



HOW DO FIRST AMERICAN TRIBES DEFINE AND ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN TOURISM?

Leadership and Learning in Organizations - Capstone

Paige Williams Shepherd

Vanderbilt University | Summer 2020

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paige Williams Shepherd holds a B.S. in Hotel and Restaurant Administration from Oklahoma State University and a Masters in Tourism Administration from The George Washington University, concentrating on Sustainable Tourism Management. Paige is passionate about travel and tourism, with experience spanning from Oklahoma to Washington, DC to Guatemala. For the past 13 years, she has worked in tribal tourism. Paige currently serves on national and local boards in the areas of tourism, education and the arts.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	2
Organizational Context.....	4
Definition of Problem.....	5
Key Questions.....	5
Conceptual Framework.....	6
Methods.....	13
Interviews.....	13
Observations.....	15
Data Analysis and Coding.....	15
Findings.....	16
Recommendations and Discussion.....	33
Study Limitations.....	38
Small Sample Size.....	38
Selection Bias.....	38
Personal Connection.....	38
Conclusion.....	39
References.....	41
Appendices.....	44

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the early 2000s, First American tribes in Oklahoma began establishing tribal tourism departments within their sovereign government structures to promote tribal businesses and tribal territories as travel and tourism destinations. Shortly before the first tribal tourism department was established in Oklahoma, the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association was incorporated in 2002 as a nonprofit to advance Indian Country tourism. Collectively and independently, AIANTA and Oklahoma tribes have been actively involved in instituting tribal tourism as a means of economic diversification and growth for sovereign nations. After more than a decade of evolution, tribal tourism departments within Oklahoma and across the United States continue to struggle in understanding how First American tribes define and achieve success in tourism.

In collaboration with AIANTA, a comparative case study was conducted, using interviews of four First American tribes in Oklahoma who had established tribal tourism departments with tenured leadership. Members of The Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation and Muscogee (Creek) Nation were interviewed to understand tribal tourism and its impact on surrounding communities. In doing so, the following study questions were:

1. Why does tribal tourism exist?

- a. Specifically, what is tribal tourism seeking to accomplish?
- b. Specifically, why is it important for tribes to market themselves as a destination?
- c. Specifically, how is tribal tourism different from tourism?

2. What is the impact of tribal tourism on communities, tribal and non-tribal?

- a. Specifically, how do the departments measure the benefits of tribal tourism?
- b. Specifically, what is the relationship between tribal tourism and communities?

Yoon et al.'s (2001) theoretical framework examines the structural effects of tourism impact factors: economic, social, cultural and environmental. For this study, a modified framework based on Yoon et al. was utilized as an integrated approach to identifying patterns and relationships using the economic, cultural and social impact factors.

The qualitative study yielded six findings that emerged from the framework and study questions:

Finding 1

Tribal tourism departments are created by First American tribes to promote the tribal region as a destination and provide an authentic, educational experience.

Finding 2

Community partnerships within and surrounding First American tribal jurisdictions are key to tourism success, though there is an opportunity for increased collaboration.

Finding 3

Technology is the primary tool utilized by First American tribes to promote, market and share the tribal destination.

Finding 4

First American tribes are committed to tourism, though what tourism looks like in each tribe differs, resulting in varying levels of commitment.

Finding 5

Pride, destination affinity and feedback are the primary ways Oklahoma First American tribes measure tourism success, which is different than how states and destination marketing organizations measure tourism success.

Finding 6

Collaboration and funding are the most desired resources for First American tribal tourism departments.

Out of the six findings, four recommendations were made jointly for AIANTA and the four Oklahoma First American tribes. Collaborative recommendations support the mission of AIANTA while addressing key case study findings and building connections across Indian Country.

Recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation 1

Establishment of AIANTA tribal destination network chapters per state or region.

Recommendation 2

Develop and administer a community stakeholder survey through the tribal destination network to gain the support of tribal tourism.

Recommendation 3

Champion the value of tribal tourism.

Recommendation 4

Coordinate individual tribal tourism digital marketing efforts for greater collective impact.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) was established in 2002 as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization to advance tribal cultural tourism efforts in Indian Country and serve as a national advocate on behalf of the 574 tribal nations across the United States. The mission of AIANTA is “to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism that honors traditions and values.”

AIANTA’s brand pillars are imbedded in their mission; define, introduce, grow and sustain. Define focuses on helping tribes start the tourism process with Tourism 101, ensuring the programs are built on a strong foundation of culture, traditions and history. Introducing authentic First American experiences allows visitors and potential visitors to be educated about the history and culture of tribal nations honestly and invitingly. AIANTA introduces and showcases American Indian destinations through social media, public relations efforts, digital positioning, familiarization tours and an international marketing program. The organization seeks to grow tribal cultural tourism through one unified voice, enhancing the opportunities and exposure for all tribes, regardless of tribal tourism. Last, AIANTA strives to sustain the tribal tourism industry by sharing information with stakeholders as a reminder of the economic importance of tribal tourism. As economic success throughout Indian Country has continued to increase, so too have the responsibilities and offerings provided by AIANTA.

Current core functions provided by AIANTA are education and training, visitor outreach and digital presence via NativeAmerica.travel. While organizational core competencies focus on introductory

tourism and marketing efforts, AIANTA leans on collaborations and partnerships with The George Washington University, U.S. Travel Association, Brand USA, National Parks Service, Department of Interior, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Indian Affairs, the National Travel & Tourism Office and others to enrich tribal tourism efforts and expand offerings. Understanding each tribe is a sovereign nation; AIANTA strives to meet tribes where they are in the tourism process.

To support tribes at various stages of tourism development, the organization offers numerous opportunities. Each Spring, AIANTA attends ITB Berlin, the most extensive travel and tourism tradeshow in the world. AIANTA allows tribal organizations and businesses owned by tribal members to participate in the conference for a nominal fee compared to the cost of the tradeshow. Additionally, AIANTA bears the cost of the tradeshow booth, creating a unified brand Indian Country can present to the world. Other international marketing tradeshow opportunities are offered throughout the year as well to attend Showcase USA Italy, IPW (USA) and Brand USA Travel Week (London, UK). Each Fall, AIANTA hosts the American Indian Tourism Conference at a First American tourism destination within the United States. The conference focuses on bringing together Indian Country to learn from local and national tourism organizations and each other regarding advancing cultural tourism. The American Indian Tourism Conference is the only domestic travel and tourism conference dedicated to Indian Country.

AIANTA effectively provides a collective voice to an industry that strives to make positive economic impacts to tribal communities and territories across Indian Country. Through education, training,

marketing and advocating, AIANTA dedicates time and financial resources to growing First American cultural tourism.

DEFINITION OF PROBLEM

AIANTA exists for the sole purpose of advancing tribal tourism efforts throughout Indian Country; measurement of the economic impact of tribal tourism efforts across Indian Country is not one of the organization's objectives. While this Capstone does not seek to answer the complicated question, "How much revenue is generated in a destination per \$1 spent on tribal tourism marketing?", it does acknowledge measurement and tracking are critical components for AIANTA and tribal nations to continue to dedicate funds to tourism.

Tribes must generate profit to provide for their government and people while receiving limited funds from the Federal Government. Tribes are diverse in their economic businesses, ranging from oil and gas to smoke shops and healthcare to casinos. Many financially successful tribes receive a significant majority of their revenue from casinos and gaming operations. Every dollar spent on tourism is competing against business operations, government operations and the provision of programs and services to tribal members.

The problem the Capstone explores is not a financial return on investment, but an exploration regarding how tribal tourism provides an economic and symbolic value for Tribes, reservations and tribal jurisdictions. Each of the 574 sovereign tribal nations has the opportunity to determine the goals and objectives they seek to achieve in developing

and contributing to tourism. These tourism objectives can change based on changes in tribal administration, funding, resource availability and need, just as they can in local, state and federal government.

Due to the understanding of the vast and unique differences of each tribe, AIANTA has never sought to develop a tool detailing specific measurements of success related to tribal tourism. AIANTA members, however, seek guidance regarding how a tribe can define and achieve success in tourism to assist in justifying efforts and financial spend. Through the exploration of four tribal nations located in Oklahoma, all of whom are members of AIANTA, the Capstone provides a framework of tourism efforts or activities, objectives and outcomes or successes.

KEY QUESTIONS

- 1) Why does tribal tourism exist?
 - a. Specifically, what is tribal tourism seeking to accomplish?
 - b. Specifically, why is it important for tribes to market themselves as a destination?
 - c. Specifically, how is tribal tourism different than tourism?
- 2) What is the impact of tribal tourism on communities, tribal and non-tribal?
 - a. Specifically, how do the departments measure tribal tourism?
 - b. Specifically, what is the relationship between tribal tourism and communities?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The foundation of this research study seeks to answer seemingly simple introductory questions that a First American tribe will ask themselves when exploring the idea of tribal tourism. How does one define tourism success, and how does one achieve tourism success? Two underlying points must be considered while addressing the questions:

- a) Each of the 574 First American tribes in the United States is a sovereign nation with its' own unique government and operational structure and;
- b) There is no nationally or internationally accepted measurement for tourism success.

The theoretical framework selected provides an integrated approach derived from the education and marketing disciplines and designed to identify patterns and relationships from four tribal tourism case studies.

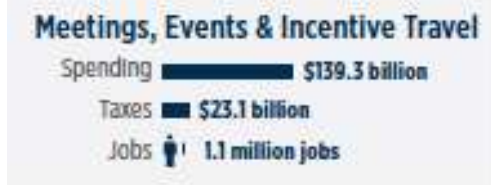
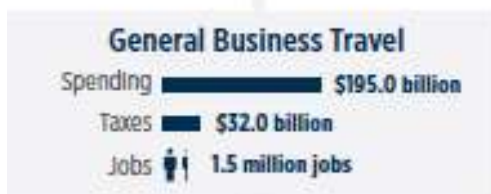
Before discussing the framework, one must first understand tourism. Tourism is the act of experiencing activities and places outside of one's usual environment, for an amount of time, typically less than a year. Tribal tourism is the act of a First American tribe or First American owned business actively allowing and promoting experiences and activities on tribal lands or related to tribal culture.

According to the World Tourism Organization (2019), "As one of the most thriving economic activities of the 21st century, tourism is well placed to contribute to indigenous people in improving their livelihoods. If managed responsibly and sustainably, indigenous tourism spurs cultural integration and revival,

bolsters employment, alleviates poverty, curbs rural flight migration, empowers local communities, especially women and youth, encourages tourism product diversification, allows people to retain their relationship with the land and nurtures a sense of pride."

Tribal tourism, sometimes referred to as indigenous tourism, is often generalized as cultural tourism. Over the last decade, tribal tourism has been growing as a means of economic diversification for Oklahoma First American tribes. Economic diversification derives from the success numerous tribal nations have experienced from gaming and casino operations. Gaming revenue is the lifeblood of many tribal nations, allowing them to provide programs and services to their citizens while growing commerce and government.

The U.S. Travel Association reported in 2019; domestic travelers spent \$972 billion on travel and tourism in the United States. Domestic and international inbound travelers combined spent \$1.1 trillion, generating a total of \$2.6 trillion in economic output. The travel industry directly supports 9 million jobs and 6.8 million in other industries, with a total impact of 15.8 million American jobs. Travel is among the top 10 industries in 49 states and D.C. in terms of employment. Four out of five domestic trips are for leisure purposes: visiting relatives, shopping, visiting friends, fine dining, and rural sightseeing as the top activities. International arrivals to the United States in 2019 totaled 79 million with shopping, sightseeing, fine dining, national parks/monuments and amusement/theme parks being the top five leisure activities. The top 10 international markets to the United States were Canada, Mexico, U.K., Japan, China, South Korea, Brazil, Germany, France and India.



