



Stronger Economies Together

Doing Better Together

Tourism

Rachael Carter, Mississippi State University

Chance McDavid, Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi State University



TOURISM: FINALIZING THE PLAN

OVERVIEW

Purpose: During this session, participants will:

- Learn the basic services tourists need
- Learn the basic principles for planning, developing, and managing tourism for economic development
- Review rural tourism examples, case studies, and available resources

Estimated Time to Complete: 4 hours

Materials Needed:

- Nametags
- Name tents
- Sign in sheets
- Flip charts
- Markers

Handouts:

- Handout 1 – Tourism Planning Guide

SLIDE 1
INSTRUCTIONS

Have this slide up when participants arrive.

Introduce participants if newcomers are attending.



SLIDE 1

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 2

INSTRUCTIONS

Go over these basic statements related to tourism and economic growth to set the stage for the next slide.

Decision making regarding public budgeting is difficult for elected officials due to limited resources.

Tourism is sometimes a misunderstood economic and community development tool. Local residents often can clearly see the burdens that tourism can place on a community, but may not be able to see the benefits such as revenue generation and job creation.

In order for any economic development strategy to be successful and sustainable community development must occur. This in the simplest of terms means that there must be a local person or entity that is the driving force behind the initiative. Also, people from various groups from within the community must work together towards a common goal.

Communities often have limited resources and must take advantage of what assets and resource that they do have in order to move forward.

(A Guide to Community-based Planning, SRDC, Dr. Gene Theodori, Sam Houston State University)

Are these all true for our region?

Tourism and Economic Returns

- Public budgeting is difficult.
- Tourism is sometimes misunderstood.
- Community development is vital.
- Small towns have limited resources.
- Take advantage of what you have.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

SET

SLIDE 2

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 3
INSTRUCTIONS

Ask the participants if tourism development is important to their region? Why or why not?



SLIDE 3

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 4
INSTRUCTIONS

Explain to the audience that tourism has benefits because it is actually a good or service that brings in money from outside the local economy. Tourism can generate funding to support improvements to infrastructure. Tourism can also increase the visibility of the town and create an awareness of the resources the community can offer to both local and non-local residents.

Discussion: What other benefits might tourism bring to our region?

The next two charts provide two real examples of tourism benefits to a community

Source: Tourism and Retail Development, Attracting Tourists to Local Businesses, Bill Ryan, Jim Bloms, Jim Hovland, David Scheler, University of Wisconsin Extension

Tourism Benefits

Tourism:

- Is an export good
- Brings visitors with higher disposable income
- Can support more diverse retail
- Brings outside revenues that stimulate the economy
- Generates funding for infrastructure
- Increases visibility
- Creates an awareness of the regional resources

Source: Tourism and Retail Development, Attracting Tourists to Local Businesses, Bill Ryan, Jim Bloms, Jim Hovland, David Scheler, University of Wisconsin Extension

SET

SLIDE 4

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 5
INSTRUCTIONS

Provide an overview of this single case. The Prairie Arts Festival, a one day event, takes place annually in a small Mississippi town of just over 11,000 population. These calculations are of direct expenditures that were experienced in a Mississippi town as the result of an event held in the community to draw in outside dollars and to celebrate the culture of the town. The event contributed to the local economy by bringing in revenues from outside the local area and by encouraging spending by local residents when normally those local residents spent money in the larger surrounding communities.

Discussion: What surprises you in the chart?



