

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

A summary report of the activities of the Tourism Golden Association
January 1st to December 31st, 2023

Key Reporting areas include Destination Performance, DMO Performance, Destination Management,
Destination Marketing, Visitor Services, and Financials



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PO Box 20181
Golden
BC V0A 1H0
Phone: 250-439-1111
E-Mail: manager@tourismgolden.com



Directors, Officers, Committees & Staff

Board of Directors from May 2023

Elected

Representing Town of Golden Accommodators

Jordan Egan, Basecamp Lodge Golden

Atma Sandher, Ponderosa Motor Inn

Gaurav Randhawa, Prestige Inn Golden

Representing General Accommodators (all locations)

Brandy Beliveau, Bellstar Hotels & Resort

Representing Area A Accommodators

John Lush, Lush Mountain Accommodations

Jo Best, Mount 7 Lodges

Representing Tourism Operators

Graeme Kreiner, Golden Golf Club

Ryan Johannesen, Glacier Raft Company

Toby Barrett, Kicking Horse Mountain Resort

Tristan MacLaggan, Golden Skybridge

Officers

President Toby Barrett

Vice President John Lush

Treasurer Graeme Kreiner

Secretary Brandy Beliveau

Committees

Finance Committee

Graeme Kreiner (Treasurer), Toby Barrett, Tristan MacLaggan

HR Committee

Jo Best, Toby Barrett, Brandy Beliveau

Stakeholder Committee

Atma Sandher, John Lush, Toby Barrett, Ryan Johannesen

Governance (Constitution and Bylaw) Committee

Atma Sandher, Toby Barrett, Ryan Johannesen

Co-op Programs Committee

Atma Sandher, Brandy Beliveau, Jo Best,

Staff

Executive Director Joanne Sweeting

Communications Manager Andy Brown

Marketing & Operations Hugh Brown

Destination Services Mgr. Mariela Encina-Lanus

Social Media & Asset Dev. Alison Morphy

The board establishes the vision, mission, and objectives of the organisation and approves the annual marketing plan and budgets. It ensures fiscal responsibility and fulfilment of the organisation's mission.

About Tourism Golden

- ❑ A non-profit society incorporated in 2006 and mandated as the DMO and eligible entity until July 2027.
- ❑ The DMO area contains the Town of Golden and CSRD Area A, not including Yoho National Park.
- ❑ Representing tourism stakeholders (accommodations, activity operators and attractions).
- ❑ Primarily funded by the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) leveraged with grant monies and 'pay to play' stakeholder co-op advertising sales.
- ❑ Governed by a board of 11 directors representing accommodations and tourism operators.

Mandate

Tourism Golden Association will lead, direct, and manage destination marketing activities and support tourism development initiatives on behalf of Golden and Kicking Horse Country by maintaining a collaborative and inclusive industry driven organization, and by providing opportunities for stakeholders to increase revenues. We will provide a consistent voice for Golden and Kicking Horse Country in the tourism marketplace.

Tourism Vision

"We will inspire travellers who share our community's values to stay longer and experience Golden, creating deep connections and lasting memories."

Tourism Mission

"Tourism Golden works collaboratively with its stakeholders and leverages its resources effectively to execute research-informed destination management strategies that responsibly grow Golden's year-round visitor economy and contribute to the community's economic sustainability and resident quality of life."

Values & Guiding Principles

As we progress towards our vision and fulfill our mission, Tourism Golden will make strategic, research informed decisions, and conduct itself in a manner that is:

- ❑ Respectful of our community, our stakeholders, our partners, and the environment
- ❑ Inclusive and Collaborative
- ❑ Transparent and Accountable

Executive Summary

2023 was the first full year of receiving 3% MRDT which provided the significant impetus for increased activity across all strategies and several new projects.

Highlights of key performance indicators include:

- ✓ 624,170 overnight stays
- ✓ Overnight visits increased by 24%
- ✓ \$63.5 million estimated gross accommodation revenues
- ✓ Accommodation revenues increased by 7.8%
 - ✓ +6.5% hotel/motel
 - ✓ +10% short term rentals
- ✓ ADR increased by 8.7%
- ✓ Hotel/motel occupancy decreased by 2%
- ✓ Shoulder season occupancy increased against 2019.
- ✓ Length of stay 1.8 nights.
- ✓ TG Achieved Rainbow Registered Accreditation.
- ✓ Developed Indigenous relationships & educational assets.
- ✓ \$3.2 million accommodation referral value.
- ✓ 18% increase in accommodation referral value.
- ✓ MRDT revenues for the DMO increased 68%.¹
- ✓ 10,500 visitors served at the Visitor Centre

The significant increase in inflation (6.8%) and rising mortgage rates seemed to have no impact on visitation and tourism revenues in Golden in 2023. We did continue to feel the impact of the extended closures of Highway 1-, and 90-minute diversion for the Kicking Horse Canyon Project in April and May, and to a lesser extent in the month of October. With the project now substantially complete after 3 years of construction we look forward to improving

visitation in future years during the shoulder months.

Unsurprisingly, the largest impact on visitation was wildfires and smoke. The BC travel ban imposed at the end of August 2023 saw a small boost to occupancy as immediate travel plans were forced to change. The overall outcome, even despite the lifting of the ban in the following week, was to signal the consumer appetite to travel into BC and effectively end the season. Accommodators reported an increase in cancellations.

Housing availability and affordability, and the resulting impact on labour attraction and retention remained an issue. The 2023 Stakeholder Survey ranked 'Affordable housing' as #3 in Tourism Golden's Important Business. Workforce and affordable housing projects are in development by Golden Community Economic Development, and we have committed to support them but were not able to include specific projects in the 2024 annual plan as no project plans exist.

With the increase in MRDT and the development of the Destination Management plan and other projects launched in 2023 we hired a Destination Services Manager in January. We also hired a replacement for the Marketing & Administration position in April and were able to complete the year with an extremely strong, committed and productive team.

We had been over capacity in the small office on 9th Ave. N. for some time but the increase in FTEs and their workload meant that it would be untenable to continue in that location with moving to a hybrid office-remote situation. In October, we

¹ When adjusted for the shift from 2 – 3% MRDT from July 2022. Gross unadjusted change from 2019 – 2023 is 118%

were finally able to move to a larger, professional office in a higher profile location that future proofs the growth of the organization and its resources, as well as providing an improved experience for visitors that seek information when the seasonal visitor centre is closed.

The 2023 AGM was held in May, and we were honoured to welcome Richard Porges, President & CEO of Destination BC, as the keynote speaker who presented on DBC's corporate strategy and goals, as well as their Iconics, Destination Development and other programs as well as the B.C. industry performance. The event was well attended by industry and community organisations as well as local government. The Board of Directors remained consistent with previous years and continued to support staff in the tactical implementation of the annual plan and strategic priorities.

The 5-year strategic plan identifies three priorities:

- ❑ *Destination Marketing,*
- ❑ *Destination Recovery, and*
- ❑ *Destination Management.*

Some of the notable tactics were:

Destination Marketing:

- ❑ Destination asset creation for marketing and destination management projects.

Destination Management:

- ❑ Launch of the Destination Management plan project.
- ❑ Winter shuttle services partnership.
- ❑ Resident engagement & sentiment survey.
- ❑ Stakeholder survey.
- ❑ Goldenguide.ca online destination education program for residents & tourism workers.

- ❑ Launched workinggolden.ca free job listing platform supported by social media advertising.
- ❑ MRDT member support programs including free advertising and Check-in Canada listing.
- ❑ Support to GCED on housing initiatives.

As a Resort Municipality, Golden benefits from RMI funding and under the 2022 – 2025 Resort Development Strategy and multi-year agreements with the Town of Golden we received funds from to support in-destination winter shuttle services, the development and launch of the workinggolden.ca job portal and the Golden Guide and Golden Pass online destination training and rewards programs which launched in early 2023.

The stakeholder survey conducted in fall 2023 will become an annual exercise, as required by the MRDT program for destinations collecting 3%, which will enable us to track our performance as a DMO as well as stakeholder opinion on several topics including destination sustainability, prioritising the DMO's activities, the rate of industry growth and barriers to growth. We are pleased that 62% of respondents rated our performance on the key strategic objectives as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

As is typical, we did not receive high season MRDT until Q3, leading to a strong cash position at the end of the fiscal and great start to 2024 tactical activity. That said, although gross MRDT revenues increased by 47% against 2022 (or +17% when adjusted for 2% collection months in 2022), there were notable discrepancies in the disbursements for the months of September and December which skewed the final 4-months of the year. September can be attributed to wildfire and travel ban disruption, but the December discrepancy remains an unattributable mystery, particularly when the

amounts differed significantly from the amounts indicated by the STR and AirDNA reports. Concerns were registered with the Ministry of Finance.

We recognize these factors that make our success possible:

1. The *MRDT program* which provides reliable multi-year funding for tourism marketing and projects.
2. The focus of Tourism Golden staff and board on *strategic planning informed by research and data*.
3. Tourism Golden stakeholders who *invest and innovate* in products and experiences, engage with us in *collectively promoting Golden* and *support our efforts* in content creation and media relations.
4. The Town of Golden and CSRD Area A who support our position and efforts as the eligible entity and lead organisation for tourism.
5. Destination BC and Destination Canada who provided consistent leadership, research, and support and who continue to *innovate in tourism marketing and industry programs*, opportunities and partnerships as well as delivering successful provincial marketing campaigns.
6. Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture's *Festival, Fairs and Events Program* which provides funding for events.
7. The *RMI program* which provides project funding via contribution agreements with the Town of Golden.
8. TIABC and the BCHA whose collaboration and tireless advocacy for the industry as well as efficient communication and meaningful insights were extremely valuable.

