

Cape Breton Island

your heart will never leave.



Destination Cape Breton Strategy
2022-23



We acknowledge that we are in Unama'ki – the Mi'kmaw name for Cape Breton Island – which is one of the seven traditional districts of Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded home of the Mi'kmaw People.



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2021 Results



2021 Results

The 2021 year was better than 2020, but still well below pre-pandemic levels. Nova Scotia re-opened to vaccinated domestic visitors from outside Atlantic Canada without the need to self-isolate in early summer; however, with travel planning lead times most of these visitors did not start coming until August or later. As a result, the Maritimes market was once again the primary focus for Cape Breton Island.

The winter season started slowly due to lack of snow in early January and a COVID outbreak in the Halifax region, but the latter part of the season was strong, in part due to travel restrictions to New Brunswick which led many Mainland Nova Scotia snowmobilers to come to Cape Breton. Spring was impacted by another shutdown and a gradual re-opening. Summer started to see the visitation numbers steadily outpacing 2020 and this carried into the fall which saw the strongest visitation compared to 2019.

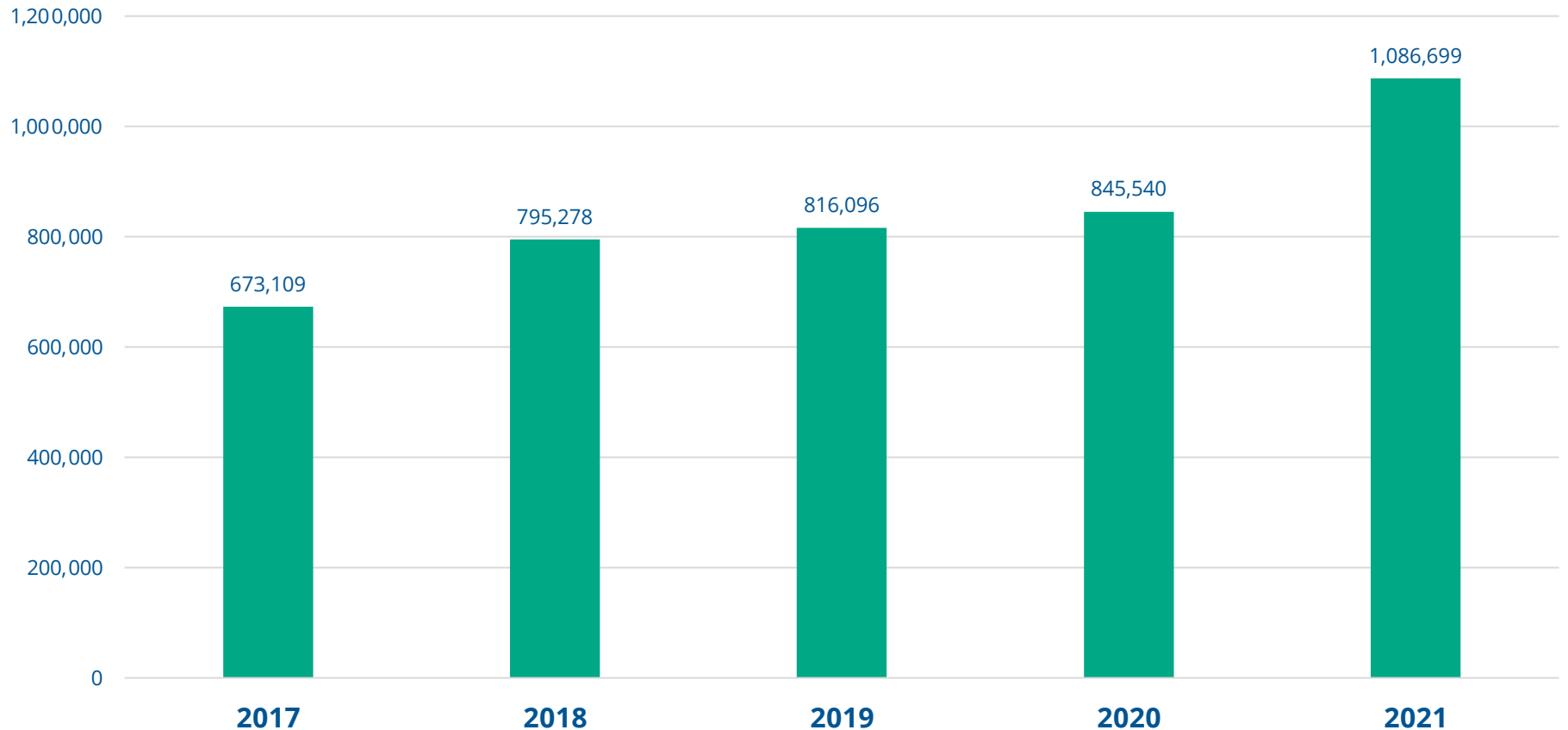
With a focus on regional travellers, the destination again saw many visitors coming for weekend getaways, with slower periods from Monday to Thursday. This was particularly challenging during the Thanksgiving weekend and following weekend in October where very high visitation around the Cabot Trail strained the capacities of restaurants, hiking trails, and other operators and amenities.

The most significant challenge was a labour shortage that has reached a critical level. The shortage has been felt across the country and will likely take years and significant effort to fully address.

Detailed results for key performance indicators are provided on the following pages.

