Determinants of Travel Intentions to a eighboring Destination

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ABSTRACT

The primary purposes of this study were to collect information on neighboring travelers' past visits and determinants of future intentions for an overnight pleasure trip. Data was collected on a wide variety of travel behaviors. The study is based on a telephone survey of 3,688 residents of New Brunswick (NB) and Nova Scotia (NS), two sister Provinces to Prince Edward Island, a major Canadian tourist destination. The results reveal 51.9% have visited PEI within the past five years, 36.7% have visited PEI more than five years ago, and 11.4% have never visited PEI. Linear logistic regression analysis revealed that all three groups had a positive reaction to at least one form of advertising used. In all cases, if the potential visitor recalled and/or responded to an advertisement for PEI, they were much more likely to revisit than those who did not.

Key words: *travel destination choices, neighboring destinations.*

INTRODUCTION

The objective of most tourism marketing strategies is to increase the number of visitors to a destination. These marketing campaigns attempt to influence behavioural intentions and increase the probability that travellers will visit. Thus, predicting travellers' future behaviours is a critical part of planning for and forecasting of visitor numbers for destination marketers. To develop effective marketing strategies directed at encouraging visitation to a specific destination, tourism marketers must know when and how behavioural intentions are developed by the target market and what are the variables influencing intentions to visit.

Prince Edward Island (PEI) is Canada's smallest province, with 1.4 million acres of land and a population of 139,000. PEI is located on the east coast of Canada and is separated from its sister provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick by the Northumberland Strait. The three provinces are known as the Maritime Provinces. In 1997, the Confederation Bridge was opened providing a permanent link to the mainland, resulting in a significant boom in visitors and economic activity to PEI.

PEI is known, in part, for the natural products from its land and water. Agriculture and fisheries are the first and third largest industries. PEI has been called "the million-acre farm," and fields with rows of green potato plants set in the red soil of the Island are a common sight. The combination of the red soil and green fields with the blue of the water and sky makes for striking scenery. This island landscape is one of the reasons why over 1.1 million visitors per year are attracted to PEI, making tourism the province's second largest industry.

Residents of New Brunswick (NB) and Nova Scotia (NS) make up the largest contingent of visitors to PEI. Based on the results of the 2007-2008 PEI visitors exit survey, managed by the Tourism Research Centre (TRC) at the University of PEI, 65% of visitors to PEI are from the two neighboring Maritime Provinces with 36.8% from NS and 28.2% from NB.

In early 2009, the TRC surveyed residents of NS and NB to determine the characteristics and attitudes these travel markets had towards PEI. These were considered in three travel groups of Maritime residents: (1) those who visited PEI within the past five years, (2) those who visited PEI more than five years ago, and (3) those who never visited PEI. Only travelers who had taken an overnight pleasure trip in the past five years were surveyed and non-travelers were excluded.

The primary purposes of this market study were to collect information on neighboring Maritime travelers' past visits to PEI and determinants of their future intentions to travel to PEI for an overnight pleasure trip. Travel intentions were assessed by asking respondents if they intended to visit/re-visit PEI for an overnight pleasure trip within the next two years. Data was collected on a wide variety of travel behaviors and on reasons why they did not visit PEI in the past five years for an overnight pleasure trip.

The specific objectives of this Maritime travel study were to collect data on the following: (1) in-province and out-of-province pleasure trips of one or more nights taken in the past two years; (2) past overnight pleasure trips to PEI; (3) the awareness of PEI travel advertising, media channels (sources) recalled, and perceptions of PEI; (4) the influence of friends and/or relatives living in PEI on travelling and ownership of home, cottage, RV, etc. in PEI; (5) interests in travelling and future intentions to travel to PEI (likelihood of visiting/re-visiting PEI for an overnight pleasure trip); (6) understanding reasons for not visiting/revisiting PEI for an overnight pleasure trip.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In general, behavioural intentions are created through a choice and decision process. Peter and Olson (1996) argue that consumers' actions are based on beliefs regarding the benefits associated with taking a particular action (buying a product or travelling to a destination) and the subjective assessment of whether others want the consumer to engage in that behaviour. The outcomes of these reflective processes are integrated to evaluate alternative behaviours and make a decision. During the choice and decision process, intentions can change over time. The more time that elapses between the two, the greater the likelihood that unforeseen events will produce changes in intentions.

