



# **explore minnesota for business council meeting**

April 15, 2025



# agenda

- Welcome and approval of minutes
- Workforce Attraction Campaign Update
- Business Attraction Campaign Update
- Resident Retention Pilot Update
- Sustaining This Work in FY26-FY27
- Coming up







# **workforce attraction campaign update**

## Total Sessions



## Organic Sessions



# workforce attraction: strong performance increasing

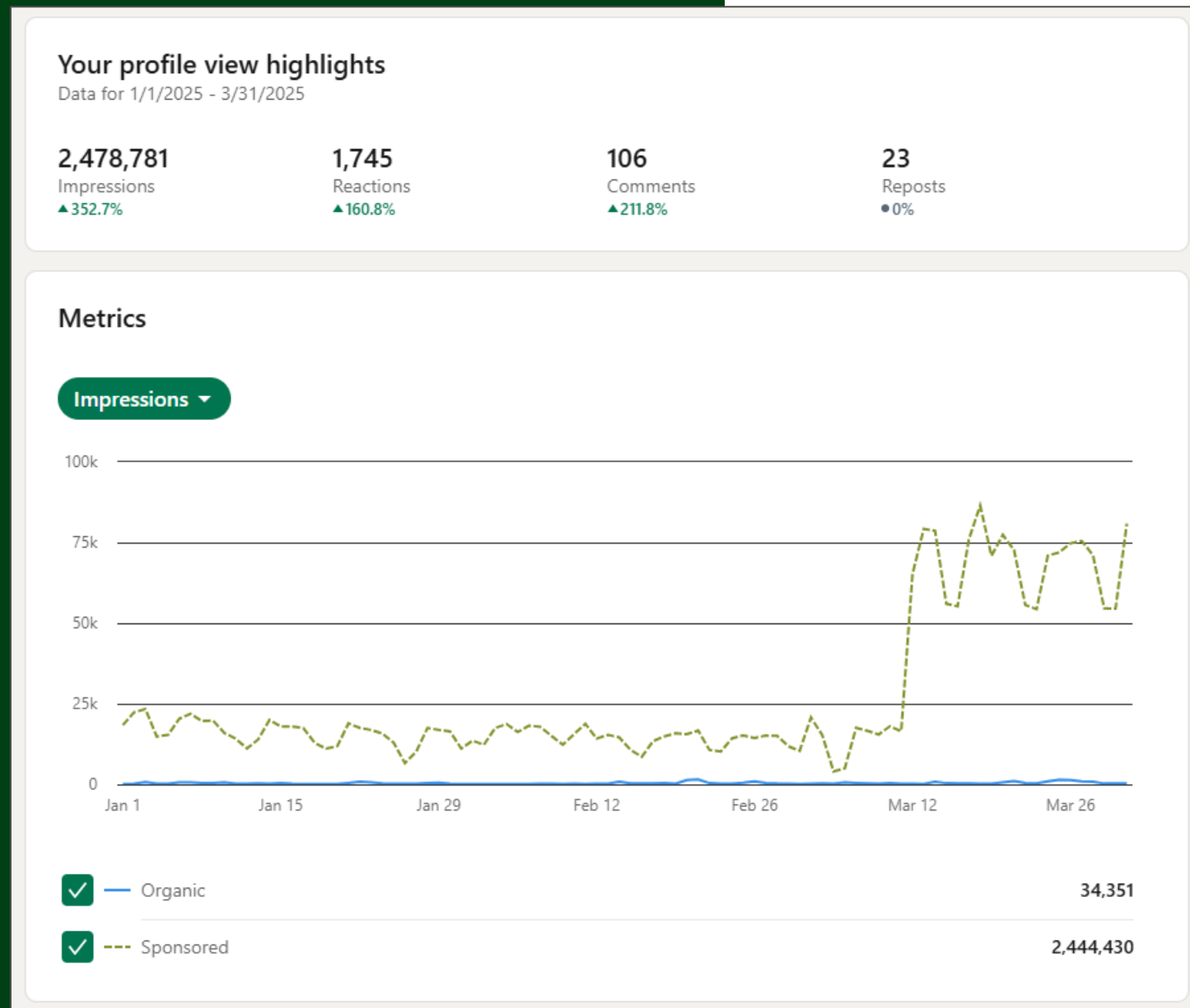
- Q1 saw increases in web traffic and campaign performance
  - March saw highest overall web session performance since campaign launch (73K+ sessions)
  - Organic traffic remained about even over the past 4 months (*opportunity to adjust content here moving forward*)
  - Notable tactics (see table below)\*
- Signals an increased interest in moving to MN since the beginning of the year

