

# **FAQs REMARKABLE EXPERINCES PROGRAM**

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION – FALL 2016**

### **What is a remarkable experience?**

A remarkable experience is a well-designed, developed and delivered travel experience that inspires a visitor to recommend or share it via word-of-mouth to their friends, family and colleagues.

### **What is the goal of the program?**

The goal of the program is to provide tourism industry operators with the information, tools and resources they need to enhance existing products or develop new products, based on a solid understanding of visitors to BC. In addition, the program seeks to encourage digital and social media marketing excellence. Overall, the goal of the program is to encourage repeat visits and recommendations for BC tourism businesses.

### **When will the program be available?**

In the Thompson Okanagan, Kootenay Rockies and Vancouver Island regions the program will run from October 2016 until March 2017. In Vancouver, Coast & Mountains and Northern British Columbia the program will run from January 2017 until June 2017.

### **Where is the program being offered?**

For fall 2016, the program is available to small and medium sized tourism businesses (fewer than 50 employees) and organizations that manage attractions or are involved with the promotion of tourism (community DMOs) in the following locations:

Thompson Okanagan: Winter (non-ski) tourism operators from across the region

Kootenay Rockies: Highway #1 connector from Golden to Revelstoke

Vancouver Island: Pacific Marine Circle Route, including tourism business circling Duncan, Port Renfrew, Victoria and back

### **When is the registration deadline in my area?**

For the fall 2016 program (Thompson Okanagan, Kootenay Rockies and Vancouver Island) registration closes on Friday, September 23, 2016.

Program locations for winter 2017 will be announced in the fall. Registration for the winter program offerings is expected to begin in October 2016.

## **How long is the program?**

The program runs for six months but could be completed in less time. The in-class learning modules are delivered in the first three months. Coaching may be accessed anytime in the first three months and for an additional three months after the end of the last learning module. The time commitment for the program is estimated at 50-60 hours over the three to six-month period.

## **What qualifications do participants need to have?**

Businesses or organizations participating in the program should:

- Derive 50% of their revenue from visitors and have been in business for a minimum of one year;
- Have an active business/organization website used for marketing;
- Have at least one active social media channel used to market their business (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc...);
- Be able to commit time to the program (50-60 hours over three to six months);
- Have an interest in and ability to develop or enhance their product offering, website and social media marketing activities.

## **How is a tourism business defined?**

If 50% of the business's revenue is derived from visitors to the community, the business is considered a tourism business.

## **How much does it cost?**

Destination BC has set an introductory program cost of \$350 plus tax. This fee includes all three learning modules plus six hours of individualized coaching, lunches and coffee breaks, electronic guides and access to a private Facebook page for program participants. Accommodation is not included in the program fee.

## **To learn more about the program visit:**

[www.DestinationBC.ca/Remarkable-Experiences](http://www.DestinationBC.ca/Remarkable-Experiences)

Or contact the Regional Destination Marketing Organization for your region:

Lana Cheong  
Tourism Vancouver Island  
250.740.1213  
[Lana@tourismvi.ca](mailto:Lana@tourismvi.ca)

Ellen Walker-Matthews  
Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association  
250.860.5999 #215  
[experiences@totabc.com](mailto:experiences@totabc.com)

Shannon Harrison  
Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association  
250.427.4838 #207  
[Shannon@kootenayrockies.com](mailto:Shannon@kootenayrockies.com)

Or contact Destination BC:

Beth Sangara  
Destination BC  
250.387.8111  
[Beth.Sangara@DestinationBC.ca](mailto:Beth.Sangara@DestinationBC.ca)

## **PROGRAM DETAILS**

### **What do participants need to do to prepare for the course?**

Prior to Module 1 there will be a webinar that will introduce the program and its components, as well as provide an overview of Module 1. Prior to Modules 2 & 3 participants will receive an electronic guide that will introduce some of the subjects covered in the modules. It is recommended that participants attend or review the webinar (it will be available for playback after the original air date) as well as the electronic guides before the related module.

In addition, there will be some module specific requirements prior to each module that will be shared closer to the module date.

### **How long is each program module?**

Module 1: Experience Design is a two-day module (7.5-8 hours each day). Module 2: Digital Marketing and Module 3: Social Media are one-day (7.5-8 hour days).

### **What will participants learn?**

Module 1: Experience Design uses psychographic segmentation to develop a deeper understanding of visitors to BC. Using that knowledge as a basis, participants then move through the process of designing, developing and delivering new experiences that will appeal to various traveller types.

Module 2: Digital Marketing reviews concepts related to business ranking in search (such as Google my Business, Search Engine Optimization) and various website components that ensure websites are the most effective they can be for closing the sale.

Module 3: Social Media Marketing looks at key concepts for taking full advantage of social media to promote the participant's business including User Generated Content, Influencers/Advocates, integration into the tourism system, and also reviews Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as they relate to tourism.

### **What does experience design mean?**

Visitor experience design is a systematic approach for a business or cluster of businesses to design, develop, deliver and promote new travel opportunities in ways that inspire travellers to "choose you"!

### **Do participants need to use the coaching?**

The Remarkable Experiences Program coaches are experts in the field of experience design, digital and social media marketing. They are available to program participants to help create a plan for advancing some of the ideas they may come up with from the learning modules or to guide participants through areas where they have questions. Coaching is shown to improve results for businesses. For each module, participants will receive two hours of coaching. The first hour is mandatory; the second is discretionary, but highly recommended.

### **Do coaching hours expire?**

Yes. For program participants attending the Fall 2016 program, coaching expires by March 31, 2017. Winter coaching hours expire by June 30, 2017. There will be no refund for unused coaching hours.

### **What are the benefits of the program?**

Participants can expect to:

- Better understand their visitor using customer segmentation tools;
- Open up new markets or revenue opportunities by using a well-defined process for experience design and development;
- Increase web traffic and conversion to sales by improving their online presence and website;
- Make it easy for fans to talk about the business online and increase recommendations and advocacy;
- Benefit from coaches who are experts in the program subject matter.