

Tourism Package Development Workshop #1 Summary

From November 23, 2012

1. PARTICIPANTS

Accommodations:

Ahmic Lake Resort
Wilson Lake Resort
40 Bay Street B&B
Comfort Inn
Bayside Inn
Rocky Crest
Dannygraig B&B
Wasauksing Marina & Campground
Wawanaisa Resort

Experiences:

Red Rock EcoAdventure
Chippewa Cruise
White Squall
Bear Claw Tours
Georgian Bay Airways
Johnston's Cranberry Marsh
Kudos Kuisine
Lick's Home Burgers
Stockey Centre
Museum on Tower Hill
Bearly Used Books

Supporting Organizations: RTO12 – Explorers' Edge, Georgian Bay Country, Canadore College, Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve.

2. RESEARCH & TOOLS ... you were asking:

- Who is the target market?
- Focus on prime season or shoulder seasons?
- Types of travelers & their values?
- Do schedules/itineraries motivate or turn away potential customers?
- Having one main activity in the middle of the stay, and add other interesting activities on the other days.
- The option of staying at one accommodation vs. multiple accommodations.

- Focus and segment, can't go after the entire audience, need to determine who to target. For ecotourism, consider targeting the Germans and other Europeans. Community need; market research. Some existing resources available.

- Maps! – local maps for self-guided hikes, cycling maps, trail maps – all in one
- Shuttle service eg. Kayak from X to Gilly's and get shuttle back to hotel; shuttle for a daytrip somewhere, etc.

3. THEMES, KEY WORDS - EXPERIENCES

Results from all groups that were brainstorming package themes and possibilities. These included half-day, full-day, and weekend experiences.

Art, craftspeople, studio tours	Maple syrup
ATVs	Motorcycles
Bicycles, cycling tours	Outdoor/wilderness skills
Bird watching	Painting on location (Group of 7)
Catering, cooking, eating, dining	Personal Water Craft tour/route
Craftspeople, demonstrations	Photography
Culinary specialties	Picnics
Cultural, history	Pottery
Depot Harbour	Pow Wow
Dinner cruise	RV, KOA, camping
Dinner & a show	Salt Dock Trail, Rose Point Trail
Farm tours	Self-guided tours
First Nations culture, art	Shuttles for guests
Fishing, cook-what-you-catch	Snowmobile tours, point-to-point
Golf	Snowshoe hikes
Guided tours	Spas
Hiking, day hikes, overnight hikes	Stockey show
History	Trapping
Horseback-riding	Trapping
Kayaking	Winter options (ski, snowmobile)
Leadership training	Yacht rental
Maps – trails, hiking, cycling	

4. TOP EXPERIENCES TO DEVELOP (in no particular order)

Access to islands...
Cultural – First Nations
Camping + Cultural event
Outdoor multiple experiences
Cycling Tours (bike rental, self-guided, spot-to-spot)
Depot Harbour – cultural & historical interpretation
Hiking, walking, trails (guided or self-guided with maps)
Winter activities (snowshoe, sculpture, hot chocolate)

5. RESEARCH for this region shows that our biggest attractions are:

- Boating & water activities
- Outdoor recreation & adventure
- Georgian Bay shoreline & islands & lakes
- Camping
- Cottage life
- Family resorts & cabin rentals
- Killbear & other parks
- Fishing & hunting
- Trails
- Towns & villages
- Art, studios, culinary
- Festivals & events

(Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership & RTOs. Consumer Insight Study. June 2012 available at www.rto12.ca)

Group discussion raised several possible target markets, including:

Weddings, honeymoons

Family reunions

Europeans (Germans)

Seniors

Older couples

Disabilities/accessibility

Package tours vs. independent travellers

Corporate retreats, training

Local residents – although not an external market; some locals purchase packages for themselves or their guests.

