

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

A summary report of the activities of the Tourism Golden Association

January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Key Reporting areas include Operations, Marketing, Visitor Services and Financials



=TOURISM=

**Golden**  
GOLDEN RULES  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Submitted by: Joanne Sweeting, Executive Director



#GOLDENRULES  
#GOLDENBC

[tourismgolden.com](http://tourismgolden.com)

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## About Tourism Golden

- Incorporated in 2006, Tourism Golden Association is a non-profit society mandated as the DMO and eligible entity until July 2022.
- The DMO area contains the Town of Golden and CSDR Area A, not including Yoho National Park.
- Representing 163 tourism stakeholders (accommodations, activity operators and attractions).
- Primarily funded by a 2% tax on eligible accommodation room nights, known as the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) leveraged with grant and ‘pay to play’ stakeholder co-op advertising sales.
- Governed by a board of 11 directors representing accommodations and tourism operators within the boundary and a seat for the Chamber of Commerce. The board establishes the vision, mission, and objectives of the organisation and approves the annual marketing plan and budgets. It ensures fiscal responsibility and fulfilment of the organisation’s mission.

### Mandate

Tourism Golden Association will lead, direct, and manage destination marketing activities and support tourism development initiatives on behalf of Golden and Kicking Horse Country by maintaining a collaborative and inclusive industry driven organization, and by providing opportunities for stakeholders to increase revenues. We will provide a consistent voice for Golden and Kicking Horse Country in the tourism marketplace.

### Directors, Officers, Committees & Staff

#### Board of Directors from August 2020<sup>1</sup>

##### Elected

###### *Representing Town of Golden Accommodators*

Suk Dhasi	Best Western Mountainview
Atma Sandher	Ponderosa Motor Inn
Treema Coney	Prestige Inn Golden

###### *Representing General Accommodators (all locations)*

Brandy Beliveau	Bellstar Hotels & Resort
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###### *Representing Area A Accommodators*

John Lush	Lush Mountain Accommodations
Lucille Hayward	Moberly Lodge
Jo Best	Mount 7 Lodges

###### *Representing Tourism Operators*

Graeme Kreiner	Golden Golf Club
Ryan Johannessen	Glacier Raft Company
Toby Barrett	Kicking Horse Mountain Resort

##### Appointed

Cam Dawes	Kicking Horse Chamber of Commerce
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##### Officers

President	Toby Barrett
Vice President	John Lush
Treasurer	Jo Best
Secretary	Lucille Hayward

##### Committees

###### **Finance Committee**

*Jo Best (Treasurer), Treema Coney, Toby Barrett*

###### **HR Committee**

*Jo Best, Treema Coney, Toby Barrett*

###### **Stakeholder Committee**

*Atma Sandher, John Lush, Toby Barrett, Treema Coney, Ryan Johannessen, Suk Dhasi*

###### **Governance (Constitution and Bylaw) Committee**

*Atma Sandher, Toby Barrett, Lucille Hayward, Ryan Johannessen*

###### **Visitor Services**

*John Lush, Suk Dhasi, Ryan Johannessen*

###### **Co-op Programs Committee**

*Atma Sandher, Brandy Beliveau, Jo Best, Lucille Hayward*

##### Staff

Executive Director	Joanne Sweeting
Marketing & Administration	Rachel Wilde
Communications & Social Media	Andy Brown

<sup>1</sup> The 2020 AGM was postponed from May to August due to pandemic disruption.

## **DMO Business Objective,**

*“In a manner that is admired by all in the Canadian tourism industry, we will increase the economic impact of tourism in Golden and the surrounding area by growing revenues for businesses that serve tourists by 30% by 2021.”*

## **Tourism Vision**

“We will inspire target visitors to explore and experience Golden.”

## **Tourism Mission**

“We will market Golden as a destination of choice. By delivering innovative marketing initiatives we will increase economic benefits for all our stakeholders and for the community.

We will provide tools and guidance to assist our stakeholders in delivering remarkable visitor experiences.

We will provide information and education to inform and guide destination development.”

## **Values & Guiding Principles**

These are the principles by which Tourism Golden will operate:

- Balance resident values with visitor demand.
- Maintain a positive, respectful relationship with residents of Golden and Area A.
- Recognize the community as a blend of diverse unique resources working together to become a healthy, vibrant community in which to live and work.
- Advocate a social, environmental, and economic balance within the tourism industry and the community at large.
- Work collectively with the community to develop services to meet the needs of our visitors.
- Foster open and honest communication with all community stakeholders through a comprehensive communication plan.
- Be inclusive and transparent to the stakeholders and the community.
- Partner with existing organizations and stakeholders that contribute to tourism marketing and destination development.
- Leverage resources and maximize partnership potential.
- Be fiscally responsible and accountable to stakeholders.
- Advocate on behalf of the local tourism industry.

## **Strategic Objectives 2017 - 2021**

As identified in the 2017-2021 Strategic Business Plan, the Strategic Objectives of the organisation are to:

- Increase target market awareness of Golden as a great destination to visit.
- Establish perceptions of Golden consistent with our brand positioning – brand positioning is known and embraced by target markets and residents.
- Encourage target visitors to make Golden a positive choice of destination in their vacation.
- Encourage day visitors/passing traffic to stay longer and return later as an overnight visitor.
- Increase length of stay.
- Increase number of overnight visitors.
- Encourage repeat visitation.
- Increase shoulder season visitation and revenues.
- Establish a baseline and show annual improvements in Net Promoter Score.
- Increase funding for Tourism Golden.
- Maintain position as lead organization in tourism and continuously learn and improve.
- Build strong stakeholder and local support for Tourism Golden and for the overall importance of the tourism industry.

## Executive Summary

*The global COVID-19 pandemic devastated the tourism industry from March 2020. Overall, tourism revenues in Golden reduced by 40% <sup>2</sup>.*

Following a record year for tourism in 2019, we were excited to build on that success in 2020 and 2021 and were in place to achieve the target of 30% growth in the 2017 – 2022 Strategic Plan. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020 and had an instant, critical and lasting impact on the global tourism industry and of course in Golden.

As the situation unfolded, we were fortunate to have strong leadership and support from our provincial industry bodies; Destination BC, the BC Hotel Association, TIABC and others who provided support in many forms, timely research on the state of the industry and resident sentiment, and collectively advocated for government support for the industry. We appreciate the response from both the provincial and federal governments, without which some of our businesses could not have survived.

