

2012 Executive Summary and Recommendations

Study Objective and Methodology

The objective of this study was to conduct comprehensive research and develop a strategic marketing plan to effectively position and market Currituck County, North Carolina as a travel and tourism destination of choice. The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism (CCDTT) retained Randall Travel Marketing, Inc. (RTM) of Mooresville, North Carolina to conduct this study.

Study Methodology:

Research was conducted in Currituck County, North Carolina from May through July 2012. The following methodology steps were implemented:

1. Initial Meeting and Materials Gathering:

Initial meetings reviewed study methodology, deliverables, questionnaires, gather input, etc.

2. Performance Review:

RTM analyzed the organization's governance, mission statement, comparability of funding and budget allocation with national averages. Staffing and organizational structure were studied. There was a thorough review of marketing programs, results measures and program performance. RTM provided documentation of economic impact statistics and tax relief for Currituck County, N.C.

3. Lodging Survey and Rental Agency Manager Interviews:

A confidential survey was sent to all lodging management in Currituck County. Six (6) rental properties representing 1,889 of the 3,233 rental units and two (2) hotel/motel properties representing 166 of the 196 rooms responded. The response rate of 59.8% is reliable.

4. Attraction Manager Survey:

A one page survey with five (5) questions was written by RTM and approved by Currituck County Department of Travel & Tourism. A survey was sent to seven (7) attractions in Currituck; five (5) attractions participated.

5. Inquiry Conversion E-Survey:

A 37 question survey was sent January 30, 2012 to a sample of 15,000 email addresses. Of the invitations that were emailed, 2,771 were returned as undeliverable and 201 invitation recipients opted out of the study. This resulted in a net-sent quantity of 12,028. A total of 356 surveys were completed representing 2.96% return. An incentive of a drawing for a free weekend visit was included.

6. Attraction Visitor Intercept Interviews:

Random visitor intercept interview surveys were conducted at six (6) major attractions. The research team explored in-depth visitor awareness of the Currituck County attractions, visitation patterns and perceptions and satisfaction ratings. A total of one hundred eleven (111) intercept interviews were conducted during June 4 -7, 2012. Interviews were conducted by RTM and CCDTT staff.

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Summary of Performance Review

Lodging Taxes and CCDTT Funding

The CCDTT is funded through annual appropriations received from the Currituck County Board of Commissioners. Each spring, the CCDTT prepares a budget request that is submitted as part of the overall County budget to be reviewed by the seven-member Currituck County Board of Commissioners who also serve as the TDA. Funding for the CCDTT budget comes directly from the occupancy tax collected on all short-term lodging (less than 30 days) in Currituck County. North Carolina Statute requires counties to receive approval from the state legislature to levy any local taxes. The legislation that enables Currituck County to levy the occupancy Tax was first passed in 1987 and amended in 1991 and 1999. Therefore, the current occupancy tax in Currituck is levied at 6% and was established for the following purposes in each of the three legislative amendments:

Year	Levy	Purpose
1987	3%	Tourism related expenditures
1991	1%	1/3 Tourism related expenditures 2/3 Promotion of travel and tourism
1999	2%	1/3 Tourism related expenditures 2/3 Promotion of travel and tourism

Currituck Lodging Tax Revenues

Year	6% Transient Occupancy Tax Actual Revenue	4.25% North Carolina Sales Tax	2.5% Currituck Sales Tax
2001/02	\$2,828,107	\$2,003,242	\$1,178,378
2002/03	\$3,130,910	\$2,217,728	\$1,304,545
2003/04	\$3,268,297	\$2,315,044	\$1,361,790
2004/05	\$4,667,481	\$3,306,132	\$1,944,784
2005/06	\$5,322,539	\$3,770,132	\$2,217,725
2006/07	\$8,221,291	\$5,823,414	\$3,425,538
2007/08	\$8,957,545	\$6,344,928	\$3,732,310
2008/09	\$9,259,610	\$6,558,890	\$3,858,170
2009/10	\$8,667,381	\$6,139,397	\$3,611,410
2010/11	\$9,421,232	\$6,673,373	\$3,925,513

Source: CCDTT. Sales tax amounts calculated by RTM based on Occupancy Tax figures

Tourism Advisory Board:

The Currituck County Commissioners/TDA Board created in October 2005 a Tourism Advisory Board to provide guidance to the CCDTT. The Tourism Advisory Board is appointed by the TDA, meets quarterly and is governed by formal rules of procedure established by the County Board of Commissioners. The 7 Board members are required to be residents of Currituck County but are not required to be employed by or affiliated with the travel industry. The Currituck Co. resolution calls for three year staggered Board terms. Board members may be reappointed for one additional term.