*Each household would pay **\$1,398 more in taxes** without the tax revenue generated by travel and tourism.*

SOURCE: U.S. Travel Association
 Note: Direct spending totals do not include international passenger fares

Sources of Travel Spending Total = \$1.1 trillion



SOURCE: U.S. Travel Association

When discussing tribal tourism in the United States, it is essential to include international tourism figures, as international visitors are incredibly interested in learning about First American culture and being immersed in an authentic experience. There are several reasons for global appeal, some of which are impacted by the country of origin. For example, there is a famous German writer by

the name of Karl May, who is best known for travel fiction based in the American Old West and including First American culture. Karl never visited America nor met a First American; however, his books have created a lure for many Germans to travel to America to experience the American Old West and meet a First American. Additionally, other cultures see connections in the thousands of

years of history rooted in First American culture that does not exist in the United States. Smith (2015) credits visitor motivation to both anthropological desires to learn more about communities under global threat and a personal need for cultural experiences of a diverse nature. The United States Department of Commerce, National Travel and Tourism Office reported in 2016

that 1.955 million international visitors had traveled to First American communities, with the top four countries being South Korea, China, U.K. and Germany. From 2004 to 2016, visitation grew 160 percent from international tourists. In 2018, First American communities welcomed record high overseas tourism to Indian Country, totaling more than 1.986 million.



Source: International Trade Administration

Historically, cultural tourism is assumed to have attracted a small demographic of international travelers who are well-educated and spend more on average per day than the average traveler, thus presenting a decreased risk of negatively impacting the destination due to overtourism. However, as data from 2016 proves, the increased demand for cultural activities to enhance the overall visitor experience for international and domestic visitors has shifted. In 2004, the top four countries with international visitation to

First American communities were U.K., Germany, France and India. “The phenomenon of mass cultural tourism is increasingly becoming a cause for concern” (Smith, 2015). The industry as a whole has branded the idea of mass tourism as overtourism, which has resulted in varying destinations from parks to cultural sites and cities to world heritage sites to implement visitor limitations to protect the irreplaceable tourism resources.

Visitor Volume to American Indian Communities...Deconstructed (continued)

	2004		2004		2016		2016	
	Overseas Volume # (000s)	VAIC % Inc. Incidence %	VAIC # Volume # (000s)	% of VAIC Volume %	Overseas Volume # (000s)	VAIC % Inc. Incidence %	VAIC # Volume # (000s)	% of VAIC Volume %
Overseas	20,322	3.7%	752	---	37,589	5.2%	1,955	---
1 South Korea	627	2.3%	15	2.0%	1,974	9.5%	211	10.8%
2 China	203	3.7%	8	1.0%	2,972	6.8%	209	10.7%
3 U.K.	4,303	4.4%	206	27.4%	4,574	3.9%	201	10.3%
4 Germany	1,320	6.8%	95	12.6%	2,035	6.7%	145	7.4%
5 France	775	5.6%	45	6.0%	1,628	8.2%	141	7.2%
6 Australia	520	5.1%	29	3.9%	1,346	7.1%	108	5.5%
7 Spain	333	2.3%	8	1.0%	801	11.9%	100	5.1%
8 India	309	14.1%	44	5.8%	1,172	10.6%	96	4.9%
9 Italy	471	8.3%	35	4.6%	983	7.7%	78	4.0%
10 Netherlands	425	9.3%	42	5.6%	672	9.5%	61	3.1%
11 Dom. Rep.	180	1.7%	3	0.4%	348	14.1%	49	2.5%
12 Colombia	295	2.7%	7	0.9%	836	4.6%	39	2.0%
13 Sweden	254	3.3%	8	1.1%	559	6.7%	37	1.9%
14 Brazil	385	0.8%	3	0.4%	1,693	1.9%	37	1.9%
15 Taiwan	298	2.2%	7	0.9%	463	6.1%	29	1.5%
16 Argentina	168	0.4%	1	0.1%	906	2.8%	27	1.4%
17 Japan	3,748	0.8%	35	4.7%	3,577	0.6%	23	1.2%
18 Denmark	151	0.0%	14	1.9%	326	6.8%	22	1.1%
19 Guatemala	162	0.9%	1	0.0%	251	8.6%	22	1.1%
20 Switzerland	243	6.5%	16	2.1%	469	3.4%	16	0.8%

Due to sovereignty and First American agreements with the federal government, tribal land structure varies across the United States. The four tribes interviewed during the case study each occupy a tribal jurisdiction, which is different from a tribal reservation. The difference between jurisdiction and reservation changes the landscape of tourism.

Reservations are areas of land, varying in size, that is managed and governed by a First American tribe, not the state in which the

reservation is located. Tribal jurisdictions are identified regions within states where the federal government recognizes First American tribes; however, the jurisdiction is not managed by the tribe. The tribe is free to purchase land within the jurisdiction and submit through the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the land to be placed into a tribal trust. As a result of jurisdiction, the four tribes interviewed include the community as an essential aspect of tribal tourism.

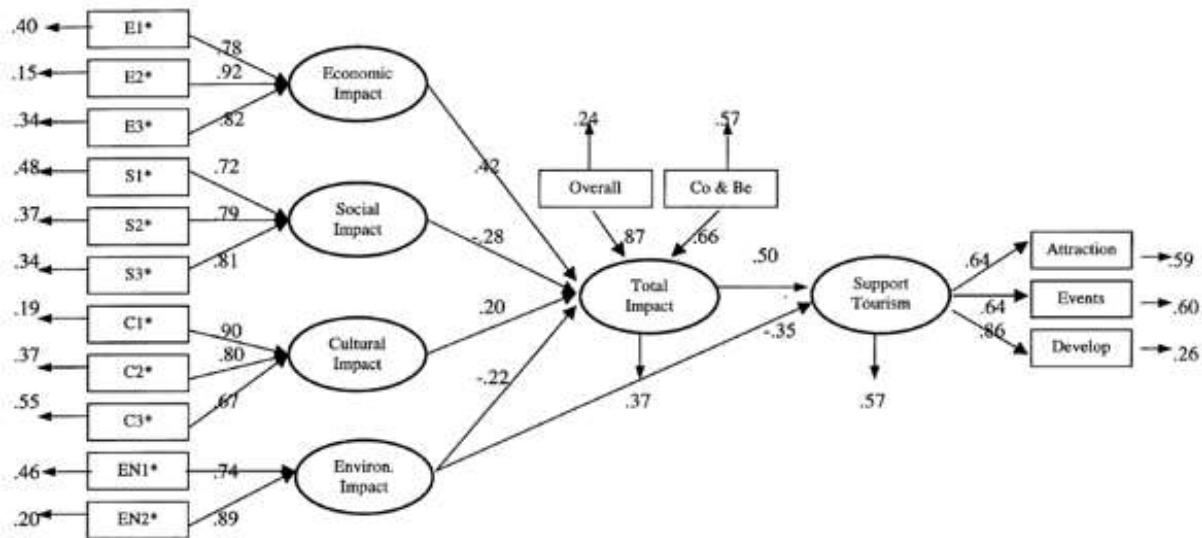


Source: US Census Bureau Tigerline Shapefiles, OCU Center for Native American and Urban Studies

Indicators for success determine what preconditions are likely to create the best (or most successful) outcome for the intended enterprise (R.H. Lemelin et al., 2015). A quick research analysis provides many examples of indicators for success applicable to tourism. As numerous studies regarding tribal, indigenous and aboriginal tourism have pointed out, it is hard to use general indicators of success across tourism efforts due to the vast differences within tribal government, economics, politics and

location, which is addressed as an underlying challenge. Structural equation modeling is a statistical analysis framework, which was utilized by Yoon et al. (2001), for validating tourism development according to total tourism impact. The framework includes four impact factors. The factors are economic, social, cultural and environmental. Each of the four elements impacts the other, in addition to a direct impact on total tourism.

Results of Structural Equation Model



Fit indices: $\chi^2 (89) = 105.87, p = .11, GFI = .96, RMSEA = .025, AGFI = .94, NNFI = .99, PNFI = .71, CFI = .99, IFI = .99, RFI = .94$.
 Note: χ^2 = Chi-square; GFI = goodness-of-fit index; RMSR = root mean square residual; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit; NNFI = nonnormed fit index; PNFI = parsimonious normed fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; RFI = relative fit index.
 * Please refer to Table 2 for the name of indicator.

Source: Yoon, Y., Gursoy, D., & Chen, J. S.

The groundwork of the model lies in the social exchange theory. If it is perceived that the positive impacts of tourism will be more significant than the adverse effects, a community is motivated to engage in tourism and support future tourism development (Getz, 1994). After the study, Yoon et al. adjusted the theoretical model to include three critical factors that influence how a community responds to tourism: attractions, events and development. For these case studies, the Yoon et al. model was adjusted after reading the four tribal nations' interviews. Note that the case study framework used for the case study removes environmental impact based on the codes naturally represented in the interviewees' responses, which were economic, social, and cultural.

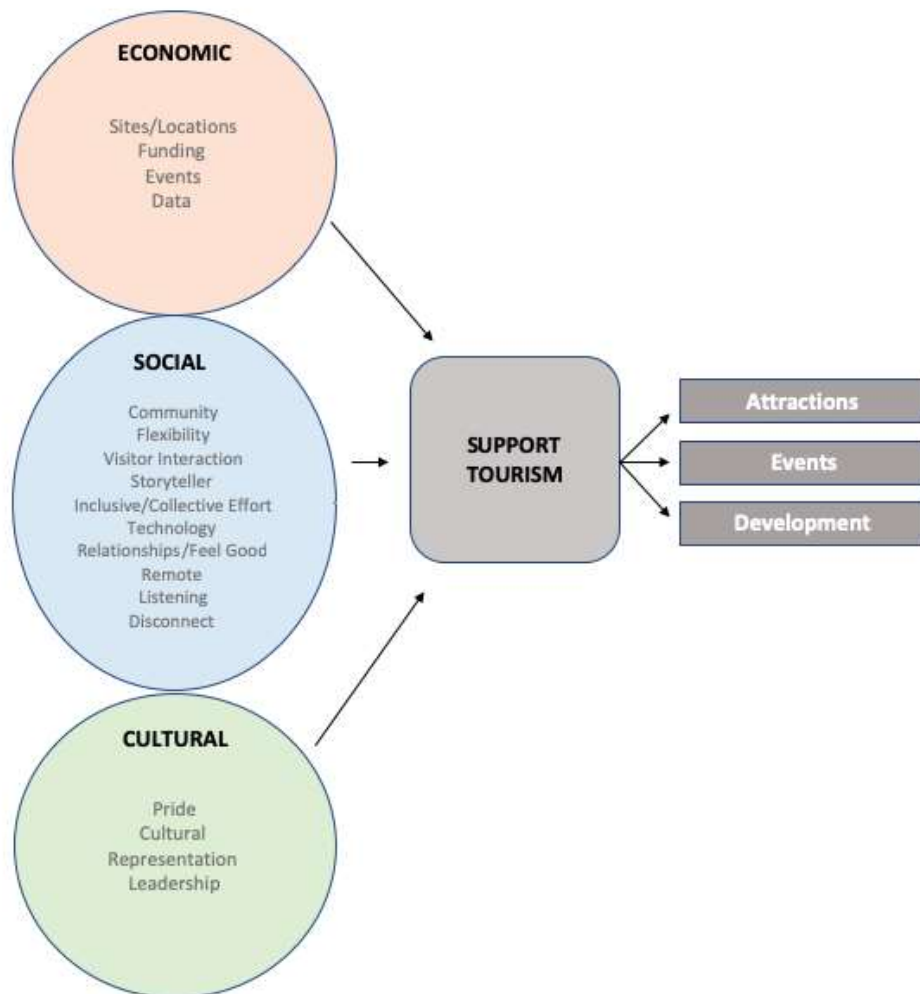
- Economics is considered a benefit that generates revenue for the tribal nation. Examples of economic components mentioned during the interviews include gaming/casinos, retail and tour group fees.
- Social is defined as the net effect on a community and the well-being of people. Social also encompasses activities that bridge the gap among people.
- The cultural frame is defined as the First American way of life. Culture is inclusive of the general customs and beliefs of each tribe interviewed. Throughout the interviews, there is a reference to cultural committees/departments, cultural centers, historical sites and government structures.

