Cultural & HeritageTourism

a Handbook for Community Champions
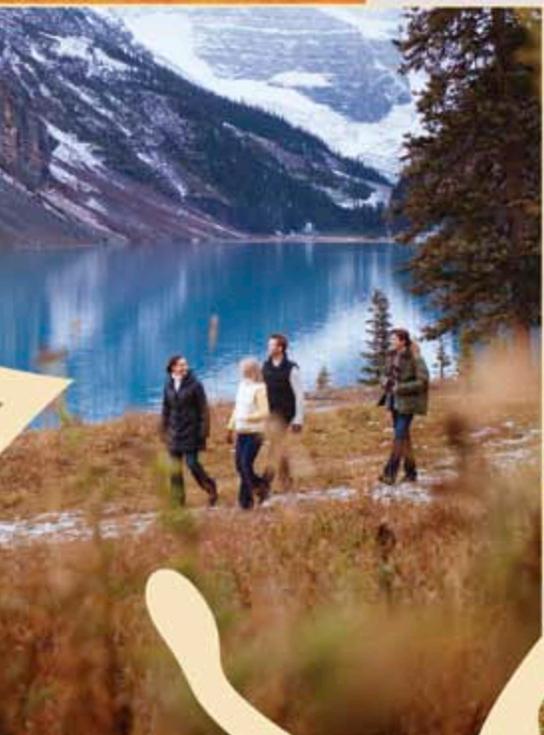
Table of Contents

The views presented here reflect the opinions of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Provinces and Territories which supported the project:

Acknowledgements

How to Use This Handbook

Developed for Community "Champions"

This handbook was produced to inspire and assist community leaders across Canada to realize greater benefits in this sector of the industry. We hope it will be shared widely and used to encourage discussion, workshops, and cultural/heritage tourism initiatives.

Community cultural tourism "champions" are passionate individuals who appear in many guises. They may be government officials, front-line staff, or volunteers with a local event or festival. These people believe in the potential of cultural/heritage tourism for their community, and can make the commitment to take action.

Handbook Organization

This volume isn't the final word on cultural/heritage tourism—perhaps a "Coles Notes version" would be a better description. Our aim is to provide you with enough information to get started with an effective planning process. Aligned with the concept of community-based tourism, the guide encourages building experiences based on the unique culture of your community. We won't give you a precise set of recipes to do this, but we will give you a set of approaches and issues to consider, so you can develop new items that showcase your community's cultural flavour.

Section A

outlines why cultural/heritage tourism may be important to your community. Chapters in this section provide: broad background information, basic definitions, global tourism trends, and current views on links between the world of arts, culture and heritage and the business of tourism.

Section B

outlines how to plan and create a stronger cultural/heritage tourism presence in your community. We outline potential barriers to, and effective steps for, developing an cultural/heritage tourism strategy.

Showcase Studies

In addition to these sections, and throughout the handbook, you'll find inspiration in eleven short "Showcase" studies—articles that briefly describe initiatives from various communities that show what cultural/heritage tourism can look like.

Learn More…

Cultural/heritage tourism is a comprehensive topic, with many areas of specialization. Recognizing that all perspectives can't be covered in this introductory handbook, a brief set of references is included in the appendix, most with a web link. The endnotes identify the sources for this handbook, for additional information.

While all links were verified at the time of publication, inevitable changes mean some links may no longer work. Most reports referred to in this handbook, along with thousands of other tourism-related resources, can be found in the **Tourism Online Resource Centre** at www.torc-ttracanada.ca, maintained by LinkBC in partnership with the Travel and Tourism Research Association (Canada Chapter).

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photo: Mary Clark, Traveller

1. Cultural/Heritage Tourism & Your Community

This chapter briefly introduces the concept of cultural/heritage tourism and why it's becoming an important economic focus for many Canadian communities.

1.1 Treasuring Our Past, Looking To the Future

In some countries, such as Japan and France, individuals who display exceptional mastery of an art or craft are officially recognized as "Living Treasures." These people keep traditional arts and crafts alive, allowing heritage to be passed to following generations. While Canada doesn't have an official 'living treasures' program, we do have people recognized for devoting their lives to keeping our culture alive.

One is Dr. Cyril Simard, a Quebec architect who founded the ECONOMUSEUM® network, which has grown into one of the world's most outstanding showcases of cultural/heritage tourism. In the welcoming comments below, Dr. Simard offers a word of encouragement and inspiration to community champions considering the possibilities in cultural/heritage tourism.

Cultural Heritage Tourism: the spirit of our places, our identity
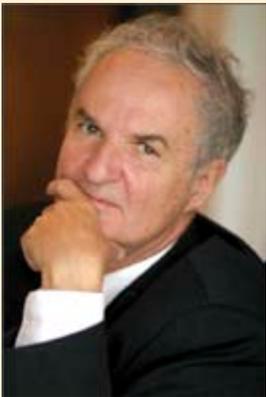
As a global agent of communication, cultural tourism must position itself as an agent of sustainable development, applying itself to the core values of public education, respect for our differences, authenticity of our projects, and protection of our heritage.

Sustainable development refers to economic growth. While it creates jobs and wealth, it can do so to the detriment of the values we cherish. While the exchange of goods is simple in modern society, cultural tourism is a much more complex set of interactions. The experience of the ECONOMUSEUM® network teaches us that visitors want an exchange with artisans at work: they want to know how the products they consume can be traced, they want to find out about manufacturing processes, and they want moments of wonder in spaces where the spirit of the place is preserved and magnified.

To develop humanized cultural tourism, our visitors must therefore take home emotions and souvenirs of a history, an expertise, a new friendship. Hence the importance of preserving both our physical and our intangible heritage, as designated by UNESCO, in accordance with universal ethics which call for expression of the beauty and the soul of our country.

Through the richness of its contents and the quality of its authors' message, there is no doubt that this guide will serve as an invaluable reference source at the service of a humanized cultural tourism, an expression of our identity and our authenticity.

Cyril Simard, O.Q., Ph.D.
Chair, Board of Directors
ECONOMUSEUM®SOCIETY NETWORK

A place for on-site exchange and learning, the ECONOMUSEUM® is outfitted so that the artisan can personally explain and convey to visitors the secrets of their trade and the products which have been adapted to modern life.

With Dr. Simard's words in mind, let's get started! One of the most important elements in cultural/ heritage tourism is community fit. That's because travellers are changing, and many communities are doing their best to understand and adapt to these trends.

Travellers are Changing

As communities consider diversifying their economies through tourism, they need to be aware of the changing desires of many travellers. Today, an increasing number of consumers want:

- Safe destinations.
- Meaningful, authentic experiences.
- The ability to 'participate' rather than 'observe'.
- A chance to meet locals.
- Quality in concert with good value.
- Comfort, and softer adventure activities.
- Unique products and customized experiences.
- Last-minute getaway opportunities, with suggested itineraries.
- The opportunity to plan online.
- Opportunities to support good environmental and social responsibility practices.[1]

This kind of visitor travels to experience a wide range of authentic attractions and services unique to the destination.

Communities are Responding

Across Canada many communities have become high-appeal tourism destinations by attracting this type of visitor. They've seen that cultural/heritage tourism supports local business, helps diversify their economies, and improves quality-of-life for local residents. Consider this list of Canadian communities:

- Trinity, NF
- Charlottetown, PE
- St. Andrews, NB
- Lunenburg, NS
- Quebec City, QC
- Stratford, ON

- Ft. Garry, MB
- East End, SK
- Rosebud, AB
- Nelson, BC
- Dawson City, YT

These places all increased visitor revenue by nurturing the historical and cultural assets unique to their region. Through effective partnerships, planning and promotion, they created jobs and economic activity through cultural/heritage tourism.

At this stage you might want to ask yourself:

- Is a focused effort to develop cultural/heritage tourism right for my community NOW?
- If we have established cultural/heritage attractions, are we ready for a more holistic, community-based approach to improving our appeal as a destination?

If the answer to the above questions is "yes", then the rest of this handbook is for you. Becoming a cultural/heritage tourism destination takes time, resources, and creative thinking. You won't be an expert after reading this, but you should be able to start discussions and establish a plan to produce results.

Let's turn our attention to the sector. What is cultural/heritage tourism? And how did it evolve to be an important economic generator?
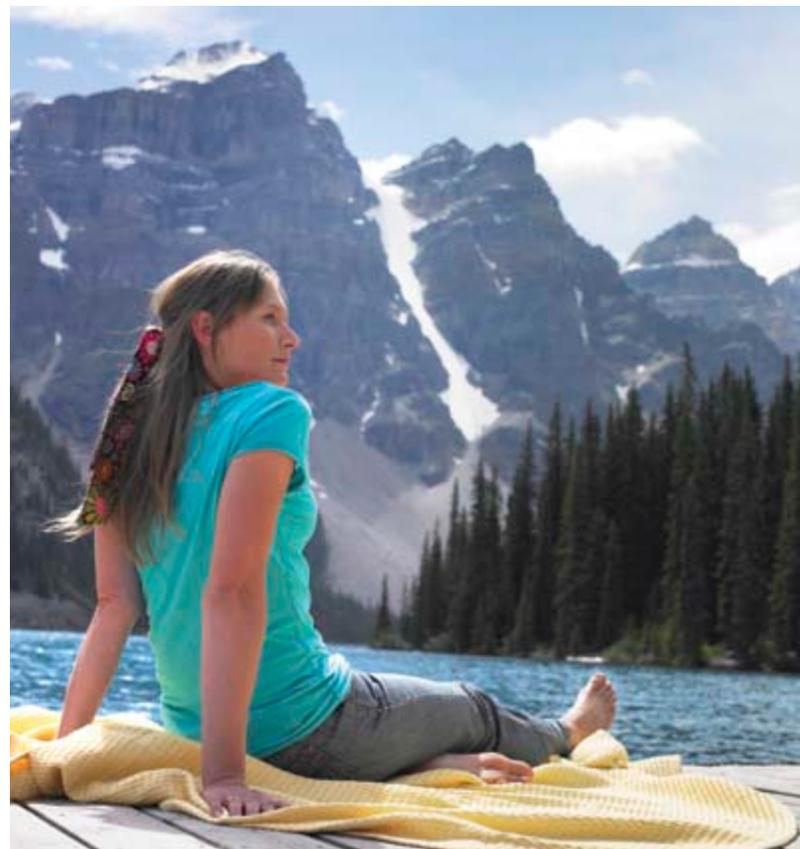
2. Defining Cultural/Heritage Tourism

This chapter explores the evolution of cultural/heritage tourism, including definitions, economic impacts, and products/experiences that comprise the sector.

2.1 The Birth of a New Economy

Cultural/heritage tourism opportunities have come to be, in large part, because of Canada's economic transformation over the past 30 years.

We've moved from resource extraction and processing to a mixed-services economy that spans from agriculture to animation, from finance to forestry, and from tourism to technology. Natural resource revenues from oil, gas, minerals, timber, and electrical energy are still vital contributors to the national economy, but fewer people now work in these industries.

There's been a fundamental shift toward a knowledge-based economy – where an educated population provides our competitive advantage, and drives what we have to sell on local and world markets. Of particular interest to tourism is the emergence of what Richard Florida[2] calls the *creative economy*, where visual and performing arts, heritage, and cultural activities of various kinds become economic drivers.

In addition, a significant tourism product shift is being driven by the aging of our population, with their increased interest in arts, heritage and cultural tourism.

Finally, the global tourism climate is changing. A 'thickening' US border combined with a global economic downturn has forced a re-think about markets and the changing demand for tourism products. What is the best approach for rebuilding lost business? What emerging markets can be developed? How can the unique "sense of place" of a community or region be further developed to attract new visitors? And most importantly for this handbook, what is the role of arts, culture, and heritage attractions/events in building a thriving and diverse tourism economy in your community?

2.2 Defining our Sectors

Before we answer these questions, let's provide a brief overview of tourism, and cultural/heritage tourism.

What is Tourism?

People are motivated to travel for a wide range of reasons: reuniting with family, escaping a cold winter, rejuvenating at a spa, or experiencing a different culture or cuisine.

The tourism economy includes everything from a visitor's mode of travel, to meals, lodgings, and activities they engage in during their trip. With so many products and services catering to the needs of tourists, it's not surprising that tourism is now considered the largest industry in the world.

There are many ways of defining tourism, but a commonly accepted definition is the one developed by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO):

"The activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes."

What is Cultural/Heritage Tourism?

Given the many definitions of "culture," it's hardly surprising there are many definitions for cultural/ heritage tourism–also known simply as cultural tourism or heritage tourism:

- **"Culture and heritage tourism** occurs when participation in a cultural or heritage activity is a significant factor for traveling. Cultural tourism includes performing arts (theatre, dance, music), visual arts and crafts, festivals, museums and cultural centres, and historic sites and interpretive centres." – *Canadian Tourism Commission*[3]

- **"The movement of persons to cultural attractions** in cities in countries other than their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs and (2) all movements of persons to specific cultural attractions, such as heritage sites, artistic and cultural manifestations, arts and drama to cities outside their normal country of residence." – *UN World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission*[4]

- **"Geotourism is defined as** tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents." – *Center for Sustainable Destinations - National Geographic*

- **"Heritage tourism** is travel directed toward experiencing the heritage of a city, region, state or country. This travel enables the tourist to learn about, and be surrounded by, local customs, traditions, history and culture. – *Texas Historical Commission*[5]

- **"Travel directed toward** experiencing the arts, heritage, and special character of a place. America's rich heritage and culture, rooted in our history, our creativity and our diverse population, provides visitors to our communities with a wide variety of cultural opportunities, including museums, historic sites, dance, music, theatre, book and other festivals, historic buildings, arts and crafts fairs, neighbourhoods, and landscapes." – *US National Endowment for the Arts et al.*[6]

Together, these definitions paint a colourful picture of the many dimensions of this sector. The definition below brings to life the concept of community-based cultural/heritage tourism—which is a key focus of this handbook:

"Cultural Tourism embraces the full range of experiences visitors can undertake to learn what makes a destination distinctive – its lifestyle, its heritage, its arts, its people–and the business of providing and interpreting that culture to visitors."

– Commonwealth of Australia, Creative Nation[7]

The Link between Heritage Conservation and Tourism

The ties between tourism and heritage conservation have been growing stronger in recent years. In 1999, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) created the International Cultural Tourism Charter – Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance. Its key principles are[8]:

1. Since tourism is among the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange, conservation should provide responsible and well-managed opportunities for members of the host community and visitors to experience and understand that community's heritage and culture first-hand.

2. The relationship between heritage places and tourism is dynamic and may involve conflicting values. It should be managed in a sustainable way for present and future generations.

3. Conservation and tourism planning for heritage places should ensure that the visitor experience will be worthwhile, satisfying and enjoyable.

4. Host communities and indigenous peoples should be involved in planning for conservation and tourism.

5. Tourism and conservation activities should benefit the host community.

6. Tourism promotion programs should protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage characteristics.

These principles demonstrate that heritage conservation recognizes tourism is here to stay, and is seeking ways to live harmoniously. They make clear that cultural/heritage tourism operators have a responsibility to the host community, to the visitor, and to the resources on which their industry is based.

Canadian Cultural Tourism Principles

The Charter was echoed in three core principles outlined by the Canadian Tourism Commission in *Packaging the Potential: A Five-Year Business Strategy for Cultural and Heritage Tourism In Canada* (1999), which states cultural and heritage tourism:

- Involves a quality visitor encounter with a cultural or historic experience that is authentic, and that is not created solely for the purpose of attracting tourists.
- Must be sustainable and must ensure that the quality and integrity of the cultural or heritage resource/experience are conserved.

- Is based on a mutually beneficial partnership between the cultural/heritage and tourism sectors, and must be a revenue generator for both sectors.

The following set of lists[9] outline a range of products and experiences that could form a destination-wide approach to cultural/heritage tourism development.

Products are those activities where a direct financial transaction is involved (like a guided tour or a restaurant meal). Experiences usually require no direct payment by the visitor (like outdoor public art). Products are direct revenue generators, and experiences contribute to the mood that enhances existing trips or motivates travellers to book new ones. Some tourism groups also refer to the "visitor experience"– as how they feel about themselves as they interact with the host community (pre, during and post visit) and the memories they take away.

What products and experiences does your community/region currently offer? What new opportunities could be developed? The following list, derived from the Heritage Tourism Alliance in BC, offers a sense of the scope of activities to consider.

Culture and Heritage Sites

• Art Galleries and Exhibitions
• Interpretive centres
• Museums
• Theatres
• Ranches and farms
• Historic sites
• Wineries
• Aboriginal and cultural centres
• Historic forts, lighthouses, and homes
• Outdoor public art and sculpture

Routes

• Historic driving routes
• Scenic driving routes
• Scenic/historic walking trails

Cultural/Heritage Themed Services

• Accommodation
• Retail
• Antiques and collectables
• Dining
• Farm Stays
• Other visitor services

Events

• Community fairs
• Local markets
• Historic re-enactments
• Feast-of-Fields meals
• Music/theatre/film festivals
• Interpretive programs
• Street entertainment
• Pow-wows

Cultural/Heritage Tours (Guided, Group)

- First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultural tours
- Regional driving tours
- Historic sightseeing tours
- Factory tours
- Farm, wine and brewery tours
- Military site tours
- Historic walking tours
- Guided archaeology hikes and digs

Cultural/Historic Districts

- Intact and preserved neighbourhoods
- Architectural features (buildings, bridges, signs, etc.)
- Main streets, parks, and squares
- Historic districts

Cultural or Heritage Landscapes

- Parks, trails, and lookouts with interpretation
- Monuments and historic markers
- Gardens and landscapes

Local Products/Services

- Authentic arts and crafts
- Artisan food and wine
- Heritage-inspired, hand-crafted souvenirs
- Demonstrations, including Aboriginal art/crafts

By now you might be thinking of ways your community could highlight and package these sorts of attractions as a means to generating visitation. Let's look at our first case study, from the Yukon, where the past and present come together in the Yukon Gold Explorer's Passport program.

Highlighting Cultural Heritage Attractions through the Yukon Gold Explorer's Passport

A Rich Past, a Breathtaking Present

The Yukon's heritage unites proud First Peoples' cultures, World Heritage Sites, the thrill of the Klondike Gold Rush, and the majesty of Yukon wilderness. Visitors to this northern Canadian territory are invited by Travel Yukon to "step back in time, or just feel time stand still", as they experience the Yukon's "Larger-Than-Life" past and present.

With many hundreds of historic sites sprinkled throughout the Yukon, there's ample opportunity for visitors to delve into its colourful past. The challenge is to entice travellers, many passing quickly on their way to Alaska, to stop and experience as many as possible.

Yukon's culture and heritage come to life through roadside historic sites and unmarked graves, and major attractions and museums such as Fort Selkirk and the MacBride Museum. These provide numerous ways to learn about the ancient land of Beringa, the complexity of First Nations culture, the role of the RCMP, the drama of the Alaska Highway construction and of course, the history of mining and the Klondike gold rush.

A New Marketing Program Rises from Previous Promotions

The Yukon Gold Explorer's Passport program is a result of combining two previous contests. Created by the Department of Tourism and Culture, it offers an incentive for visitors, and provides a unique way to tour the region. As promoted online, it's "your chance to win some genuine Klondike placer gold without, as Robert Service might say, 'moiling through the muck.'"

Tourism Yukon's Denny Kobayashi, Senior Manager of Marketing, was involved in the amalgamation of the original Yukon Passport Program and the Yukon Adventure Contest, and is encouraged by the growth in engagement following the change in 2009.

"Over time, the passport approach to enticing visitors to learn about, and visit, unique Yukon cultural attractions,

communities and natural wonders has been very effective at enhancing visitation and increasing revenues at participating sites," explains Kobayashi.

Operating during the Yukon's short summer season (June through to the end of August), guests visit museums, interpretive centres, and other sites, getting their passports stamped as many times as possible for the chance to win heritage-inspired prizes:

"Collect 20 or more stamps for your chance to win 5 troy ounces of Klondike placer gold. Collect four from the featured sites – Binet House Interpretive Centre, Campbell Region Interpretive Centre, Keno City Mining Museum and John Tizya Centre – to enter on-site draws for 1 troy ounce of Klondike gold".

Prior to 2009, the government offered two separate heritage-based contests for Yukon visitors. The Cultural Services Branch promoted the Yukon Gold Explorer's Passport contest with prizes (gold and silver, along with collectable posters or pins) to help promote the territory's museums. The Tourism Branch administered a Yukon Adventure Contest, with prizes of gold and gasoline for visitors to a wider variety of heritage and other attractions.

After two years of consultation with stakeholders, the streamlined passport contest was launched in 2009. "Consolidating the two contests alleviated some level of confusion being experienced by visitors, created efficiencies in advertising, promotion, collateral costs, and participation in the program increased overall," says Kobayashi.

Passport to a New Future for Yukon's Cultural/Heritage Tourism

The contest now features 33 heritage attractions from around the Yukon. Recently competing its third year, the project has been successful in increasing communication between branches. Stakeholders recognize the contest as the primary program for promoting cultural tourism in the area. More work needs to be done to measure the impact, but initial indicators are encouraging.

According to Kobayashi, "participation has continued to increase year to year and attractions are reporting visitors are engaged and sharing their experiences with other travellers. Most importantly, they are reporting their most memorable experiences involved talking to locals about their lifestyle, environment, families, history, and special places."

Yukon receives approximately 300,000 visitors per year, and museums, interpretive centres, and first nation cultural/heritage centres attract about one third of that volume. The previous contests had about 1000 participants per year, many registering in both contests. In 2009 this increased to 1700 people visiting at least 10 sites using the new passport, and a further jump to 2700 individuals was noted in 2010. With increased participation, Bruce Barrett from the Ministry comments "this kind of incentive definitely creates an opportunity for increased visitation at participating sites, and helps to provide visitors a connected set of experiences that bring to life the rich sense of place that is Yukon".

Find out more: www.travelyukon.com/explorer-passport

Now that we've seen evidence that cultural/heritage tourism can raise visitation rates to Canadian communities, let's look at other benefits it can provide.

