2020 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: Te Hā Tāpoi - The Love of Tourism,

Destination Name: (include any state, province or region)
Te Moananui a Toi – The Coastal Bay of Plenty

Country: New Zealand

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Position: Product Developer

Nomination Category: (Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)
- ☐ Culture & Communities
- ☐ Environment & Climate
- ☑ Nature & Ecotourism
- ☐ Islands & Seaside
- ☐ Immediate responses in dealing with the COVID -19
- ☐ Post COVID -19 recovery
- ☐ One of the 17 SDGs* (if yes, which one) Click or tap to choose

*The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The 17 SDGs are integrated—that is, they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. What are the Sustainable Development Goals? https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html

For further information on Tourism for SDGs: http://tourism4sdgs.org/

Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices here
DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

Issues faced
What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice?

Most destinations seek growth in terms of visitor numbers with the delivery of social benefits like visitor spend, employment, tax income and foreign exchange. At Tourism Bay of Plenty (TBOP), we believe tourism has become too dependent on the pursuit of growth, seeing its role to simply “get bigger”.

“You can never change things by fighting the existing reality, to change something build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete” Buckminster Fuller.

In full awareness of this, TBOP has expanded the organisation’s mandate from promotion into destination management and a major part of that shift is the creation of an ambitious new destination plan called Te Hā Tāpoi - The Love of Tourism.

The plan communicates the Bay of Plenty’s ambitious aspirations to flourish while balancing the needs of people, the environment, and the tourism industry.

This plan was created alongside the local community, local iwi (indigenous people) and the local tourism industry to be a guiding document that helps to contribute to a place that residents not only live but love. It means sharing our love of “our place” with the world to the betterment of the community, not against it.
A few years ago TBOP asked for a peer review of our annual plan – it evolved from there into a momentous shift towards planning for the long term future of the destination.

TBOP absolutely do not want these things to just be words on a page – to enable execution three new roles were created on the development side of the organization.

The first role is a person responsible for research and insights, which is fundamental, because in New Zealand, the regions don’t even know how many people are coming to them. We don’t know the volume. We need to understand what the tipping point is, and how many is too many.

We have also hired a Product Developer. It’s a new role in New Zealand; we’re learning as much as we can from like roles around the world to understand it. This person will lead the implementation of the development plan, making sure everything we develop from here aligns to The Love of Tourism. They will also make sure that the Bay of Plenty experience is one that’s transformational. As we move forward we are adding more resourcing to this area.

The third role we added is a Māori word called Kaihautū, a specific Māori economic development role to work in partnership with our Māori community and ensure we’re making these changes with our Indigenous people, not to them or against them.

Alongside this, the guiding values Iwi and the people of Te Moananui a Toi | the Coastal Bay of Plenty hold have formed the foundation of this plan.

- Manaakitanga: working together to establish a hosting standard that has no peer, but is also reflective of the community.

- Kaitiakitanga: respecting and ensuring the health of the whenua me nga arawai (land and water) is fully considered when exploring new and existing tourism opportunities.

- Kotahitanga: committing to a unified vision and governance approach to tourism.
- Tapoi Ako: Supporting the promotion of a tourism education and career pipeline for rangatahi ki kaumatua (children and grandchildren).

- Whanaungatanga: Supporting and promoting a strong employee culture in the tourism sector.

- Mahi Tahi: Working together to build an outstanding cultural tourism proposition.

TBOP has a clear sense of what Te Moananui a Toi | The Coastal Bay of Plenty stands for and the courage to uphold these values.

**Key success factors**

**What helped you tackle the issues?**

TBOP undertook massive process of research, strategy and visioning over three years which involved a lot of consultation, questioning and listening.

This took a lot of time, budget and resource however it has helped to create a very inclusive and informed plan that TBOP feel very confident in moving forward with and taking action on.

