



2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT

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ATIA MISSION & VISION

MISSION

The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) will be the leading industry organization promoting Alaska as a top visitor destination, communicating and promoting the Alaskan tourism industry as one of the state’s major economic forces, and will be the respected voice of the industry for the growth of the industry, while remaining stewards of the state’s natural resources, cultures, and Alaska’s unique quality of life.

VISION

- Alaska is recognized as a world-class visitor destination where year-round tourism is treated as an important, sustainable opportunity for economic and resource development.
- Alaska is recognized as one of the top 10 world destinations.
- As a recognized and leading industry for Alaska, tourism is a year-round experience with opportunities to engage in natural and cultural connections in urban and rural Alaska and in large and small-scale options.
- ATIA is a recognizable and respected steward of the state’s tourism marketing investment and highlights our positive role as an economic driver in Alaska for Alaskans.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ATIA will:

- Promote and facilitate travel to and throughout the State of Alaska.
- Provide a broad-based association of individuals and companies with an interest in the visitor industry in Alaska.
- Encourage the increase and improvement of quality visitor facilities, services, and attractions throughout Alaska.
- Lead private sector efforts to assure a robust and broad-based statewide tourism marketing plan.
- Increase awareness of the economic importance of the visitor industry.
- Develop and implement programs beneficial to travel suppliers and supporting industries.
- Initiate and cooperate with local, state, and federal entities in developing and implementing programs, policies, and legislation that are responsive to the needs of the industry and to intervene in those issues and initiatives that would directly affect the facilitation and promotion of travel to and within Alaska.
- Work cooperatively with the public sector on tourism development and long-range planning.

TRAVEL ALASKA: WÁATS’ASDIYEL JOE YATES



LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR & PRESIDENT

In FY23, the Alaska Travel Industry Association and the travel industry embraced signs of normalcy as the effects of the pandemic waned and focused efforts returned to welcoming visitors. While summer 2022 did not see international and cruise passenger visitation quite back to pre-pandemic levels, there was a significant rebound driven by independent travelers. Workforce and housing resources remained tight, providing challenges for businesses still recovering from the financial and staffing impacts from the pandemic. Yet throughout FY23, Alaska’s travel industry remained steadfast and resilient, and the continued return of both cruise and independent travelers has supported its recovery and strength.

The importance of tourism for our communities and the state’s economy is reflected in newly released research ATIA conducted in 2022 showing that 2.7 million visitors traveled to Alaska and spent \$3.9 billion during the summer and winter. Given that 2022 was still a transitional year for tourism and 2023 had a record number of cruise passengers, we know the economic impact of tourism and its importance to Alaska’s workforce and overall economy will continue to grow. Further, ATIA supports working within our communities to manage the potential impacts of our visitors.

This momentum will only continue if there are sustained, healthy reinvestments of tourism dollars to support destination marketing. The tourism marketing campaign that ran during FY23 will drive visitation in 2024 and will keep Alaska competitive with other long-haul destinations in the coming year. However, to remain competitive and generative, we must be consistent each year with our welcoming message so as not to lose future market share to other destinations with larger marketing budgets.

ATIA and its board of directors focused on supporting policies and marketing endeavors that ensure tourism companies from all regions and sizes can not only survive, but also thrive. Through the board’s leadership, and the commitment of the ATIA staff, initiatives moved forward seamlessly as the organization searched for, and successfully found, a new president and CEO.

There is still much work ahead, but the strength of our industry continues to be the way we work together to provide incredible experiences for visitors and supporting livelihoods for so many Alaskans across the state.

Sincerely,

Craig Jennison
ATIA 2022-2023 Board Chair

Jillian Simpson
ATIA President & CEO



ATIA 2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Board Chair
Craig Jennison
TEMSCO Helicopters

Vice Chair
Josh Howes
Premier Alaska Tours

Immediate Past Chair
Scott Habberstad
Alaska Airlines

Secretary/Membership Chair
Emily Edenshaw
Alaska Native Heritage Center

Treasurer/Finance Chair
Dave McGlothlin
Holland America - Princess

Tourism Policy & Planning Chair
Colleen Stephens
Stan Stephens Glacier & Wildlife Cruises

Government Relations Co-Chair
Dennis McDonnell
Alaska Coach Tours

Government Relations Co-Chair
Elizabeth Hall
John Hall’s Alaska

Marketing Co-Chair
Dan Rough
Holland America Line

Marketing Co-Chair
Jacqui Taylor-Rose
White Pass & Yukon Route

ATIA President & CEO
Jillian Simpson
beginning May 2023

Sarah Leonard
until February 2023

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matt Atkinson
Northern Alaska Tour Company

