

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

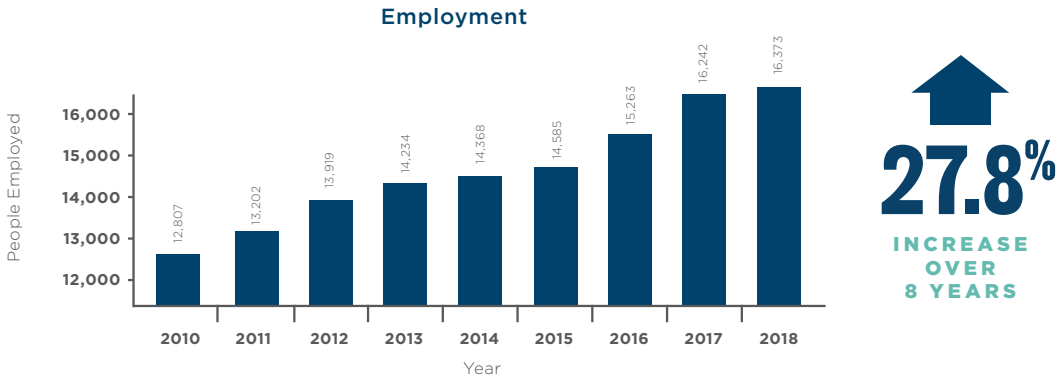
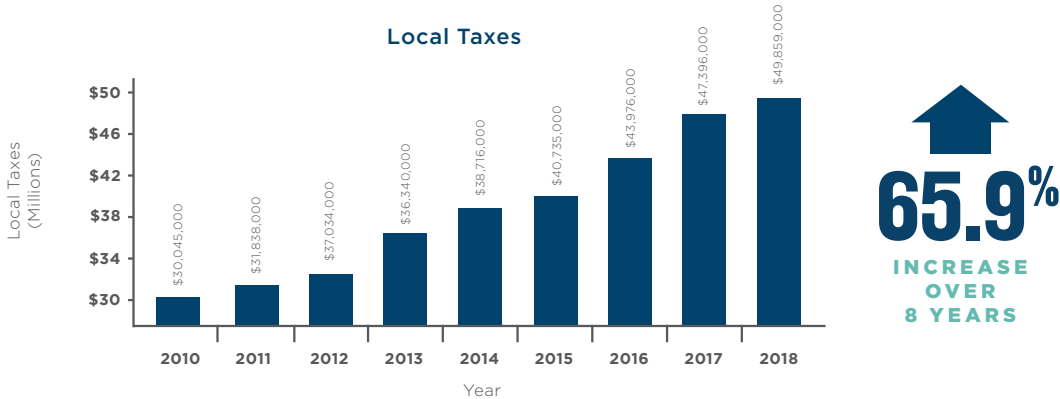


**NIAGARA  
FALLS<sup>®</sup>**  
USA

WHERE ADVENTURE COMES NATURALLY<sup>®</sup>

DESTINATION NIAGARA USA




# EVOLUTION OF NIAGARA COUNTY TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS\*

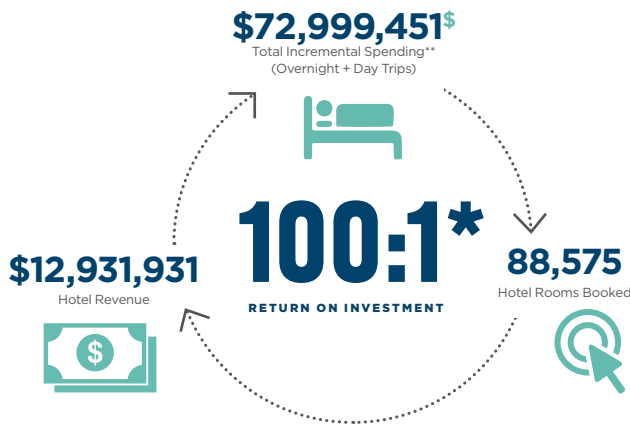


\*Source: Tourism Economics: Economic Impact of Tourism in New York 2010-2018

# DIGITAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

We launched integrated marketing campaigns in targeted markets to generate incremental visitation and spend along with repeat business.

