

Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau

November 18, 2022

Sarah Leonard, President & CEO
Alaska Travel Industry Association



Alaska Travel Industry Association

600+ member businesses

24-member Board of Directors

Statewide Destination Marketing

Advocacy



**\$10.5M budget for
Alaska statewide
destination marketing**

**Management
8%**

**Advertising
63%**

**Web
9%**

**Public & Media
Relations
9.5%**

**Research
4.4%**

**Travel Trade Shows &
International
3%**

**—TRAVEL—
ALASKA**



CULTURAL TOURISM



https://www.travelalaska.com



ATIA.org Home • Northrim Bank Travel Alaska - Official S... First National Bank Alas... Financial Assistance Poli...

Covid-19 Travel Updates

EXPLORE ALASKA

THINGS TO DO

DESTINATIONS



Order a Vacation Planner |

Sustainable Tourism |

North to Alaska

GETTING AROUND

PLAN YOUR TRIP

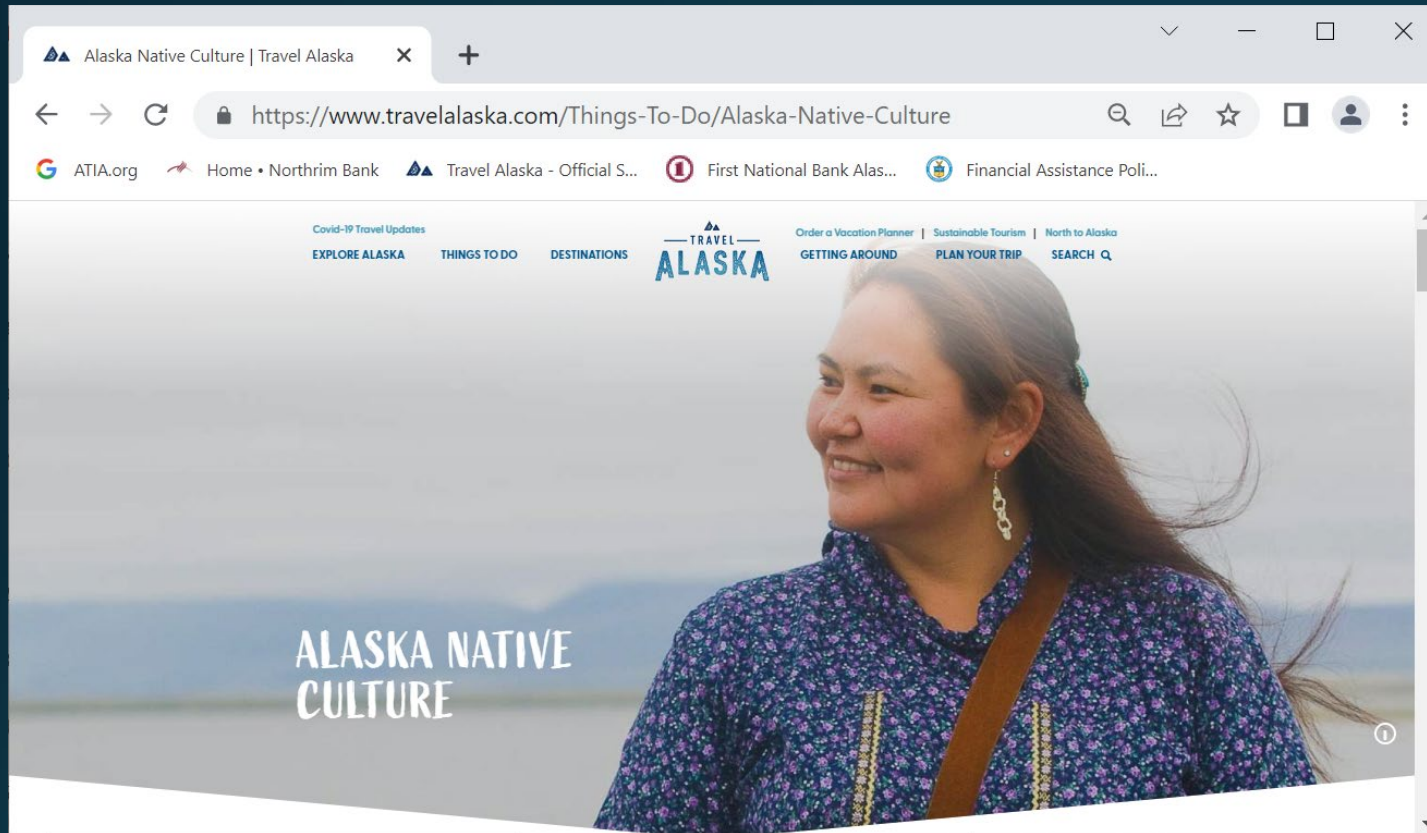
SEARCH Q

WÁA SÁ IYATEE?

Tlingit

How Are You?





