

# TOURISM GOLDEN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT

2017



**A summary report of the activities of Tourism Golden**

**January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017**

**Key reporting areas include Operations, Marketing, Visitor Services and  
Financials**

Submitted by: Joanne Sweeting, Executive Director

Phone: 250-439-1111

E-Mail: [manager@tourismgolden.com](mailto:manager@tourismgolden.com)

Date: April 2018



## Contents

About Tourism Golden .....	4
Mandate .....	4
Directors, Officers, Committees & Staff .....	4
DMO Business Objective, .....	5
Strategic Objectives 2017 - 20122 .....	5
Key Performance Indicators.....	6
Executive Summary.....	8
Situational Context .....	9
Tourism Trends & Influences .....	9
Economic & Political Influences.....	9
Social & Consumer Trends.....	9
Disrupters .....	10
Operational Summary .....	10
Stakeholder Relations .....	10
Advocacy .....	10
Visitor Information Services.....	11
Marketing Summary .....	12
Research.....	13
Economic Benefit .....	13
Success in Target Markets .....	13
Destination Marketing Performance .....	14
Strategic Objectives Performance Indicators .....	14
Marketing Strategy Performance Indicators .....	15
Golden Visitor Survey 2017.....	16
Financial Summary .....	18
Visitor Services.....	18
APPENDIX A.....	19

# Message from President, Mr. Rav Soomal

Dear Stakeholders, welcome to the 2017 Annual Report.

2017 was an exceptionally busy year for Tourism Golden. As well as continuing to grow MRDT tax revenues, Tourism Golden took a leadership position in ensuring visitor services remained in Golden. Additionally, advocating pertinent issues on behalf of our stakeholders at every level of government.

Our accommodators experienced unprecedented demand in the summer period, which correlated to the highest average daily room rates and occupancy ratios Golden has ever seen. This demand, the rise in room rates, and an overall strong year correlated to a 10% overall increase in MRDT tax revenues.

In 2016 Tourism Golden stepped up to ensure visitor services would continue to be provided in Golden. Tourism Golden proactively created and proposed to the province a comprehensive plan to ensure these essential services remained within our community. The province embraced the proposal and, in the summer of 2017, Tourism Golden officially opened the brand new visitor services location on the Trans Canada Highway.

2017 has seen Tourism Golden take a strong advocacy role pertaining to many important issues that greatly affect our residents and stakeholders.

With an array of new online booking platforms, we have seen the accommodation landscape change drastically. It has gone from traditional accommodators and bed and breakfasts to now include hundreds of properties ranging from single bedrooms, basement suites, and entire single-family homes. Tourism Golden is absolutely supportive of these booking platforms and the sharing economy however, the organization feels it is important to advocate on behalf of our stakeholders and residents of our municipality to ensure that there is regulation that is equitable for all.

With a new government coming into power in 2017 we have seen many proposed changes to provincial legislation. The new government has expressed interest in changing BC Family Day to fall in line with Alberta and other provinces. Tourism Golden has advocated these dates continue to be on alternate weekends as it benefits Golden greatly by bringing more people and more tourism dollars to our community over the two weekends.

Most importantly the government has issued notice that MRDT eligible entities may now be allowed to allocate MRDT revenues to fund affordable housing. We have commenced and will continue with the utmost importance to lobby the government to protect the MRDT revenues from being diluted or diverted. Tourism Golden's 120% increase in MRDT revenues since inception is a direct correlation to the concentrated marketing efforts by our staff. Any reduction in MRDT revenues to our organization will result in less marketing funding, less tourist visits, which will in return result in millions of dollars in lost revenue for the community.

I have to say I am extremely excited for this upcoming year at Tourism Golden as a board member and stakeholder. I am excited and optimistic this summer will bring new records. I am excited to be a part of such a progressive, and innovative team. We are so lucky as a community to have some of the most exceptional staff driving this organization.

Rav Soomal

President

## About Tourism Golden

- ❑ Incorporated in 2006, Tourism Golden Association is a non-profit society mandated as the DMO and eligible entity until July 2022.
- ❑ The DMO area contains the Town of Golden, and CSRD Area A, not including Yoho National Park.
- ❑ Representing 163 tourism stakeholders (accommodations, activity operators and attractions).
- ❑ Primarily funded by a 2% tax on eligible accommodation room nights, known as the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT).
- ❑ Governed by a board of 11 directors representing accommodations and tourism operators within the boundary and appointed directors of community organisations. 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.

### 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.

### Directors, Officers, Committees & Staff

#### Board of Directors at April 2018

##### Elected

*Representing Town of Golden Accommodators*

Rav Soomal	Best Western Mountainview
Bob Munro	Le Beausoleil Bed & Breakfast
Treena Coney	Prestige Inn Golden

*Representing General Accommodators (all locations)*

Atma Sandher	Ponderosa Motor Inn
--------------	---------------------

*Representing Area A Accommodators*

John Lush	Lush Mountain Accommodations
Lucille Hayward	Moberly Lodge
Joanne Best	Mount 7 Lodges

*Representing Tourism Operators*

Graeme Kreiner	Golden Golf Club
Magi Scallion	Golden Snowmobile Club
Toby Barrett	Kicking Horse Mountain Resort

##### Appointed

Shelly Wadden	Kicking Horse Chamber of Commerce
---------------	-----------------------------------

##### Officers

Rav Soomal	President
John Lush	Vice President
Treasurer	Bob Munro
Secretary	Magi Scallion

##### Committees

###### Finance Committee

*Rav Soomal, Bob Munro – Treasurer*

###### HR Committee

*Rav Soomal, Graeme Kreiner, Magi Scallion*

###### Stakeholder Committee

*Treena Coney, Lucille Hayward, Atma Sandher, Rav Soomal*

###### Governance (Constitution and Bylaw) Committee

*Rav Soomal, Magi Scallion, Atma Sandher*

###### Visitor Services

*Rav Soomal, Atma Sandher, Toby Barrett*

###### RMI Committee - All board directors

##### Staff

Executive Director	Joanne Sweeting
Marketing & Administration	Rachel Wilde
Communications & Social Media	Andy Brown
Visitor Services Manager	Alycia Weir

## **DMO Business Objective,**

*“In a manner that is admired by all in the Canadian tourism industry, we will increase the economic impact of tourism in Golden and the surrounding area by growing revenues for businesses that serve tourists by 30% by 202”*

### **Tourism Vision**

“We will inspire target visitors to explore and experience Golden”

### **Tourism Mission**

“We will market Golden as a destination of choice. By delivering innovative marketing initiatives we will increase economic benefits for all our stakeholders and for the community.

