

# *Making Visitors Your Customers: A Guide to Washington County's Tourism Market*

## *Introduction*

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*Whether you are in the kind of business that is naturally considered a “tourism business”, such as a restaurant or motel, or are in just about any other business, you know tourists are an important part of your market during the summer and fall months.*

*But how do you find out how many visitors there are so you can make viable business plans to take advantage of this boon? And how do you find out what tourists enjoy doing, what ages they are, and where they come from? And how do you get more of them to come?*

*Fortunately, there are many resources, including statewide market research, sales and tax collection data and traffic counts to help you get a handle on just how many people we're talking about and what they do while they're here, to help your business target this sector with products and services.*

*In addition, there are organizations that will help you market your*

*product, and offer some practical advice besides.*

*The research indicates thousands of people visit Washington County during the peak tourism seasons in the summer and fall. Some are just passing through on their way to another destination. Some are here for a day trip, and others come for a long weekend or stay a week or two to enjoy the sights and sounds of this remarkable part of Maine.<sup>1</sup>*

*All businesses – whether or not they are directly involved in the tourism industry – accommodations, restaurants of all sizes and shapes, gift shops and attractions – are affected by these tourists and benefit from their visits.*

*Tourists buy gasoline, stop at convenience stores, visit art galleries and book stores, buy bait for fishing, rent spots to camp and do just about anything we all do as residents.*

*They also use ATMs, get haircuts, get oil changes or have their automobiles serviced. They shop in*

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<sup>1</sup> Data and sources included in appendix

supermarkets, look for vegetables at roadside stands and even attend church.

The reason all this is important to every business person in Washington County should be obvious - tourists spend money. Exactly how much they spend here is difficult to determine because the state places Washington and Hancock Counties in the same tourism region, Downeast Acadia, and reports tourism data jointly.

Therefore, the numbers for the Downeast Acadia region are especially high, but that is because Acadia/Bar Harbor is one of the top one or two destinations in Maine.

Therefore, it makes sense to look at many sources of data and try to get the best information you can. All the basic numbers indicate something special happens during the period from April through the end of September each year. For instance, restaurant and lodging sales in 2004 in Calais, Eastport, Jonesport and Machias alone, totaled \$15,392,000 during that time period. The other months - the first and fourth quarter - totaled \$9,575,000.

The difference between the 'tourist' season and the 'off' seasons was \$5,817,000 - or 63 percent.

It is important to try to quantify the tourism industry in Washington County as much as possible, so all businesses can plan to turn visitors into customers.

## Part I: Tourism Market Research

If you plan to start, expand or improve a business specifically to attract tourists, it's important to know how many people you're talking about, and to understand as much about them as possible. The first place to look is the Maine Office of Tourism research, which is all available on their web site.

### *State Tourism Information*

The Maine Office of Tourism undertakes an in-depth study each year of tourism's economic impact on Maine and the type of people who have that impact.

The study looks at visitor travel patterns, spending patterns, what they enjoy doing and when, where they come from, their income and the how long they stay.

If there was any doubt before, there is no longer any doubt that tourism is big business in Maine. Consider the numbers:

In 2004, domestic visitors to Maine directly and indirectly generated:

- \$13.6 billion in sales of goods and services
- 176,600 jobs; and
- \$3.8 billion in total payroll

Out-of-state domestic visitors made up 72% of all travel expenditures in 2004.

In 2004, revenues from domestic tourism totaled \$531 million in state and local taxes, including:

- \$294 million in Sales Tax;
- \$149 million in Personal Income Tax and
- \$88 million in Gasoline Tax

In addition:

- An estimated **8.9 million overnight trips** were taken to Maine in 2004.
- An estimated **34.7 million day trips** were taken to Maine in 2004.
- Travel during July, August & September accounts for 52% of overnight tourist trips to Maine.

- Travel during April, May & June accounts for 25% of overnight tourist trips to Maine.
- Travel during *October, November & December* accounts for *16% of overnight tourist trips* to Maine.
- Travel during January, February & March accounts for 8% of overnight tourist trips to Maine.