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CCDTT Budget Analysis

The CCDTT staff is to be commended for demonstrating solid fiscal responsibility when it comes to the appropriate use of the occupancy tax funding appropriated to them by the County. The charts below show that the CCDTT is well within standard industry ranges when it comes to the allocation of their current funding.

Budget Category	2008/09	%	2009/10	%	2010/11	%
Salaries & Benefits	\$436,055	17.9%	\$470,304	16.7%	\$526,303	17.6%
Overhead	\$113,472	3.4%	\$ 91,664	3.3%	\$74,525	2.59%
Outreach	\$1,891,158	77.5%	\$2,231,849	79.0%	\$2,281,926	76.3%
Capital Outlay	\$29,924	1.2%	\$30,302	1.07%	\$107,811	3.6%
TOTAL	\$2,440,685	100%	\$2,824,119	100%	\$2,990,565	100%

A review of the three basic budget categories for CCDTT (Salaries & Benefits, Office Expenses & Outreach) reveals that the CVB is spending the funding it receives appropriately as a percentage of the whole budget. These figures compare favorably with the standards set by the DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International). According to DMAI, salaries and benefits should fall within a 25-40% range. Marketing and outreach should be approximately 40-50. The Office expenses fluctuated in 2006/07 due to a one time contracted services charge of approximately \$150,000. Outreach expense is appropriate given the size and type of the travel market in Currituck.

Mission:

The mission of the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism is to strengthen the local economy through the promotion of the County as a vacation destination. The Department's goal is to assist tourism-related businesses with advertising and marketing promotion while providing visitor's information on the attractions, activities, events, accommodations, services and historical sites located throughout Currituck County. The Department has set ten (10) specific objectives.

Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism Staff:

The Director of the CCDTT reports directly to the County Manager, and the Currituck County Commissioners who serve as the TDA Board. There are currently eight full-time positions and 20 part-time positions on staff. The staff reports good teamwork, however, RTM is concerned with the accurateness of their individual job descriptions, as well as the overall operation compared to "best practices" of similar destination marketing organizations.

Office and Visitor Center Facilities:

Visitor Center Walk-Ins

Year	Moyock	Corolla
2007-2008	5,269 (May '08-June '08)	29,666 (closed Jan-Feb)
2008-2009	34,246 (No Dec stats)	34,496 (closed Jan-Feb, plus no Dec stats)
2009-2010	52,722	37,684 (closed Jan-Feb)
2010-2011	54,022	37,648 (closed Jan-Mar for remodeling)

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CCDTT Staff Interviews

Staff rated the overall tourism marketing effectiveness of the CCDTT at a 4.66 on a 1-5 scale, where 1=low and 5=high. The team feels that it is doing excellent work and is accomplishing good results.

Strengths of the CCDTT according to staff:

- Teamwork – staff works together very well
- Funding level
- Good leadership; Director’s ability to develop ideas and plans

Weaknesses of the CCDTT according to staff:

- Wrongful use of occupancy tax (County level)
- Periodic difficulty in working with other departments within the county
- Lack of support from County Administration
- Need more tourism professionals on TDA Board

When asked what is needed to market travel and tourism in Currituck County more effectively, the following was noted:

- More funding
- Being able to retain professional staff (salaries & professional growth)
- Additional staff – especially for social media and new emerging technologies
- Access to the entire allowable Occupancy Tax funds (2/3 of 3% should be going towards promotion rather than other uses).

