

Profile of 2006 St. Paul Oktoberfest Attendees



Prepared for:
St. Paul Oktoberfest &
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2006, the University of Minnesota Tourism Center (UMTC) and Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) were contracted to profile visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest. Several visitor characteristics were of interest beyond demographics, including information sources, spending habits, and experience at St. Paul Oktoberfest. To that end, a visitor questionnaire was developed and administered to St. Paul Oktoberfest visitors.

Methods

An on-site questionnaire was administered to attendees. A systematic sample with sampling throughout the event and across the event activities was implemented. Throughout the event, a total of 249 parties were contacted and 109 questionnaires completed resulting in a 43.8% completion rate. Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned and checked in SPSS version 14.0.

Results

Demographics

Most often respondents were female, non-Hispanic Whites, and reported an average age of 48.9 years. The majority of respondents have German in their background. The most frequently cited income was between \$35,000-49,999 (25.0%).

2006 St. Paul Oktoberfest experience

On average, respondents spent more than three hours at St. Paul Oktoberfest, predominately with family (47.1%) and reported spending the most on souvenirs (\underline{M} =\$19.63). Respondents indicated they enjoyed many aspects of St. Paul Oktoberfest. Among the options presented, respondents most frequently cited they enjoyed the live music (41.9%) and food and beverages (16.2%).

Almost half of respondents had previously attended St. Paul Oktoberfest. They heard about it through friends, the newspaper or 'other' sources. Respondents attended St. Paul Oktoberfest an average of 3 (\underline{M} =2.8) times previously, most often (85.3%) as recent as 2005. However, more than one half of respondents were first time visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest. Among these new visitors, a majority stated an intention to return to the area in the next twelve months.

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INTRODUCTION

Festivals and special events benefit both local communities and visitors. Community festivals of short duration contribute to the celebration of local culture, identity, and place. Festivals also enhance exposure, awareness, profitability and image of the host community, as well as serve as a vehicle for other development (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003; Getz, 1991; Hall, 1992; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001). To maximize benefit and enhance events, organizers need to continually assess and evaluate their event and its market.

In 2006, the University of Minnesota Tourism Center (UMTC) and Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) were contracted to profile visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest. Visitor demographics, information sources for the festival, experience, and expenditures at St. Paul Oktoberfest, as well as familiarity with community were of specific interest. The study methods and results are presented below and followed by a discussion.

METHODS

An on-site questionnaire was administered to visitors during the 2006 St. Paul Oktoberfest. The methods for the questionnaire administration are presented in the following sections: study setting, questionnaire, approach, response rate, and analysis.

Study Setting

The 2006 St. Paul Oktoberfest was held October 14th. St. Paul Oktoberfest is reported to attract more than 2,000 visitors and is located on Rice Street between Rose and Geranium Avenue in St. Paul, Minnesota. The event included several stages of live music, food and merchandise vendors, kid's activities, folk dancing, and many other activities.

Questionnaire

An on-site questionnaire was developed with the assistance of St. Paul Oktoberfest personnel. Questionnaire sections included event participation, enjoyable attributes, information sources, expenditures, group composition, community familiarity, and demographics (Appendix A).

Approach

A sampling plan was created to reach the range of St. Paul Oktoberfest attendees. A convenience sampling plan was implemented where visitors were approached and asked to complete the questionnaire. Sample schedules incorporated both time and spatial considerations to ensure coverage across festival activities.

Based on estimated attendance from preceding years, a sampling quota target was set at 382 visitor contacts (95% confidence interval; $\pm 5\%$ sampling error rate). Trained volunteers and University of Minnesota Tourism Center staff administered the questionnaire.

Response Rate

Throughout the event, a total of 249 parties were contacted and 109 questionnaires attained. Three questionnaires were unusable, resulting in a 43.8% compliance rate (Appendix B; Table 1). A total of 3 questionnaires were unusable, and thus, 106 questionnaires were used for analysis. Among those who did not agree to participate, the most frequently specified reasons were lack of interest or time. Approximately one fifth (18.8%) of non respondents indicated they had already completed a questionnaire. Given the 106 sample size we can be 95% confident that results fall within 9% of the results reported.

