

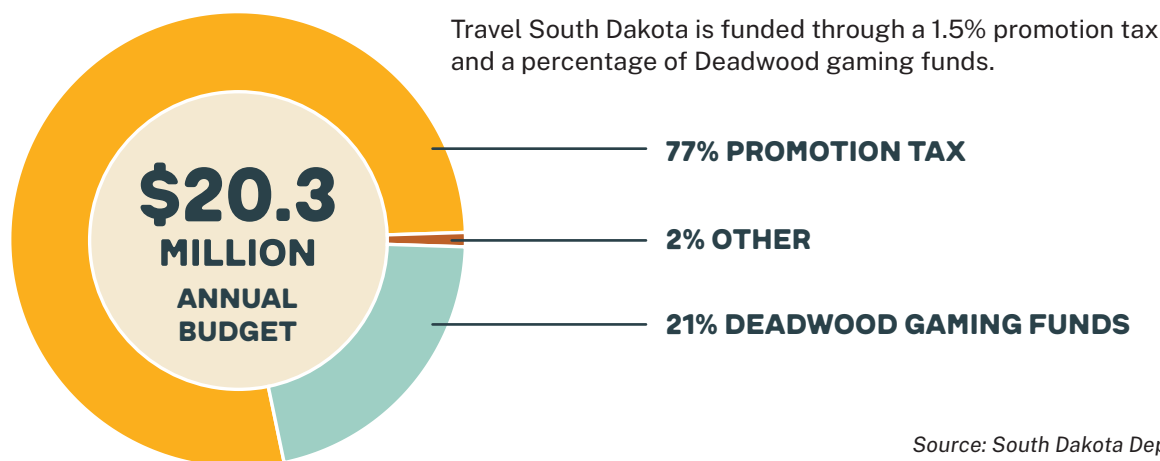
# TRAVEL South Dakota 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Travel South Dakota's unique mission is to enhance the quality of life for all South Dakotans by strengthening communities and their tourism economies, encouraging responsible stewardship of our destination, and creating meaningful experiences for all to enjoy.

We pursue this mission by enhancing and expanding the South Dakota brand, advancing the development of our destination, advocating for responsible destination management, and prioritizing organizational excellence.

Here are several highlights of how Travel South Dakota's mission was advanced in 2024.

## ANNUAL BUDGET



Source: South Dakota Department of Revenue

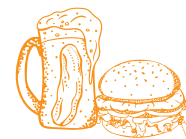
## ECONOMIC IMPACT\*



South Dakota welcomed  
**14.9 MILLION VISITORS**  
in 2024, a **1.4% increase** from the previous year and an **all-time record**.



These visitors spent a **record-setting \$5.09 BILLION** in 2024, which generated **17%** of all state sales tax collections.



The tourism industry supported **58,824 JOBS** in 2024. Labor income soared to **\$2.2 billion**.

Source: Tourism Economics

\*Refer to [SDVisit.com](https://sdvisit.com) for a comprehensive listing of monthly travel indicators, and the full 2024 Tourism Economics report.

# GLOBAL MARKETING & BRAND STRATEGY



## TOTAL 2024 RESULTS

- 662M+ paid media impressions
- 11.8M+ searches generated
- 2.8M+ site visits (TravelSouthDakota.com + partner and other sites)
- 575.8k+ estimated total hotel + flight bookings generated
- 1.2M+ estimated total nights booked
- 1.27M+ estimated total travelers from generated bookings
- \$156M+ estimated total hotel + flight revenue generated

## Super Bowl TV Spot



Travel South Dakota partnered with one-hit-wonder band Nine Days in 2024 to create the department's first-ever Super Bowl TV ad. The TV spot, "ABSOLUTELY (Story of a State)," ran in the regional markets of Denver, Minneapolis, Omaha, Des Moines, Kansas City, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls.

The spot performed beyond expectations, with numbers overdelivering in our key markets.

