
CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MULTI-DESTINATION PLEASURE TRIPS

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Abstract: A four-cell typology of pleasure trips is developed based on number of destinations visited and the trip purpose or benefits sought. Five distinctive spatial patterns evolving from this typology are identified that may be adopted by pleasure travelers: single destination, en route, base camp, regional tour, and trip chaining. Four of these involve visiting multiple destinations. Multi-destination visits are a rational behavior pattern and reasons that account for this behavior are discussed. It is suggested that the concept of cumulative attraction offers a conceptual underpinning for explaining such trips. Benefits accruing from a better understanding of multi-destination trip behavior are discussed. **Keywords:** forecasting, multi-destination, tourism, pleasure trips, spatial patterns.

Résumé: La conceptualisation des voyages d'agrément à plusieurs destinations. L'article présente une typologie à quatre cellules pour discuter les voyages d'agrément, selon le nombre de destinations et le propos du voyage ou le genre de bénéfices que l'on cherche. A partir de cette typologie, on identifie cinq modèles d'organisation spatiale: destination simple, escale en route, camp de base, voyage régional et enchaînement de voyages. Pour quatre de ces modèles, il s'agit de destinations multiples. On discute les raisons pour lesquelles on entreprendrait un voyage à plusieurs destinations. On suggère que le concept de l'attraction cumulative pourrait être utile pour expliquer ces voyages. On discute les bénéfices que l'on peut tirer d'une meilleure compréhension du comportement du voyage à destinations multiples. **Mots-clés:** prévisions, destinations multiples, tourisme, voyages d'agrément, modèles d'organisation spatiale.

INTRODUCTION

Substantial attention has been focused on developing destination demand models in outdoor recreation and tourism (Lieber and Fesenmaier 1984; Witt and Witt 1989). However, to this point, the models

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that have appeared in the literature have in large part been predicated on the assumption that when travelers leave home, they go to a single destination. In many cases, this assumption is fallacious. According to Wall, "Recreation sites do not exist in isolation. They are found within a context of competing and complementary facilities. Thus, given the mobility of most pleasure travelers, it is likely that they will frequent more than one site or destination on a single trip" (1978:35). Indeed, it has been reported that between 30% and 50% of all trips are multi-destination (Hanson 1980; O'Kelly 1982). The single destination assumption has been widely retained because it simplifies the modeling task, but its adoption is likely to substantially reduce the accuracy and efficiency of forecasting models (Hanson 1980).

Early attempts to forecast tourism and outdoor recreation demand using spatial models focused on the gravity model (Cheung 1972; McAllister and Klett 1976; Van Doren 1967; Wilson 1971). Over time, the general form of the gravity model has been extended to encompass a variety of origin-destination specific influences on spatial interaction (Baxter and Ewing 1986). However, gravity models have a number of limitations (Fotheringham 1981, 1983). Among them is a lack of sensitivity toward spatial relations between the preferred destination and other alternative destinations (Cesario 1973; Ewing 1980; Fotheringham 1983).

Although the importance of multi-destination trips has been recognized in other fields (Thill and Thomas 1987; Timmermans and Golledge 1990), evidence of this recognition in the tourism and outdoor recreation literature has been limited to a few pioneering studies (Baxter and Ewing 1981; Ewing and Baxter 1981; Leiper 1989; Wall 1978). Part of the reason more emphasis has not been given to modeling multi-destination trips may be attributable to the failure of tourism organizations to collect data that provides insight into this phenomenon and that can be used to calibrate and test these models. According to Leiper, "not much information is readily available about patterns of multi-destination tourism" (Leiper 1989:531). He notes this problem in the context of international tourism and suggests the reason for it; his comments are likely to be equally applicable in a domestic context:

Each country's tourism industry and its public sector supportive organizations primarily want to know how many tourists visit that particular country, and want information about those visitors and their visit within that hosting country. Tourism interests in each country make only sideways glances at how many of their visitors travel to other countries (Leiper 1989:532).

Wall (1978) suggested that single and multi-destination trips should be differentiated and should be modeled separately. In a study at Mammoth Cave National Park and at Carter Caves State Resort Park, both in Kentucky (USA), Wall identified different prevailing spatial patterns among visitors. At Mammoth Cave, a majority of visits were part of multi-destination trips, while at Carter Creek most visits were single destination trips.

