



explore minnesota agency overview



February 3, 2025





what we do

We support the growth of Minnesota's economy through management of the state's tourism, livability and economic opportunity, outdoor recreation, film, and other statewide promotion efforts as directed.



grow minnesota's economy

Increase economic opportunity for Minnesotans by promoting the state for travel, livability and business development.



advance and champion welcoming experiences for all

Increase the number of diverse vendors used, spend in diverse markets, content celebrating diverse cultures and foster relationships with underserved, cultural and heritage communities.



provide industry leadership and maximize partner collaboration

Grow stakeholder participation in our programs, increase private and in-kind contributions, and prioritize opportunistic marketing.



foster state stewardship

Identify areas of growth and sustainability and create new educational opportunities related to maintaining the cultural, environmental and economic integrity of our top destinations.

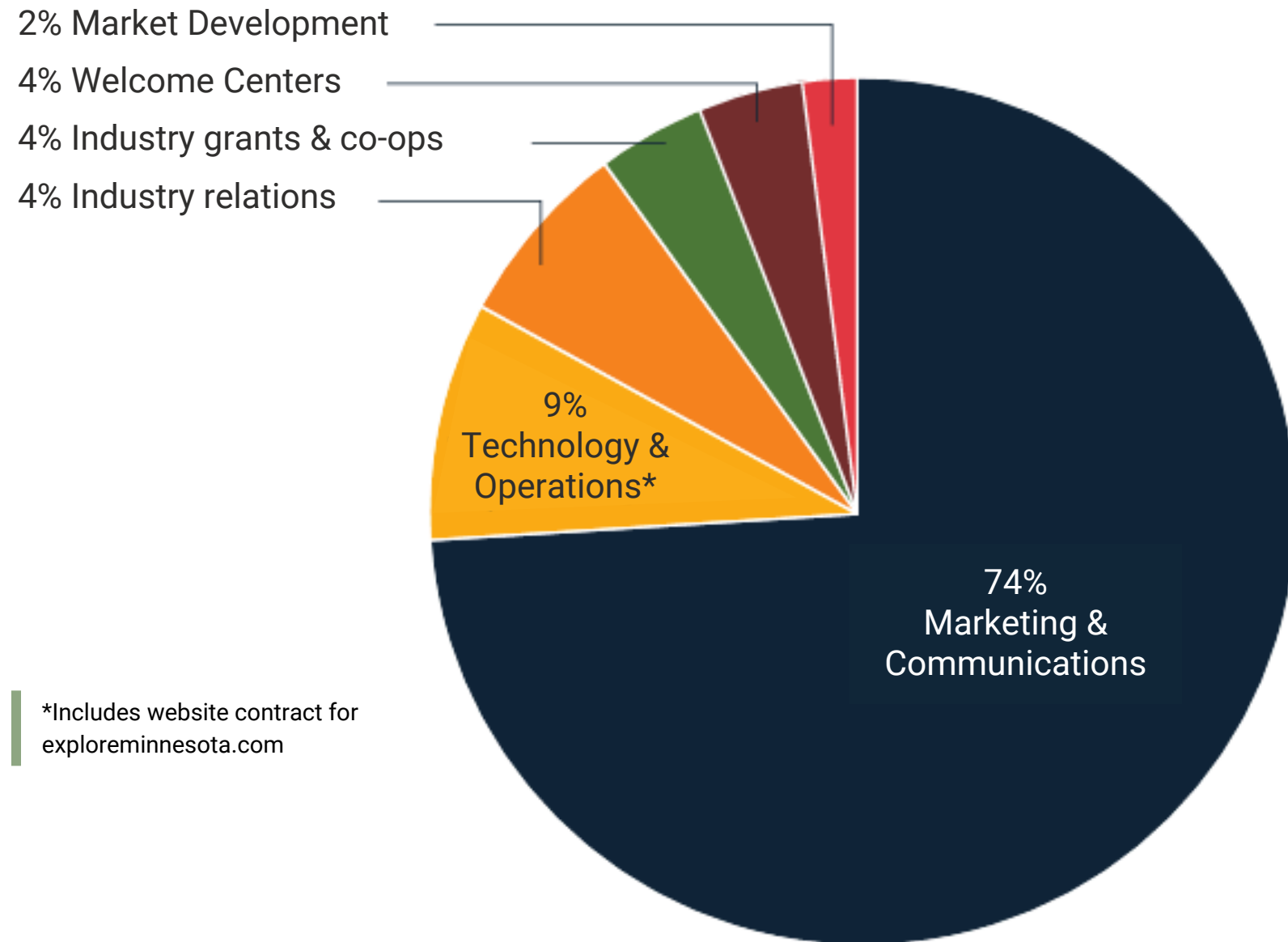


ensure organizational excellence

Prioritize employee growth through educational opportunities and improve employee satisfaction as well as engagement.



budget allocation



*Includes website contract for exploreminnesota.com

operating budget FY24

\$18.407 million (base)

