





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|    |                                           |    |                                              |
|----|-------------------------------------------|----|----------------------------------------------|
| 3  | Research Overview                         | 22 | Important Factors for Choosing a Destination |
| 5  | Profile of Meeting Planner Participants   | 23 | Marketing - Key Learnings                    |
| 6  | Participants                              | 27 | Recommendations for Promotions/Incentives    |
| 9  | Perception Based Insights - Key Learnings | 28 | Strategies for Targeting Planners            |
| 12 | Destination Appeal                        |    |                                              |
| 13 | Descriptive Words                         |    |                                              |
| 14 | Perceived Personality                     |    |                                              |
| 15 | Comparable Destinations                   |    |                                              |
| 16 | Differentiators                           |    |                                              |
| 17 | Planner Assumptions                       |    |                                              |
| 18 | Significant Strengths and Weaknesses      |    |                                              |
| 20 | Opportunities for Growth                  |    |                                              |
| 21 | Best Methods for Creating Awareness       |    |                                              |

## RESEARCH OVERVIEW

This report presents the findings of a qualitative study of meeting planners' perceptions of Rapid City, SD, as a meetings destination, conducted by Digital Edge on behalf of the Rapid City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The study consisted of a series of 30-minute, in-depth interviews with 12 meeting planners who were recruited from Visit Rapid City's customer and prospect list. During these interviews, participants were asked their perceptions and consideration of Rapid City as a meetings destination and their overall thoughts on marketing techniques to engage planners. The results were used to develop a thorough understanding of Rapid City's most appealing destination attributes and marketing strategies.





## RESEARCH OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Digital Edge, in close consultation with Visit Rapid City, developed a discussion guide that featured conversation points to address the following project objectives:

- Gain valuable and insightful feedback to determine how meeting planners perceive Rapid City as a meetings destination
- Focus on key issues that may impact meetings and conventions business for the destination
- Hear objective feedback from planners that can lead to actionable recommendations on what can be improved to gain more M&C business through marketing



## PROFILE OF MEETING PLANNER PARTICIPANTS

Digital Edge conducted in-depth interviews via online video conferences. Meeting planner participants had to meet the following requirements to participate in the study:

- Have professional experience planning group meetings
- Currently employed as a meeting/event planner
- Have an influence on the destination decision-making authority
- Have or have not visited or held a meeting in Rapid City

The meeting planner participants interviewed represented many different types of organizations. This included, corporate, social, religious, non-profit, sports, third-party and associations segments.

These participants planned several types of events and sizes. These events ranged from board meetings to educational sessions and large conferences/trade events. Planners most commonly were made up of those who planned small and medium-sized events. Meetings and events ranged from under 50 attendees to 500+ attendees.

# PARTICIPANTS

|                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>James Smith</b><br/>National Business Economic Issues Council<br/>Jfsmith1203@gmail.com<br/>Asheville, NC<br/>Has visited and held conference in Rapid City.</p>            | <p>Past President and founding member for the Association NBEIC<br/>Professional economist, economic forecaster, business economist</p>                                                                                                                | <p>Plans 2 meetings per year<br/>50-100 attendees<br/>Market Segment: Non-Profit</p>                                                              |
| <p><b>Tommy Keown</b><br/>Arrowhead Conferences and Events<br/>tommy@arrowheadconferences.org<br/>Alpharetta, GA<br/>Has not visited but has held a conference in Rapid City.</p> | <p>32 years in meetings/events planning, 10 years with Arrowhead.<br/>Arrowhead Conferences &amp; Events a 501(c)(3) subsidiary of Campus Crusade for Christ (now Cru) for the purpose of facilitating Christian conferences throughout the world.</p> | <p>Plans 35 meetings per year<br/>35-500+ attendees<br/>Market Segment: Religious</p>                                                             |
| <p><b>Marilyn Bentz</b><br/>National Bowhunter Education Foundation<br/>mbentz@nbef.org<br/>Rapid City, SD<br/>Has visited but not held conference in Rapid City.</p>             | <p>Executive Director, been with the organization a very long time. They provide fishing and wildlife hunting education required in 11 states and overseas prior to getting their license.</p>                                                         | <p>Plans 2 conferences per year<br/>10-500 attendees<br/>Market Segments: Corporate, Association</p>                                              |
| <p><b>Debbie Ravenscraft</b><br/>HelmsBriscoe<br/>Estates, IL<br/>dravenscraft@helmsbriscoe.com<br/>Has not visited or held a conference in Rapid City.</p>                       | <p>Senior Director Global Accounts/ Chairman's Club/ President's Club<br/>Strategic Meeting Management and Meeting Planning Consultant, Site Selection Specialist and Contract Negotiator</p>                                                          | <p>Plans approximately 100 meetings per year<br/>50-500+ attendees<br/>Market Segments: Corporate, Association, SMERF, Incentive, Third Party</p> |
| <p><b>Brenda Glass</b><br/>Independent Meeting Planner<br/>glasspeg@aol.com<br/>New Port Richey, FL<br/>Has not visited or held a conference in Rapid City.</p>                   | <p>Independent Meeting Planner with 30 years' experience in the hospitality business, 13+ years with Site Search, and 4 years working independently with 16 varied groups.</p>                                                                         | <p>Plans 25-30 meetings per year<br/>50-500 attendees<br/>Market Segments: Corporate, Association, SMERF, Sports, Third Party</p>                 |

