



# Business Support Toolkit

[www.spot-lit.eu](http://www.spot-lit.eu)

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# Introduction



## Purpose of this this Toolkit

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The Northern Periphery and Arctic area of the European Union (NPA) is home to a range of models of excellence in literary tourism. It incorporates two UNESCO Cities of Literature in Edinburgh, Scotland and Reykjavik, Iceland and is home to multiple literary icons and Nobel Laureates across multiple NPA country profiles. The borderland regions of Ireland and Northern Ireland have strong literary tourism assets, linked by people and place and spanning both urban and peripheral areas and in Dumfries and Galloway literary tourism acts as a driver for regeneration and economic prosperity.

This Toolkit is intended to provide a comprehensive guide for participants of the Spot-lit SME engagement programme<sup>1</sup>; to aid development of literary tourism and tourism-related enterprises in the NPA. It has been designed with you the owner/manager of the SME in mind; to take practical steps to develop literary tourism business concepts, identify areas for collaboration and innovation, and maximise awareness to tourists and relevant stakeholders, ensuring a sustainable literary tourism business model which will enhance the literary tourism assets in the NPA region over time.

## How to use the Toolkit

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The Toolkit is intended to be used as a resource which supports the Spot-lit SME engagement programme. It provides information, exercises, checklists and examples of good practice in literary tourism development within the NPA region, to help you to build sustainable business models for LT in your destination.

This is provided via a step-by-step approach to:

- **Understanding the LT and cultural tourism landscape.**
- **Understanding the key challenges facing new business development for literary tourism.**
- **Developing a strategy to sustain your business idea.**
- **Understanding visitor motivations**
- **Developing innovative LT products/services/experiential offers which take consideration of visitor expectations.**
- **Integrating new products and services into the local and national tourism infrastructure.**
- **Maximising your potential to reach new audiences/markets.**
- **Creating partnerships and alliances with other cultural / LT providers and the wider tourism sector locally, nationally and internationally across the NPA.**
- **Evaluating your business success.**

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<sup>1</sup> The Spot=lit SME Engagement Programme is a programme designed to assist micro, small and medium sized enterprises develop new approaches to literary tourism across the NPA region. Where micro enterprises are those with up to 10 employees and SMEs are those with 10 – 250 employees.

## About Spot-lit

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Spot-lit aims to grow the literary tourism sector in the NPA region by supporting the organisations and businesses in this culturally rich region to grow, collaborate and better engage audiences together. The project will run from October 2018 until September 2021.

Spot-lit will enhance the capacity of the Literary Tourism sector in the NPA by:

- ✓ Developing new Literary Tourism assets which respond to emerging literary and cultural consumer needs.
- ✓ Optimising shared learning and evidence of successful approaches to literary tourism development from mature city markets and best practice models, towards realising literary tourism development potential in peripheral areas.
- ✓ Demonstrating the greater economic impact of an integrated cultural tourism product over projects developed in national isolation.
- ✓ Developing a framework for involvement of SMEs in realising literary tourism development potential.
- ✓ Maximising potential for inter-connectivity in the region through thematic place-based responses to literary tourism.
- ✓ Developing a shared narrative for literary tourism and inclusion of literary tourism in the wider tourism policy agenda and in tourism promotion.
- ✓ Addressing the need for shared development and marketing of existing Literary Tourism assets.
- ✓ Leveraging digital platforms and technologies to increase visibility of the sector to defined market segments.

Spot-lit addresses the need for shared marketing of existing place-based literary tourism assets and assistance in the development of new ones, with more effective promotion and development of these assets and sharing learning across the partner countries, the ultimate aim being the coherence and development of a new cultural tourism products and services for peripheral regions of the NPA delivered in association with local small, medium-sized (SMEs) and micro enterprises, and which deliver economic impact both in individual partner areas and across the NPA region.

The Spot-lit project partners include:

- **Irish Central & Border Area Network (ICBAN), Northern Ireland** (Lead Partner)
- **Arts Over Borders (AOB) Northern Ireland**
- **Western Development Commission (WDC), Ireland**
- **Kajaani University of Applied Sciences (KAMK), Finland**
- **Lapland University of Applied Sciences (Lapland UAS), Iceland**
- **Regional Council of Kainuu (RCK), Finland**
- **Wigtown Festival Company (WFC), Scotland**

Associate Partners:

- **UNESCO City of Literature, Reykjavik, Iceland**
- **UNESCO City of Literature, Edinburgh, Scotland**

## **Why develop literary tourism in the NPA region?**

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The Northern Periphery Area (NPA) of Europe is home to many world-class literary icons, an abundance of literary places and a rich literary heritage. Current low levels of joined-up Literary Tourism activity in the NPA make it a sector ripe for development.

National tourism development bodies support the development of cultural tourism through a range of services which generally includes; research and statistics for visitor attitudes to culture, profile and numbers of cultural and incidental tourists visiting specific locations, regions and attractions, growth trends for tourism development, supports to assist tourism development at national, regional and local level.

Across the NPA different approaches have been taken to the development of literary tourism. Some areas specifically Scotland and Iceland have developed core propositions for visitors around their literary heritage and contemporary literary culture, with both Edinburgh and Reykjavik holding the title of UNESCO City of Literature. Outside of these cities in more rural areas in the NPA a patchwork of provision of literary tourism assets exists ranging from literary tours and trails, places associated with literary icons, buildings and landscapes connected to the lives or work of writers etc.

It is in these spaces and places that new approaches to literary tourism are being designed and developed. Learning from these models will assist development of the literary tourism potential of the Spot-lit partner countries and across and beyond the NPA and provide guidance for development of new and innovative literary tourism propositions.

# Chapter 1: Understanding Literary Tourism



## Literary and cultural tourism

Cultural tourism is a term which generally refers to activity centred on arts events, artistic performances, festivals, museums, art galleries, traditional culture and heritage attractions of destinations in both urban and rural areas.

