

A desert landscape at sunset. The sky is filled with vibrant colors of orange, pink, and purple, with scattered clouds. In the foreground, there are several cholla cacti (cylindrical cacti with small spines). In the mid-ground, there are several saguaro cacti (columnar cacti with arms). The overall scene is a classic desert sunset.

Visit
TUCSON®

VISIT TUCSON

2021-22 ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23 MARKETING PLAN



CONTENTS

Message from the President & CEO	01	Tucson Sports	21
2021-22 Board of Directors	04	Multicultural & Mexico Marketing	23
Visit Tucson ROI	05	Tourism	25
Visit Tucson Funding Overview	06	Film Tucson	27
Tucson Tourism Overview	07	Partnership & Visitor Information Services	29
2022-2025 Strategic Plan	09	Board Service & Stakeholder Participation	31
Marketing	13	Staff Directory	33
PR & Communications	15	Contact Us	35
Sales	17		
Gem Show & Convention Services	18		



Dear Partners,

As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded I became President & CEO of Visit Tucson just a few months ago in December 2021, in the throes of the pandemic. If you had asked me then what was in store for Tucson's tourism industry, I never would have predicted our community's successes. Our Average Daily Rate is the greatest indicator of Tucson's tourism rebound, and it increased 32% year-over-year from July 2021 through July 2022 to a record high of \$135.

This comeback resulted from the destination's positioning as a place where wide-open spaces, world class food, and vibrant arts and culture all co-exist. That message has reached millions of travelers both domestically and internationally – through Visit Tucson's marketing, sales, and public relations outreach.

In Fiscal Year 21-22, some of Visit Tucson's most notable accomplishments resulted from the film industry putting a lens on Tucson. The two finale episodes of Top Chef Season 19 showcased Tucson as thriving UNESCO City of Gastronomy, while HBO's Duster pilot highlighted the destination's striking Sonoran Desert landscapes. Now, with the Arizona State Legislature announcing tax incentives for cinematic production in 2023, the future of film looks even brighter for Tucson.

Additionally, I am proud of how Tucson has re-engaged with travelers from abroad. As pandemic-related border restrictions lifted in Mexico and Canada, Tucson was prepared to welcome back international visitors. We amplified our multicultural efforts in our top

international market, Mexico, and launched the inaugural ¡Viva Tucson! Celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. Comprised of more than 30 cultural events, this month-long celebration shined a light on the community's Hispanic roots and inclusive mindset Sept. 15-Oct. 15.

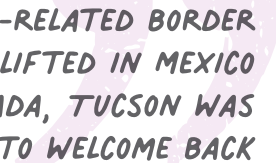
Our friends to the North were welcomed back with similar fanfare with the announcement of new seasonal flights from Flair Airlines to Tucson from five Canadian cities, including Fort McMurray, Prince George, Edmonton, London, and Windsor beginning November 2022. These flights could bring more than 20,000 visitors per month to Tucson from cities that in many cases offer no other international service.

This past year has been a coup for Tucson's hospitality industry, and I'm excited to see where the momentum we've gained takes us. Undoubtedly there will be headwinds, as economic uncertainty and ongoing labor shortages continue to weigh heavily on our sector. However, no matter what the future holds, I can say with confidence that the resiliency of Tucson's hospitality industry is second to none. After all, look at all we've accomplished this past year. The future is bright.

Best Regards,



Felipe Garcia
President & CEO



"AS PANDEMIC-RELATED BORDER RESTRICTIONS LIFTED IN MEXICO AND CANADA, TUCSON WAS PREPARED TO WELCOME BACK INTERNATIONAL VISITORS."

2022-23

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

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John Denker, Vice President Marketing
University of Arizona

Vice Chair

Andrew Stegen, Complex Director
Westward Look Wyndham Grand Resort & Spa

Treasurer

Glenn Grabski, General Manager
Tucson Convention Center

Members at Large

Dan Cavanagh, Consultant
Lloyd Construction

Laura Shaw, Senior Vice President
Sun Corridor Inc.

Evan Feldhausen, Tax Shareholder
BeachFleischman

Immediate Past Chair

Nancy Kluge, President & CEO
Reid Park Zoological Society

General Business

Board Members

Steve Earnhart, Market President
iHeartMedia Tucson

Bob Hoffman, President
Tucson Roadrunners

Dr. Amanda Kraus,
Assistant VP - Campus Life
University of Arizona

Hospitality/Visitor Services

Nate Ares, Owner
Ares Collective Restaurants

Moniqua Lane, Owner
Downtown Clifton & Citizen Hotels

Hillary Louarti, Owner
Diamond Transportation

Chris Squires, Owner
Ten55 Brewing Company

Laura True, Owner

White Stallion Ranch

Bryan Tubaugh, Chief Executive Officer
Aligned Hospitality Management

Government

Sharon Bronson, Chair
Pima County Board of Supervisors

Josh Nicolson, Council Member
Town of Oro Valley

Elaine Becherer, Mayor's Appointee
City of Tucson

Members at Large

David Hatfield, Senior Director of Air Service
Development and Marketing
Tucson Airport Authority

