

CANADA REPORT

May 2026

Travel
South
USA

Prepared By:

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ABOUT TSUSA

Global Partner Programming

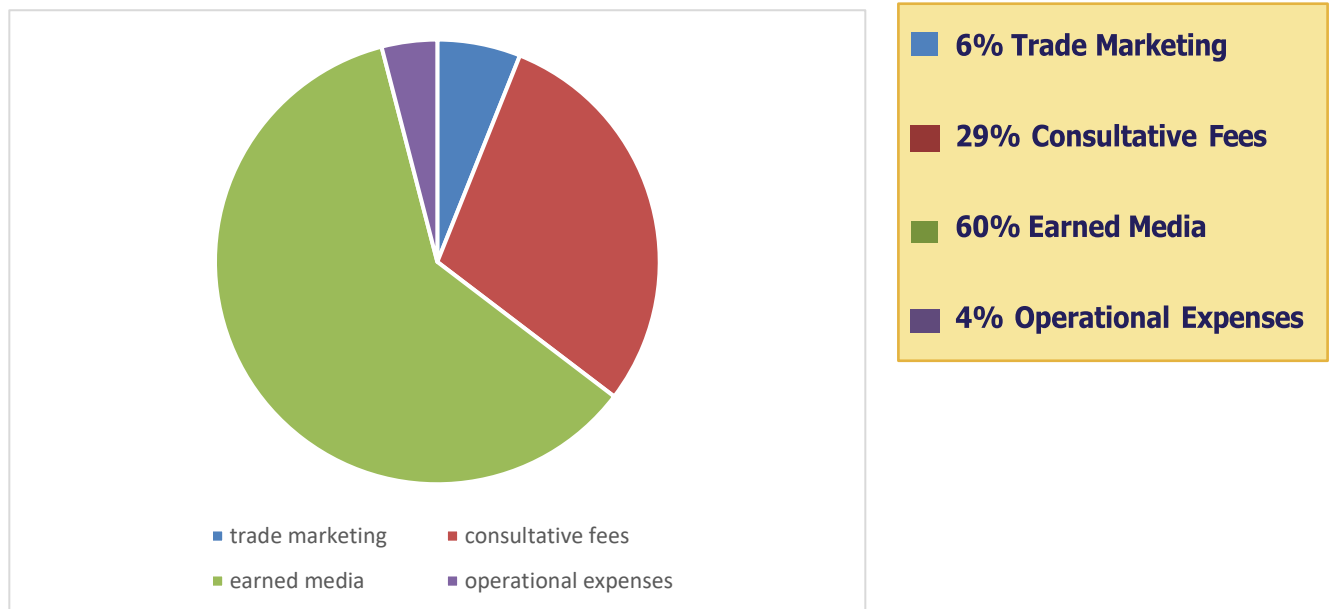
Canada represents one of the most important international source markets for the United States, underpinned by deep socio-cultural ties, aligned values, and one of the most integrated economic relationships in the world. The efficient movement of people across the border is essential to prosperity and competitiveness, and travel remains a natural extension of those connections.

Canada is currently facing economic headwinds, with affordability concerns and cautious consumer spending influencing travel decisions. However, travel remains a priority for many Canadians, particularly higher-value and experience-driven travelers who continue to seek meaningful leisure experiences. Strong air connectivity, proximity, and a mature outbound travel culture continue to support cross-border travel, making Canada a resilient and strategically important market. Success will depend on demonstrating value, creating timely reasons to visit, and aligning messaging with evolving consumer priorities.

While current volumes sit below earlier forecasts as households navigate broader socio-economic pressures, the market continues to deliver a meaningful share of travelers who remain active and willing to visit the United States.

Canadian travelers are experienced, informed, and comfortable navigating the U.S. They are receptive to regional diversity, open to local cuisine, and typically build itineraries that blend marquee experiences with opportunities for discovery.

FY 26 Canada GPP Resource Allocations



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Meetings held with media outlets and companies to identify partnerships and editorial opportunities for FY27.
- Destination-focused content drove the strongest engagement overall, with Facebook consistently outperforming Instagram. Content highlighting specific places and experiences resonated more effectively than broader, general-interest messaging.
- Trade outreach focused on understanding projections for the second half of 2026 through industry partners who provided valuable insights that will determine FY27 planning strategy.