### *Tourism in the Downeast & Acadia Region*

The Downeast & Acadia Region is Washington and Hancock Counties, combined. This regional configuration helps draw attention to Washington County and other less traveled parts of the state along with one of its most popular destinations, Acadia National Park. Data collected by the Maine Office of Tourism aggregates numbers and reports them for the whole region. Here are some highlights from 2003 research:

The research for the Downeast Acadia region shows that in 2003, the region had 3 million day trips, and 1.2 million overnight trips. 75%

of those who stay overnight in the region are here for pleasure, the rest are here for business (1%) or to visit friends and relatives (24%).

According to this same research, most people are here for enjoying the outdoors (33%) and touring (21%).

15% of visitors to this region are from Massachusetts, 13% are from other New England States, and 66% are from outside New England (compared with 32% for the State as a whole). 57% of our visitors arrive here by car, truck or RV.

41% of our visitors travel here between July and September.

42% of visitors to Downeast and Acadia are over 55 years old. 77% are over 35.

The income range of people visiting Downeast and Acadia is higher than what is typical for Maine as a whole:

Over \$75,000	37%
\$50,000 to \$74,900	31%
\$25,000 to \$49,900	29%

34% of visitors to this region used the internet when planning their vacation.

The things tourists do in the region are varied and include visiting small towns and villages (89%), visiting wilderness area (63%), enjoying unique local foods (51%), viewing wildlife (22%) and experiencing rural farming (33%).

The numbers for Downeast Acadia show that this region enjoys a comfortable portion of Maine's tourism market. While you could argue that the numbers for Washington County are dwarfed compared to the Bar Harbor and Acadia lure, the fact is that these 3 million people visiting that attraction are just one to three hours from most of Washington County.

### *The Tourism Market in Washington County*

The only data in the State research that gives any inkling of Washington County's share of this market is this measurement of primary destinations during 2001-2003; (Percentages derived from the

research were applied to 2004 numbers.)

39% (694,200) of first time overnight visitors to Maine were going to the Downeast Acadia Region. 34% (605,200) of first time visitors to Maine were going to Acadia National Park and/or Bar Harbor. That means that 5% (89,000) of first time visitors to Maine are going somewhere else in Downeast Acadia, including Washington County and other parts of Hancock County.

Of repeat visitors to Maine, 18% (1.282 million) are going to the Downeast Acadia Region, and 16% are going to Acadia National Park and/or Bar Harbor (1.139 million). This leaves 2% of return visitors going somewhere else in the region, or 142,400.

So of the estimated 231,400 "universe" of travelers, both first time and repeat visitors who came to the Downeast Acadia Region in 2004, but did not go to Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park, how many got to Washington County?

For that number, we need to look at other data more specific to Washington County.

### **Traffic Data**

The Maine Department of Transportation measures traffic on certain roads for a variety of reasons. You can compare seasonal traffic on major roads in and out of Washington County to get a sense of how many additional vehicles travel our roads in the summer and fall than normal. For example, June through October have higher than average traffic rates. If you calculate the difference between the high months and the average, you find that 122,859 more vehicles travel Route 1 in East Machias in the tourist season than other months of the year. 182,529 more vehicles travel Route 9 in the tourist season than usual. These are not all tourists. Remember that many local people travel around more in the summer than the winter too. These are measurements for both lanes combined, and many people may go back and forth the same way, and many may travel around frequently while they are here. But if only 20% of this higher than average traffic is

represented by visitors, that number would be over 61,000.

If your business is located on Route 1 or 9, it's more important to know that in the tourist season (June to October), traffic on these roads increases 60 to 70%.

### **Campobello Visitations:**

You can also get an idea how many people travel here by asking well established attractions in the region.

- In 2004, 121,185 people visited the Roosevelt International Park on Campobello.
- In 2005, the number was 115,108.

The majority of these visitors would have traveled at least part of the way through Washington County.

### **Border Crossings:**

The average number of passenger vehicles crossing at the Ferry Point and Mill Town border stations a

month from November to May, 2004 was 84,832.

During the busy months, June through October, there is an average of 19,690 more cars per month crossing the border, or an increase during the season of 98,450. Assuming every car crosses the border twice, this would represent 49,225 trips, some coming into the US and some leaving the US. All of them would be driving in or through Washington County, either on Route 9 or Route 1.

