



TRAVEL MEDIA ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

We Are Going Places

Strategic Plan 2024

Approved by TMAC Board of Directors

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THE STRATEGIC PLAN, MISSION, VISION AND ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The 2022/2023 TMAC Board of Directors came together in January 2023 to embark on a Strategic Plan to update the vision and mission statement for TMAC and provide a roadmap for the future of the organization.

Considerable dialogue revolved around the changing landscape of travel media. The recurring message was, that even though the method in which travel stories are being delivered has shifted over the past 30 years, the essence of what travel media writers do, has not changed. Regardless of the delivery platform, travel writers inspire travel.

With this core foundation of what travel media delivers, the value of what TMAC brings to its membership is as important regardless of which format is used for the delivery of the message.

MISSION STATEMENT AND VISION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement and Vision Statement align with our organization's ongoing commitment to high standards and quality with the goal of connecting travel media and travel industry professionals. TMAC's activities will relate to and be founded in these statements.

VISION

To be the trusted organization of choice for accredited travel media and tourism industry professionals in Canada.

MISSION

Rooted in Canada with an international reach, the Travel Media Association of Canada creates a positive space for travel media and travel industry professionals to cultivate relationships that result in relevant collaborative, comprehensive opportunities and successful outcomes to foster and inspire travel.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

TMAC is on strong footing. Membership is on the rise, Board of Director's roles continue to be filled with members fuelled with experience in leadership and integrity, and our committees have volunteers rising to the occasion.

TMAC is in a healthy financial position, fiscally powered and supported by membership fees and revenues generated from conference hosting and sponsorship.

The 2021-22 TMAC National Board of Directors undertook a governance review, established membership, board and committee Codes of Conduct, and produced guidelines for standing committees of the National Association.

The development of the strategic plan was a combination of advance pre-work followed by a guided 1.5-day in-person facilitated board session. During the session, the board worked together in revisiting and revising the current vision and mission and then worked collaboratively to assess the value that TMAC offers. Many ideas were generated, and the proposed action steps were narrowed down through post-workshop surveying and summarization. This was further developed to be reflective of the changing environment and insights.

The plan looks at the strengths that TMAC has to offer its membership and then reflects on challenges/weaknesses with a lens to address these as opportunities.

This living document will provide direction to the Board, National Committees, and Chapters. Actions have been prioritized with committees responsible for the items noted.

The resulting ACTION PLAN will inform and guide our national committees, our governance and chapter relations.

1.0 ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY BY STRENGTHENING TMAC'S GOVERNANCE FOUNDATION

TMAC National is guided by its by-laws which include an elected board of directors of up to 11 members. Elected for a two-year term, the elected positions are filled on a staggered term basis. With approximately 50% of the existing board members remaining in place annually, this enables the retention of knowledge and operational continuity while still welcoming new board members.

An annual election is held, with members in good standing being able to run for a position. The position of President is assumed by the Vice-President; therefore, this position is retained on the board by the individual for four years. A board member can run for two consecutive terms, for a total of four years before being required to allow at least one year between terms.

Elected (typically) in May as per the by-laws, the board transition takes place on the last day of the association's annual conference.

The Board of Directors meets monthly, with work of the association supported by a slate of committees. Currently, this consists of nine active committees.

The National Board and the association are further strengthened by Regional Chapters. With four Chapters in place, they are an extension of TMAC National,

providing regional engagement and support. Guiding their operation is the TMAC Chapter Policy.

Strengths:

- Clearly defined [By-Laws](#) governing the association are in place
- Active engagement and leadership from members
- Strong interest from members to serve on the board and board committees
- Regular monthly board meeting, with minutes published on TMAC website
- Regular committee meetings
- The Association is fiscally responsible, with reserves being established to support the operation of the association
- Committee structure with Board Members serving as chairs enables regular updates and communication, annually preparing goals and deliverables for National
- Board Orientation Document is available and shared with Board Members
- Board Member benefits program is in place
- Four (4) Regional Chapters are in place
- Foundational Codes of Conduct and policies are in place for:
 - [Membership: required to sign upon joining](#)
 - [Board Members](#)
 - [Committee Members](#)
 - [Harassment Policy](#)
 - [Dispute Resolution Policy](#)

