



# 2014 West Virginia Image & Advertising Accountability Research

November 2014

## Table of Contents



Introduction	3
Purpose	4
Methodology	5
Executive Summary	7
Conclusions and Recommendations	26
Trip Planning	32
Destination Past Visitation and Interest	37
Travel Motivators and Hot Buttons	43
West Virginia's Image versus the Competition	46
West Virginia's Product Delivery	89
West Virginia's 2014 Advertising Campaign	95
Creative	96
Advertising Awareness	98
Impact of the 2014 Ad Campaign on West Virginia's Image	107
Short Term Impacts of Advertising	123
Appendix: Media Diagnostics	127

## Introduction



- Longwoods International was retained to undertake an evaluation of West Virginia's tourism advertising campaign.
- This report presents the detailed study findings as they relate to:
  - West Virginia's image as a travel destination vs. its key competitors
  - The impact of the advertising on West Virginia's image as a travel destination
  - The bottom-line impacts of the campaign

#### Purpose



- The research was designed to provide:
  - Strategic image data
    - What are the image factors and attributes that are important in destination selection?
    - What is West Virginia's image as a travel destination versus its key competitors: Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina?
  - A measure of both short-of-sales and bottom-line impacts of West Virginia's tourism advertising:
    - Awareness/recall of the 2014 campaign
    - Incremental short-term trips to West Virginia during and immediately following the advertising campaign
    - Incremental trips planned for the following year
    - Spending in West Virginia by the incremental visitors
    - Direct taxes generated by that spending

## Methodology



- The study surveyed travelers in West Virginia's advertising markets:
  - A traveler is defined as a person who has taken a day or overnight pleasure trip within the past 3 years, and intends to take one within the next two years. (63% of those screened met these requirements.)
- The study was conducted via a major online consumer sample in the U.S.:
  - The sample was selected to be representative of the markets being surveyed (West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Washington, DC)
  - A total of 1,400 travelers participated in the study
  - Data was weighted prior to analysis based on age, gender, income, household size, and market size.

## Methodology (Cont'd)



- The questionnaire included:
  - Travel history
  - Image of West Virginia and its competitors (Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina) as a travel destination on a battery of 54 attributes
  - Awareness of West Virginia's tourism ads: Respondents were exposed to actual copies of the ads.



## **Executive Summary**

# Past and Future Visitation to West Virginia



- Half of the respondents (50%) have experienced West Virginia at least once. West Virginia visitation is below the visitation of the competitive states of Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, and Ohio. In the past 2 years, visitation to West Virginia is only 31%. Again this level is lower than the competitive states.
- Similar to the competitive states, four in ten indicate they plan an overnight or day visit to West Virginia in the next year. West Virginia residents are twice as likely to visit West Virginia in the next year as residents of other states.

#### Travel Motivators



- In order to determine the key factors that motivate travel and destination of choice, respondents are asked to rate the selected states across a robust list of attributes or characteristics.
- Statistical correlations are then used to establish the degree of association between each attribute and the overall rating, "A place I would really enjoy visiting."
  - A high correlation reveals an attribute to be an important motivator. The attributes with the highest correlations are referred to as 'Hot Buttons'.
  - A lower correlation reveals an attribute to be of lesser importance.
- Using a data reduction technique, the attributes are combined into 12 different factors. The Travel Motivating factors are calculations that reflect the aggregated factor importance across the attributes.

#### **Travel Motivators**



- For these travelers, the top motivators for getting on the destination wish list are excitement, family destination, followed by adult destination:
  - The notion of excitement comes from being seen as a fun, "once in a lifetime" experience and a sense of adventure
  - Family destination, including being a good place for families to visit and that children would enjoy
  - Adult vacation, the perceived suitability for couples and adults vacations

## Travel Motivators (Cont'd)



- Several factors are of moderate importance individually; but they include some of the key rational features that bring to life the emotional excitement that attracts people to a destination:
  - Luxurious refers to a destination's first-class hotels/resorts
  - A worry-free environment, because being perceived as relaxed, safe, and friendly are important
  - Being unique from the vacation experience, local cooking, scenery to interesting bed and breakfasts
  - Being popular with vacationers and being a well know destination

## Travel Motivators (Cont'd)



- Relatively low on the priority list are:
  - Good sightseeing, particularly the overall variety of things to see and do, and the interesting arts and crafts, and well known landmarks
  - The opportunities for entertainment, including shopping, theater, music and nightlife
  - Climate overall and with a good contrast of seasons.
  - Opportunities for sports and recreation. It is unfortunate that this dimension is low on the priority list since this is one of West Virginia's strengths especially for exploring nature and being a good place for camping.
  - Being affordable, well-priced vacation options and being close by

#### **Hot Buttons**



Examining the attributes individually and comparing them to the attribute of "A place I would really enjoy visiting." The following attributes rise to the top as important to destination choice.

- A fun place
- Good place for families to visit
- Must see destination
- Good for couples
- An exciting place
- Lots of things to see and do
- Children would especially enjoy
- Good place to relax
- A real adventure
- Unique vacation experience

## West Virginia's Image vs. Competitors



- In comparison to the major competitors evaluated in this study, West Virginia's overall level of appeal:
  - lags significantly behind North Carolina and Virginia and slightly below Maryland and Pennsylvania
  - but is ahead of Ohio
- As an exception, West Virginia is perceived similarly to North Carolina and Virginia as a **Sports and Recreation** destination and better than all other states.

# West Virginia's Image vs. Competitors (Cont'd)



- West Virginia's image strengths versus these competitors as a group are:
  - Known for beautiful mountains
  - Great for white water rafting
  - Excellent hunting
  - Great for hiking/backpacking
  - Great for exploring nature
  - Good place for camping
  - Great for canoeing/kayaking
  - Excellent skiing/snowboarding
- None of these attributes are considered important to destination choice in West Virginia's advertised markets.

## West Virginia's Image



- Travelers perceive some significant disadvantages to visiting West Virginia relative to the competition:
  - Well-known landmarks
  - Variety of dining options
  - Excellent shopping
  - First-class hotels/resorts
  - Exciting nightlife/ entertainment/ shows
  - Well-known destination
  - Lots to see and do
  - Great for theater and the performing arts
  - Popular with vacationers
  - Great for swimming
  - Great for golf
  - Children would especially enjoy
  - An exciting place

## Image of West Virginia vs. Ohio



#### West Virginia Better For...

- Known for beautiful mountains
- Great for white water rafting
- Great for hiking/backpacking
- Great for exploring nature
- Good place for camping
- Truly beautiful scenery
- Excellent hunting
- Unique scenery
- Great for canoeing/kayaking
- Excellent skiing/snowboarding
- Good trail system
- A real adventure
- Good place to relax

#### Ohio Better For...

- Excellent shopping
- Variety of dining options
- Exciting nightlife/ entertainment/ shows

# Image of West Virginia vs. Pennsylvania



#### West Virginia Better For...

- Known for beautiful mountains
- Great for white water rafting
- Great for hiking/backpacking
- Great for exploring nature
- Excellent hunting
- Great for canoeing/kayaking
- Known for pristine water
- Good place for camping
- Warm, friendly people
- A real adventure

#### Pennsylvania Better For...

- Well-known landmarks
- Variety of dining options
- Great for theater and the performing arts
- Lots to see and do
- Excellent shopping
- Interesting antiques/arts/crafts
- Exciting nightlife/ entertainment/ shows
- Children would especially enjoy
- Well-known destination
- First class hotels/resorts
- An exciting place

## Image of West Virginia vs. Virginia



#### West Virginia Better For...

- Known for beautiful mountains
- Great for white water rafting
- Excellent skiing/snowboarding
- Excellent hunting

#### Virginia Better For...

- First class hotels/resorts
- Well-known destination
- Variety of dining options
- Well-known landmarks
- Popular with vacationers
- Lots to see and do
- Good place for families to visit
- Great for swimming
- Excellent shopping
- Exciting nightlife/ entertainment/ shows
- An exciting place
- Children would especially enjoy
- Great for theater and the performing arts
- Good for couples

## Image of West Virginia vs. Maryland



#### West Virginia Better For...

- Known for beautiful mountains
- Excellent hunting
- Great for white water rafting
- Great for hiking/backpacking
- Great for exploring nature
- Good place for camping
- Great for canoeing/kayaking
- Good trail system
- Truly beautiful scenery
- Excellent skiing/snowboarding
- Affordable accommodations
- A real adventure
- Unique scenery
- Warm, friendly people

#### **Maryland Better For...**

- Variety of dining options
- Exciting nightlife/ entertainment/ shows
- Well-known landmarks
- Excellent shopping
- First class hotels/resorts
- Great for theater and the performing arts
- Well-known destination
- Popular with vacationers
- Lots to see and do
- Unique local/ethnic cooking
- Great for swimming
- Children would especially enjoy
- An exciting place
- Great for golf

# Image of West Virginia vs. North Carolina



#### West Virginia Better For...

- Known for beautiful mountains
- Great for white water rafting
- Excellent hunting
- A good contrast of seasons
- Excellent skiing/snowboarding

#### North Carolina Better For...

- Popular with vacationers
- Great for swimming
- Great for golf
- Well-known destination
- Good place for families to visit
- Excellent shopping
- A fun place
- First class hotels/resorts
- Great climate overall
- Exciting nightlife/ entertainment/ shows
- Lots to see and do
- An exciting place
- Good vacation packages
- Good for couples

## West Virginia's Product Delivery



- The image ratings we just discussed looked at perceptions of West Virginia and the competition among the broad population of potential travelers. Within that broad population there are people who have visited West Virginia in the recent past, i.e. who have experienced West Virginia's product, and some who have not.
- The analysis that follows examines recent visitors' image of West Virginia based on recent experience ("product delivery") compared to the image ratings of those who have never actually visited, i.e., whose perceptions are based on "pure image".
- This is essentially the difference between the expectations of those who have not been to West Virginia vs. the experiences of those who have. When the experience falls short of expectations, there may be a problem with the product. When experience exceeds expectations, there is a great opportunity to educate those who do not know how wonderful West Virginia is.

## **Product Delivery Impacts**



- As expected, the image ratings for West Virginia are much higher among West Virginia visitors on all dimensions as compared to those who have not visited.
- Past experience strongly influences the perception of West Virginia as being exciting, a family destination, a adult destination, being worry free, great sightseeing, having a good climate, excellent sports & recreation, and being affordable.
- Hot Buttons notably impacted by experience are:
  - Good place to relax
  - Good place for families to visit
  - An exciting place
  - Good for couples
  - Being a must see destination
  - Provides an unique vacation experience
  - Being a real adventure
  - Being a fun place

# Advertising Awareness and Impact on Visitation



- Fifty-nine (59%) of the respondents are aware of the West Virginia advertising. West Virginia ad awareness is highest in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Maryland.
- The advertising in magazine and online advertising formats have similar awareness levels (47% and 43% respectively) with television lower (34%), and radio much lower (18%).
- The impact on visits to West Virginia is slowing with increased advertising frequency.

## Advertising Image Impacts



- The advertising has had only a modest impact on West Virginia's image as a travel destination. Across virtually all dimensions, respondents who recalled seeing the advertising rated the West Virginia only modestly higher to those respondents who did not recall seeing the advertising. Typically, there is a larger difference.
- The campaign had highest improvement to the perception of West Virginia as being *popular*, *exciting* and *unique*.
- The Hot Button notably impacted by the advertising is:
  - A fun place

## Advertising Financials



- With an investment of \$1,876,667, the 2014 campaign generated an awareness level of 59%.
- Bottom-line results included:
  - 1,500,486 incremental visits to the state that would not have occurred without the advertising
  - \$181 million in incremental visitor spending
  - \$13 million in incremental state and local taxes
- Looking at it in another way, every dollar spent on the 2014 campaign generated \$96 in incremental spending in West Virginia and \$7 in additional tax dollars.
- Campaign efficiency is good with every dollar invested in travel marketing generated 0.8 trips in 2014.





- Many of West Virginia's image strengths are outdoor attributes such as known for beautiful mountains, great for white water rafting, excellent hunting, great for hiking/backpacking, and great for exploring nature.
- When taken individually, these attributes are relatively unimportant in terms of driving interest in destination selection.
- West Virginia's image is stronger than Ohio. However compared to North Carolina and Virginia, the image perception is much lower. These stronger destinations should be kept in mind when developing the messaging.



- Longwoods believes these image perceptions can be corrected in advertising, especially when focusing on the Hot Buttons of:
  - Lots of things to see and do
  - Children would especially enjoy
  - An exciting place



- Travel motivator ratings from people who have visited in the past 2 years are better than those who have not experienced West Virginia. As a result, tactics to build trial for the West Virginia destination should be considered.
- This is especially true among the factors of worry free, sports & recreation, being affordable, and climate. When travelers experienced the destination, they rate West Virginia higher.



- Image ratings among those aware of the advertising are only slightly higher to those who have not seen the advertising.
- It would appear that travelers are not learning anything new from the advertising.
- The slowing of the impact on visits to West Virginia with increased advertising frequency is expected to some degree. However, the rate of change seen in this research is lower than expected and may be an indication that the current campaign may be reaching the end of its effectiveness.



