



Explore Minnesota Industry Outreach Webinar August 24, 2020

13:01:32 afternoon's before outreach, we appreciate the time you are spending with us today.

13:01:37 I know it's been a busy summer, a summer unlike any other that we've ever experienced before.

13:01:46 We wanted to have this call today to kind of just give you a little bit of an update on things that are going on

13:01:54 in the Minnesota tourism industry, similar things that are going on specifically with Explore Minnesota

13:02:03 and planned for the future.

Before I begin, if everyone could mute your phones if you have not already

13:02:09 done so, if you're not speaking, that would be appreciated to avoid any background noise.

13:02:19 We will have an opportunity hopefully if there is time for some questions at the end, people can ask those to us

13:02:23 and we will try to address those.

I want to talk to you a little bit about the status of our industry.

13:02:34 We are going to hear from Pat Simmons, our main researcher on some of the latest research, things are going on

13:02:44 in Minnesota and throughout the country as well as Katharine Kelly from adventure and as well, talk about

13:02:51 consumer marketing and public relations activities are going on right now.

I want to start off briefly by giving

13:02:57 you a quick overview of some of the broader issues with tourism nationally and in Minnesota.

13:03:08 From a Minnesota perspective, we are still, and we all know, we are in phase three of the stay safe order.

13:03:20 And you know, there's been some gradual reopening discussion regarding bars and restaurants, and guidelines are

13:03:26 continually revised based on the state's desire to balance economic growth as well as public health.

13:03:33 I have had a chance to work pretty closely with Commissioner Steve Grove and I know he's been holding a number

13:03:42 number roundtables throughout Minnesota with various industry groups to get input on issues relative to

13:03:48 public health and economic growth and try to bring those thoughts and concerns back to the governor.

13:03:54 I know that we just even had a call this morning regarding various large events throughout Minnesota, he did

13:04:03 some surveys to find out what is the status of the industry, what are some of the desires moving forward and I

13:04:08 know those are being evaluated especially as we head into the fall to winter with a lot more indoor

13:04:11 activities.

And it's going to be a very crucial time for our industry.

13:04:17 Right now, no further firm dates have been set.

I know that's something a lot of our

13:04:23 industry needs to start planning.

But there is nothing that's quite been able to be set yet.

13:04:31 On any further relaxation.

National sentiment and activity is somewhat on the object depending on

13:04:36 which research panels you're looking at, I think Pat is going to talk about that.

13:04:43 But there is concern about safety and about travel.

People still as you know are staying

13:04:50 closer to home, avoiding air travel and postponing trips.

But there still is somewhat of a

13:04:55 latent demand and desire for people to get out.

The U.S. travel Association is

13:05:04 currently planning a domestic marketing campaign that many of you may have heard about, it's called "let's go

13:05:09 there" and that's planning to start after Labor Day, the domestic marketing campaign.

13:05:15 Minnesota is very pleased to be a part of this effort and we will share with you the industry toolkit with you that

13:05:22 I think it is supposed to be released later on this week.

This campaign can be adapted to your

13:05:31 destination if you wish and will be available at no charge.

Internationally, brand USA which

13:05:38 currently still serve on the board, I currently serve as the chair, they are planning to discontinue, or continue

13:05:45 to discontinue their international marketing until April of 2021.

But they are still engaged in efforts

13:05:55 to keep the U.S. top of mind including virtual brand USA travel week in Europe so Minnesota hopes to be a part

13:05:58 of that.

We unfortunately won't see international flights resume anytime

13:06:06 soon this year a tentative date I think was just, we heard about this morning, now March 28th through October 30th

13:06:19 2021 for Delta flights to Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Paris, and London.

So that certainly will cause some

13:06:20 problems in getting international travelers to the United States and specifically to Minnesota.

13:06:29 Minnesota, our summer is very mixed in terms of activity, downside and upside obviously.

13:06:36 But resorts and campgrounds are doing quite well.

Originally they had a lot of early

13:06:44 cancellations but a lot of those dates have filled in because people just want to get out, they want to venture

13:06:50 out and do some kind of vacation.

But larger cities and communities are significantly hurting because of a

13:06:58 lack of group visits and events.

That really are hurting a lot of our hotels and convention centers

13:07:09 throughout the state.

Sports tournaments, some groups have been picking up but still the

13:07:15 challenge with so much of the desire and the need to have that advance.

