

# Dealing with Disasters: How data drives decisions

Alisha Valentine  
Strategic Marketing & Research Insights

## What do DMOs measure?

**FUN**

Marketing

Product Development

Meetings and Events

Visitor Spending







Environmental



Social



Political

## Environmental Disasters



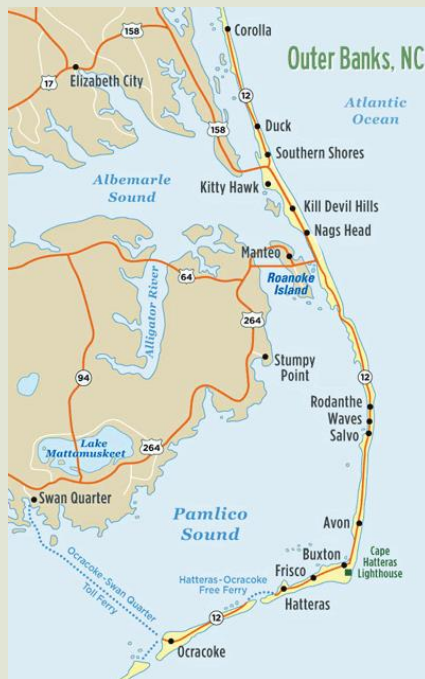
### Common in CenStates:

- Tornadoes and floods

### Other DMOs deal with:

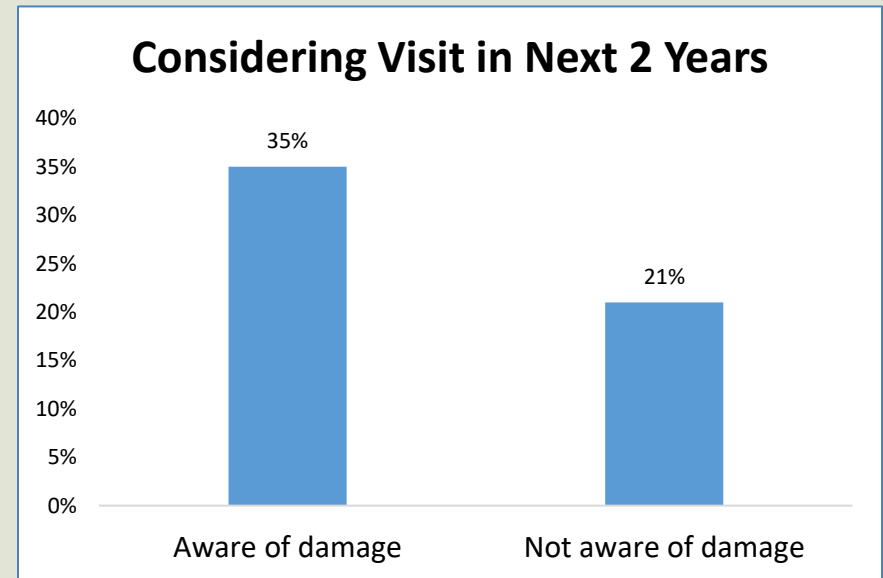
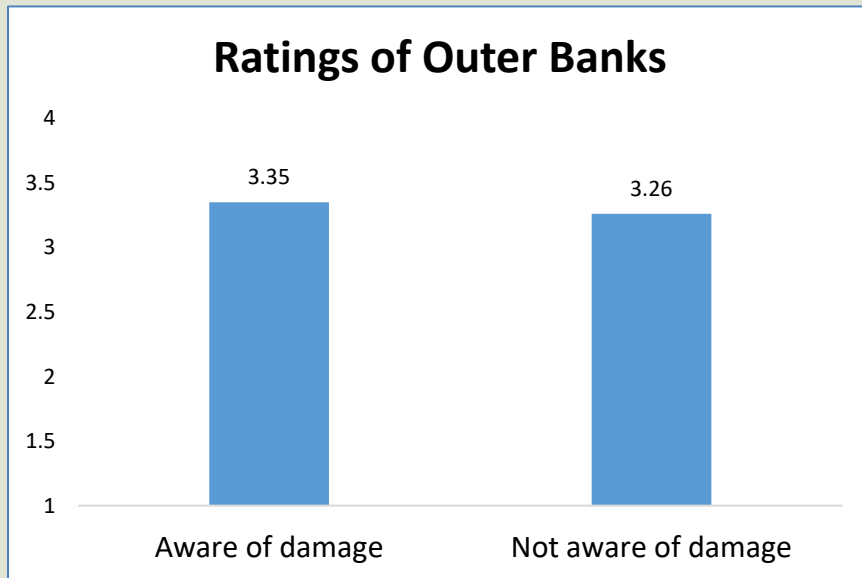
- Earthquakes
- Hurricanes
- Wildfires
- Oil spills

