

Star of the North

Talking Points

As cultural tourism continues to trend, more and more people seek to understand the authentic culture and lifestyle of the people who live in the destinations they visit or are considering a move to.

Star of the North answers a new question: "What can I be a part of in Minnesota?"

It showcases unscripted, documentary-style advertisements, including a video series where both travelers and new residents engage with the places and people that make Minnesota rich with character and optimism. With elements of surprise, discovery, adventure and joy, this campaign provides a look at what sets Minnesota apart, with a proud (but never boastful) authenticity.

How we Landed on Star of the North

- Our 2022-2024 Dream State campaign painted an enchanting picture of traveling to Minnesota, especially during a time where travelers were dreaming about getting out of their own backyard. It performed very well, as evidenced by our impressive tax ROI of \$25 - a nearly 80% increase YOY.
- As Explore Minnesota expanded to include livability marketing, our strategy was to develop a campaign that encompassed both travel to and life in Minnesota to create clarity and consistency of what the state has to offer.
 - We conducted a robust segmentation study and identified two new, more diverse target audiences for tourism. We discovered that these audiences are no longer content with just being visitors; they want to immerse themselves in local ways of life. They also wanted an active vacation, to explore beyond the obvious attractions and seeking new experiences.
 - For the livability campaign, we conducted robust research and interviews with key state stakeholders, diverse community leaders, current residents and out-of-staters open to moving, to better inform our state brand positioning.
- While Star of the North is the English translation of the Minnesota state motto "L'étoile du nord," in this context it's also an invitation to showcase endless examples of what makes Minnesota the true star of the region.

Star of the North Campaign Overview

- More than an advertising campaign, Star of the North is an immersive content strategy that uses real, first-person accounts to share the Minnesota story.
- By highlighting local places, traditions, people and ways of life, we're not just showing what Minnesota has to offer; we're inviting people to be a part of it. We 'flip the lens,' shifting our focus from a marketer's voice to the voice of the Minnesota traveler or new resident, allowing them to speak on behalf of the state and what it has to offer. What results is an invitation not just to visit or move, but to connect, learn and belong.