



**FY20** ANNUAL  
REPORT





# FY20 ANNUAL REPORT

Tourism's importance to Nevada was evident this year, as the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated an economic shutdown and travel restrictions that dramatically affected our industry. While fiscal year 2020 began on a high note, with visitor volume and other economic indicators holding steady or improving over the previous fiscal year, in March — the beginning of the economic shutdown — those numbers plummeted. Nevada's tourism industry typically employs about 25 percent of Nevada's workforce. During this pandemic, the industry has shed a record number of jobs, resulting in dramatic losses in state tax revenue that normally would be garnered from visitor spending.

On a more positive note, communities in rural Nevada have fared better during the pandemic, with visitors seeking unique outdoor experiences in our vast open spaces. First quarter data in FY21 (July through September 2020) shows that rural Nevada room tax collections are down only 8%, while Clark County and Washoe County room tax collections are down about 65% and 35%, respectively.

As your Lieutenant Governor and Chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism (NCOT), I can assure you that the commission and the Nevada Division of Tourism (Travel Nevada) are working diligently to support Nevada's tourism industry and to keep visitors safe and healthy as our state navigates the reopening process. NCOT has established a Recovery Subcommittee to provide input on Travel Nevada's tourism recovery plans, and Travel Nevada implemented a COVID-19 Recovery Grant Program funded with CARES Act funds, among other industry support efforts.

We hope you find this report helpful in understanding the impact COVID-19 has had on Nevada, and what NCOT and Travel Nevada are doing to support the state's tourism industry.

— Lt. Gov. Kate Marshall







# FY20 ANNUAL REPORT

The Nevada Division of Tourism (Travel Nevada) is more than just a state agency charged with promoting Nevada as a tourism destination. We have a genuine understanding of the state, and are dedicated to sharing it with visitors around the country and the world. We began this fiscal year on track to meet our marketing and industry goals, but the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent business shutdown in the spring devastated the entire tourism economy.

In March 2020, Travel Nevada paused its marketing, public relations and international efforts, and pivoted to supporting our tourism partners through in-state efforts. Our focus turned to a destination development program, promoting in-state travel to residents, and the disbursement of Recovery Grants to Nevada tourism organizations.

Those activities have taken place in a "new normal" economic reality. Like the rest of the state, Travel Nevada was impacted by the economic shutdown. The agency is funded solely through a portion of room tax revenue, which was reduced dramatically as resorts and hotels shut their doors to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The revenue loss required a reduction in Travel Nevada staff to its current crew of 13 and an assessment of essential programs.

Despite these hardships, the team at Travel Nevada is determined to overcome these losses and help bridge the gap between uncertainty and a brighter future. We continue to serve our mission in rural Nevada, and have faith in a resilient tourism industry that gathers its strength from the spirit of discovery.

— Brenda Scolari, director, Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs



## COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

### impact on Nevada's tourism industry and Travel Nevada's response

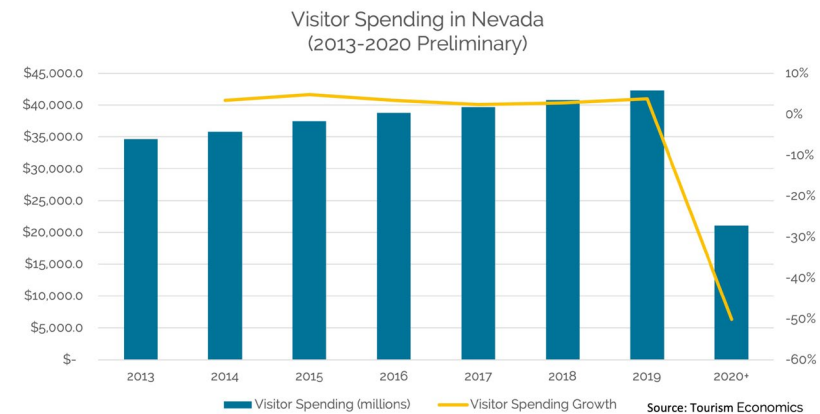
The latest estimates of the economic impacts of travel to Nevada by Tourism Economics suggest visitors generated nearly \$68 billion in total spending, employing about 25 percent of the state's workforce in 2019. State and local tax revenues generated by visitors also reached about \$5 billion in FY19 in Nevada. To keep the industry – and therefore, the state's economy – strong, the Nevada Division of Tourism (Travel Nevada) executes strategic marketing and public relations programs that promote the state as a travel destination domestically and abroad. Travel Nevada also serves Nevada's tourism industry, facilitating partnerships among the various tourism promotion agencies and administering a grants program to benefit rural Nevada tourism organizations. Funded solely by a portion of lodging tax revenue (¾ of 1%), Travel Nevada is advised by the Nevada Commission on Tourism.

For the first half of FY20, Travel Nevada was tracking well against its goals. Some specific accomplishments include:

- The agency had launched a new creative campaign, which was used in a highly targeted paid media campaign that reached the state's travel audiences in target markets.
- While live, the FY20 campaign's on-site intent-to-travel metrics were up significantly over FY19, with eNewsletter sign-ups up 96% and visitor guide requests/downloads/views up 78%.
- The domestic public relations team hosted its most successful media event yet, with more than 40 journalists from outlets like Newsweek, Travel + Leisure and CNN, which already has resulted in several earned media placements and more pending.