Economic, social and cultural were the primary codes used in analyzing the data, while attractions, events and developments represent functions and outcomes of the themes.

- Attractions are designed for a large number of tourists. Examples include cultural centers, gaming/casino resorts and parks.
- Events are planned public, semi-public or private activities or social occasions. Examples include an annual festival, exhibition, concert and sports event.
- Development is inclusive of the advancement of land resources for

tourism purposes and supporting service development. Examples include the refurbishment of historical sites and supporting visitors through the process of destination growth and progress.

To ensure the framework reflected the context of the questions being explored, the Yoon et al. model was modified. While the codes were determined within the framework, the interview responses naturally revealed tribal tourism themes, prevalent across all tribal nations interviewed. Tourism attractions, events and developments are implemented by tribal nations with desired expectations and actual outcomes.



The outcome of tribal tourism is rarely financial. Tribes engage in tourism to tell their story, on their behalf, in their voice. For too many years, First American culture has been exploited by states and destinations, including First American culture, without the consent of the tribe. States and destinations were aware that visitors were seeking an authentic First American experience, and instead of collaborating with tribes, destinations developed material and experiences representative of tribal culture. Due to economic resources provided by gaming and casinos, tribal nations now have the opportunity to represent themselves to domestic and international travelers, often in partnership with States and destinations. Tribes have the power to develop tourism, which showcases the rich cultural history of the destination. Destinations are always looking for ways to set themselves apart from competitors, and they usually lean on their people, hospitality and traditions as crucial factors. "Indigenous populations play well to that trend and have thousands of years' worth of history with their lands and a deep understanding of a destination's significance" (Peltier, 2018). Tribes have the unique opportunity not only to say this is a river one can float, but here is what the river and every component in the river mean to our people, and this is how we used the water. Everything has meaning in First American culture. It is the storytelling component of First American tourism that genuinely provides an unmatched experience.

METHODS

The case studies utilize a qualitative approach to address study questions. In the

field of qualitative methodology, case studies were among the first types of research used in the field (Starman, 2013). This study involves an analysis of similarities, differences and patterns across four cases that share a common focus and goal, resulting in a comparative case study exploring how and why tribal tourism works or fails to work (Goodrick, 2014). Qualitative research was selected due to the investigative nature of the study questions and AIANTA's desire to understand the views and perceptions of the tribes being interviewed. The role of this study is to provide a vision to the organization that can be used to assist in the future development of concepts and theories for tribal tourism nationally. The qualitative approach seeks to discover new thoughts and operational practices that can be analyzed across the four tribal organizations to identify themes that fit within the defined conceptual framework.

Interviews

Qualitative interviews were conducted with tribal Nations located within the Plains Region of AIANTA. Interview protocols were driven by the desire to understand the history, development and operational structure of tenured tribal tourism departments. The interviews consisted of 62 open- and close-ended questions. The same interview protocols were utilized for each of the four interviews. The semi-structured in-depth interviews took approximately 45 minutes, resulting in a "conversational partnership" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995)



Tribal Regions Map

Source: American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association

Four tribes located within Oklahoma that have tenured tribal tourism departments and are also members of AIANTA were identified as potential participants with similar tribal landscapes. The four tribes are also members of a collective group of First American nations in Oklahoma called the “Five Civilized Tribes.” The phrase refers to the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek) and Seminole nations and came into use during the mid-nineteenth century. The name was associated with the five Southeastern nations due to their assimilation to Anglo-American norms; however, “elements of “civilization” within Southeastern Indian society predated removal” (Frank, “n.d.”, Five Civilized

Tribes, para. 3). The nations had previously supported a collective tourism group through the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes, where the four proposed participants equally participated financially to promote tourism through Oklahoma's Native Experience. Oklahoma's Native Experience was established before the shift to reference tribal nations as First Americans. The brand maintained a collaborative digital presence until the restructuring of the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes in 2017. The tribes had independently and collectively displayed aggressive tribal tourism efforts, thus ideally having a wealth of knowledge and experience to share for the case studies.

OKLAHOMA'S

NATIVE EXPERIENCE

Source: Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes

Identified tribes were contacted via email regarding the AIANTA study and asked to participate. One-on-one interviews were pre-scheduled with each of the four tribes. The individual interviewed from each tribe was the director of tourism, or equivalent title and position in senior leadership, who is authorized to speak on behalf of the tribal nation. Interviews were conducted privately at a location selected by each interviewee. Each interview was recorded in addition to manual note taking to ensure the audio and visual components of each interview were captured for analysis.

Observations

Limited observations were reported during interviews as each one-on-one interview took place in a neutral location. Interviewees were engaged during the interviews, often expanding responses outside the scope of the immediate question. Observations post-interview regarding each tribe's tourism brand, tourism website and tourism digital presence, including social media, were documented and analyzed. From the observations, a deeper understanding of each tribal destination was gained and in addition to context to assist in interpreting case study findings.

Data Analysis and Coding

Data analysis began with a listening tour of each of the four interviews. I listened to each of the four interviews three times with the intent of familiarity, identifying meaningful quotes for consideration and finally, for categorization and themes according to the conceptual framework. With precise categorization, each interview was parsed to identify patterns and create codes for the qualitative data. The analysis considered similarities, differences, relationships, structures and systems according to the three categories: economic impact, social impact and cultural impact. The conceptual framework identified themes that naturally matched the flow of the case study. Underlying themes of significance are activities, expectations and outcomes. Post-interview questions were assessed to determine the value.

To begin producing code for the data, matrices highlighting concepts and themes were utilized across the four interviews to start identifying patterns. The matrices allowed the abundance of data provided during the more than four hours of interviews to be easily digested, allowing narratives to emerge within the bins of the theoretical framework.

FINDINGS

Based on the expertise of interviewees and tenured tribal tourism department structures within the four case studies, the basis for the questions specifically focuses on understanding why tribal tourism exists. As Smith (2015) concludes, the contributions of tourism to the cultural survival of indigenous peoples can be invaluable. Through rigorous analysis of the interview data and coding through the lens of the framework, themes and patterns emerged across the four case studies. The following findings are consistent with Yoon et al.'s adapted research around validating a tourism development theory based on tourism impact factors; economic, social and cultural.

1. Tribal tourism departments are created by First American tribes to promote the tribal region as a destination and provide an authentic, educational experience.

Tourism is typically utilized as an economical solution for destinations. While the economic success of tribal nations is pertinent, the reason First American tribes establish tourism departments derives from a cultural place. Throughout each of the interviews, no matter the question, an undertone of tribal ownership was communicated. Each tribe understands the economic impacts that tourism has on their nation; however, admitted should the department cease to generate revenue, the department would continue to exist in the same capacity. "Revenue is important because everything we do, we want to justify the cost and offset it wherever we can, but would we still do what we are doing, regardless of the amount we brought it?

Absolutely!" Tribal tourism exists as a service.

Service to the citizens of the tribe, to First Americans, to the local communities and the world. Tribal tourism perpetuates the culture and sites while providing an educational experience, from an authentic voice. First American tribes want to own their own stories as for far too long white man stole and exploited the parts of First American culture and history that were economically beneficial. Never seeking the tribes for permission or guidance. Tribe A, which started their tourism department in 2007, shared one primary reason for creating a tribal tourism department, "The tribe started a tribal tourism program to tell our story from our perspective." Ownership of tribal history, culture and stories is a simple right tribes have continually been robbed of throughout history. Their "single most important goal is to educate the public about the history and culture of the tribal nation and people." Tribe D communicated, "Elected Leadership wanted to be able to connect all of the tourism assets the tribe was investing in under one brand, not the government brand. A brand owned and told by the Nation." Tribe D created a tourism department in 2008. The department, started by one individual and no infrastructure, employs nearly 40 people and has been recognized nationally and internationally for their tourism marketing, advertising and P.R. efforts. Tribe B passed tribal legislation in 2007, establishing tribal tourism, officially funding and starting the department in 2008, focused on creating awareness of the tribe's culture and businesses. Not only are the four tribes collaborative, as seen through the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes and various remarks throughout the interviews, but the nations are competitive as well from friendly sports matches to business

operations and success. Tribal tourism competition is no exception. When discussing with Tribe C regarding why they created a tourism department in 2013, it was really about keeping up. "It was kind of they were following the trend in Oklahoma. So obviously some tribes had theirs, and several other tribes followed that trend as far as starting an official tourism department. And so they did that more so that they were on board with everything going on. They did not have a clear vision at that point. Even though we've kind of tried to form that over the last few years." Tribe C is, however, clear on the department's goal, "bring visitors into the area...and then we throw in a little education as we go."

Since 2007, when Tribe A established the first tribal tourism department of the tribes in the case study, until now, tribal destinations and Oklahoma have drastically changed, however, the underlying purpose of each department remains the same. Over the past decade, tribal tourism has become more relevant with the continued economic development nations have made in their tribal jurisdictions. Directly comparing economic growth for all 38 federally recognized tribes in Oklahoma versus the State of Oklahoma from 2012 to 2017 shows an output increase in GDP by tribes of 19.8% and 13.5% by the State over the six years (Dean, 2019). It is also important to note that tribes primarily occupy rural regions of Oklahoma and remain a constant source of economic development to communities as they are permanently located in their tribal jurisdiction. The drastic growth by both tribes and the State of Oklahoma perpetuates the purpose of tribal tourism. Tribe D highlighted its tourism purpose. "The tourism department is the storyteller to visitors of the destination and tribe. Tourism is the thread that connects all of the tribal assets under one umbrella for a

visitor. Our stories are told through our website, social media, brochures and annual travel guide. We also tell our story through our information centers and the First American art we have on display and for sale at each facility." Packer and Ballantyne (2016) point out the tourism industry's responsibility to engage visitors in transformative learning experiences, before, during and after they visit the destination. As Richards (2018) discusses, the research field of cultural heritage tourism is shifting from tangible to intangible heritage. It is increasingly linking indigenous cultures and communities around the world into the tourism network. With sound tribal tourism infrastructure and economic opportunities, the four nations are well positioned to control the visitor experience and message.

