



Tourism Destination Area Nomination Workbook

New York's North Country Region

Why is tourism important to the North Country?

Tourism offers the most viable opportunity to diversity and ignite the North Country economy by capitalizing on existing demand to attract a wide variety of private investment that will transform communities. Tourism is already a \$1 billion industry in the North Country and with its low upfront investment cost and quicker return on investment than many other industries, it is well-positioned to drive a new North Country economy as well as complement other strategic clusters of economic activity. Year-round tourism promotes a more sustainable, stable economy and more jobs; it's the most likely growth industry for this region and will help recruit other types of investment.

The region has a history of hospitality and several successful tourism hubs in place and exceptional four-season outdoor recreational opportunities are poised to leverage private investment in lodging, restaurant, attraction and other types of tourism related venues. Recognizing the transformative potential that tourism has in the North Country, the Regional Economic Development Council is advancing the following strategies:

Put tools in place to attract private investment in tourism which will drive demand to revitalize and diversify communities and create a climate that will allow entrepreneurs to flourish.

Develop tourism infrastructure to transform the Region by driving community development and leveraging private investment in tourism destination area communities and corridors.

The key to these strategies is that they recognize and focus attention on the need to attract and foster development in attractions, facilities and infrastructure conducive to attracting the 21st century traveling public. This is critical to sustaining, spreading and maximizing the North Country's tourism sector and revitalizing communities that have committed to tourism as a major component of their economy and quality of life.

An important element of advancing these tourism strategies is the definition, designation and advancement of “Tourism Destination Areas.” A TDA is a community (or group of communities) that have the critical mass of attractions, amenities, tourism support services, accommodations and infrastructure that enable them to sustain their economy and quality of life in the tourism economic sector. These are centers of activity and enterprise along the Byways and Blueways of the North County in a broadly defined “community” that demonstrates a commitment to making tourism a key economic driver by having engaged in tourism development planning and having initiated local projects whose primary goal is tourism demand generation. The designation as a TDA is an economic development tool to help provide communities with access to programs, financing and opportunities to advance their tourism-related economy.

A TDA has:

- A planning document (such as a destination master plan) that clearly shows success or viable intent to use tourism as an economic development tool;
- A leadership commitment in writing stating that the area is committed to the development of tourism, because it takes many resources within a community to create a successful destination;
- Infrastructure capacity or the capacity for expansion to meet future needs;
- A marketing mechanism (Chamber of Commerce, Visitor’s Center);
- Demonstrated regional leadership by being a “voice” in the region or forging regional connections to foster economic development.

These are some of the key attributes that reviewers will be looking for when evaluating TDA Nomination forms. A TDA is not only a community that currently exhibits all the characteristics mentioned above; communities that demonstrate clear progress and/or potential in key areas will also be considered for TDA designation.

Designated TDAs may have access to financing programs and will be positioned for Priority Project status for CFAs they submit for consideration by the North Country Regional Economic Development Council. Additionally, Tourism Investment Funds will be targeted at private sector investments in designated TDAs.

What is the Tourism Destination Area Self-Guided Nomination Form? And why should you use it?

Around the world tourism destinations are constantly working to distinguish themselves in the marketplace. The emphasis of Tourism Destination Areas (TDA) is to enable your destination and community to operate at the highest level it can achieve and to have access to the tools necessary to achieve your goals. This Form focuses on providing a clear appraisal of your current tourism situation and as part of a process provides the forum to generate discussion for tourism potential in your destination.

The Nomination Form is organized into sections to accompany critical elements identified for a TDA. The Form is designed to ask thought-provoking questions which will allow your destination to realistically assess its current situation. In some cases, the answer may not be a simple yes or no, or the required information may not be readily available. The questions are guides, designed to broaden the way you creatively think about your destination and forcing you to examine everything your destination has to offer, as well as what it lacks. Do not be discouraged if you cannot answer all the questions. Be realistic, gauge where your destination stands. A Glossary of Terms is included to clarify key words.

We recognize that these are challenging questions which we hope will generate much discussion and mobilize your community to take future action. Consider the answers or in some cases blanks, to be measurements to which you can compare future tourism activity. While this process requires a commitment of time and energy, your community's investment will be rewarded through the insights and directions gained.

The Nomination Forms will be reviewed and evaluated by a third-party committee of tourism experts. This process will also help the Regional Council identify clusters of projects or types of projects that are needed in multiple areas of the region so programmatic activity and planning can be directed to those critical areas.

What are the goals your community would like to achieve by undertaking the Tourism Destination Area (TDA) process? (E.g. to increase tourism revenues, improve quality of life, etc.)

Our primary goal is to grow the local economy in Lewis County through the creation of a sustainable tourism development program that will bolster tourism revenues by increasing visitors to our area. This program can be continuously enhanced by using concerted stakeholder effort toward tourism promotion that aggressively markets our County's assets to first a broad audience, then narrows outreach in meaningful ways to specific cohorts or user groups. Examples include: trade shows, advertising, a new website and mobile device applications highlighting seasonal recreation and cultural activities. Additionally, we seek to bolster our four-season tourism promotion through cross-marketing our destinations and activities.

Top goals include:

- Continue promotion of 4-Seasons program
- Better convey to the public our attractions and amenities
- Increase Revenue to local businesses
- Manage growth
- Increase investors and partnerships

Identify the geographic boundaries covered by your destination. (Remember a TDA can be more than one municipality)

Lewis County, in its entirety, as our assets are throughout our county, encompassing the Tug Hill Region.

