



The Power of Co-Op Marketing: Driving Success for You & Your Stakeholders



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Introduction

Travel is all about making memories. People plan trips to recharge, discover new places, and broaden their horizons. Amidst the diversity of traveler motivations, one thing remains constant—the need for compelling, effective marketing to capture their attention.

As a destination marketer, your role is to guide travelers toward your destination. But standing out in a crowded market can be challenging—especially when resources are limited. That’s where the collaborative power and expanded resources of co-op marketing can help boost your impact.

Co-op marketing means partnering with hotels, tourism boards, local businesses, and attractions to pool marketing budgets and messaging. Together, you can create larger, more impactful campaigns that reach wider audiences and drive visitation.

With *The Power of Co-Op Marketing: Driving Success for You and Your Stakeholders*, you will:

- ▶ **Master the Fundamentals:**
Understand the core principles of co-op marketing and learn how to integrate them into your marketing strategies.
- ▶ **Discover Best Practices:**
Explore proven strategies and tactics for creating successful co-op marketing campaigns, ensuring maximum impact and efficiency.
- ▶ **Build Enhanced Credibility:**
Learn how collaborative efforts can boost shared credibility, enhancing trust and authority in the eyes of potential visitors.



Executive Letter

As a destination marketer, your role in driving the economic impact of travel and tourism for your region is vital. This requires strong community collaboration, clear communication, and strategic alignment among all stakeholders.

In my 15 years as a destination marketer, I learned that our partners, members, and stakeholders are the backbone of tourism. They're most often why travelers choose one destination over another. Travelers choose their destination based on the experiences they offer. They want to immerse themselves in a local community and explore the neighborhoods, indulge in local favorite restaurants, and discover local museums, attractions, tours and more.

At the same time, community stakeholders want to know, "How are you driving visitor business to my organization?"

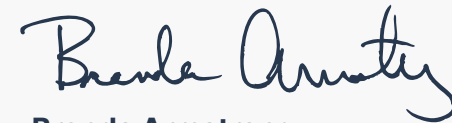
This is where co-op marketing proves invaluable. It showcases the community's offerings to visitors and allows businesses to invest in a targeted program that specifically benefits their business.

Co-op programs are a tried-and-true strategy, with 78% of destination marketing organizations (DMOs) actively investing. But today's digital tools open up new possibilities for your strategy with real-time data, precise campaign customization, and effortless management, with tangible results like bookings, foot traffic, and economic impact.

At Sojern, we recognize the vital role of co-op marketing and are here to support you every step of the way. We're excited to introduce our new guide, packed with practical insights and actionable tips, to empower you to leverage the power of co-op marketing.

We trust this eBook will equip you with the insights to build the strategy you need to elevate your co-op marketing efforts and drive success.

All the best,



Brenda Armstrong

Senior Director, Destination Co-Op Development, Sojern



CHAPTER ONE

Co-Op Marketing 101

Whether you're new to the concept or looking to refine your approach, this guide provides a solid foundation to see how co-op marketing might work for you. In this chapter, we explore the fundamentals of co-op marketing, highlighting why it is an essential tool for destination marketers.



What is Co-Op Marketing?

Co-op marketing, short for cooperative marketing, is a strategic partnership where multiple organizations within a destination come together to pool resources and share costs to achieve common marketing goals. Imagine coming together and aligning your goals to create a marketing campaign that goes way beyond what you could achieve on your own. Sounds ideal, right?

This isn't a new concept. This strategy dates back to the early 20th century when destinations would collaborate by sharing space on full-page ads to promote their unique offerings and attract travelers collectively. Fast forward to today. We have revolutionized co-op marketing, making it more accessible and effective.

In the travel industry, this can look like DMOs collaborating with hotels, attractions, airlines, tour operators, and more, to collectively work to boost visitation and increase visitor spend in-market. These partnerships can range from simple joint promotions to comprehensive, multichannel campaigns.



How Can Co-Op Marketing **Help You?**

Why should you consider co-op marketing? Let's break down its many advantages:

Cost Efficiency

By sharing the costs of marketing campaigns, you can achieve high-impact results without draining your budget. This approach lets you allocate resources to other critical areas, allowing you to focus on what truly matters: driving economic growth for your destination, supporting local businesses, and creating memorable experiences for travelers. Plus, it allows smaller local partners to reach incoming visitors in a much more affordable way.

Extended Reach and Exposure

Combining your marketing efforts with like-minded partners can exponentially increase your reach. Imagine your destination being showcased to an

entirely new audience—it's like getting an invitation to the most exclusive party in town. This means more visibility, greater brand awareness, and, ultimately, more visitors.

Shared Resources and Expertise

Collaborating allows you to tap into the unique skills, knowledge, and resources of your partners. Whether it's creative talent, market insights, or technological tools, shared resources can significantly enhance the quality and effectiveness of your campaigns.

Scalable and Customizable

Co-op marketing is incredibly flexible. Whether you're a local DMO looking to explore new markets or a national enterprise aiming to strengthen your presence, you can scale and customize your co-op marketing efforts to fit your specific needs. You can tailor

campaigns to target the right audiences, optimize resources, and achieve your marketing goals, regardless of your organization's size or scope.

Top Reasons for Running a Co-Op Marketing Campaign*

58% increasing overall marketing investment

54% reaching wider audiences

46% sharing costs

*% show those who answered yes to running a co-op marketing campaign.

