



Helpful Docs and Definitions

*Need to contact us? Have a question?
Email: tourism@state.mn.us*

Explore Minnesota (EMT) maintains information on tourism-related businesses to assist travelers with planning their vacations. Free listings are available to all businesses who meet the criteria outlined in Sections B through E. Explore Minnesota reserves the right to edit or refuse any listing that includes offensive language, photos or symbols. These businesses include lodging, attractions, dining and events. Listings, once approved, appear on our website (ExploreMinnesota.com). They are also available to our travel counselors located throughout the state to assist visitors with planning their time in Minnesota.

Contents

New/Existing Listing Guidelines

Section A – page 3

These guidelines assist the business owner, the DMO¹, and Explore Minnesota in determining who can submit and/or maintain a listing on our website and who can have proponency² over an existing listing.

Tourism Information Sources

Section B – page 6

Tourism organizations, associations, and websites dedicated to Minnesota tourism.

Accommodations

Section C – page 7

A place where travelers can sleep and find other services and how lodging types are defined by EMT.

Attractions

Section D – page 9

A thing or place that draws visitors by providing something of interest and how each classification is defined by EMT.

Food & Flavors

Section E – page 14

Full-service restaurants.

Events

Section F – page 16

A planned occasion that provides an experience that a person can either participate in or observe.

¹DMO: Destination Marketing Organization

²Proponency: A term used in EMT's system for giving login and editorial permissions for specific database listings to an individual or organization other than the primary owner or official contact person for that listing. In most cases, one-time written permission from the listing owner is required in order to grant this type of access.

New/existing listings permissions and guidelines

A guide to the major classifications in our database and who can enter/update them on our website.

Accommodations

Business Owner: Go to <https://extranet.exploreminnesota.com> and click on the “Request a new account” link. Once we have reviewed and approved your new user request, we will email you a username and password, or contact you if more information is needed. The listing will not be active on our website until you log in and complete the information.

DMO: Obtain written permission in the form of an email or letter from the business owner or manager in charge. This should be forwarded to EMT authorizing you to make updates to their listing. Once we have received permission we will give you proponentcy* over the existing listing or process a new user request. If the ownership of the business changes, the DMO will need to obtain new permission to update the lodging property.

DMOs are encouraged to contact new lodging businesses in their area to let them know of the free marketing opportunities on [exploreminnesota.com](https://www.exploreminnesota.com) and tell them the process for applying for a listing.

EMT: EMT will process all new user requests received from the business owner or DMO based on the guidelines above.

Attractions

Business Owner: Go to <https://extranet.exploreminnesota.com> and click on the “Request a new account” link. Once we have reviewed and approved your new user request, we will email you a username and password - or contact you if more information is needed. The listing will not be active on our website until you log in and complete the information.

DMO: Obtain written permission in the form of an email or letter from the business owner or manager in charge. This should be forwarded to EMT authorizing you to make updates to their listing. Once we have received permission we will give you proponentcy* over the existing listing or process a new user request. If the ownership of the business changes, the DMO will need to obtain new permission to update the attraction listing.

DMOs are encouraged to contact new attractions in their area to let them know of the free marketing opportunities on [exploreminnesota.com](https://www.exploreminnesota.com) and tell them the process for applying for a listing.

EMT: EMT will process all new user requests received from the business owner or DMO based on the guidelines above.

Events

Event Coordinator: If you do not have a login to the Extranet, go to <https://extranet.exploreminnesota.com> and click on the “Request a new account” link. Once we have processed and approved your new user request, we will email you back a username and password, or contact you if more information is needed. If you have an existing login, please use that. We encourage

event coordinators to update existing annual events rather than entering the information as a new event every year.

DMO: DMOs can add events that take place in the coverage area of their tourism organization. EMT will change the association from the DMO to the venue for all arts listings. If the DMO enters an event that is already current and updated by the official event coordinator, EMT gives preference to the event coordinator and will remove the DMO's duplicate event. DMOs are asked to search the website to prevent duplicate entries of events.

EMT: Due to the high volume of events statewide, EMT is unable to provide the data collection and entry of individual events. We allow DMOs to enter events in their area in those cases where the event coordinators do not do so.

Food & Flavors (Dining)

Business Owner: Go to <https://extranet.exploreminnesota.com> and click on the "Request a new account" link. Once we have reviewed and approved your new user request, we will email you a username and password, or contact you if more information is needed. The listing will not be active on our website until you log in and complete the information.

