

# BROCHURE DISTRIBUTION

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## Effectiveness of Brochure Distribution in Racks



Prepared by: Patrick Tierney Ph.D., San Francisco State University, October 19, 2000 & December 15, 2003

Prepared for:  
Association of Professional Brochure Distributors



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## DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

### *International Assessment of the Effectiveness of Brochure Distribution in Racks\**

The International Association of Professional Brochure Distributors (IAPBD) was interested in quantifying the importance of brochures gathered from brochure racks for during-trip planning and purchases. IAPBD contracted with Dr. Patrick Tierney to conduct an international study in cooperation with the Association. A self-administered survey was given to a random sample at facilities with brochure distribution racks in 17 cities in the U.S., Canada and Ireland. A total of 2,569 surveys were completed.

Brochures were the most frequently used source of information for during-trip planning. The vast majority (84%) of respondents saw brochure racks at the survey site and also at other sites. At least 65% of respondents got a brochure from a brochure rack.

### *Comparison of the Effectiveness of Brochure Distribution in Racks to Other Tourist Information Sources\*\**

The International Association of Professional Brochure Distributors (IAPBD) and the author completed research in 2000 that determined brochures were the most frequently used source of information for during-trip planning, and over one-third of those tourists who got a brochure changed their travel plans as a result of the brochure information. These findings demonstrate the continuing strong role that brochure racks play in the distribution of tourist information. But the previous research did not address the issue of the effectiveness of brochure racks *relative to other forms* of marketing media used by the travel and tourism industry. For example, how does distribution through brochure racks

compare with other media in terms of being most helpful in planning visitor trips, causing a change in travel plans, or in use of coupons/discounts? Therefore, IAPBD contracted in 2003 with Dr. Tierney to conduct a follow-up research project with these objectives:

- Conduct a cooperative national survey (with IAPBD members) of travelers at brochure distribution sites, and gather data on the effectiveness of brochure rack-distribution compared to other media.
- Document the potential for brochure rack-distribution to increase visitation to travel-industry websites.

### *Researcher's Profile*

Patrick Tierney received a PH.D. in Recreation Resources with a concentration in Tourism Marketing from Colorado State University in 1991. Currently, he has a joint appointment in the Departments of Hospitality Management and Recreation & Leisure Studies at San Francisco State University, where he is professor and coordinator of the Commercial Recreation, Tourism and Resort Management Program. In addition to his academic pursuits, Tierney has been co-owner, for 20 years, of Adrift Adventures – an adventure recreation business offering summer white-water rafting vacations in Colorado, Utah and Alaska.

Tierney is recipient of the 1997 Best Tourism Research Award from the California Division of Tourism, the 1991 Excellence In Research Award from the Commercial Recreation and Resort Association, and co-recipient of the 1990 Colorado Rural Tourism Achievement Award.

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Aside from being the most widely-used source of information for during-trip planning, brochures are driving business to company websites, and influencing travelers to change their travel plans.

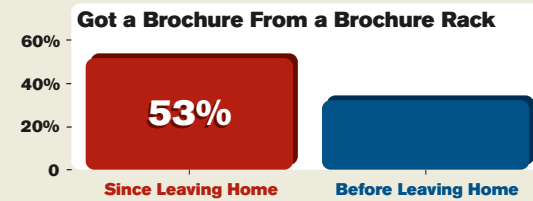
Brochures are used by a broad cross-section of travelers, including WiFi internet users and users of other more technically sophisticated forms of information gathering. So in addition to the basic appeal of simplicity, colorful presentation and placement relevancy, brochures distributed in a rack are more effective than other tourism information channels.

Over a third of respondents who pickup a brochure from a rack will actually change their travel plans, and these changes result in new reservations and purchases not planned in advance. Furthermore, over half the respondents report they are very likely to purchase something or visit a destination shown on a brochure in the next six months...so the influence of a brochure has longevity beyond the date of collection.