Strategic Objectives and Measure of Success

The 5-year strategic plan is the guiding document for the annual marketing plan and tactical activity. Tourism Golden's five-year strategy is designed to deliver measurable results in the pursuit of seven core objectives across four themes:

Economic Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase overall value of the tourism economy • Increase average length of visitor stay at all times of year • Increase shoulder season occupancy levels and rate
Visitor Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect more visitors to remarkable experiences via multiple channels • Educate visitors to experience a safe and responsible vacation
Stakeholder Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver enhanced stakeholder programs and support
Resident/Community Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase resident understanding of the value of the local tourism industry and support for the tourism industry • Balance resident values with visitor demand and business needs

The methodology for measuring progress against each of these objectives is as follows:

	Objective	Methodology	Measure
1.0	Increase overall value of tourism economy	Value of tourism input/output model baseline established in 2019	Value of tourism economy in 2025 equivalent or better than 2019
2.0	Increase average length of stay at all times of year	Accommodation reporting	Average length of stay increases year over year
3.0	Increase shoulder season occupancy and rate (April/May and October/ November)	Use MRDT collected in these months as a proxy for performance	MRDT collected in shoulder seasons increases year over year
4.0	Connect more visitors to destination experiences through multiple channels	Visitor Intercept Survey Visitor Centre Stats Mobile engagements	Increasing engagements with visitors in destination
5.0	Educate visitors to experience a safe and sustainable vacation	Visitor Intercept Surveys	Visitor awareness and understanding levels
6.0	Deliver enhanced stakeholder programs and supports	Stakeholder survey	Top Box ratings
7.0	Residents of Golden understand the value of tourism and support the local tourism industry	Periodic resident survey	Maintain support for tourism industry
8.0	Balance resident values with visitor demand and business needs	Periodic resident survey	Resident sentiment index

Destination Performance 2023

Destination performance reflects Tourism Golden's on-going marketing activity and industry support as well as key trends and events that disrupt or support visitation as detailed in the situational analysis.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Recovery quicker than expected.

Inflation 6.8%.

Wildfires & BC travel ban.

Kicking Horse Canyon Project extended closures.

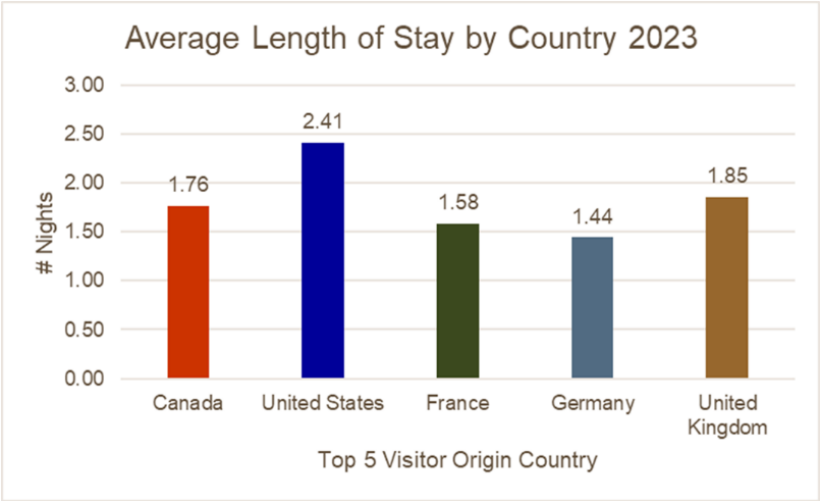
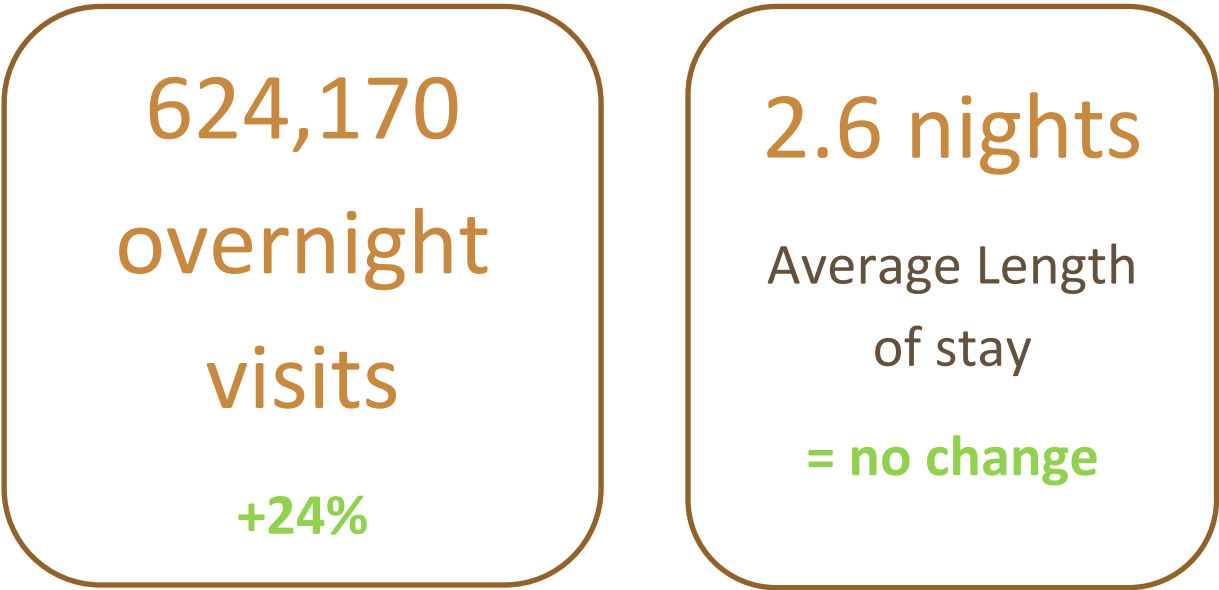
Labour shortages.

Housing availability & affordability.

MRDT increased to 3%

It is rewarding to note the significant increase in overnight visits.

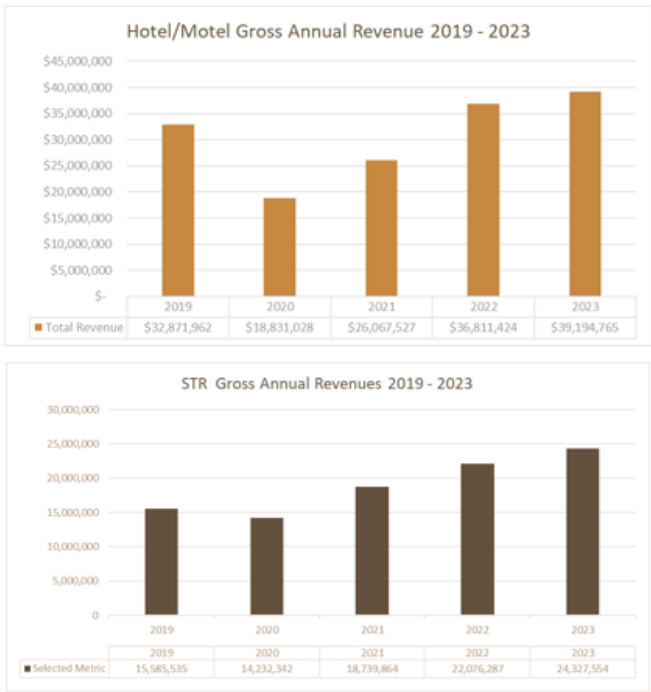
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The average length of stay displayed here is taken from the 2023/24 Annual Visitor Study conducted online between May 2023 and April 2024. It is consistent with 2019 intercept visitor study conducted in 2019 which recorded an average stay of 2.5 days in the summer and 3.5 in winter. Interestingly and somewhat confusingly is the data collected using Telus Insights shows the average stay to be 1.8 nights. Whatever the reason, we continue to remain focussed on encouraging multi-night, multi-activity stays and hyper-focused marketing on the visitor markets that demonstrate the highest value in length of stay and in-destination spend, as well as visitor segments whose values and align with our destination’s.

² Source: Telus Insights

Despite hotel/motel occupancy rates declining slightly from 2022 overall revenues increased reflecting the increase in ARD and RevPAR. STR revenues increased by 10% compared to the 6.5% in hotel/motel revenues.

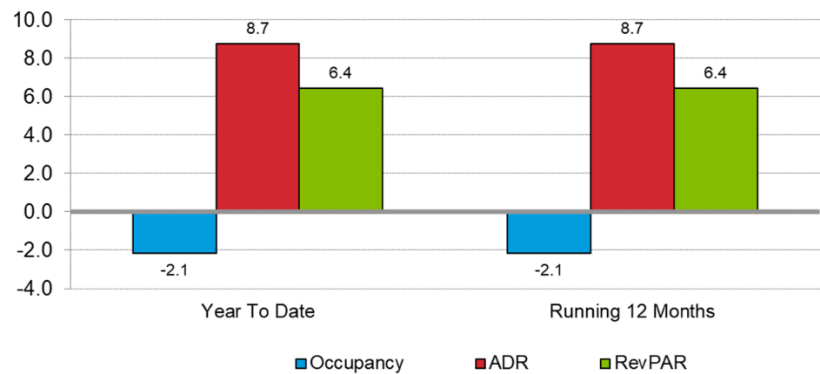


**Estimated Direct
Accommodation
Revenues**

\$63,522,319
+7.8%

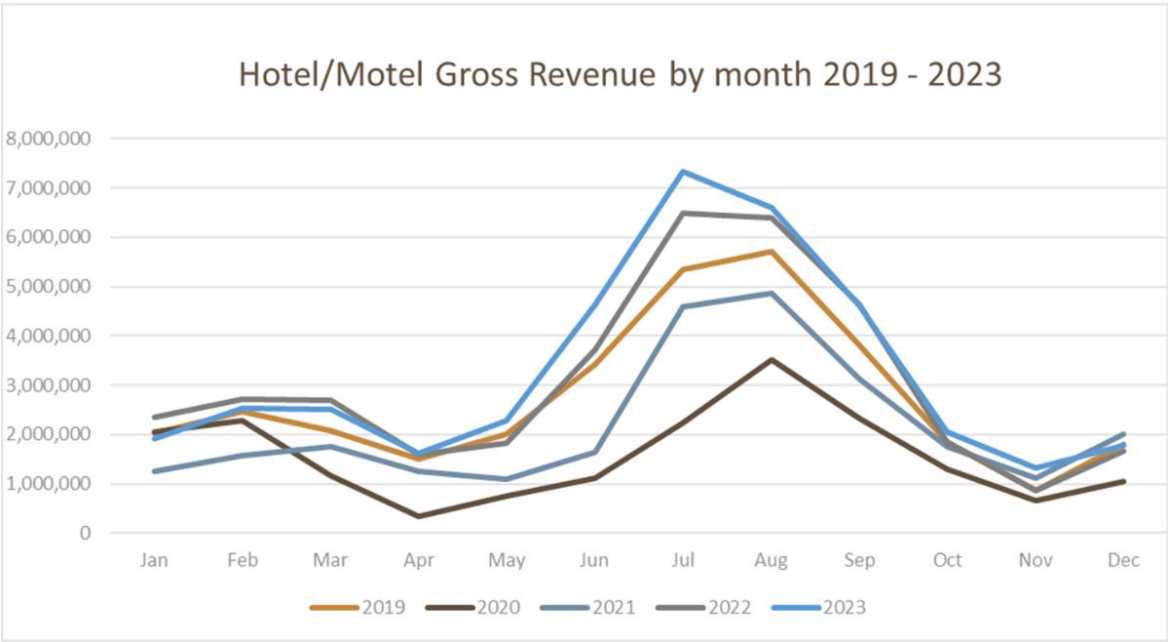
Source: STR & AirDNA Destination Reports

