



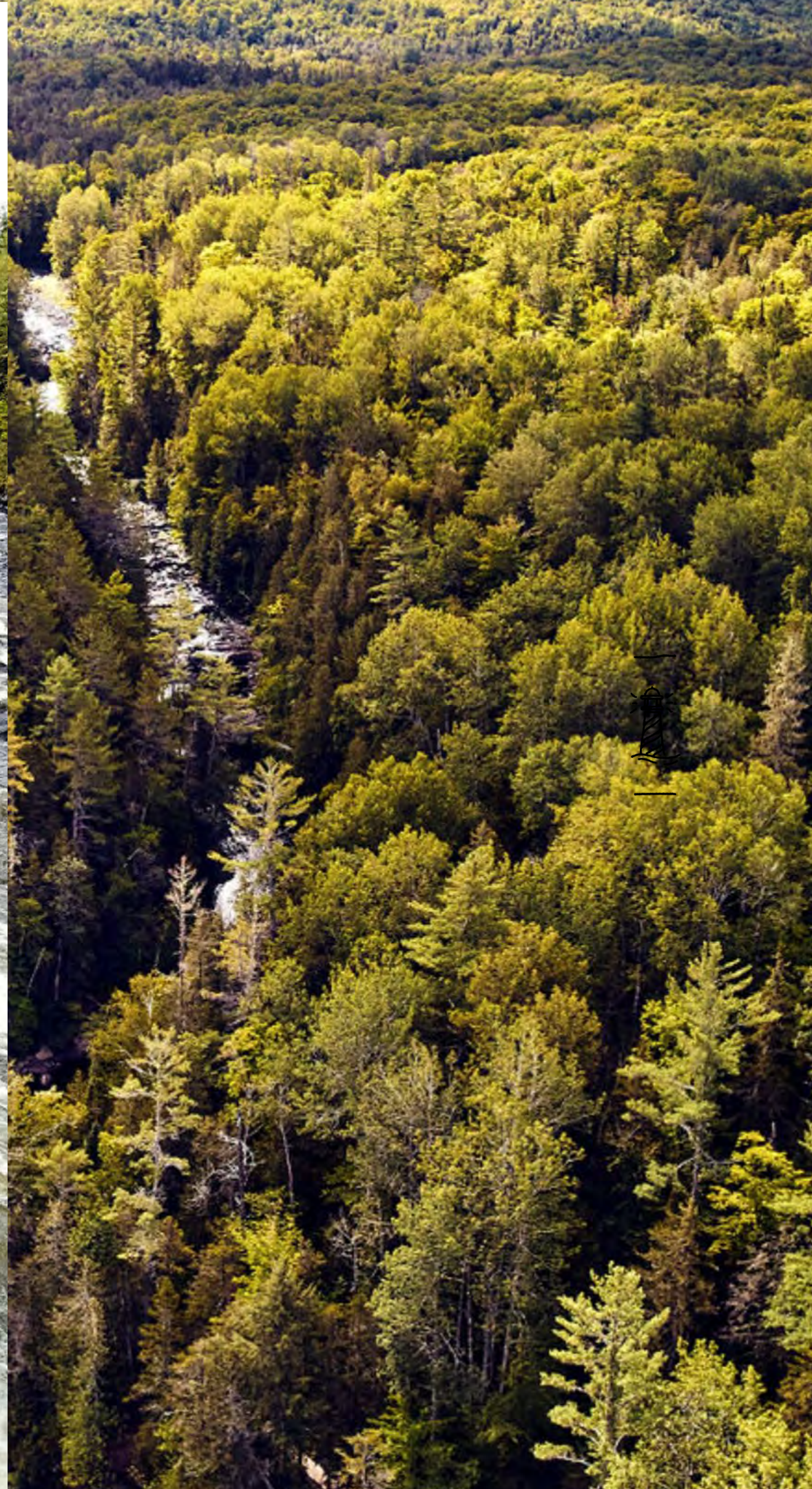
Maine

2023 ANNUAL PLAN



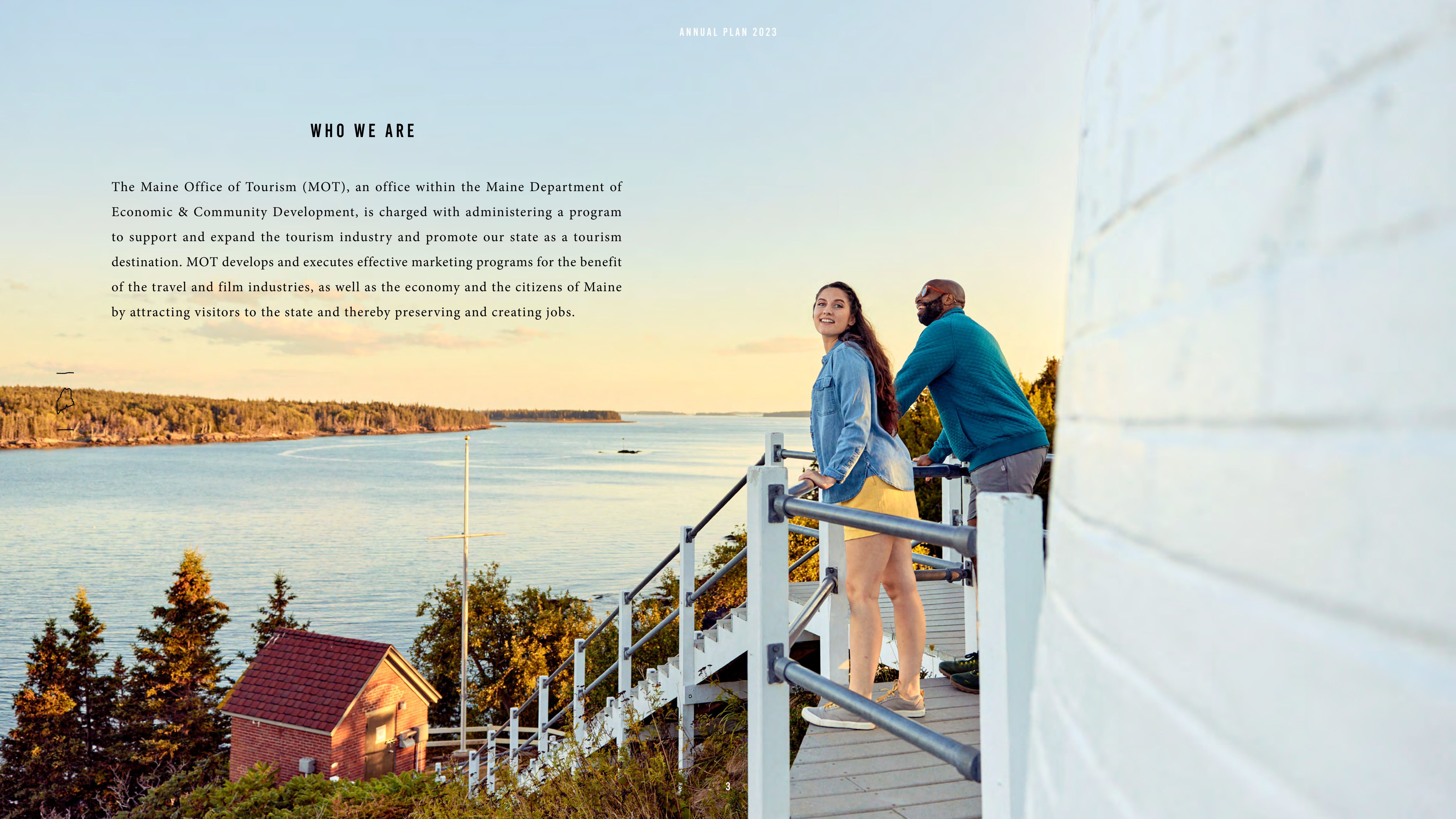
CONTENTS

- 3 · WHO WE ARE
- 4 · OUR MISSION
- 5 · DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
- 9 · RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS
- 11 · MARKETING + CAMPAIGN EFFORTS
- 19 · PUBLIC RELATIONS, EARNED MEDIA & ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA
- 23 · CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM
- 26 · TRAVEL TRADE, CONSUMER GROUP + FIT – LEISURE SALES
- 30 · GRANT PROGRAMS
- 32 · INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS
- 35 · MAINE FILM OFFICE



WHO WE ARE

The Maine Office of Tourism (MOT), 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 our state as a tourism destination. MOT 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.