CHANNEL	Impressions	Video Completions/Clicks	Spend	KPI	Benchmark
CTV with competitive conquering (awareness)	1,420,235	1,398,934 video completion	\$56,809.40	99% VCR	90% VCR
YouTube AI (consideration), skippable video	495,538	397,782 video completion	\$8,424.15	80% VCR	60% VCR
Social Retargeting – DMA (intent)	413,190	12,057 clicks	\$15,585.50	\$47.22 CPA	\$100 CPA
Social Retargeting – Hand-raisers (intent)	175,722	3,710 clicks	\$3,796.32	\$21.44 CPA	\$100 CPA

\*Data from February 2025.

# workforce attraction: boomerang expansion

- In March, expanded workforce attraction campaign to target boomerang audience:
  - **Minnesota Mid-Career Boomerangs:** Adults who have lived in the state before (ages 25-40) and are in a point in their life/career where they are ready to move back for quality of life, family, a different pace, new adventures.
- Tactics focused on Meta and LinkedIn ads
  - In Q1, Explore Minnesota's LinkedIn channel saw a **352.7% increase in impressions** compared to the previous quarter
- Other SEM/paid search expansions aimed at driving newsletter signups







# **business attraction performance update & discussion**

Total Sessions



Organic Sessions



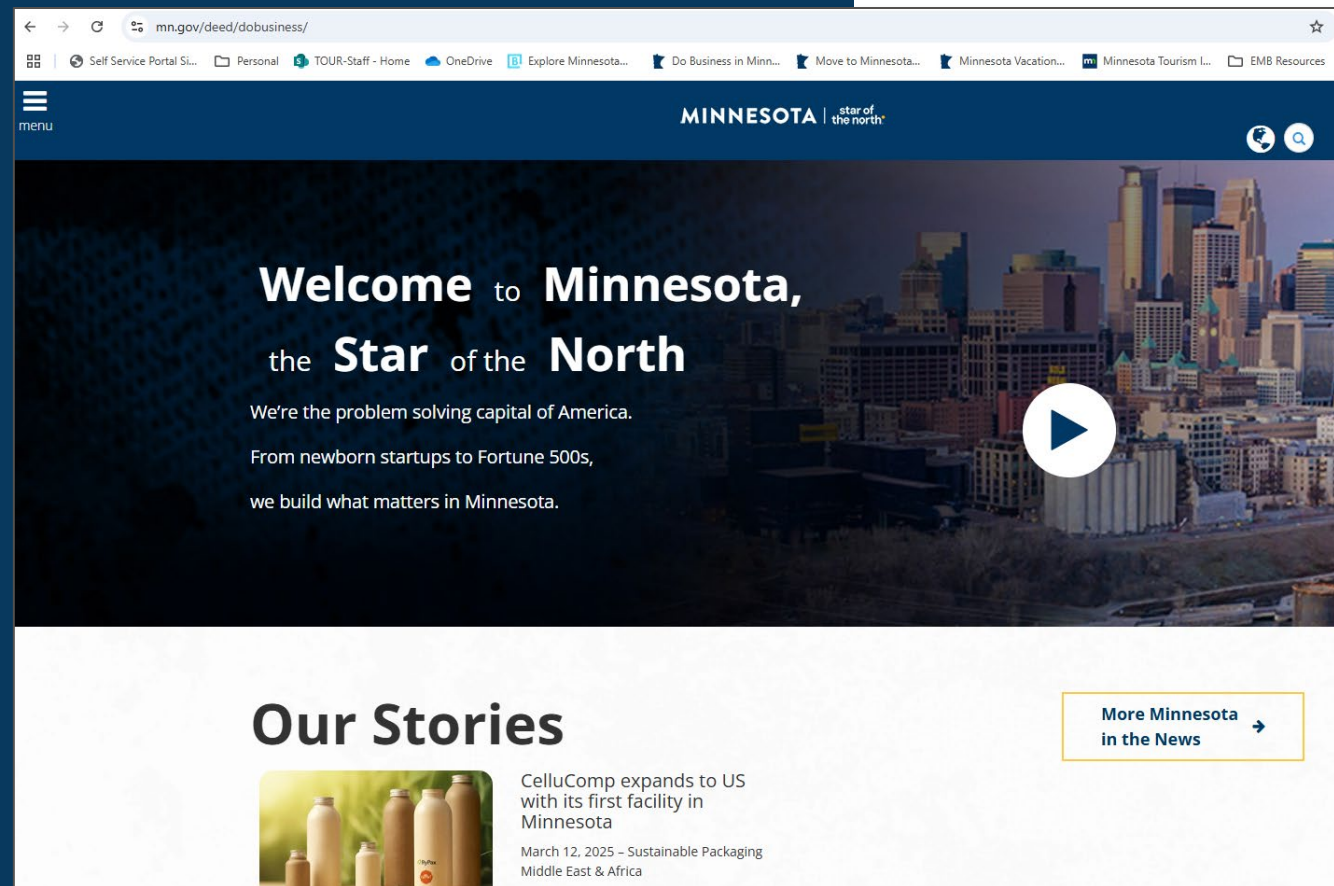
# business attraction: continued strong performance