**Hotel/Motel Overall Percent Change
@Dec 2023**

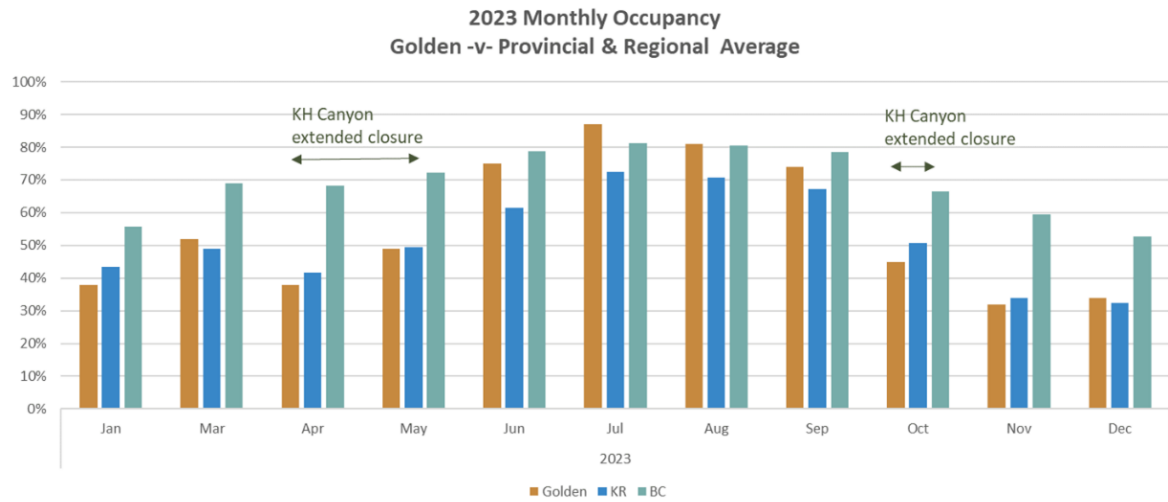


As previously mentioned, despite the off-season closures of Highway 1 for the Kicking Horse Canyon Project it is rewarding to see the response to our focussed spring, fall and road trip marketing campaigns have been successful in increasing gross MRDT revenues during spring and fall when comparing 2023 to 2019. MRDT revenues would naturally increase by 50% as a result of the change from 2% to 3% in July 2022, however, even the adjusted revenues show a net increase in spring of 88% in spring and 49% in fall.

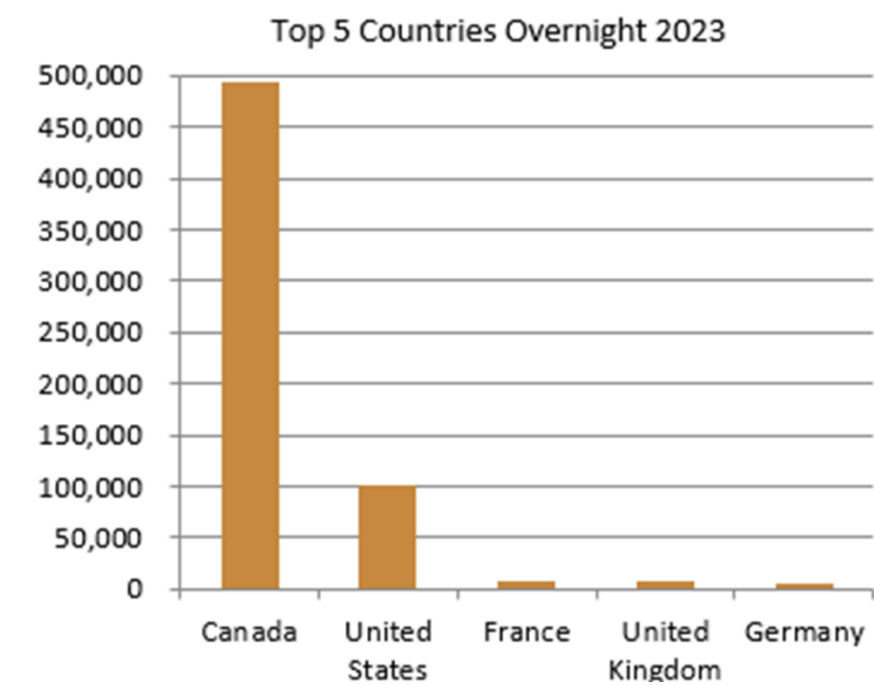
Whilst the needle is moving on increasing revenues in shoulder seasons, hampered by the extended closures of Highway 1 during April, early May, October and November annually since September 2020, most accommodation revenue is generated between June and September.



The 2022 annual report highlighted that occupancy in Golden outperformed the provincial average. A significant rebound in provincial visitation meant that this was not the case in 2023, however occupancy in Golden did outperform the regional average for the months of May – September and, December.

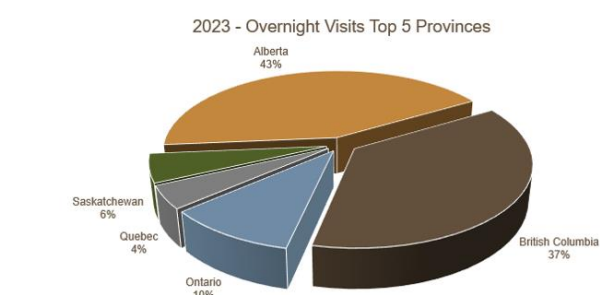


As is typical, Canada is the primary market for overnight visitation in Golden. US visitors are the second largest followed by France, UK and Germany with significantly smaller numbers.



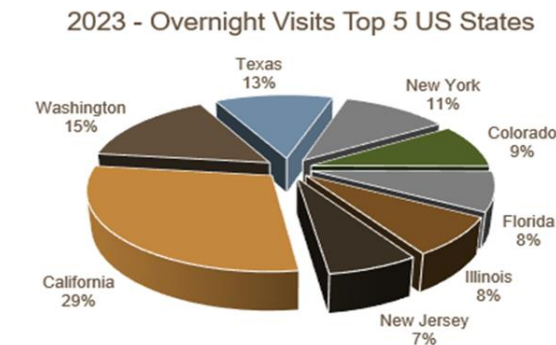
Alberta and B.C. remain the primary producers of Canadian overnight stays. California and Washington in the US. These reflect the identified target markets in the 5-year Strategic Plan and annual marketing plan and budget.

493,660 Overnight Canadian visitors



Source: Telus Insights Dec 2023- Golden-Columbia

100,050 Overnight US visitors



Source: Telus Insights Dec 2023- Golden-Columbia

2023 DMO PERFORMANCE - HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Achieved Rainbow Registered Accreditation
- ✓ 121 million digital advertising impressions
- ✓ Digital impressions increased by 10%
- ✓ 344k website users
- ✓ Accommodation listing referral \$3.2 million
- ✓ +18% referral value
- ✓ 10,582 visitors served +21%
- ✓ Indigenous Learning project Phase 1

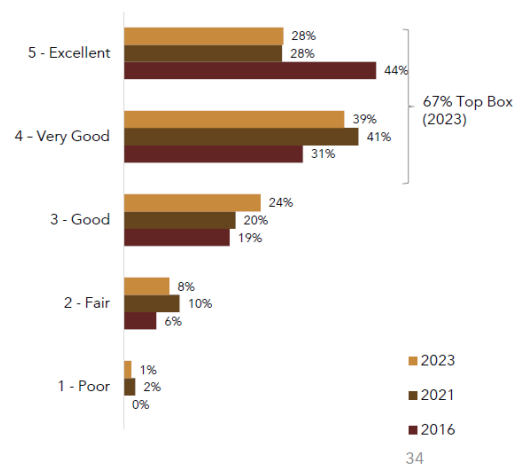
Stakeholder Survey Results

67% of respondents in the 2023 Stakeholder Survey rated the overall performance of Tourism Golden as 'very good or 'excellent'. Also noteworthy is that only 1% rated our performance as 'poor'. The slight decrease against previous surveys may be attributed to the implementation of the additional 1% of MRDT which some eligible accommodators did not support.

Stakeholders were asked to rate the overall performance of TG.