We will provide tools and guidance to assist our stakeholders in delivering remarkable visitor experiences.

We will provide information and education to inform and guide destination development.”

### **Values & Guiding Principles**

These are the principles by which Tourism Golden will operate:

- Balance resident values with visitor demand.
- Maintain a positive, respectful relationship with residents of Golden and Area A.
- Recognize the community as a blend of diverse unique resources working together to become a healthy, vibrant community in which to live and work.
- Advocate a social, environmental, and economic balance within the tourism industry and the community at large.
- Work collectively with the community to develop services to meet the needs of our visitors.
- Foster open and honest communication with all community stakeholders through a comprehensive communication plan.
- Be inclusive and transparent to the stakeholders and the community.
- Partner with existing organizations and stakeholders that contribute to tourism marketing and destination development.
- Leverage resources and maximize partnership potential.
- Be fiscally responsible and accountable to stakeholders.
- Advocate on behalf of the local tourism industry.

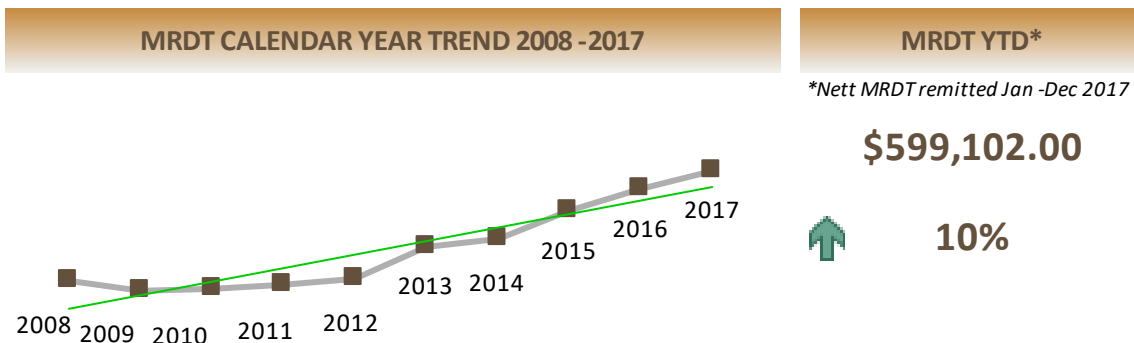
### **Strategic Objectives 2017 - 2022**

As identified in the 2017-2022 Strategic Business Plan, the Strategic Objectives of the organisation are to:

- Increase target market awareness of Golden as a great destination to visit
- Establish perceptions of Golden consistent with our brand positioning – brand positioning is known and embraced by target markets and residents.
- Encourage target visitors to make Golden a positive choice of destination in their vacation
- Encourage day visitors/passing traffic to stay longer and return later as an overnight visitor
- Increase length of stay
- Increase number of overnight visitors
- Encourage repeat visitation
- Increase shoulder season visitation and revenues
- Establish a baseline and show annual improvements in Net Promoter Score
- Increase funding for Tourism Golden
- Maintain position as lead organization in tourism and continuously learn and improve
- Build strong stakeholder and local support for Tourism Golden and for the overall importance of the tourism industry

## Key Performance Indicators

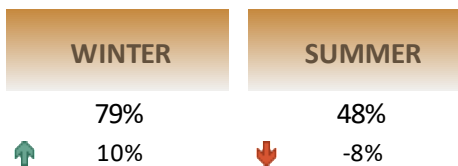
### MRDT REVENUES



### AVG. LENGTH OF STAY (NIGHTS)



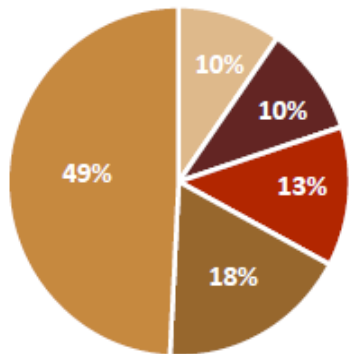
### AWARENESS



### TARGET MARKET PENETRATION

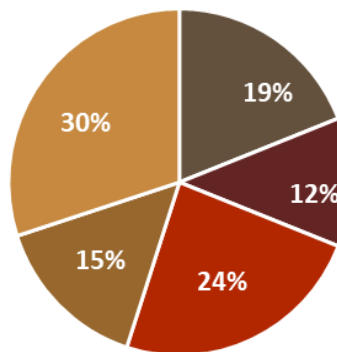


**Market Origin**  
Percentage of Visitors



- BC
- Overseas
- Alberta
- USA
- Other Canada

**Market Origin**  
Percentage of Visitors



- BC
- Overseas
- Alberta
- USA
- Other Canada

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**3,844,401** IMPRESSIONS



INSTAGRAM  
ENGAGEMENT  
**89,000**



FACEBOOK  
ENGAGEMENT  
**78,000**



TWITTER  
ENGAGEMENT  
**1,200**



YOUTUBE VIEWS  
**13,108**

FACEBOOK TOTAL REACH  
**3,663,093**

## WEBSITE ANALYTICS



### UNIQUE VISITORS

175,549



16%

### ORGANIC TRAFFIC

151,139.00



13%

### DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS

42,047.00



10%

### WEB VISITS

**231,972**



**11%**

### TOP 5 COUNTRY OF ORIGIN BY VISIT

	CANADA	168,030		8%
	USA	33,393		27%
	UK	6,510		-31%
	GERMANY	3,726		-6%
	AUSTRALIA	3,640		47%

### CONTENT DRILLDOWN | PAGEVIEWS

ALL ACTIVITIES	268,001		4%
BIKING	14,389		-18%
FISHING	10,827		12%
HIKING	16,160		-6%
PARKS	24,897		92%
RAFTING	12,788		-13%
SNOWMOBILING	11,060		-7%
SKIING	9,542		53%
HELI & CAT SKI	2,656		37%
SKI TOURING	3,568		10%

