



Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan

FINAL
September 2014



SQUAMISH
BRITISH COLUMBIA

PREFACE

This Squamish Branding, Development and Marketing Action Plan was developed through a collaborative community process between Destination Development Inc. (DDI) (dba Roger Brooks International) and the people of Squamish, B.C. We would like to thank the District of Squamish, the 17 brand volunteers who have participated on the Brand Development Committee and the Brand Development Team, as well as many business and property owners, residents, and others for the hours they devoted to the process of making this plan a reality, contributing their time and valuable input of ideas, resources, and feedback.

The recommendations made in this Plan are based on the information provided to DDI by many caring and concerned citizens of the District, research, best practices in other locations, and the findings of previous plans and studies, as well as experience and expertise in the field.

The results from implementation of this Plan are dependent upon many factors, including the time, effort, funding availability, and cooperation of those involved in its implementation.

DDI has provided the District of Squamish with the native InDesign files for this Plan, so the District of Squamish has the ability to make future changes and edits to the plan on its own. Any changes or edits that are made by the District of Squamish or its employees, partners, collaborators, or assignees, after receipt of this plan from DDI, are made without the input and expertise of DDI.

Table of contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Primary goals of this effort | 2 |
| The 10 things you need to know about branding | 2 |
| The Branding Process | 3 |
| The Target Audience | 9 |
| The Set-up | 10 |
| The Challenge | 11 |
| The Brand Strategy | 13 |
| The Look and Feel of the Brand | 15 |
| Marketing Materials | 17 |
| Squamish Recommendations | |
| 1 Form the Brand Leadership Team | 18 |
| 2 Brand Leadership Team assignments | 21 |
| 3 Establish a BLT speaking engagement calendar | 23 |
| 4 Secure domain names | 24 |
| 5 Begin the transition to the new brand identity | 24 |
| 6 Bring other local organizations and partners into the brand | 25 |
| 7 Get the Brand Promise out there | 26 |
| 8 Downtown retail and business recruitment | 27 |
| 9 Encourage Downtown businesses to open late | 28 |
| 10 Create "The Very Best Of" Squamish brochure | 28 |
| 11 Continue to grow digital library in support of the brand | 31 |
| 12 Brand District vehicles | 32 |
| 13 Continue to improve access to and use of the waterfront | 33 |
| 14 Solicit input from local groups to identify ways to better support and access Squamish's outdoor activities | 33 |
| 15 Begin development of the 2016 Activities Guide | 34 |
| 16 Develop a branded website "jump page" | 34 |
| 17 Integrate the new brand into monthly newsletters | 36 |
| 18 Launch a community clean-up program | 38 |
| 19 Find your best Squamish spokespeople - put them on film | 39 |
| 20 Develop "itineraries by locals" marketing program | 40 |
| 21 Start developing sample itineraries | 42 |
| 22 Review giving Downtown a name | 42 |
| 23 Accelerate plans to connect the various "hubs" via trails | 44 |
| 24 Secure funding and contract for the creation of a comprehensive wayfinding system | 44 |
| 25 Build and install new "Welcome to Squamish" signs | 46 |
| 26 Create a database of regional clubs and organizations | 47 |
| 27 Create a series of brand awareness posters | 49 |
| 28 Identify innovative and cost-effective local guerilla marketing initiatives | 52 |
| 29 Start inviting clubs and organizations to host events in Squamish | 52 |

| | | |
|----|--|----|
| 30 | Integrate the brand into existing economic development marketing materials | 52 |
| 31 | Rebrand the trail guide | 53 |
| 32 | Update District policies and processes to support the Brand Promise..... | 55 |
| 33 | Encourage merchant blade signs in Downtown Squamish | 55 |
| 34 | Continue to grow a Downtown beautification program | 56 |
| 35 | Work with local organizations to develop a branded customer service program..... | 58 |
| 36 | Develop free wi-fi access throughout Downtown Squamish..... | 59 |
| 37 | Improve visitor transportation linkages to Squamish..... | 59 |
| 38 | Integrate the new brand into logo gear and collectibles..... | 60 |
| 39 | Develop the public market..... | 62 |
| 40 | Explore ways to connect existing Squamish events to the brand | 63 |
| 41 | Begin the process of implementing a highway banner program..... | 63 |
| 42 | Integrate the brand into partner organization websites | 65 |
| 43 | Review the plan every two months, update it every year | 66 |
| 44 | Develop a Squamish adventure app..... | 66 |
| 45 | Contract for urban planning expertise (plaza)..... | 67 |
| 46 | Develop a cross promotion program | 68 |
| 47 | Create and manage social media campaigns | 69 |
| 48 | Create a YouTube channel and load it with adventures..... | 70 |
| 49 | Develop a buskers program for Downtown Squamish..... | 70 |
| 50 | Support Tourism Squamish with building a brand-focused marketing program..... | 73 |
| 51 | Contract for a public shuttle service (hop on / hop off)..... | 74 |
| 52 | Make the plaza a reality..... | 75 |
| 53 | Hire plaza management/programming staff..... | 76 |
| 54 | Begin programming the public market | 76 |
| 55 | Measurables and accountability..... | 77 |

Supporting Information

| | |
|---|----|
| Logo versions | 82 |
| Ad design concepts | 83 |
| Trail marker design concepts | 91 |
| Chart of recommendations grouped by lead organization | 92 |

Squamish, British Columbia

Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan

September 2014

INTRODUCTION

Billions of dollars each year are spent marketing communities for economic, residential, business, and tourism development, yet 97% of that marketing is ineffective. Why? People are exposed to 5,000 marketing messages a day – far more than the mind can absorb – so they automatically filter out generic marketing messages and those that don't appeal to their individual needs or desires. For instance, if you heard a commercial on the radio touting an amazing mountain biking excursion, and that was a passion of yours, your mind would instantly pay attention. However, if mountain biking was of no interest to you, then your mind would ignore it. This is why phrases like “we have something for everyone” are simply ignored. They don't trigger any receptors in the brain.

The mind has seven hidden triggers, and if you want your marketing – your brand – to stick, it must trigger one or more of these receptors: Passion, Mystique, Prestige, Power, Rebellion, Alarm and Trust. Additionally, it has to be specific and useful. Generic marketing is no longer effective.

The days of being “all things to all people” are officially over. To be successful – in business or as a community – you must differentiate yourself from everyone else. After all, there are more than 600 cities, towns and villages in British Columbia, and information about each one is instantly accessible via the web. To win you must find that one “unique selling proposition” that really sets you apart from everyone else, and then build on that as a foundation. This is the art of branding.

In this new reality of shrinking federal and provincial funding for communities, every town, city or district must think and act like a business: finding new ways to import more cash than is exported when locally earned money is spent elsewhere. Communities have been forced to get into the branding game to be successful. To win you must find your niche, create new business opportunities within that niche, and then promote it like crazy. Welcome to the era of the brand – the art of differentiation.

Squamish has been faced with a two-fold challenge:

- Trying to compete with all the other communities in the region that are also working to attract new industry, visitors and residents.
- Overcoming the perception of being a sleepy lumber town and a pit stop on the way to Whistler.

On the positive side, Squamish has some incredible assets it can build upon:

- Squamish has, for many years, been transitioning from timber to a tourism-based economy. Tourism is the third largest industry in British Columbia, and it establishes a great foundation upon which to build.
- Squamish is also one of the very few communities that has both “sea and sky” within minutes of each other, and each offers an amazing array of activities – particularly appealing to the multi-sport enthusiast.
- The community is also ideally located halfway between Vancouver and Whistler Resort. It offers small town ambiance, without the urban traffic, noise and expense.

The key is to find a way to brand the community so that it clearly stands out among so many other “Super Natural British Columbia” destinations on both Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands, and the mainland areas of the province. Every community in the province promotes its outstanding outdoor recreational activities and amenities, so the process of differentiation becomes more difficult.

Brands are also a promise – that what you claim as a brand is believable. You must be able to deliver on that promise. Being the “Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada” has been problematic in the fact that the words “outdoor recreation” are two of

the three most overused words in the tourism industry, particularly in Western Canada. While the recreation capital may be true, it's so broad that it doesn't narrow down the actual activities that tell the world that Squamish really "owns" that brand. There's no question that Squamish is one of the world's premier rock climbing destinations, and one of the few places that has outstanding multi-sport activities (sea and sky) within minutes of each other. Once the brand has been narrowed down, it becomes more believable and then is much easier to "own." After all, brands are about ownership. Napa Valley owns the wine brand. Nashville owns the country music brand. Victoria owns the gardening and beautification brand.

THE PRIMARY GOALS OF THIS EFFORT

- To really put Squamish "on the map" as one of British Columbia's best destinations to live, learn, work and play.
- To differentiate Squamish from other Western Canadian and British Columbia communities.
- To make Squamish THE destination of choice for visitors, not just a pit stop on the way to and from Whistler.
- To create year-round job and business opportunities beyond just tourism. Recreational technology is a focus that can accomplish this, blending both tourism and industry. Becoming a "creative capital" in terms of film, photography, design, and online technologies are also a good fit for Squamish.
- To showcase Squamish as an incredibly desirable place to live and raise a family.

THE TEN THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BRANDING

1. Branding is the art of setting yourself apart from everyone else. Being a place that has "something for everyone" includes every community anywhere and says nothing specific about who you are.
2. A brand is a perception – what people think of Squamish when you tell them where you live – the first thing that comes to their minds. A brand is also a promise that Squamish will deliver on that perception (good or bad). Sometimes communities need repositioning or re-branding. This is something Squamish has been working on for quite some time as it has transitioned from timber to tourism.
3. Logos and slogans are not brands. They are just marketing messages and graphic images used to support and reinforce your ownership position. After all, brands are about owning your niche in the marketplace. Logos and slogans make up just two percent of a brand, yet tend to get nearly 98% of the political attention. Have you ever gone anywhere because they had a great logo?
4. Never use focus groups for brand development unless you want a watered-down generic brand that can fit just about anyone, anywhere. The Squamish Brand Development Committee and subsequent Brand Leadership Team are not focus groups, but a group of local businesses and organizations whose primary purpose is to develop this plan that will reinforce and support the perception and promise being developed and marketed.
5. A great brand evokes emotion. It's a feeling someone has about you. This is why you must focus on activities more than physical attributes such as historic buildings, parks, trails, mountains, rivers, inlets, wildlife, and public facilities.
6. All successful brands are built on product, not marketing. You can develop new advertising, graphics, websites, mobile apps, signs, and posters, but if the product doesn't change or improve, what have you accomplished? Any increase in sales will not be sustainable. While Squamish has many world-class activities, accessibility can be a challenge, thus the need for product development.
7. You never "roll out" a brand. It's earned – good or bad. The good news for Squamish is that the community already has a strong foundation on which it can build its brand, meaning the recreational lifestyle and activities, and thus the new marketing effort, can begin almost immediately.
8. You cannot do branding by public consent. Yes, it was important to ask local and area residents to weigh in on the brand direction, but in the end, the idea found to be most feasible is the direction being pursued and detailed in this plan to push the agenda forward. This has been a grassroots effort. The District and the Roger Brooks Team facilitated the process, but the business and residential community has played a vital role in the brand's development.

9. You build the brand on feasibility, not just local sentiment. Typically, the most feasible brand direction is built on a foundation already in the community. In the case of Squamish, that foundation is its recreational lifestyle and activities.
10. Brands are built on public relations – advertising is used to maintain your ownership position. A brand is a feeling we have of you – and feelings are communicated by word of mouth, press coverage, articles, and, these days, social media.

THE BRANDING PROCESS

The process used to develop the Squamish brand has been tested over a number of years and has, to date, met with a 100% success rate. The 13-step process is outlined here.

1. Creation of the Brand Development Committee (BDC)

With the Brand Development Committee, an outside facilitator is brought in to guide the community through the process. Included on the BDC were the following people:

- Christy Allan – Expand Marketing Group
- Deanna Bell – Britannia Mine Museum
- Vanessa Carrington – District of Squamish, Economic Development
- Jeff Cooke – SORCA, Squamish Chamber of Commerce, business owner
- Glenn Davies – Downtown Squamish Business Improvement Association (DSBIA), business owner
- Alice Guss Tsawaysia Spukwus – Squamish Nation
- Patricia Heintzman - District of Squamish, Councillor
- Dan McRae – District of Squamish, Economic Development
- Christina Moore – District of Squamish, Communications
- Michelle Neilson – Squamish Arts Council, business owner
- Auli Parviainen – Squamish Chamber of Commerce, Inside Edge, business owner
- Tracey Saxby – Imagine Squamish
- Randy Stoyko – District of Squamish, Business and Community Services
- Lesley Weeks – Tourism Squamish
- Stephanie Wells – Capilano University

Roger Brooks International was retained to facilitate the process, led by Roger Brooks, Jordan Pogue and Creative Director, Greg Forsell. Competitive analysis, research and feasibility work was a team effort between the BDC and the Roger Brooks team.

2. Education and Outreach

Over the summer months of 2013, funding was secured for the Squamish branding effort, and in January of 2014 an online questionnaire was developed. Using the questionnaire, over a month-long period, 1,143 people responded to nine questions including what they thought Squamish should be known for – its brand. They also provided feedback on what they saw as major challenges and the community's best assets. They answered other questions including what they thought was missing in Squamish that would get them to spend more time (and money) in the community. The responses were exceptionally enlightening.

While not a scientific survey, a little more than 80% of the respondents live within the district limits of Squamish, about 4% live within 30 km of the town, and the final 12% live outside that area. The remainder did not indicate their location.

Additionally, numerous interviews were held with local organizations, so that, as groups with a narrow focus (like downtown Squamish), they had an opportunity to provide insight, ideas, and input on Squamish's future.

3. Identification of the Markets

It's important to know whom the region hopes to attract as a result of the branding process in terms of location, demographic, and lifestyle or psychographics. Working with the Brand Development Committee and using ESRI demographic research, the markets were identified as follows:

Geographic markets (in order of priority):

- The 75,000 residents that live within a 40 km (25 mile) radius of Squamish
- Visitors passing through the area
- The 2.5 million residents within an 80 km (50 mile) radius
- The 3.6 million residents within a 160 km (100 mile) radius
- Washington State residents (6.9 million) – with a focus on overnight stays
- Oregon State residents (3.9 million) – also garnering additional overnight stays
- Then, from around the world starting with North America

Demographic markets:

- People looking for a vibrant recreational destination to call home
- People with an entrepreneurial spirit: business development
- Young professionals, young families, highly educated
- Creative professionals: film, photography, writing, software development, design, culinary, etc.
- Business: recreation technology (RecTech) as a primary economic development focus

Psychographic markets:

- Urban refugees wanting a recreational, adventure-driven way of life
- Edgy, high-spirited, creative people (The Creative Class)
- Tourism industry suppliers

3. Compilation of the Feedback and Market Research

The Brand Development Committee spent several weeks reading through the survey feedback and applying it to the "Feasibility Testing" process. Here are the ten questions we explored for each idea that came from local and area residents:

- Is this something the people we are hoping to attract can't get or do closer to home? If it isn't, we didn't toss it aside, but put it in the "complementary activity" category rather than as a primary brand candidate.
- Is this something the private sector can invest in? The very best brands are built on private-sector investment, not public amenities and activities. Think Napa Valley, Orlando, Anaheim, Branson, Missouri and its 49 music theaters, Nashville and country music, Memphis and Graceland, the River Walk in San Antonio, etc. Where is the private-sector investment opportunity? This branding effort is geared towards finding ways to import more cash into Squamish through business development as well as utilizing the community's outstanding recreational assets.
- Can you make it obvious what Squamish is about when people come into the community?

- Is it experiential – based on things to do, not just things to look at? Both locals and visitors are looking for immersive or activity-based opportunities. Things to look at become “been there, done that” activities – they are not sustainable draws.
- Is this something local residents can buy into? If you were to suggest branding Squamish as the British Columbia version of “Sin City,” you probably wouldn’t get much buy-in locally.
- How much will it cost and when will the business and community see a return on its investment? Both for public projects and privately developed opportunities.
- How wide an audience will it attract? You want a narrow focus or niche, but not one that’s too narrow and, definitely, not one that’s too broad like “outdoor recreation.”
- Will it extend our seasons? The challenge with outdoor-oriented brands (parks, lakes, climbing, hiking, biking, sports fields) is that they are not typically sustainable several months of the year or when there’s inclement weather.
- Are there residents and businesses that will tirelessly champion the cause? Without true champions who will tirelessly push the project forward and never take no for an answer, branding efforts cannot succeed.
- Does it have legs? Can we start with a niche, and then expand it? For instance, if Squamish wanted to become known as the “outdoor recreation capital,” it could start by being the rock climbing capital – so that you truly “own” that brand. Then add the top mountain biking trail in Canada to that list, and then add sailboarding Howe Sound to the adventure list. Over time you will own the recreation capital brand.

The initial list of brand options and opportunities from the public survey included:

- Outdoor life/recreation
- Outdoor Recreation Capital of British Columbia
- Adventure Capital
- Back country adventures
- Mountain biking mecca
- Rock climbing mecca
- Hiking trail mecca
- Windsurfing
- Sailing
- Center for recreational technology
- High tech capital of BC
- Arts
- Health and wellness
- First Nations focus
- Great schools
- Quest University
- Amazing, developed waterfront
- Equestrian
- The Chief
- Festivals
- Brohm Ridge Ski Resort/Garibaldi at Squamish Ski Resort
- Gardening /Farming (organic, experimental, etc)
- The Squamish Festival

- Specialty market shopping hub
- The Howe Sound Brew Pub
- The new gondola
- Ecotourism/nature
- A marine centre for Western Canada
- Eagles
- Beer
- Recreation education
- Foodie haven
- Best farmers market
- BC's 21st Century Business Incubator
- Sport Tournament Centre
- Trails Mecca – hiking, biking, walking
- Trails provide easy/direct access to the recreation (climbing, kiting, mountain biking etc.); not more than a few minutes from any home in Squamish
- Trails/river dike walking paths also connect all the 'nodes' of Squamish – referred to in the survey as the 'highway sprawl' but can be defined as hubs such as:
 - Brackendale (eagles)
 - Garibaldi Village (shopping, dining cluster in Squamish "North"),
 - Mamquam River (eagles, golf, salmon spawning, kayaking),
 - Brennan Park Rec Centre/outdoor ball/soccer fields, mountain bike skills park, BMX park, Equestrian Centre
 - Smoke Bluffs (climbing, hiking)
 - Downtown
 - Waterfront
 - Estuary/Spit (kiting, windsurfing)
 - Chief/Shannon Falls
- Some connectivity of existing trails would be required to achieve this, as well as a comprehensive wayfinding/directional signage plan and self-guided tour maps, including lamppost banners/signage denoting a sense of arrival and uniqueness of the particular area.
- Unique eateries/watering holes also add interest to each area (Watershed Grill in Brackendale, Howe Sound Brew Pub in downtown, great coffee shops etc.) – think cruiser bike/culinary self-guided tours, nature watching self-guided bike/walking tours etc.
- Estuary, Spit, Waterfront
- Ecotourism/Nature/Environmental Leadership/Education
- Biking Capital of BC
- More than Mountain Biking
- Grand Fondo making road biking popular
- Trails adaptable for leisure biking and novices
- Adventure Gear Centre of BC
- Squamish has all the outdoor activities
- Rock climbing, bouldering, mountain biking, wind surfing, sailing, fishing, etc.
- Attract top gear, equipment & clothing manufacturers

- Set-up marketing or branch offices
- Feature local brand shops
- Annual Outdoor Gear, Equipment & Clothing Tradeshow
- Hold trade & consumer days for show
- Largest in Canada!!
- Oceanside mountain town

4. Narrowing the field through research and outreach

From this list, and other ideas, numerous items were easily grouped together. The Brand Development Committee took this list, combined some items where it made sense, and then individual team assignments were handed out to run the ideas through the Feasibility Test.

They broke the ideas into three categories:

1. Those that evoked a feeling: Youthful energy, entrepreneurial, healthy, beautiful, progressive.
2. Those that were not unique to Squamish: Outdoor trails, beaches, hiking, parks, historic downtown.
3. Ideas that can differentiate Squamish from other communities in Western Canada.

These ideas were debated, tested, re-tested, and agonized over. Narrowing your focus is never easy, and it's natural to want to make sure no one is left out. Yet, that's exactly what branding is about: Finding your niche and promoting it like crazy.

After weeks of meetings and research, the winning brand direction focused on skewing the brand younger, (people in their 20s, 30s and early 40s) and creative, differentiating Squamish from Whistler as having more "unscripted," impromptu, creative recreational activities, and then focusing on the smart, educated, and very independent-minded people of Squamish – perhaps telling their stories. Being organic, "real" and perhaps a little gritty or raw, and playing up the very entrepreneurial spirit of those who call Squamish home.

5. Creation of the Brand Leadership Team

Once the brand direction was finalized, the BDC set about creating the Brand Leadership Team, which is detailed in the plan's recommendations. The Brand Development Committee's primary job was to determine the brand direction. The Brand Leadership Team (BLT) is charged with leading the effort – making something happen. This is the group that will implement the plan. These will be the pioneers and champions who will bring it all together and will make it all happen. They never take no for an answer and will move mountains to make a difference for Squamish.

6. Development of the Product BrandBank

Next was developing the list of product development initiatives to give the brand a solid foundation: What needs to be developed, improved, added, or changed to reinforce the brand direction. Brands are built on product, not just marketing. In fact, product sells itself. There are many recommendations in this plan that focus on product development initiatives. All are an INVESTMENT, not just an expense. Every recommendation was included *only* if it would help achieve the goals of reducing leakage (locally earned money spent elsewhere), increasing tourism spending, encouraging new business growth, and making Squamish a desirable place to live, work and visit.

7. Write the Brand Promise

Once we knew what the brand would be, and we defined the product that will reinforce and support it – leading to ownership of the brand – the brand promise was created. This is the guiding principle for everything the community and its partnering organizations will focus on for the next three to five years.

8. Create the look and feel of the brand

This is where the logo, tag lines, concept print ads, pole banners, posters, and other graphic elements come into play. They must portray the feeling that supports the brand promise. Successful brands evoke emotion – they are what we think of you when you mention you're from Squamish. They are more than just what you have to offer.

9. Develop the Action Plan

During the second week of April, 2014 the Brand Development Committee donated many hours of their time to meet as a group to come up with the major initiatives that will drive the brand forward. After all, a brand is something that lasts for generations. Look no further than Whistler to see a good example of a lasting brand as one of North America's most heralded ski resort destinations. The recommendations outlined in this plan came as a result of meetings during the week in April along with follow-up research.

This is *not* simply a Strategic Plan outlining general goals, strategies and objectives. It is, in essence, a to-do list that details specific assignments, by organization, approximate costs where and when available, and they are placed in chronological order of when they would be implemented. It's important to point out that an Action Plan is like a jigsaw puzzle – there are many pieces and you cannot reshape them, toss some aside or alter them without ending up with a worthless puzzle or plan. Branding, product development and marketing recommendations are all intermingled in this plan, making it easy to simply work your way, by organization, down the list.

10. Make something happen

As you read through the recommendations you'll see that this is an aggressive plan. It requires digging deep to make some very specific things happen over the next three years. The work has already begun but won't end for perhaps a decade. In fact, you can never rest on your laurels, so the brand (including this plan) must always progress and grow. Once you cement ownership of the epic adventure lifestyle, other communities will try to emulate your success – they will be gunning for you. Once the community and its partners have implemented most, if not all, of the recommendations in this plan, they will come back together and develop the next list – always with the same goals and the same brand promise as a guiding light. Product development is an ongoing process – not a one-time thing.