# PARTICIPANTS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Andrea Kinney</b><br/>         MarjaNet, Inc.<br/>         Popxperiential - Contract<br/>         andrea@popxperiential.com<br/>         St. Augustine, FL<br/>         Has not visited or held conference in Rapid City.</p> | <p>30 years of experience in the travel industry meeting and event planning. Destination and venue selection, negotiate costs, unique experiences for attendees</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>Plans 50 meetings/events per year<br/>         50-500+ attendees<br/>         Market Segments: corporate, associations, non-profit organizations, incentives, social and sports groups</p> |
| <p><b>Carly Reid</b><br/>         Community Associations Institute<br/>         creid@caionline.org<br/>         Burke, VA<br/>         Has not visited or held conference in Rapid City.</p>                                       | <p>Director of Program Logistics and Exhibitor Relations. Negotiation of meeting space contract, courtesy room block, AV, F&amp;B and transportation (as needed) with various hotels and properties and companies</p>                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Plans 10 meetings per year<br/>         50-500+ attendees<br/>         Market Segments: Association</p>                                                                                    |
| <p><b>Kirk Jensen</b><br/>         Fidelity Technologies<br/>         kirkjensen@gmail.com<br/>         Minneapolis, MN<br/>         Has visited but not held conference in Rapid City.</p>                                         | <p>Fidelity Technologies Corporation is a supplier of quality services and products to Government and Department of Defense clientele in the areas of simulation and training, field support services, and military and aerospace manufacturing. Former Air Force navigator, now contractor for DoD who has training classes to teach pilots how to fly using flight simulators.</p> | <p>Plans two meetings per year<br/>         Approximately 50 people each<br/>         Marketing Segments: Corporate</p>                                                                       |
| <p><b>Sutra Borgeson</b><br/>         Creative Travel &amp; Events, LLC<br/>         Sutra@CreativeTravelandEvents.com<br/>         Oklahoma City, OK<br/>         Has not visited or held conference in Rapid City.</p>            | <p>CEO<br/>         International Event &amp; Travel Specialist<br/>         Specializing in Corporate, Military Reunions, Sports Team Travel, Worldwide Sporting Events, European Adventures, Destination Weddings</p>                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Plans approximately 8 meetings/events per year<br/>         50-200 attendees<br/>         Market Segments: corporate, associations, incentives, social and sports groups</p>               |
| <p><b>Autumn Skousen</b><br/>         Freedom Fest<br/>         autumn@freedomfest.com<br/>         South Jordan, UT<br/>         Has visited and held conference in Rapid City.</p>                                                | <p>Autumn Skousen is the Director of Finance and Operations for FreedomFest, an annual intellectual conference discussing geo-politics, philosophy, history, science &amp; technology, healthy living, music &amp; dance, and economics and business.</p>                                                                                                                            | <p>Plans 1 large conference per year<br/>         100-150 visitors and 2500-3000 attendees<br/>         Market Segment: Social</p>                                                            |



