

Final Report

Emploi Quebec – Coasters Association
January 28th – August 28th 2017

Submitted by:
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Introduction:

Over the period of January 28th to August 28th, I was contracted by the Coasters Association, through a project with Emploi Quebec, to work as a “Junior Tourism & Communications Consultant” with the Lower North Shore Tourism Ad Hoc Table. This contract included the following objectives:

- Section I: Training (Coaching)
- Section II: Implementation of the tourism action plan
- Section III: Marketing actions
- Section IV: Support to entrepreneurs
- Section V: LNS Tourism Forum

In addition to these objectives, I was later mandated to additionally work on the Coasters Association’s project with Canada Economic Development, which included the implementation of the tourism marketing actions, in addition to the coordination and planning of the upcoming Lower North Shore Tourism Forum 2017. Please see below a breakdown of each of these actions:

Section I: Training:

All training with consultant Jean-Michel Perron was completed, through weekly meetings via Skype every Monday morning at 9h00. During these sessions my tasks for the week were reviewed, the actions to work on and how, explanations of the tasks, their importance and my resources. It was during these sessions that Mr. Perron also explained many different realities of the tourism industry, plans for the future, how they are attainable, and taught me the do’s and don’t’s of tourism development.

My time with Mr. Perron proved to be extremely positive for me when learning of the tourism industry. He was able to relay his expertise to me throughout our work on numerous different tasks, including: his sharing of contacts, working on business plans, project funding proposals, contact with journalists/media as well as different industry professionals, etc. He also helped create a clear understanding of the work previously done in tourism in the past in the region, relayed a lot of the information and brought me up to speed on the file. He was of particularly great help to me through work within the marketing plan, as his experience and contacts helped achieve optimal results for the actions.

Section II: Tourism Action Plan

The following actions, from the LNS Tourism Action Plan, were developed or began throughout the period of this contract.

1.3: Coaching for entrepreneurs: Throughout the period of this contract, I worked with numerous entrepreneurs or associations, in order to support them as much as possible in their tourism endeavors. This included: Bonne Esperance & Blanc Sablon Tourism

Associations in feedback regarding upcoming walking trails, CEDEC in building of the new LNS Tourism website,

1.4 HR Funding for 4 Museums: Fond Initiatives Plan Nord project concept and assembly. A project was put together to submit within the upcoming 3rd call for proposals. Project requests employee salaries for 2 consecutive years (2018-2019) for all four museums, through a pilot project.

2.1 Development of Archeological Sites: Met with numerous archeologist enthusiasts over the course of the contract, including those previously involved in archeological development of the Lower North Shore (Florence Hart, Nicki Shattler, Claude Morency, Antonio Cormier). Made contact with 2 archeologists familiar with the region, in discussion of the potential for upcoming projects, directly in relation to the action plan. Contact made in order to persue future “status report” of archeology potential, and assembly of previous work completed, for the region.

2.2 Iceberg Observations: Contact with Yves Levesque, who had previously worked with Voyages Coste in offering iceberg tours. Found him to be not interested in further development. Later began discussions with a new party, a young entrepreneur, who is interested in developing the concept and offer boat tours, as well as sport cod fishing. Worked with him (Michael Sheppard) and Mr. Perron in the creation of a concept, plausible packages, guidelines and an overall business plan for the project, to be submitted to Tourisme Quebec in October. Initial tours set to begin June 2018.

2.6 Sport Cod Fishing: Attended DFO public consultations regarding sport cod fishing, which determined that new systems will be put in place for the 2018 season, enabling charter boats to obtain group permits, allowing them to bring participants fishing for sport, at a cost. Follow up made with Andrew Roswell from DFO, for upcoming information once details are concrete. Ideal guidelines and marketing plan discussed with Mr. Perron.

2.7 Chicoutai Scenic Road Map: Updates/corrections made to the design and aesthetic of the map, as suggested by numerous different partners.

4.5 Fast Maritime Link: Business plan completed by Mr. Perron. The document is currently being translated.

5.1 Upgrade to LNS Tourism Official Website: Website has been upgraded through a CEDEC contract. Viewed carefully and edits/suggested changes submitted, currently awaiting launch.

