

DULUTH

SOCIAL MEDIA PLAYBOOK

DULUTH



For questions or further clarification, please reach out to the City of Duluth at tourism@duluthmn.gov.

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1.0

SOCIAL MEDIA APPROACH

SOCIAL MEDIA APPROACH

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & KPIS

Even though specific goals might vary by platform, all social channels share a few core drivers to keep top-of-mind when creating content. We've outlined fundamental social media goals, objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) across any platform.

◆ GOALS

- Inspire visitation to Duluth
- Build the Duluth brand and shape perceptions of Duluth
- Provide exposure to all sides and facets of Duluth
- Showcase Duluth's unique personality
- Highlight diversity - of voices, of perspectives, of attractions, etc.

◆ KPIS

- **Awareness** - reach and impressions of those viewing our posts
- **Engagements** - comments, reactions and shares
- **Growth** - increase social followers
- **Clicks** - website traffic referrals from social media
- **Conversions** - key conversions on the website (i.e. Visitor Guide downloads, form submissions, interactions with hotels, etc.) from social traffic

◆ OBJECTIVES

- Use content categories that showcase all there is to do in Duluth, year-round
- Focus messaging on potential travelers, rather than current residents
- Develop a cross-platform strategy for cohesive content
- Create content in alignment with the new Duluth brand



2.0

OUR AUDIENCES

FRIENDS & FOLLOWERS

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OUR AUDIENCES

FRIENDS & FOLLOWERS

Before we dive into creating content, it's important to identify our social audiences. By keeping audiences in mind, we can put out the right messages for potential visitors in a way that resonates, along with testing different posts for different audiences.

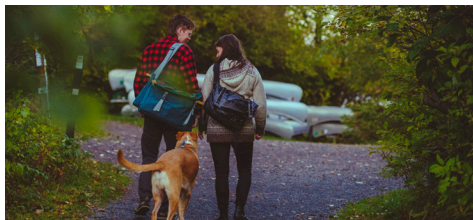


◆ **KIDS & CONNECTION**

Travel party: partner + children

They value: escapes from the day-to-day, quality time and connection

They need: practical trip ideas, planning resources and road trip suggestions



◆ **UP FOR ADVENTURE**

Travel party: partner, friends and other couples

They value: activities they can do, unique experiences, outdoor recreation, food and drink

They need: budget-friendly trips, the local scoop on a destination and technology for trip planning



◆ **READY TO ROAM**

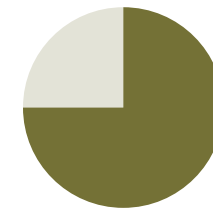
Travel party: partner, potentially other couples

They value: quality time and experiences that are authentic to the destination

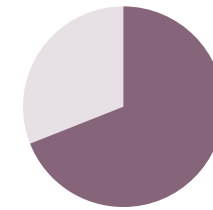
They need: approachable adventures and ideas for traveling outside of peak season

SOCIAL AUDIENCE INTEL

On social media, we can layer these personas and interest-based groups with demographic information based on our followers. Generally, our followers tend to be:



75%
FEMALE



69%
25 TO 54 YEARS OLD



**FROM SURROUNDING TARGET MARKETS
LIKE MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL, FARGO,
ROCHESTER AND ST. CLOUD**



3.0

THE DULUTH BRAND

MESSAGING & TONE

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LOOK & FEEL

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THE DULUTH BRAND

MESSAGING & TONE

Tone can be what makes or breaks a social post. Portraying our brand personality through a consistent voice is important to build the Duluth brand and help draw potential visitors to Duluth.

“Welcome to Duluth” is something we say. But it’s also something you’ll feel - especially on social media. Our goal: to give potential visitors an inside look at the people, the pace and the place of Duluth so they can feel what’s special here before they even arrive.

Social channels should showcase what’s unapologetically original about Duluth, from locals’ favorite watering holes to cultural events and hidden gem hiking trails. Our voice is authentic and neighborly, showing people that while they’re here with us, they’re one of us.

◆

BRAND POSITIONING:

LOVE IT LIKE WE DO

You’ll get it when you get here. And even when you leave Duluth, it never leaves you. Our brand positioning takes the local things we love about Duluth and shares them with visitors, helping them feel what makes Duluth unique by nature. Proudly diverse. Delightfully local. **Love it like we do.**

FRIENDLY ◆ UNIQUE ◆ PROUD ◆ HONEST ◆ SURPRISING

KEY SENTIMENTS FOR SOCIAL

◆ **SOCIAL CONTENT SHOULD FEEL:**

- **Unexpected** - show visitors the surprising, worth-a-second-look sides of the city
- **Welcoming** - emphasize inclusion and our neighborly nature toward all kinds of visitors
- **Engaging** - keep copy conversational, concise and fun, just like the people of Duluth
- **Authentic** - connect with readers in real ways, avoiding pitches and sales talk
- **Visitor-focused** - our proud, local voice should be directed at those outside of Duluth
- **Diverse** - strive to tell diverse stories, including who we show and what we show around the city

