

The Impact of *Arizona Highways* Magazine's Facebook Page



Arizona Department of Transportation Research Center

The Impact of *Arizona Highways* Magazine's Facebook Page

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16. Abstract <p>This project examined the relationship between use of the Arizona Highways magazine (<i>AHM</i>) Facebook Page and the decision to travel to or within Arizona. Key purposes were to: (1) provide a thorough understanding of <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page users, including demographics and the relationships among magazine subscription, use of the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page, and use of the <i>AHM</i> website; and (2) provide a thorough understanding of the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page effectiveness, including users' perceptions and preferred content, factors that encourage users to visit regularly, and the Page's influence on users' decisions to travel to or within Arizona. Criteria were established for assessing effectiveness of the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page and were grouped into three focus areas: (1) growing the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page community; (2) encouraging Page fans to visit the <i>AHM</i> website, to support the goal of increasing sales and subscriptions; and (3) using the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page more effectively to encourage increased travel to and within Arizona.</p> <p>The study presents 26 recommendations in the three focus areas noted above, of which <i>AHM</i> has selected 10 as the highest priority for implementation. The research results can be used by ADOT, <i>Arizona Highways</i> magazine, and tourism industry professionals in developing content for their Facebook Pages that positively influences decisions to travel to or within Arizona. The project can also serve as a model for others who have interest in the use of social media.</p>			
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADOTArizona Department of Transportation

AHM*Arizona Highways* magazine

AOT.....Arizona Office of Tourism

FHWAFederal Highway Administration

ISS.....in-state subscribers

NSnon-subscribers

OSSout-of-state subscribers

PIBPartners In Brainstorms, Inc.

PPproduct purchasers

SNSsocial networking sites

SOWstatement of work

UGCuser-generated content

URL.....uniform resource locator (website address)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Arizona Highways magazine (*AHM*) is a powerful tool in highlighting, and presumably attracting tourists to, Arizona, and is particularly renowned for its photography. The publication currently has over one million readers and circulates in all 50 states and in two-thirds of the world's countries.

In addition to the print publication, *AHM* utilizes electronic media, namely a website and Facebook Page, to reach customers and potential tourists. The Facebook Page enables users to engage in dialogue and interaction with each other—uploading photographs, sharing accounts of personal travel experiences, and reacting to specific *AHM* content—thereby personalizing their connection with the magazine and fellow users.

RESEARCH PURPOSE AND APPROACH

This project examined the relationship between use of the *AHM* Facebook Page and the decision to travel to Arizona. The key purposes of the study were to:

- Provide a thorough understanding of *AHM* Facebook Page users, including such factors as demographics, level of involvement with the Facebook Page, and relationship between use of the Page and use of the *AHM* website and between use of the Page and subscription to *AHM*.
- Provide a thorough understanding of *AHM* Facebook Page effectiveness, including:
 - Influence of *AHM* Facebook Page on users' decisions to travel to or within Arizona, visit specific attractions, engage in local activities and events, select accommodations, etc.
 - Users' perceptions of and preferred content for the *AHM* Facebook Page.
 - Factors that influence users to repeatedly visit and engage with the Page content.
 - Users' suggestions for improving and adding value to the Page.

The research approach for this study incorporated collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, with the qualitative data obtained through online focus groups of current *AHM* subscribers and non-subscribers and the quantitative data obtained through an online survey of *AHM* Facebook Page users. Also examined were the user metrics for the *AHM* Facebook Page available from Facebook Insights. Additionally, the key criteria to be used in judging the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page were developed based on a literature

review of Facebook Page best practices, along with input from the technical advisory committee (TAC) for this project.

FINDINGS

Key findings from the online survey and focus groups are summarized below.

- The *AHM* Facebook Page user profile reflects the following demographics and characteristics:
 - Most are between the ages of 45 and 64, with a mean age of 51.
 - The ratio of females to males is three to two, with females composing nearly 60 percent of respondents. However, male and female representation is nearly equal among users ages 35–44.
 - The majority (70 percent) of users reside in Arizona.
 - Slightly more than half (56 percent) do not currently subscribe to *Arizona Highways* magazine.
 - A significant majority of *AHM* Facebook Page users describe themselves as “somewhat or very familiar” with the *AHM* website and with the *AHM* Facebook Page.
 - Less than one-third visit the *AHM* website on a weekly basis. Visitation to the *AHM* Facebook Page is significantly more frequent, with 49 percent visiting the Page at least once a week.
 - More than two-thirds of respondents (69 percent) identified themselves as moderate to strong fans of the *AHM* Facebook Page.
- *AHM* has effectively crossed the digital divide, instilling trust and confidence in the *AHM* brand among *AHM* Facebook Page users.
- Increased familiarity with and use of the *AHM* website and *AHM* Facebook Page would likely influence current *AHM* non-subscribers toward subscribing to the magazine.
- When seeking information about Arizona travel destinations, *AHM* subscribers and non-subscribers primarily turn to organization and travel-related websites and to publications. While the *AHM* publication is their primary resource for Arizona information, they perceive the *AHM* website as presenting numerous navigation and search difficulties.
- *The AHM* Facebook Page has effectively used content and features to promote community engagement, with Page users identifying features that invite participation and promote interaction and sharing as the most liked.
- The *AHM* Facebook Page has been a catalyst in stimulating interest in Arizona travel destinations, with 64 percent of *AHM* Facebook Page users agreeing that the Page

has motivated them to consider planning a trip to one or more Arizona destinations during the next 12 months. Particularly noteworthy is the finding that those individuals represented 70 percent of the non-subscriber respondents, compared with 57 percent of subscriber respondents.

- The top two types of travel planning information sought by *AHM* Facebook Page visitors are sightseeing recommendations and information on short trips such as weekend getaways.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Of the 26 recommendations contained in this report, the *Arizona Highways* team identified the following 10 as the highest priority for implementation:

1. Develop innovative ways to promote *AHM* subscriptions, such as use of the Facebook “Give a Gift” feature, trial digital and/or print subscriptions, and discount offers for *AHM* Facebook Page users.
2. Review *AHM*’s order entry, fulfillment, and customer assistance processes and modify as needed to better facilitate subscription purchase and renewal.
3. To the extent possible, track the subscription activity of *AHM* Facebook Page users who indicated that their familiarity with and use of the *AHM* website and/or Facebook Page would likely influence their decision to purchase and/or renew a subscription to *AHM*.
4. Review similarly focused websites and model best practices in features and functionality on the *AHM* website and Facebook Page.
5. Highlight a specific Arizona location on the *AHM* Facebook Page, using maps, restaurant and lodging suggestions, a discount offer, and other features.
6. Prominently display the *AHM* subscription option on the *AHM* website and the Facebook Page.
7. Use the *AHM* Facebook Page–featured photo and related links as a “tease” to motivate consumers to take a vacation or major trip to an Arizona destination.
8. Utilize the survey data to determine the correspondence, if any, between respondents’ stated likelihood of Arizona travel during the next 12 months and actual reported travel or travel planning behaviors during that period. This would entail a follow-up survey of the same survey respondents.
9. Incorporate into the *AHM* Facebook Page popular content and features used on Facebook Pages for other organizations featuring Arizona travel.
10. Develop *AHM* Facebook Page–only content and promote it on the *AHM* website.

CHAPTER 1. WORK PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is to provide a safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation system that links Arizona to the global economy, promotes economic prosperity, and demonstrates respect for Arizona's environment and quality of life. One of the key factors in linking Arizona to the global economy, as well as promoting economic prosperity, is tourism.

To reach a broad range of potential tourists, ADOT utilizes a variety of communication channels, including social media such as Facebook. Facebook is a social networking service launched in February 2004. As of November 2012, Facebook had over one billion active users, more than half of them using Facebook on a mobile device. As Web technology has evolved, users are seeking richer and more personalized experiences that center on two-way dialogue and interaction. The use of social media enables ADOT's potential customers to connect with each other as well as with the department.

Historically, the highly respected *Arizona Highways* magazine (*AHM*) has been a powerful tool in highlighting (and presumably attracting tourists to) Arizona. Since its founding in 1925, *AHM* has been dedicated to presenting its readers with the best of what the state has to offer, and faithfully capturing the distinctive essence of what makes Arizona such an attractive place to reside in and travel to. This monthly publication is geared toward an audience with a deep-rooted interest in Arizona's rich history and diverse culture—highlighting unique outdoor experiences, expert travelogues, and historical tales through its exceptional articles and features, along with award-winning photographs of Arizona's scenic wonders that have gained the magazine recognition around the world.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH STUDY

The purpose of this research study was to examine the relationship between use of the *AHM* Facebook Page and the decisions of potential visitors to travel to Arizona.

The key issues addressed in this study were:

- What motivates use of the *AHM* Facebook Page?
- How does Facebook usage differ among demographic groups, and what features or content have high appeal for each group?

- What is the likelihood of Facebook users placing trust in the *AHM* site and each other?
- How does that likelihood affect willingness to share information and develop new relationships?
- How has the social interaction through Facebook influenced tourism in Arizona?

The biggest challenge ahead for *Arizona Highways* magazine may not be lack of audience or even lack of new revenue opportunities, but rather, the fact that a steadily growing portion of readers will prefer to connect with the publication in the digital realm rather than in print. The technological advances that have made digital publishing possible have also added a new layer of complexity—and a new set of players—to the process of connecting content and readers.

News and other information-providing organizations, including magazines, still produce most of their own content for their audiences, such as news items and feature stories about people, places, and events. However, publishing in the digital environment requires that magazines depend on aggregators such as Google and social networks such as Facebook to bring them a substantial portion of their audience (readers). As information consumption becomes more mobile, magazines must follow the design rules of device makers like Apple and software developers like Google to ensure the delivery and readability of their content. According to the Pew Research Center (Rainie 2012), over 25 percent of American adults reported owning a tablet computer as of September 2012; that figure had more than doubled in less than a year, from 10 percent in December 2011. Each new platform may require a new software program, and these players take a share of the revenue and, in many cases, also control the audience data.

That data may be the most important commodity of all. In a media world where consumers decide what travel news they want to get and how they want to get it, the future will belong to those who understand the public's changing behavior and can target their content and message to fit the interests of each user. For *AHM*, it is critical to understand the relationship between use of the magazine's Facebook Page and the decision of potential visitors to travel to Arizona.

METHODOLOGY AND WORK PLAN TASKS

Task 1: Work Plan

The first key task was to develop a detailed work plan that described all the tasks to be completed for the research study, *The Impact of Arizona Highways Magazine's Facebook Page* and the methodology to be employed in implementation of the study. These tasks and methodologies are outlined in Chapter 1.

Task 2: Definition of Effectiveness

The following methodologies were employed to determine the meaning of effectiveness from two perspectives, that of *AHM* and of the Facebook Page user.

Criteria for Judging Effectiveness from AHM Perspective

To identify the criteria for determining the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page from the magazine's perspective, the researchers conferred with the *AHM* team to identify and agree on the key criteria to be used. It was anticipated that some of these criteria might be modified as additional data were gathered from users and potential users during work plan tasks, including insights from the user profile, best practices, the online survey, and the focus groups.

Identification of Best Practices of Effective Facebook Pages

To identify effectiveness criteria from the user's perspective, the researcher accessed its digital research library composed of nearly two billion records in 600 databases. The databases include research studies, trade journals, and publications about best practices of marketing on Facebook utilized by the magazine and travel industries. Examples of applicable, effective Facebook Pages were shared with *AHM* to aid the magazine team in developing and/or modifying its Facebook Page to help increase the number of new and return visitors and to improve the overall engagement and effectiveness of the Page.

Two sets of criteria were compiled for determining the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page. One set was identified by the *AHM* team as the criteria to be used to assess effectiveness from the magazine's perspective. The other set—developed from the review of best practices and existing user-centric studies of effective Facebook Pages, as well as input from *AHM*—consisted of the criteria to be used to assess effectiveness from the user's perspective. As with the *AHM*-focused criteria used to determine the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page, it

was anticipated that the effectiveness criteria from the user's perspective might also be modified as additional data were gathered from *AHM* Facebook current and potential Page users in subsequent work plan tasks, particularly the user profile and online focus groups.

Task 3: Profile of *AHM* Facebook Page Users

A comprehensive profile of users of *AHM*'s Facebook Page was then developed based on the following methodologies and characteristics that were identified, collected, and analyzed.

Facebook Analytics

For the first phase of compiling a profile of *AHM* Facebook Page users, user profile data available through Facebook Insights were reviewed weekly. Facebook Insights provides Facebook Page owners with metrics based on their content. Data are also available through the Graph API. However, to fully address the user characteristics to be identified, collected, and analyzed, the work plan included implementation of a quantitative user profile online survey.

Quantitative User Profile Online Survey

While some insights into the profile of *AHM* Facebook Page users could be gained through Facebook Insights and reporting tools, a more comprehensive online survey was implemented, with the link posted on the *AHM* Facebook Wall and Question pages.

The online survey was designed to provide a thorough understanding of *AHM* Facebook Page users, including:

- Demographics.
- Preferences regarding travel destinations within Arizona.
- Factors that influence when and why they access the Facebook Page.
- Level of their involvement with the Facebook Page (visit frequency, return visitation, actions taken, engagement level, links accessed) and the relationship between their use of the Facebook Page and visits to the *AHM* website and blog.
- Preferences and expectations regarding content of the Facebook Page.
- Willingness to share information on the Page.
- Relationship between their use of the Page and subscription to *Arizona Highways* magazine.
- The influence of *AHM*'s Facebook Page on users' travel decisions regarding choosing Arizona as a destination.
- Expenditures associated with recent Arizona leisure trips.

Data from the survey were examined in terms of the established criteria for determining effectiveness. The researcher worked with the *AHM* team to modify the evaluation criteria as needed to make them more responsive to and reflective of users' needs and interests related to the *AHM* Facebook Page.

The process of implementing the online survey was as follows:

- Developed an initial draft of the online questionnaire with input from the *ADOT/AHM* team. The *ADOT/AHM* team reviewed the questionnaire, and any requested revisions were made.
- Applied contemporary graphic design and “customer speak” to the questionnaire, formatting it for maximum visual appeal. The researcher’s experience has demonstrated that customizing the questionnaire dramatically increases response rate and decreases respondent fatigue.
- Programmed the questionnaire and tested it with the researcher’s proprietary panels to ensure that all wording and instructions were appropriate. An online link was also provided to the *ADOT/AHM* team to test the questionnaire before it went “live.” Comments and suggested revisions and additions to the questionnaire were then implemented.
- Posted a link to the survey on the *AHM* Wall and Question Pages. E-mails were also sent to *AHM* Facebook users and individuals who had provided their e-mail address when signing up for the *AHM* newsletter on the Facebook Page or through any other promotions or special events.
- Included a unique identifier in the programming that allowed participants to start and stop the online survey at their convenience. Using the link and login brought them back to their questionnaire exactly where they left off. This identifier was also used to track incomplete surveys and send reminder e-mails asking participants to log back on and finish the survey.
- Provided real-time survey data to the *ADOT/AHM* team by means of the researcher’s password-protected Research Dashboard, which presents field and frequency reports showing total responses to each question and other data, such as length of time spent on survey.

Based on the results from Facebook Insights and the online survey, a user profile was prepared as Chapter 3. Data tables were also provided, segmented by key demographics.

Task 4: Assessment of the Effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page

The effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page was assessed based on the criteria established in Task 2, the collection of quantitative data and identification of the *AHM* Facebook Page user profile in Task 3, and the collection of qualitative data in Task 4.

Qualitative Online Focus Groups

Two online focus groups were conducted with users of *AHM*'s Facebook Page, one with subscribers to the magazine and the other with non-subscribers who had previously visited the *AHM* Facebook Page. The platform for the online focus groups utilized interactive Web 2.0 tools. Web 2.0 refers to the overall body of technologies that have changed web pages from static to interactive, such as the posting of visitor comments, and have enabled the formation of online discussion groups in which participants can interact with each other as well as with material that is shown to them. In the *AHM* Facebook Page focus groups, participants used the chat tool to interact with the moderator and each other, responded to polling questions by selecting responses, viewed various sections of the current *AHM* Facebook Page, and identified their likes and dislikes and provided suggestions for making the Page more engaging to visitors.

The focus groups addressed the following key effectiveness criteria identified in Task 2:

- Influence of the *AHM* Facebook Page on users' travel decisions regarding the choice of Arizona as a destination, including visiting specific attractions, engaging in local activities and events, selecting accommodations, and choosing travel routes and itineraries.
- Users' perception of the Page, such as what they like and dislike and what aspects of the Page are more appealing than the magazine.
- Factors that compel someone to become a fan and what influences users to continue to return and engage with the content of the Page.
- Improvements to the Facebook Page that could add value for users and encourage continued use of the Page, such as the addition of photos, contests, weekend events, and innovative "add-ons."
- Effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page in encouraging fans to visit the *AHM* blog and website.

The use of online focus groups permitted *AHM* readers throughout the United States and the world to participate. The following steps were carried out to ensure that the focus groups achieved their intended purposes:

- Identified potential focus group participants among *AHM* Facebook users based on the user profile and responses to the online survey. Reconfirmed key demographics for qualification—such as age, gender, income, family size, education, city, state, and county—and other criteria for potential participants, including their level of involvement with the Facebook Page.
- Contacted and confirmed participation of prequalified *AHM* Facebook Page users.
- Developed an online discussion guide for approval by the ADOT/*AHM* team, including current and potential Facebook Pages and concepts to be tested.
- Conducted two focus groups, each approximately 75 minutes in length. During the online focus groups, participants heard the moderator’s voice, viewed the current *AHM* Facebook Page, answered questions, commented on other participants’ feedback, took part in polls and surveys, and more.

Based on key insights gained from previous tasks—identification of best practices of effective Facebook Pages, compilation of an *AHM* Facebook Page user profile, and findings from the online focus groups—recommendations were developed to help increase the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page, add value for users, and encourage their continued use of the Page.

Task 5: Final Report

An executive summary of 1,500 words or less was prepared and compiled with the previous tasks and their corresponding Chapters 1 to 4 to form the final research report.

CHAPTER 2. DEFINITION OF EFFECTIVENESS

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE *AHM* FACEBOOK PAGE FROM *AHM*'S PERSPECTIVE

The criteria to be used for determining the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page from the magazine's perspective were developed in a brainstorming session with the *AHM* team. The criteria are presented below.

1. Support *Arizona Highways* magazine's mission statement: *To be the official source for travel information in Arizona and to increase travel to and within the state.*
2. Engage and grow a community on the *AHM* Facebook Page.
 - a. Increase Facebook traffic, including the frequency of quality and in-depth comments, new posts, and photo sharing.
 - b. Build "connection" points based on key interests (e.g., photography, hiking, and travel planning, including lodging, dining, activities, and events).
 - c. Channel *AHM* Facebook Page visitors to the *AHM* website and blog.
 - d. Reach a younger audience.
3. Increase subscriptions to the magazine and purchase of ancillary products; encourage Facebook visitors and fans to become subscribers and customers.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE *AHM* FACEBOOK PAGE FROM THE *AHM* USER'S PERSPECTIVE

To identify effectiveness criteria from the user's perspective, a variety of resources were consulted, with a particular focus on those utilized by the magazine and travel industries. These resources included primary and secondary research studies, trade journals, and publications about best practices of Facebook marketing. Examples of effective, applicable Facebook Pages were presented to the *AHM* team for review, and the team's suggestions for possible criteria were taken into consideration. The key criteria identified for determining the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page from the user's perspective, which also complement the criteria from the magazine's perspective, are presented below.

1. Access to engaging travel-related content (posts, photographs, stories, etc.) that promotes travel to and within the state.
2. Ability to connect with *AHM* staff and other *AHM* Facebook Page fans based on key interests (e.g., photography, hiking, and travel planning, including lodging, dining, activities, and events).
3. Content of interest that extends the experience from the Facebook Page to the *AHM* website and blog.

4. Content generated by *AHM* and users that appeals to a younger audience.
5. Benefits and/or incentives for *AHM* Facebook fans for subscriptions to the magazine and purchase of *AHM* ancillary products.

BEST PRACTICES OF EFFECTIVE FACEBOOK PAGES

AHM was already implementing several of the best practices found in the most effective Facebook Pages, and this is noted in the following section within the discussion of each applicable best practice. Several of these practices can be seen in Figure 1, a portion of the *AHM* Facebook Page that contains a featured photograph, a contest for young artists, and a link to the *AHM* Newsletter. Additional implementation of some or all of the following best practices will allow *AHM* to further expand the authentic social experience, build lasting relationships, and help reach *AHM*'s business objectives.



Figure 1. Portion of *Arizona Highways Magazine* Facebook Page. (November 2012)

When Facebook transitioned all Pages to its new Timeline format in December 2011, several key marketing questions arose as a result of the transition:

- How does this new format for presenting content impact the ability to engage an audience?
- Have strategies changed for effective posting of content?
- Does content that garnered high interaction prior to the change in the Timeline format still motivate people to interact and be engaged?

According to Facebook, its users interact in different ways—such as liking, commenting, and sharing—as well as at different frequencies. Specifically, liking makes up approximately 79 percent of all interactions, commenting accounts for 15 percent, and sharing content accounts for 6 percent. For *AHM*, each of these interaction methods represents an important touchpoint in the conversation with its audience. The greater a user’s overall interaction with the *AHM* Facebook Page, the more often *AHM* content will appear in that user’s News Feed—the center column of the homepage containing a constantly updating list of stories from people and Pages that the user follows on Facebook.

The following section outlines best practices for increasing user interaction with Pages, including the following:

- Best days and times to post on Facebook overall and to appeal to travelers.
- The type of content that resonates best with Facebook users and travelers.
- Best ways to move Facebook fans to become subscribers and purchasers.
- Posting strategies proven to increase interaction and engagement.

Post on Days with Higher Interaction Rates and Greater Impact on Travel Planning: Thursdays through Sundays

The Facebook interaction rate for posts on weekends is nearly three times the interaction rate for weekday posts (20 percent versus 7 percent, respectively). Interaction rate is calculated as the percentage of people who saw a post and liked, shared, clicked, or commented on it. Facebook fans use the social network when they have downtime, which is why higher interaction rates occur on weekends. Despite the higher weekend interaction rate, only 14 percent of all posts on Facebook are published on Saturday or Sundays, presumably because company postings are handled by employees working a traditional Monday-to-Friday workweek. Thus, the common practice of posting primarily on weekdays represents a missed opportunity.

Figure 2 shows the Facebook interaction rates and postings of travel-related companies by day of the week; the size of the green bubbles represents the interaction rate for that day.

Interaction rates start climbing on Thursdays and peak on Sundays, when interaction reaches 24 percent, which is 14 percent higher than the average daily interaction rate of 10 percent. Clearly, the most effective days to post are later in the week, i.e., Thursdays through Sundays. For those planning weekend day trips, interactions increase on Thursdays and Fridays. In comparison, for those planning longer trips that require an overnight stay, the majority of planning, researching, reviewing photos, and posting occurs on Sundays.

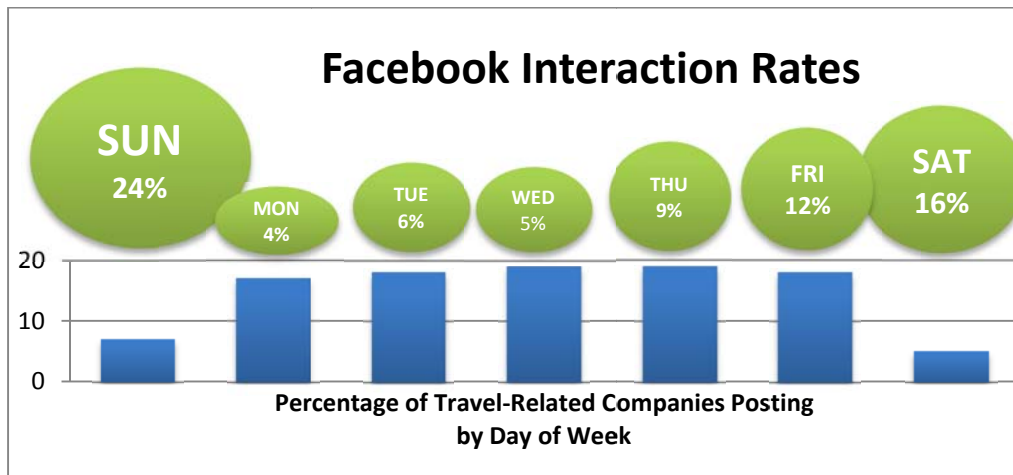


Figure 2. Facebook Interaction Rates and Travel-Related Company Postings, by Day of Week. (November 2012)

Currently, *AHM* has two recurring posts every week, Trivia Tuesday and Friday Fotos, seen in Figure 3. The Friday Fotos post includes a link to the *AHM* blog. It appears that *AHM* currently posts most often on Tuesdays, first with the posting of the Trivia Tuesday question and then with the announcing of the winner shortly after 5:00 p.m.

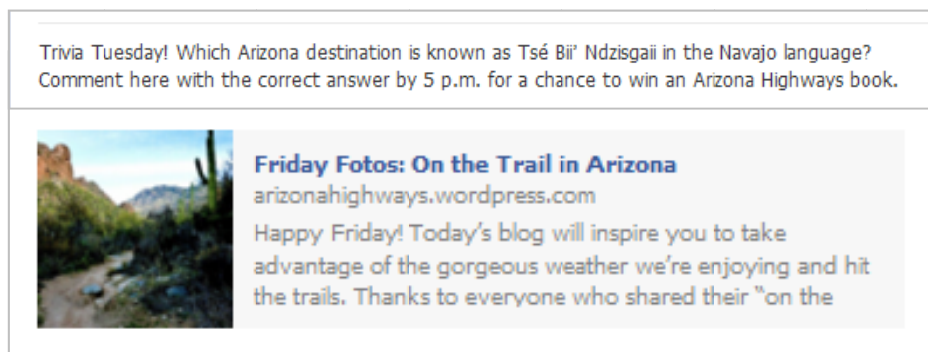


Figure 3. Examples of *Arizona Highways* Magazine Trivia Tuesday and Friday Fotos Postings. (November 2012)

Promote Sharing of Travel Experiences, Incorporate Social Geo-Location Apps, and Leverage “Go-To” Travel Experts

According to one travel survey (Frommer’s Unlimited & Tnooz 2011), sharing travel experiences online became more common in 2011, with over one-third of travelers posting travel photos in general (38 percent) or sharing travel experiences on Facebook specifically (33 percent). Respondents ages 18–34 have adopted the sharing of online travel experiences in higher numbers than other age groups. They are two to three times more likely to upload photographs in general (69 percent versus 38 percent) and to share experiences on Facebook specifically (72 percent versus 33 percent). Additionally, travelers and Facebook users are showing increased usage of social geo-location services such as Foursquare to highlight travel destinations, lodging, restaurants, and events. Foursquare currently has over four million users.