We were grateful for provincial grant funding for MRDT entities. This, along with other government subsidies and programs and Destination BC grants plus natural attrition enabled us to maintain a full complement of staff and continue to create new assets specific to the pandemic, despite the 40% reduction in MRDT revenues.

From adversity comes opportunity and whilst there is no denying the critical impact on the industry and our own revenues, we saw an increase against 2019 in web visits from AB (29%) and BC (17%) from June 2020 to the end of the year and an increase in pages per visit, indicating that more people in those target markets were researching a visit to Golden. Whilst this may not have translated into immediate visits in 2020, it indicates there is new potential for future visits once traveller confidence returns. It also achieves the goal of raising awareness of Golden in a previously untapped sector of our target markets.

We learned that our strong and efficient team can continue to operate at the highest level from remote locations, an absolute necessity with the constantly changing situation and many unknowns.

As the pandemic unfolded our planned activity and campaigns changed. We focussed on providing support to our

stakeholders and educating consumers on the ever-changing situation whilst encouraging our primary domestic drive markets of Alberta and B.C. to ‘Dream Golden’; to dream now and travel later, with the objective of staying top-of-mind for a vacation once travel safely resumed.

### COVID RESPONSE:

1. Budget and marketing plan updated.
2. Immediate pausing of all advertising activity.
3. Resumed as appropriate with new campaigns for AB & BC markets only.
4. Advisory banner added to all webpages.
5. Created COVID-19 stakeholder information web page.
6. Initiated COVID-19 special stakeholder e-blasts.
7. Hosted virtual Town Hall for stakeholders.
8. Created COVID-19 consumer information web page.
9. Created and launched ‘Dream Golden’ social campaign.
10. Hosted a Stakeholder virtual Town Hall.
11. Hosted a free digital marketing workshop.
12. Created & distributed businesses open/closed summary document.
13. Created ‘Travelling to Golden during COVID’ for visitors
14. Created stakeholder messaging toolkit.
15. Postponed Golden Travel Planner from Dec 2020 to May 2021.
16. Supported KRT Resident Sentiment survey.
17. Supported all industry bodies lobbying for support.

Recognising the need for increased stakeholder communications and support, we responded accordingly.

We rescheduled the production and launch of our maps and travel planners and after reviewing available stocks, reduced print run sizes as appropriate.

Anticipating the start of the Kicking Horse Canyon Phase 4 construction project, we had already planned the ‘Getting to Golden’ campaign which focussed on the experiences and benefits of the road-trip, whilst at the same time connecting visitors to reliable project information to dispel misinformation about highway closures.

Our strength in being primarily an outdoor destination surrounded by national and provincial parks, offering lots of outdoor activities and space is precisely what people who were prepared to travel during the pandemic were looking for and our campaigns reflected this, resulting in occupancy higher than the provincial average for the summer. Our

<sup>2</sup> As indicated by MRDT revenues.

accommodation data also reflects the desire for self-contained private accommodations, with short-term rental occupancies being higher and extending longer into the fall months than traditional operators.

Whilst the pandemic brought new challenges from a marketing perspective, our role as the lead organisation for tourism advocacy continued. We continued to participate in the Kicking Horse Canyon Community Liaison Committee to advocate on behalf of tourism stakeholders.

**Collaboration** and communication are important in any year but was particularly evident in 2020. A benefit of the unprecedented circumstances was that it brought about new or improved relationships and communications both within the industry as well as the community. These included regular meetings with KRT and the regional CDMOs and participating in regular meetings with community specialists in the labour market, education, business, and social services. We were successful in working with the Town of Golden to create a new Event Hosting Co-op program. Managed by Tourism Golden and funded with RMI monies, this program is designed to provide financial support to events that align with our marketing objectives and can provide strong marketing and awareness in our target markets. The objective is to encourage the growth of new and existing tourism events by supporting eligible local hosting expenses, reducing the pressure on a handful of accommodations and other businesses to continuously provide free or heavily discounted services, and thereby contributing a true value to the local economy. As well as ensuring the return of the highly valuable *Freeride World Tour* in early February 2020, this program was particularly meaningful in helping to secure two new mountain biking events for Kicking Horse and Golden in the *Crankworx Summer Series*. This was a critically important event, not only in raising awareness in a highly qualified audience, but also in securing a return of the event in 2021 and, hopefully, beyond.

We continued to participate in the DBC Open Pool Marketing Co-op program with several CDMOs and sector organisations on campaigns for mountain biking, Nordic skiing, fishing, and snowmobiling. As the lead organisation for a consortium with Parks Canada (Yoho ad Kootenay), Radium Hot Springs and the Village of Radium we launched the *Golden Triangle* website and marketing campaign in July 2020. We also collaborated with Tourism Revelstoke and Shuswap Tourism to create a consortium for the '*Get into BC*' campaign. Both these campaigns are aimed at mitigating the impact of the 4-

year Kicking Horse Canyon Phase 4 project, which includes extended closures of Highway 1 and the communication of a complicated construction schedule whilst motivating continued visitation.

Whilst the pandemic and PHO orders limited media visits, we continued media outreach by providing story ideas and assets on request. Building on previous years' hosting and media relationships garnered an amazing 72 stories in print, online and radio.

The Key Performance Indicators report on pages 13 and 14 summarise strategic performance against specific targets outlined in the 2020 Marketing Plan.

We recognize these factors that make our success possible:

1. The **MRDT program** which provides reliable multi-year funding for tourism marketing and projects. In 2020, the additional MRDT grant supported financial stability.
2. The focus of Tourism Golden staff and board on **strategic planning informed by research and data**.
3. Tourism Golden stakeholders who invest and innovate in products and experiences, engage with us in collectively promoting Golden and support our efforts in content creation and media relations.
4. The Town of Golden and CSRD Area A who support our position and efforts as the eligible entity and lead organisation for tourism.
5. Destination BC and Destination Canada who provided consistent leadership, research, and support during the pandemic and who continue to **innovate in tourism marketing and industry programs**, opportunities and partnerships as well as delivering successful provincial marketing campaigns.
6. Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture's **Tourism Events Program** which provided funding for the Freeride World Tour.
7. The **RMI program** which provides funding for the Event Hosting Co-op program under a contribution agreement with the Town of Golden.
8. TIABC and the BCHA whose collaboration and tireless advocacy for the industry as well as efficient communication and meaningful insights were extremely valuable during 2020.