◆ **SOCIAL CONTENT SHOULDN’T FEEL:**

- **Quaint** - don’t minimize Duluth by making the city feel small, slow or sleepy; when referencing Duluth, use “city” rather than “town”
- **Traditional** - unconventional sights, charms and quirks are what make Duluth special
- **Cocky** - while we’re proud, we’re not arrogant or overconfident
- **Glamorous** - Duluth is approachable; the door is always open for all kinds of travelers
- **Corny** - though we use humor, our voice should still feel smart and tasteful vs. corny or goofy
- When referencing the city, “port city” should be used sparingly and only when aligned with shipping related content. “Twin Ports” and “Zenith City” should be avoided



THE DULUTH BRAND

LOOK & FEEL

COLOR USAGE

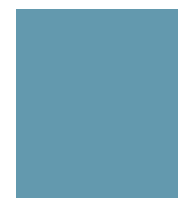
◆ PRIMARY COLORS

Superior Blue and North Star Gold are Duluth's primary colors. They serve as anchor points in establishing our identity and differentiating us from other tourism locations. These colors should be implemented consistently in all communications and marketing materials. Refer to the color values listed when working with Duluth's brand colors.

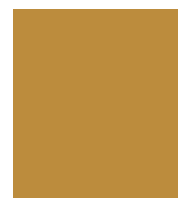
◆ SECONDARY COLORS

Duluth's secondary palette comes straight from the heart of the city. It represents what you will see firsthand and provides a warm and welcoming feeling.

PRIMARY



Superior Blue
PMS: 7696 C
CMYK: 74.24.26.0
RGB: 99.153.174
HEX: #6399AE

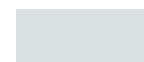


North Star Gold
PMS: 4026 C
CMYK: 19.47.95.2
RGB: 188.140.61
HEX: #BC8C3D



True Black
PMS: Black C
CMYK: 66.66.68.71
RGB: 45.41.38
HEX: #2d2926

SECONDARY



Fog
PMS: 7541 C
CMYK: 15.5.8.0
RGB: 217.225.226
HEX: #D9E1E2



Sand
PMS: 7527 C
CMYK: 14.13.21.0
RGB: 214.210.196
HEX: #D6D2C4



Mirage Lake
PMS: 2463 C
CMYK: 73.38.53.14
RGB: 91.118.113
HEX: #5B7671



Moss
PMS: 7761 C
CMYK: 51.42.100.21
RGB: 116.113.54



Bronze
PMS: 730 C
CMYK: 24.65.100.11
RGB: 158.101.46
HEX: #9E652E



Rocky Beach
PMS: 4225 C
CMYK: 44.42.55.8
RGB: 139.131.114
HEX: #8b8372



Lupine Purple
PMS: 5205 C
CMYK: 43.66.35.7
RGB: 134.100.122
HEX: #86647a



Forest Green
PMS: 2411 C
CMYK: 92.44.99.56
RGB: 28.66.32
HEX: #1c4220



Lester Brown
PMS: 2322 C
CMYK: 44.71.84.55
RGB: 78.53.36
HEX: #4e3524

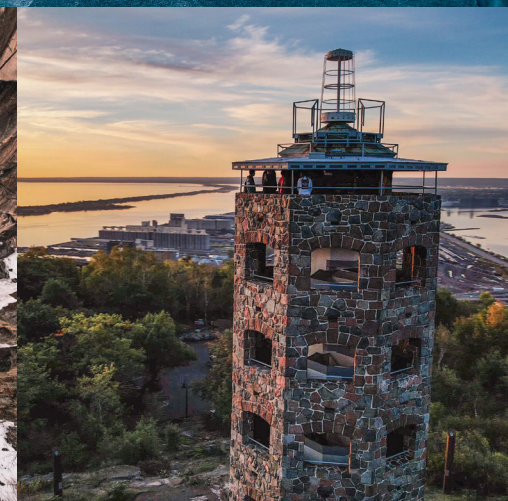
PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLES

When selecting images they should encompass one or more of the following principles:

- ◆ **CAPTIVATING**
Showcasing the city's landscape with unique points of view and interesting composition
- ◆ **HONEST**
Giving potential visitors an authentic, real feel for the city
- ◆ **INCLUSIVE**
Showing that all kinds of people, attractions and lifestyles make up Duluth
- ◆ **ACTIVE**
Emphasizing action-oriented shots that show experiences, connecting and doing

Things are unique in Duluth and we want to convey that through our photography.

◆ --- Access Visit Duluth photos at [VisitDuluth.com/Brand](https://www.visitduluth.com/brand).



BEST PRACTICES

To keep things consistent, avoid selecting images that use the following techniques: labeling/cluttering, over exposed, staged and cliched, over-edited, color overlays, low quality.