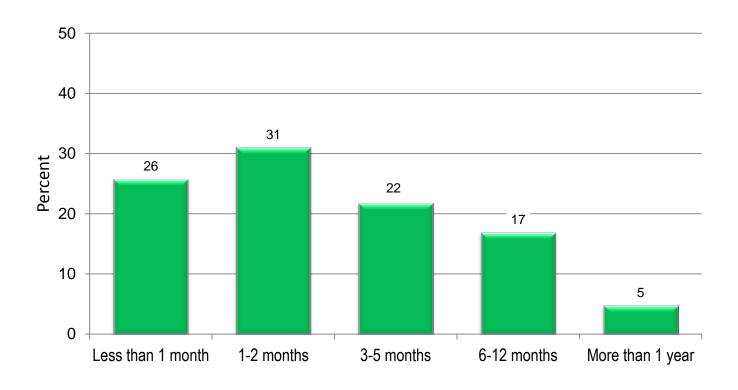
- It appears that Magazine and Online placements worked harder for West Virginia than Radio. Some consideration should be given to shifting some of the media dollars to the media that works harder.
- West Virginia has a good performance on their return on investment at \$7 for every marketing dollar invested.
- Increased spending may not yield the same ratio, but it should increase the tax dollars generated if the advertising is on strategy.



## Trip Planning

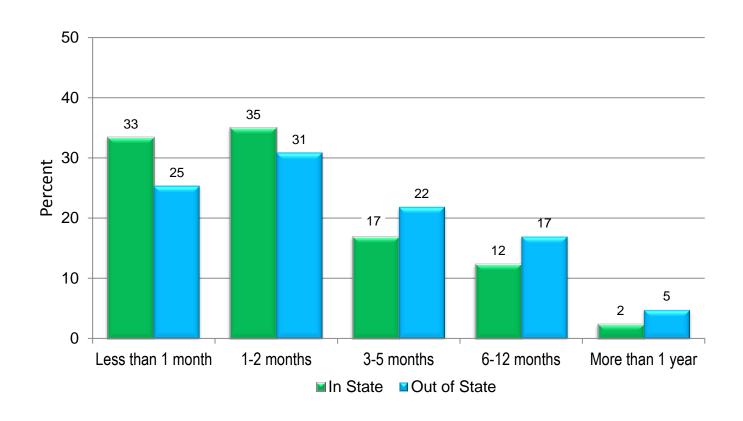
# Planning Cycle





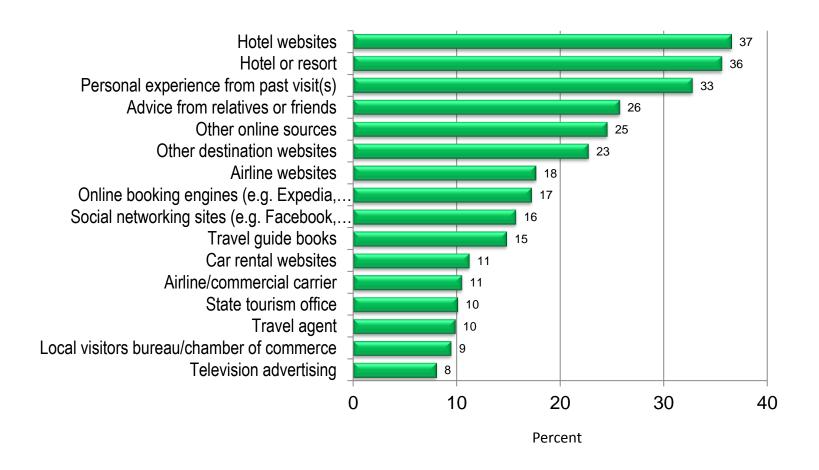
## Planning Cycle – In State vs. Out of State





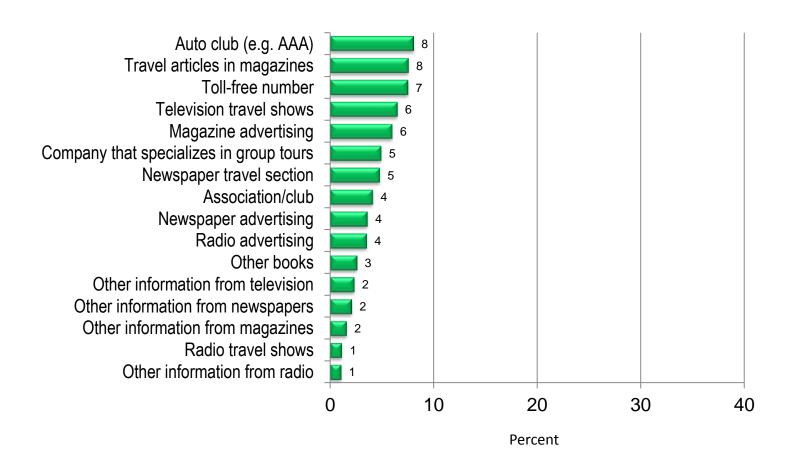
## Information Sources Used for Planning





## Information Sources Used for Planning (Cont'd)





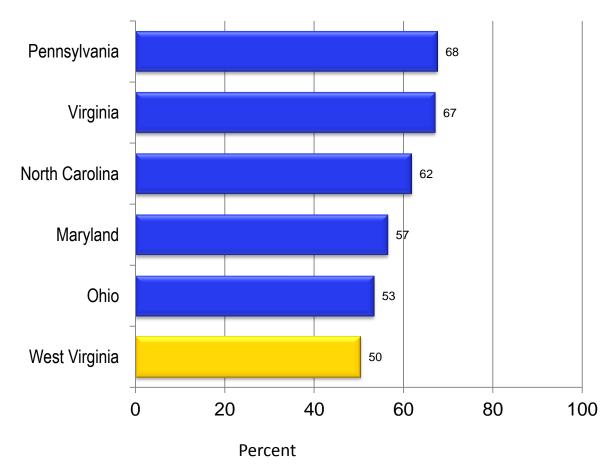


# Destination Past Visitation & Interest

#### Ever Visited — Day/Overnight Trip



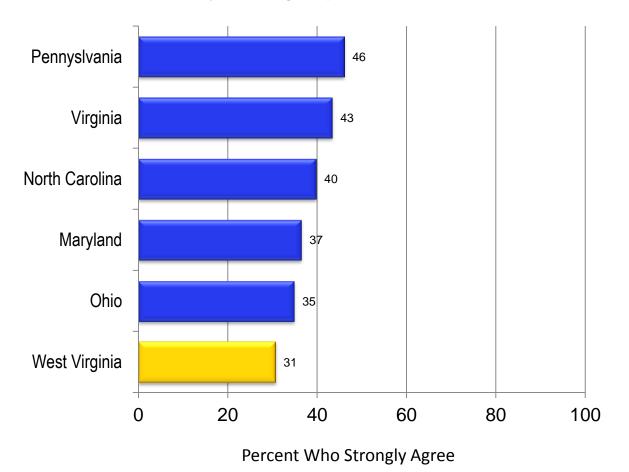
Base: Those who have ever visited on a day or overnight trip



#### Past 2 Years— Day/Overnight Trip



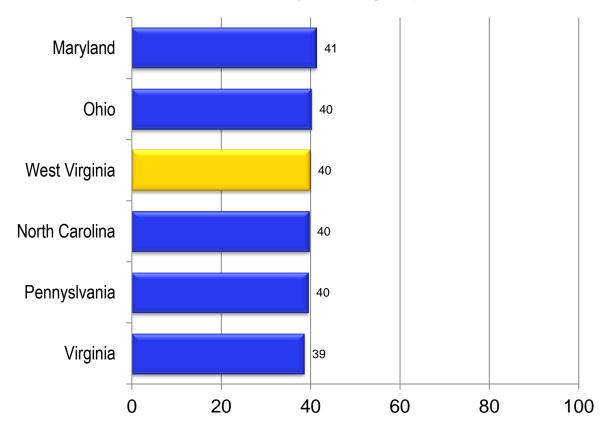
Base: Those who have ever visited on a day or overnight trip for each state



#### Intent to Visit in the Next Year



#### Base: Those who have ever visited on a day or overnight trip

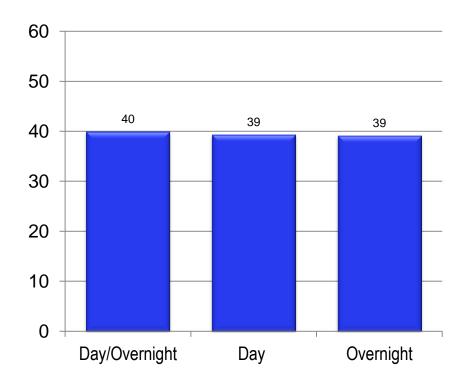


#### Intent to Visit West Virginia in the Next Year



Base: Those who have ever visited on a day or overnight trip



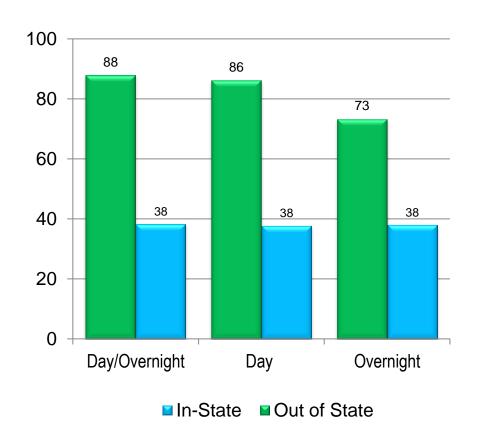


#### Intent to Visit West Virginia in the Next Year – In-State vs. Out of State



Base: Those who have ever visited on a day or overnight trip

Percent who Definitely/Probably Will Visit

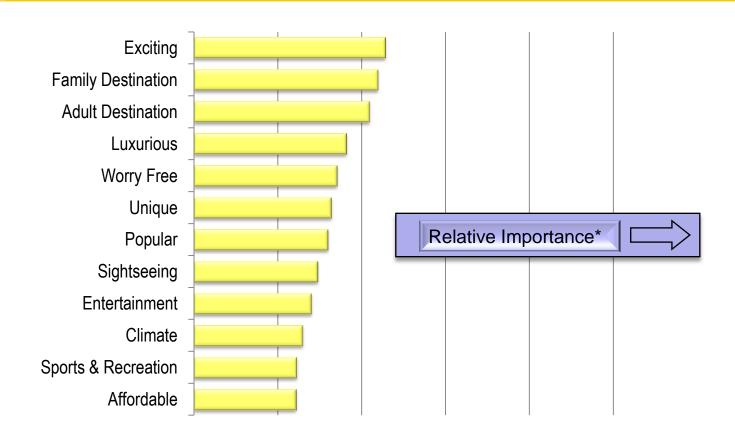




## Travel Motivators and Hot Buttons

#### **Travel Motivators**





<sup>\*</sup>A measure of the degree of association between each factor and whether destination is a place "I would really enjoy visiting."

#### **Hot Buttons**



#### **Top 10 Hot Buttons**

A fun place

**Good place for families to visit** 

Must see destination

**Good for couples** 

An exciting place

Lots of things to see and do

Children would especially enjoy

Good place to relax

A real adventure

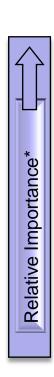
Unique vacation experience

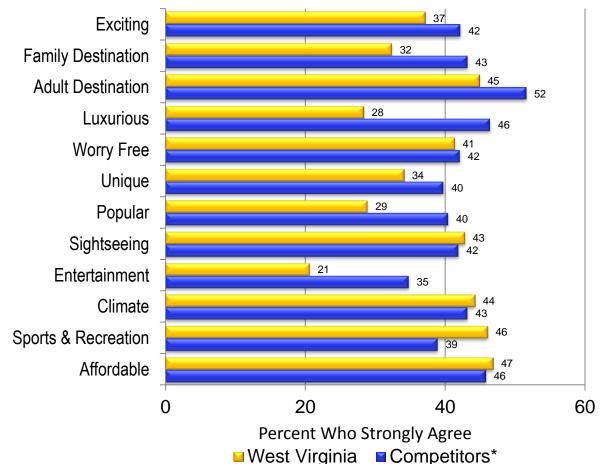


# West Virginia's Image vs. the Competition

#### West Virginia's Image vs. Competitors

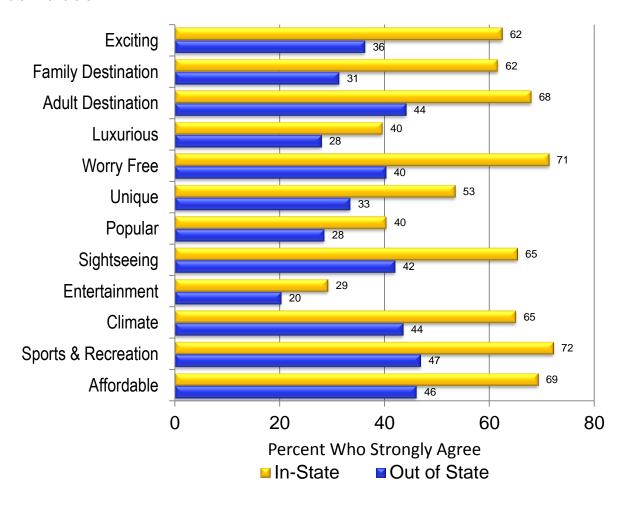






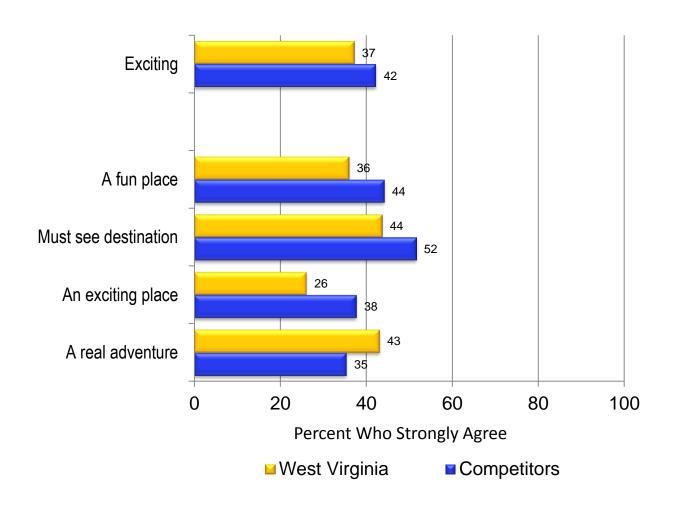
### West Virginia's Image – In-State vs. Out of State





