

**Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Report to Mat-Su Borough Assembly  
June 15, 2021**



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## Member Outreach & Education

- Hosted 26 webinars since March 2020
- Focused on resources, recovery and marketing

- Update on Covid-19 Status
- Mat-Su Small Business Development Center
- Mat-Su Borough Economic Impact Task Force
- 2020 Mat-Su State Parks Update
- Guidance and Safety Protocols for Reopening
- Highway Neighbors 2020
- Show Up For Alaska 2020
- Mat-Su Borough CARES Grants

### Covid Economic Relief for the Travel Industry



Julie Hart, CFO by Design



- Managing your Online Presence and Reputation
- ATIA Update 2020
- Survival Stories
- Financial Tips for Recovery
- Working With Tour Operators
- Destination Analysts Mat-Su Research Findings

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## Member Outreach & Education

Member webinars, continued

- Cruise Industry Update
- Covid-19 Relief for the Travel Industry
- Iditarod 2021 Update
- 2021 Mat-Su Winter Tourism Showcase
- Manage your Online Listings
- Search Engine Optimization
- Digital Marketing Tools
- 2021 Mat-Su Summer Product Showcase
- Show Up For Alaska 2021
- Highway Neighbors 2021
- Hatcher Pass Happenings



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## Mat-Su CVB as a community resource

- Covid-19 page updated daily
- Produced Tourism Strong and Travel Safely videos
- More than 2,000 phone calls
- Robust Calendar of Events
- Usage of social media to spread community messaging
- Produced and shared Mat-Su Valley Traveler Research Report of Findings



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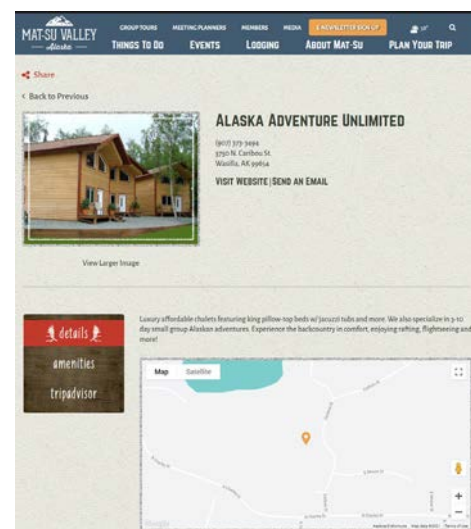
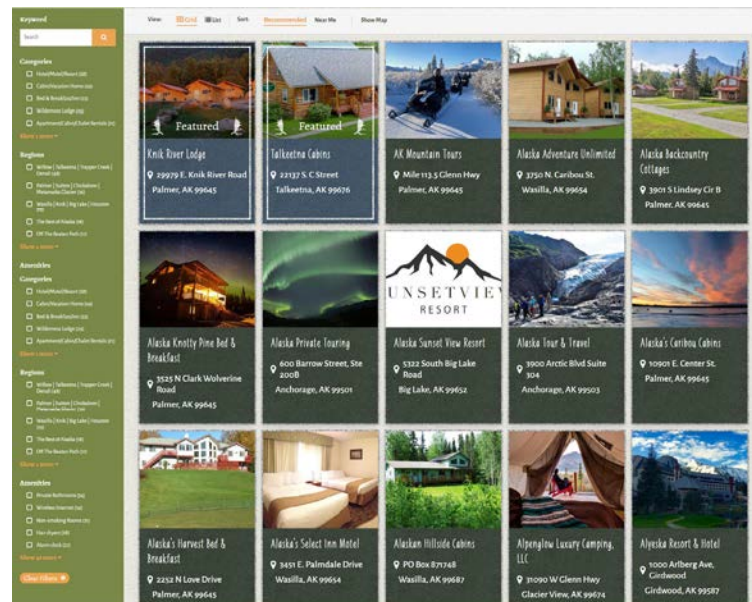
## Marketing – Web Site Development

- Paused paid search but continued Search Engine Optimization (resumed April 2021)
  - Most efficient use of budget during a time of limited travel
- Launched Listings Pro
  - Provides more visibility to Mat-Su business and events
- Mat-Su Puzzle Challenge