- Q1 saw increases in web traffic and campaign performance
  - January saw highest overall web session performance since campaign launch (12.7K+ sessions)
  - Organic traffic saw a considerable uptick since the start of the year (highest month to date was February)
  - Notable tactics (see table below)
    - One-time buyout of the Wall Street Journal took place January 28 (awaiting results)
    - Launched 3-month SmartBrief newsletter
    - Business Facilities continues to see strong performance (568 leads from newsletters since launch)

CHANNEL	Impressions	Clicks	Spend	KPI	Benchmark
SmartBrief Targeted Newsletters	531,061	2,086 Clicks	\$5,000	0.39% CTR	0.15% CTR
SmartBrief Targeted Newsletters Added Value	226,701	641 clicks	\$0	0.27% CTR	0.15% CTR
Business Facilities Display Package	48,751	757	\$4,000	1.55% CTR	0.10% CTR

\*Data from February 2025.





# business attraction website improvements

- **DEED changes:**
  - joinus.com >> mn.gov/deed/dobusiness transition (completed in January)
  - “Join Us” branding going away across DEED assets (in progress)
- **Explore Minnesota changes:**
  - exploreminnesota.com reskin launching in summer 2025
  - Separate menu for business attraction pages
- Continued improvement and alignments underway





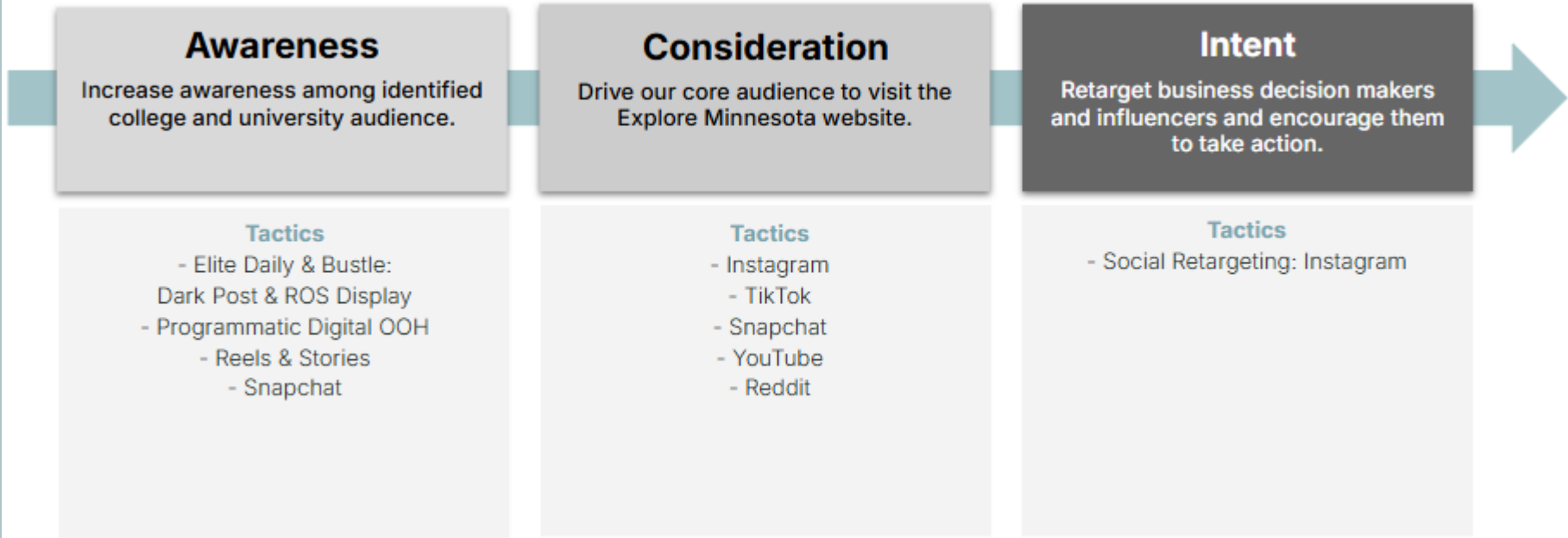
# resident retention pilot



# audience & objectives

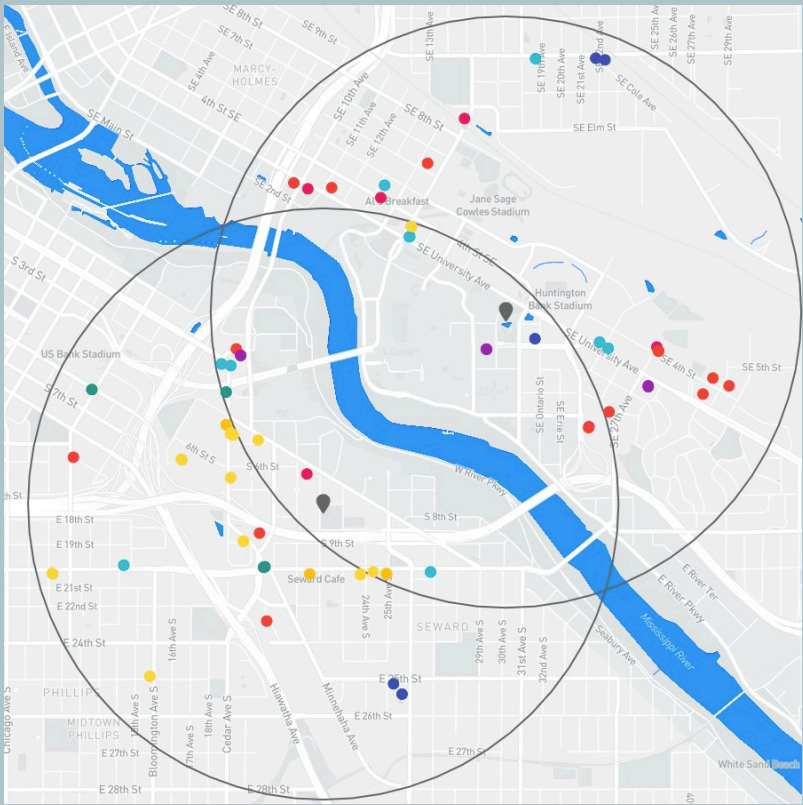
- **Audience:** In-State Students & Recent Graduates -- Young adults in their final year of college and recent graduates (ages 20-25)
- **Pilot goals:**
  - Identify messaging that positions Minnesota as a leading location to launch and build a career.
  - Determine what factors influence the target audience's decision to remain in Minnesota after graduating or in the early stages of their career.
  - Identify the most effective messaging and channels to reach Gen Z to encourage them to consider Minnesota as a viable option to stay after graduation or in the early years of their career.
- **Geography:** Minnesota