The following ratings (1-5 scale, 1=low and 5=high) were given by staff:

Category	Rating
Providing leadership for the local tourism industry	4.33
Development of effective marketing materials and advertising	4.75
Recruiting leisure tourism to Currituck County	5.00
Bringing conventions/meetings to Currituck County	N/A
Bringing motorcoach tours to Currituck County	N/A
Providing results reports to local industry partners	4.33
Working with local elected officials	3.00
Communication with local community leaders	4.00
Wise use of CCDTT funds	4.50
Fostering an atmosphere of teamwork	4.75
Providing on-going education and career advancement	4.00
Providing the tools you need for your job	4.66

2011 North Carolina Travel and Tourism Economic Impact Data by County

	Statewide	Dare	Currituck
Rank of County tourism economy in North Carolina	n/a	4/100	32/100
Total domestic travel expenditures	\$18,421,060,000	\$877,150,000	\$121,340,000
Total travel related payroll	\$4,192,450,000	\$175,740,000	\$22,010,000
Total number of travel related jobs	188,400	11,260	1,380
Total LOCAL sales tax paid by travelers	\$3,043,870,000	\$40,540,000	\$5,780,000
Total STATE sales tax paid by travelers	\$959,600,000	\$44,280,000	\$5,480,000
Total STATE & LOCAL sales taxes paid by travelers	\$4,003,470,000	\$84,820,000	\$11,260,000
County Population	9,656,401	34,307	23,995
County Households	3,626,179	15,465	9,396
Tax relief per capita from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$414.60	\$2,472.38	\$469.26
Tax relief per household from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$1,104.05	\$5,449.76	\$1,197.32

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	Pasquotank	Camden
Rank of County tourism economy in North Carolina	70/100	100/100
Total domestic travel expenditures	\$53,190,000	\$1,820,000
Total travel related payroll	\$7,890,000	\$190,000
Total number of travel related jobs	470	10
Total LOCAL sales tax paid by travelers	\$1,200,000	\$150,000
Total STATE sales tax paid by travelers	\$2,980,000	\$100,000
Total STATE & LOCAL sales taxes paid by travelers	\$4,180,000	\$250,000
State or County Population	40,696	10,014
State or County Households	14,563	3,442
Tax relief per capita from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$102.71	\$24.97
Tax relief per household from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$287.03	\$72.63

Summary of 2012 Currituck County Lodging Report

- Leisure visitors account for 96.80% of total Currituck County lodging occupancy. Convention/ meeting attendees combined with individual business travelers comprise 1.65%. The remaining 1.55% consists of transient, groups and “other”.
- For both rental companies and hotels, summer is the busiest travel season followed by fall and spring. Winter is slowest.
- Hoteliers report an average of 15% of travel parties are walk-ins without advance reservations.
- For rental companies the average yearly occupancy is between 35% - 40%.
- Overall the vast majority of travel parties are families (93.82%).
- For rentals the average travel party size is approximately 2 families. For those overnighing in a hotel the average travel party size is 2.5 people.
- Rental companies report the average length of stay during peak season as 7 days/6nights. For hotels/motels/inns the average length of stay is 3 nights.
- An average of 20-30% all house rental property travel parties includes pets.

Currituck County Lodging

Lodging Property Type	Total Lodging Properties/Agencies	Rooms/ Units	% of Lodging Inventory
Rental Agency	20	3,233	94.17%
Hotel/Motel	5	196	5.71%
Bed and Breakfast Inns	1	4	.12%

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2011 Lodging Market Segmentation

