

IGU - INTERNORDIC GUIDE EDUCATION PROJECT REPORT



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PROJECT INFORMATION

Project IGU - Internordisk Guideutbildning för Upplevelseturism, Internordic Guide Education, has been created to resolve problems in the North Calotte region related to the development of guide work and guide training. During the project working period 2005 – 2007, solutions were sought for developing guide training in accordance with the requirements of the experience industry, above all using cross-border co-operation.

The purpose of this report is to initiate discussion on expanding co-operation in the fields of experience production and training throughout the North Calotte or nationally.

EU Interreg III A North

Project term 01.08.2005 – 30.09.2007

Project budget: 120,000 €

Partners:

Kemi-Tornionlaakso Municipal Education and Training Consortium Lappia, Tornio, Finland

LTU, Luleå University of Technology, Department of Music and Media, Piteå, Sweden

Finnmark University College, Alta, Norway

Authorities and financing bodies:

County Administrative Board of Norrbotten

Regional Council of Lapland

The North Calotte Council

Troms and Finnmarks County Councils

TE Centre for Lapland

PROJECT IGU – INTERNORDIC GUIDE EDUCATION

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Project Background

The North Calotte region, comprising the northernmost regions of Norway, Sweden and Finland, has had thriving project activities for nearly a decade in developing tourism expertise. Year-round tourism is rapidly on the increase, and the number of international customers is growing. The tourism operators of northernmost Europe have also searched for ways to make co-operation more efficient for training applications.

Earlier cultural tourist projects for the area have verified that tourism for today and the future requires the guides to have new skills and ways of handling customers. The traditional guide training firmly based on communication of information and presentation of the tourist destination is no longer sufficient, and requires supplementation. The Experience Industry also requires more diverse expertise for dealings with customers and interpretation of the destination.

Discussions held in national and Scandinavian seminars have highlighted the networking of guides, unification of training, creation of opportunities in cross-border guide training sessions, unification of examinations, and assuring the quality of guide services. It has been regarded as important to create coherent structures for various guide training courses, as well as validation and certification processes.

With respect to quality, the term “guide” should be defined as the assurance for quality and development of the tourist destination, in order for the appropriate training courses to be planned and provided. The intention of the assessment process is also the specification of a guide’s professional quality to assist tourism professionals in the product plan-



Entrance 2007, Kemi SnowCastle

ning processes, and to ensure good customer feedback. The guide also holds a significant role in leading guests to experience meaningful experiences, attraction factors and activities of the tourist destination.

The development of the guide's task is not merely a national concern, rather guide services are provided to international tourists in ever-growing amounts in the northern regions, also to neighbouring nations. The achievement and maintaining of a common level of quality for Scandinavia becomes increasingly significant. Quality assurance not only eases product and route planning for the tourist industry across borders, but it also has an impact on the meaningful experiences of the visitors.

Projects and practical work situations have sought solutions by combining resources in the sparsely inhabited North Calotte region. Individuals working as and studying to be guides, tour leaders, activity providers, tourism teaching staff in universities, higher education establishments and vocational colleges within the North Calotte regions, as well as national guide organisations in Scandinavia, have expressed their interest in participation. The long travelling times mean the task requires time, will be costly and produce results slowly. Thanks to EU-funded projects, progression has been made in attempts into product development and guide networking in the regions.

The first step towards the unification of Scandinavian guide training was the project's North Calotte Guide Network, which during the period 2002 – 2005 trained a total of 10 North Calotte experts from Norway, Sweden and Finland. The main emphasis of the training was in North Calotte knowledge, studying tourist destinations, tourist routes and attractions in genuinely important destinations. During the project, the importance of regional and cross-border training as reacting to rapid development was also realised. There is a need for a new type of product development, marketing expertise and customer service training content related to the experience economy. During the project a need to plan entirely new training content for today's and future needs became clear. It also became clear that new rules of engagement are required for cross-border training and certification.

IGU project to continue work

The IGU project set its goal as furthering the process initiated in the North Calotte Guide Network for the development of Scandinavian training co-operation and teaching content. The earlier result of the project was natural connections with activity providers and tourist organisations, tour operators, guide associations and unions in all three Scandinavian countries.

During the initial stages of the project, the partners in Norway, Sweden and Finland already had ongoing training for guidance and the needs of the experience industry. At the Luleå Technical University, the Department of Music and Media in Piteå had initiated the first Upplevelseproducent training leading to the Master of Arts qualification. The Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences and the Vocational College Lappia worked in co-operation with the Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry (LEO). The Tornio tourist guides negotiated with the Swedish Guide Association about the possibilities to initiate joint guide training with Haparanda. In Alta, practical guide training had been introduced into the Finnmark University College curriculum and experience theory was strongly emphasised in the curricula. All educational establishments expressed a very positive attitude, there was a readiness to develop new ways of working, as well as sharing own expertise and experiences.

Project partners and financiers

The IGU project was developed by the Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences and Vocational College Lappia as a continuation of the earlier project work in the Tornionlaakso (Tornionjoki River Valley), Bothnian Arc and North Calotte regions.

In Piteå, Sweden there was a broader interest in the development of guide training, and due to the Upplevelseproducent training, the natural partner was the LTU and its Department of Music and Media.

The partner chosen for Northern Norway was the leading tourism educator of the Finnmark University College in Alta.

In addition to receiving funding from partners, the project also received funding from the EU Interreg III A North programme (County Administrative Board of Norrbotten and Regional Council of Lapland), the North Calotte Council, TE-Centre and the provinces of Finnmark and Troms.

Project goals and findings obtained

The principle goal of the project was to achieve joint training modules and strategies for the North Calotte region.

- During the project, familiarisation was conducted into the contents of guide training in different countries, validation and certification processes. In the beginning of the project, the contents of guide courses in different countries were unfamiliar for project participants. During the project an overall picture of the Scandinavian guide training was formed, as well as of foreign training and the demands of such.
- It was verified that Scandinavian guide training concentrates on guidance content, guidance techniques, rhetoric and communication with great emphasis, but experience, product development and marketing expertise was not included in traditional training sessions. The principle reason for this is that there are no teachers, as guide training is still arranged in many localities on the basis of a recreational activity. One solution could be to transfer guide training to tourism colleges and under the responsibility of tourism teachers.
- It was verified that very little higher education level guide and tour leader training was available in Scandinavia. For the 2007 – 2008 academic year, revisions were made to all partner course programmes, where information and skills related to experience theories were added. Partners also plan to acquire course modules from one another, and continue development work even after the project has reached completion.
- The project arranged regional seminars in Alta and Tornio called “Den transmoderna Guiden”, the contents of which were more or less the same. The new information and plans for the future inspire current and future guides. The content themes for the seminar are processed in the articles of this report. The educational establishments of all three partners initiated a revised guide course in 2007.

The intention was to develop unifying training and assessment grounds for the North Calotte’s own field of specialisation within guide qualification courses in Scandinavia.

- The Scandinavian Guide Union has unified course programmes and examinations for culture guides. Building supplementary courses for these programmes is easy, and these may already be implemented in the North Calotte region as multi-form teaching organised by the educational establishments involved in the project. Applications are also open to foreign students, if the teaching language is not a problem. Supplementary sections and specialised courses assist existing guides to become experience guides.
- In Sweden, national certification has been created exclusively for nature guides, the development of which was possible to monitor during the IGU project working stage.
- The Vocational College Lappia has initiated, as adult education, the first cross-border local guide fundamental course, which has been approved with the Guide Unions of Finland and Sweden. During the course new practices will be created in bilingual training. All course participants are competent in Swedish and Finnish.
- The concepts of Interpretation (from the United States) and Upplevelseguide created in the Piteå Experience Producer Course have become familiar concepts among educational establishments and the industry during the project.

The goal was to improve and deepen cross-border regional co-operation between tourist organisations and guides along the theme routes, as well as between trainers and developers.

- Project tasks appreciated the cross-border exchange of expertise and perspectives. The small differences between methods and assessment processes create new ideas and good practices are implemented. In Norway for instance, there are long traditions in guiding cruise ship passengers, but in the Bothnian Arc this work is still in its infancy.
- The first steps have been taken for experience guide training and certification, as well as joint training and cross-border certification. The goal is to achieve a new guide that is also competent in another nation, if the guide is familiar with the destination. Working in this way facilitates the flexible cross-border use of guidance services in situations where it may be difficult to find persons with rarer language skills to work as guides. The certification of new guides may also use the assessors of neighbouring nations.
- Co-operation in the Bothnian Arc has long and natural traditions. The Experience Producer Course of the LTU already strongly resembles Northern Sweden, and it may be transferred across the border. The relations with educational estab-



Greta–Stina Brunnia (born in 1758) waiting for important guests. Acting as Greta–Stina, Tuula Saaritie tells of 18th century life in Tornio, a time when the town often welcomed foreign key persons.



300–year old Linné surprised the audience at the IGU seminar in Tornio, April 2007. Hansi Gelter dressed as Linné performed as Sweden’s first great nature guide. Carl von Linné visited Tornio on his trip to Lapland in 1732.

ishments created by the project assists co-operation between guide associations and guide networks.

- Tornionlaakso (Tornionjoki River Valley District) is a natural area for co-operation, and cross-border activity has increased due to EU-funded projects. Networks have also been strengthened in the IGU project, and the intention is to transfer the experience of the Tornio-Haparanda guide course to Tornionlaakso based cross-border guidance activities, in addition to the possible changing of the guide association to a regional association.

What does the future hold?

This report is the concrete outcome of the project, through which we want to initiate discussion on the development of guide training to be capable of jointly creating a broader validation and certification practice, which would assure the quality of guidance

services and give consideration to the important role of the tour operator in the implementation of cultural and nature tourism products in Scandinavia.

The possibilities for the three educational establishments involved in this project to continue co-operation on the practical level are good. A background organisation will, however, be required to support this work on the Scandinavian level, as organisations focused on tourism development and guidance are primarily national.

The diverse work of the guide and tour leader of the future as experience producer and interpreter is a very challenging worksite for developers.

We hope to be able to continue the development work initiated in the IGU project to benefit the entire North Calotte region.

THE COMPLEX GUIDE ROLE

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Introduction

The IGU project has been addressing the questions of what might be the needs for, and the competence of, a “Nordkalottguide”. Furthermore the project has looked at guiding education and certification in the three countries involved in the project. The project participants have tried to shed some light on the development of the guide roles and guiding by relating these questions to the broader issues of tourism development and societal changes in general. This part of the report gives some background to these discussions.

The complex guide role

Discussions on the current situation and the trends and challenges affecting guiding in the area of Nordkalotten need a basis in some accepted theoretical perspective, before introducing more contemporary and potentially fruitful perspectives. To serve this purpose let us very shortly clarify the central term. “Guide” and “guiding” can be seen in relation to other terms like “tour guide”, “tour leader” or “courier”. There are several definitions and the European federation of Tourist Guide Associations (FEG) gives the following: “the role of the tourist guide is to guide visitors from abroad or the home country in the language(s) of their choice, interpreting the natural and cultural heritage of the area of qualification”, and further “around the monuments, sites and museums of a city or region; to interpret in an inspiring and entertaining manner, ... the cultural and natural heritage and environment” (FEG 2007). A less formal way of saying it would be that guiding concerns the leading of tourists, at cultural or natural sites, for shorter excursions of some hours or for several days long trips.

The following text presents a classical view on the tourist guide. In a well known article from as far back as 1985 the sociologist Erik Cohen addressed the origins, structure

and dynamics of the modern guide role (Cohen 1985). Besides identifying the historical roots of the tourist guide in the Grand Tour of the 17th and 18th century and locating it in the modern tourism system, he examines the main aspects and the main components of the role of the tourist guide. These are, respectively, the leadership and mediation spheres and the inner vs the outer direction of the guide's work.

To deal with a group of tourists leaves the guide in an intermediate position between the group and – at least for tourists – the somewhat unfamiliar society or nature of the destination. He or she is a member of both worlds for a time. Therefore the attention of the guide sometimes is focussed towards the inner social situation of the group, at other times the attention is towards dealing with some practical matter outside the group. The tension between the two makes the inner-outer a central aspect of the guide or tour leader role. The other central task of mediating between the tourists and the destination, activity or attraction, can also be given a direction towards the activity in question or towards communicating inwards or towards the group. The two aspects results in a very flexible scheme of the components that make up the challenges of the guide and furthermore the corresponding roles of ideal type character (fig. 1).