"A good place to live is a good place to visit."

– Dr. Brian White[10]

Over more than three decades as a tourism educator and consultant in Canada and abroad, Dr. Brian White often found himself in the position of trying to explain the "why" of cultural/heritage tourism. Why should communities and their citizens be interested? Why should people put their time and energy into making their home towns more welcoming, attractive and full of interesting activities for visitors?

"You're not doing this just for the tourists," Brian told one meeting of municipal, First Nations, business, and community leaders in Port Alberni, a forestry-dependant Vancouver Island town. "You're doing this to improve the quality of life for your own residents. The tourism pay-off is that if you make your community the sort of place where people want to live, then it will also be the sort of place tourists will want to visit."

Cultural/heritage tourism can generate both tangible and intangible social benefits to a destination, in addition to economic gains. It provides opportunities for visitors (and residents, including youth) to learn about the dynamic heritage of the local region. It can also bring together residents for a common purpose. In this way, community improvements collectively made in the name of cultural/heritage tourism enhance the quality of life for residents, and contribute to increased pride.

Summary of Benefits

Here are many ways cultural/heritage tourism can benefit communities[11]:

Summary of Cultural Tourism Benefits		
Economic	Social	Environmental
• Diversifies the local economy by creating new jobs, businesses, attractions and events.[12] • Brings in new money and generates tax revenues.[13][14] • Supports existing small businesses and provides options for expansion. • Promotes the preservation and protection of significant local resources. • Builds relationships among and within communities. • Helps develop and maintain new/existing community amenities.	• Enhances the community's image and pride. [15][16][17] • Encourages community beautification. • Creates opportunities for healthy community relationships and partnerships. [18][19] • Creates experiences for visitors attracted to history, preservation, and the cultural arts, which can then also be enjoyed by residents. • Preserves local traditions, customs and culture. • Provides education, research and work-placement opportunities for students. • Generates increased local investment in heritage resources and supporting tourism services.	• Contributes to a culture of preservation. • Encourages residents and visitors to consider their impact on the natural and built environment. • Increases awareness of the site, attraction or area's significance.

3. Cultural/Heritage Tourism Visitors: Who Are They?

This chapter will help you identify who the "cultural/heritage tourist" is, and ways your destination can capitalize on the wide interests of this growing group.

3.1 Canadian Boomers Hit 65

Baby boomers are the wealthiest and largest generation in Canadian history. They represent a tourism boom of sorts: as many become empty-nesters and move into retirement, their travel-related expenditure increases for a window of a decade, more or less. However, after this ten-year period, with declining income and health, their window for travel and leisure pursuits starts to narrow.

Boomers are avid cultural consumers. They are the primary participants in events including: tall ship festivals, heritage steam engine events, culinary and wine festivals, veterans' events, arts and crafts fairs, classic car shows and rallies, fine woodworking shows, and a host of specialized hobby events that bring millions of dollars into Canadian communities each year.

A closer examination indicates this group is also involved in a wide range of volunteer activities in their communities, many in heritage and cultural institutions such as local museums and heritage properties. They enroll in clubs, associations, and take continuing education courses – and frequently become a formidable force in local politics. In this way, the interests and activities of this demographic are blurred between "visitors" and "residents".

Economic activity inevitably follows tourism demand. As interest in cultural experiences grows, new hotels, restaurants, special events, and specialized services become established. Tourists not only visit and make purchases, but become permanent or—less desirably—part-time residents of the region. This process is called amenity migration—people moving to a community because it is a great place to live.

3.2 Culture as a Travel Motivator

The Tourism Activities and Motivations Studies (TAMS), conducted by the Canadian Tourism Commission and its provincial/territorial partners, reveal trends in the composition of the market, and in the preferences of consumers. These trends directly support the argument for more and better cultural/heritage tourism development.

TAMS conducted with Canadian[20] and US[21] markets found that, after the predictably popular shopping and dining (also arguably forms of cultural activity), cultural/heritage activities have the highest participation rates of all tourism activities for visitors from both countries. 'Visiting heritage sites and museums' consistently emerge as activities in which most participate. For Canadians, city strolling, visiting museums, and visiting heritage sites were the most popular activities. Americans also like those activities, but put visiting casinos and amusement parks at the top of their list.

"Within the leisure market segment of the global travel industry, culture is arguably the single largest motivator of international travel. Europe, whose tourism product is built primarily on culture, is the most visited continent. France, a nation that epitomizes culture, is the most visited country."

– Steven Thorne, Cultural Tourism Specialist

Observers ranging from the previously-quoted specialist Thorne to the FPT team sponsoring this volume have noted Canada has not, traditionally, placed a great deal of emphasis on culture and heritage in its marketing. Our image-making has until quite recently been focused almost exclusively on our glorious natural and outdoor settings we offer visitors. However, work by the Canadian Tourism Commission and provincial-territorial tourism agencies has revealed that once core questions (of safety, security, comfort and affordability) have been addressed, visitors make decisions on where to travel based on the availability of 'lots to see and do,' as this table[22] illustrates:

How important are each of the following conditions when choosing a destination for an overnight pleasure trip?	Highly Important	Somewhat Important	Of No Importance
	% based on total number of Canadian travellers = 20.9 million.		
No health concerns at the destination	50%	38%	8%
Feeling safe at the destination	66%	28%	4%
Being familiar with the culture and language of the destination	14%	56%	27%
Being at a place that is very different, culturally, than yours	9%	47%	40%
Having friends or relatives living there	11%	27%	59%
Low-cost package deals available for the destination	23%	50%	23%
Destination is disabled-person friendly	6%	15%	73%
Lots of things for children to see/do	17%	22%	56%
Lots of things for adults to see/do	38%	51%	7%
Information about the destination available on the internet	25%	43%	27%
Great shopping opportunities	12%	41%	43%
Availability of luxury accommodation	7%	26%	55%
Availability of mid-range accommodation	29%	50%	13%
Availability of budget accommodation	22%	44%	23%
Availability of camping	13%	24%	51%
Convenient access by car	43%	41%	11%
Direct access by air	29%	42%	22%
Convenient access by train/bus	13%	37%	39%
Not stated		1 %	

Research by ATLAS[23] revealed leading factors of visitor motivation in Europe that complements North American findings. They suggest people want to learn and expand their personal boundaries, but are mainly interested in relaxing in a pleasant place with many amusing activities.

This has enormous implications for how we construct our visitor experiences. As host communities, we may have our own ideas of what visitors should experience. But if we don't position that information in a pleasant, relaxing and fun setting, our message may not be heard – or worse, may be misunderstood.

Cultural/heritage tourism dovetails with existing tourism marketing and product development strategies. For instance, ecotourism, "travel to experience unique natural settings with minimal impact," was a focus through the 1980s and 1990s. As boomers and Gen-X cohorts grow older and seek softer activities, however, the focus has shifted somewhat. Ecotourism continues to be a strong travel generator in Canada, with cultural/heritage tourism emerging as an important complementary element in reviving stagnant local economies.

Motivational Statements (% agree)

	This experience has increased my knowledge	It was very relaxing being here	I like the atmosphere of this place	There are lots of interesting things to see
% agree	~80.5%	~81.5%	~85.5%	~86.5%
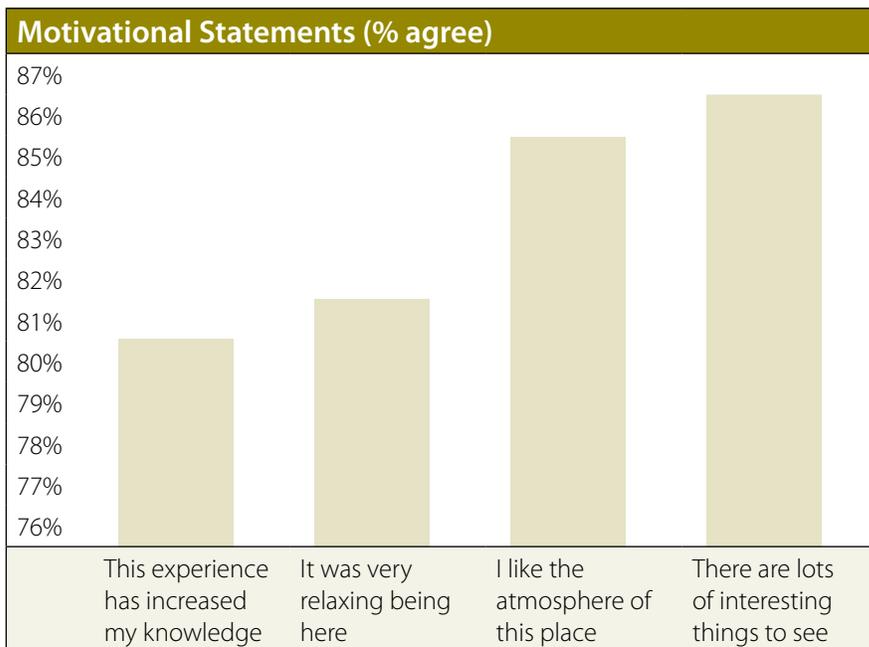
The words of this American travel industry leader highlight the increased activity and profile of cultural/heritage tourism in the United States:

"The sheer volume of travellers interested
in arts and history as well as their
spending habits, their travel patterns and
demographics leaves no doubt that history
and culture are now a significant part of the
US travel experience."

– William Norman, Past President, Travel Industry Association of America

As our only land-linked neighbour, the US has always been the major market for Canadian tourism, and understanding their needs and wants continues to be paramount. That can be challenging, as recent research suggests not only are Americans and Canadians already different from one another, they are drifting further apart.

The CTC commissioned research by Environics Ltd. that shows important differences between sociographic profiles of US and Canadian tourists. The first chart below outlines the characterization of tourist attitudes in the two countries, while the second shows results for each country changing over time.
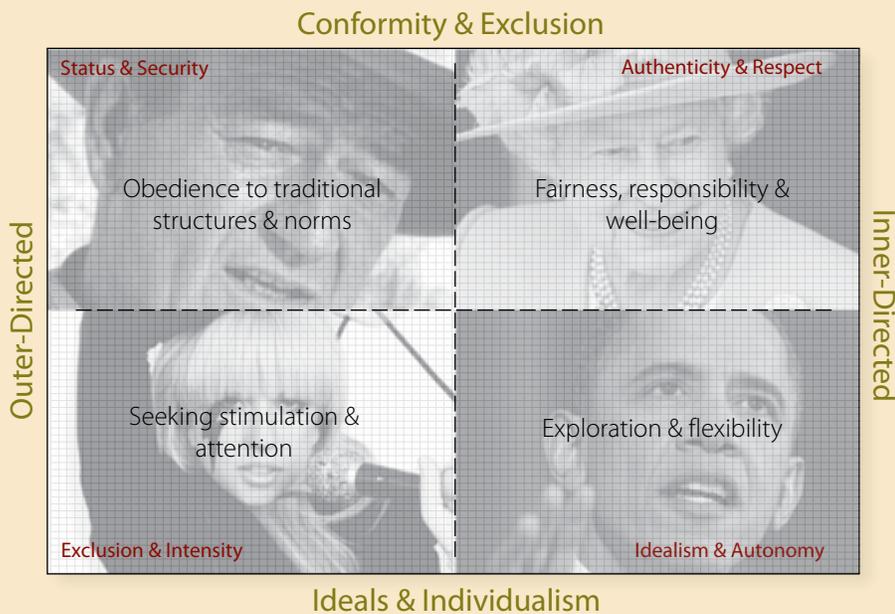
Profiles of tourist characteristics

Conformity & Exclusion

Status & Security	Authenticity & Respect
Obedience to traditional structures & norms	Fairness, responsibility & well-being
Seeking stimulation & attention	Exploration & flexibility
Exclusion & Intensity	Idealism & Autonomy

Outer-Directed — Inner-Directed

Ideals & Individualism

Trends in tourist profiles

Authority

Status & Security	Authenticity & Respect

🇺🇸

1992
2007 2004 1995
2000

Survival — Fulfillment

🇨🇦

1992
1995
2000
2004
2008

Exclusion & Intensity	Idealism & Autonomy

Individuality
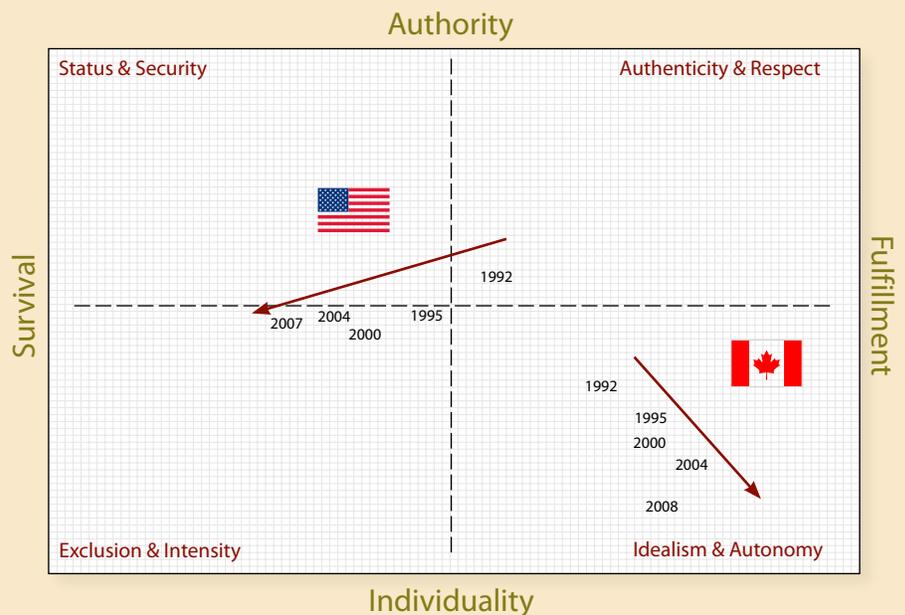
Many US tourists are more interested in hedonistic escapism: safe, all-inclusive types of experiences. Canadians, on the other hand, are generally more interested in 'hands-on' learning experiences that form the core of cultural/heritage tourism. Of concern is that the American market is trending more to isolationism and away from openness to new experiences. With most cultural/heritage attractions representing new and 'foreign' experiences, these might become decreasingly attractive to US visitors.

From Canada

Statistics Canada's *Travel Survey of Residents of Canada* indicates large numbers of travellers participate in cultural/heritage products or experiences. The chart below shows the numbers of overnight Canadian tourists taking part in cultural/heritage activities. The numbers are in the millions each year for most activities – clear proof of a substantial potential market. For comparison, some non-cultural activities such as golf and ski are noted.

Canadian Participation Rates			
Overnight Domestic Trips: Activities	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Aboriginal Event	439,571	457,408	552,777	466,046
% change		4%	21%	-16%
Historic Sites	4,818,912	5,103,318	5,277,696	5,479,216
% change		6%	3%	4%
Plays or Concerts	5,123,243	6,009,326	5,720,897	6,215,362
% change		17%	-5%	9%
Museums or Galleries	4,552,907	4,664,681	4,942,364	5,514,626
% change		2%	6%	12%
Festival or Fair	3,056,541	3,479,251	3,059,731	3,804,156
% change		14%	-12%	24%
Fishing	6,460,548	6,537,252	7,412,173	6,836,753
% change		1%	13%	-8%
Spectator Sports	3,769,531	3,805,698	4,144,498	4,462,542
% change		1%	9%	8%
Golfing	3,617,349	3,591,081	3,848,164	3,555,614
% change		-1%	7%	-8%
Canoeing & Kayaking	4,041,708	4,069,141	4,449,240	4,322,447
% change		1%	9%	-3%
Casino Gambling	2,839,351	3,080,911	3,377,649	2,736,547
% change		9%	10%	-19%
Cycling	3,658,691	3,490,802	4,264,525	4,641,959
% change		-5%	22%	9%
Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding	2,251,331	2,203,892	1,801,725	1,674,045
% change		-2%	-18%	-7%

These statistics reflect the fact that cultural/heritage tourism is not a fad, or a trend, but a genuine sector of the industry.

From the US

The US Department of Commerce publishes profiles of the cultural/heritage market in that country. Their 2010 report[25] notes the proportion of all tourists in the US engaged in cultural/heritage activities. Again, these activities rank quite highly on the list of priorities for Americans:

Tourist Activity Participation While in the US	2009 %	2010 %	% Change
Shopping	90	90	.3
Dining in Restaurants	86	86	0
Visit Historical Places	68	68	.2
Sightseeing in Cities	60	59	-.09
Art Gallery/Museum	41	41	-.01
Cultural Heritage Sites	40	41	-0.7
Visit Small Towns	36	37	1.5
Amusement/Theme Parks	32	34	2.1
Visit National Parks	34	34	0.2
Concert/Play/Musical	30	20	-0.3

Canada's Place in the World

According to the World Tourism Organization, Canada is 15th among the world's top tourism destinations. The top-ranking destinations are those with significant culture and heritage tourism offerings. European destinations featuring "old world" culture lead the list. France, a country that bills itself as the very essence of culture, is on top. China, which considers itself the world's oldest civilization, places third behind the US, but if Hong Kong is included it leapfrogs the Americans to pull into a near tie with France.

Scanning the list, you'll notice almost every nation but Canada relies primarily on culture and heritage as its key attractor for visitors. We have room to become a more popular tourism destination by nurturing our cultural/heritage product.

Note: Egypt and Morocco are listed as top destinations in the Middle East and Africa respectively, despite not making the 'top 20.'

Source: World Tourism Organization, (2011), UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2011 Edition.

Comparison of Global 2010 Leading Tourism Destinations
2010 International Arrivals (m)

1. France
2. USA
3. China
4. Spain
5. Italy
6. UK
7. Turkey
8. Germany
9. Malaysia
10. Mexico
11. Austria
12. Ukraine
13. Russia
14. Hong Kong
15. Canada
16. Thailand
17. Greece
... Egypt
... Morocco
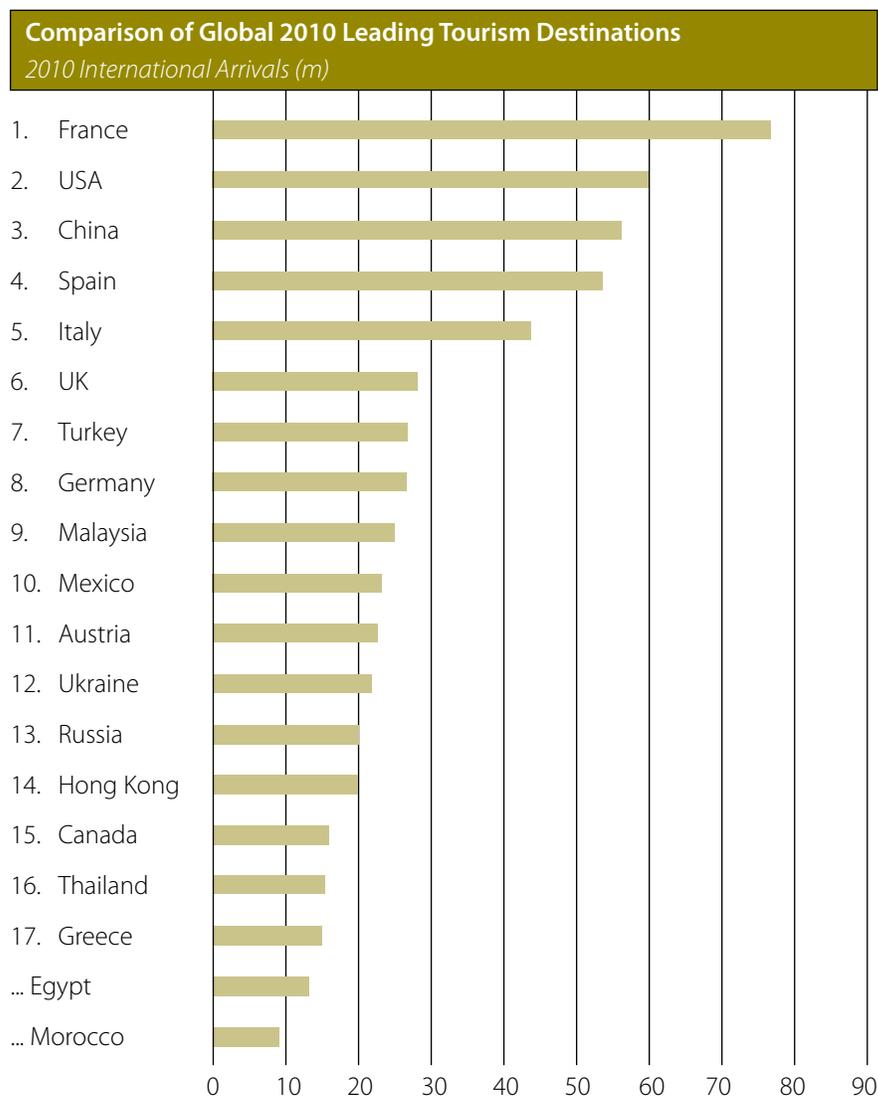
A considerable amount of research has allowed us to create a profile of the typical cultural/heritage traveller. One excellent source is *Cultural and Heritage Traveller*, a sporadic publication from the US Office of Travel and Tourism Industries. It offers key characteristics of the 'typical' cultural/heritage tourist, who is:

Well-Educated: More likely to have college or university degrees than the general traveller, and willing to do home-work, often arriving with detailed prior knowledge of the attraction.

Well-Heeled: Enjoying significantly higher incomes than general travellers, thanks to an older demographic profile and higher education levels.

Well-Travelled: Taking more trips per year compared to general travellers.

Research by the CTC[26] and its provincial-territorial partners probed Canadian and American tourists to determine what they seek in a leisure vacation. Among the top benefits sought by visitors are to:

- Share stories or have something interesting to talk about back home (80%).
- Stimulate the mind/be intellectually challenged (77%).
- Renew personal connections with people other than family (73%).
- Gain new knowledge of history, other cultures or other places (69%).
- Enrich one's perspective on life (64%).
- See or do something different (52%).