## Situational Context

### Disrupters

The global COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on tourism. International arrivals were impacted by continuous border closures, quarantine, and testing requirements from March 2020. Domestic travel was guided by differing provincial travel restrictions and health guidelines changed continuously and frequently. Not surprisingly, confidence in travel dropped dramatically, and residents' appetite to welcome visitors also diminished. Businesses were forced to close or manage unpredictable cash flow with cancellations, deposit refunds and dramatic impact on overall bookings and revenues.

The [2019 Economic Impacts of Labour Market Challenges in Golden, BC](#) study determined that 46% of tourism-related businesses experienced labour market challenges, rising to 84% in the summer season. Ironically, in 2020, despite the reduction in visitor volumes and operational capacity, the labour market issues deepened with a combination of the CERB which discouraged some employees from returning to work and hospitality employees transitioning to other industries less impacted by the pandemic.

The Kicking Horse Canyon Phase 4 project began in fall 2020 with geo-technical assessments and archaeological work.

## Operational Summary

### Stakeholder and Industry Relations

We recognised the need to provide increased support to our stakeholders and in addition to our regular monthly Stakeholder News eblasts, we produced e-blasts providing summary information of provincial PHO policy and guidelines as well as government support programs, and education and business advisory resources. These averaged a 58% open rate and overall stakeholder communications averaged a 52% open rate.

We were unable to hold in-person meetings due to PHO orders, however the AGM was held virtually via Zoom on August 11<sup>th</sup>. The attendance was less than in previous years, attributed to a busy month for visitors, lack of staff and an exhaustion with virtual meetings. We also held a Town Hall virtual meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, which had much better engagement.

Following the successful launch of the Co-op Photo Shoot program in summer 2019, we continued the program in winter 2019/20 to assist winter operators and business seeking to expand their portfolio of high-quality professional images for their own seasonal marketing. Four businesses participated in the winter program, and we received rights to the images produced. Due to revenue uncertainty, we did not offer a summer or fall 2020 program.

We ran our own virtual workshop in early June, led by Conner Galway of Junction, focussing on digital marketing skills and the Tourism Golden campaigns for summer and fall 2020 that stakeholders could align with.

We had planned the launch of a member-led Co-op Marketing program in 2020, but due to the uncertainties of revenue and cash-flow this was postponed to 2021.

We continued to offer our typical subsidised co-op marketing opportunities.

As a member of the RMI committee we worked with the Town of Golden to inform the 2019 -2022 Resort Development Strategy.

Tourism Golden annually sponsors the Hospitality Award at the Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards gala and did so again for their 2020 Facebook live event.

Letters of support were provided to several organisations including Wildsight for an interpretive signage project, one of which was placed at the visitor centre.

Relationships and collaboration with other community, regional and provincial DMOs and tourism stakeholders developed through participation in the DBC Co-op Marketing Program and Destination Development working groups as well as the BCDMOA meetings and TIABC industry conference.

### **Advocacy**

The organisation represents the interests of the tourism industry and local tourism stakeholders, and was active in the following matters:

#### **Short Term Rentals**

Tourism Golden continued to advocate for municipal recognition of short-term rentals as commercial home-based businesses and we are pleased that short-term rental legislation was finally implemented within the Town of Golden in December 2020.

#### **Labour Shortages**

*The Economic Impact of labour Shortages in Golden* study undertaken in late 2019 was completed. In spring 2020 the report was shared with relevant community organisations as well as local, regional, and provincial governments to inform future strategies.

#### **Kicking Horse Canyon Phase 4 Community Liaison**

We continued to be actively involved in the Community Liaison Committee to represent the tourism sector and to strongly advocate for traffic management planning that would have the least amount of impact on our stakeholder businesses during the winter and summer peak seasons.

### **Visitor Information Services**

The Golden Visitor Centre opened on June 28, 2020 and operated with COVID protocols in place. Fortunately, the normal face-to-face service operation includes service windows, dual-monitor digital screens and an online trip planning tools that allow our VICs to safely interact with visitors and to customise information searches and create itineraries that can be emailed directly to their personal devices.

To respect sanitisation recommendations, brochures, rack cards and maps were not made freely available but were handed out upon request.

With the interior space of the building closed to the public we sold very little merchandise other than the BC road map, Backcountry Mapbooks and Parks Canada tickets resulting in much reduced retail sales revenue.

Staff were provided with PPE, and protocol to limit the use of shared items and increase sanitisation, as well as plexiglass screens between staff inside the service window and visitors outside the window.

To provide our staff with a dedicated private washroom we made a change to the washroom block by operating the women's washroom as gender neutral. With the limitations of social distancing this created long lines outside. We added several porta-potties to mitigate this.

Despite all of the service limitations, the Golden Visitor Centre still maintained its 4.5-star Google Business rating.

Visitor numbers at the centre were approximately 60% less than 2019, with an obvious nervousness of visitors to have any personal interactions. We therefore took the decision to close the centre after the September long weekend.

We appreciate the support of Destination BC and the Town of Golden as we strive to continually provide exceptional community visitor information services. The collaboration is justified by the estimated *incremental economic benefit of \$9.9 million* generated by the Golden Visitor Centre.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Source: [2019 Golden Summer Visitor Survey](#)

## Marketing Summary

The primary function of Tourism Golden is to market Golden as a tourism destination of choice. The 2017-2021 Strategic Business Plan and the 2020 Marketing Plan identify the marketing objectives, target markets, marketing strategies and budgeted spend. However, the plan and budget were re-adjusted several times through year in response to the continually evolving pandemic.

From mid-March marketing activities were cancelled or postponed, aside from print advertising that was already in the market and in April began conceptualising the options for a campaign to keep Golden top-of-mind, whilst reinforcing the PHOs non-essential travel recommendation. The 'Dream Golden' social campaign incorporated video edits and images from the existing asset library.

In 2020, the marketing spend was \$402,621; 34% less than in 2019 and 50% less than originally budgeted. Destination marketing expenses represent 70% of total expenses. This does not include staff wages and benefits. As measured by the Ministry of Finance, staff wages related directly to the delivery of marketing and tourism projects are deemed a marketing expense, and in that determination Marketing and Promotion spend represents 94% of total expenses.