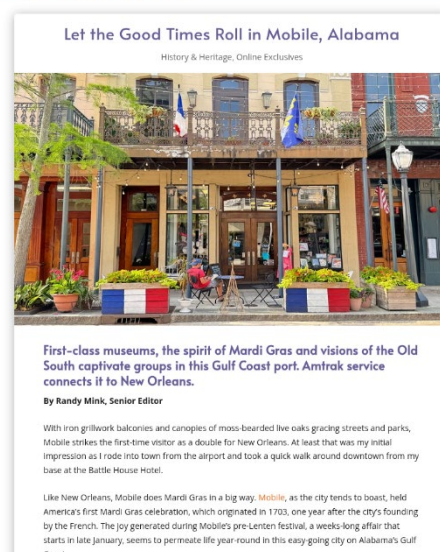
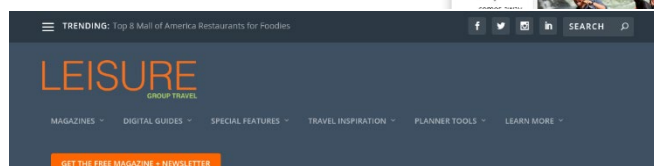
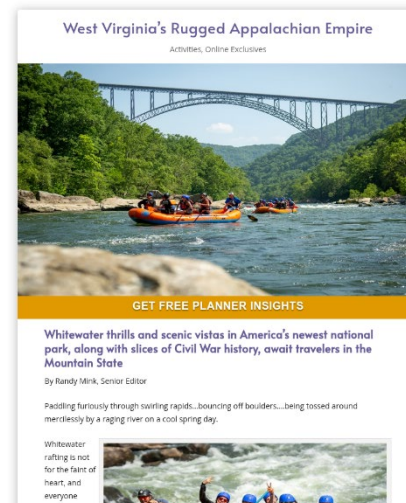
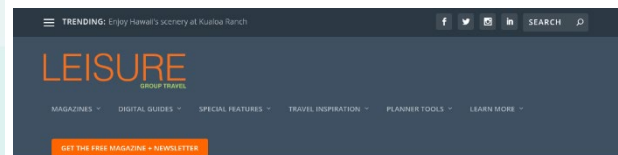
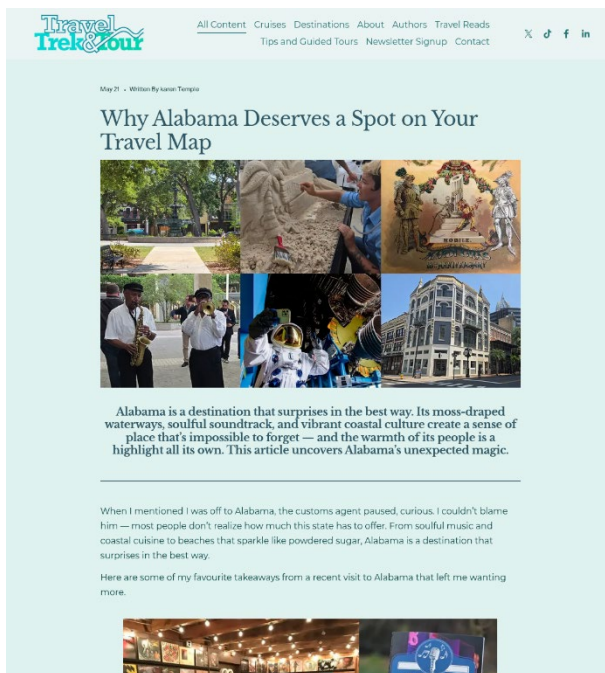
		Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	April	May	June	FY 25/26 Total
9 Partners AL/AR/KY/ MS/MO/NC SC/TN ROTS	Canada							
	Travel Trade							
	Trade Meetings/Trainings	22	14	18	5	4		63
	Number of Agents Trained	0	29	4	0	0		33
	Communication & PR							
	Media Meetings	39	23	18	3	7		90
	Total number of articles published	15	6	2	2	3		28
	Impressions	10,109,399	170,775	6,803,067	6,000	839,166		17,928,407
	Global Media Marketplace & FAMS	0	4	2	0	0		5
	TSUSA PR Newsletters	1	3	3	1	1		9
	Facebook	4	12	13	3	4		41
	Instagram	4	12	13	3	4		41

II. Comms & PR

Meetings with media, coverage opportunities, media releases, contacts, earned media evaluation, clippings, and others.

