



Maine

BICENTENNIAL

2019 Annual Report

CONTENTS

03	· WHO WE ARE
04	· KEY FACTS
07	· OUR MISSION
10	· 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW
12	· PAID ADVERTISING
19	· OWNED CHANNELS
24	· EARNED MEDIA 2019
30	· OVERSEAS TRAVEL TRADE + LEISURE SALES
32	· MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS
35	· GROUP TOUR
36	· LEISURE TRAVEL SHOWS + SALES
38	· 2019 CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAM
40	· INDUSTRY SUPPORT
42	· MAINE TOURISM MARKETING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM
44	· DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT
52	· RESEARCH
54	· MAINE FILM OFFICE





WHO WE ARE

The Maine Office of Tourism, an office within the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development, is charged with administering a program to support and expand the tourism industry and promote the state as a tourism destination. The Office develops and executes effective marketing programs for the benefit of the travel and film industries, as well as the economy and the citizens of Maine by attracting visitors to the state and thereby preserving and creating jobs.





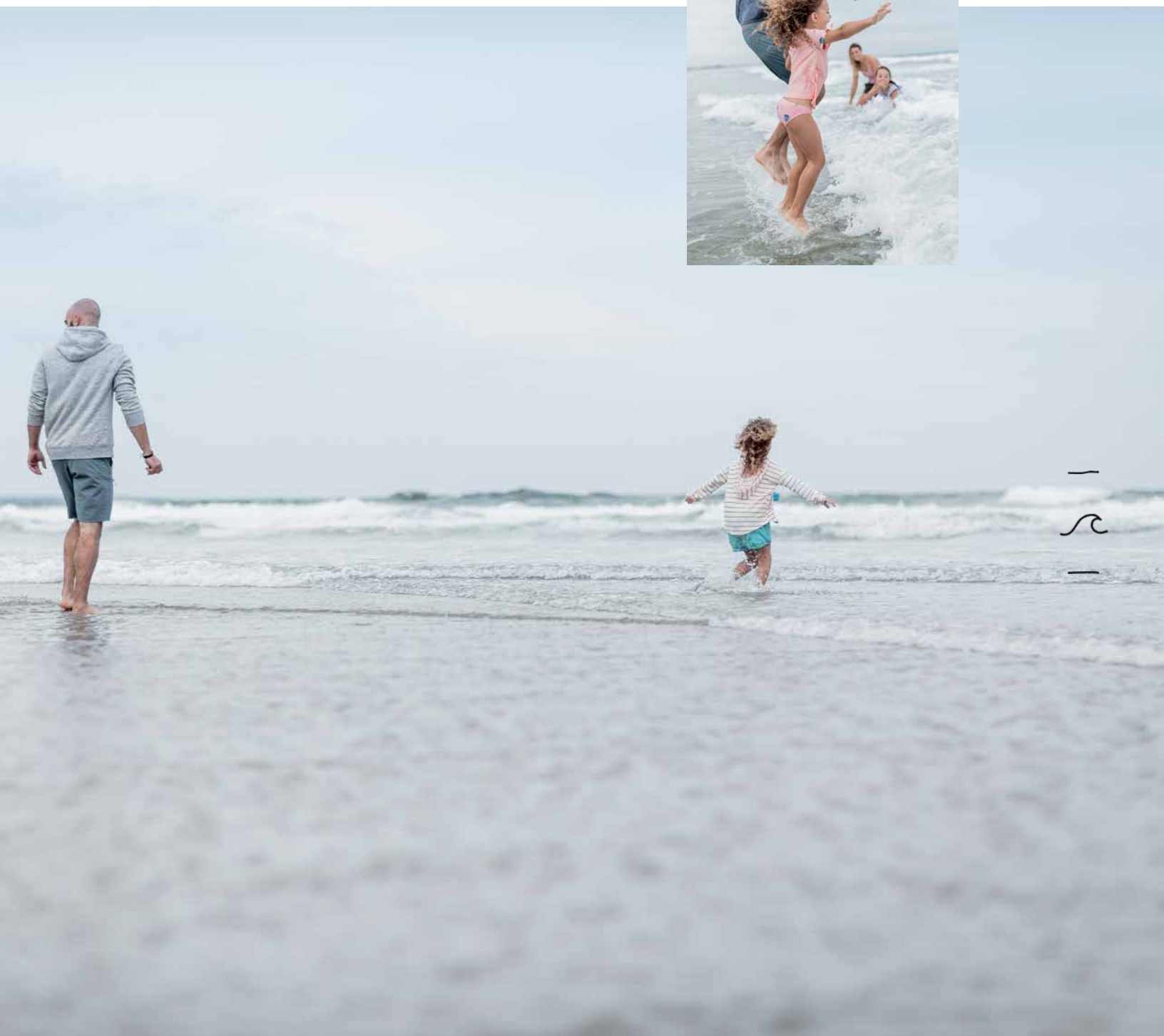
KEY FACTS

- Overall visitation grew to 37.4 million, up 0.7%.*
- Total first-time visitation grew to 7.2 million, up 12.5%.
- Combined restaurant and lodging taxable sales grew to 4.29 billion, up 6.0% (\$241 million) from 2018.**

*This estimate includes all tourism-related overnight travel and non-resident tourism-related day travel.

**Date reflective of 4/20/2020





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~
—

"Seashells make the best souvenirs."