- Be specific – geography matters



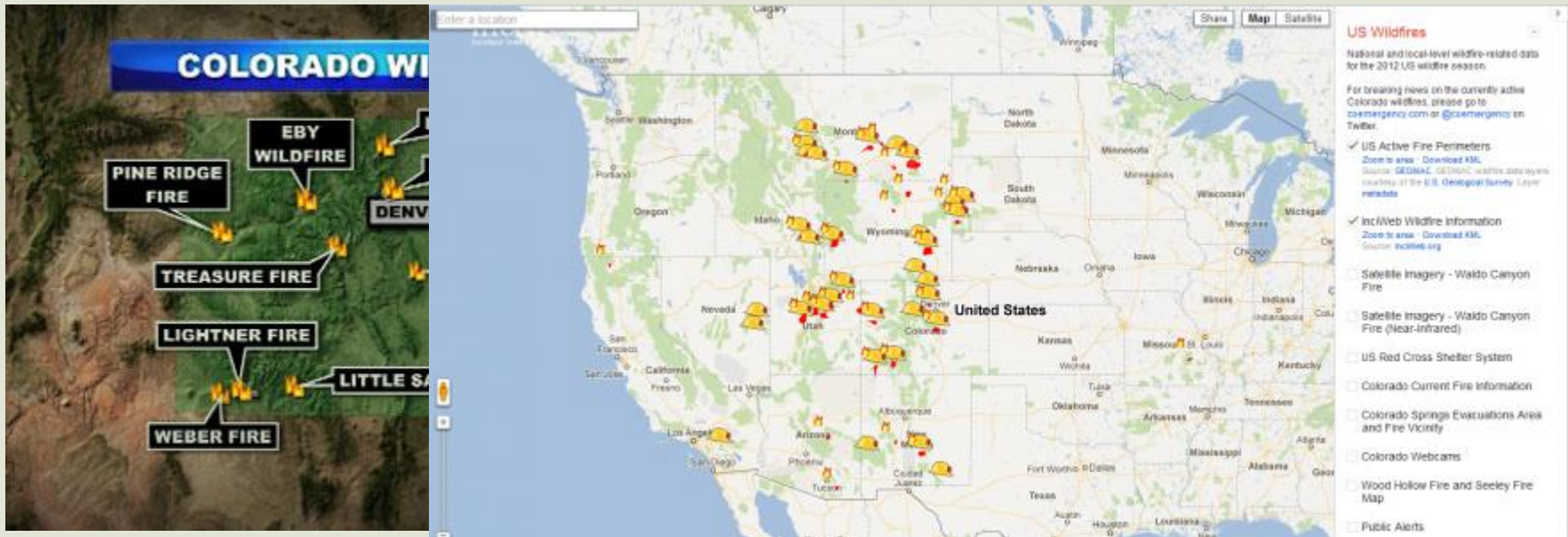


- Talk to consumers – they can surprise you



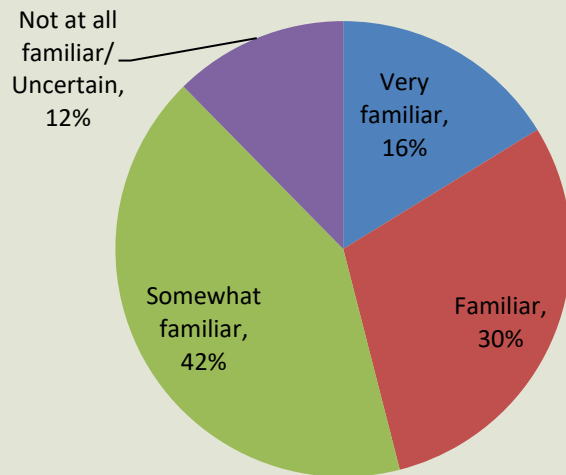
Source: Strategic Marketing & Research, Inc. -- 2004 National Hurricane Awareness Survey

- What's your competitive position?

