

VISIT BELOIT

Brand Perception Research

Prepared for Visit Beloit
October 2024

THE CLOSEST TO THE CUSTOMER WINS.



Project Overview

Purpose. To assess the awareness and perception of Beloit, WI as a travel destination, as well as its brand health relative to regional competitors. We explored 5 key aspects: brand awareness, brand equity, brand loyalty, brand personality and visitor/non-visitor profiling.

Target Audience. This research was conducted among travelers living within 250 miles of Beloit, WI and includes both visitors and non-visitors.

Sample. A total of 972 respondents were interviewed for this study. This included 372 from a house list and 600 from a professionally managed panel. This sample size provides for a maximum margin of error of +/-3.1% at a 95% confidence level. H2R Market Research conducted this research using an online survey. The professionally managed online market research panel was screened for travelers and decision makers.

Key Takeaways

- **Brand Awareness.** Beloit has high brand awareness (74%), high recent visitation (7%), and is poised for continued growth as more people are willing to visit the area. Market potential for the area has grown by 4 points since 2018, and traveler conversion and retention rates are high at 18% and 31%, respectively.
- **Brand Equity.** The area's brand equity has reached levels higher than before the pandemic. Traveler opinions of Beloit are in line with its history and nearly one in three (30%) intend to visit in the next 12 months. People are talking about Beloit, recommending it to others, and choosing it over other destinations.
- **Brand Personality.** Beloit is recognized for delivering on essential travel benefits - affordable, easy to get around, great restaurants, clean and safe. Travelers perceive Beloit to be a nice town that's close to home, with an enjoyable downtown area worth spending quality time in.
- **Visitor Profile.** Most travelers to Beloit are visiting 3+ times per year (58%) for short recreational day/overnight trips and family visits. And while visitors find that Beloit has many strengths, they are looking for more unique experiences. As one of the area's top selling propositions, downtown Beloit may be a way to capitalize on this desire.
- **Non-Visitor Profile.** Lack of awareness/familiarity with Beloit is the main obstacle preventing more travelers from visiting. Non-visitors say they would be more likely to consider Beloit if they were made aware of a special event or an interesting attraction, especially if paired with deals and promotions. As Beloit continues to have high awareness, promoting special events would likely help convert awareness into visitation.

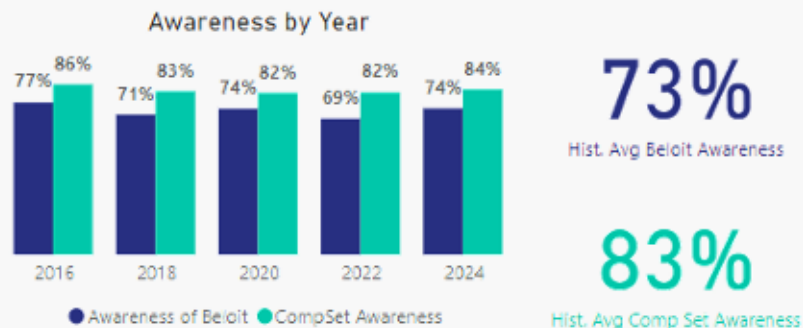
Brand awareness of Beloit improves

Most travelers within a 250-mile radius (74%) are aware of Beloit.

This is just above Beloit's historical average awareness of 73% but well below the 2024 competitive set awareness of 84%.

Strategic Implication:

Beloit continues to have consistently high awareness year over year which makes it a likely 2025 travel destination. Yet, the competitive set is strong; therefore, it's important to find the elements that make Beloit stand out from the competition to get visitors to come to Beloit instead of other destinations. As economic conditions tighten, it is critical Beloit is top of mind of places to visit so it doesn't get left out of the mix.



*Historical average – data combined from 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 studies.

BRAND AWARENESS

Visitation falls shy of nearby competitors

7% of nearby travelers have visited Beloit within the past 24 months.

Recent visitation for 2024 was on par with the historical average Beloit visitation of 8% but fell below the historical average competitive set visitation of 13%.

