



DISCOVER

South Carolina

ESTO "Road Less Traveled" Category Submission

About This Entry



The Discover campaign was developed to build awareness of and increase visitation to Undiscovered South Carolina, which includes all counties other than Horry, Charleston and Beaufort. From the iconic Myrtle Beach Grand Strand to Charleston’s cobblestone streets and Hilton Head Island’s luxury golf resorts, South Carolina’s coastal cities are well-known travel destinations. Not only do we want to continue to encourage the exploration of these popular coastal cities, we want to showcase the multitude of undiscovered vacation opportunities that South Carolina’s diverse culture and rich history has to offer.

Since 2014, SCPRT has made a concentrated effort to promote lesser known attractions, destinations and hidden gems that South Carolina has to offer. During the 2017-2018 fiscal year, the Discover campaign influenced 682,539 trips to undiscovered destinations in South Carolina.





The Challenge

The Discover campaign has been successful – but how do we keep it that way?

Success is great. We love seeing our hard work pay off – but we can't keep being successful without sharing new stories about the incredible variety of experiences that can be had across the Palmetto State. It was clearly time for some new creative to breathe life back into the campaign and keep the numbers on the rise.

The Goal

To influence 750,000 trips to Undiscovered South Carolina during FY18-19.

Target Audience

- Adults 25-64 (skewing female), HHI \$75,000+
- Outdoor enthusiasts seeking outdoor activities and adventure.
- Cultural travelers, history enthusiasts and foodies seeking unique and authentic experiences.



750-Mile Radius

Markets within a 750-mile radius that have demonstrated a higher propensity for travel to South Carolina.