DMO: DMOs can add and maintain restaurants that are in the area of their tourism organization. If the DMO requests a restaurant that is currently being updated by the actual owners or manager, EMT will defer to the owner/manager. If, after a restaurant is added to the database the actual owner wishes control of the listing EMT will remove the DMO from update abilities and give it to the owners.

DMOs are encouraged to contact new restaurants in their area to let them know of the free marketing opportunities on exploreminnesota.com and tell them the process for applying for a listing.

EMT: EMT will occasionally seek out and add listings for restaurants around the state, in order to expand and enhance this section of our database. We may seek assistance from local DMOs or other sources to review our listings and help us remove outdated ones, and add missing dining establishments that meet our criteria. If no owner can be found on these listings, we will ask the DMO to take over the upkeep of the listing.

Music Clubs

Business Owner: Go to <https://extranet.exploreminnesota.com> and click on the "Request a new account" link. Once we have reviewed and approved your new user request, we will email you a username and password - or contact you if more information is needed. The listing will not be active on our website until you log in and complete the information.

DMO: Obtain written permission in the form of an email or letter from the business owner or manager in charge. This should be forwarded to EMT authorizing you to make updates to their listing. Once we have received permission we will give you proponenty* over the existing listing or process a new user request. If the ownership of the business changes, the DMO will need to obtain new permission to update the attraction listing.

DMOs are encouraged to contact new music clubs in their area to let them know of the free marketing opportunities on exploreminnesota.com and tell them the process for applying for a listing.

EMT: EMT will add in music clubs requested by a DMO but cannot give proponency to the DMO without specific permission. Request a new listing by going to <https://extranet.exploreminnesota.com> and fill out the information. Be sure to put in the comments that you are a DMO requesting a new listing.

Tourism Information Sources (Destination Marketing Organizations)

Chambers/CVBs/Tourism Organizations

Primary local and regional non-profit tourism promotion organizations that can be contacted directly by phone, mail and/or electronically and that provide detailed information about community-wide attractions, activities and lodging in their area. The organization must have an office that is staffed full-time or respond on a daily basis to a recorded phone message system or electronic requests for information. Additionally, the organization must have a printed brochure or response piece to mail out, or a useful consumer website with travel information.

Associations – Statewide, Regional & Local

Statewide, regional or local associations and organizations, which have multiple members, and exist to promote tourism in Minnesota, but which do not meet the criteria for the primary chamber/CVB/non-profit tourism organization category. The primary focus may be activity- or interest-based and/or cover a specific Minnesota region or community. The organization must provide some form of travel information to the public beyond this database listing – for example, a useful consumer website, a printed response piece and/or a public telephone contact number.

Welcome Centers

Official State of Minnesota Welcome Centers, staffed by Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) or in direct partnership agreements with the State. Designated Affiliate Welcome Centers are not listed here, but are included in the Chambers/CVBs/Tourism Organizations category.

Other Informational Websites

Links to web-based community tourism information sites which do not meet the requirements for the organizations or associations shown above. The website must have the primary focus of providing recreational or other tourism-related information on a particular Minnesota community or region, including but not limited to lodging, camping, attractions and events. No public phone number is required, but a contact phone number must be provided to Explore Minnesota Tourism. Explore Minnesota Tourism reserves the right to deny a listing that is not in the best interest of EMT or the state.

Lodging & Camping Database

Explore Minnesota's Lodging & Camping (Accommodations) Database exists to provide information on places for the traveling public to stay overnight when traveling in Minnesota. Basic listings in this statewide database are provided free of charge to lodging & camping establishments that meet the basic criteria listed here.

- For purposes of the database, the lodging or camping establishment must be located in Minnesota; it must be permanent and open on a seasonal or year-round basis, and must fit one of the existing classifications in order to qualify.
- The establishment must be open to the general public. A facility that requires purchase of property or timeshare ownership, and/or that requires membership (even if membership is free) is not eligible.
- To be included in this database, the facility must be in compliance with any required licensing and taxation laws.

The content of all Explore Minnesota lodging & camping listings is limited to information related to the primary purpose of the database, i.e., rentals by the traveling public. The listings cannot be used for real estate sales, timeshare sales, or recruitment of memberships. Explore Minnesota reserves the right to edit these database listings, and to periodically review listings for continued eligibility.