#### **Sales Data:**

The Maine State Planning Office tracks retail sales by year, for each Labor Market Area. They separate Restaurant and Lodging sales, as well as other kinds of retail business. By looking at these numbers, you can get a sense of how many people are coming to Washington County for overnight trips, either by estimating from the total sales, or as a percentage of the state's sales overall.

For example, in 2004, total lodging sales in Washington County

were \$4,827,225. If the average room price is \$75 that's 64,363 overnight stays for the year.

According to the research for the region, 75% of those were here for pleasure, or over 48,000.

Another way to look at this is Washington County's lodging sales represent .8% (less than 1%) of the state's total sales. .8% of the state's overnight visitors is 71,200. 75% of that number is 53,400.

## *Part II: The Market and Your Business*

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### *Who is Your Customer?*

*According to the latest figures, visitors to the Downeast and Acadia region are older, have a higher income, stay longer and enjoy their visits much more than in many other regions of the state.*

*Most important, figures indicate Downeast and Acadia visitors are well pleased with their Maine experience. The experience is most often described as “exciting, unique, and provides something for everyone.”*

*Visiting wilderness destinations and exploring small towns and villages is high on the list of things to do, as is going to the ocean, exploring natural environments and tasting local foods. While in the region, visitors most like to experience historic areas, see historic landmarks, visit ocean beaches and participate in a lobster bake or dinner.*

*Many trips to this region are taken to experience the natural environment and engage in outdoor activities such as camping, hunting, fishing, hiking or canoeing.*

*When you look at Washington County’s numbers, you may draw the conclusion that as many as 120,000 could be traveling through the area, but as few as 50,000 may actually come here to spend vacation time during the year. In other words, this means a little over 40% of the visitors who spend time in the region are also prompted to overnight here.*

*That is important because overnight trips - though smaller in number than day trips - typically generate more traveler revenue because they are longer and often involve spending for commercial accommodations. But obviously many people driving through Washington County or here for a day trip is also a market that can be appealed to.*

*To summarize Washington County’s tourism market, you could say that there are about 50,000 people coming here for overnight trips, and twice that many passing through or on a day trip. So you have two opportunities to appeal to our summertime visitors.*

### *Developing Your Product for Different Visitors*



*By understanding who is coming to the region, you can develop a product that appeals to those customers.*

*People who are here for extended trips will plan in advance, so promoting your business is important. The lack of information about a region, your property, your service, or your attractions, will discourage people from visiting the area, especially when that area is relatively unknown. The information you can get out there about your business isn't just advertising - it's a big part of what you have to offer. Think of it as a "pre-visit service".*

*Also, many people 'discover' the region by using the Internet and 34% of people coming to the Downeast Acadia Region use the internet to plan their trip. These are both good reasons to have a well thought out web site that provides information on your product or service, hours and location. If your web site links to other attractions in the region, the potential visitor is more likely to be able to fill their weekend with great things to do, and will want to return to do some more.*

*Visitors need to have a positive experience while in the area, so excellent customer service is essential.*

*Part of customer service is knowing about all the activities, events and other services available in your area, so your customer has plenty to do while they are here. Does your accommodation offer pre-packaged tours of the area and guidebooks to encourage people visit local attractions?*

*You can also develop a product or service that appeals specifically to people passing through the area, or here on a day trip. When people are passing through, your business has two chances: to capture, and to divert.*

*Capture: If you want to draw additional traffic into your business, a general store for example, try offering something you know they want: maps of the region, box lunches, locally made food and other products, something that is unique to your store or area. Advertise these on outdoor signs to grab the attention of people driving by. Offer part of your parking lot to a fish vendor or farmer's market. Tourists may stop for gasoline, but they may also purchase some home made jam to take home, a map of art galleries, and a unique gift item.*

*Divert: If a person is passing by your business, you have a chance to divert them from their planned route and entice them to stop for something unplanned. For example, if you are in a business that offers guided nature hikes, offer a “hike and lunch” that provides people with a 20 minute hike to a picnic area, a break for the food and a hike back. They would have planned to stop and eat anyway, why not use their lunch stop as a way to promote your business? Naturally they will have such an enjoyable experience they may plan to come back for a day hike next weekend.*

