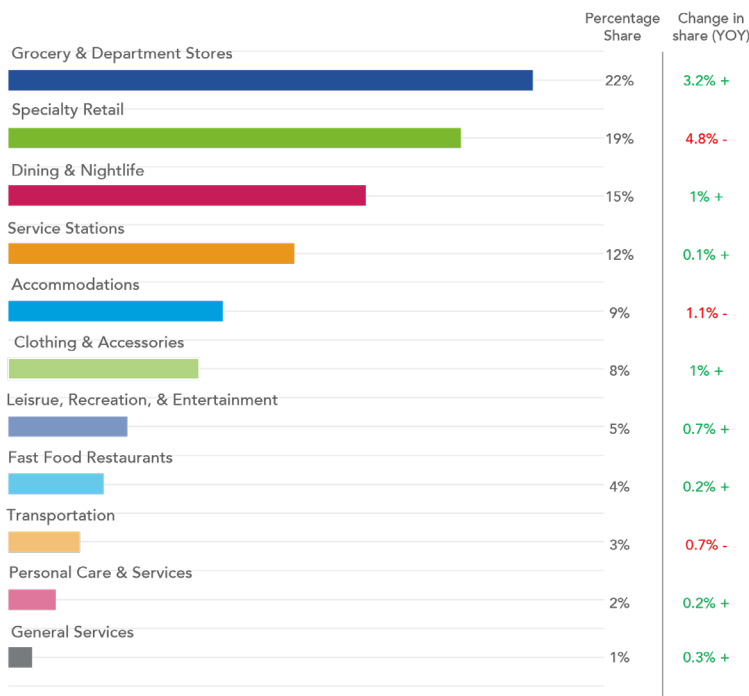
VISITOR SPENDING

Visitor spending showed a clear upward trajectory throughout the year, rising from early spring levels to peak in late fall and early winter. After a brief dip in early fall, spending rebounded strongly

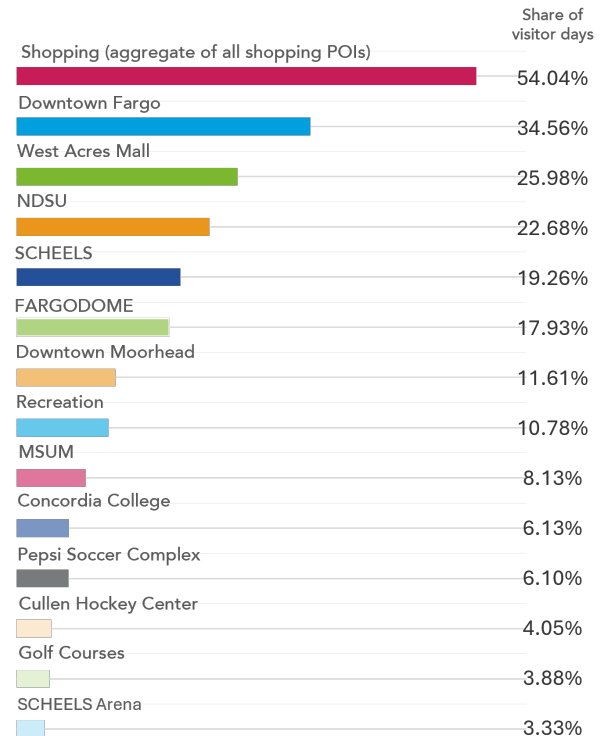
in October through December, highlighting sustained demand beyond the traditional summer travel season and high spending patterns for local businesses leading into the holiday season.