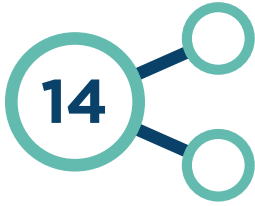
 <b>Spring</b> March 8 – May 31	<b>48,566,405</b> Impressions	<b>389,799</b> Web Conversions	<b>6,088</b> Travel Guide Requests	<b>157,205</b> 1 Minute 30 Seconds Time on Site
	<b>360,125</b> Clicks	<b>576</b> Email Sign-Ups	<b>12,361</b> Travel Guide Online Views	<b>1,493,224</b> Hotel & Flight Searches (enriched data)
 <b>Fall</b> August 5-October 10	<b>15,289,268</b> Impressions	<b>275,055</b> Web Conversions	<b>2,934</b> Travel Guide Requests	<b>115,138</b> 1 Minute 30 Seconds Time on Site
	<b>223,729</b> Clicks	<b>193</b> Email Sign-Ups	<b>9,706</b> Travel Guide Online Views	<b>633,901</b> Hotel & Flight Searches (enriched data)
 <b>Winter</b> November 1- December 19	<b>2,446,820</b> Impressions	<b>121,068</b> Web Conversions	<b>883</b> Travel Guide Requests	<b>46,258</b> 1 Minute 30 Seconds Time on Site
	<b>28,470</b> Clicks	<b>66</b> Email Sign-Ups	<b>2,293</b> Travel Guide Online Views	<b>208,446</b> Hotel & Flight Searches (enriched data)



\*Based on Adara Attribution platform measuring actual consumer transactions generated from Niagara Falls USA website and digital ad placements.  
 \*\*Above amount used in calculation of organization ROI on page 16.

## MEDIA

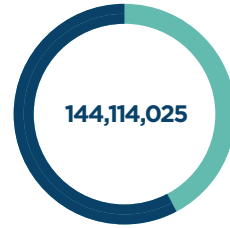
As stewards of a world-renowned icon, we work tirelessly to garner significant media attention.



Visiting Media Hosted



Destination stories  
across all media channels  
(print, television, online, etc.)



Total number of  
media impressions  
(Individual views)

## TOP MEDIA PLACEMENTS

Our two top media placements in 2019 resulted from hosting travel media within the destination.



Lonely Planet

**A Boozy Tour Through New  
York's Niagara County**



**11,849,867**  
IMPRESSIONS



MSN.com

**15 Best Summer Weekend Getaways  
You'll Want to Book This Second**



**10,031,198**  
IMPRESSIONS

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## WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA



2019 WEBSITE VISITATION:  
**1,330,345**



2019 Page Views:  
**2,826,487**



2019 Unique Visits:  
**1,036,902**



Total Blogs  
**37**

### Stats for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn



Total fans for all four channels: **115,575**

Link clicks from posts: **98,946**

Total impressions for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn: **20.2 MILLION**

Overall engagement for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn: **496,856**

# THE OTHER SIDE OF NEW YORK

From April 12 – June 2, in partnership with Delaware North and Niagara Falls State Park, we launched “The Other Side of New York” integrated marketing campaign. This campaign targeted New York City and its surrounding boroughs highlighting the various adventures on the “other side of New York” in Niagara Falls USA. Interest targeting on digital platforms included users that matched at least one of the following criteria: hiking, adventure, bucket list, hiking trails, outdoor enthusiast, travel & adventure, weekend getaway and outdoor adventure. The path to purchase for this campaign was the Discovery Pass landing page on the Niagara Falls State Park website. It also included over 100 ads throughout Manhattan and the (5) boroughs on bus shelters promoting Niagara Falls USA.



**3,443,164**  
Impressions



**24,900**  
Clicks to landing page



**4 minutes  
21 seconds**  
Average Time on Site

## Paid Social Media



## NYS Bus Shelter Ads



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## GLOBAL INITIATIVES

### Brand USA Inspiration Guide Program 2019



**40+**

13 print and digital language editions in 40+ countries.



**465,000**

465,000 print copies distributed at Trade Shows, Embassies, Visa offices, IPW Registration bags, etc.



**90**

90 major global tour operators use the print guide for their customer trip planning purposes.



**3,697,949**

Digital Inspiration Guide Total Pageviews: 3,697,949

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### Presenting Niagara Falls USA to the World

By attending/participating in travel trade marketplaces and carrying out sales calls/missions, we met with over (367) travel trade companies representing China, India, UK, Germany, Australia, France and more.

**113**

#### Referrals

Sent out tour operator requests for information to identified partners about their product.

