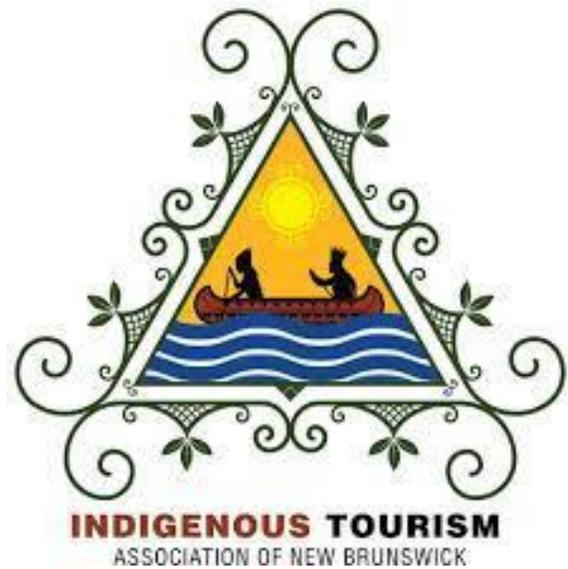


JUNE 10, 2021



MARKETING DEVELOPMENT PLAN

MARKETING AND STRATEGY

MARKETING DEVELOPMENT PLAN

GOALS

- Vision & Mission
- Community Support and Engagement
- Partnerships
- Membership program

MARKET RESEARCH SUMMARY

- Market Overview
- Product/experience types
- Market Segmentation
- SWOT analysis for Indigenous Tourism in NB

STRATEGY

- Strategic Priorities
- Membership program
- Social media presence/engagement
- Website
- Roundtable/Panel Discussions

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Progress to-date
- Future plans

GOALS

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Vision: Vibrant communities and peoples with successful Indigenous tourism industry businesses sharing our own stories in our own voices.

Mission: Represent, support, and grow our sustainable Indigenous tourism industry.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide mechanisms for communities, individuals, and business to successfully establish and sustain tourism businesses.
- Preserve and promote Indigenous culture, heritage, and language for New Brunswick First Nations
- Serve as a liaison between Indigenous tourism businesses, industry partners and the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture. Be an advocate in the industry for these businesses and First Nations communities.
- Create and develop economic opportunities for Indigenous people in New Brunswick to work in the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Increase the number of market-ready and export-ready Indigenous tourism products in New Brunswick.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

We strive to take a grassroots approach to the development of Indigenous tourism experiences. These businesses can form an integral part of the economic wellbeing of First Nations communities in New Brunswick and can serve to authentically represent their cultures to visitors.

We have been in consultation with First Nations Chiefs and Councils – communicating the benefit and significance of this industry to their communities and listening to their specific needs.

We intend to be involved with JEDI activities, Pow Wows and other gatherings and events to further relationships between Indigenous communities and the tourism industry.

PARTNERSHIPS

PARKS CANADA

ITANB and Parks Canada are working together to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to partner on Indigenous tourism. This partnership will focus on the Kouchibouguac National Park – providing and coordinating Indigenous tourism experiences at the park and to promote Indigenous tourism on their web site.

UNBI TRAINING INSTITUTE

We have partnered with the Union of New Brunswick Indians Training Institute to develop and deliver an accredited Tourism and Hospitality Management Diploma Program. We intend to serve as a liaison between First Nations communities and businesses and these valuable training resources and education. We believe that accessible hospitality business education is crucial to the growth of the Indigenous tourism sector.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

As a registered not-for-profit organization, ITANB will depend heavily on the engagement and contributions of members. ITANB will develop a membership program for Indigenous tourism operators and supporters from the public. Our membership program plans have been developed following a review of the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) membership program and best practices of provincial Indigenous tourism organizations.

We want to provide promotion services for our Tourism Operator members, through both traditional channels and social media.

MARKET RESEARCH SUMMARY

STATE OF THE INDIGENOUS TOURISM SECTOR IN NEW BRUNSWICK

The Indigenous tourism industry in NB is in the early stages of development. There are currently 11 experiential, market-ready Indigenous tourism businesses in NB – only a few of which are export-ready as per the ITAC National Guidelines. There are dozens of other market-ready Indigenous businesses in the tourism service industry that provide non-experiential products.

According to a survey of New Brunswick First Nations respondents as part of the 2019 *Building Better Together: Exploring Indigenous Development in New Brunswick* project carried about by the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI), when asked “Which sectors are the most important for your community’s future economic development?”, more surveyed answered “Tourism” than any other individual option. The same survey found that the top challenges Indigenous entrepreneurs in New Brunswick face are access to funding, need for business planning/entrepreneurial skills, social issues, financial/tech literacy and marketing capacity.