CATEGORY SPENDING



POI VISITATION

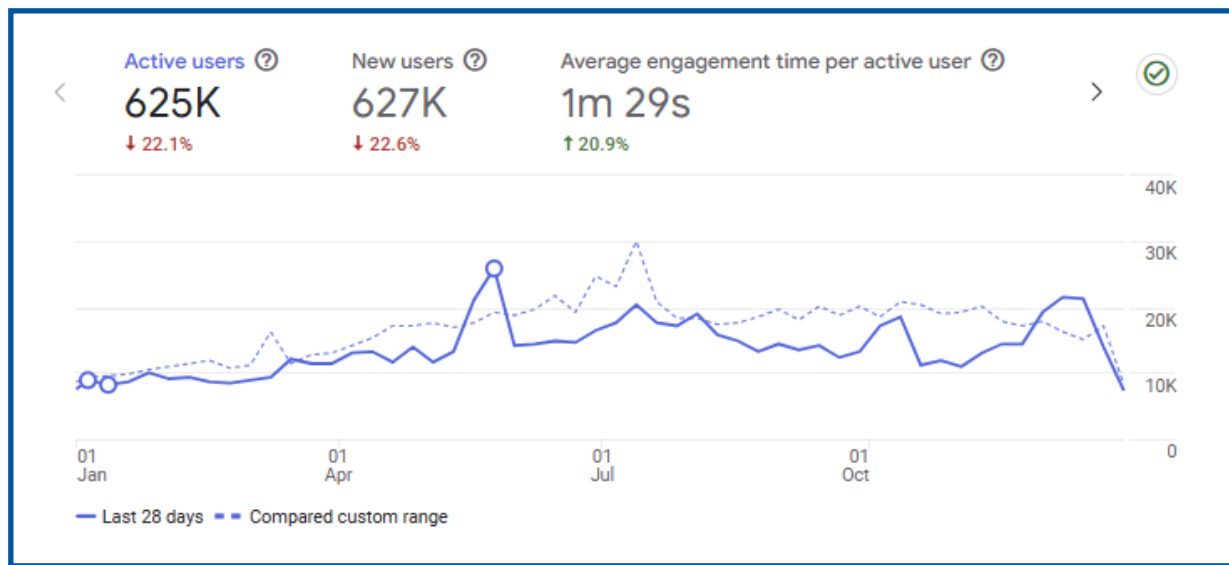


Note: all information on spending & visitation has a filter focusing on people traveling from 90+ miles away.

MARKETING PERFORMANCE

WEBSITE TRAFFIC

The traffic to fargomoorhead.org shows a year-over-year decline in active and new users, reflecting broader shifts in search behavior as AI-driven generative search results increasingly answer travel-related questions without requiring a website click. While overall traffic volume has softened, this trend aligns with industry-wide changes in how users discover and consume destination information. Importantly, users who do reach the website are spending significantly more time engaging with content, indicating that traffic quality has improved and that visitors who click through are highly intentional and deeply engaged. This shift suggests the website is increasingly serving as a high-value resource for trip planning and decision-making, reinforcing the importance of compelling, in-depth content that supports users further along in the travel consideration journey.

