

## OOH advertising continues to evolve

From traditional billboards (which first appeared in the 1830s) to today's 3D AR-assisted signage, mobile graphics, and personalized messaging, out-of-home (OOH) advertising is here to stay.

That's an understatement. The OOH market is currently valued at \$9B (up from \$6B in 2020), with digital advertising comprising about half of it.

Tracking the effectiveness of OOH media didn't begin until the 1970s and was measured primarily through brand awareness statistics. Digital billboards didn't widely appear until 2005, changing the OOH landscape (literally).

Some key trends as technology augments the medium are:

**Call-to-action integration**, which enables attribution and ROI analysis. During the pandemic, the QR code made a huge comeback, and consumers can scan and research or scan and

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Photo: Indigenous Tourism Canada

**Partners offer adventures with paddleboards, canoes, kayaks, and other motor-free ways of water travel.**

## Indigenous tourism gains momentum

Travelers in Canada these days have more options than ever to get out and explore the country's nature and culture—and many of these experiences are owned and operated by Canada's more than 630 First Nation communities as well as Inuit and Métis peoples.

They're part of a tourism campaign, called the Original Original, from the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, or ITAC.

The campaign was born in 2020, an otherwise bleak year for the travel industry due to COVID-19.

But Keith Henry, a Métis person and president and CEO of the ITAC, couldn't help but be excited when he saw the results of a survey directed by his organization that summer.

The survey noted that 88% of Canadians wanted to support and partake in Indigenous travel experiences, thanks to a surge of in-country road trips as well as a

fundamental, attitudinal shift that moved travelers closer to the perceived core values—embracing nature and a mindful pace of life, for example—of Indigenous culture.

Still, travelers pinpointed a barrier when it came to Indigenous travel. They "wanted authentic experiences but didn't know how to identify them," says Henry.

ITAC's findings speak to a larger trend throughout the tourism industry.

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### First Nations programs

- Harvesting wild rice by canoe on Whitefish Lake in Ontario.
- Building traditional Cree tipis in Saskatchewan.
- Exploring lava beds and alpine meadows in British Columbia while staying at the wood-hewn Vetter Falls Lodge, owned by Canada's Nisga'a Nation.



Photo: Intrepid Travel

Hikers enjoy Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, on the Arizona-Utah border.

## Travelers respond to authentic experiences

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Travelers have long been enthusiastic about Indigenous tourism experiences: activities and adventures dedicated to all things pre-colonial.

Recently, though, tour operators have noted that travelers want more transparency when it comes to how Indigenous communities are identified and compensated. That has led to soul-searching throughout the industry—and new support and advocacy for First Peoples.

The Original Original mark, launched by ITAC in 2021, identifies businesses that are at least 51% Indigenous-owned and adhere to a key set of responsible travel values.

The mark not only aims to educate travelers about Canada's First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, but also communicates authenticity to global travel partners.

So far, 300 businesses have completed the Original Original

accreditation process.

Other tour operators are also pulling back the curtain on their relationships with Indigenous communities. Intrepid Travel has woven more than 100 First Peoples experiences into its 2023 trips, from a Navajo-guided tour of Utah's Monument Valley to lunch and a mask-carving lesson with members of Costa Rica's Terraba River Indigenous Community.

Governments are also starting to promote Indigenous tourism.

In the United States, the 2016 Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act, was a major turning point, notes Seleni Matus, executive director of the International Institute of Tourism Studies at George Washington University. The NATIVE Act increased funding for Native American tourism and kickstarted coordination between local groups and federal agencies.

—*fastcompany.com*

## OOH advertising

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buy when passing an OOH ad.

**Touch screens** are also commonplace in many walk-by locations, and consumers have become accustomed to interacting with signage.

**Programmatic OOH** (or POOH, as it's unfortunately called). That means ads can be targeted and swapped out based on the weather, time of day, product/service focus, or consumer type. British Airways ran a "Look Up" campaign tied to specific flights that soared over its digital billboard.

**Every space is a space for advertising.** From restroom signage to the skies (literally), marketers are finding new creative uses for every blank surface, including those that move.

**Small screen meets big screen**, as messaging can appear on our phones and at the locations we're passing by. As geotargeting becomes more sophisticated, advertisers can take a page from Disney and start speaking to mass audiences and "targets of one."

**3D graphics** enable advertisers to reach beyond the billboard and entertain, amaze, and engage viewers. Their unique artistry makes them a terrific background for Instagram moments, extending their reach to people not physically at the location.

We expect more personalization, drama, immediate geotargeting, and highly responsive performance analysis in the OOH space.

—*streetfightmag.com*