Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences: The Case of Long Lake, the Adirondack Park, New York

Bozana Zekan

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Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences:
The Case of Long Lake, the Adirondack Park, New York

By
Bozana Zekan

A thesis submitted to the
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Acknowledgement

This thesis is dedicated to people of Long Lake. I would especially like to thank Mr. Robert Gibson, director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, for all his help and input in this research.

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Abstract

Demand for experiences is a major trend in the tourism industry that came as a response to commoditization of services. As many destinations have similar (or same) services in place, it became difficult for travelers to diversify one destination from another. What is nowadays happening is that travelers are no longer satisfied with traditional services only and instead seek something that they did not have a chance to experience elsewhere. Challenge that destinations consequently face is to answer travelers’ demand for diversified experiences and at the same time to differentiate themselves from their competition. Hence, this study addresses how destinations can differentiate through experiences. Specifically, the study describes “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” for recommending strategies to differentiate a destination through experiences and uses Long Lake as the case destination. As such the study will serve as a useful model to other destinations dealing with commoditization.
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement........................................................................................................2
Abstract......................................................................................................................3
Table of Contents........................................................................................................4
List of Figures.............................................................................................................6
List of Tables.............................................................................................................7

Chapter 1 - Introduction to the Study
i. Introduction and Background..............................................................................8
ii. Problem Statement...............................................................................................13
iii. Purpose of the Study............................................................................................13
iv. The Objectives of the Study................................................................................13
v. The Importance of the Study................................................................................14
vi. Methods................................................................................................................14
vii. Key Definitions and Terminology.......................................................................15

Chapter 2 - The Literature Review
i. Introduction...........................................................................................................17
ii. Destination Marketing and Positioning...............................................................17
   a. Definition of Destination Marketing.................................................................17
   b. Power of Positioning...........................................................................................20
iii. Experience as It Relates to Competitiveness and Differentiation......................22
   a. The Concept of Experience..............................................................................22
   b. Experiential Travel and Demand for Experiences...........................................28
   c. Experiences in Demand....................................................................................30
   d. Structure of Service Experiences and Their Creation....................................31
   e. Examples of Experiential Positioning...............................................................33
Chapter 3 - Methods
i. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 36
ii. Objectives of the Study & Methods Used ..................................................................... 36

Chapter 4 - Results & Findings
i. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 41
ii. Objectives of the Study, Results & Findings ................................................................. 41

Chapter 5 – Conclusions & Recommendations ............................................................... 97

Bibliography ....................................................................................................................... 101

Appendixes
Appendix 1 – E-mail and Phone Interviews ................................................................. 105
Appendix 2 – Feedback Survey ....................................................................................... 112
Appendix 3 – Long Lake Resources ............................................................................... 117
Appendix 4 – Sample Visitors’ Comments ..................................................................... 141
List of Figures

Figure 1: Elements of destination marketing .................................................. 20
Figure 2: The experience realms ................................................................. 23
Figure 3: The progression of economic value ................................................. 29
Figure 4: Destination experience differentiation model ............................... 62
Figure 5: Dublin entertainment example ..................................................... 71
Figure 6: Long Lake’s canoeing race event example ..................................... 73
List of Tables

Table 1: Dimensions of the service experience in tourism.................................32

Table 2: Summarized interviewees’ responses (Questions 1-3)............................56

Table 3: Summarized interviewees’ responses (Questions 4-5)............................59
Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

i. Introduction and Background

Research shows that demand for experiences is a major trend in the tourism industry and that destinations now compete by emphasizing their experiences (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Justification for that lies in need for destinations to fight the problem of Pine and Gilmore’s (1999) commoditization of services that can be described as follows: many destinations having similar (or same) services in place, which no longer makes these services differentiators that give ability to the destination to compete exclusively on them. In other words, when destinations offer traditional goods and services only, it becomes difficult for travelers to diversify one destination from another, since most of them have more or less the same offer. For example, how easy/difficult is for the potential visitors to differentiate one resort in Caribbean from another, if their offers are almost identical? The assumption can be made that this offer can consequently result in lack of appeal and interest for the destination, as that destination is undifferentiated from its competition in the perception of the potential visitors. And in that case, those destinations can compete only on price and in that way hope to attract visitors to choose them instead of their competition. (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

In addition, what is happening is that travelers nowadays seek something different, something that they did not have a chance to experience elsewhere and that is how they actually decide which destination to visit (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005). Thus,
demand for different experiences at destinations is created by the travelers and one can say that destinations do not really have much choice if they want to attract these people: they need to differentiate themselves and their own experiential attributes from competition. This is where the role of experiential positioning and marketing begins to emerge.

Furthermore, to show how differentiating by experiences can be done, this study applies the concept to a destination and hence uses Long Lake as the case destination. Long Lake is a small town (852 inhabitants) located in the center of the Adirondack Park in the state of New York. Tourism is a major industry there, but also in the entire Adirondack Park. That has been the case since the 1950’s when destinations in the Adirondack Park became easily accessible for many family vacations due to the development of automobile, the booming economy, increased leisure time and income. This small town in the Adirondack Park was appealing to the visitors since it offered them something different than the life in the city: private cottages, untouched nature and numerous opportunities to enjoy outdoors. Even though there were other towns nearby that offered similar services, demand for towns such as Long Lake was increasing, since they were offering something that other (non-lake) destinations did not and in that way were able to differentiate themselves from non-lake destinations. What helped at that time was the fact that the supply of destinations such as Long Lake was not saturated. However, what happened in the Adirondack Park was that the number of destinations that offered the same services kept increasing and hence resulted in saturated supply. In other words, activities and accommodations were no longer differentiating factors for the
destinations in the Adirondack Park since today greater number of destinations offered literally the same type of accommodation options and similar activities.

(Gibson, personal communication, 2005; Lagiewski, personal communication, 2005).

Visitors come to Long Lake to enjoy outdoor activities (bird watching, biking, camping, canoeing, boating, cross country skiing, fishing, hiking, hunting, snowmobiling, star gazing) as well as concerts, craft fairs, and similar events (Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005). The town’s current marketing efforts are focused essentially on marketing activities that visitors can engage in while in Long Lake. However, as mentioned earlier, the case is that all these activities and events that are found in Long Lake are most likely found in any of the Adirondacks townships. And not only activities and events, but also the same type of accommodation and dining options, tourism infrastructure in general. For example, if one was to read a brochure about what one can do while in Long Lake that same text could be applicable to Indian Lake, Blue Mountain Lake, and so forth – most likely to any of the towns in the Adirondack Park. And there are close to 100 towns and villages in the Adirondack Park that encompasses 6 million acres and is the size of the state of Vermont.

(Gibson, personal communication, 2005; Lagiewski, personal communication, 2005).

Another issue that Long Lake is facing is that its market is entirely outdoors oriented – the same case as with other lake destinations in the Adirondack Park. This leads to conclude that Long Lake most likely attracts the same visitor markets at the same time of a year as 99% of the Adirondack Park, excluding Lake Placid since that lake town offers upscale lodging, dining and shopping opportunities and has a major differentiating attribute attached to its name - Olympic Games took place there in 1980’s. Concerns have
also been expressed that Long Lake tourism is consequently failing to attract visitors, especially overnight visitors, as currently there is nothing done that aims toward differentiating Long Lake from other lake destinations in the perception of the potential visitors.

(Gibson, personal communication, 2005; Lagiewski, personal communication, 2005).

The situation is as follows: small towns (like Long Lake) in the Adirondack Park that have similar (if not the same) offer of activities, events, accommodation and dining options (tourism product) to other lake destinations in the Adirondack Park, in addition to most likely same visitor markets at the same time of a year, face the problem of commoditization of their services. Hence, need has been discovered to find the way to make Long Lake appealing to the potential visitors and to get them interested in this small town and consequently have Long Lake diversified from its competitors. There are several ways Long Lake could differentiate itself:

~ on price
~ offering services and/or activities that other towns in the Adirondack Park do not offer
~ on experiences

If Long Lake is to differentiate itself on price, that means it needs to offer lower prices than its competitors and in that way hope to attract visitors to come to Long Lake rather to any other lake destination in the Adirondack Park. However, offering lower prices does not say anything to potential visitors what is Long Lake about, what is distinctive about it. In other words, potential visitors are unable to differentiate Long Lake on anything besides on fact that is cheaper from other lake destinations in the
Adirondack Park. Question that remains to be answered is how low the prices can go. So, when competing on price, not only is there no distinctive appeal and feeling about Long Lake as a destination, but there is also no profit for Long Lake. Similar case is if Long Lake is to differentiate by offering services and/or activities that other towns in the Adirondack Park do not offer. Adding services and/or activities would not be particularly effective in diversifying Long Lake and fighting commoditization of services as this would be just an additional activity/service that would most likely be appealing for certain time period and would eventually become just one of numerous things to do while in Long Lake.

Competing on experiences is a different story, as experiences put each individual visitor in the focus (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). What is more, destinations that promote experiences that one can engage in while visiting that particular destination only create a distinctive appeal and interest for that destination. In addition, research suggests that experiences can help destinations in reaching goals that differentiating on price and adding new services/activities fail to do. These goals are as follows:

~ increasing customer loyalty
~ creating an emotional bond
~ providing reasons for them to want to return

(Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005).

Therefore, the focus of this study is on experiences and hence diversifying Long Lake though experiences. Despite the fact Long Lake has similar offer to other towns in the Adirondack Park, it can differentiate itself by promoting experiences along with activities and events that current and potential visitors will be able to associate with Long
Lake only, and at the same time making sure that this emphasis on experiences is reflected in the town’s marketing.

While many authors have introduced the importance of differentiating services and products through emphasis on experiences, very little has been applied to a whole destination. Furthermore, no one has shown the process of how destinations are using experiences and consequently diversifying themselves. This study goes one step further and describes the “how” part: it describes the application of a “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” to a destination suffering from commoditization and suggests the ways to differentiate through experiences by using Long Lake as the case destination.

ii. Problem Statement

How to differentiate Long Lake as a tourist destination through experiences.

iii. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to introduce “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” for recommending strategies to differentiate a destination through experiences and experiential positioning.

iv. The Objectives of the Study

There are five main objectives that this study addresses, and these are:

- To document tourism in Long Lake (Long Lake resources, challenges that tourism is facing, visitor markets, and so forth)
- To document the Long Lake experience
To identify opportunities for creating unique Long Lake experience

To introduce “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” for recommending strategies to differentiate Long Lake through experiences and experiential positioning

To determine challenges to applying “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” to Long Lake

v. The Importance of Study

This study is important for several reasons. It shows how destinations that suffer from commoditization can find ways to differentiate themselves through experiences and experiential positioning. In addition, addressing the above stated problem in this study can help Long Lake tourism to focus on experiential attributes and to use them as a marketing tool. Pine and Gilmore (1999) welcomed the experience economy; hence, this study can help destinations to embrace and promote the experiences for their own benefit of differentiating. Most importantly, this study presents a model which can serve as a useful tool for other destinations dealing with commoditization.

vi. Methods

In regards to methods for data collection, site visits, interviews, as well as e-mail correspondence are used. Personal interview has been conducted with director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department; e-mail and phone interviews with the owners of the lodging and business properties in Long Lake. Written surveys are also used with the purpose of getting feedback. The emphasis is placed primarily on the qualitative research and open-ended questions. Secondary research has also been used to
address the objectives of this study. Additionally, the “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” is applied to a tourist destination in general and Long Lake.

vii. Key Definitions and Terminology

~ Positioning – marketing tool used in the tourism industry “…to create a distinctive place in the minds of the potential customers” (Chacko, 1997).

~ Experiential positioning – generally defined as “strategic process of understanding consumer desires, creating (designing) and delivering a particular form of experience, and communicating the firm’s proposed experience to consumers in a way that differentiates the brand from competitors in the consumer’s mind” (Mulvey & Padgett, 2001).

~ Experiential marketing – generally can be defined as “…actual consumer experiences or interactions with products for the purpose of driving the sale of that product…” (Wikipedia, 2003). Same concept can be applied to the experiential marketing of destinations: visitor’s actual experience with a destination resulting in demand for that specific destination.

~ Experience economy – concept of staging memorable events for the individual that will engage him/her in a personal way and therefore make “…the value of the experience lingers”. Experience occurs within the individual and “…no two people can have the same experience” (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, pp. 12-13).

~ Commoditization – competing only on price with little or no differentiation (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p.1)
Market segmentation – process of dividing a market into segments to “...facilitate more cost effective marketing, through the design, promotion and delivery of purpose-designed products, aimed at satisfying the identified needs of target groups” (Middleton, 1994, p. 73).
Chapter 2

The Literature Review

i. Introduction

The literature review is divided in two parts. First part introduces destination marketing and positioning, whereas the second part reviews the concept of experience as it relates to competitiveness and differentiation in business environments and destinations.

ii. Destination Marketing and Positioning

a. Definition of Destination Marketing

Term destination can refer to a hotel, resort, attraction, city, region or a state and destination marketing can therefore be defined as marketing those to the potential customers and trade (Glossary of Tourism Terms, n.d.). In marketing their places, marketers use four main strategies:

~ Image marketing – in most cases the least expensive strategy since it involves only communication of the destination’s features to the potential visitors. Destinations do not necessarily have a positive image – the image can also be weak, negative, mixed, contradictory, and overly attractive, which makes it challenging for the marketers to modify or entirely change the image (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1993). Moreover, image is considered an important promotional tool in tourism industry in general since it can influence the attitudes and behaviors of a targeted group and is labeled as a “…important determinant of tourist buying behavior” (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998, p.
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

Hence, an excellent strategy to use when conveying destination experiences to the current and potential visitors.

~ Attractions marketing – wide array of attractions (natural, historical buildings, landmarks, and so forth) are marketed to attract the visitors to come to specific places (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1993).

~ Infrastructure marketing – image and attractions are not enough to attract visitors if the infrastructure is not in place (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1993).

~ People marketing – strategy for a destination to market the local people but initially taking into consideration the perception that potential visitors may have about them (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1993).

In regards to promoting a destination, destination marketers use variety of influence tools to appeal to target markets they want to attract. Some of these tools are: advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling. Furthermore, TV shows, songs, sports, and sites can also do a lot (both help and hurt) in promotion of the places. (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1993).

In developing logos, themes and advertising support, Ritchie and Crouch (2003) stated that destination logo, as a part of the bigger picture called destination branding, should be “…supported by thematic advertising…”, which would in their opinion call for an advertising agency and timing decisions based on different factors (for example, behavioral patterns of the target markets, cost, and so forth) (p. 204). At the same time, what Ritchie and Crouch (2003) found surprising is the fact that destination managers spend a great amount of attention and detail to developing the destination logo; however,
only few of them do the research to find out how their logo is really perceived by their markets.

When it comes to actually identifying strategic visitor markets, Ritchie and Crouch (2003) stated that destination managers are facing a true challenge when they are to decide which visitor markets to target. Thus, they need to answer the following two questions: “...who have we attracted in the past? and who can we best serve now, given our strengths?” (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003, pp. 189-190). This process understands getting to know the market segments (their needs, wants, and behaviors), reviewing the data to gain understanding of trends and, at the same time, thinking about “…experiential benefits…” that the particular destination can offer to the visitor markets and that could possibly be a source of destination’s competitive advantage (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003, p. 190).

Once this is accomplished, Ritchie and Crouch (2003) noted that destination managers can do “…experience market matching…”, which is in their words, matching between the experience types that the destination can offer and visitor markets which destination can compete to attract (p. 190). Approach that destinations should not neglect to take, as different visitor markets are attracted to different experiences. Thus, when doing the matching process, destination managers should not forget to address different constraints (for example, location, cost) since they may influence the match (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). In addition, elements of destination marketing and the way they are implemented were also detailed by Ritchie and Crouch (2003). This is shown in Figure 1.
b. Power of Positioning

Furthermore, positioning is considered one of the most effective tools used in tourism and destination marketing since it creates a position in the minds of the potential visitors that differentiates specific destination from the competition (Chacko, 1997). It can be defined as “...a form of market communication that plays a vital role in enhancing the attractiveness of a tourism destination...more than just image creation” (Chacko, 1997). Thus, positioning benefits both potential visitors and destination: it helps potential visitors to easily differentiate one destination from the others and choose which they feel more attracted to; at the same time positioning helps tourism destination to gain “...a competitive edge” by differentiating itself in the minds of the visitors (Chacko, 1997).
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

There are several steps in the positioning process that need to be taken into consideration in a positioning strategy, and these are:

- Market positioning – identifying and selecting markets that represent business potential by answering the questions such as: What is important to the target market? How does the target market perceive the destination? How does the target market perceive the competition? What attributes should a destination use to differentiate itself to make the best use of its limited resources? (Chacko, 1997).

- Psychological positioning – creating unique image of a destination in the minds of the visitors. Since this image occurs automatically, it is challenging for the marketers to control the positioning. Psychological positioning can be objective (creating an image that portrays destination’s physical characteristics) and subjective (tourist’s perception of a destination) (Chacko, 1997).

- Positioning approaches – the final step where it is reinforced “…what the destination does best and what benefits are offered”. Some examples of the positioning approaches include positioning by price value (for example, positioning on the basis of low price may imply low quality); with respect to use or application (positioning on the reasons for visiting destination); according to the users or class of users (positioning featuring the people who should visit destination); positioning with a respect to a product class (for associating a destination with the unique experiences), and positioning vis-à-vis the competition (for bringing out differences between destinations) (Chacko, 1997).

Thus, positioning analysis not only answers the questions such as: What position does a destination own now? What position does the destination want to own? Who must the
destination outposition? How can it be done? but it also gives the opportunities for marketers to create a differentiating image of a destination in the minds of the visitors. (Chacko, 1997).

iii. Experience as It Relates to Competitiveness and Differentiation

a. The Concept of Experience

Pine and Gilmore (1999) introduced the idea that goods and services are no longer enough for differentiating and therefore advocated experiences as a form of differentiation. They explained the shift from commodities to experiences and noted that successful companies nowadays create experiences for their customers if they are to be differentiated from their competition and at the same time charge premium prices – main advantages of competing on experiences. However, the field that was left to be explored is how would tourist destinations go about using their concepts and theories specifically at the local level.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) defined experiences “…as events that engage individuals in a personal way” (p.12). Each individual who is engaged into experience remains with the memory of it, and this is where the value of experiences is derived (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Walt Disney World is given as an example of the “experience stager” where many families go to be engaged into experience about which they are most likely to talk about years after visiting it (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, pp.12-13). The value of the visit to Walt Disney World and experiences they engaged in while being there remain with them. Moreover, since individuals are engaged entirely in a personal way, it cannot be the case that two people have the same experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).
~ The Experience Realms

Going further with the engagement of the customers/guests, Pine and Gilmore (1999) suggested “The Experience Realms” model, where horizontal axis corresponds to the level of guest participation (anywhere from passive to active) and vertical axis to “…the kind of connection, or environmental relationship, that unites customers with the event or performance” and goes anywhere from immersion to absorption (p.31). This is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The experience realms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absorption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Pine and Gilmore (1999) gave the example of passive participants to be symphony goers, who are observers or listeners of the symphony and who experience the symphony without affecting it. At the same time, active participants are entirely opposite – they directly affect the experience by actively participating in it – for example, skiers (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).
As an example of absorption, Pine and Gilmore (1999) referred to the TV audience – people watching TV and in that way absorbing the experience. On the other hand, players of the virtual reality games “...go into experience” and are therefore immersed into it (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p.31).