VISIT TUCSON'S
RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

\$24:\$1 ▶ Visit Tucson generates \$24 for the metro Tucson region for every \$1 invested in the organization

	*\$108,000,000	Leisure Visitor Inquiry Impact
	\$70,600,000	Meetings Economic Impact
	\$38,800,000	Sports Economic Impact
+	\$208,000	Mexico Economic Impact
	\$36,000,000	Public Relations Earned Media
	\$16,500,000	Film Direct Spending
	\$793,000	Tourism Economic Impact

VISIT TUCSON'S
ECONOMIC IMPACT
INCREASED 82%
IN 2021-22

\$270,901,000 **2021-22**
TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

*Visit Tucson's leisure visitor inquiry impact is measured as 4% of total visitor spending in Pima County in 2021.

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 \$9.31 million in Visit Tucson in 2022-2023, approximately 80% 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 \$628,990 in Visit Tucson’s 2022-2023 fiscal year budget, approximately 5% of the organization’s revenue. Visit Tucson’s more than 500 partner businesses pay annual membership dues, and many invest in advertising on our website, in our publications, and through our other owned assets.

In addition, Visit Tucson has applied and been awarded grant funding in the amount of \$1.75 million, approximately 15% of the organization’s 2022-23 revenue. We will receive

\$1.25 million from Pima County’s federal CSLFRF Funds to Restore Tourism grant as well as \$500k from the Arizona Office of Tourism’s Visit Arizona Initiative marketing grant.

The Arizona Initiative marketing grant will bring more travelers to Tucson and Southern Arizona, which will help area small businesses recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19 as well as stabilize and strengthen metro Tucson’s economy by attracting more visitors and their expenditures to Tucson and Southern Arizona. Likewise, Pima County’s ARPA funding is intended to enhance the economic welfare of tourism-related businesses in Pima County, along with their employees.

FUNDING SOURCES

\$5,900,000	City of Tucson
\$3,000,000	Pima County
\$1,250,000	ARPA Grant, Pima County
\$628,990	Private Sector
\$500,000	AOT Grant
\$410,000	Town of Oro Valley
\$11,688,990	Budgeted 2022-23 Revenue



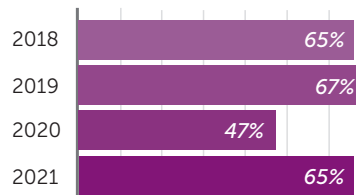
Barrio Viejo

TUCSON TOURISM OVERVIEW

Pima County 2021 Travel Impacts

Direct Travel Spending = **\$2.38 billion (+77%)**
Travel Industry Earnings = **\$710 million (+10.4%)**
Travel-Related Jobs = **20,170 (+4.9%)**
Local Tax Receipts = **\$69 million (+39%)**
State Tax Receipts = **\$124 million (+46.4%)**

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



Tucson Hotel Occupancy



Tucson Hotel Average Daily Rate



Tucson Hotel RevPAR

Source: STR, December 2018-21 reports

Recovery in the Region Continues

Pima County's tourism recovery picked up real momentum as the 2021-2022 fiscal year was winding down. All major indicators showed strong growth over 2020-2021, led by a 77% increase in Direct Travel Spending, Tucson area hotels & resorts recovered occupancy and grew average rates resulting in revenue per available room (RevPAR) gains of 36% over the previous year. Many factors combined to improve results for local hotels, including strong leisure demand and the return of meetings & events such as the Tucson Gem Mineral & Fossil Showcase, which left some businesses scrambling to accommodate the increased demand.

Maintaining and enhancing this recovery into the current fiscal cycle is the primary goal, with STR forecasting 3% increases in occupancy & average rates to result in a 6% RevPAR increase for 2022 and group demand returning to 100% of 2019 levels by the 3rd quarter of 2023.



MORE ROOMS AT HIGHER RATES!

Tucson's hotel room inventory was growing throughout the pandemic, with nearly 1,000 more rooms of inventory available because of new hotel construction in 2022 vs. 2019!

2022-23

Visit Tucson Launches New Three-Year Strategic Plan

Although we were firmly on the road to recovery last year, Visit Tucson continued to implement its Tourism Recovery Plan throughout the 2021-22 fiscal year, while also launching a process to develop a new three-year strategic plan for 2022-25.

In partnership with consultants at MMGY NextFactor, the planning process included a community survey and individual interviews to better understand metro Tucson's destination strengths and opportunities for future tourism growth. The results of the survey and interviews provided guidance to develop goals and strategies for Visit Tucson's 2022-2025 strategic plan. The goals and strategies in the plan will be carried out with annual tactics developed by staff and updated annually.

The 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, approved by the board of directors in April 2022, continues to support the community-derived goals in Tucson's 10-Year Tourism Master Plan. The plan highlights our vision and goals for the year ahead, including launching a sustainable tourism program, supporting the ongoing recovery of local businesses, and celebrating the diversity of our community through engaging storytelling.