visitcapebreton.com Sessions

Five-year Trend, 2017-21



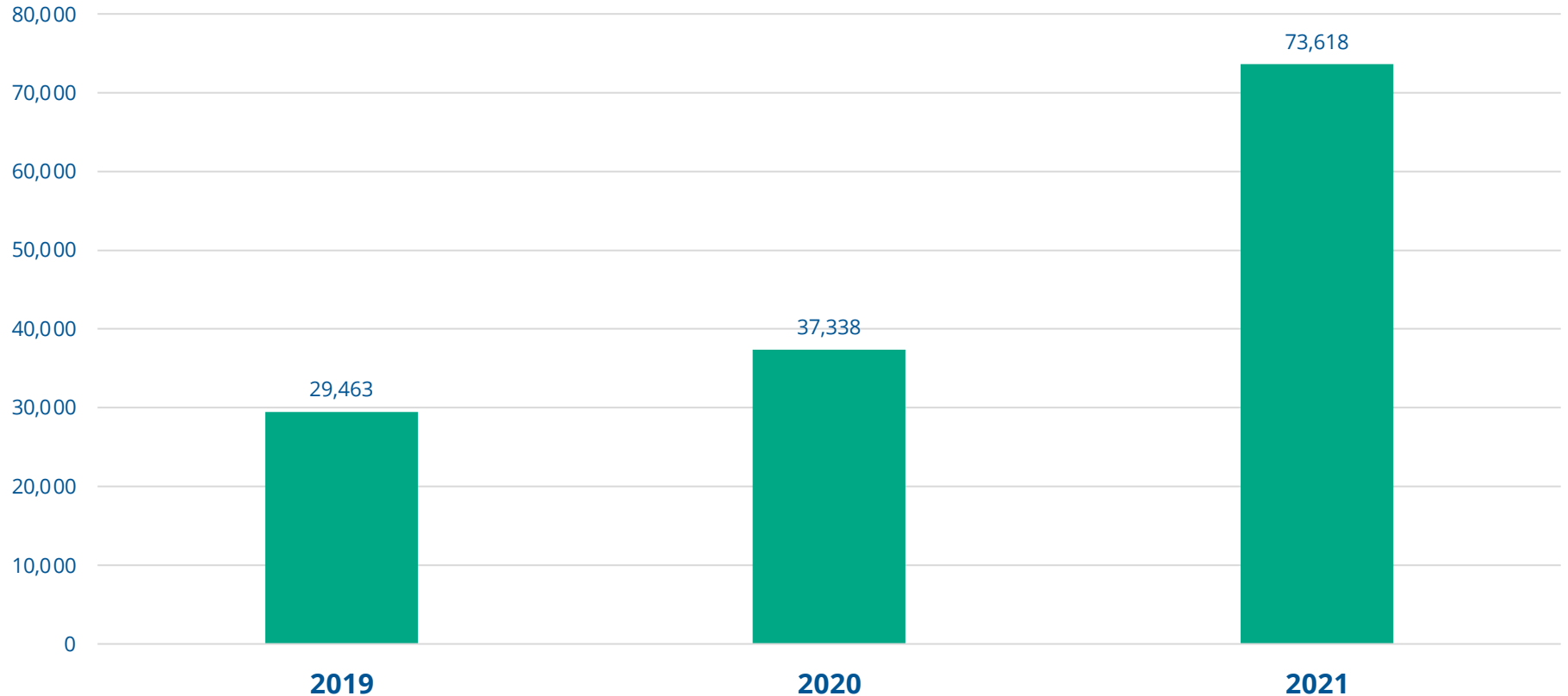
Source: Google Analytics

The vast majority of Destination Cape Breton's marketing efforts are designed to drive traffic to visitcapebreton.com. The chart shows the growth of website traffic over the past five years. Sessions in 2021 were up 29% over 2020 and eclipsed one million for the first time. This was driven by domestic traffic to the site, which saw a 31% increase.

Average session duration was up 10%, while pages per session was down 4%. However, leads (clicks to operator websites), a key indicator for measuring intent to visit, were up 13% and hit record levels.

visitcapebreton.com Winter Campaign Pageviews

2019-21



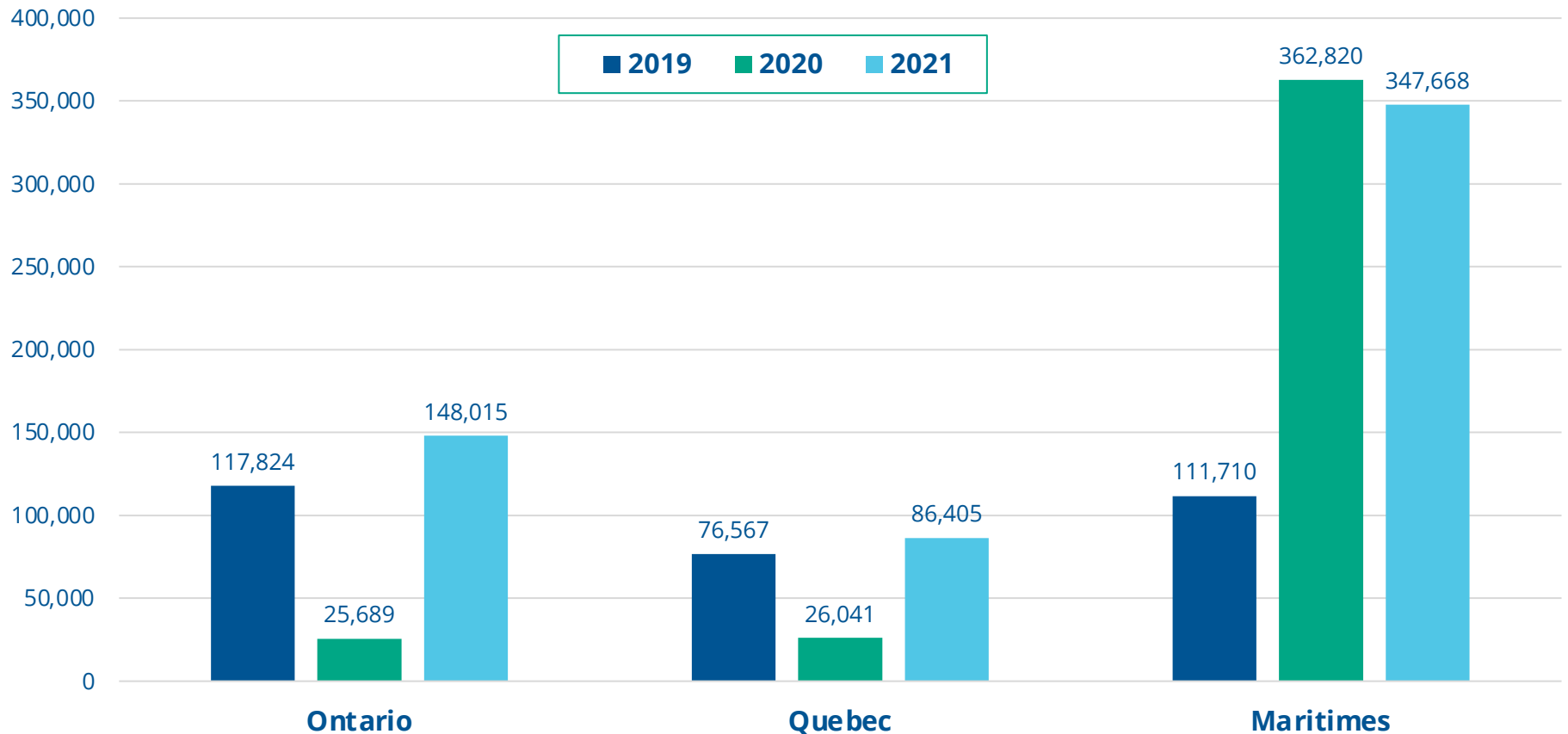
Source: Google Analytics

The winter campaign for 2021 began in December 2020 and continued to the end of March. The 2021 campaign almost doubled 2020 with a 97% increase in pageviews. This increase coincided with a much larger investment due to a partnership with Tourism Nova Scotia in their Digital Content Marketing Partnership.

