



Photo: Noel Hendrickson

ALIVE WITH STORIES

BANFF & LAKE LOUISE TOURISM – 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT & CEO

This has been another tremendous year of growth for our destination. In 2016, we built a five-year strategy and in year three, we are pleased to report we have exceeded many of the goals established, delivering a solid return for members, while sharing indelible awe with our visitors.

In 2018, average annual occupancy was 71.7 per cent. This is up from 68 per cent achieved just three years ago. Driving this is an additional 100,000 room nights generated in winter and shoulder season in that time. This is the result of a focused effort on growing visitation in these slower periods. The destination exceeded 50 per cent average occupancy in November for the first time ever, a testament to the work Banff & Lake Louise Tourism (BLLT) and our members are doing to create a more sustainable, 12-month economy.

To be a year-round destination, BLLT needs to better gather visitor feedback month-by-month. In 2018, we increased measuring our Net Promoter Score (NPS) from summer and winter months to include our shoulder seasons and our ability to monitor visitor sentiment year-round. This gives us better information to work with—more responses and more opinions from visitors. What's important is that June through September is still generating our highest scores, so we can see visitors are still having positive experiences in our most popular season.

2018 was the first time we included a goal for social media engagement on our scorecard and we knocked it out of the park. Our results were 75 per cent higher than our initial target thanks to an intense effort from our team. Another area where we have seen strong results is in generating leads to members. We challenged ourselves with a target of 1.8 million leads in 2018, almost three times our target

from 2016, and we reached that mark. Where we came up short this year is room night growth from October to May, which is our focus for growth. We are happy to see this number increase from 2017, but we still landed just shy of our 2018 target. Knowing this, we will review the data and see how we can do better in 2019.

This year, we've taken a slightly different approach with our Annual Report. We've incorporated a series of stories that touch on some of the key initiatives from the past year and highlight how we work together as a destination. These stories are supported by a deeper dive into the insights that lead to our data-driven decisions. We are very proud of our team's performance and the level of collaboration that is happening across the destination as we work to achieve our goals. We plan to leverage this energy in 2019, to continue to deliver a strong return on our members' investment.

Sincerely,



David Roberts
Board Chair,
Banff & Lake Louise
Tourism



Leslie Bruce
President & CEO,
Banff & Lake Louise
Tourism



OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

OUR PURPOSE

Inspire the world to experience the indelible awe of Banff and Lake Louise.

OUR VISION

A bold and disciplined marketing organization committed to the growth of our tourism economy and the curation of our brand.

OUR STRATEGY

We will grow member revenue to \$10.4 million by 2020, through working with our partners to share the indelible awe of Banff and Lake Louise with high-yield travellers in growth markets.

OUR MANDATE










BLLT focuses on building year-round visitation. To achieve this, we will:

- » Work with our members, Parks Canada, and the communities of Banff and Lake Louise.
- » Be governed by an elected board of directors.
- » Partner with Travel Alberta, Destination Canada, and like-minded partners.

OUR BRAND PROMISE

Providing moments of indelible awe. The rare experience that hits so hard, it stays with you forever. In Banff National Park, these life changing moments are born from a seemingly inexhaustible supply. It's a sudden connection between people and the natural world that instantly brings both to life. It's real, overwhelming, and unforgettable. And it is the unique point of difference for Banff and Lake Louise.

2018 AT-A-GLANCE

GENERATE YEAR-ROUND DEMAND	OBJECTIVES Grow visitation in winter and shoulder season Develop partnerships to improve marketing effectiveness Defend summer revenue	GOALS  INCREASE AVERAGE ANNUAL OCCUPANCY TO 71.7%  19,446 ROOM NIGHTS' GROWTH EXCLUDING JUNE TO SEPTEMBER  1.8 MILLION LEADS TO MEMBERS	RESULTS 71.7% 14,829 1,853,125
LEAD WITH BRAND	OBJECTIVES Build destination brand alignment Fuel traveller advocacy	GOALS  BRAND AWARENESS RANKED: 2ND IN CANADA 4TH IN U.S.  SOCIAL MEDIA: 736,064 ENGAGEMENTS	RESULTS REMEASURE IN 2019 1,288,693
STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT	OBJECTIVE Work together as a destination	GOALS  \$8,973,214 MEMBER REVENUE  NET PROMOTER SCORE: ≥76	RESULTS \$9,637,394 79
OPERATE A PERFORMANCE BASED BUSINESS	OBJECTIVES Promote employee effectiveness Optimize investments Deliver exemplary fiscal processes and outcomes	GOALS  MARKETING COSTS ≥85% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE  CLEAN AUDIT OUTCOME	RESULTS 89% YES

