

2025 HSMAI ADRIAN AWARDS ENTRY

WELCOME ALL

INCLUSIVE STORYTELLING THROUGH
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS IN MAINE

MAINE.
FORGED BY NATURE



OUR STORY

With its stunning landscapes, welcoming communities and unparalleled outdoor activities, **Maine has something to offer everyone**. However, historically the state hasn't been seen as a destination of choice for many underrepresented audiences. The Maine Office of Tourism (MOT) set out to change that perception through a nontraditional media campaign that let influencers tell the state's story to a wide, diverse audience.



OBJECTIVES

The Inclusive Creator Program had several core objectives, including:

- To **shift perceptions of Maine** among historically excluded travel audiences.
- To **uplift local businesses**, empowering Maine's community partners to benefit from increased visibility and alignment with right-fit influencers.
- To **spotlight inclusive experiences** through authentic, creator-led storytelling.
- To **encourage long-term connections** between content creators and their audiences by fostering repeat visits, sustained storytelling, and authentic word-of-mouth advocacy.





GREEN BOOK GLOBAL



CORNERS OF BOSTON

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

To present Maine as a welcoming destination for travelers of all backgrounds, we selected a roster of different creators. While all of these content creators focused on travel, their audiences spanned a wide range of different groups, including Black and African American, Hispanic, Asian, Multiracial, European and LGBTQ+ travelers.

In 2025, our creators were:

- **Green Book Global** (@greenbookglobal on Instagram), who focuses on Black and African American travelers, inclusivity and safety.
- **Corners of Boston** (@cornersofboston on Instagram), whose areas of expertise include weekend getaways and cuisine.

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

- **Gabi and Shanna Meit-Sciara**

(@27travels on Instagram), an LGBTQ+ travel couple in search of exciting events who bring an international audience.

- **Marwa Oswan** (@thecitylists on Instagram), who highlights Arab-owned businesses and culture.

- **Mike Myerscough-Harris**

(@expiredfilmclub on Instagram), a UK-based sports and lifestyle marketer with a particular interest in Portland's new Hearts of Pine major-league soccer club.



GABI & SHANNA



MARWA OSWAN



MIKE MYERSCOUGH-HARRIS



27travels and visitmaine
Paid partnership
Sugartapes • Head In The Clouds

27travels Welcome to Maine — one of our favorite LGBTQ+ friendly states in the USA 🏳️🌈 #ad

We spent Pride weekend on a dreamy, coastal getaway in @visitmaine and had the best time exploring its charming ocean towns, stunning nature, and celebrating Bangor Pride!

As a lesbian couple, we felt so safe and welcomed everywhere we went. Experiencing Pride in a small town with their local community was so special, and seeing rainbow flags and inclusive signs all across the state brought a huge smile to our faces 😊🌈 Maine truly is a place where everyone is welcomed exactly as they are – and it has so much to offer.

Here's where we stayed, what we did, and where we ate so you can add it to your Maine itinerary!

Stays:

- 📍 Salt Cottages, Bar Harbor @saltcottages
- 📍 Tarratine Inn, Bangor @thetarratine

Things to Do:

- 📍 Acadia National Park
- 📍 sightseeing with Acadian Boat Tours
- 📍 Bangor Pride

Vegan & Inclusive Eats:

- 📍 Milk & Honey Cafe, Northeast Harbor @milkandhoneyneh
- 📍 Thrive Juice Bar, Bar Harbor @thriveinbarharbor
- 📍 Little Fern at The Claremont, Southwest Harbor @claremontmaine
- 📍 Barliman's, Bangor @barlimans
- 📍 Chimera Coffee, Bangor @chimeracoffeeeco