Feature Content That Is Portable, Participatory, and Personal

The widespread usage of mobile devices has fundamentally changed how users access Facebook. The majority of Facebook users access it through mobile devices. According to one report (Hampton et al. 2011), almost 60 percent of Facebook users have a smartphone and 32 percent have a tablet computer. The *AHM* Facebook Page data show that, of the average 600 new likes a month, 268 came from mobile devices and 51 from third-party applications. Therefore, it is important that *AHM* feature portable content that users can easily access, use, and share on their mobile devices when they are traveling.

AllTrails is a leading digital network focused on outdoor enthusiasts, providing one million people monthly with information and tools to discover top destinations near them, record their adventures, and share them with friends and family. AllTrails and National Geographic have partnered in producing one of Facebook’s highest-rated and most-used apps, featuring over 40,000 trails, reviews, and photographs. The AllTrails and National Geographic website prominently features the app, as seen in Figure 4. AllTrails has reported that Arizona is among its top three states in frequency of inquiries and posts.



Figure 4. AllTrails/National Geographic Website Homepage. (November 2012)

Leverage Featured Banners to Highlight Travel Opportunities and Magazine Subscriptions

As seen in Figure 5, the *AHM* Facebook Page currently features the following sections in the banner area: About, Photos, Likes, Newsletter, and Notes. While About, Photos, and Likes are among the most commonly featured sections on effective travel and leisure Facebook Pages, *AHM* may want to consider replacing or rotating the Newsletter and Notes sections with other topics that support *AHM*'s criteria for judging an effective *AHM* Facebook Page—specifically, content that promotes travel, channels users to the *AHM* website, and provides an opportunity to subscribe to the magazine and purchase ancillary products.

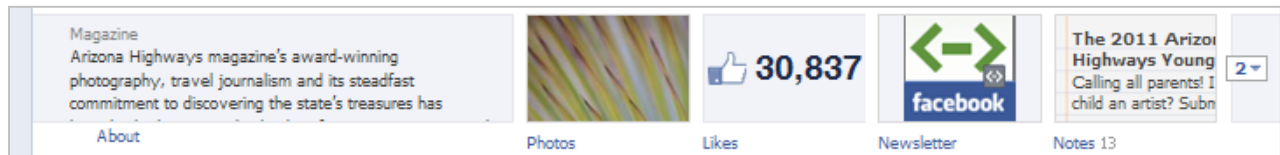
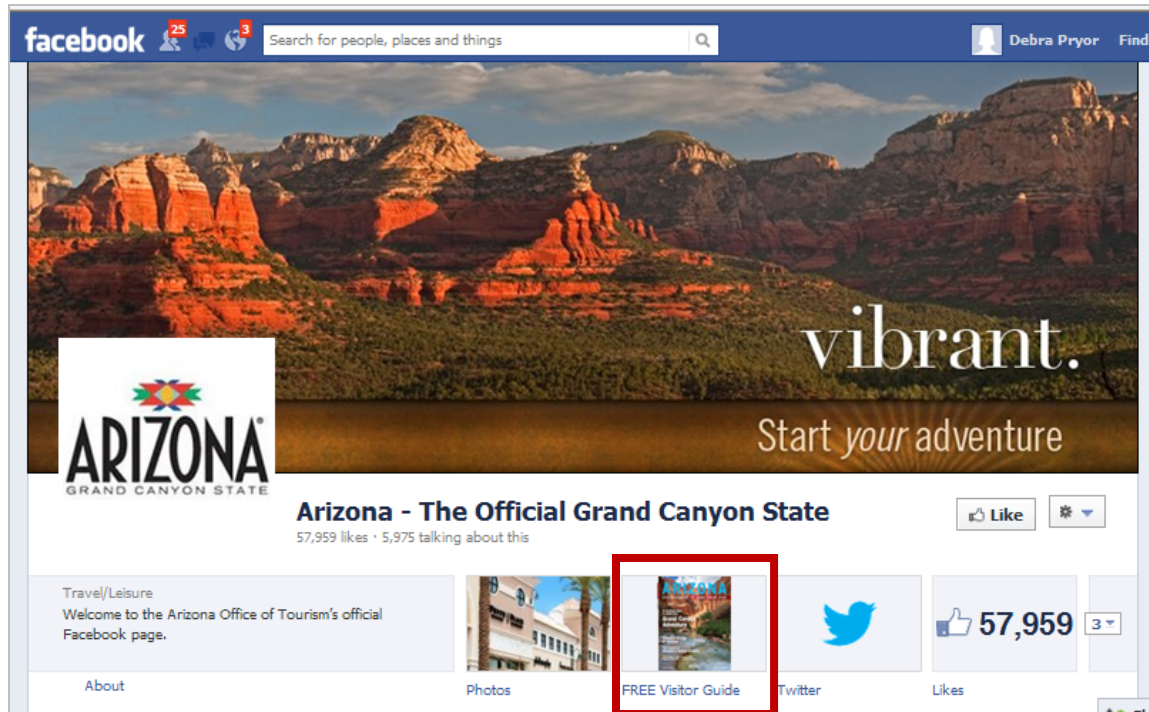


Figure 5. Current Banner Area on *Arizona Highways* Magazine Facebook Page. (November 2012)

Highlight Travel Guides and Content

The Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) reports that its most popular website page—excluding its homepage link to arizonaguide.com—is its “Request a Visitor’s Guide” page (AOT 2012a). A significant portion of visitors to this page originate from the AOT Facebook Page, shown in Figure 6, where “Request a Visitor’s Guide” is featured in the AOT Facebook banner. The AOT’s next most popular website pages are also featured on its Facebook Page.



**Figure 6. Arizona Office of Tourism Facebook Page Featuring Visitor Guide Offer.
(November 2012)**

As seen in Figure 7, the *AHM* website features a Travel Guide section positioned as “your one-stop resource for planning your next Arizona adventure.” It includes the following sections: Dining, Weekend Getaways, Event Calendar, Lodging, and External Links. Such content could be featured on and rolled into the *AHM* Facebook Page banner area.



Figure 7. Arizona Highways Magazine Website Travel Guide Section. (November 2012)

Promote Magazine Subscriptions and Ancillary Products

Several travel magazines feature special subscription offers for their Facebook users on their Facebook Page banners. Figures 8 and 9 show excerpted portions of the *Sunset* magazine and *Phoenix Magazine* Facebook Pages; the latter promotes both a subscription offer to the magazine and its featured product, the *Essential Southwest* coffee-table book.



Figure 8. *Sunset Magazine Facebook Page. (November 2012)*



Figure 9. *Phoenix Magazine Facebook Page. (November 2012)*

Best Practices for Posting

Post Between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. to Give New Content When Fans Are More Likely to Act

According to a Facebook publication on best marketing practices for Page owners (Facebook 2011a), posts published between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., which are referred to as *non-busy hours*, receive 14 percent higher interaction than those that post between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., referred to as *busy hours*. Currently, only 18 percent of posts are published by companies during non-busy hours. When not at work, people are more likely to spend time perusing Facebook and interacting with Page content. Providing the right content at the right time increases interaction and optimizes marketing initiatives.

Post One to Two Times per Day, but Space Posts to Avoid Exceeding Seven Posts per Week

A research study on wall posts (Forrester Research 2012) found that marketers that post one or two times per day see a 19 percent higher interaction rate, on average, than those that post three or more times per day. Interaction rates are also high for marketers that post seven or fewer times during the week. Pages with more than seven owner posts per week see a 25 percent decrease in interaction rates. A review of past *AHM* posts shows that they occurred no more than two times a day and averaged six to seven posts a week, rates that are in keeping with best practices.

Keep Posts Short: Use 80 Characters or Less

According to a Facebook report (Facebook 2011c), posts with 80 characters or less show 23 percent higher interaction than do longer posts. More than 75 percent of posts exceed this optimum length, which could negatively impact interaction.

Use Photo Attachments or Text-Only Status Updates to Increase Interaction

Facebook's new Timeline design encourages marketers to feature large images on their Pages. According to Facebook, attachments with photographs—such as the one featured on the *Sunset* Facebook Page seen in Figure 10—attract interaction rates 39 percent higher than average. Status updates that contain only text show notable interaction rates of 12 percent higher than average, but posts with links or videos drive fewer likes and comments, and show lower-than-average user interaction rates.

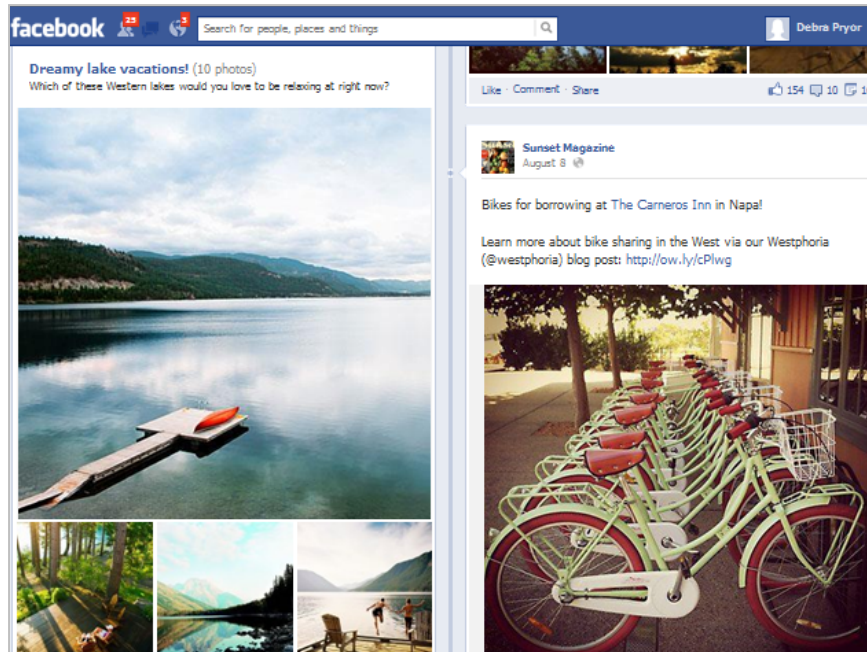


Figure 10. *Sunset Magazine Facebook Page Featuring Photograph Attachments. (November 2012)*

A study sponsored by the Pew Internet & American Life Project (Rainie et al. 2012) noted that half of all Facebook users (49 percent) comment at least once per week on a photo that was contributed by another user. Some 20 percent of Facebook users comment on another user's photo at least once per day. Frequency of commenting on photos generally declines with age, but is still high among older age groups. Some 10 percent of Facebook users over the age of 50 comment on a photo each day, while 33 percent of Facebook users over the age of 50 comment on a photo at least once per week. Women are much more likely to comment on photos than are men, with 19 percent of men and 13 percent of women having never commented on a photo. Only 13 percent of men comment on photos on a daily basis, while 25 percent of female Facebook users comment on a photo at least once per day.

Of Top 10 Posts on AHM Facebook Page, Eight Are Photographs

The analysis of *AHM* posts showed clearly that *AHM* users are highly engaged by the photographs featured on the Facebook Page. In fact, as seen in Figure 11, eight of the 10 most effective posts in 2012 featured photographs. This rating is based on the "Virality" percentage, which is calculated as the number of unique people who have created a story from an *AHM* Page post divided by the number of unique people who viewed it. Here *unique* refers to a single individual who is counted only once in calculating a percentage or statistic, regardless of his/her

number of interactions. In calculating the Virality percentage, for example, if the same person created three stories from one post, he/she is counted as one unique person.

Date	Post	Reach	Engaged Users	Talking About This	Virality
10/22/12	Valerie Millett entered her "Southwest Su...	12,398	2,293	1,587	12.8%
6/6/12	Our friend and Adobe guru Rick Burress...	5,866	610	342	5.83%
10/19/12	Recently, we received a letter from Rober...	1,328	232	77	5.8%
9/23/12	Wade Thorson is one of the more than 1,...	31,749	2,270	1,666	5.25%
2/4/12	We'd like to introduce you to our March...	4,861	546	250	5.14%
9/3/12	Capture an amazing photo this weekend...	13,459	1,124	649	4.82%
10/10/12	Friday Fotos is on hiatus this week. Won'...	18,062	1,389	849	4.7%
1/10/12	Trivia Tuesday! Here's a gimme: What sig...	5,420	320	243	4.48%
1/4/12	Check out our February cover. We're ce...	3,934	434	160	4.07%
2/7/12	Trivia Tuesday! Which iconic Arizona hot...	5,632	309	215	3.82%

Figure 11. *Arizona Highways Magazine's* Top Facebook Posts in 2012 as of November 2012.

The top post, shown in Figure 12, was from October 22, 2012. Called the “Southwest Sunrise,” the shot was entered by Valerie Millett in the 2012–2013 *AHM* Online Photography Contest.



Figure 12. Arizona Highways Magazine’s Top Facebook Post in 2012 Featuring Photography Contest Entry. (October 22, 2012)

Reach Additional Creators and Curators of Photos through Photo-Sharing Services

One study (Rainie et al. 2012) also reported that 46 percent of Internet users post photos and videos online that they have created themselves, and 41 percent curate photos and videos they find elsewhere on the Internet, posting them on image-sharing sites. Women act as creators and curators of photos more frequently than do men.

Additional insights from this study are presented below.

The Pinterest logo, featuring the word "Pinterest" in a red, cursive font.

Instagram



- Pinterest is a site that allows users to organize and share content from around the web by “pinning” photos and images onto “pinboards” that are organized by categories or themes. Each “pin,” which includes a caption, links back to the site from which it originated. The site is dominated by women.
- More than a tenth (12 percent) of online adults say they use Pinterest, with nearly a fifth of online women (19 percent) using it.
- Instagram is a photo-sharing service built around a smartphone app that allows users to filter or tint photos they have taken and then share them with their networks. The site is dominated by young adults.
- More than a tenth (12 percent) of online adults say they use Instagram, with some 27 percent of internet users between the ages of 18 and 29 using it.
- Facebook recently bought the service.
- Tumblr is a social blogging service that allows for easy sharing of various types of posts, including texts, photos, quotes, links, music, and videos.
- Five percent of online adults say they use Tumblr, and some 11 percent of young adults use it.

The analysis of *AHM* posts shows that the ability to create and curate photos is seen as a key feature and benefit of the *AHM* Facebook Page. Therefore, it appears that *AHM* would extend its reach on Facebook by promoting these photo-sharing services.

Use Questions to Drive Dialogue and User Insights

Question posts are popular on Facebook; in fact, 29 percent of all posts contain a question, and questions generate 92 percent higher comment rates than do non-question posts, according to one report (Forrester Research 2012). The added value in this type of post comes from the insights into fan preferences that can be derived from their responses. Figure 13 gives an example of an *AHM* post posing a question.

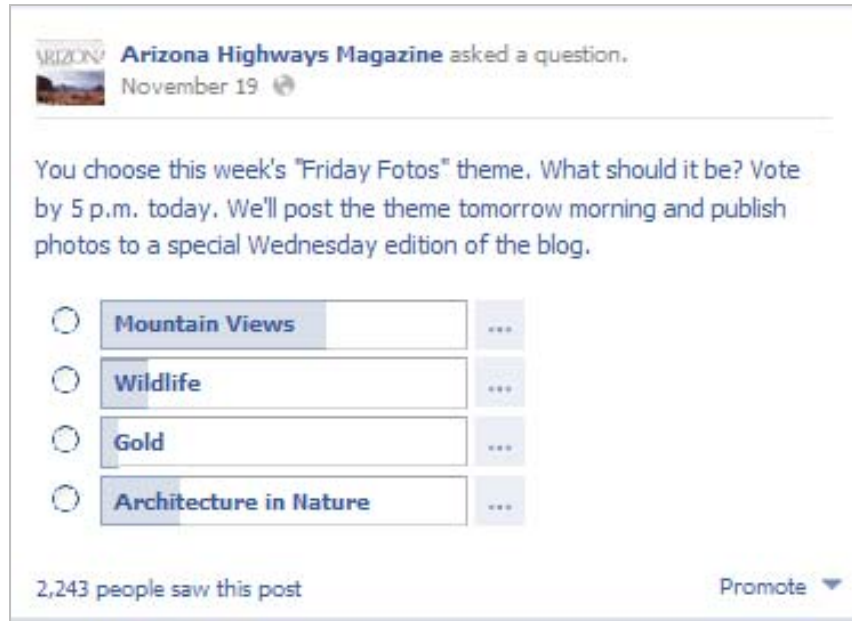


Figure 13. Arizona Highways Magazine Post Using Question to Generate Interaction. (November 2012)

Place Questions at the End of Posts

Not only does it matter whether a question is asked, it also matters where the question is placed within the post. Posts with a question located at the end achieve a 15 percent higher overall interaction rate and twice as many comments than those with a question located in the middle of the post. It appears that a question followed by more content distracts fans from responding to the question immediately; in contrast, when the question is placed at the end of the post, it is easier for the fan to immediately respond.

Use *Caption This* and *Title This* Strategies to Drive More Comments

With Facebook's revised emphasis as of 2012 on Timeline photo posts, the *caption this* strategy generates 5.5 times higher comment rates than posts without that feature. *Caption this* typically presents a funny photograph and asks users to submit clever captions. Similarly, *AHM* can employ a *title this* strategy, asking users to assist in titling a photograph, such as one depicting a scenic drive through the Dragoon Mountains in Arizona. Asking fans to help title a photograph increases the overall interaction rate by more than 100 percent. Although it is important to use these and other strategies in moderation, they may improve interaction among users.

Show Users a Long-Display URL on Posts That Include a Link, but Track Link Clicks Internally with a Shortened URL

There are certain advantages to using both a long URL and a shortened URL when posting links to Facebook. Long URLs receive 16 percent higher interaction rates than do shortened URLs because they give users an indication of the link's final destination. For example, the long URL www.arizonahighways.com/photography.asp, seen in Figure 14, lets users know that *AHM* will direct them to a page about photography. On the other hand, using shortened URLs allows for easy link click tracking, which is critical to the Page owner's ability to measure success. Thus, using a combination of both, displaying the full URL when publishing and using a shortened URL in the background to track the link clicks, benefits both the user and the owner of the Page.



Figure 14. Arizona Highways Magazine Use of Informative Display URL. (November 2012)

Use Facebook Calls to Action to Explicitly Tell Fans What Action They Should Take

A recent research study on Facebook posts (Forrester Research 2012), found that the most effective calls to action include *like, caption this, share, yes or no, and thumbs up*. These calls to action achieve interaction rates of at least 48 percent higher than average. Conversely, words such as *take, click, submit, check, and shop* result in significantly lower interaction rates than average and should be sparingly used as calls to action. Frequently used calls to action are depicted in Figure 15, in descending order of effectiveness.

Because different calls to action help accomplish different goals, it is important for marketers to first determine the goal of the post and then determine the corresponding call to action to drive the preferred interaction. When fans are specifically asked to:

- *Like* a post, it achieves a like rate that is three times higher than when they are not asked.
- *Comment* on a post, it reaches a 3.3 times higher comment rate than when they are not asked.
- *Share* a post, it achieves a share rate seven times higher than when they are not asked.

LIKE
CAPTION THIS
SHARE
YES OR NO
THUMBS UP
TRUE OR FALSE
COMMENT
AGREE
TRIVIA
HIT
TELL US
SEE
POST
ORDER
VISIT
WATCH
TAKE
CLICK
SUBMIT
CHECK
SHOP

Figure 15. Popular Facebook Page Calls to Action. (November 2012)

Use Softer Sell Keywords That Resonate Better with Users

According to a Facebook report (Facebook 2011b), certain promotional keywords lead to more fan interaction than do others. The top five promotional keywords that result in high interaction are *winner, win, giveaway, entry, and new*. Posts that use *winner, win, or giveaway* achieve, respectively, 68 percent, 46 percent, and 42 percent higher interaction than average.

Summary of Best Practices of Effective Facebook Pages

The best practices described in this report are all aimed at increasing user interaction rate with a Page, which ultimately leads to that Page owner's content appearing more frequently in the News Feed on the user's homepage. Use of these best practices can be leveraged by *AHM* to help guide its Facebook posting strategy by testing some of the practices, measuring to see which are working best, and modifying as necessary. To summarize, the key best practices addressed are as follows:

1. Post on days that have higher interaction rates and greater impact on travel planning—Thursdays through Sundays.
2. Promote sharing of travel experiences, incorporate social geo-location apps, and leverage “go-to” travel experts.
3. Feature content that is portable, participatory, and personal.
4. Leverage the featured banners to highlight travel opportunities and magazine subscriptions.
5. Post between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. to present fans with new content when they are more likely to respond and take action.
6. Post one to two times per day, but space posts to avoid exceeding seven posts per week.
7. Keep posts short—use 80 characters or less.
8. Use photo attachments or text-only status updates to increase interaction.
9. Reach additional creators and curators of photos through photo-sharing services.
10. Use questions to drive dialogue and user insights.
11. Place questions at the end of posts.
12. Use *caption this* and *title this* strategies to drive more comments.
13. Show users a long-display URL on posts that include a link, but track link clicks internally with a shortened URL.
14. Use Facebook calls to action to explicitly tell fans what action they should take.
15. Use softer sell keywords that resonate better with users.

CHAPTER 3. USER PROFILE BASED ON FACEBOOK INSIGHTS ANALYTICS

SOCIAL NETWORK SITE USAGE AND FACEBOOK DOMINANCE

According to the Pew Research Center (Hampton et al. 2011), 79 percent of American adults say they use the Internet and nearly half of adults (47 percent)—or 59 percent of Internet users—say they use at least one of the social networking sites (SNS) like Facebook. This is nearly double the 26 percent of adults (34 percent of Internet users) who reported using a SNS in 2008. Among other things, this means the average age of adult SNS users has shifted from 33 in 2008 to 38 in 2010. Over half of all adult SNS users now are over the age of 35, and some 56 percent of current SNS users are female.

Facebook dominates the SNS space; 92 percent of SNS users are on Facebook and 13 percent use Twitter. With more than one billion active users worldwide and growing, if Facebook were a country, it would be the third most populated behind leaders China (1.33 billion) and India (1.17 billion).

Considerable variance exists in the ways that people use specific social networking sites as well as in the frequency of their visits; 52 percent of Facebook users and 33 percent of Twitter users engage with the respective platform daily, the highest levels among all SNS. The engagement levels are best demonstrated by an analysis of what users do on Facebook on an average day.

- 26 percent *like* another user's content.
- 22 percent comment on another's post or status.
- 20 percent comment on another user's photos.
- 15 percent of Facebook users update their own status.
- 10 percent send another user a private message.

AHM FACEBOOK PAGE FAN PROFILE

For the first phase of compiling a profile of the *AHM* Facebook Page fan, the user profile data available from Facebook Insights was reviewed. Data was collected and exported by day, week, and month for the period of January 1 through November 23, 2012. A consistent and thorough analysis of *AHM* Facebook Page users, specifically fans, was then completed using a customized analysis program and queries. Fans are defined as users who have “liked” the *AHM* Facebook Page; as of November 23, 2012, these fans numbered 30,837.

AHM Facebook Page Fans by Gender

The majority of *AHM* Facebook Page fans are female (61.6 percent) and 37.2 percent are male, as seen in Figure 16. The remainder (1.2 percent) of *AHM* Facebook Page fans did not indicate gender when they created their Facebook profiles.

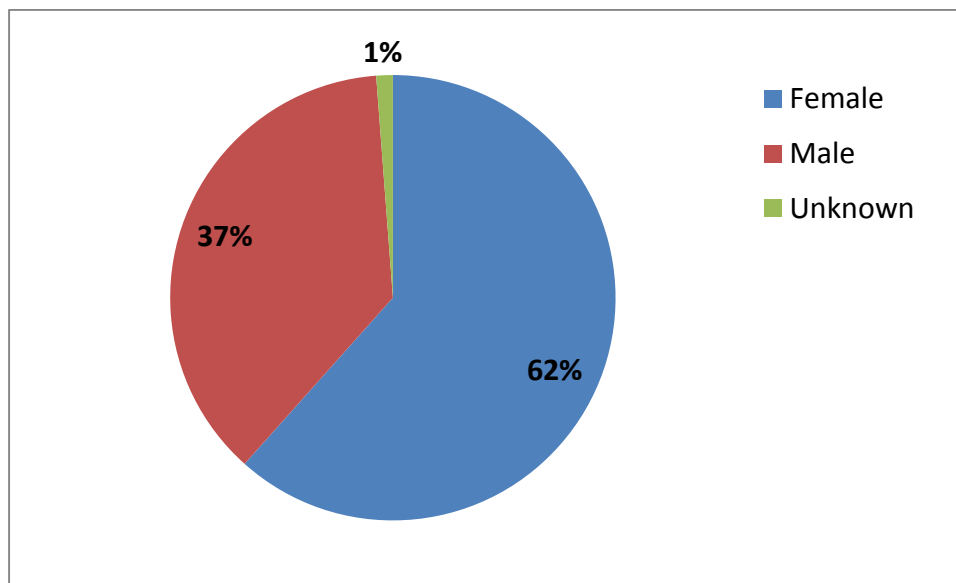


Figure 16. Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page Fans by Gender as of November 2012.