What's happening in the state to do

13:07:23 the booking a little bit farther out.

From and explore Minnesota perspective, our crisis grant program

13:07:30 has been a huge success in terms of industry participation.

So we are pleased that that has been

13:07:39 very well-received.

And we've got a new new robust co-op program with very significant explore

13:07:48 Minnesota buy downs and to really get the low cost of entry for businesses to participate, to get back into the

13:07:54 marketplace.

I also want to mention our welcome center is gradually reopened with

13:07:58 minimal staffing.

But the majority of staff at explore Minnesota and majority of staff at the

13:08:06 state are still working remotely if they are able to do so.

At the end of this call I'm going to

13:08:14 talk a little bit more about plans for the future, a little bit about the legislative session and a few other at

13:08:19 meetings that are planned.

But I first want to take this time to turn it over to Pat Simmons.

13:08:28 Pat is going to give you just the latest on industry health, things going on nationally as well as from a

13:08:32 Minnesota perspective.

So with that, I will turn it over to you, Pat.

13:08:38 >> Thanks, John.

Hello, everybody.

I'm glad you could join us for our

13:08:47 webinar today.

I'm going to focus on a few things.

First of all, a couple of the most

13:08:52 recent research projects I've been working on.

One of them is still in process right

13:09:03 now and the other one, from a few weeks ago, since we last met with you this way so I'm going to share some results

13:09:13 as well.

Right now, what we have in progress is a survey that is pretty similar to

13:09:25 what we've done for a number of summers toward the end of the summer, we reach out to what has evolved into adjusted

13:09:32 combinations of lodging properties and camping properties as being perhaps the best indicator of how travel and

13:09:35 tourism is going although we recognize that that's not the full spectrum of what we've got.

13:09:43 But it's again consistent and provides a pretty good indication of what's going on.

13:09:48 You may, if you are lodging properly, hopefully you will see an invitation for that survey.

13:09:56 The third invitation went out today extending the deadline for the survey until tomorrow.

13:10:01 So far we have a pretty good response, we are hoping to get even more.

One of the reasons I'd love to get

13:10:11 more is to be able to segment the responses between geographic areas of the state by our tourism regions and

13:10:16 also the type of business so if you haven't already filled out one of those surveys, you have until 5:00

13:10:28 tomorrow to do so.

Right now, we are looking at roughly -- I'm going to give you the results

13:10:32 from that survey so far.

They will change some but I think the trends are going to hold pretty well.

13:10:42 Through the rest of the survey.

So we've got roughly even numbers of resorts and hotels and motels, just

13:10:48 over a third of each with a smattering of campgrounds, about 12% and other types of lodging.

13:10:56 Results are distributed pretty well across regions which is great.

Including a healthy dose from the

13:11:05 metro area where we sometimes have had trouble bringing in responses.

Most of the respondents, 86% have been

13:11:09 open the entire June through August.

Neck.

I was a little bit surprised to see

13:11:15 and hear that, I thought that was great news.

Results for how business has been this

13:11:25 summer, the spectrum.

We've been hearing about that with well over a quarter of respondents

13:11:31 saying it's up but also around 20% saying business was down 50% or more.

25 is down half or more compared to

13:11:37 this time last summer.

40% of respondents said business picked up strength more than usual

13:11:45 over the course of the summer so that lines up with restrictions being lessened and people as we've been

13:11:51 hearing getting a little more comfortable with the idea of traveling but still 31% of respondents said

13:11:58 business dropped off more than usual over the course of the summer so I was a little bit surprised to see those

13:12:04 results.

I think perhaps indicative of a rush to get out and travel right away and

13:12:13 perhaps also as the numbers have not dropped as much as perhaps most people would like to see in terms of

13:12:20 confirmed cases, and indicators may have also cap some people from traveling that might have otherwise.

13:12:30 Nearly half of respondents, a bigger share of our this summer or Minnesota residents.

13:12:42 More respondents still even though the shift in economic conditions, more than half of respondents still had

13:12:49 positive-leaning results on their financial health.

This is either growing or stayed

13:12:51 positive in the spectrum of respondents.

Just over half.

13:12:58 That is considerably lower than normal.

But I will call it encouraging.

13:13:10 Combined, a third of respondents said their business activity has already surpassed preCOVID levels.

