

Businesses court millennials

Lake George area trying to promote a year-round venue

By Robert Downen

Published 10:56 pm, Wednesday, November 2, 2016

Lake George

In their efforts to bring year-round tourism to the Lake George and Adirondacks area, local business leaders are shifting their sights toward the millennial generation. By refocusing their branding efforts toward the United States' more than 80 million millennials (loosely defined as those born between the mid-1980s and early-2000s), officials hope they can draw in more tourism and bolster the region's fledgling economy. First, though, they'll need to change perceptions of Lake George and the larger Adirondacks region.

A May study by the Tupper Lake-based [Wild Center](#) found only 23 percent of millennials surveyed described themselves as "outdoors" people.

Further, the survey found, 41 percent of millennials are "unwilling to travel more than four hours away for a regional trip," and young people view the Adirondacks as "too much ground to cover," with "the idea of six million acres off-putting."

On the East Coast, where major cities and metropolitan areas are inordinately close (as opposed to the less-populated and expansive regions of middle America), drawing young people to the northernmost parts of New York might prove difficult.

Still, that hasn't stopped local businesses from trying.

[Sasha Pardy](#), owner of Adirondack Winery, believes the area is easy to pitch. The challenge, she said, is getting the information to the right audience.

Pardy, a [Lake George Chamber of Commerce](#) board member and proponent of the "Lake George 365" initiative, said area businesses need to change perceptions of the area as purely a summer and outdoors destination.

Many people view Lake George and the Adirondacks as "only an outdoorsy location, and they don't realize there's other things to do in the area besides climb a mountain."

Since launching Lake George 365, Pardy has been a main voice for the area, helping local businesses understand how to use social media to reach out to millennials, for whom technology and daily life are inextricably linked.

"The information is everywhere," she said. "It's just getting people to understand where (businesses are) and what sites to go to to find out."

At Adirondack Winery, which she opened in 2008 with her husband, Pardy has already launched two new events aimed at millennials, including wine education classes like "Wine 101" and the "Uncork & Uncraft" event series that started last weekend.

"The more we co-promote with other businesses, the more we give people reasons to come here, to come back and to stay for a while," she told the [Glens Falls Business Journal](#) in September.

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Originally published on TimesUnion.com