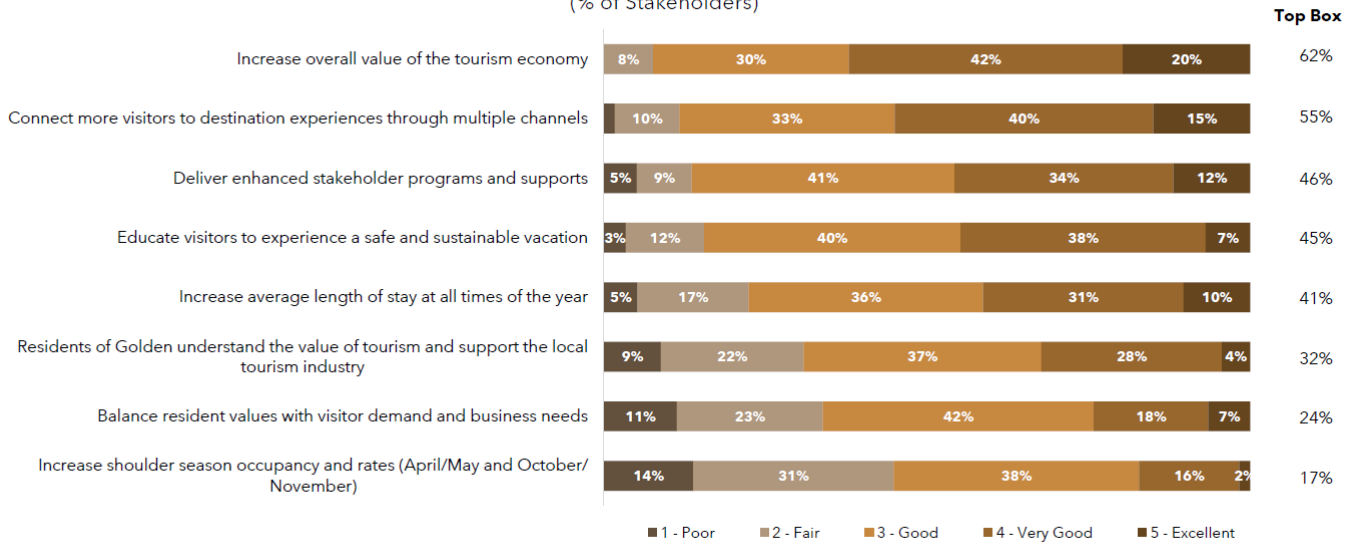
- In 2023, 67% of stakeholders rated TG's overall performance as 'very good' or 'excellent'. This is down 2 percentage points from 2021 (69%).
- It is noteworthy that only 1% rated Tourism Golden's overall performance as 'poor'; down from 2% in 2021..

Tourism Golden Overall Performance
(% of Stakeholders)



Taking everything into account, how would you rate the overall performance of Tourism Golden? n = 60.

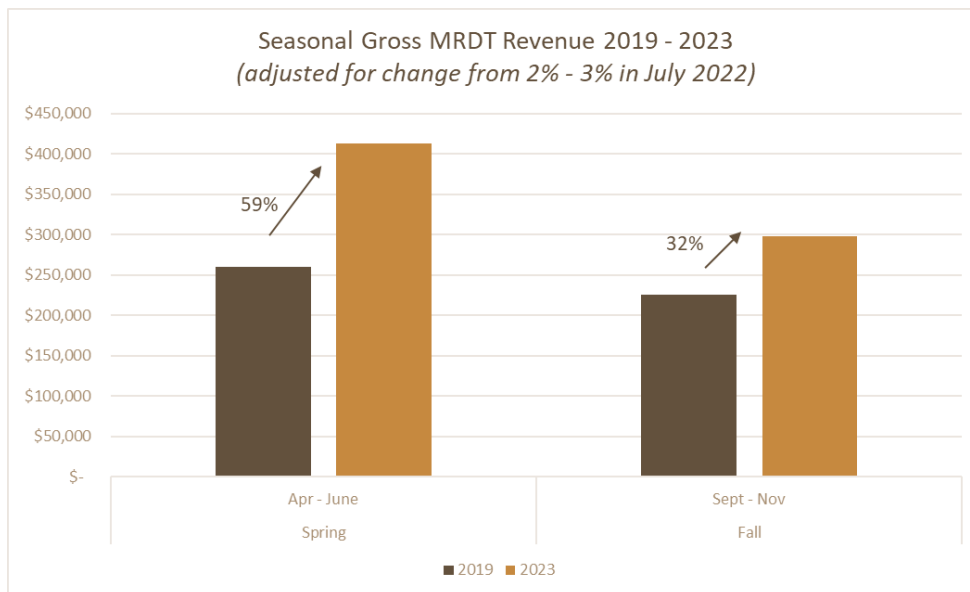
Tourism Golden Strategic Objective Performance (% of Stakeholders)



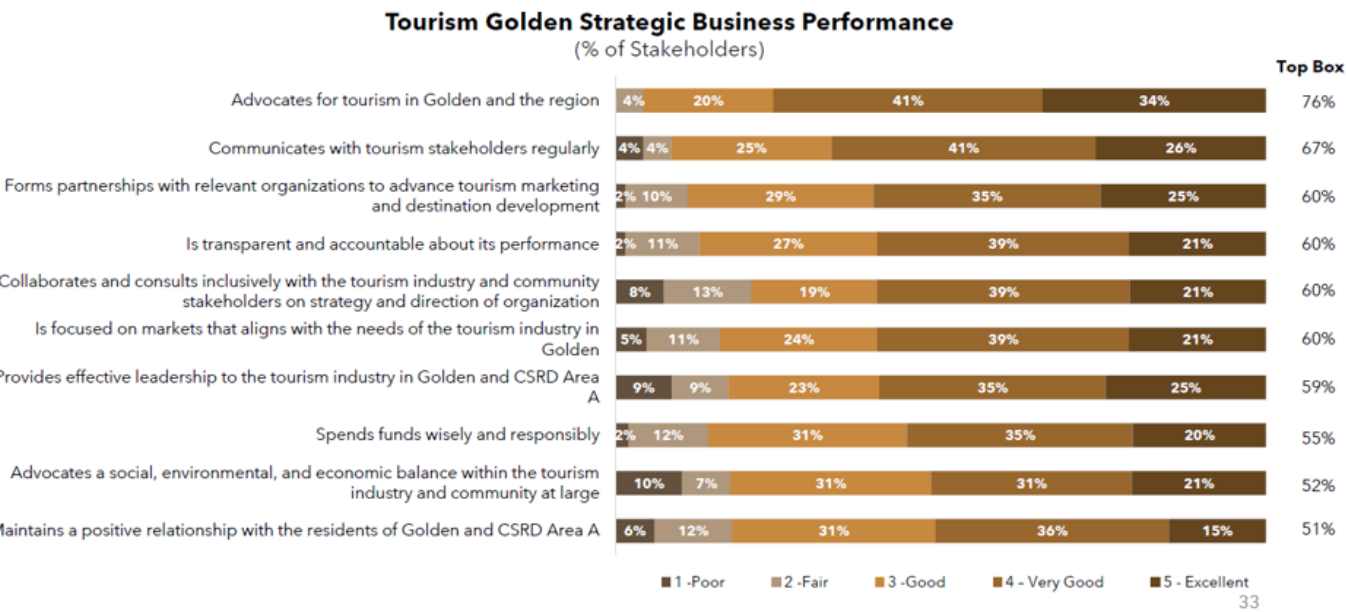
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In Tourism Golden's 2022-2027 strategic plan, there are four themes that directly impact the tourism industry include: 1. Economic Contribution, 2. Visitor Experience, 3. Stakeholder Experience, and, 4. Resident/Community Experience. Based on these themes, 8 key objectives were identified. How would you rate Tourism Golden's performance on each of those objectives.

Interestingly we rated lowest on achieving increased shoulder season occupancy (arguably more difficult with multi-week extended closures of highway 1 in April, May and October 2020 to 2023), however, comparing gross MRDT revenues (adjusting them for the change to 3% in July 2022) in 2023 against 2019 indicates an increase of 59% in spring shoulder accommodation revenues and 32% in fall revenues. These figures significantly exceed the cumulative inflation rate of 19.67% indicated by the bank of Canada.

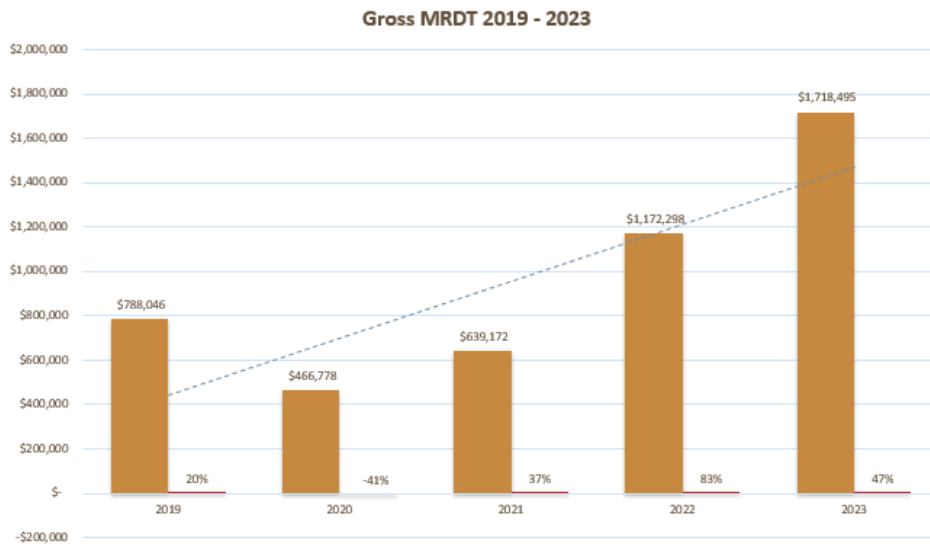


It is rewarding to see that stakeholders strongly rate our performance in advocacy and leadership, communication and consultation, marketing and destination development, transparency and accountability, and fiscal responsibility.



Tourism Golden strives to collaborate and be an inclusive, industry-driven organization. How do you rate Tourism Golden's performance on the following ways of conducting business. n=49-70.

As demonstrated below, the gross MRDT revenue has increased by 118%. When adjusted for the shift from 2% to 3% in 2023, the net increase is approximately 68%.