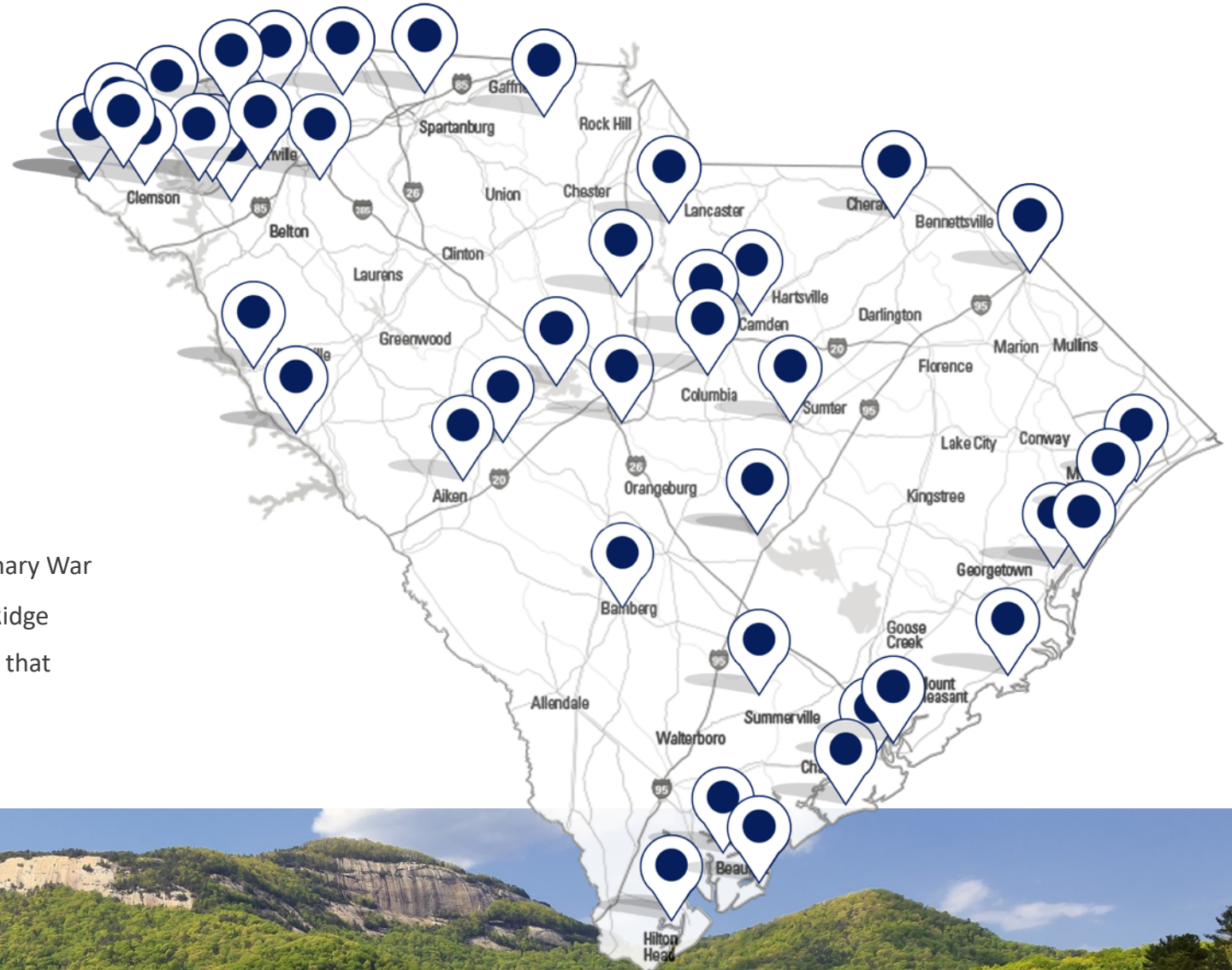
Time Frame

January 1, 2019
through
March 15, 2020

Sharing the Love

There's always something new
to discover in South Carolina.

Whether we're showcasing small coastal towns, Revolutionary War battlefields or charming towns in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, we create visually stunning creative campaigns that showcase the Undiscovered regions of South Carolina.



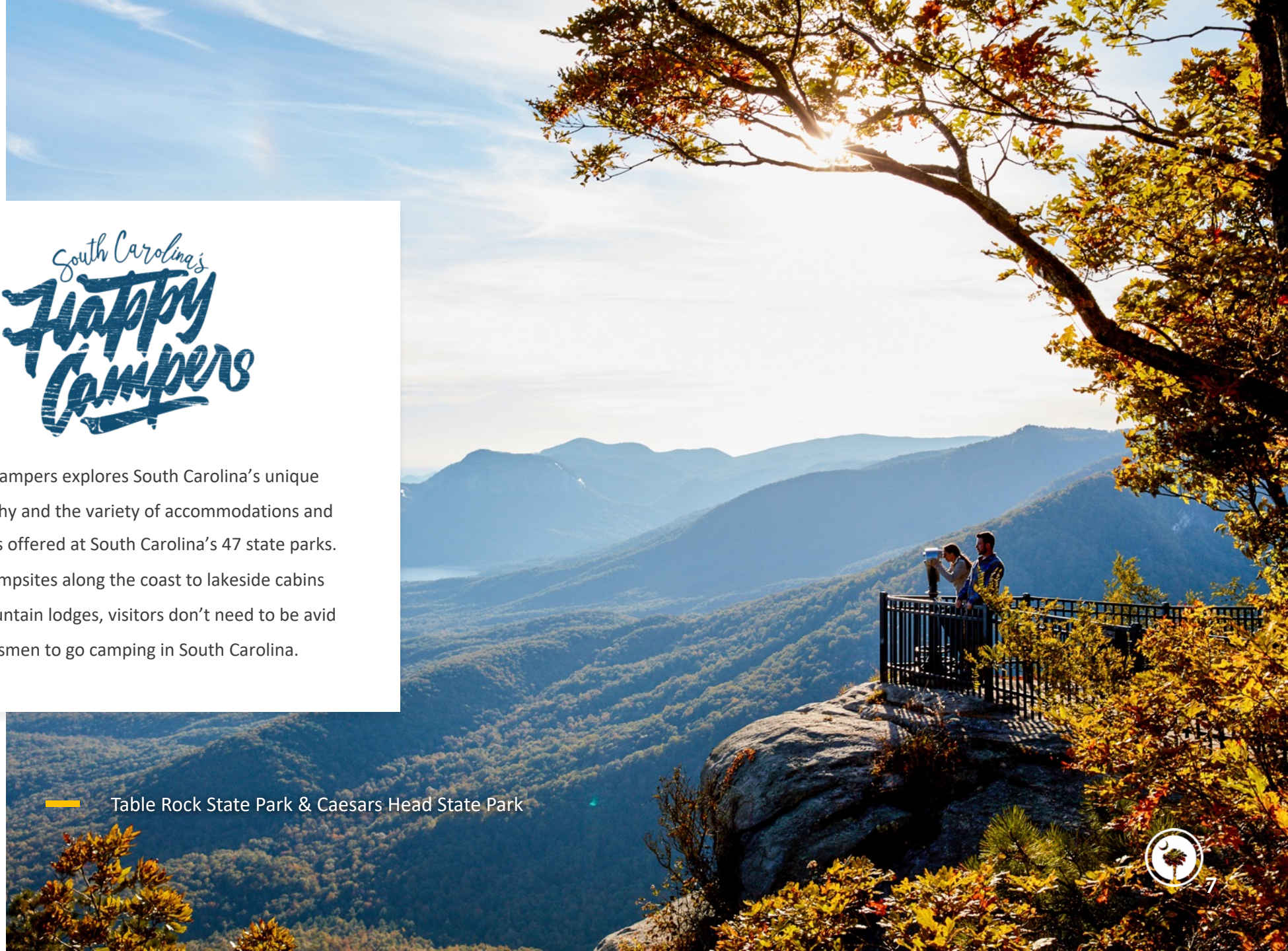
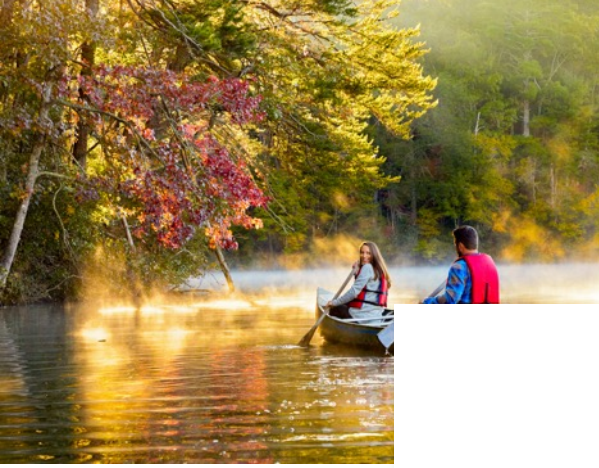