5.2 Tourisme Cote-Nord web pilot project: Pilot project launched. Help verify inclusion of all local businesses and verification of information. Communication with local

stakeholders throughout my tour along the Coast, about the possible uses of the new website.

5.3 Production of experiential videos: Completed for both summer and winter videos, throughout two tours of the region. Funded through the Canada Economic Development project with the Coasters Association (in detail below).

5.5 LNS Tourism Forum: Currently underway, set for Oct. 17-18th, 2017.

5.6 Recognize Voyages Coste as the main marketing tool: Throughout all marketing actions completed over the 6 month contract, Coste was the main focus in all marketing actions (etc. Online campaign and Google Adwords directed to their website, call to action and logos at the end of promotional video direct towards Voyages Coste).

5.7 Creation of a tourism officer: Funding secured for salary of tourism officer under the Coasters Association until the end of December 2017. Work with the MRC and Coasters Association to submit a project via the FARR program, in order to secure salary for one year (2018).

Section III: Marketing Actions:

The following list was originally decided upon by the Tourism Ad Hoc Table, in collaboration with Mr. Perron. I was responsible for the implementation and coordination of these actions and seeing through their completion.

Over the course of 6 months, the following marketing actions were conducted:

Winter promotional videos:

- Conducted by David Chaumel, throughout a snowmobile tour of the Lower North Shore. Captures LNS way of life, La Route Blanche and interviews with locals, to be used for future online promotion.
- Worked primarily in support to Voyages Coste in this action, because its work began before I was hired.
- Work included:
 - o Drafting/editing of contract
 - o Help to coordinate the video development (concepts, feedback, etc.
 - o Invoicing

Online Marketing Campaign:

- The firm "Point Pub" was hired in order to conduct online marketing campaigns, consisting of Facebook and Youtube advertisements for the region. All ads included links directly to point of purchase, the Voyages Coste website.
- My tasks included:

- Work with Tourisme Cote-Nord (Etienne Lancelette) on the selection of the firm. Point Pub was chosen due to its connection with ATR.
- Correspondence and coordination of the campaign with Point Pub marketing team and Mr.Perron. Including the selection of the target market, key words, optimal photographs and text to be used.
- Administration in relation to drafting of the contract, its signing, submission, invoicing, etc.
- Clarification/updating of numerous technical issues related to the Voyages Coste website.
- Re-evaluation of the campaign at mid-point to ensure its top performance. Adjustments made to advertisements and market segments. Includes follow up with Voyages Coste and Google Analytics assessments.

Chicoutai Scenic Road Promotion

- Online marketing campaign conducted along with overall larger campaign with “Point Pub”. Specifically designed to bring attention to the Chicoutai Scenic Road and the Voyages Coste package created around it
 - Work with CEDEC to make annual update and several aesthetic changes to the map
 - Correspondence and coordination of the campaign with Point Pub marketing team and Mr.Perron, including the selection of the target market, key words, optimal photographs and text to be used.
 - Administration in relation to drafting of the contract, its signing, submission, invoicing, ensuring the Voyages Coste package is easily accessible and posting of the new map on the Coste website.
 - Re-evaluation of the campaign at mid-point to ensure its top performance. Adjustments made to advertisements and market segments, which includes follow up with Voyages Coste in making necessary adjustments.

Summer Promotional Videos

- Hired firm ‘Sinex3’ to produce summer promotional/advertising videos. A tour was completed along the LNS to capture the entire region. 5 different videos to be produced (different concepts/themes), as well as a bank of 100 photos. To be used in future promotions, as well as via the LNS tourism website.
- My work included:
 - Contact with numerous partners to request recommendations for video production firms
 - Design of official proposal
 - Design of video concepts (5)
 - Creation of travel itinerary along the Lower North Shore
 - Selection of firm from within 3 different submissions

- Correspondence with chosen firm (Sinex3) on our goals, concepts, making travel arrangements, etc.
- Travel along the LNS with the video crew, ensuring all relevant pieces were captured.

