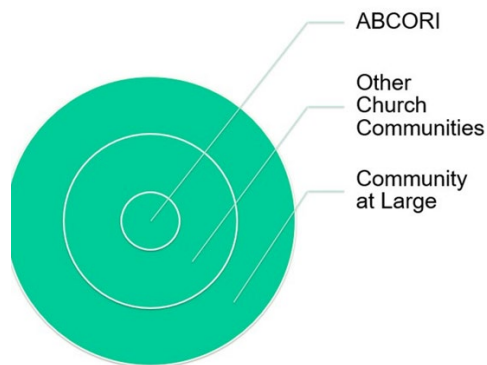


## Fact Sheet on Market Analysis

As a comprehensive camp and small conference center there are distinct ministries to a variety of people. In the business world we use the language of customers and market segments and market profiles – the point of all that is defining who we serve. And making a plan to reach out to them (promotion). Below are some statistics and descriptions about who we seek to serve in our ministry.

How we reach them will cut across all the advertising medium: face to face visits at churches and other venues (e.g. Christian schools, home school groups); exhibit halls; web pages; social media platforms; handbills and brochures; email push programs; camper to camper recruitment incentives; Gramma Christmas gifts at the web page; etc. etc.

The graphic below (which was also in the slide packet) describes our three macro targets: ABCORI congregations, other communities of faith, and the community-at-large.



Who specifically we target for resident camp (overnight camps) is different than day camp which is different for church retreats which is different for a mid-week corporate planning retreat or contemplative solo retreats with a spiritual director. One of the strengths of the Canonicus Ministries model is our ability to serve multiple groups and, in many cases, multiple groups at the same time. Let's look at some of the statistics that indicate the potential for success for some of the above mentioned groups. The slide deck pointed to other ABC camps that are successful in recruiting campers. Here are some of Canonicus Ministries market pools.

### Youth Camps Markets (Resident camp and Day camp)

**Children and Youth in ABCORI congregations:** an informal survey was done by one of our pastors and it identified 286 children and youth attending. They of course are target # 1. While waiting for those congregations to grow with new families here are the other markets to be pursued.

**Home school families:** RI has approximately 3.9% of its student population in 2023-24 as home schoolers. There is not a specific head count for home schoolers for the state as there is no state wide mandatory count. Using the public school enrollment figures for K-8 of 88,633 (primary camp age group) from *Rhode Island KIDS COUNT*; an estimate of more than 3456 home school students is reasonable (some estimates are as high as 5700). Researchers at

John Hopkins University (search John Hopkins home school hub) put the home school population in RI at over 3000.

According to NCES survey (<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2017/2017102.pdf> - pg.29) when asked parents “Important reason (check-all-that-apply) for home schooling”; **67%** indicated for moral instruction; **51%** religious instruction. Many home school families would by extension be interested in Christian camp programs that focus on character based developmental goals.

How does one reach this group of 3000 children and youth? These groups often have Facebook pages, newsletters, and event calendars, which are good places to share information or partner for outreach. Not only are the home school networks a point of access to promote summer camps but to provide special school year programs for the groups as well.

Additional home school statistics and research can be found at this link:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/02/20/a-look-at-homeschooling-in-the-us/>

**Christian day schools:** Approximately 10.9% of RI students attend private education schools or approximately 17,000 students (National Center for Education Statistics - NCES). A search of RI religious day schools in the state produces a list with an estimated student population of 3100 (K-12 since grade breakdown is not provided for most schools). If you expand that private Christian school head count to include not only RI but southeastern Massachusetts and eastern Connecticut that estimate is 6520 students. This of course includes both Catholic and Protestant schools.

How does one reach this group of 3000-6000 students? A variety of methods are available in terms of direct push marketing but non-traditional outreach like inviting student groups or faculty groups to the Canonicus Aerial Adventure Park in the fall or spring opens the door to direct outreach to the families.