## PUBLIC & MEDIA RELATIONS

EARNED MEDIA  
FEATURES

**26**

STAKEHOLDER  
NEWS OPEN RATE

**50%**

CONSUMER  
DATABASE

**12,474**

CONSUMER  
NEWS OPEN

**20%**

## Executive Summary

*2017 was another banner year for tourism in Golden*, continuing the trend of annual increases to visitation and revenues that Golden has enjoyed since 2012. Whilst there were some proportional shifts in Golden's primary markets; reduction in the Alberta market, and increases in the BC, USA, and overseas markets, Golden continued to out-perform the industry.

It was a year in which *collaboration* with our stakeholders, and community and industry partners was critical, but clearly demonstrated what can be achieved with teamwork and shared vision.

In recent years, tourism has grown to become one of the most important industries at national and provincial levels. We are proud of the fact that the regrowth of tourism in Golden began the trajectory much earlier with 2017 closing the *8th consecutive year of growth* and confirming a *120% increase in accommodation revenues since the inception of the organisation in 2007*. Despite the long period of sustained and substantial growth, Golden continues to outperform BC provincial figures, and Alberta resorts.

We are confident in claiming that outcome for Tourism Golden, whilst recognising three primary factors that make it 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 and forward-thinking approach informed by research and data*.
3. Destination BC and Destination Canada who continue to *innovate in tourism marketing, and industry programs*, opportunities, and partnerships.

The Tourism Golden team once again delivered successfully against most primary goals determined in the 2017 annual marketing plan. Despite the exponential growth of short-term rental vacation properties *MRDT revenues increased by 10%*, signalling increased revenues for our accommodations and comparing favourably against the *2% BC average*. Accommodation *occupancies increased 11%<sup>1</sup>* on average throughout the year, most notably in March, April, May, September, and October.

## Highlights

- ❑ BCDMOA Professional Excellence Award
- ❑ 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of growth
- ❑ Transition to community-led visitor services
- ❑ 2% increase in total revenues
- ❑ 10% increase in MRDT revenues
- ❑ 12% increase in co-op marketing revenues
- ❑ 11% increase in accommodation occupancy
- ❑ Stronger spring & fall seasons
- ❑ Average length of stay summer 2.8 nights
- ❑ Average length of stay winter 3.2 nights

2017 signalled the start of a new 5-year term for the organisation, and a fresh strategic direction which stands on four key pillars:

*Build on a strong brand*  
*Create, curate, and communicate*  
*Educate and collaborate*  
*Inform and evaluate*

*Collaboration* was our watchword in 2017. This rolled out across several activities and projects, the most important of which was the successful transition of visitor information services from provincial to community-led services in partnership with Destination BC, the Town of Golden and other stakeholders, and agencies.

We continued to collaborate with Destination BC, Kootenay Rockies Tourism, activity sector organisations, and regional community DMO counterparts in multiple integrated marketing campaigns, asset production, media and travel trade relations, and professional development. These relationships and activities were critical to leveraging our

<sup>1</sup> Source: STR Destination Report Dec 2017



funds through Destination BC's Co-op Marketing program and Visiting Journalist programs, amplifying our voice, creating compelling content, and ultimately increasing motivation to visit.

RCR and Tourism Golden collaborated to confirm Kicking Horse Mountain Resort and Golden as the *host for the Freeride World Tour* in February 2018. Additionally, the same partners participated in the Canadian Ski Council US market winter campaign.

Working with Destination BC we undertook a *PRIZM market segmentation research project* which gave deeper insight into the characteristics of our visitors, and which informed change in the 2018 marketing plan, recognising new EQ segments and geographic markets.

As always, we continued to engage with our own tourism stakeholders to offer print and digital co-op marketing opportunities and were grateful for the support of our stakeholders in hosting media visits which resulted in an astounding *26 earned media features* in target publications.

Throughout the year, we continued to advocate for a level playing field on short term vacation rentals at both local and provincial levels, in addition to supporting TIABC and the BCHA in their own efforts.

## Situational Context

### Tourism Trends & Influences

*"Canada welcomed a record breaking 20.8 million tourists in 2017"<sup>2</sup>*

*International arrivals into Canada increased by 4.4%.*

*"2017 marks an impressive year for tourism in British Columbia"<sup>3</sup>*

BC international arrivals grew by 4.4%, attributable in part to increased air access from several markets including China, Germany, Australia, Mexico, and France. Of note to Golden, international arrivals into Calgary rose by 3.8%.<sup>4</sup>

2017 was the Canada 150 celebration year, and we took maximum opportunity of the national campaign promoting

free Parks Canada parks passes by creating the 'Heart of the Parks' campaign which ran throughout the year, and which will be continued in 2018. It is satisfying to compare the *2.3% growth in Alberta Resorts* occupancy, against the average *11% growth in Golden*, and the average *18.8% ADR increase in Golden ADR* which eclipsed the *variance of 9.2% in Alberta Resorts* indicating that the campaign generated more than its fair share of incremental occupancy and revenues.

### Economic & Political Influences

Alberta's energy sector began to rebound with an increase in oil prices and although recession is still a factor in this important market, perhaps what will continue to be a bigger influence is the on-going pipeline dispute between the BC and AB governments.

Elections in the USA may have had both positive and negative influences on our US market; encouraging cross-border travel to escape, or alternatively giving pause on luxury spend until the impact of 'Trumpification' became clearer. What is clear is that USA market for Golden grew by 3% in summer 2017 and 1% in winter 2016/17.

Whilst the UK still wrestles with Brexit, it appears that the British traveller increasingly chooses Golden with the market for Golden increasing by 4% in both winter and summer.