13:13:19 So again, there are certainly businesses that are doing well but under a third of respondents don't

13:13:27 anticipate preCOVID levels until at least the second half of 2021.

Until, during the second half of

13:13:35 2021.

About a third expected their business to return to the level, another 21.5%

13:13:44 anticipate a later return, 2022 or later.

4% of respondents who said they don't

13:13:54 expect their business to ever return to preCOVID levels.

So that is survey that is in progress

13:14:01 right now.

Stay tuned for results from that to be included in an email to folks who

13:14:12 responded to the survey.

The other survey I wanted to touch on is one that went out, about 120 of

13:14:26 them from the crisis program mailing.

We were just trying to get a sense of how they saw business in their

13:14:34 communities.

We found out from them, like we've heard, campgrounds and resorts have

13:14:42 fared better and will continue to fare better for the rest of the summer.

With their prediction that this went

13:14:52 out mid-July.

The places in their communities that we saw having the most challenges were

13:15:01 meetings and conventions, they are both expected to continue with the biggest sales declines for the rest of the

13:15:10 summer.

Nine out of 10 respondents in the area of event cancellations postponement

13:15:15 said they experience cancellations or postponements for at least three quarters of their communities 2020

13:15:29 spring and summer events.

The events were canceled, 910 communities.

13:15:38 The importance of events to communities, this was something that you're going to get a different

13:15:43 perspective perhaps and then you from others in the community.

This was something we just kind of

13:15:51 wanted to find out their take on just how important events are to their communities, more than 8 out of 10

13:15:55 respondents attribute at least a quarter their community's annual travel activity to events.

13:16:05 That was a pretty big number, we thought.

Included in that group over a quarter,

13:16:16 attributed more than half of their communities annual events.

We also asked our community's

13:16:20 sentiment towards travel.

Local businesses have a more positive sentiments for welcoming tourists

13:16:27 compared to the sentiments of local residents.

And local residents were pretty

13:16:36 lukewarm with about half, 70% of respondents were either slightly negative or slightly positive, about

13:16:45 evenly split so it really was very evenly split between the respondents saying that residents are welcoming

13:16:55 versus not welcoming.

Stay tuned again for the upcoming end of summer survey results.

13:17:05 I'm going to shift over to some coverage on the national level of things that are happening in

13:17:16 Minnesota.

I too in weekly to results that come out from a number of different

13:17:26 travel-related research companies.

Most of those we have lengths to from our industry web site on the COVID

13:17:37 page, the U.S. travel web site has even more resources in these regards.

One of the things I'd try to keep on

13:17:44 top of it is what are the current level of losses and how do they compare overtime for the amount of travel we

13:17:54 can see.

For the week ending August 15th, through mid-August, travel spending

13:18:04 rose 5% that week which is the fifth consecutive week of expansion.

While it's still registered 44% below

13:18:16 last year's level, instead beginning of March, the COVID pandemic has resulted in over \$341 billion in cumulative

13:18:27 losses for the U.S. travel.

Focusing on Minnesota and the results that we've seen from estimates on

13:18:41 losses and travel expenditures, for that week ending August 15th, on a national level spending that week was

13:18:48 down about 44% from Minnesota.

Tourism economics is the name of the company that does this.

13:18:59 47% was below the same week a year ago, the week ending August 15th almost right around half of the travel

13:19:11 spending of the same week a year ago.

We've been tracking pretty closely with U.S. levels of travel spending,

13:19:22 loss estimates.

Again, that's 44% from the U.S.

Humility in Minnesota, we lost \$4.8

13:19:37 million in travel spending.

While it's not an exact Apples to apples comparison, we have C million

13:19:45 dollars, that's the amount of leisure and hospitality sales in the state.

A couple other things that I will

13:19:55 touch on before I sign off, some other indicators of travel for the week.

TSA screenings group for the fourth

13:20:05 consecutive weekend reached a new pandemic peak of 863,000.

So that's an indication of how much

13:20:18 travel has, you know, come up.

But travel is still down.

That level is 71% lower than the same

13:20:28 period last year.

So improvement but improvement against need for a lot of it.

13:20:36 Highlights from three different travel research companies provide ongoing travel research to us at this point.

13:20:42 Domestic air and hotel bookings for future travel were up 7% last week compared to the previous week.

