

# Raising the Bar on the Visitor Experience

October 6th, 2015  
Revelstoke, BC



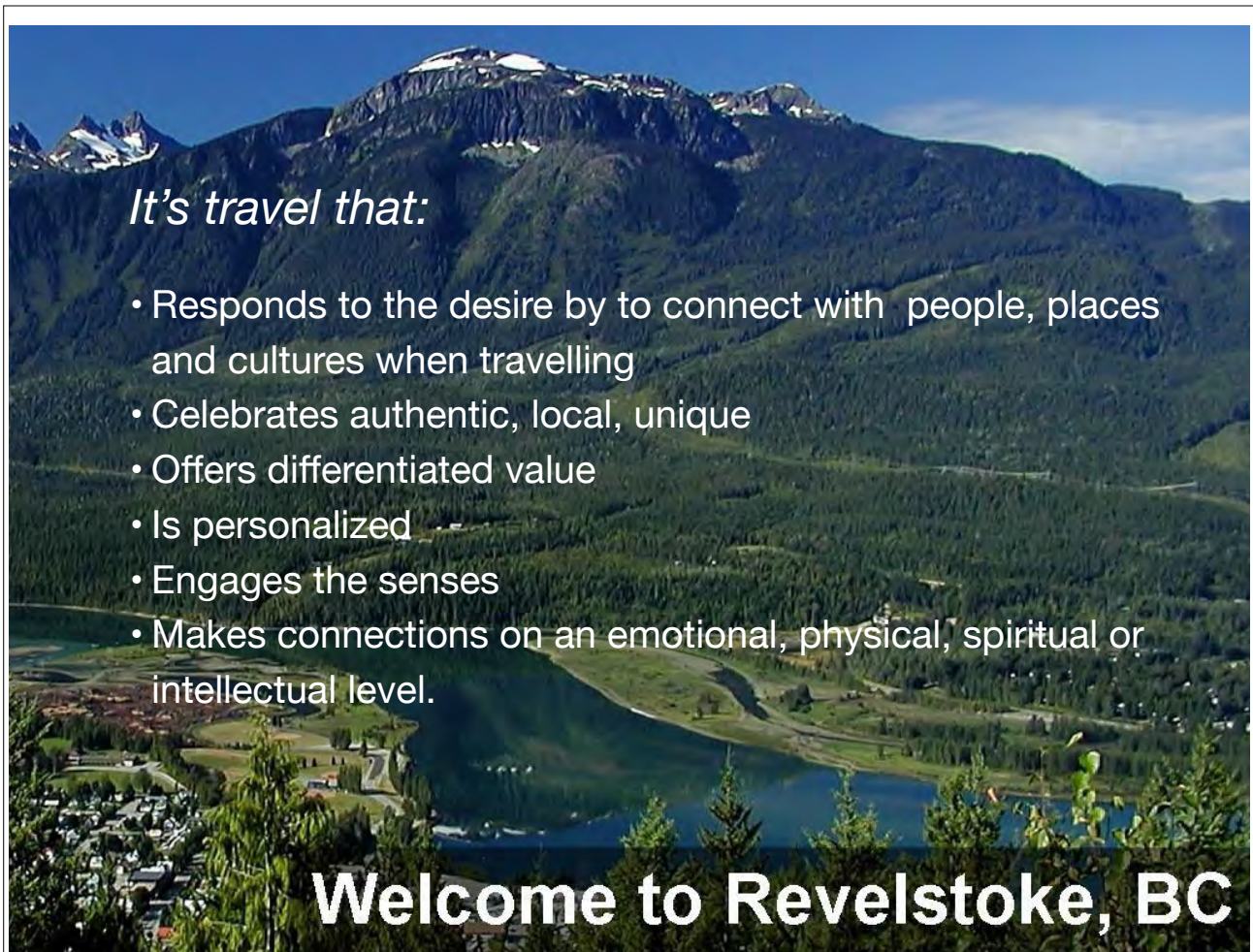
images: [deviantart.net](http://deviantart.net) &