200 YEARS OF

Black Diamond



BRILLIANCE

OUR MISSION

Become the premier
four season destination
in New England.









2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

The year 2019 was the final year of the This is Me. campaign, which elevated Maine's lifestyle to create consumer craving for the destination and ultimately drive visitation. This campaign maintained a strong presence in key markets of opportunity, while introducing elements such as brand partnerships to tap new audiences and further elevate the brand. Atlanta was introduced as a new market due to the fact that it indexes high with our core segments and it is an airline hub with direct air service to Maine. After successfully focusing on driving first-time visitation from Mid-Atlantic markets for the past couple years, MOT increased media spend in Boston and New York to drive new first-time visitors from these legacy markets.

To supplement the core campaign, a key strategic partnership was developed with the help of the new Office of Outdoor Recreation. *The Gear Up and Go* Maine program aimed to elevate the state as a premier destination for outdoor recreation. This program integrated the Maine brand with leaders in the travel/outdoor space—National Geographic and Maine Outdoor Brands member, Hyperlite Mountain Gear.



**IN 2019, TOURISTS SPENT NEARLY \$6.5 BILLION IN MAINE,
SUPPORTING OVER 116,000 JOBS.**

TRADITION





PAID ADVERTISING

SUMMER 2019 CAMPAIGN

The paid media strategy built off successes in 2018 using a mix of high-impact media types, such as TV, out-of-home and print, with action-driving channels (digital) to reach consumers in the dreaming and researching stages of trip planning, while they were most receptive to receiving vacation inspiration.

Display, paid social and paid search were leveraged using actionable messaging to reach consumers in the planning and booking stages. Creative messaging was tailored to these different stages to create brand comprehension and push prospects further down the funnel to convert.

The *Gear Up and Go Maine* program lived as the cornerstone of the Summer 2019 paid media campaign with a custom partnership with National Geographic. The cross-

promotional effort included linear and digital TV, Maine exclusive website hub, custom content produced by a renowned National Geographic photographer, digital and social promotion and sweepstakes to generate leads. The program enabled MOT to reach new, highly relevant travel audiences, while establishing credibility by aligning the Maine message with a trusted media outlet.

This partnership also allowed Maine to collaborate with Maine-based outdoor retailer, Hyperlite Mountain Gear. This collaboration infused the Maine brand into consumers' everyday lives through the release of a limited-edition Maine backpack. This mutually-beneficial partnership leveraged both brands' distribution channels to build awareness and inspire travel intenders to gear up and visit Maine.





CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS: APRIL-OCTOBER 2019

The summer 2019 paid-advertising campaign delivered **797.2MM impressions** across all paid channels, and elevated the Maine brand via strategic partnership with National Geographic to reach relevant travel intender audience and drive over **96MM impressions**. In Baltimore, Charlotte, Hartford, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Atlanta, Boston and New York City, the campaign maintained a strong presence with **spot TV driving over 131MM total impressions**.

Brand promotion at the national level continued with an **NPR partnership that delivered over 281MM impressions**. In expansion

markets like Atlanta, Boston and New York City, the campaign drove brand awareness with **out-of-home executions resulting in 138MM impressions**. In publications like Outside Magazine, Boston Globe Sunday Magazine, Backpacker Magazine, and National Geographic, the campaign reinforced brand sentiments through local and national **print buys receiving over 14MM impressions** upon campaign completion.

Digital Highlights:

- 104MM impressions
- 684,264 clicks
- 0.65% average CTR



WINTER 2019/2020 CAMPAIGN

A dedicated winter campaign ran November 2019-February 2020 to continue to establish Maine as the premier four-season destination in New England. Media concentrated in prioritized local markets of Boston, Hartford and Philadelphia with coverage in areas that have historically generated winter visitation: Mid-Atlantic and New England. Similar mediums and placements from the core summer campaign were included in this continuation strategy with the addition of connected TV.





**CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS:
NOVEMBER 2018-MARCH 2019**

The dedicated winter campaign resulted in 85.5MM projected impressions across all paid channels. The campaign generated broad awareness of Maine through targeted high-impact out-of-home placements, including digital billboards and commuter train posters. In Yankee Magazine, Boston Magazine and New Hampshire Magazine, the campaign

reinforced winter messaging with contextually relevant magazine insertions. The campaign introduced Maine to travel intenders using Connected TV, and generated brand awareness by encouraging consumers to take action with a targeted digital plan, including partnerships with Jun Group and TripAdvisor.



ANDREW KNOWLTON PARTNERSHIP

Maine partnered with Maine enthusiast Andrew Knowlton, host of Netflix's "The Final Table" and former editor-in-chief and current editor-at-large of *Bon Appetit*, to create a content-first program in Summer 2019. Leveraging his authority in food, culture and all things Maine, Knowlton highlighted the state's MidCoast region through a three part-series of articles for *The Maine Thing Quarterly* and an in-market experience with his family, giving his followers an insider's look at Vacationland.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS: JULY-SEPTEMBER 2019

- **1.2MM impressions** across all channels
- **160+ posts** across Instagram and Instagram stories
- **20,000** likes, comments and shares
- **15,500+** VisitMaine.com pageviews
- **50+ images** for Visit Maine's use across digital channels





