

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH BEST PRACTICES

FINAL REPORT

Golf Marketing and Sales Mission
February 27th, to March 4th, 2007

Prepared by:

Name: Lennie Kelly

Title: A/Director, Tourism

Organization: Tourism Atlantic

Date: April 2nd, 2007

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

The following outlines the type of information that could be useful for Best Practices Final Reports. Please note that any additional information is encouraged, since this guide cannot address every aspect of every mission. The debrief at the end of your mission, as well as the participant surveys, will provide you with the information you need to complete the report.

Introduction

Provide a brief introduction to the mission and mission location as well as a short summary of the mission highlights. This could include, but is not limited to, a brief background and significance of the mission to the tourism industry in Atlantic Canada, key highlights, why did the mission succeed or not succeed, participants overall feedback, etc.

Purpose

The purpose of the Golf Marketing and Sales Best Practices Mission was to provide a broad base of knowledge to Atlantic Canadian based golf operators of how golf operators in one of the most popular golf areas in Canada (British Columbia) manage day to day operations as well as share their concerns and challenges within their own operations. The information gained from this is to allow the Atlantic operators to learn what works in these particular areas and apply these practices to their own operations. The group comprising the mission was a well mixed blend ranging from golf course operators to resort operators to industry representatives, each with somewhat differing issues while at the same time possessing similar issues; that is: maximizing revenues.

Primary Expectations

The following provides a summary of the participants' primary expectations for the Best Practices Mission (taken from their applications):

- Observe
- Learn
- View
- Experience
- Gain insights into what
- Determine how
- Evaluate

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

- Gain knowledge about
- Build regional collaboration

Mission Itinerary

Day 1 – February 27th, 2007

- Tour Okanagan Golf Course, The Harvest Golf Club and Gallagher’s Canyon and meet with the respective General Managers (Tour led by Kelley Taylor)

Day 2 – February 28th, 2007 (Kelowna)

- Presentation by Margaret Penner; Director of Marketing - Predator Ridge Golf Resort
- Presentation by Kelley Taylor; Okanagan Golf Alliance
- Presentation by Rod Cochrane; General Manager – The Golf Club at the Rise
- Presentation by Carolyn Carr; Acting Director of Marketing – Thompson Okanagan Tourism
- Group Wrap-up discussion

Day 3 – March 1st, 2007 (Vancouver)

- Presentations by Richard Lewis (Market Development Manager, North America) and Jacqueline Simpson (Marketing Manager, Consumer Programs, North America) of Tourism British Columbia
- Presentation by Andy Hedley, Vice President of Operations – Golf BC
- Phone presentation by Ro Davies; Sales Manager – Whistler Golf Club
- Presentations by Eric Suzuki, Sales Manager – Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club and Shelley Quinn; President – Eagle Tours Golf and Snow Sports
- Presentation by Kris Jonasson; Executive Director – BC Golf Association
- Presentation by Jim Lee; Executive Director – Canadian Golf Tourism Alliance

Day 4 – March 2nd, 2007 (Vancouver)

- Visit Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club
- Presentation by Scott Masse; Assistant General Manager, Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club
- Presentation by James Kronk; General Manager, Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club and Managing Director – Play Golf
- Visit and tour Mayfair Lakes Golf and Country Club (Matt Hardman; Golf Shop Manager)

Day 5 – March 3rd, 2007 (Victoria)

- Presentations by Patrick Meagher and Trish Larsen of Golf Vancouver Island
- Tour of Westin Bear Mountain Resort by Terry Yacyshen, General Manager, Resort Operations – Westin Bear Mountain

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

Mission Leader

Lennie Kelly; Acting Director, Tourism, Tourism Atlantic

Participants

Newfoundland and Labrador

Scott Hatchard; General Manager – Terra Nova Golf Resort

Mike Rowsell; Sales and Marketing Manager – The Woods at Southlands

Trevor Stuber; Marketing Manager – The View Golf Resort

Greg Hillier; Executive Director – Golf Newfoundland & Labrador

Nova Scotia

Terry Burns; General Manager – Le Portage Golf Club and Representative of Fab Four

