Summer 2020 Tourism Marketing Results

Campaign: June 1- September 7, 2020

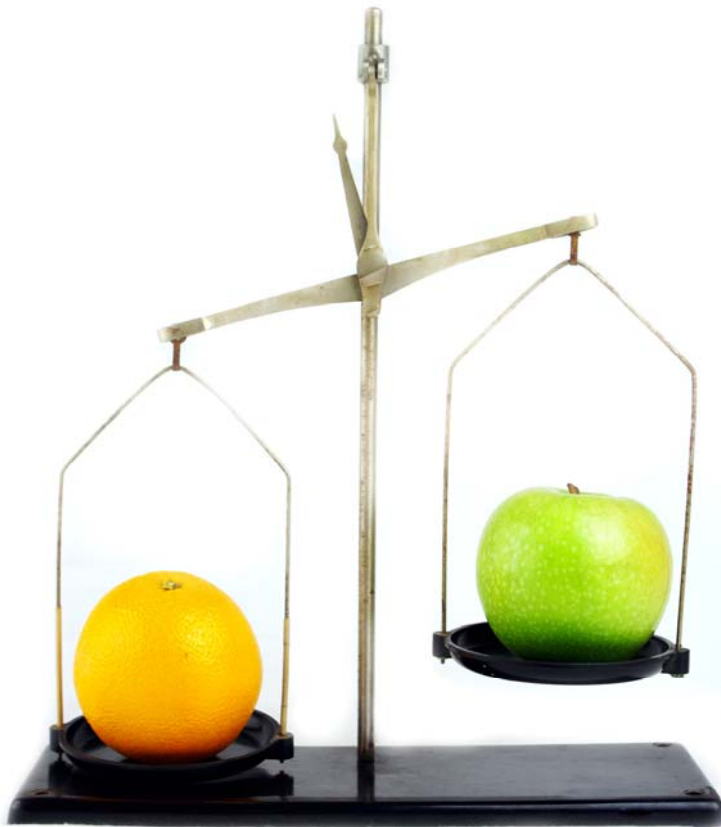## 3 key questions we'll address today:

Did our marketing make people more likely to visit Connecticut — mitigating the impact of the pandemic on Connecticut tourism?

How did each of our tactics perform?

What insights can we glean from this atypical season?

Connecticut

Difficulty Comparing Year over Year

Due to the impact of Covid-19, it is generally not useful to compare 2020 metrics to 2019. Where a comparison could be made, we've done so in the pages that follow. But several factors make many factors an apples-to-oranges comparison, including:

- Research shows that 1/3 of our target audience is only visiting essential businesses and another 1/3 is only reluctantly going out.*

- Travel restrictions limited the range from which we could recruit visitors.

- The timeframe of the campaign was significantly shorter and later than prior years.

- Our media plan shifted dollars away from click-inspiring tactics to viewing tactics. This makes it difficult to compare topline KPIs like cost-per-click and cost-per engagement year over year.

Source: PlaceIQ Reemergence Audiences – Hartford/ New Haven, NY, & Boston DMAs, July 2020

Connecticut

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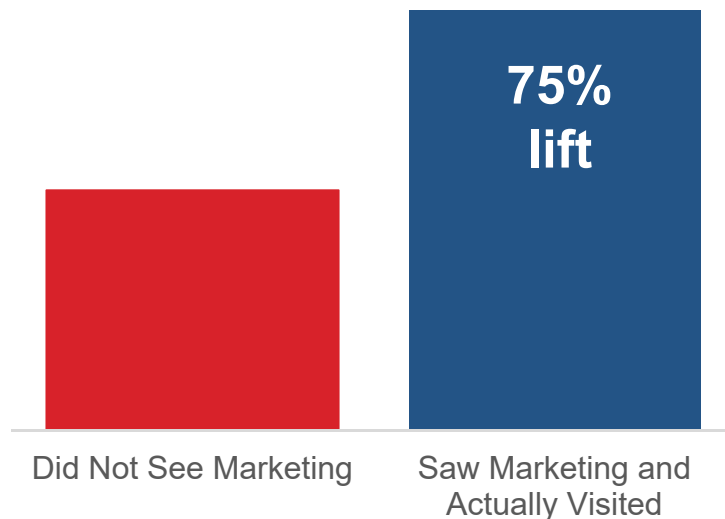
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Campaign Motivated People to Visit