Strategic Opportunities:

- Encourage the National Board to be Representative of its Membership.
Review/clarify goals around board make-up to encourage representation to include geographic, diversity, percentage/ratio of media and industry members, etc.
- Establish a fiscal reserves policy to ensure long-term financial stability and sustainability.
- Conduct an annual review of the TMAC National By-Laws
Including:
 - Determine if Board Member turn-over is a concern, if so, consider options (i.e. extending terms to 3 years)
- Undertake Governance Model Review
This effort will develop and offer clarity on items specifically relating to roles, responsibilities, representation and authority of the national board, president, elected members, committees, and employee(s).
- Strengthen the capacity and relationship of the Board.
 - Host a dedicated Board Orientation for new board members early in their elected term.
 - Strive to host two in-person board meetings during a year.

From a fiscal perspective, host one in conjunction with the TMAC Conference as the new board takes office.

Consider hosting one in conjunction with an in-person Semi-Annual meeting with a program for members, a 'summit'.

- Annually review/reflect on the Board Member Benefits program.
- Identify and provide ongoing training for board members in their roles.
- Strengthen National Board Committees
 - Develop standardized committee guidelines around meeting frequency, minutes, committee make-up, terms and process for decisions, and
 - relationship to employee(s) and board
 - Annually, as an extension of the strategic plan, committees will continue to develop goals and deliverables for the year ahead to be presented to the board for acceptance, guiding their work for the year.
 - Host committee orientation session, reviewing Committee Code of Conduct, TMAC National plans and the significance of the committee's role in achieving them annually.

- Strengthen National-Chapter Relationship and Role.

Starting with a Review of the current Chapter Policy.

TMAC National recognizes that the roles of the chapters are unique, valued and critical to the success of our organization. The importance of supporting and working with chapters under the national board is a critical component to the overall success of the association.

The leadership and authority of the national board is vital to the success of TMAC. In order to have a strong organization, chapters and the national board must be on the same page. It is recognized that over time, the members on the national and chapter boards will change. For that reason, the Board needs an evolving operations guide to serve as a foundation for all interactions between and within TMAC board volunteers, whether it is chapter to chapter, or chapter to national or vice versa.

The recommendation is to commence with a review of the Chapter Policy with a lens to clarify and establish:

- Role of Chapters within TMAC
- Standardized governance model for TMAC Chapters that specifies election and terms of board members, responsibilities, financial and annual reporting, communication within Chapter, between Chapters, and to/within TMAC National.
- TMAC National Brand and Communication Plan (i.e. assess establishment of social channels and roles)
- Development of a policy handbook that recognizes the authority of the TMAC National Board, and specifies the role and responsibilities

of each, TMAC National and Chapters. The goal of the guide is to embrace the individuality of each chapter by nurturing their ability to show initiative and leadership within the TMAC structure.

- It is imperative for TMAC's success that chapters feel they are being heard and their points of view are considered.

This work should begin immediately.

2.0 ENSURE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

As a registered Canadian Non-Profit Association, adhering to Canada Revenue Agency regulations, and in keeping with its by-laws, TMAC National oversees the fiscal responsibilities of the association. Operating within its means, the association delivers its programs and services based on an annual board-approved budget.

Strengths

- Membership fees generated from a solid and growing membership base
- Achieving annual sponsorship goals
- TMAC Conference registration fees support the program and the Association's fiscal health, and have been meeting goals
- Annual budget prepared, approved by the National Board
- Annual Financial Review or Audit undertaken by an independent accountant
- Treasurer provides month-end financial report at each board meeting
- An investment account is being re-build to support sustainability
- By-laws guide and govern fiscal reporting for the association

Strategic Opportunities

- Develop board policy and guidelines to support operational sustainability and special projects.
i.e. operating reserves for not less than one year.
- Continue to explore and diversify revenue sources to further support operational goals, programs and activities of TMAC. Beyond fees and conference sponsorship, explore government and related funding, and project-based funding. Continue with annual budget planning, projecting and preparing for self-sufficiency and sustainability.
- Continue to review and establish policies and procedures for expenses, operationally and administratively for board and volunteers.

3.0 STRENGTHEN TMAC BRAND

We reviewed our current relationships and roles, with a lens to strengthen collaboration, outreach and sustainability.

Accredited TMAC members are the most sought out and valued travel media professionals for tourism industry media relations managers in Canada and internationally. Contributing to and strengthening the tourism economy through their storytelling, they are recognized as a cornerstone in local, regional, national and global tourism marketplace marketing plans.

Tourism industry media relations managers come to TMAC to develop relationships with Travel Media for their respective businesses and destinations. With a desire to work with accredited travel media, they engage with them to raise awareness, profile and educate target audiences – to inspire and convert into visitation.

Each brings valuable insights around industry needs, challenges and opportunities.

Strengths

- TMAC is recognized as a national player within Canada
- Members recognize and value their membership
- We have aligned and established collaborations with TIAC, including: membership; associate membership; award presenter; visible active role at annual TIAC Congress
- We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indigenous Tourism industry Association of Canada (June 2023). Collaboration and engagement are ongoing; including TIAC sponsored and presented TMAC National Award; reciprocating presentations at conferences.
- There is pride and ownership in association by members
- Active industry sponsorship engagement in support of our conference
- We have a recognized, established Awards Program that celebrates excellence, attracting strong industry sponsorship.
- TMAC Members are:
 - Accredited professionals
 - Experienced with expertise
 - Authentic, committed and demonstrate integrity
 - Respectful
 - Accurate
 - Abide by Code of Conduct
 - Published, respected and recognized
 - Professional with established audiences / reach

Strategic Opportunities

- Reassess TMAC Brand Guidelines
 - Revisit TMAC logo, and confirm it is still valid
 - Revisit the slogan/tagline “We ARE Going Places”, does it accurately reflect and uphold our values and USP?
 - Revisit the [brand guide](#) to ensure it reflects TMAC as we go into the future.
- Raise awareness and appreciation of the value of Canadian Travel Media professionals (generating demand for them).
- Leverage TMAC Awards program to showcase, celebrate and draw attention to excellence in travel media, and the winners.
- Develop, offer, and deliver a workshop for industry focusing on ‘how to work with’ and “why work with” travel media. Build on the [Tourism NS Guidebook](#), to create a 1-hour session, options for extended.
- Publish Member Names/List on TMAC website to enhance visibility and validation of our extensive membership base representation.
Respecting membership privileges, make the ‘names’ of accredited TMAC members public on TMAC website so they can be ‘seen’ and validated as such.
(NOTE: it is difficult to build pride and generate demand in the public for members when we are hiding the names of the members behind a membership wall – yet named in social media sharing of stories)

4.0 STRENGTHEN MEMBER COMMUNICATION

Transparent and with integrity, the TMAC National Board aims to maintain ongoing communication among and with members.

As communicators, internally, we acknowledge that materials shared with members may not always be reviewed. Schedules, volume of emails, and demands on members mean our communications need to be relevant and of value.

Strengths:

- Transparency
 - Governance Policies and Procedures are developed by the National Board, responsive to needs and published on [travelmedia.ca](#) for members to view.
 - Minutes of the Board of Directors published on [travelmedia.ca](#)
 - Annual General Meeting hosted in keeping with by-laws, complete with sharing of annual reports and financials
- Consistent Communications
Membership is informed regularly through distributed of items like:

- Monthly newsletters
- Bi-monthly updates
- Programs and Event updates as necessary, i.e., Countdown to Conference
- TMAC Facebook Group exists for those engaged in the platform
- Board Minutes are published on the TMAC website
- Responsive
As a priority of the board, member relations and efficient service. TMAC is responsive, approachable and welcoming.

Strategic Opportunities:

- Ensure TMAC Member communication is relevant and timely. Monitor frequency and length of newsletter communications to avoid being overwhelming, and disregarded.
 - Reduce ‘information dump’
 - Ensure relevancy of content
 - Monitor statistics
- Leverage and establish effective use of Social Media and Engagement
Acknowledging that not all of our members are ‘on’ or actively engaged in social media platforms like Facebook, not all members are a part of TMAC’s Facebook Group. It is voluntary; however, accessibility may prevent equal participation. Investigate and recommend possible options to social media-based platforms for member-to-member engagement/interaction, taking cost and administration/monitoring into consideration .
- Ensure TMAC’s website and CRM are optimized and effective.
Assess website platform with a lens to ensure it meets the operational and communication needs of TMAC and enables members to locate, engage and share efficiently.
- Enhance National-Chapter communication channels to reach members. Engage TMAC Chapters to relay National communications to and within their chapters by way of:
 - During Board Meetings, providing a national update at the meeting, or having TMAC National President and CAO attend meeting
 - Share highlights and links to national newsletters within Chapter communications, social channels, etc.
 - At Chapter functions, offer National updates, and ensure a national representative addresses the gathering

5.0 GROW AND STRENGTHEN MEMBERSHIP BASE

For 30 years, TMAC has evolved and responded to the changing dynamics of the tourism industry. We have evolved, adapted and pivoted as media adjusted to how travel media professionals communicate, share stories about destinations, people and experiences – and the role they play in the industry.

TMAC refreshed its accreditation requirements and re-qualified the majority of its media membership in the Fall of 2022, ensuring integrity as a professional association. Requirements for Industry Members were reviewed as well. Since then, membership – media and industry has grown.

Strengths

- TMAC has retained an accreditation/application requirement for membership. This is becoming a distinguishing aspect of TMAC.
- Accreditation/Application requirements were updated in the Fall of 2022.
- Media members are re-qualified every three years, speaking to integrity, quality of membership and performance.
- Membership is growing, both industry and media – often through member referrals.
- Membership categories and accreditation requirements continue to evolve and adapt.
- Categories of membership have expanded since 2021 to include Editors, Co-Creators categories in addition to Media, Industry and Industry-Secondary.
- Volunteer engagement is vibrant, meeting the current needs of the association.
- Volunteer benefits program is in place.
- Membership has privileges including exclusive access to database of members, communications, Chapter Events, and the annual Conference & Media Marketplace, Press Cards for media.
- Membership retention has been strong, those who become members renew, remain engaged.

Strategic Opportunities

- Maintain accreditation of members.
Continue to be clear and consistent in establishing an annual review of criteria, points and categories for membership – retaining our accreditation requirement, although other similar organizations are not.
While this is considered a TMAC differentiator, and quality assurance tool, periodically revisit this requirement to ensure it meets the needs of the members.
- Ensure members are categorized/presented accurately.
i.e. Media enters as freelance but pitches as a blogger – determine how to address this issue.

- Unified voice as Travel Media.
Unify accredited members around the baseline of who TMAC is and what we stand for, acknowledging that all forms/mediums of storytelling and travel media are valued. Shared ownership and vision as a TMAC member will minimize insularity and fractioning of relationships between media members. There is room for all forms of travel media communicators within TMAC, respectful of their preferred channels.
- Recognize the needs of membership.
Acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs and priorities between industry and media. This lens should be applied to conferences, benefits, professional development, etc.
- Continue to uphold (and update) criteria and Code of Conduct for membership to ensure credibility, integrity, and clarity.
- Maintain membership at a healthy, sustainable level as determined by the board. Is there a maximum limit to how many members 'should' be within TMAC?
Raised as a question, it was from the perspective of:
 - *capacity to effectively service our membership;*
 - *concerns around delegate limitations at our annual conference, 'all' members may not be able to be accommodated;*
 - *Perceptions about having 'too many' members, particularly media members, may lead to too many 'competitors'?*

Valid from many perspectives, as a national non-profit, membership and programming, membership fuels the fiscal capacity of the association.

- From a conference perspective, given our host destination fiscal and accommodation capacity, there will always be limitations on numbers. In 2024 and 2025, capacity will grow from 200 delegates to 250.
- We will monitor registration and waitlists, and responses to RFPs for the conference for capacity opportunities.
- Consider the opportunity to create a semi-annual summit, creating a secondary opportunity for membership to come together, engage and incorporate elements of the annual conference with a unique agenda to differentiate it from the conference.
- Monitor capacity of TMAC to service its members from an administrative perspective, expanding staff complement may be required as scope and membership evolve.

- Foster and facilitate a diverse, representative, inclusive, membership base. Reflect on current collection of membership with a lens on diversity, inclusion and geographic representation as well as channels of communication and representation.
- Actively promote TMAC and membership. Strengthen referral program by existing members who are champions:
 - Reiterate the referral program among members
 - Celebrate/acknowledge those referring members publicly among members
- Facilitate and foster an active and engaged membership. Active engagement of members in TMAC strengthens TMAC and the membership base.
 - Build on the volunteer program in place to advocate for and actively welcome volunteers, building on the “Volunteer with TMAC” section on travelmedia.ca, promote the opportunities and ensure those who step up are engaged.
 - Determine if the list should be brought forward as a standing Board Meeting item, or through Governance.
- Establish an attractive membership benefits program. Membership privileges/advantages are valued, seeking opportunities to strengthen in meaningful ways are important:
 - Awards Program reviewed to remain relevant and valued
 - Member Benefits program to be reviewed, expanded
 - Explore additional alternative opportunities of value like the conference, given it will always have capacity limitations
 - Review of awards (note this is ongoing)
 - Reinforce benefit of creating member media profiles – value of sharing your bio with industry.
 - Encourage member-to-member outreach benefits, media reaching out to destination rep within TMAC as opposed to non-member
- Seek and respond to Member Feedback
TMAC will continue to regularly consult with membership through surveys, seeking input and feedback. Building on the Awards program and Conference Program survey, an annual survey of membership regarding key areas requiring direction, ensuring membership relevancy and value.
- Proactively Champion the Profession of Travel Media.
 - Develop a mentorship program for those exploring becoming involved with travel media as profession – building from our ‘Buddy Program’
 - Establish an annual scholarship program that primarily involves sponsoring

- an individual to attend the TMAC Annual Conference & Media Marketplace.
- Outreach to and engagement with Schools of Journalism and Tourism Hospitality/PR within Canada.

6.0 STRENGTHEN TMAC NATIONAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Provided as a member benefit, and an opportunity to strengthen and respond to needs within the Travel Media Profession, TMAC annually curates a series of programs and events that further the Mission Statement that guides of the association, specifically “creates a positive space for travel media and travel industry professionals to cultivate relationships that result in relevant collaborative, comprehensive opportunities and successful outcomes to foster and inspire travel.”

6.1 TMAC Conference & Media Marketplace

One of the most valuable roles TMAC serves for membership is the annual TMAC conference. Hosted in a different destination annually, this event brings travel media and tourism industry media managers together to network, learn, experience a destination, and participate in the media marketplace which results in work for media and exposure for industry. It is the largest and most significant member event curated by TMAC.

Strengths:

- This is a key event for members, evaluations reflect high scores
- Host destinations showcase/collaboration strengths membership
- It is a significant fundraiser for TMAC supporting overall operations
- Network/relationship builder among membership
- Generates significant economic impact during the event and through coverage, generates increased visitation and impact after the event
- Generates significant media exposure for the host destination and its partners
- Generates ‘work’ for media members
- Professional Development programs for delegates
- Builds TMAC brand and fosters ‘family’ network
- Channel for National Awards program to be showcased and awards presented generates new partnerships, collaborations – and members
- TMAC National and the local host destinations collaboratively curate the event
- Smaller in scale compared to other media marketplaces, the intimate and boutique feel provides a more ‘family’ atmosphere
- Travel Grant program in place to support media members’ ‘travel’
- Sponsorship program is well subscribed to, expanding showcasing of member destinations

Strategic Opportunities

- Monitor Conference Capacity Limitations
Delegate capacity will always be subject to the hosting capacity of the host destination, specifically for the media tours and venue for marketplace, but also

TMACs ability to attract registrations. Determining the ideal delegate number and providing excellence at that level will be ongoing.

- Host Destination Selection Criteria
Host Destinations can be in any location, provided that the proponent meets the criteria outlined in the RFP, and is a member in good standing with TMAC. Destinations are selected based on an evaluation of the proposal.
 - Strengthen the RFP and evaluation framework to reflect and consider impact of anticipated cost(s) to attend should be considered.
 - Host Hotel should technically be a TMAC member, ensuring they have an appreciation and understanding of the scope of the gathering and its impact/value to the destination.

- Offer a compelling and appealing Conference Program
As a key member benefit, and critical to the fiscal health of TMAC, developing an attractive, compelling, timely and relevant conference program is imperative. Responding to feedback from delegates, monitoring trends in similar events, and building strong offerings in destinations of interest.

PD Sessions and Keynotes for the conference need to ensure there is an opportunity for Media and Industry members to ‘check in’ regarding trends, challenges and opportunities in their relationship building.

- Ensure Media Marketplace is productive and result-generating for business leads. Continue to ensure integrity and intent of the Media Marketplace. Delegates attending the conference, and participating in the Media Marketplace are intended to be the ‘decision makers’ for travel media engagement.
- Curate attractive Pre and/or Post Media Tours
Continue to work with Host Destinations to curate unique and timely tours that fuel/enable ‘sellable’ stories – for the media, which increase value and exposure for the host.

It is important to note that Pre and/or Post Tours are funded entirely by the host destination. Typically, itineraries are 3-nights/4-days, and will guarantee at least one media tour each of the attending media.

- Ensure the Conference is fiscally responsible.
TMAC relies on the conference to be a funds generator to support and enable the annual operating budget for the organization. Delivering an attractive program will always need to be balanced against budget limitations. This requires the organizing team to remain creative and prudent, yet offer a memorable,

professional and desirable program.

6.2 National Professional Development

TMAC established a National PD program, expanding beyond the annual conference program. In 2019 guided by a newly established committee, TMAC introduced a virtual National PD Program to provide members with valuable, professional development opportunities furthering their expertise and creating a networking platform. Designed in response to member feedback and current trends, concerns and opportunities, the National PD program is designed and delivered as a member benefit.

Strengths:

- Regular PD Program is offered – virtually and at conference
- Sessions are well attended, followed up with delegate survey
- Virtual Sessions are recorded and offered within TMAC YouTube Channel for reference
- PD Sessions for the TMAC Conference are curated and delivered
- Diverse presenters are secured from membership and external sources
- Program of sessions are member-driven through feedback

Strategic Opportunities

- Develop and offer a Membership-Driven Program
Continue to gather and respond to member feedback for ‘virtual’ and in person PD Sessions, ensuring they are timely, relevant and support the growth and development of members as professionals, and as a member benefit.
- Curate an engaging and timely National PD Program
Balance and meet the needs of the diverse membership base, that complements the strategic direction of TMAC.
- Establish an Honourarium Guideline for TMAC
Recognizing speakers have varied fees, TMAC has limited fiscal resources. Clarifying and establishing guidelines for the honorarium/expenses covered for presenters, reflective of budget capacity, will provide the committee with a framework to work within. Revisited annually, it is subject to change.
- Strengthen the PD program through Partnerships/Sponsorships.
Continue to seek collaborations and sponsorship options for these sessions. Minimizing expenses, drawing in incremental funds for TMAC National, the PD Program is an opportunity to create partnerships and sponsorships that strengthen TMAC.

6.3 Develop and Host TMAC Annual Awards Program

Recognizing excellence in travel media and tourism industry collaborations is an important tool developed by TMAC to strengthen brand, recognition and professional achievement within the industry.

Strengths:

- Established as an annual program of TMAC
- Criteria, guidelines, judging matrix and framework in place
- Categories are annually reviewed and amended based on member feedback
- Submissions annually are seeing growth as is volume of members submitting works for consideration
- Professionally managed with integrity
- Annually a promotional program celebrates the finalists and winners
- Attracts sponsors for majority of award categories

Strategic Opportunities

- Evolve and adapt TMAC award categories.
Ensure categories continue to evolve to reflect changing platforms and mediums for storytelling and based on member and industry feedback, research and trends.
- Ensure effective communication and transparency with membership.
Continue to communicate the development, management and judging approaches to the Awards Program. Ensuring integrity, remaining objective and professional in the development of categories, judging and awarding to members, as well as the public.

6.4 Explore Creating/Hosting Additional Events

There are opportunities to strengthen TMAC fiscally, and proactively raise profile, awareness, and generate demand for Canadian Travel Media Professionals. Leveraging our foundation and reputation to host events, provide workshops, and generate exposure for destinations all further the value of TMAC and our brand.

In addition to supporting Chapters in the curation of their annual program of events, subject to budget, and opportunity, consider:

- Curate and host TMAC Meet-Ups in partnership with Chapters in destinations where TMAC National is already scheduled to be.
- Targeted at the Tourism Industry, create customizable TMAC

Mini-Marketing Summits/Tour Program.

Working with emerging destinations to expand their product development accomplishments and market launch, offer skills development sessions, 'how to work with travel media' sessions, and embark on media FAMs to generate/launch exposure. Sourcing supporting funds and partners would be part of the collaboration with the destination.

6.5 Chapter Hosted Events & PD

Chapter events further strengthen TMAC, providing opportunities to connect, network, create meaningful exchanges between members, fostering relationships among existing and new members. Considered a National Member Benefit, endorsed by TMAC National as part of the Chapter program, we recognize these programs as an extension of our national program and will support the promotion and success of these events.

7.0 ADVOCACY: STRENGTHEN TMAC'S RESPONSE TO THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF TRAVEL, AND TRAVEL MEDIA INDUSTRY

TMAC has a regional, national, and international voice with which to serve as advocates on key principles and concerns affecting and impacting its membership, and the professional scope of the travel media profession. At its core, advocacy can bring change, through public awareness, offering support, through leadership or aligning with others sharing the same concerns. Influencing policies, practices and approaches or acknowledgement of specific issues determined to be of interest.

Inspiring travel, building awareness and pride while educating travelers, TMAC members not only serve as key sources for information, they are critical to the tourism industry – enabling them to be celebrated and recognized, supporting the economic, social and cultural appreciation and sustainability of businesses and communities.

The presence of accredited, reputable travel media professionals is essential to the travel and tourism industry. The travel media profession is affected by many elements, many of which are outside their scope of control.

Key issues, positions and actions should be determined by TMAC National in consultation with membership. Developing a frame of reference and key principles around specific issues of concern will enable TMAC to formulate an informed and justified position for communication, and action.

Some areas/items raised that require consideration include:

Artificial Intelligence (AI):

TMAC's reputation and integrity is anchored in our code of conduct which denounces plagiarism and takes pride in the art of storytelling with integrity and professionalism.

- Establish TMAC's position on use of AI, clarifying acceptable uses and best practices to serve as guidelines for members, and justification for positions assumed by TMAC on behalf of membership.
- Develop guidelines for acceptable use of AI and AI-generated content in travel media to ensure transparency and authenticity.
- Formulate TMAC's position on AI-generated content to represent the interests of its members.

Sustainability / Climate Change – Action

Recognizing that travel in and of itself contributes to sustainability of people, places, cultures, economies and the environment, as champions of travel:

- Determine and validate common areas of concern .
- Identify and establish principles that TMAC members uphold to address the sustainability and environmental impact of travel.
- Develop strategies for proactively responding to concerns climate change issues and opportunities within the travel industry

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

TMAC is committed to ensuring our Association, and the travel industry we work with embrace Diversity.

Within our Code of Conduct, we specifically highlight our intentions that guide our operation. From a position of advocacy and champions of the travel industry,

- Undertake a review of the TMAC Code of Conduct, ensuring it remains relevant and adjusting as necessary.
- Develop specific initiatives and goals/outcomes to be undertaken by TMAC that foster, support and ensure diversity, equity and inclusion among our members, volunteers and operational teams.
- Develop actions/initiatives/partnerships that TMAC can undertake within the tourism industry that advocate for and ensure diversity, equity and inclusion is a priority and accomplished.

Meta/Google blocking of news media

Affecting news media outlets, TMAC members with work published online within and determined to be news media are currently being blocked. TMAC members are being impacted, however we have not assessed the extent or long term implications of this move. Representing membership, being informed, taking a position and advocating on their behalf, lead an effort to:

- Assess the impact of Meta/Google's actions on news media and subsequently on travel media.
- Advocate for fair treatment and visibility of travel media on digital platforms.