Athabaskan Culture

Inupiat Culture

Yup'ik & Cup'ik Culture

Tlingit, Haida, Eyak & Tsimshian Culture

Unangax & Sugpiaq Culture



Alaska 2022-23 Visitor Profile Study

By Destination Analysts

1

Intercept
survey of
visitors

2

Online panel
survey of U.S.
travelers to Alaska

3

Online survey of
ATIA partners'
owned audiences

May 2022 through April 2023

RESEARCH

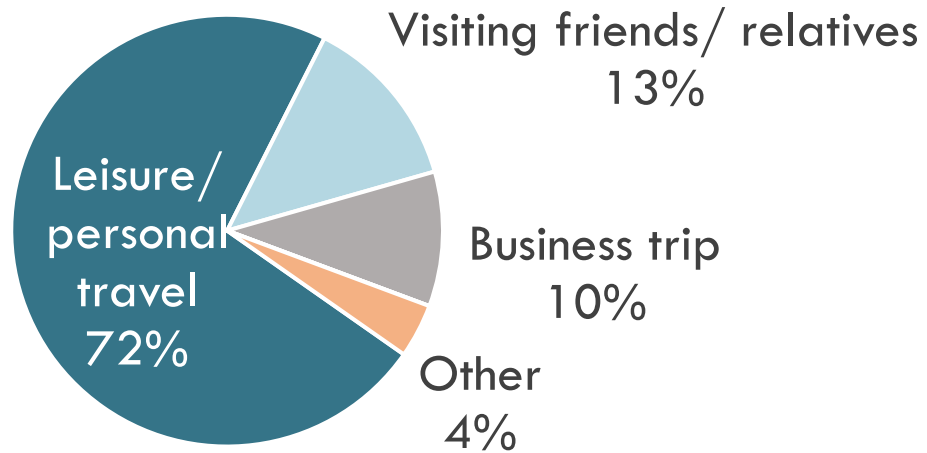


	Intercept Survey	U.S. National Online Panel Survey	ATIA Partners Owned Audience Survey	Total
Year-to-Date Results				2,944 responses
Fielding Dates	May 2022 – October 2022	August 2022	August 2022	
Sample Collection	1,301 responses	500 responses	1,140 responses	
Travel Period Covered	May 2022 – October 2022	May 2022 – August 2022	May 2021 – August 2022	

