

The Emerging Trend of Experiential Travel

**A New Nebraska Opportunity
for long range success**

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An Earlier Generation of Travelers Collected Destinations

- ♦ “Today is Tuesday,” said the peripatetic traveler to his wife, “We must be in Rome.”



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Later, travelers began focusing on the collection of memories

- ◆ “Once you’ve traveled, the voyage never ends, but is played out, over and over, in the quietest chambers... that the mind can never break off from the journey”.

—*Pat Conroy*



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“Travel is more than the seeing
of sights, it is a change that
goes on, deep and permanent,
in the ideas of living.”

—*Miriam Beard*



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The new paradigm for the twenty-first century

Travelers are seeking trips that provide new, valuable experiences that raise their consciousness, develop new skills, and actually change their lives.



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A Trend known by several names

- ◆ Enrichment travel
- ◆ Immersion travel
- ◆ Experiential travel



A Trend on the Rise

- ◆ More than half of visitors recently polled expressed interest in taking an educational trip, nearly 25% were more interested than five years ago.
- ◆ The quarterly Longwoods Travel USA survey confirms: over four of ten American vacationers are now confirming the “experience travel” choices



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Travel Marketers Are Responding

- ◆ “Experiential tourism is fundamental to bringing our tourism brand to life to entice international travelers to Canada”
-CTC CEO Michele McKenzie



Tour Operators have taken note

- ◆ “We’re evolving and developing product to meet the demands of a brand new market of seasoned, educated, well-heeled travelers who demand and desire more than stopping, standing and staring.” -*Randy Julian, former chair, NTA*



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- ◆ Live the Amazing Stories Behind the World's Greatest *Destinations—The Disney Tour Operator program*
- ◆ “Providing a whole new way for families to travel together”
- ◆ “*Adventures by Disney Vacations are unforgettable, immersive, providing travel experiences for families to explore the world's greatest destinations.*”



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Travel Writers embrace experiential travel

- ◆ “You could call them *before and after* vacations, because, after one of them, you’re probably going to be a little bit different.”

-Pam Grout, noted travel writer and world traveler



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Experiential offerings are varied

- ◆ Ethnic cooking in Mexico
- ◆ Teaching teens about the fashion industry in New York City
- ◆ Wine tasting excursions
- ◆ Craft making
- ◆ Social programs such as Habitat for Humanity
- ◆ You name it!



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Experiential travel is universal

- ◆ Providing new ways of seeing and experiencing communal travel opportunities with friends and relatives



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The Destination Market Potential Is Deep

- ◆ Affording excellent opportunities for communities to feature special places for individual renewal—where visitors can experience something personal and lasting...and potentially life changing.



How to embrace this experiential trend

- ◆ Requires new, creative skills—A fresh perspective of your visitor appeals/offerings
- ◆ Create exciting descriptors
- ◆ Employ graphics that dramatically put the visitor “center stage” in the travel product
- ◆ Convey strong sensory appeals not often found in many communications messages



Examples for outdoor enthusiasts

- ◆ “Discover, Exhale, Conquer and Explore”.
—*Pocono Mountains DMO*
- ◆ “Live the Life. Lose yourself. Find yourself”.
—*Virginia Beach DMO*



Listen to your customer

- ◆ **Follow the recommendations** from travelers in new visitor profile studies that are most apt to bring visitor attention, interest, and desire



Make it Personal

- ♦ **Deliver fresh, powerful copy, and appeals** -- emotionally engage the traveler and describe the destination:
Step back in time for historical adventures . . . majestic mountain discoveries . . . New journeys just around the corner . . . Exploring the Spirit of America.
- ♦ Convey the sensory experiences that best vividly describe your special sights, sounds, and conveyed feelings



Use Big Names

- ◆ **Use recognizable big names.**
People are most attracted by specifics—not generalities
- ◆ Combine generic appeals and experiences in your destination with well-known, identifiable names and sites
- ◆ If you don't have big, recognizable names, then "market-annex" them
- ◆ Share how personal experiences can be created in rewarding and fascinating ways
- ◆ Avoid being generic!



Employ large, dramatic photos

- ◆ include visitor adventurers who are shown experiencing your travel product.
- ◆ These larger photos will serve to anchor nearby smaller photos
- ◆ Provide compelling captions



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Incorporate graphic icons/art

- ◆ **Feature indigenous memorabilia** throughout your collateral that connote the destination personality of your community



Use testimonials to motivate visitors

Third-party positive comments about your destination from both media and well-known public figures are far more credible to consumers than traditional promotional or advertising copy.



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Seek out competitors' examples

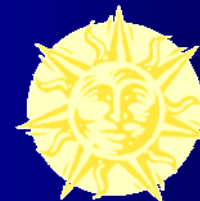
- ♦ "An all-American road trip, filled with cowboys and Indians, buffalo and prairie dogs, and dreamers. . ." *San Diego Union-Tribune*
- ♦ "The Black Hills rises out of the Badlands, inviting exploration of rock spires, clear lakes, cool forests and main-street strolling towns." -- *Cottage Living Magazine*



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Be Bold and Creative

- ◆ Keep up with trends and the market direction that is consistently provided by consumer research
- ◆ pay close attention to your competitors' effort
- ◆ be bold and provocative-- employ attention-getting, risk-taking opportunities that match your experiential visitor offerings with the customers' needs



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Use a Creative Brief Process for consistent direction

- ◆ Project description (size, shape, look, & feel)
- ◆ Primary /secondary messages
- ◆ Competing activity
- ◆ Marketing objective
- ◆ Where business coming from? audience profile
- ◆ What is the single most important point for this target audience?



- ◆ Mandatory inclusions/restrictions
- ◆ Merchandise or distribution plan
- ◆ Timelines
- ◆ # units produced/reach/frequency
- ◆ Budget/budget code
- ◆ Approvals (signatures from affected depts.)
- ◆ Methods for evaluating success



Never Stop Seeking Out Opportunities For Success!

“The secret of success is to
know something nobody else
knows.”

—Aristotle Onassis



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DESTINATION MARKETING INSIGHTS

HOW TO BOOST PERFORMANCE,
INCREASE CUSTOMERS,
AND MAXIMIZE MARKET SHARE

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