(% = very or somewhat important):

"Most cultural travellers want to enrich their lives with new travel experiences. For them, a leisure or vacation trip is not complete without visiting a museum, historic site or landmark or attending a cultural event or arts performance."

– Federal, Provincial, Territorial Cultural/Heritage and Tourism Initiative[27]

The Travel Activities & Motivations Survey (TAMS) *Culture & Entertainment Reports* contain valuable information about the Canadian market. These "segmentation" reports, combined with two TAMS culture and entertainment overview reports, form an integrated picture of the culture and entertainment market. They include many non-cultural entertainment activities such as attending sporting events, shopping, or gambling. As there are differences in the activities examined in each country, care must be taken when interpreting the findings from a cultural/heritage tourism perspective. That said, they can provide useful data on the overall percentage of travellers who included these activities in their trips. The table below compiles data from the 17 Canadian and US reports that examine cultural tourism activities[28].

Segmenting the market by visitor interest can help destinations match visitors with the right products, as we see next.

Canada and US TAMS Activity Profiles

TAMS Culture and Heritage Product Participation Rates: Findings[29]		
Cultural Activity Groupings – Canada Rank *(numbers missing are activities not culture-related)*	Canada: % participation on trips	US: % participation on trips
1. Shopping, Dining	61.7	60.4
2. Historical Sites, Museums, Art Galleries	43.4	41.4
3. Theme Parks, Exhibits	29.1	37.8
4. Fairs & Festivals	28.0	31.7
5. Musical Concerts, Festivals, Attractions	24.4	
7. Wine, Beer, Food Tastings	17.7	17.7
8. Science Technology Exhibits	17.2	19.1
9. Live Theatre	15.5	
10. Garden Theme Attractions	13.1	1.3
11. Agri-Tourism	11.7	10.4
14. Aboriginal Cultural Experiences	8.6	6.6
15. High Art Performances	8.2	8.5
16. Comedy Clubs, Festivals	7.5	
17. Visits to Spas	7.5	
18. Participatory Historical Activities	5.0	3.0
19. Equestrian & Western Events	5.0	12.0
21. Literary & Film Festivals	1.9	
Products Surveyed in US Only		
Theatre, Comedy Clubs, Casinos		35.1
Fine Dining and Spas		25.5
Rock Concerts, Recreational Dancing		11.8
Theatre, Film, Musical Festivals		6.5
Archaeological Digs, Sites		4.2

Communities and major tourism organizations are working hard to better understand cultural/heritage tourists. Recently, the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), working with Environics, devised the *Explorer Quotient®* (EQ) as another tool for segmenting and reaching different kinds of visitors.

In the CTC's words: "the Explorer Quotient® is a new way of looking at consumer segmentation, based on insights that are far richer than traditional metrics such as income, age, travel intentions and preferred activities. Two travellers standing in the same place, participating in the same activity, can be going through two completely different experiences. As a broad example, imagine how a Japanese traveller might interpret Lake Louise as a spiritual connection to nature, compared to a German traveller who might feel a great sense of personal accomplishment at having realized a lifelong travel goal."

The EQ segments point to the underlying emotional motivators of travellers, with four of the nine directly related to cultural tourism:

- The Cultural History Buff
- The Cultural Explorer
- The Authentic Explorer
- The Personal History Explorer

Understanding what motivates a particular market segment allows a destination, or individual attraction, to redefine the ways they lure visitors. Parks Canada, for example, has used these new tools to gain a better understanding of how the parks experience can be enhanced for various types of visitors.

It's important to note that a cultural/heritage tourism strategy for a destination will appeal to a variety of segments – or to overlapping segments. You can take an online quiz to determine the type of "EQ" traveller you are:

www.eq.canada.travel

The EQ profile that follows is an example of the insights this tool can provide.
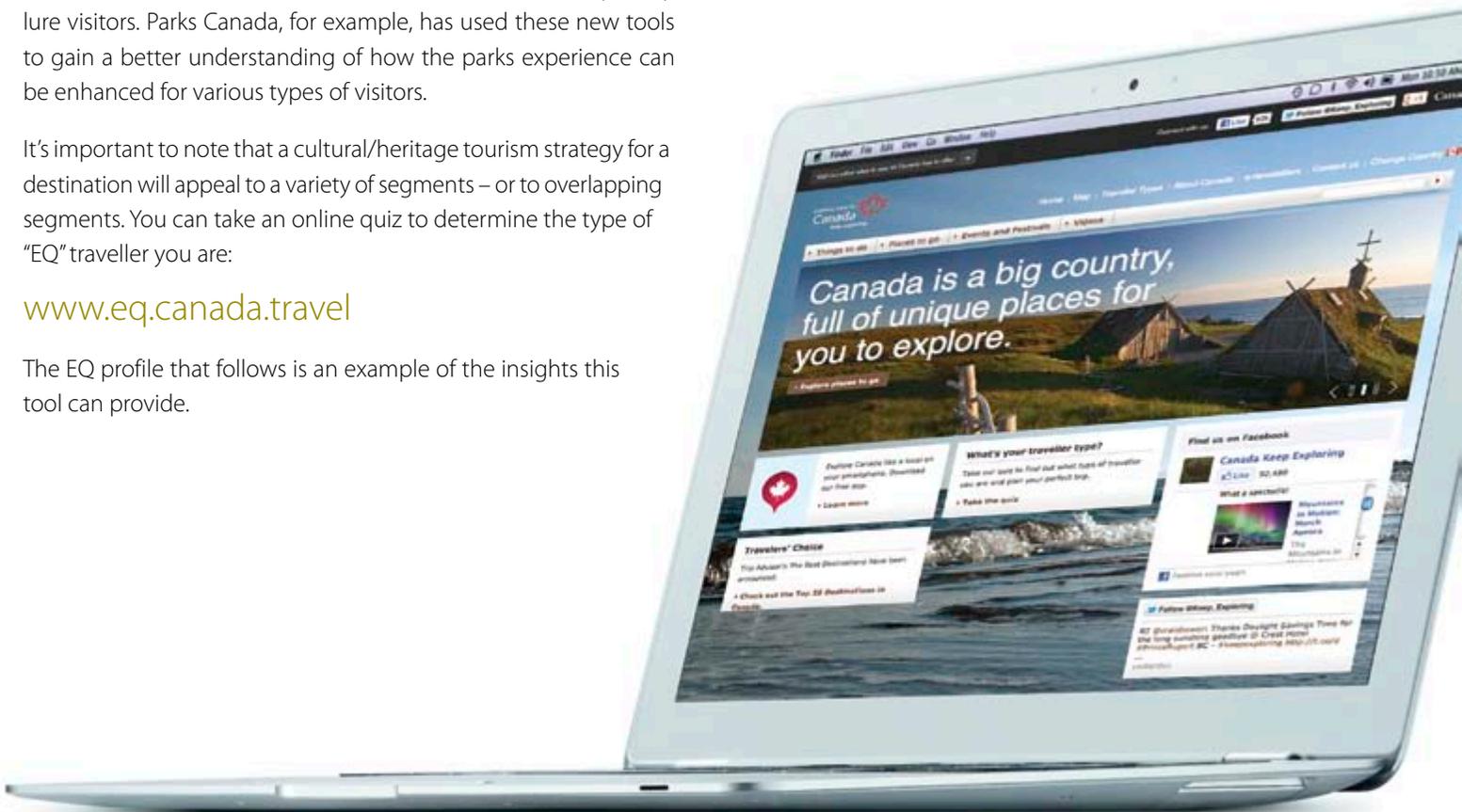
The *Cultural Explorer* EQ™ Segment

These travellers seek constant opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the entire experience of the culture, people, and settings of the places they visit.

Not content to watch from the sidelines, they want to participate in the modern-day culture of a site or community. They often converse with locals, attend cultural festivals, or go off the beaten track to discover how locals truly live.

For Cultural Explorers, travel is seen as the only way to truly experience life and the world– never to be replaced by secondary methods such as TV or the internet. Travel tends to have an element of escapism for Cultural Explorers, as they get away from their everyday lives.

Cultural Explorers:

- Prefer spontaneous events and unique discoveries; they avoid mainstream, 'touristy' locations.
- Are not intimidated at all by unfamiliar locations or situations and are willing to endure uncomfortable transportation and amenities to "live" a different culture.
- Avoid skimming the surface of their destinations and are more interested in deep, meaningful experiences than seeing all of the "must-see" attractions.
- Feel some time pressure trying to meet all of their goals and responsibilities.
- Are willing to take risks to reach their goals and are confident in their ability to adapt to change.
- Are egalitarian and progressive in their societal views, and feel little need to adhere to societal norms.
- Seek fun and excitement, and are attracted to crowds and social events.
- Place little importance on brand names and status purchases when shopping, and are sceptical of advertising.
- Are ecologically and ethically aware, reflected in their carefully-researched purchases.

Characteristics:

- Positive
- Flexible
- Open-minded
- Easygoing

- Curious
- Energetic
- Risk-taker
- Creative

Most likely to be seen at:

- Heritage sites
- Cultural events
- B&Bs and hostels
- Festivals
- Museums

Travel values:

- Companion experiences - prefer traveling with like-minded people.
- Living history/culture - enjoy ancient history and modern culture.
- Learning travel - like to learn everything about a place, time or culture.
- Risk-taking.
- Constant exploration - always planning for the next outing.

from Experiences: A Toolkit for Partners of the Canadian Tourism Commission, CTC

Check out the profiles of the other segments at:

www.en-corporate.canada.travel

Now that that we've learned about cultural/heritage tourism consumers, let's examine the part a destination plays in developing products and experiences to meet their needs.

This chapter will explore the importance of involving the entire community in Cultural/Heritage Tourism development.

4.1 A Sense of Place & Authenticity

Authenticity is a core concept underlying "sense of place". While we know that presenting an authentic tourism experience is critical, researchers have found that visitors, host communities, and tourism operators may have different perspectives on what that word means. For most visitors, authentic means genuine, or sincere, something rooted in the real culture of the place. For host communities, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, it may mean a more detailed set of rules for adhering to the traditions or history of a culture. With heritage properties, authenticity is respect for the cultural contexts and for the communities that care for them. For tourism operators, it's a more flexible term that can be adjusted as they find ways to tell the community's story in ways that are meaningful, truthful and that provide a strong experience for visitors.

A Sense Of Place - Two Definitions

"The components of sense of place can be a thousand-and-one things. It's the sensation you get when visiting somewhere for the first time – the first impression, the look, the feel, the atmosphere, the people. Sense of place embraces the distinctive sights, sounds and experiences that are rooted in a destination, those unique and memorable qualities that resonate with local people and visitors alike."

– Sense of Place Toolkit, Wales Tourist Board.

"Sense of place is what we immediately feel when a city, town, or region is distinctly different from another we've visited. Call it an atmosphere or an ambience: an amalgam of the landscape, the townscape, and the community's inhabitants, expressed through unique sights, sounds, and 'goings-on' that intrigue and captivate us."

– Cultural Tourism Specialist Steven Thorne

27

While these are all valid perspectives, current research leans toward the term "authority," meaning the operator has been given permission by the appropriate cultural custodians to present certain stories to the public.

For operators with First Nations stories, this may involve obtaining permission from Band Councils, or community leaders. For operators telling broader stories, authority means working with local history groups, museums, and provincial officials to make sure they are presenting accurate, fair, and balanced information.

AUTHENTIC & **ABORIGINAL**®

An example of a program designed to ensure experiences are delivered in a 'respectful, truthful and quality manner'.

-AtBC

How does "community-based" cultural/heritage tourism differ from attractions-based tourism? To understand, pick up a visitor brochure from almost any Canadian destination. You'll usually see a broad slogan touting some aspect of the community, and then a series of separate advertisements for various attractions, hotels, resorts, tours, and restaurants.

in traditional tourism destinations each attraction operates as a "stand-alone" businesses, existing in a vacuum. The entire community is dependent on the strength of the individual attractions to pull visitors to the destination.

A related challenge is that accommodations tend to be the largest revenue earners in the tourism industry. Although few visitors will be drawn to your town by comfy mattresses or crisp linens, typically hotels and resorts have larger marketing budgets. Accommodators should be paying attention to their local tourism attractions, but this doesn't always happen.

As you can see, this 'every business for themselves' approach is risky; visitors today have wide-ranging interests, and will almost certainly want to be involved in more than one activity. Communities that build and promote an integrated range of varying experiences will have the advantage, which include:

- **Attracting** and retaining more visitors, addressing multiple or overlapping interests.
- **Grounding** tourism promotion in the full suite of community offerings, tapping into the "sense of place" of the community and using character to provide a unique selling proposition.
- **Building** resident pride, turning ordinary citizens into enthusiastic ambassadors for the destination.

The next case study, profiling the community of Wells in BC, illustrates how a community-based approach can yield tremendous results.

ArtsWells Builds a Destination through Creative Arts Strategy

Natural Resources Decline

Many small rural communities across Canada have been forced to reinvent themselves as traditional resource-based activities decline or disappear. This was the case in Wells, a tiny community in BC's interior that experienced job losses and instability after a reduction in mining and forestry. With the vision and hard work of community champions, however, Wells has been able to create a cultural/heritage tourism economy that relies on renewable human resources and is environmentally friendly.

Identifying Geographic Advantage

Early on, Wells community champions identified their proximity to the restored historic town of Barkerville, a short 8km down the road, as one of their key advantages. A national historic site, Barkerville is a 1860s gold rush town inextricably linked to British Columbia's birth as a province; an animated window into our Canadian history. Theatre shows, period-dressed interpreters, stage coaches, restaurants, and shops all provide the visitor with an incredible cultural experience.

Success through a Creative Economy

Wells champions recognized that long-haul visitors would be 'pulled' to the community with local cultural/heritage offerings beyond Barkerville. Plans for an arts school and arts-focused festival were developed.

Julie Fowler, executive director of *Island Mountain Arts and the ArtsWells Festival of All Things Art*, explains: "a creative community and economy has always been at the heart of the ArtsWells Festival of all Things Art. Now going into its 8th season, it has been voted as one of the top ten festivals in Canada by CBC Radio Three, attracts upwards of 1500 people to the community of Wells/Barkerville (pop. 250) every BC Day long weekend, and has directly resulted in new residents moving to Wells."

Arts, History and Adventure

A 1930s town built on gold mining, Wells' slogan is now "Arts, History, Adventure." Since 1977, Island Mountain Arts has been a champion organization, and they now coordinate ArtsWells, the School of the Arts, and a Public Gallery. Over 35 years, Island Mountain Arts has drawn visitors to Wells to learn, teach, work, exhibit and perform. A number of those people have stayed to work in arts, culture, and tourism, run studios and businesses, and/or raise their families.

Partnerships are Key

From the beginning, Island Mountain Arts sought out partnerships in order to be viable. In fact, the first year of ArtsWells only broke even because it procured a donation from the Wayside Goldmines, the local mining company. Other early partnerships included the Wells Forest Society who helped promote and organize the festival, and the International One Minute Play Festival – an already established Wells-based event. This remains one of the most popular events at the festival.

Barkerville has long been a critical partner. Providing discounted admission to festival goers, they also serve as a sponsor and venue for festival musical acts. Local businesses became actively involved by offering coupons, and performance venues or exhibition space, while galleries became part of the ArtWalk. The Festival has also developed strong partnerships with media and tourism contacts in order to build visitation.

Of course, the artists themselves are important partners. Says Fowler: "because we couldn't pay huge fees (to visiting artists) we made sure to provide great hospitality and other benefits like arranging other tour dates and pre-festival showcases in neighbouring communities like Williams Lake, Quesnel, and Prince George."

Funding partners are of central importance. ArtsWells works with the BC Arts Council, Canada Council, Heritage Canada, Service Canada, and the District of Wells to build continued support for the festival as a key economic generator for the community.

Volunteers Are Essential

Wells is simply not big enough to supply all the volunteer labour the festival needs, so organizers got creative. They established a benefits package to attract out-of-towners including a free festival pass, free amazing food, and free camping. Last year ArtsWells had a base of 120 volunteers, with most imported from outside of the community. In addition to travelling volunteers, a core group of locals organizes festival logistics and marketing year-round, year after year.

Fowler concludes: "The more we can grow this side of our economy, the healthier and more sustainable our communities will be. The creation and growth of the festival has been a lot of hard work, but it has also been incredibly rewarding. This comes in the form of financial inputs, as the festival is now a huge economic engine for the town, but more important are connections made between people and organizations that make up what is now our festival community."

Find out more: www.artswells.com

The first half of this handbook provided foundational knowledge about cultural/heritage tourism, and the importance of a whole-community approach. The second section will explore ways community-based cultural/heritage tourism might play out in your home town.

5. Plan for Community-Based Cultural/Heritage Tourism

In this section, we describe considerations to make before you begin a community tourism plan. We also focus on the important factors related to developing First Nations, Inuit and Métis partnerships.

5.1 Understand the Planning Process

There's no standard approach to developing a tourism economy, but we've compiled the experiences of many communities to identify common ingredients for success.

Undertaken effectively, your cultural/heritage tourism strategy will be integrated into a wider community tourism plan, which in turn should form part of an overall community economic development plan.

A good planning process helps to achieve several inter-related goals, including:

- Attracting the right kind of visitors to the community/destination.
- Developing the necessary services, products, and infrastructure for tourists.
- Maximizing the opportunities presented by tourism as a job and business generator for the community.
- Ensuring tourism is sustainable for both businesses and the community from an economic, social, cultural, and environmental perspective.
- Putting in place the partnerships, organizational structures, and funding required to achieve the destination's vision.
- Ensuring the efficient and effective use of resources and funds, especially in rural areas that often have fewer resources.[34]
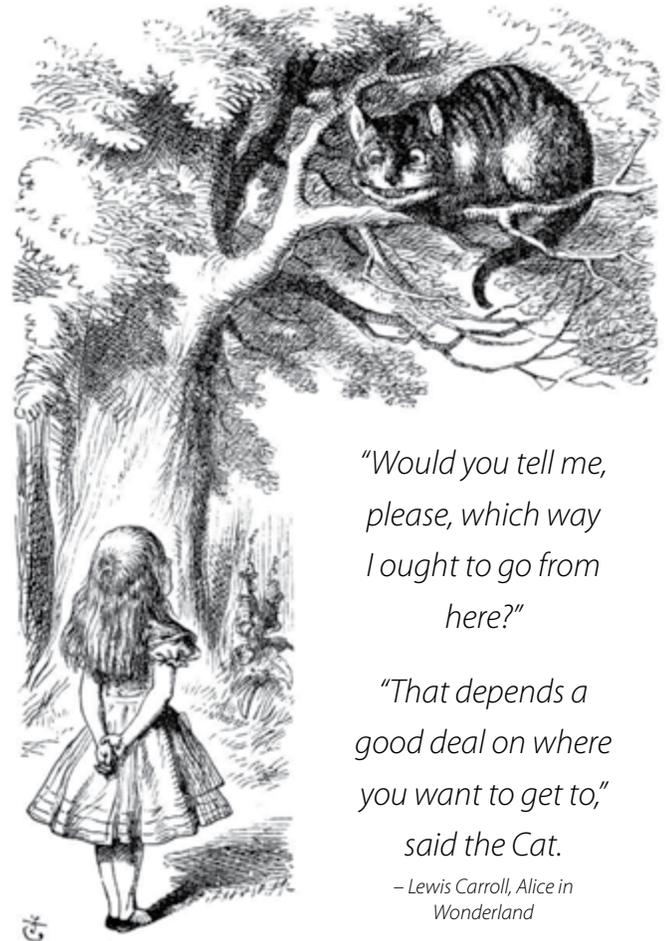
"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.
– Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
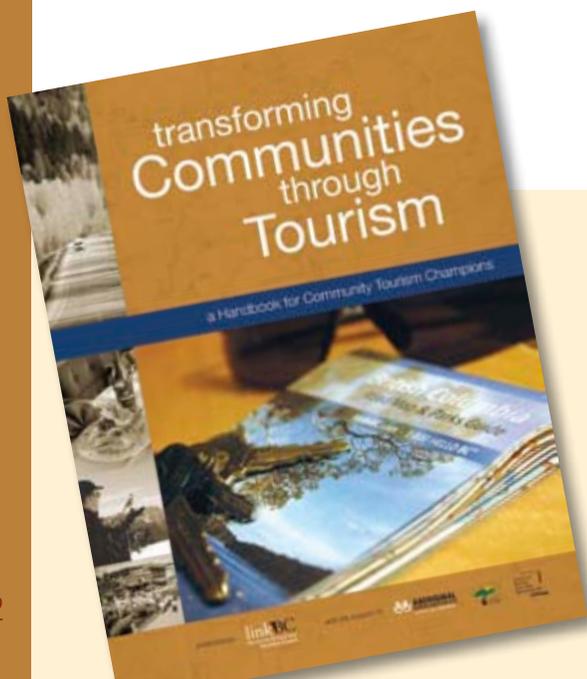
Transforming Communities Through Tourism: A Workbook for Community Champions

This workbook provides a detailed road map to effective community-based tourism planning. It's available free at www.torc-ttracanada.ca. While developed for a West coast audience, the practical information should be of value to communities across Canada.

In a recent cultural tourism strategy session in British Columbia, a panel of academic, industry and government advisors adopted this definition for cultural/heritage tourism:

"Travel to experience the authentic cultural identity of our people, places, and activities."

The group arrived at this definition by using an analogy to explain how culture can help strengthen tourism – by comparing the community to a home. Whereas a house is a lifeless collection of building materials, a home is animated by the people who live there. If a city or town is a 'house' of natural and built attractions, a community is a 'home'.

Let's think of a family preparing their home to receive guests. Looking around, daily clutter sticks out like a sore thumb, and finishing touches might be in order. The family might do a quick dusting, put out fresh linens and flowers, and organize meals and activities.

Cultural/heritage tourism is like this process – a way to ensure our community puts its best foot forward for guests. And just as a family might compose a to-do list ahead of a big visit, communities have a lot to gain from engaging in a planning process.

Organize for Success

A community's full tourism potential is realized by organizations and individuals working together to create a "blueprint" for success— often in the form of a community cultural/heritage tourism strategy. This is a document produced by key community stakeholders representing a cross-section of interests related to culture, heritage, tourism and local government.

