



MC
CAMPER
COMPASS

BOOSTING CAMPER STAYS:

KEY STRATEGIES TO REVIVE
CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS

Conducted by



MODERN
CAMPGROUND



LETTERS FROM THE CEOS

I'm Brian Searl, Founder and CEO of Modern Campground. I am thrilled to present the first ever MC Camper Compass report, created in partnership with Cairn Consulting Group. These monthly reports are crafted to provide you with important data and insights to help you make the best decisions for your campground.

This month, we are focusing on "Boosting Camper Stays: Key Strategies to Revive Campground Reservations." With many campgrounds seeing fewer reservations across the U.S. and Canada, it's more important than ever to adapt and find new ways to attract and delight campers. Our latest findings reveal what upgrades and discounts campers want to see, encouraging them to stay longer and return for future visits.

Inside this report, you'll find actionable insights ready to be implemented at your campground. These insights are designed to help you enhance your guests' experiences through meaningful improvements. At the end of the report, you'll find ways to put this data to use immediately.

Additionally, we're sharing 10 in-depth blog articles on our website to explore this topic further. We'll also post key takeaways on social media throughout the month, so make sure to follow us for bite-sized insights. We always welcome your thoughts and ideas; if you have suggestions for future reports or specific data you'd like to see, please reach out to me at brian@insiderperks.com.

Thank you for your commitment to creating memorable camping experiences. Together, we can turn these challenges into opportunities for growth and success.



Brian Searl

Founder & CEO
Insider Perks & Modern Campground

My name is Scott Bahr, President of Cairn Consulting Group, and I'm excited to introduce the first edition of the MC Camper Compass report, brought to you in partnership with Modern Campground. This report series is designed to offer actionable insights that will help you navigate the evolving landscape of the camping industry.

At Cairn Consulting Group, we specialize in providing data-driven solutions and in-depth research to help businesses like yours thrive. Our latest findings indicate a noticeable decline in campground reservations in many locations across the U.S. and Canada. This downturn presents an opportunity for us to explore innovative strategies to attract new visitors and enhance their experiences, thereby encouraging longer stays and repeat visits.

This report, titled "Boosting Camper Stays: Key Strategies to Revive Campground Reservations," delves into what campers themselves have expressed could entice them to spend more time

at your campgrounds. We collected this data through a combination of surveys and long-form interviews, providing both quantitative and qualitative insights directly from your potential guests.

Whether you're looking to innovate with new amenities, design effective promotional offers, or simply understand your guests better, this report offers valuable guidance. I invite you to read through and discover practical tips and strategies that can make a significant difference in your operations amidst these challenging times.

Thank you for your dedication to creating memorable outdoor experiences. Let's work together to turn these challenges into opportunities for growth and success.



Scott Bahr

President
Cairn Consulting Group





BOOSTING CAMPER STAYS:

KEY STRATEGIES TO REVIVE CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS

In light of a noticeable decline in campground reservations this year in many locations across the U.S. and Canada, campground owners and operators are presented with a need to adapt and innovate. Addressing this downturn requires a strategic approach to not only attract new visitors but also to increase the length of their stays and encourage repeat visits. This report aims to provide an overview of some options to achieve these goals amidst

challenging circumstances. By understanding guest preferences and exploring innovative approaches, campground businesses can create an appealing environment that addresses the trend of declining reservations. In particular, the information will focus on what campers say could effectively entice them to either lengthen their stays and/or take additional trips.

METHODOLOGY

The information provided in this report is a compilation of both quantitative and qualitative information. The primary resources that were utilized include a survey of guests conducted by Cairn Consulting

Group to evaluate the views of campers who are planning to take additional camping trips this year; a series of long-form interviews with campers were also used to provide context to the results.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key Insights 06

