VISIT TUCSON

2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24 MARKETING PLAN

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Dear Partners,

As I reflect on the past year, I can't help but feel awestruck at how far Tucson's hospitality industry has come since the onset of the pandemic. Average daily rate remains an indicator of the strong recovery of tourism in Tucson, and in fiscal year 2022–23 it surged to \$158, a 6.7 percent increase. Though occupancy remained almost flat, average daily rate drove RevPAR up 7.2 percent year-over-year.

Fiscal year 2022–23 was the hallmark year that Tucson's tourism industry needed. It was the year in which we could finally put 2019 comparisons to rest, because as the impact of the pandemic waned, people displayed an incredible exuberance for travel, and Tucson was prepared to welcome them with open arms.

I'd like to recognize the collective efforts of Visit Tucson's staff and you, our partners, who work tirelessly to ensure the destination is presented in the best light across all verticals. At Visit Tucson, we have spent the past fiscal year fine tuning our tried-and-true methods of relationship building with important clients and stakeholders, while also critically evaluating how we can improve our processes, pitches, and product. Here are a few noteworthy highlights:

Our sales team increased production by further permeating domestic key feeder markets and aggressively pursuing companies that went "meeting dormant" during the throes of the pandemic. Their efforts led to a standout performance that surpassed all previous years, with 403 meetings booked with an \$87.4 million economic impact to greater Tucson.

Our multicultural and marketing teams spearheaded the month-long Tucson Es Tu Casa campaign targeting Spanish speakers in key U.S. markets. The campaign led to a more than 500% percent increase in traffic to the Vamos a Tucson website and won the Arizona Office of Tourism's Best Marketing Campaign — Urban Category.

Our PR team has elevated the perception of Tucson with a record-breaking year that generated 316 articles representing 504 placements. Tucson coverage was featured in some of the most coveted domestic and international publications, including on two premier lists: The New York Times "52 Places to Go in 2023" and Time Magazine's "The World's Greatest Places of 2023."

Film Tucson further solidified the destination's reputation as one of the nation's most distinguished culinary hubs by securing episodes on Gordon Ramsey's new show Food Stars, which airs on Fox, and PBS' La Frontera with Pati Jinich. Dovetailing the air date of the La Frontera episode in April, Jinich returned to Tucson for Borderlands Food and Film, a public-facing event in which she espoused her love of the destination and its cuisine.

All this is to say, the team at Visit Tucson and our partners worked harder and smarter over the past fiscal year to drive results, infusing \$23 dollars into the community for every dollar put into our organization. Heading into the next fiscal year, we will remain committed to this cause, though we know the headwinds of inflation will play a more commanding role in the performance of Tucson's hospitality industry.

Please continue to delve into the Annual Report and Marketing Plan for a better understanding of Visit Tucson's and our community's successes over the past year and priorities moving forward. We share these achievements as well with the City of Tucson, Pima County and the Town of Oro Valley and thank them for their support and for working with us in making Tucson a great place to visit. My door is always open to you should you have any questions or suggestions as we head into another exciting year.

Best Regards,

Felipe Garcia President & CEO

"I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL AWESTRUCK AT HOW FAR TUCSON'S HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY HAS COME SINCE THE ONSET OF THE PANDEMIC."

2023-24 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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VISIT TUCSON'S RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

\$23:\$1 > Visit Tucson generates \$23 for the metro Tucson region for every \$1 invested in the organization

\$110,000,000	Leisure Visitor Inquiry Impact	
\$85,966,022	Meetings Economic Impact	
\$32,899,479	Sports Economic Impact	
\$32,497,844	Public Relations Earned Media	
\$10,826,172	Film Direct Spending	
\$265,111	Tourism Economic Impact	

2022-23 Total economic impact \$272,454,628

VISIT TUCSON FUNDING OVERVIEW

Visit Tucson is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization that provides destination marketing services for Pima County, the City of Tucson, and the Town of Oro Valley. Combined, these entities are expected to invest \$10.91 million in Visit Tucson in 2023-2024, approximately 93% of the organization's revenue. Pima County, Tucson, and Oro Valley invest only bed tax revenue in Visit Tucson.

Bed (transient occupancy) tax is paid by people who stay for 30 days or less in hotels, resorts, bed and breakfasts, and short-term lodging facilities. Visit Tucson does not receive general fund revenue from these government entities. While the Town of Oro Valley contributes a set amount each year, Pima County and the City of Tucson contribute a percentage of bed tax collections. City of Tucson's revenue is based on the previous year's collections, while Pima County's revenue is based on current collections.

Private sector revenue makes up \$305,750 in Visit Tucson's 2023-2024 fiscal year budget, approximately 2.6% of the organization's revenue. Visit Tucson's more than 500 partner businesses pay annual membership dues, and many invest in advertising on the organization's website.