Culture, including literary culture, is increasingly used to promote destinations, enhancing their competitiveness and attractiveness to visitors and leveraging the profile of a region as a global destination. According to the European Commission it is estimated that cultural tourism accounts for 40% of all European tourism with 4 out of 10 tourists choosing their destination based on its cultural offering (European Union, 2019)

**Literary Tourism is a subset of cultural tourism that responds to the needs of tourists looking to engage in unique and authentic literary-related experiences; oftentimes in locations with a specific literary heritage, association with a writer's life or the inspiration for a literary work.**

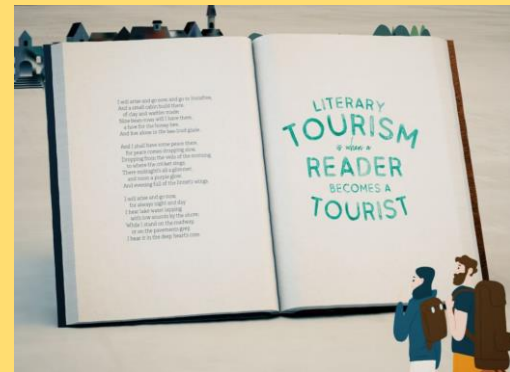
In recent times the literary tourism sector has developed linkages with creative tourism e.g. film (J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter – Scotland/Northern Ireland; Dan Brown's Da Vinci Code – Rome), architecture (Knut Hamsun - Hamsun Centre, Norway visited for architectural appeal as well as its association with the author) or mythology and oral traditions transcribed to literature (e.g. Loch Derravaragh – Children of Lir etc). It is considered that places associated with authors are more likely to endure as these are kept alive by the writer's work (Ousby, 1990).

**Literary Places** are places (landscapes or specific town, cities etc) associated with literature and specifically authors have grown in popularity with Dublin and Edinburgh, both UNESCO Cities of Literature drawing on their literary heritage to develop a new narrative to contemporary literature and literary tourism.

*Literary places create reference points for the literary visitor, evoking emotional responses, memories and meaning for the location.*

They can be tourist attractions in and of themselves or form part of a wider literary, trail, region or tourism offering. Such places are viewed as cultural and literary tourism destinations and can be valuable assets to rural communities in particular (e.g. Wild Atlantic Way – W.B. Yeats, Samuel Beckett – Northern Ireland, Moat Brae, Dumfries, Scotland).

*Literary  
tourism is  
when a reader  
becomes a  
tourist*



*a visitor, led  
by their desire  
to experience  
more of what  
a place has to  
offer in  
relation to  
their love of  
the written  
word*

**Literary Trails** have been developed in many locations both rural and urban, with many instances located in cities referencing places where authors, poets have lived or related elements within their works. Such trails generally take the form of walking trails and can be developed as either guided tours or self-guided through downloadable apps, GPS references, virtual and augmented reality experiences for hand-held devices and mobile phones.

**Literary Festivals** have also grown in appeal and have expanded over time to deliver experiences beyond the literature which promoted its original creation. These festivals are linked to the arts and contemporary culture of a specific location, amplifying the literary, artistic and cultural profile of the destination.

Such festivals are not confined to cities being equally significant in more rural locations and in some cases providing a catalyst for regeneration through culture. Examples of excellence in literary festivals in the NPA region include the Cúirt International Literature Festival, Ireland; Burns Night, Scotland; Happy Days Beckett Festival, Northern Ireland, and the Wigtown Book Festival, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland.

Literary festivals providing a call to action for both the literary-motivated and cultural visitor to choose a location at a particular point in the calendar year however the potential for increasing literary tourism to a location from a literary festival requires partnership between stakeholders, working to ensure their impact can be felt beyond the duration of the festival itself, into the wider tourism season.



## Chapter 2: Knowing your market

## Who is the literary tourist?

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Broadly speaking literary tourism can be broken down into two categories:

- (a) The **motivated or inspired** literary tourist is one who is drawn to a location for a specific reason, which may be an association of the destination with an author, etc interest e.g. literary, artistic, a festival etc. and for whom the experience of the location and its literary community.
- (b) The **incidental** tourist those who respond to the cultural offer available to them within their chosen destination. E.g. those who engage in cultural / literary experiences in destination rather than specifically choosing a destination for that purpose.

The motivated tourist is looking to immerse themselves in the literary heritage of their chosen destination. The cultural fabric of the destination is an integral part of their destination choice A cultural 'sense of place' is vital. The incidental tourist is more likely to respond to what is available to them within their chosen destination as opposed to choosing the destination specifically for its cultural or literary activity.

Research has shown that with rising education levels literary and special interest tourists, seek engagement in new and deep cultural experiences including, innovative programming, creativity and living culture and they will travel to find these attractions.

Every tourist makes individual choices in terms of their motivation for travelling, whether it be specific literary interest, the needs of the party with whom they are travelling, what your destination has to offer, their budget etc. Understanding how they make these choices will assist you in marketing your location and product / service to them and increase your potential to attract them.



## Who is the literary tourist?

- The literary tourist is a person who has a specific interest in literature (enthusiast / motivated tourist) and seeks to visit places associated with authors, poets, playwrights etc. and/or places that are connected to their writing – e.g. the setting for a novel etc.
- They tend to be people who research their destination before travel and who are interested in experiencing an immersive and authentic experiences during their visit.
- They enjoy contemporary literature, getting up close to authors via literary festivals, events, symposia etc.
- They will remain longer in a destination and have a higher discretionary spend.

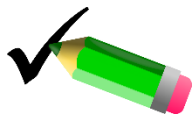


Analysing the profile of tourists currently visiting your region, city, town etc is a useful process. Doing this work offers you:

- **A greater understanding of the type of tourist your region currently attracts.**
- **Insights into why they chose to visit and what else might interest them while in your location. Knowing this will help you align your product / service to their needs.**
- **Information about how they found out about your location and what it had to offer, providing you with a deeper understanding of the most effective ways to reach your potential customers.**

Think about how you might attract visitors to your business from the wider area.

Can you attract those who travel to your destination for reasons other than literary pursuits? for example, for other cultural events, sports, leisure or business travel? Are there opportunities for you to create links with the local literary or cultural community to develop events, packages, offers which will address their buying needs?