Analysis

Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned and checked in SPSS version 14.0. Extreme outliers were winsorized to bring highly skewed variables into usable ranges. Descriptive analysis provided means, standard deviations, and frequencies to describe the sample and provide information on variables of interest.

RESULTS

Respondents

Demographics

More than half (56.3%) of respondents were female and reported an average age of 48.9 years (Appendix B, Table 2). A majority of respondents were white (84%) and of non-Hispanic or non-Latino background (95.1%). The majority of respondents indicated having German in their background (59.6%). The highest percentage (25.0%) of respondent's reported an annual household income of between \$35,000-49,999 (Appendix B, Figure 1).

Primary Residence

Respondents' predominately resided in the Metropolitan area, as indicated by their stated zip code. A majority (76%) of respondents' primary residence was zero to fifteen miles from the St. Paul Oktoberfest area (Appendix B, Figure 2). An additional (19%) resided fifteen to 25 miles from the area. Very few respondents (5%) indicated they resided more than 26 miles from the area. 12.2% of respondents indicated their zip code was 55117, the zip code of where St. Paul Oktoberfest took place.

St. Paul Oktoberfest Experience

Almost half of respondents had previously attended St. Paul Oktoberfest (46.2%; Appendix B, Figure 3). Respondents attended St. Paul Oktoberfest an average of three (\bar{M} =2.8) times previously, most often (85.3%) as recent as 2005. On average, respondents spent more than three hours (\bar{M} =3.87) at St. Paul Oktoberfest, with a range of one-half hour to twelve hours.

Sources Informing about St. Paul Oktoberfest

Respondents heard about St. Paul Oktoberfest most frequently from friends (42.5%), the newspaper (25.5%), 'other' sources (24.5%) or a previous visit (18.9%; Appendix B, Table 3). Very few respondents indicated they heard about the event through radio (3.8%) or TV (1.9%). No respondents indicated they heard about St. Paul Oktoberfest from City Pages or the internet. Among those new to Oktoberfest in 2006, friends (28.6%) and 'other' sources (28.6%) were the most frequently cited information source.

Attributes of Enjoyable Experience

The top cited most enjoyable attributes of St. Paul Oktoberfest were the live music (41.9%) and food and beverages (16.2%; Appendix B, Figure 4). Less frequently cited attributes included folk dancing (8.6%), people watching (8.6%), kids' activities (6.7%), concert (6.7%), 'other' attributes (4.8%), renewal of wedding vows (3.8%), and the bed race (2.9%).

Group Composition

Most frequently respondents attended St. Paul Oktoberfest with family (47.1%; Appendix B, Figure 5). Slightly more than a fifth (22.1%) attended with friends, while about one tenth attended with both family and friends (12.5%) or an organized group (11.5%). Very few respondents attended St. Paul Oktoberfest alone (2.9%).

A majority (50.9%) of respondents indicated their group was comprised of other adults (18 or over; Appendix B, Table 4). Approximately one fifth (19.8%) were comprised of children twelve and under. Among respondents who specified the actual number of people in each category, groups averaged 4 adults (\underline{M} =4.1) and 2 children (\underline{M} =2.2; Appendix B, Figure 6).

St. Paul Oktoberfest Expenditures

On average, respondents spent the most on souvenirs (\underline{M} =\$19.63; Appendix B, Table 5). Respondents spent an average of \$18.19 on food and beverages, \$17.75 on 'other' items and \$5.40 on games.

St. Paul Area Experience

A majority (70.8%) of respondents had previously visited the area for reasons other than St. Paul Oktoberfest. A majority (86.4%) of respondents intend to return to the area in the next twelve months (Appendix B, Figure 7). Similarly, among respondents who indicated no previous exposure to the area, approximately two thirds (66.7%) indicated an intention to return.

Comments and Suggestions

Qualitative analysis of open-ended comments and suggestions revealed several themes (Appendix C). A favorable experience was the most common theme among respondents.

