Tourism: An Integral Part of a Community’s Economic Development Portfolio

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Today’s Talk...

- What is the tourism industry?
- Its economic significance to LA?
- Roles & responsibilities in development and management
Tourism & Economic Development

- Piece of the diversification puzzle
- Tourism should be considered as part of any community’s development strategy
- Creates jobs, income, and tax revenues
What is the Tourism Industry?

- Group of profit-making and some public enterprises
- Broader definition of “industry”
- Economic sector that has developed around the activities and needs of the traveling public.
- Traveling public - business & leisure
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So Who is a Tourist?

Visitor from some other location, and:

- does not intend to stay permanently,
- visiting friends or relatives
- may be…
  - on vacation
  - on business trips
  - attending a special event
  - participating in a sporting event
  - just sightseeing
Top Ten Tourism Truisms

10. Tourists want attractions and activities; not parishes and communities.
9. The tourism environment is dynamic.
8. Tourism has its benefits, but it also has its costs.
Top Ten Tourism Truisms (cont.)

7. Tourism is a complex, service sector industry, where:
   * customers come to the product;
   * expenditures are for tangibles;
   * driving forces are the intangibles.
   * public sector management; private sector job and income creation.
Top Ten Tourism Truisms (cont.)

6. Public and private partnerships are essential to market and promote parishes and communities!
5. Area-wide cooperation is essential. Must join forces to provide an adequate attractions’ base for visitors. “Grow the pie”.
4. Professional, enlightened and dedicated leadership is needed to make it happen!
Speaking of tourism leadership!

- How is the tourism industry organized in LA?
  - Private components
  - Public components
  - Local organizations
How is the Tourism Industry organized in LA?

- Private Sector
  - Attractions, accommodations, eating establishments, etc.
  - Trade associations- LTPA, LHMA, LRA
  - Close working relationship with public sector—state and local
How is the Tourism Industry organized in LA? (cont.)

- Public Sector
  - State level- Office of Tourism within DCRT. Primary mission: out-of-state marketing and promotion
  - Local level- 50+ tourist commissions and convention and visitor bureaus
The Parish’s Tourism Organization

- Tourist commission or convention and visitor bureau?
- What does it do?
- How is it funded?
- How does it operate?
- Who are the members?
- How are the members appointed?
Typical Tourist Commission and CVB:

- **Purpose:** to promote tourism in the parish or multi-parish region
- Advertise, and publish information relating to **tourism** attractions in the Parish using lodging tax as primary revenue base.
Typical Tourist Commission and CVB:

- Commissioners/ CVB members
  - Residents of the Parish
  - Nominated by a nonprofit organization
  - Appointed by Parish government
  - Volunteers; receive no salary or compensation

- No or small staff led by an Executive Director
Top Ten Tourism Truisms (cont.)

3. Effective tourism organizations are accountable, rely on staff, involve all commissioners/members, and the rest of the community.

2. It’s about $$$$ Stable funding base, a plan, budget, and spend accordingly.

1. It’s a war out there. Plan and then plan some more! Effectiveness requires order and organization.
Vermilion Parish Tourism Commission

- Who Are We?
- What Do We Do?
Who Are We - By Definition?

Team Leaders

- Using our individual special skills to help the team achieve our purpose and reach our tourism goals
- Motivating others to do specific tasks to achieve our purpose and reach our tourism goals

Team Players

- Always balancing the needs of the community, the government, the businesses, and the visitors with our own ideas, and those of our team
- Working directly with each other and the executive director and responding as a group to inquiries from those outside the tourism team.
Who Are We - By Law?

- **A Team** of Seven Commissioners
  - Residents of the Parish
  - Nominated by a nonprofit organization interested in tourism
  - Appointed for three years by Parish government
  - Volunteers; receive no salary or compensation

- **Sub-teams** To Perform Administrative Tasks
  - Officers
  - Personnel committee members
  - Action committee members

- **Partners** With the Executive Director
# What Do We Do - By Definition?