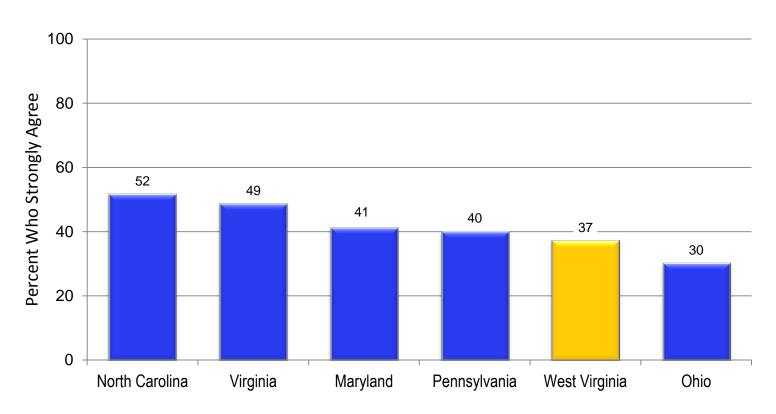
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Exciting





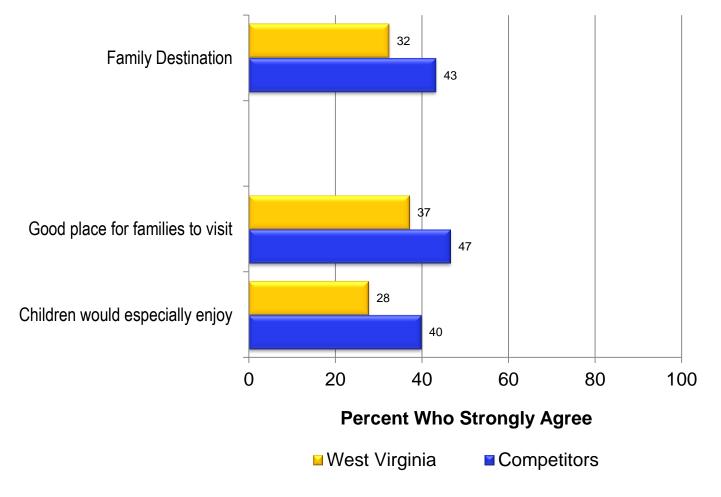
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Exciting





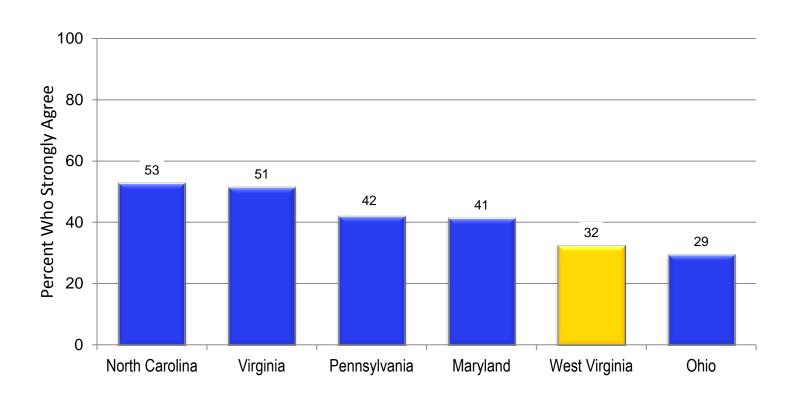
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Family Destination





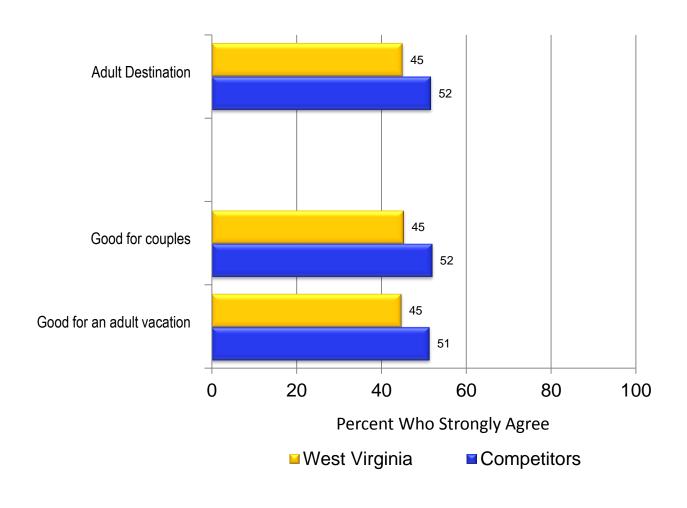
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Family Destination





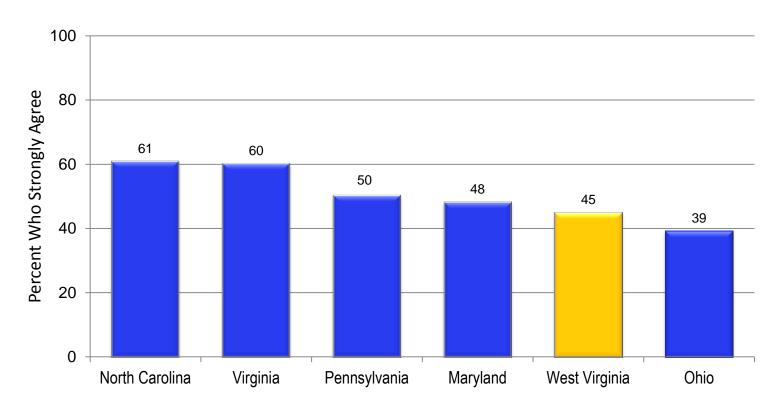
### West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Adult Destination





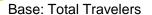
### West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Adult Destination

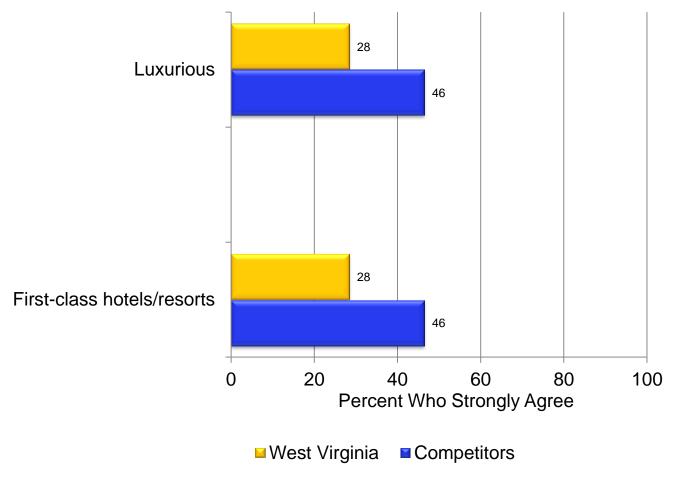




### West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Luxurious

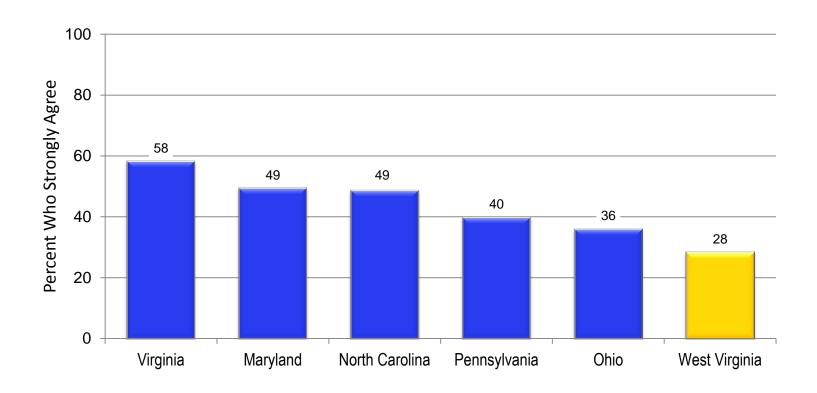






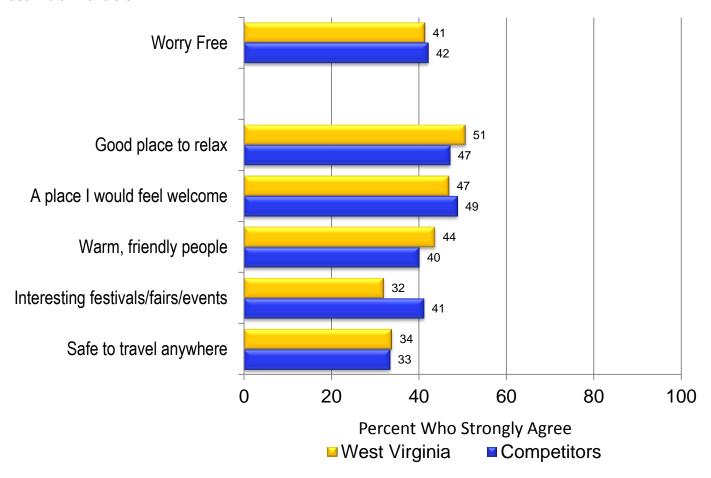
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Luxurious





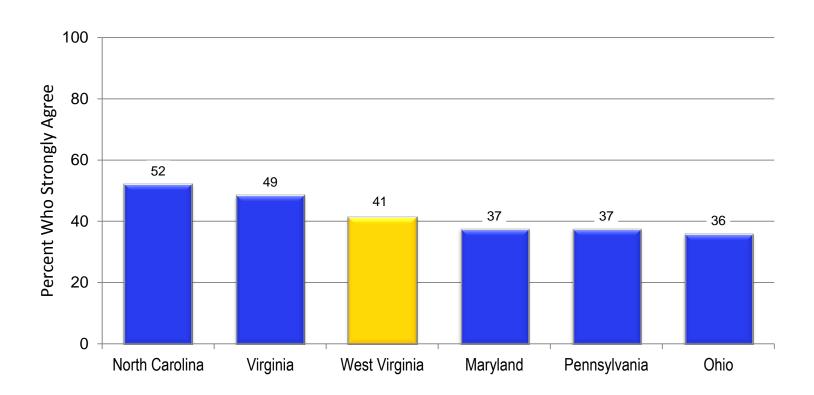
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Worry Free





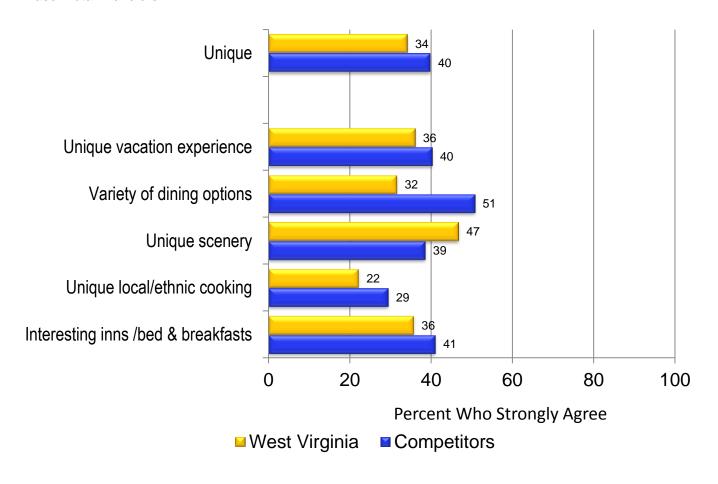
## West Virginia's Image vs. Competitors — Worry Free





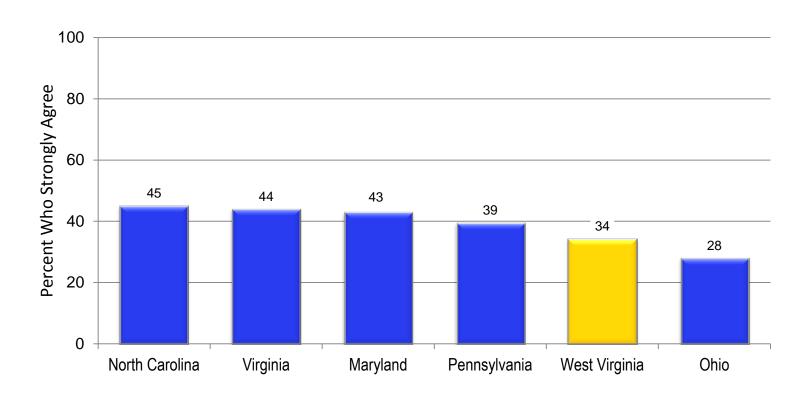
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Unique