We continued to ensure that our marketing efforts are coordinated and complementary to the provincial and regional strategic plans, and respected PHO guidelines and travel restrictions, adapting campaign messaging and timing as appropriate.

Through the DBC Co-op Marketing program we participated with regional community DMOs and activity sector associations on the following campaigns:

- Kootenay Dirt (mountain biking)
- Kootenay XC (Nordic ski)
- Sled Kootenay (snowmobiling)
- Fishing BC
- Golden Triangle (Hwy 93/95/1 road trip/tour)
- Get in BC (Hwy 1 road trip AB border to the Shuswap)

## Media Relations

With pandemic travel restrictions we did not encourage media visits and cancelled the annual fall media trip. Media hosting was therefore extremely limited in 2020, however building on the strong relationships developed in prior years, leveraging advertising spend and responding efficiently to provide quality content and assets when requested earned

72 features in qualified print, online and TV channels. Sport Fishing on the Fly returned for a 3<sup>rd</sup> visit in September 2020.

The amount of earned media generated through the FWT and Crankworx events, one event held prior to the pandemic hit, and the other being constrained by pandemic restrictions, demonstrates the absolute value in the event hosting co-op program, and actively seeking new, similar events in the future.



LIVE BIG | TRAVEL | FOOD & DRINK | FASHION & GEAR | ARTS & CULTURE | PLACE | SHOP | VIDEO



Be Here Now: Golden, British Columbia

Margaret Atwood once wrote, "In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." After a spring day in Golden, British Columbia, it's impossible not to.

**3 Adventures: Golden, B.C.** By John Rezell, Editor

## Big Adventure with Small-town Charm

With the Canadian Rocky Mountains as a backdrop, the town of Golden sits at the base of the Trans-Canada Highway, on sweeping curves hugging the rugged granite face and the edge of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. A town of Golden temps visitors into stay. The small city sprawls across the mountainside, with a river filling wetlands in the south just before it joins the Columbia River, creating the Hells Gate in the middle of town. The town's location and elevation provide a unique and dramatic view and reflects its history as a mining town. The surrounding snow-capped peaks of the Purcell Mountains draw tourists away from the community with its natural beauty. The town of Golden is known for its friendly atmosphere and its proximity to the town of Revelstoke, which is a great place to go for a day trip. The town of Golden has a lot to offer, from its natural beauty to its unique culture and history. The town of Golden is a must-see destination for anyone who loves adventure and exploration.

BBC TRAVEL

ADVENTURE & EXPERIENCE | HISTORY | CANADA

The birthplace of Canada's mountain culture

(Image credit: Parks Canada/I Houghton)

By Cassidy Randall 22nd January 2020

The gritty railroad town of Golden is home to the origin story of Western Canada's celebrated mountain culture, which has lured countless adventurers for more than a century.

## Content & Asset Creation

We completed the following projects:

- Locals Lowdown video series
- Winter activities photo shoot
- Multiple stakeholder co-op winter photo shoots
- Kootenay Dirt consortium mountain biking video
- Sled Kootenay consortium snowmobile video
- Getting to Golden campaign video edits
- Kicking Horse Canyon pre-project B-roll capture
- Dream Golden video edits

The [Locals Lowdown](#), a series of seasonal short videos for social media featuring local activity and community ambassadors launched in early 2020 and garnered 21,100 views.

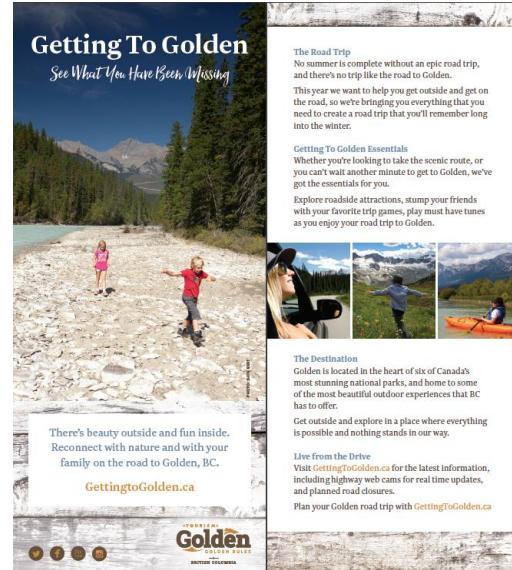
User generated Content (UGC) continues to play a large role in giving access to inspirational content for our social media platforms and quality images for other marketing activity. Using the CrowdRiff User Generated Content platform gave us access to **1.2 million social assets** and **979 rights approved assets**: an invaluable addition to our social media and marketing activity.

## Advertising

Paid advertising was paused in March 2020 and resumed only as appropriate to pandemic advisories and in the regional drive markets of Alberta and B.C.

With a deep library of assets created in previous years, we were able to quickly launch the '[Dream Golden](#)' campaign aimed at raising awareness and keeping Golden top-of-mind in our primary markets of AB and BC during restricted non-essential travel periods, but with the clear message to dream now and travel later. Additional campaigns were launched as appropriate within the phased 2020 lifting of PHO travel restrictions. The 'Get off the Beaten Track and Heart of the Parks' campaigns focussed on our natural attributes of outdoor space, fewer people and proximity to national parks.

The Getting to Golden social campaign encouraged travelers to consider the road trip a part of their vacation with many attractions and experiences on the way to Golden. The campaign ran between July and Sept 2020 and garnered 12,500 views.



A Facebook post from 'Tourism Golden' with the caption 'Escape the crowds and head to Golden, B.C. Experience an authentic mountain town packed with outdoor adventure.' It features three images: a sunset over mountains, a person kayaking, and a person standing on a rocky shore. Below the images are 'Learn More' buttons and social sharing options.

A Facebook post from 'Tourism Golden' with the caption 'Stay in Golden, BC and explore six of Canada's most stunning national parks.' It features two images: a waterfall and a person sitting on a rock. Below the images are 'Learn More' buttons and social sharing options.

## Consumer Relations & Shows

All consumer shows were cancelled due to the pandemic.

We used the monthly newsletter to support the PHO messaging of non-essential travel and the Dream Golden campaign. The average monthly open rate was 13%, a drop of 2% against 2019, which we attribute to reduced level of interest in immediate travel due to the pandemic, and perhaps a resistance to the unwanted messaging.

We continue to engage and converse with consumers through social platforms and review sites and engagement continued to be strong on these channels.