PEOPLE

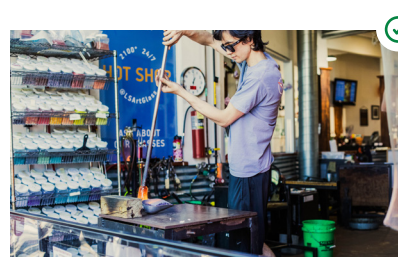


Show authenticity of individuals with organic shots, expressing their true self.



Avoid awkward stances and overly posed portraits.

ARTS, CULTURE & EVENTS



Show the full experience. Allow others to feel immersed in the art and culture scene.



Avoid generalized and/or stock photos that aren't unique to the artist, event or scene.

LABELING



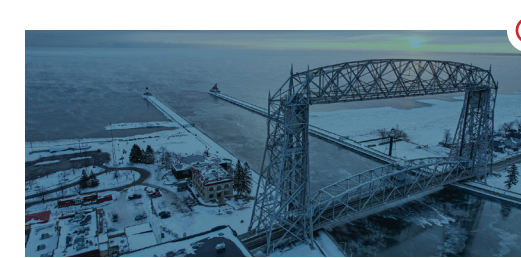
Avoid cluttering images with large scale logos and marks. Let the image shine.

OVER EXPOSED



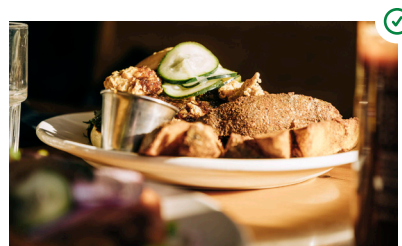
Refrain from extreme exposure that reduces clarity of the subject matter.

COLOR OVERLAYS



Avoid color overlays that distract from the original photo.

FOOD & BEVERAGE



Show products in their real environments but focus on placement, angles and natural lighting.



Avoid straight on shots, messy scenes and bad lighting. This makes the product unappetizing.

NATURE



Show the variety of nature that Duluth has to offer and incorporate people enjoying it.



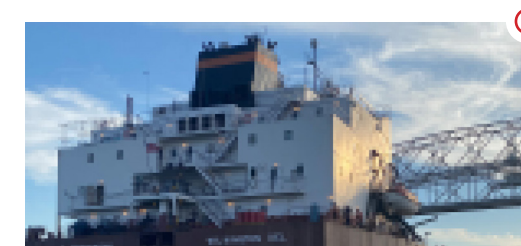
Avoid close up nature shots that could be from any destination.

OVER EDITED



Avoid extreme editing. The image should still look realistic, just enhanced.

LOW QUALITY



Avoid poor quality images such as phone photos or pixelated photos.

STAGED



Avoid posed and staged shots. Show people enjoying the moment.

4.0

CONTENT STRATEGY

CATEGORIES & EXAMPLE POSTS

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CONTENT STRATEGY

CONTENT CATEGORIES & EXAMPLE POSTS

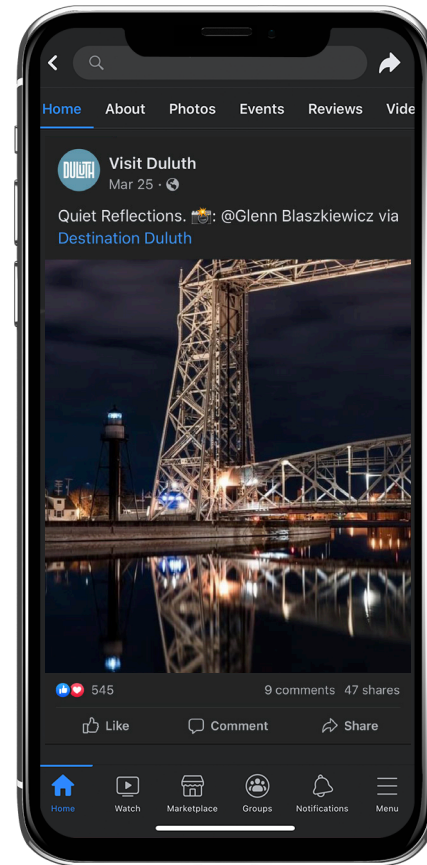
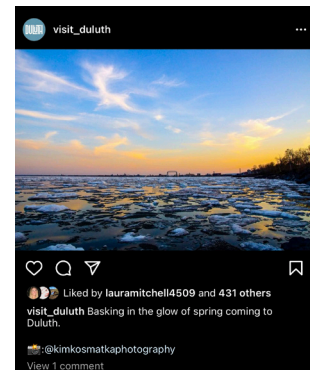
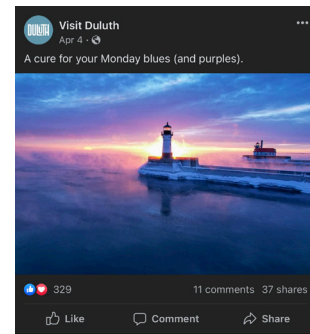
Social media content is divided into three main categories, and each of those buckets aligns with where a potential visitor might be on their path to booking. From inspiration and education to tools that help visitors plan and book, each content category plays an important role in winning over travelers and driving visitation.

