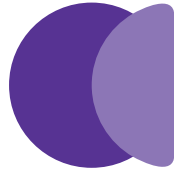




State Tourism Agency
of the Republic of Azerbaijan



azerbaijan

TOURISM BOARD

Marketing *and Communications Strategy* *2024-2026 Brief*

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Section 1: Vision, Objectives, Priority Markets, and Guiding Principles

1.1 Vision for 2023-2026

Azerbaijan Tourism Marketing and Communications Strategy aligns with the broader Tourism Strategy 2023-2026 by the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan, aiming to position Azerbaijan as an inviting, sustainable, and leading destination in the region. The vision emphasizes an immersive experience characterized by Caucasian charm, stunning natural beauty, and exceptional cuisine, appealing to both local and international travelers. The goal is to establish the Azerbaijan Tourism Board (ATB) as a premier national tourism marketing organization, securing a dominant share of the regional tourism market and contributing significantly to sustainable socio-economic growth.

1.2 Objectives

The marketing objectives for 2023-2026 focus on:

- 1. Economic Contribution:** Boosting tourism's impact on the economy by increasing visitor numbers – especially to the regions, length of stay, and spending.
- 2. Private Sector Support:** Enhancing the private tourism sector by promoting a range of attractions and services across Baku and regions, thereby creating jobs and income.
- 3. Accessibility and Cultural Diversity:** Promoting Azerbaijan's inclusive infrastructure, multiculturalism and tolerance.
- 4. Innovation and Digitization:** Supporting personalized experiences through digital channels, data-driven decisions, and emerging technologies.
- 5. Seasonality Reduction:** Developing competitive low-season tourism options and expanding into new markets to maintain year-round visitor flow.
- 6. Market Intelligence:** Continuously gathering and updating tourism data for effective policymaking, planning, and development.

1.3 Guiding Principles

ATB's marketing initiatives are underpinned by three guiding principles:

- 1. Sustainability:** Emphasizing long-term social, economic, and environmental impacts by promoting sustainable destinations and practices, supported by the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan.
- 2. Seasonality:** Reducing seasonal tourism fluctuations through targeted promotions for off-peak travel periods and cross-promotional partnerships, guided by the Tourism Seasonality Action Plan.
- 3. Regional Development:** Using tourism as a tool for regional economic and social development by marketing regional attractions and events, promoting local economies, and fostering investment through the Destination Management Plans.

1.4 Market Connection Levels

The 2024–2026 marketing plan is led by a comprehensive **Source Market Analysis** conducted by the State Tourism Agency and the Azerbaijan Tourism Board. This analysis examines a range of factors, including accessibility, outbound travel trends, and existing traveler interest in Azerbaijan. By understanding these unique characteristics, ATB can tailor its outreach to connect meaningfully with each market segment.

This approach supports targeted engagement across various international markets, ensuring that promotional efforts are well-aligned with travel preferences and interests. Each market segment represents distinct opportunities for collaboration, allowing ATB to reach diverse audiences while fostering strong regional and global connections.

Table 1. ATB's Market Connection Levels

Established Connection Markets	India, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, UAE, Uzbekistan, etc.
Growing Connection Markets	Bahrain, Belarus, Germany, Iran, Italy, Morocco, Poland, Qatar, South Korea, the UK , etc.
Developing Connection Markets	Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Georgia, Hungary, Iraq, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Spain, etc.
New Connection Markets	Brazil, Egypt, Greece, Indonesia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland, USA, etc.

2.1 Brand

Azerbaijan: Take Another Look” brand were watershed moments in the relatively short history of ATB. Since then, much has transpired - from ATB’s dramatic increase in participation in global tourism events, countless FAM trips, media advertising, through to the lockdowns brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the subsequent re-emergence of international travel, the liberation of Karabakh, and unrest in Eastern Europe. A review of consumer perceptions of the Azerbaijan tourism destination and brand is needed to help guide the effective implementation of marketing efforts by ATB over the next term.