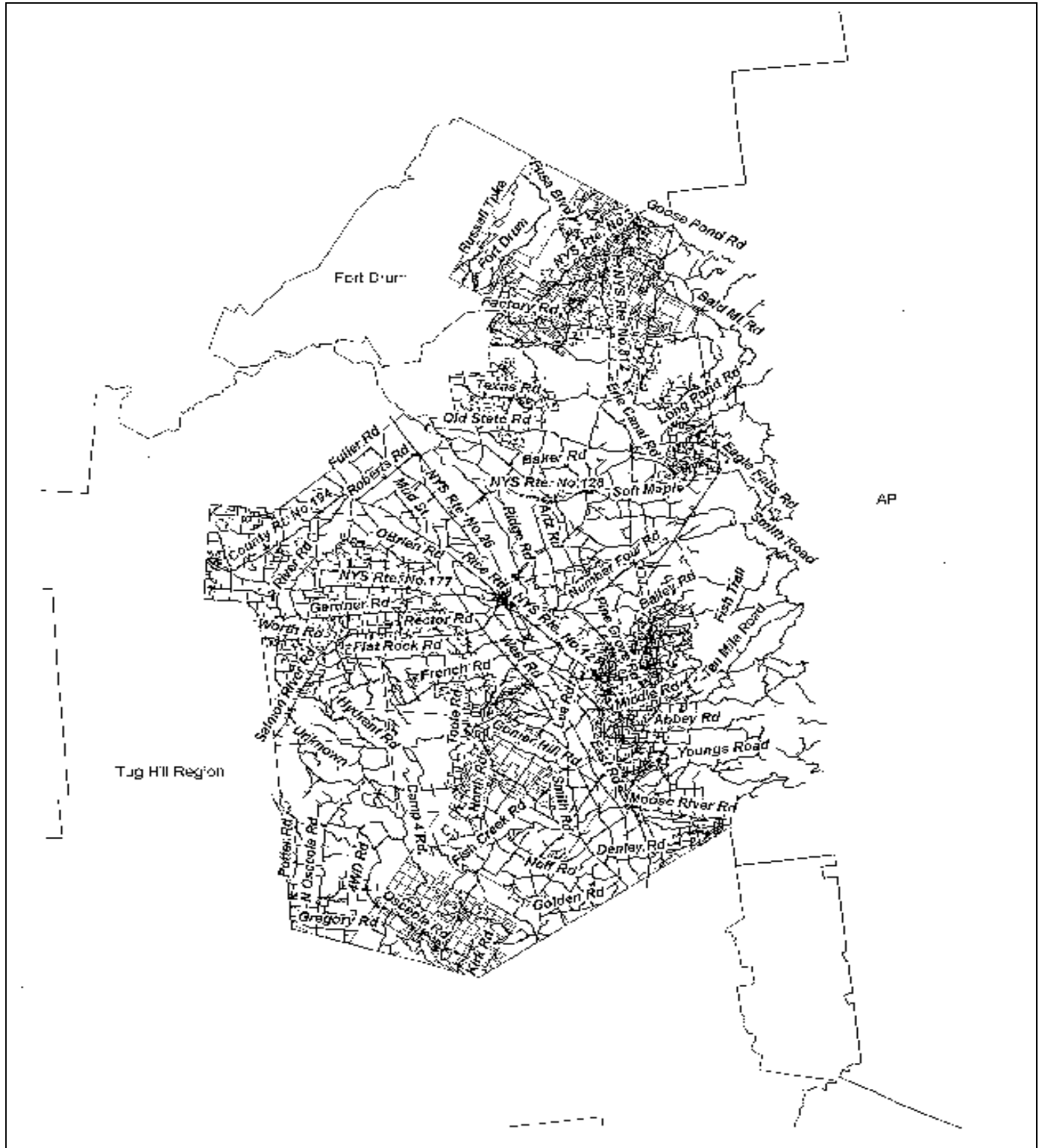
Jefferson County to the North & West

Herkimer County to the East

Oneida County to the South

- Oswego
- St. Lawrence
- Surrounding Counties
- Supporting Businesses

Provide a map of your Tourism Destination Area:



What category best describes this destination?

Core Destination: A clearly defined area of intense tourism activity that can be marketed as a destination. Such a destination likely impacts adjacent neighborhoods and communities.

Area Destination: A zone or group of communities that is brandable for tourism attraction and development. Likely an area based on a cluster of recreational activities or developments associated with a geographic feature or a “trail” of connected thematic attractions.

Hub & Spoke Destination: A destination that has a central community providing key visitor services, but relies on “spoke” activities and attractions in surrounding areas to complete the tourism experience.

What best describes tourism’s current position in the economy of this destination?

Primary activity: Tourism is the primary economic driver for this destination.

Significant activity: Tourism is a significant part of the destination economy, but not the overriding personality of the destination.

Supplemental activity: Tourism plays an important role, but other types of activity substantially drive the economy.

Potential activity: Tourism current role is minor, but planning is underway to increase its contributions to be substantial.

Does the geography of this destination overlap with other tourism destinations?

Please check: Yes No

If so, discuss the other brands that support tourism to this destination or explain how this destination shares things in common with other destinations.

- Jefferson County to the North & West
- Herkimer County to the East
- Oneida County to the South
- Oswego County
- St. Lawrence County
- Town and Village of Boonville
- Black River Blueway Trail and Scenic Byway
- Maple Traditions Scenic Byway
- Adirondack Park
- Tug Hill Region

All of the above counties offer tourism activities that complement those found in Lewis County. Outdoor recreation opportunities are connected through supporting services, clubs, and trail systems that connect smaller, rural communities with larger communities that offer more tourism services. They are connected in such a way that goes beyond jurisdictional boundaries and relies on smooth transition from one municipality to the next.

Complementary/ Cross-Jurisdictional Activities: County Fairs, snowmobiling, ATV, Cross-Country Skiing, Hiking, Kayaking and canoeing, Fishing, Biking, Snowkiting, parks, camping, museums, cultural arts performances and displays, as well as special event programs.

