



Gustavus Visitors Association Year End & Progress Report August 6, 2023

City Of Gustavus Reports Due:

February- first quarter (Mid Year) , May - second quarter, August- (End of Year) third quarter & November - fourth quarter

This report reflects activities within the Gustavus Visitors Association between August 2022 and August 2023. With projected goals and objectives for 2024.

Packet Includes:

- Progress Report
- Profit & Loss vs Actual July 2022 through June 2023
- Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2023

Gustavus Visitors Association Board of Directors:

Leah Okin - President

Robynn Jones -Vice President

Cam Cacioppo -Secretary

Hillery Lesh- Treasurer

Natalie Vaz – Director Voting Member

Curtis Lindblom -Director Voting Member

Open position – Voting member at large

Employed positions:

Brian Taylor – Marketing Technician

Trisha Dawson- Marketing Social Media

Leah Okin – Marketing Coordinator

Noel Ferevaag – Administrator

Mission Statement

The mission of GVA is to enhance the economies of the City of Gustavus (CoG) through tourism marketing that increases business revenue, tax revenue and creates jobs. Our primary goal is to increase overnight stays of leisure and business travelers, who in turn, support local businesses through spending money – a boost to our economy.

GVA is committed to promoting and elevating Gustavus' position as a world-class destination for leisure travel. GVA further serves to ensure tourism continues to contribute locally on a large scale, thereby enhancing the quality of life for all who live, work and play here.

Organizational Structure

Non-profit corporation

The Gustavus Visitors Association was incorporated as a 501c(3) non-profit corporation in January of 2005. According to GVA By-laws, every fall the Board reviews and adopts a fiscal year budget for the period: July 1 to June 30 of the following year to coincide with the City of Gustavus' fiscal year. The Board submits its request for use of a portion of bed tax revenues to the City, along with the Marketing Plan which must by Ordinance be approved by the City Council.

Funding Source

The Gustavus Visitors Association is funded both by a city bed tax of 4%, of which GVA can receive up to half, and GVA annual membership dues. The visitor industry supports up to 50% of the City's tax revenue in most years.

Completed to task 2023

- Maintained marketing and memberships.
 - Southeast Alaska Tourism Council (SATC)
 - Travel Alaska
 - Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA)
 - Travel Juneau
- Distributed 'Gustavus News Bulletin' for community and businesses, answering frequently asked questions in town. 210. subscribers.
- Attended Alaska Travel Industry Association marketing webinars.
- Alaska Travel Industry Association Travel Planner ad' submitted. The vacation planner is primarily distributed in the lower 48, Canada and some international destinations. ATIA also takes the vacation planner to all travel trade events we attend. DMO's can also place bulk orders for the planner to distribute in their community. For the 2024 vacation planner we are planning to print around 200,000. Here are some quick stats on the current digital 2023 vacation planner: Since 10/1/22:7,725 unique users 8,286 sessions 10.24 minutes per reader
<https://www.travelalaska.com/Plan-your-Trip/Planning-Tools/Vacation-Planner> is the 3rd most visited page on the website ATIA website 44,174 VP requests (submitting the form)
- Relocation of the visitor kiosk at the beach has begun. The GVA will be working with Gustavus Construction and Glacier Bay Construction and hope to have the relocation of the beach kiosk completed this season.
- The Gustavus Children's mural under the Salmon River Bridge is underway with the leadership of Morgan. This is an incentive created to combat graffiti whilst giving the Salmon River fisherman and boaters something creative and very 'uniquely Gustavus' to view

- Stickers for advertising Gustavus were made and distributed again.



- Maintaining GVA Events Calendar for both Visitors and the local community.
<https://www.gustavusak.com/local-community/gustavus-events/>
- Map & Brochure completed and printed. This had a whole new look this year featuring the wonderful words of Linda Parker on the front. When updating the map the GVA emailed all of the community and GVA members for feedback. This generated a huge amount of comments and edits, those that wanted roads added and those that did not wish to have roads added, trails added, trails taken off. Trying to appease all is a challenge; however, we felt that it was important to try.
- Updated Poster size maps of Gustavus located at- The Dray, the beach kiosk, Alaska Seaplanes and Alaska Airlines
- Mailed out our brochures as requested by visitors planning to come to Gustavus
- The map and brochure is also downloadable and may be printed from our website.
- Maps & Brochures also get mailed to our neighboring communities.
- Submitted an ad for print in Alaska Magazine with tracking integrated in the QR code/URL
- Aramark and the Glacier Bay Lodge and Tours is now displaying the GVA map and brochure on their front desk counter with a QR Code that will take the viewers straight to the GVA website to see what services, activities and places of interest exist in Gustavus. This includes information about local businesses and visitor activities based in Gustavus. The goal is for the guests of the Glacier Bay Lodge to see what is available in Gustavus for them to venture into town, explore and enjoy the local amenities.