AWARDS

- **Graphis Advertising Annual 2019**
 - Gold: Serendipity Video
- **CA Interactive Annual 2019**
 - Shortlist: The Maine Thing Quarterly; Roxi Suger
- **CA Design & Advertising Annual 2019**
 - Shortlist: Magazine Single; Slurps
 - Shortlist: Magazine Single; Relationships
 - Shortlist: Magazine Series; Slurps, Relationships, Scat
- **Adworkers 99**
 - Silver: TV More than :30 Single; Serendipity :60
 - Bronze: Digital Video Campaign; Slurp, Lobster, Road Trip
 - Merit: Digital Video; Slurp
 - Merit: Digital Video; Lobster



OWNED CHANNELS

EMAIL

Consumer Program:

- Deployed 12 monthly emails to opt-in subscriber database of roughly 420,000
- Deployed two consumer promotional emails featuring the Lighthouse and Winter in Maine issues of The Maine Thing Quarterly digital magazine
- Deployed two niche emails to segmented lists to promote Open Fishing Season and Winter Activities
- Deployed two emails to the database to promote Restaurant Week and Harvest on the Harbor
- Consumer open rates range from 12.8% to 16.2%
- Consumer click rates range from 5.3% to 12.4%

Industry Toolkits:

- Deployed two industry emails promoting content kits for the Lighthouse and Winter in Maine issues of The Maine Thing Quarterly



"Every step brought us
closer, to each other."



WEBSITE

In 2019, MOT focused on updating new and existing content to increase traffic and visibility of VisitMaine.com. VisitMaine.com had 202 stories updated or added to the site in 2019. SEO was a top priority for MOT, as the Google algorithm continues to evolve. This was accomplished through updating high-demand content, like lobster and lighthouses, popular overview pages, like Things To Do, and more granular content, like the towns' pages.

The Maine Thing Quarterly highlighted two uniquely Maine stories. The Winter Quarterly featured assets from the 2018 winter shoot, which highlighted all that Maine has to offer in the winter months, like skiing, cozy winter nights and snowshoeing. The Light You Keep told the story of Mr. DeRaps, a former lighthouse keeper, who has kept the spirit of Maine alive through his love of lighthouses and watching over them.

YEAR-TO-DATE METRICS

VISITMAINE.COM (1.1.19-12.31.19)

- **2.7MM** website sessions across 2MM users; **up 11.3% YoY**
 - 125K of those sessions arrived on the Quarterly section
- Average session duration of 2:11
- Percentage of new sessions is 84.7%; up 7.6% YoY
- 850K users from organic search; down 4% YoY
- 293K users from social channels; up 42% YoY.
- 48.7K “Maine Invites You” orders; up 6.6% YoY
- 15.4K “Maine Invites You” online views; up 7% YoY
- 2.8K e-newsletter sign-ups; down 33% YoY
- 381K organization page views; down 17% YoY







MAINE HAS SERVED
AS A BEACON OF
TRUE ORIGINALITY &
PERSEVERANCE FOR
CENTURIES.





EARNED MEDIA 2019

The Maine Office of Tourism delivered story ideas and materials to targeted national, regional and international media outlets and influencers — including travel, lifestyle, sports, food, news and general interest. These efforts communicated the unique point-of-difference that is Maine and generated greater understanding and awareness of Maine by working with a wide range of media/influencers to help tell the story.

DOMESTIC + INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Many of the stories written about Maine germinated from proactive media pitching and responding to media inquiries. The MOT's PR/earned media program had contact with nearly **800 media outlets** and influencers, with coverage in a mix of online, print and broadcast outlets including Travel + Leisure, USA Today, Boston Globe, Canoe & Kayak, Forbes, Architectural Digest, AAA World, PBS Television, and the Today Show. Editorial coverage on Maine resulted in an **estimated reach of 2.8 billion.**



*"Every fisherman has their favorite spot.
Mine is Maine."*

KEY OUTREACH:

In 2019, 39 press/influencer visits to Maine involved nearly 100 businesses and attractions throughout the state, and eight one-on-one meetings with top-tier travel media based in Chicago were organized.

MOT participated in winter family travel satellite media tours (TV, radio, print, online) featuring syndicated family travel columnist and author Eileen Ogintz that resulted in **38.9MM impressions**.

The PBS series, TravelScope, shot in Maine in 2018 started airing September 2019. To date, **1,081 broadcasts** have aired across the country. MOT earned media also partnered with Samantha Brown's PBS show, Places to Love, on a segment in Maine, which will air spring 2020.

MOT's PR team participated in Trav Media's International Media Marketplace, meeting with 48 members of the travel and lifestyle media, and participated in the Society of American Travel Writer's media marketplace at their annual convention to pitch Maine story ideas during 14 one-on-one appointments.

In collaboration with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Conservation, MOT produced and distributed weekly foliage reports during the fall season. Media coverage from the reports resulted in **318,000 coverage views**. Additionally, the office collaborated with Ski Maine and Maine Snowmobile Association to produce and distribute weekly snow reports during the winter months resulting in **107,000 coverage views**. A winter photo shoot at state parks was also coordinated and added 20 new photos to MOT's asset library.



ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

CAMPAIGNS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

MOT partnered with Travel Mindset on an influencer campaign that highlighted wellness vacations and delivered 17MM impressions with a total reach of 1.2MM. Earned media for this campaign was valued at \$265K with cost per engagement at \$0.20.

The “On the Road” campaign series was improved and expanded for content creation and social sharing to showcase different regions, activities and build content falling under the four tourism pillars.

