

FY21 Mat-Su CVB Annual Report



“Leading tourism’s recovery”

From the Board Chair

Looking back on the last fiscal year, it was a tale of two seasons. When the fiscal year began on July 1, 2020, we were in the middle of a lost summer, one without out-of-state visitors and facing a very uncertain future. Alaskans, however, showed up, and helped us get through that very difficult summer. In 2021, we all saw a dramatic increase in independent travelers and despite a lack of cruise visitors, many local businesses were as busy as ever.



The Mat-Su CVB played an integral role in leading the industry's recovery and I'm proud of the way the organization pivoted quickly. When it became apparent in 2020 that we would not have out-of-state visitors, the organization focused solely on marketing to Alaskans, which resulted in keeping many of us afloat.

The organization also provided many resources to our members to keep them informed and educated. Webinars, information about grant opportunities and marketing tips benefited the membership.

Despite the pandemic, we focused on the future and added to our national marketing efforts, with ads in several national publications. As an organization, we knew that we needed to promote our destination in new and creative ways so that when travel returned, the Mat-Su Valley would be on every visitor's wish list.

Together, we will lead the recovery of the industry. Our future looks brighter by the day.

FY2021 Board of Directors

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Mark Fleenor,
Sheep Mountain Lodge

Vice Chair
Roberta Warner,
Alaska Tour & Travel

Treasurer
Travis Taylor,
Premier Alaska Tours

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Cole Chambers,
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Cheryl Metiva,
Extreme Fun Center and The Valley Cinemas

Fernando Salvador,
Alaska Collection by Pursuit

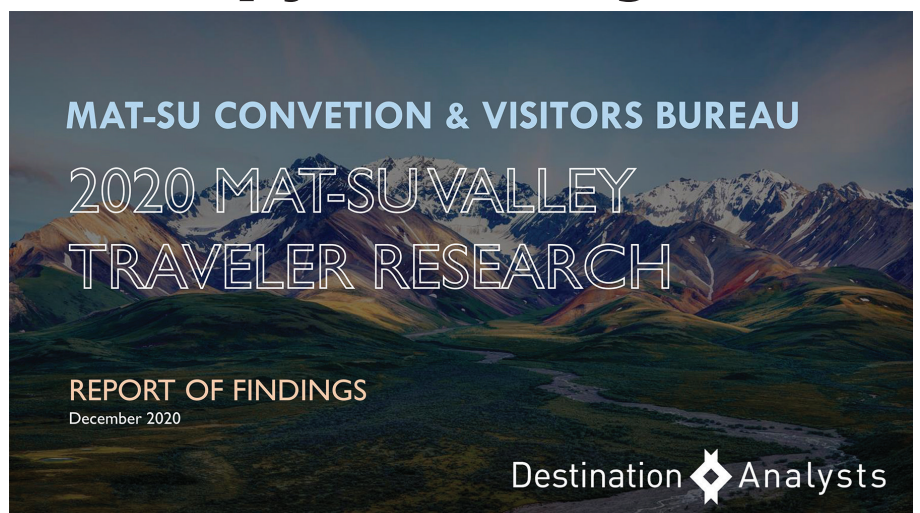
Rick Peterson,
McKinley Princess Wilderness Lodge

Dan Wilcock,
Alaska Backcountry Adventure Tours

Heather Dudick,
Alaska Railroad

Research provides roadmap for recovery

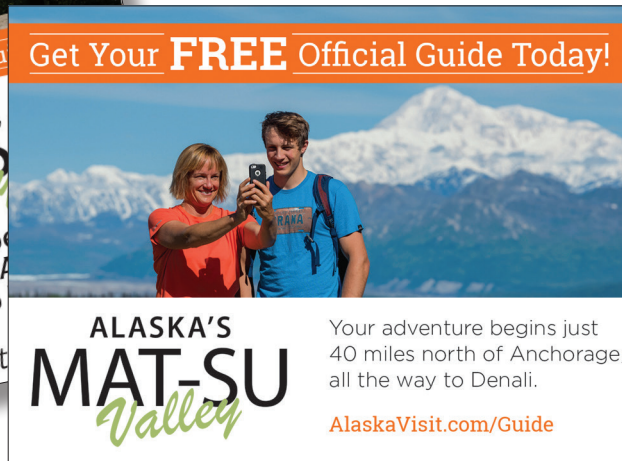
Knowing that travel trends and visitor patterns would be severely disrupted due to the pandemic, the Mat-Su CVB turned to research to lead the recovery. In November 2020, the organization invested in a visitor profile survey through Destination Analysts that identified geographic and demographic information about our travelers. The report helped guide all marketing efforts in the most efficient and effective way possible.