Google Adword Campaign:

- Online marketing campaign, done in collaboration with firm ParConseils, designed to direct web searches relevant to travel the Lower North Shore, directly to the Voyages Coste website.
- My work included:
 - Work with Mr.Perron to designate the key regions, age ranges, characteristics, etc. to target those travel to, or in the proximity, of the Lower North Shore.
 - Ensure necessary updates were made to Voyages Coste website, to ensure optimal results (e.g. changes to website organization/design, location of contact information, website usability and simplicity, mobile version corrections, etc.)

Social Media & Marketing Trainings

- Training organization called 'Gonzo Marketing' was hired to offer social media and online marketing trainings to Lower North Shore tourism stakeholders, in hopes of increasing their knowledge and efficiency on this subject.
- My work included:
 - Creation of proposal (with the help of Mr. Perron) to submit to numerous training organizations, including list of all content desired to be covered in the training, criteria, etc.
 - Proposal sent to 3 different firms. Each was evaluated, and found to be out of our price range.
 - Negotiations were made with Gonzo Marketing, in order to meet a solution within our budget.
 - Design of invitation for participants, including all criteria to participate
 - Invitation was submitted to the Ad Hoc Table for approval and translated.
 - List of potential participants was compiled. Invitation was sent to all tourism stakeholders in the region.
 - Management of RSVPs and relaying messages/answering questions regarding the training
 - Directly calling numerous participants, in order to fill the 10 spaces available. We ended up with full participation.
 - Correspondence with 'Gonzo Marketing' regarding training preparation, ultimate goals, participant background info, etc.

- Correspondence and coordination of participants leading up to the trainings
- Participation in the 6 social media trainings for my own comprehension as well (currently still in process).

Section IV: Support to Entrepreneurs

Tour of the Lower North Shore

- Over the week of June 23rd – July 2nd, I travelled the Lower North Shore with a video crew (as mentioned above). However, this tour also acted as a means to make contact and introduce myself as a tourism officer, with the numerous stakeholders across the Lower North Shore. The tour allowed me to meet and greet with people in every community, those working on the ground. I also had the opportunity to see first hand the countless attractions and projects already in place across the region, as well as build relationships with key players throughout the Lower North Shore.
- Summary of results:
 - 9 communities visited
 - 21 number stakeholders met with
 - Visiting attractions such as Providence Island, Le Brion site, numerous walking trails along the Coast, “Marguerites Cave” in Harrington, etc.

Other tasks included:

- Communication and aid to local businesses/stakeholders whenever possible (whether it be through support, opinions on new projects, etc.)
- Assistance in submitting projects for funding (ex. FIPN project with 4 museums)
- Tourism monthly newsletter, sent to tourism stakeholders across the LNS in hopes of better connecting the communities.
- Attended the “Collective Impact Forum” in La Tabatiere in March, representing the tourism file with a kiosk, with focus on tourism.
- Attended the Lower North Shore Research Centre workshop in St.Paul’s River, to participate in the discussion around tourism and its economic potential.

Section V: Lower North Shore Tourism Forum

I was responsible for the planning and coordination of the LNS Tourism Forum, under supervision of the Tourism Ad Hoc Table. Tasks included:

- Drafting and editing of the forum invitation list, including input from numerous partners. Responsibility of sending out the invitation to invitees.
- Invitation design/work with CEDEC and then Coastal printing for design and corrections of the official forum invitation.
- Design of the official forum program, events and speeches of the day, etc.

- Work closely with Voyages Coste in attempts to make logistical arrangements (travel, lodging, meals, etc.) for the tour along the LNS.
- Media advertisements for March tourism forum (Facebook advertisements, posters, radio announcements), as well as follow up after its re-scheduling.
- Arrangements within community locations, including booking of community halls/spaces and necessary equipment.
- Follow up and communication with numerous tourism stakeholders across the region, regarding their participation.
- *Please note that these tasks were completed and reworked twice, after the postponing of both the March and September events. *
- Due to low participation from outside parties and logistical issues within the region, the forum was again postponed and re-organized to take place October 16-17th.

Conclusion

Overall, the contract was a great learning experience, which I enjoyed thoroughly. My knowledge of the tourism industry has expanded exponentially over the last several months, allowing me to feel prepared and confident moving forward in my position as a tourism officer.