

Tourism Task Force Business Survey Results

Notes on survey:

- Survey was sent to 103 businesses via email
- Only 14 responses were received
- For the first 9 responses there was an issue that did not show the first sections of questions related to VCVB membership – only 5 responses received on these after setting were fixed.
- Despite survey functionality problem and low participation, the respondents were from various sectors of the business community and feedback was varied.

Businesses responding:

Prince William Sound Subway

Alaska Guide

Saltwater and Snowflakes

Radio Shack

Chugach Mountain Institute and Foundation

A Place On Coho BnB

South Central Hardware

End Of The Road Ren Fair

Pangaea Adventures

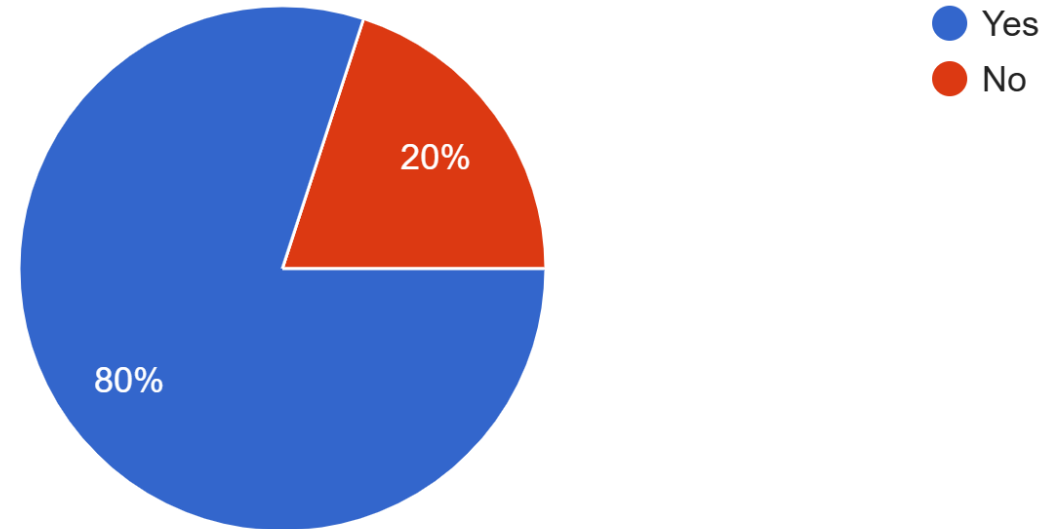
Capt'n Joe's Gas

Valdez Museum

Sound Crafts Alaska

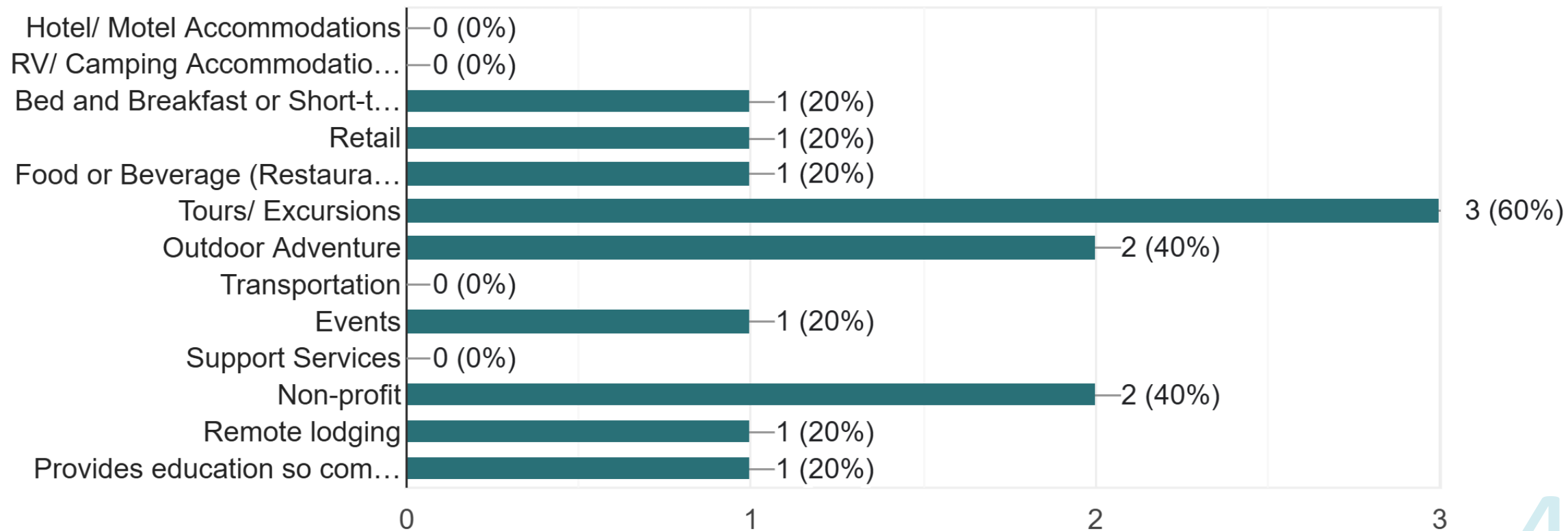
Are you a business that directly provides a service to business and leisure travelers to Valdez?