11. Keep the energy high

This is why true champions must lead the effort. Their unbounded enthusiasm will push the agenda forward. There are ONLY three killers of any branding effort:

1. Local politics, which are typically worse with membership organizations than with elected officials.
2. Lack of champions who will push the agenda forward and will "sell" it, bringing in more champions.
3. Lack of money (both private and public).

The bottom line: If you have true champions, they will ALWAYS get through the politics and they will find the money. ALWAYS.

12. Tell the world

2014 is the "getting ready year," which includes securing funding for several projects, gradually reworking all marketing materials from business cards to websites, etc. Let the fun begin!

One word of caution: As you start to implement the new brand graphics and key marketing messages, make sure you will be able to "deliver on the promise" they represent. A brand is a promise, and if you don't live up to that promise, the branding effort will fall flat. In the case of Squamish, to become a truly epic, recreational lifestyle destination that attracts and is home to people who crave adventure, it will be mandatory to live that mantra – meaning the residents of Squamish will need to live what they promote.

13. Revisit the plan every three months – at least

This Action Plan is a to-do list. Not a plan you read once and then it sits on a shelf. Start working down the list. Write notes in the margins; check off items that have been accomplished; put peer pressure on your partnering organizations; “How are you doing with your list?” This is a plan that should be reviewed every month, and as it progresses, you simply cross off the list the initiatives that have been implemented.

Once a year go through the plan and update it. Plans like this are fluid, and some things may need to be rearranged or may alter the timeline, and so it’s very important to update the plan once a year. Likewise, as you implement items in the plan, each year you’ll add one or two NEW initiatives to the plan to keep the brand moving forward and to keep it growing.

13. Never, ever give up

On October 29th, 1941, Winston Churchill spoke to the boys at Harrow School and made this famous statement: “Never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.” While this may be a little overly dramatic for Squamish’s brand project, it sets the stage for never taking no for an answer. Where there’s a will, there’s a way. It will be impossible to make everyone happy, so just keep pushing forward.

Dr. Robert Anthony once said, “Forget all the reasons why something may not work. You only need to find one reason why it will.”

THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Tourism:

- Those passing through the area on the way to and from Whistler
- Residents within a 2.5 hour drive
- Visitors coming into the greater Vancouver area
- Visitors coming into Western Canada
- Visitors from around the world

Economic development:

- RecTech entrepreneurs
- Small business start-ups in the creative arts and recreational industries
- Light manufacturing of adventure-related gear, clothing
- Creative professionals: Digital technologies, film, writing, and other creative pursuits
- Students/Educators
- Millennials: young entrepreneurs where quality of life, low cost of living, and recreational pursuits are key

Community development:

- Young families with a passion for community, world-class recreation
- Single young professionals looking for a super-creative lifestyle mixed with recreational pursuits
- Urbanites looking to live away from the big city – perhaps working remotely with occasional trips to the “office” (In the greater Vancouver area)

THE SET-UP

Everything has changed over the last decade when it comes to marketing places: tourism destinations, a place to live and raise a family, a place to retire, or a destination for establishing or relocating a business.

One major reason is the Internet. It has changed the game; people no longer search for cities, counties, or even provinces. We search for experiences and then add a general or specific location, which is secondary to the experience.

Typical Internet searches might include:

- House (or condominium rentals) Squamish, BC
- Best Italian restaurant, Squamish, BC
- Business loans, Vancouver, BC
- Kite board rentals (or sales), Squamish
- Investment opportunities, Vancouver
- Ski resort, British Columbia
- Business opportunities, Squamish, BC
- Mountain bike trails, BC
- Mountain bike rentals, Vancouver BC area
- Rock climbing, British Columbia

Out of every 100 Internet searches pertaining to geography (cities, towns, districts, counties, provinces), only one search will be for the city first. Even fewer people search for districts or counties, and rarely does anyone type in a region. This has changed the marketing game forever. You must now sell the experience first.

Ninety-percent of all Canadians have immediate Internet access, and out of that group, a full ninety-four percent use the Internet to decide where they might want to relocate a business, buy a new residence, or visit on their next adventure.

When it comes to tourism we ALWAYS look for the experience first: “Best rock climbing, British Columbia” or “Single track biking, British Columbia.” Visitors – and site selectors – don’t search for “Squamish, BC, what to do.”

Compounding the challenge, there are nearly 450 cities and towns in British Columbia, most of them within a four hour drive (or a ferry ride) from Vancouver, and all of them are looking for a more robust job base, for new investment, for tourism, and for residential development.

In addition, virtually every city, town and district in southern British Columbia is attempting to tap into the greater Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary and Seattle markets. But also marketing to that same audience are the U.S. states of Washington, Oregon (The Seven Wonders of Oregon), California, Utah, Idaho and Nevada. The greater Vancouver/Victoria region is pummeled with place-marketing promotions and advertising: television, the web (pop-up advertising), newspapers and print publications, billboards, direct mail pieces, and radio.

On top of all of that, nearly every BC city, town, and district is selling the same list of things:

- Hiking trails
- Biking (on road, off road, single track, mountain)
- Skiing (cross country, downtown, snowboarding)
- Outdoor recreation (the two most overused words in tourism)
- History
- Special events

- Hunting and fishing
- Boating, sailing, wake boarding, sail boarding, fishing
- Wildlife viewing, bird watching
- Educated work force
- Available land and properties
- “We mean business”

And the list goes on and on. These can fit virtually any place in Canada, let alone British Columbia.

Because everyone is saying the very same things, ninety-seven percent of ALL community-based marketing is now ineffective. Why? Because everyone is saying the same thing. The marketing falls on deaf ears.

This is why you are in the branding game. To win you must either be:

- Significantly DIFFERENT.
- Offer something totally new: be the FIRST at something.
- Offer something significantly BETTER (only by third party endorsement) “The best rock climbing in North America” – quote by “so and so” magazine.
- Have the MOST OF something (Jackson, Wyoming: 110 galleries and western living shops, Napa Valley and 243 wineries, Disneyland and hundreds of rides and attractions, Branson, Missouri and 49 music theaters)
- Be the BIGGEST (such as the biggest roller coaster in the U.S., the biggest rock climbing face in North America) – But it has to be based on activities. (The tallest fir tree in the Northern Hemisphere is in BC – but does that make you want to go there?)

Combinations of activities are extremely effective: Orlando is home to the largest and best (by third party endorsements) theme park in North America – Disney World. Plus there are 171 other major attractions in the Orlando area. Biggest, Best, and Most. Orlando is the most visited destination in North America as a result.

THE CHALLENGE

Squamish, while extraordinarily beautiful and located along the “world famous Sea to Sky Highway,” has been a pit stop on the way to Whistler. Signs like “Outdoor recreation capital of Canada” tend to fall on deaf ears on the way to “extraordinary downhill skiing and mountain biking in Whistler.”

Outdoor recreation is so broad it can apply to anyone, anywhere, and as people drive through Squamish they see or hear nothing that proves the town really IS the outdoor recreation capital.

Branding is what someone thinks when you say you’re from Squamish. And it takes considerable time to shift that thinking from a rugged timber town, to one of bright, young, entrepreneurial-minded creative people and young families looking for a quality life.

That’s what this effort is about. Narrowing that focus and differentiating Squamish from every other British Columbia town – many of which are home to lakes, rivers, mountains, trails, and incredible wildlife. After all, BC’s slogan wraps around “Super Natural British Columbia.” So how are you different from Prince Rupert?

That’s why there must be a Brand Strategy.

The trick is to always portray the Brand Story in as few words as possible, make it clear and different, really make a statement, make it believable, and evoke emotion in the process.

How do you do this?

By letting the people of Squamish tell THEIR stories. In their own words:

- Where they came from
- Why they came
- Why they stayed
- Describe their perfect day in Squamish
- And what they do for a living

This approach may be how to bring the new Squamish brand to life (campaign), or a brand theme that ties into all of your marketing for years to come.

During the online survey, more than a thousand people weighed in when asked about Squamish, and five themes came to the forefront:

1. Squamish is not programmed, like Whistler and other “manufactured” destinations. It’s an unscripted “organic” atmosphere - in business and in life. It’s a great place for new beginnings and to try new things.
2. It’s young; it’s vibrant; it’s creative; it’s entrepreneurial. If something doesn’t work, you try something different – you head out on the water, the Chief, or the trails and dream up a new idea.
3. More than half the population came from other areas – many from half way around the world – for the recreation, but they stayed for the lifestyle and the chance to live a dream – once again, in business and in life.
4. It’s perhaps the best multi-sport destination in the world – not just in Canada or North America. You can enjoy truly world-class rock climbing and mountain biking, and half an hour later be sailing or paddle-boarding among dolphins and orcas in a salt water bay. This is where Sea AND Sky beautifully co-exist.
5. Squamish is less than an hour to all the amenities of the big city in Vancouver and less than an hour from all the resort amenities and downhill skiing at Whistler. Can it get any better than this? And the drive either direction is simply “world class.”

The challenge, once again, is finding a way to wrap this up on a billboard, a television ad, a one-minute video, an article in Outdoor Magazine – or any of hundreds of other publications that would LOVE to tell the Squamish story.

We captured the essence of the brand in the conceptual full-page ads and posters, but realistically, how often will Squamish have the opportunity to run full-page ads or even 60-second television ads?

How do you boil down these themes, or even key words, into less than eight words – the maximum you would use on a billboard?

There’s no question that photography really is worth a thousand words. But finding that word, or group of words, that can accompany the photography (or videography) and put an exclamation point on the photograph is always elusive.

How do you say, in essence, that people live in and visit Squamish because they want to experience some of the world’s most epic and unscripted wind, sea and mountain adventures, in a vibrant, energizing, world-class setting full of both wildlife and great business opportunities?

Squamish is literally ‘hardwired’ to offer this. The ever-growing trail system, climbing routes, water access – all combine to create the infrastructure that delivers on the Brand Promise.

Squamish residents and visitors are also ‘hardwired’ to seek out adventures – in recreation, in life and even in learning and career choices. It’s in your DNA to explore outdoors, to crave adrenaline, to embrace your natural surroundings.

You are hardwired for adventure.

Of course you have to back it up with reality, and that's where Squamish shines: It's a brand the community already owns and can start marketing today. Claim it. Own it. Use it.

A nice sidebar to this brand is that the word 'hardwired' offers a nod to the growing knowledge and education industries that are becoming more and more established in Squamish. The brand suggests a forward-thinking, modern, tech-based community that, at its roots, is comprised of residents who are gutsy, willing to take risks, and who strive for a healthy balance between work and play.

What a difference a decade or two can make. From its humble beginnings as a mining camp, to a successful timber-based economy, to an up-and-coming service-based "RecTech" and tourism-based economy with two university campuses, Squamish has grown and is finding its groove.

Home to one of the youngest populations in Western Canada and full of independent but brilliant thinkers, innovators, and creative professionals, Squamish is quickly becoming THE destination of choice for unscripted adventure – where you chart your own course, not one programmed by others.

While world-class outdoor recreation brought these souls from around the world to Squamish, this unscripted way of life goes far beyond just recreational pursuits. These entrepreneurial spirits see business as a grand adventure. They see possibilities not seen in other places, and they see opportunities and welcome new beginnings as a way of life.

THE BRAND STRATEGY

Economic Development:

- Squamish is becoming a magnet for global businesses, large or small, that want to set up shop in a place where they can live the dream.
- Squamish is set to become the most desirable address in the world for outdoor-based companies to headquarter and for students to learn.
- Companies will want to be based here so they can claim legitimacy in the outdoor world.
- Businesses will photograph, film and promote their products and services in Squamish's natural setting, indirectly building brand equity for a town that is home to healthy businesses that reflect the values of our community. Squamish is known for its magnificent landscape and world-class outdoor recreation, but tourism is not the only industry in Squamish.

Images:

- Every image must demonstrate our epic adventures – and how we are hardwired for adventure – whether its the scenery (the view from the gondola), mountain biking (some of the incredible trails), paddle boarding among dolphins, climbing The Chief, hiking, or watching in awe as bald eagles soar above Squamish.
- Businesses, and their staff, hardwired for adventure: world-class videography, recreational technology (RecTech) – Squamish could easily "own" this economic development opportunity.
- People telling their story as a visitor , local, student, entrepreneur or business owner.

Problems We Want to Solve:

[These are the reasons for why Squamish needs to develop a new brand.]

- Squamish has evolved a great deal in the past 10 years, but the image and some of the product have not.
- For people living here, visiting, or wanting to start a business, the image of Squamish is not 100% clear. Branding, taglines, and actions are inconsistent, and the Squamish of the past appears to be a lasting image for many.
- Even though the image of Squamish is evolving on its own, it isn't being actively leveraged to advantage. As a result, opportunities to attract the people and the business Squamish wants are being missed.

Project Objectives:

[This is what Squamish needs to do in order to address the problems they want to solve.]

- In a concise brand strategy, clearly articulate the most compelling reasons why Squamish is a better place to live and run a business.
- In a detailed and comprehensive action plan, identify how Squamish needs to grow the brand so that they deliver their brand promise, over and over again.
- Increase community-wide pride and understanding of the brand that leads to consistency in communication and marketing.

Brand Character / Brand Voice:

[This articulates the feeling of the brand. If Squamish were a person, what would it be like? This should translate into the execution of all elements. Communication, advertising, marketing tools, product development, and even customer service programs, should be consistent with the brand's character.]

- Adventurous, active, youthful
- Proud, real, and a little rough around the edges
- Grateful for our natural surroundings
- Proud and respectful of our First Nations heritage
- Proud of our hard working logging industry roots and looking forward with an entrepreneurial spirit

Brand Positioning Statement:

[This combines the target market (people who will see the greatest benefit from Squamish's brand) with how Squamish wants people to think of them and the benefit Squamish is providing them.]

To youthful, intelligent, and active people who highly value outdoor activity and their connection with their natural surroundings, Squamish is the community that has, within 10 minutes, more breathtaking outdoor adventure opportunities than any other community in Canada.

Brand Promise:

[This is Squamish's unique INTERNAL promise of value that they are committed to delivering to their target market. It clarifies and communicates what sets Squamish apart from other destinations and guides Squamish in how they live, share and deliver their brand.]

You can experience the world's most epic outdoor adventures—from sea to sky—all within 10 minutes of one another.

Tagline:

Hardwired for Adventure.

Reasons to Believe / Squamish's Product:

[This is evidence for Squamish's positioning. It is the reason why people will believe Squamish has more outdoor adventure than any other community in Canada. It makes the claimed benefit credible and compelling.]

Within 10 minutes of one another we have:

- More than 3,500 rock climbing routes and boulder problems including the famous Stawamus Chief.
- More than 200 km of world-renowned mountain biking single-track trails.
- Access to some of the best kite boarding and windsurfing conditions in North America.

- Expansive backcountry alpine hiking, ski touring and snowmobiling (on the doorstep of eight Provincial Parks).
- Ocean, lake and whitewater fishing, standup paddle boarding, kayaking and boating (with access to Howe Sound, eleven lakes and at least five rivers).
- Largest bald eagle feeding area on the West Coast.

Key Messages:

[Primary messages consistently support the Brand Promise and are repeated in press releases, advertising copy, website copy, photography, etc. Secondary messages support other strengths and can be used for more sector-specific marketing and promotion.]

Primary:

- There is so much to do outdoors, you will never be bored.
- The only place you can play on the ocean, rock-climb and explore the mountains all on the same day.
- The perfect location for recreational enthusiasts looking to combine work and lifestyle.
- The outdoor recreation capital of Canada.

Secondary:

- The people of Squamish have a strong and growing connection to its First Nations’ heritage.
- We are deeply connected to the ‘sea to sky’ landscape that surrounds us.
- The people of Squamish are youthful and entrepreneurial, which is inspiring business growth and social enterprise.
- Squamish is home to some leading private and public education providers.

Headline Examples:

[These are EXAMPLES of the types of headlines that could be used for marketing materials, editorial, etc.]

- Where you will experience epic adventures from sea to sky.
- What’s on your playlist?
- Basecamp to adventure.
- So many adventures. So little time.
- Small town. Big Adventure!
- Staycation capital of the world

THE LOOK AND FEEL OF THE BRAND

Throughout this plan you’ll see initial concepts used to convey the brand to your major and secondary markets. You’ll notice common elements that would always be used to create continuity with everything you do.

The creation of a Brand Style Guide to be used by the district and all your local partnering organizations to create strong synergy between individual marketing efforts will be essential to provide continuity.

The Story of the Squamish Logo



The logo of Squamish represents our past and our future; our connection to the outdoors through the sky, wind, land and water; and it symbolizes our diversity.

Our name, Squamish, is an English adaptation of Skwxwu7mesh, meaning “Mother of the Wind” and “people of the sacred water”.

The ‘Eye of the Creator’ icon that sits proudly above ‘Squamish’ represents the powerful connection that our people – from Squamish Nation residents dating back thousands of years, to residents of today – have with nature and the magnificent scenery that surrounds us. Ocean, mountains, granite, forest, wind, and rivers. These natural elements have defined us and our changing economy through the ages, and today offer a lifestyle packed with adventure that sets Squamish apart from all others.

The ‘Eye of the Creator’ is framed in Coast Salish red and black and adorned with blue to represent our community’s youthful exuberance, vibrant nature, and a community rich with generations and cultures. Blue also tells the story of the glacial waters that pulse through our rivers into the ocean and our expansive sky. Mirror-image whale tails form the centre of the eye further demonstrating our community’s oceanic connection.

We are youthful. We are bold. We are deeply connected to this extraordinary landscape and the adventures it provides. We are innovative and entrepreneurial, and we stand tall as we lay down a strong foundation for an abundant future in Squamish.

MARKETING MATERIALS

With your marketing efforts, you *must* promote your “anchor tenants”, much as Orlando promotes, foremost, Disney World and *then* the other attractions and activities like Wild Kingdom, Universal Studios and the other 170 attractions in Orlando and the surrounding area. For Squamish, those “anchor tenants” - the truly epic experiences that people who are hardwired for adventure seek - should include (those in red should be highlighted):

1. Stawamus Chief
 - Hiking
 - **Rock climbing** (the Apron / the Grand Wall)
 - **Bouldering** (base of the Grand Wall)
 - **Sight-seeing** (standing at the base and looking up at the rock / watching the climbers)
 - Paragliding
 - You can also weave some culture into this signature attraction through explanation of where the name comes from, plus there are several very interesting First Nations story telling opportunities here.
2. Mountain Biking
 - **Half Nelson** (this trail has received the most media coverage)
 - Loads of other amazing trails – provide a nod to the 200+ km’s single track trails
3. **Kiteboarding** / Windsurfing (followed by sailing / kayaking / SUP’ing) in the **Howe Sound**
4. **Eagle Viewing** (there are many locations and ways to view the eagles)
 - Brackendale Eagles Provincial Park / Brackendale Dike
 - More opportunities for story telling here
5. Sea to Sky Gondola
 - **Hiking** (**Sky Pilot** and **Habrish** as well as the Sea to Summit trail)
 - **Sight-seeing**
 - Rock Climbing
 - Mountain playground
6. And a very close 6th would be **Garibaldi Park** (hiking / mountaineering / skiing / snowshoeing / camping) One more thing, it’s important to promote the eight provincial parks you have in the immediate area (the Epic Eight). That, alone, is a big selling point that should not be missed.

The recommendations in this plan include the creation or updating the look of the following printed marketing materials:

- The Very Best Of Squamish brochure (tourism)
- Opportunities Brochure & Community Profile (economic development)
- Brand posters
- Trail Guide
- Activities (or Adventure) Guide (tourism)

All of these would also be available as PDF downloads from local websites.

SQUAMISH RECOMMENDATIONS

The following pages include the initial list of recommendations to get you started. As you move forward you may add other recommendations to the plan, but do not remove any that are included in this plan. All the recommendations are integral to the success of your branding efforts.

For every recommendation we've included:

- A description of the recommendation
- Who would be charged with its implementation
- When it should be implemented (many will be ongoing, some will be one-time projects)
- Approximate cost of implementation
- Possible funding sources
- The rationale for making the recommendation

Each partnering organization should go through the recommendations, highlight the ones that belong to them, hand out assignments and then perhaps create a "mini-action plan" listing their specific assignments and implementation timelines.

The Brand Leadership Team should go through the recommendations and create a table that shows the timeline for implementation of each recommendation.

The following recommendations are listed in chronological order:

1. Form the Brand Leadership Team

Timeline: July 2014

Who takes the lead: Brand Development Committee (their last task)

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

Since April of 2014 a lot of time and effort has gone into developing the Brand Leadership Team – the group of local residents and business owners who will push this plan forward. This is the group dedicated to helping craft this plan, and then will stay involved to push it forward. While the initial BLT has been formed, some may read through this plan and prefer not to be involved, and others may come forward to champion the cause and help implement it. Because of this, the following provides a detailed recommendation of who, ultimately, will lead this effort.

This is the first and most important recommendation of the entire effort. Without strong champions, this effort cannot succeed. After working with more than a thousand communities around the world, the only time an effort like this has failed is when strong champions weren't in place to push it forward. The Brand Leadership Team must be composed of doers – not simply directors. Even though you've already taken this initial step, please review the following to make sure you have the right champions in place:

The BLT should be comprised of those individuals committed to "championing" the brand and making it happen. This means that even in the face of some adversity, they will push the agenda forward; they will not take "no" for an answer; and they will continue to "sell" the brand hoping to attract additional champions to the cause.

The members of this team will also be the “voice of the brand,” working in a hands-on capacity as advocates for the brand vision, being instrumental in fulfilling all of the recommendations set forth in the Action Plan.

The BLT should include key “movers and shakers” from the community: business and/or property owners, downtown or business association members, District Council and staff, tourism and economic development representatives, chamber of commerce representatives, and others who are good communicators and are committed to the brand vision.

Keep the BLT to 13 or fewer people. The bigger the committee the less likely you are to get things accomplished. This is about making something happen. Often you’ll find 13 great champions, but after a month or two the “real” champions stand out after the initial enthusiasm has waned. Typically you’ll end up with between five and seven true champions, and they will work to bring others onboard – acting as “pied pipers” for the brand.

Local organizations and District officials should read through the Action Plan and then decide whether or not they feel passionate about the objectives and projects detailed therein. Characteristics of a good BLT member include:

- A willingness to invest time (and in some cases, money)
- An ability to take a few hits along the way: They need to have thick skin. Not everyone will agree with the brand direction. You simply cannot be all things to all people, and you can’t let local politics kill the branding effort.
- Good speaking abilities: The BLT will be asked to sell the brand direction to various groups, boards and provincial/ regional and even national organizations. They should be good public speakers and be 100% behind the brand.
- Enthusiasm: Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.” This must be the motto of the Leadership Team members. Enthusiasm is contagious!
- A willing doer, not someone who just wants to direct: Each member will be expected to dedicate two to four hours a month to this cause, attending meetings, speaking to various groups, coming up with great ideas and pushing the effort forward.
- The Team will also be the “brand police” when it comes to key marketing messages, use of the brand identity and tag lines. They are also charged with making sure the brand stays narrow – to resist “brand creep,” as there will be a desire to keep broadening it until it becomes more and more generic, and thereby less and less effective.

In addition, individuals with something to gain from the implementation of the plan also make good BLT members. They’ll work all the harder to see it succeed. This entire effort will rest on the shoulders of the BLT. Without champions, the branding and product development process cannot succeed and nothing will come of this plan.

Who can benefit from the brand and should be strong champions?