Adriel Butler
Borealis Basecamp

Lalanya Downs
CLIA Alaska

Heather Dudick
Alaska Railroad

Camille Ferguson
Sitka Tribe of Alaska

Mandy Garcia
Salmon Berry Tours

Dave Karp
Nome Discovery Tours

Juno Kim
Ovibos Consulting

Scott McCrea
Explore Fairbanks

Bill Pedlar
Knightly Tours

Liz Perry
Travel Juneau

Blake Rogers
TIA-Yukon

Stacey Simmons
Kodiak Brown Bear Center

Linda Springmann
Port of Seattle

Anthony Giliam
Premeir Alaska Tours
ex-officio

Holly Johnson
Wings Airways & The Taku Glacier Lodge
ex-officio

TRAVEL ALASKA DESTINATION MARKETING PROGRAM

ATIA manages the State of Alaska’s destination marketing campaign, Travel Alaska. The program is informed by industry experts through a 23-member marketing committee and ATIA’s board of directors to promote the state as a premier, year-round travel destination.

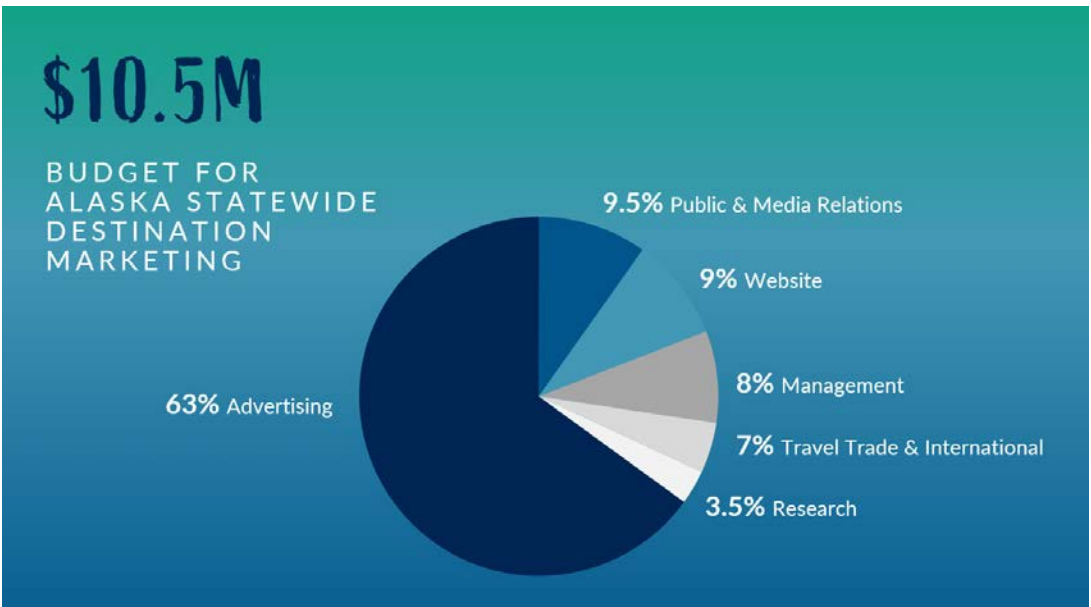
The Travel Alaska marketing program is an integrated, always-on, multi-faceted plan that grows the Alaska economy by increasing visitor travel and spending.

Our objectives include:

- Increasing brand awareness.
- Engaging with our audience through content on TravelAlaska.com and social media channels.
- Providing co-op programs for our industry partners.

These objectives help us meet our strategic goals below:

- Grow Alaska’s position as a top international, year-round vacation destination.
- Enhance and strengthen the destination brand domestically and globally.
- Continue to focus on cultural and sustainable integration in all brand efforts.
- Establish measurement framework baseline metrics for future success.



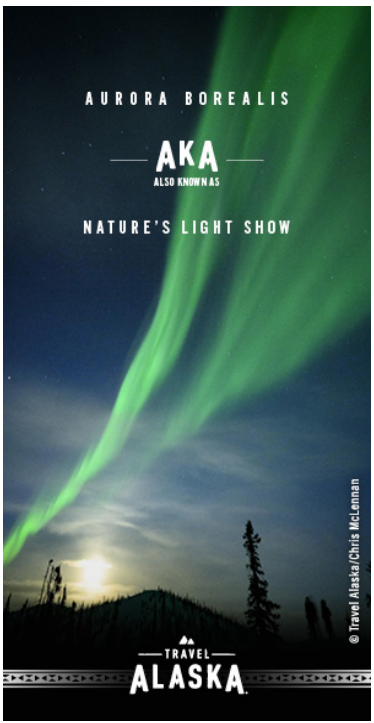
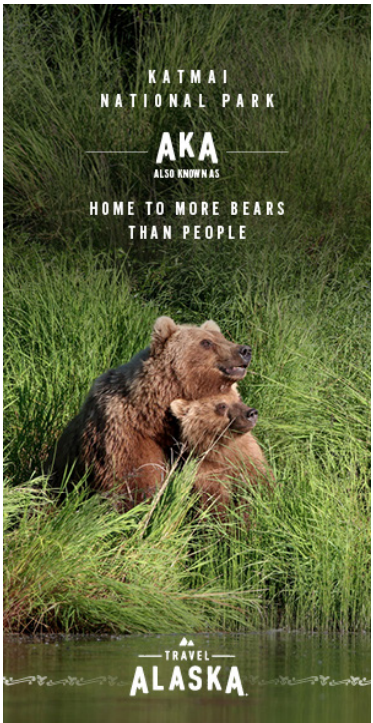
TACTICS