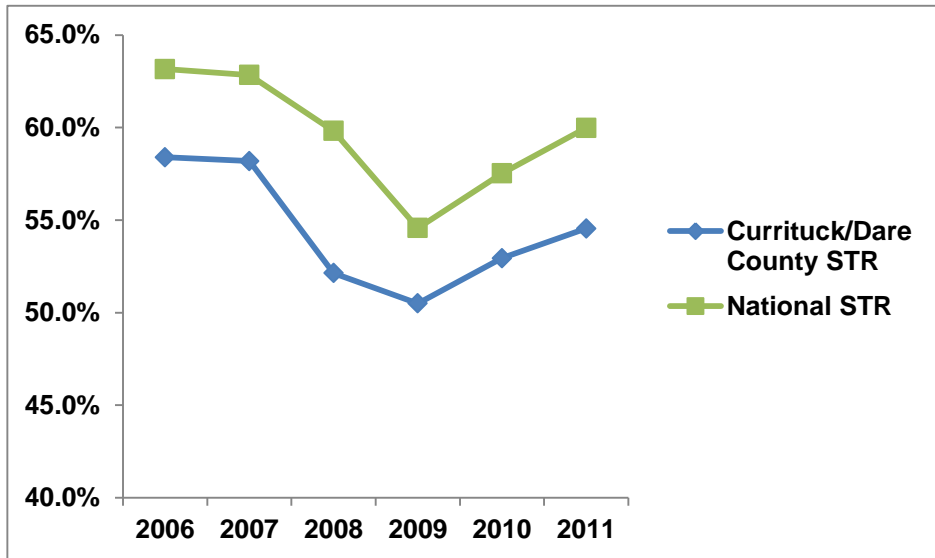
2011 Overall (3,433)	2011 Rental Properties (3,233)	2011 Hotel/Motel/B&B (200)	Annual Overall Market Mix (Segments):
59.8%	58.4%	83%	Response Rate
96.80%	97.39%	91.30%	Leisure
91.68%	93.95%	70.75%	Leisure – tourists visiting the beach, local attractions, shopping, etc.
3.14%	2.23%	11.48%	Leisure – weddings
1.04%	0.33%	7.59%	Leisure – visiting friends & relatives who live in Currituck County
0.94%	0.88%	1.48%	Golf package or golf group
1.01%*	0.72%	3.70%*	Convention & Meeting
0.79%	0.72%	1.48%*	Convention / conferences
		2.22%*	SMERF (social, military, educational, religious, and fraternal groups)
0.90%	0.62%	3.52%	Transient
0.90%	0.62%	3.52%	Pass-through / part of a longer trip
0.65%*	0.56%	1.48%*	Group
0.50%	0.56%	0.00%	Sports groups
1.48%*		1.48%*	Group tour / motorcoach
0.64%	0.71%	0.00%	Business
0.64%	0.71%	0.00%	Corporate individual business
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Other
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Other (specify)

2012 Rental Party Profile

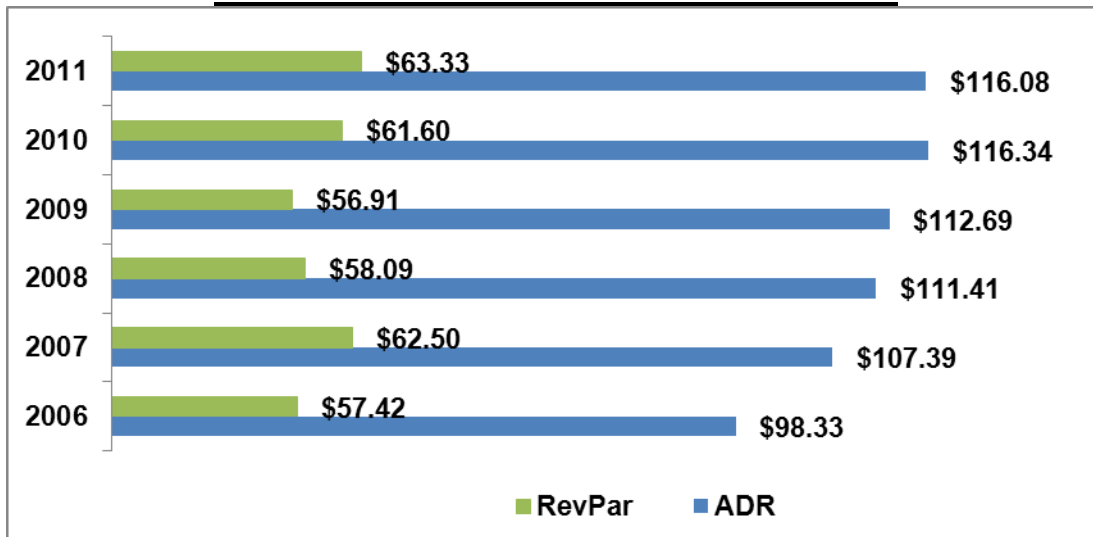
	Rental Properties	Hotel/Motel/Bed & Breakfast Lodging Properties	Overall
Average travel party size (Rental properties typical pattern: •2 families• 3 families• 1 family)	2 families (8-10 people)	2.5 people	5.7
Average length of stay	7 days	3 days	6 days
Adults traveling with children	93.82%	~	93.82%

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Five Year Annual Occupancy Trends for Currituck/Dare County vs. U.S.