AHM Fans as Compared with Facebook Users by Gender

The majority of both Facebook users in general and of *AHM* fans specifically are female (58 and 61.6 percent, respectively.) A corresponding 43 percent of Facebook users in general are male, as are 37.2 percent of *AHM* fans. As seen in Figure 17, females are more frequent users of social network sites. The one exception is LinkedIn, a social network site that targets business professionals and has a higher male audience.

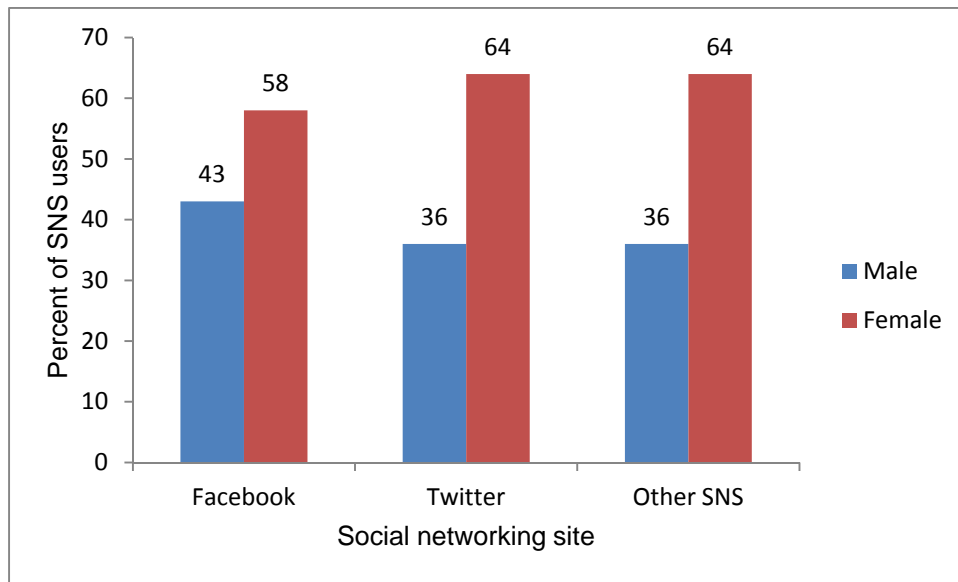


Figure 17. Users of Social Networking Sites by Gender as of November 2012.

AHM Facebook Page Reaches Both Males and Females Equally

Because *AHM* is showing a higher fan base among females, the *AHM* Facebook Page data for the period of January through November 23, 2012, was examined more closely to determine if there were any variances. For example, was *AHM* generally reaching more females than males on Facebook? Reach refers to the total number of different people exposed at least once to a medium during a given period. As seen in the data presented in Table 1, the reach of the *AHM* Facebook Page is exactly the same for both genders: 48.7 percent of females and 48.7 percent of males were being reached by the *AHM* Facebook Page. Clearly the current *AHM* Facebook Page has higher appeal among females.

Table 1. Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page Fans and Reach Analysis by Gender by Month, January through November 2012.

2012	Fans of AHM Facebook Page		Reach of AHM Facebook Page	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
January	62.0	36.8	53.3	43.9
February	61.9	36.9	55.8	42.3
March	61.9	36.9	43.0	52.3
April	61.8	37.0	49.2	47.4
May	61.7	37.1	51.0	47.4
June	61.8	37.1	42.9	55.3
July	61.6	37.2	46.1	51.0
August	61.5	37.2	49.1	49.4
September	61.5	37.4	44.8	51.9
October	61.3	37.6	49.6	47.8
November	61.1	37.7	51.4	47.1
Average	61.6	37.1	48.7	48.7

AHM Facebook Page Fans by Age

Just over half of AHM Facebook Page fans (50.8 percent) are between the ages of 35 and 54, as seen in Figure 18.

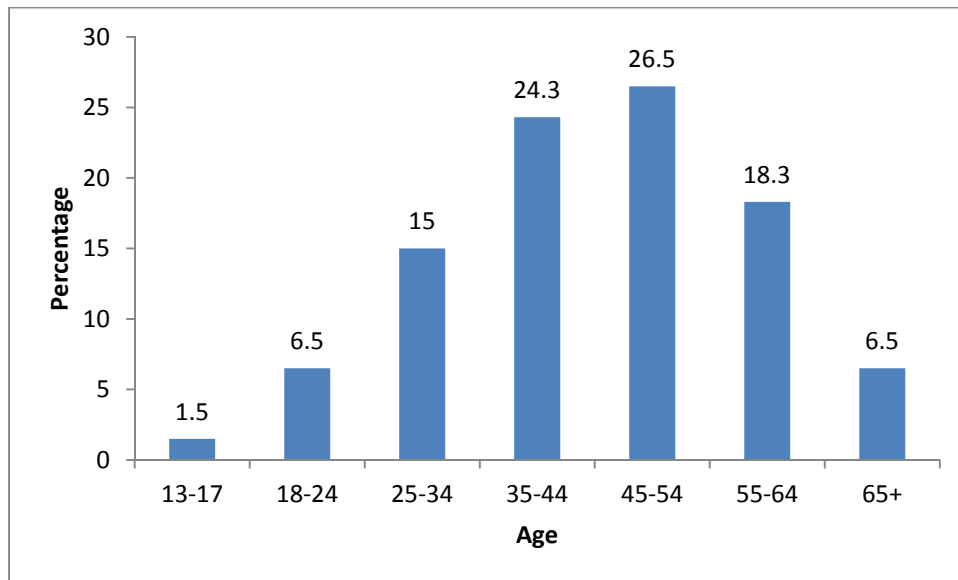


Figure 18. Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page Fans by Age as of November 2012.

AHM Fans as Compared with Facebook Users by Age

As seen in Figure 19, Facebook has the lowest percentage (49 percent) of users age 35 or younger among social networking sites. In comparison, only 29 percent of current *AHM* Facebook Page fans are in this age range, a difference of 20 percent. *AHM* Facebook fans and users are approximately 20 years older than the average Facebook user. This difference may be attributable to *AHM*'s older subscription base overall, a portion of whom then became early adopters of the *AHM* Facebook Page.

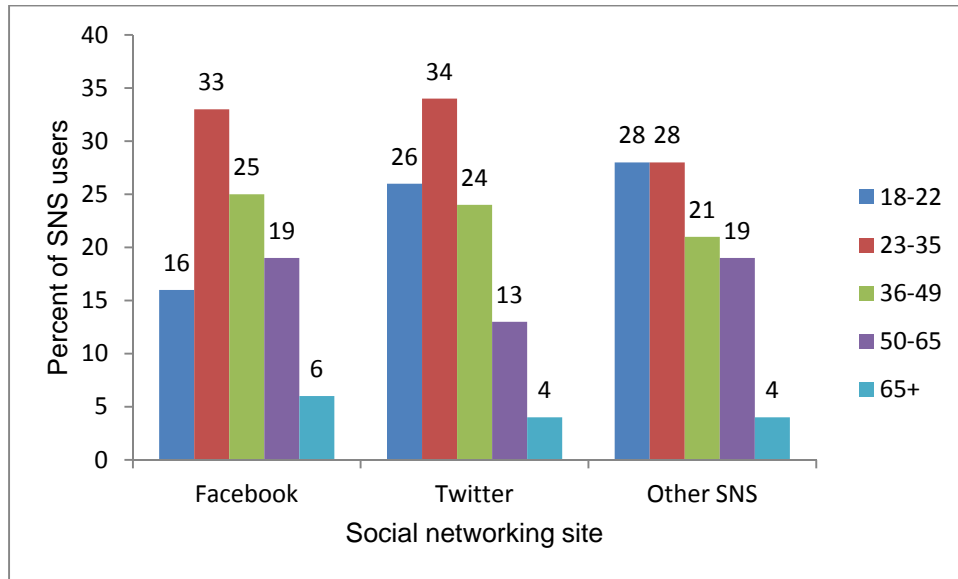


Figure 19. Social Networking Site Users by Age as of November 2012.

***AHM* Facebook Page Fans by Country**

An examination of the country of origin of the current 30,837 fans of the *AHM* Facebook Page showed that the vast majority (90.9 percent) of the fans is within the United States and 8.9 percent are from other countries. This data is presented in Table 2.

Indonesia is the second most frequent country of origin among *AHM* Facebook Page fans and is also the second largest Facebook market. However, per the Facebook analytics team, many companies discount the *likes* from Indonesia because that nation's fans have a high incidence of *liking* multiple companies and brands, more so than Facebook Page fans from other countries.

**Table 2. Country of Origin of *Arizona Highways* Magazine
Facebook Page Fans. (November 2012)**

Country	Total Likes of Fans of AHM Facebook Page
United States	28,039
Indonesia	216
Canada	194
United Kingdom	142
India	139
Mexico	129
Germany	121
Turkey	92
Italy	92
France	71
Brazil	67
Morocco	64
Australia	63
Philippines	55
Algeria	53
Egypt	50
Peru	48
Malaysia	47
Japan	45
Pakistan	45

International Visitors to Arizona

The Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) estimates international tourism spending in Arizona based on aggregate credit card usage data along with data from other independent research sources. Figure 20 shows 2011 international tourism spending in Arizona by country (AOT 2012a).

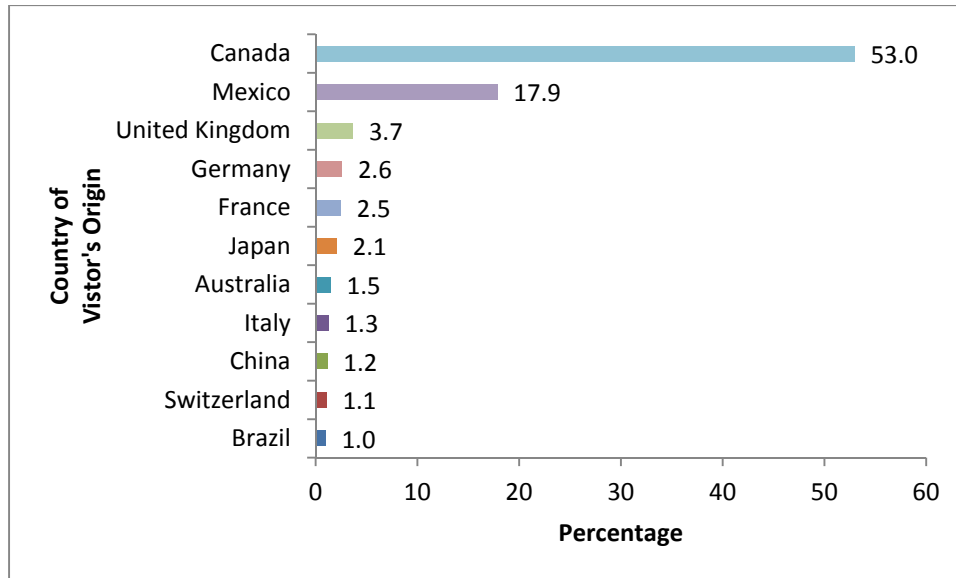


Figure 20. International Spending in Arizona in 2011 by Country of Visitor's Origin.

In comparing the international countries of origin of the *AHM* Facebook Page fans with the international countries of origin of visitors to Arizona in 2011, the only countries not reflected on the list of *AHM* Facebook Page fans are China and Switzerland. Facebook currently is blocked in China, but there are other opportunities for *AHM* to increase its international fan base and also target emerging international markets.

According to a report prepared for AOT by the Arizona Hospitality Research and Resource Center of Northern Arizona University (Cothran 2007), population and demographic changes taking place worldwide are having a significant impact on Arizona tourism and will continue to do so for the next few decades. The populations of many European and Asian countries are decreasing, and several of these countries have traditionally been popular markets for travel to Arizona. In the 50-year period from 2000 to 2050, France, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Germany are expected to decrease in population by 8, 12, 23, and 26 percent, respectively. In comparison, the number of visitors to Arizona from these same countries decreased by far greater rates in the 10 years from 1996 to 2006, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Visitation to Arizona from Four Major International Markets, 1996–2006.

	1996	2006	10-year percent change
Germany	206,000	78,000	-62%
United Kingdom	175,000	126,000	-28%
France	114,000	72,000	-37%
Japan	83,000	50,000	-40%

While traditional markets are declining, Latin America and Canada remain strong markets for Arizona visitation. Additionally, new international markets such as China and India are emerging. Thus, *AHM* has an opportunity to target Facebook communications to those international markets that are holding their own, as well as to those that are gaining ground.

AHM Facebook Page Fans by City

As noted previously, the *AHM* Facebook Page has 28,039 fans from the United States. Table 4 shows that of the top 20 cities in which *AHM* fans reside, 16 are Arizona cities, with Phoenix accounting for 18 percent of total *AHM* fans. The four top cities outside of Arizona are Los Angeles, Las Vegas, San Diego, and New York.

Table 4. Top 20 Cities of Origin of Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page Fans.

City	Total Likes of Fans of <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page
Phoenix, AZ	5,038
Tucson, AZ	1,910
Mesa, AZ	1,162
Scottsdale, AZ	974
Chandler, AZ	644
Tempe, AZ	558
Gilbert, AZ	536
Glendale, AZ	459
Flagstaff, AZ	455
Prescott, AZ	355
Los Angeles, CA	338
Las Vegas, NV	334
Peoria, AZ	312
Sedona, AZ	215
San Diego, CA	207
Surprise, AZ	205
Queen Creek, AZ	201
New York, NY	169
Sierra Vista, AZ	162
Goodyear, AZ	147

Domestic Visitors to Arizona by City

Table 5 presents the non-Arizona cities identified by AOT as target markets for travel to Arizona (AOT 2012a).

Table 5. Top Domestic Target Markets for Travel to Arizona.

Primary Target Markets	Chicago
	Los Angeles
Secondary Target Markets	Denver
	Minneapolis
	New York
	San Diego
	San Francisco
	Seattle

A comparison of the top 20 cities of origin of *AHM* Facebook Page fans and the cities identified by AOT as target markets shows that Los Angeles, San Diego, and New York appear on both lists. Thus, these three cities represent the strongest opportunities for *AHM* to increase its out-of-state reach.

Growth in *Lifetime Like* Unique Users: *AHM* Facebook Page Fans

In Facebook Page terminology, the *Lifetime Like* figure refers to the cumulative total of unique users who have liked a particular Page. As seen in Figure 21, during the period of January 1 through November 23, 2012, the *AHM* Facebook Page total of Lifetime Like unique users—commonly referred to as *fans* of the *AHM* Facebook Page—rose from 24,189 on January 1, 2012, to 30,837 as of November 23, 2012, an increase of 6,648 fans, or 27.5 percent. While the growth in fans has been fairly consistent, averaging 600 new fans per month, the greatest increase occurred during October 2012 when a total of approximately 1,000 fans was reached, a 40 percent increase over other months in 2012. Two key factors may have contributed to the October 2012 jump: increased activity and posting of photos for the 2012–2013 *AHM* Online Photography Contest, and overall increased traffic on Facebook leading up to the November presidential election.

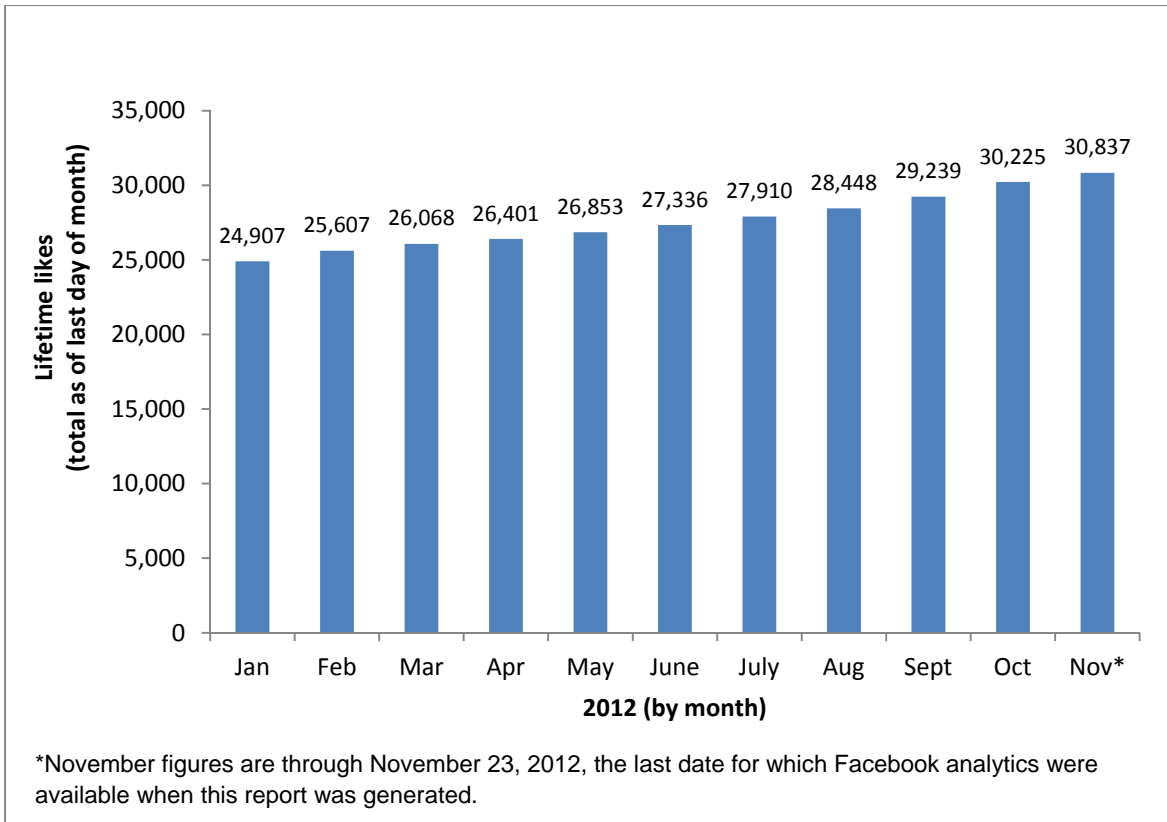


Figure 21. Total Number of People Who Have Liked *Arizona Highways Magazine* Facebook Page.

New Likes and Unlikes of *AHM* Facebook Page

Figure 22 shows the daily average of unique people who liked and unliked the *AHM* Page for each month of 2012. Clearly, *AHM* gains more fans during the autumn and winter months than in spring and summer. As a general guide for judging a Page’s success, the daily unlikes should not exceed 10 percent of the daily new likes. *AMH*’s daily average of unlikes remained consistently below three through July, but as the daily average of new likes decreased in March through May, the daily average of unlikes represented an increasing percentage. As the daily average number of new likes increased during the autumn months, so did the number of unlikes, thus remaining higher than 10 percent.

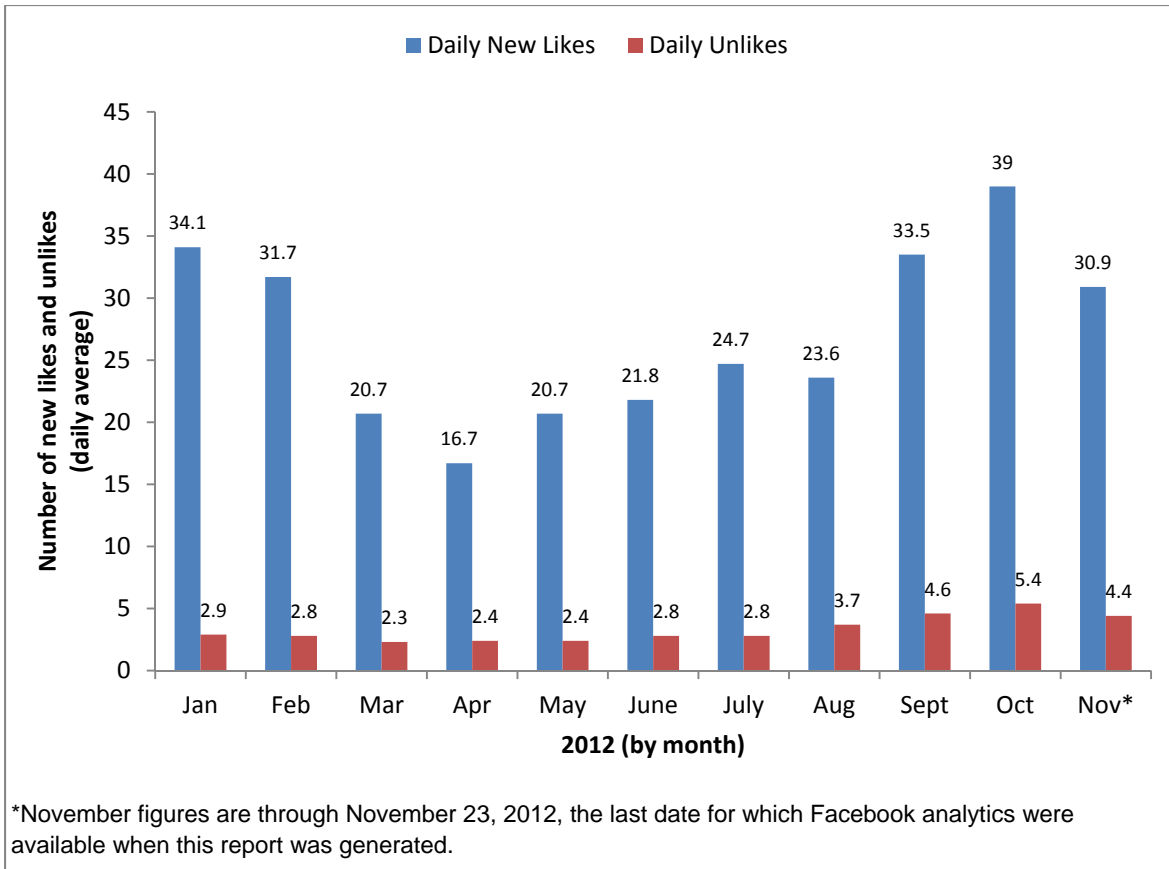


Figure 22. Number of People Liking and Unliking *Arizona Highways Magazine* Facebook Page.

Engaged Users of the *AHM* Facebook Page

Figure 23 shows the daily average of unique people who engaged with the *AHM* Facebook Page during each month, January through November, of 2012. The daily average includes all the various means of engagement, such as clicking on a link, generating a story, commenting on a post, answering a question asked by *AHM*, and so on. From July on, the number of engaged users generally increased.

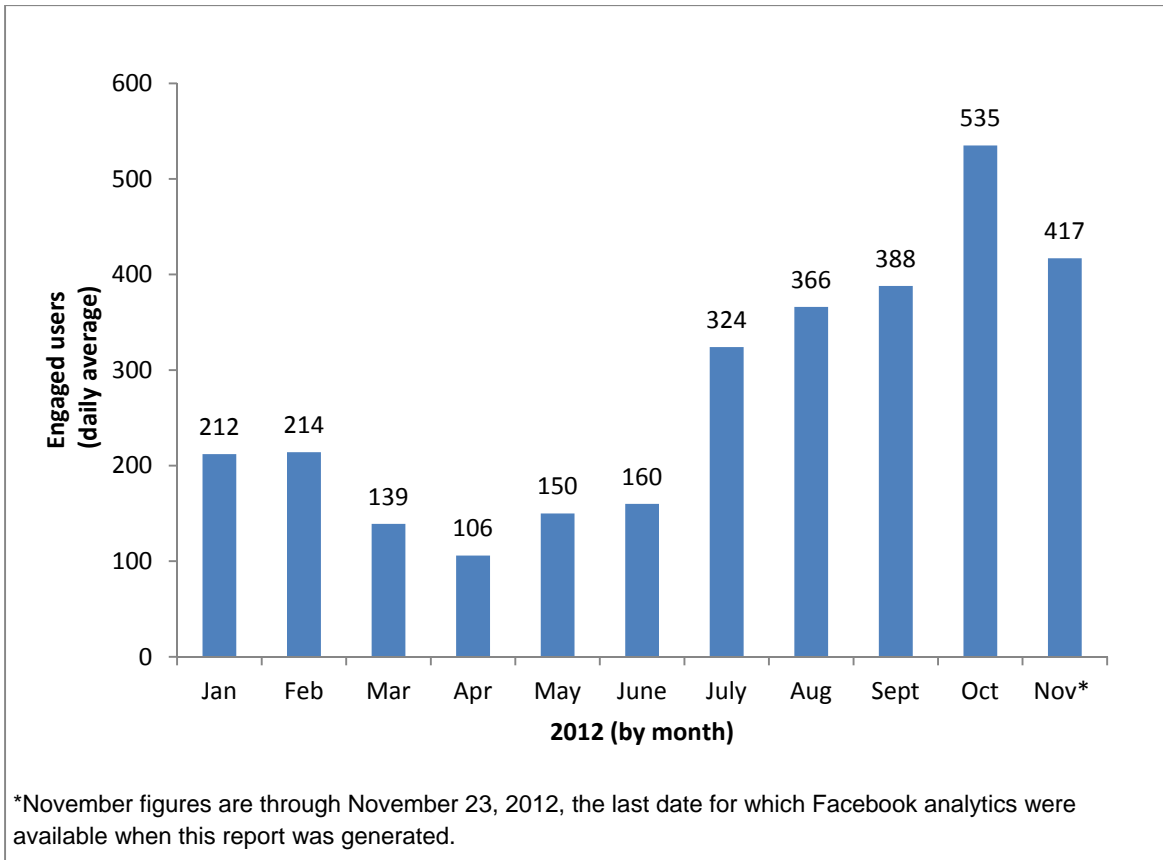


Figure 23. Number of People Who Engaged with *Arizona Highways Magazine* Facebook Page, by Month.

People Sharing *AHM* Facebook Stories

Figure 24 shows the number of unique people who shared a story about—commonly referred to as *talked about*—*AHM* during January through November of 2012. Sharing a story, or *talking about*, is one of the ways that users can engage with a Page; thus, the individuals represented in Figure 25 comprise a subset of the engaged users shown in Figure 24. Other interactions that represent users' engagement include liking the Page; posting to the Page Wall; commenting on or sharing a Page post; answering a question posted by *AHM*; responding to an *AHM* event; mentioning the Page; or tagging the Page in a photo.