- 33,000 hotel and flight bookings
- \$7 million in hotel revenue generated
- 97% view-thru-completion rate on digital video
- 15 million earned media impressions
- Direct traffic to TravelSouthDakota.com 192% above average the day of and day after the Super Bowl
- Referral traffic to TravelSouthDakota.com 435% above average



## Forever 605; Year Two

2024 marked year two of Travel South Dakota's Forever 605 campaign, with the second year focusing more on industry involvement. The department wanted to balance visitors' positive economic impacts with the preservation of the state's natural and community assets.

A new partner in this effort was the Department of Game, Fish & Parks. With their oversight of the state's parks and campgrounds, coupled with their regulation of hunting and fishing, we knew their partnership was vital in spreading the Forever 605 message.

## South Dakota Passport Program

In 2024, the South Dakota Department of Tourism expanded its successful passport program by introducing four new themed passports. Working closely with our regional tourism partners, we developed these passports from start to finish, ensuring a diverse mix of experiences and collaborating on extensive promotional efforts.

### Locations

- Head for the Hills (42 locations)
- Northbound Family Adventures (42 locations)
- Missouri River Getaway (30 locations)
- Southeast Family Fun Escapes (40 locations)

### 2024 Regional Passport Numbers - (Jan 1, 2024-Dec 31, 2024)

- Total Passport Downloads: 3,546
- Business Check-ins: 12,517

New Passports! →





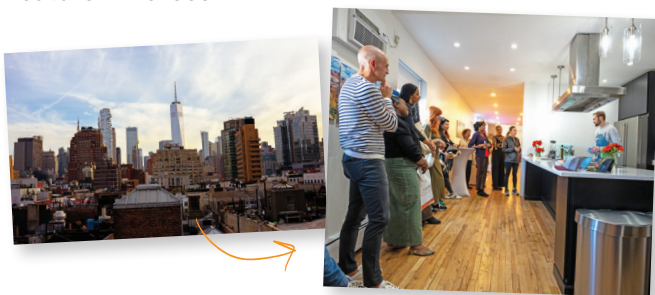
## GLOBAL PUBLIC RELATIONS & CONTENT SERVICES

### SoDak House in SoHo

New York City is the media capital of the world, making it the perfect location for a “SoDak in SoHo” pop-up media event. We invited 13 industry partners to join us as we brought South Dakota food, craft brews, and local businesses to share their stories directly with the media.

#### Results:

- 13 industry partners
- 70 media members and influencers attending from outlets like The Today Show, CBS News, Good Morning America, Forbes, Conde Nast, and Real Simple
- Live morning show segment on PIX 11 while in-market
- Four articles and counting since April 2024, including a feature in Forbes



### New Scenic Drives Piece

With the feel of a coffee table book, this new guide features beautiful drives in every region of the state and helps visitors plan an epic road trip adventure with breathtaking sights, hidden gems, and larger-than-life attractions. The printed guide is also available online in an e-version.

### Dylan Efron at Sturgis



Avid outdoorsman, Hollywood producer, and influencer Dylan Efron made his way to Sturgis in 2024, spending several days at the world's largest motorcycle rally gathering content to share with his more than 1 million followers. And as a bonus, Dylan's friend and fellow traveler Danny McGee brought another 388,000 social followers along for the ride, as well as 15 minutes worth of YouTube content.

### Regional Broadcast Media Tour

South Dakota's tourism efforts took center stage during a regional broadcast media tour featuring Katlyn Svendsen and James Hagen. The duo traveled across five key Midwest markets to share the state's unique flavors, exciting events, and compelling travel opportunities with regional audiences to generate awareness and excitement of South Dakota's tourism experiences. The team appeared on morning shows in key markets to offer engaging insights into South Dakota's diverse tourism offerings. The tour resulted in a total audience reach of 16,636,374, significantly amplifying South Dakota's visibility in key regional markets.