Web Updates and Improvements

- Continued content updates of business profiles, donors, homepage content, and more.
- Created the new analytics reports and continued to make incremental improvements in our analytics data and how it's gathered, processed, organized and displayed.
- Developed a custom integration with Google's Looker Studio platform to display custom reports for members on the site (Not yet launched)
- Developed analytics reports for our business members (Nearly ready for Alpha launch)

Highlights from monthly meeting minutes

January

- January draws to the end of the membership drive and 46 businesses joined out of a possible 64. Many of those that did not join are the small service businesses and not visitor related.

February

- The GVA has reached out several times now to join the Juneau Carbon offset program as a sponsor and continues to look at 'Green initiatives' for Gustavus
- Several surveys went out this month to gather numbers and input.-
- Survey to find out how preseason bookings were looking (this came on the heels of David Olney making a comment at a City Council meeting that he had seen several cancellations of group bookings and that we should be aware that Gustavus may have a challenging visitor season in 2023. The survey concluded that most accommodations had a good to average preseason reservations already booked.
- A survey went out to see how many visitors Gustavus received 2022 and if there has been an increase over the last 5-10 years. This survey came as a result of the DRC improvement grant writer looking to see if there has been an increase in trash and compost over the years and how visitor numbers have affected this volume increase. The results of the GVA survey were inconclusive as we were not able to obtain accurate numbers due to several accommodations not participating in the survey or a reluctance to divulge numbers. The visitor numbers were ultimately estimated with the assistance of the City Administrator by obtaining an account of arrivals into Gustavus by Ferry, AK Seaplanes & AK Airlines (although this does not account for those arriving by private vessels of private aircraft) The estimated visitor numbers for 2022 was – between 7-8,000.
- A survey went out to find out what the businesses and community would like to see portrayed in a marketing promotional film about Gustavus and who would be good to be interviewed to capture 'what we love about Gustavus' and why we live here. 15 people have been listed to participate in the interview process of the Gustavus Film project to capture a variety of points of view and personalities.

March

- Discussion on the content of the Welcome Sign Kiosk to make the sign more Gustavus based information.
- Continue conversations about the content of the Gustavus Film Project.
- Richard Cooper (born and raised in Haines, who's first passion is music)
- Frostline Studios
- <http://www.frostlinestudios.com/>
- Meeting to discuss Blog posts on the GVA site and Social Media.

April, May, June, July & August meetings postponed until the summer season is over.

September - monthly meetings will resume.