	Outer directed	Inner directed
Leadership sphere	1: instrumental Original guide	2: social Animator
Mediatory sphere	3: interactionary Tour leader	4: communicative Professional guide

Fig.1: Erik Cohen's scheme of the principal components of the tourist guide role and the corresponding ideal types of guides (Cohen 1985).

The instrumental component is the outer directed leadership role. It deals with the tasks of getting the group where it should be at a planned time. In nature guiding it involves for example the choice of routes, interesting location, taking weather precautions etc. Further the guide is the person that can take the tourists "back stage" (MacCannell 1989) in the region. To legitimize such access the guide has to control the behaviour of the group, shepherding and marshalling them (Holloway 1981) and keep them safe.

The social component in the model is the inner directed leadership role. There may be tensions and potential conflicts within the group, and the guide is often expected to be able to prevent the outbreak of unpleasantness and to integrate the group with no one feeling let out. For nature tours it may be necessary to work on the group morale in case of bad weather or unexpected incidents, and the guide may have to divide tasks between group members or to keep them busy and happy as an animator.

When one looks at the other main dimension of the figure, the one of mediation, there is first an interaction component. The guide's intermediate position is interactive, working two ways, representing the destination to the tourists and the tourists to the various sites, individuals, institutions and landscapes of the destination. This further implies that the guide sees to it that the group gets its meals and other services from tourism industry providers or from the local society's infrastructure, like medical care. The role moves towards becoming the one of a tour leader.

The fourth quadrant of the diagram refers to the communicative role of the guide. This is probably in many ways the central modern component, at least the one where formal training is expected to influence the quality of the guide performance – therefore the professional guide. A detailing of the component first concerns the selection of the interesting stuff that is communicated. The informational character of the stuff is expected to be correct and precise, but whether it is neutral in a stronger sense is debateable. Thirdly the information given, the narrative or story, is an interpretation. The cultural meeting between the tourist and the local culture and nature needs interpretation for the message to be accessible at all. The meaning and content of interpretation is however contested and will be dealt with in more detail later. Here it is central to mention that Cohen more than 20 years ago addressed the topic and building on Goffman (1974) stated that the guide made use of appropriate language and dramaturgic effects or even staged attractions totally. This brings in the fourth element, fabrication. The message and its contents may be falsifications, inventions or deceptions sold as authentic representations of the localities.

This is the outline of the theoretical model. Cohen goes on to discuss how the dynamics that arises partly from the emergence of a tourism system, that is the development in the tourism industry and more experienced tourist markets, and from the more general societal development e.g. in the media sector. This ongoing process makes a shift over time, from the primacy of the instrumental aspects of what is the original guide role, to the primacy of the communicative aspect of the professional guide.

Cohen's article is primarily analytical and academic, although it gives both a historical background for today's practices, a fascinating picture of the rich variation within the professional performance of guides and good view of tourism development for the last three decades. A less theoretical approach to the guide role and guiding is given by Kathleen Pond in what still – after 15 years – seems to be the most comprehensive treatment of the subject on a combined academic, pedagogical and practical level (Pond 1993). In short it is an American-type textbook. It is a leading educational representation of the professionalization of guiding that Cohen was speaking of. It has influenced formal and higher education level guide training in many countries for some years and is for example on the reading list of the University of Stavanger and the Finnmark Uni-

versity College guide educations. The empirical or case aspect of the book is taken from American tourism, but much of it has its application parallels in our part of the world.

Pond sums up the role of the professional guide in five points. First, the guide is a leader, meaning that professionalism shows in the way the guide takes responsibility for the group of tourists. Second, the guide is an educator. The tourists visit places to understand so far less understood cultural or natural phenomena and the guide should help them in achieving this. Third, the guide is an ambassador for the destination. The hospitality shown and the representation of the place should make the guests want to come back. Fourth – and closely related to the third point – the guide is a host and should establish an atmosphere where the customers feel they are guests. Last, the guide is a facilitator, being in flexible control and knowing how and when the other aspects of the role are to be combined.

Challenges of guiding

Within the frames of the IGU project attention has been paid to all four quadrants of the Cohen figure, it is more or less unavoidable. Perhaps more attention has focussed on matters that related to two of them more than the others: Questions of practical matters concerning border crossing in the area has been the subject of attention and mapping, and examples of good guide practice has been presented. Both of which has a lot to do with the upper left quadrant, the more traditional guide role. Some examples however linked the discussions into some current trends in tourism, one of which is the ever recurring theme of “experiences”. One other significant trend is a growing focus on interpretation, where the project group has been presented with refreshing examples. The present text deals with these two themes and their influence on the communication aspects of the guide role, that is the fourth or lower right quadrant in Cohen’s figure.

The challenge of interpretation

We saw in the definition of the term of a guide given above, that a central task is to interpret heritage. The more specific implications of interpretation is, however, a subject worth attention and carries a potential that has lately been rediscovered. The theme is not dealt with specifically in Cohen’s article, but is present in Pond’s book.

50 years ago this year the American Freeman Tilden published the book “Interpreting our heritage”. The book has since become a classic, with several later editions. The background of this book is the National Parks of the US and their place within the national historical and natural heritage. Tilden originally worked in journalism, and as a playwright and novelist, but he got more interested in the national parks.

Tilden quite explicitly puts forwards the principles of interpretation in his view:

1. The interpretation must relate what is being displayed to something within the experience or personality of the visitor. If not the interpretation is sterile.
2. Interpretation includes and is based on information, but they are entirely different things.
3. Interpretation is an art and a combination of many arts, whatever the character of the materials presented.
4. Interpretation is provocation, not instruction.
5. Interpretation is holistic, not partial and must address the whole man.

The first principle is easily accepted and confirms tourism psychology in the sense that the relation between the host and the guest, or the communication between the guide and the customer, must work in a way that meets expectations or preparations or knowledge that the visitor already has acquired. However, it goes beyond the demand dominated rules of quality management where the expectations of the customer are alpha and omega.

The other four principles are put more strongly and in terms that makes interpretation far more than printed information beside an exhibit or a five minutes programmed talk of some theme. That interpretation is basically something far beyond information, that it is an art and that it should provoke, need explanation.

The core of these four principles is most easily seen in the statement that interpretation should provoke. If provocation is the ultimate goal of interpretation, it cannot be provocation in the sense that the visitor is angered or made to feel irritated or shameful. The purpose is to stimulate towards a desire to widen the horizon or to gain an understanding of greater contexts (1976:33). It is an appeal to the intellect as well as to the feelings of the audience.

In Tilden's national context the ultimate goal seems to be to make the visitor love the heritage visited, whether is it part of history or of inherited landscapes, in short to love his country. This may be a stronger goal to achieve within the context of international tourism. It may even be too strong within domestic tourism, in an age of regionalization, of more relativism and even more cynicism than 50 years ago.

It even is a matter of religion or ecological pantheism: "Nature and Man are inseparable companions. If you vandalize a beautiful thing, you vandalize yourself. One does not interpret by recitation of facts, but by exposing the soul of things. Not with the names of things. Not with sermonizing or lecturing, not by instruction but by provocation"

(1976:38).

Concerning the fifth principle, the one of holism, Tilden states that it is better that the visitor to some attraction (preserved area of natural, historic or prehistoric kind) leaves with one or more whole pictures in his mind than with a melange of information that put him in doubt as to what this attraction is, or why it is preserved at all.

The point about interpretation for children as something following a fundamentally different approach from interpretation for adults, at its best following a separate program, might be elaborated on here. The variable of age – and connected to it the educational situation of most child visitors to heritage sites – is in some ways, and especially within Tilden's context, more important than most socio-demographic variables. For tourism other matters like nationality, education, income and the specific motivation may be of equal importance. It is therefore a far broader discussion in what ways an interpretation program should be adapted in a differentiated way between groups of tourists.

Interpretation has become a hot topic in several contexts and has also been a core issue for this IGU project. It has been dealt with at several seminars during the project period, first and foremost by Hans Gelter in presentations on “the transmodern guide”. It is also worth mentioning that interpretation is nothing new to professional guides, although probably not in the very strong message version of Tilden. The FEG for example states as the first of three aspects “In-Depth Environmental Interpretation - the Tourist Guide is the well-informed intermediary between up-to-date research in all the above mentioned fields and the many different levels of tourist demand and interest.” (FEG 2007).

The challenge of experience expectations

“Experiences” has become a more central word for tourism during the last ten years. Experiences have always been at the core of at least the leisured part of tourism, but the term has had some renewed attention from academics and industry people lately. This attention is not limited to tourism specifically. Rather tourism is seen as part of “the experience industries” and of contemporary society with bigger room for play and playfulness, for diversions at home and away from home. Further, technological development is transformed and applied for use in consumer goods faster than before. There is a considerable theoretical trend within economics and social sciences that postulates that societal development and economic growth in particular will take place within the “experience economy”. Part of this is seen in the way the interface between technology and services is showing its economical potential.

The start of the focus on experiences is often given to Pine and Gilmore's book on the experience economy (1999), although the line of thinking clearly has antecedents far back. Nordic writers have participated in writing in the trend from various disciplinary positions. Examples are: Mossberg (2003) who examines a restaurant service situation

and marketing perspective. Tarssanen and Kylänen (2005) bring forward a theoretical model for the integration of the experience perspective in all tourism production connections, the experience pyramid (cf. <http://www.elamystuotanto.org/?deptid=21989>). The anthologies from O'Dell and Billing (2005), who bring a cultural point of view, and Bærenholdt and Sundboe (2007) who discuss topics from a variety of social science perspectives. A member of the IGU project group, Hans Gelter has given several contributions in the field (2006a, 2006b). A special issue of the *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* has been issued (Larsen and Mossberg 2007).

The main idea is that capitalism has entered a new phase, taking the service based economies into the age where experiences are expected by the customers, who are willing to pay extra for getting something unique, different, never before seen, or for being elevated, enlightened, entertained, or for being given a perceived personal message or sermon on some serious topic of environmental or ethical character. Ultimately, to qualify as an experience in the sense for example used by Tarssanen and Kylänen (2005) it should transform the tourist, making her another individual.

Conclusion

The crucial point for the present context is seen from the subtitle of Pine and Gilmore's book: *Work as theatre and every business is a stage*. This may be taken as a description of the normal situation of a tourist guide. If the perspective from Tilden is brought in addition, where the task of personally and emotionally touching or moving the tourist, the challenges that the present and the future brings for guiding become even greater.

The question is how to meet these challenges. The mere existence of the books mentioned and all other material elaborating on the themes of interpretation and the experience economy is another way of saying that this theme is something which is being addressed in tourism higher education generally. However, the situation for guides education and training with respect to these disciplinary developments, whether they are taken into consideration in programs and syllabuses, is something different. The general situation of, among other aspects, tourist guiding being a part time profession with rather varying income, of its formal training being rather short, of the varying status of certification, all speak against its actually being incorporated into guide training. This does not, however, reduce the work of many tourist guides who by professional instinct, by privately updating themselves and by participating in the forefront of production development in the tourism sector, seem to take well care of the lessons from interpretation and the experience writers.

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IGU – STEPS INTO THE FUTURE

Tuula Saaritie, Vocational College Lappia

The work of guide and tour leader in times of change

Tourism in northern regions is booming but also changing. We need even more professional local guides and tour leaders with even better language skills to plan and implement tour programmes, using which traversing the countryside may be done on nature's terms, northern culture would be revealed, and tourists will be assisted in receiving meaningful experiences and carefree relaxation.

The guide is ever-increasingly an experience producer, a job that requires a lot of accurate planning and preparation. Guides are expected to have an even wider range of skills in the tourism environment and traditional guide education is no longer sufficient for tourism's new demands.

The tour leader will take care of the practical arrangements for tourist groups when travelling by charter bus, snowmobile or husky sled. A professional tour leader serves educational, meeting and incentive travellers, or touring and culture tourists. The tour leader is able to plan the route and schedule, as well as constructing an interesting entirety by combining activity programmes with narration given on the bus. Customers often come from abroad, so the tour leader should have good knowledge of the language and culture of the customers.