**5**

#### Tradeshows

IITA Summit, NAJ West, Connect Travel Marketplace, ITB, IPW

**2**

#### Sales Missions

ILoveNY Ireland Sales Mission and Brand USA India Sales Mission

**12**

#### Site Visits

In-market familiarization tours with Tour Operators and Receptive Tour Operators

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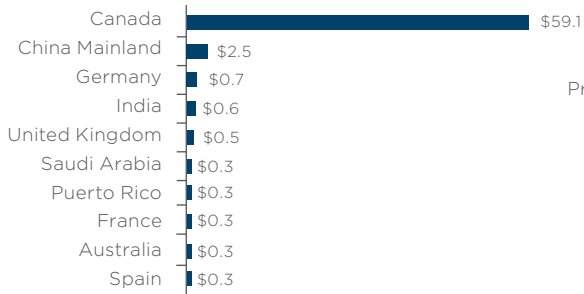
### Partnerships



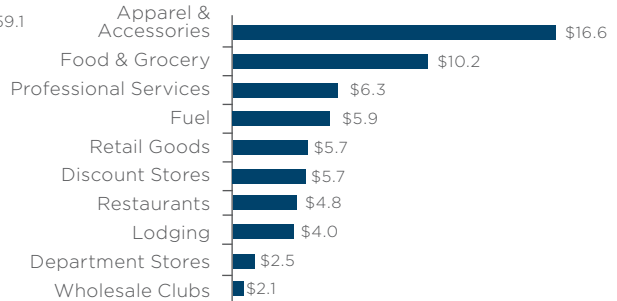
# VISAVUE®

VisaVue® provides transactional data and insight into consumers, who use Visa credit cards. We are able to identify and track the spending activity of international visitors throughout Niagara County. This provides performance measures highlighting: year over year growth of Visa card users in Niagara County, top market segments by spend, top originating countries by spend along with multiple other data points.

**Top Originating Countries by Spend amount (\$M US)**



**Top Market Segments by Spend Amount (\$M US)**



## WORLD PRIDE

From April 15-June 15 we ran native and display ads across Expedia Group’s ad network targeting users that were traveling to New York City for World Pride events. All ads drove users to a dedicated landing page on Expedia’s website.



<b>6,300</b> Room nights	<b>1,327</b> Clicks	<b>4,639</b> Travel Guide Requests	<b>130,585</b> 1 Minute 30 Seconds Time on Site
<b>2,363,315</b> Impressions	<b>427</b> Email Sign-Ups	<b>10,617</b> Travel Guide Online Views	<b>584,938</b> Hotel & Flight Searches (enriched data)





# LEISURE GROUP SALES

Leisure Group Sales focuses their efforts on increasing motor coach business to Niagara County while providing support to groups that are in the destination.



**TOTAL = 158 GROUPS\***



## Sales Missions

In 2019, we hosted two sales missions to Pennsylvania and Ohio to meet directly with twenty tour operators. The goal of these missions was to encourage tour operators to consider adding Niagara Falls USA to their group tour options. The results:



## Tradeshows



**Return on Investment – 9:1**

\*Above amount used in calculation of organization ROI on page 16.  
\*Motorcoach business booked by Destination Niagara USA Staff. Not all Motorcoach business is reported to our organization.

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# CONVENTION AND MEETING SALES

The Convention and Meeting Sales team continues to grow this market and to attract regional and national conferences along with New York State and National Associations. The team also focused more heavily on growing the SMERF (social, military, education, religious and fraternal) market and expanding services to in-market conventions.



**31**

Conventions/Meetings  
Booked in 2019

Total Room Nights:

**15,742**

EEI:

**\$12,104,157<sup>§</sup>**

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## Convention Social Geo-Targeting

In 2019, we executed geo-fence ad campaigns, which targeted two meeting planner tradeshow. The geo-fence technology pixelated users that were located within the defined target range around the conference location. The ads directed users to a dedicated landing page on the Niagara Falls USA website, which highlighted meeting planner destination attributes.



**83,442**

Total Impressions



**18,848**

Total Paid Reach



**190**

Total Link Clicks

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**45:1**

**Return on Investment**

<sup>§</sup> Event Impact Calculator is provided by Destinations International, a professional organization representing destination marketing organizations worldwide. Calculations are based on meeting/event type, season, room and number of attendees. Above amount used in calculation of organization ROI on page 16.

# MOVING VISITORS THROUGH NIAGARA COUNTY

We know Niagara Falls USA attracts visitors from all over the world, and we want to make sure everyone has an extraordinary experience. That's why we ensure every connection with our brand from the website and social media to our brand ambassadors exceeds expectations.



## Visitor Center

**In 2019, the Niagara Falls USA Official Visitor Center welcomed 133,089 visitors, which was a 4.3% decrease over 2018.**

## Retail

The retail shop in the Niagara Falls USA Official Visitor Center saw significant increases in 2019 with over 8,500 branded items sold, taking the Niagara Falls USA moniker all over the globe. We have sold over 12,000 inventory items since beginning retail in 2018.