Source: [State of Destination Marketing 2024](#), [Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024](#)

What to Watch Out For

While the benefits are compelling, co-op marketing isn't without its challenges. Here's what you need to watch out for:

Misaligned Goals

Ensure your partners have clearly defined and aligned objectives from the outset. It's important to establish a common vision and set measurable goals that everyone agrees on. This alignment helps you create a unified strategy and avoid conflicting priorities that could undermine the campaign. We'll dive deeper into this topic in the next chapter.

Resource Imbalance

Equitably distribute responsibilities and costs to avoid conflicts. When resources are shared unevenly, it can lead to tensions and dissatisfaction among partners. By clearly defining roles, responsibilities, and contributions,

you can ensure that all parties feel valued and fairly treated, fostering a more cooperative environment.

Communication Breakdown

Maintain open, regular communication to keep everyone on the same page. Effective communication is the backbone of successful co-op marketing. Regular updates, meetings, and transparent reporting help prevent misunderstandings and ensure all partners know progress, challenges, and any necessary adjustments.

Top Reasons for Not Running a Co-Op Marketing Campaign*

- 51%** difficulty coordinating and managing programs / partners
- 54%** unable to get private-sector fundraising
- 16%** lack of awareness or know-how

*% show those who answered never to running a co-op marketing campaign.

Source: [State of Destination Marketing 2024](#), [Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024](#)

What Makes a **Successful Partnership?**

Maximize Benefits for All Partners

It's not about picking and choosing partners—it's about creating opportunities that all partners, regardless of size, can benefit from. For example, you might work with an airline and a tour operator to boost travel from a specific market or connect local hotels, attractions, and museums with travelers whose interests align with their offerings.

Define Clear Roles

Establish clear roles and responsibilities to ensure smooth collaboration. When each partner knows their specific tasks and contributions, it reduces confusion and overlap. A well-defined structure helps maintain efficiency and ensures that all aspects of the campaign are covered.

Monitor, Evaluate, and Show Value

Regularly assess the performance of your co-op marketing efforts to identify areas for improvement and celebrate successes. Continuous monitoring allows you to track progress, make data-driven decisions, and adjust strategies as needed. Celebrating achievements not only boosts morale but also reinforces the value of collaboration.



CHAPTER TWO

Get Your Co-Op Program Up and Running

A co-op marketing program can give you unparalleled advantages, setting your destination apart and cutting through the noise. This chapter will guide you through the steps to identify the right partners, define goals, and create a comprehensive plan to ensure your co-op marketing program's success.

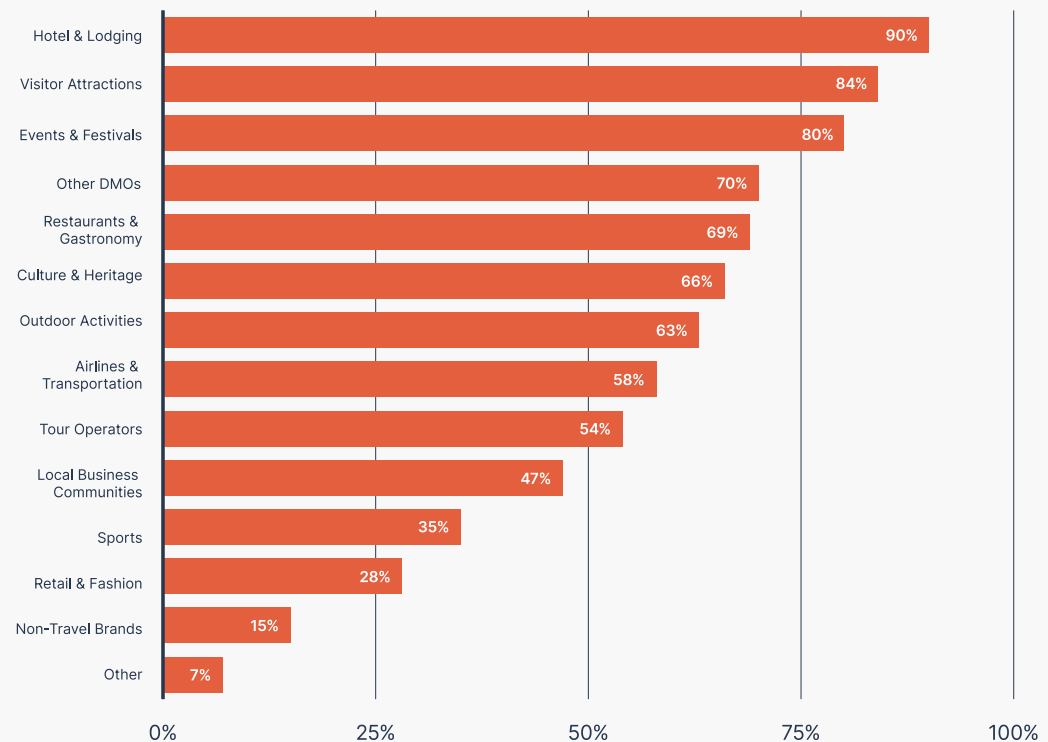


Time to Partner Up

Your destination can find successful collaborations with several key sectors. For example, **90%** of DMOs work with hotel and lodging entities, ensuring visitors have quality accommodations. Visitor attractions are also popular partners, with **84%** of DMOs engaging these entities to highlight local points of interest. Beyond that, **80%** of DMOs partner with events and festivals that attract large crowds, while **70%** collaborate with other DMOs to share resources and amplify their reach.