Thus, these four dimensions form four experiential realms: entertainment, educational, escapist, and esthetic, as shown in Figure 2. Pine and Gilmore (1999) explained that entertainment occurs when “...customers passively absorb the experiences through their senses” and among others, they gave the example of reading for pleasure to belong in this particular realm (p.31). When it comes to educational realm, they explained that customers absorb the experiences, but at the same time, they are actively participating by having their minds and/or body engaged for the purpose of increasing their knowledge (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Escapist realm is completely opposite to the educational realm. In the escapist realm, the customers are actively participating in experiences and are at the same time completely immersed in these experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Pine and Gilmore (1999) named theme parks, casinos, and chat rooms as the examples of escapist environment. Lastly, the customers of esthetic realm simply want to “be”, or in other words, they immerse themselves into the environment, but, as Pine and Gilmore (1999) suggested, these customers remain passive (p.35). One example of the esthetic experience would be sitting at the Café Florian in Old World Venice (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

The message that Pine and Gilmore (1999) conveyed through experience realms is that although some experiences engage mostly one of the realms, the boundaries between realms may be blurry; also to keep in mind that “…the richest experiences
encompass aspects of all four realms” (p.39). The key lies in assessing the “sweet spot” in the center of the Experience Realms figure (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p.39).

~ Ing the Thing

Pine and Gilmore (1999) also drew attention to the suffix “ing” in words and suggested that goods in the experience economy must be “experientialized” to have more value added and that their usage becomes memorable (pp. 15-16). So, as they stated, the users are now in charge: they are engaging themselves into variety of activities that are experiences (for example, hot-air ballooning, bobsledding), as well as among others, into driving, cooking, and reading experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, pp. 15-16).

~ Engagement of Senses

In addition, Pine and Gilmore (1999) taught that experiences are intrinsically sensory. Or, in other words, it does matter what one sees, hears, touches, smells, and tastes on shaping of the impressions and consequently experiences. As they say: “The more effectively an experience engages the senses, the more memorable it will be” (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p.59). To support that, one of the examples that they noted was Barnes & Noble bookstores. Besides being simply bookstores, the management decided to add small cafes that will appeal to senses of the customers (for example, smell of the coffee, smell of the cookies) and in that way not only be able to keep the customers longer within the bookstores, but also to encourage them to spend more money (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Engagement of senses may be difficult to analyze on a destination as a whole due to its complexity and is surely more applicable to individual businesses at the destination.
~ Theming the Experiences

Furthermore, Pine and Gilmore (1999) placed enormous value on theme of the experience; in their words, “the first step is envisioning a well-defined theme” (p.47). Well-defined theme gives cues to the people to know what to expect (for example, Hard Rock Café) and will result in a memorable experience, whereas ill defined theme does exactly the opposite (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The concept of theming the experience and envisioning one theme may prove as challenging to apply to a destination as a whole. In other words, it would surely be quite a task (if possible at all) for destination managers to bring all the businesses to work towards one theme.

According to Pine and Gilmore (1999), there are five principles that can help in developing well-defined theme; or in other words, something that will be compelling, captivating and memorable for people, and at the same time, will include them into the experience:

1. Engaging theme alters a guest’s sense of reality
2. The richest venues possess themes that fully alter one’s sense of reality by affecting the experience of space, time, and matter (for example, parking garage at Chicago’s O’Hare airport and parking spots in 3-D perspective)
3. Engaging theme integrates space, time, and matter into a cohesive, realistic whole (for example, Lori’s diner in San Francisco that is authentic 1950’s diner)
4. Themes are strengthened by creating multiple places within a place (for example, American Wilderness Experience and changes in scenery)
5. A theme should fit the character of the enterprise staging an experience (for example, “Magnificent Mile” by Arthur Rubloff) (pp. 49-52).
~Staging the Experiences

Moreover, it all comes to staging the experiences, where one needs to make sure that there is nothing distracting or contradictory to the prevailing themes (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). This can also turn out to be a challenge if applied to a destination as whole. In other words, it may be challenging to bring all the businesses to work towards ensuring that there are no contradictions when it comes to the main theme. Hence, this would again be more applicable to individual businesses at destination rather than to destination as a whole.

At the same time, the authors introduced the model of theatre; in their words, “Whenever employees work in front of customers, an act of theatre occurs” and, with this model in mind, customers are engaged in a memorable way since they are connected with the performers (that is, employees) (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, pp. 104-112).

~Value of Memorabilia

Lastly, Pine and Gilmore (1999) also placed value on tokens that remind the customers of their experience: postcards, T-shirts, caps, and so forth; or as they phrased it, “…memorabilia as tangible artifacts of the experiences they want to remember” (p. 57). Hence, experience stagers could do any of the following in order to extend the experiences for their customers: sell memorabilia, turn items into personalized memorabilia, give memorabilia away, and/or develop a new sort of memorabilia (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).
b. Experiential Travel and Demand for Experiences

Demand for experiences is a major trend in the tourism industry and consequently destinations now compete by emphasizing their experiences (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). According to Schneider (2004), experiential travel can be defined as a “travel that enriches the soul while broadening the mind”. Travelers became more demanding, they “…want to be emotionally moved, educated, challenged, involved, entertained, and even surprised” (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005). They are no longer satisfied with the traditional services only – they want to go beyond that and have therefore created demand for diversified experiences (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005).

This increasing demand for experiences shows that it is no longer enough for destinations to compete with their facilities and amenities, but instead they need to create differentiating experiences if they want to attract these travelers (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005). To support this claim, research suggests that travelers choose destination they want to visit “…based on the delivery of experiences rather than physical attributes of a resort, a city, a province, a country” (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005).

This overlaps with Pine and Gilmore’s (1999) theories that goods and services are no longer differentiators and that the new differentiator for gaining competitiveness comes in the shape of experiences. However, when there is little or no differentiation, what happens is that goods and services are turning into commodities, which means that businesses/destinations can compete only on price – the scenario that everyone seeks to avoid (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). And thus businesses/destinations start looking for the new source of competitive advantage, as the case is here with experiences. This relation
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

between a competitive position and pricing is shown in Figure 3 – equally applicable to businesses and destinations.

Figure 3: The progression of economic value.

Moreover, Pine and Gilmore’s (1999) progression of economic value is also reflected in Ritchie and Crouch’s (2003) statement, “…what makes a tourism destination truly competitive is its ability to increase tourism expenditure, to increasingly attract visitors while providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences…” (p. 2). In other words, destination gains differentiated competitive position by providing experiences for the visitors and hence is able to charge premium prices.

What is more, visitors nowadays do buy experiences (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003), which is a great opportunity for destinations that know how to use it for gaining
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

competitiveness. The key for each destination lies then in making sure that everyone knows what kind of experience can be found at that particular destination.

Moreover, when a destination is to create memorable experiences that will differentiate that destination in the minds of the potential travelers, it should not neglect to take the “Experiential Tourism Attributes” into consideration, as they clearly state the expectations of today’s travelers:

~ Engage Me - Make it Interactive!
~ Immerse Me
~ VIP Me
~ What’s Behind the Scenes?? - “Insider’s View”
~ Introduce Me to Cool People
~ Give Me Bragging Rights!

(National Tour Association, 2005).

c. Experiences in Demand

Some examples of the visitors’ experiences that are in demand are as follows:

~ day to day community experiences (such as kitchen parties, home and farm visits, church basement dinners, community festivals, local farm market visits) since they give travelers the opportunity for the intimate experience of a destination through the interaction with the local community

~ experiential, hands-on or interactive activities (such as farm or ranch stays, culinary, photography, and art tours) since travelers nowadays do not want only to observe, but want to be engaged
special access and “behind the scenes” tours (such as theatre, zoo, museum archive, and after hours or insider tours)

learning and discovery that is participatory, with a two-way communication and interaction with locals (such as archeological and geological tours, and experiences within a tour)

travel that promotes shared experiences with family, friends, and fellow travelers (such as family oriented and small group tours, and alumni travel)

(Schneider, 2004).

d. Structure of Service Experiences and Their Creation

As research shows, the service experience contains four dimensions that detail what tourists seek and thus for that reason they should be taken into consideration when creating experiences (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). They are shown in Table 1. Possible challenge for destination managers at this point becomes the task of creating the experience that will integrate all these dimensions and hence making sure that they are appropriately reflected in it.
Table 1: Dimensions of the service experience in tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension one: hedonics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~ Doing something I really like to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Doing something memorable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Doing something thrilling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Having a once-in-a-lifetime experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Sharing my experience with others later on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ A feeling of escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Being challenged in some way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ My imagination being stirred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ On an adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Having fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Doing something new and different</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension two: peace of mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~ Physically comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Property is safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Relaxed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Personal security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Privacy is assured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension three: involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~ Involved in the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Element of choice in the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Have control over the outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Being educated and informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension four: recognition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~ Taken seriously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ Important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Furthermore, there are several things that each destination needs to take into consideration when thinking about applying the experiential attributes. These are recognizing and focusing on: a destination's intrinsic qualities and unique brand elements, on 4 T's (themes, threads, trends, and traditions) and events, and lastly converting key
attractions and experiences into immersion experiences (National Tour Association, 2005).

Relatively, Schneider (2004) suggested the following checklist for creating an experience that every destination should take into consideration:

~ Select a theme and carry it through the tour
~ Select the types of experiences to include
~ Identify the range of activities, attractions and places to offer
~ Determine the ideal group size
~ Identify the appropriate suppliers or partners for the delivery
~ Assess all aspects of the experience
~ Evaluate the balance of planned activities in the experience
~ Determine the ‘souvenirs’ that will be a part of the experience
~ Cost all elements of the trip
~ Determine the core marketing messages and images that will attract your target market – create a unique selling proposition
~ Deliver it!

(Schneider, 2004).

e. Examples of Experiential Positioning

Example of how the experiential tourism and positioning have been put into practice, is the initiative done by Bureau, which is the first Destination Marketing Organization in Canada to do this, and hence made decision to focus on seven experiential areas:

~ Cuisine
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

~ Ski
~ Winter outdoor adventure
~ Summer outdoor adventure
~ Luxury/Spa
~ Culture/Heritage
~ Family Reconnecting/Togethering

(Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005).

More specifically, Banff and Lake Louise is a destination that practices experiential positioning and if one wants to experience it, he/she may expect to be engaged with “...regionally inspired cuisine, award-winning spas, and world-class luxury...in the destination that challenges both body and soul” (Banff Lake Louise Tourism, 2005). Hence, it is clear on what should destinations focus next – on experiences (positioning, marketing, travel, areas, and so forth).

However, taking previously mentioned Bureau and Banff and Lake Louise as the example, it is said that they practice experiential positioning – but based on this source, not enough details were provided in terms of what they are doing specifically with the areas they have in focus to experientially position them. Methods that they are or will be using are also not documented.

Another example of the emphasis on the tourist experiences is shown in Cyprus Strategic Plan for Tourism 2010. Besides aspiring to position itself by focusing on differentiating location attributes (such as “...island in the Mediterranean, at the crossroads of three continents...”), Cyprus recognizes the importance of offering “...a multidimensional, qualitative tourist experience” that distinguishes this island from its
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

competition (*Strategic Plan for Tourism 2010*, n.d.). Same scenario as with Banff and Lake Louise: what is the meaning of “...a multidimensional, qualitative tourist experience”? In other words, although it is made clear and is surely promising in terms of how they want to position themselves and which strategies to use to accomplish that, the element that is still missing is to simply state what one needs to do specifically to create that experience for the travelers.
Chapter 3

Methods

i. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline methods that were used to address the objectives of the study stated in Chapter 1. Methods that were used are combination of both primary and secondary research. In this chapter objectives are referred numerically, as objective 1, objective 2, and so forth.

ii. Objectives of the Study & Methods Used

Combination of methods was used to answer objective 1. The first was to make inventory of Long Lake resources in order to learn what Long Lake has to offer to its visitors. This was done by looking at the websites and guides on Long Lake area, as well as through personal communication with director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department.

Two one-day site visits were organized to answer both objective 1 and objective 2. First site visit was made on March 11, 2005. Since the researcher has never been to the Adirondack Park before, these site visits were opportunity for the researcher to learn more about area, about the case destination itself, and at the same time to experience them first-hand. Second site visit was made on June 13, 2005 with the purpose of attending the town meeting. This meeting on Long Lake tourism and challenges that is facing was open to anyone interested to attend it. Researcher attended as a non-participant observer. There were several guest speakers scheduled to present at the
meeting: Ms. Pauline Slack (director of One Work Source, Business and Employment Center of Hamilton County), Mr. Richard Lagiewski (professor at Rochester Institute of Technology), Mr. Robert Gibson (director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department) and Mr. Bill Osborne (Hamilton County Tourism). Duration of the meeting was approximately two hours.

**Personal interview** was used to answer objective 1 in order to get the input on tourism in Long Lake from director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department himself. Interview was incorporated into the first site visit to Long Lake and took place in director’s office, during which the researcher has recorded written notes. Duration of the meeting was approximately one hour.

**E-mail correspondence** with director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department was also used to address objective 1 with the purpose of obtaining the most current information in regards to challenges that town’s tourism is facing. Correspondence took place in both 2005 and 2006.

In addition, **e-mail and phone interviews** were used to answer both objective 1 and objective 2 in order to get the input from Long Lakers primarily on why do people visit Long Lake, who they perceive to be their main visitor markets, and on what the Long Lake experience is. Interviews were conducted with the owners of lodging properties and businesses in Long Lake. Initially, e-mails were sent out to twenty out of twenty-nine properties in Long Lake on April 30, 2006 – all properties that had listed their e-mail addresses online received the e-mail asking for their input in this research. In addition, the idea was to get the input from properties that are open year round as well as from those that are opened only seasonally. Sample e-mail that was sent out can be found in
Appendix 1. The same e-mail was modified in order to be applicable to the store and thus sent to the owners of Hoss’s Country Corner. Complete list of the properties to which the e-mails were sent can be found in Appendix 1.

As can be read in the sample e-mail mentioned beforehand, researcher, project and a correlation with Long Lake were briefly introduced, along with the information regarding how much time it will take to answer the questions. In addition, owners of each individual property were asked for desirable reply options and to opt for disclosing their name or not. Thus, researcher’s contact information was listed as well. Five open-ended questions were asked in order to allow interviewees space for elaboration when answering the questions.

First three questions during interviews were asked in order for researcher to learn more about Long Lake tourism and hence address objective 1 of the study. The first question that they were asked to answer was “In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?” with the purpose of getting the local people’s view on reasons to visit Long Lake. Second question “What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay there?” was asked to get a feeling of what makes them different from other properties. Continually, third question “What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?” was asked with the intention of finding out who is really coming to Long Lake, what are the target markets from the local perspective.

Following two questions were asked to answer objective 2 (and possibly objective 3). Hence, question “What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?” was asked with the purpose of revealing what exactly does Long Lake experience represent to local
people. Finally, the last question “In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?” relates to the previous question and was asked with the intention of getting the local people to start thinking about specific experiences that can be found at their properties and in Long Lake that may prove to be diversified experiences for Long Lake.

Only owners of two lodging properties responded to the e-mail. E-mails were followed with the phone calls to random properties in Long Lake and thus owners of four properties agreed to a phone interview. Duration of the phone interviews was approximately 5 minutes. All responses were recorded manually by the researcher. Effort has been made to record the answers in their entirety; however, some of them may not be recorded as such. Altogether, six out of total twenty responses were obtained.

Two online guestbooks were also used to answer objective 2 and thus opinions of the several people who visited Long Lake and their experiences of this lake destination have been documented.

“Destination Experience Differentiation Model” In order to answer objective 4, it has been shown how this model can be applied to any destination (and Long Lake) and hence help destination to differentiate itself from its competitors. In addition, when applying this model to Long Lake, one comes across opportunities for identifying unique Long Lake experiences/experiential areas on which possibly to focus – objective 3.

Feedback survey & discussion were used to get Long Lakers’ feedback on the study and in that way to learn what they have found challenging, as after all their town is used as the case destination of this study objective 5. Basically, this study, when completed, was presented in Long Lake. Presentation took place on June 15, 2006 and it
was open to everyone who was interested and able to attend it. People who attended are as follows: Mr. Robert Gibson (director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department), Ms. Dixie Lee LeBlanc (Camp Hillary; marina; town clerk), Mr. Bill Osborne (Hamilton County Tourism), Mr. Gregg Wallace (town supervisor; business owner), Mr. George Britton (Britton Cabin), and Ms. Maureen Shannon (Rochester Institute of Technology). After the presentation of the study was completed, attendees were given a brief survey to fill out and to return to the researcher via fax. Sample survey that was given out can be found in Appendix 2, as well as the individual surveys that were returned to the researcher.
Chapter 4

Results & Findings

i. Introduction

Results and Finding chapter reviews the information that was gathered to address the objectives of the study. Hence, in continuation of this chapter, individual objectives of the study are outlined, along with the results and findings related to the specific objective.

ii. Objectives of the Study, Results & Findings

Objective 1: To document tourism in Long Lake (Long Lake resources, challenges that tourism is facing, visitor markets, and so forth)

Long Lake Resources

~ Lodging, Dining & Camping Facilities

When people come to Long Lake they can choose from variety of accommodation options: hotel, motels, cabins, cottages, inn/lodge, B&B, private houses, and camps. The number of all lodging establishments in Long Lake is 29 with 160 rooms. Only 8 out of 29 properties are opened year round, and 21 properties are opened seasonally. Largest property has 19 rooms (Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake), and the average size of the properties is 5.5 rooms. Most of the lodging properties are located on the lake. In addition, Long Lake offers variety of dining options: from restaurants to lighter fare places. Complete list of dining places and lodging properties in Long Lake, along with the number of units and times of operation can be found in Appendix 3.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Gibson, personal communication, 2005).
When it comes to camping facilities, Long Lake township has 8 camping facilities on 578 sites, which is more than any other township in Hamilton County. They are considered to be “Long Lake’s”, but not all of them are located in Long Lake. Camping facilities that are easily accessible from Long Lake are also counted in. One finds here a range from very simple, primitive campsites to the campsites with stores and game rooms. Most of these campgrounds that belong to Long Lake township are public. Private campgrounds are Hideaway Campsite (30 sites) and Hoss’s Country Campground (14 sites). New York State Campgrounds that are either in Long Lake township or easily accessible from Long Lake are listed in Appendix 3.


~ Activities and Attractions

One comes to Long Lake to enjoy number of outdoor activities (bird watching, biking, camping, canoeing, boating, downhill and cross country skiing, snowshoeing, fishing, hiking, hunting, snowmobiling, star gazing) as well as seaplane tours (Helms Aero Service), boat tours (Long Lake Boat Tour), concerts (Fiddle Jamborees, Irish Music Festival, and so forth), craft fairs, and similar events (Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005). It is said that “the ways to enjoy the area are virtually unlimited” (Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.). Therefore, the following section briefly addresses above mentioned outdoor activities and Long Lake’s offer when it comes to the specific activity.
Snowmobiling  Long Lake and Raquette Lake combined open the access to snowmobilers to 750 miles of trails in Hamilton County and to entire New York state trail system (*Adirondack Winter Guide 2004-2005*, 2004). Snowmobiling trails are free for use and snowmobilers are given opportunity to enjoy in a scenic landscape (*Four Season Guide to the Central Adirondack Region*, 2005).

