

Community Tourism Handbook

A Resource Guide for Community Groups
Participating in Sea Turtle Ecotourism in the
Commonwealth of Dominica



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Note:

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Community Tourism Handbook

A Resource Guide for Community Groups
Participating in Sea Turtle Ecotourism in
the Commonwealth of Dominica

2008



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Overview and Purpose

With support from the United States Agency for International Development, through its Caribbean Open Trade Support (COTS) program in the Eastern Caribbean, the Dominica Sea Turtle Conservation Organisation (DomSeTCO), in partnership with the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST), has been tasked with developing a nation-wide, science-based and non-invasive sea turtle research, conservation, and ecotourism program that can be implemented in collaboration with Government, coastal communities, the tourism industry, and visitors to the island.

The resulting program has focused heavily on leadership training in coastal communities interested in assuming greater responsibility for sea turtle survival in Dominica and has included technical training in population monitoring and research, data collection, and habitat conservation, including a public outreach component. Importantly, the program has aimed to facilitate a sustained commitment to conservation goals by fostering capacity for income generation at the community level. Training guides to lead Turtle Watches, building on Dominica's reputation as an ecotourism destination and WIDECAST's expertise in this area, has provided a basis for new professional livelihoods that both create a more diversified income base in participating communities and also discourage sea turtle poaching at major nesting beaches.

Prior to implementation of this program, discussions with Government and relevant communities in the South East and North East confirmed that there was consensus regarding the need for livelihood diversification in ways that support *The Nature Island* market niche, and that a professional "Turtle Watch" tour product was a high priority. Notwithstanding, there was no national capacity to support such diversification in ways that met the standards of international best practice.

Therefore, the program has sought to identify the appropriate community structure, regulatory framework, and institutional development necessary to create a Turtle Watch program in Dominica, while at the same time to maintain nightly beach patrols at the nation's primary nesting beaches in order to collect basic population data, to nurture a feeling of civic pride in the protection of these grand and ancient creatures, and to reduce illegal killing of the animals during their egg-laying period.

Nature Seekers (www.natureseekers.org) is proud to be involved in this program, and to have been asked to provide training to communities in the form of a *Basic Course in Sea Turtle Community-Based Ecotourism, Tour Guiding and Management* taught at the La Plaine Agricultural Training Centre, Commonwealth of Dominica (11-15 September and 1-12 October 2007) and an *Advanced Course in Sea Turtle Community-Based Ecotourism, Tour Guiding and Management* taught in Matura, Trinidad (23-29 March 2008).

In collaboration with DomSeTCO and WIDECAST, and based on professional courses we have designed for community participants in Trinidad, we developed a core curriculum to teach trainees about tourism expectations, tour guiding, common techniques for guiding on a turtle beach, structure of tours, communication, how to manage group behaviour, safety practices, program management, management of community groups, etc. The resulting *Basic Course in Sea Turtle Community-Based Ecotourism, Tour Guiding and Management* was also designed to meet the requirements and standards of national certification processes, as required under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

The Basic Course was highly interactive, with extensive sharing of participants' experiences and knowledge. A wide variety of facilitation techniques were used – including whole group discussion, brainstorming, nominal group technique, small group work, individual reflection, guided facilitation, and “round-robin” with individual and group presentations (see Baptiste and Sammy 2007). The facilitation techniques were used as potential tools for participants to apply in the process of individual and organisational development. The specific goals achieved by the Basic Course were to train and develop participants from three rural communities in basic sea turtle tour guiding and group (and business) management skills to enable them to develop a customised tour for each community, improve tour preparation and presentation skills, and increase their understanding of organisation and guide management.

Several important resources and references were shared with the trainees, these are listed in Appendix I. In addition, a comprehensive *Field Procedures Manual* (Stapleton and Eckert 2008) and an *Action Plan for a Sea Turtle Conservation and Tourism Initiative in the Commonwealth of Dominica* (Sammy et al. 2008) have also been developed in support of a professional community-based approach to “Turtle Watching” as a tourism product in The Nature Island.

The purpose of this brief *Community Tourism Handbook* is to share, based on our experience as a community based organisation in Trinidad, additional programmatic tools that we have developed and found useful – including a “Tour Guide Manual” (Appendix II) and a variety of standardised surveys and forms. Sammy et al. (2008) recommend that each community organisation develop their own *Handbook* “with standards for managing visitors, carrying capacity, health and safety, and staff protocols (e.g. hiring, training, evaluation).” We hope these models will prove helpful in this process, that a successful Turtle Watch experience will become the cornerstone of a national Sea Turtle Conservation and Tourism Initiative in Dominica, and that the initiative, upon its success, might set an example for others to follow.

Purchasing a Turtle Watch Tour

In Trinidad, anyone wishing to participate in a Turtle Watching tour must first purchase a Permit from an authorised payment centre: Sangre Grande Forestry Division, San Fernando Forestry Division, or the Port of Spain Forestry Division (Figure 1). Every visitor to the nation's primary nesting beaches – located at Fishing Pond, Matura, and Grande Riviere – must hold a valid Forestry Permit (Appendix III) before they can be allowed to walk out onto the beach. The cost of the Permit is less than US\$ 1.00; in contrast, the fine for entering the Prohibited Area without a permit is TT \$20,000 (ca. US\$ 3,500).

Each Prohibited Area [nesting beach] has an established carrying capacity of 100-150 persons per night, depending on the site. Forestry Division offices communicate among themselves, and when the carrying capacity is reached, no more Permits can be sold for that night. At the close of the business day, Forestry alerts each community-based tour guiding organisation as to the number of Permits sold for that night so they can schedule an adequate number of Tour Guides.

Once the customer arrives at the nesting beach, they must show their Forestry Permit and then purchase a Tour. A sample receipt is included as Appendix IV. The customer is guided to the Visitor Centre to hear an introductory presentation by the tour guide. While they wait, the customer is asked to complete a Visitor Information Form (Appendix V), which facilitates record-keeping, builds a client database, and provides information on whether the tourist is interested in other tour services.

How to organize for turtle watching

During the decades of the 1970's and 1980's, the slaughter of egg-bearing females created sufficient national concern to designate the nesting beach a Prohibited Area under the Forest Act (chap 66:01) in 1990. As a result, the Matura Beach is restricted every year during the period of 1st March to 31st August inclusive. This means that each person coming to view turtles must obtain a permit to enter the prohibited area. **In order to do this one person will need to visit special offices of the Forestry Division with a list of names of everyone desirous of coming to view turtles and the date they wish to come.** Without a permit on the beach you can be fined \$20,000.00

- Permits can be obtained at the:
 - Sangre Grande Forestry Division Tel: 668-3825,
 - San Fernando Forestry Division Tel: 657-8391
 - Port of Spain Forestry Division Tel: 622-7476
- The cost of the permits are (paid at Forestry Division):
 - **TT\$5.00 per adult and**
 - **TT\$2.00 per child (Under 12)**
 - As part of the conservation effort a carrying capacity was establish to allow 150 persons for Matura Beach. As a result the permits are granted on a first come first serve basis.
- All visitors with permits are asked contact Nature Seekers for directions. On arrival on the beach visitors pay a guide fee of (paid to Nature Seekers):

Visitors	Adult	Child (under 12)
Locals (per person)	\$15.00 TT	\$5.00 TT
Foreigners (per person)	\$10.00 US	\$5.00 US
Foreigners Students (per person)	\$ 5.00 US	
- On arrival the tour group receives a briefing and then taken to the beach by a tour guide for the viewing of the endangered leatherback turtles.