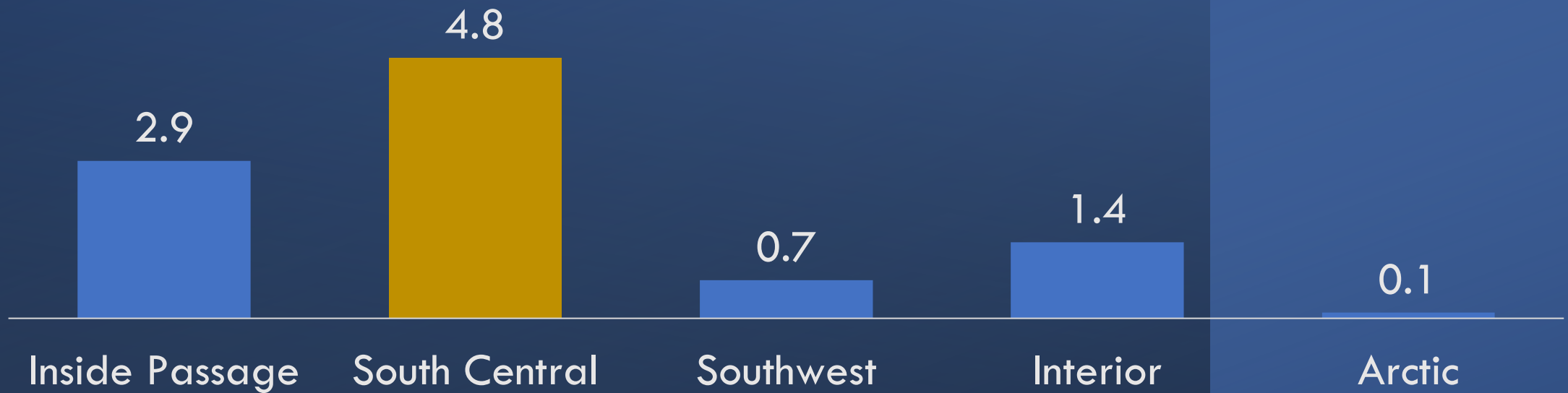
YEAR TO DATE RESULTS

Primary Purpose of Visit

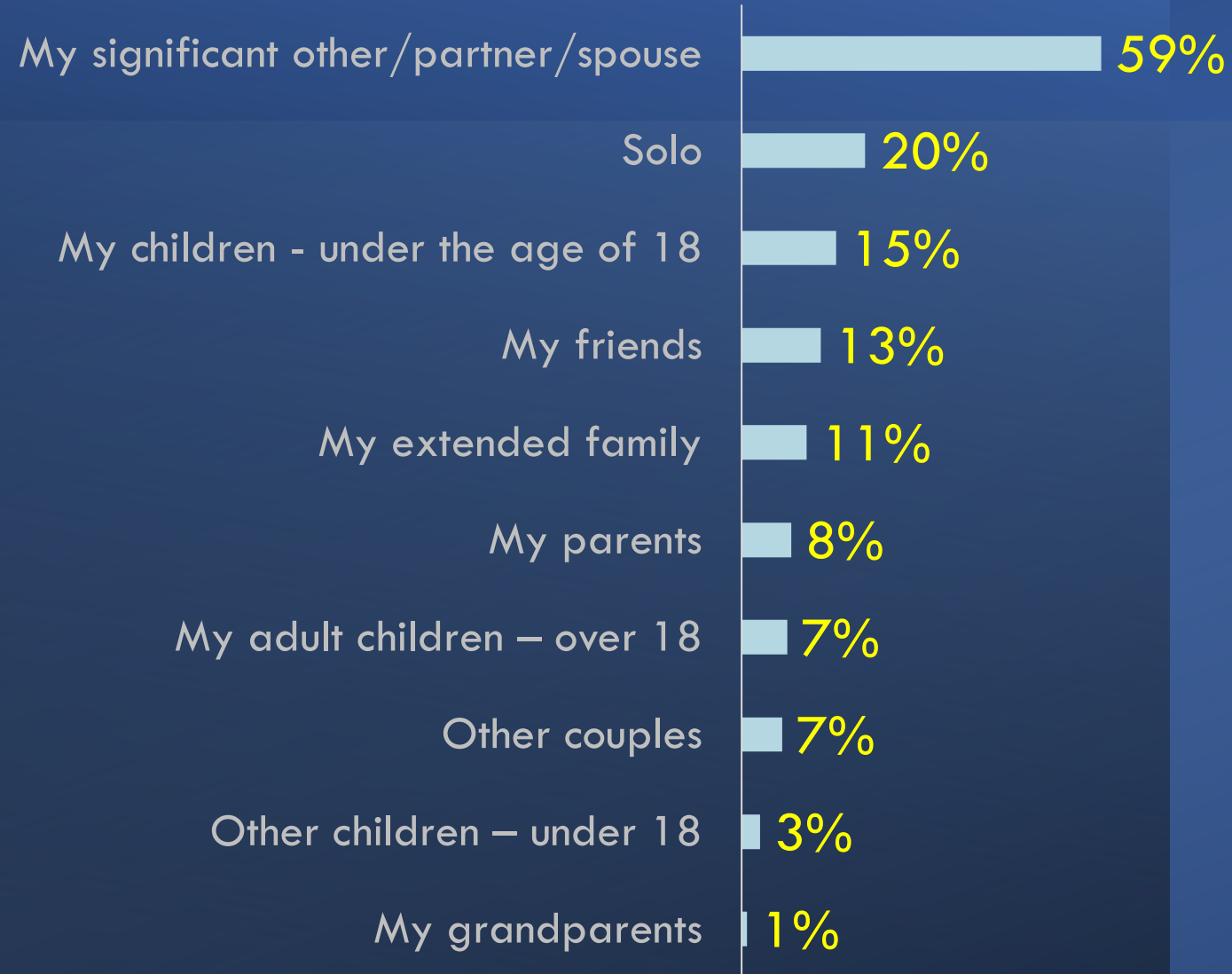
By Destination Analysts. As of 11/09/22



Average Length of Stay by Region (Nights)