The foundation courses for tourist guides concentrate on learning the facts about a locality, how to make the facts into an interesting presentation, and learning traditional guide techniques. Following the basic course, continuous supplementary training should be available, which would be revised according to the requirements of the tourist industry. This training would occur in the colleges of the industry so that the training would be updated according to education given to young people.

How then does this young person get to use this education and become flexibly involved in guide activities? Will guide expertise grow quickly, and will it be possible to have Interpretation Guides direct from universities in the next few years? How can co-operation be developed? These are issues that could be jointly considered in colleges and guide associations.

In the North Calotte region it would be preferable for colleges to increase co-operation in studies and that qualifications would be accepted internationally. For instance, a person studying in Lapland would be awarded ECTS approved grades in certain courses attended in Norrbotten.

Guide work also has a wider significance. A successful visit includes visitors learning something new in an enjoyable way. The visitor has started to consider values, and become stimulated into seeking further information. The visitor has become an ambassador of the region, who enthusiastically tells of personal experiences, shows pictures taken, and perhaps writes in a blog for website visitors to read. Others become stimulated and the destination receives more attention as a consequence of a job done by a good guide.

Guide training and association activities in Finland

In Finland, the guide qualification is obtained by attending local guide courses organised in co-operation between the Finnish Guide Association and the local guide association, or by completing a vocational course.

National guide activities are coordinated by the Finnish Guide Association established in 1974, which has 126 local guide association members with nearly 2000 members. Finland's northernmost provinces of Oulu and Lapland have 11 local associations and 128 guides who provide guidance in a total of 12 different languages. The Finnish Guide Association also has continual collaboration with other Scandinavian guide associations.

The Finnish Guide Association monitors the organisation of guide courses, approves training programmes, marks guide examinations, and awards guide badges to graduates of the tourist guide foundation course. These locally certified guides maintain their professional expertise and demonstrate their skills every five to eight years in an activeness examination arranged by the local guide association and supervised by the Finnish Guide Association. A certified guide is identified by the Finnish Guide Association badge, and the guide carries the Member Card of the Guide Association.



Every year in Finland two national and two regional meeting and training sessions are arranged for members of the Finnish Guide Association. Some of the Finnish associations belong to the Scandinavian Inter Nordic Guide Club Association, that arrange, in connection with their annual general meeting, a three-day, high-level training session with the Scandinavian nations taking in turns to provide the venue.

The guide may receive more training through regional courses, wilderness and nature guide courses, or tour leader courses supervised by the Finnish Guide Association. Guide trainers and assessors receive supplementary training on courses arranged by the Guide Association. Over the past few years, an ever larger group of guides have graduated from the Travel Guide Qualification of the Finnish National Board of Education.

The Travel Guide Qualification is a demonstrative examination, the assessment of which is jointly performed by the representatives of the employer, employees and educational establishment. The adherence to the conditions of the examination is supervised and guided by the examination committee. The Examination Committee of the Travel Guide Qualification has representation from the Finnish Guide Association and ERTO (The Federation of Special Service and Clerical Employees, ERTO, is an organization of employees working in expert positions in the private service sector.)

Education leading to Travel Guide Qualification is arranged in a few second level colleges as local or internet training. The Tourism Basic Degree, revised in 2000, is also arranged in second level colleges, but the entrance requirement can be a matriculation examination.



Tornio-Haparanda Travel Guide Foundation Course students at the Aine Art Museum. Surprisingly, the guide for the Art Museum was Guard Hilja Halme. The guided tour went well and the course participants actively participated in the examination and interpretation of art.

Foundation course for the Tornio – Haparanda Travel Guide

The first cross-border travel guide foundation course was initiated in Tornio and Haparanda in November 2007 following planning and preparation lasting about two years. The guide associations of Finland and Sweden participated in the planning through the North Calotte development projects. The initiated course has been approved by the Finnish and Swedish guide associations, and is mainly arranged according to guidelines of the Finnish Guide Association and using association certified trainers. The Swedish guide association representative participated in the planning, implementation and receipt of guide examination for the course.

The aim of the basic course, is that once the student has completed the course, the basic details from Finland and Sweden, as well as Tornio and Haparanda will be known, the guide will be able to guide a variety of tourist groups in different languages, as well as plan guidance routes taking into consideration the needs of the customer. Once having passed written and oral examinations, the guide may then be awarded local tourist guide certification from the Finnish Guide Association or the Swedish Guide Association. The course includes studying the national and local information sections, as well as exercises and tasks related to practical guiding skills. The course programme emphasises the special characteristics of the border region and the needs of the tourist business. The second priority is the practical exercising of interaction and communication skills at a destination, on a walking tour, and on a moving bus in the urban areas of both towns. The course also gives consideration to more creative interpretations now common for guiding, experience-richness and revitalisation. Study emphasises individual and cooperative learning.

The Tornio-Haparanda guide course had 15 participants on the foundation course and three experienced guides updating their expertise on the course. All are fluent in Finnish and Swedish, and at least one other language. Almost all students taken onto the course are post-graduates. Many of the course participants have experience in tourism marketing and presentation experience through their own main career. The course uses both Finnish and Swedish languages, and the written material is also either in Finnish or Swedish. Course students perform 400 hours of work. Study methods include lecture teaching, local teaching and internet teaching, study discussions in the Moodle learning environment, individual learning exercises, prepared sight visits, practical guidance exercises at destinations, walking tours, and on a moving bus. The students complete coursework, course exercises and an oral guidance examination in their native language. Those approved will be selected to be guide association members and will receive certification for the Tornio-Haparanda region. Certified guides participate in a foreign language skills examination and will be awarded certification to provide guidance in the language in question upon passing the test.

The purpose of the coursework is for the student to acquire and process information pertaining to the planning and guidance of guidance routes. Subjects are local issues and themes that hold tourist interest for the locality. The coursework may take the form of an essay, report, interview, video, DVD, expansive slide presentation, or presentation of the tourist resort. Each student compiles a personal thematic entity on an approved subject, the learning process becomes a cooperative learning process, where one student studies a certain subject in depth and distributes the information to others. The coursework will be presented orally and visually using the PowerPoint graphics application.

Further training opportunities are being planned for a tour leader course, and local guide courses for the Tornionlaakso and Meri-Lappi regions. Supplementary training is arranged on an annual basis by the local associations for developing the content areas or guiding skills for their own areas, and the designing of new products.

Experiences of assessment co-operation in the North Calotte

The result of long-term co-operation between Scandinavian guide associations is the assessment methods which are very similar in Norway, Sweden and Finland. We are aware that guides have mainly completed the same sort of learning process, and their guidance techniques are also similar. The information of certified guides is weighed and they have to perform an activity demonstration of their knowledge and skills every 5 – 8 years.

The first experiences of joint assessment situations in the North Calotte region were obtained in spring 2005. North Calotte guide network – the project had the intention of developing and revising guidance content, as well as creating new ways of working based on a common Scandinavian guiding practice. The ten certified North Calotte Guides put in at least 1000 hours/person during the course of the project to develop guidance contents, as well as to practice guiding on the routes.

The certification as North Calotte Guide is conducted as a themed guidance, for which own assessment criteria are created. The assessment adhered to the assessment methods for the Scandinavian guide associations. The participants prepare the script and background material for their guidance. The chosen themes are the subject from the perspective of the entire North Calotte, and following written work, theme guidance was presented in the bus and/or at the destination to a group and to assessors. An assessment meeting convened after the guidance and assessment discussions were entered into between the assessors and guides, without the presence of outsiders. The discussion was always initiated by the student's own assessment followed by the feedback given by the expert. Experienced guides and guide trainers from Norway and Finland acted as assessors. Over the years the activities of the Norrbotten Guide Association have reduced, and at the time the northernmost regions of Sweden did not have a competent guide trainer and assessor.

IGU steps in Tornionlaakso

When Finland and Sweden joined the European Union, the possibility for cross-border co-operation in EU Interreg projects was created. Among the first projects was the “Acerbi – Theme Trip”. On the basis of a travel reports by explorers and scientific material made back in 1799, cultural programmes are created for the historical tour route, and a tour from Oulu to the North Cape in the footsteps of Giuseppe Acerbi. The municipality’s culture and tourism persons, guides, entrepreneurs and product development experts in Norway, Sweden and Finland planned and realised Educational Tour 1998 and Acerbi – Symposium festive trip in 1999.

The greatest obstacle to the further development of trips came from Tornionlaakso not having any trained local guides proficient in foreign languages. Knowledge of Italian would be important for the success of the theme trip. The situation has become further improved thanks to the rapid internationalisation of Tunturi-Lappi district tourism. Now is the right time for starting to develop high quality culture and nature programmes.

The first step has already been taken, as the Tornio-Haparanda Travel Guide Foundation Course was initiated. Next it is hoped that the Tornionlaakso and Tunturi-Lappi districts would get their own customised foundation course in co-operation with Pajala. This course should be a combination of internet teaching and seminar days. Due to pronounced seasonal changes, studying time would be longer than in urban areas. The action area would be larger than usual, but using the Moodle – learning environment and LearnLinc, it can easily be realised.

The next stage would arrange specialisation and expansion course for Tornionlaakso and Bothnian Arc expertise. The tour leader course may be arranged as a short course, theory over two weekends and a practice trip. Experience expertise related short courses, Storytelling and Interpretation, may be arranged at the LTU.

As the outcome of long-term work, a network would be created to Tornionlaakso, where culture guides and nature guides, event organisers, sports activity providers and local food developers would work together to build superior products for our naturally picturesque region. The increase in tourist numbers is facilitated by the abundance of accommodation capacity and year-round services of the region. The resource of the products is locality and the communication of such using interpretative guides to provide meaningful experiences for visitors in authentic environments. Thanks to the trip programmes planned in Tornionlaakso, the summertime tour and culture tourism would increase in a controlled manner by giving consideration to the principles of sustainable development, respecting nature and the local way of life. This environment would best suit individuals who respect sustainable values, creative people as new age guides and tour leaders. These new guides may be termed Transmodern Guide.

A STORY OF INTERPRETATIVE GUIDING AND EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION.

*By Hansi Gelter
Luleå university of technology*

This is the story of the fictive guide Gunnar Gunnarsson discovering the secrets of guiding and interpretation from a perspective of experience production. The hypothetical story is based on the authors both practical and theoretical knowledge earned through many years of guiding and teaching summarized and expressed in Gelter 2007 and in the “Internordic Guide Education” project IGU (Internordisk Guide Utbildning).

The story of the guide

I am standing at the parking lot at Storforsen Nature Reserve, one of Sweden’s most popular tourist attractions of the north. It’s the largest rapids in the Nordic countries with a total drop of 82 meters in a stretch of five kilometres waterfalls and rapids, and where the two final kilometres make up a spectacular waterfall with a drop of 60 meters. It’s a very popular area for local visitors and international tourists. At the visitors centre guided tours are arranged and also external tour operator do guiding in the area. I the fictive guide Gunnar Gunnarsson have my own nature-based tourist firm with the intention to guide tourists at different nature destinations.



Figure 1: Storforsen majestic water falls. Foto H. Gelter

The autodidactic guide

I am waiting here at the parking area for my guests to arrive and take them on a guided tour in the majestic river landscape of the nature reserve. I am excited to test my new guiding and interpretation knowledge I learned through the Internordic Guide Education Program IGU.

Last year when I stood here in the same situation I was a fresh man and self learned guide. Autodidactic I now learned is the name of a self learned teacher or guide. As today I was very excited about my new occupation as guide but even more nervous about my performance as a guide. I was so nervous that my legs were shaking and I was sweating although my customers as I then called them had not yet arrived. I have seen guides in action and know how a good guide should act. I have also heard that good service was to fully fill my customers needs and expectations and to get satisfied customers I have to give them even more than they expected. As I was told the goal of good service and good guiding was more than satisfied clients. I have heard I should give my customers the unexpected. So I did my homework well and learned every plant and bird of the area, the geology of the river basin and the cultural history of the area as well as about every artefact at display at the forestry and log floating museum of the Nature

Reserve. I planned in detail a two and a half hours guided tour around the area where I tell my customers everything I know. I had carefully prepared scripts for every stop which I learned to repeat exactly, and I also tried some dramaturgical pitches, some jokes at certain spots. We made some 30 stops on the 5 km guided walk covering the whole area and every interesting spot I could find. I had prepared the trail for days to find the perfect logistics and optimal path not to walk the same trail twice. It was a complete disaster!



