

## Conference Program

### Monday, April 16

2:00-5:00	Industry Meetings
4:00-6:00	Registration and Exhibitor Set Up
6:00-9:00	Opening Reception and Social—Sanctuary Center transportation provided

### Tuesday, April 17

7:45	Registration Open
8:00-6:00	Sponsor Exhibits Open
8:00-8:45	Breakfast Buffet with Exhibitors
8:45-9:00	Welcome –
9:00-10:00	<p><b>General Session - Finding Your Unique Value</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roger Brooks</li> </ul> <p>We can find information about any city, town or county in a few seconds via the web. But visitors rarely look for cities and towns: they look for specific activities that cater to them and then in a general location. To successfully market your destination you need to answer one question: “What do we have that the people we are hoping to attract can’t get or do closer to home?” Whatever it is that makes you different, or clearly better (by third party endorsement), should be the focus of your marketing efforts. In this fast-paced, fun, and enlightening presentation you’ll see why this finding your Unique Selling Proposition is more important than ever and you’ll learn how to cut through the politics of promoting that one thing that truly sets you apart from the crowd. And if you don’t have anything truly unique, how to come up with the winning solution. Using real life case examples, you’ll come away with new ideas and ways to better promote your business and community.</p>
10:00-10:30	Break with Exhibitors
	Breakout Sessions
10:30-11:30	<p><b>Community Marketing on a Miniscule Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roger Brooks</li> </ul> <p>Chances are pretty good that you simply don’t have the budget to do the marketing you’d like to do. If that’s the case, then you won’t want to miss this session! You’ll learn how to best allocate your marketing dollars (no matter how small), and five ways you can successfully market your business or community without spending an arm and a leg. You’ll learn how to best leverage TripAdvisor (at no cost), the power of recruiting outside events where they do the work - and the marketing, the two printed marketing pieces you need to produce (and how to do it at minimal cost), how to create an effective web presence while spending only a couple-hundred dollars - a year, and where to spend your advertising dollars for the greatest return on investment.</p> <p><b>The State of Air Travel in North Dakota</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mark Sixel, President of Sixel Consulting</li> <li>Ryan Riesinger, Executive Director of Grand Forks International Airport</li> </ul> <p>Our panel will discuss the current state and future of air travel in North Dakota, including pilot shortage, aircraft supply and how competition will affect air service in the state in the months and years to come.</p> <p><b>Developing Tribal Tourism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonja Tanner, OPOS Tours and Travel</li> </ul> <p>Sonja has more than 20 years of experience in offering cultural tours. Her insights on building, appreciating and sharing the cultural diversities of Indigenous Nations will be a benefit to anyone with an eye on destination development.</p>

11:30-1:15	<p><b>Governor's Awards Luncheon Honoring Leaders in Travel and Tourism</b></p> <p>The Governor's Awards for Travel and Tourism recognize the passion and dedication North Dakotans who have contributed to the growth of travel and tourism, our state's third-largest industry. These awards speak to the foundational gratitude important to Governor Burgum.</p>
1:30-2:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Breakout Sessions</p> <p><b>Augmented Reality is the New Reality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ed Sargeant, Director of Creative Services, Agency MABU</li> <li>• Annette Schilling Willis, Client Services Manager, Agency MABU</li> </ul> <p>Augmented Reality (AR) is quickly blurring the line between the real world and computer-generated content. AR reshapes the way we connect with the world around us; by adding in audio, video, imagery and more, traditional content as we know it, will come to life. You are likely already experiencing this type of experience through games such as Pokemon Go, or when ordering furniture using IKEA's mobile app. It's time to take <i>your</i> content to the next level! Viewers to your destination can now watch a video that's incorporated into an interpretive panel, business card, or brochure, or even experience a 3D reconstruction as the walk the grounds of a historic site. Ed and Annette will share the possibilities of this new technology, including hands-on demonstration and an exploration of how this technology is already being used and the potential for destination tourism marketing.</p> <p><b>Marketing Sports Tourism: Collaboration between Sport and Destination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elly DesLauriers, Minot Park District</li> <li>• John Bollinger, GM of the Bismarck Larks</li> <li>• Joe Vettel, Fargo Park District</li> <li>• Kali Mork, Fargo-Moorhead CVB</li> </ul> <p>Marketing sports tourism requires community collaboration. Our panelists will share how they leverage assets and partners.</p> <p><b>Learn from Best Practices in North Dakota</b></p> <p>Our industry gurus will share some of their best practices and tips for success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instagram – Tanner Cherney, Devils Lake Tourism</li> <li>• Frostival – Charley Johnson and Stephonie Broughton, Fargo-Moorhead CVB</li> <li>• Using Partner Access – Shelley Wagendorf, Greater Grand Forks CVB</li> </ul>
2:45-3:45	<p><b>General Session - Reimagine Your Attraction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dustin Growick, Museum Hack</li> </ul> <p>Is your attraction inspiring visits ... or just plain boring? Are you working towards the future ... or building your plans on the past? Museum Hack challenges the status quo and works with museums and attractions to create new content, strengthen existing programs, build social media prowess, reach new audiences and inspire interest.</p>
3:45-4:15	<p style="text-align: center;">Break with Exhibitors</p>
4:15-5:00	<p><b>The Great Debates</b></p> <p>Hear both sides to three important topics affecting destinations in this lighthearted, and thought-provoking, session. Which side will you end up on?</p> <p>Event creation and management is the DMO's job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro – Charley Johnson, Fargo-Moorhead CVB</li> <li>• Con – Sheri Grossman, Bismarck-Mandan CVB</li> </ul> <p>Influencers are measurable and worth it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro – Suzie Kenner, Devils Lake Tourism</li> <li>• Con – Justin Fisk, Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation</li> </ul> <p>Social media inspires travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro – Kim Schmidt, ND Tourism</li> <li>• Con – Heather LeMoine, ND Tourism</li> </ul>
	<p>Evening on your own</p>