5 responses



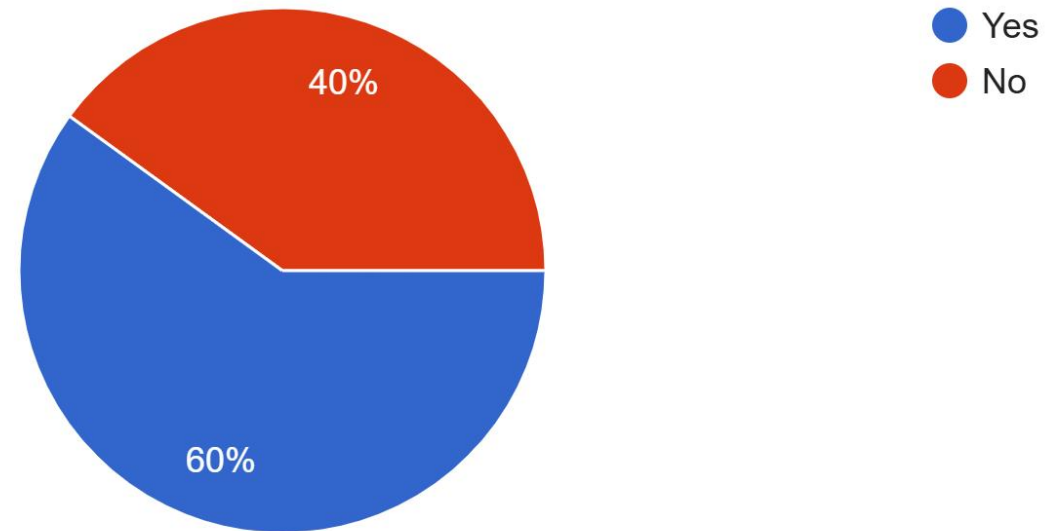
How would you categorize your business? (check all that apply)

5 responses



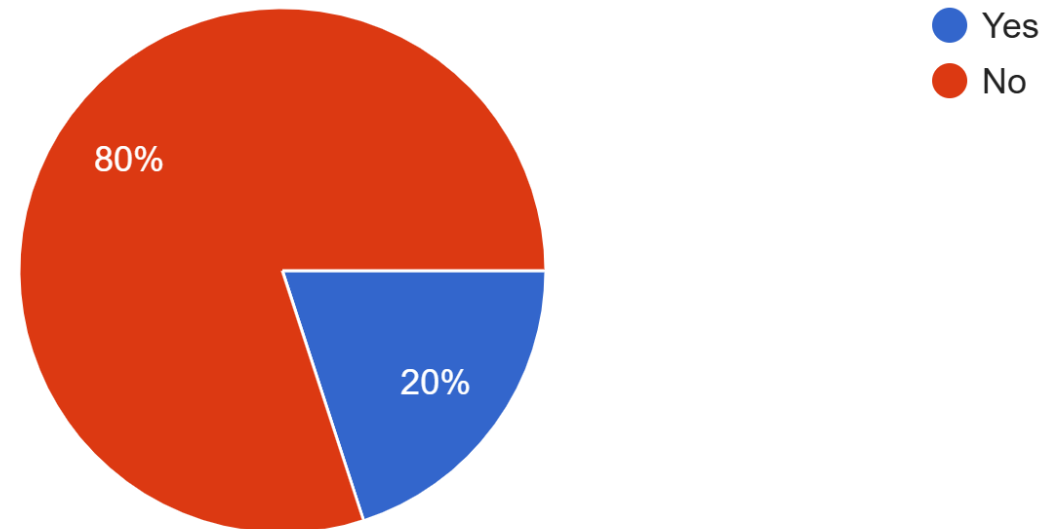
Are you currently a member of the Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau?