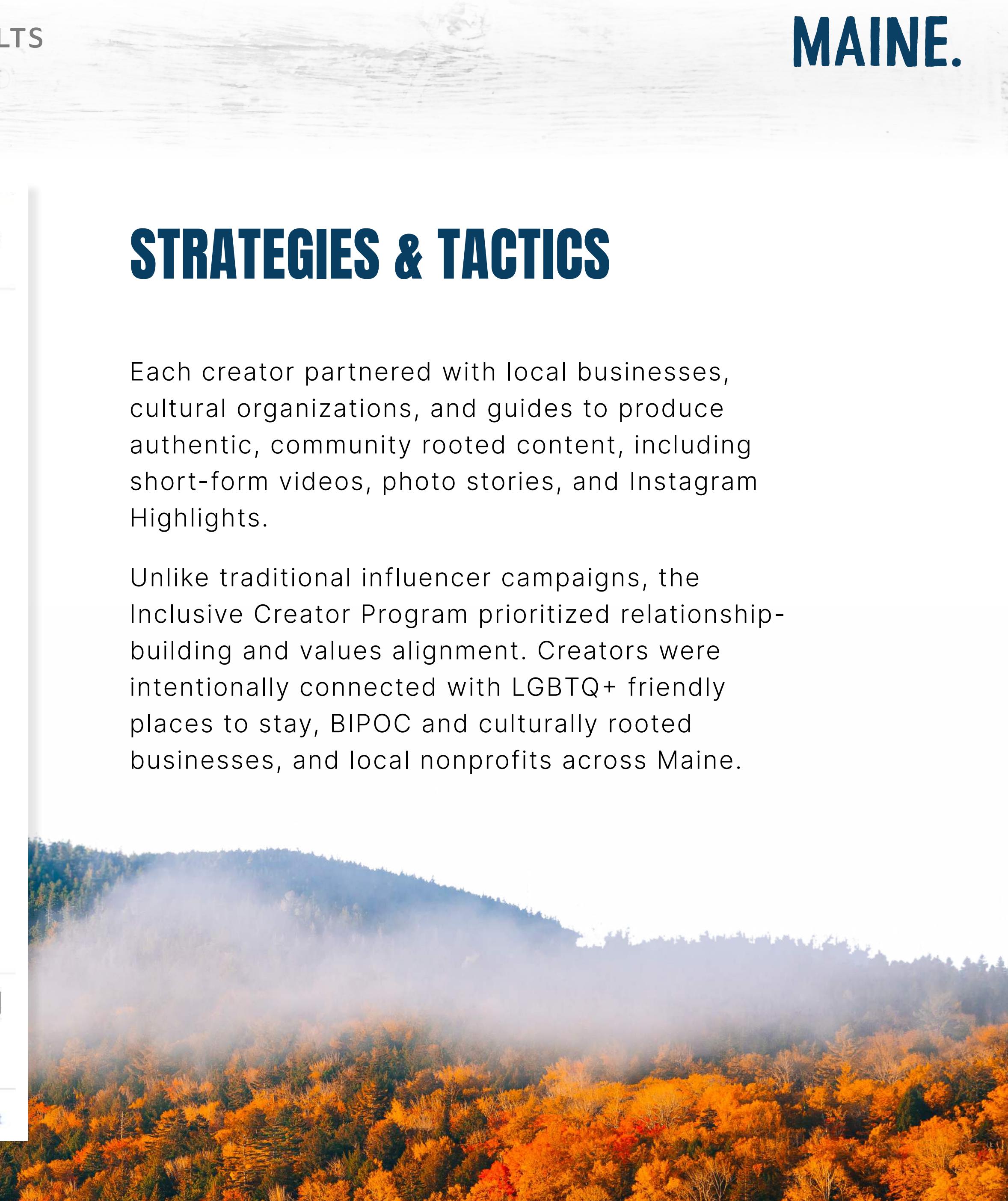
Liked by allee1023 and others
July 17

Add a comment... Post

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

Each creator partnered with local businesses, cultural organizations, and guides to produce authentic, community rooted content, including short-form videos, photo stories, and Instagram Highlights.

Unlike traditional influencer campaigns, the Inclusive Creator Program prioritized relationship-building and values alignment. Creators were intentionally connected with LGBTQ+ friendly places to stay, BIPOC and culturally rooted businesses, and local nonprofits across Maine.