Kootenay Rockies  
Tourism Industry  
Conference  
2015

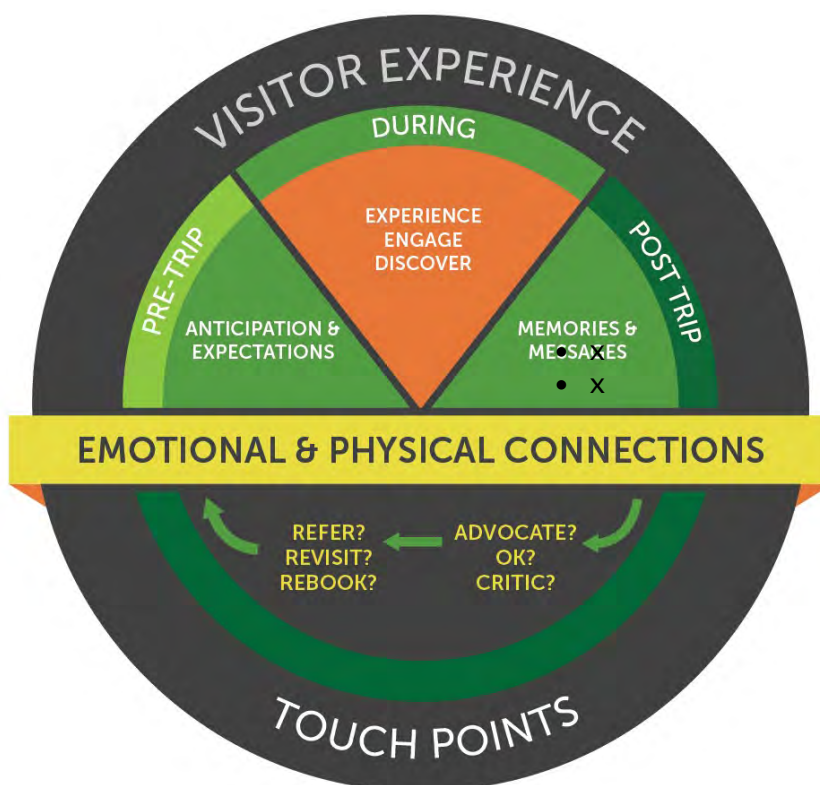
Presented by:  
Dr. Nancy Arsenault  
"The Experience Gal"

[tourismcafe.org](http://tourismcafe.org)

What do we  
really mean when we say  
"The Visitor Experience?"



Some aspects of the Visitor Experience you control



Other's you don't

# MIND FLIP

It DOESN'T BEGIN with :

'What can we sell'

"Who can I package with"

# MIND FLIP

It BEGINS WITH ASKING

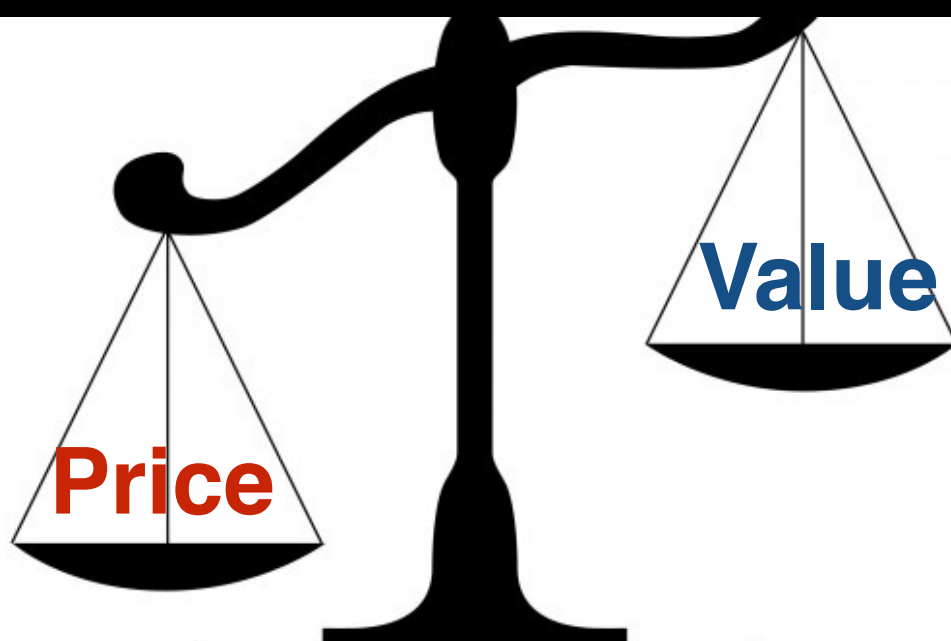
What memories do we want our guests to leave with?