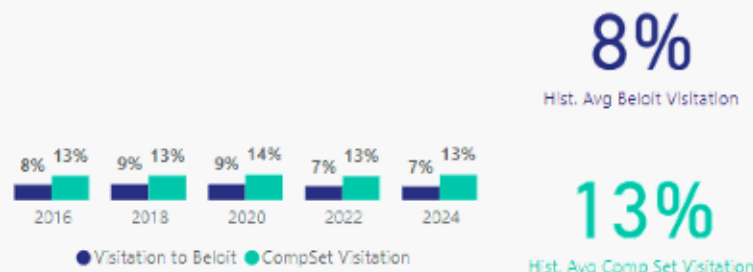
Strategic Implication:

Travelers continue to choose other regional destinations over Beloit. Some of this is simply because of higher awareness but it's also key for Beloit to differentiate offerings from nearby competitive destinations to help attract additional visitors. These differentiators need to be front and center in all advertising to make Beloit the easy decision for travelers.

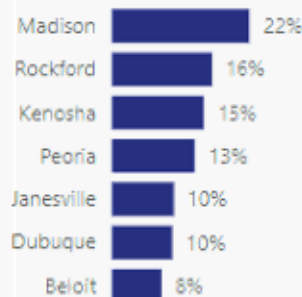
BRAND AWARENESS

Q9: Please indicate your awareness and prior visitation of the following areas *for leisure purposes*. (5-pt. scale)

Visitation by Year



Visitation to Destinations*



*Historical average – data combined from 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 studies.

RESPONDENT BASE:
ALL PANEL RESPONDENTS | N=600 PER YEAR



Beloit is poised for growth in the market

Beloit's market potential has grown from 2018 and is just above both 2020 and 2022 and its own historical average.

Beloit's 2024 Conversion rate is 18% - on par with 2016 but down 2% from its historical average.

Beloit's 2024 Retention rate is 31% - down 1% vs. 2016 and 2% vs. its historical average.

Strategic Implication:

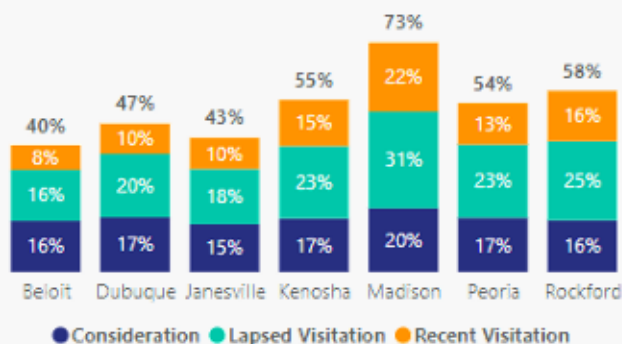
Beloit is well-positioned to capture leisure travelers and market share as close, weekend getaways continue to grow in popularity.

While travelers are willing to travel farther from home for larger vacations, the average traveler is enjoying multiple, smaller getaways throughout the year. This puts Beloit in a good position.

Market Potential by Year



Market Potential*



*Historical average – data combined from 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 studies.

BRAND AWARENESS

Q9: Please indicate your awareness and prior visitation of the following areas *for leisure purposes*. (5-pt. scale)

RESPONDENT BASE:
ALL PANEL RESPONDENTS | N=600 PER YEAR



Traveler opinions of Beloit align with historical average

36% of travelers have a positive opinion of Beloit.

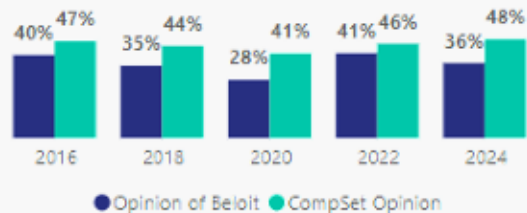
Positive opinions of Beloit declined notably from 2022. However, at 36%, this is on par with Beloit's historical average.

As has been a trend in the past, this is well below the historical competitive set average of 45%.

Strategic Implication:

Continue to highlight and reinforce all the wonderful benefits Beloit has to offer to travelers. While opinions of Beloit are in line with its historical average, they are still lower than the comp set. Encouraging visitors to post/talk about the area helps increase opinion of destinations – often as well as direct marketing.