GENERATE YEAR-ROUND DEMAND

CAMPAIGN PROMOTES FULL WINTER EXPERIENCE, SUPPORTS YEAR-ROUND DEMAND

A digital marketing campaign once targeting the destination skier has evolved to market Banff and Lake Louise as the full winter experience. For the last four years, BLLT teamed up with SkiBig3 to partner with Destination Canada and Travel Alberta to create a unique Winter Campaign. The campaign has proven to be a great example of partners taking a progressive approach to positioning.

The Winter Campaign tells the full story of the destination—highlighting food, wellness, and adventurous alternatives. It inspires visitors to weave other activities into their ski holiday: ice skating, dogsledding, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, sleigh rides, dining and more. It has resulted in an increased spend on accommodation, transportation, and activities over the winter and shoulder seasons.

“First and foremost, it’s about driving overall visitation in the winter. What we see from the data is that the primary driver in winter is ski, but people want to do more than that. In fact, skiing typically represents only 30 per cent of the vacation spend; the rest is spread across different sectors: lodging, dining, nightlife, retail, non-ski experiences and

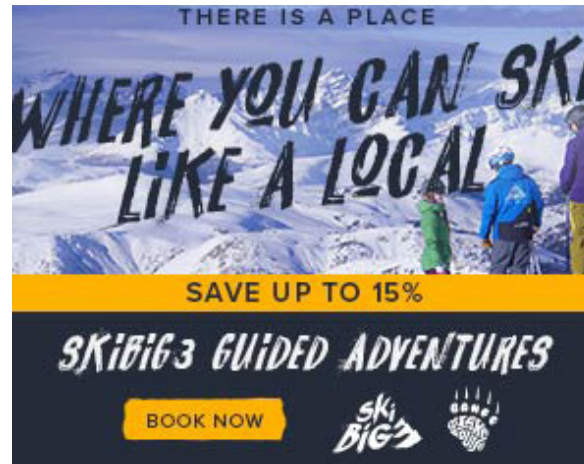
Photo: Noel Hendrickson

transportation,” said Pete Woods, President of SkiBig3.

The Winter Campaign has seen compounded growth over the years. The 2017/2018 campaign paced almost 40 per cent over the 2016/17 winter season. Tactics included paid social, search, and display advertising, targeting the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, and Mexico markets. It also includes a significant retargeting aspect, responding to anyone who engages with campaign webpages or content.

“Year-after-year, Banff Lodging Co. has seen significant growth in our early winter sales through this coordinated marketing strategy led by Ski Big 3, Travel Alberta, Destination Canada, and Banff & Lake Louise Tourism. This success can also be attributed to BLLT members aligning our ‘Early Book By’ dates. This helped us lock-in more destination skiers, well before the winter began,” Chantelle Willett, Sales Manager, Banff Lodging Co.

“We funnel the audience through the full path to purchase with awareness, consideration, and then conversion. Depending on where they fall in that path, we communicate different messages. Because we can be so targeted with who we talk to and when, we can put out the right message at the right time,” said Woods.



Everyone is engaged in the planning process. Partners write the creative brief together, work collectively to get the agency aligned, vet all the creative as a group, and take part in bi-weekly phone calls focused on the campaign’s performance.

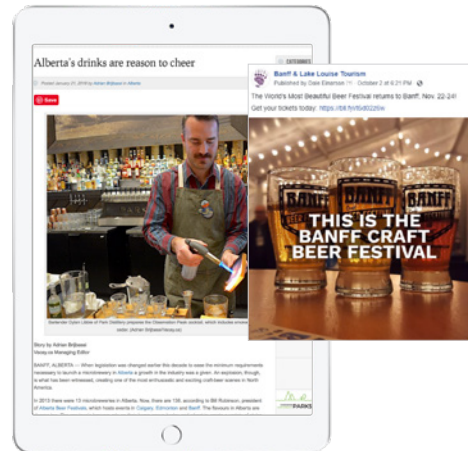
Partners meet to compare analytics on a month-to-month and year-over-year basis to see what is working and what is not, what can be adjusted, and what can be incorporated into the next iteration. The 2017/18 campaign achieved \$5.9 million return with a \$1.55 million spend helping generate year-round demand in Banff and Lake Louise. Through the Campaign website visits, cost per website visits, total conversions, media cost, impressions and click through rates are all tracked.