This campaign focused completely on the Maritime market, which was consistent with previous years. A partnership with the Snowmobile Association of Nova Scotia (SANS) helped drive visitation from Mainland Nova Scotia sledders who had previously only gone to Northern New Brunswick.

visitcapebreton.com Sessions by Market

June 14-October 31, 2019-21



Source: Google Analytics

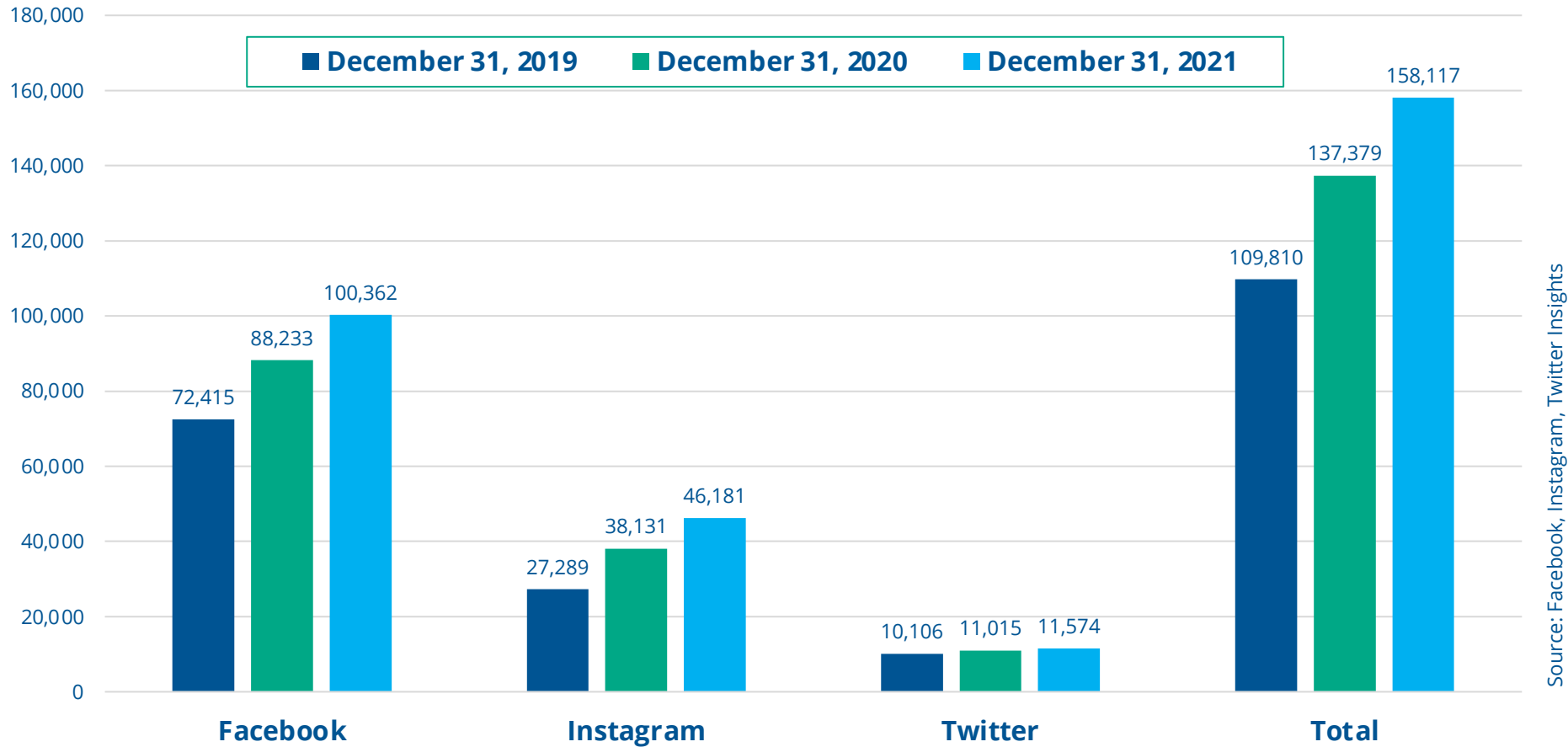
In looking at the campaign for the summer and fall tourism seasons, traffic from domestic markets was up 55% over 2020, with the Maritimes down slightly. The increases in the Maritimes market in 2020 and 2021 coincided with a much larger investment, as it was a foundation for travel demand in an uncertain time. Traffic from Ontario was up 26% over 2019 in

the campaign period, while Quebec was up 13%.

The increase in website traffic, combined with a similar increase in leads (clicks to operator websites), showed that the campaign was effective in driving demand. Much of this traffic was generated through the partnership with Tourism Nova Scotia.

