

APPLICATION FOR TRANSIENT GUEST TAX FUNDS

August 14, 2015

2016 Tourism Research

1. Describe the project.

The branding project has placed a big emphasis on identifying what exactly Topeka is and who exactly our target market is. Visit Topeka needs to be confident that we are marketing to the right people. The city of Topeka is possibly missing out on certain demographics. Two research businesses, Young Strategies, and Adara, specialize in working with tourism organizations to answer these questions. The plan is to make 2016 a year of research and development to coincide with all the great things that are going on around the city.

Per Young Strategies:

Reliable visitor research should be the basis for all destination planning. The Young Strategies team works with each of our clients to develop a research methodology that will capture the voice of their travelers by segment and identify actionable strategies to drive future growth. We use research to examine all aspects of the destination and the travelers that visit there. A research based strategic marketing plan is then developed to effectively position and market the destination or region. Most of all, the Young Team always works in close partnership with the destination and presents the final report to leaders to gain buy-in and tangible support. Unity in support of a strategic plan is the goal.

Research Methods Employed By the Young Team

- Inquiry Database Analysis
- Lodging Market Research, Assessment and Analysis
- Online Surveys
- Mail Surveys
- Visitor Intercept Interviews (on-site)
- Visitor/Inquirer Telephone Interviews
- Attraction Market Research, Assessment and Analysis
- Community Leader Executive Interviews
- Visitor Center Research and Analysis
- Convention/Meeting/Event Market Assessment including Planner Decision Maker Interviews
- Group Tour Market Assessment including Decision Maker Interviews
- Sports Market Assessment including Team Sports Planner Interviews
- Focus Groups - test a specific concept on a small group
- Focus Forums - larger demographic profile match input sessions

Typical Destination Assessment and Planning Methodology

1. Destination Reconnaissance:

- The project team experiences the destination from the visitors perspective to identify specific issues to be addressed in the research

2. Lodging Market Assessment:

- A detailed multi-year analysis of the destination lodging market is critical to understand overnight visitation.

3. Destination Marketing Analysis:

- A thorough review of the current and past destination marketing efforts and ROI establishes benchmarks for the future.

4. Scientific Visitor Research with Inquiries or Local Visitors:

- Visitor Surveys by mail, online and/or on-site interviews identify the current inquirer/visitor conversion and profile as well as key decision making and behavior attributes.

5. Planning Retreat with Leaders:

- Research findings are presented to board and/or industry leaders at a planning workshop and key strategies for growth are identified with stakeholder buy-in.

6. Strategic Branding and Marketing Plan:

- A comprehensive plan is completed following the retreat and presented in print and electronic formats along with a detailed PowerPoint presentation. The recommendations typically include:
 - Branding/Positioning
 - Marketing Organization and Structure including Funding and Budgeting as well as Staffing
 - Marketing and Promotions
 - Direct Sales
 - Gateways, Signage and Wayfinding
 - New Product Development
 - Front Line Training
 - On-Going Research and Tracking

Per Adarra:

Data partners make it possible.

ADARA and our data partners have created a portfolio of premium consumer data, with billions of pieces of data. Personal information stays private, while purchase and profile data is available to advertisers. Actual travel purchase patterns, individual preferences, and shopping behavior patterns are all at your fingertips. Our data provides knowledge that lets you take action to reach the right audience.

More than a single swipe of the card.

It goes beyond individual transactions. The ADARA Magellan travel intelligence platform has access to loyalty program data, historical purchase patterns, and much more, to build rich customer profiles. Your offers can be personalized to reach specific audiences – not because of one of their purchases, but based on buying habits made over time. And with our campaign insights, you can go beyond campaign performance reporting to gain a true understanding of the consumers who interact with your campaigns.

Find customers, rather than follow clicks.

The ADARA Magellan platform transforms real-time loyalty, booking and search data from customers and prospects into powerful advertising solutions, delivering on performance and branding campaign objectives. Looking for a specific type of customer? Looking for someone with a specific need? The data provided by the Magellan platform to inform and shape advertising campaigns is current, accurate and sourced directly from the largest global travel and business services companies.

Essentially, these two organization work hand in hand in a two step process

- 1) Young Strategies does research to show you who your target market should be and how much they spend.
- 2) Adara tracks the spending habits of visitors through a logarithm and reports the info back.

This will allow Visit Topeka to know who our target market is, who is should be, how much they contribute to the local economy and how much more we can project for the future.

2. What is the total budget for the project?

Both projects will cost roughly \$100,000

3. What are the funding sources other than TGT dollars for this project?

The Visit Topeka operating budget is already extremely tight. All available money is used for advertising and marketing to new events. There are currently no dollars available for research like this.

4. How much TGT funding is requested?

The full amount of the cost for the studies.

5. What will the TGT funds be used for?

To pay Young Strategies to conduct research on Topeka tourism and to pay Adara to gather information on spending habits and locations of visitors for year 2016.

6. What are the economic development and tourism benefits to the city?

We are not able to fully answer this question as the benefits to the city far outweigh anything I can imagine. After this study is complete, Visit Topeka, the Chamber of Commerce, Go Topeka, the city and county, and entertainment venues will know who our target market of traveler is. In addition, we will know exactly how much money people coming to Topeka spend, where exactly they come from, how exactly they get here, when exactly they come, and exactly how long they stay. The possibilities after this information are endless.

Oakland, California, a city very similar to Topeka in the tourism industry recently conducted this study. For 2014, they experienced a 4% increase in ADR and are projected to increase 9% for 2015. Occupancy experienced a 9% increase to 80% in 2014.

7. What is the projected return on investment for the city (direct and indirect)?

It is feasible to say that organizations are spending marketing and advertising dollars in ways that are not getting a ROI. After this study, VTI will be able to work with in need organizations to create a marketing plan that aims at spending dollars on marketing to people, cities, states, and organizations that will give the biggest ROI.

8. What is the timeline for the project?

The entire year of 2016 will be spent conducting this research to ensure that all seasons are tracked equally.

9. How many visitors will come to your project?

There is no quantifiable number for this project. After the project is complete we will be able to strategically target specific people and places looking for what Topeka has to offer.

10. How will your project create overnight stays in Topeka?

VTI will know exactly what our target market is, how much they spend, and how long they stay. VTI will then go after those people and groups that create biggest ROI. Knowing this information is invaluable to hotels, entertainment venues, etc...

11. Is there additional information?

<http://www.youngstrategies.com/>

<http://adara.com/>

Respectfully submitted by Visit Topeka

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brett Oetting". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brett Oetting
President & CEO
Visit Topeka