



# **A Target Market Case Study**

## **An NTC White Paper**

Before starting any tourism marketing program, the most critical action is to determine the target visitor markets the program will be aimed at. Recently, National Travel Center had occasion to determine the target markets for a Scenic Byway resident in both California and Oregon. The two states had to very different visitor profiles, making the primary task to determine target markets that incorporated the information from both states, yet generated target markets distinct to the Byway. The point is to be very thorough in analyzing the research, plus combining the research findings with the qualities of the destination, to arrive at the precise target markets that fit the destination.

### **Current Visitor Behavior**

There are 31 million residents within a 6-hour radius (the normal driving radius for road trips) of the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway. A number of the 69 million prime Byway visitors in the US also reside within the radius. The visitor resources on, near, and adjacent to the Byway are available at all star rating levels and able to accommodate visitors of many types, income levels and interest areas.

### **Oregon**

Data retrieved from Travel Oregon before the May 2023 research introduction illustrated that the ideal visitor market for VLSB ARR was already arriving in Oregon, based on their primary reasons for visiting:

- 24% Touring
- 23% Outdoors
- 17% Special Event
- 11% Resort
- 11% City Trip
- 06% Casino

Their selection of places to visit and experiences to engage in revealed a strong interest in exploring culture and heritage in the region:

- 31% Historic Places

22% Cultural Attractions/Activities  
12% Exceptional Culinary Experiences  
12% Brewery Tasting/Tours  
09% Wine Tasting/Tours  
07% Ecotourism

Updated data revealed virtually the same information:

36% Historic places  
30% National or state park  
27% Cultural activities/attractions  
27% Touring  
25% Outdoors  
23% Special Event  
18% Exceptional Culinary Experiences  
16% Museum  
12% Wine tours and tasting  
12% Beer tours and tasting  
10% Art Gallery

Top locations visited include:

25% National/State Park  
24% Landmark/Historic Site  
20% Fine Dining  
20% Hiking/Backpacking  
15% Camping  
15% Museums

Additional data reveals that 91% of trips to Oregon are taken by car (whether personal automobile or rental), 71% of the trips taken with a spouse or partner, and an average of 4.1 nights are spent in Oregon. Just over 10% of visitors indicated they did not plan anything before

traveling. 50% of the visitors who did plan in advance did so within 60 days before the trip. A third of travelers arrived between July-September and a quarter between April and June.

After not having supported detailed visitor research since 2017, the new research Travel Oregon released in May 2023 illustrates the opportunity to attract Oregon visitors to the Byway even more clearly.

90% indicated that scenic beauty was their top activity selection factor

84% used an automobile for transportation, whether owned or rented

70% were 45 years or older, with the average age rising to 51.1

Fewer traveling parties had children

Per party trip spend rose to \$2,497 with 25% spent on lodging, 24% on dining, 12% on retail and 11% on things to see and do

Only 6% did no planning before arriving, with 50% planning within 60 days, and 44% who engaged in a longer planning horizon

Historic old towns and art galleries are the top two heritage/cultural activities

Specific Southern Oregon data indicated a higher incidence of larger traveling parties, coupled with a larger number of parties staying longer than the average Oregon stay. Some of this difference can be attributed to the Rouge River Valley with multiple wineries and other attractions being included in the same Southern Oregon region as Klamath Falls.

#### Average Length of Stay

27.1% 1-2 Days

39.9% 3-4 Days

33.0% 5+ Days

#### Travel Party Size

67.5% Two Adults

17.5% Solo

15% 3 or more

### Traveling Party Composition

- 81.1% Spouse or partners
- 28.0% Children under 18
- 09.8% Friends
- 08.8% Adult children
- 07.4% Other relatives
- 04.7% Parents
- 02.6% Pets

### Trip Purpose

- |                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 48.9% Leisure                  | 44.5% in 2019 |
| 25.2% Visit friends and family | 29.7% in 2019 |
| 11.8% Business                 | 08.8% in 2019 |
| 04.0% Other personal reasons   |               |
| 03.7% Bleisure                 |               |
| 03.7% Event or festival        |               |
| 02.6% Conference               |               |