*It is important, if you want to divert passers-by, to have an attractive, eye catching entrance, plenty of parking, and good signs. If you have enticed a person to stop and can let them know how many great opportunities there are in your area besides your own business, they may change their plans, or incorporate your area into their plan next time. So always have a supply of brochures on hand of other local businesses, or put together an activity package people can easily buy from you. For example, if you operate a historic site*

*and there are three others in your area, offer a “three in one” deal, where the people pay one price and get a ticket to see all three facilities. Instead of stopping by your place for a quick tour, they are now spending three hours in the area and all three sites benefit. Throw in a coupon for a meal from a local restaurant, and they will need to stay even longer.*

### *Do Your Own Research*

*If you’re thinking about starting a business, or adding a new component to an existing business to appeal to tourists, don’t assume you know what will work – ASK. Ask existing customers, former customers and people on the street. Ask a local restaurant to allow you to conduct a survey during different times of the year and ask whatever you need to know – what would they pay to go on your boat tour, what would be the maximum length of tour they would prefer, what would they be interested in seeing and learning about on the tour?*

*Surveys and focus groups are standard tools of the trade when a company is considering starting up or expanding into a new product line –*

*use these tools to help inform your efforts while you are still in the planning stages.*

*In general, if you are already in business and want to appeal to tourists and have them respond to your business and efforts, you might consider providing what people already seem to need.*

*Do people frequently ask your staff for directions or suggestions for places to visit? Keep a good supply of road maps on hand, have a place for local business brochures to be displayed. If people frequently ask for a good place to go fishing, offer a fishing package with a map, a license, tackle and a box lunch, all for one price.*

*If you're in the lodging business, have you ever asked existing customers why they stay in your facility? Have you asked them what they like and what they would change? Do you stay in touch with past customers to remind them of your facility when they're planning their next vacation?*

## Part III: Marketing Your Product

### *What the State is Doing*

Traditionally, Maine has recognized the significant value of the travel and tourism industry, and it has, to various degrees, committed tax revenue for the promotional support and expansion of the industry because of its contributions to the economic well being of its residents and businesses through the generation of visitor expenditures, resulting tax revenue and generation of jobs.

Through its Office of Tourism, Maine has assumed the role of “umbrella” marketing agency, under which stand the diverse businesses who are involved in the activity of serving travelers, including the transportation, accommodations, food service, retail, attractions, outdoor and cultural heritage agencies and entities, to name just a few.

The State seeks to attract out of state visitors by portraying through advertising and media promotion an array of attractions, amenities and activities, from the mountains and lakes to coastal areas, which may be enjoyed in different seasons of the year.

In other words, the Maine Office of Tourism promotes a composite image of Maine in its entirety to attract the attention of potential visitors from outside the borders of the state.

### *Piggybacking with State Media Buys*

When you are ready to advertise and get your business in front of potential visitors, keep in mind that each year the Maine Office of Tourism prepares and makes known its media buying plan to all tourism organizations and regions and any business interested in knowing where and when it will place its ads.

The Office of Tourism conducts extensive research into the best geographic areas to advertise and the best time to place those ads. While much of that media plan centers on television advertising, the state also determines the best newspapers or magazines in which to advertise.

That research and the state’s media plan offer regions, chambers and individual businesses the opportunity to ‘piggyback’ on the state’s efforts.

In some instances, the state will offer a co-operative advertising opportunity which means your business

will be part of a much larger, more effective ad than if you were to stand alone. Obviously, larger ads draw larger audiences.

However, even if there is no co-op opportunity, by placing your ad at the same time in the same newspapers or magazines in which the state is advertising, you will benefit from attention generated by the larger, often more colorful state ad.

Many times, newspapers and magazines will run special sections on Maine and will look for ads to round out the section. Reduced advertising rates are often in effect and you will be able to purchase more space for your money.

In the case of special sections, chambers of commerce often put together a co-op advertisement – which, again, will cost you less but make you part of a larger, more noticeable presentation.

The Office of Tourism also has a web site, [www.visitmaine.com](http://www.visitmaine.com), that offers searchable areas for you to list your business. This web site appears to be underutilized by Washington County businesses, but is widely used by people planning vacations to the State.

