Tourism Product Development in Ontario’s Highlands
A Workbook

Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization

Economic Planning Group
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Introduction

Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO) is an industry led not-for-profit organization established in 2010 in response to the recommendations from the 2009 Ontario Tourism Competitiveness Study. OHTO’s mandate is to establish the Ontario’s Highlands region as a competitive tourist destination. OHTO’s efforts are concentrated in four main areas – tourism product development, marketing, workforce development and investment attraction.

As a first step towards developing Ontario’s Highlands as a competitive tourist destination, OHTO completed the Premier-ranked Tourism Destination Framework Study. The results of this project provided OHTO with an inventory of the tourism assets within the region and several recommendations to support development of the destination.

As a follow up, OHTO retained The Economic Planning Group to conduct a market and product assessment of the region’s core attractors and to prepare a destination development strategy focused on priority product development needs and opportunities.

This workbook is the by-product of this exercise and is intended to assist communities within the region who have similarly conducted an inventory of their own tourism assets, by providing a framework for the product development process. It is meant to be used by industry partners and stakeholders – destination marketing organizations, municipal tourism offices, economic development agencies and other groups with an interest in tourism.

The workbook provides:

- Definitions for key terms
- A description of the differences between destination development and product development
- A step by step process and templates to help:
  - Identify activities/products that have the best potential for your destination.
  - Establish a prioritized list of product development needs and opportunities.
  - Develop action plans for implementation.
Preparing tourism product development plans is both an art and a science — it is not a simple ‘fill in the blanks’ process.

It requires qualitative assessments drawing on strategic insights gained from:

- research
- the knowledge of experts
- the experience of successful destinations elsewhere
- consultation with industry stakeholders
- your experience and knowledge of the tourism industry

**What’s Involved**

Working through this workbook and preparing product development plans involves a number of steps:

1. Assessing the quality and competitiveness of the resources and activities available at your destination (the tourism product)

2. Identifying the markets attracted by the tourism products in your destination and determining their potential.

3. Assessing the market readiness of the tourism products – whether they meet the needs and expectations of the target markets.

4. Matching the markets with the tourism products to decide which have the best potential for your destination.

5. Identifying the needs and opportunities, for each tourism product, to best respond to market expectations and create quality and compelling experiences for visitors.

6. Developing action plans for implementation in response to each of the priority needs and opportunities.
**The Outcomes**

When you are finished, you will have:

- a list of tourism product development priorities with the greatest potential to attract target markets to your destination
- a detailed action plan for implementing priority product development needs and opportunities including who does what and a timeline

**How to Use this Workbook**

The workbook contains three main sections, each describing a different phase of the work necessary for product development.

Start with the section that is ‘the best fit’ with where you are at in the product development process.

- **Option 1**: If you know which tourism products your destination has to offer and you want to decide which one(s) have the most potential, start with *Product Market Match (page 9)*.

- **Option 2**: If you know which tourism products are priorities for development in your destination, start with *Identify Needs and Opportunities (Page 22)*. Note that you may need to refer back to *Product Market Match* for some tasks.

- **Option 3**: If you know which tourism products are priorities and you have a good idea of things that need to be done to get these activities ready for the marketplace, start with *Develop the Action Plans (Page 33)*.

It would be useful if you flipped through the full workbook before you start to get an idea of the scope of information you will need and the amount of effort it will take.

Each section poses some questions for you to consider. If you need more information to answer these questions, sources of information are suggested. The answers to the questions should be compiled in the templates provided.
Throughout the workbook, sample templates contain examples of the information you should compile and the analysis you need to do. For illustration purposes these samples are all about motorcycling.

Blank templates for you to use in your product development planning are in the Appendices.
This is not a quick and easy process.
It takes time and some research.

It needs careful and objective consideration of what your destination has to offer, how it measures up in the market and what needs to be done to make it better.

But the end result will be worth it – a detailed action plan for achieving results!
Definitions
A common understanding of key terms is important.

- **A sector** is a group of similar experiences, such as land-based outdoor adventure, water-based outdoor adventure, arts, culture & heritage, etc.

- **A tourism demand generator** is a specific activity or experience within a sector that has the potential to attract visitors to the region. These experiences may work independently (e.g. snowmobiling) or be clustered together (e.g. a number of artists and crafts people establishing an arts trail or studio tour). In this workbook, the words **tourism product** have been used to signify a tourism demand generator.

- **Destination development** is everything you need to do to get your destination ready to be successful in a competitive marketplace. It includes:
  - Product Development
  - Workforce training and development
  - Attracting investment

- **Product development** is all of the effort needed to ensure that a tourism demand generator (or specific activity or product) is ready to be successful in a competitive marketplace.

- **Demand supporters** are the activities, amenities and experiences that complement the core activity/experience, contribute to increasing the length of stay, spending and enhance overall visitor experience.

- **Product Market Match** is a process to identify which products/activities have the best potential for your destination, considering both product and market issues.
Destination and Product Development in Ontario’s Highlands

Destination development is all about getting your destination ready to be successful in a competitive marketplace.