ADR and RevPar for Currituck/Dare Counties

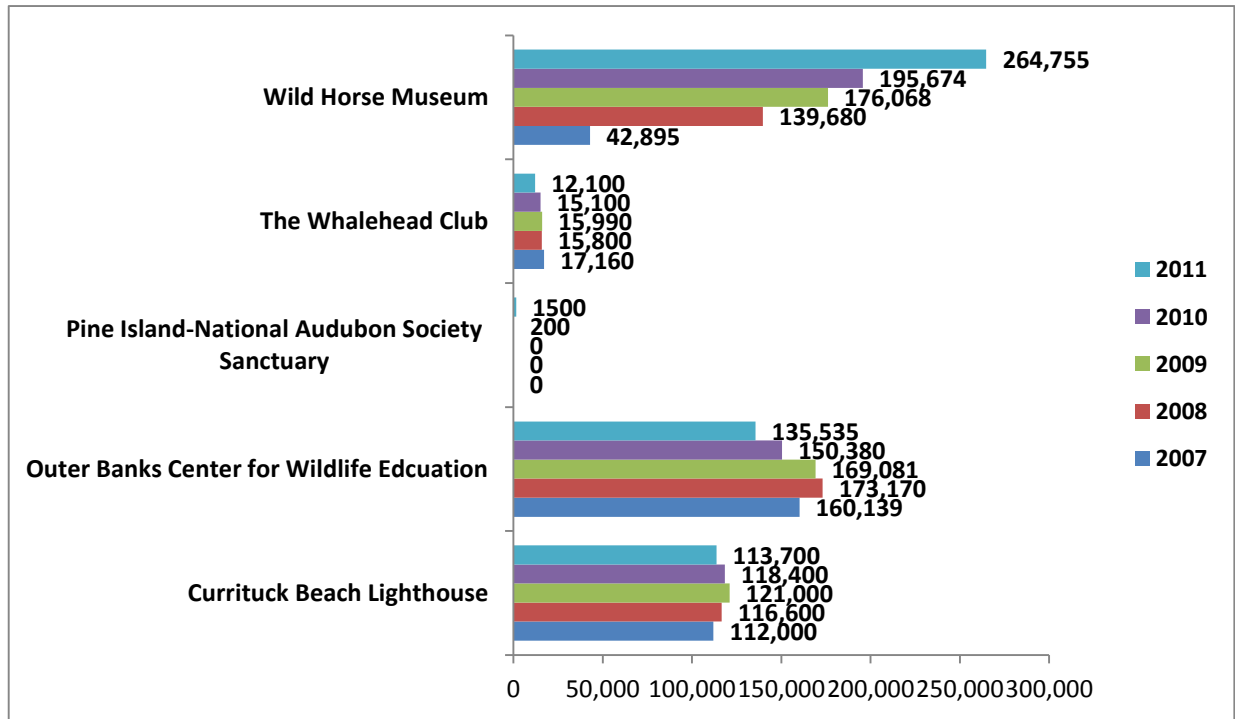


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Summary of Attraction Manager Survey

ATTRACTION SURVEY	2011
Individual Visitors:	
Local residents	10.0%
Out of town visitors	77.4%
Group Visitors:	
College/university/education groups	5.0%
Sports (tournaments, groups)	0.0%
Group Tour/motorcoach	2.8%
Weddings/reunions/family events	1.2%
Social Clubs (Garden, Book, etc.)	2.2%
Religious/Church	1.0%
Association	0.0%
Other (specify): _____	0.4%
Individual and Group percentages added together must total 100%	
	100%

Currituck Attraction Five Year Visitation Trend



- Summer was specified as the busiest season for all five attractions.
- Of those reporting Virginia was first in visitation to Currituck attractions, followed by Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey and North Carolina.

