.Executive Summary

The following market research has been compiled for Cabot cheese and the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (VDTM).

Literature Review:

- *Co-ops*: In the dairy industry, the cooperative is an efficient business model and Cabot practices niche marketing which lets them charge higher prices for a higher quality product.
- *Dairy Industry:* Dairy is the largest industry in New England. Vermont is actively engaged in the dairy industry and it is a major economic driver in the state.
- *Cabot*: Cabot cheese is a Vermont institution since 1920 and prides itself on its quality and cooperative heritage.
- *Tourism*: Vermont attracts visitors nationwide and has a very loyal following of East Coast residents who like to get away from it all and who like active outdoor activities.

Brief Description of the Survey:

- One thousand surveys were mailed via United States Postal Services from the VDTM's database.
    - o There was a response rate of 26.152%.
- Nineteen thousand surveys were sent via email to people who requested information online and provided their email addresses.
    - o There was a response rate of 18.26%.
- Objectives of Survey
    - o To obtain demographic information from all respondents, regardless of their visitor status.
    - o For Cabot; converting visitors to loyalists.
    - o For VDTM; analyzing people who request information versus those who actually visit, and analyzing the effectiveness of travel packets.
- The survey was divided into sections containing questions on Cabot cheese, VDTM and demographics.

Significant Findings:

- The average age of respondents for mail and email is 50.7 and 49.8 respectively.
- The median overall household income bracket is in the $75,000 - $100,000 range.
- The majority of visitors travel to Vermont in the fall, which accounts for 41.3% of visits.
- Respondents reported an average of 1.94 visits per year to the State.
- Eighty seven percent of visitors spend the night.
- Visitors overall rating of Vermont on a 6 point scale was 5.41.
- Sightseeing, shopping and historic sites and museums are the top three activities in which visitors participate while in Vermont.
- Maple syrup, cheese and ice cream are the three products most associated with Vermont.

- Nearly 75% of respondents reported they were aware of the Cabot Brand.
    - The grocery store is where the majority of respondents were exposed to the brand.
    - The main reason for trial is because Cabot is a Vermont product.
    - Quality and taste are the main reasons respondents buy Cabot cheese.
- After visiting Vermont, respondents report higher levels of loyalty and purchase of Cabot cheese.
- Exposure and trial of Cabot cheese increases purchase frequency and loyalty.
- Loyalty is highest among older populations and higher incomes.

Conclusions:

- Overall, if a Vermont tourist is exposed to and tries Cabot cheese during their visit, they are more likely to become more loyal and purchase more Cabot cheese.
- A positive visiting experience in Vermont affects loyalty to Cabot cheese.
- Travel planning materials (website and planning packets) were overall rated useful.
- Visitors to Vermont primarily come in the summer and fall months.

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Timeline of Events

Illustrated below are the duties and activities conducted by the research team in order to complete the research.

January 20th	Select team/select client
January 25th	First meeting with client
January 30th	Client meeting report
February 3rd	Research objectives and design
February 10th	Abstract of literature/Preliminary questionnaire
February 13th	Second meeting with client
February 16th	Final questionnaire
February 20th	Send out surveys
February 23rd	Data collection report
February 27th	First reminder email
February 2nd	Literature review
March 6th	Second reminder email
March 9th	Data entry report
March 26th	Stop collecting data/Electronic data file completed
March 30th	Write SPSS programs
April 6th	SPSS frequencies output
April 12th	Third meeting with client
April 13th	Univariate analysis tables and write-ups
April 28th	Draft one of final report
May 5th	Final draft of report
May 10th	Presentation

Vermont is known as a national tourist destination for great recreational opportunities and beautiful landscapes. The VDTM has created seasonal information packets and an on-line travel planner to provide travel information to potential visitors. VDTM identifies numerous tourism attractions such as the Ben and Jerry's ice cream factory and the Cabot visitor annex.

Cabot Creamery was founded in 1919 as a cooperative of dairy farmers from Vermont. The company follows the Rochdale cooperative principles by placing value on community, quality and self-reliance. Cabot Creamery produces a wide range of high-quality natural dairy products. Cabot is most famous for its award winning cheddar cheeses. Cabot continues to be a successful dairy producer known throughout the country for high-quality, all natural dairy products.

This research study was conducted by students of the School of Business Administration at the University of Vermont. The study seeks to meet the information needs of Cabot Creamery and the VDTM. Two modes were used to collect data: a direct mail survey and an online survey. The sample was randomly selected from the population of people who have requested travel information from the VDTM. The survey collected qualitative and quantitative data on the respondents visit to Vermont. Information gathered included activities during the visit, rating of the visit, awareness and exposure to the Cabot brand, and demographic information. The results from the survey can be used by Cabot to identify effective means of converting visitors to Vermont into Cabot loyalists. The VDTM can use the information to better understand the information needs of visitors and potential visitors.

This report is organized as follows. First, we will provide a brief review of the literature on the dairy industry, co-ops and tourism in Vermont. Next, we will detail the objectives and research design for this study. Then, we outline the results of the study and, finally, offer recommendations and conclusions. We turn now to the literature review.

Cooperative:

The Cabot Creamery is one of many different types of cooperatives that produce natural and processed cheese, butter, and a number of different complementary products. Cooperatives (co-ops) origins date back nearly three hundred years to Scotland, where Robert Owen believed that he should put his workers in a good environment and provide education for them and their families in his cotton trade business. Co-ops today have come a long way from their origins. They exist in agricultural industries, housing, consumer goods, ski resorts, medical services, insurance, and other fields. Dairy co-ops negotiate prices, assemble, haul, manufacture, process and market their products to wholesalers, retailers, and in their own stores. (Curtin 1993)

In Vermont especially, co-ops have a dominant presence. Grocery stores such as City Market in Burlington, Mad River Glen Ski resort in Waitsfield, and the Cabot Creamery among others scatter the Vermont countryside. The economic climate in Vermont offers a favorable environment for co-ops. Being a small state with a small population and close community ties, the idea of mutual benefit is highly regarded.

The Cabot Creamery began in 1919, when 94 farmers contributed $5 per cow to combine their resources to increase sales (Cabot 2005). During this time, about one third of all dairy farms were associated with a co-op. There were nearly 3000 cheese factories in the United States at this time. As of 2002, dairy co-ops accounted for 13% of all agricultural marketing co-ops in the United States. Over the past 70 years the number of dairy co-ops has fallen from 2,300 in 1940 to only 196 in 2002. This is a direct reflection of farmers taking advantage of large economies of scale, which has been a national agricultural trend. This movement has resulted in fewer, larger farms. (Curtin 1993)

The Cabot Creamery falls under a niche marketing co-op. Capitalizing on farmer based and organic products, Cabot markets unique, high quality cheeses at its processing location in Vermont. Cabot sells a large variety of different specialty cheeses alongside its award winning cheddar cheese. Only about 9% of all dairy co-ops fall under this niche marketing type of co-op. (Cooperatives in the Dairy Industry 2005)

Consolidation is taking place in the processed cheese industry. Cabot has been incorporated with the Agri-Mark dairy co-op since 1992. Agri-Mark supplies all the milk that Cabot uses to produce cheese. Agri-Mark also supplies milk to McCadam cheese of New York. Cabot creamery prides itself in using the ethics of the Rochdale Principles. These are a set of basic principles that allow co-ops world wide to conduct business. Though revised several times since its creation in 1844, the newest set of principles states:

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Member economic participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, training and information
6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Concern for community

(The Rochdale Cooperatives Principles 2006)

Cabot Creamery is still a small co-op in comparison to their national competition. Cabot not only competes with national branded foods, such as Kraft, but also other co-ops, such as Land O' Lakes. The Midwest has the largest dairy cooperative concentration in the country. Many co-ops exist all across the country and only distribute their products locally (Consolidation in the Dairy Industry 2000). Cabot has a unique advantage of being sold at some national retailers such as Wal-Mart. The Cabot Creamery is operating in a market that has huge growth possibilities, though to increase output the company would need to increase members.

