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Montana Nonresident Visitor Information Center Use

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West Yellowstone
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Introduction

This study is a research assessment aimed to determine the effectiveness and future development of visitor information centers (VICs) in the state of Montana. The Montana Office of Tourism, the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana and Montana's Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) feel that understanding traveler preferences for visitor information centers is an important factor in influencing travel behavior and increasing tourist spending in the state of Montana. They especially wanted to target VIC preferences of our state's non-resident guests.

From an examination of the available literature on this topic, findings have indicated that VICs act as one of the most important communication channels to attract and educate travelers about the benefits of visiting a particular state (Pearce, 1989; Fesenmaier, Vogt, and Stewart, 1993). By providing the right type of information in different market segments, managers can influence visitor behavior such as length of stay, attractions visited, routes selected, and the planning of future trips. Studies on the benefits of VICs are furthermore important because these facilities act as the visitor's first impression of the state and have the potential to set the stage for the overall visitor experience.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to understand how often travelers use VICs, what sort of facilities and services visitors would like, and where visitors would prefer VICs be located. A number of studies have examined these questions at length; however, most of them were conducted over ten years ago and therefore do not reflect the influence of technology on travel behavior. As such, a secondary objective was to understand if and to what extent technology is

affecting visitor's use of VICs, specifically in light of the emergence of social media and Internet-capable devices such as smart phones. The information from this report is designed help state managers understand the importance of VICs in an evolving world, what visitors are seeking regarding VIC location, facilities, and services, and how to best provide for these preferences in the state of Montana today.

Literature Review

Introduction

Numerous studies have been conducted to explain the importance of visitor information centers (VICs) to state tourism development. Although the literature covers a variety of information regarding VICs and those who use them, this review will focus on five major themes that surface repeatedly throughout the literature reviewed. These themes consist of the purposes and use of VICs, determining the optimal location for a VIC, comparing resident and non-resident characteristics that use VICs, the influence of VICs on travel behavior, and the economic impacts these facilities have on state revenue. Although these themes have been studied in a variety of contexts, this review will primarily focus on their application from a marketing perspective, in order to extend traveler's length of stay as an opportunity to increase expenditures to the state.

Reasons for Stopping

The literature indicates that visitors initially stop at VICs for a number of reasons. Although most studies have concluded that the primary reason visitors stop at information centers is to use the restrooms, (Fesenmaier and Vogt, 1993; Fesenmaier, 1994; Perdue 1995) other studies have found that the majority of visitors stop specifically to obtain information, especially nonresident visitors (Stewart, 1993, Tierney, 1993). Other notable reasons for

stopping include to stretch, exercise, and relax, walk pets, picnic, or to obtain refreshments (Pennington-Gray and Vogt, 2003; Fesenmaier, 1994). Interestingly, studies have shown that regardless of their reasons for stopping, the vast majority of those who did stop (76-98% of those surveyed) reported that they requested and received information at VICs. Such a high percentage could therefore have significant implications for the importance of visitor information centers as a way for travelers to visit more attractions and provide more income within a particular state. (Tierney, 1993; Fesenmaier, Vogt, and Stewart, 1993; Fesenmaier, 1994.)

Preferences for Facilities and Services

Visitors intercepted in these studies indicated a number of preferences in terms of VIC facilities and services. In a series of open-ended interviews conducted in Colorado (Perdue, 1995), travelers were most likely to prefer restrooms and a lighted parking area with shade trees and shelters in the way of building and grounds facilities, and were generally seeking information regarding road and weather conditions. In terms of facilities, least important to visitors were gift shops, showers, and restaurants (Perdue, 1995). Another study specifically found that free highway maps and brochures about attractions were the most common types of information obtained, while accommodation options, shopping information, and calendars of events were least popular (Fesenmaier and Vogt, 1993). Most importantly, Fesenmaier (1994) concluded that these free highway maps, brochures and restroom facilities were the most important aspects in choosing a VIC, regardless of location or ease of accessibility. In addition, according to the 1993 Fesenmaier, Vogt, and Stewart study VICs especially have an impact when they contain clear signs, adequate room, and a trained, competent staff.