- Downtown property owners
- Downtown businesses: particularly retailers, restaurant and entertainment venues
- Event producers, caterers, audio/visual companies, marketing firms, event management firms and individuals
- Public market vendors (part of this plan includes the development of a public market)
- Hoteliers and tourism industry operators

The first order of business is to set up some ground rules. This is a group dedicated to working with the organizations that can make things happen. You might consider this a “booster club” but with some heavy hitters and the ear of key organizations.

Ground rules might include:

- Number and frequency of meetings. Some meet every other week for the first six months as assignments are fleshed out and implemented, then they reduce the schedule to one meeting a month – and additional meetings as needed for consultant selection or other special to-do items.

Assignments:

- Have one person take minutes and act as the BLT secretary. One would organize and remind members of meeting times and dates.
- Another would be charged with setting up the speaking engagement calendar: Developing a list of organizations, contacting them with times during the year they'd like to see what's happening. This person would hand out assignments to fellow members – such as at which event they would individually make a presentation.
- A BLT member would be charged with the PowerPoint and graphics so that everyone is using the same resources. A unified message is very important.
- One would work with the District or other funding organizations to set up times to review proposals, Requests for Qualifications, and to set up meetings for interviews or the selection process.
- The “BLT Chief of Police” would be the lead “brand cop” gathering marketing pieces created by partner organizations and materials generated using the Brand Style Guide, and then presenting them to the BLT for approval.
- If a member misses more than two meetings in a six-month period, they are removed from the team. This effort, particularly in the first year, requires a commitment to be a doer – including attending meetings and playing an active role in the effort.
- Generally, BLT members would serve for two years, and then among themselves would invite new members to come in as needed. So the entire BLT is not changed over at the two-year mark; there will be some natural attrition. What you don't want is the BLT to think their job is finished at the two-year mark. This could result in the disbanding of the BLT. So the two-year rule is simply a guideline. Some champions would stay for the long haul, and as long as the enthusiasm doesn't wane, bring them on!

A brand cannot be built without investment, and the initiatives in the plan require both public and private investment. Therefore, this team must be willing to take a stand and be the voice of reason.

The key is to have a small enough team so that things can actually get done, since this is about implementation. There may need to be additional people on the team – it's good to allow some flexibility.

If it is possible to develop a larger BLT without politics and personal agendas interfering with progress, then the more people on the ground, the more effective the effort will be. With a strong implementation program, once the brand starts moving, it will take on a life of its own. Generally, the idea is to have the BLT work itself out of a job after five to seven years. Once again, this is not a steadfast rule, but at some point perhaps an organization will take on the role of brand cop and another take on product development, etc.

The life of a BLT typically ranges between five and twenty years. As the brand takes hold, meetings can be less frequent. In some cases, the BLT becomes a registered non-profit agency with some funding mechanisms to take on specific projects tied to the brand development effort. In the case of Squamish we'd anticipate the BLT's life to be between five and seven years.

It is important to point out that branding is never done. You cannot rest on your laurels. If you are the best, people will be gunning for you. Just think about Napa Valley. How many wine regions in California alone are looking to topple Napa as the wine capital? Likewise, Disney doesn't remain static, but adds new attractions and events all the time. Winners can never rest, so this is not something you start and then walk away from. There will always be a need for champions.

Finally, there are only three killers of any branding product:

- 1 . Local politics
- 2 . Lack of champions
- 3 . Lack of money, both public and private

If you have great champions, they will get through the local politics and find the money and/or the development interests to make it all happen. No brand can succeed without tireless champions who pioneer the effort. This is the BLT's mission.

Once again, this is the most important decision in the entire Action Plan. Read the plan, adopt it, then become Champions for Change – active pioneers in bringing it to life. If you ever want to create a lasting legacy, this is the perfect vehicle.

The importance of the BLT with committed brand champions cannot be overstated. We surveyed 400 well-branded towns in North America, and in 397 of those communities, development of the brand was a grass roots effort. Rarely will a top-down effort yield success. Why? Elected officials are voted into office to be all things to all people, yet brands are about being known for something specific. The days of “we have something for everyone” are over. In this age of specialization, you must jettison the generic. A generic branding effort yields a watered down, mediocre, ineffective brand.

These individuals will do the work to see that the product is developed that will bring the brand to life, fulfilling the brand promise. The concerted effort by these people will be the force of the entire branding effort, keeping the brand image in focus, keeping the plan on track and overseeing the successful development of the brand.

After the presentation in the Ledge Café a group of nearly 25 “champions” met and wanted to be a part of the Squamish branding initiative. Invite them to the first meeting and see how committed they will be with the process. Limit the BLT to perhaps one person per organization or business so you don’t end up with an unwieldy group that’s too large to manage or keep focused.

Typically we recommend a group of approximately 13 individuals, making sure that more than half represent the private sector. As noted earlier, top-down branding doesn’t work. The best branding efforts in North America were grassroots efforts and include Nashville’s country music brand, Napa Valley and wine, Orlando and Disney World, Branson, Missouri and music theater, Hershey, Pennsylvania and chocolate, and Frankenmuth and its Bavarian brand.

2. Brand Leadership Team assignments

Timeline: October 2014

Who takes the lead: Brand Leadership Team (BLT)

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

Set a regular schedule for the Brand Leadership Team (BLT) to meet. Perhaps once a month. Here are the topics to cover in this first meeting:

Set up committees - for example:

- a . The Marketing Team would handle all brand-related marketing including brochures, website enhancements and makeovers, billboards, advertising, and approvals of all things brand related when it comes to graphics – including wayfinding signage design. The marketing team would work closely with other local organizations and their marketing efforts making sure there is continuity in the look, the feel, and the messaging among all platforms. You will be far more effective as one unified voice, than as separate individual voices. What a disaster it would be if every Coca Cola plant designed its own Coke logo, cans, advertising campaigns and marketing materials. Sitting on the Marketing Team should be downtown, the district (economic development), tourism, chamber of commerce and an organization that markets Squamish for business, community development, and tourism. To really create a solid branding effort, even having Quest and Capilano Universities tapping into the same messaging would solidify and cement ownership of the brand.
- b . The Product Development Team would be charged with pushing downtown revitalization and development, the waterfront development as it moves forward, the creation of programmed central gathering places, as well as recruitment of various retailers and businesses. They would tackle trail head identification, wayfinding signage, gateways and other product development initiatives.

- c . The Events and Outreach Team would work to recruit events to Squamish. They would look for ways that local businesses can tap into the brand, reinforcing and strengthening your ownership position. Finally, this committee is also charged with public outreach. Their mission is to find ways that everyone locally can tap into Squamish's branding effort and to "sell" the brand to local, regional, and provincial organization. Their job is to, over time, bring in more and more champions until the brand is ingrained into the minds of everyone in Squamish. They will work with hospital boards, colleges and universities, primary school boards, community groups and auxiliary organizations such as Kiwanis, Rotary and others.

Make a list of local organizations that hold monthly, quarterly or annual meetings including (but not limited to) school boards, chamber of commerce, district council, economic development, tourism, hospital boards, Kiwanis, Rotary, other auxiliary organizations, Downtown Squamish BIA – every local organization in the district, region and even at the provincial level.

Here's a starter list:

- Local school board
- Chamber of Commerce (boards and general membership meetings)
- Auxiliary organizations including Kiwanis, Lions Club, Rotary, and others
- Economic Development
- Tourism businesses and those that administer the use of Destination Marketing funds
- Community colleges and other secondary educational institutions
- Downtown Squamish BIA
- Performing and visual arts groups
- Regional and provincial tourism officials and representatives
- Your local legislators
- Local clubs and organizations. The best way to recruit new events is to ask local club members to encourage their groups to host events in Squamish. This can include quilt clubs, Master Gardeners, art guilds, motorcycle and classic car clubs, biking and hiking clubs, photography organizations, etc.

Then assign Brand Leadership Team members to contact each organization. Set up a time for the BLT members to give a presentation to each of these organizations over the next six to eight months. We left you with the PowerPoint/Keynote presentation to which you can make modifications to fit the time limit (usually 20 to 30 minutes) and the speaker's style.

The idea of this is to "sell" as many people as possible (not everyone will be supportive) on the brand direction, and let them know you'd love to hear their ideas on how to make it happen. Ideas might include new or additional ways to strengthen the brand making it even more successful. For example, if people belong to a local motorcycle club, would they consider having that organization host a motorcycle rally in Squamish? How about outdoor gear shows and product testing/media launches? All of these things add life and vibrancy to Squamish, and as more people "discover" the incredible appeal of the community, perhaps they will invest, move businesses to Squamish, start new businesses, or spend more time in the community. Additionally they will tell their friends (think social media) about the amazing time they are having in Squamish.

This is to garner support, new ideas, and to get the community excited about the brand.

The result of this first meeting, and perhaps a follow-up meeting, is to end up with a 2014 calendar that is filled with speaking engagement opportunities – chances to promote the brand direction. The most successful branded communities are more than skin deep; the brand is the soul of who they are, and that means a dedicated public outreach effort is necessary to achieve ultimate success.

Finally, assign one person to follow-up with members of the BLT to make sure they are contacting their assigned organizations, that presentation times are set, and that other members of the BLT are aware and can show up to offer additional support. And then follow-up to check off the organizations that have been shown the brand direction.

3. Establish a BLT speaking engagement calendar

Timeline: September 2014

Who takes the lead: Brand Leadership Team (BLT)

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

From the presentation provided in Apple Keynote and PowerPoint formats (and the BLT's presentations to the community), each BLT member charged with promoting the brand should take the one-hour presentation (included with this plan), modify it, and make it their own. In most cases you'll only have 20 minutes to speak. Here's what we'd suggest take place during that presentation:

- Two minutes to let the audience know that branding is more than logos and slogans. It's the essence of who you are and what you want to be known for – the feeling someone has when you mention Squamish.
- Three minutes to explain why branding is important: The audience easily has information about every city and town in Western Canada at their fingertips in a fraction of a second via the web, so what sets Squamish apart from the rest? Why should someone live, establish a business, or visit Squamish? What sets you apart and makes you the destination of choice? And make sure you mention money: This is about importing new cash, and keeping locally earned cash in Squamish. The bottom line in branding is about tax base and community development.
- Two minutes about the process: Let the audience know that more than 1,100 locals weighed in and the brand direction was founded on feasibility, not just local sentiment.
- Ten minutes selling them on the product that backs up the brand:
 - Downtown gathering place, a year-round public market, identifying trails and your truly "epic" adventures that make Squamish worth a special trip from anywhere around the world.
 - Wayfinding that will effectively help guide visitors explore Squamish - and many others. Just key on the top five or six product development recommendations. Remember, this is your time to sell the audience on the plan, not detail everything in the plan. Focus on the top product development recommendations where you need the most public support.
- And then just three minutes showing them the look and feel of the brand. Do NOT concentrate on logos, but show them the concept ads, pole banners, wayfinding signage, so they can see what the brand looks like. The logo is always in the bottom right hand corner and is always used with other graphics. Don't let the logo become a topic of conversation. It means very little when attracting business investment, new residents and visitors.

Once again, the big focus is on education (so people understand why you're doing this and why it's important) and sales: You are ALWAYS working to bring in more champions. The more people you have buy into the brand, the stronger and more ingrained it becomes as the heart and soul of the community.

Finally, create a year long calendar, pick your four or five or six BEST speakers on the BLT, remember, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm," and then schedule them to speak at the various events. And don't just keep it within Squamish. If you can find opportunities to speak to clubs and organizations in Vancouver, Victoria, the Canadian Tourism Commission, the greater Seattle or Portland metro areas – then, by all means go there! Think of provincial-wide organizations and western Canada organizations, such as the Tourism Industry Association of BC, rural development, economic development, etc.

Also, develop a list of provincial-wide conferences where you can share your branding experience with large audiences, and tell them what you are doing to develop the new brand. When you do this, you are also selling them on why they MUST pay a visit to Squamish, and once they do it, chances are they'll be back to see your progress. While this takes time, it's free and will spread the word throughout the province, western Canada, and Pacific Northwest.

You should also, on the last slide, place a URL where the audience can sign up for Tourism Squamish's free monthly

e-newsletter that will showcase upcoming recreational opportunities and events. This is an easy way to create “top of mind awareness” and to start building your database.

4. Secure domain names

Timeline: October 2014

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: No more than \$100

Possible funding idea: Lodging tax funds, tourism, the District

Rationale and/or details:

With any branding project one of the first priorities is to secure the domain names that will help promote the brand.

In addition to the domains already secured by the District, the BLT should brainstorm and review additional domains for purchase, recognizing that Squamish wants to encourage other businesses to align themselves with the brand by securing their own domains.

The BLT should discuss what is required to acquire the currently privately-owned www.Squamish.com. This URL could potentially be a great landing site/URL for all Squamish enquiries, acting as a launch page to other websites including tourismsquamish.com and squamish.ca.

Securing domain names usually costs between \$5 and \$7 a year, and hosting each may be in the \$5 a month range, so it's not a big expense. Keep in mind that the domain name should help sell the experience – it's actually part of the marketing effort.

5. Begin the transition to the new brand identity

Over a year (or so), replace existing business cards, stationery, utility billings, and other printed materials to convert to the new look and feel of the brand.

Timeline: Fall of 2014

Who takes the lead: The BLT, supporting organizations

Approximate cost: None (items are simply replaced as needed)

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

The BLT will initiate discussions with the various organizations to determine what exact elements of the brand will be used by certain organizations, e.g. Tourism Squamish may use the same logo as the District; however, they may have a slight variation on the logo to incorporate “Tourism.” Furthermore, they will discuss how various other organizations, such as the Business Improvement Association, the Squamish Arts Council, the Chamber, and other events will use the brand.

The 2014 calendar year is the “getting ready” year, meaning that this is the year dedicated to product development initiatives, creating new marketing materials, and gradually introducing the new brand identity, wayfinding signage and pole banners. This transition does not need to be expensive.

When a District Councillor or Staff member, for example, needs new business cards printed, they would be printed with the new look and feel of the brand. Over time, letterheads, utility billings, envelopes, business cards and even vehicle graphics would change to the new brand graphics. The transition might take 12 to 18 months, and that's just fine. People will come Downtown, and people will invest in Downtown because it's becoming a popular gathering place, not because there's a new logo on printed materials, business cards, or signage.

The transition should also apply to any marketing Tourism Squamish other supporting organizations do over the next couple of years. In fact, once the Brand Style Guide is complete, copies should be distributed to your partnering organizations – chamber, tourism office, economic development, district departments, Downtown organizations, and any events organizations.

Successful brands require continuity. This does not mean the Chamber needs to use the same logo as Tourism Squamish, but there should be common color schemes or fonts used to create synergy between organizations.

NOTE: EVERY use of the brand identity, tag lines and marketing messages must be “approved” by the BLT Marketing Team before printing so that they comply with the rules outlined in the Brand Style Guide. One of the primary functions of the BLT is to “police” the brand-mark (logo) and the messaging, just as is done by any major brand. As brochures, pole banners, wayfinding signage, print ads, billboard displays, trade show booths, business papers, newsletters, etc. are developed, EACH MUST be approved by the BLT Marketing Committee. This is imperative to assure the strength of the brand.

The brand identity can ONLY be used for public sector marketing. Joe’s Muffler Shop cannot use the logo or the tagline in their marketing efforts. However, if Joe wants to promote a public event such as “Cars and Street Rods - Hardwired for Adventure,” there’s no problem since it reinforces the brand. This use should actually be encouraged; however, it must be approved by the BLT Marketing Team.

6. Bring other local organizations and partners into the brand

Timeline: Starting in February 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

The most successful branding efforts are those where local stakeholder organizations play a key role. Many years ago, the Roger Brooks team led a branding effort for Battle Creek, Michigan. They were going to work towards becoming the Midwest’s “Competitive Sports Capital,” building on the Kellogg Foundation’s efforts to help people live healthier lives.

Kellogg was founded on healthy living, but over the years the brand became synonymous with Frosted Flakes and sugary cereals, something they were trying to change. But if Battle Creek was going to talk the talk, it had to walk the walk. The challenge: At the time Calhoun County was considered the most overweight county in the most overweight state in the country. Michigan has worked on that and is now fifth on the list of most overweight states. The point is that the brand has to be more than skin deep. It needs to be entrenched in the community, so everyone eats, breathes, and lives the brand. If you talk the talk, you must walk the walk.

With a focus being on “hardwired for adventure”, it’s important that local residents, businesses, educational institutions, and the District walk the talk.

Every local organization should sit down with their boards and the BLT to come up with programs or ways they can tie into the ‘Hardwired for Adventure’ theme – in their marketing efforts, classes, educational programs, and outreach.

When York, Pennsylvania decided to narrow its focus to become the Industrial Art & Design Capital, York College decided to concentrate its efforts on this very industry. There are also niches for each Squamish organization to tap into to align themselves with Squamish’s Brand Promise.

The most successful branding efforts are grassroots efforts. This means they need to start in schools – from kindergarten up to graduate degrees. When friends and family come to visit, residents should promote your epic adventures – including your recreational activities and events.

The types of organizations and partners Squamish should approach as a priority include:

- District of Squamish
- Tourism Squamish
- Squamish Chamber
- Squamish Nation
- Squamish Arts Council
- Squamish Library
- Downtown Squamish Business Improvement Association
- Sea To Sky Gondola
- SORCA
- Rotary
- Media
- Signature Event Producers, e.g. Test of Metal, Logger Sports, Squamish Valley Music Festival

7. Get the Brand Promise out there

Put the brand promise in every district department, including police, fire, public works – everywhere. It should be stenciled INSIDE the buildings, as interior decor. The brand promise is your guiding principle for everything you do as a community.

Timeline: Beginning in January 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: \$5,000

Possible funding idea: Destination marketing funds

Rationale and/or details:

Brands must be more than skin deep. They are the essence of who you are as a community. And you want to put the brand promise in front of your local residents, organizations – and visitors – as often as possible so they remember what you, as a district, are all about. The least expensive way to do this is to create a stencil with letters approximately 10 inches tall by about 8 inches wide that showcase the brand promise. It should read “Squamish: Hardwired for Adventure”.

We recommend that this be stenciled inside public spaces as interior decor, selecting the specific location so that it will be attractive, easy to see and read, and adds to the beauty of the inside rooms:

- Local schools (elementary, middle/junior high, high school)
- Library
- Municipal Hall
- Police and fire departments
- Planning and community development departments
- Hotel lobbies
- Gas stations, fast food establishments, retailers
- Sports facilities

Stencils cost about \$100, and this budget includes contracting with a person or small business that would actually do the painting. If businesses want a customized stencil, as mentioned above, we believe this would be an appropriate public

expense. We would encourage the BLT Marketing Committee to do this for businesses that want to have stencils done. In fact, businesses should be encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. This is the fastest, easiest, most cost effective way to put the brand promise “out there” so that it becomes ingrained in the minds of local residents and visitors.

The BLT could also brainstorm other creative ways to communicate the brand.

8. Downtown retail and business recruitment

Timeline: In progress

Who takes the lead: BLT and Economic Development (District)

Approximate cost: Included in Economic Development budgets

Possible funding idea: N/A

Rationale and/or details:

Downtown Squamish has the potential to be one of the most outstanding gathering places in British Columbia. It already has an intimate feeling, some great signature shops, and terrific “bones” in terms of architecture, but it’s still missing the critical mass that will make downtown Squamish a draw in itself.

Every person with an interest in downtown Squamish should be encouraged to watch the Roger Brooks video “The 20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Downtown,” a three-part series that addresses many of the recommendations made in this plan. It is the culmination of more than 10 years of ongoing research, and the “rule of critical mass” is the one ingredient common to all 400 successful downtowns. A critical mass of destination-retail shops, dining, and entertainment is essential.

Businesses that need to be recruited to downtown include:

- Upper level residential development wherever possible.
- A 5,000 to 10,000 square foot outfitter that would sell and rent kayaks, canoes, wakeboards, water ski equipment, small boats, fishing and hunting gear, camping gear, hiking/running gear, binoculars, clothing, and fitness gear.
- An additional bike shop that rents, sell, and repair bikes: mountain/trail bikes, street bikes, and leisure bikes. Biking is the fastest growing leisure sport in the country, and Squamish has one of the best trail systems in Western Canada. Squamish is part of what could be the Canada’s best biking destination along the World Famous Sea to Sky Highway. Added to this mix should be Segway tours. This would make Squamish an outstanding destination and would add to the epic experience that people who are hardwired for adventure are seeking!
- Full service spa – not just hair and nails, but a first-class day-spa facility. Perhaps an existing spa can up its game, becoming a signature spa destination.
- Additional restaurants. If you had 30 restaurants in downtown, you’d have people coming to Squamish from the greater Vancouver area and Whistler/Pemberton JUST for the dining. So adding more dining venues would just make downtown even more vibrant and successful. The goal: Twenty in the next five years. These can be as simple as an ice cream shop, additional coffee shop, upscale eatery or two, bakery, butcher shop, wine store, deli with retail picnic items, health food store, etc.
- Visitor information center with public washrooms downtown should be on the list as well.
- A great book store, additional First Nations art and other galleries, perhaps a local arts co-op.

Seventy percent of all consumer spending (visitors and locals) now takes place after 6:00 pm. It will be important to have lease agreements dictate operating hours and days, just as you’d find in Park Royal or any other mall setting. The future of downtowns is where we go after work and on weekends, after school, or after spending the day in the mountains or on the water. With outdoor recreation as your primary visitor draw, 99% of these activities will take place during the day. No visitor wants to head back to a hotel room and just watch television because downtown Squamish is, for the most part, closed. This effort must start with property owners, not just merchants. The “20 Ingredients” video will be a great one for your merchants, property owners, and the District to watch.

9. Encourage Downtown businesses to open late

Timeline: In Progress

Who takes the lead: DSBIA

Approximate cost: Covered by existing organization budgets

Rationale and/or details:

One important ingredient of successful downtowns is having shops be open consistent hours and days, and having them stay open in the evening hours.

North Americans are shopping and dining later in the evening hours than they used to. Seventy percent of all retail spending now takes place after 6:00 p.m. When shops close at 5:00 or 6:00, they are missing most of the shopping opportunities. But, it's important that **most** of the shops in a downtown stay open in the evening - one or two won't attract as many shoppers as six or more open stores. You need the critical mass. If very few shops are open in the evening, there's no reason for people to spend time downtown - people will go somewhere else to do their shopping.

This is best achieved when property owners define their tenants' operating hours and days in their lease agreements. This is something retail malls insist upon, and it's important for downtowns as well. One way to handle the need for more staff to keep the shops open longer is to start a shared-worker program. Opening later in the morning so that you can close later in the evening is also worth considering.

The "20 Ingredients" video will be a great one for your merchants, property owners, and the District to watch. There is an additional video that concentrates on why downtown businesses should be open into the evening hours and some tips about how to make it happen.