The strategy provides a framework for business, local government, cultural or heritage organizations, other community-based groups and community members to:

• Collectively analyze cultural/heritage tourism resources.
• Identify and capitalize on potential partnerships.
• Address constraints to overcome.
• Set the stage for sustainable development and promotion.

Planning can be used to balance economic opportunities with the cultural and natural sensitivities of the area. Community-based strategies can also identify education and training residents need to start their own cultural/heritage tourism enterprises or to obtain employment in the region.

To maximize acceptance and political support, position your cultural/ heritage tourism strategies as components of other overarching planning initiatives that may exist in the community.

The next case study looks at a how a partnership benefiting two historic sites in Alberta has grown over time.

Successful partnerships are built and sustained on a foundation of trust, mutual respect and collaboration – this doesn't happen overnight. Successful partnerships emerge from action rather than words, and take time to mature.[35]

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump & the Fort Museum of the NWMP Develop Aboriginal Partnerships

A Tale of Two Historic Sites

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump Interpretive Centre ('The Jump') is situated in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, an ideal site for hunting buffalo. For nearly 6,000 years, the Aboriginal peoples of the North American plains drove them over steep cliffs. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Jump is one of the best preserved sites bearing witness to this custom. An award-winning interpretive centre, operated by the Alberta government, opened in 1987.

Nearby in Southwest Alberta is Fort Macleod, home to the first permanent police post in the Canadian Northwest. It was established to control law and order, and is credited with stopping the whiskey trade to First Nations people. The site was chosen for its sweeping views of the plains and proximity to water. Today, Fort Macleod actively commemorates and promotes its strong ties to the past.

Working Together

"It's been a collaborative partnership" says Quinton Crowshoe, Site Marketing/Program Coordinator at the Jump, about the relationship that evolved between their site and the Town of Fort Macleod. Those involved see benefits of working together—making sure stories are culturally and historically accurate, offering visitor experiences based on authenticity of place and its people, strengthening the tourism draw of the region, and learning about each other and their cultures. But how did the relationship grow? Both groups reached outward beyond themselves and their institutions.

Engaging the Community

Staff at the Jump began by engaging with the community. This evolved over time: connecting with community leaders and local attraction operators, joining groups including the Chamber of Commerce, supporting initiatives at The Fort Museum of the NWMP, working with other local attractions, collaborating on marketing, and remaining open to opportunities to work together. Initiatives ranged from simple things like verbal cross-promotion to more complex projects involving several partners and lots of coordination.

Dawn Lauder, Site Manager for the Fort Museum, adds that ongoing communication helps, as well as bouncing ideas off one another, brainstorming, and being open to new

possibilities. "The relationship has been very good, we are working closely together. Don't stop. As our journey continues we will constantly learn and get better," says Lauder.

In the early stages, Crowshoe didn't realize a magnitude of support was available to him. Over time, he found out about services and programs at the provincial and regional levels,

and began taking advantage of this support and getting involved in various tourism related committees. This has helped him be more effective in his position, and cemented working relationships with the Fort and other partners.

The Partnership Takes Effort

Crowshoe feels one of the biggest challenges is time—time to keep in touch, to coordinate and plan initiatives, and to maintain and strengthen the relationship. This is especially true during the peak summer season when operators are busy with visitors. During this time, planning and other related activities are kept to a minimum and resumed after the season. Part of yearly training involves educating staff about other attractions in the region and encouraging them to promote these to visitors.

Crowshoe's greatest success? It's the relationship itself. "The people I have worked with have embraced me into the community. I've obtained insights and an understanding of how 'mainstream' society works. That is phenomenal for a person growing up on the Piikani Reserve. Developing relationships is about coming together and making a collective effort—by sharing a common vision, having respect for each other, building trust—to achieve beneficial outcomes for all that could not necessarily be realized by working on your own. It has been a rewarding experience."

Find out more:

www.head-smashed-in.com   www.nwmpmuseum.com   www.fortmacleod.com

Another excellent resource for communities is Experience Nova Scotia: A Toolkit: www.gov.ns.ca/econ/tourism/docs/ExperienceToolkitApril2011.pdf
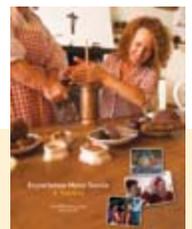
The planning effort is often triggered by one or two "champions"—individuals with passion for the community who can visualize the potential of cultural/heritage tourism development. Every community has a different social, cultural, and political history, as well as different organizations who can uniquely shape local tourism planning and development. Communities across the country have proven that a collaborative process can produce significant results!

1. **Incorporate as much local flavour as possible** in your product offerings—share local foods and wines, showcase your best local talent, etc.

2. **Make it easy** for visitors to find and enjoy what the locals know.

3. **Provide exclusive opportunities**—for example "backstage passes"—something not available to everyone.

4. **Develop "hidden gems"**—unique opportunities to meet and interact with local enthusiasts to provide entertainment, to learn, or to immerse visitors in the lifestyle and landscape of your destination.

5. **Recognize you're now in the business of crafting "great story" moments.** Make sure your offerings are story-worthy. Ensure visitors will be excited about sharing their experience with friends and family.

6. **Provide a hands-on** and interactive experience. Don't underestimate the value visitors find in activities locals might take for granted.

7. **Be innovative** and don't be afraid to take chances.

8. **Work with your competitors**, better known as your allies, in attracting visitors to your destination. Give your visitors tips on what to see and do nearby, and where to eat. Consider packaging your offerings and make it easy for potential visitors to buy.

9. **Think about how** you can provide "only available here" activities to set the stage for a great story to happen.

10. **Include something unexpected** or an element of surprise, perhaps a take-away locally-produced gift. These small things add value and enhance the overall visitor experience.

– Department of Economic
and Rural Development and Tourism, Nova Scotia

Once a cultural/heritage tourism task force or advisory group is established, a number of steps and tools can be used to help develop the strategy.

To assess your community's potential for cultural/heritage tourism, you need to:

• Understand the wider tourism supply system in your region, province or territory.

• Gauge how receptive residents might be to tourism.

• Understand what visitors are seeking.

Assess Your Potential in Three Steps

As a group, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What's possible with our natural and cultural resources?

2. What's appropriate or desired in our community?

3. What's economically sustainable?

The state of Arizona has been a leader in cultural/heritage tourism development for more than a decade, with its "sunbelt" amenities and growth. They believe that for a community to be ready for cultural/heritage tourists, three essential elements are required[36]:

1. The presence (an 'inventory') of developed or developing cultural/heritage sites, attractions, and resources.

2. The willingness of the public and private sectors to work together to maximize the quality of the historic inventory, as well as the quality of services and amenities needed by the cultural/heritage tourist.

3. The interest of a specific, and lucrative, visitor market for the products and experiences you plan to offer.

You need to determine whether your community has the capacity to move forward, the desire to proceed, and products that line up with the demands of the marketplace (often called product-market matching).

1. Capability
What have we got?
(what's possible with our natural and cultural resources?)

2. Suitability
What will we share?
(what's appropriate or desired in our community?)

3. Feasibility
What do our guests want?
(what's economically sustainable?)

Obtaining answers to these questions through the three steps above will help your community chart the right course ahead.

Essential Element: An Inventory

There are a number of ways to complete an inventory of your assets in tourism and culture, ranging from complex GIS computer mapping to simple brainstormed lists. Complex methods are not a requirement. Your group will want to capture information about all the (arts, culture and heritage) resources in your community, as well as all the (tourism) businesses, organizations and agencies that provide the goods and services visitors need.

Look on the LinkBC Tourism Online Resource Centre for simple inventory checklists from New Zealand (www.torc-ttracanada.ca – search "Checklists" "New Zealand"). Should you have access to GIS, the methods for a tourism inventory developed in BC are at www.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/risc/pubs/culture/cstos/assets/digdat_tos.pdf .

A culture-specific inventory is covered in the Cultural Mapping and Cultural Planning Toolkits of the Creative City Network of Canada . This two-step process has communities map out what is important to their culture, and then develop a plan on how to manage those resources sustainably.

The next few pages provide checklists you can use to assess your community's cultural/heritage tourism capacity.

Essential Element: Community Willingness

As part of the inventory process, you'll want to understand community views on cultural/heritage tourism development. This short checklist will help you take the pulse of your community's attitudes:

Baseline Community Checklist: Where Do We Stand?

(Adapted from Cultural/Heritage Tourism Practical Applications, Museum Association of Arizona)

1. First, does our community actually want to attract tourists?

It's no secret that some communities don't want to host or provide services to an influx of tourists. There are cases of communities working to prevent or limit the development or promotion of tourism attractions in their backyards. Cultural/heritage tourism champions need to make sure these views, if they exist, are acknowledged and if possible, addressed.

Do we need more information?

Yes ◯   No ◯

2. Who is currently being attracted to our community? Are they coming because of the available cultural experiences?

If you're unsure, do an informal survey of local shop owners, restaurant staff, and service station attendants. These are "front line" staff talking to people coming through the community. This will help you determine whether visitors to your community are there for other reasons, or are being lured to existing cultural experiences.

Do we need more information?

Yes ◯   No ◯

3. Are travellers "passing through" on their way to another destination, or choosing our community as their overnight stay?

If unsure, enlist local accommodation providers and restaurants to place a brief questionnaire in rooms or on the table. Include an introduction, such as: "We think we have a wonderful community and want to know why you're visiting. Thank you for helping us make this a better place to visit." Keep questions simple, such as: Are you from out of the region? If so, which province, state or country? How long will you stay here? Are you on your way to another destination?

Do we need more information?

Yes ◯   No ◯

The results of this community review will be complemented by your own careful assessment of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. The questions below can be used as a guideline for research and discussion by your task force:

Assets & Opportunities Assessment

(Adapted from Cultural/Heritage Tourism Practical Applications, Museum Association of Arizona)

1. What is the overall fiscal health, and administrative vision, of our cultural and heritage-based institutions?

Cultural centres, museums and similar institutions often struggle financially. They are sometimes not in the best position to lead a new era of tourism. Similarly, if some organizations lack internal vision, they won't be able to evolve, progress, or put forth new offerings to the public. Are there ideas to respond to this situation in your community?

Do we need more information?

Yes ◯   No ◯

2. Does our community have a compelling story to tell?

Can your community claim a special story or fact as its own? What differentiates your history and cultural heritage from the town down the road? Were there famous people or events associated with your story? Can you connect your story to the region? Do you have special places that tell your story, and, if so, do they tell it in an authentic, quality fashion?

Do we need more information?

Yes ◯   No ◯

3. Are there other unique attractions in the area (a 30-45 minute drive away) that can provide complementary experiences for cultural/heritage visitors?

Look for connections. A product consisting solely of history museums, for example, is not as robust as one that includes historical re-enactments, historic trails, or hikes led by knowledgeable guides. One place to start: are there Aboriginal tourism partnerships that could work?

Do we need more information?

Yes ◯   No ◯

4. Do you have any local "star" attractions that fit the cultural/heritage mould?

For instance, does your town have: a popular restaurant that serves unique local food, a quilting or craftshop, authentic Aboriginal arts and crafts, an antique district, or art galleries and studios? Do they have the capacity to work together and adopt a "cooperate internally, compete externally" mentality?

Do we need more information?

Yes ⬤   No ⬤

5. How healthy is your "people infrastructure"?

How involved are elected officials in non-profit organizations, and in public dialogue about the role of tourism? What is the willingness of the local media, especially the newspaper and local websites, to advocate for improved cultural/heritage products and tourism services? Are people currently working in tourism adequately trained? Is there willingness among shopkeepers, gas station attendants, and service personnel to embrace the town's history, make recommendations, and give directions? Are there effective partnerships with local Aboriginal communities?

Do we need more information?

Yes ⬤   No ⬤

6. Are "quality-of-life" amenities in our community supported & well-funded?

Consider your parks and recreation amenities, libraries, street maintenance, downtown redevelopment, beautification of streetscapes. Evaluate both your community's financial ability to help develop new assets, and its willingness to invest in these amenities for residents. Are there funding sources (e.g. hotel taxes) that could be tapped to promote cultural/heritage tourism?

Do we need more information?

Yes ⬤   No ⬤

With these checklists in hand, you should have a clear understanding of your community's inventory of assets, attitudes, willingness, and capacity for change. If cultural/heritage tourism still seems a realistic and desirable fit for your community, you're ready to lay the groundwork.

The first step is to prepare your people.

6. Prepare Your People

The previous chapters of this handbook have provided knowledge about cultural/heritage tourism and introduced some key planning considerations. Now, using the "preparing people, places and activities" framework, we'll look more closely at developing cultural and heritage-based tourism experiences.

Preparing your people involves a number of steps, including: ensuring effective engagement of task force members, encouraging residents to act as welcoming hosts, and providing services and experiences to visitors.

6.1 Welcome Your Visitors

Providing easily accessible visitor services and ensuring guests receive a warm welcome are essential parts of the tourism infrastructure. The right welcome can have a significant influence on how long visitors stay, how much they might spend while in the area, and how they'll describe their experience to others (i.e., potential future visitors).

6.2 Become Good Hosts

Cultural/heritage tourism destinations need to constantly assess the level of hospitality visitors receive. While it's important to improve levels of customer service provided by tourism industry professionals, don't forget that the way visitors see your community is strongly shaped by interactions they have with residents. Not everyone is a tourism booster, but if your community develops cultural/heritage tourism in a way that enhances quality-of-life for all, you can influence citizens, over time, to be welcoming hosts.

Task the businesses and cultural/heritage tourism organizations in your strategy with determining the most appropriate customer service training for the community. All front-line employees should be given incentives to attend. Service Best®, FirstHost®, WorldHost®, Client Plus—these short workshops ensure volunteers and front-line staff understand the importance of good service, and provide practical skills to create good visitor experiences. These programs vary, but all make sure that those in contact with out-of-town visitors[38]:

- Make a good first impression.
- Know their job.
- Recognize the importance of visitors to the business and destination.
- Know their community.
- Understand tourism basics.
- Communicate clearly.
- Handle problems effectively.
- Make a good last impression.

In addition to preparing front-line staff, progressive tourism organizations will often develop a tourism awareness campaign for residents. This includes print and online tools outlining "What Tourism Means for Our Community," asking businesses to offer locals free or discounted admission to attractions. Sometimes this is as simple as encouraging operators to reach out into the community.

Our next case study offers an example of two individuals who do just that – serving as welcoming hosts to visitors and local ambassadors for cultural/heritage tourism in their rural area.

O Roseau Brings Métis Culture to Life

Location and History Create Opportunity

A vision of owners George and Florence Beaudry, the *O Roseau* 200-acre site is located one hour south of Winnipeg. Nestled in the Rapids Reach of the Roseau River valley at the edge of ancient Lake Agassis, the regional landscape formed over the last 10,000 years as the river carved its way through sand and gravel formations, creating dramatic cliffs, spectacular vistas, and kilometres of challenging rapids.

The *O Roseau* Project was started in 2000 as a millennium project designed to promote the attractive riverside setting as ideal for a variety of outdoor activities. These include pioneer camping experiences and historical interpretive tours that bring the rich Métis history of the southern Manitoba region to life.

Developing an Authentic Experience

As early as 1734 the explorer LaVerendrye used the Roseau as an alternate route in his discoveries of the west. The first known European buried on the prairies is LaVerendrye's nephew, whose grave is marked at the confluence of the Roseau and Red Rivers. The property is located along the Crow Wing Trail, used by Métis freighters in the 1800s to transport goods across the international border using Red River carts. The trail is also part of the Trans-Canada Trail.

The Beaudrys were inspired by this history and beautiful surroundings and saw the potential to capitalize on the history of the site. To attract visitors, they created the Crow Wing Camp, where they greet visitors in period dress, and provide an outdoor experience similar to 19th century trail life when voyageurs traveled by canoe to trade goods and furs. Using storytelling and character portrayals, along with primitive camping facilities, visitors are transported back in time and, as George says, "given an appreciation of what our ancestors had to endure."

Roughing it in the Bush

In their recent nomination for the Tourism Industry of Canada's Cultural Tourism Award, O Roseau was acknowledged for their "commitment to visitor satisfaction by staying true to its mission in providing authentic camp experiences." The camp replicates life on a major trade route of the 1800s, where travellers would stop to rest, trade, break bread, and share stories. There are no modern conveniences on site (except an outhouse) and visitors enjoy meals of bannock and bison stew, sleeping on bison robes. A local Métis guide assists guests with the challenges of daily camp life. For those not willing to immerse themselves in this authentic camping experience, bed and breakfast accommodation will soon be available.

Bonhomme Beaudry

During the winter season, George Beaudry travels to schools and festivals around Manitoba, such as Festival du Voyageur, to deliver historical programming and educate students on the pre-confederation era (c. 1800s) of Métis history. He often appears as "Bonhomme Beaudry", a character based on the life of a family ancestor who was a well-seasoned voyageur in the early 1800s.

Through stories and songs, Bonhomme Beaudry offers entertaining and educational sessions for summer camp guests and student groups of any size. In the classroom he makes the history of Canada come alive, covering topics in both official languages while tying into the curricula of history, social studies, and geography.

While a small operation, the Beaudrys have used their passion for local history to attract new visitors to the region, which in turn has benefited other attractions. As stated in their nomination, they "eagerly point guests to the nearby towns of St. Malo and St. Pierre Jolys for services not available on site. They also encourage guests to visit other unique attractions in the area including the St. Malo Grotto and Provincial Park, Tall Grass Prairie and Rosa Reserves, Three Fires Ceremonial Grounds, and Wounded Warrior Rock."

These communities and attractions have recently joined together to jointly promote the St. Malo and O Roseau region, an initial step in building a community-based approach to increasing tourism in the region.

Despite Challenges, the Story Continues

This family-owned cultural tourism operation has needed to address many common challenges small businesses face. A recent obstacle related to the prohibitive cost of insurance required for some of the features (open fires) of the pioneer camp facilities. At press time, George Beaudry was continuing to serve as a heritage ambassador for the O Roseau site by providing his services and experiences to school groups, and looking forward to greeting many more guests to come.

Who might be the Bonhomme Beaudry in your community? It's worth finding out!

Find out more: www.oroseau.ca

- Provides appropriate place and profile for the local Aboriginal story, and the other predominant cultures of the region.
- Has excellent signs directing visitors to the centre and key attractions.
- Offers a professionally-designed tourist map of the community and region, including reasons and incentives to stay (highlighting character and themes – see chapter 9).
- Provides a good inventory, display and distribution of tourism-related brochures for community and region.
- Engages visitors through an effective interpretation program (e.g., exhibits, interpretive signs, plaques, brochures, murals, historic photos).
- Offers training and regular upgrading to provide skills and knowledge to visitor information counsellors.
- Has opening hours that are convenient for the large majority of visitors.
- Suggests itineraries, and reasons to stay longer.
- Provides good mobile coverage and free WiFi.
- Provides booking services so visitors can make purchases on the spot.

Many towns support tourism through centrally-located Visitor Information Centres (VICs) with staff trained to answer questions about the community and local area. The VIC may be either a stand-alone facility (perhaps in a heritage structure such as a former railway station) or part of an existing operation (a hotel, gas station, or chamber of commerce office).

VICs can be costly to develop. If your community doesn't already have a centre in place, be sure to determine the most suitable and cost-effective type of visitor services to provide in your community. Instead of a Visitor Centre, some smaller communities may choose to have unstaffed information kiosks and clear, highly visible maps and signs. Many communities are now providing this information through a range of mobile phone apps.

For many tourists, the VIC is the first point of contact with the community, and will strongly influence first impressions. Make sure your cultural/heritage tourism strategy involves the VIC (or equivalent service) as a key partner.

Key Elements of Successful Information Centres

Your cultural/heritage tourism strategy can be given a real boost by a VIC that demonstrates these attributes:

- Is attractive, well-located, landscaped and central; has prominent signs and provides free parking (note: sometimes the existing location is not the best!)
- Accentuates cultural/heritage themes and community brand through design, exhibits, art, sculpture, etc.

Not only is the VIC a great place to spread the word about attractions, it's the perfect data collection point. The VIC, along with your provincial/territorial tourism department or ministry, can provide you with guidance on how to tie into existing visitor tracking. This data will help you create visitor profiles and determine what kinds of information and services tourists are looking for. Recording this information over time will allow you to observe any changes and respond accordingly, perhaps by updating the community tourism plan and the cultural/heritage tourism strategy.

Now we invite you to consider approaches to building effective partnerships between culture, arts, and heritage agencies. Informal talks often lead to alliances, but when substantial investments of time, money, and reputation are involved, careful strategic thinking will lead to decisions that owners and/or boards will later celebrate! Remember to:

1. Ensure you have executive support for exploring the development of cultural partnerships.

Evaluate your organization's capacity to manage relationships with arts, culture, and heritage partners. Is there the operational capacity to take on partners? Do you and your prospective partner have a core volunteer base? Is your current mix of products and services adaptable to new initiatives? Has your competition developed similar partnerships to the ones you are contemplating? Have you developed a rationale for spending time and effort to move in this direction?

2. Talk to colleagues in other destinations strongly allied with the arts, culture, and heritage sector.

Assemble some case studies, analyze demand trends, and undertake a competitive analysis. Don't keep ideas a secret –sharing your thoughts at an early stage can help you develop a 'guiding coalition' of champions for your new direction. You'll also be able to identify where resistance within your organization or community is likely to occur, and you might as well find these roadblocks early on!

3. Evaluate your customer service reputation and capacity.

Poor customer service provided by your partners can reflect negatively on your own organization. Generally speaking, volunteer-run organizations are often really successful at customer service because of community enthusiasm for special cultural events and attractions. Either way, here's where some due diligence up front can prevent potentially awkward alliances and steer you towards mutually beneficial discussions.

4. Schmooze! Do lunch!

Talk to the people who are passionate about their culture/arts/heritage operations, because it's their commitment that will make for a solid partnership and growth of new cultural attractions and events. Informally try out ideas for collaboration and see if there's a good fit. Frequently, you'll find dedicated people who want to see

the cultural life of their community build, who understand funding, political support, and volunteer development. If there is already a movement promoting arts and culture then it's a good bet there will be an appetite for expansion if the right partner comes along.