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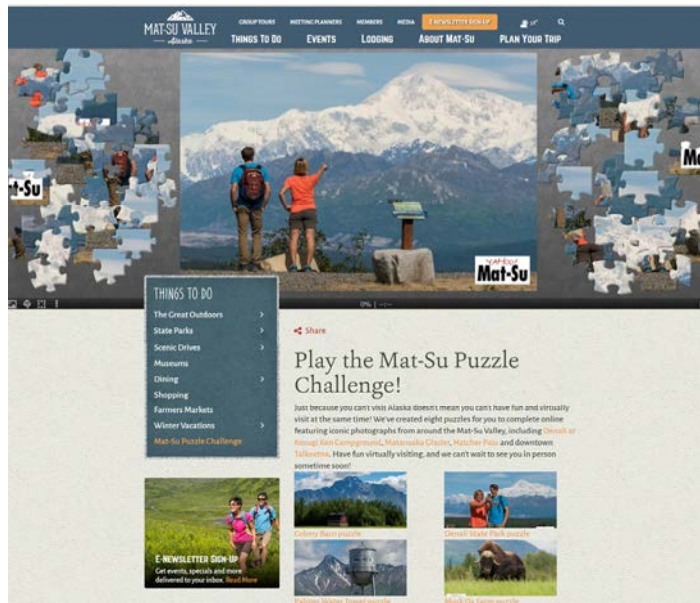
## Marketing – Web Site Development



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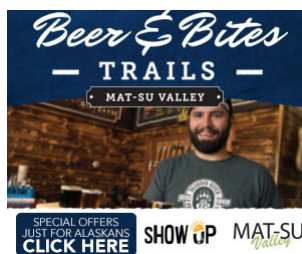
## Marketing – Web Site Development



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## Marketing – Reaching Alaskans

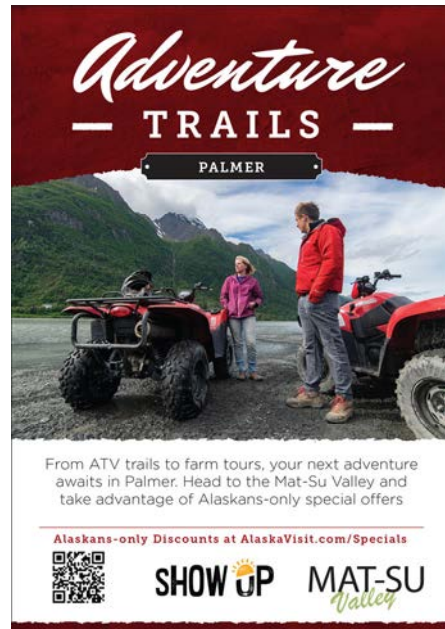
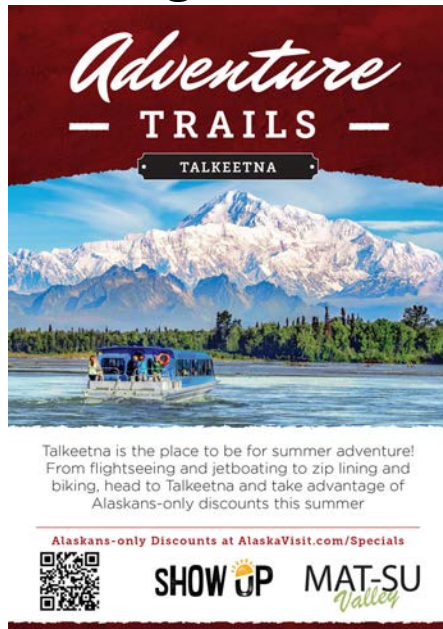
**SHOW UP**



- Largest in-state promotions ever
- Show Up for the Valley (2020 and 21)
  - Print
  - Digital
  - Paid search
  - Social media
  - Streaming television
  - Radio
  - Influencers
- Promoting Alaskans-only specials

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## Marketing – Reaching Alaskans



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## Marketing – National Advertising

- National Travel Magazines

- Travel & Leisure
- Outside Magazine
- AARP Magazine
- Alaska Magazine
- The Milepost



Travel & Leisure ad, February 2021

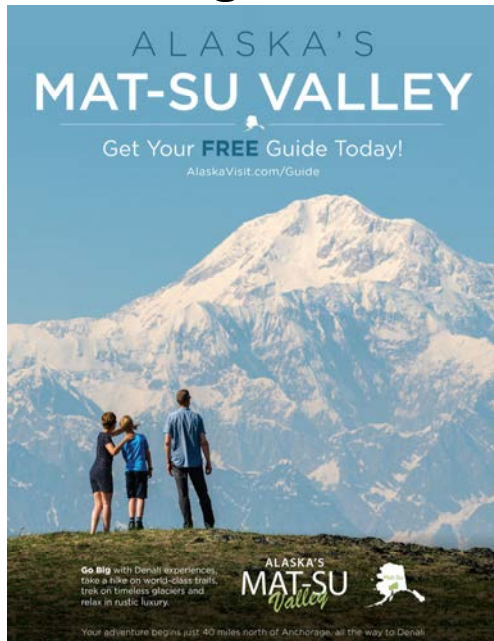
*These ads generated more than 3,000 requests for visitor guides, giving Mat-Su small businesses exposure to highly interested travelers*



