

FY23 ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

# TRAVEL-DRIVEN. FUTURE-FOCUSED.

**ARIZONA**  
OFFICE OF TOURISM





## VISION

Create an Arizona experience that captures and nurtures the hearts and minds of people who call it home and travelers the world over in search of extraordinary adventure and natural wonders.

## MISSION

We stabilize and strengthen local economies, protect environmental and cultural resources, create a meaningful visitor experience and enhance the quality of life for Arizonans through tourism collaboration, promotion and development.



# Strategic Planning

**Program Purpose:** The Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) leads the state's tourism industry in the development of global marketing programs to promote Arizona as a unique travel destination. With multiple research-based initiatives including advertising campaigns, cooperative marketing programs, travel trade activities, media relations and community outreach, AOT creates a positive and profitable cycle of visitation, spending, job growth and tax revenue.

As a result, Arizona's tourism industry injects billions of dollars into the state's economy to help fund public services such as education, safety and health.

To accomplish this, AOT continually updates its strategic plans to maximize program reach and effectiveness.

The foundation of our current Three-Year Strategic Plan, 2021-2024, includes the following strategic goals:

1

**Balance Statewide Visitation Across Time, Place, and Traveler Type**

3

**Support the Diverse Needs of our Industry Partners to Cultivate and Sustain a Thriving and Inclusive Tourism Economy**

2

**Strengthen Arizona's Position as an International Destination for Desired Travelers**

4

**Sustain the Tourism Product and Experience by Expanding AOT's Destination Management Program, Appreciate AZ**

Throughout our FY23 Annual Report, you will see how our programs align to these goals and the results of our work.

# Consumer Marketing

**Program Purpose:** The global competition for tourism visitation escalates daily. This competition makes it imperative for AOT to elevate the state's competitiveness to secure valuable visitor dollars, as these dollars are directly attributed to strengthening and expanding Arizona's economic and social vitality. AOT competitively positions Arizona's travel brand and maintains its tourism marketing momentum with the following campaigns:

## Domestic Campaign

AOT launched "Here You Are," its new domestic campaign that positioned Arizona as the ideal place for visitors to disconnect and truly live in the moment. The campaign built on the desire to leave zoom calls, schedules, and routines behind and connect with the kids over a simple lakeside campfire or find exhilaration in solitude during a ride down a snow-covered mountainside. The campaign was deployed in the primary target markets of Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York, and secondary markets including Minneapolis, Denver, Charlotte and Indianapolis. The key message to visitors was "Arizona immerses you in its undeniable wonders and has a way of making you stop and see that being present has never felt so good."

## RESULTS

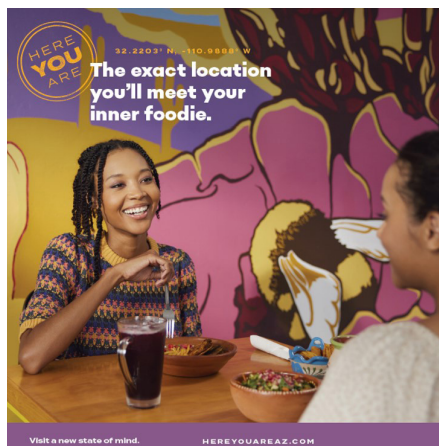
- **37% awareness, reaching 36.2 million travel households**
- **1.7 million ad-influenced trips, generating \$4.4 billion in revenue**
- **Return on Investment (ROI): \$35 for each \$1 invested**

## Domestic Flight Support

This campaign strategically targeted direct and non-stop flight markets to Arizona with messaging conveying easy, hassle-free travel. Spend less time traveling and more time exploring the wonders of Arizona. Business travel print, airport video screens, podcasts, travel deal partnerships, and booking engine digital partnerships were the core of this campaign.

## RESULTS

- **89.6 M impressions to date across 12 primary markets**
- **Contributed to generating 37% awareness nationally**
- **Reaching 36.2 million traveling households**





# Niche Marketing

**Program Purpose:** In addition to our primary consumer advertising campaigns, AOT produced several niche marketing programs to further support the variety of activities found in Arizona.



## Sports

From Cactus League Spring Training games and Super Bowl LVII (57) to NCAA Final Four and NASCAR at Phoenix Raceway, AOT promoted Arizona as the ultimate sports destination. Through major marketing efforts to in-market consumer activations, AOT worked to encourage visiting fans, and those yet to visit, to extend their Arizona sports vacations beyond just the Valley and the events that brought them here.