5. Make one person responsible for managing relationships with cultural partners.

Create a job description for a cultural tourism coordinator, and initiate the role using a relatively low risk pilot project. The person filling that role needs to be a 'champion' (it might be you!). In some cases, a partnership may develop with very little forethought, but most often strategic alliances will include big players such as a DMO or community association. These partners will want to reach out to a single contact who can talk numbers, budgets, and goals.

This diagram shows the wide range of stake-holders—and potential collaborators—that can be involved in your community's cultural/heritage tourism strategy.

1. **Visitor or Resident:**
   the audience for cultural tourism activities & products.

2. **Operators (Ops):**
   directly interact with visitor/resident.

3. **Sector Groups:**
   operator interest groups.

4. **Governments:**
   agencies with related mandates.

5. **Social Sectors:**
   broad segments of society.

6.5 Work Respectfully with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities

Across Canada, cultural/heritage tourism visitors want to experience the rich cultures of the original peoples of the land. Many enjoy participating in an authentic First Nations, Métis or Inuit (Aboriginal) tourism experience. Working with local Aboriginal communities, both rural and urban, should be a priority for your regional cultural/heritage tourism strategy.

Aboriginal communities want to tell their own stories in their own voice. Many communities are taking the lead in developing cultural and heritage tourism opportunities that present authentic experiences for the visitor and preserve their unique cultures and heritage. Through greater financial stability, stronger governance, and savvy entrepreneurs in Aboriginal communities, a full-scale market has emerged. Here are suggestions for working with Aboriginal communities:

- **Build positive relationships.** Recognize the unique relationship local groups have to the land (deriving from the ancestral spirits who created the land) and the cultural knowledge that is tied to this relationship.

- **Demonstrate responsibility.** Acknowledge the cultural obligations of the local indigenous community for looking after the environmental, cultural, and spiritual well-being of the land.

- **Show respect.** Demonstrate your understanding that cultural knowledge is the responsibility of elders, and that not all information may be appropriate for sharing with visitors.
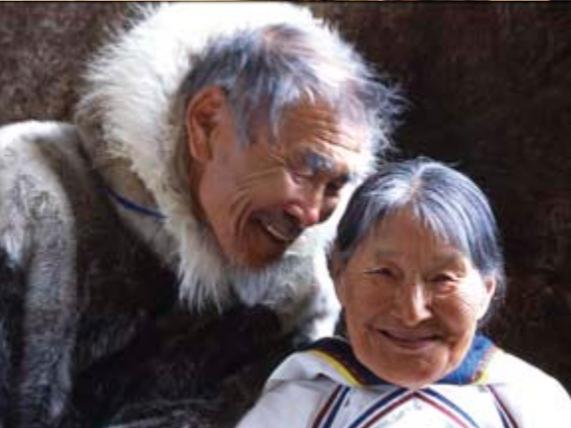
- **Include First Nations partners.** Ensure groups operating within the traditional territory meet with leaders/elders to get input into planning. Developers should discuss their plans and review the details of any site plans and prospective operations with First Nation(s).

- **Think of future generations.** Cultural tourism development must contribute to long-term sustainability—for future generations of Aboriginal people hosting visitor activities.

- **Determine what needs to be protected.** The protection of traditional knowledge, as well as spiritual, archaeological, and other heritage sites must be explicit within the plan.

- **Consider the land.** Environmental protection of landscapes and view-scapes—for locals and visitors—are critical factors in the process.

- **Develop agreements and protocols.** Take time to understand the local processes and protocols; ensure discussions and management agreements are maintained with elders/ traditional knowledge keepers. Determine who you should be speaking with.

- **Remember authenticity.** Work with the local community to ensure all Aboriginal cultural tourism offerings and stories are authentic.

- **Respect local First Nations' values in your strategy.**
  In cooperation with the local First Nations community, include the management and protection of core values and encourage best practices while operating within traditional territory. Adhere to these values:

  - *Ensure deals with First Nations are visibly and obviously 'fair' to all parties.*

  - *Promote employment and benefits for local First Nations' communities.*

  - *Understand and share traditional ecological knowledge, and what it means to the community.*

  - *Identify and carefully manage, often by avoidance, all spiritual areas, sensitive archaeological sites, and heritage resources.*

  - *Carefully manage, generally by techniques to control visitor impacts, the natural landscape, wildlife and culturally-important plants (medicinal plants, berries etc.).*

An understanding of these principles can lead to strong healthy working relationships based on respect and recognition – and ultimately a richer experience for the cultural/heritage tourism visitor.

You've prepared your people, and now that you're ready to welcome guests, it's time to evaluate what kind of community they'll be visiting. The next chapter relates the process of preparing your places.

If you've followed the suggestions thus far, you should have a good understanding of how to prepare your people for cultural/heritage tourism development. This chapter discusses preparing your places: the range of facilities, infrastructure, and services guests require to ensure a clean, safe, and enjoyable experience.

7.1 Make Your Places More Attractive for Visitors (and Locals)

No matter what interesting cultural/heritage experiences your strategy includes, you won't fulfill your potential if the community as a whole isn't an attractive, welcoming place. As noted earlier, improvements that form part of a cultural/heritage tourism strategy will also be seen as improvements for residents. While the challenge of community improvement may seem daunting, dozens of Canadian cultural heritage champions have leveraged their partnerships to make incredible strides in this area.

Community Beautification

The community-based approach recognizes that visitors leave a destination with the sum total of all of their impressions and memories. We've all seen the results of reduced municipal budgets and economic downturns: main streets that aren't kept clean, derelict downtown buildings, signs with peeling paint, weeds on the boulevards. It's imperative, however, that government, tourism, cultural/heritage and volunteer partners work together to address the community's appearance.

Ideas working in other communities include:

- Organizing regular litter-clean-up days.
- Joining Communities-in-Bloom.
- Funding a downtown "streetscaping" project.
- Increasing tree planting targets.
- Replacing worn and ineffective signage.
- Tackling graffiti.
- Developing murals.
- Encouraging landscaping around commercial establishments.
- Preserving and maintaining landmark structures.

Once the community at large is spruced up, it becomes easier to set the stage for enhanced cultural/heritage attractions.

Preservation & Enhancement of Heritage Structures

The preservation of heritage structures is an important part of protecting the sense of place valued by visitors and residents alike.

What historic buildings and attractions are there in your community and surrounding area? Your strategy should have a section that focuses on preservation and maintenance of these places and their visual settings or "viewscapes".

Your community-based strategy should regularly consider how well you provide the following basic services for your visitors, and develop plans to address gaps:

☐ **Parking.** Is there sufficient parking at all of your cultural/heritage tourism sites? Is it free or reasonably priced? Are the sites well-located? Well-maintained?

☐ **Public restrooms.** Are these sufficient in the areas tourists frequent? Are they well-maintained? What do they say about your community?

☐ **Accommodations.** Is there adequate local lodging to accommodate the visitors you are expecting? Are these providers well-promoted in your overall marketing campaign? (Remember that cultural/heritage visitors often prefer smaller properties with "local colour" and historic bed and breakfasts.)

☐ **Places to Eat.** How easy is it for visitors to find the kind of dining spots you advertise? Do these restaurants, coffee shops, bakeries and pubs have their own heritage-focused exhibits and stories to tell in the premises?

☐ **Shopping.** Is it easy for visitors to find locally-produced arts and crafts? Are unique shops included in the itineraries that build on your community's cultural theme? Are there antique shops and local craft markets that can be promoted?

☐ **Hours of operation.** Are hours of operation of all of your attractions (including your visitor information centre) conducive to a positive experience? What will they find open or closed? Are business hours clearly posted? Is it easy to find basic, well-lit information after hours?

☐ **Parks & Picnic Areas.** Are there attractive, casual rest areas for visitors to use in the warmer months? Are they landscaped, well maintained and litter-free?

☐ **Graffiti.** Does the community have a plan to remove graffiti on a timely basis? Are there priority routes or areas that need to be considered from a visitor perspective?

"Good marks" on all of the above will lead to much greater visitor satisfaction, and complement the cultural/heritage experiences you are promoting.

Signage is an essential part of the product development and marketing process, often overlooked by communities in this technological era. Visitors may have GPS, excellent maps, and more than one set of good eyes, but can still get easily lost and confused in communities with outdated or inadequate signage.

An effective signage program can attract visitors while providing clear directions and information. It can also play a critical role in connecting people to the culture and heritage of the region. Signs compatible with local character that conform to national or international standards will be better understood by visitors from different countries and cultures. Types of tourism and services signs include[42]:

1. **Welcome and entrance signs.** Keep your message strong and uncluttered but highlight your cultural/heritage character, theme(s) and brand.

2. **Way-finding, directional and information signs.** Ensure these are prominent, large enough and in all the right spots. Make sure there is adequate parking to entice visitors to stop.

3. **Tourism attractions signs.** Ensure these are on all main routes, and there are sufficient numbers. Position these separately from your welcome signs.

4. **Business service signs** clearly showing products and services.

5. **"Blade signs"** placed perpendicular to the street, are more likely to be noticed by visitors driving or walking by.

6. **Interpretive signs.** Create a set of interpretive signs to tell your community's story, and invest in professional design and sign creation services.

With your people prepared, and your community's sense of place clearly articulated, you're ready to focus on the activities you hope to share with your guests.

This chapter addresses ways you can engage visitors with a variety of activities before they leave with positive memories.

"Experiential tourism is learning something by doing something with someone who lives here"

– Bill Kendrick, Experience PEI

8.1 Create "Lots to Do"

With culture buffs, travel is more than where you've been. It's about what you did, how it made you feel, the people you met, and the memories you took home. Once your community has developed your inventory, assessed your people, and revamped your overall destination, you can identify and develop new visitor experiences. This checklist may assist with the process:

Developing Cultural/Heritage Tourism Experiences: A Checklist

☐ **Identify market prospects** by creating a profile of current and potential cultural/heritage tourism markets.

☐ **Look at what is currently being offered from the visitor's perspective**—what do they stand to gain from participating in local events and activities?

☐ **Reflect on your competitive advantage.** What does your community do better than any other? It may be a better location, an exclusive line of merchandise at one of your attractions, better prices, exceptionally high quality customer service, or the value-added services or experiences provided.

☐ **Think of the features that make your cultural/heritage tourism destination unique.** Unique selling propositions (USPs) are a feature or combination of features that make your product attractive to a market segment, presented to the visitor as a special reason to visit your community.

☐ **Identify experiences offered in neighbouring communities.** Are there any experiences you could package together to increase traffic for both destinations?

☐ **Consider what you already do well.** What attractions and experiences are already winners? How might enhancing these with a cultural/heritage component work to your advantage?

☐ **Look at the timing of your tourism offerings.** Would it work to lengthen your tourism season?

This next case study tells the story of how a community took a small event held in the tourism shoulder-season and transformed it into a well-known festival, capitalizing on local strengths.

Trails, Tales & Tunes Festival

Natural Beauty Complements an Authentic Cultural Experience

The picturesque community of Norris Point, Newfoundland, is a fishing town surrounded by ruggedly beautiful Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Their *Trails, Tales and Tunes* community festival takes place in May, typically overlooked as a marketable time of year in the region.

A Blend of Outdoor/Indoor Visitor Experiences

The festival features entertainment, culinary arts, outdoor activities, storytelling, and learning experiences. It centres on the hospitable nature of the community, for which Newfoundland is renowned worldwide. It blends experiences including:

- Guided daytime walks in spectacular Gros Morne National Park.
- Afternoon workshops with artists and photographers.
- Evening entertainment by talented musicians and storytellers.
- A mix of authentic venues including churches, halls, theatres and pubs throughout Norris Point.

During its short existence, Trails, Tales and Tunes has become a premier event in the province. Audiences have grown to nearly 9,000 visitors in recent years, as has the scope of the festival. Tourism businesses are reporting a remarkable increase in revenue during what is normally a very slow time.

The Birth of a Community Festival

Shirley Montague is the Creative/Artistic Director of the festival. An award-winning folk singer raised in Labrador (and proud Norris Point resident), Shirley recently spoke with with Dr. Nancy Arsenault, who prepared a case study on the festival. "I would say the most important element is the community support," said Shirley. "It would be a different experience if the community didn't embrace it. We can't ever lose sight of that, it's the community and all the businesses within it. Everyone has taken ownership of the festival."

Extending the Season

The festival steering committee realized the event could extend the tourism season in the region. They discussed nurturing a sense of place through elements including:

- The arts, story-telling, and song and dance.
- Community well being and health (trail walking) and civic pride/spirit.
- A shared appreciation for cultural and historical ties to the geographical setting.
- The changing of the season from cold winter to the welcome promise of spring.

The marrying of these concepts has brought Trails, Tales and Tunes alive.

Committee Work and Community Collaboration

Not resting on their accomplishments to date, the Committee is nurturing longer-term growth by developing additional partnerships, increasing volunteerism, and exploring staffing/committee succession plans, all of which ensure the overall sustainability of the festival.

A set of principles help guide the work of the committee:

- *Trails, Tales and Tunes* is foremost a Norris Point/Gros Morne Festival aimed at engaging all ages and utilizing facilities within the Town of Norris Point.
- *Trails, Tales and Tunes* is committed to the culture of the region and showcasing the talents and traditions of our people.
- The Festival encompasses all aspects of entertainment.
- Walking is encouraged throughout the Festival.

- The majority of entertainers/presenters will be drawn from the region defined as the West Coast of Newfoundland and Labrador (both short and long term residents, as well as people visiting/passing through).

- Additional entertainers/presenters may be recruited from other areas of the province and beyond.

- The Festival will strive to present new performers every year.

- Every effort will be made to include anyone who happens upon the Festival and requests to present.

- The Festival is committed to showcasing lesser-known performers who are part of the cultural fabric of the province.

- Al performers/presenters will be paid for their efforts and all expenses incurred will be covered by the Festival.

- The Festival is committed to maintaining a strong local audience and ensuring that some of the main events have reasonable admission fees.

- Admissions to events provided by local businesses and community organizations will be determined by the owners/operators.

Shifting Perspectives: Planning and Training

The Gros Morne Cooperating Association (GMCA) is a non-profit that supports volunteers in Gros Morne's environmental education and conservation programs, recreation activities, and park initiatives. They also manage the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST), offering experiential travel training to the tourism industry in Atlantic Canada. Since 2005, community leaders, musicians, committee members, and cooperating businesses have participated in the *Edge of the Wedge Experiential Travel Training*. What has emerged is a multi-community understanding, in partnership with the national park, of the visitor potential for the area and new ways to work together.

Dr. Arsenault, one of three educators who has delivered training in the region for over a decade, observes: "This is not a typical tourism festival but a true community festival. The entire town is involved in either the festival or by being a wonderful community host."

The event meets increasing demand for experiential travel and the desire for visitors to connect with local people, enjoy authentic experiences, and take home memories.

Given the longevity of the training, people like Shirley Montague, hotels, artists, parks staff, and other area stakeholders have a common appreciation of how to work together to meet the needs of the visitor. Says Arsenault: "We've had the privilege of working with these people for years, and have seen shifts in how the community and region collaborates–the results speak for themselves."

Find out more: www.trailstalestunes.ca

Unique selling propositions (USPs) are a feature or combination of features that make your product attractive to a market segment, presented to the visitor as a special reason to visit your community.

Tie Product Development to Your Plan

Setting the stage for a new experience can be as simple as adding a craft demonstration to an existing event, or as complex as developing a multi-day cultural/heritage package event for your region (as demonstrated in Gros Morne). A good place to start is to refer to your cultural/heritage tourism strategy. What are your goals and objectives? Here are some examples of objectives:

- Extend operating season (by days or months).
- Encourage new visitation to your community (admission fees, attendance at events, room nights).
- Extend stays of existing visitors (room nights).
- Increase yield per customer (amount each visitor spends in your destination).
- Shift visitation from peak to off-peak times (encourage shoulder season visits).
- Encourage repeat visitation and destination loyalty.
- Diversify market reach (attract a variety of customers, or new customer profiles).

Clustering and Packaging

Clusters of compatible experiences in proximity to one another can be marketed collectively to increase everyone's market share. Identifying and creating clusters could be as easy as connecting existing opportunities, or may involve working with partners to create new ones. While clustering brings together partners to promote their complementary products, each partner sells their own experience separately.

Packaging is different from clustering, in that it combines a series of offerings that are purchased for one price. Individual experiences may come from one operator or multiple operators but are sold only once. See Chapter 9 for a featured section on packaging products.

This next case study profiles an example of clustered experiences under a unified banner.

ÉCONOMUSEÉ Celebrates Traditional Trades & Knowledge through a Network Model

Partnerships Support the Vision

Created in 1992 by Dr. Cyril Simard (who wrote the introductory letter for this guidebook), the mission of the ÉCONOMUSEÉ® (in English, ECONOMUSEUM®) Society Network (ESN) is to showcase traditional trades and know-how by promoting the establishment of the ESN concept across Canada. The concept combines "economy" and "culture" and has expanded across the country to establish better interaction between the artist or artisan and visitors.

photo: Mary Clark, Traveller

This network of businesses is composed of multitalented artisans who open their doors to the public and share their passion for their art, trade and heritage. Although most active in Quebec, the Canadian Maritimes are developing the Atlantic ECONOMUSEUM® Corporation, a network has begun in Europe, and British Columbia is about to launch its network. The Quebec network alone receives over 600,000 visitors a year at 36 ECONOMUSEUM® locations.

Dr. Simard, an architect, began by creating a strong team of political and business supporters for the concept, and in so doing, helped to create a rich network of Quebec artisans in thirteen tourism regions, and a marketing program to support them, that offers the public a number of innovative cultural tourism experiences.

Living Cultural Tourism

In Dr. Simard's words, the ESN network "plays a tourism trump card by highlighting the authentic trades and skills of many Quebec communities, and magnifying the spirit of the place. For the tourist, the ESN creates a unique opportunity to interact directly with the artisans and in their workshops. Whether creating works of art or regional foodstuffs, they are the true in situ ambassadors of our cultural and heritage values."

The network has expanded to promote featured artists and craftspeople that demonstrate an impressive range of expertise. Some examples:

- Animal Fibre Craft: Mohair - Le Chevrier du Nord
- Blacksmithing - La Forge à Pique-Assaut
- Bread Making - Boulangerie Perron de Roberval
- Brewing - Bières de la Nouvelle-France
- Butter Making - Ferme Jean-Noël Groleau
- Cheese Making - Laiterie Charlevoix
- Chocolate Making - Chocolaterie Chocomotive
- Cider Making - Cidres et Vergers Pedneault
- Fashion Creations - Harricana by Mariouche
- Fish Production: Salt and Dried Cod - Lelièvre, Lelièvre et Lemoignan
- Fish Production: Smoked Herring - Le Fumoir d'Antan
- Flour Milling - Les moulins de L'Isle-aux-Coudres
- Fur Dealer / Bootmaking - Bilodeau
- Furriery - Richard Robitaille Fourrures
- Gemstone Cutting - Touverre
- Glass Working: Stained and Leaded Glass - Les Artisans du vitrail
- Glassblowing - Verrerie d'art Touverre
- Herbalism: essential oils - Aliksir
- Honey - Musée de l'Abeille
- Instrument Making: Violins - Jules Saint-Michel, Luthier
- Jewellery Making - Le Forgeron D'or
- Leather Working - RocheFort maroquinier
- Liqueur Making - Cassis Monna & Filles
- Maple Syrup Making: Alcoholic Beverages - Domaine Acer
- Metal Working: Bronze - Musée du bronze d'Inverness
- Paper Making - Papeterie Saint-Gilles

- Porcelain Making - Porcelaines Bousquet
- Raw Milk Cheese Making - Fromagerie du Pied-de-Vent
- Sand Sculpture - Artisans du sable
- Slumping Glass - Studio des Verriers du Richelieu
- Soap Making - Domaine de la Savonnière
- Taxidermy - Nature 3M
- Vines & Wine - Vignoble de l'Orpailleur
- Weaving - Les Ateliers Plein Soleil
- Woodcarving - Atelier Paré

Authenticity is Key

The ESN recognizes that today's consumer is more knowledgeable about the range of products and services the market offers. Consumers are adopting a socially responsible outlook, and place value on "ethically-made" products that value sustainable development, and social equity. This is reflected in the Charter of Values of the ESN. It lays out the fundamental principles governing the attitude and behaviours of the people who keep the ESN alive on a daily basis: its artisans and their workers, its administrators and its employees.

Six Operational Features

In addition to these principles, the ESN concept has developed an operational framework for members with six main components, adaptable to the individual operator, all intended to create an intimate relationship between the operator and the visitor:

1. The reception area, which offers the visitor an overview of the artisan, his or her origins, and their family. Space is devoted to cultural heritage, celebrating the special character of a trade or a skill, an event, a time or place.

2. The workshop, the heart of ECONOMUSEUM®, where the artisan works in front of the public, explaining the different stages of the processes in use.

3. The presentation of historic collections and artifacts from the past describing the job of the artisan or craft through the ages.

4. The contemporary collections, interpreting modern research and innovation, which have objects or products made according to current tastes.

5. The documentation or educational space where visitors can learn about the craft using videos, books and documents.

6. A retail shop or gallery where the craftsman sells products manufactured on the spot. The visitor relates more strongly due to the relationship established with the artisan, and so the products are more than mere souvenirs, but rather carry memories and emotions of a unique experience.

"Establishing a connection between the artisans with their skills and the general population remains our goal," concludes Dr. Simard. "It seems that our age of technology cannot replace contact with the hands-on artisan or artistic creator, nor create an understanding of production processes: the ability to physically explore the workshop, and participate in a living human interaction. This is where our slogan 'The craftsman at work' has its roots and delivers on its promise."