Just as tribes and the state have changed, so too have the visitor's expectations. Having a clear understanding of why each nation created a tourism department ensures the tribes are delivering an authentic experience, acknowledging that the experience does not always match the visitor's expectations. Tribe C highlighted the challenges of misinformation and lack of education surrounding First American destinations. "Being a tribe, what is unique about us is the fact that we have this entire culture that we can share with people. I mean, you hear again and again, that people want to learn about First Americans. Unfortunately, they want to learn about the Hollywood perspective." The tribes use these opportunities to educate visitors on the history and culture of their specific tribe and how it connects to the encompassing First American story.

2. The partnerships with communities within and surrounding First American tribal jurisdictions are crucial to tourism success, though there is an opportunity for increased collaboration.

In Oklahoma, tribes are an integral part of the rural community fabric. “While tribes do operate businesses, the businesses exist to serve the tribal government in securing a sustainable future for the nations and their citizens. This unique objective has significant implications for tribes and their citizens, but also non-tribal communities and the state” (Dean, 2019, p. 12). The economic impact to rural Oklahoma far exceeds tourism and is generally reported in five categories;

education, government, history and culture, health and wellness and other. Tribes provide funding directly to communities within their tribal jurisdictions to support projects, goals and financial shortfalls. In many communities, the four tribes interviewed are the primary financial contributors to the town's sustainment. "Such payments include donations to local school districts and governments supporting local primary and secondary schools and universities, contributions to communities supporting local health and wellness and cultural program, and many other community programs" (Dean, 2019, p. 14). In the 2017 Impact of Oklahoma Tribal Nations report, Dean (2019) found that 15 of the 38 tribes in the State of Oklahoma had a total economic impact to state and local communities of \$61,159,120.

Tribal Contributions to State and Local Communities			
	Local	Statewide	Total
Education	\$923,027	\$13,333,667	\$14,256,693
Government	\$22,118,422	\$3,914,304	\$26,032,726
History and Culture	\$233,604	\$5,222,473	\$5,456,077
Health and Wellness	\$117,387	\$3,030,364	\$3,147,751
Other	\$4,174,985	\$8,090,887	\$12,265,873
Total	\$27,567,424	\$33,591,695	\$61,159,120

Source: Participating Tribes, OCU Center for Native American and Urban Studies

Each tribal nation interviewed acknowledged the partnerships and impacts the communities have on tribal tourism's success, ranging from representation on local Boards to including non-tribal destinations in tribal tourism marketing initiatives. Tribe A’s initial understanding of community involvement led them to include non-tribal tourism stakeholders in the strategic planning process of developing the department in 2007. Strong community support is one of Russell-

Mundine's (2007) indicators of successful development of Australian indigenous entrepreneurship, highlighting that the indigenous nation must mobilize and sustain community support. Freeman (1984) pioneered the stakeholder theory, advocating that organizations, and in this case, tribal nations, are characterized by relationships with various individuals and groups. Freeman (1984, p. 46) stated, "[a] stakeholder in an organization is (by definition) any

group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives." Being that the tribal nations are the economic engines in the communities, they are affected by the successes, or failures, of the tribal nation regarding travel and tourism. One interviewee eloquently summed up the impacts of the stakeholder theory with a quote by Elected Leadership of Tribe D, "a rising tide lifts all ships," before elaborating further to say "if what we are doing helps others in the community, state, or Indian Country, we count that as a success." The interviews communicated that the tribes understand tourism is not about standing up but a collaboration of many. Tribe C acknowledged, "Okay, so we have our tourism brand, which it represents our region of Oklahoma. So we are responsible for working within the communities around that brand and the marketing initiatives around that."

Part of understanding the stakeholder theory is knowing the differences between transaction and relationship-based efforts. Communities rely on both forms of tribal support for tourism to be successful. Tribe C's tourism structure and budget significantly support transactional efforts by working with five communities on an annual basis, who receive a \$5,000 grant to evolve tourism further. Many grantee recipients are destination or event-based and qualify based on set criteria previously determined by the tribe. The image painted by Tribe C explicitly displays their understanding of the stakeholder theory.

"Too often, we want to focus on our assets because we have that direct ROI. And we have like that measurable piece of it. And of course, we want people to spend money at our sites, like that is how we function, right. But I genuinely feel

that if we only focus on ourselves, if we only focus on the tribe, we will limit our community so severely, like we are handicapping them. Because if the tribe ceases to exist, we are just going to have dried up communities. And then the same is true, even if we become the next Las Vegas, but we have nothing outside of ourselves. That does not benefit our tribal members, our community members or those coming to visit us. And so right now, we have out of our entire budget; we have \$25,000 set aside to work with five sites every year. And again, and again, that is the piece of what we do that gets questioned, but it is also what I believe the most in because the state and different industries, they do not direct that funding to historical sites that we believe have value. And so, so much in Oklahoma, we talked about cultural and heritage tourism, and you know, the history, and we want to preserve that. I would love to see us come in and do that. And I say that not because I want us to come in and take over those sites. But I am a firm believer in people owning what they have. And that is like the biggest piece of site development for me is that we want to come in and be a true partner. The goal is for us to give you the resources and the tools to own what you have, and we want you to be proud of it, we want you to be sustainable."

The stakeholder theory depends on the consideration being given to each stakeholder group, in this case, community, to ensure priority is not given to one stakeholder's interest over the others. Consideration is provided regardless of power or interest (Sautter, 1999). This is where the stakeholder theory and tribal nations disconnect. As sovereign nations, tribes have the legal right to operate and act independently. In Oklahoma, as tribal jurisdictions, the

dynamics are different from tribes who reside on reservations, as the web of integration is convoluted, however tribal nations ensure they are making decisions that never jeopardize sovereignty. Two interviewees acknowledged the tribes often operate in silos when it comes to making decisions; however, they desire additional community collaboration without waiving sovereignty.

"While we have great relationships with our communities, as a tribal nation, we operate independently. We could do a better job bringing in outside voices to evolve the definition of success," per Tribe A. Tribe D went into further detail: "We have good relationships with local communities, but we still, meaning municipalities, the local chambers, we have great partnerships, but we still do our own thing in a way. The idea of working better to understand each other's goals, and bringing them to the table, and them (communities) bringing us to the table as well." This is where the missions of tribal nations override theory. Ultimately, tribes make decisions based on their missions of sustaining and growing the quality of life for their citizens and future generations. Due to history with federal, state and local governments, First Americans protect themselves and their resources, thus frequently making decisions within the tribal government structure and amongst tribal elders and citizens to ensure the rights and best interests of the tribe are always protected.

3. Technology is the primary tool utilized by First American tribes to promote, market and share the tribal destination.

Once a First American tribe has established a tourism department and ensured the destination is market-ready, communicating that the destination is open and available to receive guests is one of the most critical aspects of success. According to Trip Advisor, 73% of travelers use online sources when deciding on a vacation destination (Graft, 2019). Destination Analyst reported 58.2% of travelers used any user-generated content to help plan, including hotel reviews, destination reviews, blog reviews and social media reviews (Graft, 2019). The power of the internet allows rural, remote, unknown destinations, such as First American nations, to invite the world to experience their destination in their voice. Online marketing allows limitless opportunities and no longer requires consumers and destinations to connect face-to-face. National and international visibility is vital. Per Phocuswright, travel brands are now spending 61% of their marketing budgets online (Manoukain, 2019). Xiang et al. (2015) explored information technology and consumer behavior in travel and tourism. They highlighted the importance of understanding how technology influences tourism consumer behavior is the foundation marketing and communications strategy that is effective and sustainable. Xiang et al. (2015) acknowledges the unknown lifecycle of technology and recommends businesses identify technology trends with the potential to impact long-term strategic initiatives.

Each of the interviewees discussed the impact of technology on the success of the department and destination. Tribe D stated, "Our website is key for us; social media is key for us. They allow us to get our message out, and it also allows us to be a resource for the potential guests coming. Social media and our website are our main components." According to Sojern, digital advertising represented the most significant portion of ad spend for all global travel marketers in 2018, which is expected to grow (Manoukain, 2019). Facebook Ads, specifically, were used by 79% of travel marketers, with predicted spend to increase in 2019 (Manoukain, 2019). Ziang et al. (2015) recognize the travel and tourism industry as one of the early adopters of the internet. Tribe B acknowledged when talking about digital marketing and social media; everyone is fighting for the same viewership, highlighting the importance of creating relevant, impactful content and mentioning that it takes technology to accomplish. Tribe B went on to discuss a new employee they hired within the tourism department with a professional background as a TV host. The interviewee emphasizes technology provisions such as production cameras, drones and editing software for their new employee in order to create high-res production spots for tourism.

Tribe C mentions the importance of tracking to justify the department's efforts, "technology is going to be the fastest-growing way to be able to get some sort of data back that justifies what we are doing." They explained how technology provides data across the website, an app and recently, with the usage and integration of geofencing.

"Utilizing pixels and different things as we go in, especially on the website, being able to track people from one page to

another and seeing what they are interested in. We just launched like an app in a widget that further enhances the visitor experience and adds tracking ability to our side. And one of the biggest things that we are working on is the geofencing. So within the app, as they download it as we serve up ads, we are able to do it within like certain areas. So if they have the app, and they are entering, you know, a specific county and they are going by one of our sites, we can push messages out to them. And so I think that we are going to use that more and more as we are trying to not only get into our area but help control their experience as they go through. Because like I said, even though we want them to spend money in the area as a whole, we, of course, want to guide that. So they either spend it at our sites or at you know, something that benefits the community directly, maybe not like a corporate gas station, but our travel plaza or a mom and pop stop."

Tribe D also mentioned using website traffic; however, as a tool to understand keyword buys and time on site. "Do we need to update content if website traffic is not there long enough? Or if we are not getting enough traffic our way, do we need to change keywords? If our website visitation is down, we track the data and try to get it up."

Tribe A's realm of responsibility under the tourism department umbrella includes the restoration and operation of historic sites, museums and gift shops. The interviewee acknowledged that technology is integrated into all aspects of their department, from data management to communications to visitor feedback to safety.

"So it is a piece of everything we do, I mean, It is simple from, you know, the

fire alarm went off in a building, and how can I get a mass communication out about it, that it is not an emergency. So there is the mobile aspect of it, that is just, you know, for communication. There is also all of our data. We rolled out a new point-of-sale system with a data management component that collects zip code and email and can prompt some visitor questions and data. We also integrate technology through all of our museums. So our open new museum has an augmented reality through an iPad experience with it. So that has been well received, very well. But then we also use it for collection purposes. So we have, we just, we were spending staff time to go do collection reports on temperature, humidity, and all of our museums, every day literally somebody's going logging them, and with our new museum, it has to be done twice a day. So we move to networked data, sensors for temperature, humidity, that report to a system. And then we compile that data there. So it is, it makes our lives easier, and it improves efficiency. And the technologies, the way people find us, most of our marketing is moving to digital, and meeting visitors where they are at whether they are on their phones at a soccer game. They are scrolling through Facebook, well, we want to be in front of them, and so technology is a huge part of the promotional aspects of what we do as well."

Technology in all forms is impactful to the visitor experience. Tribal tourism departments, like all other tourism destinations, recognize the impact of technology on the destination decision-making process. Consumers today are technology-savvy travelers whose technology usage and behaviors evolve (Ziang et al., 2015). The global travel market

is hungry for historical and heritage tours. Per TripAdvisor, popularity jumped 125 percent in 2017 (Manoukain, 2019). The four tribes included in the case study understand the potential economic impact technology has on the tribal tourism industry in Oklahoma and have already identified it as a tool for success.

4. First American tribes are committed to tourism, though what tourism looks like in each tribe differs, resulting in varying levels of commitment.

