

# **The Changing World of Destination Market Research: Methods in Driving Traffic to an Online Survey**

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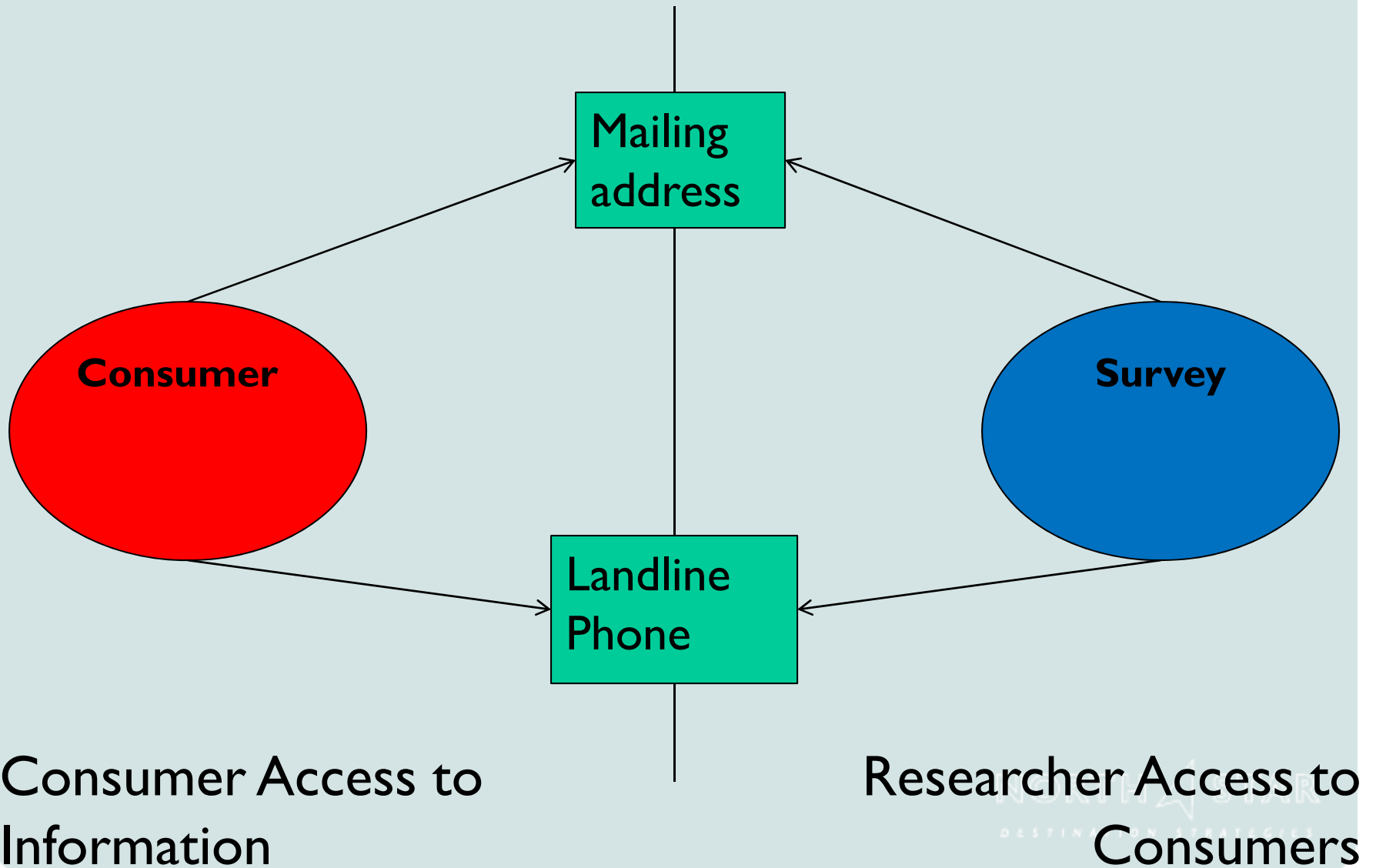
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# Today we're going to...

- Discuss changes in consumer behavior away from traditional resources and towards online resources
  - A consumer's informational resource is our access point
- Explore ways to find survey success using multi-modal online sampling methods
  - Diversity is the key
- See an example from an online visitor survey done for Tioga County, PA

# TRADITIONAL SURVEY METHODS



# Changes in Consumer Behavior

In the last 10 years:

- 25% of the US population has dropped their landline phone
- Nearly 90% of US consumers now use e-mail
- Nearly 80% of US consumers are now active on the internet
  - Even among those over age 62, nearly half are connected

# The Sampling Dilemma

- 1) Random sample = equal access to consumers
- 2) Consumer ways of accessing information have become fragmented
- 3) Consumer information resource = researcher access point
- 4) (Besides mail) there is no longer any one place where all consumers can equally be accessed.