5 responses



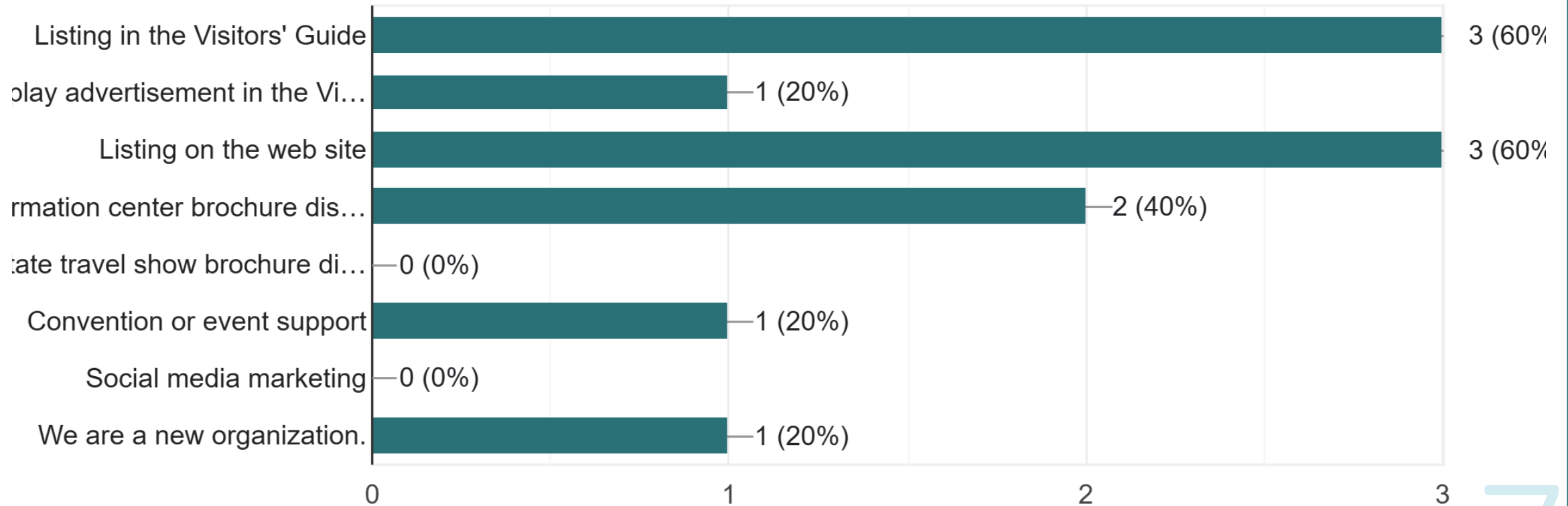
Do you purchase an ad in the Valdez guidebook?

5 responses



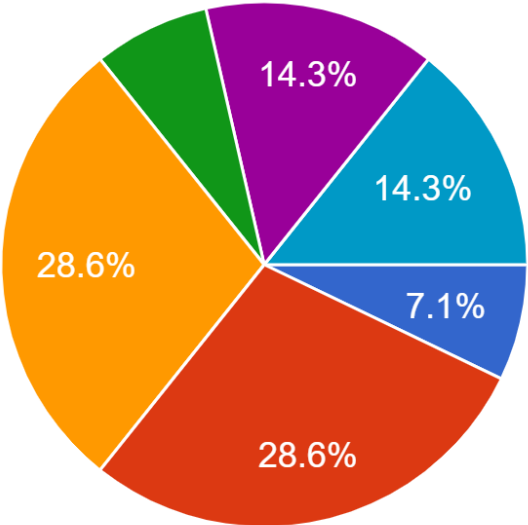
What VCVB benefits or services did you take advantage of in the past? (check all that apply)

5 responses



What do you feel is the primary role of an organization like the VCVB should be?

