



2025 Top HAT Awards

Nominations are open for the 2025 TopHAT (Hospitality and Tourism) Awards. The Top HAT Awards celebrate outstanding teams, businesses, individuals, campaigns, experiences, and lodging properties that have demonstrated exceptional dedication to their company or organization's brand promise over the past year.

About the program:

The Top HAT Awards Gala, the premier awards ceremony of the travel, tourism, and lodging industry in New Mexico, is the annual dinner and awards ceremony hosted by the New Mexico Hospitality Association. This event celebrates the finalists and announces the winners of all Top HAT Awards in a fun and elegant environment. Recognition as a finalist is an impressive accomplishment and the winner displays best-in-class and innovative practices.

The award categories include:

- **Marketing Awards**
 - **Best Print Campaign** (*includes brochure, magazine, visitor guides, direct mail, and other print media*)
 - **Best Digital Campaign** (*includes website design, digital advertising, mobile app development, online streaming, remarketing, email marketing, SEO, and other digital media*)
 - **Best Social Media Campaign** (*includes Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Youtube, Snapchat, etc.*)
 - **Best Broadcast Campaign** (*includes cable/network/satellite television, AM/FM radio, and other broadcast media*)
 - **Most Innovative Campaign** (*All platforms of the previously mentioned media are included, along with outdoor, public relations, emerging media, etc.*)
 - **PR: Earned Media** (*New this year, the PR: Earned Media Campaign recognizes the most substantial unpaid/earned media coverage resulting from the creative efforts of an individual, organization or agency. Earned media (or free media) refers to publicity gained through promotional efforts other than advertising (paid media) or branding (owned media).*)
- **Product Development Awards**
 - **Outstanding Event** (*fairs, festivals, conferences, ceremonies, formal parties, concerts, conventions, etc.*)

- **Outstanding Attraction** (*museum, exhibit, tour, entertainment center, etc.*)
- **Best New Experience** (*new tourism related event, attraction, experience, introduced after January 1, 2024*)
- **Personnel Awards**
 - **Front-of-House Food & Beverage Employee of the Year** (*Eligible “Front of House Employees” constitutes as employees who have high guest interaction. Depending on how your property defines it, “Food & Beverage” may include: bartender, server, host/hostess, banquet staff, etc.*)
 - **Front-of-House Hospitality Employee of the Year** (*Eligible “Front of House Employees” constitutes employees who have high guest interaction. Depending on how your property defines it, “Hospitality” may include: Front Desk, Bellman, Admin, Customer Service, Sales & Marketing, Management, etc.*)
 - **Back-of-House Food & Beverage Employee of the Year** (*Eligible “Back of House Employees” constitutes as employees who have low guest interaction. Depending on how your property defines it, “Food & Beverage” may include: bartender, server, host/hostess, banquet staff, etc.*)
 - **Back-of-House Hospitality Employee of the Year** (*Eligible “Back of House Employees” constitutes as employees who have low guest interaction. Depending on how your property defines it, “Hospitality” may include: Front Desk, Bellman, Admin, Customer Service, Sales & Marketing, Management, etc.*)
- **Premier Awards**
 - **Hospitality Professional of the Year** (*All hospitality personnel are eligible.*)
 - **Tourism Professional of the Year** (*All tourism and marketing personnel are eligible.*)
 - **Full-Service Hotel of the Year** (*Lodging establishments with a dedicated, revenue-producing F&B component*)
 - **Select Service Hotel of the Year** (*Lodging establishments without a dedicated, revenue-producing F&B component*)
 - **Supplier/Vendor of the Year** (*All suppliers and vendors who conduct business with New Mexico travel, tourism and lodging businesses are eligible. Must have current operations based out of New Mexico*)
 - **Innovation/Sustainability** (*Recognizing projects/properties that have prioritized sustainability in key areas like building redevelopment/preservation, climate action, positive community impact, and sustainable design*)

Nomination tips:

- ***Tell a story.*** This is our industry’s opportunity to celebrate excellence, but that excellence would not exist without the people. A terrific way to highlight achievement is to share stories about the nominee that demonstrate that fact.
- ***Include numbers.*** No matter what award you are submitting a nomination for, there are numbers you can include to validate the success of your employee, team, campaign, event, venue, etc.
- ***Focus on the recent.*** These are annual awards, and submissions should focus on the achievement over the past year. Please refrain from including information in your submission prior to 2024/25 or your most recent complete fiscal year, unless the information provides germane context to the recent achievement (percent increase in visitation, sales, etc.) The judging body will emphasize these criteria when evaluating submissions this year.

Top HAT Awards nominations will be sent to a third party, which will determine the winner of each category. All finalists will be announced prior to the awards dinner and the winner of each award will be announced at the annual awards dinner at 7:00 pm on November 18 at the Sheraton Uptown - Albuquerque.

