



# Unlocking the Power of Inclusion In Tourism Marketing



# About the Speaker



**Cassandra Razzi**  
Senior Business Development Manager  
[Cassandra@orange142.com](mailto:Cassandra@orange142.com)



# Direct Digital Holdings: DEI Equals Growth, and It's In Our DNA



As a Black-owned business with a minority-majority-led board, all of DDH's brands, including Orange 142, are fully committed to DEI and women empowerment. Women comprise 80% of our corporate leadership and 66% of the administration across our three brands. We are the number one partner for brands that want to support the most diverse digital advertising ecosystem.

80%

of corporate leadership is women

66%

of the administration are women



 Huddled Masses®  Colossus SSP®  Orange 142®



# Topics Discussed Today

- » Dimensions of Diversity
- » Investing in Diverse Media Boosts Perception and Sales
- » Influence of Gen Z and Millennials
- » Risks of NOT Adapting
- » Investment in DEI: Tourism Initiatives that Drive Financial Growth
- » Virginia Case Studies
- » Easy/Cost Effective Ways to Be Inclusive in Media
- » Ensuring Ongoing Investment : Demonstrating Financial ROI of DEI
- » Takeaways
- » Q&A



# Dimensions of Diversity



**Ethnicity and Race**



**Gender Identity and Expression**



**Sexual Orientation**



**Age**



**Ability and Disability**



**Religion**



**Socioeconomic Status**



**Cultural Background**



**Veteran status**



**Neurodiversity**

# Dollars

## Market Growth and Expansion:

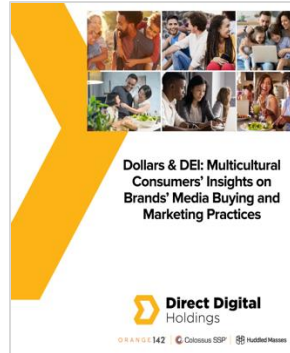
Diverse audiences represent significant market segments with purchasing power. According to Nielsen, multicultural consumers in the United States have a buying power of over \$4 trillion annually. Marketing to these demographics can help businesses tap into new revenue streams and expand their market share.

**multicultural consumers**  
have a buying power of over

# \$4 Trillion

## The Bottom Line:

Your destination's growth depends on reaching new audiences and growing your groups and leisure travelers to people with spending power. Your destination can't afford not to market to multicultural audiences.



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Huddled Masses<sup>®</sup> Colossus SSP<sup>®</sup> Orange 142<sup>®</sup>

**A's**

## Q&A



Download Today!



# Investing In Diverse Media Boosts Perception and Sales



## Enhanced Reputation

Inclusive tourism ensures that all visitors, regardless of their identity or abilities, can fully enjoy and access tourist attractions, accommodations, and services.



## Expanded Market Reach

Inclusive marketing attracts diverse visitors from different backgrounds, interests, and abilities, expanding the potential customer base for tourism businesses.



## Higher Visitor Spending

Attracting a diverse range of visitors through inclusive marketing can lead to increased tourism revenue, job creation, and sustainable development within the local economy.

## 40% of diverse consumers

**feel that only a few or no brands are doing a good job demonstrating support for their communities**

There is a significant disconnect between diverse consumer sentiment and the current level of brand investment in diverse media and outreach.

## Almost 80% of diverse consumers

**feel more positively about brands that advertise in targeted media channels**

Diverse consumers are more likely to have a favorable perception of brands that make the effort to reach them through community-focused media.

# Consumer Spending Trends



## Black Americans

Projected buying power of \$1.8 trillion by 2025.



## Latino/as

Spending of \$1.84 trillion in 2020, surpassing the entire economies of countries like Canada.



