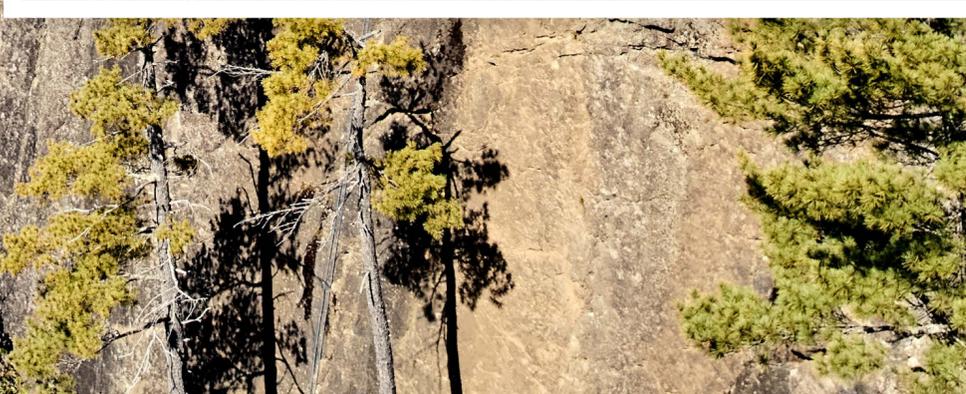




MAINE.

2024 ANNUAL PLAN



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WHO WE ARE

The Maine Office of Tourism (MOT) is a state agency within the Department of Economic and Community Development that leads, convenes and advances the state's tourism economy by providing resources and education to strengthen the tourism industry, fostering a culture of stakeholder collaboration and developing strategy and best practices to promote and enhance the Maine experience for all.

We remain committed to our core purpose of marketing the state of Maine as a travel destination. The integration of our Destination Management Plan in 2023 supports the long-term success of the state tourism industry by balancing the visitor economy with stewardship of our natural resources and culture, the qualities that have always drawn people to Maine.





OUR MISSION

Cultivate year-round economic vitality for Mainers in balance with healthy communities and the natural environment through destination management, responsible marketing, community engagement, and fostering collaboration among Maine's tourism partners.





DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN





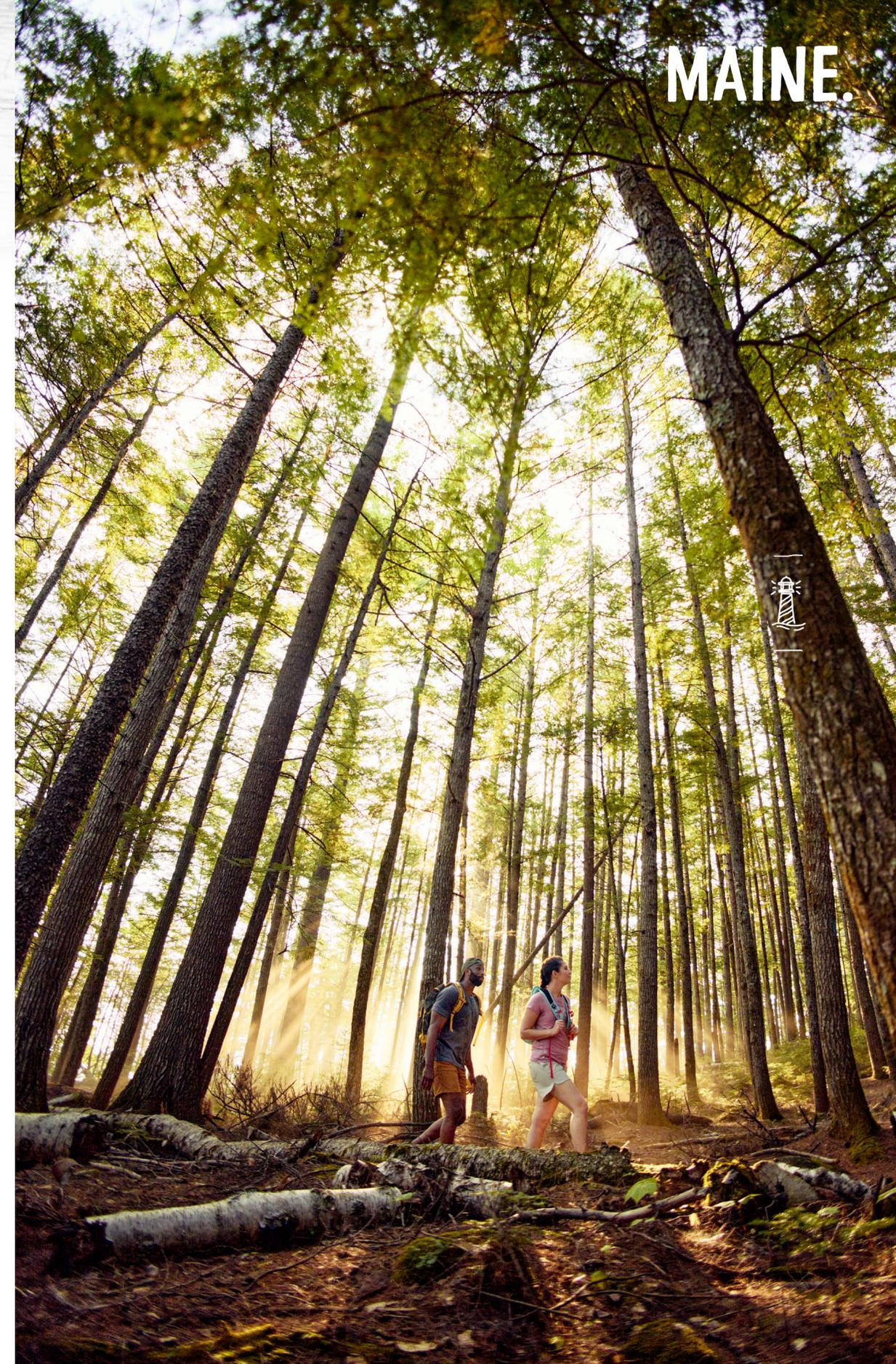
DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