In addition, Visit Tucson has been awarded grant funding from Pima County and Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT), representing 4.4% of the organization's revenue. Pima County's ARPA funding is intended to enhance the economic welfare of tourism-related businesses in Pima County, along with their employees. Visit Tucson has been granted an extension by Pima County for the remaining \$206,500 in ARPA funds, to be used by December 31, 2023.

The Arizona Initiative grants through AOT will bring more travelers to Tucson and Southern Arizona, which will help small businesses recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19 as well as strengthen metro Tucson's tourism economy. Visit Tucson is entering its second and final year for two of three AOT grants and will receive \$310,000 from the AOT's Visit Arizona Initiative grants this year.

FUNDING SOURCES

\$11,732,250

\$5,500,000	City of Tucson
\$5,000,000	Pima County
\$410,000	Town of Oro Valley
\$206,500	ARPA Grant
\$310,000	AOT Grant
\$305,750	Private Sector

Budgeted 2023–24 Revenue



TUCSON TOURISM OVERVIEW

Pima County 2022 Travel Impacts

Direct Travel Spending = \$2.75 billion (+15.7%) Travel Industry Earnings = \$812 million (+14.4%) Travel-Related Jobs = 21,710 (+7.7%) Local Tax Receipts = \$81 million (+16.3%) State Tax Receipts = \$141 million (+13.2%)

Source: "Arizona Travel Impacts", Dean Runyan & Associates

Total Visitors to Tucson and Southern Arizona:

2021 4.9 million 2022 5.8 million (+18%)



Source: "Longwoods Travel USA"

Source: Smith Travel Research

\$49

\$67

\$88

Important Industry Gains

Pima County's tourism industry continued to show strong signs of recovery in fiscal year 2022-23. All major indicators showed strong growth over 2021-22, led by a 15.7 percent increase in Direct Travel Spending to \$2.75 billion. Though this growth is of significance for the destination, in all likelihood it will not be repeated. The 2022-23 fiscal year brought a unique trifecta of circumstances, including pent up travel demand from the pandemic, travel savings incurred during the pandemic, and soaring inflation – all three of which are expected to simmer in the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Direct Travel Spending was bolstered by Tucson's average daily rate, which grew 19.8 percent to \$139 in 2022, according to Smith Travel Research. Occupancy had a much less notable performance, ticking up only 4 percent in 2022 as three new hotels came online and others were shuttered, representing a net gain of 400 hotel rooms to the market. However, the destination's new hotels played an important role in driving rate, as their average daily rate far exceeded that of the shuttered hotels. Resulting from the destination's average daily rate gains, Tucson's RevPAR soared 31 percent year-over-year.

Vacation rentals were of increasing importance to Tucson's room inventory in 2022, representing 30 percent of all available rooms in the market, according to Key Data. Though the number of vacation rentals has increased 50 percent since March 2022, occupancy remained high, leading to revPAR gains of 4 percent in 2022. Given their strong performance and increasing availability, it's believed that vacation rentals will continue to play an integral role in Tucson's hospitality landscape moving forward.

PENT UP TRAVEL DEMAND DRIVES GROWTH!

The 2022-23 fiscal year brought a unique trifecta of circumstances, including pent up travel demand from the pandemic, travel savings incurred during the pandemic, and soaring inflation.

JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort, Jeep Tour



DEPARTMENTS

MARKETING

PR & COMMUNICATIONS

SALES

GEM SHOW & CONVENTION SERVICES

SPORTS

MULTICULTURAL & MEXICO MARKETING

TOURISM

FILM TUCSON

PARTNERSHIP & VISITOR SERVICES



MARKETING

The marketing department's primary goal is to engage leisure, business, and international travelers with the "Free Yourself" brand and inspire them to experience everything Tucson and Southern Arizona have to offer. Through research and analysis, potential visitors from key markets are identified and targeted with relevant content and branded advertising deployed seasonally through a variety of media channels.

Visit Tucson's media budget is relatively small when compared to many destinations in our competitive set. Keeping this competition in mind, along with the need to adjust to changing consumer habits, a paid media strategy that focuses primarily on digital platforms has been adopted to more accurately target specific audiences and better evaluate campaign return on investment (ROI).

2022-23 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

4 2M

Social Media

Engagements

1.6M Unique Website Users

- Through a collaboration with the Multicultural Marketing department, launched three inaugural campaigns that presented Tucson as a welcoming and culturally diverse destination to Hispanic and Spanish speaking audiences. "Viva Tucson" occurred in September 2022 during Hispanic Heritage month and targeted key feeder markets; "Tucson Es Tu Casa" was rolled out during 2023's high season and targeted Spanish speakers in domestic markets; "Verano en Tucson" followed thereafter and targeted mostly regional and some local Hispanic audiences. Efforts led to a combined 58,216 unique page views among the three campaigns' landing pages.
- Completed marketing campaigns that were funded by the American Rescue Plan Act through Pima County and the Arizona Office of Tourism. The funds allowed Visit Tucson to maintain a robust media plan targeting leisure visitors and meeting planners in key feeder markets. These additional funds and the strength of the resulting plan allowed Visit Tucson to exceed its key metric for website visitors, surpassing 2022 for highseason economic impact and return on ad spend.
- Implemented a new video-first strategy for Visit Tucson's social media channels and launched a TikTok channel in 2022. This new strategy, which focused on creating and posting vertical video assets to promote local businesses and top tourism assets, led to more than 25 million completed video views.

