



Experience Nova Scotia A Toolkit

NOVA SCOTIA.COM
Shaped by the Sea





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WELCOME!

This toolkit is designed to be a practical resource, providing you with information to craft new experiences for our visitors. Inside you'll find:

- an overview of Nova Scotia's brand and core experiences, as well as travel motivators and visitor interests
- tools to assess your experience and the opportunities in your region
- ideas on how to develop new experiences
- tips on promoting your experiences
- information on provincial marketing activities

Are you ready to create experiences that our visitors can't resist? Let's get started....





1

WHAT'S THE SITUATION?

IN THIS SECTION

Inspiring Travel

The Art of Consumer Engagement

Meeting Expectations



A product is what you buy; an experience is what you remember.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION?

We all know Nova Scotia is a special place with unique history, beautiful scenery, incredibly friendly people, and so much to see and do.

But lots of other destinations around the globe can say the same thing.

So what sets Nova Scotia apart?

It's the feeling you get when you stand at Rissers Beach, toes in the water, looking out on that unending horizon and feeling at peace.

It's that energy you feel after you've danced a lively jig to the tunes of that young fiddling talent at the community hall in Inverness.

It's the satisfaction of sharing a meal with friends, made better because you picked the fresh ingredients yourself from a local valley farm.

Travel is not just about where you've been anymore – it's about what you did while you were there, how it made you feel, the people you met while you were there, and the memories you took home. A product is what you buy; an experience is what you remember.

Our visitors want to experience what it means to be Nova Scotian.

For those of us in tourism, it means rethinking our approach so we can offer our visitors more experience opportunities, not just products. The global tourism market is very competitive. We currently offer some great experiences, such as those highlighted in best practices throughout this toolkit. And, we need more new, exciting experiences that differentiate us from our competition, refreshing our offering to visitors. How will you help set us apart?



INSPIRING TRAVEL

Visitors have their own perspectives, values, and expectations that influence their reaction to a product. They use those perspectives and values to select the product, and have expectations of what it is going to be like.

Your challenge is to find a way to offer an experience that speaks to those values and unique perspectives, and fulfills or exceeds the expectations of your visitors.

Sound impossible? It's easier than you think! Just keep reading.

First, it helps to understand what motivates travel decisions. Does your experience match a travel motivator? Does it offer an opportunity to indulge, learn, be challenged, or pursue a special interest? In Section 2 you'll learn about what motivates people to travel.

Next, take a look at why people choose to come to Nova Scotia. That's where the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism can help. We know why they come and have built our brand on it. We've also identified the core experiences that differentiate Nova Scotia from anywhere else. You'll get more details in Section 3.

In Sections 4 and 5 you'll learn how to assess your assets and create experiences that complement the Nova Scotia brand and tap into our core experiences that visitors are seeking. That's how you can move closer to meeting the expectations of your visitor!

THE ART OF CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

With hundreds of television channels, thousands of magazines, and endless websites, media is more fragmented than ever before. Consumers have changed, too. Today they take an active role in communicating with you (the seller), and with other consumers about your product.

That's why it's so important to engage your customer and have an active conversation with existing and potential visitors. Tapping into their passions and understanding interests will help you determine the experience you offer and choose the right mix of marketing, communication, and social media tools. When developing your engagement and marketing tools to shape expectations and create buzz, you'll find information on visitor motivations, interests and things to think about in Sections 2 and 6.

MEETING EXPECTATIONS

The final step is to ensure you are meeting or exceeding visitor expectations. Section 7 provides tools and resources for evaluating your experience and engagement activities, to build on your success.

Ready to get started? Let's find out what motivates people to travel to Nova Scotia.





2

WHO WANTS A NOVA SCOTIA EXPERIENCE?

IN THIS SECTION

Why Do People Travel?

Special Interest Travel

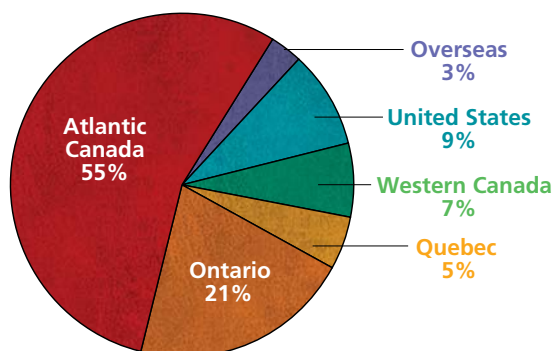
Best Practices: Making Connections
– Hike the Highlands Festival



WHO WANTS A NOVA SCOTIA EXPERIENCE?

Tourism has been an industry in Nova Scotia since the 1870s. At first, the call of the great outdoors brought hunters, fishers, and outdoor enthusiasts to our shores. After WWII, Mom, Dad, and the kids came to enjoy the beaches in “Canada’s Ocean Playground.” Today, pleasure travellers from Canada, the United States, and beyond come to enjoy Nova Scotia’s outdoors, culture, heritage, cuisine, seacoast, and urban experiences.

As our visitors evolved, so did our ability to understand them. By combining information from Visitor Exit Surveys and other sources, we know who our visitor is, where they come from, how they get here, and, most importantly, why they choose Nova Scotia. Check out Appendix A for demographic information on Nova Scotia’s visitor markets.



WHY DO PEOPLE TRAVEL?

Demographic information is very important but it does not get at the heart of why people travel. After all, there are a lot of other things they could spend their hard-earned money on. So why do people choose travel?

There are several reasons that motivate people to travel*:

Escape. To unwind and take a break from the pressures of life or work. Getaways are increasingly attractive for this motivation.

Indulgence. Travel is a luxury purchase or a gift to themselves for having achieved a certain economic status.

Learning and renewal. To experience other cultures, learn the history, and sample the local life experience.

Challenge and adventure. To seek stimulation rather than relaxation in their travel experiences. Those who buy “adventure travel” experiences may relish strenuous activity, hardship, risk, and even danger.

Special activities. Travel as a necessary part of an activity they value, such as research, education, humanitarian contributions, fellowship, or a specialized activity.

There are also four factors that shape people's buying preferences*:

Comfort. This is characterized by pleasant and comfortable surroundings, enjoyable eating experiences, comfortable sleeping arrangements and living quarters, general ambience, catering by service staff, music and other forms of entertainment, and pampering to the extent that their economic means can provide. At one end of this scale, some travellers prefer the maximum luxury and comfort they can afford. At the other end, some are quite willing to accept more basic conditions.

Convenience. This is the extent to which the travel experience is managed by others, freeing the traveller from many of the logistical chores associated with it. For example, some people prefer to travel with a group because of the simplicity and convenience it offers. Others will accept more complex or difficult logistical arrangements, schedules, and even hassles, in order to get to the travel experience that they value.

Cost. Some travel customers are much thriftier in their buying patterns than others. Some have no choice but to stretch their travel funds as far as possible. Others are less cost sensitive, preferring to pay more to have options they might not otherwise have. Options such as upgrades, side trips, expensive meals, shopping, and other extras have little appeal to some and great appeal to others.

Control. This is the extent to which the customer wants to control the buying process and manage his or her own experience. Sometimes related to convenience and cost, the control factor seems to reflect the desire for a sense of autonomy and authority. Some customers are happy to put their fate into the hands of a travel agent, tour organizer, or group leader, while others insist on the "do-it-myself" method.

Consider travel motivators and buying preferences when you are developing experiences for your target markets.

*Karl Albrecht. Source: *Destination Marketing Association International Foundation, The Future of Destination Marketing: Tradition, Transition and Transformation.*

SPECIAL INTEREST TRAVEL

So far we have touched on demographics, motivations, buying styles - what else is there?

Well, there is travel motivated by special interests and passions.

There are segments (groups of people that share common characteristics and may be interested in similar experiences, e.g. women-only groups) and niches (groups of people interested in a particular product or service, e.g. cycling enthusiasts). A fit between these groups and the experience the province has to offer, either now or in the future, presents an opportunity for tourism growth in Nova Scotia.

You will find several emerging market bulletins that provide information on some of these markets at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/TCH/tourism/emerging-markets.aspx>.

The Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) has also done some great work on consumer segmentation called the Explorer Quotient™ (EQ). The EQ builds a link between social values and travel preferences. That means the way you view the world influences the type of travel you choose and the experience that you have when travelling. This can influence how we as tourism providers develop and market our tourism products and services, doing so in ways that appeal to certain segments of the population.

Through the EQ, nine types of consumer segments have been identified, three of which the CTC identifies as the best prospect targets for Canada. Check out the EQ and these segments online under Resources for Industry at <http://en-corporate.canada.travel/>.

Consider travel motivators and buying preferences when you are developing experiences for your target markets.



best practices

Making Connections – Hike the Highlands Festival



With incredible hiking opportunities that connect the mountains to the sea, and a market of hiking enthusiasts to draw from, Hike the Highlands Festival has grown into a 10-day event that brings over 170 visitors to the Highlands area each September.

Not happy to just provide safe, guided hiking opportunities, Hike the Highlands Festival Society works hard to add value to visitors' hiking experiences. Drawing on local experts, they present workshops and sessions on everything from photography and the history and natural environment of the area, to the use of Nordic walking poles and sharing of global hiking experiences. All of this speaks to the passions of the festival's market – the hiking enthusiast.

In 2009, they offered nine new hikes, four new workshops, and a new series of evening presentations. "It's a competitive world out there and unless you introduce something new every year, people won't come back," said Tom Wilson, member of the Festival Society. It is paying off with 40 to 50 visitors returning to the event each year.

The small-group nature of the hikes and other social opportunities give festival participants and event volunteers an opportunity to get to know one another. Festival organizers are working to make a connection online as well.

In addition to traditional marketing activities, the festival targets outdoor enthusiasts through websites as well as Facebook, Twitter, online press release services, blogs, and the Google search engine. "All of our social media activities encourage people to talk about the festival and visit the Hike the Highlands website," said Tom. Once there, participants can browse the festival brochure, register for the hikes, and pay online.

By talking to their guests during the festival and doing an evaluation every year following the event, the Festival Society has stayed on top of visitor trends and interests, ensuring the festival remains a must-do for hikers in coming years.

At a Glance:

Core Experience:

Outdoor

Target Market:

Hiking/outdoor enthusiasts, baby boomers, and women from across Canada and the United States

Experience:

Hiking, workshops, evening entertainment and social activities, open and closing activities, participant challenges such as a Hiker's Distance Award program

Why it Works:

Taps into visitor passion, connects locals with visitors, provides opportunities for social interaction and shared experience, involves doing rather than watching, provides visitors an opportunity to learn and challenge themselves





3

LIVING THE BRAND

IN THIS SECTION

What Is a Brand?

The Nova Scotia Tourism Brand

Nova Scotia Brand Attributes

Best Practices: Savour the Seaside Experience
– White Point Beach Resort

An Emotional Appeal to our Visitors

Nova Scotia's Core Experiences

The Strong Six Storymakers: Core Experiences

Best Practices: In Tune with Visitor Expectations
– The Celtic Music Centre



What Is a Brand?

WHAT IS A BRAND?

A brand is a promise to a customer. It's a promise to provide a benefit that the customer values. Having a consistent, credible brand differentiates you from your competition.