VISIT TUCSON

2022-2025 Strategic Plan Overview

VISION:

Elevate Tucson as the dynamic outdoor and cultural hub of the Sonoran Desert.

MISSION:

Welcoming the world to Tucson to strengthen our vibrant community.

CORE VALUES:

Passionate: We love what we do and enthusiastically promote Tucson and the people, places, and events that make our community special.

Inclusive: We welcome everyone with warm hospitality, embracing our differences and sharing the cultural diversity and authenticity of the borderlands region.

Innovative: We strive to be on the cutting edge and seek new ways to achieve greater success, constantly adapting and learning.

Respectful: We treat others with kindness and value different opinions and experiences, working together in meaningful collaboration.

Committed: We are committed to our stakeholders and clients, the preservation of our heritage, and sustainable tourism practices.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

1. Sales & Marketing | 2. Collaborative Destination Management | 3. Community Alignment & Support | 4. Sustainable Organization

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Sales & Marketing

- a. Enhance Visit Tucson's brand and expand leisure marketing activities to increase national and international awareness.
- b. Celebrate the diversity of our community through engaging storytelling.
- c. Expand sales and marketing activities around meetings, conventions, and sports.
- d. Establish a sustainable funding model for film production incentives.

Collaborative Destination Management:

- a. Support the recovery of local businesses.
- b. Support Tucson Airport Authority initiatives to expand air access.
- c. Develop new and grow existing events.
- d. Increase sports venue access for tournament and out-of-town play to increase bookings.
- e. Advocate for transportation and mobility infrastructure improvements for visitors.
- f. Promote new and improve existing experiences.

Community Alignment & Support:

- a. Sustain government support of the tourism industry.
- b. Improve resident sentiment and support for tourism and Visit Tucson.
- c. Expand outreach to industry stakeholders.
- d. Support coalition efforts for additional ARPA/other COVID recovery grant funding.

Sustainable Organization:

- a. Collect new data and research and implement new technology to better connect with visitors.
- b. Pursue Tourism Marketing Authority enabling legislation.
- c. Diversify revenue sources for Visit Tucson's operations.
- d. Optimize staffing and expand capacity to achieve market potential.
- e. Enhance the culture of the organization to meet the expectations of today's workforce.



VISIT TUCSON'S
DEPARTMENTS

MARKETING

PR & COMMUNICATIONS

SALES

GEM SHOW &
CONVENTION SERVICES

SPORTS

MULTICULTURAL &
MEXICO MARKETING

TOURISM

FILM TUCSON

PARTNERSHIP &
VISITOR SERVICES



Tucson International Airport

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).

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1,293,574
Unique Website
Users

5,272,981
Social Media
Engagements

Highlights 2021-22

- Using American Rescue Plan Act Funds provided by Pima County and the Arizona Office of Tourism, **a robust media plan targeting leisure visitors and meeting planners was implemented.** These additional funds and the strength of the resulting plan allowed us to exceed our key metric for website visitors, even surpassing 2019 high-season web traffic numbers.
- In 2021-22 the marketing department was able to track **over \$18 million in direct booking revenue tied to our leisure marketing campaigns.*** Users exposed to our campaigns and messaging were 20% more likely to book and stayed 1.5 days longer than those who were not. These numbers presented a strong indication that our campaigns were effective and that demand for travel had recovered to near pre-pandemic levels, with Tucson in a prime position to capitalize on pent-up demand. *(*Sources: Expedia Media Group, Priceline.com, ADARA Analytics, Sojern)*
- In fall of 2021 **Visit Tucson launched a newly designed website. This included new versions of VisitTucson.org, VamosaTucson.com, and all of our various department sites.** A new platform and new design led to higher content engagement and was a major contributor to the success of our high-season marketing campaigns.



Priorities 2021-22

- **Continue to leverage American Rescue Plan Act funds provided by Pima County and the Arizona Office of Tourism** to develop a comprehensive and effective media plan strategically targeting leisure travelers and meeting and event planners.
- Work with the Tucson Airport Authority, Flair Airlines, and five destination cities in Canada to **develop a tactical integrated marketing plan designed to maximize bookings for Flair's new nonstop service from Canada to Tucson.**
- **Develop new content and visual assets to be used in our marketing campaigns and on the newly launched Visit Tucson website.** Content and assets will be developed in-house and in partnership with influencers and media vendors.
- **Implement a new video-first strategy for our social media channels and launch a Visit Tucson TikTok channel by fall of 2022.** Changing algorithms have now made video content the key component to continued audience growth and engagement, with vertical video becoming the preferred medium for engaging social content on platforms like Instagram and TikTok.

MARKETING TO CANADA

With the announcement that Flair Airlines would be launching nonstop service to Tucson from five Canadian cities in November of 2022, Visit Tucson was undoubtedly excited. While our team had engaged in Canadian marketing initiatives prior to the pandemic, this announcement marked the first time that Tucson would have non-stop air service to an international destination outside of previous service to Mexico. In order to capitalize on the potential of these new markets, Visit Tucson immediately connected with the Tucson Airport Authority (TAA), Flair Airlines, and each of the five Canadian destination airports to begin developing a plan.