News Releases & Pitching

- Monthly newsletter highlighted the Roots of Southern Food and the Bounty of the Sea
- May included three articles featuring Alabama and West Virginia as a result in GMM 2026.
- CoverageBook Link - <https://travelsouthusa.coveragebook.com/b/cc3dd1a010f4af6e>



II. Comms & PR

May Social Media Posts

Title	Date published	Status	Reach ⓘ	Likes and reactions ⓘ	Comments ⓘ	Shares ⓘ
 Missouri is calling and there's so much more than you think w... Reel ·  travelsouthusa.ca	Boost ... Sun May 31, 1:01pm		151	0	0	0
 Missouri is calling and there's so much more than you think w... Reel ·  Travel South USA - Canada	Boost ... Sun May 31, 1:00pm	  	234	1	0	1
 From floating crystal-clear waters in the Ozarks 🍷 to treasur... Reel ·  travelsouthusa.ca	Boost ... Fri May 29, 12:00pm		127	1	0	0
 From floating crystal-clear waters in the Ozarks 🍷 to treasur... Reel ·  Travel South USA - Canada	Boost ... Fri May 29, 11:59am	  	215	2	0	1
 Discover Missouri! 🎵 Live music 🏡 Vibrant cities 🌿 Outdo... Reel ·  travelsouthusa.ca	Boost ... Mon May 11, 1:30pm		108	1	0	0
 Discover Missouri! 🎵 Live music 🏡 Vibrant cities 🌿 Outdo... Reel ·  Travel South USA - Canada	Boost ... Mon May 11, 1:29pm	  	9	0	0	0
 GRL PWR 🙌 #derby #kentuckyderby #kentucky #travelsout... Reel ·  Travel South USA - Canada	Boost ... Sun May 3, 9:29am	  	2	0	0	0
 GRL PWR 🙌 #derby #kentuckyderby #kentucky #travelsout... Reel ·  travelsouthusa.ca	Boost ... Sun May 3, 9:29am		8	0	0	0

Insights:

- May 31 Missouri Reel on Facebook performed strongest reach overall (234 reach).
- Ozarks-focused content (May 29) delivered the highest engagement, with 2 reactions and 1 share on Facebook, showing stronger audience response than other themes.
- Facebook consistently outperformed Instagram in both reach and engagement.
- Top-performing posts are clearly destination-specific (Missouri/Ozarks)

II. Comms & PR

PR Newsletter to consumer media professionals

Status	Topic	Numbers delivered	Open rate
Travel South USA Newsletter Series #9	The Roots of Southern Food & the Bounty of the Sea  Featured: Mississippi, Arkansas, South Carolina, Kentucky, Missouri	425	38.9%

II. Comms & PR

Global Media Marketplace & Summit 2026

Name	Publication	Status	Expected Coverage	Fam Choice
Craig Silva	BigDaddyKreativ, The Travel Pub, Living Local Magazine (digital and print), Toronto Times, Ottawa Times, Montreal Times, Mapsgirl	Completed	Social media posts Social media posts 2x stories in multiple outlets	Kentucky
Randy Sharman	Informed Traveller	Completed	Multiple podcast interviews	Georgia
Karen Temple	Ottawa Life	Completed	Alabama	Virginia
Bryen Dunn	Inspired Media Inc. (PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ)	Completed	2x Stories	Missouri
Randy Mink	Leisure Group Travel & Canadian World Traveler	Completed	Mobile, AL West Virginia Canadian World Traveler – <i>pending (Summer issue)</i>	West Virginia

II. Comms & PR

Media Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings) cont.