Example statements included “Great event!” and “Great festival!” Returning to next year’s Oktoberfest was another theme among respondents. An example statement is “Great time – Nice Atmosphere – would definitely come again.” Ideas for enhanced offerings included offering more German food selections and better signage.

DISCUSSION

The 2006 St. Paul Oktoberfest attracted a range of visitors from the local area who found a variety of the events enjoyable. Results indicate the St. Paul Oktoberfest provides an enjoyable experience among visitors, as evidenced by open-ended comments and return visitation. The enthusiasm expressed in open-ended comments illustrates the degree of satisfaction among respondents. A majority of respondents expressed favorable, and often exclamatory, sentiments about St. Paul Oktoberfest. The high intention to return to this area suggests that visitor’s previous experience was positive.

A primary draw for the event was the live music. Four of ten respondents indicated the live music was the most enjoyable attribute by a considerable margin. Therefore, retaining and perhaps expanding the music is essential for the festivals success. Food and beverages were also enjoyed, among the other opportunities. Continuing to offer a range of activities is important as families are currently your largest audience.

Word of mouth was an important vehicle for event marketing and mirrors previous state and national findings (Getz, 1991; Salk & Schneider, 2006; Salk, Schneider, & Monson, 2005). Almost one half of new visitors heard about St. Paul Oktoberfest through friends. Early planning is key to maximize the effects of word of mouth, as it increases the likelihood of event dates, scheduled programmatic information, and new additions to circulate. Newspapers were also one of the frequently cited information sources. To attract visitors outside of the St. Paul Metro area, newspaper announcements placed throughout the region would be beneficial.

With regard to visitor spending, respondents reported moderate spending in all categories provided. To maximize visitor spending, efforts to increase visitor length of stay and product offerings are suggested. On average, visitors spent only three hours at the event. Providing for enhanced visitor comfort would potentially extend their stay.

St. Paul Oktoberfest played a role in increased community awareness and exposure. More than one quarter of respondents had no prior visitation to the area but stated an intention to return in the next twelve months. To enhance the likelihood of return visitation, on-site promotion of community amenities and offerings is advised. This could be achieved through the expansion of the map and schedule made available at St. Paul Oktoberfest.

While visitor surveys have the ability to better understand the festival market, they do not capture other information of potential use to event organizers such as actual visitation, the overall economic impact of St. Paul Oktoberfest and how the event compares to other festivals in the region. Future research to capture this useful information is advised.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

2006 St. Paul Oktoberfest Survey

Have you been to St. Paul Oktoberfest before (check ONE)? ___ YES ___ NO

If yes, how many years have you attended St. Paul Oktoberfest? ___ YEARS
What was the last year you attended St. Paul Oktoberfest? _____

Where did you hear about this event? (check all that apply)

___ NEWSPAPER ___ FRIENDS ___ INTERNET ___ CITY PAGES ___ PREVIOUS VISIT ___ RADIO ___ TV ___ OTHER

About how long do you intend to be at the event? ___ HOURS

Have you ever been to this area for any reason other than St. Paul Oktoberfest? ___ YES ___ NO

Do you intend to return to this area in the next 12-months (check ONE)? ___ YES ___ NO

What do you enjoy most about St. Paul Oktoberfest (check ONE)?

___ LIVE MUSIC ___ FOLKDANCING ___ FOOD & REFRESHMENTS ___ KIDS ACTIVITIES
___ PEOPLE WATCHING ___ CONCERT ___ RENEWAL OF WEDDING VOWS ___ BED RACE
___ SOUVENIOR SHOPPING ___ K-9 DEMONSTRATION ___ OTHER

Who are you with (check ONE)?

___ ALONE ___ FRIENDS ___ FAMILY ___ FAMILY & FRIENDS ___ ORGANIZED GROUP ___ OTHER (SPECIFY: _____)

How many in your group are of the following ages (specify NUMBER):

___ 0-12 years ___ 13-17 years ___ 18+ years old

How much did YOU spend during your time at the Festival?

