Building Sales of
Discover NJ History License Plates

A Research Report For:

November 2016
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Findings and Conclusion

Following are some initial findings and conclusions from this research based on our analysis of the results.

- There is potential to increase sales of the *Discover NJ History* license plate.
  - Almost one-in-five New Jersey motorists (18%), who do not currently own it, say they are likely to consider buying the license plate, even after being told the cost.
  - Likelihood is higher among drivers familiar with the history license plate, and those who say it’s important to support New Jersey historical sites.

- Most licensed drivers are familiar with (any) specialty license plates, but awareness of the *Discover NJ History* plate is low.
  - Asked, unprompted, to name a specialty plate only two percent mentioned *Discover NJ History*, much lower than most other specialty plates; true even among respondents who say it’s important to support New Jersey historic sites.
  - Provided a list of specialty plates, familiarity with *Discover NJ History* ranked lowest; again, low even among those saying it’s important to support New Jersey history.
Findings and Conclusion

- Motorists do not find design of the Discover NJ History license plate as engaging or attention grabbing.
  - Asked to compare it to other specialty plates (all shown), the history plate easily rated lowest for:
    - Overall appeal
    - Being attention grabbing
    - Calling attention to a cause or issue
    - Having a modern and up-to-date image
    - Having an appealing design

- Asked to describe the image displayed on the plate, 69 percent aren’t sure what it represents.

- A significant percentage of respondents (37%) say they don’t know where to look for information about acquiring the license plate.
  - This is true even among drivers familiar with the plate.
Findings and Conclusion

- The vast majority of motorists don’t know how funds generated by sales of the Discover NJ History license plates benefit the state, which likely affects willingness to buy
  - Three-in-four respondents say they aren’t sure how the money is used
  - Even among those saying it’s important to support New Jersey’s historical sites, or who are familiar with the license plate, at least two-thirds don’t know where the money goes

- Lack of interest in having a specialty plate and cost are the primary reasons for not buying the Discover NJ History license plate; however, there are other reasons that can be overcome, including:
  - Having an unappealing design
  - Don’t know how to obtain it
  - Don’t trust where money goes
SPECIFIC FINDINGS
1. Familiarity With Specialty License Plates
The vast majority of New Jersey motorists (84%) are at least somewhat familiar with specialty New Jersey license plates. Almost six-in-ten (58%) are familiar (a 5 or 4 rating), significantly higher among those saying it’s important to support New Jersey historic locations and those likely to purchase a Discover NJ History plate, but don’t have one now.

**Q3. How familiar are you with specialty license plates supporting specific interests and causes..?**

*Base: Total Respondents (500)*

**(Note: Highlighted numbers indicate a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level within demographic or target groups, not against total.)**
Familiarity With Specific Specialty Plates

KEY POINT

Unaided awareness of the Discover NJ History license plate is low compared to other specialty plates. This is true even among licensed drivers who say it’s important to support New Jersey historic sites. This question was asked open ended; that is, without providing license plate names.

PERCENTAGE FAMILIAR WITH:

- Cancer/Conquer Cancer/Cancer Awareness/Breast Cancer: 20%
- Wildlife/Wildlife Conservation/NJ Wildlife: 16%
- Jersey Shore/Shore to Please: 13%
- Animals/Animal Friendly/Protection/Rescue/Shelters/Pets: 9%
- Battleship/Battleship New Jersey: 9%
- Alumni/Colleges: 5%
- Police/Law Enforcement/PBA: 5%
- Personalized/Vanity: 5%
- Discover NJ History: 2%
- Other: 19%
- None: 9%
- Not sure: 26%

Q4. Which specialty license plates are you familiar with?
Base: Familiar With Specialty License Plates (418)
Familiarity & Purchase of Specialty License Plates

KEY POINT
Awareness of the Discover NJ History license plate also rates significantly lower when compared to four other plates, named to create a comparison. Even among motorists who say it’s important to support the state’s historic locations, fewer than half are familiar, even through names of these plates were provided.

PERCENTAGE FAMILIAR:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty License Plate</th>
<th>Percentage Familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserve Wildlife</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shore to Please</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conquer Cancer</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battleship</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover NJ History</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERCENTAGE PURCHASED:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty License Plate</th>
<th>Percentage Purchased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserve Wildlife</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shore to Please</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conquer Cancer</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battleship</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover NJ History</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5. Which of the following specialty licenses plates, if any, are you familiar with? Then indicate if you/any member have purchased?
Base: Total Respondents (500)
New Jersey drivers who purchase specialty license plates do so mostly to support an issue or cause, followed by an appealing design, and that they are different from standard plates.