After a year of strategic planning with industry and community stakeholders and exploration of evolving traveler preferences, in Spring 2023 MOT introduced a **Destination Management Plan** to ensure the sustainability of Maine’s tourism industry into the future and balance the industry’s growth with residential quality of life and the inherent qualities that have always drawn visitors to Maine.

The Destination Management Plan identifies five imperatives to guide development of MOT’s marketing initiatives and other industry support programs:

1. Optimize Long- Term Economic Impact
2. Promote Destination Stewardship
3. Advance Destination Development
4. Prioritize Collaboration and Stewardship
5. Enhance Organizational Effectiveness

The plan includes key initiatives for each imperative and an implementation process to track progress and results. At the core of the plan is MOT’s commitment to act as catalysts and advocate for the things that make our state unique, with programs and initiatives focused around nine **Stewardship Principles**.





MARKETING AND
CAMPAIGN EFFORTS





MARKETING & CAMPAIGN EFFORTS

Our 2024 media plan will continue to build upon the success we have seen over the last two years, bringing in new strategic messaging and innovative ideas to target the right-fit visitors to the state of Maine in alignment with the Destination Management Plan. Our unique strategy will bring the brand to life while emulating the essence of Maine through various custom content partners. We'll use learnings from comprehensive DEI consulting to inform the development of our campaigns and ensure messaging and imagery is inclusive and inviting to new and diverse audiences.

- Finalize VisitMaine.com rebuild to best align with our new look and feel of the refreshed brand. This will ensure the site is more user-friendly and navigable. Meet regularly with content team to ensure its relevance as a travel planning resource.
- Continue to 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. 2023 saw a large amount of growth within the food culinary space for Maine and we look to build upon that success.
- Capture the essence of Maine via video and still shoots that leverage local production companies and creators to fill gaps in asset library, as needed.
- Continue the “always-on” campaign to ensure we’re actively engaging and staying in front of our audience throughout the year. We’ll keep seasonality fluid, allowing us to focus on immersive Maine experiences.