Travel intentions depend on tourists' degree of certainty toward the destination (confidence generation) and on inhibitors, which may cause tourists to respond differently from what their attitudes dictate (Moutinho, 1987). Travel intentions can be defined as the subjective probability of whether a customer will or will not take certain actions that are related to a tourist service. These intentions to travel by potential customers are their perceived likelihood of visiting the destination within a specific time period (Woodside & MacDonald, 1994). In the travel and tourism literature, intentions to travel are articulated and examined in the scope of trip

planning behaviour. This involves complex and dynamic decision-making and behavioural processes with multiple determinants of inter-related components (Decrop, 1999).

The decision-making process and destination choice models often emphasize the inter-related variables and continuous interaction among elements. One variable is travel stimuli such as marketing communications, travel literature, word of mouth, and travel trade suggestions and recommendations. Another variable includes personal and social determinants of travel behaviours of socioeconomic status, personality features, social influences, and attitudes and values. There are also external variables including confidence, image of destination, past travel experiences, assessment of objective/subjective risks, constraints of time, costs, and so on. All of these variables may play an important role in creating destination awareness, influencing travel intentions, and selecting choice sets such as destination, accommodation, activity, attraction, transportation mode, route, shopping, eating, etcetera. Many research studies support these findings including Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Chon, 1990; Gartner, 1986; Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Middleton, 1988; Moutinho, 1987; Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005; Schmoll, 1977; Um and Crompton, 1991; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989; Woodside and MacDonald, 1994.

When studying the factors influencing intentions, many tourism studies have suggested that advertising as a promotional campaign "stimulates" intentions or visits to a particular destination (Burke and Gitelson, 1990; Kim, Hwang and Fesenmaier, 2005; Messmer and Johnson, 1993; McWilliams and Crompton, 1997; Woodside, 1996). This approach has generally focused on evaluating individuals' responses to advertising campaigns within the context of destination awareness and intentions to visit. It is primarily concerned with the flow of events, from the tourist stimuli to the purchase decision (Moutinho, 1987).

In this context, Middleton (1988) describes it as a "stimulus-response" that includes a range of competitive products produced and marketed by the tourist industry and communication channels such as advertising, sales promotion, brochures, personal selling, and PR. These can be manipulated by tourism marketers to stimulate potential tourists to make decisions to purchase. Pechmann and Stewart (1990), however, suggest that only travellers who already have a general intention to travel to a particular destination are likely to formalize the destination decision based on the exposure to an advertisement.

METHODOLOGY
Sampling process

For this study, the research process was completed in two stages. First, a telephone survey was completed with the target population of the person considered head of the household in all households in NB and NS. This sample was stratified for each province at the *census metropolitan area (CMA)* and the *census agglomeration (CA)* level based on the 2006 Census by Statistics Canada. Overall, 14 sampling areas were considered: three CMAs, nine CAs, and two areas that captured the rest of NB and NS.

Telephone interviews

A total of 41,940 phone numbers were dialed. These were stratified as discussed to ensure a representative sample of households. Table 1 provides the results with 3,688 people (8.8% of the numbers contacted) actually completing the very short phone survey. Of those completing the survey, 368 had not taken an overnight pleasure trip in the previous 5 years so these people were excluded from the survey. Of the remaining 3,320 respondents, 1,418 (42.7%)

agreed to participate in a follow-up survey providing more details regarding their travel activity. The remaining 1,902 people (57.3%) did not wish to answer the follow-up survey.

Of the 91.2% of the non responses, two-thirds were because the phone number was invalid (38.7%), or there was no answer or the line was busy (27.7%). About 20% of the total numbers dialed were answered by a person who refused to participate in the survey. The surveys were completed over a one-month period beginning June 25 and ending July 23, 2009. The average length of time of 4.8 minutes to complete the survey was very consistent across all participants.