Summary of Inquiry Conversion E-Survey Data

Quantity of interviews:				356
Visitor point of origin:				Mid-Atlantic: Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York
Demographics:				
Average Age = 53.16 primarily Baby Boomer (57%) and GenX (29%)		Decision Maker Gender: Male = 35% / Female = 65%		
Adults traveling without children = 65% / families = 35%		Travel with Pet: Yes = 18% / No = 82%		
Trip Planning:				
How helpful was info: (1=low / 5=high)		What to see/do = 4.37 / Whether to visit = 4.28 / Selection of lodging = 4.12		
Prior visit:		Yes = 48% / No = 52%		
Travel to Currituck after receiving info:		Yes = 29% / No = 71%		
Average lifetime visits to Currituck:		2.84 (increased from 1.18 in 2007)		
Plan on visiting Currituck in future:		Yes = 91% No = 9%		
Used to plan trip:		CCDTT Visitor Guide = 40%	N.C. Tourism Website = 34%	Currituck Website = 28%
		N.C. Travel Guide = 27%	Google = 23%	AAA World = 20%
How far in advance did you plan trip:		12% = 2 weeks / 29% = 2 months / 25% = 5 months / 34% = 6 months		
Major trip purpose:		Business = 1%	Leisure/Vacation = 74%	Pass-through = 5%
		Meeting/Conv. = 1%	Visit Family/Friends = 6%	Group Get Together = 4%
		See Wild Horses = 2%	Birding = 1%	Other = 6%
Visit Behavior & Characteristics:				
Mode of transportation:		94% = automobile only / 4% = fly/drive (Norfolk most prevalent airport)		
First visit or repeat:		3.11% = 1 st Trip / 66.89% = Repeat / 19% have visited 5 or more times		
Likes:		Beaches/Scenic Beauty, Peaceful/Relaxing/Quiet, Wild Horses		
Dislikes:		Traffic, Long drive to get there, Cost		
Words about Currituck County:		Rest, Beautiful, Beach, Peaceful, Fun, Family Fun, Friendly people, Wonderful, Sun		
Participating activities:		Dining out = 85%	Shopping = 79%	Beach/Swimming = 77%
(Fewer activities than in 2007)		Sleep late / nap = 52%	Driving/Sightseeing = 50%	Historic Sites = 48%
		Visit park = 35%	Look for wild horses = 30%	Visit museum = 29%
Attractions visited:		Lighthouse = 58%	Corolla Village = 42%	Whalehead Club = 28%
		OBC for Wildlife = 27%	4- Wheel Drive Beach = 27%	Heritage Park = 24%
Fish:		Yes = 29%	No = 71%	
Water sports:		Yes = 25%	No = 75%	
Non-water outdoor recreation:		Yes = 56%	No = 44%	
Participate in outdoor recreation :		79.31% = No / 20.69% = Yes: Hiking, walking, tennis, cycling, camping		
Cultural event:		Yes = 11%	No = 89%	
Time on mainland:		Drive thru = 37%	½ day = 26%	Entire Trip = 17% Majority/time = 16%
Rating: (1 – 5 scale: 1=low / 5=high)		4.40 = excellent		
Rent equipment:		Yes = 17% / No = 83% (Beach chairs, Bicycles, Boogie boards, Kayak, Coolers)		
New Products that appeal to you:		Dining = 78%	Lodging Options = 78%	Shopping = 53%
		Bike Paths = 45%	Free Trolley = 38%	Artisan Co-op = 32%
		Wildlife Tour = 26%	Nighttime Entertain. = 22%	Other = 13%
Lodging preferences:		Rental Homes = 51%	Mid-price Hotels = 48%	Hotels w/Suites = 30%
		B&B = 29%	Budget Lodging = 28%	Full Service Resort = 25%
Retail merchandise preferences:		Made in N.C. = 49%	Clothing = 49%	T-shirts = 48%
		Collectible = 37%	Books/Music = 34%	Edibles = 33%
Stop at visitor center:		Never = 3%, Rarely = 29%, Fairly often = 44%, Frequently = 24%		
Expenditures:		Total Amount	Daily Amount	% of whole
Lodging / vacation home rental		\$ 1,216.57	\$ 293.86	52%
Food / meals		\$ 349.64	\$ 84.45	15%
Shopping		\$ 223.09	\$ 53.89	10%
Transportation, fuel, airfare, etc.		\$ 198.48	\$ 47.94	8%
Attractions / amusements		\$ 175.07	\$ 42.28	8%
Equipment rentals		\$ 169.23	\$ 40.88	7%
Average Trip Expense		\$2,332.08	\$ 563.30	100%
Average number of nights = 4.14				