However, not limiting your partnerships to these traditional sectors is important. Expanding your efforts to include non-travel brands, which **15%** of DMOs currently do, can introduce fresh perspectives and innovative approaches. Partnering with airlines and transportation providers, a strategy used by **50%** of DMOs, can streamline the travel experience for visitors and enhance the overall appeal of your destination.

Types of Companies DMOs Would Partner With For Digital Marketing Campaigns



Results are shown in absolute numbers for clarity. Respondents could choose more than one option.

Source: [State of Destination Marketing 2024](#), [Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024](#)

Prioritize Your Goals to Achieve More Together

Setting clear, focused goals is essential to the success of your co-op marketing program. These goals should be measurable, achievable, and aligned with the broader marketing strategy of your destination. By clearly defining what you want to achieve—whether it's increasing visitation, extending stay durations, boosting visitor spending, or enhancing brand awareness—you lay the foundation for a successful co-op initiative that benefits all participants.

In a co-op marketing program, it's also important to ensure that the efforts of all participants support the destination's broader strategy. This means focusing on key performance indicators (KPIs) that matter most, like achieving a specific increase in tourism numbers, improving occupancy rates during off-peak seasons, or increasing social media engagement.

Rather than just aligning partner objectives, it's about creating synergy across the entire program. Encourage all participants to set campaign goals that align with the overall objectives of the destination. This way, while each partner—be it hotels, local attractions, or tour operators—pursues their KPIs, they also contribute to the shared success of the destination. This collaborative approach ensures that everyone involved sees tangible benefits, making your co-op marketing program more effective.



Plan for Success

A marketing plan serves as the blueprint for your co-op marketing program, covering various aspects such as target audiences, key messages, marketing channels, and content strategies.

Target Audiences

Identify and segment your target audiences to tailor messages and select the right channels. By understanding the demographics, behaviors, and preferences of potential visitors, you can create campaigns that truly resonate and drive results.

Key Messages

Create clear and compelling messages that directly resonate with your target audiences. Focus on highlighting your destination's unique selling points and the benefits of visiting, ensuring that each message speaks to what makes your location special.

Marketing Channels

Choose the right combination of marketing channels to effectively reach your target audiences. Focus on the platforms where your audience is most active to maximize your impact. Your mix can include digital marketing—

such as programmatic advertising, social media, email campaigns, Connected TV (CTV), and Search Engine Marketing (SEM)—alongside experiential marketing, like events, co-branded tradeshow presence, and pop-up experiences, for the most effective and trackable results.



CHAPTER THREE

Chart the Optimal Path Through the Funnel

Traditionally, DMOs focused on upper-funnel marketing—essentially casting the widest net to attract visitors. However, recent trends highlight a significant move toward full-funnel marketing strategies. A staggering 70% of DMOs are now investing in activities that span the entire visitor cycle, from awareness to conversion and beyond.