Besides trail rides and snowmobile races, events are organized that can attract snowmobilers to come to Long Lake. During the winter the Long Lake Moonlighters Snowmobile Club is involved in organizing events such as Poker Runs, The Round Robin Dinner, and Annual Winter Carnival so snowmobilers can participate in these events as well and make their stay in Long Lake longer and more fulfilled.


Complete list of trails in Long Lake area can be found in Appendix 3.

Star gazing  Away from the metropolitan areas, Long Lake is often described as a remote destination in the Adirondack Park. And specifically due to its remoteness, Long Lake gives the opportunity to the astronomers to enjoy “...one of the best “dark sky sites” in the North East”. Besides the opportunity to observe the sky, number of Star Parties is organized for the visitors in July and August, not only in Long Lake but also in Raquette Lake.

Biking - Long Lake offers variety of paths that bikers can choose to take: Department of Transportation (DOT) bike paths (if provided, bikers are required by law to use them) that intersect in Long Lake, as well as miles of county and secondary roads, both paved and gravel surface. These paths give the ability to the bikers to experience various surface conditions and in that way to test their biking skills or simply to enjoy the ride. All state hiking trails in the area can be used for biking besides Northville-Placid trail.  

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).  

Complete list of biking paths in Long Lake area can be found in Appendix 3.  

Hunting - Opportunities that hunters find in Long Lake are unlimited due to the numerous acres of hunting grounds that are state lands and that surround both Long Lake and Raquette Lake. If they opt for camping, they need to make sure whether they need to obtain camping permits before. Usually groups of less than 10 people may camp for 3 nights without a permit.  

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).  

There are several seasons during the year when hunters can enjoy this sport:  

~ Bear season – begins: the first Saturday after the second Monday in September – ends: the day immediately preceding the opening of the muzzleloading season. Hamilton County is rated #1 among all counties in the State in the number of bears that are taken.  

~ Archery season begins September 27 – ends: Friday immediately preceding the next to the last Saturday in October.
Muzzleloading season - is a seven day period ending on the day before regular season begins.

Regular season begins on the next to last Saturday in October – ends: the first Sunday in December.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).

Deer hunting and small game (ruffed grouse, varying hare, coyote, woodcock, and waterfowl) hunting are also very popular in the Long Lake area. Long Lake hunting grounds include both public land areas and private hunting clubs.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).

Suggested hunting grounds in Long Lake area are listed in Appendix 3.

Snowshoeing, downhill and cross country skiing  Since Long Lake is close to Whiteface Mountain, Gore Mountain, and Big Tupper that have great snowmaking capabilities, Long Lake visitors who are downhill skiers have excellent opportunities to enjoy this sport in a short driving distance. If skiers want to make the best use of their time, recommendation for them is to opt for Whiteface or Gore Mountain during the week and for Big Tupper during the weekend in order to avoid long waiting lines for the lifts.

(Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).

Cross country skiers and snowshoers can enjoy numerous miles of backcountry trails (Four Season Guide to the Central Adirondack Region, 2005). 130 kilometers (~81 miles) of cross country ski trails are mostly the same as the ones used for hiking and snowmobiling. Most of these trails are on state land and range in level of difficulty: “...from trails for adventurous and skilled skier to paths for those who merely want to
spend some leisure time in the woods”. Some opt for wilderness and finding their own way through it, and not following any of the established trails. Opportunities for people who enjoy these sports are virtually unlimited in Long Lake area, for both beginners and skilled skiers. Equipment and maps of the area trails can be rented and/or purchased in Long Lake.

(*Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.*).

Complete list of trails in Long Lake area can be found in Appendix 3.

**Fishing** Long Lake area together with Raquette Lake has a lot to offer in terms of fun and challenge for “fishing enthusiasts”, both beginners and experts. Brook trout is found in Raquette River, Bog River, and Big Brook, while small and largemouth bass can be found in Forked Lake and Long Lake. For the fishermen who seek challenge: lake trout and land-locked salmon in Lake Eaton and Raquette Lake as well as the northern pike in Long Lake that is often described as “…a real fighter and has been the source of many stories about “the one that got away””. Ice fishing is permitted in both Long Lake and Raquette Lake.

(*Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.*).

Besides fishing as a part of the fisher’s leisure vacation, contests are organized that can attract fishers to come to Long Lake. The following are some of the fishing contests that are organized in Long Lake area:

- Mike Norris Memorial Ice Fishing Derby on Raquette Lake
- Adult/Child Ice Fishing Contest
- Long Lake Fish & Game Youth Fishing Contest
Annual Spring Fishing Derby for Bass & Pike

Raquette Lake Bass Tournament

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005).

Complete list of fishing terrains in Long Lake area can be found in Appendix 3.

**Hiking** Long Lake and surrounding area offer range of well-marked trails for both adventurous backpacker who seeks challenge and a leisure hiker who simply goes for the walk in the woods. Moreover, Long Lake is used as the starting point for the final leg of hiking to Lake Placid due to its location on the Northville-Placid trail that is a premier hiking trail in the Adirondack Park. These trails enable the hiker to enjoy the scenery and beautiful views on lakes and peaks of Owls Head, Blue Mountain, Frederica Mountain, West Mountain, and Goodnow Mountain.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).

Complete list of hiking trails in Long Lake area can be found in Appendix 3.

**Bird watching** Being part of the Adirondack Park, Long Lake offers locals and visitors numerous opportunities to enjoy the nature and wildlife. Considered as an everyday occurrence, different species are often taken for granted, and people start appreciating them usually only when something different happens (for example, bald eagles feeding at the lake in the early spring). Birds that are seen in Long Lake area are changing due to the changes in the forest conditions. For instance, wild turkeys that a few years ago have never been seen in this area, nowadays became frequent travelers in Long Lake area. At the same time, Long Lake offers variety of habitat to different birds (mature forests, bogs,
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

lakes, ponds and streams). Common loon, which is known as “...reclusive symbol of the Adirondack Wilderness” is often seen on Long Lake when the ice melts. Generally, there are two distinct phases for observing birds with a slight overlap in the spring and fall. Most common species that are seen throughout the area are: chickadees, rose-breasted grosbeaks, dark-eyed junco, chipping sparrow, purple finch, blue jays, Canada geese, bald eagles, common loons, and ospreys.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005).

Complete list of the most common birds, along with the areas which provide habitat for them and where it is possible to see them in Long Lake area can be found in Appendix 3.

Canoeing and boating Long Lake, as well as the entire Adirondack Park, has always been appealing for small-boat vacationers. People were and are still attracted to come and experience “Great Northern Wilderness” by opting for canoeing or boating. At the same time, local people throughout the Adirondack Park used these small boats more as a necessity until the road system was completed, when boating became more for leisure and pleasure. Nowadays vacationers have the opportunity to rent canoes, rowboats, fishing boats, paddleboats and ski boats in both Long Lake and Raquette Lake marinas and businesses.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).

Long Lake is 14 miles long and located in the Fulton Chain Canoe Route which extends from Old Forge to Paul Smiths. This is a major waterway, thus, promising great opportunities for canoeing and boating for exploring it as well as many opportunities for many side trips off this waterway. At the same time, canoeing has been one of the fastest
growing sports in the Adirondack Park in general; however, there are certain areas that
cannot be crossed in a canoe, called “carries”.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).

Power boats are restricted to Raquette Lake, Long Lake, and Lake Eaton. Raquette Lake has two marinas, a public dock, and a public boat lunch and there are no
restrictions on size of engines or boats. Long Lake has one marina, a public boat lunch,
and a public dock. Public dockings are for hourly docking only.

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.).

Besides canoeing and boating as a part of the visitor’s vacation, different events
are organized that can attract people to come to Long Lake. The following are some of
the events that are organized in Long Lake area:

~ Long Lake Regatta

~ Raquette Lake Annual Boat Parade

~ Adirondack Canoe Classic

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005).

Complete list of side trips off the Long Lake can be found in Appendix 3.

~ Events Schedule

Visitors who come to Long Lake have the opportunity to participate in variety of events.
Besides numerous sporting events (such as fishing contests, snowmobile, swim, canoe,
skating races, and so forth), carnivals (such as Winter Carnival), concerts (Fiddle
Jamboree), art shows (Annual Art Show and Sale), auctions (Great Adirondack Auction
to Benefit the Long Lake Library), festivals (Strawberry Festival) and parades (Annual
American Legion Memorial Day Parade) take place throughout the year.

*(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005)*.

Detailed overview of the annual events for the Long Lake area in 2005 can be found in Appendix 3.

~ Retail, Artisans, Craftsman, Galleries & Specialty Shops

Some places of interest are Hoss’s Country Corner (“A Unique Shopping Experience That Will Keep The Adirondacks In Your Home All Year”), Adams Wood Shop, Adirondack Basket Case, Bookman Rustic Furniture, Chax Knives, Cold River Gallery & Woodwork, Crummy Carver, Marge’s Monograms, Pond Side Studio, Raquette River Weaver, The Rock Shop Minerals Unlimited, and The Spinning Wheel Gift Shop.

*(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Hoss’s Country Corner, n.d.)*.

Several other specialty shops that can be found in Long Lake are as follows: Adirondack Memorials, Bear Paw Hot Tubs, Brown Pelican Tanning Salon, Buttercup Yarn and Wool Shop, Camp Hillary Ice Cream Stand, Computer Clinic, Demar’s Carpet Shop, Don’s Small Engine Repairs, Hoss’s Adirondack Christmas Shop, Iron Bridge Gallery, Lake Street Shoppe, North Country Images and Gallery, Paradise Pastry Decorated Cakes, Shear Images, Terrys Gun Shop, Trading Post, and Wide River Antiques.

*(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005)*.
Challenges Facing Long Lake Tourism

As mentioned earlier, the interview with Mr. Gibson, director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, was incorporated into the first site visit, as the main purpose of the trip was to become familiarized with the Long Lake tourism. The first question that has been aroused was whether there is a connection between Lake Placid and Olympic Winter Games on one side and Long Lake on other. Or in other words, does Lake Placid help to Long Lake in terms of generating demand for visiting Long Lake for the people who are visiting Lake Placid. Mr. Gibson answered that “Lake Placid and Olympics do nothing for Long Lake”. He explained that Long Lake is often put together with Raquette Lake as one destination, due to their vicinity. Website proves that, as well as the printing materials that he had showed and shared generously during this visit.

Furthermore, Mr. Gibson continued with addressing some of the issues that Long Lake faces, such as seasonality issues. In his words, the main season is July and August with some shoulder season – only about nine weeks of high demand. He continued with saying that late May and early June are “bad” time, since that period is considered as black fly season and that there is no demand during Christmas time.

Mr. Gibson referred to the events schedule for the Long Lake area as well. According to this schedule of events, there is something happening every single month in Long Lake. However, the issue is not the quantity of the events, but instead the fact that the majority of these events are rarely large enough to attract people to come to Long Lake and stay overnight (or even for a few days). One usually sees day travelers coming to attend or participate in the events in Long Lake.
He described tourism product of Long Lake as 1950’s lodging properties which are clean, but no major renovations and investments have been made after these properties were built as a response to mass tourism market. 1950’s was a time of booming economy, increased leisure time and income. Moreover, at that time, thanks to the development of automobile industry Adirondack Park became easily accessible for many family vacations which then resulted in mass tourism product. The main reason, as he put it, lies in fact that local people are in a way hesitant to invest since they think that they can possibly benefit more by selling their properties to the second home owners, who are a huge market in the entire Adirondack Park. Other issues that he mentioned are directly related to hardly any investments are: rising tax rate which has hit hard many businesses, old proprietors who are not willing to take risks, and possible proprietors’ “victim mentality” – in other words, “doesn’t matter what I do things are bad” attitude. But, as he emphasized, there are also local people who are motivated to invest, motivated for change-example being the owners of the Hoss’s Country Corner.

Mr. Gibson has also listed all outdoor activities that one can find in Long Lake and drew the attention to outdoor again. Meaning, when the weather is bad, there is not much to do in Long Lake: if the visitors are to stay inside, they will not have many entertainment options or indoor activities to engage in and may consequently have no reason to stay in Long Lake. Thus, additional obstacle being that the same outdoor activities can be found all over the Adirondacks.

Mr. Gibson mentioned that day after the meeting in Long Lake, on March 12, snowmobile races are taking place and recommended the visit to the trails. He described
snowmobilers as excellent spenders, but also emphasized the fact that less and less people like using trails that go over lakes, as the case is in Long Lake.

Continually, as Mr. Gibson explained, a simple thing of going to see a movie can be complicated in the winter time since one needs to drive to one of the nearby towns which may be challenging in bad winter weather. Young people are leaving the area which is then reflected in the lack of labor. Mr. Gibson also mentioned that international staff members were hired in the past such as for Camp for the Arts, but the obstacle to this remains housing.

On the other hand, the budget that is available for marketing and promotion of Long Lake to Mr. Gibson is limited to $20,000. Moreover, additional thing that he wanted to make sure prior ending this meeting was for the researcher to understand the small scale of the project (that is, one is not talking about how to attract several thousands of visitors to Long Lake) and the infrastructure that is in place. Therefore, he showed several lodging properties as a sample that exactly portrayed his earlier words on 1950’s tourism product. He also took the researcher to Hoss’s Country Corner to see the store and to meet one of the owners who shared the plan on expanding the store by adding a “small village of shops”. Walk around Long Lake proved Mr. Gibson’s point that there are not many people around and that there is not much to do when it comes to indoor activities/entertainment in Long Lake.

Furthermore, a lesson learned on Long Lake tourism while attending the town meeting was that Long Lake tourism needs clearer direction on what to market directly and mostly. With the annual budget of $20,000 for marketing, it was emphasized that most magazines are way beyond the means available. At the same time, surveys show
that 60% of the market looks at the Internet websites and 40% still relies on the printed material – all agreed that they do not want to lose these 40%. The question unleashed was how to get more people to come to Long Lake website, since “…website tells people why should they come to Long Lake”. Possibility could be to link the words such as Adirondack experience, family, fun, laid-back summer, weekend fun, and so forth to Long Lake website, so that when people type these words in search engines that they are offered Long Lake website to look at as well. Choice of these words would consequently portray Long Lake as such destination. Other idea that came out was to create packages as “simple, inexpensive way” to attract people to Long Lake. The reasoning behind packaging or partnering that was emphasized at the meeting was the general attitude that “together we are better”. Examples that came out at the meeting was local lodging partnering with The Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake or with The Author’s Night that is held in Hoss’s Country Corner in Long Lake.

Additional challenges that Long Lake tourism is facing were documented in the e-mail correspondence that initiated on April 22, 2005, in which Mr. Gibson clarified the issue on Long Lake snowmobiling offer that the researcher inquired about. As he stated in his e-mail, Long Lake at that time was considered to be a day trip destination for snowmobilers from other areas (for example, Newcomb or Old Forge). Once the trail north out of Long Lake was to be completed, which was planned for the next year, Long Lake should become destination for snowmobilers out of Cranberry Lake/Tupper Lake. This trail was a hope for turning the Long Lake into a destination where snowmobilers will stay and ride from, since at that point in time it was not a primary destination for them. As he suggested, with the completion of the trail North (next year)
Long Lake should have much better product to promote. At that time Long Lake offered little to snowmobilers when it came to riding since the trails were predicated on the ice of Raquette Lake.

When asked why 4-day-event became 1-day-visit to Long Lake for snowmobilers, Mr. Gibson answered that snowmobile racers no longer spend any time in the area. In his words, snowmobilers show up day of race and leave immediately following the race that is not big enough to draw spectators to stay overnight. In addition to the fact that it no longer has the great popularity it had 20 years ago. However, he suggested that snowmobiling as a recreational sport is something entirely different—it is a weekend activity. In his words, until this year, the trail system was not reliable enough to promote Long Lake as a snowmobiling destination. Long Lake relied on a few snowmobilers who did consider it an appropriate destination. In Mr. Gibson’s opinion, snowmobiling as a recreational sport is seen as the activity with the most potential for tourism growth, since Long Lake now does possess reliable trails. To further support this, Mr. Gibson stated that Long Lake does not have the facilities to promote “good” cross country skiing or snowshoeing and, to add to it, ice fishing is a very limited market, which then leaves snowmobiling as the activity with the best potential

correspondences dated September 19, 26 & October 03, 2005.

In the e-mail correspondences that are dated September 26 and October 03, 2005, Mr. Gibson was asked to clarify why there is no demand for rooms, for coming to Long Lake in general, during Christmas time. He replied that at that time there is no snowmobile industry since snow conditions are not conducive and people are at the same time involved in the Christmas routine. He emphasized that basically entire area begs for
visitors at that time and that the only draw could be a downhill ski facility that Long Lake does not have. As he elaborated, January, February and part of March are snowmobile months, but the weather needs to cooperate. At the same time, weekends are big most of the year. Especially when season starts to build in June with fishermen. As he suggested, Long Lake is probably 90% of the capacity during July, August, September and first two weeks of October.

Mr. Gibson was also asked to confirm the statement that the packages are rarely offered, which he did confirm in the e-mail dated October 03, 2005. He stated that this is true for the most of the lodging properties since most of the businesses have never had to promote to actually have businesses. However, as he added, lots of the businesses do include town supplied material.

Reasons to Visit Long Lake & Visitor Markets

Table 2 summarizes Long Lakers’ responses to questions on why do people visit Long Lake and who they perceive to be their main visitor markets. This information was obtained in phone and e-mail interviews. Complete interviews can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 2: Summarized interviewees’ responses (Questions 1-3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:</th>
<th>FINDINGS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?</td>
<td>for the pristine beauty; pretty untouched, beautiful nature; the quiet; hiking trails; canoeing; friendliness of the town; it attracts people who like the outdoors and are not looking for a luxury vacation; people who prefer mountains; getaway from the city; for lake itself; lots of lakefront; essentially cheap attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay/shop there?</td>
<td>clean; child-friendly pleasant atmosphere; private cottage on the water where a family may enjoy a vacation and do what they want, without any pressure from anyone else; many things that are not available elsewhere and building itself interesting to visit; nice sandy beach; location on the lake; quaint cabins; off the beaten path; all-inclusive; secluded property; hand-made log cabin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?</td>
<td>from all over the world; the predominant # from NY, Md. and East coast; couples and families; single; married (either with or without children); younger and older; wide diversity; even divided (men-women); nothing that children cannot touch or do; honeymooners; sports outdoors enthusiasts; people celebrating anniversaries, quiet couples and one child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives 2 & 3: To document the Long Lake experience & To identify opportunities for creating unique Long Lake experience

Researcher’s View of Long Lake

Researcher found that stay at the Adirondack Hotel was something that one does not experience every day. Rooms with no private baths were not expected; however, one quickly adapts to the amenities that are available and at the same time realizes that extra amenities are not really needed to have a comfortable stay. Luxuries such as TV or phones in the rooms would not even fit the overall hotel’s ambient. Pleasant dinner in hotel’s Lake Street Café was marked by laid-back atmosphere and friendly staff whose efforts were aimed towards making their guests feel at home. Stuffed bear and the moose in the lobby of the hotel were surely something different and not expected to be seen there. In researcher’s opinion, this could translate as the hotel’s emphasis on exposing
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

guests to nature and wild-life. Simple, humble, welcoming, and quiet – words that could be used to describe not only this hotel, but Long Lake as well. Researcher noted that Long Lake could be known as a perfect place for get-away and enjoyment in simple things.

