

BRINGING THE
SASKATCHEWAN
TOURISM BRAND TO LIFE







Tourism Saskatchewan launched a new brand for marketing Saskatchewan’s tourism experiences in April 2015. The brand reflects the essence or personality of our province. It reflects the qualities that are unique and memorable, and make Saskatchewan distinct from other destinations.

- Brand Position: *This beautiful and vast land draws us together*
- Brand Proposition: *Time slows – and as you relax, you connect with the people around you*
- Brand Pillars: *Land and Sky; Time and Space; Community*

This document summarizes the research behind the brand and illustrates how to weave the brand themes into your own marketing activities.

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OUR RESEARCH

Tourism Saskatchewan undertook comprehensive research to gauge perceptions about the province as a destination, identify distinct features and pinpoint what is unique to our province – what Saskatchewan “owns.”

Online surveys with consumers in Saskatchewan and Alberta involved them ranking key words commonly associated with Saskatchewan. Top-of-mind was the relaxing pace and atmosphere, followed by the impressive natural beauty and the welcoming character of Saskatchewan residents.

Consumer focus group testing in Alberta and Saskatchewan included a mix of individuals who have vacationed in the province and people who commonly travel via their own vehicle. Two Alberta focus groups were exclusive to travellers who had never taken a holiday in Saskatchewan.

Tourism Saskatchewan recently contracted EnviroNics Analytics to develop custom Explorer Quotient (EQ) profiles for Saskatchewan’s top Canadian tourism markets. Five key market segments were determined. These segments are based upon an analysis of postal code data for Canadians who:

- visited Saskatchewan
- inquired directly to Tourism Saskatchewan
- visited **TourismSaskatchewan.com**
- purchased a Saskatchewan angling licence (but are not residents)
- camped in a provincial park during the past two years

The identified market profiles focus on travellers from Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia. Information about the research and the characteristics of each profile is available on **IndustryMatters.com**.



WHAT DID WE HEAR?

- Family is a distinguishing factor for Saskatchewan.
- Residents are friendly and down-to-earth.
- Saskatchewan is perceived as outdoorsy.
- A laid-back attitude is common. The province's simplicity is part of its charm.
- Vacationing in Saskatchewan is about being connected, feeling welcomed and being part of the community.
- Diverse landscapes and breathtaking scenery surprise and impress. Experiencing the unexpected shapes great travel memories.
- Saskatchewan affords time with family and friends; time to explore nature; and time to discover oneself.

Visitors said . . .

"You don't have to be from Saskatchewan to feel at home vacationing in Saskatchewan."

"Saskatchewan is a place you can 'be' with your family, not 'do' with your family."

"I have been to a number of places and you just can't find a friendlier place than Saskatchewan."

"Looking for an experience that is calming, relaxing . . . if I go to Saskatchewan, I know that I can come back relaxed."

"Even if you are a stranger, you are family in Saskatchewan."

"[People] are real. They don't pretend to be somebody else."

"Wide open skies give the sense of freedom."





BRAND ATTRIBUTES

Personality

- Sincere
- Down-to-earth
- Authentic
- Easy-going
- Small-town
- Friendly
- Family-oriented

Voice

Straightforward and friendly – “We are happy to see you. We are glad that you came.”

Tone

- Confident
- Welcoming

Brand Pillars

• Land and Sky

These basic building blocks of nature are at the heart of the Saskatchewan brand. From legendary southern badlands to rolling prairie to the majestic northern boreal forest that frames nearly 100,000 lakes – these are the spaces that define us, make us who we are and bring us closer together.

• Time and Space

In Saskatchewan, time is in no hurry. Like the magnificent skies above, space seems endless. There is room to breathe and to stretch the imagination. As you disconnect from the stress of a busy, crowded life, you connect with the people around you.

