

TIP SHEET #8: CREATE AN EXPERIENCE

Travellers today have more choices than ever before. Let's motivate travellers to choose Nova Scotia over competing destinations around the world by offering experiences they can only get here – connecting to our culture, icons, and coast.

A purchasable experience is creating or curating a unique mix of activities and services including opportunities for visitors to do something special with a local guide or expert, all packaged at one price point. Experiences go beyond a package to include well-themed, hands-on activities that engage as many of the five senses as possible where visitors learn something by doing something with someone who lives here.



Top 10 tips for developing a new experience

- 1. Know your business goals:** What do you want to achieve by developing and offering an experience? Goals will help focus your experience development efforts and create benchmarks to track and measure the success of your experience and business growth. For example, are you looking to increase visitation and revenue through the week? Do you want to extend your operational season? Would you like visitors to stay longer? Do you want to earn a higher yield per guest? Are you trying to attract a new visitor segment? Whatever your goals are, make sure they are clear, specific, and measurable from the start. For tips on setting measurements for your experience, review [Tip Sheet #17: Measuring Success](#).
- 2. Focus on your visitor:** Who is the target Explorer Quotient (EQ) visitor segment for your experience? Build your experience around the travel motivators and values of the visitor you want to attract. Whether you're developing a new experience or tweaking an existing one, knowing why they travel, and their preferences is a crucial first step.
- 3. Be authentic:** Being authentic means providing visitors with genuine Nova Scotia experiences. What flavours, stories, activities, or places can you build into an experience that travellers won't find anywhere else?



4. Plan for local connections: How can visitors learn something by doing something with someone who lives here? Visitors want to feel an emotional connection to places they visit, engage with the people who live there like local experts or insiders, and get behind the scenes access.

A local expert or insider may or may not be currently active in our tourism industry. They could be a subject matter expert like a paleontologist or someone who holds generations of knowledge and can share a traditional recipe, or a craft (boat building, weaving, farming). Perhaps an elder in the community or a natural storyteller could contribute to your experience. Local experts or insiders like artists, chefs, or musicians are perfect partners to help deliver a component of your experience by authentically connecting with visitors.

5. Bring the WOW! Take an experience from memorable to unforgettable by including unexpected moments or surprises. Introduce a new flavour, provide access to an amazing place or person, or include something visitors make or take home as a memento of their experience. Where you choose to hold your experience or who the guests meet can make a big impression and help you stand out. Curate remarkable moments that visitors are excited to share with friends and family. Don't underestimate the things we may take for granted in our everyday life such as incorporating local fresh seafood into your meal or walking on the ocean floor.

6. Sustainable by design: Visitors have high expectations for tourism experiences. Think responsibly about the partners you select, sourcing your food locally, and the impact your offering has on the environment. Can you incorporate reusable items like cloth napkins and tasting glasses, plates and cutlery? Are there local traditions or flavours you can celebrate as part of your experience? Can you support local organizations (environmental, cultural, community) where your experience takes place by donating a part of your proceeds? Sustainability of the global tourism industry impacts more than the environment, and can positively influence the economic, social, and cultural wellbeing of our communities.

- 7. Attention to detail:** Experiences do not need to be complex, but they do need to be well-planned. Ensuring that no detail is overlooked, no matter how small, will go a long way in delighting and adding value for your guests. For example, providing guests additional comforts like umbrellas on a rainy day, blankets in the evening, or timing activities around tides and sunsets lets visitors know that they are your priority.



- 8. Price for profit:** Price for profit while paying close attention to your bottom line. Know how many guests you need to break even and achieve your desired profit. Use [Worksheet #7: Measuring Experience Success](#) to walk you through cost considerations from credit card fees and permits to commissions. Remember that visitors find value in authentic experiences and are willing to pay for the right combination of unique activities. Local markets may be more price sensitive than travellers, and that's okay!
- 9. Test and evaluate:** Test your offering with local guests or partners who align with your target market to gain valuable insight that can be used to enhance your experience. Be sure to ask about the flow and timing, quality of the experience, and the fun-factor. Listen to feedback and make adjustments to perfect your offering before sharing it with travellers.
- 10. Ready to market?** Market readiness is all about how prepared your business is to promote your experience and deliver on visitor expectations. Is your experience ready to be marketed to travellers? Do you have captivating photos and video appealing to target travellers? Can travellers easily find and book your experience online?
- Use [Worksheet #6: Being Market Ready](#) to help you self-assess your readiness to market and sell your experience to travellers.