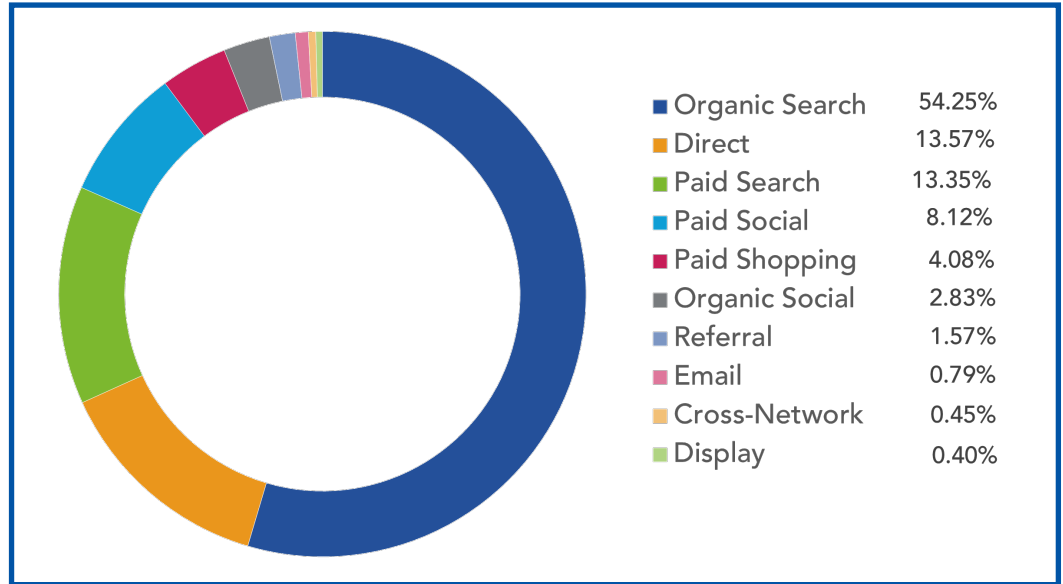


MOST POPULAR PAGES

Page Title	Page Views
Fargo-Moorhead Events Calendar	598,975
This Weekend	138,381
Things to Do in Fargo, ND	134,096
Official Tourism Website for Fargo, ND & Moorhead, MN	112,269
Fargo Restaurants, Bars, & Places to Eat	108,583
Attraction in Fargo, North Dakota	75,933
Major Events	66,192

TRAFFIC SOURCES

Website traffic is driven primarily by organic search, which accounts for more than half of all sessions, underscoring the continued importance of strong SEO and discoverable content. Direct traffic and paid channels provide additional support, while social, referral, and email sources play a smaller but complementary role in reaching and engaging visitors.