SLIDE 5

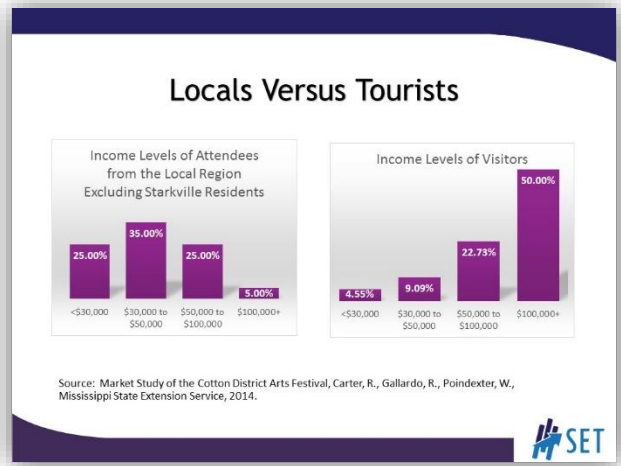
TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 6
INSTRUCTIONS

These charts represent the income levels of outside visitors compared to attendees from the local area to the Cotton District Arts Festival and Super Bulldog Weekend (a single event), that takes place in Starkville, Mississippi. The charts are significant because they demonstrate an example of a tourism event drawing visitors with higher income levels than the local residents to the area. Higher incomes translate into more disposable income.



SLIDE 6

TIME: 10 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

Source: Market Study of the Cotton District Arts Festival, Carter, R., Gallardo, R., Poindexter, W., Mississippi State Extension Service, 2014.

SLIDE 7

INSTRUCTIONS

Explore the differences in community events and tourism events.

Community events and tourism events are both important to the well-being of a community, but the effects that they have on the community's local economy vary. Community events typically have mostly attendees from within 50 to 90 miles of the event's location. The benefits of a community event would be retaining local spending and contributing to the local quality of life.

Tourism events focus on drawing visitors from outside the local area to draw new money spending in the region. Tourism events can also create awareness about the resources, assets, or attractions of a particular town. An event can be both a community event and a tourism event, but it is vital that the event managers clearly define outcomes they are trying to achieve when planning an event.

Discussion: How might this distinction change the way an event is planned and implemented?



SLIDE 7

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 8
INSTRUCTIONS

Review these important starting points to planning for tourism.

Event planners need to determine what type of people they are trying to draw to their event, how many people they believe will attend, and what businesses would benefit from the event and who might be willing to help.

Discussion: What other questions might be important to consider?



SLIDE 8

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 9

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide the group into pairs and briefly discuss these four questions. If the group is very large or time is limited, you could assign different questions to different groups.

Asking these questions help gauge buy-in prior to organizing an effort.



SLIDE 9

TIME: 10 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 10

INSTRUCTIONS

Examine these four main needs of a tourist:

Somewhere to eat - Are there places for tourists to eat? Is there a local "hot spot" that folks need to be sure to visit?

Somewhere to sleep - Are there adequate facilities to accommodate people overnight? An important piece to the economics of tourism is "heads in beds." Are accommodations close by? Are they within walking distance to the major attraction(s)?

Something to do - This may seem obvious, but communities must be careful not to oversell the experience. What is the attraction? Is the community a destination or should it be part of a larger, regional effort?

Something to buy - Visitors like to leave with something to remind them of the experience. Also, local businesses benefit from the tourism dollars. What is available for folks to purchase? Is there something unique to the area?



SLIDE 10

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS: HANDOUT 1 – TOURISM
PLANNING GUIDE

SLIDE 11

INSTRUCTIONS

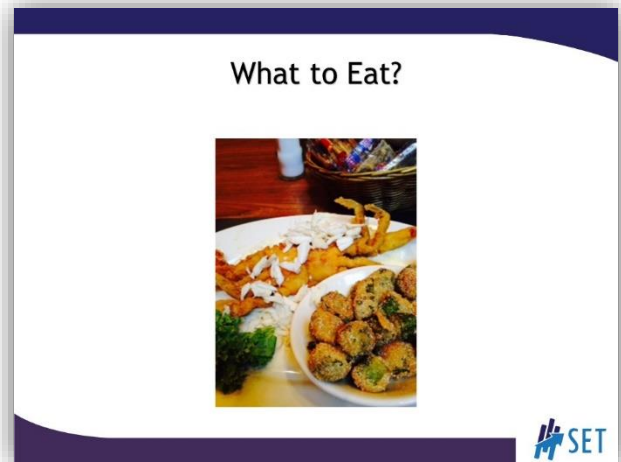
The following slides are an activity. It is common knowledge that tourists need a means to travel to your community, something to eat, somewhere to sleep, something to do, and something buy.