INSPIRE

Motivate potential visitors to consider Duluth as a vacation destination and make them feel inspired, curious and energized. Build awareness with Tier 1 visitors within a 400-mile radius of Duluth, and inspire overall good vibes for locals and all visitors. This category is more focused on imagery and the feel of our brand vs. being copy heavy or too detailed.

◆ CONTENT COULD LOOK LIKE:

- Lake Superior
- Trails
- Cityscapes
- Families
- Couples/friends
- Solo travel
- Destination Duluth posts

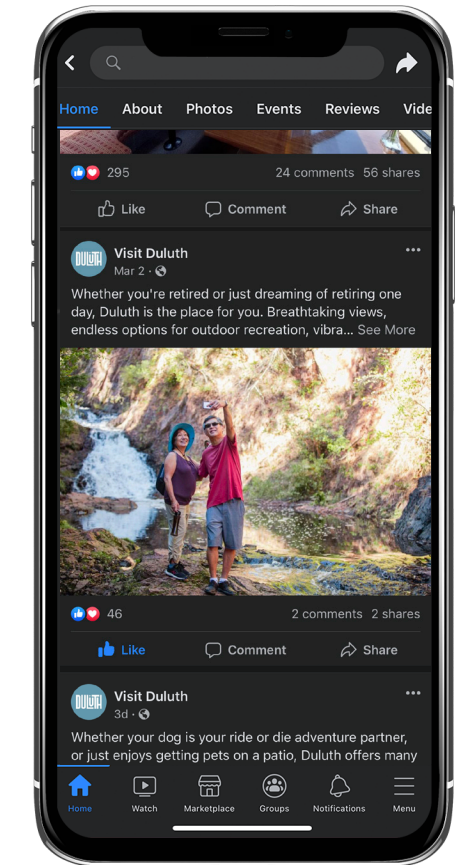
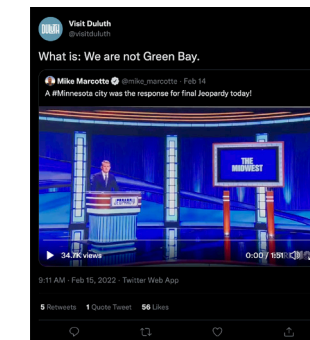
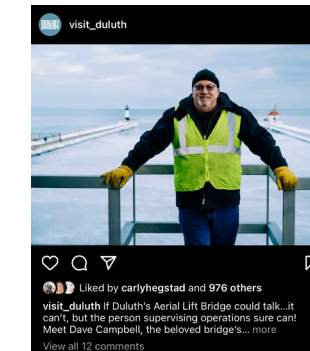


EDUCATE

Show and tell potential visitors all there is to do throughout the city. Provide a “local” view of the city to show unexpected aspects of Duluth. This category focuses on highlighting differentiators for Tier 2 visitors within a 200-mile radius.

◆ CONTENT COULD LOOK LIKE:

- Hidden gems
- Variety of attraction types (big vs. small, well-known vs. local gems)
- BIPOC businesses
- Faces of Duluth
- Posts that engage locals as ambassadors/guides/local experts
- Niche audiences - mountain bikers, campers/hikers, food and beverage, arts & culture, history, music
- Media clips to further educate
- Fun Duluth pop-culture references
- Link to blog posts

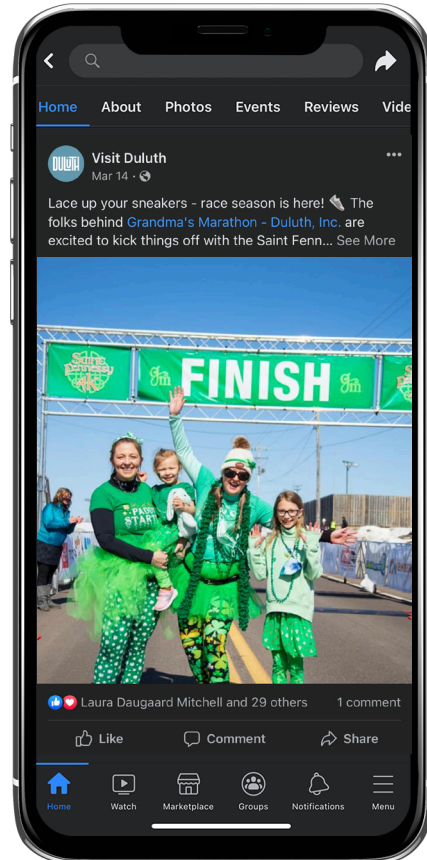
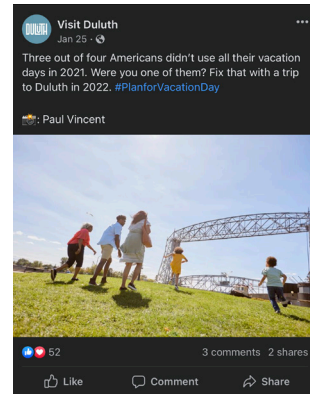
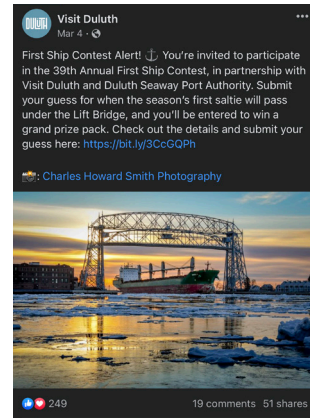