### Average Daily Per Person Spend \$249

- 22.8% Lodging
- 20.0% Dining
- 12.0% Attractions/activities
- 10.9% Retail
- 08.6% Rental car
- 04.8% Ground transportation
- 0.08% Food stores

## Trip Spend Summary

Party size 2.1

Length of Stay 4.3 Days

Per day travel party spend \$513

Travel party spending per trip \$2,205

Per person trip spending \$1,069

## Accommodations Used

41.4% Hotel

26.5% Motel

16.3% Friends or family

15.2% B&B

14.5% RV campground

08.7% Glamping

08.2% Private home

06.9% camping

01.9% Second home

0.09% working farm or ranch

## Activities Participated in Last Oregon Trip

60.9% Eat and Drink

46.9% Outdoor Recreation

32.3% Scenic Ride

30.1% Shopping

26.5% Business or Family Related Event

22.9% Art and cultural heritage

17.4% Attractions and entertainment

12.6% Festival or special event

09.1% Health and wellness services

08.5% Sporting event

06.8% Agricultural experience on working landscape

## Age

26.6% 65+

20.1% 55-64

13.8% 45-54

22.9% 35-44

14.1% 25-34

02.9% 24 or younger

53.7% women/45.3% men

85% College or some college

Even split between employed and retired

## Source States

40.6% Oregon

14.5% California

14.3% Washington

05.3% Arizona

03.4% Texas

03.2% Idaho

03.0% Colorado

02.5% Nevada

02.3% Utah

## California

Recently introduced visitor profiles indicate visitors revealed their ideal destination would:

- Offers an abundance of scenic experiences including national/state parks and beaches
- Has endless road trip opportunities featuring scenic beauty, interesting towns and off the beaten path experiences
- Has culinary experiences, food, wine, craft beer, that are part of the culture/lifestyle
- Offers rich multi-cultural experiences
- Is rich in cultural attractions, historic sites, cultural institutions and diverse neighborhoods

Immerse Visitors indicate they chose the destination because they could:

Live like a local and find enrichment from local culture

Broaden their knowledge and enriches their understanding of the world

Allows me to immerse myself in local life and culture

Helps me to meet new people and create new memories

Provide me with unique and interesting experiences

- Culinary festivals
- Winery or wine region
- Performing arts
- Museums, science centers
- Historical sites
- Art museums/visual arts venues
- Exploring small towns
- State/National Parks
- Driving on scenic byways or roads
- Hiking

Recharge Travelers indicated they preferred destinations that:

Met their need to relax, escape everyday life and recharge:

Restores my sense of harmony/balance

Gives me time out to think and regain control of my life

Helps me to escape from everyday stress/pressure

Finds a sense of relaxation

Allows me to feel organized and avoid surprises

- Farmers markets



- Winery or wine region
- Unique local restaurants
- Scenic byways and roads
- View/enjoy natural beauty
- Shop at unique local shops

Data from Shasta Cascade encompassing eight counties in northern California presents a different picture than that of Southern Oregon. More traveling parties stay in commercial accommodations (85.1%) and more stay in vacation rental properties (14.9%). Source states include the same locations with a different percentage of arrivals.

#### Source States

42.8% California

10.2% Oregon

09.0% Washington

04.3% Arizona

03.% Texas

02.5% Idaho

#### Source Cities

57% from San Francisco and Sacramento

15% from Los Angeles

11.5% from Portland

10.7% from Seattle

6.1% from Phoenix

5.6% from Eugene Oregon

Two-thirds of Shasta Cascade visitors have incomes over \$75K. The 57% of visitors who are over 45 is roughly the same percentage as Southern Oregon with 60.5% over 45.

Arrival data into Siskiyou County, based on Experian Mosaic demographic profiles somewhat backs up the information from Oregon and Shasta Cascade, with between 50% and 60% of visitors arriving into Siskiyou County in the over 45 age group. 48% of those traveling into Siskiyou County have the discretionary income (over \$75K) to travel.