To make this relevant to your region the instructor can pull a photograph from around the region of food in a restaurant, an activity, a place to stay, and a means of traveling around the region. These photos can simply be photos from a phone or digital camera. The audience should try to guess the location of each of the photos.

Next to get the group started in creating a tourism experience have the audience name somewhere in their region that they love to eat, a means of transportation, somewhere to stay, and something to do in their region.

This information could possibly be used to develop guides of things to see and do in the area. It could also be used to help build weekend getaways, and day trip attractions. Ask the audience to be creative, and to list places that are not as well known or that creates a particularly good experience for a visitor.

Use the Tourism Planning Guide and fill out the "What Does a Tourist Need" section with real examples from within the region. Use the following slides to guide the four quadrants of the matrix.



SLIDE 11

TIME: 20 MINS FOR ENTIRE ACTIVITY
(SLIDES 11 – 14)

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS: HANDOUT 1 – TOURISM
PLANNING GUIDE

SLIDE 12
INSTRUCTIONS

See slide #11 for explanation.



SLIDE 12

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 13
INSTRUCTIONS

See slide #11 for explanation.



SLIDE 13

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 14
INSTRUCTIONS

See slide #11 for explanation.



SLIDE 14

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 15
INSTRUCTIONS

Guide the participants to consider other industry sectors that could be impacted by tourism. Some of these are depicted on this slide. It is easy to understand that retail, hotels, and restaurants are all impacted by tourism, but it takes more thought to consider that tourism can also benefit agriculture, oil and gas, and construction industries.

Discussion: Are there others missing that you would add?



SLIDE 15

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 16
INSTRUCTIONS

Examine this list of basic examples of tourism businesses in a local community. These businesses can either generate their own tourists or benefit from tourism.

Discussion: Which of these exist in our region?

What would you add to your matrix?



SLIDE 16

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 17
INSTRUCTIONS

Discuss how rural tourism might be packaged in a community. This diagram shows various types of rural tourism and how each of these types of tourism is often not a stand alone in a tourism mix or package in a community. Sports tourism and culinary tourism could be tied together to create an experience. A simple example would be attending a sporting event and then dining at a local restaurant that specializes in local cuisine.

Niche Tourism: Conference, reunion, holiday, wedding, and anniversary

Culinary: Restaurants, local foods, festivals that promote foods

Agritourism: farm tours, petting zoos, tractor shows, rodeos, trail rides

Historical: museums, storytelling, Indian mounds, battlefields

Sports: large sporting events, travel tournaments, professional matches and tournaments, runs or benefits

Ecotourism/Nature: Canoeing, bird watching, butterfly watching, fee hunting and fishing

Music: Large music events, small venues, music festivals, music museums

Festival and special events: arts festivals, street fairs, community events, music festivals, auctions, flea markets, wildlife festival

Discussion: Which of these elements are in this regions? What does the region have to support these? Add the answers to the Rural Tourism chart



SLIDE 17

TIME: 5 MINS

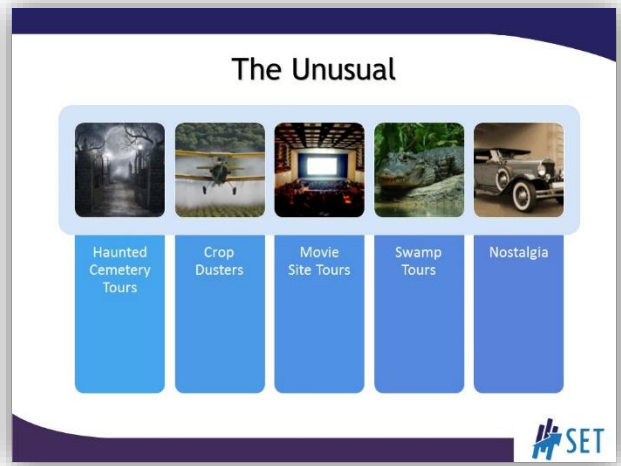
SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 18
INSTRUCTIONS

Think past the traditional to the unusual. When creating a tourism attraction authenticity is important. Ask questions such as what makes our community special. Is this a story we could tell. How can we make some of our everyday cultural experiences an attraction for a tourist?