Includes \$500,000 marketing incentive

one-time funding FY24-25

\$2M Tourism Recovery Grants

\$2.2M Tribal Nations initiatives + grants

\$11M Explore Minnesota for Business

private industry match

Cash	\$1.85 million
In-kind	\$7.2 million
Total	\$9.05 million

operating budget FY25

\$15.269 million

Includes \$500,000 marketing incentive



economic impact

visitors

80.2 million
visitors

34.8 million
passengers at MSP*

economic impact

\$14.1 billion
in visitor spending

\$24.2 billion
in economic impact

jobs & taxes

180,473
jobs generated

\$2.3 billion
state & local taxes generated

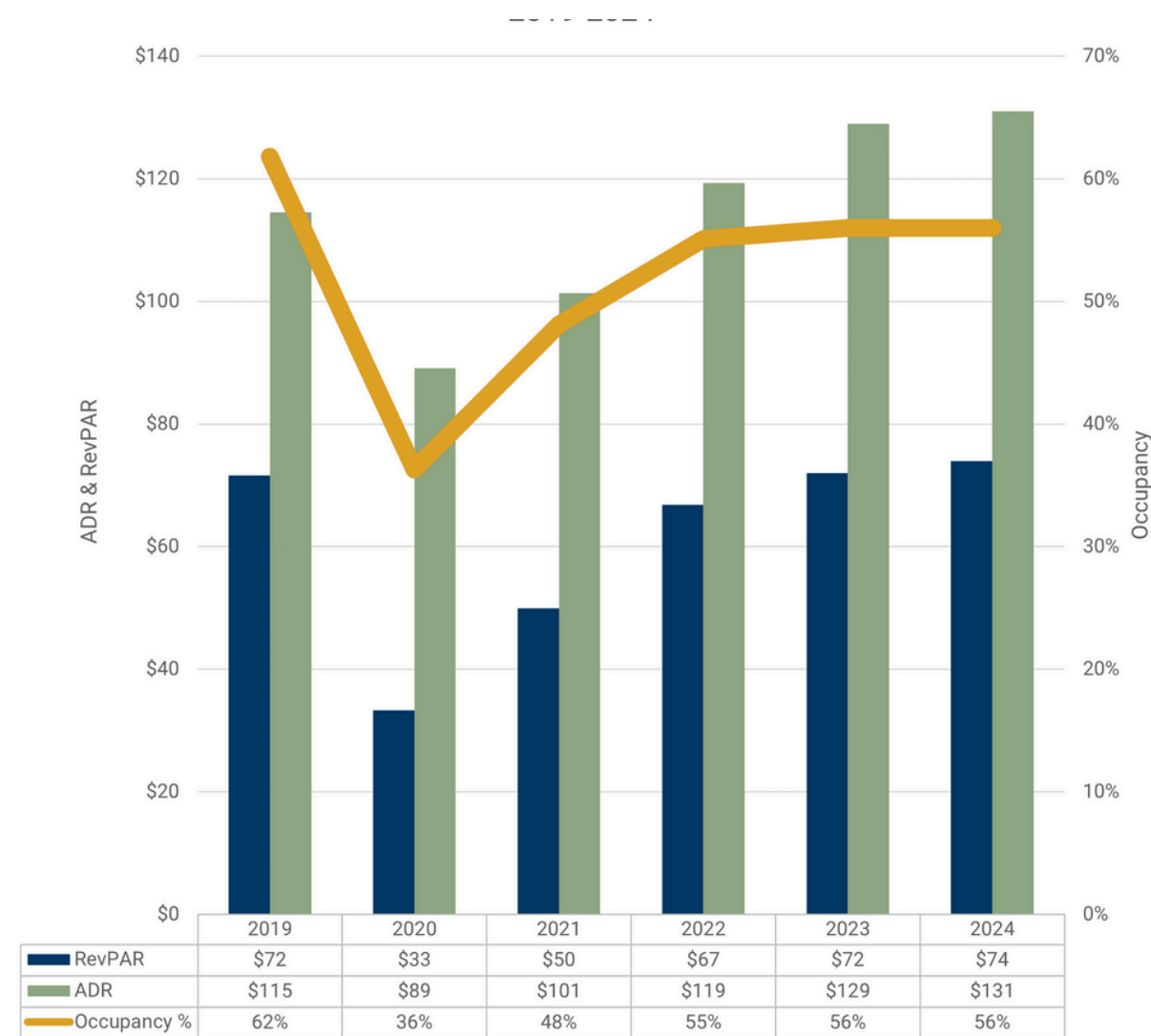
**tourism saved
each minnesota
household
\$1,002 in taxes
in 2023**

