

Insider Perks Releases Industry-First Analysis of Psychological Barriers Keeping Gen Z Out of Campgrounds

New white paper argues industry's amenities investment misses the real problem—and offers a framework that costs 98% less

CLEVELAND, OH, UNITED STATES, January 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Insider Perks](#), an AI-first marketing and automation company serving the

outdoor hospitality industry since 2009, today released "The Great Outdoors Disconnect: Why Wi-Fi Won't Save the Campground," a white paper presenting a new psychological framework for understanding why Gen Z struggles to convert into long-term campers.



Insider Perks Logo

“

Gen Z is drowning in comfort and stimulation. They don't need faster Wi-Fi. They need someone to hand them a flint striker and tell them it's okay to fail.”

Brian Searl

The report identifies four barriers—Competence Terror, the Boredom Void, Productivity Guilt, and Biophobia—that emerge from developmental and environmental factors unique to digitally-saturated young adults. It argues that the industry's current amenities-focused approach places campgrounds in direct competition with hotels, a battle outdoor hospitality cannot win.

"Gen Z is drowning in comfort and stimulation," said Brian Searl, Founder and CEO of Insider Perks. "They don't need

faster Wi-Fi. They need someone to hand them a flint striker and tell them it's okay to fail."

The framework is supported by recent industry data. KOA's 2025 Camping & Outdoor Hospitality Report shows Gen Z has the highest "at-risk camper" rate of any generation—guests who express interest but fail to convert or return. YPulse research indicates 79% of young adults wish they had more outdoor skills, while 38% report feeling unwelcome in the outdoor community despite no one rejecting them.

The white paper synthesizes research from developmental psychology, attention science, and

behavioral economics to explain why these patterns exist—and what operators can do about it.

Key contributions include:

- 1) A four-barrier diagnostic framework rooted in peer-reviewed research on play deprivation, attention fragmentation, productivity anxiety, and nature disconnection
- 2) Five scaffolding strategies with specific messaging, implementation steps, and cost estimates
- 3) An economic analysis showing psychological scaffolding costs approximately \$16,500 compared to \$755,000 for a comparable glamping investment
- 4) A phased implementation roadmap beginning with zero-budget tactics operators can execute this week

"The barriers aren't encoded in birth year—they're products of experience," Searl said. "Which means the solutions work for anyone who shares the psychological profile, not just people born after 1997. That's a much larger addressable market than most operators realize."

The report draws on 19 sources and includes case studies from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, REI Outdoor School, and San Diego County Parks demonstrating that scaffolding-based approaches already work at scale.

About Insider Perks

Insider Perks is an AI-first marketing, automation, and research company exclusively serving the outdoor hospitality industry. Founded in 2009 and headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, the company works with over 500 campground, RV park, and glamping resort clients across North America. Through its CampVantage platform, Insider Perks conducts competitive intelligence and pricing research across thousands of properties. Founder Brian Searl also publishes Modern Campground, the largest outdoor hospitality news publication, and co-hosts MC Fireside Chats and Outwired, weekly podcasts covering industry trends, AI, and technology. Learn more at insiderperks.com.

Download the Report

The full white paper is available for free download at <https://insiderperks.com/gen-z-camping-report/>

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