Classifications

Bed-and-Breakfast / Historic Inn

A facility with indoor lodging, which is generally a private home, that offers bedrooms and breakfast for paying guests on a nightly basis, and requires a minimum stay of less than 30 consecutive days. Some are historic homes furnished with antiques, while others are cottages, farmhouses or contemporary family homes. OR A small hotel or lodge in a renovated or carefully preserved building (pre-1930) that offers rooms on a nightly basis; a minimum stay of less than 30 consecutive days is allowed. Rooms are traditionally decorated with antique furnishings or reproductions. Typically, these hotels may offer more privacy than is customary in a B&B home. Breakfast is not included in the price of the room unless stated.

Camping

A facility intended for camping, accessed directly by vehicle or indirectly by trail or watercraft, consisting of designated sites designed to accommodate, generally, a family-size group of people. Picnic ground, swimming beach and water access are frequent minor facilities of a campground. Camping sites must be available for rental. Establishments that require purchase of property or campsites, or membership, are not eligible.

Hotel/Motel

A facility with multiple indoor lodging units, where sleeping accommodations are offered for one night or more to travelers; a minimum stay of less than 30 consecutive days is allowed. Hotels and motels may include minor facilities such as swimming pools, saunas, etc., but, unlike resorts are not specifically designed to support a variety of recreation activities. The hotel/motel facility type is intended primarily as a travel-oriented lodging facility.

Houseboat Rental

A business that rents boats designed to accommodate a group of people over a period of days, with sleeping, kitchen and bathroom facilities. Patrons may rent boats on a daily or weekly basis; a minimum stay of less than 30 consecutive days is allowed.

MONTHLY/SEASONAL RENTAL REQUIRED

A facility with indoor lodging, where sleeping accommodations are offered to travelers with a minimum required stay of at least 30 consecutive days but not more than 120 consecutive days (to allow for a seasonal rental). The facility type must be intended primarily as a travel-oriented lodging facility, and not as the permanent residence of the occupants. Properties listed within this category CANNOT be listed under any other category, because all other categories must allow rentals of less than 30 consecutive days.

Outfitters for Overnight Trips

An outfitting business that rents all of the equipment needed for overnight off-site tent camping trips. This could include canoes, tents and other camping gear, and may include the sale of maps and/or food, and trip-planning services.

Resort

A facility with indoor lodging, specifically designed to support recreation activities, usually in a vacation-related time span; a minimum stay of less than 30 consecutive days is allowed. Resorts generally offer a variety of other facilities, such as rental watercrafts, swimming beaches, water access, and occasionally campgrounds, golf courses, trails, etc. The resort facility type is distinguished from the hotel/motel facility type by both its on-site recreation facilities and natural resources and its intent as primarily a vacation-oriented versus travel-oriented lodging facility. *For a resort to have a separate database listing in the vacation home category, the resort & vacation home must have separate Tax ID numbers.*

Vacation Home Rental (Private)

An individual indoor lodging structure, such as a vacation home, cabin or cottage, which is rented in its entirety for one night or more to travelers; a minimum stay of less than 30 consecutive days is allowed; the lodging unit is NOT part of a resort, hotel, motel or other multi-unit lodging business. To be listed, the home or cabin owner must be in compliance with any required licensing and taxation laws. *Vacation Home property owners that rely on a property management company (defined below) to handle reservations, collect and remit sales tax and other required taxes are not eligible for an additional separate listing from that of the management company.*

Vacation Property Management Companies

Vacation property management companies are companies that rent privately-owned vacation properties (as defined above) on behalf of owners, and which collect and remit sales and other required taxes on these properties. Property management companies that handle two or more units of accommodation are only eligible for a single listing of their property management business – not a listing for each unit - in the Explore Minnesota database. This rule applies whether the units offered by the company are contained in a single building or complex, such as a condominium building or multiple cabins in a traditional Minnesota resort layout, and also if the accommodation is available at several different locations, such as privately-owned cabins or homes in completely separate locations. The vacation properties and the management company must be in compliance with any licensing and taxation laws.

Attractions & Activities Database Criteria

The Explore Minnesota Attractions & Activities Database exists to provide information on places to go and things to do that travelers are interested in and frequently ask about. The database includes information that the traveling public may want or need to know in advance of travel to an area. Listings for some local points of interest such as retail stores, statues, monuments, picnic areas, beaches, restaurants, etc., are not included in this statewide database.