Let's look at two car companies as an example. Volvos are known for safety. BMWs are known for excitement. They're both cars, but they deliver two different promises, thus, their brands set them apart and attract different types of customers.

THE NOVA SCOTIA TOURISM BRAND

Nova Scotia's brand is the original maritime culture in North America.

We are unique in that our history and culture have been defined by our relationship to the sea – from the early explorers to the fisheries to ship-builders to the merchant trade of the port of Halifax to the villages that dot the coastline. Our geography is also defined by the sea. We have a wide range of seacoast landscapes and experiences. Many people are drawn to the magic of this special place, where we as Nova Scotians have created a vibrant, modern culture that is represented in our music, art, food, and lifestyle.

Brands, just like people, have a personality. The Nova Scotia brand personality is spirited, affable, salt-of-the-earth, and proud. These are the qualities of Nova Scotians that are reflected in our legendary hospitality. We want to bring this personality to life in our communication and interaction with visitors.

Visitors interpret our brand personality from their interactions with Nova Scotians, from the experiences they enjoy, and in the words and images they see prior to and during a visit.

Your tourism business will have its own unique brand. When it fits under the umbrella of the Nova Scotia brand, you are aligning yourself with visitors' expectations, and promising them your version of the experience they desire.



Nova Scotia Brand Attributes

Old-world charm

Our authentic Nova Scotian maritime culture and our rich history brought to life.

New-world pulse

Our modern interpretation of culture demonstrated through how we live today – our cities, towns, and villages by the sea, music, cuisine, and wine.

Shaped by the sea

Our spectacular seacoast scenery, protected spaces, our lifestyle and culture, as well as our salt-of-the-earth people whose ancestors depended on the rich bounty of the sea for life and livelihood.

The spirit of our people

Genuine and hospitable people who value tradition.

best practices

Savour the Seaside Experience – White Point Beach Resort



Photo courtesy of White Point Beach Resort

Sampling the local Solomon Gundy (pickled fish) is one of the surprises awaiting guests in the Nova Scotia Adventures in Taste à la Beach weekend. When guests comment on Facebook that they tasted things they never thought they'd put in their mouth, they liked it, and they'll be back with a friend, you know you've made an impression! This culinary package is one of the many experiences that draw visitors to White Point Beach Resort on Nova Scotia's South Shore.

"We develop experiences for guests on a regular basis, because that's what creates market appeal," says Donna Hatt, Marketing and Product Development Manager, White Point Beach Resort. "We know people don't travel to sleep in a bed. We like to tap into our guests' sense of adventure, reflection or fun. We engage people and sometimes invite them to step outside their comfort zones."

White Point designs experiences specifically for the winter months to generate demand for dates that can be more difficult to sell. Guests purchasing an experience package receive the convenience of the packaged itinerary and perks, like preferred VIP seating and access to experts.

"We don't discount," says Donna. "We value-add. By including experience-based activities as part of a package, rather than a complimentary activity, we've increased guest pleasure and convenience, bookings for the resort and partner services, and made offering experiences easier to manage."

While culinary themes are popular, White Point Beach Resort offers other packages throughout the year, including cultural activities and outdoor experiences like stargazing and bird watching with local experts.

"We have a template that works and an inventory of experience providers," says Donna. "Once we decide what the theme or 'stage' is, we craft the experience to match our desired price point, pull in our local partners, and take it to market through our direct marketing channels, as well as through partnerships with Destination Southwest Nova, Taste of Nova Scotia, and the province, including novascotia.com."

White Point has offered visitors culinary seasonal experiences from Nova Scotia apple tastings to seafood feasts. Testing packages through trial and error, they build on successes. They observe and listen, tweaking offerings based on feedback from visitors, partners, and staff. Next, they'll be looking into weekday learning-experience packages and voluntourism opportunities.

At a Glance:

Core Experience:
Culinary/Seacoast

Target Market:

Summer & Fall: Couples and families from Maritimes, Ontario, United States and beyond. Winter & Spring: couples within 90-minute drive of White Point

Experience:

Nova Scotia Adventures in Taste à la Beach: Culinary weekend featuring classes with chef, wine tasting, meet and greet with food producers, sommelier-paired five-course meal, beachside marshmallow roast, dip in saltwater pool, live local musical entertainment, and accommodations in ocean side resort

Why it works:

Value-added experience, taps into passions and interests of markets, provides visitors chance to learn or acquire a new skill; offering experiences creates demand for accommodation business, makes effective use of staff skills, partnerships with local suppliers, associations and destination marketing organizations, strong core experience connections

Nova Scotia's Tourism Position

"Nova Scotia is North America's original maritime culture where visitors will be captivated by our old-world charm and new-world pulse, which have been shaped by the sea and the spirit of our people."

An Emotional Appeal to our Visitors

Strong brands evoke emotion. Nova Scotia's brand invites visitors to be:

Delighted

The joy and happiness they feel during their Nova Scotia experience.

Captivated

Visitors are engaged and inspired by the beauty of the place and the people.

Grounded

A sense of connection with the sea, with themselves, and with a sense of humanity that they thought was lost.

Fulfilled

There is a lot for visitors to learn about this place and the people, new stories to be told around every corner, and opportunities to become touched by Nova Scotia's natural beauty.

Visitors tell us that above all, they want to be captivated by their Nova Scotia experience. This is the essence of our brand – the feeling we strive to create in the hearts and minds of our visitors. It is what they desire most and is something the Nova Scotia experience can offer in spades. That's why the word *captivated* is in our positioning statement.

NOVA SCOTIA'S CORE EXPERIENCES

What's the Story?

The Nova Scotia brand makes a promise, has a personality, and evokes a set of emotions. Now let's talk about some of the real-life ways this all comes together for our visitors.

This involves creating the stories visitors will want to take back to their family and friends; experiences that will engage their senses, fill their souls, and connect them with our people and places.



Seacoast



Outdoor



Culture

THE STRONG SIX STORYMAKERS: CORE EXPERIENCES

Nova Scotia’s tourism development and marketing are built around core experiences. Core experiences represent areas where Nova Scotia has unique and authentic strengths that give us a competitive advantage. They are areas that respond to consumer demand and have potential to support growth for our industry. Let’s set the stage to get visitors experiencing Nova Scotia and sharing their stories.

The six Nova Scotia core experiences are:

Seacoast

Nova Scotia’s spectacular and diverse coastline – all 7,600 kilometres – is one of our core brand strengths and key differentiators.

Story Ideas: How can visitors better connect with our seaside parks and beaches, coastal routes and trails, tides, lighthouses, and waterfront communities? What could make a day at the beach even better? How about offering your guests a gourmet picnic lunch featuring local food and a “treasure map” to the nearest beach? Or, show visitors how to whittle a stick for roasting marshmallows at a beachside bonfire under the stars? How can you tie into the essential seacoast experience?

Outdoor

Nova Scotia’s scenic seacoast and natural heritage make our province an ideal destination for outdoor and soft-adventure enthusiasts. For visitors with a passion for cycling, hiking, or wildlife watching, Nova Scotia has much to offer. Consider the world-renowned Cabot Trail, or the Bay of Fundy, New 7 Wonders of Nature finalist.

Story Ideas: Could your visitors get closer to nature by meeting a local expert and helping collect data for research? While hiking through Five Islands Provincial Park, can visitors hear the legend of Glooscap told by a Mi’kmaq elder? Could a cyclist reach a personal best on the Cabot Trail? How can you set the stage for visitors to have an amazing adventure connecting with nature in Nova Scotia?

Culture

Our culture and people that have been shaped by the sea make Nova Scotia a unique tourism destination. Sure, there are other coastal cultural destinations, but where else can visitors experience first-hand the heritage and culture of Mi’kmaq, Gaelic, African Nova Scotian, and Acadian people? Our combination of art, music, dance, theatre, and storytelling allow visitors to connect to a living culture that’s unique in this world.

Story Ideas: Can visitors hear a local story that adds meaning to their life? Can they learn to dance or create a craft with an artisan and connect with our culture? What sneak peek can you offer your visitors, with music, art and craft, founding cultures, festivals and events, or way of life?



Cuisine



Heritage



Urban

Cuisine

With our abundance of fresh seafood, burgeoning agri-tourism industry, award-winning wineries, micro-breweries, and quality dining, we are well-positioned to become a leading gastronomical destination for “foodies” who place high value on quality local food and drink.

Story Ideas: How can visitors delight in the tastes of Nova Scotia? “Think outside the plate” and use agri-tourism to engage guests. How about visiting local farms, meeting growers at the local markets, or joining in the grape harvest at a local winery and learning wine-making secrets from the vintner?

Heritage

Memories await visitors exploring our historic sites, museums, and built heritage. The opportunity to walk in your ancestors’ footsteps is alluring. Immigrants have been settling in Nova Scotia for hundreds of years. The vast number of people whose ancestors entered North America through Nova Scotia represents a large potential market for genealogical tourists: people who want to connect with their past, retrace their ancestors’ steps, and experience their culture.

Story Ideas: Nova Scotia has a unique mix of UNESCO world heritage sites and a biosphere. How can you link them to these globally significant stories? Can visitors get in costume or help prepare a traditional recipe? How can they connect with living traditions, genealogy, and founding settlers? Can visitors play a role in our natural history by helping to preserve endangered species in Nova Scotia? How can visitors make a personal link with their family tree?

Urban

From Halifax to Sydney, Nova Scotia’s cities by the sea serve up a cosmopolitan experience – with art galleries, live theatre, shopping, spas, and major sports events – presented against a setting of colourful history and rich tradition.

Story Ideas: How can visitors experience our well-known hospitality? Can you point them to the club where they can see live music, then mingle with the band after the show? Can you recommend a spa that includes a breathtaking view, or uses made-in-Nova Scotia ingredients? How can a shopping trip include the opportunity to meet the artist or craftsman? How does a festival or event showcase the spirit of your community? Can you provide visitors behind-the-scenes access?

Six Core Experiences

Let’s set the stage to get visitors experiencing Nova Scotia and sharing their stories.

best practices

In Tune with Visitor Expectations – The Celtic Music Centre



Photo courtesy of The Celtic Music Centre

You shouldn't leave the Celtic Music Centre in Judique without seeing a live performance. The centre staff knows their key experience offering is live music and culture, and they know that everyone walking in the door expects it. They don't think anyone's ever left unhappy.

"If we're the first stop on Cape Breton Island, people want to hear live music, interact, learn how to dance, and they don't necessarily want to pay \$20 for a concert, until they learn a bit about the traditions and the music," said Robin MacDonald, Director of Marketing and Communications, the Celtic Music Centre. "So what we offer is a music demonstration. We hire a professional musician to touch on traditional music, fiddle, bagpiping, and step-dancing, and offer a live demonstration every hour."

The centre also offers a less-structured component, one that's very popular. "Our lunchtime ceilidh is our best offering, with real people playing real music in an authentic setting. We serve traditional food, and the locals share tables with visitors – a great experience."

It's not unusual for centre staff to search the full room looking for chairs for visitors. And, if visitors feel inspired by the lunchtime ceilidh, they can go to the exhibit room to play instruments on hand, or learn to step-dance. By trying new offerings, the centre doubled their numbers in summer 2009, and was full every day when other attractions were down. Workshops take place once a week through July and August as well. The centre continued offering lunchtime ceilidhs, music demonstrations, and events past September, and extended their season by seven weeks due to visitor demand.