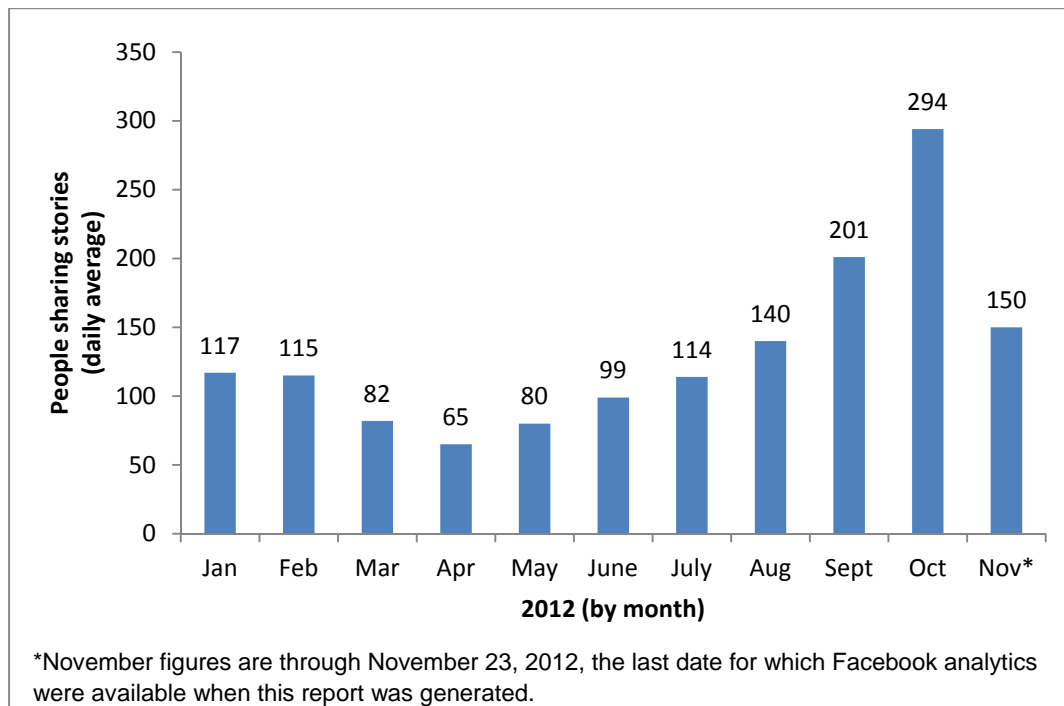


Figure 24. Number of People Sharing Stories About *Arizona Highways Magazine* Facebook Page.

Stories Created About the *AHM* Facebook Page

Figure 25 shows the daily average number of stories created about the *AHM* Page.

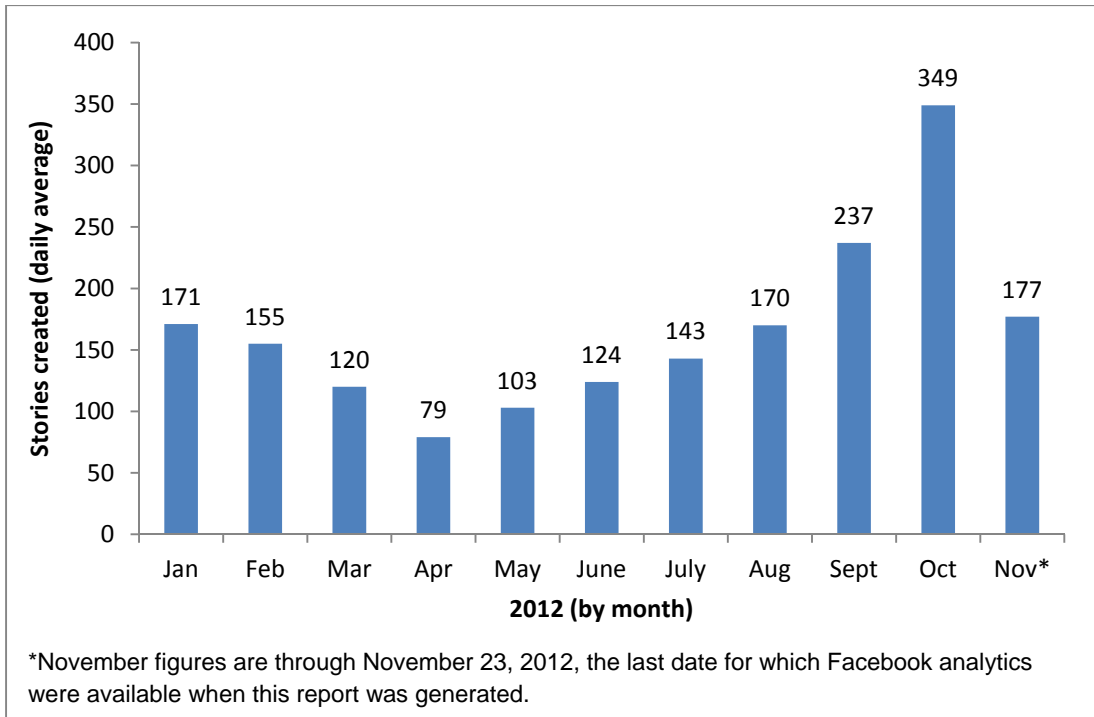


Figure 25. Number of Stories Created About *Arizona Highways Magazine* Facebook Page.

Comparison of *AHM* Facebook Page Fans with Fans of Other Facebook Travel Pages

A comparison of the fans of the *AHM* Facebook Page with those of other travel, magazine, and destination Facebook pages, presented in Table 6, reveals that *AHM* has an older fan base (ages 45–54) as compared with most other travel magazines. In contrast, the AOT Facebook Page attracts a slightly younger audience (ages 35–44), which AOT has attributed to focused content around baseball spring training, family interests, and summer activities (AOT 2012a).

Table 6. Facebook Page Insights for *Arizona Highways* Magazine Compared with Other Travel Pages.

Facebook Page	Total Likes	Most Popular Age Group	City in Which Majority of Fans Reside	Most Popular Week
<i>Arizona Highways</i> magazine	30,837	45–54 years old	Phoenix	October 21, 2012
<i>AAA Arizona Highroads</i> magazine	2,445	35-54 years old	Phoenix	October 7, 2012
Arizona Office of Tourism Arizona – The Official Grand Canyon State	58,563	35-44 years old	Phoenix	June 24, 2012
<i>Frommer’s Travel Magazine</i>	22,296	25-44 years old	New York	September 30, 2012
Lonely Planet	924,883	18-24 years old	London	February 26, 2012
<i>National Geographic Traveler</i> magazine	287,717	25-34 years old	Cairo	August 12, 2012
<i>Outside</i> magazine	108,551	25-34 years old	New York	July 15, 2012
<i>Phoenix Magazine</i>	7,533	25-44 years old	Phoenix	July 29, 2012
Phoenix Tourism	25,367	45-54 years old	Phoenix	June 10, 2012
Scottsdale Tourism	34,512	45-54 years old	Scottsdale	October 2, 2012
<i>Sunset</i> magazine	82,534	35-54 years old	Los Angeles	June 3, 2012
<i>Texas Highway</i> magazine	9,533	45-54 years old	Houston	September 16, 2012
<i>Travel + Leisure</i> magazine	144,166	25-34 years old	Bangkok	November 4, 2012
Trip Advisor	8,403	25-34 years old	London	November 11, 2012

CHAPTER 4. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

SURVEY BACKGROUND

To supplement the profile data available from Facebook Insights, a comprehensive online survey was implemented. The target population consisted of individuals who had some degree of familiarity with the *Arizona Highways* magazine (*AHM*) Facebook Page, based on their response to the following screener question placed early in the survey questionnaire: “In general, how familiar are you with the *Arizona Highways* Facebook Page?” Four response choices were provided, and individuals selecting any of the first three were permitted to continue with the survey: (1) *very familiar*, (2) *somewhat familiar*, (3) *not very familiar*, and (4) *not at all familiar*. Twenty-four individuals selected the fourth response and were precluded from completing the questionnaire.

The online survey was designed to provide a thorough understanding of *AHM* Facebook Page users, including:

- Demographics.
- Preferences regarding travel destinations within Arizona.
- Factors that influence when and why they access the Facebook Page.
- Level of their involvement with the Facebook Page (e.g., visit frequency, return visitation, actions taken, engagement level, links accessed) and the relationship between their use of the Facebook Page and visits to the *AHM* website.
- Preferences and expectations regarding content of the Facebook Page.
- Willingness to share information on the Page.
- Relationship between their use of the Page and subscription to *Arizona Highways* magazine.

The survey also included several questions designed to gauge the influence of the *AHM* Facebook Page on users’ travel decisions regarding the choice of Arizona as a destination, as well as other questions obtaining information on expenditures associated with Arizona leisure trips taken during the past two years (mid-2011 through mid-2013).

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Potential survey participants were recruited from two populations:

- The *Arizona Highways* magazine (*AHM*) e-mail address list, which included subscribers and individuals who had provided their e-mail address when entering a contest, signing up for the *AHM* newsletter on the *AHM* Facebook Page, or participating in other promotions or events.
- *AHM* Facebook Page users.

Individuals on the *AHM* list were sent an e-mail invitation to participate in the survey. Each invitation contained a unique link for the addressee's use in accessing the online questionnaire. The link also served a tracking function, enabling the sending of follow-up reminder e-mails to individuals who had begun but not completed the survey. *AHM* Facebook Page users were invited to participate in the survey through a link provided on the Page.

The online survey was launched on April 24, 2013, and concluded on June 1, 2013. To encourage participation, an iPad Mini with a digital *AHM* subscription was offered as an incentive to everyone who completed the survey by June 1, 2013. Additionally, a code for a 25 percent discount on merchandise from the *AHM* online store was provided to everyone who completed the survey, as well as to those who had been precluded from completing the survey due to lack of familiarity with the *AHM* Facebook Page, as discussed earlier. The iPad Mini, digital subscription, and merchandise discount were provided by *AHM*.

A total of 755 survey questionnaires were completed, of which 155 came from individuals on the *AHM* list of e-mail addresses and 600 from individuals who entered through the link on the *AHM* Facebook Page. *AHM* had predicted the low entry rate among individuals on the e-mail list because current subscribers make up the majority of the list, and *AHM* subscribers represent an older-than-average age demographic that is typically less likely to participate in online surveys. Nevertheless, response to the survey reflects a number of positive aspects:

- The survey was quite lengthy, with 35 questions and an average completion time of 10 minutes. Research has historically shown that the longer the survey, the greater the drop-out rate. However, MarketTools Inc. (Suresh and Conklin 2010) found that a number of factors in survey design, such as variety of questions, can overcome respondent fatigue and keep respondents engaged to complete the survey. Respondent interest in the survey topic also plays a significant role in survey completion. Therefore, it can reasonably be concluded that the individuals who completed the *AHM* survey remained engaged throughout.

- This is further borne out by respondents' high interest in participating in an online discussion group to be held approximately one month after the survey, with 48 percent of survey completers expressing interest and providing their personal contact information for follow-up.
- Various survey questions elicited open-end responses. Many of these "voice of the consumer" responses indicate that the survey raised consumer awareness of the *AHM* Facebook Page. Following are a few examples:
 - *"Sorry, I'm not a big Facebook fan. I do use it every once in a while and now that you have shown me some of the things that are available on your Facebook site, I might look at it more often."*
 - *"I'm not familiar with the AHM FB page. I enjoy the posts as a result of "liking" the page, however I don't think I have ever really perused the FB site. After this survey, I might."*

KEY FINDINGS

Demographics of *AHM* Facebook Page Users

Gender and Age

Females composed 59 percent of *AHM* Facebook Page users and males 41 percent. The mean age of all respondents was 51. However, as seen in Figure 26, male representation was higher than female representation within specific age groups: ages 18–34 (12 and 10 percent, respectively) and ages 65 and older (17 and 11 percent, respectively). Among participants ages 35–44, male and female representation was nearly equal (16 and 17 percent, respectively).

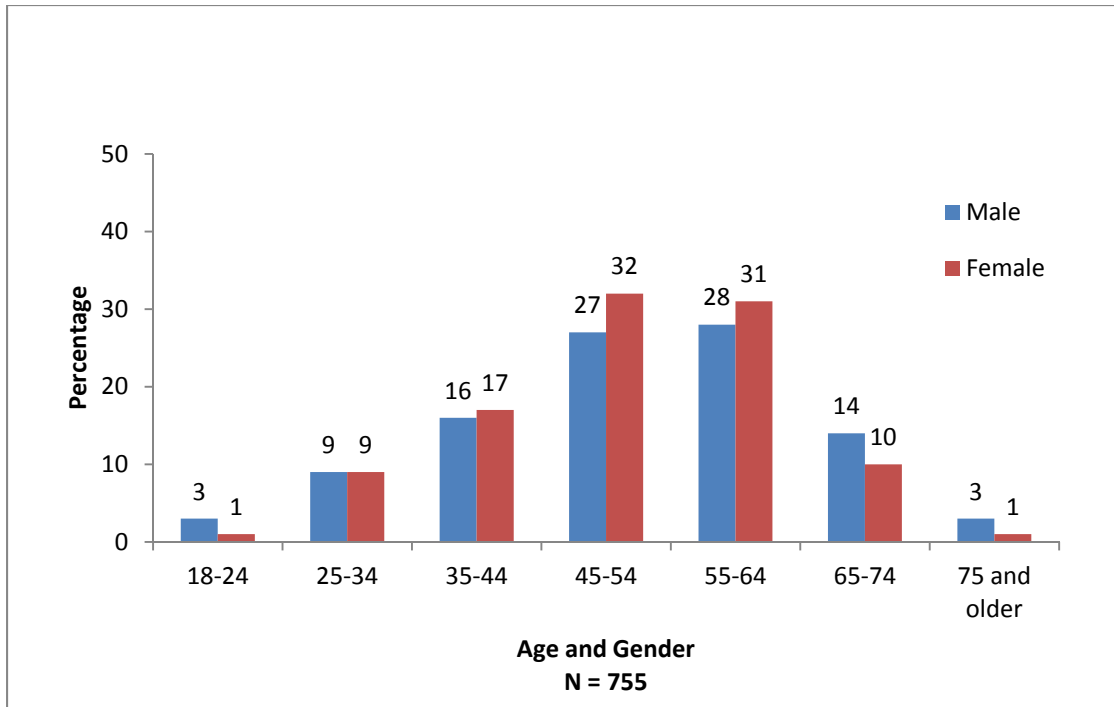


Figure 26. Gender by Age Group.

Place of Residence

The vast majority of *AHM* Facebook Page users (70 percent) reside in Arizona, with nearly 65 percent living in Maricopa and Pima counties, the two most populous Arizona counties. Of the remaining respondents, 29 percent live elsewhere in the United States, and slightly more than 1 percent reside outside the United States.

- Of the 218 respondents who reside in another state, 30 percent live in the West, 29 percent in the South, and 25 percent in the Midwest.
- Of the 12 respondents who live outside the United States, nearly two-thirds live in Europe and one-third in Canada.

AHM Subscription Status

A slight majority (56 percent) of respondents were not current *Arizona Highways* magazine subscribers.

Respondents and the *AHM* Website

Familiarity with AHM Website

A significant majority (81 percent) of *AHM* Facebook Page users were very or somewhat familiar with the *AHM* website, as seen in Figure 27. Only 3 percent considered themselves to be not at all familiar with the *AHM* website, and those individuals were not asked the survey follow-up questions about the frequency and influence of their visits to the website.

No significant difference was seen between the degree of familiarity with the *AHM* website among *AHM* subscribers and non-subscribers overall, although subscribers described themselves as “not very familiar” with the website at nearly twice the frequency of non-subscribers (21 and 11 percent respectively). Age was also not a significant factor in respondents’ level of familiarity with the *AHM* website.

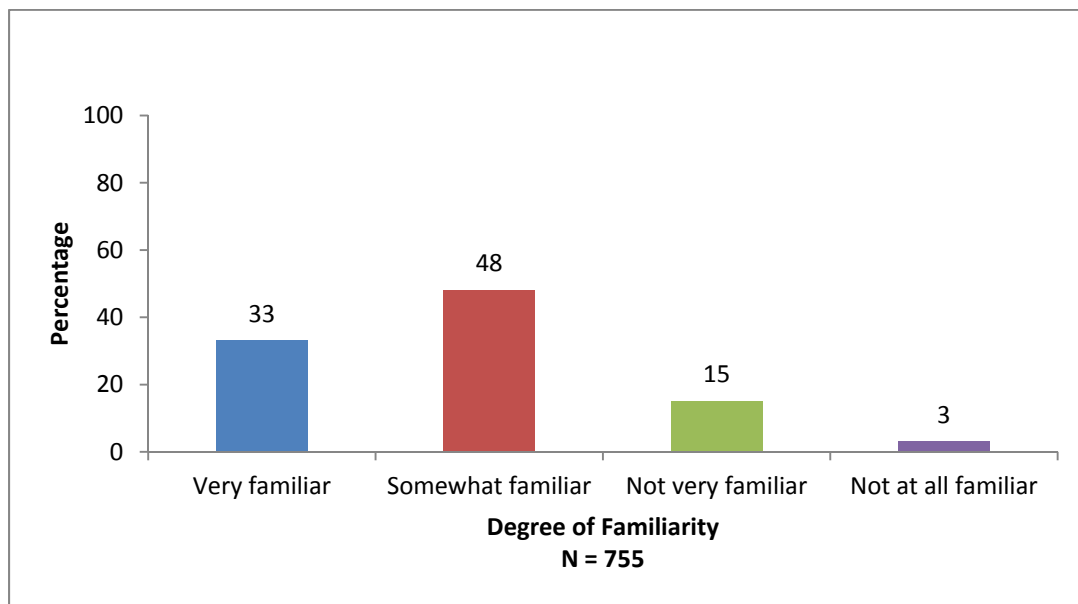


Figure 27. Familiarity with *Arizona Highways* Magazine Website.

As seen in Figure 28, familiarity with or use of the *AHM* website had a significantly greater influence on non-subscriber decisions than on subscriber decisions to purchase or renew a subscription to the magazine. Individuals who gave top three ratings (defined as a rating of 5, 6, or 7) to the *AHM* website’s level of influence comprised 42 percent of non-subscribers as compared with 28 percent of subscribers. Conversely, 57 percent of subscribers attributed little influence (defined as a rating of 1, 2, or 3) to their familiarity with or use of the *AHM* website, as compared with 33 percent of non-subscribers.

This disparity appears to reflect two significant findings that were supported by comments in the focus groups:

- Subscribers display an ongoing, sustained loyalty to the magazine and very few factors—even positive or negative experiences on the *AHM* website or Facebook Page—would affect their decision one way or the other to renew their subscriptions.
- Non-subscribers who “discover” the *AHM* website perceive it positively and are likely to consider subscribing to the magazine.

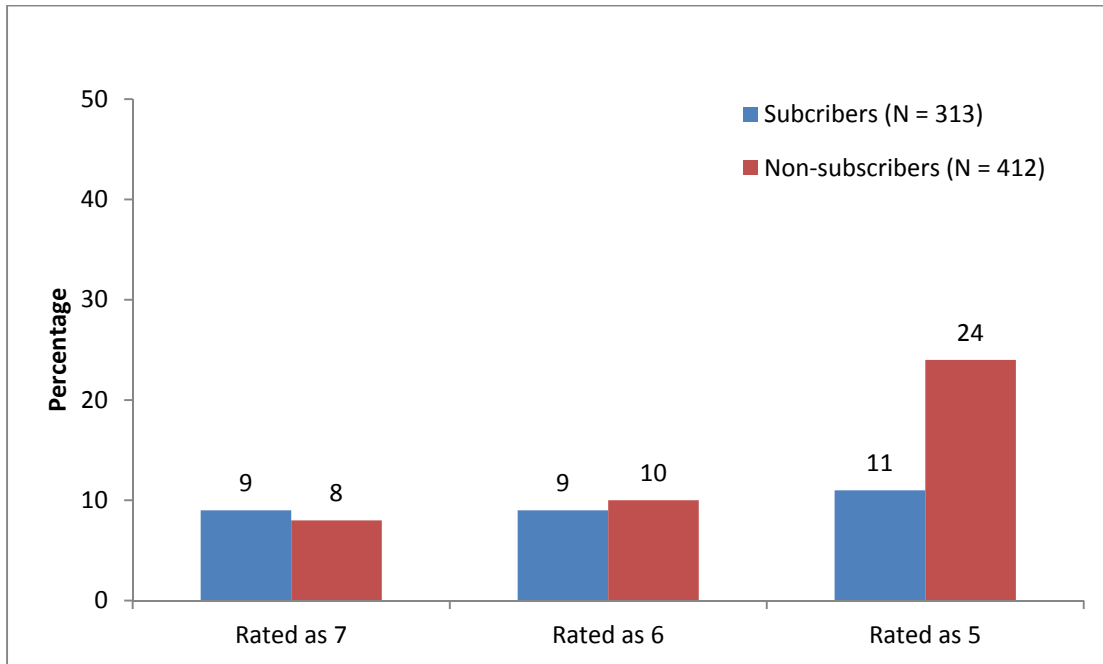


Figure 28. Subscriber and Non-Subscriber Familiarity with *Arizona Highways* Magazine Website as Influence on Decision to Purchase or Renew Subscription.

Additionally, detailed analysis of the data by age group showed that respondents ages 25–34 and those 55 and older believed that their familiarity with or use of the *AHM* website would likely have a significant influence on their decision to purchase or renew a subscription to the magazine.

Visitation to AHM Website

Among individuals who had some degree of familiarity with the *AHM* website, the significant majority (72 percent) said they visit the website no more than twice a month, as seen in Figure 29. Only 3 percent said they visit the *AHM* website daily. The mean number of visits to the *AHM* website was 3.8 per month, and no significant variation from this rate was seen among or between *Arizona Highways* magazine subscribers and non-subscribers.

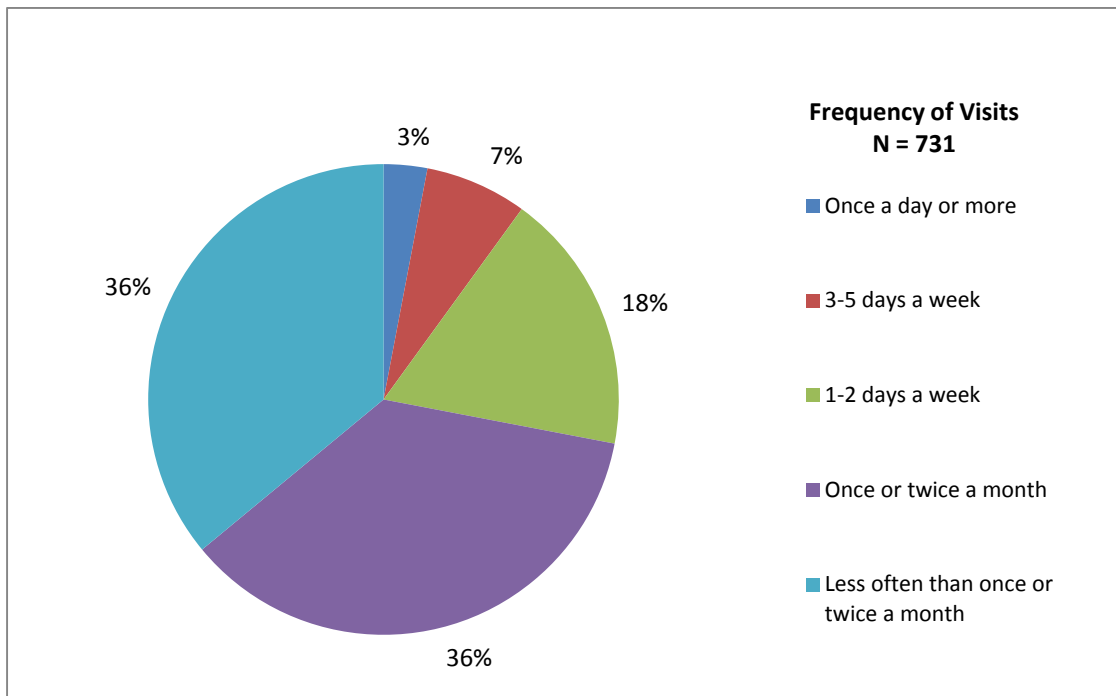


Figure 29. Visitation to *Arizona Highways Magazine Website*.

Examination of the visitation frequency data by age group determined that the mean number of visits to the *AHM* website per month was significantly higher among the oldest respondents (ages 65 and older) and the youngest respondents (ages 18–24), with 5.2 and 5.6 mean number of visits per month, respectively. Additionally, the highest rates for daily visits were seen among the two youngest groups of respondents, those 18–24 and 25–34. However, each of these younger age groups included fewer than 100 individuals (12 and 67, respectively) and was considered too small a base for purposes of solid statistical analysis.

Respondents and the *AHM* Facebook Page

*Familiarity with *AHM* Facebook Page*

As noted earlier, to assure that the survey was completed by individuals with some degree of familiarity with the *AHM* Facebook Page, the following screener question appeared early in the survey: “In general, how familiar are you with the *Arizona Highways* Facebook Page?” Four response choices were provided, and individuals selecting any of the first three were permitted to continue with the survey: (1) *very familiar*, (2) *somewhat familiar*, (3) *not very familiar*, and (4) *not at all familiar*. Twenty-four individuals selected the fourth choice and were precluded from completing the questionnaire; they are not included in the total 755 completed surveys.

Nearly all respondents (87 percent) reported being very or somewhat familiar with the *AHM* Facebook Page, as seen in Figure 30. Further analysis of the data by age showed that respondents ages 18–34 more frequently described themselves as *very familiar*, while those ages 35 and up tended to describe themselves as *somewhat familiar*. No difference was seen between *AHM* current subscribers and non-subscribers.