## Marketing Collateral

With the travel restrictions paused distribution there were many remaining stocks of the 2020 Golden Travel Planner, which was launched in Dec 2019, which we estimated would last until 2021. Additionally, we wanted to respect the pandemic impact on stakeholder revenues and cash-flows. We therefore deferred the production of the 2020 Golden Travel Planner until after a stakeholder survey conducted in November indicated strong support for this as an advertising opportunity. Consequently, the typical December launch was re-scheduled to May 2021, which will now become the annual launch date.

The Hiking and Biking Maps were both printed as usual in February prior to the pandemic.

Aside from performance tuning, development of the tourismgolden.com website was limited to adding COVID-19 information pages for both stakeholders and consumers.

In our role as lead organisation for the Golden Triangle an interactive website [www.tourthetriangle.ca](http://www.tourthetriangle.ca) was created and launched in both English and French. The website allows the user to customise content being served according to season, interest, and travel direction. Tracked conversions through social and search campaigns showed the use of the 'Search' button to be the top conversion.

A video for the website, along with social shorts for a social campaign were also created along with rack cards in French and English that were distributed throughout the Bow Valley and along the touring route.

The image contains two side-by-side screenshots of the Tourism Golden website. Both screenshots show the same layout with a navigation bar at the top. The left screenshot is titled "GOLDEN BC COVID-19 INFORMATION" and the right one is titled "COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR STAKEHOLDERS". Both pages contain text about vaccination requirements and links to government websites for more details. There are also sections for "RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES" and "TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS".

The image shows a screenshot of the "TOUR THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE" website. It features a large banner image of a river flowing through a valley. Below the banner is a search form titled "TAKE THE TOUR". The form includes dropdown menus for "I'm touring the triangle towards" (with options "Golden" and "Fall"), "And want to experience" (with option "Nature"), and a "SEARCH" button. A small "x" icon is in the top right corner of the search form.

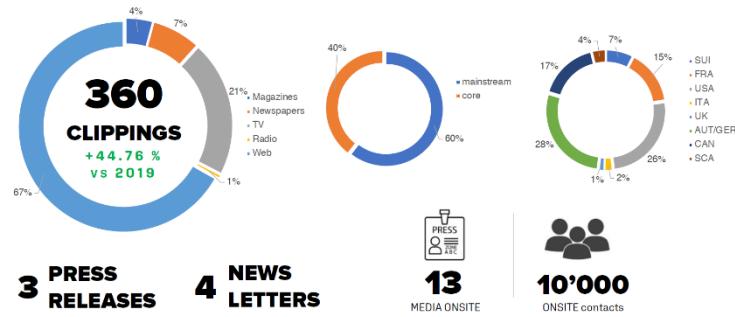
The image shows a screenshot of the "Tour the Golden Triangle" website. At the top, it says "Take a journey through the Canadian Rockies as you explore Yoho and Kootenay national parks, Revelstoke, Field, and the Columbia River."

## Events

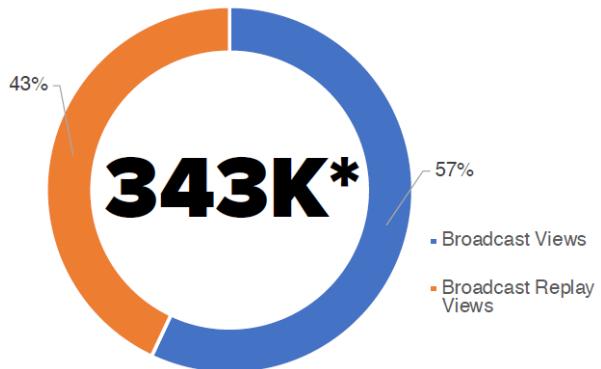
The third Freeride World Tour event was held at with KHMR from February 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020.



The Kicking Horse-Golden event garnered 16.6 million impressions across digital and social channels, an increase of 20% against the 2019 event, demonstrating a growing engagement with a highly qualified global audience.



## COMPETITION BROADCAST



**16.6M**

IMPRESSIONS

+20 % vs 2019

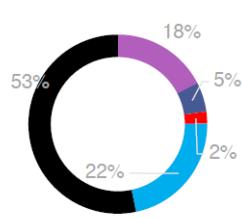
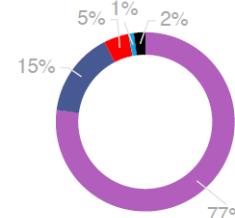
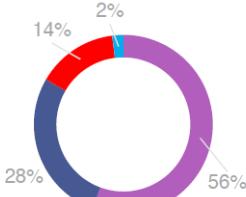
**7.4M**

VIDEO VIEWS

+46 % vs 2019

**4%**

ENGAGEMENT RATE



**57K** Page views on event page of FWT website  
+14 % vs 2019



Crankworx created a former-TV-only mountain biking series operating safely within the approved PHO guidelines. Two events were held in Golden and Kicking Horse in August 2020, including a resurrection of the famous Psychosis downhill race on Mt. 7, which we hope will become an annual event again. The event generated good engagement in our primary markets, raising awareness of Golden as a world-class mountain biking destination in a

highly engaged audience.

**6** full-length broadcast shows distributed through EDGESport and webcast on YouTube, Facebook, and Vimeo

**313,593** Total broadcast and webcast views

United States	35.3%
Canada	21.1%
United Kingdom	8.7%
Germany	4.5%
Australia	3.6%
Brazil	3.4%
India	3.1%
France	2.0%
Mexico	1.6%
Spain	1.6%
New Zealand	1.4%

## Research

We are committed to informing and measuring our activity with research and proven data by regularly undertaking visitor and other data research.

### Economic Impact of Labour Shortages in Golden Study.

With funding provided by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia we had initiated in fall 2019 a study on the economic impact of labour shortages. The report was published in spring 2020 and highlighted how critical the issue is, the economic and other outcomes, as well as identifying the influencing factors specific to Golden. The report showed:

- 46% experienced labour challenges (Rising to 84% in the summer)
- Impact on visitor experience:
  - Reduced customer service.
  - Turned clients away.
- \$6.6 million in lost direct revenue
- \$4.6 million in lost GDP
- \$3.5 million in lost labour income
- \$1.5 million in lost federal, provincial & municipal taxes

Identified opportunities and gaps:

- Provide more affordable housing.
- Increase resident base.
- Reduced seasonality of tourism industry.
- Federal & provincial support programs for labour & skills shortages.
- Initiatives to promote tourism careers.
- Provide affordable transportation options.