14 responses



- Marketing to in state visitors
- Marketing to out of state visitors
- Providing a visitor's center
- Advertising for local businesses
- Maintaining a website highlighting Valdez
- Maintaining a website highlighting Valdez

How can a future tourism marketing organization best support you as a local business?

“A tourism marketing organization can best support my business by driving consistent visitor traffic to Valdez and making sure small, everyday businesses like mine are included in promotions—not just major attractions. Providing updated visitor information, highlighting quick and convenient dining options, and helping direct foot traffic through signage, maps, and online visibility would make a big difference. Clear communication about cruise ship schedules and major events would also help us staff appropriately and better serve visitors.”

“So many different ways...”

“Attract visitors from beyond Alaska and internationally.”

“I have brochures at the Visitor Center”

“Equitable marketing and advertising. Being more inclusive and not letting community insiders run the show. Highlighting SUSTAINABLE, LOW-IMPACT tourism that preserves the natural wonders of Valdez for future generations (not kowtowing to snowmachine club bullies and the big capital of the heli ski industry that serves the Epstein class).”

“Advertisement” “Be available to visitors to direct them to local attractions.”

“By having a section in the visitors center for us to advertise year round.”

How can a future tourism marketing organization best support you as a local business? (continued)

“I think the biggest way a future tourism organization can support us is by helping bring the right people to Valdez and making it easy for them to say yes once they find us. For a place like Valdez, awareness is everything. If someone doesn’t decide to include us early in their Alaska trip planning, we usually don’t even get a shot. So strong, targeted out-of-state marketing is huge, especially if it helps drive more demand into May and September. Even a small lift in those shoulder months makes a real difference on our end. Valdez really shines as a multi-day destination, but that story isn’t always obvious to visitors. Anything the DMO can do to help build simple itineraries, connect experiences, and guide people toward spending more time here is incredibly valuable. Access to good data would also go a long way. Even basic insights on where visitors are coming from, how they’re booking, and how demand is shifting helps us make better decisions as operators. Helping align businesses, share opportunities, and build partnerships with groups like cruise lines, RV companies, and international operators. That kind of coordination is hard for any one business to do alone, but it benefits everyone when it’s done well. At the end of the day, it’s not just about more visitors, it’s about the right visitors. People who are excited to be here, who stay a little longer, and who really engage with what makes Valdez special. If a future DMO can help with that, it would be a big win for all of us.”

“Providing info to consumers about what we offer”

“Continue letting visitors know about the FREE self-guided walkway tour at the hatchery to learn about its fish culture operations, Alaska's salmon enhancement programs and their economic benefits.”

“By providing a single location for potential and current visitors to obtain accurate information on Valdez businesses and events.”

“Increase awareness of our organization among Alaska residents—particularly those facing financial, geographic, or social barriers, including youth from low-income, rural, urban, and Indigenous communities—so they can access high-quality outdoor education, safety training, and wilderness experiences.”

“Not only bringing visitors to Valdez, but also CONNECTING visitors to the local businesses. Having people show up, camp on the side of the road or in the Glacier Stream riverbed, hike on trails, bring their own food, and enjoy everything they can for free is more of a drain on local resources than an economic opportunity. I've talked with several store owners who do not see a significant uptick in sales on cruise ship days.”



Key Words From Answers

*Word Cloud generated using Microsoft Co-Pilot AI

If budget allowed, what marketing do you think the next destination marketing organization for Valdez should focus on?

“If budget allowed, marketing should focus heavily on digital and social media campaigns that highlight Valdez as an easy, must-visit destination. This could include promoting road trips, cruise stopovers, and outdoor experiences, while also showcasing local businesses and food options. Short-form videos, influencer partnerships, and targeted ads during peak travel planning seasons would be especially effective. It would also be helpful to market shoulder seasons to help extend tourism beyond just the busiest months.”

“Market EVERYTHING Valdez offers. Faith just started doing that. But only listing half of what we have makes Valdez half as appealing. When funding comes from the city it should do it's best to draw people to it. That means show the whole menu of Valdez has to offer.”