# PARTICIPANTS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Krystin Poitra</b><br/>         IRIS – Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology<br/>         krystin@iris.edu<br/>         New Town, ND<br/>         Has not visited or held a conference in Rapid City.</p> | <p>Meeting and Event Management Specializing in the total coordination and execution of special events including weddings, fundraisers, corporate conferences/meetings and more.</p>                                                                                       | <p>Plans 20 Meetings per year<br/>         50-500 attendees<br/>         Market Segments: Association</p>                |
| <p><b>Todd McPherson</b><br/>         Integrated Family Community Services<br/>         todd_mcp@yahoo.com<br/>         Highlands Ranch, CO<br/>         Has visited or held a conference in Rapid City.</p>                | <p>Director of Development and Marketing at Integrated Family Community Services. Experienced marketing and promotions project manager with substantial event planning and in-house marketing strategy experience. Background in both corporate and non-profit arenas.</p> | <p>Plans 10 Conferences per year<br/>         10-50 attendees<br/>         Market Segments: Corporate and Non-Profit</p> |





# PERCEPTION-BASED INSIGHTS

## KEY LEARNINGS

The study shed light on planners' insights, perceptions, destination knowledge, and the overall thoughts and considerations of selecting Rapid City, SD as a meeting destination.

When it comes to a meetings and conventions destination, Rapid City has iconic beauty, is rich in history, has a lively downtown, diverse hotels and venues, and offers a sense of safety all of which are important when planning meetings.

### Here is what we learned:

When it came to initial perceptions and destination appeal, planners unfamiliar with Rapid City as a meetings destination perceived the destination as being rural, sparsely populated, the wild wild west and difficult to get to. However, the participants suggested educating planners about the destination's attractive downtown area, historic attractions, and affordable diverse hotels and meeting venues could increase their consideration of the city for hosting future meetings and events.

## KEY LEARNINGS

Planners who had already hosted groups in Rapid City—mainly SMERF, small Associations and Regional groups—found the destination appealing primarily due to safety, affordability, having a lively downtown and attractions. They stated the destination is welcoming, the planning through the CVB was easy and seamless, and the local establishments had a willingness to accommodate.

What differentiates Rapid City from comparable destinations is its family-friendly vibe, phenomenal national parks, natural beauty, and it is rich in history. Planners familiar with Rapid City said it's a bucket list destination.

In summary, planners indicated that Rapid City is a hidden gem with significant strengths and appeal. Highlights include diverse hotel and venue options, natural attractions for every interest, affordability, a lively downtown, and a sense of safety. Also, Rapid City is beautiful and picturesque, with planners describing it as **WOW** and **Awe Inspiring** once you're there.

Rapid City's significant weaknesses include airlift, cost of getting there, and group transportation/shuttle options and hotels within proximity of one another.



## KEY LEARNINGS

The most significant opportunities for growing meetings business in Rapid City include creating awareness for the affordability, free parking, downtown, unique venues and hotels. Planners suggested the destination focus on regional or drive markets due to the cost of airlift to get to the destination.

The planners said the destination should focus on increasing transportation, shuttles and ridesharing options and consider adding hotels closer to the Conference Center.



# DESTINATION APPEAL

Planners who host SMERF and whose attendees are regionally located find Rapid City most appealing. These groups are usually willing to drive, travel with family and are looking for a safe, affordable city with unique attractions.

Smaller association and regional groups found the destination appealing, with safety, affordability, downtown, national parks and natural attractions being the main draws.

Most meeting planners agreed the destination needs to target the right type of groups or market segments due to airlift and transportation/costs from a major airport. Planners who plan larger groups haven't considered Rapid City due to the expense of air travel, most flights with 2 stops, limited hotel rooms and meeting facilities within walking distance of one another.

Planners who are familiar with the destination find it very appealing and believe their attendees of groups that would be a good fit, would be interested and excited to attend a conference in Rapid City

The destinations VIBE was described as Historic, American, Patriotic, typical Midwest, modern, good image, young family.