We see potential to expand these tourism areas:

- Horseback Riding as a destination
- Incentivize Outfitter and Guide Entrepreneurs
- Pre-mapped excursion routes
- Self-guided historic site tour

What types of visitors does the destination want target? (I.e. recreational travelers vs. sightseers; vacation home owners vs. hotel users; couples vs. families, etc.)

All type of visitors, as our assets provide the ability to speak to many diverse individuals, couples, families and groups of the public. *It should be noted that we are limited in our ability to service or properly address all cultural groups with signage/communication.*

- Key Point – Outdoor Enthusiasts

We understand that the core type of visitor profile differs across a wide variety of outdoor activities that our Tourism Destination Area affords. However, core market profiles that include mostly couples or families with middle to higher incomes are similar within the subcategory of Non-motorized Outdoor Enthusiast. Non-motorized activities include camping; canoeing/kayaking; cross-country skiing; fishing; golfing; white-water rafting and mountain biking. Motorized Outdoor Activity users are mainly male and earn between, \$40,000-\$100,000, but there is growing anecdotal evidence that this sport too is becoming more couple and family based. Motorized activities speak to All-Terrain Vehicles and Snowmobiles. (Blueway Plan citing several marketing studies, p. 54-58)

What geographic and or niche market does the destination believe it can effectively attract?

We will primarily rely upon the 120 million potential visitors within one day's distance from our Tourism Destination Area, however our recent marketing efforts have included a well-designed website that can reach viewers in any market.

As mentioned above Recreation and Outdoor Enthusiasts are a key market for us, along with the entire NCREDC. Heritage and Cultural Visitors, Backcountry and Adventure tourists, and Agricultural Tourists are all important to our marketing efforts, specific to our Area and the Region as a whole.

Lewis County consistently has very high snow-fall each year which attracts the snowmobile and winter enthusiast. Our County also maintains a county ATV trail system managed by a permit system, through the Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry. The County also has a diverse network of waterways for white water and flat water adventures.

Our rural nature lends itself to excellent hiking, mountain biking, passive camping and hunting.

- Recreation- extreme to light
- History

Weakness

Coordination, Multi Events, Communication, Lack of new Events, marketing, Funding, Festivals

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Section 1: Competitive Advantage

A tourism destination area must possess a competitive advantage over other destinations, something recognizable by visitors as a unique or appealing asset. This competitive edge affords the potential to draw new, significant visitor traffic to an area.

A This area is considered to stand out from other destinations because:

Our seasonal snow-fall, ATV Trail System, Horse Trails, World Class Kayaking, Waterfalls, State and Public Hunting Lands, Our pristine nature, Outstanding natural setting.

B The area has the following unique tourism products/services/experiences that are authentic to the North Country (e.g. biking, hiking paddling; mountains, lakes, rivers etc.):

Snowmobiling, Paddling, Historic Sites
Cultural tours, Golf

Mountain Biking, Lakes, Rivers, Kayaking
ATV Riding

X-County Ski Center, Snowshoeing
Horse-back riding

Down-hill Ski Center, passive Camping
Outstanding Recreational Activities, Inclusive

C Would non-residents, who are seeing the sights in the North Country, consider your destination area to be a first-choice destination, or a must-do experience?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, please identify why:

Weakness

- Lacking Exposure
- Awareness of Area
- Specialty Shoppes

Corrective Action. County and Chamber have embarked on an aggressive web and tradeshow marketing program.

D Does the destination respect heritage preservation by protecting heritage corridors/sites/buildings?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, briefly describe:

Attempts have been made, limited programs as funding is always the issue

- Cultural-Heritage Sites

Weakness

- Only Seasonal Operations of these sites

Section 2: Leadership

Enhancement of an area's existing tourism infrastructure requires community support. Tourism industry operators and municipalities must play an integral leadership role in strategic tourism development.

A Do local residents actively support tourism within the community and welcome additional tourism growth? Provide examples of how they actively support.

Landowners allow use of their land. The Public supports an increase in use.

B Do the tourism business leaders in the area work together in partnership with other stakeholders to grow tourism?

Please check: Yes No

Please provide examples:

Groups of businesses working together. However more cooperation between businesses can be generated.

C Does the municipalities in the area have in place documented tourism objectives, policies or priorities?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, do these objectives, policies, and priorities fit with the North Country Regional Economic Development Strategy?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, describe how they advance the strategies:

In 2011 the County developed a document (Herzig & Herzig) that identified our strengths and weakness. The areas outlined are being implemented as funding is appropriated.

Section 3: Tourism Infrastructure

Capacity of your existing tourism infrastructure must be identified and defined to better understand your current situation.

Accommodations:

Does the area offer accommodations with a variety of quality levels and price points?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, complete the following table:

Please note: Classifications for the type of accommodations can.

| Type of Property: | Number Properties | % rated AAA 3 star & up | Total # of units | % open year round | Price range in peak season |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Cottages/Cabins | 9 | NA | 39 | 100 | \$1,300.00-\$1,400.00 per wk |
| Resorts | 1 | NA | 1 | 100 | \$99.00-\$125.00 |
| Hotels | 5 | NA | 65 | 100 | \$111.00-\$169.00 |
| Motels | 8 | NA | 177 | 100 | \$89.00-\$159.00 |
| Bed & Breakfast Inns | 18 | NA | 39 | 100 | \$99.00-\$125.00 |
| Fishing/Hunting Lodges | 2 | NA | 19 | 100 | 1,300.00-\$1,400.00 per wk |
| Campground(Public & Private) | 6 | NA | 594 | 100 | \$156.00 -\$300.00 per wk. |
| Vacation Rental Homes | 5 | NA | 47 | 100 | \$1,300.00-\$1,400.00 per wk |
| Total | 53 | NA | 981 | 100 | |
| | | | | | |

Dining & Restaurants:

Does the area offer a variety of dining options at different price points?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, complete the following: (tally count restaurants in appropriate boxes)

| Check all that apply | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------|--------|---------------------|------------|--|--|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Family Dining | Fine Dining | Fast Food | Ethnic | That offer Full Bar | Night Club | | | Serves Breakfast | Serve Lunch | Serve Dinner |
| 19 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 18 | 1 | | | 6 | 19 | 19 |

Can you describe destination dining or signature experience? (Restaurants that are an attraction in themselves)

The dining facilities are located through Lewis County. Each dining accommodation provides its own unique regional atmosphere.