PLAN AND BOOK

Giving visitors specific calls to action, helping them find more information about Duluth and closing bookings with Tier 3 visitors.

◆ CONTENT COULD LOOK LIKE:

- Linking to itineraries/blogs
- Lead generation efforts
- Events - promoting large and medium sized events that draw visitors for overnight stays
- Encouraging potential visitors to plan and book their Duluth vacation



5.0

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

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CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

CONTENT PRODUCTION

COPY & CONTENT:

Use conversational language and keep posts concise while using the appropriate character counts and recommendations per platform.

- Proof the copy several times before posting (including sets of additional eyes) to ensure all mistakes are caught ahead of time. Typos and misspellings make a brand look unprofessional.
- Copy that is accompanied by images or videos has been reported to perform better.
- Research has shown that Facebook posts around 90 characters perform better than those with lengthy captions.
- Using emojis and exclamation points may increase engagement and can help convey emotion but watch how often you use them and how many are used at a time. Overdoing exclamations and emojis can look unprofessional.



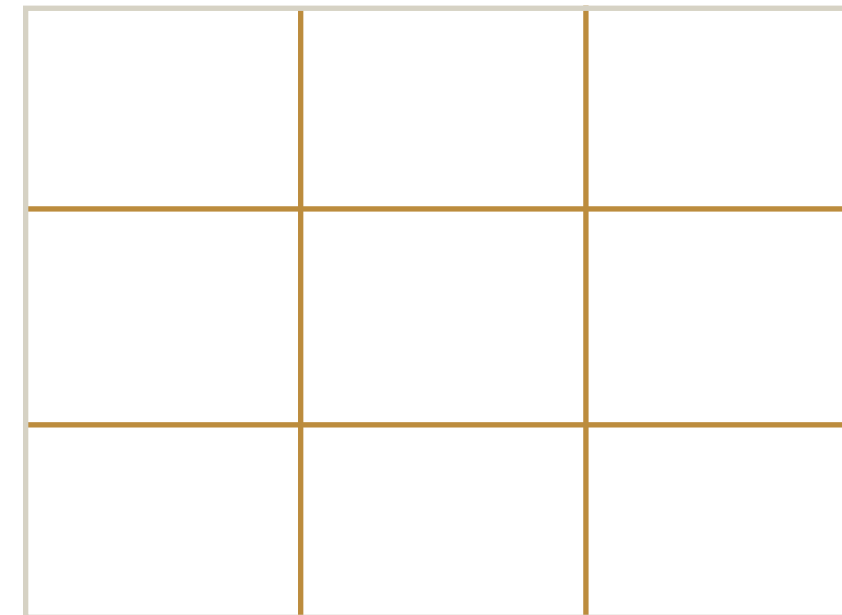
When crediting a photographer/videographer, use the flash camera emoji with a colon after it, then the tagged account.

 @exploreminnesota

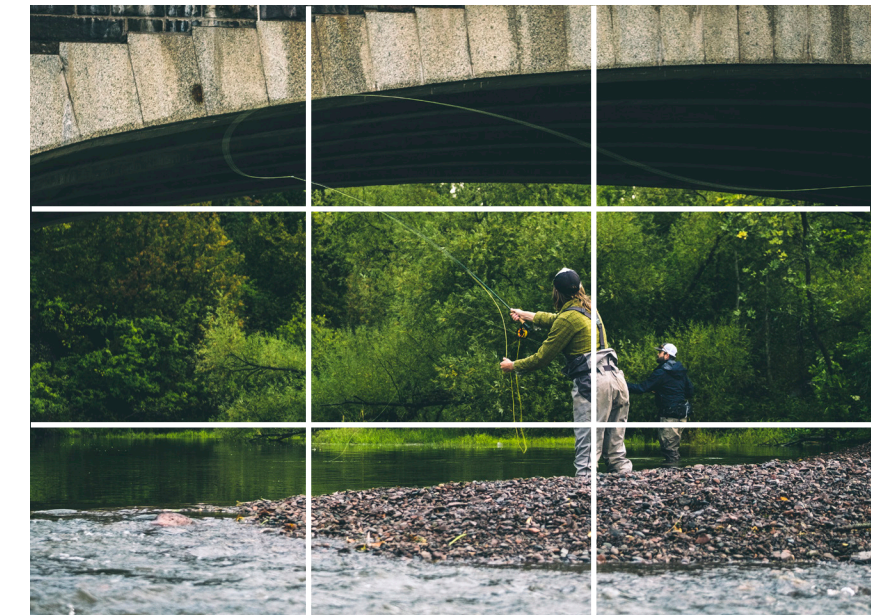
IMAGERY & PHOTOGRAPHY:

- Always use natural light when possible, and stay away from extremely sunny situations, which can cause harsh shadows.
- Use a clean background versus a busy background when possible to keep the focus on the main subject of the photo.
- Ensure the subject is in focus. Check this after every photograph.
- Use the rule of thirds when shooting. Visualize the photo divided into thirds, and try to place your subject near where the gridlines intersect for a more interesting composition.

RULE OF THIRDS GRID



EXAMPLE



CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

PLATFORM BEST PRACTICES

As the new Duluth brand comes to life, we'll focus on social platforms with the most potential to influence visitors in alignment with our overall goals.



TOP PRIORITIES BY PLATFORM:

◆ FACEBOOK

- Post 4-6 times per week (but no more than 1x per day).
- Ensure there is a balance of posts that keep people engaged on Facebook and posts that drive people to the website. Top engaging posts on Facebook could include carousel posts or posts with multiple images, videos, memes, etc. that don't link off the platform.
- Use UTM codes that include the social platform name, in combination with link shorteners (such as bit.ly) for links back to the website. This ensures we can track social media traffic, while keeping a clean link on the social media post.
- Post questions and encourage discussion among followers.
- Request for followers to share their experiences, photos, etc.
- Tag locations and featured businesses as warranted.

◆ INSTAGRAM

- Post 3-5 times per week (but no more than 1x per day).
- Keep LinkTree links updated for the most relevant CTAs and links to the website. Ten or less is highly recommended.
- Use UTM codes for links back to the website and ensure the UTM code lists the social platform.
- Create shareable content in line with the Visit Duluth brand that prompts users to share on their account.
- Instagram shows higher engagement on reels, so repurpose content where applicable to utilize as Instagram reels.
- Engagement is crucial to increase engagement and followers; reply to comments and DMs.
- Use shorter, quicker copy on Instagram versus Facebook.
- Tag locations and featured businesses as warranted.
- **Stories:** Share UGC content or local business content on stories that is relevant to Visit Duluth. Showcase target audience groups enjoying what Duluth has to offer (i.e. hiking, camping, visiting breweries, enjoying Lake Superior). Share posts from local businesses to help promote Duluth's offerings (i.e. a beer release at a brewery, a concert at a local venue, a children's event). Stories can also be used to share when we have a new Instagram post, as some audiences will see new stories before they see new in-feed posts. If applicable, some stories could also be posted on Facebook.
- **Highlights:** The content shown in the Highlights section categorizes posts based on a specific topic. These will be evaluated 2-3 times per year for relevancy and alignment with the brand story.

◆ TWITTER

- Post 1-2 standalone tweets per week. Tweet more if relevant (i.e. live-tweeting an event).
- Retweet relevant tweets and reply to/like tweets that mention Visit Duluth when applicable.
- Limit 1-2 hashtags per tweet.
- Keep copy conversational, short and sweet (within character limit).
 - Focus on one specific message rather than trying to cover multiple ideas.
 - If you have more to say, link to the website or start a thread.
- Monitor events and trending conversations to join the discussion when applicable and if on brand. (i.e. the Jeopardy example post on page 25).
- Asking questions and/or running polls is an effective way to interact with your Twitter audience.
- Twitter is a strong platform to promote something new or upcoming such as new businesses, events, seasonal attractions, etc.

◆ ADDITIONAL PLATFORMS

The platforms listed here are a second priority. All platforms will be claimed, audited and updated to showcase the new Duluth brand, but may not be actively posting new content at the current time.

- Pinterest
- TikTok
- LinkedIn

TAGGING BUSINESSES & ADDING HASHTAGS

POST EXAMPLE

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, [Business Name](#), sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. [Business Name](#), quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

#Hashtag #Hashtag #Hashtag #Hashtag #Hashtag



You and 22 others 2 Shares
Like Comment Share

Check out additional businesses: [Business Name](#), [Business Name](#), [Business Name](#), [Business Name](#), [Business Name](#), [Business Name](#).