Social Media Follower Growth

2019-21

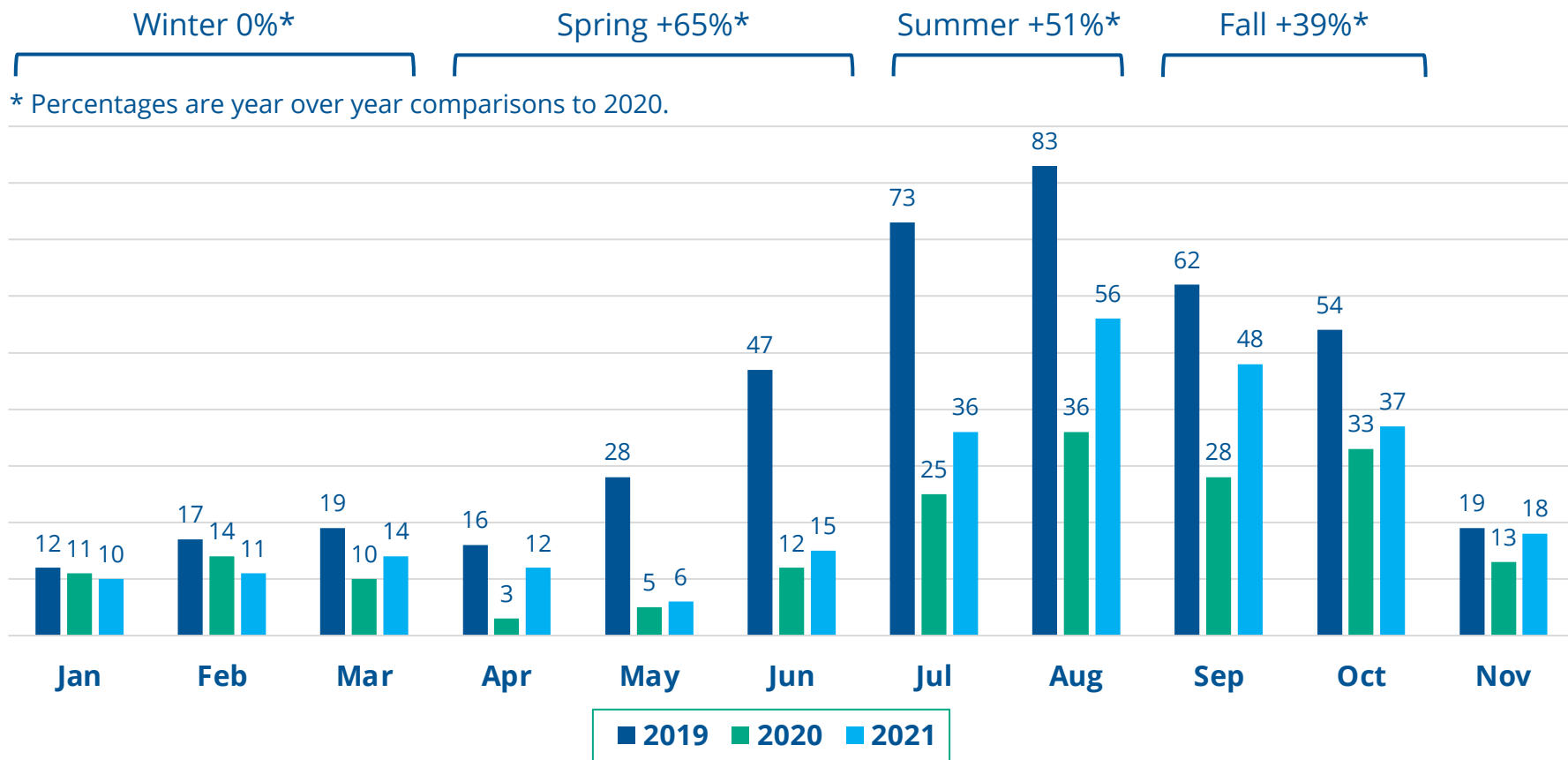


Social media follower growth increased 15% in 2021 to over 158,000. Facebook and Instagram both continued their strong growth trends, increasing at 14% and 21% respectively. Twitter increased modestly by 5%.

In addition to follower growth, video views for the year increased 2% to over 4.3 million. However, the total number of engagements (reactions, comments, shares) declined by 17%, mainly due to changes in the Facebook algorithm.

Registered Room Nights Sold by Month

January-November, 2019-21



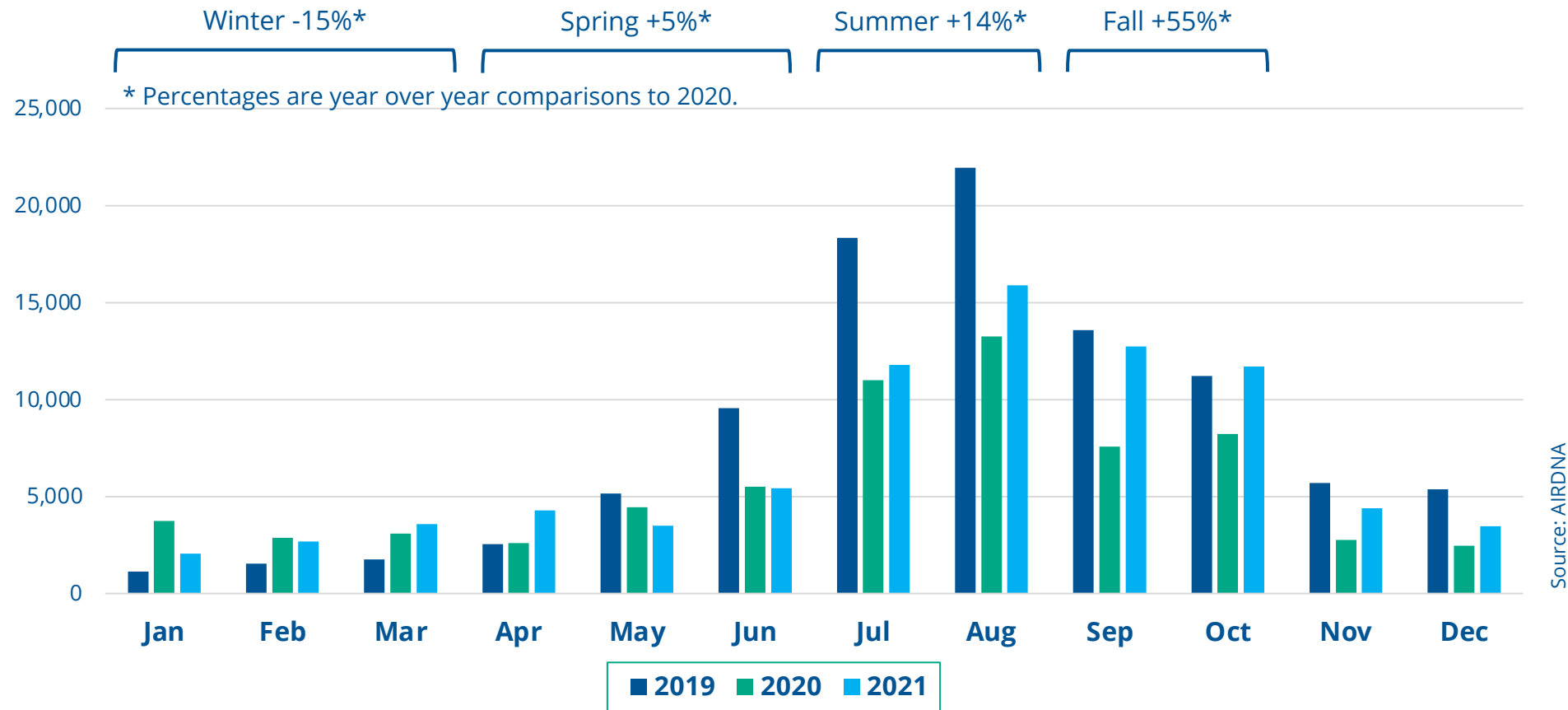
Source: Nova Scotia Tourism Indicators

Conversions are measured mainly through room nights sold. Overall, registered room nights sold were up 44% from January to November compared to 2020, slightly better than the provincial average, but down 37% compared to 2019. The occupancy rate for the Island was 41%, compared with 53% in 2019.

Despite a slow start, the winter season was on par with 2020, a pre-pandemic season except for the latter half of March. Unsurprisingly, the spring was up significantly over 2020, as the 2021 shutdown was much shorter. The summer and fall were up significantly over 2020, but still well down from 2019.

