

West Virginia Tourism 2014 Accountability and Image Study*

Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to give us an adequate measurement of the return on our advertising investment. Additionally, it shows the effectiveness of our advertising and branding, while also comparing us with our competitor states. This study includes:

- Impact of West Virginia's advertising on West Virginia's image and trips to West Virginia.
- Total visitor spending generated by the campaign.
- Return on investment of the advertising campaign.
- Key travel motivators for West Virginia.
- Image of West Virginia in the areas that are important to travelers and image of up to 5 of West Virginia competitors (OH, PA, MD, VA, NC).

Key Findings:

- The 2014 West Virginia tourism advertising campaign generated:
 - 1.5 million trips to West Virginia during the year of the campaign.
 - \$180.9 million in visitor spending
 - \$13 million in state and local taxes
- West Virginia generates \$7 in taxes for every dollar spent on advertising; this is a 7 to 1 return on investment for the state.
- West Virginia's strengths vs competitors include: "Known for beautiful mountains", "Great for whitewater rafting", "Excellent hunting", "Great for hiking/backpacking", "Great for exploring nature", "Good place for camping", "Great for canoeing/kayaking", "Excellent skiing/snowboarding".
- The following are those image attributes that correlate most highly with interest to travel to ANY destination by travelers in our market areas. These are the perceptions that West Virginia's marketing programs need to deliver to motivate travelers to visit the State rather than its key competitors.
 1. A fun place
 2. Good for families
 3. Must-see destination
 4. Good for couples
 5. An exciting place
 6. Lots of things to see and do
 7. Children would especially enjoy
 8. Good place to relax
 9. A real adventure
 10. Unique vacation experience

*Source: Longwoods International, 2014