Promoting our destination to a national audience



The Mat-Su CVB placed display advertisements in national publications like AARP (below), Travel+Leisure (left), Outside (right) and Alaska Magazines, in addition to The Milepost.



4,180

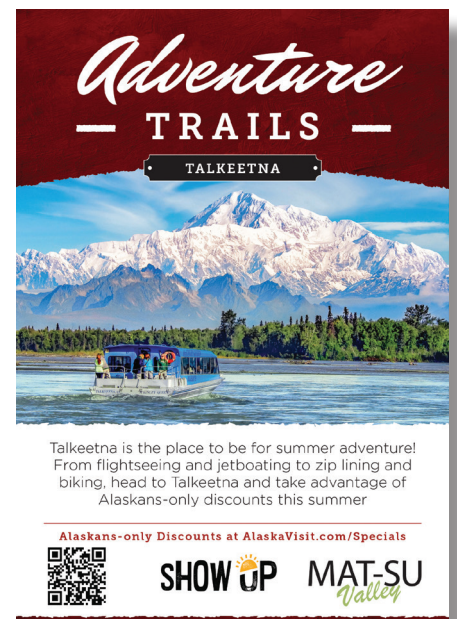
Visitor Guide requests directly from national ads

29%

Increase in e-newsletter subscriptions

Reaching Alaskans

Marketing to Alaskans was more important than ever before in FY21, as the pandemic resulted in virtually no outside visitors during the first and second quarters. The Mat-Su CVB's investment resulted in 82 print ads, 1 million digital impressions and 120,000 placements on streaming TV and radio. Mat-Su CVB worked in collaboration with local chambers of commerce to develop ads highlighting local communities and activities.



AlaskaVisit.com brings customers to your door

AlaskaVisit.com saw an increase of 35.5 percent in traffic in FY21, despite the pandemic, well exceeding industry averages. Investing in paid search and digital ads, as well as targeting high potential visitors identified through research, means members receive more referrals. The web site not only gives visitors trip planning information, it generates business for our members.