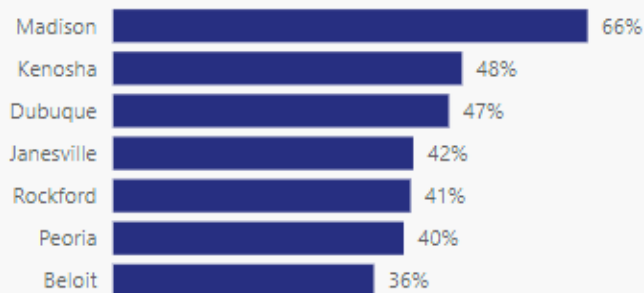
Positive Opinion by Year



36%
Hist. Avg Beloit Opinion

45%
Hist. Avg Comp Set Opinion

%Somewhat/Very Positive Opinion of Destinations*



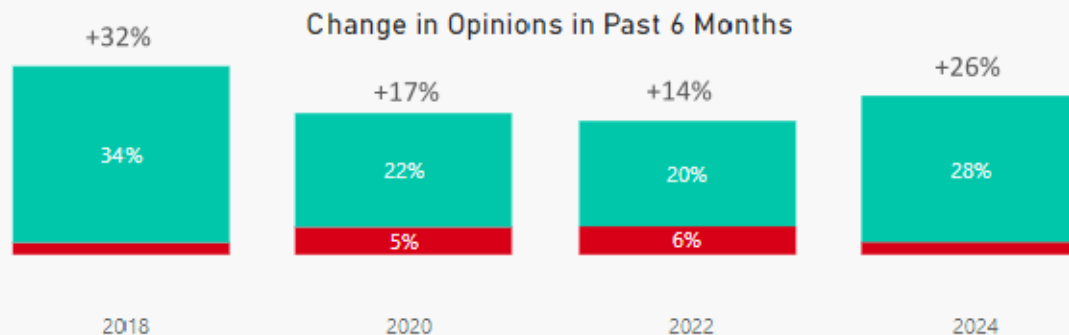
*Historical average – data combined from 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 studies.

BRAND EQUITY



Beloit maintains a positive brand perception

Overall opinions of Beloit as a brand continue to be lower than pre-pandemic times. However, Beloit earned its highest score since 2018 (+26%).



Strategic Implication:

Beloit's brand perception is at a post-pandemic high. What travelers are hearing about Beloit is positively changing their opinion of the area. They need to hear even more and be given a specific reason to visit.

BRAND LOYALTY

Intent to visit Beloit increases

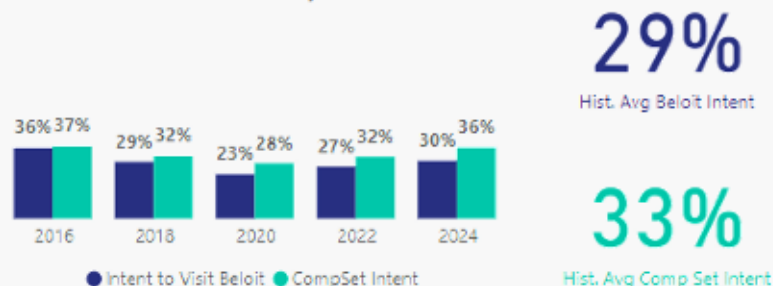
Nearly one in three (30%) intend to travel to Beloit within the next 12 months. This is the highest intent has been since 2016, sitting just above its historical average.

Intent to travel to Beloit falls below the historical competitive set average intent of 33%.

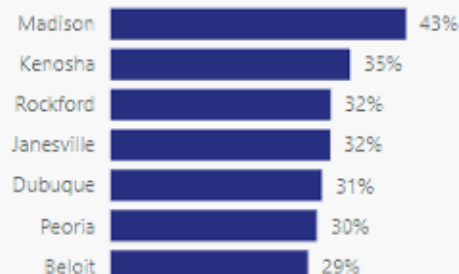
Strategic Implication:

Travelers are continuing to choose Beloit yet are more likely to visit competitors. Keep marketing efforts strong to show the characteristics that distinguish Beloit from others. And ensure that visitors have an amazing experience and all front-line employees they experience invite them to come back again. Repeat visits are key.

Intent to Visit by Year



%Probably/Definitely Will Visit in Next 12 Months*



*Historical average – data combined from 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 studies.