Attractions:

Does the area offer core and supporting attractions that are linked to the area's physical setting and/or history and augment the visitor experience?

Please check: Yes No (Not promoted effectively)

If yes, complete the following table:

| Attraction | Annual Visitation | Core or Supporting attraction? | Adult admission price | Months of operation |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Whetstone Gulf State Park | | | \$7.00 | 12 |
| Wind Mill Tours | Unknown | | Free | 12 |
| Maple Weekend | 4,000 | | Free | March |
| Ag Tours | 2,000 | | Free | October |
| Brewery Tours | Unknown | | Undefined | 12 |
| Fairgrounds | 80,000 | | Free | 12 |
| Adirondack International Speedway | Unknown | | \$15.00 | May-Sept |
| County Fair | 35,000 | | Free | July |
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From the attractions identified above, is there a wide range of core and supporting attractions that would sustain visitor interest for more than 24 hours?

Please describe:

Yes, there are numerous recreational activities, including but not limited to hiking, biking, kayaking, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling and ATV riding. In addition there are historic site of interest.

Experiences:

Does the area offer a variety of commercial, natural, cultural or heritage experiences/activities (e.g. birding, wildlife watching, tours, culinary classes, learning vacations, rafting/paddling, guided tours, fishing/hunting, etc.)?

Please check: Yes No (Not promoted)

If yes, complete the following table:

| Experience | Number of operators/ guides | Number of visitors served |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Constable Hall Tours | 3 | 2003 |
| Rail Road Depot Museum | 1 | 1,123 |
| Black River Trail | 0 | Unknown |
| Mennonite Heritage Farm | 3 | 940 |
| American Fiddlers Hall of Fame | Unknown | Unknown |
| Maple Ridge Cultural Center (self guided) | Varies | 7,000 |
| Denley Trout Farm (self guided) | 0 | Unknown |
| Tug Hill Vineyards (self guided) | Varies | 20,000 |
| Town Hall Theater (unavailable) | 0 | Unknown |
| Houps Acres Deer Farm (unavailable) | 0 | Unknown |
| Fall Foliage Tour (self guided) | 0 | 1,200 |
| Maple Weekend (self guided) | 0 | 4,000 |

Events & Festivals:

Does your area offer events that are marketed outside the region and are designed to draw tourists or have more than 50% of their attendance supported by tourists? Please list events that are tourism draws; not events that depend upon tourists already in the market for other reasons.

Please check: Yes No (promoted to a degree)

If yes, complete the following table:

| Event Name | Event theme | Month of event | Average visitor attendance |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Blk River Challenge | Boating, Canoes, Kayaks | June | 125 |
| Riverfest | Boating Kayaking | August | 200 |
| Watercross | Snowmobile Races | June, July, August | 7,000 |
| Mudfest | 4X4 Mud Event | June, July, September | 1,000 |
| Race w/ wind | Bike Race | August | 1,000 |
| Maple Week | Maple Products | March | 4,000 |
| Cream Cheese festival | Community Festival | September | 12,000 |
| Duck Race | Charity Event | April | 3,000 |
| Tug Hill Blue Grass | Music | June | 3,000 |
| SNIRT | ATV Event | April | 3,500 |
| Flywheels & Pulleys | Swap Meet | September | 2,000 |
| Woodsmen Field days | Wood Products/Competition | August | 44,319 |
| Edge Hotel Wellness Event | Health Care | November | 800 |
| Snow Ridge Hill Climb | Extreme Snowmobile Event | January | 300 |
| County Fair | Community Event | July | 35,000 |
| Black River Concert Series | Music | January-March | 3,000 |
| | | | |

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Meetings/Conventions:

Does the area afford the ability to host meetings, workshops and conventions?

Please circle: less than 10 people 11-50 people 50+ people

Specify meeting space available for meetings of more than 50:
(i.e. halls, community centers, meeting rooms, convention centers, etc.)

| Facility Name | Number of Meeting Rooms | Largest Banquet Capacity | Number of sleeping rooms (if lodging) |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Jebs | 1 | 50 | 0 |
| Ridgeview Inn | 1 | 180 | 0 |
| Boondocks | 1 | 100 | 0 |
| Steak & Brew | 1 | 80 | 0 |
| Lowville Academy (School) | 1 | 300 | 0 |
| Chamber of Commerce | 1 | 50 | 0 |
| Edge Hotel/Boondocks | 0 | 100 | 130 |
| Ridgeview Lodge/Ridgeview Inn | 0 | 180 | 150 |
| Elks Lodge | 2 | 501 | 0 |
| Lowville Theater | 1 | 687 | 0 |
| Legislative Chambers | 1 | 80 | 0 |
| Maple Ridge Center | 1 | 75 | 0 |
| American Legion | 1 | 98 | 0 |
| VFW | 1 | 251 | 0 |
| Lowville Fire Department | 1 | 330 | 0 |
| Glenfield Fire Department | 1 | 287 | 0 |
| Copenhagen Fire Department | 1 | 250 | 0 |
| Croghan Fire Department | 1 | 94 | 0 |
| Turin Fire Department | 1 | 317 | 0 |
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Shopping:

Does the area offer a range of retail shopping opportunities that cater to the tourist trade, including clothing, crafts, and souvenirs at different price points?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, provide a tally of the number of store fitting in each category:

| Mass Market/Chain | Boutique | Specialty/Niche | Souvenirs | Grocery/Food/Deli | Year Round Operation | Seasonal Operation |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 2 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 22 | 38 | 0 |

Does the area have one or more shopping districts/developments that would be of special appeal to tourists?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, briefly describe the shopping district(s):

What other amenities does your community offer that help position it as a destination?