Once arriving to the snowmobile racing point one could get entirely new perspective on Long Lake. Number of snowmobilers, accompanied with their families and friends, seemed to be enjoying themselves while waiting for their turn to race. Noise that snowmobiles were making and people’s conversations entirely replaced the silence one could find there only a day before. Long Lakers seemed to enjoy all the action that was taking place, whereas just a day before it seemed like quiet would be the best choice of word to describe Long Lake. Hence, this has also proved to researcher that Long Lake offers variety of experience: from get-away in a beautiful nature to action-driven outdoor activities.

The Experience of Long Lake as Seen by Long Lakers

Table 3 summarizes Long Lakers’ responses to the questions on what Long Lake experience is/represents to them. As noted earlier, this information was obtained in phone and e-mail interviews and complete interviews can be found in Appendix 1.
Table 3: Summarized interviewees’ responses (Questions 4-5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:</th>
<th>FINDINGS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?</td>
<td>friendly pleasant atmosphere; leisurely pace of life; plenty of exposure to nature; small community in the largest state park in the country; community concern; safety; beauty; great place to raise a family; outdoor experience; the roots are here; special place; close-nit community; people willing to help each other; lake; quietness; people who like country come here; people do not do extraordinary things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?</td>
<td>pleasant place to spend some time in; friendly, slower paced place where everyone is treated like family; comfortable experience in a housekeeping cottage which is located in a wooded setting on the water; lot of fun very friendly and confident employees to enable that; very good experience; some people come for hiking, fishing, and some just to relax and read a book – Long Lake can give them both; rather unique experience; simple; lake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, interesting to note is Long Lakers’ discussion on what really Long Lake experience is that took place at the town meeting. One local has simply put that “...experience here is nothing”. This was defied by Mr. Gibson and Mr. Osborne by stating that there is no proof that the previous statement was true since surveys show that people come to Long Lake for the specific activity. The other example of Long Lake experience that could be heard was “...experience of remoteness”. One of the lodging owners suggested that she had used “Get back to basics” logo for her hotel and got tremendous response because of it. What was conveyed to the Long Lakers by Professor Lagiewski is that essentially all comes down to giving people feeling of what Long Lake
is all about. At the same time, to move beyond DEC and APA (control and decision-making authorities), things that cannot be changed, and focus on emotions. Professor Lagiewski took as an example the picture of the small girl holding a huge fish caught in the lake and emphasized the interest and attention she may attract of people interested in fishing, especially families – more powerful than any brochure that lists different kinds of fish that can be caught in Long Lake.

**Visitors’ Views of Long Lake**

Visitors think of Long Lake as of place to come to get away, to relax, but also to enjoy numerous outdoor activities. Moreover, Long Lake is described as a place where they find slow-paced environment, relaxing peace and calm, as well as enjoyment in the beautiful nature. It is a place for their family retreat in a small, friendly, and quaint community, place to call home although they have lived somewhere else for decades; however, are still anxious to come back to.

*(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.)*

Thus, many of today’s visitors are the ones who want to keep their family tradition going. In other words, people who grew up or spent their summers as children there are now coming for a vacation to Long Lake with their own children. Some of them even stated their desire to move to Long Lake when in retirement. This small town evokes lots of memories for them: it represents a journey to different times for them. As one of the visitors summarized, “Times seemed so much easier then and people seemed to care more about each other and the simple things in life. In the hearts of each of the three Marvin children are memories of wonderful campfires, hiking in the woods,
lumberjacks working, trips to the dumps to see the bears and on and on. I am thankful for
the time spent there with those that I love and hold so dear.”

(Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.)

Additional visitors’ comments earlier can be found in Appendix 4.

**Objective 4:** To introduce “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” for
recommending strategies to differentiate Long Lake through experiences and experiential
positioning

“Destination Experience Differentiation Model” is used to show how destinations can
differentiate themselves through experiences. Application of this model to a tourist
destination in general is described first, as to show how any destination that suffers from
commoditization can use the model shown in Figure 4. Continually, application of the
model to Long Lake is described by using town’s activities, events, and suppliers as the
examples, rather than using Long Lake as a whole. Hence, the assumption has been made
that destination may = events = activities = suppliers at that specific destination. The
choice of which activities, events and suppliers to address was made based on
consultation with director of Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism
Department, and thus the following were selected: snowmobiling and fishing (activities);
canoe race “Adirondack 40 Mile Canoe and Kayak Challenge and 9 Mile Sprint” and
birding festival (events); Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake and Hoss’s Country Corner
store (suppliers). In the following analysis they are used interchangeably in order to show
how each of these can represent a diversified experience for Long Lake and thus be
marketed in that way.
Figure 4: Destination experience differentiation model (Zekan and Lagiewski, 2006).

Modified: Elements of destination marketing (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, p.189).
Conduct a destination inventory: infrastructure, suppliers, activities, events, and experiences

Tourist destination

The key here is familiarization with a destination in its entirety, since to turn a destination into a diversified destination experience, one needs to be aware of all destination resources. Thus, finding out about the infrastructure in the specific destination, suppliers, activities, events, and experiences can help not only in understanding the current situation and getting a more complete picture, but also in identifying limits and opportunities within that destination for providing diversified experiences for its visitors.

For example, the thought should be placed on the geographical location of the destination and its accessibility since this may be a limiting factor for the destination. Sample questions that may be asked are: what transportation options do people have to choose from when deciding to visit this particular destination? Is there an airport nearby or driving is only way to reach the destination? If so, what is the level of difficulty of finding the way around and the quality of roads in general? Is the signage in place that can direct people and help them find the right path? In addition, one should not omit addressing issues that destination may be facing (such as capacity of the facilities, seasonality), as well as the ways they are affecting this destination.

Thus, the process itself of conducting the destination inventory can be done in several ways. One can do a secondary research and get the information about the specific destination online, in books, magazines, and variety of promotional materials – if available. If needed information is not entirely available from the secondary research, one can opt for the primary research. Contacting directly local tourism offices and suppliers
via e-mail, phone, or fax and asking them questions is recommended to make sure that one has the most current information on hands, whereas some websites may have not been updated recently. At the same time, if one has means and opportunity to actually visit destination, to talk to local people, and to experience destination by him/herself, this site visit can only contribute to better understanding of destination and what destination is really all about. Lastly, if one already lives in that specific destination, gathering this information should be very easy to accomplish.

*Long Lake*

Regardless of whether one talks about event, activity or supplier, the main idea for Long Lake tourism department (in continuation of the study referred as tourism planners) at this point is to be able to say: “Ok, this is exactly what Long Lake offers when it comes to X”. For example, if one is to aim at one particular event and thus take above mentioned canoe racing event as the example, this would understand making a detailed overview of it and answering questions such as:

~ When and where does the race take place?
~ What are the routes and the length of the race?
~ How many carries there are?
~ What types of canoes are participating?
~ What are the entry fees for participation?
~ Who can participate in races-men, women, mixed? Any limitations in terms of who can compete in a certain category?
~ Who is organizing it?
~ How can one register for participation in race?
~ Is it a daily event or it requires overnight stay in Long Lake?

In other words, complete familiarization with what Long Lake offers when it comes to this specific event (resources, possible limiting factors and issues, and so forth). Once tourism planners are aware of this Long Lake offer, the challenge that lies ahead is what to do with what they have to make this event a memorable and diversified destination experience for the visitors.

Evaluate messages that are sent out to visitors by focusing on five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch

Tourist destination

As it was mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, Pine and Gilmore (1999) claimed that experiences are intrinsically sensory. Therefore, it does matter what one sees, hears, touches, smells, and tastes on shaping of the impressions of a destination and consequently experiences, whether one is aware of that or not.

This also justifies application when conducting the destination inventory. After having completed the destination inventory, one can analyze and evaluate messages that for instance suppliers are sending out to their visitors. Some of the questions that focus on senses that one may ask are: What are the colors of the property (or the colors that are prevailing at destination in general) conveying to the visitors? Were the colors and materials used in built chosen for a specific reason and are they portraying it justly? Would the interior and exterior environment of the property (or again destination in general) be described as warm, tidy and welcoming or as cold, dirty and uninviting?
What makes it such? Are the façades appealing and kept in a good condition? It all comes down to explaining the meaning of a certain color, sound or a particular smell that one can sense at the destination (that is, the message that destination “sends out” to its visitors).

In other words, one can analyze colors, sounds, smells, tastes, and materials that are prevailing at the destination and think of the ways they translate. For instance, if green color prevails, it may translate as an emphasis on connection to the nature or tranquility at the destination. Dimmed lights and/or candles may imply romantic atmosphere, whereas small properties/facilities may suggest intimacy. Loud music may translate as the emphasis on entertainment and the night life. Food that one is able to smell after entering into the restaurant may translate as an invitation to order something more than appetizer, to try local cuisine specials. Or it may translate as coming home after the hard days work and not having to think about cooking but instead having someone welcoming you and taking care of you. In addition, taste of certain food or wine at the destination may suggest uniqueness of the offer or preparation at that particular destination. Use of stone as a building material may imply coldness, but at the same time, may translate as a tradition. Wood may imply simplicity of the rural living, yet also the warmth.

Overall, the main criterion for evaluation is basically after getting the answers to the sensory questions (such as those mentioned above) or simply their meanings is to keep asking oneself is that the message that I (for example, supplier) or we (for example, destination) want to convey to the visitors.
The key here is to understand that colors, sounds, and so forth that visitors (both current and potential) see or in any way relate to activity-event-supplier in Long Lake send out a certain message to them. If one is to take Long Lake snowmobiling as the example, read the information that is available about it in different sources, see the pictures of it, a person interested in snowmobiling will get a certain idea and form opinion of it. For example, this person may visualize snowmobiling in Long Lake to be an adrenalin-charged activity or quite the opposite, a slow-paced activity where the value is placed more on socializing and enjoying outdoors – and all that based on information one has heard/read and/or the pictures that one has seen. Thus, this individual will form the impression of Long Lake’s snowmobiling. In addition, information/pictures can make this activity appealing/non-appealing to the individual and may/may not evoke the interest in participating in it. For instance, just a sound of snowmobile on the website that talks about Long Lake’s snowmobiling may evoke the interest of the individual and possibly get him to think “I want to do this right now”

So, this is where tourism planners need to be cautious. In other words, if they want to promote Long Lake’s snowmobiling more as a competition-oriented activity, they should use promotional material that conveys exactly that message to the visitors. Relatively, if they want to attract people to come to Long Lake in winter and promote Long Lake’s snowmobiling more as a leisure activity for all ages, they should use promotional material that conveys that such as pictures of friends and families having fun in a cold while snowmobiling. The key idea being to use the material that will make this activity and experience of engaging into it appealing and at the same time making
sure to send out the exact message that tourism planners want to convey to visitors about the Long Lake’s snowmobiling.

Identify impressions and areas for possible improvement

Tourist destination

This is where the input of both visitors and local people comes in. One needs to find out about their impressions of a destination and identify areas for possible improvement. This is also the opportunity to see whether there is a mismatch in terms of the messages that destination is trying to convey and visitors’ interpretations – it may happen that the visitors are interpreting the messages differently than the local people would want to. At the same time, one can find out about both positive and negative impressions and identify where more attention should be devoted to entirely eliminate the negative ones.

There are several ways to identify visitors’ impressions. Brief written survey could be distributed to a sample of visitors, for instance with the assistance of owners of the lodging properties. Also, if one is able to make a site visit, one could also make informal interviews with the visitors and inquire about their impressions. It is surely more convenient if one already lives in that specific destination. Other way to find out visitors’ impressions would be to ask for the visitors’ comment cards from the lodging properties, restaurants, tourism offices, and so forth in case that those have been used to get visitors’ impressions. Some may also have a log instead for their visitors to write down their impressions and experience of the place. Additionally, logs with the visitors’ comments and impressions may have been also created online so that the visitors could write down their comments once at home.
Similar data gathering methods could be used to find out about impressions of the local people. Brief written survey could be distributed to a sample of local people. Also, informal interviews could be done in person if one has the opportunity to visit the destination and to talk to people. Alternative option could be to arrange the phone interviews, for instance with the lodging owners, store owners, people working in tourism offices, and so forth.

Long Lake

If taking birding festival in Long Lake as the example, both tourism planners and visitors (potential and current) may be asked the same questions to answer in order to get the impressions of both groups on the same event. Sample questions that they may be asked are as follows:

- Based on information you know or have heard/read about this event, would you say that this event is for knowledgeable bird watchers only or for anyone who enjoys outdoors? What makes you say that?

- What impressions do you have in terms of whom you would expect to see among visitors who come to Long Lake for birding festival? Would you expect to see more men, women, or mixed?

- Would you describe birding festival as a family activity? Why/Why not?

- What expectations (if any) do you have in terms of fees involved with this event – do you see it as an activity for upscale people only or as an affordable event to participate in? Justify your answer.

- What is your impression of the overall event organization?
Hence, besides finding out the impressions of both Long Lake’s tourism planners and visitors on this event, the benefit of asking the same questions to both of these groups lies in identifying what visitors perceive this event to be vs. what Long Lakers think that visitors perceive. This also gives the opportunity to tourism planners to make corrections in terms of eliminating the mismatch (if needed).

Assess all aspects of experience that a destination can offer to current and potential visitors: opportunities for enjoyment, learning, escaping

Tourist destination

After familiarizing with a destination, evaluating messages that are sent out to visitors and identifying their impressions, the next step is to think of all aspects of the experiences that the specific destination can offer to its visitors.

For beginning, one can refer to the experience inventory conducted earlier, and thus, list all the aspects of experiences that one can engage in or associate with this destination and make assessment of each. In other words, when analyzing particular experience, one should think of what exactly creates this experience and what these constituting elements of experience offer to the visitors. This can be applied to any destination after conducting its inventory. Dublin, the capital of Ireland, may serve as an example. After completing the destination inventory (Dublin as a whole), one may opt to focus first on the entertainment experience as a part of the overall Dublin experience. The constituting elements of the entertainment experience in Dublin may range anywhere from drinking Guinness in one of the pubs in Temple Bar area to watching the performance of Riverdance in Gaiety Theatre. One may translate these as the
opportunities for enjoyment, escaping (for example, relaxed pub atmosphere, friendliness of the Irish people, Irish music), and/or the opportunities for learning (for example, learning about Riverdance, why it became known as one of symbols of Ireland all over the world, learning about other Irish beers besides Guinness and at the same time why Guinness is so popular). Thus, while watching Riverdance, visitors are passive observers of the show who absorb the entire experience, whereas people who drink Guinness in pubs actively participate in the overall entertainment experience and are immersed in it, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Dublin entertainment example (Zekan, 2006).

Absorption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participation</th>
<th>Active Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riverdance audience</td>
<td>Guinness drinkers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immersion


This translation or the assessment is a reference to Pine and Gilmore’s “The Experience Realms” model that was explained in Chapter 2. Basically, it all comes down to taking each experience and its constituting elements and placing them within Pine and Gilmore’s model. In that way one can not only analyze the role and the behavior of the visitor, but also the level of his/her absorption or immersion into chosen aspect of the
experience. As one could see in the example above, by doing this one actually places the aspects of experiences into Pine and Gilmore’s “The Experience Realms” and identifies which of those are opportunities for enjoyment, learning, and/or escaping. In this particular case it turned out that Riverdance audience belongs to entertainment section of the model, whereas Guinness drinkers to the escapist section. Additionally, one may come across aspects of experiences that are not exclusively part of one section, but instead encompass more sections: being at the same time the opportunity for enjoyment, learning and escaping.

The key note being to include as many experiences that can be found at the destination as possible so that later on, through the assessment and system of elimination, the focus remains placed on those experiences that are diversifying and thus, as such can bring competitive advantage to the destination.

**Long Lake**

Tourism planners are here to assess all aspects of the experiences that any of the events, activities or suppliers can offer to Long Lake visitors. If taking canoeing racing event again as the example, tourism planners can make reference to Pine and Gilmore’s “The Experience Realms” model and analyze canoeing experience that is promoted through the event itself. In other words, make clear on what is this experience made of (participation in race only? Spending time with families? Enjoying outdoors?) and what is the role of visitor (that is, whether this event appeals only to people who participate in the event or also to observers?). Hence, one comes to the conclusion that this particular event is or can be promoting much more than just one experience, as shown in Figure 6.
Figure 6: Long Lake's canoeing race event example (Zekan, 2006).

**Absorption**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participation</th>
<th>Active Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race observer</td>
<td>Parent teaching his child how to canoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person “being” on lake</td>
<td>Race participant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Immersion**


The key note at this point being to identify as many experiences as possible since tourism planners have yet to answer the following two questions:

- Out of all these experiences, what kind of canoeing experience is currently promoted through this event and
- what canoeing experience would they want to promote through the event.

**Ascertain the existing themes of the experience**

**Tourist destination**

Building upon what was accomplished earlier, the unveiling challenge at this point is to determine the existing themes of experiences and their design elements (name, colors, materials, decorations, music, overall ambient); not to evaluate them. Pine and Gilmore (1999) talked about importance of themes, as it was referenced in Chapter 2.

Thus, one should refer to experience inventory that was conducted earlier and address each individual experience and its existing theme (if any). If one takes local
dining experience as an example, he/she may look at the name of the restaurant, colors that are used, interior environment in general and ask: what is prevailing in this dining experience?

For instance, dinner at a property that looks as a medieval castle in proximity to Lloret del Mar, Spain is a dining experience for the visitors. Even from the outside it may be assumed that the theme at this dining facility is medieval times. One learns soon that design elements support this theme and thus, create the experience for the visitors. Once entering, visitor is given a crown and kindly greeted by the staff whose clothing may be associated with the artwork from the past times. Continually, once seated in dimly lit vast room, it is apparent that all tables are facing towards and surrounding the sandy battle ground, which alludes to the visitors that a certain show will take place during the course of the night. No utensils are provided, so once the soup is served in a huge bowl, one does not have any other choice but to drink it. Same with the entrée – instead of using fork and knife, one can only use his/her hands to eat a grilled chicken. When it comes to beverages, red wine and water are served to everyone. Also, all lights are aiming at the center ground, which here literally becomes a stage for the battles of knight riders, dressed in armor, with shield and spears. The desired outcome here is apparently to have the visitors completely captivated by the overall medieval theme so that this dining experience becomes memorable and recognizable for them. And exactly theme with its design elements (clothing of the staff, crowns, lighting, lack of utensils, battles of the knights) makes it such.

Question such as: “What exactly makes this experience recognizable in visitors’ minds?” can also be a starting point in determining if the experience has been themed.
Any part of experience that can be described as dominating, compelling and/or memorable in any way should be taken into consideration when ascertaining the existing themes of the experience. That is exactly what builds a theme of that particular experience on which the visitors will base their impressions and expectations.

**Long Lake**

Once experiences have been identified, the challenge that tourism planners face is to determine whether any of the experiences are themed. For example, the experience of staying at the Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake – does it have a theme; is there something prevailing about it that makes the stay at this hotel recognizable?