Remuneration of Travel Media Professionals

TMAC members continue to voice concerns related to being remunerated for their work, specifically payment of cash, not for exchange/trade for products and experiences. As professionals, making careers from their work requires a shift in perception, appreciation and valuation of their work.

Building on strategic opportunities identified within this plan, ongoing public relations and communications will be required to support members and establish this sector as a valued and essential component within marketplace plans worthy of, and requiring, investment.

Together with membership, both media and industry:

- Address the challenges of budget allocation and expectations of payment for travel media professionals.
- Advocate for fair market value compensation and recognition of the value provided by travel media content.

Travel Media Professional Values / Code of Conduct

Establishing for our industry foundational pillars around our values will build integrity and respect within the industry, and among our membership.

- Develop clear statements that outline TMAC's positions on various aspects of travel media.
- Address issues such as cultural tourism, professional remuneration, diversity and inclusion, and responsible/sustainable/regenerative travel and tourism.
- Use these statements as guiding principles to communicate TMAC's position and values to the industry and the public.
- Establish principles of sustainability as travel media, and within our operation/administration of TMAC.

In order to effectively address these issues and enact meaningful change, TMAC could consider the following steps:

- **Research and Data:** Gather data, research, and insights related to each issue to strengthen the organization's arguments and positions.
- **Collaboration:** Collaborate with other industry organizations, experts, and stakeholders who share similar concerns to amplify advocacy efforts.
- **Education and Awareness:** Raise awareness among TMAC members and the broader public about the importance of these issues and their impact on the travel and travel media industry.
- **Engagement with Members:** Engage TMAC members in discussions and surveys to understand their perspectives and gather input on key issues.
- **Policy Development:** Work on developing clear and actionable policy recommendations to address each issue. These recommendations can then be used for advocacy efforts.

- **Communication:** Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to effectively convey TMAC's positions, actions, and progress on these issues to both members and the public.
- **Advocacy Platforms:** Utilize various platforms, such as social media, industry events, conferences, and partnerships, to advocate for the changes TMAC seeks.

By focusing on these steps and effectively executing advocacy efforts, TMAC can serve as a strong advocate for its members and make a meaningful impact on the travel media industry.

8.0 HUMAN RESOURCES

TMAC organizational framework relies on its National Board of Directors, committees and chapters, all volunteers from among membership. Supporting and enabling the association to develop, maintain and achieve its mandate and deliver its programs has been paid human resources.

While staffing under contract compliment has changed over the past number of years, currently this is supported by a Chief Administrative Officer. Moving from a contract for service model to an employee, the position presently is the sole employee of TMAC.

Paid support services contracted under the CAO include a bookkeeper, accountant for annual audit reviews and a website tech.

Strengths:

- TMAC established an HR Committee
- Performance Appraisal for CAO is completed on an annual basis
- CAO Job Description in place
- TMAC owns its domains, emails, and a laptop
- Financially, TMAC is able to support its current HR support

Strategic Opportunities

- Develop a Human Resources Management Plan
Acknowledging that TMAC is a non-profit association, the fiscal capacity will remain a priority, working within the ways and means of the organization to deliver programs and services. Shifting the CAO from a contracted services approach to an employee of TMAC, has meant a shift in approach to operations, and commitments.

Now one year into this approach, there is a need to address a variety of elements

to establish an Employer-Employee framework. From salary scale and reviews, to TMAC office and equipment administration and operation. Established at policy level, this will provide guidance to existing and future board members, and consistency.

HR has established an annual employee performance review framework, a job description and offer of employment contract developed with legal insight.

Moving forward the following will be undertaken:

- Establish a framework for an employee compensation program, current job description for the CAO states an annual salary without framework for changes to salary compensation, and benchmarks for raises, overtime, sick days, nor benefits. To ensure stability and successioning for TMAC, an assessment of fair compensation for each position be monitored and reflected, based on budget capacity.
- Establish an administrative office compensation package for employee(s). TMAC relies on the employee to provide phone, internet, power, and workspace to perform the tasks of the association.
- Establish/adopt a standardized performance review program. This will guide the HR committee in their monitoring and evaluation of the CAO, and to guide the CAO in the management of supporting staff.