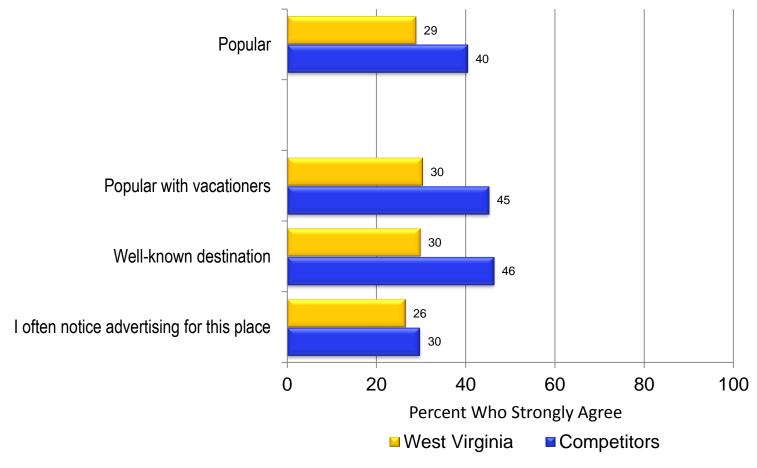
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Unique





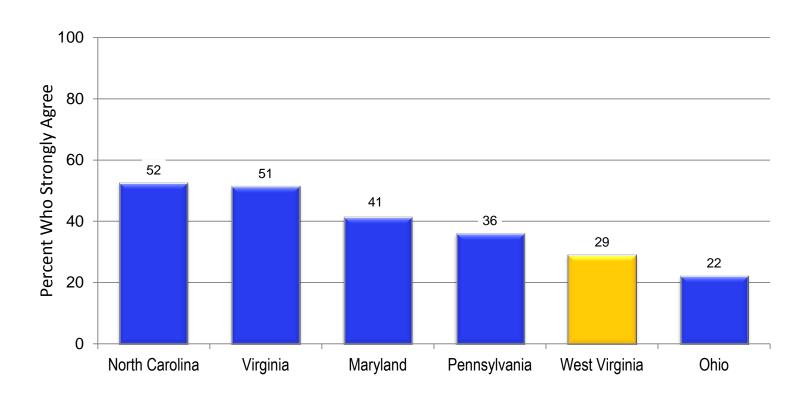
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Popular





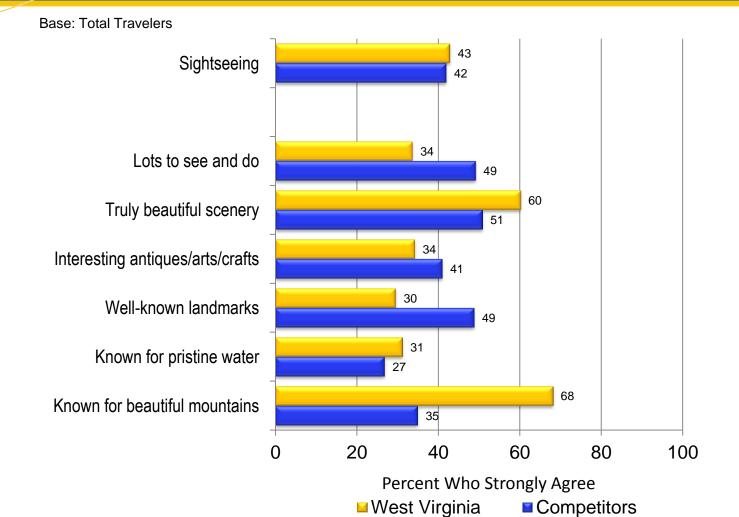
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Popular





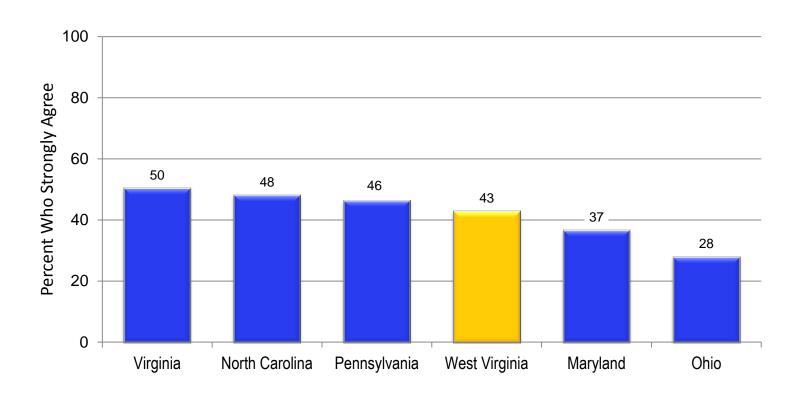
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Sightseeing





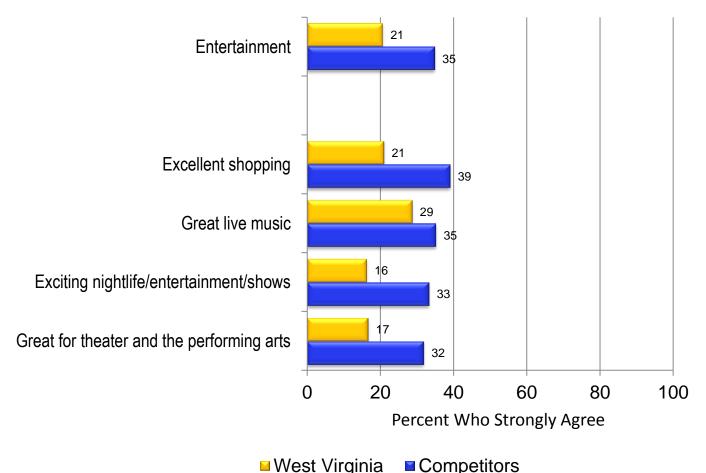
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Sightseeing





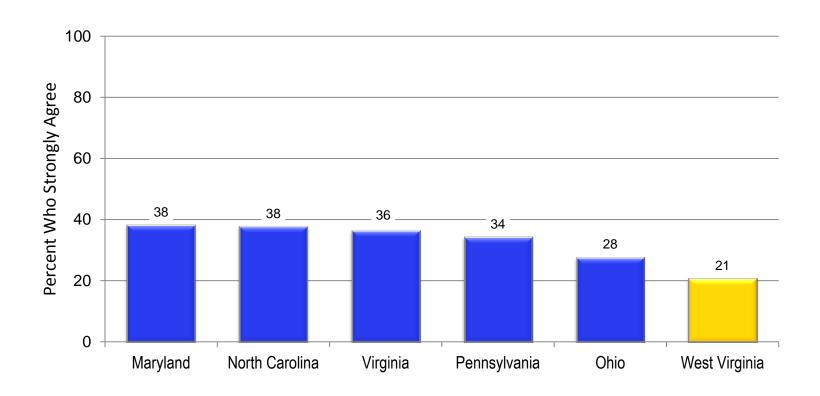
### West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Entertainment





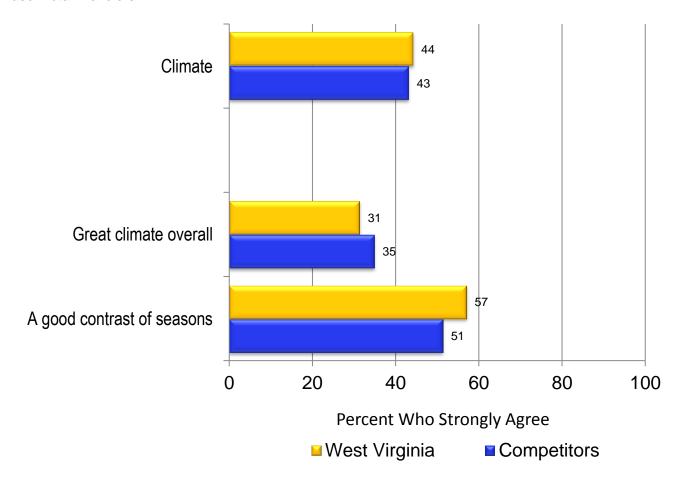
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Entertainment





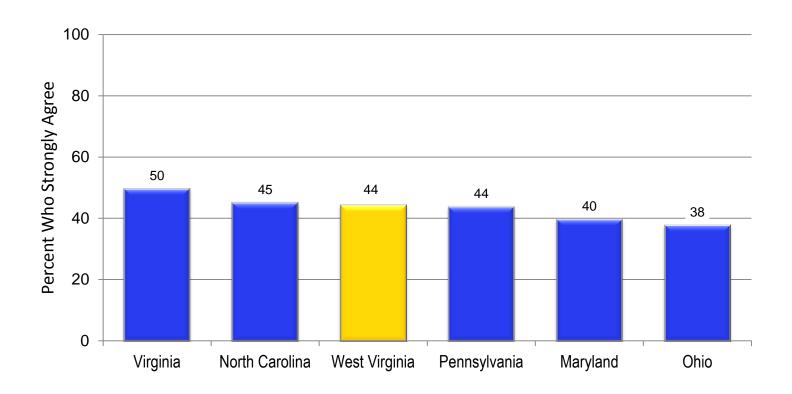
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Climate





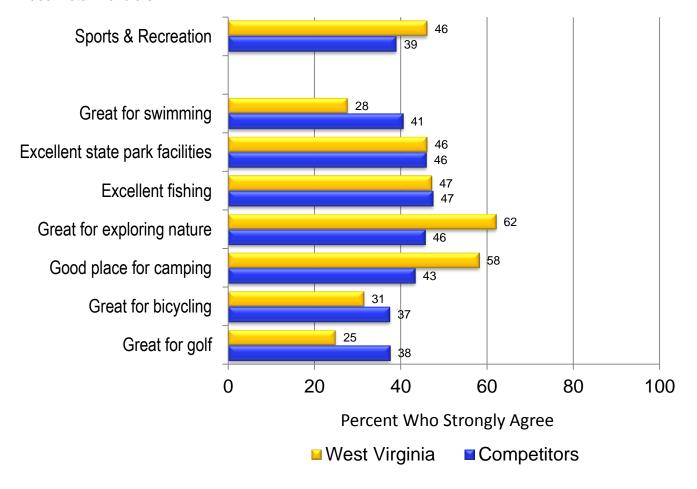
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Climate





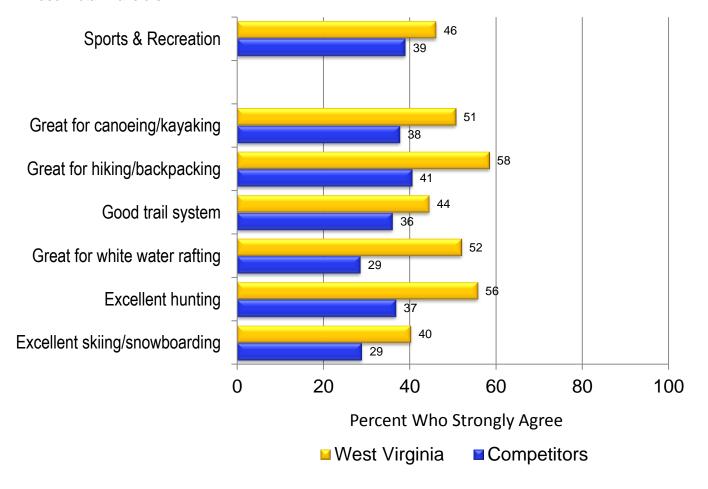
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Sports and Recreation





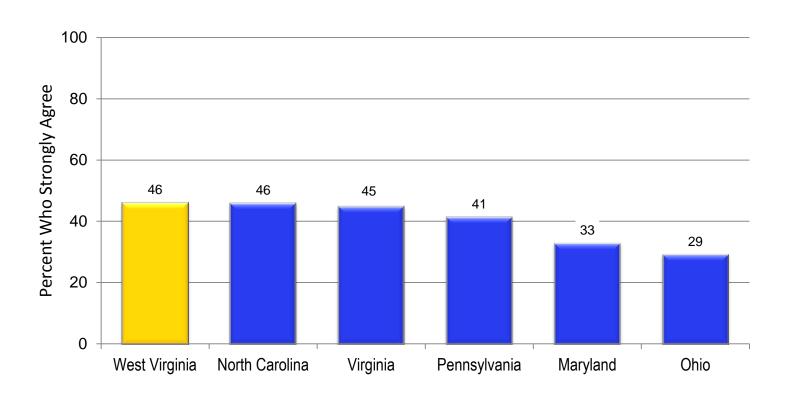
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Sports and Recreation (Cont'd)





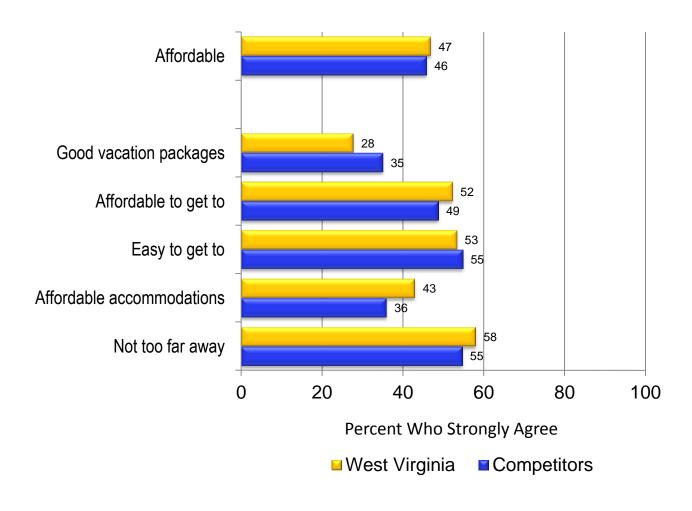
## West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Sports and Recreation