Shared Economy Unit Nights Sold by Month

January-December, 2019-21

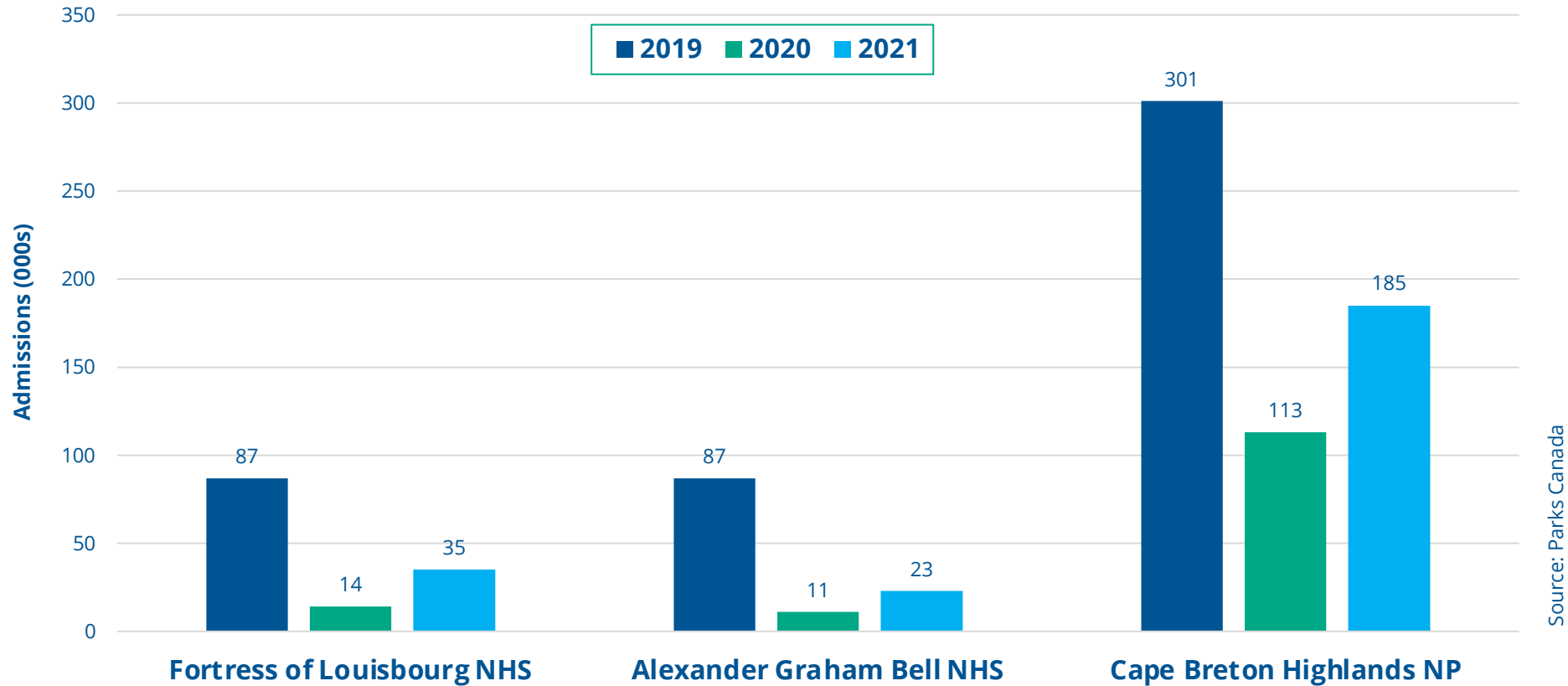


Shared economy unit nights sold (mainly through Airbnb) were up 21% compared to 2020, but down 17% compared to 2019. Nova Scotia overall, was up 19% over 2020 from January to October, but down 22% over 2019 for the same period, so the Island has fared slightly better comparatively.

The winter season was down compared to the mainly pre-pandemic 2020 winter season, but only by 15%. The spring was up 5% with a shorter shutdown period than 2020. The summer was up 14% over 2020, but down 31% from 2019. The fall was up significantly over 2020 at 55% and was almost on par with 2019.

Visitation to Parks Canada Sites

2019-21



Visits to Parks Canada sites were up significantly over 2020 at 76%, but down 49% from 2019. Visitation to the Cape Breton Highlands National Park was strongest as many visitors engaged in outdoor activities, as they have been deemed to be relatively safe during the pandemic. Visitation to the National Park in October was particularly high, with almost 4,000 more visitors than 2019.

The Fortress of Louisbourg and Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Sites were both up at 150% and 109% respectively over 2020. However, a return to 2019 levels is not expected until the return of cruise traffic, as this a significant portion of the overall visitation to both sites.



2022-23 Strategy Overview



2022 Forecast

The Conference Board of Canada's Nova Scotia Travel Market Outlook states that "travel for sightseeing in Nova Scotia is expected to surge in 2022, thanks mainly to the reopening of the Port of Halifax [and Port of Sydney] to cruise ships next year and also to an expected improvement in travel intentions." The report projects that overall visitation to Nova Scotia will return to pre-pandemic levels in 2022. This will be driven by domestic leisure travel, which they project to increase 18% over 2019 visitation levels. They project US leisure travel to the province to bounce back, but still be 29% below 2019, while international leisure travel will also start to recover but will still be 51% below 2019. Given that Cape Breton Island is largely a leisure travel destination, this is encouraging news.

Economic growth was strong in 2021 and is expected to be at about 4% for the year. TD Economics states, "Moving into 2022, economic activity will likely remain robust. Consumption growth of 6.5% will lead the way, which is underpinned by employment gains and built-up savings. Services consumption is slated to be exceptionally strong, as Canadians continue to release pent-up demand."

These forecasts are positive, but it is important to note that the Conference Board report was released just prior to the current Omicron variant outbreak, which may impact their projections. However, in a recent CBC interview, Dr. Robert Strang, Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health, stated that "this pandemic will end and Omicron is likely to be the way out of this." Many public health experts agree and are cautiously optimistic that the pandemic is shifting to an endemic phase, which would make COVID similar to a seasonal flu. With such a phase, it is likely that public health



restrictions will end and travel will gradually return to pre-pandemic levels.

It is prudent to remain cautious, but to plan for a year that is closer to pre-pandemic levels than the last two. The return of cruise and major events like the Celtic Colours International Festival, along with strong destination demand, will move the industry closer to full recovery. However, supply issues, particularly the labour shortage, will continue to be significant constraints.



The Travel Context

Skift recently released its Megatrends Defining Travel in 2022, in which they state that 2022 will be travel's year of recovery. Their Founder and CEO, Rafat Ali, states, "Ignore the naysayers. Dive in 2022, with optimism, intent and purpose." Within the report, Skift identifies a number of trends that are relevant to Cape Breton Island:

- **Uncertainty is the New Certainty**
Having a flexible plan will be key. However, they also state that the impact on travel has decreased with each new wave in the pandemic.
- **Climate Resilience is the New Return on Investment**
Climate mitigation and sustainability plans are becoming more and more important for destinations.
- **The Great Upskilling of Labour**
"The divide between available workers and open positions in travel is too great to overcome. Educating a smaller labour pool with new skills is the only way to overcome the labour shortage crisis."
- **Communities Move Beyond Spectator Roles for Tourism**
It will be imperative to have the input of residents in tourism management to ensure the success of the destination. Tourism must enhance the quality of life of residents.
- **Remote Work is Driving Socialization for Business Travel**
Conferences and conventions will be slower to recover, but Business will be looking for ways to socialize with smaller meetings, retreats, off-sites, etc.



- **The Rapid Ruralization of Travel**

The growth in outdoor adventure and rural escapes has created a new kind of overcrowding. Innovative solutions will be needed to manage the impact on communities and amenities.

Expedia's 2022 Travel Trends Report, which polled 12,000 travellers including 2,000 Canadians, states that, "Travellers want their next vacation to be their Greatest of All Trips (GOAT), in pursuit of transformative and meaningful travel experiences." This includes a few key trends that are relevant to Cape Breton Island:

- **The Splurge-cation**

After cancelled trips and postponed celebrations, travellers are willing to treat themselves and will be less budget-conscious.

- **Immerse to Discover**

Travellers will be more willing to immerse themselves in culture and experiences completely different to their own. They will be seeking more off-the-beaten-path opportunities.