BRAND EQUITY

Q11: Please indicate how likely you are to visit each of the following destinations in the next 12 months. (5-pt. scale)

RESPONDENT BASE:
FAMILIAR PANEL RESPONDENTS | N=VARIES BY DESTINATION, BY YEAR



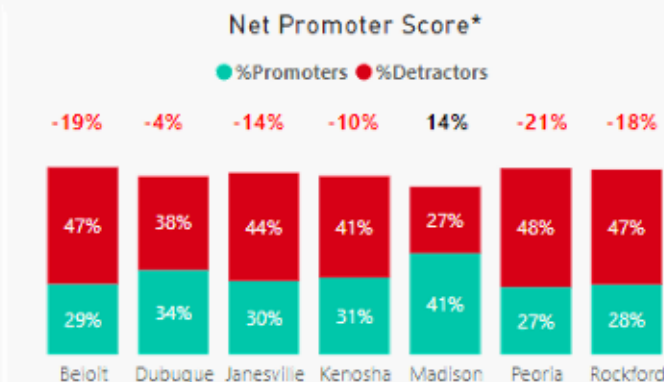
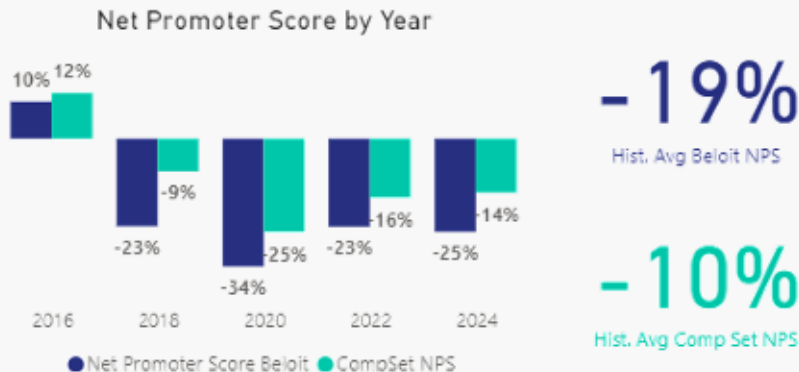
Beloit takes a hit to its Net Promoter Score

Despite a notable improvement in 2022, Beloit experienced a decline in 2024.

Beloit has an NPS of nearly -19% historically, falling behind other destinations in the competitive set. However, all those in the competitive set struggle with the percentage of detractors.

Strategic Implication:

It's hard for destinations to increase their Net Promoter Score. The key is finding ways for travelers to share their positive stories regarding the area.



*Historical average – data combined from 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 studies.

BRAND EQUITY

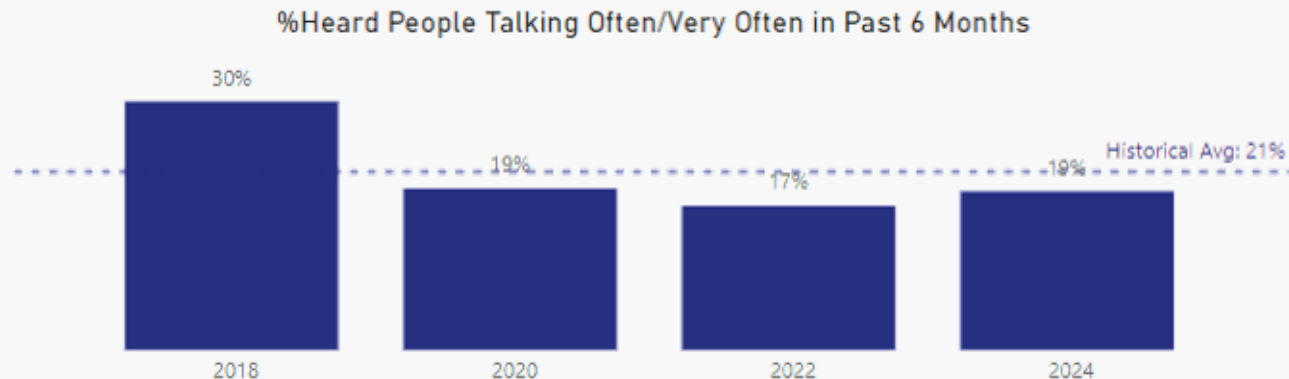
Q14: How likely would you be to recommend visiting each of the following destinations to your friends and family?:
How has your perception of Beloit changed in the past 6 months? (11-pt. scale)

RESPONDENT BASE:
VISITOR PANEL RESPONDENTS | N=VARIES BY DESTINATION, BY YEAR



Beloit is generating buzz among travelers

Roughly one in five travelers (19%) have heard people talking often about Beloit in the past 6 months.



Strategic Implication:

Word of mouth plays an important role in keeping Beloit top of mind among travelers. People are talking to others frequently and positively about Beloit. Reviews are becoming even more important when travelers are making decisions about which destinations to visit.