As anyone could imagine, the proposition of warm winter weather combined with nonstop service and Flair's already low fares would be enticing to any Canadian traveler. However, we found that our biggest challenge would be raising awareness for Tucson leading up to the first year of the flights. With this in mind, our campaign strategy will focus on connecting with travelers where they consume the most media, deploying market-specific tactics including social media ads, video pre-roll, and connected TV spots that highlight Tucson's sunny skies, ample outdoor activities, and our top-rated accommodations and attractions.

TUCSON TOP 10 MARKETS FOR VISITOR SPENDING

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. New York | 6. Denver * |
| 2. Los Angeles * | 7. Washington, DC |
| 3. San Francisco * | 8. Seattle * |
| 4. Chicago * | 9. Atlanta * |
| 5. Phoenix * | 10. Dallas * |

Source: 2016 Visitor Analysis

*Denotes nonstop flight market



El Charro Café

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 manages production of the Tucson Official Travel Guide and the Visit Tucson e-newsletter and generates content for VisitTucson.org as part of an integrated marketing/communications team.

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

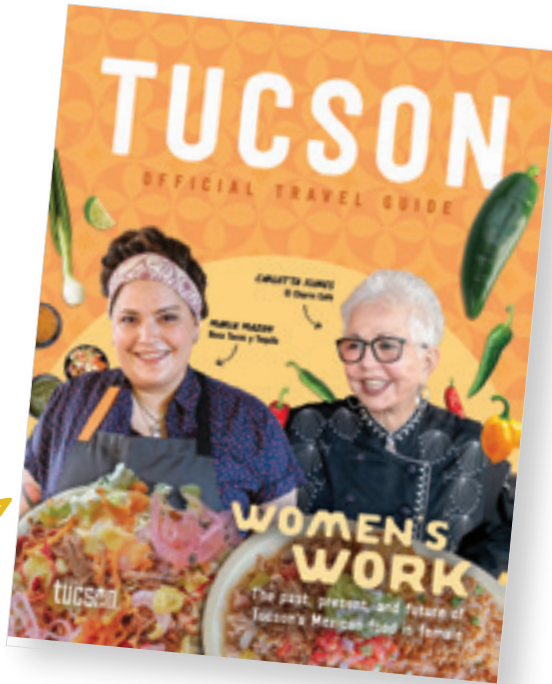
282
Articles
representing
422 placements

\$35.9M
Value of Media
Coverage

9.5B
Media
Impressions

Highlights *2021-22*

- Staged a media event in New York City showcasing Tucson Chef Maria Mazon and locally made Whiskey del Bac. **This event represented the pinnacle of our media efforts which generated a record \$36 million of PR coverage** in 2020-21 including articles in *The Washington Post*, *Travel + Leisure*, *the New York Times*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, and *Sunset Magazine*.
- Produced the **2022 Tucson Official Travel Guide in-house for the second year**, ensuring advertising revenue surpassed all hard costs associated with publishing the guide.
- Coordinated pre and post FAM trips for **six Travel Classics West attendees which have already generated five articles valued at \$796,470**. Travel Classics West is one of the premiere conferences connecting editors and journalists with destination sponsors and was held in Scottsdale, Arizona in November 2021.



Priorities 2022-23

- With major titles covering Tucson as a food destination last fiscal year, **identify, develop, and promote new Tucson pitches** such as dark skies, Tucson's neighborhoods, and local artisans and makers, while continuing to leverage our designation as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy.
- **Improve and increase client connections** through a monthly e-newsletter distributed to freelance travel writers and editors, enhancement of "Story Ideas" in our digital press room, and targeted proactive outreach to key contracts.
- To help facilitate feature coverage of Tucson, **host a minimum of 35 press trips for domestic and international media.** As all pandemic-related travel restrictions ended in June 2022, more journalists are willing to travel once again. coordinated for Travel Classics West attendees.

TUCSON FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AS A 'FOOD CITY'

Six years after being designated a UNESCO City of Gastronomy, Tucson has finally been widely recognized as a destination for foodies from around the world. Since 2015, the PR team have met with hundreds of journalists, pitched Tucson's food scene in a thousand different ways, and organized dozens of food-focused press trips. Over the years, awareness of the designation turned into mentions in multiple articles, ultimately leading to several feature stories this fiscal year.

The culinary focused earned media coverage kicked off in December 2021 with an 8-page article entitled "Is Tucson the best city for Mexican food in the U.S.?" which ran in the UK publication, National Geographic Food. Next up was Bon Appetit which published "Where to Eat in Tucson, Arizona's Desert Jewel" on their website in February 2022. Only a few months later, Food & Wine included Tucson on their list of "Next Great Food Cities" published on their website in April 2022 and appearing in the print publication in May 2022. Finally, Tucson and Arizona were featured in France's top culinary magazine, Regal with a 14-page feature entitled "Arizona: Return of the Pioneers" in June 2022. We optimistically look forward to additional food-related coverage in 2022-23.



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 tradeshows, 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.

