



Experience Development 101

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10:00am

Teams

**With
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Product And Experience Development – Important Differences You Need To Know

The first question you might be asking yourself is: aren't product and experience development the same thing?

Well, the answer is really yes and no. There are a lot of the same elements that go into both including determining a theme, thinking about target audiences, thinking about the potential for collaboration and packaging, and what kind of collateral you might need, such as maps or brochures.

Here are some definitions to help you out.

A PRODUCT is defined as a good, activity or service that is delivered to consumers with a moderate level of differentiation, is available to a fairly wide market and is focused on cost-based pricing or is free. Some examples of product development include a self-guided touring route or guided interpretive hike through a park.

VS.

An EXPERIENCE. According to Dr. Nancy Arsenault, Experiential travel *engages* visitors in a series of *memorable* travel activities, revealed over time, that are inherently *personal*, *engage the senses* and *make connections* on an emotional, physical, spiritual, social or intellectual level¹.



Some great examples of experiences would include writing a song with a Juno award winning songwriter, a behind-the-scenes tour at a museum where you can touch important historical objects or foraging for wild mushrooms with a local guide and using them to cook a soup for lunch.

Think about this. You can go to a restaurant and have a delicious meal with excellent customer service and be completely satisfied. You might not tell anyone about it or even think about it again. Now, take that great restaurant and add in a hands-on component, a visit

into the kitchen to meet the chef or some really great storytelling from the host and you have an experience that you might be more willing to share with your friends, family and your social media network. These are the things that make you say "Wow, that was cool."

There are a few other subtle differences between products and experiences as well. Product development might also involve investments in infrastructure like buildings or larger pieces of equipment. Experiences often use existing infrastructure (yours or someone else's) to animate the space. Experiences are more focused on the interactions with people and create a deeper emotional connection.

Food for thought: Could you use products as the foundation of your business, and experiences as the additional value-added pieces for smaller, niche markets to gain a higher yield per customer AND in a time when you have excess capacity?

¹ Nancy Arsenault (2004). *Defining Tomorrow's Tourism Product*.

This is an opportunity for you to add new revenues to your business!

Product and experience development could also be an opportunity to create partnerships and collaborations to offer something new and engaging for visitors. It could be a new way to see an attraction or finding a unique way for visitors to connect to a place in a more authentic way.

So, what's in it for me?

- Connect with other people in your community to tell your story
- Extend reach into a new market
- Reduce seasonality
- Increase yield on capital investments

Ultimately, it's about finding ways to encourage visitors to stay longer, return more often and increase the economic impact they leave behind.

This blog post is available through the RTO7 Connection, May 25, 2015

<http://rto7.ca/Public/RTO7-Connection/May-2015/Product-and-Experience-Development-%E2%80%93-Important-Dif>

Making the Shift

Blind Love

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7ZnzzOJKc>

This is the story of a blind man from New York City exploring Quebec in the summer. The message is powerful, although the products featured are not necessarily unique.

A Reflection on Blind Love
How does this video make you feel?
Why is it so powerful as a marketing tool?
These types of products are available everywhere, how has Quebec made them seem so different?

“Design creates stories, and stories create memorable experiences, and great experiences have this innate ability to change the way in which we view our world”

– Christian Saylor

Benefits of Experiential Travel

There are many reasons why different businesses and communities look towards experiential travel to help grow visitation, yield per consumer and ultimately, their bottom lines. Here are a few benefits.

Think about your business; how could you use each of these concepts to positively impact the local economy?

Benefit	How Will This Help?	How Can I Make This Work for My Business?
Engage with non-traditional tourism businesses and people in the community e.g., Historical society, local musicians, farmers	<i>Flavour of the community that is authentic</i>	
Layered into existing offerings as a new revenue stream e.g., Learn about A/V at a theatre	<i>Depth of product</i>	
New and creative use of existing infrastructure e.g., convert your greenhouse into a dining room	<i>Higher yield on your capital investments</i>	
Can be created during a time of year when you are traditionally slower e.g., Showcase how to make maple syrup in the summer	<i>Reduces seasonality</i>	
Educate people about the place (social, financial, environmental) e.g., educational adventures	<i>Sustainability of Tourism</i>	

“Our Food Experiences have generated off season buzz and revenue. They demonstrate to our customers what we are capable of, therefore help to strengthen our brand. It has also shown us what we can accomplish outside of our comfort zone.”