### *Maine Invites You*

One of the most significant opportunities for local advertisers is a magazine developed specifically to respond to inquiries generated by the State's advertising. The Maine Office of Tourism contracts with a statewide membership organization, the Maine Tourism Association, to produce and distribute this magazine, called *Maine Invites You*, which helps people plan their trips to Maine. The Maine Tourism Association also operates the State Visitor Information Centers, and can help your business or region distribute brochures in any or all of its centers. They also offer a number of promotional opportunities to their members.

### *The Role of the Region*

Tourism regions within states have existed for decades as marketing tools to attract visitors, based on the convenient availability of nearby clusters of visitor amenities and natural or man-made attractions that offer incentive for travelers to come and visit.

Experience has shown however, that regional names or designations,

except in a few extraordinary cases, may not be recognized as brands by the prospective traveler. The true utility and benefit of regions comes from the cooperation among the tourism and business entities that together promote what is unique about that region.

The State, based on its market research, sells what is appealing about Maine as a whole. The regions, in contrast, promote their particular amenities, attractions, unique culture and geography to select groups of potential visitors who respond to the State's promotional efforts, as well as to visitors who have come to Maine.

Marketing in Downeast & Acadia is coordinated by Downeast & Acadia Regional Tourism (DART) an organization of chambers of commerce, businesses, and tourism planning organizations in Hancock and Washington Counties.

According the Maine Office of Tourism's Strategic 5-Year Plan, DART fulfills the following tasks:

- Work in partnership with the state to encourage the development of quality sustainable travel products to support tourism marketing

efforts from the region and the Maine Office of Tourism,

- Serve as the principal in-region informational conduit for the tourism industry and its business communities,
- Foster and promote a collective spirit of cooperation among businesses within the region, and
- Develop promotional programming to support regional tourism interests.<sup>2</sup>

The best way to be involved in DART is to be active in your local Chamber of Commerce, and help them stay active in DART. Your chamber may ask you to volunteer to help execute some of DART's promotional projects. Businesses also have opportunities to participate in regional brochures, and be listed on DART's web site. Since DART is able to get some of its promotional projects partially subsidized by the State through the Maine Tourism Marketing Promotion Program, participating in these efforts is especially affordable.

### *Your Chamber of Commerce*

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<sup>2</sup> Maine Office of Tourism 5 Year Strategic Plan

Every business in Washington County has access to a local Chamber of Commerce. By the time a potential visitor has learned about Maine, and the region, and has decided they want to visit your area, they are likely to call the Chamber to request a brochure, and are very likely to go on line to find their web site. This is where your participation as a local business is most critical. If a person in Ohio planning their visit to Maine has found the local chamber web site, but can't find your business, an opportunity is lost. Maybe they will visit anyway and just not go to your business. Or maybe they will decide there aren't enough services in your town and go elsewhere.

### *Opportunities for Packaging and Cooperative Promotions*

Another great way to build your business is to become involved in 'packaging' your product with other businesses in the area.

If you own a restaurant, package a meal with a local accommodation; if you are a bed and breakfast, package your business with a restaurant or attraction. Offer a free admission

when the customer registers for the package, or a dinner at a local restaurant at a reduced rate.

Packaging is nothing more than giving customers a perceived value - they must believe they are getting more by buying the package than they could get buying each item individually. Your role is to plan their excursion for them, and provide a variety of activities for a single purchase.

The best thing about packaging is that you control what you offer, when you offer it and at what price you offer it. You don't have to run package programs during your peak season. Use the packages to attract customers at times of the year when things are slower or when you hope to attract visitors for an extra day or night in the area. You don't have to offer everything, just partner with other businesses who do, agree on the price for each, bundle the offerings together with a theme, and you have a new attraction!

You can be as proactive and creative as you want to be. Some examples:

A B&B could offer a September Farm Tour Package, including rooms, meals, a map of farms in the area,

and \$20 in “Farm Bucks” to spend at the participating Farms.

A local motel could sell a Fall Foliage Paddle Weekend package that includes a 2 night stay, an early morning breakfast, a box lunch and a guided kayak tour.

The Maine Office of Tourism runs an aggressive packaging program aimed at individual visitors, families and the travel trade industry. The Office currently offers more than 330 packages on its Web site ([www.visitmaine.com](http://www.visitmaine.com)). To get an idea what getaway packages are offered and how to register your package, go to that Web site and click on ‘Getaways.’