Tourism planners need to be aware of the fact that theme of the hotel is what can make the experience of staying at it recognizable. In order to answer whether hotel already has a theme, they can seek to find it in the name of hotel, colors that are used, design elements, and interior environment in general. They may ask themselves what do expressions such as “Adirondack”, “turn-of-the-century hotel”, “take a trip back into a past era and relax in our rustic Adirondack taproom”, and “before you leave, everyone will know your name” that are found on hotel’s website say to potential visitor about this hotel experience and whether there is a prevailing theme in them. Visitors will base their impressions and expectations of a certain experience based on the information they read and the pictures they see. And if the theme exists, the overall experience of this hotel is more likely to be remembered and distinguished in the minds of the visitors than if the opposite was true and theme did not exist at all.
Identify visitor markets based on experience types and needs, wants, and behaviors of the current and potential visitors

Tourist destination

This is where one needs to decide on which visitor markets to target. Being aware of the wide array of experience types that can be found on a destination from the inventory conducted earlier, the challenge now is to match them with the appropriate visitor markets. Different visitor markets will probably be attracted to different experiences that destination can offer to them: honeymooners will likely seek destinations that enable get-away experiences, while business people may come to the particular destination only with the purpose of attending the conference and the networking experiences.

Ritchie and Crouch (2003) stated, as it was referenced in Chapter 2, that the way to deal with experience-visitor matching challenge would be to basically start with identifying visitor markets that have been coming to a destination, to get to know the market segments and trends thoroughly. This involves analyzing the past records on visitors in order to get as many information on their needs, wants and behaviors as possible with the idea of finding out what kind of experiences they may seek to find at the destination. Thus, based on findings and experience types, the next step is to do the matching between experience types and visitor markets and keep asking: who can a destination serve best?

It may be the case that the visitor markets that destination can serve best are already coming to the destination. At the same time, it may be the case that additional visitor markets would need to be targeted if the destination can serve them better. The
key here is to approach this entire process as realistically as possible, and to take all limits and opportunities into consideration.

Long Lake

For example, when it comes to fishing in Long Lake and whom to target, sample questions that tourism planners may answer are as follows:

~ Who is most likely to come and participate in this activity? Why?
~ What do you know about that specific visitor market?
~ Is that the market that Long Lake should seize to attract?
~ What do you know about trends in fishing in the Adirondack Park in general?

Answering these questions can help them to answer the main question in regards to fishing: who can Long Lake serve best? Knowing the visitor markets and trends thoroughly is of huge help in matching particular fishing experiences with appropriate markets and thus emphasizing those experiences in marketing of Long Lake’s fishing. Note to keep in mind: if tourism planners want to attract families with children to come for a fishing to Long Lake, they would want to emphasize different fishing experiences (for example, spending time away with your family, teaching the child how to fish, and so forth) in Long Lake’ promotional material to appeal to them than if they are to attract experienced fishers only.
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

Determine if the theme needs to be modified to make the experience more engaging for the visitor markets

Tourist destination

This is where one should go a step back and refer to the existing themes of experiences, analyze them (that is, determine whether design elements, such as color, sounds, and so forth support the theme, create Pine and Gilmore’s “unified storyline”, and are captivating the visitors) and decide on the possible modifications. The goal is to have experiences that are engaging for the visitor markets, or in other words, that captivate their attention, and are challenging and interesting to them so that they come to the specific destination to be immersed in them. Pine and Gilmore’s writings on theming the experience and principles for theme developing that were explained in Chapter 2 support this and can be used to decide on whether the theme is compelling or if it needs to be modified.

Therefore, according to Pine and Gilmore (1999) and their five principles, some of the questions that one may ask are: Is the theme compelling, captivating and memorable? What makes it such? Does the theme create a completely new reality that is everything but similar to the visitors’ daily lives? Does it integrate space, time, and matter into a cohesive, realistic whole? Or in other words, do all design elements strongly support the chosen theme? Does the theme create multiple places within a place? Does it give a feeling to the visitors that they stepped in the several different worlds once they came to a destination? Does the theme fit the character of the enterprise or destination that creates (that is, Pine and Gilmore’s “stages”) the experience? Medieval times theme in the example mentioned earlier surely fits the character of the property that looks like a
medieval caste, whereas, hard rock theme may not be appropriate nor would it fit the character of this particular property. Answers to these questions will help in determining whether the current theme of the experience is a “strong” theme that will make the experience memorable for the visitors or if it needs to be modified to become such a theme.

Long Lake

After ascertaining the existing themes of the experience, tourism planners are to analyze them in order to make sure that all design elements support the theme. If taking Hoss’s Country Corner store in Long Lake as the example – learning about the theme of this property’s experience helps in determining whether there is an area for improvement in order to make it more captivating and appealing to the visitors. What tourism planners can do is to analyze the theme of the store by referring to Pine and Gilmore’s five principles and answer questions such as:

~ If you think that there is a prevailing theme in store, would you say that the theme is captivating? Why/why not?

~ How would you describe it?

~ Do all design elements (colors and materials used, interior ambient) support the theme?

~ Does it give a feeling of escaping the reality of everyday life?

~ In your opinion, what would make it captivating and memorable?

Furthermore, Hoss’s Country Corner store is described as “…unique shopping experience that will keep the Adirondacks in your home all year…” and is “…catering all your gift
and Adirondack needs”, according to the store’s website. Therefore, tourism planners may also want to think about the correlation between the theme that is presented/emphasized in the store and these messages that are used in store’s promotion and whether any modifications should be done to make them more captivating for the visitors.

Decide on experiential areas by focusing on target markets and four dimensions of the service experience in tourism

Tourist destination

Not all types of experience that can be found on a destination can be equally competitive or bring to that particular destination competitive advantage among other destinations. Therefore, the focus needs to be placed on those experiences with the most potential of turning the destination in general into a diversified destination experience for its visitors.

In order to make an appropriate decision on which experiential areas to focus, one should first think of destination’s target markets. After identifying them earlier, making decision on the markets that destination can serve best, and doing the matching process between the experiences that can be found at the destination and visitor markets, one should select and work on those experiences that seem to be in the greatest demand (common ground) for the visitor markets that one is targeting.

Second, one should include Ritchie and Crouch’s four dimensions of the service experience in tourism, as referenced in Chapter 2, into his/her decision on determining the experiential areas. One should think of experiential areas that satisfy the needs of the visitors to do something that they really like to do, what is memorable, thrilling, different
for them, what gives them a feeling of escape. But at the same time, what makes them feel safe, relaxed, private, involved into experience, and important.

For example, diving lessons could be one of the choices of experiential areas for a seafront destination with an extremely rich underwater world to focus on and that at the same time could satisfy the above stated needs of the visitors. And the diving instructors would be the ones to ensure delivery of diversified diving experiences. Assumption can be made that people who sign up for diving lessons are there because they want to learn how to dive, like water, and are interested in exploring the underwater world - so they are here to satisfy their need to do something they like to do, yet do not know how to do it. At the same time, this is a new, different experience for them and they are excited about it. Trained diving instructors are there to make this experience memorable for them, understandably in a positive way. They are there to teach them different techniques, safety, and so forth in order to make new divers feel comfortable, safe and aware of the fact that they are actually in charge of diving process itself. This also shows the divers that they are taken seriously from the beginning. Furthermore, they are there to educate them about different species that can be seen under the sea and which they will be able to see only when diving at this particular destination. Basically, diving instructors are there to open an entirely new world for them and make them part of it. It all comes to choosing experiential areas that can satisfy above stated needs of the visitors and at the same time making them a diversified experience for them.
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

*Long Lake*

Regardless on whether one talks about event, activity or supplier, the main idea for tourism planners at this point is to be able to say: “Ok, these are the parts of this activity/event/property that seem to appeal to the majority of visitors…they are different; they provide feeling of escape and are memorable because of...”. For example, if analyzing snowmobiling, certainly not all aspects of Long Lake’s snowmobiling experience will be equally competitive or have the same potential of turning Long Lake into a diversified snowmobiling experience for its visitors. So, tourism planners should decide on which experiential areas of snowmobiling to focus. Answering the following questions may help them in their decision making process:

~ What do visitors that come to Long Lake for this activity seek?

~ What aspect of this activity do you think has the strongest appeal for the majority of the visitors who come to Long Lake for snowmobiling?

~ What aspect of this activity do you think has the most potential in giving the visitors something different? Memorable? Thrilling?

~ What aspect of this activity gives them feeling of escape? Privacy? Relaxation?

In addition, if they opt to focus more on the social aspect of snowmobiling experience (rather than on races), they should emphasize this in the promotional material on Long Lake’s snowmobiling. In other words, they need to choose messages (that is, pictures, words) that convey a different experience of snowmobiling in Long Lake to the visitors.
Decide on experiential areas by focusing on what is authentic and memorable about this specific destination and what can bring possible competitive advantage

Tourist destination

Continually, one should think of what is authentic about this particular destination, what exactly makes the visit and experience of this destination memorable, and focus all energy on those areas. When it comes to authenticity of the particular destination, the task is to think of what exactly can visitors find or engage themselves in while there that is unique and typical just for that destination.

For instance, fishermen’s nights are typical for Dalmatian region on the coast of the Adriatic Sea in Croatia and as such can be the example of authentic experiential areas. They can be described as the local events where seafood, cheese, and wine are served all over the promenade and boats turned into the restaurants, servers dressed in seamen, local music playing, and so forth. Hence, these events are authentic entertainment experiences that visitors will most likely opt to engage themselves in while vacationing in one of the seaside towns in Croatia. Basically, when it comes to experiences, authenticity is the greatest opportunity destination could seize to use to its advantage, since it will evoke visitor’s interest and thus will make destination experience diversified in his/her mind.

Lastly, one should think of the experiences that are most likely to generate a competitive advantage for the particular destination and justify what makes it such. Using the above mentioned example, seaside town on the coast of the Adriatic Sea is likely to become more competitive if it focuses on the authentic entertainment experiences instead of night clubs experiences exclusively that can be found at any destination. Thus, after taking everything from above and balancing with the limits and opportunities within
destination, one should come to the decision on where the overall focus of the experiential areas should be.

*Long Lake*

Authenticity is the greatest opportunity Long Lake could seize to use to its advantage, since it will evoke visitor’s interest and diversify Long Lake from other lake destinations in his/her mind. If taking Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake as the example and trying to decide on what is authentic about this specific property, tourism planners may ask some of the following questions:

~ Is there any part (aspect) of the stay at this hotel that you can describe as authentic? If so, what makes it such?

~ If not, what could make the stay at this hotel authentic?

~ How could this hotel and stay at it (any aspect of it) diversify Long Lake among other destinations where visitors for example come for leisure?

In addition, this hotel can go with “going back to basics” positioning and promote it as such. It is a different and captivating message for the visitors that implies that they will have the basic things they need for their stay there; can forget about any luxuries and at the same time feel good about it. Various experiences can be emphasized along with it (for example, seclusion, get-away, feels like home atmosphere) and communicated in the hotel’s promotional material to the visitors, as an added value for making the stay at this property memorable.

Additionally, Long Lake’s authenticity and a possible diversifying factor could lie in overall town’s “going back to basics” positioning which tourism planners may opt to
pursue so that visitors will be able to associate or expect a distinctive, authentic feeling with Long Lake. Understandably, the challenge remains to bring the majority of local people to agree upon the overall town’s positioning.

Establish destination experiential positioning

Tourist destination

The task here is to convey the experiences to the visitor markets, to create a certain picture, portray a position of the destination in terms of experiences and unique experiential offer of this particular destination in the minds of the visitor markets. This is where the destination’s authenticity and themes of experiences play a big role. Overall challenge here is to take all the information collected and analyzed earlier and decide on how destination exactly wants to be perceived in the visitors’ minds and thus what does it take to establish such a position, such an impression of the destination. And having in mind that the desired ultimate goal would be that visitor markets potentially start perceiving this destination as diversified and superior among other destinations in terms of experiences they can engage in when visiting this destination.

Long Lake

Tourism planners are here to decide on how they want to position Long Lake/activity/event/supplier, as well as on what needs to be done so that visitors start perceiving it in that way. If one is to aim at one particular supplier and thus take Hoss’s Country Corner store as the example, this could translate as making sure that this store
portrays Long Lake as “such and such” shopping experience. As documented earlier, Hoss’s Country Corner store is a place that positions itself (or is known) as:

- “...unique shopping experience that will keep the Adirondacks in your home all year...”
- “...nothing that children cannot touch or do...”
- “...lots of fun...”
- “...many things that are not available elsewhere...”
- “...building itself interesting to visit...”

The key idea at this point being for tourism planners to make certain that this is exactly the image of Long Lake that they want for visitors to have in their minds and thus to use this positioning when promoting the Long Lake’s shopping experience. In addition to ensuring that this store’s positioning goes hand in hand with overall Long Lake’s positioning.

Develop marketing tools to support the promotion of destination experience

Tourist destination

After decision is made on visitor markets, experiential areas and experiential positioning, the next challenge becomes how to communicate uniqueness of the destination experience to the targeted visitor markets. This is where one decides on the best way to reach the markets.

For example, one may opt to develop destination logo that will portray desired destination experiential position to the visitor markets. The main themes of diversifying experiences should be present in all advertising materials and PR activities. The choice of
advertising materials and PR activities will probably differ from destination to destination, depending mostly on what one perceives to be the best way to reach desired visitor markets and the budget that is available for the promotional purposes of the particular destination.

Nonetheless, one should aim on using experiential themes and images that reflect destination experiences in order to create the emotional bond with the current and potential visitor markets. For example, instead of writing only the article about diving for all ages in Maldives, one may decide to include pictures of family of divers taken while they were in the midst of corrals and surrounded by different kinds of fish. The impact of these pictures on the readers would be twofold. First, readers would learn that there is a possibility for family diving. Second, if they are interested themselves in diving and seeing the wealth of the underwater world on the pictures, they would probably say “I would want to dive there”.

Long Lake

This is where tourism planners need to decide on advertising materials and/or PR activities they would you use to reach desired visitor markets to inform them about Long Lake and its offer— for instance, to reach fishers to inform them about fishing contents taking place in Long Lake. Hence, images that closely reflect Long Lake fishing experience should be used in this activity’s promotional material in order to create the emotional bond with the current and potential visitors. In other words, using pictures over words to convey experiences and by doing that help in marketing of Long Lake as a fishing destination.
So, instead of listing all kinds of fish that can be found in Long Lake, one may opt for the images that will aim at emotions of the visitors and consequently connect with them — much more powerful than words when the aim is to convey experiences. For example, if tourism planners want to portray fishing experience in Long Lake as a family activity, it would be much more effective to include the picture of a small girl fishing with her dad instead of only listing the fish. Choice of images surely depends on what experience tourism planners want to convey and which visitor markets they are targeting. Listings (of kinds of fish in this particular case) are useful; however, they do not do much when it comes to conveying experiences associated with the particular activity.

Implement experiential marketing campaign

Tourist destination

After deciding on the best way to reach the visitor markets, which advertising materials to use and PR activities to organize, this is where one actually puts the things in motion, that is, implements experiential marketing campaign.

Basically, it all comes down to involving the key players at the destination (for example, owners of the lodging and dining properties, tourism office) to start thinking about putting campaign into motion and timing for it in order to promote their destination(s). Or better to say, to promote the experience of their destination(s). Thus, this is where one sends out the promotional material, posts the material on the Internet, organizes PR activities, puts commercials on radio and TV — anything that is perceived and decided earlier upon as the best and affordable way(s) to reach the visitor markets
and that, most importantly, uses experiential themes and images that reflect experience of the destination.

*Long Lake*

Experiences that tourism planners want to promote with the Long Lake’s events/activities/suppliers should be at the heart of the marketing campaign. Experiential marketing can be labeled as a non-traditional marketing and as such requires non-traditional marketing channels. In other words, tourism planners could find relying less on brochures and more on web and public relations much more effective when it comes to marketing experiences associated with events/activities/suppliers in Long Lake, in addition to using more visuals and less text as detailed before.

Furthermore, in experiential marketing campaigns tourism planners should place more value on creating relationships with various clubs (for example, bird-watchers, snowmobiling clubs, and so forth) and media outlets and in that way gain access to additional channels to promote experiences that Long Lake offers when it comes to the specific activity/event/supplier. At the same time, tourism planners should emphasize the use of stories to portray experiences in order to give people feeling of what Long Lake is all about. Desired outcome for tourism planners being that people who see a certain picture of Long Lake or read the story about someone’s travel and experiences in Long Lake find themselves desiring to be in that image or in that story.
Decide on the most effective ways to stage destination experience

Tourist destination

Pine and Gilmore (1999) talked about importance of staging an experience, as it was referenced in Chapter 2. The lesson learned from them is that one needs to find the most effective ways to set a stage for engaging the visitor markets. Or in other words, find the most effective ways to deliver experiences that will evoke visitors’ interest and captivate their attention. So here is where one needs to go back to experiences, experiential areas, and themes prevailing at the destination and think about whether they need to be enhanced in order to be a more appropriate stage of his/her destination experiences.

Another lesson from Pine and Gilmore that should not be omitted: one needs to make sure that there is nothing distracting or contradictory to the prevailing themes, since distractions can diminish the entire experience of the destination for the visitor. Local people at the destination that are to any extent involved in creation or delivery of a certain experience should be equally committed to staging the experience for the visitors, so one needs to make sure to have them involved from the beginning and to create “the plan of action” together. This plan will differ from destination to destination. However, what one needs to keep in mind is the fact that local people are the key players in engaging the visitors into experience since they are on the front line, they are in contact with them. One should also put him/herself in the visitors’ position and think about with what kind of impressions they will leave, what they will say about the experience of this place after their visit is completed. If there is anything whatsoever that needs to changed or entirely eliminated that one can think of at this point, this is the chance to do it.
Long Lake

This is where tourism planners need to decide on “the plan of action”. For example, when it comes to canoe racing event, tourism planners need to make sure that there is a clear idea on what canoeing experience is promoted with this event (such as competing and winning the race? Learning how to canoe?). Equally important, there has to be a clear direction for delivering that experience for everyone who is involved in it in Long Lake. For example, if tourism planners promote “learn how to canoe” as a part of the event, in that case experienced canoeists who are willing to teach interested people how to canoe have to be on site for the event. Otherwise, delivery of that particular experience has failed.

In addition, this is also the opportunity for tourism planners to review if there is anything distracting or contradictory to the prevailing theme of canoeing experience and if so, time for them to make changes. At this point, tourism planners should also try to answer the question on impressions they believe the visitors will leave Long Lake after coming there for this event (either as a participant in the race or just an observer). If tourism planners are not satisfied with the impressions they anticipate the visitors will leave Long Lake, this is a chance to make changes and to ensure that canoeing experience is as promoted once visitors come to attend the event.

Deliver diversified experience

Tourist destination

One has to come it at last – delivery of a diversified experience! After all the analyses, work and experiential marketing campaigns, one has finally come to the point to have the
visitors at his/her destination. This is a final implementation stage. Here it all comes down to everyone playing his/her part in delivery of experiences as agreed earlier (reference to Pine and Gilmore’s actors) while engaging the visitors into destination experience and making sure that they leave with positive impressions that will yield memories.

**Long Lake**

At this point visitors are already in Long Lake so this is time for the action. If they are staying at the Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake, tourism planners and employees at hotel must ensure that visitors’ stay is what they wanted it to be in terms of experience they have there. In other words, if tourism planners were promoting “going back to basics” then that has to be the case once the visitor is on site – for example, the interior of the hotel and amenities found there must justify the experience that was promoted prior to arrival. In this particular case, what they aim to accomplish is to involve the visitors in “going back to basics” experience which will make the stay at this hotel memorable for them. And ideally, diversify the experience of this hotel from other hotels in the Adirondack Park.

