

*Roadtrippers*

# Hello,

## BACK TO THE START

Flopped on a bed in a charmingly thread-bare motel in Savannah, Georgia — tucked **but energized from our latest** sally down the coast exploring mucky Civil War battlefields and unpeeling the layers of under-celebrated American architectural experiments — we couldn't help but grumble: why were all our geeky digital tools optimizing all the fun out of our road trip, when what we wanted was adventure?

Why couldn't we — a bumbling Brit and an All-American nerd — find more of the little diners and small businesses and strange haunts that represented the people and stories of the 50 little countries that we found smashed together as the United States? Why were we getting routed to corporate chains and tourist traps that were caricatures of the America we loved?

Why couldn't we use technology to dig up the weirder, funnier, more fascinating stories that were the reason we were on the road in the first place?

The ultimate road trip companion tool didn't exist. Why couldn't we make it?

Roadtrippers was launched in 2012, which happened to be the first year where domestic road travel rates finally began to rebound. It was pretty basic. But it was fun. And people loved it.

Seven years later, we boast 2.5 million monthly users. We've helped roadtrippers log over 7.6 billion miles — that's enough to reach Mars and back 112 times. Our users log an average of 4 minutes on our site, while other brands fight to survive six seconds of pre-roll. And we still thankfully feel like ourselves — a little off. Definitely still

bumbling and nerdy. And always in search of another story to share.

## THE CURSE OF FIRST

Over the years, our scrappy team has built tools, a deep and surprising database of interesting places worth a detour, and an approachable brand that people love.

Years ago, we built our consumer proposition on "exploration" and "discovery," concepts which have become table stakes in the modern travel industry.

Today there are over 280 travel apps in the iOS app store alone, hundreds of travel media publications, and thousands of individual travel "influencers." The leisure travel industry is a booming \$683 billion dollar business rife with sterile mega-corps buying their way across the entire travel funnel.



**Yet no other brand exists to do what we do: to celebrate life's detours. To say optimization is for robots, and the best use of GPS is to get lost.**

## FROM INDIE TOWARDS ICON

For the past seven years, we've been a small team, proudly punching above our weight. We haven't always stayed on a straight path, but those detours have made us sharp.

In the next seven years, we aim to shift from a scrappy independent to a household brand.

It will take hard work, fresh thinking and (even more) mistakes to get to where we want to be. Most importantly, it's going to take your flourishing talents and your belief in the transmogrifying magic of the road trip to get us there.

This brand book includes answers to important questions and some new ways of thinking about ourselves and how we present ourselves to the world.

We will have to change to grow — but always stay scrappy and a little bit off. I'm not sure we could change that if we tried.

Love, James & Tatiana

**The ultimate road trip companion tool didn't exist. Why couldn't we make it?**



## What's Inside

This brand book is one way to tell the story of who we've been and who we're becoming, for all employees — present and future — as well as the friends and family of Roadtrippers we rely on to get our jobs done.

While we all know (and love) the awesome power of roadtripping, not every driver does. The goal of this playbook is give our team shared and simple language that playfully reminds the world: **if you've got a license, you're a Roadtripper.**



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**Big Goal**

**Become *the* iconic road trip brand — the #1 destination for road trip stories, planning, and booking.**



“

**The point of a road trip is not to find the more efficient route, but to make interesting stops.**

NIA, ROADTRIPPERS SUPER FAN

”



## Brand Promise

### *Life, Detoured*

*Detours. A little deviation from the norm.  
A bit further. A bit longer. A bit "off."*

*Detours are where surprise happens.  
And surprise is good.*

*On the road,  
Detours keep unique places open for  
business. They keep insiders open to  
outsiders.*

