

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES TOURISM

2024

YEAR IN REVIEW

SPECTACULAR
NORTHWEST 
TERRITORIES



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Every year, the tourism industry in the NWT faces a wide range of challenges; some we have seen before, while others are new, and maybe unprecedented.

During the past 12 months, our operators have been working hard to ensure their guests have the best possible experience in the Northwest Territories. This is a task that requires so many different skills: organization, knowledge, preparedness, and resourcefulness. But above all, our operators have shown incredible warmth and hospitality, leaving each of their guests feeling special, important, and valuable.

The past winter, spring and summer looked generally successful for many businesses who reported being busy and getting many bookings from both new and returning guests.

I am happy to share we currently have 173 registered members, slightly down from 175 last year but up from the 153 before the pandemic.

Our members are present in all 5 regions across the territory, and one day, we hope to have members in all 33 communities. They also represent many different sectors, which really shows the wide variety of experiences for our visitors to enjoy in the NWT in every season.



"During this past year, NWT Tourism has continued to work with our industry partners to find solutions and help our members with their issues and concerns, ranging from identifying funding sources, and working with airlines to address concerns and needs, to identifying programs that help with recruiting, retaining, and training workforce."

During this past year, NWT Tourism has continued to work with our industry partners to find solutions and help our members with their issues and concerns, ranging from identifying funding sources, and working with airlines to address concerns and needs, to identifying programs that help with recruiting, retaining, and training workforce.

We continue to have conversations with all levels of government to ensure that our industry and the concerns expressed by our membership are always top of mind and are being addressed.

We have been working with our partners in the aviation industry to maintain long standing schedules as well as to increase the frequency and capacity of flights to and within the North. We are grateful for the support and collaboration we have been getting from our partners in the aviation industry and hope to be able to keep the conversations going to make air access to and within the North even better.

I am very proud of the work that our Board and our staff have done to support our membership throughout the whole year.

Finally, I wish to thank all of you for the work you do year-round and the dedication you show towards our industry. I am honoured and excited to serve as the Chairperson for the NWT Tourism Board of Directors and look forward to supporting this thriving industry in my new role.

Best,

Paul Harrington

*Chair of the Board of Directors,
NWT Tourism*

NORTH SLAVE RAYMOND McDONALD / NWTT



MARKETING OVERVIEW

The Spectacular Northwest Territories has what visitors want. From awe-inspiring natural beauty to unique cultural experiences, the NWT continues to captivate visitors seeking adventure, connection, and authentic moments. This year, our marketing efforts have focused on showcasing the territory's unmatched assets—from the Spectacular Aurora and pristine wilderness to rich Indigenous experiences and authentic Northern charm. By leveraging strategic partnerships and targeted outreach, we've ensured that the NWT remains a top-of-mind destination for domestic and international visitors alike.

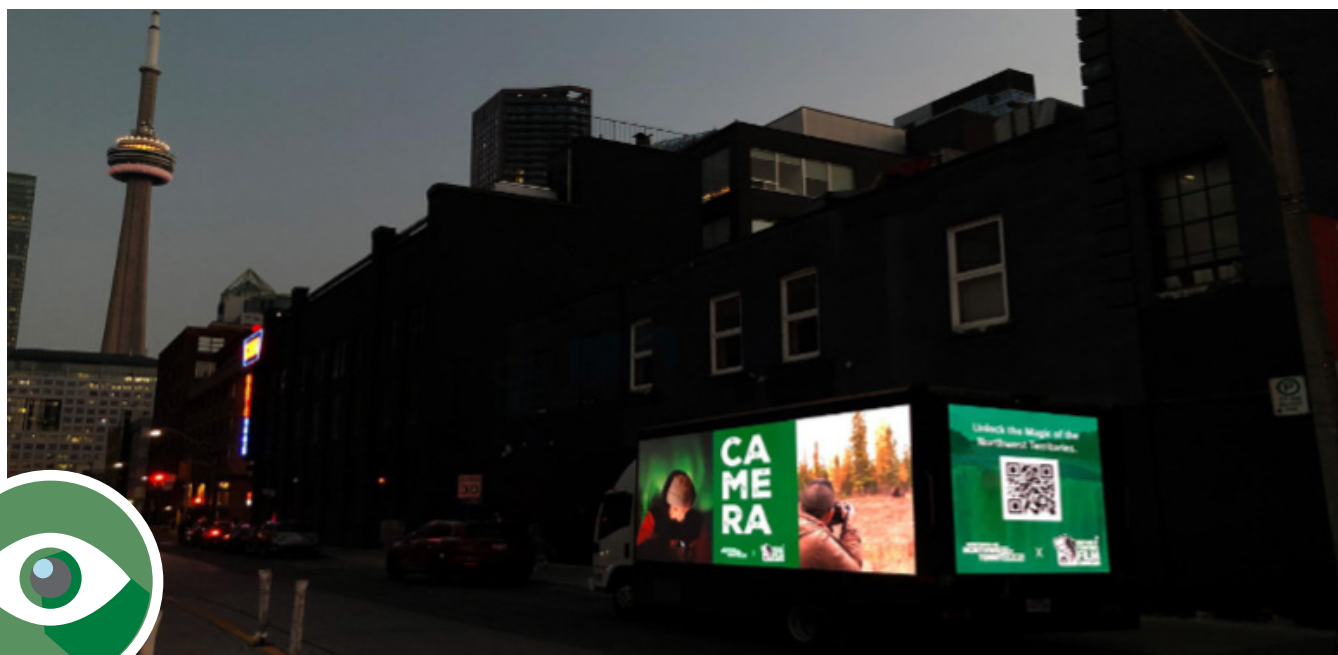
Consumer-direct marketing remains a cornerstone of NWT Tourism's strategy, encompassing general advertising, the SpectacularNWT travel guides, the Spectacular website, social media marketing, Consumer Shows, and special events. This year, the focus has been on refining these channels to deliver measurable results. Enhancements to the Spectacular NWT website have emphasized connecting potential visitors with operator packages and Indigenous experiences.

Following are some of the marketing projects we have completed in the last year and the beginning of others for 2025.

CONSUMER DIRECT MARKETING

Consumer-direct marketing includes strategies and tools such as general advertising, the NWT travel guides, the NWT Tourism website, social media marketing, consumer shows, and special events. Digital search continues to be an essential strategy in marketing, and NWTT consistently sees solid results from our content strategy. Updates to the website will continue to see package and operator listings as the focus and aim to drive more traffic further down the marketing funnel.

A moving ad display in Toronto for the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) – Outcrop Communications



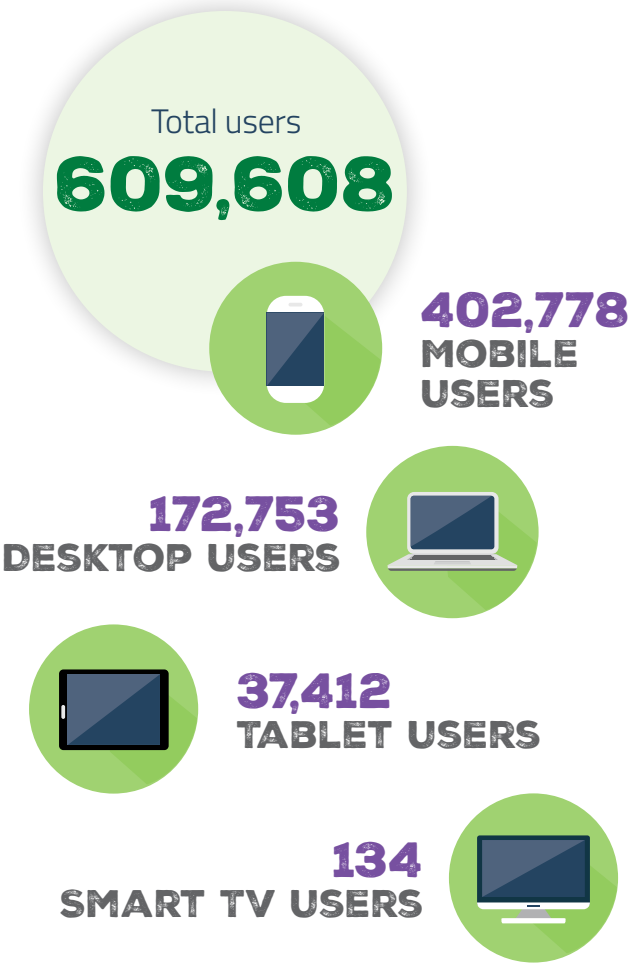
Spectacular NWT Website

The [website](#) not only serves as a central hub of information but is also a critical tool in measuring the performance of the marketing efforts of NWT Tourism. Website traffic is an objective measurement tool that provides instant feedback on marketing activities, particularly regarding digital advertising and social media. Consumer website marketing continues to focus on premium story content. NWT Tourism encourages potential visitors to the territory to engage with this content and use it to learn more about the NWT, plan their trip, and keep the dream of a visit to the territory alive.

