



# 2013/14 Marketing Plan



**Christian White's carving shed in Haida Gwaii**

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**Marine wildlife viewing with Aboriginal Journeys in Campbell River** [AboriginalJourneys.com](http://AboriginalJourneys.com)

# Background

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**The Next Phase**, AtBC's Five-year strategy for Aboriginal cultural tourism in British Columbia, targets growth for the industry at 10% each year. This marketing plan outlines tactics that directly support the strategies identified in The Next Phase.

- Focus on Online Marketing
- Focus on Authenticity and Quality Assurance
- Regional Approach
- Build and Strengthen Partnerships
- Push for Market-Readiness
- Focus on Key and Emerging Markets



Download: <http://cl.ly/DxpB>

# Overview

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The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC) is a Stakeholder based industry association. One of AtBC's primary functions is to promote market-ready Stakeholder products and experiences and the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry as a whole.

Over the years, AtBC has built awareness of Aboriginal cultural tourism opportunities within British Columbia by promoting market-ready Stakeholder products to consumers, travel trade and travel media. The goal of all of AtBC's marketing activities is to funnel interested travellers to the individual Stakeholder's website.

## Stakeholder Engagement

In order for its marketing activities to be successful, AtBC needs to continue to engage its Stakeholders. By pro-actively involving Stakeholders in its marketing approach, AtBC will connect the consumer directly with the Aboriginal-owned tourism businesses. This will create engaging and real conversations that raise not only the awareness of Aboriginal tourism, but also increases bookings for the Stakeholders.

## Consumer Campaign

British Columbia's Aboriginal tourism industry must continue to offer authentic and exceptional tourism experiences that inspire and attract consumers. For 2013, AtBC will develop a new Consumer Campaign that features a consistent theme through all of its initiatives and marketing channels, and at the same time pro-actively engages its Stakeholders.

## Travel Trade

In addition, AtBC will expand its work with the Travel Trade to promote Aboriginal Tourism to its target audience, and provide insight into how Aboriginal experiences fit into their travel offerings.

## Travel Media

Travel Media will also be engaged effectively in order to generate increased editorial coverage in relevant publications, broadcast media and online channels.

## Authenticity & Quality Assurance

AtBC will develop a new quality assurance program to ensure that consumers consistently receive an amazing experience.

## Primary Goal

The primary goal of AtBC's 2013-14 Marketing Plan is to **convert interest into bookings.**

## Objectives

- » Increase visits to Stakeholders' websites and social media
- » Increase in visitation to AtBC's website
- » Increase in followers to AtBC's social media accounts
- » Increase in subscribers to AtBC's email marketing campaigns
- » Build and strengthen recognizable brand with Consumers, Travel Trade, Travel Media
- » Increase Aboriginal-themed itineraries and packages offered by receptive tour operators, tour operators and travel agents
- » Increase in positive editorial and broadcast coverage

## Market-Ready Designation

To be eligible to participate in AtBC's marketing program, each Stakeholder must meet the following Market-Ready criteria:

- » Has been operating in a safe and professional manner for at least one year
- » Carries adequate insurance totaling no less than 2 million in liability
- » Has current business and operating licenses, registrations and permits
- » Has a website that honestly and accurately represents the Aboriginal tourism business
- » Accepts credit cards and debit cards as means of payment
- » Handles reservations/inquiries by telephone, fax and email on a year-round basis
- » Handles and is able to provide confirmation of booking arrangements within 24 hours
- » Has a product that is of interest to tourists, both domestic and international





**Eco tour with Lakeshore Resort & Campground** [LakeshoreResortCampground.com](http://LakeshoreResortCampground.com)



# Stakeholder Engagement

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AtBC strongly believes that Stakeholder engagement is key to the success of all of its marketing activities. This marketing plan is 100% Stakeholder focussed. All activities begin and end with the Marketing Stakeholders.

AtBC staff will work with each individual Marketing Stakeholder to ensure that consumers, travel trade and travel media all have access to:

- » Information covering all of their available tourism experiences
- » Special offers on experiences
- » Story ideas that will compel people to find out more about the Stakeholder
- » Information on events that the Stakeholder is hosting or participating in

## Digital Assets

AtBC will support Marketing Stakeholders by gathering new, professional images and/or video from each Stakeholder business. These assets will be used in story blogs and advertising as well as being made available through a Digital Asset Management System to Travel Trade, Travel Media and the Stakeholders themselves.

