



About the Survey

During the summer of 2007 (July 27 –August 2), the University of Idaho administered an in- depth survey with 1,800 park visitors. These results are based on 805 responses received. Participants were given detailed instructions to complete 29 questions in a survey booklet which had been developed in a special planning workshop including park staff and partner organization representatives. The survey is a key component of the new Independence National Historical Park Long Range Interpretive Plan and it will be a valuable tool in planning future park visitor services. The Visitor Services Project (VSP) is an ongoing research project between the National Park Service and the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit. The VSP was established to provide parks with more in- depth knowledge of their visitors and to help guide future planning.

What We Learned

INDE is helping to draw tourists to the Philadelphia region. We're succeeding because of the strength of our ranger-led tours and the additional services we are able to offer, thanks to our valuable partnerships.

- 89% of visitors surveyed were not residents of the area. Of these, 41% said their primary reason for visiting Philadelphia was to visit INDE. However, 60% also indicated that now here, the park was only one of several destinations they would be visiting.
- Visitors value interactions with park rangers and costumed characters. 96% of visitor groups rated the quality of their interaction with park rangers as “very good” or “good” (on a scale of 1 -5, ranging from “very poor” to “very good”). Ranger-led tours within the park were rated as the most important part of people’s visit to the park.
 - 88% of visitors rated Ranger-led programs in general as “extremely important” or “very important”
 - 92% of visitors rated the Independence Hall Ranger-led tour as “extremely” or “very important”
 - Not only are these tours important, but they are valued by visitors as being of high quality. 95% of Ranger-led programs were rated as “very good” or “good” quality
- It’s not just the park rangers that are getting rave reviews: visitors also like living history and costumed characters. When asked what programs they would like to see more of on future visits, most respondents (64%) cited living history programs and dramatic presentations (the second most common choice (62%) was more roving rangers available to answer questions).

There’s plenty here to keep visitors interested for more than one day, though many fit their visit to INDE into just a few hours.

- 28% of visitors surveyed said they visited the park on more than one day. Most of these (78%) limited their visit to two days, but 13% stayed even longer.
- Of those visitors who only visited the park within one day, 32% stayed for 3 to 4 hours, but 36% spent five or more hours in the park.



This survey tells us something about our visitors, and we can use this information to improve our programs, services and facilities.

- During the summer months, 72% of our visitors are families. 5% are on commercial tours, and only 1% are part of educational groups (educational groups tend to visit more in the spring). INDE will be offering more family-friendly programming during the summer months.
- Visitors come from around the country and around the world. Pennsylvania is the best represented state (at 14%), but this survey included visitors from 48 states as well as the District of Columbia.
- International visitors comprised 7% of the survey results (the survey was only offered in English). Of these, 22% were from Canada, 19% from the United Kingdom, and others came from 24 other countries.
- Unfortunately, only 26% of international visitors surveyed were aware of the availability of translated media, an offering we need to publicize more.
- We are seeing an increase in the diversity of our visitors, but we can still do more to provide diverse programming. This surveyed found that 94% of park visitors are white, 3% Asian, and 3% African-American. Furthermore, 5% of our visitors are Latino (an ethnic rather than racial category).

Visitors to INDE feel safe in the park, though many are still concerned by the homeless in the area.

- 63% of visitors surveyed said they feel “very safe” in the park, and an additional 27% feel “somewhat safe,” though only 58% feel their personal property was “very safe” in the park.
- When asked what made them feel less safe, “the homeless” was the most common response, followed by “panhandlers” and “walking at night.”

What we have learned about peoples’ visits to the park will help us better get the word out to help visitors plan their trip. Visitors will enjoy their time here more if we can give them more information before they arrive.

- Visitors surveyed are mostly planning their visit before they arrive (82%) and using information from tour books to do so. However, too many don’t know everything they need to know before they arrive.
- Only 38% were aware of INDE’s security procedures before they arrived (note that the security procedure has been changed since this survey was taken).
- Only 35% were aware of the ticketing system for Independence Hall.
- In fact, when asked what they liked least, visitors were most likely to mention constraints on visitation such as closing times, waiting times, and the ticket system.