Each of the four tribal nations interviewed structured tourism differently. It is important to note because each tribal nation is a sovereign government, a functional structure for one tribe may not and likely cannot work for another, which is evident in the findings below. One interviewee acknowledged the complicated dynamic. "I think that it is different for every tribe. What makes sense for one tribe will not make sense for another one, just because tribes generally are not structured the same. But wherever it is aligned, it should have a connection to people who know a little bit about marketing, or a lot of it."

Tribe A is a cultural tourism department responsible for the management of seven museums, two welcome centers, three gift shops and public programming space. The department oversees the tribe's tourism brand and marketing. The brand and marketing focus on tribal and cultural destinations owned and operated by the tribe. The department also operates a tour program and various cultural programs and events for the tribe. One unique cultural program the department is responsible for is the one

percent law the tribe passed around 15 years prior. The one percent law dictates that every tribal project over \$500,000 must dedicate one percent of the budget for art in the new project. The cultural tourism department employs a collection management team responsible for all artifacts at the tourism museums and all artwork across all casinos and health properties. The interviewee communicated the department is responsible for "about 8,000 pieces worth about \$8 million". The cultural tourism department for Tribe A is structured under business operations. The department has a dual reporting structure to business operations and tribal council, which is unique for the tribe and unique amongst the tribes interviewed. Due to dual reporting, Tribe A expressed integrated participation from leadership regarding the department's objectives and accomplishments. These monthly interactions ensure cultural tourism is top of mind for operations and elected officials.

Tribe D, also structured under business operations, mimics the structure of a destination marketing organization. The tourism department is responsible for promoting the entirety of the destination, whether the locations are owned and operated by the nation or not. The department designed and manages a destination website which provides in-depth information regarding the region including event listings, blog, suggested itineraries and featured towns. The department acknowledges they are viewed as a resource for visitors and the local communities due to the extensive amount of information provided via the website. In addition to the website, the department strategically engages in social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube. In addition to the marketing and advertising responsibilities, the tourism department operates four tourism information centers,

which more than 1 million visitors annually, a First American art gallery, and manages a limited liability that functions as a receptive tour company selling group tour packages. "Elected Leadership wanted to create a department to connect all of the tourism assets the tribe was investing in under one identity, that was not the government brand. A brand owned and told by the Nation." Unlike Tribe A, Tribe D receives limited, unstructured feedback. Leadership's unofficial policy is to hire capable, confident individuals who are well-versed and educated in their specific field, then trust and allow them to do their job. Reporting is constant; senior leadership feedback is minimal.

The tourism department at Tribe C has lived in several places within the tribal structure and currently resides within the business operations structure; however, at the time of the interview, it lived within strategic development. In addition to structural changes, the department has experienced several tourism leadership changes since its inception. With each leadership change, the focus of the department has slightly changed. The interviewee mentioned two previous directors had led the program before they took over. Under current leadership, the department has focused on growing and developing the travel brand, working with communities around the brand and marketing initiatives, operating two welcome centers, one gift shop and an online store.

Additionally, the department manages sponsorships in the local tribal communities. The interviewee ended the question stating, "if a task does not belong somewhere, it comes into our realm." Interpreting responses throughout the interview, it is clear the department struggles to have a unified vision. The interviewee also identified "not having a clear unified vision" as the department's

biggest hindrance. "Not having a clear vision, you are not able to focus all your efforts in one area. I really feel that if we had, this is Elected Leadership's vision, and these are the steps that we need to take to get there. We could be a lot more successful. That is not to say we would not still pick up pieces of other tasks, but we would focus most of our resources on the best course forward." The interviewee reported the department receives no leadership feedback outside of an annual 30-minute presentation to Elected Leadership. Oddly enough, the individual interviewed emailed shortly after the interview communicating the department's functions had split, and they were no longer the director of tourism. The tourism department and retail component were separated into two different departments, and she would now be leading the retail department. The change echoes the sentiment expressed during the interview and results in another leadership turnover for the already disconnected department.

Tribe B, who recently structured under business operations, is responsible for tourism and recreation. The department oversees four main functions for the tribe; tourism, recreation, annual festival and the golf course. Under the tourism umbrella, they are responsible for managing the tourism brand and marketing the tribe's attractions throughout the region. One main differentiator is Tribe B Nation does not promote the entire tribal region as a tourist destination like Tribe C and D; however, it focuses solely on tribal businesses and destinations. Under the recreation umbrella, the department is responsible for managing the Attraction, which includes all surrounding fields and event space. The Attraction is a significant revenue stream for the department hosting tournaments for the local communities and academic institutions. Tribe B's Annual Festival is the largest event

hosted by the tribe, usually attracting around 40,000 people, which takes place each summer. The event takes contributions by all nation departments, as nearly 900 volunteers are needed; however, the tourism department manages all planning. The annual festival includes arts and crafts vendors, food vendors, free concerts by national acts, a rodeo, sports tournaments, a parade, citizen ceremonies and more. Lastly, the department oversees operations of a golf course the tribe purchased several years back and recently remodeled. Tribe B communicates directly with the elected leader, receiving praise and opportunities for growth as a department when warranted. Additionally, the department interacts with Tribal Council, receiving positive and negative feedback, though always supportive.

While each of the four tribes is structured under business operations, their roles and responsibilities vary. One sentiment rang clear; all departments were supported by senior tribal leadership and felt as though the administration had a clear understanding of tourism. One concern that clouds leadership's perception, as expressed by one interviewee, is the tourism department does not directly work with elected tribal officials. "Do I feel like I have someone that I can go hash out issues with or explain our perspective from a tourism goal or that will fight for what we need, no. That is not saying that Elected Leadership would not be that person. But we have layers in between there that do not allow us to jump to that level."

There is a disconnect within First American tribes regarding the purpose and impact of tribal tourism, though there is support from tribal leadership. Outside of leadership, interviewees communicated varying disconnects regarding other departments

within each nation's understanding of tourism. While two tribes provided vague answers, two elaborated. "I think some do; I do not think everyone does. I think some people wonder what that is or why you know why it is done, but I think that they see we provide value to the tribe. They might not all know exactly what tourism means, but I think they know that as a department, what our functions are, and that we are doing good for our nation."

Additionally, another interviewee provided context regarding why they believe other departments do not genuinely understand tourism.

"They understand their view of tourism. Every department has its niche; communications focus is on marketing. They understand marketing and tourism. Tribal events understand how we go out to trade shows and community events. They each understand their piece to what they are willing to accept. And they understand what they see. They see us on social media going out to trade shows, having fun saying, "You guys come visit." They understand it to a very simplistic level. They do not understand the depth of it. And what it takes to pull off an event or work with community partners on a regular basis."

5. Pride, destination affinity and feedback are the primary ways Oklahoma First American tribes measure tourism success, which differs from how States and Destination Marketing Organizations measure tourism success.

Bornhorst et al. (2010) identify four determinants for destination marketing organization (DMO) success; 1) Supplier relations; 2) effective management; 3) strategic planning; 4) being focused and objective-driven. In addition to two inputs for success, which are human resources and funding. The predominant state approach utilized to evaluate tourism success is the economic impact of input-output analysis (Dwyer et al., 2004). Oklahoma uses input-output economic analysis developed by Dean Runyan Associates (2019) to estimate spending, earnings, employment and tax receipts as input data to derive economic measures and secondary effects of the travel industry. Economic input from traveler spending is vital to states, destinations and communities across the country for tax revenues. "Travel-related tax revenues are pure profit, generated by visitors who do not require essential public services of a destination" (U.S. Travel Association, 2018, p. 3). Due to state and destination funding models, tourism tax revenue is often viewed as a measure of success for lawmakers and community leaders due to the diminished tax burden for constituents and financial leverage to fund essential community services.

Tribal tourism funding models in Oklahoma do not rely on county or destination tax revenue, nor is such fee collected; thus, it is impossible to measure success in such a way. As communicated in finding one, tribal tourism in Oklahoma was established to promote tribal regions as tourism destinations and provide an authentic, educational experience, not to generate profit. Significant revenue for tribal governments in Oklahoma is produced by gaming. The revenues are then utilized to "provide services for citizens and to develop new tribal industries. Each to benefit the long-term welfare of the tribal citizens" (Dean, 2019, p. 9). Tourism is a benefactor of gaming success.

Conversations regarding the measurement of success of tribal tourism efforts resulted in three general themes from the four tribes: pride, destination affinity and feedback, internally within the tribe and externally from the communities, partners and visitors. Teresa Pinter (2005) identified that effectively planned and managed heritage (cultural) tourism can realize positive impacts, including building community pride. Tribe A communicated pride as a success factor in the opening of a new museum. "People feel proud and inspired when they visit. So it's not just for the public; it is for our citizens as well. We use their pride and their response about how we are doing to measure our success." In addition to internal and citizen response, Tribe A also discussed the value of instilling community pride when measuring department success. Tribe D discussed pride in their department based on the satisfaction tourism team members receive from their relationships with the communities within the region and the personal connections established at travel and tourism shows. "We promote our area very well. We know our area very well. We take pride in getting into our areas and learning what is going on in them so that we can be the storytellers of the destination." Tribe D further elaborated that the department's tourism efforts are often the destinations only marketing. The pride, the individuals, feel being able to represent the entire community is immense. Tribe C discussed how instilling community pride was a central effort of the department during its inception. "A big part of what we did when we first started tourism was not only reach out to our communities, but it was instilling pride in our area of the fact that we have something to offer. As communities grow and branch out their tourism initiatives, we count that as a success, because it is not just

us making the efforts. It is everyone as a whole."

Awareness is essential for any brand. Tribe B identifies creating awareness for the tribe, cultural sites and amenities as the single most important goal of the tourism department. At the same time, Tribe C focuses on brand awareness, "how many people know our name, how many people know we exist." A strong brand delivers relevant content to the intended recipient and exposes new people to the brand, all while breaking through the noise of competition. Statista's 2019 advertising forecast predicted ad expenditures in the United States to amount to \$240.7 billion. Even with so much money going into marketing and advertising, the intangible nature of branding makes it difficult to measure. The difference between brand awareness and brand affinity is sharp. "Brand affinity is where the real value is-the feeling and meaning created around a company or product will define its success or failure" (U.S. Travel Association, 2019, p. 34).

Tribal tourism marries perfectly with brand affinity as the objective of the destination is to create a meaningful connection with the culture, people, land, stories and history of the area. Tribal nations invite visitors and the world to share and experience an authentic journey that educates and encourages meaningful conversations and opportunities to grow as individuals. Oklahoma tribes do this by creating meaning for visitors but also understanding their visitors. "An understanding of who your visitor is and who it is not. Truly knowing and owning what we are and not trying to be everything to everybody. Trying to do what we do authentically and not what people want or what they expect, but being who we truly are."

This raw understanding allows the tribes to build brand affinity and loyal visitors. Tribe D mentioned getting people to consider Oklahoma as a travel and tourism destination is the hardest pitch. Once visitors experience the world-class destinations, the widely undiscovered National Park, the small-town charm and welcoming people, visitors establish feeling and meaning, resulting in brand success. Tribe A expressed the same sentiment, "trying to not only get yourself and your message above the crowd but to bring people to a state they are not familiar traveling to, that is an obstacle."

