



MAMMOTH LAKES TOURISM
VISITOR VOLUME

September 2018

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Background

- Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) is responsible for promoting the destination to leisure travel visitors. Tourism-related businesses (lodging, restaurants, retail) pay an annual assessment based on the type and size of business. It is important that the agency knows how many visitors come to the destination annually in order to ensure that the assessment is being collected appropriately and to budget for future marketing efforts.
- To complicate attainment of this goal, the majority of visitor lodging in Mammoth Lakes is non-hotel. Hotels typically have the information systems in place to accurately track visitation. Even Airbnb, VRBO, and other such sites have some information-reporting mechanisms. But individual property owners – who may rent a house, cabin, or room through direct contact with visitors – are far less equipped to report the information that MLT needs. Without an accurate visitor count, MLT’s task in determining how much the TBID budget should be is difficult.
- MLT partnered with Strategic Marketing & Research Insights (SMARInsights) in 2016 to combine results of both primary and secondary research in an effort to arrive at a visitor volume figure. The initial Visitor Volume report was submitted in April 2016, using TOT receipts for the region obtained from Dean Runyon data compiled for Visit California, SMARInsights’ Travel Trending database, and gate counts from Yosemite National park. From these data sources, SMARInsights triangulated an initial visitor volume.
- The following is an update on that initial calculation, informed by additional wave of research (SMARInsights’ 2018 Mammoth Lakes Visitor Profile), as well as from updated TOT receipts received directly from Mammoth Lakes Tourism. The following details how these data are used in calculating the revised figures for unique visitors to Mammoth Lakes, total trips, and total visitor days, and also include seasonal volume information.

2017/18 Mammoth Lakes Visitor Volume

Metric	Amount or Calculation			FY17/18 TOT receipts based on monthly amounts reported to MLT by area lodging venues
	2017/18	2015/16	% chg	
Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) receipts	\$17,867,401	\$15,733,340	14%	FY17/18 TOT receipts based on monthly amounts reported to MLT by area lodging venues
Average per-trip tax receipt	\$7.12	\$6.77	5%	Derived from VCA/Dean Runyon data on 2017 trips to High Sierra Region
Mammoth Lakes person trips	2,510,122	2,323,979	8%	TOT receipts ÷ Avg per-trip tax receipts
Average # of trips per visitor	1.48	1.44	3%	Visitor Profile research
Unique visitors	1,697,385	1,613,875	5%	Mammoth Lakes trips ÷ Avg # of trips per visitor
Average length of stay in Mammoth Lakes	3.1	3.2	-4%	SMARInsights' Visitor Profile research
Total visitor days	7,718,329	7,436,734	4%	Person trips X Average length of stay in Mammoth Lakes

- Person trips = one person taking one trip to Mammoth Lakes = a visitor
- Unique visitors = number of different people that visited and accounts for repeat trips
- Visitor days = number of visitors times average trip length

2017/18 Seasonal Visitor Volume

Mammoth Lakes Visitor Volume by Season	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	TOTAL	
Share of trips	34%	21%	28%	16%	100%	SMARInsights' Visitor Profile research
Mammoth Lakes person trips	863,482	532,146	712,875	401,620	2,510,122	Share of trips per season X total Mammoth Lakes trips
Average length of stay in Mammoth Lakes	3.2	3.0	3.1	2.8	3.1	SMARInsights' Visitor Profile research
Total visitor days	2,738,231	1,608,256	2,236,151	1,135,691	7,718,329	Mammoth Lakes trips X Total visitor days
Unique visitors	583,900	359,846	482,057	271,582	1,697,385	Total Unique visitors X Share of trips