FACEBOOK

MOT used a posting strategy more heavily focused on sharing user-generated images and continued to prompt engagement through sharing photos, videos, interesting accolades, articles and news. This posting strategy not only reached 35,451,931 users, it drew 822,101 engaged users, delivered 41,956,726 impressions and received more than 140,500 “Likes.”

Plus, weekly foliage and snow reports were promoted along with a series of posts for National Plan for Vacation Day that included an interactive infographic.

INSTAGRAM

On Instagram, the MOT fan base grew from 77,000 to more than 108,000, and utilized #MaineThing to gain access to thousands of user-generated images to showcase a wider variety of activities and areas throughout Maine.

Instagram Stories celebrated the seasons and unique Maine activities, showcased timely user-generated images, and created highlights with longer shelf lives. Monthly Instagram Story campaigns continued to showcase the state.

The “On the Road with Visit Maine” campaign showcased destinations and activities of interest to MOT followers while creating compelling content through travel across the state. “Where in Maine” featured a map graphic to accompany photos of cities and towns in every region of Maine. The “Ultimate Maine Road Trips” campaign provided four road trip ideas, with each idea focusing on two regions of the state and providing a must-see travel check list.



MOT provided Maine photos through Instagram Stories and encouraged followers to save and use as their phone screensaver. MOT utilized Instagram Stories to provide weekly foliage and snow reports, and shared partner Instagram stories: @canoekayakmag, @natgeoadventure, @travelmindset, @mvandersluis, @omandthecity, @northernoutdoors. To engage with influencers visiting Maine, MOT re-posted content.

To actively engage users, MOT initiated Instagram polls, quizzes on Maine facts and Q&As to ask audiences their preferences on seasons, activities, etc. In a coordinated Instagram takeover with @capesshore, MOT showcased Vinalhaven and Norway.

TWITTER

MOT Twitter received 1,658,100 total impressions. It capitalized on the viral seagull lobster roll image by tweeting at the photographer and sending a lobster roll kit. To encourage continued engagement and promotion, MOT participated in travel-related Twitter Chats and provided weekly foliage and snow reports.









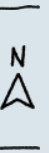
OVERSEAS TRAVEL TRADE + LEISURE SALES

The Maine Office of Tourism engaged with targeted overseas markets in partnership with other New England states through the Discover New England collaboration.

- Promote Maine overseas to various target markets:
 - United Kingdom, Ireland and Germany
 - + In partnership with Discover New England (DNE), an international marketing cooperative between five New England states
 - France and Italy
 - + In partnership with the state of New Hampshire
- Participated in co-op marketing programs via BrandUSA in Canada, the UK and Germany, driving increased international bookings to the state.
- Assisted more than 95 international tour operators with requests for information and images.
- Exhibited at U.S. Travel Association's annual IPW international marketplace and met with 75+ international buyers and media from more than 10 different countries in the Maine booth, and 40 international buyers as part of the Discover New England delegation.
- Attended the Discover New England annual travel trade marketplace and summit in Manshantucket, CT, and met in one-on-one appointments with more than 60 international buyers including tour operators and receptive operators from 10 different countries serving key overseas markets.
- In collaboration with Discover New England, organized and hosted familiarization tours for 27 international tour operators and 17 international media from Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.
- Hosted a familiarization tour for representatives from the marketing firm that represents Discover New England in the UK to better acquaint them with Maine's offerings.
- International trade shows and sales missions:
 - UK: Participated in London Series Red Sox/Yankees PR event with over 45 trade and media attendees, and in individual meetings with key tour operators and travel writers.
 - UK: Participated in the Discover New England booth at World Travel Market in London, meeting with more than 30 tour operators and media representatives.
 - Ireland: Participated in the Dublin World Holiday Show with DNE.



"Some of the most fulfilling days are the ones
when you have nothing to do."



- Germany: Participated with DNE in ITB Berlin, the largest travel trade show in the world, and met with 22 tour operators and media from Germany, Switzerland and Austria.
- France: Along with delegates from New Hampshire, participated in a weeklong French sales mission in appointments with 17 tour operators and travel media in Paris and Nantes, plus trainings for 15 of their sales associates providing an introduction to Maine.

A 3-way partnership promoting Shipyard Brewery and its New England heritage by teaming up with the launch of the new Jack Reacher novel *Past Tense*, by Lee Child (set near Maine) and Discover New England. The promotion included in-store promotion with bottle neck labels, point of sale materials in pubs, and social media through Shipyard Brewery, Lee Child and Discover New England. The promotion included a sweepstakes to win a trip to the Shipyard Brewery in Portland, Maine.



MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS

Maine Invites You

A comprehensive travel guide published in partnership with the Maine Tourism Association and distributed to nearly 160,000 prospective visitors as a key consumer fulfillment piece.

Yankee Magazine

Weekends with Yankee TV program produced by the publishers of Yankee Magazine featuring Maine as a New England travel destination aired April-September 2019.

Pro Bowling Association

Sponsorship of 2019 event in Maine, inclusive of event presence and media promotion on ESPN.

Maine Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Conservation

Collaboration to produce and distribute weekly foliage reports during the fall season.

Ski Maine + Maine Snowmobile Association

Collaboration to produce and distribute weekly snow reports during the winter months.

Bicycle Coalition of Maine

The Maine Office of Tourism supported the production of the “Where to Ride” online resource at www.bikemaine.org.

World Pro Ski Tour

Sponsorship of 2019 event held at Sunday River Resort, featured on CBS Sports Network, positioning Maine as a world-class skiing destination.