Figure 2: Contemplative experience of Storforsen majestic water falls. Foto H. Gelter

At my first tour I was so nervous I forgot my lines and scripts and even got “black outs” at too many of my planned stops. Even common simple names of birds and flowers or the story behind artefacts I forgot in the rush most of what I have prepared, having my lines and scripts popping up some stops later confusing my customers as my information got totally mixed up, pitches and jokes delivered at the wrong moment. Also as I got stressed I started to rush and push on people to get it over and finish up my guided tour as quick as possible. The more irritated my customers become the more stressed I was and the more I forgot what to say and rushed on. I even once got lost on the trail and came back into areas we already had passed.

So on my next tour I tried to learn my script and pitches even better. I made some key word notes on a paper to get my brain to work at each stop and even made a sketch map

over my route where I indicated my pitches and jokes. It didn't help. The problem became now to read the notes without being seen by my customers thus fumbling around in my pocket or somehow hiding the notes and the map. I even had prepared the timing during the walk so I would not have to stress towards the end of my guided tour. I wrote down times and minutes at every stop on my map but as I could not take it out in the open and read it in front of my customers it didn't help. Also my nervousness made my foreign language a disaster and I can imagine my appearance and facial expressions tumbling for the right words, remembering the right phrases and scripts, sweating from the disastrous performance. Not much of hostmanship and charismatic guide performance I guess. I could not think of the impression I left to my customers. They were certainly not satisfied with my guiding. My presentations were neither fun nor interesting, although I know my subject, the order along the trail, the natural logic and names of things and places, it all came out in a stereotypic boring way.

And they told me that guiding was easy and fun. A friend told me that a tour guide must be the easiest and most fun work in the world – more like a paid vacation than a real job. You don't need a special education he said and you don't need to know so much. Except for languages of course. A couple of university studies in a couple of foreign languages would have helped me in communicating plants, birds, and historical artefacts in English, German and French as well as responding to all common questions. Otherwise it's a simple job.

Except for you need a course in first aid and basic medicine. On my first tour a newly ruptured customer showed up and I had to leave him after fifteen minutes otherwise both his operation wound would have ruptured again and my guided tour would have taken five hours. I had no idea when we started the tour that he just came from the hospital and what special needs he had. On my second tour an older gentleman slipped off the trail and hit his knee on a rock and got his palm cut up and messy with a lot of blood pouring from the scars. Of course I had no first aid kit or first aid education so one of my other customers, a nurse took care of the patient and took him back to the visitors centre at the Nature Reserve. In addition a third client fainted when seeing all the blood and I had no idea what to do with her. Thank God the nurse could multitask and also helped the fainted lady. Otherwise it's a simple job.

I realised that I also needed some university courses in general history and especially Swedish history by all the questions my foreign customers gave me about this and that. It seemed that they expected the guide to be a guide book for the country they visited and not bothering reading the facts by themselves. I should also have spent some time at Grythyttans Restaurant School to learn about Swedish and local food traditions. How should I know what the Vikings were eating or how the first hunters prepared the meat? And I needed Law School as many clients asked about what is allowed and what

is not in Scandinavia and this northern outback. Can they stay overnight in the museum huts? Is there a sheriff in every village? Can they cut trees in the forest for camp fire? What are the penalties of speeding? What is the crime rate locally, in Sweden, In the Nordic countries, in Europe? And so on. And I should also have taken singing courses at the School of Music as my customers friendly ask me if I could sing some tunes of old folksongs, logging songs, Sami joik and popular Swedish songs in the middle of my guide program. I could not understand why my customers where not interested in the information about the historic artefacts and the fauna and flora I was telling about but instead came up with a lot of questions about Swedes, Sami people and all kind of things I had no clue of. So I could not understand why being a guide could be a simple joyful task. It seemed more to me that I had to be an omnipotent person and professor in almost every subject.



Figure 3: Ranger Guide at Storforsen. Foto H. Gelter

On my third tour, at the time when I seriously reconsidered my choice to become a guide and the mystery why I did not function in the field although I had long good teaching experiences in the class room, I decided to steal an idea from more professional guides. I have noticed that many place guides and rangers wear some kind of uniform. So I thought maybe as in the case of acting on stage, where you slip into a roll and uniform, I may feel more secure. So instead of my ordinary forest trousers and green shirt I got a red “ranger” shirt with the company patch on my arm and a “ranger hat” thus giving me some more authority and

thereby security in my roll as guide. It made me in better mode which directly influenced my communication with my customers. As I previously was very nervous also my guests become nervous in general and especially when walking on the boardwalk paths over the furious rapids of the river. Some guests refused to go near the river and the vantage points with spectacular view over the water fall. I also had some logistic problems with my group of up to thirty five persons. As the trails split up in many paths so did also my group. At several times I had to spend some good time to find my guests who had spread

all over the place. This was especially the case when leaving the view points of the waterfall to continue down to the meadowlands below the falls for botanical observations. Some refused to leave the viewpoints wanting to take more photos and films, others had strolled away to the dead falls we were suppose to visit after the meadows and some had made them comfortable at one of the many fireplaces along the boardwalk paths. I had no idea how to keep the group together and I was running around more or less furious as a shepherd's dog. So my leader skills where not developed and I had no logistic didactics how to lead the group under different conditions.



Figure 4: Guided group at Storforsen water falls. Foto H. Gelter

I did neither realize that every customer is important. Already at the first tour those most interested in the nature or culture of the site walked just near me all the time occupying med with lots of questions and remarks and their own stories, while less interested where always the last or the first who already had passed my next stopping point. It took me a while to learn not to favour only the most interested and to address also the less interested. And I did so many more mistakes as a self learned guide.

I learned many lessons that summer. Some of these are:

- I learned that I as a guide am the front face of our company and the local place and even the country. The customers judge the company, the place and the country to a substantial degree on the performance of the guide.

- I learned that I needed some uniform and a name tag to be the natural leader of the group and to give me the security I need as a group leader.
- I learned that the best service is not to give as much information as possible and to squeeze in as much as possible into the guided tour. Satisfaction has nothing to do with the amount of information delivered.
- I learned that my behaviour is critical for the performance and that my mode influences the mode of my guests.
- I learned not to favour some guests but to “see” and communicate to all my guests in a group.
- I learned the hard way that group logistics and field leadership is very important to keep the group together and to give everyone the chance to enjoy the visited spots.
- I learned that when I lead a larger group I always have a dedicated person in the back of the group that when we stopped that person reports that everyone are with us. This person functions as a help leader in keeping the group tight and together.
- I learned that two and a half hour and five kilometres is a too long guided tour for ordinary buss tourists. The clients were tired already after one hour and had to suffer in the last one and a half hour of guided information. Some needed toilet facilities after one hour disturbing my guided tour scheme.
- I learned that thirty stops are too many stops for both the customers and for the guide to remember.
- I learned that at each stop I had to wait until all the customers had come before I start to talk about the interesting subject of the stop.
- I learned that to be able to talk to a group of over thirty persons I needed a special logistics and didactics to be able to address the whole group. I had to find something I can step up on such as a rock or wood stump or log so everyone can see and hear me. I had to position myself according to the wind, the sun, the view etc.
- I learned that the time schedule is important and that I had to inform my customers carefully about the time table, time of rests, etc and that I had to be able to improvise to keep my time schedule.
- I also learned never to rush my customers if my time management collapsed – stressing my clients gave them a bad experience and a bad impression of my guiding skills. It is better to adjust the program and skip some of my planed stops then to rush my customers.
- I learned to distinguish between “backstage” and “front stage” where backstage is the invisible part for my customers of the guided tour performance where all my problem solving and logistics take part. Front stage is what my customers experi-

ence during the tour. The front stage should not be disrupted by time management problems or other problems during the tour.

- I learned that scripts are good when learning my subject but that I should not keep strictly to my scripts or my learned lines I had prepared to say – that’s a certain way to forget what I had to say. And I definitely should never read directly from a script in front of your customers. I have to learn my stuff and then talk from heart – like real actors!
- I learned that pre-prepared jokes rarely work – a joke has to come spontaneously and adapted to the persons you are guiding and be part of the good mode of the group. A joke in the wrong situation or mode is always a disaster.
- I learned that I have to be able to cope with stress without showing it for my clients. When I am calm also my clients feel calm and relaxed and are more prepared to challenge themselves. A stressed guide is like a stressed teacher where the teacher’s signs of stress become more interesting than what the teacher is teaching.
- I learned that I have to earn my trust of the group. This is done by my body language, how I talk, dress, behave, answer questions, lead and act in all situations through the guided tour. It is an instant of a second to lose my trust. A trustful and confiding guide gives security to the group especially in outdoor and risky situations. An insecure guide and leader may result in informal leaders that can take over the group.
- I learned that the guide must have the skills and tools to attract and focus the attention of the customers to the subjects under consideration and to be able to communicate knowledge in an interesting and attention capturing way. Otherwise like in the classroom the attention of the group will drift away to other things not related to the subject.
- I learned that a guide has to be flexible and be able to modify the schedule according to circumstances, different customers etc. I need to have a plan B and plan C for different possible scenarios of deviations from my guiding plan as a part of a good preparation for a guided tour. These may be weather circumstances, accidents, special needs or wishes of the group etc.
- I learned that a guide has to be honest and be able to say, “Sorry, I don’t know” and never lie or fabricate “knowledge”. A lie will sooner or later be discovered and an untruthful guide is uninteresting to listen to.
- I learned that a guide needs a good feeling for service and that to “give some extra” in service does not mean to give it all or as much as possible of my knowledge. It’s more giving on a social dimension where your hospitality is the key for good service.

- I learned that social competence to meet different personalities, different cultures and to be able to treat every one in the group on the same conditions is an important but difficult skill to learn for a guide.
- I learned about the importance of security and action plans in case an accident happens, and how important it is to know my first aid and basic medical knowledge when working with people. It's never a matter of if something will happen, but rather when it will happen. What do you do when one of your clients gets a heart attack?
- I learned how important it is to at least know the basics about my customers, what kind of group, ages, what disabilities may be in the group, from where and why they are coming, their expectations, what demands they have and what they know already and so on.
- I learned the importance of preparation of knowledge, both its logistics and mental preparation. It is important to know the facts and information by heart not only by mind. The mind forgets. Knowledge by heart can be adjusted to the situation, restructured and reformulated. Preparation of logistics is to really find your way in geography, have a plan B and C, know the timing of details, have my necessary equipment with me, i.e. first aid, maps for the customers, props etc. Mental preparation includes to handle my nervousity, love my task, respect my customers, love the place, the company and the country I represent and to forget my private business while "on stage" guiding.
- I learned that guiding is like theatre, I have to practice and know my role, my scripts, my drama, my scene and my performance. I have to know my voice and how to use it. I have to know how to speak, how to use tempo, intonations, content, duration etc. I have to know my body language and how to use it.
- I learned never to excuse myself as guide, such as "I'm sorry, but I have to tell you...", "Excuse me for leading you're here, but ...", "I'm sorry, but I want to show you...", "Sorry, but this is my first time...", "Sorry for being your guide" or "Sorry for existing". I am the guide, the authority of the place and its knowledge that my customers are paying to follow and listen to, so I must be the natural leader and guide.
- And most important, I learned how important it is to learn basic guiding skills as well as the reason why I a guiding these people at this place. I learned to ask myself "Why am I doing this?"
- And finally I learned how fun it is to work with and for people, to serve and deliver experiences.

The new interpretative guide

So now I am standing here again at Storforsens nature reserve this time much better prepared after the IGU course in guiding and interpretation. Again I am waiting for my customers, but now I call them my “guests”. I learned by the IGU course that within the experience industry I personally have to invite “my guests” to my experience and thereby enhancing the experience of my guests. Through my IGU education I have moved from the service industry where we talked about customers, consumers and clients and more or less regarded them as anonymous person’s with certain “characteristics” – customer groups, target groups etc. to the experience industry. In the experience business a guest is a person I want to learn to know and interconnect with, I am naturally are curious about and to whom I develop very personal relationship. My business concept must be personalized and I need much more background information about my guests then previous for my customers within the service business.