In today’s competitive tourism marketplace, destinations need to deliver on a number of critical fronts if they are to be successful. These include:

- **Experiences that have compelling appeal to targeted markets** - visitor experiences that are unique and that respond to market expectations better than do those of competing destinations.
- **Outstanding customer service.**
- **Quality experiences** that are easy to plan, buy and access.
- **Good value.**
- **Meeting and exceeding customer expectations.**
- Offer products and amenities that are **up-to-date and meet contemporary standards.**
- Have the necessary **infrastructure and services** in place to support the experiences being offered.

Rounding out the effort needs a sustainable business organization working with partners as appropriate to take the offerings to identified target markets. This involves using the **Internet and both new and traditional marketing tactics** to reach consumers, build relationships and make the sale.
**Product Development**

The same considerations given towards the development of a destination can also be applied to a specific tourism demand generator within a destination. Product development involves developing and implementing strategies and action plans to ensure that all the elements described above are in place for the selected tourism products.

Product development involves three phases of effort, each with several steps.

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**Tourism Product Development**

**Phase I: Product Market Match**

*Decide which activities/products are priorities for your destination.*

- Step 1: Product Assessment
- Step 2: Market Assessment
- Step 3: Product Market Match Evaluation

**Phase 2: Identify Needs and Opportunities**

*Decide what needs to be done for each activity to get it ready for the marketplace.*

- Step 1: Identify What’s Happening Now
- Step 2: Look at Other Successful Destinations
- Step 3: Identify Needs & Opportunities
- Step 4: Prioritize Actionable Needs & Opportunities

**Phase 3: Develop the Action Plans**

*Decide on the specific actions that need to be taken and who does what.*

- Step 1: Decide on Lead Partners
- Step 2: Formulate the Plan
- Step 3: Identify Resource Needs & Sources

---

**Do it!**
Phase 1: Product Market Match

If you already know what your destination has to offer and want help in deciding which tourism products/activities have the best potential for your destination and whether they are market-ready, start here.

If you already know which tourism products have potential for your destination, start with Phase 2, Identify Needs and Opportunities (Page 22). Note that you will need to refer back to the questions in Step 1 below and the results of Step 2.

**Objective:**
1. To assess the quality of the products available, match them with the markets seeking those products and identify those that have the best potential to attract visitors and spending.
2. To explore the willingness and capacity of stakeholders to work together on product development initiatives.

**Why this is Important:**
Activities that attract visitors to a destination have different levels of market potential, depending on things such as how big the market is and whether the activity motivates trips.

The resources (both natural and man-made) available for each activity vary in quality and competitive strengths and these factors can have a big impact on whether the destination can be successful in attracting visitors for that activity.

Example: Motorcycling is a small market but a high percentage of motorcyclists take trips for the purpose of motorcycle touring. On the other hand, a lot of people swim but only a few take a trip just to go swimming.

Example: Ontario’s Highlands is home to some world-class rafting and whitewater paddling experiences which go a long way to making the region a destination for these types of activities.
It is also important to understand whether the tourism product is market-ready – that is, are all the things in place that the market needs and expects when travelling to participate in a specific activity or for a specific experience.

Tourism businesses and organizations do not have the resources (human or financial) to work on product development for all activities at the same time. You need to know which activities have the best potential and are most likely to be successful in contributing to the overall objective – attracting visitors and spending to your destination.

*What’s Involved:*

Step 1, Market Assessment and Step 2, Product Assessment should be done in tandem. You will need to refer to the findings from Step 1, particularly those about market expectations, in completing the product assessment work.

Each of these steps is described below.

**Step 1: Market Assessment**

*What:*

- Use existing research to get an understanding of the market potential of each of the products/activities being considered.
- You should be able to answer these questions for each activity on your list:
1. Market Size – How big is the market? How many (or what percentage) of travellers participate in the activity?
2. Market Trends/Growth Potential – Is the market growing, declining or staying the same? Also consider whether there is good potential for future growth, given socio-demographic trends and trends in consumer interests.
3. Potential Yield – How much will people who travel for this activity spend? Will it be higher or lower than other for other activities? Consider whether they will stay overnight – overnight visitors spend much more than day visitors.
4. Role as a Travel Motivator – Is the activity a main reason for travelling or is it just something that is done while on another trip?

The answers to these questions should be recorded in Template 1.

- You also need to explore the needs and expectations of the market for each activity. These insights will be important in completing the product assessment steps. They should also be recorded in Template 1.

If you don’t have the answers, here are some ways of getting information that will help. You may only be able to find general information on some activities; this is fine. All you need is enough information to let you make a judgment about each question for each activity you are looking at.

**How:**
Use the following sources:

*Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport*
- Regional Tourism Profiles prepared by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport Research Division (http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/tourism/research.shtml). Select Regional Tourism Profiles. Profiles can be created for any region in Ontario and the province overall. Of specific interest is Table 1.8 – Trip Activities. This data will provide an indication of the most popular types of activities in the region and in Ontario overall.