Dairy:

The dairy industry in Vermont is the largest in New England. The State is home to nearly half of the dairy farms in all of New England. Over 90% of milk is exported by Vermont dairy farmers with most of it being sent to Southern New England. Over half of the available crop land in Vermont is owned by dairy farmers. The milk sold by Vermont's dairy farmers makes up 75% of Vermont's total cash receipts. There are 32 major farms in Vermont that produce cheese. Cabot Creamery Inc. is one of the most notable. (Vermont Dairy 2003)

A Vermont Dairy Promotion Council is in place throughout the state of Vermont. Due to state and federal law all dairy farmers have to contribute to the Promotion Council. Through a portion of the milk checks, Vermont dairy farmers pay for milk and dairy product promotion. The amount a dairy farmer has to pay is measured in 100 pounds of milk. For every hundredweight in milk Vermont farmers pay 15 cents. Of this money, 10 cents goes to the Vermont Dairy Promotion Council, and five cents goes to national Dairy Management Inc. programs. In Vermont dairy farmers pay for milk produced by all animals, but on the national level only dairy farms that produce milk from cows are required to make contributions. (Vermont Dairy 2003)

The Vermont Dairy Promotion Council is made up of representatives of farmer cooperatives, independent farmers and processors. The council is funded at approximately $2.6 million. The majority of this money goes to the New England Dairy

Promotion Board, which supports Dairy Marketing Inc. programs. The rest of the money is distributed between the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and other marketing and promotions activities including the University of Vermont. (Vermont Dairy 2003)

Dairy farming provides Vermont with culture, history, landscape and also contributes greatly to the economy. Vermont's agricultural economy is the most dairy dependent in the nation. A study done in 2002 on two Vermont counties found that farmers typically spend more locally than other businesses since they rely on a variety of local businesses such as feed and seed dealers, fertilizer and fuel companies, machinery dealerships and repair shops. The study showed that in these two counties farms added $450 million annually to the local economy. Dairy farms in Vermont are also responsible for more than one-tenth of all the farm sales in New England. The dairy farms support local businesses by spending $169.6 million on farm expenses. The dairy farms also provide more than ten percent of all jobs in the Vermont region. The dairy industry provides over 11,000 jobs for farm workers, suppliers, processors, marketers and a variety of other farm services and agencies. (Agriculture, Food, and Community in Vermont 2003)

Over the years many changes have taken place in the Vermont Dairy Industry, primarily because of increasing costs and price instability. The number of off-farm processors is on the decline, which makes manufacturing costs for farmers higher. There has been in increase in on-farm processors, with in increase in organic dairy farming. The dairy industry will continue to change and, in response, the Vermont economy will have to change as well. Through different agencies, including affiliates at the University of Vermont, a dairy task force as been created to deal with the changes in the industry. (Agriculture, Food, and Community in Vermont 2003)

Cabot:

As stated earlier, Cabot Creamery was founded in 1919 by a co-op of dairy farmers from Cabot Vermont. The farmers used excess milk to produce butter which they then sold throughout New England. Ninety-four farmers initially joined at the cost of $5 per cow, and a cord of wood. The farmers purchased the village creamery, and produced butter under the Rosendale label. (The Vermont Cheese Trail 2002)

In the 1930's the co-op experienced success due to the increase in urbanization. Cities created a large market for dairy products. During this period of success Cabot hired its first cheese maker and began producing cheddar cheese. Cabot continued to grow through the years and by 1960 Cabot was comprised of 600 farm families. Farms in the U.S. were steadily declining as a result of industrialization. In 1980 Vermont only had 2,000 farms whereas 10,000 farms were present twenty years before. While the farm industry was shrinking Cabot experienced continued success. Cabot dropped the Rosendale label and produced cheese under the Cabot brand name. (Cabot 2005)

In 1989 Cabot took first place in the cheddar category at the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest held in Green Bay, Wisconsin. A few years later in 1992 Cabot experienced a large expansion by merging with the southern New England co-op Agri-mark. The merger meant that the co-op now had 1,500 farms, four processing plants and a large product line. During this same time Cabot cheddars won many awards for taste. (Cabot 2005)

Today Cabot is still owned by a co-op of farm families and has an impressive product line. Cabot is known for producing high-quality, all natural products. Cabot produces a wide variety of different flavored cheddars, Monterey Jack, Swiss, American, Colby Jack, Mozzarella, Muenster. Cabot also produces cream cheese, cottage cheese, butter and yogurt among other products. Cabot continues to strive to meet consumer demand by introducing new products to the market. One of the most notable is the new 50% light cheddar cheese. The Cabot brand is nationally distributed and can be found throughout the country. (Cabot 2005)

Cabot and VDTM are currently working together. For example, Cabot is featured in advertising campaigns put out by VDTM. Through VDTM's website (VermontVacation.com) visitors can learn about Cabot Creamery and different tourist attractions that involve Cabot. Cabot has many tourist attractions that bring visitors to Vermont and therefore it is only a natural partnership between the two companies.

Vermont Tourism:

The state of Vermont has been a popular tourist destination for several years. There are a variety of reasons that visitors are drawn to Vermont. Among the top reasons is the plethora of recreational activities in which one can participate. There are more than 9,000 miles of biking trails, both off-road and on. The Green Mountains offer over 700 miles of hiking trails including the well known Appalachian Trail and Long Trail. The mountains also make Vermont an ideal destination for skiers and riders. There are over 4500 skiable acres, 900 trails, and 150 lifts. Other activities that Vermont offers in the winter are snowmobiling and snowshoeing. Vermont is “one of the top hunting destinations in New England" with over 800,000 acres of conserved wildlife habitat open to public hunting. "Vermont's waterways are home to some of the finest freshwater fishing in the US" (VermontVacation.com 2006). Visitors can also partake in a game of golf at one of the several beautiful golf courses in Vermont. There are recreational activities to satisfy virtually all tourists' interests.

Apart from physical activities, tourists also visit Vermont for arts and culture. There are several small venues where local, regional, and national artists perform. One can enjoy a concert without the annoyance of a huge crowd. The "downtowns" of Vermont are an attraction as well. Cities such as Bennington, Burlington, Brattleboro and Montpelier contain local restaurants and shops and "serve as the core of Vermont's social, cultural, and economic life" (VermontVacation.com 2006). Vermont also holds several fairs, festivals, and events such as dairy, farm, and craft shows. In addition, there are multiple museums and galleries for tourists to visit.

A third reason Vermont attracts tourists is the inherent beauty of the Green Mountains and the nature that surrounds them. Thousands of "leaf peepers" travel to Vermont in the fall to enjoy the foliage while some visit in the winter to see the snow covered mountains. The countryside is home to several functioning farms. Visitors are able to take tours, stay overnight, or even help out the farmers for a few days. Not only do the visitors enjoy nature, but they also gain an understanding of the integral role these farms play in Vermont's economy.

Many tourists visit Vermont for the distinct products that are created in the state. Among the long list of goods are dairy, cheese, coffee, maple syrup, chocolate, wood furniture, and teddy bears. There are over 250 specialty food companies in Vermont.

Visitors can sample the products and take tours of the factories as well as purchase the products to bring home with them. Vermont products are known for their quality as well as their naturalness.

The tourism industry plays a vital role in Vermont's economy. The Vermont Travel and Tourism fact sheet for 2003, published by the VDTM, states that Vermont visitors spent $1.46 billion for goods and services yearly. This spending supported 36,470 jobs for Vermonters and contributed $181.7 million in tax and fee revenues to Vermont. Sectors of the Vermont economy such as retail and dinning are two to three times more dependant on visitor spending than the national average. About 40 percent of visitor spending occurs in the summer, 31 percent in the winter, 21 percent in the fall, and 7 percent in the spring. Visitors made 12.8 million trips for leisure, business, or personal travel. Around half these visitors are out of state and stayed overnight while one quarter are in state and simply visited for the day. Half of the visitors live in another state, and 19 percent are international, mostly from Canada. One third of visitors stay with friends, family or in a private home when spending the night in Vermont and half stay at a hotel, motel, inn or bed and breakfast. (The Vermont Travel & Tourism Industry 2003)

"Visitors consistently describe Vermont as beautiful, peaceful, natural, pure, authentic, genuine, and with products of exceptional quality. These attributes are complimented by a personality described as respectful of the environment, friendly, hard working, and independent." (Hyde 2006). The strength of the Vermont brand has been a key component to the success of the state's tourism industry. Although the perceptions of Vermont have not changed much over the years, the way in which the brand is marketed to potential visitors is innovative. With the internet being one of the main sources of knowledge for a majority of individuals, marketing through this medium has become a necessity for Vermont. It allows the state to leverage its strong brand identity and compete with larger states that have a more significant marketing budget.