10. Create "The Very Best Of" Squamish brochure

Timeline: January 2015 with publication and distribution by end of March 2015

Who takes the lead: Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: To be determined

Possible funding idea: Destination marketing funds

Rationale and/or details:

Always promote your "anchor tenants." These are businesses and activities that people would drive 45 minutes to an hour, or more, to visit specifically. You cannot let politics get in the way of promoting your "best of's." The reasons for creating this brochure are many:

- The most asked question at any hotel, B&B or visitor information center is "where's a good place to eat?" Visitors don't want to be handed a list – particularly one that only features advertisers or members. By promoting your best restaurants, retail shops, and activities, you ensure a good high-quality experience, which is often instantly noted on Facebook, in Twitter posts and in on-line reviews such as Yelp and TripAdvisor. If friends or family were visiting you, where would you take them to eat?
- Success breeds success. No successful mall is ever developed until the anchor tenants are committed. And most people go to the malls, not because there's a Roger's Wireless store, Hallmark store, GNC Nutrition outlet, or a dozen cell phone dealers, but for the anchor tenants. Chances are good they'll stop into Roger's Wireless, Hallmark or a number of other smaller shops while they're at the mall. The anchor tenants attract the shoppers to the mall, and all the other shops benefit as well. Would you go to Orlando if Disney World wasn't there? If you said no, you just insulted 171 other attractions. But they all know that Disney is the anchor tenant and does the heavy lifting in terms of promotion, and they all benefit from the Disney park being there. Additionally, Disney is glad Universal Studios, Wild Kingdom and the other attractions are there because, collectively, they make Orlando worth a trip from just about anywhere on earth.

- By promoting your very best restaurants, retail shops and activities, you encourage the others to raise the bar so they can be included in future “Best Of” guides, which should be produced each year. Note the upcoming criteria and encourage those not selected to work on those criteria, so they too can be promoted in the guide.
- “Best Of” restaurants, retail shops and activities make Squamish worth a special trip, particularly from neighboring communities. Is there a particular restaurant, retail shop, or vendor that you’d make a special trip to North Vancouver, Whistler, downtown Vancouver, Granville Island or Lonsdale Quay for? So what do you have in Squamish that warrants a special trip from these areas? An easy one is the Sea to Sky Gondola. Perhaps another activity is hiking or climbing The Chief. What are your top three restaurants that make Squamish worth a special trip? And how about the top three retail shops? And the top ten activities?
- One of your recruitment objectives is to recruit one, two or three anchor tenants into downtown Squamish. Just like malls, few downtowns become successful destinations without those anchor tenants. You need to recruit them, and then make sure you help market them, specifically, creating an incentive for them to invest in Squamish.
- Promoting private business is the life-blood of tourism - and any community’s economic development efforts. Remember this entire plan is about creating jobs and importing new cash into Squamish.
- It raises the bar - and the quality - of Squamish’s offerings. And ultimately, it will raise the bar for the entire community, making Squamish a “premier” place to live, work and play.

The Best Of guide is a 4 inch x 9 inch rack brochure that can include up to 20 businesses and activities, and it is typically made up of 24 panels (12 panels per side). It should include perhaps 12 to 20 businesses and activities, plus a front and back cover, a panel explaining how these were chosen, and a panel that talks about Squamish: Your location and what the town is all about. Do NOT make the mistake of including everyone to be politically correct. For Squamish we’d suggest promoting the top three or four restaurants, the best three retail shops, and the top ten activities and attractions.

Here are the criteria you might use to determine who should be invited as a participant:

- a. They must be open at least six days a week. The day they can be closed is Monday. This creates continuity for your visitors - and residents.
- b. They must be open until at least 7:00 pm all six nights (to start). As an FYI, 70% of all consumer retail spending now takes place after 6:00 pm. Are you open? This is why all successful malls are typically open until 9:00 or 10:00 pm, seven days a week. Encourage your merchants to be open during the evening hours and promote the “best of’s” that are on board. This won’t be a problem for most restaurants, but can be a challenge for retailers and some attractions or activities (particularly historical attractions that tend to close at 5:00).
- c. They must have good curb appeal. They must be inviting. Remember, you are staking the reputation of the community on these businesses.
- d. They must be highly regarded by someone other than themselves. This means that they must have an 80%+ positive reviews on TripAdvisor, Yelp, Urban Spoon and/or have been written up in regional publications.
- e. They must be organic to Squamish. This means you can’t include franchises and businesses that can be found in just about every city. Why drive to Squamish if I can enjoy the same shop or restaurant right here in Vancouver?
- f. They do not all need to be located in the downtown area. While we hope they can be recruited to downtown, it’s not a requirement to be included in the guide.

For the first year, Tourism Squamish could handle the funding of this brochure. After that, the funding model should be revisited to possibly include a 50/50 split between the businesses and Tourism Squamish, such as the following model: Each business is invited to purchase a panel in the guide, making this a public-private marketing partnership. Typically each business or activity would pay in the range of \$400 for their panel. The remainder of the cost is covered by Destination Marketing funds. This is a public/private project. Many activities, such as historical attractions and parks, have little or no marketing budgets, and their panel would be covered by the Destination Marketing funds.

It’s very important NOT to include businesses just to sell more panels. You should have a good balance between restaurants,



retail shops, and activities.

We recommend printing 60,000 copies (although the quantity will be budget dependent and need to reflect both local distribution and potential regional distribution), and distributing them as follows:

- Every hotel, motel and B&B should put the “Best Of” guide in every room or have them available at the front desk. Housekeeping would make sure one is in each room. Guests, of course, are encouraged to keep the copy they pick up. An alternative would be to hand the guest one on check-in.
- In your visitor information center, chamber of commerce office, and at visitor information kiosks designed and installed as part of your wayfinding system. You should have kiosks at the Sea to Sky Gondola, near hotels, downtown, and at your major parks. All should include brochure distribution where the “Best Of” guide is included.
- One should be sent to every household in the district, in a #10 envelope (yes, snail mail) with a small card that reads, “The number one reason people travel is to visit friends and family. We hope that you will hang onto this brochure so that when friends or family visit you, you will show them the very best of what Squamish has to offer. After all, we believe every dining room table should be a concierge desk.”
- At other visitor information centers along Highway 99 and others within a two-hour drive of Squamish. Think West Vancouver, North Vancouver, Whistler, Pemberton.
- At the municipal hall, library and at other public assembly spaces.

This one brochure is a good way to get regional visitors to stop in Squamish and actually venture more than a block off the highway. It is a great way to get hotel guests to go beyond a quarter mile of the interstate, and a good way to educate locals about what you’ve got and where it’s located. This will be your most important local marketing piece, bar none.

For each featured business, include a photo (interiors sell the experience better than exterior shots), their logo, address, phone number, website address and a description of why they are so good and are a “must visit” and “worth the drive” destination. Each would get a full panel. You might consider adding a QR code next to the logo or at the bottom of each panel

where a person could easily pull up their website or menu.

The guide should also be available on the Tourism Squamish website for viewing and for download.

The guide should be reproduced every year. Finally, the reasons no lodging facilities are included is so that they will hand the brochure to visitors without fear of promoting their competitors.

Included in the “Best Of” guide should be a panel dedicated to “The Epic Eight” provincial parks, and the other top-rated “epic” experiences:

1. Stawamus Chief: Hiking, Rock climbing (the Apron / the Grand Wall), Bouldering (base of the Grand Wall), Sight-seeing (standing at the base and looking up at the rock / watching the climbers), Paragliding
2. Mountain Biking: Half Nelson, loads of other amazing trails, perhaps a nod to the 200+ km’s of single track trails
3. Kiteboarding / Windsurfing (followed by sailing / kayaking / SUP’ing) in the Howe Sound
4. Eagle Viewing: Brackendale Eagles Provincial Park / Brackendale Dyke
5. Sea to Sky Gondola: Hiking (Sky Pilot and Habrich as well as the Sea to Summit trail), Sightseeing, Rock Climbing
6. And a very close 6th would be Garibaldi Park for its hiking / mountaineering / skiing / snowshoeing / camping

Each one of these should have a single panel in the Best Of guide and perhaps the Chief should merit two.

11. Continue to grow digital library in support of the brand

Timeline: Fall of 2014 and ongoing

Who takes the lead: Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: Covered by existing organization budgets (approx. \$5,000 Tourism Squamish)

Possible funding idea: To be determined

Rationale and/or details:

We are in the age of visual communications. A picture really is worth a thousand words. Video is worth even more. The key is having great content and high-definition resolution. Your photos and videos need to be world class – like you’d expect to see in a National Geographic publication. Remember the focus on “epic” in the Brand Promise. This is a promise and you must deliver on that promise. The idea is to sell great experiences that are different or clearly better than what the visitor can get closer to home. The photos need to fit within the framework of the Brand Style Guide – the look and feel of your brand. Photos and videos should be exciting, fun, and engaging. Everything you film and shoot should portray the epic feeling. And people who are hardwired for adventure should always be included in the photography.

Tourism Squamish is currently sourcing digital assets (including photography) with usage restricted to Tourism Squamish initiatives (including media use). Grow the inventory of signature photographic images that promote the brand. Ensure that the Brand Style Guide speaks to what the photos need to depict.

Continue to work with local photographers.

Make sure your videographer also has studio/editing skills. You’ll want to create a number of 20-second to three-minute videos showing every season of the year, each promoting a single experience, and some promoting sample itineraries. Filming the “Itineraries from locals” can be a fantastic addition to your website and YouTube channel. This means videos may need to be edited and formatted for use on YouTube, your website, and other online sites.

Continue developing an excellent B-roll library of video and perhaps 100 signature photographs, keeping mind:

- The photography and videography must fit within the Style Guide requirements and recommendations.
- Focus on people having a great time. Don't show just scenic vistas – show hikers enjoying the scenic vista. People see themselves where they see other people. Always sell experiences, not just places, not just objects.
- Keep the photography tied to the core brand promoting 'hardwired for adventure'. Watch the Roger Brooks video in the All Access Library "The Use of Photography to Increase Sales." This can be very helpful for your efforts in securing and using world-class photography. A photograph really IS worth a thousand words.
- Build upon the library Tourism Squamish already has, and ensure they, and other organizations, continue to brief photographers on what specific styles of photography are needed to support the brand.

12. Brand District vehicles

Timeline: Fall 2014 (new vehicles), continue to roll-out across fleet in 2015/2016

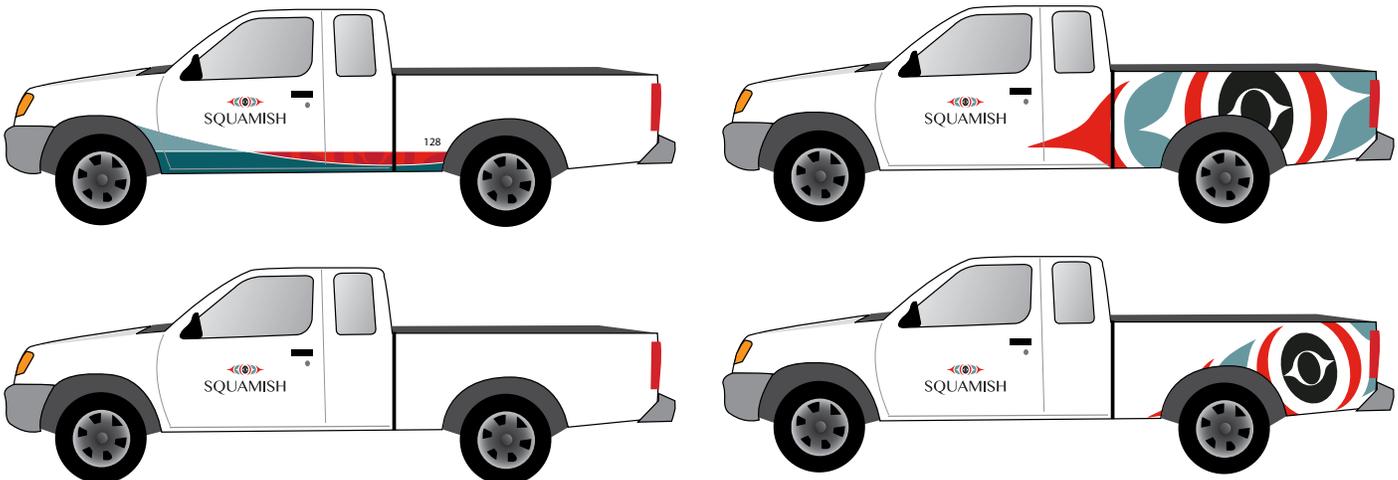
Who takes the lead: District of Squamish

Approximate cost: Covered by existing District budgets

Possible funding idea: Not required

Rationale and/or details:

Over time, District vehicles may need to have decals placed, and when that opportunity arises, include the new brand. Start with parks department vehicles, then perhaps public works and bylaw vehicles, followed by general operations' vehicles and machinery.



Conceptual examples.

13. Continue to improve access to and use of the waterfront

Timeline: Winter 2014

Who takes the lead: BLT, District of Squamish

Approximate cost: To be determined

Rationale and/or details:

One of Squamish's great assets is its oceanfront and the activities people can enjoy on the water. Squamish promotes its sea to sky adventures, so it is essential that there be easy access to the waterfront - by trail and road - from Downtown. Both areas can contribute to the benefit of each other if they are easily accessible to each other. As the oceanfront is developed, it will be important to provide amenities, including washrooms, parking, and staging areas.

There is also an opportunity for the BLT to help further the design, use and promotion of Lot 1, including providing support for the Legacy Project which is proposed as part of Squamish's 100 years' celebration.

14. Solicit input from local groups to identify ways to better support and access Squamish's outdoor activities

Timeline: Winter 2014

Who takes the lead: BLT (responsibilities may shift as initiatives are identified and delegated to various organizations and groups)

Approximate cost: None (costs may eventually be associated with implementing solutions)

Rationale and/or details:

In addition to all of the other recommendations that help support, promote and access Squamish's incredible outdoor activities (biking, hiking, climbing, kiting, boating, eagle viewing, etc.), these working groups would lend their expertise to identify ways to improve accessing and using Squamish's natural assets that collectively set Squamish apart from other destinations and are core to the brand promise. The working groups would also discuss priorities and feasibility of implementation, and help identify key stakeholders that would take the lead on implementing solutions/improvements.

Some examples of the types of ways Squamish could ensure they continue to improve outdoor adventure experiences include:

- Eagle viewing - improve signage, parking (for cars and buses), and viewing. Seek funding for volunteers. Provide washrooms.
- Mountain Biking - continue DOS grant for trail maintenance. Work with BC Timber Sales to make sure there are buffer zones between logging operations and high traffic trails. Review staging areas at the trail heads of various trail networks.
- Climbing – explore solutions for parking lot break ins. Shuttle/transit from camping area to climbing areas (side benefit - eliminate illegal camping).
- Kayaking - create kayak-friendly waterfront access. Must be near parking and away from boat launches.
- Kiteboarding – create kite-board launch point with access from Downtown Squamish (longer term project tied in with SODC development). In short term, grade spit road regularly and mitigate dust.
- Water Sports – basic bathroom, water and storage amenities.

For most outdoor activities in Squamish, the protection of land to ensure the future of each activity is critical. It will be important for each of the local groups to ensure they also address any challenges, concerns, or threats to the land where members of their community recreate (e.g. Smoke Bluffs, The Chief, The Spit, various trail networks including Ring Creek, Crumpit Woods and Alice Lake trails, etc.).

There is also an opportunity to engage a group of event producers to ensure the BLT can support removing any obstacles to their success.

15. Begin development of the 2015 Activities Guide

Timeline: Winter 2014 / Spring 2015 (print Spring 2015)

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee, Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: Covered by existing organization budgets

Possible funding idea: Destination Marketing funds, advertising co-op funds

Rationale and/or details:

Your “Visitors Guide” should become an “Activities Guide,” and the 2016 issue will roll-out the new brand. It should have an entirely new look and feel per the Style Guide. For more information on content, photography, and how to make advertising “advertorial,” watch the Roger Brooks video “Visitor Guides for the 21st Century.” This video will showcase many great examples including content, the order of what is included, the use of photography, QR codes, and other elements. The primary key: To sell experiences, sample itineraries, lots of specifics, focus first on your “anchor tenants” and then complementary activities, and get rid of lists – except in the back of the publication.

16. Develop a branded website “jump page”

Timeline: Starting February 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee, District of Squamish

Approximate cost: Included in current website maintenance budgets

Possible funding idea: Destination Marketing funds

Rationale and/or details:

When it comes to nearly ALL marketing (tourism, economic development, downtown promotion, event promotion and business marketing), funding should be roughly allocated as follows:

- 45% on digital marketing: website, social media, e-newsletter, apps, online advertising, pay per click, video content, photography, sample itineraries, etc.
- 20% on advertising, where the focus is to drive people to your website, which MUST be good enough to close the sale.
- 20% on public relations: getting articles and exposure showcasing the brand, sample itineraries, focusing on the top three “epic” adventures and your downtown revitalization efforts.
- 10% on printed materials (your “Best Of” and Activities Guide).
- 5% on trade shows, billboards and other forms of advertising

As you can see by this breakdown, the web should be the very top priority. Ninety percent of all Canadians and Americans now have immediate access to the Internet via smart phones, tablets, and computers, and they have this access at home, at work, at school, and while on the road. Of this group, 94% use the web to decide where they will visit, what they might want to do this weekend, where to eat, what to do tonight, where to live, and even where to establish a business.

Squamish’s tourism website should REALLY showcase the Brand Promise. It needs to be world-class and professionally produced. In fact, this website should set the tone, look and feel for other local websites that would promote economic development, the district (governing website), downtown, chamber of commerce and other local organizations.

Task a designer (on contract with Tourism Squamish or the District) to design a “jump page” that brings the visitor to a branded landing page before launching into other websites that best matches their enquiry, e.g. TourismSquamish.com (visitors), Squamish.ca (residents), or the SquamishChamber.com (local businesses). Perhaps one of the new registered domains could redirect to the jump page until organizational websites are fully updated with the new brand. This will be a

cost effective way to demonstrate that Squamish is transitioning to a new brand in lieu of the full websites being re-skinned with the new brand look and feel.

The “quick win” concept of a jump page may be a long term approach by Squamish’s organizations to help redirect website visitors to the appropriate website. This could be built out to be like New Zealand’s website portal (www.newzealand.com).

Key suggestions to ensure a successful tourism website:

The tourism website needs to be photography-based, showcasing Squamish’s incredible beauty using professionally shot photography (National Geographic quality). Include lots of video content, including the seven-minute video now used to promote Squamish (and fits the brand perfectly). It also needs to be full of specific information and details, making it extremely easy and convenient to plan a trip to Squamish. It should NOT be a website based on lists. Simple lists of restaurants, retail shops, museums, parks, and other things, do nothing to entice visitors to choose Squamish. The website needs to be experienced-based and rich with content.

Most of all, it needs to look “world class,” yet not overly polished to be too “shiny.” Squamish is a “real” organic destination with roots in First Nations, timber and mining, and having those elements throughout the site will provide an “honest” representation of the community.

Sample itineraries will be very important and should include specific restaurants, and even specific dishes to try. Above all, specific recommendations should be included, just as travel writers do.

The website MUST be good enough to close the sale. All advertising is designed to pull people to the website, and once there, it will need to “close the sale” in terms of trip-planning, things to do, etc. Make sure the top three or four “Epic” adventures are showcased. You are building the entire brand on those. They need to be worth a flight from Toronto, Halifax or Florida. Climbing The Chief is one of those and brings people from around the world. Perhaps there’s a certain trail that is better than any other in Western Canada, or a particular kite-boarding site, and, of course, the new Sea to Sky Gondola with hiking.

The bottom line: Make it clean, simple, and make it truly embody the organic feel of Squamish. The website is, by far, your most important marketing tool. Even when it comes to economic development, site selectors, potential residents, and investors will always review the tourism website, since it embodies why someone would choose to visit or live in Squamish.

Work with your graphic design firm to have common elements and a consistent look and feel among your sites. They do not all have to be cookie-cutter or use the same template, but they do need to have complementary and unified color schemes, fonts or graphic elements.

We could easily spend 100 pages just talking about the website, but here are a few rules:

1. Promote specifics not generalities. If you promote Squamish as the hub for some of the best fishing in British Columbia, you must provide specifics:
 - a. Where are the best fishing spots?
 - b. What kind of fish will I catch there?
 - c. Do I need a fishing license? If so, where can I get one?
 - d. How far a drive are these fishing spots from Squamish?
 - e. Is this boat or shore fishing?
 - f. Where is a bait and tackle shop?
 - g. How do I get there and where do I park?
 - h. Can I rent a boat there? Or where can I launch my boat?
 - i. What kind of bait should I use?
 - j. What time of day, what time of year is best?
 - k. The more details you provide the more likely you are to close the sale.

The same applies to climbing sites, hiking trails, biking trails, water-based activities and even downtown events, conferences, and conventions. Details, details, details. There should be no questions unanswered as people plan visits to Squamish.

- 2 . Avoid lists. If you want to showcase restaurants, include them by type of dining: Italian, Mexican, Chinese, Barbecue, etc., and make sure you include a photo (interior please), logo, address, meals served, hours and days they are open, and a description of why they are so great, plus include a link to their menu or website .
- 3 . Include detailed itineraries. We urge you to watch the Roger Brooks video “The Power of Itineraries,” which showcases dozens of examples and how to craft itineraries.
- 4 . People LOVE video content – particularly those that run from 30 seconds to no more than three minutes. It’s better to have a number of shorter videos than one long one.
- 5 . People LOVE photography. Your site should be loaded with photography, and the photos should show people enjoying activities – not just places like parks, ball fields or downtown without a soul in the picture. We relate to people, not just places. Suggestion: watch Roger’s video “The Power of Photography to Increase Sales.” Focus on what makes Squamish unique – and worth a special trip.
- 6 . The tourism site should be organized by activity. Consider a “pick your season” format where they choose the season, and it takes them to a page that will tell them what to expect that time of year in Squamish in terms of weather, accommodations and activities. Once on that page, they can then “pick your passion,” which will include the various activities available that time of year. Golf or baseball may be seasonal, as may hunting, but Squamish events and activities will be showcased in every season.
- 7 . Make it simple and easy to navigate.
- 8 . Remember that you are selling experiences first, not Squamish. People are looking for things to do, not places to go.

We suggest the BLT Marketing Committee watch the following Roger Brooks videos. Each is about an hour long:

- Community Marketing on a Minuscule Budget
- Seven Deadly Sins of Destination Marketing
- The Power of Itineraries
- Tourism for the 21st Century

A successful website example is Asheville, North Carolina’s site www.exploreasheville.com. Obviously, the look and feel of Squamish’s website should be quite different with a totally different focus, but their site is a good one in terms of content.

17. Integrate new brand into monthly newsletters

Timeline: Winter 2014 / Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: Tourism Squamish, District of Squamish, BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

Nothing creates top of mind awareness like constant reminders. And the most unobtrusive reminder can be in the form of a monthly e-newsletter. Tourism Squamish is already sending out newsletters, plus the District and the Chamber have their own locally focused newsletters that are distributed to their databases.

The following are some tips to more effective newsletters:



Capital Projects.

Learn more about infrastructure improvement plans and projects



LATEST NEWS

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet igitur ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute m vel eum Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet



UPCOMING EVENTS

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet



Save time...
find a quick link below



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 2

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 3

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 4

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit... diam nonummy nibh euismod...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 5

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 6

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit... nonummy



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 2

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 3

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 4

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit... diam nonummy nibh euismod...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 5

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit...



QUICK LINKS
HERE OPTION 6

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit... nonummy



COUNCIL
UPCOMING COUNCIL
MEETINGS AND
DECISIONS



Conceptual
example.

They can't be a sales pitch. Each should be short, to the point, and offer upcoming events and tips and tricks on recreational activities, techniques, proper gear, etc. It should showcase "Coming up this month..." and tips, ideas and quotes to help people get excited about experiencing an adventure in Squamish - all types of activities for people who are hardwired for adventure.

Whenever possible tell stories: A visitor's Squamish experience/adventure; someone coming to Squamish to try something new; a visiting family's eventful weekend in Squamish.