Even during a pandemic, those who saw our marketing, particularly in NYC, **visited Connecticut significantly more than those who didn't.**
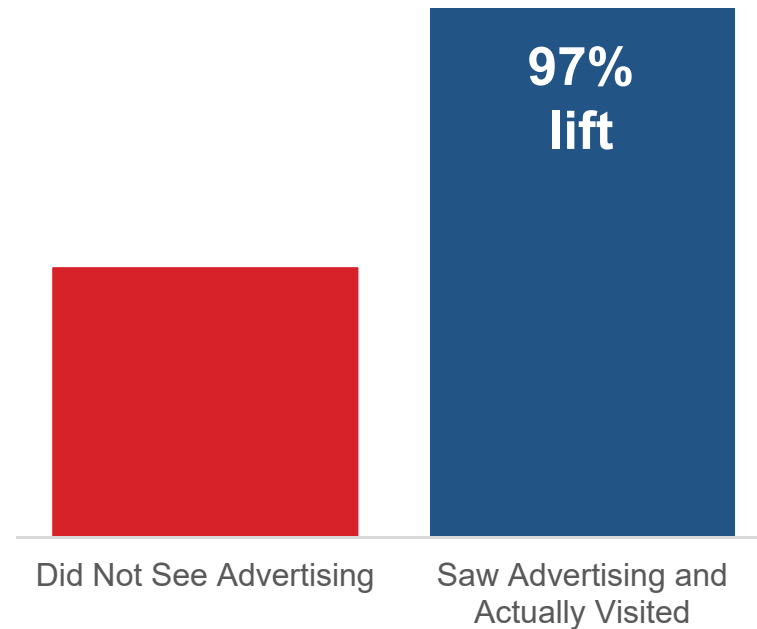
GENERAL TARGET

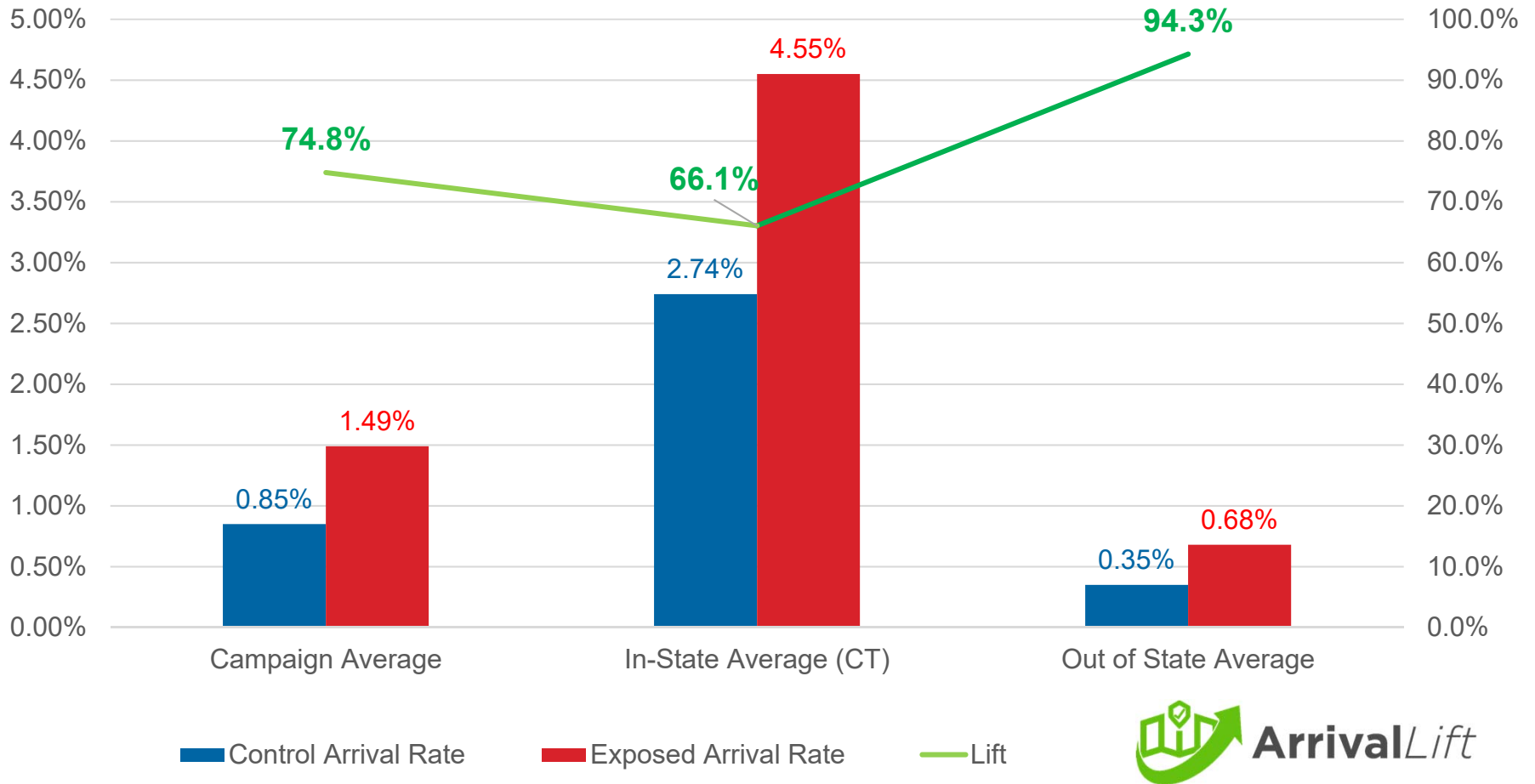Percent lift in <u>actual visitation</u> among exposed vs. a matching unexposed control