BRAND LOYALTY

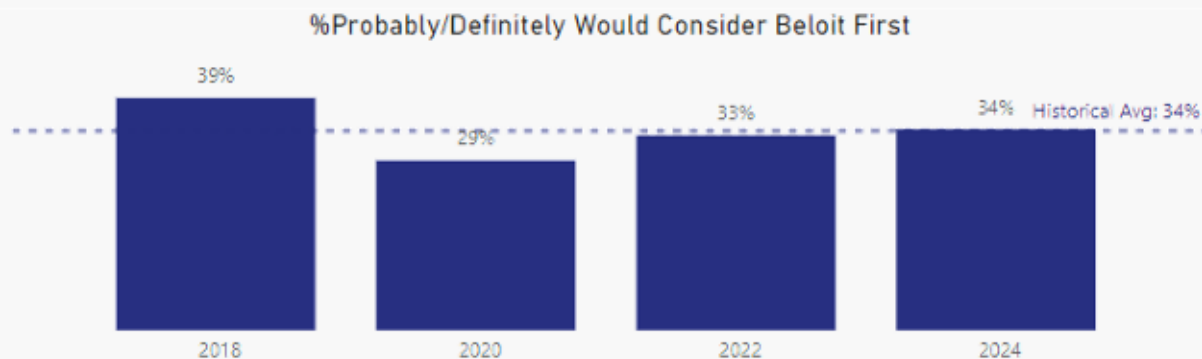
Q17: In the past 6 months, how often have you heard people talking about Beloit?

RESPONDENT BASE:
PANEL RESPONDENTS FAMILIAR WITH БЕЛОИТ | N=VARIES BY YEAR



Travelers are considering Beloit above other destinations

34% of travelers say they will consider Beloit first, when choosing a travel destination. This is an increase from last year and on par with the historical average.



Strategic Implication:

Travelers are continuing to consider Beloit first year after year. Continuing to differentiate Beloit vs. competitive destinations and reinforcing its unique offerings will help solidify the decision to visit.

BRAND LOYALTY

Brand Map: Beloit delivers on travelers most important needs

Beloit is recognized for delivering essential travel benefits - being affordable, easy to get around, having unique local restaurants, having a variety of clean hotels, and being safe.

Secondary strengths include being accessible and having outdoor recreation activities.

Strategic Implication:

Beloit consistently delivers the aspects of travel that are most important but could benefit by highlighting rare experiences that travelers can't get on an everyday basis. These experiences unique to Beloit are good ways to encourage visitation.

Brand Personality Assessment



BRAND PERSONALITY

Q6: Please indicate how important you find each of the following attributes or characteristics when thinking about destinations you'd like to visit. (5-pt. scale)

Q20: Please rate how well you believe the following attributes describe Beloit. (5-pt. scale)

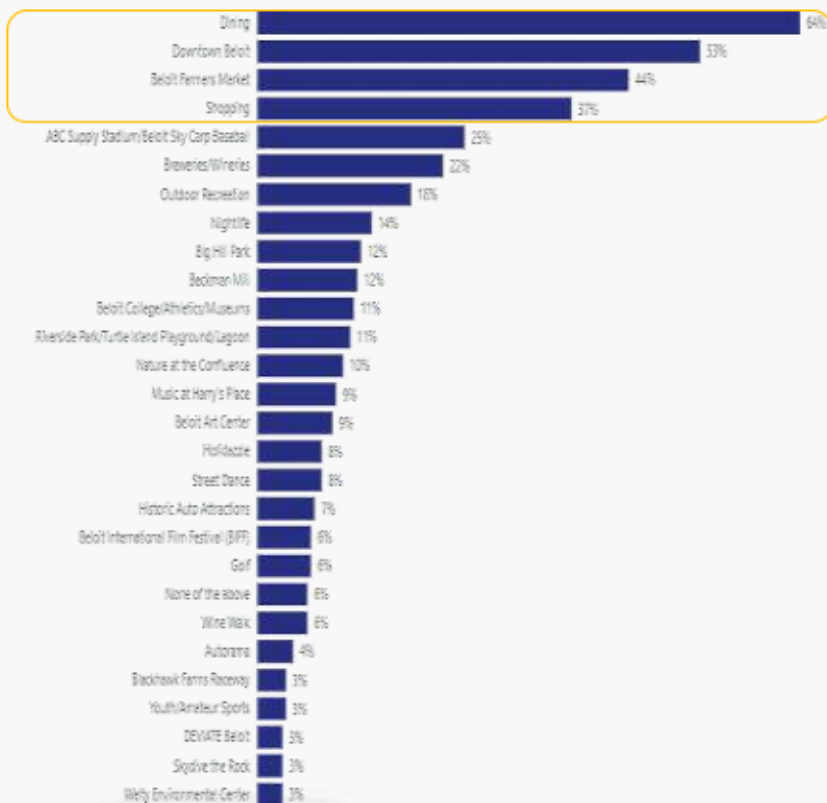
Beloit's unique selling proposition

By correlating visitors' reactions to each of Beloit's brand attributes with their corresponding level of intent to visit one can determine the attributes that stand out among those who are most likely to visit again in the future.