Location Preference

Services are not the only important component of visitor information centers. One particular study (Perdue, 1995) indicated that location and accessibility are in fact the most important factors in visitors choosing to stop, differing significantly from other studies that have found services and facilities are most important (Fesenmaier, 1994.) Because the studies vary with these preferences, it is important for managers to consider not only the types of services and facilities that visitors seek at VICs, but also the most convenient location to build an information center. Pearce (1989) suggests that managers should take into account seven considerations when planning for the location of a visitor information center: climate, physical conditions, attractions, access, existing facilities, land tenure and use, and regional development or partnerships. Typically, the literature maintains that visitors were most concerned with VICs being placed within close proximity to highways and interstates, and should be easily accessible from the roadway. This includes ease of accessibility from the interstate or highway in addition to ease of access back on to the road once the VIC has been accessed. On the other hand, travelers reported they were least concerned with visitor information centers being located close to or within cities or towns or a near state's border (Perdue, 1995). Therefore, it is not necessarily the location itself that visitors were concerned with, but rather how quickly and easily they could access the information center and continue on with their travels.

Resident vs. Non-resident Behavior

Other studies have concluded that a difference exists between resident and non-resident travelers in terms of preferred VIC location and services. For example, one particular study found that resident travelers were more likely to stop at interior information centers, usually to use the restroom, while non-resident travelers were more likely to visit VICs located on the

state's border to gather information. According to the authors, this indicates that border centers should focus their resources on assisting travelers with becoming oriented to the state, while interior VICs should have information available to residents regarding shopping, camping, and outdoor recreation opportunities. Finally, the authors state that both centers should be used as a promotion to travelers to extend their length of stay in the state, therefore increasing traveler expenditures. (Pennington-Gray and Vogt, 2003).

Influence on Visitor Behavior

Overwhelmingly, studies have found that VICs have a significant influence on travel behavior. Perdue, author of "Travel Preferences for Information Center Attributes and Services," illustrates the importance of visitor information center by stating that these facilities "set the stage for a visitor's experience within a state, helping to establish a consumer's first impression of a state and providing attraction facility information to enhance the visitor's experience" (1995). These experiences have the potential to inform visitors of alternative attractions to visit on their current trip, help shape plans for future trips, and can even extend the length of time visitors stay in a particular state. The majority of those surveyed in studies indicated they considered the travel information they obtained "very important in influencing their travel behavior in the state," and helped them learn about new, less popular attractions within the state they were visiting (Fesenmaier, Vogt, Stewart, 1993). For example, in the Tierney study, 67 percent of visitors surveyed reported that their stop at a Colorado visitor information center influenced their trip in some way (1993), while 40 percent in the Fesenmaier study indicated they would increase their length of stay as a direct result of the information they obtained (1994).

Expenditure Impacts

Such an influence on travel behavior has furthermore shown to contribute significantly to overall expenditures within a state. One Indiana study concluded that 33 percent of travelers interviewed claimed they had spent additional money as a result of the information obtained at a VIC; of these 33 percent, 25 percent stayed overnight in a lodging facility and spent an average of \$50 more than planned, 66 percent spent more on meals and food, and 58 percent spent more on oil and gas than originally planned. The study found that overall, an additional \$21,000 was spent in Indiana for every 1,000 visitor groups who received information at VICs. (Fesenmaier and Vogt, 1993). A more recent study in Rhode Island estimated an average expenditure increase of \$104 to \$111 per person as a result of the information they obtained, leading to an expenditure impact totaling to \$17.8 million per year (Tyrrell and Johnston, 2003). Such figures clearly indicate that visitor information centers have the ability to greatly increase spending because of their influence on visitor behavior, especially when they are conveniently located and offer a variety of useful information, facilities, and services (Fesenmaier, et al, 1993).