- **Unfiltered Enjoyment**

Travellers will be seeking a sense of contentment and well-being on their next trip and will plan to stay longer in a destination to fully experience all it has to offer.

In Destination Canada's report, Tourism's Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry, the following travel trends were identified that are relevant to Cape Breton:

- **Frictionless Travel**

COVID has increased the need for less human interaction throughout the consumer journey and travellers are seeking seamless travel experiences with limited pain points.



- **Responsible Travel**

There is growing consumer research predicting that travellers want to lighten their footprint on destinations – supporting local economies, engaging with local cultures, reducing carbon emissions and enabling environmental conservation.

- **Indigenous Connection**

Research conducted by the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and Destination Canada shows that one in three Canadians is interested in Indigenous experiences and culture.

- **Wild for Wilderness**

Many travellers are seeking physically challenging adventures, while others are seeking passive ways to engage with nature.

- **Health and Wellbeing**

According to the Global Wellness Institute, the wellness travel market is growing and people have become hungry for a sense of wellbeing during the pandemic.

- **Affluent Travel Boom**

In the US, high-income consumer spending is now 11% above pre-COVID levels, driven by affluent travellers seeking experiences that provide a sense of wellbeing and personal growth.

Expedia partnered with Environics Analytics to look at cruise demand. The findings revealed that “passengers making up the largest group [of early adopters to return to cruising] have a propensity to be upper-middle income Americans aged 65+, an encouraging sign for the cruise industry as its key customer segment is clearly eager to return to the seas.” This is promising for the Canada-New England cruise region, including Sydney. There are currently 90 cruise ships booked to stop in Cape Breton in 2022.



Guiding Principles

The 2022-23 strategy for Destination Cape Breton is based on the following guiding principles:

1. It is developed in alignment with Tourism Nova Scotia's strategy for the season and continues alignment with ACOA's Tourism Innovation Action Plan.
2. It adheres to the Research/Product Innovation/Marketing Continuum.
3. It focuses on promoting the Island's core assets/motivators and niche activities that can be safely enjoyed following public health guidelines and protocols.
4. It continues to utilize Destination Canada's award-winning and proven Explorer Quotient (EQ) psychographic profiles, focusing primarily on Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers.
5. It bases all decisions on the best evidence, wherever possible.
6. It is designed to be flexible to quickly adapt to changing pandemic conditions.

A photograph of a man and a woman on a stage. The man, wearing a purple shirt and a black and white checkered vest, is lifting the woman. The woman, wearing a red shirt and a black skirt with a floral pattern, is looking up at him. They are on a stage with a blue backdrop and a wooden floor. A blue wavy graphic element is on the right side of the image.

Goals and Objectives

To optimize impact for the Cape Breton Island visitor economy, the strategy will focus on three main objectives for 2022-23:

- To enhance the brand of Cape Breton Island as a bucket-list destination for Canadian travellers, and beyond;
- To optimize domestic visitation for the greatest possible impact in all periods of the year, with particular emphasis on the growth of shoulder and winter seasons; and
- To work with partners to mitigate supply side constraints to the greatest extent possible.

Using these objectives as the focus, the measurable goals must reflect a path toward full recovery, while taking steps toward being a four-season destination. Using 2019 as a benchmark, the goals will be:

1. To generate total registered room nights sold on Cape Breton Island to 80% of 2019 levels (345,000 room nights sold);
2. To reach average monthly occupancy rates of 45% for spring (May-June), 60% for fall (September-October) and 35% for winter (January to March); and
3. To collaborate with partners to mitigate the labour shortage by all possible means.

Within these levels, there will be an emphasis on smoothing out peak levels of visitation (e.g. October weekends) to try to avoid undue stress on operators and amenities.



Research

Research

The Research/Product Innovation/Marketing Continuum begins with research to define the target audience, identify trends and determine what they are seeking in our destination.

Research conducted over the past number of years has clearly defined the target audience. For the coming year, based on the Conference Board of Canada forecast, it can be defined as follows:

Demographic

- Empty nest couples aged 45-70 (boomers and Gen X)
- Pre-nest young adults aged 22-32 (millennials and Gen Z)
- Females do majority of travel planning (57% of web visits)
- Post-secondary educated, employed full-time or retired

Geographic

- Maritimes
- Ontario
- Quebec

Psychographic (Explorer Quotient Types)

- Authentic Experiencers (33% of visitors)
- Cultural Explorers (24% of visitors)

Destination Canada categorizes Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers as 'Learners'. They are drawn by culture and natural beauty. They seek engagement in a destination – to meet locals and to be participants in the culture.





Key Research Observations

Through research conducted over the past three years, a number of observations may be made that can inform the strategy:

- Destination Canada's Tourism Outlook Forecast suggests that many travellers will continue to look domestically for their travel plans in 2022. Their 2022-23 Marketing Strategy states, there is "an opportunity to harness the Canadian traveller's temporary appetite for exploring closer to home and grow long-term appetite for domestic travel."
- Motivations for regional visitors include the Cabot Trail, outdoor adventures, fall activities and winter activities.
- Motivations for out-of-region domestic visitors include the Cabot Trail, culinary, cultural experiences, outdoor adventures, fall activities and festivals and events.
- The average length of stay for regional visitors is about 3 nights and for out-of-region domestic visitors is 5.6 nights.
- The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) reports that there was a 23.5% growth in Indigenous tourism revenues in 2019, which significantly outpaced the rest of the sector. With targeted investments, ITAC forecasts that Indigenous tourism will recover faster than the rest of the sector.
- The rental vehicle shortage is projected to continue through 2022, so road trips are likely to continue to far outweigh air visitors. Recent research by Destination Analysts found that US travellers perceive road trips to be the safest travel activity.



- Pre-pandemic, 45% of visitors sought live music during their visits to Cape Breton. With the potential for a return to live music and hosting events like the Music Tourism Convention and Nova Scotia Music Week, there is an opportunity to place an emphasis on music tourism in 2022-23.
- Waterfalls are consistently among the most viewed and engaged content on [visitcapebreton.com](https://www.visitcapebreton.com) and social channels.
- With signs of overtourism on the Cabot Trail during October weekends, there is a need to disperse that demand to other areas of the Island and to weekdays.
- As mentioned in the #RiseAgain2030 Destination Development Strategy, there is a lack of Cape Breton specific data upon which to make decisions, but there are new data tools available.

A photograph of a person wearing a red helmet riding a silver motorcycle on a paved road. The road curves along a coastline with a blue body of water and green hills in the background under a clear sky. A large, stylized blue wave graphic overlays the right side of the image and extends into the text area.