Figure 1. Information on the fee structure for entering the Matura Prohibited Area (a major leatherback sea turtle nesting beach in Trinidad), and purchasing a Turtle Watch tour from Nature Seekers – the community group authorised by Government to lead tours at that site. Source: www.natureseekers.org.

Service Quality for a Turtle Watch Tour

A successful tour guiding business relies on providing each customer with a high quality experience, starting with their very first phone call!

Each service encounter should be a positive experience. The following are among the many service encounters that a customer might experience in the purchase of a tour, using Nature Seekers in Trinidad as an example:

- ✓ Customer calls on the telephone, sends an e-mail, or visits the Forestry Office or Nature Seekers office to acquire information on the Turtle Watching tour.

The customer may need a brochure, information about the duration of turtle watching season, an explanation of the overall process for obtaining a permit (where to purchase it, when the office is open, etc.), permit cost and guide fee, availability of accommodation, the type(s) of facilities available on site, and/or any additional costs. At this point the customer should be informed of additional facilities, such as the library and gift shop.

- ✓ Customer then proceeds to purchase a Visitor's Permit at the Forestry Division.

A representative from the Forestry Division will call Nature Seekers and inform them of the number of Permits they have sold for that particular night. In so doing, Nature Seekers can now plan for their visitors.

- ✓ Customer calls or sends an e-mail to get directions, as well as to ask any questions they may have regarding the Turtle Watching tour.

This may include appropriate apparel, repellent, torch light, etc. At this time the visitor will be asked to give an approximate time for their arrival and also to confirm the number of people in their party. At this point the visitor should also be advised to pay attention to the signs along the road to the meeting point; for example they should dim their car lights when approaching the meeting point and the reason for this should be explained.

- ✓ The customer arrives at the meeting point in Matura, the turtle watching site, and is greeted by an employee.

Usually they are again reminded to dim their car lights and an explanation is given.

- ✓ The customer then shows their Visitor's Permit to the Nature Seekers employee and pays the tour guide fee. An e-mail address is also taken from the group leader and, if possible, addresses from other members. (It is the intention of Nature Seekers to obtain an e-mail address from each guest so that feedback can be obtained from everyone.)

- ✓ The customer then observes an audio-visual presentation that educates them not only about the Turtle Watching tour but also the plight of marine turtles and the various reasons why awareness and conservation are important.

- ✓ The customer then proceeds to the Turtle Watching tour with their tour guide.

- ✓ During the Turtle Watching tour, the customer interacts with the tour guide by means of two-way communication.

- ✓ After the Turtle Watching tour is complete, the customer proceeds back to the meeting point and is invited to purchase souvenirs from the display. A feedback form is administered to customers willing to stay and complete the form.

- ✓ All customers are thanked for their participation, encouraged to visit again, and asked to share their positive experience with their friends and family.

Conducting a Turtle Watch Tour

A professional tour has a well-developed Introduction, a "Body", and a Conclusion; for example:

Introduction to the Tour (set the stage, create a foundation)

Welcoming Remarks

- Clearly state your name

- Tell your customers how long your organisation has been working with turtles
- Note that your organisation, and the Turtle Watch product in Dominica, advocates for community empowerment

Organisation History

- When was your organisation founded?
- What is its Mission?
- Are there important partners in your Turtle Watch product? (e.g. DomSeTCO; Division of Forestry, Wildlife and Parks; Village Council; nearby hotels, ...)

Why Conduct Turtle Watches?

- To utilize natural resources in creating sustainable livelihoods in the community
- To empower communities in small business skills and self-sufficiency
- For the conservation and sustainable use of sea turtle populations in Dominica
- To assist in reducing the poaching of nesting sea turtles
- To educate the general population of the plight of the sea turtles, and how people can become more involved

Rules and Safety

- Insect repellent application before the tour
- Appropriate parental supervision at all times
- No indiscriminate flashing of torch-lights
- Follow the guide, don't take your own path on the beach
- No riding of turtles or collection of sea turtle eggs
- No leaving of tour and walking un-supervised
- Only authorised photography
- Only authorised video filming
- No littering on the beach
- No alcohol, weapons, or pets
- Please turn cell phones off

Tour Summary and Duration

- The objective is to see and experience the nesting process, however the presence of a sea turtle cannot be guaranteed
- Tour takes approximately 2.5 to 3 hours
- The tour is over when the nesting turtle has returned to the sea

Other Tours Available

- Advise the customers of other related programs, including tours (e.g. waterfall, nature hike, community gardens), crafts, and other services offered by the organisation in the community

Body of the Tour (describe the nesting process, build anticipation!)

Sea Turtle Nesting

- Nesting approach from the sea
- Preparing of the body-pit
- Excavation of the egg chamber
- Depositing the eggs

- Covering the egg chamber
- Camouflaging the nesting area
- Returning to sea

Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation

- Swimming, Diving, Feeding – what do turtles do when they are not on the beach?
- Breeding – mating, beach selection (these turtles were born in Dominica!)
- Conservation Issues – poaching, habitat loss, threats at sea (away from Dominica)

Other Subjects of Interest

- Geology and Geography
- Flora and Fauna
- Economics of the Area
- Traditions and Customs
- Legends and Folklore
- Archaeological Ruins
- Current Local & Global News
- Current Environmental Issues
- Local Social Customs
- Stars in the Sky

Conclusion of the Tour (invite your customers – and their friends – to return)

- Sincerely thank your customers for choosing your Tour Service
- Encourage the purchase of crafts and other products
- Encourage comments in the Visitors Book
- Distribute brochures and other educational materials
- Request that customers complete a Service Quality Survey
- Remind customers to collect all of their personal belongings
- Encourage customers to share their experience with family and friends
- “Have a safe journey home!”

Evaluating a Tour Watch Tour

Consider talking to the customers after the tour, do not just leave them when you return from the beach. Walk together, make conversation. Ask the customer a few questions to determine their level of satisfaction with the tour: for example, elements they were happy with and those they were not so happy with. Be genuine in your request for their suggestions for improvement of the tour and your service in general.

Ask as many customers as possible whether they are willing to complete a Service Quality Survey (Appendix VI). Usually even after the Turtle Watch experience, when the customer may be very tired, s/he will be excited about the experience and willing to share information. Any survey must be completely voluntary, however, and do not be disappointed if the customer simply wants to be on their way.

If there is no opportunity to complete a comprehensive survey (cf. Appendix VI) – perhaps the hour is very late or it is raining and people are running for their cars – take time later to review

the Visitor Information Form for the customer's (or group leader's) contact information. Send a short, friendly e-mail asking for feedback. Make it easy on the customer by sending the survey to them by e-mail. As an alternative, a shorter survey may be administered on-site (Figure 2).

Consider offering an incentive to those who have properly filled out the form, perhaps offering to waive the guide fee for that individual on their next visit or offer a 10% reduction in an Adopt-A-Turtle fee or offer a complementary booklet or craft upon their next visit.

For your benefit, ask all kinds of people for their feedback – do not only ask those that you know had a wonderful time. Ask the quiet person, the person with young children, the person you think may not have enjoyed their experience very much. To improve your service, you must always be seeking to make your service better for all customers, as long as their requests do not compromise the rules of behaviour on the beach. For example, if the customer wanted to take pictures or touch the animal at an inappropriate time, do not change the tour based on that information – but the lesson to be learned is that the tour guide might need to better explain the reasons for the rules.