ADVERTISING

ATIA utilizes paid media to generate brand awareness through high-reach tactics that inspire travel to Alaska. Advertising includes a mix of media such as linear, connected and streaming tv; digital display; search engine marketing, retargeting, paid social, and print placements; email; content partnerships; asset collection; and the Official State Vacation Planner.

ATIA launched a creative campaign in 2022 called “AKA Also Known As” which has been recognized nationally for the following awards:

- US Travel ESTO Mercury Awards Finalist 2022, State Destination Website
- Best Travel Integrated Ad Campaign, The Web Marketing Association/Internet Advertising Competition
- Silver Telly Award, Regional TV in the Travel & Tourism Category
- US Travel ESTO Mercury Awards Finalist 2023, Integrated Marketing & Messaging Campaign



RESULTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Over **54,000 Vacation Planner Travel Guides** were requested and delivered

68,000 new consumer leads

2.7 million website sessions (almost 3x above goal)

Paid Media:

- 439,000,000 impressions
- 960,300 clicks = 10.24% Click Thru Rate
- 87% Video Completion Rate

E-newsletter:

- Over 550,000 opt-in subscribers
- Open rate: 40%

DEMOGRAPHICS

PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS: California, Texas, Florida, Washington, and New York.

PRIMARY TARGET AUDIENCES: Boomer/ Retiree, Independent, and Family Travelers.

BEHAVIORAL DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Audiences consuming travel content focused on Alaska.
- Audiences consuming content focused on activities found in Alaska—e.g., fishing, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, dog sledding, skiing, snowboarding, Alaska Native culture, northern lights, cruising.

WEBSITE

TravelAlaska.com is Alaska’s official travel planning website, reaching millions of potential Alaska visitors every year. This highly engaging, visually appealing, and interactive website features trip planning tips, itineraries, and articles, along with community, public lands, and activity pages. The website is continually being refreshed with new, inspirational written content and images, keeping Alaska top-of-mind for visitors, reflecting seasonality and travel trends, and improving SEO so Alaska remains competitive with other domestic and international destinations in organic search.

TravelAlaska.com also provides partner advertising opportunities including profile ads, banner ads, travel specials, integrated ads, and sponsored content. As ATIA’s core marketing tool, all advertising campaigns drive to pages on the website. Leads are generated from travel planner requests and newsletter subscriptions. The goal for FY23 was to generate 1 million new sessions, which was exceeded by nearly 180%.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Organic social media channels include Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube. The content on these pages is aimed at increasing awareness and engagement about travel to Alaska.

Combined, the channels have more than 745,000 followers and an average engagement rate of 6%, three times the industry average.



RESULTS & HIGHLIGHTS

- 2,796,725 sessions
- 4,837,080 pageviews
- 382,460 partner referrals (120% increase over previous year)
- Organic traffic rose 40% year-over-year
- Over 50 new landing pages, including travel articles, activity pages, and community pages, with 10 Alaska Native culture content pages

PUBLIC & MEDIA RELATIONS

ATIA utilizes public relations to place positive, travel-related news about Alaska into the editorial channels of national media. Earned media allows Travel Alaska to cost-effectively reach high-circulation audiences with stories about Alaska’s unique travel experiences.

ATIA provides media assistance to domestic and international media in the form of fact-checking, answering questions, and photo assistance. A big highlight this year secured by ATIA was bringing the NBC Today Show to broadcast live from Fairbanks and North Pole for the Winter Solstice on Dec. 20, 2022, with additional taped sessions and social media posts. Content featured industry partners and locations and attractions of the area.



ATIA hosted two media events in FY23. The Alaska Media Road Show took place for the 19th year, bringing 27 ATIA partners together with 25 media representatives from outlets such as AFAR, Matador Network, LA Times, AARP, and more. The three-day event generated 47 media clips, resulting in over 712 million impressions and more than \$6.6 million in advertising equivalency value from Oct. 2022 – June 2023.