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**SEE EXERCISE 1: IDENTIFYING YOUR TARGET CUSTOMERS**

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## Profile of the motivated cultural tourist

- ✓ Those seeking culture as a way of life
- ✓ Those drawn to a location for a specific cultural event, festival, activity, attraction, landscape etc.
- ✓ Those seeking authentic experiences and expressions of cultural heritage which relate to people and place (traditions, values etc.)
- ✓ Those looking to be immersed in a location where culture is a component part – living culture, living tradition
- ✓ Those interested in both traditional and contemporary culture
- ✓ Those looking to reflect elements of their own lifestyle in another location

## Collecting customer data

Successful businesses rely on good customer information to make informed choices about their business. To have an impact on tourist numbers, an emphasis needs to be placed on the collection of relevant and comprehensive customer information that relates to how people make their travel choices.

For businesses with ticket-based products (e.g. events, festivals) their booking system is their lifeblood. Ensuring effective data collection during the booking process provides insights into customer buying patterns, trends in the marketplace and ultimately in building loyal customers and developing new ones. A good business regularly reflects whether it is collecting the information it needs to grow its customer base. The deeper your understanding of your visitor profile the more likely you are to attract them to what you have to offer.

When collecting customer data encompassing fields relating to non-local customers within your booking system provides you with additional information about international consumer buying patterns which may differ greatly from those of domestic audiences, allowing you to build effective marketing and awareness for each defined customer segment as required over time. The table below outlines the type of information which is useful for organisations to capture at time of sale.

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Visitor profile</i>	<i>Information to capture</i>
<i>Tracking non-local audiences</i>	International and domestic visitors	What is the duration of their stay in your location?  Are they visiting specifically for your business, an event, festival etc?
<i>Tracking ticket sales</i>	Non-local audiences	Percentage of tickets sold to non-local customers  Tracking ticket sales relating to specific events, activities etc.
<i>Audience development and retention</i>	International and domestic visitors	Percentage of new audiences who are non-local  Percentage of repeat non-local audiences Average party size
<i>Advance booking</i>	International and domestic visitors	Percentage of sales in advance of visit  Percentage of sales while in destination
<i>Website traffic tracking</i>	Non-local audiences	Number of website visitors  Number of new visitors to the website  Number of website visitors from your location's key markets for tourism  Number of visitors motivated by literary specific information

# Methods for collecting customer information

- ✓ Booking system databases
- ✓ Onsite surveys (during events, after experiences etc)
- ✓ Online surveys (pre and post purchase)
- ✓ Email communications (post experience)
- ✓ Registration for free events, workshops etc
- ✓ Website visits and landing pages
- ✓ Online registration and sign up to ezines
- ✓ Friends programmes
- ✓ Online competitions
- ✓ Marketing campaigns

Collecting feedback from your audiences is an excellent way of developing a closer relationship with them and thus building the likelihood of a return visit to your business. Capturing this information helps you recognise methods for successful income generation for your business, assess the customer experience and analyse their behaviour patterns during their visit.

Having access to good customer data will enable you to develop targeted marketing campaigns to defined market segments. The more focused your approach to your market, the more likely you are to achieve success. It pays dividends when you are creating targeted campaigns for specific events, products, experiences allowing you to clearly identify your key markets, look at patterns of who is buying your product/ service as well as helping you to create meaningful messages for these target customers online and offline. It also helps in building relationships with associations, and special interest groups for literary tourism, who are looking for what you have to offer and can likely provide repeat custom for your business.

## General Data Protection Regulations

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With the advent of stronger rules on data protection through Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the European Council, the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regulates the processing by an individual, a company or an organisation of personal data relating to individuals in the EU. (European Commission, 2016), meaning that people have more control over use of their personal data and that businesses benefit from a level playing field in relation to the collection and management of data.

The application of the data protection regulation does not depend on the size of the business but rather on the nature of its activities; therefore application of GDPR applies to SMEs and micro enterprises, however the keeping of records relating to data processing is related directly to the nature of the business and in some instances SMEs and microenterprises do not need to keep records unless processing of personal data is a regular activity, poses a threat to individuals' rights and freedoms, or concerns sensitive data or criminal records. Information relating to the application of rules relating to GDPR is available at [www.europa.eu/info/law/reform/data-protection](http://www.europa.eu/info/law/reform/data-protection)

# Chapter 3: Developing your literary tourism business



## The importance of your business to literary tourism

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According to the OECD (OECD, 2009) cultural, and within that literary, tourism has an impact on repeat visitors to a destination and specifically those who plan their visits in advance in order to attend a pre-organised event, festival etc. Therefore, it makes good sense to include the needs of these tourists when developing your LT offer for your customer. This research shows that cultural tourists are more likely to stay longer in a destination to take advantage of other recreational activities during their visit, thus spending more in the local economy and the surrounding region.

What your business and others in the literary and cultural sector offers to tourists is therefore important to the development and sustainability of tourism in your area. The development of a comprehensive offer around a specific cultural focus – e.g. writer, literary tradition, location in which a book has been set etc. positioned alongside the traditional tourism proposition for a region, provides the tourist with a range of opportunities to involve themselves in different pursuits during their stay and maximises the potential for them to stay for a longer period of time.

Trends in tourism transport in the OECD (OECD, 2016) area show air and road travel as the dominant modes of transport, with major transport hubs (including cruise terminals and large airports) playing an increasingly large role in facilitating connectivity. The creation of thematic tourist travel for example, where the transport element is embedded into the appeal of the product (e.g. literary driving trails – places in landscapes connected via driving routes, integrated signage etc) is noted as being a factor for the stimulation and development of tourism spread within a region. It also identifies the growth of the sharing economy as being particularly evident in the tourism sector, with information shared across digital platforms and accessible on a range of mobile devices and cultural shifts in consumer behaviours.

*'consumers (are) increasingly open to the idea of sharing resources, being more experimental, and seeking authentic experiences when travelling'. (OECD, 2016)*

### Literary tourism can.....



## Developing a micro enterprise or small business in the tourism sector

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When developing a new enterprise you need to consider a number of elements including; planning, resourcing, financing, marketing, connectivity with wider tourism industry etc; however, success of individual businesses lies primarily in development of a clear understanding of why the business exists – what it is trying to achieve and for whom – in essence building a strategy for success.

