Marketing To The Middle Class: Tourism In The 20th Century

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Marketing to the Middle Class: Tourism in the 20th Century
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Abstract
Advertisements and promotional material from the 1950s to the present give unique historical insight into American middle class travel patterns. We researched how advertising of Route 66, State Slogans, Colorado Ski towns, and the Walt Disney Company focused on marketing experiences to families as opposed to marketing the site location itself. We aim to discover how advertising portrays a certain image and whether that portrayal is accurate with the experience in reality.

Introduction
After WWII America found itself with economic prosperity and more leisure time than ever before. Advertising of tourism became much more targeted at middle class Americans as travel became more affordable and common. For the first time the middle class had the desire to travel and the accessibility of road travel made this dream attainable for the masses. Different aspects of advertising in tourism were epitomized by the promotional the masses. Aspects of advertising in tourism were epitomized by the promotional tactics adopted by the Walt Disney Company, Glenwood Springs, Route 66, and various state slogans, each of which have affected Americans.

Walt Disney Company
Advertising done by the Walt Disney Company displays their superior quality. Disney is one of the most successful companies in the tourism industry, because of this Disney advertising tactics differ from others. Disney has established a worldwide name for themselves; Disney does not need to market their name or the destination, rather Disney aims to market the experience. Disney targets families and individuals of all ages, and the main goal for their advertisements is to depict them having unforgettable experiences together. As evidenced in one of their slogans for Adventures by Disney, “Let Disney Connect You With the World. And Each Other”, Disney promotes “magic” that only they can offer.

Route 66
Even though Route 66, the road, barely exists today, it has cemented an identity in the fabric of American culture that continues to represent the American Dream of what the country has to offer a traveler. Cultural references to the highway still exist in our culture today. Steinbeck’s The Grapes of Wrath, the song “Get your Kicks on Route 66!” and even K-Mart’s clothing brand have made Route 66 a permanent fixture in the American identity. The excitement of traveling Route 66 represented in these cultural objects continue to instill in Americans the dream of travel.

Glenwood Springs, Colorado
Glenwood Springs began as a sleepy little mining town, and was put on the map because of the train stop that people used to get to and from Aspen, CO. Glenwood Springs became a popular tourist destination once the interstate project, begun by President Eisenhower in 1956, was underway. Glenwood Springs has often been described as “the poor man’s Aspen” and certainly delivers the Aspen experience at a fraction of the cost of a true Aspen Vacation. With the many different activities that are available in the area, families can enjoy Glenwood Springs on any budget. Glenwood Springs prides it’s self in being a vacation the whole family can enjoy by focusing on togetherness and the natural beauty of the area.

State Slogans
State slogans have been employed throughout America since the 19th century; however, official state slogans started in the late 1930s, but did not gain widespread use until after World War II. With the end of WWII, individuals and families looked to leisure as a distraction and a way to restore normalcy to their lives. Drawing on the increased public interest in travel and tourism, state offices of tourism developed slogans which typically emphasized one of three factors: popular culture, state and national history, and nature. Each state slogan aimed at simultaneously emphasizing unique attributes and appealing to the everyman. Overall, state slogans capture a state in a snapshot of a few words to appeal to tourists. In doing so, state distinctiveness and familiarity are captured, helping to instill a national identity in Americans.

Conclusion
We concluded that advertising in tourism was effective in its focus on promoting memories and travel experiences. By advertising the experience, people were automatically drawn to the destination eliminating the need to promote the actual location itself.