OUR MISSION

We pursue economic vitality for Mainers in balance with healthy communities and the natural environment through responsible marketing, community advancement and fostering collaboration among Maine's tourism partners.





DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Over the course of 2022, the Office of Tourism sought input from stakeholders, residents and visitors to develop a Destination Management Plan that is sensitive to the long-term sustainability of our state. The plan centers destination stewardship that aligns with our recognized need to balance growth management with residential quality of life and to safeguard the inherent qualities that have always drawn people to Maine as a favorite New England destination.



The Office of Tourism is committed to our core purpose of marketing the state of Maine as a travel destination while recognizing that we must protect the character and culture of our state now and for the future by balancing the visitor economy with stewardship of our natural resources and way of life.

With the findings of the assessment input in hand, the planning work began and the vision, mission, stewardship principles, imperatives and action steps took shape.





PLAN IMPERATIVES AND 2023 ACTION STEPS

OPTIMIZE LONG TERM ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Attract travelers who are best aligned to Maine's experiences and ethos.
- Invest in marketing intelligence to improve effectiveness and enhance return on investment.
- Prioritize diversification of travelers to and within Maine.

PROMOTE DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP

- Integrate sustainable travel opportunities into MOT marketing.
- Work with MOT staff and contractors to develop sustainable itineraries and travel ideas.
- In collaboration with ad agency, PR contractor, Office of Outdoor Recreation and sister state agencies, develop and implement Look Out for ME 2.0 campaign.

DEVELOP AND EVOLVE INDUSTRY SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP.

- Create statewide stewardship messaging and toolkit for business and industry use.



ADVANCE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

- Establish and maintain a robust and accurate inventory of tourism assets.
- Support and expand grant programs and other programs that improve tourism experience and facilitate product development.
- Examine and continue Community Destination Academy to identify opportunities for expansion.

PRIORITIZE COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

- Expand stakeholder communications and opportunities.
- Increase in-person community presence and presentations at industry events.
- Provide industry training on stewardship and inclusion principles.
- Expand partnership network and identify collaboration opportunities.





RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS

ANNUAL OFFICE OF TOURISM REPORTS

- Economic Impact and Visitor Tracking
- Seasonal Topline Visitor Tracking: Spring/Summer, Fall, Winter
- Regional Economic Impact and Visitor Tracking
- First-time vs. Repeat Visitor Summary
- Maine Traveler Research Panel Surveys

DEVELOP NEW STANDARD REPORTS

- Regional Seasonal Topline Visitor Tracking: Spring/Summer, Fall, Winter
- Arrivalist reports to reveal data on a monthly, quarterly, annual and seasonal basis
- Reevaluate the granularity of geographic locations in Arrivalist
- Explore new data dashboard options





MARKETING & CAMPAIGN EFFORTS



KEY INITIATIVES

- Finalize brand refresh process and adopt new brand assets such as: logo, color palette, typography, etc. and weave into all things Maine, from advertising to VisitMaine.com. These will be detailed in a comprehensive Brand Guidelines document for easy access and reference.
- Redesign VisitMaine.com to make the site more user-friendly and navigable. Meet regularly with content team to ensure its relevance as a travel planning resource.
- Heavy up efforts to promote Food Tourism and ensure efforts are supported by access to quality assets and content developed in conjunction with the content team.
- Capture Maine's unique beauty and character via video and still shoots that leverage local production companies and creators to fill gaps in asset library, as needed.
- Create new travel planning content. Utilize research results and findings to help guide decisions regarding travelers' topics of interest and their reasons for visiting Maine.
- Roll out a new campaign born from the brand refresh efforts that taps into the key essence and unique positioning of Maine.
- Continue the success of the paid media strategy by building upon the foundation from our 2022 approach.



BRAND REFRESH + CAMPAIGN APPROACH

For the past six months, we reviewed our current brand: what it says, what it means and how it resonates with visitors. We compared the brand to other destinations. We reviewed past data and results. We studied and critiqued our existing advertising and promotions. And we interviewed industry stakeholders, staff, past visitors and those yet to visit. We realized a simple, yet fundamental shift in the brand message was needed to evolve—that of people—to place. Our current brand, while engaging and authentic to the destination, focused on the people of Maine. We discovered the brand needed to widen its perspective and look outward. It needed to tap into visitor desires to truly experience Maine, for Maine itself: its dramatic sights, its serene sounds and fresh, from-the-earth flavors. Visitors want Maine to be tangible. Something they can touch and feel, both physically and emotionally.