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1139

Leads

323

Meetings
Booked

\$70.5M

Economic Impact

146,646

Room Nights

Highlights *2021-22*

- COVID continued to impact the sales process when new variants popped up in the beginning of the fiscal year. However, as they proved to be less lethal, group travel began to increase at a very rapid pace. This led to **an increase of 46% more leads than the previous year, and a 21% increase in room nights booked** from the previous year.
- The Sales team invested much time and effort in **conducting 112 unique site inspections** with qualified meeting planners that had RFP's, **which resulted in 85,519 room nights going definite.**
- Meetings were booked from almost every state, with the **top five states being: Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, and Texas.**
- As COVID restrictions were lifted across the country, the Sales Team went to where the customers were, **traveling to tradeshows, client events, partner meetings, educational events, and appointment-based shows.** All to enhance awareness for Tucson as a premier meetings destination, and to increase leads and bookings for Tucson.



Priorities 2022-23

- The sales staff will continue to promote Tucson throughout the country with **over forty schedule trips to out of market tradeshows, sales missions, and client events.** This is imperative to keep Tucson top of mind with meeting planners and to generate qualified leads for Tucson hotels.
- **Continue to host inbound FAMs and site inspections with prospective meeting planners.** Facilitate the future growth of primary “City-Wide” events that drive compression including the Gem, Mineral, & Fossil Showcase, Tucson Invitational Games, and the Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses.
- Launch an **aggressive media buy targeting Meeting Planners** to keep Tucson in the forefront for future meetings.

BACK BUT DIFFERENT!

As COVID restrictions lifted and attendees desire to meet increased, Tucson was positioned for success. A robust meetings campaign that spoke to WIDE OPEN SPACES and BEYOND THE BALLROOM, gave Meeting Planners confidence that Tucson could host programs again successfully. However, not business as usual. Many groups took advantage of Tucson’s gorgeous weather to host more outdoor events, including breakout sessions and team building. This trend may be here to stay awhile.

Meeting attendees also took advantage of blending business with leisure or “bleisure”, by having family members join them on their trip to Tucson where they may stay over an extra night or two and enjoy all that Tucson has to offer. This was desirable as many people had not travelled in a very long time. When taking the opportunity to do this, they spent more money in our restaurants and attractions throughout Tucson.

One comment we heard repeatedly from our Meeting Planners: nothing can replace face to face meetings. Virtual meetings will continue to be a component of larger programs but cannot replace meeting in person. Many groups took advantage of team building during their post-COVID meetings to enhance relationships with suppliers, vendors, employees, and colleagues. This type of activity is hard to duplicate successfully in the virtual world.



GEM SHOW & CONVENTION SERVICES

Visit Tucson's director of gem show & convention services represents Visit Tucson to the international gem, mineral & fossil community. Through this department, the Official Gem Guide, content for the gem show microsite and a metro-area wide Gem Show Welcome Program are produced & implemented. Key collaborators on supporting the shows include the City of Tucson, Pima County, Madden Media, Maingate Square, 4th Avenue Merchants Association, Downtown Partnership and local media.

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

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

41 Total Shows	30,000 Official Gem Guides Distributed	200 Local Businesses Engaged	72% of total Conventions Serviced
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Highlights *2021-22*

- **Despite a still-in-progress pandemic, four September shows returned, as well as 37 Winter shows.** All reported an approximate 30-40% reduction in business, but also cited opportunities to partner and promote shows and venues with Visit Tucson, and rethink and restructure operations. Examples include:
- **The old Chamber of Commerce building was sold to Crystal Classics**, a United Kingdom-based business that relocated their headquarters to Tucson, renovated the Chamber building and opened the Tucson Fine Mineral Gallery/Crystal Courtyard, a year-round gem show venue and event space.
- **A group of warehouses in Central Tucson emerged as the new Mineral District**, establishing an easily accessible area for shoppers and dealers to do business at six shows and two year-round venues.

Priorities 2022-23

- Visit other gem show destinations, starting with Denver in 2022, to **ensure that Tucson's services remain competitive to established shows**, new events and specialty groups such as museum buyers and gemologists.
- **Introduce a minimum of two new, additional gem shows** during the January 28-February 13, 2023 dates.
- **Begin the Economic Impact Study process** supporting the 2024 Winter and Fall gem shows.
- Provide direct services to a **minimum of 70% of booked conventions**.



FINDING GEMS IN TUCSON

Do you ever wonder where all the stuff at the gem shows comes from? Or where it goes? Consider the Eyes of Brazil, a giant, six-foot quartz geode discovered in a field belonging to soy farmers in Rio Grande del Sol in 2014. A buyer for the massive treasure was found! Tucson gem and mineral dealer Michal Mael, who ordered special saw blades from Germany, had the treasure sliced and polished, and displayed it in her booth at the Kino Gem & Mineral Show in 2018! Representatives from GIA (Gemological Institute of America) in CA happened to be visiting her booth, and while they were admiring the amazing grading and druzy surfaces of the pieces, she approached them (not having any idea who they were).