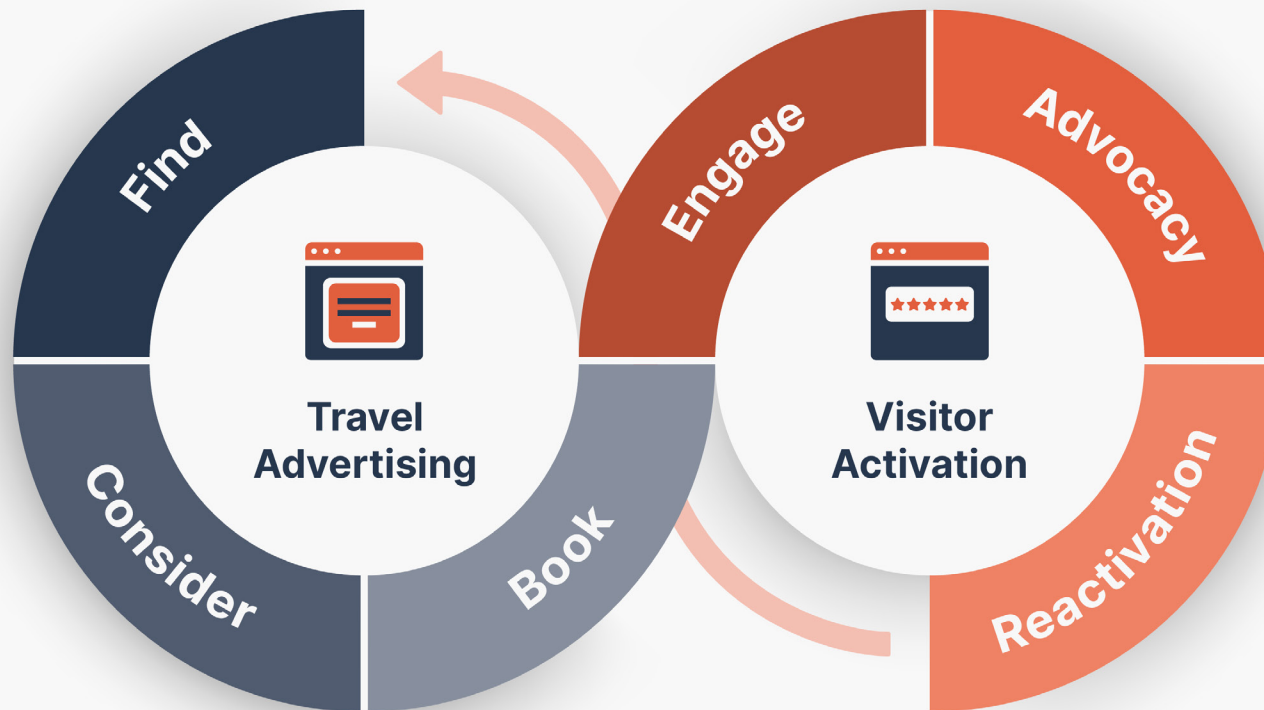
Full-Funnel Marketing

It All Starts With Awareness and Inspiration

At the top of the funnel, it's all about getting the word out about your destination and inspiring people to travel. You can do this through broad advertising campaigns, social media promotions, CTV ads, and content marketing to spark interest. CTV is quickly becoming a go-to channel, helping you reach a wide audience with engaging videos. Even though many are moving towards full-funnel marketing, about 30% of destinations still focus primarily on the awareness phase to grab as much attention as possible.



The Travel Marketing Lifecycle, Explained



Find

Travelers search for inspiration, providing destination marketers with valuable data.

Consider

Now's the time for targeted messaging with engaging content to guide decisions.

Book

Harness the power of first-party data to secure bookings from both new and returning travelers.

Engage

Reach confirmed travelers before and during their visit to help guide an experience built to their interests.

Advocacy

Focus on building connections with visitors, underscoring your dedication to welcoming travelers.

Reactivation

Strategic, post-stay outreach encourages visitors to filter back into the cycle for a return visit.

Turn That Awareness Into Consideration

In the middle of the funnel, efforts shift towards nurturing interest and consideration. This involves providing more detailed information, such as destination guides, itineraries, and testimonials. Retargeting ads and email marketing help keep the destination top of mind. DMOs investing in full-funnel campaigns recognize the importance of this stage in transitioning potential visitors from awareness to active consideration.

Convert Those Who Arrive at the Bottom

Partnerships with hotels, airlines, and attractions can offer bundled deals that incentivize action. The bottom of the funnel is about driving conversions, such as bookings or ticket purchases. Tactics here include clear call to actions, special offers or limited-time

discounts, and easy-to-use booking platforms. Full-funnel approaches are crucial here, as marketing campaigns are judged based on their impact, and DMOs must demonstrate economic benefits to justify their budgets.

Keep Them Coming Back for More

Boost loyalty by sending personalized follow-up emails and offering exclusive deals to past visitors. Focus on turning repeat visitors into advocates by creating experiences they'll want to share with others, driving valuable word-of-mouth promotion. This keeps engagement high, reduces the effort needed to attract new visitors, and ensures each campaign builds on the momentum of previous successes.

Breakdown of Stage-Specific Actions*

85% Upper Funnel

51% Lower Funnel

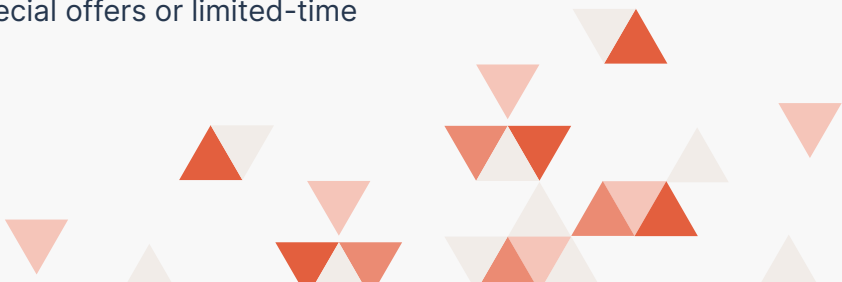
18% In-Trip

15% Conversion

1% Post-Trip

* % show those who answered yes to running a stage-specific campaign.

Source: State of Destination Marketing 2024, Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024



Pinpoint the Travelers Who **Love What You Offer**

To market your destination effectively, start by truly understanding your ideal travelers. Dive into past visitor data to see who's coming—are they adventure seekers, families, luxury travelers, or event planners? Understanding what draws them to your destination is crucial. Don't stop there, though. Tap into broader travel industry insights and partner data to gain a fuller picture of traveler behaviors, preferences, and interests. This combination of your own data and industry insights will help you tailor your marketing and reach a wider audience.

For example, if you're looking to attract **event planners**, focus on what makes your destination perfect for hosting events, like flexible conference facilities, safety, affordability, and easy transportation. Highlight successful events you've hosted and offer packages that make planning easy and stress-free.

For **eco-conscious travelers**, emphasize your commitment to sustainability. Promote eco-friendly hotels, green initiatives, and opportunities for low-impact tourism. Being transparent about your environmental efforts helps build trust with this group.



When targeting **accessibility-focused travelers**, highlight your accessible accommodations, attractions, and transportation options. Provide clear guides, and consider partnering with local accessibility organizations to enhance your destination's appeal further.

And don't forget about other key groups, like **cultural enthusiasts** who are passionate about heritage experiences, **foodies** eager to explore local cuisine, or **solo travelers** looking for unique adventures. Tailoring your marketing to these specific interests can help you attract a diverse range of visitors.

By understanding who your ideal travelers are and what they're looking for, you can create marketing strategies that truly resonate and bring the right visitors to your destination.