The Experience Alaska media event in April brought 12 ATIA partners and 14 media representatives together for one-on-one appointments. An additional evening event included 20 media representatives.

ATIA partnered with the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) to promote a social media giveaway promoting Alaska seafood and travel, resulting in a trip for two to the Homer area.

ATIA won the following Public Relations Society of America Alaska Chapter Aurora Awards in 2023:

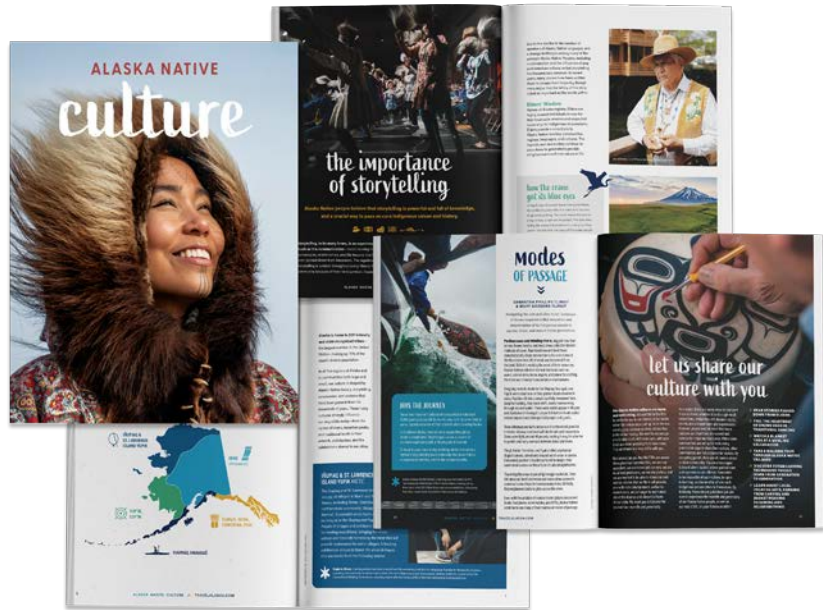
- Media Relations | 1st Place, Showcasing Alaska’s winter solstice live on NBC’s “TODAY”
- Multicultural Public Relations | 1st Place, Sharing the story of Alaska’s BIPOC communities through Travel Alaska’s partnership with NOMADness Travel Tribe’s Evita Robinson
- Influencer Marketing | 2nd Place, Travel Alaska and GoPro’s influencer press trip partnership highlighting winter tourism

RESULTS & HIGHLIGHTS

- 472 journalists assisted
- 463 articles published
- \$63,000,000 ad equivalency value
- 9,816,113,628 impressions
- 76 average Barcelona Principles score
- Quarterly newsletter sent to over 650 media resulted in a 41% average open rate (10% increase over FY22).

CULTURAL TOURISM

Alaska Native culture has been expanded throughout the entire Travel Alaska program in recent years. ATIA has worked closely with Alaska Native leaders and content creators to authentically share the living cultures of Alaska. The centerpiece of the effort is a new Alaska Native Culture Guide that was produced, printed, and inserted into all Travel Planners, and made available digitally through TravelAlaska.com. Website and social media content was greatly expanded and a paid media campaign supported the effort.



RESEARCH & DATA

ATIA retained Future Partners (formerly Destination Analysts) to conduct a Visitor Profile study for summer of 2022 and winter of 2023, as well as an economic impact report. Knowing that 2022 was not a typical travel year, this research will allow ATIA to build on this foundational knowledge coming out of the pandemic.

Key stats: Alaska’s tourism industry contributes \$5.6 billion in total economic impact to the state, including \$3.9 billion in direct consumer spending.

Further, ATIA tracks media efficiency and travel trends through the Zartico operating system dashboard, as well as Adara Consortium and US Travel reports. All these components contribute to ATIA’s data matrix to measure advertising successes and opportunities.



TRAVEL TRADE & INTERNATIONAL

TRAVEL TRADE:

Travel trade including tour operators, travel agents, and cruise advisors are an important distribution channel for visitors to Alaska. ATIA supports the travel trade by helping them develop and expand trip packages to Alaska. This is accomplished through destination education and outreach through trade show attendance, travel agent consortium partnerships, training webinars, familiarization tours (FAMs), and through the Alaska Certified Expert (ACE) Program.

INTERNATIONAL:

Prior to the pandemic, ten percent of Alaska’s visitors came from overseas markets. FY23 saw a softening of international travel restrictions and ATIA returned to actively outreaching to top markets. ATIA contracts with one overseas office to represent Alaska in German Speaking Europe – Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Marketing is conducted through travel trade and media outreach. The ACE program was translated into German and launched in 2022. ATIA hosted an international sales mission to Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands to promote Alaska travel in these key European markets.