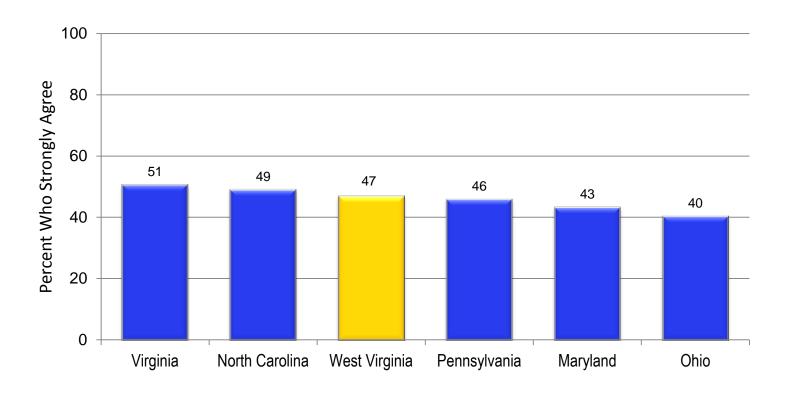
### West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Affordable





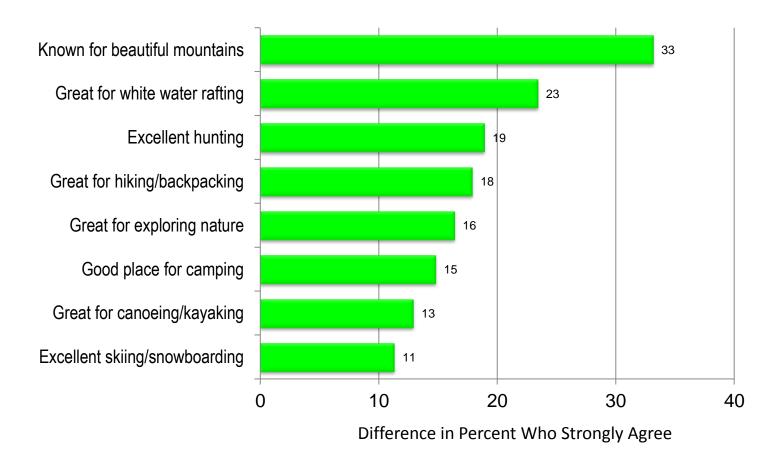
### West Virginia Image vs. Competitors — Affordable





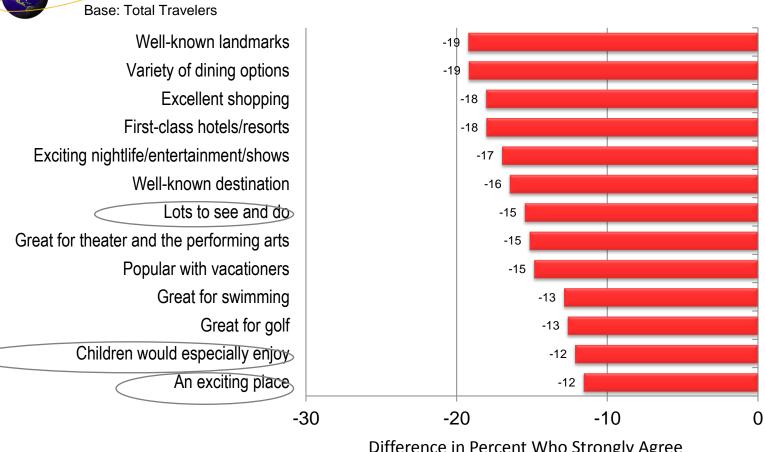
# West Virginia Image Strengths vs. Competitors





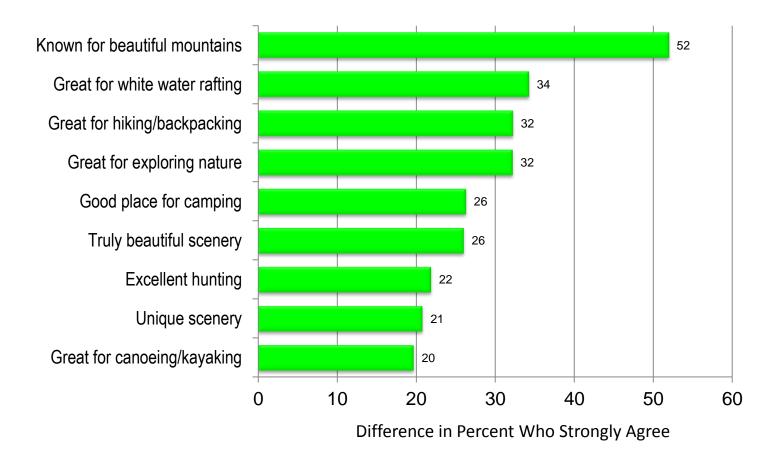
#### West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. Competitors





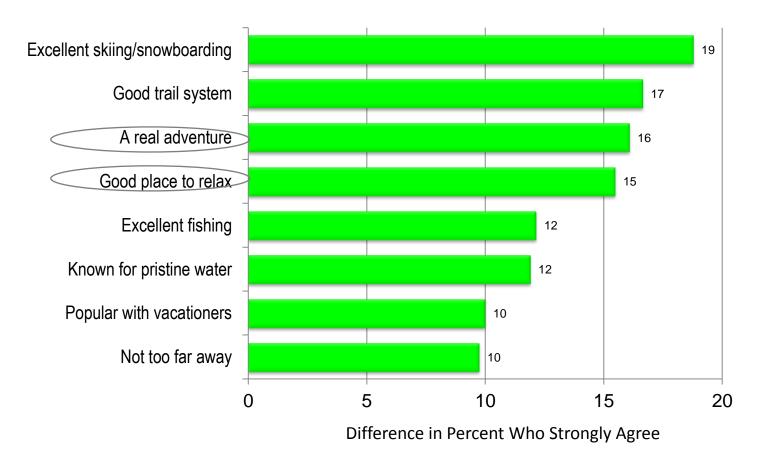
### West Virginia Image Strengths vs. Ohio





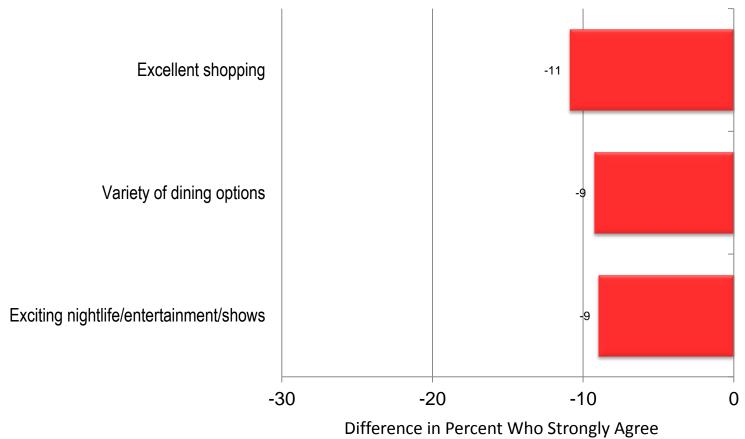
# West Virginia Image Strengths vs. Ohio (Cont'd)





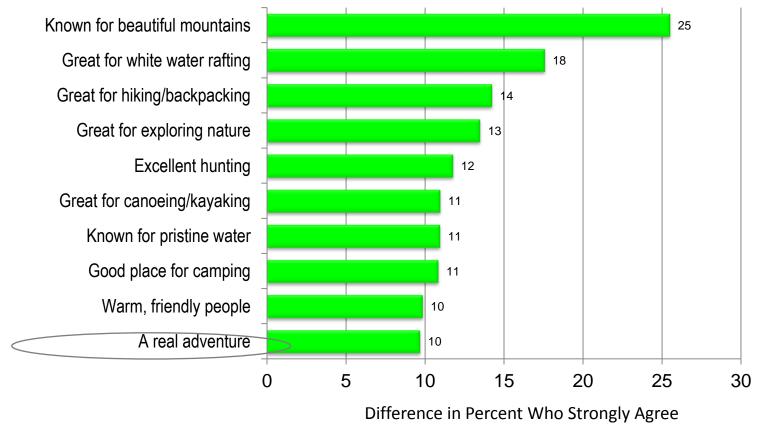
### West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. Ohio





# West Virginia Image Strengths vs. Pennsylvania

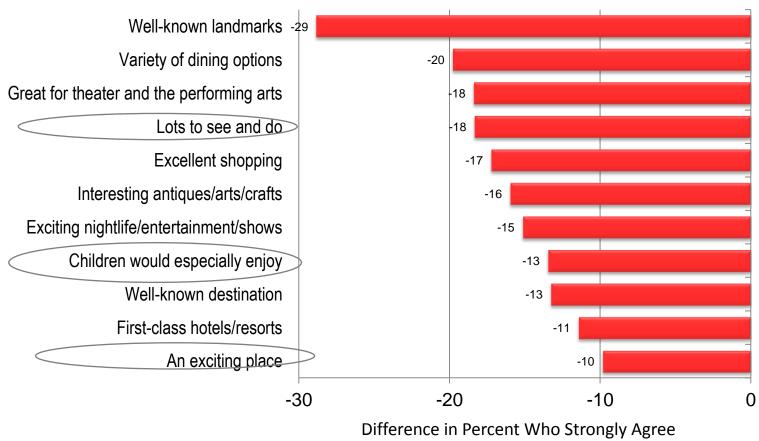




### West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. Pennsylvania



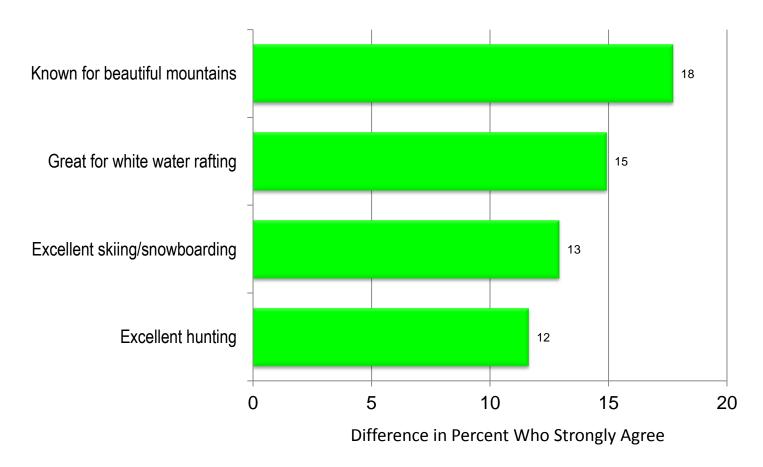
Base: Total Travelers



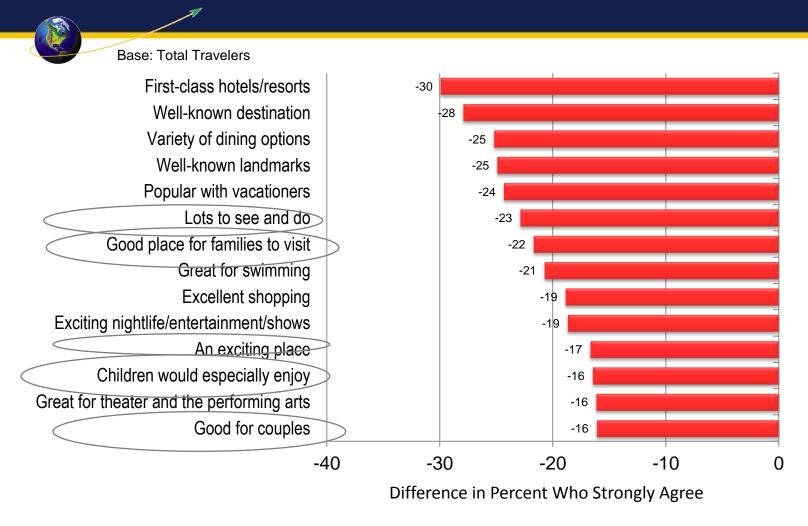
Note: Circled attributes are some of the most important image hot buttons for travelers

# West Virginia Image Strengths vs. Virginia



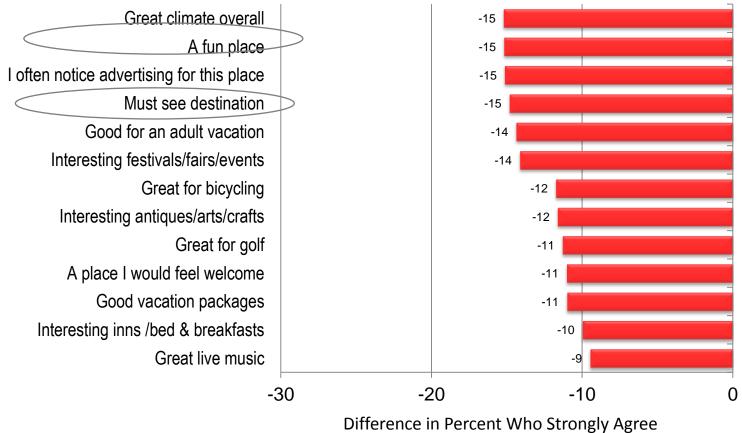


# West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. Virginia



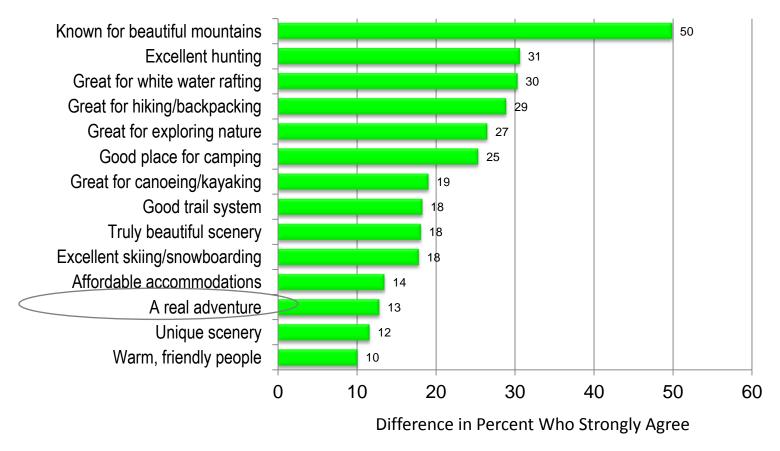
# West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. Virginia (Cont'd)