## RESULTS

### ► Phoenix Raceway Collaboration:

- 9 million impressions
- 78,716 total clicks
- 32,425 landing page sessions
- 1.6 million impressions across Facebook and Instagram

### ► Spring Training Campaign:

- 95 million impressions served across the two phases
- 105,940 total clicks from paid ads
- Nearly 130,000 landing page sessions
- Per-game attendance at the 2023 Cactus League increased by 34%
- All 15 MLB teams in the Valley saw year-over-year increases
- Cactus League games drew 1.6 million fans to the 10 spring training ballparks across Maricopa County

## Arizona Meetings Mean Business

AOT continued building awareness of Arizona as a premium meetings destination and urged meeting planners to consider Arizona for upcoming meetings and events. To accomplish this, AOT and statewide partners joined efforts to saturate the meetings industry with Arizona Meetings messaging. A landing page ([arizonameetings.com](http://arizonameetings.com)) acted as a partner hub for information and a strategic media buy was executed with AOT's branding as well as partner specific messaging. Additionally, AOT participated in events such as IMEX, the largest meetings industry trade show in the U.S.

## RESULTS

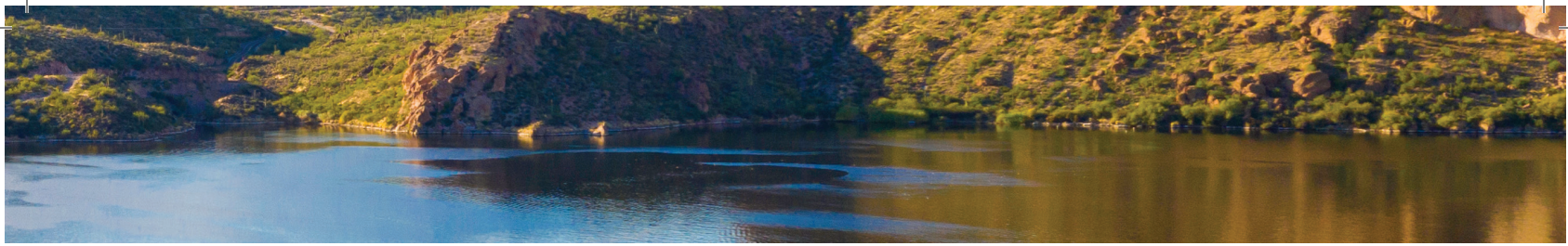
### ► 14.5 million total impressions

- 8.9 million digital impressions
- 5.6 million print impressions

- **More than 51,000 landing pages visits across 47,000 new users**
- **Custom content with partners including Northstar Meetings Group and Skift Meetings**







## ► Arizona Wine Industry

AOT continued to increase awareness of Arizona's wine industry, promoting the three designated AVA wine regions of the state as well as smaller emerging wine regions. Campaign material inspired in-state residents to explore the wine trails and buy local wine products and, to make planning easy, AOT promotes its digital Arizona Wine Trail Passport to help travelers find nearby tasting rooms and special offers at the more than 120 wineries, tasting rooms and vineyards around the state. The paid media campaign included billboards and targeted digital placements and was supported by media relations efforts and social media activities.

## RESULTS

- **85 million total impressions**
  - 25 million digital impressions
  - 59 million out of home impressions
- **Nearly 100,000 landing page sessions**
- **100,000 paid social engagements**
- **470,000 organic social impressions**
- **19,000 organic social engagements**
- **4.1% organic social engagement rate**