Destination Management

2023 began the shift to recognise and incorporate destination management into our activities. A robust Destination Management planning project launched in fall 2023 and is due for completion in summer 2024. In advance of the DM project and working towards our goal of becoming an inclusive and diverse destination and organisation, we were the first business in Golden to become Rainbow Registered in the CGLCC program. Having completed that, we created a program to support member businesses to achieve the accreditation. Prior to the program launch we hosted an introductory webinar with the CGLCC and hosted a free CGLCC webinar for our members and TG staff on 'Navigating 2SLGBTQ+ Diversity & Inclusion in the Tourism Industry' in fall 2023.

- ✓ YYC – Golden-Kicking Horse
- ✓ In-destination



Tourism Golden partnered with Kicking Horse Mountain Resort and received additional funding from RMI funds for the inaugural 2022/2023 season of the seasonal winter airport and in-destination shuttles. Ridership on the airport shuttle service from Calgary to Golden & Kicking Horse was limited to 131 passengers, hampered by late product launching late in 2022. The Golden-Kicking Horse Connector usage was strong with 6,200 riders. The second season (2023-2024) numbers were significantly better, benefiting from targeting tour operators at the Mountain Travel Symposium in spring 2023 and a longer lead-in time for consumer marketing.

Other Destination Management projects included the custom Golden job board for local employers and employees www.workinggolden.ca. Launched in Feb 2023, the website has had 15,000 users since launch.

The Golden Guide online destination education program for seasonal front-line workers was created with the objective of having 'ambassadors' at all direct and indirect visitor touchpoints able to provide visitors with informed and consistent information about primary experiences, Indigenous peoples and history, as well as highlighting the value of tourism and the visitor economy. The program is self-directed and consists of 10 transcribed video modules with links to additional information. Launched in early summer and supported by a seasonal rewards program the program had 283 graduates in 2023.



Course Summary

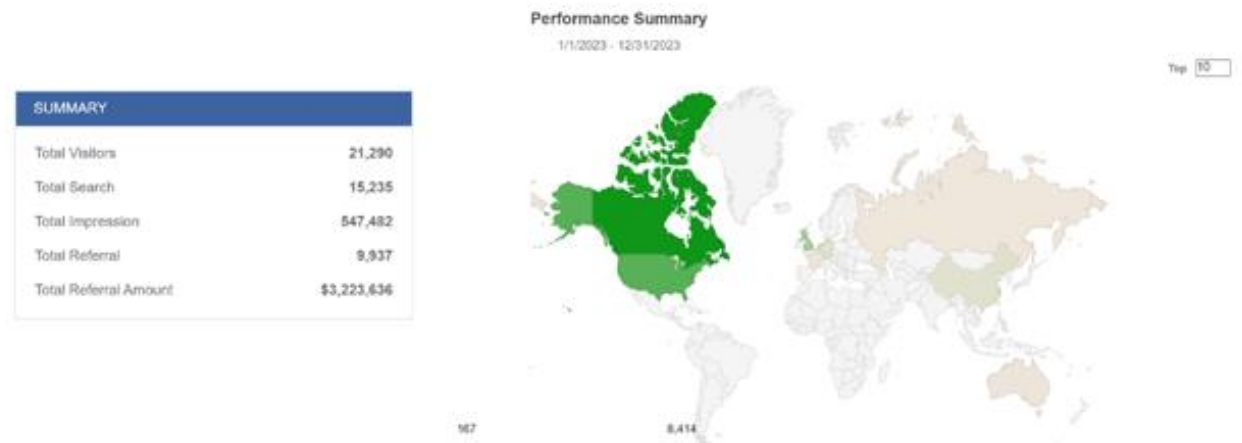
Welcome to the Golden Guide, a 10-module course that looks at Golden as a destination and what it has to offer visitors during their stay. This program is for community champions, like yourself, who regularly interact with visitors. The intention is to provide you with information and resources that you need to help visitors have exceptional experiences.

Tourism is a big economic driver in Golden, and you're an important part of this whole process. You can help protect our community and environmental values while also encouraging a prosperous tourism industry.



Stakeholder Support & Programs

The Board supported the continuation of the recovery programs implemented during the pandemic to support member. These include free advertising for MRDT-collecting members in owned marketing collateral as well as accommodation referrals via the Check In Canada search and referral booking platform. Data from this platform clearly demonstrates the value of the Tourism Golden website and app in providing over \$3 million in referrals, an increase of 18% against



2022.

Other stakeholder co-op programs continued.

☐ Co-op Photo & Video Shoots Winter & Summer

- ☐ 50% co-op support for professional seasonal photo & video shoots
- ☐ 29 video & photo shoots
- ☐ 21 partners with new assets

☐ Events Hosting Co-op Program

- ☐ 50% matching funding for eligible local hosting expenses
- ☐ 3 Events

☐ MRDT-collecting Member Support Program

- ☐ Free Check in Canada Referral listing \$300 value
- ☐ Free Travel Planner 1/18th advert \$235 value
- ☐ Free tourismgolden.com website listing \$80 value

☐ Media Hub image & video

☐ Shared industry research

☐ Subsidised 3rd party advertising



Tourism Golden also provided a free 3-hour CGLCC workshop 'Navigating 2SLGBTQ+ Diversity & Inclusion in the Tourism Industry' for all stakeholder businesses and organisations. All opportunities for training or grant applications are communicated via our twice-monthly Stakeholder News e-blasts.

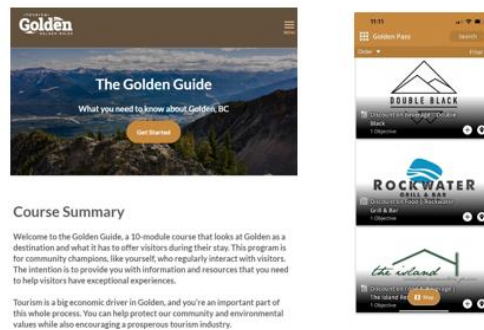
With the demise of the WorkBC Job Board, and in response to our stakeholders identifying worker attraction and retention as a critical issue, we launched the custom workinggolden.ca job board. A paid social media campaign ran continuously in targeted domestic and international markets with working visa programs.

- ✓ Custom Golden job board [workinGolden.ca](https://workinggolden.ca)
- ✓ Launched Feb 2023
- ✓ 15,000 users



Recognising the return of international and domestic seasonal workers with little knowledge of the destination, we also created and launched [the 'Golden Guide'](#) and 'Golden Pass' rewards program. This custom online destination education aims to provide an overview of the destination, its history and Indigenous peoples as well as ensuring a consistent approach to referring visitors to owned and credible information sources. Following the launch success with seasonal workers, the program was rolled out to all residents, creating a wonderful network of community ambassadors. The goal is to add new video modules annually and create a visitor-facing version of the program.

- ✓ The Golden Guide Online destination education for residents & front-line workers
- ✓ 283 graduates
- ✓ Golden Pass Rewards program



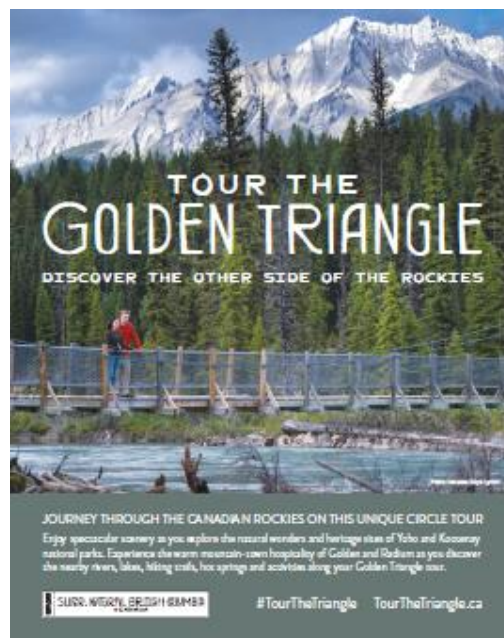
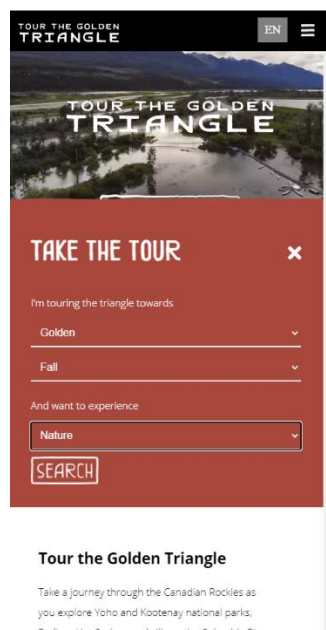
Marketing Summary

The [2022-2027 Strategic Plan](#) and the 2023 Marketing Plan identify the marketing objectives, target markets, marketing strategies and budgeted spend.

As previously mentioned, tactical marketing activity expenses increased by 43%, representing 55% of overall expenditure. We continued to focus on driving shoulder season and winter visitation, and longer stays in Golden.