- The international PR team brought dozens of journalists from key markets into the state.
- A sales team partnership with Brand USA drove millions of impressions and thousands of booked room nights from Canadian travelers.

In Q3 FY20, COVID-19 hit the U.S. and rattled the entire world's tourism industry. Since March 2020, the pandemic has resulted in more than \$460 billion in losses for the U.S. travel economy, according to the U.S. Travel Association. Every state felt those impacts, but Nevada, which relies heavily on the hospitality industry, was among the most impacted. Preliminary estimates from Tourism Economics suggest that visitor spending in the state declined by about 50% in 2020 to around \$21 billion. To put this in perspective, visitor spending in 2019 was estimated to be about \$42.3 billion.





Recognizing the potentially long-term and dramatic effects of COVID-19 on the state's largest industry, Travel Nevada made quick and strategic pivots to its marketing efforts to maximize the impacts of its remaining dollars and help the state prepare to rebound. Within days of the COVID-19 pandemic reaching the U.S., Travel Nevada posted on its industry website (TravelNevada.biz) online resources for in-state partners to find the latest and most accurate information for each hospitality business sector. The agency also developed new messaging for travelers, letting them know that Nevada has "Always Been Here. Always Will Be." This new direction enabled the agency to continue to welcome travelers virtually and, eventually, when they were ready to visit again.

Travel Nevada continues to monitor this rapidly changing situation and is ready to react. In December 2020, visitor volume from Las Vegas and Reno stood at about 1.45 million. This is up from a low of 0.16 million seen in the depths of the economic shutdown, but lower than the 3.84 million visitors seen in January 2020, before the effects of the pandemic were felt.



To continue on that positive trajectory, the agency has continued to focus on supporting in-state partners and travelers. With marketing efforts on hold in the fourth quarter and into the first quarter of FY21, Travel Nevada adapted its efforts to support Nevada's tourism industry. Travel Nevada released its Rural Tourism COVID-19 Response Plan in Q1 FY21. Available online at TravelNevada.biz, the plan presents best practices and suggested protocols from various service industries and health authorities for tourism organizations seeking guidance in responding to COVID-19. Travel marketing efforts also restarted in Q1 FY21 with the launching of the Discover Your Nevada campaign, encouraging in-state travel. In Q2 FY21, Travel Nevada distributed a portion of the funds it received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act throughout rural Nevada through two grants programs in Q2 FY21. In November, \$1.65 million in COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grants and \$44,921 in Volunteer Impact Program grants were awarded. Travel Nevada spent \$3 million in Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) money on recovery marketing.

Additionally, the Nevada Commission on Tourism, led by Lt. Gov. Kate Marshall, has established a recovery committee. This subcommittee of the Nevada Commission on Tourism provides feedback on Travel Nevada's tourism recovery plans as the agency navigates this continually changing health and economic crisis.

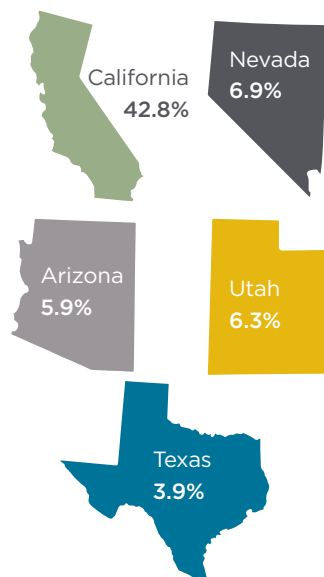
For more Nevada tourism statistics visit:  
[TravelNevada.biz/research-strategy](https://TravelNevada.biz/research-strategy).



## RESEARCH AND INTEGRATED MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS STUDY RESULTS AND STATS

Nevada's visitor bases diversified in FY20, an ongoing goal as Travel Nevada seeks to widen the state's appeal. Over the last several years, the average age of Nevada visitors has decreased, while the average education level has increased.

### Domestic Visitor Origin Top 5 States



### 2015 vs. 2019

OUR VISITOR IS...

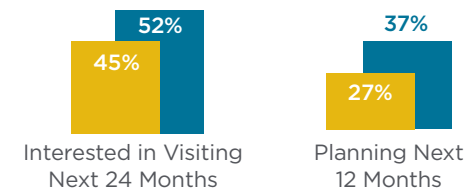
Younger  
47.48 vs. 46.01

More diverse  
79.64 % vs. 73.57% Caucasian

More educated  
62.67% vs. 65.17% college

### Integrated Marketing Communications Impact on Travel Intentions

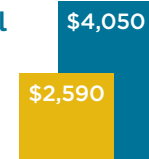
Not Aware  
Aware



Average Trips to NV per Year

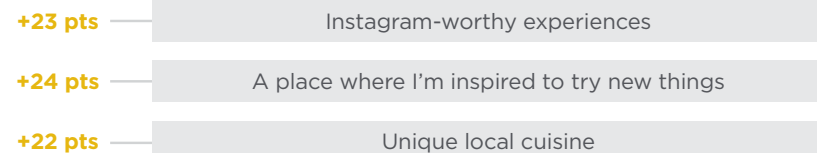


Average Annual Visitor Spend per Household in NV



### Integrated Marketing Communications Impact on Destination Attributes – Aware vs. Unaware Difference

Total Audience



Sources: The OmniTrak Group





# FY20 ANNUAL REPORT

## PAID MEDIA

Travel Nevada's approach to paid media is always rooted in a deep understanding of the target audiences and the most up-to-date data and research. A key focus of the FY20 media program was to strategically support the rollout of the evolved creative messaging. Identifying media partners and placements that could create meaningful connections between Nevada and the people we want to visit is essential, as well as delivering the campaign messaging effectively through the right channel at the right time.