### Social & Consumer Trends

Growth in the popularity of short term vacation rentals fuelled by the exponential growth of available (albeit many illegal) units in Golden and Area A, continued. The *Golden Visitor Study* undertaken in winter and summer both demonstrate large increases in the use of STRs, and their influence on consumer destination selection. Vacation home rentals in summer 2017 increased from 6% of paid roofed accommodation stays in 2016 to 23% in 2017, with use of Airbnb increasing by 25%. In response to the question "How important was ... private home rental... in your decision to visit Golden" responses of 'extremely important' grew by 13% in summer.

Use of mobile devices to access the Tourism Golden website increased by 26%, and tablets by 13% whilst use of desktop dropped for the first time, indicating the value of continuing to invest in a 'mobile-first' approach.

<sup>2</sup> Source: [destinationcanada.com](http://destinationcanada.com)

<sup>3</sup> Source: [destinationbc.ca](http://destinationbc.ca)

<sup>4</sup> Source: [Alberta Tourism Market Monitor Feb 2018](http://Alberta Tourism Market Monitor Feb 2018)

## Disrupters

Whilst Golden was not threatened by the BC wildfires, air quality was affected. Some visitors were re-directed from other destinations to Golden because of fire, others cancelled their planned Golden vacation.

## Operational Summary

In February 2017, we were honoured to receive the BCDMOA Professional Excellence Award for our work in 2016. The award recognised our commitment to informing strategic and tactical planning through research, and our collaborative approach to content creation and curation, layered with paid multi-channel advertising. Throughout 2017, we continued to implement the same strategic approach and tactical planning which results in consistently achieving steps towards our strategic objectives.

The transition of visitor information services in July 2017 from provincial to community-led, managed by Tourism Golden, brought opportunity in many ways. Whilst the launch of new services added significant pressure to the year's activity, observing the immediate and obvious success, and having an additional touchpoint with our visitor is extremely valuable. The additional responsibility and workload added a Visitor Services Manager, Alycia Weir, to our permanent team.

We were proud to participate in Destination BC's Remarkable Experiences and Destination Development programs, believing, as they do, that education and collaboration leverages our strengths, amplifies our voice, and provides a compelling motivation for visitation.

Whilst overall the organisational and marketing performance produced exceptional results, smoky conditions, high peak season prices, and the increase in BC visitor market may have impacted the summer Net Promoter Score which dropped from 35 to 31. Albertans remain Golden's strongest promoters.

## Stakeholder Relations

We take our role as leader in the local tourism industry seriously and were pleased that members numbers held strong and stakeholder engagement in co-op marketing opportunities leveraged \$85,000 for destination marketing.

We communicated regularly and relevantly with our tourism and community stakeholders at the AGM in April and Open House in November. The monthly stakeholder news continued to have a strong 50% open rate.

## Advocacy

The organisation represents the interests of the tourism industry and local tourism stakeholders, and was active in the following matters:

### Short Term Rentals

Whilst appreciating the increased consumer demand for short-term vacation rentals, and the importance of having that product available to drive incremental visitation, the fact that these properties are not held to the same requirements in collecting provincial accommodation taxes or adhering to the municipal bylaws presents an unfair competition that threatens to undermine the traditional accommodators who provide professional, quality services and who support the local tourism economy and destination marketing. In 2017, Tourism Golden continued to advocate for change to municipal bylaws, and to provincial accommodation PST legislation in the following ways:

- ❑ Letter to Minister Finance with request to rescind clause 78(1)(b) of PST legislation.
- ❑ Letters to CSRD and Municipality requesting they write to Finance Minister.
- ❑ Lobbied Town of Golden to update and enforce STR bylaws.
- ❑ Participated in Town of Golden STR engagement sessions.
- ❑ Stakeholder e-blasts requesting letters to the Minister.
- ❑ Met with MLA Doug Clovechok, TAC Critic.
- ❑ Supported TIABC, BCHA in their advocacy efforts.

We are pleased that both the provincial government and the Town of Golden have responded with positive action that will be implemented in 2018.

### BC Family Day

With capacity on AB Family Day already at maximum, stakeholders indicated they would prefer BC Family Day to remain a separate date. Tourism Golden took the following action:

- ❑ Letter to PM & Min. TAC
- ❑ Supported CWSAA & TIABC in their advocacy efforts.

Unfortunately, the Government chose not to listen to the tourism industry and we were unsuccessful.

## Visitor Information Services

We are grateful to collaborate with Destination BC on 5-year service agreement which delivers a community-focussed multi-channel approach that will elevate the visitor experience in Golden, but that is flexible and sustainable. Based on DBC research, which identified a multi-channel need for information provision through face to face services, online and social media, the business plan combined traditional face-to-face service, alongside new services such as WiFi hotspots, digital kiosks, pop-up information at events and community ambassadors.

With the support of the Town of Golden, who created the new site buildings and amenities using RMI funds, and the Ministry of Transportation who allowed use of the land, we were able to create the brand-new Visitor Information Centre and Amenity Hub in a high profile and accessible location. Elements such as signage, picnic tables and garbage bins were re-purposed from the old BCVC site. Learning from the past, the new buildings can be easily moved or re-purposed should the need arise in the future.

Although traditional print materials are available, Information Counsellors use digital tools to find and communicate information to the visitor. Duplicated touch screens, and the Tourism Golden online trip planning tool allow Counsellors the ability to engage the visitor and create customised itineraries which can be emailed to the visitor's own device.



WiFi hotspots were installed at the Golden Visitor Centre, at the Chamber of Commerce, in Spirit Square and 9<sup>th</sup> Ave North near the Tourism Golden office, giving visitors the ability to find information and connect with stakeholder businesses using their own devices.

Digital kiosks were installed at the Golden Visitor Centre, the Chamber of Commerce, and Glacier Mountain Lodge at Kicking Horse. With the success of the first phase, additional

kiosks will be installed in high volume locations in 2018 and 2019. The kiosks are a customised version of the Tourism Golden website, featuring real-time map locators, the Experience Finder and trip planning tool. When not in use, the kiosks play destination and partner videos.