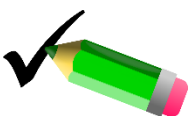
When developing your business consider the following:

- **What is my/our passion for developing the business? Why am I/are we creating this business?**
- **What am I/are we good at now and what do I/we intend to be best when we are up and running?**
- **Is my/our idea economically viable and sustainable?**

These elements should work in harmony and in equal measure for business sustainability.

**Your passion for your business concept has no value if there is no market for what you intend to sell.**

**Equally there is no value in developing a business which has little or no potential for growth and excellence.**



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**SEE EXERCISE 2: DEVELOPING YOUR BUSINESS ACTION PLAN**

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The following diagram outlines the steps to take when embarking on a new literary tourism business idea. It is a design-thinking approach which when applied as a business model ensures that what you are developing has a market focus and therefore the opportunity to be successful.



## Creating a destination focus

When making the decision to develop a literary tourism business you need to think carefully about your destination.

Think about what your destination represents. What is its key message? Why do visitors come? What is their motivation? How and where do they hear about your location?

How will your business enhance the destination and create a compelling proposition for the visitor to want to visit?



## Canongate Stars and Stories

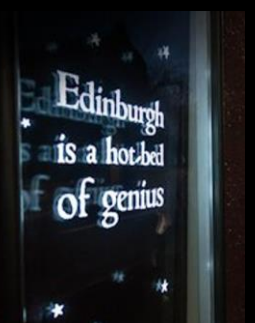
Edinburgh, UK

Canongate Stars and Stories is an immersive literary tourism initiative developed by Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature. An illuminated self-guided Walking Trail which comprises 24 light boxes positioned at locations associated with the literary heritage along the city's Royal Mile. Each light box featuring a quotation which celebrates Edinburgh's print and publishing heritage; and drawn from famous books and writers from the region. The trail connects stories with place and animates the city as a place which celebrates its literary heritage and future.

### What did Edinburgh City of Literature do?

- Created navigation tools for the visitor through digital and printed mapping guides.
- Involved multiple stakeholders – businesses, bars, restaurants, libraries, community groups etc; a collaboration between UNESCO City of Literature and local businesses
- Incorporated it as part of a wider UNESCO City of Literature brand and campaign **#wordsonthestreet**
- Created a call to action for the visitor to visit Edinburgh during off-peak season in the winter months of the year – by making the trail only available between November / March annually.
- Developed new ways for the visitor to experience the city – using digital technologies - and by default increasing awareness and digital reach.
- Extended opportunities for visitors to the city beyond normal retail hours, by presenting the light boxes for view between 4pm - 11pm each evening.

An illuminated  
walking trail  
about Edinburgh's  
Old Town  
print and publishing  
history





Consider how we associate a destination with particular, e.g. New York – Skyscrapers, Lapland – Santa Claus; Scotland – festivals and golf; Ireland – Wild Atlantic Way, Kainuu – Kalavela etc. Within these larger concepts is the opportunity to create distinct and differentiated tourism offers. Ensure that what you are developing will fit within the context of your destination.

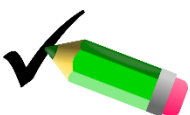
Understanding what is on offer locally and where your product / service will fit will be important to you in attracting your visitors. They are not just looking for what you have to offer but also what else is on offer in your city or region. Examples of such opportunities for connectivity include: Wigtown Book Festival and literary landscapes as in John Buchanan's Thirty Nine Steps, Dumfries and Galloway; Happy Days and Lughnasa Frielfest, Northern Ireland, Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival and Kajaanin Runoviikko Poetry Festival, Finland; and the Wild Atlantic Way and Galway 2020, Ireland etc.)

## Developing Literary Places

### Consider how your literary tourism concept connects with your location....

- Will it be delivered via a trail or tour, through a series of events, a festival, a learning programme, summer school or symposium?
- Will it engage local communities so they can be your ambassadors for visitors?
- Is it connected to inspirational landscapes, to particular writings, to specific authors?
- Can you provide all that a visitor needs when they come to your location? If not - how can you overcome this?
- Can you attract a visitor as part of a broader tourism destination or brand? E.g. Wild Atlantic Way
- How will you maintain authenticity of the literary context – within a literary tourism interpretation of the destination?

If you are a key player in your location, think about how what you offer can influence other elements for the tourist, accommodation, food, things to do. If your location is not currently a visitor destination, consider how you can build awareness of your literary tourism offer around other services, by working with partners outside of your sector.



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**SEE EXERCISE 3: ATTRACTING THE LITERARY TOURIST**

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# Integrating your business into your destination

1. Get in touch with your local tourism development office to hear about opportunities open to you to create awareness of your business
2. Sign up for regional and national tourism e-zines.
3. Add your business description and send regular updated information to your local tourism development web editor for inclusion on their trade portals e.g. [www.visitscotland.co.uk](http://www.visitscotland.co.uk), [www.discoverireland.ie](http://www.discoverireland.ie), [www.visitfinland.com](http://www.visitfinland.com), [www.dicovernorthernireland.com](http://www.dicovernorthernireland.com) etc.
4. Attend local networking events in both the literary and tourism sectors
5. Consider partnership with businesses outside of your sector and within your community – (e.g. local guides, historical and heritage groups, creative, education, retail etc).

## Case Study

### Yeats 2015 – Sligo, Ireland

Sligo, Ireland is known as the spiritual home of poet W.B. Yeats. The location providing a backdrop and inspiration for many of his great works, with a number of locations in the county named within the works themselves. It has long been a location of specific interest to the literary visitor and specifically to those interested in Yeats' work and that of his wider creative family.

Sligo's contemporary proposition is as a creative place – a place where culture and creativity are embedded in the location and its people.



Agencies, literary organisations and community players came together to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of W.B. Yeats in 2015. A year-long celebration which connected people and place drawing global audiences and developing a legacy for literary tourism (for both literary heritage and contemporary writing) connected to the location. Continued developments in the region provide opportunities for new literary tourism businesses to be developed in concert with this destination focus. (E.g. Galway 2020 – European Capital of Culture).