#### Calendar year social stats:

- Users reached: 78.3M (14% increase)
- New followers: 35.9K (52% increase)
- Engagements: estimated 500K

## GLOBAL TRAVEL & TRADE



### TOTAL 2024 RESULTS

- 280+ one-on-one trade show appointments
- 4 international missions (Canada, Germany, UK, France)
- 320+ meetings with travel professionals

### Canadian Travel Trade Efforts

Continuing a focus on Canada in 2024, the trade team was active in a variety of ways. Over the course of the year, the team attended three travel trade shows, secured a Global News Morning Show spot with the Alberta Motor Association, conducted eight webinars between Canadian operators and South Dakota partners, and sent monthly industry newsletters. All of these efforts are moving the needle on bringing Canadian travelers to our state.

### Trade Co-op Efforts

Through our partnership in The Great American West, South Dakota in 2024 participated in 36 total marketing campaigns between seven international markets. Twelve of these campaigns were in direct cooperation with tour operator partners including; Platinum Travel (UK), CANUSA (Germany), USA Reisen (Germany), Connections (Benelux), Little America (Benelux), Visiteurs (France), Evasions (France), Amerigo (France), USA Rejser (Nordic), Kilroy International (Nordic) and Nyhavn Rejser (Nordic). Other consumer shows, trade shows and activities took place reaching many other travelers, tour operators, travel agents, media outlets and journalists.



## INDUSTRY RELATIONS, DEVELOPMENT & RESEARCH

### New Forever 605 Online Training Module

In July 2024 Travel South Dakota launched the Forever 605 Training module in the department's free Online Hospitality Training. The Forever 605 module provides the information hospitality industry workers need to understand and implement Forever 605 destination stewardship strategies into their daily practice.

### Investment in Research

2024 was the year of research for Travel South Dakota. The team partnered with research firms to conduct five studies, each aimed at providing the research needed to make smart, effective decisions.

#### Future Partners:

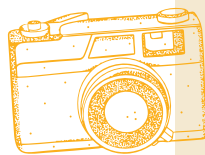
- **Visitor Profile** – This study gathered information about recent South Dakota visitors to learn more about their travel behaviors: what motivates them to travel, vacation planning sources, length of stay, travel spending, accommodation preferences and average party size.
- **Top Personas** – This three-part study identified the most valuable traveler personas and provided actionable insights into their behaviors, preferences, and perceptions.
- **Website Usability** – This study was designed to evaluate the user experience of the Travel South Dakota website with the purpose of informing its redesign.

#### Longwoods International:

- **ROI and Image** – This research measured the ROI and awareness of South Dakota's 2023 advertising campaign as well as gathered insights into the image and perception of South Dakota as a vacation destination.

#### Love Communications

- **Market Analysis** – The objectives of this research were to identify South Dakota's awareness funnel metrics across the country, determine which advertising channels are having the largest impact on travel decision-making and what psychographic and/or demographic correlators exist to help further explain these findings.



## AWARDS

### Mercury Awards – U.S. Travel Association

- **Destination Stewardship** | Forever 605

### Magellan Awards – Travel Weekly

- **Gold Award** for Story of a State (Destination Marketing - TV Commercial for Destinations)
- **Silver Award** for “So Much South Dakota, So Little Time” Winter Campaign (Destination Marketing – Campaign - Advertising/Marketing for Destinations)

### Adrian Awards – HSMAI

- **Gold and Best of Category:** “So Much South Dakota, So Little Time” Integrated Campaign (Business to Consumer)
- **Gold:** Sturgis Motorcycle Rally Wall Street Journal placement (PR/Communications Feature Placement Online or Print – Consumer Magazine or Newspaper)
- **Silver:** “So Much South Dakota, So Little Time” Peak Season Campaign (Advertising – Brand Campaign)
- **Silver:** Travel South Dakota Organic Social (Digital – Social Media/Social Networking)
- **Silver:** Story of a State (Advertising – Television)
- **Bronze and Best of Category:** “So Much South Dakota, So Little Time” Shoulder Season Video (Advertising – Connected TV/Streaming/Linear)
- **Bronze:** Dock Tok President's Day Influencer (Digital – Influencer Marketing)
- **Bronze:** Forever 605 (Advertising – Corporate Social Responsibility)
- **Bronze:** The Sturgis Rally Rides into its Next Era (PR/Communications PR Campaign – Consumer)