AARP Magazine ad, March 2021

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## Marketing – National Advertising



- New! Full-page ad in the 2022 Alaska Vacation Planner
- 250,000 distribution to high-potential visitors and travel advisors
- Call to action to request Mat-Su Visitor Guide and visit AlaskaVisit.com for trip planning information

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## Marketing – Digital Advertising



*These innovative methods of online advertising ensure our destination is promoted to highly-qualified potential visitors, providing efficiency and effectiveness*

- Audience Xtension Network  
Appear on thousands of national web sites based on behavior and location
- Paid Search  
6 campaigns active, focusing on destinations, accommodations, events, food/dining, outdoor activity and general Alaska interest

Drives qualified web users to AlaskaVisit.com and converts to e-mail subscriptions and Visitor Guide requests

Highly targeted and efficient

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## Marketing – E-newsletters

- Monthly communications to subscribers
- One newsletter for Alaskans, a second for Lower 48 travelers
- More than 3,000 subscribers
- One web site visit turns into remarketing opportunities throughout the year



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## Marketing – Content Development

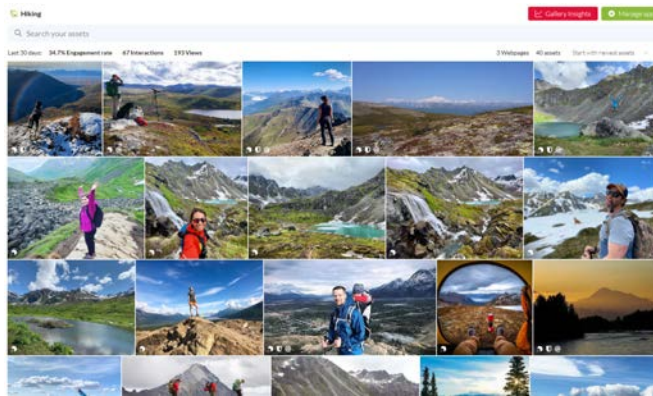


- Weekly blog highlighting destinations, events, businesses
- Web pages added monthly based on Search Engine Optimization recommendations
- Overall, produced 53 videos since April 2020 for members, marketing and outreach, all in house
- Photo shoot scheduled for June 29-July 5

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## Marketing – User-Generated Content

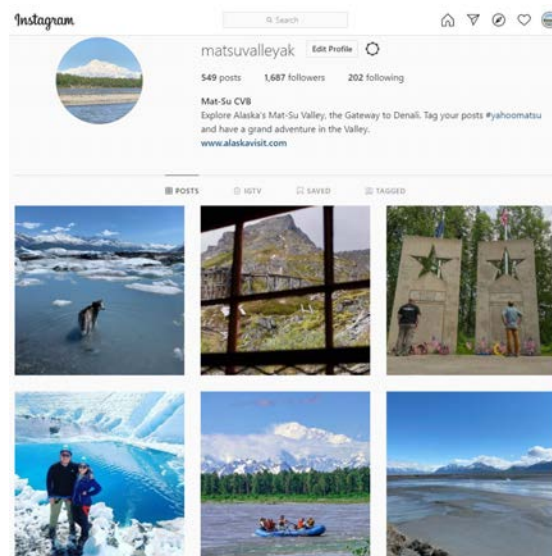


- Platform aggregates images posted to social media
- Rights granted to the CVB to use in social media posts, web site and online
- User-generated content is more engaging and trusted by web users
- Updated weekly with new images on multiple web site pages

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## Marketing – Social Media

- 3xs weekly posts on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter
- Sponsored ads in 6 U.S. cities based on research
- Sponsored ads in Southcentral Alaska promoting in-state visitation
- Creation of Instagram account @MatSuTourismJobs to help workforce development



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## Marketing – New Social Media Campaign

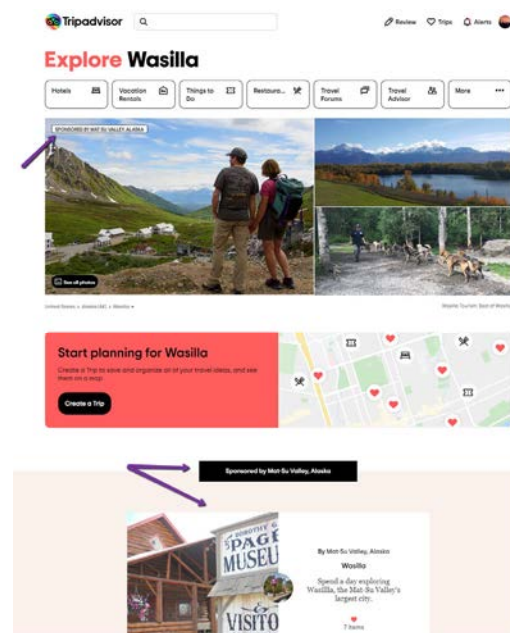


- Facebook 'Experiences'
- Instagram Story ads
- Targeted by location, demographics and behavior
- National campaign features imagery and call-to-action to visit web site, runs throughout summer
- Administered by Sparkloft, an international leader in travel social media marketing