Unless noted, this data was from the 2023 Tourism Economic Impact Data

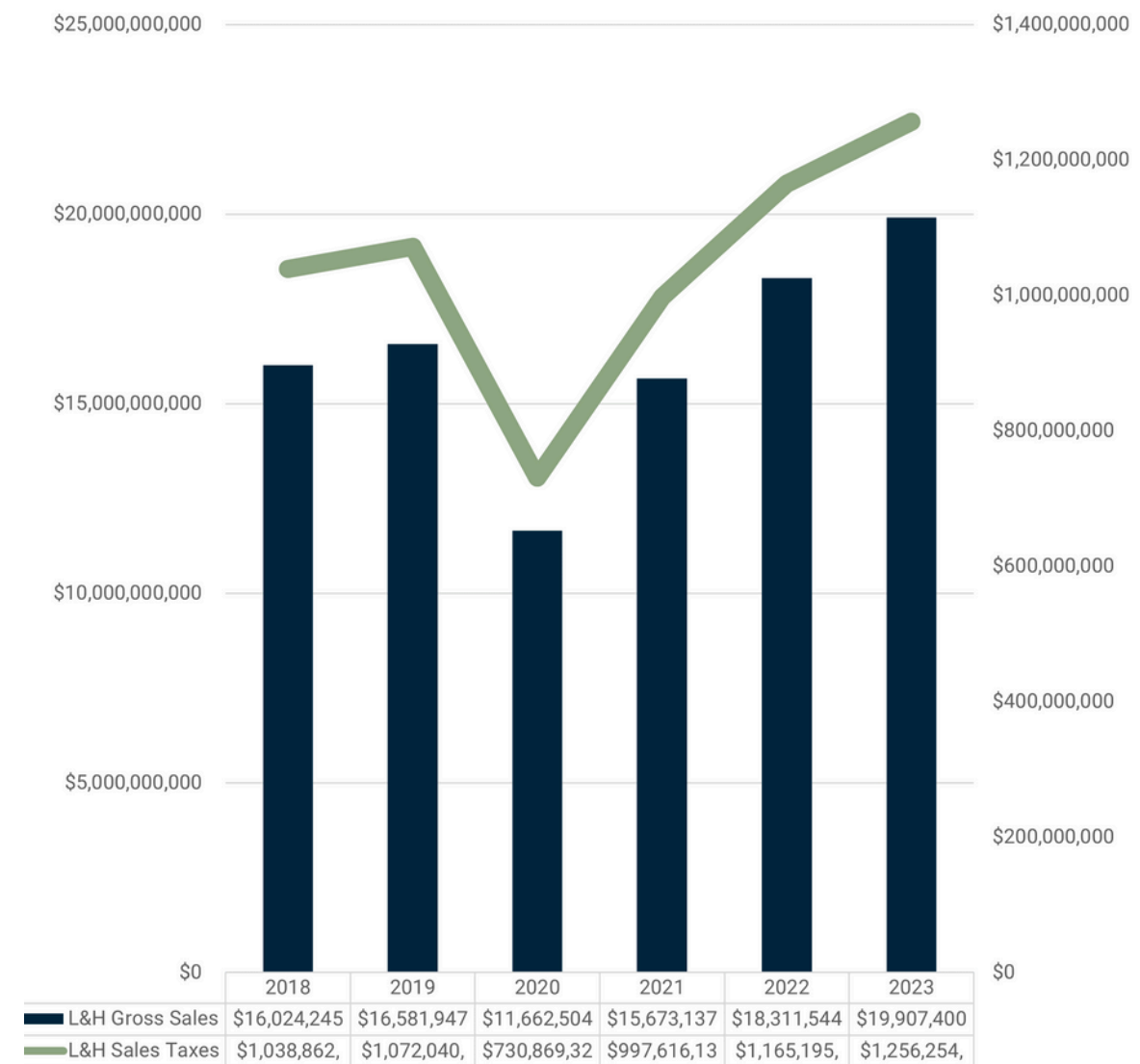
* Source: Minneapolis Saint Paul Metropolitan Airports Commission

key growth metrics

hotel occupancy



tourism sales



† Total room revenue generated from the sale or rental of rooms.
 ^ Room revenue divided by rooms sold, displayed as the average rate for a single room.
 * 2024 through end of June.
 ° The leisure and hospitality (L&H) industry sector includes a broad category of fields within the service industry such as lodging, food services, event planning, theme parks, transportation and other tourism oriented products and services. This sector is highly sensitive to economic and competitive market conditions and can have steep seasonal fluctuations during the year.



star of the north[★]

Explore Minnesota's Star of the North campaign goes beyond tourism to attract workers and businesses.

Immersive shares real, first-person accounts to tell the Minnesota story, highlighting local places, traditions, businesses, and people, inviting others to join in the experience.

our new tourism campaign debuted march 2024 with an authentic, optimistic minnesota message...

across a multitude of digital and broadcast platforms.

Minnesota appeared on broadcast TV in Chicago, Winnipeg and Thunder Bay; digital deployment in Minnesota, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming; as well as Dallas and Canadian cities Winnipeg and Thunder Bay.

where we advertise mn

global reach

We advertise in six European tourism markets, including the United Kingdom, Germany, France, the Nordic region, the Benelux region and Italy.

Marketing tactics include newsletters, digital advertising, social media, websites, booking attribution, earned media, and product development.

global partnerships

U.S. Travel Association, Brand USA, National Tour Association, American Bus Association, International Inbound Travel Association, International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association, Great Lakes USA, Mississippi River Country, Great American West (gateway cities membership), nine Visit USA Committees around the world

FY24 travel trade activities

Brand USA mission, Tokyo, Japan + Seoul, South Korea, July 2023

80 appointments with travel trade and tour operators + group destination training sessions

U.S. Travel's IPW 2024, Los Angeles, CA, June 2024

115 appointments with trade, marketing, and media representatives from around the world.

Brand USA European Travel Week, London, UK, October 2023

24 media appointments with travel writers + 37 trade appointments with tour operators/distributors.