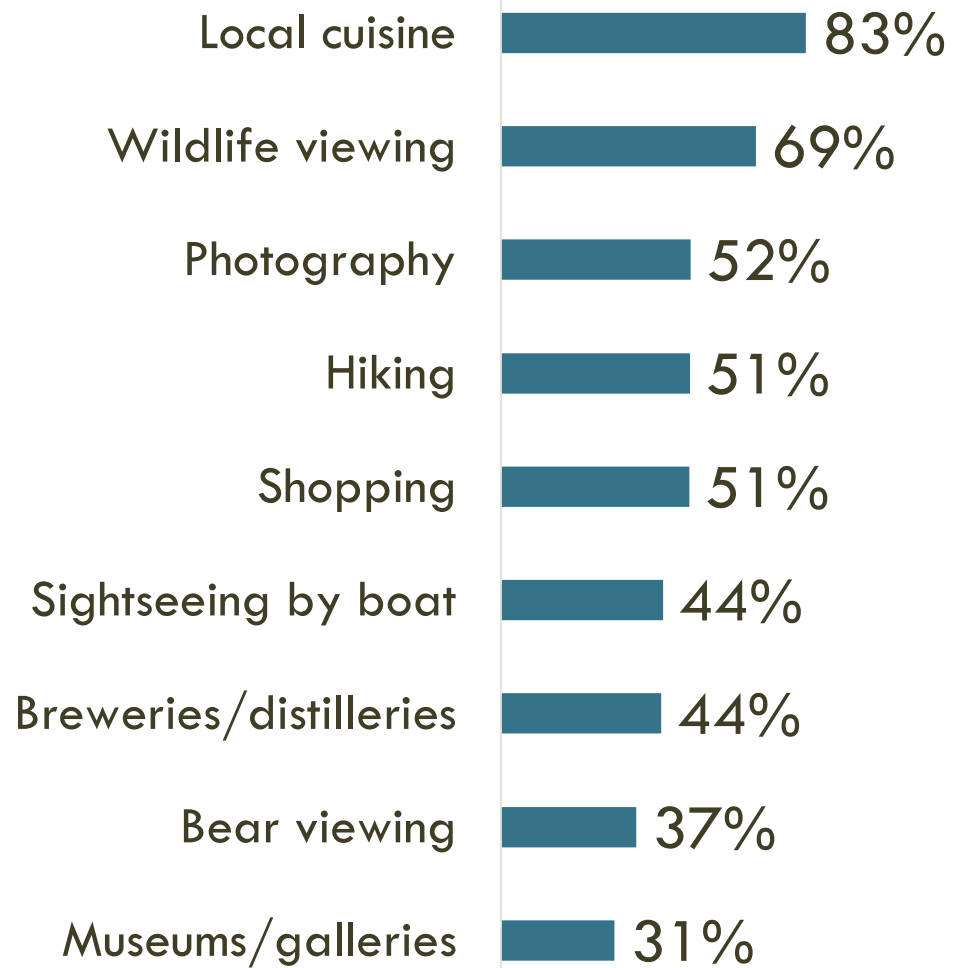


Travel Party Composition

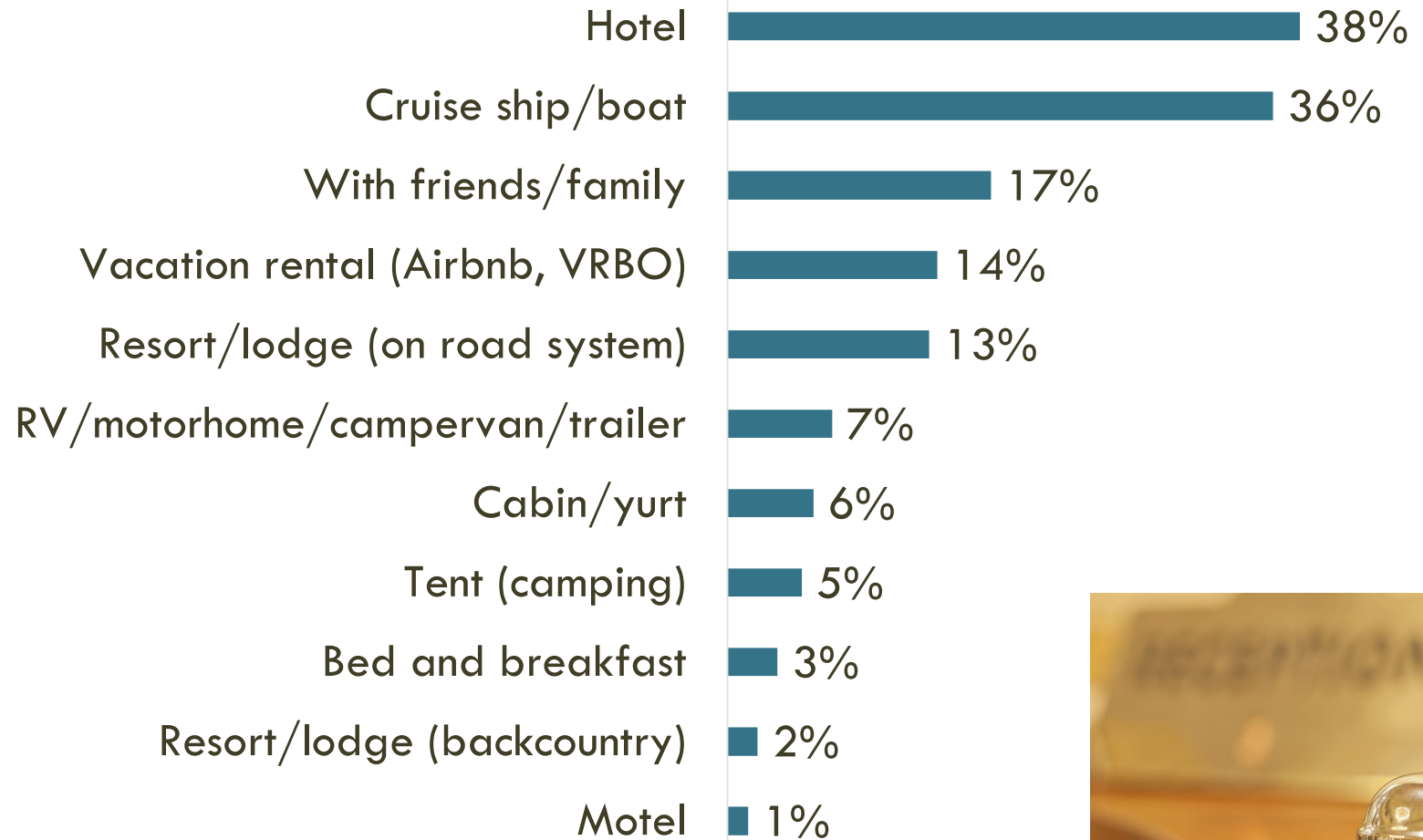




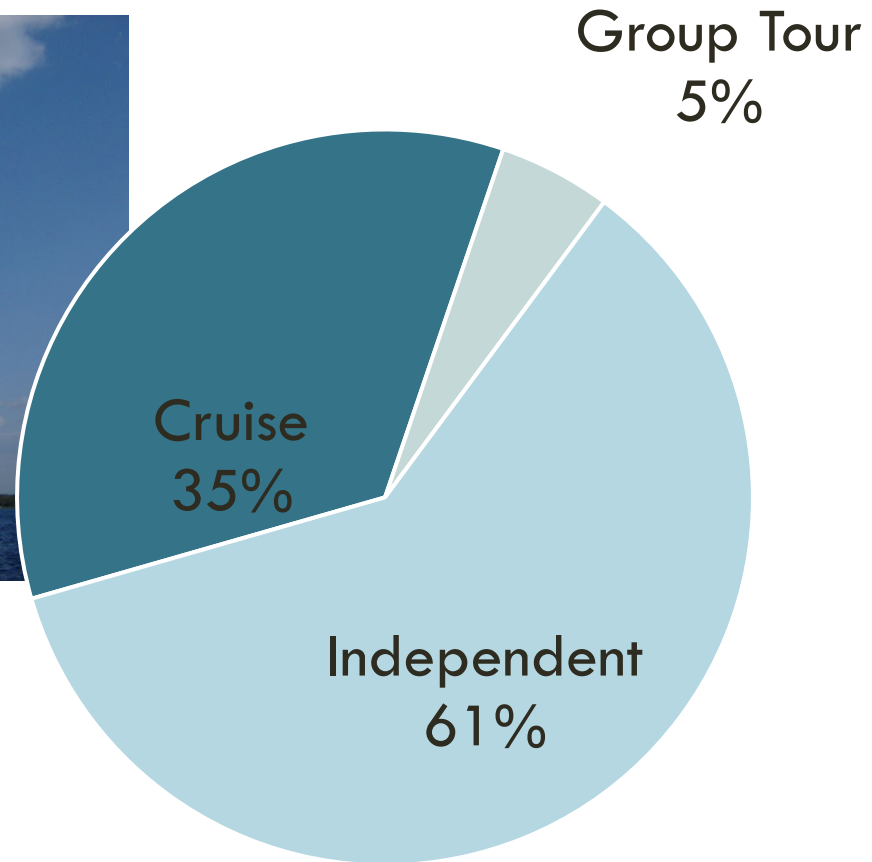
TOP ACTIVITIES



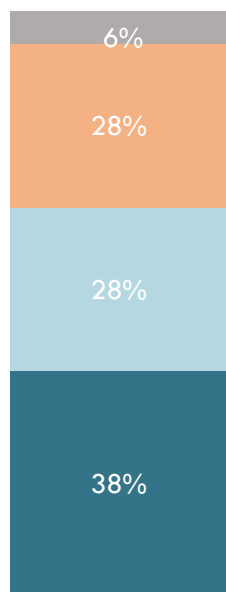
LODGING



TRAVELER TYPE



Demographics



■ Gen Z

■ Millennial

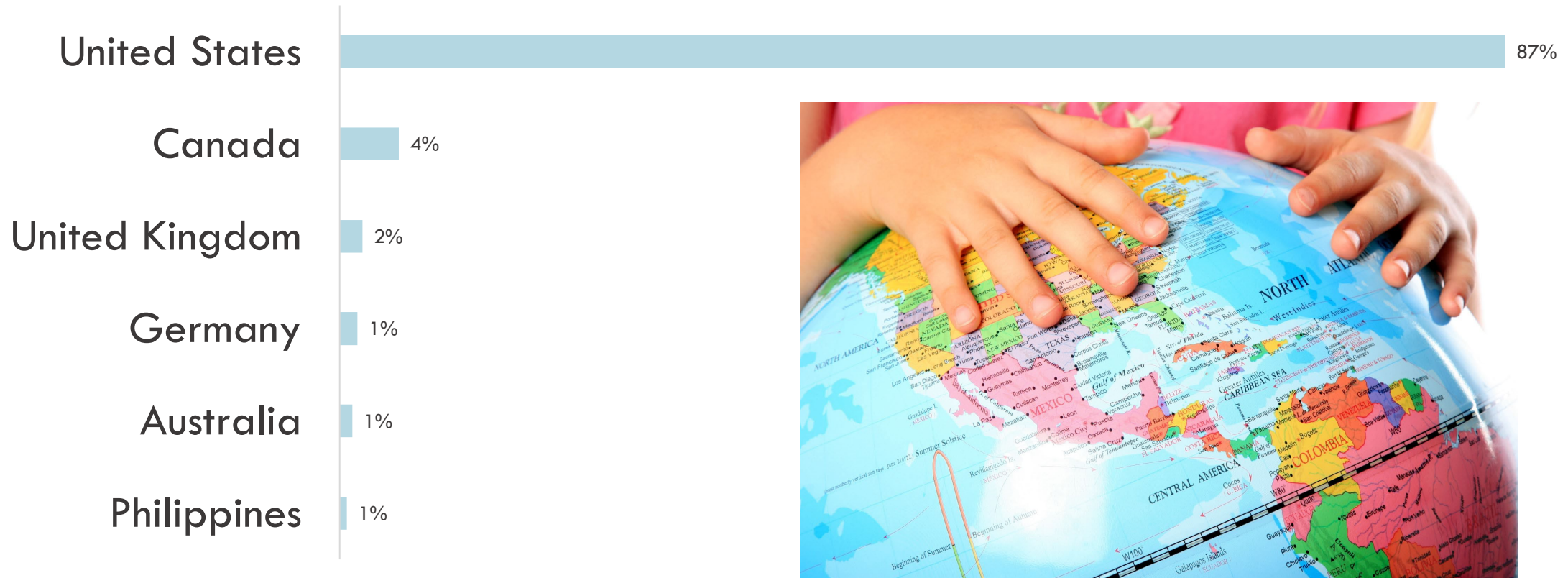
■ Gen X

■ Boomer or older

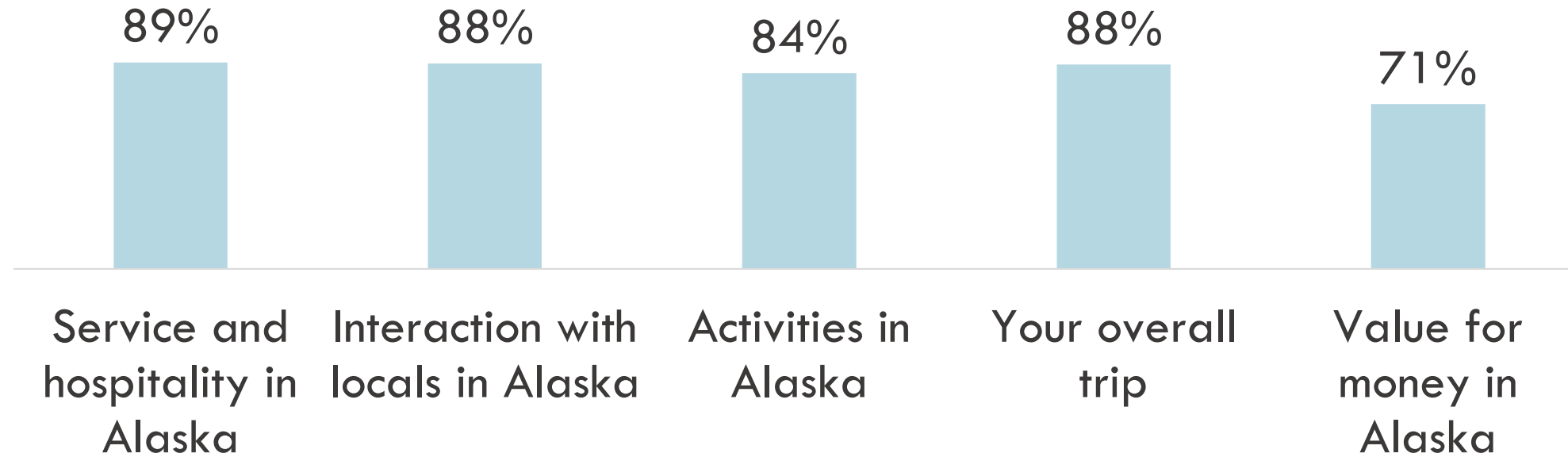


Demographics