“Another advantage is that SkiBig3 is part of the Mountain Collective and Ikon Pass. That gives us access to hundreds of thousands of skiers in North America that historically would not have thought of Banff and Lake Louise for a winter trip. That is why it’s so important we continue to work as a destination to keep providing compelling reasons for them to come,” said Woods.

CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS SUPPORT FOCUS ON SLOWER SEASONS

Each year, creative marketing campaigns build awareness, drive engagement, and educate consumers on the variety of activities and events available in destination over the calendar year. They focus on growing the winter and shoulder seasons, leveraging partnerships to improve marketing effectiveness.



BANFF CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL

Campaign objective: Showcase Banff and Lake Louise's Taste of Place to the North American traveller, inspire them to visit in the fall.

Media highlight: Alberta's drinks are a reason to cheer, Vacay.ca (Canada)



COCHON 555

Campaign objective: Build reputation for Banff National Park as a “where to eat” destination.

Media highlight: Why Banff is Canada's Next Great Culinary Destination, Sharp Magazine (US)



CHRISTMAS 2018

Campaign objective: Enhance the reputation of Banff and Lake Louise as a Canadian Christmas destination.

Media highlight: How to Experience the Canadian Rockies with Kids – Qantas Magazine (Australia).

2018 HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- » 204 media and influencers from our target markets hosted.
 - In addition to a range of top-tier media outlets and content creators, we embarked in partnerships with:
 - **Columbia:** sports media tested their new gear line in Banff and Lake Louise, reporting and creating content while here.
 - **Epic Trails:** an adventure TV show which aired on Outside TV across the U.S. and were picked up by Fox Sports in the U.S.
 - **GoPro:** Travel Alberta hosted the GoPro Creator Summit in Kananaskis in June, bringing two groups into Banff and Lake Louise for day trips.
 - Destination Canada's GoMedia was held in Calgary this year; two pre-FAMs of global media came to Banff and Lake Louise.
- » 52 Alive Passes issued to media working on destination stories and highlighting our Alive Pass partners.
- » 337 members were included in media itineraries overall.
- » Contributed to True North Rockies Campaign to promote winter experiences to eight U.S. markets with 15 partners and members involved in the campaign.
- » Continued the annual Destination Canada and Ski Canada Council campaign promoting the country as a great ski destination to three U.S. markets.
- » Continued sponsorship and promotion of the Banff Craft Beer Festival.
- » Became lead co-sponsor of the Banff Centre Mountain Film and Book Festival:
 - Banff:
 - 9 days; 24,000 attendees.
 - World Tour - Canada/U.S.:
 - 550 film screenings; 250 locations; 300,000 attendees.
 - World Tour – International:
 - 1,100 film screenings; 550 locations; 45 countries; 550,000 attendees.

BLLT tracks leads to members from across the organization.

Digital leads: a visit to one of BLLT's online channels or partner channels is the entry point to a member's website.

Visitor Centre leads: visitor centre staff refers a visitor to a member (this is recorded as category – i.e. Attractions, restaurants, etc.).

These are combined to form our annual Leads to Members goal.



1.85M LEADS TO
MEMBERS
3% ABOVE TARGET



Photo: Paul Zizka

MEETING PLANNERS EXPERIENCE THE DESTINATION FIRST-HAND

Seeing is believing. Bringing meeting planners from key geographic markets to the destination helps strategically showcase and differentiate Banff and Lake Louise as an inspiring meeting place. In 2018, BLLT laid the groundwork to host events for Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Events professionals (MICE) in 2019 that will put Banff and Lake Louise top of mind for meeting planners.

- Connect Mountain Incentive, a well-known travel trade show for industry members, will be held in Lake Louise from March 20-22, 2019. The invitation-only event connects meeting planners with mountain resort suppliers looking for group business. Over 40 high-value planners and 40 suppliers will convene for industry sessions, networking, new business opportunities, and activities.

MICE travel is a continued focus for BLLT. It is an opportunity to grow year-round demand for the destination. These groups are involved in multi-day itineraries with a wide scope of activities, including accommodation, restaurants, entertainment, retail, and services. MICE business has a higher spending per person compared to tour and leisure travel, as many expenses—travel, accommodation, food—are covered by the employer.