13:20:52 That's still down 66% year-over-year with considerable vast regional differences around the U.S.

13:21:06 From destination analyst, travel sentiment index report that they put together, fewer Americans are viewing

13:21:13 during the pandemic will worsen in the next month.

While 57 percent do still not want

13:21:18 visitors in their community yet, the mix of people wanting and not wanting people to come to their communities.

13:21:30 This is the lowest this sentiment has been since the week of June 15.

So in other words, there is an

13:21:36 improvement in a lowering of the number of people who don't want visitors in their communities.

13:21:43 Four of our first time since the end of June, the percent of those who said they will be happy seeing an ad

13:21:52 promoting tourism for their community, 16% said they would be happy.

This ties in, do we want people in our

13:21:58 community, do we not?

People are finally coming around to being okay with their communities

13:22:07 being promoted to tourism ads.

When asked to rate the most unsafe aspects of air travel right now,

13:22:11 behavior of other passengers is by far the issue that concerns travelers the most.

13:22:21 We saw that in our consumer survey earlier in the summer, the end of June where what we found was people were

13:22:32 okay traveling to a greater extent than they were when they couldn't be under control of their own safety measures.

13:22:39 They don't trust other people more than they don't trust themselves in terms of being, staying safe.

13:22:47 Long Woods is another company that I tune into considerably and they say more than half of travelers said they

13:22:55 are hesitant to travel since they are unclear about travel restrictions such as quarantines and their

13:23:02 destinations.

So this speaks to a lack of clear communication as received and reported

13:23:08 back by consumers.

I think we can't do enough as far as getting the word out about what is and

13:23:19 isn't open and with the protocols are there.

The other company that I tune into is,

13:23:34 actually there are a number of them.

I'm going to leave it at that because my time is running short.

13:23:34 But again, I encourage you to look on our web site, our COVID page and U.S. travel's web site for the latest on

13:23:42 both consumer sentiments and what has been the impacts of the pandemic so far on travel and tourism.

13:23:47 I think it's back to you at this point, John.

>> Great, thank you.

13:23:53 That was an awful lot of information to sort through.

I know we are all probably dealing

13:24:01 with just being overwhelmed with so much information, not sure exactly where to tune to monitor this on a

13:24:08 daily basis paid so if you have any further follow-up questions or thoughts or questions, please be sure

13:24:13 to let us know, contact Pat directly and we will be sure to get you your answers.

13:24:20 Next, we want to talk a little bit about summer and fall marketing plans and the other activities from a

13:24:28 communications perspective.

We heard from Pat how consumers are really wanting clear communication.

13:24:40 To talk to you a little bit about what we've been doing in that area, I think I don't know if Leann or Katharine

13:24:44 Kelly, you are going to take over at this point.

I will turn it back to you.

13:24:50 >> Thanks, John.

You can be the one to tell me if you can see my screen.

13:25:05 Can you see my presentation?

All right.

>> Sorry, I had to put my speaker on

13:25:11 to respond in the affirmative, yes, I can see that.

>> Excellent, let's get started,

13:25:14 then.

Thank you.

I'm going to give you some updates on

13:25:19 what we've been doing in marketing.

Obviously this is into the summer that any of us were hoping it was going to

13:25:28 be back at the beginning of the year.

But we've all gotten to test our flexibility and resiliency.

13:25:31 For explore Minnesota we've been pleased that we were able to get a few carefully chosen messages back out

13:25:35 into the markets this summer.

And I just want to walk through what that's look like.

13:25:41 I'm going to start with this second spot that you've hopefully seen in the market.

13:26:28 🎵 [music]

So that spot is called "see you soon," a piece that was created very

13:26:34 intentionally to not be overly-promotional but allow us to make a soft reentry into the market

13:26:39 this summer.

We wanted to get people thinking about exploring Minnesota again.

13:26:50 So that Spot ran starting June 29th and ran through August 16th on broadcasts connected to the display with social

13:26:58 and SEM supporting it.

We rented in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North and South Dakota and the

13:27:02 Chicago and Omaha areas, being very intentional of the fact that we know people aren't traveling far from home

13:27:08 right now but I wanting to get out to some degree.

So this campaign was really intended

13:27:17 to drive awareness and it did that, approximately right now, the number is 13.6 million total impressions from

13:27:24 the see you soon campaign with 1.9 million views of that Spot on YouTube and the application on YouTube

13:27:31 actually drove more YouTube views and subscribers to the EMT channel in July than any other month on record.