## Consumer contest

The 2013 consumer campaign features a photo contest. AtBC will support Marketing Stakeholders with signage and other resources to help promote the contest and their business as part of the campaign.

## Destination BC Membership

In 2013, AtBC's Marketing Stakeholder fee of \$495 will include a \$99 membership with Destination BC (DBC). This will ensure that all AtBC Marketing Stakeholders will receive broad exposure on the HelloBC.com website - including the high traffic "Special Offers" section. AtBC staff will assist Stakeholders with their DBC membership to reduce the administrative burden.

# Consumer Campaign

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## 2012 Success

AtBC launched its Our Story. Your Experience. (OSYE) campaign in the summer of 2012. During the campaign development, AtBC worked closely with many Stakeholders to create unique content that successfully built a strong social media presence and reached our target audience.

Some highlights of the campaign included:

- » 3,900 Facebook Likes (OSYE and Klahowya Village combined)
- » 3,500 email addresses (OSYE and Klahowya Village combined)
- » AtBC's 2012 Facebook content viewed almost 5 million times by over 790,000 users
- » AtBC's 2012 Facebook content reached up to 215,000 users per week
- » Some Videos reached more than 5,000 people
- » Reached close to 20,000 unique visitors to AboriginalBC.com in July and August, 2012

## 2013 Campaign

For 2013, AtBC will build on the social media success of last year, and develop a Consumer Campaign that takes the broader theme-based approach from 2012 to a more tactical strategy. In doing so, AtBC will focus on the individual Aboriginal experiences as a consistent theme that gets carried through all of its initiatives and marketing channels, and at the same time pro-actively engages its Stakeholders, as well as the consumers.

## Target Audience

- » BC, ON, AB, CA and WA
- » With AtBC's brochures, regional guides and digital advertising, AtBC will be targetting all visitors travelling throughBC
- » Sophisticated and frequent travellers, who travel overnight, 35-64 years, with above average income

## Campaign Concept

For 2013, AtBC will introduce a new campaign titled 'Plus Aboriginal'. The campaign will be carried out by introducing the individual Aboriginal experience providers to the audience, making it easy for them to plan and book an Aboriginal experience or vacation as part of their trip to British Columbia.

The campaign will enable us to:

- » Showcase the breadth and diversity of individual Aboriginal experiences in BC
- » Give a direct connection to the Aboriginal experience providers in BC
- » Motivate the audience to add the experiences to their BC itinerary or to book an Aboriginal vacation
- » Invite the audience to share the Aboriginal experience(s) with their friends and followers



**+ AboriginalBC**  
*= Essential BC Moments*

The perfect British Columbia vacation isn't complete until you immerse in the true spirit of the land and meet its thriving First Nations people. Connect with BC's authentic Aboriginal culture next time you visit by living, learning and sharing in the heart and soul of it. Tour a traditional Aboriginal village, learn an ancient art form or rejuvenate through spiritual healing. Take a journey you'll never forget – and turn your BC discoveries into Aboriginal moments.

Visit [AboriginalBC.com](http://AboriginalBC.com) to discover BC's original culture.

 **ABORIGINAL TOURISM BC**  
our story. your experience.

Ad mockup showing one possible treatment of the "Plus Aboriginal" concept.



## Timing

Logistics will start in early April and campaign activities will be executed between June 1 and September 30, 2013. The campaign will continue from October to March with a lower frequency of story generation focussed on off-season activities.

## Campaign Goal

- » Motivate consumers to take action by planning or booking an Aboriginal experience or vacation

## Campaign Strategies

- » Inspire consumers by bringing Aboriginal tourism to life
- » Connect consumers with travel planning tools, trip ideas and special offers to motivate them to take action
- » Capture consumer information for future contact through contesting and email-marketing
- » Campaign Targets
- » 5,000 Facebook Likes (not including Klahowya Village or Industry pages)
- » Consumer Facebook reach of 500,000 users
- » Consumer Facebook engagement of 10,000 interactions
- » 50% increase in website visits over 2012
- » 50% increase in click-through to Stakeholder websites over 2012

## Content Creation

The 'Plus Aboriginal' campaign will deliver exciting, fresh and unique content that really captures the first-hand visitor experience with the individual market-ready Stakeholders. By focusing on the unique aspects of the Stakeholders' experiences as seen through their different points-of-view, the content not only offers strong, people-based story angles that visitors can relate to, but also provides a platform from which to directly market Stakeholder products through social media and on AboriginalBC.com.

- » Videos and images
- » Story blogs

## Website

AboriginalBC.com will undergo a creative refresh, so it better reflects the 'Plus Aboriginal' campaign, highlighting all market-ready experiences on the home page via a user-friendly navigation that easily directs website visitors to the actual experiences.

- » Mobile friendly design
- » Interactive map
- » Trip / itinerary builders
- » Events calendar
- » Stakeholder deals and packages
- » Integration of videos, blogs and contest

## Contest

The 2013 contest – a cornerstone of the campaign – invites visitors to share images of their Aboriginal tourism experiences via the social media site Instagram. The best images will then be chosen and published through AtBC’s online and social media channels, but also printed as picture boards and published at Klahowya Village (KV).

With this approach, AtBC showcases the individual experiences at KV which will become part of the conversation for the staff to highlight the experiences, but also anchors KV to the campaign as an important component.

Stakeholders will be provided with materials to promote this contest to their guests. The Stakeholder with the most images will also be awarded a prize (e.g. picture boards or free membership).



Sample “Aboriginal Moment” captured on Instagram.

Example Instagram contest from the CTC.



## Social Media

Throughout 2013, all newly created content will be strategically leveraged through appropriate social media platforms including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest and Instagram. User participation in the social media program will be encouraged through contests and other engaging content (image, videos, etc.).

## Email Marketing

AtBC will be communicating with the consumers through stories that are delivered via email marketing. In partnership with Destination BC, AtBC has access to over 35,000 email contacts that have expressed interest in Aboriginal tourism. Throughout the summer, AtBC will create 6 email blasts that will invite consumers to explore individual Stakeholders' experiences.









## Other Activities:

- » Digital signage advertising at key hotels in the Lower Mainland
- » Regional brochures
- » Advertising in regional travel guides


















# Tactics and Activities

**Inspire:** The 2013 campaign will bring Aboriginal tourism to life in the minds of consumers.

- » Social Media: Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram  
- » Story blogs  
- » Inspirational videos and photos with a focus on individual Stakeholders  
- » Digital Advertising  

**Connect:** The 2013 campaign will connect consumers with travel planning tools, trip ideas and special offers to motivate consumers to take action.

- » Website Enhancements: trip builder, deals, itineraries, map  
- » Email marketing: stories, tactical messages  
- » Social Media  
- » Search Engine Marketing  
- » Brochure   
- » Regional Guides   
- » Digital Advertising 

**Capture:** The 2013 campaign will collect consumer information for future contact.

- » Photo Contest   
- » Social Media  
- » E-sign up  

 Partnerships  Online Marketing  Print Marketing



**Traditional canoe tour with Takaya Tours in North Vancouver** [TakayaTours.com](http://TakayaTours.com)

# Travel Trade

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The goal of AtBC's Travel Trade marketing activities is to promote Aboriginal tourism and AtBC's Stakeholders to Receptive Tour Operators and Tour Operators and develop itineraries and getaways that include Aboriginal experiences.

AtBC will continue to work with Travel Trade partners to develop and increase Aboriginal-themed itineraries in their product offerings.

In 2012 AtBC conducted a comprehensive travel trade survey which revealed that the awareness of Aboriginal tourism has increased by 94.4%, and the interest level of actually incorporating Aboriginal experiences increased by 88.8% over the last 5 years. To continue this trend, AtBC's travel trade focus includes establishing key account partnerships that publish and actively market Aboriginal-themed packages and experiences in their markets.

## Travel Trade Goal

To promote Aboriginal tourism and AtBC's Stakeholders to Receptive Tour Operators and Tour Operators and increase inclusions of Aboriginal experiences in travel itineraries and getaways.

## Target Markets

**Core Markets:** Canada, US, Germany and UK

**Other/Emerging Markets:** AtBC will support these markets when opportunities arise but will not actively go after these markets (eg. China, Brazil, India).

## Targets

To increase published Aboriginal experiences in Receptive Tour Operators' and Tour Operators' itineraries and packages by 15% (based on 2012 survey).