Implications and Conclusion

Although the literature provided useful information about visitor information centers, their influences, and visitor preferences for their services and facilities, it should be noted that all the information for this review was taken from studies conducted nearly ten years ago. It appears that few studies have been conducted or made available regarding this matter in very recent years. Spending habits and travel behavior as a result of the information obtained from visitor information centers could have changed in the last ten years, especially with the influence of readily-available information provided by Internet-capable devices and other technology, as well as the dip in the U.S. economy. It would be important, therefore, to conduct further studies

about visitor preferences, travel behavior, and expenditure increases relating to visitor information centers in order to assess if similar impacts are taking place today.

Visitor information centers have the potential to influence travel behavior, a visitor's experience, and boost the statewide economy. Authors of the literature have noted, however, that VICs do not necessarily have a positive impact on spending simply because they are open. In order for states to benefit from an increase in attraction visits and extended stays, managers must bear in mind a number of visitor preferences for location, services, and facilities.

According to the literature, information centers must be easy to access and have the necessary information available to orient non-residents to the state and help residents learn about new attractions and travel options. They should be equipped with conveniences such as restrooms and a place for visitors to stretch out, exercise, or relax from driving. VICs furthermore have the ability to make travelers feel safe if proper lighting and shelters are provided, along with trained, friendly staff to provide further information and assist with any other needs. As the studies show, all of these factors should add up to providing a positive traveler experience, potentially leading to extended stays and an increase in travel spending.

Methodology

Nonresident travelers in Montana during July, and August 2011 were surveyed for this study. Researchers from ITRR randomly intercepted and surveyed non-resident travelers at 15 different communities in Montana (see Acknowledgements for the complete listing.) The surveying sites consisted of gas stations at each location, which were considered neutral and unbiased to represent the variations of travelers around the state. Days in which the visitors were surveyed were randomly selected and included both weekdays and weekends.

The researcher approached travelers while they were filling up their vehicles and asked if they were willing to be interviewed regarding a non-resident travel study about visitor information centers. Travelers were questioned with the use of a structured survey created by researchers from ITRR. The survey included questions about traveler demographics, use of visitor information centers, preferences for services and facilities at VICs, and how technology affected their use of VICs.

All but six non-resident travelers agreed to respond to the survey out of a population 300.

A 98 percent response rate was obtained resulting in a sample size of 294. Interviews lasted between 2 and 5 minutes depending on how the travelers responded to the survey.

Results

The results report visitor characteristics and demographics for comparison, preferences for VIC location, facilities and services, experiences with Montana VICs, and how technology is affecting VIC use. Please note, however, that the different analyses refer to different portions of the data and are not all drawn from the 294 useable responses.

Nonresident visitor demographic information

As shown in Table 1, respondents permanently reside in a variety of states, provinces, and countries throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. The majority of nonresident visitors came from the state of Washington, California, Alberta, and Idaho. On average, most respondents were repeat visitors to Montana with 81 percent indicating that they had visited Montana before. The average size of the respondent's travel group was three people, indicating that the average respondent was traveling as part of a couple or with family. The average age of travelers was 47.