“We like to have events in locations that make sense. Somewhere that fits the demographic of the group. We were intentional about coming to Canada. Working with Banff & Lake Louise Tourism and the Fairmont, we uncovered an opportunity to meet outside the U.S. for the first time. They’ve been amazing partners,” said Suzi Schnell, senior regional director of sales for Connect, while speaking about BLLT. “Getting planners to experience the destination is great exposure for Banff and Lake Louise.”

Connect puts on 25 events each year based on various market segments. They attract lots of new business opportunities. BLLT has been building a relationship with organizers over the years, promoting the destination at 2018’s Connect Mountain Incentive in Lake Tahoe and a larger event held in Las Vegas that attracted over 4,000 attendees. BLLT worked with Connect and members to build an agenda that connects with the Banff and Lake Louise brand, including wellness sessions and winter activities.

“We want our meetings to be more than just a room, breakouts, and breakfast. We want people to have an experience. We want them to be on social media talking about the area.

These offsite events will be an experience in and of itself, which will help make the destination stand out,” said Schnell.

Another opportunity we will be hosting in 2019 is the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence’s (SITE) Texas Technology Summit. BLLT worked with members on the agenda, including developing off-site opportunities. The Summit is expected to attract over 100 buyers and suppliers.

“This event brings valuable business networking time for customers who make decisions on selecting destinations, Destination Management Organizations, off-site venues and activities for group travel programs,” said Pat McCain, SITE Texas Technology Summit. “While our focus is on incentive programs, nearly all our buyers also plan their company meetings, conferences, trade shows, and other events. It’s a quality opportunity.”

“MICE travel is a continued focus for BLLT. It is an opportunity to grow year-round demand for the destination.”

ADDITIONAL 2018 HIGHLIGHTS:

- » Secured Australia tour operator Sno’n’Ski MegaFam’s first trip to Alberta; 30 travel agents will now experience Banff and Lake Louise first-hand in March 2019.
- » Launched VIP FAM for Product Managers from Australia with Scenic Christmas itinerary.
- » Hosted Alberta Travel Trade Association (ATTA) Adventure Elevate (285 delegates, 27 media, 25 countries); 100 per cent of attendees surveyed post-conference said it exceeded expectations.
- » Hosted Canada’s West Marketplace, including four pre-event familiarization trips that included a helicopter tour, snowshoeing, Johnston Canyon Icewalk, a visit to Lake Louise, and Santa Claus Parade experiences for 55 buyers from six different countries.



Photo: Paul Zizka

TRAVEL TRADE

BLLT worked with tour operators, wholesalers, and travel agents from around the globe in 2018, developing new business through sponsorship opportunities and Joint Marketing Agreements (JMAs). Representing the destination in geographic target markets grew and strengthened industry relationships, led to new itineraries, and generated leads for members.

34,305

POTENTIAL ROOM NIGHTS (NORTH AMERICA)

107% OF ANNUAL TARGET | 26 NEW ITINERARIES
27 NEW TOUR OPERATORS



146,040

POTENTIAL ROOM NIGHTS (EUROPE AND AUSTRALIA)

108% OF ANNUAL TARGET | 17 NEW ITINERARIES
8 NEW TOUR OPERATORS

22,550

POTENTIAL ROOM NIGHTS (ASIA)

119% OF ANNUAL TARGET | 22 NEW ITINERARIES
14 NEW TOUR OPERATORS

FAMS, SITES AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TRIPS (BDTS)

BLLT led and attended in-destination site visits and familiarization (FAM) tours that allow key influencers the chance to experience Banff and Lake Louise in person.



38

 BDT/SITE VISITS
WITH 117 PARTICIPANTS (MICE)

27% ABOVE ANNUAL VISITS TARGET

48

 FAM VISITS WITH
496 PARTICIPANTS

92% ABOVE ANNUAL VISITS TARGET

MICE

In 2018, BLLT led a variety of MICE-focused business development efforts with meeting planners and agencies. This included sales missions and meeting-specific advertising campaigns in key markets, increasing room nights, and driving leads to members.



302

 MICE LEADS
41% ABOVE ANNUAL TARGET

LEAD WITH BRAND

TAKING A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO COMMUNICATIONS

Chelsea and Jasen Thompson visited Banff from Washington, U.S., over the 2018 May Long weekend. In an interview with CBC Calgary, secured through BLLT media relations, the couple said they've found the destination to be pedestrian-friendly.

"It's super easy. It's nice to have a bus route that basically covers all of town," Jasen said.

