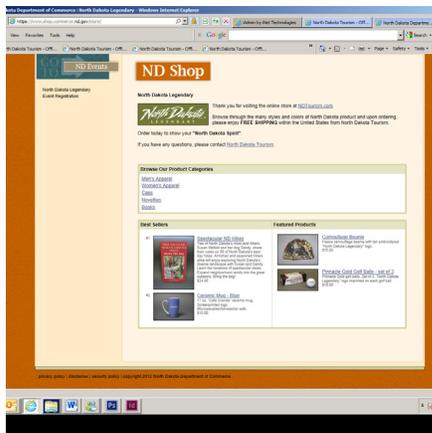




Travel Update

- Theodore Roosevelt National Park's North Unit Scenic Drive is now open.
- Hotel availability in Bismarck, Minot, Dickinson, Williston and Watford City has greatly improved. There are normally rooms available every day of the week.
- Bismarck's North Dakota Heritage Center Main Gallery is closed for expansion. Its re-opening will be in three stages beginning summer 2013. State Historical Society and Foundation offices, State Archives and Museum Store remain open.
- Starting Feb. 14, American Airlines will offer nonstop flights from Fargo to Dallas-Fort Worth.
- 4 Bears Casino and Lodge, New Town, added 100 standard rooms, 20 suites and two executive suites with walk-out balconies.



Remember that Christmas is just around the corner. You can get your uniquely North Dakota gift through the North Dakota Tourism gift shop: www.shop.commerce.nd.gov/store/



And the Telly goes to ... us

North Dakota Tourism television ads, produced by Odney Advertising, have been recognized with bronze Telly Awards. This international awards program in its 33rd year is the premier award honoring the finest film and video productions, groundbreaking web commercials, videos and films and outstanding local, regional and cable TV commercials and programs.

The North Dakota Tourism ads recognized were:

- **North Dakota Tourism's Arrive a Guest. Leave a Legend. TV campaign**
- **North Dakota Tourism's Arrive a Guest. Leave a Legend. Hiking TV ad**
- **North Dakota Tourism's Arrive a Guest. Leave a Legend. Golfing TV ad**

North Dakota Tourism's TV ads competed against more than 12,000 entries submitted by participants from all 50 states and five continents. A panel of more than 500 industry professionals judged the competition. The Telly Awards were founded in 1978.

The Arrive a Guest. Leave a Legend television campaign was developed in 2011, aired in 2012 and will run again in 2013. The ads can be viewed at North Dakota Tourism's website: www.ndtourism.com/about/advertisements/north-dakota-legendary/

Odney has been North Dakota Tourism's agency of record since 2001.

More information about the Telly Awards can be found at: www.tellyawards.com.

Timing is important in Facebook engagement

Looking for more engagement on your fan page? Here are five ways you can improve Facebook engagement.

1. Keep your updates short

Research shows that the longer a post is, the less engagement it will receive. Results vary, but research shows that 100 characters or fewer seems to be the sweet spot. Want even more engagement? Let a photo do the talking.

2. Don't use URL shorteners on Facebook

A recent study by Buddy Media found that engagement rates were three times higher for Facebook posts that use a full-length URL, rather than a link generated by a URL shortener like bit.ly. A shortened URL does not indicate what type of website you're taking them to, which is a deterrent to mobile users.

3. Post at times ideal for your fans

Getting your post at the top of fans' newsfeeds is paramount for engagement. So how do you do this? For one, make sure you post at the right times. Recent data from bit.ly shows that the optimal time to post on Facebook is between 1 and 3 p.m., when Facebook traffic peaks. Links posted between 1 and 4 p.m. get the highest click-through rates, with Wednesday at 3 p.m. being the best time to post all week. Links posted before 8 a.m. and after 8 p.m. are less likely to get shared.

4. Use the right words for higher engagement

What you say — or don't say — on Facebook matters. Certain words elicit more engagement, while others will leave your post dead in the water. Action keywords like "post," "comment," "take," "submit," "like" or "tell us" are the most effective. Be direct in your request, and fans will listen.

5. Ask questions

Asking a question is a surefire way to encourage comments, but not all questions are created equal. How and where you ask a question matters. Questions placed at the end of a post increased engagement by 15% over questions placed at the beginning. "Where," "when" and "should" drive the highest engagement rates, with "would" generating the most likes. Avoid asking "why" questions, which have the lowest like and comment rates.