What experiences could we create?

Who should I work with to design and deliver on a  
unique value proposition?

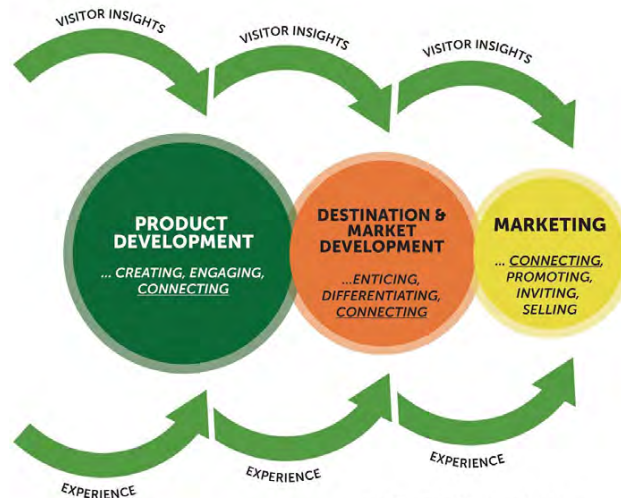
# WHY

## WE NEED TO COMPETE ON VALUE





Product development  
& cultivating niche markets  
must keep pace with marketing  
to deliver on the brand promise,  
generate revenue and increase visitation.