13:27:42 And as we were running our recovery campaign, as we got closer to August we realized we had an opportunity to

13:27:47 start integrating some of our summer creative's that we originally had intended to run this summer on a

13:27:53 bigger campaign than we normally would have.

We change course a little bit and we

13:28:02 were able to integrate a little bit into our recovery media by speaking to those who are ready to move from

13:28:10 dreaming about travel to planning a trip.

If you banners that we see here, and

13:28:19 the spots through August 16th.

Also exciting is that because fishing and golf are both activities that are

13:28:23 very conducive to social distancing and activities that lots of people are pretty excited about this summer, we

13:28:31 were able to launch these, not quite as planned but we do get them into market on July 13th.

13:28:38 That started a bit later because a COVID and we are going to run them into September 6th to try to make the

13:28:43 most of what's left of the season.

These ads are running in the same markets as the recovery campaign and

13:28:51 so far they've driven more than 196,000 session so we are excited about those results.

13:29:01 Now it's already time to start thinking about fall even though we are not ready to, we have exciting plans for

13:29:09 fall and I'm going to start by showing you the 30-second spot.

[Music]

13:29:34 >> Some things are here for just a moment.

But if you spend it right, a moment is

13:29:38 enough.

Find your true North.

Only in Minnesota.

13:29:47 >> So that Spot will be the cornerstone of our general campaign this fall and if it looks familiar it's because it

13:29:56 was also the star of last year's fall general campaign.

In addition we are running display

13:30:04 social ads and in our neighboring market, and then we also have a fun placement for the fall in Midwest

13:30:13 living, which I can show you.

This appeared in the September-October issue if you want to go pick it up,

13:30:19 it's pretty fun to see in the fall colors.

All right.

13:30:27 Also for fall outside of our General we have two new niche campaigns.

Dog lovers and family road trip or is

13:30:34 and I wanted to just take a second to share some of the insights that went into choosing these new niche is.

13:30:43 For dog lovers, we know Americans spend over \$72 billion on their pets annually leading to a rise in pet

13:30:46 friendly travel listings.

Dog lovers are more likely to enjoy outdoor activities.

13:30:56 Our content that included dogs has historically outperformed all other types of content.

13:31:01 Dogs are kind of universal and their appeal is what we sort of consider COVID-proof.

13:31:08 We still love our dogs.

More than ever, may be.

On the family Road trip aside, 59% of

13:31:13 Americans said they were planning to take more road trips in the next five years highlighting freedom and scenic

13:31:20 views and now during COVID, not road trips are widely considered by consumers to be the safest or

13:31:30 sometimes only option for travel.

87% of Minnesota travelers consider themselves Road trippers before the

13:31:35 pandemic and we expect that that figure may actually go up now that so many people are looking at Road trips as

13:31:41 their possibly only option to get out and explore right now.

So that all bodes well for the work

13:31:50 that we've done in these two areas.

I'm going to play you each of our niche is, 62nd Spot we use on our

13:32:00 social tabs, really quick but I'm going to show you first the dog lovers one.

>> Find your true North.

13:32:12 Only in Minnesota.

>> So that Spot's along with display, social, and native ads will run

13:32:19 September 1st through November 1st.

And in the past our niche campaign ran nationally but with the focus on

13:32:26 staying closer to home we are targeting these campaigns within comfortable driving distance, which we determine

13:32:33 to be 500 miles with 15% of our media being ran in Minnesota.

We are supporting dog lovers with the

13:32:44 influencer activation called the Tails of Minnesota.

We are engaging four Minnesota dog

13:32:48 influencers to help us get the word out that Minnesota is a dog-friendly destination.

13:32:55 So they are going to be going out on little trips to dog friendly places within Minnesota and posting content

13:33:01 September through October.

At the same time we are going to be encouraging consumers to participate

13:33:06 in the Tails of Minnesota by posting their own pictures of their dogs on Instagram using the hashtag #MNTails.

13:33:20 And shall be able to find more info about the influencer promo at ExploreMinnesota.com/MNTails once the

13:33:25 campaign begins.

Lots of fun stuff there.

And then our other niche is road

13:33:31 trippers, family road trippers.