From the research conducted by Downs and St. Germain we discovered four themes that visitors best relate to. These became our brand pillars—focus points to which the brand is relatable and true.

1. Escape to Nature
2. Small-Town Spirit
3. Feast of the Earth
4. Slower Way of Being

We will be centering our campaign efforts around these pillars and bringing them to life both visually and tonally as we execute our advertising in 2023 and beyond. We want to telegraph that Maine is an ideal retreat for adventure, natural beauty and quiet sophistication. We will leverage updated imagery and messaging that capture the essence of Maine's inspiring landscapes. We will continue to lean into strategic partnerships that allow us to target larger audiences who value sustainability, outdoor recreation and off-the-beaten-path finds.





TARGETING

Our strategy will remain nationally focused, with continued evaluation of new and emerging markets that show promise of future travelers to Maine. We will prioritize travel intenders overall, layering on varying behavioral attributes that allow us to tap into niche audiences known to travel to Maine during the various seasons. We will maintain our presence in the New England and Mid-Atlantic Regions to capitalize on drive traffic and continue with promotions in nearby Eastern Canada markets.





PAID ADVERTISING

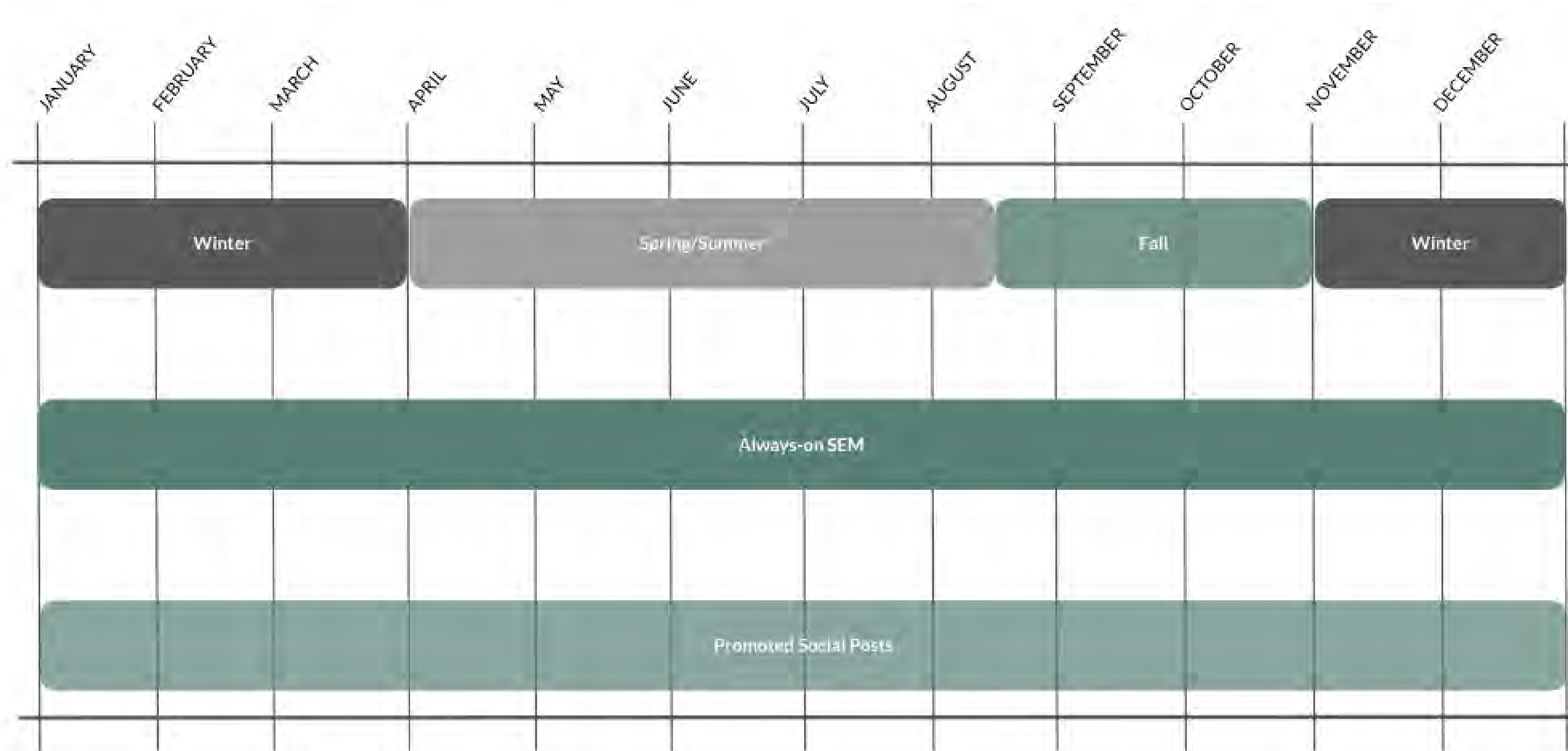
Our approach to 2023 will be to build upon the success of 2022. Our strategy is built around:

1. Raising awareness and consideration for travel to Maine during the various travel seasons
 - Including intent-based tactics within the plan to help increase site activity, conversions and overall visitation.
2. Prioritizing 1st Party Data
 - Developing and refining our media buys to build our 1st party data warehouse, as implementations towards a cookieless environment continue to move forward.
 - Fully optimizing across channels as we work towards one common goal.
3. Extending Successful Content Partnerships
 - Analyzing learnings from last year and selecting key content partners that can elevate our Maine story with unique executions.
 - Expanding our footprint nationally across trusted publishers.
 - Leveraging buys with content creators/partners to extend distribution and audience reach to promote sustainability and dispersal.
 - Tapping into new, diverse voices and content creators.
4. Distribution of Owned/Brand Assets
 - Fulfill a more robust plan with assets aligned to the newly refreshed brand.
 - Focus on behavioral and creative ties within segments such as: food, senses and sustainability.
 - Represent seasonality in Maine. Spring/Summer remains our primary investment but continuing a strong presence in the shoulder seasons of Fall/Winter.
 - Expanding reach to new key-emerging markets as well as nationwide distribution.



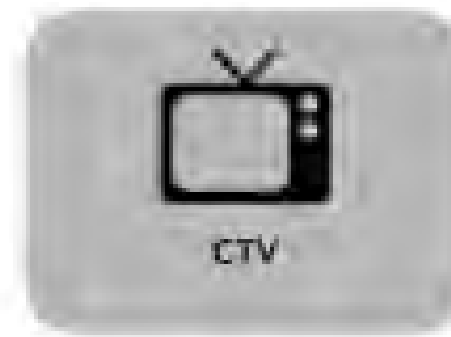
FLIGHTING

Campaign breakdown at-a-glance:



CHANNEL SPECIFIC MARKETING TACTICS

TV



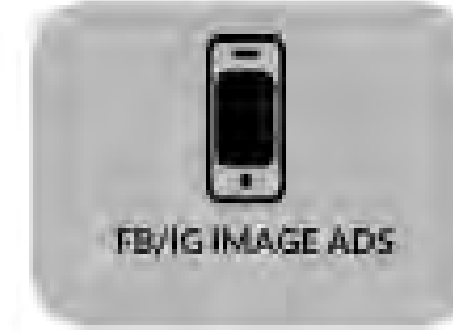
Content



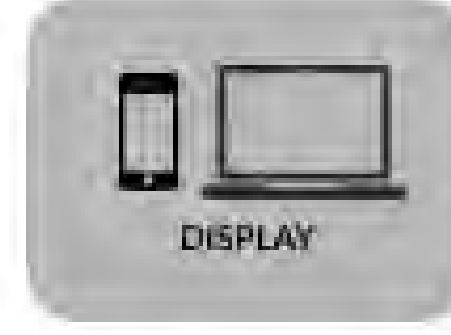
Out of Home



Social/SEM



Digital



Print



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic partnerships are key to extending a destination’s reach and value with like-minded brands, businesses and individuals. By identifying brands that have a similar audience and comparable brand values to those of Maine, we can build relationships with new and existing consumers, extend reach and provide key consumers with even more value.

We see a great opportunity for Maine to take advantage of this approach and are continuing to explore national brand partners, as well as activating local partners.