*Detours make your trip yours.  
The detours we choose define our lives.*

*They give our stories twists, sharp edges,  
and hard turns.*

*They free us from the feeling of just living life  
from point A to point B.*

***And no one knows detours quite like  
Roadtrippers.***

*Travelers go to Mt. Rushmore. Roadtrippers  
know its secret room.*

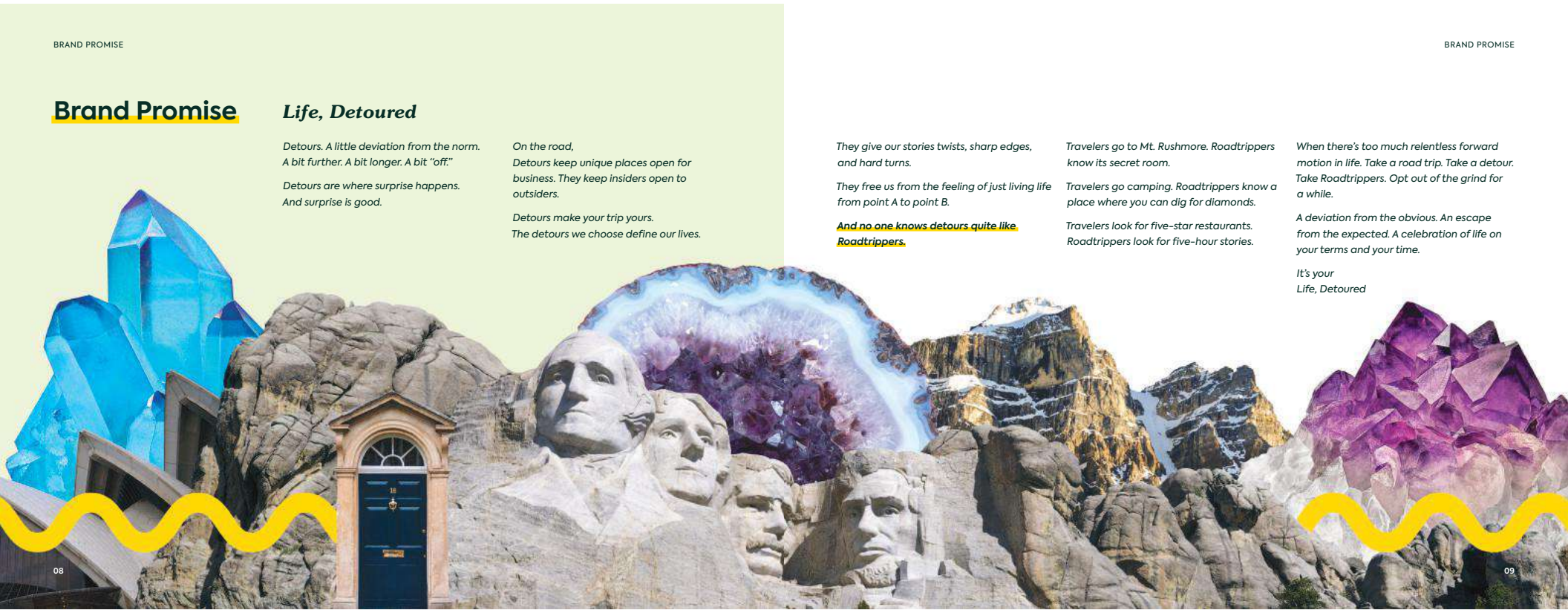
*Travelers go camping. Roadtrippers know a  
place where you can dig for diamonds.*

*Travelers look for five-star restaurants.  
Roadtrippers look for five-hour stories.*

*When there's too much relentless forward  
motion in life. Take a road trip. Take a detour.  
Take Roadtrippers. Opt out of the grind for  
a while.*

*A deviation from the obvious. An escape  
from the expected. A celebration of life on  
your terms and your time.*

*It's your  
Life, Detoured*





*Life, Detoured*



No one knows  
**detours** quite like  
Roadtrippers.



**Leave optimization  
to the robots...**



**Product Truth**

**Roadtrippers is anti-GPS;  
the *only* travel planning  
tool designed to make  
your trip *longer*.**







# Why does *Life, Detoured* matter?



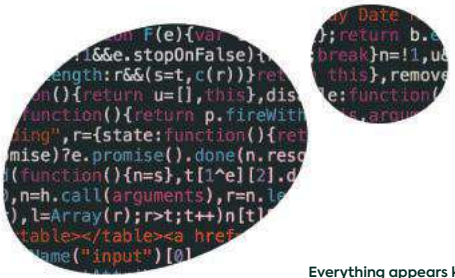
## Cultural Tension

Because there's a **kismet deficiency** in the world today...