Members and non-members can nominate a team or individual who qualifies under the award categories. ***The nominee does not have to be a member to be nominated.***

Nominations close Tuesday, October 14, at noon!

Marketing Awards

The Top HAT Marketing Awards recognizes a marketing initiative that showcases innovation, creativity, forward-thinking marketing, and dedication to the organization's brand promise. ***The campaign must have run sometime between January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.***

Categories and Descriptions:

- **Best Print Campaign** – *Eligible “Best Print Campaign” includes brochure, magazine, and other print media.*
- **Best Digital Campaign** *(includes website design, digital advertising, mobile app development, online streaming, remarketing, email marketing, SEO, and other digital media)*
- **Best Social Media Campaign** *(includes Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Youtube, Snapchat, etc.)*
- **Best Broadcast Campaign** – *Eligible “Best Broadcast Campaign” includes TV, radio, etc.*
- **Most Innovative Campaign** – *All platforms (print, digital, social media, broadcast) are eligible. This award is the ideal category to submit for uncommon campaigns, such as public relations, outdoor, and emerging media.*

Nomination Info:

- Company
- Title of Campaign
- Ad Agency (only if used)
- Market/location(s)
- Target Audience
- Budget

Submission Questionnaire:

- What was the goal of this campaign? Be specific.
- What was the intended message for the target audience? Please give examples.
- How did you measure the campaign's success? Explain your metrics, and why you decided those metrics were appropriate.
- What were the campaign's results? Provide specific measurables.

Product Development Awards

The HAT Product Development Awards recognizes an exceptional event or attraction ***implemented sometime between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025***, either one-time or ongoing. If a new experience was added to this event/attraction, we urge you to submit a nomination for the Best New Experience Award.

Categories and Descriptions:

- Outstanding Event – *Eligible “Outstanding Event” includes festivals, conferences, ceremonies, formal parties, concerts, conventions, etc. If a new experience was added to this event, you can also nominate them for Best New Mexico Tourism Experience of the Year.*
- Outstanding Attraction – *Eligible “Outstanding Attraction” includes a place of interest such as a museum, exhibit, tour, entertainment center, etc. If a new experience was added to this attraction, you can also nominate them for Best New Mexico Tourism Experience of the Year.*
- Best New Experience – *Eligible “New Experience” includes a never-implemented tourism related event or attraction that was introduced after January 1, 2024. Entirely new stand-alone experiences, or experiences added to a current event or attraction qualify.*

Nomination Info:

- Company
- Name of Event/Attraction/Experience
- Location

Submission Questionnaire :

If event/attraction

- Please describe the event/attraction. What is the purpose? What is the history and traditions associated with the event/attraction?
- Are there any additional experiences or features recently added to the event/attraction? If so, what are they?
- What indicators did you use to measure the success of the event/attraction? Did the event/attraction meet the goals set?
- How does the event/attraction enhance the surrounding cultural assets and the community at large?

If new experience

- Please describe the new experience. Why was this experience created?
- If this was a new experience, was this event/attraction in conjunction with an existing event/attraction? If yes, what was it?
- How does the new experience enhance the surrounding cultural assets and the community at large?
- What indicators did you use to measure the success of the new experience? Did the experience

meet the goals set?

Personnel Awards

The HAT Personnel Awards recognize employees who have shown exceptional customer service and dedication to the property's brand promise. Nominations in this category are urged to submit a nomination for the Professional of the Year Award. Supporting information must have been between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

Categories and Descriptions:

- Front-of-House (FOH) Employee of the Year – *Eligible “Front of House Employees” constitutes as employees who have high guest interaction. There are two categories:*
 - FOH Food and Beverage (F&B)
 - FOH Hospitality – *this may include (depending on how your property defines it):*
 - Front Desk
 - Admin
 - Sales & Marketing
 - Bellman
 - Customer Service
 - Management
- Back of House (BOH) Employee of the Year – *Eligible “Back of House Employees” constitutes as employees who have low guest interaction. There are two categories:*
 - BOH Food and Beverage (F&B)
 - BOH Hospitality – *this may include (depending on how your property defines it):*
 - Housekeeping
 - Engineering
 - Food Safety
 - Laundry
 - Operations

Nomination Contact:

- Name of Employee
- Title
- Company
- Email

Submission Questionnaire:

- How many months/years has this employee been employed with your organization?
- Describe how the employee has met or exceeded goals and expectations in their role. If possible, please provide metrics that validate their performance.
- How else has this employee improved or contributed to the business? Please give examples.
- How did this employee improve the customer experience? Please give examples.
- Are there any example(s) when this employee provided exceptional customer service or went beyond the call of duty?
- Has the employee received any awards or special recognition over the past year?