11.9% Autumn Years

11.6% Blue Sky Boomers

7.1% Thriving Boomers

3.3% Booming with Confidence

10.6% Singles and Starters

2.3% Suburban Styles

1% Power Elite

Yet, in addition, 17.4% of arrivals are Golden Year Guardians with very limited incomes and little discretionary income to travel.

## Target Visitor Markets

### Target Market Priority One: Traditional Byway Travelers

The most lucrative target market for the Byway are those visitors already arriving in Oregon to engage in “touring.” These visitors with a profile identical to typical Byway visitors, re older, wealthier, more educated, and explore culture and heritage. While exploring they also enjoy wineries, local cuisine, and hopping in arts locations. They do not demand luxury accommodations, instead preferring those authentic to the destination. The presence of non-chain accommodations is not a detriment to attracting this market. The National Travel Center White Paper on this market is attached.

Prime Byway travelers are:

- Primarily older, married, educated, and affluent couples
- Frequent users of social media
- High value travelers who participate in more activities and visit more attractions
- Average trip spend of \$2,497 per trip includes 34% spent on accommodations, 20% dining, 11% retail, 10% things to see and do
- 60% plan at least 2 months in advance of longer trips.
- 78% stay in commercial accommodations with a preference is for unique lodging
- Sightseeing includes famous landmarks, national and state parks, historic sites, museums, breweries, wineries, art galleries
- Fine dining is a regular thing, coupled with a variety of not necessarily high end foods and cuisine
- Shop in local shops, boutiques, art galleries
- 89% visit one state, 28% from April-June, 32% July-September
- They access destination websites, OTA's, hotel sites and social media for information

## **Target Market Priority Two: RV Travelers**

The 52 RV parks along the Byway route indicates that RV travelers are also arriving in the region. The RV Association segments RV travelers as follows:

### **39% Casual Campers**

Use their RV only a few weekends a year in the warmer months. Thoroughly enjoy the RV lifestyle and the relaxation and escape in nature is delivers.

82% over age 55

56% Female

55% Retired

53% earn under \$65K

90% no children at home

72% I am a private person

55% weekend trip in RV, 46% weeklong trip in RV, 44% car road trip

Most travel with a travel trailer, rather than a free standing RV

### **33% Family Campers**

Most have grown up in an RV family and use camping to bond with family and spark the hobby to the next generation. Travel limited by full time employment.

80% under age 55

53% Female

64% Employed Full Time

58% over \$65K

64% live at home with children

73% I am a very private person

26% weeklong trip in RV, 25% beach vacations, 22% camping and backpacking

Most travel with a travel trailer, rather than a free standing RV

## **16% Escapists**

Committed to RV lifestyle, enjoy the freedom the exploration the RV provides. Traveling as a family for 2 months of the year.

54% over age 55

50% Female

40% employed full time, 40% retired

60% over \$65K

31% live at home with children

72% I am a very private person

54% weeklong vacation in RV, 35% beach vacations, 31% destination trip in an RV

61% use a travel trailer, 9% a motorhome

## **6% Avid RVers**

Committed to traveling in an RV every chance they have, using their RV for a season each year. Romantic getaways and the best of nature.

62% over 55

64% Female

26% employed full time, 48% retired

51% over \$65K

78% no children at home

66% I am a very private person

53% weeklong vacation in an RV, 38% destination trip in an RV, 30% beach vacations

59% travel with a travel trailer, 12% a motorhome

3% Happy Campers: snowbirds who use their RV half year in a warmer location.

1.5% Full Timers who make the RV their home.

1% Adventure seekers.

### **Target Market Priority Three: Outdoor Recreation Travelers**

Although outdoor recreation visitors will continue to be an important market for the Byway, they represent a lower spending visitor than the two previous target markets. There is also a difference between outdoor recreation participants and outdoor recreation visitors. The Outdoor Recreation Association lists 53 outdoor activities, 15 of which apply to the Byway travelers: Backpacking, Bicycling, Camping, Climbing, Fishing, Hiking, Horseback Riding, Hunting, Kayaking, Rafting, Skiing, Snowboarding, Swimming, Walking, Wildlife Viewing. Some of these activities are observational, while others involve active participation.