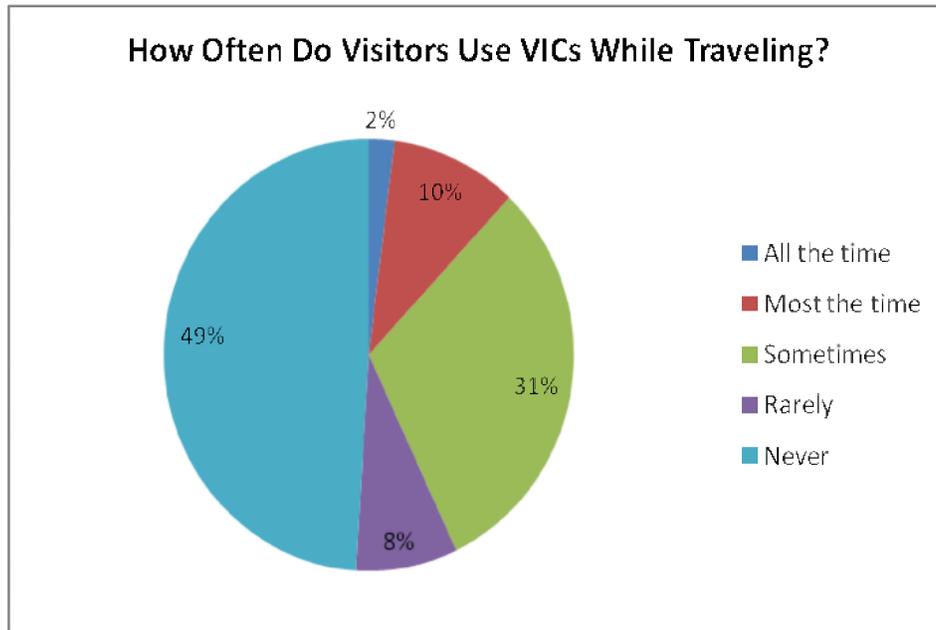
Table 1: Respondent Permanent Residence

State, Country or Province	N	%
Washington	55	18%
California	26	9%
Alberta, Idaho	23-25	8%
Minnesota, Utah	14-16	5%
Oregon	13	4%
Colorado, North Dakota, Wisconsin	8-10	3%
Arizona, Illinois, Kansas, Wyoming, Michigan, Texas	5-7	2%
AK, BC, France, GA, IA, IN, MO, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, Saskatchewan, SD	2-4	1%
CT, KY, MD, MA, NH, PA, Manitoba, Ontario, Czech Republic, Holland, Netherlands, Norway	1	<1%

How often do nonresidents use visitor information centers?

Visitors were asked whether or not they use VICs when they travel. If they answered “no,” they were then directed to technology portion of the survey. If they answered “yes,” they were then asked a variety of questions about their preferences for VIC location, services, and facilities followed by the technology questions. Table 2 represents the percentage of how frequently respondents use VICs during their travels. Nearly half of the visitors indicated that they never stop at VICs during their trips while the other half indicated to what degree they do stop at VICs during their trips. Of those that do stop at VICs while vacationing, the average respondent indicated that they use these facilities “sometimes.”