- As a key component of Visit Tucson's leisure media plan, **initiate a new campaign to promote Tucson as The Home of America's Best Mexican Food.** This will result in the creation and distribution of new digital content and video assets that dovetail messaging associated with Tucson's UNESCO City of Gastronomy designation.
- Engage in a request for proposal process to select an agency to **develop a new brand identity for Tucson as a travel destination.** Visit Tucson has seen great success with its Free Yourself brand that was launched in 2013, but due to changes in the tourism landscape and how people perceive travel destinations, it's time for Visit Tucson to build on past success and unveil a new brand identity.
- Improve and optimize Visit Tucson's owned media channels. With the hiring of a new agency that handles leisure media planning and buying of behalf of Visit Tucson, our internal marketing team will focus its efforts on creating and refining website and social media content to enable a better user experience.



TUCSON TOP 10 MARKETS

For Visitor Spending

- New York
 Los Angeles *
- 3. San Francisco * 8. Seatt

- 4. Chicago *
- 5. Phoenix *
- 6. Denver * 7. Washington, DC 8. Seattle *
- 9. Atlanta *
- 10. Dallas *

Source: 2016 Visitor Analysis

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*Nonstop flight market

NEW MEDIA PLANNING & BUYING AGENCY ANNOUNCED

In the second half of fiscal year 2022-23, Visit Tucson enthusiastically finalized an agreement with Madden Media as the bureau's new media planning and buying agency beginning in July 2023. Madden Media was selected after an extensive national search, which included a request for proposal process that comprised many of the most recognizable marketing agencies throughout the country. Though the competition was stiff, Tucson-based Madden Media was ultimately awarded the one-year contract after submitting a detailed proposal demonstrating their thorough understanding of Tucson as a destination and showcasing myriad innovative ideas on how and where to promote Tucson to visitors. Madden Media is considered one of the thought leaders in destination marketing, and Visit Tucson looks forward to utilizing their experience, research, and insights in a way that will ultimately bring more visitors to Tucson.



PR & COMMUNICATIONS

Public relations and communications generate coverage of metro Tucson and Southern Arizona in local, national, and international publications. The PR team pitches story ideas to journalists and influencers, hosts press trips, and conducts media missions in key cities. The department oversees production of the Tucson Official Travel Guide and a journalist e-newsletter as well as maintains the materials within the press room.

2022-23 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

316 Articles representing 504 placements

Value of Media Coverage

11.2B Media Impressions **51** Journalists Hosted on Press Trips

\$32.5M

- Generated record-breaking number of articles and placements. Tucson's designation as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy continued to gain traction, leading to extensive and more prestigious coverage, like an 11-page feature that ran in the UK version of Food and Travel and was later picked up in the publication's Mexico edition. Additionally, **Tucson was named one of the** "Best Foodie Cities" in Travel + Leisure, an honor also bestowed on food meccas such as New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. The PR team also made great strides in generating coverage about mountain biking, another of the organization's brand pillars, with one article in UK-based Escapism and four articles in German-based Bike Magazin.
- Produced the **2023 Tucson Official Travel Guide inhouse for the third and final year**, ensuring advertising revenue far surpassed all hard costs associated with publishing the guide. Due to an elevated workload, the PR team will outsource the publication in 2024, as it did before the pandemic.
- Optimized the PR team's CRM module by rolling out guidelines that ensure consistency and utilizing Simpleview's itinerary builder. The latter achievement is especially valuable to Visit Tucson partners because it allows them to easily track ROI after hosting a journalist.

- Leverage new tools and relationships to drive additional media coverage. In July, the PR team initiated a twoyear contract with Handlebar PR to assist with the organization's domestic media efforts, and officially started a two-year contract with a superior media monitoring tool called MuckRack.
- Maintain to a large extent the ratio of domestic to international media coverage. With the lifting of COVID vaccine requirements for foreign travelers to the U.S. in May 2023, international publications are increasingly seeking coverage about overseas travel, and Tucson is of significant interest. Conversely, domestic travel publications are also pursuing international travel pieces, presenting the PR team with the challenge of keeping Tucson top-of-mind.
- Discover the destination's untold stories to pitch media. **The PR team will schedule regular meetings with community stakeholders and partners to develop niche story ideas**, then pitch those to established and new media contacts, as tied to each team members' annual goals.

TIME WORLD'S GREATEST PLACES



TOP LIST PLACEMENTS RESULT FROM FAMS

As a result of two separate hosted media visits, Tucson was featured in The New York Times "52 Places to Go in 2023" and Time Magazine's "The World's Greatest Places of 2023." Considered to be among the most important appropriations in the travel industry, the lists shined a light on the historic significance of Tucson's Barrio Viejo neighborhood, which is slated for National Historic Landmark designation, and Tucson's strong cultural, culinary, and historical ties to Mexico.