Cultural Tension

# People outsource their curiosity to algorithms.



Everything appears knowable. All of the world's information (and your ex's shenanigans) are only a quick Internet search away.

*Where's the fun in that?*

Everyone appears like they've got it all together. Put your best (filtered) face forward.

*Where's the truth in that?*

Every decision is first cracked, then tracked, by code. The "all-knowing algorithms" dictate our tastes in movies, music, household supplies, and even our love lives.

*Where's the serendipity in that?*

We are most human when we are candid, cranky, spontaneous, amazed, introspective, surprised, or even shit-out-of-luck. Who you are when the wheels fall off (literally or figuratively)?

Roadtrippers is the antidote to an overly optimized modern life. It invites the unexpected and the unknown back into our lives. It's 50ccs of chance right into serendipity's veins.

**The more digitized and optimized life becomes, the more people will need Roadtrippers to help them escape the expected and make their own Life, Detoured.**

Mission

In a world of  
kismet deficiency,  
Roadtrippers exists  
to help any driver,  
anywhere...





# Who do we reach today?



## Our Audience

**Road Trip Essentialists —  
about 30 million drivers  
a year, to be precise.**



**Fw: A Message of Appreciation**

Mon, Dec 16 at 6:28 PM

Thank you guys for your amazing work on your site! It's what I've been looking for for years. I discovered it from this article: <http://www.dailydot.com/lifestyle/kia-soul-road-trip-checklist/>

My dad and I share a love of driving and traveling. Sadly, we've drifted apart in part years; our interests split and I grew up and left home for college. Due to some serious recent soul-searching, I plan to surprise him with some quality bonding time soon.

Your site has inspired me to try to reconnect with my father.

He had a massive heart attack a few years ago, and nothing but luck prevented him from passing away. We aren't very close, and have drifted apart with the passage of time. When I was little, all I wanted was for him to do things with me, but he was always tired due to his blue-collar job. Now that we're both older, he has more time but I don't. It's like Harry Chapin's song, "Cat in the Hat." With the help of your site, I won't let myself become what my father was forced to do. I crave that loving father-son relationship now more than ever.

It's a good song. If you haven't heard it, give it a listen. And remember, it's never too late.

Thank you again. Seriously.


C Luzader  
Flatwoods, WV



*Here are just a few real life stories submitted by our super fans that show how inspiring people to live Life, Detoured is in our DNA.*



**D-----Aus**  
**@Roadtrippers** I often tell people that it was this website that inspired me to break free from the 9-5. I have always loved this site!




**E Morrow**  
Can't tell you enough how helpful/awesome/enlightening this page/you guy(s) have been. Just recently went on a 5,400 mile trip myself and I used your app for most of it.

Like · Comment · 21 hours ago

I just want you guys to know that as someone who has always wanted to go on an epic road trip I appreciate Roadtrippers. And as someone, who like many people, has had days, I love Roadtrippers. It's gotten me through some rough times. You guys are the absolute best. <3 You've really brought back the art and mystique of the road trip.

**a@gmail.com**  
Location: Libourn, United States  
Signed up: 4 months ago



**C Moore**  
I'm on my way from Indiana to New Mexico and saw one of your cars! And I've been using your app for my trip! You guys rock!

Aug 5th, 7:47pm

**Your website is FANTASTIC!**

**K Stevens**  
to hello

8:40 PM (14 hours ago)

To the brains behind Roadtrippers,

My husband J and I just had a travel themed wedding on March 28th (globes as centerpieces, map invitations, a wooden mile marker sign with US landmarks, location themed seating chart, the whole shebang) and we'll be leaving for our 5 week cross country road trip honeymoon as soon as grad school's out in mid May :) San Diego to Key Largo, up the coast to Maine, through Chicago and Yellowstone, and back home via Vegas ( with MANY stops along the way).