The VDTM recently began an in-state marketing campaign after realizing how important in-state visitors are in terms of being tourists themselves as well as influencing the visits of family or friends. They are also working on attracting more international tourists. The potential for growth in the Vermont tourism industry is huge thanks to the strength of the Vermont brand. The state recently hired a chief marketing officer, Christine Werneke, to “establish a consistent Vermont message and brand identity that all agencies and departments can adopt.” (Hyde 2006). The value of the brand is already created. The challenge will be to continue to maximize and capture that value.

Given this backdrop, the next section of this report discusses our research objectives and design.

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Objectives:

There were two main objectives of this survey. The first was directed at satisfying the information needs of Cabot Creamery while the second answered questions for VDTM. The objective for Cabot was to understand what works in converting those who visit Vermont into Cabot Triers, Repeaters, and Loyalists. The objective for VDTM was to explore the conversion of those who requested tourist information from their website to those who actually visited. We also looked at the usefulness of the Tourism Department's travel planning materials.

Cabot will use the information from this study to determine any opportunities (new or previously used) to convert Vermont tourists into Cabot loyalists. VDTM can use the data to better understand the profile of their potential and actual visitors.

Relationships of Interest:

After collecting data, we performed several cross tabulations in order to draw meaningful conclusions related to our objectives. The first set of relationships analyzed determined the factors that may have impacted trial and adoption of Cabot cheese among Vermont visitors. These include:

1. The relationship between an increase in loyalty to Cabot cheese after visiting Vermont to:
    - Demographics
    - Exposure to brand while in VT
    - Trying Cabot while in VT
    - Positive experience while visiting Vermont
    - Exposure to advertising, (TV, Radio, Print, or placed in Vermont Travel information sources)

2. The relationship between potential travelers who request information from the website to the demographics of actual tourists who have since visited Vermont

3. The relationship between those individuals surveyed through e-mail and those surveyed through direct mail

Information Needs:

Information needs can be divided into two categories: those that will answer questions posed by Cabot Creamery and those that will provide insight for the Vermont Department of Tourism.

1. Cabot:
    - Trial Vehicles
    - Awareness
    - Usage/ Purchase rates
    - Attitude towards Cabot
    - Loyalty to Cabot cheese
    - Importance of Brand Attributes
    - Demographics (age, gender, income, family size, education)
    - Exposure to brand
    - Perception of Vermont
    - Products associated with Vermont

2. Vermont Department of Tourism:
    - Lodging type
    - Primary interests and activities while in Vermont
    - Length of stay
    - Number of travelers
    - Demographics (income, age, gender, education)
    - Frequency of visits
    - Usefulness of VT Vacation packet, VT Travel Planner

Data Collection Mode:

Surveys were distributed through direct mail and electronic mail. These methods of data collection were appropriate in order to preserve anonymity and enabled us to reach a large amount of potential respondents. The surveys were sent out on February 20th and were collected over a three week period. UVM provided letterhead and envelopes (both outbound and return). Cabot printed the questionnaire and labels and paid outgoing mailing. Students helped with the mailing as needed. The web survey was fielded by Cabot, with the resulting data sent to the students upon receipt.

Sample Size and Protocol:

The sampling frame consisted of VDTM's database. The sampling procedure was a random selection of 1000 individuals who did not provide an e-mail address and 19,000 individuals who did include an e-mail address. The protocol was no follow-up for direct mail. There were two follow-up e-mail reminders sent out to those who had not yet completed the survey. The first reminder was sent out one week after the initial launch and the second reminder one week following the first. We included, as an incentive, an address card to be filled out and sent back to Cabot who then sent out a coupon for a free bar of cheese. For those respondents filling out the web survey, they simply provided their address information after they completed all the questions. In addition, all names were entered into a drawing for a free Vermont vacation. The anticipated response rate was 25% which made the sample size 250 direct mail completes and 4,750 e-mail completes.

Question Types and Scales:

The survey was divided into three separate sections. The first section contained questions pertaining to VDTM, the second to Cabot cheese, and the third consisted of demographic information. A variety of question types and scales were utilized including:

- Several nominal, check the box type questions
- Nominal and ratio for demographics
- Few yes/no questions
- Likert-type scales

The next section provides results of the survey.

The following tables outline summary statistics from the questionnaire. Of the 1,000 mail surveys that were delivered, 244 were successfully completed and returned, while 67 were undeliverable. This produced a response rate of 26.152% for direct mail surveys. There were 19,000 total web surveys distributed via email and 3,470 were successfully returned, producing an 18.26% response rate. For a more detailed description of the data, please refer to appendix D, which contains a full printout of the frequency output.

Table 5.1
Profile of Respondents

	Overall Responses	Web Responses	Direct Mail Responses
Age			
18-24	1.00%	1.00%	1.70%
25-34	11.70%	11.60%	13.40%
35-44	20.60%	20.70%	19.50%
45-54	29.80%	29.80%	22.90%
55-64	25.30%	25.30%	24.20%
65+	12.10%	11.60%	18.20%
Mean Age	49.86	49.8	50.73
Education			
Mean	15.61 years	15.62 years	15.42 years
Gender			
Male	41.20%	41.70%	33.60%
Female	58.80%	58.30%	66.40%
Income			
<20000	2.20%	2.20%	2.00%
20000 to <25000	3.20%	3.30%	2.00%
25000 to <30000	0.40%	0.00%	5.90%
30000 to <40000	15.00%	15.50%	7.80%
40000 to <50000	23.00%	23.90%	9.30%
50000 to <75000	1.60%	0.00%	25.40%
75000 to <100000	23.40%	23.50%	22.90%
100000 to <150000	19.00%	19.30%	14.60%
150000 to <250000	9.20%	9.30%	7.80%
250000+	2.90%	3.00%	2.40%
Median	$75,000 - $100,000	$75,000 - $100,000	$50,000 - $75,000

Table 5.1 contains a demographic profile of survey respondents. Our team calculated statistics for respondents' age, education, gender and income. The results are based on the answers we received to questions 28, 29, 30 and 32 respectively in our questionnaire.

The mean age of respondents was very similar for both the web and direct mail surveys: 49.8 years old for web compared to 50.73 years old for direct mail. Overall, the largest percentage of respondents, 29.80%, were between the ages of 45 and 54 years old. Although this age group also represented the largest percentage of web survey respondents, it made up only the second largest proportion of direct mail respondents. For direct mail surveys, individuals between the ages of 55 and 64 comprised the largest percentage of respondents: 24.20%.

The mean number of years of education was also very similar among web and direct mail respondents. With an overall average of 15.61 years, web respondents averaged 15.62 years while direct mail respondents averaged 15.42 years.

Our research team received more survey responses from females than males. The overall gender differential showed that 41.20% of our respondents were male, while 58.8% of our respondents were female. We also noticed that compared to direct mail, a larger percentage of males participated in the web survey: males 41.70% for web compared to 33.60% for direct mail. Females made up 58.30% of web respondents and 66.40% of direct mail respondents.

The median overall income bracket was in the $75,000 - $100,000 range. This median income range was also the same for the web respondents. For direct mail respondents however, the median income was lower: $50,000 - $75,000.

Table 5.2 **Travel Behavior**	
Season of visit	
Fall	41.30%
Spring	8.10%
Winter	14.70%
Summer	35.90%
Average visits to Vermont	1.94* visits a year
Travel companions	
Average number of Adults	1.88
Average number of Children	0.50
Did not overnight	13.0%
Did overnight	87.0%
Average overnights	4.95**
Average rating of visit to Vermont	5.41/6***

*This number reflects only the people who have been to VT
** Of people who stayed overnight
*** 1 being negative, 6 being positive

Table 5.2, the travel behavior table, shows the breakdown of the seasons in which the respondents visited (question 2 of the questionnaire), number of visits in a typical year (question 4), average number of adults and children respondents traveled with (question 8), visitor's overnight data (question 9), and the average rating of traveler's visit to Vermont of who stayed overnight (question 12). Fall was the most popular time to visit with 41.30%, followed closely by summer with 35.90%. Winter received 14.70% and spring was the least visited season with 8.10%. Winter may have received a lower percentage because the respondents were people who requested information from VDTM. Many people who travel to Vermont in the winter, travel with the specific intent of winter sports and most likely seek information from those resorts, therefore they would not have been included in our sample. Thus, it may be true that winter is a more popular season to visit than this table suggests. Those who traveled to Vermont visited about 2 times per year. The average number of adults the respondents traveled with was 1.88 and the average number of children was .5. The majority of people did overnight (87%) while 13% did not overnight in Vermont. Those who stayed overnight in Vermont spent about 5 nights. The average rating of visitors to Vermont was fairly high, 5.41 out of 6 with 6 signifying a positive experience.