\$ _____ FOOD & BEVERAGES \$ _____ GAMES \$ _____ SOUVENIORS \$ _____ OTHER

What year were you born? 19___ **What is your zip code?** _____

What is your gender? ___ FEMALE ___ MALE

What is your annual household income (before taxes)?

___ LESS THAN \$5,000 ___ \$5,000-9,999 ___ \$10,000-14,999 ___ \$15,000-24,999
___ \$25,000-34,999 ___ \$35,000-49,999 ___ \$50,000-74,999 ___ \$75,000-99,999
___ \$100,000-124,999 ___ \$125,000-149,999 ___ \$150,000 or more

Does your background include German or Austrian? (please check one)

___ GERMAN ___ AUSTRIAN ___ BOTH GERMAN & AUSTRIAN ___ NEITHER

What is your ethnic origin (check one)?

___ HISPANIC/LATINO ___ NON-HISPANIC/NON-LATINO

What is your race? (check all that apply)

___ AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE ___ ASIAN ___ BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN ___ WHITE
___ NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER ___ OTHER (Explain: _____)

Comments/Suggestions

THANK YOU

APPENDIX B

Tables and Figures

Table 1. Response rate among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006.

Total parties contacted	249
Respondents	109
Refusals	140
Compliance rate	43.8%
Unusable Questionnaires	3
Usable Questionnaires	106

Table 2. Demographic characteristics among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006.

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	42	43.8
Female	54	56.3
Total	96	100.0
Background		
German	62	59.6
Austrian	1	1.0
Both German and Austrian	9	8.7
Neither	32	30.8
Total	104	100.0
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	4	4.9
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	78	95.1
Total	82	100.0
Race		
White	89	84
Asian	8	7.5
Other	6	5.7
Black or African American	1	.9
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	.9
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0
Total	N/A ¹	N/A ¹
Age (M=48.9; S.D.=16.4)		
18-30	15	15.0
31-40	15	15.0
41-50	27	27.0
51-60	16	16.0
61-70	17	17.0
71 or older	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0

¹ Due to possible selection of multiple categorical responses.