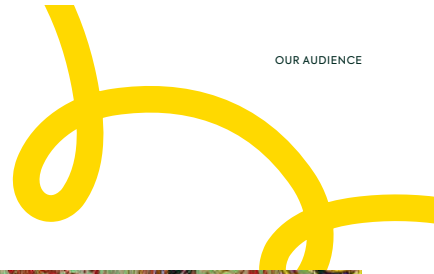
We just wanted to let you know that your website has been amazing already! We have planned our entire trip using your site (title "Great American Road Trip" of course), and have found many exciting stops we didn't even know existed. We've used the phone app as well for a trip from San Diego to Vancouver, and it's on standby, ready to assist this summer!

We live and breath travel, perpetually pinching pennies for the next trip as soon as we get home from the last one, and your website just called to us. Essentially, just wanted to give a hearty electronic handshake for doing a bang-up job :)

Thanks for being wonderful,

K & J Hopkins

OUR AUDIENCE





“  
**Road trips are the only mode of travel where people reclaim 100% of their freedom. Go wherever you want! Go fast or not. Whereas on a flight or cruise, you are literally on someone else’s agenda.**

ROADTRIPPERS EMPLOYEE INTERVIEW

”



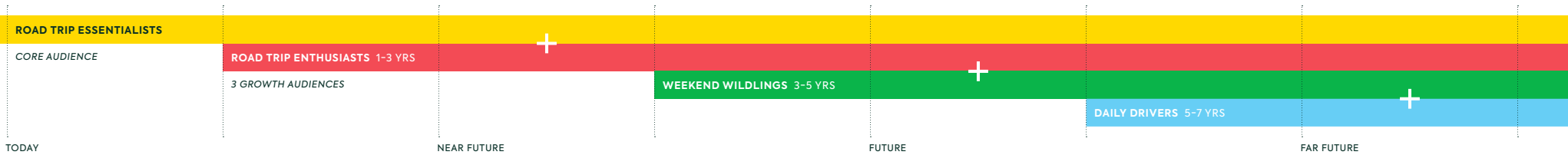
# Who do we pursue next?





OUR AUDIENCE

OUR AUDIENCE



## Road Trip Essentialists

**TRIP LENGTH: 7 - 14 + DAYS**

Today we reach **Road Trip Essentialists**; **people for whom road trips are the thing**; those already inclined to take a road trip for a road trip's sake.

These folks include: hardcore Roadtrippers, Airstreamers, #VanLifers, professional recreationalists (a.k.a. retirees), inbound tourists from abroad, National Lampooners, Route 66ers, Harley Davidson riders, etc.

**We will always and forever serve our Essentialists** — we currently reach about 30 million a year — but they are a relatively fixed population, which means we will need to expand our core reach by winning over the following groups:

## Road Trip Enthusiasts

**TRIP LENGTH: 4 - 5 DAYS**

In the next 1-3 years we want to win the **Road Trip Enthusiasts**; **people for whom road trips are a thing that gets them to a thing**. Those who might hit the road to pursue their passions.

These folks include people willing to go the distance for their interests and hobbies such as: live music festivals, attending a Con (fan conventions), competing in a sports event, attending a march or parade, tailgating, or celebrating the start of a seasonal thing like fly fishing, cherry blossoms, or apple picking.

## Weekend Wildlings

**TRIP LENGTH: 24 - 72 HRS**

Later we'll want to pursue the **Weekend Wildlings**; **people who travel intra-county on the weekends and want to appreciate their surrounding area better**. Those who might be willing to venture further on the regular and holiday weekends.

These folks include: people who rent or own vacation homes, families looking to entertain and inspire their kids, couples trying to "get away from the grind," friend groups taking mini-trips, individuals wanting to get inspired, etc.

## Daily Detourists

**TRIP LENGTH: 30 MIN - 2 HRS**

Eventually we'll want to inspire **Daily Detourists**; **people who aren't quite ready to head home for the day and want to discover a "hidden gem" in their neighborhood**.

These folks include anyone who would welcome a bit of spontaneity in their day: commuters heading home, university students with flexible schedules, stay-at-home parents, bike commuters, and work-from-home freelancers.