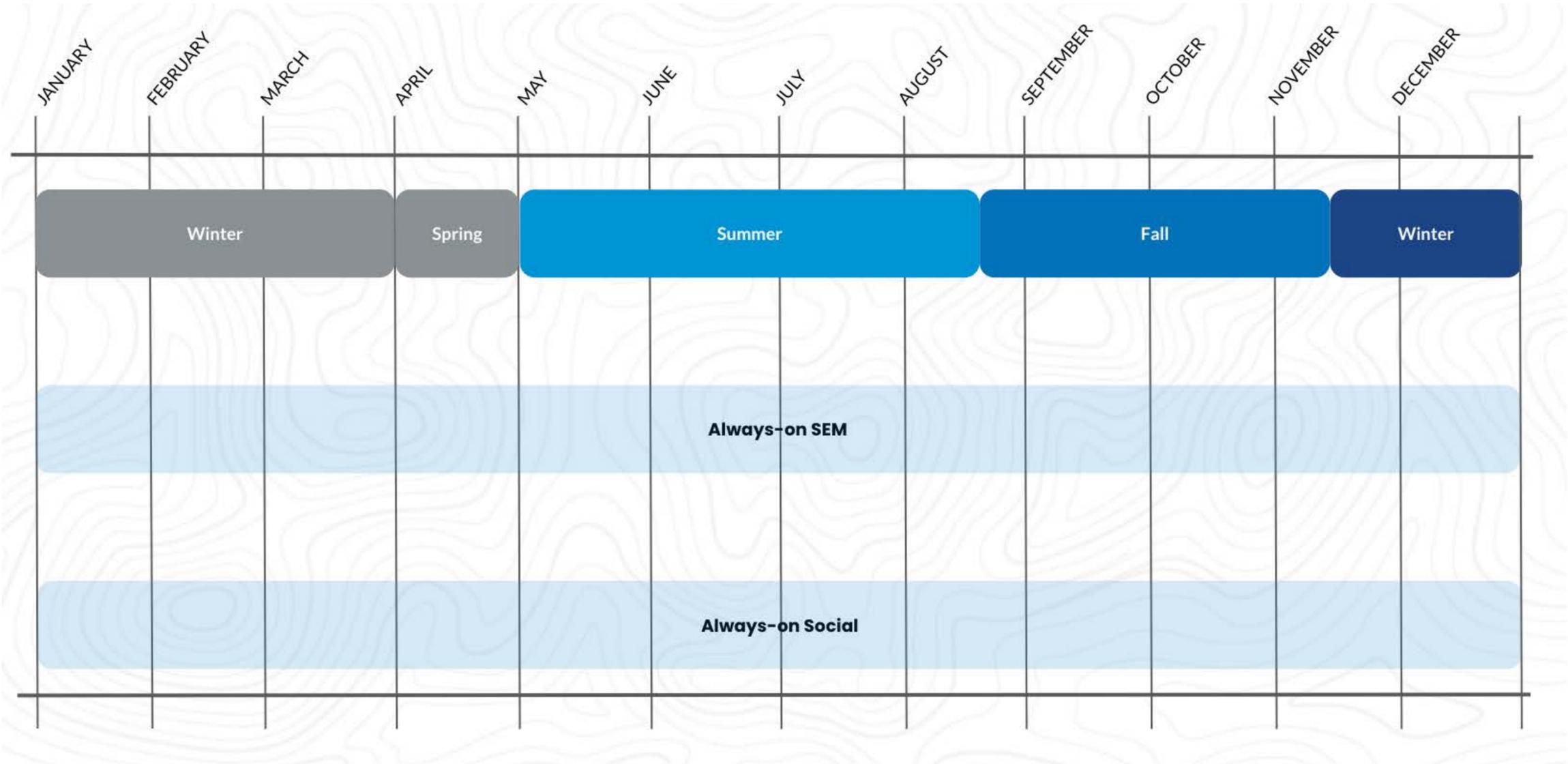


TARGETING:

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 and audience information 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. We'll also expand into new markets such as Jacksonville, FL and Raleigh-Durham, NC based on new seasonal direct flights to the state. Within these target markets, we'll lean into personalization of messaging to increase impact and efficiency.