Figure 1: Frequency of VIC Use

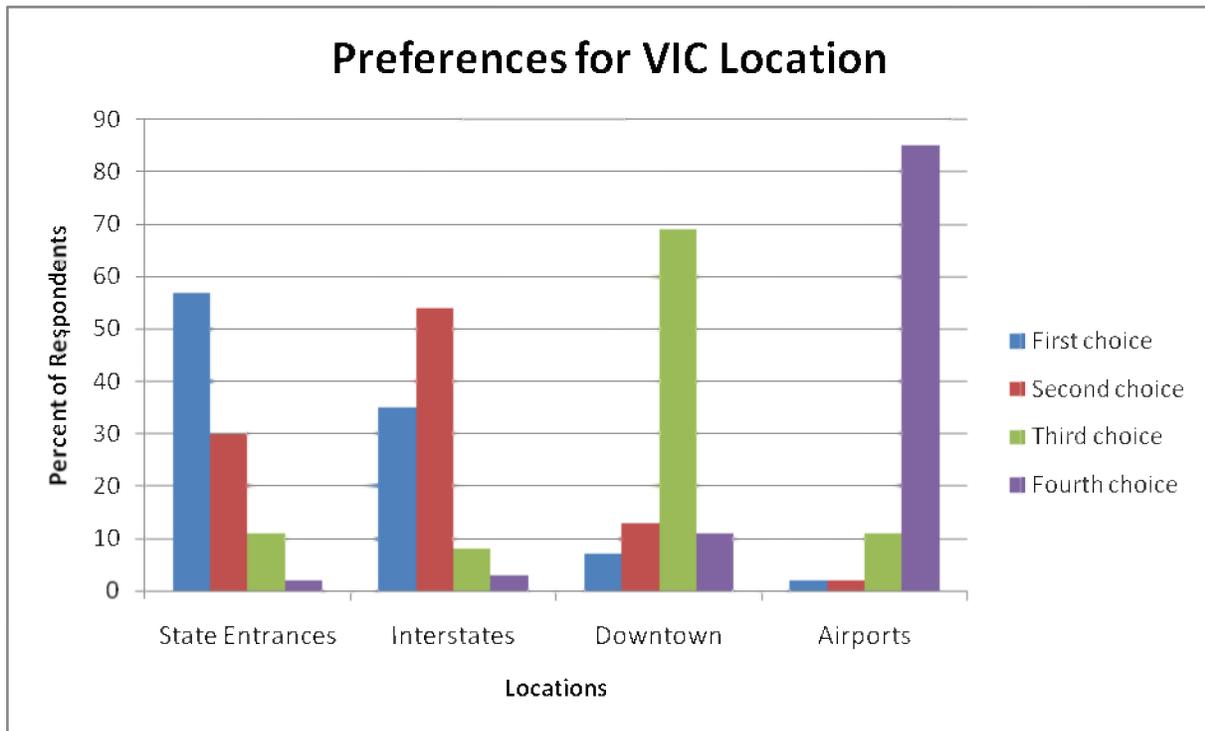


Preferred Location for Visitor Information Centers

Respondents who indicated that they do use VICs to some degree were then asked where they prefer VICs be located. They were given four locations that VICs could be located and were asked to rank the locations from 1 to 4, with 1 being their most preferred location and 4 being least preferred. The results of this information are shown in Figure 1.

Although visitor preferences for VIC location varied, it appears that travelers most prefer VICs to be located at entrances to the state, followed by along interstates or highways, then downtown areas. Overwhelmingly, the least preferred location for VICs was inside airports.

Figure 2: VIC Location Preferences



Several of the respondents had difficulty responding to this question, however, and firmly indicated that their preference for a VIC location depended on the type of trip they had planned. In order to fully determine visitor preferences for VIC locations, therefore, respondents were then asked if it was important to them that a VIC is located in a variety of other *specific* locations, which can be viewed in Table 3. Based on the responses, visitors overwhelmingly indicated that it was important to them that VICs be located at interstate rest areas, other highway rest areas, and near major attractions. On the other hand, the majority of respondents did not feel it was important that VICs be part of a local chamber of commerce.

Table 2: Specific location preferences

“Is it important to you that a VIC is located...”		
	Yes	No
At interstate rest areas?	82% (n=122)	18% (n=27)
At other highway rest areas?	73% (n=107)	27% (n=39)
Near major attractions?	67% (n=96)	33% (n=48)
As part of a local chamber of commerce?	34% (n=48)	66% (n=93)

Preferences for VIC Facilities and Services

Visitors were asked questions regarding the services and facilities they would like to see at a VIC, including free maps and brochures, available staff, and restroom facilities. Results showed that nonresident travelers preferred nearly every service and facility listed on the survey be made available to them, with the exception of pet exercise areas (if the respondent did not have a pet with them, an exercise area was not important to them) and the ability for VICs to make accommodation reservations. The most popular facilities that visitors indicated they would like to have at VICs were restrooms and a place for them to stretch, rest, and relax from their travels. The most popular services were free maps and brochures for them to take, information on current or local events, and information on current weather or road conditions. Table 4 displays the full list of results regarding preferences for VIC facilities and services.

