



DESTINATIONS  
INTERNATIONAL

# 2021 BUSINESS PLAN



## Executive Summary

Destinations International will continue to be the leading authority and resource to support the destination marketing and management industry and the community of people who make it work every day.

As the global trade association for destination organizations, convention bureaus and tourism boards, the association supports the work of more than 5,000 professionals from more than 600 destinations in 13 countries across the globe.

Every day the association works to raise the level of professionalism of the people who make up our industry. We support the exchange of relevant information and provide education, tools and best practices. We exert a collective influence in matters that impact our global community, and we position our industry as an important creator of economic opportunity in our members' local communities and neighborhoods.

In 2021, Destinations International will continue the work of building the future of our industry through supporting each of our members, especially at a time when our industry begins to recover from one of the most challenging moments in modern history due to the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the travel industry.

## What Drives Destinations International

**VISION:** Our members are essential to the success of destinations worldwide.

**MISSION:** We empower our members so their destinations excel.

**VALUE PROPOSITION:** We inform, connect, inspire and educate our members to drive destination economic impact, job creation, community sustainability and quality of life through travel.

# Our Four Cornerstones



## COMMUNITY

Destinations International is a hub connecting associations and industries to create trusted partnerships invaluable to our members.



## ADVOCACY

Destinations International is the collective voice of destination organizations empowering destinations on issues big and small.



## RESEARCH

Destinations International is hyper-focused on uncovering what's next for destination management through forward-focused research and relevant data.



## EDUCATION

Destinations International is the definitive resource for professional development and destination management.

## 2021 Strategic Objectives



**Industry Advocacy Leadership:** Become the recognized advocate for the destination marketing and management industry.



**International Impact:** Expand Destinations International's global footprint to grow membership, non-dues revenue and industry impact.



**Strategic Partnerships:** Transform Destinations International's partnership business model to create beneficial solutions for destination organization members and partners.



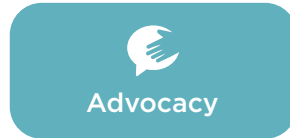
**Next Generation Professional Development:** Become the premier source for destination marketing and management education and professional development.



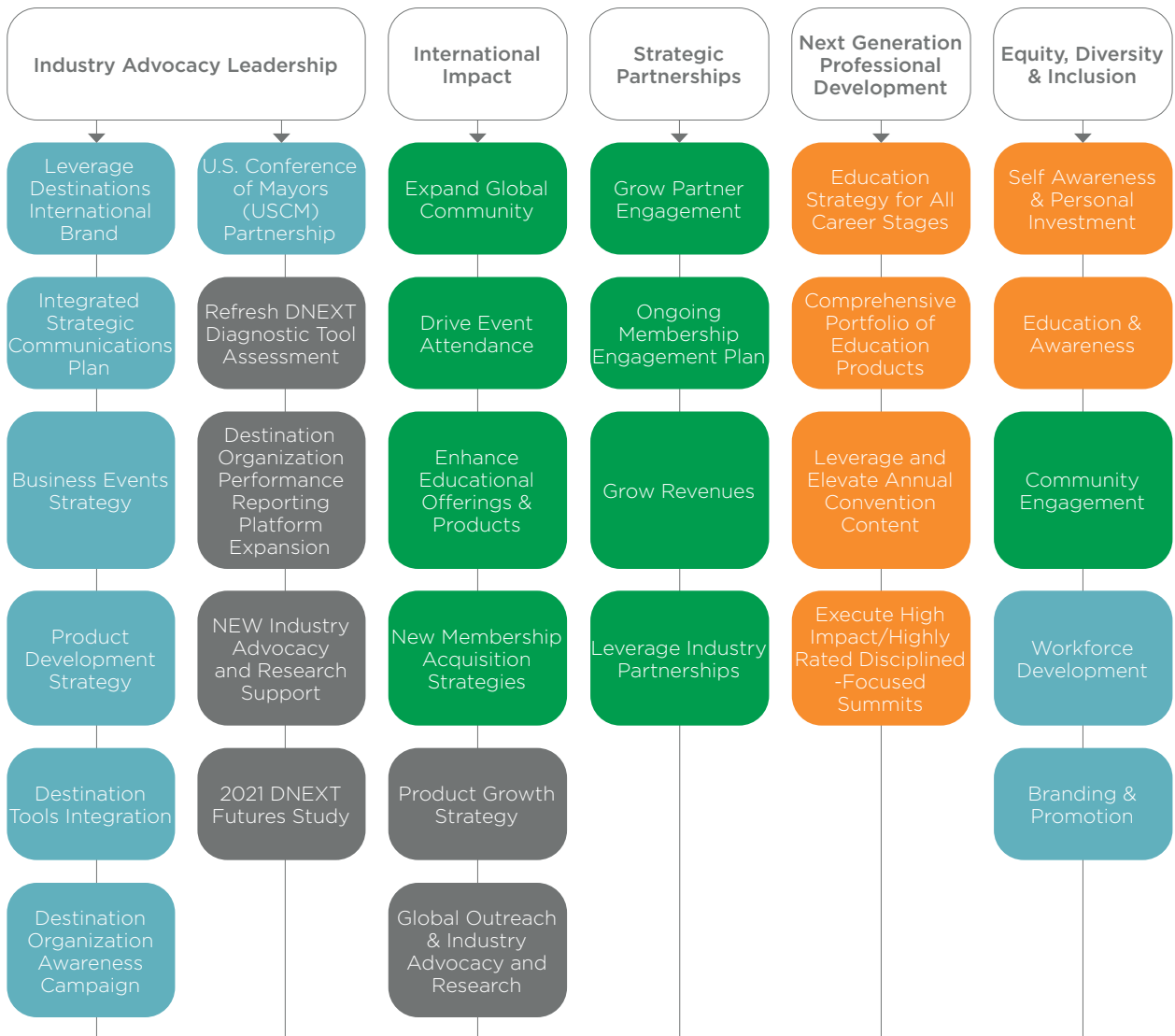
**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:** Lead and engage strategic planning and programmatic development initiatives and opportunities to enable structural social change for the benefit of our members' communities.