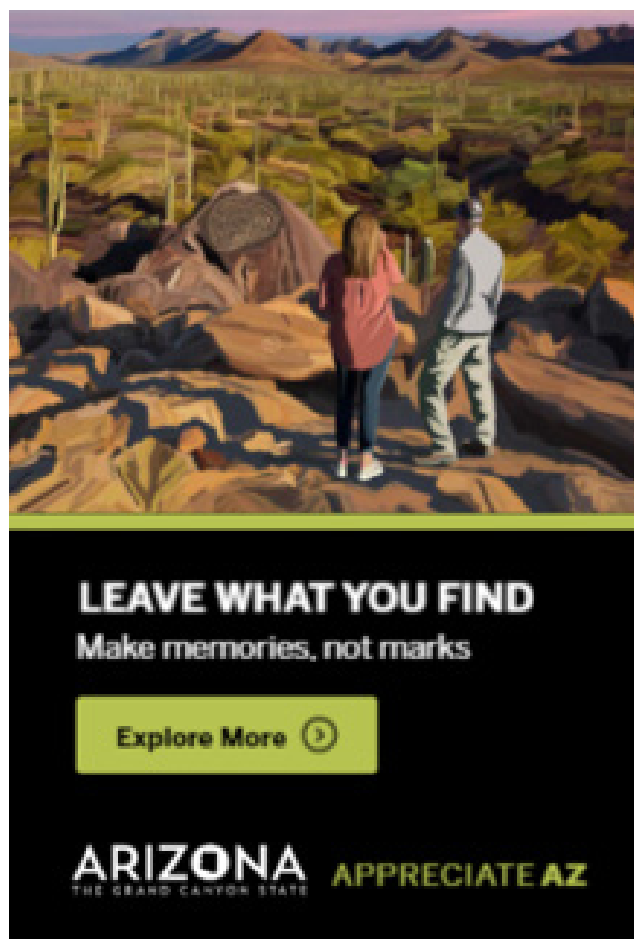


# Appreciate AZ

**Program Purpose:** AOT continued to build its responsible outdoor recreation and sustainable tourism brand, Appreciate AZ, to ensure visitors and residents are equipped with the knowledge and skills to protect our state's iconic natural features for current and future generations. Longform storytelling content with *Arizona Highways* magazine, Visit USA Parks channels and native digital partners nurtured deeper relationships with our audiences. Strategically placed in-store messaging at outdoor retailers intercepted audiences while they shopped. Outreach to more than 800 Arizona public schools enabled us to reach a younger audience.

## RESULTS

- **More than 44 million media impressions**
- **Nearly 200,000 clicks to the website**
- **1,700 uses of the #AppreciateAZ hashtag**
- **13 million impressions through social media**
- **339,000 organic social media engagements**
- **Nearly 1 million paid social media engagements**
- **1.5 million video views on social media alone**
- **More than 105,000 brochures, posters, stickers and kids activity books distributed**





# Rural & Tribal Cooperative Marketing Program

**Program Purpose:** The Rural & Tribal Cooperative Marketing Program is designed specifically for rural destination marketing organizations (DMOs), regional partnerships, statewide tourism associations and Tribal entities. It promotes and encourages visitation to Arizona's rural and Tribal destinations. Through this program, industry partners outside Arizona's major metropolitan areas collaborate with AOT on advertising efforts extending the reach of their marketing programs, maximizing available funds, and increasing the overall exposure of their destinations. Program opportunities feature a robust media plan that includes digital, print, outdoor and AOT publications, along with research and trade & media opportunities.

## RESULTS

- **\$1.2 Million Granted**
- **34 Community Recipients**



# Social Media

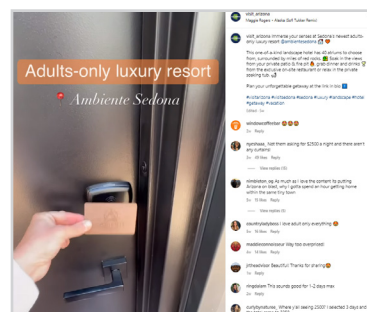
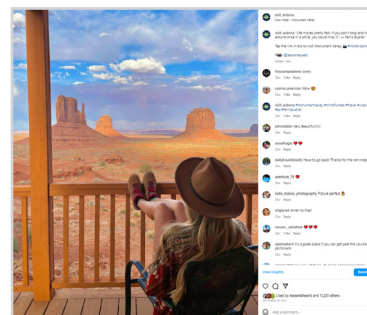
**Program Purpose:** Social Media is an integral component to AOT's overall marketing efforts and is integrated into several campaigns. AOT uses several social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube to connect with travelers and inspire Arizona visitation. In FY23 AOT built several social media programs and initiatives to further generate engagement with visitors.

## Engagement

AOT monitors social media engagement through the measurement of comments, likes, and shares of its social media channels. The measure is a determinant of how people are interacting with our social media accounts and content.

## RESULTS

- **554,486**







# Fulfillment

**Program Purpose:** AOT fulfills visitor requests for travel planning assistance, provides travel planning materials, disseminates monthly email correspondence for "opt-in" consumers and maintains comprehensive, informative websites to encourage extended visits to Arizona.

## RESULTS

- **Top 5 consumer domestic request locations (not including Arizona):**
  - **OSTG:** Texas, Nevada, Colorado, California and Washington
  - **State Maps:** California, Nevada, Texas, New Mexico and Colorado
- **Total number for consumer packets distribution (travel guides & maps):**
  - 64,577
- **Top 5 consumer international request locations (not including Canada):**
  - **OSTG:** Belgium, Australia, France, New Zealand and Brazil/United Kingdom
  - **State Maps:** China, Belgium, France, Brazil and United Kingdom



- **Total number for bulk distribution:**
  - Official State Travelers Guide (OSTG): 307,907
  - State Maps: 361,030

# Travel Trade Relations

**Program Purpose:** AOT proactively works with the travel trade industry (tour operators, receptive tour operators, wholesalers, travel agents, airlines, etc.) in both domestic and international markets to build a global network of Arizona product experts. This program helps to extend our advertising efforts to international visitors.

