



## Wet Weather Variables: Unforeseen Tourism Business Insights

Weather and climate variables have major impacts on business, especially the outdoor-reliant tourism industry. Different weather events however, can result in entirely different consequences based upon your business plan. Recorded weather phenomena do not stop at just temperature and precipitation, nor should your business-weather analysis.

### So what? It rains and people stay home, right?

It might seem obvious that weather affects your business in simple ways, and certain factors definitely affect it more than others, but there are many more levels to explore before conceding a “rained out business day.” Knowing how the wet weather affects day-to-day business turnout becomes much more than a binary analysis, but rather a predictive process that **can save you money**. Below is a table of common “wetness variables” with potential cues in the southeast tourism industry. *How else can your business benefit?*

Wetness Variables	Description	Primary Measure	Tourism Industry use in the Southeast: Basic Positives and Negatives
<b>Humidity</b>	A description of water vapor in the air. Seen as Relative Humidity or Dew Point.	Percentage/ Degrees Fahrenheit	(+) High humidity decreases the need for costly watering of vegetation. (-) High summer values make outdoor activities uncomfortable for clients.
<b>Warm Season Precipitation</b>	Precipitation encompasses all water types falling from the atmosphere. The warm season in North Carolina encompasses rainfall.	Inches	(+) Rain drives people indoors; indoor tourism can benefit. (+) Rain rehabilitates golf course turf and contributes to aesthetic quality. (-) Outdoor tourism activities are almost all hampered by rainfall. It depresses overall attendance and prohibits outdoor recreation.
<b>Cold Season Precipitation</b>	Precipitation encompasses all water types falling from the atmosphere. The cold season in North Carolina encompasses snow, sleet, and freezing rain.	Inches	(+) Snowfall helps ski resorts when amounts are light and manageable. (-) Heavy, wet snowfall or freezing rain precipitation hurts even winter tourism as roads become treacherous and impassible. (±) In the southeast snowfall tends to be perceived more positively compared with rain. This can cause different tourist behavior between the two events.
<b>Snow Water Equivalent (SWE)</b>	Snow varies from light and airy to heavy and wet. SWE quantifies this. The standard is 1" snow = 1/10" rain.	Ratio/ Inches	(-) Wet snows are detrimental to road conditions and can depress tourist accessibility and willingness to participate in indoor and outdoor tourism. (±) A very important metric to the ski industry. Snow type influences the quality of natural snow on a ski slope.
<b>Stream Flow</b>	A measure of the speed and amount of water passing through streams and rivers.	Cubic Feet Per Second	(±) Rafting in the Appalachian Mountains is influenced by stream flow which is realized in strength of the rapids. (±) Stream flow can be used as a proxy for ground water and give golf course managers information on available watering capacities.
<b>Soil Moisture</b>	Atmospheric conditions can dry or moisten the soil; this measures the amount of water in the soil.	Cubic Meters	(+) Golf course managers can use soil moisture parameters to better maintain courses and turf choices. (-) Soil moisture can create local microclimates. This can lead to localized heat wave outbreaks or thunderstorms which negatively affect outdoor tourism and recreation.



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