Campaign Strategy

Authentic experiences
deserve authentic
marketing.

That's why we chose to shift from more a traditional, inspirational and romanticized campaign with paid talent to shorter-form videos that feature **“real people, real stories”** to better capture and convey the authenticity that makes South Carolina so special.





South Carolina's Happy Campers

Happy Campers explores South Carolina's unique geography and the variety of accommodations and activities offered at South Carolina's 47 state parks. From campsites along the coast to lakeside cabins and mountain lodges, visitors don't need to be avid outdoorsmen to go camping in South Carolina.



— Table Rock State Park & Caesars Head State Park

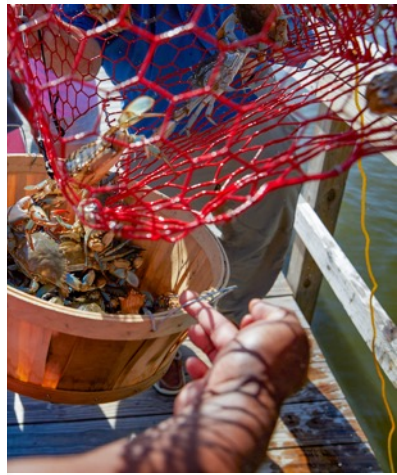




FROM SEA TO TABLE

A South Carolina TRADITION

Just beyond South Carolina's well-known coastal cities are dozens of charming towns waiting to be explored. The Sea-to-Table campaign transveres these quiet retreats and shares the secrets to making a meal of fresh-caught seafood that's ready-made for memories.



McClellanville





SCENIC *Gardens* of SOUTH CAROLINA

The Scenic Gardens creative showcases some of South Carolina's stunning gardens, including the beautiful South Carolina Botanical Garden, the majestic Swan Lake Iris Garden, and the famously gorgeous Brookgreen Gardens.



— Clemson Botanical Garden & Brookgreen Garden

We shifted our paid media focus to target travelers who take four or more leisure trips a year.

These heavy travelers account for just 25% of leisure travelers, but they account for nearly 50% of ad-influenced Undiscovered South Carolina trip spending. We adjusted our media targeting to focus on these heavy travelers, who skew educated, higher income, older and married, likely empty nesters. They are people who have the time and the disposable income to travel frequently.

We made a concentrated effort to target markets within a 350-mile radius during the fall, winter and spring to influence summer travel because they are more likely to visit/travel during the summer. More distant markets are most likely to visit during the spring and need a longer lead time for planning a trip, so we reach them during the fall and winter to influence spring travel.