**Hints**
- Look in the bibliographies of other studies and reports for references – and then search for these documents to use in your research.
- Look for sources that have information on a number of activities – this makes it easier to compare the data and determine the relative scores.
- Canadian research is not always available. US data is likely generally
• Travel Activities and Motivations Study. Select Travel Activities and Motivation Reports at this site http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/research/studies/statistic_reports.shtml. The Overview Reports provide data on participation in activities and trip motivations. Detailed reports are also available on many specific activities.

**Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC)**

• Market Segmentation Reports found at http://www.tourismpartners.com/research.xhtml?language=en. These reports provide information on the interests of specific target market segments identified as priorities by OTMPC.

• Other research reports prepared by OTMPC and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport from time to time. When available, these reports can be found at http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/publications.shtml or http://www.tourismpartners.com/research.xhtml?language=en

**Other**


• Strategies and studies prepared for other regions and destinations

• Special interest magazines and websites

• GOOGLE search using key words such as:
  - Participation in [sector] or [activity], Canada, US
  - Market research [sector] or [activity], Canada, US

• While you are doing this research, look for information on what the market expects – what activity features are important, what types of facilities, services and infrastructure are required, what complementary programs, events or experiences are important.

• Summarize the information in *Template 1: Summary of Market Information*. The next page shows an example of this template for motorcycling.
### TEMPLATE 1: SUMMARY OF MARKET INFORMATION

**EXAMPLE – Motorcycling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Market Size</th>
<th>Market Trends/Growth Potential</th>
<th>Potential Yield</th>
<th>Role as a Travel Motivator</th>
<th>Market Needs &amp; Expectations (To be used in the Product Assessment)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycling</td>
<td>2.2% of Canadians went motorcycling while on overnight trip – 1.9% for same day excursion; 1.2% went motorcycling on overnight touring trip.</td>
<td>Ontario: Annual motorcycle purchases increased by over 200% between 1995 and 2005, to almost 20,000 per year; declined to 13,000 by 2010. US motorcycle registrations grew by 70% from 1995 to 2003. Manufacturers data suggests peak reached in 2008 and has declined by about 35% since then likely largely due to economic conditions (street motorcycles). Growth supported by aging demographic achieving their “bucket list.”</td>
<td>Good. Those on overnight touring trips need roofed accommodation. Data from Port Dover event: 1 night stay (22%) spent $102 2 night stays (19%) spent $117 per day. Day trippers spent $120; All amounts well above average tourism spending in the region.</td>
<td>56% of participants indicated motorcycling was main reason for at least one trip.</td>
<td>Great views and scenery with roads that offer exciting curves and vistas. Good quality roads with minimal traffic, good signage. Gas stations every 2 – 3 hours. Things to see/do every 2 – 3 hours. Good restaurants and evening entertainment. Accommodations and campgrounds, preferably with dedicated and secure areas for bikes (covered parking, side stand pads, bike washing areas are ideal). Motorcycle specific maps designed to fit map bags; guides &amp; suggested itineraries identifying ride options, biker friendly stopping places, scenic look outs, repair shops, accommodations. Bike friendly communities and businesses (training on needs, attitudes). Educated drivers (share the road).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same-day:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTT: 9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO: 47,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTL: 65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overnight Touring:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTT: 7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO: 18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTL: 60,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source of Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAMS (Travel Activity and Motivations Study, 2006)</td>
<td>Google Research</td>
<td>Strategies from other destinations</td>
<td>TAMS (Travel Activity and Motivations Study, 2006)</td>
<td>Educated drivers (share the road)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Step 3 below will tell you how to decide on the scores.
Step 2: Product Assessment

What:
- Does your destination have high quality resources for [activity]?
- Are the resources in your area for [activity] of better quality than in competing destinations? Do you have any resources that are of national or international quality?
- Are the opportunities for [activity] in the area ready for the marketplace? For example:
  - Can visitors easily find out where to participate in the activity?
  - Are there businesses that provide the necessary services, equipment, etc.? Can visitors easily find information on these businesses?
  - Is the information visitors will need available, e.g.:
    - Maps, routes, itineraries
    - Signage
    - Schedules
  - Do the tourism operators offering the activity have trained staff with the right skills?
- What initiatives are currently underway or being planned?
- Does the product meet the market needs and expectations identified in Step 1? What needs to be done to make sure that the destination can deliver on these expectations for [activity]?
- Are there barriers and challenges that need to be overcome? What are they?
- Are the tourism operators, partners and other stakeholders involved in [activity] willing to work together? Do they have the time and resources to participate?

