



## **Tourism Recovery Plan**

As sure as precedent has taught us in times like these all industries, including tourism, will recover to their fullest form at some point. But, unlike the most recent crisis, the Great Recession of 2008, which was caused by lax mortgage lending practices, international trade imbalances and a general fragility in the economy, the current crisis is external to the economy and was thrust upon the US at a time of economic stability.

Also, important to recognize differences in the two crisis' is that in the recession businesses were not completely shuttered and social distancing was not a factor. Lessons learned from the 2008 recession, in part, was that once the correction occurred the country went into a ten-year growth pattern. In this crisis, there is likely to be a much steeper initial curve back to normalcy (it may be a 'new normal' but normalcy nonetheless).

This prediction is predicated on pent-up demand for products and services will be there; re-hiring and folks taken back from furloughed positions will drive the consumer economy back to a more sustainable level; and, the symbiotic nature of our economy will start to function again – at a faster pace than we experienced after 2008.

The direct sales and marketing plan set forth in this document will only occur with prudence and safety in mind, with adherence to CDC and State recommendations.

Regardless of the speed of recovery, Discover Flagstaff will continue to stay ahead of the curve by implementing smart strategies to welcome our visitor back and get the tourism economy producing for our community again.

### **General Strategy:**

The over-reaching strategy for Discover Flagstaff, once the travel bans have been lifted and the social distancing mandates/recommendations are no longer in place, will be to channel funds and effort toward the most likely markets to respond first to the lifting of travel restrictions: the drive-market, direct-flight market(s) and the Meeting & Conventions Market. These markets either have the travel infrastructure in place, have a short travel decision window, have a low threshold for making travel decisions to the

destination, are our natural customer, or all the above mentioned. Additionally, a strong focus will be placed on the customers that are in-market to be sure that they see and do more and stay an extra night.

**Vertical Industry Roundtables:** The Discover Flagstaff Team will be hosting roundtable meetings with the following vertical industries: Restaurants, Bars and Breweries, Attractions, Tour operators, Hotels/motels/B&Bs) to coordinate our plans, exchange best practices and design cooperative marketing.

### Drive-Market:

**This Market is the first to respond to the pent-up demand due to the following.**

- Familiarity with the Flagstaff product is typically high
- It has a low barrier economically compared to other segments of travel
- The decision window to travel is relatively quick (can be as soon as the day prior to travel)
- Can and often is based on weather conditions
- Outdoor adventure equipment can easily be traveled with
- Pets can easily be a part of the vacation
- Travel is done in the company of their choice (family, friends, alone)

**Strategy:** The message needs to speak to their daily and/or desired behavior: gastronomy, mixology, craft beer, connecting with friends and/or family, their personal physical and mental health (nature, hiking, getting outdoors).

**Tactics:** Since familiarity is high in the drive-market, the messaging needs to be delivered to the prospective travelers in a familiar and trusted setting: publications, website, television, via email drip campaigns and out-of-home.

- **Digital:** programmatic, behavioral and geographical, search, social, video
- **FSI (Free-standing-insert):** in The AZ Republic and Las Vegas Review Journal with content supporting accommodations, festivals, things to do, restaurants/breweries
- **Spot:** 30s on at least one network station in Phoenix
- **Paid display:** Phoenix Mag, New Times
- **NBC Phoenix network:** airing lifestyle segments on AZ Midday
- **Social media:** push local happenings

**Potential partnerships:**

- ❖ An attractions pass – work with the key attractions in and around Flagstaff to come up with a pass that folks could go to MNA, Lowell, Riordan Mansion, Meteor Crater, USGS, Bearizona, amongst others.
- ❖ Marketing that includes specific BBB collecting business partner offers

- ❖ “It has never been sweeter to Discover Flagstaff” – a restaurant promotion that offers complimentary dessert.
- ❖ Collaboration with DBA will include tactics to enhance their efforts

### Direct-Flight Market(s):

**This Market is early to respond to the pent-up demand due to the following.**

- The need for business travel (IBT) to the destination (W.L. Gore, Purina, ATC Materials, Joy Cone, Senes Tech, etc.)
- Visiting friends and family (community, NAU)
- Leisure travelers

**Strategy:** The message needs to be strong on awareness of things to do in the destination and inspiring to add on to their trip for additional leisure activities.