Alaska’s top long-haul markets include: (Tourism Economics)

1. U.K.
2. German Speaking Europe
3. Australia / New Zealand
4. India
5. Benelux Region (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg)
6. Italy
7. France
8. South Korea
9. Spain
10. Singapore

RESULTS & HIGHLIGHTS

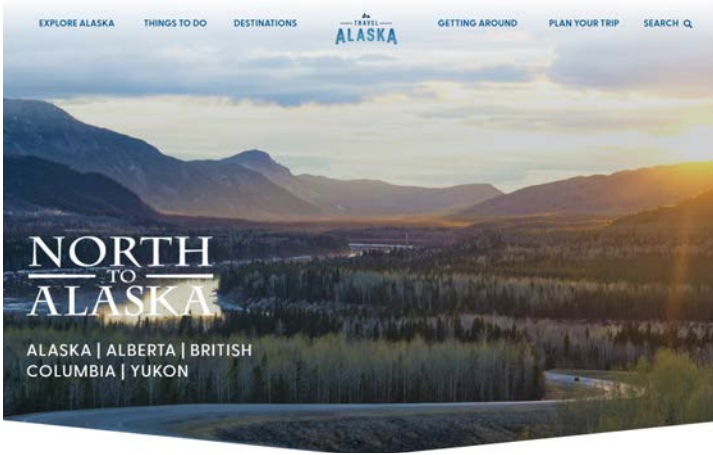
- One-on-one Meetings: 331
- FAM Participants: 50
- Travel Agent / Tour Operator Trainings: 40 trainings, over 1,970 participants
- Travel Agent Mailing: sent to 3,500 Travel Agents
- Meet Alaska Directory: over 600 distributed
- ACE Trainings: 1,904 new registrations, 745 completed

TRADE SHOWS & EVENTS:

- AAA Threads
- American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace
- American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA) Global Convention
- Cruise 360
- Go West Summit
- Icelandair Mid-Atlantic – Reykjavik, Iceland
- IPW (U.S. Travel Association)
- National Tour Association (NTA) Travel Exchange
- Professional Travel Agents of North America (PTANA), New England Chapter
- Seatrade
- Travel Agent Forum
- Travel Leader’s Network – EDGE
- United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA)
- Western European Sales Mission – Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, and The Netherlands

NORTH TO ALASKA

North to Alaska is a partnership between Travel Alaska, Travel Alberta, Destination British Columbia, and Yukon Tourism to promote highway travel from the lower-48 through Canada to Alaska. The North to Alaska website was integrated into TravelAlaska.com in its own section and is now ranked as one of the top ten pages on the website for sessions. The partnership has been ongoing since 1988.



COOPERATIVE MARKETING PROGRAM

ATIA is able to offer marketing opportunities to our industry partners including local Destination Marketing Organizations and private businesses of all sizes to leverage our existing campaign dollars with their own. Over 300 partners took advantage of digital and print placements, media events, travel trade shows, and website programs to keep their Alaska businesses top of mind for consumers and travel agents and operators. Partner investment resulted in over \$1.2 million for FY23, which was reinvested into the marketing program.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Over the past three years, Alaska’s tourism industry has suffered the same workforce shortage challenges as other parts of the country, and ATIA’s member businesses were vocal in their frustrations at finding and retaining good staff. Two years ago, ATIA refreshed our in-house job board and launched a paid campaign to promote the job board on social media and encourage partners to post their jobs. ATIA’s workforce efforts continued in FY23, after expanding in FY22, with a social media campaign attracting job seekers to the Alaskatvia.org job board. During peak recruitment, the job board had 120 listings.

In addition to the job board, ATIA supported the ATIA Anchorage Chapter with a workforce panel at Anchorage’s King Tech featuring representatives from local tourism businesses. In January, ATIA traveled to Nome to participate in a workforce summit hosted by the Denali Commission as community representatives discussed housing, workforce, and childcare needs associated with the Port of Nome expansion project.



ADVENTURE GREEN ALASKA

Adventure Green Alaska (AGA) is ATIA’s voluntary certification program for sustainable tourism businesses operating in Alaska. Since 2009, AGA has recognized and promoted Alaska tourism businesses who practice economic, environmental, social, and cultural sustainability. Applications for certification or re-certification are reviewed bi-annually. There were 102 certified members at the end of FY23.

ATIA updated the AGA certification application and program materials to reinforce safety protocols and best practices as standard sustainable operations practices, and the AGA website and brand were refreshed.

Thank you to lead sponsor, **Alaska Airlines**, and the supporting sponsors of Adventure Green Alaska: Alaska Railroad Corporation, Explore Fairbanks, Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau, Seward Chamber, Major Marine Tours, Allen Marine Tours, Alaska Alpine Adventures, Premier Alaska Tours, and Visit Anchorage.