Another rare example of a study in which multi-destination data were collected was reported by Ewing and Baxter (1981). They asked

a large, but non-random, sample to provide details about their most recent recreational day trip by automobile. Their findings confirmed those of Colenutt (1969) that many leisure day trips are not simple origin-destination trips. Two-thirds of their samples' trips involved more than one stop. From these data, Ewing and Baxter formulated a model of multi-stop trips that "produced results that differed systematically from those obtained from the more usual origin-destination model in an intuitively reasonable fashion" (1981:328).

Alternative destination choices cannot be accurately conceptualized by considering the attributes of the alternative major destinations alone, since in tourists' minds these alternatives are related to other attractions in proximity. Traditional spatial models have been misleading in using spatial analyses that treat each trip as an independent unit of analysis, rather than considering similarities and differences among sets of destinations (Currim 1982). It has been demonstrated that such models particularly lack the ability to accurately predict demand in hypothetical situations in which destinations are added to or subtracted from the original destinations (Timmermans 1982). Many models of travel behavior lack transferability between study areas, and one reason for this is a failure to incorporate into them the spatial structure of complementary opportunities (van der Heijden and Timmermans 1988).

The central theme of this paper is that the spatial pattern of attractions influences the probability of an individual visiting an area, either because the attractions are perceived to be a cohesive unit, or because they serve as alternative en route opportunities. This paper is intended to offer a conceptualization of the role and structure of multi-destination pleasure trips, and to highlight the importance of understanding and developing multi-destination trip models of pleasure travel.

MULTI-DESTINATION TRIPS

A potential tourist is likely to view multi-destination visits as a rational behavior pattern that reduces the time and cost associated with travel (Ben-Akiva and Lerman 1985) and, therefore, increases the potential benefits that may accrue. There are at least five reasons that may account for people engaging in multi-destination trips. First, pleasure travel comprises relatively complex patterns of interdependent travel activities (Fesenmaier and Lieber 1985, 1988). Even within a tour group as small as two people or a single family, different members are likely to seek different benefits from destinations on a vacation. This heterogeneity of preferences encourages selection of multiple destinations and single destinations with multiple attractions, since different destinations and attractions may be able to fulfill the different needs of each member of a tour group.

Second, almost half of US tourists stay in the homes of friends and relatives when taking a trip, regardless of the purpose of the trip (Mill and Morrison 1985). Temporary stops at the homes of friends and relatives may increase the tendency to visit more destinations on a trip.

Third, as the benefits sought expand from single to multiple, the resultant diversification travel pattern may be attributed to the need to seek variety (Farquhar and Rao 1976; Green and Devita 1974; Green, Wind and Jain 1972). Individuals' level of arousal may be heightened by adding more variety to their vacation experience. The threshold level for any specific need can be affected by travel that was initially triggered by a different need. For example, while traveling to visit the River Walk and historic Missions of San Antonio, individuals from Dallas may decide to make a side trip to Sea World in San Antonio and/or to the city of Corpus Christi if their needs to be entertained or engage in water-based activities are triggered, and this would require only a relatively small incremental increase in time and money.

Fourth, by aggregating a group of attractions into a trip, rather than relying on a single destination to provide the benefits sought, individuals may perceive that they reduce uncertainty and level of risk. If a single need was motivating a trip and it was only partially met, then a visitor is likely to look for a second attraction that may contribute further to satisfying that need. This implies that satisfaction with a particular attribute may be cumulative in the visitor's utility function, and that a common attribute at a second attraction may still have marginal utility. If more than one need was motivating a trip, then additional destinations may be sought that contribute to meeting the other needs.

An alternative type of risk is that a need may be satiated after staying at a single location for a given period of time, and boredom may arise. It has been suggested that "individuals become satiated after exposure to high levels of one attribute and seek an alternative that offers high levels of some other attribute" (McAlister 1979:214). Seeking benefits from a diversity of destinations might be a result that emerges from satiation (Brickman and D'Amato 1975; McAlister 1979).