**Tactics:** Since familiarity is anywhere from medium to low, the messaging needs to inform the potential travelers in these origin markets and inspire additional leisure time in Flagstaff. Additional messaging is the ease of non-stop flights.

- **Digital:** served in Dallas and Denver markets
- **programmatic, behavioral and geographical,** search, social, video
- **Niche publications** in Denver and Dallas
- **Radio** – Dallas and Denver markets – vacation giveaways

**Potential partnerships:**

- ❖ Work with key companies in Flagstaff that have significant IBT; we can communicate digitally with welcome packets
- ❖ Work with the Airport Director on any and all recovery plans the Airport is planning

### Meetings & Conventions:

**This Market is quick to respond to the pent-up demand due to the following.**

- Companies are looking to get back to business
- Associations depend on the engagement of their members
- Meeting planners have contractual obligations to hotels
- Strong relationships between the hotels and the meeting planners

**Strategy:** Incentives to re-book, direct sales efforts and strategic marketing placements.

**Tactics:** Since familiarity depends on whether it is a re-booking or a new client. The messaging needs to be focused on building attendance, ease of travel and appropriate facilities for their needs.

- **Corporate retreat** business in Arizona.
- **Temporarily rebranding the incentive program “It pays to Meet in Flagstaff” to “It pays to Rebook”** to help properties earn back the business recently lost.
- **Plan FAM trips** and missions to get back in front of the planners and potential new/returning business.
- **Prospect** from our data base for new and repeat business

**Potential partnerships:**

- ❖ Work with companies in Flagstaff and residents to encourage bringing any meeting that they attend or coordinate home to Flagstaff
- ❖ Crating an incentive program “It Pays to Re-book” your meeting in Flagstaff

**In-Market Strategy (Visitor Services):**

**This Market is critical to the recovery plan due to the following.**

- They have already made the decision to support us and are in-market
- This customer has the potential to be ambassadors for Flagstaff with their social media posts and sphere of influence
- Flagstaff garners a 60% repeat visitation statistic, so they are likely repeat customers and fans of Flagstaff already

**Strategy:** it is all about personal service and providing up to date and relevant information to inspire them to do and see more.

**Tactics:** ‘Local Business Open House’ at the Visitor Center – this will occur shortly after the Visitor Center re-opens. The purpose of the open house is for businesses to meet the staff and provide up to date information on their business. This will in turn allow the staff to provide excellent customer service to our walk-in visitors.

**Potential partnerships:**

- ❖ It’s never been sweeter to visit Flagstaff – This partnership would entail the VC coordinating with participating restaurants on complimentary desserts with an entree. The marketing would be supported by the Discover Flagstaff Marketing Team and Creative, as well as owned media.

**Earned Media:**

**Earned media efforts will be in concert with the individual market plans. Messaging will align with Discover Flagstaff owned, paid and social platforms by applying the marketing 'rule of five.' Target origin DMAs are the State of Arizona, Southern California, Las Vegas, Denver and Dallas.**

- Leverage existing media relationships to encourage editorial content
- Pitch stories to targeted groups utilizing media contact database
- Pitch Meetings and Events publications both print and digital
- Work with sales to support increased conference exposure with articles and press releases
- Schedule press trips with qualified media that produce results shared across large audiences
- Reschedule those that have cancelled due to COVID-19
- Work with AOT to maximize increased visitation to Flagstaff providing assets and content on Discover Flagstaff campaigns.
- Pitch mom-cation, high altitude training, astro-tourism, festivals, dining, breweries, City of Seven Wonders, outdoors, attractions, Route 66, downtown, stay and play, hub and spoke, meetings and events, etc.
- Attend Arizona Office of Tourism media missions and industry conferences, events and workshops.

### Community-Facing Efforts:

**The community play a critical role in the tourism economy.** They not only assist in welcoming our visitors, are employed at places of business which service the visitor but they themselves frequent the tourism-centric businesses (bars, restaurants, attractions).

**Strategy:** Keep the message that the visitor economy is critical to our success front and center in the mind's eye of the resident. Additionally, let them know how they can play a bigger role.

**Tactics:** Create tangible ways that the residents can get involved.

- **Staycation promotions** – this is a great way for residents to have fun, get re-acquainted with their city and support the effort. Community-facing advertising and social media will be employed to encourage folks to have a staycation in their own backyard.

- **Flagstafflocal.com** – is a great way to show that a great place to live is a great place to visit. This movement offers residents ways to give back and get involved while being recognized and winning prizes.