The beautiful specimen is now a part of the permanent collection at their prestigious Carlsbad headquarters museum. GIA's staff & board had a contest to name their newest find, and Eyes of Brazil won! So, the next time you're in a world-class exhibition, you may be standing next to something that made its "debut" in Tucson, acquired by one of the museum buyers who comprise yet another of the many gem show audiences! ROCK ON!



Oro Valley Aquatic Center

TUCSON SPORTS

Visit Tucson Sports has facilities, amenities, and a convenient location that few other tournament sites can match, plus a whole lot more. We help with everything from logistics to PR 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, Pima County, and Oro Valley, 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.

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

61
Sports Leads

44
Sports Bookings

32,733
Sports Room Nights

Highlights 2021-22

- In collaboration with FC Tucson and Pima County, **over 3,300 room nights were generated for MLS and USL Preseason** in the first year that spectators were allowed back post COVID.
- Partnered with Elite Tournaments to bring two events, the **IWLCA Southwest Cup and the Elite Academy Spring Showcase to Kino Sports Complex**. Combined, the events generated over 4,000 room nights in the community.
- Assisted the University of Arizona in bringing the first two rounds of the **NCAA Women’s Basketball Tournament to McKale Center**, providing national television coverage and close to 700 total room nights just from the visiting basketball teams.
- Worked with the Arizona Sports and Entertainment Commission **to relocate the Lori Piestewa National Native Games from the Phoenix area to Tucson** in July of 2021 due to a lack of available facilities in the Phoenix metro area.
- Return of the El Tour de Tucson in November 2021, bringing in **over 6,700 riders – a 20% increase over the 2019 event**.



Priorities 2022-23

- Return of Korean Baseball Organizations for Spring Training after two year absence due to COVID. **Working to secure 3 teams, the KT Wiz, NC Dinos and Kia Tigers for spring of 2023.** Also assisting the Korean National Baseball Team for practice facilities leading up to the World Baseball Classic to be held in Phoenix.
- **Secure events at the Oro Valley Aquatic Center with USA Artistic Swimming.** Currently negotiating contracts for April and October of 2023 with expectations for a multi-year agreement based on experience at the facility in 2023.
- Partner with Perimeter Bicycling Association of America on **a new event for the Tucson metro area, the El Tour de Senoras** – Arizona’s fully supported, non-competitive women-only cycling weekend in February 2023.
- Work with Compete Sports Diversity Council to **promote the Tucson metro area as a welcoming location for LGBTQ+ events** in the future.

RETURN TO NORMALCY

Sporting events continued during COVID, only in smaller numbers and in most cases without spectators. Restrictions varied from city to city, county to county and state to state during this time, with many event organizers and rights holders scrambling to find locations that would allow their games to be played. With a somewhat apparent return to normalcy, sporting events are gaining strength and back to the same game levels and spectator numbers that were seen pre COVID. The demand is only increasing as athletes are anxious to get back out on the fields and participate in the sports that they are passionate about.

With all COVID restrictions lifted, facilities in the Tucson Metro area are already seeing requests for dates and space on a level surpassing those seen in 2019 and prior. Between local sports leagues & events, and out of town demand, the sports industry is poised to continue at a strong pace, creating a positive economic impact on our community.



Tucson Premium Outlets

MULTICULTURAL & MEXICO MARKETING

Mexico is the largest source of international visitors to Arizona with four million overnight trips in 2019, according to the Arizona Office of Tourism and according to University of Arizona, Mexican visitors contribute an estimated \$1 billion to metro Tucson's economy every year. Visit Tucson's Multicultural marketing department works to attract Spanish-speaking visitors from Mexico and the Hispanic market in the U.S. and to increase the number and duration of overnight stays by visitors from Mexico and the Hispanic Market.

The multicultural department has a comprehensive marketing program for the Mexico market which is branded Vamos a Tucson ("Let's Go to Tucson"), with two visitor centers open in Sonora (located in Hermosillo and Ciudad Obregon). We collaborate 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 in cultural awareness to be "Mexico Ready," 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.

Highlights *2021-22*

- International travel is returning to pre-pandemic levels and travel restrictions are lifted. **In 2022, we are back to the same number of pre-pandemic border crossing visitors between the U.S. and Mexico.** Visit Tucson and Customs and Border Protection have been working together to ensure all entry lines at the border are open, enabling travelers to experience less wait time and to ease border crossing for travelers from Mexico.
- Continued our marketing outreach and promotion in full force (TV, Radio, Billboards, Digital and Print Media) to our top markets Sonora, Sinaloa, and Mexico nationwide **with media coverage totaling 300+ million impressions.**
- **Collaborated with the Arizona Office of Tourism** in coordinating tradeshows including the "Wine Fest San Carlos", and in hosting familiarization trips in Tucson and Southern Arizona for target media resulting in nationwide coverage in Mexico in publications such as *Food & Travel, Reforma, El Universal, Milenio,* and *Sabores de Mexico y El Mundo.*



2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

12,000

Consumers Attracted to Sonora Tradeshows

14,200

Consumers Engaged on Vamos Facebook Page

20

Trade/Tourism Meetings with Mexico Officials



Las Hermanas Beer Collaboration

BINATIONAL PROJECTS

Promote binational collaborations with businesses from Tucson & Mexico, with the second edition of “Las Hermanas Beer” where 60+ Hispanic female brewers hailing from both sides of the U.S. Mexico border have collaborated to create a new brew that celebrates the diplomacy shared between the two countries.

