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Market research study identifies 1 million potential tourists traveling to Quad Cities by car— 300,000 from Chicago making a strong case for restored passenger rail service

OLATHE, Kan. – The Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) utilized Ruf Strategic Solutions, a target marketing company, to profile people interested in visiting the Quad Cities. Results revealed 1 million potential tourists, including 300,000 in the Chicago area, which includes support for the Quad Cities effort to restore passenger rail service to and from Chicago.

Charlotte Morrison, vice president of marketing and communications for the Quad Cities CVB said, “We want to understand the people who travel to the Quad Cities so we can market more effectively to them and find even more visitors like them. Ruf helped us understand the travel habits of our tourists: how long they stay here, their level of disposable income and what activities they enjoy while on vacation,” Morrison added.

The Quad Cities CVB is using the information gathered from this study to aggressively market to Chicago travelers and other valuable target groups. With passenger rail service between the cities, the targeted groups found in Chicago could ride the train and increase tourism to the Quad Cities. With the media preference data Ruf provided, the destination can promote events and attractions using media channels that target their audience.

Mike Mahoney, account development director of Ruf Strategic Solutions believes the best visitors are those that spend more, stay longer and come back more frequently. “If you know who your best visitors are, you can align your marketing to find clones of those people across the nation to increase your visitation. The key to effectively marketing to them is to understand their interests and preferences,” said Mahoney. “Additionally, with American Airlines announcing flight capacity being cut 7 percent, there is value in finding such a large number of cluster groups who travel by car.”

Ruf’s newly released Smart Targets 6.0 provided the demographic, geographic and psychographic characteristics, media preferences and travel lifestyles of the Quad Cities inquirers to create a comprehensive profile of these consumers. A database of 43,000 past inquiries compiled over 3 years was used by Ruf to create the profile of the type of person interested in visiting the Quad Cities. Their inquirers were grouped into clusters of likeminded consumers. Quad Cities can now focus their marketing efforts to similar clusters across the nation. More than 1 million people were found with similar lifestyles to past inquirers, with the greatest number of similar clusters appearing most frequently in Chicago, followed by St. Louis and St. Paul.

Ruf Strategic Solutions delivers a full suite of marketing intelligence solutions to help organizations acquire new customers, retain existing customers and develop one-to-one relationships to maximize profitability. Ruf’s unique ability to integrate vast arrays of data, technology tools and over 32 years of expertise, empowers organizations with truly actionable and measurable intelligence. For more information, visit www.ruf.com.

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