-Pier Donnini, Owner Queen's Bar and Grill, Port Elgin

Sustainability of Tourism

The aim of sustainable tourism is to increase the benefits and to reduce the negative impacts caused by tourism for destinations. Long-term sustainability can be achieved by seeking a suitable balance between:

- Protecting natural environments, wildlife and natural resources when developing and managing tourism activities (environmental),
- Providing authentic tourist experiences that celebrate and conserve heritage and culture (socio-cultural), and
- Creating socio-economic benefits and well-being for host communities through employment and income earning opportunities (economic).

Sustainable tourism development is a complex and continuous planning process of reinvesting in your most precious assets over time (people, places and processes). It can build local pride and confidence and requires the informed participation of all relevant local stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership.

It includes moving from a volume to a value-based (length of stay and dollars spent) approach, in which the tourist's experience is more meaningful/satisfying and serves to raise their awareness about sustainability issues and promote responsible and respectful tourism practices on their part.

Sustainability of Tourism Starting Points

- **Business Operations and Planning**
 - Have membership, support and/or training through sustainability organizations (e.g. Green Tourism Canada)
 - Communicate with and address concerns from local residents, indigenous and business community
 - Have a code of conduct/ethics including cultural, environmental and indigenous issues
 - Have succession plan for management and employees
 - Provide living wage and benefits to employees
 - Evidence of sustainability considerations in planning documents
 - Evidence of action to lower footprint (i.e. monitoring of utility consumption and waste production appropriate for business size)
 - Have a sustainable sourcing plan in place (e.g. fair-trade coffee, Eat Local Grey Bruce)
 - Have dedicated efforts for assessing and managing environmental risks and impacts (including climate risks)
- **Tourist Information and Promotion**
 - Provide product packaging and/or cross marketing of at least 3 other tourism attractions and services within BruceGreySimcoe that can extend stay, expenditure and diversity of experience
 - Possess standards, certifications, or awards from third-party organizations related to sustainability (i.e. community support, environmental performance, etc.)
- **Tourist Experience & Sense of Place**
 - Encourage tourists to reduce consumption and waste, reduce environmental impacts, and/or green alternatives
 - Take measures to reduce impact on surrounding land and biodiversity (i.e. plant native species, reduce paved area, install bird-feeders)
 - Long-term planning for maintenance, expansion and product development for tourists and potential tourist increase (i.e. washrooms, parking etc.)
 - Include Indigenous language and/or local cultural content in promotional materials

- **Indigenous Cultural Tourism**
 - Indigenous cultural content follows local protocols
 - Indigenous-focused educational background provided to guests before and during visit

Progression of Economic Value



http://farm5.static.flickr.com/4014/4376653242_5a20ee8ecf_o.jpg

Commodities – Low market value and no differentiation.

Goods – Add value to a commodity by slightly transforming it, but still low market value and low differentiation.

Services – Increased market value by placing value from a person combined with a good. Small ways to customize.

Experiences – Highly customized, includes time as part of the value. Time from an expert or storyteller to help create a personal memory by having the customer engaged in the activity.

“We are the accumulation of everything we’ve seen, the things we’ve done, and the places we’ve been. Buying an Apple Watch isn’t going to change who you are; taking a break from work to hike the Appalachian Trail from start to finish most certainly will.”

-Dr. Thomas Gilovich in *Why You Should Spend Your Money on Experiences, Not Things*. Travis Bradberry.
Fores.com August 9, 2016

Resources

2021/22 RTO7 Partnership Opportunities

Please visit www.rto7.ca for details.

Sign up for the industry e-blast <http://rto7.ca/Public/Special-Pages/Mailing-List-Signup> to find out the latest on program updates, upcoming events and happenings around the Region.

Workforce Development

Tourism Service Excellence Training

<http://rto7.ca/Public/Resources/BGS-Tourism-Service-Excellence-Training>

Free Resource!

RTO7 and the Counties of Bruce, Grey & Simcoe have partnered to bring an online customer service training program to the region. Working in collaboration with OTEC (Ontario Tourism Education Corporation), the BGS Tourism Service Excellence Training is a one-hour online training that will provide the fundamentals of customer service for frontline tourism staff, students, and other first impression individuals e.g. gas station attendants. We want to collectively ensure that we're all putting our best foot forward when it comes to welcoming visitors to BruceGreySimcoe!