To create the plan there were several significant steps:

1) Uncovering our ‘Place DNA’ – this is to clearly understand the different types of value this place has to offer. This understanding starts with clearly defining this place’s intrinsic character, also known as ‘Place DNA’. Building our branding on a true community identity will be able to improve the experience and the value we bring to stakeholders.

The importance of Place DNA cannot be underestimated as the origin of our authentic product, experiences, brand, marketing and management. It’s our destination’s test for authenticity.

2) In developing the plan TBOP ran series of workshops and presentations across the region, and have had multiple stakeholders involved in those.

The workshops organized involved all of TBOP’s key stakeholders. They were
about uncovering who we are as a destination and taking into account the different perspectives and expectations from outside the tourism industry. They were facilitated by Destination Think! and were held throughout the region, including Tauranga, Whakatane and Waihi Beach.

This process has naturally expanded our stakeholder network. Rather than only working with industry or the obvious stakeholders, we worked hard to bring in people who have a different mindset, worldview, and different priorities.

It wasn’t just about tourism, it was about the environment and conservation. It definitely involved Māori leaders and organisations. It was also about people who are involved in education, arts and culture and other entrepreneurs and leaders.

The types of stakeholders that were involved:
- Funders: Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Whakatane District Council
- Strategic Partners: Coastal BOP Tourism Industry, local Iwi, Coastal BOP Community, Air NZ + Tauranga City Airport, National Tourism Bodies, Academia Bodies, Local Environment Groups, Local businesses/networks
- Other Key Organisations: Local Member of Parliament, Local Media, Neighbouring Regions, BOP Regional Council, Community Groups

This has expanded how we see tourism’s role within our region, which is that it can help transform our place and help it to flourish. Tourism is not just something that happens to us, to our people and our environment. We turned that on its head and now aspire to make sure that the value it brings really adds value to our place and its people.

**Lessons learned**
While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome?

Because tourism is a key contributor to the region’s economy, visitor spend and job creation is often the core focus. But instead we need to spread our vision of not just ensuring economic growth and not just sustainability; we need to go further and strive for regeneration.

We got really excited about the original final draft of Te Ha Tapoi - The Love of Tourism. But later, as a team, late one night, we said no, this doesn’t clearly articulate how brave we want to be here.
So we said, “Don’t hold back, don’t cushion the messages out of fear that people might disagree. This is a conversation we need to start having with our community.

At first, we thought maybe this was a bit too visionary, but since we have been presenting it, we have become so much more comfortable and confident. It has really helped to have global industry leaders such as Frank Cuypers, William Bakker, Anna Pollock and others have a look at it and say, “Go for it.”

Within the project implementation, we learned deeply how co-creation will lead to success – to ensure active involvement from multiple stakeholders and to more effectively solve challenges and build better visitor experiences. We cannot maintain the historic, segmented approach. Destination Management is not one organisation or individual’s responsibility. It is a shared responsibility and in order to succeed it requires a co-creative approach. We now truly understand the balance of manaakitanga with kaitiakitanga and work in collaboration with our stakeholders to manage the industry sustainably while adhering to our guiding principles.

Results, achievements and recognitions

What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice? Has it received any rewards?

1) Starting to see motivated residents who are happy that they are involved in visitor management. They are involved in what is happening to their place – the control mechanisms and all the positive results of that.

2) This is what travellers want. The emerging travellers do not want to destroy the environment with their travel. They want to come to a place and do some good – this plan is helping to create the opportunities for them to do that.

3) Economic benefits have got stronger. Since December 2018, when Te Ha Tapoi started to be executed, monthly visitor spend growth in Coastal BOP has almost consistently outstripped the national average visitor spend in New Zealand (see attached graph ‘Monthly Visitor Spend – Coastal BOP – NZ’).
Additional references
Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from Youtube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/ One Drive) download URL.

Link to Te Ha Tapoi – The Love of Tourism Document

How Tourism Bay of Plenty turns the Love of Tourism into action

No Place Like Home - video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuKEL5_PWzM&t=5s

Monthly Visitor Spend – Coastal BOP - NZ