"We listen to visitors," said Robin. "The travellers that come this way are coming to be part of something; they're looking for an experience. And we make sure everyone knows about what we do, starting with our locals and growing from there."

The centre takes advantage of the many free marketing opportunities with the region, province, and through social media, and believes in partnerships. Robin says that by being a cultural niche market and partnering with like organizations in the region, such as Highland Village, Celtic Colours, the Gaelic College, Glenora Distillery, and communities, everyone in the area benefits. And, visitors stay longer because of the many cultural experience opportunities.

Cultural sustainability is also important to the centre. "We're seeing larger groups of younger performers and the younger generation connecting to music at cultural facilities across the island," says Robin. "It's a true, living culture here. We're not down to the vanishing fiddler."

At a Glance:

Core Experience:
Culture

Target Market:

In summer, couples and families from Maritimes, Canada, and international. Lunchtime ceilidhs are 50 per cent visitors, 50 per cent locals. In winter, up to 90 per cent local audience.

Experience:

Live music, interpretive centre, restaurant, gift shop, archives.

Why it works:

Deliver on visitor expectations of Nova Scotia brand. Provide cultural connections to local musicians and residents. Interactive elements appeal to all senses. Marketing partnership in region broadens reach.







4

ASSESSING YOUR EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

IN THIS SECTION

Moving Toward Experiences

Four Steps To Examining your Destination

Worksheet 1: Destination Dynamics

Top Ten Tips: Create an Experience

Setting Goals

Your Ideal Guest

Sustainable by Design

Worksheet 2: Ideal Guest Profile

Best Practices: Tapping into Passions
– Sugar Moon Farm



MOVING TOWARD EXPERIENCES

One way in which we can give our visitors a Nova Scotia experience is through experiential tourism.

Experience PEI (www.experiencePEI.com) has a great definition of experiential tourism:

Learn something by doing something with someone who lives here.

(Thank you to Bill and Mary Kendrick of Experience PEI for continuing to share their knowledge and expertise.)

Experiential Tourism

It means taking the goods and services that have traditionally been part of the tourism industry up a level by designing opportunities for our visitors to:

Learn – a new skill, about who we are and how we live, or to challenge themselves

Do – be a hands-on participant in the activity not a passive observer

Be Local – by meeting and engaging with people who are interested in sharing our local culture, practices and way of life or a particular skill they may have

Think about it this way.

1. When I buy a fresh lobster I am buying a **commodity**. I can only buy this lobster once (it's perishable) and I can choose to buy a steak instead (it's substitutable).
2. When I buy processed lobster sold in a can it is a **product**, something that is tangible and available to everyone.
3. When I buy a lobster dinner in a restaurant I am buying a **service**: the preparation and serving of the meal. The service is intangible and can be customized to my liking.
4. When I learn how to cook a lobster to perfection, and a local teaches me the proper way to crack it open, and I get to enjoy that lobster in an interesting location – that is an **experience**. It is personal to me and something I will remember.

Every level of value you add to enhance your visitors' experiences sets you apart from your competitors. Best of all, the more value you add, the greater the opportunity to increase your revenue.

Let's look at some of the steps you can take to move toward experiences.



Least Value and Experience

Greatest Value and Experience

Every level of value you add to enhance your visitors' experiences sets you apart from your competitors.

Hidden gems. Local secrets.

Focus on the iconic attractions, activities, hidden gems, and local secrets that best speak to your visitors' interests and passions. This will benefit everyone in the region through increased visitation, length of stays, and spending.



FOUR STEPS FOR EXAMINING YOUR DESTINATION

1. What are your destination's demand generators? These are unique or appealing assets that translate into a reason to visit. They could be an iconic attraction, signature festival, event, or activity.
2. What are your destination's demand supporters? Each destination has unique features, strengths, and opportunities to build upon. Some attractions, activities, and things to see and do may not motivate a visitor to come to your region but do add to the appeal of your region.
3. What are some of the things in your region that you value but may not be part of the tourism offering of your destination? A local musician, storyteller, artisan, or expert on a particular subject may provide the opportunity for visitors to learn something new, have exclusive access, or meet local people. This is all added-value for a visitor experience. We like to think of these as hidden gems. What are your destination's hidden gems?
4. How do these demand generators, demand supporters, and hidden gems fit in with the province's brand and core experiences?

Check out Worksheet 1: Destination Dynamics, a planning tool for assessing your destination's advantages.

You may be tempted to promote everything there is to do in your area. Don't! While every one of these attractions and activities adds value to your destination, they are not necessarily going to motivate travel to your destination.

WORKSHEET 1:
DESTINATION DYNAMICS

Use the following table to create an inventory of demand generators, demand supporters, and hidden gems for your region that fit within the province’s core experience categories. Does a particular strength emerge in one or more experience categories?

		Destination Resources		
		Demand Generators	Demand Supporters	Hidden Gems
Core Experiences	Outdoor Adventure			
	Food & Wine			
	History			
	Culture			
	Beaches & Seacoast			
	Cities & Towns			

Demand Generators – the attractions, activities, and things to see and do in a region that are the primary motivator for a visitor to travel to that region (marquee events or iconic attractions for example). These may change with the season.

Demand Supporters – the attractions, activities, and things to see and do in a region that are not the main motivator for visiting, but contribute to the overall appeal of the destination and can be added to a visitor’s itinerary (such as community attractions, sightseeing tours, specialty shopping etc.).

Hidden Gems – may not be something you would consider part of your destination’s tourism offering but have potential to add value to your visitor’s experience (such as a local expert, artisan, musician, chef, etc.).

Be specific in your assessment. Don’t just list the generic: museums, hiking trails, boat tours, etc. Identify the specific opportunity by name, what is included in the experience, and what makes it special.

For more information on assessing your destination, see the Tourism Destination Area Kit online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism/tda-kit.aspx.

Download worksheets online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism/experience-toolkit.aspx
Please call us with any questions at 902-424-3908.
Ask for “experience toolkit assistance.”

When thinking about your destination, can you answer the following questions:

1. My destination is considered to stand out from other destinations because (competitive advantage):

2. My destination has the following tourism products/services/ experiences that are unique (USPs). Why are they unique?

3. What hidden gems in your community can become part of the new experiences or travel packages you offer?

4. What are some of your destination’s strengths and opportunities?

5. Based on Inventory, do you have a cluster or critical mass of activities to draw visitors to your destination area?



We're different here – why?

TOP TEN TIPS: CREATE AN EXPERIENCE

Before we get into the how of developing an experience, here are some things to keep in mind:

1. We're different here – why? From language and customs, to foods and fun activities, incorporate these local nuances in your product or offering. Tell visitors what it means to be Acadian or why Cape Breton outcakes are the best in the world. Share your secrets.
2. We know the local hot spots and hidden gems, but the visitor does not. Make it easy for them to find and enjoy what the locals know.
3. Provide visitors a “backstage pass.” Give them an exclusive opportunity – something not available to everyone.
4. Who are the people in your neighbourhood? Remember the hidden gems: the local artists, experts, chefs, musicians, for example. Can they be included in your experience to provide entertainment, an opportunity to learn, or a chance to immerse visitors into the lifestyle and landscape of Nova Scotia?
5. Is your offering story-worthy? Will visitors be excited to share their experience or brag about it to their friends and family? Consider yourself in the business of crafting “great story” moments.
6. Let me try! How can elements of your daily operations or the experience you develop provide a hands-on and interactive experience to visitors – one that aligns with Nova Scotia's core experiences? Could they help pick veggies from your garden for their meal while you provide gardening tips? Could they help tag birds for a local research project on migration? Could they learn to make blueberry grunt at a community supper? Don't underestimate the value visitors would find in the things we take for granted.
7. Why does your offering matter to potential visitors? A room with a bottle of wine is available in any town, anywhere. Be innovative and don't be afraid to take chances.
8. Come together! Work with your competitors, better known as your allies, in attracting visitors to your region. Provide your visitors with tips on what to see and do nearby, and where to eat. Give them reasons to stay longer. Consider packaging your offerings and make it easy for potential visitors to buy. (See tips on packaging in Section 5.)
9. Nowhere else on Earth! This can be a strong call for visitors to come to Nova Scotia. How can you connect with these “only in Nova Scotia” activities to set the stage for a great visitor story to happen?
10. Include something unexpected or an element of surprise. Even the little things add value and enhance your visitor's experience. Sometimes they may not cost anything to include! Sharing a favourite recipe is a simple example. You have the platform. What are you going to do with it?



Now you should have an idea of some of the resources and assets available in your community. Don't forget that you or the people in your business or organization may have skills or expertise that can also become part of an experiential tourism opportunity. Take an inventory of the expertise available to you within your own operation. Now, from these inventories, pick one or two ideas that you think may have the most potential to develop into an experience.

We will walk through how you can bring these ideas into reality in Section 5.

SETTING GOALS

A good place to start with experience development is to think about what you want to achieve: What are your goals?

Are you hoping to extend your season of operation? Do you want to extend stays at your accommodation, or length of visit to your attraction or destination? Would you like to see a higher yield per customer? Do you want to encourage mid-week visitation? Are you looking to encourage repeat visitation? Do you want to diversify your market?

Whatever your business goals, try to make them measurable. For example, a measurable goal might be: *To create one new experience opportunity that will increase my mid-week visitation by 5 per cent for the May-October period.*

A measurable goal, like this one, lets you know when you've been successful. At the end of your pilot period you can determine whether or not your mid-week visitation increased.

Now let's make the goal even more specific by layering on pleasure market information. For example:

To create one new experience opportunity – **a family-themed experience – targeted to the Atlantic Canadian market**, which will increase my mid-week visitation by 5 per cent for the May-October period.

This goal will help you focus your experience development and marketing efforts. Because you know the Atlantic Canadian market is interested in family activities (see Appendix A), elements of your experience should reflect those themes. And since you know Atlantic Canada is the geographic market you have in mind, your marketing dollars can be directed to channels that will have the biggest return for your investment.

YOUR IDEAL GUEST

So, you have a couple of ideas you want to develop into an experience based on the strengths of your destination and a sense of what you hope to achieve by trying an experiential tourism approach, now let's think about who your ideal guest may be.

Section 2 and Appendix A can provide insight into visitors to Nova Scotia and you probably have a good sense of what your current guests look like for your business, attraction or destination. Now think about the experience ideas that you have. Who do you think this will appeal to? The worksheet on the next page may help you develop a profile of your ideal guest. You may have a different ideal guest for each experience.

SUSTAINABLE BY DESIGN

Do you practice responsible tourism? Whether you call it responsible or sustainable, more and more consumers expect it; in fact, not practicing it may be a competitive disadvantage for you. How focused are you on managing all resources in a way that the economic, social/cultural, and environmental needs of your business and community can be fulfilled today and into the future?

There are many web-based resources related to sustainable tourism that you can access, including "A Question of Balance – Green is the New Black" self-audit workbook from the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, at www.tians.org/sustainable. Appendix B contains the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism.