How:
To answer these questions, draw on your own knowledge and do some of the following:
- Interview industry stakeholders such as:
  - Major tourism operators currently offering the activity or experiences that include the activity.
  - Organizations involved in offering the activity such as snowmobile clubs, hiking clubs, cycling groups, trail groups.
  - Economic development staff
  - Provincial/federal government staff from departments such as:
    - Parks Canada
    - Ontario Parks
Ministry of Natural Resources

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

Ask these types of questions (note that some of this information will be used in Phases 2 and 3 – the strategies and action plans):

- What are the area’s strengths for [activity]? Do we have any truly unique features or resources? How do we compare to other destinations in Ontario for [activity]?
- What are the area’s weaknesses for [activity]?
- What initiatives are currently underway or being planned to develop [activity] for visitors and by whom?
- To what extent is the region market-ready for [activity]?
- What else needs to be done for [activity] to attract more/new visitors, particularly overnight visitors, and to make the region market-ready for [activity]?
- Do operators/stakeholders involved with [activity] collaborate now? Do you think they are willing to work together in future?
- What barriers or challenges will need to be overcome for things to happen?

If, after interviewing industry stakeholders you don’t feel that you have a good understanding of the issues and opportunities/needs, try interviewing a few experts inside and outside the destination, such as:

- Individuals with a strong personal interest in [activity]
- People who write books or articles about [activity]
- Local, provincial and/or national organizations and clubs
- Tour operators specializing in [activity]

Ask these questions:

- What are the area’s strengths for [activity]? Does the region have any truly unique features or resources? How does it compare to other destinations in Ontario for [activity]?
- What are the area’s weaknesses for [activity]?
- What needs to be done for [activity] to attract more/new visitors, particularly overnight visitors, and to make the region market-ready for [activity]?

Instead (or as well), you could get a group of local people who are familiar with the activity together and brainstorm each of the topics. Some follow up interviews might be needed to confirm some of your conclusions and get additional details.
Summarize the results of the product assessment by topic on Template 2: Summary of Product Assessment. See the example on the next page.

Summarize the list of needs to make the region market ready for [activity] on Template 3. This information will be used in Phase 2 of the process.
## Template 2: Summary of Product Assessment

**Motorcycling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Competitive Strengths/Unique Selling Propositions/Quality of Resources/Comparison to Elsewhere</th>
<th>State of Market Readiness/What’s Happening Now</th>
<th>Weaknesses, Barriers and Challenges</th>
<th>Willingness/Capacity of Industry and Stakeholders to Work Together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Motorcycle Touring| Strong across Ontario’s Highlands – good secondary road network, not too much traffic, twisty roads, scenic, varying landscapes – Canadian shields, lakes, hills Other Ontario is good but tends to be flat. Other regions are targeting this market segment – e.g. Grey Bruce, RTO 4. | Very close to market ready Roads are in place, generally in good condition Some service needs. What’s Happening Now:  
  - Lennox & Addington with Land O’Lakes in 2nd year of promoting – have online presence, 5 routes, brochure, and marketing; have landed a major event for 2012  
  - Haliburton just getting into this year – have identified some itineraries, going to shows  
  - Renfrew Economic Development working on a few itineraries  
  - Area is already getting some demand – no numbers but are seeing more and more; L&A very pleased with their results | Some attitude changes needed re bikers. Lack of motorcycle repair services/shops. Loss of gas stations in rural areas (itineraries are important and need to identify gas stops). Some roads in poor condition – may need to identify improvements needed. | Good  
  Key players are economic development offices/DMOs – willing to work together, see the benefits. |

| SCORE | HIGH | HIGH | MEDIUM | HIGH |

Note: Step 3 below will tell you how to decide on the scores.
### Template 3: Identified Needs to Make the Destination Market Ready for: Motorcycling

- Itineraries and/or suggested roads for motorcyclists
- Maps and guides
- Improved back road signage
- Information on location of gas stations and their operating hours
- Information on other services such as repair shops, restaurants and accommodations that will welcome motorcycle groups
- Recommendations on things to see and do, places to stop while travelling through the area
Step 3: Product Market Match Evaluation

What:
- Use the results of Steps 1 and 2 to decide which activities have the best potential for your destination.

How:
1. In Templates 1 and 2, give each activity a High, Medium or Low rating in each cell based on the information compiled. Sample guidelines for this scoring are provided in Appendix I. If you have collected different types of information, you will need to design your own scoring template.
2. Assign numerical values to each rating (High – 3 points; Medium – 2 points; Low – 1 point).
3. Add up the points for each activity.
4. Combine the total points for each activity from Template 1 and 2, in Template 4 (see example on the next page).
5. Based on the results, group the activities into two or three tiers – High Potential, Medium Potential and Other (or just High Potential and Other).