Additionally, tourism planners should think of which part of the stay at this hotel would specifically yield memories of being there and thus make sure that even potential visitors are aware of that. For example, if promoting “fun and personal contact to wildlife”, tourism planners could opt to share the pictures of the visitors with the moose and the bear in the lobby on the hotel’s website, which is surely a distinctive part of staying at this hotel besides being a proof to potential visitors that promoted experiences are delivered.
Objective 5: To determine challenges to applying “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” to Long Lake

Model – The Way to Go?

The section that follows briefly highlights Long Lakers’ responses to the questions on the proposed study, along with some of the issues/challenges that were brought up during the presentation itself and were not documented in the written surveys. As noted earlier, a sample survey and complete surveys that were returned to the researcher can be found in Appendix 2.

Following the introductory part that asked for their names and their connections to tourism in Long Lake, attendees were asked to state their overall opinion on emphasizing experiences in marketing destinations such as Long Lake. Thus, opinions were divided. Using experiences as the focus was labeled as an excellent tool to use in promotion; however, at the same time, the note of caution followed. In other words, the opinion was that if communities are to place emphasis on experiences this may result in discouraging visitation for smaller, non-emphasized reasons. The use of marketing that emphasizes experiences was considered to be more appropriate for business specific marketing or for areas that are built around a very specific experience (Marketing the Amazon Basin for Eco-Tourism was given as the example). In addition, the concept was labeled as logical. Photos were evaluated as an excellent way to communicate activities that are available to those considering a destination. If one provides photos of various forms of family fun this may encourage other families to enjoy the same. Same with the photos that may evoke childhood memories – a person seeing those may want to replicate those memories. What was found challenging is the fact that is very difficult to get business owners to agree on
much. In addition, it was stated that although Long Lake has much to offer, other towns in regions offer a lot too.

Second question asked how realistic is to think that the focus on experiences in Long Lake marketing can help in diversifying Long Lake among other lake destinations in the Adirondack Park. Agreement was that is somewhat realistic and difficult, since people are independent in thinking. In other words, it was stated that Long Lake has a number of unique experiences and if these could be developed with the cooperation of local businesses there may be a possibility of opening additional markets. Agreement was that focusing on a single experience could be disastrous since Long Lake has basically the same offer and is not different enough from other towns in the Adirondack Park. Therefore, the thought was that Long Lake must offer more than the experience which can be gained in many other areas. This promotion scheme was thought to be more realistic for the individual businesses. Some things that were listed to set Long Lake apart from other towns in the Adirondack Park are seaplane service and the fact that Long Lake is the longest lake in the Adirondack Park. It was also said that these do not necessarily encourage visitors to come to Long Lake, although they do diversify this lake from others.

In continuation attendees were asked to state their opinion on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed concept. Many experiences that are available in Long Lake for tourists, as well as very active tourism department that plans all the events, were labeled as strength. Businesses that sell a particular product or service can very easily use experience marketing because they have a very specific focus, and experiences tend to focus on single reasons to visit. What was found challenging is when it comes to meeting the needs of the larger community (for example, funding not available for producing
quality informational pieces and enough brochures to meet diverse experiences; could not afford to publish color photos and art until recently). It was also emphasized that political agencies such Town of Long Lake, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department cannot ignore their constituents (Chamber or Business Association or any other non-governmental TPA) and their decisions. Additionally, it was considered that if a community such as Long Lake uses a promotion activity that ignores or at least downplays one experience over another that this could have disastrous results. Statement was made that experience concept ignores the person who is trying to absorb everything an area has to offer – casual sightseers. It was also noted that this concept has been used and promoted for about ten years and that this study successfully reminded of the areas that Long Lake needs to work on.

The last question asked the attendees to tell what they feel is the best way to market Long Lake. This approach on using experiences was described as the ideal – with proper funding. In other words, marketing plan could be developed that would continue present publications while at the same time expanding to promote a specific experience. In that scenario, Long Lake would produce the variety of publications and promote in specific target markets. The hope was that this study would go one step further and suggest where to market specifically to replace Long Lake’s current “shotgun” approach. Suggestion to use writers has been considered to be an excellent idea with a probable tremendous positive impact; however, the challenge so far turned out to be finding the writers. Furthermore, media advertising is still found to be extremely important, since there are many people who do not use Internet at all. What is more, the visits to the website tend to increase after the ads are run. Widely distributing brochures which have
photos of the various experiences available in Long Lake was also felt to be one the best ways to market Long Lake, in addition to the word-of-mouth and using unique qualities (seaplanes, 14-mile lake, wilderness adventures, camping for the physically disabled/challenged, nature trails).

Additionally, one of the issues that was brought up during the presentation itself and was not mentioned in the written surveys is the concern about taking some experiences and trying to create a positive experience out of not-so-positive environment – in other words, over promising. Statement was made that visitors must be told what to expect (for example, if a hotel does not have the expected amenities) in order to avoid the potential for disappointment. It was also said that Hamilton County in general has moved in the proposed marketing direction about five years ago (more by default than design) and that the marketing opportunity is perhaps not so much “teaching your child to fish”, but instead “we will teach you how to fish so you can teach your child” (reference made to Pine and Gilmore’s “The Experience Economy”). Current advertising was described as a “shotgun” (fire and hope you hit something) and that Long Lake would like to move towards “rifle shooting” (to hit a particular target). Problem may also lie in the possibility that Long Lake is perhaps marketing something that it does not have and that photo opportunities could show specific experiences. Overall idea of using experiences in marketing seems to need neighborhood and regional support; hence everyone in the community must understand and “buy into” the strategy and the selection of a target market.
Chapter 5

Conclusions & Recommendations

Based on the feedback received in regards to proposed “Destination Experience Differentiation Model” on using experiences as a differentiation tool in marketing destinations such as Long Lake, conclusion can be drawn that there is a limited applicability of the model to a destination as a whole. On the other hand, proposed model was affirmed to be more applicable to individual businesses at destination.

To justify above conclusions, one of the issues that seem to be of Long Lakers’ main concern about this model is the understanding that success of the model depends on cooperation of all local businesses. In other words, everyone in the community needs to “buy into” the model. This has been acknowledged as the obstacle to applying the proposed model to Long Lake as a whole, as it is difficult to get business owners to agree on much.

Researcher has also found that bringing local people to agree upon how they want to position their destination as a whole is challenging. In other words, the ideal scenario would be that majority of local people (if not all) agrees on the way they want their destination to be perceived in minds of the potential visitors in terms of experiences that are emphasized as unique/differentiating. In addition, this would understand that the individual businesses at destination are working towards the same themes and experiences, but as well as on attracting the same visitor markets that destination as a whole has ideally agreed upon previously. Reality is that this is extremely challenging for any destination to accomplish.
As the overall attitude is that the use of experiences is more appropriate for individual businesses, then a recommendation to the individual businesses in Long Lake would be to embrace experiences in their own marketing and in that way to differentiate themselves from the competitive businesses in the Adirondack Park. As addressed earlier, when it comes to goods and services, businesses in Long Lake have more or less the same offer as their competition all over the Adirondack Park. What consequently happens it that there is no distinctive feeling with any of the businesses. So, the question that owners of the individual businesses in Long Lake need to answer is what would make shopping/stay at their properties diversified in the minds of potential visitors from the shopping/stay at any other property in the Adirondack Park? Experiences – for all the reasons stated throughout the study. Hence, if individual businesses decide to focus on experiences as differentiating factors, they need to make sure that the experiences they want to convey to potential visitors are reflected in their marketing materials through the use of pictures, stories that justly portray those experiences. In other words, the purpose of conveying the experiences to potential visitors’ is to captivate their attention, to create a distinctive feeling about the certain property, without over promising.

What would consequently happen is that Long Lake as a whole would have individual businesses that use experiences in their individual marketing and have consequently become a distinctive place for the visitors. In other words, the sum of these individual businesses and unique experiences that they promote would add and gradually build Long Lake experience. In addition, Long Lake would not need to choose one specific visitor market to target nor would it be “all things to all people”, since individual businesses would target those markets that they find relevant. Thus, Long Lake would
slowly move towards “rifle shooting” marketing (hitting particular visitor markets), which is exactly where Long Lakers want to go, according to the feedback surveys.

It has also been suggested by one of local people that focus on experiences would be ideal approach to take if proper funding was available. However, researcher’s opinion is that experiential marketing material does not require more funding than Long Lake already has for its promotional purposes. It means shifting the focus from listings to pictures and stories to convey experiences and in that way to emotionally connect to the potential visitors. If funding is not available to print in color, black and white picture of a certain experience that individual business wants to promote could prove to be more powerful than any word. If Long Lakers believe in media advertising, they could follow the same principle. And as stated earlier, the goal would be that people who see a certain picture of Long Lake or read the story about someone’s travel and experiences in Long Lake find themselves desiring to be in that picture or in that story. Recommendation remains to decrease the number of brochures (hence cut costs in that way) and rather to make one comprehensive brochure. Additionally, what Long Lakers could find even more cost effective is to place more value on creating relationships with various clubs (for example, bird-watchers, snowmobiling clubs, and so forth) to gain access to additional channels to promote experiences.

Lastly, it has also been said by one of the local people that Long Lake has a lot to offer, but so do other towns in the Adirondack Park. This is exactly why they should use experiences in marketing: to move from more or less undifferentiated (that is, commoditized) offer all over Adirondack Park and wrap up experiences around Long Lake’s offer and unique qualities that this lake destination possesses. For example,
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

unique quality of Long Lake may be the fact that it is the longest lake in the Adirondack Park and thus this is a diversifying attribute. However, unless there is a story (that is, experience such as get-away on water, promise of quietness, family fun) promoted which potential visitors can associate with it and which will captivate their attention, it will not make much difference to them whether it the longest or the second longest lake in the Adirondack Park. And that is exactly where the value of experience shows and where “Destination Experience Differentiation” model can help.

As documented earlier, proposed model has certain challenges that destination managers may face depending on the size and complexity of their destinations. Researcher has also found certain steps of the model to be challenging to apply. One of these steps is conducting experience inventory (part of step 1 of the model) that can prove as quite a task to do, if one aims on including as many experiences that destination offers as possible in order to be able to filter them afterwards. Furthermore, evaluating messages that are sent out to visitors (step 2), assessing aspects of each individual experience at destination as a whole (step 4), and hence determining their themes (step 5) can prove to be time-consuming tasks that people will not gladly engage in.

However, destination managers who decide to use this model will probably modify it to fit the needs of the individual destinations, whether they opt to apply it to a destination as a whole or to focus on the individual businesses. However, what the real value of this model is that is simply outlines the basic steps for destinations that suffer from commoditization and actually shows them how they could move from the point where they are towards experiences - something that has not been done before. And there should be no doubt whatsoever for any destination on where to go next.
Bibliography


Appendixes
Appendix 1 – E-mail and Phone Interviews

i.) Sample e-mail that was sent out to lodging properties:

Hello,
My name is Bozana Zekan and I am a graduate student at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, NY. I am working on marketing project for Long Lake and therefore would kindly ask for a few minutes of your time. Mr. Robert Gibson, director of Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism in Long Lake, is familiar with my work and has been a huge help to me. There are five questions that I would want to ask you, owner/manager of your specific property in Long Lake, and would greatly appreciate your input. Questions concern your lodging property and Long Lake in general and answering those should take maximum 10 minutes of your time. You may choose to reply to this e-mail and answer the questions in writing. If it is your preference, I will gladly call you, ask you the questions, and write down your answers. Just let me know the phone number (if different from the one on the website) and preferred time to call. Please let me know what is more convenient for you.

The questions are as follows:
1. In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?
2. What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay there?
3. What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?
4. What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?
5. In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?

In addition, please indicate the name of the property, your name (not disclosed, if desired) and title. I can be reached at:
bozana56@yahoo.com
585-475-6968 (work phone, by 4:30 PM)
585-272-0767 (home number, after 5:00 PM)

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation with this Long Lake project. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,
Bozana

ii.) List of properties to which the e-mail was sent to:

~ Hoss's Country Corner
~ Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake
~ Endion
~ Long Lake Lodge Bed and Breakfast
iii.) E-mail interviews:

Green Harbor Motel & Cottages – Owner/Manager
April 30 & May 02, 2006

1.) In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?

Visitors come to Long Lake for the pristine beauty, the quiet, hiking trails, canoeing, and friendliness of the town.
2.) What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay there?

Our property provides a clean childfriendly pleasant atmosphere.

3.) What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?

We have visitors from all over the world, the predominant # from ny, Md. and east coast. Couples and families, our main target are couples and families.

4.) What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?

The Long Lake exp. should provide people with a friendly pleasant atmosphere and a leisurely pace of life, plenty of exposure to nature.

5.) In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?

Most people will remember Green Harbor as a pleasant place to spend some time in friendly, slower paced place where everyone is treated like family.

Waterfront Vacation Cottage
May 12, 2006

1.) In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?

I believe that Long lake attracts people who like the outdoors, and are not looking for a luxury vacation, i.e. Las Vegas. Outdoor oriented people who prefer a beach experience may go to Cape Cod, or the New Jersey shore. Outdoor oriented people who prefer mountains are more likely to come to the Adirondacks, and Long Lake.

2.) What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay there?
My property is a private cottage on the water, where a family may enjoy a vacation and do what they want, without any pressure from anyone else.

3.) What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?
Visitors have been single, married (either with or without children), younger, and older. A wide diversity.

4.) What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?
A small community in the largest state park in the country. LLPRT does a great job of scheduling local events during the summer. Part of my Long Lake experience is to visit either before July 1, or after mid September when the summer tourists are back home.

5.) In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?
My guests have a comfortable experience in a housekeeping cottage which is located in a wooded setting on the water.

iv.) Phone interviews:
All responses were recorded manually by the researcher. Effort has been made to record the answers in their entirety; however, some of them may not be recorded as such.

Hoss's Country Corner – previous owner of the store
May 07, 2006

1.) In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?
For peace and beauty.

2.) What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to shop there?
Many things that are not available elsewhere. Building itself interesting just to visit. Great choice of books.

3.) What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?

Even divided (men-women). Many families especially during the summer. Nothing that children cannot touch or do. Try to advertise the store through newspapers, radio (e.g. to Buffalo, Rochester), direct mail (locally), website.

4.) What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?

Community concern, safety, beauty, great place to raise a family, outdoor experience, hiking, climbing, etc.

5.) In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?

Lot of fun; very friendly and confident employees to enable that.

Long Lake Real Estate, Seaman’s Lakeshore Cabins – Owner and broker

May 10, 2006

1.) In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?

Such a pretty place; getaway from the city and rat-race so to say; many people coming especially after 9/11.

2.) What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay there?

Nice sandy beach, location on the lake, quaint cabins; people coming every year for 20-30 years from Illinois, California, etc.; there was a couple coming for 50 years.

3.) What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?

Families with children, honeymooners; to give them outdoor and getaway experience.
4.) What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?

6th generation Long Laker; the roots are here; special place; two boys who are 7th generation Long Lakers and Adirondackers.

5.) In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?

Very good experience; people want to come to Long Lake; some even decide to buy a property here after coming here for a vacation; some people come for hiking, fishing, and some just to relax and read a book – Long Lake can give them both.

Long View Lodge – General Manager/Owner

May 10, 2006

1.) In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?

Majority of people come for pretty untouched, beautiful nature; no billboards and signs; area quiet and beautiful.

2.) What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay there?

Off the beaten path, all-inclusive, rooms, cabins, beach, dock, restaurant, secluded property.

3.) What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?

Sports, outdoors enthusiasts, fair amount of families, people celebrating anniversaries, honeymooners who then start coming for their anniversaries. Promote through printed material, radio and Internet.

4.) What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?

Close-nit community, people willing to help each other.
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

5.) In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?
Rather unique experience; one that they will not necessary find elsewhere.

Endion – General Manager/Owner
May 12, 2006

1.) In your opinion, why people (visitors, travelers) come to Long Lake?
For lake itself; 14 miles long; lots of lakefront; essentially cheap attraction.

2.) What makes your specific property interesting to them so that they choose to stay there?
It is a hand-made log cabin.

3.) What are your impressions in terms of diversity of the visitors?
Quiet couples (and one child); rent only to three people; promote through real estate.

4.) What does “Long Lake experience” mean to you?
Lake; quietness; town pretty adequate; people who like country come here, not the ones who look for Las Vegas; people do not do extraordinary things; people come for fishing, etc.

5.) In your opinion, what kind of experience will visitors have at your property and in Long Lake in general?
Satisfied people; not much strain; not overcrowded; simple; lake.
Appendix 2 – Feedback Survey

i.) Sample survey that was given out:

Long Lake & Experiences  
Presented by Bozana Zekan  
June 15, 2006

Thank you for finding time to fill out this survey that should take maximum 15 minutes to complete. Your input is greatly appreciated. I would kindly ask you to answer the following questions:

1. Your name (optional):

2. What best describes your connection to tourism in Long Lake?

- □ Lodging
- □ F&B business
- □ Retail/store
- □ Attraction
- □ Marina
- □ Club
- □ Other – please specify __________

3. What is your overall opinion on emphasizing experiences in marketing destinations such as Long Lake?

4. How realistic is to think that the focus on experiences in Long Lake marketing can help in diversifying Long Lake among other lake destinations in the Adirondack Park?

5. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this concept?

6. What do you feel is the best way to market Long Lake?

Thank you!
ii.) First returned survey:

1. Your name (optional): Robert Gibson
First, I want you to know that I felt the presentation was extremely well done. The concept was well presented and explained. It was obvious that because Bozana was not involved at the very start, there were expectations that did not materialize.

2. What best describes your connection to tourism in Long Lake?

- Lodging
- F&B business
- Retail/store
- Attraction
- Marina
- Club
- Other - please specify Local Tourist Promotion Agency

3. What is your overall opinion on emphasizing experiences in marketing destinations such as Long Lake?
Promotion of a community using “experiences” as the focus can be an excellent tool for a community or attraction to use. However, a TPA must be extremely cautious that the emphasis on experiences does not discourage visitation for smaller non-emphasized reasons. I feel that this type of marketing is more appropriate for business marketing or if an area or region built around a very specific experience. For example: Marketing the Amazon Basin for Eco-Tourism.

4. How realistic is to think that the focus on experiences in Long Lake marketing can help in diversifying Long Lake among other lake destinations in the Adirondack Park?
Long Lake has a number of unique experiences. If these can be developed with the cooperation of the local businesses there is the possibility of opening additional markets. However, the concept of focusing on a single experience, for example: canoeing could be a disaster. Long Lake simply is not enough different from other Adirondack communities to be able to offer a product that perhaps 50 other towns could not. Therefore, we must offer more than the experience which can be gained in many other areas. I think that it is more realistic for individual businesses to utilize this promotion scheme successfully. For example: Tom Helms to promote the flying service as one of the only two charter planes left in the Adirondacks.

5. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this concept?
As I have pointed out above, experiences tend to focus on single reasons to visit. This is fine for a business which sells a particular product or service. For example: your use of Hoss’s is excellent. They can very easily use experience marketing because they have a very specific focus.
However, this type of marketing fails when a TPA attempts to meet the need of the larger community. Funding generally is not available to produce quality informational
pieces, nor is it available to cover the cost of producing enough brochures to meet the diverse experiences. As a TPA I am selling “The Adirondack Experience” which is many things to different people.

As a political agency, the Long Lake Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department emphasizes another weakness of this concept. We cannot ignore our constituents. A Chamber or Business Association or any other non-governmental TPA can make decisions which are not always positive for all businesses. In a small community like Long Lake, an promotion activity which ignores or at least downplays one “experience” over another “experience” could have long and disastrous results at the polls.