Fund-Raising Associated with a Turtle Watch Tour

Designing a Turtle Watch tourism product can incorporate many other small businesses in the community (see Sammy et al. 2008). For example, crafts, booklets, and even food can be sold at the Visitor Centre; other tours can be arranged; information about the community can be displayed; and items related to the Turtle Watch can be offered that bring additional money into the community organisation to support conservation work. One example is an "Adopt-A-Turtle" program where visitors pay a fee to 'adopt' a turtle, and in this way they can learn more about a particular animal (perhaps the one they saw); e.g. whether it returned again later in the season and whether its eggs hatched successfully. See Appendix VII for an example of a Certificate. This is not a program to be taken lightly. You must follow-up with more information, or a general newsletter sent to all 'adoptive parents' as the nesting (and hatching) season progresses.

Essential Record-Keeping for a Turtle Watch Tour

Financial and employee record-keeping is essential to any organisation. Standardised forms must be created to document tour guide fees, staff hours, craft sales, donations, number of visitors, etc. (Appendix VIII, IX). Transparency in accounting promotes trust in the organisation, both by its members and by its auditors. Conflict is strongly reduced by accurate record-keeping regarding hours worked, tours led, etc. by members of the organisation. A standardised form related to payroll can be helpful (Appendix X).

Regulatory Framework for Turtle Watching

In Trinidad, successful Turtle Watching relies heavily on a government-mandated permit system allowing a regulated number of visitors into the nation's Prohibited Areas (Appendix III) each night during the sea turtle nesting season, and requiring these visitors to pay a guide fee. Regulations of this kind, adapted to a country's legal system, are essential to community-based ecotourism development (see also Sammy et al. 2008).

**Guest Experience
Employee Feedback Record**

Date:

Employee Function / Position: *(please check √ the appropriate box)*

Tour guide
 Patroller
 Sales
 Conduct briefing/ collect permit and guide fee

Overall Experience

Please check √ the appropriate box according to your overall experience

 

What changes or improvements could have been made to improve your experience?

Main Problem/Success Category *(please check √ the appropriate box)*

People (quality of tour, ability to provide pertinent information)
 Equipment (reliability)
 Other

Would you recommend Nature Seekers Turtle Watching Tour to others?
(please check √ the appropriate box)

Yes No

If you have answered No please indicate the reason why, so that Nature Seekers can try to address this. Our goal is to be the best tour guide service that we can be!

Figure 2. “Short form” customer experience and employee feedback survey.

Literature Cited

- Baptiste, Suzan Lakan and Dennis Sammy. 2007. Basic Course Report: Sea Turtle Community Based Ecotourism, Tour Guiding and Management, 11-15 September and 1-12 October 2007. La Plaine Agricultural Training Centre, Commonwealth of Dominica. Prepared by the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST), in partnership with Nature Seekers and the Dominica Sea Turtle Conservation Organisation (DomSeTCO), with funding from the United States Agency for International Development. Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica. 39 pp.
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The authors would also like to express their own gratitude for the privilege it has been for us to be involved with this peer-training and mentoring process, and our hope that the ties forged between community groups in Dominica and community groups in Trinidad will be enduring and mutually beneficial.

APPENDIX I

2007 Sea Turtle Ecotourism “Basic Course” Training Package

1. Turtle Tour Guide Tote-Bag
2. *Sea Turtles: An Ecological Guide*, textbook by David Gulko and Karen Eckert (2004)
3. Documents for Basic Course:
 - Syllabus – Tour Development
Tour Programme Management
Tour Preparation and Presentation
 - Nature Seekers, Nature Tour Enterprise: “Turtles and Beyond”
 - Roles and Responsibilities of a Board Member
 - Presentation Skills and Professional Guiding Techniques Handbook: Training Programme for Turtle Watching and Ecotour Tour Guides at Matura, Grande Riviere, Fishing Pond and Mayaro, June/July 1997, compiled by Kathryn McConnie-Angoy, Tour Guide Instructor and Managing Director, Tours Incredible. Prepared for the UN Development Programme (Trinidad and Tobago) and Tourism and Industrial Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited.
4. Documents for the Dominica State College Training in collaboration with Dominica Sea Turtle Conservation Organisation (DomSeTCO) and USAID, 3-7 December 2007, including:
 - Turtle Tour Guiding Programme, by A. Etiennise John-Daniel, Certified Hospitality Educator
 - Basic Education and Skills Training (BEST), Dominica State College Tour Guide Training Programme
 - Overview and Importance of Dominica’s Tourism Industry
 - Glossary of Terms
 - Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division: User Fee System for Eco-Tourism Sites, prepared by Cyrille John, December 2006
 - SHAPE, Architectural Heritage in Tourist Product (Dominica)
 - Bird Watching (Dominica)
 - Professional Tour Guiding, Skills and Techniques, by Paulette Joseph
 - Folklore/History (Dominica)
 - Customer Care (NISE Professional Conduct), by Katie Julien, Coordinator, Basic Education and Skills Training, Dominica State College
 - Overview of the Flora and Fauna of Dominica, prepared by Stephen Durand (Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division)
5. Dominica Red Cross, First Aid Training (2-day), conducted by Keith Comley
 - Document: Emergency First Aid Course
6. CD with photographs of training
7. Certificate of Course Completion

APPENDIX II
Tour Guide Manual

Tour Guide Manual

Version I

2007



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CHAPTER 1

Who is a Tour Guide?

Definition of a Tour Guide

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines both words separately:

TOUR: Journey through a place, visiting things of interest or giving performances.

GUIDE: A person who shows others the way; one employed to point out interesting sites to travelers.

Therefore, the appropriate definition is:

TOUR GUIDE:

A person who shows others the way, or is employed to point out interesting sites to travelers whilst journeying through a place and/or visiting things of interest.

Why a Tourist Guide?

The most obvious reason for a person to take a guided tour is to be informed ...

1. at a SITE (museum, fort, church, house);
2. on FOOT (town walk, country trail, beach walk); and/or
3. on the MOVE (bus, maxi/ taxi/ car, boat).

It should be noted that the phrase “tourist” guide in the above context could be misleading, because the client on any of the above may be:

1. a local person interested in a history trail;
2. a businessman eager to know more of the place where he is to be involved; or
3. a holiday-maker (the traditional understanding of the word “tourist”).

Qualities that a Successful Tour Guide Should Possess

Knowledge and Understanding

- Working knowledge and understanding of the unique and special qualities of the natural or cultural attraction

Attitude

- An abiding love of the land and culture, and deep convictions about protecting the natural or cultural attractions being presented.
- An outgoing, pleasant nature: one who can meet, welcome and instantly develop a rapport with people of all personalities.
- Self-confidence, naturalness, and poise displaying a professional attitude and appearance
- Honest, genuine respect and concern for the client’s well-being and needs while on a tour.

Communication skills

- Good communication skills using direct eye contact, a clear and articulate speaking voice.
- Good command of the English language, enabling the guide to share and relate the special qualities of the attraction with charisma and wit of a story-teller.
- An ability to draw the clients into the natural or cultural experiences by questioning, listening and encouraging participation on the part of the tour participants.

Judgment

- A decisiveness and assertiveness that allows the guide to make decisions on behalf of the group when challenges arise and quick corrective actions are needed.
- An ability to keep the group organized and moving along according to the tour schedule.

CHAPTER 2

Introduction to Professional Guiding

First Impressions

The first impression on any tour is the lasting impression. Many tour groups are met at the airport by a guide at the beginning of their trip, or later when the group is off to its first site. These are crucial times when the guide can either get things off to a good start ... or drag a series of problems throughout the tour.

Consequently, by following Basic Professional Guiding Techniques and simple recommendations, a number of potential problems and misinterpretations can be avoided – making life easier for both the guide and for the client, right from the beginning.