For purposes of the database, an attraction or activity site is defined as a place with a specific, unchanging address/location; the attraction or activity site must be located in Minnesota; it must be permanent and available on a seasonal or year-round basis, and must fit one of the existing categories in order to qualify. A facility that requires membership (even if membership is free) is not eligible.

The attraction or activity must be open or available to the public on a regular schedule; however, EMT reserves the right to consider, on a case-by-case basis, listings of activities for which reservations are required, when deemed appropriate for the specific activity.

(Please note that the word *Attractions* is used to refer to the database to cover a wide variety of classifications.)

Attraction/Activity Site Classifications Definitions

Adventure Trips

An organization that provides scheduled or custom-designed outdoor activity trips led by experienced guides. Trips may include one or more of the following: biking, canoeing, dog sledding, fly-in fishing, hiking, kayaking, rafting, rock climbing and skiing. Food, lodging and gear may be provided.

Amusements

Amusement parks, miniature golf, corn mazes and other attractions that are open regularly on a year-round or seasonal basis.

Antique Shops

A store, shop or mall whose primary business purpose is the sale of antiques to the public. In order to be listed, the business must be open on a regularly scheduled basis and have or be listed in a printed brochure or website that identifies it as an antiques-business and clearly indicates these hours. Stores or malls with multiple dealers are only eligible for one listing.

Art Museums & Galleries

A facility that houses and maintains permanent and/or temporary art exhibits that are open for public viewing. Must have regular hours the museum/gallery is open to the public. Multiple studios sharing a building/gallery space only qualify for a listing covering the whole building or gallery.

Bike Rental

A business that rents multiple bikes to the public on an hourly or daily basis. Rental sites are located near trails or areas commonly used by cyclists.

Biking Trails

Trails can be either paved or unpaved. Paved trails include asphalt, crushed limestone and similarly surfaced trails, and should be at least 10 miles long and suitable for biking. Natural surface trails (singletrack) typically incorporate obstacles like logs and rocks and are suitable for mountain biking in single file. These trails should be a minimum of 1 mile in length and groomed.

Birding & Wildlife Viewing

Public lands, reserves, clubs, guides or field trip organizers with an established focus on birding or other wildlife viewing. To be listed, the area or activity must be available to the public and must either have relevant signage, educational displays or information, or a designated contact person or organization. It can also be included if it's designated as "an Audubon Important Birding Area". Properties that require an overnight stay to use the viewing areas or participate in the field trips are not included in this category.

Boat, Train & Trolley Tours

An organized tour or excursion that uses a common conveyance for a group. The travel method may be of interest itself, such as riverboats, paddlewheel boats, passenger trains, trolley cars, carriages; or the tour will focus on an area of interest (a specific lake, river, historical area, etc.). Tours must be available to the public.

Boats and Motorized Watercraft Rental

Businesses that rent motorized boats and/or other licensed motorized watercraft and equipment to the public.

Canoe & Wilderness Outfitters

A business that rents all of the equipment needed for day trips. This includes canoes, the sale of maps and/or food and trip-planning services.

Canoe, Kayak and Rowboat Rental

Businesses that rent non-motorized licensed watercraft and equipment to the public.

Casinos/Gaming

Casinos and horse racing facilities that are open to the public.

Children's Museums

A museum whose primary audience is children and that provides exhibits or hands-on interactions.

City & Area Guided Tours

Organized tours with a primary focus on multiple points of interest in a specific city, town or destination area.

Cross-Country Ski Trails

Ski trails that are at least 10k and are regularly maintained/groomed.

Dance

A venue that presents a regular season of dance performances by traveling troupes OR a Minnesota-based professional dance group that performs regularly in the state. Attractions database contains contact information only, not performance schedules.

Dogsledding Excursions

Businesses that provide dogsledding excursions.

Downhill Skiing and Snowboarding

A facility with multiple runs of varying difficulty levels, ski lifts of various types, and regular maintenance throughout the season.

Ethnic Heritage Attractions

An attraction (museum, site, tour, etc.) that is open to the public and for which the primary focus is the people, traditions, history and/or culture of a specific race or nationality.

Fishing Guides and Charters

Guided fishing excursions, with equipment and bait available. Watercraft and guide may be hired for a private fishing excursion or available to the public at scheduled times. Rates are per trip on a half- or full-day basis. Fishing guides must have a printed brochure, business card or website available.