#Hashtag #Hashtag

Tagging relevant businesses is a great way to support applicable partners while increasing the shareability of the post. When tagging businesses in post copy for Instagram or Facebook, refrain from including any more than four to ensure the content stays legible and easy to skim for those quickly scrolling. If listing more than four, please reference the below:

- Link off to the Visit Duluth site by encouraging users to check out business listings
- Create a comment on the post listing the remaining business names

When listing hashtags, stay in the range of one to five. It is also suggested to make sure there is a hard return after the post copy. This keeps things clean and legible for the user. In situations where more than five hashtags are needed, include a list in a comment below.



CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

HASHTAGS

Using hashtags helps increase reach to users who may not be following our account yet, along with encouraging them to use the same hashtags to spread the word.

◆ HASHTAGS TO USE REGULARLY:

- **Branded Hashtags:** exclusive to your brand
 - Examples: #VisitDuluth, #LoveItLikeWeDo #LoveDuluth #WelcomeToDuluth #UniqueByNature
- **Trending Hashtags:** current popular hashtags in the industry
 - Examples: #Travel #Nature #Adventure
- **Content Hashtags:** relate to Duluth's content categories
 - Examples: #GreatLakes #FacesOfDuluth
- **Location Hashtags:** specific to the location you are posting about
 - Examples: #LakeSuperior #NorthShore #DuluthTrails
- **Explore Minnesota Hashtags:**
 - Examples: #OnlyinMN - especially for images/videos that are visually striking, showcase things that are unique, or align well with EMT's current "Dream State" campaign showing the magical, dream-like aspects of Minnesota

◆ HASHTAGS TO AVOID:

- Remove usage of #AuthenticDuluth
- Make sure to research and understand the context or meaning behind any new hashtag before using it

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

VIDEO USAGE

Video content is exploding on social media, and it's no wonder: Facebook is rated as the most impactful of all social channels for video. There are several ways to incorporate video on your Facebook page and Instagram account to drive engagement and raise awareness of Duluth:

Pre-recorded video: This is a video you record and share later. By pre-recording video, you can reshoot, edit and polish the video before you share it.

Facebook Cover videos: Instead of a traditional Facebook cover photo, you can also set a cover video that will play at the top of your page. These videos should be simple yet dynamic, driven by imagery and without sound.

Live Video: Live videos are shot on the spot and shared live with your audience. Followers can go back and re-watch your live video later, though Instagram live videos are shorter-lived. Shooting live video has many benefits: users are alerted when brands go live, it's often bumped up to the top of followers' feeds, and it gives you the chance to interact with comments in real-time as people are watching.

Instagram and Facebook Stories: Small video snippets that usually self-delete after a short period of time. These help users to capture authentic moments and create a bigger, richer story for your brand.

SHOOTING VIDEO CONTENT

Before you shoot your video, be sure you have a plan. Create a bulleted outline or loose script of what you want to say and shoot. Having a plan will ensure you capture all the footage you need and follow a storyline that makes sense to viewers. Try to avoid scripting all copy verbatim; instead, use conversational language that feels natural.

◆ BEST PRACTICES

- Invest in a tripod for your phone. They're small, inexpensive and mean no more shaky videos.
- The same rules of lighting apply for video as with images. Do your best to shoot near a source of natural light, and make sure the light is coming from behind the camera.
- Don't zoom, as it degrades the quality of your video. Just get closer.
- Shoot for the platform you're using. Shooting horizontally (landscape) is usually the way to go, especially for platforms like YouTube. But for a social media platform like Facebook or Instagram (especially stories or reels), remember to shoot vertically (portrait).
- If you're live-streaming video, keep your phone either vertical or horizontal for the entire video; don't switch it mid-video.

Some video content performs better than others. Keep these best practices in mind when creating your own videos:

- 85% of social videos are watched without sound. Make sure yours isn't completely dependent on sound, and use the captioning option through Facebook to add subtitles.
- Videos up to two minutes long get the most engagement. Try to keep content under this length. Usually, the rule for social video is the shorter, the better.
- More than half of videos are watched on mobile, so it may make sense to shoot vertical video instead of widescreen.

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

UGC

User generated content (UGC) helps build authenticity and drive engagement while diversifying content in a cost-efficient way. Keep the following best practices in mind with UGC:

- Review the content and make sure it aligns with our brand. Only share UGC with high quality photography, with no typos and that portrays Duluth in a positive way.
- Always reach out and ask permission before posting someone else's content. Don't assume permission because they used a specific hashtag.
 - Example message: "Good Evening! Your photo is so amazing - we were wondering if you would allow Visit Duluth to share this photo, tagging you and giving you credit on our social media accounts. If you could reply back and let us know if we have your permission, that would be great. We look forward to hearing from you."
- Always give credit to the creator.
- If you want to solicit content from others, be clear in what you're looking for or consider a giveaway to draw engagement. Thank fans who are submitting their own content.
- Extend the content by curating users' posts into Instagram stories and highlights.
- Incorporate Destination Duluth content 1-2 times per week (providing credit to the original poster and Destination Duluth), ensuring that all content falls within our main strategy and is showing a variety of attractions.