Top Countries of Origin



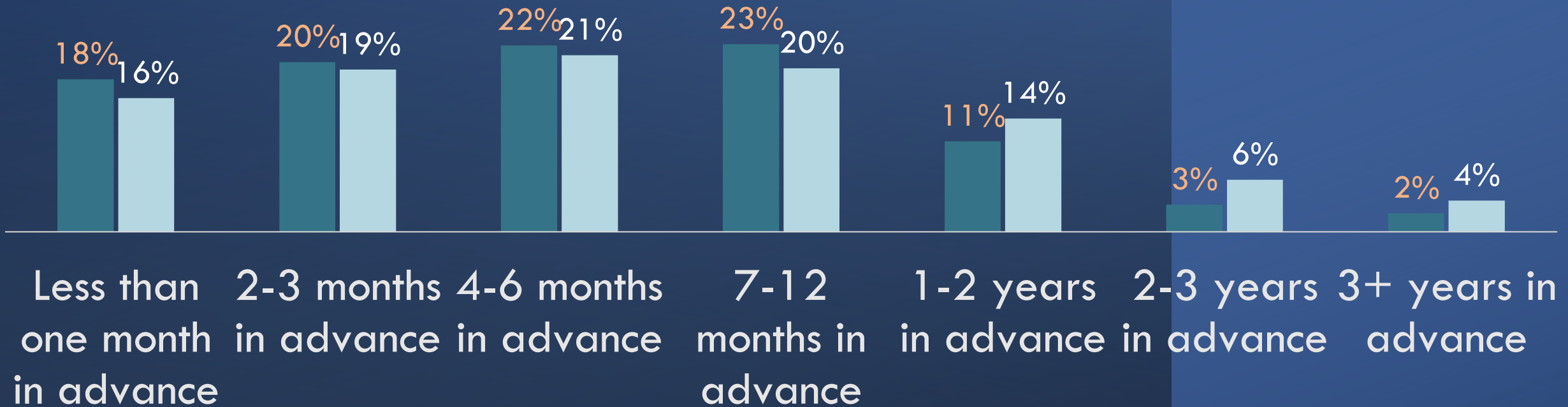
Visitor Satisfaction

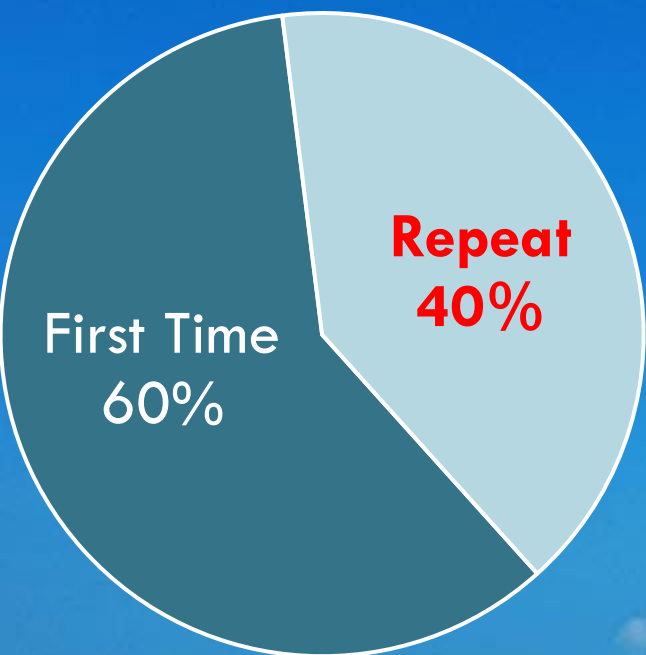


Planning & Booking Window

■ Begin Planning

■ Begin Booking



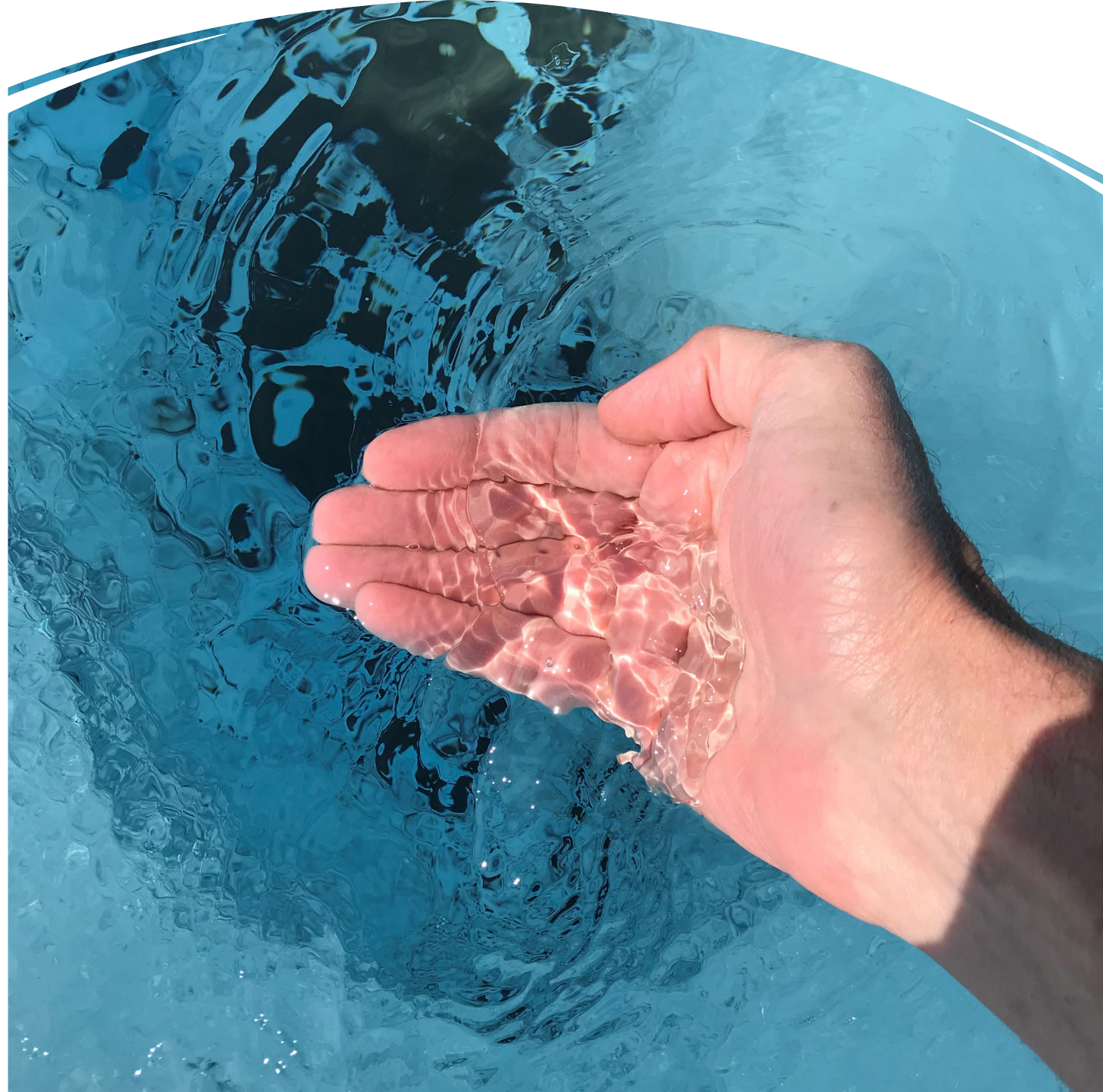


First time vs. repeat visitors

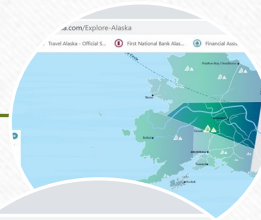


2019 Contributions from the Tourism Industry

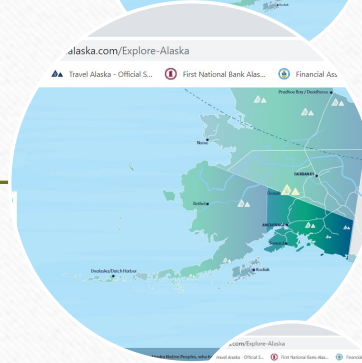
- **\$109.6 MILLION MUNICIPAL REVENUE:**
 - *Sales Tax: \$41 Million*
 - *Bed Taxes: \$39.3 Million*
 - *Dockage Fees: \$22.3 Million*
- **\$143.3 MILLION STATE REVENUE:**
 - *State agencies, tickets, fees, and permits*
- **\$252.9 MILLION TOTAL STATE AND MUNICIPAL REVENUE**
- **1 in 10 ALASKA JOBS EMPLOYED IN TOURISM SECTOR**
 - *Over 40,000 (peak-season 52,000 jobs) direct and indirect jobs*