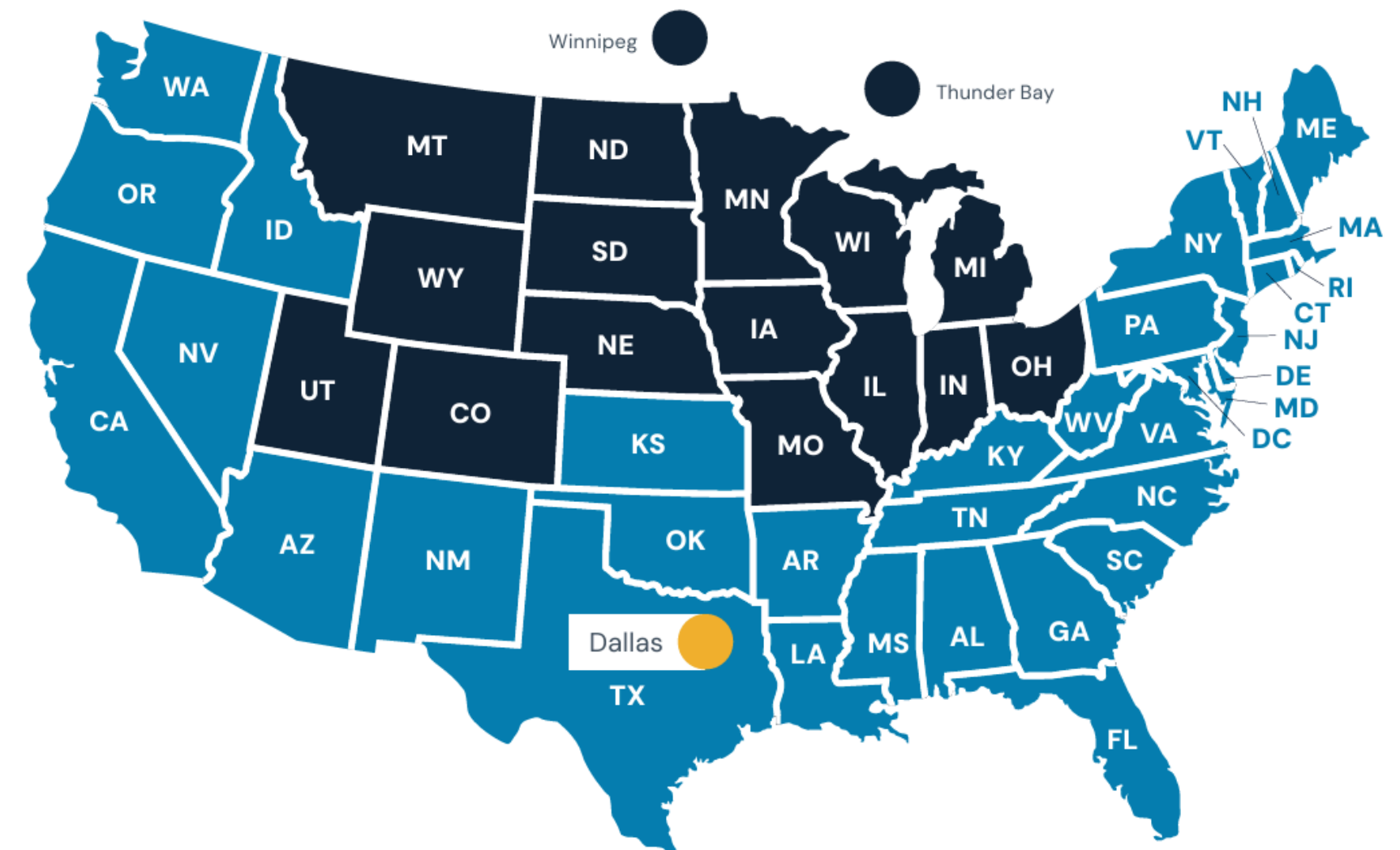
Brand USA Connect Canada, Toronto + Montreal + Calgary, June 2024

28 appointments with travel agents, airlines + tour operators; 2 travel agent trade shows + networking.

domestic media spend by season



Additionally, 11.6% of the total campaign spend was dedicated to enhancing reach among diverse audiences.



general + diversity + niche markets
 niche expansion markets
 flight + diversity markets

campaign results / general + diversity brand lift



	general	diversity
Awareness	↑ 2.6	↑ 2.6
Ad recall	↑ 3.9	↑ 3.0
Familiarity	↑ 4.3	↑ 3.9
Favorability	↑ 7.1	↑ 6.0
Consideration	↑ 5.1	↑ 4.3
Purchase intent	↑ 2.1	↑ 2.6

FY24 spring/ summer campaign



MN Travel Stories



Share

star of the north



MINNESOTA TRAVEL STORIES

Watch on YouTube





digital momentum

viral timberwolves moment

Less than \$12,000 invested resulted in a **980%** increase in social engagement and an **84%** rise in website sessions WoW. We attracted nearly **6,000 new social media users**. Our national and local media attention was nearly **5x greater** than that of our highest-performing pitches or events—the efforts were published by the *New York Times*, *People*, *NPR*, *CBS News*, *ESPN.com* and *Sports Illustrated*, among others. We generated more than \$1,200 from online swag sales.

FY24 social media growth

 Impressions +23.5%
Engagements +23.9%
Engagement/impression +0.4%
Video views + 40.7%