Find out more: www.economusees.com

Cultural/heritage tourism is about sharing stories. To do this, you need to build an interpretive capability in your community. Interpretation is a complex field of knowledge, and frequently it's the determining factor in whether or not a tourism experience is successfully realized.
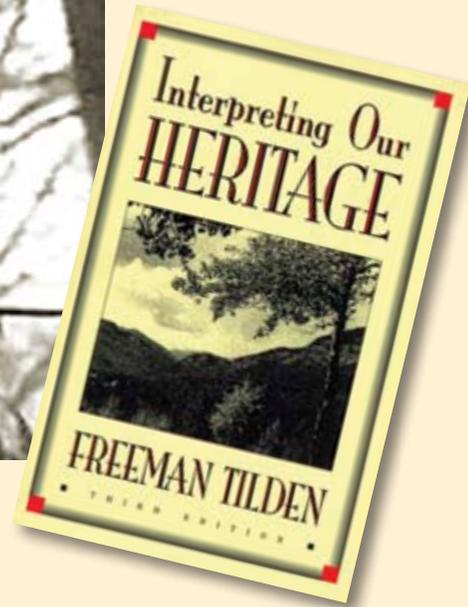
The 'father of interpretation' in North America is Freeman Tilden, an American who helped shape interpretation in US national parks by drawing up this list of principles:

Tilden's Six Principles of Interpretation

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based on information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is to some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole person rather than any part.

6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best, it will require a separate program.

In cultural/heritage tourism, interpretation is most often associated with museums and heritage sites. However, all tourism businesses, attractions, and experiences will benefit by providing good interpretation.

Whether on signs and websites, in brochures and guidebooks, or in media promotions, the stories you tell will shape how the visitor sees and understands your community.

Engaging Exhibits

Effective exhibits will bring your community's cultural character to life, and should be encouraged in multiple locations. Whether professionally mounted exhibits in the local museum, or a heritage showcase developed for a hotel lobby or lounge, some useful guidelines apply. The following has been adapted from Cultural Heritage Tourism: Practical Applications developed by the Museum Association of Arizona and the Arizona Humanities Association.

Key Ingredients of a "Healthy" Exhibit [43]

☐ **The heart** of the story is at risk when there are too many elements—keep it simple.

☐ **Be selective** in what you display—keep the items few in number and powerfully interpreted.

☐ **Use video** monitors and audio clips to maximum advantage.

☐ **Be clear!** Labels should be legible, clearly written in an engaging style, and not too wordy.

☐ **Make the** effort to add multilingual labels for your dominant visitor groups—your guests who don't speak English or French will appreciate this!

☐ **"Exercise" your** exhibits regularly—change/rotate regularly (at least twice a year), and make repairs immediately.

☐ **Make sure** the story you tell is authentic—keep true to the story, relate it to the historical context, construct a contemporary analogy, and put a human face on it.

☐ **Connect your** exhibit story to your community-based cultural/heritage tourism strategy.

☐ **While designing** your exhibits, make parts of them portable enough to travel—an exhibit that you place in a shopping mall, town square, or other community center might bring visitors to your attraction that otherwise would not come.

☐ **Finally, remember** that your front-line team can be the best exhibit—train your staff, both professional and volunteers, so that everyone is familiar with the same story; can interpret the exhibits, and are well-versed in the mission, story, and the community they represent.

If you choose exhibitry as one means to tell your community's story (and each attraction should), remember that today's cultural/heritage tourist comes with higher expectations of quality than ever before. Exposure to sophisticated graphics in print and online means today's visitors expect that level of polished presentation wherever they travel.

When in doubt, use a professional or invite a specialist to review your exhibit plans. If as a small business you cannot afford a designer, discounted or non-fee services may be available through a college/university museum studies or design-arts program, or with a local arts group.

This next case study demonstrates how driving routes, signage, interpretation and new technology (such as QR codes) can be used to showcase the best a community has to offer.

Regional Driving Routes Increase Visitation – PEI Arts & Heritage Trail

Building on An iconic Character

At the start of PEI's Arts and Heritage Trail Guide, Anne of Green Gables exclaims: "There is no more beautiful place on the face of the earth. We've got historic sites and architecture that will take you back to the beginnings of this country. Our museums and cultural masters will give you experiences to awaken your senses! If your imagination is anything like mine, you'll love our island full of music and art."

Building on Anne's iconic profile, the Tourism Industry Association of PEI, along with government and business partners, developed an island-wide campaign to attract more visitors to cultural and heritage experiences.

Driving Routes Created

The trail features a network of cultural and heritage attractions along five Coastal Touring Routes covering almost all regions of the province. These include the North Cape Coastal Drive, the Central Coast Drive - One Drive Two Shores (Green Gables Shore and Red Sands Shore), Points East Coastal Drive, and a route surrounding the capital city of Charlottetown.

Clear & Colourful Visitor Information

The printed guide and website contain strong editorial content to lure potential travellers to each region. Sense of place is brought to life in pieces on:

- Community museums
- Island lighthouses
- Ceilidhs & kitchen parties
- PEI sea glass
- Lucy Maud Montgomery (author of Anne of Green Gables)
- The Confederation Trail
- The People's Poet (Milton Acorn)
- The Abegweit Aboriginal Pow Wow
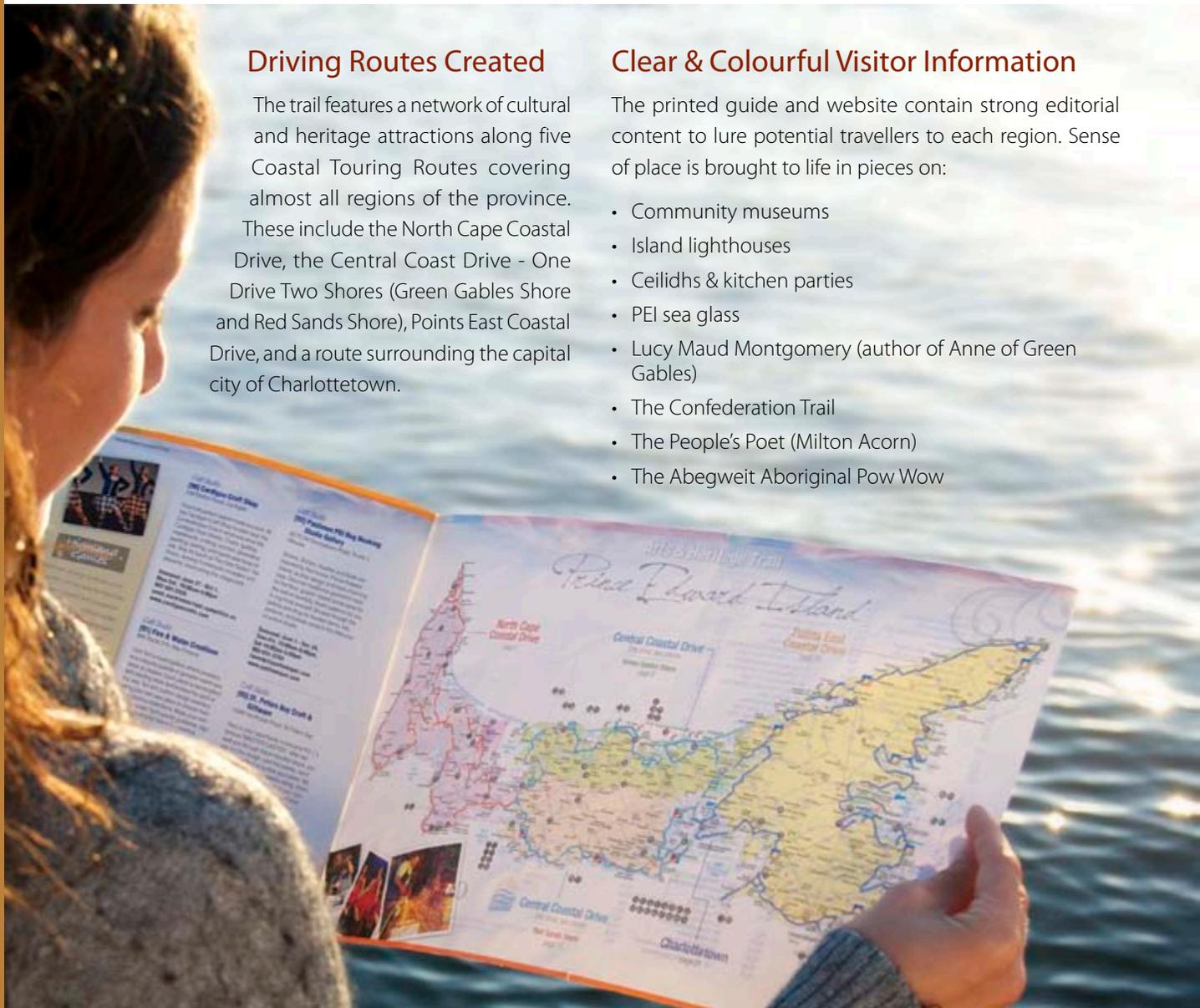
Along the trail points of interest are identified by five icons representing built heritage, human heritage, natural heritage, performing arts, and the visual arts. Wine and culinary experiences are included in a separate but complementary guide, also profiled on www.artsandheritagepei.com.

With an easy-to use map, the guide includes listings from individual businesses, included on a "pay-to-play" basis, with only a limited number of ¼ page ads available for purchase. Participants must meet quality control criteria established by the committee to ensure visitor service standards and island content levels.
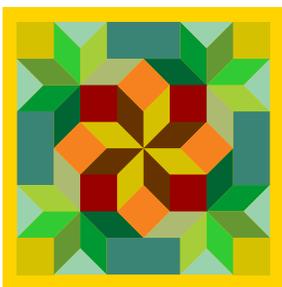
Using Imagery & Technology to Promote Routes

Individually-created quilt board signs adorn attractions en route. Each is designed to reflect the personality of the site, while identifying the island's cultural community. Participating businesses pay a modest price for the designed, produced, and installed signs.

Partners have been quick to incorporate Quick Response (QR) codes to help visitors make decisions and find out more about participating businesses. Smart phone users are taken immediately to the operator's listing on the Arts and Heritage Trail website with information on that business (especially helpful when they're closed) and details about other operators along the trail.

Signs of Success

In its first year a target of 50 participants and 25 signs was exceeded with 93 paid listings and 46 quilt board signs. The current distribution plan will see 50,000 English and 20,000 French guides distributed around the island, and an out-of-province marketing strategy is in development.

Janet Wood, of PEI's Department of Tourism and Culture, has been a partner in this campaign. When asked to comment on key successes, and lessons for other regions in Canada, she said "this is very much an industry-led initiative with the Tourism Industry Association of PEI (TIAPEI) leading the promotion of heritage and cultural tourism product. The key to success is partnerships –TIAPEI working with partners including the craft sector, Culture PEI, and federal and provincial governments. In doing so, we built on our past "Thorne Burnett Situation Analysis" and the development of new cultural experiential product, bringing market-ready tourism products to our visitors' attention. This 'pay to play' marketing vehicle supports the sustainability of our heritage and culture operators at the same time as meeting visitors' needs and expectations."

Find out more: www.artsandheritagepei.com

You've given thought to the stories you'd like your guests to experience. Now, with cultural tourism specialist Steven Thorne as our guide, let's delve deeper into determining what unique cultural/heritage assets your community has to offer.

Recognizing that "the place is the product," cultural tourism specialist Steven Thorne developed an effective planning process for his approach to community-based cultural/heritage tourism, which he coined "place-based cultural tourism." Thorne's work forms the basis of this chapter, where we explore the concept in more detail.

> *"When taken to market, a place-based cultural/heritage tourism destination invites the visitor to experience much more than the destination's cultural 'attractions.' The attractions are there, but they are expressions of the destination's culture rather than its embodiment. The branding, imaging, and messaging developed for the marketing campaign communicates the destination's cultural character and sense of place as much as it profiles the attractions themselves."*
>
> *– Steven Thorne*

9.1 Build on Your Inventory: Clusters & Themes

As discussed in chapter 7, one of the first steps to creating a community-based cultural/heritage tourism strategy is to build an inventory of available experiences. From there, with guided discussion, your community's unique cultural character can be identified. This unique cultural character can form the core of stories and marketing themes, which then tie together your cultural/heritage products and experiences.

A cultural/heritage tourism task force, working through an experienced facilitator, can make great progress at this stage. In a workshop setting, community members identify all cultural/heritage tourism experiences they can think of. Using Thorne's place-based planning approach, each experience is assigned to its appropriate cultural cluster of:

- Human heritage
- Agricultural and industrial heritage
- The arts
- Cuisine, and
- Natural history

In addition to tangible assets, Thorne advises that intangible heritage assets that help create the community's cultural character can also be identified in this exercise (e.g. culture & traditions, folklore, language and idioms, and religion), adding an important layer of information to the inventory.

The following clusters are a tool that helps your community zero in on your cultural character.

1. Human Heritage. Experiences that reveal the tangible and intangible legacy of human settlement and development:

Tangible:

- Aboriginal heritage experiences
- Archaeological sites
- Architecture
- Archives
- Botanical/decorative gardens
- Community walking/driving tours
- Cultural & historic districts
- Heritage events & festival
- Heritage home tours
- Historic sites
- Human heritage museums
- Libraries & learning events
- Pioneer villages/living history sites
- Statues & monuments
- Streetscapes

Intangible:
- Customs & traditions
- Folklore
- Language & idioms
- Religion

2. Agricultural & Industrial Heritage. Experiences that reveal the legacy of human settlement and development specific to agriculture and industry:

- Agricultural festivals
- Agricultural museums
- Farmers' & fishers' markets
- Industrial museums
- Industrial factory tours
- Farm & orchard tours
- Tours of artisanal food production facilities
- Tours of artisanal product manufacturing facilities
- Winery tours

3. The Arts: Experiences of the performing, visual, literary, and media arts:

- Artist-run centres
- Art instruction classes & retreats
- Artist studios
- Bookstores featuring local/regional authors
- Commercial art & craft galleries
- Literary arts events & festivals
- Live music & comedy clubs
- Media arts events & festivals
- Multi-disciplinary arts events & festivals
- Performing arts events & festivals
- Public art
- Public art galleries
- Visual arts events & festivals

4. Cuisine. Experiences of foods, wines and beverages, including their history and production:

- Artisanal foods & beverages
- Beverage events & festivals
- Culinary/cooking classes & retreats
- Dining experiences (restaurants, bistros, coffee houses, pubs)
- Food events & festivals
- Wine festivals & tastings

5. Natural History*. Experiences that reveal the relationship between the natural environment and human settlement and development:

- Natural history festivals
- Natural history museums
- Natural history tours
- Nature interpretation centres
- Parks & interpreted nature trails
- Scenic landscapes & vistas

* *"The land shapes its people, and people shape their land. A community's culture cannot be fully understood or appreciated without interpreting the land, even in an urban environment."* – *Steven Thorne*

This sorting and categorizing of the experiences can reveal what Thorne calls the destination's "cultural character". The themes that emerge from the destination's cultural character can be then used to guide marketing efforts. He continues, "the destination's cultural themes are not imposed; they emerge through the place-based planning process. Through this process, any destination can identify its unique cultural themes, [which] help visitors navigate the high volume of experiences and ...to understand, and appreciate, the destination's sense of place."

Theme Example: Mountains, Ranchers and Oilmen

The Epic Alberta, Historic Places Road Trip Guide illustrates some strong cultural themes. It is founded on the understanding that "encounters between people and the land have resulted in a rich and diverse collection of cultural resources that define Alberta's distinct sense of place." [45]

A good example is one of the 12 regions profiled, featuring a *Mountains, Ranchers and Oilmen* theme, which includes an historical overview of the area, effective descriptors, and photos. Together these resources link a wide range of regional attractions from the Royal Tyrell Museum, to the McDougall Memorial United Church, and from Okotoks Erratic "Big Rock" to the Stephen Avenue National Historic District in Calgary.
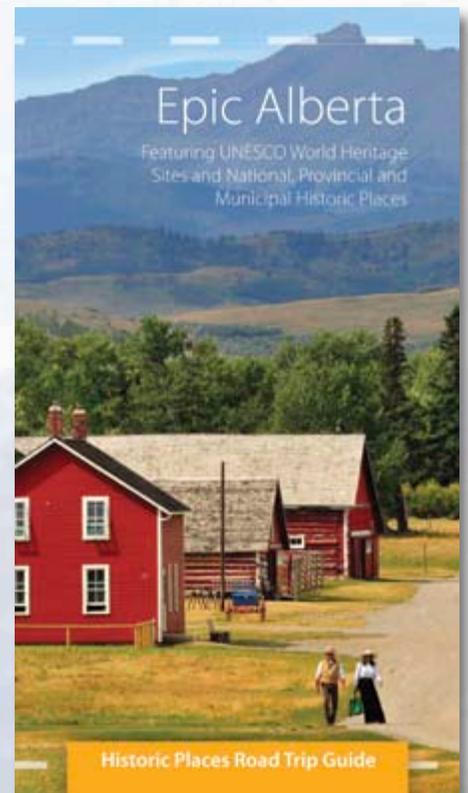
Themed routes and itineraries add value because they make it easy for visitors to plan their vacation and expose them to things they may enjoy but not have found on their own. They can serve as a strong tool to increase visitation and extend visitor stays.

Creating Themed Itineraries in Your Community

To create one in your community, your task force, or individual members, can start by researching and the best attractions in your destination. Build appealing themed routes around core experiences, geographic areas, cultural themes, or visitor interests. Don't forget to highlight scenic values and natural assets on the route. For inspiration, think back to the network of PEI driving tours featured in the Arts and Heritage Trail promotion (described in the last chapter).

Once itineraries are developed, feature them on your website and in other collateral to showcase the great things to see and do in your area. Have all task force marketing partners promote these options to help encourage visitation and longer stays.

This list was adapted from Cultural Heritage Tourism: Practical Applications: Museum Association of Arizona[46]. They suggest your community creates itineraries with the following features:

☐ **Realistic Times.** Have a realistic understanding of the time it takes to visit the recommended cultural/heritage experiences, and share this with visitors. Generally, an hour is a long time for most people to spend in any single attraction. If any of your attractions require more time, say so. Make sure there is minimal driving time between points of interest on the route.

☐ **Appropriate Length.** When designing itineraries, it's best to write a variety of timeframes including half-day tours, overnight tours, and, if possible, link up with neighbouring destinations and lodging partners to create a weekend (two or three-day) excursion.

☐ **Great Map.** Make sure an easy-to-use road and tourist map is provided. Include cultural highlights, messages from your interpretive program, and all relevant travel and road information. Use the map to promote the services of business partners.

☐ **Clear Information.** Give accurate directions to attractions on the route. Provide accurate information about days/hours of operation and entrance fees.

☐ **Appealing Descriptions.** Briefly describe the highlights of what the visitor will discover, but don't oversell an attraction or experience. It's better to "under-promise" and "over-deliver".

☐ **Roads and Driving Information.** Be honest about driving time, road conditions, and provide information about gas and food-stop opportunities.

☐ **Tips for Your Target Market.** Include the type of information your target market needs to know. Is this a good place for children to enjoy? Is there a cafe on premise or nearby? Can you bring a picnic lunch and enjoy it on the grounds? Do you need to wear comfortable shoes to enjoy your attraction? Is any special clothing needed?

☐ **Accessible Tourism.** Include attractions and experiences that accommodate travellers with disabilities and highlight these features (wheelchair accessible trails, etc.).

☐ **Where to Stay and Eat.** For itineraries longer than half a day, add recommendations about where to stay and eat. Incorporate unique local cuisine and specialties.

☐ **Ways to Engage Visitors.** The most successful itineraries provide opportunities for people to interact with local guides, ponder the exhibits, internalize the messages, and marvel at the natural scenery.

Inter-Connections Lead to Stories

Although each cultural/heritage tourism experience can be assigned to a specific cultural tourism cluster (such as "Cuisine"), culture itself, as Thorne notes, "is a web of interconnectivity. For example, cuisine is connected to agricultural heritage and to natural history. Cuisine is also an art."

Once communities have identified the interconnections among the experiences they have inventoried, Thorne recommends that narratives and stories then be developed to showcase these interconnections, highlight the destination's themes, and promote a distinctive sense of place.

The next case study illustrates how seemingly disparate communities and stakeholder groups can come together under a common banner to present a web of cultural/heritage experiences that create sense of place for visitors.

Trails of 1885   TRAVEL GUIDE   www.trailsof1885.com
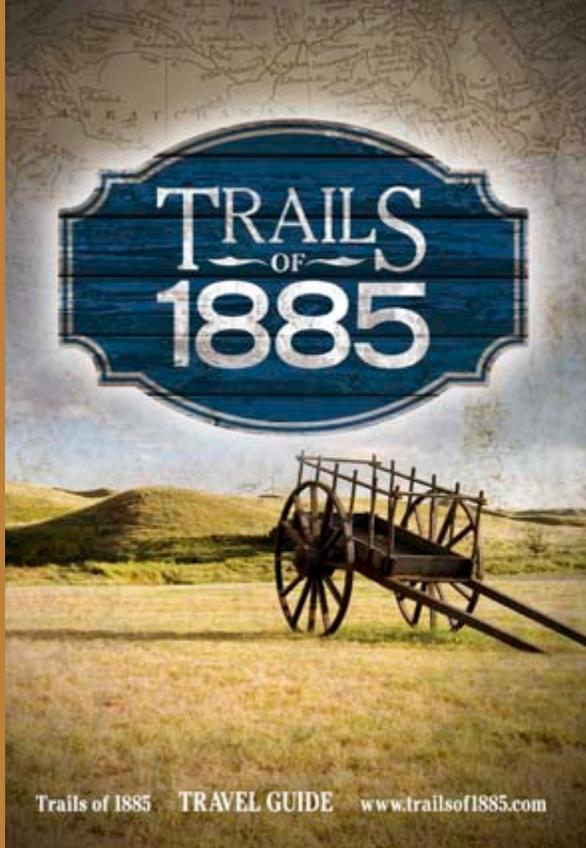
Trails of 1885 Bridges Cultures & Attracts Tourism

Historic Confrontations Set the Stage

For years, Saskatchewan residents have fostered a range of sites known for the dramatic events and intense personalities of the North West Resistance (formerly called the North West Rebellion) of 1885. These locations range from battle sites with major interpretive centres to remote meadows and hillsides where solitary historic markers recount stories from an almost mythical past.