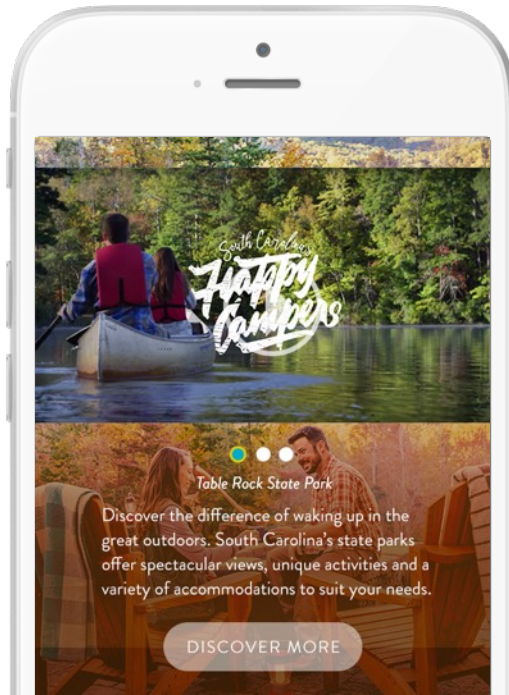


Media Mix

Undiscovered South Carolina travel increases dramatically when consumers are exposed to ads in three or more media. To accomplish this, we adopted a layered paid media approach:

- **Awareness and Consideration:**

TV, Video, SEM, Print,
OOH and Audio Streaming



- **Actions/Link Clicks:**

Cross-Platform Display Ads

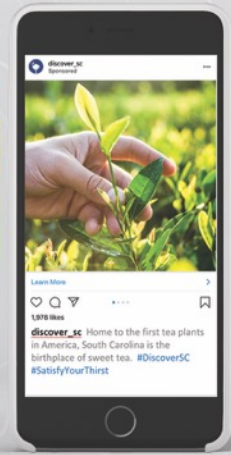
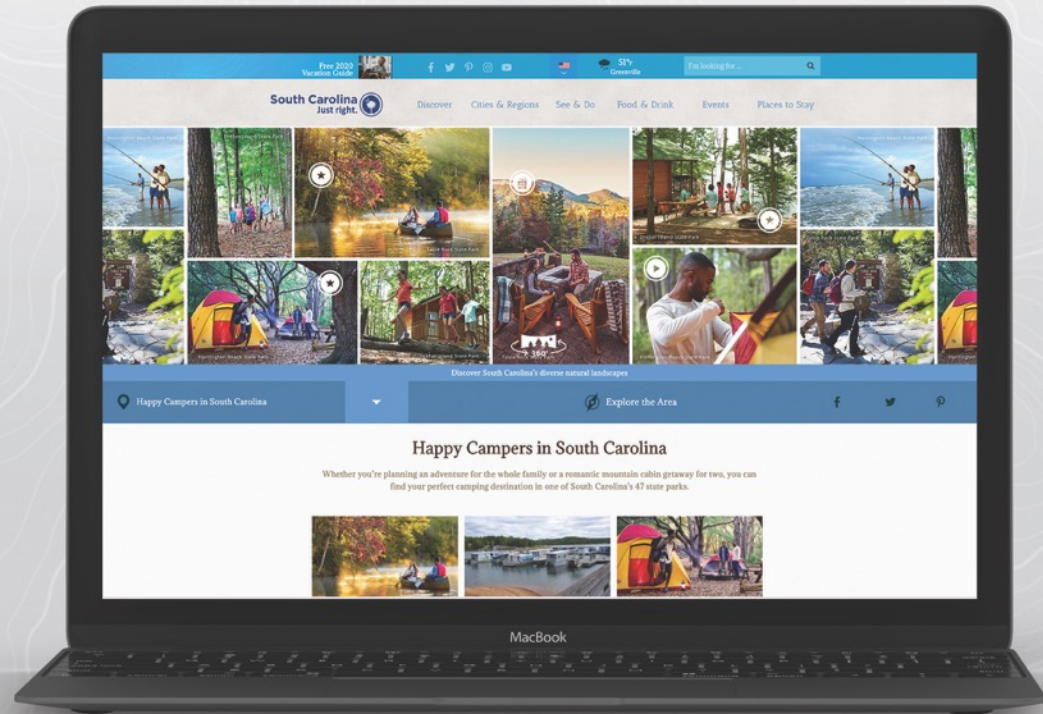
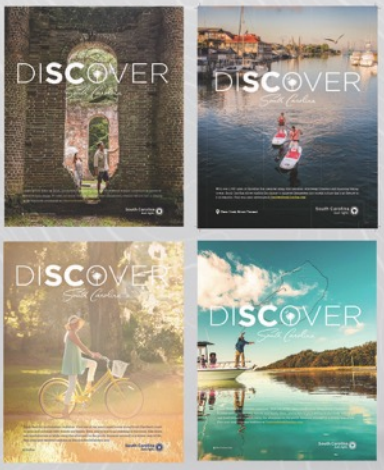


