

## The Halo Effect of Destination Waconia

How often do we hear of someone that has come to the Waconia area as a visitor and now has become a resident and/or started a business? From dining experiences, to wineries, time spent on the lake, to Nickle Dickle Day; I've heard a wide array of countless stories that often involve a particular place and a welcoming experience. Tourism attraction in the Waconia area does not just involve a place to visit; but rather a 'halo effect' of a place to live, work, start a business, and/or retire.

"In a recent study of tourism campaigns in nine states, the research firm of Longwoods International demonstrated how each state's tourism promotion campaign created a 'halo effect,' lifting not only visitorship but driving business development, real estate sales, second home purchases and even college recruitment. When combined with an actual visit, the impact of tourism marketing on all these activities was even more magnified." ("The halo effect of tourism")

### **Halo Effect of Minnesota Tourism**

While attending the 2023 Explore Minnesota Tourism conference yesterday, a video was shown that emphasized the 'Halo Effect of Tourism.' Research shows that if someone visits Minnesota, they are:

- 54% more likely to think of Minnesota as a good place to start a business
- 76% more likely to consider it a good place to live
- 106% more likely to think it's a good place to start a career

### **Carver County Impact**

At the conference, additional statistics were provided and broken down by county. The leisure and hospitality industry for Carver County demonstrates a fiscal value of tourism.

- \$231.6 million in gross sales
- \$15.1 million in state sales tax
- 4,020 private sector jobs

## Value of Destination Waconia

In looking at state and county data, what does this mean for Destination Waconia? Whether realized or not, our tourism industry is also producing a 'halo effect' in our business community. The Waconia Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau continues to promote our businesses, community attractions, and local events to visitors (and future residents). We're also working with our tourism board of directors to discuss and continue to research additional ways to measure and monitor analytics to demonstrate the monetary impact of driving visitors.

Over the long Minnesota winter, many of our members have been spending hours planning upcoming spring and summer events that attract visitors. We're looking forward to all that's ahead!

It might even be that your personal story is one that has played a part in our community's economic development. If a local attraction or event originally drew you to move to the area, we'd love to hear your story! In the meantime, stay connected at [destinationwaconia.org](https://destinationwaconia.org) for chamber and community events.

Your business makes a difference, and our collective impact is strong!

*-Christine*

"The halo effect of tourism." *Longwoods International*, 7 April 2016,

<https://longwoods-intl.com/the-halo-effect-of-tourism>. Accessed 1 March 2023.

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<https://mn.gov/tourism-industry/tourism-matters/>. Accessed 1 March 2023.