Professional of the Year

The Top HAT Professional of the Year Awards recognize an overall outstanding employee/owner who has not only shown exceptional customer service and dedication to the property's brand promise, but has **also actively contributed to the growth of the New Mexico tourism, travel, and lodging industry as a whole**. Nominations in this category are urged to submit a nomination for the Personnel Award. Supporting information must have been between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

Categories and Descriptions:

- Hospitality Professional of the Year – *All hospitality personnel are eligible.*
- Tourism Professional of the Year – *All tourism and marketing personnel are eligible.*
- Owner of the Year – *All hotel owners are eligible.*

Nomination Contact:

- Name of Nominee
- Title
- Business
- Email

Submission Questionnaire:

- How has this individual contributed to or improved the business? If possible, please include metrics to validate their contribution.
- Please describe the leadership and volunteer roles this individual holds within their community and New Mexico. Please provide roles the individual currently holds or held within the past year.
- How did this individual improve upon the customer experience? Please provide examples.
- How has this individual contributed to the growth of the New Mexico tourism/travel/lodging industry as a whole? Please provide examples.
- Has the nominee received any awards or special recognition over the past year?

Innovation/Sustainability & Community Engagement

The Innovation/Sustainability award recognizes companies and individuals who have invested time and resources into developing creative business models that move the industry forward and/or encourage development of a sustainable industry. The Community Engagement award recognizes a business or individual that exhibits a commitment to the community beyond their own business interests. If you have questions about this nomination, please reach out to NMHA for clarification.

Categories and Descriptions:

- Innovation/Sustainability – *All hospitality and tourism businesses (and industry related businesses) are eligible.*
- Community Engagement – *All hospitality and tourism businesses (and industry related businesses) are eligible.*

Nomination Contact:

- Name of Nominee
- Title

- Business
- Email

Submission Questionnaire:

- How has this individual/business implemented/exhibited innovative and/or sustainable practices in their business? If possible, please include metrics to validate their contribution.
- For Community Engagement, please describe the leadership and volunteer roles this individual holds within their community and New Mexico. Please provide roles the individual currently holds or held within the past year.
- Has the nominee received any awards or special recognition in the last two years?

Hotel of the Year (Both Select and Full Service)

The Top HAT Hotel of the Year Awards recognizes TWO overall outstanding hotels that have not only shown dedication to their guests but have **also actively contributed to the growth of the New Mexico tourism, travel, and lodging industry as a whole**. One winner will be chosen from the full-service hotel, resort, and casino categories and one from the select service category. Supporting information must have been between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

Nomination Information:

- Hotel Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- General Manager
- General Manager Email
- Average Daily Rate (*ADR*)
- Occupancy Rate (%) (*Optional*)
- Repeat Customer Rate (%)
- Employee Retention Rate (%)

Submission Questionnaire:

- How has your hotel activity contributed to the growth of your destination? Please be specific. If possible, please provide metrics for validation.
- How does your hotel support your local community? Please list and describe your community involvement.
- Has the hotel received any awards or special recognition over the past year? If so, please list them.
- How has the hotel strategically partnered with local businesses to create experiences or enhance the visitor experience? Please describe those partnerships.
- How has your hotel contributed to the growth of the New Mexico tourism/travel/lodging industry as a whole?
- Why does your hotel deserve to win "Hotel of the Year"?

Supplier/Vendor of the Year

The Top HAT Award for Vendor/Supplier of the Year is for a community partner that has been the most effective at supporting the travel, tourism and/or lodging organizations reach their goals and supporting the growth of New Mexico's tourism economy. Qualified businesses for this category may include Professional Services (Marketing, Accounting, Legal, Event Planning), Suppliers (Food Distributor, Utility, Telecommunications), Restaurants, Trade Associations, and Educational Institutions. Supporting

information must have been between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

Nomination Information:

- Company Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- Owner/CEO
- Type of Product/Service
- How many years as supplier/vendor been in business in New Mexico?
- How long has the vendor/supplier been serving hospitality/tourism businesses in New Mexico?

Submission Questionnaire:

- With how many New Mexico travel, tourism and/or lodging organizations does the supplier/vendor conduct business? Please list the clients and their destinations. (This will remain confidential.)
- How does the supplier/vendor contribute to the overall growth of New Mexico's tourism economy?
- Share an example of the supplier/vendor providing a comprehensive solution; a "Save the Day" moment, for a travel, tourism or lodging business.
- In a philanthropic and/or volunteer role, how has the supplier/vendor contributed to its local community and to New Mexico as a whole?
- Summarize how the supplier/vendor demonstrates commitment to integrity and corporate accountability.
- Why is it important to the supplier/vendor's business strategy to partner with hospitality and tourism businesses in New Mexico?