From a brand awareness perspective, Travel Nevada's FY20 paid media program distributed the evolved brand messaging, including new video, print and display assets, across several of the "always on" campaign elements in order to showcase the Travel Nevada brand through this modern lens.

- OTAs form a foundation for the Travel Nevada media efforts and were some of the first platforms to amplify the new creative in September 2019. These partners not only give Nevada the ability to be in front of audiences when they are planning trips, but also are able to provide data around sales through their booking platforms, providing valuable information for ongoing optimizations and evaluation of program performance.
- Programmatic advertising partners leverage data across many sites and channels to efficiently and effectively target people based on desired attributes in order to drive quality site traffic and encourage users to take specific actions when they arrive on the site. These elements help support the broad, yet targeted, reach of the aspirational brand content while still driving measurable "intent-to-travel" actions.
- Cross-device video and audio allow for Travel Nevada to not only reach data-targeted audiences at scale, but also to account for the various ways users are accessing television, video and audio content, reaching them while they are in a leisure mindset regardless of the device or platform they're using at the time.



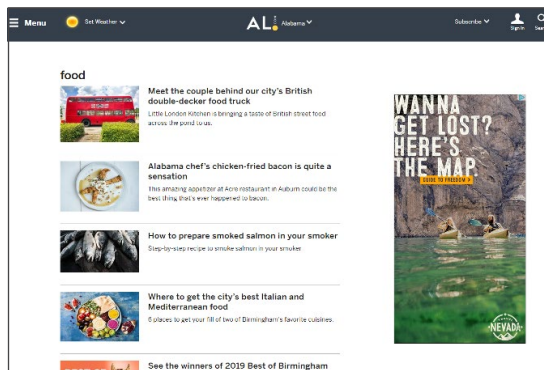


Travel Nevada's other priority in FY20 was to leverage its immersive content partnerships, social channels and influencers to showcase more "tangible activities" to potential visitors so those audiences could picture themselves having these experiences and the feelings of adventure and freedom they could bring. The primary focus of this effort was rooted in Travel Nevada's 10 curated road trips and the myriad of activities found within each route. Whether the road trip appealed to audiences geographically, by interest or by length of travel, each road trip allowed Travel Nevada to enlighten audiences that there's a little something for everyone on a trip through Nevada.

- Publishers and content partners like Travelzoo, BuzzFeed and The Culture Trip offered Travel Nevada the ability to connect in meaningful ways through both brand affiliation and a direct appeal to audience interests. These partners provide deeper engagement with the stories important to Nevada and help potential visitors truly understand the destination. Content partnerships allow Travel Nevada to appeal to various parts of the traveler journey, inspiring and connecting with audiences while also helping move potential visitors toward booking their travel and bringing these experiences to life.
- Social media and influencers are critical components to ensure Travel Nevada is making real connections with both existing and potential visitors. These platforms allow for authentic storytelling in environments where people are spending significant time engaging each day, enabling our biggest ambassadors to bring the target audiences along for the ride and see firsthand what traveling throughout Nevada is all about.

### A few key highlights from the FY20 program included:

**Adara:** This travel-specific programmatic partner leverages online behaviors that indicate a user's intent to travel and was one of the first elements to launch in FY20, delivering the new display and video creative to potential travelers. In addition to driving 29 million impressions while live in FY20, its retargeting placements – which are aimed at driving conversions – successfully accounted for 39% of all campaign on-site conversions as of March 2020.



**American Park Network:** Through this partnership, Travel Nevada strategically sponsored the Wi-Fi networks within national and state parks, attractions and campgrounds located in and around their target markets to connect with outdoor enthusiasts in uncluttered, relevant environments. Nearly 110,000 Wi-Fi sessions were delivered during Nevada's fall flight, more than double the projected delivery, which was provided by APN as added value. Users watched the 15-second commercial spot in its entirety in order to gain access to the Wi-Fi, ensuring Travel Nevada was only paying for engaged users who viewed the entire video.