Hints
- It will not always be possible to award scores based on numerical information. In some cases, you will need to make a judgment call based on the information that is available and your knowledge of the activity and the destination.
- It is useful to make notes about the factors you considered in awarding the scores so you can refer back to them later.
## Template 4: Summary of Product Market Match Evaluation
### MOTORCYCLING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Market Assessment Factors</th>
<th>Product Assessment Factors</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Market Size</td>
<td>Market Trends</td>
<td>Potential Yield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle Touring</td>
<td>Low (1)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Activity A</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>Low (1)</td>
<td>Low (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Activity B</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Activity C</td>
<td>Low(1)</td>
<td>High (3)</td>
<td>Medium (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example:
- Motorcycle touring and Other Activity C have high potential for the destination.
- Other Activity A and Other Activity B have medium potential.
Outcomes from Phase I:
When you have finished working through Phase I, you will have:

1. A list of activities that have the best potential for your destination, considering:
   - market factors
   - the competitive strengths and quality of the resources for the activity
   - the willingness of industry stakeholders to collaborate on moving forward

2. A good understanding of:
   - the current situation
   - who is involved
   - what’s happening now and what’s being planned

3. Some ideas on what needs to be done to meet market expectations.

This information will be used in identifying the needs and opportunities and preparing the action plans in Phases 2 and 3.
Phase 2: Identify Needs and Opportunities

When you know which activities/products have the best potential for your destination, start work on Phase 2. This will help you decide what needs to be done to make sure these activities/products are ready for the marketplace and in the best shape to help attract more visitors and spending.

If you didn’t work through Phase I, look at the questions and tasks in Step 2 of Phase I (page 14) and complete Template 3 to make sure you have the information you need for Phase 2.

**Objective:**
1. To identify what’s happening now and what’s planned for each priority activity.
2. To identify what needs to happen and what opportunities there are to ensure that each priority activity is ready to be taken to the marketplace.
3. To prioritize the needs and opportunities and decide which ones will be done.

**Why this is Important:**
This phase of work will set out what you want to achieve for each activity and provide the overall direction for moving forward.

Each need and opportunity decided on must be actionable, considering the most effective and efficient use of resources to help achieve the overall goal – attracting more visitors and more visitor spending to your destination.

**What’s Involved:**

Each of these steps is described below.
Step 1: Identify What’s Happening Now

What:
• You need to get a good handle on what is being done now and what else is being planned, in each priority activity area.

How:
• Interview industry stakeholders (see list on Page 15). If you already collected some of this information in Step 2 of Phase I it might be useful to do some more interviews in the priority activity areas to make sure you are fully informed about what is happening and being planned. You can also get more ideas on what needs to be done and find out who the key players are for each activity.
• Ask these questions:
  o What initiatives are currently underway or being planned to develop [activity] for visitors?
  o Who is involved?
  o What is the status of the initiative?
  o What other things need to be done to make the region a compelling destination for [activity]?
  o Are there other experiences, services, facilities that travellers visiting for [activity] expect that need to be provided or improved?
  o Who might be partners in moving forward?

Step 2: Look at Other Successful Destinations

What:
• Learn from the experience of others about what the market wants for [activity] and how to deliver it.

How:
• Look at strategies done by other destinations on your priority activities to get ideas on what the market expects and ideas for your destination. Sources include:
  • websites of Ontario’s regional tourism organizations
  • Google search – use the activity and words like strategy, market research, market strategy, tourism plan.
• Look at the websites of other destinations that are leaders for [activity] to see what compelling experiences they are offering, how the activity is presented to consumers, ideas for packages and itineraries, etc.

Example of destination website for motorcycling
http://www.ridegreybruce.com/index.php
Step 3: Identify the Needs and Opportunities

What:
- Build a list of needs and opportunities to establish compelling, market ready experiences for [activity] along with all the other elements of product development, as illustrated.

How:
- Build this list from what you have learned about:
  - what the [activity] market expects
  - what is happening now
  - the list of things needed to make the region market ready for the activity (from Step 1, Market Assessment)
  - the list of needs identified in the stakeholder interviews
  - what you have learnt from other destinations
  - your own expertise

- Consider the following questions in building a list of needs and opportunities under each heading.

Remember – The needs and opportunities must be actionable and achievable with the resources that are likely to be available. Not all activities will have needs and opportunities in each category.

Compelling Core & Supporting Experiences
- What core experiences in [activity] do we have now?
- Are they market ready and compelling to visitors from outside the region? If not, what needs to be done to them?
- Are there major gaps that need to be filled with respect to [activity] to make the region a preferred destination for [activity]?
- Are there other experiences that travellers visiting for [activity] expect that need to be provided or improved?
Facilities & Support Services

- Are there gaps in the facilities and support services needed by visitors coming for [activity]? If yes, what is needed? Consider:
  - Types and quality of accommodation
  - Food and beverage
  - Support services such as gas, repair services, outfitters
  - Transportation
  - Seasonality of operation of any of the above
  - Other?

Infrastructure

- What are the gaps in the infrastructure necessary for [activity]? For example, are there gaps in:
  - Trail infrastructure
  - Way finding
  - Parking/Staging areas/Landing areas
  - Performance facilities/venues

Workforce Training and Professional Development

- Are there staff with the right skills to meet the markets’ needs for [activity]? If not, what improvements are needed? What additional skill sets are needed?
- Are there needs for professional development training for owners/managers of businesses operating in this area, for example in marketing, packaging, business planning, human resources?

Making it Easy to Buy

- What gaps are there in what visitors interested in [activity] need? For example, can they find information on what the area has to offer, how to make the purchase and how to have a seamless experience?
- What about:
  - Trip planning tools including mapping, detailed information (pre and on-trip)
  - Booking tools
  - Packages
  - Suggested itineraries
  - Outfitting services including guides, equipment rentals,
  - Other services
**Investment**

- What are the major investment needs associated with [activity], both in-kind and financial?

Complete *Template 5* with a full list of needs and opportunities. Check out the example for motorcycling on the next page.
## Template 5: Product Development Needs and Opportunities and Assessment

### MOTORCYCLING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Development Category</th>
<th>Needs &amp; Opportunities (From Step 3)</th>
<th>Assessment of Needs and Opportunities (from Step 4)</th>
<th>Overall Conclusions re Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Compelling Core and Supporting Experiences** | • Planned itineraries across the region with recommended routing, stopping points, lunch options and overnight stay suggestions. Include highlights, road conditions, types of scenery, gas station locations.  
  • Events for motorcyclists to put the destination on the map. | Very important; other regions are doing this. Makes it easy for trip planning. Must be accompanied by marketing effort.  
  Important; will give motorcyclists a reason to visit the area | Relatively easy – need some local motorcyclists to help identify routes, then someone to develop details and maps.  
  Could be a challenge finding a group to take this on | High |
| **Facilities and Support Services** | • Restaurants and accommodations that understand the needs of motorcyclists, have facilities such as parking area, storage options, etc.  
  • Gas stations at regular intervals  
  • Motorcycle repair services/shops | Important – in a community like motorcycling, word of mouth can have a big impact.  
  An essential service – particularly important if using less travelled routes in the itineraries – may impact itinerary routing.  
  Important to at least identify where closest ones are to routes, provide contact information. | An educational process – requires developing a list of needs for this market and communicating with business owners.  
  Identifying them and repair services should be easy; then need to disseminate information.  
  See above | Medium |

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A Workbook on Tourism Product Development  
Page 28
### Template 5: Product Development Needs and Opportunities and Assessment

**MOTORCYCLING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Development Category</th>
<th>Needs &amp; Opportunities (From Step 3)</th>
<th>Assessment of Needs and Opportunities (from Step 4)</th>
<th>Overall Conclusions re Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>Good highway signage along itinerary routes</td>
<td>Less important with good mapping and GPS locators.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motorbike-friendly communities with parking areas, welcoming attitude</td>
<td>Of some importance to good experiences and positive word of mouth marketing; can help make the destination.</td>
<td>Low – medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upgraded road surface in some locations.</td>
<td>Important to positive experience</td>
<td>Low – Medium depending on importance to key itineraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workforce Training and Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>Staff in businesses who are ‘motorcycle friendly’, familiar with the itineraries and able to provide advice.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Making it Easy to Buy</strong></td>
<td>On line trip planning tools including printable maps and other information about the itineraries.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Development Category</td>
<td>Needs &amp; Opportunities (From Step 3)</td>
<td>Assessment of Needs and Opportunities (from Step 4)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good maps with GPS locators.</td>
<td>Increasingly important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Packages geared to this market.</td>
<td>Less important for this market – tend to be independent travellers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Attraction</td>
<td>Somewhere to call for more detailed information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No needs identified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Good maps with GPS locators.
- Packages geared to this market.
- Somewhere to call for more detailed information.

Increasingly important
Less important for this market – tend to be independent travellers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes re Importance in Attracting New Visitors &amp; Spending</th>
<th>Notes re Do-ability</th>
<th>Overall Conclusions re Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Template 5: Product Development Needs and Opportunities and Assessment MOTORCYCLING
Step 4: Prioritize Actionable Needs and Opportunities

What:
- Assess and prioritize the list of actionable needs and opportunities in Template 5.

How:
- For each need/opportunity, consider the following factors:
  - How important are they (critical, important or would be nice to do) in achieving the overall goal of attracting new visitors and spending?
  - Are they doable in the short to medium term, considering:
    - Are there likely to be willing and capable partners (businesses, organizations, agencies, etc.) to be involved in the initiative?
    - Are the industry stakeholders involved in the activity likely to support the initiative?
    - What level of financial investment is needed? Is there likely to be funding support?
    - Is the initiative likely to be sustainable – financially, environmentally, culturally?
    - Are there major challenges that will need to be overcome before moving ahead with implementation?
    - Does your organization have the capacity (people, time, money) to play your role?

These are somewhat subjective judgements based on insights gained and your knowledge of the tourism industry in the destination.

For some of the product development needs and opportunities, you may need to do some preliminary research on things such as funding sources to see if the project might be eligible. The objective at this point is not to expect commitments or be overly specific, but to gain a general idea about doability.