Resource Allocation: Divide & Conquer

Zero in on the stages of the funnel that matter most to your goals. Allocate resources where they'll have the biggest impact to make every move count. With **70%** of DMOs investing in full-funnel activities, the inter-connected customer journey allows for more efficient data tracking

and campaign optimization. Using partner and first-party data helps you develop continuous improvement and better ROI, making extensive tracking and analytics systems essential. This approach drives immediate results and fosters long-term growth and stakeholder satisfaction.

A comprehensive budget should account for all aspects of the campaign, including advertising costs, production expenses, and personnel. Resource allocation should ensure that each partner contributes equitably based on their capabilities and expected returns.



*All monetary values are for example only. Partner investments can range from \$500/mo. to \$10k/mo. for 3 months.

†Partners may vary in number and type depending on host.

CHAPTER FOUR

Step Up Your Tactics & Strategies

Digital marketing is at the heart of today's DMO strategies—and it's easy to see why. With over 70% of DMOs focusing heavily on digital channels and 81% managing decisions about digital strategies in-house, being quick on your feet and ready to adapt has never been more important.

In this chapter, we'll dive into how essential digital marketing tactics—like social media advertising, programmatic, CTV, and content marketing—can help you connect with potential visitors, boost your brand, and inspire more travelers to choose your destination.

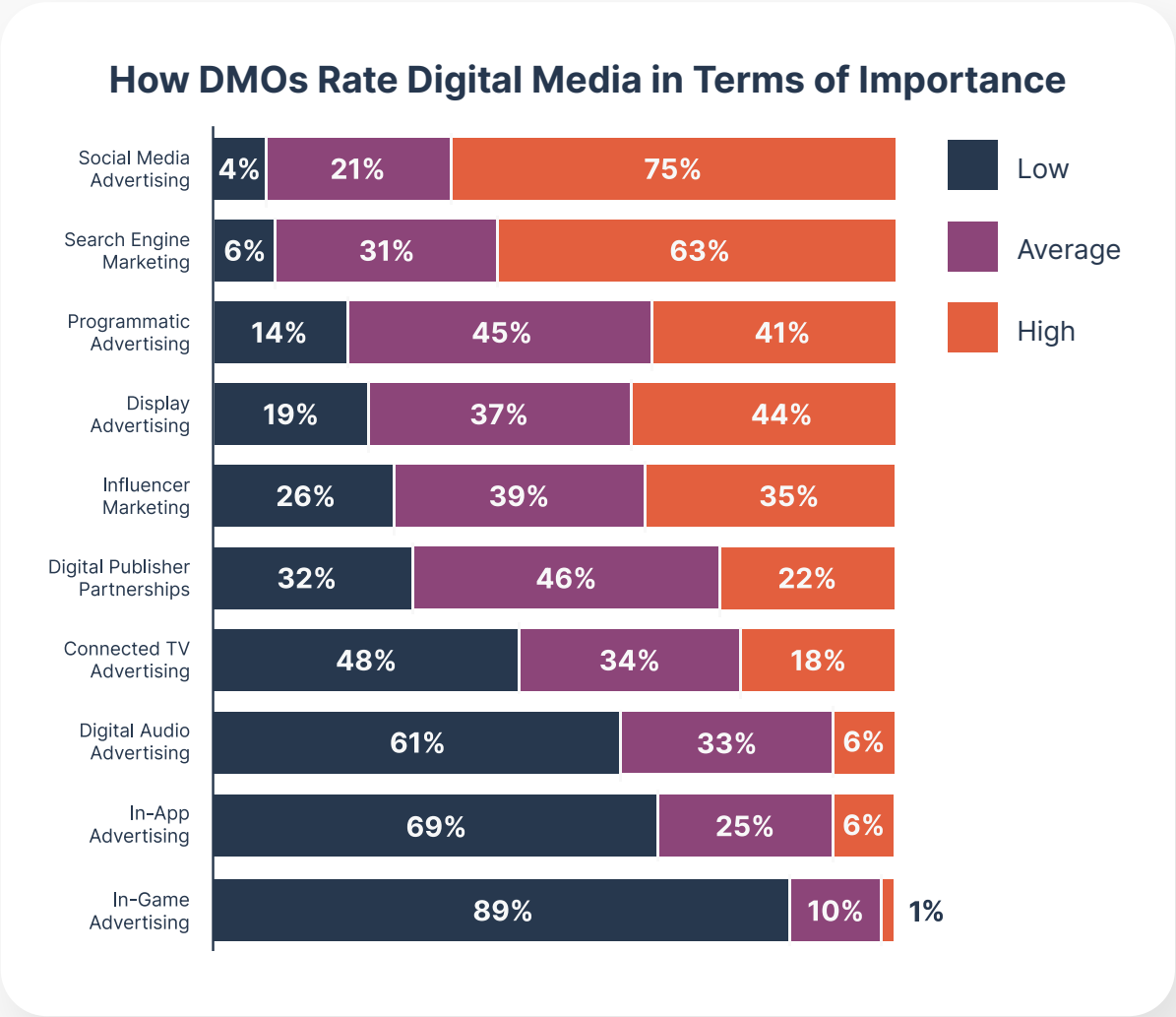


Map the Channels That Drive Travel Choices

Each marketing channel plays a unique role in guiding travelers through their journey, from discovering a destination to booking a trip. Some channels are great for building awareness and showcasing what makes a destination special, while others help build trust as travelers plan and research. Understanding how each channel fits into this journey helps destinations reach the right people at the right time. Here’s a look at how DMOs rate the channels they find most important in this process.