Now being in the experience business I will no longer “guide” my guests around the place and “inform” them about the cultural artefacts, nature, history, geology and everything else I know of about this place. That is, I will no longer give them the service of showing them the way around the area and informing them about the features at display or to learn about. I have stepped into the experience and transformation industry within tourism – which requires a new level of business concepts with new demands of skills, knowledge and understanding.

In stead of “good service” I will give my guests a *thematic interpretation experience* of one and only one aspect of the Storforsen Nature Reserve. To be able to invite my guests into “my experience world” I no longer can tell them everything I know or there is to know about the area. Rather I will express only one aspect of “my life”, one theme that will be clearly communicated in the *experience product* they buy. This experience product my guests have bought I have carefully prepared and designed in a process of *experience production* that will reveal as my guest’s personal *guest experience*. The methods I have used in the experience production here at Storforsens Nature Reserve are *Interpretation* and *Total Experience Management TEM* which will be explained in my story below.

Interpretation starts with a theme. The interpretative theme will be supported by every aspect of the thematic tour, its dramaturgy, its props, its souvenirs etc. so my guests will have a clear and nice memory of the experience. The experience has three *fundamental interpretation goals*, to learn my guests the basic theme, to touch my guests emotionally and to change or transform a behaviour among my guests. It’s the pedagogic of the brain (intellectual), the heart (emotional) and the hand (behavioural) of interpretation. What to learn, how to touch and what to change through the interpretative guided tour will be dependent of the theme I chose.

Choosing the theme is the core of interpretation. The theme should be expressed in one *pitch*, one sentence that *provoke* an interest and desire to learn more and to experience the theme – i.e. to provoke to buy the *experience product*. The theme should also express the main message of the interpretation, the most important impression that each and every guest will remember after the experience. Today's theme for my guests here at Storforsen will be: "*How mythological forest creatures enhanced the life's of the settlers of the northern frontier of Sweden.*" The learning goal will be to learn my guests how important mythological explanations of natural features were for the remote northern settlers. The emotional goals will be to strengthen the connection of my guests with the forest and its natural and mythological features and the behavioural goal will be to increase my guest's security in and interest to be in the forest. Thus the spectacular waterfall environment of the Nature Reserve is not the goal per se for the interpretation but rather a majestic environment to learn about the natural forces and the mythological interpretations of them.

To strengthen the experience of the theme I am no longer dressed as a forest guide but as the forest settler Anders "Persa" Gustafsson from 1732. I will take the roll of a "*first person guide*" "being" and acting the person I am interpreting. A "*second person guide*" would dress like this historical person but talk about him and his life while a "*third person guide*" dressed as a normal guide only talk about the person and his life in third person. I therefore not only dress as settler but also play the role of a person from 1732 talking and thinking as that person would do. This needs a high degree of acting, practice in old language expressions and reflections on how a person from that age would experience the new modern world. A first person guide thus needs to prepare a lot of scripts to handle different situations. I learned from the book of Pine and Gilmore (1999) that acting can be performed in four different ways depending on the dynamics of the script and the performance.

In *platform theatre* as on a theatre scene the script is static as well as the scene and thus the words of the script are expressed in the same way at the same place at every performance. Every theatre performance here must be as identical as possible. This may within guiding be the case in museum guiding where the same information is given every time a group stops at a specific artefact such as a painting or sculpture. Here the actor (guide) is limited by the script, the lines to express the information and by the performance scene. If the script is static and the performance is dynamic we get *street theatre*. In the street the environment is dynamic and shifting with lots of disturbances where even the audience may be dynamically shifting through the act. Here the actor has a statically scripts in small packages where each package is delivered depending on the circumstances. Each script is well rehearsed but will be performed at need and the mode of the moment. For a guide this may occur when guiding a fixed theme at a new unknown place or when guiding at a dynamic place with a dynamic audience like sta-

tionary demonstrating of an artefact at a cultural heritage site. A third guiding situation which however is rare in guiding is *matching theatre*. Here a dynamic script is combined at a statically performance. Components of information are dynamically combined and preformed in a uniform way. This may occur when the a guest is repeatedly visiting the same attraction and the performance must be matched to earlier and future performances so there will be a communication between each visit in the performance that gives a continuous experience. This will be similar to TV-series where each unique program contributes to the combined series. Finally we have *improvisation theatre* where both the script and performance is dynamic and improvised. Here the performance is spontaneous and unexpected where the value is created by what is at hand. It's a form of creative communication based on the occasion and the place where impulses and ideas lead from one performance to the other. Two performances will never be identical and thus will be a form of learning also for the actor or guide.

Interpretation can be regarded to be a combination of several of these guiding performances. At certain stops where other actors may contribute we will have platform theatre, at other stops we will have street theatre when we have a certain message to communicate but the environmental circumstances may vary. And mostly we will have improvisation theatre in the form of true reciprocal communication between the guide and the guests. So doing an interpretation is a much more dynamic performance then a traditional guiding which too often is preformed statically as platform theatre. Interpretation needs even more preparation than guiding. To be able to improvise you need to have all your knowledge in your heart and have the skill to effectively communicate it. Scripting is even more important because you have an explicit theme that every script, line and pitch must support. All facts and information must be relevant and meaningful in the light of the theme. And finally you need some artistic skills to present your theme and information in an interesting way, the learning must be in the form of entertainment – *edutainment*.

I have carefully prepared myself to meet my guests by a *guest analysis*. Experience production is about personalizing the experiences thus you need to know your guests well. In designing the interpretative guiding I have restricted the marketing of the experience product to a certain tourist segment thus narrowing down the different kinds of guest I will meet in my group. Not having a too diversified group will facilitate my communication with my group as well as learning and understanding my group. Also a more homogenous group will not result in internal disturbances within the group. Having guests from only one nationality would restrict the languages I have to use. Restricting the ages span within the group facilitate how to communicate to my guests and so on. Small guest segments thus make the guide job easier in many instances. Not mixing small children, conference guests and party groups is obvious. Thus specializing the experience product for a specific segment and the marker the product in only that segment gives

me a lot of forehand information about my guests. Additional guest information may be provided by the selling organisation in case of tour packages, business groups etc. Finally my first meeting with the group will be important for my learning about my guests. Another way to make the guide job easier and almost a prerequisite for experience production is to restrict the *group size*. To be able to effectively communicate with the whole group the group size should ideally be 5-6 guests, but economically more realistic a group of 10-12 persons is ideal for this kind of interpretation. Today I am awaiting a business group of 10 persons.

The Interpretation

Now the buss arrives at the parking lot at Storforsen and as soon the buss stops I enter the buss and present myself as Anders "Persa" Gustafsson, a settler in the area from 1732. I also present myself as their guide to the area and creatures of the forest. In experience production it is important to clarify through markers or rituals when the experience starts and ends. Such clearly marked experience product allow me as experience produce to plan and manage the experiences as well as the pre- and post-experience and clarifies for the guest when the experience they pay for start and ends. Entering the buss and starting the experience with my presentation marks the beginning of the experience of meeting Anders "Persa" Gustafsson and his life. I present the theme of the interpretation by explaining that I will give my guest a glimpse of my life and interaction with the mythical creatures of my forest. This first meeting with my guests and presentation of the program is preformed in a spirit of wonder of the modern carriage the guests arrive in as well as a wonder of the modern world. Authenticity of my acting roll is central for the meaning and experience of the interpretation. All my wording, expressions, body language etc. must be authentic and support my interpretation of the person. I cannot slip in and out of my performance in a first hand guiding interpretation.

Knowing that my guests have been travelling for several hours I have to take care of their *physiological needs* according to *Maslow's pyramid of needs*. I tell them about what clothing to bring from the buss according to the weather situation, where the nearest toilets are and where and at what time the guided tour will start as well as where to wait for the start. Thus I give my guests ten minutes to prepare for the guided tour, to visit toilets and to adjust their clothing. I have chosen the starting point at the information map over the nature reserve not far from the buss. Those who are done with their preparations can read the information about the area while waiting for the others. Before letting the guests leave the buss I tell the buss driver to only open the front door. Here I can to wait outside the buss at the door step to personally welcome each guest as the leave the buss. Once everyone has left the buss and I had an initial personal interaction with each of my guests I join the waiting group at the information map and try to talk with everyone while waiting for the last guests to be ready. Having personally welcomed and then spoken with every guest gives me a chance to judge their clothing and outdoor equip-

ment, their physical status and learn more about my guests background and expectations. All is done in an authentic awe of the modern times and its technology to support the interpretation theme.

For the interpretative tour I have carefully chosen only five stops and planned the tour to take about one hour and be 1,5 km long. I have learned from the psychologist Miller and his *magical number of seven* that the human mind can only handle up to seven plus minus two items at a time. Thus if my tour would contain 30 stops my guests would probably not remember what happened at stop seven, twelve and twenty-four – most the stops would fuzz together into a blur. But five stop our mind can remember and handle at the same time thus letting my guest remember and tell about each of the stops. Therefore, as I learned should an interpretation tour never exceed seven stops and take no longer than one hour.

The next level of Maslow's pyramid of needs is about *security*. My guests need to feel secure to be able to enjoy the experience. So before I start my interpretation tour I give them some basic security information so my guest with confidence and trust can join my experience. I dedicate a person to walk as the last person through the walk to keep us together and to watch out from attacks from behind from forest creatures. This keeps the group more tightly together and increases the excitement for what will happen during the tour. I inform my group that we will probably meet some mythological creatures of the forest and that my guest carefully must listen to my instructions of how to behave towards the creature to be safe. I tell them to never leave the trail even "under an attack". These simple "safety rules" creates an excitement and expectation for the tour and facilitate my leading and handling of the group in the forest.

The third level of Maslow's pyramid is about *social care*, to be seen and acknowledged by the group and the leader. It is also about my hostmanship. I have learned the "*fish philosophy*" of good hostmanship that consists of four simple steps towards good hospitality and hostmanship. This philosophy is about catching the energy and releasing the potential of myself as well as of my guests. The first step is to *choose my attitude*. There are many things we don't have control over such as the weather, other people etc. but I can have control of my attitude and mood. My attitude affects how I experience the moment and behave towards my guests. It's a simple choice. I can choose my attitude the moment I wake up and leave my bed. I can choose to have a wonderful day together with my guests despite bad weather or I can choose to have a bad day. My choice of attitude affects the attitude and mood of my guests and how they experience the interpretation. My task as interpreter is to tune in my guests attitude to have fun by the interpretation.

The second step in fish philosophy is to actually *have fun*. Happy people treat other people kindly, happiness releases creativity and play. Work becomes a reward if you have

fun at work. Joyful learning becomes fun experience. Play as learning, as an interaction between people and interaction with the environment becomes experimentation with life itself – “play is a spirit” – an invitation to life according to this philosophy. To cope with and enjoy my role as a person from 1732, i.e. my “first guide interpretation” my guest must “play with the game” and become a part of the “game” – the interpretation. Only after having the right attitude and having fun with the game of interpretation my guests will create meaning and value of the experience. If I have fun playing my role my guests will have fun experiencing my interpretation. If the game becomes too serious the fun will disappear as well as the play of the interpretation. If one person refuses to play the game of the interpretation the whole interpretative experience can become bad and lose its meaning also for the rest of the group. Having fun does not mean to be a “fun person” dropping jokes etc. Having fun is to be playful and enjoy what you are doing, enjoy your guests and enjoy the moment, to be there just then. This gives us the third step - to “*Make their Day*”. This is more than just to be nice, it is to do the unexpected, something that is important for your guests, to make the world a better place to live in. You do this by focusing on the person you are addressing in your communication. This give you back energy and a good feeling. Make their day is to care for everyone of your group all the time. Not to favour some and exclude others – everyone have to be invited in your fun. Make their day and you have a good day!