A major goal of the website is to move potential visitors further down the ‘funnel’ to operator pages and packages. NWTT’s website focuses less on getting high numbers of (expensive) paid traffic to the site and more on getting higher numbers of high-quality ‘organic’ traffic. NWTT is pleased to see higher quarter-on-quarter growth from organic traffic. NWT Tourism also sees more engagement with the right content and the team is glad to see the work is paying off to get more people to operator and package listings.

The SpectacularNWT website has shown considerable growth as it continues to allow potential visitors to interact with the SpectacularNWT brand and learn about the diverse opportunities and experiences that are available in the Northwest Territories. Improving the website has always been paramount for NWT Tourism. The main changes to the website were to help build a better user journey and ultimately connect people to NWT businesses, events, regions, and communities.

This year, NWT Tourism began work on a few new landing pages on the website, including a respectful and responsible travel page and a wellness sub-landing page, in an effort to further highlight packages, experiences, and products offered by our members that visitors are looking for. Both pages will be launched in 2025. Operator pages and packages now feature clickable logos that help potential visitors identify [NWT Tourism members](#) as well as Indigenous operators enrolled in the [Original Original Program](#) with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC).



Top cities by users

➤ Toronto 61,255	➤ Ottawa 15,092
➤ Calgary 40,740	➤ Montreal 14,028
➤ Edmonton 26,465	➤ Warsaw 7,723
➤ Vancouver 24,664	➤ London 7,664
➤ Yellowknife 15,259	




From January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024
(Source: Google Analytics - GA4)



TOP COUNTRIES

Country

Users










	Canada	436,598
	United States	110,799
	Poland	7,996
	Germany	5,670
	Nigeria	5,614
	United Kingdom	4,439
	China	4,033
	Australia	3,138
	France	2,618
	Mexico	2,251

The tables above display the countries and regions with the highest number of users that visit our English speaking website. We also have other subsites and social media platforms to engage and interact with our non English speaking audiences.

TOP REGIONS

Region

Users

	Ontario	180,730
	Alberta	104,778
	British Columbia	86,673
	Quebec	38,198
	Northwest Territories	19,155
	California	15,335
	New York	13,528
	Texas	8,763
	Masovian Voivodeship	7,723

From January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024
(Source: Google Analytics - GA4)



Partnerships

In the last year, NWT Tourism worked hard to develop and maintain partnerships with other Destination Marketing Organizations, Destination Canada, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), Expedia, and many media outlets. Such collaborations offer opportunities to reach a wider audience, share resources, and create more compelling marketing campaigns. Expedia Group's research emphasizes the importance of understanding traveler behaviour and connecting with actively searching travelers to create engaging campaigns that stand out. Partnering with other Canadian DMOs and national partners can help our tour and activity providers benefit from increased bookings, especially at a time when travelers seek authentic experiences. By leveraging these relationships, NWTT can more effectively market all our regions as part of larger Canadian campaigns, ultimately boosting awareness and travel bookings.

Northern Lights Campaign

One of the main consumer campaigns, along with core domestic activities for paid media, was a Destination Canada partnership between all the Northern Lights partners (Yukon, Manitoba, and NWT). This is the second year NWT Tourism has had the opportunity to partner with Destination Canada, the Yukon and Manitoba to highlight Canada as the best place in the world to see the Aurora Borealis.

Northern Sky Corridor

Of the 26 applications submitted, NWT Tourism was one of four selected by Destination Canada to take part in their new Tourism Corridor Strategy Program. This program aims to attract investment and create legendary journeys for travellers. NWTT has collaborated with Explore Edmonton and Destination Canada on the creation of the Northern Sky Corridor. This corridor connects Edmonton as the gateway to the NWT, celebrating our rich cultural heritage, art, and spectacular experiences set under the Midnight Sun, the dark star filled skies and the legendary Aurora.

Northern Lights Campaign billboard in Times Square in New York in 2024 – Destination Canada



Notable Achievements

*Data as of Dec 5, 2024



32,856
FOLLOWERS



11,974
FOLLOWERS



2,954
FOLLOWERS



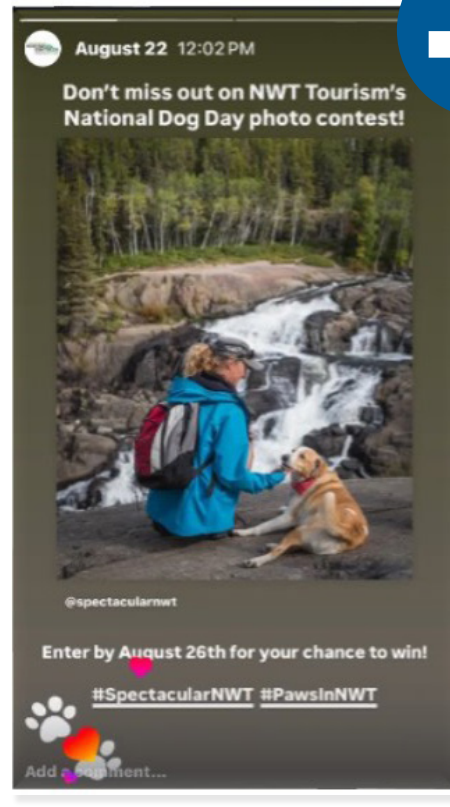
695
FOLLOWERS



313
FOLLOWERS



83,518
FOLLOWERS



The National Dog Day Campaign

Digital Advertising and Social Media

As in previous years, NWT Tourism has continued to work on digital ad campaigns that targeted a wide variety of markets, in line with our “Always-On” strategy. In addition to paid advertising, NWT Tourism has been extremely active on social media platforms in an effort to connect with potential visitors. NWT Tourism is currently active on seven social media platforms in English. As of the beginning of December 2024, NWT Tourism’s social media platforms have over 139,000 followers cumulatively, an increase of over 3,000 followers from December 2023.

Additionally, through the work of our General Sales Agents, we are also active on 4 social media platforms in the German, Chinese-speaking, Korean, and Japanese markets.

The purpose of digital advertising and social media is to keep the NWT top of mind for potential visitors and drive the traffic to the SpectacularNWT website.

CONTENT MARKETING

The purpose of content marketing is to tell stories about the NWT as a destination, provide information helpful when booking, and connect potential visitors to relevant operators and packages. This year, NWT Tourism collaborated with our Agency of Record, Outcrop Communications, to both increase story content on the SpectacularNWT website, as well as improve and update existing stories. Keeping this content fresh and current helps generate interest, maintain awareness, and improve the Spectacular website’s search rankings. Calls to Action (CTAs) continue to be featured in every story content on the website and links are purposefully added to direct interested readers towards pages that are promoting related operators and packages. A total of 21 stories were written or reworked this year.