Research Objectives

In pursuit of the goals and objectives, the following strategic objectives have been defined for Research:

1. To continue to measure and report on key performance indicators

- Room nights sold and occupancy rates
- Shared economy unit nights sold
- Google Analytics
- Social media insights
- Digital marketing effectiveness

2. To continue to monitor relevant regional, national and international research related to tourism trends

- Attend key destination focused events and webinars
- Monitor tourism research sources such as Tourism Nova Scotia, Destination Canada, TIAC, and others

3. Explore new research opportunities

- Evaluate the potential and feasibility of new data tools such as mobility data
- Explore the potential to measure Net Promoter Score to benchmark the brand health of the destination



Product Innovation



Product Innovation

Over the past year, there have been a number of product innovation initiatives on Cape Breton Island, as follows:

- Experience development workshops with one-on-one follow-up sessions were conducted in partnership with Tourism Nova Scotia.
- An Unama'ki partnership project was conducted to create an inventory of current Indigenous experiences and chart next steps in Indigenous tourism development.
- A culinary development project initiated in 2020 continued, in partnership with the Cape Breton Food Hub, NSCC and ACOA.
- The initial exploration of a “Cultural Storytelling through Food” project was conducted with Acadian partners.
- In partnership with CEPI, a sportfishing assessment focused on the Bras d’Or Lake was conducted.
- In collaboration with the Cape Breton Partnership, the mountain biking assessment that was initiated in 2020 for Victoria County was extended to other parts of the Island.
- Initial steps were taken to explore the potential for Cape Breton Island to enter the luxury tourism market.
- Discussions took place with numerous partners regarding potential new events, including a Spring arts festival, a multi-day cycling event, a snowmobile festival, among others.



- DCB formalized its Innovation Committee, which continued to meet to evaluate ways to address industry pain points.

Many of these initiatives will be continued into 2022-23 and priorities will be established for others.



Product Innovation Objectives

In pursuit of the goals and objectives, the following strategic objectives have been defined for Product Innovation:

1. To work with Indigenous partners to enhance their experience offerings and support their continued development

- Work with Unama'ki partners to explore product development opportunities through Tourism Nova Scotia and/or through new Indigenous-focused components within the ACOA Toolkit
- Partner with the Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network (NSITEN) to host a conference in Unama'ki focused on Indigenous tourism development
- Establish an Indigenous tourism development position dedicated to Unama'ki

2. To work with industry and partners to develop and promote experiences and packages that will appeal to the target audience

- Continue working with cultural tourism partners, including the Celtic Heart of North America, Expérience Acadie and others to continue product innovation efforts
- Encourage operators to participate in Tourism Nova Scotia programs
- Work with industry to develop packages and offers that motivate Monday-Thursday travel for the fall
- Develop 5 to 7-day itineraries that encourage longer stays
- Continue to enhance culinary offerings



3. To collaborate with partners to launch the Year of Music celebration

- Work with partners to develop or enhance live music offerings around the Island, including Patio Lanterns 2.0, a gateways music project and new music events incubator
- Support CBMIC in the delivery of music development projects
- Support the hosting of the Music Tourism Convention and Nova Scotia Music Week

4. To establish Waterfall Season as a spring motivator

- Explore Tofino's Storm Season as a best practice model
- Work with operators to develop new experiences and offerings focused on waterfalls

5. To continue to develop winter tourism

- Prioritize next steps from the Winter Readiness Project that is currently in progress
- Identify a winter best practice mission for 2023
- Collaborate with partners to build winter capacity

6. To collaborate with partners to attract, create or innovate festivals and events that can serve as travel motivators in the winter and shoulder seasons

- Continue to work with partners to identify sport or cultural events that are a good fit to attract to Cape Breton Island
- Continue to support new event producers in bringing their events to market in partnership with municipal partners and Events Nova Scotia
- Enhance the Community Festivals & Events program with the five municipalities and ACOA to encourage capacity building and innovation



7. To support visitation growth at the Fortress of Louisbourg

- Work with Parks Canada and the Fortress Louisbourg Association to explore the potential for new evening experiences at the Fortress

8. To continue to develop niche markets with growth potential

- Prioritize next steps in the development of accessibility, boating, mountain biking, sportfishing and luxury travel markets
- Conduct a market assessment for wellness travel

9. To position the Island as a small meetings destination

- Develop and implement a new partnership program for meetings and events



Marketing

A photograph of a man and a woman interacting with a horse on a farm. The man, wearing a blue t-shirt and khaki shorts, is reaching out to touch the horse's nose. The woman, wearing a white shirt and white pants, stands next to him. The horse is brown and white. They are standing in a grassy field with a wooden fence in the foreground. In the background, there is a white barn and a blue sky with clouds.

Marketing

Despite the pandemic, the fundamentals of marketing are still sound. More than ever, people are living online and in this new reality, we act on our needs and make decisions in what Think with Google calls micro-moments. For travel, Think with Google has defined four key micro-moments, as outlined below:

I-want-to-get-away moments: a.k.a. "dreaming moments" that happen when people are exploring destination options and ideas with no firm plans. At this stage, people are looking for inspiration.

Time-to-make-a-plan moments: a.k.a. "planning moments" that happen when people have chosen a destination. They're looking for the right dates, the right flight, the right place to stay, and all the things they'll do while they're there.

Let's-book-it-moments: a.k.a. "booking moments" that happen when the research is done, and people are ready to book their tickets and reserve their rooms.

Can't-wait-to-explore moments: a.k.a. "experiencing moments" that happen when the trip is underway. Travelers are ready to live the trip they've been dreaming about—and share it with others.

These micro-moments provide a Path to Purchase that Destination Cape Breton has been using for the past number of years. The marketing strategy is designed to bring the target audience through this Path to Purchase toward a conversion to a visit, and beyond. The following page outlines the tactics that will be employed at each stage of the Path to Purchase.

The Path to Purchase

DREAMING	PLANNING	BOOKING	EXPERIENCING
Digital Marketing* Display Video Social	Digital Marketing* Category search Re-marketing Social Email	Digital Marketing* Branded search Re-marketing Social	Digital Marketing App
Content (Hero)* Hero video Influencers Travel media	Content (Hub)* Locals Know blogs Experience videos List-style content Local ambassadors	Content (Help)* FAQ blogs Itineraries Packages Operator listings	Content User-generated (UGC) Reviews
Collateral Material Experience Guide	Collateral Material Experience Guide Seasonal Guides	Collateral Material Experience Guide Seasonal Guides	Collateral Material Map
TV Regional	Specialty Print Motorcycle Guide		
Artist Ambassadors	Travel Trade	Travel Trade	

* Digital and content marketing is largely conducted in partnership with Tourism Nova Scotia.



Marketing Activities

The prescribed marketing activities are:

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is the largest component of the Destination Cape Breton marketing campaign and delivers the strongest ROI. Over the past few years, DCB has partnered with Tourism Nova Scotia through their Digital Content Marketing Program, which provides matching dollars to target the key markets.

This year, DCB will be piloting a personalization and end-to-end digital visitor experience that will be aimed at better meeting the needs of potential visitors and nudging them toward greater conversions. This will include a new mobile app.

Content Marketing

A robust content strategy will be implemented to follow the 'Hero, Hub, Help' approach of Destination Canada's Content Playbook. This approach identifies compelling, relevant content and distribution channels to reach the target audience at each stage of the Path to Purchase. Where possible, marketing automation will be employed in the process.