The New York Times placement was written by Daniel Scheffler, who visited Tucson for the first time in June 2022 in search of the country's best Mexican food and music. However, over the course of his trip, he also became mesmerized with the destination's Sonoran Adobe architecture. a pivot that led to his deep dive into Barrio Viejo and eventual pitch to The New York Times. The Time Magazine placement was written by Nick DeRenzo, who visited Tucson in November 2022. The former travel editor of Hemispheres Magazine, Nick is a prolific freelancer and longtime fan of Tucson. His goal was to explore Tucson's flourishing Mexican food scene while also obtaining a healthy dose of history and culture. Though he had been to Tucson previously, Nick was so awestruck by his actionpacked itinerary that he successfully pitched Tucson to Time Magazine.



SALES

Visit Tucson's convention sales department's primary goal is to convince meeting planners and meeting decision makers to host their meeting in Tucson. The sales department develops a strategic business plan each year, creating a road map for the upcoming fiscal year. Sales works with the meeting planners to generate leads for Tucson's convention center, area hotels, resorts, destination spas, and dude ranches, and special event venues. To keep Tucson in the forefront of these decision makers, Sales is constantly pushing out Tucson at meeting trade shows, client office visits, through marketing efforts, and hosting meeting planners for custom site inspections. Once a contract to host a meeting in Tucson is signed, it is turned over to the Conventions Services Department, which serves as the destination expert, and provides recommendations for a wide variety of services from Visit Tucson partners.

- Logged a record-breaking year, with increases of 28 percent more leads, 25 percent more definite bookings, and 31 percent more definite room nights booked into Southern Arizona hotels year-over-year.
- Conducted 151 site inspections and welcomed 106 qualified meeting planners on familiarization tours, resulting in **56,229 definite room nights booked in Tucson** area hotels.
- Successfully **implemented the Master Account Credit Promotion**, intended to drive more business to Tucson, with more than 250 definite groups signing on. This value-driven promotion gives Tucson a competitive edge over other destinations as the cost of meetings continues to increase.



- Strategically **promote Tucson at trade shows, client events, and sales missions throughout the country,** to establish and further foster relationships with meeting planners. In addition to direct outreach, advertise Tucson in a variety of digital and traditional meeting planner platforms to keep the destination top-of-mind.
- Host inbound meeting planner FAMs and site inspections, a proven way to secure business over other destinations. Utilize the department's "You Fly We Buy" promotion as an added enticement.
- Continue to **build upon strategic partnerships with third party meeting planners** such as HelmsBriscoe and ConferenceDirect by attending their annual conferences to forge new relationships and further develop established relationships.



NEW DOWNTOWN HOTELS BOLSTER CONVENTION CENTER MEETINGS

As the number of hotels in downtown Tucson continues to surge, so does the opportunity for hosting larger convention-style meetings. Since 2020, four new downtown hotels have come online, including: DoubleTree by Hilton Tucson Downtown Convention Center, Home2 Suites by Hilton Downtown/Hampton Inn by Hilton Downtown, Graduate Tucson Hotel, and most recently The Leo Kent Hotel, Tucson, A Tribute Portfolio Hotel. With 1,700 rooms now available in the region, Visit Tucson's Sales Team can present downtown as a viable option for smaller conventions to utilize the Tucson Convention Center. The team's Destination Downtown promotion provides meeting planners with an incentive to further consider this possibility.

Today, the Sales Team is more excited than ever to present downtown Tucson as a meetings destination with ample entertainment, culinary, and arts and cultural opportunities. With discussions underway about additional hotels coming online in the future, downtown Tucson will continue to be a focal point for the Sales Team moving forward.



GEM SHOW & CONVENTION SERVICES

Visit Tucson's Director of Gem Show & Convention Services presents Tucson to the international gem, mineral and fossil community. Through this department, the Official Gem Guide, content for the gem show microsite, and the metroarea Gem Show Welcome Program are produced and implemented. Key collaborators include the City of Tucson, Pima County, Madden Media, Main Gate Square, 4th Avenue Merchants Association, Downtown Partnership, Mercado and MSA Annex and local media.

Additionally, after Visit Tucson Sales convention bookings are secured, the department also connects planners with local businesses, provides marketing tools, temporary help and concierge tables.

Highlights 2022-23

- For the first time since 2019, all six fall shows returned in 2022 and a new seventh show, Aeora Rocks, made its debut. The winter Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase was **comprised of 40 shows throughout greater Tucson.**
- The winter Mineral City Show grew to **13 venues within a** six-block radius in central Tucson.
- Welcomed 20 museum buyers looking to bolster their institutions' collections. **Representatives hailed from prestigious organizations such as Smithsonian Institution, The British Museum, and Gemological Institute of America.**
- In conjunction with La Encantada and Michal & Co., co-sponsored Tucson's first pop-up gem show, which included the opening of a continually operating store with year-round events and activities.



