

Moccasin Trails

Video Clip 5: Pricing Model

Q: What kind of considerations went into your pricing?

A: Pricing was more kind of around, number one, making sure that our intellectual property was fully compensated. And what I mean by that is making sure that our elders' time, our culture knowledge, the person, their time, their stories, their songs, their verbiage, that's intellectual property. And number one, that has to be fully compensated. And we can't want that intellectual property, and then give them, you know, trinkets to pay them. It's got to be fully compensated. It's no different than when you bring up a doctor to be a keynote speaker, and you pay them thousands of dollars. Well, you pay for an elder's story. You pay for a story that's 10,000 years old. You better pay that for thousands of dollars as well. So, that's the first and foremost-- That's the first and foremost important thing that kind of drives the rest of the price for the visitors. And that's an education back and forth. You know? Don't get me wrong. There's some intellectual property elders, traditional knowledge keepers, that get compensated greatly for their stories and their knowledge and their expertise, but again, that's government money. Right? So, it's a lot of education saying I get that. I get that you get paid \$500 to spend half an hour with someone and tell their story. I get that. That's government paying you, but I can't do that because the visitor is not going to pay that. So, let's find that common ground here where you are compensated for that story, for that intellectual property, but let's also make sure that I'm not getting-- I'm not suffering as well where I'm losing money. 'Cause if I'm-- If the visitor and tourist is paying Moccasin Trails to have that, and all of that is going into this intellectual property, I'm going to be out of business. So, that's-- Those are very interesting conversations that I have with our traditional knowledge keepers. And again, it's education back and forth. It's finding that middle ground, and kind of really where it comes down to is kind of two sectors. Yes, go. When you get asked by the school district or when you get asked

by a government official to go and do an opening prayer, an opening ceremony. Yes, charge them \$350, \$500. That's great, but this-- But I'm not dealing with government money here. I'm dealing with people's hard-earned money. So, let's talk about that. This is important, but you need to get compensated, but we're not on that same level as government money. So--

Q: And yours is not just a one-off, right? It can happen over and over again.

A: Exactly. So, that's where those conversations really happen, and that's me educating them. That's them educating me. And it's kind of this education happening back and forth between our business and our traditional knowledge keepers. So, that's first and foremost. Once that gets decided, then it's okay. Now, the rest of the trip is easy. Okay. Now we got to go to Indigenous Winery. We know that it's, whatever, \$20 a plate. Okay. So, we got to add that in. We know that we're going to go to the museum for a guided tour, and that's \$11 per person. We add that in. And then, you know, and then we factor in our time and all of our costs as the business owner using our software, using our, you know, booking software, our time, all of that stuff, right? Our gas and all of that. So, that's kind of how our costs get developed, but the most important part is making sure that that intellectual property-- 'Cause that's such a-- It's actually kind of a grey area right now, right? So, once that gets decided, then that's what determines the remaining portion of that experience, what the cost is.

Q: What is a typical full-day tour or some of those visits you mentioned?

A: So the-- We try to keep it under \$100. So, for example, the Kelowna tour is, you know, a 3-hour experience with Indigenous knowledge keeper such as Grouse, do a pictograph tour with canoeing or paddling. We're singing songs. We're doing ceremonies. We go to the pictograph site. And then, you know, we go to Indigenous Winery for a private tour in the vineyards and then wine tasting and then, you know, a really elegant lunch. You know? Once we factor in wherever, whatever our expenses are, then we kind of, you know, do our markup on that, but we want to keep it under, you know-- For example, that tour is \$95. We want to keep it under that. We want to keep it-- It's not just a set amount of \$100, but we want to

make sure that we keep it affordable. We want to make sure that-- You know, recognizing that-- You know, if a family of four comes, and they're in Kelowna, that-- You know, that's a \$400 day for them. For, let's say-- I just say \$400 'cause my wife and my two kids-- That's \$95 per person. So, if they've got their wife and their two kids, that's an expensive day for them. So, we have to make sure we keep it at an affordable price. And make sure that the quality is still there, right? It's kind of a fine line. I'm learning all of that pricing as we're going through it as well, right?

Q: Did you get any feedback on it where people said it's too high, too low? Right?

A: Yeah. I talk with tourism associations. I talk with, you know, for that one I had long discussions with Tourism Kelowna. I talk with market experts. I talk with people who are entrepreneurs in the past. I talk with other tourism operators. So, it's a lot of, kind of, researching and talking with everyone, really, to kind of determine where is that price point, right? We actually learned from our first one-- We did a water to wine tour in Kamloops. We called it water to wine where we'll start at, say, Lafarge Landing, and we'll go paddle to Harper's Trail Winery. And, you know, we'll get off at their private dock, and then the winery staff will come down. We'll do a protocol, you know, our Indigenous leader will lead us in a protocol of greetings and all of that. And then we'll go and do a tour of the winery and then a lunch. And we priced it at, like, \$150 per person. And not one person bought it. So, we had to revisit that and really kind of say, "Okay. Well, realistically let's-- We don't want to lose that tour. We know it's a great experience that people will have, but let's make sure that we have people booking, and let's make sure that people are-- Let's make sure that-- 'Cause there's three organizations involved. There's Moccasin Trails, there's Divine Tours, and then Harper's Trail Winery. So, each one of those three plays an integral part of delivering this package. Well, each one of those three has to get compensated for that as well. At the end of the day, we're all business people. We're all entrepreneurs. We have to feed our family, and we have to put food on the table. So, you know, now you got to take those profits and divide them up by three.

Please note that this transcript has been slightly modified; it is not a verbatim copy of the original audio clip.