Fifth, variability in the spatial, temporal, and personal constraints faced by pleasure travelers, suggests that a variety of different destinations in reasonable proximity may be needed to accommodate their needs at different times or under different conditions. Therefore, travelers may combine visits to several destinations in the course of a single trip to reduce overall travel costs associated with satisfying a given set of needs. This behavior seems particularly likely to prevail when resources are restricted. Survey responses to the 1974 gasoline shortage, for example, indicated that the principal response by urban households to the fuel shortage was consolidation of their travel into fewer round trips, each of which had a larger number of stops (Lerman 1979). Since long-distance trips to destinations require investing resources for such purposes as transportation, lodging, and food, it is rational for tourists to tour more places around a single destination area and/or along routes on the way to the area, rather than to take separate trips to single principal destinations.

A Typology of Pleasure Trips

Multiple-destination trips are conceptualized as the outcome of a choice process in which an individual decides that a combination of alternative combinations of destinations and benefits sought will be

		Purpose or Benefits Sought	
		Single	Multiple
Number of Destinations Visited	Single	<p>1</p> <p>A single benefit from a single destination</p> <p>[Specialization]</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Multiple benefits from a single destination</p> <p>[Benefit Diversification]</p>
	Multiple	<p>3</p> <p>A single benefit from multiple destinations</p> <p>[Destination Diversification]</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Multiple benefits from multiple destinations</p> <p>[Mixed Strategies]</p>

Figure 1. Typology of Pleasure Travel Patterns

selected. Figure 1 offers a typology that classifies pleasure trips using the dimensions of number of destinations visited, and purpose or benefits sought. Cell 1 is termed specialization and describes those trips that are limited to a single destination where an individual goes for a single purpose, for example, to play golf. If multiple benefits are sought from a single destination, then the trip pattern is described as benefit diversification and is assigned to Cell 2. A trip to a major city is likely to belong in the Cell 2 category, since cities possess multiple types of attractions and many visitors are likely to take advantage of this wide array. An alternative example for Cell 2 is a cruise ship experience, since the ship can be conceptualized as a "single destination" whose passengers may be attracted by the variety of activities on board and the multiple ports of call.

Cell 3 is termed destination diversification and describes tourists who visit multiple destinations in pursuit of a single purpose, for example, visiting wineries in the Napa Valley of Northern California. Trips assigned to Cell 4 are those on which different destinations are visited on the trip for different purposes. Thus, a trip incorporating a visit to the Napa Valley wineries, going on to San Francisco to enjoy the city's cultural offerings, and finishing at Pebble Beach to play golf, would be characteristic of Cell 4. This cell may embrace combinations of Cells 1, 2, and 3, since combining any two of them would involve multiple benefits from multiple destinations. Cells 3 and 4 describe the situa-

tions that are germane to multi-destination marketing and may be spatially manifested by patterns 2, 3, 4, or 5 (Figure 2).

The typology shown in Figure 1 suggests a number of important implications for understanding the spatial pattern of vacation trips. According to Kim and Fesenmaier (1990), the spatial structure of the supply of recreation opportunities is likely to affect the nature and extent of participation in pleasure travel. If A_1 , A_2 , A_3 , A_4 , and A_5 (Figure 2) are five destinations being considered for a trip and it is assumed they are equidistant from the home origin and identical in every respect, then it is likely that they have an equal probability of being selected for the trip. However, when the destinations in Figure 2 are examined more carefully, it is apparent that A_2 , A_3 , A_4 , and A_5 provide extra opportunities (B, C, D, E, and F), for securing additional benefits for relatively small increments of cost, because these attractions can relatively easily be incorporated into the trip. Hence, it seems likely that destinations A_2 , A_3 , A_4 , and A_5 will be preferred over A_1 .

Figure 2 identifies five distinctive spatial patterns that may be adopted by pleasure travelers. The spatial pattern selected is likely to be dependent on the types of destination available, their accessibility from different origins, and the type of area in which the origin is located (Ewing and Baxter 1981). Some proportion of visitors to a destination may exhibit the characteristics of all five patterns, but until those proportions and the structures of each pattern are known, cooperative marketing efforts are unlikely to be efficacious.