Oklahoma tribal tourism departments create brand affinity and brand awareness through marketing and advertising, community

engagement, sponsorships, management and ownership of tourism welcome centers, tradeshows and visitor interactions. Building a brand affinity for tribal tourism is more significant than one tribe working at the goal independently. The four tribes acknowledged the impact of working collectively as tribes within the state and across the Nation to create awareness. Tribe D said, "We work really closely with Oklahoma tribes. Also, we share knowledge and tourism development data with tribes nationally through speaking at conferences and through the U.S. Travel Association." Exposure of Tribe D on the national stage not only assists with increasing exposure for the individual tribal tourism brand but heightens the awareness of tribal tourism as a voice contributing to the national tourism conversation.

Tribal Brand Logo's



Cherokee Nation



Chickasaw Nation



Choctaw Nation



Muskege (Creek) Nation

Internal and external feedback received by the tribal tourism departments is the third way to measure success. "Primarily to measure success or failure of our department, we use feedback. Feedback from visitors, the community, our department, the Nation," said Tribe D. Listening is culturally significant to First American tribes, dating back centuries. "When Native Americans do communicate, they put much

more of an emphasis and value on listening rather than speaking" (Rice, "n.d.", Listen Before You Speak, para. 1). Jones-Smith (2018) expressed how First Americans communicate differently. "A major American Indian cultural value is the dictum "listen before you speak" (Jones-Smith, 2018, p. 271). First American culture uses silence as a tool to communicate. Cultural norms of First American culture create a foundation for measuring tourism success.

Listen or your tongue will make
you deaf
Native American Proverb

While the channels of feedback have diversified and changed over the centuries, the wisdom gained is still equally as relevant. Tribe C listens across multiple platforms to external customers. "A lot of it is feedback. As far as comments we receive on social media, what we hear at tradeshow, if people come to visit and then how our communities feel. A big part of how we market what we do is really just listening to the consumer."

Tribe D elaborated on the importance of listening to the community, and the positive impacts a strong relationship has on tourism success. "If we have good relationships with businesses, they are willing to buy-in and participate in our tourism strategy. If we do not know what is going on with our destinations, we cannot accurately promote them. Having a personal connection and listening to our businesses allows them to understand that our objective is to bring new visitors to the entire region." Tribe A emphasized the importance of community as well but acknowledged that measuring tourism success is difficult. "It is not black and white, but a big part of our measurement of success is our community response to what we have done. We have had some failures that we have had great community response for. We have learned from that. But we have resounding successes as well, where the community is vocal about how we have done has made them feel or whether it has instilled a sense of pride." Tribe B, whose role is also to plan and oversee events, highlighted the importance of event feedback from vendors, attendees, volunteers and staff, however,

expressed concern they did not do a sufficient job collecting data for measurement.

Regarding the Annual Festival, "We know we have been successful. You can hear the entire community talk about it. There will be stores or restaurants in town that say, "you guys brought in a ton of people." If we can attract tourism to not just the tribe but also the community, you know we are helping everyone." Listening and reporting external stakeholder feedback to tribal leadership justifies the continued investment in tribal tourism.

In addition to external feedback, internal feedback is a crucial component of tribal tourism success. Due to sovereignty, tribal self-determination and history, First American tribes traditionally prioritize internal feedback. Tribe B discussed the importance of listening to the tourism department team. "If they are not happy with what we are doing, how we are working, then we are not really successful." Tribe A focused on how internal feedback within the department is vital to the visitor experience. "We cannot do what we do without having an effective team. Having all of our sites working together, because one group that comes through will likely experience all the locations." The interviewee stressed the importance of tourism site feedback to ensure brand expectations are met across the destination, creating a positive visitor experience. Chen and Rahman (2018) noted memorable tourism experiences positively affect cultural tourism destination loyalty by tourists.

Each of the tribes spent significant time discussing the importance of relationships with other tribal departments, none more so than the relationship between tourism and culture. Cultural department relationships vary across tribal structures, from reporting

to collaboration. Tribe A reports directly to the Board of Directors Cultural Committee and Tribal Council Cultural Committee in their dual reporting structure. Tribe D leans on the Department of Culture and Humanities, which operates the tribal cultural center and all tribal museums as a resource to tell the story of Tribe D peoples. Tribe D's tourism department sees itself as a service to the Department of Culture and Humanities, assisting in sharing the history and culture of the tribe. While both Tribe A and Tribe D have cultural centers, Tribe C and Tribe B do not.

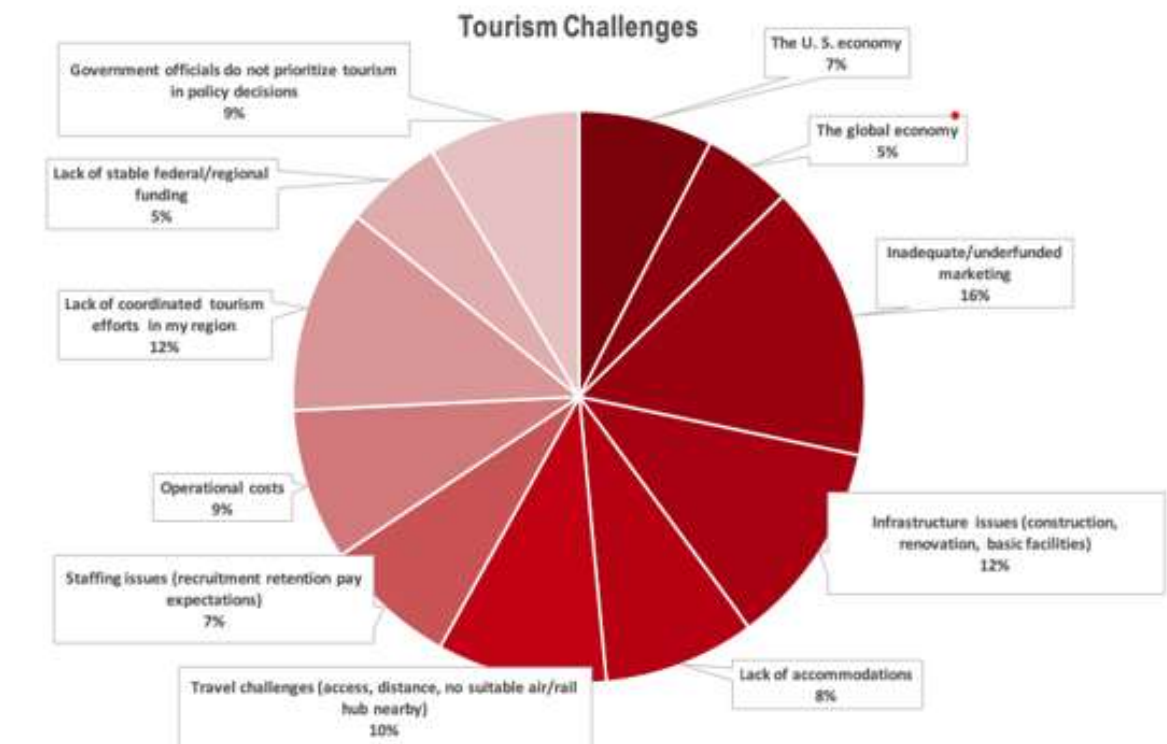
Tribe C is currently building a cultural center and acknowledged tourism's relationship with culture moving forward would be significant.

"But being a tribe, what is unique about us is the fact that we have like this entire culture that we can share with people. I mean, you hear again and again, that people want to learn about First Americans; unfortunately, they want to learn about like the Hollywood perspective. And so as we move forward, we definitely want to change that connotation. But to do that, we have to have a strong relationship with the cultural group. And as we develop the cultural center and different assets, I think we need them, and they need us because

they have to realize that while we do not want to commercialize, we do have to take into perspective what the visitor wants. And really just like we hold all of our sites accountable for these quality standards, we need to hold ourselves accountable to that, whether it is parking, or restrooms, or what's in the gift shops, I think we can both lend each other a little bit of advice that will make it easier for both of us to bring people in."

6. Collaboration and funding are the most desired resources for First American tribal tourism departments.

Funding and collaboration were identified as the top resources desired by the Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation and Muscogee (Creek) Nation to assist in tribal tourism efforts. Interviewee responses emulated State of Indian Country Tourism Spring 2019 national data from an AIANTA report, identifying inadequate/underfunded marketing as the most significant challenge facing tribal tourism enterprises followed by lack of coordinated regional tourism efforts and infrastructure issues which tied for second.



Source: American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association

To grow tribal tourism, each interviewee identified additional department funding as the primary resource necessary to make an impact. While all tribes acknowledged they have adequate funding for current operations, failure to grow and missed opportunities were recognized due to current funding allocation. Aside from capital project expenditures and operational needs tied to the investments, tourism budgets have remained flat at each of the tribal nations over the past several years. While budgets have remained flat, the cost of doing business continues to rise year over year, in addition to short lifespans of digital marketing tools such as websites, apps and museum technology that continually require updating. Advocating for tribal funding is complicated. Tourism is competing for money against programs and services for citizens and businesses turning a

profit. Tribe A details the complexities of why each tribal tourism budget has remained relatively flat.

"I think the biggest challenge is just advocating for funding, even though we are well supported. We live in a political organization, and there are external factors. We are very blessed to be supported by the businesses. But you know, it tourism is not a huge moneymaker. Tourism is a big economic impact, but as a department, we are not highly profitable. So we are dependent upon the economy at large and are dependent on our businesses because they directly support us get funding."

Tribe D discussed ways in which an increased budget would allow the department to grow tribal tourism.

“We have identified ways in which we can grow our brand through research, partnership increased marketing spends and creative campaign strategies; however, every effort requires additional funding currently not available. Increased budget for headcount would also have a positive impact on the department's ability to grow the tourism brand. Currently, shared services or external vendors are utilized. While they are great, they lack the specific knowledge and expertise of the region to effectively tell the story of our destination in an authentic tone.”

From a staff and department oversight perspective, Tribe C employs the least number of tourism employees compared to the other three tribes and compared to other destinations across Oklahoma, according to the interviewee.

“Yes, for if we were looking to grow and actually increase, like our awareness and what we are able to impact? I would say no, you look at a lot of different tourism departments and how the staff there is, even specifically within Oklahoma, and I would say that we are understaffed and a little under-budgeted. Specifically, I would say, as to our media budget, you look at any of our competition, which does not refer specifically to Oklahoma, or to the tribes as anyone trying to get those road trippers in our immediate vicinity. Compared to what they have, we are severely under-budgeted.”

Tribes are essential to Oklahoma's tourism and economic success, which is none so more apparent than through the United for

Oklahoma platform whose mission is the raise awareness of tribal impacts across the state. However, the four tribal nations acknowledged present and past collective efforts and expressed their desire for increased interaction and collaborative efforts to increase tribal tourism across the state. Tribe B mentioned changes to Inter-tribal Council meeting format impacting consistent dialogue but hopes for increased time together and sharing of best practices. Tribe C elaborated on how specifically the tribes can work together.

“Right now, we have a limited amount of time with each other. We see each other at a conference here or you know, something there. And we get that networking opportunity, and we get those connections. But I wish it was one of those relationships where we sat down and said, “This is our overall goal. This is our goal in the next year, three years, five years. This is what we are planning, and this is what we have rolled out. And we are able to compare. Not only are we able to say, “We tried that, and I would recommend you do X, Y and Z instead of this.” It would also show where we overlap. Our goal is not just to bring them to our areas. It is to spread the love and send them to different locations throughout the state.”

Tourism, while competitive amongst destinations, is collaborative. The reality of the tribal tourism disconnect has nothing to do with a decreased desire by any tribe but the lack of allocated time initially provided through the Inter-Tribal Council.