Prince Edward Island

Alex MacLauchlan; Marketing Manager – Andersons Creek Golf Club

Stephan Martell; Sales and Marketing Director – Bright Marketing (Glasgow Hills Golf Club)

Mary Ellen Dougan; Director of Sales and Marketing – Rodd Hotels & Resorts

Robert Jay; Owner – Lane’s Cottages & Suites

Stephanie Mayer – Fox Meadow Golf Club

KELOWNA

Name of 1st Presenter- Margaret Penner; Director of Marketing - Predator Ridge Golf Resort

Brief Description presentations given

Golf Packaging – Ms. Penner made a very good presentation on golf packaging. Predator Ridge is a high-end golf club and resort and promotes the facility that way. Her main points were that of promoting the Predator Ridge experience as opposed to just golf. Packages can include corporate, golf groups and golf couples all of which seek different packages.

Comments of the activity/presentations, and lessons learned from presenters

Ms. Penner cooperates with the other golf courses and employs the services of a Tour Planner. Attractive rates are afforded the planner. Ms. Penner discussed with the group

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

their policies relating to discounting green fees (when to discount and when not to discount).

Was the information provided of interest to participants? Yes

As a result of the presentation, the following points have been noted:

1. The use of a Tour Planner has been very helpful
2. The cooperation between golf courses within the Okanagan group is worthwhile
3. Define the quality of your course and accept that there are varying levels of quality between courses and price accordingly.

Name of 2nd Presenter – Kelley Taylor; Taylor'd Events Ltd.

Background: Ms. Taylor operates a Golf Tour Planning operation and works with the Okanagan group of courses almost exclusively.

Brief Description of presentations given

Ms. Taylor operates a Golf Tour Planning operation and works with the Okanagan group of courses almost exclusively as well as with certain of the hotels in Kelowna. She noted that her priority to provide personal service to her clients which means that she does not employ online booking services but rather telephone/fax and personal interaction with the clients. This appears to work well for her and her partner courses/hotels but differs from some of the operators that we heard from in the Vancouver and Victoria area.

Was the information provided of interest to participants? Yes

As a result of the presentation, the following points have been noted:

1. The personal interaction worked best for her
2. The cooperation with the courses and hotels (attractive rates) are very important.

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

Name of 3rd Presenter – Rod Cochrane; General Manager – The Golf Club at the Rise

Background: The Rise is a high-end Golf Course and Resort currently under construction which will rival Predator Ridge for quality. His remarks were focused on opening a new resort.

Brief Description of presentations given

Mr. Cochrane provided a detailed presentation on the construction of The Rise and the issues he has and will be facing as it emerges to its opening next year. The presenter provided information of valuable interest to all participants.

Comments of the activity/presentations, and lessons learned from the presenter

As a result of this presentation, the following points have been noted:

1. Budget properly. Make required changes during the construction process. Not after opening.
2. When doing website development, be conscious of using proper pictures which will not date the course. Use a professional photographer and own you pictures.
3. Use the media to your advantage
4. Your first impression in the marketplace is a lasting one. Get it right the first time.

Name of 4th Presenter - Carolyn Carr; Acting Director of Marketing – Thompson Okanagan Tourism

Background: Ms. Carr was relatively new to her job but spoke about using partnerships to promote tourism. Because of time restrictions, she did not have much time for a full presentation. Not much was gained from her presentation

VANCOUVER

Name of 5th Presenter - Richard Lewis (Market Development Manager, North America) and Jacqueline Simpson (Marketing Manager, Consumer Programs, North America) of Tourism British Columbia

Brief Description of presentations given

Ms. Simpson & Mr. Lewis provided a handout and gave a detailed overview of the working of Tourism B.C. its structure, relationship to the regional associations and funding to assist with the marketing and promotion of the golf industry. They highlighted the various marketing strategies including FAM Tours, press releases, membership in various national and international organizations and the benefits.