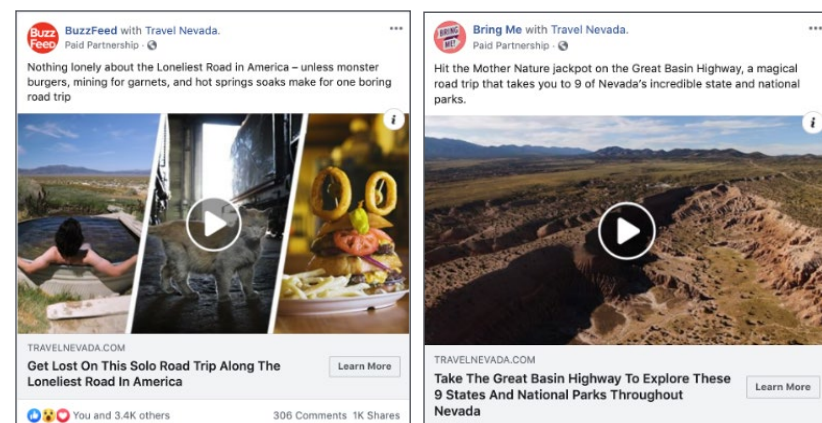


**Discovery Network:** Partnerships with Travel Channel and Discovery Channel offer Nevada continued national brand exposure and seamless integration around relevant content. In addition to a robust commercial spot schedule reaching viewers consuming travel and adventure content across both networks, FY20's program also aligned three custom-produced Nevada vignettes with the series Expedition Unknown. Discovery Network created this series of short-form vignettes to offer viewers a glimpse into "Unknown Nevada," running in alignment with airings of Expedition Unknown, to connect with viewers of the show across both channels in a custom, integrated way. While the completion of this program, including digital and social extensions, has been delayed due to the pandemic, the three custom vignettes and other sponsorship elements were able to run up until the pause in mid-March 2020. Additionally, the custom video content Discovery Network created has been repurposed and is being utilized in FY21 efforts since Nevada's creative production capabilities were limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.



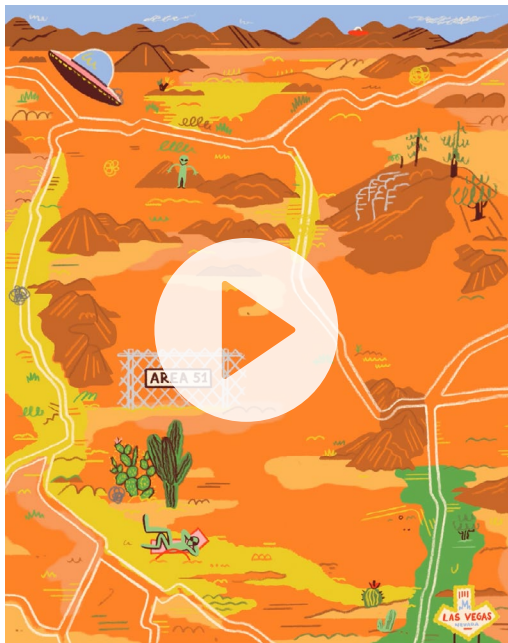
Video - Click to Play

**Bring Me by BuzzFeed:** Because Travel Nevada is always seeking relevant partnerships that include strong brand recognition, BuzzFeed's travel brand Bring Me offered a great opportunity for a new partnership in FY20. Bring Me, the number one most viewed travel publisher on the web, developed custom videos featuring two of Nevada's road trips – the Loneliest Road and the Great Basin Highway. This content, shot in-state and stylized under the BuzzFeed production teams, was hosted on BuzzFeed's site and amplified across both the BuzzFeed and Bring Me Facebook and Instagram channels, generating more than 1.1 million views and nearly 7,200 social engagements. In addition to the strong social performance, the Great Basin Highway video that was featured on their site surpassed BuzzFeed's video completion rate by 500%, indicating users found the road trip content to be compelling.





**The Culture Trip:** The Culture Trip is known for creating and curating stories that reveal what is unique and special about a place, its people and its culture. Travel Nevada entered this partnership in FY20 to collaborate on content aimed at inspiring The Culture Trip's audience to plan their trips, go beyond their cultural boundaries and connect with the world around them. This integrated partnership included the development of three original social videos (featuring Goldwell Open Air Museum, Gold Butte National Monument and the Republic of Molossia), custom animated maps playfully bringing the the E.T. Highway and Death Valley Rally road trips to life, as well as on-site photo articles and a strong digital presence across The Culture Trip's website and social channels. The three social videos garnered more than 15.8 million views and generated nearly 285,000 engagements.



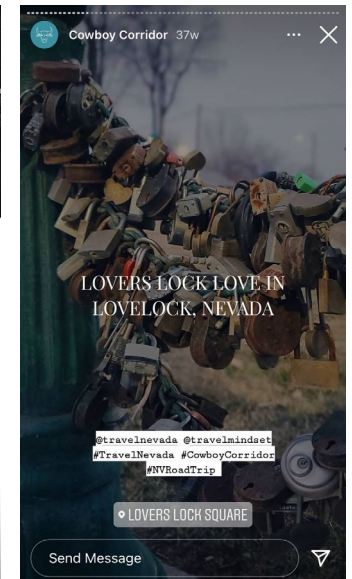
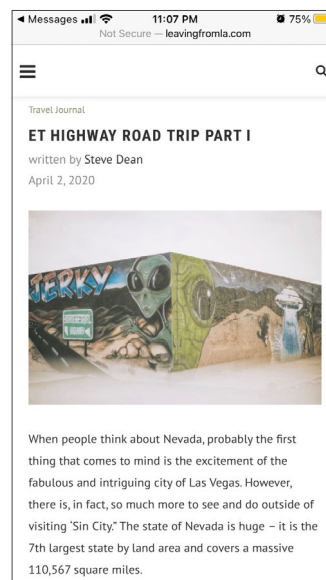
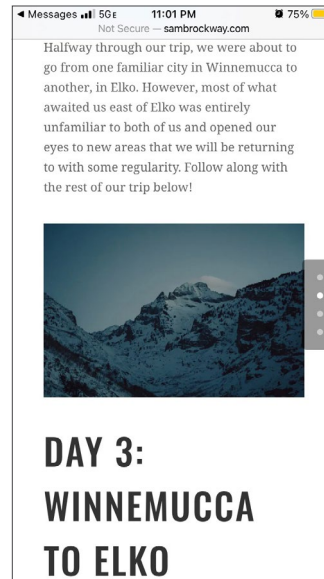
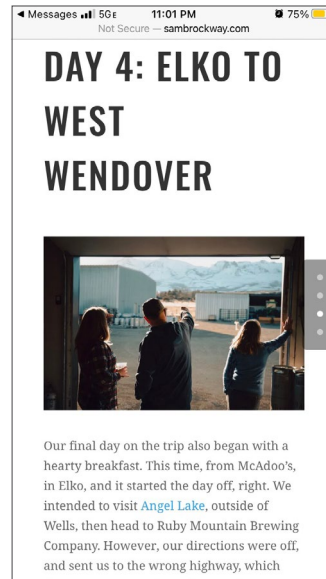
Animation - Click to Play