Statewide Destination Marketing and Management and our DMMO partners



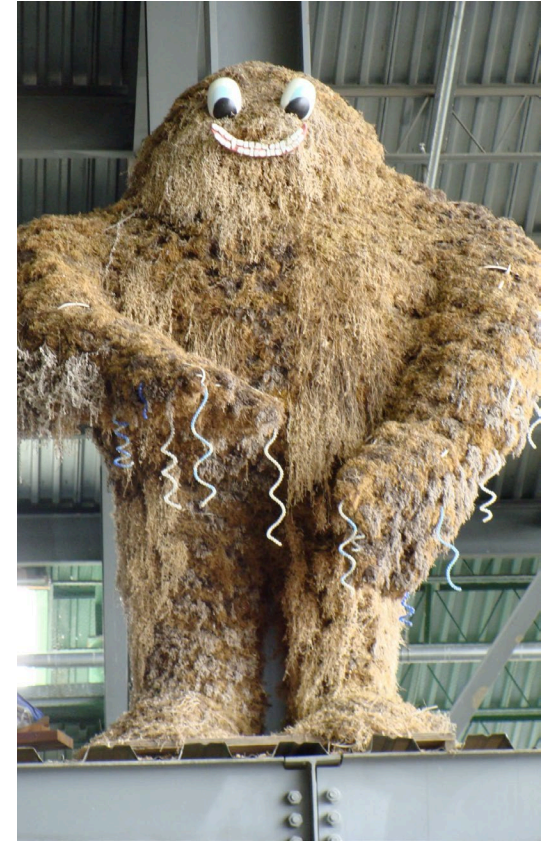
Interior: Explore Fairbanks



Mat-Su Valley: Mat-Su CVB



Southwest: Discover Kodiak



Thank you!

VISIT ANCHORAGE

Strategic Planning & Personas

- Partnered with Twenty31
- 30+ stakeholder interviews, workshops, and site visits
- Tourism roadmap 2023-2026 (and beyond)
- Solve for economy, social, and environment
- Set direction based on business, visitor, and community needs



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

To achieve its vision, Visit Anchorage needs to consider the entire tourism ecosystem. It needs to satisfy economic development objectives by first and foremost supporting tourism stakeholders to accelerate wealth and job growth.

It understands that decisions made on behalf of the tourism industry also impact the communities in which tourism happens, as well as its surrounding physical environment.

Visit Anchorage's Tourism Strategic Plan 2023-2026, has updated goals or achievable outcomes that are generally broad and longer-term, supported by objectives that are shorter-term and that define measurable actions to achieve the overall goal.

1. GOAL: ECONOMIC

Increase total annual revenues & profitability from tourism

- Optimize visitor yield in summer by targeting more visitors with better experiences, longer stays, and investment
- Improve seasonality with winter and shoulder season growth
- Attract higher yield-visitors and channels
- Increase awareness, interest, and action to visit Anchorage
- Support improvement of visitor experiences, products, and infrastructure

2. GOAL: SOCIAL

Improve Anchorage liveability and appreciation of tourism among residents.

- Support improvement in resident quality of life
- Improve perception of tourism in the community
- Increase government, industry, and resident confidence in tourism to support tourism direction

3. GOAL: ENVIRONMENTAL

Ensure natural assets are protected & sustained for locals and visitors to enjoy for generations to come

- Increase tourism stakeholder environmental awareness
- Infuse environmental considerations more comprehensively in key tourism programs

Challenges

Immediate impact



1. Social issues



2. Lack of qualified labor



3. Accommodation options
& price points

Challenges

Longer-term, more systemic



1. Leadership & industry mindset shift towards year-round tourism



2. Value of tourism not fully appreciated by community & its leaders



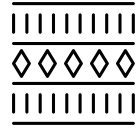
3. Anchorage tourism largely defined by downtown core & not MOA



4. Product & experience availability in shoulder/winter season for tourism



5. Non-optimized products, experiences, routes, & trails for tourism



6. Development & integration of Indigenous experiences as part of overall tourism experience



7. Lack of venues outside of downtown core for group travel



8. Airline pricing & route availability



9. Transportation in & around Anchorage



10. Anchorage not considered "Real Alaska" by its key stakeholders and residents permeates the narrative



11. Anchorage (& Alaska) is only for older visitors



12. Tourism in Anchorage defined primarily by cruise industry

Opportunity Themes

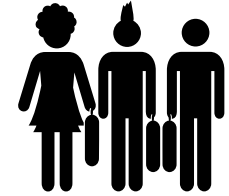
Immediate & short-term



1. Strengthen tourism leadership & advocacy role to communicate value of tourism



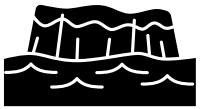
2. Position Anchorage for independent travelers, younger, more adventurous visitors



3. Develop more resilient, higher-yield mix of tourism channels: high-end group, incentives, international

Opportunity Themes

Longer-term



1. Fully embrace Anchorage tourism opportunities beyond downtown core



2. Develop a year-round tourism mindset



3. Understand Anchorage as a complete "real Alaska" standalone destination



4. Improve the downtown tourism vibe



5. Develop "Made in Anchorage" shoulder/ winter tourism products and experiences

Vision & Mission

VISION

A globally desired, year-round, and multi-day tourism destination that entices visitors with an array of accessible, uniquely Alaskan experiences.

MISSION

Driving major economic and social value for Anchorage residents, businesses, and visitors through tourism.