WORKSHEET 2:
IDEAL GUEST PROFILE

What is the demographic make-up of your current target market(s)?
 Answer these questions for each one of your identifiable target markets.

Guest Profile			
Age			
Party Type (ie. Singles/Couples/Families)			
Number in Party (on average)			
Visitor Origin			
Length of Visit with You			

For each guest profile identified above, answer the following questions:

What travel motivators do you see your experience matching for each of your target markets (see Section 2). Keep in mind that travel experiences can appeal to multiple motivations at the same time.

Can you identify visitors with shared characteristics (segments such as women only, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender, or multi-generational) or particular travel interests (niches such as cuisine, wine, agri-tourism, hiking, motorcycle or cycling enthusiasts) who would be interested in this experience? If yes, describe them.

How does this experience reflect the Nova Scotia tourism brand?

Does your offering fit with one or more of the province's core experiences? (Circle those that apply)

- Seacoast Outdoor Culture Cuisine Heritage Urban

Consider your competitive advantage. What makes your experience different from others in your area, province, Canada, or the world?

What are the unique benefits and features that your offering provides to your visitor (unique selling propositions)?

Based on the above information, how can you describe your experience in your marketing and promotional materials? What images do you think would appeal to each guest profile?

Download worksheets online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism/experience-toolkit.aspx

best practices

Tapping into Passions – Sugar Moon Farm



The sweet scent of boiling sap, hearing stories straight from the farmer's mouth, tasting a gourmet maple meal, and the crunching of fresh snow underfoot while exploring a sugar bush trail by snowshoe. These are a few of the experiences offered by Sugar Moon Farm. They all stem from the passions of farmers Scott Whitelaw and Quita Gray. And they all connect with the passions of visitors.

"The visitor experience enables people who come to eat or explore to fall in love with us and creates a relationship," says Quita. "They understand and connect with what we're doing."

At the heart is an Earlton-based farm experience, but what they're offering continually evolves through partnerships with regional chefs, Taste of Nova Scotia, the ECONOMUSEUM® Network, trails and cultural groups. With the diverse activities being offered, visitors are staying even longer.

"People come for several hours, eat, go for a hike, come back for a hot drink," Quita says. "It makes us more of a destination, and has definitely helped grow the business. It attracts different customers and gives us more resilience, because not all our eggs are in one basket."

Word of mouth works for drawing visitors to Sugar Moon Farm, but over the last few years they've also noticed more visitors discovering them online. To grow visitation, Scott and Quita work on satisfying existing customers to generate more business through referrals, tap into partnerships, and connect with visitors through an email newsletter and a website that includes daily updates to photos, the sap journal blog, events, trail conditions, and menus.

"The personal connection matters, as does the education and health-related aspect in terms of our ingredients and outdoor experience. Environmental responsibility matters," says Quita, noting people comment on local ingredients used in food, and even the composting toilets. "We did these things right from the beginning because we wanted to, and it resonates with people."

Tapping into passions and sharing values with visitors and partners is a sweet recipe for success at Sugar Moon Farm.

At a Glance:

Core Experience:

Cuisine/Outdoor

Target Market:

Maple-lovers and "foodies," families, students, outdoor enthusiasts, group tours. Primarily targets visitors within a 2-hour radius. High number of repeat visitors.

Experience:

Maple-sugar farm and pancake house, including sugar bush trails for hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, and sleigh rides. ECONOMUSEUM featuring the history and craft of maple sugaring in the sugar camp. Locally sourced, all-day Maple Brunch. Gourmet Chef's Night special events. Maple shop and tastings.

Why it works:

Variety of interactive experiences draw visitors to farm, tapping into multiple passions of target markets. Personal connections and partnerships form engaging experiences. Entice visitors year-round. Passionate about delivering quality, sustainable experience.



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COMPANY LIMITED

North Atlantic E

WAVE OF FRE
STRIKES

PARIS—A wave of F
which last week disrupt
services, postal deliver
electric and museums.
schools and unions. dele
Trade union delegat
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but train services are no
be affected.

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BRIGGS WOR
DECISION

DAGENHAM, all m
Briggs workers, all m
Transport Workers Un
support the Amalgama
Shop
decision

SENHOWER'S
UNDERSTANDING
OF ARAB ISSUES

KING SAUD EXPRESS
SATISFACTION

CAIRO. — King Saud of Saudi
Arabia expressed satisfaction with
President Eisenhower's understanding
of Arab issues last night on the eve
of the crucial Arab, Big Four,
Conference. King Idriss of Libya
Saud joined President Eisenhower's
endorsement of the talks
aiming to reduce the

20/3

18/3

17/3

« Les bancs de brouillard, les bouygues et
les petits îlots abandonnés... »

Fin Gaudes

30



5

DEVELOPING EXPERIENCES

IN THIS SECTION

Designing Your Experience

Worksheet 3: Experience Planning

Worksheet 4: Experience Element Costs

Packaging Your Experience

Worksheet 5: Package Design

Worksheet 6: Pricing

Worksheet 7: Partnership Agreement

Testing, testing...

A Few Words on Risk & Regulation

Best Practices: Making Personal History
– Sherbrooke Village



DEVELOPING EXPERIENCES

DESIGNING YOUR EXPERIENCE

By this point you should have taken a good look at the assets available in your destination and/or within your business or organization. You have given some thought to the goals you would like to achieve by embarking on an experiential tourism development. You also have a profile of who your ideal guest is for the experience ideas that you have so far.

Now, let's bring those great ideas into reality.

The worksheet on the pages 40 and 41 has been designed to assist you in thinking through the steps, activities and resources you may need to develop your idea into an experience that can be sold in the marketplace. Every question may not apply and you may think of things that are not presented here.

On page 42 you will find a worksheet to help you price your experience.



Some Definitions

Experience Provider A guide, specialist, expert or local knowledge enthusiast involved in the actual delivery of the experience. The experience provider leads the guest through the experience from arrival to departure alone or in partnership with other experience providers. For example, a local fisherman may be the expert in a maritime fisheries based experience.

Experience Broker Someone who brings customers (visitors) and experience providers together. The experience broker may have an inventory of experiences for sale but may or may not be physically involved in the delivery of the experience as an experience provider. Their role is to compile the inventory, market the experiences, book the sale and coordinate the administrative elements associated with the sale usually for an administrative fee (commission). The experience broker may be involved with the development of the experience as well. Experience PEI is an example of an experience broker.

What is your role? As you think about embarking on experiential tourism opportunities you may want to think about what your role might be? For example, will you be the person delivering the experience as an experience provider. Will you be working alone or in partnership with other experience providers? Perhaps you will take on the role of experience broker. Maybe you will be filling both roles.

WORKSHEET 3:
EXPERIENCE PLANNING WORKSHEET

PLANNING

Describe the experience?

What is the theme of the experience?

What are the memories, messages or new learning you want your guest to leave with?

What are the elements/steps involved? Think about how your guests will move from one step to the next – from arrival to departure. Provide a detailed itinerary.

Are there timing considerations or other details that need to be dealt with in advance?

How can the experience be simplified? For example, what elements can be prepared in advance?

How many of the five senses are you engaging? Circle all that apply. Sight Smell Taste Touch Hear

Have you included something the guest can take home with them to remind them of their experience? What is it?

If you are working with partners, do they share your commitment to quality and delivery of the best possible guest experience?

Do you need to include a specialist, guide or subject matter expert to enhance or bring a different skill set to the experience?

Do you have a safety/emergency plan prepared, if applicable? Do your partners have a copy of the plan?

Is there a good balance between planned activities and unstructured activities? Between active participation and passive observation? If not, what can you change?

Are any special training, licences, or requirements needed to deliver this experience?

LOGISTICS

How long will it take to complete the experience?

When can you offer the experience? Specific days, dates and times and/or is it an exclusive opportunity that may only be offered on a limited basis?

Do you require any props or materials to deliver the experience? If so, what are they? Use this to create an experience checklist.

Are there limitations or opportunities that you need to consider with respect to your guests? For example, walking limitations.

Is there a limit to the number of people to whom you can offer the experience? Maximum and minimum number.

Where will the experience be offered?

Are there any special requirements you need to consider with respect to the location?

If the experience is outdoors, will weather impact the delivery? If so, what is your back-up plan?

Will guests be comfortable and safe?

What do you need to tell the guest before they arrive? For example, do they need to bring special clothing or footwear?

If you are relying on a partner or partners in the delivery of the experience, what are the things they need to know and when? Are there special coaching tips you can share with them.

WORKSHEET 4:
EXPERIENCE ELEMENT COSTS

DEVELOPMENT COSTS:

Research		Cost of your time to research the idea, the potential market and whether there is already a similar experience being offered in your area.
Salaries - time to develop the experience		The cost of your time to develop the experience, includes time to plan the experience, time to test it and time to gather all necessary materials and equipment to test and provide the experience long term.
Equipment and Materials		This is the purchase of equipment and materials in order to offer the experience. These are materials and equipment that will be used exclusively for the experience that you will want to recover over the life of the experience.
Staff and Provider Training		The cost of training your existing staff on how to provide the experience or the cost to hire and train new staff if you need to add staff in order to provide the experience.
Transportation		The cost of transportation for materials and equipment for both the purchase of them as well as transporting them in order to test the experience.
Insurance		If the experience is something that will be offered on a regular basis and needs to be added to your policy or if you require a one off rider to your existing insurance in order test the experience.
Marketing		Costs associated with promoting the experience to potential consumers as well as promoting to potential partners.
Other Costs – permits, trials,		Costs associated with permits required to provide the experience, entry fees and space rental.
Total Development Costs:		
Total Development Cost Per Participant:		

FIXED DELIVERY COSTS:

Salaries – for provider and their staff		Staff time incurred each time the experience is provided to the public.
Equipment used		If there is additional equipment required to provide a specific session that was not purchased as part of the development phase.
Facility – Rental if necessary		If you need to rent space as a one off for a given client.
Insurance		If a rider is required each time you offer the experience, instead of the experience being added to your overall policy.
Transportation		Cost of getting the participants to the experience if that is part of the price. Also include cost of transporting equipment and materials as well as staff if the experience is provided off site.
Total Fixed Costs:		

*Download worksheets online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism/experience-toolkit.aspx
 Please call us with any questions at 902-424-3908. Ask for “experience toolkit assistance.”*

VARIABLE DELIVERY COSTS:

For Providers:

Meals – for providers and staff

If the experience is taking place in another region that would require overnight travel the provider and their staff.

Accommodations – if required

If the experience is taking place in another region that would require overnight travel the provider and their staff.

For Participants:

Materials used – per person

The costs of materials used in the experience will vary depending on the number of participants.

Fees – Entrance and other if required

The entry fees if the experience takes place in a venue that charges admission, will vary depending on the number of participants.

Coffee Breaks

The costs will vary depending on the number of participants. This assumes that a break will be provided.

Lunch – if provided – per person

The costs will vary on the number of participants.

Other Costs – take away

The costs of the take aways would be established in development but the total will vary depending on the number of participants.

Total Variable Costs:**Subtotal of all Costs:****ADDITIONAL COSTS:**

Credit Card Charges – if you accept as payment

Charges will be added by dividing the subtotal of all costs by the percentage fee your Credit Card company charges.