"It's pretty convenient for us," Chelsea added.

This was echoed by Christine Schelstraete. She drove her car from Sherwood Park, Alberta for the August long weekend and found she didn't need it to visit popular sights in the area. "Taking the bus is a great way not bring extra congestion into the town. It's regular, it's always available. It's easy to jump on ... it's fantastic."

In 2018, Parks Canada, the Town of Banff, and BLLT collaborated for the second year on a marketing communications plan to address challenges with increased visitation in Banff National Park and congestion in certain areas over the summer. By working together, the partners developed a common voice to enhance visitor experience and encourage transit use, by drawing attention to the

increased infrastructure that was being made available to residents and visitors in Banff National Park.

Visitors were encouraged to walk, bike, book a tour or enjoy public transit and shuttles, driving attention to the website [explorethepark.ca](#), which aims to help visitors plan their trip ahead of time. It provides detailed transit and shuttle routes, frequency, and fares. Details on bike rentals, easy-to-reach walking trails, and booking tours are also available. The trip planning tool helps reduce congestion at popular locations by outlining different times to visit key attractions and showcasing how to get around the park in transit or other means than a personal vehicle. Information about RV access and real-time parking details are also available.

“This partnership has aligned our language and our intent,” said Town of Banff Mayor Karen Sorensen. “We are strategic in using multiple ways to persuade visitors, even before they arrive in Banff, that public transit and local shuttles provide a more enjoyable way to experience the Park. And we are seeing results – we have maintained visitation levels, and are seeing large increases in transit use and drops in vehicle congestion at peak periods and at key locations.”

The campaign is aimed at day visitors from Calgary, campground and hotel guests, RV users, the local business community, and residents. Not only is the campaign advertising and content measured for performance, but behaviour change such as parking, traffic flow, pedestrian traffic, and transit usage are monitored as well.

The partnership formed in 2017, in anticipation of Canada 150 and will continue in 2019.

“We are committed to protecting the ecological integrity of Banff National Park. We also want to provide meaningful, high-quality experiences for visitors,” said Judy Glowinski, external relations manager with Parks Canada. “With the development of shared strategic communication and marketing plans, we can achieve long term, sustainable solutions for traffic management.”

2018 HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- » Engaged with 20 Alberta Visitor Centre locations at Alberta Culture and Tourism’s annual Spring Showcase; presented two breakout sessions on engaging visitors through social media.
- » 4.5/5 TripAdvisor rating for Banff and Lake Louise Visitor Centre locations.
- » Visitor Centre Google ratings:
 - ★★★★ 4.6/5 stars for Banff.
 - ★★★★ 4.5/5 stars for Lake Louise.
 - ★★★★ 4.5/5 stars for Field.

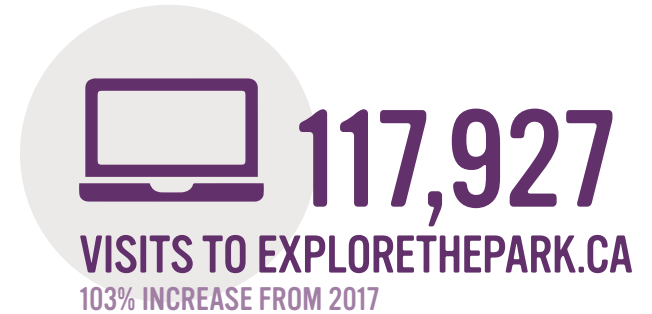
PARTNERSHIP PROMOTES TRANSIT, DEFENDS SUMMER REVENUE

A consistent increase in visitation over the last five years has led Parks Canada, the Town of Banff, and BLLT to continue to rely upon a partnership approach to address the challenges that can come with increased visitation in Banff National Park.

Together, they encouraged visitors to leave their vehicles behind to enjoy the Park. This increased transit ridership during a period of heightened visitation and drove traffic to a single trip-planning resource, explorethepark.ca.



NOTE: Roam increased the number, frequency, and duration of routes from 2017 to 2018.



OVERALL DECLINE IN VEHICLE TRAFFIC:

1.8% TOWN ENTRANCES
3.6% BANFF AVENUE BRIDGE
4.5% MOUNTAIN AVENUE





Photos: Paul Zizka

VISITOR CENTRE TEAM INVESTS IN ENHANCING THE EXPERIENCE

Stepping off the shuttles in the Lake Louise overflow parking lot, visitors are greeted by the smiling faces of visitor experience specialists with bear pelts and antlers laid out on a table. In collaboration with Parks Canada and Lake Louise Ski Resort & Summer Gondola, BLLT uses mobile visitor centre sites to help guests navigate their way through the destination while simultaneously offering an authentic experience.