Gardens, Orchards & Farms

A subset of the Family Fun category, these listings include public gardens with set hours for visiting. The gardens must be a primary focus of the site. Orchards and farms must have specified hours that they are open to the public and offer tours, interactive opportunities (such as pick-your-own-produce, petting zoo, hayrides, etc.) or other family-appropriate activities.

Golf Courses

Public or semi-private regulation golf course (open to the public) with nine or more holes.

Hiking

State trails or trails within state parks, available for use by walkers or hikers. Some trails may also be used for biking, in-line skating, cross-country skiing or snowmobiling. Trails maintained at other public facilities may also be listed if they are at least 5 miles in length.

Historic Museums, Sites & Tours

A building or geographical site that holds direct relevance to history of the local area, state or country because of the site's location, contents, architecture, or the people or cultures associated with it. The site must be open to the public on a regularly scheduled basis. Includes county historical museums, state historic sites, historic homes with period furnishings, etc. Does not include historic markers at waysides or buildings simply listed on the National Historic Register. The site's primary draw must be its historic value, rather than a related commercial enterprise.

Horse Rental/Trail Rides

Stables that provide horses and necessary equipment for use by novice riders. Rates are per hour or trip. Experienced wranglers on-hand. Stables are located near trails that can be used for guided or unguided rides.

Hunting Guides

An individual or company who provides hunting excursions to the general public. Equipment and/or dog rental may be available. Guides may be hired for a private hunting excursion or available to the public at scheduled times. Rates are per trip (half or full day), or per game animal. Hunting guides must have a printed brochure, business card or website available.

Hunting Preserves

A business licensed by the Department of Natural Resources to operate a hunting and shooting area. The business must be open to the public, not only to members of a specific hunting club. Hunting opportunities may include upland birds, waterfowl and/or large game; sporting clays and target shooting may also be offered.

Ice Fishing House Rental

A business that rents ice fishing shelters to the public.

Industrial & Factory Tours

A guided or self-guided, in-depth public tour of a factory or other operating business. The primary purpose of these tours is to demonstrate how a product is made or how an industry operates.

Mines & Cave Tours

Organized guided or self-guided public tours of a working or historical mine or mining site, or of a cave.

Music Clubs

Establishments whose **primary purpose** is to present live music to the public, from small intimate café and coffee shop settings to larger, well-established clubs and halls. The music offered may include jazz and blues to country, indie rock, hard rock and hip hop, or other genres. May offer scheduled shows on weekends or have music seven nights a week.

Musical Performing Groups

Professional music groups, such as symphony orchestras, that perform regularly for the public OR groups that organize musical performances of a particular type or genre for the public. Attractions database contains contact information only, not performance schedules.

National Parks & Forests

Nationally operated parks, forests, monuments, wildlife refuges and recreation areas.

Nature Centers

Any city, county, regional, state or federally designated area containing a visitor center and created for the purpose of educating people about nature and the environment.

Performing Arts Centers

Any space whose primary purpose is to provide a venue for the performing arts (theater, dance, music). Attractions database contains contact information only, not performance schedules.

Professional Sports Teams

Professional clubs with regularly scheduled games. Attractions database contains contact information only, not schedules.

Rafting/River Tubing

A business located on or near a river with inner tubes or rafts for rent and shuttle service from a trip destination or to a departure point.

Scenic Byways

Any officially designated national or state scenic byway.

Science and Nature Museum

An indoor and/or outdoor facility that provides examples of, observation of, and/or interpretation of environmental or other scientific concepts. Includes zoos, public gardens, horticultural sites and science-related museums. Listings in this category do NOT include trails, unless interpretive displays or other educational information is available.

Shopping

Shopping Center/Area

Regional malls or community shopping centers that meet retail industry definitions based on size (>150,000 sq. ft. gross leasable area.) To qualify for listing, the centers must have a central phone number on-site for information about the shopping center or mall and a printed directory or brochure available to be mailed, or a public website that lists the shops in the center or mall. May also include physical buildings that are owned by a single company, corporation, or investment group then leased back to the shops.

Shopping district/Main Street

A grouping of 10 or more unique and independently owned stores located on a single street. The district or main street should be in a walkable area and managed by an official association/organization with a central phone number/website that promotes the shopping district.

Snowmobile Rental

A business that rents snowmobiles to the public. Other related equipment may also be available.

State Parks

Any designated state park or state forest.

Summer League Baseball

Summer league clubs with regularly scheduled games. Attractions database contains contact information only, not schedules.