**Travel + Leisure:** In addition to a full-page ad in the November 2019 issue of Travel + Leisure to feature the new brand creative, Travel Nevada also partnered with the Meredith Corporation's digital team in production of a custom Instagram TV (IGTV) episode of Travel + Leisure's social series, "Locals." The 5+ minute IGTV episode posted by @TravelAndLeisure delivered more than 11 million impressions and 2 million video views and racked up over 88,000 video completions. The video also touted an engagement rate that exceeded the Meredith Corporation's engagement rate benchmark by 182%.

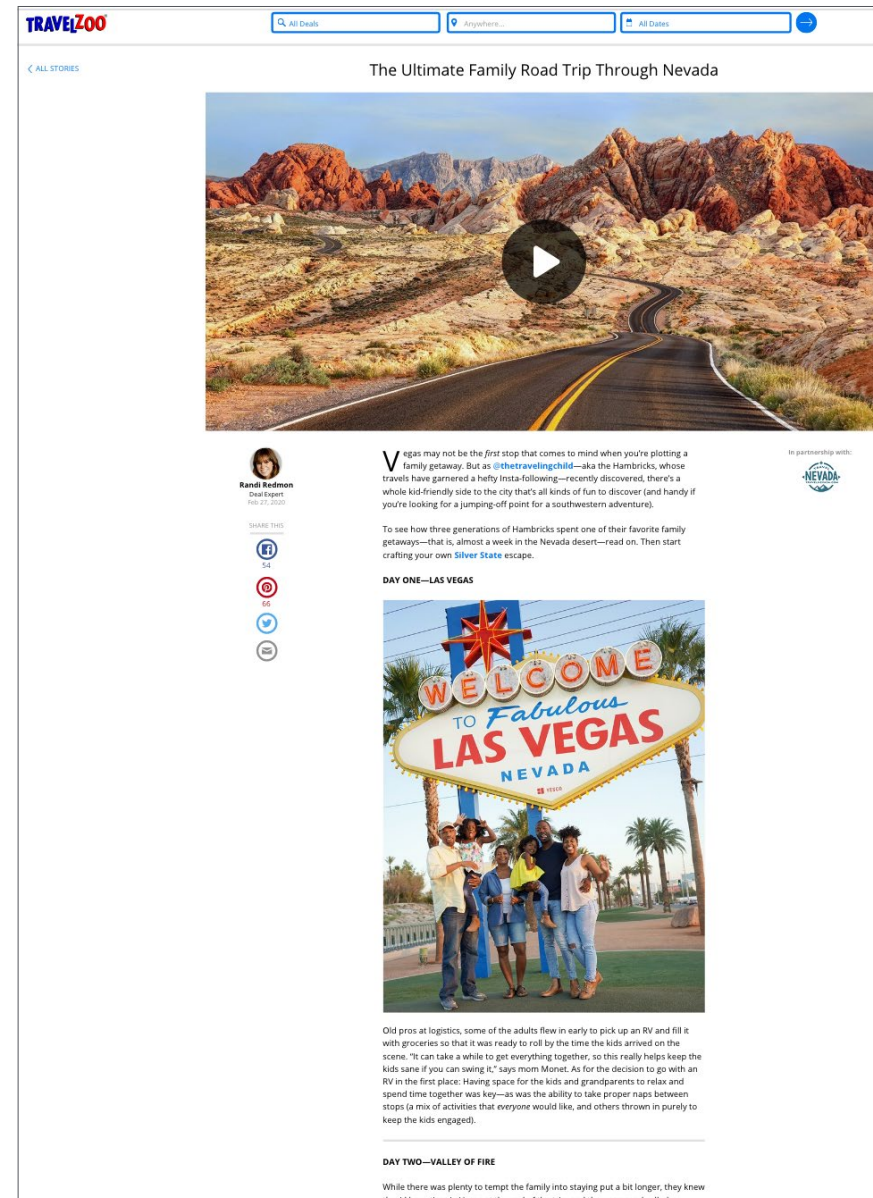




**Travel Mindset:** In FY20, Nevada continued its partnership with Travel Mindset, the industry-leading influencer network, successfully facilitating two of the five planned influencer trips to Nevada, prior to the pandemic interruption. (The rest of the program remains on hold until Nevada can safely resume domestic advertising.) Photography influencer Sam Brockway (@SamWBrockway) and his friend explored Nevada's Cowboy Corridor, generating social highlights and blog posts about their experiences; travel blogger Steve Dean (@LeavingFromLA) tackled the E.T. Highway with two of his friends, documenting their adventures across his blog and his Instagram. These two initial influencer efforts generated 172 social posts, reaching 109,200 people and garnering more than 72,400 engagements.




