

President's Report  
Semi Annual Meeting 2019  
Riverhouse Inn and Cottages

Good Morning, Folks. My name is Kirk Nicholson and I am President of the Board for TIAPEI. I would like to thank all of you for attending this Semi- Annual meeting.

I would like to take a moment to thank and recognize fellow board members for the dedication to the association and to the industry:

Corryn Clemence Charlottetown Port

Terry Nabuurs The Wheel House in Georgetown

Wayne Cotton Charlottetown Inn and Conference Center

Stanley Macdonald Canadian Potato Museum

Christian Gallant Triquetra Entertainment

Jamie Thomas Lennox Island First Nation

Ilona Daniels Chef Ilona Daniels

Keith Samuel Rodd Royalty

Amy Macpherson Fisherman's Wharf Lobster Suppers

Rose Dennis Meetings and Conventions PEI

We have an excellent group with diverse back grounds and a keen interest to move our Tourism Industry forward.

Of course, I would be remiss in not recognizing the TIAPEI staff and all that they do. Kevin and his team, day in and day out, are on the front lines helping build our Tourism product brick by brick.

I would like to start by taking a quick look back...

Prior to becoming actively involved with TIAPEI... I was a member for many years. I became a member simply under the premise that it seemed to be the right thing to do. I derived 70% of my business from Tourism so I should support the Association. As far as what TIAPEI did day in and day out ... well I would be hard pressed to answer. Had no idea the programs that they ran or the services that were available.

Knowing what I know now, I would encourage all businesses and organization to take advantage of the training and programs available through the Association. It's as simple, and I like things simple, as going to the TIAPEI website and clicking on the Professional Development tab.

In all my years in business I have never heard a manager or business owner say staff have received too much training!!! Or as the boss say "I know everything I need to know..." Lets take advantage of what's out there... It only makes our product better.

On that note, our product clearly has become better... with revenues increasing year over year.

(Kevin has all the great revenue and statistical numbers and wow are they good no need to be redundant...)

So, has it just been luck... is it just our turn to have the visitors...? Is it just a cycle like the stock market...?

In a mature Industry such as tourism, how is it that we are approaching % growth numbers close to what an Emerging Market would show...? Maybe we are an emerging market... maybe the world is just starting to discover us.... Maybe this is just the beginning...!!!!

Or have we found the "magic formula"?

In years past, tourism was usually driven by one or two themes that changed over the generations.

As a few examples, for many decades (say 50's, 60's, 70's and even into 80's) our numbers were derived from people who were born here but moved away to find work... They came back to visit family... then their kids came.... but as we got into third generations not so much...

People always came for the scenery, beaches etc. Then there was the bridge as a draw... as it was being built. Followed by golf which drew people from far and wide... So, in 2019, what is the draw? why are they coming...

The short answer is for many reasons.

Culinary adventure, to golf, to experience our beaches, to see a country music concert, to go on a fishing boat and fish lobster, go kayaking, Anne of Green Gables, Theater, rent a cottage and stare at the water for a week, go to a theme park, sports tourism... and I sure there is something I have missed but you get the picture

Sport Tourism I would like to single out for a moment... It's one that I feel has great potential...

As a parent with two kids in sports... I have been a "Sport Tourist". Their games of choice have been hockey and basketball which are played primarily in the fall/winter season. In my work, we historically call this the off season. Tournaments are the draw and people are spending money in the "Off Season".

Clearly the Hotels and Restaurants are the big winners in this sector ... but there is also the spinoff to sport stores, gas stations, local retail shops etc. It's, I feel, one of the best ways to stop calling Tourism "Seasonal"

I would like to challenge all of us... to change our mindset from Seasonal to looking at it as Year-Round Industry and this sector is one way to get there...

But I would also like to challenge our government at all levels to look at Sport Tourism as the new Big Deal... There is money to be made here!!! Now I know it won't happen overnight but one brick at a time.... We will get there.

To shift gears here a little, it's hard not to mention the new ways that people are arriving. They are coming on cruise ships in record numbers and then returning later to have a longer visit. And to accommodate these cruise ship "returnees" Doug continues to increase capacity at the airport. It sounds like the "Magic Formula" to me ... but it's not magic.... It's been many years and many decades in the making.

Our Tourist product is now spread over many sectors as referenced previously... all the eggs are in many, many baskets and like any wise investment the risk is minimized.... But it is just not hard work that gets you there.... Passion is Key.

Passion will get you through the hard times. Passion will have you excel in the good times. Passion keeps business operators engaged for the long term. Passion keeps the marketing people come up with new ideas year over year. Passion pushes the Chef to produce that new dish. Passion is the "Magic."

And luckily for us our Industry has more PASSION than any other...

Our Board will continue providing support to TIAPEI and all its members. We are here to listen and are very much open to share ideas and thoughts at any time.

On that note I would like to thank you all for coming and wish everyone success in 2019.

Submitted by:  
Kirk Nicholson