Table 5.3
Travel Planning

Packet Received	
Winter	9.70%
Fall	23.60%
Summer	22.70%
Fishing	2.10%
Camping	7.50%
Did not receive	10.20%
Packet Usefulness	4.40/6*
Website Usefulness	4.29/6*

* 1 being not useful, 6 being very useful

The travel planning table shows the percentage of respondents who received each travel planning packet (question 5 from questionnaire), along with the usefulness of the packet (question 6) and the usefulness of the www.VermontVacation.com website (question 7). The packet that was received by the largest percentage of respondents was the fall packet with 23.60%. The summer packet was received by 22.70%, the second largest percentage. The winter packet was received by 9.70% of respondents, and camping was received by 7.50% of respondents. Only 2.10% received the fishing packet. The percentage of people who did not receive a packet was 10.20%. The usefulness of the packets had an average rating of 4.4 out of 6 with 6 being very useful. The average rating for website usefulness was similar, 4.29 out of 6.

Table 5.4 Activities				
Normally Participate			**Participated in Vermont**	
Sightseeing	83.40%		Sightseeing	64.50%
Historic Sites/museums	65.50%		Shopping	38.70%
Shopping	55%		Historic Sites/museums	36%
Fairs/Events	54.50%		Factory Tours	26.50%
Farmers Market/Farm visit	50.10%		Hiking	21.90%
Cultural activities	48.30%		Farmers Market/Farm visit	21.50%
Hiking	39.50%		Cultural activities	15.50%
View Wildlife/Birds	33.70%		Fairs/Events	14.90%
Factory Tours	32.80%		View Wildlife/Birds	14.20%
Biking	23.30%		Other*	9.60%
Fishing	19.30%		Nightlife	6.10%
Business	19.20%		Skiing	6%
Resort/Spa	18.50%		Biking	5.40%
School/Education	17.80%		Resort/Spa	5%
Canoe/Kayak	16.80%		Personal Business	4.90%
Nightlife	13.70%		Canoe/Kayak	4.40%
Skiing	13.20%		Fishing	3.50%
Personal Business	12.80%		Boating	2.80%
Boating	12.60%		School/Education	2.30%
Other*	10.60%		Snowmobiling	1.40%
Meeting/Convention	8.50%		Snowboarding	1.30%
Hunting	6.10%		Meeting/Convention	1.20%
Snowmobiling	3.10%		Hunting	0.40%
Snowboarding	3%		Business	0.40%

Table 5.4 contains the activities in which respondents normally participate and those in which they participated during their visit to Vermont (questions 10 and 26 from questionnaire). The questions inquiring about activities participated in while in Vermont only apply to those who actually visited Vermont. Therefore the number of those who responded to this question was either 3,647 or 3,648 (depending on the activity) as opposed to 3,705 or 3,706 respondents for the normal participation options. Sightseeing is the most frequent activity in which respondents normally participate (83.4%) and also

the most common activity respondents engaged in while in Vermont (64.5%). Shopping and historic sites/museums were among the top three for both normal activities and activities in Vermont. Historic sites/museums was the second most frequent for normal participation with 65.5% while it was the third most frequent for Vermont activities with 36% of respondents indicating they visited museums or historic sites while in VT. Shopping ranked as the third most common activity for normal participation (55%) while it ranked second for VT activities (38.7%). In our sample of respondents 54.5% of people said they normally participate in fairs/events while only 14.9% indicate they attended any while visiting VT. Snowmobiling (1.4%), snowboarding (1.3%), meeting/convention (1.2%), hunting (.4%), and business (.4%) were the least common activities respondents participated in while in Vermont. Similarly, meeting/convention (8.5%), hunting (6.1%), snowmobiling (3.1%), and snowboarding (3%) ranked as the four least likely activities in which respondents normally participate. The percentages for activities respondents engaged in while in VT are lower overall than those of normal activities. This discrepancy could be due to the fact that the participants indicated a greater number of activities in which they normally participate, and only a few for those in which they participated during their visit to Vermont. The activities that had lower percentages could be due to the fact that the type of people who are participating in activities such as snowboarding and hunting are not likely to look for information from VDTM. These people may seek information elsewhere.

Table 5.5 Vermont Products	
Products that people associate with Vermont:	
Maple Syrup	93.80%
Cheese	72.90%
Ice-cream	57.60%
Teddy Bears	46.40%
Wood Furniture	28.80%
Winter Sports Equipment	17.90%
Coffee	12.80%
Wine	7.40%
Computer Chips	1.20%

Table 5.5 is based on question 13 in the survey which asks what types of products respondents associate with the state of Vermont. The percentages above reflect the proportion of respondents who perceive a correlation between the listed products and the state of Vermont. As expected, maple syrup is almost universally associated with the state of Vermont, which received a 93.8% positive correlation. Cheese is the second most associated product with the State of Vermont; 72.9% of individuals connected it to the State. Brands such as Cabot fall into this category. They are able to capitalize on this association by stressing their Vermont roots, therefore enhancing the tie between Vermont and the product category. The third most recognized product, Ice cream received 57.6% association. One possible reason for this association is the Vermont established Ben & Jerry’s which is a popular nationwide brand. Teddy bears, which had a 46.4% association, could be related to The Vermont Teddy Bear Company. Wood Furniture is a product that was added on the request of Cabot cheese to collect data on a related marketing project and 28.8% of respondents associated this with Vermont. Winter sports equipment (17.9% association) could be most closely associated with Burton Snowboards, a Vermont company. Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, a rapidly

expanding company is most likely the main driver associated with the Coffee category (12.8%). Wine and computer chips, the two least associated products were included to prevent individuals from simply indicating that all the products were associated with Vermont. The data accurately displays that this precautionary measure did in fact work properly.

Table 5.6
Association Between Attributes and Vermont, Vermont Products and Cabot cheese

	Vermont	Vermont Products	Cabot cheese
High Quality	29.70%	49.30%	54.60%
Natural	61.80%	53.90%	48.30%
Authentic/Genuine	41.80%	40.10%	32.00%
Original	26.30%	26.50%	21.30%
Environmentally Friendly	51.30%	31.70%	16.20%

Table 5.6 is related to the Vermont products table (Table 5.5), and originated from question 25 on the survey which asks respondents to check any adjectives they feel describe Vermont, Vermont products, and Cabot cheese. The adjectives are in descending order by the Cabot cheese responses. More respondents associated high quality with Cabot cheese than with Vermont and Vermont products. This is consistent with the award granted to Cabot as best cheddar cheese in the world. The largest percentage of respondents described Vermont and Vermont products as natural while this adjective was the second most chosen for Cabot cheese. There are some inconsistencies in this table as well. Approximately 51.1% of respondents indicated that Vermont is environmentally friendly while only 31.7% and 16.2% associate this with Vermont products and Cabot respectively.

Table 5.7 Awareness of Cabot	
I am aware of Cabot cheese	74.70%
Never heard of it	25.30%
I tried Cabot before first visit to Vermont	55.80%
Had not tried Cabot before first visit to Vermont	28.20%
I have never been to Vermont, but have tried Cabot	10.30%
I have never been to Vermont and never tried Cabot	5.70%

Table 5.7 is based on questions 14 and 15. Question 14 states "Are you aware of Cabot cheese", and question 15 states "Which statement below is the most accurate?" Everyone who filled out the survey was required to answer the awareness question (question 14). Only those who were aware of Cabot answered the second question (question 15). Awareness of Cabot cheese totaled 74.7% which for the purpose of this survey was very favorable. Over half of the respondents (55.8%) have been to Vermont and tried Cabot before visiting. This allowed us to further analyze exposure, trial and loyalty of the brand. A small percentage of respondents, 5.7%, have neither been to Vermont nor tried Cabot.