- **Trust Building and Engagement:**

Facebook, Instagram,
Native and Influencers



Campaign Examples

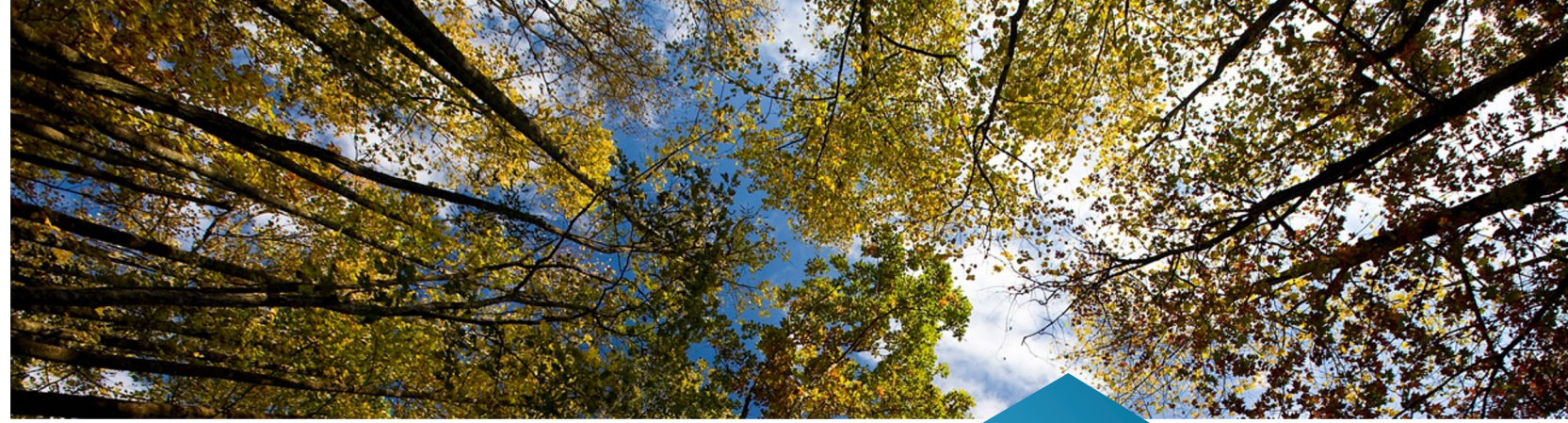


Independent Research

We partnered with SMARI, an independent research firm, to assess the awareness and impact of our advertising and its ability to influence Undiscovered South Carolina travel. Data is collected via an online survey completed by 4,000+ qualified respondents in our target markets.



Strong Marketing is the Key to Steady Growth



Results

With another **861,807 trips**, Undiscovered South Carolina is definitely getting discovered.