The most simple spatial pattern reflects a trip to a single destination. However, there are few instances where attractions stand alone as single destination places without relating to other attractions. The Grand Canyon, for example, may approach this, but it does not stand

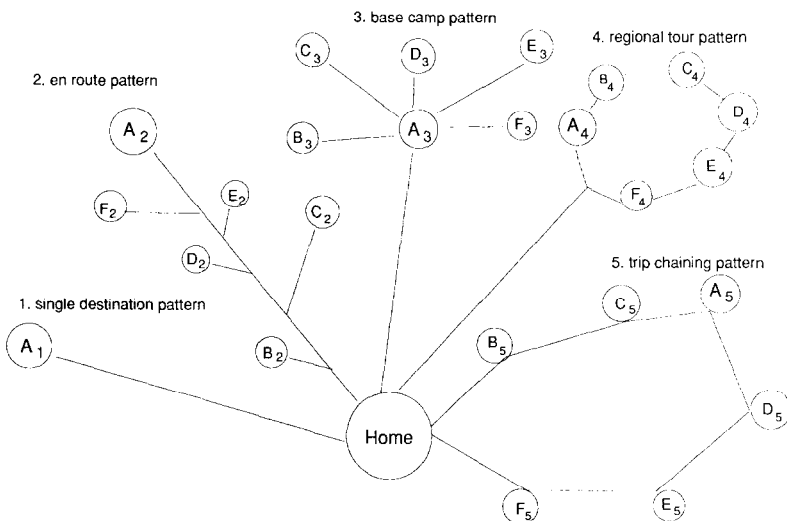


Figure 2. Alternative Spatial Patterns of Pleasure Vacation Trips

fully alone. The nearby American Indian communities, other area communities, and lesser attractions also attract visitors (Blank 1989).

The other four patterns describe alternative routes for visiting multiple destinations. Alternative two is the "en route" pattern, whereby a single destination provides the focus for the trip. However, on the way to and from that destination, there are places of interest to which tourists may detour and invest time and money resources. The en route attractions are established between the market origin and the primary destination, so that visitors are "intercepted" on the way to or returning from the primary destination. In some contexts, en route interception attractions have been deliberately encouraged as part of government policy. For example, in the United Kingdom in the 1970s, country parks were created between large population centers and popular destinations, such as national parks, to dissipate visitation at the destinations and to alleviate overcrowding at them. Interestingly, Nelson (1958) has suggested that for relatively small attractions, it is easier to attract visitors en route, than to pull them off or away from a beaten path. Although these smaller attractions are positioned to intercept visitors to the major destination, the appeal of the focus destination may be reduced if these intervening opportunities were not available. A study of visitation at 40 Canadian provincial parks conducted in British Columbia (Ewing 1983) supports this notion. It was found that parks with more destinations en route from the origin (or parks on routes with more intervening opportunities) were more, rather than less, likely to be visited when other influences were held constant.

Alternative three is the "base camp" or radius pattern. Tourists adopting this travel route stay at the primary destination throughout their vacation, and use it as a "base camp" from which to visit places within the area. In some situations, the satellite destinations may lack necessary support facilities, such as accommodations, to be self-generating attractions and, therefore, may depend upon a symbiotic relationship with the support services offered by the base-camp destination.

Orlando, Florida is an illustration of a base camp pattern, where Disney World is the main destination for most people, but an array of lesser attractions have located in the vicinity. From Disney's perspective, these attractions are parasitic, in that they generally do not generate much additional business to Disney, but rather are dependent on that main attraction to bring people to the area. However, from the city of Orlando's perspective, the other attractions may increase visitor length of stay in the city and consequent economic impact. To partially counter the parasitic positioning of other attractions, Disney has incrementally expanded its range of attractions and accommodations so that its hotels serve as base camps and more places of interest for day visits are on the Disney site.

A fourth pattern, described by Getz (1991) in the context of festivals and events, is the "regional tour" pattern. In this case, tourists travel to a region and sequentially visit a series of destinations in the area before returning to their origin. Getz (1991) suggests that destinations within regions may cooperate to create sufficient "pull" to attract visitors by fostering a number of good quality themed events that are clustered in time and space.

Gunn (1988) has suggested that when destinations offer different attractions in reasonable geographic proximity, which is characteristic of the base camp and regional tour patterns, they might be conceptualized as an organic tourism resource area. Within such an area, individual destinations have their own attraction power, but their differences enable a variety of visitor needs to be satisfied in the same geographic area. In these structures, the challenge for those responsible for marketing each destination is to recognize the complementary strengths of other destinations in the area and cooperate with them. At a minimum, this is likely to result in joint promotional efforts that communicate all the benefits that may accrue to visitors to the area.