Section 4: Marketability

Ideally, this section involves recognized branding of your destination's national/international significance.

A The area has received a designation by a recognized state, national and/or international entity for being a destination. (For example, state/National Historic District; Blueway Trail, Scenic Byway, etc.)

Please circle: Yes No

If yes, specify designation by whom and date received:

- 1) Black River Trail Scenic Byway
- 2) Maple Traditions
- 3) Blueway Trail
- 4) Black River Watershed
- 5) Tug Hill region
- 6) Black River Canal
- 7) Adirondack State park

Section 5: Strategic Planning

This section focuses on the collective commitment to invest in tourism development, marketing, research, human resources and partnerships.

A Has a tourism destination development plan/strategy been developed for your community/area?

Please check: Yes No (**Refer to Comp Plan recommendations**)

If yes, how many years ago was it developed and what are the key initiatives implemented to date?

2009 Comprehensive Plan, Prepared by Lewis County and Bergmann Associates

Tourism & Recreation is the first High Priority Policy Area of the County's Comprehensive Plan, highlighting key objectives and action items.

2011 Strategic Tourism Report, Prepared by the Herzig Group.

Preparation of this document marked the completion of a high priority action item of our County's Comprehensive Plan.

If yes, when will the implementation be complete?

Ongoing program

Do the objectives and priorities outlined within the plan support the North Country Regional Tourism Strategies? Please identify these specific strategies and priorities.

Yes, the strategies and priorities that we are recommending throughout this Plan support the 2011 NCREDC's Strategic Plan identified strategies and action items. These include Strategy 1, to "put in place tools to attract private investment, which will drive demand to revitalize and diversify communities..." This strategy highlights leveraging brand equity to strengthen and widen the attributes of the North Country Region. We build upon Adirondack and Tug Hill brands in our new logo, website, print materials, and smart phone applications. Strategy 2 recognizes the need to develop tourism infrastructure, which is a theme carried throughout this document. (p. 44-5)

Furthermore, in NCREDC's 2012 Implementation Agenda, a key strategy is to "put in place tools to attract private investment in tourism which will drive demand to revitalize and diversify communities and create a climate that will allow entrepreneurs to flourish. (p. 57). NCREDC amended the 2011 Strategic Plan to include support for Blueways, Byways and Trailways implementation projects, specifically mentioning the Black River Blueway, thereby recognizing the need for tourism planning in the region and that these are established brands with well-vetted management plans and with recommended action items that we continue to implement.

Our Tourism Destination Area application is consistent with and/or incorporates recommendations from the following plans:

- 2007 Black River Blueway Trail Development Plan
- 2009 Black River Trail Scenic Byway Comprehensive Management Plan
- 2009 Maple Traditions Scenic Byway Comprehensive Management Plan
- 2009 Lewis County Comprehensive Plan
- 2009 Town & Village of Lowville Comprehensive Plan
- 2010 Black River Watershed Management Plan
- 2011 North Country Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan
- 2011 Lewis County Strategic Tourism Report
- 2012 Village of Lyons Falls Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination Study
- 2012 North Country Regional Economic Development Council Progress Report

B Is a program in place to monitor and track the progress made towards achieving the objectives outlined in the area's plan?Please check: Yes No

If yes, these are measured by:

Progress is being tracked through the Chamber of Commerce and Google Analytics.

If No, are there plans in place to develop a tourism destination development plan/strategy in the near future?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, when? _____

If No, is the area already included in an existing larger municipal or county tourism development plan/strategy?

Please check: Yes No**C Visitation: What mechanisms do you currently have in place to measure visitation?**

How long have these mechanisms been in place? Are they effective?

The Chamber of Commerce Website, Apps and Google Analytics.

D What are the resources in place to manage future tourism plans for the area, and to move them forward?

Identify resources (staff, budget, organizations, volunteers, etc.) that are in place:

Recently launched a trade show initiative with funding provided by the County. The Chamber of Commerce and Lewis County also launched a "New" Tourism website and Apps in 2014. Our 2015 marketing/Operational Budget was increased 75% over 2014.

E List other resources needed that will help further tourism initiatives in the area.

Personnel, Funding, Marketing Plan – Goals/Objectives, Core Data Tracking, Seasonal trend analyses on target areas.

F Is there an established “destination marketing organization” for the area?Please check: Yes No

If yes, please complete the following (if the DMO is part of a larger organization, only answer in reference to resources specifically designated for destination marketing)

Name of DMO:

Chamber of Commerce

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Organization budget | |
| Percent public funds | \$160,000.00 |
| Percent private funds | \$120,000.00 County, \$40,000.00 State |
| Number of full time paid staff | 2 |
| Number of part time paid staff | 1 |
| Number of volunteers | 20+ |

| Types of marketing done by DMO | Yes | No |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|
| Places print advertising | X | |
| Places TV advertising | X | |
| Places Internet advertising | X | |
| Maintains website(s) | X | |
| Manages social media | X | |
| Publishes brochures/guidebook | X | |
| Solicits publicity | X | |
| Solicits group business | | X |
| Solicits convention business | | X |
| Commissions research | | X |
| Sponsors hospitality training | X | |
| Organizes events | X | |
| maintains information center | X | |

Other information about DMO activity:

The Chamber of Commerce is designated by the Lewis County Board of Legislators (BOL) annually through resolution as the DMO. The BOL also provides an annual marketing budget to the DMO.