What unusual sites exist within the region? Add them to the empty boxes on the Rural Tourism chart



SLIDE 18

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 19
INSTRUCTIONS

Consider this list of established and emerging trends in tourism and travel today. The purpose of this list is to allow the audience to brainstorm on what assets in their community would fit into one of these categories. For example if the community has a local river that would be a resource for developing adventure tourism with canoe rentals or ecotourism with river tours.

Do any of these spark new ideas? If so, add them to the appropriate boxes.



SLIDE 19

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 20
INSTRUCTIONS

This slide lists a number of unusual rural tourism ideas.

Discussion: What else does your region have to offer that might be unique to the region?



SLIDE 20

TIME: 10 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 21

INSTRUCTIONS

Consider how modes of transportation can impact the number and type of tourists that visit your community. Modes of transportation can also be a form of a tourism attraction.

Suggest that the audience research all of the major transportation avenues to their community or near their community. This information can be used to determine where and how to market your attractions. This information can also be used to determine what types of tourists might be traveling through your town already. Place information about your events where these travelers will easily find it.

Many states have already developed marketing strategies and attractions around attractions such as rivers, lakes, and railroads. The audience should research whether there are any initiatives currently underway in their community.

The development of nature based and culture based trails has become popular in multiple states. The audience should be advised to determine if any of these initiatives are currently taking place in their region and develop a strategy to use this existing marketing to benefit their event or attraction

Highways, Byways, Rivers, Trails, and Tracks
Capitalizing on existing strategies, markets, and attractions

- Major Highways
- Already Created Trails
- Railroads
- Rivers and lakes,
- Coastlines
- Airports

Tourism Trails are Trending

SET

SLIDE 21

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 22
INSTRUCTIONS

Identifying well-traveled roads in the region is one key to effective tourism development. Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) is a method that can be used to identify well-traveled roads and highways near your community.

www.esri.com

[Note: You may want to change this map to your state prior to presenting the session.]



SLIDE 22

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 23
INSTRUCTIONS

What transportation options do we have in the region to support tourism?

Add these to the tourism planning guide.



SLIDE 23

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

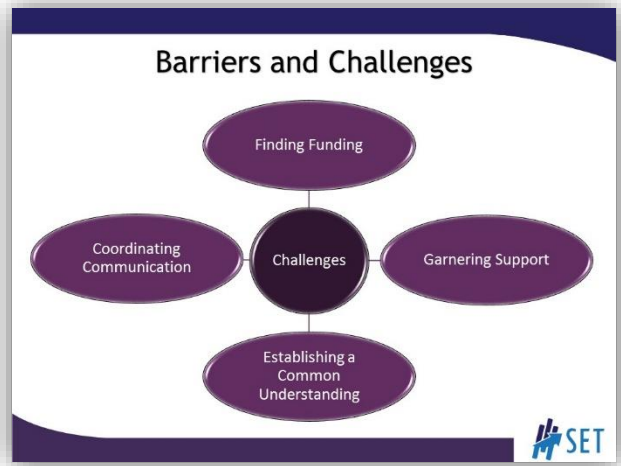
SLIDE 24
INSTRUCTIONS

Examine some of the more common challenges to establishing a tourism sector. The most common challenges and barriers to success when developing tourism are listed on this slide.

As an activity have the group create a list of potential stakeholders and resources for addressing each of these challenges.

- Who might be willing to help work on these challenges?
- What resources exist to help?
- What resources might we need to find?