Finally to make their day you have to *focus on your guest*. Forget your everyday problems – *bee there!* Not only be physically there, *see your guest*, give him or her all your attention when communicating, really listen to your guest. This often results in a feeling of stopping the time – live in the moment, a flow experience. *The past is history, the future is mystery. Today is a gift. That why we call it the present.* To really communicate with a person is to learn about that person, to be curious, respectful and absorbed. Real communication gives deep experiences. Real communication is a prerequisite for real interpretation. This simple “Fish philosophy” of hostmanship has made me a much better host and guide and will be that extra people won’t forget from my interpretation.

One way to release tension and to have fun together is to involve the guests in the story. So I started the tour by asking witch mythological creatures each one of my guests has meet lately. I also ask what creatures there are in the modern times. By these questions I learn what attitudes my guests have towards the theme and the interpretation and if I have to tune in them even more in the “game” or fantasy mode of the interpretation. Leaving out a single person not taking part in the “play” can disturb the whole experience.

Now we start the walk along a forest trail. I have informed my guests that I will invite them to my world and visit my living room, the forest and my sleeping room, my forest hut. We will if we are lucky meet the creatures that live in my living room and my world. While walking I learn my guests how to walk quietly in the forest not to disturb

the mythological creatures or to frighten wildlife. This automatically softens the talking among my guest and focuses their attention towards the surrounding forest. After a short walk we came near a creek where I suddenly whispered “schyyy..., listen!” In front of us from the creek we could here fragile music tones from a violin intermixed with the ripple of the creek. I said it’s the “näcken”, the mystic creek man playing the violin. Slowly we tip-toed to a spot where we could see “näcken” sitting naked in the creek plying his seducing music to attract people to join him into the creek. Quietly I explained what “näcken” is and why he could be very dangerous for people. Then we quietly passed the dangerous spot. While still hearing the fragile tones from the violin intermixed with the rushing from the creek suddenly a young woman stood next to the trail dressed in a long skirt. She stood next to a big round rock shyly smiling and pointing at a picnic blanket under the big rock. It took a while before my guest saw the large tail emerging from the skirt. I explained that this was a friendly troll woman and that trolls are not as ugly as nowadays commonly expressed but could look as ordinary nice people except for their tail. I explained that this troll was a good friend of mine, a bit shy but that she would like to welcome my guests to her forest with some snacks from the forest.

I knew my guests would be hungry and thirsty after the long buss tour. According to Maslow’s physiological needs being hungry or thirsty can destroy even the best interpretative experiences. Here I use this physiological need to strengthen the experience and contribute to the theme. I therefore prepared some local natural foods and drinks such as dried reindeer and moose meet, raw spiced salmon from the river, smoked local fish, conserved mushrooms, fresh blueberry, cloudberry and raspberry etc. and to drink blueberry fruit drink, birch sap drink etc. I invited my guests to sit down on the blanket to enjoy the treasures of the forest and river supplied by my troll friend while listen to the music of “näcken” and the whirling water of the creek. I explained what trolls are and why they and their families were important for my life in the forest. Then I ask my guests what important function trolls have in the modern life and my guests explained enthusiastic their view on trolls. I then explained that the big rock we were sitting at was thrown here by the mountain giant “Bro” living in the mountain “Storbeget” (big mountain) some kilometres to the south. Bro could not sleep by the rush of the big waterfall of Storforsen and started to throw these big rocks at the river to stop the noise. Finally he gave up and moved away to a mountain further west. I told my guests the difference between trolls and giants and that they in modern times often seemed to be mixed up. The giants did neither like the ringing of church bells and often throw these big rocks at churches explaining all the big rocks on the fields around villages. While sitting there eating, listening and telling the stories our own troll was curiously but shyly investigating the “modern people” by touching their strange clothing, shoes etc. but without saying a word.



Figure 5: Old forest hut at Storforsen Logging museum. Foto H. Gelter

After thanking our troll for the delicious delicacies of the forest we went on along the trail with the music fading away behind us. Now the mood was joyful in the group and after a short walk we reached a small and simple log hut. I explained that this was my first “sleeping room” in the forest. It had a dirt floor, open fire place, no windows and entrance at one short side. I showed how it was constructed and isolated with moss, how I had to sleep on a straw bed with reindeer furs, and the simple cooking equipment I used. I explained that I in the beginning for many years lived alone in this hut before I could build me a larger hut to bring here my family. I spend many lonely days and nights in the forest and in this small hut and I asked how people live today. While my guests explained the ways of modern days suddenly a loud crack was heard from the slapping a wooden stick to a tree trunk. A dense fog appeared some fifty meters from the hut. “Watch out” I alerted my guests and suddenly from nowhere a beautiful girl appeared. It was the “skogsfrun” (forest woman) I explained. She was laughing loud and waving her hand to invite us come to here. I explained that the “skogsfru” often visited lonely foresters in their huts, and that she was very fond of men. With her laugh and shouts she seduced even family men to leave their settlements to join here. If the man did not answer her calls she become angry and turned her back which was hollow like a hollow trunk. I explained that she controlled all the animals in the forest and if you made her angry you would have bad hunting success. She could also make people get lost in the forest. By swearing of prying to God or using fire you could frighten her away. So



Figure 6: Forest hut at Storforsen Logging museum. Foto H. Gelter

I asked my guests to start to swear loudly. Joyfully my guests started to swear and curs loudly intermixed with laughing over the strange situation and as suddenly she appeared the “skogsfrun” disappeared to everyone’s surprise. What my guests did not know was that the girl interpreting the “skogfrun” was hiding behind a large mirror which made her suddenly appear and disappear and that she had lightened a military smoke grenade to create the mystic fog.

After this intense but fun experience we continue the trail until we came to a lager log hut with small windows on one side. This is my home I said. We were greeted by my son Jon. I invited my gusts into my “house” a larger hut but still with dirt floor and open fire place. I presented my son who helps me in the forest with logging, hunting and fishing. I explained that my wife at the age of twenty-four died in the birth bed when our third child was to be born. Our second son died at the age of seven during a cold winter when hunting was bad and we were starving. I and my eldest son of fourteen were now struggling to survive in the forest. We invited our guest to cut some small trees and chop up wood to lighten two outdoor fire places. We let our guest try to make fire with flint and ion but after that everyone has failed Jon showed how to do it. On one fire we put on “coffee” made from herbs of the forest and on the other Jon started to fry our main meal dish “slobben” fried meat and wheat. Letting our guests taste our simple meal food sitting around the fire places, suddenly we heard some giggle



Figure 7: Old forest hut meal. Foto H. Gelter

from behind my hut. I explained that it was our “hustomte”, our brownie. Suddenly this little creature ran over to the barn hut where our horse and a goat were housed. Several of my guests tried to run after the little creature to get a picture. I asked surprised why they wanted to catch my “hustomte” so they embarrassed explain what a photograph was and why they wanted to catch a picture of the small creature. I had to explain that they are very shy and how important they are for our settlement and that we regularly give them our left-over and even feed them with porridge and thereby keep our animals in good condition. By taking care of our “tomtar” they take care of our settlement and animals while we are away working and protect them from wildlife, diseases and other mythological creatures. I asked if my guests had “tomtar” at their homes and they explained that the modern Sancta Clause at Christmas was a kind of “modern tomte”.

My guests did not know that I have engaged two six year old children to play “tomte” at the settlement while we visited it. They were carefully instructed what to do and they enjoyed to play and lurk our guests. We ended our small meal to donate our leftovers to our small “tomtar” who from inside the stable laughed and giggled to our kindness.

We moved on while some guests expressed their despair they could not get any pictures of all the forest creatures and I explained that mythological creatures are difficult to get hands on and are not supposed to be “caught”. After a short walk we reached one of



*Figure 8: Tar pile area at Storforsen Logging museum.
Foto H. Gelter*

my working places - the tar pile. I explained that most of my income came from char production which was the most important export from the area and northern Sweden in my days. My guests could see how the tar pile was built and test the smell of the tar and see how it was used for wood impregnation mainly in the ship-building industry and for rope-making, but also as antiseptic in medical care. Swedish tar was important for the great shipping nations of the 1700- and 1800-century and contributed to the build of the foundation of the modern world and its history. I asked if modern people still were using tar and was surprised of the answer.

From the tar pile we had only a short walk to the waterfalls. Before reaching the walk boards of the falls I stopped my group and explained that my duty as a forest man was calling and had to leave my guests at this spot. From my leather back-pack I was carrying I took out a memorabilia, a souvenir for all my guests. It was a wooden "troll" with a rope stump as tail smelling of tar. I told them to take care of "my" trolls and to remember my hard life together with my forest creatures. This troll belonging to the family of the kind troll we meet will bring good luck and fortune to my guests in their modern lives. I also told them that now when they learned to know the forest creatures and how to behave towards them they need not to be afraid of the forest anymore. After all it was my living room and working place. To evaluate if my interpretation goals were fulfilled I asked my guests what they learned from my life and how they felt about the forest.



*Figure 9: Principle of tar pile at Storforsen.
Foto H. Gelter*

To my satisfaction the interpretation fulfilled my learning goals of learning my guests about the mythological creatures of my life and their significances; it fulfilled my emotional goals of making a better connection to the forest and my behavioural goal of awaking an active interest to learn more about the forest and its life.

I then informed my guests the way

to the waterfall, to the visitors centre close by, and most important about the next interpretation tour. Within one hour an interpretation of the geology and botany of the area will be given and later on an interpretation of the life of the log-floating men and ending up the day with an interpretation of the charcoal burning in this area. I invited my guests to experience these other additional interpretative tours of the area, enjoy further souvenirs and maybe some “modern” coffee at the visitors centre and a great experience of the waterfalls. After group and individual photos of me with my guests I took farewell of my guests with hope they will visit me again. I left a happy bunch of tourist running off for buying the next interpretation tour and buy books to learn more about the forest and its real and mythological inhabitants. I made their day and this become my best day so far.

Interpretation planning

I learn from IGU that by doing an interpretation instead of a traditional guided tour I can earn more from the interpretation. Instead of talking about everything in a two hour guided tour I invite my guests to take part in several different and shorter thematic interpretations, thereby “re-use” my guests several times. Having given them a great experience in only one aspect of the attraction I have if I succeeded with my interpretation created a desire and need to experience other aspects of the attraction, i.e. to buy another experience, or to come back later for another experience. Not only have I through interpretation created more “experience products” to sell from the same attraction, each product can also be more expensive than an ordinary guided tour though the experience production of interpretation.

Through the embedding of the cultural and natural resource in an experience production I will refine and commoditizing the resources in the same way as Pine and Gilmore in their book “The Experience Economy” explained how the value of a coffee bean increases each time it will be refined. The coffee bean starts as a harvested natural resource

a commodity with a price of about 1\$ a pound or one or two cents a cup. When a manufacturer grinds, packages and sells the coffee as goods in a grocery store the price for a customer has increased to about 25 cents a cup. Brewing the beans at a cornered coffee shop as a service will now sell the beans for 50 cent per cup. But if you serve the same cup of coffee embedded in an exclusive experience such as an espresso bar at a five star hotel where the ordering, creation and consumption of the cup of coffee embodies a sense of theatre and exclusive experience, a consumer gladly pay up to 5\$ for the cup. Thus the experiences embedding the goods and service offers a higher value offering, a sensation not expressed by the service per se. The more exclusive the embedded brand of the experience the more guests will be prepared to pay for the experience.

We have the similar situation within the guide business. By pamphlets and maps guests can be guided for free or almost free at the touristic resources, By providing the resource as a service, a guided tour where we as service show the way to the best spots and give necessary information we no longer do it for free. Guiding 30 guests for 10 Euro during 2,5 hour gives me 300 Euro. Embedding and refining the guided tour as a personalised interpretation we can take 80 Euro from only 10 guests thus earning 800 Euro for only one hour – and having fun at the same time. And increasing the experience, making it more exclusive, unique and scarce can increase its value even more. Commoditizing through experiences and creating several experience products through thematic interpretation of a touristic resource can thus significantly increase tourism income.

Interpretation as I have described above with the hypothetical example from Storforsen nature reserve do not need to be as that complicated as exemplified. In my interpretation though “Living history” I have included several actors as well as effects and as well as gastronomic specialities. You can build interpretations from simple interpretations based only on your narrative skills all the way up to advanced staged theatrics performances such as in Living history displays.