Table 1
Total Phone Numbers Contacted and Interviews Completed

	N	% of Total Records contacted	% Complete /not complete Survey
Total Phone Numbers Dialed	41,940	100.00%	
<u>Completed Surveys</u>	3,688	8.8%	100.0%
Completed - Agreed to Follow-up Survey	1,418	3.4%	38.4%
Completed - Refused Follow-up Survey	1,902	4.5%	51.6%
Have not taken an overnight pleasure trip in past 5 years	368	0.9%	10.0%
<u>Did Not Complete the Survey</u>	38,252	91.2%	100.0%
Not a valid number	16,241	38.7%	42.5%
No Answer, no ring, answering machine, line busy	11,599	27.7%	30.3%
Initial refusal	8,579	20.5%	22.4%
Other	1,833	4.4%	4.8%

As discussed, the target population was divided into 14 sampling areas including three CMAs, nine CAs, and two areas that captured the rest of NB and NS. NS has 55.6% of the relevant population and NB has 44.4%. The Maritime Provinces are rural in nature with the three CMAs accounting for 37.8% of the target population. The CA's represented 23.9%, other NS at 19.9% and other NB at 18.3% of the sampling frame. The distribution of responses to the telephone survey by province and geographic location within the provinces matches almost exactly the distribution of the population of the two provinces. In terms of statistical accuracy, a sample of 3,688 has a very small sampling error of 1.6% at a 95% confidence level.

Follow-up surveys
Upon completion of the telephone survey, participants were asked if they would also participate in a follow-up online or a paper-based survey. A survey was designed for each of the three travel groups as (1) those who have visited PEI within the past five years, (2) those who had visited PEI five or more years ago, and (3) those who have never visited PEI. Those who chose to do the survey online were asked to provide their name and email address. They were contacted within two days via an email providing a link to the survey. Each participant who chose this option was contacted three times, by the initial invite and two reminder emails spaced out over three weeks. Participants who chose to participate using a paper survey were sent a package including the survey and a prepaid, addressed envelope for returning the survey within three working days.

Table 2 provides data on the number of respondents in each travel group who agreed to participate in the follow-up survey, the number of surveys completed, and the number of surveys used in this report. In terms of statistical accuracy, a sample of this size has a sampling error of 3.5% at a 95% confidence level. The margins of error for the various sub-groups used in this paper will be higher.

Table 2
Number of Follow-up Survey Requests and Completed by Type of Visitation to PEI

	Travelers who have visited PEI within the Past 5 Years		Travelers who had visited PEI More Than 5 Years ago		Travelers who have never visited PEI		Total	
Total Number of Respondents who agreed to follow-up survey	872	61.5%	376	26.5%	170	12.0%	1,418	100.0%
Total Number of Surveys Completed	505	62.7%	215	26.7%	85	10.6%	805	100.0%
Follow-up Surveys Completed (%)	(57.9%)		(57.2%)		(50.0%)		(56.8%)	
Total Number of Valid Surveys	482	62.5%	205	26.6%	84	10.9%	771	100.0%
Percentage of Valid Surveys	(95.4%)		(95.3%)		(98.8%)		(95.8%)	

Weighting the survey data

Two types of element weights are commonly encountered in the analysis of survey data: (1) the expansion weight, which is the reciprocal of the selection probability, and (2) the relative weight, which is obtained by scaling down the expansion weight to reflect sample size (Lee, Forthofer and Lorimor, 1989). Although this study used stratified sampling, the collected data was aligned with the population. The results of the telephone surveys were weighted by the census population data for NB and NS as discussed earlier. Follow-up surveys may not accurately reflect the results for the initial sample if all initial respondents do not participate in the follow-up survey. Thus, the follow-up surveys were weighted by census regions and by the results from the initial phone surveys for the percentages of respondents in each of the three travel groups.

