

Tourism Package Development Workshop #4 Summary

February 7, 2013

This report highlights the workshop held on February 7, 2013 at Canadore. This workshop was the 4th in a series on tourism product development. Below is a summary of results, some recommendations, outcomes of the group discussion on use of the Biosphere Brand, the Agenda, the list of participants, and evaluation results.

The workshop on February 7, 2013 focused on three things:

1. What is the Biosphere Reserve?
2. How can the Biosphere Brand be used to leverage business?
3. What types of social media are used in tourism & which ones add value?

Summary of results:

The 30 participants represented 21 business operators, and 5 supporting organizations. 14 people stayed after the workshop to receive one-on-one social media coaching on their own Facebook page from SOS Media.

The Biosphere Branding presentation by Brittany Mahnke, was followed by a discussion about how to leverage the brand for tourism. Notes from that discussion can be found below.

Canadore College ecotourism package creation is moving forward by coaching from Trish Manning Consulting (March 22, 2013) in order to confirm itineraries, pricing, and marketing strategies among partners. Contact Becky if you wish to be involved rpollack@gbbr.ca

Recommendations for Using the Biosphere as a brand for Tourism:

From the Biosphere Reserve (GBBR)'s perspective, it would be good to find a way to share the Biosphere Brand more widely across the tourism industry so that operators can choose if and how they wish to use it.

The GBBR's role is to educate and build capacity for a healthy environment & healthy economy. From the results of this workshop, we are developing new programs that could better meet the needs of tourism operators (e.g., educational materials for their use; marketing products, etc.).

A conversation with Georgian Bay Country (GBC) has already occurred as to the partnership nature of using the Biosphere logo and tagline in some of their publications and marketing materials. This conversation should also be held with Explorers' Edge to see what level of interest there is for using it at a regional scale.

There is the potential for a new Biosphere Branding Committee to provide some leadership, where interested operators and supporting organizations can more clearly define and direct the use of the brand. Several people indicated willingness to volunteer for such a committee.

Biosphere Branding Group Discussion...

1. The Biosphere values that appeal most to tourists:

The 30,000 islands, our nature, and scenery. Tourists like that the Biosphere is unique. We need to encourage “conversation starters.” Let’s distinguish our eastern Georgian Bay from the other parts of Georgian Bay by using the UNESCO designation.

We would love to see a Biosphere binder or education package online that can be printed. The Biosphere binder should clearly outlined (designation, map, species) and mention key attractions or access points (for wildlife, beaches, islands, etc). Recommended to have the education package provided online before the May long weekend.

2. The Biosphere as “an experience” or as “a destination”?

Tourism operators would like to see more of a presence at our office location with printed materials or Biosphere staff ready and available to provide an educational hike. Interpretive signage would help distinguish the Biosphere as a destination, throughout the region.

With regard to areas “outside” the official boundaries of the UNESCO biosphere reserve, there should be materials and tag lines that point people to “the Biosphere in our Backyard” and all operators and organizations are encouraged to become Biosphere Charter members – which provides a live link on gbb.ca/charter-members and showcases businesses throughout the year.

3. How could the Biosphere logo be leveraged?

Use space in business windows for the Biosphere logo downtown Parry Sound.

Provide the tourism information centres with more information about the designation.

Contact realtor associations to inform them of the designation.

Contact all area tourism associations to encourage the use of the Biosphere brand/tagline in publications.

Tourism Package Development

Working Session #4 – Social Media and Branding for Your Biosphere

AGENDA

February 7th, 2013

Canadore College, Parry Sound

9:00-12:00 with optional facebook coaching 12:00-1:00

Welcomel A Biosphere in Your Backyard

Becky Pollock, Communications Manager
Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve

Q&A

The Biosphere Branding Opportunity

Brittany Mahnke, Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve

Group Discussion: how can our region leverage the "Biosphere Brand"?

10:30 > Coffee Break

Social Media Tools for Tourism: a focus on facebook

Nicole Saulnier, President
SOS Media

Q&A

Evaluation & Next Steps for Package Development

12:00 > Computer Lab for Coaching on facebook



This workshop has been generously sponsored by the Parry Sound Area Community Business Development Corporation (CBDC) – a part of the FedNor Community Futures program.