List the region’s potential regional barriers and challenges on Tourism Planning Guide in the box under “Barriers and Challenges.”



SLIDE 24

TIME: 15 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 25

INSTRUCTIONS

Examine these elements vital to success in light of the previous slide's activity. What would we add or change to that activity given this information:

Community Catalyst - A champion is needed to keep a tourism effort alive and moving forward. Champions are both people and organizations.

Access to Resources & Opportunity - Building upon local assets is important. Opportunities to leverage these resources are needed to make a tourism development process work.

Public & Private Partnerships - They're are certain elements that the public sector can provide such as infrastructure improvements. Private sector components (lodging, dining, shopping, etc.) must develop partnerships with local government to make a tourist effort work.

Knowing Your Market - Just like businesses must know who their audiences are, an important part of a tourism strategy is to know its visitor profile.

Consider what the region has to offer that could help mitigate the barriers and challenges. Add these to "potential partners and strengths."



SLIDE 25

TIME: 10 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 26

INSTRUCTIONS

Creating a sustainable tourism effort requires you build a team. Relationships within the region contribute to the success of any event.

Ask the group to discuss potential partners for their tourism efforts.

Positions that would need to be filled or included on an event board. For example, the region could create a formal group to manage a specific event. Board members need to be assigned to the focus areas in which they feel most comfortable. Specific areas would be marketing, entertainment, logistics, safety, food and beverages, programming, administration, and sponsorship.

Also, consider developing a plan for establishing regional and community partners within public and private organizations such as public offices, emergency management, local businesses, and community groups.

Add any additional notes to the Potential Partners and Strengths box.



SLIDE 26

TIME: 10 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 27
INSTRUCTIONS

Review these important perspectives on what tourists are.

Looking for an experience - People are looking for an authentic, genuine experience that they can't replicate anywhere else.

Not dependent on you - Tourists are resourceful, and they have expectations and will seek them out.

Part of local business - Tourists spend money. They contribute to the economic tax base in a community.

Someone who has his/her own wishes and wants - Again, it's important to know your visitor profile.


Not an imposition or an interruption - Tourism should be looked at as a viable piece to the economic development puzzle in the community.

For more information on this topic see - Tourism and Retail Development, Attracting Tourists to Local Businesses, Bill Ryan, Jim Bloms, Jim Hovland, David Scheler, University of Wisconsin Extension


What to Remember

Tourists are:

- Looking for an experience
- Not dependent on you
- Part of local business
- Someone who has his/her own wishes and wants
- Not an imposition or an interruption



For more information on this topic see - Tourism and Retail Development, Attracting Tourists to Local Businesses, Bill Ryan, Jim Bloms, Jim Hovland, David Scheler, University of Wisconsin Extension



SLIDE 27

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 28
INSTRUCTIONS

Depending on where your region is in the SET process, discuss next steps. Some of the other sessions may guide next steps.

Questions you may want to consider asking:

- What are the takeaways from this exploration?

- Does Tourism seem a viable industry to pursue in our region? Why/Why not?

- What are the next steps we would need to take to move forward? Add these to the region's 30/30 Plan of Action



SLIDE 28

TIME: 15 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:


SLIDE 29
INSTRUCTIONS

These are tourism resources that can help communities explore a tourism development strategy in more detail.

Share these with the region.

Resources and Links

- Tourism and Retail Development, Attracting Tourists to Local Businesses, Bill Ryan, Jim Bloms, Jim Hovland, David Scheler, University of Wisconsin Extension
- Community Tourism Development, University of Minnesota Tourism Center www.tourism.umn.edu
- USDA National Agricultural Library <http://ric.nal.usda.gov/rural-tourism>
- National Main Street Center <http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/>
- Travel South <http://www.travelsouthusa.com/>



SLIDE 29

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS:

SLIDE 30
INSTRUCTIONS

Be sure to include your contact information.



SLIDE 30

TIME: 5 MINS

SUPPLIES:

HANDOUTS: