

SURVEY PROCEDURES FOR FESTIVALS, EVENTS AND PERMANENT ATTRACTIONS: GUIDELINES

MEASURING VISITOR EXPERIENCES AND SPENDING AT EVENTS, FESTIVALS AND ATTRACTIONS

Thousands of tourists and local residents attend cultural and arts festivals, fairs and attractions across Canada every year. They leave these sites with new experiences, new knowledge and with valuable impressions that can help organizers make more informed design, planning and marketing decisions. If they are *tourists*, these visitors inject money into the local community, adding to its economic well-being.

By systematically surveying visitors, event and attraction managers learn about who comes to their event or attraction, measure visitor satisfaction, identify what visitors liked and what they would like improved, adjust marketing and promotional campaigns to encourage repeat visitation, and produce estimates of the tourism economic impact of their event or attraction within the local community.

WHO ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR?

- Event and festival managers
- Museum, art gallery and other permanent attraction managers
- Community economic development departments
- Consultants
- College and university faculty and students

ANY VISITOR STUDY & TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

To help events and attractions decide *if* they wish to conduct visitor studies and if so, how to go about it, a consortium of national, provincial and territorial organizations produced a set of *Guidelines*.¹ These *Guidelines* can be adapted for *any* visitor study but were originally developed to generate credible and consistent inputs for estimating the tourism economic impact of festivals, events and attractions. The “inputs” have been designed to match categories required for tourism economic impact assessment models used by most provincial and national arts, culture and tourism organizations. The models themselves are not included in the Guidelines but are available from various government organizations.

The Guidelines describe the concepts and research procedures required to obtain reliable answers to the following types of questions.

- How many people came to the event or attraction?
- What are their demographic characteristics (age, gender, education)?
- How many are tourists?
- What are their reactions to experiences at the event or attraction?
- How did they hear about the event or attraction?
- How much did tourists spend at the site and in the community?
- How much of tourists’ spending in the community is money spent *because* of the event or attraction?

SAME TOOLS – MANY PURPOSES

For some events and attractions, the primary benefit of the Guidelines will be associated with economic and tourism-related studies. For others, the Guidelines’ utility will be for visitor studies without special reference to tourism or its economic impacts.

Depending on their size, complexity and access to resources, some events and attractions will be in a position to implement procedures described in the Guidelines with little or no assistance. Others may need support from professional survey researchers and analysts to customize forms and procedures to meet their particular circumstances. Still others may review the steps required and conclude that they are not in a position or do not desire

¹ Sponsors of the original and/or subsequent Guideline projects: Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture; British Columbia Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts; Canadian Tourism Commission; Federal-Provincial-Territorial Culture/Heritage and Tourism Initiative; Government of the Northwest Territories – Department of Resources, Wildlife, & Economic Development; Government of Yukon – Department of Tourism and Culture; Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage; Ontario Ministry of Tourism; Tourism British Columbia; Tourism Prince Edward Island.

to conduct a tourism economic impact assessment but can use the basic procedures described in the Guidelines to meet other information needs.

Organizations that may require help in implementing the procedures described in the Guidelines are encouraged to seek guidance from faculty members in tourism, economics or social science departments at a local college or university or members of research professional organizations such as the Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA, www.ttra.com), Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA, www.mria-arim.ca). These organizations maintain lists of members who may be able to meet your needs.

DIFFERENT GUIDELINES FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

THE GUIDELINES

For Tourism Economic Impact Assessments

Guidelines: Survey Procedures for Tourism Economic Impact Assessments of **Gated Events and Festivals**

Guidelines: Survey Procedures for Tourism Economic Impact Assessments of **Ungated or Open Access Events and Festivals**

Guidelines: Survey Procedures for Tourism Economic Impact Assessments of **Gated, Permanent Attractions**

For On-Site Spending/Other Assessments

Guidelines: Survey Procedures for Assessment of On-Site Spending at **Gated Events and Festivals**

Guidelines: Survey Procedures for Assessment of On-Site Spending at **Ungated or Open Access Events and Festivals**

The Guidelines have been customized to reflect different event characteristics and information interests.

Event Characteristics

Gated Events: Events with controlled access (*gates*) where people can be counted as they enter (e.g., country fairs at fairgrounds, performances in roofed venues).

Ungated Events: These versions parallel the Gated Event versions, for “ungated or open access” events (e.g., waterfront festivals or street festivals, parades).

Permanent Attractions: Permanent arts, culture and entertainment attractions with controlled access (*gates*) where people can be counted as they enter (e.g., museums, art galleries, theme parks). Designed for attractions interested in estimating their tourism economic impact in the community, this document can also be used to meet other information needs.

Information Interests

Two versions of Gated and Ungated Event Guidelines are available. One is designed to capture tourist spending in the community and at

the event to estimate **tourism’s direct and indirect economic impact** (*Tourism Economic Impact Assessments*). The other version does not capture tourist spending in the community, focussing instead on **spending at the event** by all attendees (*On-Site Spending*).

FEEDBACK FROM USERS

Feedback from festival, event or attraction managers and other interested individuals who review or implement the Guidelines is essential. As a work-in-progress, the Guidelines will be revised and refined based on users’ comments. An evaluation kit, including comment forms, is being designed and will be available on-line in Summer 2007.