ATIA FOUNDATION

ATIA supports the growth and education of Alaska’s travel industry through the ATIA Foundation, a separate 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The ATIA Foundation’s mission is to assist Alaskans desiring to further their education in the travel industry. The Foundation supports two scholarship programs: the Student Scholarship Program, for Alaska residents enrolled or intending to enroll in a program of study in preparation for a career in tourism; and the Professional Development Scholarship Program, for individuals seeking to advance or build upon their expertise in a visitor industry-related position. Funds are raised through annual events and donations from supporting individuals.

In FY23, individuals and businesses in Alaska tourism donated over \$66,000 for Student and Professional Development Scholarship Programs. \$61,170 in scholarship funding was awarded, including \$53,500 to 16 college students pursuing careers in the tourism industry. Students represented 10 communities across Alaska, from Ketchikan to Nome.



MEMBERSHIP

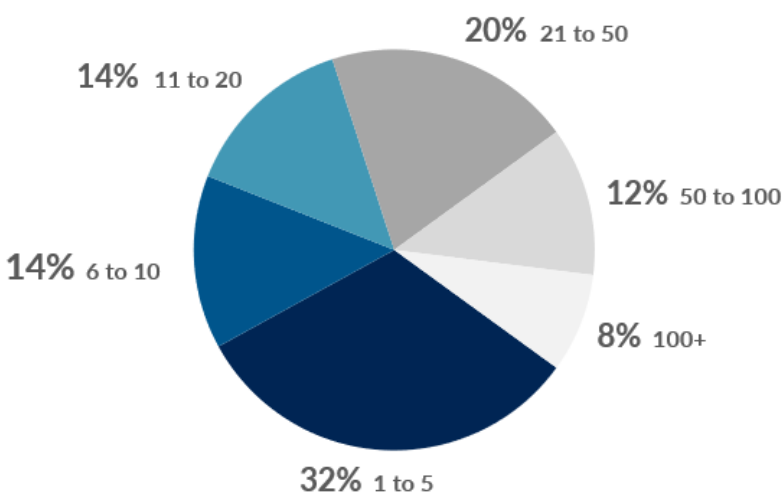
583 ATIA Members on June 30, 2023

ATIA member businesses represent all aspects of the Alaska tourism sector. Members include:

- Tour Operators including multi-day group tours, daytrip excursions, and backcountry guides
- Fishing Lodges
- Wilderness Resorts
- Cultural Attractions
- Hotels
- Bed and Breakfasts
- Destination Marketing Organizations
- Alaska Native Corporations
- Transportation Providers
- Cruise Lines
- Media & Publications
- Travel Planners
- Restaurants & Bars
- Breweries and Distilleries
- Retail Stores
- And More!

Most of ATIA’s members are small businesses, with 60% having fewer than 20 full time employees.

ATIA Member Businesses: Number of Employees



SUSTAINING PARTNERS

DENALI LEVEL

Alaska Airlines
Holland America Group/Princess
Cruises/Holland America Line

ALYESKA LEVEL

Alaska Railroad
Visit Anchorage

ARCTIC LEVEL

Explore Fairbanks
Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau
Premier Alaska Tours
Pursuit – The Alaska Collection

GOLD LEVEL

Alaska Business
Allen Marine Tours
Cruise Lines International Association –
Alaska
Ketchikan Visitors Bureau
Knightly Tours
Major Marine Tours
Northern Alaska Tour Company
Salmon Berry Tours
Stan Stephens Glacier & Wildlife Cruises
Travel Juneau
White Pass & Yukon Route Railway

JADE LEVEL

Alaska Alpine Adventures
Alaska Coach Tours
Seward Chamber & Visitor Center
Skagway Convention and Visitors
Bureau

MEMBER BENEFITS

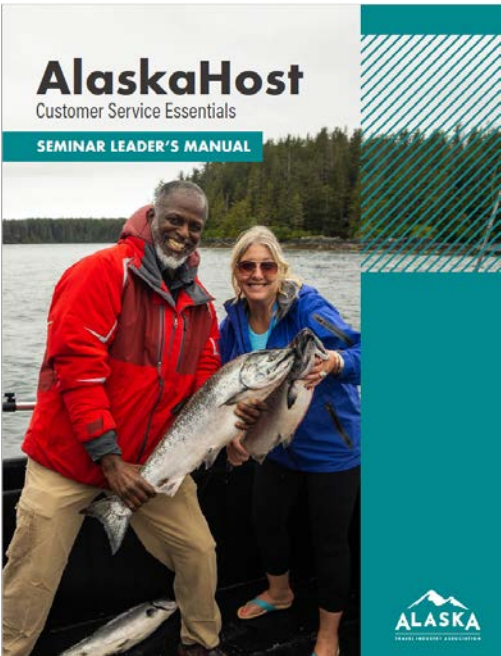
ATIA is the leading statewide industry organization for travel-related businesses and supporters. ATIA’s members enjoy exclusive benefits such as the ATIA Annual Convention and Trade Show, online courses offered through the ATIA E-Learning Center, participation in local chapters, access to health benefits, business to business discounts, and networking opportunities.