EXPERIENCE TYPES

The market-ready Indigenous tourism business types in New Brunswick consist of:

- Heritage interpretation/guided cultural tours
- Lodging and accommodations
- Museum/information centres
- Outdoor day adventure tours
- Hunting/fishing
- Culinary experiences
- Restaurants
- Entertainment centres

MARKET SEGMENTS

Indigenous tourism experiences in New Brunswick must appeal to the type of experiences that tourists are looking for – they must be developed to appeal to high potential market segments. The following tables from the 2008 New Brunswick Aboriginal Tourism Strategy report show the priorities of these market segmentation categories as they pertain to Indigenous tourism.

Geographic Market Segment	Priority
New Brunswick	Medium
Atlantic Canada	Medium
Quebec	High
Ontario	Medium-High
United States	Medium
International	Medium/High

Party Type Market Segment	Priority
Adult Couples (no children)	High
Families	High
Young Couples	Medium-high
Youth Groups	Medium

The disconnect between the types of Indigenous tourism products available in New Brunswick and those preferred by consumers was illustrated in a 2006 phone survey of Canadian and international respondents. Cultural, historical, and experiential tourism ranked the highest in terms of interest, while day adventures ranked the lowest. There is a lack of experiential, heritage-interpretation Indigenous tourism in New Brunswick compared to the demand for such experiences, especially from overseas consumers, 84% of which said they were interested in Indigenous cultural experiences. The experiential Indigenous tourism segment in NB has developed somewhat in the decade-plus since this study, with 11 operators now offering experiential tourism products, but there is more room for industry growth in addition to further development of these existing operations.

ITANB seeks to support these experiential tourism businesses and to provide business training support for individuals from New Brunswick First Nations communities. We want to engage Indigenous artists and educators who can provide vital support to cultural heritage experiences.

SWOT ANALYSIS FOR INDIGENOUS TOURISM IN NB

A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis provides an overview of all the factors involved in making future decisions pertaining to an organization – or in this case, an entire industry. The following is a SWOT analysis of the state of the Indigenous Tourism industry entering the 2020s:

STRENGTHS

- Vibrant communities and diversity of Indigenous cultures
- Relationships with NB Dept. of Tourism, Heritage and Culture (THC), Parks Canada (PC), Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), Tour Operators, and Municipalities
- Set of existing operators that are market-ready
- Beauty of New Brunswick’s natural environment
- Mi’kmaq and Wolastoqay languages
- Three diverse First Nations of Mi’kmaq, Peskomuhkati and Wolastoqay

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of experiential operators relative to demand from consumers
- Struggling tourism industry plus struggling Indigenous communities in wake of COVID-19 Pandemic
- Need for business management skills plus education in communities interested in running tourism businesses
- Informal nature of travel to NB – less pre-planned trips

OPPORTUNITIES

- Large population of Indigenous youth per capita
- Union of New Brunswick Indians Training Institute can deliver accessible Tourism and Hospitality education for First Nations people in New Brunswick
- Explore NB 20% travel rebate – now expanded to all Atlantic Canadians
- Dozens of Indigenous businesses/heritage experiences primed to be developed into experiential tourism
- Existing Mawi' Artists Collective network to engage artists through and integrate art/tourism
- Grant funding programs
- Roundtable discussions
- Preservation of heritage and culture
- Heritage guiding
- Partnerships to be established with non-Indigenous businesses, and representation

THREATS

- Federal funding cuts
- Reluctance from First Nations councils to support tourism enterprises
- Volatile on-reserve political situations
- Lack of Central and Accessible Land Access

STRATEGY

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In their 2008 *New Brunswick Aboriginal Tourism Development Strategy*, AMEC Consulting recommended tourism administrators in New Brunswick undertake several strategic thrusts to develop Indigenous tourism. We have adapted these recommendations to the current market conditions along with recommendations from the 2020 *Atlantic Canada Indigenous Tourism Study* prepared by the Joint Economic Development Initiative.

1. Improve existing products

- Review the products and rationalize by eliminating duplication in geographic regions.

- Develop and enhance the amount of traditional content (song, story, language).
- Develop and implement digital/online marketing, social media presence and online reservation booking.
- Enhance customer service through The Union of New Brunswick Indians Training Institute (UNBITI) Tourism and Hospitality program.
- Investigate and negotiate partnerships with nearby non-Indigenous tourism operators.
- Examine and develop cross-selling opportunities for Indigenous businesses.