MEDIA SCHEDULE

Channel	Tactic	Spring/Summer												Fall						Winter																					
		April				May				June				July				August			September			October			November		December												
		4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	
TV	Addressable TV																																								
DIGITAL	Connected TV																																								
	Video																																								
	Native																																								
	Display																																								
	Partnerships																																								
CONTENT	Custom Partnerships																																								
OOH	Out of Home																																								
PRINT	Print																																								
AUDIO	Audio																																								
SEM	Google Paid Search																																								
SOCIAL	Facebook / Instagram																																								





PUBLIC RELATIONS, EARNED MEDIA & ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

MOT's PR and earned media program focuses on content creation and building beneficial relationships with media—including food, travel and lifestyle writers across print, broadcast and digital media, as well as digital influencers. These relationships help extend the reach of Maine's paid media by securing third party endorsements that communicate Maine's desirability as a destination. Through social media, we will reach consumers directly to share inspirational content that spurs engagement and leads to a desire to visit Maine.



GOALS

- Position Maine as a premiere drive-to destination with an abundance of outdoor opportunities and cultural offerings.
- Inspire year-round visitation in all regions.
- Ensure Maine's key messages are reinforced and consistent.
- Reach **500 media/influencer** contacts in 2023.
- Garner editorial coverage for Maine totaling at least **1 billion media impressions**.





STRATEGY

Using the Office of Tourism Destination Management Plan as a guide, create content and messaging that conveys responsible and sustainable travel, diversity, equity and inclusion; and enhances the desirability to experience Maine's many assets with the ultimate goal of supporting Maine businesses/organizations and growing Maine's economy. Work in collaboration with MOT's marketing agency to expand upon and support paid media components.

PR efforts will focus on four key themes for 2023:

- Outdoor recreation and natural assets
- Cultural identity (including arts, heritage, communities and foodways)
- Sustainable/responsible travel
- Authenticity (showcasing the people and way of life of Maine)



TACTICS INCLUDE

- Create compelling content (press releases, story ideas, pitches, itineraries, web and social) that focuses on experiences, inclusion, authenticity and Maine's lifestyle.
- Proactively pitch story ideas to regional and national lifestyle and travel trade media with a goal of at least five proactive pitches to the most-wanted media list each month.
- Monthly communication with the media to provide the latest information on Maine as a travel destination while highlighting Maine's hospitality industry and tourism-related businesses.
- Plan familiarization visits to Maine for key media and influencers to generate content that covers the depth and breadth of Maine travel experiences with the goal of hosting 20 media/influencer visits.
- Plan and execute four adventure familiarization tours prior to the Adventure Travel Trade Association.
- Implement the food tourism plan by developing content and working with MOT's marketing agency on sharing the stories of Maine's foodways.
- Provide support, information and assets to media covering Maine, as needed.
- Generate engagement with the media and general public through social platforms, reaching a broader audience and presenting a wide variety of inspiring and informational content.
- Seek out collaborations and partnerships that align with Maine's brand and are mutually beneficial.
- Enlist support of Maine tourism industry adding at least 10 new PR Partners in 2023.





CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM

Cultural Heritage Tourism plays an essential role in shaping the visitor experience and helps differentiate the Maine brand. MOT will be embarking on several cultural tourism initiatives throughout the year including:

**WABANAKI CULTURAL TOURISM INITIATIVE
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FOUR DIRECTIONS
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**



- Participation in Native Tourism Planning process with George Washington University
- Wabanaki Cultural Tourism: Situation Analysis complete (Spring 2023)
- Summit 2.0 planning and implementation (June 2023)
- Participation in product development planning process and studio
- Engage with and attend AIANTA training programs
- Provide support for the establishment of a sustainable Maine Native Tourism Alliance
- Partner with Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation on planning and product development





**MAPPING MAINE BLACK HERITAGE
WITH MAINE BLACK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Planning and development
- Participation in working group
- Collect current African American and Black travel trends
- Build asset inventory
- Create 18-month timeline for product development
- Research other state African American Heritage Tourism projects and programs

CULTURAL ALLIANCE OF MAINE

- Leadership role in developing this new statewide organization
- Collect information regarding new cultural tourism product
- Provide technical assistance on funding, tourism readiness and engagement with the tourism industry



TRAVEL TRADE, CONSUMER GROUP & FIT - LEISURE SALES



DOMESTIC AND CANADA CONSUMER SHOWS

The Maine Office of Tourism exhibits at high-traffic consumer travel and outdoor adventure shows in key USA and Canada markets, providing partnership opportunities to regional and industry members. Show staff help to elevate awareness of the Maine brand, directly interact with consumers to share information specific to their interests and learn what travelers are seeking in travel to Maine.