CAMPAIGN FLIGHTING AT-A-GLANCE

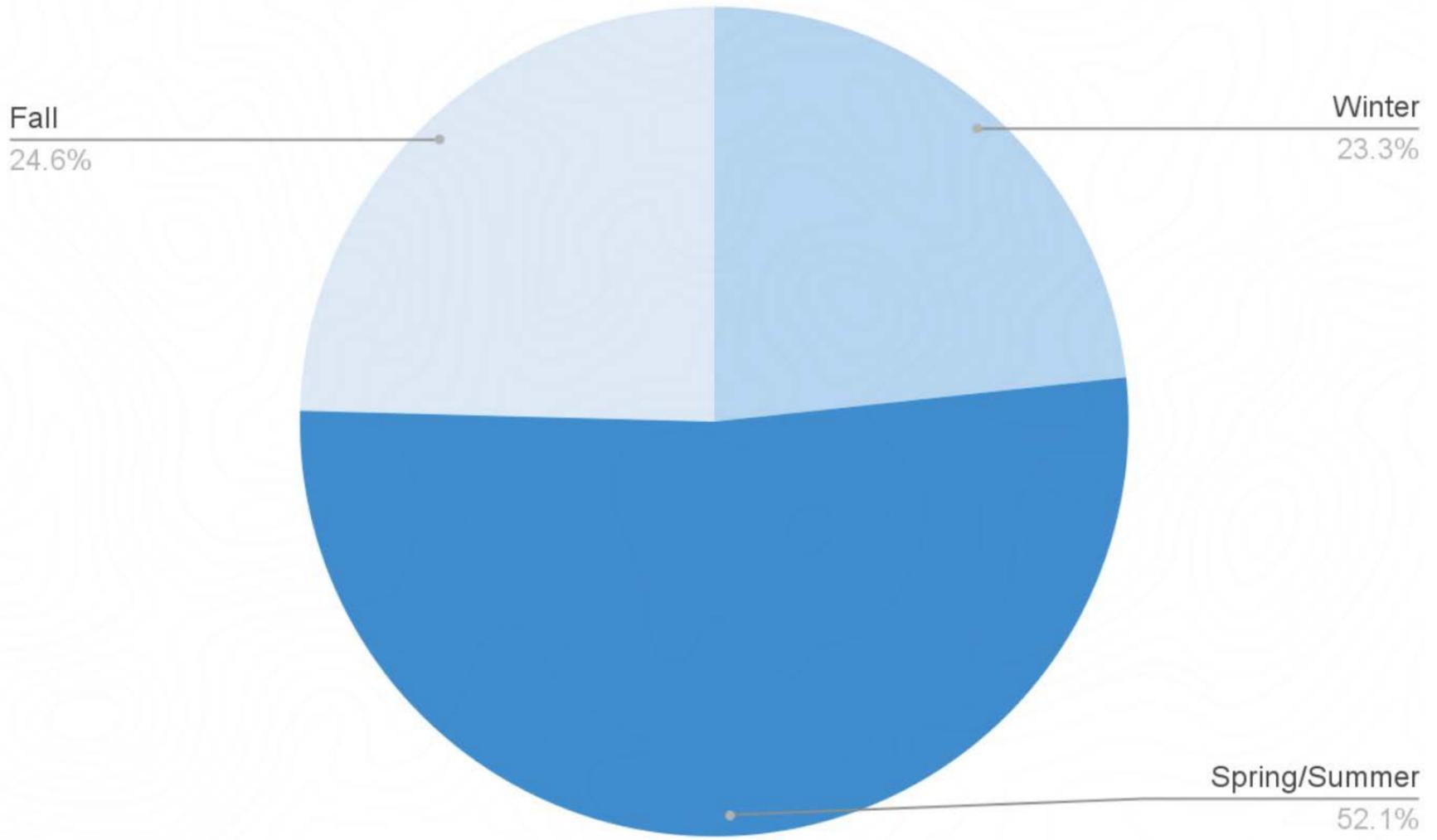


CAMPAIGN TACTICS

 Addressable TV & Connected TV	 Online Video	 Print	 Display & Native
 OOH & Experiential	 Content Partnerships	 Paid Social	 Paid Search/SEM



SEASONAL BUDGET BREAKDOWN





PUBLIC RELATIONS, EARNED MEDIA & ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Public relations (earned media) enhances a paid marketing campaign by reinforcing a message and often, expanding the reach to larger audiences beyond the scope of paid advertising. Maine also benefits from a strong PR program because we have the opportunity to tell a deeper story.

At the core of any successful communications campaign is consistent messaging, rich storytelling, an authoritative, educational voice and compelling visuals. Proactive media relations, thought leadership, timely events and compelling social media content all have a role to play in ensuring the Maine Office of Tourism makes a positive impression.

The close partnership between Miles Partnership and Marshall Communications is an asset to MOT. The combination of each channel – paid, earned, owned and shared – working together is the key to success when promoting Maine, and the collaboration and mutual respect for the work each other does ensures we are delivering a unified message to our target audiences.





PR (EARNED MEDIA) STRATEGY

Using the Maine Office of Tourism Destination Management Plan as a guide, create content and a steady stream of media coverage and engagement, both through traditional and social media, with 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.

PR efforts will focus on four key themes:



Outdoor recreation and natural assets



Cultural identity
(including arts, heritage, communities and foodways)



Sustainable/responsible travel



Authenticity
(showcasing the people of Maine)

Using the Destination Management Plan, the PR program will incorporate all aspects of the plan in the messaging and brand storytelling. The Destination Management Plan empowers us to promote Maine sustainably. It is NOT less promotion – it is smarter promotion, and PR is an effective method to fulfill that goal because of the reach and brand storytelling achievable through PR.