2022-23 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

46 Total Shows	43% Of Total Conventions Serviced
30,000	209
Official	Local
Gem Guides	Businesses
Distributed	Engaged

- Begin the process of developing an Economic Impact Study to measure the success of the 2025 fall and winter gem shows.
- Introduce a minimum of two new accounts to Visit Tucson's roster of gem shows and colleague organizations.
- Refresh content at the dedicated Visit Tucson microsite, TucsonGemShow.org, with the goal of branding Tucson as a year-round gem, mineral and fossil destination.
- Provide direct services to a minimum of 40% of booked conventions.





POP-UP GEM SHOW: AN EVOLUTION

In February and March of 2023, Visit Tucson teamed up with Tucson's premier open-air shopping center La Encantada and Energy & Rock Positioning Expert Michal Mael for the first ever La Encantada Gem Show. The nine-day show in the courtyard featured Michal & Company's renowned array of some of the world's most beautiful gems and geodes, captivating audiences hailing from all over the world. The show was such a success that the proclaimed Queen of Rocks, Michal Mael, opened a home decor and furnishing store in La Encantada called Tucson Geodes & Gems, and continued to host monthly "pop-up" events through the summer. During these events, participants explored the artistry and healing effects of gems and minerals through activities such as painting with crystals and gemstones and experiencing sound baths using crystal bowls.

Visit Tucson was proud to co-sponsor La Encantada's first Gem Show, which reaped economic rewards on the community, and looks forward to exploring similar opportunities in the years ahead.



can match. Visit Tucson also assists with everything from logistics to public relations to event funding, making event preparation almost as enjoyable as the event itself. Visit Tucson Sports plays a leadership role in attracting key sporting events to Tucson, Oro Valley and Pima County,

Visit Tucson Sports has more than facilities, amenities,

and a convenient location that few other tournament sites

SPORTS

TUCSON SPORTS

sporting events to Tucson, Oro Valley and Pima County, leveraging the sports market to generate economic impact and media exposure to the area. It also strives to act as a facilitator, catalyst, coordinator, or any other appropriate role that might be helpful in fulfilling its mission and charter.

2022-23 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

81	66	44,610
Sports	Sports	Sports
Leads	Bookings	Room Nights

- Secured four professional Korea Baseball Organization teams for spring training in Tucson. Three of the four: KT Whiz, NC Dinos, and the Kia Tigers trained at Kino Sports Complex and High Corbett Field for four weeks in February and March. The Korean National Team also spent two weeks training in Tucson in preparation for the World Baseball Classic that took place in Phoenix in March.
- In conjunction with Elite Tournaments, hosted three events in Tucson: International Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association Southwest Cup in November, the Elite Academy Spring Showcase for Boys in March, and the Developmental Player League Spring Showcase for Girls in April. The three tournaments' economic impact totaled \$3.6 million.
- Hosted US Artistic Swimming's US Junior Senior Championship at the Oro Valley Aquatic Center in April. The organization was so impressed by the facility, they've chosen to return for the US Master Championships in October 2023.

- Work in concert with Southern Arizona Sports, Tourism & Film Authority to bring four Mexican spring training baseball teams to Tucson in March 2024.
- Garner more riders and extend the length of stay for participants of El Tour de Tucson in November 2023. The goal is to **exceed 7,000 riders and leverage additional classes and workshops** to lengthen the number of nights riders stay in Tucson.
- Continue to foster the relationship between Visit Tucson and professional Korean Baseball League to **retain at least three Korean baseball teams for spring training in 2024.**



FOSTERING THE KBO RELATIONSHIP

After identifying Tucson as a worthwhile spring training site due to its pleasant, predictable spring weather and Visit Tucson's ability to offset costs through team sponsorships, the first Korea Baseball Organization (KBO) team signed on for its inaugural year in 2015. Since then, Tucson has only grown in popularity as a spring training site for KBO teams, all of which have gone on to win the Korea National Championship.

In 2023, Tucson hosted three KBO teams and the Korean National Team for the first time ever. Visit Tucson is committed to growing the relationship with KBO and looks forward to welcoming KT Whiz, NC Dinos, and the Kia Tigers back for many years to come. Their presence is a boon to the hospitality industry, generating \$2.7 million in economic impact in 2023. Moreover, the Korean Baseball League donates more than 1,000 practice baseballs each year to underprivileged young athletes in Tucson in an effort to spread the love of the game.





MULTICULTURAL & MEXICO MARKETING

Mexico is the largest source of international visitors to Arizona, contributing an estimated \$1 billion to metro Tucson's economy every year. Visit Tucson's Multicultural & Mexico Marketing department is tasked with increasing the volume and duration of overnight stays of Spanish-speaking visitors from Mexico and the Hispanic market in the U.S.