Domestic travel shows include:

- Boston Travel & Adventure Show
- Chicago Travel & Adventure Show
- New York Travel & Adventure Show
- Washington DC Travel & Adventure Show
- Eastern States Exposition, Springfield, MA

Additionally, MOT will exhibit at a series of targeted consumer travel shows throughout Eastern Canada, including:

- Montreal Outdoor Adventure Show
- Ottawa Travel and Vacation Show
- Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show





GROUP TOUR

MOT will continue to showcase group-friendly destinations, attractions and businesses in Maine at:

- American Bus Association Marketplace and National Tour Association Travel Exchange, with pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings with group travel decision makers, operators and buyers from across the country.
- Other motorcoach and group-friendly events, FAM Tours and conventions as deemed appropriate by the MOT.

CRUISE MAINE

- Support stakeholders in Bar Harbor with data and up-to-date information as the issues around passenger caps are litigated and negotiated.
- Partner with representatives from the City of Portland to facilitate Phase 1a of a shoreside power feasibility study, which will look at CMP's transmission and distribution capacity. Simultaneously, collaborative with key stakeholders on measures to improve pedestrian and traffic flow in all cruise destinations in the greater Portland area, in particular Commercial Street.
- Support Maine's smaller ports with a tailored approach to their needs, whether marketing, port and destination development, or education about the cruise industry.
- Collaborate with our Cruise Canada New England partners on a regional Sustainability Pledge and on building an Itinerary Planning solution that streamlines booking for all ports in the region.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

As one of the six partner states of Discover New England (DNE), Maine continues to be an active participant in DNE as we prepare for the reinvigoration of international travel. Targeted overseas markets in Maine in partnership with other New England states include the United Kingdom, Germany and France.

In 2023, MOT will build on relationships maintained in these key markets during the pandemic.



- Partner with Brand USA to leverage the consumer-facing, funds-matching opportunities through direct-to-consumer marketing and in-market language content on its website, DiscoverAmerica.com.
- Attend the Discover New England Summit and International Marketplace for meetings with tour operators from the UK, Germany, France, Italy, other European countries, Australia, Japan and China.
- Attend IPW, the U.S. Travel Association annual marketplace for 1:1 sales appointments with international tour operators and receptives.





GRANT PROGRAMS



MAINE TOURISM MARKETING PARTNERSHIP GRANT

Expansion of the Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program (MTMPP), which provides funding for regional and special event marketing. This matching grant program for non-profit organizations includes approximately \$1.6 million total for the eight designated Regional Destination Marketing Organizations (RDMO), up to \$60,000 each for two special events that will impact multiple regions, and enhanced grants of up to \$5,000 each for Maine Communities Grants and up to \$30,000 each for Enterprise Marketing Grants for qualified tourism-related projects.

TOURISM MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Tourism Marketing & Development Recovery Program will allocate \$2M in subawards for marketing and public relations programs, research projects and other large tourism related projects to eligible applicants.



INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS



MOT communications strengthen Maine’s tourism industry through regular updates on MOT program resources and results and sharing of industry trends and partner information. Communication outlets include:

- Annual Governor’s Conference on Tourism
- Annual Report and Annual Plan
- Quarterly briefings and input sessions with industry stakeholders
- Monthly State of Maine Tourism Partners News industry email
- Presentations at tourism focused regional and industry association meetings as appropriate
- Distribution of program and research information in response to industry and press inquiries
- Distribution of releases regarding MOT program results

In 2023, MOT will schedule in-person regional and virtual meetings to provide industry training in elements of the new Destination Management Plan for Maine tourism, including:

- Search Engine Optimization
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Additionally, MOT will collaboratively promote partner efforts and statewide initiatives to advance:

- Workforce development
- Destination development
- Environmental stewardship

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Maine State Law requires the Maine Office of Tourism, with input from the tourism industry, to develop a Five-Year Marketing and Development Strategy for state tourism growth. In 2023, MOT will solicit input to shape the Five-Year Strategic Plan that will begin in 2024.