RESULTS

Market situation

Incidence of overnight pleasure travel in the past five years

Given the definition of a traveler for this study, the vast majority of Maritimers (90.2%) had taken an overnight pleasure trip in the past five years. Based on the total target population aged 18 years and over, this translates into approximately 1.2 million people (out of 1.35 million adult residents). 9.8% had not taken any overnight pleasure trips in the past five years. As shown in Table 3, a slightly greater percentage of New Brunswick residents took an overnight pleasure trip in the past five years, but the difference of 1.4% was not significant.

Table 3
Incidence of Overnight Pleasure Travel in the Past 5 Years by Province

	New Brunswick (N=1,638; 44.4%)		Nova Scotia (N=2,050; 55.6%)		Total (N = 3,688)	
Yes	1,490	91.0%	1,836	89.6%	3,326	90.2%
No	148	9.0%	214	10.4%	362	9.8%

Note: This result is based on telephone interviews with a head of the household (χ^2 value = 2.026; d.f. =1; p = .164).

Destinations visited in the past five years

Table 4 illustrates that 85% of Maritimers had travelled within Canada within the past five years, 62% of whom had travelled overnight for pleasure within their home province. Over half (51.4%) of New Brunswick residents travelled to NS, while 44.2% of Nova Scotia residents travelled to NB. Nearly 52% travelled to PEI for an overnight pleasure trip in the past five years. Respondents travel quite frequently with an average of 10.7 trips over the previous 5 years.

It is interesting to note, however, that a larger, or similar, number of travelers from NB and NS visited other parts of Canada (outside of the Maritimes) and the United States than they visited their neighboring provinces of NB, NS, and PEI. 51.4% and 53.5% of travelers from NB visited NS and PEI, respectively, while 57% and 54% visited other parts of Canada and the United States respectively. The results are similar for travelers from NS. In total, 51.9% of respondents visited PEI but about 57% had visited Canadian destinations outside of the Maritime Provinces and 51.2% visited the United States. One-quarter (24.2%) visited Mexico/Caribbean and about 12% went elsewhere. It seems that traveling to neighboring provinces does not hinder, nor is it a substitute for travel to other destinations.

Table 4
Pleasure Trip Destinations visited in Past 5 Years by Province

	New Brunswick (N=1,490; 44.8%)	Nova Scotia (N=1,837; 55.2%)	Total (N = 3,327)
CANADA (NET)	85.4%	83.8%	84.5%
Within home province	61.4%	62.9%	62.2%
Nova Scotia (New Brunswick)	51.4%	44.2%	47.4%
Prince Edward Island	53.5%	50.5%	51.9%
Other parts of Canada	57.0%	56.7%	56.9%
United States	54.0%	48.9%	51.2%
Mexico/Caribbean	22.8%	25.3%	24.2%
Elsewhere	10.6%	12.4%	11.6%
Other	7.7%	9.5%	8.7%
Not sure/Can't remember	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%

Note: Travellers are those people over 18 who took one or more overnight pleasure trips in the past five years.

Visitation to PEI

As shown in Table 5, a higher portion of NB versus NS residents visited PEI in the past five years (53.5% vs. 50.5%), while a higher portion of NS versus NB residents visited PEI more than five years ago (38.2% vs. 35%). Overall, across the two provinces, a higher percentage of respondents visited PEI recently (within the past five years) than over five years ago (51.9% vs. 36.7%). Over 11.4% had never visited PEI. This is consistent for residents of both NB and NS.

Table 5
Visitation to PEI by Province

	New Brunswick (N=1,490; 44.8%)	Nova Scotia (N=1,837; 55.2%)	Total (N = 3,327)
Travelers who visited PEI in the Past 5 Years	53.5%	50.5%	51.9%
Travelers who visited PEI More than 5 Years ago	35.0%	38.2%	36.7%
Travelers who have never visited PEI	11.5%	11.3%	11.4%

Note: Travelers are those people over 18 who took one or more overnight pleasure trips in the past five years (χ^2 value = 3.607; d.f. = 2; p = .165).