“Drawing in more international travelers”

“The cruise ships are great”

“Some of this is probably repeating earlier comments. Apologies ahead of time. At the top of the list would be targeted digital marketing to out-of-state travelers who are already in the consideration phase for Alaska. That means search, high-intent social, and content that’s built around real trip planning, not just inspiration. We want to show people exactly how Valdez fits into their itinerary and why it’s worth the time. I’d also invest in content that tells a clear, usable story of Valdez. Not just beautiful imagery, but practical storytelling, things like “3-day” or “5-day” itineraries, route-based planning (Anchorage to Valdez), and combinations of experiences. The easier we make it for someone to picture their trip, the more likely they are to commit. Another big opportunity is partnership marketing. Working closely with cruise lines, RV rental companies, and international tour operators to get Valdez built into their recommended routes and packages. Those channels can drive consistent, high-quality demand at a scale individual businesses can’t reach on their own. I’d also put meaningful budget toward shoulder season campaigns. Specifically, May and September. That could be targeted offers, itinerary-focused campaigns, or partnerships that encourage travelers to shift slightly earlier or later. Even modest success there has a big impact locally for us, and I would guess for other operators, too. Finally, I think there’s real value in high-quality media and PR, but it needs to be intentional. Bringing in the right writers, creators, and storytellers who align with the kind of visitor we want, not just volume for the sake of exposure.”

If budget
allowed, what
marketing do
you think the
next destination
marketing
organization for
Valdez should
focus on?
(continued)

“Small Businesses”

“Social media campaign”

“A dynamic web presence”

“Emphasis should be placed on highlighting the wilderness and outdoor opportunities in Valdez and the surrounding region, while reinforcing our community’s commitment to environmental stewardship and responsible recreation.”

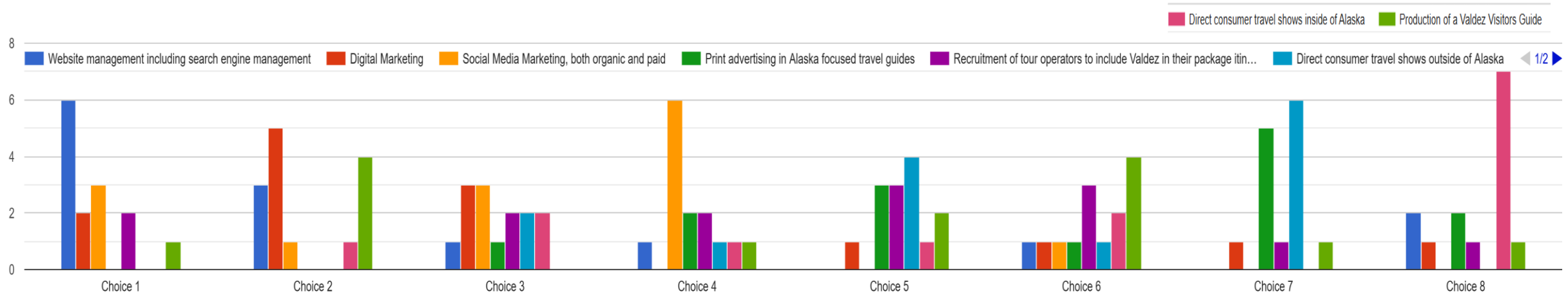
“I have not seen your marketing metrics or analysis of current efforts, but I strongly suspect that a coordinated online marketing presence with an improved website experience would be beneficial.”

“As with most public spending in Valdez (as with the USA at large), it's likely public spending will continue to serve those who need it least while the needs of the working class and poor are ignored. I don't need public spending to serve my business. PUBLIC SPENDING SHOULD SERVE THE GENERAL PUBLIC.”

“In state and out of state information”

“Try to work with marketing agencies besides Seed Media.”

Please rank the following marketing activities in order of importance. (Select 1 choice for each row- 1 is highest and 8 is lowest)



Do you have comments or thoughts on organizational structure and membership? (preferred organization type, oversight, membership requirements, etc.)

“I think the organization should be simple, transparent, and easy for small businesses to be part of. It’s important that all types of businesses in Valdez feel represented—not just larger tourism operators. Clear communication, regular updates, and some level of local business input or advisory group would go a long way. Membership requirements should be affordable and not overly complicated, especially for small, year-round businesses. The focus should be on collaboration and making sure everyone benefits from increased tourism, not just a few.”