## EXP Niagara

This free online training program provides the hospitality and tourism community with the training needed to enhance visitor experiences by educating them on our destination's tourism product as well as customer preferences.



**219 members of the hospitality and tourism community completed EXP Niagara during 2019, for a total of 728 Certified EXP Pros since the program's launch.**

## Ice Cream Appreciation Trail

In honor of National Travel & Tourism Week, in 2019, we introduced the Ice Cream Appreciation Trail the first week of May. In partnership with a local ice cream truck vendor, we traveled across Niagara County and passed out free ice cream to all of our hospitality and tourism partners to show our appreciation for all that they do for our visitors.



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## PRINT WORTHY

We produce several collateral pieces providing inspiration to visit or book a group/meeting in Niagara Falls USA. They motivate and encourage people to visit and explore Niagara County.



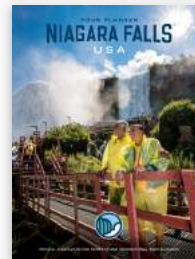
### Travel Guide

With a circulation of 500,000, the Travel Guide provides an in-depth platform on which to tell the real story of Niagara Falls USA inspiring visitors from all over the world.

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### Tour Planner

This sales tool is used for both domestic and international tour planners. It provides information including suggested itineraries and businesses that are group-friendly, encouraging planners to book in the destination.



### Meeting Planner Guide

As we continue to grow our meetings and convention business, our Meeting Planner Guide provides the tools needed to consider booking a meeting in Niagara Falls USA, including room specifications and unique venues in the region.

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### Outdoor Adventure Guide

As we continue to build on our Niagara Falls USA, Where Adventure Comes Naturally brand, we created The Niagara Falls USA Outdoor Guide featuring year-round fishing, birding, hiking and biking opportunities. This guide is distributed at outdoor consumer shows as well as our Visitor Center and is a popular planning tool for our in market visitor.



# OUTDOOR PROMOTIONS

Niagara Falls USA is known for the wide variety of outdoor adventure it has to offer—and we're making sure that it is well known. From articles in national publications to hosting national events, we are recognized as a destination of choice for outdoor enthusiasts everywhere.

## Publications

TV, radio, digital and print advertising in key markets have increased our exposure in publications including Fishing 411 with the World Fishing Network, Lake Ontario Counties Trout and Salmon Newspaper, NY Outdoor News Newspaper, Lake Ontario United, WLVL, & Eastern Fly Fishing.

## The Outdoor Beat

This LCTV show, hosted by Bill Hilts, Jr. completed its fifth full year and is one of the most popular outdoor shows in Western New York.

## Fishing & Outdoor Expo

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Niagara Fishing and Outdoor Expo was held at the Conference and Event Center. The event saw a decrease in attendance due to weather. Booth space from vendors was sold out and this provided additional overnight stays in Niagara Falls hotels, generating revenue for local businesses in January, a typically slower month.



## Derbies and Tournaments

We support the following tournaments with financial, marketing and physical resources.

### 35th Annual Lake Ontario Pro Am Salmon Team Tournament:

- 50 teams from around the Northeast
- Approximately 300 people in the destination for a minimum of three days

### 43rd Annual Greater Niagara Fish Odyssey Derby:

- Approximately 400 participants

### Lake Ontario Counties Trout and Salmon Derbies:

- Three annual events (Spring, Summer, Fall)
- Approximate number of attendees:
  - » Spring: more than 4,000
  - » Summer: 3,000
  - » Fall: 7,000

## Outdoor Media Relations Highlights:



520

Outdoor coverage across all media channels (print, television, online, etc.)



34

Visiting Media Hosted



333,079,908

Total number of media impressions



## Birds on the Niagara

The inaugural Birds on the Niagara event was held Jan. 25-26, 2019 sponsored by the Niagara River Greenway Commission, NYS Parks, Buffalo Audubon and more as we assisted with the marketing and promotion of this new winter event in our very own globally-recognized Important Bird Area.

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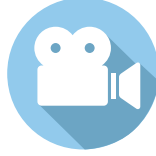
## BUFFALO NIAGARA FILM COMMISSION

The Buffalo Niagara Film Commission promotes film production throughout WNY. These numbers reflect only Niagara County.