The communities of interest (COI) model will continue to be integrated within the content marketing strategy to utilize local ambassadors and targeted influencers to create and disseminate content.



Website

A key piece of the digital marketing and content strategies is the website, which has been designed to be a content hub. In addition to the personalization engine previously mentioned, the website will see a new communities module added, along with an enhanced and expanded live music section. It will continue to be optimized for improved performance.

Collateral Material

The Cape Breton Island Experience Guide will continue to be produced as the main lure/fulfillment piece for visitors. Seasonal campaign collateral will continue with Fall and Winter guides. The Cape Breton Island Map will continue to be produced for visitors on Island and provided through visitor information centres.

Television

Television advertising continues to be effective with the Maritimes, particularly with news programs. For 2022-23, there will be regional spring/summer, fall and winter campaigns on TV.

Specialty Print

An ad will continue to be placed in the Atlantic Canada Motorcycle Touring Guide, which is widely utilized by that niche market.

Artist Ambassadors

The Island's touring artists are the finest salespeople of our destination. Destination Cape Breton has partnered with Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy and family, the Barra MacNeils, Ashley MacIsaac and the Men of the Deeps to promote the Island during their tours. These partnerships will continue and other ambassadors will be considered.



Travel Trade

Destination Cape Breton will continue to work closely with Tourism Nova Scotia's sales team to support their efforts to draw more visitors to the province, and Cape Breton Island specifically. This will include attending Rendezvous Canada and Atlantic Canada's Showcase.

Influencers and Travel Media

Destination Cape Breton will continue to work closely with Tourism Nova Scotia to identify and bring key influencers and travel media to the Island.

User-generated Content (UGC)

Recommendations of friends and family is one of the most effective ways that potential visitors learn about a destination. Visitors will continue to be prompted to share their photos and videos on social media utilizing the #visitcapebreton hashtag.



Marketing Objectives

In pursuit of the goals and objectives, the following strategic objectives have been defined for Marketing:

- 1. To increase domestic website traffic on visitcapebreton.com by 5% to reach 950,000 sessions, while also increasing clicks to operator websites by 5%**
 - Adjust the digital marketing campaign
 - Implement an end-to-end personalization strategy with marketing automation where possible
- 2. To increase the social media footprint by 10% to reach 174,000 followers, while also increasing the total number of engagements by 20% to 735,000**
 - Enhance the content marketing strategy (with an emphasis on more diversity)
 - Continue the COI approach across all aspects of the content strategy
 - Continue to build relationships with local ambassadors in other categories like culinary, winter, fishing, luxury, boating, etc.
 - Continue the development of content for hidden gems and lesser visited areas around the Island
 - Bring in targeted micro-influencers from Ontario and Quebec
- 3. To generate spring season demand by marketing Waterfall Season from mid-May to the end of June**
 - Develop an advertising and content program around Waterfall Season
 - Engage local ambassador and regional influencers to generate buzz around the concept
 - Drive conversions through the promotion of package offers



- 4. To drive fall visitation with an emphasis on Monday-Thursday and late October travel**
 - Promote Monday-Thursday package offers to Nova Scotia residents
 - Promote leaf watch with local ambassadors
 - Promote the Cabot Trail Food Truck Rally
- 5. To generate increased demand for winter visitation**
 - Expand winter marketing to the Greater Toronto Area
 - Bring in targeted winter micro-influencers from Toronto area
 - Promote a snowmobile festival
- 6. To support the Year of Music celebration through marketing and promotion**
 - Develop a Year of Music creative theme
 - Add a robust music section to visitcapebreton.com that highlights live music events, Cape Breton musicians, music-based itineraries, and playlists
 - Work with CBMIC and local artists to create new music to be used in promotional videos
 - Develop a content plan to create and share music tourism experiences
 - Plan and host activations in Toronto and Montreal to promote our music tourism to travel media and key travel influencers
- 7. To mobilize visitors into advocates for Cape Breton Island**
 - Develop and implement a UGC campaign in conjunction with operators
- 8. To position the Island as a small meetings destination**
 - Develop a marketing plan and materials for the small meeting and corporate retreats market



Destination Development



Destination Development

In June 2021, Destination Cape Breton released the #RiseAgain2030 Cape Breton Island Destination Development Strategy, which was developed in collaboration with ACOA, Parks Canada, the Province of Nova Scotia, the five Island municipalities, the Cape Breton Partnership, Cape Breton University, NSCC and industry stakeholders. The strategy provides a shared vision for the sustainable growth of the Island's tourism economy. The 2030 vision is:

Cape Breton Island is a four-season, sustainable, and smart tourism destination that provides positive benefits and wealth creation opportunities for residents, tourism operators, stakeholder organizations and ancillary businesses, the public sector, and visitors. Through nurturing and celebrating cultural expression, authentic experiences, culinary offerings, events, and the abundance of natural beauty and outdoor adventure opportunities, the Island's position as the #1 Island in North America is continually fortified. Education and training, research, and innovation support the development of dynamic tourism clusters that support and leverage our tourism industry's growth.

The full strategy may be downloaded at **riseagain2030.com**.



Destination Development Objectives

Each year, DCB will prioritize objectives of the #RiseAgain2030 strategy to pursue, in collaboration with partners. Following are the priorities for 2022-23:

1. To work with partners to address and mitigate the current labour shortage

- Develop an online inventory of programs and initiatives that operators may explore to address their shortages
- Promote employment opportunities from the Cape Breton Job Board on [visitcapebreton.com](https://www.visitcapebreton.com) and social channels
- Work with the DCB Innovation Committee to explore digital and/or other innovative options to mitigate the labour shortage
- Work with partners to explore other initiatives, including housing, immigration, etc.

2. Work with the Port of Sydney, niche ports and the Atlantic Canada Cruise Association to prepare for the return of cruise

- Develop and launch a communications strategy to rebuild industry and public confidence in cruise

3. To work with Cape Breton University/World Tourism Institute, NSCC and the Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resources Council on upskilling within the industry

- Collaborate with partners to identify the areas of greatest priority
- Support partners in conceptualizing and delivering education and training for industry employees



4. To develop a sustainability plan for the Cape Breton Island tourism industry

- Attend the IMPACT Sustainability & Tourism Conference to learn best practices
- Develop a sustainability advisory committee of key stakeholders
- Develop a scope for a sustainability plan

5. To enhance communication channels with industry and residents

- Conduct pre-season industry sessions around the Island
- Conduct post-season industry sessions to review results and obtain feedback into the next annual strategy
- Continue regular industry communication vehicles – newsletter, industry website and corporate social channels
- Continue regular meetings with the Product Innovation and Marketing Committees
- Conduct 'State of the Industry' presentations and interviews

6. To evolve Destination Cape Breton to enhance its capacity to deliver its mandate

- Implement recommendations in the Destination Cape Breton Revenue Stream Report to address the reduction in resources
- Develop a diversity, equity and inclusion plan and set of policies for the organization
- Work toward Destination Cape Breton becoming net zero in emissions for its operation



For more information, visit:
destinationcapebreton.com