Website Analytics

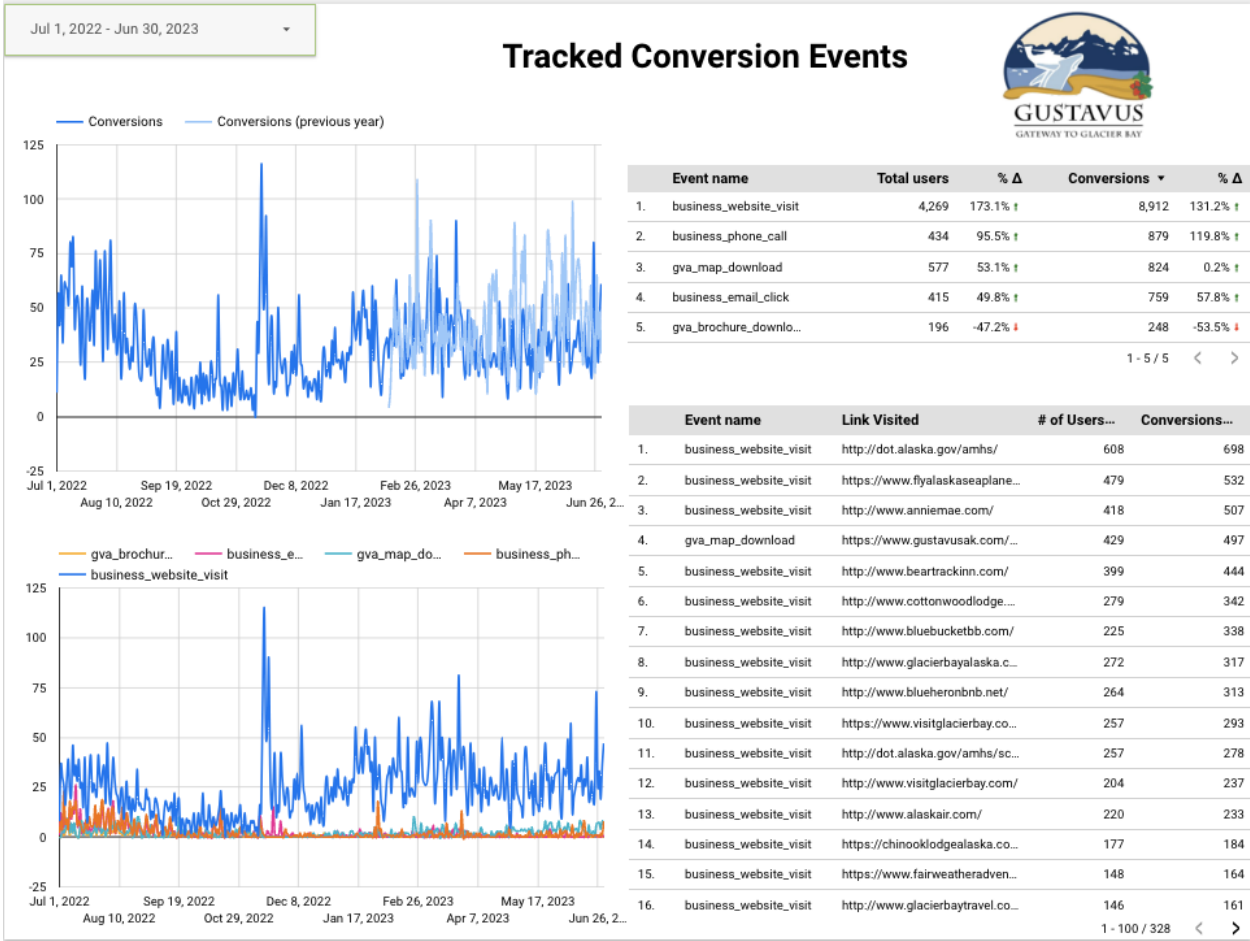
In FY23 we made significant changes to our analytics reporting, including the following all-new analytics reports. Our previous reports came from a Google “Universal Analytics property”, a platform Google has now phased out and stopped processing data for on July 1, 2023. Our new reports were built to get ahead of this platform shift as well as report on the “conversion” goals we began implementing for the website in February of 2022.

Because we didn’t begin data collection via the new “Google Analytics 4” platform until October of 2021 and didn’t begin tracking conversions on the site until February of 2022, we don’t have overlapping data for the full two year period, so the comparisons from FY22 are not complete, and percent changes listed in the reports are unfortunately not accurate.