75% lift

Did Not See Marketing

Saw Marketing and Actually Visited

NYC TARGET

Percent lift in <u>actual visitation</u> among exposed vs. a matching unexposed control

97% lift

Did Not See Advertising

Saw Advertising and Actually Visited

Source: 2020 ArrivalsI Spring/Summer results

Connecticut

Campaign Drove Visits Both In- and Out-of-State

While in-state audiences are always more likely to visit CT, the campaign
still drove significant in-state lift and inspired a much greater rate of conversion.

Source: 2020 Arrivalst Spring/Summer results

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CTvisit Drove High Engagement

The pandemic did drive overall website traffic down 45%.
But those who visited the site were deeply engaged.

During the So Good to See You Campaign:

- **1.9M site visits** (down 45% from last year)

- **1.2M views of listing page**s
(equal to last year)

- **92K views of "STAY" landing page**
(26% more than last year)

- **Time on page up** (44% higher than 2019)

- **~1 million referrals** (clicks, calls, emails)
sent to tourism businesses

Content continuing to drive engagement by:

- Attracting more people (53% of visits from organic search)

- Driving more people to site (46% of visits came to site through an article)

- Keeping more people on site (bounce rate improved 63%)

Connecticut

What Tactics We Deployed During Campaign

The $1.2M *So Good to See You, Connecticut* campaign
included the following tactics:

Connecticut
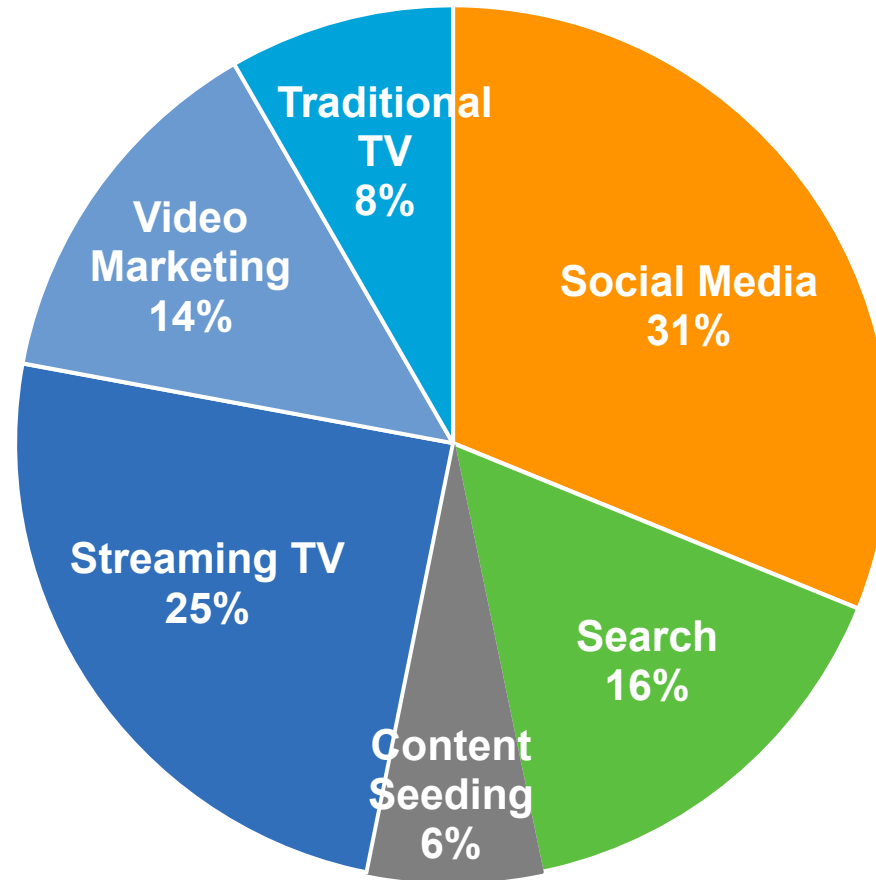
TV Campaign Reached Nearly 28 Million

We leveraged a variety of tactics to distribute our TV campaign/video assets. In-state audiences were particularly receptive to these ads.

Type of Delivery	In-State Views	Out-of-State Views	Total
Local TV	3,913,207	N/A	3,913,207
Local TV (Spanish)	193,000	N/A	
Streaming TV	1,583,336	6,576,098	8,159,434
Web Pre-Roll	1,476,887	7,130,873	8,607,760
Facebook/Instagram	3,913,207	2,545,286	6,458,493
SUBTOTAL	*11,093,190*	*16,252,257*	*27,138,894*
Retargeting	687,932		687,932
TOTAL			**27,826,826**

Source: 2020 Arrivalst Spring/Summer results, AdSquare Visit Tracking

Connecticut

Heightened Interest in PR Messages

Between April 1 – Sept. 7:

- Secured **346 earned media placements**

- Generated **557+M impressions**, in local, regional and national press (19% more than Summer 2019)

- Facilitated **30+ media interviews**

Focus Areas:
- Apr/May: Virtual Tourism
- June: Open House Day, Campaign Launch
- Jul/Aug: Summer Staycations/Travel
- Sept: Fall Foliage/Travel Preview
- Ongoing: State of the Tourism Industry

Major Impression Drivers:
- Connecticut Open House Day (MSN)
- Northeast Travel Restrictions (ABC News, MSN Money, Yahoo News)
- Summer Tourism (MSN Video)

Top-Performing Content

Over 450 articles were read by 1.2 million visitors

Once again, top performing content was a mix of
old "winners" and new trending (COVID) topics.

Top Performing	Readers
Outdoor Dining	66,516
Social-distance-friendly Hikes	45,788
10 Ways to Enjoy a Summer Eve	32,769
Top 10 Hiking Trails	32,331
September: Second Summer	30,793
Lobster Shacks	30,553
5 Romantic Inns by the Sea	29,338
Experiences You Can't Have City	28.517
Best Swimming Holes	27,374
Hotels Now Open	27,097
So Good To See CT on TV	25,940
Picnic Spots	25,700
Great Drives Along the Coast	23,923

Top Performing, cont'd	Readers
Walkable Town Centers	22,360
Lakes in Connecticut	21, 268
Guide to Seafood Shacks	19,513
Lobster Lovers Guide	18,073
6 Parks Kids Will Love	16,915
Bike Trails for Every Speed	16,527
Best Views by Hike and Bike	16,046
10 Highest Waterfalls	15,698
Dining at home with CT Chefs	15,500
Summer Blossom Finder	15,124
Essential Gardens to Visit	14,866
Connecticut Gardens	14,518
Go Off The Beaten Path…Towns	14,451

Connecticut

Social Media Drove Particularly High Engagement

- **65.5M+ impressions** across Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat

- **~530K clicks to CTvisit.com**.