The department has a comprehensive marketing program for the Mexico market that's branded "Vamos a Tucson" ("Let's Go to Tucson"), which includes a Spanish website and Spanish written materials available at two visitor centers in Sonora (located in Hermosillo and Ciudad Obregon). The department collaborates with government officials, economic development agencies, and community leaders in Arizona and Mexico on cross-border tourism and trade initiatives. The department also trains partner businesses to be "Mexico Ready," and creates and coordinates campaigns for Mexico and for the Spanish-speaking market in the U.S. that promote Tucson as the preferred destination for shopping, dining, events, cultural activities, and heritage.

- Spearheaded the inaugural "¡Viva Tucson! Celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month." Comprised of more than 50 cultural events, this month-long celebration shined a light on the community's Hispanic roots and inclusive mindset Sept. 15-Oct. 15. A landing page highlighting the events and featuring profiles on the important Hispanic voices was created, and press releases were distributed both domestically and in Mexico, resulting in 11 article placements.
- Engaged with more than 42,000 potential Mexican visitors at events like the Hermosillo Beer Festival, San Carlos Wine Festival, Show Gastronomic, and Bacanora Festival, and met with key Mexican tourism officials during 40 impactful meetings.
- Achieved record-breaking Spanish media coverage that aligns with Visit Tucson's brand pillars. Three standout articles resulting from journalist familiarization tours included a two-page spread in *Travel and Leisure Mexico* about how and where to view Tucson's renowned night skies, an eight-page piece in Food & Travel Mexico about Tucson and the Sonoran Desert's culinary bounty, and a three-page piece in *Food & Wine Español* about Tucson's designation as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy called *Milenio, and Sabores de Mexico y El Mundo*.

- In its second year, evolve the "Tucson es Tu Casa" campaign from an awareness campaign into one that drives bookings of Spanish speakers living in the United States.
- Recapture the market share of shoppers visiting from Sonora, Mexico. During COVID, Mexican shoppers shifted their shopping behaviors, so the goal is to redirect them back to Tucson. To do so, Vamos a Tucson will work hand-in-hand with local shopping centers to launch a comprehensive marketing campaign across Vamos a Tucson's digital and social media platforms, as well as through traditional marketing means, such as TV and radio.
- Attend trade shows and media missions in key feeder markets in the United States and Mexico to secure familiarization tours of top Mexican media and generate extensive media coverage of Tucson in Mexico. Efforts to include participation in IPW's Media Marketplace and AOT's Mexico City Media Mission.

2022-23 Key Performance Indicators



\$538,146 Value of Media Coverage

84,809 Unique Visitors to Vamos a Tucson Website



TUCSON ES TU CASA

In February, Visit Tucson rolled out the inaugural "Tucson Es Tu Casa" campaign to establish a connection with U.S. based Spanish speakers by highlighting the area's vibrant culture, heritage, and sense of community. To do so, Visit Tucson worked with digital marketing agency Orange 142 to develop a highly visual campaign that paired bold imagery with casual, friendly messaging.

The objective was to increase awareness of the destination to Hispanic travelers by driving traffic to the destination's "Vamos a Tucson" website that's dedicated to Spanish speakers. Orange142 used a multi-faceted strategy to reach the intended audience in Phoenix, Albuquerque, and El Paso by distributing ads through social media, display advertising, and search engine marketing. Separately, Visit Tucson secured ads on iHeart Media, Spotify, Telemundo, NBC, and Peacock in more than 15 additional markets, including the key feeder cities of Los Angeles, Chicago, Denver, and New York. "Vamos a Tucson" traffic rose more than 500% percent year-over-year and the campaign received more than 3 million impressions on programmatic digital tactics, 1.5 million video impressions, and 1 million streaming audio impressions. The campaign was so successful in resonating with its intended audience that the Arizona Office of Tourism awarded "Tucson Es Tu Casa" the best marketing campaign of the year.



TOURISM

Visit Tucson's tourism department promotes Tucson and Southern Arizona as a leisure destination to domestic and international receptive operators, tour operators, travel agents and group tour companies. Other duties include conducting seminars to educate travel professionals about how best to market our destination; connecting clients directly with partner hotels and attractions using a strategic sales approach; collaborating with tour operators on cooperative advertising; and coordinating site inspections and familiarization (FAM) tours so travel professionals can experience the region first-hand.

2022-23 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

787	178
Room	Clients
Nights	Educated

25 Participants on FAMs/ Site Inspections

- After putting a pause on the department due to pandemic-related budget constraints, retirements, and resignations, the Tourism department was rebooted in January 2023, and the Director of Tourism and dual Tourism and PR Coordinator were hired. The department's focus has evolved to drive international business to Tucson from German-speaking countries and the United Kingdom, the destination's top overseas visitor feeder markets.
- Assembled and rolled out an ambitious program of work that prioritizes developing relationships with receptive operators, who act as the middleman between Tucson area hotels and tour operators. Face-to-face meetings with receptive operators were held during premier industry conferences, including RTO Summit, Go West Summit, and IPW, the last of which is also attended by top international tour operators.
- Hosted 15 tour operators and travel agents on familiarization tours in Tucson during the final two months of the fiscal year. Having a concrete understanding of Tucson's diverse offerings allows these industry representatives important insight into how to sell the destination to their clientele.