Determinants of models to estimate travel intentions

Linear logistic regression analysis was used to estimate determinants of travel intentions, the dependent variable. This was measured by asking respondents if they intended to visit/re-visit PEI for an overnight pleasure trip within the next two years. For model estimation, 14 independent variables were used as noted in Table 6. This use of multiple determinants in the traveller destination choices is similar to various studies in the literature such as Decrop, 1999, Baloglu and McCleary, 1999, Woodside and MacDonald, 1994. In this study, the first four variables of image, quality, value and satisfaction were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Overall destination image was assessed based on how respondents rated nine descriptive statements of PEI. For those who visited PEI within the past five years, overall trip quality was assessed based on how respondents rated six aspects of their travel experience on PEI. For those who visited PEI at any time, both value for money and overall trip satisfaction were assessed based on the response to descriptive statements of their most recent trip to PEI.

The influence of advertising has been studied widely in the literature such as Hwang and Fesenmaier, 2005, McWilliams and Crompton, 1997, and Woodside, 1996. In this study, the advertising variables affecting travel decisions were measured on a scale of 0 to 100. The remaining nine variables were dichotomous variables taking a value of 0 or 1. Three of these related to the recall and reaction to advertising, while the final six were demographic variables. Logistic regression is a suitable technique to predict the likelihood of an event occurring and it is structured to use dichotomous dependent variables. Likewise, it can accommodate independent variables that are measured on a continuous or categorical scale.

The results of the three regression models, one for each of the travel groups, are presented in Table 6. It should be noted that the "overall correct" statistic indicates that intended or unintended travellers were classified correctly at a high level for all three travel groups. The statistic is very similar for those who visited PEI at some point (73% to 77%) and it is highest for those who never visited (90.6%). Note that all six models are highly significant which indicates that at least some of the independent variables significantly increased the likelihood of visiting PEI over the next two years. Further discussion of the three travel groups follows.

Model A: Travelers who visited PEI within the past five years

In this model, the variables of "value for money," "overall satisfaction," "responding to advertisements," and "marriage" had positive and significant influences on the intention to visit PEI again within the next two years. These variables were significant at the 0.01 level or the 0.05 level. The odds ratio indicated the probability of an event occurring when the independent

variable increased (Menard, 1995). This also fit with the literature of multiple components interrelating to impact travelers' decisions and choices.

Therefore, if a visitor felt they received value for their money and they had high overall level of satisfaction in their most recent trip to PEI, their intention to revisit PEI is much higher (similar to findings of Woodside and MacDonald, 1994). Respondents who agreed or strongly agreed they received value and were satisfied are about 1.66 and 1.85 times respectively more likely to revisit PEI than those who were neutral or disagreed with the two statements. This indicates that keeping the price/value equation in balance and keeping these visitors from the two neighbouring provinces satisfied with their travel experiences will lead to repeat visitors to PEI. This will also help to build loyalty to PEI as a travel destination.

If these recent visitors responded to an advertisement, they were 3.16 times more likely to revisit PEI than those who did not respond (Moutinho, 1987). This seems logical since a recent visitor would most likely only respond if they were planning to return to the destination. Finally, recent visitors who were married are 2.12 times as likely to revisit.

Model B: Travelers who visited PEI more than five years ago

In this model, the variables of "value for money," "overall satisfaction," and "recall of PEI advertising," had positive and significant influences on the intention to visit PEI again within the next two years. These variables were significant at the 0.01 level or the 0.05 level. The odds ratio indicated that if these non-recent visitors felt they received value for their money and they had high overall level of satisfaction in their trip to PEI more than five years ago, their intention to revisit PEI was much higher.

Respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that they received value and were satisfied are about 1.63 and 3.32 times more likely to revisit PEI than those who were neutral or disagreed with the two statements. This suggests that, to attract this very large group of non-recent visitors (36.7% of Maritime households), advertising focusing on these two factors may increase intentions to revisit PEI within a short time period (Pechmann and Steward, 1990).