## Travel Trade Strategies

- » Inspire the travel trade by bringing Aboriginal tourism experiences to life
- » Connect the travel trade and industry partners with the AtBC Stakeholders and provide tools that make it easy to include Aboriginal travel experiences in RTOs and TOs itineraries
- » Partner with Receptive Tour Operators, Tour Operators, Canadian Tourism Commission, Destination BC and the six Regional Destination Marketing Organizations to leverage marketing efforts in all markets and to ensure AtBC Stakeholders' experiences are included in travellers' itineraries and packages





## Aboriginal Tourism Expert

In 2013, AtBC will develop the Aboriginal Tourism Expert program with the goal to introduce the program to the travel trade in 2014. It will be designed to further increase the knowledge and expertise of Aboriginal tourism experiences amongst our travel trade partners. Individuals who become Aboriginal Tourism Experts will receive accreditation and other promotional benefits.

AtBC will work closely with the CTC and Destination BC to design and establish the program.

# Tactics and Activities

**Inspire: Use 2013 campaign content to bring Aboriginal tourism to life in the minds of the travel trade partners.**

- » Story blogs  
- » Inspirational videos and photos with a focus on individual Stakeholders  

**Connect: Connect the travel trade and industry partners with the AtBC Stakeholders.**

- » Facilitate Travel Trade familiarization tours 
- » Coordinate Travel Trade networking event 
- » Increase communication with the Travel Trade through a dedicated travel trade website, e-newsletters and social media activities  
- » Continue to develop suggested packages and itineraries   
- » Attend Travel Trade Shows: CWM, December 2013; ITB, March 2014; Rendez-vous Canada, May 2014  

**Partner: Build strong relationships with industry and travel trade partners.**

- » Conduct key account activities in core markets 
- » Participate in cooperative marketing activities with the CTC in the UK and Germany (2014)  
- » Develop the Aboriginal Tourism Expert program   

 Partnerships  Online Marketing  Print Marketing





**Cultural tour at the Haida Heritage Centre in Haida Gwaii** [HaidaHeritageCentre.com](http://HaidaHeritageCentre.com)



# Travel Media

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The goal of AtBC's Travel Media marketing activities is to promote Aboriginal tourism and AtBC's Stakeholders to Travel Media in order to drive positive editorial and broadcast coverage in AtBC's key travel media markets.

Earned media is an essential activity in AtBC's Marketing Plan. Travellers are influenced by what they read and see, and editorial and broadcast coverage is more effective than advertising. Any positive coverage or third party review will entice visitors to learn more about Aboriginal tourism and individual Stakeholders, which will eventually lead to bookings.

## Travel Media Goal

Promote Aboriginal tourism and AtBC's Stakeholders to Travel Media in order to drive positive editorial and broadcast coverage in AtBC's key travel media markets.

## Targets

Doubling stories and broadcasts from last year – 20 editorials (online, print or blogs); 4 broadcasts

## Target Markets

**Core Markets:** BC, Canada, US, Germany and UK

**Other/Emerging Markets:** AtBC will support these markets when opportunities arise but will not actively go after these markets (eg. China, Brazil, India).

## Types of Media Outlets

Print, Online, Blogs, Broadcast, Video Journalism

## Travel Media Strategies

- » Inspire the travel media by bringing Aboriginal tourism experiences to life through content and story ideas
- » Connect the travel media with Stakeholders' experiences to positively impact editorial and broadcast coverage and to increase awareness of the Aboriginal tourism brand
- » Partner with the Canadian Tourism Commission, Destination BC, the six Regional Destination Marketing Organizations and other Industry Partners to align Travel Media focus and efforts
- » **Story Idea Themes**





## Story Ideas

AtBC will engage the Aboriginal tourism businesses by gathering regional story ideas. The stories may cover 'what's new', 'what's unique in a specific region', and more.