# Destinations International 2021 Business Plan

## CORE PILLARS



## STRATEGIC GOALS



Ongoing Advocacy, Communication & Engagement

**OUTCOMES:**  
Increased Member and Partner Engagement. Revenue Growth. Event Attendance Growth. Destination Product Growth.



# **Destinations International Foundation**

## **The Unique Role of The Foundation**

The Destinations International Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the work of the association to empower destinations globally through innovation and resource incubation. The foundation seeks to provide Destinations International members with innovative thought leadership, tools and solutions, as well as incubate future products and programs that will advance and support the work of the association and the industry. Our current areas of focus include:

- Industry Advocacy & Research
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Talent & Workforce Development
- Global Outreach

Investment in the Destinations International Foundation directly supports strategic initiatives to further the association's goals to ensure that our members are supported with knowledge, programs and powerful tools so that they can continue driving essential growth in their community, creating opportunities for their residents and building our destinations. Together, the association and foundation set the stage for connections that will impact the quality of life for people in destinations on a global scale.

# 2021 Special Initiatives



## **Industry Advocacy and Research: Seeing Destination Promotion as a Public Good**

In today's globalized environment, every community must compete with every other destination for its share of the world's visibility, consumers, businesses and the available capital and investments. To compete, destinations must be successful at clearly developing, articulating and managing a community's brand. Efforts must be made to promote, market and engage potential visitors, and destination organizations are uniquely positioned to do this. Addressing this need for destination promotion is for the benefit and well-being of a community and an essential investment to develop opportunities and build quality of life for all the community residents.

Takeaways and case studies will include knowledge of how a modern destination organization is structured and operates, how to tie the benefits of destination promotion back to the destination organization, how to successfully maximize a destination organization's brand stewardship and successful integration of destination organizations with local governments and policy.



## **Industry Advocacy and Research: Compression as a Tool of Economic Development**

Compression nights, the high-demand periods in which hotel occupancy exceeds 90%, have long served as opportunities for hoteliers to achieve peak pricing performance and low vacancy rates and for communities to maximize tax revenues. As compression continues to decrease, businesses and destinations need to strategically leverage these high-demand periods to achieve a greater share of nights booked.

This study will evaluate what happens to a region when tourism is at its peak and the effect it has on its surrounding areas. This report will evaluate four core areas: visitor spending values;



attendance and visitation; occupancy values across hotel and short-term rentals; and consumer spending values and habits.