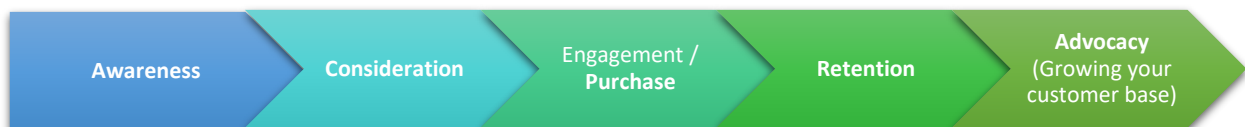


## Developing a visitor-friendly approach

Every destination has a range of options for the visitor. Meeting your visitor needs is really important in attracting your target customers to your location. Be aware that success for your business will depend on the complete experience for your customer. This ranges from when they first decide to choose your location or your specific offering to what they do when they are with you.

Think about how you might develop memorable experiences for your visitors. A visitor's experience starts as soon as they start to think about where they want to visit, motivations they might have for visiting your location (festival, event, landscape, association with literary heritage or contemporary literary culture, another reason for their visit – e.g. leisure tourism etc.), and it finishes when they have returned home after their visit. This we refer to as the **customer journey**.

Your business needs to understand the opportunities for connecting with your target markets at all points along the customer journey.



## The Customer Journey

<i>Awareness</i>	How and where do your customers find out about you?
<i>Consideration</i>	What would compel them to choose what you have to offer? Is that offer different for each customer group?
<i>Engagement</i>	How easy is it for your customer to access / engage with what your business has to offer?  How can you improve the engagement process?
<i>Retention</i>	What do you do after their visit to make them choose your literary tourism business again
<i>Advocacy</i>	What do you ask them to do to help you to share your story and grow your markets?



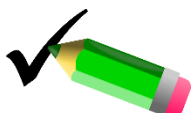
To attract new and repeat customers you need to look carefully at when and where they come into contact with your business. Their choices are made on the experience they have with your business at these different points in time. We call these customer touch points. These touchpoints can be broken down into three stages:

- **Pre-purchase** - before they choose what you have to offer
- **During experience** - when the customer is using your product or availing of your service and
- **Post- purchase** - after they have departed.

Managing your customer touch points allows you to consider the communications required with each customer group, (e.g. families seeking experiences for children's literature, visitors interested in places in books etc.) as what is required by one customer group is not necessarily the same as what is required by another.

Think about your customers – who are they and the type of experience they are expecting from you. For the most part you will already be responding to their needs but to remain ahead of the curve and to ensure you are planning to remain innovative – you should consider what is required next for them – and what is essential and what is 'nice to have'.

Thinking like this will allow you to plan effectively and to ensure that you remain focused on achieving what is important for your business success and providing what your customer needs – ultimately giving them a memorable experience which is designed for them.



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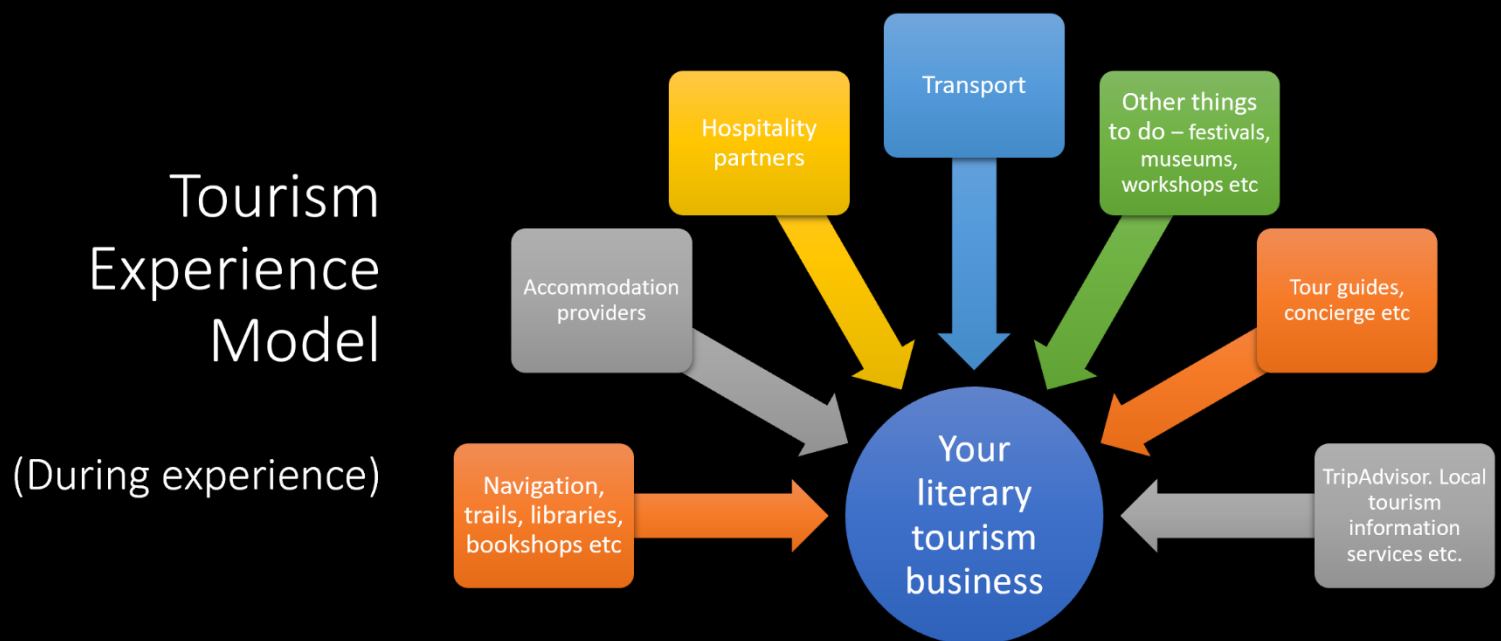
**SEE EXERCISE 4: YOUR CUSTOMER JOURNEY**

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## Designing your customer experience

Once you have considered how your customer finds you and the ways in which they connect with your business while in your destination, the next thing to do is to build their experience at your location. Consider what each of your customers want when they are in your location. Do they know what's available? How can you influence their behaviours, attitudes etc and ensure your business benefits? Where a family might go, stay etc may be totally different to where a couple who are coming to enjoy the location or a festival etc will stay and do. This must be thought about carefully with serving the customer need always in mind.