If we can one day inspire even the 9-5ers to break up the routine with an unexpected detour, we'll know we've truly succeeded in **our mission to help people Escape the Expected** — without leaving our existing audiences behind.

# What does that win us?



## Our Audience

**269 million licensed drivers in core markets: United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.**

TODAY

**30 million**

Road Trip Essentialists  
(Average annual reach across Roadtrippers' products)

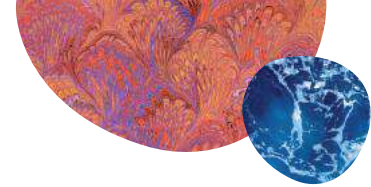
TOMORROW

**269 million**

Road Trip Enthusiasts, Weekend Wildings, and Daily Detourists

## Our Audience

Up-For-Its are *obsessed* with seeing the world for themselves.



“  
They’ve got to see, touch, taste, smell, understand, and experience something out in the world for themselves.  
”



To reach all **269 million potential roadtrippers in our core markets**, we must be willing to think big, but also be sincere in our effort to provide them with a meaningful detour from their day-to-day.

We must free every person, every day, from the pressure to live life like a *Daily Driver*. No one wants to live their life from point A to point B. And yet, between life’s daily grind and our competitors’ constant push towards total optimization, people default to that easy A to B. Work to home. Home to work.

By doing what we do best — inspiring and encouraging people to opt out of the grind and go for a detour — both on the road and in life, we will keep the promise of kismet alive not just for vacations or other special occasions, but in their daily drives.

Users of our platform will be encouraged to pursue not just short detours (the out-of-the-way restaurant on the way home from work) but also special events that are only available for short times, like movies, concerts, or festivals, that are worth going off the beaten path.



**Up-For-Its include:** Phish Phans, Burners, Sprrrring Breaaaaakers, Coachella and Glastonbury Socialites, Comic Con & Cosplayers, Hikers, Backcountry Hunters, Mountain Bikers, Anglers, Yogi Ashram Gurus, Pride Paraders, Season Ticket Holders, Scenic Drivers, National Park Travelers Club Members, Motorcyclists, Writers on Retreat, Seasonal Mushroom Hunters, Birders, Dark Sky Amateur Astronomists, Slalom Joy Drivers, Changing Foliage Family Trippers, Ragnar Relay Athletes, Tough Mudder Competitors, Semi-Pro Athletes, Oktober Festers, Touring Musicians, The Beyhive, Film Location Scouts, Architecture Enthusiasts, Traveling Salespeople, Ravers and Bassheads, Curious Gourmands, Biekie Tourers, Tradeshow and Convention Goers, WrestleManiacs, Long Haul Truckers, Politicians Stumping, City Limits Explorers, Broke College Co-Eds, Friend-with-a-Cabin Crashers, Long Holiday Weekenders, Over-The-River-And-Through-The-Woodsers, Intercity Travelers, Café Racers, Obsessive Foodies, Penny-Pinching Partiers, Weekend Homers, Trendy Brunchers, Super Commuters, Break-the-Daily Grinders, Afterschool Program Pickup-ers, New-in-Towners, Super Commuters, Wanting-to-Wait-Out-Rush-Hourers, Not-Quite-Ready-to-Netflixers, etc.

Our Audience

Pursuing all 269 million Up-For-Its in our core global markets gets us closer to hitting our goal of becoming *the* iconic road trip brand.





### **Elevator Pitch**

**For the Up-For-Its, Roadtrippers is anti-GPS; the *only* trip planning tool designed to make your trip *longer* by celebrating only the best people and places worth a detour.**

## Brand Beliefs & Values

1. Curiosity is a Contact Sport
2. Open Roads, Open Minds
3. The Unknown is Only a Speed Bump, Not a Barricade
4. Roadtrippers See Problems as Plot Devices
5. Assume Good Intent
6. Shoot Straight
7. Go Like Hell



### **1. Curiosity is a Contact Sport**

WONDER + INITIATIVE

We believe curiosity is at its best when it inspires you to act on it.