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up/Next Step
Samantha Vecchiarelli, HOLR/Yahoo! Canada	Discussed upcoming travel editorial opportunities for Yahoo! Canada and HOLR. She shared her upcoming honeymoon travel plans and expressed strong interest in exploring the U.S. South for premium romance, culinary, and cultural destination storytelling. Evaluated her audience demographic and discussed how Travel South USA's diverse partner offerings align with her content style.	Follow up in July to review her finalized freelance assignments.
Mary Beth Roberts, Postmedia	Connected to assess the current market appetite and editorial interest for U.S. travel coverage within the Canadian media landscape. Discussed evolving Canadian traveler preferences, specifically focusing on how regional U.S. destinations and unique cultural experiences are currently tracking with their readership.	Monitor progress and follow up once her specific editorial direction is clarified and finalized with her editor.
Cynthia McLeod, Toronto Sun	Met to review current travel coverage priorities, editorial lead times, and her team's internal digital workflow. She noted a backlog of pending U.S. features and a tightly managed allocation for U.S.-specific travel content.	Continue pitching timely and relevant story ideas as opportunities arise
Stephanie Davoli, Viva La Dolce	Conducted a comprehensive media review to explore multi-platform storytelling opportunities across key lifestyle verticals. The discussion focused on identifying upcoming content slots for women's travel, multi-generational family travel, and regional lifestyle features. Examined her strategy for positioning destination content across broader, high-circulation Canadian media outlets.	Await assignment confirmations and maintain continuous dialogue. Follow up with tailored pitches, multi-state family vacation concepts, and curated women's getaway angles.
Karen Doradea, Daily Hive	Conducted an introductory relationship-building meeting following a recent editorial transition. Established a direct line of communication with the new contact and discussed their fresh editorial vision for the travel vertical. Evaluated their specific interest in	Share relevant pitches and explore potential press trip and destination coverage opportunities

	future U.S. travel features, laying the groundwork for how Travel South USA can fit into their upcoming content roadmap.	
Paul and Lorraine Zander, FAZE Media and Modern Traveler	Reconnected to discuss upcoming editorial slots and in-depth destination storytelling opportunities for the Canadian market. Explored specific content themes surrounding heritage travel, cultural narratives, and deep-dive, long-form features. Evaluated how Travel South USA's rich historic landmarks, music traditions, and diverse cultural footprints seamlessly align with their upcoming premium editorial requirements.	Continue sharing story angles and evaluate future assignment and press trip opportunities
Clementine Affana, Freelance	Met with a freelance travel and lifestyle journalist to review her upcoming pitch schedule and identify fresh angles for U.S. destination storytelling. Discussed her outlet roster and general interests; unique charm, hospitality, and seasonal appeal. Pitched diverse multi-state offerings can seamlessly integrate into their upcoming freelance content pipeline.	Provide resources and general destination updates to support upcoming editorial opportunities.

III. Trade

Trade Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Activity/Activation	Follow-up/Next Step
Sandra Costa, Porter Airlines	Porter Airlines is celebrating its 20th anniversary and has seen 240% growth within the last year. They presented opportunity for targeted campaigns to build on the airline's ongoing growth and success. Given the recent dip in U.S. travel performance, opportunity with Southern gateways (Nashville) will capture the core Gen Z and Millennial growth audience through event-driven travel and strong B2B agency partnerships.	Opportunity to position the region's new direct access (Nashville) as a gateway to multi-state travel by leveraging major sports and festival bookings to extend regional stays and equipping B2B agency channels with dedicated TSUSA destination materials.
Ali Rizvi, Goway Travel	The meeting focused on potential alignment with Goway Travel, noting that 70–80% of their business relies on FIT and group travel. Majority of their demographic are from Western Canada that typically travels in sizes of 10–15 people for 5–10 days.	Opportunity to expand their existing southern itineraries (currently Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee & Kentucky, Tennessee). Follow up with ready-to-use regional collateral, FIT-focused itineraries, and dedicated sports-group packages to capture their high volume of Western Canadian group bookings.
Terry Vander Linden, AMA Travel	He noted that there has been a 22% drop in U.S. travel demand due to the political climate. While they saw massive 2025 growth in long-haul markets like Europe and Japan (+300%), there is a concern that travelers are shifting away from the U.S. once they explore other regions in terms of cost efficiency. However, there is optimism in leveraging the proximity to Canada for short-term trips. He mentioned the use of CAA's AI tool, "Trip Canvas," to re-engage Canadian travelers.	Opportunity to position the region as a close, high-value alternative to long-haul destinations. Key strategies include expanding storytelling beyond the usual core spots to showcase diverse Southern experiences and heavily leveraging the "Trip Canvas" AI platform to increase destination visibility across all CAA channels.
Franziska Fenselau, Johnview	Met with her to review current market conditions and shifting booking trends for inbound U.S. travel. Their core business strategy heavily prioritizes experience-based, middle-class FIT travel offerings across their network.	Maintain ongoing communication to address shifting market demands. Supply her with general promotional materials and destination updates to ensure the region remains relevant as they monitor future booking trends.