## Tips for interpreting your location for your customers

- ✓ Encourage your visitors to travel to different parts of your location e.g. connecting what you have to offer with heritage infrastructure, landscapes, bookshops, places, people etc.
- ✓ Increase understanding and providing information at in different locations and where customers expect to find it
- ✓ Offer a range of authentic immersive experiences – something to do or get involved in which is connected to your literary tourism business (e.g. met the author, book signings, poetry slams, guided tours, concerts in unusual locations associated with literature, unusual tours etc.)
- ✓ Ensure that you connect with people both in person and online – ensuring they can engage with your location, share their experiences and create dialogue around what you have to offer.
- ✓ Make locations accessible and suited to different market segments (e.g. what's in it for a special interest literary association, a school tour, a family, empty nester couples etc.)



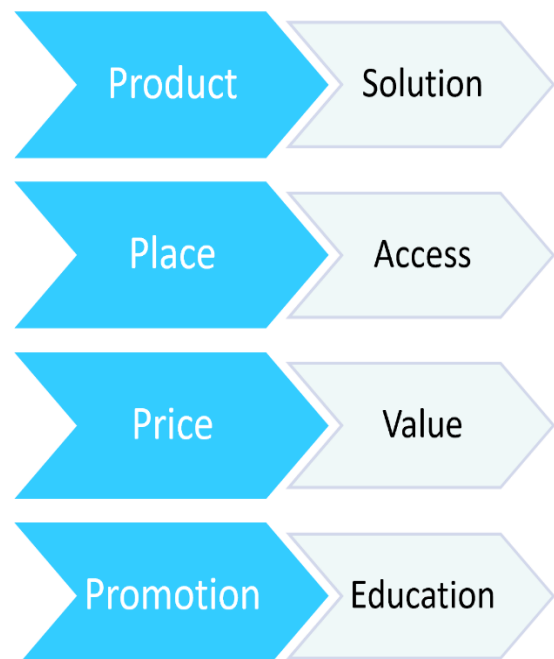
## Develop a marketing plan

Marketing the business is everyone's responsibility. Remember that in a service or experiential business you are always in 'real time' marketing. People see your business for what it is as part of their experience. You need to make sure that you have covered all bases at all points when they come into contact with your business.

Ensure that you have a marketing plan in place for your business, one which has an integrated social media strategy. Having a clear plan about how you intend to get the message out about your business from the outset is vitally important to making sales in the immediate term and to building business sustainability.

## From traditional marketing to innovative marketing

- We no longer think of giving our customers products – now we speak of solutions / experiences
- We don't place our products or services – we provide access for our customers to make their own decisions.
- We no longer speak of price – but rather of the value what we have to offer delivers for our customers
- And finally – we don't promote our offer but rather educate our customers to make informed choices – and to choose us.



## Creating Your Message

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It's important that you consider what you are going to say to your audiences in the early stages of your planning. Your success will be dependent on the early development of your message. Having a clear message in place builds understanding of the value of what you have to offer to your customers.

## FIVE TIPS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR MESSAGE

1. Start by forming your overall message – what your idea is all about.
2. Keep your language clear and relevant to those you want to attract.
3. Think about what you want to tell them, about you, your organisation, your reputation, your track record etc.
4. Build your message to respond to their needs – consider what matters locally, fit in with the local literary conversation and tourism development agenda.
5. Keep yourself informed of what is happening across your locality and regionally in – so that you are not duplicating effort.



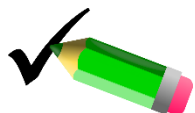
## Getting your message out

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In many cases marketing budgets are no more than wishful thinking. Where no marketing budget is available to you, you need to think carefully about publicity planning. Developing awareness of what you offer can be of interest to news media at local, regional, national and international level – provided you have considered your target market and you know what you want to communicate and to whom.

**If you have a story –  
tell it !**

**Find and celebrate  
your distinctiveness**



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### SEE EXERCISE 5: DEVELOPING YOUR MESSAGE

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#### Create awareness

- Provide timely information about what you have to offer the visitor across locations and platforms
- Cross-promote with other tourism and cultural providers in your area / region or nationally.
- Utilise regional, national and international press as required.
- Consider developing a Familiarisation trip with relevant partners / businesses to entice international journalists, key stakeholders, destination management companies, incoming tour operators etc to your location
- Create distinct and targeted information for those who are already visiting your location – but coming for a different reason. Do you have an offering for them also?
- Refresh your product offering to suit changing market trends.



## Build relationships

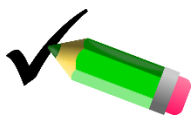
Building relationships with others in the tourism sector and within your destination is hugely important in getting your message out to visitors.

- If the tour market is relevant to you carry out desk research to see how you might [influence tour itineraries](#) – build relationships with the providers who best match your offering.
- [Work with local, national and international tourism agencies and organisations](#), utilise the promotional platforms they provide (both online and offline).
- [Develop a destination 'personality'](#) – work with others in your region to devise your message around what attracts tourists to your destination.

## Be online

Constant change and innovation in technology provides you with more targeted opportunities to speak directly to global visitors. Understanding where your potential audience is online, will help you to get better results from your online marketing efforts.

- [Be where your audience is online](#) - develop Google ad word campaigns or Facebook advertising etc for specific events, occasions, etc.
- [Manage your website](#) – it is a key marketing tool for your organisation. Carry out search engine optimisation and post regular updates to your site to keep it visible to Google and other search engine providers.
- [Create a Blog](#) – find your voice and tell your story. Talk about what is current and related to your offering and your customers' needs.
- [Utilise social media](#) channels including; Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Flickr, Pinterest, Vimeo etc. – choose the ones that best suit your business
- [Create video / audio footage](#) of your product, of people experiencing what you have to offer. This can help you to build connectivity with a wider community online and bring the audience closer to experiencing your offering in advance of their arrival and /or help them decide to choose your destination.
- [Encourage user-generated content](#) on your website.
- [Seek testimonials](#) from those who have experienced what you offer – people generally trust what others have to say.