Table 3: Preferences for VIC Services and Facilities

Is it important to you that a VIC...		
	Yes	No
Has restroom facilities?	97% (n=141)	3% (n=5)
Has maps of the area to take?	96% (n=144)	4% (n=6)
Has printed brochures to take?	95% (n=140)	5% (n=7)
Has a place to stretch, rest, and relax?	82% (n=119)	18% (n=26)
Has information on current or local events?	75% (n=108)	25% (n=37)
Has information on weather or road conditions?	72% (n=105)	28% (n=40)
Has refreshments?	59% (n=85)	41% (n=58)
Has pet exercise areas?	35% (n=51)	65% (n=94)
Has the ability to make accommodation reservations?	28% (n=40)	72% (n=104)

In addition, respondents were asked if they preferred staffed VICs to provide local insight, regional advice, or travel directions. Most visitors felt that staff was an important component to VICs in some way, especially to give local insight or recommendations. Some respondents also indicated that staff was only necessary when they are trained, knowledgeable, and friendly. Table 4 illustrates visitor preferences for staff at VICs.

Table 4: Preferences for VIC Staff

Is it important to you that a VIC has <i>staff</i> so you can get...		
	Yes	No
Local insight or recommendations?	70% (n=101)	30% (n=44)
Regional and/or statewide advice?	68% (n=98)	32% (n=47)
Travel directions?	67% (n=98)	33% (n=49)

Current Use of VICs in Montana

Based on the data, a significant 45 percent of visitors did not use a VIC while in Montana while 55 percent did or planned to use one on their trip.. Those that did stop overwhelmingly had a positive experience, with most respondents indicating they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their stop. No respondents reported any sort of negative experience with Montana VICs. Table 5 displays these results.

Table 5: Traveler Experience with Montana VICs

Did you stop at a Montana VIC on this trip?	
	%
Yes	45% (n=67)
No	45% (n=67)
Not yet, but I plan to	11% (n=16)
If yes, how satisfied were you with your experience?	
Very satisfied	65% (n=44)
Satisfied	32% (n=22)
Somewhat satisfied	3% (n=2)
Not at all satisfied	-

Respondents were also given a list of possible ways to find information while traveling and asked to indicate which options they tend to use. The list included these sources of information: billboards, brochure information racks, asking employees at businesses, highway information signs, or using a personal computer or smart phone. Ten percent of respondents who fit into this category indicated that they did not seek any information during their trip, but preferred to plan ahead. For those that did not plan ahead, the next most popular option represented were smart phones and personal computers, with five percent indicating they were

traveling with laptops, Internet-capable cell phones, or both. The remaining respondents reported using some combination of employees at businesses, brochure information racks not located in a VIC, highway information signs, billboards, and technology.

Technology and VIC Use

To gain an understanding of the effects of technology on traveler VIC use, respondents were asked if they use smart phones and social media. If they responded with "yes", they were then asked if and to what extent this use affected their need to stop at VICs. Table 6 illustrates the results of these questions.

It is important to note that this data contains information from the entire survey sample and includes both users and non-users of MT VICs during their travel. It appears that respondents are relatively technologically savvy, with more than half indicating that they own a smart phone or mobile device and slightly over half indicating that they use social media. It seems that smart phones are much more likely to decrease the visitor's need to stop for information, although more respondents indicated they will continue to stop regardless of their Internet-capable devices. On the other hand, social media seems to have very little effect on the respondents' use of VICs. No respondents who use VICs indicated that technology has increased their need to stop at VICs, but several asked if it could be noted that they would be more inclined to stop as a result of technology if VICs had wireless Internet.

Table 6: Relationship Between Technology and VIC Use

Do you currently own a smart phone?	
	%
Yes	60% (n=174)
No	40% (n=116)
How has your smart phone changed your use of VICs?	
No change-I don't usually use VICs	49% (n=104)
No change-I will continue to use VICs	29% (n=61)
Decreases my use of VICs	23% (n=49)
Increases my use of VICs	-
Do you use social media?	
Yes	51% (n=144)
No	49% (n=141)
How has social media changed your use of VICs?	
No change-I don't usually use VICs	50% (n=93)
No change-I will continue to use VICs	45% (n=83)
Decreases my use of VICs	5% (n=9)
Increases my use of VICs	-

Summary and Implications

The primary purpose of this study was to determine nonresident visitor preferences for VIC locations, services, and facilities. A secondary purpose was to explore the ways that technology changes the need for visitors to stop at VICs.

