

Step 3: Prepare, Protect and Manage

HANDOUT: Tour Product Options

Ever wonder what travel products are most appropriate for you and your visitors? With increased competition, destinations must develop appropriate tour products and packages that are easy to purchase, easy to use and provide value to the customer. Consider the following list to learn about some of the tour products that can be developed – by the public and/or private sector - to market in advance, offer on-site or provide incentives for various types of visitors.



Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
All-Inclusive Tour Set-price tour package including lodging, meals, attractions and transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time/budget sensitive customers • partnering with resorts, cruises for specific length of stay • sale by travel agents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pre-paid activities, attraction tickets, accommodations, events, lodging, meals, air, ground transportation, etc. • usually packaged through tour operator, wholesaler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pre-paid by customers • requires advance bookings
Audio Tour A tape or CD tour that an individual traveler can use within a site, such as a museum or on walking and driving tours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • special exhibitions • controlled access – pick up and drop off points for equipment, tapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • central point for distribution, rental (equipment, audio tapes) • production costs: voice talent, scriptwriter, audio, editing, master tape, dubbing, packaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost of production, updating • maintenance of equipment • measurable

Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
<p>Central Reservation System (CRS) A central (usually toll free) reservation service to book lodging and attractions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting/conventions • ticketed events and attraction packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sign up lodging, attraction partners • secure system and data base to handle reservations • call center staffing, training and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one-stop shopping for customer • costly start-up • staffing, maintenance costs
<p>Coupon Book A booklet with coupons offering discounts or special premiums</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time-sensitive promotions • encourage repeat customers • increasing number of activities/length of stay • residents/ visiting friends & relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multiple distribution outlets • distribution costs: marketing, PR, commissions • development, printing costs • critical mass of products – either by theme or collection of products: lodging, tours, attractions, restaurants, shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trackable • short shelf life • involves multiple public/private partners • weigh time/money to produce, distribute vs. use
<p>Cultural Corridor/ Heritage Trails Cultural or heritage attractions linked together by a marked touring route (for bikes, auto, foot or water traffic)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural heritage travelers • audiences interested in linear travel • extend stay of current visitors • urban/rural mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical mass of cultural activities/attractions • link along a linear route/geographic area to create a ribbon of activities • “anchor” attractions • consistent quality of visitor experience at participating cultural attractions, activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficult to measure impact if including gated, non-gated attractions/areas • fly-drive tours difficult unless routed in/out of same city, wave drop off for rental car • must offer enough experiences consistently (hours/days of operation)

Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
<p>Family/Kids Tour Packages/Programs Special tours, activities and materials geared towards children and accompanying adults (grandparents, parents, extended family members, chaperones)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • families: traditional, intergenerational, extended • marketing annual visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interactive, educational mix of things to do • “kid friendly” attractions, accommodations, restaurants • offer new learning experiences • schedule quality time together • customized for different levels of interest, skill depending on age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must meet expectations of parents/grandparents/adults • mostly seasonal: summer (August) travel • number of young people who travel is growing annually by 21%¹ • heritage activities number one for families² • grandparents included on 16% of family vacations³
<p>Group Tour: General Inclusive package tours for groups (or individuals to participate in a group itinerary) sold in advance by tour operators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • destinations with enough activities that can accommodate 20-50 people at one time • time-driven itineraries (several hours, 1/2 day, full day, overnight, multi-day) • organizing by theme or geographic area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accommodate 20-50 people at one time • motorcoach parking • motorcoach drop-off • step-on guides • net, wholesale rates for operators • comps for driver/guide • “something special” that can’t be purchased individually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • huge audience for cultural heritage audience: 52% of tour operators offer museum tours⁴; mature adults represent 1/3 of all US travel⁵ • advance bookings • shoulder/off season • capacity issues • measurable

¹ Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) Travel Poll, 2000

² Better Homes & Gardens Family Vacation Report, 2000 Meredith Corporation

³ Better Homes & Gardens Family Vacation Report

⁴ National Tour Association, Courier Magazine September 2001

⁵ TIA Travel Poll, 2000

Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
<p>Group Tours: School Tours designed for school groups, often targeting a specific age or curriculum topic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local schools: public/private seeking educational program • field trips for specific cultural/heritage program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • market to/through schools, teacher conferences • educational: compatible with lesson plans or curriculum • accommodate 20-40 kids with chaperones at one time • bus unloading, parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must be affordable • advance bookings • year-round, though predominately spring • measurable
<p>Group Tour: Special Interest/Thematic Small group outings that focus on specific topics and offer exclusive touring opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well-traveled, highly educated customers • non-profit groups offering travel programs to build membership: university alumni, museums, etc. • aficionados interested in specific topic, theme (cuisine, architecture, Civil War, local culture, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education/in-depth tours • customized for each group • “something special” that can’t be purchased individually • accommodate 10-30 people at one time • van/motorcoach parking, drop-off • prefer patronizing “locally-owned” establishments • accommodate small groups, wide range of ages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low cancellation rate • not rate sensitive • high value on sustainable tourism • marketed through relationships – takes time to build. • sold directly or through receptive/tour operators • measurable

<p>Guidebook A book describing attractions, accommodations and other tour services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mass market • regional/in-state visitors • local residents • cultural heritage travelers interested in theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical mass of cultural heritage product to include • criteria to determine what is included • time and money to research, write, design and print • wide-spread distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum shelf-life two years if including logistical information (prices, hours, events, retail, etc.) • lengthy, costly development process • can get political on who to include
<p>Hub-Spoke/Circle Tour A tour based in a central location that includes shorter day trips out from that location/ a tour that begins and ends in the same location</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fly-drive markets • urban centers partnering with rural neighbors • extending stay of current visitors (one – three nights) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • linking cultural heritage sites along a scenic loop • cultural heritage can be integrated with other activities • need to have routes where visitors are not backtracking • tours not more than 100 miles driving total during one day • overnight accommodation • include evening entertainment/activities • provide consistent quality of visitor experience at sites/events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not necessarily seasonal • offers wide variety, sampling of thematic product • measurable • fluctuating interest during peak/non-peak period can be challenging for scheduling, staffing

Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
<p>Independent Traveler Itinerary A travel schedule that suggests a route and attractions to see within a specific time frame</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • market to receptive/ tour operators • mass market: leisure travelers looking for options • short-haul or long-haul travelers • international, domestic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suggested things to do based on thematic or geographic region • include helpful trip-planning information such as how long it takes to drive, visit or tour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides options based on interests, opportunities • allows travelers to browse, then pick and choose • can be linear, circular, hub and spoke
<p>Independent Traveler Package Tour A pre-paid tour that includes specific – but not all – travel components, usually lodging, ground transportation, and attractions. Foreign Independent Travelers (FIT) purchase these tour packages from travel agents and/or tour operators prior to departure and receive vouchers to submit as payment to US travel establishments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mass market - leisure • time/budget sensitive leisure travelers • weekend or short-haul travelers • marketing special value-priced promotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • partners accommodation with activities such as museums, events, outdoor activities • tour elements bundled together and presented to customer as “package” • needs perceived value: special price, unique elements • sell direct via 800#, internet, CRS, hotel or through travel agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can be offered last minute • good for B&Bs as well as hotels, motels and resorts • purchased in advance • 1/2 of all US adults take at least one weekend trip per year (103 million adults)¹

¹ TIA Travel Poll, 2000

Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
<p>Internet Trip Planner A web site that provides travel information about a specific destination or travel theme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internet users wanting control over their itinerary • mass market: domestic/international travelers wanting to do research on their own/time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internet designer, software, maintenance • recruit cultural heritage product (events, activities, attractions, accommodations) to participate • hyperlink to related sites, pages • marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • info direct to customer • easy to use, icon-friendly (shopping basket, luggage) • easily updateable (password controlled) • must encourage visits to site • site maintenance • flexibility to customize itinerary • can build in tracking, response mechanism
<p>Internet Reservation System A web site that allows users to book travel online.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internet users • mass market: domestic/international familiar with booking on-line • price-sensitive shoppers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “secure” pages essential for booking and billing • internet designer, software, maintenance • recruit cultural heritage product (events, activities, attractions, accommodations) to participate • hyperlink to related sites, pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost to launch, maintain • sell direct to customer: no middle man (travel agent, tour operator) • 30% leisure customers made at least one travel booking over the internet during the past 12 months¹ • five web sites accounted for 59% of all online travel spending²

¹ Travel Weekly's 2001 US Consumer Travel Survey/NFO Plog Research Inc.'s American Traveler Survey

² 2001 US Consumer Travel Survey

Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
<p>Passport: Thematic A “passport” that encourages travelers to visit thematically linked sites in order to secure a prize or premium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent travelers • groups • families • regions encouraging multiple site visitation • local residents/ visiting friends and relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruit participating sites/activities • provide incentive for travel • research, write, design, produce “passport” • tracking mechanism at participating sites: stamp, swipe card, voucher, ticket • offer consistent quality of visitor experience • evaluate usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visitor “souvenir” • value for money • results can be skewed if participants not promoting, managing program on site • cost to implement • only good as long as all partners participate • not seasonal • drives traffic to lesser-known attractions, activities
<p>Passport: Regional A “passport” that encourages travelers to visit sites within certain geographic boundaries in order to secure a prize or premium.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent travelers • groups • families • regions encouraging multiple site visitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruit cluster of sites/activities in geographic area to participate • can partner cultural heritage with other attractions, activities • provide incentive for travel • produce “passport” • tracking mechanism at participating sites: stamp, swipe card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • results can be skewed if participants not promoting, managing program on site • value for money • visitor “souvenir” • interactive • cost to implement • not seasonal • drives traffic to lesser-known attractions, activities
<p>Season Ticket An admission ticket that is good for a specified amount of time (longer than a day)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local residents • membership benefit for nonprofit groups (museums, universities) • promoting off-season, shoulder season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer discount/incentive for purchase • marketing • terms/conditions • produce, distribute ticket 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • value for money • encourage repeat visitation • black out dates a deterrent • trackable

Tour Product	Best For:	Key Needs/Elements	Pros/Cons
<p>Trolley Tour A regularly scheduled locally escorted tour of a specific route/destination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent travelers • local residents • cultural heritage travelers • small groups • activity program for meetings/conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • map and sign route • provide drop off locations at key attractions • consistent schedule of tours • train tour guides/drivers • accommodate minimum 20 passengers • sold in advance and/or on-site • point of embarkation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost to purchase, operate trolley (driver, insurance, maintenance) • capacity: fluctuating peak, non-peak visitation
<p>Walking Tour: Self Guided A brochure, booklet or map that provides directions and information for a walking tour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent travelers: families, seniors • local residents • cultural heritage travelers • Main Streets, historic districts, neighborhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good map • route identifying key attractions • corresponding signage • time/funds to research, write, design, print and distribute tour brochure, map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficult to measure • extends stay of current visitors • established tour product
<p>Walking Tour: Hosted A walking tour led by a volunteer or paid tour guide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent travelers • local residents • cultural heritage travelers • small groups • Main Streets, historic districts, neighborhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good map • route identifying key attractions • trained guides to lead tours • reliable schedule, meeting point for tours • time/funds to research, write, design, print and market guided tours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measurable • capacity: fluctuating peak, non-peak visitation • can be adapted, expanded for special events/holidays