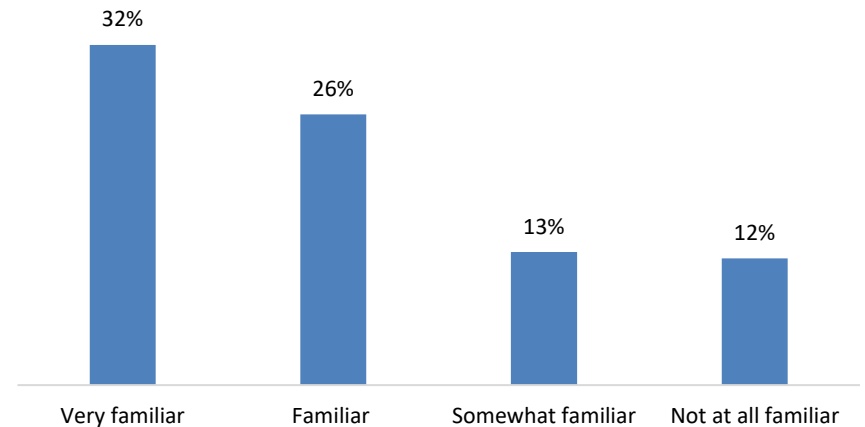


- It's more important to you than it is to consumers

**Familiarity with CO Wildfires**

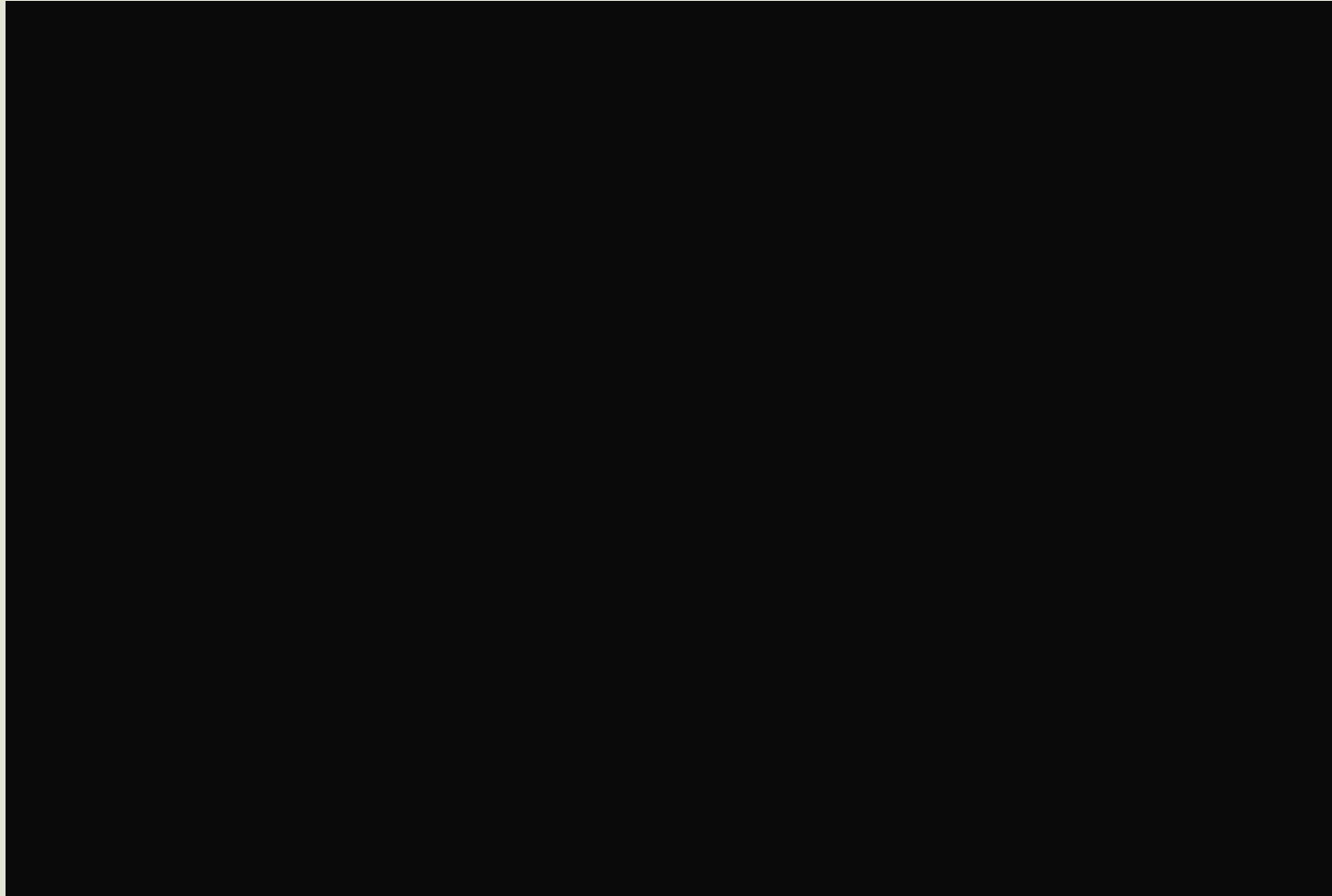


**Likelihood to visit Colorado in the next year by familiarity with wildfires**

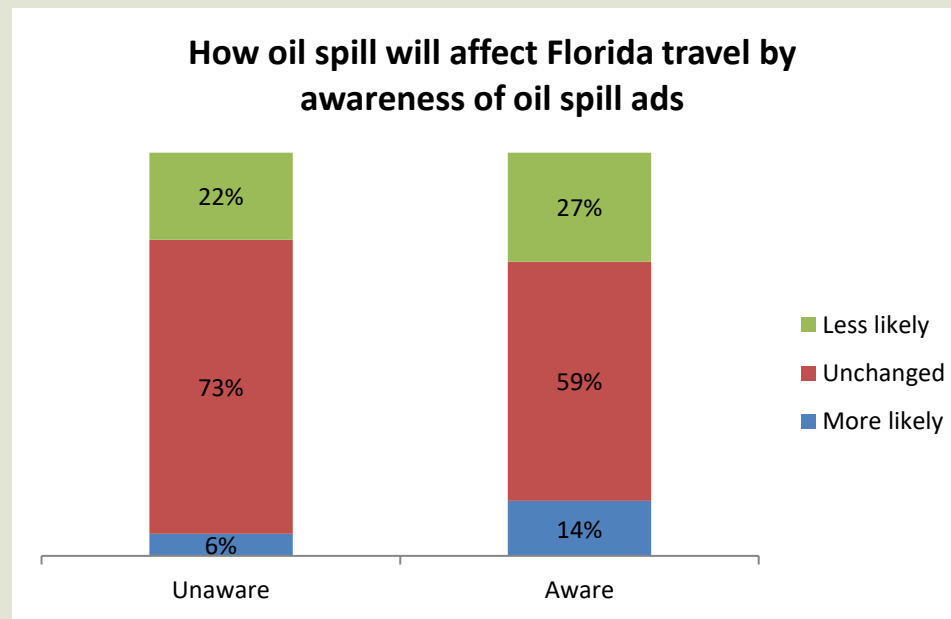


Source: Strategic Marketing & Research, Inc. – 2012 Colorado Wildfire Awareness

- 



- Know if you need to change your strategy



Source: Strategic Marketing & Research, Inc. – 2010 VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Effectiveness Research

## Political Disasters



## Religious Freedom and Restoration Act

- Passed by Indiana General Assembly and quickly signed into law
- On the heels of marriage equality in 2014
- Indiana has no sexual orientation protections
- Business community responded quickly RE: ability to attract and retain talent, willingness to expand operations
- Meetings and conventions were some of the most vocal



**Marc Benioff** ✓  
@Benioff

Follow

Today we are canceling all programs that require our customers/employees to travel to Indiana to face discrimination. [cnn.com/2015/03/25/pol...](http://cnn.com/2015/03/25/pol...)