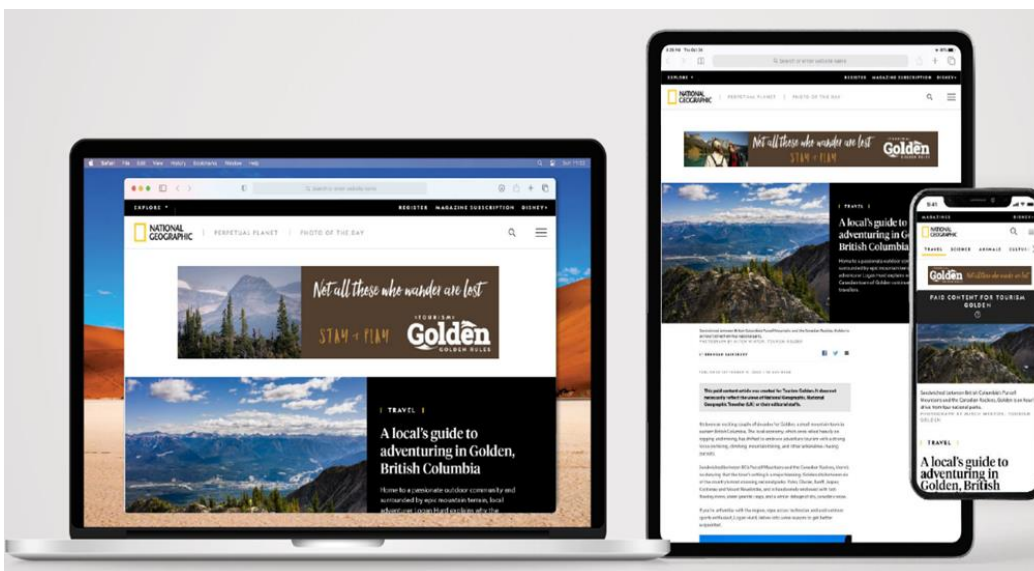
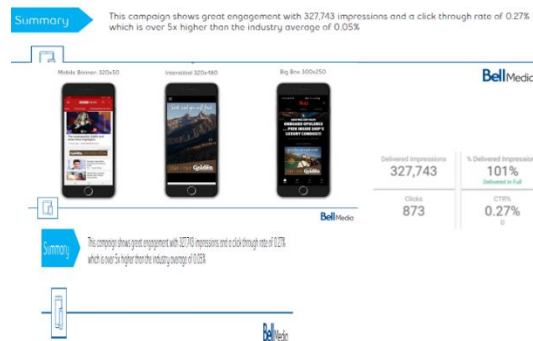
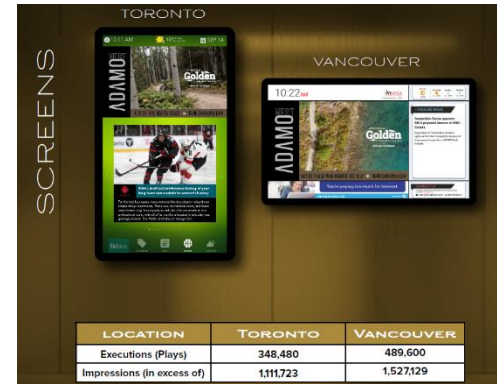
Through the DBC Co-op Marketing program we participated with CDMOs and activity associations on the following:

- ☐ Golden Triangle (Hwy 93/95/1 road trip/tour)
- ☐ BC Bird Trail (Columbia Valley Bird Trail partnership)
- ☐ Kootenay Dirt (mountain biking)
- ☐ Kootenay XC (Nordic ski)
- ☐ Sled Kootenay (snowmobiling)
- ☐ Fishing BC
- ☐ BC Ale Trail



Advertising

- ❑ Target audiences continue to include target US states, UK, Australia, Germany, Netherlands and France as well as regional drive AB & BC markets plus ON and QC.
- ❑ Work Where You Play campaign to support the attraction of seasonal workers.
- ❑ Social media video adverts including accommodation-specific and [Work Where You Play](#) campaigns. Video campaigns garner much higher engagement than static or carousel campaigns.
- ❑ Print advertisements in 38 titles including National Geographic Traveller UK and BBC Wildlife Magazine, usually supported by additional multi-channel distribution such as newsletters and social media.
- ❑ Elevator video campaigns in Vancouver & Toronto.
- ❑ Spring and fall campaigns also included CTV Calgary Morning Live TV spring and fall campaigns with activity operator partners and AB/BC mobile and display campaign on the Bell Media network.



THE GOLDEN TOUCH

At the heart of the Canadian Rockies sits Golden, a town surrounded by a vast and varied landscape and a prime destination for those with a passion for wildlife

Golden is British Columbia, Canada, is a town that has been blessed with a diverse landscape and easy access to an extraordinary wealth of wildlife. Nestled between six national parks and at the confluence of two historic rivers – this authentic mountain town is surrounded by diverse geography that ranges from one of the best trout streams in North America to expansive forests and high mountain terrain. It's of little surprise to discover, then, that this is also a leading destination for wildlife lovers looking for unusual encounters.



Unique wetlands
The Columbia Wetlands is one of the world's greatest natural treasures. The area was designated a wetland of international importance on World Environment Day

Mountain high
The six national parks surrounding Golden – Yoho, Glacier, Banff, Jasper, Kootenay and Mount Revelstoke – provide unique experiences and thousands of kilometers of protected landscape to explore. Nearby Yoho National Park is home to one of Canada's tallest and most magnificent waterfalls, Takakawa Falls, and provides a rock from Yoho's glaciers creates the deep turquoise colour of Emerald Lake and



"A leading destination for wildlife lovers looking for unusual encounters"

Lake O'Hara. Or head to Glacier National Park to explore the desert forests, home to a wide range of wildlife. Black and grizzly bears roam throughout the park, deer and elk forage in the woodlands, and eagles patrol the skies. Bears play a vital role in the ecosystem of British Columbia and there are strict rules regarding responsible behaviour near these majestic mammals. The Golden Bear Refuge at Kicking Horse Mountain Resort has the largest enclosed and protected grizzly bear habitat in the world. For visitors also keen to learn about another familiar Golden resident, the wolf, the Northern Lights Wolf Centre is dedicated



Golden
BRITISH COLUMBIA
Visit tourismgolden.com/wildlife for more

Destination wildlife
Golden offers an unrivalled experience throughout all four seasons with plenty of winter activities on offer. Summer is also a popular time to visit, however, for wildlife seekers, the prime time for viewing is spring and autumn. These are the seasons when wildlife is most active, recovering from its winter slumber. It's also the time when animals are looking for food, including in mating opportunities at lower elevations.

It may be a surprise to learn that this rich wilderness sits just three hours from Calgary International Airport. Accommodation options are varied, ranging from luxury mountain homes, charming rustic cabins to full-service hotels, so you can return to comfort after your exploring the Canadian Rockies.



Find the Ultimate Mountain Holiday in Golden, BC

If you're looking for a mountain-based adventure holiday in Canada, remember Golden rules... in spring, summer, autumn and winter.



Written by Roger Peltier
Last Updated: 10 May 2023

Sponsored content

How these active adventures combined to create an incredible holiday in Golden



PAID COMMENT FOR TOURISM GOLDEN
I have just spent a weekend at the Golden Ski Inn. It was a fantastic experience. The staff were very helpful and the facilities were excellent. I would highly recommend this place to anyone looking for a winter holiday in Golden. The location is perfect for those who want to enjoy the best of both worlds – the beauty of the Canadian Rockies and the convenience of being close to the city. The Golden Ski Inn is a true gem and I will definitely be returning soon.

ADVERTORIAL
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WINTER KICKS IN GOLDEN!

A world-class winter destination with a wealth of inspiring terrain, plus a down-to-earth mountain vibe – that's the dream team of Golden, BC, and the legendary Kicking Horse Mountain Resort.



WORLD CLASS SKI HUB
Just west from Golden, Kicking Horse Mountain Resort is an exceptional ski resort and the only North American stop on the famous Trans-Canada Ski Trail. The rugged mountain scenery draped in deep snow provides a home to vast and varied terrain. Huge bowls and spectacular glaciers with pristine ice are yours to find long downhill runs and the fourth highest vertical drop in North America, at 1,915m.

Have a ski instructor for the day or a mountain guide to help you make the most of the huge lifts and acres of skiable terrain, including more than 100 runs, 100 chutes and four bowls.

ENDLESS WINTER ADVENTURE
This 4,700-hectare ski resort is a true gem. Come to the right place Golden is the gateway to a world of winter fun. Located in the town's backyard in the Bugaboo range of the Purcell Mountains, it offers a variety of skiing options in the Selkirk Mountains. Home to the legendary Kicker's Pass, one of the ski touring routes in the world.

Add in world-class Nordic skiing at Queen Mountain, snowshoe trails, the tubing run



MOUNTAIN TOWN VIBE
Away from the slopes, Golden has a hard-to-beat authentic atmosphere. There's a wide range of accommodation, from modest and historic to luxury and modern. A huge variety of restaurants and bars offer a wide range of dining options, including Japanese, Mexican and Italian. And for those who want to enjoy the best of both worlds, Golden is home to the Golden Spa. Located in the town's backyard in the Bugaboo range of the Purcell Mountains, it offers a variety of spa treatments and massages. Add in world-class Nordic skiing at Queen Mountain, snowshoe trails, the tubing run

APPETITE WHETTED?
For those who want to enjoy the best of both worlds, Golden is home to the Golden Spa. Located in the town's backyard in the Bugaboo range of the Purcell Mountains, it offers a variety of spa treatments and massages. Add in world-class Nordic skiing at Queen Mountain, snowshoe trails, the tubing run

DO NOT MISS:
Don't miss the Golden Ski Inn. It's a true gem and I will definitely be returning soon.

BOOKING INFO:
Golden Ski Inn is a true gem and I will definitely be returning soon.

CONTACT:
Golden Ski Inn is a true gem and I will definitely be returning soon.

LOCATION:
Golden Ski Inn is a true gem and I will definitely be returning soon.