You will get many ideas by studying what others are doing and can decide how to adapt your property or business to a package that makes sense for you and your partners.

Local festivals and events are a great way to bring attention to a particular community, a specific historic event or an area attraction. And they are a great way to get new people to visit a community or region.

Many local promotions are successful (the Machias Blueberry Festival or the Eastport Salmon Festival are good examples) and they typically will draw tourists and visitors from a further distance and for a longer period of time than normal.

When selecting a local promotion, make sure you are not conflicting with any other major event or festival on that day or weekend and bring together as many local people as possible to discuss it, agree on it, plan it and staff the event.

Chambers of commerce and regional organizations can offer suggestions on how to make your local promotion successful and indicate whether any funds are available on the state, regional or local level to help finance the event.

### *Local Advertising and Public Relations*

Pay good attention to the local population, even if you believe tourists are your biggest market. Remember from the research - 24% of people visiting the area are here to visit friends and family. People like to keep their guests entertained. And if you want local residents to refer



tourists to your business, they need to know about it, too.

Try having open houses, or other events just for locals to generate “buzz” about your business. Invite waitresses and motel workers, who are often asked for suggestions by visitors, for a special tour of your facility. Word of mouth advertising is effective, so working to generate it can be very helpful.

While word-of-mouth business is always rewarding, many businesses also use a mix of paid advertising and public relations to get and keep their name in people’s minds.

Advertising can be expensive – whether it is print, radio or television – and public relations campaigns are sometimes difficult to get off the ground, and even more difficult to sustain.

It takes good planning, stamina and a financial commitment to stay involved in both advertising and public relations. However, being in business means you must look for ways to get your name in front of your customers.

In many cases, local or regional newspapers will offer an opportunity for you to have a story and a picture published when you open for business. Take advantage of that opportunity.

It costs you nothing and gives you immediate attention.

Be prepared, however. Think about it, don’t leave dealings with the media to chance. Know what you want to say, what points you want to make and how you want to say it. If a reporter, writer or radio interviewer doesn’t ask you questions that will allow you to make your point, make sure you don’t let them go without telling them what you want them to know.

In addition, have something to hand them. It should be a simple fact sheet about your new business: your hours, what you offer, why you are unique, some background on yourself and your employees and a general quote about your philosophy of business.

Reporters like having facts they don’t have to dig for. The more you can provide them, the greater the chance they will use it in their article and smaller the chance that the story will contain errors.

Follow-up articles should be considered anytime you do something special, promote someone or hire a new employee. These ‘Business Briefs’ are run in most newspapers and give you just that much more opportunity

to get your name in print. A head shot of a new employee, or an employee who has completed a relevant course - mechanics' school or real estate school, for instance - are all considered proper 'briefs' material.

Again, it will get the name of your business in the paper - and you can always add a paragraph at the end highlighting what you offer and your location. That's good, free advertising!

Paid advertising is another matter. Whether you decide on print or broadcast advertising, it is important to plan a campaign with a specific goal, rather than sporadically placing advertising with an expectation of short term results. Most advertising professionals will tell you that a regular, small ad is more effective than a larger ad run once in a while. But sometimes that larger "splash" can be worth the investment.

The best way for many businesses to have a regular and effective ad campaign is to join with your chamber and advertise as a group. That way, your combined ad will take up much more space and be much more visible. Sharing the cost makes it possible for you to have a larger presence than if you were to do it alone.

## *Using the Worldwide Web*

Today the Internet has surpassed all other media conduits as the most popular source for travel news and information.

According to research from the Travel Industry Association of America, fully 40% of the American public use an Internet Web site for travel planning, compared to 26 % who use motor club magazines, 25 % for newspaper travel sections, 20 % for television travel shows and 17 % for general interest magazines.

Several Maine businesses and the Maine Office of Tourism have developed Web sites to keep pace with this medium's significant presence in the travel market.

Working with such organizations as the Maine Innkeeper's, the Maine Restaurant Association, the Maine Office of Tourism, local chambers of commerce and regional organizations, businesses should utilize the latest technology to enhance their site's position through an expansion of search engine utilization, and links with other complementary web pages when it's feasible.

Businesses must also be open to new Web commerce opportunities such

as potential booking of accommodations and package tour programs, the dissemination of media publicity and other communications services, such as additional, targeted E newsletters.