Being where the visitor is, when they need support, was the driver behind an increased visitor experience investment in 2018. Staff also roam Lake Louise lakeshore working closely with Parks Canada to maximize resources and provide a seamless experience during the summer season.

An expanded focus in 2018 saw visitor experience specialists onsite four days a week in the summer, supporting days that typically see the highest volume of visitation. This is up from two days a week in 2017. The goal is to support a better visitor experience by providing information on how to best experience the area.

“The goal is to support a better visitor experience by providing information on how to best experience the area.”

This highly-trained team are a welcome and reliable source of information for accessing Lake Louise.

“One-on-one engagements are meaning-making. It works better than a sign. Through this in-person approach, we can understand the visitor’s interest and align on where to direct them,” said Michaela Paul, manager of educational services, Lake Louise Ski Resort & Summer Gondola.

In 2018, social media and Visitor Centre teams began working more closely to meet guests’ needs through digital channels such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. There have been direct benefits from this focus, including increased engagement and audience growth on social media channels, and enhanced customer service experiences.

Educational outreach is important to make sure visitors have realistic expectations prior to and during their visit. Encouraging travellers to choose alternate modes of transportation, experience lesser known areas of the Park or visit popular locations during the early morning or evening hours does something awesome here. It also helps encourage responsible behavior in Banff National Park.

“To have someone to talk to and plan next steps is helpful. We are available to answer specific questions visitors have. And, we can make recommendations on guided tours or other attractions and make sure visitors get the best experience,” said Paul.



Photo: Noel Hendrickson

PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION IN REAL-TIME

BLLT provides in-person service at Visitor Centres, including Banff Avenue, Banff Train Station, Lake Louise and Field, mobile sites at Lake Louise Lakeshore, Banff Avenue, and other popular locations. The team is also focused on online channels and social media, listening and responding to visitors. Although visitor engagement targets were not met, lead goals were exceeded by 7.6 per cent.



92,780

VISITOR ENGAGEMENTS

2.6% BELOW TARGET

VISITORS FROM MORE THAN 12 COUNTRIES

EVALUATING SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

In BLLT's first year with a firm social media performance target, we exceeded the overall engagement goal by 75 per cent. This means more travellers are creating awareness of the destination and advocating on behalf of Banff and Lake Louise. This included Visitor Experience Specialists providing accessible information, listening and responding to visitors in real-time, as well as a dedicated social media manager focused on building community before, during, and after a traveller's trip.



1.3M

TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS

75% ABOVE TARGET

FACEBOOK: 214,972 TOTAL AUDIENCE*
TWITTER: 24,516 TOTAL AUDIENCE*
INSTAGRAM: 159,659 TOTAL AUDIENCE*

*AT END OF 2018



Photo: Reuben Krabbie

A chef in a white uniform is shown in a kitchen setting, pouring a liquid from a spoon onto a plate of food. The chef is focused on the task, and the background is slightly blurred, showing other kitchen elements. The lighting is warm and focused on the chef and the food.

STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT

FOOD TOURISM: FROM FARM TO TABLE, STRATEGY TO APPLICATION

At Banff's inaugural hosting of the foodie event, Cochon555, executive chef of Sky Bistro, Scott Hergott, greeted guests with a one bite dish. His role—alongside a host of other local chefs, bartenders, sommeliers, and regional producers—was to set the stage for the one-of-a-kind competition and food-focused weekend. This event aligns with BLLT's objectives to build Banff and Lake Louise's reputation as a food destination.

Held in nine U.S. cities each year, Cochon555 provides BLLT the opportunity to reach and profile the destination to a new, food-motivated audience in many of its priority U.S. markets. The first ever Cochon555 event in Canada, held in Banff in April 2018, sold out in three weeks, a promising milestone for its first year. Hergott sees the event playing a similar role to his, offering up just a taste of what's to come for Banff's emerging food scene.

“Expectations should be high for Banff and Lake Louise as a culinary destination beyond ski, hot springs, and gondolas. We are paying more attention to showing off local talent;



Photo: Noel Hendrickson

farmers, chefs, distillers, brewers, and more. Cochon555 is a world-class event, it allows us to do just that,” said Hergott.