- **7.2M video** views, with a **27.56% video view rate** among target audiences

- **117K clicks from videos to CTvisit**

- **7.6M engagements** — a **11.64% engagement rate** (more than three times the industry benchmark of 3.39%)

Budget	Impressions	Clicks	Video Views	Engagements
$363,102.72	65,563,421	529,423	7,170,241	7,631,003

"This is wonderful! All the states should do this for their safety-compliant attractions. Now I'm going to plan my road trip there."

"Thanks for this post. I was able to send it to my family so they could see what a great state CT is and what it has to offer."

"This is a great posting for 'things to do' during the pandemic where one would not encounter crowds. A walk along a lake, an outdoor restaurant to have lunch, etc."

Social Performance | Creative

The campaign included refreshed images from partners across the state. The images were then branded with the campaign name and color palette to differentiate it and make it stand out to our target audiences.
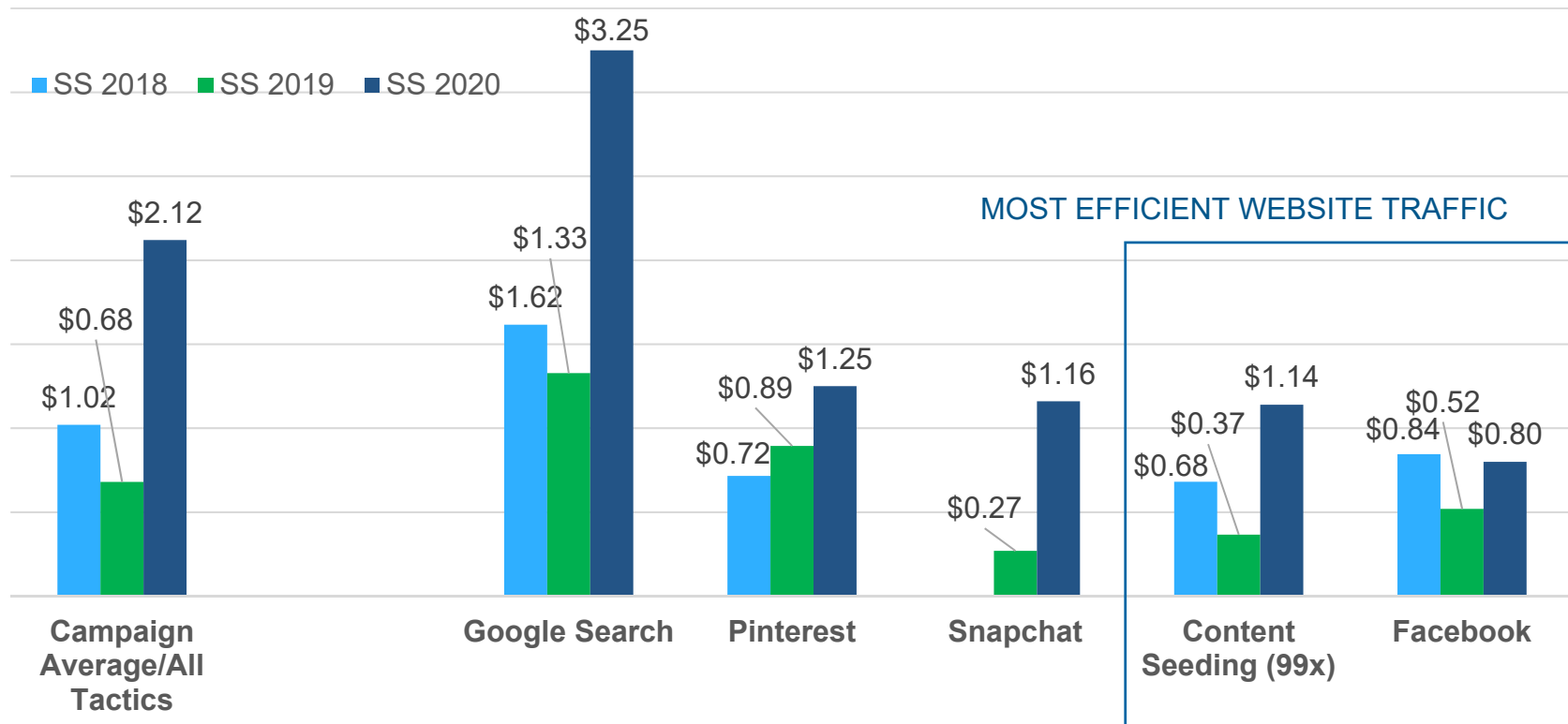
Top performing topics included:

- Towns
- Hiking
- Lobster Rolls
- Outdoor Dining
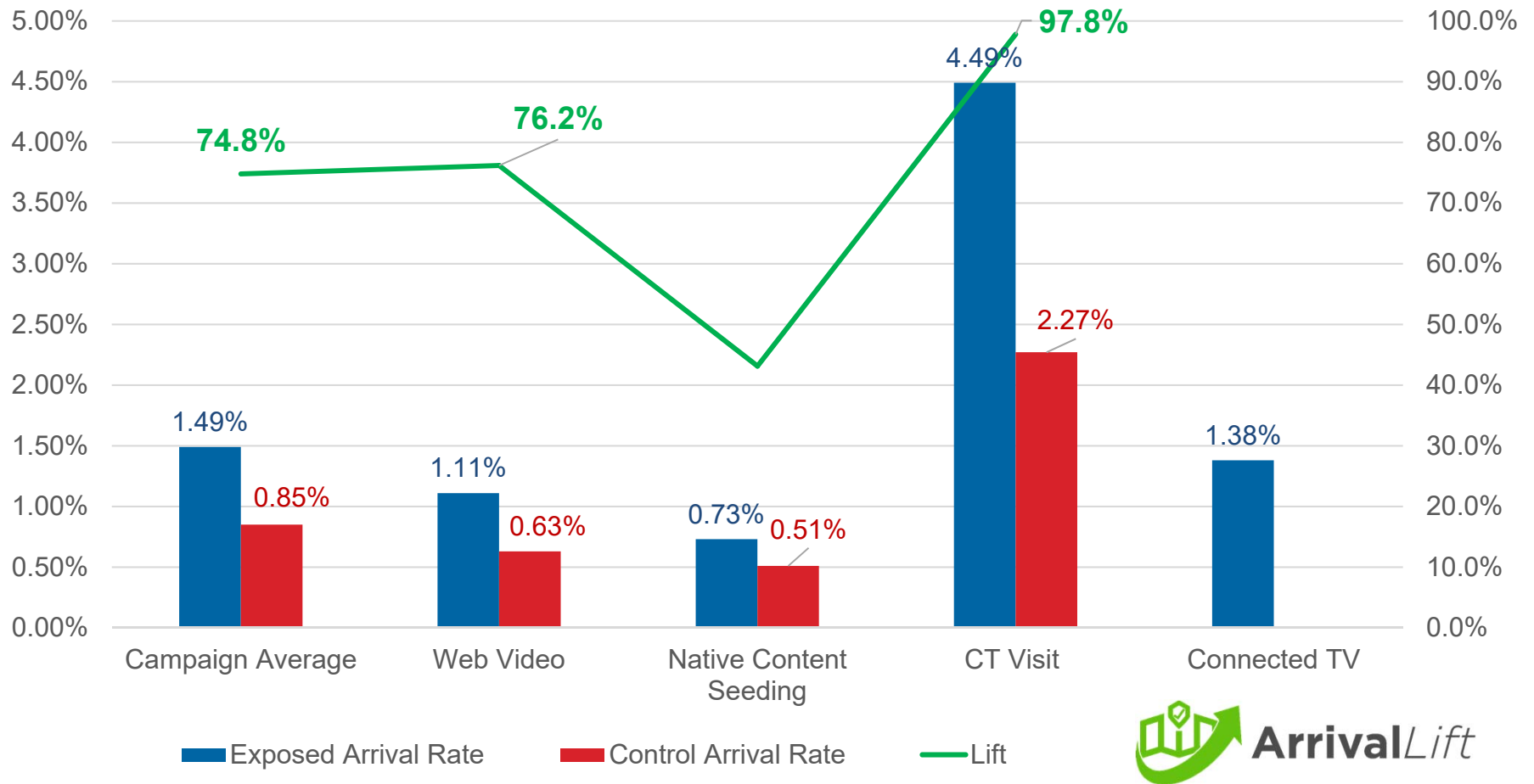- Drives Along the Shoreline
- Second September
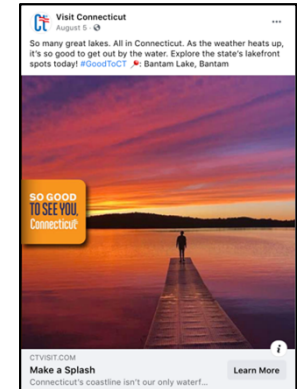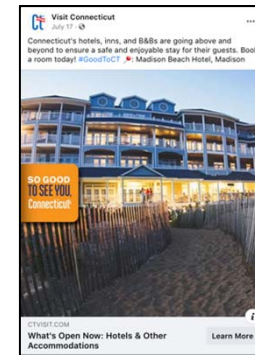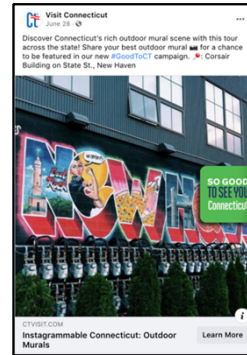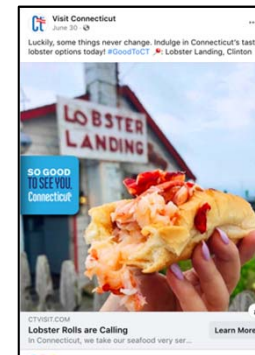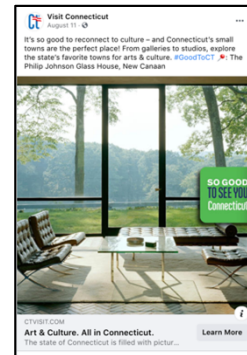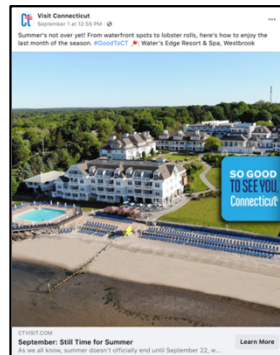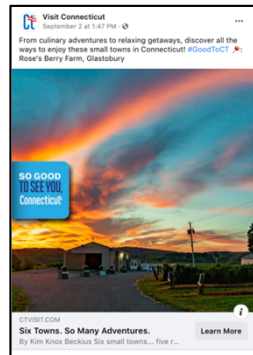
CTvisit drives most lift

Website exposure is the most impactful driver of physical visitation.

All tactics measured drove visitation lift. Connected TV did not reach statistical significance in measurement for Lift measurement

Source: 2020 Arrivalst Spring/Summer results

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Key Takeaways

The campaign is clearly generating actual tourism visitation that would not have otherwise existed, therefore mitigating the impact of Covid-19 on the industry.

In-state responsiveness is significantly greater than out of state

- Consider shifting more of fall budget in-state

Content marketing was less a focus this year. Still, it proved to be the most effective and efficient tactic for driving visitation to the site and to the state.

- Keep as strong component of mix

Content marketing is also largely responsible for CTvisit's outpacing all competitors' sites, even our better funded ones. The volume of content, (with its SEO optimization and domain authority) is by far the single biggest source of site traffic.

- Continue to programmatically update content in addition to creating new

Video campaign performed very well in views, engagement, clicks and visitation.

- Keep in the mix for future campaigns

Connecticut