Knowledge & Understanding

The first requirement, therefore, of a guide is to have an inquisitive mind and a love of knowledge across the widest range of subjects. The quest to build up knowledge is never-ending! If a guide feels he/she knows it all, it is time to give up guiding because s/he has “burned out”.

Knowledge must be built on a solid base. Every professional guide should have a fundamental knowledge about the area in question in certain basic subjects:

- Geology and geography
- History
- Flora and fauna
- Architecture
- Economics of the area
- Traditions and customs
- Legends and folklore
- Archaeological Ruins
- Current Local & Global News
- Environmental Issues

- Local Social Knowledge (how people live, including their customs, religion, politics, education, work.)

All these subjects must be presented objectively, not purely from a personal angle.

Finally, there must obviously be a specific and detailed knowledge of the sites, walks/trails and bus/boat routes that are covered.

A guide, as s/he builds on experience, should listen to the clients' questions and think about them through the clients' eyes. Correct, objective answers should be sought by reading and listening to experts, including the older generation.

It is the guide's responsibility to interpret cultural heritage both past and present. A professional guide can thereby enhance international understanding and increase cross-cultural awareness.

Without KNOWLEDGE the *Art of Guiding* cannot be practiced. Commentary cannot be learned by heart.

Personality

The professional guide will:

- Have a genuine love of people and country;
- Have a warm personality: be ‘a giver’ and not a taker;
- Have dignity and self-confidence in a natural way;
- Understand the meaning of hospitality, act as host/ess not ‘prima dona’
- Care about the clients; e.g. find out their interests and adapt information accordingly;
- Seek to make a tour interesting both for the informed specialist and for the general public, including for the elderly and for children;
- Always seek to give out correct, objective information;

In brief, the professional guide will seek retain interest by passing on information in

an enjoyable and entertaining manner, combining the skills of the teacher and the entertainer.

If there is one major quality within a professional guide's personality, it must be ENTHUSIASM. Enthusiasm backed by expertise will lead to confidence both in oneself and in the client.

ENTHUSIASM + EXPERTISE = CONFIDENCE (E.E.C)

Setting the Scene for Your Tour

The atmosphere for a guided tour can be set within the first five minutes of meeting the client or indeed even less.

Appearance

Think about dress. Does your attire suit:

- The occasion?
- The site?
- The client? (Do not dress for the opposite sex! Jealous partners will only make your work difficult.)
- Comfort

Look good – confidence in your appearance gives you confidence in yourself ... and gives your audience confidence in you.

Body Language

Hold yourself well – stand tall, do not slouch or lean against a wall or vehicle.

Do not fold your arms across your chest in a defensive gesture or have your hands on your hips in an aggressive stance.

SMILE and, above all, establish EYE CONTACT. This should be with each and every member of the group, however briefly. You should not fix your eyes on one person only, the most sympathetic or attractive, but note the shy person, the loner, the person walking with a stick, or the person with the babe-in-arms.

Introduce Yourself

Introduce yourself clearly and simply. After a few sentences, check that everyone understands English and, in particular, *your* English. Remember there are many thousands of different English accents worldwide and each takes awhile to get to get used to. In addition many non-English speakers will understand English if spoken clearly and distinctly.

Audience Assessment

Assess your audience by being aware of:

- Nationality and country of origin
- Age and sex
- Socio-economic group, education
- Whether the audience has any special interests
- How much do they already know?
- Have they have visited before?
- Where else they have been?
- Where else are they going?
- How long they will be staying?

Some of the above information can be obtained at the time of booking. If there is an accompanying person, make contact and find out some background. Talk to the clients themselves. Try and find out a little about the client, establish contact by a few questions, from which specific interests may well emerge.

Outlining Your Tour

The client may have very specific expectations, but sometimes there may be a discrepancy with your brief. An outline description of the tour can help identify any misunderstandings and possibly solve them before they become problems.

Practical information is also important: how long the tour will take, stops/breaks for food/ drink and facilities, whether photography is allowed, to wear or not to wear a hat or shoes (e.g. in churches/ mosques).

Nervousness

It is a well known fact that actors and professional speakers will often feel nervous

before a performance; indeed it will be said that it is better to feel a little nervous, to experience “butterflies in the stomach”.

The need to overcome nervousness increases adrenalin flow and thereby energizes the system. It is, therefore, not a bad thing to feel nervous! But it is also not a good thing to be *seen* to be nervous and therefore it should be concealed.

You may be nervous from:

- Lack of preparation;
- Resultant lack of knowledge;
- Fear of running out of things to say and “drying up”.

Nervousness shows in your body language:

- Feet may shuffle around, or tap;
- Hands constantly move, knuckles clenched, rings fiddled with;
- The body may sway and weight be shifted from hip to hip;
- The voice can waver, swallowing can be detected as it dries.

How can this nervousness be concealed?

- Take control of your body;
- Adopt a well-balanced stance, feet slightly apart, weight evenly distributed on both hips, spine straight; this will lessen physical tiredness and lend an air of authority;
- Draw back shoulders, hands preferably behind the back, this expands the lungs and allows easy intake and exhalation of breathe;
- Control your hands and consider carefully how you use them; do you wave them around uncontrollably or use them as gesture that are a recognizable extensions of what is being said? For instance, if you say ‘look to your right’, do you indicate clearly to the right? Or if you talk of a particular fruit or flower you might describe its shape in the air with your hands.
- Take control of your breathing;
- If you ‘dry up’, **PAUSE**, have the courage to be silent;

- Take a **DEEP BREATH**. This is conscious action of taking control and, at the same time, sends the oxygen to the brain;
- Words will once again flow!

There is never a need to apologize for “drying up”. Most people will not notice there has been a break in commentary unless you draw their attention to it. Indeed, pauses are positive to allow for the absorption of knowledge.

If you find you are particularly nervous about a specific tour, perhaps taking experts around a museum, give yourself a kick start by learning your opening sentences by heart. Once you have launched yourself into delivery, the natural content of your presentation will follow.

A Good Talk has an Introduction, a Body, and a Conclusion

In every good talk, there is a good introduction, a good body and a good conclusion – each of which accomplishes a different set of purposes. Preparing an effective talk is simple if you think of it as developing these three different parts, and if you concentrate on designing each part to accomplish its specific purposes.

Introduction

- To create interest in the theme, and to make your audience want to hear more about it;
- To orient the audience to theme, and tell them how your talk is going to be organized;
- To establish the conceptual framework that you rely on in the body, and to introduce the vehicle (if you are using one);
- To set the stage for the conclusion

Body

- To develop the theme, organized just as you said it would be, and using whatever facts, concepts, analogies, examples, comparisons, etc.

that you need to make the information entertaining, meaningful, and relevant to your audience.

Conclusion

- To reinforce the theme – to show one last time the relationship between the theme that you revealed in the introduction and all the information you presented in the body. Conclusions summarize the key points that were made earlier, and some offer ideas about larger meaning of the theme (e.g., what the “bigger picture” is or “where we go from here”).

CHAPTER 3 Commentary

Effective Commentary

People take guided tours to be informed. If they enjoy themselves, they will retain far more information. Therefore, an effective commentary is information delivered in an enjoyable and entertaining manner.

Information is a series of accurate facts or data. It should also be:

- Concise and simple;
- Selective and relevant (to the client and to the tour);
- Structured, not a simple inventory or list of facts;
- Varied, covering all aspects; e.g. an agricultural tour may also cover an important building, an interesting geological phenomenon or a day in the life of an agriculture worker.

Information which is somehow related or connected to the inner circle of our lives will seem more important to us than it otherwise might. That is because it is more personal and therefore more relevant. Communication that appeals to those things we really care about attracts our attention; such as:

- Our strongest beliefs;
- Ourselves;
- Loved ones (especially children);
- Our values and deepest convictions.