Practitioners recognize the value of knowledge sharing through networks, not just within organizations, particularly the encouragement of partnerships within destinations (Baggio & Cooper, 2010). New

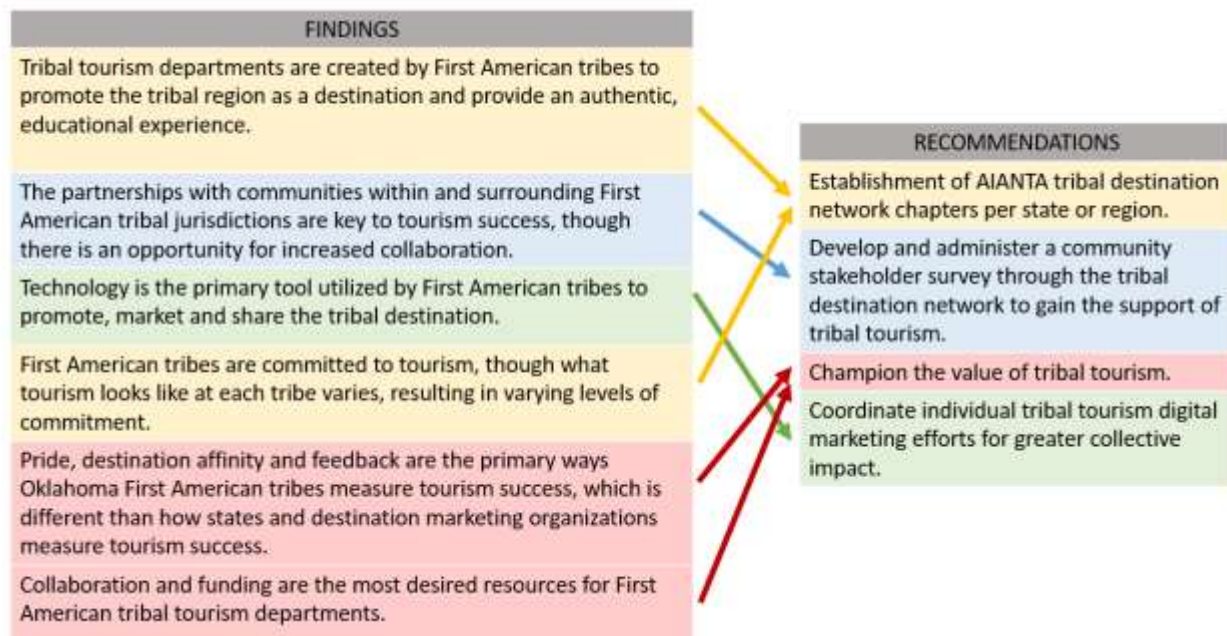
thinking shifts knowledge management from 'knowledge is power' to 'sharing is power,' which creates 'communities of knowledge' within destinations (Baggio & Cooper, 2010). Encouragement and collaboration of partnerships are essential not only among tribes but also within communities and the State of Oklahoma. Tribe D highlighted the power of sharing, "It would help if we had knowledge of future projects within our area. We are not always aware of projects, internal or external until they are made public. If we had the information prior, we would be able to support the initiative immediately."

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Six key findings within the economic, cultural and social lenses resulted in four recommendations for the Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation, Muscogee (Creek) Nation and AIANTA. Each recommendation is a direct response to data collection and analysis.

Recommendation one derives from finding one and finding four, focusing on the

meaning and commitment to tribal tourism. The second recommendation, in response to finding two, highlights and grows the importance of community support. Recommendation three is a product of finding four and five, focusing on the outcomes and needs. The final recommendation originates from finding three and the importance of technology in tribal tourism success.



1. Establish AIANTA tribal destination network chapters per state or region.

The development of formal and informal collaboration, partnerships and networks to deliver a product is more prominent in tourism than most economic sectors (Baggio

& Cooper, 2010). The report findings and Spring 2019 AIANTA survey both identify the need for formal collaborative tribal tourism efforts. Oklahoma tribal findings communicated informal efforts struggle to remain consistent since the dilution of the Inter-Tribal Council Tourism Committee. AIANTA's mission outlines define, introduce, grow and sustain as the pillars of the organization, aligning perfectly with the identified need. Establishing chapters across

the United States allows AIANTA to meet tribes where they are, opposed to requiring them to attend a conference to engage with the organization. The requirement could be the limitation that prohibits a tribe, business or individual from interacting with AIANTA. It is recommended that chapters represent a state or states, depending on the number of tribes per state, within the six identified regions. With 39 federally recognized tribes, Oklahoma should establish the first tribal destination network chapter, leaning on the four tribes interviewed for this study as founding members.

Tribal destination network chapters should be utilized as an introduction and growth tool for AIANTA, including member and non-member tribal nations, tribal enterprises, First American-owned businesses and individuals. Inclusion allows a network of tribal and community destination stakeholders based on interest, not on finances, power or previous participation. It is recommended that tribal destination networks meet monthly or bi-monthly depending on chapter needs as a means to share knowledge, innovate, collaborate and remain competitive in the industry. In numerous economist and sociologist cases, it has been shown that a dense and well-formed network, particularly in unpredictable environments, favor's a stakeholder's attitude to search for new opportunities and to share experiences (Baggio & Cooper, 2010). Sharing experiences, best practices and evaluating tourism opportunities creates an ecosystem of resources. As identified during the finding of this study, others within tribal organizations often struggle to comprehend tourism fully. Having a local network of colleagues within whom appreciate and understand the complexities of tribal tourism will be a valued sounding board for each tribal nation.

Due to the current tourism economic environment, tribal destination network chapters will be vital in ensuring economic hardships do not alienate destinations that are unable to continue membership, unable to travel and are looking for tribal resources and support moving forward. Tourism will be different, moving forward. Tribal tourism will be different, moving forward. Collectively tribes and communities, through formal tribal destination networks, can lean on one another to grow and sustain.

2. Develop and administer a community stakeholder survey through the tribal destination network to grow and enhance collaboration.

Interview findings identified the importance of community partnerships regarding tribal tourism success, feedback as a critical means of measurement and the increased desire for collaboration as three key takeaways connected to a tribe's relationship with the surrounding communities. As each tribe identified; currently, there is not a formal process for communities or stakeholders to provide tourism feedback to the tribal tourism department. Once the tribal destination network is established, one of the first business orders should be developing a community stakeholder survey to elicit feedback from organizations and individuals connected to the tourism industry or impacted by the tourism industry. Destinations that have conducted tourism stakeholder surveys in the last five years are Destination BC, Tourism Richmond and Travel Oregon. Exploring each of these surveys would give the tribal destination network a solid foundation to assist in developing questions for tribal stakeholders in Oklahoma. The Travel Oregon example

shows how one survey can be applied to various regions throughout a state to ensure consistency while including region-specific questions. Addressing the needs of stakeholders is one component to signifying sustainable tourism (Waligo et al., 2012), which fits within the cultural beliefs of First American cultures. Sustainable tourism is the concept of visiting a tourist destination without harming the cultural, natural or recreational resources while trying to make a positive impact on the environment, society and economy. Freeman (1984) asserted that stakeholders can affect and are affected by the actions of one organization.

The survey should be conducted online and distributed to community stakeholder databases managed by each tribe of the tribal destination network. The survey should be assessed every two years due to the vital role stakeholders play in the sustainable success of a destination. After collection of initial baseline data, the tribal destination network should set measurable and attainable goals regarding the community stakeholder surveys over the biennium to ensure the community partnerships remain healthy, feedback continues, and collaboration between tribal tourism departments and communities is increasing.

3. Champion the value of tribal tourism.

The tourism industry is expansive and complex. Findings identified individuals within tribal organizations do not fully comprehend the purpose, impact and opportunity tourism affords tribal nations. The story of tourism does not resonate with everyone. There is a lot to know, a lot to understand and no explicit channel of communicating the positive impacts of tribal tourism on communities, states, Indian Country and the United States. Championing

the value of tribal tourism, collectively as tribal destination networks, highlights when entities work in tandem with other economic development strategies, tourism success can be achieved. Being a champion means telling the stories of our communities, the personal visitor experiences, the addition of new tourism destinations and businesses, leading to job creation and increased tourism activity. It means analyzing the information learned from the community stakeholder survey and being transparent with the data to allow others to utilize the results to guide tourism development decisions in the regions. It means sharing resources to assist tourism growth and understanding across tribal territories and within the organization across tribal departments.

Working collectively with AIANTA, the tribal destination network should develop two toolkits to champion the value of tribal tourism, one for tribal tourism departments to use within tribal organizations and a second to be used externally for communicating the value of tribal tourism to communities, states, Indian Country and the United States. The toolkits fit within the mission of AIANTA to define, introduce, grow and sustain tourism that honors traditions and values through education, the heartbeat of their work. “Internal marketing techniques designed to inform residents of the economic and cultural benefits they receive from tourism may be helpful in gaining the host community’s support that is necessary for the development, successful operation, and sustainability of tourism” (Yoon et al., 2001, p. 370) Building strong tourism advocates comes from increasing the number of tribes, businesses and people who see themselves as part of the tourism industry. To build the industry, clear connections must be available between words and actions through the toolkits. The toolkits will be essential pieces of the dialogue

tourism departments utilize to assist others in understanding the industry.

Understanding the value and positive impacts of tribal tourism assists with another finding within the case study, the desire for increased funding. A clearly defined internal and external communications strategy within the toolkits will lay the foundation for tribes

seeking to establish a tourism department or grow tourism funding within an existing department. Playbook: Protecting Your Budget by the U.S. Travel Association (2018) has identified seven reoccurring message themes to be included in communication to safeguard or increase an organization's tourism budget:



Source: U.S. Travel Association

While the U.S. Travel Association is a resource and tool for many states and destinations across the United States, creating invaluable information regarding tourism advocacy and policy, the resources are not specific for Indian Country and are based on U.S. Travel membership. Two of the interviewed tribes are members of the U.S. Travel Association and AIANTA;

however, outside of those three entities, there is little representation of tribal tourism within the national organization. The four tribal nations interviewed, in collaboration with AIANTA and U.S. Travel Association, should collectively develop an external resource that can be utilized by communities, destinations and states. The toolkit should focus on growing cultural tourism based on a

shared understanding of the value of tribal tourism.

In 2005, the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers designed a Tribal Tourism Toolkit Project: “Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Indian Country” intended to guide tribal nations through the tourism planning process, cultivating community collaboration and culminating with the launch of tribal tourism. The 10-step toolkit recommends the following steps:

- 1) Form an Action Committee
- 2) Plan and Complete a Tribal Community Inventory
- 3) Conduct a Resident Attitude Survey or Hold a “Hopes and Horror” Meeting
- 4) Analyze Your Current Market
- 5) Establish Priorities and Goals
- 6) Develop Strategies/Projects and Identify Resources
- 7) Analyze Project Impacts
- 8) Test Strategies in the Community
- 9) Seek Formal Endorsement
- 10) Implement Plan

The toolkit encourages tribes to explore the economic impacts of tourism. It serves as a supplemental tool, working in collaboration with this case study analysis regarding defining and achieving success in tribal tourism through the lens of an economic, social and cultural framework. The 10-step process serves as a model toolkit specializing in tourism in Indian Country.