CruiseMaine

CruiseMaine worked collaboratively with Maine port communities to promote Maine as a sustainable cruise destination. Key initiatives:

- Commissioned a state-wide study of cruise ship visitors to Maine
- Established statewide, online cruise schedule in collaboration with Maine port communities through maine.portcall.com
- Continued engagement, education and outreach with Maine port communities, state partners and cruise industry representatives



Maine Sports Commission

The Maine Sports Commission worked to promote, elevate and advance Maine as a four-season sports destination. 2019 initiatives included:

- Development of marketing strategy and materials
- Research and development of new sporting events in collaboration with Maine's tourism regions
- Final stages of a new branding initiative and website to be launched early 2020
- Promotion of statewide current events
- Recognition of athletes through #sidelinestories social media campaign
- Elevated messaging around National Girls & Women in Sports Day in collaboration with several colleges, universities, teams and non-profit organizations







GROUP TOUR

TOUR OPERATOR APPOINTMENTS & MARKETPLACE

The Office of Tourism continued to engage with the group travel market, providing tour operators with information about bringing motorcoach tours to Maine.

American Bus Association Marketplace: 51 appointments (28 average for DMO)

In partnership with the Maine Motorcoach Network (MMN), sponsored a Maine booth at the annual American Bus Association, which hosts over 3,500 tour operators, suppliers and exhibitors in the group tour industry. Activities included:

- Generated hundreds of tour operator leads via a lobster-themed raffle
- Opening reception serving lobster dishes
- Distribution of Maine Invites You magazine and member profile sheets

National Tour Association: Thirty-four pre-scheduled appointments with tour operators from the United States, Canada and key international markets.

Ontario Motorcoach Association: Twenty-four pre-scheduled appointments with Tour Operators from Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, Canada

MAINE MOTORCOACH NETWORK

Maine Motorcoach Network Group Travel Guide: Distributed over 100 copies of key fulfillment piece to qualified tour operator leads. The resource book features group-friendly lodging, attractions, restaurants, transportation services, events and sample itineraries.

2019 Sales Mission: Visited North and South Carolina to make sales calls to 12 group tour operator companies. Each of Maine's eight regions was represented by a member of the MMN. Maine-made products were gifted to all operators.

2019 FAM Tour: Welcomed 12 tour operators to visit the Maine Beaches Region, Greater Portland Region and the MidCoast Region for five days. Over 25 attractions, 10 restaurants and five hotels were included in this familiarization tour.





LEISURE TRAVEL SHOWS + SALES

The Maine Office of Tourism exhibited in target markets delivering firsthand “insider” information to consumers from MOT staff and Maine tourism partners.

DOMESTIC TRAVEL SHOWS

Boston – New York – Philadelphia – Washington D.C. – Chicago

Worked with regional partners and the Maine Windjammer Association to staff the Maine booth and share information with the show attendees. Supported the Ski Maine Association’s presence at the Boston Ski & Snowboard Expo.

The Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation exhibited at the Outside Magazine sponsored show, “Outside Experience,” held in Chicago in May in partnership with Maine Outdoor Brands and the Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands.

SPORTSMAN’S SHOWS

Great American Outdoor Show – Harrisburg, PA
World Fishing & Outdoor Exposition – Suffern, NY

Worked with representatives of the Maine Professional Guides Association and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife staff to promote

Maine hunting and fishing opportunities to this niche audience and represent Maine’s sporting interests within the tourism industry.

CANADIAN TRAVEL SHOWS

Montreal – Toronto – Ottawa

Exhibited at Canadian consumer shows in key markets for Maine visitation, focusing on outdoor adventure to reach a younger demographic looking beyond the shopping and beach destinations that are typically visited by Canadians.

Contracted with the New England Tourism Center in Montreal to distribute Maine marketing materials in CAA seminars and Travel Xchange trade shows in Ontario and Quebec.



**EASTERN STATES EXPOSITION OR “BIG E”
Springfield, MA**

The Big E broke attendance records once again, with over 1.5 million attendees during the 17-day event. The Maine Building on the Avenue of States saw a steady stream of visitors seeking information on fall touring, and planning for key activities such as hiking, hunting, beach vacations, etc. Culinary tourists to the building queued for Maine sourced delights such as lobster rolls, baked potatoes, and blueberry pie. New in 2019, the Maine Office of Tourism introduced a human-sized walk-in lobster trap photo booth/selfie station for visitors to the building.