E Through a DMO or other source, is current travel information on the area available through the following?

Travel Guides:

Please check: Yes No

If yes, describe including quantities printed and distribution program:

50,000 Annually, Printed
33 Visitor Centers, Distribution
20 Trade Shows, Distribution

Website:

Please check: Yes No

If yes, describe including current statistics on use:

Google Analytics

Brochures:

Please check: Yes No

If yes, describe:

Assorted, hiking, fishing, hunting, ATV and snowmobile

Other:

Please check: Yes No

If yes, describe:

Summer and Winter Apps for mobile devices.

Section 6: Seasonal Capacity

This section focuses on: sufficient capacity to service visitors on a year round basis.

Using the information identified in Sections 4 and 6 provide the following statistics:

Please Note:

Q1 January - March

Q2 April - June

Q3 July - September

Q4 October - December

A Distribution of total visitation is as follows:

| Yea | % visitation in Q1 | % visitation in Q2 | % visitation in Q3 | % visitation in Q4 |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2011 | 87 | 53 | 83 | 66 |
| 2012 | 63 | 49 | 80 | 51 |
| 2013 | 100 | 58 | 73 | 55 |
| | | | | |

B Accommodation occupancy is distributed throughout the year at the following percentage rates:

| Year | % occupancy in Q1 | % occupancy in Q2 | % occupancy in Q3 | % occupancy in Q4 |
|------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2011 | 87 | 53 | 83 | 66 |
| 2012 | 63 | 49 | 80 | 51 |
| 2013 | 100 | 58 | 73 | 55 |
| | | | | |

The annual average occupancy rate is: 69%

C Visitation: What mechanism do you currently have in place to measure visitation?

Bed Taxes: 2011 - \$24806.74, \$15028.85, \$23727.80, \$18668.87
 2012 - \$17894.55, \$13925.69, \$22871.32, \$14593.87
 2013 - \$28714.28, \$16652.53, \$20746.30, \$15754.16

D What are operators/businesses within the area doing to extend the tourism season? What initiatives have they indicated an interest in pursuing in the future?

Establishment of additional none traditional/seasonal events to attract tourist to the County (e.g., The Edge Healthcare Wellness Event).

Also adding additional App layers for a self guided Maple Tour.

Section 7: Travel Trade

This section is focused on the potential to develop packages that extend the season and diversify the product offering, by maximizing partnerships with the travel trade.

A Can the area be experienced through the purchase of multi-activity/day packages?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, please identify examples of these packages:

Businesses participate in package programs. Bus tour program be developed with Tour Companies across the region.

B Is there a demand for the area's type of packages? This demand is demonstrated by:

YES, Tour and Bus operators are working with the Chamber to establish packages for area activities.

C Is the area considered "friendly", or "very hospitable", by tour operators?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, how do you know this?

A variety of companies are currently working with our Chamber to develop program packages.

D Is the area represented at consumer and travel trade shows?

Please check: Yes No

If Yes, which shows and by whom?

Our 2015 marketing Budget expanded our presence at trades show. The Chamber of Commerce/Lewis County will have a marketing presence at 10-trades shows across the Northeast and Canada in 2015.

Section 8: Sustainable Tourism Practices

Meeting the needs of present tourists, while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future; on managing all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled—while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.

A Is an environmental monitoring program in place to ensure the carrying capacities of the natural systems are not overwhelmed by destination visitation?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, it is described in:

SEQR – program Limited

B Does the area consider the impact of increased visitation on the residents' quality of life?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, what mechanisms are in place for residents to express their opinion?

Event Questionnaire to evaluate impact on area and services. Jefferson Community College conducts a quality of Life survey every fall for Lewis County. The data is reviewed and adjustments are made in marketing strategy if necessary.

C Has your community established land-use laws that support the preservation and management of natural assets and tourism sector growth.

Please check: Yes No

If yes, please list:

Through our department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry

D Does the destination currently demonstrate sustainable tourism practices (practices that minimize tourism's negative economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts and/or make positive contributions to the cultural, heritage and natural assets available in the community)?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, briefly describe:

Lewis County is building a program to communicate to a Public sector, through our newly developed event permit program.

Section 9: Support Services Infrastructure

Visitor amenities, services and infrastructure

A Do you have a water treatment facility in place which has the capacity to accommodate existing levels of visitation/attractions/services?Please check: Yes No

If No, are you planning to implement a water treatment system?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, how long until it is in place? _____

Will this provide sufficient capacity to accommodate projected levels of visitation?

Please check: Yes No

If no, how will the area address this issue?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

B Do you have a sewage treatment facility to accommodate existing levels of visitation/attractions/services?Please check: Yes No

If No, is there a plan to develop a sewage treatment facility?

Please check: Yes No

If Yes, how long until it is in place?

Will this provide sufficient capacity to accommodate projected visitation?

Please check: Yes No

If no, how will the area address this issue?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

C Are there public, well-maintained permanent bathrooms available at strategic locations throughout the area.

Please check: Yes No

If yes, please identify:

Our public facilities are maintained and upgraded as necessary.

D Is the road, transit, and parking capacity in place to accommodate existing levels of visitation?

Please check: Yes No

If No, is there a plan in place to address issues of road (maintenance/construction), transit (route creation/expansion), and parking capacity for existing levels of visitation?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, please outline what is planned:

Yes, ample parking is provided via lots throughout the county. Specific event parking is coordinated in detail.

