



Tourism British Columbia Export Ready Criteria

The following criteria are used by Tourism British Columbia when determining if a supplier is ready to work with Tourism BC in offering “export ready” product to international markets:

Suppliers Must:

- Be in business at least one year, with a proven track record for safe and professional operation.
- Demonstrate an adequate budget and marketing plan that includes international tour operators.
- Understand the roles played by receptive tour operators (RTO's), tour operators/travel wholesalers, and retail travel agents. This includes an understanding of rack or retail pricing, agent commissions and wholesale net rates and client relationships at each level.
- Be willing to include receptive tour operators in your marketing and sales plan, and implement a regular sales call program directed toward these operators.
- Be willing to provide contracted wholesale net rates to receptive tour operators. As a general guideline, requirements are: 15% off the retail price for day activities and transportation and 20-30% off retail pricing for accommodations (higher discounts are common for volume production).
- Honour the contracted net rates, no price changes before the expiry of the contracted agreement.
- Provide detailed pricing and program information to tour operators and receptive operators at least one year in advance of selling season, i.e. May 1999 for the summer/fall 2000 season.
- Be prepared to communicate and accept reservations by telephone, fax and/or e-mail. Provide same-day confirmation of booking arrangements.
- Set up billing arrangements with the operator, agency or receptive tour operator. Accept client vouchers as confirmation of payment for reservations.
- Determine business priorities in terms of group or FIT business. If you plan to pursue group business, consider access by tour buses, parking/turnaround areas, washroom facilities etc. Determine your maximum group size.
- Carry adequate insurance (minimum \$3 million liability insurance for adventure product suppliers is recommended). Discuss this with your receptive operator (sometimes they can add suppliers to their existing policies at nominal cost).
- Provide support (free or reduced rates) for international media and travel trade familiarization tours.

In addition to the above, the following should be considered “next steps” for consideration as business and market presence expands:

- Consider attending travel trade shows involving international buyers, either in North America or overseas.
- Expand the sales call program to include overseas contacts as well as Canada-based receptive operators.
- Be prepared to provide tour operators and media with 35mm slide, CD ROM or standard computer format images of the product or operation, for use in brochures, promotions and editorials.
- Consider producing video footage of product or operation for promotional and training purposes.
- Consider development of a website offering information on your product.
- Be prepared to adapt to uniqueness of certain overseas markets. Flexibility may be required with regard to last minute bookings and changes.
- Consider hiring frontline staff that speak the language of the markets you are interested in pursuing.