An easy way of making your communication more personal is by self-referencing:

- Self-referencing means getting your client to momentarily think about themselves as you give them some new information. This makes them relate to the information on a more personal level, therefore heightening their attention.
- Examples of simple phrases that you can use are:
 “Have you ever....”
 “Think about the last time your son/daughter.....”
 “How many of you ever.....”
 “At one time or the other most of us have....”

Information can be made enjoyable by the manner of the delivery:

- A smile in the voice as well as the face;
- Anecdotes and human stories rather than straight facts;
- Humour and jokes. Be aware of your client; different nationalities laugh at different things and offence to ANY member of the group must be avoided. Never make a joke at the expense of another;
- Endeavour always to use the positive statement.

In addition, remember that your role is to:

- Promote the area in which you guide, the company that has set up the tour and indeed your own services as a professional guide;
- Dispel misconceptions: people travel the world with their own ideas about a place derived from television, films, novels and hearsay: their ideas are sometimes quaint and you should aim for them to leave with a

- far clearer understanding of your home;
- Involve your client: find out their interests and draw comparisons with their country.

TELL ME, ... I'LL FORGET

SHOW ME, ... I MAY REMEMBER

INVOLVE ME, ... I'LL UNDERSTAND (AND REMEMBER)!

Specific Commentary

Whether on site, on a walk or in a moving vehicle, check in advance:

- Your route: are all items in the museum there? Is any part of your route blocked off?
- Your knowledge: is it up-to-date? Have you checked out previous questions where you did not know the answer?
- Timing: have you adapted your commentary to the time available?
- Current events: how might they modify your tour?
- Who is paying?

Above all be flexible, think of Plan B!

Introduction

In your opening remarks, include a few aspects of your tour that will grab the imagination of your clients, facts that you can refer to later on: a historical link with the client's country, an unusual plant, a famous person, a special artefact. This will give your client something to look forward to and when you enlarge on that point, it will already be familiar.

Very quickly talk about something that can immediately be seen:

TOP VISUAL PRIORITY

PEOPLE RECALL NO MORE THAN 20 % OF WHAT THEY HEAR AND THEY RECALL 30% OF WHAT THEY SEE

People may look at something, but until told what it is they often do not actually see it. Only *after* having established what is visual, bring in the non-visual, such as the historical fact or anecdote. Try to find a visual trigger for the non-visual information.

In structuring commentary try to find links: the person whose statue is in the main square was born in that district, then lived in that country house: the drink you had at lunch was made from fruit sold here in the market and growing on a tree to be seen shortly.

Delivery of Commentary

Voice- Learn to make the best possible use of your voice. Not only must it not fail you and therefore needs nurturing, but a good voice will enhance your commentary and heighten your client's pleasure in listening to you.

First it should be understood that breathing is very important. Breathing should come from the stomach; place your hands on your rib cage, if you are breathing correctly, you will feel your ribs moving slowly up and down with each inhaled and exhaled breath. If this is not happening, lie on your back on the floor: it is impossible not to breathe correctly in this relaxed position.

In using your voice, your first aim must be heard, which is not as stupid a statement as at first it appears. Make sure you position yourself and your group in front of you and avoid large numbers standing behind you by backing up against something, even a thin tree or a pole. In a noisy street, give yourself a sound-board by standing with a wall behind you or, alternatively, depending on

what you are showing the group, facing the wall which will bounce your voice towards the group.

Face your group at all times

Remember you may have clients who are hard-of-hearing and who are, therefore, grateful to be able to lip-read to assist their hearing.

On a walk, try not to give out information while moving, as only those close to you will hear.

The larger the group, the longer it will take for the sound of your voice to reach those furthest way from you. Speak more slowly as well as more loudly. To increase volume, be sure to maintain your deep breathing and push the volume out on the exhaled breath. Do not rely on your vocal chords to increase volume: this will result in shouting and very quickly strain your voice for which there is no cure but rest.

Clarity is as important as volume. Make sure that you articulate clearly, particularly vowel sounds. Do not speak through clenched teeth, but use the muscles around the mouth almost as though you were singing.

Variety can be achieved by changes in pitch, in volume and in speed. This is how you emphasize a subject, capture attention.

But finally do not forget the value of **SILENCE!** Your silence will often silence others.

Microphone Technique

Modern microphones are very sensitive. Client reaction to poor microphone technique is usually to call for volume to be turned up or down. It is more likely to be incorrect technique.

Do *not* copy 'pop' singers or even TV presenters by holding the microphone in front of your mouth like an ice cream cone waiting to be licked.

A microphone should be an extension of one's face, held either

1. on chin, just below the lips, in touch with the face so that voice waves pass over the top of it, or
2. to side of the mouth in touch with the face so voice waves flow past it.

If the feel of metal on the skin is unpleasant, then insert thumb between microphone and face, but in touch with it.

This facial contact ensures that voice is not lost when moving your head. Holding a microphone in front of the mouth not only masks the face, but very often muffles sound in the enclosed space of a bus.

Care should be taken in handling microphones which are delicate instruments. Bus/taxi owners should be encouraged to have microphone leads of a reasonable length to allow the guide to face clients with a certain amount of movement.

Take care not to sit or stand below an amplifier, this leads to feed-back. Above all, be aware and experiment for best possible reception.

Words and Dates

K.I.S.S. – “**Keep It Short & Simple**” is the perfect maxim for the professional guide. Short sentences, simple words. Using erudite (learned) words can create a gulf between you and your client. If you must use a technical word as in certain specific subjects, explain it. When monitoring a **PLACE NAME**, repeat slowly, even spell it.

**NEVER UNDERESTIMATE
AUDIENCE INTELLIGENCE**

**NEVER OVER ESTIMATE
PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE**

The professional guide will be able to make any subject intelligible to the audience and will not make assumptions about the client's knowledge.

DATES should be used sparingly. Certain key-dates cannot be omitted, but time can be identified in a number of ways; for example:

1683
The late 17th-century
The late sixteen-hundreds
Just over 300 years ago

Always remember, relate a person to a period and a date to a relevant event (if possible in the client's country).

Visual Aids

Teachers who have to make their visual aids must envy the tourist guide whose visual aid is all around. A guide does not lecture, but tells people what they can see: therefore you must illustrate your commentary with what can be seen.

Indication

Indicate physically, pointing at what should be looked at; extend your arm fully and hold your indication long enough for all to look.

On site, the larger the group the larger the visual should be; or in a museum case the object should be high enough for all to see. If you must describe a small object, give people time to approach later and look at it.

In addition indicate verbally; to the left/to the right. In bus or taxi, avoid 'straight ahead' since the people at the back frequently cannot see and feel left out. If it is essential to indicate something ahead, add'... and shortly on your left/right'.

Never say 'over there'- the immediate response will be 'where'? Where necessary, add verbal detail such as 'the house with the red door', 'the tree with the yellow flowers', the stuffed animal with the long tail', and so on.

Remember the use of gesture to extend verbal description: describe the shape of a tree, a fruit, a building with your hands. Position

both yourself and your group to see. Choose your own position carefully so that you do not obstruct the very visual you are talking about. Choose your stops carefully where you can talk about a number of visual items.

CHAPTER 4

Questions

Questions Asked by Tour Guides

Asking good questions can improve a guided tour – they help you to focus people's attention and lure them into the discovery process by engaging their imaginations. Besides being "open-ended" or "closed", questions can be classified according to their purpose. The following are some examples.

Focusing Questions

- To focus attention on something of interest:
 "Can you all see the coconut tree with two heads?"
 "Why do you suppose this happened?"