# But...

- Mailing surveys is expensive and results in low response rates.
- Dillman Tailored Design Method:
  - Personalization
  - Pre-contact letters
  - Hardcopy surveys with SASEs
  - Follow-up postcards
  - Incentives

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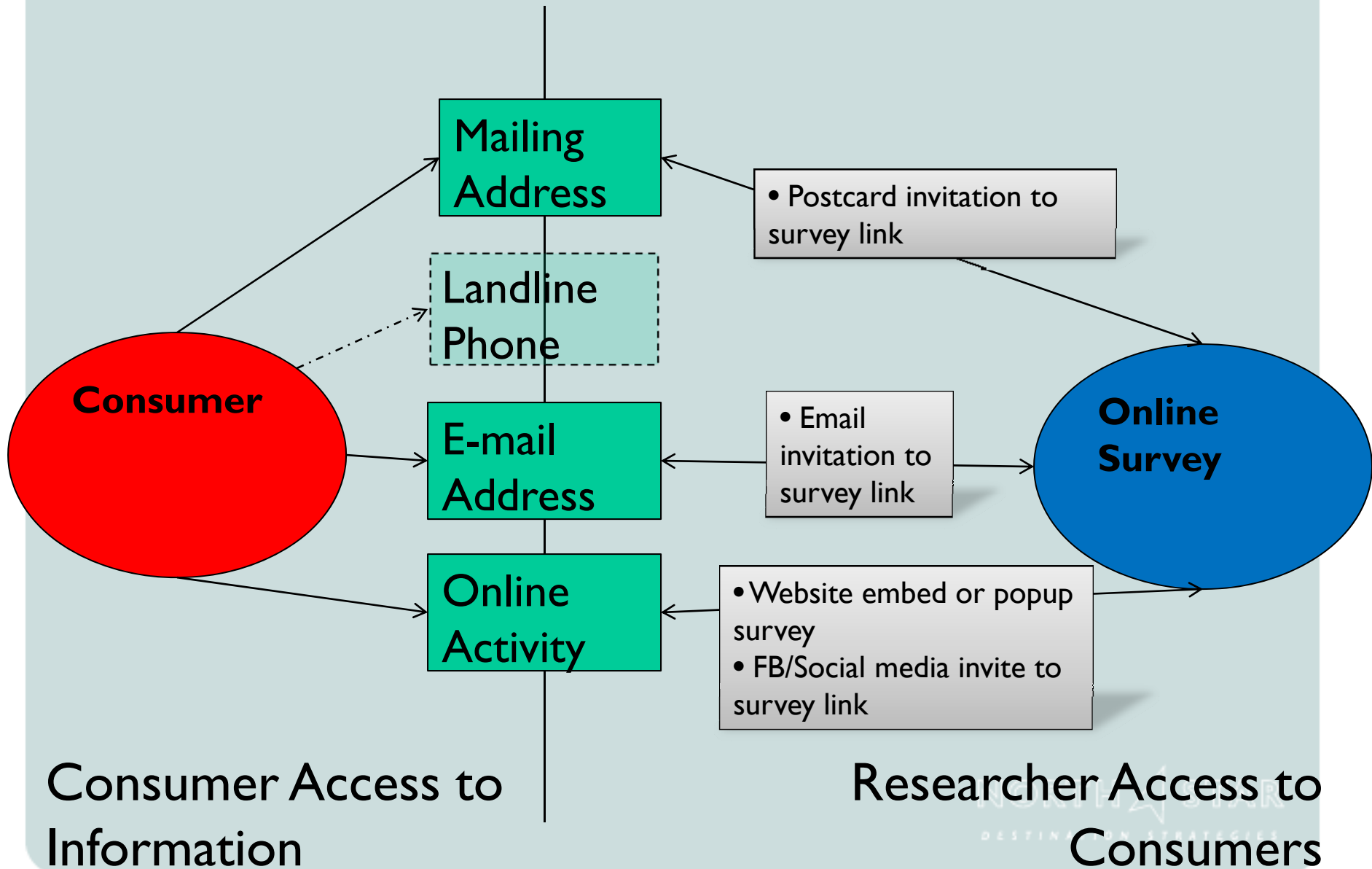
High cost in  
time and  
resources