35.5%
Total increase
over FY20

178,000
Total visitor
sessions

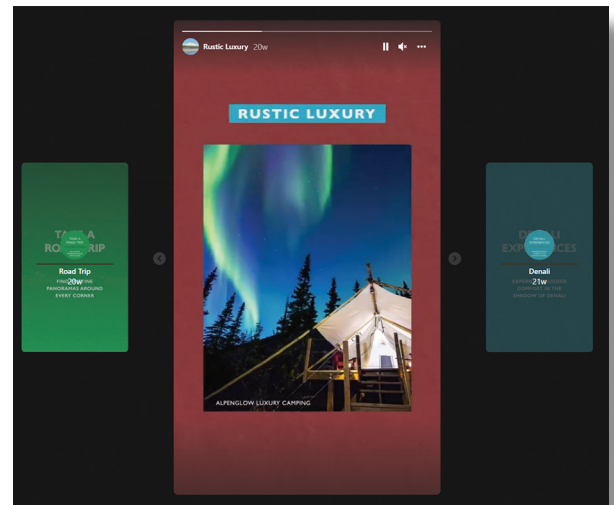
66%
Total increase in
organic traffic

Reaching visitors through social media

4.3 million
Total reach
across all social
platforms

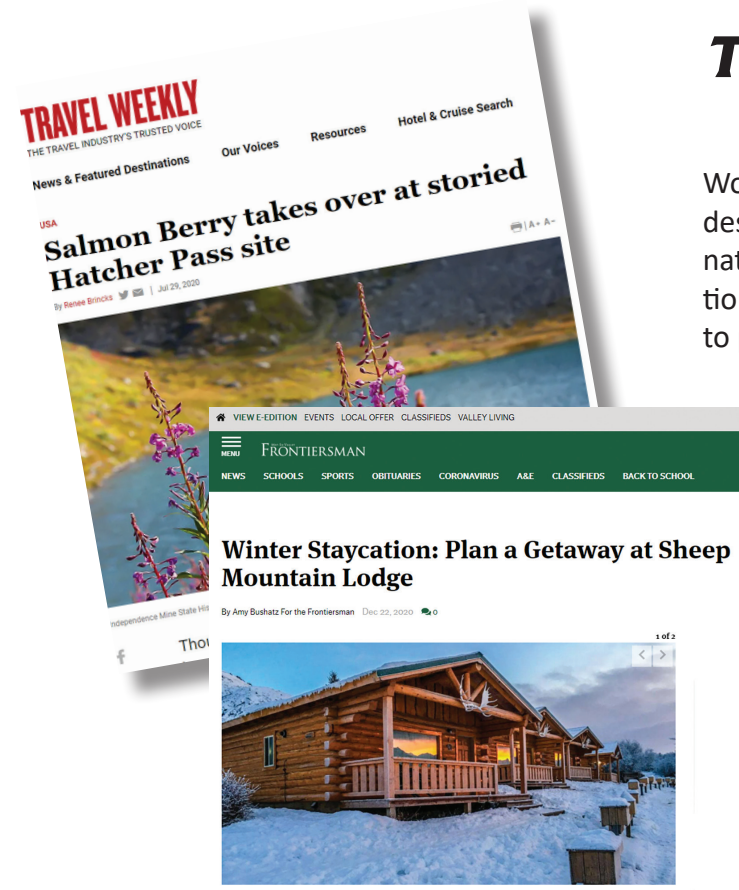
75,000
Engagements on
Facebook,
Instagram,
Twitter

Travelers turn to social media for inspiration! In FY21, Mat-Su CVB launched a national social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram, generating a total reach of 4.3 million and generating more than 75,000 engagements.



Telling our destination's story

Working with travel journalists is an important way to highlight our destination in print and online. In FY21, Mat-Su CVB assisted 25 national travel writers with Mat-Su itineraries, including publications like Travel Weekly and Travel Age West. We also work locally to promote activities and experiences to in-state readers.



Relationships keep travel trade planning for recovery

The pandemic was felt hardest in the group tour segment, as large tours did not operate. Building on existing relationships was important, however, as travel trade will return, and virtual platforms helped. In FY21, Mat-Su CVB participated in the virtual National Tour Association convention, including a destination training seminar with operators. The CVB also participated in two travel agent trainings, reaching more than 75 agents, and provided assistance to 10 operators during the pandemic.



75
*Travel agents
trained in
virtual seminars*

70
*Tour operators
reached during
NTA destination
spotlight and
appointments*

Membership is the backbone of Mat-Su CVB

Providing tools for members' success

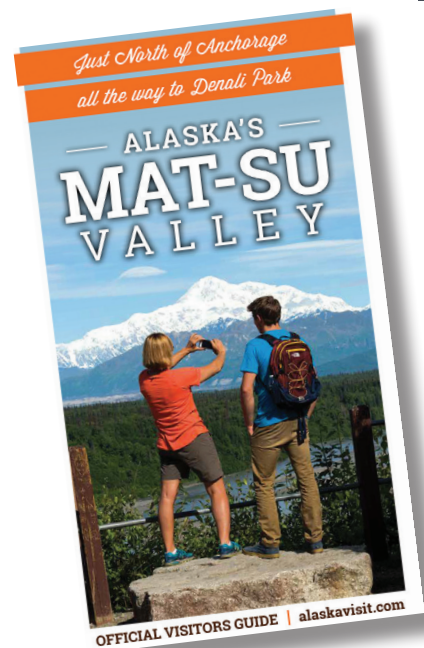
To give members financial flexibility during the pandemic, Mat-Su CVB extended a 25 percent discount on membership and visitor guide advertising for a second year. The strength of the organization lies with the strength of our membership.