Provide things to do, not just reading material. Make it engaging. Tell everyone you know to subscribe. Wouldn't it be great to get subscribers from all over the country – or world, for that matter? You can if you make the e-newsletter shine in terms of content and reasons to visit.

In each newsletter include five or six "articles," but you should just include the headline and the first sentence or two plus a link to see the rest of the article on your website. This way someone can quickly scan down the list, and if something catches their eye, they can click on the link, taking them to the website and the rest of the story. If they don't see anything interesting, they can just delete the e-mail, BUT it still created "top of mind awareness" – reminding the reader that Squamish is a great place to spend their time.

Subscribe to other tourism-based e-newsletters to see how they look and sound. Which ones are successful in getting you to click on links to specific pages on the website for more details? Follow your own intuition. Asheville, North Carolina is a good one to use as a model.

Each month consider the following:

- A great tip, trick or idea that the reader can do themselves. Perhaps a great book to read, tips and tricks for living a happier, healthier, bolder life. They don't always have to showcase an epic adventure, but can focus on a way of life – The Squamish Lifestyle. Food tips, living a green lifestyle, organic gardening, but with recreation at the top of the list.
- A great small-business opportunity.
- Incredible events coming up in the next 60 days.
- The latest video that evokes emotion and makes us want to visit the Squamish now – a call to action.

Make sure it is super easy to subscribe by having a sign-up space on the home page of the website.

Every e-newsletter should include a photograph, teaser text, and a link for the rest of the story. And it should be produced once a month.

There are also numerous adventure-based companies with their own databases, e.g. SquamishAdventure.com, that actively promote Squamish as an outdoor adventure destination. The BLT should assign members to reach out to organizations and companies that send out newsletters to learn what they are doing and how they could improve upon their current programs by tying into the brand more effectively and using the suggestions for an effective newsletter within this recommendation.

18. Launch a community clean up program

Timeline: Winter 2014 / Spring 2015 and ongoing

Who takes the lead: Every local organization led by the BLT

Approximate cost: Covered by existing organization budgets

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

As a world-class destination, you must walk the walk. Everywhere in Squamish should be stunningly beautiful, clean, and environmentally friendly (no cheesy plastic banners and portable signs or a plethora of sandwich boards). Local residents

should look at the community through the eyes of a visitor. If it doesn't look like a world-class destination, then what can be done to make it better? This can be one of the major obstacles in getting more visitors into Squamish. Driving along the highway you see the backsides of ugly industrial-looking buildings, ditches filled with blackberry vines, lots of weeds, and sign clutter – old and new. First impressions are lasting impressions.

Make those first impressions good ones. This starts with every single citizen being a booster for the brand. Picking up trash, cigarette butts, pulling weeds, planting flowers, and on and on. Beautify alleys, lots, and all along the sides of Highway 99.

The idea is to have Squamish be the cleanest, most beautiful town in British Columbia, starting at its gateways right into the heart of downtown. This should also extend into the neighborhoods and residential areas. Parks and sports facilities should look world-class as well. Make Squamish shine, and people will take notice. You'll become one of the most desirable communities in Western Canada. Community pride will blossom, and that creates a bottom-up approach and buy-in to the branding plan.

The BLT should work on ways to help Squamish clean up and beautify the approach to Squamish. Entries into communities give people their first impressions, and first impressions are critical. Perhaps the Dept. of Highways would grant the District access to the highway right-of-ways so they can be mowed and treated as a public park. Perhaps public art displays (sculptures) of people on kite boards, climbing, biking, etc. can be placed along the highway – or the pole banners suggested in this plan. All of these elements would make Squamish more desirable and would prompt people to stop rather than just pass through.

This effort needs to include Downtown and the north commercial areas. Whistler spends a great deal of time and money making sure its first impressions are good. This must be a priority in Squamish as well. Perhaps local organizations could "adopt" a month, and during that month they would take the lead in making sure the highway right-of-ways are clean, mowed, and are beautiful.

Build upon existing programs including Pitch in Week, Imagine Squamish's initiatives, and other community and school group efforts at clean-up and beautification of the community. Consider organizing an annual clean-up event in Squamish in the spring.

19. Find your best Squamish spokespeople – put them on film

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee, Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: None to perhaps \$15,000 for professional assistance over the year (12 videos)

Possible funding idea: Destination marketing funds

Rationale and/or details:

Find the most enthusiastic, fun-loving, good looking, engaging and humorous person you have and put them on film. They don't have to be professional broadcasters or television personalities, but they DO need to be totally sold on Squamish and be ultra-enthusiastic about spending time in the community. They need to exude excitement about how fantastic Squamish is. As stated before, Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm," and he was, and is, absolutely right.

You don't need to hire a professional film crew, but you do need some production and editing skills to fine-tune the video segments. What you want to do is add three short videos every month to the website. These might include an hour of filming, which will be edited down to one-, two- or three-minute videos, each selling one epic adventure in Squamish.

Consider your local talent, e.g. local musicians, athletes, actors, entertainers, etc.

- Chances are excellent you already have these people in Squamish. NOTHING sells like video. As these are produced, each one should have a single focus with perhaps one or two complementary activities. Ideas should include:

- Culinary: best restaurants (good food, ambiance, fun, entertaining, great characters)
- Family activities
- Historic attractions and activities such as the mine tour, and other similar historic sites
- Downtown shopping and dining
- Epic adventures
- Family-friendly adventure (or two)
- Wildlife viewing (eagles)

Make sure they are SPECIFIC, not full of generalities. If you promote eagle viewing, include the time of year, what the visitor will see, time of day, where to go specifically, and on the way where to grab a special snack or to bring a picnic lunch. Think like a travel writer or a travel show host: Rick Steves, Rudy Maxa, or Laura McKenzie.

Create a YouTube channel and promote it heavily. Nothing sells like professionally produced video, and each one can be just two to three minutes in length. Once again, they need to be very specific to be effective.

20. Develop an “Itineraries by locals” marketing program

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

This is a great exercise that can be a part of your speaking engagement tour.

Itineraries by locals is an opportunity to leverage how the experiences of Squamish’s locals through marketing programs in print ads, website promotions, etc. It’s another great way to put a local/personal spin on Squamish story-telling.

Develop itineraries designed by locals. Take groups through the seven-question list (feel free to develop new questions) and develop itineraries for niche markets like the following:

- a . Families with kids under ten years old
- b . Families with kids from ten to 18 years old
- c . Girls’ weekends out
- d . Guys’ night out
- e . The romantic escape
- f . For the big spender
- g . Theater and arts itinerary
- h . Sunday morning brunch tour
- i . Calorie burn itineraries (healthy living)
- j . Friends in town tour
- k . Arts weekend tour
- l . The day at the market tour
- m . Festival weekend

- n . Sea adventures itineraries
- o . Mountain adventures itineraries

The questions you might ask include:

- a . Where is the best place to get the perfect meal? Name the restaurant and the signature dish. Its attraction can be great ambiance, good food, or great characters.
- b . Where can I check my e-mails?
- c . Where can I buy the perfect gift – something locally or regionally made? Name the store and a sample of the type of gift you'll find there.
- d . Where can I take the photo that says I was really there? The best photo opportunity for Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, Twitter, etc .
- e . Where can I get the best dessert? Name the place and the dish. The dessert to simply die for.
- f . What is the one thing I MUST do while in Squamish? (It can be any day of the week or any time of day.)
- g . Where can I get gourmet items for a picnic? And where would I picnic?

You can use these questions or make up your own. Just make sure there is a focus on businesses and activities. Here's how to facilitate the process at, for example, the Squamish Windsports Society or the Howe Sound Dance Academy:

- Pass out sheets of paper.
- Make sure everyone has a pen or pencil.
- Then ask the questions. Make sure they don't write "my house" for an answer unless they'd like you to send every visitor to their place.
- In boxes on the left, have them put the answers in order as if the guest was coming out Friday evening and would be there until Sunday afternoon.
- Then ask one, two or three people in the audience to read their itineraries, in order of how it would proceed. Here's a sample:
- Come on out Friday afternoon and have dinner at Sushi Sen in Downtown Squamish. Make sure you try the sockeye salmon sushi – it's to die for.
- The next morning, head to [name of store] where you can pick up gourmet items for a picnic. Make sure you get...
- Then head over to the Sea to Sky Gondola. Plan on spending two hours there to take in some of the best views in British Columbia and hike the area for an hour or so.
- Then come back to downtown and head out on the spit to watch the wind surfers, sail boarders and have your picnic lunch. While downtown check your e-mails. Wi-fi is free!
- Head over to the marina and take a photo of The Chief with sailboats in the foreground to show that Squamish really has both sea and sky. It's a fabulous viewpoint for The Chief.
- Then head over to the Britannia Mine Museum ...
- When you're done, you'll want to head over to ... restaurant, and for dessert you've got to try the creme brulee.
- What a weekend and what a way to celebrate an epic day.

These are the types of itineraries visitors LOVE, and this is why more than 140 million people in the U.S. and Canada subscribe to travel-related publications: because they provide specifics, not generalities. When itineraries come from local residents, it creates a bond with the community, AND it brings your locals into the tourism industry. These make guests feel welcome, wanted and appreciated.

Put these answers together into itineraries. Once you have these itineraries, put them on the website as “Itineraries from the locals.” Categorize them by type: girls’ weekend out, extreme recreation, kids and family, etc. Tweet them; include them on Facebook. Show photos of the people who developed them. Each should take place during a weekday or weekend afternoon, an evening, or even on a Sunday morning. Include photos of each venue or business. Do NOT try to be politically correct, and do not shy away from promoting individual businesses. These businesses are the lifeblood of the district!

If you go through the list of questions, you’ll note that five of the seven are promoting private industry. That’s what tourism and economic development are all about. By the way, one itinerary might promote Sushi Sen while a separate itinerary might promote the Howe Sound Brew Pub. No one is being left out – different businesses will appear in different itineraries catering to their specific audience.

21. Start developing sample itineraries

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee, Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: None (some graphic design to create PDF files)

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

An earlier recommendation discussed developing itineraries that come from locals. You also want to create other specialized itineraries that can be featured on the website, and would include downloadable PDF files. Visitors LOVE sample itineraries, and they need to be very specific. Consider a variety of itineraries from several hours to one and two-day recommendations.

Sample itineraries are web-based tools that help demonstrate the endless possibilities of a short or long stay in Squamish and further emphasize the brand of the close proximity of so many world-class outdoor adventures.

All of the itineraries should have a brand twist to them. The BLT could work with different organizations, groups, or individuals to create the itineraries that may at first appear typical, but offer a Squamish flare. For example, instead of hitting the nightclubs as part of a “Guy’s Night Out,” in Squamish, a group of guys may put on their head lamps and hit Half Nelson for a full moon night mountain bike ride, followed by beers at the Howe Sound Brew Pub.

The itineraries must be supported by strong brand-focused imagery, photos and descriptions. Begin with epic adventures, and expand from there. They should be supported by strong brand-focused imagery, photography, and descriptions. Also, be sure the itineraries are tied to what the top words are that people use to search for. Include First Nations culture and heritage as one or more of the sample itineraries, either as a themed itinerary, and/or included as an element in other itineraries.

Rather than take up several pages showcasing examples and how to make this happen, please watch the Roger Brooks video in the Video Library, “The Power of Itineraries.” In this one-hour presentation you’ll see how they are laid out; you will see guidelines to help you craft sample itineraries; and you’ll see why they are so important and how they can dramatically increase visitor spending in Squamish.

22. Review giving Downtown a name

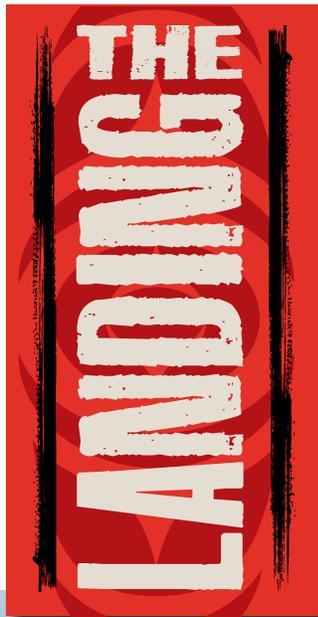
Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT, DSBA

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:



Conceptual examples.



Giving downtown a name makes it a destination, not just a geographic designation. Signs on the highway noting “downtown Squamish” or “central business district” mean little and are not an effective draw. But “The Shipyards” in North Vancouver, or “Gastown” in Vancouver have appeal. They become “attractions,” which is the goal for downtown Squamish.

We recommend calling downtown “The Landing” - refer to the conceptual pole banners on the following page. It fits Squamish’s waterfront area, and would be a great name for a central gathering place. It even fits the climbing lexicon.

As the waterfront is developed, it can either be an extension of The Landing, or might be a second district. We prefer they be one and the same to create continuity, but that thought may change depending on how the waterfront is developed.

By officially recognizing and adopting a formal downtown name, getting signs along the highway directing visitors to “The Landing” will be approved much easier than having just an informal agreement.

23. Accelerate plans to connect various “hubs” via trails

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, BLT

Approximate cost: \$30,000

Possible funding idea: Grants, general funds

Rationale and/or details:

Squamish is home to lots of trails - but most don't complete the job connecting neighborhoods to activity centers, retail shopping areas, parks, and other services. The trails need to be accessible by bike, pedestrian, stroller, wheelchair, etc., and connect Squamish's various communities. This will reduce traffic and automobile use, and ultimately will provide for a much safer, easier, and enjoyable time in Squamish. Think of the Valley Trail in Whistler, which has been heavily used and is now an attraction.

Because Squamish is a young community (one of the youngest populations in Western Canada), providing safe access on foot, on bike, and with strollers is vitally important. And visitors will also enjoy and benefit from their development as well.

There are several completed plans that the District and the Squamish Trail Society have developed. These should be consolidated and implemented.

24. Secure funding and contract for the creation of a comprehensive wayfinding system

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, BLT

Approximate cost: \$250,000 (budgeted across 2015-2018)

Possible funding idea: Transportation grants (federal, provincial)

Rationale and/or details:

Secure funding for the creation and development of a Wayfinding System. This should be one of the very top priorities the BLT and District undertake. It helps visitors have a more enjoyable experience, it will pull them off the highway, and it will also educate locals about what you have and where it's located.

Look for federal and provincial grant funds, and then find out what local matches will be. The wayfinding system plan should be developed so that implementation and installation can be phased for budget considerations.

Work on the local match portion as part of the upcoming District budget process. A District-wide system will be far more advantageous than just a system in town. This way signage can direct people throughout the District and parks, not just once they're off Highway 99 and driving around Downtown Squamish.

The first step is looking for funding to design the system, and then look for funding to implement the system. If there is a qualified design/build firm, they should definitely be considered.

To design the system, we estimate the cost of the plan would be about \$125,000 including bid-ready documentation, so the

plan can be presented to fabricators for bidding the construction and installation.

These should be included in the wayfinding system:

- Highway/freeway vehicular directional signage
- District roadway vehicular directional signage
- Pole banners (often seasonal) for downtown and throughout the district
- Visitor information kiosks
- Transit stops (once a trolley system is implemented)
- Gateway signage (community and downtown)
- Marquee signage for parks and other public facilities (like the public market and plaza)
- Pedestrian wayfinding in downtown and along the waterfront
- Trail-head identifiers and informational signage at various locations, such as eagle viewing areas

Conceptual examples.



- Interpretive signage at historical and cultural sites and points of interest
- Actual trail markers along your trails. About a third of the total cost is geared to better identifying your staging areas, trail heads, and trail markers (with distances) at junction points along the trails. This, alone, will be an extensive part of the system.
- Consider, where appropriate, the integration of Squamish Nation translations on its signs and wayfinding materials.
- Consider, where appropriate, the use of digital highway signs that are easily updated
- Consider, where appropriate, including structures that support event banners

Wayfinding system design is not a public works project. A good wayfinding system is as much a science as an art, and it should be developed by professional wayfinding experts. This is an investment, not an expense. It is critical that the wayfinding system include signage that “connects the dots,” providing signage all the way through to each destination. Studies have shown that wayfinding increases retail sales and services by an average of 18%, which is substantial.

Navigation systems are not a substitute or replacement for a wayfinding system. Only 17% of Canadians use navigation aids, and that is to look for things they already know exist. Wayfinding will educate them on things they may not know you actually have.

We recommend that district officials watch the 60 minute video in the Roger Brooks Video Library, “The Art of Wayfinding.” This video provides a lot of details regarding costs, why wayfinding is important, and how to contract with wayfinding expertise.

Quite often this can be funded by federal transportation grants with local matching funds. No matter what, the very top priority is to install wayfinding signage from your highway area hotels to downtown.

The wayfinding concepts included in this plan are concepts only - the designs of the signage, including materials, will be determined in the wayfinding system design.

25. Build and install new ‘Welcome to Squamish’ signs

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, BLT

Approximate cost: \$50,000+

Possible funding idea: To be determined

Rationale and/or details:

This is a priority item coming out of the recommendation “Secure funding and contract for the creation of a comprehensive wayfinding system”. Gateway signs (or “welcome” signs) into Squamish provide a sense of arrival and increase the perceived value of the destination. They can create an instant good first impression of a community.

The location of gateway (or welcome) signs should be determined based on surroundings. You should place them where they will make the first best impression, and that is rarely right at district limits.

Gateway (or welcome) signs should make a bold statement and be designed to reflect Squamish’s active, adventuresome, exciting brand. Materials and design should be selected to withstand weather conditions as best as possible.

The exact locations, design, and materials of the signs is to be determined based on recommendations provided in the wayfinding system.

Integrating public art into a gateway sign is also a way to connect to the brand, engage local artists and create another attraction for visitors.

26. Create a database of regional clubs and organizations

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing committee

Approximate cost: None (staff time with help from Tourism Squamish)

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

One of the best, quickest and cheapest ways to increase tourism spending is to recruit outside organizations to have them host their festivals, shows, exhibitions and events in Squamish.

There are two comprehensive guides available in print, and it's possible they might now be in digital or database format:

- a. Associations USA. This is "a directory of contact information for national associations, foundations, and other nonprofit organizations in the United States and Canada." It is published by Omnigraphics of Detroit.
- b. National Directory of Nonprofit Organizations (a two-volume directory). It includes "key contact, IRS status, and annual revenue information for more than 260,000 organizations."

There are no publications, that we could find, that concentrate solely on Canadian clubs and non-profit organizations, but part of your marketing should be to the U.S. American visitors to Canada spend nearly twice as much as Canadians.

These books cost nearly \$1,100 and are published yearly. Most libraries have the books on hand, so one option is to provide a donation to the library and have them give you last year's edition when the new edition comes out. You might donate \$250 dollars to the library, which would otherwise probably just recycle the old editions. If they do not purchase these guides, then simply spend the money to get these directories.

The BLT Marketing Committee should also reach out to existing groups and organizations to garner the lists they already use including Tourism Squamish, Quest University, Squamish Arts Council and sporting groups (e.g. SORCA).

You are looking for clubs and organizations that hold periodic events, and you'll be inviting them to Squamish. Here's the big challenge: These are not organized by location, and you want to invite organizations that are located in Washington, Oregon, and Western Canada (British Columbia and western Alberta). So this means you may want to get two or three interns to help go through the books and find the clubs and associations that have a presence in your geographic market area. That means weeding through thousands of directory listings, then entering the information for each that might be a possible contact into your CRM software.

Clubs and organizations you hope to attract include:

- Recreation clubs (biking, hiking, climbing, etc.)
- Squamish Off Road Cycling Association
- Squamish Windsports Society
- Squamish Access Society
- Squamish Trails Society
- Squamish Arts Council
- Squamish Environment Society
- Squamish Valley Equestrian Society
- Squamish Youth Soccer
- Squamish Yacht Club
- Quilt, potter, photography, art guilds and related clubs

- Associations that concentrate on health issues: massage, spa, alternative medicines, natural health professionals
- Car clubs (just about every auto manufacturer has a club, plus classic car clubs)
- Motorcycle clubs (Harley Owners Groups, GoldWing Associations, etc.)
- Biking clubs (street and mountain biking)
- Fitness clubs: running clubs, events like the Danskin Women's Triathlon and other competitions that move around the country
- Environmental cause organizations: David Suzuki Foundation, Wilderness Society, Nature Conservancy
- Marine-oriented organizations: boating and sailing clubs, board sport clubs
- Fishing clubs, competitions, and related events
- Historic and cultural organizations
- Other local groups can be found at: <http://www.mysquamish.com/category/organizations/athletics/#11>

These are just a few of the basic groups you would invite. Not only are you trying to attract hobby clubs (like classic car shows), but also non-profit organizations and thousands of cause-oriented organizations that host fund-raising events from 10K runs, to triathlons, to walks, and all types of other events. And remember, although many local groups are mentioned above, one of your big goals is to attract out-of-town clubs and organizations (including from the U.S.) to hold their events in Squamish. In this way, you are attracting VISITORS to Squamish, where they will spend their visitor dollars.

In almost every case, you will find contact information, a phone number, address and what kind of organization they are. You want to do your marketing by phone and snail-mail. This kind of marketing is more effective if it is direct contact, rather than by e-mail. This database is your bible in terms of reaching out to perhaps thousands of organizations.

As you develop the database your staff will need to make judgment calls: Volunteer fire departments are often non-profits but the chance of them hosting an event in Squamish, instead of their home communities, is pretty slim. Only go after the ones where they host larger events and are willing to drive 50 miles or so to host the event.

Chances are good that you'll end up with about 3,000 contacts in your database – and that's a LOT. Once you get an event, like the Northwest BMW Club (we found it doing a web search), chances are you can book their event once, and if it is successful, and you are awesome hosts, you'll get it for the same weekend, every year, for years. That's the goal of this effort: Invite them once, treat them right, and have them come back year after year.

As you start building the database, all kinds of organizations will emerge that would be a perfect fit for Squamish's branding efforts. Car and motorcycle clubs are a perfect fit because the drive is a primary part of the experience and the Sea to Sky Highway is one of the most scenic in North America. Imagine downtown Squamish with 100 Corvettes lining the streets for a day or two or three. These events can fill every hotel room, every restaurant table, and they generate a LOT of local spending.

Many of these clubs and organizations host annual conferences, exhibitions, trade shows and consumer events. Initially (until the Squamish plaza is built) you are looking for consumer-oriented public events. Wouldn't it be great if the National Diabetes Foundation held an annual half-marathon in Squamish? After all, you have excellent trails and already have a focus on healthy and energetic living.

As part of this effort, come up with ten or twenty unique event names that you can pass on to these organizations.

Your database will include organizations that have offices and events within a four-hour drive of Squamish. This would include Seattle (and dozens of other Northwest cities).

Concentrate on those within a two-hour drive. This is your primary target area. This database is the lifeblood of your marketing effort, so take the time to build it right, and then start calling every club, association, and organization. When you do so, also ask them for referrals.

Another great way to build this database is to work with the local club members already living in Squamish or Whistler or

West Vancouver. Chances are good that you have Harley and Gold Wing owners in the area that belong to their local club. Talk to them about hosting an event in Squamish. The same could go with automobile clubs: Mustang, Subaru, Mercedes, BMW, Volkswagen and many others. Also, there are your auxiliary organizations that host events: Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Elks, Eagles, and others.

Reach out to discover who belongs to what organizations and have them open the doors for you. You want them to host events in Squamish, and if they do you'll roll out the red carpet for them.

When scheduling events, the BLT should ensure that they first identify gaps in the calendar, where attracting new events would be valuable, generating room nights and additional spending.