I will play you that six second spot when we begin.

13:33:40 >> Find your true North, only in Minnesota.

>> And so like we've all talked about,

13:33:46 people want to get out but they don't actually want to go too far from home right now.

13:33:53 So road trips are the perfect solution and it allows us to promote key attractions and activities within the

13:33:59 Road trip narrative and lets travelers really control their own itinerary.

We can give them ideas of places to

13:34:10 go.

So the road tripping niche will run the same date, September first your

13:34:12 November 1st.

With display, social, native, and SEM and again targeting that 500-mile

13:34:21 radius, with 15% in Minnesota.

And to support road tripping, we have a really fun promotion, Road-Trip'n

13:34:27 bingo, we made a bingo card for each of the five regions of the state and as you can see there is fun illustrations

13:34:32 on all the bingo cards and we were really careful in choosing items, that can be viewed from the safety of your

13:34:40 car or from safe distance from others.

These aren't super specific things that everyone has to go to one very

13:34:46 specific place to see, all things you can hopefully experience throughout your drive.

13:34:53 And just a fun way to get people out there in a safe way.

We actually printed cards that are

13:35:06 going to be available at EMT welcome centers but then everyone has access to download digital cards and at

13:35:11 [ExploreMinnesota.com/bingo](https://www.exploreminnesota.com/bingo).

We are encouraging people to share their pictures along the way by using

13:35:20 the hashtag #ExploreMNAgain.

That is what we are doing this fall.

You will see these in the market very

13:35:25 soon.

Ends of the last thing I wanted to cover is our diversity and inclusivity

13:35:35 initiative.

And this is something we are excited to take on.

13:35:40 Explore Minnesota identified an opportunity to attract more people of color to travel to and within

13:35:44 Minnesota and ensure that our state is welcoming and inclusive to all ethnicities.

13:35:51 We know tourism marketing is not the singular solution to this challenge but we also know that our marketing

13:35:56 strategies and campaigns must support these objectives.

So in July we engaged the

13:36:02 research firm ebony marketing systems to contact consumer focus groups with black and Latino travelers to better

13:36:10 understand perceptions of Minnesota, their travel motivations and capture feedback on existing and future

13:36:16 advertising creative.

Along with ebony, what we did to structure these focus groups is we

13:36:22 recruited people who are between the ages of 25 and 55, they had to have taken at least four trips in the past

13:36:27 year, whether air or car.

They had to intend to travel for leisure within the next year.

13:36:32 And the reason for all that is because we want to make sure we are talking to travelers.

13:36:37 They had at least one child and they had to identify as either Black or Latino.

13:36:43 The way we structured it is conducted eight focus groups total.

Four of the groups were among Black

13:36:49 travelers and four were among Latino travelers.

We put the groups by age, 25 and 39

13:36:55 was their own group and 40 heaven 55 were their own group.

Half of the participants lived in

13:36:58 Minnesota.

We got that perspective and have resided in nearby states.

13:37:04 Illinois, North and South Dakota, Indiana, Colorado, Michigan, Nebraska, or Wisconsin.

13:37:14 We had moderators who were Black and Latino to facilitate these sessions, everything was facilitated via Zoom.

13:37:23 To give you an idea what that looked like, this is our Latino moderator, she had just shown the participants

13:37:29 and was asking them to sort of reflect on what was motivating or not motivating about them.

13:37:35 And as I said in addition to showing them spots we actually got their thoughts on travel in general and

13:37:41 what's important to them and we were able to show them some ideas for new spots and get feedback.

13:37:48 So here's a few of the key things we learned and are excited to incorporate.

13:37:56 Representation is very important but no group wants to be tokenized so marketing should include multiple

13:38:04 ethnicities.

Latino respondents are a vacation as activity well Black respondents found

13:38:08 it rejuvenating.

Both groups that food is a powerful indicator of culture and signifies

13:38:18 diversity so I am looking forward to showing more.

The presence of children was a strong

13:38:26 positive as well as depictions of multigenerational travel.

Safety was a key factor for Blacks in

13:38:36 deciding where to go and how they would travel there.

Yes, COVID was a discussion about this reference is specific to racism and the civil unrest that it happened.

So the destinations need to be worth

13:38:45 the trip.