Comparing Questions

- To bring similarities and differences between things:
 "How would you compare these two rocks?"
 "What does this smell like? Does it remind you of anything?"

Inferring Questions

- To get the group to see how certain information applies in different situations:
- To explore possible conclusions and implications:
 "If that's true, then how might we explain such and such?"
 "What do you think could be concluded from this?"
 "So how do you think this turtle will look in another 20 years?"

Applicable Questions

- To get the group to see how certain information applies in different situations:
 - “Could you apply this knowledge at home?”
 - “Why might it be important to know such and such?”
 - “In what other ways can this tracking device be used?”

Problem – Solving Questions

- Encourage the group to think of solutions to real-world problems and issues:
 - “What do you think is needed to stop this problem?”
 - “What can be done to prevent this beach erosion?”

Question Asked by the Visitor/Client

Questions tell us that:

- The client is listening and interested
- We are approachable and that our information is acceptable
- We are successfully involving the client in the tour

However, questions can be an irritant when:

- They interrupt, are irrelevant or pre-empt us
- The questioner is showing off
- They are provocative or even rude
- We cannot answer them

The Correct Technique for Answering a Question

- First and foremost, SHOW PLEASURE;
- Listen properly and let the speaker finish (how often do you think you know the question, answer it and it's not quite the right answer to the right question?);
- Then REPEAT THE QUESTION.

Why Repeat the Question?

- To involve the group; (if you answer only the questioner, even embark on a conversation, you will lose the re-

mainder of the group who have perhaps not heard the question, and feel left out even though they may well be interested);

- To make sure you have understood
- To give time for your answer
- Only then, give your answer and remember: K.I.S.S. (be concise!), otherwise you may well find yourself embarking on another topic

Handling Difficult Questions

- Fix time for the question that interrupts, is irrelevant or pre-empt;
- In practising reception of a question, the show-off or silly question is in itself shown up and more often than not others in the group will spontaneously provide the answer and solve for you the problem of this difficult client!

NEVER LIE!

There maybe someone within the group who does know the answer. By inventing an answer, you risk destroying your entire credibility. However, sometimes when repeating the question, you realize that you may have an idea. You should give your answer as a possibility, then offer to find out or indicate where the client can find out.

Above all, NEVER be rude, get angry, put a person in front of others; do keep it cool and

DISARM WITH CHARM!

CHAPTER 5 Guiding

Good Tours have Good Parts

There are four parts to a good tour: a staging period, an introduction, body, and conclusion. Preparing an effective tour or guided walk is simple if you can think of it as

developing these four different parts and if you concentrate on designing each part to accomplish its specific purpose.

relationship between the theme and the things you showed and discussed.

Before the Tour Starts

- The staging period
 - Greet people, assure them that they have arrived at the right spot, inform them of the duration and physical needs of the tour and about any special clothing (shoes, coat, flashlight, etc.) they might require.
 - Discuss safety!
 - Establish a rapport and wait for the starting time.

During the Tour

- The introduction
 - Create interest in the topic, and to make your audience want to hear more about it.
 - Orient the audience to the theme, and tell how the tour is going to be organized.
 - Establish the conceptual framework by telling a little about some of the things the audience will see along the way.
 - Set the stage for the conclusion.
 - Repeat information about the length and duration of the tour, physical requirements, clothing, etc.
- The body
 - Much of this part is done at stopping points along the tour.
 - At each point, you develop the theme by showing your audience pertinent sites and objects of interest.
- The conclusion
 - Reinforce the theme – to show, one last time, the re-

Guiding a Specific Site

To some extent the guidelines are the same whether in a museum, a religious building or a secular building. First and foremost it is essential to liaise with the person in charge, check that guiding by outsiders is allowed, and follow any regulations that might be in force, such as a particular route, maximum numbers, etc.

Be sure to give your group any relevant instructions in advance, such as that artifacts in a museum should not be touched, whether photography is allowed; in a church men should remove their hats, in a synagogue men should cover their heads, in a mosque everyone should take off their shoes before entering; and so on.

Once on site, group control is practised:

- Make sure the whole group can see what is being described;
- Make sure the whole group can hear you;
- Make sure the group is positioned in such a way as to allow other visitors to pass and if the group grows, as often happens, interrupt your commentary to repeat the need for free flow, to other visitors;
- When moving through the building, be sure to give advance warning of such things such as steps, low beams or other hazards, and some indication of where you are heading, then individual lingering, will look more closely at something that requires their special attention.

Leading a Guided Walk

All the techniques employed on site should be practised on a walk, viz, group management and positioning.

Positioning to be heard – voice projection needs particular care in the open air, even

wind can blow sound away! Think about where to stand, using perhaps a wall as a sound board.

In a town it is more important than ever to ensure that no paths are blocked, particularly where local citizens are going about their daily business. Give thought to where roads should be crossed and take responsibility for seeing all clients across the road; in particular, pointing out from which direction traffic is to be expected.

In the country, give advance warning about other hazards such as uneven ground, poisonous plants, etc.

Guiding on the Move – Bus, Maxi, Taxi, Car or Boat

Be sure you know how many clients are in your group and re-count after any stop. Do not rely on others or make a summary guess. Leaving one person behind at an isolated spot could have disastrous results.

The importance of positioning falls away to be replaced by remembering the clients' position in the vehicle. Remember that you, as a guide, have the best view and widest vision. Some member(s) of your group will have worst, perhaps tucked in the back of the bus. That client has as much right to attention and forethought as the client sitting perhaps next to you.

Do not talk privately to those closest to you, they are likely to ply you with questions. If the question is of general interest, repeat it over the microphone and give a general answer, possibly incorporated into your overall commentary. If the question is specific to that client, post pone further discussion until a natural break.

Make sure that your commentary is timed early enough for all to see what you are showing them. It is better to be too early, provided you remember later to indicate the subject, than to talk about something you have passed.

IF YOU HAVE PASSED IT, LEAVE IT OUT

Think about indication: point out an object if possible, add verbal indication 'to the right' or 'to the left'; if you must talk about something ahead (which you can probably see well, but the client at the back cannot), add '...and shortly on you left or on your right' (as it will be since you are unlikely to drive straight into it).

In addition, specify: if pointing out a specific tree amongst many, describe the form of the tree, the shape of the leaf, describe the colour, the shape of the leaf, the colour of the blossom or its proximity to something else more reasonably recognizable. If pointing out a house amongst many describe the colour, shape of the windows, or other identifying feature.

Many tours are a combination of bus, walk and site. Commentary should be thought through in advance to link specific angles of common interest. If travelling to an agricultural site, your commentary will be different from that used when travelling to a prehistoric site.

Personal Checklist

- Who exactly is the client?
- How many people will be guiding?
- What time/rendezvous/itinerary?
- Who is paying entrance fees?
- Do you have a contact name, telephone number, address for the person/ company responsible for the tour?
- Who will be paying you? And have you established a fee?

First Aid

All professional guides must complete a First Aid course which should include C.P.R. This is as much to know what *not* to do, as what to do. If the tours that you are required to lead require specialised First

Aid, you should also complete an Advanced First Aid Course.

Guide Kit

All Tour Guides are required to take along portable Guide Kits which should include:

- First Aide Kit
- Reference & Field Notebooks
- Communication Equipment
- Emergency Telephone numbers
- Trail Maps
- Charts
- Compass
- Binoculars
- Flash Light, etc.

All accidents, however minor, should be reported to the tour organizer.

Insurance

All guides should be covered for Public Liability, either independently or through the employer, where relevant.