- Continue to build lasting relationships with hotels and receptive operators in conjunction with the department's program of work. While this task has proven to be arduous, having these relationships in place has been fruitful.
- Leverage Tucson's rich cultural elements, national park, and proximity to the border to encourage international tour operators to promote the destination as an integral part of itineraries, not a tack-on. This could be achieved by an itinerary that features southern Arizona and New Mexico with a multi-day stop in Tucson.
- Host a familiarization tour that precedes IPW Los Angeles in May and targets German tour operators and travel agents.



TUCSON BOLSTERS OVERSEAS VISITATION

To bolster overseas visitation in its two most important markets, Germany and the United Kingdom, Visit Tucson applied and was accepted for a Visit Arizona Initiative Regional Partnership Grant from the Arizona Office of Tourism. The grant came in the aftermath of the pandemic when international travel came to a complete standstill.

To achieve a competitive advantage over other U.S. destinations. Visit Tucson established contracts with Get it Across Marketing in Germany and Travel & Tourism Marketing Ltd. in the UK to amplify its leisure sales efforts through June 30, 2023. These agencies expanded the destination's offerings and visibility through targeted sales calls with tour operators, co-op marketing campaigns, and site inspections to Tucson. Over the course of the fiscal year, the agencies met with a total of 86 tour operators in their respective markets, conducted four co-op marketing campaigns with top prospect tour operators, and secured three site inspections (German tour operators), with an additional two site inspections (UK tour operators) forthcoming in the fall of 2023. While Visit Tucson does not have an ongoing contract with the two agencies moving forward, we will continue to utilize both on a project specific basis to build further inroads into the German and UK leisure travel markets.



tücsan

FILM TUCSON

Film Tucson markets Tucson and Southern Arizona as a production location for feature films, TV shows, print and television commercial advertising, and other filmed content that generates economic impact for our region. Other duties include advocating for and supporting the local film industry; partnering with the University of Arizona's School of Theater, Film and Television to host industry professionals; and collaborating with local film festivals to market Tucson as a production location to visiting filmmakers.

2022-23 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

4,527 Room Nights	Ē	0.8M Direct ending
15,690	175	28
Job Days	Leads	Projects

- In conjunction with the newly created AZ Motion Picture Production Program (AMPPP), Film Tucson developed a plan to aggressively market Arizona's film incentives, which became available to applicants on Jan. 1, 2023.
- Initiated the inaugural steps of the strategic plan, which included: helping to update the City's film permitting process; increasing outreach to the local industry members; reestablishing connections with outlying communities in rural areas; and continuing to collaborate with the Arizona Film & Digital Media office to provide training for entry-level film positions throughout our region.
- Attracted feature films, unscripted television, and commercials, including a popular Belgium reality TV series called De Mol, a Western feature film from Thunderbird Pictures called The Last Dollar, and a commercial for Amazon. The economic impact of all these productions totaled \$10.8 million.



- **Continue to market Arizona film incentives at industry-related events** such as American Film Market and South by Southwest. These events are more important than ever because having state film incentives to publicize gives Visit Tucson a competitive edge.
- Leverage high-profile relationships established through the University of Arizona's alumni network to connect with and pitch producers in Los Angeles. Once the current industry strikes have been resolved, planning will begin on a collaborative large-scale Hollywood event which will target former Tucsonans as well as UA alum currently working in LA's film industry.
- Host a high-profile event in Mexico City to further permeate the film industry in Mexico. Drawing on our two decades worth of connections to Mexico's filmmaking community, Film Tucson will host a vibrant yet relaxed party at a popular movie venue to market the border region (and beyond) to highly motivated directors and producers from television and film.

FILM INCENTIVES GIVES TUCSON THE EDGE

On Jan. 1, 2023, the Arizona Motion Picture Production Program was rolled out to attract film productions — a hallmark accomplishment many years in the making. For the first time in decades, Arizona now has a bankable marketing angle to take to the industry, allowing Tucson to regain a portion of the market share that was taken by other states with longstanding film incentives like New Mexico and Georgia.

To prepare for the coming groundswell of projects which this new program will bring, we spent the year focused on addressing the needs of potential film customers: we assisted the City of Tucson with streamlining their film permitting process, we worked in conjunction with the Arizona Commerce Authority's Arizona Film & Digital Media office to provide training classes for entry level production positions, and we initiated outreach to cities outside Tucson to offer our seasoned leadership when film projects begin setting up in their communities.

Although the US film industry is temporarily experiencing disruption (as of this writing, union strikes from the Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild have placed a temporary halt to all studio projects), we're confident that once these fluctuations are smoothed out, Tucson will be poised to grasp a sizable share of the feature film and TV series market.