Overhead

If there are costs associated with offering the experience at the providers location a portion of that cost can be added to the cost of the experience.

Total Additional Charges:**Total Cost of Experience:****COMMISSION/PROFIT MARGIN:**Profit Margin –
to be added to the total price by the provider

The amount of profit the provider wants to make from the experience will be added by multiplying the total experience cost by the percentage of profit.

Commission –
charged if you are selling for someone else

Commission will only be charge by a third party who is selling the experience on the providers behalf. This will be added by dividing the total cost plus the profit margin by the percentage of commission the third party is charging. This will ensure that the provider receives the price per person that he quoted the seller.

Total Selling Price:**EXPERIENCE DELIVERY:****Total number of this
experience offering per year:**

This is an estimate of the number of times you believe that you will be able to offer this experience.

**Total minimum number of
participants per experience:**

This is the number of people you require in order to offer the experience. If you are willing to offer the experience to individuals or if you prefer groups this is where that is identified.

**Total number of participants
for this experience per year:**

This is the total number of visitors you estimate will participate in your experience in a given year.

PACKAGING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Experiences may be sold on their own or you may wish to package them with other tourism goods and services. Packaging combines a series of offerings that can be purchased for one price from one or more points of sale. Packaging is a process which has five steps: design, partnerships, pricing, marketing & sales, and operations. These steps are, in fact, very similar to those you would follow when developing an experience.

When you combine your experience into a package the overall package theme should be consistent with the theme you have developed for your experience. Also, you should keep in mind that the package partners (accommodations, meals, attractions, other experiences, for example) should share your perspective on quality and customer service.

The worksheet on the next page is a package planning design worksheet to help you and your partners craft an exceptional package. The worksheet on page 46 is designed to assist you with pricing your package. Finally, the worksheet on page 47 is an example of an agreement that can be signed by you and your partners for both experiences and packages.



WORKSHEET 5:
PACKAGE DESIGN

Package Name: _____

Target Market: _____

Package Type:

- Half or Full Day
- Getaway (less than a week in length)
- Hub & Spoke (one location for multiple nights with day trips)
- Multi-Hub & Spoke (two locations for multiple nights with day trips)
- Extended Multiple Day (a week or longer with multiple locations/activities)

Package Elements

(accommodations, attractions & activities, meals, transportation, evening activities and entertainment, guided tours, value-added elements)

Why would someone want to buy this package?

WORKSHEET 6:
PRICING

PACKAGE ELEMENTS	COST PER PERSON
Accommodations	
Room Rate	
Room Tax	
Occupancy Tax	
Other	
Meals	
Breakfast	
Lunch	
Dinner	
Transportation	
Rental Car	
Shuttle	
Other	
Attractions/Activities/Experiences	
Evening Activities & Entertainment	
Added-value Items	
Administration Cost	
Sub-Total	
Markup	
Subtotal	
Commission*	
Other Charges	
TOTAL	
Sell at price/person (round up or down to the nearest dollar amount)	

**If selling through a travel agent or tour operator, you will need to add a commission (the payment for the customers they bring to you). First, ask about their typical commission rate. Then, to arrive at the dollar amount of the commission, follow this sample formula: if your package subtotal after markup is \$150 and the commissionable rate is 20% you would divide \$150 by 80% or .80 (100% – 20% = 80%) and the commission would be \$37.50 – the new package price is \$187.50.*

**Download worksheets online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism/experience-toolkit.aspx
Please call us with any questions at 902-424-3908. Ask for "experience toolkit assistance."**

WORKSHEET 7:
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Supplier Name:		Date
Address		
City	Province	Postal Code
Telephone	E-mail	
Website		

Main Contact:	Title	Telephone
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Back-Up Contact:	Title	Telephone
-------------------------	-------	-----------

Accounting Contact:	Telephone
----------------------------	-----------

Terms and Conditions

The following are the terms and conditions to services between:

and: _____ for a vacation package.

This agreement is valid from: _____ to: _____

Service to be provided:

Net Rate: Adult	Senior	Child
------------------------	--------	-------

Description of Service:

Voucher Handling and Billing Procedures:

Cancellation Policy:

Agreed to by:

Partner	Company	Date
Partner	Company	Date

Each partner should retain a copy of this agreement for their records.

*Download worksheets online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism/experience-toolkit.aspx
Please call us with any questions at 902-424-3908. Ask for "experience toolkit assistance."*

TESTING, TESTING...

Your product offering doesn't have to be perfect the first time round. By testing your product with friends, family, or people in your community you will gain valuable insight that can be used to enhance the experience before you invest funds in marketing activities. Even if you take it to market, you may need to adjust to find the right mix.

Check out Section 7 on Product and Marketing Evaluation for further information.

A FEW WORDS ON RISK & REGULATION

While having the appropriate type and level of insurance coverage for your business is important, it is equally important to have a risk management plan. Risk management involves the assessment, analysis, control, and treatment of risk. When working with partners, particularly when developing new product offerings, it is important to have a risk management plan in place. At a minimum, ask for copies of their insurance policy to make sure that your partners have the appropriate type and level of insurance for the product experience they are offering.

To learn more about risk management, consult with your insurance broker.

Also, if you are offering a new experience, make sure you have all the necessary licences and are meeting whatever federal, provincial, or municipal regulations that may govern your offering.

Delivery Checklist

How can the visitor book your experience or package? Through online reservations, by telephone, or by e-mail?

Will you request a deposit to reserve the experience or package?

How will you manage inventory? If you are selling a room, product, or particular activity, how will you ensure it's available when the visitor books it?

When will you pay your partners? What is your payment policy?

What will you send the visitor to confirm booking? This should include the visitor's information, dates booked, reservation number, deposit fee, experience or package description, policies and procedures, and any other information you think is relevant.

Will you send any pre-trip materials? This can set the stage for visitor expectations.

Make sure you confirm the bookings with your partners so their inventory can be blocked or the activity and service will be available.

Will you generate vouchers or coupons so visitors can access the other activities and services offered in the

package? This should include their name and date of package, the vendor's name, address and on-site contact person for the visitor, type of service provided, and any special instructions.

Who will handle service issues and complaints? Do you have a policy for that?

Make sure your partners have adequate and correct insurance coverage for the experience they are providing.

It is important to keep in mind that all of the costs associated with your experience should never exceed the revenue you can expect to get from the experience. For example, if your marketing activity costs are more than the revenue you expect to make, you need to rethink your strategy.

In some cases, you may offer an experience that requires a certain number of people to participate in order for you to cover your costs or make a profit. This is called the break-even point: when your costs and revenues are equal. In this case, you need to identify up front for the visitor the number of people who must book before the experience is delivered, as well as your cancellation policy.

Will you send any post-trip materials or perhaps a memento of their experience?

best practices

Making Personal History - Sherbrooke Village



This is far from your ordinary band camp. Nestled on the shore of the scenic Saint Mary's River is historic Sherbrooke Village, where visitors are fostering real creative connections among the authentic homes and buildings of the 1800s.

For the past four years, music camps have been offered mid-week to groups of up to 20 participants. "We offer an immersive learning experience in songwriting or fiddling," says Lynn Hayne, Manager of Development and Promotions at Sherbrooke Village. "In addition to the inspirational setting, days filled with playing music, and access to experts, we offer traditional meals, village tours, and evening activities, like campfires or concerts."

The village has been developing and delivering Hands On History educational camps and workshops for nearly 20 years, primarily targeted to children, and these experiential camp packages are an extension of this, targeting new markets.

"A downturn in tourism is what inspired us to package and offer the camps," says Lynn. "We had to find new ways to entice people to visit our site. Plus tourism trends were changing and with people expecting more to do, we have to deliver more."

The ideas came by listening to and observing visitors, and tapping into on-site assets and experts. With the popular evening Courthouse Concert musical series offered throughout the summer and fall, suggestions came from visitors to build on the songwriters' circle night and hold a camp in "this great place with great acoustics." The village branched out to offer an art camp in 2009, after staff were inspired by visitors painting on-site, and felt they could offer a more structured experience. After taking a heritage costuming course, the wardrobe supervisor on staff also offered to lead a workshop. So the camps continue to grow and diversify, all connecting to the interpretive themes of the village, providing a place to try new things, be creative, and learn – often a transformative experience.

"It's amazing to see the growth in participants over the four days," says Lynn. "Music camps host a public concert on the final night, and we have a grand finale exhibit for the painters. For many, it's their first time playing, or displaying, to an audience. It's a milestone moment. And, this brings their friends and family to visit, too."

In 2010, the village plans to offer a photography camp, and Victorian beading and felt appliqué workshops. They're also considering offering quilting and rug-hooking camps, as well as weaving and fibre-art experiences in coming years.

Lynn says balance is important in creating packages, as you want to provide people with enough time and space so they know they're on vacation. She suggests working with partners to provide lots of choices to visitors and allowing the different personalities to decide when to take part.

"Don't be afraid to try something new or admit when it isn't working," says Lynn. "And, when something is working, adapt and make changes so programs are even better than participants expect. And, listen to your visitors to focus your efforts. When our camps are more than half full with past participants before we've even started promotions, we know it's relevant to our markets."

At a Glance:

Core Experience:
Heritage/Culture

Target Market:
Special interest market, 20 per cent local, 50 per cent Nova Scotia, and 30 per cent from Maritimes/Canada/United States

Experience:
4-day themed camp or 1-day workshop in historic village

Why it works:
Provides special interest markets with access to experts and an environment for creative, personal growth experience; themes connected to historic village; interactive; authentic Nova Scotian setting and cultural connections; camps shaped on visitor feedback





6

TOOLS OF ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS SECTION

The Marketing Mix

Positioning your Experience

Images: A Visitor's Viewpoint

A Word on Writing

Talking to Customers

Best Practices: The Unexpected – So Swell
– Nova Shores Adventures



TOOLS OF ENGAGEMENT

THE MARKETING MIX

Marketing can involve a range of activities from print ads and brochures to websites and online advertising. It can include direct-to-consumer tactics such as social media and consumer tradeshows, or the use of travel influencers, such as tour operators, travel agents, or travel media. Some activities are free and require an investment of time; others are paid promotions. But all should be cost-effective. The marketing activities you select will depend on your target market, your business goals, and your budget.

Keep in mind, these days it's not enough to just get the word out to potential visitors about your offering. You need to engage them in conversations – before, during, and after their visit – so you can connect their passions with the experience you are selling.

What do you want to say? Let's take a look at how you can position the experience you've created to your target markets. This will shape customers' expectations and influence whether they are met.

POSITIONING YOUR EXPERIENCE

In Section 4 you created a guest profile which included information on your target markets' demographic make-up, their travel motivators and shared characteristics. You also identified your experience's connection to the Nova Scotia brand, its fit with the core experiences and its unique selling propositions.

Now you need to combine these features and benefits into a message for your target guests. The focus should be on the compelling benefits the experience will have for your visitor.

Here's an example of how a business offering bicycling tours in Nova Scotia combines its features and benefits (unique selling proposition or USP), then positions them to visitors:

The operator's marketing features its high-tech bikes (USP), its unique, out-of-the-way scenic seaside routes (USP), the long-standing reputation of the company as a quality operation (competitive advantage), and its Nova Scotian guides who are all trained in the natural and cultural history of Nova Scotia (both a USP and competitive advantage). All this comes together to provide "a genuine, high-quality cycling adventure guided and hosted by Nova Scotians that will delight the visitor with spectacular seaside scenery and the chance to learn more about Nova Scotia's rich nature and culture."