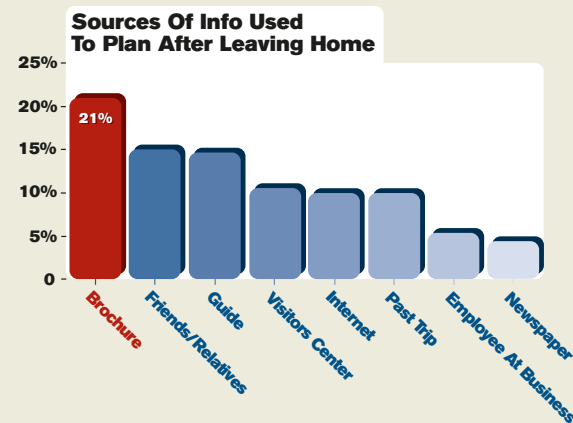
## Got a Brochure Before or During a Trip\*

- When asked if they got a brochure from a rack since leaving home, over half (53%) had done so
- Respondents were asked if they got a brochure from a brochure rack prior to leaving home, and over a third (34%) had done so



## Trip Planning\*\*

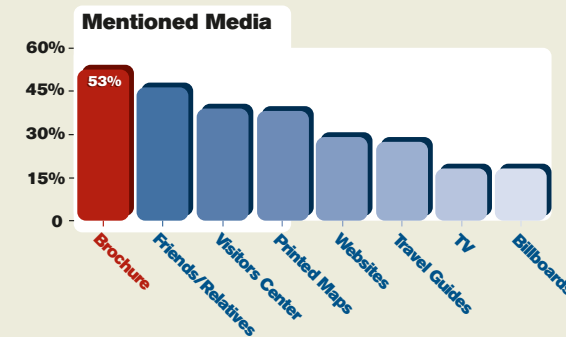
- Brochures were the most frequently used source of information during the trip (21%)
- Overall, 62% of respondents were seeking trip information since leaving home



- Over 36.6% of all respondents who got a brochure changed travel plans due to information in the brochure

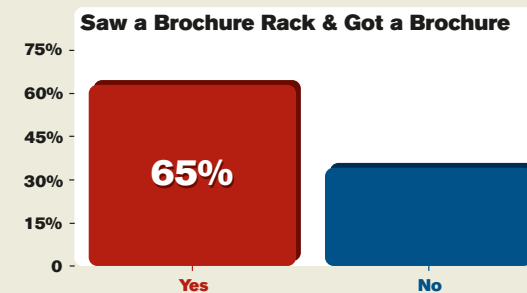
## Tourist Information Sources Seen or Heard Since Leaving Home\*

- Brochures from a brochure rack were the most frequently mentioned media (53%)
- Followed by friend/relative referrals (49%)
- Followed by Visitor centers (39%)



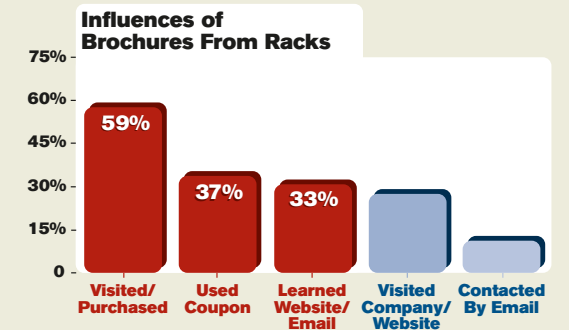
## Seeing and Using of Brochure Racks During Trip\*\*

- 65% of those who saw a rack, selected a brochure at the survey location
- Overall, 81% of respondents saw the brochure rack located at the survey site
- Over 84% of non-resident respondents on a leisure trip saw brochure racks
- More than 64% of all respondents saw brochure racks at a location other than the survey location



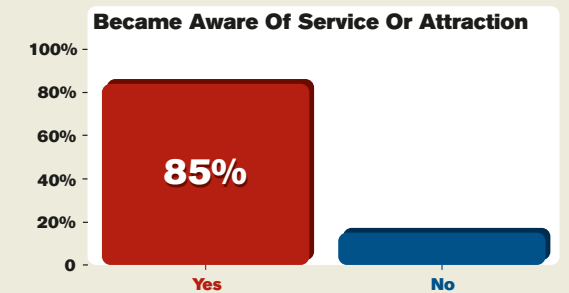
## Influences In Getting a Brochure From a Brochure Rack (Before or After Trip)\*

- Over half (59%) actually visited an attraction or purchased something
- Over one-third (37%) used a discount coupon from a brochure
- One-third (33%) learned about a company website or email address



## Impacts of Getting Brochure During Trip\*\*

- Nearly 85% of respondents who got a brochure stated they became aware of a service or destination of interest
- Over 90% of non-resident leisure travelers who collected a brochure became aware of a service or destination of interest



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