

Essential Strategies to Innovate Your Visitor Experiences and Offerings

Question & Answer Follow-up | May 19, 2020

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Are customers willing to pay for engaging and immersive experiences? Is there a price threshold? How can small businesses offer immersive experiences to their potential customers in cost-effective ways?

Consumers will pay for engaging and immersive experiences provided they are impactful and evoke an emotional connection. Small businesses can create exclusive mini experiences (early or late exclusive access, special added value perks, etc...). Operators must be flexible and willing to try new things.

What about the 'experience' lifespan and length of time it's offered?

After about three to five years and you will need to refresh your experience(s).

How can we sell experiences when we are trying to avoid big crowds? Do we need to look at more take-home experiences and/or online offerings?

To control crowds and spread people out, you will have to work on a reservations plan to ensure public health and safety. You might also create a take-home kit, such as a recipe with all the ingredients, or do online engagement demos on a regular basis.

[BC's Restart Plan](#) provides guidance on steps to safely reopen the economy to ensure our combined efforts and sacrifices are not squandered. Please review the plan for information on the four-phased approach and guidance on re-opening your business. [WorkSafeBC's website](#), which is being updated regularly, provides guidance to employers on returning to safe operations as well.

Please provide an example of how you can demo with the COVID-19 safety issues.

You can safely demo culinary programs. It may require added elements such as an overhead mirror or video/screens so the audience can see what you are doing. People would not be participating in the demo. Food could be prepared in advance and served once the demo is complete. Refer to guidelines and advice provided by [WorkSafeBC](#).

For these mini engagement experiences focused on the hyper local market, should the emphasis be on shorter (1, 2, or 3 night) getaways?

Mini experiences that are 30, 45, or 60 minutes in length are optimal, especially if you can keep people moving around.

When doing teachings or demonstrations, are the businesses charging? Or is this free?

When teaching a skill or craft, the business is charging for the experience. Customers are paying for the instructor, including materials and a profit margin is built in.

Most of these immersive experience examples involve face-to-face time with staff. How can businesses keep these staff safe and healthy while immersing guests?

Face-to-face connections create the most impact. For safety, social distancing and masks are key. Also, ensure your staff are not in a risk category. Consider changing out staff if possible, depending on the length of the experience. Again, refer to your sector guidelines and advice provided by [WorkSafeBC](#).

What are your recommendations for marketing these types of experiences? In general, and with COVID-19 in mind?

Safety messages first will build confidence. Then, use video and imagery showcasing individuals or small groups of people enjoying the experience. Online is key for promotion - website, social media channels, and past customer testimonials.

From ideation to delivery, how long does it usually take to create and deliver these experiences?

You can get a mini experience to the market in 30 days, however, new experience design and development takes longer.

I host pop-up dinners that take you direct to your food source on farms. I use an approved kitchen for food preparation, and everything is to code, but execution is outside on a farm. What are your thoughts on the risk of someone becoming sick and that impact on the business?

You need to analyze every partner and aspect of your experience. You might have to scale down the amount of stops or activities to make it manageable. Your brand has to guarantee the partners you collaborate with have public health and safety top of mind and build trust.

For hotel packages that partner with local companies to offer experiences, travelers post COVID-19 are going to be price conscious. Would you suggest building experiences into the package price, or use them as add-ons?

Packaging lodging plus experiences and attractions takes you out of the commodity/price game. Create manageable packages with a few attractions, along with some free time. Test your offerings. Great packages also garner great public relations.