Both groups expressed interest in trying new things on vacation,

13:38:50 however, Black respondents were less likely to embrace only outdoor recreation and wanted to see a range

13:38:57 of and more relaxing activities.

This is also true of some Latino respondents rate fall and winter

13:39:05 depictions were least motivating to Black respondents rate Minnesota residents looking for activities

13:39:10 extended beyond one region of the state.

They often enjoy outdoor activities

13:39:16 and finding hidden gems but they also wanted to see options within the Metro.

13:39:23 And our nonMinnesota residents are they most associate Minnesota when winter and snow and when traveling

13:39:26 domestically, they want to find which experiences are most unique to Minnesota.

13:39:32 That was very loud and clear.

They want to know what is unique to Minnesota, why would I come here.

13:39:38 They want to know that Minnesota has a vibrant metro area and many of them said they would often use a city as a

13:39:44 base and venture out to other activities from that base.

All of America came up in every single

13:39:50 group as an iconic Minnesota destination and was expected to be seen in marketing.

13:39:54 Distinctions between age groups were not strongly pronounced by the older respondents did tend to not like

13:40:01 outdoor activities in the winter as much and look for a variety of options so everyone in the family would be

13:40:08 entertained on their vacation.

So what are we going to do with all this information?

13:40:15 So our spring and summer of 2021, next spring and summer is our next major opportunity to showcase new creative

13:40:23 to the largest and broadest audience possible, because that is specifically our largest base.

13:40:29 Our immediate action is to make sure that EMT has brand-right created for spring that reflects a deliberate and

13:40:34 authentic effort to engage in more racially diverse audience.

However, this is not a one-time

13:40:37 effort.

We intend to continue to incorporate and grow these insights into all

13:40:41 future marketing to ensure that we are welcoming and inclusive to all travelers.

13:40:46 The biggest plays are probably going to see it as next spring that we are going to be using this going forward

13:40:52 and making sure that we are taking them into account every single time we are creating something new.

13:40:58 And that is what I've got.

Feel free to submit questions via chat if you have them.

13:41:05 After that I will turn it over to Leann.

>> Thanks, Katharine.

13:41:12 Hi from everybody.

I am just going to follow up with some additional public relations updates.

13:41:22 First of all, throughout the month of August, we've conducted a variety of virtual meetings via Zoom with select

13:41:30 regional and national journalists and writers so we are taking the opportunity, because they have some

13:41:33 casual two-way conversations with them.

Some of the topics we've been

13:41:42 addressing have been, how is of the pandemic impacting travel stories and their approach to travel stories.

13:41:52 What are the various media topics that they are focusing on for the rest of 2020?

13:42:00 And into 2021, whether they think the future of travel looks like beyond the pandemic?

13:42:06 What trends do they think are here to stay and also just giving them updates specific to Minnesota.

13:42:17 So John Edman and Alyssa Hayes, our P.R. officer have been having conversations one-on-one and some of

13:42:26 the writers and editors we talked with so far include "The Washington Post," "The Wall Street Journal," Forbes,

13:42:37 "lonely planet, "outside" magazine, "National Geographic traveler," "travel and leisure," "Chicago

13:42:41 Tribune," "The New York Times" and there are more.

So we are concluding those efforts

13:42:51 here in the next week or so and we hope that this strategy will give us some insight as we try to prioritize our

13:43:00 marketing and communication efforts going forward in the next year.

Additionally, we are doing promotion

13:43:11 of our fall colors with a joint press release and consumer emails and collaboration with this Department of

13:43:21 natural resources so those efforts will begin in mid-September.

And finally just an update on the

13:43:31 partnership front, we launched our fifth annual edition of hike man and that promotion and sweepstakes are

13:43:39 underway and we want and continue to encourage people to continue enjoying the outdoors state-wide and exploring

13:43:48 a variety of different types of hikes close to home or at least within the state and so that promotion is off and

13:43:53 running and we thank all the partners who have helped us put that together.

13:44:05 And with that I believe I send it back over to John.

>> Thanks, Leann and thank you,

13:44:10 Katharine.

You know, this clearly is not marketing tourism as we have done in

13:44:17 the past, this is an entirely different environment.

We are trying to deal with the issue

13:44:28 of public health pandemic but trying to really work on people's interest in travel, to travel as safe as they

13:44:35 possibly can and to still keep our economy going at least from a leisure and hospitality perspective.