Budget

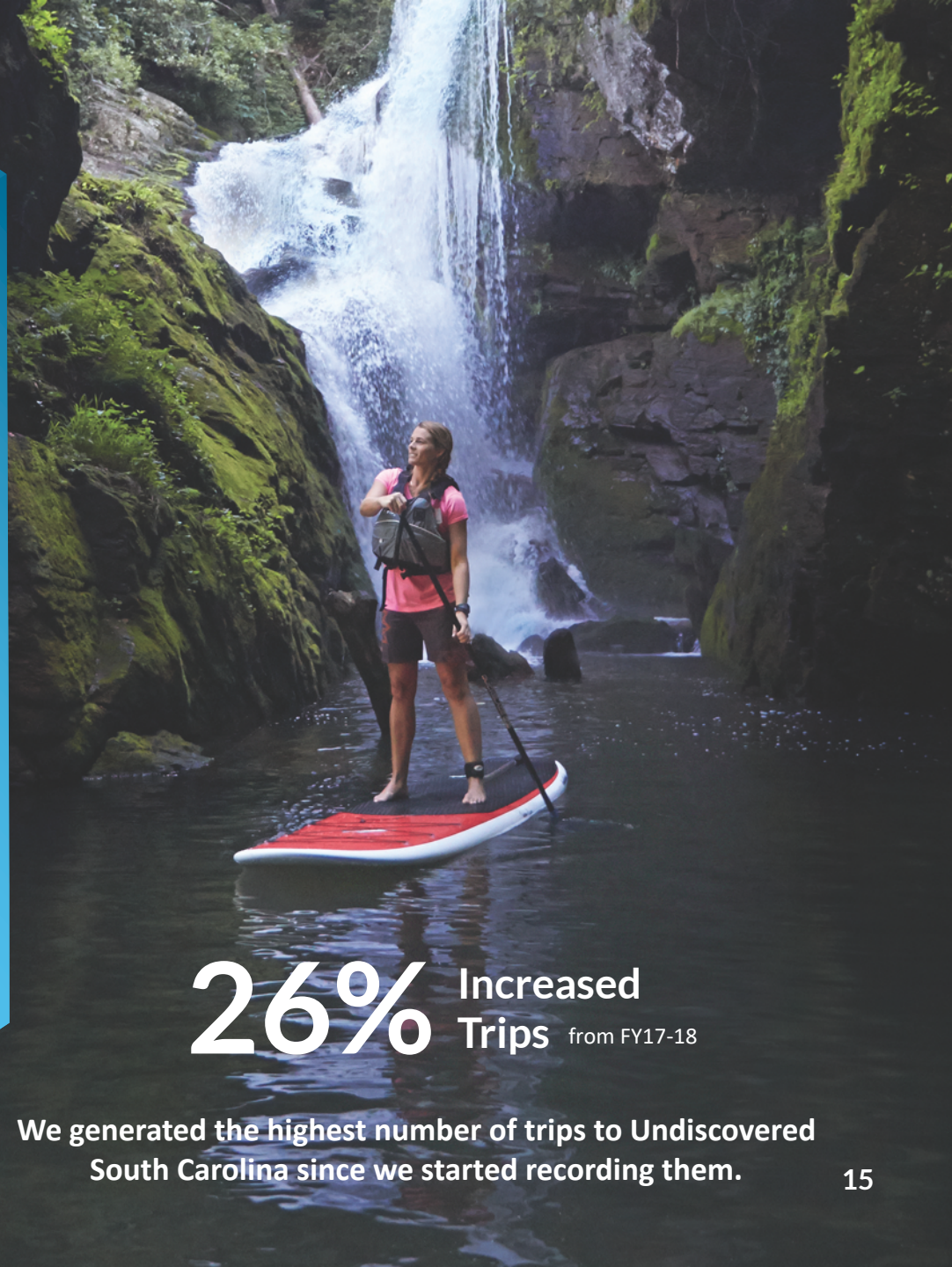
\$5 million media budget

\$300K for video creative and production

Not only did we exceed our goal of 750,000 trips by 15%, the number of trips increased by 26% from FY17-18.

Real Stories, Real People get real results.

Our creative shift better captured South Carolina's unique, undiscovered locations while our media optimizations made sure the right audience was being served our ads.



26% Increased Trips from FY17-18

We generated the highest number of trips to Undiscovered South Carolina since we started recording them.

Results

Undiscovered South Carolina was so successful, we reached a major milestone: our admissions tax collections **passed the \$40 million** mark for the **first time in our state's history**, growing by nearly 5% to **over \$41 million** in FY 18-19.

- **\$9+ Million Vacation Rental Room Nights, an 18.7% Increase**
- **Accommodations Tax Revenue Increase 4%**

- **Admission Tax \$41+ Million, For the First Time in Our State's History**
- **\$34+ Million in state park revenue, leading to 103% self-sufficiency, the highest to date**

Results

Our media is 60% more efficient than the industry benchmark

Our refined media strategies led to an improved cost per awareness household. SCPRT spent \$0.13 to reach a target household.

This marks a significantly efficient media buy, as SMARI's industry benchmark for comparable campaigns is \$0.32 per household reached.

Being 60% more efficient proves the media optimizations that were made were extremely effective.

Our cost
\$0.13 per household

Industry benchmark
\$0.32 per household



Results

It Worked!



In Fiscal Year
2019 - 2020:

92.2%

of trips were booked by people in our targeted 25-64 age range.

92%

of trips booked were from those with HHI of \$50K-\$249K.

50%

of those that booked hotels in SC who are also members of a hotel loyalty program, have earned status milestones within their program, which suggests they are heavy travelers.

Results

The FY18-19 Discover campaign generated 47% awareness of SCVRT ads in target markets, reaching 27.4 million target households, which helped lead to the 861,807 undiscovered SC trips and a 26% increase in overall trips to South Carolina.

47% awareness

26% Trip Increase

Reached 27.4 Million Households





Thank You

for your time.