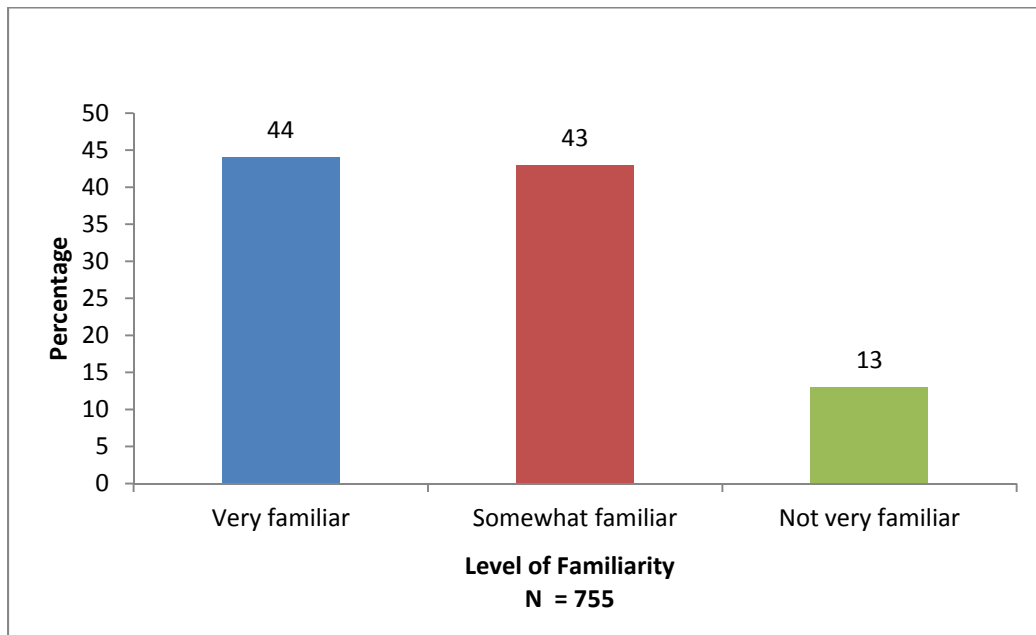


Figure 30. Familiarity with *Arizona Highways Magazine* Facebook Page.

As seen in Figure 31, familiarity with or use of the *AHM* Facebook Page had a significantly greater influence on non-subscriber decisions than on subscriber decisions to purchase or renew a subscription to the magazine. Individuals who gave top three ratings (defined as a rating of 5, 6, or 7) to the level of influence of the *AHM* Facebook Page comprised 46 percent of non-subscribers as compared with 31 percent of subscribers. Conversely, 54 percent of subscribers attributed little influence (defined as a rating of 1, 2, or 3) to their familiarity with or use of the *AHM* Facebook Page, as compared with 30 percent of non-subscribers.

As already discussed regarding subscriber and non-subscriber familiarity with the *AHM* website, this disparity seems to reflect two significant findings supported by focus group comments:

- Subscribers display an ongoing, sustained loyalty to the magazine and very few factors—even positive or negative experiences on the *AHM* Facebook Page or website—would affect their decision either way to renew their subscriptions.
- Non-subscribers who “discover” the *AHM* Facebook Page perceive it positively and are likely to consider subscribing to the magazine.

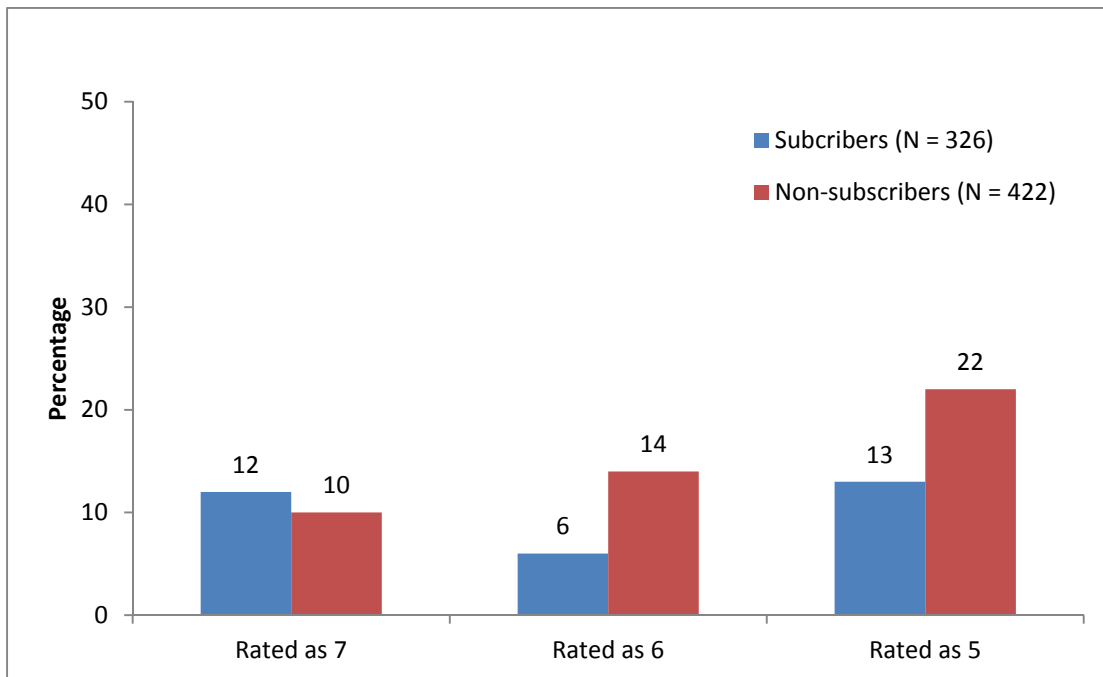


Figure 31. Subscriber and Non-Subscriber Familiarity with *Arizona Highways* Facebook Page as Influence on Decision to Purchase or Renew Subscription.

Additionally, detailed analysis of the data by age group showed that respondents 55 and older believed that their familiarity with or use of the *AHM* Facebook Page would likely have a significant influence on their decision to purchase or renew a subscription to the magazine.

Visitation to AHM Facebook Page

Respondents were nearly evenly divided between those who visit the *AHM* Facebook Page at least once a week and those who visit no more than once or twice a month (49 and 45 percent, respectively), as seen in Figure 32.

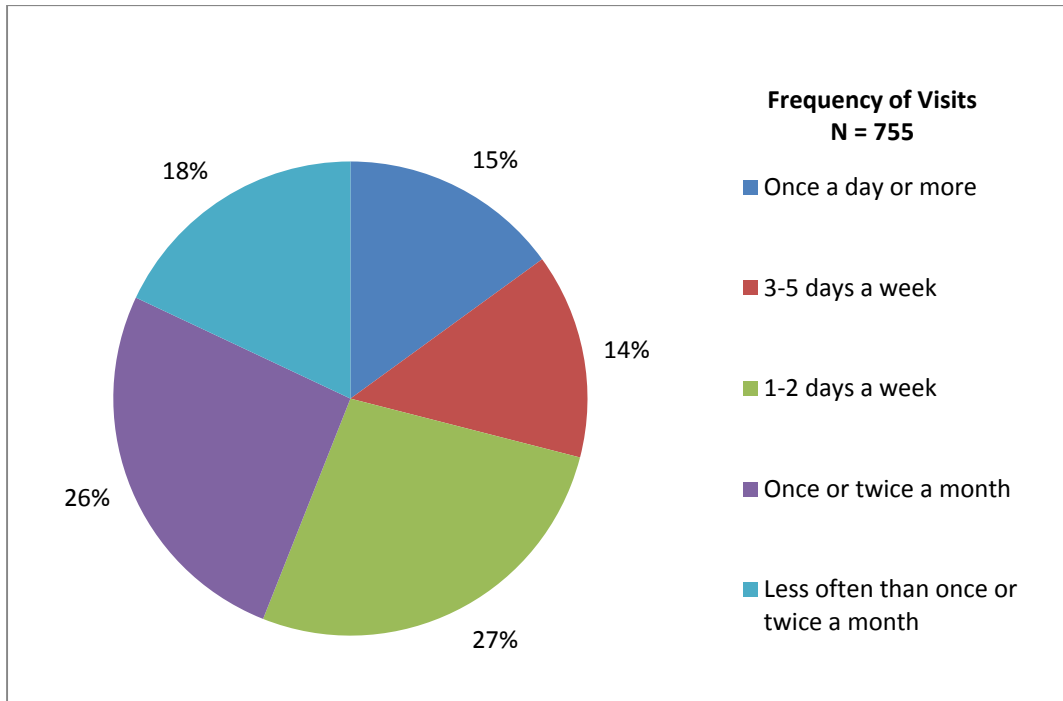


Figure 32. Frequency of Visitation to *Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page.*

For respondents overall the mean number of visits to the *AHM Facebook Page* was 9.3 per month, which is significantly higher than the mean number of visits to the *AHM website* (3.8 per month). Examination of the visitation frequency data by age group determined that the mean number of visits per month was significantly higher (11.8) among respondents 65 and older, and this age group also exhibited the highest rate for multiple visits per day.

Frequency of visitation to the *AHM Facebook Page* was similar for *Arizona Highways magazine subscribers* and non-subscribers, with subscribers showing somewhat higher visitation rates overall. Among non-subscribers, nearly half (49 percent) reported visiting the Page once a month or less often; in comparison, the rate among subscribers was only 38 percent.

Not surprisingly, respondents who accessed the survey through the link on the *AHM Facebook Page* generally reported higher visitation rates than those who were recruited through the *AHM e-mail address list*; the mean number of visits per month was 10.1 and 6.5, respectively.

Feelings Regarding AHM Facebook Page

As seen in Figure 33, more than two-thirds of respondents (69 percent) rated the extent to which they considered themselves fans of the *AHM Facebook Page* as 5, 6, or 7 on a 7-point scale, meaning that they identified themselves as fans. No significant differences were seen by

age or *AHM* subscriber status, although younger respondents and non-subscribers tended to consider themselves somewhat stronger fans than older respondents and subscribers. Additionally, respondents who accessed the survey through the *AHM* Facebook Page link described themselves as strong fans significantly more often than those recruited through the *AHM* e-mail address lists.

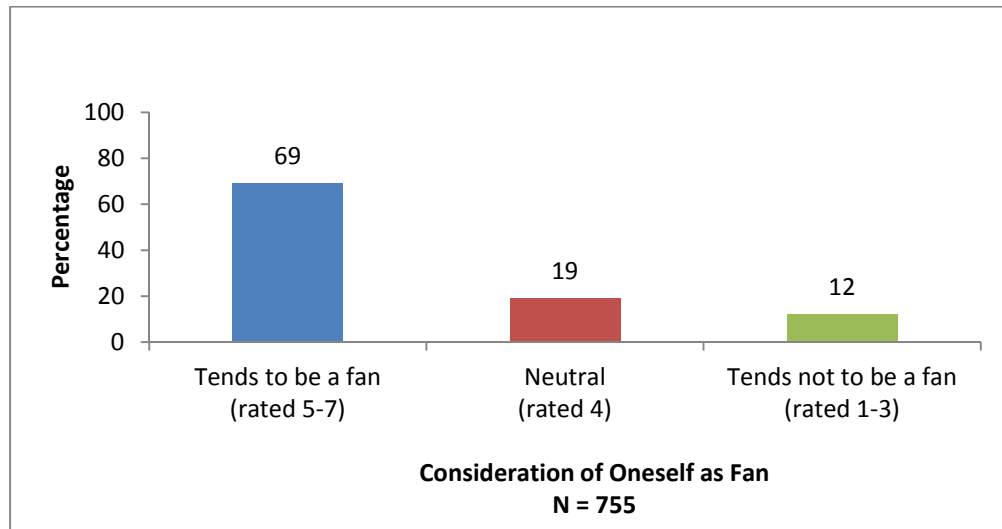


Figure 33. Extent of Considering Oneself a Fan of the *Arizona Highways* Magazine Facebook Page.

Perceptions of the *AHM* Facebook Page

Agreement with General Statements about Page

Table 7 shows a list of statements about the *AHM* Facebook Page and the percentages of total respondents, *AHM* subscribers, and *AHM* non-subscribers who strongly agreed with each statement (i.e., selected 6 and 7 on a 7-point scale). Respondents overall, as well as subscribers and non-subscribers, most strongly agreed with the following statement: *“I trust in the overall integrity and credibility of the information and content posted by Arizona Highways magazine’s creative and editorial staff on the AHM Facebook Page.”*

Table 7. Number of Respondents Who Strongly Agreed with Statements Regarding the *Arizona Highways* Magazine Facebook Page.

Survey Statement	Number (%) among All Respondents (755)	Number (%) among Subscribers (326)	Number (%) among Non-Subscribers (422)
I find the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page appealing.	459 (61%) **	180 (55%)*	276 (65%)*
I find the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page informative.	442 (59%) *	160 (49%)	280 (66%)**
The <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page has increased or sustained my interest in Arizona travel destinations.	416 (55%)	157 (48%)	258 (61%)
The <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page provides a wealth of information about overnight leisure trips or weekend getaways to Arizona travel destinations.	361 (48%)	131 (40%)	227 (54%)
The <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page provides a wealth of information about vacation options—trips lasting at least five days—to Arizona travel destinations.	323 (43%)	121 (37%)	200 (47%)
I trust in the overall integrity and credibility of the information and content posted by <i>Arizona Highways</i> magazine’s creative and editorial staff on the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page.	585 (78%)***	249 (76%)***	334 (79%)***
I trust in the overall integrity and credibility of comments posted by <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page users about their Arizona travel experiences.	385 (51%)	159 (49%)	224 (53%)
I turn to <i>Arizona Highways</i> magazine (and/or the <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page) as the official source for travel information in Arizona.	376 (50%)	182 (56%)**	192 (46%)
The <i>AHM</i> Facebook Page has motivated me to seriously consider planning a trip to one or more Arizona travel destinations during the next 12 months.	360 (48%)	140 (43%)	218 (52%)
Note: The three statements ranked highest by each population—all respondents, subscribers, and non-subscribers—are designated as follows: ***highest ranking; **2nd highest; *3rd highest.			

As seen in Figure 34, while subscribers and non-subscribers alike showed strong agreement with several statements, the levels of agreement were significantly higher for non-subscribers than subscribers regarding every statement but one: *“I turn to Arizona Highways magazine (and/or the AHM Facebook Page) as the official source for travel information in Arizona.”* The lower levels of agreement among subscribers—and, in particular, the fact that slightly less than half (49 percent) agreed with the statement, *“I find the AHM Facebook Page informative”*—indicates that the Page is not currently meeting their information needs, which could lead to reduced visitation by subscribers.

On the other hand, the non-subscriber levels of agreement with the following two statements, as compared with the subscriber levels, indicate that the AHM Facebook Page is having some degree of success in encouraging travel to and within Arizona among non-subscribers.

- *“The AHM Facebook Page has increased or sustained my interest in Arizona travel destinations.”* (non-subscribers: 61 percent; subscribers: 48 percent).
- *“The AHM Facebook Page has motivated me to seriously consider planning a trip to one or more Arizona travel destinations during the next 12 months.”* (non-subscribers: 52 percent; subscribers: 43 percent).

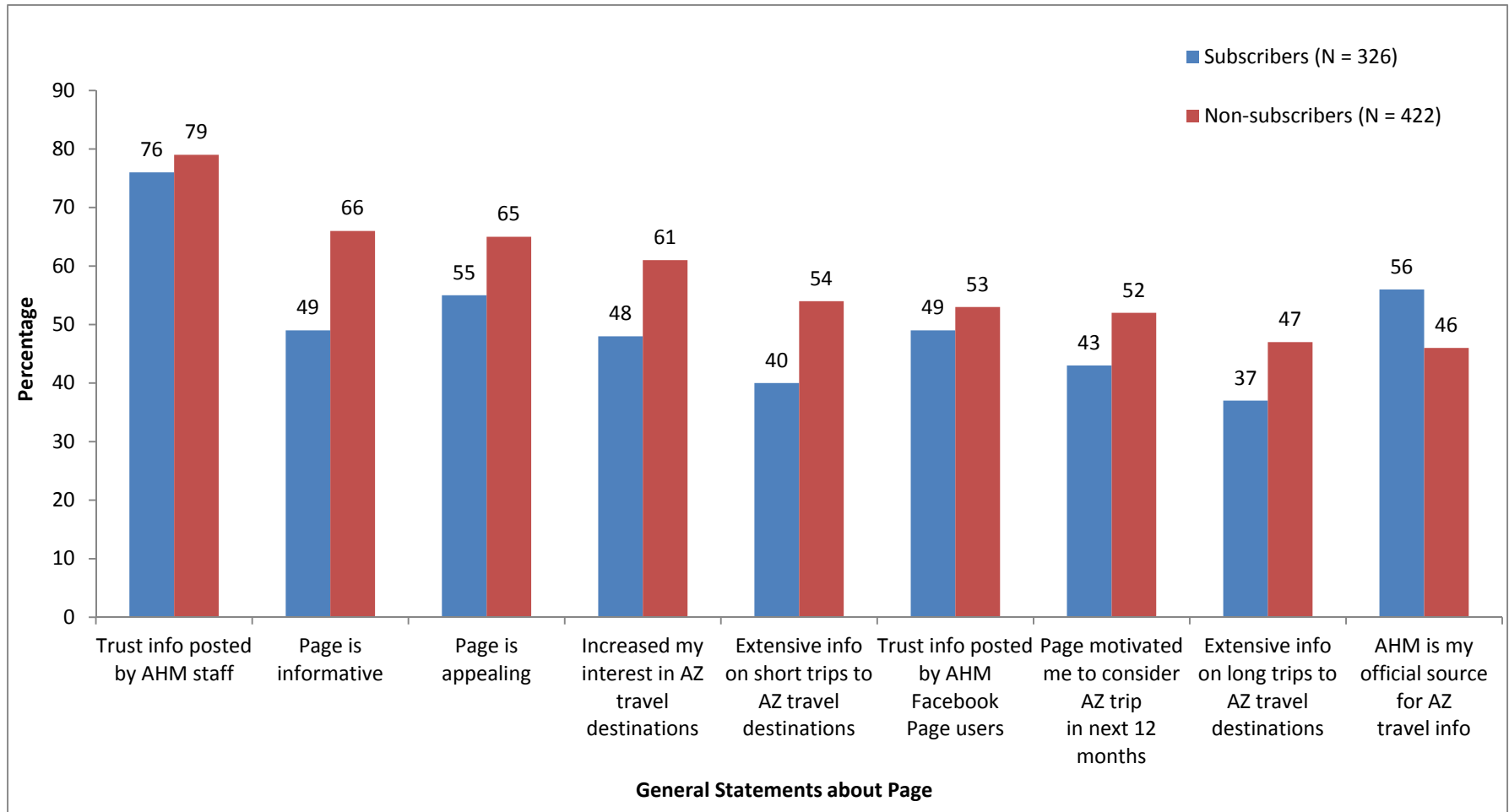


Figure 34. Subscriber and Non-Subscriber Agreement with Statements about Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page: Top Two Ratings.

Additionally, detailed examination of the data by age determined that individuals in the 55–64 age group agreed significantly more strongly than other age groups with the two statements concerning the amount of travel-related information on the *AHM* Facebook Page:

- The *AHM* Facebook Page provides a wealth of information about leisure trips or weekend getaways to Arizona travel destinations.
- The *AHM* Facebook Page provides a wealth of information about vacation options—trips lasting at least five days—to Arizona travel destinations.

Liking of Specific Features

Among all respondents, the most-liked features on the *AHM* Facebook Page were Friday Fotos, with 71 percent of respondents rating it in their top two, followed by postings by other users, at 67 percent, as seen in Figure 35. The next highest rated were the Sneak Peek feature, at 60 percent, and the Save Our Parks campaign, at 56 percent. The features on the *AHM* Facebook Page receiving the lowest ratings among respondents overall were links for discounts and coupons, and the two “convenience” links: one for subscribing to *AHM* newsletters, and the other, to the magazine.

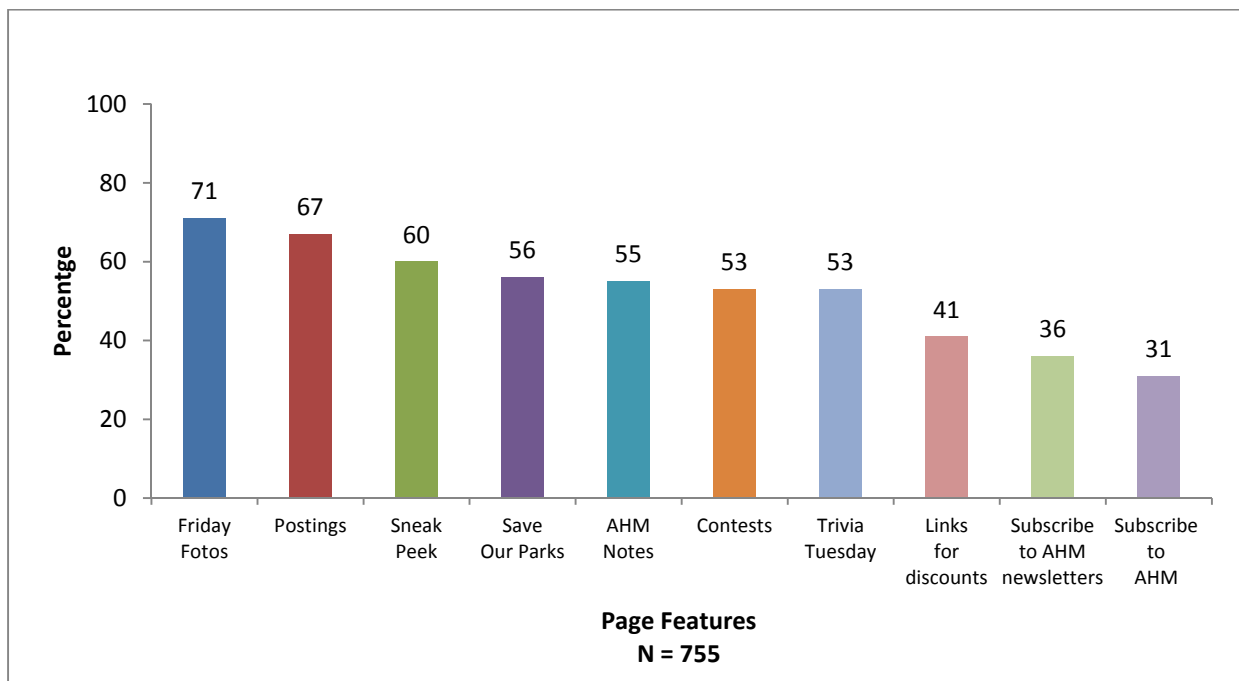


Figure 35. Most-Liked *Arizona Highways* Magazine Facebook Page Features.

No significant difference was seen between the features most liked by overall respondents and those most liked by *Arizona Highways* magazine subscribers or by non-subscribers. A closer examination of the data by age showed that individuals in the 25–34 age group rated two features higher than any other age group and significantly higher than respondents overall. These features were (1) contests, at 67 percent for this age group versus 53 percent for all respondents, and (2) links to sites offering discounts, at 54 percent for this age group versus 41 percent for all respondents.

Interest in Additional Features and Content

In an open-ended question, respondents were given the opportunity to identify other features or content they would like to see on the *AHM* Facebook Page. Nearly one-fifth of respondents (17 percent) expressed interest in more photographs and photography-related content, including interviews with *AHM* photographers about their experiences and techniques; interesting places and appropriate times of year to photograph; information on local photography workshops and events; *AHM*-sponsored offerings of inexpensive workshops presented by *AHM* photographers; features on “ordinary” people who explore and photograph in Arizona; more photo contests for amateurs only; division of Friday Fotos into amateur and professional categories; and similar suggestions.

A number of comments referenced interest in more opportunities for submission of photographs by amateur photographers and, in fact, came from individuals identifying themselves as such. However, the majority of photography-related comments reiterated respondents’ appreciation of *AHM*’s long-standing reputation for excellent professional photography and their interest in seeing more of that. The vast majority of those comments were highly complimentary; thus, while the following comment is not typical, it does present an interesting perspective on the topic of increased opportunities for amateur photography submissions versus a focus on high-quality professional photography:

- “Let’s get back to the basics and feature the best photos that are taken in Arizona. I belong to many FB pages about Arizona that are so similar to yours now. Ones that allow viewers to post their photos and enter contests. You have one of the best brand names in photography in the United States really. You and *Life Magazine* have always been my favorites.”

Participants also expressed interest in features and content related to the environment, wildlife conservation, and similar topics, particularly information on how to get involved. Examples include:

- “I would like to see more hands-on interviews with locals of rural areas. Ideas on how others can contribute their ideas and time to conservation. Become more appealing to a younger generation.”
- “More info on volunteering to protect natural areas, promoting Leave No Trace ethics, importance of eco-tourism.”

Travel Planning Information Sought on AHM Facebook Page

Among all respondents, the top two types of travel planning information sought on the *AHM* Facebook Page are sightseeing recommendations and information on short trips such as weekend getaways (80 percent and 71 percent, respectively), as seen in Figure 36.