Enticements Based on Number of Planned Trips for 2024 07

Enticements Based on Accommodation Type Preference 08

Influence of Trip Reduction Types on Motivation 09

Lower-cost Camping Options and their Appeal 10

Motivating Factors for Longer Stays 11

Amenities as Enablers for Extended Stays 13

Role of Bathroom and Shower Facilities 15

Influence of Activities on Visitor Retention 17

Effectiveness of Nighttime Events 19

Additional Motivating Factors 21

Conclusion 23

From Report to Reality: Turning Insights into Action 25





KEY INSIGHTS

- Campers who are planning multiple trips (3 or more) are twice as likely as those who only are planning a single trip to mention that discounts could get them to stay longer or take additional trips.
- Generally, campers who stay in tents, RVs, or cabins are most likely to seek discounts, though RVers are less motivated by enhanced amenities. Cabin guests are least likely to cite better bathrooms and showers.
- It is notable that campers who decreased the number of nights they are planning to stay are more motivated by discounts than those who cancelled a trip.
- Campers who are planning to stay at free camping locations are much less motivated by discounts, yet are nearly equally likely to mention that enhanced amenities could motivate them to stay longer at a campground.
- Offering a range of discounts including free nights, meal deals, rewards programs, and local business coupons can significantly enhance campsite appeal.
- Providing modern facilities such as comfortable cabins, quality camping equipment, cooking areas, covered camping sites, pools, internet access, and clean showers will attract more campers.
- Including various water-related activities, community and family-oriented activities, and onsite entertainment can help retain visitors and encourage longer stays.
- Approximately 7% of campers indicated that nighttime events would motivate them to stay longer. Organizing events like live entertainment, campfire nights, and community activities can add a dynamic element to the camping experience, making it more attractive.

ENTICEMENTS BASED ON NUMBER OF PLANNED TRIPS FOR 2024

WHAT ARE THE ENTICEMENTS AMONG CAMPERS BASED ON THE NUMBER OF PLANNED TRIPS FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2024?

Looking ahead to the remainder of 2024, campers who are planning multiple trips (3 or more) are twice as likely as those who are planning only a single trip to mention that discounts could get them to stay longer or take additional trips. By contrast, the campers with fewer trips are looking for locations with better amenities.



Number of Trips Planned for the Remainder of 2024

	1 Trip	2 Trips	3 Trips	More than 3 Trips
Decreased price/discounts	23%	35%	25%	48%
Better/more amenities	24%	22%	25%	17%
Bathrooms/showers	14%	7%	13%	9%
Activities/things to do	7%	14%	13%	4%
Events/night time events	5%	9%	6%	4%
Campsite in a more natural setting	7%	4%	13%	0%
Enhanced safety	7%	1%	0%	0%
Enhanced/better food	4%	1%	0%	0%
Nothing	10%	10%	6%	4%
Other/uncertain	14%	10%	19%	22%

ENTICEMENTS BASED ON ACCOMMODATION TYPE PREFERENCE

WHAT ARE THE ENTICEMENTS FOR CAMPERS BASED ON THEIR PREFERRED TYPE OF CAMPING ACCOMMODATION?

Generally, campers who stay in tents, RVs, or cabins are most likely to seek discounts, though RVers are less motivated by enhanced amenities. Cabin guests are least likely to cite better bathrooms and showers.



Camping Accommodation

	Tent	RV	Cabin	Other
Decreased price/discounts	30%	32%	35%	14%
Better/more amenities	23%	18%	23%	24%
Bathrooms/showers	11%	15%	4%	8%
Activities/things to do	8%	10%	12%	8%
Events/night time events	4%	3%	12%	5%
Campsite in a more natural setting	5%	6%	4%	8%
Enhanced safety	4%	2%	4%	5%
Enhanced/better food	3%	2%	2%	3%
Nothing	10%	5%	5%	3%
Other/uncertain	15%	19%	12%	38%

INFLUENCE OF TRIP REDUCTION TYPES ON MOTIVATION

DOES THE TYPE OF TRIP REDUCTION (DAYS VS. TRIPS) IMPACT WHAT MOTIVATES ADDITIONAL TIME SPENT CAMPING?

It is notable that campers who decreased the number of nights they are planning to stay are more motivated by discounts than those who cancelled a trip.



Change in Trips for 2024

	Cancelled a Trip	Decreased Nights	Decreased Camping, Increased Other Trips	No Planned Changes
Decreased price/discounts	24%	35%	17%	31%
Better/more amenities	24%	19%	17%	25%
Bathrooms/showers	10%	6%	6%	13%
Activities/things to do	10%	0%	11%	11%
Events/night time events	0%	0%	6%	9%
Campsite in a more natural setting	5%	3%	0%	7%
Enhanced safety	14%	10%	0%	1%
Enhanced/better food	5%	3%	0%	2%
Nothing	5%	10%	6%	10%
Other/uncertain	19%	26%	50%	7%

LOWER-COST CAMPING OPTIONS AND THEIR APPEAL

DO THE ENTICEMENTS IMPACT THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING LOWER COST CAMPING OPTIONS?

Campers who are planning to stay at free camping locations are much less motivated by discounts, yet are nearly equally likely to mention that enhanced amenities could motivate them to stay longer at a campground. Campers who look for reduced fee campgrounds are more likely to be motivated by costs and having additional services and amenities.



Replaced Stays with Lower Cost Options

	Plan to stay at free locations	Plan to stay at reduced fee locations	No changes
Decreased price/discounts	15%	33%	40%
Better/more amenities	23%	27%	18%
Bathrooms/showers	13%	9%	12%
Activities/things to do	9%	9%	9%
Events/night time events	4%	9%	7%
Campsite in a more natural setting	12%	2%	1%
Enhanced safety	6%	6%	0%
Enhanced/better food	1%	3%	3%
Nothing	5%	9%	12%
Other/uncertain	24%	15%	6%

MOTIVATING FACTORS FOR LONGER STAYS

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF DISCOUNTS THAT MOTIVATE CAMPERS TO STAY LONGER?

In response to the observed decline in campground reservations, offering targeted discounts has emerged as a promising strategy to increase the length of stays and encourage repeat visits. According to our survey, 30% of campers indicated that a discount would motivate them to extend their stay. Various discount options could be implemented to capitalize on this opportunity:

Free Night Offers:

Providing an additional night free with a minimum stay requirement.

Meal Deals:

Including a complimentary meal or offering discounted meal packages.

Rewards Programs:

Establishing a loyalty program where guests earn points for future discounts or free stays.

Price Reductions on Goods and Services:

Lowering the prices of campground goods and services, such as equipment rentals or store items.

Extended Stay Discounts:

Offering free extra nights or waiving fees for extending trips.

Local Business Coupons:

Partnering with local businesses to provide guests with free coupons, enhancing their overall experience.

Special Offers:

Providing specific deals like half off on the last night and complimentary firewood for bonfires.

These discount strategies not only make stays more affordable but also enhance the overall value proposition for campers. By effectively implementing these offers, campgrounds can attract cost-conscious visitors—encouraging longer stays and fostering customer loyalty.

VERBATIM COMMENTS

They could offer a free night to stay at the campground.

A deal on the cost or a free meal included.

A rewards program.

Yes! A campground would truly entice me to stay an additional night if the cost was effective!

Reduction of price in goods and services.

Free coupons to local businesses.

Free extra nights, no added fees for extending trip.

Half off on the last night and free wood for bonfires.



AMENITIES AS ENABLERS FOR EXTENDED STAYS

WHAT TYPES OF AMENITIES ARE MOTIVATORS?

Improving amenities is a key strategy for campgrounds to encourage longer stays, with 23% of campers indicating that enhanced amenities would influence their decision to extend their visit. Based on camper feedback, the following amenities can significantly boost the attractiveness of a campground:

Comfortable Cabins:

Providing well-furnished cabins with power at competitive prices can attract those who prefer comfort over traditional tent camping.

Quality Camping Equipment:

Offering high-quality camping gear for rent or purchase on-site.

Cooking Area:

Including amenities like a cooking area and BBQ facilities offers guests a place to prep their meals and increases social interactions.

Covered Camping Areas:

Installing covered areas at campsites to offer protection from the elements.

Modern Facilities:

Adding features like pools, internet access, and clean showers to provide a more luxurious experience.

By upgrading their amenities, campgrounds can cater to a broader range of campers, from those seeking a more comfortable, less rugged experience to those looking for modern conveniences. Implementing these enhancements can make campgrounds more appealing, thereby increasing the length of stays and attracting a more diverse clientele.

VERBATIM COMMENTS

Offer good camping equipment.

Cabins and power within these cabins for a lower nightly price.

A BBQ and bug spray would entice me to stay and maybe a house on the campground.

If there is a comfortable cabin, I will stay there. I no longer have an interest in staying in tents.

Pool, internet, showers.

If I don't feel like truly roughing it and living like 2000 years ago I will try a campground.

Covered area in camping site.



ROLE OF BATHROOM AND SHOWER FACILITIES

HOW DO BATHROOMS IMPACT CAMPERS' MOTIVATION TO STAY?

Improving bathroom and shower facilities is a strategic approach for campgrounds to encourage longer stays, with 11% of campers indicating that better facilities would influence their decision to extend their visit. Based on camper feedback, the following improvements can significantly enhance the campground experience:

Real Bathrooms with Showers:

Providing modern, clean bathrooms equipped with showers.

High-Quality Washrooms:

Offering well-maintained, high-quality washrooms to elevate the standard of campground facilities.

Nice Public Bathrooms:

Ensuring that public bathroom areas are clean and pleasant, which many campers consider a game-changer.

Quieter Areas:

Designating quieter areas within the campground where bathrooms and showers are conveniently located.

Exclusive Amenities:

Providing exclusive access to high-quality showers.

By focusing on these enhancements, campgrounds can address common concerns about hygiene and comfort, making their sites more attractive to visitors. Implementing such improvements can lead to increased satisfaction, encouraging campers to stay longer and return in the future.

VERBATIM COMMENTS

Real bathrooms with showers.

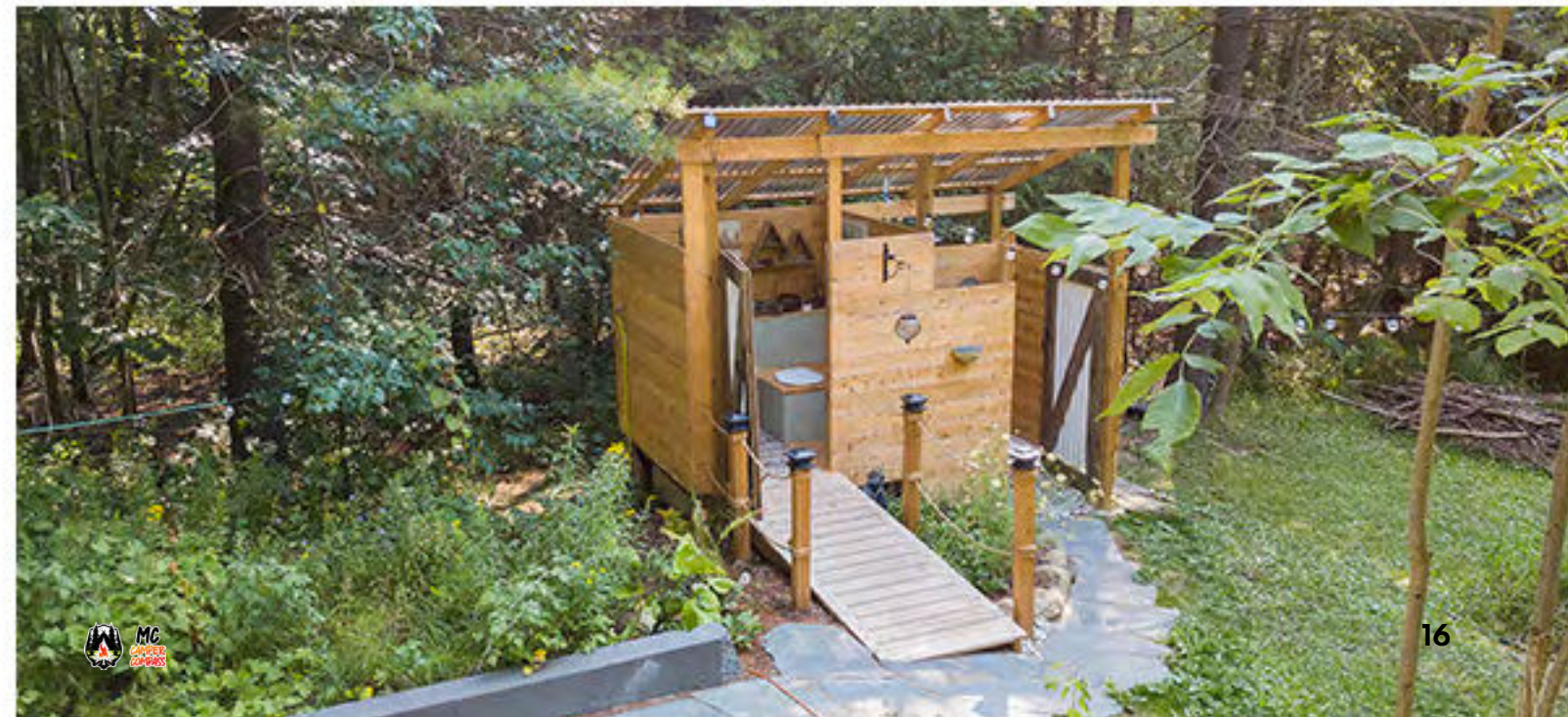
High quality washrooms or pools.

Nice public bathroom/washrooms. That to me is game changer for camp grounds.

Quieter areas, showers and restrooms close by and maybe a free boat rental for staying another night.

They really don't. There's a lot of loud people there, bathrooms are nasty and it's just gross I usually don't but sometimes if there's no other options then I would have to pick one. Well showers is always a plus.

The exclusive pass to a good shower and a 3 course meal.



INFLUENCE OF ACTIVITIES ON VISITOR RETENTION

HOW DO ACTIVITIES IMPACT GUESTS?

Offering a diverse range of activities is a key strategy for campgrounds to attract and retain visitors, with 9% of campers indicating that more activities would encourage them to stay longer. Based on camper feedback, the following activities can significantly enhance the campground experience:

Water Activities:

Providing options like swimming in a lake, boating, jet skiing, canoeing, rafting, paddle boating, and kayak fishing.

Pet-Friendly Areas:

Designating specific areas for pets to ensure that pet owners can enjoy their stay without restrictions.

Outdoor Recreation:

Offering facilities and equipment for fishing, such as fishing poles, and ensuring a variety of outdoor activities that allow campers to enjoy nature.

Community Events:

Organizing group or community activities and events to foster a sense of community and engagement among campers.

Family and Children's Activities:

Providing activities tailored for children and families to ensure an enjoyable experience for all age groups.

On-Site Entertainment:

Including entertainment options such as go-karts or other fun recreational activities.

By implementing a diverse array of activities, campgrounds can create an engaging and enjoyable environment that encourages longer stays and repeat visits. These activities not only cater to a wide range of interests but also enhance the overall appeal of the campground.

VERBATIM COMMENTS

Have activities like swimming, fishing, and entertainment while staying there.

It has a lake to go swimming and an area for pets.

Activities for the children/ family activities.

Group/community activities and/or events.

Activities like boating, jet skiing, go carts.

Have fun things to do in the area and must have a good quality room and in addition there should be free breakfast.

A good campground should have a lot of activities [like] canoeing, rafting, fishing, paddle boats, kayak, fishing poles, etc. The whole idea camping is to be outside and enjoying mother nature.



EFFECTIVENESS OF NIGHTTIME EVENTS

ARE NIGHTTIME EVENTS EFFECTIVE AT INCREASING STAYS?

Enhancing the offering of events and nighttime activities is a strategic approach for campgrounds to encourage longer stays, with 7% of campers indicating that more nighttime events would motivate them to extend their visit. Based on camper feedback, the following activities and events can significantly enhance the campground experience:

Nighttime Events:

Hosting events specifically designed for the evening, such as themed nights or special gatherings.

On-Site Entertainment:

Providing entertainment options like live music or performances to keep guests engaged after dark.

Campfire Nights:

Organizing regular campfire nights where guests can gather, socialize, and enjoy the classic camping experience.

Marshmallows and S'mores:

Offering snacks like marshmallows and s'mores, combined with movie nights or social gatherings for families and friends.

Group Activities:

Facilitating group or community activities that promote interaction and create a lively atmosphere.

Nighttime Activities:

Providing options for nighttime activities such as stargazing, night hikes, or glow-in-the-dark games.

Special Events:

Hosting special events like "Girls' Night Out" at the camp to cater to different interests and groups.

Community Events:

Organizing community events that bring campers together, fostering a sense of camaraderie and belonging.

By incorporating these nighttime events and activities, campgrounds can create a vibrant and engaging environment that not only enhances the guest experience but also encourages longer stays and repeat visits. These events add a dynamic element to the campground, making it a more attractive destination for a diverse range of campers.

VERBATIM COMMENTS

Have events at night time.

On site entertainment.

More campfire nights.

Night time activities.

Live entertainment.

Some kind of entertainment.

A girls night out at the camp.

Marshmallows and s'mores and a bunch of snacks and movies and friends and family.

Group/community activities and/or events.

...or have some type of event happening on their grounds.



ADDITIONAL MOTIVATING FACTORS

WHAT OTHER ITEMS WERE MENTIONED?

Across the spectrum of campers, others offered feedback on what could motivate them to either stay longer, and/or plan an additional trips. In particular, some campers note that if they could get a campsite that offers a high quality location near a natural feature they would consider additional time camping. Whether it's near a lake or river, or simply being able to isolate themselves and experience the benefits of being in nature.

Other campers mentioned the idea of food services, which could include an enhanced type of food offering on-site, as well as free or discounted food options.

To stay on a beautiful lake.

A nice location, creek or river, plenty of trees, and no other people.

Offer a campsite that has a great view along a river or a lake possibly add some outside furniture where you could sit out and enjoy the breeze.

Access to the lake and the views.



Good onsite food, not just vending machines.



Having better food so we don't have to cook or eat unhealthy food.

Free pancake breakfast or other free meal.

A deal on the cost or a free meal included.



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, addressing the decline in campground reservations requires a multifaceted approach that focuses on enhancing guest experiences and providing targeted incentives. By implementing a diverse array of activities, improving amenities, and offering strategic discounts, campgrounds can create a more appealing environment that encourages longer stays and repeat visits.

Some of these approaches include:

- **Enhanced Activities:** Offering a variety of activities, especially water-related and community events, can significantly boost the attractiveness of campgrounds.
- **Improved Amenities:** Ensuring clean, high-quality bathrooms, quiet areas, and exclusive access to certain amenities can elevate the camping experience.
- **Targeted Discounts:** Implementing discounts such as free nights, meal deals, rewards programs, and partnerships with local businesses can motivate campers to extend their stays.
- **Nighttime Events:** Hosting engaging nighttime activities and events can add a dynamic element to the campground experience, encouraging guests to stay longer.

By focusing on these areas, campgrounds can impact the guests' views on extending their stays or taking additional trips, ultimately alleviating the impact of the trend of declining reservations and promoting a thriving camping environment.



FROM REPORT TO REALITY: TURNING INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

Enhance Your Amenities

Campers are increasingly drawn to campgrounds that offer modern and comfortable amenities. Consider upgrading your facilities to include well-furnished cabins with power, BBQ facilities, and high-quality camping equipment available for rent or purchase. Additionally, creating modern shower facilities and maintaining clean washrooms can significantly impact a camper's decision to extend their stay. By investing in these enhancements, you cater to a broader spectrum of campers, from those seeking comfort to those desiring traditional camping experiences.

Offer Targeted Discounts

Implementing various discount strategies can not only attract visitors but also encourage them to extend their stay. Some effective discount options include offering a free night with a minimum stay, meal deals, and extended stay discounts. You might also consider partnering with local businesses to provide guests with free coupons, thus enriching their overall experience. Establishing a rewards program where guests can earn points

towards future free stays or discounts can foster customer loyalty.

Organize Diverse Activities

A well-rounded activity calendar can greatly increase the appeal of your campground. Include water activities such as swimming, boating, and fishing, which are highly popular among campers. Additionally, consider organizing group or community activities to create a sense of camaraderie. Nighttime events like campfire nights, stargazing, or themed nights can provide engaging experiences that motivate campers to prolong their stay.

Create Pet-Friendly Spaces

Acknowledging the importance of pets in family vacations can be crucial. Designating specific pet-friendly areas within the campground ensures that pet owners feel welcome and have a hassle-free stay. Enhancing these pet-friendly zones with amenities such as pet play areas or designated pet walking trails can make your campground a top choice for pet owners.

Improve Food Services

Offering high-quality on-site food options can be a game-changer. Campers appreciate not having to cook every meal and are attracted to healthy, delicious, and convenient food options. Consider hosting regular food-related events such as free pancake breakfasts or BBQ nights. Additionally, providing complimentary meal deals or discounts for dining can materially enhance the camping experience and encourage guests to stay longer.

Promote High-Quality Locations

Campers are often motivated by the quality and uniqueness of the campsite location. Ensure that your most scenic spots—near lakes, rivers, or areas with stunning natural views—are equipped with comfortable seating and possibly even outdoor furniture. A strategic emphasis on these high-quality locations can draw campers who might prefer a picturesque stay, thereby increasing your site's attractiveness and guest retention.

By implementing these actionable insights, campground owners can transform their sites into more attractive, engaging, and customer-friendly environments. These enhancements not only cater to current trends and preferences among campers but also foster greater loyalty, encouraging visitors to return and recommend your campgrounds to others.

Act on these insights today to convert the guidance from this report into reality, elevating your campground's market positioning and guest satisfaction consistently.



MODERN
CAMPGROUND



www.moderncampground.com