

Working with Aboriginal Business: Building Partnerships in Tourism

Tourism Industry Association of BC
Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC
Nimmo Bay Resort
'Namgis First Nation



Ministry of
Jobs, Tourism
and Skills Training



*'Signs of Lekwungen' bronze
spindle-whorls stamp
Victoria's Inner Harbour with
a First Nations presence*

In Today's Workshop



- **Walt Judas**
CEO of Tourism Industry Association of BC



- **Lillian Hunt** former guide, U'mista Cultural Centre;
Director, Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC,



- **Craig Murray**
Owner-operator, Nimmo Bay Resort



- **Randy Bell**
Manager of training, 'Namgis First Nation



- *Convenor – Bruce Whyte, Ph.D. (cand.), Sr. Tourism Development Officer, Tourism Policy Branch, Economic Development Division, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training*

Building Partnerships

- Tourism is a top 'gateway' for Aboriginal entry to the world of business
- The world wants Aboriginal culture
- Aboriginal communities control key resources



The BC Tourism Landscape

TOURISM
INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION OF

BC



- ✓ 19,000+ (small) businesses
- ✓ 270,000 employees
- ✓ Projected 100,000 new workers needed by 2020



The BC Tourism Landscape

TOURISM
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- ✓ *Film, High Tech & Tourism – BC's strongest performers in 2015*
- ✓ *Visitor economy larger than agriculture, forestry*



The BC Tourism Landscape

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- ✓ Record 5 million international overnight visitors
- ✓ +4.5% Asia
- ✓ +3.8% Europe
- ✓ +9.6% USA



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- ✓ YVR passengers = 20.3 million in 2015, +5%
- ✓ BC Ferries passengers = +4%
- ✓ Vehicles = +4.5%



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- ✓ *Tourism*
Revenues = \$14.6
billion in 2015
- ✓ *\$7.1 billion in real
GDP*



The Aboriginal Tourism Landscape

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- ✓ *Aboriginal businesses = \$561 million in GDP*
- ✓ *\$12 million in tax revenues*



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- ✓ BC Aboriginal tourism sector = \$45-50 million in revenues
- ✓ 1500 Aboriginal tourism businesses in Canada; 300 in BC or about 4% of all tourism businesses in province



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- ✓ *Majority of Aboriginal businesses retained or increased revenues over past three years*



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- ✓ *Over half have been in business more than 12 years*
- ✓ *61% operate year-round*



The Aboriginal Tourism Landscape

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- ✓ *Aboriginal businesses employ average of 8 full-time staff*
- ✓ *67% operated by Aboriginals*



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- ✓ *3.7 million visitors to Aboriginal businesses in BC*



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- ✓ *Majority of Aboriginal tourism experiences are add-ons, versus sole purpose for travel*



The Aboriginal Tourism Landscape

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- ✓ *Majority of visitors to Aboriginal tourism operators are domestic; USA and Europe reasonably strong*



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- ✓ *Aboriginal experiences include: performances, displays, events, tours*



The Aboriginal Tourism Landscape

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- ✓ Profile of visitor to Aboriginal experience – majority female, middle aged to senior, highly educated, high income



Profile of Aboriginal Tourism Visitor *Cultural Explorer*

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- ✓ *Defined by their love of constant travel and continuous opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the culture, people and settings of the places they visit*



Profile of Aboriginal Tourism Visitor

Cultural Explorer

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- ✓ *Personality traits:*
Open, accepting,
non-traditional,
enthusiastic,
creative



Profile of Aboriginal Tourism Visitor

Cultural Explorer

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- ✓ *Cultural Sampling: They believe that other cultures have a lot to teach them*



Profile of Aboriginal Tourism Visitor

Cultural Explorer

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- ✓ *Importance of Spontaneity: They enjoy an element of surprise and welcome unexpected circumstances that enrich their lives*



Profile of Aboriginal Tourism Visitor

Cultural Explorer

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- ✓ Pursuit of Novelty: Trying out new things is thrilling



The Aboriginal Tourism Opportunity

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- ✓ BC home to approximately 200 First Nations bands... one-third of all of Canada



The Aboriginal Tourism Opportunity

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- ✓ Approximately 100% growth in BC over last 5 years
- ✓ Tour operators predict moderate growth in the Aboriginal tourism market



TIABC Resources

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- ✓ *Partnerships,
Advocacy,
Marketing,
Destination
Development*



Lillian Hunt



- Aboriginal tourism is hot, and growing
 - Doubled operators/revenues 2006-2012
- AtBC tools/ programs to help
 - Product Development
 - Skills Development
 - Marketing