This exercise reveals that candidates for Unique Selling Proposition include "Dining," "Downtown Beloit," "Beloit Farmers Market" and "Shopping."

Other choice drivers that compel many to return to Beloit also include "ABC Supply Stadium/Beloit Sky Carp Baseball," "Breweries/Wineries" and "Outdoor Recreation."

Activity Participation



VISITOR PROFILE

Q28: Which of the following activities did you participate in on your most recent visit to the Beloit, WI area? Please select all that apply.

RESPONDENT BASE:
VISITED BELOIT IN THE PAST 24 MONTHS | N=236



What makes Beloit special and unique

Travelers perceive Beloit as a place that is close to home, with great restaurants.

They also appreciate the parks and river nearby, along with the variety of things to do and nice downtown.

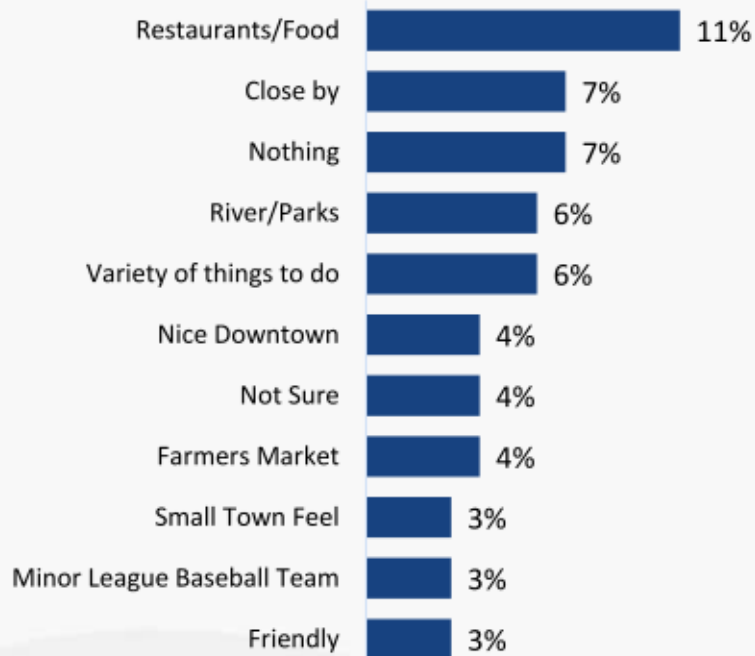
Strategic Implication:

Visitors are utilizing dining establishments and mentioning the dining offerings as a top distinguishing factor. Capitalize on all that Beloit's food scene has to offer by highlighting it in marketing efforts. Food continues to motivate travel and in particular items/restaurants that are unique and can be shared on social media.

BRAND PERSONALITY

Q19: What differentiates or makes Beloit stand out from other leisure destinations you are familiar with or have visited?

What Differentiates Beloit From Other Destinations (Open-ended responses)



RESPONDENT BASE:
FAMILIAR WITH БЕЛОИТ | N=808



Beloit is attracting recent and repeat visitors

81% of travelers visited Beloit earlier this year.

Most travelers to Beloit (58%) are visiting more than 3 times per year, making frequent repeat visits extremely common.

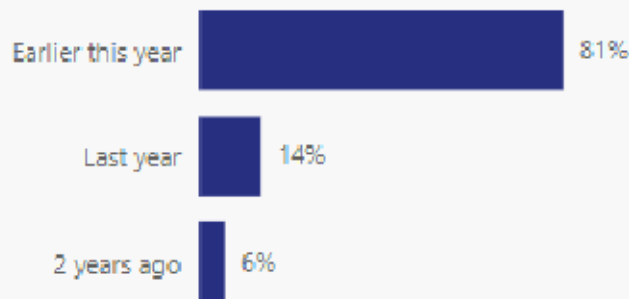
Strategic Implication:

Since most visitors come to Beloit multiple times per year and are familiar with the area, they may be interested in learning about local happenings/events throughout the year. Targeting frequent travelers through specific marketing could help encourage them to share their experiences with others and promote the area.