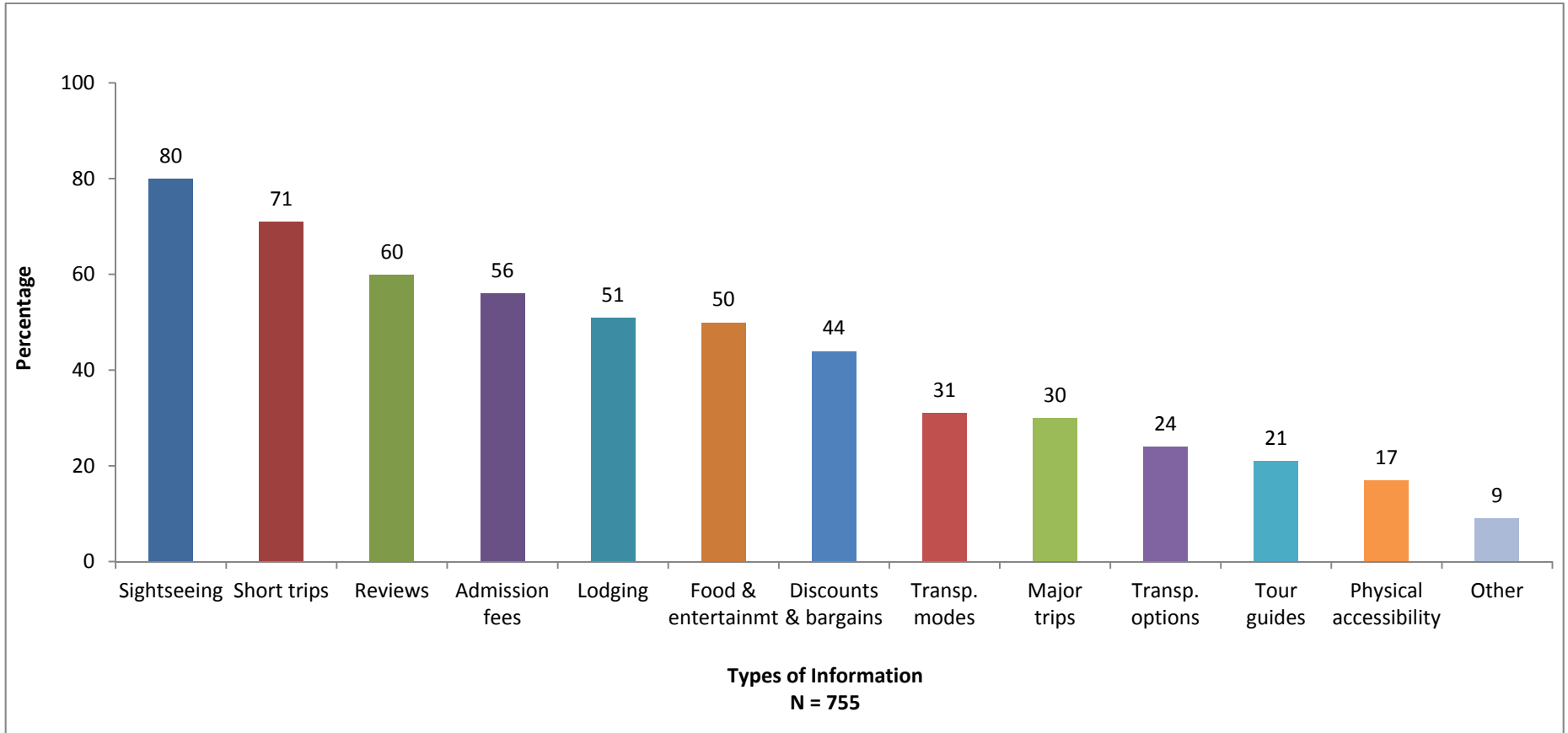


Figure 36. Travel Planning Information Sought on *Arizona Highways* Magazine Facebook Page.

No significant difference was seen between the types of travel planning information most frequently sought by overall respondents and those most frequently sought by *Arizona Highways* magazine subscribers or by non-subscribers. A closer examination of the data by age showed that individuals ages 35–44 seek information on discount travel packages and bargains more frequently than any other age group. Additionally, individuals ages 55–64 are more likely to look for information on lodging options and cost, while those in the 65 and older age group are, not surprisingly, the most likely to look for physical accessibility information.

Respondents also gave open-ended responses on other types of travel planning information they look for on the *AHM* Facebook Page. Responses grouped by general topic are as follows:

- Photographs and photography-related stories and information (41 percent).
- Backpacking, hiking, camping, and horseback riding information (19 percent).
- History and historic sites, lesser-known roads and destinations, directions, outdoor activities, information related to use of recreational vehicles (17 percent).
- Events, festivals, day trips (14 percent).
- Customer service issues, accommodations for pets, wheelchairs, etc. (9 percent).

Other Reasons for Visiting AHM Facebook Page

Figure 37 shows the top four other reasons selected by all respondents for visiting the *AHM* Facebook Page: (1) view pictures, (2) experience Arizona through *AHM* Facebook Page features such as Trivia Tuesday and Friday Fotos, (3) gather information on what to expect when visiting Arizona, and (4) support efforts to maintain and save Arizona landmarks and state parks.

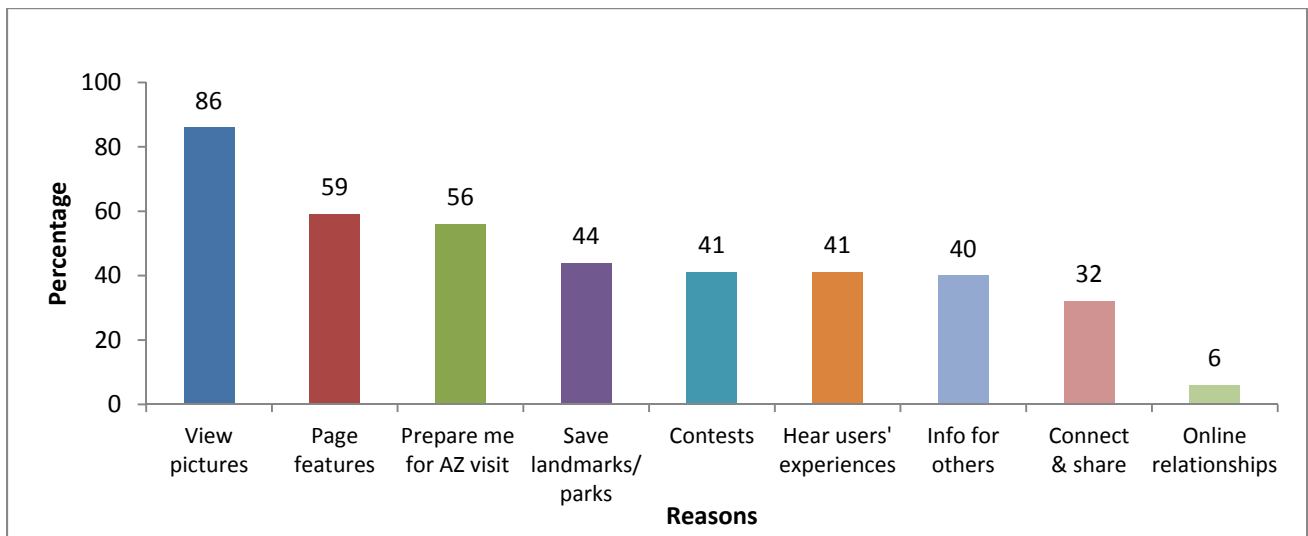


Figure 37. Other Reasons for Visiting *Arizona Highways* Magazine Facebook Page.

No significant difference was seen in the reasons why respondents overall, subscribers, or non-subscribers visit the *AHM* Facebook Page, although subscribers were more likely than non-subscribers to visit because of features like Trivia Tuesday and Friday Fotos. A closer examination of the data by age showed the following:

- Individuals in the 25–34 age group are significantly more interested than any other age group in contests, and all age groups have more interest in contests than those 65 and older.
- Individuals age 45 and older are significantly more interested than those under age 45 in gathering information to pass along to others, such as family and friends.
- Individuals in the 55–64 age group are significantly more interested than any other group in gathering information to help prepare them for what to expect when visiting Arizona.
- Individuals age 65 and older are significantly more interested than any other age group in hearing from other *AHM* Facebook Page users about their travel experiences.

Respondents were also permitted to provide open-ended responses regarding other reasons for visiting the *AHM* Facebook Page. The majority referenced the respondent's fondness for Arizona, typically as a former resident, and use of the *AHM* Facebook Page as a means to keep in touch, such as the following comments:

- "I used to live in Arizona and like to see places I have been and want to go back to."
- "Lived in AZ and have family there. I just enjoy the pictures and seeing photos of places I lived or visited."

Arizona Leisure Travel during the Last Two Years

As seen in Figure 38, nearly all respondents (91 percent) had taken some kind of leisure trip during the last two years, with 78 percent of respondents (586) having taken a short trip lasting four days or less and 48 percent (365) having taken a major trip of at least five days. These figures include 36 percent of respondents (268) who had taken both types of leisure trips.

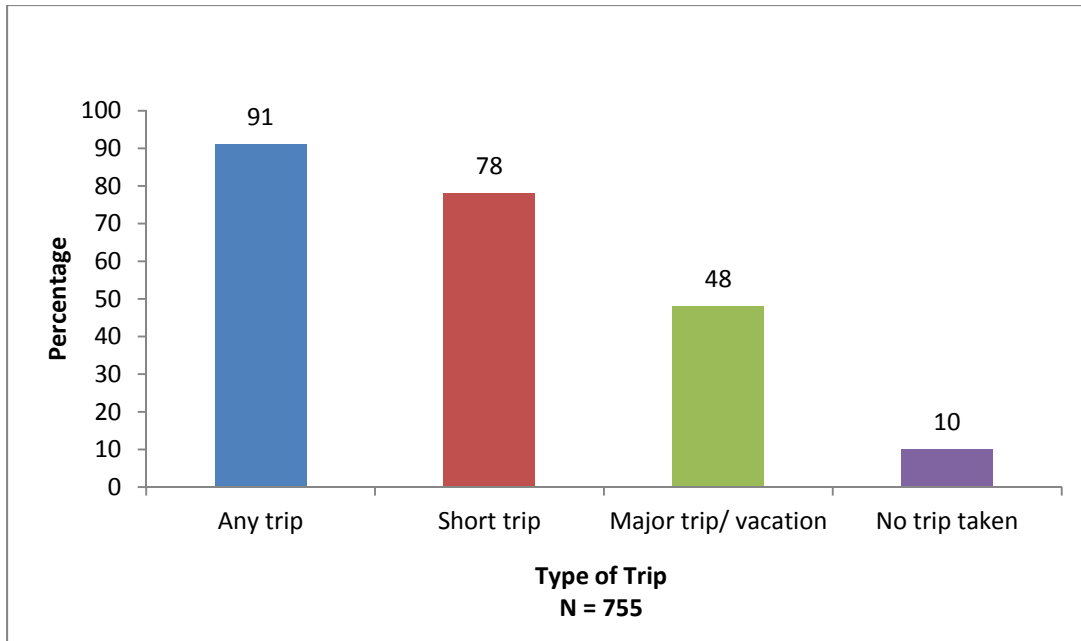


Figure 38. Arizona Leisure Travel during Last Two Years.

A significantly higher percentage of *AHM* subscribers than non-subscribers (41 percent and 31 percent, respectively) reported taking both types of trips. In contrast, a significantly higher percentage of non-subscribers than subscribers (46 percent and 38 percent, respectively) reported taking only a short trip.

As seen in Figure 39, the large majority of respondents who reported taking both short and major trips in the past two years are ages 45 and older, with most trips having been taken by individuals ages 45–64.

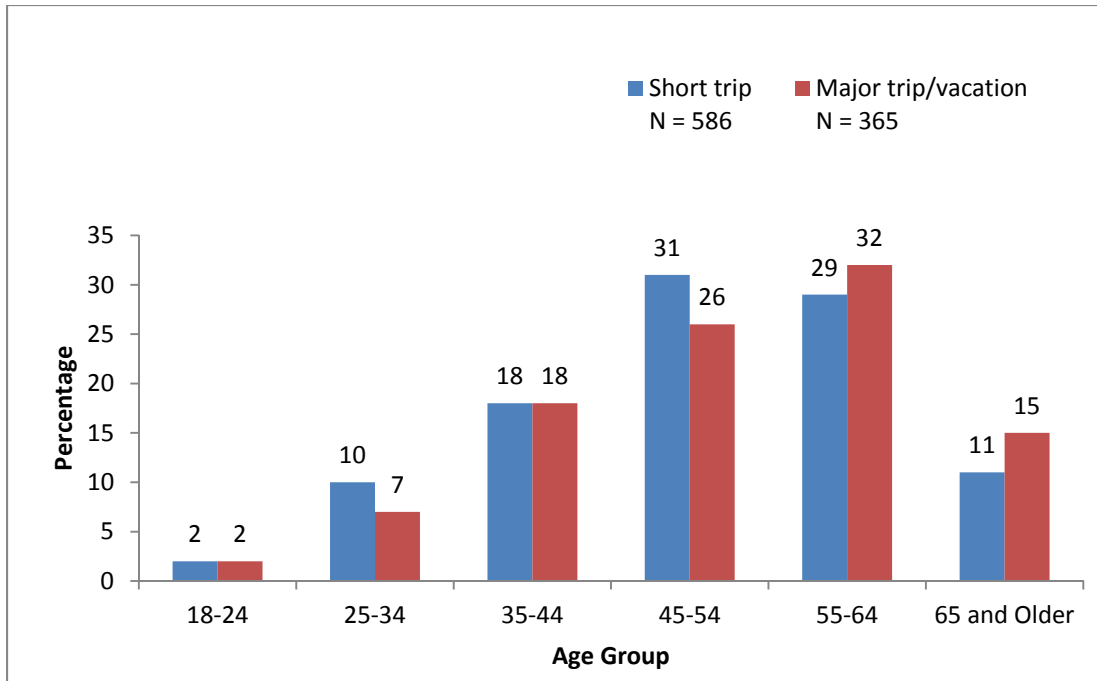


Figure 39. Age of Respondents Reporting Short and Major Trips.

As seen in Figures 40 and 41, the large majority of both short and major trips taken by respondents included one or two adults and no children. This corresponds with the age range (45–64) of the most frequent travelers, as noted above, since they are likely to have no young children in the home and are freer to travel.

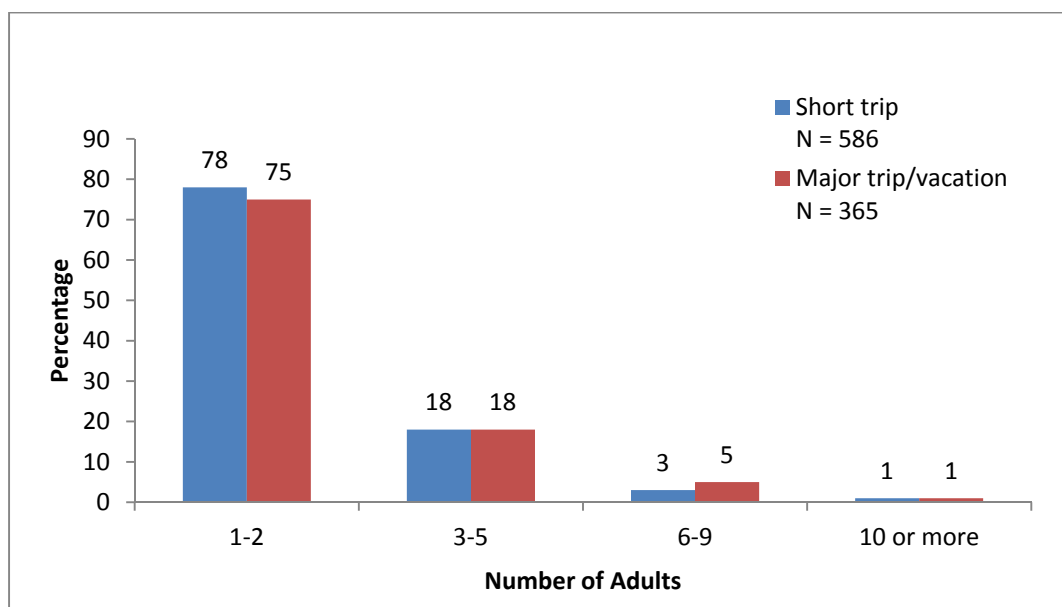


Figure 40. Adults in Travel Party: Short and Major Trips.

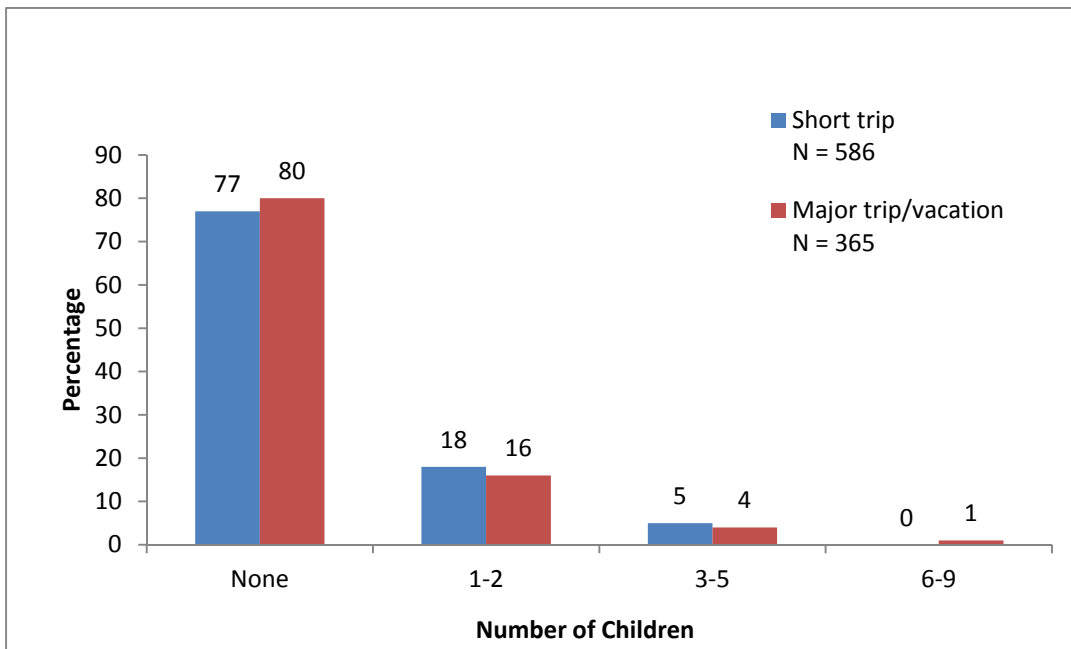


Figure 41. Children in Travel Party: Short and Major Trips.

Short Trips of Four Days or Less

Of the 586 respondents who had taken a short trip, 40 percent had taken a weekend getaway trip and 34 percent had taken a trip of three to four days, as seen in Figure 42.

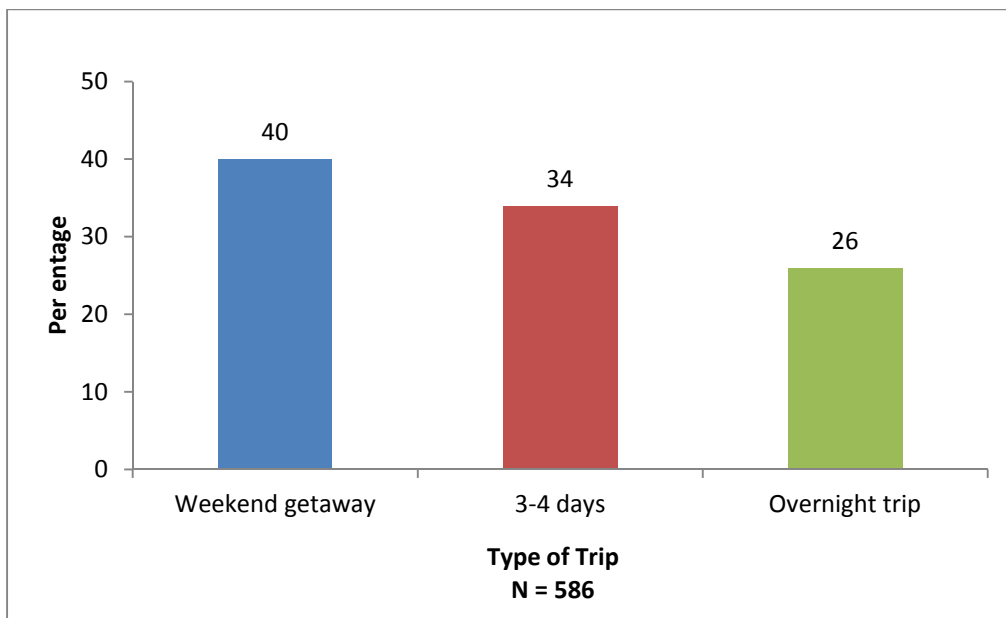


Figure 42. Type of Short Trip Taken in Last Two Years.

No difference was seen between the types of short trips taken by *AHM* subscribers and by non-subscribers. An examination of the data by age showed that the high frequency of weekend trips was attributable to all age groups except individuals 65 and older, who took significantly more overnight and three- to four-day trips, and significantly fewer weekend trips. Individuals 65 and older also reported a significantly higher frequency of short trips that included six to nine adults in the travel party.

Expenditures. Respondents who had reported taking a short trip were asked to estimate the travel party’s total expenditures for the trip, including money spent on lodging or camping, meals, entertainment, shopping, transportation, and other trip-related expenditures. As seen in Figure 43, of the 586 respondents who had taken a short trip in the previous two years, slightly more than half (55 percent) reported that the travel party’s expenditures for the trip had totaled less than \$500. Approximately one-fourth (26 percent) reported total expenditures of \$500 to \$999, and nearly one-fifth of the respondents (19 percent) reported total expenditures of \$1,000 or more. The overall mean for total short-trip expenditures was \$612, and no significant variations were seen by respondents’ *AHM* subscriber status or age.

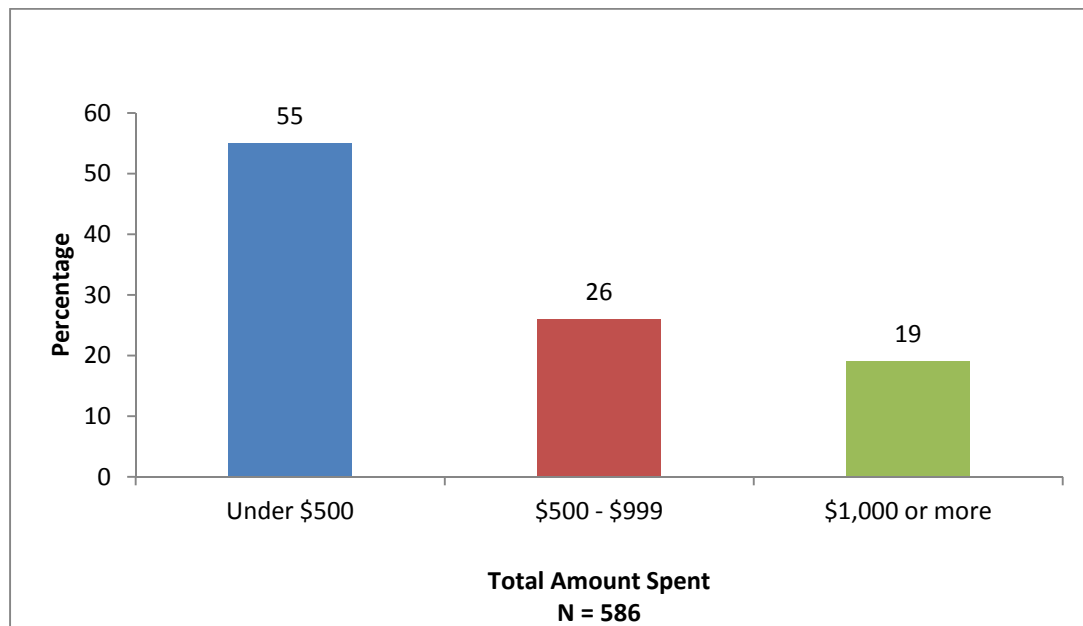


Figure 43. Estimated Short-Trip Expenditures for Total Travel Party.

Influence of AHM Facebook Page and AHM Website/Magazine on Short-Trip Decision

The decision to take the short leisure trip did not appear to be influenced by respondents’ visits to the *AHM* Facebook Page. As seen in Figure 44, less than one-third (32 percent) of respondents reported that their visits to the *AHM* Facebook Page had influenced their decision.

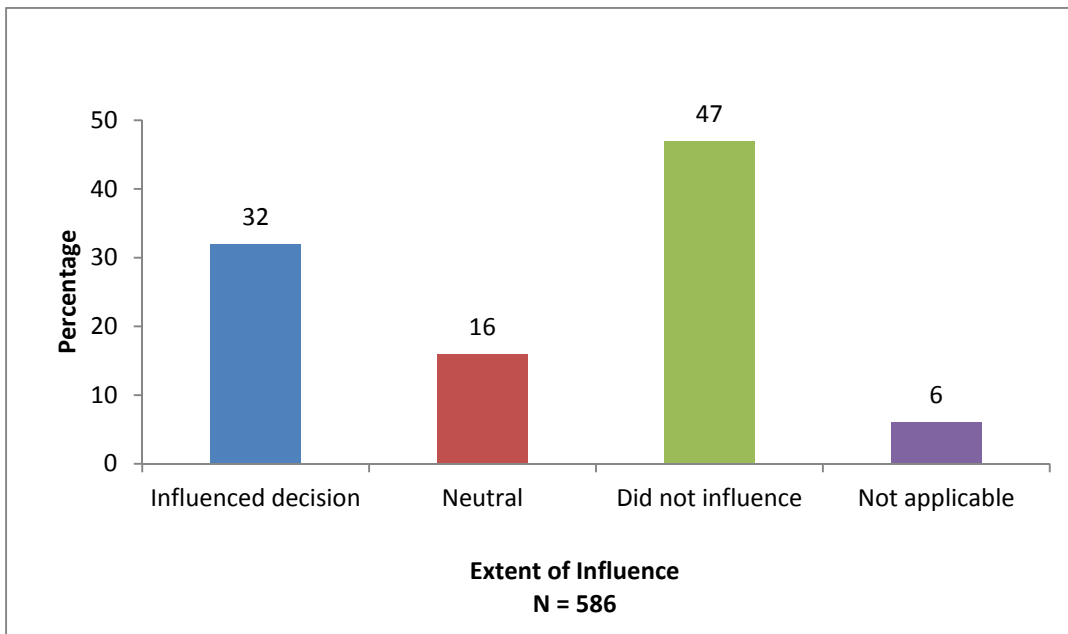


Figure 44. Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page Influence on Decision to Take Short Trip.