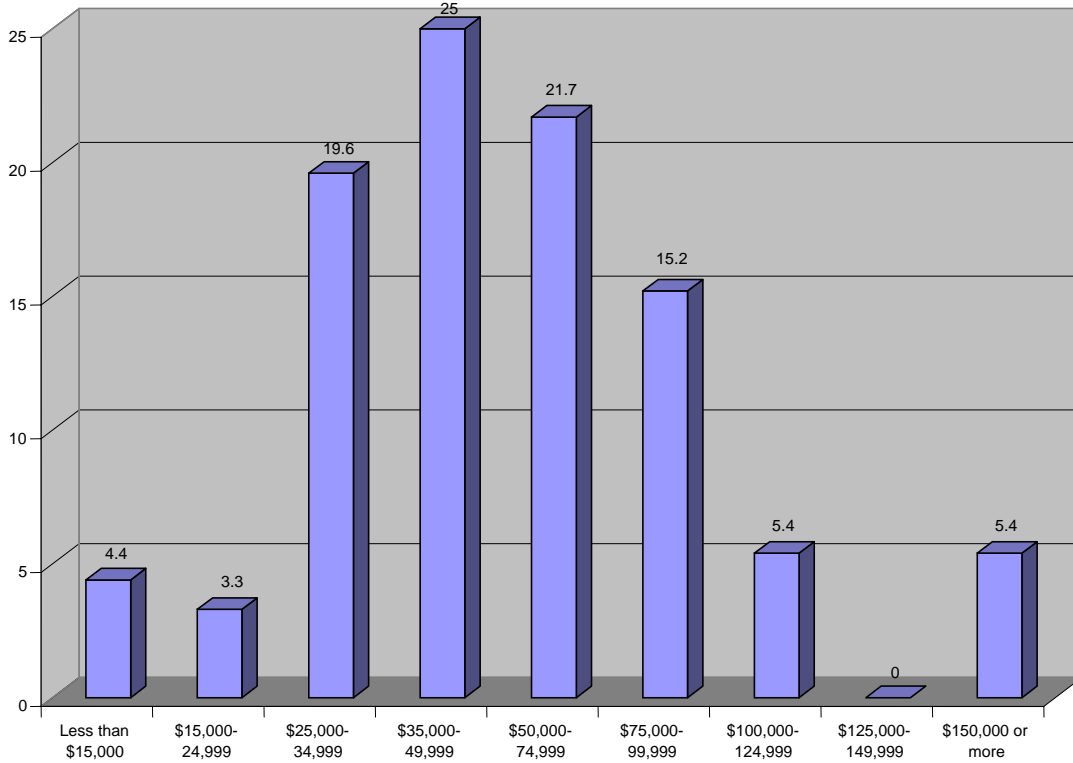


Figure 1. Percentage of annual household income among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006 (n=100).

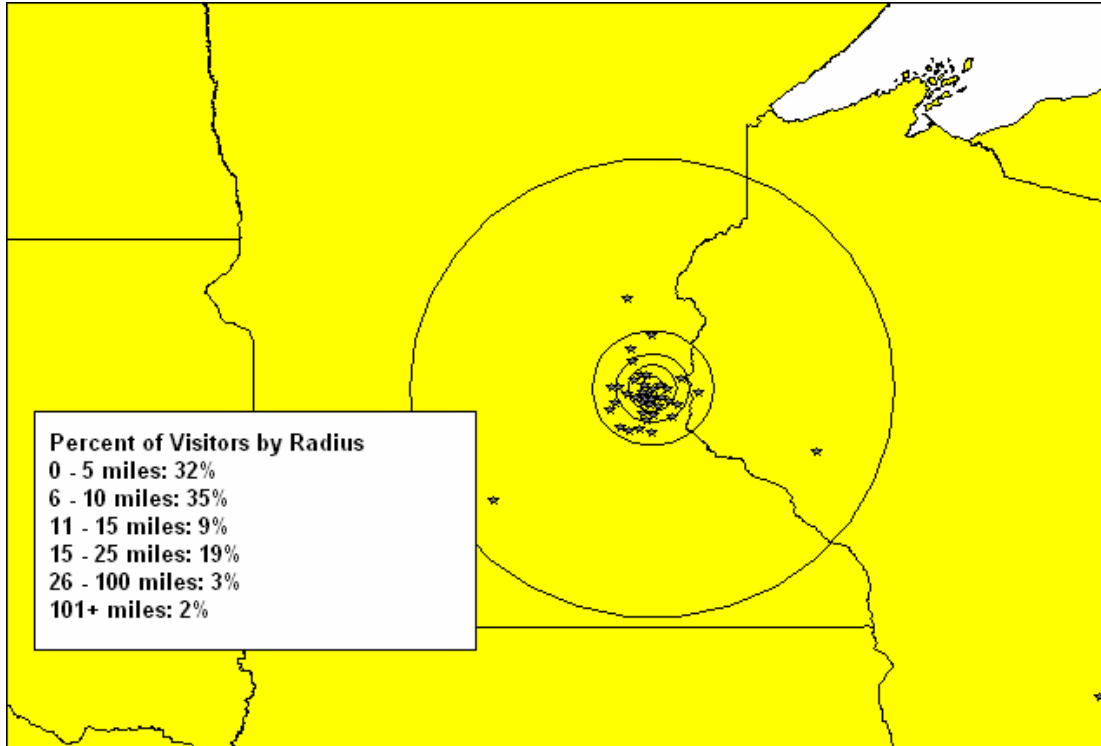


Figure 2. Radius map of respondents to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006 (n=98).

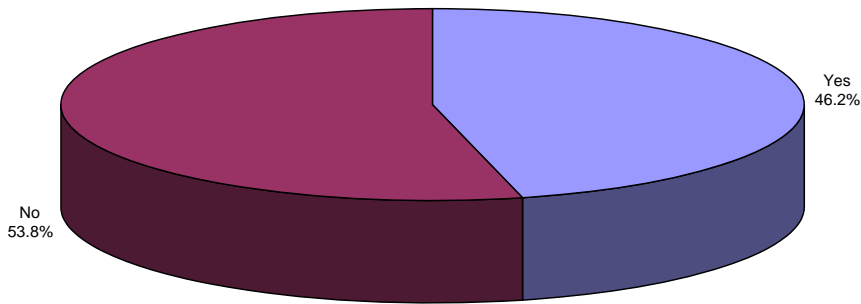


Figure 3. Previous Oktoberfest Fest attendance among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006 (n=104).