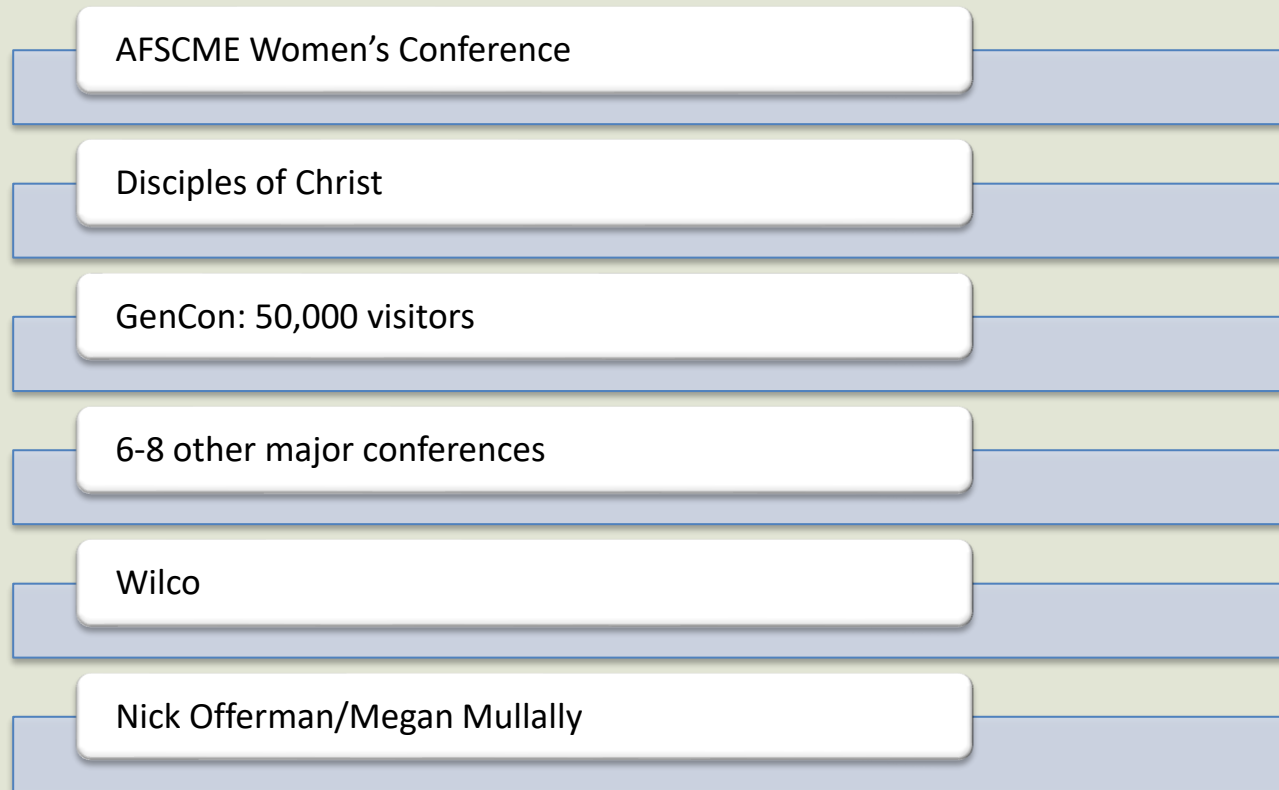
8:02 AM - 26 Mar 2015



"The NCAA national office and our members are deeply committed to providing an inclusive environment for all our events. We are especially concerned about how this legislation could affect our student-athletes and employees. We will work diligently to assure student-athletes competing in, and visitors attending, next week's Men's Final Four in Indianapolis are not impacted negatively by this bill. Moving forward, we intend to closely examine the implications of this bill and how it might affect future events as well as our workforce."