There's a million places for passive or idle curiosity, but Roadtrippers is home of active curiosity. It's how Roadtrippers came to be — and it's the business model that keeps us alive. Every single thing we build aims to pull people off their couch or cubicle to see, taste, experience, and better understand our world.

### **2. Open Roads, Open Minds**

INSPIRATION + COMPASSION

We believe road trips are more than a fun escape — they are a moral good.

To road trip is to leave echo chambers and comfort zones behind and begin to see the world as others do. Out on the road is where we're more likely to encounter people who don't look, believe, or think like us — and how we choose to respond determines the health of humanity. We are like 'Leave No Trace' but for roads, taking care to leave the people and places we find better than when we found them. Our work is a reminder that the simple act of roadtripping helps keep hearts and minds open and places attended and alive.

### **3. The Unknown is Only a Speed Bump, Not a Barricade**

COURAGE + RESOURCEFULNESS

We believe in driving right towards the unknown.

Travelers go to places they already know they'll like; Roadtrippers venture off to find places where anything might happen. That's where the fun is found. We admire those who choose things not because they are easy and expected, but because they make new tracks for others to follow. Roadtrippers is a place where we encourage and reward folks for facing the unknown, because odds are that's where true innovation and stories worth sharing are found.





“  
Crazy challenges  
set the stage for  
us to overcome  
the impossible.  
”



#### 4. Roadtrippers See Problems as Plot Devices

OPTIMISM + HUMOR

**We believe that the best stories are usually found in the biggest challenges.**

A great road trip isn't the one where everything goes according to plan; it's the one where things go off the rails but you survive and return to tell the tale. What's true on the road is true in our business; whether it's a busted tire or broken code, an unexpected road delay or looming deadline, crazy challenges set the stage for us to overcome the impossible together, and that makes life memorable, meaningful, and worth bragging about at the bar.

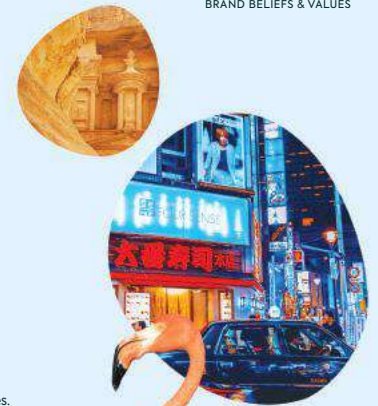
#### 5. Assume Good Intent

SELFLESSNESS + COLLABORATION

**We believe when you look for the good in each other, you'll probably find it.**

We're all here to do work we're proud of and do it with people we like, respect, and would happily burn highway miles with. Some tech companies are willing to keep 'brilliant jerks' around, but that's never been the Roadtrippers way.

Life is too short and the road is too long to get caught up in petty, political, power struggles (or anything else that's bad and starts with a "p"). Here we look for the best in each other, we look for good intentions — because travelers react, but Roadtrippers rise above.



#### 6. Shoot Straight

HONESTY + RESPONSIBILITY

**The only time we favor the most direct route is when it comes to honest and up-front communication.**

There are times when things go sideways out on the road, in the office, and in life. Happens to us all. When it does: own up to it. Give it straight, keep it simple, and get on with it.

Let's be excellent communicators.

Let's present facts with tact. Let's have a bias-towards-resolution, rather than a festering black hole of confusion. At Roadtrippers, speed isn't everything, but momentum matters.

#### 7. Go Like Hell

ENTHUSIASM + IMPACT

**We believe our working life deserves to be a joyful life.**

This is travel. This is a business built on bringing iconic memories to the masses. This is a company where leaving the office is part of your job requirement. Live big. Live interesting. Live *Life, Detoured* and leave a trail of incredible and inspiring projects you're proud to be a part of. We want your time spent at Roadtrippers to feel like a special place where you are encouraged to drive at speed toward your dreams.



## Summary

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### Big Goal

Become *the* iconic road trip brand — the #1 destination for road trip stories, planning, and booking.

### Brand Promise

*Life, Detoured*

### Product Truth

Roadtrippers is **anti-GPS**; the only trip-planning tool designed to make your trip *longer*.