*“Her first time in the Atlantic
was a time to remember. For both of us.”*

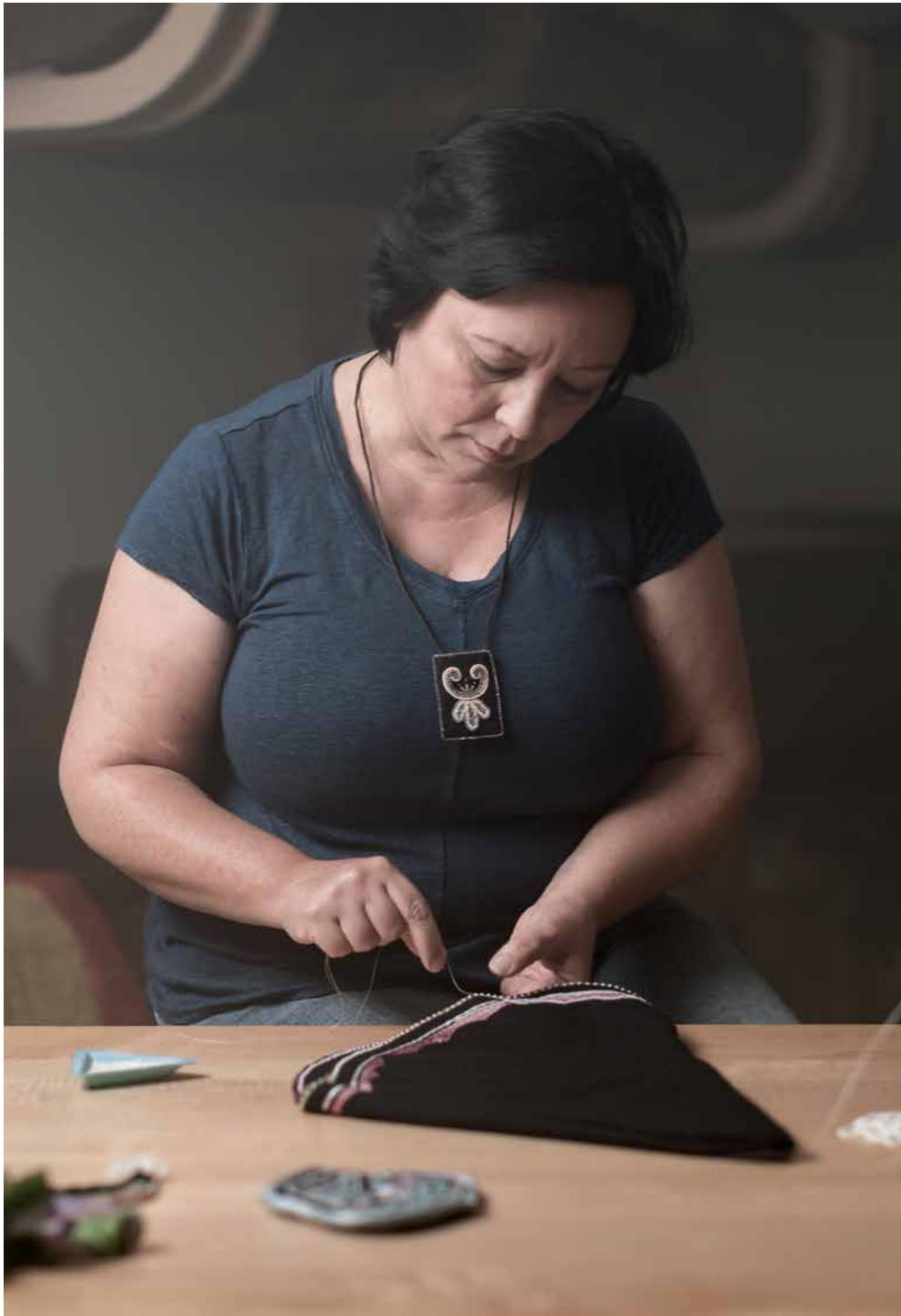




2019 CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAM

- Partnered with the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance and the Maine State Poet Laureate to deliver year two of the Maine Poem Card Project. Twenty-five lodging properties in all eight tourism regions participated in the program and distributed poem cards to visitors.
- Delivered cultural tourism marketing presentation in Ellsworth in collaboration with the Maine Downtown Center.
- Presented a cultural tourism roundtable in Portland. Ten cultural organizations participated and learned about cultural tourism trends, how to connect with the Maine Office of Tourism and the tourism industry, and marketing strategies to help attract visitors.
- Conducted site visits to Portland, Ellsworth, Skowhegan, Westbrook, Lewiston, Auburn, Biddeford, Bar Harbor, Belfast, Bucksport, Stonington, Brooklin, Burnt Island, Gray, Rangeley, Millinocket, Bath, and Waterville that included 60+ businesses and organizations. The purpose of these visits was twofold; to learn what's new and to share information on ways to connect with the Maine Office of Tourism and the tourism industry.
- Planning and Fieldwork for Bicentennial Itineraries: Working in collaboration with the Maine Historical Society, Maine Department of Transportation, Maine Rivers and Portland Landmarks, MOT is developing multi-day itineraries that highlight four Maine rivers: Saco, Androscoggin, Kennebec, Penobscot. This effort will encourage visitors to discover new ways to experience Maine.
- Fieldwork included visits to 30+ businesses, organizations and sites.
- Provided technical assistance: marketing, grant opportunities, and cross-promotion opportunities to 15+ cultural organizations.
- Attended and presented at The National Main Street Conference, Collaborative Cultural Tourism: Drawing Visitors to Main Streets, Seattle, WA, March 25-27, 2019.
- Partnered with Four Directions Development Corporation to plan and carry out a Wabanaki Cultural Tourism Summit in fall 2020.







INDUSTRY SUPPORT

ADVOCACY/OUTREACH

Quarterly stakeholder meetings with attendees including members of Maine's Tourism and Hospitality Alliance (Maine Tourism Association, Hospitality Maine, Maine Campground Owners Association, and the Ski Maine Association and Retail Association of Maine), regional representatives, and other tourism-based organizations.

Maine Tourism Partners News

Monthly industry e-newsletter reached over 7,000 Maine tourism businesses, organizations, and other tourism stakeholders with updates on Maine Office of Tourism initiatives, research results, trends in tourism, and Maine industry news.