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Summary of Attraction Research in Currituck County

	Whalehead Club	OBX Center for Wildlife Education	Currituck Beach Lighthouse	Wild Horse Museum	Historic Corolla Village
Respondents:	111	111	111	111	111
Visited: Yes	30 (27.03%)	31 (27.93%)	70 (63.06%)	29 (26.13%)	43 (38.74%)
	22 = 1 st visit 2 = 2 nd visit 5 = 2-5 visits 1 = 6+ visits <small>*Small % of kids</small>	21 = 1 st visit 2 = 2 nd visit 7 = 2-5 visits 1 = 6+ visits	48 = 1 st visit 7 = 2 nd visit 10 = 2-5 visits 5 = 6+ visits	21 = 1 st visit 2 = 2 nd visit 6 = 2-5 visits 0 = 6+ visits	22 = 1 st visit 3 = 2 nd visit 11 = 2-5 visits 7 = 6+ visits
No	81 (72.97%)	80 (72.07%)	41 (36.94%)	82 (73.87%)	68 (61.26%)
Why NOT visited?	Don't know what it is Not interested Cost Not kid-friendly	Don't know what it is Not interested Maybe	Visited before Climbing steps Long line Cost	Don't know what it is Not interested Maybe	Don't know what it is Not interested Maybe
If visited, Info Source:	Prior Knowledge Drive by Family/Friends CCDTT	Drive by Prior knowledge Family/Friends CCDTT	Prior knowledge Drive by Family/Friends Brochures CCDTT	Prior knowledge Brochures Drive by Family/Friends	Prior knowledge Family/Friends Drive by Brochures Signage CCDTT
Planning to Visit?					
Quantity	81	80	41	82	68
Yes	46 = 56.60%	45 = 56.00%	22 = 53.57%	45 = 54.55%	42 = 61.36%
No	36 = 43.40%	35 = 44.00%	19 = 46.43%	37 = 45.45%	26 = 38.64%
Met Expectations:	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	88.46%	96.67%
Satisfaction Rating:	4.55	4.47	4.70	3.97	4.45
Admission Good Value?	96.30%	N/A = free	93.65%	N/A = free	N/A = free
Recommend to Others?	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	89.29%	94.59%
Likes:	History, Architecture, Scenic setting	Animals, Aquarium Appeal to kids Movie	View, History, Climb, Beautiful, Unique	Childrens' Activities, "Cause" for horses, History	Quaint/Cute, Historic, Bookstore, Shops, Authentic
Dislikes:	More interpretation		Steps, Crowded, Cost, Heights	More like a gift shop than a museum	Nothing
Name Match Experience?	75.68%				
Enhancements Recommended:	Tag-Line for name, physical access	Outside "lure"	Cash only payment is problematic, something to do other than just wait	Make it more about the Wild Horses, Coordinate with horse tours, etc.	Maps/signage, "You are here" kiosks, Parking, Restrooms

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Summary of Attractions Visitor Intercept Survey

- Slightly over 50% of those surveyed planned to visit all five attractions; however, the Historic Corolla Village had more intentions (61.36%) to visit.
- When asked which attractions respondents would recommend to others, the Whalehead Club, Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education and Currituck Beach Lighthouse would be enthusiastically recommended (all received a 100% rating when asked if respondents would recommend to others). Historic Corolla Village would be recommended by 96.67% of the visiting public, and only 88.46% would recommend the Wild Horse Museum.
- The most dramatic improvement was seen for the Whalehead Club for which the team noted much improved satisfaction ratings compared to previous visitor surveys.

Whalehead Club:

- The name is definitely a confusing factor for visitors. Close to a quarter (24.32%) felt the name did not match their expectations. Several thought it was a bar or an exhibit on whales. This emerged as the number one issue for Whalehead Club in 2012. One-third (36 out of 111) of those surveyed had no plans to visit Whalehead Club. Close to one-third had no knowledge of the attraction.
- While the name is problematic, satisfaction scores in 2012 were much improved from previous visitor surveys and intercept interviews conducted by RTM. A 4.55 score (on a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 equals low and 5 equals high) equal to a good, solid “A” rating was given to Whalehead Club. RTM especially noted that repeat visitors seem to give a higher satisfaction rating with 2012 visits compared to prior visits.

Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education:

- Close to three-quarters of those surveyed (80 out of 111) did not visit Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education during this trip to Currituck County. The most frequently given reason for not visiting is they did not know what it is. There does seem to be some issue with the name, indicating that it does not fully depict the experience offered. After conducting the study, RTM feels the word “Education” in the name may perhaps be problematic.
- Those that did visit liked the animals, the aquarium, the appeal to kids, and the movie best.

Currituck Beach Lighthouse:

- The Currituck Beach Lighthouse was rated at 4.70, the highest rating of any tested.
- More than 6 in 10 who visited Currituck County came to Currituck Beach Lighthouse (63.06%). Of those who chose not to, many cited they had been before or the climbing of the steps was an issue.

Wild Horse Museum:

- Almost three quarters (73.87%) of those surveyed did not visit Wild Horse Museum. Close to 1/2 of the respondents mentioned they had no knowledge of the attraction.
- Family-friendliness seemed to make this attraction a positive for parents. “Activities for children” and “care about horses” were frequently given as reasons to visit Wild Horse Museum.

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Historic Corolla Village:

- The average rating for Historic Corolla Village was 4.45, an excellent mark. What most visitors liked the most was the quaint/cute/charming village setting, along with the shops and activities.
- Fifty percent (50%) of respondents had visited Historic Corolla Village prior to this trip.

Recommendations Based on Research

Develop the destination (Leadership):

1. **Dining variety**
2. **Shopping**
3. **More lodging options**
4. **More seasonal reasons to visit**
5. **Bridge would help traffic issues**
6. **Facilities that will support diversification and growth (weddings, reunions, sports, SMERF, trade shows, etc.)**
7. **More beach access (now there is only 1 that has bathrooms & bath house & parking)**
8. **Add signage/wayfinding system on Island – so one knows how far away things are. Even the DOT signs says Corolla is 20 miles when it is less than 10**
9. **Interpretation at Heritage Village – include Wild Horses**

Marketing:

- **Continue current Branding & Imagery**
- **Excellence in Internet, Mobile, Social**
- **Promote dining, shopping variety**
- **Continue efforts at marketing efficiency**
- **More interpretation of Attractions**
- **Consider mobile visitor center for Heritage Village & Grocery Store parking lots when visitors arrive**

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Recommended Actions for Attractions/Attraction Managers

RTM recommends these attractions consider the following points to sustain and increase visitation from out-of-town visitors:

- Partner with the CCDTT to focus on the preferred marketing messages and outreach efforts to appeal to travelers.
- Be aggressive in placing brochures and other promotional materials in the following:
 - Currituck County Visitor Centers.
 - Area lodging/rental properties. This is where visitors report they are most likely to pick up activity information.
 - Places where visitors are likely to spend time such as shopping and dining areas.
- Ensure operating hours work are convenient
- Offer an appealing experience that will motivate visitation.
- Partner with local front-line personnel to ensure they are aware of the attraction and enthusiastically recommend it to guests.

Whalehead Club recommendations:

- RTM's recommended next steps for this attraction include adding a tag-line or other interpretation of the experience both in signage at the site and in marketing materials to help overcome the confusion caused by the name. Also, better access for those with physical limitations is needed; i.e. an elevator.

Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education recommendations:

- RTM feels more initial interpretation needs to be featured on the exterior of the building in order to lure more visitors into the attraction.

Currituck Beach Lighthouse recommendations:

- Accept credit/debit cards; it was felt the \$7 entrance fee was "difficult to come up with in cash." One comment that jumped out to RTM was "only visited (the) grounds, wait was one hour to walk up." This should be addressed by management immediately. Perhaps something could be added that provided interpretation while visitors are waiting to enter.

Wild Horse Museum recommendations:

- RTM recommends this museum consider having a more extensive interpretive exhibit on the wild horses. Perhaps having photos of the actual wild horses, or their family groups, would be good. Also, having more connectivity to other wild horse products, such as the tours is recommended.

Historic Corolla Village recommendations:

- RTM suggestions handing out maps of the layout would improve the visitor experience. Also "you are here kiosks" and better signage would be valuable.