MAINE FILM OFFICE

WHO WE ARE

The Maine Film Office, a division within the Maine Office of Tourism within the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), is charged with promoting TV, film, photography and other media production in Maine. The Film Office promotes Maine as a location for a variety of visual media productions and executes a strategy to increase productions in Maine to help grow Maine's economy. As the official liaison between the visual media industry, state agencies and production companies, the Film Office promotes Maine communities, businesses and residents and encourages productions to hire and buy locally to increase the economic benefits of these activities to Maine.



STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Maine traditionally has been a filming location for indie films, TV series, TV series episodes, commercials and photo shoots. Interestingly, the volume of visual media production in Maine has increased since COVID-19 as productions have determined that Maine is a safe place to film, and a variety of key creative talent and crew have relocated to Maine. With the increased interest in Maine as a filming location, DECD is seeking to increase the state's ability to attract and service more and larger productions.





STRATEGIC PLANNING

Developing a strategic plan to reflect the changing landscape in the industry and to guide and enable future industry growth will be a major focus in 2023. The annual plan will be designed to set priorities and focus resources to adapt to a changing industry. We expect the plan will evolve and grow as the strategic plan develops.

Strategic planning in the first half of the year will focus on a Production Infrastructure, Capacity and Development Analysis, the building of a database in the Salesforce Customer Relationship Management platform as further described below, as well as the development of a more structured approach to the administration of the Visual Media Production Incentive.

PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE, CAPACITY AND DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

The Film Office contracted with Olsberg SPI to provide a comprehensive examination of the State's current production capacity, strengths, weaknesses, constraints and capacity gaps in key areas of visual media production, including but not limited to: facilities and equipment, services, vendors, crew, key creative talent and incentives compared to other states that might attract similar projects, as well as the amount of increased production likely to result from improving Maine Visual Media Production incentives. The analysis will include:

- A Detailed Audit of Production Capacity, including:
 - Current production capacity
 - Specific gaps and challenges
- Identification of Key Opportunities to:
 - Increase current levels of production based on current production capacity
 - Increase production capacity to attract and service more and larger productions
- Analysis of Visual Media Production Incentives, including:
 - Types and sizes of productions that can be attracted with the current incentives
 - Improvements to the current incentives that would attract more production, including what type and size of productions such improvements would attract
 - The degree of production upturn likely to result from improving visual media production incentives
- Identification of Potential Sector Growth:
 - Analysis of production sector growth possible with the current production capacity
 - Development of a Strategy for increasing the current production capacity to support increased levels of production
 - Recommendations for developing the production sector



SALESFORCE DATABASE

When the Department of Economic and Community Development added Salesforce to our office tools, the Film Office began development of a database specifically designed for storage of information about productions that registered to film in Maine and productions that applied for the Visual Media Incentive program.

This new database will make readily accessible a variety of information from productions that register and provide information through the DECD website, including:

- Data collection about productions that film in Maine
- Robust reporting for the Visual Media Incentive program

Although registration is voluntary, the Office encourages all productions that film in Maine to register their productions with the Office so that the size of the Maine media industry can be measured and shared in advocacy of the industry. Further registration will permit these productions to qualify for the Maine Visual Production Incentive Program.





MAINE FILM COMMISSION

Strategic planning in the second half of the year will focus on work with the Maine Film Commission to develop plans to implement the recommendations of the Production Infrastructure, Capacity and Development Analysis.

There are 13 seats on the Maine Film Commission. Two of those members, the Director of the Maine Arts Commission and the Commissioner of DECD or the Commissioner's Designee, serve as ex officio, non-voting members of the commission. The names of people submitted for seats on the Film Commission are under review and the Film Office looks forward to working with the new commissioners.





VISUAL MEDIA PRODUCTION INCENTIVE

During the second and third quarters of the year, the Film Office will be available to work with the designated individuals from the State Tax Assessor's Office to develop all necessary applications, certificate forms, rules and reporting requirements in order to comply with the requirements of Title 5 Chapter 383, Section 13090. The Film Office will need direct assistance from the State Tax Assessor's Office in order to ensure that the appropriate information is collected and procedures are developed to provide the State Tax Assessor's Office with the information and documentation it needs to administer the visual media production reimbursement under Title 36, chapter 919-A and the credit under Title 36, section 5219-Y.



Maine

VISITMAINE.COM