Q6. Which of the following are reasons you or someone in your household purchased a specialty license plate?
Base: Reasons For Purchasing License Plate (85)

- To support an issue or cause: 59%
- Liked the design and look: 38%
- Different than standard New Jersey license plates: 34%
- Other: 8%
- Not sure: 1%
2. Comparing The Image of Specialty Plates
**KEY POINT**
Respondents were shown three license plates and asked to rate each on factors generally important in making consumer purchase decisions. The *Discover NJ History* license rated lowest on almost all images, particularly for having a modern image and up-to-date look, overall appeal and having an appealing design. Respondents saying it’s important to support historic NJ sites rate the license plate better, but still not high.

**PERCENTAGE SAYING EACH DESCRIBES (5 OR 4 RATING):**

- **Is appealing overall**
  - Discover NJ History: 40%
  - Conquer Cancer: 60%
  - Battleship: 55%

- **Would grab your attention**
  - Discover NJ History: 45%
  - Conquer Cancer: 58%
  - Battleship: 59%

- **Calls your attention to a cause or issue**
  - Discover NJ History: 41%
  - Conquer Cancer: 62%
  - Battleship: 56%

- **Modern image/up-to-date look**
  - Discover NJ History: 36%
  - Conquer Cancer: 52%
  - Battleship: 51%

- **Cause of issue I relate to**
  - Discover NJ History: 36%
  - Conquer Cancer: 62%
  - Battleship: 51%

- **Has appealing design**
  - Discover NJ History: 41%
  - Conquer Cancer: 60%
  - Battleship: 59%

**Base: Total Respondents (500)**

**Chart Notes:**
- Important to support historic NJ sites (51%); familiar with *Discover NJ History* plate (53%)
- Important to support historic NJ sites (56%); familiar with *Discover NJ History* plate (58%)
- Important to support historic NJ sites (53%); familiar with *Discover NJ History* plate (55%)
- Important to support historic NJ sites (47%)
- Important to support historic NJ sites (50%)
- Important to support historic NJ sites (54%); familiar with *Discover NJ History* plate (53%)
### Image of Discover NJ History License Plate

**KEY POINT**  
Ratings for the Discover NJ History license plate are about even on all image attributes. None stand out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Is Appealing Overall</th>
<th>Would Grab Your Attention If You Saw It On Another Car</th>
<th>Calls Your Attention To A Cause or Issue</th>
<th>Modern Image, Up-To-Date Look</th>
<th>A Cause or Issue I Relate To</th>
<th>Has Appealing Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 – Closely Describes</td>
<td>17 %</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>17 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>17 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>23 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>32 %</td>
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<td>17 %</td>
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<td>18 %</td>
<td>19 %</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>19 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Doesn’t Describe At All</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
<td>9 %</td>
<td>9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>3 %</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Q7. Please rate each of these license plates on each of the following?**  
Base: Total Respondents (500)**
The Battleship license plate rates lowest for championing a cause drivers can relate to, but relatively high for being attention grabbing.

Q7. Please rate each of these license plates on each of the following?  
Base: Total Respondents (500)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Is Appealing Overall</th>
<th>Would Grab Your Attention If You Saw It On Another Car</th>
<th>Calls Your Attention To A Cause or Issue</th>
<th>Modern Image, Up-To-Date Look</th>
<th>A Cause or Issue I Relate To</th>
<th>Has Appealing Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 – Closely Describes</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Doesn’t Describe At All</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</table>
Image of The Conquer Cancer License Plate

KEY POINT
As may be expected, the Conquer Cancer license plate rates highest for representing a cause respondents relate to. However, it also rates highest for overall appeal and calling attention to a cause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is Appealing Overall</th>
<th>Would Grab Your Attention If You Saw It On Another Car</th>
<th>Calls Your Attention To A Cause or Issue</th>
<th>Modern Image, Up-To-Date Look</th>
<th>A Cause or Issue I Relate To</th>
<th>Has Appealing Design</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>5 – Closely Describes</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q7. Please rate each of these license plates on each of the following?
Base: Total Respondents (500)
KEY POINT  Asked what first comes to mind when thinking about a historic New Jersey image, historic buildings top the list, just above light houses.