Called “Las Hermanas” or “the sisters,” the beer was brewed at facilities in both Mexico and the U.S. The release party occurred at Borderlands Brewing Company in Tucson and in Mexico City. This project generated domestic and international media coverage in digital, TV, broadcasting, and print media in the U.S. and Mexico.

Priorities 2022-23

- Continue to leverage a strong presence in Mexico and to the Hispanic market in the U.S., **embracing Tucson’s multiculturalism to attract these target audiences to our diverse and inclusive destination** where they feel welcomed and can enjoy the culture, heritage, and people of Southern Arizona.
- Develop turnkey strategies to directly access the Spanish-speaking market from Mexico and the Hispanic market in the U.S. by **offering Visit Tucson partners advertising opportunities in target markets.** These opportunities include advertising through our owned media, such as: e-newsletter, website (vamosatucson.org), and social media channels.
- **Continue to grow collaboration and strengthening partnerships with the Arizona Office of Tourism** and continue hosting media outlets with nationwide coverage in Mexico, participation in tradeshows and events in Mexico, and promoting campaigns that reach out to the Hispanic market in the U.S.



Mission San Xavier del Bac

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.

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1,652

Room
Nights

438

Clients
Educated

22

Participants on FAMs/
Site Inspections

Highlights *2021-22*

- In collaboration with Northstar Travel Group, **Tucson hosted the Global Travel Marketplace at the Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa in September 2021.** More than 90 travel agents attended this premiere conference and experienced Tucson first-hand through off-site functions and pre- and post-familiarization tours.
- As pandemic-related travel restrictions were reduced and eliminated, **relationships with more than 120 U.S.-based receptive operators and international tour operators were reestablished** at in-person tradeshows including Brand USA Travel Week, Go West Summit, and IPW.
- In partnership with the Arizona Office of Tourism, **hosted five leading German tour operators on a FAM trip designed to introduce Tucson to new clients.** This trip was also supported by Condor Airlines to promote their nonstop flights from Frankfurt to Phoenix.



Priorities 2022-23

- **Rethink and rebuild the tourism department with a focus on the future of leisure group travel** following the retirement and resignation of key staff. Review and evaluate tradeshow, sales missions, and other activities with a focus on ROI and measurable goals.
- **Identify niche tour operators in the UK and Germany** whose clients are looking for the experiences offered in Tucson. Collaborate on product development and strategic marketing initiatives to drive room nights.
- **Participate in strategic co-op marketing campaigns that drive tour operator room nights** by targeting their travelers most likely to book a Tucson itinerary.

TUCSON HOSTS GTM WEST...FINALLY

Global Travel Marketplace West is an elite appointment event that connects the most influential travel advisors in North America with travel suppliers from all over the world. It was scheduled to be held at the Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa in May 2020, and like so many other meetings and conferences, it was cancelled and rebooked several times. Initially, the conference was optimistically rescheduled for September 2020, but with ongoing pandemic-related travel restrictions a virtual meeting was more practical. Once again, the conference was rescheduled and eventually held in September 2021.

More than 50 one-on-one appointments were conducted with top travel agents, who were educated on Tucson's tourism amenities and connected with local hoteliers and other businesses. Visit Tucson sponsored the welcome reception and dinner, and attendees were thrilled to experience a traditional cowboy cookout at White Stallion Ranch. Pre- and post-FAM opportunities were also arranged, and many participants extended their stay to visit Tucson's top attractions including Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Pima Air & Space Museum, and Biosphere 2. GTM West was an excellent opportunity to showcase our community to these top clients.



Film Fest Tucson

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.

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

15,388 Room Nights	\$16.5M Direct Spending	24,994 Job Days	114 Leads	37 Projects
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Highlights *2021-22*

- Thanks to the combined efforts of the City of Tucson, Pima County, Rio Nuevo, and the AZ Commerce Authority, **Film Tucson was able to lure a TV pilot for HBO Max entitled *Duster* and produced by JJ Abrams**, which generated 9,797 hotel room nights and a \$10M spend.
- **Film Tucson’s two-year effort to bring in Bravo’s hit program *Top Chef* finally paid off** after it filmed its two-episode finale in Tucson and showcased our regions rich food history, including appearances by Chef Carlotta of El Charro, Mission Garden, JW Marriott Tucson Starr Pass Resort & Spa, the Pima County Historic Courthouse, and Tanque Verde Ranch. The entire shoot generated 1,493 room nights and a local spend of \$1.4M.
- **Feature films continued to choose Tucson as a prime location**, including a Belgium drama titled *The Wall*, yet another Western from INSP-TV, and a few scenes for the upcoming Steven Spielberg autobiographical feature *The Fabelmans*. All the combined features created a direct spend of \$2.7M and 2,334 room nights.