Finally, the “experience” concept ignores the person who is trying to absorb everything an area has to offer. These are the casual sightseers. The people who may want to go for a easy hike, or canoe paddle or simply drive around and stop when and where they want to.

6. What do you feel is the best way to market Long Lake?

With proper funding, this approach would be the ideal. The Town of Long Lake could develop a marketing plan which continued our present publications, etc. while at the same time, expanding to promote a specific experience.

Long Lake would produce the variety of publications necessary. We would promote Long Lake in specific target markets. It was my hope and understanding that this study would go one step beyond where it ended and there would actually be suggestions where to market rather than using our current shotgun approach of running an ad in a newspaper or magazine and hoping that what you are advertising is going to be read by a person looking for this experience.

Your suggestion that we use “writers” for articles has been tried at the county level. I think that it is an excellent idea and would have a tremendous positive impact. There have been freelancers who have written about the area I find that has had a good response. One experience we wanted to market this way was fishing. However, we have had little luck in finding the writers.

You may find this strange but I may be one of the few people who still feels that media advertising is extremely important. I have noticed that visits to the web site tend to increase after ads are run in a newspaper, etc. I use the internet almost entirely to plan vacations but I also realize that there are many who do not. We who use the internet heavily tend to forget that there are still a large number of people who don’t use the internet at all.

Thank you!
iii.) Second returned survey:

1. Your name (optional): Dixie Lee LeBlanc

2. What best describes your connection to tourism in Long Lake?

☐ Lodging  ☐ Attraction
☐ F&B business  ☐ Marina – (canoes)
☐ Retail/store  ☐ Club
☐  ☐ Other – please specify Town Clerk

3. What is your overall opinion on emphasizing experiences in marketing destinations such as Long Lake?

The concept is logical. Providing photos of individuals participating in various forms of family fun encourages other families to enjoy the same. A photo could evoke childhood experiences that one might want to replicate or engage in with one’s children. Photos are an excellent way to communicate activities available to those considering a destination.

4. How realistic is to think that the focus on experiences in Long Lake marketing can help in diversifying Long Lake among other lake destinations in the Adirondack Park?

This is difficult because Long Lake has basically the same to offer as nearly all other communities in the Adirondack Park, i.e. hiking, swimming, fishing, boating, camping, lodging, restaurants, stores, marinas, etc. The ONE thing that sets Long Lake apart from most other towns is the sea plane service we’ve had here for over sixty years. We also have a cruise & dine restaurant on Raquette Lake that tours the lake.

Long Lake, 14 miles long, is the longest lake in the Adirondacks. Raquette Lake, with 99 miles of shoreline is the 4th largest lake in the State. Long Lake is the 2nd largest town in area in NYS. These facts are not particularly interesting or necessary to encourage vacationers and tourists to come here, although they do diversify Long Lake form other Adirondack towns.

5. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this concept?

Strength – many experiences are available in Long Lake for tourists. Weakness – all, except sea plane service, is available elsewhere. One of our strengths is a very active Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department. They plan many events all year round for residents and tourists to enjoy.

6. What do you feel is the best way to market Long Lake?

Widely distribute brochures which have photos of the various experiences available in Long Lake.
Lodging businesses: spring – fishers, birders, some hunters; nightly rentals; summer – families mostly – weekly rentals; fall – foliage seekers, snowmobilers, skiers, during winter months only 2 hotels and one motel are open. Other rental businesses are not winterized so close until spring.

Bozana – you did a great job. Your hard work certainly paid off. Thank you so much for helping us – please visit sometime. Dixie

Thank you!

iv.) Third returned survey:

1. Your name (optional): Gregg Wallace

2. What best describes your connection to tourism in Long Lake?

☐ Lodging  ☐ Attraction
☐ F&B business  ☐ Marina
☐ Retail/store  ☐ Club

☐ Other – please specify Town Supervisor and Business Owner

3. What is your overall opinion on emphasizing experiences in marketing destinations such as Long Lake?

Very difficult to get business owners to agree on much. We (Long Lake) has a lot to offer, but so does other communities in the region.

4. How realistic is to think that the focus on experiences in Long Lake marketing can help in diversifying Long Lake among other lake destinations in the Adirondack Park?

Somewhat realistic, although in order to market anything you need a goal and gameplan. People are very independent in thinking, it’s difficult to change some.

5. In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this concept?

Unfortunately, this concept has been used and promoted for about 10 years. You did succeed in reminding me of areas that we need to fine tune.

Until recently, L. Lake couldn’t afford to publish color photos and art. We just purchased a commercial color printer. Hopefully our promotions will change.

6. What do you feel is the best way to market Long Lake?

1. Word of mouth, hopefully in a positive manner.
2. Use our unique qualities: sea planes, 14 mile lake, Wilderness Adventures, Camping for the physically disabled/challenged and nature trails.

Thank you!
Appendix 3 - Long Lake Resources*

* Sources: Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Gibson, personal communication, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.

i.) Lodging properties in Long Lake, along with the number of units and times of operation:
- Adams Park Apartment in Town House (1 unit; open year-round)
- Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake (19 units; open year-round)
- Bait Shop Cottage (1 unit; open seasonally)
- Blueberry Hill Motel (7 units; open seasonally)
- Britton Inn & Cabin (1 unit; open seasonally)
- Camp Hilary Cottages (13 units; open seasonally)
- Camp Twilight (1 unit; open seasonally)
- Camp Zamp Bed & Breakfast (5 units; open seasonally)
- Corner Motel (6 units; open year-round)
- Dellwood Cottage On The Lake (no data)
- Emerson Cottages (3 units; open seasonally)
- Endion (cottage; 1 unit; open year-round)
- Green Harbor Motel & Cottages (14 units; open seasonally)
- Guidehouse Guest House & Honeymoon Cottage (2 units; open seasonally)
- Hillside Cottage (1 unit; open year-round)
- Journey's End (cottage; 4 units; open seasonally)
- Long Lake Lodge Bed and Breakfast (5 units; open year-round)
- Long View Lodge (14 units; open year-round)
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

~ Marina Cottages (6 units; open seasonally)
~ Mintaska Cottage (1 unit; open seasonally)
~ Morning Star Inn (4 units; open seasonally)
~ Motel Long Lake & Cottages (8 units; open seasonally)
~ NE-HA_SA_NE (cabin; 1 unit; open year-round)
~ Sandy Point Motel (11 units; open seasonally)
~ Seaman's Lakeshore Cabins (4 units; open seasonally)
~ Shamrock Motel & Cottages (17 units; open seasonally)
~ Sunset Point (3 units; open seasonally)
~ Water's Edge Cottages (5 units; open seasonally)
~ Waterfront Vacation Cottage (2 units; open seasonally)

ii.) Dining places in Long Lake:
~ Adirondack Blarney Stone Irish Restaurant
~ Adirondack Hotel on Long Lake
~ Bakery/Paradise Pastry
~ Camp Hillary Ice Cream Shop
~ Custard's Last Stand Ice Cream
~ Cyber Café
~ Hoss's Country Corner
~ Kickerville Mobil Station & Quick Mart
~ Long Lake Diner
~ Long Lake Knoshery
Long Lake Wine & Spirits
~ Long View Lodge
~ Northern Borne Groceries
~ Rita’s Cakes
~ Slice of Life Pizza
~ Stewart’s Shops
~ The Cellar Restaurant & Tavern
~ The Owls Head Pub
~ Trading Post

iii.) New York State campgrounds that are either in Long Lake township or easily accessible from Long Lake:
~ Brown’s Tract – campsites with toilets, picnic area, beach and boat launch
~ Eight Lake campsites with flush toilets, showers, fireplaces, picnic tables, swimming beach, and boat lunch
~ Forked Lake - primitive public campground
~ Golden Beach – campsites with picnic area and swimming beach
~ Lake Eaton – campsites with flush toilets, showers, fireplaces, picnic tables, bathing beach, and boat lunch
~ Lake Lila - camping under "wilderness" conditions
~ Tioga Point – campsites with fireplaces and picnic tables, accessible only by boat
~ William C. Whitney Wilderness Area – primitive camping sites where large groups are not allowed.
iv.) Snowmobiling trails in Long Lake area:

1. Corridor Trails

*Long Lake to Raquette Lake*

- Power line Trail Mileage: 1.6 mi. Emerson Road 3.2 mi. Rte 28N/30 3.5 mi. North Point Road
- North Point Road Mileage: 7.9 miles to the Lower Sargent Pond trailhead – primary corridor between Long Lake and Raquette Lake
- North Point Road Sargent Ponds – Tioga Point Mileage: 2.1 mi. from North Point Road to Lower Sargent Pond. 3.5 miles from Lower Sargent to Tioga Point from North Point. 3.5 mi. Lower Pond to Tioga Point
- Tioga Point – Raquette Lake Village 2 miles on the surface of Raquette Lake

*Side Trip off this Corridor Trail:*

- Forked Lake Campsite Road Mileage: 1.7 mi. North Point Road to campsite.

*Newcomb* Mileage: 11.2 mi. to County Line 16.0 mi. to Newcomb.

2. Secondary/Local Trails

- Lake Eaton Campsite – Big Brook Loop Trail Mileage: 3.4 miles for complete loop
- Endion – Lake Eaton Campsite – Big Brook Loop Mileage: 5.1 miles to campsite entrance 4.5 miles to Rte 30
- Hammer Brook – Big Brook Loop Trail Mileage: 3.4 miles from trail head to Lake Eaton Campsite Entrance

Trails that are found in Raquette Lake area are:

1. Corridor Trails
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

~ Brown’s Tract / Uncas Road to Eagle Bay Mileage: Raquette Lake to Eagle Bay 10 miles

2. Secondary/Local Trails

~ Bug Lake Trail Mileage: 3.8 mi. campsite to Uncas Road

~ Raquette Lake – Eight Lake Mileage: 2.3 miles to Uncas/Browns Tract Road at Upper Pond. 2.9 miles to head of Eighth Lake.

~ Seventh Lake Inlet – Buck Creek Loop Mileage: 6.7 miles.

v.) Biking paths in Long Lake area:

1. New York DOT Paths that are found in Long Lake area are as follows:

~ Rte. 28N/30 and Rte. 28 – towards North Creek bike routes marked on the road shoulders

~ Rte. 28 South of Blue Mountain Lake through Raquette Lake and on through Old Forge - necessary to ride in the highway lane

~ Rte. 30 North toward Tupper Lake - designated bike paths with the area of extremely wide shoulders for 7 miles (near Tupper Lake)

~ Rte. 30 South – has parts that have not been rebuilt. Parts of this route north of Mayfield have been rebuilt and have bike paths.

~ Rte. 28N to Newcomb - round trip to Newcomb is approximately 28 miles. Shoulders of this route are wide enough to use as bike paths.

~ Loop: Long Lake → Blue Mountain Lake → Indian Lake → North Creek → Minerva → Newcomb – Start in Long Lake; the loop follows Rte. 28N/30 south to Blue
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

Mountain Lake, then along Rte. 28 east to North Creek and then back on to Rte. 28N through Minerva and Newcomb. The round trip is approximately 80 miles.

2. Back roads are:
   ~ Endion Road - winding paved town road 2 miles in length; no major hills; light traffic
   ~ Kickerville Road - paved town highway; very easy ride; 3 miles in length
   ~ North Point Road begins 3.2 mi. southwest of the Long Lake Town Hall; about 11 more miles to the end at North Point, near the edge of Raquette Lake.
   ~ Buttermilk Falls - very short and scenic ride
   ~ Forked Lake Road - easy paved road to Forked Lake Campsite
   ~ Sabattis Road – located about 6 miles northwest from the Long Lake Town Hall on Route 30; 12 miles in length

At the moment the state is going through the process to designate trails open for mountain bikes. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation works on a comprehensive trail network which will include:
   ~ Lake Eaton/Endion Road Trail
   ~ Lake Eaton-Big Brook Loop – 4 miles for the loop
   ~ Sargent Ponds an excellent opportunity to bike through the woods on well marked, fairly level, pathways. Upper Sargent Pond – Lower Sargent Pond via Grass Pond – Sargent Pond Loop
   ~ William C. Whitney Wilderness Area the headquarters area make an excellent starting point for a 16 mile ride to Lake Lila.

Paths that are found in Raquette Lake area are:
   ~ Sucker Brook Bay - 6.6 miles in length; beginner to intermediate level
~ Mohegan Lake - 2.8 miles; relatively leveled

~ Sagamore Road/Uncas Road/Route 28 Loop – only for mountain bikes; 14 miles in length

~ Browns Tract/Uncas Rd/Sagamore Loop

~ Seventh Lake Boat Launch    Mohegan Lake via Buck Creek Trail 4.2 miles; 2 hours; 400 foot elevation change

~ Raquette Lake    Eagle Bay via the Browns Tract/Uncas Road – 8.5 miles in length; beginner level

~ Newcomb Lake Road (Santanoni Great Camp) 5 miles in length (one way); beginner level; only for mountain bikes

vi.) Hunting grounds in Long Lake area:

Public land areas with hunting grounds include:

~ The Cold River area – “...hunting ground for the sportsman who wants to rough it”. This area can be reached by boat. Hundreds of acres of land for hunting.

~ Lake Lila – acres of woodland with several camping sites

~ The Bog River Flow – hunting area with several camping sites. Most of the land is private.

~ North Point Road – numerous acres for hunting and camping with parts that are private land.

~ The Endion/Owl’s Head Trail – most of it is good hunting area

~ Lake Eaton – almost entirely surrounded by State land and is open to hunting
- The Northville – Placid Trail (north) – opportunities for off-trail hunting along the lake
- Forked Lake – almost entirely surrounded by private land that is marked
- The Northville – Placid Trail (south) – both private and State land hunting areas
- South Pond – mostly surrounded by State Land
- The East Inlet
- The William C. Whitney Wilderness area – 15,000 acres of land that opened to public hunting in 1998
- Sabattis Station area

Suggested hunting areas in Raquette Lake are:
- Marion River – area between Rte 28 and the Marion River is State land until the Marion River Carry
- Tioga Point
- Boulder Book
- The land around Sagamore Road – mostly State land, besides the land surrounding Sagamore Lake, Camp Uncas and Lake Kora
- The Browns Tract Campsite area and Uncas Road – mostly State land
- Shallow Lake

Fly-in-Areas are remote parts that can be reached with the seaplanes from Long Lake.
Suggested locations are:
- Corner Pond - northeast of Long Lake
- Deer Pond - west of Tupper Lake
- Bridge Brook - west of Tupper Lake
~ Big Trout Pond - north of Sabattis Road
~ Upper Sargent Pond - south of Forked Lake Road
~ Lower Sargent Pond - south of Forked Lake Road
~ Tirrell Pond - northeast of Blue Mountain Lake
~ First Lake - north of Indian Lake
~ Pine Lake - north of Indian Lake
~ Rock Lake - north of Indian Lake
~ Cold River - north end of Long Lake

vii.) Skiing and snowshoeing trails in Long Lake area:

~ Three Brook Trail – “backcountry” class trail with parts laid out specifically for cross-country skiing

~ The Sargent Ponds – well marked, fairly leveled pathways through the woods; great choice for families with young children. Upper Sargent Pond: elevation changes from 571 meters (~1,874 feet) to 618 meters (~2,028 feet) and then to 554 meters (~1,818 feet); intermediate to advanced level. Lower Sargent Pond: elevation changes from 548 meters (~1,798 feet) to 575 meters (~1,887 feet) and then back to 548 meters (~1,798 feet); intermediate to advanced level. Lower-Upper-Middle Sargent is between Upper and Lower; intermediate to advanced level as well. Sargent Pond Loop is 11 km long (6.84 miles); intermediate to advanced level

~ Forked Lake Road – easy paved road to campsite; beginner level; great for all ages; temporarily closed
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

- Forked Lake Campsite Trail – 3.2 km (~1.99 miles) one way: beginner to intermediate level
- Owls Head Mountain – 5 km (~3.1 miles) one way; advanced or expert level; elevation at trail head 500 meters (~1,640 feet); very steep in places; provides excellent scenic views
- Lake Eaton Trail – elevation changes from 510 meters (~1,673 feet) to 568 meters (~1,864 feet) and then to 530 meters (~1,739 feet) at lake level; beginner level
- Lake Eaton – Big Brook Loop – 5.6 kilometers (~3.48 miles) in length; good choice of trail for almost everyone; beginner level
- Northville – Placid Trail South – intermediate to expert level; very steep parts
- Northville – Placid Trail North – trail for “…serious skier and winter backpacker”
- Santanoni – beginner level
- Lake Lila – 9.7 kilometers (~6 miles) from the county road; beginner level
- Frederica Mountain – beginner to intermediate level due to steep slopes

Trails that are found in Raquette Lake area are:
- Tioga Point – 6.4 kilometers (~3.98 miles) with minor changes in elevation
- Sagamore Lake – 5.3 kilometers (~3.3 miles); good choice of trail for entire family for snowshoeing and/or cross country skiing
- Uncas Road South from Eight Lake – 4 kilometers (~2.5 miles)
- Buck Creek Trail – 6.7 kilometers (~4.2 miles) in length; 122 meters (~400 feet) of change in elevation
- Browns Tract Ponds and Sucker Brook Bay Road – 5.11 kilometers (~3.2 miles); easy grades
- South Inlet Cascades – 2.4 kilometers (~1.5 miles)
- Shallow Lake – 3.5 kilometers (~2.2 miles) in length; with easy grades, marshy areas and water crossings

viii.) Fishing terrains in Long Lake area:
- Upper, Lower and Middle Sargent Ponds – early spring the best time to fish these ponds; brook trout found in all three ponds; largemouth bass found in the Upper Pond; Little Tupper strain of Brook Trout found in the Lower Pond
- Pine Brook – brook trout
- Raquette River Between Forked and Long Lake – book trout
- Forked Lake – excellent largemouth and smallmouth bass fishing; brook trout, perch and sunfish also found in this lake
- Long Lake – fun for all ages; yellow perch, bullheads, sunfish, northern pike, smallmouth bass, brook trout, and pan fish
- Big Brook – excellent brook trout fishing (especially in the early spring); brown bullheads, northern pike, and smallmouth bass found here
- Bog River Flow
- Lake Lila – lake trout, brook trout, land locked salmon and smallmouth bass
- William C. Whitney Area
- Big Trout Pond and Little Trout Pond - brook trout and lake trout
- High Pond – brook trout
- Chub Pond – brook trout
- Rich Lake
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

~ Newcomb Lake – good brook trout fishing as well as lake trout fishing
~ Moose Pond – brook trout
~ Raquette River Below Long Lake – brook trout, walleyed pike (very early spring), brown trout, northern pike and brook trout

Fly-in waters are remote fishing areas that can be reached with the float plane service which is available in Long Lake. Suggested locations are:

~ Deer Pond - west of Tupper Lake - brook trout
~ Bridge Brook - west of Tupper Lake - brook trout
~ Big Trout Pond - north of Sabattis Road - brook trout
~ Upper Sargent Pond - south of Forked Lake Road - brook trout, smallmouth bass
~ Lower Sargent Pond - south of Forked Lake Road brook trout
~ Tirrell Pond - northeast of Blue Mountain Lake - brook trout
~ First Lake - north of Indian Lake - brook, rainbow, lake trout
~ Pine Lake - north of Indian Lake - brook trout
~ Rock Lake - north of Indian Lake - smallmouth bass
~ Grass Pond - west of Long Lake brook trout

The fishing terrains in Raquette Lake area are:

~ Raquette Lake – brook trout, lake trout, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, perch and bullhead
~ Sagamore Lake – good brook trout and lake trout fishing in early spring; pike
~ Browns Tract Pond – brook trout and smallmouth bass
~ Shallow Pond – stocked with 8.5" brook trout
~ Cranberry Pond – stocked with 4" brook trout
~ Haymarsh Pond(s) – brook trout

~ Unnamed Pond – brook trout

~ Chub Lake and Chub Pond - stocked with 4" brook trout

~ Queer Lake

ix.) Hiking trails in Long Lake area:

~ East Inlet Brook – unmeasured; rough trails; bushwack only; unmarked

~ Sargent Ponds – well marked; fairly leveled; excellent trails for the families with small children; minimal elevation change on the trails; few steep slopes
  - Upper Sargent Pond – 1.3 miles; well marked with snowmobile and hiking trail markers; about 30 minutes each way
  - Lower Sargent Pond via Grass Pond – 2.1 miles; well marked with hiking and snowmobile trail markers; 75 minutes one way
  - Lower Sargent Pond-Upper Sargent by way of Middle Pond – 1.7 miles between Upper and Lower; 60 minutes one way
  - Sargent Pond Loop – 6.9 miles includes distance between the trailheads; 5 hours
  - Lower Sargent Pond to Marion River Carry – 1 mile; 30 minutes; accessible only by canoe trip up the Marion River from Raquette Lake

~ Owls Head Mountain – 3.2 miles to summit; well marked trail; relatively difficult after about 2.25 miles; scenic views; some steep stretches

~ Lake Eaton Trail – 0.5 miles to Lake Eaton; 3.5 miles to Lake Eaton Campsite; relatively easy to hike; marked
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

Lake Eaton – Big Brook Loop – 4.0 miles for the loop; good trail for almost everyone, young and elderly; especially nice hike in the fall

Mount Sabattis Recreation Area – unmeasured; relatively easy climb with only few steep areas; excellent view of Long Lake-a must for every Long Lake visitor

Buttermilk Falls – very short and scenic trail; very nice to visit any time of year

Northville-Placid Trail South – 10.2 miles to Tirrell Pond; 1.75 miles to Long Lake Reservoir; 13.5 miles to Route 28N/30; 1 1/4 mile north of Blue Mountain Lake; 14.8 miles from Lake Durant; steep for first 1/2 mile; strenuous to Blue Mountain or Lake Durant.