2. Strengthen people

- Improve the education in traditional skills – language, stories, song, knowledge.
- Increase the number of people with strong customer service skills and business acumen.
- Develop the skills necessary for effective and interesting cultural interpretation.
- Enhance leadership and business management capabilities.
- Enhance sales and marketing skills.

3. Add Indigenous cultural content to mainstream tourism products

- Determine the direct and indirect historical/story linkages between existing tourism products and Indigenous cultures.
- Identify the most appropriate people, particularly those skilled in heritage interpretation, to embed with the attraction.
- Develop and produce marketing materials that can be used to expose the entire inventory of Indigenous tourism products in the province.
- Ensure that training and supervision is in place to maximize opportunities for Indigenous people.
- Maintain communications and business relations that will result in lasting partnerships between Indigenous & non-Indigenous business
- Partner and co-manage with NB Icon Attractions, Provincial Parks and National Parks
- Visibility of Indigenous Art in Public Places

4. Develop new products

- Evaluate the natural resources, scenic beauty, and wildlife diversity/abundance of the areas that First Nations communities/people have access to, and assess whether these assets can provide the kind of experiences that prospective clients are seeking in a controlled manner of development..
- Leverage existing human and financial resources before extending investments beyond the sustainable capacity of the communities.
- Understand the needs of travelers looking for Indigenous visitor experiences.
- Work with entrepreneurs and councils to develop Indigenous visitor experiences.

5. Deliver business support

- Build support from local communities.
- Establish industry support from nonprofits and government grant programs.
- ITANB to serve as liaison for First Nations entrepreneurs to access these services.

6. Target marketing

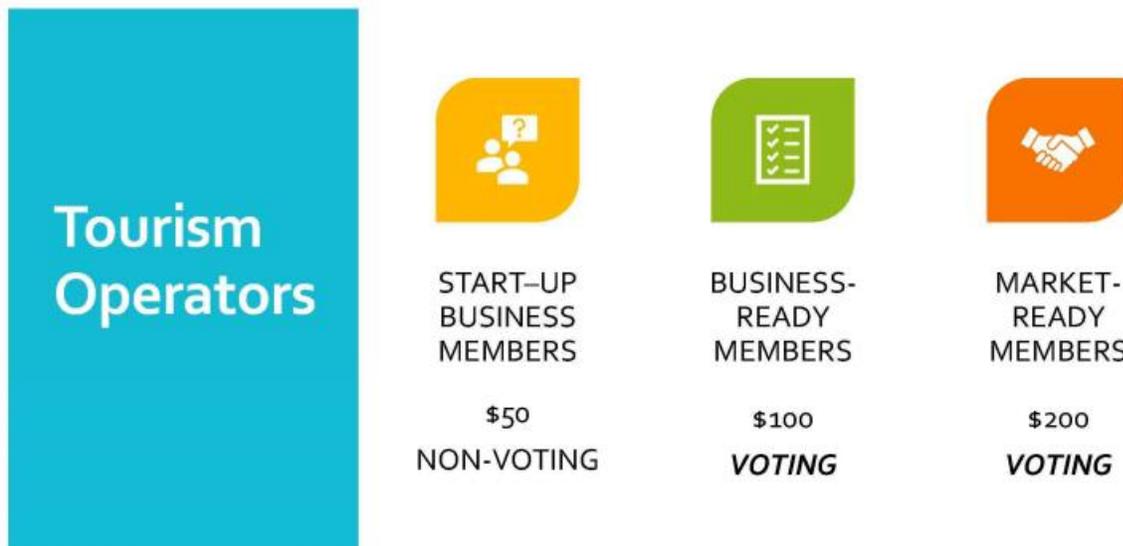
- Increase demand through marketing that raises interest and furthermore converts that interest in Indigenous tourism experiences into bookings and visitations.
- Partner with other tourism businesses and organizations to promote Indigenous tourism to their members/consumers.

In JEDI's 2020 Indigenous Tourism in Atlantic Canada Study Findings and Recommendations report found that business-to-business (B2B) partnerships are the most important priority for development right now. There is an established and strong tourism industry in New Brunswick and there are many opportunities for collaboration between non-Indigenous tourism operators and Indigenous tourism operators, interpreters and communities.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

We are going to establish three classes of members: New Tourism Operators, Existing Tourism Operators and Export-Ready Tourism Operators. Tourism Operators can choose between Voting and Non-Voting membership. Voting members of ITANB must be Market-Ready or Export-Ready (in keeping with ITAC's National Guidelines) and must be at least 51% Indigenous-owned/operated. Indigenous identity is defined as an individual with First Nation Status, Metis Nation of Canada status or a Full Membership with the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council.