Production of "The Wall"

PRODUCTION TO THE MAX

The big film news for locals in mid-2021 was Film Tucson and Visit Tucson landing the pilot episode of a major HBO Max TV series directed by JJ Abrams (ABC-TV's *Lost*, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*) and how this boundless production (which seemingly took over whole parts of the city) pumped \$10M into our local economy.

Since the storyline of this series is set in 1972, the producers of the show were relieved to find a vast array of mid-century modern buildings throughout the downtown area, as well as impressively-preserved 1960's-era neighborhoods just waiting to be filmed. They were also thrilled by how accommodating Film Tucson, the City of Tucson, and Pima County were when it came to closing off streets, filming inside government offices, and rerouting traffic for large scale street scenes.

One of the biggest upsides (besides the considerable economic impact) is that all the visiting Hollywood stalwarts, most of whom had never been to our region before, were able to see our citizens bring it's A-game across every spectrum of the Tucson experience: from our dependable local crew base to our passionately-committed government officials; from the friendly staff at our local restaurants to the exemplary care provided by our hotels and resorts. Once these filmmakers returned home, they spread the news to their industry colleagues that Tucson is an outstanding place for filming.

With new statewide film incentives less than a year away, it's only a matter of time before some of these same filmmakers return again.

Priorities 2022-23

- Thanks to the tireless efforts of Arizona's film communities, **we now have statewide incentives taking effect in September 2023 which will give our state a competitive edge in the production marketplace.** Major studios and soundstage developers have already begun reaching out to Film Tucson to discuss plans for future projects after the incentives program revs up less than a year from now. For the next 10 months, Film Tucson's focus will be to prepare our community for the increased production.
- Film Tucson and AZ Film & Digital Media are once again offering a series of classes (the previous ones took place in the pre-pandemic days) aimed at adding more talented workers to our crew base. Instructors will once again train students to become certified production assistants, grip/lighting personnel, and members of the art department. **This program was so successful that some graduates of the previous classes were hired by HBO Max to be a part of *Duster*.**
- Our offices have already begun coordinating with representatives from the City of Tucson's and Pima County's Economic Development offices so **local film-related businesses have the tools they need to expand before the incentives take effect in 2023**, as well as with Hollywood-based developers seeking Tucson as the next spot to build a soundstage.





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 456 partner businesses benefit from the meetings delegates, sports groups, special events, and film crews that we also help attract to the region.

2021-22 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Highlights *2021-22*

- **Launched a new partnership model in July 2021**, welcoming 46 new small business to become members of Visit Tucson.
- **Trained 103 new Certified Tourism Ambassadors™ (CTAs), who are now out in the community**, sharing the value of tourism and the great experiences Tucson and Southern Arizona have to offer. An additional 107 CTAs renewed their certification.
- In partnership with Pima County, we **served more than 30,000 visitors in the Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center** and assisted more than 12,000 online visitor inquiries.

Historic Pima County Courthouse



Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center

Priorities 2022-23

- **Resume a robust calendar of in-person partner events** including partner orientations, Tucson Tourism Trends, Meet & See networking events, and other partner trainings.
- **Launch quarterly partner communications** highlighting resources, information, and programs partners can participate in.
- **Increase community awareness of and visitation to the Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center** by hosting a familiarization tour for partner businesses, with a focus on attractions and lodging partners.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PLANNING

Visit Tucson's new sustainable tourism program is supported by a two-year grant from the Arizona Office of Tourism and focuses on sustainability planning and sustainable recreation. During the sustainable tourism planning phase, we will develop regional sustainability strategies in collaboration with the international program Global Destination Sustainability Movement (GDS). GDS empowers destinations with the mindsets, strategies, and skill sets to create regenerative places to visit, meet, and live in. We will work with GDS consultants to benchmark metro Tucson's sustainability performance and develop new tourism strategies to improve our sustainability performance.

The sustainable recreation phase supports the Leave No Trace ethic by connecting best practices with research and on-the-ground implementation of sustainable recreation improvements. Increasing accessibility and connecting with underserved communities are priorities. Sustainable recreation activities will include trail improvements and bilingual outdoor recreation promotion, and as well as tree planting to combat the heat island effect and support placemaking in public spaces.

BOARD SERVICE & STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Visit Tucson staff collaborated with 63 boards, committees, and civic and professional organizations in fiscal year 2021-22.

- Agave Heritage Festival
- American Society of Associations Executives
- American Youth Soccer Organization
- 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 Town Hall
- Cinema Tucson Committee
- Christian Meetings & 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
- 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 Metro Chamber, Military Affairs Committee
- Tucson-Mexico Sister Cities
- UNESCO Creative Cities Network
- University of Arizona, Galileo Circle
- University of Arizona Athletics
- University of Arizona Athletics -Hispanic Heritage Advisory Council
- University of Arizona, Parent and Family Association
- Up with People International Alumni Association
- Women's Foundation for the State of Arizona



Tucson Museum of Art

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Downtown Tucson



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