Public Liability Insurance covers you in the event of a client suing for damages. If driving a client it is essential you e covered for Hire & Reward. Ordinary car insurance is sufficient.

Self Assessment

The work of a tourist guide is one that can give great job-satisfaction. The majority of clients are ready to enjoy themselves. They do not set out to complain. However, if the guide is not professional, has not prepared and does not practise all techniques for the benefit of every client within a group, the client may simply leave the tour. Alternatively there will be complaints. A guide is only as good as his/her reputation.

On the other hand, do not allow the easy praise that comes from the client who has had an enjoyable time, to go to your head. Take the time occasionally to think whether you would have enjoyed your own tour.

Above all, do not be persuaded into believing that large tips are the sign of success. Some cultures tip, others do not. Some people will be reluctant to tip if the person in front has not done so. Others may consider you too well-informed to insult by tipping. A tip is a welcome bonus and if working with driver, to be shared 50/50. Finally, a professionally guide does not solicit tips.

Once the general guidelines have been identified, there is a constant need for innovation as one guides over the years – something that goes beyond inventiveness. Change and motivation in the guest and guide are the most important end result that must be achieved through professional guiding. Once those goals are met, all their priorities are addressed.

In summary

Guiding is about communication and Public Relations. As Guides you are communicators, be it to a few or too many, your aim is therefore to be more effective speakers with a view to:

- a) Retaining visitors' interest;
- b) Making your tours both informative and enjoyable.

Therefore develop your own style, in accordance with your personality, and above all, enjoy yourselves.

CHAPTER 6 Guidelines

Guidelines for Your Guests

Expectations

- Encourage your visitors to accept your country and/or site for what it is and not for what they expect of it. This will ease ridiculous demands and strains placed on sites and arrangements.

Adaptation

- Excite visitors into adapting to different environments (climate, food, accommodation); this will highlight their travel experience.

Country's system

- Inform your visitors of the way things get done or never get done in your country, and that this could be a great cultural experience, which would add to the excitement of their trip.

Day-by-day

- Encourage visitor to handle their itinerary one day at a time. It will help to avoid unnecessary concerns, thereby relaxing both of you.

Teamwork

- Encourage active participation, this way the outcome can be the product of everyone's input, giving visitors a sense of fulfilment.

Guide/Guest Relationship

- Promote the idea of a reciprocal connection between friend/visitor so that both you and your guest can benefit from each other's input.

Interaction

- Assist your visitors in developing a reasonable rapport with you fellow nationals of your country. This could be an enriching experience, but be aware that you should oversee this interaction so as to avoid any cultural errors by both parties.

Photography

- Your visitors should be informed of the importance of extending special courtesies when photographing humanistic interests. Explain clearly the things or people that they might be photographing.

Communication

- All problems or complaints should be communicated to you or the pertinent staff, as soon as an issue presents itself so it can generally be dealt with.

Rules and Regulations

- Safety of you, your guest, the site/country and the general operations are important, therefore it is necessary that you encourage your guests to adhere to any rules and regulations. When dealt with at an early stage it can only enhance your tour.

Sense of Values

- Discourage guests from making direct comparisons between countries, as economic, social and political factors are intimately related to cultural and ethnic characteristics. Treated independently of other societies, a country can be better understood.

Enthusiasm

- When your guests are as enthusiastic as you are, you will generate a more interesting and exiting tour. This reciprocal arrangement is instrumental in starting the guide's "information generator". The more they ask, the more they will learn and enjoy.

Guidelines for You, the Guide

Be well informed of the most current local and global news, including environmental issues

- Try to read the newspaper as early as possible. Many times this information can be incorporated into your tour.

Abide by a "code of ethics" for guides

- If these are non-existent, you should incorporate your own or collective, environmental and professional sensitivity in carrying out activities.

Take along your portable “guide kit”

- See page 19

Have guests observe the official rules and regulations for visitor sites

- Incorporate your own environmental concerns and guidelines

Motivate guests on the importance of environmental issues

- Today, both regionally and globally, environmental issues are being discussed and instituted to assist with our day to day life. So motivating their thoughts and ideas can become a stepping stone towards the cause of conservation and rational use of resources, both at home and abroad.

Help monitor environmental impacts

- Include tourism related activities, in coordination with governmental authorities. Both you and the operator play an important part in helping to monitor protected areas.

Improve your guiding techniques and general knowledge

- Attend seminars and workshops regularly. Through guiding associations or clubs, guides could share the particular expertise or skills. Encourage a guide could give a presentation each month on a different topic to the rest of the association. Newsletters are also helpful, especially if each guide has an input.

Play your talks and lectures

- Coordinating with a group leader or specialist guide will assist in a well structured tour. This will avoid having information repeated too often or disseminating incorrect information.

Step in if it is necessary, in the interaction between guests and the site

- Always remember that visitor’s impact greatly on the well-being of

your site. Therefore this should be controlled. You as the guide can minimize the impact, so as to ensure sustainability.

Learn to say “I don’t know”

- It is not an obligation to know everything – more important is that the information is correct and accurate, and conveyed in an informative and entertaining manner.

Keep your promises to your guests

- Be realistic; never offer anything that is not truly or totally feasible; e.g., “a clear, dry day in June” or “hundreds of turtles in an hour”.

Fine tune your perception of difficulty, time and space

- This means to be accurate and realistic as possible when announcing travelling time and distances between region and sites or actual lengths of walks. Be accurate as to the level of difficulty on certain treks or river trips. It is safer to magnify the distance to a place or the difficulty in a walk than to underestimate it.

USE COMMON SENSE AND BE HONEST

More Hints & Ideas

The skills involved in professional guiding are acquired as a result of a constant learning process. Your own initiative and imagination are essential in developing personalized techniques. With this in mind, consider adapting the following suggestions to your own needs and interest:

- Guest Books
- Using slides and videos for briefings
- Learn to interpret holistically; e.g., how does the present-day community use botanical species in their herbal medicine?
- Lectures that promote conservation

APPENDIX III
Permit to Enter the Prohibited Areas

ORIGINAL

FORESTRY

PERMIT TO ENTER PROHIBITED AREAS MATURA,
FISHING POND AND GRANDE RIVIERE

[Under the Forests Act, Chap. 66:01, sections 2 and 8(f)]

Order No. A No. 11833

Name

Address

.....

Occupation

Purpose of Visit

Duration

Permission is hereby granted to enter Prohibited Area at

..... subject to the provisions of the Forests Act

and to regulations made under this section 8, Chap. 66:01 and the attached

conditions.

This Permit it Not Transferable.

Fee payable

Date of Issue

Date of Expiry

.....
Director of Forestry
(Conservator of Forests)

[Conditions Overleaf]

CONDITIONS

1. Permission granted for the purpose of Studying/Observing Marine Turtles during the Nesting Season 1st March to 31st August annually (between the hours of 6.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. only for Grande Riviere). Other activities which would have any negative impact upon marine turtles or their habitat during this period are strictly forbidden.
2. No making of fire on the beach.
3. No loudspeakers and excessive noises.
4. Fishing is permitted in zoned areas only for the period specified and is subjected to declaration of Catch on request by a Forest Officer or Police Officer.
5. Picnicking only during the day in specified locations.
6. Camping only for the purpose of Turtle Watching and/or Research in specified areas.
7. No high-powered artificial lights which exceed the beam power of hand torchlights.
8. No driving of vehicles on the beach.
9. Conditions also subjected to the Protection of Turtle and Turtle eggs Regulations made under section 4 of the Fisheries Act, Chap. 67 :51 and section 5 of the Conservation of Wildlife Act, Chap. 67:01.
10. Permits for one entry cost \$5.00 for Adults and \$2.00 for Children under 12 years old. Permit charges may be waived at the discretion of the Director of Forestry.
11. Multi-entry Permits for the season 1st March to 31st August cost \$50.00 for Adults and \$20.00 for Children under 12 years old.
12. Permit holders must be accompanied by tour guides authorized by the Forest Division.
13. Entry may be refused to persons with or without Permits at any time at the discretion of the Director of Forestry, should conditions for the management of marine turtles warrant such action.