Although we have a strong social media presence and engagement, we also participated in Destination BC's social media program which connects visitor information partners and engagement with visitors as they move B.C.

Pop-up information services were trialled at the Wednesday Farmers Markets with great success, and a more robust version will be rolled out in 2018 that will see a branded pop up tent and mobile digital kiosk at major events and activities.

Despite opening one month later than planned, the new *Golden Visitor Centre* welcomed almost **10,000 visitors August 4<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>**, and digital kiosks and WiFi hotspot users added a further **5,700 interactions**.

Site-specific research revealed **a 96% satisfaction** with overall experience at the site, and an estimated **economic benefit of \$1.3 million** because of visitor service provision.



## Marketing Summary

The primary function of Tourism Golden is to market Golden as a tourism destination of choice. The 2017-2022 Strategic Business Plan and the 2017 Marketing Plan collectively identify the marketing objectives, target markets, marketing strategies and budgeted spend per strategy.

The total spends on Marketing and Promotion, including research, was **\$545,777**, which represents **72% of expenditures**. This does not include staff wages and benefits. As measured by the Ministry of Finance, staff wages directly related to the delivery of marketing and tourism projects are deemed a marketing expense, and in that determination Marketing and Promotion spend would represent 94% of total expenses.

We continued to ensure that our marketing efforts are coordinated and complementary to the provincial and regional strategic plans throughout our planning process. Through the DBC Co-op Marketing program we participated with regional community DMOs and BC Mountain Bike Tourism Association in a 'Kootenay Dirt' campaign and asset creation, with the CWSAA Nordic campaign, and supported Fishing BC on film shoot.

### Media Relations

Throughout the year Andy, supported by our PR agency, and often in collaboration with DBC and KRT, engaged with approved traditional media and social influencers, providing story content or hosting. We can attribute 26 features as a direct result of this activity, including *Ski Canada, Westjet Magazine, Globe & Mail, Avenue Magazine, Vacations & Travel Magazine, Outdoor Journal, London Evening Standard, Explore Magazine, BC Magazine, Canadian Geographic, Forecast Magazine, Outdoors Northwest, Ski Magazine France, and TV show Sport Fishing on the Fly*.

### Content & Asset Creation

We briefed and produced 3 destination videos and multiple social media edits and added to the already extensive image library.

### Social Media

The continuous demand for engaging content led us to engaging Crowdriff, a User Generated Content (UGC) platform that gives access to thousands of images and video shared through social media and assists us in keeping website and social media content current and fresh. With the support of Kootenay Rockies Tourism, we also hosted an educational Tourism Golden Association

workshop for stakeholders on creating content for social media channels and the value of engaging with the social community to amplify our collective Golden voice.

### Advertising

Our paid advertising strategy targets both digital and print media buys, occasionally incorporating other channels including features on video screens in Times Square N.Y., Dundas Square, and the PATH in downtown Toronto alongside print and digital publications. The successful ROI is demonstrated in the increases in both organic and paid website visits, and an increase in awareness of Golden.

Also, of note; we received approval for a Google search ad grant which provides net contribution of \$84,000 to a year long campaign beginning December 2017.

Other successes include collaboration with RCR to confirm Kicking Horse Mountain Resort as the location for the Freeride World Tour in 2018. This is the first global event of this magnitude to be hosted in Golden, and we should recognise the value of the B.C. Tourism Events Program which provided financial support for the event, and our local accommodation sponsors and community supporters that made this possible. This first successful event puts Golden on the stage for this and other similar events in the future.

### Consumer Relations & Shows

Aside from social media activity, consumer-direct engagement includes monthly newsletters, which maintain a healthy 20% open rate, more than industry average, and attendance at snowmobile, wedding, and outdoor adventure consumer shows.

### Marketing Collateral

A complete overhaul of the Bike Trail Map, and refresh of the Hiking trail map and Golden Travel Planner were completed. Continued improvements to tourismgolden.com, particularly in relation to the addition of digital kiosks and WiFi hotspots.

### Events

A significant change to the events strategy saw a move away from organising our own Golden Mountain Festival to attracting and facilitating 3<sup>rd</sup> party professional events. This has proved to be very successful with the second successful year of the Golden 24 Mountain Bike race operated by Transrockies, and confirmation of Kicking Horse Mountain Resort and Golden as the host for the Freeride World Tour in February 2018.



The Destination Marketing Performance tables pages 14 and 15 summarise strategic performance against specific targets outlined in the 2017 Marketing Plan.

## Research

Date informs all our activity and measures the outcome against the targets set. It supports the strategies and objectives that are set in the annual marketing plan, and the 5-year strategic plan. We continued to invest in collecting and analysing visitor data in the winter and summer seasons.

Our 2017 seasonal Visitor Studies reveals success in achieving our goals with visitation coming from our identified primary target markets, strong repeat visitation, and increased awareness of Golden as a winter destination, although summer visitor awareness dropped, likely because of visitors re-directed due to wildfires.

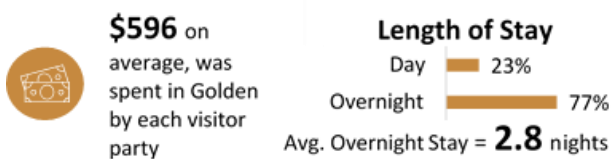
More detailed information can be found in the [Summer 2017 Visitor Survey](#) and [Winter 2017 Visitor Survey](#) reports

Collaboration with Destination BC on a Golden-specific PRIZM market segmentation project gave us deeper insight into our visitors and their lifestyle and gave rise to some changes in the 2018 marketing plan.

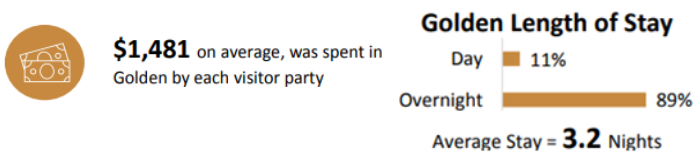
## Economic Benefit

The visitor surveys reveal healthy length of stay and average spend per party. Winter stay and spend both increased substantially. Using the average known number of available fixed roof accommodations and extrapolating average monthly occupancies from the STR Destination report, *we estimate the economic benefit of tourism to Golden to be more than \$100 million annually.*

### SUMMER 2017



### WINTER 2017



## Success in Target Markets

Success in reaching the identified markets with our marketing efforts can be seen in the excerpts from Golden Visitor Survey 2017 on page 16 and 17 which support the primary geographic origin and travel motivation of visitors as per our identified markets and audiences. This data is also supported by website analytics shown in the Key Performance Indicators, although interestingly web visits from UK and Germany declined.



Canadian visitors originate primarily from Alberta, BC, and Ontario. International visitors are primarily from the USA states of California, Texas and Oregon, and European countries UK, Germany, and Switzerland.

Summer research showed an increase in visitors from B.C. and overseas, with a decrease in visitors from Alberta. Primary motivators for visit, aside being a convenient place to stop, were family vacation, sightseeing, nature and wildlife, visiting national parks, mountain biking, and VFR.

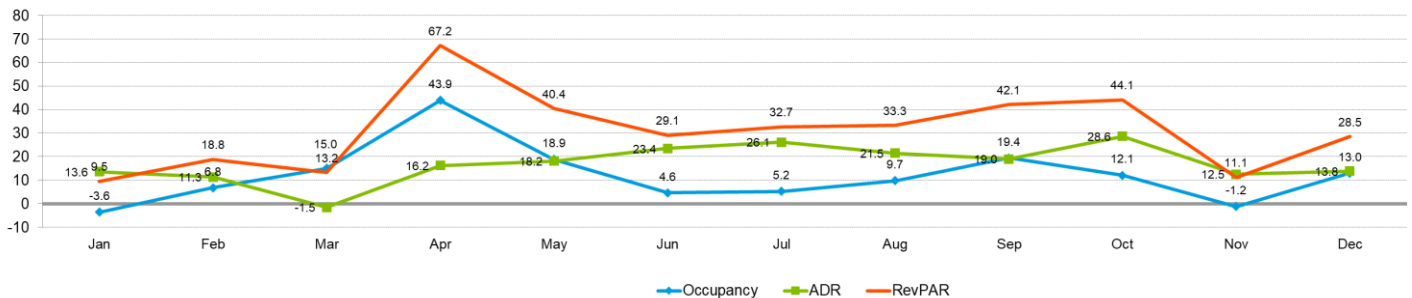
Winter Alberta market visitation matched the previous winter. 72% cited resort skiing at KHMR as their primary reason for visit. Winter activities, VFR and relaxation were also primary motivators.

## Destination Marketing Performance

### Strategic Objectives Performance Indicators

2017 MARKETING OBJECTIVE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	OUTCOME
Establish perceptions of Golden consistent with our brand positioning	Net Promoter Score as determined by winter & summer visitor studies	Winter increase by 3% to 50 Summer increase by 3% to 36	Winter 45.9 Summer 31.8
Increase target market awareness of Golden as a great destination to visit	Awareness level as determined by the percentage of positive responses in visitor studies to "Were you aware of Golden before planning this visit?"	Winter increase by 5% to 75% Summer increase by 5% to 57%	Winter 79% + 9% Summer 48% - 4%
	Awareness and intent to visits from key target markets as determined by website visits	Canada increase by 5% to 160,000 USA increase by 5% to 27,675 UK increase by 5% to 9,800 Germany increase by 5% to 4,100 Australia increase by 5% to 2,400	Canada 168,000 +8% USA 33,393 +27% UK 6,510 -31% Germany 3,726 -6% Australia 3,640 +47%
Increase nightly visits and length of stay	Growth in visitation as indicated by accommodation revenues and determined by gross MRDT revenues	Increase by 5% to \$538,000	\$612,302 +10%
	Average length of stay as determined by winter & summer visitor studies	Increase by 5% to 3 nights	Winter 3.2 Summer 2.8

**Monthly Percent Change-2017**

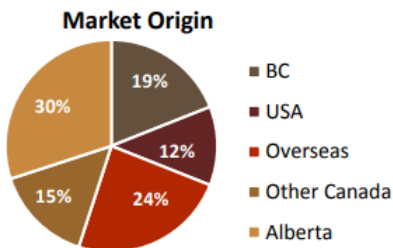


## Marketing Strategy Performance Indicators

STRATEGY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	OUTCOME
Marketing Collateral	% response to Visitor Study question “Printed sources of visitor information used before and during trips to Golden”	Maintain or Increase: Travel Planner = 3% before / 11% during Maps = 17% before / 27% during	Travel Planner 2% before / 6% during Maps = 8% before / 23% during
	% response to Visitor Study question “Online sources of visitor information used before and during trips to Golden”	TG website 28% before / 16% during	18% before / 8% during
	Visits to website video pages	Increase by 5%	3,365 + 27%
	Website visits	Increase by 5%	231,972 +11%
	Visits to website activity pages	Increase by 5%	268,001 +8%
	Stakeholder co-op-marketing support	\$71,000	\$83,251
Digital Media	Website visits generated by trackable paid campaigns	Increase by 5% to 52,700	42,047 +10%
	% response to Visitor Study question “How Did You Originally Find Out About Golden?” is Internet search	Maintain or increase 14%	18%
	Social media engagement & reach as demonstrated by Facebook organic reach	Increase by 30% to 2 million	3,844,401
Public & Media Relations	Achieve earned media in influential travel or activity media	15 features	26
	Consumer newsletter open rate	Maintain 20%	20%
Travel Trade	Visits to new website Travel Trade section	Determine benchmark	Website update in 2018
Events	Event sponsorship & revenues	\$7,500	GMF cancelled
	Total participation at key events throughout the festival	300 or more	GMF cancelled
	New sporting event held or planned to be held in 2018 or after	1 new event confirmed	Freeride Word Tour Feb 2018
Visitor Information	% response to Visitor Study question “The Visitor Information I Obtained in Golden Resulted in Me or My Travel Party... “as “Improving the Overall Quality of My Experience in Golden”	Maintain or increase 55%	59%

