

Another Summer of Tourism Success



Hello all Tourism Partners,

We are pleased to provide this report on our Summer Marketing activities. Once again we are seeing consistent growth for summer tourism marketing and the work we are doing benefits all of the region.

Go East of Edmonton is creating an Economic Impact in every community.

This report highlights the very successful efforts of the Go East of Edmonton Team in attracting visitors who are not only spending money but also exploring communities they might not have otherwise visited.

Key Takeaways in this Document:

Grants - Over \$100,000 from Grants in 2024 for marketing and development.

Travel Guide- another successful year with incredible demand and readership.

Website- Traffic continues to soar with over 550,000 pageviews over the past year.

Social Media- grew to over 56,000 followers reaching over 1 million annually.

Digital Marketing- highly effective again this summer on Google and Meta Ads.

New Content Created- Driving Traffic to Major Attractions and events all summer long.

Roadtrip Adventure Game- more successful with 40% increased travellers and expenditures into the region.

NRED Tourism Development Project -successful projects plus training and support to local businesses.

Invitation for New Board Members- positions are available to join our leadership team.

Go East of Edmonton AGM – Nov 20, more details coming soon.

Grants from Travel Alberta...

New Milestone reached- *for 4 years in a row we have earned \$50,000 or more in grant funds from Travel Alberta.* In 2023 we are pleased to say that once again Travel Alberta entrusted us as the DMO to promote the whole region for summer tourism events and activities. **Travel Alberta staff commented how strong our results were from Marketing** and provided the funding for 2024 for our Summer and Roadtrip promotion.

Travel Guide is another great success in 2024!

A Success Year after Year – *The 2024 Travel Guide saw the redesigned and enhanced Outdoor Adventures, Great Attractions and Eat-Drink-Shop sections with a complete rewrite of all editorial in the guide, plus the ever popular Roadtrip Adventure Game section.*

Testimonials continue to come in about the guide, its great content, and numerous operators have stated the positive return on investment received from it. The travel guide receives the majority of all our testimonials that come in, and is the **#1 reason people say they learned about roadtrips into the region.**

Weekly calls came in starting April through to July asking how and where they can get a copy- this was the highest demand we have ever seen for the Travel Guide!

In 2024, we distributed to over 50 outlets in Calgary+Red Deer, over 350 in Edmonton area plus key locations and visitor centres around Alberta, in addition to complete distribution in our local area. With 67,000 copies printed it was running out early in August in key locations.

Year after year, the Travel Guide has proven itself as an effective unique marketing tool- many have said it is the Best and most popular Travel Guide in Alberta!

Website Traffic continues to Soar through the Summer of 2024!

Over 550,000 pageviews reached again- *for the Go East of Edmonton website.*

Across all our regions of East Central Alberta and Northeast Lakeland, no tourism website even comes close to achieving this high of Traffic!

For the period of May 1 to September 15 from Google Analytics: these results are comparable to 2023!

Leads to Partners- click thrus to partners content is over 23,000!

Total Users is again over 255,000 people! Website Sessions (Visits) is over 330,000.

Google Search Reports that the Go East of Edmonton Website appeared in **over 11 Million searches** (Impressions) in the past year and resulting in **200,000 clicks to Partners pages and content** on the website!!! (1 Million more impressions/searches in 2024)

60% increase in pageviews to the Roadtrip Adventure Game is a huge increase over last year!

For the first time our overall website traffic is slightly higher or the same/similar as it was in 2023 for: Outdoor Adventures, Attractions, Events Calendar, Camping, Golfing, Things to do, and Travel guide.

These numbers also do not include the Annual **online version of the printed travel guide**. For the past year once again we consistently reached **200,000 pageviews** for the annual online travel guide!

Total Pageviews for the website and Online Guide is consistently over 700,000 annually!

Go East of Edmonton Website is where your content, events and activities need to be. Be sure to send us your events and updates every month to info@goeastofedmonton.com!

Social Media Success...now over 56,000 followers!