A Goal Emerges; Steps are Taken

In 2006 a small group of tourism developers and historic site managers gathered in Saskatoon to discuss how these locations, and the stories they tell, could be brought together, invigorated, and collectively attract more visitors to the region. They chose a target for completing the first phase of these tasks: the 125th Anniversary of the North West Resistance (in 2010). Ian McGilp from Tourism Saskatchewan shared the following summary of some of the many steps they took:

1. Sites and historic locations were mapped and assessed, and an inventory of all possible 1885-related attractions in region was undertaken.

2. An initial meeting was held with stakeholders to determine their appetite for hosting visitors, and telling their stories in their own words.

3. Stakeholders became aware of, and started to accept, different interpretations and points of view about the events of 1885. It was noted, however, that First Nations stories had been missed in previous initiatives.

4. The group decided that other than the basic connection to the North West Resistance, there would be no common script.

5. A range of additional stakeholders were added to what became known the 1885 Coalition: provincial tourism organizations; federal, provincial, municipal, and community attractions; community museums; tour operators; accommodations; and First Nations and Métis Elders.

6. The group extended to Albertan sites involved in the Resistance, and to Manitoba, where the story of Louis Riel was already marketed to attract visitors.

7. They chose a Coalition project manager from one of the province's regional tourism marketing organizations familiar with many of the sites.

8. In 2008, approvals were obtained from federal, provincial, and municipal departments, and Tourism Saskatchewan for a cost-shared three-year project.

9. An Advisory Committee was formed of project funders, site administrators, tourism developers, First Nations Cultural College, Gabriel Dumont Institute, and other stakeholders.

10. The committee 'opened doors' for the Project Manager among Coalition members, different agencies, ministries, First Nations, Municipalities, and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.

11. Cultural requirements and sensitivities, language of delivery, interpretation and visuals were assessed.

12. A Trails of 1885 brand was developed, through significant relationship building by the project manager with individual First Nations and the Métis Nation.

13. In 2009 a website was established as a prelude to many activities planned for the 125th anniversary year.

14. The formal Year of the Métis and 125th Anniversary was launched with a major ceremony attended by dignitaries, dancers, drummers, fiddlers, actors, and Elders from Alberta and Saskatchewan. A huge elk hide proclamation was signed by the Federal and Provincial governments, First Nations, and Métis Nation acknowledging the significance of 1885 to the future of Canada.

The opening of the 125th anniversary celebrations was truly only the beginning. Major events were held throughout the year including the first-ever re-enactment of the Battle of Poundmaker Cree Nation; and 1885 ceremonies at the Marr (Field Hospital) Residence in Saskatoon, Fort Battleford, Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt, Steele Narrows, and Humboldt. The addition of *Trails of 1885* resulted in the largest ever attendance at the annual Métis homecoming festival "Back to Batoche Days".

To support long-term tourism benefits to the region, events were reinforced by capital projects such as highway improvements, highway signage, site signage, large maps at 1885 sites, multi-million dollar improvements at Batoche NHP, major improvements to the Duck Lake Regional Interpretive Centre, rededication of Tourond's Coulee/Fish Creek NHS, major infrastructure work at Fort Pitt, 'Wounded Warrior's Park' designation in Prince Albert, and others.

Promotion Critical

Promotional and other activities included the extensively distributed *Trails of 1885 Travel Guide*, the well-received 1885 website, mintage of a commemorative medallion, an essay-writing contest in schools, major daily radio spots from May through early September, pow wows, performances of "The Trial of Louis Riel", and more.

Three self-guided itineraries through the 1885 product clusters were developed: Valleys of the Saskatchewan, Battle River Country, and the North West Frontier, and a geo-caching project involving ten 1885 sites was launched.

Governance Adapts as Situation Changes

In 2011, the regional tourism association was discontinued and marketing responsibilities for its broad base of industry members were assumed by Tourism Saskatchewan. A new non-profit corporation "Trails of 1885 Association, Inc." was created. Its Board of Directors is currently in the process of developing priorities and a business plan to build on the momentum and successes of the last 5 years and take the 1885 project forward into the future.

Lessons Learned

"The main lessons learned have been around the importance of communication and respect," says McGilp. "The project saw the closest participation of First Nations, Métis Nation, and tourism interests in the commemoration of a series of major historic events that I can recall," a tribute to the dedication of project manager Colleen Norrish. "Keeping the stakeholders up to date on what is going and answering questions before they become issues has been vital."

He concludes, "The project has certainly met one of its main goals –to strive to increase visitation, and visitor satisfaction while developing cultural awareness locally, regionally, provincially, and nationally."

Find out more: www.trailsof1885.com

As communities use the knowledge gathered in their inventory, they will need to categorize available experiences in a way that shows their relative impact on the overall visitor experience. Thorne categorizes these in this way:

"**Lead experiences** are the destination's cultural/heritage tourism icons: its most developed and recognized cultural/ heritage experiences. These could be:

- a renowned museum or gallery
- a signature arts, heritage, or culinary festival
- a major First Nations attraction
- a significant historic site

Lead experiences have high standards of quality, authenticity, interpretation, and visitor service. Usually, lead experiences also have a tangible "wow factor."

Supporting experiences are the destination's second-tier cultural/ heritage experiences. Usually, but not necessarily, they are less developed than lead experiences and have less prominence in the tourism marketplace. Although they generally lack the "wow factor" of lead experiences, they are often no less culturally significant. Some examples that might fit this category:

- a farm or factory tour
- a cluster of antique shops
- a beautiful network of lake-side trails that encourage visitors to stay longer
- a walking tour of downtown

At minimum, supporting experiences have good or acceptable standards of quality, authenticity, interpretation, and visitor service.

Sustaining experiences are more limited in size and scope than lead or supporting experiences, but often help create memorable impressions of a community. They are sometimes seen as "tiny jewels" by visitors – for example:

- an artist studio that lies off the beaten track
- a menu inspired by regional cuisine featured at a rural restaurant loved by locals
- a well-designed interpretive kiosk at a scenic wayside
- a subject expert who provides the opportunity to learn something new, or to meet local people"

Thorne further observes that sustaining experiences, for example those provided by community museums and events produced by non-profit arts groups, can sometimes be constrained by limited resources. That said, sustaining experiences must, at minimum, have good or acceptable standards of quality, authenticity, interpretation, and visitor service.

When a community planning group assigns a cultural/heritage experience to one of these categories, it is not a value judgment on the experience. It is a helpful means for positioning each experience within a marketing campaign that promotes a wide range of community experiences.

Thorne describes the tool that he uses to help guide communities position their cultural/heritage experiences as a product positioning matrix (or PPM). Here is an example for the Human Heritage cluster:

Using the framework provided by Steven Thorne, your community should be on its way to discovering your cultural character–"a central element in destination planning. It solidifies a vision. It shapes the brand. It informs the marketing campaign through the development of themes. It provides a context for visitors to understand and interpret the destination's cultural experiences."

Human Heritage	Product Positioning Matrix			
Experience Types	Lead	Supporting	Sustaining	Total
Aboriginal heritage experiences				
Archaeological sites				
Architecture				
Archives				
Cultural & historical districts				
Decorative gardens				
Heritage events & festivals				
Heritage homes				
Heritage sites				
Human heritage museums				
Libraries				
Living history sites				
Monuments				
Streetscapes				
Other				
Total				

This next case study illustrates how a community can create and convey a brand that allows visitors a clear understanding of their cultural character.

Celebrating Identity through the Celtic Colours International Festival

The Right Time of Year

Each year, when the changing leaves of a Nova Scotia autumn add a splash of colour to the scenic Cape Breton Island landscape, a group of dedicated individuals work to coordinate the successful Celtic Colours International Festival. This event has grown over the last 15 years—and celebrates and develops the region's living Celtic culture and hospitality—while building cultural and economic relationships across Cape Breton and beyond. It's a draw for international artists, which increases visitor appeal, and helps builds strong global ties between artists.

A Region-Wide, Community-Centred Festival

The Festival takes place in communities all over Cape Breton Island—ranging from urban Sydney, with a population of 30,000, to small remote locations, First Nations and Acadian communities. Venues vary from a 2,000-seat arena to 120-seat community halls, and include churches, schools, halls, theatres and cultural centres. It now attracts visitors to experience over 300 artists at more than 40 shows, 200 community cultural events and a nightly Festival Club.

The festival has extended the tourism season by two months in Cape Breton by encouraging attendees to move around the island and enjoy the fall foliage while seeking out events. Celtic Colours does an annual survey to measure how much the audience spends during the festival. In 2010 that number was $6.2 million, spread widely throughout the island. Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation calculated that the overall economic impact to the region is now an impressive $15 million.

Authenticity and Visitor Service are Key

The Festival appeals to travellers because it is truly authentic, reflecting the real culture and flavour of the region. *Celtic Colours'* staff works with communities around the island to provide the best possible visitor experience, and to build local acceptance. Plans are realistic, based on the talents of the community volunteers, as well as specific attractions, accommodations and sources of support and enthusiasm. For example, a community without a restaurant will host a community-made dinner on the night of their concert. In Mabou, with many fine fiddlers and step-dancers to draw

upon, they offer workshops in traditional music to all ages and abilities.

This authenticity has paid off in high visitor satisfaction. In a recent survey of almost 1,000 festival-goers, 96% rated Cape Breton hospitality as excellent or good, and 91% rated the festival offerings and arrangements in the same high categories.

Recently the festival joined with other signature Gaelic attractions on Cape Breton Island (the Celtic Music Interpretive Centre, Highland Village Museum, and Gaelic College of Celtic Arts & Crafts) to form the *Celtic Heart of North America* marketing cooperative www.celticheart.ca, thus extending the reach of all partners.

Measuring Success

Celtic Colours has collected very detailed data on its audience, and the resulting economic impact. For example, according to National Car Rental statistics, the average contract for a Celtic Colours tourist was nine days while the average stay of other tourists throughout the season was 3.7 days. A report generated by Enterprise Cape Breton stated that 103 jobs and 34 spin-off jobs are created because of the festival.

2009 data shows 18,400 tickets were sold to 44 concerts and over 13,000 people attended almost 292 events. 58% of the audience travelled to the region for the festival (22% from mainland Nova Scotia, 20% from other Canadian regions, 13% from the US and 3% from as many as 20 other countries).

Providing Benefits to Locals

Festival staff are committed to ensuring economic benefits are spread throughout the region. Well over 300 of the performers are local, and performer's fees of $200,000 are distributed annually. An "Artist in Residence" program engages a local and a visiting artist to take on a special role during the festival, and the *Celtic Colours* off-season school program presents performances to 8,500 students.

The festival reports these benefits for communities:

- Tourism businesses are extending their season of operation.
- Communities are gaining confidence through working with festival staff on cultural events, and are planning events year-round.
- Community groups are upgrading local venues to meet festival standards.
- Local artists are now working full-time and touring abroad because of festival exposure.
- Young people are gaining job experience, and benefitting from the training provided by the festival.
- New marketing partnerships are being formed.

Celtic Colours partners closely with Gaelic cultural organizations by providing them with artists and promoting their events.

Recognition

This cultural/heritage tourism initiative is getting noticed: after receiving other awards over the years, in 2011 Celtic Colours International Festival was named the winner of the National Cultural Tourism Award, offered through the Tourism Industry Association of Canada.

"It is a great honour to be recognized on a national level," said Artistic Director Joella Foulds. "It is a testament to the attraction people have to our unique culture. Our focus has always been to present an authentic cultural experience within a world-class framework."

Robert Sampson, Chair of the Festival Society commented: "Cape Breton's unique Celtic heritage, its living culture and its special charm is what draws visitors. We enable our audience to get to know the culture in an intimate way by providing an authentic experience. Through this annual festival and its year-round influence, we have created a destination of choice for the Celtic cultural tourist."

Learn more: www.celtic-colours.com

With this foundational understanding in place, you are ready for the next step. You've moved beyond the basics of preparing your community's people, places and activities, to understanding and building on your cultural character. There are a few final considerations that will help move your strategy forward.

This concluding chapter discusses potential barriers to moving forward, and provides an introductory look at strategies for marketing cultural/heritage tourism products. It provides a brief section on opportunities to work with colleges/universities, and ideas for ongoing strategy evaluation.

10.1 Barriers to Culture and Tourism Partnerships

Cultural/heritage tourism champions need to be passionate, but at the same time pragmatic. While satisfying, working with cultural/heritage and tourism stakeholders can also yield frustrations. For instance, governments at every level may be unable to fund heritage property maintenance, or provide low levels of financial support for arts and for cultural enterprises.

Culture-tourism partnerships are critical, however, some cultural/heritage and arts organizations may be reluctant to partner with tourism and economic development groups. These concerned citizens may perceive a move towards tourism as commoditization. They may have never considered how community-based tourism development can help contribute to the fiscal health of arts and heritage organizations. And they may have been turned off by terms such as "products". By the same token, however, carefully chosen words such as "experience economy", backed by case studies such as the ones in this book, can help to bridge the gap between arts/culture and tourism planners.

Today's successful destinations—whether urban or rural, large or small—have earned attention from their target markets by paying attention to their needs and wants, and providing what these markets are looking for.

10.2 Involve Your Local Colleges & Universities

Many Canadian colleges and universities offer tourism and arts education and training. When developing a cultural/heritage tourism strategy, community organizations should consider how these institutions might contribute.

A number of these programs offer committed and experienced faculty and students to assist with research, development, and promotional tasks related to cultural/heritage tourism development, which may include:

- Undertaking a resident perception survey and analyzing the results.
- Contributing to a community tourism inventory.
- Completing online research into the current marketing strategies of competing destinations.
- Formulating a marketing and communications strategy for cultural/heritage tourism partnerships.
- Developing initial exhibit concepts and design for a cultural tourism attraction.

When hiring, consider the graduates of these programs, as they can complement the (very necessary) work undertaken by professional consultants and other organizations.

10.3 Market for Success: Special Considerations

As a community-based strategy begins to emerge, the attention will soon turn to marketing. How to fund? What to promote? Who to lead? What themes? What key messages? What approaches to take?

This section is not a comprehensive guide to destination marketing (see Learn More for specific resources on marketing), but will give you a high-level overview of marketing plan components that could follow the development of a local strategy.

Promote the Whole Community to Serve Different Interests

For communities, recognizing the overlapping interests of cultural/heritage travellers is important, as is featuring all of a destination's cultural experiences within a single marketing campaign.

Being Ready

Before proceeding with marketing, you must ensure attractions and experiences being promoted are ready to deliver on the destination brand and marketing promise. As you consider individual marketing participants, ask yourself if they are47:

Export Ready

A business that markets to and through travel trade distribution channels, understands commission or net rate pricing, and agrees to trade bookings and a cancellation policy. Represents a high degree of reliability/predictability in offering high-quality visitor experiences.

Market Ready

A business that markets to potential visitors in their planning stages, communicates with potential visitors year-round, and is ready to accept advance reservations.

Visitor Ready

A business that has all its licenses, permits and insurance in place, in order to operate legally.

It's important to match the marketing tools and audience with the right product readiness. Higher-end consumers may expect export-ready experiences, whereas local and rubber tire (driving distance) guests may be perfectly comfortable with a visitor-ready attraction.

A community-based cultural/heritage tourism campaign needs purpose-built marketing platforms. These may include a website, a printed visitor guide, and social-media tools.

Experts like Thorne and White explain that products and marketing platforms work together to communicate the destination's overall sense of place, and to help visitors to navigate all of the traveling options in the destination. Whether your marketing platform is stand-alone or part of a broader tourism, cultural/heritage or local government package depends on your circumstances and the relationships you form with partners.

Collaboration between museums, historic sites and hotels can involve discounted admissions to sites or "packages" of accommodation, transportation, and admissions. Museums in many Canadian communities have successfully partnered with downtown hotels and like-minded restaurants for several years. Tickets to events or festivals often offer coupons to visit other community businesses in a 'cluster'.

Develop an Effective Website

Given the enormous growth of the internet as a tool for finding and booking tourism activities, it's no surprise Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) have been working very hard to understand how tourism operators can make best use of the internet and its cousin, social media.

Tourism British Columbia (TBC) recently completed a guidebook on internet marketing, with two key concepts that apply nationally. The first demonstrates how prospective visitors go through the process of deciding where to go and what to do. TBC calls this the Purchase Funnel[48], with the number of people declining with each successive step:

The Purchase Funnel
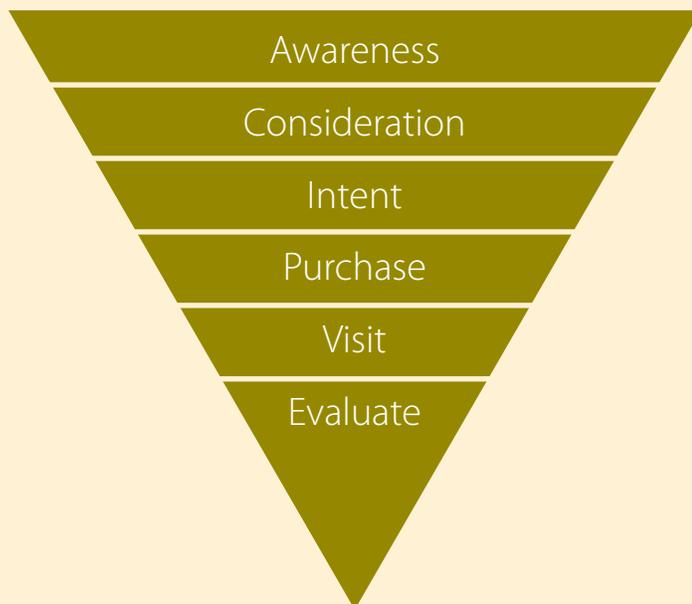
- **Awareness** is when a person knows about a destination, tourism product or experience.
- **Consideration** is when a person has shortlisted a destination, tourism product or experience amongst other potential options.
- **Intent** is when a person is planning a visit in the foreseeable future.
- **Purchase** is when a person has bought a product or package.
- **Visit** is when the guest goes to the destination or does the product or experience.
- **Evaluate** comes after the visit, when the person has developed opinions about the quality of the experience, whether expectations were met, the potential for a repeat visit, and whether they would recommend the experience to friends, family, or on websites like TripAdvisor.

Tourism marketers must work carefully through ALL of these steps to achieve consistent success.

The second key concept is the idea of using all of the tools available to achieve your goals. That means developing an online marketing strategy for your community that makes full use of digital tools combined with the power of partnerships. TBC suggests your strategy should include these factors:

Online Marketing Strategy

- 3rd Party Websites
- eMail Marketing
- Online Display
- Social Media
- Search Engines
- Website
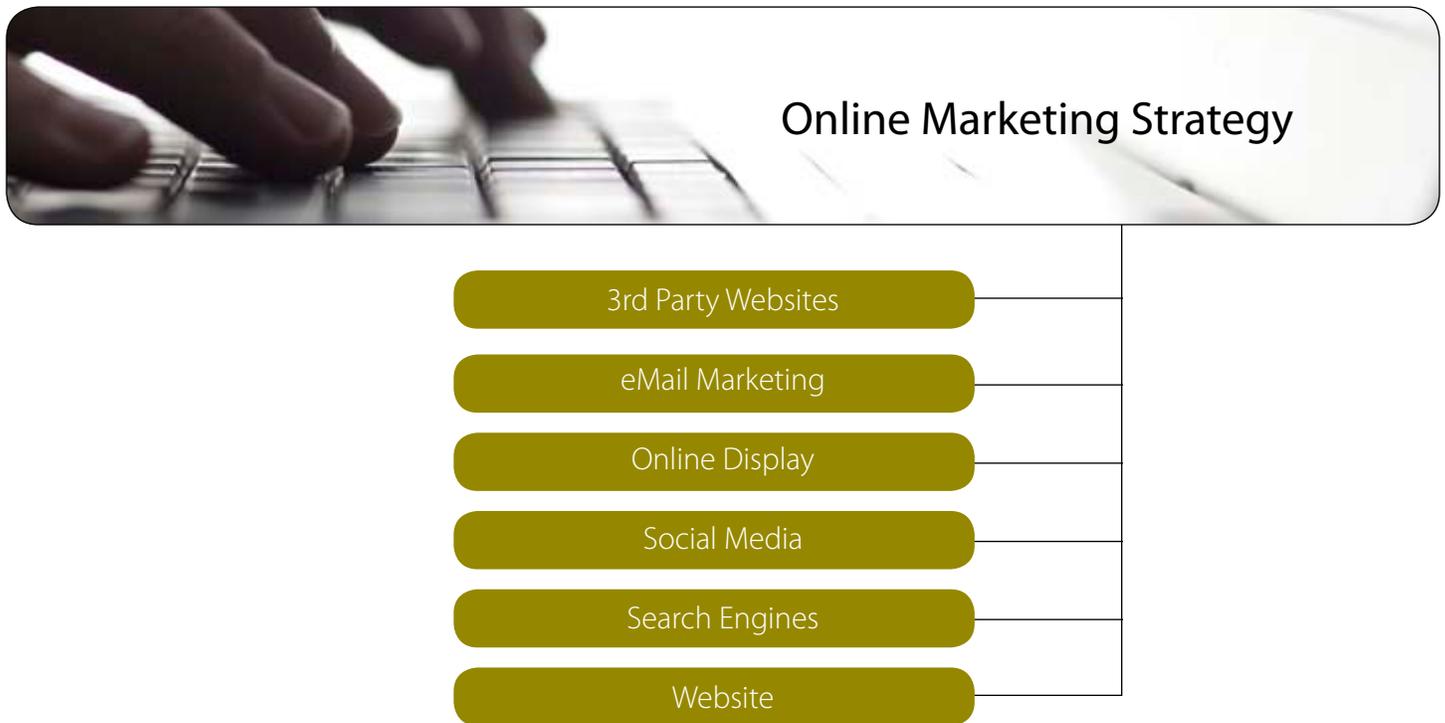
Your Provincial/Territorial tourism association, or regional DMO, should be able to provide you with the latest news on what's current in internet marketing. Tourism BC suggests your website should set its sights on these goals[49]:

- Encourage people to request more information.
- Collect information from your site visitors so you can contact them directly.
- Promote your tourism business and its products and services.
- Promote your community or region.
- Allow users to make an information or reservation request through your website.
- Allow users to make a purchase or reservation directly through your website.