- Mark Emmert, NCAA President

- Threatening to pull out of Indianapolis:





What governing board? And what Customer Advisory Board?

- Circle the wagons
  - Approval from Governing Board to take a position on the issue; only 2<sup>nd</sup> in the organization's history
  - Customer Advisory Board – group of 25 meeting planners





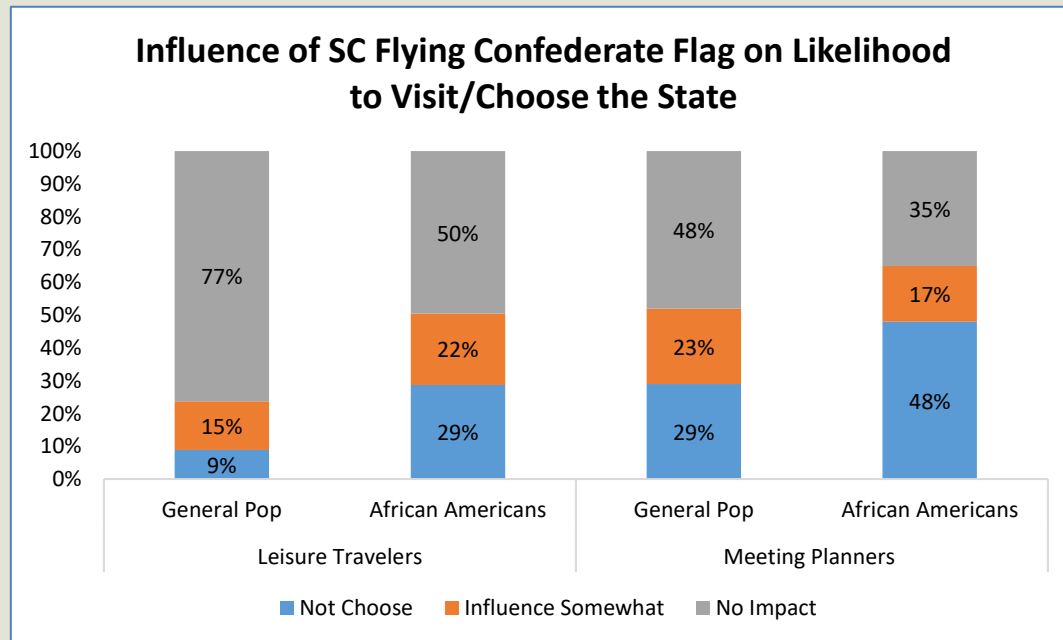
- Measure where you can:
  - 1 billion negative social impressions
  - 500 million negative impressions from traditional media
  - 1,000 emails to Visit Indy leadership
  - Impact on summer non-group room nights

*Source: Visit Indy*

- Evaluate the issue's long-term impact
  - RFRA in the media for a relatively short period of time, but the impacts could be lasting



- Know what different audiences need



Source: Strategic Marketing & Research, Inc. – 2001 South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism Flag & Boycott Research