New Milestones reached – *we have surpassed well over 56,000 total followers from all social channels. As of Sept 30, we have reached over 38,000 followers on Facebook and over 10,000 subscribers to our e-newsletter! Instagram and our new Tik Tok page continue to grow as well.*

Interesting and Impressive facts:

- We are on social media every day 7 days per week!
- Dozens of new people follow us every day. In the summer, up to 1000 people may follow us in one month.
- And Wow...**we once again reached over 1 Million** (From June, July August) *summer reach from Facebook and Instagram combined.*

Once again In 2024 so far we have reached over 1.5 million people combined from Facebook and Instagram. **Be sure to always Tag us [@goeastofedmonton](https://www.instagram.com/goeastofedmonton), or [#goeastofedmonton](https://www.tiktok.com/@goeastofedmonton)**

Did you see us on Global TV?

On Thursday June 13, we were live on the Global TV morning show to promote the region, Roadtrip Adventure Game and the 2024 Travel Guide. **It was another great interview.** See it here...

<https://goeastofedmonton.com/videos/>

We also ran Ads on the Global TV morning show starting in June till early July.

Other Digital Marketing Results... (From May till September 15)

1. Facebook/Instagram Ads and Google Display, Search and Retargeting Ads
 - Impressions have reached nearly **5.5 Million**.

There are 50 videos on our Youtube Channel for Go East Roadtrip Videos with total views of **over 1 Million views** since all videos have been launched!!

Pattison Edmonton Digital Billboards- Rotating Ads ran from May to June in targeted locations with nearly **100,000 plays** reaching over 2.5 Million total vehicle traffic.

Radio Station promotion – every week we continue to do a talk show on Country 106- Vegreville east central area, and we do a monthly Talk show on Country 99- Lakeland area. We ran ads on CFCW and 5 other area radio stations to promote summer travel into the region.

Its clear that Go East of Edmonton is the #1 promoter of this region with a strong impact for tourism and economic development.

New Content Created in 2024...

8 Great Attractions is our new feature section (In the Travel Guide and on the website) including Metis Crossing, Ukrainian Village and our top attractions.

<https://goeastofedmonton.com/things-to-do/8-great-attractions/>

Antique Week and **Expanding Open Farm Days** promotions were new successful projects.

Monthly Blogs promote all the top events and things to do all summer long.

<https://goeastofedmonton.com/itineraries-roadtrips/trip-ideas/>

Plus, we have updated Trip Ideas, articles and Destination pages including **Indigenous Experiences** from across the region to help drive traffic and more visitation. We also continued **Roadtrip Influencer Campaigns** in the summer of 2024.

Roadtrip Adventure Game in 2024 resulted in a huge increase of Roadtrippers!

We have some **great successes to share** for 2024. This is still *A One-of-a-kind Promotion in Alberta!*

- Nearly 2000 people to date have signed up for the Roadtrip Adventure Game on the website.
- Hundreds of Families played the game and spent money across the region. We tracked over 530 different people who played the game and/or scanned to win in 2024.
- All Age Groups played the Game from kids with Parents to Millennials, Boomers and Seniors!
- Prizes contributed from the partners and sponsors actually topped over \$10,000.00
- The Game ended early September with announcements of winners coming soon in late October.
- Many thanks go to sponsors MCSNET Internet services, CFCW Radio and Canalta Hotels, as well as the participating communities. Learn more at <https://goeastofedmonton.com/itineraries-roadtrips/roadtrip-adventure-game/>
- Every community has been promoted through our social media channels. and <https://www.facebook.com/GoEastofEdmonton> with a total reach of over 200,000 views!

- **The amount of people that went to every Community – all 46 locations increased by 40% over last year.** This is a very significant amount of increased roadtripping and expenditures projected across the region.
- **New Special Events in 2024 - we partnered with the Ukrainian Village in June to promote to schools at Childrens day.** We also attended events around the region in June and early July to promote the game launch! This was successful as people told us they found out at our display at events.

40% Increased Travellers and 30% More Stickers Given away in 2024!

Some sticker stations reported to double the amount of stickers given away, while some others had **significant increases**. The vast majority of sticker stations reported more stickers given away in 2024 as compared to 2023. Unofficial results are that: **30% more stickers given away to a total of over 11,000 stickers across the region and over 1000 entries submitted from all prize categories.** Entries in most prize categories increased between 30 to 40% this year. Repeat players doubled over last year and overall it's an increase of 40% of players/roadtrippers in 2024.