## RESULTS

- **FAM Tours/Participants:** 13 FAMs/63 participants
- **Trade Sales Appointments:** 5,077
- **Destination Trainings Conducted:** 157
- **Arizona Communities Visited:** 63





# Media Relations

**Program Purpose:** AOT works with travel media (editors and journalists for newspapers, magazines, broadcasts, online, etc.) throughout the United States as well as international markets (primarily, but not limited to, Canada, China, Mexico, Germany, France and the United Kingdom) providing them with unique article ideas regarding Arizona's travel experiences to generate positive third-party editorial exposure.



## RESULTS

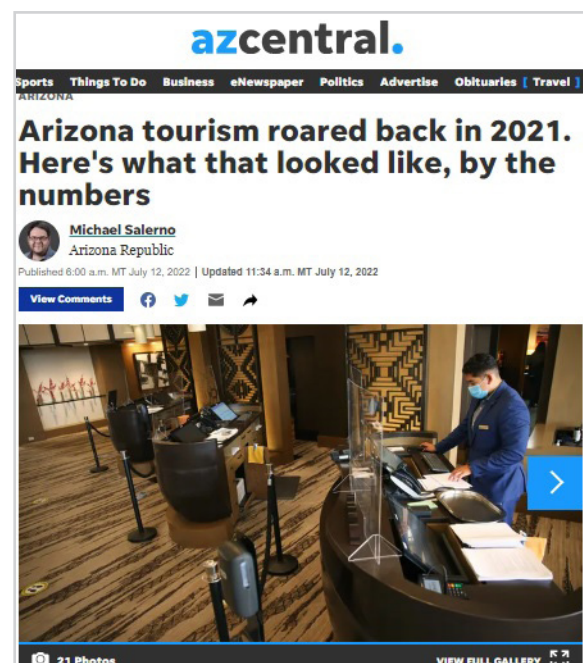
- **Journalists Hosted: 77**
- **Number of Feature Articles Generated: 951**
- **Article Impressions: 4.2 Billion**
- **Arizona Communities Visited: 40**

# Local Media Coverage

**Program Purpose:** AOT strives to communicate clearly, accurately and consistently the agency's program of work and messages to various audiences including internal and external partners, stakeholders, media, residents and consumers. Additionally, AOT uses public relations efforts to support the agency's various campaigns and programs.

## RESULTS

- **Number of Industry-Related Articles/ Broadcasts Generated: 524**
- **Circulation: 1.7 billion**
- **Value: \$3.6 million**
- **Social Media Metrics: 56,000+ Organic Twitter Impressions**







# Grants

**Program Purpose:** AOT continued distributing its allocation of the Visit Arizona Initiative, the new program launched in FY22 that is designed to accelerate tourism recovery, job creation and economic development across our state. Program funding comes from federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds earmarked for pandemic recovery efforts. More than \$60 million of this initiative was made available through AOT grant programs. DMOs, chambers of commerce, local businesses and organizations, event producers and more were eligible to participate.

## RESULTS

- **Total Dollar Amount Granted: \$28 Million**
- **Number of Projects Funded: 189**



# Community Engagement

**Program Purpose:** Through presentations, outreach programs and technical assistance opportunities, AOT provides tourism organizations and entities valuable marketing information and customer service skills to boost their visitor offerings and provide Arizona travelers with a high-quality experience. AOT uses various communication channels including a weekly eNewsletter, *Tourism Tuesday*, to communicate the agency's program of work and participation opportunities. Additionally, AOT officially designates Arizona Visitor Information Centers (AVICs) throughout Arizona. Each center helps to promote local, regional and statewide attractions, recreation opportunities and hospitality amenities.