The use of the internet to plan vacations is one of the most important changes in tourism promotion in the past decade. There are many professional firms that can help you position your business to become part of those vacation plans.

A web site should be more than an on-line ad. You can incorporate features that allow potential visitors to email you questions, make reservations, make advance payment, check the local weather, find other services. Including "newsy" items can encourage your repeat customers to visit your site regularly, making sure you are the first place they consider when they plan their next trip.

### ***Capturing Customer Data for Direct Promotions***

Whatever business you are in, it is important to know where your customer comes from, what they are doing in the region, how long they will stay, what they think of your product

or service and what else did they do while they were here.

Sales to previous customers are some of the easiest and least costly to make, but good gathering and management of customer data must be a part of your routine.

Customer information is usually pretty simple to gather - all you have to do is ask.

Have a survey card available when a guest checks in or out; ask questions while they are in your shop or on your tour. Customer comment cards should be available and freely given to visitors while they are in your store, restaurant or lodging facility.

The most important information you can gather is name, address and an e-mail address. This will allow you to target that customer once again by direct mail or by e-mail. For example, a local guide can send notices about when hunting seasons open, paid for with advertising from local outfitters. A kayak tour company can send its schedule for the season out in advance to its past customers with a "register early" discount.

You will also be able to determine what geographic location the bulk of your guests or customers are coming

*from and target marketing to that area.*

*Finally, gathering the information will allow you to follow-up with a simple post card of thanks to these visitors. That will leave a positive and lasting impression on those visitors*

*and make them think about visiting the area once again.*

### ***Other Resources:***

*This guidebook is intended to give you some ideas about how to gather information necessary for good tourism business planning and promotion. There are many other resources available to help you, and still other organizations that work on tourism planning and infrastructure development.*

*For now, we are offering this list of resources that can help you in your tourism business endeavors.*

### ***Tourism Resources for Washington County Businesses***

#### ***Chambers of Commerce***

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*(Local and area-wide tourism promotion)*

#### ***Machias Chamber of Commerce***

*PO Box 606*

*Machias, ME 04654*

*(207) 255-4402*

<http://www.machiaschamber.org>

#### ***Calais Chamber of Commerce***

*PO Box 368*

*Calais, ME 04619*

*(207) 454-2308*

<http://www.visitcalais.com>

#### ***Eastport Chamber of Commerce***

*PO Box 254*

*Eastport, ME 04631*

*(207) 853-4644*

<http://eastport.net>

***Cobscook Bay Chamber of Commerce***

*PO Box 42*

*Whiting, ME 04691*

*(207) 733-2201*

<http://www.cobscookbay.com>

***Regional Tourism Promotion***

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***Downeast Acadia Regional Tourism (DART)***

*PO Box 4*

*Cherryfield, ME 04622*

*(207) 546-3600*

<http://downeastregion.com>

***Statewide Tourism Promotion***

***Maine Tourism Association***

*(State Publications and Tourist Information Centers)*

*325B Water Street*

*Hallowell, ME 04347*

*(207) 623-0363*

<http://www.mainetourism.com>

***Maine Office of Tourism***

*(State of Maine promotions)*

*#59 State House Station*

*Augusta, ME 04333-0059*

*(207) 624-9800*

<http://visitmaine.com>

Studies and Information Available at <http://www.econdevmaine.com/resources>

- *Maine Tourism Facts*
- *The Profile of First-time & Repeat Trips to Maine*
- *2004 Maine Getaways Tips*
- *2000-2004 Maine Visitor Research*
- *2003 Downeast and Acadia Visitor Study*

### *Business Planning*

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[www.WACOBIZ.org](http://www.WACOBIZ.org)

*Provides business plan templates, links to helpful information, and lists of all organizations that provide direct business assistance in Washington County.*