### Telus Insights 2020 – 2021.

Prior to the pandemic we had initiated a 2-year project with Telus Insights. As this is a large financial commitment, we immediately contacted Telus in March 2020 to secure a postponement of reporting and financial outlay until after receiving the deferred MRDT. The project was re-started in December 2020, with all 2020 data being received early in 2021. The data showed that whilst, unsurprisingly, there was a significant drop in overnight visitation from all markets, there was a strong recovery from AB and BC between June and September (see figure 2)

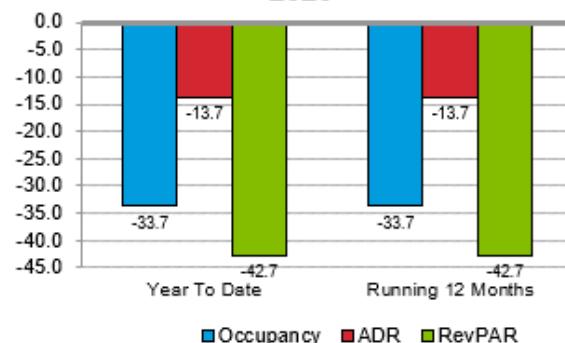
As the project progresses through 2021, we will be able to track visitor numbers and trends as we recover from the pandemic. Additionally, using FSAs gathered we can identify

geo-locations that generate multi-night visits and re-target them in future advertising campaigns.

### Accommodation Performance.

Using destination data collected via STR and AirDNA, we were able to track how short-term rentals and traditional hotels and motels performed during the pandemic. Traditional accommodation revenues and occupancies fell by 33% and 42% respectively (see figure 1) despite a strong recovery of occupancy in August (see figure 3). Comparatively, short-term rental accommodations recovered much better in the summer months, reflecting consumer demand for self-contained independent accommodations in more remote locations. (See figure 4)

**Overall Percent Change  
2020**



*Figure 1 Source STR Destination Report*

The [Tourism Sentiment Index](#) by Destination Think! measures the online sentiment of a destination through peer to peer conversations, complementing the quantitative data from other sources. Most conversations and positive sentiment were about Golden's outdoor activities. Negative sentiment about food, I believe, reflected the critical issue of labour

shortages  
compounding  
by the  
pandemic.

CATEGORIES	VOLUME COMPARISON	GOLDEN		
		Volume	Emotion	Sentiment
▲ Outdoor Activities	—	70% + 7%	Joy 17 Average	
▲ Food + Culinary	—	11% + 11%	Anger 27 Average	
▲ Safety	—	4% + 4%	Joy -10 Average	
▲ Access + Transportation	—	4% + 4%	Joy 12 Average	
▲ Destination Services	—	5% + 5%	Joy 33 Average	
▲ Culture + History	—	3% + 3%	Joy 23 Average	
▲ Relaxation + Wellness	—	3% + 3%	Joy 3 Average	
▲ Amenities + Entertainment	—	1% + 1%	Joy 55 High	

