the value of print

A summary of independent research on the reach, influence and impact of printed guides and printed advertising on U.S. leisure travelers

AT A GLANCE

Print use by U.S. leisure travelers

- 53% of U.S. travelers reported using a printed resource in planning travel in the previous 12 months
- 896 million trips were taken in the last 12 months by this group of U.S. travelers
- 24% of U.S. travelers indicated that they used an official destination visitor guide in the past 12 months to plan a trip
- 400 million leisure trips were taken by this group of U.S. travelers in the past year – spending an estimated $161 billion
- 67% of readers of official visitor guides indicated that they visited the destination after receiving the guide
- 88% of readers who were undecided indicated that the official visitor guide influenced their decision to visit
- 79% of visitors use official visitor guides to make specific planning and booking decisions on their trip. Visitors use the official visitor guides to make decisions on the following:
  - 79% activities and attractions to enjoy
  - 54% places to eat or enjoy
  - 21% places to stay

PROFILE OF VISITOR GUIDE READERS

- 56% are female
- 53 years old (avg.)
- 73% are married
- Slightly older
- Skewed female
- Significantly more affluent

$93,000 household income

Miles Partnership markets destinations and hospitality businesses by working with state tourism offices, convention and visitors bureaus, hotels and other organizations in the tourism industry to create forward-thinking digital and print content marketing solutions.
3 Myths About Print Advertising

**MYTH:** Print is Dying

**TRUTH:** Print Use Remains Strong

Usage of print publications by U.S. travelers is at record or near-record levels, but how and when print is being used in trip planning is changing.

**MYTH:** Print is Only Used by Older U.S. Travelers

**TRUTH:** Print is Used by All Ages of U.S. Travelers

Younger U.S. travelers still use print for inspiration and ideas to complement their increasing range of digital media.

**MYTH:** Reducing Print Advertising Can Save Money

**TRUTH:** Print Advertising Helps Drive Bookings

Print advertising is a critical part of an integrated media solution, as the most trusted channel, according to 82% of consumers.

PRINT ADS are the most trusted advertising channel, according to 82% of consumers.

**Fact:**

In the 10-year history of The State of the American Traveler, print usage has set new records over the last 12 months, with over half of all U.S. leisure travelers using it during 2016-17.

**Fact:**

Gen Y travelers’ use of official visitor guides is only slightly less than that of Gen X and Baby Boomers. In other areas of print usage, Gen Y travelers actually use print more in travel decisions (e.g., lifestyle magazines).

**Fact:**

The average U.S. leisure traveler uses a small number of print publications in trip planning, but visits more than 120 websites before and during their travel. Print advertising is trusted by more consumers (82%) than any other type of advertising.

Additional Research

Miles creates an array of free tourism marketing white papers, all geared toward helping you to create and track effective tourism marketing campaigns.

(resources available at www.milespartnership.com)

4 Tips for Measuring PRINT ADVERTISING

Print advertising is, by nature, more challenging to measure than digital advertising – in which every part of the user and online interactions can be tracked. Here are tips for measuring your print advertising.

1. **Trackable Phone Numbers** can be a simple, low-cost way to understand response – for businesses where phone calls are an important way travelers contact you. Options start at just a few dollars per line – which offers reporting on the number, duration and origin of callers.

2. **Deals or Offers**

A specific offer or deal such as “Ask for Our Family Fun Special” can be a simple way to assess response – however, recognize that a small proportion of travelers will remember to ask, and such requests can be challenging to answer in a busy office setting.

3. **Vanity URLs or QR Code**

The majority of visitor guide readers go online for additional information. You can use a web address (e.g., www.mywebsite.com/familyfun) or a QR code and use your online analytics to measure response.

4. **Conduct Research**

Finally, consider conducting research on use of printed guides. For example, if your advertising is about building awareness, consider an Advertising Recognition and Perception Study every few years.
4 Tips for Developing Effective Print Ad Creative

1 Have a Clear Purpose: Build Awareness or Drive Immediate Action

Identify the primary objective for your advertising: Is it to create awareness and build your brand, or do you want to focus on driving immediate bookings? It’s difficult for a single ad to do all things well.

2 Be Consistent

Engaging with visitors and driving bookings often takes a number of interactions across multiple channels. Make sure your print ads are tightly integrated with advertising on digital channels by cross-promoting your web and social media channels, highlighting what’s available online (e.g., “Check our website for the best available rate”) and using design and images consistently.

3 Use Engaging Images

Photography is at the heart of the best print advertising. Invest in great images – both from professional photographers and from visitors and locals (user-generated content).

4 Create a Connection with Copywriting and Design

Impactful print advertising uses the size, spread and tactile quality of print along with effective design and evocative headlines to create an emotional connection with the reader.


MORE: For a full list of research and other resources, visit www.MilesPartnership.com