The basics of interpretation are quite simple – the difficult skill is to apply them to specific real cases. The base of interpretation was first expressed in the first book on interpretation written by Freeman Tilden in 1957 “Interpreting Our Heritage”, where he set out the six basic principles of Interpretation.

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow *relate* what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is *revelation* based upon information. They are entirely different things. However all interpretation includes information.
3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials pre-

sented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction but *provocation*.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole person rather than any phase.

6. Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

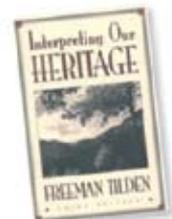
From these basic principles we have extract a short hand version Tilden's Interpretation Principles TIP:

Good interpretation must:

- *Provoke* the interest of the audience.
- *Relate* to the everyday lives of the audience.
- *Reveal* the main point through a unique ending or viewpoint.
- *Address the whole* (focus on illustrating a theme).
- Strive for *message unity* (use the right illustrations, vocabulary, etc. to present the message).

From these basic principles some definitions of interpretation have been developed. The most common is from Tilden's book 1957 "*Interpreting Our Heritage*":

An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.



A more modern version is developed by Interpretation Canada in 1978.

A *communication* process designed to REVEAL meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public, through first hand involvement with objects, artifacts, landscapes, and sites.

As mention the interpretation is build around a central theme. A theme is the central or key idea of any presentation. When a good presentation has been completed, the audience should be able to summarize it in one sentence. This sentence would be the theme. Development of a theme provides organizational structure and clarity of understanding. Once the theme of a presentation has been decided, everything else tends to fall into

place when planning an interpretation.

Themes should:

- Be stated as short, simple, complete sentences.
- Contain only one idea.
- Reveal the overall purpose of the presentation.
- Be as specific as possible.

To the theme the planning of interpretation adds three objectives:

1. learning objectives
2. Emotional objectives
3. Behavioural objectives

For example we can take the *theme: Respecting water can save your life!*

The three objectives thus could be:

Learning: At the completion of the program the majority of visitors will be able to identify the five rules of water safety.

Emotional: At the completion of this program, the majority of visitors will respect water, but not fear it or take it for granted.

Behaviour: The majority of visitors will:

- a. Learn to swim if they can't already.
- b. Wear their PFD's.
- c. Swim in pairs.
- d. "Know" before they go.

To summarise an interpretation is based on:

- *One theme* extracted from a defined object and clear goals
- *One provocation* that awakes interest and engagement
- At most *seven stops* (Millers Magic Number of 7) where each stop support the theme and *relates* to the everyday life of the guests
- Uses *props* such as pictures, actors, sounds, first person guiding etc.
- *Time management* at most 45-60 min per program, better with several shorter programs than a single long
- Individually adapted to the guests

- *Clear objectives* that include
 - o Learning objectives (for the brain)
 - o Emotional objectives (for the heart)
 - o Behavioral objectives (for the body)
- Implementation trough checklists, time tables, activity plan etc.
- Evaluation – did the interpretative goals work?

Figure 10: Thinking outside the box

Interpretation is an artistic and creative communication process to give your guests good learning experiences. In interpretation planning and as an interpretation guide you have to creatively “*think outside your box*” in what, why, how, when, for whom, with what you are going to do with your guests. Its great fun – as all creative processes are.



Experience production

From IGU I learned that Interpretation is a pedagogic method for experience production. There are parallels between experience production and pedagogic where the experience producer is equivalent to the teacher. As the teacher has to plan his or her lesson with the help of pedagogic theory and didactic methodology I as an experience producer must plan my experience product based on theory and methodology for *experience production*. This planning, designing and preparing of the experience results in an experience product that we give a price and sell on the touristic market. When our guest buy our experience product such as an interpretative tour our guest will have some input “dimension” or *pre-experiences* when entering the experience in the same way as a student has some pre-understanding from earlier learning, lessons and experiences when entering the class room for the learning experience. This pre-experience consists of earlier experiences and learning making up the understanding of the experience and thus influencing the value, interpretation, meaning and relevance of the experience. Also the mode and feelings, the physiological as well as psychological status of our guest when entering the experience influences its outcome.

These parameters are also influenced by our marketing and pre-customer relations, word-of-mouth about our product and destination, media influences, anticipation, visualisations, dreaming and expectations on the experience thus constituting a very complex dimension of experience production to consider and relate to. In the class-room the performance of the teacher based on his or her preparations and teaching skills influences the learning experience of the students and their learning outcome, i.e. what they remember from the learning experiences. In the same way the performance of the staff in the experience production based on their preparations and skills influences the guests experience and the outcome of the experiences, i.e. what is remembered of the experience. Therefore professional experience producer always include and provide some memorabilia, that is souvenirs in the form of pictures or films taken during the experience or other artefacts that are associated to the experience to facilitate the memory of the experience. By showing these memorabilia to relatives and friends the product gets a good marketing - the word-of-mouth marketing. By active customer relation marketing after the experience I as an experience producer can further influence the post-experience by reminders, new offerings and other kind of interactions with my guests. This

post-experience also include the guests own assimilation and adaptation of the experience to internalize it into the guests life story and image by reflective thinking, telling or even writing about the experience, arranging pictures and souvenirs of the experience etc. Thus I learned that the experience production starts as soon as the guest gets aware of my experience product It then gets its pitch during the actual experience where my production is applied and then continuous as long as my guest remembers my experience product, in the best case as a life-long good story to tell every one.

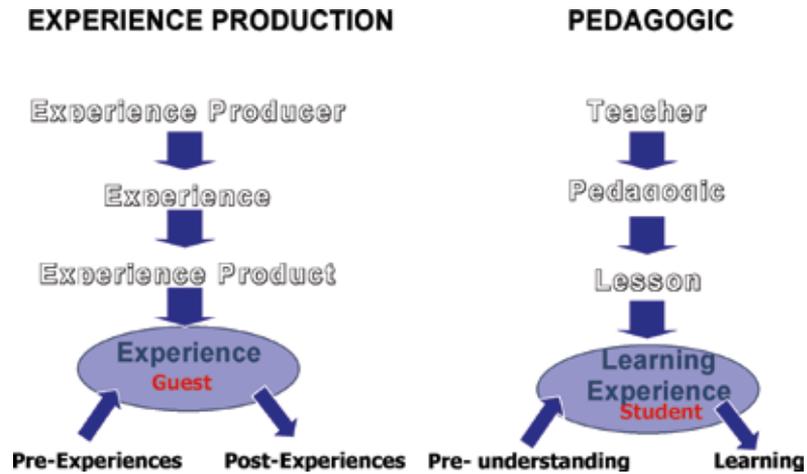


Figure 11: The principle of Experience Production in comparison with Pedagogic. After Gelter 2006

The actual experience production can be conducted according to Interpretation planning and based on experience production theory. One such is supplied by Pine & Gilmore (1999) in their book *The Experience Economy*. By this theory we learned that a memorable experience include several experience realms. Our guest can be involved in the experience on a scale from passive to active interaction where in the passive side our guests watch a performance while in the active side actually take part in the experience performance. On a second dimension our guests may absorb the experience happening around them like absorbing the landscape from a tour buss or absorbing the instruction of an activity guide. On the other scale of this dimension our guest may be immersed into the experience like becoming part of a majestic landscape or a wild river during rafting. These two dimensions when combined form four experience realms of entertainment, education, estetics and escapism.

A full experience therefore should contain aspects of all four experience realms. An experience thus should contain some aspects of entertainment where the guests more or less passively absorb the preformed experience. The educational realm may contain learning skills or activities where the guest actively must absorb instructions and performances.

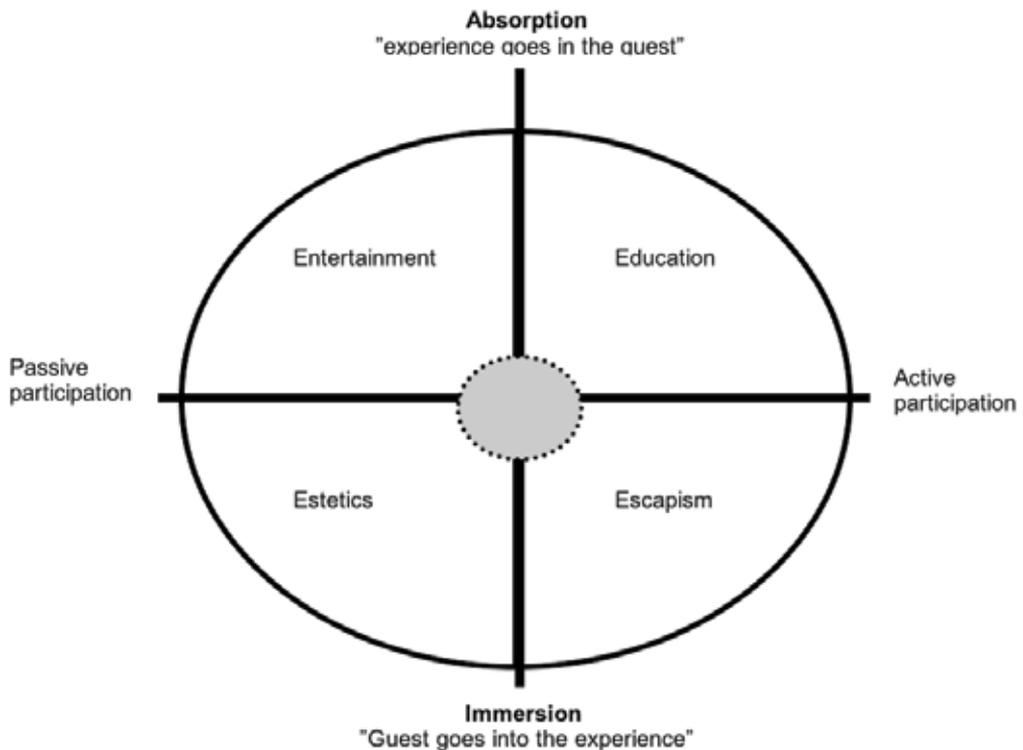


Figure 12: The four Experience Realms. After Pine & Gilmore 1999, p.30

An aesthetic realm may include a passive assimilation of a contemplative experience, such as enjoying majestic surroundings or sunset. The escapism realm includes the change from everyday life to new environments and situations normally not found in everyday life. This could be the active immersion in the river while rafting or climbing a mountain or taking part of a fantasy game such as Living History.

In my hypothetical interpretation experience all four experience realms were present. The entertainment component was for example listening to my stories, listening to the violin of the “näcken” or absorbing the presence of the “skogsfun”. The educational part was the absorbing of the facts and knowledge around the forest creatures and my life as frontier logger. The escapism was the active “play” to become invited to my life of 1732. This involved the active participation of the play and the immersion into the “old times”. The estetics include the splendid forest nature, enjoying the delicious specialities of the forest offered by the troll or immersing into the history of the huts. A good experience production involves the active design and dramaturgy of these four experiences realms, of the design and dramaturgy of the guest’s interaction and their absorption and immersion in the experiences. This includes also the design and dramaturgy of the senses, to hear the faint sound of the violin, to smell the tar, to “see” se unseen of the mythological forest and to taste the berries and the smoked fish. We usually hear the statement “an experience for all senses” – but hopefully such experiences include a dramaturgical design

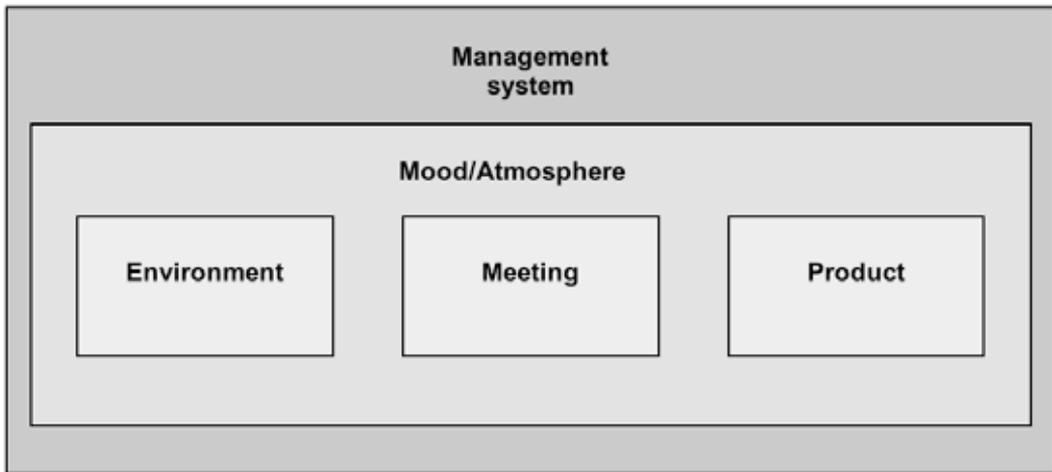


Figure 13: The Five Aspect Meal Model. After Gustafsson 2006

as using all senses at the same time would be an “over stimulation” of the experience. Sometimes the isolation of only one sense at the time gives a better effect than include to many sensations at the same time.