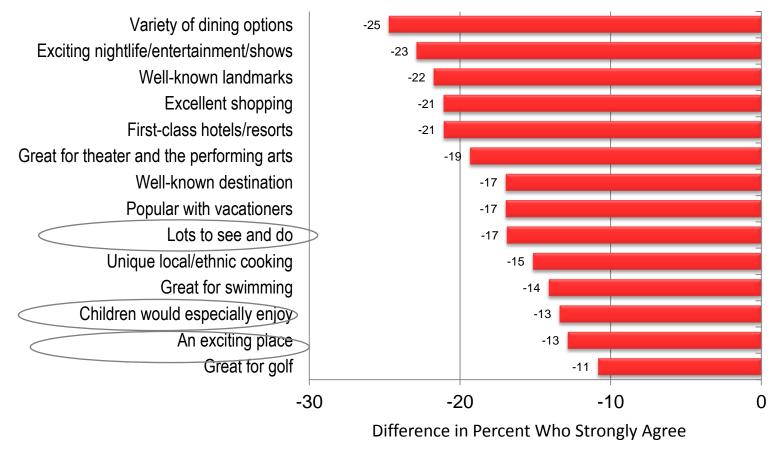
# West Virginia Image Strengths vs. Maryland





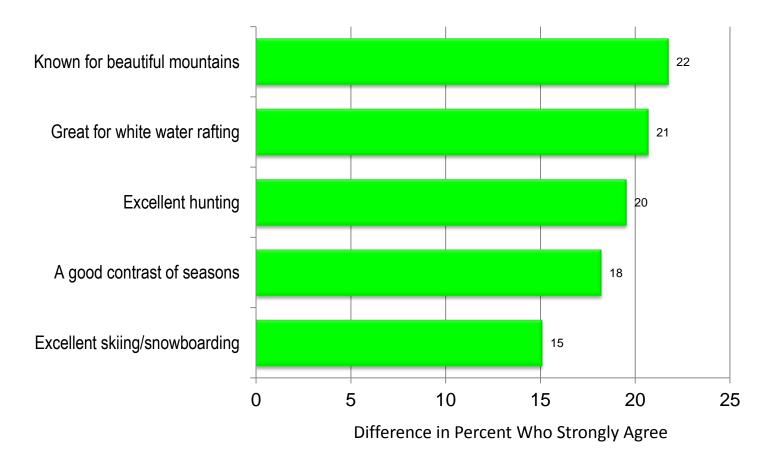
# West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. Maryland



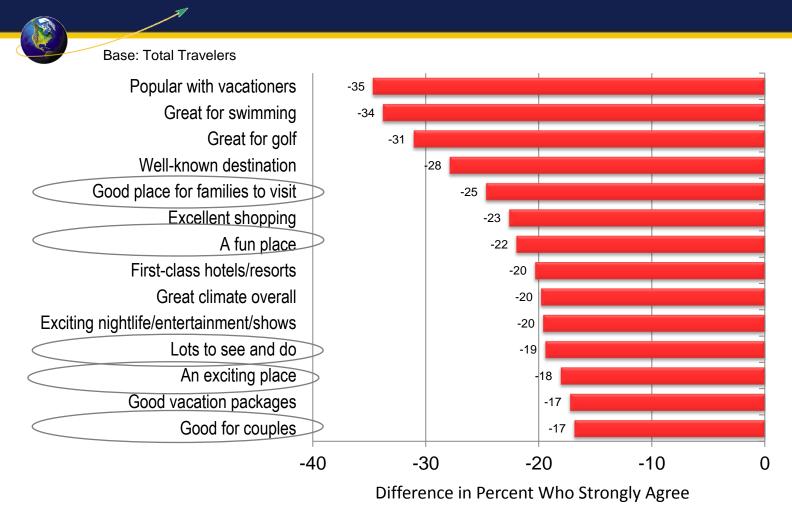


### West Virginia Image Strengths vs. North Carolina

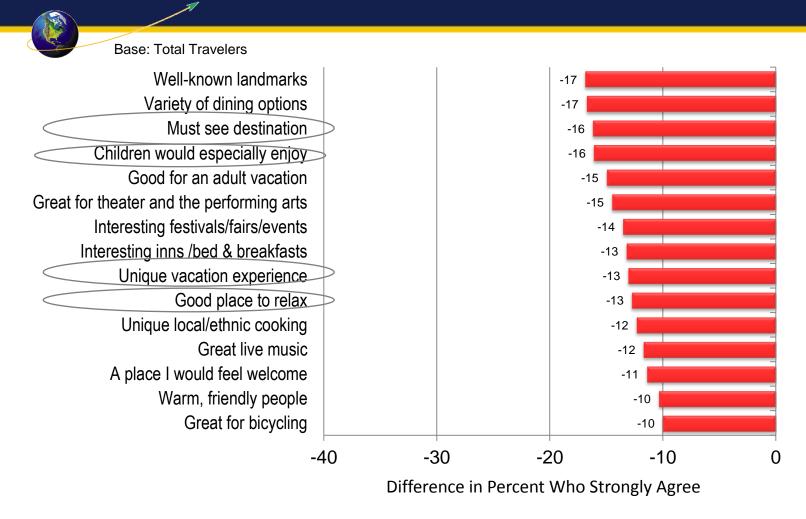




### West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. North Carolina



# West Virginia Image Weaknesses vs. North Carolina (Cont'd)

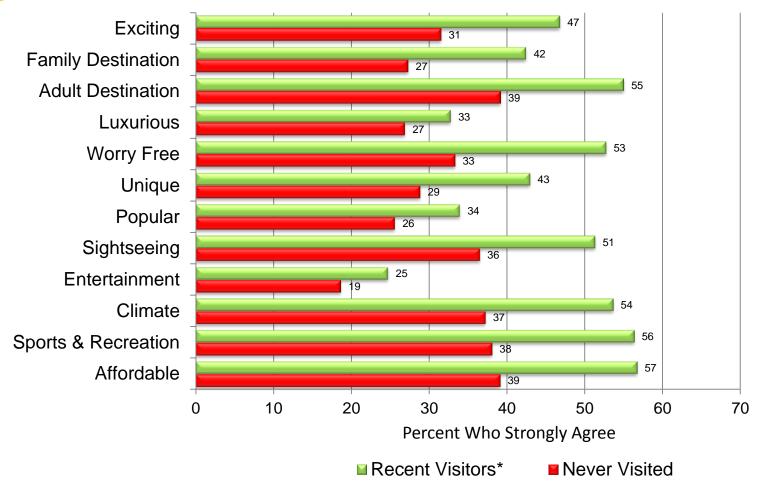




#### West Virginia's Product Delivery

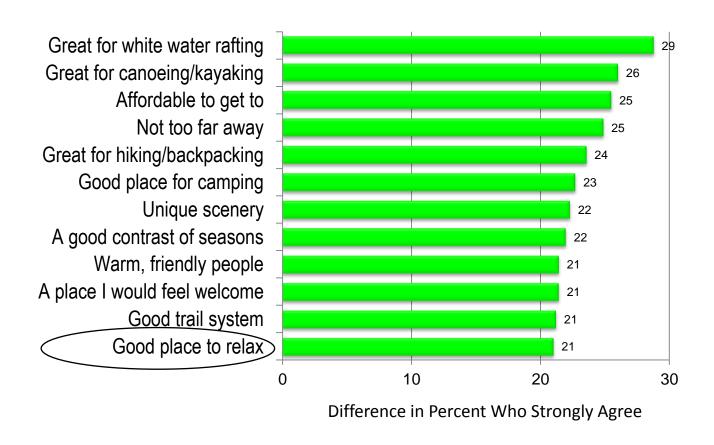
#### West Virginia's Product vs. Image





#### Top Product Strengths vs. Image

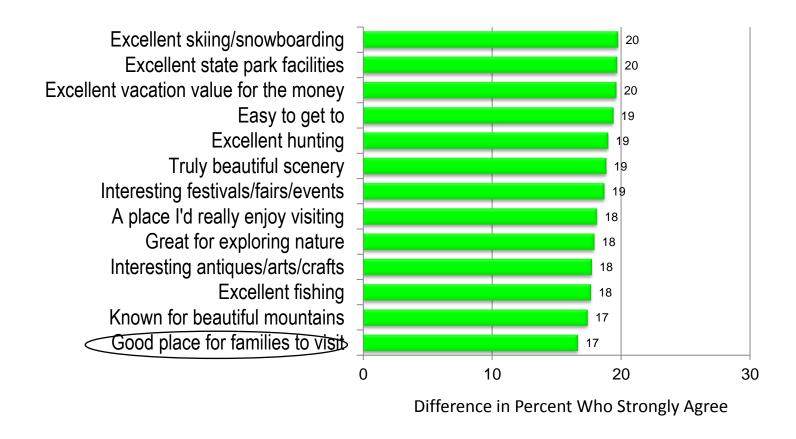




<sup>\*</sup> Circled attributes are some of the most important image hot buttons for travelers

# Top Product Strengths vs. Image (Cont'd)

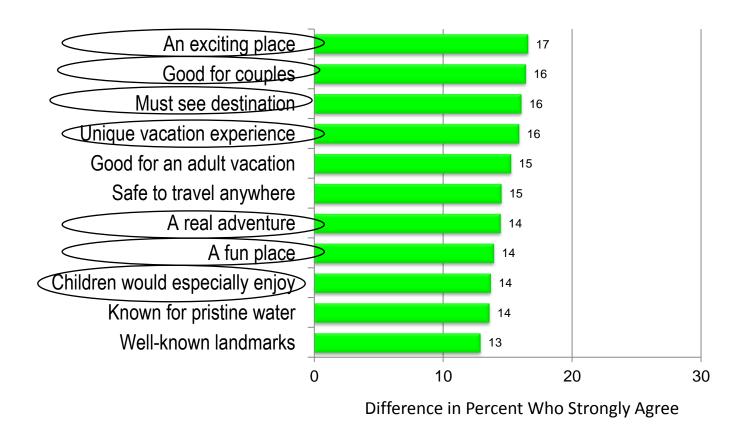




<sup>\*</sup> Circled attributes are some of the most important image hot buttons for travelers

# Top Product Strengths vs. Image (Cont'd)

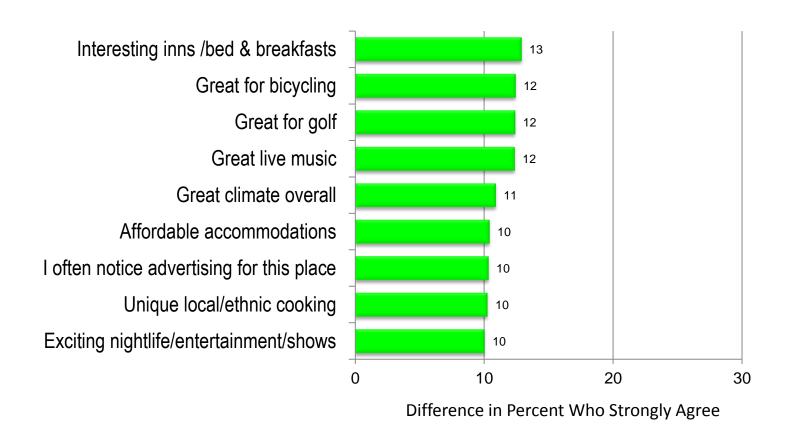




<sup>\*</sup> Circled attributes are some of the most important image hot buttons for travelers

# Top Product Strengths vs. Image (Cont'd)







#### West Virginia's 2014 Advertising Campaign



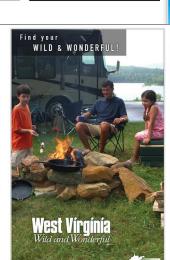
#### Creative

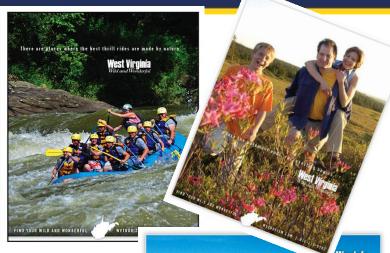
### Longwoods



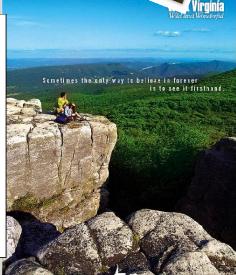


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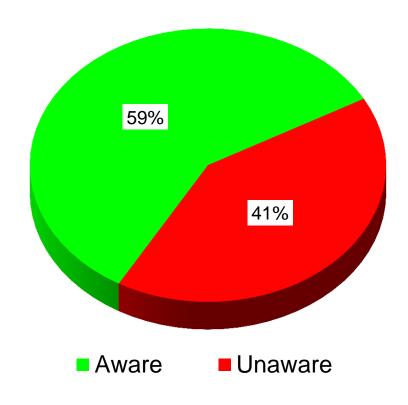