Table 5.8 Trial & Exposure		
	Exposure	Trial
Cabot Truck Signage	8.0%	N/A
Travel Brochure	23.10%	N/A
Television Ads	5.0%	N/A
Grocery Store	32.80%	N/A
Print Ads	14.30%	N/A
Radio Ads	2.50%	N/A
No Exposure	8.70%	N/A
Cabot Annex	13.20%	11.50%
Visitors Center/Factory Tour	15.30%	9.50%
Restaurant	10.40%	9.80%
Vermont Info Welcome center	19.70%	3.80%
Other*	4.10%	3.50%
Grocery/General Store Sample	N/A	11.70%
Grocery/General Store Purchase	N/A	19.30%
Did Not Try *see appendix for list of responses	N/A	15.70%

Table 5.8 looks at the different ways which Vermont visitors were exposed to and tried the Cabot Brand. This table looks at only those respondents who visited Vermont and are aware of the Cabot brand. The highest percentage of visitors were exposed to the Cabot brand through grocery stores (32.8%). This is consistent with the fact that the largest percentage of respondents tried Cabot cheese by purchasing it at a grocery or general store (19.3%). Travel brochures had an exposure percentage of 23.10%, the second highest exposure percentage. Vermont information and welcome center had an exposure percentage of 19.7%, followed by visitor's center and factory tour with 15.3%. Next, 14.3%, 13.2% and 10.4% of respondents were exposed to Cabot cheese through print advertisements, the Cabot annex in Waterbury and restaurants respectively. A small percentage of visitors (8.7%) had no exposure to the Cabot brand during their visit to

Vermont. Cabot truck signage 8%, Television Advertisements 5%, Radio Advertisements 2.5%, and other means of exposure (4.1%) had the lowest percentages. The other means of exposure will be discussed in Appendix C.

Of Vermont visitors who are aware of the Cabot brand, 15.7% did not try Cabot during their trip to Vermont, therefore 84.3% of visitors did try Cabot cheese. Samples of Cabot cheese represent an important trial vehicle for visitors; samples are available at the Cabot Annex, grocery or general stores and visitor centers. Almost the same percentages of respondents sampled the cheese at the Cabot Annex in Waterbury (11.5%) and at a grocery/general store (11.7%). Vermont information and welcome center were the least likely place for a visitor to try Cabot, with 3.8% trial at those locations. The other locations where visitors tried Cabot can be found in Appendix C.

Table 5.9 Reasons For Trial	
VT Product	23.70%
Free Sample	20.0%
Taste Reputation	19.90%
Price	18.80%
Did Not Try	15.20%
Word of Mouth	6.40%
Advertisement	4.40%
Other*	4.40%
Quality Reputation	1.20%
Coupon	0.80%

Table 5.9 looks at the various reasons that visitors tried Cabot cheese. This table consists of data from respondents who have visited Vermont and are aware of the Cabot brand. The most common reason that respondents tried Cabot cheese was the fact that it is a Vermont product (23.7%). The other major reasons for trial were; free sample, taste reputation, and price with percentages of 20%, 19.9%, and 18.8%. The finding that free

sample was the second most frequent reason for trial (from Table 5.8) is consistent with the fact that the grocery/general store sample ranked as the second most common form of trial. In our sample of respondents 15.2% of visitors did not try Cabot, which is consistent with the previous table with 15.7% percent of visitors not trying Cabot. Word of mouth, advertisement, quality reputation and coupon had the smallest percentages for reasons to try; with 6.4%, 4.4%, 1.2%, and .8% respectively. Approximately 4.4% of visitors stated other reasons for trial which will be discussed in Appendix C.

Table 5.10
Purchase Decision Influences

		Positive	No Influence	Negative
Family/Friends		33.00%	62%	5%
Advertisements		48.40%	47.40%	4.20%
Taste		86.90%	11.50%	1.50%
Availability		74.40%	17.50%	8.10%
Package Design		38.90%	55.80%	5.20%
Store Displays		40.10%	54.80%	5.10%
Price		55.30%	36.20%	8.50%
Promotional Events		33.80%	61.50%	4.70%
Vermont Product		62.90%	34.60%	2.50%
Quality		87.40%	11.40%	1.20%
Coupon/Sales		52.90%	43.30%	3.80%

Table 5.10 looks at what or who influenced respondents purchase decisions and whether it prompted them to buy more or less Cabot cheese (derived from question 23 of the questionnaire). Quality of Cabot cheese had the most positive influence on respondents purchase decision with 87.4% indicating this variable as persuading them to buy more Cabot cheese. Taste, availability, and Vermont product also had high positive influences on purchase decision with 86.9%, 74.4%, and 62.9%. Price, coupon, and advertisements had a positive influence on respondents purchase decisions with 55.3%, 52.9%, and 48.4%. Store display, package design, promotional events and family and

friends did not influence many respondents in a positive or negative way, with more than 50% indicating these factors had no influence on their purchase decision. Overall, the variables stated in the table persuaded individuals to buy Cabot cheese rather than discouraged their purchase.

Table 5.11 Brand Loyalty & Satisfaction			
	Before Visit	**After Visit**	**Non-Visitor**
Overall Loyalty to the Cabot Brand - Mean	2.69/6*	3.8/6	3.25/6
Cabot Brand Purchase Frequency - Mean	2.59/6	3.45/6	2.73/6
Non-Processed Cheese Purchase Frequency			
Times/Month - Mean **2.52**			
	Negative	**No Influence**	**Positive**
Effect of Visit To VT On Attitude Towards Cabot	1.10%	32.90%	66.00%
Overall Satisfaction With the Cabot Brand **5.2/6**			

*****1 being not loyal, 6 being very loyal

The data in the first part of Table 5.11 indicate a positive change in loyalty towards the Cabot brand among those who visited Vermont (derived from question 20 in the questionnaire). The statistics also specify the level of loyalty towards the Cabot brand for those who have not visited Vermont since requesting information through the VDTM. The overall loyalty is based on a six-point scale: 1 = Not Loyal, 6 = Very Loyal. The mean overall loyalty to Cabot increased among those who visited Vermont, from 2.69 out of 6 before their visit, to 3.8 out of 6 after their visit. The average loyalty rating among those who had not visited Vermont since requesting information was 3.25 out of 6.

The Cabot brand purchase frequency data are also based on a six point scale: 1 = Never, 6 = Always (question 22). Mean purchase frequency for the Cabot brand also increased after visiting Vermont: from 2.59 out of 6 to 3.45 out of 6. Mean purchase frequency for non-visitors was 2.73 out of 6. All respondents, regardless of whether or not they had visited Vermont, were asked to indicate their purchase frequency in units per month for non-processed cheese of any brand (question 21). The mean purchase frequency for non-processed cheese was 2.52 times per month.

Our research team also examined the influence and effects that visitors' trips to Vermont had on their attitude towards the Cabot brand (question 24). Only 1.10% of people that visited Vermont since requesting travel information indicated that their visit had a negative impact on their attitude towards Cabot cheese. Meanwhile 32.90% of visitors indicated that their trip to Vermont had no influence on their attitude towards Cabot cheese. Finally, 66% of people who visited Vermont since requesting information indicated that their visit had a positive influence on their attitude towards Cabot cheese.

For all respondents who have tried Cabot cheese, question #21 asked them to rate their overall level of satisfaction. Once again, this question used a six point scale: 1 = Very Dissatisfied, 6 = Very Satisfied. The mean overall satisfaction rating among those who have tried Cabot cheese was 4.76 out of 6.

Next, we will examine results of relationship between selected variables as set forth in our research design. Cross tabulations between variables such as demographics and loyalty will be used to examine significant relationships in our data.

Section six is dedicated to analyzing cross tabulations of multiple variables from the survey. This section will provide the reader with generous amounts of information relating to the goals and objectives of this project. The data used to compile these tables can be found in appendix E along with relevant statistics such as Chi-squared values, alpha levels, and P-values. There are eight tables in this section followed by detailed analysis.