A model for experience production to understand the gastronomic meal experience and for developing meal services in restaurants has been developed by Gustafsson (2006) at Grythyttans Restaurant School. The model called the Five Aspect Meal Model, FAMM consists of the

1. The meeting
2. The environment - the restaurant
3. The mode/ atmosphere
4. The product (meal)
5. The management system (business)

This model gives us a model for the actual arena of the experience production. Transformed to the guiding situation the meeting is between the guide and the guests as well

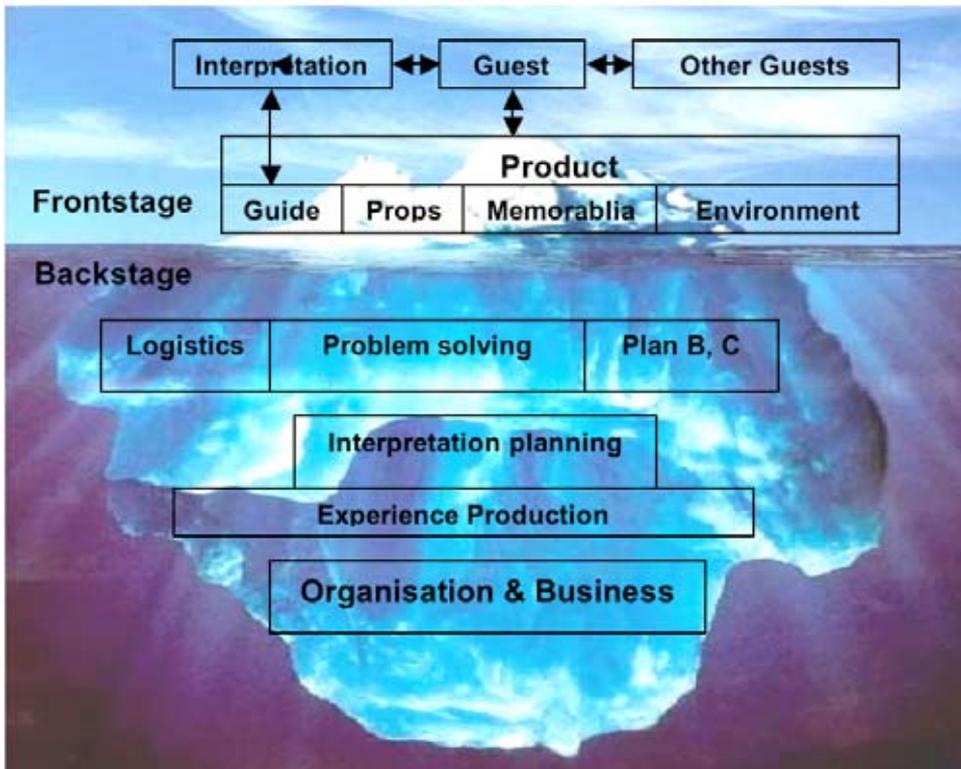


Figure 14: The Guiding Experience Arena based on theory of FAMM, Mossberg's experience room, the Servicescape and the Servuntion system.

as between different guests. The environment is the cultural and natural resources and its artefacts we guide and interpret and the product is the interpretation tour, the atmosphere is the mood among the guests the guide creates through the interpretation. The managing system is the business behind the experience production.

This FAMM-model is similar to a model for the “experience room” developed by Lena Mossberg (2004) consisting of the environment (experience room), the guest, other guests, personnel and the product and their interaction. Mossberg has developed her model on a Biters’s (1992) servicescape and Bateson (1995) servuntion system of backstage with its organisation and management, and frontstage with the experience room, personnel as actors and the guests as audience. Thus we can develop a “Guiding and Interpretation Experience Arena” according to picture 13 that clarifies some of the complexity of the guiding context.

At the Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry in Rovaniemi a complex theory for Experience production has been developed (Tarssanen and Kylänen

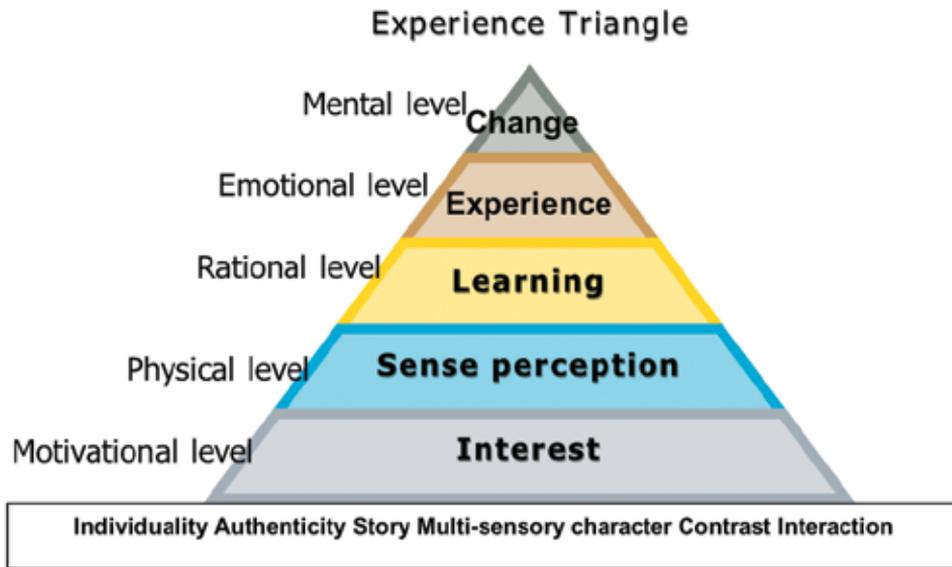


Figure 15: Total Experience Triangle for the “perfect experience production”

2005, Kylänen 2006). The Experience Triangle summarises the different aspects and dimensions of Experience production. The experience triangle represents a “perfect experience product”. It’s an explicit tool for finding critical points or deficiencies in the product, a framework for “experientialisation” of products such as a guided tour or interpretation.

The experience triangle is based on a model with two dimensions, one dimension of the client’s own experience and one dimension of specific elements of the experience product. Influential factors on the client’s experience are individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory character, contrast and interaction to offer guests something memorable and unique. Attaching these critical elements into a product we get a case of experientialisation. They emphasises that it is important that the six themes are presented at all stages of the product – from marketing to going-it-through and post-marketing as well, and that the experience producer has to take into account both the conscious and unconscious levels of the customer. The second dimension consists of levels of the experience proposed to be the motivational, physical, rational, emotional and mental level which has to be understood and taken in consideration in the experience production.

Theories can be difficult to convert into practical applications. I have therefore in the mythological interpretation story followed the Interpretation method a theory of Total Experience Production, TEM (Gelter 2006, 2007) that is partly based on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1968). This production theory is simply based on management and considerations of aspect and factors of the complex experience production process from both the point of the frontstage guest experience and basic guest needs based on Maslow’s pyramid of needs as well as backstage production factors. It is basically a



Figure 16: Total Experience Management based on Maslow's pyramid of needs.

check-list to tick of when planning, preparing and implementing the experience product where the first part considers the guest experienced and the second part the production part.

Total Experience Management, TEM - guest experience part:

1. Physiological management: - Handling your guests physiological needs. Food and drinks and possibilities for toilet visits. Weather and environmental adjustments. Are your guest's tired or exhausted or in good physiological shape for the experience?
2. Safety management: Handling the guest experience of risk – the apparent risk and the real risks involved. Often you want to optimize the apparent risk but must always minimize the real risk. Do the guests feel safe with the guide, the food, the hygiene etc. Do the guide have the proper first aid education, first aid equipment, safety plans, crisis plans etc. Do the guide has the proper experience of the activity, the area etc.?
3. Social management: Handling the social needs of your guests. How does the guide work with hostmanship? Are all the guests “seen”, accepted, respected, feel acceptance, consideration?
4. Self-esteem management – Handling the building of your guest's self-esteem. Designing activities that are within the skill levels of your guests and contribute to esteem, self confidence, self-knowledge etc.

5. Self-fulfilment management – Designing and handling situations that contribute to self actualization and self-fulfilment. Fulfil your guest’s dreams, feelings, goals, and experience needs.

Total Experience Management, TEM – production perspective:

1. Production Management – Managing the production process, who does what, when, why, at what price, with the help of what etc. Activity plans, time plans, budgets etc.
2. Technology management – What technological aids do you need in the experience production? All technology had to be tested and back-up plans must be prepared. No failing technology during the experience.
3. Sensation management – The dramaturgy of senses – or the “symphony of your senses”. What sensations are going to be stimulated when, why, and how?
4. Activity management – the activity dramaturgy of your guests. When, why and how are your guests getting interactively involved in the experience, when are they being more passive? Where are the pitches with high activity? When are periods of recreation, contemplation and reflection? Immersion and absorption in the experience.
5. Interaction management: – the interaction of the guests with other guests, actors of the interpretation, locals, other personnel etc. Interactions with different media, and other props
6. Learning management: - The pedagogic of the experience. What to learn, why, and how. Learning is important for the memory of the experience – without learning no memories!
7. Entertainment management: – How to work with the entertainment realm of the experience. How to get joy and fun into the experience.
8. Hostmanship management: - How to create a welcoming, warm atmosphere where the guest feels seen respected and honoured.
9. Risk management: – What risks physical and mental are connected to the experience? What risk plans and action plans are there? Who does what in a case of emergency or crisis? How to handle accidents, injuries and emergencies? What rules, security installations are there? What emergency transportations for evacuation?
10. Temporal management: – How to time dispose the experience, the dramaturgy, pitches, time schedulers etc. How to take the guest through the time table without rushing or inferring with the experience?
11. Ethical management: – What ethical issues can be connected to the experience

and your guests? What can you do and what can you not do with your guests? At what economical, environmental and personal expenses will the experience be offered? What behaviour towards locals, culture, wildlife, other guests are acceptable?

12. Stage management: – What in your production is backstage that the guest should not see or be aware of? What should be frontstage that the guest sees or meet? Who works backstage and who works frontstage? Are roles and casts clear?

13. Information/guide management: – What information is presented when, why and how. How is the information embedded in the experience or a part of the experience? Is it meaningful, understandable, and presented at the right moment? In what form is the information presented, orally, written, picture, film etc.?

14. Theme management: – Is the theme clear and easy to understand? Is the interpretation supporting the theme? Is it expressed in the dramaturgy, values, learning goals, story telling and interpretation of the experience?

15. Creativity management – How is the creativity of personnel and guest captured and used in the production? How do you work with individual, group and organizational creativity? How are your productions developed and evolving?

16. Quality Management: – What quality management system are you using? What certifications, environmental consequence analysis systems do you use? How do you handle quality issues for your employees, collaborators and co-workers, resources, technology, working routines, services etc.?

17. Sustainability management – To what extend is the production sustainable? What environmental costs are involved in the production?

Well, these were only some aspects of TEM – you will probably discover several more aspects to manage when designing and working with experience production. Using the concept of TEM as glasses to look at your experience production will help you design and plan your guiding, interpretation and experience production.

To conclude, working with experience production is to approach the whole complexity around designing, delivering and consuming experiences. It is a fascinating, fun and stimulating exercise in the preparation that certainly will improve your guiding products and interpretations.

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