Table 3. Information sources among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006.

	Frequency	Percent
Friends	45	42.5
Newspaper	27	25.5
Other	26	24.5
Previous Visit	20	18.9
Radio	4	3.8
TV	2	1.9
Internet	0	0.0
Citypages	0	0.0

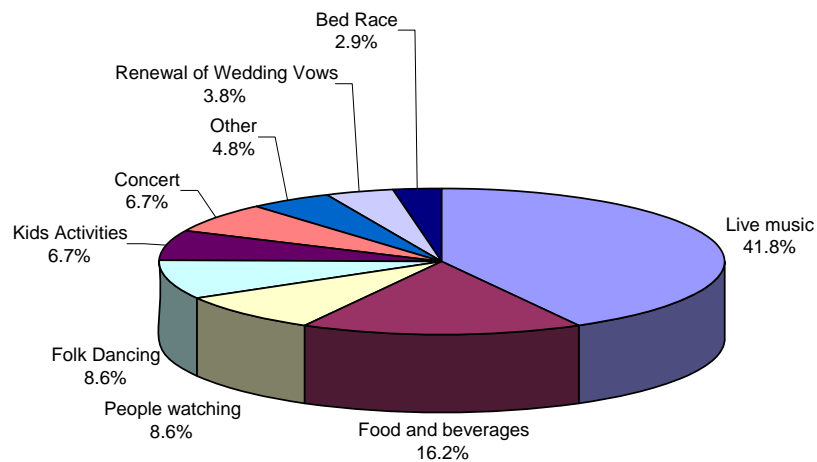


Figure 4. Most enjoyable attribute of St. Paul Oktoberfest among questionnaire respondents, 2006 (n=105).

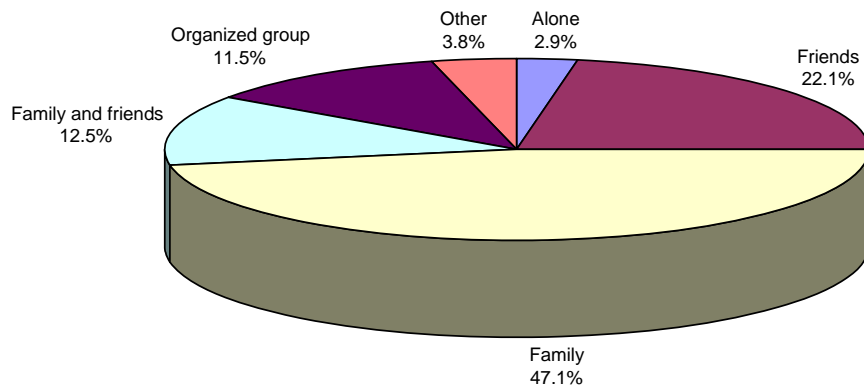


Figure 5. Group composition among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006 (n=104).

Table 4. Group composition age among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006.