# We need more blue oceans

to differentiate

# Red Ocean



# Blue Ocean



Compete in existing market space

Beat the competition

Exploit existing demand

Make the value-cost trade off

Align your systems to offer differentiation  
OR low cost

Defend your current position

Create uncontested marketplace

Make the competition irrelevant

Capture and create new demand

Break the value-cost trade-off

Align your systems to offer differentiation  
AND low cost

Innovate & pursue new opportunities





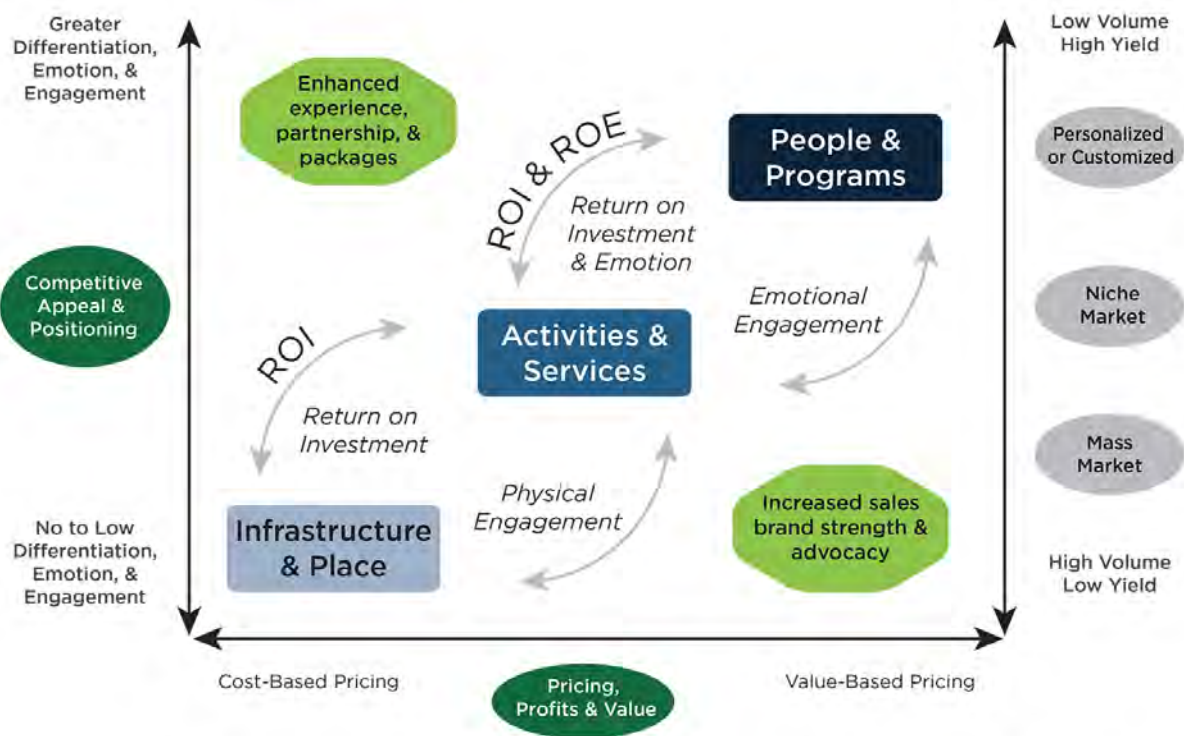


# Dinner on the Ocean Floor

- Offer amazing value and an thrilling experience
- Increase the personalization & value (hence price)
- Multiple partners - guests meet more locals
- Love what you do ... will buy more



## RAISING THE BAR ON VISITOR VALUE





Jump in with everyone else.  
Or jump right.

**REMARKABLE  
EXPERIENCES  
HAPPEN HERE**

Image: [acceleratedgrowth.com](http://acceleratedgrowth.com)

**2 MORE EXAMPLES!**

[www.tourismcafe.org](http://www.tourismcafe.org)

## Raising the Bar: Maligne Tours, AB



Meet Pat Crawley

Owner/Operator since 1980



# Maligne Lake Tours New Experiences

2013



Through The Lens  
Photographers Cruise

(c) Tourism Cafe Canada & Earth Rhythms (2014).

## Essential:

# Know your customer & what they value

# “You have to answer one question.”



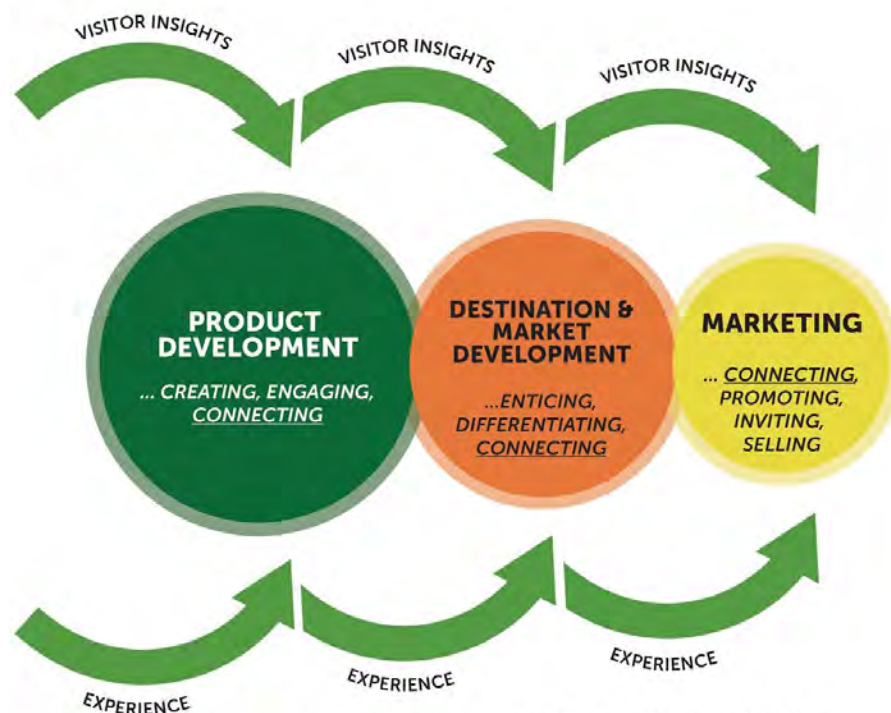
Mary Tulle, CEO

Destination  
Cape Breton Association,  
NS

From a Dead End ... to a Destination Case Study by: Nancy Arsenault & Dorothy Payne (2014)



## They Don't Shoot from the Hip!



(c) 2015 [www.tourismcafe.org](http://www.tourismcafe.org)

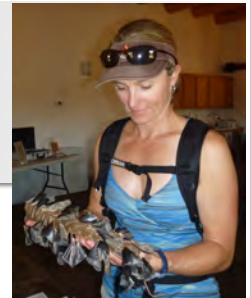
# Get to know your visitors better!



Free Availability - sign up with DBC

## Authentic Experienter

87% have a passport



Traveller Description	Values
<p>Are typically understated travellers looking for authentic, tangible engagement with the destinations they visit and have a particular interest in the history of the areas they visit.</p> <p>Enjoy sightseeing, small towns/ villages, slower pace observational and participatory experiences, down-to-earth experiences,</p>	<p>Enjoy doing their own thing, the unexpected, sample foreign culture, love learning, relatively affluent but not avid shoppers, love to live like the locals, avoid group tours, many retired with time to travel.</p>





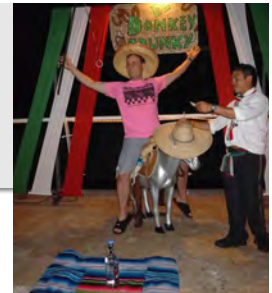
# Cultural Explorer

82% have a passport.

Traveller Description	Values
<p>Love constant travel and continuous opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the culture, people and settings they visit.</p> <p>Look for opportunities to learn, grow, enjoy everyday cultural experiences, and are environmentally/socially responsible.</p> <p>Strongly influenced by peer-to-peer information.</p>	<p>Preview unstructured travel, learning and absorbing in history and culture, like to experience the outdoors, enjoy socializing in groups, don't need to be pampered in commercial hotels, always planning their next trip, not materialistic, enjoy being spontaneous.</p>

# Free Spirit

89% have a passport.



Traveller Description	Values
<p>Are highly social and open-minded people who's enthusiasm for life extends to their outlook on travel. They like a variety of experiences, trendy 'in-the-now', social environments, packages, group tours.</p> <p>Experimental and adventurous, they bask in the pure pleasure and indulgence of high-end experiences. Spend more than average.</p>	<p>Social, love crowds, take risks, value brands, like luxury accommodations, want to see everything but not in depth, attracted to groups &amp; socializing.</p>



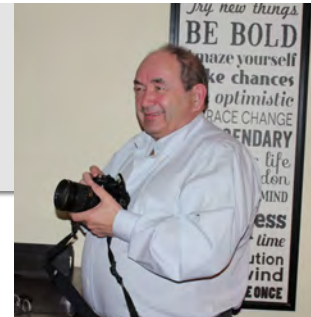
# Gentle Explorer

81% have a passport.

Traveller Description	Values
Primary defined by their reluctance to venture far beyond the comforts of home and travel on condition demanding the very best and most comfortable environments for themselves when they must do so.	Trips tend to be shorter, closer to home and centred on family events. Simple fun over cultural/learning preferred, enjoy familiar food/drinks and enjoy outlet malls, casinos, nightclubs.
Often very active locally, you usually find enough to satisfy your sense of exploration within your community.	Rather than being restricted to the confines of pre-packages tours, they prefer the flexibility of being able to decide what you want or don't want to do on your own.

# Personal History Explorer

75% have a passport.



Traveller Description	Values
Are primarily defined by their desire to connect to their own cultural root, and do so by travelling in comfort, style and security and spend more on long-haul trips.	Love to savor life's pleasures, search for their roots, are very image conscious, need status recognition, buy in impulse, adaptable, want their creature comforts, like to see everything, but not go into depth.
Enjoy all types of tours and day trips, cultural immersion, seeing the 'must see sights'	

# No Hassle Traveller



73% have a passport.

Traveller Description	Values
<p>Cautious travellers who are dutiful, reserved people who seek secure group travel that allows them to escape everyday life.</p> <p>Enjoy general sight-seeing, festivals, arts, entertainment, vibrant cities and small towns. Emphasis is on escape, relaxation and down to earth experiences. Average spend when travelling</p>	<p>Cherish ordinary everyday moments, more comfortable travelling in groups or with a guide, want to escape and take a break, vacations are being carefree and a little pampering, don't appreciate advertising.</p>

# Rejuvenators



68% have a passport.

Traveller Description	Values
<p>Are family oriented people who travel with others to escape from the stresses of everyday life. They like to be pampered, indulge themselves and enjoy shared experiences.</p> <p>Enjoy cruises, beaches, sunbathing, waterfront resorts, day programs for their kids. Spend less.</p>	<p>Like to stay in their comfort zone, escape and get away, prefer unstructured travel and being awestruck by nature, vacations are to be carefree and indulge, penchant to save money but will spend on impulse.</p>



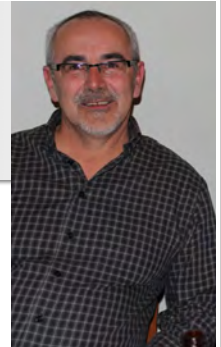


# Cultural History Buff

68% have a passport.