Use Template 5 to record these assessments, notes about the assessment and the overall conclusions about each product development need and opportunity.
Outcomes from Phase 2:

When you have finished working through Phase 2, you will have:

1. Good knowledge about all the things happening now at your destination around the priority activities.

2. Information on who your partners might be in moving forward.

3. A prioritized list of actionable needs and opportunities for each activity in each of the following categories:
   a. Compelling core and supporting experiences
   b. Facilities and support services
   c. Infrastructure
   d. Workforce training and professional development
   e. Making it easy to buy
   f. Investment requirements
Phase 3: Develop the Action Plans

Now that you have decided on the priority actionable needs and opportunities for each priority activity/product, the last phase of the product development process is to develop detailed action plans for moving forward.

Objectives:
1. To identify the step by step actions to achieve each prioritized need and opportunity.
2. To identify who should do what, when and what resources are needed.

Why this is Important:
Having a list of prioritized needs and opportunities is one thing, but unless specific actions are identified and an organization or individual given the responsibility of making them happen, it is unlikely that things will move forward. And, those that are going to take responsibility need to have the resources to follow through.

What’s Involved:
Developing the action plan requires involving key partners and organizations who will lead the implementation effort. The action plan should identify:

- The role of your organization
- Which organization/stakeholder is taking the lead
- Who the partners are in the effort
- A timeframe for completing the action
- Priority or level of importance
- Key issues or constraints that need to be addressed
- The resources needed, human and financial, to follow through on the action

Each of these steps is described below.
Step 1: Decide on the Lead Partners

What:
- Identify lead partners
- Meet with partners to review what needs to be done and determine the level of partner involvement

How:
- Start with the list of possible partners for each activity, identified during Phase 1 and Phase 2
- Identify other possible partners, drawing on your knowledge of the industry
- Identify potential lead partners (For some actions, there may be more than one possible lead partner, for example, in different sub-regions of your destination)
- Meet with each potential lead partner and explore:
  a. What are they doing now in this area?
  b. Are they prepared to play a lead role in the initiative? If not, who else might do so?
  c. Can they recommend other that partners should be involved? How?
  d. What role can their organization play?
  e. What specific actions do they think need to be undertaken to accomplish each need/opportunity? Which actions are most important?
  f. What resources, human and financial, are they prepared to provide?
  g. Any thoughts on other sources for the necessary resources?
  h. Other issues that will need to be resolved

Identifying and selecting the lead partners is a critical step in successful implementation.

The lead partners need to be an organization/business/individual that is prepared to step forward and get involved. They must be prepared to make commitments of time (and sometimes money), add the project to their business or work plan and commit to engage in delivery.

If there are no lead partners available, or no-one that is prepared to take on the initiative, then it should be dropped. If it is a critical project, then it may be necessary to ‘create’ a lead partner, through contracting services for example.
Step 2: Formulate the Plan

What:
- Identify the following for each prioritized need and opportunity:
  - Specific actions needed
  - Partners – lead partners and other partners
  - Priority and timing for each action

How:
- Use the information obtained from the lead partners to identify the specific actions, priority and timeframe required for each need/opportunity, as outlined in Template 6. Do one template for each need/opportunity.
- Go over the draft action plans with the lead partners to make sure that all the necessary information has been captured and they are in agreement.

The action plans are ‘living documents’ that change and evolve over time. They need to be updated on a regular basis as actions are completed, commitments received or challenges identified that need a change in approach.
## Template 6: Action Plan for Motorcycling *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Needs &amp; Opportunities</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Partners (Lead &amp; Others)</th>
<th>Priority and timing</th>
<th>Resource Needs and Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planned itineraries across the region with recommended routing, stopping points, lunch options and overnight stay suggestions. Include highlights, road conditions, types of scenery, gas station locations</td>
<td>Establish a working group to identify preferred routes. Research and locate (GPS) road conditions, stopping points, gas stations, restaurants and overnight stops that will accommodate motorcyclists. Create route maps suitable for web and PDF downloads.</td>
<td>Lead partner- Destination marketing organizations. Economic development departments. Tourism operators – specific accommodations and restaurants who want this business.</td>
<td>High priority Establish working group by _________ Medium Priority Do research from ____________ to ____________ Low Priority Develop itineraries by ______________ Create maps and load on websites by May 2013</td>
<td>Local motorcyclists to help with routes: (Names...) Student, contracted services or part of an employee to do this work: (names....)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: These are examples of actions that might be considered appropriate for motorcycling, not necessarily specific proposals.
Step 3: Identify Resource Needs and Sources

What:

- Identify the resources, both human and financial, needed for each action. Sometimes this will just be staff time; in other cases additional human resources will be needed.