## RESULTS

- **Webinars/Community Presentations Held: 58**
- **Visitor Centers Maintained/Designated: 65**



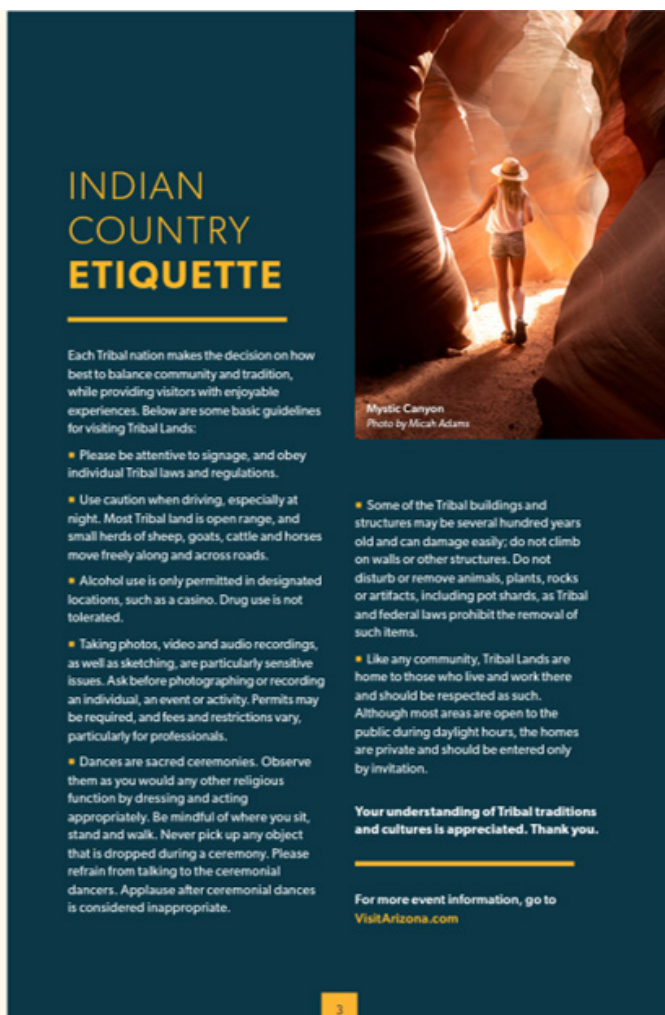
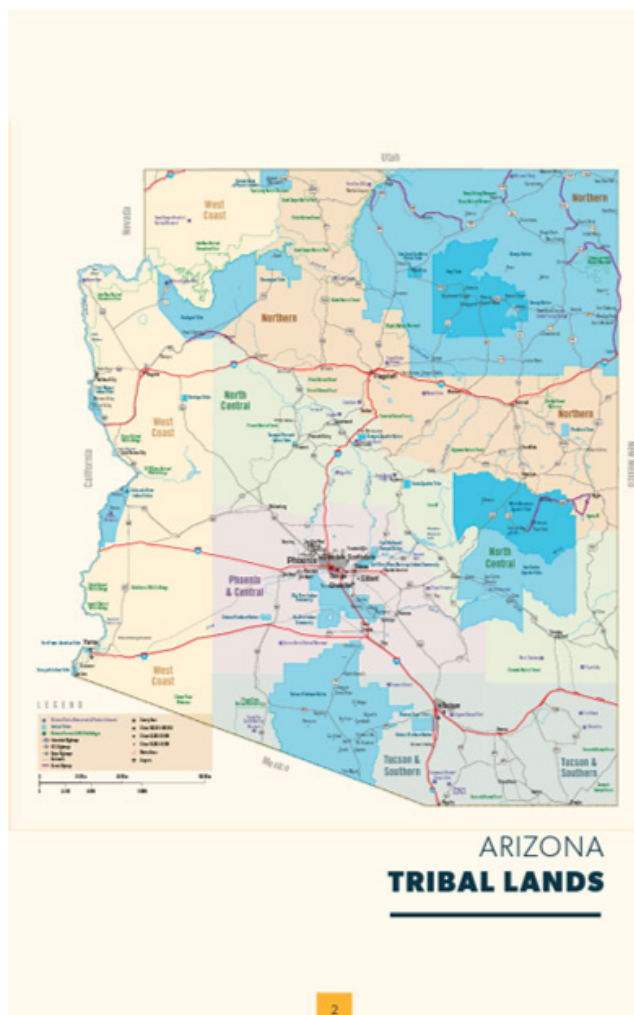


# American Indian Outreach

**Program Purpose:** AOT offers a number of programs to support American Indian Communities across Arizona. Cultural heritage tourism, including the American Indian experience, is an integral component of AOT's marketing efforts.

## RESULTS

- **Tribal Tourism Brochures: 24,299**







# KEEP UP WITH US.

For information about AOT's research, marketing programs and media plans, please visit:

**Tourism.az.gov** |     @AZTourismNews

**To subscribe to our eNewsletters, please visit:**

Tourism Tuesday (industry)  
**Tourism.az.gov**

Visit Arizona (consumer)  
**VisitArizona.com**

**For information about the Arizona travel experience, please visit:**

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