As the study shows, over half the nonresident travelers, or 56 percent, interviewed during their trip to Montana this summer either stopped at a VIC or planned to at some point during their trip. Most of these travelers had very positive things to say about the VICs' services and

facilities, indicating that they will continue to use them in the future. As such, this study shows that VICs have the potential to play an important role in the traveling experience of visitors to Montana, especially if they are conveniently-located and provide the services and facilities that travelers would like to see. The literature reviewed on this subject has furthermore indicated that VICs have the potential to extend visitors' stay and increase their travel spending. Because they are receiving a significant amount of use, this could easily be the case for VIC use in the state of Montana; in 2005, for example, out of the 27 percent of the 5,975 respondents who consulted visitor information staff during their trip, eight percent of Montana's non-resident travelers extended their trip stay (ITRR Nonresident Trip Planning Report). Managers should therefore carefully consider visitor preferences in order to attract as many as possible to these facilities. In the case of this study, the following represent the top most important preferences for VIC location, service, and facility features:

1. VICs located at state entrances along interstates
2. Restroom facilities
3. Free maps and brochures to take
4. A place to stretch rest and relax
5. Staff on hand to obtain local insight and travel directions

Other notable preferences include VICs being located at other highway rest areas and near attractions, having information on current or local events and weather or road conditions, and featuring available refreshments. On the other hand, visitors seemed least concerned with VICs that offer pet exercise areas, the ability to make accommodation reservations, or are located in towns, airports, or as part of the local chamber of commerce.

The preferred location of VICs for this study has several implications. Most travelers preferred that VICs be located at entrances to the state of Montana, perhaps because the

respondents were all nonresident travelers and would like to stop at a border VIC to obtain information about the state and become familiar with the area. Interestingly, 81 percent of respondents indicated that they had visited Montana before. This is significant because it could mean that regardless of it being a visitor's first time to the state, they would still like to obtain information about Montana upon entering. It should be noted, however, that the population for this study were intercepted only at gas stations around the state of Montana who were clearly driving a vehicle during their trip; therefore it is not surprising they would prefer that VICs located at interstate rest areas as opposed to airports. Intercepting visitors at airports, for example, may have yielded different results. As such, some respondents commented that while having a VIC at entrances to the state may be the most convenient in general, they felt it was important to note that their preference for a VIC location depended very much on the type of trip they had planned. Respondents indicated verbally that regardless of their location, it was essential that the VICs be open year-round, well-marked and easy to access and exit to and from the highway or interstate.

Similar to respondents intercepted in the reviewed literature, several visitors for this study wanted to make it clear that they prefer restroom facilities only when they are open throughout the year and clean. Likewise, several respondents also explained that VIC staff is only necessary when employees are trained, knowledgeable, and friendly. Therefore, it is important for managers to consider that the success of VICs does not depend on simply having these services and facilities available. Rather, these features must be maintained and of high quality (e.g., easily accessible with clean restrooms and a knowledgeable, friendly staff) in order to maintain VIC use and satisfaction.

Another goal of this study was to determine if and how technology is affecting VICs. Although the majority of this study's respondents are currently using technology such as smart phones and social media, it appears that this use is not significantly affecting traveler need for VICs. Social media, for example, is hardly affecting use of VICs at all. However, 23 percent of visitors who have smart phones did indicate that their phone has decreased their need to stop at VICs, primarily because they can find the information they are looking for on their Internet-capable device. With the rapid adoption of smart phones—in 2009, smart phone penetration in the United States alone was 25 percent (Falaki et al, 2010) and the numbers continue to climb—managers should be aware that VICs have the potential to compete with Internet-capable devices, and should therefore be conveniently-located and feature valued services and facilities.