Social Media and SEM

Social media advertising and SEM dominate the paid media landscape for DMOs. A whopping **96%** of DMOs consider social media advertising to be of high or average importance, closely followed by SEM at nearly **95%**. These platforms offer unparalleled reach and targeting capabilities, allowing you to connect with your audience more effectively.



Source: [State of Destination Marketing 2024](#), Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024

Programmatic Advertising and Native Ads

Programmatic advertising is a smart way to buy and sell digital ads using technology and data. It works like a behind-the-scenes bidding process that takes place as a webpage loads, ensuring your ads reach the right people at the right time. It's no surprise that **86%** of DMOs prioritize this approach. Programmatic ads deliver intelligent results across multiple channels, adapting and evolving based on campaign performance.

When it comes to ad formats, native advertising remains a top choice, with **94%** of DMOs prioritizing this over other formats. Native ads blend seamlessly with content, providing a more engaging user experience. Display and video advertising follow closely, with **85%** and **78%** importance respectively.

Programmatic Channels and the Marketing Funnel



CTV

CTV is still an untapped resource for many DMOs. While **18%** see it as highly important, nearly half—**48%**—still rate it as low importance. This shows that there's a lot of potential in CTV that many DMOs haven't fully explored yet. As more travelers turn to streaming platforms, CTV offers a great opportunity to engage audiences with dynamic video content. There's room for DMOs to take advantage of this growing channel and make a bigger impact in their marketing efforts.

Content Marketing

As competition for attention intensifies, DMOs have learned to balance their budgets: 20-40% is typically allocated to creating compelling content, while the lion's share, 60-80%, goes toward amplifying that content through strategic paid media campaigns. This careful allocation ensures that the messages you craft not only reach your audience but also resonate, leading to engagement and, ultimately, visits.

Types of Content That Drive Results

A successful content marketing strategy is diverse, leveraging various formats to capture attention and communicate your destination's unique value. Here are some essential content types that should be part of any DMO's toolkit:

- ▶ **Blogs:** These are not just search engine optimization (SEO) tools—they're opportunities to position your destination as an expert in travel, offering tips, guides, and stories that travelers find genuinely useful. Well-crafted blog posts can influence decision-making and inspire travelers to choose your destination.
- ▶ **Emails:** Personalized email campaigns are key to nurturing potential visitors. By providing tailored content based on user preferences and behaviors, emails can keep your destination top of mind, ensuring that when travelers are ready to book, your destination is their first choice.

- ▶ **Videos:** There's no better way to showcase the beauty of your destination than through video. Engaging video content can evoke emotions and provide a virtual experience that entices travelers to explore more. From quick social media clips to in-depth documentaries, videos can capture the essence of your destination in ways words can't.



CHAPTER FIVE

What's Next for Digital Marketing?

Digital marketing is being shaped by several transformative forces, including sustainability, inclusivity, and artificial intelligence (AI). By embracing these trends, you can not only attract more visitors but also contribute positively to the global community.



Sustainability & Societal Impact

In recent years, the focus on sustainability in tourism has expanded beyond just environmental concerns. DMOs are increasingly recognizing the importance of societal well-being and the positive impact tourism can have on local communities. This holistic approach to sustainability is

becoming a critical aspect of destination marketing strategies.

For DMOs, this means prioritizing initiatives that benefit both the environment and the residents of the destination. Whether it's supporting local businesses, promoting cultural

heritage, or ensuring that tourism contributes to economic stability, the goal is to create a balance that fosters long-term sustainability. In this context, content marketing plays a vital role in educating travelers about responsible tourism and encouraging behaviors that align with these goals.

How DMOs Are Strongly Prioritizing Environmental Concerns and Goals

Climate Change & Net Zero

62% (EUR)

29% (CAD)

8% (USA)

Biodiversity & Environment

56% (EUR)

24% (CAD)

33% (USA)

Circularity*

30% (EUR)

0% (CAD)

5% (USA)

** Circularity in sustainability means reducing waste and lessening our environmental impact by reusing materials and products.*

Source: State of Destination Marketing 2024, Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024

Diversity & Representation

Representing the cultural, religious, ethnic, sexual, and gender diversity of both the destination and its visitors is essential for modern DMOs. This is not only about being socially responsible—it also resonates with a broader audience and builds trust with potential visitors.

Around the world, DMOs are adopting more inclusive marketing practices. For example, nearly half of all DMOs

prioritize gender equality in their strategies, and a significant portion also focus on LGBTQ+-specific initiatives. Additionally, North American DMOs often place a strong emphasis on celebrating racial and ethnic diversity and European DMOs have a big focus on welcoming travelers with accessibility needs. Canadian DMOs are leading the way in incorporating indigenous cultures into their marketing

strategies, with 71% of respondents identifying this as a key focus.

As the world becomes more interconnected, destinations must reflect the diversity of their communities in their marketing efforts. This not only ensures that all visitors feel welcome but also enhances the authenticity and appeal of your destination.