E-Newsletter

With the help of our Agency of Record, NWT Tourism releases monthly e-newsletters to almost 30,000 subscribers from all over the world, with an average open rate of 30%.

The e-newsletter is divided into two sections; the first focuses on activities and events that are happening that month, and the second highlights events and activities to look forward to. This format aims to provide information for both visitors that are already in the territory or will be visiting soon, and potential visitors that are thinking about travelling to the NWT in the next 3 to 6 months.

Page	Pageviews	Average Session Duration
Home	216,095	1m 17s
Aurora	161,603	59s
Arts and Culture	116,713	20s
Road Trips	77,227	27s
Nature and Wildlife	48,301	21s



This chart includes GA4 metrics: views and average session time (Source: Google Analytics)

All Traffic	Users
Arts and Culture	52,601
Aurora	48,684
Home	47,891
Road Trips	37,686
Nature and Wildlife	23,231

Total Users from January 1 - December 31, 2024 including all traffic sources (Source: Google Analytics)

Organic Search	Users
Yellowknife	7,385
Here’s What Not to Miss in Yellowknife	5,928
Home	5,637
Why the Aurora is Awesome in Summer	4,927
15 Strange and Dangerous Places in Canadas Northwest Territories	3,194

Total Users from January 1 - December 31, 2024 including all organic search (Source: Google Analytics)

Video Production

Video content this year included: 23 new videos, 39 TikToks, 63 reels and videos on Instagram and Facebook, 16 Google Video ads and 23 Meta Video ads. NWT Tourism's [YouTube channel](#) has been a useful hub to share visually striking video content, with new videos being developed and added each quarter of 2024. This platform is a great opportunity to highlight different sectors and regions across the NWT. In late 2023, NWT Tourism began the production of a "Travel Tips" video series narrated by Wally Schumann and AJ Goodwin. These videos, which answer commonly asked questions on winter activities, camping, road trips, Aurora viewing and much more, serve as an informative tool for potential visitors wishing to prepare for their trip to the Northwest Territories. NWTT continued this series in 2024 with three new episodes. NWTT also worked with some of the regions to produce festival highlight videos of events across the territory.



7,228
FOLLOWERS



Video Stats

- 23 new videos
- 11 YouTube videos
- 11 social cutdowns
- Summer 2024 Television Commercial



Call Centre and Info@ Inbox

The NWT Tourism call centre, based at the NWTT office in Yellowknife, is a service-focused option for potential visitors actively considering the destination and seeking more information. The call centre received a total of 161 phone calls this year; most calls were general inquiries.

The info@spectacularnwt.com email inbox is monitored regularly; as of end of November, a total of 121 email inquiries were received, most regarding general information and Aurora.

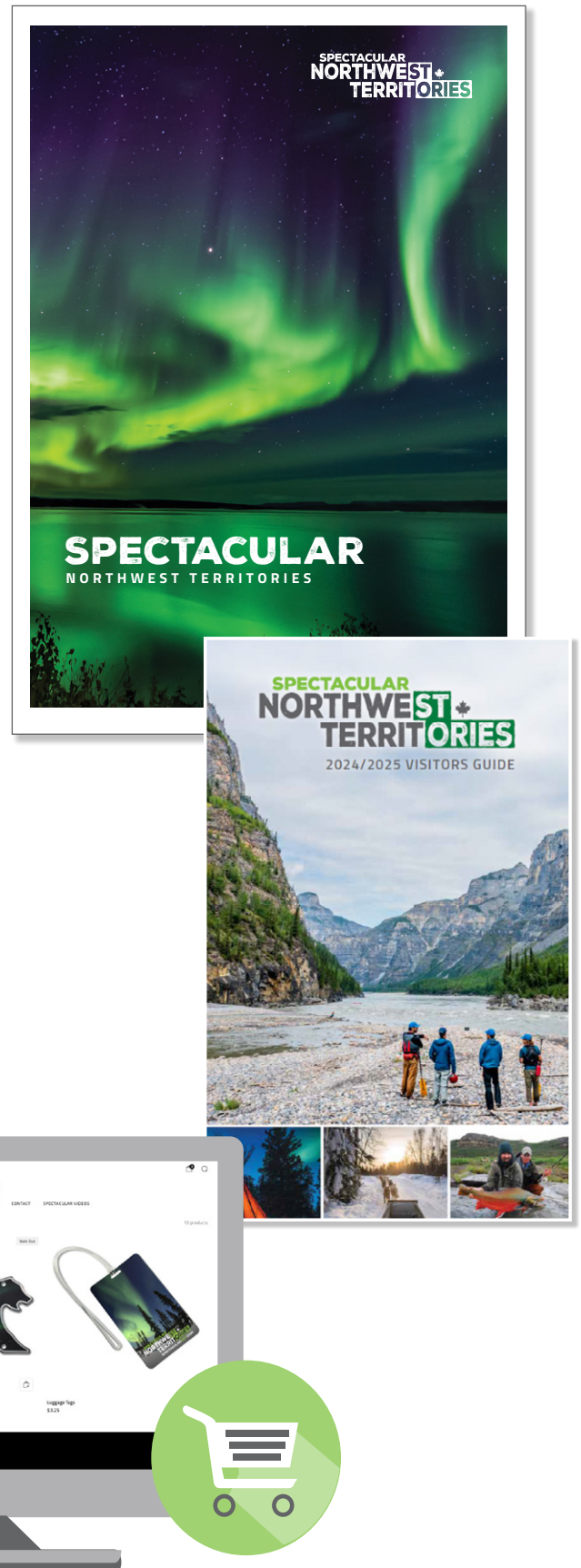
Spectacular Guide & Spectacular Book

In March 2024, NWT Tourism partnered with Northern News Services Ltd. (NNSL) to publish an annual territory-wide Spectacular Guide. The partnership between NWTT and NNSL merged the areas of expertise of the two organizations to produce a guide to attract and inform visitors to the Spectacular NWT. The Spectacular Guide is being distributed to select Visitor Centers across the country and at consumer shows.

We are still also producing the Spectacular Book, a more comprehensive and higher-end book, which is available upon request and can be accessed in many places including our website and through the monthly e-newsletter. The guide and the book also have QR links to stories, videos, and packages built directly into the document.

Online Store

In the past year, NWT Tourism has made some significant improvements to its [webstore](#). The online store showcases all the SpectacularNWT branded products, ranging from licence plates, toques and buffs to water bottles, t-shirts, sweaters, and more. New this year is the [Local Northern Retailers](#) section of the webstore, which allows NWTT members to showcase their products.





NWTT booth at one of the 2024 Outdoor Adventure Consumer Shows



Consumer Show Programming

Outdoor Adventure Consumer Shows took place in February and March 2024. NWT Tourism attended three consumer shows this year in Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary. All three shows had a good turnout and operators found NWT Tourism's presence valuable and useful. NWT Tourism debuted its new booth at the consumer shows this year and it was very popular. The vision was for visitors to the booth to imagine themselves standing under the Aurora. Many visitors to the booth stopped to take photos of themselves with the booth in the background. The photo taking was so popular that going forward, NWTT will be offering Polaroid photo opportunities for visitors to the booth, with more information on the photo that will lead them to engage with Spectacular NWT.

MEDIA MARKETING

The media coverage provided by travel writers and broadcast journalists enables an extensive audience reach at a greatly reduced cost compared to paid advertising. This 'Earned Media' also provides a voice of authenticity with readers. Media promotions typically include hosting media FAMs, answering media enquiries and helping with fact checking and photo and video acquisition. Media coverage is monitored regularly.

Media Shows and Media FAMs

The table below summarizes the Media FAMs that took place between January and December 2024.

Media FAM	Date
Expedia	January 18-21
Joel Clifton Shoot – Aurora, Winter Experiences	January 17-21
Working Holiday	March 1-12
German Media FAM – Stern	March 3-10
Mexico Media FAM	March 20-24
Fishing Canada TV Show FAM	June 12-19
Midwest Outdoor Magazine FAM	June 26 – July 3
Stephanie Vermillion – Outside Magazine	September 1-5
Influencer William Rossy (DC Partnership)	September 17-21
Melody Wren – Active Over 50 Magazine & CAA	September 12-16
Japan Media FAM Fuji Media	October 3-7
Destination Canada Winter Aurora Shoot	December 12-16

The NWT was very fortunate to host the TV show Good Morning America (GMA); the over 5 minute [segment](#), which was originally slated to be much shorter, aired in January, highlighting the Spectacular NWT and the incredible people they met while visiting us. The No.1 ranked morning newscast, GMA has a viewership of 2.819 million. After the broadcast businesses saw immediate inquiries, and we are still seeing inquiries from the feature.



**120
MILLION
DOLLARS**



Photo Library

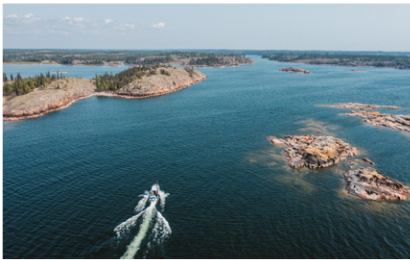
NWT Tourism populates and maintains an online photo database for the use of promoting tourism to the NWT. The photo library can be found at nwtphoto.ca. Individuals downloading photos include a mix of Travel Trade, Travel Media, and industry partners. There are currently 39,932 approved visual assets in the CANTO Library.

NWT Tourism strives to acquire stunning digital assets to promote the territory as a travel destination. Here are some of the images acquired this year:

BOOT LAKE KRISTIAN BINDER / NWTT



NORTH SLAVE ANGELA GZOWSKI / NWTT



YELLOWKNIVES DENE DRUMMERS AT FOLK ON THE ROCKS TOMMY JORGE / NWTT



OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHURCH DANIELLE GILLARD / NWTT



HOUSEBOAT BAY IN YELLOWKNIFE CAMERON BARFOOT / NWTT

NECK LAKE DANIELLE GILLARD / NWT



NORTH SLAVE ANGELA GZOWSKI / NWT



SAHTU REUBEN KRABBE / NWT



Crowdriff

Crowdriff is an online platform that gathers the most relevant and engaging User Generated Content (UGC) into one place. Within Crowdriff, we can create image galleries for the SpectacularNWT.com website and social media channels and create public photo walls and public galleries. Crowdriff also provides an efficient way to request and manage rights and permissions from UGC. NWT Tourism is able to see and request to use all the images that are tagged with the hashtag #SpectacularNWT.



BUSINESS AND EVENT TRAVEL

NWT CONFERENCE BUREAU

The [NWT Conference Bureau website](#) is a subsite of the main page SpectacularNWT and is geared towards aiding planners in any stage of organizing an event in the NWT. From initial interest and site selection, to final bookings and marketing, the Conference Bureau offers the resources to support planners.

BUSINESS EVENT TRADE SHOWS NWT TOURISM ATTENDED

Incentive Canada Winter Edition 2024 – Banff & Lake Louise, Alberta

Incentive Winter is an event organized by Destination Canada to allow Canadian Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) and industry partners to network and meet with incentive travel specialists. For Incentive Winter 2024, the Destination Canada team selected 14 international incentive travel professionals and 2 international media, to participate in their program along with 18 DMOs and industry partners. Throughout a total of 16 ten-minute appointments, the NWT Conference Bureau shared exciting images and information on the NWT. This was a highly successful and engaging event for the NWT Conference Bureau to participate in.

Destination Direct - Ottawa, Ontario

NWT Tourism attended Destination Direct, a two-day event filled with meetings, education, and social networking aimed at connecting DMOs with association executives and conference planners. Destination Direct is a valuable event for the NWT Conference Bureau to attend annually as it allows NWTT to reach high-end planners and CEOs of companies looking to host meetings and events and present them with the unique offerings of the NWT.

Tete a Tete– Ottawa, Ontario

Tete-a-Tete is Ottawa's premier trade show for association and not-for-profit leaders, meeting and event planners, and government Procurement Officers from across Canada. The event attracted high-value planners and executives by offering a main stage with keynote speakers throughout the day.

Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce Annual Tradeshow – Yellowknife, NWT

The NWT Conference Bureau and NWTT staff participated in the NWT Tourism booth at the annual Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce Trade Show. This tradeshow is a great opportunity to engage with residents and showcase the value of the NWT Conference Bureau and NWTT.

Corporate Connections Conference – Yellowknife, NWT

The NWT Conference Bureau participated in the Corporate Connections Conference which was held in Yellowknife this year. This is an annual conference held by the membership organization Corporate Connections. The NWT Conference Bureau has been working to bring this conference to Yellowknife for two years, following initial setbacks due to 2023 evacuations. This proved to be a valuable event allowing opportunities for the delegates, who were successful entrepreneurs from across Canada, to network with the Yellowknife business community, to take part in tours with local operators, and spend time in local retail establishments and restaurants.

SPORTING EVENTS

NWT Tourism provided promotional material and brochures to support the following sport tourism events that had NWT representation:

- » Sports Event Congress, attended by City of Yellowknife
- » Table Tennis Team attending National Girls Training Camp
- » Sport for Life Conference, attended by Executive Director of Table Tennis North

NWT Tourism provided welcome gift bags for the Table Tennis and Cycling Coaches' visit to the NWT. During the Canada Basketball Executive Directors Meetings, NWT Tourism provided welcome gift bags, as well as information on group activities. The event also participated in the Show Your Badge program.

BUSINESS AND EVENT TRAVEL PROJECTS

Northwest Territories Show Your Badge Program

Many Canadian and international cities offer a 'Show Your Badge Program' for inbound business event delegates. These programs offer event delegates specific discounts on goods, services, and experiences from local businesses while they are in the region for their designated event. NWTT and the NWT Conference Bureau launched the [NWT Show Your Badge Program](#) this year by sending a direct email communication to NWTT Members inviting them to join. The Conference Bureau developed guidelines, a webpage, and a program logo for the launch and has started a member database. This program provides an opportunity for participating members to promote their businesses to guaranteed visitors before they arrive. The badge program aims to help promote the NWT as a destination for conferences and business events, therefore helping to attract future MICE bookings, not to mention encouraging local spend and economic dispersion in communities during events and with the hope of delegates extending their stay.



Show Your Badge window decal

There are currently 25 participating NWT businesses, with a total of 14 events having used the program this year.

Bi-Annual NWT Inbound Air Traffic Projections

The NWT Conference Bureau provides a bi-annual reporting of upcoming events in the Territory to airline partners to assist in their load forecast and flight schedule planning.

Culinary Tourism Alliance of Canada – Great Taste of Canada Globe and Mail

Through NWTT's participation in the Great Taste of Canada program, the Northwest Territories was highlighted for a feature article in the Globe and Mail Food Section.



Destination Canada Board of Directors and Leadership Team Meetings

The Destination Canada Board of Directors and Leadership Team visited Yellowknife from October 7 to 10, 2024. The group dedicated a day to meetings and spent another day visiting operators and experiencing local tourism offerings. NWTT and the Conference Bureau arranged a full itinerary for the group and hosted an evening reception highlighting members, Indigenous culture, and the history of Yellowknife. This was an extremely valuable opportunity to share the North with national tourism industry leaders.

INTERNATIONAL MARKETS PROMOTIONS

Australia

NWT Tourism's presence in Australia is directed at attracting travelers interested in experiences such as Aurora viewing, exploring Indigenous cultures and outdoor adventures. The NWT is well positioned in-market as an add-on destination to ski holidays for these long-haul travellers, with air connections from Vancouver being of particular importance.

The Snow Travel Expo is a trade show that provides ski resorts and Destination Marketing Organizations from around the world access to a market of highly-motivated consumers in order to promote their destinations to Australian ski travelers for the upcoming winter seasons. These took place on May 19 in Melbourne and May 26 in Sydney. NWT had a booth shared in partnership with Banff Tourism and SkiBig3 (Lake Louise Ski Resort, Banff Sunshine Mountain and Mt Norquay).

NWT Tourism's in-market representative attended Virtuoso on Tour's two-day event in Sydney, sharing a booth with Rocky Mountaineer. At this event, 72 appointments with luxury, high level travel agents were conducted with a focus on Aurora viewing suppliers, locations and Yellowknife based activities.

As an exciting first, NWT Tourism participated in hosting a Virtuoso Study Tour from Australia. Virtuoso is a high-profile, luxury travel consortia that connects the world's top travel advisors and travel providers to offer premium travel experiences to upscale and luxury travelers. In partnership with Destination Vancouver and Tourism Whistler, NWT Tourism hosted 7 top travel advisors and 1 Virtuoso in-market rep in early October to showcase the NWT as a world-class destination to view the Northern Lights and engage with rich Indigenous culture.

There are currently 4 trade co-ops active with key partners including Adventure World, Helloworld, Entire Travel Group and APT with a focus on Aurora.

Mexico

In Mexico, NWT Tourism's activities focus on promoting the Northwest Territories as a destination for unique experiences like witnessing the Northern Lights and Indigenous cultural experiences to high value guests.

In February 2024, one trade FAM took place in Yellowknife. Mexican market representatives participated including trade partners at Operadora Travel Shop, Viajes Palacio, and Dream Destinations. This FAM also included a representative from an important media outlet in Mexico, the MMK Group. The focus of this FAM was for Mexican partners to get first-hand experience of product offerings and discuss ways to further promote the NWT's presence in Mexico.

NWT Tourism has campaigns currently active in-market with 2 key partners to push conversion for winter 2024/spring 2025 travel.

Japan

Japan remains a market with long-standing interest in the Northern Lights and authentic winter experiences. Key efforts this year included collaborating with Japanese travel agencies to promote Aurora-focused packages and cultural experiences.

Our in-market sales agent conducted two large training seminars. The first was in late August with JATA (Japan Association of Travel Agents) in which a 25-minute virtual webinar was conducted for 168 people focusing on travel information, key products, Aurora information and promotion of Indigenous experiences.

The second was during the Tourism Expo Japan from September 26 to 29 in Tokyo, where they conducted NWT destination training and had time to engage with Japanese consumers interested in Northern Lights tours.

Two trade FAMs from Japan took place this year. One was with key partner JTB and the other with partners including Hankyu Express, Kamome and HIS; both FAMs took place in early October and focused on Aurora experiences.

There are campaigns currently active in-market with support from Destination Canada which helps elevate presence in-market. These campaigns are designed to resonate with Japanese travelers who value authentic and nature-based experiences.

Germany

German travellers continue to be interested in travelling to the NWT to participate in nature-based tourism experiences, as well as road travel.

A new fly drive itinerary “Dempster Highway – road with a view” was developed. It starts and ends in Dawson City leading to Inuvik (and recommends the drive further to Tuktoyaktuk) describing North America’s most adventurous road trip. The itinerary includes 6 days (2-3 nights in Inuvik) filled with adventure, stopovers, and panoramic views.

In cooperation with Tourism Saskatchewan, Travel Manitoba and the Yukon, Northwest Territories Tourism is participating in a cross-marketing campaign with CRD Touristik, a German travel company specializing in custom travel experiences with a variety of road and rail journeys, and the well-known outfitter Globetrotter. This is a large campaign with many marketing tactics including advertorials, promotion through partner websites/social channels and a landing page dedicated to the destinations.

Our in-market representative participated in Destination Canada’s show – Showcase Europe from November 12th to 14th. This event brings together Canadian suppliers with European tourism professionals over a three-day marketplace to promote Canadian destinations, tourism products and experiences. The event aims to help Canadian suppliers enhance sales and business relationships with key players in the European tourism industry, through the networking events included in the program.

UK

UK travellers are drawn to the NWT for our immersive experiences and the pristine, accessible wilderness drawing travelers who seek unique adventures away from urban environments. New flight connections continue to be a great opportunity to increase our presence in-market.

This year, for the first time ever, UK tour operators participated in a FAM trip to the Northwest Territories from September 12th to 19th; this included a partnership with Destination Toronto for a 1-night stop-over. Flying from Toronto to Yellowknife highlighted Air Canada’s new year-round connection. Trade participants from WEXAS, Canadian Affair, First Class Holidays, Discover the World, Air Canada UK and Jonview took part in this FAM.

South Korea

Korean travellers are increasingly seeking themed and passion-driven itineraries and are willing to pay more for the right product. The Korean market is very interested in the Solar Max season for 2024-25 and is expected to have increased bookings for Aurora experiences. Campaigns are underway with 3 key partners highlighting the NWT as Canada’s main Aurora destination.

Our trade manager conducted a South Korea destination training virtually on November 19th to 42 participants.

Chinese Speaking Markets

NWTT continued to market to local Chinese living in Canada as well as the overall China market. Some highlights completed this year include translating all English itineraries on our main SpectacularNWT website into Mandarin and Cantonese. These make it much easier to be shared and synchronized with Chinese travel agents anytime.

Our in-market representative has built a loyalty group on WeTravel with 173 engaged travel agents sharing industry-specific information to stimulate new bookings and facilitate networking.

Destination Canada hosted a South China sales mission November 14th and 15th which our in-market representative participated in. This included sales calls with key partners including the Canadian consulate, Air Canada Japan, and multiple trade partners. This was the Destination Canada lead event in China since the pandemic.



SpectacularNWT setup at Rendez-Vous Canada 2024 in Edmonton

TRAVEL TRADE SHOWS

Focus Mexico

Destination Canada’s show, Focus Mexico, took place in Mexico City from September 10th to 12th. Focus Canada - Mexico connects the Canadian tourism industry with Mexican tourism professionals and media to share the latest trends in both Canadian and Mexican travel and explore business opportunities through B2B meetings. Over the course of this event, 20 trade meetings took place with top travel agencies and tour operators to talk about the destination and explore collaboration opportunities. NWT Tourism conducted a training session in which 70 travel agents were trained on the NWT as a destination and different product offerings available. The NWT and our partners in attendance had great exposure with the Mexican travel industry.

Rendez-Vous Canada

The NWT Conference Bureau joined NWT Tourism in Edmonton for Rendez-vous Canada 2024. This valuable event hosted by Destination Canada and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) attracts travel trade buyers from around the world and connects them with Canadian operators, showcasing our country, our businesses, and communities. It was a successful week of promoting the NWT and sharing our spectacular destination with both established and new partners. NWTT had over 70 scheduled meetings throughout the 3-day event. Many additional on-site appointments took place in addition to the pre-booked meetings, on the trade show floor, at NWTT organized after hours events, and at official RVC functions.

NWTT’s GSA for the Japanese market attended RVC 2024 and had a total of 30 appointments (26 with Japanese delegates).

NWT Tourism’s Central Europe representative in market attended RVC in person and met with 11 tour operators from the UK and one UK media to introduce (new) NWTT product and discuss potential joint marketing activities. Additionally, for the German market over 40 appointments took place.

NWT Tourism’s trade manager for China attended RVC and met with 32 tour operators from China and other Asian countries, including Taiwan.

NWT Tourism hosted a reception at the Telus World of Science during RVC; the event was well attended and represented a great opportunity to showcase Indigenous culture and the Aurora in the NWT, network, and build connections with industry partners.

CITAP+ Winter Function

CITAP+ (Canadian Inbound Tour Association of the Asia Pacific+) is a one-day event that took place December 3, 2024 in Richmond, Vancouver. CITAP+ emphasizes connecting Canada with global markets and brings together tourism professionals, including tour operators, travel agencies, hoteliers, and other stakeholders. It was an excellent chance to meet industry leaders and peers, build partnerships, and strengthen existing relationships.

The event included morning information sessions with Destination Canada who provided market updates, an afternoon marketplace floor to showcase the NWT and our offerings to partners and an industry networking evening function.

TRAVEL TRADE FAM TOURS

Travel Trade FAM	Date
Fresh Tracks – Director of HR	February 14-18
Mexico VIP FAM	February 11-18
Landsby	August 2-9
Agatha Greenland FAM	August 23-28
UK FAM	September 12-19
Virtuoso Study Tour FAM	September 30-October 3
JTB Japan FAM	October 5-8
FIT Japan FAM	October 8-11



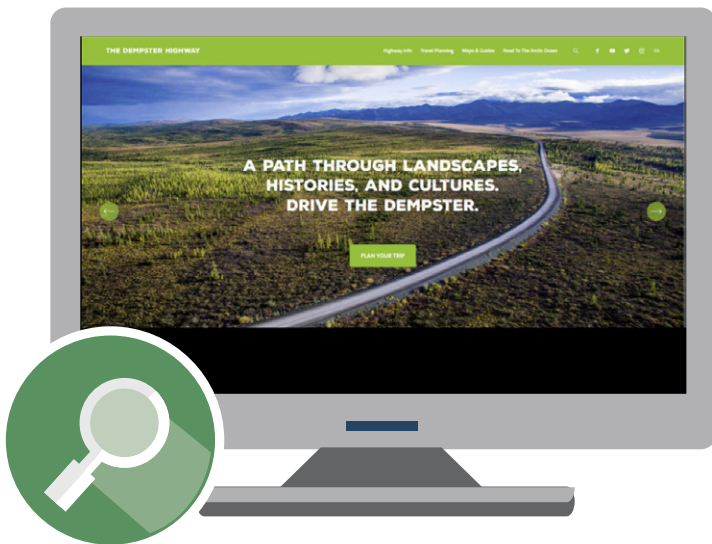
Virtuoso Study Tour FAM

REGION-SPECIFIC MARKETING

During this year, NWT Tourism implemented activities from the five regional marketing plans that are prepared annually in partnership with regional GNWT- ITI staff. The purpose of these marketing activities is to engage in outward-facing marketing that attract visitors to the NWT and to the regions by using regional content. This content includes, but is not limited to, images, video, stories, media buys, advertorials in magazines, social media posts, website landing pages and trade, media and familiarization tours.

Western Arctic

This year, NWT Tourism contributed to the promotion and celebration of regional events and attractions in the Western Arctic. Notably, NWTT supported the Inuvik Sunrise Festival through the creation of engaging content and a targeted paid social media campaign, driving awareness and participation. In addition, NWTT launched the Dempster Highway website, a dedicated platform showcasing the scenic and cultural treasures along this iconic route. To further enhance the region's artistic appeal, NWTT facilitated the acquisition of assets and created a highlight video for The Great Northern Arts Festival, enabling better promotion of this cultural event. NWTT also worked with a local photographer to purchase high-quality assets to help enhance its representation in marketing initiatives.

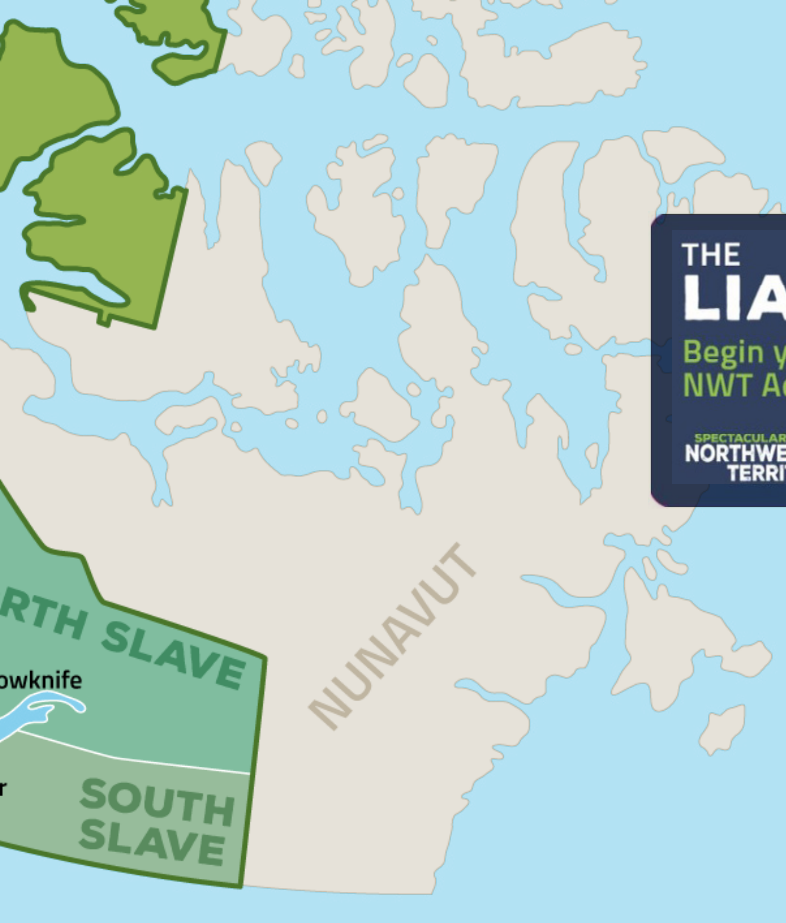


North Slave

NWTT staff facilitated Trade and Media Familiarization (FAM) tours, attracting national and international interest in the region. These tours play a vital role in showcasing the area's unique attractions to key travel and media stakeholders. In November, NWTT launched a targeted North Slave Lodges campaign aimed at regions of the U.S. market with high flight accessibility to the Northwest Territories. Further supporting regional development, NWTT acquired assets for the Yellowknife Historical Museum in October. Lastly, a video highlighting the Folk on the Rocks music festival was also produced and uploaded to the SpectacularNWT YouTube channel and the festival's events page on the SpectacularNWT website.

South Slave

NWTT worked with a local photographer and videographer to capture video footage of various festivals and events across the region. Two festival videos, featuring Hay Days and the Fireweed Festival, were completed and uploaded to the SpectacularNWT YouTube channel, with additional placement on the events pages of the SpectacularNWT website. In an effort to promote regional fishing experiences, NWTT also facilitated a media FAM to Brabant Lodge in collaboration with Fishing Canada TV. The show is expected to air in January 2025 and will showcase the lodge and region to a broad audience.



THE LIARD TRAIL

Begin your Spectacular NWT Adventure

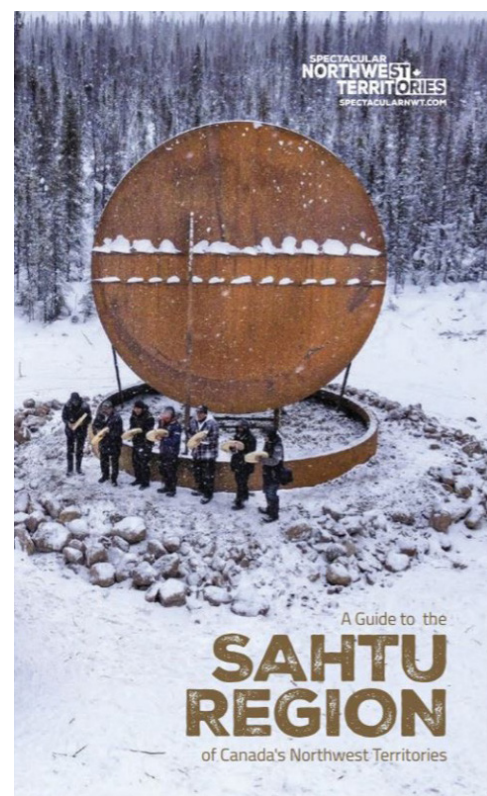
SPECTACULAR NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

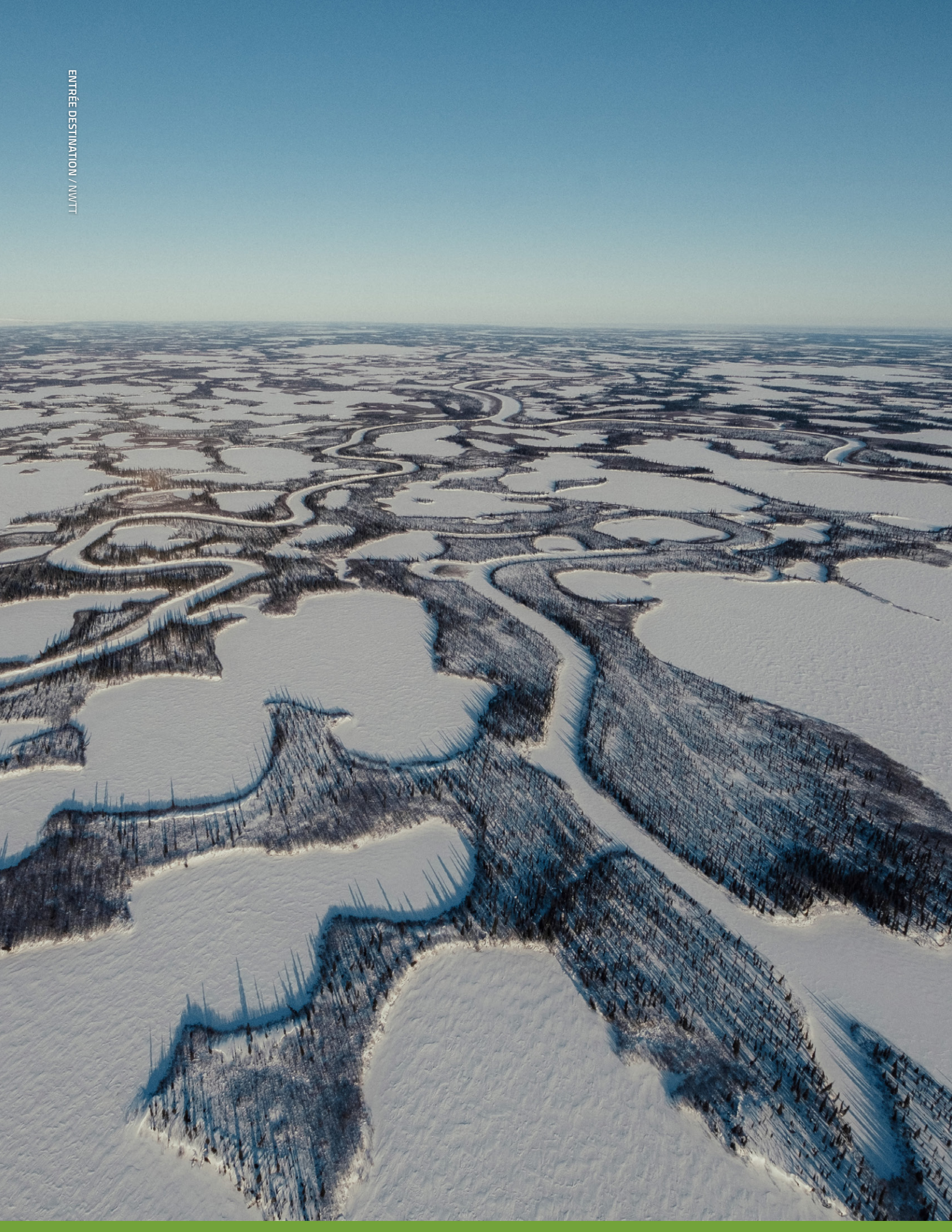
Dehcho ...

In the Dehcho region, NWT Tourism enhanced media coverage of the Beavertail Jamboree, producing a press release and acquiring photo and video assets to highlight the event's energy and cultural significance. In addition, NWTT developed a new Highway #97 sign, designed to capture the attention of passing traffic. This initiative seeks to create a more compelling and inviting presence for the Northwest Territories along this major route, encouraging travelers to explore the region's many offerings.

Sahtu ...

NWT Tourism focused on showcasing the natural beauty and adventure opportunities of the Sahtu region through a variety of initiatives. A video featuring paddling in the Sahtu was released on YouTube and added to the SpectacularNWT website. NWTT also purchased new images from local and national photographers to fill identified content gaps and better represent the region's unique landscapes and experiences. Additionally, the [Sahtu Guide](#) was completed in November, with copies to be distributed to visitor centres and the guide added to the Sahtu destination page on the SpectacularNWT website, enhancing accessibility to information about the region.





INDUSTRY ADVOCACY

NWT Tourism continues to work on relevant advocacy issues at the territorial, provincial, and national level. Advocacy work is carried out thanks to the partnership with several different organizations, some of which include the GNWT, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) and the Provincial and Territorial Industry Associations (PTTIA). Below are the advocacy activities carried out by NWT Tourism over the last year.

SCHOLARSHIPS



Northwest Territories Tourism is pleased to encourage the pursuit of excellence in the Tourism Industry in the Northwest Territories by offering annual NWT Tourism Scholarship awards.

This is the tenth year that NWT Tourism has offered scholarships. This is the second year we have included pilot and Aircraft Mechanical Engineer (AME) training as criteria for our scholarships. Also, this is the fourth year we have partnered with Rio Tinto in awarding the Rio Tinto Indigenous Student Tourism Scholarship. This year, we were able to increase the funds for the two NWT Tourism scholarships from \$1,500 to \$2,500 each. The recipients of this year's three scholarships were:

Taylor Dawn – recipient of the Rio Tinto Indigenous Student Scholarship

Taylor is currently enrolled in Bachelor of Arts Recreation, Sport and Tourism. She participated in 5 programs with Northern Youth Leadership and worked as a wilderness junior guide. She also participated in 2 programs with Black Spruce. After gaining more experience in the tourism industry, she would like to start her own tourism business.

Sommer Wiley – recipient of the first NWT Tourism Scholarship

Sommer is a Sahtu beneficiary who just completed her first year in flight school at Adventure Aviation in Grande Prairie (AB). Within the next year or two, she plans on completing her flight training and getting her first job as a pilot. Once her career begins, she plans on coming back to Norman Wells and hopes to fly for a local airline.

Ty Lafferty – recipient of the second NWT Tourism Scholarship

Ty is in his first year of the Environmental and Natural Resources Technology Program at Aurora College in Fort Smith. Ty is Tłıchǫ First Nation and is especially interested in learning how Traditional Knowledge and Science work together. Last summer, he completed his wildfire training and worked with Environment & Climate Change to provide logistical support to the firefighters. Someday, he would like to own his own tour company.

WORKFORCE

In an effort to assist our members, not only with their own physical and mental well-being, but also as a possible recruitment and retention tool, NWT Tourism has worked with CapCorp and Greenshield to design a [benefits plan](#) (health, dental and other health services) specifically for NWT Tourism members.

NWT Tourism has met and discussed with several different levels of government and organizations over the last couple of years, GNWT-ECE, Government of Canada-Immigration, CDETNO, Future Skills Canada, PTTIA, Tourism HR, TIAC, the many issues around labour shortages. The labour shortage is nationwide and is a very big concern in all industries. We will continue to work with our partners at GNWT-ITI to advocate for training opportunities for residents of the NWT in the tourism industry, and will share all opportunities with our members as they arise.



AIR ACCESS

As of December 2024, non-stop, year round service is being provided to Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Toronto from Yellowknife Airport. As well, seasonal direct flights are being offered to Ottawa and Toronto. The direct Toronto-Yellowknife route was introduced by Air Canada last December and has been very successful to date. We are hoping service for this route will increase from three days a week to daily in the future. This route has been playing a crucial role in providing increased connections between the NWT and Eastern Canada, as well as international hubs; the flight's schedule works well to align with connections for travellers from overseas. Furthermore, thanks to the interline partnership between Air Canada and Canadian North, visitors are able to connect to their destinations in the NWT beyond Yellowknife.

Again, this year Canadian North has delivered a special Tour Operator Program. Through this program Canadian North is offering special pricing for tour operators with a valid GNWT tour operator license in the Northwest Territories.

NWT Tourism worked very closely with airline and industry partners to highlight the tourism industry's concerns and needs. We have established open and consistent lines of communication with the airlines that service the NWT tourism industry. We are continuing to work with the airlines to promote the routes for the NWT, as well as be aware of routes that connect with the hubs that serve the NWT for further marketing opportunities to help ensure the routes to the NWT continue to be viable. We will continue to work with the airlines and industry partners to ensure that the tourism industry is top of mind.

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES ALONG THE DEMPSTER HIGHWAY

The GNWT's Department of Infrastructure (INF) has procured waste disposal units which were installed at the Peel and Mackenzie River ferry crossing locations over the weekend of July 13-14, 2024. INF will commit to leaving the waste disposal units in place so long as they do not begin to attract unwanted wildlife, placing the public or operational staff in danger. INF and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) met to discuss providing pull-outs along the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway (ITH). Improvements to the ITH will soon be underway, but this previously developed scope of work did not include provision of pull-outs, and cannot be accommodated within the current budget. INF commits to including pull-outs in future scopes of reconstruction work for the ITH. Once pull-outs are in place, ITI can determine if they will provide interpretive signage or other facilities at those locations.

FLIGHT AND DUTY TIME REGULATIONS

NWT Tourism attended the Northern Air Transport Association (NATA) annual conference to assist in raising awareness of the unique challenges and operating conditions of the air industry in the North and continue to work with NATA to advocate for our industries' concerns and needs. We will continue to work with the airlines and industry partners to ensure that the tourism industry is top of mind.

REDUCING THE IMPACT OF LAND LEASE COST INCREASES ON OUTFITTERS WITH OUTPOST CABINS

We have been in discussion with the GNWT's Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) as they are now the department responsible for Lands. We have been assured that we will be a member of the Technical Advisory Panel for the Public Lands Act Regulations review, however the review is dependent on the progress of the Technical Working Group, and we are still waiting for an update on the process and timeline of this work. There is still work to do with this resolution and it will be ongoing into the next year.

ENFORCEMENT OF AURORA TOURISM OPERATOR LICENSES

In working with the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Industry, Tourism, and Investment (GNWT-ITI) they have implemented a visual decal for all Aurora tour vehicles operating in the North Slave region, to easily and readily identify Aurora operators that have obtained the proper licensing. Further to this they have conducted spot checks to ensure that operators have all adequate paperwork while operating tours. We will continue to work with GNWT-ITI to ensure that regulations under the Tourism Act are being enforced, and to highlight opportunities for further training programs.

CIRQUE OF THE UNCLIMBABLES GARY GREMNER / NWT







2024 CONFERENCE & AGM

The event took place in Yellowknife from November 5th to 7th. The AGM & Conference were held at the Explorer Hotel, while the dinner and celebration event was held at the Chateau Nova Hotel. The event was well attended and the post event survey results showed positive feedback on the venue, speakers, training, as well as the AGM & Conference format and delivery. The event had the highest number of registrants in the last five years.

On the first day of the conference, NWT Tourism held its Annual General Meeting. There was engaged discussion from NWT Tourism members and Board of Directors. Four proposed resolutions were brought forward to the AGM and they were all passed:

1. Air Access and Air Industry Regulatory Challenges
2. Ease of Navigating Regulatory Requirements for Tourism Businesses in the NWT
3. Infrastructure Support Required to Navigate the Changing Landscape of the NWT
4. Reducing the Impact of Land Lease Cost Increases on Outfitters with Outpost Cabins

More information on the resolutions that were passed during NWT Tourism's 2024 AGM can be found [here](#).

Resolutions brought forward and passed at the AGM are what drive NWT Tourism's advocacy work for the upcoming year. Nevertheless, NWT's work is not only limited to the resolutions identified at the AGM.

Travel Trade Panel on the first day of the 2024 NWT Tourism Conference Athena Wong / NWTT



The first day of the conference continued in the afternoon with welcoming remarks from NWT Tourism's CEO, an opening prayer by the Yellowknives Dene Drummers, a welcome from Senator Margaret Dawn Anderson, and the Honourable Caitlin Cleveland, Minister for Industry Tourism and Investment for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

NWT Tourism's Marketing Director delivered an engaging marketing update on the activities carried out over the past year. Updates followed from the GNWT's Tourism and Parks division, as well as Destination Canada. Later in the afternoon, NWT Tourism hosted a Travel Trade Panel that included representatives from Expedia, Jonview, and Tansi Tourism Solutions. The day ended with a welcome reception that was held at the Bluebell Eatery in Yellowknife.



NWT Tourism's presentation on the second day of the 2024 Conference Angela Gzowski / NWTT

The second day of the conference started with welcoming remarks from Robert Warburton, Councillor for the City of Yellowknife and was followed by the Keynote speaker's presentation on Artificial Intelligence. Peter Pilarski, founder of the Tourism AI network and president of CIPR Communications, was this year's keynote speaker and talked about "How to Make AI Your Unfair Tourism Business Advantage". Presentations by the NWT Tourism team, Ken Brooker, a film professional working with NWT Film, and Edmonton International Airport followed. Later in the afternoon, NWT tourism hosted an aviation panel with representatives from Yellowknife Airport, Canadian North, North-Wright Airways, and Air Canada.

To round out the second day, NWT Tourism hosted 11 table topic sessions, each elaborating on a different topic relevant to tourism today and hosted by industry professionals. Attendees could choose which tables to participate in and engage with their table hosts.



The 2024 Keynote Speaker, Mr. Peter Pilarski Angela Gzowski / NWTT



NWT Tourism 2024 Industry Awards recipients – from the left: Ragnar Wesstrom, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, Mary-Jane and Gilbert Cazon, recipients of the Operator of the Year Award, and Verda Law, recipient of the Service Excellence Award.
Angela Gzowski/NWTT

On the third day of the conference, NWT Tourism hosted an Industry Training session sponsored by the GNWT's Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Training was presented by Angela Nagy of GreenStep Solutions. The training was well received, engaging, and followed by a very active Q&A session.

In the late afternoon, attendees participated in one of three community experiences; they could choose between a beading workshop led by April Bell of Etoa's Earrings at her Mahsicho store, a wild tea & wellness product making workshop with Amy Maund of Laughing Lichen, and a tour at the Yellowknife Historical Museum with Walt Humphries.



Aviation Panel during the 2024 NWTT Conference Angela Gzowski / NWTT



The day ended with the dinner and celebration event at the Chateau Nova Hotel, which included an NWT Arts market, dinner, Industry Awards, a very successful fundraiser auction, and a live band performance. The live auction held during the dinner and celebration event raised a record \$21,000 towards NWT Tourism's Scholarships Fund; this was the highest amount raised during the auction to date.

NWT Tourism is beyond grateful for the support we have received from our conference sponsors. Thanks to the NWTT staff, our speakers, and partners, the 2024 AGM & Conference had a very successful turnout and represented a valuable opportunity to build relationships and learn more about the industry.



Table Topics Sessions at the 2024 Conference
Angela Gzowski / NWTT



NWT Arts Market at the Dinner & Celebration Event
on November 7, 2024 Angela Gzowski / NWTT





Northwest Territories Tourism

Box 610, Yellowknife, NT,
Canada X1A 2N5

Telephone (Local): (867) 873-5007

Fax: (867) 873-4059

Email: info@spectacularnwt.com