**Set** Goals

**Define** Objectives
- To accomplish goals
- Develop Action Plans

**Implement** Action Plans
- Develop strategies to do
- Incorporate goals in all other activities
- Evaluate each action

**Cooperate** with Executive Director
What Do We Do - By Law?

- Accept Grants & Donations
- Make Capital Improvements to secure federal funds
- Promote, Advertise, and publish information relating to tourism attractions in the Parish using Hotel/Motel Tax as revenue base.
What Do We Do As A Team?

- Meet to review progress and make plans.
- Set goals and objectives and devise action plans.
- Leave our individuality and authority at the door - work together.
- Work through the executive director rather than directly through the staff.
What Do We Do As Leaders?

- **Officers - administer**
  - Chairman
    - presides over commission
    - co-signs checks
  - Vice president
  - Secretary
    - record of meetings
  - Treasurer
    - disburses funds; keeps financial records
    - co-signs checks

- **Action Committees - plan**
  - Implement action plans
  - Organized as needed

- **Personnel Committee - advise**
  - Advise on all tourism personnel issues
  - Three appointed by chairman.
Where Does Executive Director Fit?

- Advises commission
  - Conducts research, attends conferences to gather info for goals and objectives
  - Reports about other’s successes, action plans

- Implements goals and objectives
  - Represents Commission and Parish in all tourism events
  - Sets up cooperation with other program executives
  - Manages day-to-day Ascension Tourism Program business
Tourism Marketing 101

Analyzing Your Travel & Tourism Situation

See Handouts
Tourism Marketing 102

Identifying Tourism Products to be Marketed by Vermilion Parish
The Parish’s Attractions Base

- Attractions - a purpose of travel and focus of tourists’ interest
- Based on - resources and on activities or events
Your Parish’s Attraction Base

- Attractions can be...
  - Natural resources or scenic settings
  - Human-made attractions
  - Historical, cultural or ethnic attractions
  - Unique recreational opportunities
  - Festivals and other special events
Your Parish’s Attractions Base

- So what is there to see and do in your parish?
Your Parish’s Attractions Base

- Need to work with other parishes and counties...
  - Tourists are blind to geopolitical lines
  - Idea is to keep them in the area longer
  - Stretching limited marketing
Tourism Marketing 103-105

The Rest of the Process: Getting The Biggest Bang For Your (Scarce) Bucks

Tourism Marketing 103: Targeting Your Market
Tourism Marketing 104: Setting a Promotional Budget & Developing a Promotional Mix
Tourism Marketing 105: Closing the Loop: Were you Successful or Not? Evaluate?
But We’re Poor! How Do We Fund Our Marketing Efforts?
Sources of Funding

Organization Dues
Local Government- Parish? Municipalities
Selling Advertisement
Hotel/Motel Taxes
Visitor Enterprise Fund
Sources of Funding

Earned Income
Food & Beverage Taxes
Publicity Through Others
Voluntary Contributions
Vermilion Parish Visitor Enterprise Fund

Revised Legislative statute dedicating 3.97% of the hotel/motel room rental tax to the “Vermilion Parish Visitor Enterprise Fund”

Effective Fiscal Years 1996-2010
Visitor Enterprise Fund Allocations (1996-2010)

Erath Acadia Museum
Gueydan Museum
Kaplan Museum
LeBayou Legendire Cultural Center
Les Chretiens, Inc.
Acadian Centre on Genealogy
Abbieville Cultural & Historical Alliance
Vermilion Parish Visitor Enterprise Fund

Each entity receives an equal share of the monies.

After 2010, monies will be available for planning, development, or capital improvement at sites in Vermilion Parish.

Capitol Improvements include: acquiring lands, buildings, equipment, or other permanent properties, or construction preservation, or development, or permanent improvement.

FYE 2000 $10,700 dedicated amount to the Vermilion Parish VEF.