Find more details with links to increase engagement at www.socialmediaexaminer.com/improve-facebook-engagement/

Tech Talk

Each month, the Tourism Division newsletter will feature technology tips or best practices for utilizing new tools and Web 2.0. Please share your success stories, or your questions and suggestions via e-mail to hlemoine@nd.gov.



Tourism Quarterly Report

Area of Travel	2012 Third Quarter	2011 Third Quarter	Percent Change 12-11
State Park Visitors	598,573	555,042	8%
National Park Visitors	333,168	319,571	4%
Website Pageviews Website New Visits	545,621 133,118	565,614 120,547	-4% 10%
Major Attractions	1,602,330	1,226,094	31%
Local Visitor Centers	56,527	52,391	8%
Cumulative Lodging Tax	\$2,081,105.21	\$1,710,550.37	22%
Canadian Border Crossings	284,303	250,458	14%
Airport Arrivals	253,594	221,035	15%
Statewide Hotel Occupancy Rate	July: 82.5% August: 84.1% Sept: 78.2%	July: 84.9% August: 89.9% Sept: 84.0%	July: -2.8% August: -6.4% Sept: -6.8%
Statewide Average Room Rate	July: \$100.03 August: \$101.22 Sept: \$101.78	July: \$91.86 August: \$93.25 Sept: \$92.16	July: 8.9% August: 8.5% Sept: 10.4%
RevPar	\$75.55	\$65.69	15.0%
Taxable Sales and Purchases 2012-11 (Second quarter)	Arts, Entertainment Recreation \$25,150,251 Food Services, Accommodations \$426,152,453	Arts, Entertainment Recreation \$20,953,054 Food Services, Accommodations \$358,056,289	20% 19%

State Park: Cross Ranch, Ft. Ransom, Ft. Stevenson, Grahams Island, Icelandic, Indian Hills, Lake Metigoshe, Lake Sakakawea, Lewis & Clark, Turtle River, Ft. Lincoln, Beaver Lake, Little Missouri and Sully Creek. **National Park:** Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Knife River Indian Villages, Fort Union. **Major Attractions:** Alerus Center, Badlands Trail Run, Bismarck Civic Center, Bismarck Marathon, Bison Sports Arena, Bonanzaville, Bully Pulpit Golf Course, Camp Hancock, CANDISC, Chahinkapa Zoo, Chateau de Mores, Missouri Yellowstone Confluence Center/Fort Buford, Custer House/Indian Villages, Dakota Dinosaur Museum, Dakota Gasification, Antelope Valley, Coteau, Dakota Territory Air Museum, Edgewood Municipal Golf Course, Rose Creek Golf Course, El Zagal Golf Course, Osgood Golf Course, Prairiewood Municipal Golf Course, Des Lacs NWR, Fargo Air Museum, Fargo Civic Center, Fargodome, Former's Governor's Mansion, Fort Abercrombie SHS, Fort Clark SHS, Fort Totten SHS, Gateway to Science, Gingras Trading Post, Heritage Center, International Peace Garden, L&C Interpretive Center/Fort Mandan, Lawrence Welk Home, Medora Musical, National Buffalo Museum, North Dakota Museum of Art, ND State Capitol, North Dakota State Fair, Painted Canyon Overlook, Pembina State Museum, Pioneer Trails Regional Museum, Plains Art Museum, Prairie Fire Pottery, Ralph Engelstad Arena, Red River Valley Fairgrounds, Red River Zoo, Ronald Reagan (Oscar Zero) SHS, Three Affiliated Tribes Museum, Toy Farmer Museum, Whitestone Hill Battlefield SHS. **NOTE:** In 2011, several major events and attractions were closed due to flooding. **Local Visitor Centers:** Beach Information Center, Bismarck, Bowman Information Center, Buffalo City Tourism, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo/Moorhead, Grand Forks, McKenzie County, Minot, Jamestown, Wahpeton, and Williston.

The statewide hotel occupancy rate is measured by Smith Travel Research. North Dakota Tourism uses Google Analytics to gather visitor data from www.ndtourism.com. If you should have any questions, or would like to be included in the survey, please contact Data Specialist Tricia Miller, North Dakota Tourism, 1-800-435-5663.

In the News

(Go to the links below each item for a complete news release)

North Dakota Tourism in the news in October

October 10: Seventeen North Dakota tourism entities are able to expand their marketing efforts thanks to two grant programs from the North Dakota Department of Commerce, Tourism Division. The Events Marketing Grant Program and Marketing Grant Program each provide a maximum of \$5,000 in matching funds for promotion of regional events and for specific tourism marketing plans. A total of \$70,500 was awarded between the two programs. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=525>

October 5: From spine-tingling, bone-chilling activities to fun for the whole family, October is filled with heart-racing Halloween events. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=526>

October 25: The holiday season is just around the corner, and November is a great time to get in the spirit. Tackle your Christmas list at the many holiday arts and crafts fairs, where you're sure to find special gifts for everyone on your list. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=527>



Cooperatively advertise with North Dakota

On October 11, North Dakota Tourism presented its 2013 advertising strategy and cooperative programs to North Dakota's travel industry. The 2013 Media Plan is now available online at www.ndtourism.com/industry/references/media-plan/.

Also at that link is the 2013 Cooperative Advertising Plan, which presents the options for collective ad buying. The goal of the

cooperative advertising program is to build brand exposure while driving traffic to participating partners. Here you will find advertising options in North Dakota's newspaper inserts planned for 2013, special pricing for the magazines North Dakota Tourism will be advertising in and digital marketing opportunities.

The new digital marketing options (the last five pages of the Cooperative Advertising Plan) provide opportunity to advertise online in several different

price choices. North Dakota Tourism saw great success in its online advertising in 2012, and the media buying team at Odney has recommended options designed to motivate traffic to partners.

The cooperative advertising program is provided on a first-come, first-serve basis. The reservation form at www.ndtourism.com/industry/references/media-plan/ must be filled out and sent to Heather LeMoine at hlemoine@nd.gov or fax: 701-328-4878 before December 31, 2012.



Community Snapshot

Discover hidden gems, personalities, facts and special events in our North Dakota communities. Each month, a new community will be featured with fun-filled highlights that can be easily added to an itinerary. This month's Community Snapshot is **New Rockford**.

New Rockford was settled in 1883 and named after Rockford, Ill., the hometown of developer Charles E. Gregory. The city was settled by a wide variety of immigrants, including Germans, Norwegians, Swedish, Czechs and Swiss. Its current population is 1,388 and it is the county seat of Eddy County. Its top four employers are the Lutheran Home of the Good Shepherd, New Rockford-Sheyenne School, 4th Corporation and the North American Bison Corporation.

Hidden Gems: The Latte Lobby Coffee Shop and Jack's Tavern wine bar within the Opera House Theatre. Latte Lobby serves espresso drinks and fruit smoothies and Jack's Tavern holds monthly wine tastings for the Vine Intervention Wine Club. Rockin' Fitness, a 24-hour fitness and wellness center, is offering classes in BODYPUMP, CXWorx, Pilates and yoga.

Did you know: President Harry S. Truman and his daughter, Margaret, were in New Rockford on a whistle stop train in 1945? The train stopped at the station and the two came out to visit with school children, the mayor and others at the depot.

Personalities: Astronaut James Frederick Buchli was born June 20, 1945, in New Rockford. He is a retired United States Marine aviator and former NASA astronaut who flew on four Space Shuttle missions. ... Ole H. Olson, was the 16th Lieutenant Governor and the 18th Governor of North Dakota. In 1934, Governor William Langer was removed from office and Olson was sworn in.

Special Events: Central North Dakota Steam Threshers, September 20-22, 2013. Annual three-day event held at the fairgrounds located southwest of the city. Visitors are in awe of the unique collection of rare antique and operational steam engines from an agricultural era. Daily activities include a parade of engines, craft show, flea market, blacksmith demonstration and live entertainment. For more information on this event, please call 701-947-5631 or visit the website www.cityofnewrockford.com

For more information on fun in New Rockford, please contact Jessica Dillon, assistant director, New Rockford Area Betterment Corporation at 701- 947-2205, e-mail: dillon1348@gmail.com or Facebook: New Rockford Area Betterment Corporation.

To have your community highlighted in the tourism newsletter and on the North Dakota Tourism website, please contact Deanne Cunningham at 701-328-2502 or e-mail: decunningham@nd.gov to receive your form.