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## Awarded DCCED Destination Promotion Grant

- Advertising on TripAdvisor for the first time – sponsoring all Mat-Su destinations
- Streaming TV in Lower 48
- In-state TV on KTUU Channel 2
- Digital advertising in Lower 48 markets
- Doubled pay-per-click advertising throughout summer
- Hosting two influencer familiarization trips



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## National Travel Industry Trends



- Travel sentiment – 80 percent are planning on booking a summer vacation, up from 50 percent in January
- Good Morning America coming to broadcast live on Solstice
- Regional drive market
- Outdoor recreation
- Health and wellness
- Car rental shortages
- Staffing challenges
- Short booking window

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## Mat-Su Summer 2021 Update

- Two different stories
  - Independent traveler segment strong for local small businesses
  - Larger operators dependent on cruise visitors still facing big losses in 2021
- Cruise update
- Canadian border closure – no long-haul highway traffic
- Alaska Railroad and Denali National Park operating at reduced capacities
- Domestic instead of international



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## **2021 In-State Marketing Campaign**

- Social Media
  - Geotargeted in-state ads, May-August
- Radio
  - Anchorage market radio donut
- Pay-per-click
  - 4 months
  - Targeted to SC Alaska and Fairbanks
  - Points to “Things to Do” page and specials
- Print
  - Anchorage Daily News, full color ads
    - 3 ads weekly, May-August (48 ads total)
  - Anchorage Press, full color ads
    - Weekly, May-August (17 ads total)
  - Warrior (military newspaper on JBER)
    - Weekly, May-August (17 ads total)
- Digital
  - Google programmatic ads via KTUU
    - Targeted to SC Alaska and Fairbanks
    - May-August
    - 600,000 digital impressions
  - AnchoragePress.com
    - 50K impressions/month, 200K total
  - ADN.com
    - 50K impressions/month, 200K total
  - Frontiersman e-newsletter ad, first week of each month
    - 6,500 subscribers, points to specials page



- Streaming television
  - Via KTUU, 15- and 30-second commercials
  - Targeted to SC Alaska and Fairbanks and behavioral
  - 30K commercials per month, 120K total commercials
  - Can't be skipped or fast forwarded
  - Delivered across numerous platforms
- Over-the-air television
  - KTUU Channel 2 30-second commercial
  - Airs throughout summer, including news
  - Airs during Summer Olympics
- Alaska Travelgram
  - Sponsorship in May, June, July, August
  - Highlights destinations, specials
- TravelAlaska Travel Specials
  - Ad placed throughout summer
  - Newsletter ad (650,000 subscribers) next six months

## Mat-Su CVB CARES Act Funding Report

July 31, 2020 – June 15, 2021

On July 31, 2020 the Mat-Su CVB signed a grant agreement with the Mat-Su Borough.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly appropriated **\$1,500,000** to Grantee via Ordinance Serial No. 20-069, Resolution Serial No. 20-069, and Informational Memorandum No. 20-139; and

WHEREAS, the justification for the grant to Grantee is:

MSCVB's purpose is to provide tourism related stimulus. They actively promote Borough tourism related business for the various seasons. With the COVID-19 related shut-downs and the resulting summer related cancelations many sectors of the tourism industry have been devastated. Advertising and other promotions to advertise for safe and responsible tourism and the associated economic benefits are critical to get tourists to return to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and help revive the this critical sector of our economy. These promotional activities need to happen now as most people book their trips 6 months to a year in advance.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Expense</b>
<b><u>Advertising</u></b>	
Print	47,000
Radio	4,500
Television	9,000
Internet	77,000
Other	1,500
<b><u>Visitor Guide</u></b>	
Graphic Design	22,000
Printing	20,000
Shipping	2,200
Mailing Lists/Labels	17,200
Postage	18,500

Brochure Distribution	5,000
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**Website**

Internet Services	73,000
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Travel Trade	
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Trade Show Registration	3,000
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**Research**

2020 Mat-Su Valley Visitor Research	32,000
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**Operations**

Lease	44,000
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Accounting	2,500
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Industry Trade Memberships	4,500
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Equipment Rental	1,700
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Utilities	4,000
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**Staff Implementation/Compensation**

Wages	223,000
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Benefits and Payroll Taxes	<u>94,000</u>
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	<b>\$702,600</b>
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