**22**

Completed Productions



**28**

Completed Scouts  
& Inquiries

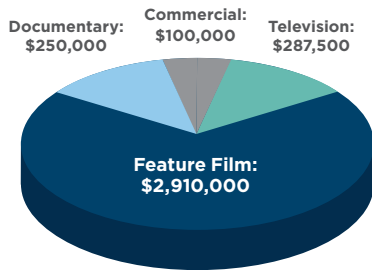


**53**

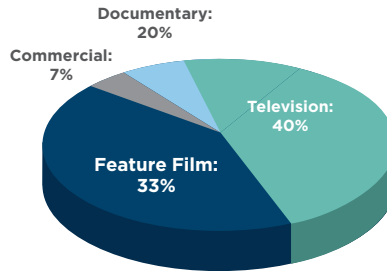
Production Days

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### Local Spend By Type



### Production Days By Type



### TOTAL ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT

**\$3,547,500<sup>§</sup>**

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**Return on Investment – 79:1**

Totals determined by production reports, and AFCI calculations based upon industry accepted totals including production day counts, production type, and crew member counts in Niagara County

<sup>§</sup>Above amount used in calculation of organization ROI on page 16.

# BOARD & COMMITTEES

## 2019 Destination Niagara USA Board of Directors

Name	Business	Category
Carol Calato	Calato Manufacturing	General Business
John DiGuiseppe	Platter's Chocolates	General Business
Mark Laurrie	Niagara Falls City Schools	General Business
Lucy Muto	M&T Bank	General Business
Lynn Oswald	Small Business Development Center	General Business
Doug Nickerson	American Niagara Hosp/Sheraton Niagara Falls	Hospitality/Tourism
Melissa Free	Seneca Gaming Corporation	Hospitality/Tourism
Galeb Rizek	Econo Lodge/Comfort Inn & Suites	Hospitality/Tourism
Lou Paonessa	NYPA - Niagara Power Vista	Hospitality/Tourism
Brett Stewart	Merani Hotel Group	Hospitality/Tourism
Mayor Paul Dyster	City of Niagara Falls	Investor Appointment
Mayor Michelle Roman	City of Lockport	Investor Appointment
Richard Updegrove	Niagara County Legislature Representative	Investor Appointment
Angela Berti	NYS Parks (Permanent Seat)	Ex-Officio/Non-Voting
	NCCC/Culinary Institute/Hospitality	Ex-Officio/Non-Voting
John Percy	Destination Niagara USA	Ex-Officio/Non-Voting
Anthony Vilardo	USA Niagara Development	Ex-Officio/Non-Voting
	Niagara University	Ex-Officio/Non-Voting

## Committees

<b>Executive</b>	Brett Stewart	Galeb Rizek	Lynn Oswald	Lucy Muto
<b>Title</b>	Chair	Vice Chair	Treasurer	Secretary

Finance
Galeb Rizek
Lucy Muto
Doug Nickerson
Lynn Oswald
Carol Calato
Mark Laurrie
Brett Stewart

Nominating
Lucy Muto
Galeb Rizek
Mark Laurrie
Brett Stewart

# FINANCE

## 2018 Financial Summary\*

Revenue		% of Revenue
Niagara Falls Bed Tax	\$2,227,611	62%
Niagara County Bed Tax	\$207,589	6%
Lockport Bed Tax	\$76,617	2%
Grants	\$121,628	3%
Business Generated Revenue	\$853,751	24%
Retail	\$107,998	3%
Casino	\$0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,595,194</b>	<b>100%</b>

Expenses		% of Revenue
Personnel	\$1,272,894	30%
Marketing	\$2,109,597	50%
Group Leisure	\$87,615	2%
Convention and Meeting	\$165,199	4%
International Markets	\$159,521	4%
Visitor Services	\$136,097	3%
Outdoor Promotion	\$90,218	2%
General and Administration	\$228,515	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,249,656</b>	<b>100%</b>

Overall Organization ROI – **36:1**

## Hotel Data

SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH DATA (STR REPORT)



**\$112.42**

Average Daily Rate  
(2.4% decrease from 2018)



**58%**

Occupancy  
(1.7% increase from 2018)



**\$65.15**

REVPAR  
(0.8% decrease from 2018)

**SUPPLY:**  
**1,197,538**  
(0.8% increase from 2018)

**DEMAND:**  
**694,012**  
(2.5% increase from 2018)

\*Interim unaudited statements



## Destination Niagara USA

**Our Mission:** We are a private non-profit with a mission to expand the economic prosperity of the Niagara Falls USA communities by generating individual and group visitation.



**Positioning Statement:** For those who would rather go and do rather than just see, Niagara Falls USA is the embodiment of America's adventurous spirit, connecting people to nature through immersive experiences that move, challenge and inspire them.