Tools to Protect Culture

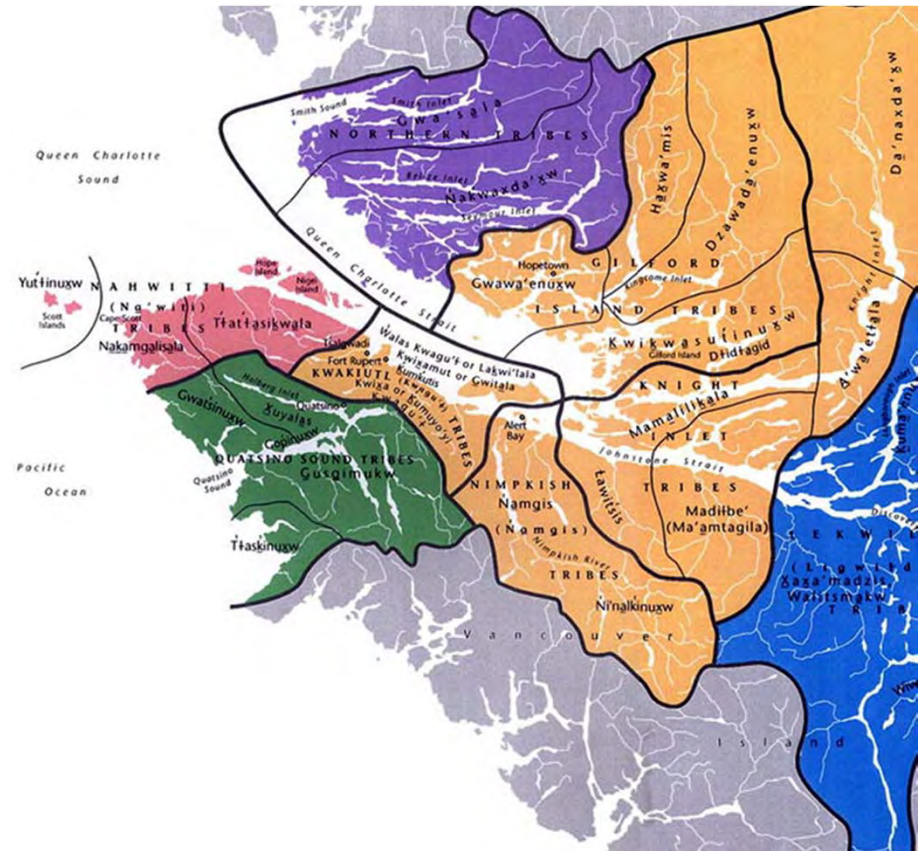
- Authentic Aboriginal-tours and products
- Authentic Indigenous – authentic arts and crafts

*Launch of Authentic Indigenous program at
Royal BC Museum*



The View from the Aboriginal Side

- The need for partners on the Aboriginal side
- Challenge and opportunity with FN culture
- Working with the neighbours – starting the Wi'la'mola Accord with Nimmo Bay
- Working toward mutual support



Territory of the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations includes some of the BC coast's most outstanding scenic beauty, wildlife and Aboriginal culture.

A Case: the Wi'la'mola Accord

- Tourism operators and First Nations joined to work together in the north Island region
- Drafted Wi'la'mola Accord to set protocols
- Deal aims to provide benefits to both parties



- Working with the neighbours



Eagle's-eye view of Nimmo Bay Resort



Craig
Murray



What's in this
for Business?

*Nimmo Bay Resort guest on paddle-board
catches spray at Wispy Falls*

The View from the Business Side



*Evening bonfire at
Nimmo Bay*

Randy Bell



'NAMGIS
FIRST NATION



*'Namgis artist
and protocol
expert
Randy Bell
believes culture
can help
Aboriginal youth
find a place in
the modern
world.*

Randy Bell



'NAMGIS
FIRST NATION



Namgis artist and protocol expert Randy Bell believes culture can help Aboriginal youth find a place in the modern world.

Oolichan – A Very Old Business



BC Ministry of Environment



ACX-BCP05212 - © - Ian McAllister

The grease or oil of Oolichan (called *tłi'na* in Kwak'wala) was the most sought-after food of West Coast First Nations... a very special sauce!

Culture, Youth and the Future

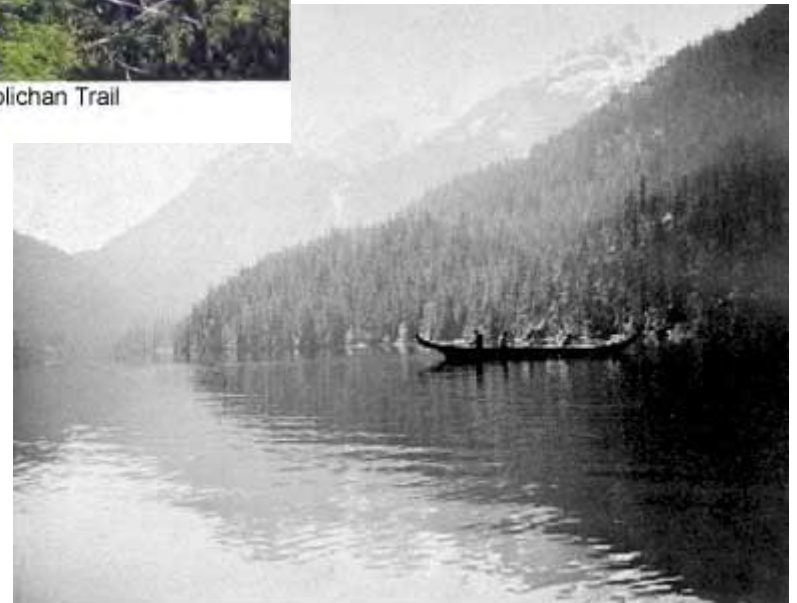


Woss Lake from the summit of the Oolichan Trail
(Lindsay Elms photo)

Images from:
<http://www.beyondnootka.com/articles/woss.html>



Donald Svanvik carving a Wolf mask in a cedar on the Oolichan Trail
(Photo courtesy of Harry Alfred)



Bolton Expedition of 1894 on Woss Lake
(T. Burrough Norgate photo)



'Namgis dancers perform for guests at Nimmo Bay Resort

Conclusion: What we Learned

- Tourism is a large and growing industry
- There is a large and growing demand for FN culture
- Business needs FN partners to connect with market demand, gain access to key resources
- FNs need business partners for finance, expertise and access to markets
- **This is a clear opportunity for win-win.**

A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow in the sky and reflecting on the water. In the foreground, three people are silhouetted against the water, looking towards the sunset. The background shows a dark treeline and hills.

Questions?

*"A good place to live is a good place to visit."**

Sunset over Alert Bay

**SOURCE: Dr. Brian P. White,
'A tourism organisational structure for the Alberni Valley,'
City of Port Alberni and Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce, 2004.*