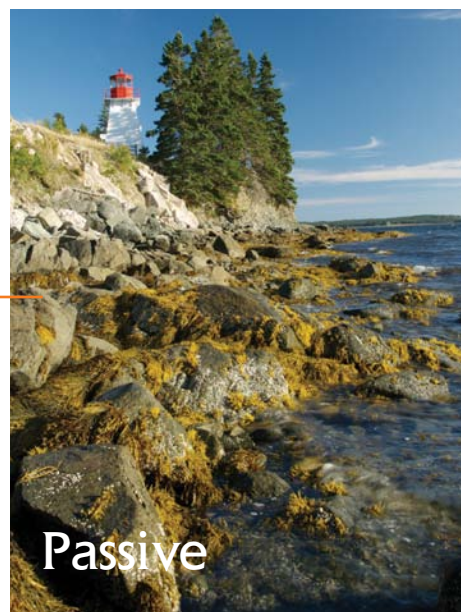
Still not sure how to position your product? Listen to how current customers (in your major target markets) view your product and what they see as being different from the competition. Get testimonials to use in your marketing. Be sure to ask how the experience made them feel.

The way you describe or write about your product, and the images you use in promotion, will be key to positioning your experience. Let's take a closer look.

IMAGES: A VISITOR'S VIEWPOINT

Your images should be so strong and compelling that visitors want to experience your offer – now! Images can be your strongest lure for visitors.

Select images based on their power to evoke the feelings or emotions connected with the experience. **Showcase people actively engaged and having fun.** We are competing with hundreds of destinations around the world and the images should be distinctly Nova Scotian and unique. Use pictures to convey the sense that this is like nowhere else in the world, a must-see destination.



When selecting your images, consider:

Is the image a true reflection of the experience you offer?

Do photos capture a moment in time, showing people engaged in something and capturing the spirit of the experience?

Do images evoke feelings connected with the provincial brand (fun, calmness, energy, awe, or joy?)

Do images also reflect warmth and the brand attributes that define our original maritime culture?

Does the image feel authentic and real, not posed?

Are people in the photos reflective of your target markets (age, interests, etc.)?

Is the image reflecting your best assets?

Bad photos are not better than no photos at all! Invest time and energy in good images.

Does the image make you want to engage in the experience?

Is it a high-resolution image – is it a minimum of 300dpi at 8.5x11?

Do you have permission to use the image, including permission of the people in the image?



A Product versus a Feeling & Experience Focus

Product focused: Getaway Weekend! Two nights accommodations: a five-course dinner for two featuring local food and wine. Sommelier workshop, tour of mussel farm and breakfast included. \$350 per couple.

Feeling & Experience focused: Sip, savour and sample. Your taste buds will thank you! Indulge in an afternoon perfecting your skills pairing Nova Scotia wines with fresh, local ingredients. Pick up mussels during your tour of Ocean Point Mussel Farm, which our Chef will prepare to perfection. Leave ready to plan your next dinner party – your friends will be impressed! Book your package including overnight accommodation at the Ocean Inn, breakfast, dinner, sommelier-led wine seminar and tour of mussel farm. \$350 per couple.

Fictional example.

A WORD ON WRITING

How you describe your experience can make it or break it. Talk about how the visitor will feel and the benefits to them, not the product you are selling. To the left are two examples that highlight the difference between product- and experience-focused writing.

TALKING TO CUSTOMERS

Now you know what you want to say. Where should you say it?

Plugging into Partnership Opportunities

Maximize your resources and reach key markets by partnering with your regional tourism association, Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), or with us at Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism. We have lots of channels to help you connect with potential visitors, start conversations, and engage visitors – and some are free! For more information take a look at the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnerships and Program guide found online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/pubs/tians-partnership-programs.pdf. See Appendix C for regional tourism association/destination marketing organization contact information.

Here's a quick review of some of your options and how they work for you:

Online

The Internet is the first place many potential visitors look for information. It's also a great medium for conversations.

When describing your experience, consider:

Are verbs active, not passive?

Are you speaking directly to the reader in a conversational tone? (use “you’ll feel” rather than “a visitor will feel”)

Does your message reflect the Nova Scotia brand personality?

Is the tone friendly, intriguing, relaxed, informal, warm?

Are you describing the experience as you would to a friend?

Does the description capture your differentiator – the thing the visitor will tell a friend about when they get back from vacation?

Is it focused on visitor benefits and feelings?

Does it give a sense of being in Nova Scotia, reflecting Nova Scotia experiences?

Is it short and to the point?

Is it a soft sell – feelings and benefits first, product second?

Does it issue a call to action (what you want the potential visitor to do)?



Let’s look at your website. This is a critical marketing tool and must be up-to-date. How do visitors get to it? How are they using it: for information or bookings? Are you maximizing your online content to feature engaging photos, descriptions, and testimonials about your experiences? Does it differentiate your visitor’s experience? Do all of your marketing activities drive people to your website? Make sure you update your website regularly to keep it fresh and to keep people coming back.

Novascotia.com is our primary marketing tool and call to action for all of our campaigns. The site receives more than 1.5 million visits annually. Are you taking full advantage of novascotia.com opportunities? For information on those opportunities check out www.gov.ns.ca/tch/pubstians-partnership-programs.pdf.

In addition to your website, online marketing tactics include:

Online Advertising. Research indicates online ads can have the same effect in raising awareness as other types of display advertising, such as magazine or newspaper, and that customers exposed to online advertising are more likely to search for brand terms. Online advertising allows you to target your market specifically, by passion or geography. Tracking online ads is also easier than traditional print media.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM). How do you rank in search engines? What are the words people use to search online for your offering? Try it yourself to test the results. There are actions you can take to increase your profile: SEO is unpaid and SEM is paid. Increasingly, people are using search engines, such as

Google and Yahoo, to find information rather than visiting a website directly by using the URL. More than 40 per cent of traffic to novascotia.com now comes from Google alone, and that amount is growing.

E-mail Program. Visitors are on your website, so invite them to connect with you by subscribing to your e-newsletter or blog. (Ask in-person visitors to sign-up, too!) Take advantage of the opportunity to build a relationship with them. Use e-mail to provide relevant information and offers, such as contests, fun promotions, packages, and deals. E-mail continues to be a cost-effective, trackable means of encouraging new and repeat visitation – but make sure you have people’s permission to include them in your e-mail database.

Social Media. With the number of social networks doubling every year, it is easier than ever for people to share photos, videos, information, and reviews about their travel experiences, and for people to find them. Suddenly, there are millions of brand ambassadors – or detractors – who are influencing travel choices. Are people talking about your experiences? What are they saying?

This is a great opportunity to have conversations with visitors. Social media users trust what others say about you more than what you say about yourself, so search popular travel sites like Trip Advisor or Expedia to see what others are saying about you. Then respond! Thank them for positive feedback, and respond to negative feedback as you would an in-person complaint: acknowledge and offer to rectify the situation with specifics.



The importance of social media in travel planning and marketing will continue to grow. In addition to helping us generate online conversations about Nova Scotia, social media sites serve as referral sources for novascotia.com. For example, Facebook was the 3rd highest site referring traffic to novascotia.com. New visits from Facebook to novascotia.com increased by 145 per cent in 2010.

Advertising

Traditional media (television, magazines, newspaper) remains critical for building the awareness you need to get people to search for you online. What is your target market reading or watching? Ask publications and broadcasters for their customer profiles to ensure you're choosing the best fit and matching the audience interests (e.g. a culinary experience marketed in a culinary magazine). Be sure to include a strong call to action in your message such as "make a reservation online," or "book today – call 1- 800...". Repetition is key to effective advertising; one ad alone will be lost. For cost-effectiveness, consider co-operative advertising with partners, your destination marketing organization, or the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

Media Relations

A single article in a high-profile magazine or newspaper, an item on a popular travel show, or a mention by a hot blogger can raise your profile considerably. Editorial coverage is considered more credible than advertising as the writer is an independent source. Consider what story ideas you can pitch about your experience to local media, travel writers, or bloggers. Did you know that the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism regularly pitches story ideas and brings media to Nova Scotia? Contact our Travel Media Relations staff to explore how you can connect with travel media in Nova Scotia (Appendix D).

Consumer Shows

Consumer shows provide an opportunity to interact with and gather information and insights from potential visitors. Which shows would your target markets attend? Can you partner with others to attend?

Travel Trade

The travel-trade channels, which includes tour operators, travel agents, and other travel influencers, is an important way we market Nova Scotia to many potential visitors, particularly in long-haul markets. This is another opportunity to reach markets through partnerships.

Creating Buzz

You can use marketing tactics to start a conversation. But, how can you really get people talking or creating buzz about your experience? Word of mouth can't be beat. Here are a few ideas:

Think about pre- and post-visit engagement. Send your guest something connected to their visit before they arrive. Or, after visitors are home, send them a memento of their trip.

Create magic – the unexpected! Sure, visitors on a horse-drawn sleigh ride know they'll be having lunch as part of their experience. But imagine their surprise when they round the corner to see a bonfire crackling and lunch cooking over an open fire, surrounded by rustic wooden tables set with linen, silverware, and soup bowls from a local potter, which they can buy to take home. Wow!

Who do visitors ask when they're in town looking for something to do? The locals, who may also be the visitor's friend or relative. What do the people in your community know about your offering? If they were stopped on the street, would they recommend your experience? Invite your local businesses and Visitor Information Centre staff to take part in your experience. Can you use them to test your experience offering? You could get testimonials from them to put on your website. Or, they could blog about it for you!

Develop a new experience that's so innovative and creative that people can't help but talk about it!

best practices

The Unexpected – So Swell – Nova Shores Adventure



The changing tides and totally undeveloped coastline they found on a vacation to the Bay of Fundy area inspired Werner and Else Ostermann to move their kayaking operation from Dover to Advocate Harbour.

Nova Shores Adventures offers exclusive access through daily kayak tours to coastal icons like the Three Sisters, which are not accessible by foot. But it is the Bay of Fundy tides that create a sense of wonder. “When the tide is coming in you can sit in your kayak on the ocean floor and wait for the sea to lift you up,” said Else. “Our visitors are delighted!”

The couple builds on that delight by providing unexpected elements, even after their guests have returned home. Kayakers enjoy a gourmet meal featuring fresh foods, home-baking and Nova Scotia products such as maple syrup and blueberries in some pretty interesting coastal locations. Some of their guests claim they come back for the food. Upon returning home, they may be surprised to find Else’s beer-bread recipe or a picture Werner took of them with the Bay as a backdrop waiting in their in-box.

“We always try to exceed expectations by providing value added elements,” said Else. The Ostermanns take time to get to know the experiences and services provided by other local tourism operators. This allows them to match what their guests are looking for and cross-promote community partners – selling the whole destination through itineraries, clusters, and packages based on visitor demand. “We know not everyone in a group may want to kayak so we find other things for them to do in the community that appeals to them.”