PARTNERSHIP & VISITOR SERVICES

Visit Tucson's partnership and visitor services departments serve as the liaison between Visit Tucson and its travel industry partners in metro Tucson and Southern Arizona. The partnership department strengthens relationships with partners through monthly communications, training sessions, and exclusive events. The visitor services department provides visitors with destination information and connects them to Visit Tucson partner businesses offering local experiences that can enhance their stays. Not all visitors are leisure travelers and Visit Tucson's 485 partner businesses benefit from the meetings delegates, sports groups, special events, and film crews that we also help attract to the region.

- Trained 135 new CTAs, who are now ambassadors out in the community, sharing the value of tourism and the great experiences Tucson and Southern Arizona have to offer. An additional 141 CTAs renewed their certification.
- Hosted 18 networking and training events and meetings that were attended by 1,500 partners and stakeholders.
- In partnership with Pima County, **served nearly 32,000 visitors** at the Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center and more than 14,000 through online and phone queries.



- In partnership with nationally recognized organization Wheel the World, evaluate the accessibility of Tucson's top 50 hotels, resorts, and attractions, to improve metro Tucson's accessibility and promote accessible businesses on Wheel the World's well-trafficked website.
- Continue to **bolster the number of familiarization tours** of the Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center through outreach to partners with volunteer or docent programs.
- Host quarterly networking events for Visit Tucson partners to connect with Visit Tucson staff and other local businesses.

2022-23 K	EY PERFORMAN	CE INDICATORS
68	1,500	110
New	Event	Partner Outreach
Partners	Attendees	Communications
11		
Certified Tourism Ambassador		
courses offered		



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IS TOP OF MIND

With an eye toward the future, Visit Tucson's Strategic Initiatives department is paving the way for the organization and its partners to become more sustainable with two important initiatives underway.

In 2022, Visit Tucson initiated the first phase of a two-year grant that was awarded by the Arizona Office of Tourism and focuses on sustainability planning and recreation. Visit Tucson completed the Global Destination Sustainability Index, a 70-point benchmark that determines how the destination is performing as it relates to sustainability indicators focused on environment, social, supplier, and destination management. In the fall of 2023, based on the report and recommendations generated by GDS, Visit Tucson will begin developing a sustainability plan with actionable strategies to improve metro Tucson's sustainability performance.

Visit Tucson is also working to achieve Green Business Certification through Local First Arizona. The certification is a testament of Visit Tucson's desire to reduce its impact on the environment through waste diversion, energy consumption, water conservation, pollution prevention, transportation emissions, and creating a culture of sustainability in the workplace. Visit Tucson also encourages its partners to become Green Business Certified, so that consumers are aware of the destination's overarching commitment to sustainable practices.

BOARD SERVICE & STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Visit Tucson staff collaborated with 63 boards, committees, and civic and professional organizations in fiscal year 2022-22.

- Agave Heritage Festival
- American Society of Associations Executives
- Arizona Bowl
- Arizona Deserts National Parks Partnership
- Arizona Film & Digital Media Coalition
- Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association
- Arizona-Mexico Commission
- Arizona Society of Association Executives
- Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Board of Trustees
- Arizona Town Hall
- Cinema Tucson Committee
- Christian Meetings δ Conventions Association
- City of Tucson
- Copper State Youth Sports Experience Committee
- Compete Sports Diversity Council

- Conquerors Paragolf
 Championship Committee
- Davis-Monthan Air Force Base Honorary Commander
- Délice Network
- Desert Thunder Squadron
- Destinations International
- Destination Marketing Association West
- Downtown Tucson Partnership
- Festivals & Events Association of Tucson & Southern Arizona
- Friends of Saguaro National Park
- Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona
- Governor's Tourism Advisory
 Council
- Green Valley-Sahuarita Chamber
 of Commerce
- Hotel Sales and Marketing Association International – AZ Chapter
- JTED Business Industry Council
- Junior League of Tucson
- Key Group

- Meeting Professionals International – Arizona Sunbelt Chapter
- Meetings Professionals International – Rocky Mountain Chapter
- Military Reunion Network
- National Charity League
- Park Tucson Commission
- Pima Association of Governments – Regional Transportation Authority
- Pima County
- Public Relations Society of America
- Rio Nuevo
- Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance, Inc.
- SKAL Club of Tucson
- Simpleview Client Focus Group
- Society of Government Meeting Professionals – AZ Chapter
- Southern Arizona Attractions
 Alliance

- Southern Arizona Leadership Council
- Sports Events & Tourism Association
- Sun Corridor Inc.
- Town of Oro Valley
- Tucson Business Alliance
- Tucson City of Gastronomy
- Tucson Clean & Beautiful
- Tucson Conquistadores
- Tucson Jazz Festival
- Tucson Metro Chamber
- Tucson-Mexico Sister Cities
- Tucson Young Professionals
- UNESCO Creative Cities Network
- University of Arizona Galileo Circle
- University of Arizona Athletics
- University of Arizona, Parent and Family Association
- Up with People International Alumni Association
- Women's Foundation for the State of Arizona





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