**Non-ABC church families looking for camps:** There are 486 non-ABC churches in Rhode Island. Through church visits, clergy group visits, exhibit shows, and direct or ‘push’ mechanism to families (old school direct mail, email, and social media platforms) these individuals will be targeted with invitations to open houses, zoom events, and other communication venues to recruit campers to the high quality Canonicus camp sessions.

**Total youth market in Rhode Island:** General school age students in Rhode Island in public, private, charter, and home schools number approximately 165,000. The four target groups above are within that overall number estimate. Our current resident camper bed count is 98 per week (which btw needs to be increased). So, 98 youth x 8 weeks summer schedule = 784 campers to be at full capacity which is .005% of the children & youth market in RI. That is an extremely low-target statistic; 1% of the school age market is 1650 children and youth. One thing is certain – more than 1% of the children and youth in RI would benefit from a Christian camp experience. Perhaps we should try to at least reach the one percent for Christ.

**Mega-church youth camp:** another way to serve (while we are building our sponsored youth camp numbers) is to rent the complete resident camp area for a week long camp where we serve as the host and provide ‘activity specialist staff – lifeguards, crafting staff, ropes course,

etc.'. The large church with their youth group of 75 high schoolers accompanied by their youth ministry adult workers do their own worship and specialty program events and run their program. It is similar to hosting a church retreat that has their own program but for retreats the common essential service is lodging and meals. This mega-church event is a common way to serve as evidenced by many camp and conference centers across the country who host these church based youth camps.

**Day camps** traditionally serve close proximity populations as many of the children are going to day camp as part of 'child care' needs for working families that are not sending kids to day school in the summer. Contact with local town recreation programs in North Kingstown and Narragansett indicate their day camp programs have waiting lists (Exeter town has no day camps). The Canonicus day camp would meet this community need. The Canonicus property has capacity for running resident camp and day camp simultaneously. The ministry plan has included this direct outreach to the local community and it appears in the budget.

## Retreats and Conferences Marketing Plan

As described in the strategic plan, the **first priority** is to engage local churches and Christian groups (e.g. campus ministry groups) to come to the grounds for weekend conferences and retreats. **The first step will be to contact every former user group to let them know we have re-launched the ministry.**

The **second outreach to expand the conference center business will be to target the 63 ABCORI congregations and the other 486 non-ABC churches in Rhode Island.**

As the weekend market is saturated, the weekday user becomes paramount in order to guarantee fiscal solvency around the conference ministry/business. There is a general rule in the accommodations part of the hospitality industry that a property that exceeds the 60% occupancy rule will be financially profitable. In the conferencing ministry that rule is a good target and the key to achieving the target is mid-week utilization.

**The market targets for maximizing mid-week use** would be the following. As a ministry serving the larger community the focus will be to promote mid-week utilization through partnerships or advertising to specific community organizations.

Partnerships would be connecting to groups like Road Scholars or educational institutions that deliver hybrid programs that consist of online learning paired with week-long intensives. Development of these partnerships is challenging but have the benefit of consistent re-booking.

Community organizations that provide 'off-site' learning experiences is the other market group with the greatest potential. A recent article (<https://www.teamout.com/blog-post/corporate-retreats-statistics#30-statistics-about-corporate-retreats>) quotes a number of surveys and related statistics that show corporate retreats or 'off-site' training experiences are making a big comeback. Why the comeback; in part because of major shifts in the work place setting (remote positions, hybrids, overuse of online modes for training). With our limited room capacity at Meadowwood that will narrow our potential customers but fortunately we have a significant population center to draw from (4.7 million people live and work within a 50 mile radius of Canonicus).

A third significant market for the mid-week user is now available due to the advent of social media platforms, especially Facebook. The intersection of the huge 'Boomer' retirement cohort who have hobby interests that coalesce around local or regional groups creates a mid-week opportunity for overnight meeting spaces. The traditional groups of hobbyists that have mid-week availability and would love a 'scrap-booking' retreat or a 'health and wellness' focus retreat are all options that would be pursued. The social network makes these outreach initiatives realistic and cost effective.