

# The Power of Itineraries







1

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in a fraction of a second

2

We are in the age of  
“personalized travel”

## Why are itineraries important?

## We have the world at our fingertips in a fraction of a second

- 94% of people who have access to the internet, use the internet to plan travel
- When it comes to planning a trip, the average traveler visits 22 websites and does it in multiple visits
- **Bottom line:** the easier you make it the more likely you are to close the sale

## We are in the age of personalized travel

- Websites find out your interests and the content you see is tailored to you
- [www.plnnr.com](http://www.plnnr.com) – check out how they personalize travel planning
- Shows “five easy steps to create your itinerary” – visitor chooses preferences and it creates an personalized itinerary based on your choices
- Companies now provide itineraries
- You have to make it easier for them to plan a trip
- No lists!
- DMOs are now getting into the game with itineraries

3

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4

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5

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- People will go somewhere if you have enough activities that will keep them busy four times as long as it took to get there

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## Itineraries encourage longer stays and repeat visits

- Why do 60 million North American's subscribe to travel publications?
- Because they provide specifics and you don't!



## Always focus on what sets you apart – your brand

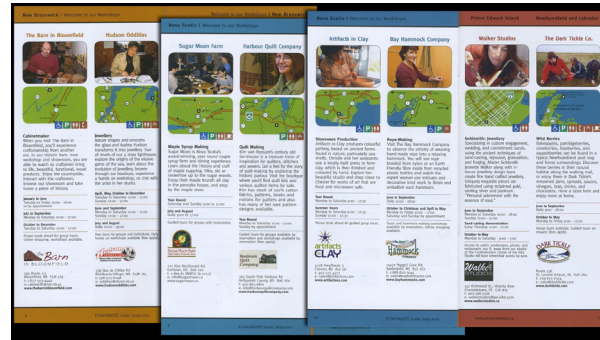
- Example: Kootenay County, British Columbia
- They had no cohesive brand
- When we secret shopped them, we received numerous different brochures, and the six secret shoppers all stated they wouldn't visit the area based on the marketing materials
- However, after seeing an 11 page spread about the hot springs, they
- The towns each have their own brand, but there is an umbrella brand that is their hot springs



## Details, details, details! People want specifics

- Name of attraction
- Teaser of why it is worth the visit
- Distance to get there (or time)
- Directions and maps
- How much time to spend there
- Details: cost, hours, parking, access, etc.
- Tips: "Ask for Barbara, she's a real character!"
- More information: link or QR code, website, address, phone number, etc.
- For example: If you're a fishing destination, these are the details you need to include
  - What will I catch
  - Where do I get a fishing license
  - How much is it
  - What are the limits
  - When are the fishing seasons
  - What time of day is best
  - What kind of bait should I use
  - Is there a bait and tackle shop in town

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## Promote private business! This is the #1 benefit of tourism

- Don't just promote public attractions or non profits
- You CANNOT let local politics kill your marketing efforts
- This is about the customer
- Specifics!

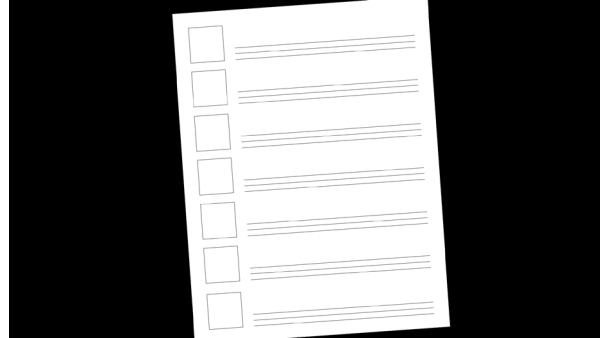
## Feel free to offer up to three choices in a time slot (no more)

- Choices, but not lists
- No more than three choices
- One is always best
- Differing choices can also be based on interest
- Make each activity a link that would take you to more details
- You can use QR codes on printed materials

## How to develop sample itineraries

- Look at itineraries developed by others: do they close the sale? What's great and what's missing?
  - Ask yourself, if this was two hours from me, would I go there?
  - Look for details, maps, prices, etc.
  - Creativity, unique ideas, cater to interests
  - Itineraries don't have to fill an entire day
  - Develop half day, full-day, multi-day
  - Be creative and have fun!