In FY21, Mat-Su CVB hosted 18 educational webinars for members, covering topics such as financial aid, product updates and digital marketing assistance. Empowering members for success is important to Mat-Su CVB.

Shooting for the stars!

Mat-Su CVB shot promotional video for members throughout FY21, using the footage on social media and strengthening member listings on AlaskaVisit.com



Providing exposure through affordable advertising opportunities

In FY21, 75,000 copies of the Mat-Su Visitor Guide were printed and distributed, and every Mat-Su CVB member received a complimentary listing. Display advertising in the guide was discounted by 25 percent, and is among the most affordable in Alaska. Additionally, advertising options on AlaskaVisit.com give members the opportunity to use Mat-Su CVB's investment in online marketing to broaden their reach and attract more web site visitors and customers.

232

**Active Mat-Su
CVB members**

16

New members

97.6%

**Member retention
rate**

18

**Educational
webinars hosted**

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position (as of June 30, 2021)

Assets

Current assets:	
Cash	\$888,769
Memberships and grants receivable	\$500
Prepaid expenses	<u>\$48,809</u>
Total current assets	\$938,078

Property and Equipment	
Furniture and equipment	\$73,716
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(\$73,716)</u>
Net property and equipment	<u>\$0</u>
Security Deposits	\$3,790
Total assets	\$941,868

Liabilities and net assets

Current liabilities:	
Accounts payable	\$32,992
Payroll liabilities & deferred revenue	<u>\$41,255</u>
Total current liabilities	\$74,247
Unrestricted net assets	<u>\$867,621</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	\$941,868

Per board policy, Mat-Su CVB's financial statements, accounting practices and reporting methods are audited every third year. The FY21 financial statements have been audited.

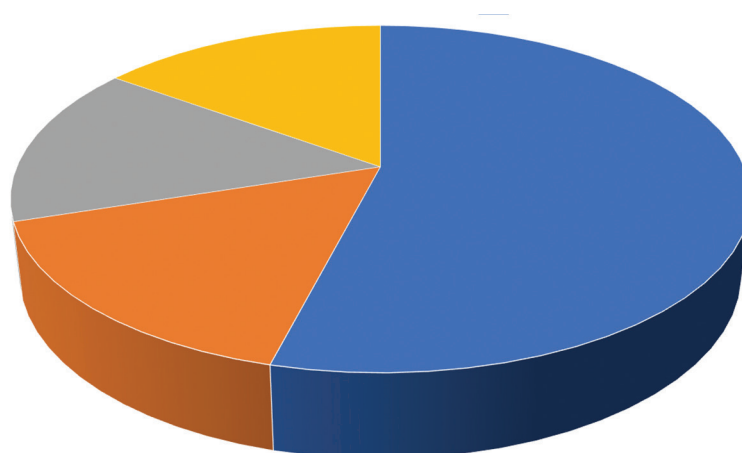
FY21 Revenue Detail - \$1,621,162

Mat-Su Borough Grant Revenue*	\$1,500,000
Employee Retention Credit	\$48,000
Membership Dues	\$30,041
Advertising Sales & Marketing Programs	\$43,103
Special Events & Fund-raisers	\$0
Interest	\$18
TOTAL REVENUE:	\$1,621,162

** Through the CARES Act, the Mat-Su Borough funded the CVB for two years at \$750,000 per year.*

FY21 Expenses by Division

Marketing	\$531,910	58%	
Membership	\$113,803	12%	
Operations	\$114,146	12%	
Administration	\$168,958	18%	



Contact us!

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Advocates for the tourism industry

The Mat-Su CVB staff serves on numerous boards of directors, both locally and statewide, advocating for the Mat-Su tourism industry and our valued members.



YAHOO!
Mat-Su

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