The typical core outdoor recreation participant is:

37 years old average age, 22% over 55

53% Male

College educated

Average income \$74K

43% have children at home

30% spend \$2,500 or more

70% spend \$1,000 or more

Travel information obtained primarily from social media and family and friends

Their gateway to outdoor recreation includes camping, biking, hiking, running and fishing.

Travel motivations include:

Being physically active outside: 80.2% female, 74.9% male

Interacting with nature: 73.2% female, 65.3% male

Traveling in an outdoor environment: 69% female, 63.4% male

Going to a neighborhood park: 65.2% female, 58.3% male

Just being outside: 59.4% female, 55.3% male

73.8% seeing landscapes

49.7% easy walking

41.2% nature photography

42.2% hiking forests and mountains

31.5% sailing, kayaking

11.8% mountain climbing

9.1% mountain biking

Outdoor Adventure segments represent a subset of the outdoor recreation market

### **Adventure Grazer**

Bucket list driven

Not likely to repeat activities once experienced

Perform at novice/beginner skill level

High thrill seeker

Exploring new places

Spending time with friends and family

### **Adventurer**

Actively seeking to improve and enhance skills

Repeat a favorite activity or related activity on multiple trips

Perform at intermediate level

Moderate thrill seeker

Relaxation

Spending time with friends and family

### **Adventure Enthusiast**

Practice activities at a high skill level

Dedicated to one activity

Accept higher risks to achieve greater thrill

Seek unique and new destinations to practice favorite activity

## Target Market Priority Four: Immerse Travelers

A fourth target market is visitors who resemble the “Immerse” travel persona of California combined with the cultural and heritage visitor to Oregon. These visitors travel to a destination to try new cuisine, wines, brews, and other culinary experiences along with “light” exploring. They often use their travel experiences to spend time with friends and family, are more likely to stay in a vacation rental, and not fill every day with exploration. They travel to take time off and enjoy themselves, and achieve relaxation just by being in a different place than home. These are visitors that can be attracted from the Bay Area and Portland that want to get away to a new place to visit and relax. California describes their personalities as creative, curious, open-minded, authentic and youthful, even if they are not young, they want to feel young.

Characteristics of this market include:

Exploring the new and unexpected

Invested in sharing new things and encouraging other to join in

80% have children

Incomes \$100K+

State: “I live life to the fullest, I’m at the top of my game.”

State: “I’m wallet savvy.”

Seek to elevate their lives and connect them with the world

Sense of discovery

Research more than three sources to select a destination

Plan within 2 weeks of departure

Get information from the internet, social media



## Target Market Priority Five: Natural Exploration Visitors

A fifth market is visitor who enjoy exploring the natural environment without necessarily being physically engaged and enjoy a more intellectual approach to these places. These visitors explore the national park environments, the volcanic story, caves, gardens, parks, and other appealing places with the intent of learning more about them. They are not going to climb mountains or go fishing, but they are going to relax in nature. This market inherently regards travel as a “wellness product” that lets them disconnect from their daily circumstances and lower their stress, yet also one to engage their minds to enable a mental as well as a physical escape.

23% age 45-54

22% 55-64

57% Female

43% Male

27% \$60K-100K, 25% over 100K

Travel as educated couples

99% to see new things

97% to see more of the world

96% to have fun

91% to have an adventure

88% scenery and landscapes to explore

88% to learn something new

85% to relax and take it easy

82% to get away from it all

82% to understand the history of it all

43% see wildlife in natural settings

38% walking in untouched countryside natural environments

36% natural and ecological sites to visit

26% plan their visits around the nature-based activities that are available

## **Marketing/Communication Action Plan**

The following marketing strategies and core messages will be used to attract each target market:

### **Target Market #1 Traditional Byway Travelers Marketing Strategy**

Baby Boomers are the traditional Byway travelers. They need to be reached online, since they spend an average of 27 hours a week online. Facebook is the most popular social media platform with 78% of Boomers, YouTube next at 67% and further down the list, Pinterest at 40%, Instagram at 32% and Reddit at 31. 83% of Boomers belong to at least one social media platform. Posts can be targeted geographically and by age and income to reach Boomers in the Bay Area and the Portland area.