**So what is the best solution?**

# Mixed Modal Online Sampling Approach

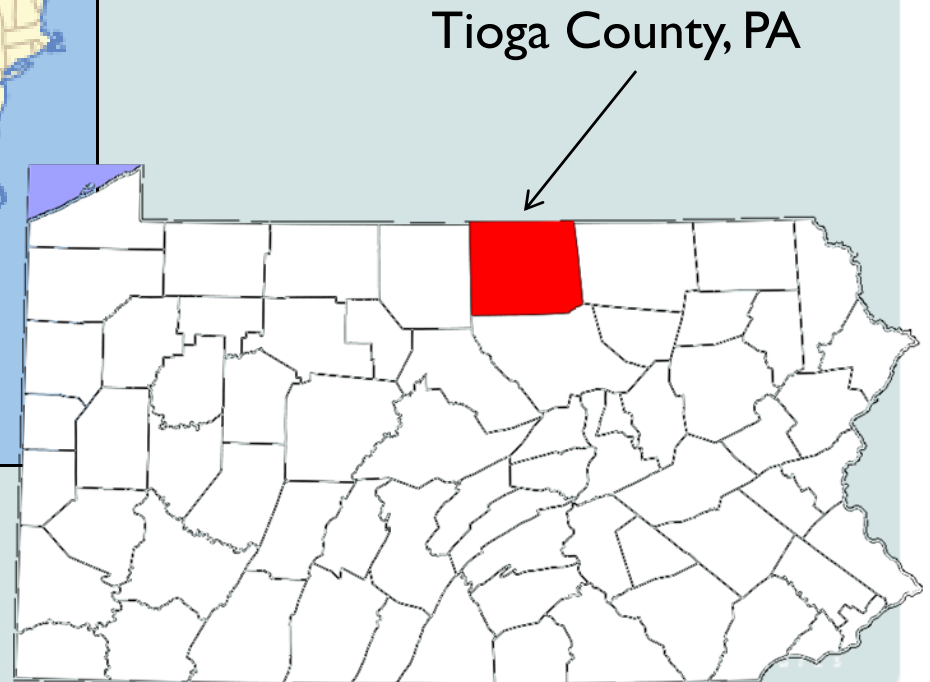
- Posting survey link in relevant online places
  - Facebook/social media
  - Visitors Bureau website
- Inviting respondents to an online survey link using their contact information
  - E-mailed invitations
  - Mailed postcard invitations
- Where possible, keep Dillman's personalization and incentive techniques

# ONLINE METHODS



# Case Study:

## Tioga County Visitors Bureau



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## Tioga County Visitors Bureau

- Tioga County is a small rural county in northern PA
  - Primary asset is “Pennsylvania’s Grand Canyon”
  - Strong destination for outdoor activity travelers



NO  
DEST



# Case Study:

## Tioga County Visitors Bureau

- **GOAL:** Quantify visitation patterns and measure the effectiveness of marketing efforts (i.e., a Visitation and ROI study).
- **RESOURCES:** Inquiry e-mail addresses, inquiry mailing addresses, Visitors Bureau website and Facebook page

# Methodology

## Sample:

- Invitation containing survey link was emailed to inquiry email records from the past 2 years (2,400)
- Postcard invitation containing survey link was mailed to inquiry mailing records from the past 2 years (3,700)
- Survey link was also posted on the Tioga County Visitors Bureau Facebook page (469 “likes”)
- A pop-up was placed on the website (over 1000 pageviews)
- Survey was open from February 17-March 3, 2011
  - 528 respondents

## Statistical Significance

- 95% Confidence Level
- +/- 4.26 Margin of Error



**Your feedback is important to Tioga County!**

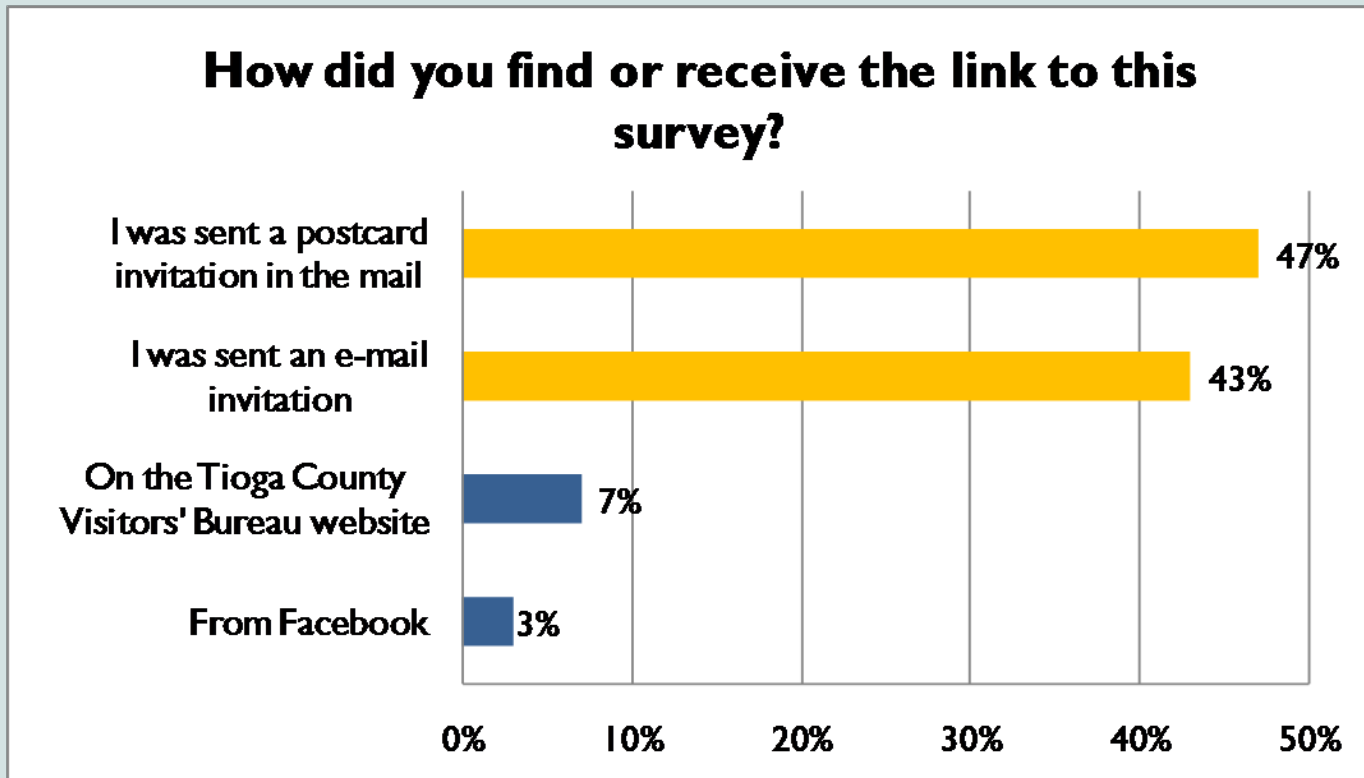
Tioga County, home of Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon and an outdoor enthusiasts' paradise, wants to hear from you! Your opinion is important, and the feedback you give here will be used to make Tioga County an even better destination.

In return for taking the short survey linked below, we'll enter you for a chance to win **\$100!** Your chance of winning a \$100 VISA Gift Card is 1 in 100.

Go online and type in this link to take the survey:  
<http://tinyurl.com/4qm6zkg>

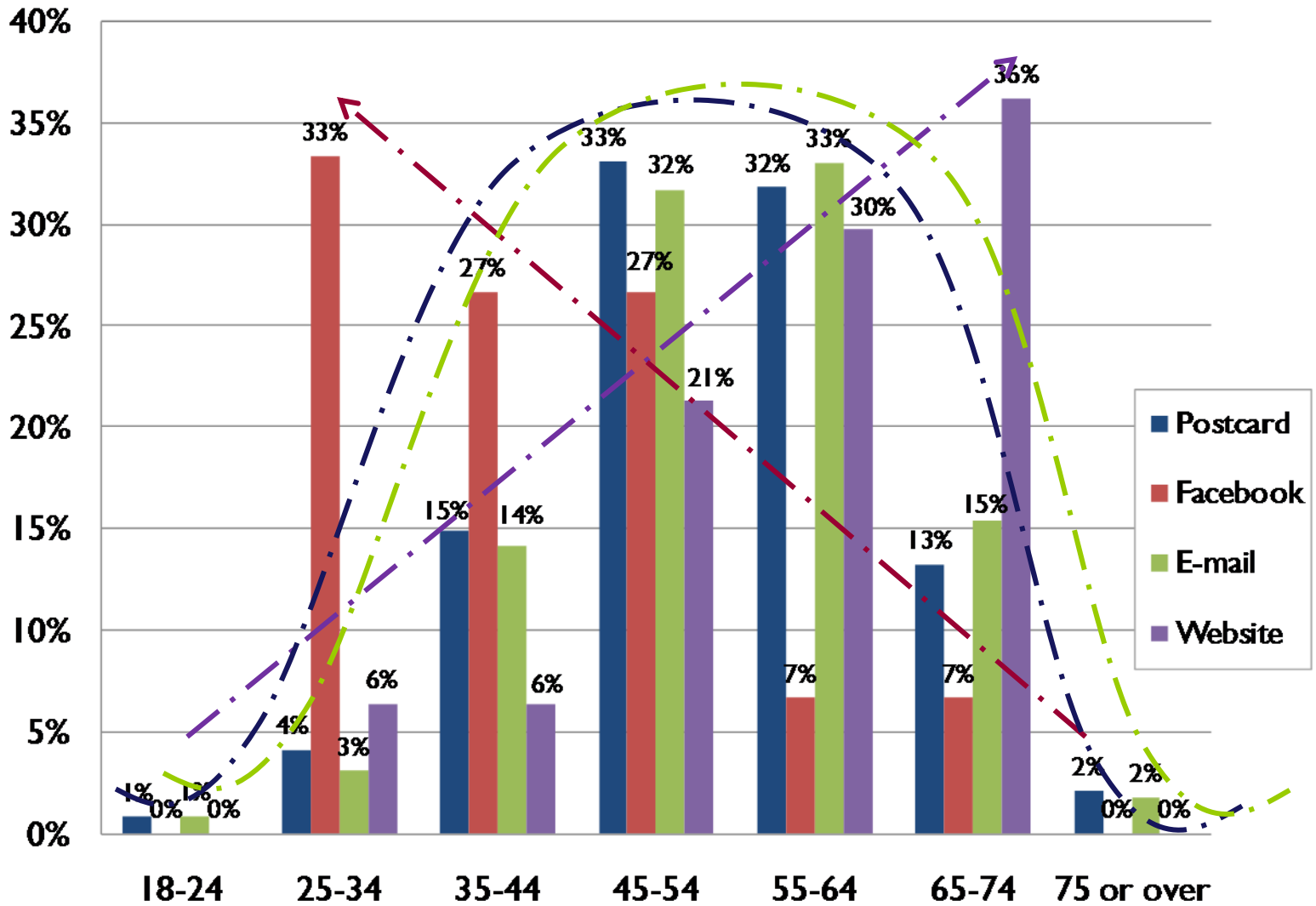
Thanks for your input and come see us soon!  
[visittiogapa.com](http://visittiogapa.com)

# Sampling Methods

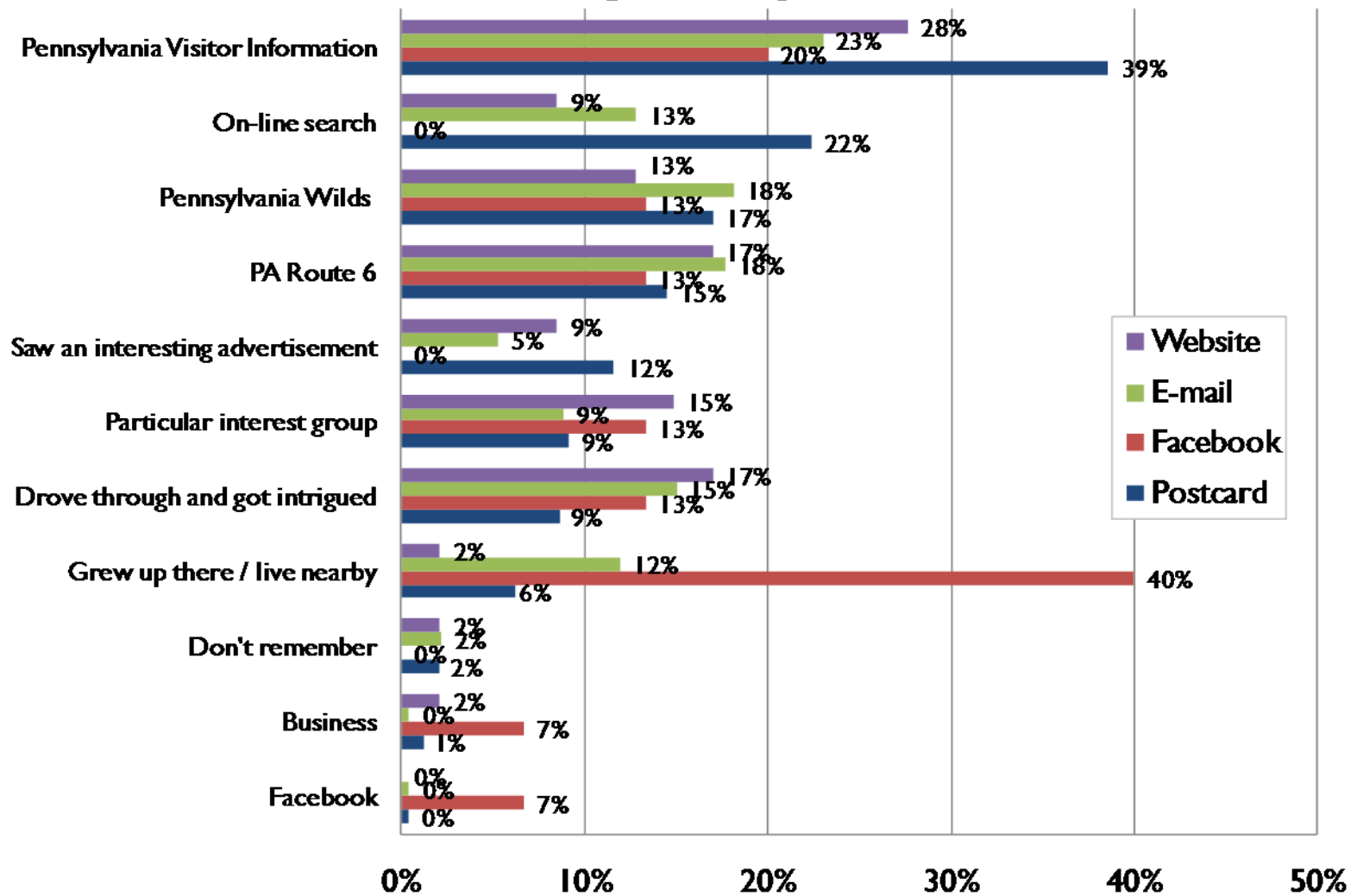


- Postcard response rate = 6.8%
- E-mail response rate = 6.2%
- Website response rate = 3.7%
- Facebook response rate = 3.4%

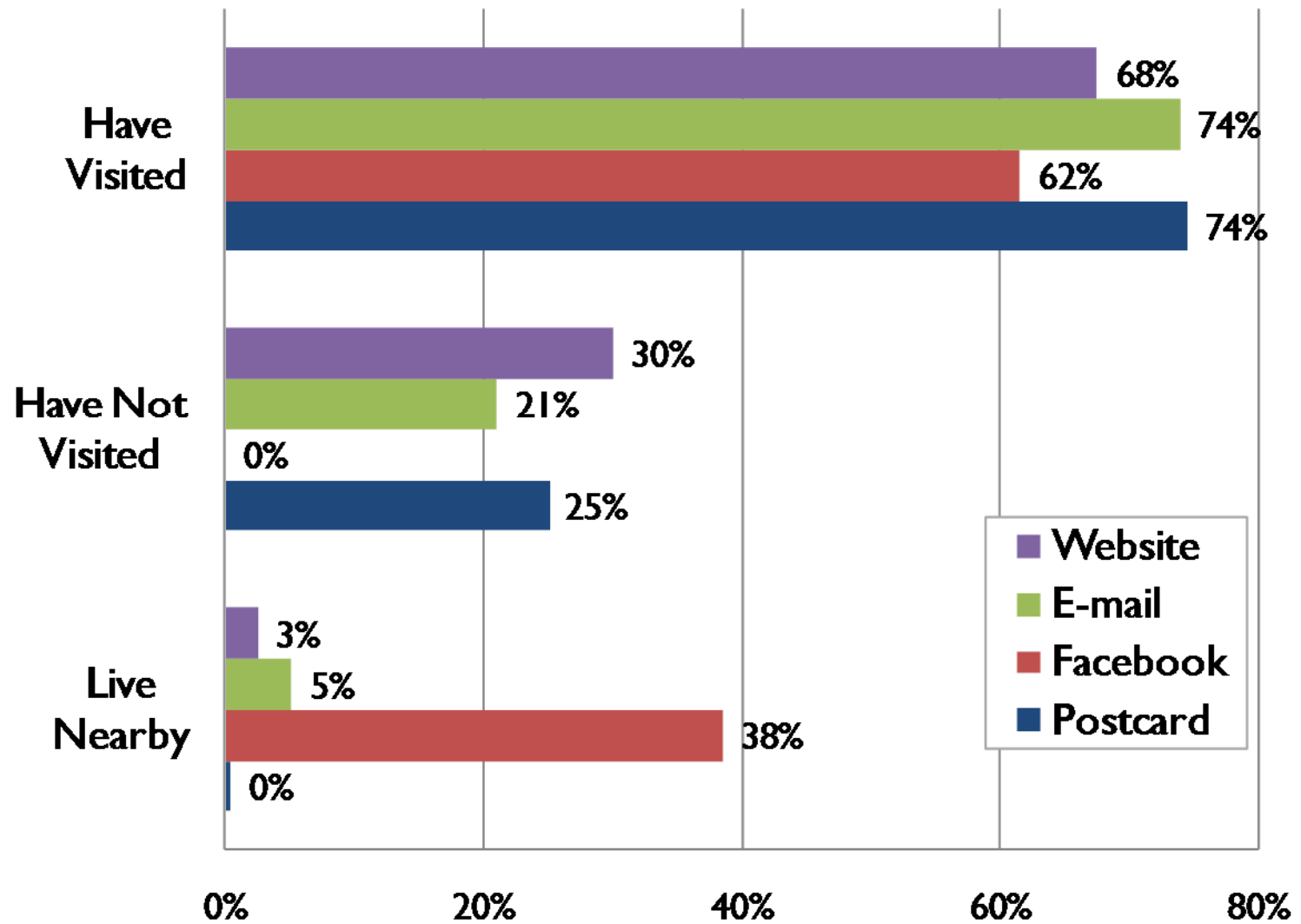
## Age Differences Among Survey Respondents by Source



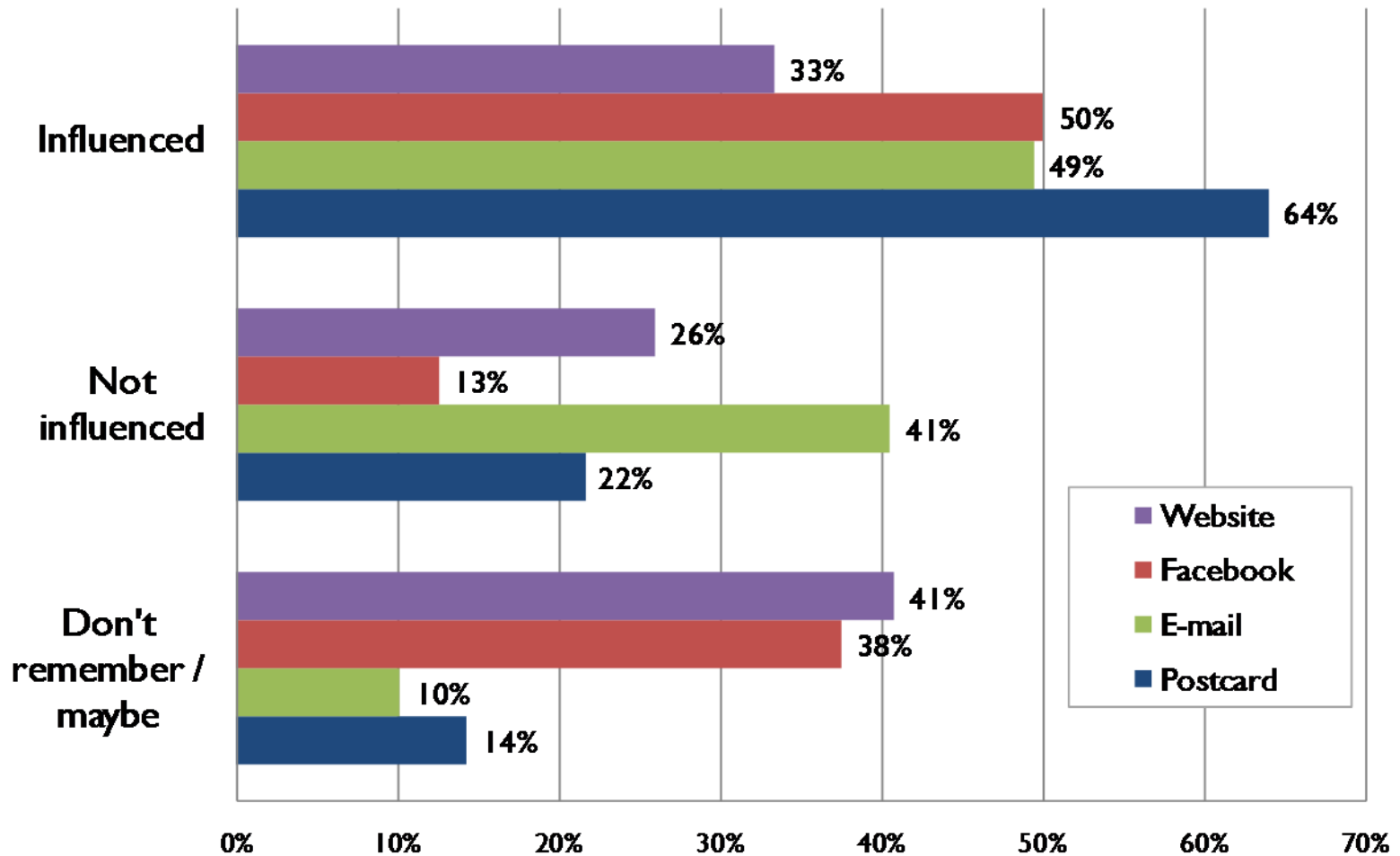
## Differences in How Consumers First Became Aware of Tioga County



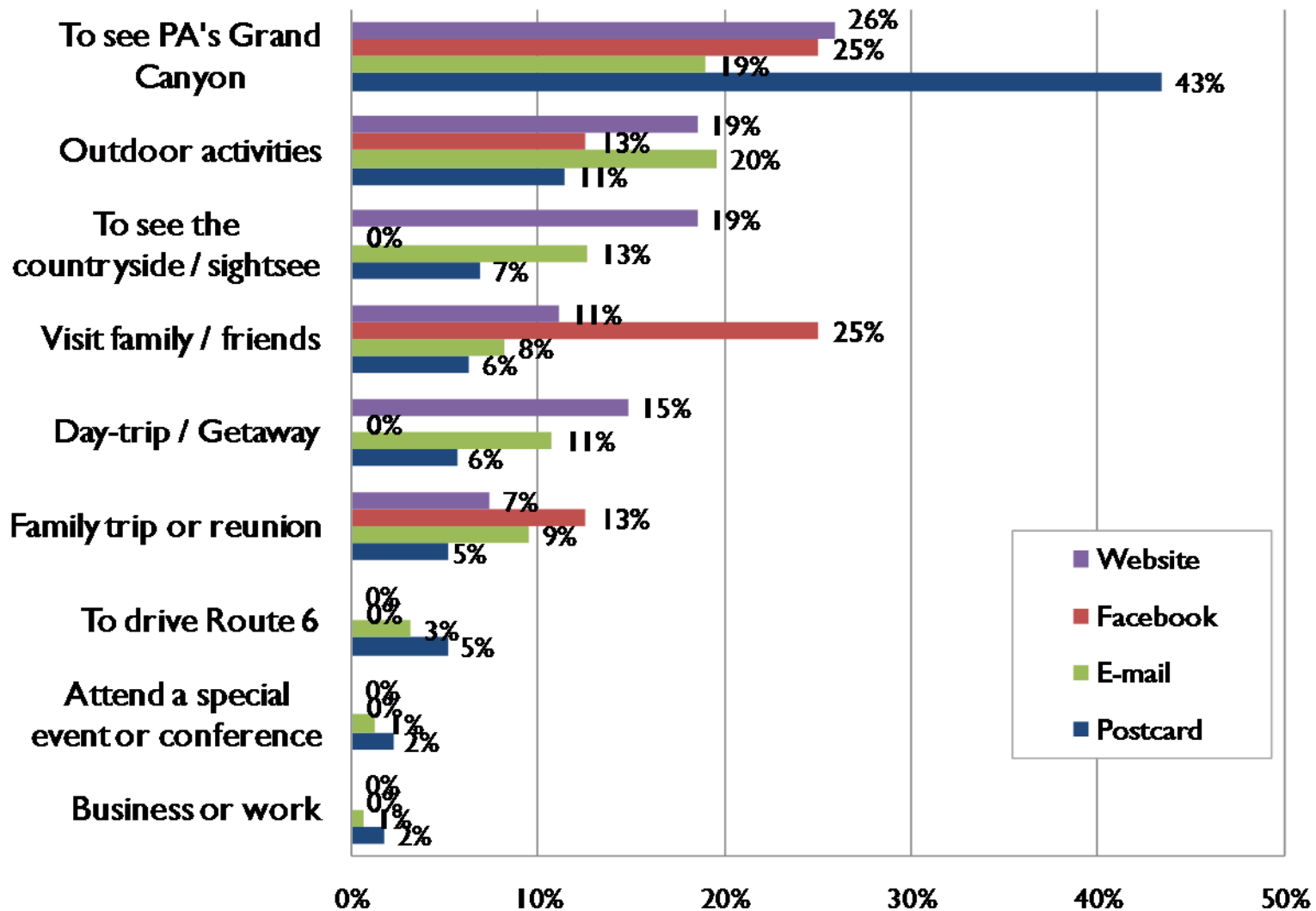
## Differences in Conversion Status



## Differences in the Influence of Advertising on Visitation



## Differences in Primary Travel Motivation



# Take-Aways

- **An online survey foundation reduces costs and time, as well as increasing convenience for respondents**
  - However, certain internet based survey approaches do have the potential to create bias in a sample
- **A multi-modal approach to online survey sampling produces the most balanced sample, since most consumers can be found (or driven) online**
  - Using multiple online access points tempers the potential for online bias
- **When used to drive traffic to an online survey, mailing addresses still provide useful access points for survey sampling without being cost prohibitive**
  - Most visitors bureaus have more mailing addresses than email addresses, thus mail provides a larger consumer population

# Thank you!

- North Star Destination Strategies

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