 Impressions -13%
Engagements -38.7%
Engagement/impression -29.6%

best-in-class website

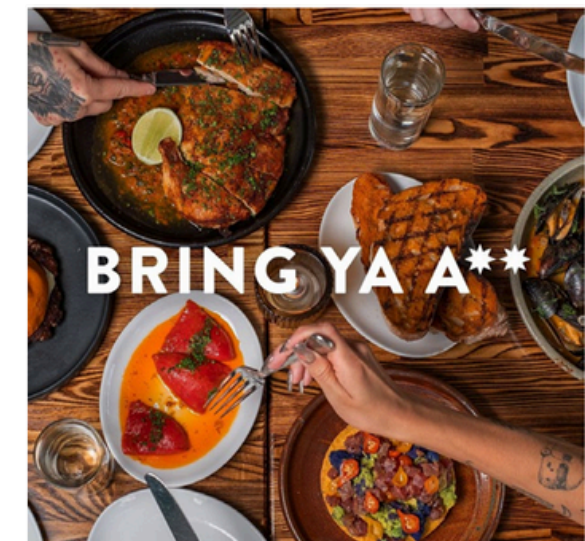
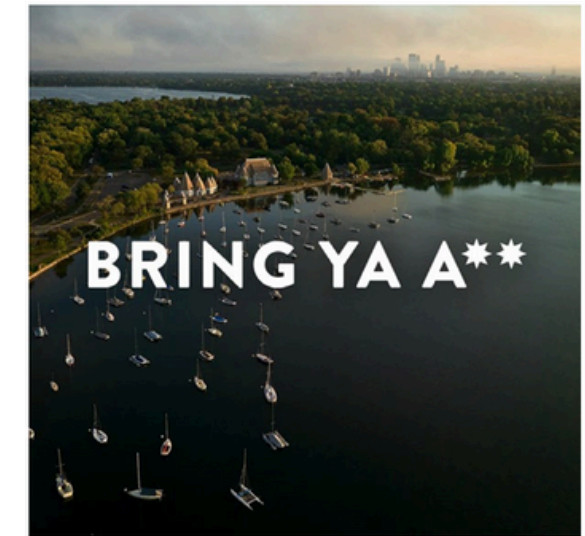
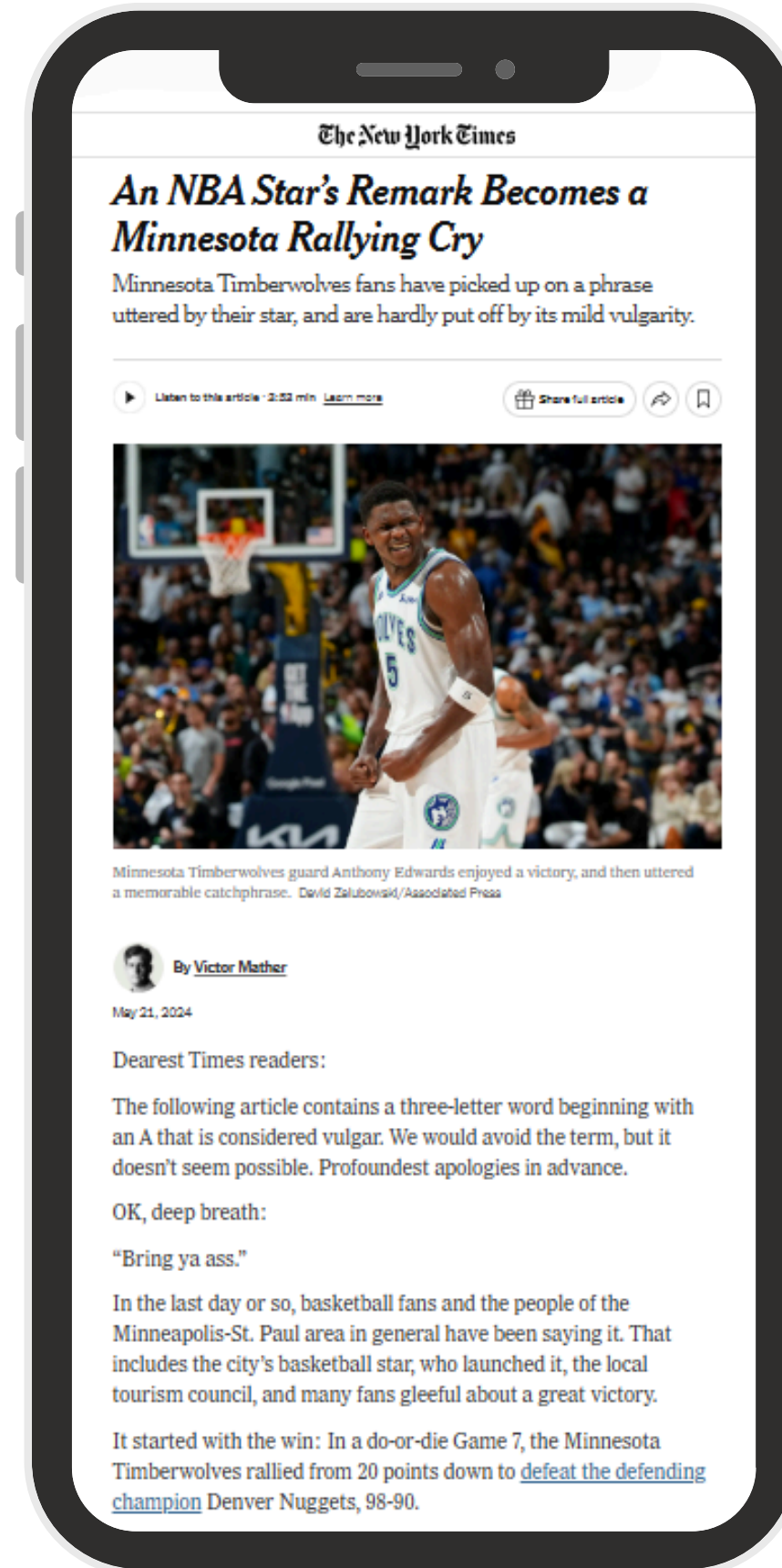
Total sessions +20.1%
Average session duration +7.1%
Users +10.4%



#9 of all 50 state DMOs in 1st page keywords on Google



Our Lighthouse accessibility score meets the highest level of accessibility standards.





media impact

national metrics*

1.3 billion
positive national
media impressions

\$1.4 million
estimated value

international media

49 articles	640,000 print reach	71,208 digital reach	1,340,000 broadcast reach
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top stories

- "Leaf peeping for hikers" *Sierra*
- "Best houseboat vacations in the U.S." *Travel + Leisure*
- "As dreary weather sets in, head to Minnesota to experience its Nordic sauna culture" *Chicago Tribune*
- "When and where to see the Northern Lights in the Midwest" *Midwest Living*
- "Discovering the joy of Lake Life in Minnesota" *Condé Nast Traveler*
- "The 10 best places to visit in 2024" *The Wall Street Journal*

* Source: Cision

The New York Times

TRAVEL+
LEISURE

People

Forbes

n p r

CBS NEWS

ESPN

MidwestLiving

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



events, co-ops & partnerships

Governor's Opener events
Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference
National Travel & Tourism Week
2024 COOP FIS Cross Country World Cup

100 industry participants
\$799.7k industry spend
\$2.23m in-kind value
\$717.6k EMN investment

\$2.2m+ total in-kind value
20+ state/regional partners
\$717.6k EMN investment



industry grants & engagement

The FY24 Tourism Recovery Grant Program provided critical funds to Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs). Grants up to \$40,000 were awarded to 111 communities, totaling \$1,153,185.