Northville-Placid Trail North – trail for serious hikers; short trips on this trail are:

- Catlin Bay – suitable for families with the small children
- Kelly’s Point – 4.0 miles from Tarbell Hill Trailhead
- Rodney Point – 6.25 miles from Tarbell Hill Trailhead; ultimate destination: nice sand beach
- Plumley’s Landing – 8.45 miles from Tarbell Hill Trailhead; one can also take a boat down Long Lake to this point
- Shattuck Clearing – 12.6 miles from Tarbell Hill Trailhead; variety of terrains

Hiking trails in William C. Whitney area are:

- Burn Road Trailhead – 13.5 miles
- Lilypad Pond Trail – 8.2 miles; red markers
- Rock Pond Trail – 2.8 miles; blue markers
- Hardigan Pond Trail – 1.5 miles; yellow markers
~ Camp Bliss Trail – 1.0 miles; yellow markers

~ Stony Pond Road Trailhead

~ Southshore Trail – 4.0 miles; yellow horse markers

Hiking trails in Long Lake-Newcomb area are:

~ Goodnow Mountain – 1.5 miles from trailhead on Route 28N; 2 hours; 1050 feet vertical rise; excellent scenic views

~ Adirondack Visitor Interpretive Center at Newcomb – 3.0 miles; easy trails; part open to wheelchair access; scenic views

~ Huntington Forest Nature Trail – 0.5 miles; easy trails; not much change in elevation; excellent choice of trail for all ages

~ Santanoni – 6.0 miles to Moose Pond; 4.5 miles to Newcomb Lake; 1.0 mile to farm site; excellent choice of trail for entire family

Hiking trails in Long Lake-Tupper Lake and Long Lake-Blue Mountain Lake areas are:

~ Frederica Mountain, Lake Lila – 3.1 miles from the parking area on the Old Lodge site; 9.1 miles from the county road in winter; scenic views

~ Blue Mountain Summit – 2.0 miles road to summit; very steep near summit; not recommended for small children; scenic views

Hiking trails in Raquette Lake area are:

~ Tioga Point to Lower Sargent Pond – 4.0 miles; little change in elevation; accessible only by boat

~ South Inlet Cascades – 1.5 miles by either trail, best as a loop if the water is not high; both trail marked with red flags
~ Sagamore Lake – 4.0 miles; relatively leveled; excellent choice of trail for entire family

~ Mohegan Lake – 2.8 miles; relatively leveled
  o Mohegan Lake-Eight Lake via Uncas Road South – 2.5 miles; 90 minutes; marked snowmobile trail
  o Mohegan Lake-Seventh Lake Boat via Buck Creek Trail – 1.2 miles; two hours; 400 feet elevation change; trail crossing over marshy areas and beaver ponds

~ Browns Tract Ponds and Sucker Brook Bay Road – 3.2 miles with easy grades

~ Shallow Lake – 2.2 miles; easy grades; marshy areas and water crossings

~ Hedgehog Mountain – short trail to the top cliffs; 15-minute-walk to the top; no path; excellent view

~ West Mountain – 4.9 miles with a vertical rise of 1140 feet

x.) Areas that provide habitat for birds and where is possible to see them:

Forest Land:

Pilated woodpeckers and ruffed grouse – have been sighted in different areas

~ Raquette Lake hamlet area – variety of habitat and bird life

~ Sagamore road in Raquette Lake

~ Brown Tract road (Uncas road) – variety of habitat and wild life in general (birds, whitetail deer, and black bears)

~ South Inlet

~ Sargent Ponds – water birds often heard and/or seen (e.g. loon)
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

~ Raquette Lake Outlet Bay – loons, shore and water birds
~ South (inlet) end of Long Lake – variety of water birds as well as the osprey nest on Moose Island
~ Jennings Park Pond – water birds; great blue heron; wood ducks; bufflehead; northern pintail
~ The north (outlet) end of Long Lake – common loon
~ Northville-Placid Trail – variety of habitat
~ Lake Eaton Campsite
~ William C. Whitney Wilderness Area – probably the best area for observing birds of prey
~ Lake Leila Primitive Area
~ Adirondack Railroad Corridor – pilated woodpeckers

Most common birds in Long Lake area are:

**Birds of Prey:**
- Red-tailed hawk
- Northern goshawk
- Bald eagle
- Coopers hawk
- Sharp shinned hawk
- Osprey
- Peregrine falcon

**Crows:**
- American crow
- Common raven

**Doves:**
- Mourning dove

**Blackbirds & Orioles:**
- Brown-headed cowbird
- Red-winged blackbird
- Northern oriole
- Common crackle
- Bobolink
- Rusty blackbird

**Cardinals and Allies:**
- Indigo bunting
- Rose-breasted grosbeak

**Ducks and Geese:**
- Wood duck
- Canada goose
- Mallard
- Hooded merganser
- Common merganser
- Black duck

**Finches:**
- American goldfinch
- Common redpoll

**Brown creeper**

**Evening grosbeak**

**House finch**

**Pine grosbeak (winter)**

**Pine siskin**

**Purple finch**

**Red crossbill**

**White-winged crossbill**

**Flycatchers:**
- Alder flycatcher
- Eastern kingbird
- Eastern phoebe
- Eastern wood-pewee
- Great-crested flycatcher
- Least flycatcher
- Olive-sided flycatcher
- Yellow-bellied flycatcher
Diversifying a Tourist Destination through Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouse/Turkey:</th>
<th>Swamp sparrow</th>
<th>White-crowned sparrow</th>
<th>White-throated sparrow</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wild turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruffed grouse</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Jays:                        |               |                       |                        |
| Blue jay                     |               |                       |                        |
| Gray jay                     |               |                       |                        |

| Kingfishers:                 |               |                       |                        |
| Belted kingfisher            |               |                       |                        |

| Loons:                      |               |                       |                        |
| Common loon                 |               |                       |                        |

| Mimics:                     |               |                       |                        |
| Brown thrasher              |               |                       |                        |
| Great catbird               |               |                       |                        |

| Nuthatches:                 |               |                       |                        |
| Red-breasted nuthatch       |               |                       |                        |
| White-breasted nuthatch     |               |                       |                        |

| Owls:                       |               |                       |                        |
| Barred owl                  |               |                       |                        |
| Northern saw-whet owl       |               |                       |                        |

| Shorebirds/Gulls/Terns:     |               |                       |                        |
| Ring-billed gull            |               |                       |                        |
| Herring gull               |               |                       |                        |
| American woodcock          |               |                       |                        |
| Solitary sandpiper         |               |                       |                        |
| Common snipe               |               |                       |                        |
| Spotted sandpiper          |               |                       |                        |
| Killdeer                   |               |                       |                        |

| Sparrows:                   |               |                       |                        |
| American tree sparrow      |               |                       |                        |
| Chipping sparrow           |               |                       |                        |
| Dark-eyed junco            |               |                       |                        |
| Field sparrow              |               |                       |                        |
| Fox sparrow (spring & fall)|               |                       |                        |
| Savannah sparrow           |               |                       |                        |
| Snow bunting               |               |                       |                        |
| Song sparrow               |               |                       |                        |

| Starlings:                  |               |                       |                        |
| European starling          |               |                       |                        |

| Swallows:                  |               |                       |                        |
| Bank swallow               |               |                       |                        |
| Barn swallow               |               |                       |                        |
| Cliff swallow              |               |                       |                        |
| Tree swallow               |               |                       |                        |

| Swifts/Hummingbirds:       |               |                       |                        |
| Chimney swift              |               |                       |                        |
| Ruby-throated hummingbird  |               |                       |                        |

| Tanagers:                  |               |                       |                        |
| Scarlet tanager            |               |                       |                        |

| Titmice-chickadees:        |               |                       |                        |
| Black-capped chickadees    |               |                       |                        |
| Boreal chickadee           |               |                       |                        |

| Vireos:                    |               |                       |                        |
| Red-eyed vireo             |               |                       |                        |
| Solitary vireo             |               |                       |                        |

| Vireos:                    |               |                       |                        |
| Red-eyed vireo             |               |                       |                        |
| Solitary vireo             |               |                       |                        |

| Wading birds:              |               |                       |                        |
| American bittern           |               |                       |                        |
| Great blue heron           |               |                       |                        |
| Green backed heron         |               |                       |                        |

| Warblers & Thrushes:       |               |                       |                        |
| Gray-cheeked thrush        |               |                       |                        |
| Wood thrush                |               |                       |                        |
| American robin             |               |                       |                        |
| Eastern bluebird           |               |                       |                        |
| Swainson’s thrush          |               |                       |                        |
| Veery                      |               |                       |                        |
| Hermit thrush              |               |                       |                        |
| Golden-crowned kinglet     |               |                       |                        |
| Ruby-crowned kinglet       |               |                       |                        |

| Waxwings:                  |               |                       |                        |
| Cedar waxwing              |               |                       |                        |

| Woodpeckers:               |               |                       |                        |
| Black-backed woodpecker     |               |                       |                        |
| Downy woodpecker            |               |                       |                        |
| Hairy woodpecker            |               |                       |                        |
| Northern flicker            |               |                       |                        |
| Pilated woodpecker          |               |                       |                        |
| Yellow-bellied sapsucker    |               |                       |                        |

| Woodwarblers:              |               |                       |                        |
| American redstart          |               |                       |                        |
| Black & white warbler      |               |                       |                        |
| Black-throated blue warbler|               |                       |                        |
| Black-throated green warbler|              |                       |                        |
| Blackburnian warbler       |               |                       |                        |
| Blackpoll warbler          |               |                       |                        |
| Canada warbler             |               |                       |                        |
| Chestnut-sided warbler     |               |                       |                        |
| Common yellowthroat        |               |                       |                        |
| Magnolia warbler           |               |                       |                        |
| Mourning warbler           |               |                       |                        |
| Nashville warbler          |               |                       |                        |
| Northern parula            |               |                       |                        |
| Ovenbird                   |               |                       |                        |
| Tennessee warbler          |               |                       |                        |
| Yellow warbler             |               |                       |                        |
| Yellow-rumped warbler      |               |                       |                        |

| Wrens:                     |               |                       |                        |
| House wren                 |               |                       |                        |
| Winter wren                |               |                       |                        |
xi.) Canoeing & boating - The side trips off the Long Lake include:

- Big Brook – the stream for experienced kayakers and canoers only
- Bog River – wonderful opportunities for canoeists and fishermen and abundance of wildlife
- Lake Lila – wilderness lake; only side trip off this pond is Shingle Shanty Brook for about 1.5 miles
- South Pond – small pond south of Long Lake
- Cold River – begins at the foot of Long Lake – right channel at the Long Lake Outlet
- William C. Whitney area – numerous lakes and streams which are accessible by canoe or non-motorized boats.

xii.) Events schedule for 2005:

JANUARY

- First Saturday of the month  Painting Class
- Third Saturday of the month - Annual Winter Carnival
  
  Skating Races and Party for All Ages

- Sunday of Martin Luther King weekend – Annual Adirondack Hotel Chili and Bread Cook Off

- Last Saturday of the month - Mike Norris Memorial Ice Fishing Derby on Raquette Lake
FEBRUARY

~ First Saturday of the month  Vintage Snowmobile Races and Exhibition held on
    Jennings Park Pond in the middle of the Hamlet

~ Saturday of Presidents weekend  Raquette Lake Winter Carnival

~ Saturday following Presidents weekend – Raquetteers Annual Poker Run

MARCH

~ First Saturday of the month - Painting Class
    Adult/Child Ice Fishing Contest

~ 2nd Saturday of the Month  Vintage Snowmobile Races and Exhibition held on
    Jennings Park Pond in the middle of the Hamlet

~ Round Robin Dinner

APRIL

~ First Saturday of the month – Learn to Paint like Rob Ross

~ Last Sunday of the month – Spring Blossom Fiddle Jamboree

MAY

~ Saturday of Memorial Day weekend  Camp Sagamore opens to the public for guided
    tours on Saturday & Sunday, at 1:30pm through the last weekend in June

~ Memorial Day as observed - Annual American Legion Memorial Day Parade
    Raquette Lake Memorial Day Ceremony
JUNE

~ First Saturday of the month  Learn to Paint like Rob Ross
   Long Lake Fish and Game Youth Fishing Contest

~ Saturday before Fathers Day - Father’s Day Celebration in Raquette Lake
   Annual Spring Fishing Derby for Bass and Pike
   Raquette Lake Fish & Game Club Junior members have their annual fishing derby

~ Last Saturday of the month  Camp Sagamore opens to the public for daily guided tours at 10am & 1:30pm through Labor Day

JULY

~ July 2 - Strawberry Festival at the Raquette Lake fire hall

~ July 4  Independence Day Celebration

~ Second Saturday of the month and the preceding Thursday and Friday - Annual Heart of the Park Antique Show and Sale

~ July 7  Annual UMW Summer Bazaar

~ July 10 - Star Party

~ Third Saturday of the month – Long Lake Regatta

~ Third Sunday of the month – Summer Fiddle Jamboree

~ Monday following the third Sunday of the month - Annual Art Show and Sale
   Meet the Artists Reception

~ Forth Saturday of the month - Long Lake Homecoming Weekend
Diversifying a Tourist Destination Through Experiences

Raquette Lake Bass Tournament

~ July 24 - Star Party in Raquette Lake

~ Last Sunday of the month  Great Adirondack Auction to benefit the Long Lake Library

St. William’s on Long Point Annual Chicken B-B-Q

and silent auction

~ July 26-30 - Annual Photo Show and Sale

AUGUST

~ First Saturday of the month  Durant Days Celebrations in Raquette Lake

Raquette Lake Annual Boat Parade

Grand Tour Benefit

~ First Sunday of the month  Heart of the Park Craft Fair at Mt. Sabattis

~ First Thursday of the month - Swim Races for all Ages

~ 10th Mountain Division Concert Band at Mt. Sabattis Pavilion

~ Second Saturday of the month  Town Wide Garage Sale and Flea Market

Annual Craft Fair, Annual Book Sale,

Annual Children’s Auction, Annual Fire Department and Ambulance Corps

Auction – Raquette Lake

~ August 14 - Star Party

~ Second Tuesday of the month  Hoss's Country Corner Adirondack Authors Night

~ Third Saturday of the month – Annual Open Banjo Festival
Diversifying a Tourist Destination Through Experiences

~ August 28 - Star Party in Raquette Lake

SEPTEMBER

~ Saturday before Labor Day & Labor Day - Raquette Lake Labor Day Weekend
~ Tuesday after Labor Day – Fall Tours
~ Friday and Saturday after Labor Day - Adirondack Canoe Classic

Ride for Stars to benefit the Eastern Star Nursing in Oriskany

~ Second Saturday of the month Adirondack Museum Annual Rustic Furniture Show and Sale

~ Third Saturday of the month - Great Adirondack Antique Show and Sale in Indian Lake

Raquette Lake One pitch/slow-pitch/co-ed softball tournament

Long Lake Birding Festival

~ Last Saturday of the month - Fall Festival in Raquette Lake

OCTOBER

~ Saturday of Columbus weekend Long Lake Harvest Festival

~ Third Saturday of the month Annual Hunters Pork Dinner, Raquette Lake Fire Hall

~ Fourth Saturday of the month Annual Roast Turkey Dinner, Raquette Lake Fire Hall
NOVEMBER

~ First Friday of the month – Annual OES Tricky Tray

DECEMBER

~ First Saturday of the month – Annual LLCS Christmas Craft Fair
~ Second Saturday of the month - Community Chorus Christmas Concert
Appendix 4 – Sample Visitors’ Comments*

* Sources: Long Lake & Raquette Lake, 2005; Welcome to Long Lake and Raquette Lake, n.d.

~ Mr. Pine (November 28, 2005): “Long Lake and Lake Eaton are the most beautiful places on this planet. I have been coming to these lakes for more then fifty years. My children and my grandson have missed very few summers at Lake Eaton. Its the only place to go on vacation..........Winter or summer.”

~ Mr. Ulmen (October 07, 2005): “Returning to canoe Long lake with son for a say after many years. Enjoy the area from Watertown NY originally but wife and I enjoy the Adirondacks. Getting a little slow on things but we enjoy.”

~ Ms. Haegler (October 14, 2004): “Our family has been going to Long Lake since the 1950's. As soon as I was born, I was in a boat! Stayed at Green Harbor when the Day's owned it, had a place at Skip-Jack by the beach, then property at Beecher Park! I've loved every minute spendt in what I feel is the most beautiful place in the world. I grew up with Herb's plane rides, boating, sking and everything that you could want. I now bring my kids up 3-4 times a year, with my 88 year old father who is still going strong and looks forward to his Long Lake trips. Now packing for an October trip, and hoping someday to be able to stay for good.”

~ Ms. Hunt (July 25, 2002): “I have recently moved here to Big Sky Country...as much as I love it, Long Lake will forever be my home. I welcome any and all email...have to say, I am a bit homesick, probably always will be. Hello to all. I will be home at Christmas for a few days.”
Mr. Almy (May 18, 2002): “Long Lake is the best place to go camping hiking swimming and have fun! I've been going there since I was well for a long time!”