Cochon555 aligns nicely with Banff and Lake Louise’s regional food identity, or “Taste of Place,” which is focused on showcasing the abundant and diverse food and beverage sources from across Alberta and B.C., genuine Canadian hospitality, spectacular settings, and unique dining experiences. Establishing and growing the regional Taste of Place is a key ingredient of the three-year Food Tourism Strategy developed in 2017. Recognizing the potential of food tourism, the approach is focused on making Banff National Park a “where to eat” bucket list destination. It aims to grow demand and increase visitation during the shoulder and winter seasons.

Implementation of the Food Tourism Strategy is a collective effort. Hotel general managers, food and beverage directors, and restaurant owners provide ongoing feedback and input through a Food Tourism Task Force hosted by BLLT. The group meets regularly,

to discuss the strategy: what’s happening and what’s next. A collection of chefs from across the destination also gathers regularly to discuss food trends, increased access to regional suppliers and producers, collaborative dinners, and how to overcome barriers to creating authentic menus that align with Taste of Place.

“There’s lots of cutthroat competition in the culinary world. There isn’t as much of that competition here. We work together to bring people here and try different restaurants. Everyone that goes to these meetings is on board with the plan and our vision to grow Banff and Lake Louise into a where to eat bucket list destination,” added Hergott.

To launch the strategy, BLLT delivered a series of workshops, presentation, and open house events in 2018, to engage restaurants in the overall strategy and support them in meeting the high expectations of food travellers. At the beginning of 2018, one restaurant in destination met the criteria laid out in the food tourism strategy for being “Market Ready.” Now there are over 20; the goal is 50.

“Expectations should be high for Banff and Lake Louise as a culinary destination beyond ski, hot springs and gondolas.”

“People who are motivated to travel for food are coming to Banff to experience what we have to offer that is unique and authentic to this place,” Hergott said. “We use ingredients from our region, highlight regional and Canadian traditions, and work hard to create a connection to this amazing place through both the settings where food is served, and the presentation of the food itself.”

SUPPORTING ENHANCED TOURISM EXPERIENCES

Key to our role is lending support for members to reinvent and re-imagine their own products and services. BLLT collaborated with Travel Alberta to deliver the SHiFT Experience Development training program to a small group of five members with ongoing coaching. SHiFT helps businesses turn a product or an activity into a memorable and remarkable experience. An additional 10 members took part in Travel Alberta’s primary SHiFT program in 2018, up from two in 2017.

Through support from this program, the following experiences have been developed:

- » Discover Banff Tours launched a nighttime interactive adventure combining snowshoeing, history, and the night sky for the MICE market.
- » Carter Ryan Gallery combined visual arts experience (painting, soapstone sculpture) with live theatre performances.
- » Norquay launched enhancements to support deeper experiences for families, new partnerships and re-imagined winter dining experience at Cliff House Bistro.
- » SkiBig3 created the Guided Adventures program, named a Canadian Signature Experience! by Destination Canada.

These are just some examples of experiences that have been enhanced or developed. In 2019, BLLT will place a greater emphasis on experience development for the whole destination, working closely with members and Travel Alberta.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

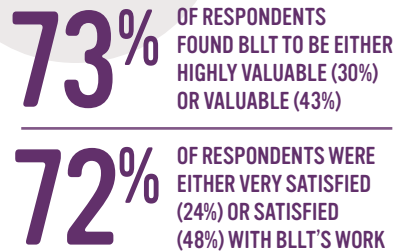
- » Building off the SHiFT program, BLLT worked with Travel Alberta to pilot and launch the Experience Essentials Workshop, showcasing opportunities that exist to respond to experiences travellers are looking for, with 30 members representing seven businesses.
- » Supported a robust calendar of events to showcase art and culture in the shoulder and winter seasons.

SUPPORTING MEMBERS AND ALIGNING THE DESTINATION

Building and nurturing an engaged membership is critical to achieving success. Workshops, training programs, and increased two-way communication builds collective knowledge. An increasingly engaged and connected membership allows for industry alignment, brings the destination brand to life, and increases marketing effectiveness.



MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY



AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

THE BANFF & LAKE LOUISE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM ENGAGES LOCALS AND BUILDS SUPPORT FOR THE BRAND PROMISE; COMMUNICATING THE IMPORTANT ROLE FRONTLINE STAFF PLAYS WITH EACH VISITOR ENCOUNTER.