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## What to do

- Put these on your website for both viewing (with photos) and for download as a PDF file
- Great content for an app
- Actually DO the itinerary
- Have friends follow it
- Send it to "outsiders" to see if they have questions

## Engage your locals in creating "itineraries from our local residents"

- Great idea for a public gathering, such as Kiwanis, Rotary, etc.
- Use blank sheet and ask a series of 7 questions
- These are examples and can be changed to suit the season, location and other particulars of the itineraries you are creating
- Where will my partner and I have the best dining experience?
- Where should we go for some nightlife?
- Where can we get gourmet items for a picnic?
- What is the one thing we MUST do while we are here?
- Where can I get the best dessert? Name the place AND the dish.
- Where can I take the best picture that says I was really there?
- Where can I get something locally made? A gift or great souvenir?
- Then ask the participants to number them in order – this builds the itinerary
- Notice: five of the questions are about private industry

## What to do with them?

- Put the best ones on your website under "experiences"
- Create little booklets or PDF files

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## What to do

Pick your season

- The holidays (Nov, Dec, Jan)
- Romantic escapes (Feb, Mar)
- Spring fling (Apr, May)
- Summer fun (Jun, Jul, Aug)
- Fall color (Sep, Oct)

Pick your mode of travel

- By mode of travel:
- RV
  - Motorcycle
  - On foot or bicycle
  - In a car
  - On a tour bus

Pick your travel group

- By group:
- Couple
  - Family with kids
  - Girls weekend out
  - Multi-generational
  - Solo
  - With friends

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## Pick your passion

- The environment
- Sports and recreation
- Culture and the arts
- History
- Shopping and dining
- Entertainment
- Rejuvenation

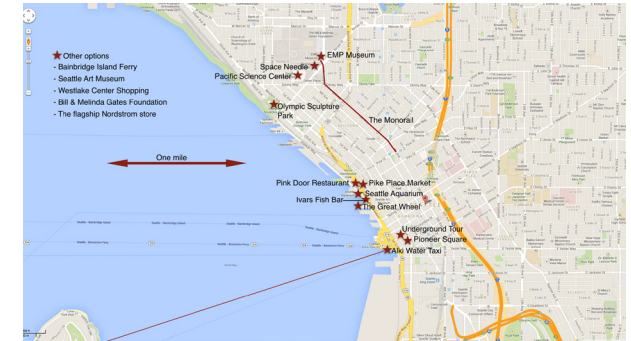
What to do: find local writing talent

- Ask local club members to create sample itineraries
- The cost is nothing, but does require outreach, editing and some photography



## The future is in video itineraries

- Check out Rick Steves - he focuses on Europe, but there are great examples of video itineraries
- They don't have to be polished – you can even do these with a phone



## The “Seattle in a day” itinerary

- One day
- On foot (with a couple of rides along the way)
- With some options along the way
- Start with Olympic Sculpture Park
- Pike Place Market
- The Great Wheel
- Offers the Seattle Aquarium as an option/ alternative
- Lunch, Ivar’s Fish Bar – including specific recommendations
- Alakai Water Taxi
- Pioneer Square, including the Seattle Underground Tour
- Underground train to Westlake Center which takes you to the monorail
- Takes you to Seattle Center and Space Needle
- Itinerary includes details on each attraction, including prices, hours, how to get there, etc.
- You don’t need to worry about leaving people out – make itineraries for different groups of people



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## What to do:

- Create a “hidden gems” itinerary book
- Cost: \$4 per book; sell for \$12-\$15 – can be a money maker
- Can be privately made
- Sell in bookstores, visitor centers, etc.
- Can create small itinerary booklets for about \$2 each
- Write sample itineraries with local clubs and organizations. Then submit them to club newsletters and magazines
- Specialty publications are always looking for places to send their readers. Include photographs and give them first rights
- If they run the article, buy reprints
- Ask for editorial calendars – what’s in store for next year
- Then help them build stories
- Create printed 8x10 tri- or bi-fold brochure
- Make them available as PDF downloads on your website, or in an app
- Create 5.5” by 8.5” cards (2 prints on 8.5”x11”)

## When to get these done

### Right now!

- Go to local clubs and organizations
- Look for local writing talent (nonfiction)
- Develop some yourself
- Go to local bookstore and purchase niche publications
- Look at the masthead for contact info and get an editorial calendar
- Write up a sample itinerary and offer it to them (no charge)
- Include professional-quality photos
- Start developing photo itineraries
- Bottom line: don’t stand still! “Many a false step was made by standing still.” ~Fortune cookie