Traveller Description	Values
Are defined by their focused interest in the history and culture of the places they visit. They are driven to learn everything about people and motivated by cultural immersion, historical travel, hobbies and unstructured travel.	Seek historical travel, soaking up the culture, prefer to 'blend in' and enjoy authentic experiences, adjust to unfamiliar food, like autonomy, don't need to be pampered, look for personal growth.
Enjoy interacting with the locals, culture and artistic activities, independent travel, urban sightseeing	They express brand apathy, caring little for premium brands and are not avid shoppers, rather purchase for practicality.

# Virtual Travellers



63% have a passport - lowest of all types

Traveller Description	Values
Reluctant travellers who seek comfort and security when they must travel. Love trips that are comfortable and don't require them to adjust to the unfamiliar, need to feel secure and avoid putting a strain on their wallet. They prefer observational activities, uncomplicated, participatory and familiar food and drink.	Uncomfortable with change and unforeseen circumstances when they have little control over their lives. Not interested in mystery or adventure they tend to watch their money and have more financial concerns.

# If you had to focus, what would you choose?



Group	Explorer Quotient Type (EQ)
1	Authentic Experienter
2	Cultural Explorer
3	Free Spirit
4	Gentle Explorer
5	Personal History Explorer
6	No Hassle Traveller
7	Rejuvenator
8	Cultural History Buff
9	Virtual Traveller



You narrowed  
in on

DBC

	Group	Explorer Quotient Type (EQ)	
Primary	1	Authentic Experienter	Primary
	2	Cultural Explorer	
		3	Free Spirit
	4	Gentle Explorer	
	5	Personal History Explorer	
	6	No Hassle Traveller	
Secondary	7	Rejuvenator	
	8	Cultural History Buff	
	9	Virtual Traveller	

Canada  
**Cultural Explorers**  
 9% of Canadian Market



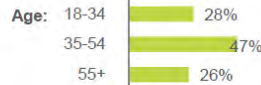
### Demographics



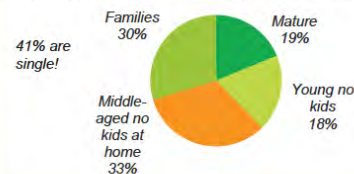
**Education:** Average

**Employment:** FT, slightly above avg. # of homemakers

**Household Income:** Average



### Lifestage



*Cultural Explorers are defined by their love of constant travel and continuous opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the culture, people and settings of the places they visit.*

### Social Values

#### Top defining Values

**Cultural Sampling:** They believe that other cultures have a lot to teach them.

**Personal Creativity:** They love to use their imagination and creativity at work and play and sharing their ideas with others.

**Personal Control:** They feel in control of their lives and not afraid to take on moderate risk if it means they can learn something new.

**Need for Uniqueness:** They like to be different from others, and will pay attention to their manner of dress and appearance.

**Social Responsibility:** They believe in giving back to those in need.

**Personal Escape:** They long for that which is beyond the practical - want to experience beauty and pleasure in surprise and astonishment.

#### Bottom defining Values

**Ostentatious Consumption:** They are not highly materialistic and are offended by ostentatious consumption.

**Aversion to Complexity:** They are not intimidated by changes or complexities in society. Being spontaneous is thrilling and fun for them.

### Travel Values

#### A Cultural Explorer will seek:

**Unstructured Travel:** They prefer not to be constrained to "tourist" schedules or destinations, and will chart their own courses.

**Historical Travel:** They love to learn about and absorb themselves in the ancient history, as well as the modern cultures of the places they visit.

**Cultural Immersion:** The best way to experience a culture is to interact with it as deeply as possible.

**Nature Travel:** They will choose destinations that provide opportunities to experience natural beauty.

**Shared Experiences:** They are attracted to groups where they can socialize and share the experience with others - using social media for sharing during and after the trip.

#### A Cultural Explorer will avoid:

**Comfort-Seeking:** This EQ type seeks an authentic experience and doesn't need to be pampered in commercial hotels.

**Reluctant Travel:** They are always planning their next trip - they are not content to experience the world through the Internet or TV.