As well, if these non-recent visitors recalled seeing an advertisement for PEI, they were 6.36 times more likely to revisit PEI than those non-recent visitors who did not. This seems reasonable since a non-recent visitor recalling an ad suggests that PEI was a part of their decision set when thinking about upcoming pleasure trips. This result suggests that more advertising in these neighbouring markets that account for 65% of the visitors to PEI may result in some of the non-recent visitors becoming recent and increasing the visitor base even further (Middleton, 1988).

Table 6
Linear-logit Models of Determinants of Travel Intentions by Type of Visitation to PEI

Variables	Model A: Travelers who have visited PEI within the Past 5 Years (N=400; 51.9%)		Model B: Travelers who had visited PEI more than 5 Years (N=283; 36.7%)		Model C: Travelers who have never visited PEI (N=88; 11.4%)	
	Parameter Estimates	Odds Ratio	Parameter Estimates	Odds Ratio	Parameter Estimates	Odds Ratio
Overall image (1 = positive; 0 = negative)	0.188	1.207	0.419	1.520	4.078**	59.038
Overall quality (1 = very poor; 5 = excellent)	0.057	1.059	-	-	-	-
Value for money (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)	0.507**	1.660	0.488*	1.629	-	-
Overall satisfaction (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)	0.617**	1.853	1.200**	3.319	-	-
Influence of advertising to make decision to travel (0 to 100%)	-0.010*	0.990	0.005	1.005	-0.017	0.983
Recalling of PEI advertising (1 = yes; 0 = no)	-0.150	0.861	3.272**	6.362	2.138*	8.484
Responding to the advertisements (1 = yes; 0 = no)	1.150*	3.159	0.001	0.000	-1.768	0.171
Requesting visitor information when responding (1 = yes; 0 = no)	-0.676	0.509	-0.001	0.000	3.034*	7.380
Gender (1 = male; 0 = female)	0.369	1.446	0.713 [a]	2.039	0.908	2.480
Age	-0.120	0.887	-0.254 [a]	0.776	-0.137	0.872
Marriage (1 = married; 0 = others)	0.753*	2.124	0.194	1.214	-0.358	0.699
Education Level	0.067	1.069	0.030	1.031	0.048	1.049
Employment Status (1 = working full time; 0 = others)	-0.025	0.976	0.503	1.653	-0.224	0.799
Annual Household Income	-0.163*	0.849	-0.030	0.970	0.193	1.213
Constant	-3.740**	0.024	-9.356**	0.000	-2.349	0.095
Model χ^2	161.20		222.10		166.11	
Overall Correct (%)	72.6		77.2		90.6	
Log Likelihood Function	-419.69		-222.06		-43.44	

Note: [a] $p < .10$ (marginally supported), * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Model C: Travelers who never visited PEI

In this model, the variables of "overall image," "recall of PEI advertising," and "requesting visitor information when responding," had positive and significant influences on the intention to visit PEI again within the next two years. These variables were significant at the 0.01 level or the 0.05 level. The odds ratio indicated if these non-visitors had a positive image of PEI, then they are about 59 times more likely to visit PEI than those who had a negative image of PEI. This seems reasonable if a person has a negative image of a travel destination, then one is highly unlikely to visit that destination.

As well, if these non-visitors recalled seeing an advertisement for PEI, they were 8.48 times more likely to visit PEI than those non-visitors who did not recall an ad. Again, this suggests that PEI was part of their decision set when thinking about upcoming pleasure trips. Finally, if these non-visitors requested visitor information when responding to an advertisement, they were 7.38 times more likely to visit PEI than those non-visitors who did not respond (Pechmann and Steward, 1990) .