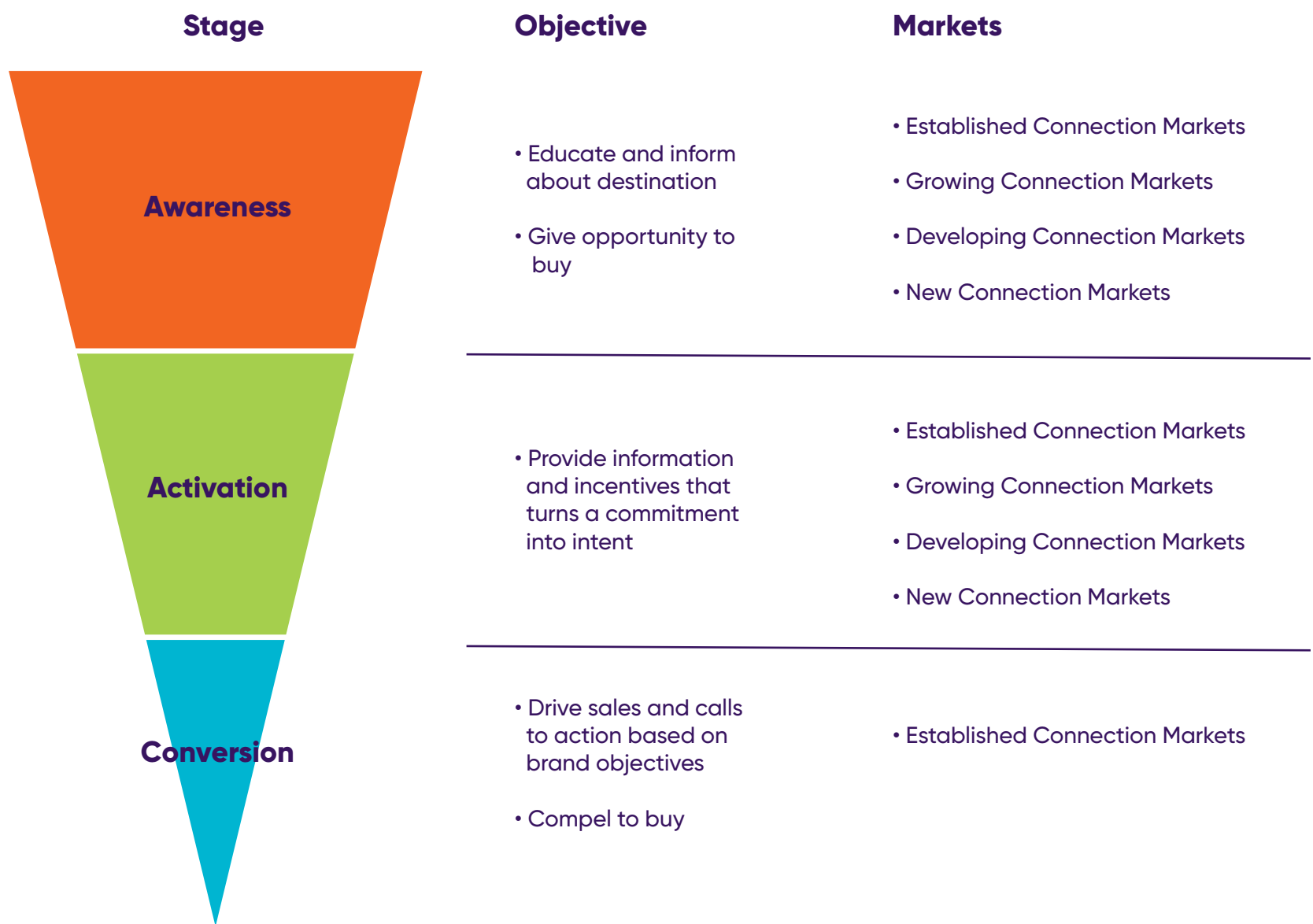
Figure 1. Azerbaijan destination brand product lines



2.2 Marketing funnel

Going forward, ATB’s international marketing efforts are guided by the marketing funnel, consisting of different stages, in which market prospects move from top to bottom. ATB’s Market Connection Levels are connected to the different stages of the marketing funnel, with the type of specific marketing channels, or tools, implemented by ATB for each market prospect directly adjusted according to the Funnel stage that they are in.

Figure 2. ATB marketing funnel



2.3 Marketing tools

The mix of tools ATB uses to promote Azerbaijan in each market changes according to the level of prospect and can be grouped into three categories: online marketing, public relations, and offline marketing.

ATB’s marketing strategy incorporates a range of tools to effectively reach and engage target audiences through offline, online, and media-based channels. **Offline marketing tools** include B2C and B2B trade shows, roadshows, workshops, and familiarization (FAM) trips that help build relationships and directly engage potential visitors, industry professionals, and partners. **Online marketing tools** leverage digital channels like webinars, e-learning platforms, social media, SEO, and digital retargeting to connect with tech-savvy audiences and enhance brand visibility. Finally, **media and communication tools** encompass paid feature stories, TV placements, media briefings, and media roadshows, designed to increase brand awareness and reach broader demographics through reputable publications and broadcast platforms. Each tool is carefully evaluated for effectiveness based on engagement, conversions, and brand impact, ensuring ATB’s resources are optimized for maximum return.

Please refer to the **Marketing Action Plan** for detailed insights into how these tools serve as engagement opportunities for local partners, helping them align with broader campaigns and leverage these initiatives for their benefit.

2.4 Strategic Alliances

Azerbaijan Tourism Board recognizes that partnerships play a critical role in strengthening Azerbaijan's presence in key international markets. By collaborating with industry partners and aligning activities, ATB aims to create synergy, expand its reach, and achieve impactful results that benefit the entire tourism sector.

One of the key partnerships for ATB's upcoming strategy period is with Azerbaijan Airlines (AZAL). In addition to AZAL, ATB collaborates with key national tourism associations such as the Azerbaijan Travel Agents Association, Azerbaijan Hotel Association, and Azerbaijan Tourist Guide Association. These alliances are guided by annual action plans that drive shared growth, innovation, and excellence across Azerbaijan's tourism sector.

2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation of Marketing Channels

ATB is committed to optimizing its marketing investments by closely monitoring the performance of each marketing channel. This evaluation is based on a cost-benefit matrix that considers financial inputs alongside channel effectiveness in driving tourism impact, such as lead generation, brand awareness, and audience engagement. Digital and social metrics like engagement rates, conversion rates, and online traffic are analyzed, while media activities are evaluated for their reach, audience interaction, and quality of coverage.

This structured evaluation approach allows ATB to make data-driven adjustments, ensuring resources are allocated effectively to maximize visibility and engagement with target audiences.