## Experience Appeal and Travel Behaviours

### 10 Most Appealing Activities (in descending order)

1. Marine life viewing (whale watching, other marine life)
2. Attending farmers' markets
3. Dining at restaurants offering local ingredients
4. Visiting national, provincial/state parks to visit interpretative centres/museums
5. Wildlife viewing - land based animals & bird watching
6. Visiting national, provincial/state parks to view wildlife and surrounding nature and/or to participate in adventure experiences
7. Viewing outdoor street performances (free)
8. Viewing Northern/Southern Lights/Aurora
9. Visiting small towns, villages
10. Food related factory tours (Cheese, chocolate, etc.)

### 3 of the Least Appealing Activities

1. Participating in multi-day guided group tours by bus
2. Golfing
3. Hunting

### Last Trip

**Party composition & size:** 74% took child-free trips, mainly travelling in groups of 2 adults.

**Duration:** 36% took trips between 4-7 nights duration, and a higher than average proportion took trips between 8-14 nights (28% vs. 22% for Canada). Avg: 10.4 nights

**Spend:** Average party spend is \$3,141 per trip. More was spent on long-haul trips - on average \$3,851 per trip

### Top 3 Sources for Trip Planning

1. Websites of online retailers, travel agencies or tour operators
2. Websites of airlines, hotels, attractions or other services at destination
3. Discussions w/ friends, family, business colleagues

### Product:

- Interactive and immersive experiences
- Beautiful scenery, active adventure, shopping, dining and outdoor festivals/events
- Allows free exploration
- Environmentally, socially responsible

### Price:

- Will pay for unique experiences, local, sustainable, ethical products
- Value for money
- Respond well to discounts and feeling like they are getting a 'deal'
- Transparency of offering

## Canadian Cultural Explorers

### Promotion:

- Get people talking (word of mouth and word of mouse)
- Varied and extensive media mix, heavy emphasis on websites
- Include other traveller reviews
- Social connection with locals
- Stylish, creative
- Traditional Advertising (newspaper, magazine, billboard)

### Close the Sale!

- Partner with airlines, hotels, attraction and services in your area
- Travel agencies, travel operators and tour guide websites are sales channels - make sure where possible you are listed!
- Include a clear 'call to action' on websites and social channels
- Make it clear how to book online or connect via phone

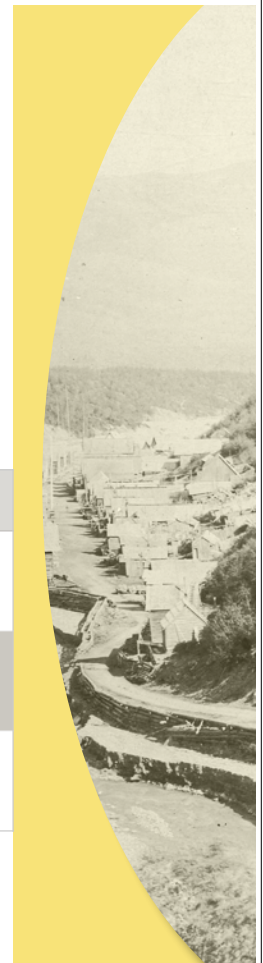
*\*compared to the global Cultural Explorer*





## 3 communities along the Gold Rush Trail

Town	1st EQ Type	2nd EQ Type
Lillooet	Authentic Experienter	Cultural Explorer/ Cultural History Buff
100 Mile House	Authentic Experienter	Cultural Explorer/ Cultural History Buff
Cottonwood House	Authentic Experienter/ Cultural History Buff	Cultural Explorer