**Travelzoo:** Travel Nevada built on the success of its past efforts with Travelzoo through the execution of a sponsored story and feature video – this time, created by family travel influencer The Traveling Child, also known as the Hambrick family. The Hambricks took a six-day adventure along the Neon to Nature road trip, chronicling their travels through an article and video featured on Travelzoo.com and other content across The Traveling Child's blog and social channels. Though the family's travel occurred in October 2019, the feature went live with Travelzoo at the end of February 2020, shortly before all efforts were paused due to COVID-19. While the promotion of the Travelzoo article was cut short, it still managed to be a top-10 campaign traffic driver to Travel Nevada's website, touting the highest on-site goal conversion rate and second highest average session duration of the campaign.



**TRAVELZOO** All Deals Anywhere... All Dates

< ALL STORES


## The Ultimate Family Road Trip Through Nevada



**Randi Redmon**  
Deal Expert  
Feb 27, 2020

SHARE THIS


Facebook, Email, Twitter, Print

to partnership with: 

Vegas may not be the first stop that comes to mind when you're plotting a family getaway. But as [@thetravelingchild](#)—aka the Hambricks, whose travels have garnered a hefty Insta-following—recently discovered, there's a whole kid-friendly side to the city that's all kinds of fun to discover (and handy if you're looking for a jumping-off point for a southwestern adventure).

To see how three generations of Hambricks spent one of their favorite family getaways—that is, almost a week in the Nevada desert—read on. Then start crafting your own [Silver State](#) escape.

### DAY ONE—LAS VEGAS



Old pros at logistics, some of the adults flew in early to pick up an RV and fill it with groceries so that it was ready to roll by the time the kids arrived on the scene. "It can take a while to get everything together, so this really helps keep the kids sane if you can swing it," says mom Monet. As for the decision to go with an RV in the first place: Having space for the kids and grandparents to relax and spend time together was key—as was the ability to take proper naps between stops (a mix of activities that everyone would like, and others thrown in purely to keep the kids engaged).

### DAY TWO—VALLEY OF FIRE

While there was plenty to tempt the family into staying put a bit longer, they knew they'd have time in Vegas at the end of the trip, and the open road called.



While the FY20 campaign launched in September 2019 and continued to roll out additional elements as creative was ready, several partnerships were in development – including collaborations with REI, Travelocity and Sunset Magazine – but unfortunately were not able to be completed as a result of the pandemic. All paid media efforts were stopped the week of March 16, 2020, due to COVID-19. The pausing of the FY20 campaign at this time was not only a response to the halting of travel domestically, but also with the intent of retaining/reserving as much funding as possible in anticipation of the impending impact of the shutdown of travel. Because Nevada, more than most states, relies so heavily on the hospitality industry, the campaign remained paused throughout FY20 and into FY21 as a result of both business closures in the hospitality sector as well as additional travel restrictions and recommendations.

Despite this disruption to the paid media program, the FY20 campaign managed to deliver more than 82 million digital impressions between its launch in September 2019 and pause in March 2020. The site traffic driven by the campaign was highly engaged and continued to exceed key benchmarks. For example, visitors driven to Nevada's road trip pages as a result of the FY20 campaign spent an average of 88% more time on those pages than a general site visitor, indicating our target audiences found the road trip content engaging and relevant to their travel interests. Additionally, when comparing overall site traffic to the same time frame in FY19, on-site intent-to-travel metrics were up significantly, with eNewsletter sign-ups up 96% and visitor guide requests/downloads/views up 78%, despite the need to pause the campaign in March.

Once the FY20 campaign was halted, efforts shifted to a focus on recovery planning. This recovery planning led to the development of a phased approach to reopening, beginning locally, expanding regionally when appropriate and then broader domestically once it is safe and responsible to do so.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

The PR team focuses on getting earned coverage of Nevada as a tourism destination in top domestic and international publications and other media outlets.