Beyond creating and operating an effective online marketing presence, the experts also recommend you pay close attention to what others are saying about you. See the TBC publication *Tourism Business Essentials: Online Reputation Management* for details.

The next case study, about successful internet marketing in Stratford, Ontario, may provide you with inspiration. It demonstrates ways a destination can match community-wide marketing efforts to a target market, and employ a range of online communications tools, to establish a recognized brand with consumers.

Community-Based Internet Marketing Draws Visitors to Stratford

Canada's Premier Art Town

In most areas of tourism, there are one or two communities that "set the bar" for good practice. For the Canadian cultural tourism industry, one such town is Stratford, Ontario. Over the past few years, it has made great strides in developing a highly effective set of approaches to online marketing. Eugene Zakreski, executive director of the Stratford Tourism Alliance, shared their journey with us.

Moving to a Four-Season Destination Prompts Innovation

In 2006, the founders of the Alliance, a private-public tourism marketing organization, recognized it had to be an innovative leader. The goal was to expand on Stratford's reputation as home of the Shakespeare Festival, into positioning the community as a vibrant, four seasons tourism destination. After extensive research, the Alliance defined its sense of place and personae based on the "3 Cs" – character, culture and cuisine, which they determined to be their best competitive assets.

Attracting Younger Visitors

The 3 Cs holistic strategy positioned Stratford as more than just a serious theatre destination. While the alliance could have chosen to cultivate traditional festival clientele, who tended to represent an older demographic, they chose instead to focus on younger cultural tourists seeking multiple experiential getaways.

The most important priority for the team was capitalizing on the internet and its profound effect on consumer behaviour in terms of sourcing, shopping and buying leisure getaways. The team was aware that the younger population was "wedded to the Web, with its complex of information, social platforms and entertainment options," says Zakreski "but we also recognized that the older market was its fastest growing user group." He adds that Stratford did not have a large marketing budget compared to competitors, and required efficient tracking of their process. For these reasons "we embarked on a strategy whereby over 75% of our consumer advertising campaigns and 'shelf-presence' would be online by 2009."

Internet Strategy Developed

In 2007 they engaged a professional internet strategy partner and over the next 24 months launched campaigns, tested different tactics, and adapted their strategies based on the results. Says Zakreski: "If we were the 'new' Stratford, the creative messaging had to be fun – e.g. 'Come for the chocolate, Stay for the Plays' – and there needed to be a different approach to our marketing. We completely revamped the tone, content and design of our Web Site, www.visitstratford.ca increasing the content by 200% with significant improvements in navigation."

Branching Out on the Web

Given the importance and appeal of video, the team decided to use it to entertain – creating short and witty, conversational video testimonials by famous residents of Stratford listing their "5 Favourite Things about Stratford". They also used videos to inform – offering a number of short attraction profiles, featuring everything from the gardens of Stratford to shopping, dining, and walks. To engage the younger market further, a successful YouTube channel was created to showcase Stratford's videos to a wider audience. To further help people plan their visit, they created 13 fictional characters whose individual tastes, ranging from "I like food" to "I like heritage architecture" provide a snap-shot as to how to spend 48 hours in Stratford based on one's interests.

Zakreski shared a number of strategies & tactics they've employed since:

- Launched seven seasonal digital marketing campaigns annually, from winter campaigns (Victorian Christmas and Stratford Unplugged) to the Swan Weekend in spring, as well as summer and fall seasonal sites.

- Invested in experientially-driven online campaigns, from the Spring Heritage Festival to Savour Stratford, a culinary program, each with specific campaign websites. Each is supported with paid online advertising (Google AdWord buys and banner ads), a customized media plan based on high-traffic sites for cultural tourists, and advertising on Facebook.

- Since 2009, they have operated 2 Twitter channels with daily conversations and 2 social blogs.

- Sending two monthly e-newsletters to 8,000 subscribers – one targeting general visitors with special offers and another for those interested in culinary experiences.

- To expand reach, they formed a partnership with a Toronto entertainment and social website that appeals to 20 and 30-somethings. The site now features monthly editorials and videos about Stratford.

- The team recognized and responded to trends in multi-platform online experiences, designing a mobile version of their site at m.visitstratford.ca last spring.

- Over the past year, they've launched mobile ad campaigns including a Visit Stratford app with features such as augmented real time, allowing the user to create personal itineraries and share Stratford experiences with friends using Twitter and Facebook. The app is a means to plan a trip in advance, a digital guide when in Stratford, and serves as a social media platform.

- Closing the marketing loop, the team is now updating print advertising and guides with digital features in the form of QR codes, also mentioned in the PEI Showcase. The content and tone of self-guided heritage tours has been updated and now each stop features a QR code, accessed by a smartphone, that provides an additional 1-2 minute audio commentary for each site.

Find out more: www.visitstratford.ca

Significant Growth Noted

Says Zakreski: "The results of our efforts have been significant, with triple-digit growth in visitors to our various websites over the past few years, double-digit growth in visitors to Stratford in the fall, winter and spring seasons, and noticeably younger adult couples enjoying the Stratford Experience."

Stratford's profile as a holistic cultural destination has increased. The *Savour Stratford Culinary Festival* was named Best Culinary Experience in Ontario for 2010, and the Alliance was awarded the Culinary Tourism Leadership award in 2011. AOL Canada recently named Stratford as the top culinary destination in Canada. TripAdvisor named Stratford one of the top 10 Canadian cultural destinations for 2010, and the Canadian Tourism Commission named Stratford in the top five romantic destinations.

But the alliance isn't stopping there. "On the drawing boards is the launch of an outdoor digital art festival," says Zakreski, "applying digital video technology to project imagery on six or seven historical buildings in Stratford's downtown heritage district, every weekend over an 8-week period. Our aim is to not only use digital media to promote the 3Cs Stratford Experience but to also create a new attraction, reinforcing our claim as Canada's premier arts town."

What image or identity do you want to create in the minds of potential visitors? This will shape customers' expectations, creating your 'position'.

Ask your target visitors for their opinion of your destination and individual attractions, and how they think these stand out 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 will help position your experience.

Use Powerful Images

The images you use in all marketing collateral should be so strong and compelling that readers/viewers will want to experience your offer—now!

Choose images based on their power to evoke the feelings or emotions connected with the cultural/heritage tourism experience. Showcase people actively engaged and having fun. Use pictures to convey the sense that this is like nowhere else, and a must-see destination.

When selecting your images, consider:

- Are the images 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 feel authentic and real, not posed?
- Are people in the photos reflective of your target markets (age, interests, etc.)?
- Are your images reflecting your best assets?
- Are they all of professional quality? Bad photos are not better than none at all! Invest time and resources in good images.
- Do the images make you want to engage in the experience?
- Have you included detailed images of local art?
- Are you using high-resolution images, appropriate for the medium?
- Do you have permission to use the images, including permission of people in the images?
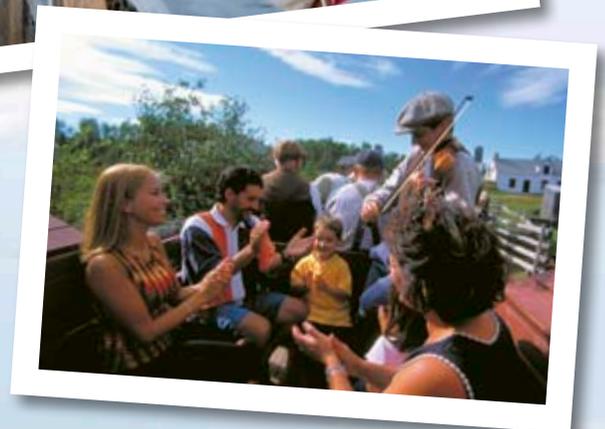
Few tourism businesses or cultural attractions can afford to create in-house marketing campaigns for all target audiences on their own. Most rely on relationships with partners. Often suppliers and providers of complementary products and experiences are willing to share marketing costs. They may also include your offerings in their marketing initiatives at a reduced cost to you.

A Fine Example

A marketing campaign focusing on a "special place" that evokes an emotional response is at the heart of Tourism Newfoundland and Labrador's recent tourism campaign. The consumer appeal is around friendliness, unique culture, cuisine, and dramatically scenic landscapes that are filled with interesting stories.
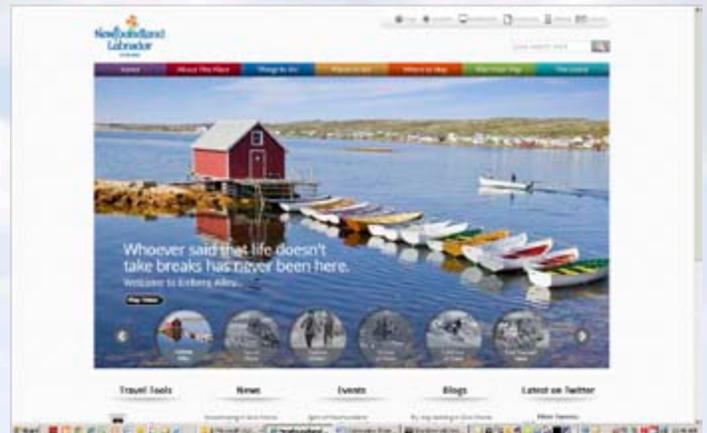
Don't forget! The cultural/heritage experience is:

Authentic *- the real story*

Quality *- professional presentation*

Unique *- something different*

Regular monitoring and evaluation of your community-based cultural/heritage tourism strategy is essential. This will measure the level of visitor satisfaction with your community, and help determine what may need to be adjusted.

Taking these steps will:

- Verify the extent to which cultural/heritage programs in your strategy are meeting their intended goals or objectives.

- Identify the profile and origin of visitors coming to the destination and detect changes in the profiles of those coming.

- Assess levels of visitor satisfaction with the community, and of individual attractions and experiences.

- Improve marketing methods to reduce cost and increase efficiencies.

- Examine visitor behaviour once at the destination.

- Determine trends in visitor revenues and economic impact in the community.

- Assess the quality of facilities, services, and levels of visitor service.

- Test responses to new or proposed programs, services, or promotional materials.

Choosing Evaluation Tools

Once you decide what you are trying to measure as a part of your evaluation process, you can determine the best tools to use. Ideally, two or three methods should be used in order to get a complete picture of overall performance. Here are some suggested approaches:

- **Visitor Guestbook or Comment Cards.** Provide visitors an opportunity to comment on their experiences at your facility. Reviewing guest comments is the simplest way to check the pulse of your visitor's experience and allows you to address issues or concerns promptly.

- **Admission Statistics.** Encourage admissions staff to keep statistics about ages, numbers in the group, and anything else you want to track. Ask guests where they are visiting from or what they plan to do. Keep a record so attendance numbers and demographics can be tracked on a daily, weekly and/or monthly basis.

- **Product Sales.** Every cultural or heritage tourism business with a retail component should be recording sales on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

- **Visitor Survey/Questionnaire.** Compile a survey or questionnaire that does not overwhelm the visitor (i.e. 5-10 min. max.) Questions should measure different aspects of the visitor's experience and the overall cultural/heritage tourism strategy. Surveys can be administered on site, or using a free online survey program.

- **Conversations with Visitors.** Have all staff regularly ask visitors about their experience. Find out what they liked and didn't like, how they heard about you, and what services or products they would like to see. Most of the time visitors are pleased to talk about their experiences!

- **Web Analytics and Social Media.** Applications such as Google Alerts will notify you of blog and twitter mentions, news articles, and web mentions relating to your business and your competitors.

- **Addictomatic (www.addictomatic.com).** This searches the web for the latest in related news, blog posts, videos and images—and lets you know what people are saying about your business, attraction or special event.

- **Monitor web statistics.** Do this for all websites that promote your cultural/heritage tourism strategy.

- **Travel Blogs.** Consider using Trip Advisor (www.tripadvisor.com) and other similar sites as part of your regular evaluation program. Beyond data analysis, this is another useful way of communicating with your customers. Answer any feedback directly, and if users have been less than satisfied, offer to fix the problem in plain view of your other users.

The next step in the process is to analyze the findings and feed them back into decision-making for future adjustments. Your task force can begin by asking questions such as:

- Does the information collected show we've reached our goals?

- Does the data highlight any specific initiatives that are working well?

- Does the information identify any problems that need to be tackled?

- Are we attracting the kinds of visitors we targeted? Are there seasonal differences?

- Does the information indicate all partners agree on goals and programming objectives?

- Have we been able to handle any traffic increases to the community? What are the implications for staffing and visitor services?

- Does the evidence show we're providing authentic experiences?

- What new opportunities have been identified, and how can we address these?

Gathering data on a regular basis is just the first step. The important factor is how this information is incorporated in ongoing community-based cultural/heritage tourism planning! Depending on available resources, consider whether expertise or additional help should be brought in (e.g. a professional research team, or a group of college/university tourism students).

This next case study demonstrates how a cultural/heritage tourism operation might use research and monitoring to turn detractors into supporters. You'll note that this festival has kept close records of attendance, employment stats, and visitor spend, all important factors in making a case for continued operations.

Le Pays de la Sagouine – from Zero to Community Hero

Acadian Theatre Performance Starts with a Controversy

A once-controversial cultural endeavour is now a revered celebration of Acadian heritage and an economic mainstay of the small town of Bouctouche, on New Brunswick's Northumberland shore. It's hard to imagine now, but one of New Brunswick's most popular and successful cultural and tourist attractions, *Le Pays de la Sagouine*, almost ended before it began. That was in 1992, when some local community leaders took umbrage to the way the event portrayed the Acadian heroine as poor and uneducated. Others thought the proposed new cultural tourism amenity would steal business away from other hospitality enterprises in town.

Originally developed as an article by Alec Bruce and published in Atlantic Business Magazine, adapted with permission from the author

A Celebration Invites Visitors to Join In

Vision, however, prevailed over scepticism, and today the summer-long celebration of Acadian culture and humour is a vital economic anchor for this part of the province. The live performances are based entirely on novelist Antonine Maillet's celebrated 1971 book La Sagouine, which consists of 16 monologues delivered by a female protagonist sharing her insights on raising a brood during the Dirty Thirties.

Through performances, dinner theatre and other experiences all inspired by Maillet's writing, visitors are now encouraged to "discover an Acadian cultural destination presenting our artists and artisans, our music, our culture and history, our traditional cuisine and fresh sea foods—and our joie de vivre!" The community also adds appeal to prospective Le Pays visitors by promoting the natural attractions of the surrounding area. Its website boasts "with its wide-open spaces, silken shores, wind-swept sand and waterways too numerous to count, Bouctouche is an ecological paradise where the air is clean and nature unspoiled."

"We get anywhere from 55,000 to 85,000 visitors a year, from all over the region, Quebec and even the United States," says the event's director, Marie-France Doucet. "Certainly a lot of bed and breakfasts, motels and inns have been built to accommodate the people who come. And other tourism attractions, such as the Irving Eco-centre, were actually created since Le Pays."

Resistance Turns to Support

Indeed, according to a 2007 online article by Erin Schultz and Paul LeBlanc, the site's former director, "the development of Le Pays de la Sagouine has had a profound impact on the community of Bouctouche and the province of New Brunswick. A recent economic impact study found that, as one of the most prominent tourist attractions in the province, the waterfront site and its attractions have contributed significantly to the economic growth of the entire region. Everything in the town has come to revolve around La Sagouine. Before Le Pays de la Sagouine was built, there were perhaps a handful of bed and breakfasts in the entire town, but now there are dozens. Other significant tourist attractions have also opened in the region. Business owners, who were initially concerned over the construction of a competing business area, now credit the site for their increased success."

Making University Connections

Moreover, Schultz and LeBlanc reported, "Le Pays de la Sagouine also provides summer employment to approximately 150 people every year. The facility has developed a close relationship with the nearby University of Moncton, which provides an excellent source of seasonal employees. A number of art and theatre students spend their summers working at Le Pays de la Sagouine, practicing their trade and gaining valuable experience, and many of the actors continue to work there after graduation. Thirty or 40 additional staff, many also students, are hired in the food and beverage facilities or as interpreters and guides."

Facilities and Offerings Expand

Le Pays' offerings include theatres, a canteen, a gift shop, a dinner venue, and most crucially actress Viola Léger as La Sagouine, and a troupe of eight comedians in a tale of resilience and adaptability. The attraction has proven equally resilient. In 2008, its restaurant burned down and was rebuilt. Yet, says Doucet, "Last year, we doubled the number of bus tours. We also started a show in English which plays every Sunday evening. We now have a lot of Anglophones, and we offer English-language tours."

Le Pays is now a community-based cultural/heritage tourism institution with an annual operating budget of some $3 million (65% is generated by the facilities; the rest comes from private sponsorship and government grants). It remains an indefatigable part of the broader provincial community—something its early detractors, now fans, would never have imagined.

Find out more: www.sagouine.com

Tourism is often called "the business of fun", and culture and heritage is certainly a pleasant topic for most people. So enjoy this work and celebrate your milestones: not only will it make the tasks more pleasant, it will encourage others to join in by publicly demonstrating that you're making progress.

Find ways to celebrate and acknowledge contributors to your vision, and the small steps you achieve on your road to success. Gather your advisory panel and planning team for a barbeque, hold your next meeting at a popular visitor attraction, or give out awards to honour members of your team who have made special contributions.

Through this handbook, we trust you've been inspired to think of ways you can serve as a stronger champion to move cultural/heritage tourism along in your community. We hope we've shown how cultural/heritage tourism can contribute to your community's economic and social objectives, and provided motivation for you.

Use this guide as a starting point, and cultural/heritage tourism will make your community a better place for both visitors *and* residents.

Appendix 1: Resources

You may wish to consult these resources, a selection of helpful tools and stories from communities across Canada and other countries. Where weblinks are not provided, a keyword search of the author/organization and title should yield results.

1. Australia Heritage Commission. Successful Tourism at Heritage Places: www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications.

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3. Bonavista Institute for Cultural Tourism: www.bonavistainstitute.ca/programs.

4. Canadian Tourism Commission. (2007). Experiences: A Toolkit for Partners of the Canadian Tourism Commission.

5. Civic Tourism: www.civictourism.org/strategies2.html

6. Creative City Network Toolkits. www.creativecity.ca/resources/ccnc-publications-mainmenu-169/toolkits.

7. Creative City Network of Canada: Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities (bibliography on cultural planning): www.creativecity.ca/cecc.

8. Heritage Tourism Alliance (BC): Market Ready Standards. http://timetravelbc.com/market-ready-standards.

9. Historic Preservation Division Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Heritage Tourism Handbook—A Guide for Georgia: www.gashpo.org.

10. International Cultural Tourism Charter – Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance: the International Council on Monuments and Sites.

11. LinkBC network. Transforming Communities through Tourism: a Workbook for Community Champions: www.torc-ttracanada.ca

12. Museum Association of Arizona et al. (2000). Cultural Heritage Tourism: Practical Applications: www.azhumanities.org/pdf/chtwrkbk.pdf.

13. Ontario Ministry of Tourism. (2009). Ontario Cultural and Heritage Tourism Product Research Paper: www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/Ontario_Cultural_and_Heritage_Tourism.pdf

14. Packaging the Potential: A Five-Year Business Strategy for Cultural and Heritage Tourism In Canada , Canadian Tourism Commission.

15. Partners In Tourism, Culture, and Commerce: www.culturalheritagetourism.org

16. Travel Activities and Motivations Survey: Culture and Entertainment Reports.

17. Texas Historical Commission. Heritage Tourism Handbook: www.thc.state.tx.us.

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21. Wales Tourist Board. (2002). Sense of Place Toolkit.

22. www.clwydianrangeaonb.org.uk/brand_central/senseofplacetoolkit/ClwydianRange_SOPT.pdf

23. Welcome! A How To Manual to Enhance Community Signage and Visitor Experience. 2007. Tourism Research and Innovation Project. www.trip-project.ca

24. White, B. (2011). Reshaping for Arts and Cultural Connectivity. Royal Roads University.

Appendix 2: Endnotes

The following sources were adapted to form key concepts and themes presented in this handbook. Please consult for more information:

1. BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation. (2001). Research Division Presentation.

2. Richard Florida is director of the Martin Prosperity Institute, University of Toronto, martinprosperity.org.

3. Canadian Tourism Commission. (1999). Packaging the Potential: A Five-Year Business Strategy for Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Canada. Ottawa: CTC.

4. World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission. (2005). City Tourism and Culture – The European Experience. Retrieved November 30, 2011 from www.etc-corporate.org/resources/uploads/ETC_CityTourism&Culture_LR.pdf

5. Texas Historical Commission. (2011). What is Heritage Tourism? Retrieved Nov 30, 2011 from www.thc.state.tx.us/faqs/faqht.shtml

6. Institute of Museum Services, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. (1995). Cultural Tourism in the United States: A Position Paper for the White House Conference on Travel and Tourism.

7. Commonwealth of Australia, (1994). Creative Nation: Commonwealth Cultural Policy. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

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11. Shilling, D., Arizona Humanities Council, & Museum Association of Arizona. (2000). Heritage Tourism: Practical Applications. Phoenix: Museum Association of Arizona, Arizona Humanities Council. www.azhumanities.org/pdf/chtwrkbk.pdf

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17. American Planning Association. (2011). Community Character: How Arts and Cultural Strategies Create, Reinforce and Enhance Sense of Place. Retrieved November 30, 2011 from www.planning.org/research/arts/briefingpapers/character.htm

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26. Ontario Ministry of Tourism. (2007). Travel Activities and Motivations of Canadian Residents: An Overview.

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This learning resource was commissioned by, and received financial support from,
the Federal-Provincial Territorial Ministers' Table on Culture and Heritage (FPT).

Aussi offert en français sous le titre: Tourisme Culturel/Héritage : guide pour champions communautaires.