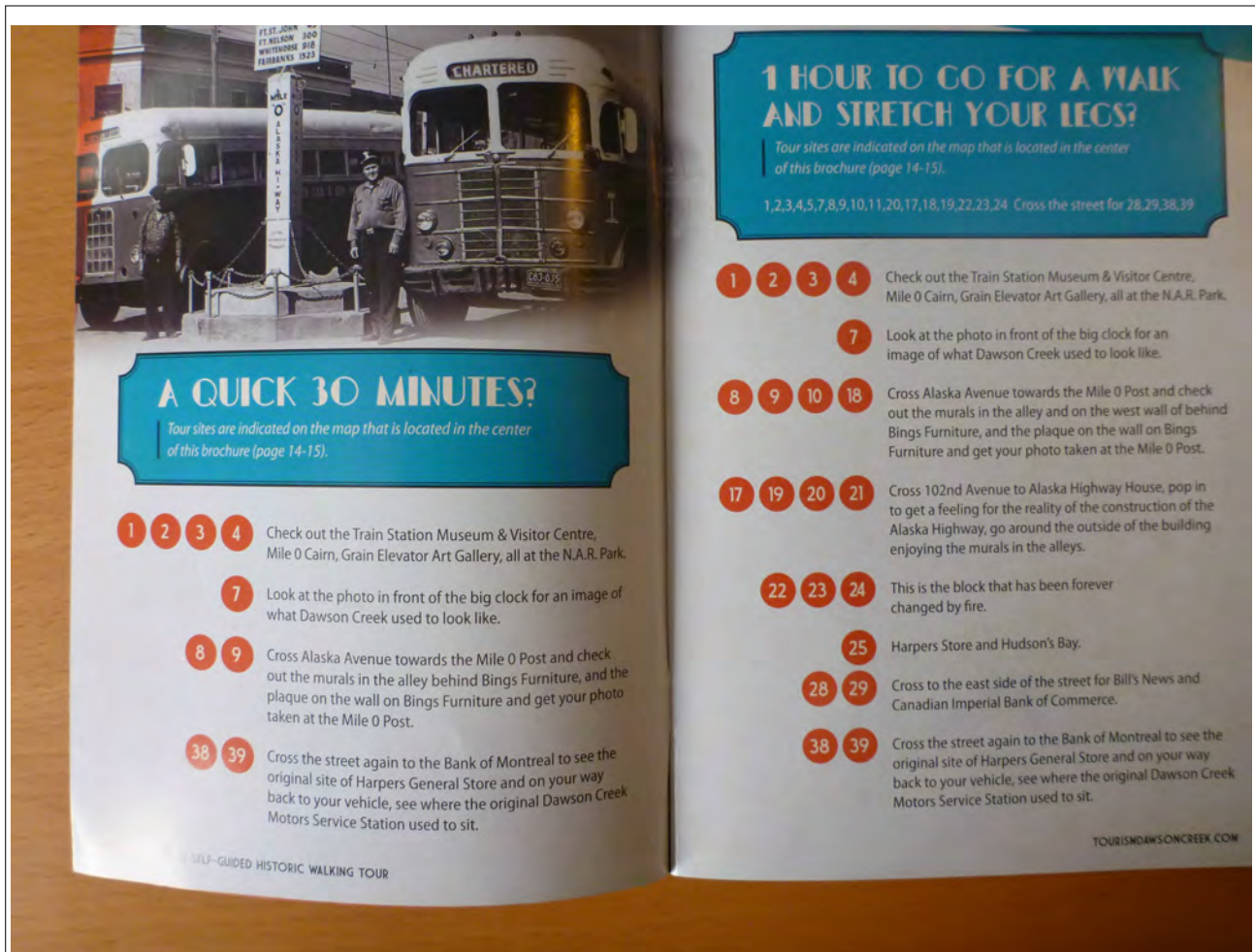


## Raising the Bar: Dawson Creek



Just one example - when then focused on the visitor experience, how things can change.

A focus on the cultural explorer.



## Unanticipated Benefits!

### Gros Morne National Park





## And Drive Direct and Indirect Benefits



## Rejuvenators: Who-da-thunk! Congrats





# Raising the Bar: Canmore Caves, AB

[canmorecave tours.com](http://canmorecave tours.com)

Ok - you have our attention!

Meet Adam Walker



- Owner/operator since 2013

Adventure Tour:  
\$155: 4.5 hrs



[tourismcafe.org](http://tourismcafe.org)

# Raising the Bar: Canmore Caves, AB

- Diversified the value proposition by focusing the visitor experience on the 'journey to the caves'



Discovery Tour:  
\$155/pp : 2-3 hrs



[tourismcafe.org](http://tourismcafe.org)

Are ready to INNOVATE,  
CREATED AND DELIVER a  
remarkable experience?



The measures of success are broader for visitors,  
businesses, communities.

# Thank You!



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