The FY25 Tourism Recovery Grant Program is currently in process and will provide \$846,815 to communities.



FY24 Tourism Recovery Grants

Awarded \$1,153,850 **Grantees** 110

Projects included:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Advertising | Search engine marketing |
| Website updates | Photography / videography |
| Social media marketing | Accessibility updates |
| Travel guide development | Conferences / tradeshow |
| Billboards | + more! |

FY24 Tribal Nations Grants

The FY24 Tribal Nations Grant Program makes funds available to the 11 federally recognized Tribal Nations who share geography with Minnesota to support development and promotion as it pertains to tourism assets, culture, heritage, arts, agritourism and outdoor recreation. No match dollars were required to participate.

Awarded \$1,449,843 **Grantees** 8

Projects included:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Updating tourism spaces | Signage |
| Tourism plan development | Events |
| Marketing tools | General marketing & advertising |
| Billboards | Website development |

outdoor recreation industry partnership



The Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership (ORIP) is an inter-agency collaboration between four state agencies, formed in 2023 to support all aspects of the outdoor recreation industry throughout the state.

Projects include:

- Outdoor Recreation Industry Summit
- Confluence of States
- Outdoor recreation economic impact report
- Explore Minnesota More podcast
- Industry outreach & engagement
- + more!



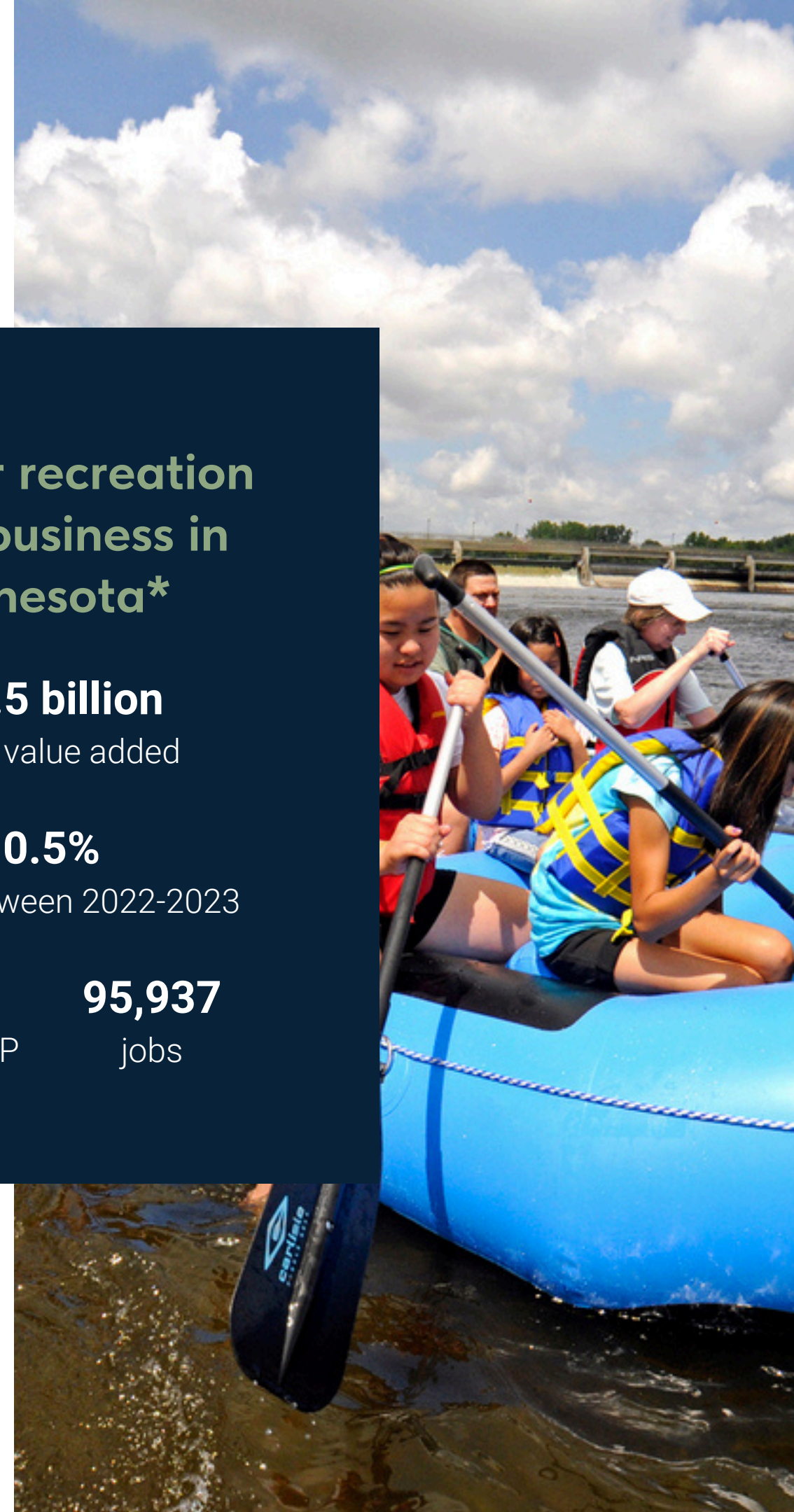
outdoor recreation is big business in minnesota*

\$13.5 billion
annual value added

10.5%
growth between 2022-2023

2.8% **95,937**
of MN's GDP jobs

* U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)





“anything and everything
I need is here”

William, project manager, Sartell

“moving to minneapolis
was the best move we’ve
ever made”

Kat, glassmaker, Minneapolis

“my kids say I’ve never
been more active”

Jim, engineer, Duluth

the state’s first- ever workforce + business attraction marketing launched in 2024...