### Mission

In a world of kismet deficiency, Roadtrippers exists to help any driver anywhere **escape the expected**.

### Our Audience

The global 269 million **Up-For-Its**, obsessed with seeing the world for themselves.

### Elevator Pitch

For the Up-For-Its, Roadtrippers is **anti-GPS**; the *only* trip planning tool designed to make your trip *longer* by celebrating only the best people and places **worth a detour**.

### Brand Beliefs & Values

1. Curiosity is a Contact Sport
2. Open Roads, Open Minds
3. The Unknown is Only a Speed Bump, Not a Barricade
4. Roadtrippers See Problems as Plot Devices
5. Assume Good Intent
6. Shoot Straight
7. Go Like Hell





# Making *Life, Detoured* real with Team Objectives, Bios, and more.



## Team Objectives

### LIFE, DETOURED

Our work makes it easy for anyone, anywhere, anytime to take a detour, from being inspired toward new destinations, discovering others' favorite places, or taking just enough hassle out of a journey to make it possible.

MAGAZINE	PLANNER & PRO	BOOKINGS
<p><i>Only the best places and people worth a detour.</i></p>	<p><i>Everything we make turns dreamers into drivers, and drivers into detourers.</i></p>	<p><i>Accommodations and experiences are worth a detour.</i></p>
<p>Expand our coverage beyond places of interest to include persons of note.</p> <p>Not just the where, but also the who, the why, and the how.</p>	<p>Make it easy for anyone, anywhere, at anytime, to take a little detour.</p>	<p>Make everything bookable, including inventory that defies expectations.</p> <p>Think partnerships with Hipmunk, Land Apart, Outdoorsy, etc.</p>



A company born of detours — all Roadtrippers employees will get team bios like these!

### Tatiana

New England gal falls hard for the classics. Follows her love of books through bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees. Gal earns fellowship in Berlin. **Pergamon museum, too much currywurst, and Berghain nights.** Gal meets guy. Roadtrippers.com is born.

*Life, Detoured*



### James

Son of a seasoned hitchhiker gets road-schooled in Africa. Makes his way as an off-road expedition guide. **Jungle, tents, two-story potholes.** Guy trades the '953' for a stint in Europe. Guy meets girl. Roadtrippers.com is born.

*Life, Detoured*







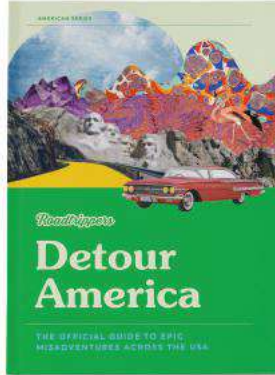
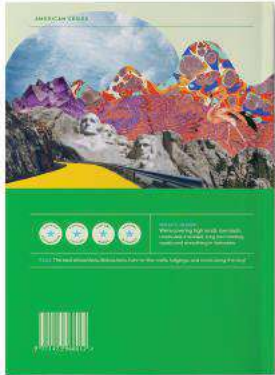
The following pages are ideas of branded pieces we could create for Roadtrippers employees, business partners, and fans.



“ Our work is a reminder that the simple act of road-tripping helps keep hearts and minds open and places attended and alive. ”







## Work, Detoured

**Introducing “Work, Detoured,”  
a new annual road trip stipend  
for all Roadtrippers employees.**

**Hit the road, find new faves,  
and share your adventures across  
the Roadtrippers platform.**



### HOW IT WORKS

While we will roll out more details over time, the gist is we're launching a fund that each and every Roadtripper can draw from to expense part or all of their road trip(s) each year. Not an unlimited fund, but generous enough you could knock a few long weekend trips or splurge on one longer Americana-kitsch-fever-dream.

To collect the funds, all we ask is that you:

1. "Dogfood" the mobile app like crazy while out on the road.
2. Take loads of pics. Go on and live that best life.
3. Leave some reviews for your fave finds.
4. Hook the product team up with your experience using (and abusing) the app.
5. Have fun. Be safe.