**Wednesday, April 18 – WEAR YOUR LOGO**

7:45	Registration Open
8:30-12:30	Sponsor Exhibits Open
8:00-8:45	Breakfast Buffet with Exhibitors
8:45-9:45	<p><b>General Session-Expanding Your Presence on Google: How North Dakota Tourism Businesses Can Enhance their Presence for Free across Google's Platforms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chris Adams, Miles Media</li> </ul> <p>Learn how you can enhance your presence across Google's platforms by attending this practical, interactive workshop. This workshop is aimed at North Dakota destinations and tourism businesses of all types– accommodation and activity providers, tour companies, restaurants, events &amp; more. It provides simple, actionable tips for businesses to review and enhance your presence across Google's platforms including Google Search, Google Maps, Google Street View, Google My Business Listings, Google Trips and more. We will cover a range of simple things that any business can do at no cost – plus the more advanced steps you can consider. All participants will leave with a check list of action items and resources for more information and support.</p>
9:45-10:45	<p><b>General Session - NDTIC goes TEDx</b></p> <p>This session is designed to spark creative thinking and provide a taste of three important topics for destinations and businesses today.</p> <p>Topics and Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why funding the arts is a smart investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dayna Del Val, The Arts Partnership</li> </ul> </li> <li>Beating Facebook's {less than} 1%: How to create engaging content that reaches your fans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hannah Stonehouse Hudson, writer, photographer, social media guru and outdoor enthusiast</li> </ul> </li> <li>How to Drive Bookings to Your Website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meredith Dillon, Sojern</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10:45-11:15	Break with Exhibitors
	Breakout Sessions with TEDx Speakers
	<p><b>The Importance of the Arts as Community Differentiators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dayna Del Val</li> <li>Brad Bachmeier</li> </ul> <p>This discussion centers on the proven cultural, social and economic value of public art. As municipalities strive to attract and retain visitors and residents, they need to demonstrate an active, dynamic and vital cultural scene and identity. Join us to discuss how public art can be utilized as a differentiator for your community. Public art has the power to add uniqueness and meaning to a community as well as more tangible and visual icons, landmarks, events and experiences of place for both our residents and visitors.</p>
11:15-12:15	<p><b>Storytelling Strategy 101</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hannah Stonehouse Hudson</li> </ul> <p>Sitting around wondering what to post on your social media profiles? There is a method to the madness. Creating your brand's compelling narrative can be overwhelming, but an overarching story is needed to increase social media engagement. Your fans and potential customers want to know about you, your products, and your background. Where do you find the stories that surround this narrative, and what do you do with them once you have them? Building on the previous seminar, we'll discuss creating a storytelling strategy that helps you connect with your dream clients. No more obsessing over what to post day to day - you'll have a plan set up that takes that stress out of your life.</p>
	<p><b>Going Beyond OTAs: How to Drive Bookings to Your Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meredith Dillon, Sojern</li> </ul> <p>Hoteliers face a number of marketing headwinds, including third party bookings telling you little about your customer, large travel companies spending millions on marketing each year, and an increase in competition on marketing channels. In order to face these challenges head-on, and come out on top, independent hoteliers need to think creatively and strategically about their marketing efforts. This presentation offers tools and tactics that hoteliers can employ to begin taking their booking strategy beyond a reliance solely on OTAs.</p>
12:15-1:30	<p><b>Industry Luncheon with guest speaker</b></p> <p>End the conference feeling inspired and recharged with this luncheon and a surprise guest speaker to close out the conference.</p>