One of the objectives of this research was to determine how tourists' exposure and trial of Cabot cheese while in Vermont affected their loyalty and purchase of the Cabot brand of cheese after their visit. The following three tables present the data relating to this objective. The loyalty and purchase frequencies were calculated from questions 20 and 22 of the questionnaire. We subtracted the loyalty and purchase frequency ratings before visiting Vermont from the ratings after visiting Vermont. We then grouped the positive numbers into a category labeled more loyal/purchased more, the negative numbers into less loyal/purchased less, and the zeros were labeled no change.

Table 6.1 Exposure to Cabot in Vermont Vs. Loyality & Purchases		
Exposure	more loyal	purchase more
Visitor Center/ Factory Tour	66.1%*	62.7%*
Annex	63.5%*	60.2%*
Vermont Info/Welcome Center	53.0%*	49.5%*
Travel Brochure	51.3%*	46.3%*
Restaurant	50.4%*	47.6%*
Truck Signage	48.40%	46.40%
Print Ads	48.3%*	43.50%
Grocery Store	46.3%*	44.5%*
Other	45.20%	46.00%
Radio Ads	38.40%	42.50%
TV Ad.	38.0%	36.40%
No Exposure	12.8%*	14.9%*

* indicates significant relationship

Table 6.1 shows that exposure[1] to Cabot cheese at a visitor center or factory tour had the highest percentage of respondents who also reported becoming more loyal to Cabot cheese and purchasing more Cabot cheese after their visit to Vermont. The Cabot Annex in Waterbury, followed by the Vermont info/welcome center were the types of exposure that had the second and third highest percentages, respectively, of individuals also claiming greater loyalty and increased purchase. These relationships are significant, with an alpha less than .05, indicating that there is a good chance these methods of exposure are related to the fact that individuals became more loyal/purchased more Cabot cheese. A significant relationship also exists between those who were not exposed to Cabot during their visit and their indication of change in loyalty/purchase behavior. The smallest percentage of those who became more loyal and purchased more were not exposed to Cabot cheese while in Vermont. This suggests that exposure may lead to a more loyal and frequent buyer. It is interesting to note that exposure in the form of television ads, radio ads, and truck signage did not have a significant relationship on

[1] Note that exposure to Cabot cheese should not be confused with trial. This is the subject of table 6.2.

increased loyalty and purchase of Cabot cheese. It is also worthy to note that the means of exposure that had the most effect on loyalty/purchase were locations where a tourist could also try Cabot cheese. These findings are supported in the following table.

Table 6.2
Trial Location Vs. Loyalty & Purchases

Trial Location	more loyal	purchase more
Visitor Center/Factory Tour	66.2%*	62.0%*
Cabot Annex	64.9%*	60.4%*
Vermont Info/Welcome Center	58.9%*	62.0%*
Sample Grocery/General Store	53.8%*	50.6%*
Restaurant	53.1%*	50.5%*
Purchase Grocery/General Store	51.8%*	48.0%*
Did Not Try	13.6%*	15.4%*
Other	37.20%	41.70%

* indicates significant relationship

Table 6.2 shows those respondents who reported becoming more loyal Cabot consumers and who purchased more Cabot cheese after visiting Vermont and who also tried Cabot at various locations. Visitor center/factory tour, Cabot Annex, and Vermont info/welcome center are the three trial locations which also have the highest percentages of individuals reporting an increase in loyalty and frequency of purchase of Cabot cheese after visiting Vermont. These results reinforce those from table 6.1. Overall, more than half the respondents (except those reporting they purchase more and tried Cabot through purchase at grocery store) who tried Cabot cheese at the above locations claimed they were more loyal and purchased more after visiting Vermont. All the significant relationships signify that it is very probable that tourists' trial of Cabot cheese during their visit is related to their increase in loyalty and purchase behavior. This is further proven by the low percentages of increased loyalty/purchase for those who did not try Cabot cheese while in Vermont.

Table 6.3 Reasons for Trial Vs. Loyalty & Purchase		
Reason For Trying Cabot	**more loyal**	**purchase more**
Word of Mouth	68.8%*	67.6%*
Advertisement	65.1%*	63.1%*
Vermont Product	61.6%*	56.6%*
Free Sample	60.7%*	56.4%*
Price	52.7%*	49%*
Taste Reputation	52.0%*	48.5%*
Quality Reputation	44.7%	41.0%
Coupon	37.0%	33.30%
Other	32.9%*	37.10%
I did not try Cabot cheese while in Vermont	12.0%*	13.1%*

* Indicates significant relationship

Table 6.3 shows respondents who indicated they tried Cabot cheese for various reasons and became more loyal/purchased more Cabot cheese after visiting Vermont. Word of mouth as a reason for trying Cabot had the highest percentage of respondents who reported they also became more loyal and purchased more Cabot cheese after their visit. In light of the findings from Table 6.1 that indicate there is no significant relationship between television and radio ads and increase in loyalty/purchase, it is interesting that there is a significant relationship between those who tried Cabot cheese due to advertisements and increase in loyalty/purchase. One possible reason for this is that the advertising that prompted the respondents to try Cabot may not have been in Vermont. The question regarding exposure to the Cabot brand was specifically asking about exposure during their visit to Vermont. The respondents could have seen advertisements before their trip which persuaded them to try Cabot while in Vermont. The fact that more than half the respondents who tried Cabot because of a free sample became more loyal and purchased more (and a significant relationship exists) supports the findings from the previous two tables. Neither coupon nor quality reputation as reasons for trying Cabot cheese have a significant relationship with an increase in loyalty or purchase after visiting Vermont.

Table 6.4
Respondent Loyalty Vs. Overall Trip Rating of Vermont

Trip Rating	Less Loyal	No Change	More Loyal
Negative	0.00%	69.20%	30.80%
2	0.00%	63.60%	36.40%
3	0.00%	87.50%	12.50%
4	0.70%	68.10%	31.30%
5	0.20%	61.00%	38.80%
Positive	0.20%	52.10%	47.80%

Significant relationship exists between trip rating and loyalty

Table 6.4 contains a cross-tabular table of respondents' ratings of their trip to Vermont and its relationship with a change in loyalty towards the Cabot brand. The causal factor on change in loyalty is the respondent's trip rating. In other words, an individual's overall rating causes them to be either less loyal, more loyal, or experience no change in loyalty towards Cabot. Our team analyzed these relationships using a Chi-Square test through SPSS. The tests were conducted using a .05 alpha level, and in fact are all significant relationships. All percentages are based solely on the people who visited Vermont since requesting information from VDTM, and who also responded to questions 12 and 22 in our survey.

Question 12 asked respondents to rate their overall trip to Vermont using a six-point scale: 1 being negative and 6 being positive. Question 22 asked individuals to rate both their loyalty to Cabot before and after their visit to Vermont also using a six-point scale. As discussed in the second paragraph of this section, respondents were grouped into more loyal, less loyal or no change in loyalty to Cabot cheese.

Among those who rated their overall trip a 1 out of 6, or ‘Negative’, 0.00% reported being less loyal to Cabot, while 69.20% reported no change in loyalty towards Cabot and 30.80% reported that they were more loyal. For those who rated their overall visit to Vermont the highest: 6 out of 6 or ‘Positive’, 0.20% also reported that they became less loyal to Cabot. As shown, 52.10% of these respondents reported no change in loyalty and 47.80% reported being more loyal which (due to the fact that this relationship is statistically significant) could be a result of their ‘Positive’ visit to Vermont. The trip rating values from 2 to 5 were purposely not labeled with anchors, giving respondents a non-biased scale for them to interpret.