However, visits to the *AHM* website and/or subscription to the magazine appeared to have greater influence on the decision to take the short trip. As seen in Figure 45, 42 percent of respondents reported that their visits to the *AHM* website or their subscription to *Arizona Highways* magazine influenced their decision.

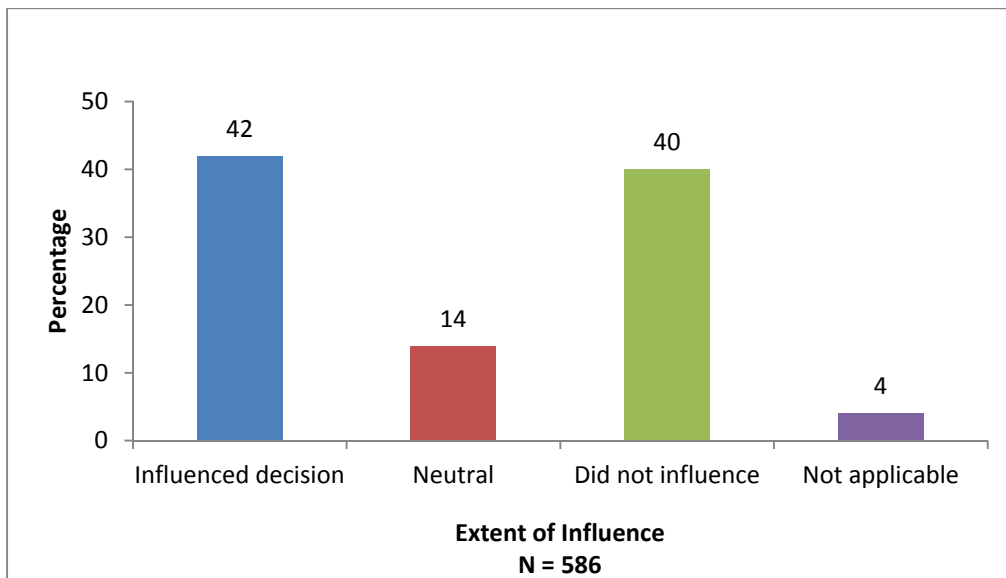


Figure 45. Arizona Highways Website/Magazine Influence on Decision to Take Short Trip.

Additionally, further examination of the data by *AHM* subscriber status showed that a significantly higher percentage of subscribers than non-subscribers (32 percent and 16 percent, respectively) reported that their *AHM* website visits or *AHM* subscription had strongly influenced their decision.

Major Trips of Five Days or More

Among all respondents, 365 reported taking a major trip or vacation of five days or more. Examination of the data by age showed that a significantly greater percentage (19 percent) of respondents ages 65 and older took only major trips, as compared with all respondents (13 percent) as well as all other age groups (ranging from 8 to 17 percent).

Expenditures. Respondents who had reported taking a major trip of five days or more were asked to estimate the travel party's total expenditures for the major trip they had taken, including money spent on lodging or camping, meals, entertainment, shopping, transportation, and other trip-related expenditures. As seen in Figure 46, of the 365 respondents who had taken a major trip in the previous two years, the large majority (81 percent) reported that the travel party's expenditures for the trip had totaled less than \$3,000, and more than a third reported total expenditures of less than \$1,000. The overall mean for total major trip expenditures was \$1,935, which was surpassed by the mean expenditures for respondents in all age groups 45 and above (45–54, 55–64, and 65 and older), as well as for *AHM* subscribers.

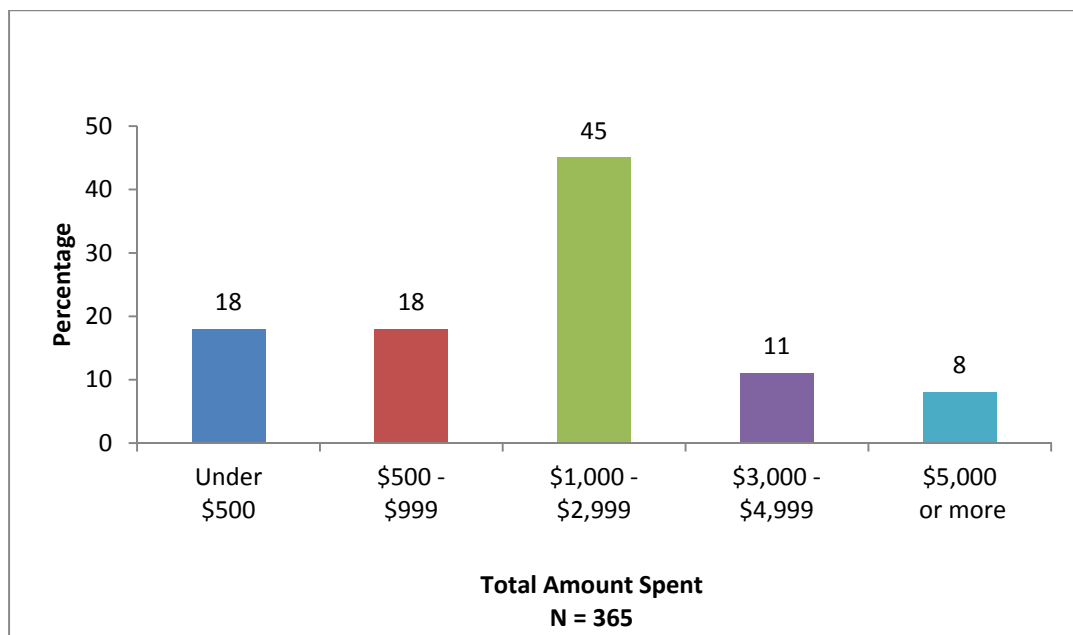


Figure 46. Estimated Major Trip Expenditures for Total Travel Party.

Influence of AHM Facebook Page and AHM Website/Magazine on Major Trip Decision

The decision to take the major trip did not appear to be influenced by respondents' visits to the *AHM* Facebook Page. As seen in Figure 47, only one-fourth (25 percent) of respondents reported that their visits to the *AHM* Facebook Page had influenced their decisions.

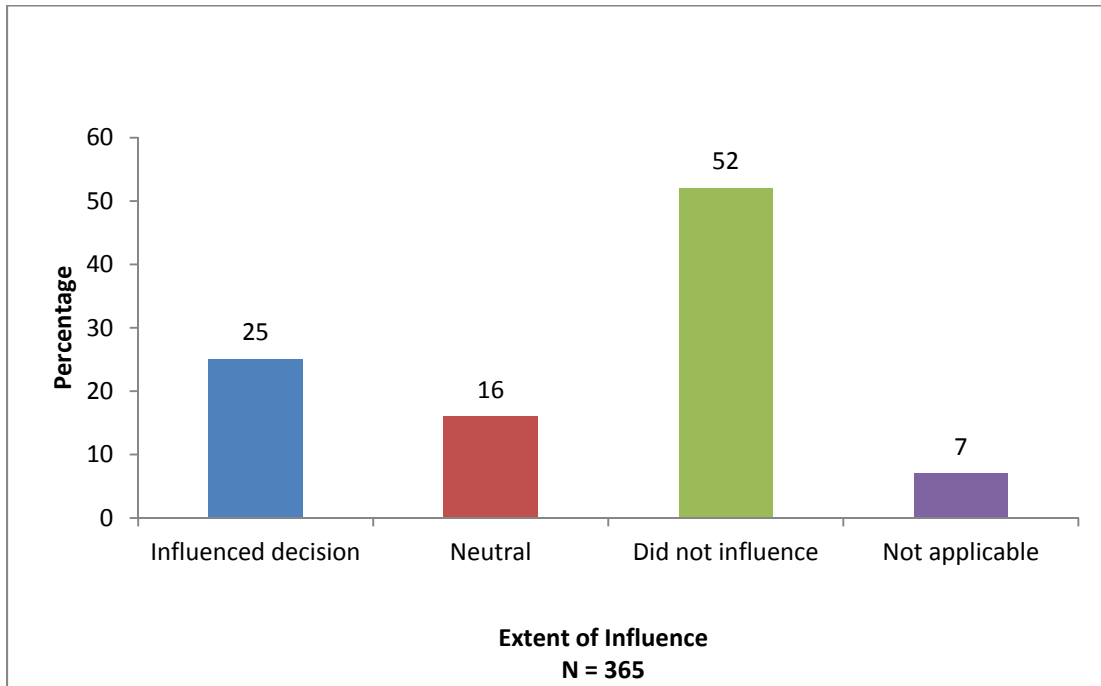


Figure 47. Arizona Highways Magazine Facebook Page Influence on Decision to Take Major Trip.

However, visits to the *AHM* website and/or subscription to the magazine appeared to have greater influence on the decision to take the major trip. As seen in Figure 48, 38 percent of respondents reported that their visits to the *AHM* website or their subscription to *AHM* influenced their decision.

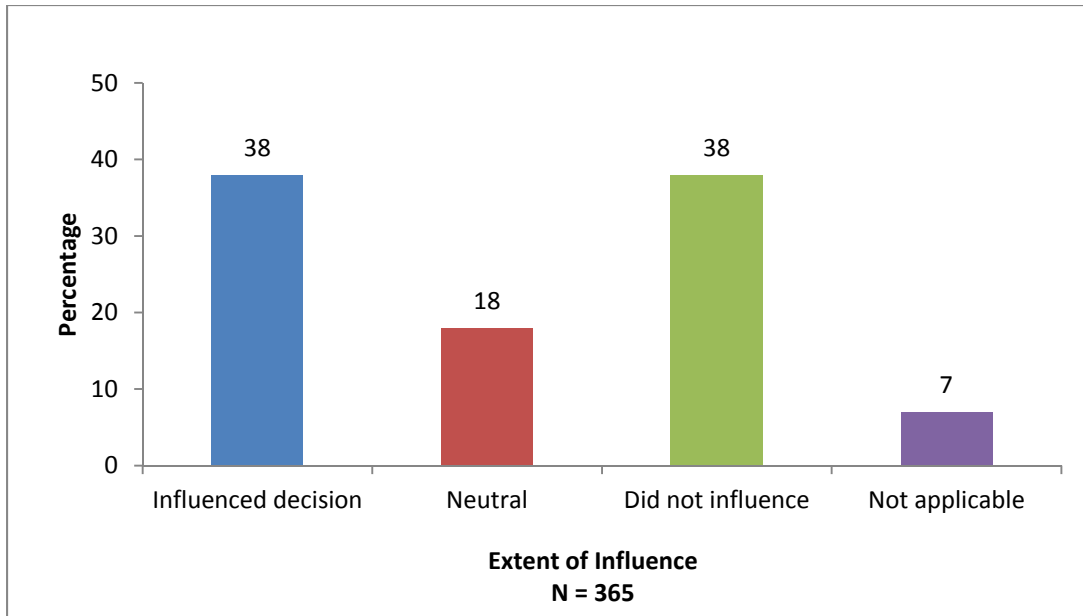


Figure 48. Arizona Highways Website/Magazine Influence on Decision to Take Major Trip.

Additionally, further examination of the data by *AHM* subscriber status showed that a significantly higher percentage of subscribers than non-subscribers (31 percent and 14 percent, respectively) reported that their *AHM* website visits or *AHM* subscription had a strong influence on their decision.

Respondent Interest in Participation in Discussion Group on *AHM* Facebook Page

As noted earlier, survey participants were asked about their interest in participating in an online discussion group about the *AHM* Facebook Page, to be held approximately one month after the survey was concluded. Those who expressed interest were added to a list of potential participants for the online discussion groups. Findings from these groups are presented in Chapter 5 of this report.

CHAPTER 5. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

FOCUS GROUPS BACKGROUND

Qualitative research was conducted with *AHM* Facebook Page users to more closely examine users' experience with and perceptions of the Page in terms of the criteria that had been previously established to assess effectiveness of the *Arizona Highways* magazine Facebook Page from the user's perspective. The platform for the online focus groups utilized interactive Web 2.0 tools that enabled participants to respond to the moderator's questions as well as to comments from other participants, identify preferences using a polling feature, and engage in other interactive activities.

Qualitative research contributes to a richer understanding of consumers' perceptions and attitudes, decision processes, and motivations, thereby providing organizations with insights on the "how" and "why" of their customers' and potential customers' decisions whether or not to join, engage, recommend, purchase, and take similar actions. Several unique aspects of qualitative research, and particularly the use of focus groups, contribute to these insights and cannot be obtained through quantitative data collection:

- Synergy among respondents as they build on each other's comments and ideas.
- Dynamic nature of group discussion process, actively engaging respondents.
- Opportunity to probe beyond initial responses and rationales (e.g., "Help me understand why you feel that way").

These benefits were exhibited during the focus groups for this project as discussion focused on such topics as:

- Favorite Arizona destinations.
- Usage and perception of competitor publications, websites, and Facebook Pages; identification of website and Facebook Page "must have" information or features that determine whether consumer is likely to return.
- How consumers initially heard about *AHM* Facebook Page; what prompted the initial visit; overall impression; what factors have affected the decision to visit regularly or not.
- Why participants do or do not consider themselves connected to the *AHM* online community.
- Ideas to attract and encourage regular visitation by the 18–34 age group.
- Challenges presented in use of the *AHM* website and purchase or renewal of *AHM* subscriptions.

Each group addressed the following key effectiveness criteria:

- Influence of the *AHM* Facebook Page on users' travel decisions regarding the choice of Arizona as a destination, including visiting specific attractions, engaging in local activities and events, selecting accommodations, and choosing travel routes and itineraries.
- Users' perception of the Page, such as what they like and dislike and what aspects of the Page are more appealing than the magazine.
- Factors that compel someone to become a fan, and what influences users to continue to return and engage with the content of the Page.
- Improvements to the Facebook Page that will add value for users and encourage continued use of the Page, such as the addition of photos, contests, weekend events, and innovative "add-ons."
- Effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page in encouraging fans to visit the *AHM* blog and website.

FOCUS GROUPS METHODOLOGY

Two online focus group discussions were conducted, one with subscribers to the magazine and the other with non-subscribers who had previously visited the *AHM* Facebook Page. The groups met online on Wednesday and Thursday, July 17 and 18, 2013, with each discussion approximately 90 minutes long. To encourage participation, an incentive of \$75 was offered.

Participants were recruited for the appropriate group from two populations:

- Individuals who completed the online quantitative survey a month earlier and indicated that they would be interested in participating in an online discussion group.
- *Arizona Highways* magazine (*AHM*) e-mail address list, which included subscribers and individuals who had provided their e-mail address when entering a contest, signing up for the *AHM* newsletter on the *AHM* Facebook Page, or participating in other promotions or events.

Recruitment from among the online survey respondents was initiated through a question placed near the end of the survey questionnaire, asking participants if they were interested in participating in an online discussion group addressing topics similar to those in the survey. Those who expressed interest were asked to provide contact information (i.e., e-mail address, telephone number, and mailing address) that would be needed for recruitment follow-up. Among the 48 percent of survey respondents who expressed interest, recruitment was dependent upon such factors as the number of groups to be held (two), the desired number of

participants per group (six to eight), and *AHM*'s wish to structure groups according to age and subscriber status.

A total of 15 people participated, nine in Group 1 (*AHM* subscribers) and six in Group 2 (*AHM* non-subscribers who had visited the *AHM* Facebook Page). Because individuals in the 18–44 age range are considered a target audience in *AHM*'s efforts to increase its Facebook Page usage, emphasis was placed on recruiting individuals in this age group. All nine participants in the subscriber group, and the majority (four) of the six participants in the non-subscriber group, were between the ages of 18 and 44.

Additional demographics of the focus group participants were as follows:

- Gender: eight males and seven females
- Place of residence: One participant lived in Las Vegas; the rest were Arizonans from around the state, including Phoenix, Flagstaff, Sedona, Prescott Valley, and Camp Verde. By Arizona county, participation was as follows: six from Maricopa; one each from Pima and Pinal; four from Coconino; and two from Yavapai.
- Familiarity with *AHM* Facebook Page: one not very familiar; seven somewhat familiar; seven very familiar.
- Travel to Arizona destination within last two years: eight took short trip(s) only; seven took both short and major trips (five days or more).

KEY FINDINGS

Discovering Other Facebook Pages

Participants most often hear about Facebook Pages from friends, either directly or by seeing their friends' posts or likes. They also follow links from other Pages and websites and use links from other media such as print products.

When visiting a Facebook Page for the first time, participants say they look at:

- The interaction level, including the number of subscribers and likes – Does it indicate active followers?
- How it interacts with audience – Are there frequent updates of substance?
- Photos, recent posts, and newsfeed – Are the topics of interest to me?
- The *about* section – Is the company or organization of interest to me?
- Items that grab my attention and make me want to spend time with the content; a “hook” to draw me in.

Usage of Facebook and Other Social Media Sites

A majority of participants described themselves as moderate to heavy users of Facebook, with a fairly even distribution among those who characterize their usage as primarily personal, primarily business, or a mix of both. A few people mentioned that they use Twitter for information and news, while others said they use no social media sites other than Facebook.

When asked about the one “must-have” item or feature that determines whether they are likely to return to and possibly become a fan of a Page, several participants cited the Page content in terms of its quality, accuracy, and authenticity, while others focused more on its timeliness and ability to engage visitors. Photos were also mentioned frequently as an important feature.

In discussing the level of their connectedness with Facebook Page communities, participants’ descriptions varied considerably, and this variation was seen in both the subscriber and non-subscriber groups. The Pages that participants interacted with by liking numbered as many as 100, but for the most part, only 25 to 30 of these were regularly visited. Other participants noted that they pay attention to the content on as few as two and as many as 30 Pages but seldom contribute, and a few individuals said they might visit a variety of Pages but rarely interacted with any by liking them. The majority of participants described their engagement with these communities as fairly passive, consisting mainly of reading posts and interacting with content only by liking it; only a few individuals said they regularly post or comment themselves.

Level of Engagement with the *AHM* Facebook Page

However, when asked about their engagement level with the *AHM* Facebook Page community in comparison with other Facebook Page communities, most participants in the subscriber group described their *AHM* Page engagement as significantly more active.

Following are a few representative comments:

- “My engagement is high. I actively participate in the contests, view updates, and *Arizona Highways* magazine is one of the two I actively follow.”
- “More active on *Arizona Highways* magazine, on my top 3.”
- “I am on the *Arizona Highways* magazine page at least 1-2x/wk.”

Also noteworthy is the following comment from another participant in the subscriber group explaining why her activity has decreased despite her interest having increased. The scenario she describes regarding Facebook’s News Feed feature is of critical importance to organizations trying to drive traffic to their Pages.

- “Less active, but more interested in *Arizona Highways* magazine page. I have felt in the past six months to a year, I've seen less *Arizona Highways* magazine stuff...perhaps my news feed is growing and I'm losing *Arizona Highways* magazine posts/content.”

Resources for Arizona Travel Information

The majority of participants, both subscribers and non-subscribers, primarily use websites to obtain information about Arizona destinations. These include organization websites such as the Arizona Department of Tourism and the National Parks Service, and travel-related websites such as Trip Advisor, Camp Arizona, Mad Maps, and others located through web searches for maps and other information about the specific area. They also use publications such as *AHM* and *National Geographic Traveler*. Participants generally do not use Facebook Pages for Arizona travel information.

Organization and Travel-Related Websites

Participants named a wide range of websites that they turn to for travel information, including AAA, Arizona Office of Tourism, Best Biking Roads, Camp Arizona, Google Maps, Hike Arizona, National Parks Service, Road Trippers (a web-based software application for route planning), Trip Advisor, US Forest Service, Weather Channel, Weather Underground, local chambers of commerce, and any official website for the destination. Participants look to these websites for information on local events and attractions; up-to-date travel information, such as road closures or dangerous weather conditions; and lodging or camping information.

Publications

When asked about specific publications they use for Arizona travel information, the vast majority of participants named *Arizona Highways*. Other publications mentioned included *Sunset*, *National Geographic Traveler*, and *Outside*. Participants look to these publications for information on hiking, such as trail difficulty and length; recommendations on unique and off-the-beaten-path places and restaurants; and information on visiting specific locations, such as things to see and do in the area, directions, accommodations, and costs. They find these publications appealing mainly because of the photographs and maps. They also appreciate the integrity of the publication and the ability to obtain information without being sold something.

Use of *Arizona Highways* Magazine versus the AHM Website. While nearly all participants in both groups named *Arizona Highways* magazine as their primary “go-to” resource for Arizona travel information, they did not feel the same about the AHM website. Participants cited difficulty with the website’s search and navigation tools as the main reason for their dissatisfaction. Below are representative participant comments about why they consider *Arizona Highways* magazine an authoritative source for information on Arizona destinations, followed by comments on why they do not typically use the AHM website.

Comments about *Arizona Highways* magazine

- “Its tremendous history, quality writing, and varied segments of interest.” (subscriber)
- “Official State of Arizona publication; use of professional resources (photos to tourism info).” (subscriber)
- “It has been around for a long time and is tried and true for information. My parents introduced me to it.” (non-subscriber)
- “Their credibility and experience with Arizona destinations. They haven’t done me wrong yet!” (non-subscriber)

Comments about *Arizona Highways* magazine website

- “I think of it as an authority, just not as a comprehensive source of information. Hard to navigate. Not easy to use information.” (subscriber)
- “When searching for hiking trails, it’s not obvious how to get to the part of the site with information.” (subscriber)
- “I see it as an extension of the magazine, with pictures, inspirations, and articles, but not necessarily a day-to-day option for info.” (non-subscriber)
- “It’s not as user-friendly as most sites. Not necessarily frustrating, but the site does not jump out as a travel resource when you first look at it.” (non-subscriber)

Participants were shown the Travel Guide and interactive map on the *AHM* website and asked if they had been aware of these resources. Among subscribers, seven of the nine participants (over 75 percent) had known about the resources. In contrast, only 50 percent of the non-subscribers had previously been aware of these resources on the *AHM* website.

Facebook Pages

The majority of participants said they typically do not turn to any Facebook Pages for Arizona travel information. They said that Facebook does not have the technical structure to offer the best travel planning information, noting that the only way to find specific information on a Page would be to scroll through the posts until you found what you wanted. As one participant put it, “At the end of the day, it’s still a Facebook Page, not a fully navigable site for information.”

Engaging with the *AHM* Facebook Page

A few individuals said they might check the *AHM* Facebook Page for destination ideas or updates on road closures, while another noted that he would go to the *AHM* Facebook Page for reader commentary to back up the information he found in the print magazine or on the magazine website. Another participant suggested that the best way to leverage Facebook is to link heavily between the content on the Page and the content on the main website.

Most of the subscriber participants thought they had heard of the *AHM* Facebook Page from reading the magazine, while the non-subscriber participants generally had heard of it through friends. For both subscribers and non-subscribers, the primary motivator for their first visit to the Page was seeing the photographs. Several subscribers noted that checking out the *AHM* Facebook Page was a natural progression from the magazine and the magazine’s website.

Overall Impression

Participants described the *AHM* Facebook Page as fun, referencing the photo and trivia contests. They particularly like the photography and the opportunity to share photos. Two of the non-subscribers referred to the Page as a quality reflection of Arizona, with one saying it is “like the *National Geographic* of Arizona” and the other commenting that it showed “the better side of Arizona and not our politics” to friends and family living elsewhere. In contrast, two subscribers were somewhat less enthusiastic in their comments, with one noting that the Page “could be so much more” and the other saying that he didn’t see it “as hugely different than any other product/service Facebook page.”

Trivia Tuesdays

Approximately half the participants in each group had participated in Trivia Tuesday at least once. Non-subscribers who had not participated typically did not know of its existence, and one individual said that it had not surfaced on her newsfeed. The newsfeed issue was also raised by one of the subscribers, who noted that she has been getting fewer *AHM* items in her newsfeed. Among subscribers, those who had not participated generally had no interest in doing so; however, one participant gave a somewhat puzzling explanation for not having participated: “I never receive my magazine in time to participate.” A few individuals also commented on the fact that a user has to be first with the correct answer, which significantly reduces its drawing power for those who aren’t checking Facebook first thing in the morning. Another way to determine the winner, it was suggested, might be through a random drawing among all those with the correct answer.

Friday Fotos

Nearly everyone in both groups was aware of Friday Fotos and regularly viewed the results, regardless of whether they had participated. Participation was higher in the subscriber group, with six of the nine individuals having posted photos. In the non-subscriber group, only one individual had participated. Several individuals in each group expressed an interest in participating if they had a photo that fit the theme. A few individuals noted that they don’t typically see the *AHM* Facebook Page early enough to participate. This may be due to fewer *AHM* items appearing in their newsfeeds, an issue that was noted by several participants.

Contests

Most individuals in the subscriber group had entered at least one contest, while only one in the non-subscriber group had done so. However, these individuals agreed with the view (expressed by several individuals in both groups who had not participated in contests) that the contests don’t seem to be featured strongly and are easily overlooked. This view was confirmed by several individuals who said they were unaware of the existence of any contests other than Trivia Tuesdays and Friday Fotos.

Posts and Comments on Posts

Among those participants in the groups who had posted to the *AHM* Facebook Page, most had posted photos. A few individuals stated that they didn’t know that posting was encouraged, other than as a contest entry. Comments on other posts were also infrequent; however, several

individuals said they preferred to “like” other posts rather than comment on them, particularly if they had nothing specific to contribute in their comment.

Connectedness to the AHM Online Community

Participants overall do not feel a strong connection to the *AHM* online community, but do believe that their fellow “likers” of the *AHM* Page probably have similar interests. As one individual put it, “I feel like I am part of it, but I don’t feel like I am connected to the other individual, if that makes sense.” Most of the individuals who said they definitely feel connected were in the subscriber group. They have a strong interest in photography and are active participants in or followers of the Friday Fotos contest, such as the individual who said, “Very much so, because it keeps me in touch with the other photographers in the area and where people are shooting.” Only one member of the non-subscriber group said he felt connected to the *AHM* community, noting that he had several friends whose photos are often picked for publication in Friday Fotos, so he liked to follow the contests and show support.