PR (EARNED MEDIA) STRATEGY

When we are communicating with the media, or directly to the consumer through social media and web content, we will consistently weave in messages of destination stewardship and sustainable travel. When appropriate, we will also weave in Maine's lifestyle attributes. Our PR program will:



Support/promote small towns by featuring businesses and organizations that authentically enhance the visitor experience and contribute to Maine's quality of life.



Promote year-round activities that will lessen Maine's seasonality challenges.



Share and pitch stories to the media that are geographically varied with the goal of spreading visitors throughout the state.



Diversify Maine's audience by partnering and working with content creators, digital influencers and media with diverse backgrounds.





CONSUMER PUBLIC/MEDIA RELATIONS – DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL

The key component to MOT’s PR program is media relations, and media relations is at the heart of what we do. We understand the power of working with the travel media whose work then becomes a third-party endorsement for Maine. Whether a producer of a TV show, a print journalist or a digital influencer, we will provide what they need to tell Maine’s story.

Tactics include:

- Create compelling content that focuses on experiences, inclusion, authenticity and Maine’s lifestyle.
- Consistent communication with the media to provide the latest information on Maine as a destination, while highlighting Maine’s hospitality industry, tourism-related businesses, and Maine’s quality of life.
- Host a “Taste of Maine” media reception in New York City to introduce key travel media to Maine businesses.
- Partner with Stellar, an influencer marketing platform, on a campaign featuring sustainable travel.
- 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.
- Plan familiarization visits to Maine for key media and influencers to generate content that covers the depth and breadth of Maine travel experiences.
- Engagement with travel trade and travel trade media with ongoing communication to them to keep Maine top of mind as a destination for their clients.





CONSUMER PUBLIC/MEDIA RELATIONS – DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL

- Implement the food tourism plan by developing content and working with Miles Partnership and the MOT team to position Maine as a culinary destination and tell the incredible stories of Maine’s food as it relates to our culture and heritage.
- Execute a collaboration with The FeedFeed to support the food tourism plan.
- Work in collaboration with MOT’s marketing agency to expand upon and support paid media components.
- Seek out collaborations and partnerships that align with Maine’s brand and are mutually beneficial.
- Monitoring, measurement and reporting.

Overall goal of the program: Reach 500 media/influencer contacts in 2024.
Garner editorial coverage on Maine totaling at least 1 billion in audience reach.





SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTENT INTEGRATION

Using social media, the PR Program generates engagement with media and the general public through social platforms, reaching a broader audience and presenting a wide variety of inspiring and informational content.

The overall tone and voice of VisitMaine’s social media platforms is warm, helpful, friendly and genuine, mirroring many of the attributes of MOT’s brand guidelines. In 2024, the plan is to integrate brand messaging throughout posts on an ongoing basis to be consistent for all consumer touchpoints:

- Aligned with the Destination Management Plan, posts that subtly encourage visitors to stay longer and move around the regions will be worked into the schedule.
- Collaborating with the paid media program on social media campaigns to amplify the content.
- Continuing a daily presence on the top networks using a combination of tactics to elicit engagement.
- Social media monitoring and reporting is essential to keep our audience engaged. By monitoring thoroughly across the platforms, we can capitalize on engaging with or sharing content from important travel outlets, influential news sources, the Maine tourism industry and others, showcasing our responsiveness and bolstering our credibility.



INTERNAL PR / TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

MOT's PR Program provides PR/communications assistance to MOT's regional partners and the tourism industry through webinars, regional meetings and when requested:

- Provide PR support to the regional organizations and chambers of commerce when they have questions about media hosting, influencer advice, media vetting, social media tips and other topics.
- Maintain the PR Partners Program – a group of Maine hotels, inns, restaurants and attractions interested in helping host press visits. The goal is to add 10 new PR Partners per year.



A scenic view of a lighthouse and buildings on a rocky coastline at sunset. The foreground is dominated by layered, reddish-brown rocks. In the middle ground, a white lighthouse with a black lantern room stands next to a large white house with a porch. To the left of the lighthouse is a smaller red building with a white roof. The background features a dense line of evergreen trees and a sky with soft, colorful clouds in shades of blue, pink, and orange. The water is visible on the left side of the frame.

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