Goals & Objectives

1

GOAL: ECONOMIC

Increase total annual revenues & profitability from tourism.

Supporting Objectives

- Optimize visitor yield in summer by targeting more visitors with better experiences, longer stays, and investment
- Improve seasonality with winter and shoulder season growth
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- Increase awareness, interest, and action to visit Anchorage
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GOAL: SOCIAL

Improve Anchorage liveability and appreciation of tourism among residents.

Supporting Objectives

- Support improvement in resident quality of life
- Improve perception of tourism in the community
- Increase government, industry, and resident confidence in tourism to support tourism direction

3

GOAL: ENVIRONMENTAL

Ensure natural assets are protected & sustained for locals and visitors to enjoy for generations to come.

Supporting Objectives

- Increase tourism stakeholder environmental awareness
- Infuse environmental considerations more comprehensively in key tourism programs

18 Key Pillars & Initiatives: Destination Marketing & Communications

1

DESTINATION MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Focus on attracting new, higher yield traveler segments through marketing and communications
- B. Focus on high-yield group tourism through marketing, communications, and travel trade
- C. Initiate local campaigns to Anchorage residents on the economic, social, and environmental value of tourism
- D. Support the creation of enhanced marketing assets and share with Anchorage tourism businesses

QW

2

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

- A. Recognize the role of tourism management and development in overall destination marketing
- B. Communicate strategy and enhance stakeholder collaboration
- C. Engage entire community on behalf of travel and tourism
- D. Conduct and share industry, market, and social tourism research
- E. Address labor issues through "Built in Anchorage" solutions
- F. Support tourism innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment

QW

3

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

- A. Optimize Anchorage trail system to accommodate various traveler segments
- B. Create more multi-day, packaged, and immersive itineraries and experiences, focusing on shoulder/winter
- C. Identify and support creation of high-yield, uniquely Anchorage elevated experiences
- D. Work with cruise companies to entice longer pre- and post-cruise stays
- E. Address transportation challenges in and around Anchorage
- F. Improve and standardize wayfinding
- G. Train local businesses in product and experience development based on consumer demand
- H. Provide training and incentives to encourage more sustainable tourism

QW

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QW: Quick Win

18 Key Pillars & Initiatives: Destination Management

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QW: Quick Win

18 Key Pillars & Initiatives: Destination Development

1

DESTINATION MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Focus on attracting new, higher yield traveler segments through marketing and communications
- B. Focus on high-yield group tourism through marketing, communications, and travel trade
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- D. Support the creation of enhanced marketing assets and share with Anchorage tourism businesses

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QW: Quick Win

HIGH-VALUE PERSONAS : ANCHORAGE

Anchorage's high-value personas are aligned with evolving traveler desires for the near-term but may need to be adjusted for long-term growth.

1.

WILD BUNCH

Families that love spending time together

- 75% agree that Alaska is the perfect fit for them
- More than 50% have a serious interest in visiting Alaska in the next 12 months
- \$710.80 Expected Daily Spend on Leisure Trips
- \$124,188 Average Household Income

2.

BUZZ BOUND

These travelers only invest in trips and destinations that are buzzed about, on trend, and socially brag-worthy.

- 75% agree that Alaska is the perfect fit for them
- More than 50% have a serious interest in visiting Alaska in the next 12 months
- \$655.20 Expected Daily Spend on Leisure Trips
- \$114,211 Average Household Income

3.

BEER-MES

Travellers who take trips to visit craft breweries, take brewery tours, and enjoy local food scene.

- Nearly 70% agree that Alaska is the perfect fit for them
- 50% have a serious interest in visiting Alaska in the next 12 months
- \$607.15 Expected Daily Spend on Leisure Trips
- \$114,907 Average Household Income

4.

INTERNATIONALLY ORIENTED

American destinations hold little excitement for these travellers, who have their mind set on global travel.

- Nearly 50% have a serious interest in visiting Alaska in the next 12 months
- \$618.17 Expected Daily Spend on Leisure Trips
- \$120,891 Average Household Income

- In December 2020, Visit Anchorage underwent an evaluation of their high-value personas to take into consideration the changing needs and desires of travelers in light of COVID-19.

- Both summer and winter high-value personas were evaluated against a number of metrics impacting pandemic travel. While these personas represented the most potential near-term recovery, consideration should be given to re-evaluation from a long-term growth perspective – particularly with respect to Internationally Oriented and Beer-Mes personas.

2022 A Year of Recovery and Focus

- Cultural Tourism
Awareness and Support
- Sustainable Tourism
Master Plan
- Gateway Visitor Center
\$6.7 million Federal EDA
Grant Awarded









YAHOO!
Mat-Su

Sustainable Tourism Master Plan



PREPARED FOR:
MAT-SU CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU



- Awarded \$100,000 ARPA Nonprofit Recovery Grant March 2022
- Four Community Workshops
- Online Public Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Analysis of Tourism Indicators

alaskavisit.com/masterplan

The Plan Identified Four Goals



- Improve the Visitor and Resident Experience
- Maximize Economic Benefits for Borough Residents
- Cultivate and Promote Sustainability
- Strengthen Resident Engagement and Support



Update on Mat-Su Valley Gateway Visitor Center

November 18, 2022

www.matsuvalleyvisitorcenter.com





Visitor Center History: 1989-Current

- Log visitor center opened 1989
- Glenn/Parks interchange 2003-2004
- Mat-Su Regional Hospital opened 2006
- Trunk Rd. Roundabout opened Sept. 2010





Gateway Visitor Center Update

- Phase 1 – Completed Feasibility Study 2010
(Awarded \$140,000 National Scenic Byways Grant 2008)
- Phase 2 – Purchased Homestead RV site
(FY14 SOA Capital Appropriation \$1 million)
- Phase 3 – Building & Site Design Completed 2016
(FY15 SOA Capital Appropriation \$1.2 million)
- Phase 4 – Construction \$8.4 million
(\$6.7 million EDA grant and \$1.67 million match, most of which came from the sale of the old visitor center)



Site, Building & Interpretive Design 95% completed November 2016





Site, Building & Interpretive Design 95% completed November 2016





\$6.7 million EDA Grant Awarded to Complete Construction September 13, 2022