#### **Advertising Awareness**

#### Awareness of 2014 Advertising

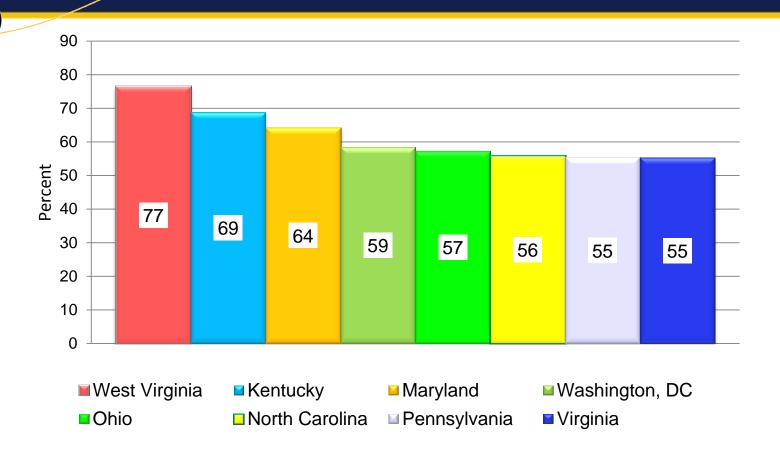


Base: Total Region



#### Awareness\* by Advertising Market

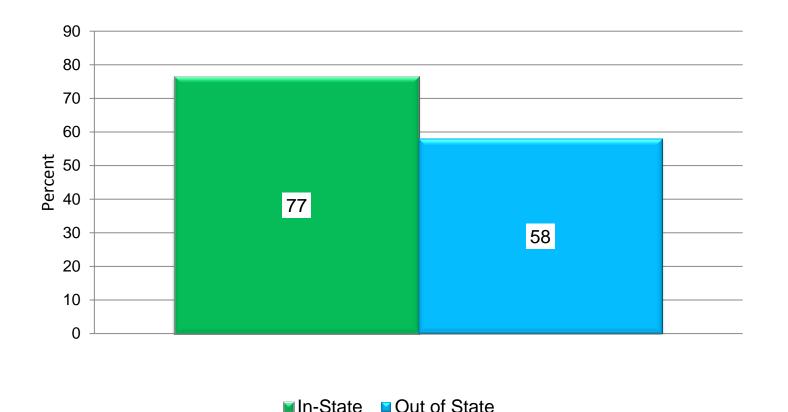




<sup>\*</sup>Saw at least one ad

#### Awareness\* In-State vs. Out of State

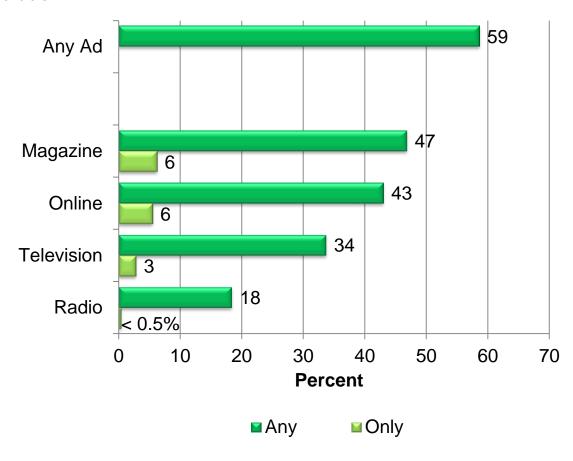




<sup>\*</sup>Saw at least one ad

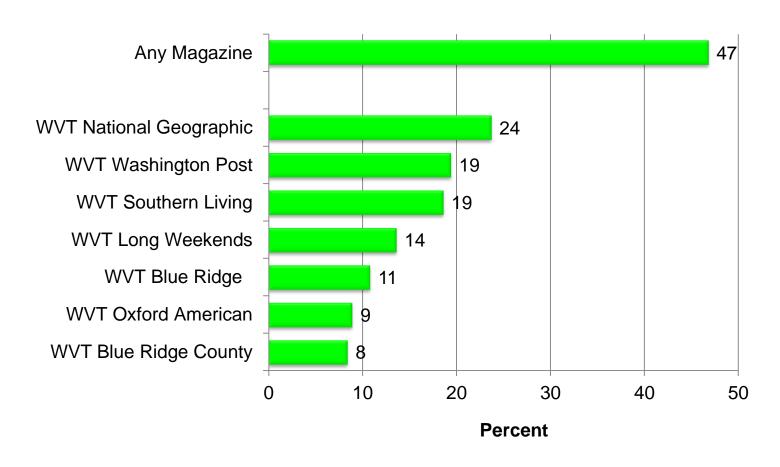
#### Awareness by Type of Media





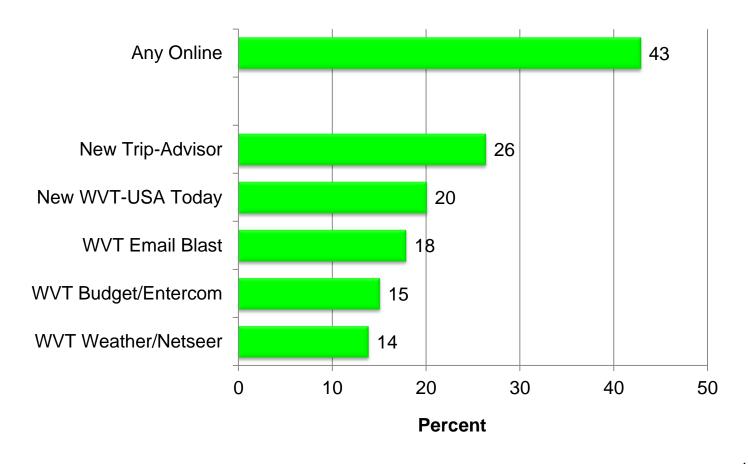
# Awareness of Individual Ads — Magazine





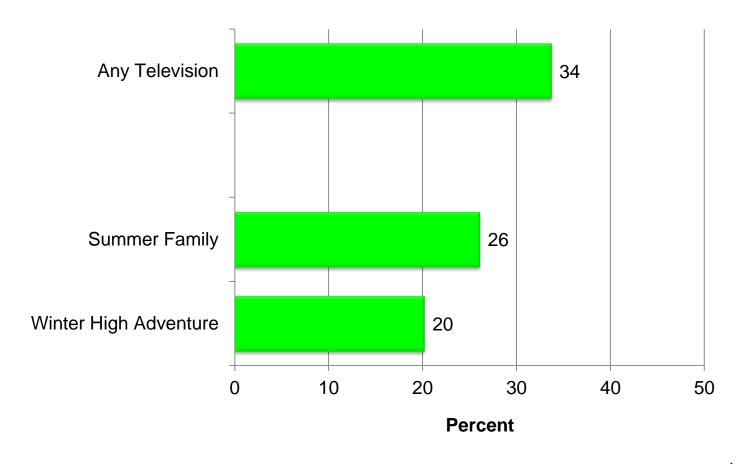
### Awareness of Individual Ads — Online





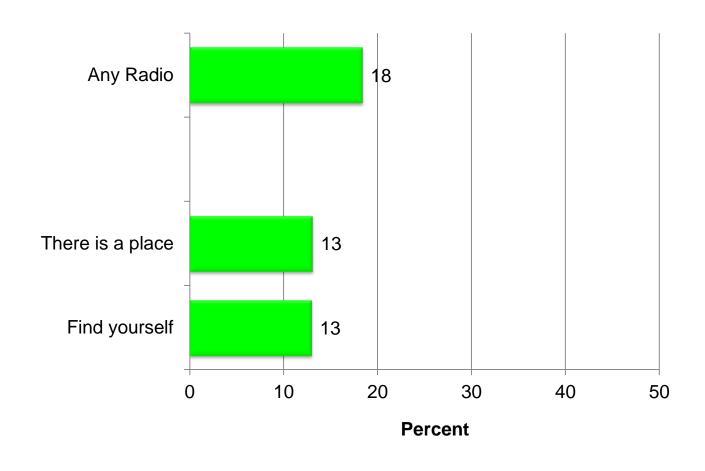
### Awareness of Individual Ads — Television





### Awareness of Individual Ads — Radio





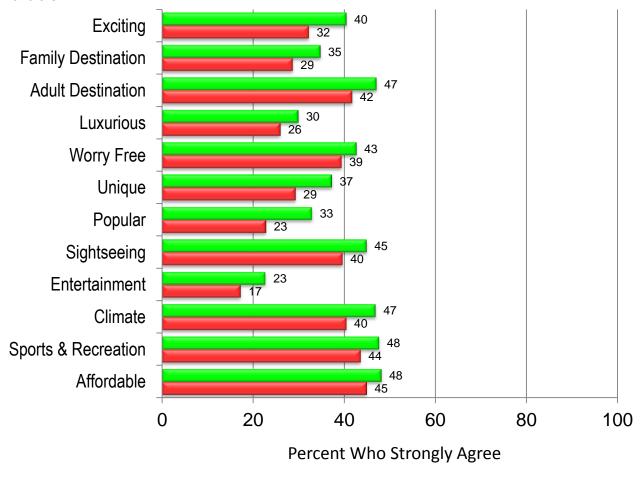


# Impact of the 2014 Advertising Campaign on West Virginia's Image

### Impact of 2014 Advertising on West Virginia's Image



Base: Total Travelers

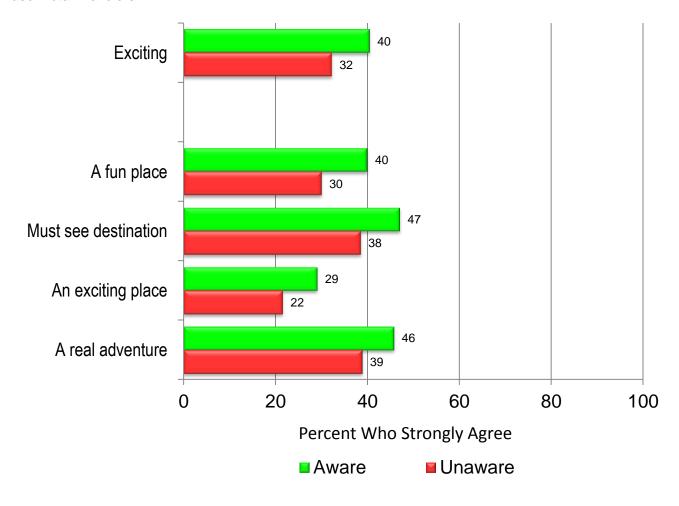


Aware

■ Unaware

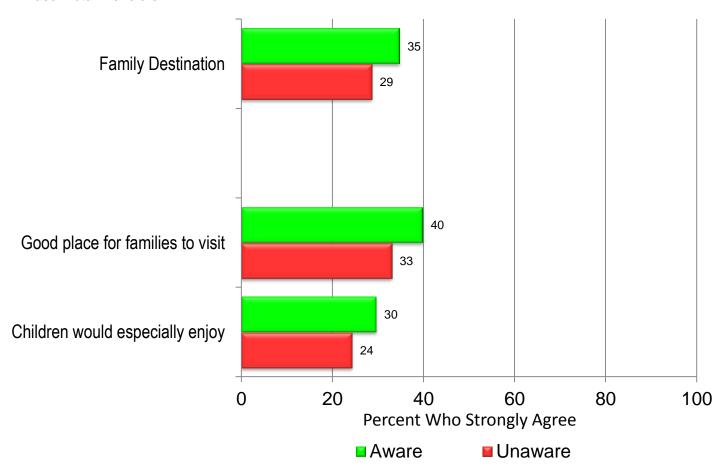
### West Virginia's Image — Exciting





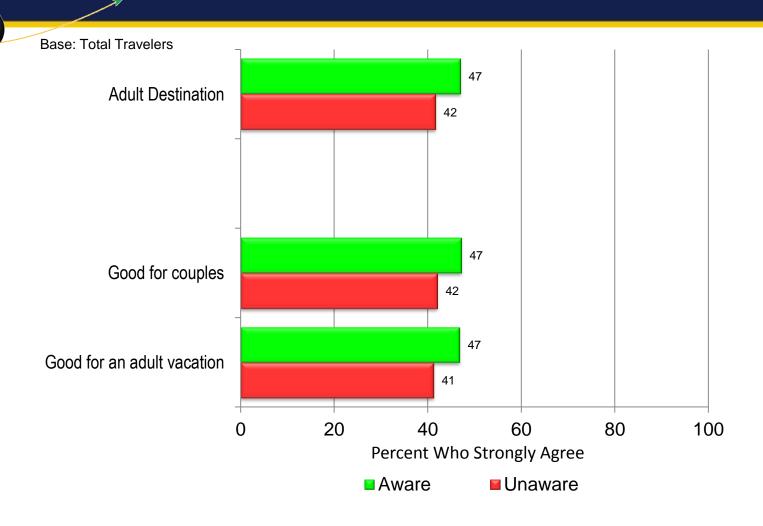
## West Virginia's Image — Family Destination





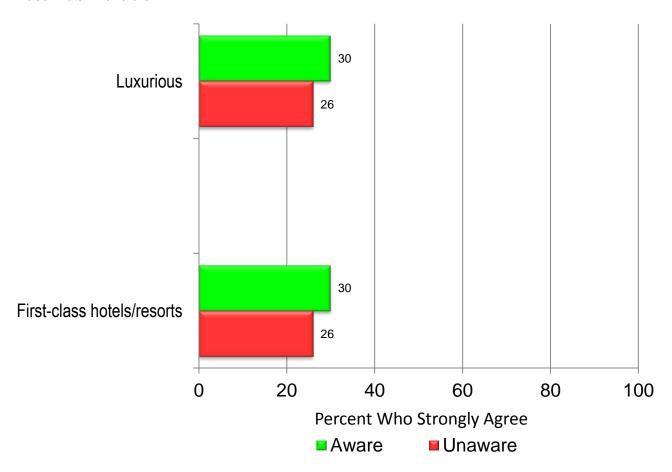
### West Virginia's Image — Adult Destination