ATIA has traditionally offered training through the AlaskaHost and Alaska CulturalHost workforce development programs (managed through a memorandum of agreement with the State of Alaska’s Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development). This year, ATIA updated both trainings with new materials, imagery, and created a virtual training platform. The training modules can be used in orientation and training sessions for workers in Alaska’s tourism industry, such as guides, drivers, servers, and other front-line workers. It provides an overview of the industry and customer service skills.

In-person trainings were conducted 15 times in eight different communities including Sitka, Skagway, Juneau, Ketchikan, Cordova, Anchorage, Valdez, and Denali. ATIA also offered two different “train the trainer” sessions which allows for other tourism partners to provide the trainings in their communities. ATIA hosted monthly virtual “coffee chats” to connect with members and offer time to help with networking, which is the number one requested member benefit.

Five Chapters: Anchorage; Fairbanks; Juneau; Ketchikan; Arts, Culture, and Heritage

Number of Communities Represented by ATIA Membership: 48



ATIA CONVENTION

In October 2022, ATIA hosted the Annual Convention & Trade Show in Sitka. Over 500 members attended and celebrated the first in-person convention since the pandemic. Attendees participated in discussions about regenerative tourism, infrastructure development, social media marketing, rural tourism development, small business planning, and challenges facing the industry post-Covid.



ADVOCACY

ATIA’s advocacy efforts focus on State and Federal issues related to Alaska’s travel and tourism industry. Advocacy efforts serve the purpose of considering policies with an eye towards ensuring the tourism sector remains a healthy and vibrant pillar in Alaska’s economy. These efforts are supported through ATIA membership fees.

In FY23, ATIA served as a voice for the industry through the following advocacy efforts:

- Engaged with National Park Service Alaska leadership to keep members informed of progress on the Pretty Rocks Slide Area in Denali National Park. ATIA also sent a letter to Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland expressing urgency to complete this project.
- Participated in the US Travel Association’s Destination Capitol Hill. ATIA advocated for supporting shortening visa application wait times, advancing FAA reauthorization priorities, providing H-2B visa cap relief, and funding the new Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Travel and Tourism. Special thanks to Alaska Senator Dan Sullivan for his work and support in creating this new cabinet-level, tourism-focused position in the Executive Branch.
- Advocated for support of The LODGE Act, a bill which would relieve housing pressure in National Park Service gateway communities including several Alaska towns. Representative Peltola signed on as a co-sponsor of the bill.
- Advocated for the Alaska Department of Transportation to release a summer ferry schedule.
- Advocated for the growth of Alaska’s tourism economy through the reinvestment of tourism revenues for destination marketing.