Governor's Conference on Tourism

The annual Governor's Conference on Tourism brings together almost 500 tourism industry stakeholders from across the state. The two-day conference includes a report on Office of Tourism initiatives and marketing programs, rollout of the annual marketing plan, a keynote address, breakout sessions, networking sessions and presentation of tourism awards. The conference is the premier professional development event for the tourism industry in Maine.



*"The abundance of
natural resources in
Maine is awe inspiring."*





MAINE TOURISM MARKETING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Each year, the Maine Office of Tourism budget provides matching grants for regional marketing promotion and special events promotion through the Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program.

FY2020 GRANTS AWARDED

Regional Tourism Marketing Organizations – \$1,310,000

- Aroostook County Tourism
- Downeast Acadia Regional Tourism
- Greater Portland/Casco Bay
- Kennebec Valley Tourism Council
- Maine Beaches Association
- Midcoast Council of Chambers
- Maine Lakes & Mountains
- The Maine Highlands: Bangor, Katahdin, Moosehead Lake

Special Event Grants – Totaling \$109,300

- Portland Bach Experience
- Great State of Maine Air Show

Tourism Enterprise Grants – Totaling \$71,125

- Maine Brewers' Guild
- Kennebunkport Business Association
- Vision Hallowell
- Maine Professional Guides Association
- Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust

- Piscataquis Chamber/Maine Whoopie Pie Festival
- Destination Moosehead
- Points North Institute
- Maine Sporting Camp Association

Regional Tourism Marketing Grants are awarded annually. Tourism Enterprise Marketing and Special Events Grants are reviewed and awarded biannually.

The MOT also awarded the following Maine Bicentennial Marketing and Event grants totaling \$60,032 to provide matching marketing funds to tourism-specific bicentennial marketing projects and events that will drive overnight visitation to Maine during Maine's bicentennial celebration year (2020).

- Portland Stage
- Penobscot Maritime Heritage Association
- Makers Guild of Maine
- Maine Beaches Association

In 2019 the Maine Communities Grant was also created to provide “kick-starter” assistance to tourism focused, community-oriented marketing projects and events. A maximum of two (2) grants for each of the eight designated Maine Tourism Regions are awarded annually for amounts ranging from \$500 - \$1500. In 2019 the Maine Jewish Film Festival was awarded \$1500.





*"Every path in
Maine leads to new
discoveries."*





DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Evaluated and provided technical assistance as appropriate to organizations taking steps toward destination readiness in the following areas.

- Skowhegan
- Kennebec Valley & Jackman
- Bold Coast
- Aroostook
- Katahdin area
- Oxford Hills

Community Destination Academy (CDA)

Partnered with Maine Woods Consortium to hold two Community Destination Academies (CDA) in 2019.

Moosehead Lake Region

Outcomes:

- Centralized listings for events in the area
- Completion of a new Boardwalk along the lake shore
- Development of an Artisan village along the waterfront
- Wayfinding projects providing signage to tourist points of interest
- Consultant meetings with individual businesses creating new experiences

Rangeley Lakes Region

Outcomes in progress: (all are a result of the CDA conversation begun in spring)

- Kiosk to be constructed at main entrance to downtown.
 - Larger wayfinding project underway with DOT
- Tested a shared, on-line, reservation service for guided experiences between one hotel and guide service with short-term success.
 - Possible expansion with more partners
- Tours: Expanded a one-day group tour into a two-day tour to engage and retain tour business for a longer timeframe.
 - A local guide purchased a van and has begun his own moose watching tours
 - Franklin County Economic Development is working on a county-wide group tour and has joined the Maine Motorcoach Network
- Branding: Awarded a contract to a Maine ad agency to develop and implement a branding plan.



*"Maine by waterway offers a whole
new perspective on the world."*

Bethel Area

Outcomes in progress:

- Identified five key Pillars of the Strategic Plan:
 - Regional collaboration, convening, communication and leadership
 - Creating community engagement and buy-in
 - Creating and refining compelling unique visitor experiences
 - Green and environmentally responsible role-model approach
 - Tourism workforce and housing development
- Each pillar has 2-3 priority projects that have been determined by vote at a community summit for further focus



Develop additional programs to meet needs discovered in working in destination areas.

Katahdin Region

- Partnered to hire a consultant to facilitate discussions between organizations with overlapping missions and marketing projects.
- Located a potential board member for one organization with expertise in organizational management.

Moosehead Lake Region

- Partnered with Maine Woods Consortium to advise and assist the Destination Marketing Organization to reorganize their board of directors, staffing and accountability.
- MOT Enterprise grant support for marketing and public relations work.
- Board is currently creating a Policy Manual that includes board, employee and operational policies.
- Maine Woods Consortium has successfully introduced and run a program of one-to-one consulting assistance for 20 businesses to work on their social media and websites to maximize opportunities.

- MOT is investing in CDA Communities with specific marketing programs designed to help them gain momentum through media. A pilot 4-season video project is running in the Moosehead region.

Rangeley

- Maine Woods Consortium has introduced and run a program of one-to-one consulting assistance for 20 businesses to work on their social media and websites to maximize opportunities. Very successful.

Bethel

- Strategic Plan that incorporates outcomes from their previous Heart & Soul process into Bethel's preferred future planning.

*"Eight different regions,
each one unique and ripe
for exploration."*







Seek financial resources and partnerships to fully develop appropriate programs to meet those needs.