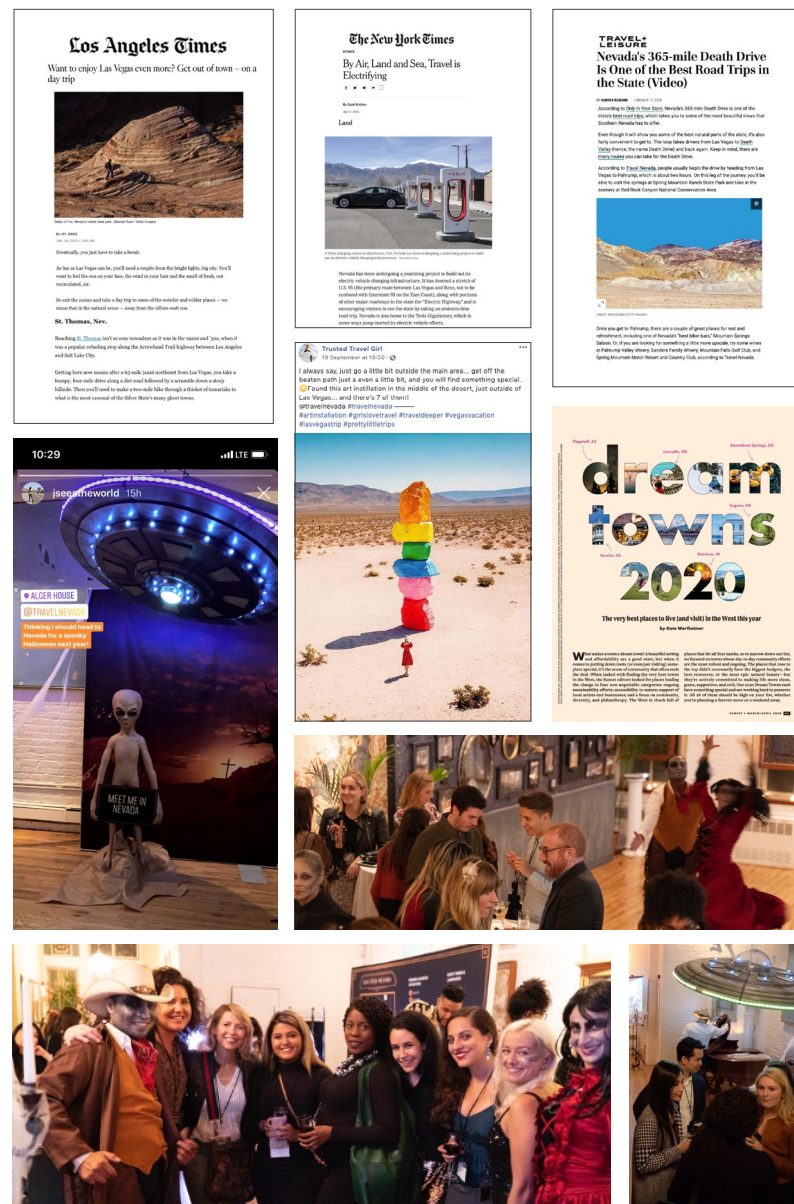
### Domestic efforts:

In FY20, the Travel Nevada PR team sought to highlight the state's unique outdoor recreation opportunities – a theme that is and will continue to be relevant in the months to come as many potential visitors seek outdoor activities during the pandemic. Stories about outdoor adventures and experiences, specifically along the state's branded road trip routes, were curated from tourism partners throughout the state and shared with media that reach the state's target audiences.

In addition to ongoing strategic media outreach, the team also held one of its most exciting and impactful events to date in October 2019: a "Haunted Ball," where the team showcased all things spooky, weird and uniquely Nevada to more than 40 journalists from CNN, Fodor's, Travel + Leisure, Newsweek, Hearst and many more. Travel Nevada is still reaping the benefits from this event, as the journalists who attended continue to produce content about traveling to the state.

Despite the impacts of the pandemic, the Travel Nevada PR team had an outstanding year. In addition to many mentions of Nevada experiences and mentions in a variety of media outlets, the PR team also accomplished:

- Securing 29 earned media placements featuring key Travel Nevada messaging in 19 unique Top 100 outlets, including *Men's Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Travel Channel*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Forbes*, *CNN*, *The New York Times*, *AAA*, *The Boston Globe*, *Endless Vacation*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Food Network Magazine*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *AFAR*, *Outside Magazine*, *Thrillist*, *Sherman's Travel*, *Sunset Magazine* and *Preservation Magazine*.
- Hosting several familiarization (FAM) tours showcasing road trips and key state attractions:
  - One group FAM focused on Nevada's "Ghosts and Legends" for five social media influencers.
  - Five customized individual FAMs for journalists from Bikerumor, STRUNG, Penta/The Daily Beast, Men's Journal/Matador Network/Big Life, and Sacramento Magazine. The team also secured four additional individual FAM visits that were eventually postponed or canceled because of the pandemic.





## International efforts:

- Travel Nevada hosted media from key international markets throughout the fiscal year. Highlights include Food & Drink Mexico, Canadian journalist Jeff Frenette, House of Coco (UK) and five French influencers.
- The Governor's Global Tourism Summit in November 2019 brought 20 journalists from our 10 identified international markets for a pre-conference familiarization trip (FAM).
- Travel Nevada's Winter 2020 FAM took 10 journalists (one from each key market) on an abbreviated Death Valley Rally road trip. Death Valley Rally is one of 10 Travel Nevada-branded road trip itineraries.



## DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL SALES TEAM EFFORTS AND IMPACT

Travel Nevada's Sales and Industry Partners team connects the Nevada tourism industry with domestic and international travel professionals and consumers, overseeing contracted representation in 10 international markets (Australia/New Zealand, Canada, China, France, German-speaking Europe, India, Japan, Latin America, South Korea and the United Kingdom).

Fiscal Year 2020 had unprecedented challenges. During the first half, Travel Nevada participated in 19 travel and trade shows, hosted five familiarization (FAM) tours for international travel representatives who promote Nevada in their countries and led missions to Mexico City, Guadalajara and Colombia. During the second half, international travel came to a halt due to COVID-19 and the ensuing travel restrictions. Travel Nevada had to put a pause to all international contracts and freeze any activations or expenditures.