Key Areas DMOs Prioritize in Their Strategies When it Comes to Social Diversity

51%

of U.S. DMOs strongly prioritize racial and ethnic diversity

71%

of Canadian DMOs strongly prioritize representation of indigenous cultures

45%

of European DMOs strongly prioritize visitors with disabilities

Source: [State of Destination Marketing 2024](#), [Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024](#)

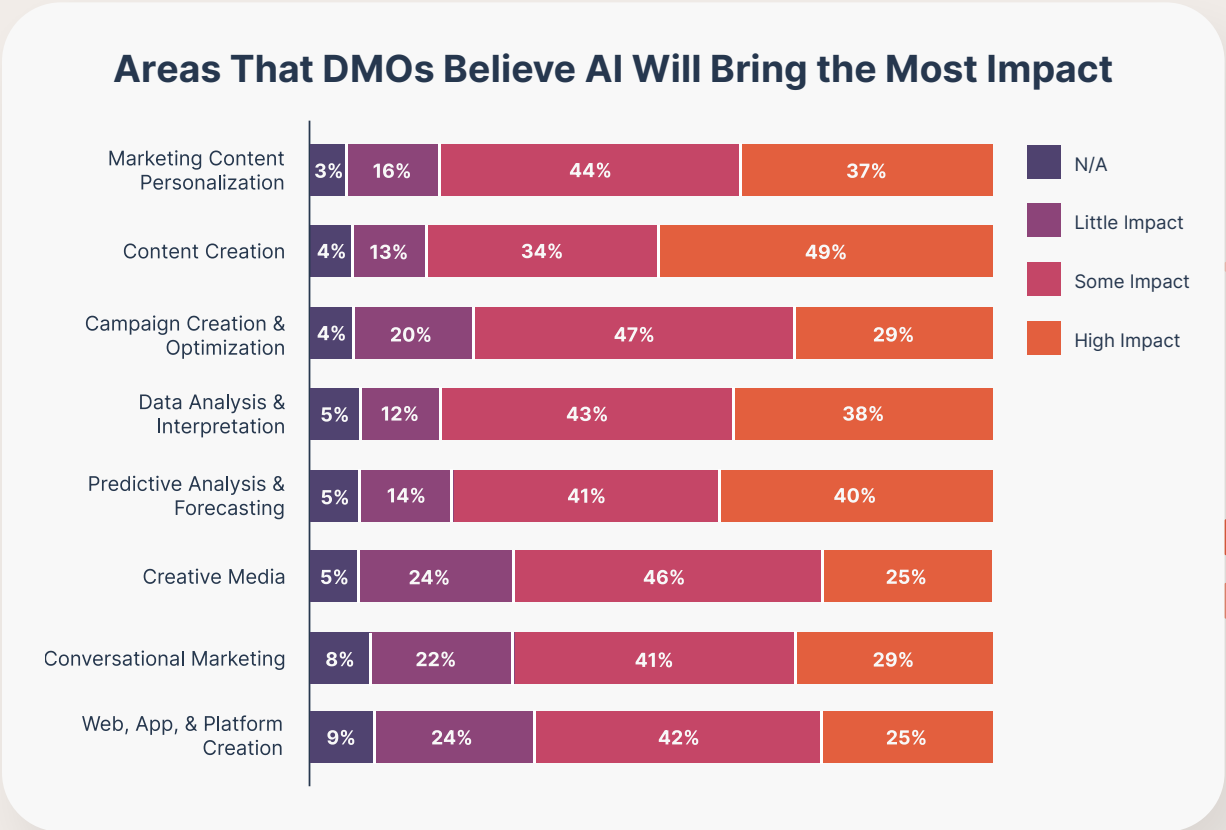
Smarter Approaches & AI

AI is arguably the most significant and transformative trend in digital marketing today. From content creation to customer engagement, AI is redefining how DMOs operate and interact with their audiences.

AI's impact on content creation is already evident, with tools that can generate everything from blog posts to social media content at scale. This technology allows marketers to produce high-quality, personalized content quickly and efficiently, freeing up resources for other strategic initiatives. However, the potential of AI extends far beyond content creation. AI is also revolutionizing data analysis, enabling DMOs to gain deeper insights into traveler behavior and preferences. This, in turn, allows for more targeted and effective marketing campaigns.

AI is reshaping the visitor experience itself. Through natural language processing and machine learning, AI can create personalized interactions that go beyond traditional segmentation.

This means that instead of grouping visitors into broad categories, DMOs can offer tailored experiences that meet the unique needs and interests of each individual traveler.



Source: State of Destination Marketing 2024, Sojern and Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2024

CHAPTER SIX

Putting It All Together

Sojern is all about taking the classic co-op marketing approach and giving it a modern twist. We combine the power of collaboration with cutting-edge digital tools to help destinations and their partners reach travelers when it matters most. With programmatic advertising, smart targeting, and data-backed insights, we make sure your message gets in front of the right people. In this chapter, we'll explore how our approach can make a real difference for DMOs, helping you get more out of your campaigns and connect with travelers in a whole new way.



A Seamless Experience Starts With Sojern

Working with an experienced marketing platform like Sojern can significantly ease the process of setting up and executing a successful co-op marketing program. Sojern provides advanced targeting capabilities and data-driven insights, allowing you to deliver personalized messages that resonate with your audience. This helps you:

- ▶ **Leverage Travel Intent Data:** We use billions of travel intent signals from our trusted data partners to tailor strategies based on each customer's goals. Whether you're a destination, hotel, or attraction, we use this data to help you attract the right audience and hit your targets.
- ▶ **Streamline Campaign Management:** Our platform simplifies the coordination of multichannel marketing strategies, integrating display, native, and video ads with CTV and paid social.