The workforce campaign showcases newcomers who moved to Minnesota for job opportunities; choosing to stay for the high quality of life. They hail from across the country and the world, settling in cities, suburbs, and rural areas. We also debuted new content on exploreminnesota.com/live

The business attraction campaign highlights 4 companies that have made Minnesota home and continue to find success in our great state.

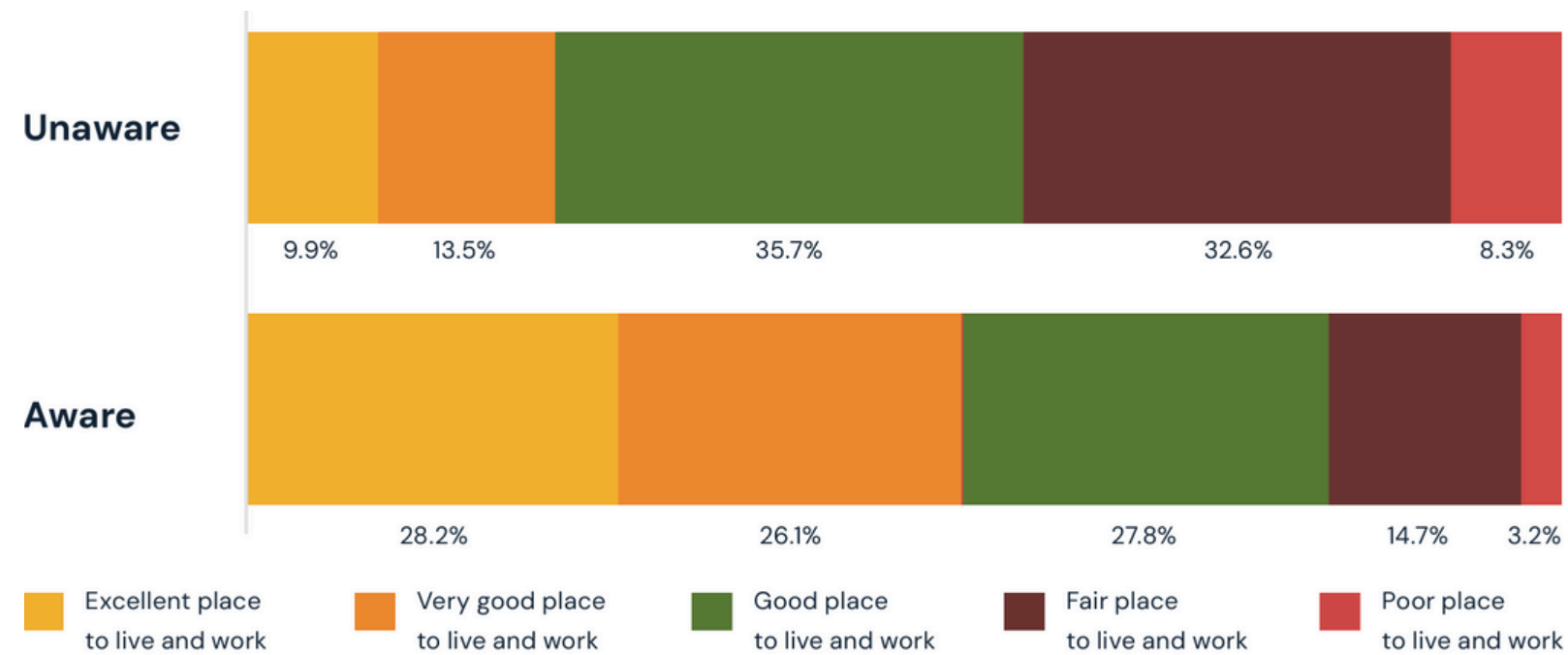
how / where we show up

campaign map

national rankings

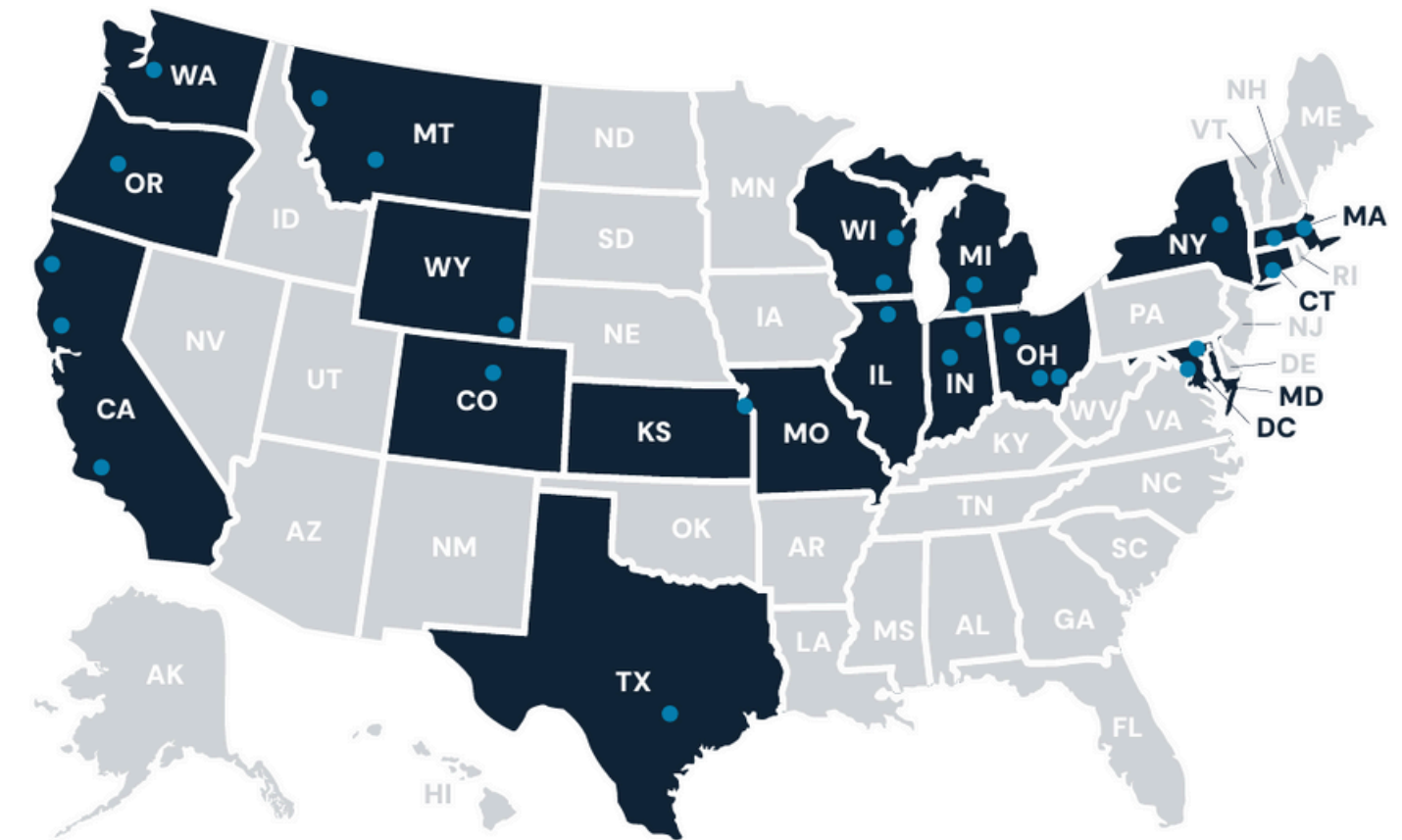


positive campaign feedback



Market studies and U.S. Census migration data indicate that Minnesota is well-positioned to attract newcomers from the Northeast, Midwest and Western states. These insights, along with data on workers in targeted industries, guided the campaign strategy.

By the end of FY25, we will have invested **\$11 million in one-time funding** in workforce and business attraction as well as resident retention.



■ livability markets
 ■ key cities or DMAs
 ■ business attraction markets

awareness survey results + what we're seeing



participants say minnesota...

	unaware	aware	lift
is a place where I can see myself living happily for a long time	3.55	4.17	↑0.62
is a place where I can achieve my career goals	3.62	4.20	↑0.58
is culturally diverse	3.57	4.14	↑0.57
has good schools	3.69	4.23	↑0.54
is a place with high-quality job opportunities	3.71	4.24	↑0.54
is a place to feel proud about	3.69	4.21	↑0.53
has high-quality health care	3.72	4.22	↑0.53

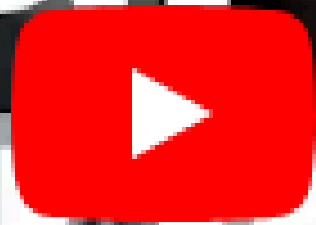


Life in Minnesota




Share

star of the north



LIFE IN MINNESOTA



Watch on  YouTube

new in FY2025

Since FY2024, Explore Minnesota has added several new initiatives. We welcomed two new departments, as well as new functions to help us better serve the state of Minnesota.

explore mn film

- Administer film incentive programs