Voting members will maintain their eligibility to vote by paying annual dues on time and maintaining Market-Ready or Export-Ready standards (per ITAC's National Guidelines). They will have the right to cast votes and elect board members at the ITANB Annual General Meeting.



- **Start-up Business Members** - \$50, Non-voting – These members are for new Indigenous tourism businesses who are in the beginning stages of their business development and who are not yet open for business. These members will receive networking opportunities, access to ITANB research, and access to training programs to help them progress.
- **Business-Ready Members** - \$100, Voting – These members are Indigenous tourism businesses with a formally registered business operation but who do not yet meet ITANB's Market-Ready standard. These members will receive networking opportunities, access to ITANB research, access to training and product development support programs (to become market-ready), and a link on the ITANB website.
- **Market-Ready Members** - \$200, Voting – These are members who meet the ITANB Market-Ready or Export-Ready standards. They will receive networking opportunities, access to ITANB research and training, product development support programs, and significant marketing

benefits such as website profiles, opportunities to be featured on FAM tours, at trade shows, in packages and promotions, and in tourism industry events.

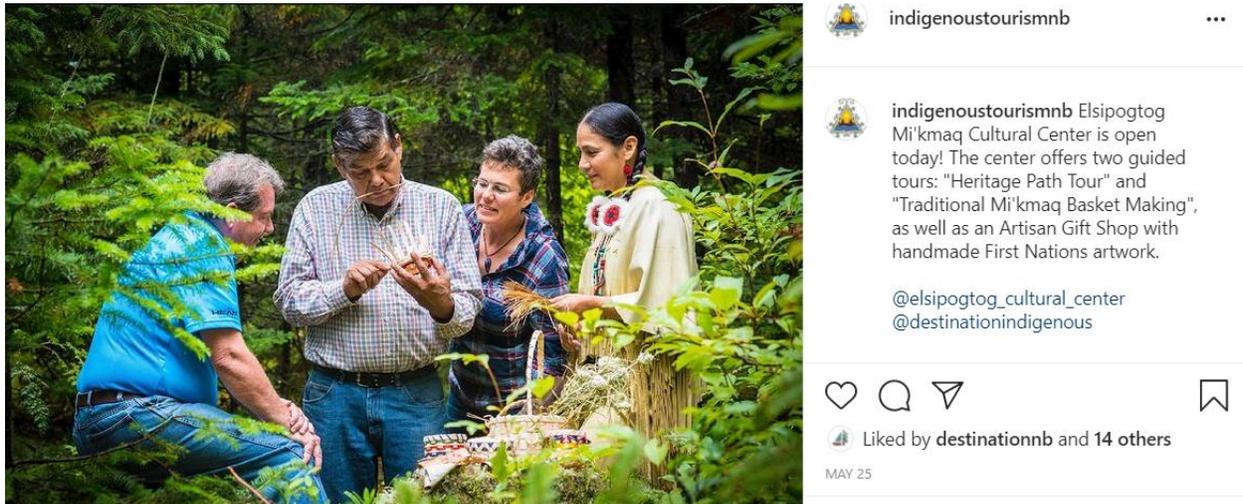
Community members

- **Individual Indigenous Members** - \$25, Non-Voting – These members are Indigenous students or other Indigenous individuals who are interested in learning about and supporting Indigenous Tourism. These members are not eligible to vote on the board.
- **Friends of ITANB** - \$500 or more if desired, Non-Voting – These members are First Nations governments, organizations, and non-Indigenous stakeholders who are interested in learning about and supporting the work of ITANB. These members are not eligible to vote on the ITANB Board of Directors.