PERCENTAGE CITING:

- Historic buildings: 32%
- Light houses: 27%
- The revolutionary war: 19%
- Scenes of people in earlier days: 8%
- Other: 7%
- Not sure: 7%

Q8. What thought first comes to mind when you think about a historic New Jersey image?
Base: Total Respondents (500)
KEY POINT

Almost seven-in-10 New Jersey drivers (and almost 60 percent of those familiar with the Discover NJ History license plate) say they don’t know what is represented by the graphic on it, and not significantly higher than those familiar with the license plate.

Q9. Focusing only on the graphic displayed on this license plate, what historic image or location does it show?

Base: Total Respondents (500)
3. Purchasing The *Discover NJ History* License Plate
KEY POINT

Almost half (46%) of respondents said they would contact the Department of Motor Vehicles or access its website to find information about acquiring the *Discover NJ History* license plate. However, more than one-in-three aren’t sure where to inquire, including those familiar with the license plate.

Q10. Where would you look for information about acquiring this specialty license plate?
Base: Total Respondents (500)
Three-in-four New Jersey drivers don't know how funds generated by sales of the *Discover NJ History* license plates are used, including significant percentages of those saying it’s important to support historic New Jersey sites, and those familiar with the license plate.

Q11. How are the funds raised by the sale of *Discover NJ History* license plates used?  
Base: Total Respondents (500)
Why Buy *Discover NJ History* Plate

KEY POINT

Among those who have purchased the *Discover NJ History* license plate, the desire to support New Jersey history and appealing design equal as the top responses. However, due to the small sample of those who purchased the license plate (9), these responses should be taken as “directional only.”

-Q12. Please indicate the reason you bought the license plate *Discover NJ History*?

Base: Respondents Who Purchased Discover NJ History License Plate (9)

- To support New Jersey History: 56%*
- Liked the design and look: 56%
- Not sure: 11%

*(Totals to more than 100% due to multiple responses.)
Almost one-in four drivers (who do not currently have a Discover NJ History license plate) say it’s likely they would consider purchasing one, significantly higher among those who say it’s important to support historic New Jersey sites and those already familiar with the plate. Cost was not mentioned in this question. Respondents, however, were told the proceeds are used to support historic preservation and heritage tourism.

Q13. How likely are you to consider purchasing this license plate?
Base: Respondents Who Have Not Purchased Discover NJ History License Plate (491)

PERCENTAGE LIKELY TO PURCHASE DISCOVER NJ HISTORY PLATE:

- Very Likely - 5: 10%
- 4: 13%
- 3: 25%
- 2: 17%
- Not Likely At All - 1: 32%
- Not sure: 4%

Important to support historic NJ sites (32%); familiar with Discover NJ History plate (36%)

(Note: Highlighted numbers indicate a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level within demographic or target groups, not against total.)
Likelihood of Buying When Cost Included

KEY POINT
When cost was specified, about four-in-10 respondents who said they would consider purchasing the license plate say it’s still likely they would do so. This is equal to 18 percent of New Jersey drivers who do not currently have the Discover NJ History license plate.

Q14. How likely are you to consider buying the Discover NJ History license plate?
Base: Likely To Purchase Discover NJ History license plate (231)

- Very Likely - 5: 17%
- 4: 22%
- 3: 30%
- 2: 18%
- Not Likely At All - 1: 13%
- Not sure: 1%

Important to support historic NJ sites (43%); familiar with Discover NJ History plate (46%)
Lack of desire to have a specialty license plate and cost are the primary reasons respondents gave for not considering purchasing the *Discover NJ History* license plate. However, a significant percentage said the design is unappealing. Smaller percentages said they don’t know how to obtain one, or, don’t trust how the money is used. This question was asked open-ended, without prompting responses.

Q15. Why is unlikely you would purchase the *Discover NJ History* license plate?
Base: Not Likely To Purchase *Discover NJ History* license plate (260)

*(Totals to more than 100% due to multiple responses.)*
Appendix A: Methodology

Results of this research are based on an online survey of 500 licensed drivers throughout the State of New Jersey.

Interviewing was conducted by American Opinion Research of Princeton, N.J. between October 7 and October 20, 2016.

American Opinion Research (AOR) is a nationally-recognized, full-service global market research firm. AOR has conducted research for such companies as Siemens, Johnson & Johnson, General Electric, Becton Dickinson, IBM, Kraft Foods, AOR has also served a number of other companies including Citibank, The New York Times Company, Cablevision, Chicago Tribune, Berlitz, AT&T, General Motors, Ford, Procter and Gamble, S.C. Johnson, Mattel, Apple, Agfa, Kohl’s and many others.