



CENTRAL COUNTIES

November 2014

Executive Director Report

Last week we attended the Ontario Tourism Summit in Blue Mountain. It was a great opportunity to network and learn, from experts, about the trends and drivers of tourism on a global scale. A theme throughout the conference was experience development in the context of providing visitors with something tangible, memorable and most importantly, authentic. What really hit home for me was the notion that the experience doesn't have to be for everyone. You are the one who knows your product/experience and you are the one who knows the type of visitor that enjoys it most. In one of the presentations, there was a great chart that demonstrated the visitor/experience relationship. All of the presentations will be available at www.ontariotourismsummit.com by the end of the month and I encourage all of you to spend some time browsing the archived material. I am sure the presenter's chart was much more composed, but here's the gist.

Visitors	Find other audiences / demographics that enjoy your current experiences	Develop new experiences for new and current audiences
	Current Visitors and Current Experiences	Grow current visitor type by providing new experiences for that demographic
	Experiences	

There are examples across the province of operators banding together to increase the number of people coming through their doors. Operators up North recognized that they had a lot of motorcyclists through the summer and saw the potential with a current visitor base.

They determined what it was that avid riders wanted/needed to get them to visit and delivered on those needs. The result is Ride Lake Superior (<http://ridelakesuperior.com/>) and operators are seeing a huge increase of visitors from an existing market. Closer to home, the Markham Jazz Festival wanted to expand their audience base this year and did it by adding new acts throughout the three day festival that drew a different demographic of music lover.

If you are happy and comfortable operating in the bottom left box, that is fantastic and we should all be so fortunate. If you are always thinking about getting that extra person through the door, that's where Central Counties can help. We can help you develop new experiences and new audiences by working together with other likeminded operators to create compelling destinations like A Country Path (www.acountrypath.com) in Durham Region. These incredible entrepreneurs have banded together to create a truly amazing destination and are already seeing the results of their collaboration. Durham Region (www.durhamtourism.ca) has been a huge supporter of this project and all of our regional partners are ready to assist as we create new reasons for people to visit our beautiful and vibrant part of the province.

Developing new experiences and partnerships takes fortitude and determination. You have to stick with it because the results are going to be slow in coming. It takes time for word to spread about new destinations and experiences but as long as we are delivering a quality experience with perceived value to the proper audience, success will come. Central Counties can assist with all stages of the process and will be proud to market your destination and tell your story. You can email me directly (cthibeault@centralcounties.ca) or contact your local regional rep.

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The main takeaway from the Summit is that in many ways, we are ahead of the curve – out in front of the trend. Let's make sure that we stay there, being THE destination to visit for compelling experiences.

Have a great day!

Chuck