



GROUP TOUR HOSTING TOOLKIT

PREPARED FOR iTIP MEMBERS

Welcome

Welcome to the Group Tour Hosting Toolkit, prepared for iTIP Members! This guide is designed to help tourism industry partners prepare for hosting motorcoach tours, ensuring a smooth, enjoyable experience for all guests. By following these best practices, you'll be ready to impress tour operators and their groups, fostering repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth.

Preparation Checklist

Facilities and Amenities

- **Restroom Facilities:** Ensure all restrooms are clean, well-stocked, and accessible. Regular checks should be scheduled, especially during peak visiting times.
- **Space Requirements:** Confirm that there is adequate space to accommodate groups of approximately 50 people comfortably. This includes seating, gathering areas, and dining spaces if applicable.
- **Tour Guides:** Assign knowledgeable and engaging tour guides who are prepared with relevant information and ready to lead the group promptly.
- **Red Carpet Treatment:** Make guests feel special by adding personal touches like welcome signs, complimentary refreshments, or small tokens of appreciation.

Enhancing the Experience

Interactive Tour Elements

Consider adding digital interaction options such as incorporating QR codes as well as traditional elements, such as hands-on activities, live demonstrations, or interactive displays, to further engage visitors.

- **Scavenger Hunts:** Create a scavenger hunt where guests can either scan QR codes at various points of interest or search for physical clues and objects to find. Each stop can provide historical facts, fun trivia, or clues leading to the next location.
- **Hands-On Activities:** Incorporate interactive experiences such as craft-making, taste-testing, or artifact handling to engage visitors in a meaningful way.
- **Live Demonstrations:** Provide live demonstrations that showcase local traditions, skills, or behind-the-scenes processes, allowing guests to gain a deeper appreciation of the destination.
- **Audio Guides & Storytelling:** Utilize audio guides or have tour guides share compelling stories to create a more immersive experience.
- **Feedback Forms:** Place QR codes at the end of the tour that link to a feedback form, allowing guests to share their experiences and suggestions. Additionally, provide physical comment cards or a guest book for those who prefer non-digital options.

Pre-Arrival Communication

Understanding Your Audience

- **Know Your Audience:** Be aware of the group's interests, demographics, and expectations to tailor the experience accordingly.
- **Student vs. Adult Tours:** Recognize key differences in engagement styles, attention spans, and interests when hosting student versus adult groups.
- **Encourage Interaction:** Create opportunities for guests to ask questions and engage with the tour content.

Questions to Ask the Tour Operator

1. **Group Size and Demographics:** How many people are in the group? What are their ages and interests?
2. **Arrival and Departure Times:** What are the expected arrival and departure times? Are there any schedule constraints?
3. **Special Needs or Requests:** Are there any special requirements or accommodations needed, such as dietary restrictions or mobility assistance?

4. **Tour Objectives:** What are the key objectives or themes of the tour? Are there specific attractions or experiences the group is particularly interested in? Is this a mystery tour? (If so, you will want to be sure you don't spoil the surprises for the guests!)
5. **Payment and Billing:** What are the payment arrangements? Will payment be made in advance, on arrival, or post-tour?
6. **Contact Information:** Who is the main point of contact on the day of the tour? Ensure you have a mobile number for easy communication. Make sure you share your information as well in case the operator needs to let you know of delays.

Logistical Considerations

- **Understanding Time Constraints:** Have a plan in place but remain flexible. Adjust on the fly when delays occur, such as a coach arriving late at multiple stops.
- **Building the Itinerary:** Factor in travel time and necessary bathroom breaks to ensure a smooth experience for all guests.
- **Coach Unloading, Loading, and Parking:** Ensure the tour host and coach driver receive clear instructions on where to unload and load guests safely. Provide designated parking information to avoid congestion and facilitate a smooth transition between stops.

Conclusion

By following this toolkit, you'll be well-prepared to provide an exceptional experience for motorcoach tour groups. Remember, a little extra preparation and attention to detail can turn a good visit into an unforgettable one. Thank you for your commitment to making our destination a top choice for group tours!