# Golden Visitor Survey 2017

## GOLDEN - SUMMER 2017 SUMMARY



### Top Provinces (outside BC & AB)

1. Ontario
2. Saskatchewan
3. Quebec

### Top 3 USA States

1. California
2. Texas
3. Oregon

### Top Overseas Regions

1. Europe – UK, Germany, Switzerland
2. Australia/New Zealand
3. Other Countries



**\$596** on average, was spent in Golden by each visitor party

### Length of Stay

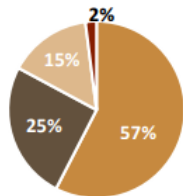


### Accommodations

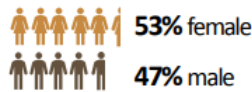
**65%** Stayed at Paid Roofed Accommodation

### Booking Method

- Accommodation Property
- Online Travel Agent
- Private Home Rental Service
- Other



### Visitors

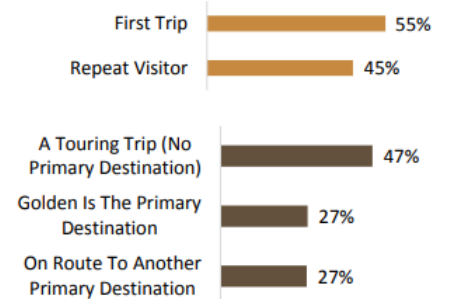


### 3.0 people in each visitor party

- 60% travelled with spouse
- 18% travelled with children (<16)
- 14% travelled with friends

**60%** had a university or post graduate degree      **54%** had HH income of \$100,000+

### Type of Visitor



### Top 5 Activities

(in addition to reasons for visiting – see below)

1. Hiking in Golden area (23%)
2. Grizzly Bear at KHMR (22%)
3. Hiking at National Parks (18%)
4. Mountain Biking (15%)
5. White Water Rafting (10%)

### Top 5 Places Visited

1. Restaurant (74%)      **83%** visited downtown
2. Gas Station (62%)
3. Grocery Store (52%)
4. Kicking Horse Bridge (51%)
5. National Parks (48%)

### Top 5 Reasons for Visiting

1. Break from Driving/Convenient Place to Stop (23%)
2. Family Vacation (22%)
3. Mtn. Biking Events & General (12%)
4. Sightseeing/Nature/Wildlife (9%)
5. Visiting National Parks (8%)

**48%** of first time visitors were aware of Golden before visiting

### Experience Evaluation

**87%** Rated Their Overall Golden Experience as Very Good/Excellent

Likelihood of Return: **72%**

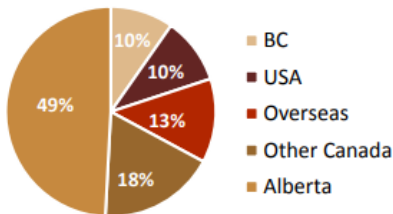
Likelihood to Recommend: **49%**

Net Promoter Score (NPS): **31.8**



# GOLDEN - WINTER 2017 SUMMARY

## Market Origin



## Top Provinces (outside BC & AB)

1. Ontario
2. Quebec
3. Manitoba
4. Saskatchewan

## Top 3 USA States

1. Washington
2. California
3. Utah

## Top Overseas Regions

1. Europe – UK, Germany
2. Australia/New Zealand
3. Other Countries



**\$1,481** on average, was spent in Golden by each visitor party

## Visitors



61% male



39% female

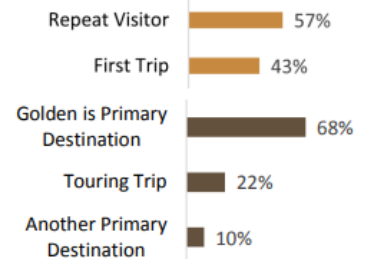
**4.1** people in each visitor party

- 43% travelled with friends
- 36% travelled with spouse
- 15% travelled with children (<16)

**72%** had a university or post graduate degree

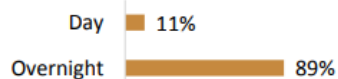
**63%** had HH income of \$100,000+

## Type of Trip



**44%** Considered Other Winter Destinations Like: Revelstoke, Banff/Canmore & Fernie

## Golden Length of Stay



Average Stay = **3.2** Nights

## Top 5 Places Visited in Golden

1. Restaurant **82%** visited
2. Pub/Bar **downtown**
3. Gas Station
4. Kicking Horse Mountain Resort
5. Grocery Store

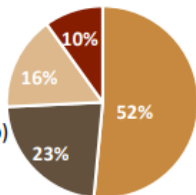
## Accommodations

**82%** Stayed at Paid Roofed Accommodation

**93%** Pre-Booked Accommodation

## Booking Method

- Accommodation Property
- Online Travel Agent
- Private Home Rental (e.g. Airbnb)
- Other



## Top 5 Reasons for Visiting Golden

1. Resort Skiing/Snowboarding (72%)
2. Visiting Friends and Relatives (5%)
3. Education/Medical (4%)
4. Cross Country Skiing (3%)
5. Backcountry Skiing (3%)

**79%** of first time visitors were aware of Golden before visiting

## Experience Evaluation

**91%** Rated Their Overall Golden Experience as Very Good/Excellent

Likelihood to Recommend: **58%**

Net Promoter Score (NPS): **45.9**

Likelihood of Return to Golden: **87%**

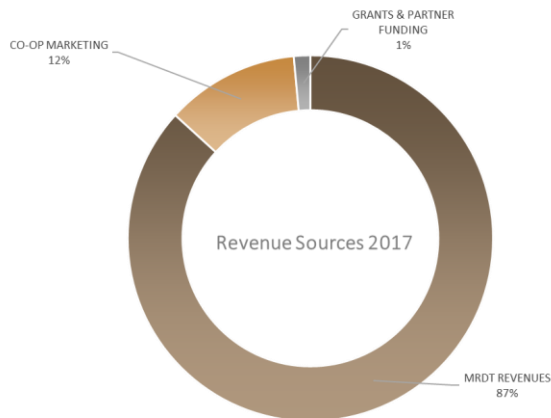
## Financial Summary

2017 was the first fiscal following a change to align the fiscal year with the calendar year.