### **Traditional Byway Travelers Core Message**

Enjoy one of America's premier Byways, bookended with two spectacular National Parks, to explore at your leisure, traveling through authentic Northern California towns, enjoying local cuisine, unique accommodations and delightful shops, in between learning the story of the region in heritage and cultural locations along the way.

### **Target Market #2 RV Travelers Marketing Strategy**

RV'ers have their own community, their own association and their own publications through which they can be reached most effectively. RVillage is a social network completely devoted to RV'ers and there are 5 Facebook Groups devoted to them as well. There are no less than 10 four color magazines devoted to RV'ers and several other specialized publications. Editorial appearing in these magazines and on their social media sites will have more credibility with this target market than appearing elsewhere.

### **RV Travelers Core Message**

Over 50 RV parks await your visit, while enjoying the very unique landscapes along the Byway, tucking in and out of historic towns, enjoying local cafes, and escaping into nature every so often, while traveling this All American Road, just perfect for RV'ers like yourself who want to explore by day and relax in a park in the evening with no care in the world.

### **Target Market #3 Outdoor Recreation Travelers Marketing Strategy**

According to Outside Magazine, these travelers are long haulers, with the average age of their audience's next roadtrip at 800 miles. 39% of these travelers booked a destination after viewing a video, and 86% of Bleisure travelers indicate they are going to add an outdoor recreation leisure component to their business trips. This makes video one of the most important vehicles to reach this market, complemented by sufficient detail on the website to enable these visitors to picture themselves on the Byway and have the details available to plan their trip. Even though we generally consider driving travel and outdoor recreation two separate markets, pleasure driving to enjoy nature is the number outdoor recreation activity.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Travelers Core Message**

Hike, trek, or climb mountains in the beautiful terrain surrounding the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway, one of America's premier All American Roads, where the scenery is unparalleled and the outdoor recreation second to none. You can camp for the evening or relax in one of the many hotels or unique accommodations along the way.

### **Target Market #4 Immersive Travelers Marketing Strategy**

This market is going to drive off of culinary, winery and other cuisine related experiences, along with unique places to stay. They are upscale, making total cost of a trip not an issue, what can be included and folded together into a cohesive experience is more important. They are going to respond best to "Instagrammable" moments, showing others who are enjoying food, conversation and relaxation. Short planning times will require appearing on social media on Wednesday or Thursday, in front of a quickly planned weekend trip. Once they have responded to visuals, information about additional things they can do on a trip can be delivered.

#### **Immersive Travelers Core Message**

Food, wine, unique shops, beautiful scenery and interesting heritage, what more could you ask for on a great weekend trip taking you through one of America's truly unique landscapes, punctuated with volcanoes, part of the Pacific Rim of Fire, that loom over the terrain at varied points. Itineraries that include the best of the best make your visit easy.

## **Target Market #5 Natural Exploration Travelers Marketing Strategy**

People who enjoy exploring unique geologic environments and other natural phenomenon - geotourists - will go where they can find it. A website filled with detailed information is the best way to attract these visitors, who will want to know about the geology, topography and geography of any site, plus the resources, services and facilities available to explore the area. Effective social media posts will require substantive content regarding the area's geology and there are specialized publications such as the Geotourism Magazine and National Geographic that feature these environments. It is likely that a geotourism program to attract professors, geology students and other will be effective to reach this market. They are interested in integrity of the place and respond to interactive interpretation.

## **Nature Exploration /Geotourism Travelers Core Message**

Millions of years ago, the earth's plates moved and molten lava exploded between the cracks, spouting high into the sky. All that fire and fury created the Ring of Fire, a circle of volcanoes around the Pacific Ocean. The Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway is one the best places on earth to explore this geologic activity dominated by soaring volcanic peaks, expansive lava flows, dramatic caves, bubbling mud pots, and steaming fumaroles.