VISITOR PROFILE

Q21: How often do you typically visit the Beloit, WI area?
Q22: When was your most recent visit to the Beloit, WI area?

Most Recent Visit



Frequency of Visitation



RESPONDENT BASE:
VISITED BELOIT IN THE PAST 24 MONTHS | N=236



Beloit is a convenient destination

Visits to Beloit are commonly short and day trips are frequent. The average stay is 1.2 nights, and travelers are repeat visitors.

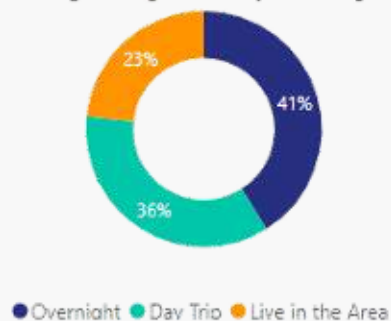
Travelers have practical reasons for choosing Beloit, such as visiting friends and family and visiting for recreational day or overnight trips.

90% are living nearby, within 100 miles of Beloit.

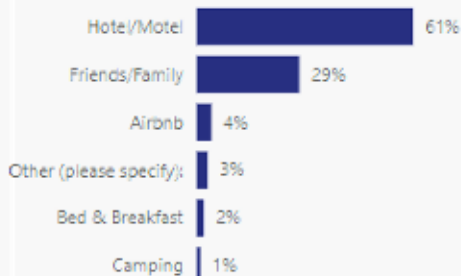
Strategic Implication:

Consider the needs of frequent repeat travelers and family visitors. It's important to highlight unique things to do to those who are already familiar with the main attractions. However, encouraging longer overnight stays would be key. Promote reasons that visitors need to stay 2 nights to enjoy an entire weekend.

Average Length of Stay 1.22 Nights



Accommodations



Primary Purpose of Trip



VISITOR PROFILE

Q24: What was the primary purpose of your trip to the Beloit, WI area on your most recent visit?

Q26: How many nights, if any, did you spend in the Beloit, WI area on this visit?

Q27: Which of the following best describes the accommodations you used for this visit?

RESPONDENT BASE:
VISITED BELOIT IN THE PAST 24 MONTHS | N=236
SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE AREA | N=97



Beloit visitor profile

2024 Beloit travelers skew older and are more likely to be adults traveling without children.

	2016	2018	2020	2022	2024
18-34 years	24%	14%	52%	11%	10%
35-54 years	36%	40%	12%	32%	28%
55+ years	40%	46%	36%	57%	68%
% Adults Only	39%	59%	65%	63%	76%
% Families with Children	61%	41%	35%	37%	24%
HH Income < \$50k	20%	20%	14%	16%	22%
HH Income \$50k-\$149,999	63%	66%	67%	63%	61%
HH Income \$150,000 or More	17%	14%	19%	21%	17%

VISITOR PROFILE

Q36: What is your current age?

Q25: Including yourself, how many people in your travel party fell into the following age groups on your most recent visit to the Beloit, WI area?

Q39: Which of the following income ranges best approximates your annual household income?

RESPONDENT BASE:
VISITED BELOIT IN THE PAST 24 MONTHS | N=VARIES BY YEAR



Non-visitor awareness, recommendations of Beloit are low

For most non-visitors, a lack of recommendations from friends and family, not enough knowledge on the area and destinations they preferred to visit more were the main barriers to visiting Beloit.

Non-Visitor Barriers (Top 2 Box)