	
INDIVIDUAL INDIGENOUS MEMBERS	FRIENDS OF ITANB
\$25	\$500
NON-VOTING	NON-VOTING

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

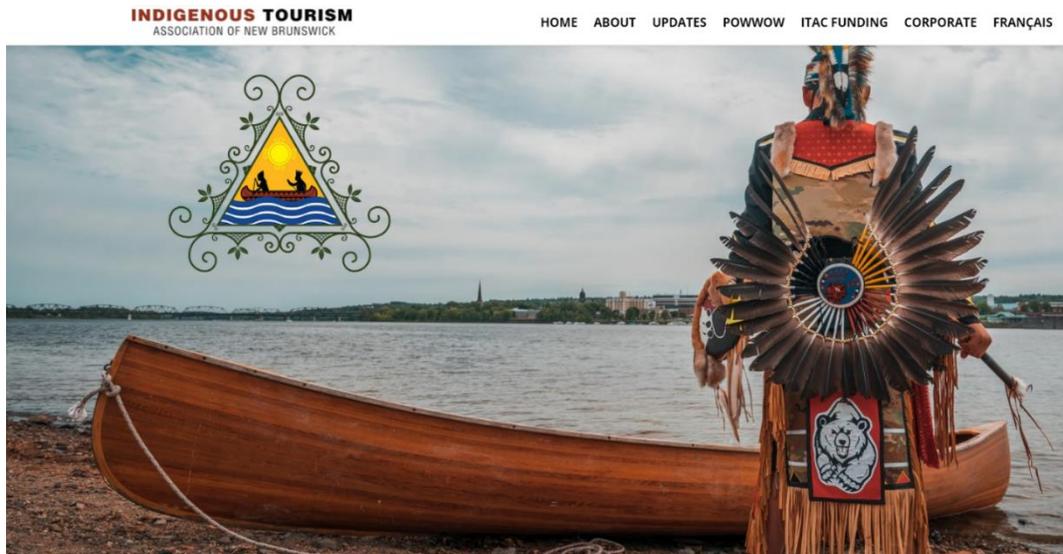
ITANB has a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The Instagram page was created recently with a focus on promoting operator openings, tour dates and other tourism experience-related content. Instagram is a hotspot for travel content, with many of the Canadian travel-related organizations having a strong presence and many popular influencers featuring travel photography in their posts.



We want to develop a more robust and steady social media presence as a benefit that we can offer Tourism Operator members – to prominently feature their businesses in ITANB’s posts and drive engagement to their websites and online booking systems.

WEBSITE

The Indigenous Tourism Association of New Brunswick website currently features information about the organization, corporate documents, details about Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada funding, and live social media updates.



When the ITANB membership program is live, the website will be updated with a membership sign-up form, an online payment system, and a listing of Tourism Operator members in the province along with an interactive map for visitors to peruse.

We would like to have an informal travel blog on our website that we can post update links to on our social media pages. ITANB staff can update the blog as they travel to meet tourism operators and share their experiences with their attractions. Having this blog and posting links to updates on social media would drive traffic from social media to the ITANB website, where followers could see our membership program, list of tourism operators and other information.

Our website will also serve as an online tourism support hub for New Brunswick, which can be used for ITAC eligibility filtering, ongoing support and discussion among members.

ROUNDTABLE/PANEL DISCUSSIONS

In the spring of 2021, ITANB contacted Indigenous tourism operators in New Brunswick and asked them what they would like from a membership program. A common request given was networking opportunities: roundtable discussions, guest speakers, meetings with other tourism operators to share tips and experiences. We would like to offer these types of forums as part of our upcoming membership program. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we may have to host these talks over Zoom or a similar remote-work platform, but once restrictions are lifted in the wake of vaccination, we hope to host in-person discussions for tourism operators.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

PROGRESS TO-DATE

ITANB has been in consultation with Indigenous tourism operators in Spring 2021, visiting the sites of their operations and asking what benefits they would want from a membership program. We have been laying the groundwork to launch this program, preparing membership categories and sign-up forms and coordinating with our website developer to create the interactive map and listings needed. We have recently bolstered our social media presence and intend to use social media as a primary driver for promotion of Indigenous tourism businesses.

We have been discussing product development plans with budding tourism operations in New Brunswick and offering support and guidance as they work to become market-ready – informing them of provincial and federal grant funding opportunities, encouraging integration and collaboration with nearby businesses, and taking photos of future tourism sites to use as digital assets in consultations with communities and stakeholders.

FUTURE PLANS

We intend to launch our membership program toward the end of summer 2021. The next step in our development process will be growth: growing the membership program and in turn growing the Indigenous tourism industry in New Brunswick, helping businesses become market-ready and helping those that already are to become export-ready. We want to help make New Brunswick the go-to destination for Indigenous tourism experiences in Atlantic Canada. Beyond that, we hope to partner with the other provincial organizations to create an alliance of Atlantic Canadian Indigenous Tourism Associations.

We want to invite Tourism Operator members along with ITANB staff to international travel trade shows, to give them the chance to promote their business. We also want to include members in media familiarization tours.