



MAD RIVER VALLEY

VERMONT

WHAT IS DESTINATION MARKETING?

The promotion of a place (in our case, the Mad River Valley, Vermont) as an attractive place to visit or live.

WHY IS DESTINATION MARKETING IMPORTANT TO THE MAD RIVER VALLEY?

- Provides customers for businesses.*
*Including, providing customers to businesses whose customers are businesses, or whose customers are business owners or business employees. *That means, every business benefits.*
- Supports business' ability to provide higher wages and better benefits, to attract and retain quality employees.
- Showcases our place to people who may move here.
- Creates vibrancy and positive mind-set through sharing what we love with others.

WHAT IS OUR DESTINATION MARKETING GOAL?

- Increase visitor occupancy in the Mad River Valley by 5 percentage points, specifically by increasing visits in the off-season and mid-week.

WHAT WOULD THIS DO?

- Bring an additional 200 people per day, on average, to the Mad River Valley.
- Based on Vermont visitor spending habits, add +\$8million per year into to the Mad River Valley economy.

HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE THIS?

With financial and human resources, and a smart, well-executed destination marketing initiative, we can focus on bringing visitors here during the slower times, and over-time, turn the significant peaks and valleys of the current business climate into rolling hills. Destination marketing requires consistent investment, messaging, and persistence to have an impact. Success is staying the course for many years.

The Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce has identified an opportunity in three target markets:

1. CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND MEETINGS.

Why?

These types of events:

- Are booked well in advance (this is a benefit because businesses can plan, prepare, and collaborate easier)
- Prefer to be mid-week (business days) and off-season (rates conducive to large groups)
- Propel our broader destination marketing efforts by introducing our destination to people who may not think of it for leisure travel, but now they will

How will we reach them?

- We'll target, market, sell, and coordinate conferences, conventions, and meetings.
- We'll expose the MRV as an attractive destination for off-sites.
- We'll employ a Valley-wide collaboration, so that we attract large events with the current infrastructure that exists.

2. SUMMER FAMILY TRAVEL.

Why Families?

- Book their vacations further in advance
- Stay longer (a week at a time)
- Fostering future visitors, as people tend to have an affinity for places they vacationed as a kid
- Showcasing this place to young families who may want to live here

Why Summer?

- In the summer, family vacation trends are for week-long stays
- Summer is still a soft time in the MRV, focusing on summer marketing will help position the MRV as more than a winter destination

How will we reach them?

- We'll target families (using demographic, geographic, contextual and behavioral marketing) that are prone to recreation-based travel with messaging about what kids can enjoy here, what parents can enjoy here, and what multi-generation groups can enjoy together.

3. YOUNG PROFESSIONALS, WHO CAN WORK FROM HERE.

Why?

- These young professionals have workplace flexibility (a growing trend), as well as unlimited vacation time (i.e. as long as their work is getting done, they can play as much as they want)
- This means, they can do the opposite thing that families and weekend-warriors have to do: they can work from here during the week, enjoying the recreation they love, avoiding the high-season crowds, and head back to their exciting city for the weekend
- We're introducing the benefits of life in the MRV to people who can't yet commit to living here, but are more likely to at some point

How will we reach them?

- We'll target young professionals who work remotely and don't need to take 'vacation time' to be here mid-week.
- We'll find them using demo, geo, contextual and behavioral marketing, and reach them primarily with partnerships and social media.
- We'll use messaging showing how cool it is to have your office be the base-lodge on a Tuesday, listening to corporate calls from your bluetooth helmet speakers on the top of the mountain, writing code next to the fire pit at a local eatery, and the like.
- We'll play up our quality internet and phone service – a valuable asset we have in the MRV.
- We'll note the ease of getting here from Boston and NYC (where many, many young professionals live).

DESTINATION MARKETING, BY THE NUMBERS:

2018 MRV occupancy average: 36% = 1550 visitors per day

2018 occupancy, by month:

January – 37%	February – 55%	March – 42%
April – 12%	May – 19%	June – 34%
July – 41%	August – 46%	September – 42%
October – 46%	November – 19%	December – 43%

Average spend per day per overnight visitor in Vermont = \$110*
data from 2015, VDTM Benchmark Report published 2017

MRV Goal: 41% annual average occupancy = 1750 visitors per day

Increase visits by 200 people per day x \$110, per visitor spend = \$22,000 x 365 days = \$8million