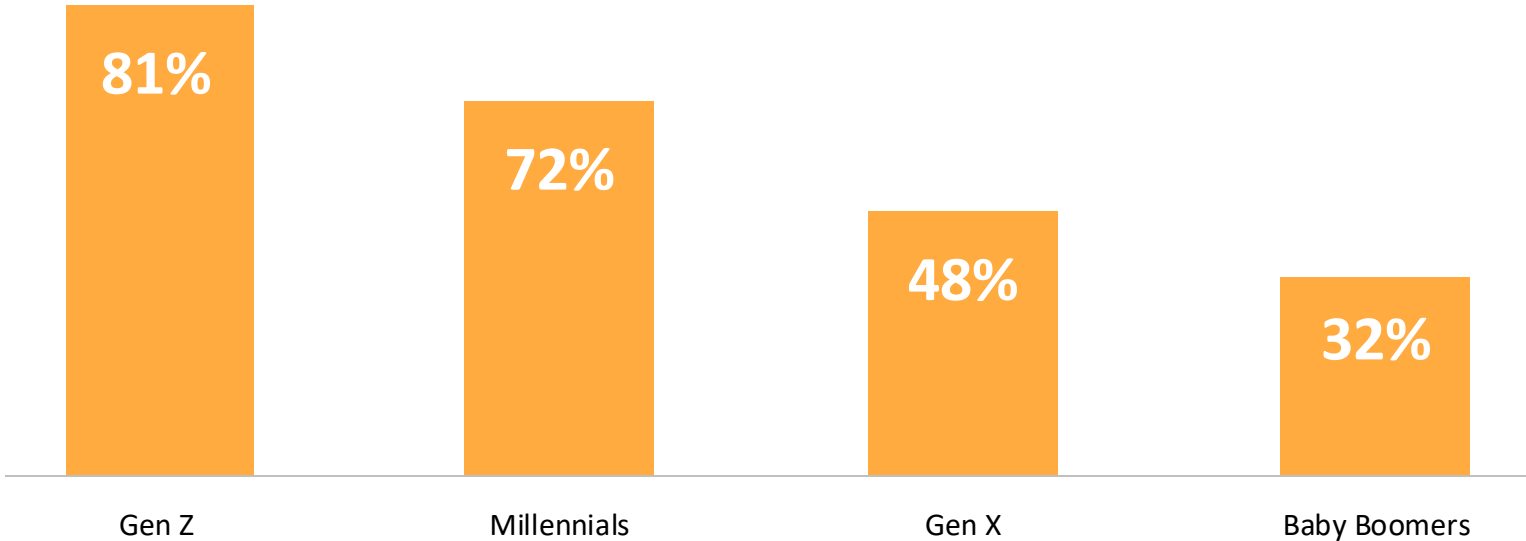
## LGBTQ+

Annual spending exceeds \$1 trillion



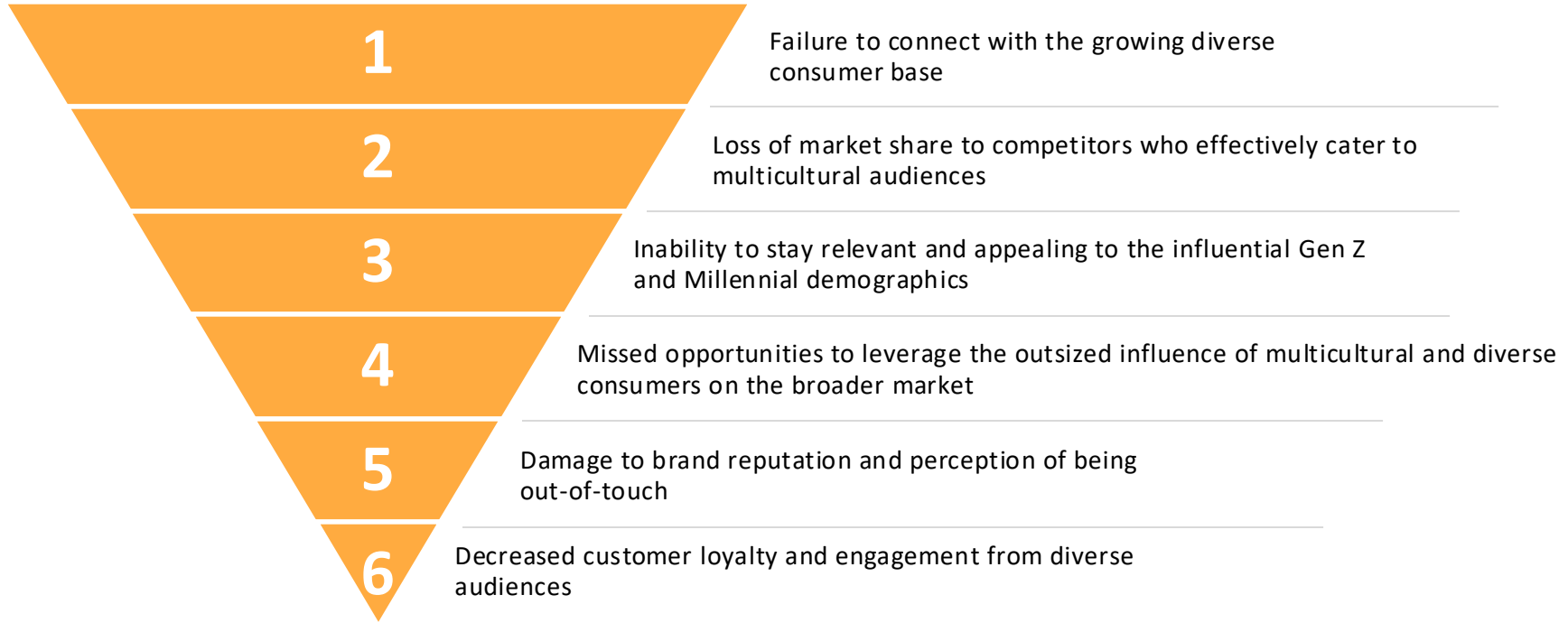
# The Influence of Gen Z and Millennials