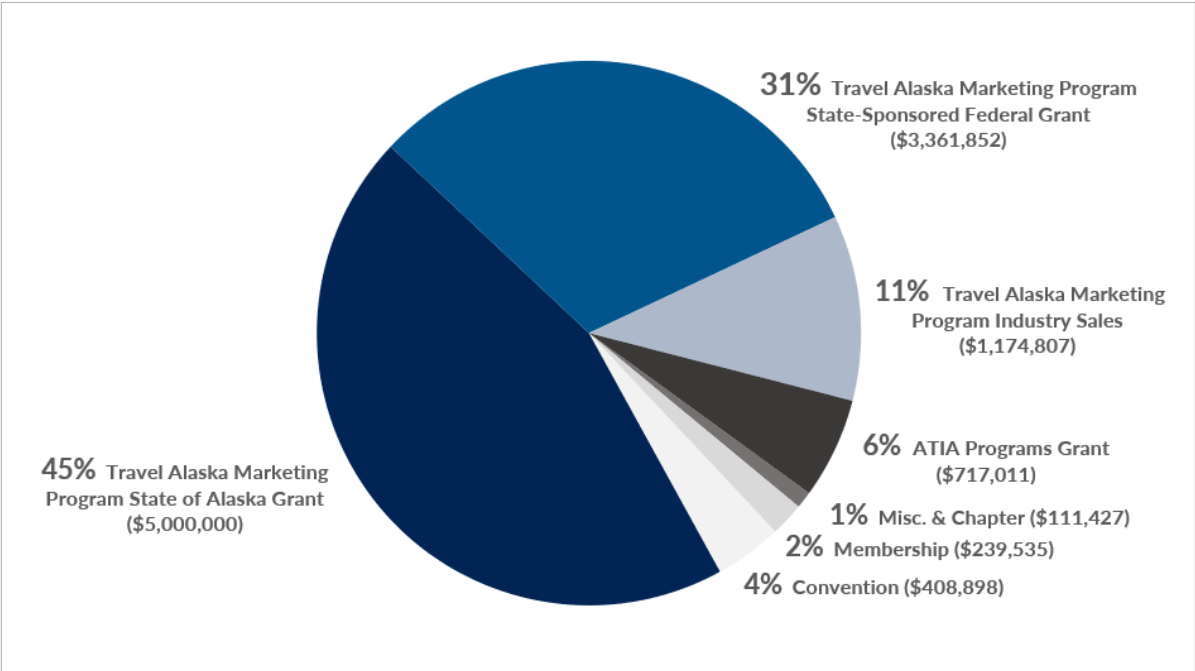


FINANCIAL INFORMATION

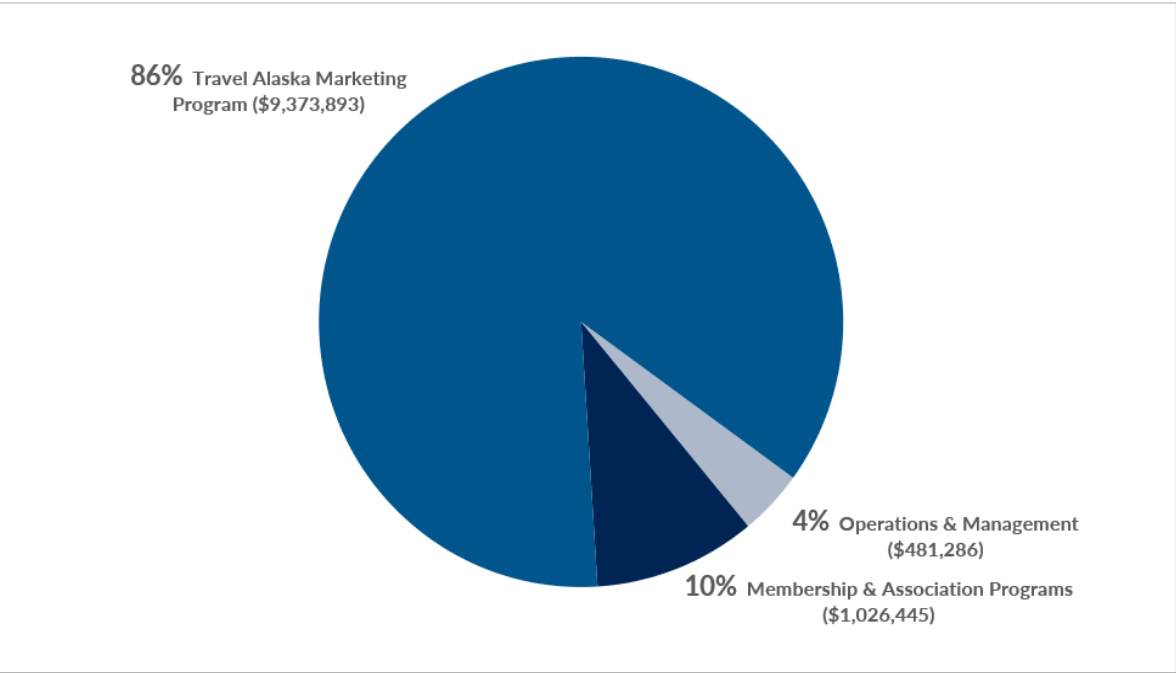
ATIA received funding from a variety of sources including membership fees, convention ticket sales, a State of Alaska marketing grant, and remaining funds from two federal grants from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) for Covid-19 relief. The EDA grant was designated to ATIA by the Governor in 2021 and was used over two years for tourism marketing.

In FY23, EDA funds were paired with the State of Alaska’s \$5 million FY23 investment in the Travel Alaska destination marketing campaign, and an additional \$1.2 million investment came from industry partners, most having under 50 full-time employees, in the form of cooperative marketing sales.

INCOME: \$11,013,530



EXPENSES: \$10,881,634





ATIA STAFF

Jillian Simpson, President & CEO from May, 2023

Sarah Leonard, President & CEO until January, 2023

Wendy Swenson, Director of Tourism Marketing

Tanya Carlson, Director of Travel Trade, International Markets, & Sustainability

Andrea Rayt, Director of Finance & Administration

Jeff Samuels, Director of Policy & Communications

Tay Clayton, Membership Director

Skye Hostetler, Sales Manager

Lindsey Middendorf, Digital Content Manager

Heidi Jo Lean, Programs Manager