“Valdez based companies. Preferred rates for business owners who actually live year-round in Valdez and not just have a house in Valdez that they stay in while they run their seasonal business. Ideally have a minimum average customer rating. If you're sending people away from Valdez who aren't pleased, you're hurting the towns reputation. They should also lead up things with City Council like pushing for a head tax on out-of-town tour operators like Premier Alaska Tours who swoop in to make bank off the cruise ships and leave with all the money at the end of the day. If you're going to bank in on what we are you should help support it.”

“I think it should be managed through the city. BNBs already pay for the tax to support this endeavor, let the city manage that money to draw in more commerce and visitors. As for the following question I am only answering it to complete the survey.”

“As a nonprofit organization I wish the organization would do more for locals that do not have a large marketing budget.”

“I think there’s a real opportunity to build something here that works well for everyone, and I’d approach the structure with that in mind. I really appreciate the opportunity to share thoughts.”

Do you have comments or thoughts on organizational structure and membership? (preferred organization type, oversight, membership requirements, etc.) (continued)

“I believe it starts with having a small, capable team that’s empowered to execute. The organization doesn’t need to be big, but what it’s trying to achieve should be clear and it should have people who are accountable for moving those priorities forward. When that’s in place, confidence is quickly built across the community.”

“I also think it’s really important to have strong input from local operators. The businesses here are in it every day, so having that perspective represented (whether through a board or advisory group) helps keep things grounded and practical. At the same time, the structure should stay simple enough that decisions can be made efficiently and protect momentum. What this looks like might be a nice balance between shared direction and clear roles. The broader group helps shape priorities, and the team is trusted to carry those forward.”

“I also think there’s value in using data to guide decisions, even at a basic level. Understanding what’s working and where there’s opportunity helps all of us make better choices. And then zooming out a bit, it would be great to have an organization that can think long-term while still supporting what’s happening right now. Tourism here has a lot of potential, and having a group that can help guide that in a thoughtful way would benefit everyone.”

“Overall, I see the DMO as a partner to the business community; something that helps connect the dots, keeps things moving forward, and supports all of us in building something strong together.”

“No.”

“Unsure, but suggest stronger community connections and transparency. I've been here since 2008, my husband was previously on the board of VCVB, and I can't really tell you what they do.”

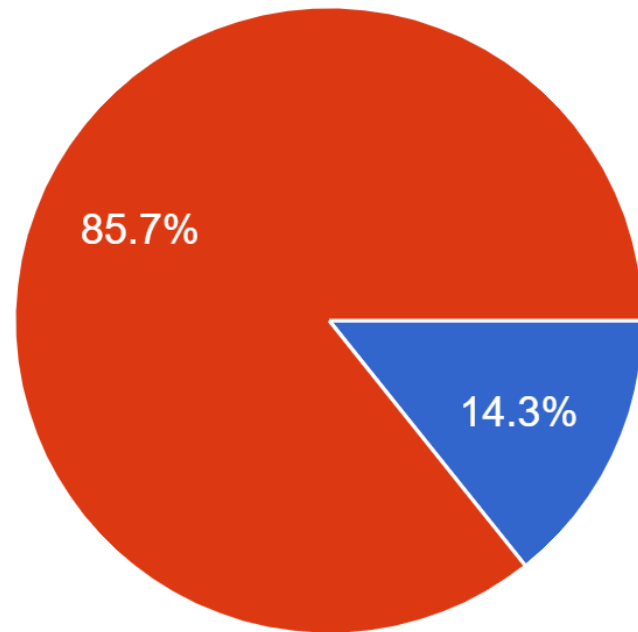


*Word Cloud generated using Microsoft Co-Pilot AI

Key Words From Answers

Related to membership, would you prefer opting into the services of a future organization through membership levels or a single membership level with...nu (such as social media, wall advertising, etc.)?

14 responses



- Prefer tiered membership levels with variable benefits
- Prefer single membership type with "a la carte" benefits paid for separately

Please identify any other topics that you think need to be addressed immediately or support needs you have for the coming season.

“Trade shows are old fashioned. Can you justify a ROI? There's also the VisitValdez website if starting fresh why not consider it, I could run it for less.”

“The current focuses are not worth the money for me to join this organization and I do not see how they will help my business.”

“As someone with a graduate level education in the social sciences, this is a poorly designed survey (with a lot of typos, spelling, and grammatical errors).”

“Thank you for all that you do for the community.”

“If you are going to have a building, consider downsizing to something smaller.”