Typsy!

Free Resource!

This micro-learning system can help strengthen/refresh your knowledge and skills, your understanding of how to do specific processes in your current or future role and get/keep you career-ready for the tourism and hospitality industry, helping to ensure we're all providing exceptional customer experiences.

We think you'll love it! You can watch a short video intro (featuring some of what Typsy has to offer) here <https://info.typsy.com/welcome-to-typsy-usa-tm>.

Ask RTO7 Staff about how to sign up.

Product/Experience Development Programs

Experience Implementation Program

<http://rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Experience-Implementation-Program>

Festival Implementation Program

<http://rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Festival-Implementation-Program>

Tourism Implementation Program

<https://rto7.ca/Public/Programs/Tourism-Implementation-Program>

Sustainable Tourism Implementation Program

<https://rto7.ca/Public/Programs/Sustainable-Tourism-Implementation-Program>

Operations Implementation Program

<https://rto7.ca/Public/Programs/Operations-Implementation-Program>

Recruitment Implementation Program

<https://rto7.ca/Public/Programs/Recruitment-Implementation-Program>

Marketing/Communications Programs

BruceGreySimcoe.com

Consumer website highlighting experiences, activities, places, festivals, and events.

- Operator Listings
- Festivals and Events listing
- Packages and Promotions

RTO7.ca

This industry website is the link to what's happening at RTO7. Find information on RTO7 programs, industry updates, customer service training, and industry events. Subscribe to our blog, RTO7 Connection. Have an industry event to add to the calendar? Email your event info to info@rto7.ca.

Stakeholder Site

This stakeholder website is available exclusively to RTO7 stakeholders and includes an image bank, reports and information. Registration is required to access this information.

Social Media

Post, Like and Share!

Facebook: BruceGreySimcoe (consumer)
 Facebook: RTO7Connection (industry)
 Twitter: @BruceGreySimcoe (consumer)
 Twitter: @RTO7Connection (industry)
 Instagram: @BruceGreySimcoe (consumer)
 Instagram: @RTO7Connection (industry)
 Pinterest: @BruceGreySimcoe (consumer)
 #brucegreysimcoe

Subscribe to the RTO7 Connection blog via RSS Feed - <http://www.rto7.ca/Public/RTO7-connection>
 Newsletter Sign up! <http://rto7.ca/Public/Special-Pages/Mailing-List-Signup> (industry)

Partnership Program 2021/22

<http://rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Partnership-Program> **Signage**

Digital Advertising
 Image Production (Images/Video)
 Language Translation Service
 Experience Development/Consumer Research/Workforce Development
 Video/Image Social Media Advertising Campaign
 Storytelling

COVID Recovery Programs

COVID Recovery Support - <https://rto7.ca/Public/Resources/COVID-19-Recovery-Support>

Ontario Staycation Tax Credit info - <https://rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Ontario-Staycation-Tax-Credit>

Destination Ontario

<https://www.destinationontario.com/en-ca>

For more COVID recovery programs visit www.reliefwithinreach.ca

Destination Canada

www.destinationcanada.com

EQ Profiles - <http://en.destinationcanada.com/resources-industry/explorer-quotient>

Experience Development Toolkit -

http://en.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/pdf/Resources/sec_exptoolkit_lores_final.pdf

Canadian Signature Experiences - http://en.destinationcanada.com/resources-industry/canadian_signature_experiences

Bruce County

General Resources

Free business listing offered to all tourism operators on our consumer website www.explorethebruce.com

Celebrate International Women's Day with Sarain Fox

Join Business to Bruce and Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey on March 10 for a celebration of International Women's Day with a focus on women's equality, #BreakTheBias #IWD2022. Learn more at:

<https://business.brucecounty.on.ca/iwd-2022>

Follow Us on social media

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Free Business Webinars at brucecounty.on.ca/webinars

Stay in the loop by subscribing at business.brucecounty.on.ca/newsletters

Contact Business to Bruce:

The Business to Bruce Team is here to provide free one-on-one business advice, training, and up-to-date information for you. Call us at 1-800-268-3838 or email us at info@businesstobruce.com.

Burning Questions!

Use this page to jot down any questions that you have during the presentation.