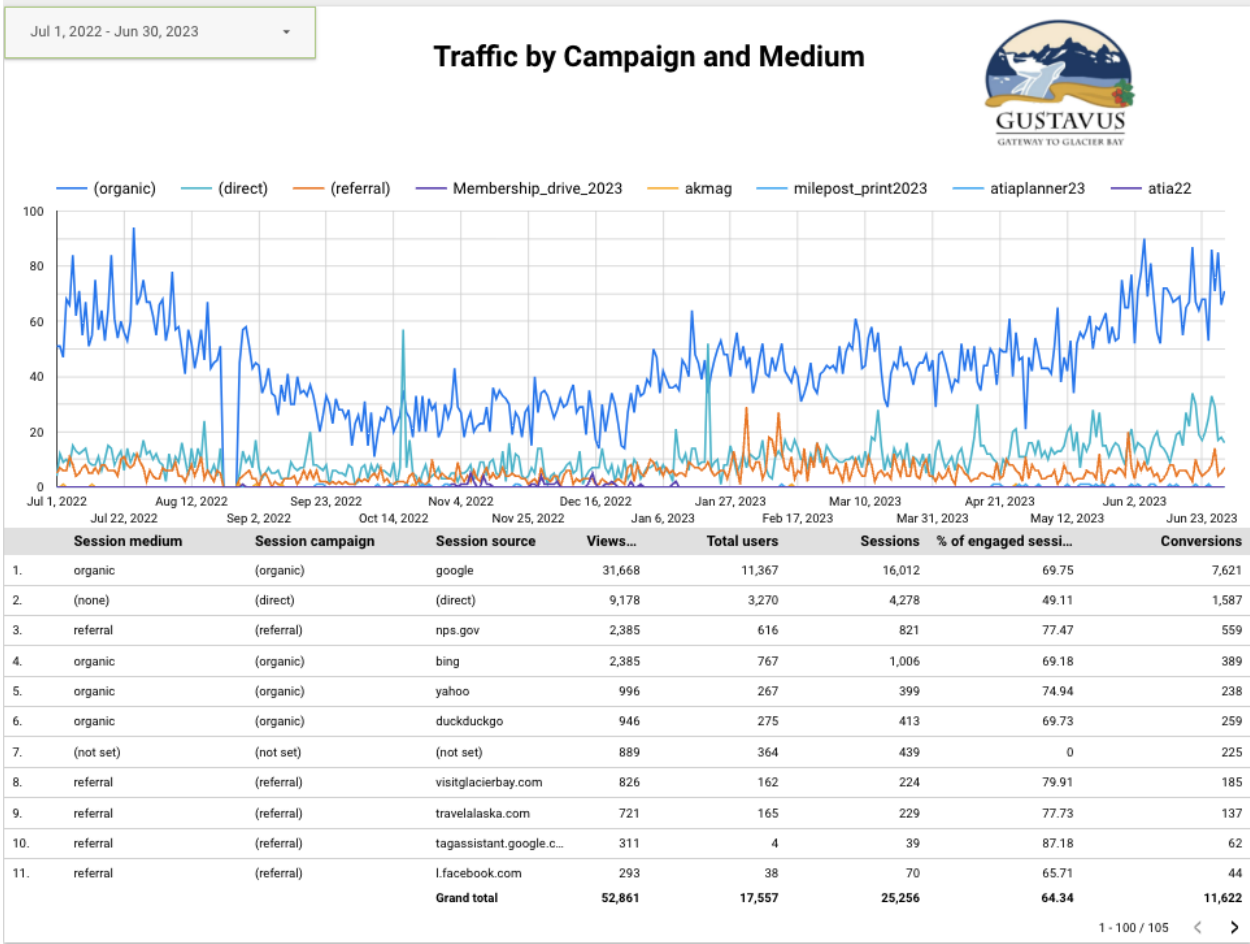
[View the live and interactive report here](#)



As always the broad majority of our website visitors are from the United States. The notable decrease in users per day from April - July of last year compared to this year is because this year we’ve focused on organic, slow and steady growth. So we didn't repeat our social media campaigns with Alaska Magazine that we ran last Spring and early summer. Considering we brought essentially zero paid online traffic to the site this year, the decrease in total users and sessions is to be expected.




Note the beginning of conversion data is in February ‘22 so the % Δ in conversions noted from last year to this year isn’t accurate. For the period where we have overlapping data it appears that conversions on the site have been slightly lower in the first half of 2023 than they were in 2022.



- Visitors coming from Google are more engaged than direct traffic to the site
- Our most engaged visitors are come from nps.gov and visitglacierbay.com (Glacier Bay Lodge website)
- Traffic from tagassistant.google.com is our marketing technician Brian testing tracking additions and changes

Jul 1, 2022 - Jun 30, 2023



Page Views

(Change is compared to previous year)

	Page URL	Views	% Δ
1.	/	8,494	12.2% ↑
2.	/getting-to-gustavus/ferry-service	4,016	98.7% ↑
3.	/places-to-stay/	3,484	-0.1% ↓
4.	/plan-your-trip/getting-to-gustavus/	2,807	82.4% ↑
5.	/accommodations	1,282	14.2% ↑
6.	/plan-your-trip/brochure-and-map/	1,086	-
7.	/getting-around-gustavus/buds-rent-a-car-sales	1,070	135.7% ↑
8.	/glacier-bay-national-park/glacier-bay-day-boat	985	94.3% ↑
9.	/transportation	956	696.7% ↑
10.	/plan-your-trip/suggested-itineraries/	951	61.7% ↑
11.	/things-to-do/fishing-and-whale-watching/	845	60.3% ↑
12.	/things-to-do/dining/	811	78.2% ↑
13.	/brochure-and-map/	742	-36.8% ↓
14.	/getting-around-gustavus/alaska-seaplanes	741	49.1% ↑
15.	/local-community/gustavus-photo-galleries/	720	27.7% ↑
16.	/accommodations/annie-mae-lodge	672	28.0% ↑
17.	/getting-around-gustavus/tlc-taxi	662	83.9% ↑
18.	/transportation/	640	-22.5% ↓
19.	/about-gustavus/the-city-of-gustavus/	601	30.9% ↑
20.	/plan-your-trip/	562	54.8% ↑
21.	/accommodations/bear-track-inn	543	41.0% ↑
22.	/about-gustavus/glacier-bay-national-park-and-preserve/	509	29.8% ↑
23.	/getting-around-gustavus/strawberry-point-taxi-tours	490	84.2% ↑
24.	Grand total	52,861	4.1% ↑

