

Destination Marketing Agency Publishes 2026 Analytics Guide as Nearly a Third of DMOs Report Funding at Risk

New resource on destination marketing analytics, tourism marketing strategy, & data-driven visitor targeting turn campaign spend into defensible economic impact

LAKE MARY, FL, UNITED STATES, August 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Evok Destination Marketing, a full-service agency with offices in Lake Mary, Tallahassee, and Memphis, has published a new resource for tourism boards facing sharper questions about what their budgets actually produce.

The guide arrives as the standard of proof rises across the industry. In Sojern's survey of more than 350 DMOs worldwide, the ability to measure economic impact now ranks as the top strategic priority, ahead of visitation and engagement, and the share of DMOs focused primarily on brand awareness dropped from 59% to 25% in a single year. Nearly a third of DMOs say their funding is at risk, which moves measurement from the back office to the center of [tourism marketing strategy](#).

The measurement problem is structural rather than technical. Expedia Group research found that 59% of travelers had not settled on a destination when they first decided to take a trip, and that travelers view an average of 141 pages of travel content across the 45 days before booking. Because 80% of travelers visit an online travel agency before booking, the transaction a DMO influences almost never happens on a channel the DMO controls. A tourism marketing strategy judged on last-click conversions will systematically undervalue the inspirational work that destinations do best.

Drawing on evok's destination and tourism client work, the guide covers:



Evok Advertising logo



Councils stopped accepting impressions as an answer. Show them who arrived and what they spent.”

Larry Meador

Layered visitor data sources. First-party web and CRM signals read intent, geolocation and mobility data confirm arrival, and anonymized card spend quantifies return. Demographic data remained the most common targeting input for DMOs, used by 74% globally, even as [data-driven visitor targeting](#) shifts toward behavioral and location-based signals that better predict who will actually visit and spend.

Direct versus indirect KPIs. Destinations International separates indicators like impressions, clicks, and website traffic from direct measures such as room tax revenue, occupancy, number of trips, visitor spending, and return on ad spend. [Destination marketing analytics](#) earns credibility by leading stakeholder reporting with the second set and treating activity metrics as supporting detail.

Attribution is built for long journeys. Position-based and linear models distribute credit across a fragmented research path, while visitation attribution uses mobility data to confirm whether exposed audiences arrived in the market.

Segmentation that predicts visitation. Origin market, behavior, trip purpose, and visitor value segments each carry distinct creative and budget implications, turning a single broad campaign into a portfolio of measurable markets.

Incremental economic impact. A study commissioned by Visit Denver credited the DMO's 2024 spring and summer campaign with 3 million incremental trips and \$1.3 billion in incremental visitor spending, a return of \$217 in spending and \$24 in state and local taxes for every \$1 spent on advertising, measured against a control group that was not exposed.

Stakeholder-ready dashboards. Finance committees, tourism boards, and lodging partners each need a different view of the same dataset, with cadence matched to the decision being made.

Closing the loop is where the discipline pays off. Data sources feed attribution, attribution proves economic impact, and dashboards translate that impact into the language of board funds, which then sharpens the next season's tourism marketing strategy and the budget behind it.

The complete destination marketing analytics guide for DMOs is available now, covering data sources, attribution models, economic impact measurement, and stakeholder reporting.

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