STRATEGIES & TACTICS

Each creator had a unique way of engaging with the community. One spotlighted Arab owned restaurants in Portland, prompting comments like "I didn't know Maine had this kind of food, adding it to my list!" Another joined Black Travel Maine a nonprofit-led Juneteenth walk and shopping experience supporting Black owned businesses. Another captured content at a local soccer match hosted by Hearts of Pine, a community-based team championing inclusivity in sports.

This content was amplified through MOT's channels and reshared by featured businesses and community partners, generating authentic visibility and long-term impact.



27travels • Follow Brooklyn, New York ...

27travels y'all are always asking for the story of how we met! and even though we feel like we've told it 1000x, we're always meeting new friends and followers! soooooo here ya go 🏳️🌈 (where's our lesbian romcom based on our love story 🥰) #wlw #lesbiancouple #wlwp pride #wlw couples #sapphic #sapphic couple #lgbtq #queercouple #howe met #lovestory 21w

deeristravelling We love your story so much and don't mind to re read again and again 😍 20w 2 likes Reply — View replies (1)

julia.and.diana_ Love your story 🌈 21w 2 likes Reply — View replies (1)

itsnataliecass I love this so much 😍 21w 2 likes Reply — View replies (1)

eigenerwegcom I love the love story itself - but also the design of the pictures - so lovely 🌈 21w 2 likes Reply — View replies (1)

Liked by valeriakosmakova and others March 19

Add a comment... Post

RESULTS

Here are just a few highlights of our 2025 digital media results:

- **2M impressions**
- **100K+ engagements**
- **An average engagement rate of 7.8% across platforms like Instagram and TikTok**

These posts were saved and/or shared at a **2.7x higher rate** than MOT's average content benchmarks, showing that users found ongoing value in the content produced by these creators. Viewer comments show how these posts sparked conversations about Maine's inclusive nature.



7w Paid partnership

went and did a sightseeing boat tour with Acadian Boat Tours & it was so nice just being on the water

cornersofboston Discover the Charm of Southern Maine Perfect Itinerary for a Cozy Coastal Getaway

Planning a New England escape? This Southern Maine is your go-to guide for where to stay, eat, and grab the best coffee. From boutique hotels with ocean views to charming restaurants and hidden gem cafés, straight out of a postcard. Save this for your next trip to Maine—perfect for couples, travelers, or a relaxing weekend with friends.

#SouthernMaine #MaineItinerary #TravelMaine #NewEnglandTravel #CoastalMaine #WinterGetaway #TravelInspo #HiddenGems #MaineVacation #Weekend

Edited - 18w

kristynecngland Great itinerary! 18w 2 likes Reply

movementwith_jill 18w 2 likes Reply

viewpointyorkmaine you captured our corner of new england so well! 18w 12 likes Reply

wefillgood What hotel is that? 18w 1 like Reply

spiritiff We need a girls trip to Portland! Check out @highrollerlobsterco 10w Reply

tiffanywbz Ok when are we going to Portland!!! 10w Reply

blackbutterfly6207 4w Love to see it was welcoming! I didn't think Maine was a state I would want to visit especially as a Black person. You've shown why that would be false! 12 likes Reply

View all 1 replies

crystalthealchemist 4w It's because of this page that Maine has moved up on my desired states to travel. 140 likes Reply

View all 7 replies



RESULTS

However, the program saw more than digital media results. Featured businesses reported increased foot traffic and visibility, while community testimonials highlighted the program's impact in showcasing Maine as inclusive and welcoming.

Ultimately, the campaign showed that authentic, story-driven social content can have a tremendous impact, reaching diverse audiences and showing them that they, too, belong in a destination.

"The multiple posts from Green Book Global have driven series business to Luke's [Lobster] from a diverse audience that may not otherwise have visited us and brought a lot of positive attention to [our nonprofit] Lift All Boats. We are so glad that the MOT sees the potential of reaching out to new audiences and the importance of featuring inclusive and welcoming destinations."

- Ben Conniff, Co-founder of Portland-based restaurant Luke's Lobster.



THANK YOU
MAINE.
FORGED BY NATURE