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

Was the information provided of interest to participants? Yes

As a result of the presentation, the following points have been noted:

1. BC Tourism has a structure that is not free of politics.
2. BC has 23 million visitors
3. Mass media is invaluable
4. Mention was made of IAGTO (International Association of Golf Tour Operators)

Name of 6th Presenter - Andy Hedley, Vice President of Operations – Golf BC

Mr. Hedley addressed the loyalty program that is offered by his company GolfBC that owns and operates eleven golf courses in B.C. and has acquired a number of properties internationally. He provided information on the Rewards Program offered by his company and the benefits of membership through the use of a card system versus other means of providing benefits. He also highlighted the redemption program and the value to members. The bottom line is to develop repeat clients over a long period of time.

Name of 7th Presenter - Ro Davies; Sales Manager Whistler Golf Club (Phone)

Mr. Davies indicated that Whistler has 4 courses with 1 marketing plan even though they are competing courses. (90,000 to 100,000 rounds per year. Mr. Davies discussed a marketing partnership between the courses at Whistler. It was noted that they provide free junior golf programs. He noted the fact that discounts are not provided but they have rates for residents plus spring/summer/fall rates. They also provide a separate rate to tour operators/planners that is very important. The courses use Golfswitch for booking of all tee times

Name of 8th Presenters - Eric Suzuki, Sales Manager – Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club and Shelley Quinn; President – Eagle Tours Golf and Snow Sports

Mr. Suzuki and Ms. Quinn related to the development of long haul markets. They stressed the need for Receptive Tour Operators to work with the operators and others involved in marketing the industry. They noted the differences between the types of operators, benefits and highlighted the IAGTO as a key international organization to be associated with in developing long haul markets.

Name of 9th Presenter - Kris Jonasson; Executive Director – BC Golf Association

Mr. Jonassen provided an overview of the BC Golf industry and the partnerships that have been created to grow golf in BC. Not terribly relevant.

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

Name of 10th Presenter - Jim Lee; Executive Director, Canadian Golf Tourism Alliance

Mr. Lee provided an excellent presentation on building a destination brand. He was very knowledgeable of Golf in Canada and knew the market dynamics of the industry in Atlantic Canada. He was able therefore to provide a perspective to the participants which everybody could relate to. He spoke of the importance of including and interacting with the media so as to maximize the outcome. Professionalism is key. All participants took away some good points from this presentation.

Name of 11th Presenters - Scott Masse; Assistant General Manager, Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club and James Kronk; General Manager, Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club and Managing Director – Play Golf

The presentations made by Messrs. Masse and Kronk were highly interactive. Masse defined the role of quality and customer service during our visit to the course. It is evident that the staff of this facility takes pride in providing the highest quality service in a friendly environment. Mr. Cronk provided valuable information on human resource training and the values of providing the time and energy to undertake these activities. Definitely re-enforced the benefits of training not only for new staff but present staff and providing ways for members to have input into the operations with new ideas and improvements.

Mr. Kronk then made a presentation on a new organization which he will be heading called “Play Golf” which is designed to promote golf at the grassroots level. A copy of his presentation will be sent to me and I will distribute it to the mission participants.

VICTORIA

Name of 12th Presenters - by Patrick Meagher and Trish Larsen of Golf Vancouver Island

Much of the presentation contained messages which were similar to the ones provided in Kelowna and Vancouver.

Name of Best Practices Mission

Date

Location

Evaluation of Mission (Taken from participant surveys and debrief discussions)

1. Strengths

- Knowledgeable presenters.
- Appropriate contacts and destinations.
- Diversity of the mission participants who interacted well with each other.
- Excellent opportunity for regional development to get the key players together.
-

2. Weaknesses

- Could have had a topic on website development.
- Distance to BC made for a lengthy duration for the mission.
- A longer round table discussion by participants would have been beneficial at the end of the mission.

3. **Conclusion: Lessons Learned / Recommendations**

In discussions with the participants, it appeared that all were satisfied with the outcome of the mission and that a number of practices being applied in BC have applicability to the Atlantic. It was also found that many of the challenges facing Atlantic Canada are being experienced in BC.