• Community

Saskatchewan hospitality runs deep and the spirit of community is a notable characteristic of our province. Visitors are immediately made to feel at home and part of the community – like a member of the family. No matter what part of Saskatchewan you visit, no matter how long you decide to stay, the essence of this place makes a memorable impression.

ILLUSTRATING BRAND STORIES

Consistent integration of the brand elements across Tourism Saskatchewan's marketing initiatives brings the brand to life and illuminates stories and experiences that entice visitors. Television commercials, videos, and advertisements created for print and online sources convey stories inspired by the brand pillars: Land and Sky; Time and Space; Community.



The brand personality is reflected in our travel guides, across social media channels and throughout the pages of our consumer website **TourismSaskatchewan.com**.



The brand is demonstrated through our interaction with consumers at trade shows. Images enhance displays and magnify our presence at consumer shows.





Tourism Saskatchewan continues to build an inventory of brand video footage and photography, as well as content to feature in itineraries, articles and other marketing materials. The brand is promoted to travel influencers, media and trade through story ideas, itineraries and experiences. New brand stories will continue to be developed. This repository of marketing assets and the expertise shared by Tourism Saskatchewan professionals will assist operators interested in leveraging the brand and developing their own vacation packages and experiences.

MAKING THE BRAND WORK FOR YOU

Industry engagement is important to us. You have been part of the process all along because the new brand was informed by your passion for welcoming visitors and treating them to exceptional hospitality and experiences. Saskatchewan's tourism industry and resources are diverse, just like the landscapes and features of this province. The brand reflects qualities in all of us – it connects us. By working collectively, we can harness the power of the brand to amplify all of our marketing efforts.

TOP FIVE TIPS for leveraging Saskatchewan's tourism brand

You know your own product and experiences better than anyone. But what stories are you telling to potential visitors? How are you making the pitch about your business and the experiences offered? There is strength in alignment and consistency. Here are some tips for leveraging Saskatchewan's tourism brand while putting your own, unique stamp on materials and messages that promote your operation.

1. DEVELOP MESSAGING THAT REFLECTS THE BRAND PILLARS

- Land and Sky: Build on the elements of wide-openness, geographic wonders and the closeness that people feel under magnificent skies, both night and day.
- Time and Space: Emphasize the laid-back nature and relaxing pace that afford time to connect with the people around you.
- Community: Visitors to Saskatchewan are made to feel welcome and included in events or activities. They become part of the community, part of the family.

2. USE PHOTOGRAPHY THAT REFLECTS THE BRAND

Great images have the power to communicate an intriguing message and command attention. Highlight the feeling of inclusiveness – the “we” and “us” – and stress that Saskatchewan provides the time and space to connect with what is important – family, community, meaningful relationships and “in the moment” experiences. Feature impressive images of the land and sky. Photography that is authentic, that illustrates the story of people and experiences, is one of your most influential and effective tools.



3. HIGHLIGHT SASKATCHEWAN STORIES

Storytelling appeals to the emotions and is a powerful marketing tool. The character and essence of this province are shared through stories of its history and its people. Saskatchewan roots run deep and the province leaves an indelible impression on those who call the province home and on those who visit.

Combining impressive imagery and compelling stories creates formidable marketing materials that illustrate the vast and beautiful spaces unique to Saskatchewan. The options are limitless – from capturing the essence of complete calm and solace in the outdoors to pristine lakes teeming with world record-size fish to roaring rivers and challenging geography where adventures await.

4. USE A CONFIDENT, WELCOMING TONE AND SHOWCASE THE UNEXPECTED

Impress travellers with scenes of majestic landscapes and stories of thrilling adventures and events they cannot afford to miss. Stress the unhurried pace that allows for true relaxation and escape, and suggest options – quiet getaways, rural hospitality, urban staycations, etc.

5. EMPHASIZE FRIENDLY, DOWN-TO-EARTH PEOPLE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

Saskatchewan hospitality is second-to-none. Stress the warm, neighbourly character of Saskatchewan residents, along with the special places where people connect and the celebrations that bring them together. Consider community events, music and cultural festivals, farmers markets, culinary events, etc.