Table 6.5 Demographics Vs. Loyality		
	Aware	**More Loyal after visiting**
Age*		
18-24	61.10%	53.80%
25-34	73.90%	37.40%
35-44	79.80%	37.30%
45-54	74.30%	44.00%
55-64	74.60%	46.70%
65+	68.80%	50.40%
Gender **		
Male	71.10%	41.50%
Female	77.30%	44.00%
Education***		
10	66.70%	66.70%
11	36.40%	100.00%
12	72.00%	42.50%
13	75.20%	42.60%
14	73.10%	43.50%
15	77.30%	43.40%
16	76.70%	43.70%
17	76.90%	66.70%
18	75.30%	42.90%
19	77.80%	20.00%
20	62.50%	0.00%
Income		
<20000	70.00%	38.70%
20000-<25000	77.20%	33.90%
25000-<30000	58.30%	20.00%
30000-<40000	74.50%	47.30%
40000-<50000	74.00%	41.90%
50000-<75000	56.90%	37.50%
75000-<100000	76.10%	45.30%
100000-<150000	74.90%	44.80%
150000-<250000	74.50%	35.10%
250000+	82.80%	53.10%

* significant relationship with awareness and loyalty
** significant relationship with awareness
*** significant relationship with loyalty

Table 6.5 looks at the relationships between demographics and awareness and loyalty to Cabot. Age and gender had a significant relationship with awareness of Cabot. A significant relationship is indicated by an alpha level less than .05. Ages 35-44 were the most aware of Cabot with 79.8% aware of the brand. All of the age groups had high and similar percentages of awareness; however the lowest percentage was those respondents falling in the age category of 18-24 (61.1%). More females than males were aware of Cabot (77.3% and 71.1% respectively). Education and income were the other demographics considered when looking at awareness, however there was no significant relationship between education and awareness or income and awareness. The alpha level of education and income was higher than .05, therefore there was no significant relationship.

Table 6.5 also looks at the relationship between demographics and loyalty to Cabot. The percentages of loyalty are of those respondents who visited Vermont. Loyalty was measured by looking at which respondents became more loyal after visiting Vermont. Age and education had significant relationships with loyalty. Age had a significant relationship with respondents becoming more loyal after visiting Vermont. Ages 18-24 had the highest percentage (53.8%) of respondents becoming more loyal after visiting Vermont. Age groups 25-34, and 35-44 had the smallest percentages of becoming more loyal after visiting Vermont with 37.4%, and 37.3%. Education also had a significant relationship to increasing loyalty among visitors. Respondents with 11 years of education had the highest percentage for more loyal after visiting Vermont, with 100%. This could be due to the low number of respondents who had 11 years of education. The lowest percentage of respondents being more loyal was for 20 years of education, with 0% becoming more loyal. This could be due to the low number of respondents who had 20 years of education, which could also be the reason for the low percentage of 20% for 19 years of education. Percentages for years of education 12 through 16 are fairly consistent, ranging from 42.5% o 43.7%. Gender and income had an alpha level above .05, therefore there was not a significant relationship with becoming more loyal.

Table 6.6 Packet Usefulness Vs. Season Packet							
	N/A	Not useful	2	3	4	5	Very useful
Winter	4.50%	0.30%	5.10%	15.30%	25.40%	29.70%	19.80%
Fall	4.20%	1.70%	2.60%	11.00%	23.50%	33.90%	23.10%
Summer	3.00%	1.60%	5.00%	12.80%	22.10%	33.20%	22.30%
Fishing	3.80%	0.00%	0.00%	17.90%	17.90%	30.80%	29.50%
Camping	3.60%	1.80%	4.00%	8.70%	20.40%	35.30%	26.20%

Table 6.6 looks at the usefulness of each particular packet as rated by the respondents. We compared these two variables to determine whether or not some of the vacation packets were more useful than others. The rating of usefulness depended on which packet the individual received from VDTM, and was rated by each respondent based on a six-point scale.

All percentages are based on the respondents who visited Vermont since requesting information from VDTM, and who also responded to questions 5 and 6 in our survey. Question 5 asked, “Which travel planning packet(s) did you receive? (Check all that apply).” Question 6 asked, “How useful was the Vermont Vacation Packet in planning your visit?” Although in this analysis we included only the individuals who received each packet, as shown in Appendix E, some respondents who did not receive a planning packet still rated its usefulness.

Those who received the winter packet had the lowest percentage of people who found it ‘Very useful’ (19.90%) although it did have the second lowest percentage of people who found it ‘Not useful’ (0.30%). Those who received the fishing packet had the highest percentage of people who rated the packet ‘Very useful’ (29.50%) and also the smallest percentage of people who rated it ‘Not useful’ (0.00%). Among those who received the fall packet, 23.10% found it ‘Very useful’, while 1.70% reported that it was ‘Not useful’. The summer packet was rated ‘Not useful’ by 1.60%, while 22.30% reported that it was ‘Very useful’. Finally, 1.80% of those who received the camping packet indicated that it was ‘Not useful’ while 26.20% said it was ‘Very useful’. Overall, it does not appear that any one packet was rated significantly more useful than the rest.

Table 6.7
Packet and Website Usefulness, Age, Means of Survey Vs. Season Visited

Packet usefulness		**Fall**	**Spring**	**Winter**	**Summer**
N/A		15.90%	28.40%	29.00%	19.20%
Not useful		1.70%	3.20%	0.80%	1.30%
2		3.00%	6.40%	4.30%	5.40%
3		12.50%	11.50%	13.60%	11.70%
4		20.70%	24.30%	20.40%	18.90%
5		28.50%	17.00%	20.90%	26.60%
Very useful		17.60%	9.20%	11.10%	16.80%
Website usefulness					
N/A		21.90%	33.60%	33.30%	25.40%
Not useful		2.10%	4.10%	2.30%	2.10%
2		3.90%	6.50%	5.30%	5.60%
3		13.10%	9.70%	11.10%	12.10%
4		20.70%	18.40%	17.70%	16.20%
5		23.40%	18.90%	19.20%	23.50%
Very useful		14.90%	8.80%	11.10%	15.10%
Age					
18-24		13.30%	6.70%	46.70%	33.30%
25-34		35.80%	10.10%	24.30%	29.90%
35-44		34.20%	9.90%	19.40%	36.40%
45-54		34.70%	7.60%	16.60%	41.10%
55-64		47.90%	7.30%	9.60%	35.20%
65+		58.30%	7.80%	4.90%	29.00%
Online Survey		40.40%	8.10%	15.10%	36.40%
Direct Mail Survey		54.20%	7.90%	9.00%	28.80%

Significant relationships exist between season visited and packet and website usefulness, age, and type of survey.

Table 6.7 shows the relationships between packet usefulness, website usefulness, age, and survey method versus the season in which the tourist visited. The numbers represent significant relationships generated by running a cross tabulation between the different variables and season visited. A significant relationship has an alpha level of .05 or less.

Regardless of the season in which the respondents visited, their ratings of the packet and website usefulness are very similar. The highest percentages fall in the 4 to 6 range indicating overall the website and packets were rated as being useful. The percentages for these two variables (packet and website usefulness) shown in Table 6.7 are column percentages. For additional information see Appendix E for row percentages.

The age of visitors was rather interesting. Age broke down into four segments for season visited. The 18-24 age group had the highest percentage (46.70%) of visitors in the winter. This could be due to the fact that many young individuals come to Vermont to enjoy sports in the snowy mountains. The highest percentage of tourists in the 25-34 age group visited in the fall (35.8%) and the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups both had the highest percentage (36.40% and 41.10% respectively) of visitors in the summer. The oldest age groups 55-64 and 65+ had the most (47.90% and 58.30% respectively) visitors in the fall. This result is not surprising since many older tourists travel to Vermont in the fall for leaf peeping.

The largest percentage (40.40%) of the on-line survey respondents visited in the fall. Direct mail was similar with the largest segment of the respondents (54.20%) visiting in the fall. The information in this table could help the VDTM to improve the specific seasonal packets and improve information on specific seasons for the website.

The age breakdown can be used to cater to specific age groups depending on the season in which most of them visit.   Overall, these numbers reflect the fact that the highest percentage of all respondents visited in the fall followed by summer, winter, and then spring.