E Does your community have emergency services to respond to the range of emergencies that may occur as a tourism destination:

Please check: Yes No

Please describe:

EMS, Fire Departments, County Sheriff, Local Law Enforcement

F Do the main transportation routes to the destination core have:

- | | | | |
|--|----------------|------------|----|
| i) frequent and easy to read directional signage | Please circle: | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| ii) well maintained road surfaces | Please circle: | <u>Yes</u> | No |
| iii) attractively maintained public spaces | Please circle: | <u>Yes</u> | No |

To prevent traffic congestion, are there alternate modes of transportation available? (e.g. public transit, shuttle service, satellite parking facilities)

Please check: Yes No

If no, do you plan to address this issue?

Public Transportation is available. Specialty programs can be developed based on a seasonal request.

If yes, identify modes of transportation:

Bus

Section 10: Visitor Support Services

A tourism destination area consistently offers high-quality, visitor support facilities and services in response to market demand

A Is there a Visitor Information Center in the area?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, where is it located?

Chamber of Commerce

B Is there access to 24/7 information for visitors available through kiosks or some other means?

Please check: Yes No

(Available in Trail Head parking Areas, Chamber website and County Mobile Apps)

C Is there public Internet or public Wi-Fi access easily available to visitors?

Please check: Yes No

If yes, identify these internet access sites:

This information is primarily supplied via the Chamber website and mobile apps which were released in September 2014. Additionally local businesses maintain websites and links providing detailed information on Lewis County.z

D Is a trained, qualified labor force available to serve visitor demands at a level that maintains guest satisfaction?

Please check: Yes No

Is there a sufficient pool of trained, qualified labor to accommodate future tourism needs in the area?

Please check: Yes No

If No, please specify areas of concern:

Now that you have completed the workbook, use the results to identify gaps, opportunities and competitive strengths. Describe in a narrative how you feel you are a Tourism Destination area. What are your opportunities to strengthen your destinations and how you would like to address the needs identified in the workbook?

The information outlined in this document is reflective of our County Comprehensive Plan (CCP), Chapter 3, Policy Area 1, and Tourism & Recreation. The CCP is our base guide for the growth and diversity of our Tourism and Recreation sectors of the economy in Lewis County. Our strengths are the natural resources, winter and summer recreational (e.g., Snowmobiling, ATVing, hiking, Biking, etc.) opportunities, waterways, open space, scenic views, historic resources, County Fair, festivals and our small town atmosphere to name a few.

In 2014 Lewis County embarked on a new marketing campaign with funding (\$57,500) provided by the Board of Legislators. It was agreed this initial marketing phase would be developed to inform the general public, business, the region and in fact the world about Lewis County, New York. A comprehensive interactive website, summer and winter mobile Apps, and analytical tracking were developed to showcase our County assets. The website and apps were launched in September 2014.

Along with the website and apps an aggressive tradeshow campaign was launched for 2015-2016. The Chamber and Lewis County as partners will be attending 10 scheduled tradeshows across the Northeast Region to market our assets.

There are no real weaknesses within Lewis County, more so challenges with the current economic climate, limited amenities and services and the availability of consistent funding for program growth and communication.

Lewis County will continue to build on the momentum generated by the current marketing strategy. Our businesses will continue to create partnerships to raise the level of services provided to our visitors. Our goal is to evaluate the data being collected, continue to listen to our business community, provide economic assistance in areas of need and continue to build a long-range marketing program to position Lewis County as a State and Regional Leader in Tourism and Recreation.

TOURISM TERMS

Attraction a natural site, a man-made facility or an area which draws visitor traffic by providing an opportunity for individuals to participate in an experience away from home. Local attractions are often based on a resource unique to that particular local area or community. For example: a natural resource (tides); cultural resource (theatre); historical resource (historic site) or a local industry (fishing).

Brand/Branding Is the sum of the experiences a person has with a product. It embodies the organizations/destinations promise to consistently deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services to the visitor. (Marketing Partners Inc., 2004)

Business Plan a comprehensive planning document which clearly describing the business developmental objective of an existing, or proposed, business. The plan addresses the What, Why, How and When of starting or expanding a business and demonstrates its viability/feasibility. Typically a business plan is a critical step in developing a successful business, and is required when applying for assistance or lending programs.

Carrying Capacity The maximum number of people who can use a site without an unacceptable alteration in the physical environment; a decline in the quality of experience gained by visitors; or adverse impact on the society, economy, and culture of the tourism area. ((Mathieson and Wall, 1982) Inskeep, 1991)

Channel of Distribution methods by which sellers reach potential buyers; travel agents, tour operators and tour wholesalers are part of this system within the tourism industry.

Competitive Advantage an advantage a business has over its competitors due to the quality or superiority of products or services; this advantage will persuade consumers to buy from that business, versus a competitor.

Cooperative Marketing the sharing of marketing costs for mutual benefit. Participants in a cooperative marketing initiative may include one or more travel product suppliers, a destination marketing organization, and travel-trade companies (i.e. tour operators or wholesalers). Usually all participating organizations share in the administration and/or cost of the marketing program.

Core Attraction the feature(s), facility(i.e.), and/or experiences which act as the primary motivators for most travel to the destination; the attractions with the most tourist visits in the destination. Core attractions can differ from season to season. (there may be golf and skiing at a four seasons resort destination.) A core attraction can also be a grouping of assets, all relating to a specific theme (e.g., forts and battlefields), or an experience enabled by a grouping (e.g., a resort experience supported by fishing, canoeing, dining and accommodations) See: Supporting Attraction)

Demand generators activities available at a destination—attractions, things to do and see—that can, on their own, generate new visits from certain market segments particularly for special interest/special activity visits, and special-event visits. Demand generators include:

- a critical mass of unique and appealing attractions, events, cultures, entertainment and leisure activities;
- quality, appealing experiences of special interest to visitors, different from those available at home;
- scenery and natural areas for recreation, relaxation and enjoyment;
- programming and packages to appeal to special interests; and
- a sufficient level of high impact marketing activities to highly targeted market segments.