# FIRST WORD THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN HEARING RAPID CITY, SD

- WOW
- Awe-Inspiring
- Phenomenal National Parks
- Mt. Rushmore
- Bucket List
- Badlands
- Black Hills
- Sturgis Rally
- Remote
- Sparsely Populated
- Historic
- Western Like
- Yellowstone
- Open Fields – Bison
- Intriguing





## PERCEIVED PERSONALITY

- Welcoming
- Wild Outdoors
- Wild West
- Native American
- Very Midwestern
- Meat and Potatoes
- Rustic
- Untamed
- Environmental Edge

*“Untamed, it's not necessarily a wild area, but just kind of very casual, very adaptable. You know, the features and the amenities are just really geared towards people that just want to let down their hair and enjoy themselves.”*

*“Yeah, probably for me, nostalgic. But I think probably a more generic term is, like, rustic.”*



## DESTINATIONS PERCEIVED COMPARABLE TO RAPID CITY, SD

Planners had a very wide selection of destinations they perceived as comparable. Those planners who had not visited or hosted a meeting previously in Rapid City seemed to base their decisions on location or similar size cities. In contrast, those who were most familiar with Rapid City based their decisions on outdoor amenities and personality.

### Planners who had not visited-

- Des Moines, IA
- Lincoln, NE
- Omaha, NE
- Oklahoma City, OK

### Planners who had visited-

- Cheyenne, WY
- Bozeman, MT
- Rocky Mountain Destinations
- Yellowstone, Glacier National Park
- Lake George, NY
- Bismarck, ND

*That's a hard question because it's really such a unique area.*

## WHAT DIFFERENTIATES RAPID CITY FROM COMPARABLE DESTINATIONS

The history, the west and Native American culture, natural attractions, the diverse activity options for all ages, safety and the family-friendly vibe were mentioned most often as the key differentiators.

When planners are seeking a Midwestern destination, the first places that came to mind were:

- Jackson Hole, WY
- Des Moines, IA
- Kansas City, KS
- St. Louis, MO
- Chicago, IL
- Omaha, NE
- Twin Cities, MN
- Denver, CO
- Milwaukee, WI

*"A lot of clients aren't looking for the Charlotte's, New York's or the Miami's. They are looking for these destinations that are lesser known but have this experience."*

*"Probably Chicago, but Chicago I think what I am finding is people want to get out of the traditional first tier city, and they want experiences."*



## ASSUMPTIONS PLANNERS MAY MAKE ABOUT RAPID CITY

The participants who were evaluated believe that planners may make the following assumptions about Rapid City:

- That they may not have all the modern resources or facilities for putting on a typical conference.
- That it is a tourist trap and you either go there for Mt. Rushmore or Sturgis Rally.
- Limited hotels that can accommodate a conference.
- It is rural, not convenient and a less attractive option for attendees.
- It's logistically difficult to get to with an expensive, limited airlift and high transportation costs.
- Limited activities and dining options for attendees and spouses.

Planners familiar with Rapid City believe it is modern and has kept up with the times. It has a unique inventory of attractions with a lively downtown, quaint shops and unique dining options. Not your typical chains.

## SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHS

Rapid City is a hidden gem described as “friendly” and “hospitable” by meeting planners who were familiar with or previously held meetings in the city. They stated the CVB team shows a willingness to partner with planners and assist in overcoming objections. Hospitality is shown in all of the venues—and the destination is considered to have good-natured people, overall.

The natural attractions, history and diverse activities available are endless, providing so much more to do in the destination than what people think. Planners with experience meeting in Rapid City commented on the options being versatile and appealing to everyone.

The downtown area provides attendees with dining, boutique shopping and open spaces and a sense of safety.

Affordability, with economically smart room rates and cost-friendly venue options, makes Rapid City especially appealing to budget-conscious planners whose attendees are located regionally.

Rapid City is believed to be very beautiful and picturesque, with planners describing it as intriguing and captivating once you’re there. Certainly, a bucket list destination.

## SIGNIFICANT WEAKNESSES

Accessibility and airlift are the most significant weaknesses of the destination. In fact, many planners who had or were willing to host a meeting in Rapid City before cited this as the only reason the city was not chosen for their programs. In the interviews, planners suggested partnering with airlines to get more flights or offering transportation incentives from the airport to help in overcoming this objection.

*“The biggest downside that I can see is just the price of airfare. It's by far the most expensive place I've ever flown in and out of. Now, that, of course, hasn't changed recently. And the airport, it sits away from the city.”*

Planners also stated the hotels are not within close proximity of one another, dining options are limited, large recurring events and the winter weather is also a factor when considering Rapid City.