Table 6.8
Visitor Status vs. Demographics

Age*		**Visitor**	**Non-Visitor**
18-24		30.60%	69.40%
25-34		52.70%	47.30%
35-44		60.40%	39.60%
45-54		62.30%	37.70%
55-64		68.60%	31.40%
65+		67.70%	32.30%
Education*			
10		66.70%	33.30%
11		27.30%	72.70%
12		56.90%	43.10%
13		56.70%	43.30%
14		58.70%	41.30%
15		57.60%	42.40%
16		65.90%	34.10%
17		46.20%	53.80%
18		66.90%	33.10%
19		33.30%	66.70%
20		62.50%	37.50%
Income*			
<20000		42.60%	57.40%
20000-<25000		53.50%	46.50%
25000-<30000		66.70%	33.30%
30000-<40000		56.70%	43.30%
40000-<50000		61.60%	38.40%
50000-<75000		63.50%	36.50%
75000-<100000		63.90%	36.10%
100000-<150000		67.70%	32.30%
150000-<250000		68.80%	31.30%
250000+		71.70%	28.30%

* indicates significant relationships

Table 6.8 above was calculated by cross tabulation of the selected demographics and the respondents who had or had not visited the state of Vermont. Analysis of age shows very interesting data. As age increases the percentage of those who have visited also increases. For example, respondents aged under 25 represent only 30.6% of visitors, while ages 45 and over represent percentages in the mid to upper 60's. Accordingly the data for non visitors shows that the older the respondent, the more likely they have visited Vermont. Education levels compared to visitor status are less characteristic with our assumptions. A usual hypothesis would state that education, age and income would most likely all rise in proportion to each other. However, in this research there are noteworthy exceptions. For example, respondents with 10 years of education, which is equivalent to a tenth grade education, reported 66.7% are Vermont visitors. This could be explained by the fact that very few respondents reported having ten years of education. There are also irregularities with 19 years of education, which would be equivalent to a very advanced degree. This is another example of possible low response rates. The majority of respondents had reported education levels between 12 and 16, which covers all high school and undergraduate college degrees. Finally, Income is very typical of our assumptions that higher income levels influence higher visitor rates. Income refers to household income of the family, and in almost every increase in income brackets, there is an incremental increase in the percentage of visitors to Vermont. Though age, education and income are very good statistics for describing visitors vs. non visitors, geographic local could potentially explain some of the abnormalities in this data. Please refer to Appendix C for further information on geographic locations of respondents. Also note the demographics data are all significant in predicting visitors and non visitors.

On February 20th, 2006 our marketing research team launched the distribution of both our direct mail and e-mail surveys all across the United States. An incentive was offered to all potential respondents which included a coupon for a free block of Cabot cheese, and the opportunity to enter to win a free vacation to Vermont. Out of the 1,000 direct mail surveys, we received 244 usable responses. Meanwhile, our initial distribution of 19,000 e-mail surveys yielded 3,619 usable responses. The substantial quantity of data collected by our team allowed us to deduce many significant relationships. These data will provide both Cabot Creamery and the VDTM with a solid profile of Vermont visitors. Our team has used this detailed information to report on statistics such as demographics, brand awareness, exposure, trial, loyalty, attitudes towards and perceptions of Vermont, travel behavior, and additional opinions related to Cabot and Vermont visitors.

Our survey results indicated that 41.30% of respondents visited Vermont in the fall, while 35.90% visited in the summer. Eighty seven percent of these individuals did in fact overnight during their visit, and of these people, they stayed an average of 4.95 nights. One of the most striking statistics of interest to VDTM was the average overall rating of respondents' visit to Vermont. In fact, the average overall rating was a 5.41 out of a possible 6. The majority of visitors have certainly enjoyed their Vermont experience. Furthermore, 66.0% of visitors indicated that their visit to Vermont yielded a positive influence on attitude towards Cabot cheese.

Approximately 73% of respondents identified cheese as a product they associated with Vermont, second only to maple syrup. More than half of respondents rated Cabot cheese as 'high quality', while 48.30% recognized Cabot cheese as a 'natural' product. A favorable finding for Cabot was that 74.70% of respondents indicated awareness of Cabot cheese. A majority of respondents (87.40%) indicated that the greatest positive influence on purchase the decision was quality, followed by 86.90% for taste, and 74.40% for availability. In contrast, only 8.50% indicated that price had a negative influence on their purchase decision while 8.10% mentioned availability as a negative influence. Overall, we discovered that the average satisfaction rating of Cabot measured 5.2 out of a possible 6. Also on a positive note, visitors' loyalty towards Cabot cheese increased by 41.26% on average after visiting Vermont.

Overall, those visitors who were exposed to and tried Cabot cheese while in Vermont became more loyal and purchased more Cabot cheese after visiting Vermont. Awareness of the Cabot brand was highest among ages 35-44, with 79.80% of respondents indicating awareness of the brand. The lowest awareness was among those ages 18-24, with a 61.10% awareness rate. As age increased among respondents, percentages of those who visited Vermont increased, with 55-64 being the highest percentage of visitors. Respondents in the 18-24 age segment comprised the lowest percentage of visitors. Those in the age category of 18-24 accounted for the highest percentage of winter visitors (46.70%); while the majority of all other age groups visited mostly in the fall.

This study was designed to address the information needs of both Cabot Creamery and the VDTM. Cabot's overall objective was to better understand the process of converting Vermont visitors into Cabot loyalists. VDTM's objective was to measure the conversion of those who requested travel information and those who actually visited. Our team was able to meet these objectives by measuring the effectiveness of trial vehicles, exposure methods, purchasing influences and attitudes and perceptions of the Cabot brand. In regards to the VDTM, we compiled demographic statistics. These statistics can be utilized to better understand the motivating factors which influence one's decision to visit Vermont after requesting information. Our marketing research team is confident that the statistics provided in this report meet the information needs of both Cabot Creamery and the VDTM.

Recommendations for Cabot:

Overall, those tourists who were exposed to and tried Cabot cheese while in Vermont became more loyal and purchased more after their visit. This suggests that it would be in the best interest of Cabot to make sure samples are available at more tourist locations. In light of the findings from table 5.4, Activities, Cabot could promote and sample their cheese at shopping locations since 38.7% of visitors indicate they shop while in Vermont. Cabot could also do the same at various sightseeing destinations given 64.5% of respondents participate in this activity during their trip. Cabot should continue to attract tourist to the Visitor center/Cabot factory to take tours, Cabot annex in Waterbury, and Vermont info/welcome center since these are the top three places where respondents who became more loyal/purchased more were exposed to and tried Cabot. In order to prompt tourists to try Cabot cheese, Cabot should focus on positive word of mouth since that proves to be the reason the most individuals who became more loyal/purchased more tried the cheese. Advertisements as a reason for trying had the second highest percentage of respondents who also reported being more loyal and purchasing more. On the other hand there is no relationship between exposure to radio and television ads while in Vermont and increased loyalty/purchase. This seems to be due to the fact that only 5% were exposed to television ads and 2.5% to radio ads. Cabot should focus on increasing their advertising aimed at tourists while they are in Vermont since it appears that advertisements seen before visiting did have an impact of their decision to try Cabot cheese. In these advertisements, it would be in the best interest of Cabot to emphasize superior taste and the fact that it is a Vermont product. From table 5.10, Purchase Decision Influences, 86.9% of respondents said that taste had a positive influence on their purchase decision. Taste reputation also has a significant relationship with those who became more loyal/purchased more (table 6.3). In addition, the fact that Cabot cheese is a Vermont product had a positive influence on the buying decision of 62.9% of respondents and also was a reason for trying Cabot cheese that had the third highest percentage of individuals who became more loyal/ increased frequency of purchase.

Recommendations for VDTM:

Those respondents in the 18-24 age category have the highest percentage of non-visitors. The individuals with the lowest income also have a high percentage of non-visitors. These results are due to the fact that only 1.0% of those surveyed are 18-24 years old and 2.2% have an income of <20,000. Considering the fact that our sampling frame was individuals who requested information from the Vermont Department of Tourism, these data would suggest that VDTM is not reaching these segments of the market. In order to penetrate this potentially large market, VDTM should promote Burlington which has a lively nightlife and would appeal to this younger audience. Our results also show that winter is the second least visited season, and skiing and snowboarding rank low in the activities in which respondents participated during their visit. VDTM could create a new tourism packet, much like their camping and fishing, aimed at a younger audience who would be interested in these winter outdoor activities. They could also mention suggestions to make their trip more economical.

The mean age of those surveyed is 49.8. Overall, respondents are not traveling with children with the average number of children under 18 being .5. The highest percentages of visitors vs. non-visitors are in the 55 and up categories. This suggests that VDTM is targeting older individuals and couples who do not travel with children. We recommend that they focus more on families by promoting activities that are family friendly such as the Vermont Teddy Bear company, Ben and Jerry's and outdoor activities including picnicking, hiking, and water activities on lake Champlain.