Demand supporter an activity that may not directly contribute to motivating a tourism visit, but may be of sufficient interest to motivate a market segment to include it in their agenda while at the destination. Demand supporters include:

- interesting and unique shopping, particularly for indigenous products and crafts;
 - quality dining, including unique indigenous cuisine;
 - quality accommodations of various types;
 - easy access to information, reservations and visitor services;
 - quality travel routes and signage;
 - access to a well-developed tourism product distribution network, i.e., tour operators, packagers, travel agents;
 - convenient, fast and affordable transportation to access the destination;
 - trained, professional service and hospitable staff;
- and
- a safe environment.

Direct selling a method of securing business through direct contact with potential customers.

Direct marketing the use of marketing media that involves direct contact with individual consumers. This includes direct mail and email that is sent to targeted individuals.

Familiarization or “fam” tours (also called product knowledge tours) a complimentary or reduced-rate travel program for tour operators, travel agents or travel writers, designed to improve knowledge about a particular destination or package. The purpose in the first two cases is to encourage active marketing support; in the third it is to encourage the writing and publication of positive media stories about the destination, thereby raising its public profile.

Feasibility study a preliminary study to assess the potential of an opportunity, and to determine if it is financially viable. The study addresses issues including the project's benefits, costs, effectiveness, alternatives considered, analysis of alternative selection, environmental impacts, public opinions, and other factors.

Goals tourism goals are clear, concise statements that broadly outline what the community/organizations would like to see happen to tourism in the community. Goals should provide direction for the accomplishment of more specific, immediate, and related objectives.

Marketing Collateral print materials used for marketing (i.e. brochures, flyers, information sheets, etc.)

Market-driven strategy a strategy in which market demand directly impacts the product development process.

Market-readiness the state of preparedness of a tourism operation, or a destination as a whole, in meeting the expectations of its customers; refers to the entire spectrum of things affecting customer satisfaction: i.e. quality of facilities and services, range of services provided, information services, business policies and practices that affect the customer directly or indirectly, etc. This term can also refer to the state of preparedness in meeting needs and expectations of the travel trade.

Market Segment a group of consumers who respond in a similar way to a given set of marketing efforts. Different market segments can exist within a target market.

Niche Markets the tailoring of products to meet the needs and wants of narrowly defined market segments. An example would be avid birdwatchers that are prepared to travel for that activity.

Objectives specific outcomes that can be measured using agreed criteria (see Goals above). Tourism objectives are more specific than goals and represent the ends to which community action should be directed.

On-Site Spending spending by visitors. This usually includes: admission fees or tickets; retail purchases (gifts and souvenirs) and food and beverage purchases.

Package a mix of tourism attractions and/or activities and associated visitor services that is organized into a single product and sold as such.

Paid Media media advertising that is paid for rather than obtained free as publicity.

Primary research collection of new data that is not available from existing sources. Doing primary research on visitors to your community could involve doing surveys or interviews (see secondary research).

Product-Market Match matching the products and resources of an area with the markets that offer the best opportunity.

Receptive Tour Operator a person or company that specializes in particular destinations, and provides services at the destination to group travel organizers and tour operators. Some operators limit their services to the community and area in which they are based; others provide services to entire regions.

Seasonal Capacity The ability to provide tourism products and services, throughout different seasons of the year, to meet tourism demand.

Secondary Research data and information that has already been collected or compiled by someone else (see primary research).

Stakeholder those individuals, groups, and parties that either affect, or who are affected by, an action of an organization or an event that may take place. As a general rule, stakeholders include all internal (community) and external (visitors) individuals.

Strategic Planning the process by which an organization envisions its future and develops strategies, goals, objectives and action plans to achieve that future.

Supporting Attraction secondary attractions with features or facilities that draw visitors to the destination area by augmenting the experience. Typically, these attractions are distinguished from core attractions by their smaller visitation numbers; however, supporting attractions can be primary travel motivators (i.e. core attractions) for some markets — typically niche markets.

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) a technique that provides scope for an organization/community to list all its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This analysis should lead to identifying priority markets and opportunities/needs for growing and/or strengthening tourism in the area. Typically, strengths and weaknesses are internal attributes of the organization/community. Opportunities and threats are external, and tend to be much more difficult to control.

Target Market a clearly defined group of customers (i.e. specific individuals, sharing common needs or characteristics); because a high probability exists that members of this group will purchase your product or service, you have selected them as the targets for your focused marketing activities.

Tour Operator a business that designs, develops, markets and operates packaged travel and tourism products and tours. Tour operators sell through travel agents and/or directly to consumers.

Tourism the activities of persons traveling to, and staying in, places outside their usual environment for leisure, business and other purposes and staying for not more than one consecutive year.

Tourism demand all visitors and travelers who meet the definition of tourists.

Tourism suppliers all businesses that provide facilities and services used by tourists; includes businesses that cater solely to tourists, (i.e. accommodations, car rental businesses) as well as those that cater to tourists markets in addition to resident markets (i.e. restaurants, attractions).

Tourist 1. someone who travels for pleasure. 2. a temporary visitor, staying for at least a day in the region, and travelling for a purpose classified as either: holiday (recreation, leisure, sport and visit to family, friends or relatives); business; official mission; convention; health reasons.

Travel Agent/Agency a licensed, travel-product retailer that provides travel information, reservations and other forms of assistance to consumers, companies and groups in making travel arrangements (sometimes referred to as a retailer).

Travel Experience an activity that replaces goods and services, and addresses consumer demand for activities which stimulate and enhance creative capacities through travel.

Travel Trade a term describing the full range of organizations that operate as intermediaries in the travel and tourism industry; these typically include tour operators, wholesalers, receptive operators, and travel agents.

Travel Media writers, reporters and bloggers who specialize in covering destinations and travel experiences for travel journals, magazines, newspapers, websites, radio and televi