*“But also, people want to go to a destination that sounds intriguing. If it is the right type of group and they must take two flights to get there, then I think they would be willing to do that.”*



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWING MEETINGS BUSINESS

- Target the SMERF, Faith based, outdoor industry groups and associations, agriculture, anthropology, geology, history, and educational groups due to those attendees being more open to driving, family-friendly travel and affordability—whereas, National, Association and Corporate groups are primarily in a business-first mentality.
- Showcase the natural attractions, open-air spaces and outdoor experiences
- Awareness of affordability, free parking, downtown, unique venues, hotels
- Market Rapid City's diverse offerings to each separate audience
- Consider working with airlines to get one or two flights in a day from a major carrier so there are more options, since it's currently very difficult to get attendees to the destination. Also, planners believe it would be advantageous to work with local transportation companies to create an incentive for transportation to and from the airport since costs can be expensive and are a deterrent. Other cities with similar distances and limited options from the airport that provide incentives have seen success in doing so.
- Use images of downtown, National Parks, natural attractions, green space, walkways, wildlife, historic sites, things that you need a reservation for in order to do them. (Delta Launch Facility) attractions, unique dining, unique hotels and venues. Attendees engaging in experiential activities.

*"I think my clients would be intrigued, but I'd have to really sell it. I need to understand why would I want to go there. I would look to the CVB to help me sell it. I am a strong believer in visuals, photos. I need those images to capture their attention and I need bullet points of why they should go there?"*

# BEST METHODS FOR CREATING AWARENESS AMONG MEETING PLANNERS

Most commonly, planners cited creating awareness through involvement with MPI, PCMA, and RCMA was the best way to connect with meeting planners. This includes their publications and websites, and sponsorship opportunities at industry events to get exposure while presenting.

Suggested shows for Rapid City to have representation includes Smart Meetings, Small Market Meetings, Connect, NorthStar Events, ASAE, MPI, PCMA and RCMA. Publications most read; Connect, Corporate and Incentive Travel

Planners believe education through one-on-one presentations at trade shows and FAMs are the best way to learn about the destination—or by offering virtual tours and videos.

All planners agree that FAMs are the only way to be truly educated on the destination, hotel product, walkability, entertainment, experiences and transportation options. All planners who have not visited Rapid City and who could possibly host a program there were very interested in seeing what the destination had to offer.

It was also stated that meeting planners use other planners as a resource when seeking a host destination. Therefore, if they learn the destination wouldn't be a good option for them after participating in a FAM, they could still confidently recommend the destination to other planners.

# MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS WHEN CHOOSING A DESTINATION

When planners were asked what were the most important factors when choosing a destination - airlift, cost of accommodations, safety and walkability remained at the top of the list. Destination appeal, experiences, incentives and concessions also rated very high, while sustainability and DEI efforts were not in the forefront of their minds or part of the decision-making process.

*"As far as sustainability, most of our clients don't put a lot of emphasis on that. I think that's going to be something that will be more important in the future because it's kind of like diversity, equity, inclusion."*

*"I see it, and I'm so happy that is the case and people are paying attention to it, but I don't see any emphasis on sustainability as it should be right now."*

*"I'd say, like, maybe 10% of our clients really care about sustainability, but I think it's coming."*





## KEY LEARNINGS - MARKETING

In general, planners want to know what is unique about Rapid City that would make for an exceptional meeting experience for their attendees. Information about what's new in the city, airlift, the culture, food, walkability and safety are the top-desired content pieces. Additionally, taking a more personalized approach to messaging may go a long way in cultivating interest in the destination.

Most commonly, meeting planners preferred short or medium length emails. Planners cited that they want emails that are quick and easy to read. Planners also shared that they would be more likely to click a link within a short email to read a webpage on their browser rather than read through a longer email and not click on a link

Planners also shared that they would more likely click on destination banner ads if the ads showcased images of the walkability, the convention center package, or reflected the overall experience attendees could anticipate with messaging that included incentives, benefits for meeting in the destination or information pertaining to the size of groups the destination can accommodate.

# WHAT WOULD ENTICE YOU TO CLICK ON A BANNER AD

Planners named a variety of options to showcase or include in the messaging that would entice them to click on a destination banner ad.