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**SEE EXERCISE 6: COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS**

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# Chapter 6:

## Funding your business



Sometimes we are so caught up in developing large-scale fund-raising for our business that we don't look closely enough at what is available to us locally at other opportunities to raise funds or benefit-in-kind for our ideas.

Get to grips with funds available locally and nationally. Many different types of funding are available from local, national and international sources. From SME of support programmes, philanthropy, corporate business, banks, investment funds, crowd-funding sources, programmes for digital innovations etc. Finding the right funding framework which suits the nature of your business is a process which requires time and consideration by the business. It is important that you keep yourself informed of the funding landscape and what is available to you locally and beyond.

In terms of accessing larger funding pots it is useful to work with other agency partners or cultural / creative entities, so that your case bears more weight and has the potential to succeed against the competition.

*Don't ever think you are too small to go big!*

A grant is a subsidy for your organisation / idea. A funder provides money to you expecting that you will use it well. There are many kinds of grants available, from small voluntary sector grants to large grants by international foundations. Some grants are solely for individuals and others are designed for groups. Some are for once-off capital expenditure (for example, a building), others are for programming (for example, running a pilot project), whereas yet others are for longer-term support (for example, core staffing costs). Statutory Grants are generally provided by the State to not-for-profit organisations. They are generally administered via Public Sector bodies, local authorities, councils and other statutory agencies.

## Seven steps to writing a successful funding application:

- ✓ Make clear what's in it for the funder and that it is them specifically that you want
- ✓ State what your business will do in achieving the aims of their funding programme
- ✓ Be clear and tell your story
- ✓ Be connected to the local / regional agenda (tourism, literary, creative)
- ✓ Be sustainable and have a potential long-term impact
- ✓ Have a plan for implementation
- ✓ Have clear partnerships in place for successful delivery

## Chapter 7: Partnership and collaboration

## Embrace partnership

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### Two heads are always better than one...

- Get to understand your local and regional tourism and literary infrastructure and assets. **Be aware of what is happening around you** – festivals, events, tourism development initiatives etc. **Integrate what you have to offer into your local cultural and literary network.**
- **Be creative** - invite your networks to an event, walking tour, showcase etc. to help them better understand what your business offers.
- **Attend relevant briefings and events** and get to know and stay in touch with your local tourism development team.
- **Sign up for ezines and connect** with online social media groups who are doing something similar to you. Connect through the Spot-lit network and website [www.spot-lit.eu](http://www.spot-lit.eu)
- Develop local links and collaborations and then build on them as appropriate. **Think across communities and boundaries** – is there someone else thinking the same thing as you? Might you be able to work together to make it happen faster, better, more often, in multiple locations etc?
- **Learn from other people's mistakes.**
- **Devise innovative ideas**, programmes and events with your partners to engage and inspire your audiences.
- **Mix it up** – consider how what you are developing might work in different locations – in unusual places – e.g. working with a creative partner to deliver an event in an unusual landscape etc.
- **Create synergies with others** but don't limit your collaborations to creatives only - work across sectors with education, business, tourism, industry partners to develop what works best for your business and your destination.
- **Ask for help!**



## Chapter 8: Measuring success

## Have a plan!

Developing a cohesive plan with measurable targets will help you to keep on track. It will keep you focussed towards success. Use the resources readily available to you. Work with your team to formulate your plan of action. Seek assistance beyond your own team if needed, but make sure to develop your own plan rather than having someone do it for you!

*Plans which are developed by the teams who will deliver them have a greater chance of successful implementation as they are better understood.*

## Build your audience

- Consider access to your location and how people will connect with what you have to offer.
- Consider joint marketing opportunities to increase your awareness.
- Seek inclusion in cultural and literary ezines, newsletters, publications for your audiences.
- Build joint relationships with cultural and creative agencies and organisations locally and across country profiles.
- Get to know where your audience is online – and create awareness to attract others who use the same platforms (e.g. Book Clubs for literary events etc).
- If developing links with the tourism industry access your local tourism development agency supports.
- Bolt-on to existing events, festivals and cultural agenda etc.
- Employ local, regional, national and international media as appropriate to your audiences.

## Learn from best practice

- Don't reinvent the wheel! Make sure that what you have to offer actually has a market to buy it!
- Access information that is already available which relates to your business development.
- Find national and international counterparts to learn from - those that are further down the line in their literary development than you. You can learn about what worked for them, and what didn't, in advance of trialling it yourself.



## Move with your market

- Know when your offering is becoming tired and build in changes to keep your offering fresh, engaging, relevant and meaningful to your audiences.
- Look for new ways of doing business (e.g. new methods of data collection, new collaborations).
- Keep your online presence visible.
- Seek partners and be innovative in your approach with them.
- Keep yourself connected with your customer needs.
- Evaluate your success – create measurement frameworks so that you can effectively assess whether your work has been a success.





## Chapter 9: Toolkit Exercises

# EXERCISE 1

## Identifying your target customers

Working through the questions below will help your business to identify its core market segments, to gain an understanding of why they choose your location and how they view what you have to offer.