Racking up the visits



Tourism brochure rack program

Have you ever wondered what it takes to get your brochures into the state rest areas? Now is the time to ask questions. If you are a tourism partner and are interested in participating in the Literature Rack Program for 2013, please call Tammy Backhaus for more details 701-328-2526 or e-mail tbackhaus@nd.gov.



Twin Cities material distribution

North Dakota Tourism has partnered with CTM Media Group in Minnesota to place remaining 2012 Travel Guides at more than 84 business locations in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro, including the MSP airport. Distribution will continue with the new guides in January of 2013.

2014 round for expansion grants open

The North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Expansion Grant Program was created in 2007 to fund infrastructure and building needs for new or expanded tourism, recreation and agritourism facilities in North Dakota.

Grants range from \$5,000-\$24,000 in any given year and require a one-to-one match (for every one dollar of grant money being requested, the applicant must provide one dollar). Applicants can be for-profit or non-profit and must be able to complete their project within 18 months of approval. Approved projects must have the ability to attract visitors from at least 50 miles away and retain them in the area for at least three hours. New attractions and businesses funded should help give the state another experience to deliver on the Legendary brand promise the Tourism Division uses in marketing the state.

Funds can only be used for buildings and equipment. They cannot be used for marketing or ongoing operation expenses. Types of usage that would be allowed include, but are not limited to, costs associated with purchase or construction of new and/or existing tourism and recreation attractions, historic sites; and equipment purchased for specific tourism project operation or a new major ongoing or annual event that will be held to attract new visitors. Maintenance and/or deferred maintenance of a facility is not an eligible project.

Expansion grant applications are now available on the North Dakota Tourism website at www.ndtourism.com/industry/nd-tourism-grants/. Completed applications must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 12, 2013.

For more information on tourism grants, contact Dean Ihla at 701-328-3505 or dihla@nd.gov.

2013 North Dakota Travel Industry Conference Nominate your Stars of the Season

Get ready for big speakers and big ideas! Planning for the 2013 North Dakota Travel Industry Conference is well underway and one of the featured speakers is musician Dave Carroll, whose negative experience flying United Airlines resulted in a YouTube hit "United Breaks Guitars," and catapulted him into customer service consulting.



www.davecarrollmusic.com/
www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YGc4z0qozo

Save the dates

April 15-17, at the Alerus Center and Canad Inns, Grand Forks.

Governor's Awards

While the 2012 season is fresh in memory, consider making nominations for the 2013 Governor's Awards for Travel and Tourism. Nominations can be submitted online at www.ndtourism.com/industry/travel-industry-conference/.

The site also has links for registration scholarships, sponsoring the conference and will have a link to registration when it is open.



Outlook for sports travel

According to presenters at the recent TTRA Global Outlook for Travel Conference in Chicago, the outlook for sports travel continues to grow. Tourism Marketing Manager Heather LeMoine attended the conference and reports this summary:

The sporting activities U.S. travelers practiced in the past year:

Walking	31%
Fishing	30%
Golf	19%
Cycling	19%
Running	13%
Boating/Sailing	12%
Snow skiing	8%
Tennis	7%
Horseback riding	6%

Golf travel is reported to be on the rebound with 12% more rounds played this year. According to the study "Travel Attitude and Behaviors of Golfers," the amenities considered for choosing a golf destination:

- 1) The quality of the course
- 2) Weather conditions and climate
- 3) Availability of tee times
- 4) Value of the course
- 5) Fine dining
- 6) Restaurants on site
- 7) Pool
- 8) Bars/nightlife

Golfers are an attractive travel target, spending on average \$1,430 per golfer per trip. And they take two-thirds more vacations than non-golfers.

Jon Last of the Sports & Leisure Research Group shared recommendations for marketing sports: "Don't focus on extremes; focus on the accessibility and variety found in communities. And take a broader approach to promote the diversity of activities at a destination."

He added that Active Adventurers are middle age with a high propensity to travel and spend, but they are a very small portion of all travelers.

One emerging market seeing increased popularity is in endurance sporting events – such as ultra – running and biking marathons.

Lodging survey

North Dakota Tourism is in development of a new website. One area under review is online lodging searches which provide price comparisons and links for booking. North Dakota currently utilizes the JackRabbit BookDirect program at NDtourism.com and is considering expanding this service. All lodging providers in North Dakota are asked to participate in a survey which will help us prioritize investing in website functions: www.surveymonkey.com/s/NF359YG.