The company keeps their kayaking groups small, which allows them to customize the experience for each guest – younger or older, new to kayaking or experienced. In addition to happy customers, Nova Shores Adventures works to build on their word of mouth by offering familiarization tours to Visitor Information Centre staff, museums, and local tourism operators. With 16 per cent of their guests selecting them through word of mouth alone, clearly they are offering an experience not to be missed. Capturing (and sharing online) the visitor’s experience through photography, and building community awareness around their product, are two great low-cost ways to promote experiences.

At a Glance:

Core Experience:

Seacoast/Outdoor

Target Market:

Kayak/outdoor and soft-adventure enthusiasts, primarily couples from 31-61 years of age and some family groups, from Canada and the United States

Experience:

Bay of Fundy guided kayaking, history and natural interpretation of local area, gourmet meals featuring local food and post-trip mementos

Why it works:

Taps into visitor passion, creates unexpected and surprising opportunities to delight visitors, provides opportunities for social interaction and shared experience, involves doing rather than watching, provides visitors an opportunity to learn and challenge themselves





7

EVALUATION

IN THIS SECTION

Tracking Tips

Worksheet 7: Inquiry & Sales Tracking Sheet

Measuring Results

Worksheet 8: Return on Marketing Investment

Best Practices: Run on the Ocean Floor
– Not Since Moses



Simply asking
“How did you hear
about us?” can
provide valuable
information that
can help you adjust
your tactics.

EVALUATION

In Section 4 we talked about the importance of setting goals for your business and markets. These provide a basis against which you can measure your success. The information you gather from tracking results against your goals will provide insight into what should stay the same and what needs improvement in your product offering and marketing activities.

Let's take a look at a few ways you can measure success.

TRACKING TIPS

There are a variety of measures you can use to track results, such as room nights, tickets sold, meals sold, length of stay, packages sold, coupons redeemed, experiences sold and sales and revenue indicators.

Measures such as audience size, number of inquiries, and the conversion of inquiries into actual sales are good indicators for marketing-activity success. It's not always easy to measure results with traditional marketing activities such as advertising. Simply asking “How did you hear about us?” can provide valuable information that can help you adjust your tactics.

There are numerous measures available for online marketing activities. The key is to know what you want to track and why. Free tools, such as Google Analytics, will give you information on how many visitors hit your site, where they were surfing in from, and the pages and content that they viewed the most. If your site offers e-commerce, you can get reports on transactions and revenues. If you purchase online advertising or other marketing opportunities, make sure that your provider can give you measures to help determine the effectiveness of your ad.

You can also gather valuable information from your visitors while they stay with you. Where are they travelling from; what's their age range; are they travelling as individuals, couples, or with families? This type of information builds a visitor profile that is useful for product development and marketing activities and can be easily gathered through a formal survey, the registration process, or informal tools such as a guestbook or your own visual/conversation process.

The Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) has provided a very simple tool for evaluating the success of your tourism experience. With two simple questions – “Was it what you expected?” and “Did you enjoy your experience?” – you will have four possible results that indicate whether or not you need to adjust your experience, your marketing, both or – best of all – nothing. Check out the CTC Experiences Toolkit (pages 13-14) at the following website for more information: <http://en-corporate.canada.travel> (under Resources for Industry).

Worksheet 7 provides a tracking sheet to record results of your marketing activities.

WORKSHEET 8:
INQUIRY & SALES TRACKING SHEET

Identify in Column A the specific marketing activities you undertake (for example, your website, other websites you are listed on and any travel guides in which you advertise or marketing campaigns in which you participate).

Column B can be used to track the number of inquiries generated from those particular activities and Column C can be used to track the number of sales generated from those activities.

	COLUMN A Marketing Activity	COLUMN B # of Inquiries	COLUMN C # of Sales
Website			
Travel Guides			
Advertising Media			
Campaign(s)			
Brochure			
Visitor Information Centre			
Friend or Referral			
Trade Show			
Other			



MEASURING RESULTS

Information gathered through tracking can help you determine if you are getting a good return on your investment for your marketing activities.

For example, perhaps you have developed a package that you promoted through a provincial newspaper. The cost for a banner ad space was \$600 and you sold 12 packages at \$300 each. Divide the total revenue for the package by the amount you spent on the banner ad to get your return on investment: $\$3600/\$600=\$6/\1 . In this example, for every \$1 you spent on marketing you received \$6 back. Do not forget that there may be other costs, such as the development of the advertisement, which you may need to factor into your calculations.

Once you have this information you can compare your various marketing activities to determine which are giving you the best results.

Worksheet 8 can assist you in tracking your return on investment for each of your marketing activities.



WORKSHEET 9:
RETURN ON MARKETING INVESTMENT

Marketing Activities	Cost of Activity	Revenue Generated by Activity	Return on Investment (revenue / cost)

Download worksheets online at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism/experience-toolkit.aspx
Please call us with any questions at 902-424-3908. Ask for "experience toolkit assistance."

best practices

Run on the Ocean Floor – Not Since Moses



Eager and excited, a crowd of runners and walkers hug the shoreline, surveying the route revealed by the receding Bay of Fundy tides. A 5- or 10-kilometre course through the mud, sand, and seawater of Five Islands awaits them, guaranteed to be a run like they've never had before!

"I was out running on the bottom of the ocean and it was so extraordinary, I felt so ecstatic, I had to share it," says Dick Lemon, organizer of the Not Since Moses event. "That idea came easy. The hard part was figuring out how, it was a hellacious undertaking. But, worth it because people are so appreciative – some refer to it as the most important event of their life!"

Word has spread quickly about Not Since Moses. This annual August event started in 2007 with 170 runners, growing to 360 in 2008 and 680 in 2009, with up to 1,500 runners expected in 2010. The event has spread from a pure runner to a runner-walker event, tapping into a broader market, and includes post-race music, food, and festivities. In 2009, about 2/3 of participants were Nova Scotians, 1/6 from New Brunswick, and 1/6 from elsewhere, as far away as Kuwait and Germany.

The community helps with the event, providing huge volunteer efforts. And the event makes an impact on the community. *"Last year with runners, family, and friends we had over 1,000 people for a two-day event in a village of 300 people, and these visitors travel up and down the shore. It exposes a lot of people who hadn't been here before to the natural beauty and culture of the area, and they spend money," said Dick.*

Dick believes in cross-marketing with area businesses. Running bibs can be used for a \$5 credit at businesses along the shore, from convenience stores to restaurants and lodgings. *"If the first five dollars are paid, I figured they'd spend more," says Dick. "And, it gets them out in the community. Also, on website, I have links to various activities, like museums and parks. I love introducing people to this area."*

The volume of response and enthusiasm of participants shows they love this event. Just take a peek at testimonials on the event's website. Dick says the event is so rewarding and participants so appreciative that he feels the same level of ecstasy he originally felt running on the bottom of the ocean. So what's his tip to creating experience opportunities for visitors?

"Big ideas suck, little ideas are fabulous," says Dick. "Start with a small thing that makes sense to you, be an optimist who plans that it might fail, and stick with it no matter what. That's sustainability, because you can't just run on enthusiasm – it could be gone in two years. Don't get into something that you can't carry emotionally or financially."

At a Glance:

Core Experience:
Seacoast/Outdoor

Target Market:
Runners of all ages, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and beyond, targeted through special-interest media and word of mouth

Experience:
Run on the ocean floor in a 10km run, 5km walk or children's "Basket Run"

Why it Works:
Innovative and truly unique, iconic Bay of Fundy tidal experience; connects with participant passions and values, allows visitors to connect with each other, locals, and place; an immersive life experience; community partnerships and support; and it is just cool!



NEXT STEPS

If you have any questions on anything covered in this toolkit, call us. Our tourism staff are available as resources and some can offer community workshops or individual business counselling to assist you in moving ahead with experience development. Contact information for staff can be found in Appendix D.

Think about ways that you can offer something uniquely Nova Scotian in your area, connecting with the brand and core experiences.

Consider your market. Where are they travelling from? What are their interests and what is the compelling experience that you can provide as a reason to travel to your destination?

Think about all of those hidden gem assets that give your region flavour: musicians, artisans, storytellers, experts, and local characters. They can enhance an experience.

How are you going to offer the experience? As a package? Review Section 5 and the worksheets provided to help you with your planning.

Do you need to partner with another local business, service, or attraction to add value to that compelling experience? Who will you partner with?

Does your experience provide an opportunity for the visitor to learn something new, discover our way of life in Nova Scotia, try something themselves rather than observe, meet and make connections with local people, or have access to something that is exclusive or behind-the-scenes?

Review the Tourism Partnerships and Programs guide for marketing and promotional opportunities that you can tap into when you are ready to promote your experience. You can find the guide here: www.gov.ns.ca/tch/pubs/tians-partnership-programs.pdf.

Have fun growing your business through experiences!





APPENDICES

IN THIS SECTION

APPENDIX A

When, Where and How: Travel Market Demographics

APPENDIX B

Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism

APPENDIX C

Regional Tourism Association and Destination Marketing Organization Contacts

APPENDIX D

Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism
Tourism Division Contacts and Resources

APPENDIX A
Who, Where and How:
Travel Markets Demographics
(Year: 2010)

The Canadian Market - At a Glance

	Atlantic Canada	Ontario	Quebec	Western Canada
% of Visitation	56	21	5	7
# of Visitors	1,189,300	451,100	96,200	141,300
Average Age of Visitor	35-44	45-54	45-54	45-54
Average Party Spending	\$560	\$1,100	\$1,000	\$1,450
Average Length of Stay	4 nights	7.5 nights	6.5 nights	11.5 nights

Source: 2010 TCH Visitor Estimates, 2004 Visitor Exit Survey

Atlantic Canada Market

- Nova Scotia's largest market
- Has high awareness of Nova Scotia
- Likely to have visited previously
- Pleasure visitors are interested in getaways, family vacations, local festivals and events, crafts shops/studios, and general "things to do"
- Visits are likely to be shorter compared to other markets; therefore they tend to spend less money here
- 92 per cent arrive by road, although a small air market is increasing (primarily from Newfoundland and Labrador)

Ontario Market

- At 21 per cent of visitation, this is an important market for Nova Scotia
- Slightly more (52 per cent) choose to drive rather than fly
- Includes couples over 40 and families
- Pleasure visitors are primarily interested in exploring local culture, history, cuisine, crafts shops/studios, and outdoor experiences such as parks, nature observation, and historic sites

Quebec Market

- 61 per cent arrive by road
- Pleasure visitors have an interest in outdoor activities, such as beach exploring, parks, and nature observation
- Also interested in crafts shops/studios and historic sites

Western Canada Market

- The majority arrive by air (85 per cent)
- Pleasure visitors desire experiences ranging from immersion in our culture to outdoor activities and local cuisine, including beaches, parks, crafts shops/studios, and historic sites

The United States Market - At a Glance

	United States Overview	New England	Mid Atlantic	Pacific	East North Central
% of Visitation	9	3	2	1	1
# of Visitors	181,300	60,900	32,200	13,600	16,000
Average Age of Visitor	55-64	—	—	—	—
Average Party Spending	\$1,000-\$1,500	—	—	—	—
Average Length of Stay	6.5-8.5 nights	—	—	—	—

Source: 2010 TCH Visitor Estimates, 2004 Visitor Exit Survey

United States Market

- Tend to be older couples
- Are seeking cultural experiences, beautiful scenery, and the ability to relax and escape routine

New England Market

- Is our largest U.S. market
- Includes Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut
- Majority arrive by road
- Pleasure visitors enjoy the beach, parks, nature, crafts shops/studios, historic sites, and museums





Mid-Atlantic Market

- Is Nova Scotia's priority U.S. market under the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership agreement
- Includes New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania
- When told of the benefits of a Nova Scotia vacation, 20 per cent said they would consider it in the future
- Pleasure visitors from this market are interested in shopping, dining, swimming and sunbathing, historic sites, and urban buildings and architecture
- 23 per cent say they are looking for an "authentic" experience
- Given the overall size of the market and the ease of access to Nova Scotia, the mid-Atlantic area holds good potential for growth

The Pacific Market

- A developmental market for Nova Scotia in partnership with the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership
- When told of the benefits of a Nova Scotia vacation, 16 per cent said they would consider it in the future.