Percentage of consumers who say multicultural and diverse voices have a significant impact on their brand preferences.



*\*Cracking the Code: How Multicultural & Gen Z Reshape Mainstream Marketing: DDH White Paper*

# The Risks of Not Adapting



What words or phrases come  
to mind when you think of  
Virginia as a travel  
destination?

slido

Please download and install the Slido app on all computers you use



**What words or phrases come to mind when you think of Virginia as a travel destination?**

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

virginia beach and williamsburg  
appalachian mountains  
mountains and beaches  
i think of virginia beach  
busch gardens  
mountain  
the beach  
beaches and mountains  
family country  
for lovers fun history lovers  
beautiful nothing nothing comes to mind

# virginia is for lovers

## virginia beach

blue ridge mountains scenic  
boring williamsburg beach history, mountains  
beautiful scenery is for lovers chincoteague  
virginia is for lovers! nice beaches not sure  
"virginia is for lovers" mountains history and beaches  
history and scenic  
no phrases but i think about virginia beach.  
virginia is for lovers. your vacation starts with va. blue ridge mountains and the scenic waters of the james river



# Virginia Perception Study

# Methodology

1,000+ Survey Respondents  
Qualifying Questions

- Do you take overnight road trips at least twice a year? (100% yes)
- Are you considering a road trip to somewhere within a few hours that you can explore and stay overnight? (100% yes)

## » Geographic Area Surveyed: Mid Atlantic States

- District of Columbia
- Delaware
- Maryland
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- West Virginia

# Survey Summary

- 84% of the survey respondents were either somewhat familiar or very familiar with Virginia as a destination
- 55% somewhat likely to consider Virginia as their next vacation.
- One third of survey respondents (33%) said they were very likely to consider Virginia as a travel destination for their next vacation

**50%**

of respondents said it was somewhat important that the destination's marketing reflects diversity authentically, with **33%** saying it was extremely important .

**69%**

44% of multicultural audiences said they were more inclined to visit a destination because its marketing showcased diverse and inclusive audiences, a 69% increase compared to the 26% response rate for white audiences.

- 43% of audiences between 18-34 said that the availability of accessible accommodations and activities in a destination greatly influences their decision when choosing a destination.
- In addition, 46% of the audience between 18-25 of all backgrounds said they are more inclined to visit a destination because it's marketing showcased diverse and inclusive representation, as compared to the 52% of older audiences that responded no to the same question.
- Only 4% of survey respondents somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that Virginia is a state with inclusive destinations for travelers of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.