# Monthly Unique Overnight Count

## Province Breakdown

Golden-Columbia Area Unique Overnight Visitors

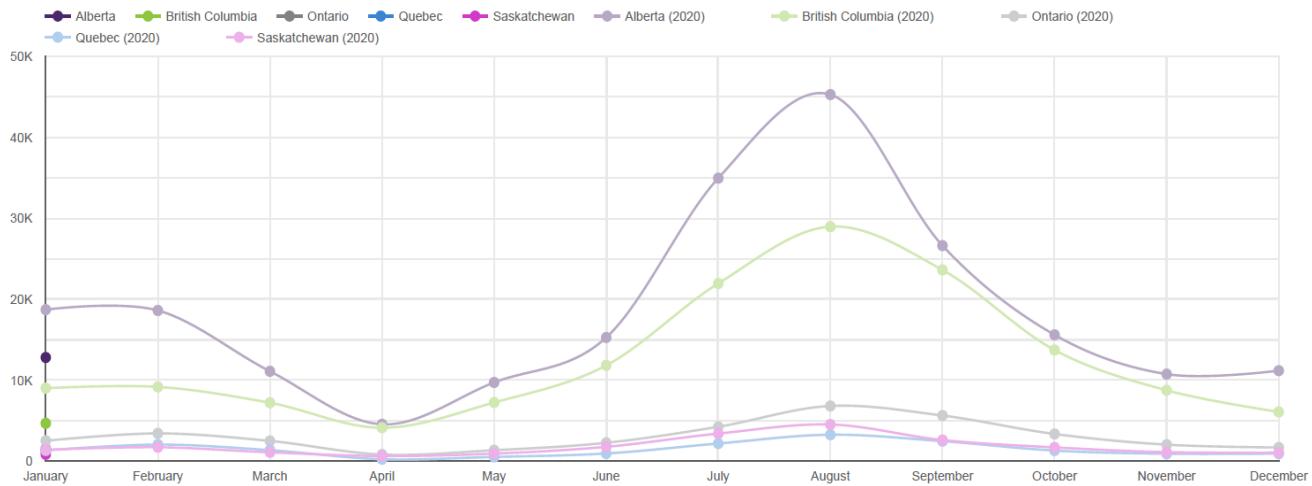


Figure 2 Source Telus Insights 2020

Monthly Percent Change - 2020

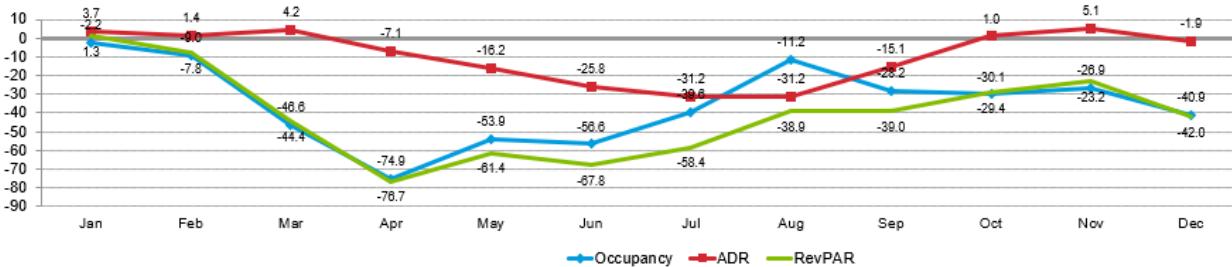


Figure 4 Source STR Destination Report 2020

AirDNA Entire Place Occupancy Comparison

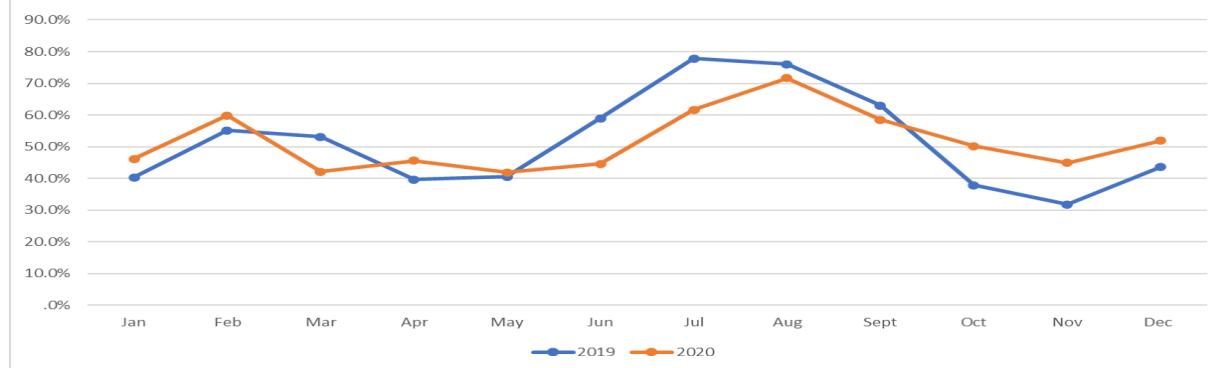
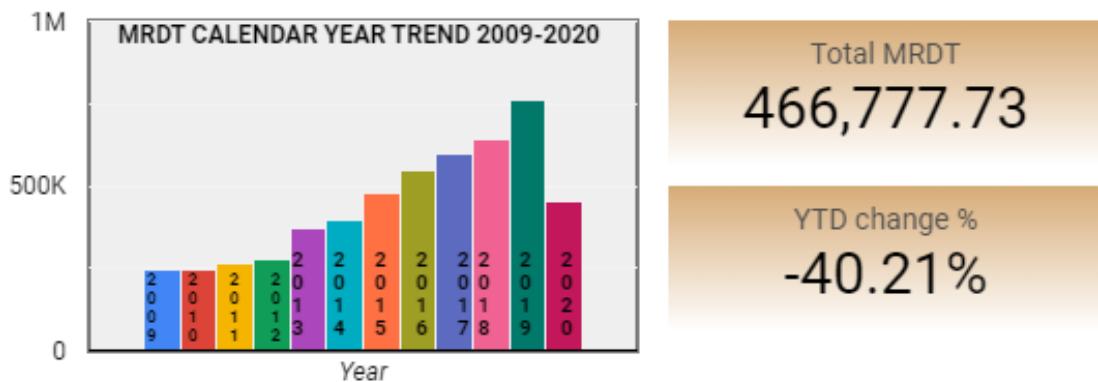


Figure 3 Source AirDNA

## Key Performance Indicators 2020

### MRDT REVENUES



### Average Length of Stay (Nights)

Winter 2019  
3.5

Summer 2019  
2.5

### Destination Awareness

Winter 2018/19  
69%

Summer 2019  
40%

Overnight Visitors  
Winter 2018/19  
89%

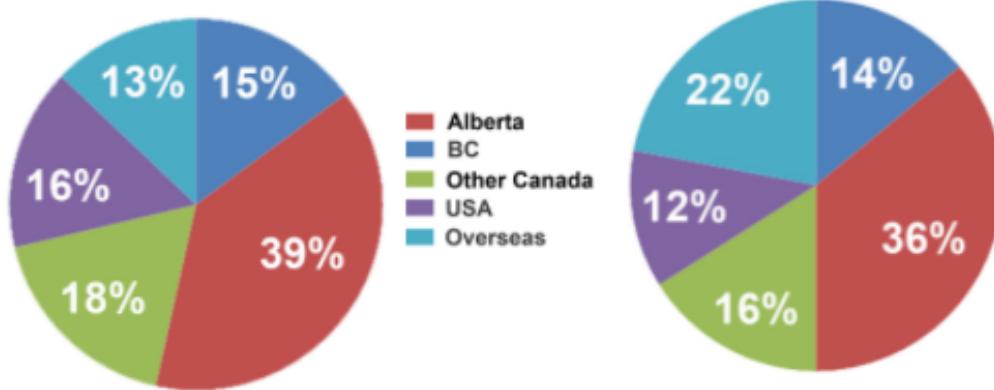
Summer 2018  
84%

### TARGET MARKET PENETRATION

Market Origin

Winter 2018/19

Summer 2019



### PUBLIC & MEDIA RELATIONS

Earned Media Features  
72

Stakeholder News Open %  
52%

Consumer Database  
10,288

Consumer News Open %  
13.41%

## SOCIAL MEDIA

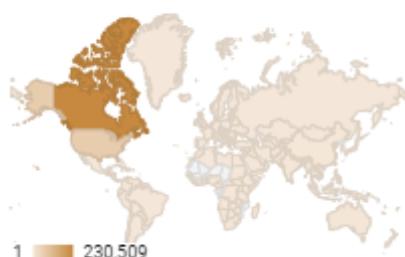
			
Instagram Followers <b>18,000</b>	Facebook Fans <b>15,000</b>	Twitter Followers <b>2,900</b>	Video Views <b>215,900</b>
Instagram Engagement <b>105,000</b>	Facebook Engagement <b>76,000</b>	Twitter Engagement <b>2,600</b>	

## WEBSITE ANALYTICS

Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 31, 2020 ▾



Web Visits:  
**322,362**  
⬇ -30.4%



Unique Users  
**322,362**  
⬇ -30.4%

Organic Searches  
**117,067**  
⬇ -6.4%

Digital Campaigns  
**107,969**  
⬇ -56.2%

### Top 5 Country of Origin by Visit

Country	Sessions	% Δ
Canada	230,509	-10.5% ↓
United States	65,017	-61.2% ↓
United Kingdom	6,442	-26.1% ↓
Australia	2,388	-50.5% ↓
Germany	2,121	-32.7% ↓

### Content Drill down/Page views

Activity	Page Views	% Δ
Biking	12,633	-47.6% ↓
Heli & Cat Skiing	3,549	5.1% ↑
Hiking	26,535	-65.5% ↓
Other	43,183	-28.9% ↓
Parks	247	-96.9% ↓
Rafting	11,613	-1.1% ↓
Ski Touring	3,168	1.1% ↑
Skiing	30,701	52.8% ↑

## Financial Summary

The primary source of revenue for Tourism Golden is the 2% Municipal and Regional District tax (MRDT). Typically, MRDT provides over 80% of total revenues, however the reduction of revenues by 40% (approximately \$300,000) meant that MRDT in 2020 represented only 56% of total funding.