- Promote Minnesota as a filming location
- Implement programs related to film and TV production, including permitting and workforce development
- Communicate with stakeholders on best practices
- Develop policies for film & TV production
- Liaise with production teams & state agencies

resident retention

- In-State Young Diplomats / Recent HS
- In-State Guardians / Career Counselors
- In-State Young College Attendees / Graduates
- Focus on developing materials to provide to high schools and post-secondary institutions
- Highlighting jobs that are essential, support well-being and have good career trajectories

outdoor recreation industry partnership

- Engage the outdoor recreation industry & convene meetings to meet industry needs
- Promote Minnesota as a premier outdoor recreation destination
- Develop programs to increase the economic impact of outdoor recreation in the state



star of the north[™]

Continuing to market tourism, workforce and business attraction, film and outdoor recreation. We will continue to integrate the marketing across the agency through the Star of the North brand to ensure consistent messaging in more places.

continuing success in the new year

Tourism

- New emphasis on opportunistic marketing around events
- Working with local communities to amplify their messaging
- International marketing growth with new airline routes

Workforce & business attraction

- Resident retention & recovery
- Continued messaging to grow audiences
- Focus on amplifying good stories out of MN
- New content production to highlight small businesses

Tribal Relations

- Continued work with grant recipients
- Increased support of tourism initiatives with Tribal Nations

Industry engagement

- Increase awareness of funding and educational opportunities
- Increase cultural storytelling



thank you



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