# Investment in DEI: Tourism Initiatives that Drive Financial Growth

Embracing innovative strategies for inclusive marketing at your destination will broaden your market reach and boost revenue.



## Data and Metrics to Support DEI Efforts

- Utilize data to drive decisions
- Measure impact



## Tourism Workforce Development

- Encourage diversity in hiring and leadership
- Training programs



## Inclusive Destination Marketing

- Engage diverse travelers
- Leverage partnerships with local communities
- Influencer partnership and inclusive content development



## Long-Term Commitment to DEI

- Continuous learning and adaptation
- Sustainability
- Authentic representation
- Storytelling

# OUT RVA

OUT RVA promotes Richmond as an inclusive and welcoming destination for LGBTQ+ travelers. It highlights the city's vibrant queer culture, events, and attractions, helping to create a space where LGBTQ+ individuals feel seen and celebrated.

Through partnerships with local businesses and tourism campaigns, OUT RVA showcases Richmond's progressive community, encouraging LGBTQ+ tourists to explore the city's diverse offerings, including art, history, nightlife, and food. It also plays a role in fostering community engagement and promoting inclusivity within the local tourism sector.



# Black RVA

Black RVA is a collaborate initiative between Richmond Region Tourism and Community leaders. It supports Black and Brown communities by offering business owners certifications and training programs to foster growth.

The organization helps create mentorship opportunities and celebrates these small businesses though the Rooted in Rising Celebration.

The "I Am Tourism" program allows locals in the Richmond Region to serve as ambassadors, promoting the city and its diversity authentically.

Additionally, Black RVA advocates for resources for Black-owned businesses, which have grown by 66% since 2023, according to Tameka Jefferson.



# Accessibility in Destinations

## Alexandria

This historic city provides accessible options for those with mobility issues, including wheelchair-accessible Amtrak and Metro stations, accessible hotel accommodations, and public transportation such as the King Street Trolley, which is equipped with ramps and automated stop announcements.

The city also offers services like MetroAccess for those unable to use regular transit, ensuring that visitors with disabilities can navigate easily. Furthermore, local airports and train services offer accessible facilities to accommodate those with physical limitations ([Visit Alexandria](#)).



# Accessibility in Destinations

## Virginia Beach

Virginia Beach is recognized for its accessibility, particularly its 3-mile-long boardwalk, which is fully accessible to wheelchair users. The city also provides beach wheelchairs at various rental stations and ramps that lead directly from the boardwalk to the sand.

Special attractions like the JT's Grommet Island Park, a fully accessible oceanfront park with sensory games and playgrounds, cater to visitors with various physical and sensory disabilities. Accessible shuttle services, designated parking, and accessible restrooms throughout the beach area further enhance its appeal as an inclusive destination ([wheelchairtraveling.com](https://www.wheelchairtraveling.com)).



# Accessible Tourism

- » Focus on inclusive experiences: Stress the financial and reputational benefits of investing in accessible tourism, such as accommodating travelers with disabilities or designing inclusive experiences. For example, accessible hotels, transportation options, and information tailored to various needs.
- » Technology and innovation: Highlight the role of technology in creating more inclusive experiences (e.g., apps that improve accessibility or translation services for non-native speakers).



# Black Charlottesville

- » **Discover Black Cville** is an initiative celebrating Black culture, stories, and joy in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. It highlights the significant contributions of the Black community, both historically and in contemporary times. Key aspects include:
  - **Historical Sites:** Visitors can explore dynamic historic sites that showcase the Black community's legacy in the region.
  - **Thriving Community:** The initiative emphasizes the vibrant present-day Black community, featuring events, local wineries, and a dynamic arts scene.
  - **Culinary Experiences:** Discover a variety of flavors at Black-owned restaurants, offering unique culinary creations.
  - **Music and Arts:** Experience performances by emerging and established Black musicians at local venues, reflecting the rich cultural tapestry of the area.
  - **Business Directory:** A comprehensive directory of Black-owned and operated tourism-related businesses is available, facilitating support for these enterprises. [Visit Charlottesville](#)



# Easy Ways to be Inclusive in Your Advertising



**Diverse faces + voices**



**Accessible hotel rooms**



**Multilingual brochure**



# Activate Diverse Audiences with Organic Social Media

- » Plan your activation calendar and channel selection carefully for optimum effectiveness (align with cultural events/holidays)
- » Avoid pandering and research what you're posting. Make sure it's sensitive, appropriate and meaningful to the audience you're speaking to.



