



2015 Mississippi Gulf Coast Awareness and Image Study

February 2016

Conclusions

Conclusions



- ◉ The Mississippi Gulf Coast's advertising campaign produced a good awareness level of 42%.
- ◉ The advertising campaign improved the Mississippi Gulf Coast's image substantially and significantly improved the intent to visit the Mississippi Gulf Coast, including over 254,000 trips in the short term with intention of up to 485,000 trips in the next 12 months.
- ◉ The Mississippi Gulf Coast's advertising provided a good economic return. The advertising generated an incremental \$33 million in spending among visitors that would not have come to the Mississippi Gulf Coast without the advertising. This spending resulted in \$1.2 million in incremental local tax revenue against the \$760,310 advertising cost for 2:1 ratio - more than covering the advertising costs.

Conclusions – Cont'd



- ⦿ Although the Mississippi Gulf Coast could easily continue the same campaign with little downside risk, there are some areas that suggest tweaking of message communication and voice could improve results:
 - ⦿ *Increased spending is suggested, there is room to grow the awareness. Interestingly the ad awareness is similar among both the inner and outer markets. Those aware of the advertising are more likely to have a higher image rating than those not aware of the advertising.*
 - ⦿ *The Mississippi Gulf Coast is seen as being stronger than competitors on Affordable dimensions. It is rated significantly lower on Popular dimensions (well-known destination, popular with vacationers, notice advertising for the Mississippi Gulf Coast). Other dimensions, the Mississippi Gulf Coast is rated lower. Longwoods believes this results from lack of understanding and/or awareness of the Mississippi Gulf Coast features.*

Conclusions – Cont'd



- Once travelers have recently visited the Mississippi Gulf Coast, their image ratings for the Mississippi Gulf Coast are much higher on all dimensions as compared to those who have not visited – the experience is much higher than expectations. These differences are quite substantial.
- Previously identified weaknesses are overcome by experiencing the Mississippi Gulf Coast:
 - *Well-known destination*
 - *Popular with vacationers*

Conclusions – Cont'd



- ◉ From a strategic point of view, this means that the Mississippi Gulf Coast can celebrate several important aspects of its product to correct misperceptions, since it can deliver on the promise with great confidence.
- ◉ The Mississippi Gulf Coast economic development image is positively impacted by the tourism advertising. These numbers can be strengthened if the advertising and visitation lift can be improved.