Roadtrip Scan to Win more than doubled in 2024.

In the 2nd year of the Scan to Win feature we received **over 2300 scans from travellers** this summer for Bonus prizes. This is an opportunity for travellers to enter for bonus prizes, at the sticker stations as well as local businesses. This was more than double the amount from last year. **One roadtripper visited and scanned at 75 locations and Businesses in the region!**

Google Map Guides...reach over 4x as many views as last year!

- As part of the QR code scan, travellers could access Google maps that were specific to the roadtrip route they were on. It had events, things to do, local businesses from all the communities.
- Between spring till now our **Google map guides had reached over 85,000 views.** The maps were also placed on the Community pages all over the website to continue to promote the region throughout the summer.
- You can see one of our map guides on <https://goeastofedmonton.com/itineraries-roadtrips/roadtrip-adventure-game/>

Top 5 ranked in order- How did they find out about the Game?

1. Go East Travel Guide
2. Played before
3. Friends/Family word of mouth
4. Social Media
5. Store/event

Top 5 where did the Roadtrippers/players come from?

1. 48% Edmonton metro area
2. 44% Local East Areas
4. 4% Other Alberta
5. 4% BC/SK

A Success Year after Year...our last survey results from Game Roadtrippers

Over 400 Room nights booked of Hotels, Camping and B&B-Unique Accommodations.

Over 80% stated they ate and shopped locally and 75% visited attractions.

Some Roadtrippers spent over \$2000 on their roadtrip, while approx. 75% spent under \$1000, and approx. 25% spent over 1000.

75% said they will come back to take another roadtrip in our region.

Amazing Visitor Testimonials Include:

- I love this so much! Not only fantastic sights but great people. Highly recommend this roadtrip to all!
- I love the Go East Roadtrip Game, this year was my 4th time, looking forward to next year!
- We love the Roadtrip Adventures with the Go East Guide and tell everyone about it!
- Numerous comments from people that they Loved this town or place they visited.
- Many people said they would not have come here if not for the Go East Roadtrip Game!

We asked Sticker Station Managers and staff for **Feedback, and received these Great Comments...**

- A lot of people came and said they loved it and they will be back to visit the community again!
- More people came through this year. Increased traffic, and many large families travelling this year. A lot of Bikers playing this year. Everyone seemed to be having a lot of fun.
- Most stations (where applicable) said that travellers made purchases at the station and around the town. Some came specifically to make purchases. As much as 25% to 50%, 75% or more made purchases at a station!
- We love being a sticker station. Not only does it increase traffic but we get to meet so many people!
- This game is fantastic and we look forward to being a part of it next year!

It is our recommendation to continue the Game across the region for 2025!

We are estimating once again that the ROI and spending generated from the Roadtrip Adventure Game is over \$200,000 in 2024. Considering inflation in 2024, this is a great achievement in a tourism promotion!

Amazing Grand Total...

Over \$700,000 spent in the region by Go East of Edmonton Game Roadtrippers since 2021!!

New Tourism Development Underway – NRED Program Funding...

In 2024 the **NRED Grant for Tourism Development and Industry Support**, continued for new project work and training programs to support the tourism Industry. A new Go East of Edmonton Industry Hub will be ready by 2025. Funds will continue till early 2025 so if you have tourism businesses that are new or needing support or have a Tourism Development project- contact us for assistance.

Invitation for new Board Members to Join us...

We want to invite partner organizations to consider putting forward name(s) for board member positions that are available. As the most active and effective DMO promoting the region we look forward to receiving your input and working with all communities to grow tourism. Contact us for details.

Announcing AGM for Go East of Edmonton Regional Tourism.

Plan to attend our upcoming In-person Meeting for our AGM and presentations. Save the date of November 20, 2024. Watch for the Invitation coming in a separate email. Looking forward to seeing everyone soon!

Sincerely from, Kevin Kisilevich on behalf of the Go East of Edmonton Team Members.