## Appendix

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Traffic Data: 2004

<i>Route 1 East Machias</i>		<i>Route 9 Township 22</i>	
<i>Month</i>	<i>Average Daily Volume</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>Average Daily Volume</i>
<i>Jan</i>	<i>2677</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>1574</i>
<i>Feb</i>	<i>2658</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>1780</i>
<i>Mar</i>	<i>2863</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>1976</i>
<i>Apr</i>	<i>2917</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>2242</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>3194</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>2502</i>
<i>Jun</i>	<i>3450</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>2788</i>
<i>Jul</i>	<i>3865</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>3617</i>
<i>Aug</i>	<i>4056</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>3863</i>
<i>Sep</i>	<i>3685</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>3066</i>
<i>Oct</i>	<i>3268</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>2775</i>
<i>Nov</i>	<i>2896</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>2399</i>
<i>Dec</i>	<i>2829</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>1912</i>
<i>Average for the Year</i>	<i>3200</i>	<i>Average for the Year</i>	<i>2540</i>

*Maine Department of Transportation*

*Border Crossings for Passenger Cars for Combined Ferry Point Bridge and Mill Town Bridge*



	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>
<i>JAN</i>	<i>61,842</i>	<i>72,676</i>	<i>80,664</i>
<i>FEB</i>	<i>64,705</i>	<i>68,087</i>	<i>85,639</i>
<i>MAR</i>	<i>71,443</i>	<i>75,556</i>	<i>86,622</i>
<i>ARP</i>	<i>67,850</i>	<i>79,791</i>	<i>87,957</i>
<i>MAY</i>	<i>75,068</i>	<i>91,533</i>	<i>99,415</i>
<i>JUN</i>	<i>76,099</i>	<i>104,355</i>	<i>103,694</i>
<i>JUL</i>	<i>81,351</i>	<i>110,238</i>	<i>111,508</i>
<i>AUG</i>	<i>86,857</i>	<i>113,237</i>	<i>111,508</i>
<i>SEP</i>	<i>112,085</i>	<i>99,212</i>	<i>98,417</i>
<i>OCT</i>	<i>98,821</i>	<i>102,169</i>	<i>96,898</i>
<i>NOV</i>	<i>82,497</i>	<i>86,574</i>	<i>65,324</i>
<i>DEC</i>	<i>82,355</i>	<i>84,882</i>	<i>88,204</i>
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b><i>960,973</i></b>	<b><i>1,088,310</i></b>	<b><i>1,115,435</i></b>

Roosevelt International Park Visitation

Year	Number of People Year Round (Roosevelt house open summer months only)
2004	121,185
2005	115,108

Source: Roosevelt International Park

	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
Jonesport	\$433,000	\$666,000	\$885,000	\$592,000
Machias	\$1,533,000	\$1,968,000	\$2,698,000	\$1,912,000
Eastport	\$833,000	\$1,282,000	\$1,812,000	\$785,000
Calais	\$1,652,000	\$2,931,000	\$3,150,000	\$1,835,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,451,000</b>	<b>\$6,847,000</b>	<b>\$8,545,000</b>	<b>\$5,124,000</b>

2004  
Sales-  
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g

Sales

Source: Maine State Planning Office

Quarter 1 and 4 Total "Off Season"	\$9,575,000
Quarter 2 and 3 Total "Tourist Season"	\$15,392,000
Difference Between "Tourist" and "Off" Seasons	\$5,817,000
Percent Increase	63.4%

<i>Lodging Sales</i>			
<i>2003</i>		<i>2004</i>	
<i>State Total</i>	<i>\$ 516,466,000</i>	<i>State Total</i>	<i>\$ 537,771,000</i>
<i>Jonesport</i>	<i>\$ 474,000</i>	<i>Jonesport</i>	<i>\$ 497,000</i>
<i>Machias</i>	<i>\$ 1,023,000</i>	<i>Machias</i>	<i>\$ 1,049,000</i>
<i>Eastport</i>	<i>\$ 791,000</i>	<i>Eastport</i>	<i>\$ 789,000</i>
<i>Calais</i>	<i>\$ 2,480,000</i>	<i>Calais</i>	<i>\$ 2,443,000</i>
<i>Washington County Total</i>	<i>\$ 4,768,000</i>	<i>Washington County Total</i>	<i>\$ 4,778,000</i>

*Source: Maine State Planning Office*

*Acknowledgements:*

*Produced by the Sunrise County Economic Council*

*PO Box 679, Machias, ME 04654*

*[www.sunrisecounty.org](http://www.sunrisecounty.org)*

*2006*

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*Handbook available on line at [www.WACOBIZ.com](http://www.WACOBIZ.com)*