

IEDA Market Research and Plan Overview

Situation Analysis:

When people from other states see Iowa on TV or online, they want to visit. When they visit, they are more likely to stay. This is why IEDA's visitor and talent attraction strategies fit hand in glove through its This is Iowa initiative.

IEDA's marketing is helping Iowa address one of its major challenges: population. Slow population growth has not kept pace with a wave of retiring Baby Boomers. The state must attract more people – visitors and residents – from other states.

This is Iowa was built on a significant research study, with two key findings:

1. Most people simply don't know enough about the state to form an accurate opinion.
2. Tourism is critical: two-thirds of U.S. adults say they have seriously considered moving somewhere after visiting.

IEDA leveraged federal COVID-19 recovery funds to take its marketing to places it had never been, including:

- Introducing Iowa to the nation for the first time through a national television ad that gave viewers a glimpse of Iowa's beauty and lifestyle.
- Soul of Iowa - A tourism campaign that showcases the state from an entirely fresh perspective – that of a drone camera – and sets Iowa's tourism efforts apart from others.
- Investing in more everyday marketing tools that Iowa needs to stay competitive, including a refreshed digital presence and an inventory of photography and video that brings Iowa to life for prospective visitors.

Results show the investment is paying off: About one-quarter of U.S. travelers and one-third of U.S. job seekers saw Iowa advertising in the first half of 2022, according to a survey. Of those, 80% of travelers and 83% of job seekers said the advertising made them more likely to consider Iowa.

Target Audiences:

- **Primary Target:** Young professionals and young families in Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin.
- **Secondary Target:** Young professionals and young families in other states with ties to Iowa.

Research shows that people within different age groups have different priorities and different media consumption preferences. Consideration of these priorities and consumption preferences has been proven to increase marketing success.

Sub-Segment	Description	Media Consumption
Young adults (Ages 22 to 29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looking to start and/or grow their career and to experience new things	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tech innate, use multiple screens, communicate with text and images

Young families (Ages 30 to 39)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to make family memories and find work/life balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys traditional media accessed differently (e.g., podcasts, Hulu)
Middle aged adults (Ages 40 to 55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have disposable income and may recommend Iowa to younger generations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most likely to use Facebook is go-to social media outlet

Strategic Framework:

INSIGHT FROM OUR TARGET AUDIENCE	My perception is my reality (and my perceptions are out of date)
WHAT WE WANT THEM TO BELIEVE	Iowa is more than meets the eye
IMAGINE IF WE COULD	Reveal the REAL Iowa
MAGNETIC IDEA / STRATEGY	Change the vantage point for our target audience so they can see Iowa from a new perspective

Messages:

Research reveals that Iowa’s tourism attractions and business-friendly attributes both equally increased favorability toward Iowa. They also increase interest in visiting Iowa and consideration for Iowa as a place to live. This reinforced Iowa’s plan to roll-out one integrated marketing campaign with consistent messaging about Iowa’s benefits.

IEDA/Iowa Tourism Office Messaging focus on topics best received by target audience travelers, as identified through the research.

- Affordability of travel and cost of living/doing business
- Economic viability of communities and careers
- Natural beauty for visiting and quality of life
- Culture and lifestyle from art to festivals, breweries and restaurants

The Iowa Tourism Industry Strategic Plan includes additional tourism messages and initiatives that have been identified as competitive advantages and growth opportunities:

- Agritourism
- International Marketing
- Visitor readiness