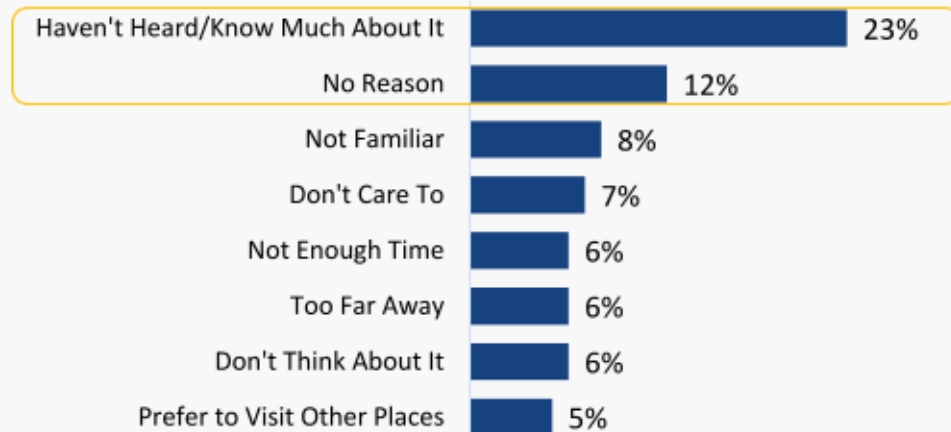
Strategic Implication:

Generate greater awareness of Beloit among non-visitors. Highlight events and attractions to help Beloit gain greater consideration over more familiar destinations and incentivize visitors to post their experiences on social media.

NON-VISITOR PROFILE

Reasons why non-visitors have never visited Beloit

Why Non-Visitors Have Never Visited Beloit
(Open-ended responses)



Strategic Implication:

Open-ended responses confirm that non-visitors either haven't heard much about Beloit or they haven't found a reason to visit. Continue to increase awareness of Beloit among non-visitors, especially by promoting exciting reasons to visit.

NON-VISITOR PROFILE

What would motivate/inspire non-visitors to visit Beloit

What do you think might motivate or inspire you to visit Beloit?

(Sample of comments)

- "A unique festival, event or activity that is only available in Beloit."*
- "A virtual guide or tour providing more information about the destination."*
- "Hearing about something there that I would like to experience."*
- "I need more information about Beloit, WI area before I will do a leisure trip."*
- "Winning a free stay or winning something from a sweepstake or contest."*
- "To get a great deal for a hotel and attractions."*
- "A unique festival. Anything that is remarkable that other destinations don't have."*
- "It needs to have something new to draw me."*
- "A discount on hotel."*
- "Free offers. I need an incentive to drive that far."*

	Open ended responses	
	Non-Visitors	Lapsed Visitors
Special Events or Attractions	16%	23%
Deals / Promotions / A Free Stay	12%	13%
Need More Information	18%	6%

Strategic Implication:

Open-ended responses reveal that both non-visitors and lapsed visitors would be motivated to visit Beloit if there were special events and attractions or deals and promotions happening. Consider adding or highlighting special events that Beloit has to offer and rolling out promotions and special travel deals.

NON-VISITOR PROFILE

Q32: What do you think might motivate or inspire you to visit the Beloit, WI area in the future on a leisure trip?

Q35: What do you think might motivate or inspire you to visit the Beloit, WI area again in the future?

RESPONDENT BASE:
 БЕЛОIT NON-VISITORS | N=558
 БЕЛОIT LAPSED VISITORS | N=179

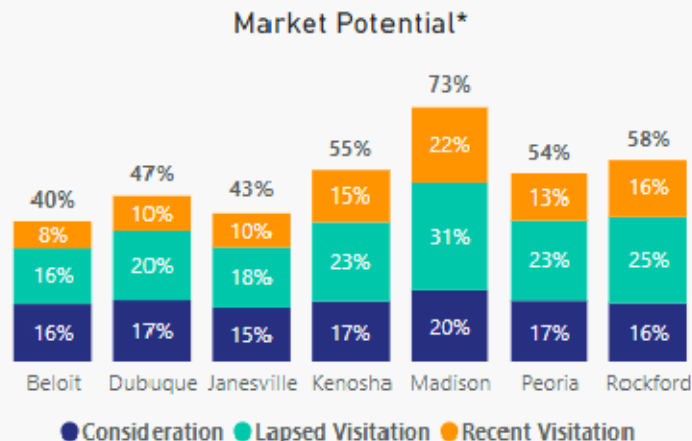


Opportunity to inspire lapsed visitors and considerers

Most of the Beloit's market potential consists of Lapsed Visitors and Considerers.

Strategic Implication:

Inspire lapsed visitors to return for a visit by adding or highlighting a special event that Beloit has to offer. Consider utilizing email lists to create a marketing campaign to do so.



*Historical average – data combined from 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 studies.

Research developed for VISIT BELOIT by H2R Market Research.

Our team loves the magic of data and research. We work until the voice of your customer is clear and you have the answers you need. If you have questions about this report, please let us know:

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THE CLOSEST TO THE CUSTOMER WINS.

