

LIFT-SERVED MOUNTAIN BIKING

Opportunities for Growth

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LIFT-SERVED MOUNTAIN BIKING OPPORTUNITIES at ski areas and mountain resorts are important contributors to the recreational landscape. While many resorts have made huge improvements in their trail systems in recent years, tremendous potential remains for resorts to continue to grow their rider base and offer even better experiences to mountain bikers of all ages and abilities.

In February 2020, SE Group designed and administered a nationally distributed survey about lift-served mountain biking to better understand this potential for growth. The goal of the survey was to gain insights from riders themselves in terms of their interest and preferences related to lift-served mountain biking, even from those who don't currently enjoy this facet of the sport. The survey was distributed by International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA), Vermont Mountain Biking Association (VMBA) and Colorado Mountain Biking Association (COMBA).

What follows are some of the most interesting trends from the survey. SE Group also hosted a webinar in conjunction with NSAA late last year based on these findings, and some ski area insights from that virtual discussion are called out below.

Market Potential

The typical vision of a downhill mountain biker used to be a burly young guy in his 20s, fully decked out in body armor, ripping down the mountain doing massive jumps. You now see a much wider diversity of riders hopping on lifts, and huge market potential exists for families, women and beginner-level riders of all ages.



"For the first 25 years we had mountain biking off the peak, it was very technical single track, and our green trails down were mostly work roads," according to Mike Solimano, GM at Killington Resort, Vt. "You can imagine what that was like. We wondered why we never grew mountain biking for the first 25 years, and that was probably the answer."

- + Of the respondents who currently participate in lift-served mountain biking, 78% are 30 years and older, and close to half are 40 and older. Note: Actual participation in the sport skews younger than this would suggest due to the fact that kids and young adults were less likely to participate in the survey.



BOGUS BASIN MOUNTAIN RECREATION AREA

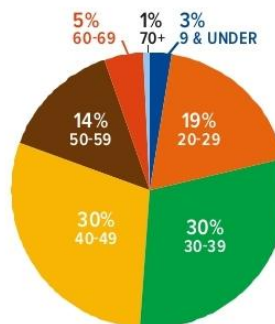
Huge downhill mountain biking market potential exists for families, women and beginner-level riders of all ages.

- + Although mountain biking is a male-dominated sport, and lift-served mountain biking even more so, the survey results suggest a potential for increased participation by female riders. While the majority (70%) of female respondents had never tried lift-served mountain biking before, 80% of these female never-ers were interested. Over 30% of the female respondents had done lift-served mountain biking, with most of these (over 70%) going at least three times a season. Women represented almost 20% of the survey respondents, which is consistent with the level of participation in mountain biking overall from other surveys.

With the goal of getting more women into the sport, Killington offers an all-abilities women's group ride called "Divas of Dirt," which is led by local pro-rider Amy Alton. Due to the ride's popularity, they have also begun offering a women's only bike camp.



RESPONDENTS BY AGE



RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