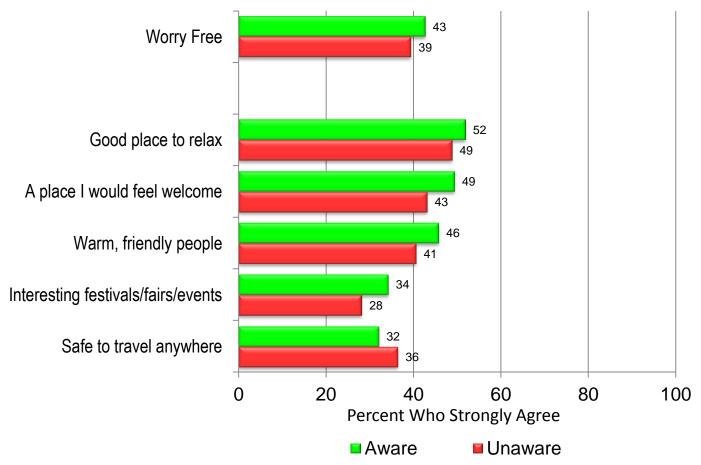
### West Virginia's Image — Luxurious





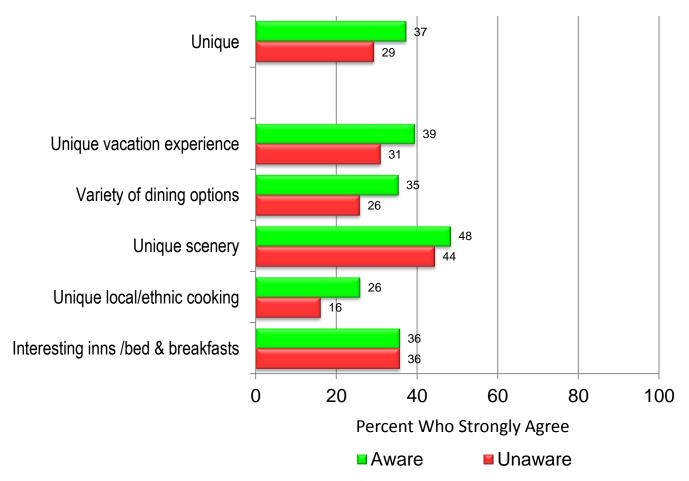
#### West Virginia's Image — Worry Free





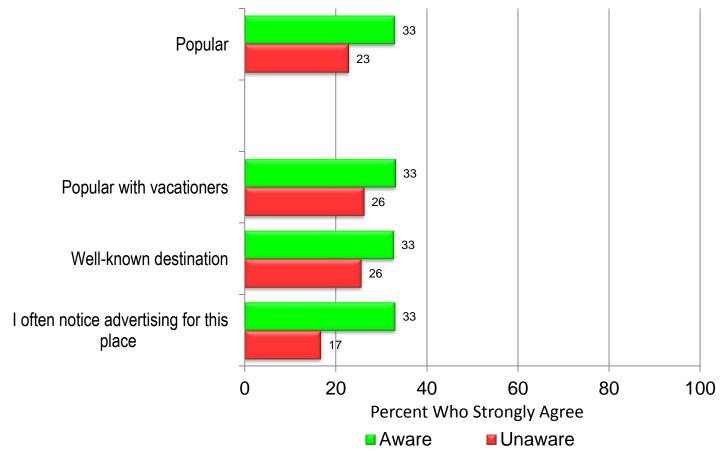
#### West Virginia's Image — Unique





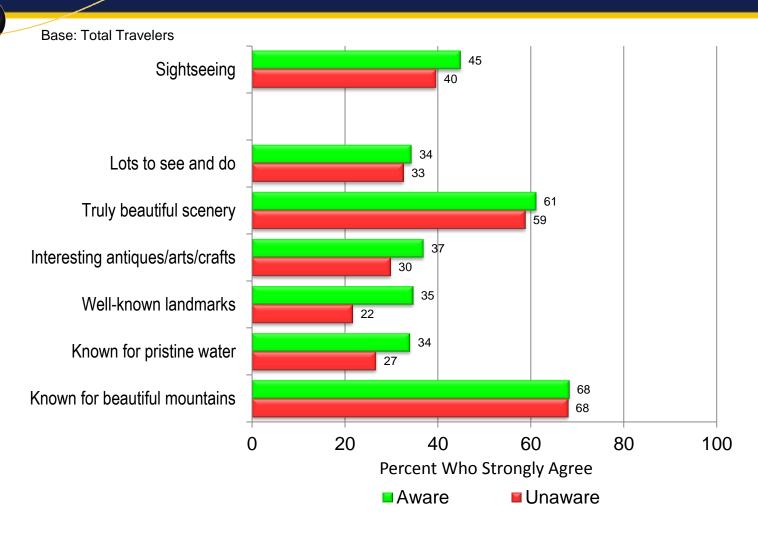
### West Virginia's Image — Popular





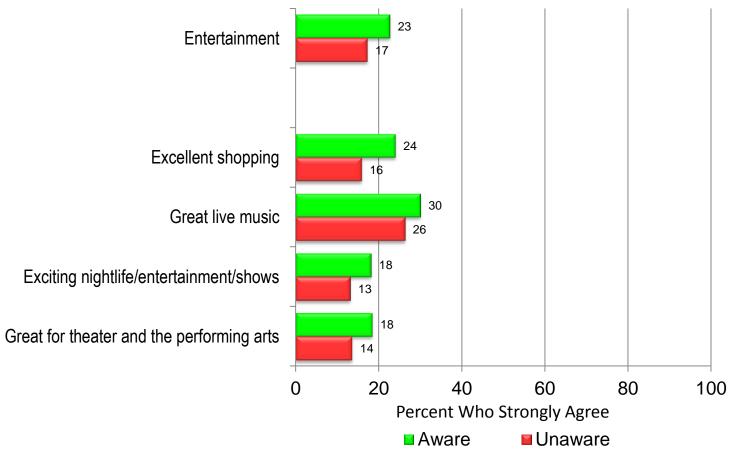
### West Virginia's Image — Sightseeing





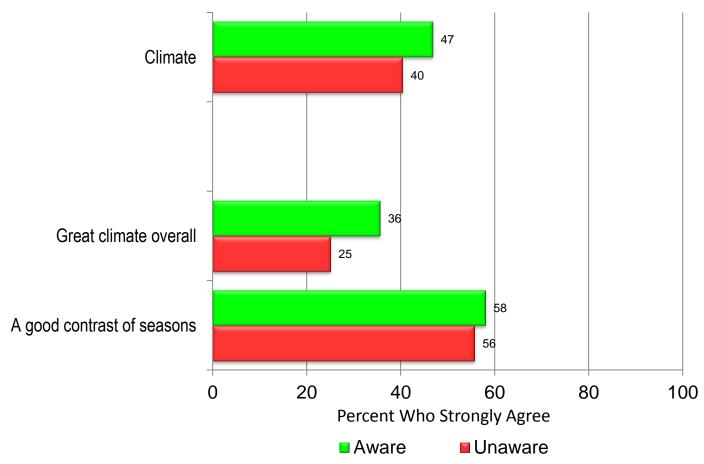
### West Virginia's Image — Entertainment





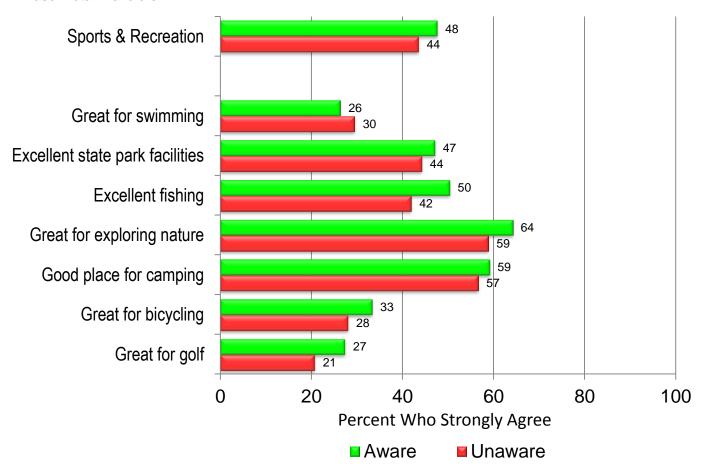
### West Virginia's Image — Climate





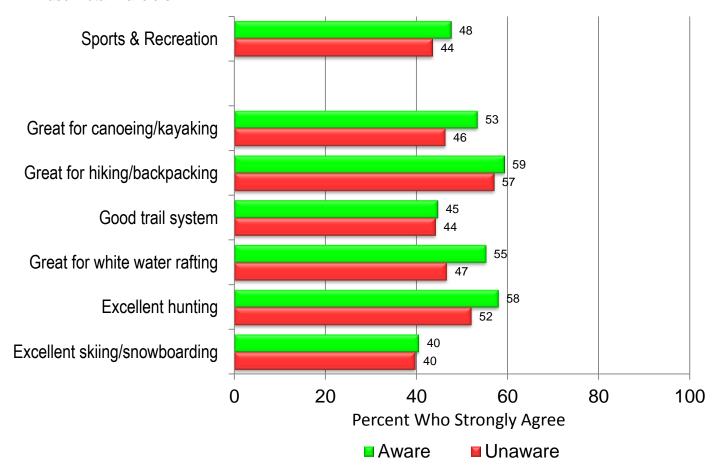
# West Virginia's Image — Sports & Recreation





## West Virginia's Image — Sports & Recreation (Cont'd)





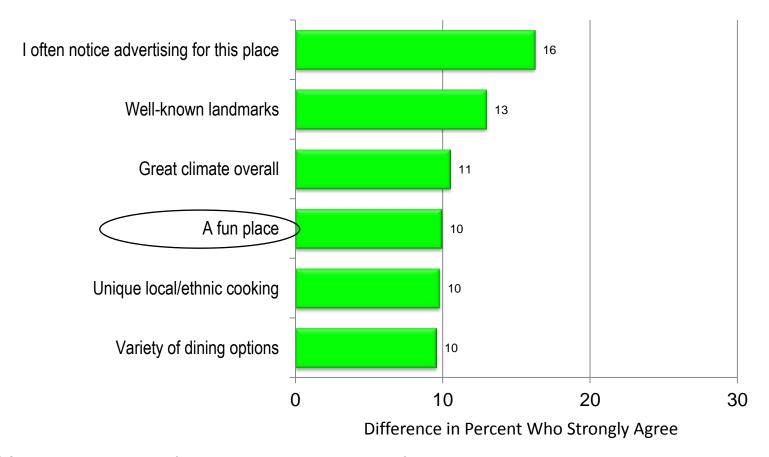
### West Virginia's Image — Affordable





### Attributes for Which the Campaign Had the Greatest Impact





<sup>\*</sup> Circled attributes are some of the most important image hot buttons for travelers



# Short-Term Impacts of the Advertising

### Short-Term Impacts of The Advertising



	2014
Ad Investment	\$1,876,667
Incremental Visits	1,500,486
Incremental Spending	\$180.9 M
State and Local Taxes	\$13.0M
Spending ROI*	\$96
Total Tax ROI**	\$7

<sup>•</sup> Incremental visitor spending per ad \$ invested.

Spending is based on \$138 per person for overnight trips and \$106 per person for day trips

<sup>\*\*</sup> Incremental taxes per ad \$ invested.

### **Short-Term Impacts Summary**



	2014
Advertising Investment	\$1,876,667
Incremental Spending	\$180.9M
Incremental Taxes	\$13.0M
Tax ROI	\$7

### Campaign Efficiency



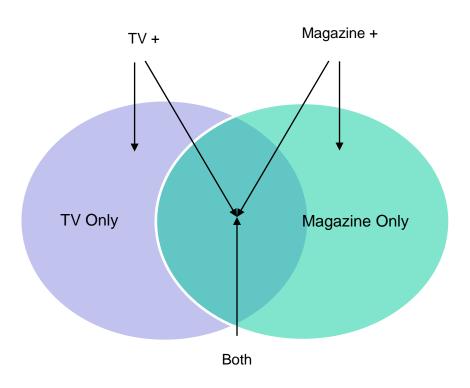
	2014
Incremental Visits	1,500,486
Ad Investment	\$1,876,667
Ad \$'s per Trip	\$1.3
Trips per Ad \$	.80



### **Appendix:** Media Diagnostics

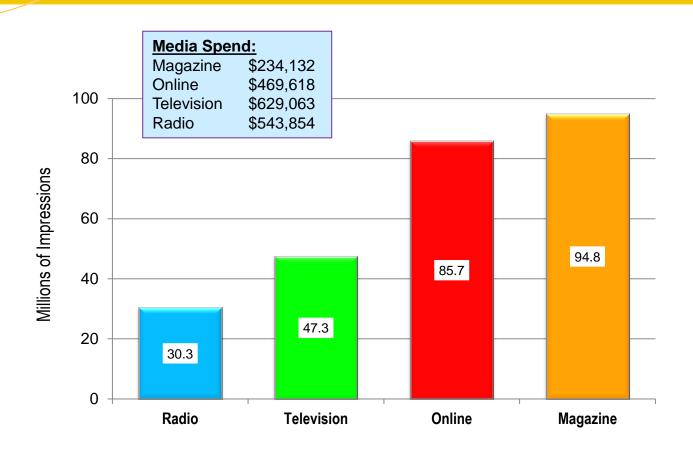
#### **Definition of Awareness**





### Total Impressions by Media





### Impact of Ad Frequency on Visits to West Virginia