The final route is the "trip-chaining" pattern. This represents a touring vacation that includes a number of foci. Tourists' itineraries involve visiting multiple destinations and going from one to another, rather than having a single focal destination or area. According to Gunn, for example, "A trail bringing many historic buildings together in common context is far superior to an isolated site" (1988:125). The trip chaining pattern is characteristic of some vacation package tours. If an attraction can be relatively easily integrated into established trip-linked tour packages for which there is demonstrated demand, then integration is clearly advantageous for the attraction and may offer low cost additional benefits to the tourists.

The four multi-destination patterns described here have some resemblance to the "three popular patterns of destination zones" described by Gunn (1988:194): urban, radial, and extended subzones. The urban and radial subzones exhibit some of the characteristics associated with the base camp pattern shown in Figure 2. Gunn's extended subzone "responds to a significant percentage of travel patterns that include first arrival at a major travel terminal (usually a large city) and transfer to some other area as a final destination" (1988:193). In this respect, it relates somewhat to the en route, regional tour, and trip-chaining patterns discussed here.

Based on the empirical work of Ewing and Baxter (1981), there are likely to be some characteristics of pleasure trips that are consistent across spatial patterns. They reported that the vast majority of stops made by their respondents were on a pre-planned route, and that only in a few cases was there any deviation away from the general direction of the most distant stopping-place on the trip. Further, their respondents sought to minimize repetition of the areas traversed and unnecessary lengthening of a trip. This strategy is consistent with a desire to minimize the distance and cost involved on a trip (Edwards and Dennis 1976, 1978).

The Concept of Cumulative Attraction

An implication of multi-destination pleasure trips is that the appeal of two or more attractions on a single route or in the same area is sufficient either to induce tourists to make a trip they would not have undertaken if there had been only a single attraction; or to persuade them to select one destination or route in preference to another if a decision to make some kind of trip had been made. The notion of

cumulative attraction offers a conceptual underpinning for multi-destination trips. This concept was developed in a retailing context (Nelson 1958) and more recently generalized to other types of travel behavior (Kitamura 1984; Lieber and Fesenmaier 1985). When adapted to tourism, it states that a given number of attractions whose primary target market is tourists will do more business if they are located en route, in proximity, or in a logical sequence to each other, than if they are widely scattered.

When attractions are clustered in one of the four multi-destination patterns shown in Figure 2, they offer a critical mass that is not offered by individual entities. The result is that they are able both to draw people from a more extensive geographical area and to increase market penetration within the catchment areas of the individual attractions. A major attraction is likely to receive the major share of promotional exposure, but this does not mean that smaller attractions en route or in proximity are merely parasitic. They add to the attraction power of the central destination which, without them, may be at a competitive disadvantage against other major destinations that have such satellite attractions. However, the lower the generative power of the individual attraction, the more important it becomes to adopt a cluster position.

Two basic types of cumulative attractions have been recognized (Nelson 1958; Kim and Fesenmaier 1990): one involves *similar* attractions, which together can draw more visitors than apart; the other consists of *complementary* attractions, which are compatible entities with a high incidence of visitor interchange. Both types represent shared business. The extent of an attraction's compatibility lies in the answer to the questions of whether attraction A down the road helps attraction B, or whether it harms attraction B, or whether it has no apparent effect on attraction B. The answer to these questions depends partially upon spatial structure or configuration and upon distance between a visitor's origin and the attractions (Kim and Fesenmaier 1990). It is also likely to depend on whether the primary target market is local, state, regional, or national. For example, Wall (1983) states that distant potential visitors may be impressed by the number and diversity of recreational opportunities available in Toronto. Facilities perceived to be competitive at the local level, may be perceived to be complementary and agglomerative by tourists. Wall (1983) offers the example of a new theme park opening on the perimeter of Toronto and the fear that it would take business from the existing downtown Ontario Place attraction and reduce its viability. The first two questions to ask in such a situation are whether the two attractions are perceived to be substitutable and whether their tourist markets overlap. If the answer to both these questions is affirmative, then the key issue is the ability of the new attraction to generate sufficient additional trips from tourists who will visit both attractions, to compensate for the loss of business at the existing attraction.