How:

- Explore resource needs with the lead partners.
- If additional funding or human resources are needed, approach the economic development agencies in the region to explore what funding and investment sources might be available. These might include:
  - Municipal economic development agencies
  - Eastern Ontario Community Futures Development Corporations
  - Ontario East Economic Development Commission
  - Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
  - Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
  - Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario

This information can be added to Template 6 and updated regularly as commitments are changed or new funding sources identified.
Outcomes from Phase 3

When Phase 3 is completed, you will have:

A detailed action plan for each strategy, identifying:

- Who is leading the effort, and who is helping
- The specific actions to be taken
- A timeframe for each action
- Resource needs and sources
Phase 4: Implementation

With the action work plans completed, efforts can now be focused on implementation.

1. Meet with all of the lead organizations. Provide them with the action plans and make sure they are clear on their responsibilities and the timing and priority of each action.

2. Establish a process for checking progress. A form such as Template 7 should be completed every three to six months to track and measure results for each strategy (perhaps more frequently depending on the nature and importance of the strategy).

3. Based on the feedback and the results achieved, adjust and modify the product development strategies and/or the implementation actions.

4. Report to your organization and partners on a regular basis, keeping them up to date on the progress being made and any necessary changes.

While the action work plans are underway, it will be important to start work on the next step – developing the market and marketing. Give some thought as to how the activity/product will be taken to market by considering:

- Who will lead the marketing effort? What other partners should be involved?
- How much will it cost?
- Where will funds come from?
- Can it be included with existing marketing efforts (e.g. on an existing website, added to an App, etc.) or will a new initiative be required?
- When should the marketing effort start?
- How will the results of the marketing be tracked?
## Template 7

Tracking Results for ___________________________ Date: ______________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Progress Made</th>
<th>Still to be Done</th>
<th>Issues/Challenges</th>
<th>Modifications Proposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I
Scoring Guidelines for the Product Market Match Evaluation
### Exhibit 1

**Scoring Guidelines for the Product Market Match Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Guidelines</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Template 1: Market Assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Market Size</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation rates are over 20%</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation rates are 5% - 20%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation rates are under 5%</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Market Trends/Growth Potential</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market has been growing strongly and is expected to continue to grow</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market is static or with slow growth</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market is declining and this is likely to continue</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Potential Yield</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This activity has potential to generate multi-day stays with above average levels of spending (e.g. primarily in roofed accommodation)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This activity can generate short overnight stays, and/or primarily camping visits</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This activity will generate primarily day trips or is something added to a visit already planned</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Role as a Travel Motivator (Rating based on data from TAMS)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This activity motivated some trips for more than 40% of participants.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This activity motivated trips for 20% to 39% of participants.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This activity motivated trips for less than 20% of participants.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Template 2: Product Assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Competitive Strengths/Quality of the Activity/Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The region has products/resources with very strong appeal offering highly unique experiences in the province and beyond.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The region has some competitive product/resources but nothing particularly unique compared to competing destinations.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The region has limited appeal for this activity and no competitive products or resources.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. State of Market Readiness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product/activity is at a high state of market readiness – there are only a few things needed to meet and exceed market expectations.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market readiness is mixed – some things are OK; others need work.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product/activity is at a low state of market readiness – there is lots of work to be done.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Exhibit 1
Scoring Guidelines for the Product Market Match Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Guidelines</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Barriers and Challenges to be Overcome</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are no or very few constraints to further development.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are some constraints/challenges but they should be relatively easy to overcome/address.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are major challenges, such as significant infrastructure or investment requirements, to further development, and they are likely to be difficult to address.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Willingness and Capacity of Operators and Stakeholders to Work Together</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry stakeholders are already working together on product development efforts, and are prepared to invest time and money in the initiatives.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry stakeholders have expressed an interest in working together in this product areas</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry stakeholders have no interest in working to enhance this product and, in fact, are generally opposed to any effort.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II
Blank Worksheet Templates
### Template 1: Summary of Market Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Market Size &amp; Participation Rate</th>
<th>Market Trends/Growth Potential</th>
<th>Potential Yield</th>
<th>Role as a Travel Motivator</th>
<th>Market Needs &amp; Expectations (To be used in Product Assessment)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Template 2: Summary of Product Assessment for [ACTIVITY]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Competitive Strengths/Unique Selling Propositions/Quality of Resources/Comparison to Elsewhere</th>
<th>State of Market Readiness/What’s Happening Now</th>
<th>Barriers and Challenges</th>
<th>Willingness/Capacity of Industry and Stakeholders to Work Together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCORE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCORE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Template 3: Identified Needs to Make the Destination Market Ready for:</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Activity]</td>
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</table>
## Template 4: Summary of Product Market Match Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Market Assessment Factors</th>
<th>Product Assessment Factors</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Market Size</td>
<td>Market Trends</td>
<td>Potential Yield</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Template 5: Product Development Needs and Opportunities and Assessment for [ACTIVITY]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Development Category</th>
<th>Needs &amp; Opportunities (from Step 3)</th>
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<td>Notes re Do-ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making it Easy to Buy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Priority Needs and Opportunities</td>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Priority and timing</td>
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<td>Actions</td>
<td>Progress Made</td>
<td>Still to be Done</td>
<td>Issues/Challenges</td>
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