III. Newsletters

Trade Newsletter to tour operators and travel agent professionals

Status	Topic	Numbers delivered	Open rate	Click-thru rate
Travel South USA Newsletter Series #9	The Roots of Southern Food & the Bounty of the Sea  Featured: Mississippi, Arkansas, South Carolina, Kentucky, Missouri	5,062	28.61%	76.81%

IV. Market Update

Tour Operators & Travel Agencies

- [Canadian return trips from the U.S. tick up slightly: StatCan](#) (Global News)
- [Canada's US travel advisory was just updated — Here's what summer visitors should know](#) (Narcity via Yahoo)
- [Government travel advisory warns Canadians ahead of summer](#) (Daily Hive)
- [Survey finds fewer Canadians plan to travel this summer – but one generation is bucking the trend](#) (CTV News)
- [Canadians spending less on travel, Gen Z an exception](#) (CTV News)
- [Where Travelers are Headed this Summer – And Why?](#) (Travel Industry Today)
- [THE LUXURY DESTINATIONS CANADIANS ARE BOOKING FOR SUMMER 2026](#) (The Gate)

Airlift

- [Air Canada pulls FY 2026 guidance but demand is strong, says Rousseau](#) (Travelweek)
- [Air Canada is hiking Aeroplan costs up to 67% on premium flights — and your window to book is closing fast](#) (Money.ca via Yahoo News)
- [Canada's largest airline slashes more flights, including YVR routes. Here's what to know](#) (Vancouver is Awesome)
- [Collapse of Spirit Airlines a 'warning' for budget carriers in Canada](#) (BNN Bloomberg)

Industry News

Conference Board of Canada Data

- According to the latest travel intentions survey, 70% of Canadians plan to take a leisure trip this summer. This represents a modest increase from 2025 (68%), though it remains below the peak observed in 2024 (73%).
- Among travellers who have selected a destination, 39% intend to travel within Canada, down from 42% last year. In contrast, 29% plan an outbound trip, up from 25% at the start of the 2025 season.
- Overall, these findings point to continued strength in travel demand, alongside a gradual shift toward international travel.

Economic Landscape

- [Canada's financial system doing well despite global turbulence: Bank of Canada](#) (BNN Bloomberg)
- [CUSMA renewal talks show faint signs of life as July 1 deadline looms](#) (CBC News)
- [Ottawa gives billion-dollar lifeline to steel and aluminum sectors as Trump tightens tariffs](#) (CBC News)
- [US pauses joint defense effort with Canada that dates to WWII](#) (CityNews/Canadian Press)
- [Carney pitches Canada as strong ally to U.S. in New York](#) (CTV News/Canadian Press)
- [Higher gas prices pushed inflation up to 2.8% in April, says StatCan](#) (Global News)
- [Canada's economy dropped 18,000 jobs in April as unemployment rose to 6-month high](#) (CBC News)
- [Canada slipped into a technical recession on an annualized basis as economic growth stalled in 1st quarter](#) (CBC.ca)
- [Expect Canada's unemployment rate to tick lower in May](#) (RBC)

V. **Actions**

1. Global Media Marketplace & Summit 2026

Monitoring and reporting coverage

2. Ongoing media meetings and pitching to obtain coverage

June PR newsletter: 'It's a June Potluck: Anything Goes!' - due by June 20

3. Draft and send May PR & Trade Newsletter

Next issue is 'It's a June Potluck: Anything Goes!' - due by June 20