**2021 Economic Impact Talking Points**

**GOAL:** Our goal for announcing these numbers is to show stakeholders and the media the success the Wisconsin Department of Tourism and our local DMO’s are having in this recovery. We want to instill faith in our collective leadership yet demonstrate an ongoing need to further the recovery.

 **2021 in a word:** Surge.

**TOPLINE MESSAGE:** Tourism surged back in 2021 with double-digit growth in economic impact in every single one of Wisconsin’s 72 counties.

**SECONDARY MESSAGE:** The tourism recovery is a dial, not a switch. While we are recovering, we have not yet fully recovered.

**PIVOT:** As visitors come surging back, we are working to ensure our guests make memories and discover the unexpected.

**2021 ECONOMIC IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS:**

* The total economic impact of tourism in Wisconsin was **$20.9 billion.**
* Tourism supported **169,700** full and part-time jobs across diverse sectors of the industry.
* Wisconsin hosted **102.3 million visitor trips**.
* **$1.4 billion** dollars in state and local taxes were generated because of tourism.
* Each Wisconsin household would need to pay **$580** to maintain the current level of government services generated by tourism.

**Tell Your Local Story**

* The data backs up anecdotal signs of the recovery

In 2021:

* + *Insert your own local economic recovery story here, be specific (examples from around the state below).*
	+ Circus World reported the best year they’ve had in 25 years.
	+ The Wisconsin State Fair had more than 841,000 attendees, despite a 22% reduction in operating hours *and* inclement weather.
	+ Ryder Cup had $130 million of economic impact!
	+ Mile of Music estimated its second-best attendance ever, a huge boost to Appleton.
	+ The Northern Wisconsin State Fair broke attendance records.
	+ More than 600,000 people attended EAA for only the third time on record.
* We are recovering, but we have not yet fully recovered.
	+ *Insert your own local recovery process story here, be specific.*
	+ Restaurants still struggle with slim profit margins.
	+ Hotels are still struggling to hire enough employees to flip the rooms. While revenues increased as fixed costs to operate these businesses have increased, these businesses still grapple with reduced hours due to worker shortages and slim profit margins and they need our help now more than ever.
	+ Urban destinations that relied upon meetings, conventions, business travel and indoor events were hit hardest in the pandemic have further to recover than more rural destinations.
	+ Although business travel has started to return, it hasn't fully bounced back. Meetings, conventions, and large events continue to strive to steadily increase their attendees and visitor numbers.
* More than $200 million in federal relief funds allocated by Governor Evers, the hard work of our industry partners and hospitality workers and Travel Wisconsin’s strategic statewide campaign with historic investment all worked together to support the industry’s ongoing recovery.

**Ongoing Recovery and 2022**

* Many sectors are still recovering. And many communities are still recovering, especially those that relied on meetings, conventions and business travel or indoor gatherings.
* The good news is that tourism surged back in 2021 with double-digit growth in total economic impact in every single one of Wisconsin’s 72 counties year-over-year.
* We look to carry that momentum into 2022, which preliminary data tells us has been strong.
	+ Wisconsin visitor spending outpaced the national average every single month in the first two years of the recovery.

**How does the 2021 economic impact compare to the last two years?**

* We are recovering but we’re not yet recovered, which follows the trajectory as it was predicted by economists from the outset.
* The good news is that for the final two quarters of 2021, collectively as a state we actually operated ahead of our record setting year of 2019.
* This tells us that our advertising works.
	+ Travel Wisconsin wasin all 12 of our advertising markets with higher spend and deeper reach than ever before in 2021.
	+ *Insert details about your marketing efforts, federal recovery dollars in action, etc.*

**Why lead with total business sales/total economic impact?**

* Our industry was the first and hardest hit by the pandemic and to lead with any number other than total economic impact undervalues the importance of our industry to the whole of Wisconsin’s (and the local) economy.

**What is the difference between direct visitor spending and total business sales?**

* + Direct visitor spending is spending by visitors to a destination within tourism related sectors (e.g. recreation, retail, food and beverage, transportation, lodging).
	+ Total business sales or total economic impact combines direct visitor spending with indirect and induced impacts.
		- Money spent on tourism results in the purchase of more goods and services like food wholesalers, utilities, and other business services.
		- Wages from tourism employees are also spent in local communities, recirculating those dollars back into the economy.
		- The total economic impact gives a more accurate picture of the industry as a whole.

**What was *<insert county>* direct visitor spending?**

* It’s important to note that direct sales only tell a small portion of the story.
* The total economic impact (aka total business sales) in the community was *<insert number>.*
* Total economic impact includes:
	+ Money spent on tourism results in the purchase of more goods and services like food wholesalers, utilities, and other business services.
	+ Wages from tourism employees are also spent in local communities, recirculating those dollars back into the economy.
	+ The total economic impact gives a picture of the industry as a whole.
* The direct visitor spending was *<insert number>.*

**How do you calculate visitor trips?**

* + Visitor trips include those who stayed in overnight accommodations or those who came from 50 miles away or more and deviated from their normal routine.
	+ This does not mean unique visitors; one person could account for more than one visitor trip.

**Which counties saw the most/least growth?**

* It’s important to note that every single county saw double-digit growth in overall economic impact in 2021.
* There are a variety of factors that impacted the amount of growth for each individual county, including how deeply tourism was impacted in that county in 2020.
* *Insert key takeaways from your county’s growth from 2021 over 2020.*

**What do you attribute this surge to?**

* There are many factors that contributed to the strong recovery of the tourism industry.
* Excellent advertising from Travel Wisconsin worked well with *[insert your campaign here]*, Governor Evers allocating more than $200 million in relief funds throughout the state’s tourism industry, hospitality dedication of workers, the creativity of our industry partners - all of these pieces are working together, in tandem, to create the future we know is possible for Wisconsin tourism.

**Recovery funds**

* Direct investments of more than $200 million in the tourism and entertainment industries by Governor Evers gave our state a competitive edge.
* And it’s clear to see these dollars were a wise investment for our state.
	+ - *Insert a comment about how your local CMO/Business/Community used some of these funds.*
		- The recovery funds are being used to keep doors open, workers employed, and promotions running.
* Data shows that this outpaces the national average percentage of recovery funds allocated toward arts, culture and tourism.
* As a percentage of all federal recovery dollars received by each state, **Governor Evers dedicated three times more funding** to arts, culture and tourism than the national average.