One final word: In the first two or three years of this effort, do NOT put obstacles in their way, like big charges for portable toilets, staging, sound, lights, security, etc. You want to create incentives for them to host their events in Squamish. Very likely, 99% of these organizations are going to be non-profit groups with very little budget. BUT they will do the marketing, invite their members and others, and THEN if it's successful and they agree to come back time and again, at that point it might make sense to begin collecting fees for local services they are using. But until then, what's in it for Squamish? Tax base that comes from a vibrant, busy, and ultra-successful downtown districts, full hotels (think Destination Marketing funds), and new businesses, residents and industry coming into Squamish, which they discovered as a result of an event they attended there.

27. Create a series of brand awareness posters

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee , Tourism Squamish, District of Squamish

Approximate cost: \$5,250

Possible funding idea: Destination Marketing funds

Rationale and/or details:

Create an initial series of three or four posters. Make them 24" x 36" (movie poster size), print 1,000 of each, have perhaps 50 of each matted, mounted and framed. These will begin to inform the world about Squamish's brand. These are a fantastic way to cement "ownership" of the brand. After all, brands are about ownership. Napa Valley owns the wine brand. Nashville owns the country music brand. Orlando owns the family vacation brand. Squamish will own the brand of "Hardwired for Adventure".

This initiative will help build a local connection to the brand.

The focus of the posters:

- The Squamish locals & lifestyle - Hardwired for Adventure
- Epic adventures

Once you have them framed, distribute and offer to hang the posters in district offices, the library, in every organizational office, hotel meeting rooms or lobby areas, at restaurants, in retail shops, museums – everywhere you can. Target key public spaces around Squamish, including Brennan Park and the Library. This will spread the word and create additional buy-in for the brand direction.

The posters should be "collectibles" with strong imagery, and each year a new poster would be developed and added to the collection. After a couple of years, people will purchase the posters to add them to their collections.

The reason to go to the time and expense of framing, mounting and matting them is to make sure they do get hung in key locations. Handing someone a rolled up poster they can hang at their convenience will result in a lot of posters sitting in back rooms. Make it easy, and you'll see it happen. This is a big part of your outreach efforts.

Make sure you offer to hang the posters for those willing to put them up! And put them up in series – with perhaps six inches

between each frame. Places that should have the posters hung include:

- Library
- Municipal Hall (and other district facilities)
- Local schools
- Corporate offices (major employers)
- Restaurants
- Hotels
- Retail spaces (where there is wall space at or near entrances)
- Possibly in empty storefront windows to create interest
- The hospital
- Golf course clubhouses

NOTE: Brands start from within – with local knowledge and support. It’s imperative that local residents and businesses know what Squamish is all about.

The remaining posters can be sent to various groups you want to entice into Squamish, and the balance can be sold at local retail shops and galleries, with some of the proceeds coming back to offset the cost of design, photographic licensing, and printing.

Conceptual examples.





The conceptual designs of the posters that are included in this plan are just that – concepts. When the BLT has the final designs for the posters created, the final images, headlines and text should be changed to the specifics that the BLT chooses, in keeping with guidelines that will be outlined in the brand style guide.

28. Identify innovative and cost-effective local guerilla marketing initiatives

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: None (staff time)

Rationale and/or details:

This recommendation builds on the brand posters and ensures that the BLT continues to find new ways to showcase the brand in Squamish.

- BLT to brainstorm and identify at least two new ways to promote the brand locally. For example, unique stickers that locals are proud to place on their cars, laptops, coffee mugs; or projecting brand images on buildings.
- This is a great opportunity to engage groups, organizations, clubs and the private sector in the development of new artwork, marketing tools, etc.
- Initiatives may be physical, digital, temporary, permanent, performance based, or even a new service.

29. Start inviting clubs and organizations to host events in Squamish

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee working with Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: None (staff time)

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

Now that the database of clubs and organizations is developed, it's time to invite these organizations to Squamish. Snail mail will get more attention than an e-mail campaign.

Craft an excellent, engaging and branded cover letter to invite clubs and organizations to host events in Squamish. This one-page letter will be critical to encourage outside organizations to host their events in Squamish. Invite them; let them know you'll roll out the red carpet for them, and that Squamish is a world-class destination.

Along with the letter, send the people an item that is innovative and unique that captures the recipient's attention, such as some Band Aids for the blisters they'll have after hiking up to the top of the Sea To Sky Gondola; or a carabineer just in case they decide to summit The Stawamus Chief; or some Chap Stick for their lips which will likely get wind burnt from so many hours kiteboarding on Howe Sound; or some Squamish branded duct tape. Budget permitting, take it one step further and send them a Squamish Survival Kit that demonstrates how they too can be 'hardwired for adventure'.

30. Integrate the new brand into existing economic development marketing materials

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: The District of Squamish (Economic Development), BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: \$15,000

Possible funding idea: General funds

Rationale and/or details:

Integrate the new brand into the Community Profile and create Opportunities brochures that integrate the new brand into their design and content. These materials should be simple, straightforward snapshots of Squamish that can be used by local real estate agents (commercial and residential) and the chamber as part of relocation packets, economic development for recruitment purposes, and tourism to attract conventions, festivals and events. Also provide copies to your major employers: hospitals and medical facilities, warehouse firms, etc.

These should be updated every year and should also be available as multi-page downloads in PDF format on local websites. Consider printing 6,000 copies. Distribute perhaps 200 to every real estate office within a 100 km radius, and then the rest will be available as needed. They should be available at the visitor information center, in each partnering organization office, and at municipal buildings.

With the "Opportunities" piece, list the top seven business opportunities. This initiative should support and reflect the priorities of the new Economic Development Strategy scheduled for completion in 2015. Consider the following:

- Recreational technologies
- Additional retail and restaurants in downtown Squamish
- Professional services buildings (creative space, small office lease spaces)
- Specialty retail shops downtown
- Sports and sporting goods store
- Bike shop (rentals, sales, repairs)
- Outfitter(s)
- Bike, kayak, canoe rentals and sales
- Tour operators (small business that lead local expeditions and tours)
- Dedicated climbing and water-sports retailer
- Downtown residential development

Make sure you concentrate the marketing on WHY Squamish – not just what you have or where it's located. WHY should I move or start a business in Squamish?

Remember, business prospects are not going to read through hundred-page plans. Each of these is an 8.5" x 11" tri-fold or bi-fold brochure that lists the top ten business opportunities, and the Community Profile provides a snapshot of Squamish.

Consider the translation of the materials for foreign investors.

31. Rebrand the trail guide

Timeline: Spring 2015

Who takes the lead: Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: Covered by existing organization budgets

Possible funding idea: Private sector investment

Rationale and/or details:

While Squamish has some amazing recreational assets, finding them is extremely difficult - even if you ask the locals how to find them. This "Trail Guide" should include:

- Where to park
- Seasonal considerations
- Difficulty level
- Primary use of the trails (hiking, biking, running, etc.)
- What to watch out for
- What you'll see and be able to enjoy
- Length and time to traverse its length (or a portion)

This will be the visitor's "Bible" when they arrive and want to try various activities, such as bouldering at the base of the Chief. It should include more than just trails – like bouldering and climbing. If I wanted to hike up to the top of The Chief, this would be the guide that should provide the details, with photography that would help us do it. It should be a folded piece that can be unfolded to reveal maps that are usable while at and on the trails. It should be printed on map paper that can be folded over and over without tearing, or a waterproof material.

While the Activities Guide (your primary Visitors Guide) is the foremost marketing piece, the Best Of Squamish and the Trail Guide are the two other most important printed marketing pieces you'll have. This particular guide should also be incorporated in the Squamish app, coming up later in these recommendations. Having a GPS guided app would be extremely handy and powerful and could actually save lives should people get lost or stranded along the trails. The catch: Is there cell service in all of these areas? That should also be addressed in the printed guide and in the app.



Conceptual example.

32. Update District policies and processes to support the Brand Promise

Timeline: Spring 2015 and ongoing

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, BLT

Approximate cost: Covered by existing organization budgets

Rationale and/or details:

To ensure Squamish protects and enhances the assets that are core to the brand promise, the BLT should provide input and feedback to the District on what current gaps and challenges exist in District policies and processes that impact local activity groups and event producers, including permitting, grant applications, and the impact of land development applications.

This is required to ensure Squamish considers the overall brand vision (and policies that help us reach this community vision). This consideration should also guide how the District works with private landowners, the Crown, SLRD, Forestry, BC Lands, environmental protection groups, etc., to ensure the protection of Squamish's assets for the future of the community.

33. Encourage merchant blade signs in Downtown Squamish

Timeline: Spring/Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: DSBA, District of Squamish, merchants

Approximate cost: \$30,000

Possible funding idea: General funds

Rationale and/or details:

Blade signs are retail signs that extend out from the façade or storefront, perpendicular to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The two points of uniformity that are important are location and size. For Squamish, we recommend that the top of the sign be no higher than nine feet above the sidewalk and no lower than seven feet, meaning the sign can be a maximum of 24 inches in height. When it comes to width, they can be any width up to 42 inches wide. Typically the façade side of the sign is placed from 14 inches to 18 inches from the façade. We also recommend that no backlit signs be allowed. However, façade mounted spot lights should be encouraged to light the signs, from both sides, particularly since there is a focus on keeping downtown open into the evening hours.

Where there are awnings that don't allow for the placement as noted above, they would hang just below the awning's lower point.

The second part of this recommendation is to find a top-notch retail sign maker and work a co-operative buying agreement with the firm, where merchants who have signs fabricated would get perhaps a 30% discount based on the quantity of work the sign-maker will receive from downtown merchants. You want a sign-fabricator that specializes in this type of retail signage (we're not talking the backlit florescent signs you see on large big box retail stores) including decorative mounting hardware. Creating a buying co-op will help increase participation in the signage program. The goal is to have blade signs in place before the end of 2015.

The District of Squamish should revisit the Signage Bylaw to allow for this type of signage in downtown Squamish (and potentially other areas including the Squamish Oceanfront).

Notes to retailers:

- a. Always use the blade sign to sell your primary lure, not necessarily the name of the store or restaurant. If it's not obvious what you are selling, you will lose sales. For instance, "Grandma's Collectibles" might be a great name for an

antique store, but the name should go on the door and/or windows and the blade sign should simply say “Antiques,” or even “Antique Furnishings.” Make it obvious what you’re selling – promote the one thing that will most easily pull people into the store.

- b. Keep the text on blade signs to four words or less. Never include a phone number or website address.
- c. Avoid outlined and script text, which is very hard to read from a distance.
- d. Signs can be round, oval, square or rectangle – shape rarely matters – but make sure they are double-sided and easy to read, and in keeping with your brand; if you are an antique store, the sign should reflect that.

Rationale for blade signs:

- a. When people drive down any street they notice signs that are perpendicular to them. People typically won’t stoop down and forward to look through the windshield up at the building facade to try to figure out what’s in the store. Likewise, pedestrians are not going to walk out into traffic to see what your signs say up on your facades; pedestrians notice perpendicular blade signs.
- b. Blade signs create a reason to continue exploring downtown, particularly while on foot. In many cases there’s no incentive to keep walking because visitors have no idea of what lies ahead. Blade signs make it easy to see what shops or restaurants are further down the road.

34. Continue to grow a downtown cooperative beautification program

Timeline: Spring/Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: DSBIA, property owners, District of Squamish, Squamish Arts Council, merchants

Approximate cost: To be determined

Possible funding idea: Funded by downtown merchants and property owners

Rationale and/or details:

Seventy percent of first-time sales at restaurants, retail shops, lodging facilities, golf courses and wineries comes from curb appeal. We all travel. Have you ever uttered the words, “That looks like a nice place to eat.” Of course, we all do. Women account for 70% of travel decisions and 80% of all consumer retail spending, so making women feel safe and welcome is the name of the game. Beautification does both.

Existing beautification efforts include:

- The work initiated and completed by the volunteer group, Imagine Squamish, in cleaning up downtown, coordinating the construction of flower box tile facades, and other initiatives.
- The Facade Improvement Program administered by the DSBIA and District of Squamish.
- And other improvements completed by downtown businesses, such as installation of seating and flower pots.

These area all excellent efforts, and by expanding on these efforts and adding to them, Downtown Squamish will become an even more beautiful, desirable destination.

The BLT should encourage businesses to take advantage of the current Downtown Squamish free sidewalk permits (e.g. for street-side cafe structures). Businesses need to register for a permit at the District of Squamish and add the District to their insurance, but there is no cost.

Merchants downtown should create a funding pool. At the end of the season, they can go to a nursery and purchase all the remaining pots and planters with openings of at least 21 inches – they don't have to match – at cost or less than cost. Then they should bring them downtown and spread them along the sidewalks against the facades. Merchants can then fill them with topsoil and plants of their choice – evergreens are a great selection, so there can be beauty all year long. The District of Squamish already waters all of the hanging flower baskets and concrete flower beds using a mobile watering system.

There should be five primary things along your facades:

1. The extension of window displays to exterior spaces
2. Benches
3. Pots and planters
4. Sidewalk cafe seating
5. First Nations' art

In Downtown Squamish there should be at least 30 benches along the facades, and each should be flanked by a large pot with evergreens (native plants) and some with seasonal annual color. Pots should be placed every meter or less.

Be sure to watch the third installment of The 20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Downtown in the Roger Brooks video library – it goes into great detail about beautification, including many photographic examples. The other element to downtown beautification is having street trees every ten metres on both sides of the street. Planting trees down Cleveland would help beautify downtown. You want downtown to fit into the landscape, not be plopped on top of it. Whatever you can do to “hide” concrete and asphalt will increase retail sales.



The District of Squamish should review policies to make allowances for sidewalk beautification by downtown tenants and property owners.

Public art installations are also a great way to beautify a space or area, including downtown. Work with Squamish Arts Council and the District (that just adopted a new Public Art Policy) to target areas around downtown with new installations. An example of an installation that would be aligned with the brand would be to install decorated/artistic representations of bicycles throughout various hubs (perhaps different colours or different types of bikes to represent each hub in Squamish).

Even when spaces are under construction, there's no reason why the developers and/or the District can't find create ways to scrim the development whilst promoting Squamish's brand (e.g. bike screen printed scrim material).

Although Squamish does have at least one bike designed bike stand downtown, there is an opportunity for more public art pieces and practical infrastructure that reflects those assets and activities that Squamish is renowned for including water sports, rock climbing, logging and First Nations.

The heart and soul of any community is its downtown. It needs to be beautiful, creating an ambiance that attracts people and makes them want to linger. One of the most visible and effective programs involves planting. A local gardening club could be recruited coordinate the following efforts:

- Replacing drab corners with colorful splashes of annual flowering plants
- Creating an annual buying cooperative
- Designing more planting for landscape buffers between sidewalks and traffic lanes
- Encouraging merchants to display hanging baskets

35. Work with local organizations to develop a branded community-wide Customer Service Program

Timeline: Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: Squamish Chamber, BLT

Approximate cost: To be determined

Rationale and/or details:

Great customer service is vital to a successful downtown. It can create consumer trust and loyalty, endearing visitors and residents to an individual shop or restaurant as well as to an entire community. It is said that people may forget what you say, or what you do, but they never forget how you make them feel. Competition is fierce for every consumer dollar, and good customer service skills will bring people back time and again, and it will prompt them to spread the word about Squamish through word of mouth, social media, and feedback websites such as TripAdvisor and Yelp!

One of the best ways to improve customer service is to train front-line employees with the skills they need and increase their knowledge of what Squamish has to offer. It is also important to provide information about the value of tourism to the community. When people see how important happy visitors are to the economy of the District, and how that affects their own quality of life, they are more motivated to offer excellent, friendly customer service.

There are many excellent customer service training resources. Destination British Columbia offers WorldHost Fundamentals Workshops, which specialize in training front-line employees with the skills they need for excellent customer service. There are also a number of excellent videos that can be purchased or downloaded for training.

The Squamish Chamber and BLT should work together to set up a program to provide customer service training for merchants, lodging staff, and other front-line workers. Consider using local expertise, adding to that expertise with additional training (such as the WorldHost Fundamentals Workshop mentioned above), and hiring outside expertise to provide training

for the members of the community.

Numerous articles are available online that provide the fundamentals of customer service. Post links to some of the best of these articles on the Chamber's website. Post information about the value of tourism to Squamish's economy and quality of life on the Chamber's website. Excellent videos are available as well, and they could be purchased and shown at training sessions.

Part of the training needs to include educating people about all the activities, attractions and amenities that Squamish has to offer. One good method is to assign each business an attraction to cross-promote. Each employee receives on-site training about the business or attraction they will promote, so they know it inside and out. When customers visit the business or attraction, the staff lets the customer know about the other business or attraction.

Consider giving awards or certifications to those who attend a certain number of training sessions, and finding ways to publicly recognize businesses that find innovative, brand-focused ways to provide exceptional customer service.

36. Develop free wi-fi access throughout Downtown Squamish

Timeline: Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: Private sector, District of Squamish

Approximate cost: To be determined

Possible funding idea: General funds

Rationale and/or details:

In this age of central gathering spots, QR codes, and sidewalk cafes, having consistent, high quality broadband Internet access is very important. Particularly in a downtown where you are trying to attract young adventurers and entrepreneurial types, having free broadband access is a huge selling point. It also makes it ultra-easy for visitors to post photos and their Squamish experiences to social media sites, furthering your marketing efforts at little additional cost.

One thing you might consider is having people login to use the Internet. They provide their name and e-mail address (no more information) after which they are automatically added to your e-newsletter database and will receive notices about adventures and events. They can have the option to easily unsubscribe.

Advertising can be sold for the landing page, offsetting monthly access costs from your primary Internet provider. It can also help offset the cost of installing the system. In Downtown Squamish, you'd have it cover your core dining and shopping district, to start, and then expand it over time.

There have been a number of efforts already in Squamish to offer free wi-fi Downtown and at some of the District's facilities - build upon these efforts and then promote them!

37. Improve visitor transportation linkages to Squamish

Timeline: Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: No cost

Rationale and/or details:

Tourism Squamish is currently working with transportation providers (e.g. Greyhound) to ensure there are sufficient services into and out of Squamish from core areas including Horseshoe Bay.

When potential visitors are considering a destination, ease of transportation is a major factor. The more convenient and easy it is to travel to the destination, the more likely visitors will choose to go there over a location with similar activities that is difficult or takes longer to travel to. If Squamish is easy to reach by the four primary modes of transportation - road, rail, water, and air - more visitors are likely to choose Squamish. With active adventure being one of Squamish's most outstanding activities, ensuring that visitors can also arrive by trail (biking and hiking), by water, air or train, will make getting there be part of the adventure.

38. Integrate the new brand into logo gear and collectibles

Timeline: Spring/Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: Tourism Squamish, BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: Covered by existing organization budgets

Possible funding idea: Destination Marketing funds, private funding (business opportunity)

Rationale and/or details:

To start telling the world about Squamish's brand, develop logo gear that can be sold at hotels, in the visitor information center, at museums, and at local retail outlets. Using the new brand identity and tagline, create collectibles and logo gear that can be sold:

- Polo shirts (have the brand identity stitched above the breast pocket location) . Don't make these billboard shirts with huge logos on them .
- Baseball and "trucker" caps
- Coffee mugs and water bottles
- Squamish Nation art and gifts
- Umbrellas and polar fleece gear
- The posters described earlier
- Logos on outdoor gear is a perfect fit to showcase the active lifestyle of Squamish.

Make up a list of brand-specific goods that could include the Squamish brand mark and would reinforce the brand.

Make sure they are colorful and something a visitor would want to wear and want to have. Think like a visitor – what you might buy and wear when you go to Banff National Park or another great city like Montreal.

Get together and think of clever and edgy slogans that would sell on logo gear. Remember to sell the experience – not just the town.

Explore the sale of promotional items that are developed to lure clubs and organizations to Squamish.

Come up with pricing (including cost of design) and then offer them to local retailers with 20% of the sale coming back to the BLT (or supporting organization) to fund further promotional efforts. For instance, if a polo shirt at wholesale costs \$12.50, it would retail for approximately \$24 .95. The BLT would pay the \$12.50, add on \$2.50 (20% of the wholesale price) for a total wholesale cost of \$15.00. This way the retailer gets the additional \$10 markup.

Also develop public market fabric shopping bags or "market bags," caps, and shirts – once the Squamish market becomes a reality. Even before it opens. This creates a sense of anticipation.



Samples of current logo merchandise.



Conceptual examples.



There is also an opportunity for the private sector to develop logo gear (with approval required from the BLT prior to using the Squamish brand identity).

The BLT should support Tourism Squamish with exploring new product ideas that are reflective of the brand - innovative, fresh, and reflecting the outdoors lifestyle of Squamish.

39. Develop the public market

PART A: Support the concept development of a public market

Timeline: Fall 2014

Who takes the lead: BLT

Approximate cost: No cost

The BLT will engage with the private developer that is proposing a public market near Downtown Squamish to share insight on the brand and how the market can tie into the brand promise.

We recommend that the public market be a year-round facility that can double as conference, trade show, and exhibition space and should operate at least four days a week and into the evening hours. It should include a center stage with daily entertainment. The market should include a mix of one-third raw produced foods, one-third prepared foods, and one-third locally crafted goods and art. It should be a “juried” mix. During the non-farmers market season it can shift gears to a Christmas Tree Forest or haunted house, or can host art shows and other organizations being recruited into Squamish.

Watch the Roger Brooks video, “Year Round Public Markets”, where you’ll find a wealth of information about developing, programming and operating a public market.

PART B: Support the opening of a public market

Timeline: Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: Private Sector

Public markets are revitalizing downtowns throughout America and are not just a local gathering spot, but a tremendous tourist attraction. A private developer is proposing a public market near Downtown Squamish, and the BLT should work with them and support their efforts to bring a public market to the District. The BLT should encourage the following recommendations for the public market:

- It should be a fixed structure with roll-up doors, which would have relight panels in them. During the warm summer months all the doors could open up. If there are prevailing winds, you might only open the sides out of the direct wind. During the winter months, you might only open up one door as a primary entrance keeping the market warm. See the renderings here for an example of what it might look like.
- The market should be open year round, starting with Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays until 4:00 pm. Over time, the market would expand its operating days to include Wednesdays, then eventually to six or seven days a week.
- The market would open at 11:00 am each day and close at 8:00 pm on Thursdays and 9:00 pm on Fridays and Saturdays, and at 4:00 on Sundays. The days of morning markets are fading as we move to evening hour shopping, dining and entertainment.
- The market should include a center stage for cooking demonstrations, music or entertainment during the lunch and dinner hours. This way the market becomes a central gathering spot for both locals and visitors.
- As noted earlier in this plan, the mix should include one-third raw, locally or regionally grown/produced foods: fruits, vegetables, dairy products, fish, poultry and meats. One third should be dedicated to locally prepared foods: cupcakes, deli-style sandwiches, prepared and ready-to-cook dishes, breads and baked goods, etc. The final third would be locally-crafted goods: art, jewelry, clothing, home accents, toys, etc. It’s important that all goods be as local as possible.

- The market would shift its focus depending on the season, and would be programmed accordingly. For instance, during the months of November and December the market could include a Christmas Tree Forest and feature all kinds of locally or regionally crafted gifts and decorations. In January it might be home to ice carvers. In October perhaps it becomes a haunted house. In September perhaps you have a chain saw carvers event.
- The market should be “Flex Space,” meaning it can also host trade shows such as fishing and hunting shows, RV shows, job fairs, wellness retreats, fitness boot camps and other brand-specific events. As you will be inviting outside organizations to host their events in Squamish, this creates an additional venue for days of inclement weather.