13:44:40 Maybe not today but we are looking forward to the future.

And I guess I just wanted to conclude

13:44:48 with a couple of comments about what's next.

The happenings here at Explore

13:44:53 Minnesota.

I think I would be remiss if I didn't make some mention of budget, I know a

13:45:01 lot of you are all dealing with budget in ways that you never thought you would be experiencing at this point in

13:45:07 your organization or business perspective.

But the state, too, is facing some

13:45:15 budget shortfalls this year as it well as into the next biennial.

We have not been given very specific

13:45:20 directions on cuts but we are anticipating that for Explore Minnesota.

13:45:27 Agencies throughout state government or throughout Minnesota are being asked to help with cuts of ten, 15, 20%.

13:45:34 We are planning for those scenarios and we will deal with it as it arises.

We hope that does not become the case

13:45:41 because we feel we can be the fuel for recovery but we will deal with whatever we are going to have to deal

13:45:52 with which you are as well.

But we are also looking beyond that, looking beyond just this current

13:45:57 fiscal year which ends June 30th and looking into the next biennial and looking at right now our ask for the

13:46:05 next legislative session and it's going to be very difficult.

I think it's no surprise that the

13:46:11 state does not have a revenue for us to make the case with investment in travel and tourism is going to be

13:46:16 really, really difficult.

But we are looking to working with you in the industry in working with the

13:46:25 Council to really come up with what are our specific asks, where do we most need to help, where can we, Explore

13:46:32 Minnesota, inject ourselves to best help on this road to recovery?

So we welcome any thoughts or input

13:46:39 anybody has on this call today or anytime down the road.

Our next council meeting, tourism

13:46:47 Council meeting is on September 15th.

It will be a virtual meeting and what we are looking at for the next

13:46:51 biennial will be one of the main topics of discussion.

I also want to point out that we have

13:47:01 several new members, newly-appointed members for the explore Minnesota tourism Council including Marine

13:47:13 representing Chambers, Bob representing trails, Tracy representing resorts and Allison representing concession

13:47:17 facilities.

We are one further position as a restaurant position and I know there

13:47:24 been a few applications for that and that appointment is still pending.

I also want to mention that we are

13:47:34 planning a series of fault listening sessions and a lot of you may recall we've been doing those, we did them

13:47:42 last year in preparation for our strategic plans, we did commit to doing it again this year, we may not

13:47:52 be able to do that physically but we do plan on doing them virtually this October, probably even by the industry

13:47:57 sector group, look for more of that to come, information in the coming weeks.

13:48:07 And I also just want to mention, I know this may seem like a far time off but earlier I think I commented and people

13:48:12 really need to plan ahead for meetings and conventions.

Well we, too, are planning ahead for

13:48:18 our future meeting and convention specifically referring to the annual tourism conference which is scheduled

13:48:25 for March 1st in the metro area.

We've heard from some of you about what your thoughts are on that but I

13:48:31 just want you to know we want to hear from the entire industry so we are going to be doing an industry survey

13:48:38 to get your thoughts on whether we continue, we have something entirely different, virtual and some

13:48:48 combination.

But you'll be hearing from us in an industry survey shortly after.

13:48:54 I also want to mention that this session is being recorded and it is available on our industry site or will

13:49:00 be later on this week.

And we'd be happy to answer any further thoughts or questions that any

13:49:10 view have at that time.

So unless there is anything else from members of my team, Katharine, are

13:49:15 there any questions that were submitted online?

>> No questions in the chat.

13:49:23 >> Well, it doesn't mean you don't have questions, I'm sure you all do.

And we would love to hear from you, to

13:49:28 hear about your thoughts, your ideas, your suggestions, your likes and dislikes about what we are doing or

13:49:32 what we need to be doing in the future.

We want to hear from all of you.

13:49:40 But we wanted to hold this webinar, we just felt this is a good time getting towards the end of the summer to give

13:49:46 you an update on things that are going on with the industry, to give you an update on some of the things with

13:49:50 explore Minnesota, what we are planning in the future.

These plans are oftentimes going to

13:50:02 have to pivot and we will do that based on what we think is best for the industry based on the direction we get

13:50:07 from all of you.

So with that, I think that concludes today's webinar.

13:50:13 We appreciate everybody taking the time to be with us and we wish you a great rest of the afternoon and a great ball