5,057

TOTAL ATTENDANCE
GOAL: 4,200

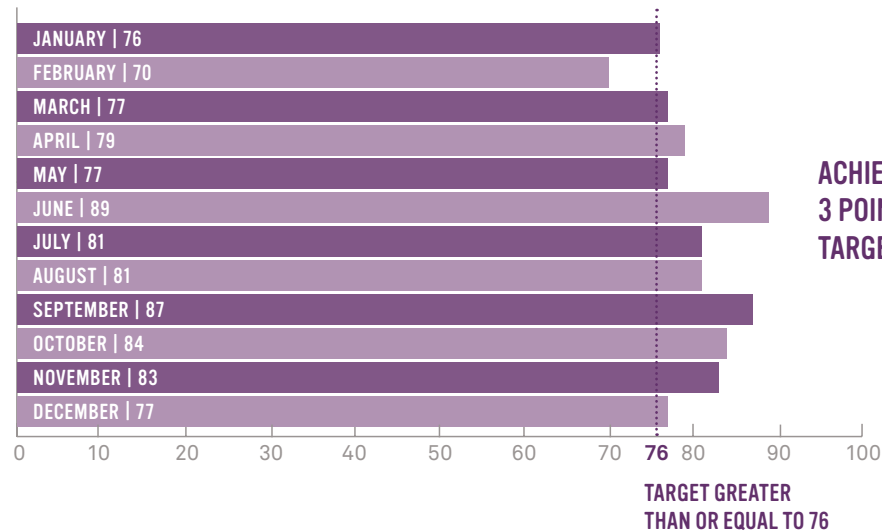
330

TOTAL MEMBERS
REPRESENTED



PAINTING A PICTURE OF THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Since 2016, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) has been used to measure success and predict future performance. This score reflects the likelihood a visitor will recommend Banff and Lake Louise to friends, family, or colleagues. In 2018, BLLT began measuring NPS year-round to gather insights from visitors in the shoulder season, where marketing efforts are seeing a greater focus.





OPERATE A PERFORMANCE- BASED BUSINESS

NEW PAYROLL AND HR SYSTEM MORE EFFICIENT AND ACCURATE

A new payroll and human resources (HR) system rolled out in 2018 is streamlining the process for BLLT's Finance and Administration department, and doing away with formerly-used paper-based approaches.

BLLT went live with its ADP system on July 16, 2018 with payroll, time and attendance, performance management, analytics, and reporting. In 2019, the team will implement the employee recruitment module and a cloud-based method for storing HR documents and files. BLLT has been working with ADP to fine-tune reporting and continually improve processes for staff. This will continue in 2019.

"We've seen some great benefits already. Our processes are faster, scheduling for hourly employees is easier, and there is better tracking for holiday time and days off. There is less chance for error, so it's accurate and efficient," said Mandy Grant, director of Finance and Administration. "It is user friendly for the team, very easy to pick up. No more paper paystubs or T4s everything is online. Also, it's providing easier access to information."

The HR system also streamlines the management of the employee lifecycle—one of BLLT's key strategies under its Operate a Performance-Based Business pillar—helping the organization find the right candidate, manage the performance evaluation process, and monitor professional development.

"We've seen some great benefits already. Our processes are faster, scheduling for hourly employees is easier, and there is better tracking for holiday time and days off. There is less chance for error, so it's accurate and efficient."

FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018

	2018	2017
REVENUE		
Financial contributions	\$9,717,186	\$8,738,814
Partnerships and Leveraged Funding	823,845	1,013,262
Other	561,123	280,590
Total Revenue	11,102,154	10,032,666
EXPENDITURES		
Marketing	6,943,159	6,319,485
Visitor Experience	2,783,151	2,428,472
Finance and Administration	1,176,734	1,139,893
Total Expenditures	10,903,044	9,887,850
Surplus (Deficiency)	\$199,110	\$144,816

NOTE:

This statement is abbreviated. For the complete audited statement please visit our website.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are committed to transparency. Disclosing how funds collected from our members are spent instills confidence that we have the best practices in place. To ensure accountability, an Audit and Finance Committee, consisting of three Board of Directors, reviews and approves financial reporting and retains an external auditor. Our financial statements are audited annually.



THANK YOU

TO OUR DEDICATED MEMBERS
WHO HELP US INSPIRE
INDELIBLE AWE.

BANFFLAKELOUISE.COM

BANFF
& LAKE
LOUISE
ALIVE