- Local private non-profit partnerships have provided most of the additional resources needed.
- The Northern Forest Center has been an outstanding partner with various additional programs aimed to assist the Maine Woods destination areas specifically.
- In communities that request it, finding money has been a component of the Community Destination Academy program.

Advocate among state agencies to focus resources on rural destinations who are investing in themselves and their sustainable future.

- Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation has been an active partner in the CDA program offering research about financial resources.
- Key people from various state agencies such as Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and Land for Maine's Future have been invited to the Destination Academies to hear discussion and engage with local needs first-hand.



Continue to build partnerships with the forest products industry as vibrant communities across the Maine Woods are critically important to both tourism and forest products.

- Presentation to the Northern Forest Center board on the Rangeley CDA by local business participants and their MOT partner.
- MOT and Maine Woods Consortium have worked with forest products representatives and a Maine Professional Guide to develop a free on-line program to be rolled out in 2020 to educate front-line workers on how to explain the nuances of recreating in the Maine woods to visitors.
- Northern Forest Center has shared that new resource with the forest products council for feedback as it has been in development.









RESEARCH

ANNUAL VISITOR RESEARCH

- Statewide and Regional Visitor Profiles
- Statewide and Regional Tourism Economic Impacts
- Seasonal Topline Visitor Reports: Spring/Summer, Fall, Winter
- First-Time and Repeat Visitor Summary
- Canadian Visitor Study
- Maine Woods Regional Summary
- Prospect Study
- Periodic Polling from a panel of Maine visitors







MAINE FILM OFFICE

A division within the Maine Office of Tourism at the Department of Economic & Community Development, the Maine Film Office markets Maine as a filming location and executes a strategy to increase production in Maine to help grow Maine's economy. It is the official liaison between the film industry, state agencies, and production companies.

The Film Office promoted Maine as a filming location to the global film community.

- Outreach efforts to visual media productions include contact with productions in: United States, Canada, Mexico, United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany and Spain.
- In total, MFO registered 55 productions with filming spread over all 16 Maine counties. The total anticipated direct spend of these productions is estimated at \$4,382,217.
- Trade shows, conferences and film festivals provided opportunities to present Maine as a filming location to businesses, television networks, production companies and executives in diverse areas of the screen sector. Appointments and contacts made during these events lead to additional increased productions filmed in Maine, resulting in an immediate direct spend in Maine by the productions while filming, as well as the PR value of having Maine showcased in films.
- The Film Office Director continued serving as an elected officer on the board of the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI)—an extraordinary opportunity to meet with filmmakers, producers and industry VIPs from around the world.









The Maine Film office attended the following:

South by Southwest (SXSW) Film Festival, Conference and Trade Show — one of a trio of highly acclaimed U.S. Film Festivals, SXSW offers access to businesses, television networks, production companies and executives in diverse areas of the screen sector from around the world

Association of Film Commissioners International's AFCI Week — focused on connecting with high-level industry decision makers with a Business-to-Business Industry Day hosted by Universal Studios, a Physical Production Power Brunch sponsored by the Hollywood Reporter, a Locations Trade Show, and an industry networking event at Entertainment Partners

Tribeca Film Festival — one of the major leading film festivals in the industry and where the filmed-in-Maine movie “Blow The Man Down” (shot in 2018) had its world premiere and won “Best Screenplay,” was nominated for “Best Narrative Feature” and received a special jury mention for “Best Cinematography”

Toronto International Film Festival — one of the largest film festivals in the world offers unique access to filmmakers, studio reps and industry delegates from around the world



HIGHLIGHTS OF PRODUCTIONS REGISTERED INCLUDE:

- **Summer Sunday**, Indie Scripted Feature Film
- **Maine Cabin Masters**, DIY Network TV Series, Season 4
- **Heightened**, Indie Scripted Feature Film
- **Tirdy Works**, Turner Broadcasting TV Series, Season 1
- **America's Hidden Stories**, Smithsonian Channel TV Series, Season 2
- **Hunt for Eagle 56**, Smithsonian Channel Documentary

MAINE ATTRACTION FILM INCENTIVE PLAN

Issued \$160,229 in reimbursement to six productions through the Maine Attraction Film Incentive Plan. Production companies receiving reimbursement for expenses had direct production expenditures of more than \$3,380,000.

MAINE FILM INDUSTRY MEETING

The Film Office invited local industry stakeholders who represent a wide spectrum of the film industry in Maine to join the Maine Film Office and Department of Economic and Community Development leadership at a round table session to discuss the current state of the film industry in Maine and to collaborate on ideas for growing a sustainable film industry.

5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN & SWOT ANALYSIS

Based on industry input, a plan was formed to provide a strategic and viable path for the film industry in Maine for the next 5 years into 2023. The plan identifies areas prioritized to strengthen the local film and creative industry, attract production to Maine, and increase the economic impact of the film industry in Maine. The plan will be reviewed and modified periodically to meet evolving challenges and explore new opportunities that arise during the next five years.

FILM TOURISM INITIATIVE

A database was added to the Film Office website and is being populated with the goal of facilitating a rise in the value-added economic impact of film to the tourism experience and promoting Maine communities, businesses and Maine-made products.

PARTNERING WITH MAINE FILM FESTIVALS

The Film Office sponsored the screenings of all Filmed-in-Maine documentaries at Emerge Film Festival and Camden International Film Festival.







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