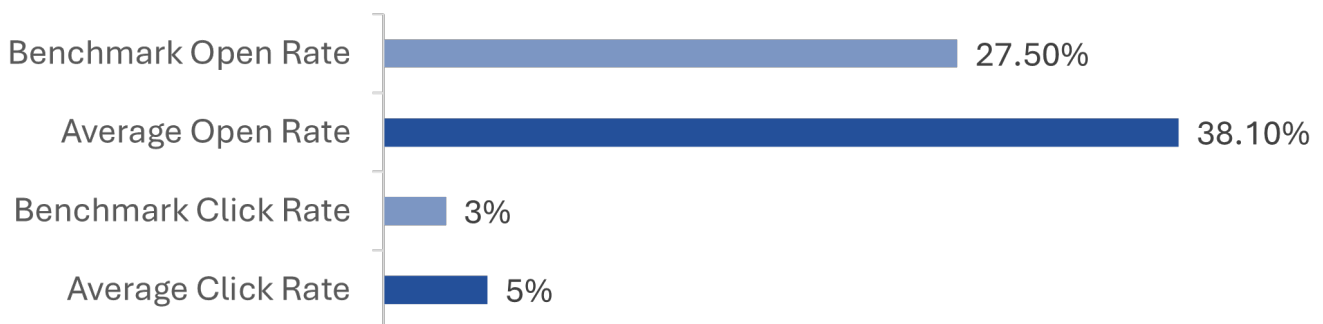
2025 NEWSLETTERS

102

Newsletters sent to 12 different audiences

Newsletter open and click rates

Compared to DMO/Non-Profit Benchmarks









SOCIAL MEDIA

13%

Change in followers across all channels since 2021






73,500

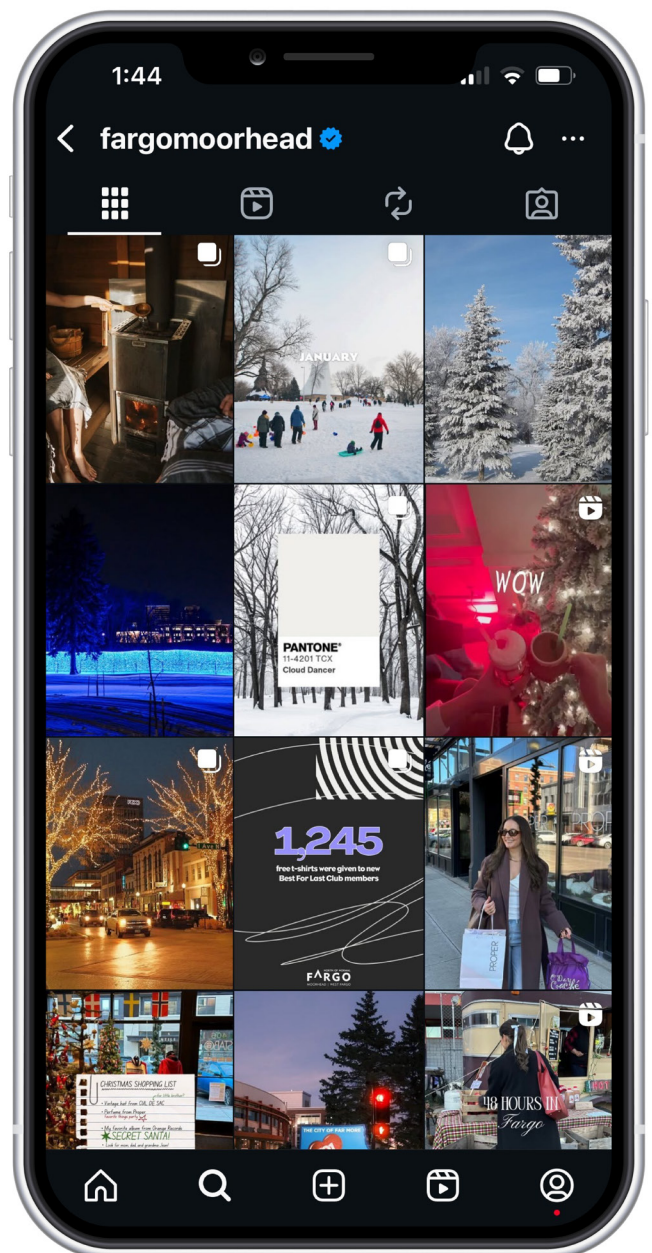
Total followers across 6 social platforms

-  **Facebook:** 49,153 across 4 pages
-  **Instagram:** 19,011 across 2 pages
-  **Pinterest:** 1,171 followers
-  **TikTok:** 2,252 followers
-  **LinkedIn:** 1,146 followers
-  **YouTube:** 778 subscribers

4,050,000

Total organic reach in 2025

-  **Facebook:** 2,487,404 organic reach
-  **Instagram:** 645,708 organic reach
-  **Pinterest:** 273,780 total audience
-  **TikTok:** 617,687 total video views
-  **LinkedIn:** 22,962 impressions



MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

LEADS & CONVERSIONS

The Leads & Conversions Campaign drove long-term engagement by increasing newsletter sign-ups through targeted, persona-based messaging. Focused on three distinct personas, the campaign used paid media, influencers, and SEO-supported content paired with landing pages, itineraries, and passport features to guide visitors from discovery to action.

Results:

3,751 incremental trips
\$557,221 incremental impact
\$15:\$1 return on ad spend
\$700k impact to lodging & \$300k impact to attractions



SPORTS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The Sports Awareness Campaign positioned Fargo-Moorhead as a premier destination for tournaments and sporting events by increasing visibility among sports planners and event organizers. Through targeted search ads, Playeasy promotions, and a featured success story highlighting VFM's relationship with USA Wrestling, the campaign boosted inquiries, strengthened page engagement, and supported earned media coverage.

Results:

5,171% increase in views to sports-focused pages
10K+ active users on the Sports Planners page (+5,820% YOY)
28,662 new users to sports pages (up from 199 in 2024)

CANADIAN SHOPPING CAMPAIGN

The Canadian Holiday Shopping Haul campaign rebuilt awareness and drove visitation from the Winnipeg market during the peak holiday shopping season by showcasing Fargo's mix of major retail, local boutiques, dining, and festive experiences. Running across Meta, Winnipeg Free Press print/digital, influencer, and radio, the campaign encouraged travelers to "make your holiday haul a Fargo getaway."

Results:

85 nights in local hotels booked
5,239% YoY traffic increase from the target demo (25K vs. 463)
44% CTR from Winnipeg Free Press (vs. 0.08% benchmark)
Influencer content delivered 60,450 impressions and 602 engagements

Next Steps:

Expand reach with younger audiences based on influencer engagement
Highlight Downtown Fargo to broaden what Canadian visitors experience beyond big-box shopping



@brainsandbronzed



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