Promoting Arizona as a Travel Destination

Both subscribers and non-nonsubscribers had a number of ideas to improve the effectiveness of the *AHM* Facebook Page in encouraging people to consider Arizona as a travel destination. A few people suggested featuring unusual and off-the beaten-path opportunities, such as renting a yurt in Walnut Canyon, or highlighting a day trip to a major city or town each week and why people should visit it. Several people suggested including links to Arizona travel packages on the *AHM* Page or attaching some kind of discount or travel deal to a featured destination, similar to a Groupon offer. Groupon, launched in November 2008, offers consumers in 48 countries daily deals on activities, events, travel, dining, and shopping, and provides merchants with commerce-related products and services, including credit card payment processing and customizable marketing campaigns.

Another participant noted, “In couch surfing, Flagstaff is a popular destination, and many foreigners who come aren’t aware of *Arizona Highways* magazine.” The term *couch surfing* refers to the practice of temporarily lodging with a stranger, free of charge, and CouchSurfing.org is a hospitality exchange network that pairs travelers looking to informally lodge with locals willing to accommodate them or perhaps just meet for a beverage. Thus the individual making this comment was likely suggesting that *AHM* should connect with the CouchSurfing.org website in order to leverage the popularity of Flagstaff among its members and introduce them to *Arizona Highways* magazine. Similar comments were also made later during the discussion of ideas for encouraging more visitors to the *AHM* Facebook Page, and

they are reported in the appropriate section of this chapter. Other noteworthy suggestions and comments were as follows:

- "...Spotlight a new destination once a week and make a post about it every day with fun facts, photos, maps, visitor's info, but posted in a way to not get lost in stuff."
- "...More outreach from businesses or cities to encourage visitation to their area. More talk with the people who live in the area to get the locals' perspective. More personal biographies on people who live there. Maybe make those specific to Facebook to encourage more Facebook use and not so much magazine."
- "The editor always writes about extra content that doesn't make the magazine; maybe this would be an outlet."
- "Perhaps after the original magazine content is published, 1-2 months later, share more of the articles/links on the *AHM* Facebook Page as a means to promote more Arizona vacation travel. Also, I love to see the "top ten" lists of food, camping, etc.; more publication, an annual survey published to Facebook, would drive more of the travel destination goal."
- "But where the Page falls short is any details about HOW to make the trips easier for outsiders."

Additionally, everyone agreed that *AHM* is known for its photography and it must remain an essential element of the Page. One participant had this to say on the subject: "You have to start with spectacular photos. If you get the viewer sucked into the magazine, site, article, you then have a consumer. The quality of pictures will attract people to the state every time. I run into them in different parts of the world."

Promoting Vacations and Major Trips (Five Days or More) to Arizona

To encourage *AHM* Facebook Page users to consider a vacation or major trip to or within Arizona, several participants in both groups suggested providing sample itineraries. Following are some creative variations on that theme:

- "Example five+ day itineraries for locations ('For those that like hiking . . . ' 'For those looking for cultural activities . . . ' 'For those looking to shop . . . ')
- "Pre-planned tours: show where to stay and a few options for filling each of the days, including activity, relaxation, and eats."
- "Give all the info needed up front: where to stay, costs, things to do, what to see."
- "Maybe the *AHM* Facebook Page could suggest a group of towns, sites, attractions to hit."
- "And, being Facebook, encourage commentary on how much others have liked the same. Or link Facebook Pages for some of those destinations."

- “Has to be linked stories. I can’t see how one could do it otherwise. Maybe photo albums based on certain small regions.”
- “More info when doing an article, with great pictures. Show us what we’ll see, and then recommend a few varieties of options on how to stay and experience it for myself.”
- “Show Arizona as a state that can be explored in five days. Create maps that inspire road trips through all our different sceneries.”

Encouraging Others to Visit the AHM Facebook Page

Participants in both groups found it somewhat more difficult to identify innovative ways to encourage others to visit the *AHM* Facebook Page. Suggestions included offering an incentive, such as a giveaway, to users who “like” the Page or share a post; including more humorous content such as jokes, funny photos, quirky stories, etc., that users will want to share with friends and family; placing ads within other travel-friendly venues, such as CouchSurfing.org; and hosting a contest with a random chance of winning rather than one based on knowledge or a skill. With regard to the latter suggestion, however, one subscriber noted that she typically does not “like” or participate in contests that are targeted at accessing her friends list.

Encouraging New, Renewal, and Gift Subscriptions to Arizona Highways Magazine

The subject of subscription renewal appeared to strike a nerve in the subscriber group, with several individuals commenting on problems associated with the process. One participant had this comment: “Online renewals: not easy to find the page; not easy to pull up account; not always accurate—I’ve had to call/e-mail for being double charged for renewal.”

In addition to making the process easy and significantly reducing the number of renewal mailings sent prior to the subscription expiration date, subscribers and non-subscribers had these suggestions to encourage new, renewal, and gift subscriptions:

- Renewal specials and deals for new and returning subscribers, unique to Facebook friends.
- Discounts and giveaways only available to fans of the Facebook Page who subscribe or renew.
- Discount on your subscription if someone you referred gets a subscription.
- “With Facebook, it’s limited; include the digital mag with a print subscription.”
- “Make a subscription [sic – possibly meant an *issue*] dedicated to the photos and posts by people through the Facebook Page.”

- “Post more about specific articles that appear in the mag... make the reader go get the magazine.”
- Provide links through Facebook for online-exclusive content for subscribers only ahead of each issue.
- Promote gift subscriptions around the holidays.
- “Make a gift subscription incredibly cheap or free with renewal.”
- “Facebook now offers a “give a gift” on a person’s birthday. Perhaps *AHM* can participate or offer a gift using this feature.”
- “What if we could ask people to re-up our subscriptions as birthday gifts?”
- “Regarding renewals of gift subscriptions; I often let gift subscriptions lapse after one year because they go up to full price. Providing a minor discount to renew gift subscriptions or bundled discounts.”

Encouraging Visitors to Become Loyal Fans

Suggestions were widely diverse on how to improve the *AHM* Facebook Page to encourage visitors to become loyal fans. Several participants called for more user-submitted content and for photo contests for amateurs, although they acknowledged the difficulty in enforcing the amateur status in the latter. One individual stated, “I do not have a professional camera and all the pictures I submit are very simple. Perhaps break out something for us weekend warriors.” In contrast, another participant wanted the *AHM* Facebook Page to become more sophisticated, “a cross between *Outdoor Photographer* (photo tips) and *Sunset* magazine (local dining reviews, etc.) Also, highlight local photographers that are NOT in the magazine....”

Particularly noteworthy are these thoughtful suggestions on converting visitors into loyal fans:

- “Content I cannot find in the *Arizona Highways* magazine or the main site. Have somebody developing content just for Facebook. It doesn't have to be voluminous, just something useful and fresh on a regular basis.”
- “Keep up with the contests. And ask and engage fans with questions about their experience so the fans can talk about what they like, and encourage a discussion with fans about unique destinations they choose to be featured in the magazine.”

Perceived Mission and Purpose of AHM Website and Facebook Page

AHM subscribers perceived the mission and purpose of the *AHM* website to be primarily promotional, aimed at increasing travel to and within Arizona and creating interest in subscribing to the publication. Both subscribers and non-subscribers voiced similar comments about the *AHM* Facebook Page. Non-subscribers described the Page as primarily aimed at

increasing tourism and commerce in Arizona, as well as encouraging the purchase of or subscription to the magazine. One participant noted that “*Arizona Highways* IS a transportation-run business.”

AHM Editor for the Day

When participants were asked what changes they would make to the *AHM* Facebook Page if they could be “editor for the day,” there was no shortage of responses. One point on which most, if not all, participants agreed was the need to have and promote the existence of Facebook-only content to drive visitors to the Page. Most participants also agreed that they would like to see an organized schedule of upcoming topics, with some room left for spontaneous postings, as well. Specific suggestions included the following:

- “Create a BEST of AZ contest, similar to the Native Eyewear Facebook contest, that would encourage friendly competition between cities or attractions around the state. The winner would get a Facebook-specific and magazine-specific feature.”
- “Ensure multiple posts of pictures from the archive every day.”
- “Regularly post questions to be answered by the public: What hikes are they doing this weekend? What restaurant are they planning to try? Encouraging them to give feedback generates more feedback.”
- “Put something edgy on the *AHM* Facebook Page. *AHM* is known for the beautiful pictures but what about loss of habitat? Or the down side of forest fires? For once, I'd like to see something off the wall.”

Attracting New Visitors and Sparking Their Interest in Arizona Travel

As noted above, creating and promoting Facebook-only content is an important factor in encouraging visitors to the *AHM* Facebook Page. Additionally, offering an incentive to encourage sharing posts may bring new visitors to the Page and keep loyal fans coming back for more opportunities. One participant also suggested that providing longer time frames for photo contests might encourage more amateurs like her to participate. She noted, “I am an amateur photographer and sometimes it takes a little time to plan where and what to shoot. If the topics for Friday Fotos were lined out for ALL the Fridays in the month, that might be interesting.”

Participants agreed that finding ways to tie technology in with content is also a significant factor in attracting new visitors, particularly individuals ages 18–24. One participant suggested featuring the topic, “How to Use Your iPhone in Arizona” and then showing unusual ways to use apps or integrated locational activities; another suggested integrating them on a specific topic,

such as “Here’s the QR code for a map of the area.” Other suggestions for attracting younger users included the following:

- Feature unique events and photos that appeal to those demographics, such as the Flagstaff Extreme zip line course, mountain biking, sports, etc. “If you like this photo, you’ll love this trail, which allows use of dirt bikes and ATVs.”
- Provide information on meet-up groups in different areas of the state.
- Use a hook, such as “Want to go on an exciting first date? Go here, here, and here.”
- Highlight special features, such as “Plan Your Grad Trip” for high schoolers or “Spring Break Adventures” for younger outdoor enthusiasts.
- Offer free trials of digital content for one to three months.
- Feature skateboard photos, smartphone contests, etc.
- Add apps and more interactive Instagram content.
- Maybe highlight one of the colleges or universities before the start of school in fall.

Preferred Features and Content

Participants were asked to use the polling feature to identify the type of content they would like to see more of on the *AHM* Facebook Page. Both subscribers and non-subscribers wanted to see more ideas and tips for day, overnight, or weekend travel. The choices, along with the vote totals for both groups, were as follows:

- A. Photographer bios and the story behind the photograph (two votes)
- B. Historical content, including *Arizona Highways* magazine “Then & Now” (four votes)
- C. Day, overnight, or weekend travel ideas and tips (five votes)
- D. Family-focused activities and travel (no votes)
- E. Vacationing in Arizona (e.g., five or more days – suggested itineraries) (one vote)

Participants were then shown the same five types of content and asked which type would motivate them to travel to or within Arizona more often. As in the previous poll, the top choice was ideas and tips for day, overnight, or weekend travel. The choices, along with the vote totals for both groups, were as follows:

- A. Photographer bios and the story behind the photograph (no votes)
- B. Historical content, including *Arizona Highways* magazine “Then & Now” (two votes)
- C. Day, overnight, or weekend travel ideas and tips (11 votes)
- D. Family-focused activities and travel (no votes)
- E. Vacationing in Arizona (e.g., five or more days – suggested itineraries) (no votes)

The fact that neither group cast any votes for family-focused activities and travel appears to support the findings from the quantitative survey that the large majority of both short and major trips taken to and within Arizona included only adults and no children.

Open-Ended Feedback

As the final question in the discussion group, participants were given the opportunity to provide any feedback they wished to the *AHM* Facebook Page Team. Following are some of the noteworthy comments.

Subscribers

- “Would be nice to view all photos in *Arizona Highways* magazine Facebook Page ... no links to an external photo site.”
- “Give me a great monsoon lightning photo I can use as a cover photo on my Facebook Page (with an *Arizona Highways* magazine logo, of course), and I'd put it up/right now/.”
- “I really enjoyed the team conducting research to make improvements. Also, really want to consider that "amateur" photo contest ;).”
- Specify off-road and on-road trips on foot, bicycle, motorbike and car.
- “It just seems to me that Facebook would be a good outlet for amateur activity (photography specifically).”
- “I'd like to see in general just more ‘action’ going on the Page. And please make it easier for up-and-coming photographers to be a part of *Arizona Highways*. Like *OP* mag. their reader base CAN actually make it in the magazine or even cover. With *Arizona Highways*, it's a small almost closed group of the same photographers.”

Non-Subscribers

- “I would have a phone number for magazine, online subscriptions available more on the front of the webpage. I never did find out how someone could simply pick up the phone and call for a subscription.”
- “I think it feels a little sterile in comparison to the magazine. I get that they have content in the magazine for paying customers only, as it should be. I think I feel that the Page is more or less an ad for the magazine and not necessarily its own entity/community/life force.”

- “Someone mentioned couch surfing earlier. If you want more 18–44-year-olds to go to *Arizona Highways* magazine Facebook Page as a tourist information resource, engage in sites like couchsurfing.org or other similar sites that target that demographic who likes to travel, have adventures, and experience something unusual.”
- “Try meetinglife.com too.

As noted earlier, the focus groups provided additional insights into the perceptions, interests, and motivations of the *AHM* Facebook Page user. Focus group participants also contributed a number of helpful suggestions and recommendations for improving the customer experience on both the *AHM* website and Facebook Page. Along with the insights gleaned from the participants, the focus group discussions proved to have consumer relations benefits as well. Following are some representative comments made by participants at the conclusion of the groups:

- *“Thank You PIB and the Arizona Highways magazine Facebook Team!” (subscriber group participant)*
- *“Great group- insightful and actionable feedback!” (subscriber group participant)*
- *“Thank you for the opportunity.” (non-subscriber group participant)*

CHAPTER 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations have been organized into three areas of focus based on the effectiveness criteria established for this research study:

- Growing the *AHM* Facebook Page community.
- Encouraging *AHM* Facebook Page fans to visit the *AHM* website, to support the goal of increasing sales of and subscriptions to *Arizona Highways* magazine.
- Using the *AHM* Facebook Page more effectively to encourage increased travel to and within Arizona.

These recommendations were developed based on the findings from extensive analysis of the quantitative data obtained in the online survey and from qualitative data obtained through two focus groups, one with *AHM* subscribers and one with non-subscribers. Additionally, these recommendations reflect adherence to the following Facebook Page guiding principles (Facebook 2011a.):

- Build a strategy that is social by design (integrate with your broader marketing efforts and parts of how you reach your business objectives).
- Create an authentic brand voice (bring your brand’s personality to life through an authentic and consistent voice).
- Make it interactive (think about aspects of your brand that are inherently social and create content that people will be excited to pass along).
- Nurture your relationships (keep content fresh and easy to consume, and reward people for their loyalty through deals and promotions).
- Keep learning (use reporting tools to learn about your fans/readers and the content they find most interesting).

FOCUS 1: GROWING THE *AHM* FACEBOOK PAGE COMMUNITY

- ▶ *Broaden the appeal of the AHM Facebook Page to attract new visitors, keep users coming back, and engage the community.*

Recommendation A

Aggressively encourage *AHM* Facebook Page visitation by informing subscribers, *AHM* website visitors, and *AHM* Facebook Page visitors (“friend to friend”) about exclusive *AHM* Facebook Page content and features, and the convenience of staying in touch with family, friends, and “all things Arizona.”

Recommendation B

Develop content and features that appeal to the environmental and conservation interests of visitors and potential visitors, as expressed in quantitative survey participant responses to questions about reasons for visiting the *AHM* Facebook Page and additional features and content that they would like to see included on the Page. Examples of topics and areas of focus include:

- Community action campaigns (similar to *Save Our Parks*).
- Ecotourism or other conservation-related efforts.
- Links to agencies or organizations whose mission is environmental stewardship.
- Volunteer opportunities, such as bulletin board postings from *AHM* partners and stakeholders.
- Community profiles of *AHM* Facebook Page users making a difference in wildlife conservation, etc.

- ▶ *Encourage visitation to and sustained interest in the AHM Facebook Page by enriching the overall AHM consumer experience.*

Recommendation C

Leverage the credibility of and respect for *Arizona Highways* magazine and the *AHM* website to drive traffic to the *AHM* Facebook Page for exclusive Page content and interaction with fellow fans around the world.

Recommendation D

Develop promotions that encourage *AHM* Facebook Page viewing, return visits, and “likes.” This could include contests that allow multiple entries, but only one per day.

Recommendation E

Present content that is perceived by *AHM* Facebook Page users as fresh and relevant by going to the source and inviting their input, such as:

- Suggestions for topic-starter ideas and content to feature on the Page.
- *Caption This and Title This* submissions of clever captions or creative titles for a photograph, a proven technique for increasing the overall interaction rate among Facebook Page users.

- Posts that include user feedback on their travel experiences when visiting specific destinations.
- Responses to questions regarding upcoming weekend plans and travel or exploration plans (e.g., places to go, things to do, local fare).

Recommendation F

Develop *AHM* Facebook Page-only content and promote it on the *AHM* website. This could include content that did not make it into the magazine and “at your fingertips” travel information and tips that relate to destinations featured on the *AHM* Facebook Page and/or the *AHM* website and/or in *Arizona Highways* magazine (e.g., maps, sample itineraries).

Recommendation G

Retain the integrity of the *AHM* brand and its trademark world-acclaimed photography by providing *AHM* Facebook Page users more photography-related content. This could include information regarding:

- Behind-the-scenes looks at “How did they do that?”
- Photography workshops.
- Tips and hints from the professionals.
- Background information and/or history about the location or setting for *AHM*’s most beloved photos.

Recommendation H

Feature *AHM* Facebook Page content that is people-centered—interesting tidbits of information about photographers, Arizona historical figures, native peoples and their cultures, artists and craftspeople, collectors, and local individuals who lend distinct character to Arizona destinations.

Recommendation I

Develop ways to address the desire among *AHM* Facebook Page users who are amateur photographers to post their photos. This could include a gallery of amateur photos or a series of “special edition” Pages, such as “Celebrate the Four Seasons—the Arizona Landscape through the Eyes of *AHM* Facebook Page Users” or a Timeline project featuring user-submitted photographs.

Recommendation J

Encourage an active and interactive community of *AHM* Facebook Page users by incorporating popular features and types of content seen on successful Facebook Pages for other organizations that feature Arizona travel, such as the REI Facebook Page and the Outdoor Photographers Page. Correspondingly, elements of the *AHM* Facebook Page can be given less prominence if they are less popular with users or do not encourage interaction. An example of the latter is the current inclusion of Newsletter and Notes as two sections or topics in the *AHM* Facebook Page banner area. These could be replaced or rotated with other topics that support the determined criteria for judging an effective *AHM* Facebook Page—specifically, content that promotes travel, funnels users to the *AHM* website, and provides an opportunity to subscribe to the magazine and purchase ancillary products.

- ▶ *Invite sharing and participation in the AHM Facebook Page community by giving incentives for and rewarding sharing behaviors.*

Recommendation K

Develop *AHM* Facebook Page content specifically designed, designated, and approved for sharing. This content might include: (1) public domain articles or posts; and (2) downloadable *AHM* photos, with an embedded photographer credit, that could be used as a banner on an individual's Page or as a screensaver on a computer or mobile device, etc. The analysis of *AHM* posts shows that the ability to create and curate photos is seen as a key feature and benefit of the *AHM* Facebook Page. However, the focus group discussions also indicated that users are somewhat confused about whether *AHM* photos can be shared without violating copyright protection.

Recommendation L

Provide a downloadable, shareable calendar of upcoming featured content (e.g., monthly calendar of Friday Foto topics) to inform and build anticipation among *AHM* Facebook Page users and the friends they share it with.

- ▶ *Target the younger demographic (ages 18–34) with appropriate content.*

Recommendation M

Develop content specifically geared to the interests of young adults, young families, and parents and grandparents who want to be “in the know” regarding the diversity of activities, sightseeing treasures, and travel planning options likely to appeal to this age group. In addition to providing generation-specific content (e.g., Xtreme sports and activities), present content in an edgy and fresh way that provokes interest.

Recommendation N

Develop content that is attuned to the needs of the 18–34 demographic. This includes: (a) affordable travel options; (b) more links to sites offering discounts and special promotion travel packages; (c) sample itineraries; (d) family-friendly and themed travel options for short trips and vacations; and (e) sharing opportunities that invite comments and posts from *AHM* Facebook Page users about their “best ever” experiences or helpful hints related to visiting specific destinations.

- ▶ *Expand the use of technology and social media outlets.*

Recommendation O

Expand partnering with other social media outlets and channels. This includes use of Instagram, links to apps that enhance presentation of *AHM* Facebook Page content, and links to sites such as Couchsurfing.org.

Recommendation P

Improve Internet search capabilities so that *AHM* Facebook Page comes to the top of search lists, and address user concerns regarding *AHM* Facebook Page newsfeeds getting “lost” or not appearing in their list.

FOCUS 2: SUPPORTING INCREASED *AHM* SALES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Recommendation Q

Prominently display the subscription option on the *AHM* Facebook Page and the *AHM* website.

Recommendation R

Develop innovative ways to promote *AHM* subscriptions, such as use of the Facebook “Give a Gift” feature, trial digital and/or print subscriptions, and discounted promotional offers for *AHM* Facebook Page users.

Additional ideas include:

- Discounts and giveaways available only to fans/friends of the *AHM* Facebook Page who subscribe or renew.
- Contests for discount subscriptions or renewals.
- Referral program (discount to individuals referring one or more friends who subscribe).
- Offers of small gift with purchase.

Recommendation S

To the extent possible, internally track the subscription activity of *AHM* Facebook Page users who indicated that their familiarity with, use of, and/or visits to the *AHM* website and/or Facebook Page were likely to influence their decision to purchase and/or renew a subscription to *AHM*.

Recommendation T

Make it easy for consumers to purchase or renew a subscription to *AHM*. Ensure that the order entry, fulfillment, and customer assistance processes support *AHM*'s commitment to quality customer service.

Recommendation U

Investigate opportunities to improve or enhance the overall *AHM* consumer experience, such as developing features and functionality of the *AHM* website that will provide a more intuitive and user-friendly experience (e.g., navigation, search capability). The look and feel of similarly focused websites, as well as the manner in which they present content, should be examined, and best practices should be modeled on the *AHM* website and Facebook Page.

FOCUS 3: ENCOURAGING A POSITIVE *AHM* INFLUENCE AND IMPACT ON TOURISM

Recommendation V

Leverage the *AHM* suite of products and services to provide *AHM* Facebook Page users with a directory of *AHM* travel-related information that cross-promotes content on the Facebook Page, the website, and upcoming editions of the magazine available via subscription, as well as *AHM* books and retail merchandise available in the online store.

Recommendation W

Inspire and motivate consumers to take a vacation or major trip lasting at least five days to an Arizona destination by using the *AHM* Facebook Page featured photo as a “tease” to cross-promote links to sample itineraries, maps, lists of a week’s worth of activities, and subscription to the magazine.

Recommendation X

Promote serious consideration of Arizona as a travel destination by incorporating or expanding *AHM* Facebook Page features such as:

- Weekly spotlight—hike, restaurant, new destination with fun facts, photos, maps, visitor info.
- Weather—seasonal (e.g., northern Arizona getaways in summer)
- Develop a Groupon-style promotion for the places featured during a specific period.

Recommendation Y

Utilize the data from the *AHM* Facebook Page survey to determine the extent that respondent-reported predisposition to Arizona travel—attributed to the influence of the *AHM* Facebook Page—is manifested in actual reported travel or travel planning behaviors during 12 successive months (June 2013 through December 2014). This would entail a follow-up survey of the same survey respondents.

Recommendation Z

Conduct a series of online or in-person discussion groups on a regular schedule (e.g., quarterly or biannually) with *AHM* Facebook Page users (*Arizona Highways* subscribers and non-subscribers) to learn more about: (a) the competitive landscape; (b) the alignment between

AHM Facebook Page content and consumer needs and expectations regarding decision-driving travel-related information; and (c) how *AHM* can effectively harness and leverage the power of its online presence (*AHM* website and Facebook Page, and other media channels or services such as Twitter and partnership links or endorsements to other sites) to tailor its integrated strategic marketing plan, build brand loyalty, and ensure that it is coordinating with evolving technologies.

Of the 26 recommendations contained in the report, the *Arizona Highways* team identified the following 10 as the highest priority for implementation:

1. Develop innovative ways to promote *AHM* subscriptions, such as use of the Facebook “Give a Gift” feature, trial digital and/or print subscriptions, and discount offers for *AHM* Facebook Page users.
2. Review *AHM*’s order entry, fulfillment, and customer assistance processes and modify as needed to better facilitate subscription purchase and renewal.
3. To the extent possible, track the subscription activity of *AHM* Facebook Page users who indicated that their familiarity with and use of the *AHM* website and/or Facebook Page would likely influence their decision to purchase and/or renew a subscription to *AHM*.
4. Review similarly focused websites and model best practices in features and functionality on the *AHM* website and Facebook Page.
5. Highlight a specific Arizona location on the *AHM* Facebook Page, using maps, restaurant and lodging suggestions, discount offers, and other features.
6. Prominently display the *AHM* subscription option on the *AHM* website and the Facebook Page.
7. Use the *AHM* Facebook Page–featured photo and related links as a “tease” to motivate consumers to take a vacation or major trip to an Arizona destination.
8. Utilize the survey data to determine any correspondence between respondents’ stated likelihood of Arizona travel during the next 12 months and actual reported travel or travel planning behaviors during that period. This would entail a follow-up survey of the same survey respondents.
9. Incorporate into the *AHM* Facebook Page popular content and features used on Facebook Pages for other organizations featuring Arizona travel.
10. Develop *AHM* Facebook Page–only content and promote it on the *AHM* website.

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