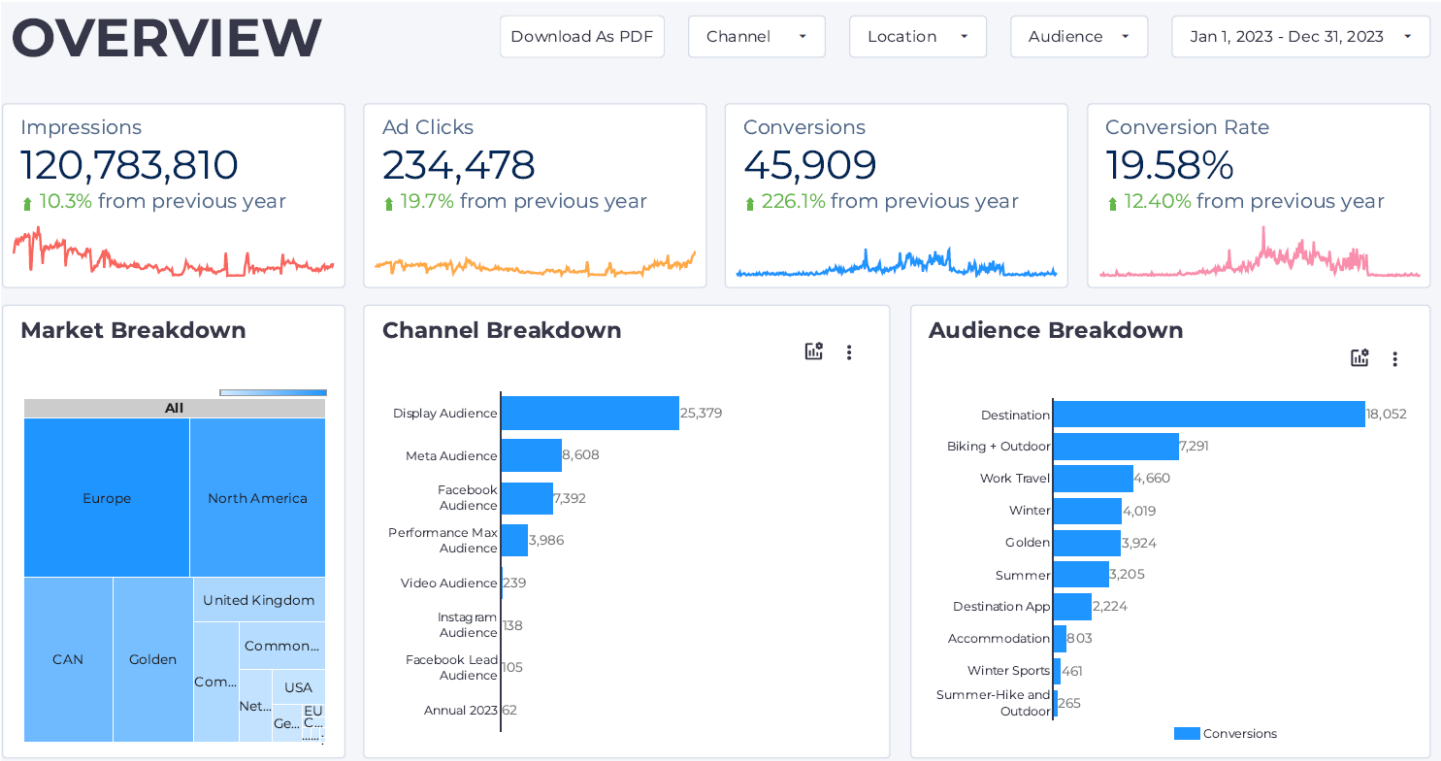
PRICE:
Golden Ski Inn is a true gem and I will definitely be returning soon.

BOOKING:
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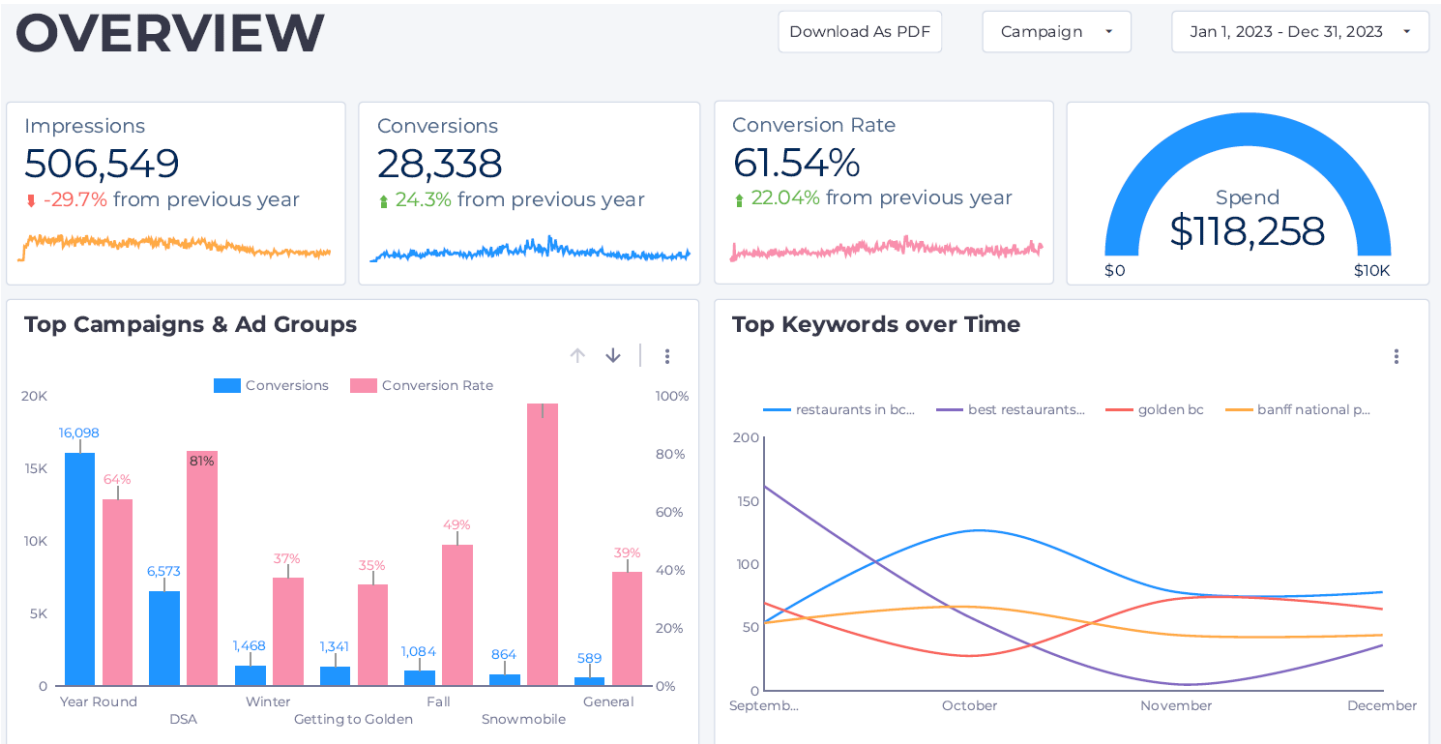
CONTACT:
Golden Ski Inn is a true gem and I will definitely be returning soon.

LOCATION:
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As we finessed our digital campaigns to focus on conversions rather than impressions, supporting the rationale of quality over quantity, we saw a significant increase in conversions and conversion rate from display campaigns against 2022.



Similarly, the Google grant-funded search campaign also saw an increase in conversions and conversion rate despite a reduction in impressions.



Media Relations

- ✓ 37 hosted media trips
- ✓ 3 press trips.
- ✓ 21 traditional media
- ✓ 16 content creators or influencers



- ✓ 110 total features & mentions.
- ✓ 52 features directly resulting from TG activity.



S2-E3: ASCEND: All That Glitters is Golden
Golden, BC is a thrill-seekers paradise. From adrenaline pumping mountain biking to peaceful hikes with stunning views, there's something for everyone.

Ascend Television is available in over 50 countries and more than 400 million homes.

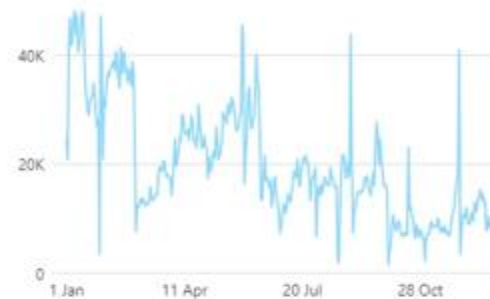


- ✓ Over 5.5 million accounts reached through social media collaborations not including Instagram stories
- ✓ TG Facebook had a reach of 2.5 million including ads
- ✓ TG Instagram account had a reach of 740K

Reach

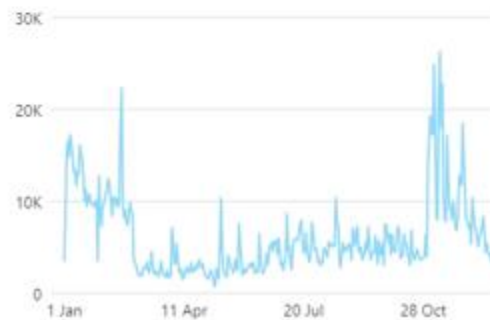
Facebook reach

2.5M ↑ 34.9%



Instagram reach

740.3K ↑ 223.1%

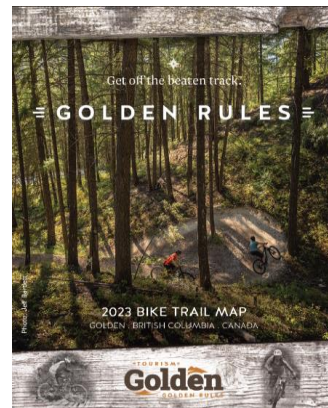


Marketing Collateral & Asset Development

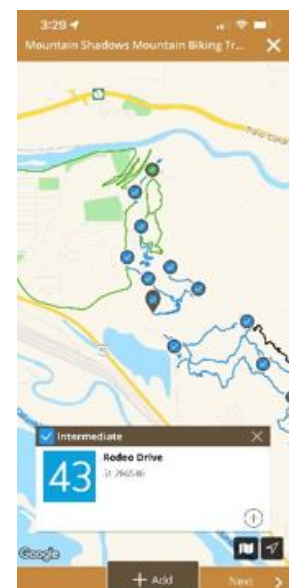
The stable of owned marketing collateral and the constant and increased need for fresh, new content and assets continued in 2023.

We produced the following annual publications to inform visitors and encourage exceptional and safe visitor experiences:

- ☐ Golden Travel Planner – 72,000 copies
- ☐ Golden Hiking Trail Map – 20,000 copies
- ☐ Golden Biking Trail Map – 12,500 copies
- ☐ Outdoor Discovery Map - 10,000 copies



The GoldenBC app was launched in fall 2022 and we continued to add customised elements in 2023 including GPS trail maps for biking, snowmobile and Nordic ski trails. With almost 9,000 users and strong pageviews and session duration, the app has proven a successful addition to the in-destination visitor experience.