6. Marketing Ideas (to be developed at Workshop #3 January 17th)

1. Having a variety of videos/pictures available for tourists to view on a main website
 2. Use existing networks, such as email lists, to promote newsletter by operators.
 3. E.g. James Bay group, sends out 4 times a year a packages brochure, each operator adds their package to it and a range of options is presented to customers.
 4. Biking, invite a known group to bike the area and blog/write about it, niche market and with appropriate social marketing, consider getting them to do a cycling video.
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Workshop Feedback – Online Survey Results

N= 20 people sent; 8 returned = 25% response rate

1. How did you hear about the workshop?

85% heard through GBC email

15% heard through word of mouth

2. Do you think package development will help your business?

75% yes

25% maybe

3. Was this workshop useful to you?

37.5% useful workshop (strong #5)

37.5% useful workshop (medium #4)

25 % useful workshop (neutral #3)

4. What was the most useful part of the workshop?

85.7% Networking

57.1% Inspiration for my own business

28.6% The need for packages & experiences

14.3% Information on tourism partners

Comments: As 1 participant said at my table - we've done this a million times. The problem is that no one is available to deal with the administrative end of setting a program up first and foremost - negotiating terms etc.

5. If you were going to proceed with a package please summarize: your market, the theme and any other details in a nutshell:

Camping with sport fishing, cultural events.

26/11/2012 9:48 AM

Culinary package, combined with an outdoor activity to attract couples and families

24/11/2012 12:02 AM

History and the arts. Target market would be individuals interested in a relaxing learning weekend. Individuals interested in learning about a culture and experiencing it.

24/11/2012 9:45 AM

Presently: families and bringing them together in a natural setting. Maybe: experience some thrill while on weekly cottage vacation

23/11/2012 5:15 PM

As an accommodation facility we are willing to work with many partners to complete packages

23/11/2012 4:15 PM

6. Would you be interested in partnering with Canadore on a learning vacation? (This could be a one day, weekend, or longer package).

50% Yes

50% Maybe

0% No

7. If you were the CEO of "Experience Georgian Bay" package offering company... what two or three packages do you think would sell in this area?

Comments:

Natural environment, sport fishing, destination on the water dining

26/11/2012 9:48 AM

I don't think it should be Experience Georgian Bay - that isn't what my guests think of when they come here - they think of Parry Sound. That has been the biggest problem that Georgian Bay Country has faced.

25/11/2012 9:38 AM

outdoor activities to see places behind regular tourists. maybe a round tour from place to place, one way you go with a plane, from the next stop with a bike, from the next stop do a hike to the next destination and then a kayak or canoetrip to the next stop. sleep at resort,cottage or room, B&B, hotel,etc.

24/11/2012 12:02 AM

1) Explore the Bay - kayaking, hiking, camping 2) Explore the History - Stay at a non-franchised hotel, walking tours of historic sites, a tour of Depot Harbour, visit to the Museums, tour of DIL

compound. 3) Arts Tours - Stay at a non-franchised hotel, eating at local eateries, tour of art studios, tours of historic sites or art sites (murals, public art), show at the Stockey Centre
24/11/2012 9:45 AM

1. traditional basic self catering family accommodation with history tour, shore lunch. Enter a sport event. 2. Camping with kayak and learn about native culture 3. Tour the bay on foot, bike, by canoe, etc. Sort of all in one. Accommodation, transportation, bike, canoe, etc provided.

23/11/2012 5:15 PM [View Responses](#)

8. If you were a tourist coming here what would you personally like to experience?

Camping, cultural events and water's edge events

26/11/2012 9:48 AM

My guests come for the water and islands.

25/11/2012 9:38 AM

history, hiking, explore islands, explore the beautiful inlands and lakes. explore where locals like to go and do.

24/11/2012 12:02 AM

Camping trip kayaking round the islands, Cross Country skiing (I think it would be fun to 'backpack' across the area on ski's)

24/11/2012 9:45 AM

warm water of Georgian Bay. swim from rock to rock. camping. simple cottage vacation.

9. Do you plan to attend the next 2 sessions?

Dec. 13th 87.5% YES

Jan. 17th 87.5% YES

Canadore College appreciates the Tourism Product Development Funding from Explorers' Edge for this project.