6.0

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

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SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

MONITORING & RESPONDING

Social media is a two-way street, so it's important to monitor, respond and have a plan in place to show we're listening and can reply in a timely manner.

RESPONSE GUIDELINES

◆ POSITIVE COMMENTS

- Like/Heart comment
- If especially positive or detailed, respond with a thank you and personalized message:
 - "We love that trail, too!"
 - "The beer just tastes better in Duluth, doesn't it?"
- Flag/save positive posts to share in the future

◆ NEGATIVE COMMENTS

- Evaluate if it's just venting or needs/warrants a response. Ask yourself, "would this look bad if unanswered?"
- If there's a specific issue, diffuse the situation and take it into another forum:
 - "So sorry to hear you had that experience. Please send us a DM to continue the conversation and we can find a resolution".
 - Direct to the Contact Us form on the website to provide more info on the issue/experience.
- If it's a persistent negative commenter, trolling or inappropriate, hide the comment.

◆ QUESTIONS

- Evaluate questions on a case-by-case basis.
- If people are wondering where photos are taken, keep responses broad and direct them back to the website.
 - "This is in Enger Park. You can find more information about this trail and other sites at VisitDuluth.com".

◆ TAGS/MENTIONS

- Respond with a "like" or short comment on the post if they tag Visit Duluth on their trip.
- If it's a negative comment or bigger issue that needs to be addressed, comment and tell the user you will send them a direct message.
- If it's just a general tag with no specific question or commentary, there's no need to respond.

◆ DIRECT MESSAGE RESPONSES

- Review direct messages daily on all accounts.
- Respond to direct questions/comments.

◆ INDUSTRY REQUESTS

If a local tourism industry partner or leader calls out a post or makes a request to be featured, take the conversation to a DM or offline to follow up.

- Let the City of Duluth know about request to connect with them directly.
- Ladder back up to goals in a polite way.
 - "Thanks for reaching out. We're working on highlighting all of the city of Duluth, so this post reflected one specific area. Know that we are keeping track of who/what we are highlighting to ensure equal representation throughout the city."
- Know when to promote and when not to promote. The event/attraction/locations featured on our channels have to have a broad tourism angle. We can't promote every event happening in the city.
 - "Thank you for reaching out and letting us know about your event. Currently, we're only featuring broad, large-scale events aimed at tourists on the Visit Duluth website/social channels and are not featuring any non-tourist focused events. We encourage you to check with community groups for possible inclusion on their calendars."
- Reference people back to website to submit content for the Duluth website.

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

INDUSTRY COMMUNICATION

Social media can be used to not only promote Visit Duluth, but to lift all partners in the tourism industry. Read the idea starters below for ways to bring Duluth tourism partners together on social for cross-promotion, content and partnerships that bolster the whole industry.

- Consider a passport or list of Duluth Must-Do's to share on social.
- Highlight the Faces of Duluth by having each take over social media for the day their blog goes live, through a visitor-focused lens.
- Partner with local artists to conduct beautification projects around Duluth, share on social and incorporate QR codes or discounts for local businesses.
- Work with a local artist on a mural project where visitors can post and share on social media, making it immediately identifiable as Duluth.
- Partner with local influencers for account takeovers, itineraries ("My Duluth in a Day") or promoting relevant events.
- Restaurants, breweries and wineries could offer discounts if you post yourself at their location and tag the location + Visit Duluth.

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

CONTESTS & SWEEPSTAKES

To avoid legal entanglements, it's important to know the rules and guidelines of social media contests and giveaways. While smaller brands may not always observe these rules, it's important for larger brands to follow these best practices.

Be clear and consistent in what the promotion is and how these promotions are defined:

- **Sweepstakes/Giveaways:** the winner is chosen at random.
- **Contests:** the winner is chosen based on a set of criteria.
- **Lotteries:** there is "consideration" involved; something that requires participants to pay, purchase or take meaningful action to participate. These should be avoided.

Key verbiage and requirements:

- Always include "chance" at winning when describing promotion (Say "enter for your chance to win" vs. saying "enter to win").
- If using UGC, fans must include #Sweepstakes or #Contest to show they created the content with intent of entering the sweepstakes.
- Avoid running promotions that require people to use their personal timelines or friend connections to participate, such as requiring a user to share a post on their friend's timeline to enter. This could be considered a lottery.
- Anywhere a user may enter a sweepstakes, you should also include a link to "View the Official Sweepstakes Rules" or "View Rules"
- Make sure you've included any platform specific guidelines. For example, if you're using Facebook/Instagram to promote your sweepstakes you must clearly state in the official rules that Facebook/Instagram is not involved in the sweepstakes in any manner.