- » Awaken your senses - what can we see, hear, taste and feel?
- » More than meets the eye – stories behind the artwork
- » Music to your ears – traditional songs tied to the land
- » Revitalizing languages – learn words in a rich, diverse culture
- » Feast for the taste buds – traditional cuisine
- » Forest medicinal walks
- » Eat a fresh catch on the beach
- » Search for arrowheads and trading beads

# Tactics and Activities

## **Inspire: Engage the travel media by bringing Aboriginal tourism experiences to life.**

- » Create regional story ideas that are driven by Stakeholders' experiences and input  
- » Story blogs 
- » Inspirational videos and photos with a focus on individual Stakeholders 

## **Connect: Connect the travel media with Stakeholders' experiences.**

- » Conduct Media Familiarization Tours (organized by AtBC and partners) 
- » Attend Travel Media Shows and other Media Events: Go Media Marketplace, September 2013; Canada Media Marketplace, April 2014; Press events (e.g. KV launch)  
- » Manage DAMS (images, videos, b-roll)  
- » Increase communication with the Travel Media through a dedicated travel media website, e-newsletters and social media activities  
- » Work with a Travel Media Specialist to execute Travel Media initiatives, familiarization tours, and to build a community of Travel Media contacts and bloggers  

## **Partner: Build strong relationships with industry partners.**

- » Align media efforts with that of CTC, DBC and RDMOs 
- » Work with RDMOs and Destination BC to track Media coverage 

 Partnerships  Online Marketing  Print Marketing





**Whale watching with Sidney Whale Watching near Victoria** [SidneyWhaleWatching.com](http://SidneyWhaleWatching.com)

# Authenticity & Quality Assurance

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Compelling tourism experiences are key ingredients in motivating people to travel. Even more important is the actual experience – making sure the visitor has a world-class experience and will become an advocate for the experience and the overall Aboriginal tourism industry.

The people and the quality of service are what takes an Aboriginal experience from good to great. The positive experience creates memories, recommendations and repeat visits.

The Authenticity and Quality Assurance program will provide the marketing Stakeholders with professional development and mentoring in the competitive tourism industry. The professional development will be provided at the AtBC forum as well as mentoring Stakeholders through one on one meetings.

## Activities

- » Develop Quality Assurance Program
- » Awareness tools for Authenticity Program for consumers and travel trade and industry partners
- » Customer service = world-class experiences
- » Mentoring Stakeholders to be included in the CTC Signature Experiences Program





**Salmon bake with Culture Shock Gallery in Alert Bay** [CultureShockGallery.ca](http://CultureShockGallery.ca)



# Supporting Marketing Activities

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Partnerships, Online Marketing and Print Marketing are key activities that all support AtBC's Marketing Strategies for:

- » Consumer Campaigns
- » Travel Trade
- » Travel Media

## Partnerships

AtBC continues to develop partnerships and relationships with industry partners to assist us in leveraging our marketing efforts.

- » Destination BC
- » Canadian Tourism Commission
- » Regional Destination Marketing Organizations
- » Destination Marketing Organizations
- » Other sectors: e.g. BC Ferries, Parks Canada

Partnership activities will include:

- » Cooperative marketing
- » Email marketing
- » Travel Trade and Media Shows
- » Familiarization tours
- » Online Marketing

## Online Marketing

AtBC's online marketing activities support AtBC's marketing strategies by promoting the individual Stakeholders' experiences to the consumers, Travel Trade and Travel Media in the identified target markets.

An event calendar, the ability to promote Stakeholder special events/promotions and increase in trip planning functionality will be added as new features on the website. These features and the social media and blog integration will be combined with an interactive map for browsing Marketing Stakeholder listings.

Additionally, AtBC's website will be re-coded to use responsive design techniques that will allow it to display correctly on a variety of mobile and desktop devices.

AtBC will continue to grow its online reputation through a commitment to professional community management. Social Media activity will be expanded to include Google+, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn and AtBC will continue to be active on TripAdvisor, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr.

Search engine marketing will focus on website optimization and pay-per-click advertising via Google AdWords and Facebook Ads.

Email Marketing will be expanded to include consumer and travel trade e-newsletters.

Online marketing activities include:

- » Website enhancements
- » Social media activity
- » Search engine marketing
- » Email marketing
- » Online marketing audit

## Print Marketing

The objective of all print marketing and advertising is to connect the target audience (consumers, travel trade, travel media and industry partners) to the Stakeholders' experiences and to continue building a strong Aboriginal Tourism BC brand.

Print marketing activities include:

- » Regional Rack cards or brochures
- » Advertising in regional travel guides
- » Marketing materials for tradeshow and other events