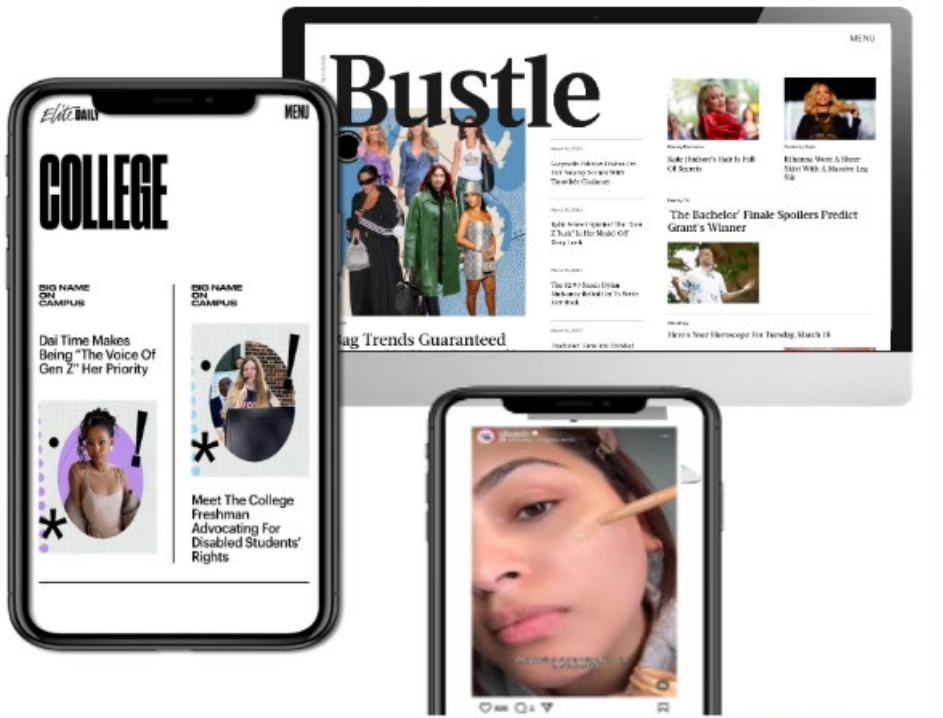


# tactical plan

- Budget focused primarily on social media (Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube)
- Other tactics include:
  - Partnership with Elite Daily & Bustle (social and display ads)
  - Programmatic Digital Out-of-Home targeting within 1-mile of college campuses (e.g., Winona State Univ. Mankato, University of Minnesota) for the month of May



[Augsburg & University of Minnesota]





# timeline & next steps

- Research: Dec thru March (complete)
- Stakeholder mapping & outreach: Dec thru Jan (complete)
- Kick-off with agency partners: Feb thru March (complete)
- Primary channel & tactical plan created: Feb thru March (complete)
- Launch *Boomerang* expansion: March (complete/in market until June 30)
- Messaging, content & creative: Feb thru April (in progress)
- Launch *Resident Retention* pilot initiatives: May through June 30





# legislative update





# sustaining this work in FY26-FY27

## Confirmed:

- Organic content (web, social, newsletter drip campaign)
- Earned media / PR
- Support for other state agency and organization branding work (e.g., Minnesota colleges, collateral development, event guidance)

## *Council brainstorm*





# council seats open

- Minnesota Tribal Leadership Representative
- Minnesota's Ethnic Chambers of Commerce Leadership Representative
- Representative in Marketing, Human Resources, or Executive Leadership from Minnesota-Based Companies with more than 100 Employees Representing Minnesota's Key Industries



# council meeting schedule

- ✓ April 15, 2025 10-11am
- ☐ July 17, 2025 10-11am
- ☐ October 14, 2025 1-2pm





# thank you!

**m** EXPLORE  
MINNESOTA<sup>SM</sup>

star of  
the north<sup>★</sup>