- ▶ **Flexible Partner Investment**

Levels: At Sojern, we know that DMOs work with partners of all sizes. That's why we offer tiered levels that allow every partner, no matter their size, to tap into Sojern's capabilities and amplify their marketing efforts.

- ▶ **Maximize Impact with Creative Assets:** Sojern co-op participants can use existing assets or leverage our creative team to develop engaging display assets that make an impact.

- ▶ **Use Data-Driven Insights:** Leverage our robust data analytics to monitor campaign performance, optimize strategies, and demonstrate the economic impact of your efforts through detailed reporting.



Partnering with us not only supports the host's objectives but also caters to the individual needs of each participant, ensuring a collaborative and successful co-op marketing program.

SUCCESS STORY

Visit Phoenix


In the heart of the American Southwest, Phoenix shines as a city celebrated for its year-round sunshine, diverse cultural scene, and endless outdoor adventures. As the fifth-largest city in the U.S., Phoenix offers something for everyone, from luxurious spa resorts and world-class golf courses to vibrant nightlife and rich artistic experiences. However, like many destinations, Phoenix faces the ongoing challenge of maintaining and increasing tourism in a competitive market.

To tackle this challenge, Visit Phoenix and their agency, Brkthru, teamed up with Sojern to create a co-op marketing program that brought together local hotels, attractions, and other partners in a single, impactful campaign. While Visit Phoenix had run many successful co-ops before, after seeing great results from previous programmatic campaigns

with us, they trusted us to bring this strategy to their co-op efforts. They saw this as a chance to scale their success and wanted to give their partners the same opportunity to benefit from programmatic media through a collaborative approach.

We took the lead, securing 12 local partners and providing end-to-end support, from campaign design to execution. Visit Phoenix contributed matching funds, ensuring that each partner's unique goals were met—whether it was maximizing return on ad spend (ROAS) or building brand awareness.

The program was a huge success for the team, driving 9,669 confirmed travelers to Phoenix, resulting in 3,057 flight bookings and 11,445 hotel bookings. The estimated economic impact was an impressive \$5.6 million, with a remarkable 125:1 ROAS.



Steven Totten, director of marketing, Visit Phoenix shared, “Whenever people bring up programmatic, I always mention Sojern. The data is great, the results are great, and the ease of use is really what makes it ideal. A lot of the process is hands off, which in the DMO world is such a golden egg to have because we’re all so inundated with different responsibilities, low staff, and low budgets. Finding a way to make partnerships truly work for us is always a huge bonus.”

SUCCESS STORY

Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau

Nestled along the serene Southwest coast of Florida, the Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau offers visitors a perfect blend of outdoor adventures and a laid-back, coastal lifestyle. As the official tourism bureau for Charlotte County, the team promotes the area to national and international travelers, focusing on leisure, sports, and meetings and conventions. With limited marketing resources, they sought new ways to engage local businesses.

In 2021, the team partnered with us to elevate their strategy through programmatic advertising targeting travel intenders. After seeing success, they expanded their efforts in 2024 with our co-op program. Our co-op program featured a one-to-one-to-one match structure:

they contributed to a partner's marketing spend, and we matched that investment with additional media value. For every dollar invested, local partners saw three times the impact, allowing each business to benefit from our highly targeted advertising.

The campaign, which ran from January to August 2024, delivered a 29:1 ROI, \$707,056 in estimated economic impact, and 2,823 confirmed travelers, including 1,148 flight bookings. One local partner reported their best-ever Q1, while another, new to working with the bureau, saw such strong results that they're eager to participate again.

"Partnering with Sojern is one of the best things I've ever been able to bring to the bureau in my role. I'm very pleased with our partnership



with Sojern, from the marketing that we do on our own, to the co-op plan which is priceless to us. Our partners love it, we love it. It's been a great relationship and we value it so much. Working with Sojern has made my life a lot easier. We'll continue working with the team for a long time," shared Maureen Morgenthien, director of marketing.

The Future of Destination Marketing is Here. **So Are We.**

The power of co-op marketing lies in collaboration—working together to amplify reach, share resources, and create compelling narratives that resonate with a diverse and ever-evolving audience. By embracing trends like AI, sustainability, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), you can build marketing campaigns that are not only effective but also responsible and forward-thinking.

The road ahead is filled with both challenges and opportunities. Economic shifts, technological advancements, and changing traveler expectations will continue to shape the way we approach marketing. However, with the right strategies in place, you have the tools to adapt and succeed.

At Sojern, we're committed to supporting you every step of the way. Whether you're just beginning to explore co-op marketing or looking to refine and enhance your current strategies, our expertise and innovative solutions are here to help you achieve your goals. Together, we can create a future where your destination not only stands out but also leads the way in sustainable, inclusive, and impactful tourism.





The Sojern Travel Marketing Platform helps destination marketers reach and inspire travelers throughout their planning journey across digital channels. With unmatched visibility into travel demand and market insights, we build audiences to find the right travelers for your destination. The platform is flexible to meet the needs of destinations and their stakeholders and gives visibility into the economic impact of your marketing efforts. Ten thousand destinations, hotels, attractions, and travel marketers rely on Sojern annually to engage and convert travelers around the world.

Learn more at www.sojern.com.