Furthermore, a number of respondents who own smart phones commented that they would use the Internet on their smart phones to obtain information but that cell phone service is limited in numerous areas throughout Montana. They went on to explain that if VICs had wireless Internet available, they would be more inclined to stop and use their services. Several possibilities could arise in the future as a result of this information. First, cell phone providers could increase service coverage in the state of Montana, further eliminating the need for visitors to stop at VICs during their trips to the state. Second, VICs could provide wireless Internet as part of their services, potentially attracting more visitors to stop and hopefully obtain information. Although it appears that technology is not severely affecting the need for VICs in Montana at present, it is likely to change the role of VICs in the future. It would be helpful to continue to analyze this relationship to see how and to what extent current technology trends affect VIC use in the future.

In summary, the majority of nonresidents stopped at VICs during their travels and had positive experiences. Respondents indicated that their first choice for a VIC location is at the state's entrance followed by interstates. These visitors prefer a variety of services and facilities, such as restrooms, free maps and brochures, and a place to stretch, rest, and relax. Regardless of changing trends in technology, visitors prefer that VICs have staff available to answer questions, give local insight, or provide travel directions, particularly if they are friendly, knowledgeable, and trained. Although visitors are using technology as part of their daily lives, this use has not significantly affected their use of VICs; however, the trend is showing it will be a factor in the near future. All of these factors strongly indicate that VICs remain an important part of the travel experience in Montana today. If, as the literature indicates, VICs do have the ability to extend trip length and traveler expenditures, managers should maintain the positive experiences visitors are having in the state of Montana by providing these preferences for location, facilities, and services.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions for Nonresident Travelers' VIC Use

1. What state, Canadian province or country do you permanently reside?
2. Is this your first time to Montana?
3. How many people are traveling in your group?
4. How often do you use visitor information centers when traveling?
 - a. All the time
 - b. Most the time
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Rarely
 - e. Never
5. I have a list of four different locations for visitor information centers. Tell me your most preferred location to your least preferred location.
 - a. Entrances to the state
 - b. Along interstates or highways
 - c. In downtown areas/along town's main streets
 - d. Inside airports

Is it important to you that a visitor center is...

6. Near major attractions?
7. At interstate rest areas?
8. At other highway rest areas?
9. As part of a local chamber of commerce?

Is it important to you that a visitor center has...

10. Printed brochures to take?
11. Maps of the area to take?
12. Information on current/local events?
13. Information on weather/road conditions?

Is it important to you that visitor information centers are staffed so you can get...

14. Regional and/or statewide advice?
15. Local insight/recommendations?
16. Travel directions?

As a traveler, is it important to you that visitor information centers have...

17. Restroom facilities?
18. A place to stretch, rest, and relax?
19. Pet exercise areas?
20. Refreshments?
21. The ability to make accommodation reservations?

22. Did you stop at a Montana visitor information center on this trip?
23. If yes, how satisfied were you with your experience?
24. If no, where do you normally find information while you are here?
 - a. Did not seek any information while here
 - b. Employees at businesses (e.g. motel, gas station)
 - c. Brochure information rack (not located in a VIC)
 - d. Highway information signs
 - e. Billboards
 - f. Smart phone or other mobile device
 - g. Personal computer
25. Do you currently have a smart phone or mobile device?
26. If yes, how has your smart phone changed your use of visitor information centers?
 - a. No change-I don't usually use visitor information centers
 - b. No change-I will continue to use visitor information centers
 - c. Increases my use of visitor information centers
 - d. Decreases my use of visitor information centers
27. Do you use social media?
28. If yes, how has social media changed your use of visitor information centers?
 - a. No change-I don't usually use visitor information centers
 - b. No change-I will continue to use visitor information centers
 - c. Increases my use of visitor information centers
 - d. Decreases my use of visitor information centers
29. What is your age?