# Case Study: Digital Advertising Success with Multicultural Hispanic Audiences

- » We successfully targeted a Spanish speaking audience using data selected digital advertising channels. The objective was to increase visitation to the "Vamos a Tucson" website and genuinely connect with key Hispanic audiences.
- » Through authentic messaging, resonating creative, and insights-supported ad channels, we drove measurable results that exceeded Visit Tucson's expectations.



**The Client**  
Digital Advertising  
Success with  
Multicultural Hispanic  
Audiences

## The Results

**500%**

Increased web traffic

**13,700+**

Ad clicks delivered



# Ensuring Ongoing Investment : Demonstrating Financial ROI of DEI



## Demonstrate ROI

The white paper provides evidence that marketing to multicultural audiences yields significant financial returns. Destinations should track and showcase the increased visitation and spending from targeted DEI campaigns, destinations can make a strong case for continued funding.



## Grants & Partnerships

Explore grants and partnerships with organizations dedicated to promoting diversity. Many government and private sector grants are available for initiatives that promote inclusivity, especially in the travel industry.



## Community Involvement

Engage local communities in inclusive initiatives. By involving the community in the development and execution of DEI strategies, destinations can ensure these initiatives are authentic and have the backing of local stakeholders, which can lead to sustained funding.

# Ensuring Ongoing Investment : Demonstrating Financial ROI of DEI



## Highlight Consumer Behavior Trends

Explain how diverse travelers, including people from different ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ communities, travelers with disabilities, and neurodiverse individuals, represent growing market segments with considerable buying power.



## Site Statistics & Case Studies

Use data to show that organizations investing in DEI marketing see higher customer loyalty, greater brand recognition, and financial returns. For instance, diverse representation in marketing can result in an increase in revenue as it taps into new audiences.

# Economic Impact of Inclusive advertising in travel and tourism in VA

- » The Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) has also launched initiatives like the Marketing Leverage Program, which supports diverse marketing efforts across the state. These initiatives help local destinations create tailored marketing campaigns that highlight Virginia's diverse attractions and communities (VATC).
- » Additionally, the economic impact of inclusive advertising is supported by data from the Virginia Tourism Economic Impact study. This study provides detailed insights into how visitor spending affects local economies, showing significant contributions to employment, income, and tax revenue across various counties and independent cities in Virginia (Vietnam American Trade Council) (Vietnam American Trade Council).
- » Overall, inclusive advertising not only boosts tourism revenue but also fosters a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere, encouraging repeat visits and long-term economic benefits.

# Key to Inclusive Marketing: Know Your Audience

- » **Avoid stereotypes:** Avoid representations that perpetuate stereotypes or marginalize underrepresented groups
- » **Use inclusive language:** Avoid gendered, racial, ethnic, or ability-assuming language. Use words like 'everyone', 'people', 'they'
- » **Highlight accessibility:** Show wheelchair users, captioned videos, braille signage to signal accessibility
- » **Celebrate culture:** Share holiday traditions, foods, dress, music from different cultures
- » **Listen to Feedback:** Get feedback from diverse groups and adjust ads accordingly



# Key Takeaways

- » Involve members of your target audience in the planning process. This will help you to ensure that your advertising is relevant and culturally appropriate.
- » Be Authentic.
- » Test your advertising before you launch it.
- » Evaluate your results and follow the data.
- » Ongoing DEI Investment enhances brand loyalty and opens access to untapped markets.
- » Culturally Inclusive and accessible experiences can set a destination apart, leading to increase visitor engagement and repeat visits.
- » Sustainable DEI efforts must be integrated across workforce, customer experience, marketing and community partnerships to drive long-term growth.