40. Explore ways to connect existing Squamish events to the brand

Timeline: Summer 2015 and ongoing

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

Every Squamish event should have a tie to the brand. The title of the event doesn’t need to use the exact messaging, but in promoting the event you are giving people another reason to experience how Squamish is hardwired for adventure.

This can be a very creative and fun thing to do. Likewise, make sure events are using the Brand Style Guide in their marketing efforts so there is continuity with your branding efforts. In fact, if it helps, have your graphic design firm help them (at your cost not the event’s cost) design their posters, banners, signs and ads promoting the event. Then, in following years, they can use those templates over and over again.

The BLT should explore ways of aligning events with the brand without third parties actually using the new Squamish logo (which would require significant monitoring and policing by the BLT, and potentially lead to improper / undesirable use of the Squamish brand). One way to achieve this may be to design an endorsement graphic that can be issued to an approved Squamish event that in turn places the graphic on their printed materials/signage/website to demonstrate their support and alignment with the new brand and proud association with Squamish, e.g. “Proudly Squamish”, or “Another Squamish Adventure”.

Once again, continuity is absolutely critical to a strong branding effort. And this includes local events.

41. Begin the process of implementing a highway banner program

Timeline: Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT, District of Squamish

Approximate cost: To be determined

Possible funding idea: Destination Marketing funds, District wayfinding budget

Rationale and/or details:

Nothing can make a more powerful first impression along the highways, outside of your outstanding view corridors, more than pole banners that set a sense of anticipation, cement ownership of your brand in the minds of travelers, and entice people to stop and spend time in Squamish. The pole banners for this purpose should be, typically, (see rendering below) 14 feet tall, 2 feet wide, and the banner itself is nearly 10 feet tall. Imagine having one of these every 1,000 feet (or 500 meters) coming down the highway, on both sides of the highway, each offset about 250 meters from the next one across the highway.

Install perhaps six of these a year, with a goal of having perhaps 20 of them total. This would be the best marketing money can buy for several reasons:



Conceptual examples.



- They instantly “sell” the experience.
- They slow traffic, particularly as drivers approach Squamish.
- They take the focus away from the less-than-desirable first impression Squamish offers.
- They start several kilometers before arriving, giving motorists time to decide to stop and “check out” Squamish.
- They can include marketing partners, including downtown, the Sea to Sky Gondola, Provincial Parks – but they should NOT be advertising-focused. The goal is to showcase the amazing experiences to be found in Squamish.

Start working with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) to get permission to install these. While the funding will be separate from your wayfinding system, this can be included as part of the wayfinding system so these pole banners don’t conflict with your directional signage and gateways.

The District, as the governing body, would best be suited to push this program forward. It’s been done in other provinces, so a precedent has been set, although it may not be easy to do. Typically, these signs would go up around the first of April or May and remain up through October. The harsh winter months would damage them, so they would be stored during the winter months – or perhaps some could remain up to promote winter activities in Squamish, for all the Whistler traffic passing through.

42. Integrate the brand into partner organization websites

Timeline: Summer 2015 and ongoing

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee, District of Squamish, Tourism Squamish, DSBIA, Chamber

Approximate cost: None – costs borne by individual organizations

Possible funding idea: Organizational funds

Rationale and/or details:

Continuity is absolutely critical in any branding effort.

Every website, from local schools, the library, economic development, tourism and even non-profit supporting organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, should reflect the Squamish brand, not just the logo, but the overall look and feel.

This does not mean that every website has to be cookie-cutter to every other website, but there should be common graphic elements, common themes in terms of text, photography, and reciprocal links to each other. The Brand Style Guide will be the bible for making this happen.

The BLT Marketing Committee should encourage – even push – other local websites to include elements of the brand in their marketing efforts. Even local businesses can use common themes and marketing messaging.

The BLT should adhere to the Brand Style Guide when it pertains to how partners use the brand (specifically the logo).

While businesses cannot use the Squamish logo in their marketing efforts, they should be encouraged to play up the brand.

The bottom line: You will be far more effective as one unified voice than a bunch of independent individual voices. That’s the power of branding.

The more you have to offer, collectively, the further people will travel, the longer they will stay, and the more often they’ll come back. This applies to your marketing as well as to the business mix in your downtown core areas.

43. Review the plan every two months, and update it every year

Timeline: First review in Summer 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

This Action Plan is not like a comprehensive plan or even a strategic plan. As an Action Plan, it is fluid, and it needs to be looked at continually, massaged, and updated. You want to keep it relevant and prevent it from sitting on a shelf gathering dust. It is your reference and guidebook for the next two years.

It should be reviewed every two months, and then updated at least once every year. You will add to it, rearrange it, add case histories or new ideas, and use it to determine budgets. And you will cross things off the list as they are implemented. It should be a guidebook for Squamish's comprehensive planning effort. It should be used by Parks & Recreation, Public Works, the District's budget office, Planning Department, by Council in terms of setting policy and goals for the District. It should also be the guidebook for the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Squamish, DSBA, and Economic Development.

The more often you review the plan, the easier it will be to keep the focus narrow and all of your organizations on the same page, pulling in the same direction. This plan is designed to generate some peer pressure between partnering organizations: "How are you doing on your list?"

The BLT should create an Excel sheet or a document that lists all of the recommendations arranged by implementing organization, so you have lists for Tourism Squamish, Chamber, DSBA, and the District. Some overlap, but this will assist each organization to track their specific assignments.

44. Develop a Squamish adventures app that would provide updates and detailed information about epic adventures, upcoming festivals/events, special deals, packages, sample itineraries, and more.

Timeline: Summer/Fall 2015

Who takes the lead: Private sector, BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: To be determined – private-sector funding

Possible funding idea: Destination Marketing funds, in-app marketing partnerships (privately produced)

Rationale and/or details:

As the brand develops, a private sector or public/private opportunity would be to create a mobile app that can offer the following features:

- Maps of local parks, downtown, and trail system with a list, where visitors can choose one location, then the other, and the app will route the user between the two. Have them GPS enabled so the app can be used while on the trails.
- Include restaurants plus both Yelp and TripAdvisor ratings. They would search for the meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner), the type of restaurant (ethnicity), and general location (close to Hwy 99, Downtown Squamish).
- Include what's happening this week. They could also sign up for alerts when an event that caters to them is coming to town. For instance someone that loves cars and motorcycles would sign up for the alert when those events are coming to town. Likewise, for those who like arts events. You would have numerous categories, such as:
 - Special deals at restaurants
 - The Arts (performing and visual)
 - Cars, motorcycles and anything with an engine attached (sample driving routes, events)

- Outdoor adventures
- indoor activities (e.g. what to do when it's raining)
- Cultural places of interests and events
- Historical events
- Music shows and concerts
- Fishing and hunting
- Recreation: on water, on trails, on rock
- The app could also include lodging options.
- It should include your attractions: the museum, tours, and other area attractions with photos and details.

This app should include a centralized event calendar (management and maintenance of this calendar to be determined with the BLT at a later date).

This should be a private-sector project that is coordinated with the BLT Marketing Committee, the District, and Tourism Squamish. All the profits can go to the developer, but it would become the "official" Squamish Experience mobile app. It should be optimized for both iOS and Android and for phones and tablets.

45. Contract For Urban Planning Expertise (Plaza)

Timeline: Summer/Fall 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT, District of Squamish

Approximate cost: \$25,000 to \$30,000

Possible funding idea: Provincial or federal community development or planning grant funds

Rationale and/or details:

To make the Downtown Squamish plaza a reality, start with a rendering or two of what it could look like. This would include several renderings along the lines of the examples used in the Brand Presentation by Roger Brooks. Have your contractor provide two to three concept renderings of the plaza – full color, high resolution water color concepts and have them do a location analysis. While this won't be the final design, it provides a strong visual of how incredible the plaza can be. Often just the rendering is enough to secure legacy funding for its development. And it certainly makes it easier to help locals envision what could be the centerpiece and signature gathering place for Squamish. Plazas should ALWAYS be in the heart of the spending district and MUST be programmed with activities 250 days a year - or more.

If funding is available or can be secured, issue a Request for Qualifications for urban planning or landscape architectural expertise to develop a plan for the plaza. We tend to steer clear of architectural firms for this type of work, since this is an outdoor public assembly space that will include water feature(s), a stage area, lighting for vendors, events and special productions, night lighting, ice skating rink in winter (if conditions in Squamish permit), music (sound system), and significant landscape elements.

The scope of work would include:

- Initial plans for the plaza area working with the District and the BLT. This should NOT be a public process, which ultimately will drive the cost of the project up as well as the planning fees. Keep the working committee small.
- Two or three renderings (water color and a little loose like the samples we've provided), showing the plaza from various angles and perhaps one in the winter and one in summer.
- Address parking issues, locations, and perhaps dovetailing the plaza into a parking structure.
- The possible street closure. Perhaps this can even be a second phase project.

- Development costs – including funding options, a phased project, and including architectural and engineering costs. In hopes of landing this major project, often urban planning/landscape architectural firms will discount this initial phase.

The rationale for doing this is to determine the final location, address parking issues, develop a development budget and timeline – turning the plaza into a “real” project. Once costs are determined, the fund-raising efforts can begin for the actual architectural and engineering effort.

Depending on costs, you could combine this with the Public Market facility as well.

We strongly recommend that the plaza be developed at the open lot on Cleveland Ave and Winnipeg St (between Cleveland Ave and Loggers Ln). This is simply an ideal location and true “center piece” for Downtown Squamish. While other locations might be easier or even cheaper to develop, a true central location is always important. The properties surrounding the plaza will see property values increase dramatically, spurring increased investment in those properties.

We encourage you to watch the Roger Brooks video “The Power of Public Plazas,” a two-part video that will show you numerous case histories, as well as the steps and ingredients to creating a winning central gathering place.

The top two, most successful, revitalization strategies for downtowns include a programmed public plaza and a year round public market.

Note: The current park and bandshell in Squamish are not sufficient as public plazas and neither park can be easily monetized. The active hours for a plaza are between 4:00 pm and 10:00 pm each evening, so they need to be in the commercial core, not next to lodging or residential developments. This, next to wayfinding, are the two most expensive projects in this plan but are also the most powerful and will provide the greatest return on investment of all public investment projects.

Tied to the plaza design and development should be a reimagined and improved downtown gateway, which should start at the highway - not a couple blocks off the highway. It should also include public art throughout downtown. And the focus of that public art should be to showcase the recreational opportunities in Squamish - after all, that’s the heart and soul of the brand.

46. Develop a cross promotion program

Timeline: Summer/Fall 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Team

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

If you were to ask most of your frontline employees what there is to do in Squamish, chances are the list would be all over the place. It’s nearly impossible to train all front-line employees about everything that the Squamish area has to offer.

Instead, each attraction would adopt three businesses in a reciprocal marketing effort. For example, the Britannia Mine Museum might “adopt” three restaurants in Squamish. For example, they might adopt The Howe Sound Brew Pub (dinner), The Ledge Cafe (dessert), and The Red Bench Diner (lunch). The museum would provide each of these restaurants with table tents that would sell the museum experience and why it’s worth the time. When a patron enters, they are given a menu and asked if they’ve been to the museum. If not, they are given a brochure. When one of the restaurants hires a new employee, the museum would pay their first two hours of wages and would give them a one-on-one guided tour of the attraction. Additionally, because they work at one of the restaurants being promoted by the museum, employees would each get a free pass to it for them and a companion. All they have to do is show their paycheck stub from within the past two weeks.

In exchange for this, the staff and volunteers at the museum would promote these three restaurants. Menus would be near the entrance, brochures would be handed to each visitor as they enter or exit, and would be available in rack brochures in the store.

Another attraction, such as the Sea to Sky Gondola, might promote three retail shops. The idea is to have the front-line employees promote ONE attraction or activity versus trying to train them to know everything Squamish has to offer. While we used signature attractions and a few of the better restaurants in this example, the most visited front-line employees will be those working at local hotels, fast food restaurants, chain restaurants, and gas stations.

They can also be brought into the mix by creating these reciprocal promotional relationships. Feel free to contact the folks at Roger Brooks International if you need more clarification on how this program works. They are looking for a case history of this in action. Perhaps Squamish would be that community!

47. Create and manage social media campaigns

Timeline: Fall 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT, Tourism Squamish, District of Squamish

Approximate cost: \$3,000 for some outside consulting, graphic design

Possible funding idea: Destination marketing funds, District funds - a mix of resources

Rationale and/or details:

Your brand is a perception – what people think when you say you’re from Squamish. It’s based on what people read, first impressions as they drive through town, their experiences, and primarily word of mouth. You build your brand through public relations, and advertising is used to maintain your ownership position. Branding has never been as fast as it is now, and that’s due to social media – word of mouth.

The BLT Marketing Committee should always be thinking of crazy fun things to do to tell the world how amazing Squamish is, with a particular focus on its top epic adventures. Some of the messages need to be emotional and touching, but most should be fun, action-packed and engaging. Some can be a little (or a lot) edgy, so they have the opportunity of going viral and creating photo opportunities.

There are countless novel, fun, and touching things you can do, and now’s the time to brainstorm ideas.

- Encourage photographs and videos of people ‘hardwired for adventure’. These would be populated on Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Flickr, Facebook, Digg and YouTube for those shot in video.
- Using a professional videographer, create a YouTube channel and populate it with 30 second to two-minute videos of people experiencing Squamish.
- Let your imagination fly and make it fun.

One thing to remember: The power of social media is when your residents, visitors, and businesses tell their “tribes” about their Squamish experiences. It’s word of mouth. Very, very few people will decide to come to Squamish because Squamish has Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and other social media pages, including YouTube. The magic happens when your market shares their experiences on your social media pages. As visitors post their experience, telling their friends and followers about their experience, word spreads, and THAT is the power of social media.

So what to do? Make sure you have free wi-fi downtown. Put up signs that say “A perfect photo spot of The Chief” or “Take a picture and post it while right here.” “Film your epic Squamish adventure” signs should be placed around town encouraging people to talk about Squamish. Provide lots of social media photographic opportunities and remind them to “post it while here: free wi-fi.” Word will spread, and the Squamish brand will really take off.

You can post your Twitter feeds using widgets on your website, and keep the conversation going. The bottom line: create opportunities for local residents, businesses and visitors to share their Squamish adventures, encourage them to do so, and that will build the brand faster and cheaper than any other form of media can. YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram should round out your top three media outlets, with Facebook and others following.

Your social media sites (YouTube Channel, Twitter, Facebook and others) should be designed with the common brand elements, per the Style Guide. And your social media efforts should be managed – don't let it become a free-for-all. This is very important. Perhaps a single person can be dedicated to the social media effort.

Ask for permission to use some of the “user experience” posts, quotes, photos and videos, and post them to the website. It should be updated every two weeks, if not every week, keeping it fresh and up to date. There is no more powerful marketing tool than third-party endorsements.

Part of this effort includes watching, very carefully, reviews on TripAdvisor (now the number one travel website on earth), Yelp and other user-review sites. Never be defensive, but if someone posts something negative, tell them you're sorry and then perhaps, if warranted, add it to the To Do List – this plan.

48. Create a YouTube channel and load it with adventures

Timeline: Fall 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT, Tourism Squamish

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: None required

Rationale and/or details:

YouTube is now the world's most used search engine. Nothing sells like video. Starting as soon as possible, you want to create a YouTube channel and start populating it with user-submitted videos and a call to action, “Begin your epic adventure” or “How are you hardwired for adventure?”

Have university students submit videos and encourage visitors to do the same. Some may be silly, some quite fun, and perhaps some will be edgy, but it's a good way to build the brand, create excitement, and solidify your ownership position of the Squamish brand.

Over time you'll add more professionally produced videos to mix in with the user-submitted videos. All should run from 20 seconds to three minutes. The median running time should be one to two minutes. As you review them, make sure they would make you want to go there if you lived in a different town.

Make sure you have them posted and linked to your tourism website.

49. Develop a buskers program for Downtown Squamish

Timeline: Fall/Winter 2015

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee, Squamish Arts Council, DSBIA

Approximate cost: \$5,000 a year

Possible funding idea: Business improvement association funding

Rationale and/or details:

Buskers include street musicians, magicians, street artisans, and other “street entertainment” that add culture, depth, and activity to a downtown. This is something Nelson, BC has done well, and it should be a top priority for Squamish.

Bringing downtown to life must include a buskers program. Here are some general guidelines to get you started:

- Buskers should be no closer than one block apart.
- They should sign a code of conduct before they can begin.
- Consider developing “stars,” marking locations where they can perform.
- All music must be non-amplified, and drums are not allowed.
- Music should take place throughout the day but end by 10:00 pm.
- Buskers can include artisans in action, mimes, musicians, and other forms of sidewalk entertainment.

We recommend starting the program with a budget to actually pay them \$30 per performance on Fridays from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Saturdays from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, and from 4:00 to 8:00, and on Sundays from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm during the summer months. The balance of funds they earn come from tips. No panhandling is allowed. Over time, this can expand to weekdays and other daylight hours. In places such as Nelson, British Columbia and Asheville, North Carolina, they no longer pay local buskers, yet the city streets have dozens of musicians, artisans, and performers who are there 360+ days a year. These downtowns are so vibrant the tips alone can support them. But to start, pay them while downtown builds up a consistent “audience.”

Work with local universities, local high schools, Squamish Nation and Training Innovations (WorkBC) to find local talent for downtown. If not music, artisans in action are also great additions to downtown.

If you have the time and energy, consider auditions to keep the quality high. They do not need to be assigned to individual locations, as long as they play at a “busker station” marked on the sidewalks.

The District and the DSBI should work together to support up to a dozen food trucks at one time downtown. These are now a major draw, and downtown needs to be opened up to allow more of them, particularly during the summer months. The argument that they compete with sit-down restaurants is a false assumption. The fact is, if you had 20 restaurants and a dozen food trucks in town at one time, residents and visitors would be coming to Squamish in droves JUST for the dining experience. If people are looking for a sit-down restaurant experience, they won't be in line at the food truck. It's a different audience, and a different experience. This is also a great way to introduce the community to ethnic cuisine that is not being offered in Squamish. Cajun, Korean, and other types of food would be a good fit and would help round out your offerings. The goal, of course, is to convert these to inline (in buildings) eateries.

With street performers, enforcement should be managed by Downtown Squamish with help from the BLT – not the district – or some other organization or agency. If there are flagrant violations by a busker, the district may need to be called in to have the person removed, but in our experience, that is very rare.

A sample ordinance for street performers is as follows (this should be changed to reflect particular specifications for Squamish):

Street Performers Ordinance

The District should encourage such performances, while at the same time recognizing that they draw crowds that may create safety problems. An ordinance should be adopted by the District that stipulates rules and regulations governing street performance, so the safety of performers, their audiences, and the general public is ensured. All street performers should be required to obtain a permit. Street performers add a cosmopolitan flair to a community and entertain residents and visitors alike. The following Street Performer Guidelines stipulate rules and regulations governing this activity. This is a compilation of documents from several cities that recognize the value of street performance.

Street Performer Guidelines

No person shall perform in a public area without a permit from the district. The permit must include the name and address of the performer, term of the permit, and the type and location(s) of the performance. A performer shall clearly display his or her permit while performing and allow inspection of the permit by any district official or police officer. All performances must

comply with this document, province and local legislation, and conditions of the permit. Permits are not transferable, and each member of a group who performs together is required to obtain an individual permit.

Every person wanting to engage in street performance is required to make a written application for a Street Performer Permit from the District accompanied by a fee. The application form requires the following information:

- Applicant's name, address, and phone number.
- Birth date of applicant.
- Applicant's driver's license or personal identification number.
- A description of the subject matter and method of performance.
- The period for which the permit applies.
- The location of areas in which the performance will be conducted.
- A statement as to whether the applicant has ever been convicted of a felony.
- A 2x2 inch color photo of the applicant's head and shoulders.
- A signed permission slip from the property owner, if performance is to occur on private property.

Rules & Regulations

Location: Performances may take place in the following locations:

- a) On private property, with the written permission of the owner or other person in control of such property.
- b) In public areas designated by the District.

Time: Hours during which performances may occur are determined by the District.

Contributions:

Performers may accept, but not verbally solicit, contributions from audience members.

Prohibitions: No performer shall:

- a) Perform without first obtaining a permit issued by the district.
- b) Perform outside areas indicated on the map that accompanies this document or off the private property for which the performer has obtained written permission.
- c) Perform within 10 feet of any bus stop, street corner, pedestrian crosswalk, or the entrance to any business (during hours the business is open to the public).
- d) Block or obstruct the free and safe movement of pedestrians. If a sufficient crowd gathers to observe a performer and interferes with public passage, a police officer may disperse that portion of the crowd that is blocking passage.
- e) Use any knife, sword, axe, saw, torch, flame, or other object that can cause serious bodily injury; any amplification device; any generator, battery, or power source that poses a fire or public safety hazard; any electrical connection to an adjacent building or District power source.
- f) Leave litter at his or her performance site.
- g) Utilize or prevent the public from using any public benches, waste receptacles, or other street furnishings during his or her performance.
- h) Place any object on a public sidewalk that leaves less than a five-foot passage for pedestrian traffic.
- i) Place his or her instruments, props, equipment, or other items unattended on a public sidewalk or right-of-way.
- j) Offer any items for sale. Performers who wish to sell items must first obtain a District peddler's license.

- k) Display any sign other than the name of the performer(s) and the Street Performer Permit.
- l) Include a minor under the age of 16 in the performance unless accompanied at all times by a responsible adult 18 years of age or older.

Revocation Of Permit: A Street Performer Permit may be revoked by the District if it (or BLT) has reason to believe that a performer has:

- a) Violated any provisions of this document or any district or provincial laws.
- b) Made a false statement in the application.
- c) Conducted a performance adverse to public safety or prevailing community standards of public decency.

Complaints And Appeals:

If a written complaint is filed with the District alleging that a performer has violated any provisions of this document, the District shall promptly send a copy of the written complaint to the performer, together with a notice that an investigation will be made regarding the truthfulness of the complaint. The performer will be invited to respond to the complaint, present evidence in his or her behalf, and respond to evidence produced by the investigation. If, after reviewing all relevant material, the District finds the complaint to be valid, the complaint shall be certified.

50. Support Tourism Squamish with building a brand-focused marketing program

Timeline: Fall/Winter 2015 (to build into 2016 plan)

Who takes the lead: BLT Marketing Committee

Approximate cost: To be explored

Possible funding idea: Destination Marketing funds

Rationale and/or details:

The BLT should work with Tourism Squamish to continue building on Tourism Squamish's programs, finding new and innovative ways to penetrate markets in a creative and cost-effective manner. Explore the use of bike stand advertisements and bus transit posters.

Squamish's primary audience (for day visitors) is within a one-hour drive, but your overnight market is people who will drive at least two hours to you, and that's your core market area. Domestic overnight visitors spend three times more than domestic day visitors, and overnight American visitors to Canada spend over twice as much as overnight domestic visitors. Develop marketing methods to reach that overnight audience. To tap into your core market area, consider placing billboard advertising in North Vancouver, Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland. While RBI is not a proponent of the use of billboards in scenic surroundings, if the billboards are available in urban areas, it is very advantageous to use them, and RBI recommends that Squamish do so. They are the most cost effective way to get your message out in very short order. The cost "per impression" is extremely low compared to other forms of media.

One of the fastest ways to promote a brand is to put it on billboards in high-traffic areas. For everyday commuters in places like Vancouver, Surrey, North Vancouver (along the TransCanada Highway), Seattle, and Portland, they will be exposed to a single billboard multiple times. That exposure will cement ownership of your brand in their minds; tell them once, tell them twice, and tell them again, and they will remember. Pretty soon these folks will say, "We really need to go out to Squamish."