To expeditiously respond to COVID-19, Travel Nevada reconciled all international contracts for FY20 in early April 2020. The Sales and Industry Partners team continues to maintain relationships with its international offices throughout the pandemic, and as international air service recovers and travel sentiment and demand improves, the return of the international program will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis forecasted by the potential for visitation from each country.







## Brand USA

Travel Nevada partners with Brand USA, a national organization that markets the United States as a premier travel destination, to ensure that the United States and Nevada are top of mind with international travelers.

In FY20, Travel Nevada participated in the following Brand USA programs:

- Western Canada Multichannel, which generated a total of 3,64,583 digital ad impressions and 37,416 hotel room nights.
- Travel Zoo Canada, generating a total of 1,494,482 impressions and 8,918 travel click bookings with participating promotional partners.
- Nine Media Australia, which generated over 160,000 impressions through Traveller digital platforms and increased bookings with Flight Centre by 2% from previous year.
- The Nevada Badge program, which had a total of 717 completed badges by international travel agents.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all other scheduled Brand USA programs went into pause in spring 2020, and Travel Nevada will be rolling over a credit from the paused programs during FY21.

## NEVADA TOURISM INDUSTRY RELATIONS: EDUCATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND GRANTS

Travel Nevada worked extensively in FY20 with tourism-related businesses and organizations, including hotel-resorts, tour operators, outdoor recreation outfitters, destination marketing organizations, the Nevada Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Parks, Nevada Department of Wildlife, the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development and other state and federal organizations to facilitate professional development, foster cooperative effort and support Nevada's tourism industry. Activities in the third and fourth quarters of the FY20 were curtailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic shutdown during the spring of 2020.

### Education: Nevada Governor's Global Tourism Summit

The Nevada Governor's Global Tourism Summit (GGTS) took place Nov. 12-14, 2019, at The Plaza Hotel & Casino in downtown Las Vegas. More than 300 delegates — representatives from tour companies, hoteliers, state tourism territories, state and federal agencies, visitors' bureaus, chambers of commerce, convention centers and media — attended conference sessions ranging from technology in travel to updates on international markets. Lt. Gov. Kate Marshall and Travel Nevada recognized the state's top industry partners at the inaugural GGTS awards ceremony, with the following awards bestowed: International Tour Operator to House of Travel from New Zealand; Outstanding Contribution to Tourism to Terry Schumacher of the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority; and Nevada Industry Partner to State Parks of the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

The GGTS agenda also included the Nevada Marketplace, a "buyer/supplier" meeting structure where Nevada tourism professionals could meet one-on-one with international tourism representatives and media. In the sales marketplace, partners met with up to 50 travel advisors ranging from international tour operators, to airline representatives and domestic operators. The media marketplace consisted of 19 representatives, including travel writers, social media influencers and representatives from media outlets. The marketplaces had international representation from 10 of Travel Nevada's contracted countries (Australia/New Zealand, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, South Korea and the United Kingdom).

*In a typical year, Travel Nevada also would offer a second conference, Rural Roundup, geared toward the state's rural tourism partners. The FY20 Rural Roundup, scheduled for Virginia City on April 2020, was postponed to FY21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*







## Partnerships: Travel Media Hosting

Travel Nevada's public relations program includes hosting travel media from key markets/targeted audiences. The program relies on partnerships with Nevada tourism businesses to promote the state's newest and best travel experiences. Media are vetted or "qualified" to ensure alignment with Travel Nevada's marketing and branding goals. Nevada tourism-related businesses and organizations are invited to participate in the hosting process to gain earned media coverage. In FY20, Travel Nevada worked with Reno-Tahoe tourism partners to host outdoor writer Robert Annis for coverage in Strung outdoor magazine; with Ely tourism partners to host a writer and photographer from Bikerumor magazine; and with Elko tourism partners to host a writer and photographer from Men's Journal, among other collaborative efforts. Travel Nevada partnered with southern Nevada tourism businesses on a group familiarization tour for domestic social media influencers.



Media hosting activity paused in the third and fourth quarters of FY20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic shutdown during the spring of 2020. Travel Nevada continues to monitor the travel market and will restart its travel media hosting program when appropriate.

## Travel Nevada Marketing Grants

In FY20, Travel Nevada distributed \$1.65 million in grant funding to rural nonprofit tourism agencies through its Rural Marketing Grants program. The funds were distributed over two cycles: \$1.35 million was awarded in June 2019 and \$300,000 awarded in December 2019.

In a typical fiscal year, Travel Nevada would have announced the first cycle of Rural Marketing Grant awards for FY21 in June 2020, but this cycle was suspended due to lack of funding.

## Nevada Magazine

Nevada Magazine moved to a quarterly publication cycle in the summer, after an independent assessment of the magazine, and interviews with staff, readers, advertisers and various stakeholders. Seeking a more robust future that includes a digital presence, the magazine revamped its digital offerings to appeal to a wider audience. The magazine also produced a book, "Odyssey of a Ghost Town Explorer," which covers the magazine's travels to more than 60 ghost towns around the state. The book went on sale in June, and continues to be very popular, as does the companion ghost town map.

Nevada Magazine, which dates back to 1936, is the publishing arm of the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs.