We are appreciative of the availability of emergency and other grants and funding that made up approximately 24% of total revenues in 2020.

We started the 2020 fiscal year in a strong financial position due to a large carry-forward. 2019 had been an outstanding year for tourism in Golden, and MRDT revenues had exceeded projections, resulting in a larger-than-anticipated carry-forward into 2020. We were fortunate that this provided us with a solid financial base as we waited out the pandemic.

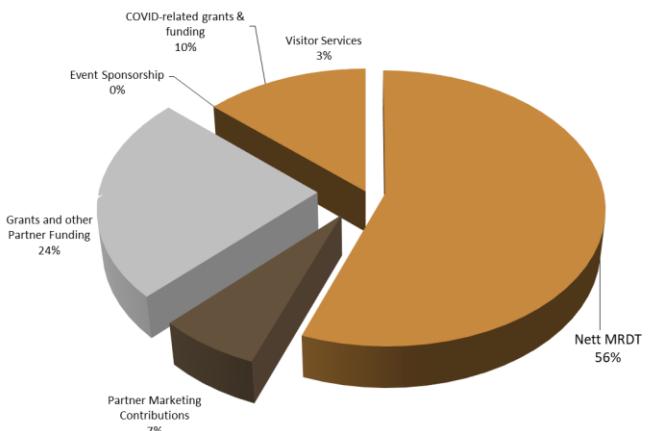
The deferment of remitted MRDT between March and September 2020 along with the unprecedented pandemic situation created a high degree of uncertainty for cash-flow and revenue.

Consequently, we were particularly careful with ensuring that only critical activities and expenses were undertaken. This approach, combined with a reduction in marketing opportunities, geographic audiences and media hosting resulted in a large carry forward at the end of 2020. This placed us in a comfortable position for all the uncertainties brought about by the unanticipated continuation of the pandemic into 2021 and the provincial Circuit Breaker travel restrictions issued in April and May 2021.

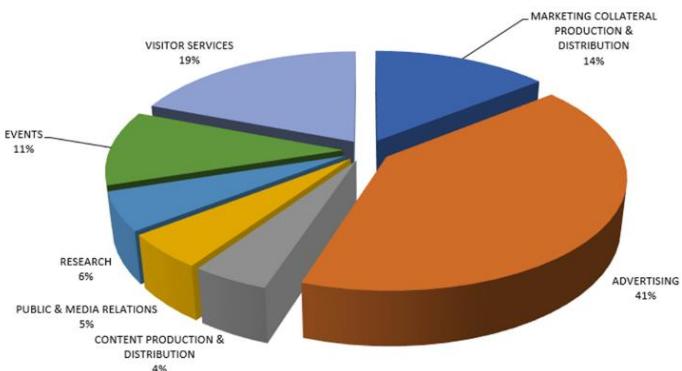
Overall, 70% of 2020 expenses were directed to tactical implementation of destination marketing and management.

Financial statements produced by Cox & Co. and approved by the Tourism Golden Finance Committee and Board of Directors are available on request to Tourism Golden members.

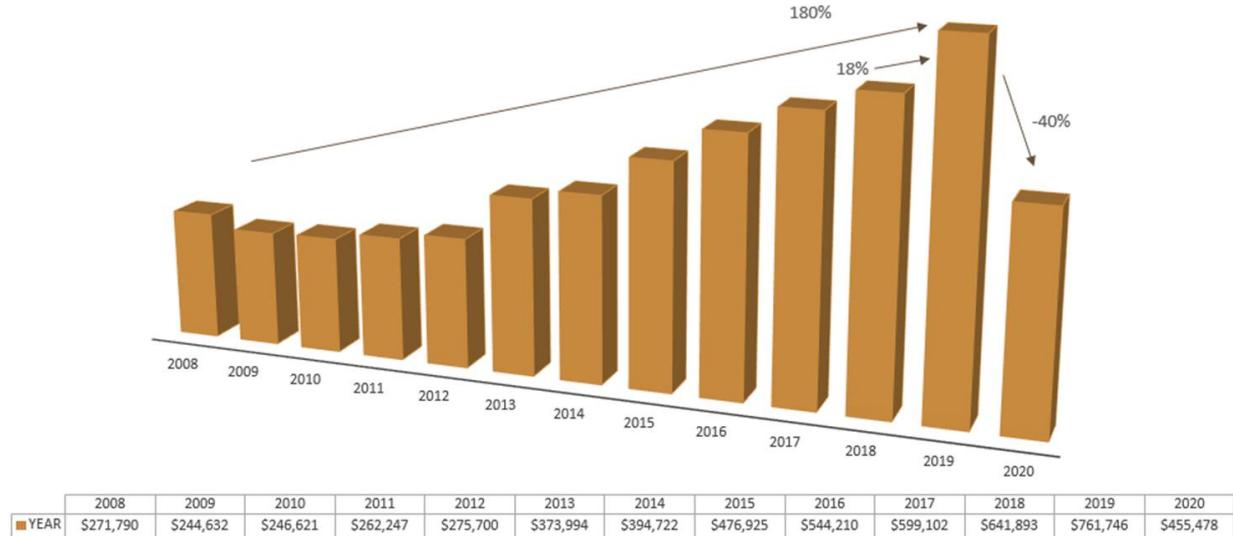
**2020 FY Revenue Sources**



**2020 FY EXPENSES BY STRATEGY**



### Nett MRDT Revenues 2008 - 2020



### MRDT REVENUES BY MONTH 2019 - 2021