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This year the ferry service page has overtaken our main accommodations directory page as the second most viewed page on the site.

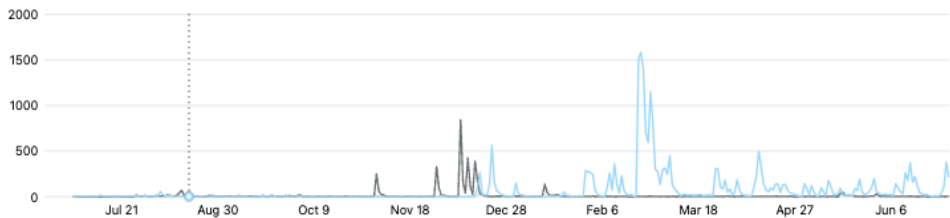
Social Media Report

Trisha Dawson continues to post on a regular basis with increasing social media followers. The plan is to up the interest with Blog posts beginning this winter. Thus far her focus has been on consistent, authentic posts, and has largely focused on the Facebook platform. Hence the material decline in our reach on Instagram compared to the previous year when our prior marketing coordinator posted more on Instagram. Our most popular posts of the year were photos of the Aurora events in late February, followed by the schedule of events for 4th of July.

Reach

Facebook reach ⓘ

9,274 ^ 279.5%



Page and profile visits

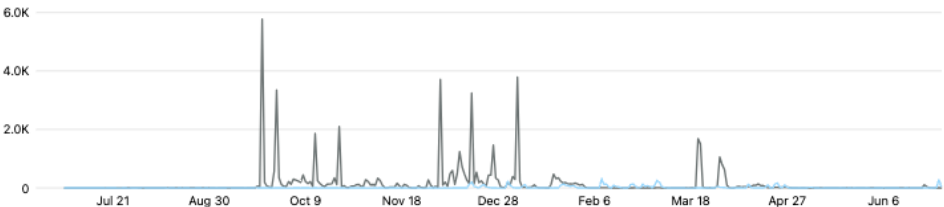
Facebook visits ⓘ

749 ^ 50.1%



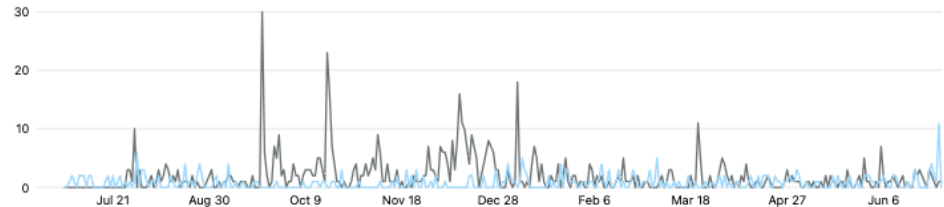
Instagram reach ⓘ

1,562 ↓ 96.5%



Instagram profile visits ⓘ

285 ↓ 59.3%



Goals and objectives for the remainder of 2023.

- Complete the move of the beach kiosk
- Update the content and signage within the beach sign.
- Green initiatives for Gustavus, sustainability and carbon footprint.
- Continue to seek improved connectivity between Glacier Bay National Park / The Glacier Bay Lodge and Gustavus.
- Continue to circulate the Gustavus News Bulletin to inform the community and businesses about activities happening that are not otherwise advertised.
- Monitor and analyze measurable marketing initiatives
- Launch the first iteration of custom member reports for our business members
- Update the website and optimize speed and organic traffic.
- Complete the Gustavus Film project with Frostline studios and begin showcasing our video content.

Conclusion

The summer season of 2023 has been dominated by the creation of the Gustavus marketing film, the movement of the Gustavus beach kiosk and the creation of the new map and brochure. We've continued marketing Nationally and Internationally, making incremental improvements to the website and focused our efforts on expanding the organic reach of our social media accounts to drive traffic from our target audiences.