	Frequency	Percent
Adults (18+)	54	50.9
Children (0-12)	21	19.8

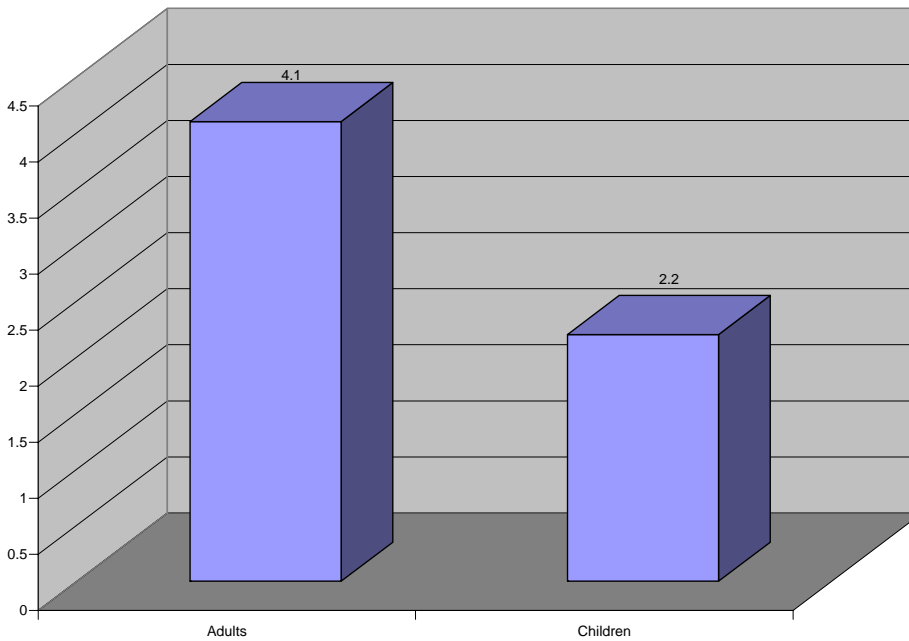


Figure 6. Average group size based on age categories among visitors to Oktoberfest, 2006.

Table 5. Average expenditures at St. Paul Oktoberfest among festival attendee respondents, 2006.

	M	S.D.	Range
Souvenirs (n=19)	\$19.63	19.67	\$0-70
Food and beverages (n=75)	\$18.19	11.05	\$0-60
Other (n=16)	\$17.75	16.74	\$0-50
Games (n=10)	\$5.4	12.58	\$0-40

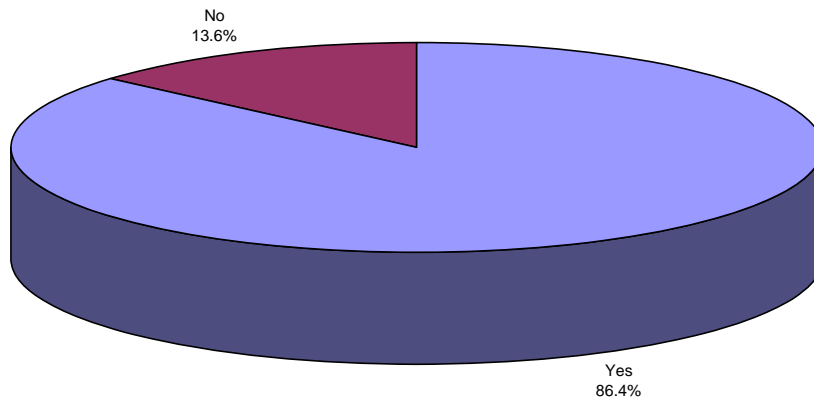


Figure 7. Intention to return to the area in the next twelve months among visitors to St. Paul Oktoberfest, 2006 (n=103).

APPENDIX C

Respondents Comments and Suggestions

A nice celebration of German Heritage

Fun time

Fun! Nice!

Thank you for inviting Pru & Gary

Wonderful festival

Great time – Nice Atmosphere – would definitely come again.

Nice time/ Returning next year.

Volunteer, will return next year

Liked the German singer in the gym.

Great time

Keep it up!

Great festival!

Beer!!

Great fest.

Great fun

Great Oktoberfest!

Good time – lots of fun!

More potato salad! I saw NO press on this in St. Paul paper ☹. More Kasekuchen!

It is a fun time. Very family friendly

More German food selections

Music too loud!

Reese's German potato salad is good. We love the Oktoberfest. Good Time! Leave the jumping balloon thing up longer!!!

Great venue! Keep it up
The groups were very good. I will be back next year

Having a great time!

Friendlyness

See ya in the movies

Thank you for all of your help

Great! Thanks!

Great event!

Everything is great

Great!

Great.

Everything is good. Keep up the good work.

Keep up the good work

Put up a big Oktoberfest sign on Rice Street and on white tent. We almost gave up!