The non-visitor portion of the Maritime market is 11.4% of Maritime households. This is much smaller than either the recent or non-recent visitor portion. Advertising focusing on PEI's image through advertising and readily available travel information may lead to visitation from this smaller, but still substantial market segment. The type of advertising that appeals to the non-recent visitor will also likely appeal to the non-visitor since there is nothing in these results that suggests otherwise.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Residents of NB and NS account for 65% of visitors to PEI, with NS providing over one-third (36.8%) of total visitors. For this study, the primary purposes were to collect information on these neighboring Maritime travelers' past visits to PEI and determinants of their future intentions to travel to PEI for an overnight pleasure trip. Travel intentions were assessed by asking respondents if they intended to visit/re-visit PEI for an overnight pleasure trip within the next two years. Data was also collected on a wide variety of travel behaviors and on the reasons they did not visit PEI for an overnight pleasure trip in the past five years.

The specific objectives of the study were to collect data on the following: (1) in-province and out-of-province pleasure trips of one or more nights taken in the past two years; (2) past overnight pleasure trips to PEI; (3) the awareness of PEI travel advertising, media channels (sources) recalled, and perceptions of PEI; (4) the influence of friends and/or relatives living in PEI on travelling and ownership of home, cottage, RV, etc. in PEI; (5) interests in travelling and future intentions to travel to PEI (likelihood of visiting/re-visiting PEI for an overnight pleasure trip); (6) understanding reasons for not visiting/revisiting PEI for an overnight pleasure trip.

Of the 3,320 respondents to this survey, three travel groups of Maritime residents were considered: 51.9% visited PEI within the past five years, 36.7% visited PEI more than five years ago, and 11.4% never visited PEI. Therefore, about half of NS and NB residents are recent visitors, while the other half are non-recent or non-visitors. This later group is very large given that well over 80% of the residents of the two neighboring provinces live less than a three-hour drive to PEI and the remaining, at most, a five hour drive. Furthermore, PEI is the fourth most favored destination of the residents of NS and NB while the residents' home province, followed by other parts of Canada, and the US are ahead of PEI in visitation. On the positive side, PEI ranks ahead of the other sister province. Residents of NS and NB are more likely to visit PEI than to NB and NS respectively. Overall, this result suggests that PEI has a very large untapped travel market, literally, "next door."

Linear logistic regression analysis was used to estimate determinants of travel intentions. Three regression models were run, one for each of the travel groups. For those who have visited PEI within the past five years, the results reveal that "value for money," "overall satisfaction," "responding to the advertisements," and "marriage" had positive and significant influences on the intention to visit PEI again within the next two years. The odds ratio indicated those in strong agreement or responding yes to these statements were much more likely to revisit PEI than those who were neutral or disagreed with the statements.

For those who have visited PEI more than five years ago, the results revealed that "value for money," "overall satisfaction," and "recall of PEI advertising," have positive and significant influences on the intention to visit PEI again within the next two years. For those who have never visited PEI, "overall image," "recall of PEI advertising," and "requesting visitor information when responding," have positive and significant influences on the intention to visit PEI again within the next two years.

Overall, the results imply to re-attract the very large group of recent and non-recent visitors, 51.9% and 36.7% respectively, of Maritime households, that advertising is important. This advertising may suggest a vacation on PEI is good value for the price (a destination that keeps the price/value equation in balance) and high visitor satisfaction of PEI travel experiences will lead to repeat visitors, This will also help to build loyalty to PEI as a travel destination. All three groups had a positive reaction to at least one of the advertising variables. In all cases, if the potential visitor recalled and/or responded to an advertisement for PEI, they were much more likely to revisit PEI than those who did not.

These results suggest that PEI is part of the travelers' choice set when considering future pleasure trips. It implies that more advertising in the NS and NB markets, which together account for 65% of visitors to PEI, may increase the visitor base from these two provinces. It appears that advertising focusing on PEI's image would lead to more visitations from these travel markets. The results also suggest that the type of advertising that appeals to the non-recent visitor will likely appeal to the non-visitor, although a focus on PEI's image seems to have a stronger draw for non-visitors. Overall, this study helps to answer Maritime travelers' past visit behaviors to PEI and determinants of future intentions to return. Given the range of variables studied, this type of survey should be able to be replicated in other travel destination regions to gain insights into dynamic traveler decision making for destination choices.

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