Boundaries:

Matura – 8.85 kilometres in length.

Bounded on the north by the Primera Pria River, east by the Sea, south by North Oropouche River and west by the Coastline.

Fishing Pond – 10.46 kilometres in length.

Bounded on the north by the North Oropouche River, east by the Sea, south by Manzanilla Point and west by the Manzanilla Windbelt Reserve.

Grande Riviere – 1.6 kilometres in length.

Bounded on the north by the sea, east by the Grande Riviere River, south by the Coastline and west by the end of the beach which is 1.6 kilometres from the Grande Riviere River.

APPENDIX IV

Receipt for Tour Guide Services



Tour Guide Services
 TOCO MAIN ROAD, MATURA, TRINIDAD W.I.
CASH RECEIPT
 Tel: (868) 668-7337 OR (868) 366-1031 or Email: natseek@tstt.net.tt



0000000 Date _____

Receive from: _____

the sum of \$ for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Monkey Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a Turtle
<input type="checkbox"/> Matura Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Craft
<input type="checkbox"/> Rio Saco Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tour
<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tagging Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Others



Tour Guide Services
 TOCO MAIN ROAD, MATURA, TRINIDAD W.I.
CASH RECEIPT
 Tel: (868) 668-7337 OR (868) 366-1031 or Email: natseek@tstt.net.tt



0000000 Date _____

Receive from: _____

the sum of \$ for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Monkey Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a Turtle
<input type="checkbox"/> Matura Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Craft
<input type="checkbox"/> Rio Saco Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tour
<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tagging Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Others



Tour Guide Services
 TOCO MAIN ROAD, MATURA, TRINIDAD W.I.
CASH RECEIPT
 Tel: (868) 668-7337 OR (868) 366-1031 or Email: natseek@tstt.net.tt



0000000 Date _____

Receive from: _____

the sum of \$ for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Monkey Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a Turtle
<input type="checkbox"/> Matura Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Craft
<input type="checkbox"/> Rio Saco Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tour
<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tagging Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Others



Tour Guide Services
 TOCO MAIN ROAD, MATURA, TRINIDAD W.I.
CASH RECEIPT
 Tel: (868) 668-7337 OR (868) 366-1031 or Email: natseek@tstt.net.tt



0000000 Date _____

Receive from: _____

the sum of \$ for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Monkey Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a Turtle
<input type="checkbox"/> Matura Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Craft
<input type="checkbox"/> Rio Saco Waterfall Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tour
<input type="checkbox"/> Turtle Tagging Tour	<input type="checkbox"/> Others

APPENDIX VI
Service Quality Survey



Service Quality Survey
Matura Tour Services

The aim of this survey is to determine the attitude of turtle watchers towards the quality of service offered on Matura Beach by Nature Seekers. The information you provide will assist in the evaluation of the quality of service offered, and will be used to improve the quality of the services provided to you. Thank you for your patronage!

SECTION A-IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE RATING

Directions for Section A

The following is a set of factors that relates to your experiences at Matura Beach. Please indicate by circling the appropriate number in the left column, how **IMPORTANT** each listed factor is to you in utilizing the service provided by Nature Seekers. In addition, please indicate by circling an appropriate number in the right column to show the extent to which you believe that Nature Seekers is **PERFORMING** in the different areas. **You may circle any number you think is appropriate, as there is no right or wrong answer.**

<p><u>Rating guide for importance level</u></p> <p>1 Very Important 2 Important 3 Neutral or Don't Know 4 Somewhat Important 5 Not Important</p>
<p>How important are each of the following service factors to you?</p>

<p><u>Rating guide for Nature Seekers performance</u></p> <p>1 Very Good 2 Good 3 Neutral or Don't Know 4 Poor 5 Very Poor</p>
<p>How well are we performing in providing the following service factors?</p>

IMPORTANCE TO YOU					SERVICE FACTOR	PERFORMANCE				
Very Important	Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Very good	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very Poor
1	2	3	4	5	1. Overall cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	2. Toilet facilities	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	3. Seating arrangements: comfort	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	4. Seating arrangements: availability	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	5. Atmosphere (décor, noise level, lighting, etc.) of our facility	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	6. Adequate guides available for tours	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	7. Easy accessibility	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	8. Adequate signs are available	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	9. Research equipment	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	10. Radio communication	1	2	3	4	5

How important are each of the following service factors to you?

How well are we performing in providing the following service

IMPORTANCE TO YOU					SERVICE FACTOR	PERFORMANCE				
Very Important	Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Very good	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very Poor
1	2	3	4	5	11. Length of Tour	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	12. Management of Tour	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	13. Tour starts on time	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	14. Delivery of Tour	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	15. Did you experience favouritism?	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	16. Price of Tour	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	17. Level of willingness to assist and provide information	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	18. Prompt service is provided when needed	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	19. Knowledgeable Guides	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	20. Guides and other staff members are polite and trustworthy	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	21. You received personalized attention	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	22. Preparation of the Guide	1	2	3	4	5
					23. Enthusiasm					

How important are each of the following service factors to you?

How well are we performing in providing the following service factors?

SECTION B: GENERAL INFORMATION

24. How did you find out about turtles watching at Matura?

- Word of Mouth Newspaper TV
 Radio International Publication Other

25. What made you decide to visit Matura Beach for turtle watching? *(check √ all that apply)*

- a. Came to see turtles
 b. This is the best turtle beach
 c. This is the nearest beach
 d. Quality of guides
 e. Availability of other activities

26. At which of the following beaches had you seen sea turtles before? *(check √ all that apply)*

- Grande Riviere Fishing Pond Other Never visited another beach

27. How frequently have you used (or do you intend to use) our tour service?

- a. Just Once
 b. Twice a Year
 c. Every Year
 d. Every Two Years

28. Would you return to Matura? Yes No

29. Which of the following nature hike/tours would you be interested in? *((check √ all that apply))*

- a. Hike to the waterfall (2 hours)
 b. Overnight camp/ hike (to a sulphur spring, tough)
 c. Bird watching
 d. Dive/ snorkel tour
 e. Fishing tour

28. How would you rate Nature Seekers performance overall?

- a) Poor
 b) Below average
 c) Average
 d) Above average
 e) Outstanding

29. How do you think the services offered by Nature Seekers can be improved?

SECTION C: DEMOGRAPHICS

The information requested in this section seeks to identify the customers of Nature Seekers and will be used to assist this organisation in satisfying the needs of these customers.

30. What is your age category?

16 – 25

35 – 40

36 – 45

46 – 55

over 55

31. What is your gender?

Male

Female

32. What best describes your nationality/ area?

a Trinidadian or Tobagonian

b Caricom National

c North America / Europe

d Expatriate Living in T&T

e Other

33. What is your level of education?

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary

34. Please state your occupation type: _____

e.g., Management, Accounting, Transportation, Construction, Educator

Thank you for your kind assistance

APPENDIX VII
Adopt-A-Turtle Certificate



NO	Taggers/Guides/Volunteers	Description of Work			Location		Comments
		Guide	Patrol	VOL	Orosco	Rincon	
1							Night Manager
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							

	Name of Persons	Location
Earthwatch Guides for day tours		
Morning Count		Orosco

Radio 1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

Sleeper 1 _____