The notion of cumulative attraction recognizes that much tourism business is shared. An attraction secures its visitation not only as a result of its own generative power, but also as a result of the generative power of other attractions. This business is represented by those who visit an attraction, but have as their principal purpose in being in the

vicinity or on that route, a visit to other attractions. Thus, a new attraction that elects to locate near existing tourism attractions is likely to receive some secondary visitation associated with primary visits to the existing attractions, in addition to its own primary visitation.

Crompton and Gitelson (1979) used the notion of cumulative attraction to study two different types of tourism enterprises that were located adjacent to each other. Their study showed that the two attractions (Six Flags Over Texas Theme Park and the Texas Rangers Baseball Stadium in the Dallas-Fort Worth area) were complementary. Each attraction drew some visitors who came primarily to visit the other attraction and who would not have visited their secondary attraction if it had been sited independent of the primary destination. They concluded that the principle of cumulative attraction and compatibility was applicable to large-scale tourism enterprises, even when the profiles of the two sets of visitors were very different.

CONCLUSIONS

From the perspective of those responsible for marketing destinations, there are at least five reasons for better understanding multi-destination trip behavior. First, multi-destination travel has an impact on a destination's viability because its potential market includes not only those for whom it is a primary destination, but also those who come into its vicinity as part of a trip to a nearby location. It seems that, in some situations, multi-destination trips will lead to longer visits and greater expenditures in a given area. Certainly a destination should not promote only itself without cooperating with other destinations that tend to be visited on the same trip; one should at least understand the trip patterns. Neglecting this practice makes it unlikely the destination will optimize its tourism potential. Understanding the spatial patterns of visitors' trips is a key to accessing the potential market, and is part of Conrad Hilton's famous dictum for success: "location, location, location."

A second reason for focusing on multi-destination trips is that investigating the nature of linkages between destinations or attractions may help establish which types of tourism activities or resources should be located close to each other in order to maximize the financial return to both of them. For example, Wall asked visitors to five sites in Toronto—Art Gallery of Toronto, Metro Toronto Zoo, Ontario Place (a publicly owned and operated waterside theme park), Ontario Science Centre, and Royal Ontario Museum—to rank the five sites with respect to their attractiveness. He found that "visitors to the Zoo, Ontario Place, and the Science Centre on the one hand, and to the Art Gallery and the Royal Ontario Museum on the other, shared similar preferences. Knowledge of such relationships can be used to establish joint exhibitions, package deals, and passport (single price) admissions to exploit or encourage complementary site inter-relationships" (Wall 1983:22).

Third, a thorough understanding of multi-destination travel behavior is a likely prerequisite to accurate forecasts of travel behavior pat-

terns and demand numbers (Cheshire and Stabler 1978; Haspel and Johnson 1982). Witt and Witt (1989:425), who are perhaps the two strongest advocates of forecasting models in the tourism literature, observe that "The accuracy of econometric forecasting is disappointing." The most important dimension of forecasting, according to Crompton, is level of *accuracy*, and when the central question "Are tourism forecasts more accurate today than they were 15 years ago?" is asked, the answer is "no." He argues that forecasters have generally ignored multi-destination travel patterns in developing their models and this "represents a central conceptual limitation" (Crompton 1990: 960).

Fourth, an understanding of the linkages between destinations will facilitate cooperative marketing efforts. An analysis of spatial patterns of tourists' travel offers a basis for functionally defining a tourism region. Functional definition means that "regions are distinguished from each other on the basis of a closely linked set of internally consistent travel patterns" (Smith 1989:183). That is, visitors who go to a destination in a region are more likely to go to others in that region, than to destinations in another region. Alternative and more traditional approaches to defining tourism regions consist of political entities establishing them, either by defining rather arbitrary boundaries, or by specifying them on the basis of homogeneity, that is, internal similarities usually based on topography, culture, or climate (Smith 1989). The functional approach to defining regions, which would emerge from an analysis of multi-destination travel patterns, seems more likely to be useful for facilitating effective cooperative marketing efforts.

Finally, from a public policy perspective, multi-destination models could be useful for estimating the economic benefits likely to accrue to a community from both proposed and existing destinations. This approach would also provide more accurate demand estimates of the likely level of use of a system of attractions under a wide range of conditions, which has implications for highway, infrastructure planning, and investment decisions. □ □

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