The team implemented significant asset development projects either stand-alone or in partnership with stakeholders or content creators. These activities resulted in:

- ❑ 33 asset development projects
- ❑ 14 Photography and Videography Projects
- ❑ 19 Stakeholder Coop photo and video Projects

Aside from refreshing activity and experience-based assets and a new destination video, we concentrated on spring and fall, and where possible demonstrated inclusivity.

Events Hosting

With the continued support of RMI funds Events Hosting program supported key annual events which support shoulder and winter visitation and promotion to our primary audiences.



Research

We remain committed to informing and measuring our activity with research and proven data which is used to track destination and DMO performance and inform marketing activity. In 2023, the data sources and studies included:

- ❑ Telus Insights visitor volume & demographics
- ❑ AirDNA STR destination data
- ❑ STR hotel/motel destination data
- ❑ Resident Survey
- ❑ Stakeholder Survey
- ❑ Online Visitor Study pilot

As required by the MRDT program for 3% destinations the stakeholder survey will be conducted annually.

Visitor Services

The addition of the new FTE position for Destination Services Manager, which includes the seasonal management of the Golden Visitor Centre, facilitated the recruitment of Information Counsellors and creation of a strong team. Nevertheless, the visitor centre was under-resourced, particularly as the team served 21% more visitors than in the summer 2022 season. It is good to see the recovery of visitors seeking in-person information, but the number was still less than the numbers served in 2019.

Europeans, Albertans, Other Canadian provinces and BC were the largest visitor origin, followed by the US and Mexico.

Visitors primarily sought information about National Parks, outdoor activities and local attractions, camping along with maps and directions. Smoke and fire were also key topics, particularly during the BC travel ban and Okanagan fires.

The VC team can be proud of their continued 4.1-star Google Business rating, particularly as the struggle with washroom issues continued to be a concern.

Parks passes remain the top in retail sales, increasing by 29% against the prior year.

With support from the DBC we implemented the first phase of the Indigenous Learning Project with the installation of Metis art and cultural information, including a hand-painted mural and series on sacred plants from a local Metis artist and Elder, and a video screen running custom videos from the Ktunaxa, Shuswap and Metis Nations.

10,582
visitors
served

+21%



Financial Summary

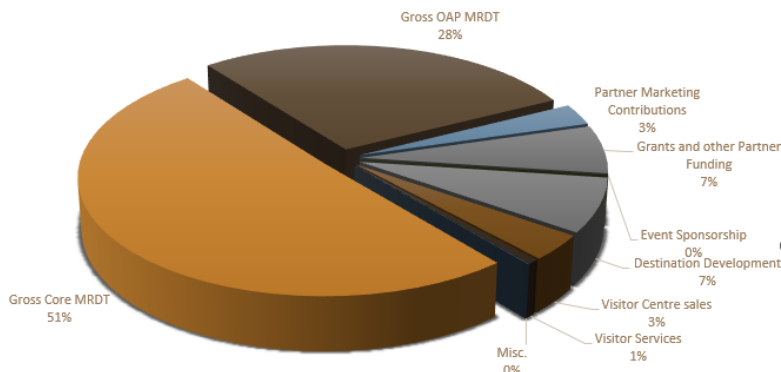
Since its inception, Tourism Golden has been committed to being available to all our stakeholder businesses and has operated a successful 'pay-to-play' model resulting in most stakeholder businesses participating in co-op advertising activities.

MRDT is the primary source of revenue for Tourism Golden and 2023 fiscal marked the first full year at 3%. Gross MRDT revenues increased by 47% accordingly. We were able to leverage significant grant, partner and RMI funding for projects launched in 2023 Overall gross revenue increased by 42% against 2022.

- ❑ 79% of revenue came from MRDT. Core MRDT represented 51% and OADP made up 28% of gross revenue.
- ❑ 3% of revenue was provided by DMO-led co-op advertising and marketing sales including the website, Travel Planner, and hiking and biking maps as well as 3rd party print publications.
- ❑ 4% of revenue was generated from retail and advertising sales at the visitor centre, primarily from the sale of Parks passes.
- ❑ 14% of revenues in 2023 came from grants and other partner funding including:
 - DBC Visitor Services Network funding for the Golden Visitor Centre.
 - DBC Open Pool Co-Op Marketing program and partner funds for the Golden Triangle campaign.
 - Resort Development Strategy initiatives managed on behalf of the Town of Golden, including events hosting, research, transport services and online destination learning programs.
 - CBT grant subsidy for summer students at the visitor centre.
 - DBC Visitor Services Network & Kootenay Rockies Tourism for the Indigenous Learning project.

2023 FY REVENUE	%	AMOUNTS
CORE MRDT (nett of Admin fees)	47%	\$ 965,276
OAP MRDT	30%	\$ 613,129
DMO-LED INITIATIVES	11%	\$ 226,861
GRANTS	7%	\$ 143,776
VISITOR CENTRE SALES	5%	\$ 92,066
OTHER	0%	\$ 1,954
		\$ 2,043,062

2023 REVENUE



The 2023 fiscal year included additional destination management expenses including the majority of the winter 2022/23 season and early 2023/24 season winter shuttle partnership project, the launch of the destination management planning project and the launch of the [Golden Guide](#) online destination education program and the local job listing portal [workinggolden.ca](#).

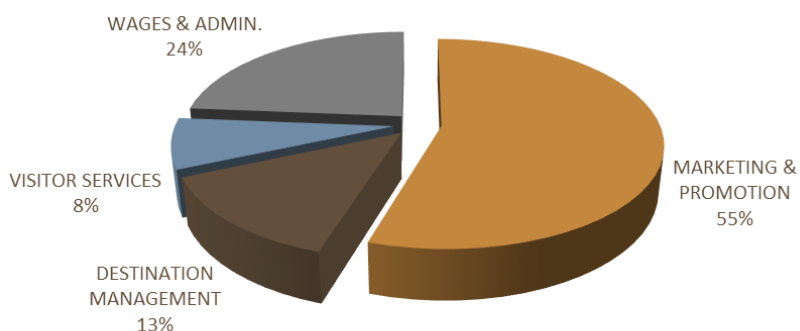
With the increase in MRDT revenue we were able to increase destination development and other activities without impacting marketing activities. The increase in tactical activity necessitated the addition of an FTE and larger office space which, along with a market review of compensation packages, resulted in larger than average increases in administration and salaries.

The summary below details the overall increases by primary expense lines:

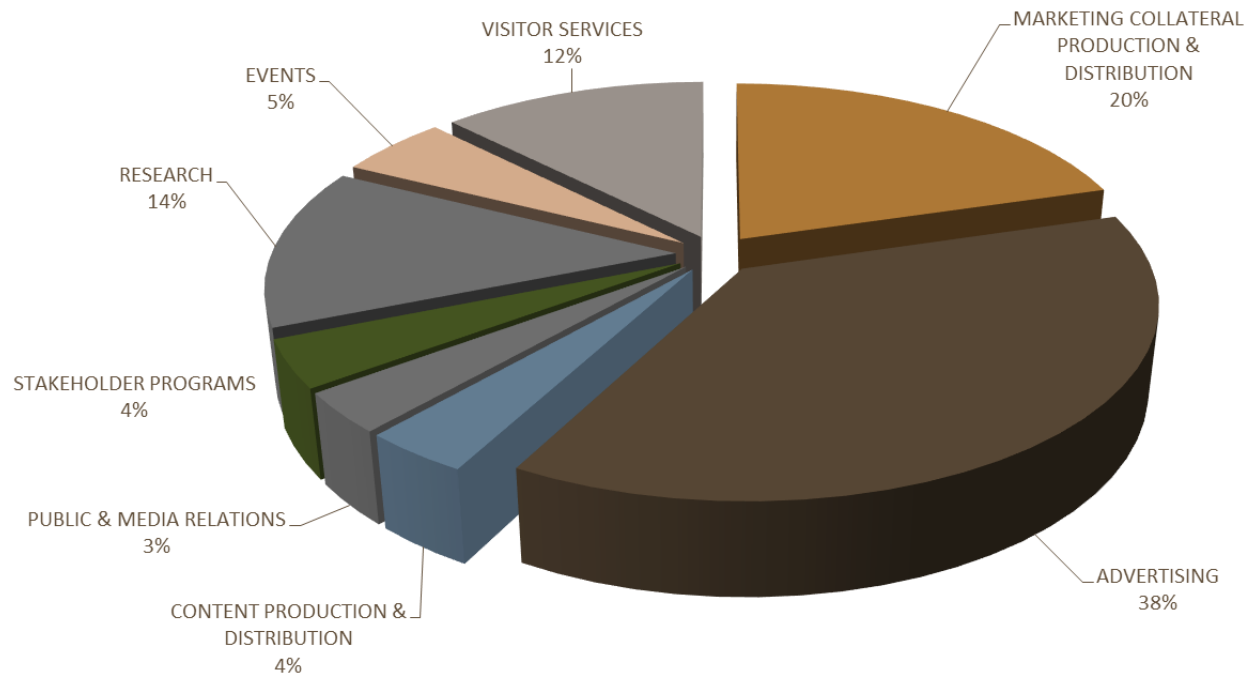
- ❑ Marketing +43%
- ❑ Destination Management +218%
- ❑ Visitor Services +7%
- ❑ Administration 115%
- ❑ FTE salaries +54%

2022 FY EXPENSES	%	AMOUNTS
MARKETING	55%	\$ 1,074,137
DESTINATION MANAGEMENT	14%	\$ 267,247
VISITOR SERVICES	8%	\$ 152,997
ADMINISTRATION (nett of MRDT fees)	5%	\$ 90,227
FTE SALARIES	19%	\$ 374,142
		\$ 1,958,751

2023 FY ORGANISATIONAL EXPENSES



2023 FY MARKETING SPEND BY STRATEGY



Financial statements produced by Cox & Tress and approved by the Tourism Golden Finance Committee and Board of Directors are available on request.

-End-