TOP FIVE TIPS for brand photography

What do the photographs on your website or in your promotional materials say about your business? Attractive, compelling images are important for creating a great first impression and triggering interest in your property. Assess your current photographs in relation to the three brand pillars: Land and Sky; Time and Space; and Community. You may already have some great images that reflect these themes. If your images are outdated, here are some tips for capturing new photography that will grab attention.

1. PUT PEOPLE IN THE PICTURE

Every story needs a character. Capture images of awe moments, people having fun, making connections and enjoying the colourful sights, lively sounds and delicious tastes of Saskatchewan experiences, events and communities. Photographs of landscapes, sunsets and outdoor settings, no matter how spectacular, resonate more powerfully when people are in the picture and emotional connections are conveyed. Potential travellers who see these photographs can envision themselves in the setting and may be persuaded to plan a Saskatchewan vacation.

2. SHOW OFF THE SCENERY

Saskatchewan people may be characteristically humble, but we have every reason to boast about the beauty of our four seasons, the magnificent scenery and the geographic wonders of this province. Show off your best photos of special places, impressive settings and scenes that will spark curiosity and invite potential visitors to seek more information. Land and sky are undeniably features that command attention. There are limitless possibilities for photographs that will challenge misconceptions about our province and inspire travellers to carve out their own Saskatchewan adventures and discoveries.

3. LET THE PHOTOGRAPHS SPEAK

Pictures have a way of telling a story that cannot be conveyed through copy or headlines. Saskatchewan's wide-open spaces, its laid-back atmosphere and unhurried pace are qualities that travellers appreciate in a destination. Setting up photographs to showcase these attributes will add to the quality of your marketing materials and can result in some powerful statements about your property and the experiences offered.

4. CAPTURE VIDEO

Most cameras today can record crisp, high-resolution video. As with still photography, your clips should tell a story or relay an emotional connection. Aim for high quality and feature impressive scenery, people enjoying their experiences and moments that capture the authenticity and welcoming spirit of this place. Upload your videos to *YouTube* and give potential customers more reasons to book and experience your product or destination firsthand.

5. REFRESH YOUR IMAGE

Consistency in the look and feel of your marketing messages is important; however, there is value in ensuring that your materials are vibrant and engaging. Consider refreshing images on a regular basis to accurately depict your business. Are you a four-season operation or destination? Do your photographs reflect the products and experiences offered? Have you recently renovated, expanded or upgraded your property or equipment? Show consumers what they can expect and ensure that you deliver on the promise.

Hiring a professional photographer can be a worthwhile investment. Before you take photographs or videos of guests, ask for their permission and be clear on where the images or footage might appear (website, brochures, etc.).

Tourism Saskatchewan's image library has a comprehensive collection of photographs highlighting attractions, events and experiences throughout the province. Inquiries are welcome.

Contact:
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Working with Tourism Saskatchewan

This document has been compiled to provide background information on the brand development process and summarize the components and themes. It serves as a guideline for tourism operators and businesses to consider. Use it to tailor your own marketing efforts to align with the brand characteristics and leverage its influence. The brand is positioned to deliver widespread, concentrated messaging about Saskatchewan's remarkable travel offerings and appeal to the desire for meaningful discoveries and memorable experiences.

As illustrated throughout this guide, there are numerous ways to bring the brand to life and showcase Saskatchewan stories through vivid photography, video, advertisements and promotional materials. At the same time, the brand pillars offer inspiration for stories that are reflective, that offer a different storytelling approach and bring attention to facets of this province that are special – its dark skies, for example, or the warm feeling of community during festivals and events that celebrate food, music and culture.

Tourism Saskatchewan invites you along for the journey. If you have questions about how to leverage the brand and enhance your marketing efforts, contact:

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