The primary source of revenue for Tourism Golden is the 2% Municipal and Regional District tax (MRDT) which provided 87% of the organisation's funding in 2017. This was leveraged with co-operative advertising sales to tourism stakeholders on a 'pay-to-play' basis, and by grant or partner funds for projects.

Although MRDT revenues increased by 10%, and co-op marketing revenues by 15% against 2016, the overall revenue for the organisation (excluding visitor services) only show a 2% growth, reflecting the amount of \$39,340 of grant funding received in 2016 for the development of the visitor services business plan.

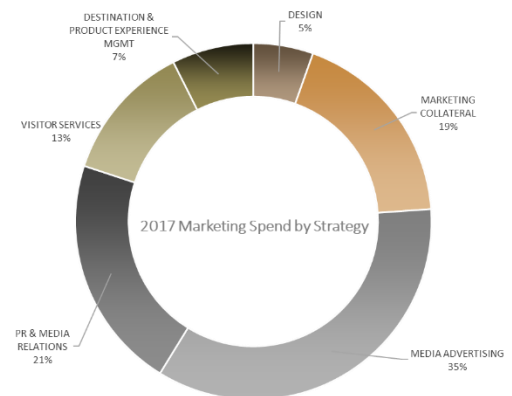
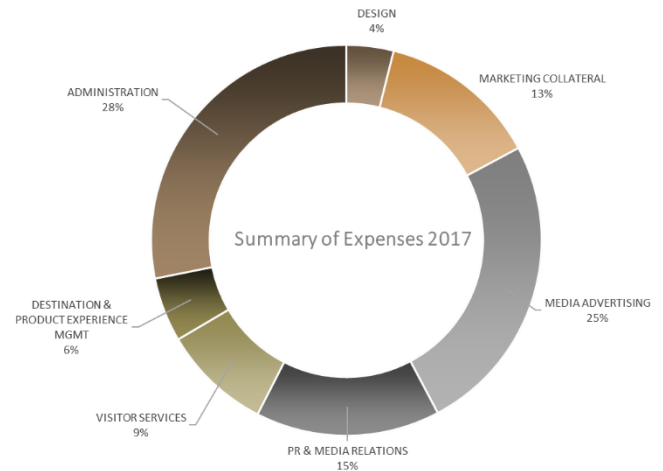
Marketing and Promotion tactical activity spend was \$545,777, which represents 72% of expenditures. As measured by the Ministry of Finance, staff wages directly related to the delivery of marketing and tourism projects are deemed a marketing expense, and in that determination Marketing and Promotion spend would represent 94% of total expenses.



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

## Highlights

- ❑ 2% increase in total revenues
- ❑ 10% increase in MRDT tax revenues
- ❑ 15% increase in co-op marketing revenues
- ❑ 72% of spend on tactical marketing activity

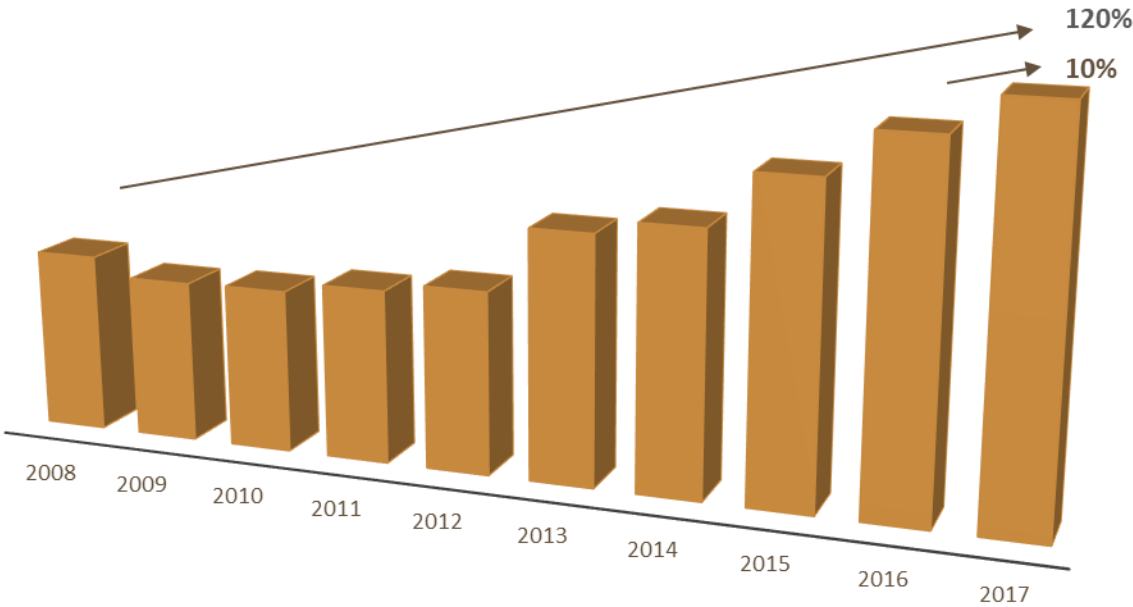


## Visitor Services

For clarity, the visitor services accounts and operational budget are reported separately. The 5-year service agreement with Destination BC, includes annual funding. In 2017, year 1 of the agreement, Destination BC contributed \$270,000 and Tourism Golden contributed \$50,000. The Town of Golden used RMI funding to create the VISAH site and therefore these amounts are not recorded in the TG Visitor Services accounts.

APPENDIX A

MRDT Revenues 2008 - 2017



	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
■ Nett MRDT revenue	\$271,790	\$244,632	\$246,621	\$262,247	\$275,700	\$373,994	\$394,722	\$476,925	\$544,210	\$599,102