Communications with Participants after Workshop #4:

Hi everyone, thanks for attending yesterday's session! Let's stay connected and *like* the fb pages in our network. When you get more than 30 *likes* you're able to access "Insights" and statistics about your page.

Also, please find attached the Biosphere Branding Guidelines or click here: <http://www.gbbr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Web-Branding-Guidelines.pdf>

For downloading the Biosphere logos, visit: <http://www.gbbr.ca/healthy-economy/biosphere-branding/>

And to become a Biosphere Charter Member check out: <http://www.gbbr.ca/healthy-economy/biosphere-charter/>

A special thank you to **Nicole Saulnier** of SOS Media <http://www.sosmedia.biz/nicole/> for some great information & coaching!

Thanks also to **Andrew Ryeland, Logan Morrisson, and Brittany Mahnke** for some facebook 101.

For other info that could help your business, check out the resources from Explorers' Edge:

<http://rto12.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Facebook-Ads-and-Business-Solutions2.pdf>

http://rto12.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/The_Power_of_Like_2.pdf

http://rto12.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/The_Facebook_Factor.pdf

Participants List – Feb. 7, 2013

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. Andrew Ryeland | Bear Claw ATV Tours |
| 2. Andy Vitch | Sunny Point Resort |
| 3. Becky Pollock | Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve |
| 4. Brady Carpenter | Graphic Designer |
| 5. Brittany Mahnke | Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve |
| 6. Carl Messervey | |
| 7. Edmund Lea | Mariners Rest |
| 8. Elise Quiring | Canadore College, student |
| 9. Heidi Knotz | Ahmic Lake Resort & Swiss Country House |
| 10. Jessie Metelka | Georgian Bay Coast Trail |
| 11. John Santarossa | Magnetawan Economic Development |
| 12. Jon Ryeland | Kudos Kuisine |
| 13. Julie Lea | Mariners Rest B&B |
| 14. Kaitlin Chantler | Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve |
| 15. Keith Saulnier | GB Airways |
| 16. Linda Spencely | Dannygraig B&B |
| 17. Logan Morrison | Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve |
| 18. Mark Crocker | Trapper |
| 19. Mary Jane Zisoff | Trilogy of Glass |
| 20. Nancy Messervey | Realtor |
| 21. Nicole Saulnier | SOS Media; Georgian Bay Airways |
| 22. Patricia Stone | Microtel |
| 23. Peter Istvan | Canadore College |
| 24. Sean Beasley | Georgian Bay Country |
| 25. Stephen Webb | McKellar Economic Development |
| 26. Steven Duff | Mishmash Enterprises |
| 27. Susan Poole | 40 Bay Street B&B |
| 28. Tania Stotzel | You Never Know... |
| 29. Tina Gataveckas | Elm Cove Cottages |

Partners Interested in Ecotourism Package Creation (Pilot 2013)

RedRock ecoAdventures	White Squall
Parry Sound Fishing Charters	Wasauksing Campground & Marina
Parry Sound Area Bed & Breakfasts	G'zaagin Gallery
Kudos Kuisine	Museum on Tower Hill
Stockey Centre	
Bayside Inn	

EVALUATION of WORKSHOP #4:

85% Overall workshop was “Very Useful” or “Somewhat Useful”

80% Found the Social Media presentation “ Very useful” or “Somewhat Useful”

90% understood the Biosphere Brand Guidelines

100% understood the UNESCO Biosphere Designation

Workshop topics of most value:

Biosphere brand

Social media overview

Trip Advisor reference/recommendation

How to do direct sales; free marketing using social media

Interested in becoming **Biosphere Charter members**?

20% already members

60% yes

10% maybe

10% no answer given

Use of a future “Explore Ontario Biosphere Reserves” brand?

75% potentially interested

If the Biosphere were to offer **other workshops**, the most popular themes would be:

Target markets

Sustainable Destination

Biosphere Experience

Sustainable Tourism

Trail Maps

Phone App

80% interested in the Biosphere providing interpretive/guide services to their customers.

Recommended uses of the Biosphere Brand for future:

Highway signage, area signage

Local attractions/locations

Wayfinding, maps, signposts

Geocaching

Target boating community (and associations)

Educate real estate associations

Market to the GTA

Marketing Products:

Window stickers; Bumper stickers

Maps; Info guides, brochures

Binder for accommodations

Flags (boaters, cottagers)

Turtle pins for kids