Takeaways will include showing the impact not only to the usual suspects (hotels) who obviously benefit, but also the many unusual suspects throughout a destination who are often ignored in this type of research. Furthermore, the study will review when group or event business triggers compression nights and how destinations can strategize to maximize meaningful impact in driving compression and the subsequent economic impact.



### **Industry Advocacy and Research: Activate a Destination Organization Awareness Campaign**

By leveraging the Advocacy Committee and Quorum Analytics' research and grassroots capabilities, Destinations International will develop four quarterly awareness campaigns for members to launch locally, along with an ongoing national awareness strategy to amplify local efforts targeting national, regional and local media outlets for story and editorial placements.

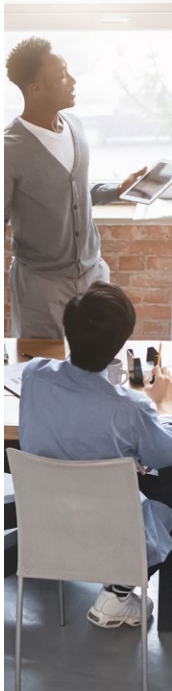
Messaging for the campaign will center around the community need that destination organizations fill, a basic understanding of how a destination organization operates, and the link between destination organizations and the impact delivered, to ultimately quantify and exemplify their foundational role in economic and cultural development, as well as quality of place.



### **Talent & Workforce Development: 30 Under 30 Program**

Destinations International is committed to preparing career-minded young professionals to develop future industry leaders that represent a diverse set of backgrounds and perspectives. Investing in the future generation of destination experts, 30 individuals under the age of 30 are selected annually to gain valuable industry networking and mentoring opportunities, monthly educational sessions, and direct exposure to increased thought leadership throughout the year.





## **Talent & Workforce Development: Apprenticeship Program**

We recognize the importance of cultivating a tourism industry that represents a wide variety of individuals and celebrates the broad range of human differences among us while embracing the commonalities we share. Destinations International has partnered with SearchWide Global and the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) to foster an apprenticeship program to provide talented apprentices with hands-on professional work experience with participating destination organizations and selected destination partners.

The goal of the program is to expand the hospitality and tourism workforce by attracting underrepresented and ethnically diverse college graduates to career opportunities they may not have considered or had access to otherwise.



## **Global Outreach & Industry Advocacy and Research**

The DestinationNEXT Futures Study identifies the trends and opportunities that will keep the thousands of destination organizations around the world thriving and relevant. The purpose of this signature report by Destinations International is to research, analyze and present findings that help guide destination leaders as they re-engineer their organizations for future success.

The 2019 Futures Study was based on a global survey of more than 500 destinations in over 50 countries that asked destination leaders to rank a predetermined series of visitor industry trends in terms of their relevance for their specific region. Participants were also asked to rank several strategies by importance that destination organizations are using to accelerate or manage visitor growth, based on those trends. The study resulted in 52 trends and 64 strategies.

The 2021 Futures Study promises to be the most important study we have conducted to date. Once again, this will be a global study with worldwide impact to be delivered at one of the most critical and dynamic moments in our industry's history.



# Destinations International Staff

## *Executive Leadership*



**DON WELSH**

President & CEO



**MELISSA CHERRY**

Chief Operating Officer



**JACK JOHNSON**

Chief Advocacy Officer



**KEITH BACKSEN**

Chief Sales & Services Officer

## *Advocacy, Research, Governance & Foundation*



**ANDREAS WEISSENBORN**

Vice President, Advocacy & Research



**CHELSEA DUNLOP WELTER**

Vice President, Governance & Administration



**GABRIEL SEDER**

Senior Director, Advocacy Policy & Program Development

## *Product Engagement*



**ELAINE ROSQUIST, CMP**

Senior Director, Product Engagement



**ALYSSA POULIN**

Senior Manager, Product Engagement

# Destinations International Staff

## *Marketing & Communications*



**CAITLYN BLIZZARD, CDME**

Vice President,  
Communications



**DAVID BREISCH**

Director, Marketing  
Technology

## *Membership Engagement*



**KATE SKIDMORE, CDME**

Senior Director,  
Membership Engagement

## *Meetings & Events*



**GREG MORRIS, CMP**

Director of Meetings

## *Education & Certification*



**RORI FERENSIC**

Senior Director of  
Education

## *Operations*



**PAMELA R. HANNER  
RICHARDSON**

Vice President, Information  
Technology



**BECKY HEATH**

Senior Director, Finance



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