- If the ad displayed images of the convention center with messaging pertaining to an expansion or number of attendees that the destination can accommodate
- If the message was about value and benefits of meeting in the destination; most enticing: incentives, room rebate offers
- If the banner painted a picture of the overall destination experience, featured different aspects of the destination including restaurants, entertainment options and experiences, or showcased something that would appeal to the masses
- If it showcased the location setting or walkability; include people walking in front of hotels with nearby restaurants and shopping



## CONTENT MOST USEFUL ON A CVB WEBSITE

- Convention center and virtual tours, aerial shots of meeting space and specs
- Capacity charts, walkability maps, easy to navigate, contact info, videos; overview of downtown area or space layouts
- Search feature to select venues and hotels with a specific number of rooms, meeting space, etc.
- Staff directory that shows who represents what region or markets segments to get assistance and correct person to send RFPs to
- Attendance building resources – images/videos for promoting the destination to attendees, templates, conference microsite
- Map showcasing the location of the convention center and hotels in proximity to dining, shopping and entertainment options
- New and upcoming convention center or hotel projects, success stories
- Hotel brands, unique venues, digital guides, calendar of events
- Unique experiences only found in Rapid City
- Major airports, airlift information and distance from airport to convention center and hotels
- Services offered
- Charitable or volunteer opportunities for giving back to host community; how can they partner with the city?



# MOST ENGAGING CONTENT FOR EMAIL MARKETING

Most meeting planners agreed that they get inundated with emails from hotels and CVBs. They want sales representatives to understand what their needs are and provide information that would be beneficial to them in making their jobs easier. They prefer the content of the email to be about new updates, promotions/offers, creative ideas for planning a meeting in the destination or anything to give them inspiration.

- Messaging very targeted to the type of interest or specific market segment
- Specific bullet point updates – new hotels, meeting packages, destination openings
- Showcase unconventional meeting spaces, venues and creative ideas for meetings
- Utilize more pictures and videos; also focus on showcasing more diversity: BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.
- Links to resources, whitepapers
- Upcoming events
- Maps showing convention center, hotels, walkability
- Promote and focus only on one area at a time, not the entire city or regions. Planners do not know where one area is from another, and it makes it difficult to plan if you give the overall number of hotels and meeting space specs for the entire city vs. just the downtown area.
- Invitation for webinars or FAMs to learn more about the destination

*“Very important for emails to have images that catch my eye and I engage with videos most. More visuals, not a lot of content. I skim through emails, so bold crazy, unique subject lines or that include incentives are a must.”*

## WHAT TYPE OF MEETING INCENTIVES PLANNERS FIND MOST APPEALING

Meeting planners unanimously agreed room rebates back to the master account were most appealing. They also cited any promotional offer that will reduce the overall cost of the meeting or a value to the client vs. personal incentives were appealing.

- \$10-15 room rebate per room night to offset cost
- Transportation, airport pickups, F&B discounts
- Complimentary rooms for staff, hosting meals
- Complimentary meeting space
- Offer services, registration, welcome attendees and booth to provide coupons and things to do while in town
- Reward points for client
- Room rates are always a hot button



# BEST STRATEGIES FOR MARKETING MEETING PLANNERS

Planners cited that promoting incentives would be the most effective strategy to peak meeting planner's interest. Following are suggestions they believe could assist in getting the message out.

- Create podcast of industry leaders to get the word out about your destination and how you can help planners understand the resources available.
- Be active in MPI, PCMA, ASAE, RCMA, Connect and Small Market Meetings to build relationships through sponsorships, presentations and the organization's marketing opportunities to create awareness of incentives and resources available.
- Email Marketing, Virtual Tours, FAMs, and Social Media that provides fresh and up-to-date information
- Social Media platforms most often used are Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook and TikTok



# DIGITAL EDGE MEETINGS MARKETING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Transition the Amazing Rush to a more comprehensive meetings marketing approach with the goal to:
  1. Drive awareness - Rapid City is a bucket list destination
  2. Drive interest for individual site visits - the Amazing Rush Site
  3. Development of attendance building toolkit - help planners sell it to attendees



Digital Edge is an agency committed to providing Destination Marketing Organizations across the globe with cutting-edge digital marketing solutions, off-the-charts creativity and meetings marketing expertise they can't find elsewhere.