## Social Disasters

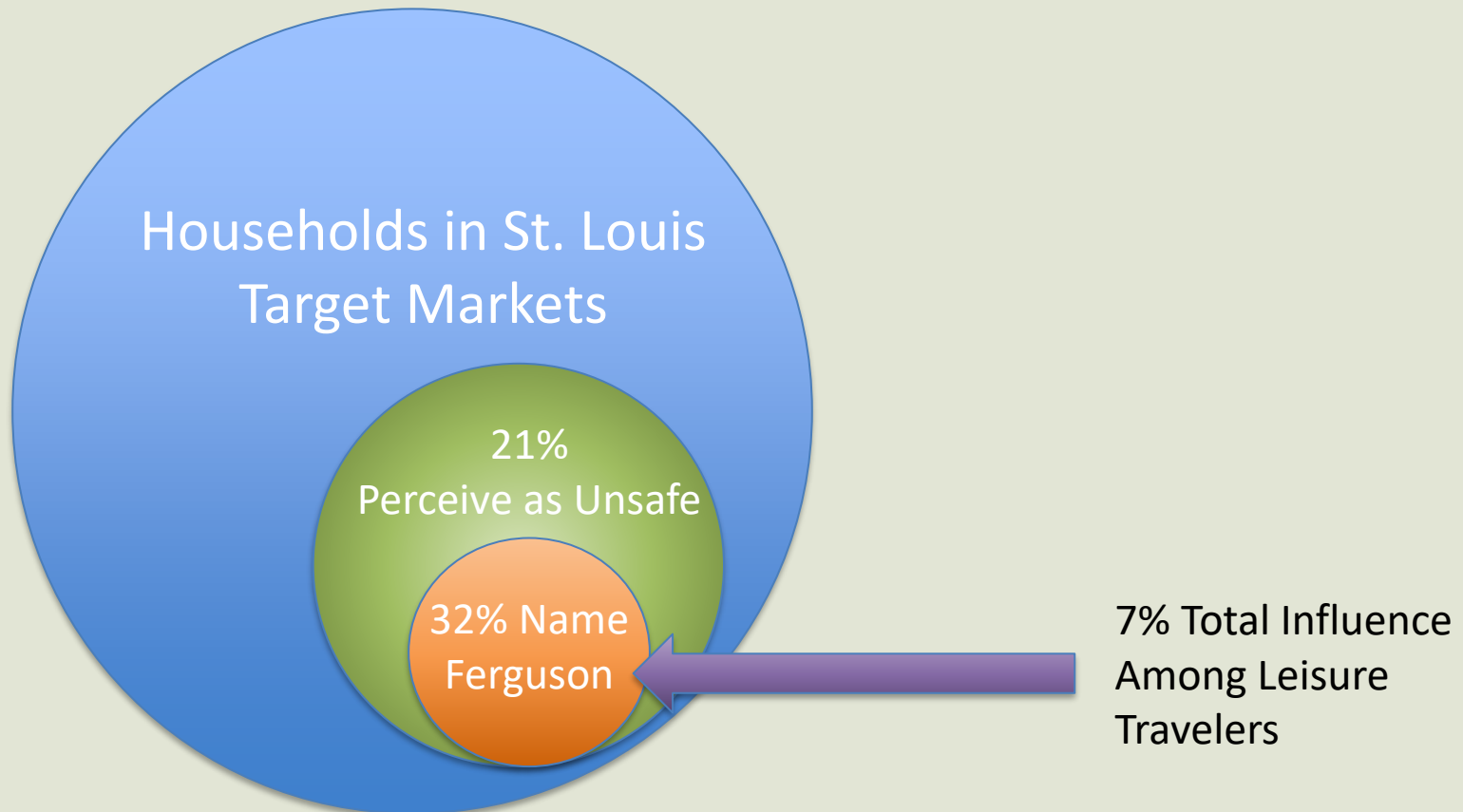


### Ferguson, MO, police shooting of Michael Brown and subsequent protests

- St. Louis is a neighboring community

- Don't make rash decisions
  - Did not associate Ferguson with St. Louis – or Missouri
  - Want to feel safe but do not eliminate a destination from consideration for crime or safety
  - Know if you need to change your message

- What's the real impact?



- Three responses to disasters:

**Environmental:**

- Florida addressed the issue with paid media

**Political:**

- Visit Indy addressed with media planners but only delayed planned consumer marketing

**Social:**

- After talking with consumers, St. Louis stayed the course with brand messaging



- In summary
  - Don't panic: Responding well is best
  - Know your audiences
    - Media and social channels can fan the flames
    - Consumers and meeting planners have different needs
  - A destination's brand is made up of life-long events, products and marketing

- How to prepare?
  - Create advisory panels
  - Conduct baseline research to have normative data about your destination



- Dealing with disaster? Let me know....

[avalentine@smarinsights.com](mailto:avalentine@smarinsights.com)