Theater

Professional theater company that provides regular performances of plays or musicals for the general public. Attractions database contains contact information only, not schedules.

Waterfalls

A natural waterfall open to the public for viewing.

Waterparks – Indoor

An amusement recreation facility, open to the public, which features swimming pool(s) **and** some other water-related activities, such as water slides, water games, water tubing, zero-depth play areas, etc. In order to be listed, the waterpark must be available to the public for day-use, not only to overnight guests at a lodging facility. Public swimming pools that offer lap or open swimming only are not eligible.

Waterparks – Outdoor

An amusement recreation facility, open to the public, which features swimming pool(s) **and** some other water-related activities, such as water slides, water games, water tubing, zero-depth play areas, etc. In order to be listed, the waterpark must be available to the public for day-use, not only to overnight guests at a lodging facility. Public swimming pools that offer lap or open swimming only are not eligible.

Wine, Beer & Spirits Tours

A vineyard, winery, distillery or brewery open to the public for tours, demonstrations, informational visits or other activities. Sites that are strictly for the retail sale of wine, beer or spirits are not eligible.

Workshops/ Retreats

An organization that offers workshops or supervised/guided retreats in areas such as nature study, visual or literary arts, spirituality, etc. These organizations may offer scheduled workshops with overnight accommodations included, or may be day workshops only. The individual scheduled workshops are not eligible for listings in the calendar of events, but the business/organization will be listed in the Attractions (Things to Do) database, so that individuals can contact them directly.

Zoos

Zoos, petting zoos, aquariums open regularly on a year-round or seasonal basis.

Food & Flavors

The Explore Minnesota Dining Database exists to provide a representation of a range of Minnesota flavors and experiences of places to dine that enhance the Minnesota travel experience. The database contains information that the traveling public may need to know in advance of travel to an area, or while in an area. Listings contain dining venues from Minnesota classics to brewpubs.

For purposes of the database, a dining establishment must be open or available to the public; have a specific, unchanging address/location; be located in Minnesota; be permanent and available on a seasonal or year-round basis; and fit one of the existing classifications in order to qualify.

Establishments that are NOT eligible for the database include: fast-food chain restaurants, food trucks, food courts, and individual vendors at a festival or permanent location.

Food & Flavors Classification Definitions

American Fare

A restaurant that specializes in iconic American foods. Examples might include hamburgers and cheeseburgers, fried chicken, barbecue, and apple pie. These foods are uniquely American in both their style and preparation. Restaurant may serve only breakfast and/or lunch.

Craft Beer & Spirits

A restaurant that also serves beer¹ or spirits crafted at an on-site brewery or distillery. Or an establishment, open to the public, that serves cocktails or beer manufactured on-site.

Fine Dining

Restaurants that specialize in elaborately or skillfully prepared food in the style of haute or grand cuisine.

International

A restaurant that specializes in food originating from a specific heritage and culture.

Locally Grown or Farm to Table

Restaurants with a significant number of menu items featuring locally sourced and/or organic foods.

Only in MN

Restaurants that are unique to Minnesota in their menus, style and preparation of fare such as walleye, wild rice, lutefisk or hot dish -or- are acknowledged as iconic Minnesota destination dining establishments (food halls, drive-ins, etc.).

Sweets & Treats

Non-chain ice cream shops, bakeries, doughnut shops, pie shops, candy shops, and other establishments specializing in dessert items.

Wineries and Winery Dining

An establishment that sells wine produced on-site for on-site consumption - may offer wine tastings, wine by the glass or bottle and/or food.

¹A restaurant-brewery that sells 25% or more of its beer on-site. The beer is brewed primarily for sale in the restaurant and bar. The beer is often dispensed directly from the brewery's storage tanks. (www.brewersassociation.org/pages/business-tools/craft-brewing-statistics/market-segments/)

Events

To promote Minnesota festivals and events that have potential for generating overnight travel in Minnesota. The following criteria are current guidelines for inclusion in the EMT calendar.