East North Central Market

- The Nova Scotia Air Gateway committee identified Chicago as a market because of the direct flights and the opportunity to grow leisure, business, and meeting and convention business
- There are links with Nova Scotia's product offering, including Celtic culture
- The gateway committee leads marketing initiatives in the Chicago market

The Overseas Market - At a Glance

	The Overseas Market Overview	United Kingdom
% of Visitation	3	1
# of Visitors	64,000	19,000
Average Age of Visitor	35-64	—
Average Party Spending	\$1,300	—
Average Length of Stay	10.8 nights	—

Source: 2010 TCH Visitor Estimates, 2004 Visitor Exit Survey

Overseas Market

- Comprised primarily of the United Kingdom and other overseas markets
- Pleasure visitors tend to be middle-aged to older couples who are well educated, have higher incomes and are well travelled
- These visitors are interested in outdoor and nature experiences, combined with experiencing our local lifestyle, unique culture, and cuisine
- Awareness of Nova Scotia is low in these markets
- They enjoy beautiful, dramatic scenery; nature; and soft adventure
- Their preference is to experience this in close proximity to cities and towns, where they can also enjoy quality seafood dining, unique accommodations, nightlife, and socializing with the locals
- Many prefer packaged holidays and booking through travel agents / tour operators
- They generally conduct extensive online research on the destination in advance
- Those interested in Atlantic Canada tend to be second- or third-time visitors to Canada
- While Nova Scotia maintains some activity in Germany, the primary marketing effort overseas is devoted to the U.K. market, much of it through the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership

The United Kingdom Market

- Nova Scotia's largest overseas market
- Travel for pleasure and to visit friends and relatives
- 49 per cent indicate they are looking for experiences related to nature viewing
- 33 per cent seek cultural experiences (dining, different ways of life, socialization etc.)
- 60 per cent are looking for packages, including car rental, as they arrive by air
- Marketing effort is primarily directed at England, which accounts for the majority of all visitors from the United Kingdom
- Research of U.K. long-haul travellers indicated that while 78 per cent are aware of Nova Scotia, few currently consider it as a vacation destination
- Given the interests of U.K. travellers and the strengths of the Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canadian experience, there is strong potential for growth in this market

By land, by air and by sea...

Most visitors to Nova Scotia are travelling by road, although air travel has increased and accounts for about 28 per cent of all visits. The cruise industry continues to be strong with over 261,000 passengers visiting through the Port of Halifax and over 69,000 visiting through the Port of Sydney.



Canada's Code of Ethics & Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism

The Canadian Tourism Industry Vision

Canada will be the premier four-season destination to connect with nature and to experience diverse cultures and communities.

The Canadian Tourism Industry Mission

Canada's tourism industry will deliver world-class cultural and leisure experiences year round, while preserving and sharing Canada's clean, safe and natural environments. The industry will be guided by the values of respect, integrity and empathy.

The Tourism Industry Association of Canada and Parks Canada Definition of Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism actively fosters appreciation and stewardship of the natural, cultural and historic resources and special places by local residents, the tourism industry, governments and visitors. It is tourism which is viable over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place.

Ethics

The Canadian tourism industry is guided by the values of *respect, integrity* and *empathy* in designing, delivering and marketing sustainable tourism products, facilities and services.

Ends

A sustainable tourism industry that:

- Promotes sensitive appreciation and enjoyment of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, contemporary landscapes, cultures and communities.
- Balances economic objectives with safeguarding and enhancing the ecological, cultural and social integrity of Canada's heritage.
- Shares responsibility by being a full participant and contributor to the economic, environmental and cultural sustainability of the destinations and assets it utilizes.

Benefits

The tourism industry recognizes that fostering sustainable tourism practices addresses its *triple bottom line* of economic, environmental and social performance.

Travellers benefit from:

- Access to high-quality products and services that support positive experiences and respect socio-cultural and environmental sustainability;
- Access to opportunities that support a variety of service interests, recreational interests, skill sets and income levels; and
- Opportunities, now and in the future, to experience natural, cultural and social environments that have retained their integrity.

Tourism providers benefit from:

- Lower costs through more efficient use of resources and the reduction of waste;
- Sound planning and management of new and existing tourism opportunities, which leads to increased business certainty over the long term; and
- Canada's improved global competitive position through heightened recognition as a world leader in the implementation of sustainable tourism practices.

Host communities benefit from:

- Positive contributions to their natural, social and cultural environments and economic well-being;
- Respect for their rights and values; and
- Full participation in the decisions which affect the development of their community as a tourism destination.

Guidelines

We regard Sustainable Tourism as a guiding concept for the sound management of Canada's tourism experiences. We will honour the following guidelines in balancing economic objectives with respect for the natural, cultural and social environments in which we work.

To this end, we will:

1. Protect Natural and Cultural Heritage Resources

Support and contribute to the protection, enhancement and restoration of the integrity of natural and cultural heritage resources and places; encourage the establishment of parks, sites and reserves; support legislation to ensure protection of historic places and resources; condemn wilful destruction of heritage resources; and work to enhance public awareness and involvement in the protection of heritage.

2. Promote Appreciation and Enjoyment

Enrich travel experiences, understanding and enjoyment by providing accurate information, engaging presentations and opportunities to connect with Canada's natural and cultural heritage; and foster support for the protection and sensitive use of heritage resources and places.

3. Respect and Involve Host Communities

Respect the rights and values of host and local communities, property owners and Aboriginal peoples; educate communities about the importance of tourism and provide them with a meaningful role in planning and decision-making for the design, development and delivery of tourism programs and services; and optimize the long-term economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits to the community.

4. Influence Expectations and Use

Influence traveller expectations through marketing, trip-planning materials and tourism activities which foster responsible use and enjoyment of our nature, culture and communities; and support leading-edge services and facilities that respect heritage resources and places while achieving economic goals.

5. Minimize Impacts

Limit the negative impacts of tourism on the natural and cultural environment through the responsible use of resources, effective waste management and minimizing of pollution; limit activities, services and facilities to levels that do not threaten the integrity of heritage resources or systems while continuing to support economic goals and traveller access; and seek innovative solutions to mitigate or avoid undesirable environmental, social and cultural impacts.

6. Raise Awareness

Conduct research to expand the knowledge base upon which sound sustainable tourism decisions depend; share the knowledge through education programs, staff training and scholarships; and recognize excellence and best practices through awards and accreditation programs.

7. Work Together

Advance sustainable tourism by working with governments, communities, stakeholders, travellers and other industries to agree upon common goals, contribute to co-ordinated and co-operative actions, exchange information, technologies and solutions, and develop shared plans.

8. Contribute Globally

Show leadership in sustainable tourism by honouring international commitments; participate in international policy development and initiatives; contribute to the building of capability on a world scale; and share best practices and technologies with other countries.

In partnership with:



Canada

With support from:



APPENDIX C

Regional Tourism Association and Destination Marketing Organization Contacts

Tourism Associations & Addresses

Contacts, Office Numbers & Websites

(AESTA)

Antigonish-Eastern Shore Tourist Association
9042 #7 Highway, General Delivery
Head Jeddore, NS
B0J 1P0

Mike Broomfield, Executive Director

T: 889-2362 / **F:** 889-2101
anteast@bellaliant.com
www.rewardyoursenses.com
www.novascotiaseacoast.com

(DCBA)

Destination Cape Breton Association
PO Box 1448
Sydney, NS
B1P 6R7

Mary Tulle, Chief Executive Officer

T: 563-4636 / **F:** 564-5422
mary@dcba.ca
www.cbisland.com

(CNTA)

Central Nova Tourist Association
PO Box 1761, 65 Treaty Trail
Millbrook, NS
B6L 1W3

Joyce Mingo, Executive Director

T: 893-8782 / **F:** 893-2269
Toll free: 1-800-895-1177
joyce@centralnovascotia.com
www.centralnovascotia.com

(PCTA)

Pictou County Tourist Association
980 East River Road
New Glasgow, NS
B2H 3S8

Cindy MacKinnon, Executive Director

T: 752-6383 / **F:** 752-6503
Toll free: 1-877-81-OCEAN
cmackinnon@tourismpictoucounty.com
www.tourismpictoucounty.com

(DSWNA)

Destination Southwest Nova Association
18 Dufferin Street, Box 1390
Lunenburg, NS
B0J 2C0

Jeanette Joudrey, General Manager

T: 678-5331 / **F:** 634-8056
Lunenburg Office: **T:** 634-8844 / **F:** 634-8056
info@destinationsouthwestnova.com
www.destinationsouthwestnova.com

Destination Halifax

1800 Argyle Street, Ste. 802
Halifax, NS
B3J 3N8

T: 422-9334 / **F:** 492-3175
www.destinationhalifax.com

(TIANS)

Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia
2089 Maitland Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3K 2Z8

T: 902-423-4480 or Toll Free 1-800-94-TIANS (1-800-948-4267)
F: 902-422-0184
membership@tians.org
www.tians.org

APPENDIX D

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Visit www.gov.ns.ca/tch/tourism
for more resources, including:

- Nova Scotia Brand Kit
- Tourism Plan
- Business Development Guides
- Market Readiness Toolkit
- Research
- Packaging Opportunities
- Partnership Opportunities
- InTouch newsletter
- Tourism Destination Area Kit



This document was produced by the Tourism Development section of the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism.

Thank you to our colleagues and industry partners for your support in developing this toolkit. We'd like to give a special thanks to those who provided the information for our featured best practices.

- Robin MacDonald, *Celtic Music Centre*
- Tom Wilson, *Municipality of the County of Victoria*
- Dick Lemon, *Not Since Moses*
- Else Ostermann, *Nova Shores Adventures*
- Quita Gray, *Sugar Moon Farm*
- Lynn Hayne, *Sherbrooke Village*
- Donna Hatt, *White Point Beach Resort*

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While the information contained in this document is believed to be accurate, as of March 2011, it is not so warranted. The reader should note that federal, provincial, and municipal laws and regulations change frequently and it is recommended that you check with the appropriate authorities, including representatives of the Tourism division, Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism and your local Business Service Centre (on line at www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/ or at numerous Access Nova Scotia centres around the province) to obtain up-to-date information on laws that may affect planning for any tourism activity or attraction in your community.







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