In addition, it can offer you insights into how you can target these customers e.g. through package development or collaborative programming in your destination etc

<p><i>Who are your customers?</i></p> <p><i>Your business doesn't only deal with the end user, sometimes your customer comes to you through an agent – you need to think about how you attract them too.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Individuals (with a literary interest)</li> <li>▪ Families</li> <li>▪ Couples</li> <li>▪ Special Interest Groups</li> <li>▪ Tour operators and travel management companies</li> <li>▪ Destination management companies</li> </ul>
<p><i>How do they make their booking choices?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As a group (special interest group, tour etc)</li> <li>▪ Online as individuals</li> <li>▪ Through a booking agent</li> <li>▪ As part of a tourism package</li> </ul>
<p><i>Why have they chosen your location?</i></p> <p><i>Are they looking for what you have to offer specifically or your wider location? What is their motivator?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Your location - what it has to offer as a holiday destination</li> <li>▪ A festival or specific event</li> <li>▪ Literary specific travel</li> <li>▪ Itinerary stop on a tour</li> </ul>
<p><i>How do they find out about your business?</i></p> <p><i>Where do they seek information?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Online – via your website, social media platforms</li> <li>▪ Through a travel management company</li> <li>▪ Through your packaging partners (e.g. hotel, restaurant, event/activity provider's communications platforms</li> <li>▪ TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet etc.</li> <li>▪ Media – national, local, international</li> <li>▪ Word of mouth</li> <li>▪ Industry publications (e.g. literary, tourism publications etc)</li> <li>▪ In destination – local tourism office etc</li> </ul>
<p><i>When do they choose what you have to offer?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In advance of arrival – (How far in advance?)</li> <li>▪ In response to promotional information (e.g. festival dates/programme released)</li> <li>▪ When they arrive</li> <li>▪ During their stay in your location</li> <li>▪ Impulse visit / purchase</li> </ul>
<p><i>Why do they choose you?</i></p> <p><i>Understanding their motivator will make it easier for you to target specific customer groups.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Your programme</li> <li>▪ Word of mouth</li> <li>▪ Reputation</li> <li>▪ Online presence</li> <li>▪ You are a major attraction</li> <li>▪ Trust in what you do as an organisation</li> <li>▪ You formed part of a package – did they choose you specifically</li> <li>▪ Learned about your business when they arrived in your location</li> </ul>

## EXERCISE 2

### Developing Your Literary Tourism Business Plan

*Developing a Business Plan – however short – will assist you to keep focus on what's important in getting your literary tourism business up and running.*

*Use the one Page business plan below to start you on this planning journey.*

1

### S.W.O.T.

Strengths	Action to enhance Strengths
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
Weaknesses	Action to address Weaknesses
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
Opportunities	Actions to exploit Opportunities
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
Threats	Actions to mitigate Threats
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

2

### Vision / Ideals

Company Values / Vision	Actions to deliver Values
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
Your Business Offer	Target Markets (segments)
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
Market trends to watch	Key areas for focus
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
Your Pitch (Message)	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

3

### Targets

Key Targets	3-5 Year Targets	1 Year Target	Quarterly Target
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	
Key Measures	3-5 year Initiatives	This Year	Quarterly
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	

4

### Actions

Objectives	Target	Current Mth Target	Current Mth Actuals
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	
Next Steps	Priorities	Current Priorities	Current Challenges
1		1	
2		2	
3		3	
4		4	
5		5	

## EXERCISE 3

### Attracting the Literary Tourist

*In order to attract the literary tourist to your business, ask yourself the following questions.*

*The answers to these questions will give you an indication of the areas where you can further develop your business to attract specific market segments.*

	Yes	No
Does your business collect information about its core customers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you build your products / services based on what you know about your customers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you consider tourists a core market segment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your business distinguish between cultural tourists and literary tourists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you develop products and services specifically for tourists?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes – Do you actively market your destination to the literary tourist?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of trends in literary tourism as they pertain to your local region and nationally?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you align your products and services in line with these trends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you work with other cultural tourism / literary tourism businesses in your area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you schedule your literary tourism offer to attract customers when they are in-destination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you plan your market awareness sufficiently far in advance to attract your customers to your destination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# EXERCISE 4

## Your Customer Journey

Your visitor's experience commences as soon as they start to think about where they want to visit, motivations they might have for visiting your location. Your business needs to understand the opportunities and potential in connecting with your target markets at all points along the customer journey.

Answer the following questions to help you assess any gaps in your customer's journey with your business.

<b>Awareness</b>	<i>How and where do your customers find out about your business?</i>	
<b>Consideration</b>	<i>What would compel them to choose what you have to offer?</i>	
	<i>Is your offer different for each customer group?</i>	
<b>Engagement</b>	<i>How easy is it for your customer to access / engage with what your business has to offer?</i>	
	<i>How can you improve the engagement process?</i>	
<b>Retention</b>	<i>What would make them a return customer?</i>	
	<i>What are you doing to make this a reality in your business?</i>	
<b>Advocacy</b>	<i>How can / do you use what your customers have to say about you to develop your customer base?</i>	
	<i>Are you doing this already in your business?</i>	

## EXERCISE 5

### Developing your Message

*Developing your message is an essential element in building awareness of your literary tourism product.*

*This exercise helps you to clarify that message for your customers, by delivering it in a way which keeps them interested in what you have to say – ultimately bringing them closer to choosing what your business has to offer them.*

#### **Hook**

**Find something compelling to get your customer's attention**

#### *Are you talking to me?*

*Outline in the first sentence the audience you are talking to – they need to see themselves reflected in your message.*

#### *What's in it for me?*

*What's in it for them?  
What will they get out of choosing what you offer?*

#### *So what do you offer?*

*What does your business do?  
Tell them what it is e.g. a literary trail, an attraction, a tour, a location programme etc)*

#### *Who's involved?*

*Tell them who's behind the business, your delivery team.  
Outline your experience and why they should trust you.*

#### *What's the Advantage for me?*

*Outline what they get from you that they will not get from others?*

#### *Results*

*What difference will it make for them?*

#### *Request*

*What do you want them to do next? (subscribe, purchase a ticket, sign up, attend, visit etc.)*



## EXERCISE 6

## Communicating with your customers

*How you communicate with your customers says a lot about your business.*

*Answering the questions below will give you an indication of the areas where you can further develop your business to connect with your customers and respond to their needs.*

What methods do you currently use to connect with your customers?	Yes	No
Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer feedback - Formal (forms, online surveys etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer feedback – Informal (anecdotal, conversational etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Media Channels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile App	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Membership Scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ezine sign up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mailing List	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile Marketing SMS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TripAdvisor (or similar)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cross promotion with other cultural / literary providers agencies etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Targeted Marketing Campaigns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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*Images used in this publication are courtesy of the Western Development Commission, YEATS 2015 Wigtown Festival Company, Fáilte Ireland - Ireland's Content Pool and [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com).*



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