Arts & Culture Events

- Art Exhibits – an art exhibition or show that takes place at an art museum, gallery, or exhibit hall dedicated to the arts.
- Art Fairs – a gathering of artists in a specific geographic location such as a park whose purpose is to exhibit and/or sell their wares.
- Comedy Shows
- Community Festivals – festivals or events that are annually reoccurring and local in nature.
- Culinary Events – an event where food is the primary focus of the event. RibFest, Taste of, etc. Not food vendors at a larger event such as a carnival.
- Dance Performances – a performance by a professional or semi-professional dance troupe. Not a street dance at a festival.
- Film & Film Festivals – a film shown at an Omnimax theater or a film festival. Can also be a special one-time showing in a park.
- Historic Exhibits
- History & Heritage Events – events that take place at historic sites or are historic in nature such as re-enactment groups or period acting at historic sites/tours.
- Literary Events – author readings, book fairs, library events and tours with a literary theme
- Live Theater – a play performed by a professional or semi-professional theater group. Not opera. To be listed there must be the name of a specific play rather than a generic “spring play.”
- Music Festivals – a festival where music is the primary focus. The festival usually has multiple performing groups providing entertainment and may or may not include an overnight stay such as camping.
- Musical Performances – A musical performance performed by a professional or semi-professional musical group. Does not include musical theater (Sound of Music, Hair). Music performances must list the specific venue the performance is taking place.
- Special Exhibits – exhibits found at historic sites or historic museums. Not art-related.
- State & County Fairs
- Storytelling Events
- Studio Tours – art crawls or studio tours that can cover a geographic area or a neighborhood.

Other Events

Events that are primarily entertaining or recreational in nature, that are likely to be of interest to a broad number of travelers.

- Auto, Boat, Air & Machine Shows
- Birding and Wildlife Events – an event whose main focus is learning about or experiencing nature firsthand.
- Children’s Events – events geared specifically toward youth

- Holiday Events – holiday light displays, Easter egg hunts, Halloween celebrations, New Year’s events and other holiday-related festivities
- Lectures & Workshops
- Science & Nature Exhibits & Events
- Shopping Events – Sidewalk sales, “crazy days” and other events where shopping is the primary draw
- Themed Getaways - A participatory event that may or may not include lodging. Usually a day or multiple-day event.
- Volunteer Events
- Other Events – items that don’t necessarily belong in any other group, but are entertaining or recreational in nature. Unique classes or workshops that do not require membership or recurring attendance, for example, a yoga class or photography workshop at a public park.

Sports

Sports events designed to draw out-of-town participants, such as: major bike rides and events, major fishing tournaments, golf tournaments, major motor races, marathons, major running and walking events, professional team sports, and collegiate sports. Sports events that are part of community festivals will not be listed separately under sports.

- Bike Rides or Races
- Canoe, Sailing, Boating Events & Races
- Duathlons and Triathlons
- Fishing Events
- Golf Tournaments
- Hunting Events
- Motor Rides and/or Races
- Running and/or Walking Events
- Skiing Events/Races
- Sled Dog Events/Races
- Spectator Sports
- Snowmobile Rides/Races
- Water Sports

Events NOT Included

- Events longer than 3 weeks (Exceptions: events like the Renaissance Festival)
- Style shows
- Private home tours (Exceptions: Home tours for the holidays, garden tours of historic homes)
- Club events where the event is NOT open to the general public
- Retreats requiring at stay at a lodging facility, or requiring reservations (Exceptions: themed events)
- Ongoing activities with no specific dates
- Church fairs or bazaars
- Religious services
- Season opening dates of attractions
- Civic events

- Events directed toward very specific audience (example: trail rides, for those who own their own horses; town reunions)
- Conferences, symposiums, or seminars
- In general, events with limited appeal

Benefits to updating an existing event rather than entering it new

Did you know that once your event is on exploreminnesota.com, it will appear on Google and other search engines? Once it's on Google, a consumer can find your event on our website by doing a Google search. But how can you help your listing rise to the top of the list?

Each time a traveler clicks on your event listing in a Google search, they are essentially "casting a vote" that raises its ranking on Google. The higher the rank, the higher up in the search results your event will be. This is very important to remember in the marketing of your event, especially for an event that does not have its own website.

Let's say your event is Bayfront Blues Festival. Bayfront Blues has been in the Explore Minnesota database for several years, and has been updated regularly so travelers trust that this link contains good, valid information. Because the listing is *updated* and not created new each year, its ranking on Google improves. Using the search term "Bayfront Blues," the event listing ranks third in a Google search. If the listing was created new each year, it would be buried at the bottom of the Google search results.

In summary, the key to acquiring a high Google ranking is to remember to *update* your existing listing and keep your information accurate and timely.

Do you have questions regarding Google ranking? Email us at tourism@state.mn.us.