The conceptual billboard ads shown can also be converted into bike stand advertisements and bus transit posters.



The concept art in these billboards can also be used for other outdoor advertising, such as bus transit posters and bike stand advertisements.



51. Contract for a public shuttle service (hop on / hop off)

Timeline: Spring 2016

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, Private sector

Approximate cost: Approximately \$60,000 for the plan

Possible funding idea: Transportation grants (federal, provincial)

Rationale and/or details:

Imagine coming as a visitor to Squamish and being able to catch a branded shuttle service between the Britannia Mine Museum, Shannon Falls, the Sea to Sky Gondola, the Visitor Information Center, Downtown Squamish, and communities like Quest, the Squamish Oceanfront and the Brackendale Eagle viewing area. This would become an attraction in itself. The ride might be free or might be perhaps 50¢ per rider.

The longest point from A to Z should be no more than perhaps 30 minutes, and it's important that a rider can catch a shuttle every 15 to 20 minutes, making it ultra convenient. Any longer than that and the visitor will usually simply drive. While on the shuttle, riders will be educated about the various activities, attractions, and history of Squamish and the area. With onboard

advertising, the operational costs could be largely offset.

For a good example of this, please take a look at the trolley systems in place in Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and Walnut Creek, California. You'd start with two trolleys that would cross paths to keep the time to catch one down to 15 minutes. Over time you would add a third and fourth to include Quest University, Garibaldi Highlands, the rail museum, and other stops.

The hop on/hop off shuttle system would include perhaps a dozen stops along the route, and two shuttles would be in continual use during the peak months with a relaxed schedule depending on demand. For instance, during winter and early spring months one shuttle might be in service and would stop at the primary stops and attractions or activities open that time of year. The shuttle system could be funded by a public/private partnership where the hotels and attractions that host stops would pay a portion of the cost (perhaps 30%) while the District would cover the remaining 70%. Some revenues would be generated from onboard advertising (panels and brochure distribution).

To start the process, \$60,000 of this cost would be spent to design the route, look at funding and operational costs including determination of what organization would operate the system, resulting in a long-term business plan for the system. Seek a service that uses low emission vehicles such as biodiesel or electric vehicles.

The approximate cost of new shuttles would be in the \$485,000 range for the purchase of three shuttles (e.g. trolley-like cars), business plan development, and construction of 16 stops at \$7,800 each.

It's important that these be shuttles, not a bus system, so they become part of the experience and an attraction in their own right. These will add to the entire experience, educate visitors about what's available and where it's located, and will connect the various hotels, your main shopping areas, attractions, sporting facilities, Downtown Squamish, and the waterfront. Once again, think of Squamish as one major theme park, i.e. Disney World, where there is a common transportation system linking it all together with a common system.

The actual development of the system might not take place until 2018 or so, but now's the time to start planning for the future. As we move to the European Standard, people want out of their cars and into a more pedestrian and transit-oriented experience. The shuttles – trolley-like not busses – can, in themselves, become an attraction. Just Google the "Big Red Busses" in Glacier National Park. The bus tours are as big a draw as the National Park!

52. Make the plaza a reality

Timeline: Spring 2016

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, BLT Product Development Committee

Approximate cost: To be determined

Possible funding idea: Various sources: local downtown assessments, fund raising efforts, grants, foundations, the sale of naming rights, a legacy project for local philanthropic efforts, revenue bond financing (tourism funding), etc.

Rationale and/or details:

By this point, a year will have gone by since this plan was first developed, and now it's time to make the plaza a reality (Note: the BLT can work on a name – or perhaps the naming rights are sold to help fund the development.) This is where you issue a Request for Qualifications for the firm to start developing the actual architectural, engineering, landscape architectural, and programming plans for the plaza. There are firms that specialize in these types of projects, so send the RFQ to those firms specifically. They will partner with water feature experts and others they already have relationships with that specialize in various aspects of the plan: Going from a water feature to a skating rink in the winter, providing power and sound system to year round events, adding night lighting, and for Squamish a year round covering.

Of all the recommendations in this plan, next to wayfinding, this is the most important. Regardless of the brand, the plaza, in itself, will make Squamish a great small-town destination of choice as a place to live, raise a family, start or expand a business,

and as an outstanding place to visit.

This is the most expensive project in this plan, but where there's a will there's a way. Call the folks in Rapid City, South Dakota, and they can attest to the challenges, and the outstanding outcome, of Main Street Square.

A must-see video is in the Roger Brooks library, for which we researched more than 100 plazas, and this video can provide inspiration, ideas, and practical things to consider as the plaza gets developed.

53. Hire plaza management/programming staff

Timeline: 2016

Who takes the lead: District of Squamish, DSBIA

Approximate cost: To be determined

Possible funding idea: Part of the plaza development cost

Rationale and/or details:

Plazas must be managed and programmed. Building a space is simply not enough, as you can see with the two "parks" in downtown Squamish that, for most of the year, are nothing more than just pretty places devoid of activity. The idea is to have the plaza active at least 250 days of the year. And for the other 115 days, it's a central gathering spot with ice skating in winter, water feature during the summer months. When it comes to downtown revitalization, what comes first; people or shops? The answer is people. Retail always follows people. If we move to the suburbs, the retail follows. If you can get people back downtown, the retailers will follow – but it can't be just for an occasional event – it has to be consistent, thus the 250 days of activity.

Main Street Square in downtown Rapid City, South Dakota is managed by a staff of three full-time people: One charged with recruiting and booking events into the square. Another handles the logistics tied to the activities. And the third handles the marketing and outreach. Of course, there's also facilities management (maintaining the square) which is often done by the city's parks department, public works and by contractors.

Look into the possibility of traveling to Rapid City to spend a few days with them to help you develop the plan. Pay them for their assistance, and the rest of the budget can cover the travel and related costs.

Hire a person or staff to oversee the management of the plaza and the programming. There are a number of groups currently programming events in Squamish, including the Squamish Arts Council, the Film and Event Manager at the District of Squamish, and the Summer Event Contractor with the District of Squamish. Their skills, knowledge and resources could be of assistance in this effort.

The other option is to simply hire the services of a consultant to put together an annual operating budget and management plan for the plaza.

54. Begin programming the public market

Timeline: 2016

Who takes the lead: Private sector

Approximate cost: Part of the management contract

Possible funding idea: To be determined

Rationale and/or details:

Markets, like the plaza, must be programmed. By 2016 the business plan should be in place, and now's the time to start



promoting it to vendors, artisans, growers, and to conference and trade show organizers around the province. Many events are planned a year in advance, and so marketing in 2016 should be done for use of the market in 2017. The goal is to have it built and operational in 2017.

The private developer of the market should work with community groups to grow a lively and vibrant market and to promote the use of the market for events. Community groups that can assist in this effort include the Squamish Farmer's Market and the Squamish Arts Council.

55. Measurables and accountability

Timeline: Fall 2014 and ongoing

Who takes the lead: BLT

Approximate cost: None

Possible funding idea: N/A

Rationale and/or details:

A community brand isn't listed on a balance sheet, and yet, having a positive, well-known brand for your community is one of the greatest assets a community can have. It affects community pride, economic development and economic success, and quality of life.

"Whether you strategically forge your brand in the marketplace or not, you will have a brand identity. Consumers will create their own brand identity (positive or negative) if you do not create an identity for them." – Jeff Kjoller, Principal, Loudthought

"Branding saves you money. Branding is recognition in the community. The return is your positive reputation. It is consistency in and understanding of what you are selling. Your ROI is recognition in the community and a constant building of your reputation. You can't grow without either one." – Madeline Anderson-Balmer, Bellwether Community Credit Union

The long term effects of a successfully branded community include:

- Attracting business and investment
- Attracting residents
- Attracting visitors
- Increased property values
- Greater quality of life
- Growth of a loyal customer base

This Branding, Development and Marketing Action Plan provides the details of how to use Squamish's brand to guide future District policies, development, business recruitment, and marketing efforts. This plan includes all aspects of the community to be part of the overall brand, or image, that people will have of Squamish. It is more than a marketing plan, and much more than a logo or tagline. It provides the direction to guide Squamish's reputation, based on people's real experiences of the community. Many of the benefits of this effort are not able to be quantified and measured, and many of the benefits will be enjoyed after a long period of implementation.

However, many benefits from the branding effort are measurable, and the benefits will be greatest if implementation of all of the recommendations in the plan is accomplished with enthusiasm, diligence, and cooperation of members of the entire community. If only a few of the recommendations are implemented, the branding effort will not be as successful as if they are all implemented. The success of the effort depends not just upon the BLT, or the District, or the DSBIA, or the Chamber, or economic development, but upon all of them working together, plus the merchants and business owners and residents as well.

Begin with baseline data to determine your return on investment. The measurables should include:

- Increases in local spending at retailers (increases in sales tax revenues)
- Increases in lodging spending

Both of these should be compared to increases throughout the province. For instance, if the province is seeing increases of 3% in retail sales and services, and a 5% increase in lodging revenues, then Squamish is maintaining the status quo if they are keeping pace. If they are exceeding those averages, then that can be attributed to many things: the branding, new marketing efforts, a revitalized downtown with shops open after 6:00 pm, a new public market, new events, a new plaza, or a number of other factors. It is always difficult to determine the exact cause of the increase (or decrease), but these measurables will show you the combined result of your many efforts.

Additional measurables include:

- Increases in population

- New building permit applications
- New business licenses

Increases in all of these measurables, if they are beating the province averages, are the goals of this effort.

We do NOT measure success by increases in “likes,” “friends,” and “followers” on social media sites. It is when the “buzz” of social media turns into actual spending that the results are counted.

This is a community-wide effort, and it will take strong champions on the BLT to lead the effort and motivate the community to do their part. Each recommendation indicates the organization that would be responsible and accountable for ensuring implementation of that recommendation.



Supporting Information

The BrandGraphics

Color Palette



SQUAMISH
BRITISH COLUMBIA



SQUAMISH


SQUAMISH


SQUAMISH


SQUAMISH

My Squamish adventure.

PRO- 10



Christy

Name: Christy

Age: 29 (again)

Why Squamish: t's the sweet spot between Vancouver and Whistler - just 45 minutes each

TODAY'S PLAYLIST

- 8:00 Running the trails of Alice Lake with my running gals
- 10:00 Finish trail-run at On the Farm. Coffee at Cloudburst w/friends.
- 11:00 Sorca Bike Skills Park, watch the kids: BMX, scooters for skateboard bowl.
- 1:00 Oceanfront picnic lunch watching kite-surfers. Explore the beach.
- 2:30 Mountain bike with friends. Access via Mamquam Forest Road. Yes!
- 5:00 Sea to Sky Gondola fro dinner. Incredible sunset with friends. Apres ride drink

"FLAT OUT AMAZING"

A few of my favorite things include absolutely incredible mountain biking - you can ride a different trail every day of the year and never ride them all - trail running, particularly at Alice Lake, and road biking. This place never ceases to amaze me. I love it here!

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,



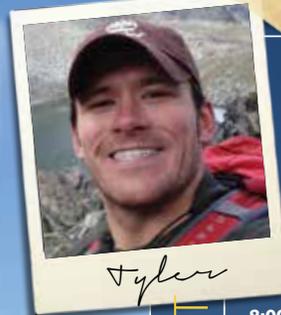
www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca



SQUAMISH

BRITISH COLUMBIA

My Squamish adventure.



PRO-

10

Name: Tyler

age: 29

Why Squamish: This is an outdoor paradise. Everyday it still amazes me how lucky I am be here.

TODAY'S PLAYLIST

- 8:00 Running the trails of Alice Lake with my running gals
- 10:00 Finish trail-run at On the Farm. Coffee at Cloudburst w/friends.
- 11:00 Sorca Bike Skills Park, watch the kids: BMX, scooters for skateboard bowl.
- 1:00 Oceanfront picnic lunch watching kite-surfers. Explore the beach.
- 2:30 Mountain bike with friends. Access via Mamquam Forest Road. Yes!
- 5:00 Sea to Sky Gondola fro dinner. Incredible sunset with friends. Apres ride drink

PARADISE IN EVERY DIREC-

Xerum nobitas ex a estruptium que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus reribus mo quiatati quasit, cus iliquam, totate viti blaut fugit

Xerum nobitas ex a estruptium que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus reribus mo

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,



www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca



SQUAMISH

BRITISH COLUMBIA

My Squamish adventure.

PRO- **17**

Name: Xwalacktun
age: 55

Why squamish: This is an outdoor paradise. Everyday it still amazes me how lucky I am

TODAY'S PLAYLIST

- 7:30** Something very early in the morning to fuel up for day
- 8:00** head to activity
- 11:00** Another great thing
- 12:00** lunch at some place
- 1:30** This is a two line description of the next amazing thing
- 5:00** dinner at a specific restaurant in town
- 8:00** An evening event that is

PARADISE IN EVERY DIREC-

This is alis quod quodignimpe cus intem. Ritis aut exernat laut volut explatur, sitatus et dita corum numquatqui nes rae volum est ro apelenlendi blacius sumque mos nonsecte aut aciande lluptat any esciasit labo and then it would end in this fashion.

Xerum nobitas ex a estruption que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus reribus mo

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,

www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca

SQUAMISH
BRITISH COLUMBIA

My Squamish adventure.



PROFILE 12

Name: Jennifer

age: 36

Why Squamish: This is an outdoor paradise. Everyday it still amazes me how lucky I am

TODAY'S PLAYLIST

- 7:30 Something very early in the morning to fuel up for day
- 8:00 head to activity
- 11:00 Another great thing
- 12:00 lunch at some place
- 1:30 This is a two line description of the next amazing thing
- 5:00 dinner at a specific restaurant in town
- 8:00 An evening event that is

PARADISE IN EVERY DIRECTION

This is alis quod quodignimpe cus intem. Ritis aut exernat laut volut explatur, sitatus et dita corum numquatqui nes rae volum est ro apelandi blacius sumque mos nonsecte aut aciande lluptat any esciasit labo and then it would end in this fashion.

Xerum nobitas ex a estruptium que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus reribus mo

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,



www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca



SQUAMISH

BRITISH COLUMBIA

My Squamish adventure.



Monica

PRO-

8

Name: Monica

age: 28

Why squamish: This is an outdoor paradise. Everyday it still amazes me how lucky I am

TODAY'S PLAYLIST

- 7:30 Something very early in the morning to fuel up for day
- 8:00 head to activity
- 11:00 Another great thing
- 12:00 lunch at some place
- 1:30 This is a two line description of the next amazing thing
- 5:00 dinner at a specific restaurant in town
- 8:00 An evening event that is

PARADISE IN EVERY DIREC-

This is alis quod quodignimpe cus intem. Ritis aut exernat laut volut explatur, sitatus et dita corum numquatqui nes rae volum est ro apelen-dendi blacius sumque mos nonsecte aut aciande lluptat any esciasit labo and then it would end in this fashion.

Xerum nobitas ex a estruption que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus reribus mo

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,



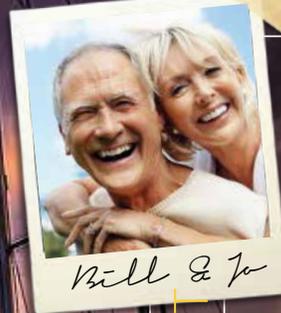
www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca



SQUAMISH

BRITISH COLUMBIA

My Squamish adventure.



Bill & Jo

PRO- 17

Name: Bill & JoAnne
age: 59 & 55

Why squamish: This is an outdoor paradise. Everyday it still amazes me how lucky I am

TODAY'S PLAYLIST

- 7:30 Something very early in the morning to fuel up for day
- 8:00 head to activity
- 11:00 Another great thing
- 12:00 lunch at some place
- 1:30 This is a two line description of the next amazing thing
- 5:00 dinner at a specific restaurant in town
- 8:00 An evening event that is

PARADISE IN EVERY DIRECTION

This is alis quod quodignimpe cus intem. Ritis aut exernat laut volut explatur, sitatus et dita corum numquatqui nes rae volum est ro apelandi blacius sumque mos nonsecte aut aciande lluptat any esciasit labo and then it would end in this fashion.

Xerum nobitas ex a estruption que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus ribibus mo

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,



www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca



My Squamish adventure.



PRO-

8

Name: Jordan

age: 27

From: Seattle, WA

Why squamish: This is one of the most amazing places in North America. Who knew?

TODAY'S PLAYLIST

- 7:10 Breakfast burrito at the Zephyr Cafe in downtown
- 8:00 Shannon Falls. Stunningly beautiful, easy hike over to the Sea to Sky Gondola.
- 9:45 Took the Sea to Sky Gondola to the top. OMG. What an incredible experience. Worth the four-hour drive from Seattle all in itself!
- 12:00 Headed to The Chief to climb to the top. Yes!
- 3:30 At the top of The Chief! This is amazing!

GREATEST CLIMB OF MY

There are only a few places I have been to that have a special, tangible energy and spirit about them. Squamish, BC is one of those places. I had no idea how incredible this community was. Squamish, BC is one of those places. We love coming here to climb,

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,



www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca



SQUAMISH
BRITISH COLUMBIA



My Squamish adventure.



PRO- 17

Name: Jake
age: 32
Occupation: Graphic Designer
Business: Garibaldi Graphics

This is alis quod quodignimpe cus intem. Ritis aut exernat laut volut explatur, sitatus et dita corum num-quatqui nes rae volum est ro apelandi blacius sumque mos nonsecte aut aciande lluptat any esciasit labo and then it would end in this fashion.

Xerum nobitas ex a estruption que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus reribus mo quiatati quasit, cus iliquam, totate viti blaut fugit and that is why I moved my

PARADISE IN EVERY DIREC-

This is alis quod quodignimpe cus intem. Ritis aut exernat laut volut explatur, sitatus et dita corum num-quatqui nes rae volum est ro apelandi blacius sumque mos nonsecte aut aciande lluptat any esciasit labo and then it would end in this fashion.

Xerum nobitas ex a estruption que id maio etur? Quideni minciis sum atur aut ent, consed etusamus reribus mo

TO READ MORE PERSONAL SQUAMISH ITINERARIES,



www.SquamishWebsiteName.ca



Trail Marker Concepts



Recommendations grouped by Lead (i.e. strategic partners).

| Lead | Recommendations |
|--|--|
| BLT (including sub-committees) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #1 Form the Brand Leadership Team #2 Brand Leadership Team assignments #3 Establish a BLT speaking engagement calendar #5 Begin the transition of the new brand identity #6 Bring other local organizations and partners into the brand #7 Get the Brand Promise out there #8 Downtown retail and business recruitment #13 Continue to improve access to and use of the waterfront #14 Solicit input from local groups to identify ways to better support and access Squamish’s outdoor activities #15 Begin development of the 2016 Activities Guide #16 Develop a branded website “jump page” #17 Integrate the new brand into monthly newsletters #18 Launch a community clean-up program #19 Find your best Squamish spokespeople – put them on film #20 Develop an “Itineraries by locals” marketing program #21 Start developing sample itineraries #22 Review Giving Downtown a name #23 Accelerate plans to connect the various “hubs” via trails #24 Secure funding and contract for the creation of a comprehensive wayfinding system #25 Build and install new ‘Welcome to Squamish’ signs #26 Create a database of regional clubs and organizations #27 Create a series of brand awareness posters #28 Identify innovative and cost-effective local guerilla marketing initiatives #29 Craft an excellent one-page cover letter inviting clubs and organization to host events in Squamish #30 Integrate the new brand into existing economic development marketing materials #32 Update District policies and processes to support the Brand Promise #35 Work with local organizations to develop a branded community-wide Customer Service Program #38 Integrate the new brand into logo gear and collectibles #39 Develop the public market #40 Explore ways to connect existing Squamish events to the brand #41 Begin the process of implementing a highway banner program #42 Integrate the brand into partner organization websites #43 Review the plan every two months, and update it every year #44 Develop a Squamish adventure app #45 Contract for Urban Planning Expertise (Plaza) #46 Cross Promotion Program #47 Create and manage social media campaigns #48 Create a YouTube channel and load it with adventures #49 Develop a Buskers Program for Downtown Squamish #50 Support Tourism Squamish with building a brand-focused marketing program #52 Make the plaza a reality #55 Measurables and accountability |
| Downtown Squamish Business Improvement Association (BIA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #5 Begin the transition of the new brand identity #9 Encourage Downtown businesses to open late #18 Launch a community clean-up program #22 Review Giving Downtown a name #33 Encourage merchant blade signs in Downtown Squamish #34 Continue to grow a downtown cooperative beautification program #42 Integrate the brand into partner organization websites #49 Develop a Buskers Program for Downtown Squamish #53 Hire plaza management/programming staff |
| Chamber of Squamish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #5 Begin the transition of the new brand identity #35 Work with local organizations to develop a branded community-wide Customer Service Program |

| Lead | Recommendations |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Tourism Squamish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #4 Secure domain names #5 Begin the transition of the new brand identity #10 Create “The Very Best Of” Squamish brochure #11 Continue to grow digital library in support of the brand #15 Begin development of the 2016 Activities Guide #17 Integrate the new brand into monthly newsletters #19 Find your best Squamish spokespeople – put them on film #21 Start developing sample itineraries #27 Create a series of brand awareness posters #29 Craft an excellent one-page cover letter inviting clubs and organization to host events in Squamish #31 Rebrand the Trail Guide #37 Improve visitor transportation linkages to Squamish #38 Integrate the new brand into logo gear and collectibles #42 Integrate the brand into partner organization websites #47 Create and manage social media campaigns #48 Create a YouTube channel and load it with adventures |
| District of Squamish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #4 Secure domain names #5 Begin the transition of the new brand identity #8 Downtown retail and business recruitment #12 Brand District vehicles #13 Continue to improve access to and use of the waterfront #16 Develop a branded website “jump page” #17 Integrate the new brand into monthly newsletters #18 Launch a community clean-up program #23 Accelerate plans to connect the various “hubs” via trails #24 Secure funding and contract for the creation of a comprehensive wayfinding system #25 Build and install new ‘Welcome to Squamish’ signs #27 Create a series of brand awareness posters #30 Integrate the new brand into existing economic development marketing materials #32 Update District policies and processes to support the Brand Promise #33 Encourage merchant blade signs downtown #34 Continue to grow a downtown cooperative beautification program #36 Develop free wi-fi access throughout Downtown Squamish #41 Begin the process of implementing a highway banner program #42 Integrate the brand into partner organization websites #45 Contract for Urban Planning Expertise (Plaza) #47 Create and manage social media campaigns #51 Contract for a public shuttle service (hop on / hop off) #52 Make the plaza a reality #53 Hire plaza management/programming staff |
| Private Sector / Businesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #33 Encourage merchant blade signs downtown #34 Continue to grow a downtown cooperative beautification program #36 Develop free wi-fi access throughout Downtown Squamish #39 Develop the public market #44 Develop a Squamish adventure app #51 Contract for a public shuttle service (hop on / hop off) #54 Begin programming the Public Market |
| Squamish Arts Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #34 Continue to grow a downtown cooperative beautification program #49 Develop a Buskers Program for Downtown Squamish |



ROGER BROOKS >
International

Roger Brooks International, Inc.
981 Powell Ave SW
Renton, Washington 98057
206-241-4770

www.RogerBrooksInternational.com

Copyright © 2014 Roger Brookst International. All rights reserved. No part of this material may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, microfilming, recording, or otherwise without written permission from Roger Brooks International.