4. Coordinate individual tribal tourism digital marketing efforts for greater collective impact.

Technology was identified as the primary means of marketing tribal tourism

destinations. Though each destination has an individual brand, mission and budget, collectively, they seek to increase visitation to tribally owned destinations and communities within tribal jurisdictions. An integrated marketing communications foundation ensures individual messages reinforce each other, creating a larger impact together than they would otherwise (Key & Czaplewski, 2017). Integrated marketing communication across tribal tourism brands can also impact visitor perception of tribal attractions in a positive way, as trustworthy destinations. Each tribal brand maintains its logo, marketing message and position; however, the communications strategy would be unified in such a way the brands would coordinate activities to seek to change digital consumer behaviors when searching for authentic tribal experiences. The hierarchy of effects model maps out the response process a recipient of a message goes through before behavior: awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and behavior (Key & Czaplewski, 2017). Results take time to produce outcomes; thus, the model clings tight to strict communications that can be enforced across multiple parties for extended periods. Channels in which coordinated efforts should span are advertising, direct marketing, sales, public relations and digital marketing. Seeing as case study interviews identified digital marketing as the primary means of promotion for tribal tourism, collaborative efforts should initiate and focus on the digital channel and grow into other channels when applicable. The essence of integrated marketing communications for tribal tourism in Oklahoma is developing a place brand based on shared positive values and perceptions.

Integrated marketing efforts will save tribal tourism departments time and money. Currently, each tribe develops an annual strategy and campaign independently.

Unbeknownst to one another, multiple tribal destinations may focus on the same themes, such as cultural tourism, recreational tourism and rural tourism. Without coordination, digital marketing efforts would have tribes competing against one another for keyword buys, resulting in increased costs for all parties. If tribal tourism departments coordinated efforts to flight keywords at specific times, they would not be competing against one another for the same words. The amount of time that goes into the development of annual strategies and campaigns would be decreased if joint communication efforts were pre-determined and not adjusted after that. Additionally, as pointed out by Tribe C, integrated efforts would alleviate overlap, align three to five-year goals and make recommendations based on experience. “If we were able to collaborate in that way, we would have the thread throughout all of us, rather than just one of us individually.”

Upstream and downstream audiences utilize digital communications, meaning in addition to digital assets used by consumers (downstream) to assist in trip planning, they can also be used by tribal, state and federal entities (upstream) to influence change to the tribal tourism landscape. In this regard, digitally integrated marketing communication also affects recommendations two and three. When tribal tourism departments present a unified message based on positive shared values and perceptions, they collectively assist in moving the needle for tribal tourism, addressing multiple opportunities.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

Small Sample Size

The small sample size and isolated geographical region of the tribal nations interviewed may limit the ability for the study to be applied broadly across Indian Country.

Selection Bias

AIANTA selected interview participants based on tribal membership status and the existence of a tenured tribal tourism department. Consideration for tribal nations outside of Oklahoma was discussed with AIANTA; however, it was determined the four interviewed tribes' similarities would allow more detailed categorization.

Personal Connection

All individuals interviewed for the study are professional colleagues of the study author. AIANTA is an intimate organization whose members work collectively to enhance tourism across all of Indian Country. Collaboration between AIANTA and tribal nations has led to organizational success. The honesty of question responses may be questioned. To alleviate concern, interview protocol was followed precisely, which included an audio recording of each interview with participant agreement.

CONCLUSION

First American nations in Oklahoma and across the United States are increasingly viewing tourism as a means of economic development and a way to share their tribal history and culture. This comparative case study interviews four First American tribal tourism department leaders in Oklahoma who are members of the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association to discover similarities, differences and patterns. The study seeks to glean common themes within the economic, social and cultural umbrellas to shed light on how First American tribes define and achieve success in tourism.

Two guiding questions framed the case study; why does tribal tourism exist and what is the impact of tribal tourism on communities, tribal and non-tribal. Each question narrowed the lens of exploration, allowing the focus of the research to target outcomes and activities. Specifically, what does tribal tourism seek to accomplish, why are tribal destinations important, and how is tribal tourism different. Further, the case study explores how the benefits of tribal tourism are measured and the relationships between tribal tourism and communities.

Four interviews with established tribal tourism departments, who had each been in existence for more than eight years, resulted in six key findings. First American tribes establish tribal tourism departments to promote tribal regions as a destination while providing an authentic educational experience. The communities within and surrounding First American tribal jurisdictions are key to tourism success; however, there is an opportunity to strengthen the partnerships and increase collaboration. First American tribes utilize technology as the primary means to market and promote the tribal destination. Tourism

structure and operations within each tribe functions according to specific tribal need, which results in a varied level of commitment. Though commitment varies, each tribe is confident in tribal leadership's support of tourism efforts. Tribal tourism success is measured through pride, destination affinity and feedback from within the organization, its citizens, communities and visitors. Lastly, the greatest need identified for First American tribal tourism departments was increased collaboration internally and externally and additional funding.

Findings brought to light four recommendations in which AIANTA and the Oklahoma tribal tourism departments can work collectively to increase, with the ultimate objective of increasing tourism participation across Indian Country. AIANTA, with the assistance of the four case study tribes, should establish tribal tourism network chapters, creating collaborative groups outside of the American Indian Tourism Conference for sharing information, data and resources. Tribal tourism network chapters should develop and administer community stakeholder surveys throughout tribal jurisdictions to increase community participation and understanding in tribal tourism efforts. AIANTA and tribal tourism departments should focus on the means to champion the value of tribal tourism to internal and external stakeholders as a way to bridge the communications gap and ultimately increase funding. Lastly, tribes should work collectively to establish integrated marketing communications to extend the value of marketing funds and learn from one another's past and current efforts. Integrated marketing communications will save First American nations time and money as well as present shared values and a unified tourism perception.

Each First American nation operates uniquely according to their constitution and government structure. For these reasons, one cannot precisely define a superior structure to be utilized by all First American nations to achieve success. The comparative case study sheds light on economic, cultural and social themes that contribute to tribal tourism success.

REFERENCES

- American Indian Alaskan Native Tourism Association, 'State of Indian Country, Spring 2019,' May 2019.
- Baggio, R., & Cooper, C. (2010). Knowledge transfer in a tourism destination: the effects of a network structure. *The Service Industries Journal*, 30(10), 1757-1771.
- Bornhorst, T., Ritchie, J. B., & Sheehan, L. (2010). Determinants of tourism success for DMOs & destinations: An empirical examination of stakeholders' perspectives. *Tourism Management*, 31(5), 572-589.
- Chen, H., & Rahman, I. (2018). Cultural tourism: An analysis of engagement, cultural contact, memorable tourism experience and destination loyalty. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 26, 153-163.
- Dean, K. (2019). *The Economic Impact of Tribal Nations in Oklahoma Fiscal Year 2017. Oklahoma Native Impact*. <http://www.oknativeimpact.com/>.
- Dean Runyan Associates. (2019). *The Economic Impact of Travel on Oklahoma: 2010 - 2018 State Estimates*. <https://ds8hbldo2z4gr.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/OK-Travel-Impacts-Statewide-and-County-Impacts-2010-20181.pdf>.
- Dwyer, L., Forsyth, P., & Spurr, R. (2004). Evaluating tourism's economic effects: new and old approaches. *Tourism Management*, 25(3), 307-317.
- Frank, Andrew K. "Five Civilized Tribes." *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*. <http://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=FI011> (accessed May 29, 2020).
- Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Boston: Pitman, 46.
- Getz, D. (1994). Residents' attitudes toward tourism: A longitudinal study in Spey Valley, Scotland. *Tourism Management*, 15(4), 247-258.
- Goodrick, Delwyn (2014). Comparative Case Studies: Methodological Briefs - Impact Evaluation No. 9, *Methodological Briefs* no. 9.
- Graft, A. (2019, July 1). *Travel and Tourism Statistics: The Ultimate Collection*. Access. <https://blog.accessdevelopment.com/tourism-and-travel-statistics-the-ultimate-collection>
- Jones-Smith, E. (2018). *Culturally Diverse Counseling: Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications.
- Key, T. M., & Czaplewski, A. J. (2017). Upstream social marketing strategy: An integrated marketing communications approach. *Business Horizons*, 60(3), 325-333.

- Lemelin, R. H., Koster, R., & Youroukos, N. (2015). Tangible and intangible indicators of successful aboriginal tourism initiatives: A case study of two successful aboriginal tourism lodges in Northern Canada. *Tourism Management*, 47, 318-328.
- Manoukain, J. (2019, September 23). The Ultimate List of Travel Statistics for 2019 & 2020. *CrowdRiff*. <https://crowdriff.com/resources/blog/travel-statistics>.
- National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers. (2005). *Report of the NATHPO Tribal Tourism Toolkit Project: "Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Indian Country"*. <http://www.nathpo.org/PDF/Final%20Report.pdf>.
- Packer, J., & Ballantyne, R. (2016). Conceptualizing the visitor experience: A review of literature and development of a multifaceted model. *Visitor Studies*, 19(2), 128-143.
- Peltier, D. (2018, November 26). Tribal Tourism Growth in U.S. and Canada Prompts Destinations to Dig Deeper into the Past. *Skift*. <https://skift.com/2018/11/26/tribal-tourism-growth-in-u-s-and-canada-prompts-destinations-to-dig-deeper-into-the-past/>.
- Pinter, T. L. (2005). Heritage tourism and archaeology: Critical issues. *The SAA archaeological record*, 5(3), 9-11.
- Rice, M. (n.d.). *Differences in Communication*. <https://unioncollegenativeamericans.weebly.com/cultural-differences-in-communication.html>.
- Richards, G. (2018). Cultural tourism: A review of recent research and trends. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 36, 12-21.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). Interviews as guided conversations: Qualitative interviewing the art of hearing data.
- Russell-Mundine, G. (2007). Key factors for the successful development of Australian indigenous entrepreneurship. *Tourism: Preliminary Communication*, 55(4), 417e429.
- Sautter, E. T., & Leisen, B. (1999). Managing stakeholders a tourism planning model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 312-328.
- Smith, M. K. (2015). *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*. Routledge.
- Starman, A. B. (2013). The case study as a type of qualitative research. *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies/Sodobna Pedagogika*, 64(1).
- U.S. Travel Association. (2020). *Domestic Travel Fact Sheet*. https://www.ustravel.org/system/files/media_root/document/Research_Fact-Sheet_Domestic-Travel.pdf.

- U.S. Travel Association. (2018). *Made in America: Travel's Essential Contribution to Economic Development*. <https://www.ustravel.org/research/made-america-travels-essential-contribution-economic-development>.
- U.S. Travel Association. (2018). *Playbook: Protecting Your Budget*. <https://www.ustravel.org/research/playbook-protecting-your-budget>.
- U.S. Travel Association. (2020). *U.S. Travel Answer Sheet*. https://www.ustravel.org/system/files/media_root/document/Research_Fact-Sheet_US-Travel-Answer-Sheet.pdf.
- Waligo, V. M., Clarke, J., & Hawkins, R. (2013). Implementing sustainable tourism: A multi-stakeholder involvement management framework. *Tourism Management*, 36, 342-353.
- World Tourism Organization (2019). *Recommendations on Sustainable Development of Indigenous Tourism*. United Nations World Tourism Organization. <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284421299>.
- Xiang, Z., Magnini, V. P., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2015). Information technology and consumer behavior in travel and tourism: Insights from travel planning using the internet. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 22, 244-249.
- Yoon, Y., Gursoy, D., & Chen, J. S. (2001). Validating a tourism development theory with structural equation modeling. *Tourism Management*, 22(4), 363-372.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Interview Protocols

How do First American tribes define and achieve success in tourism?

Ice Breaker

- How are you?
- Are you a member of a tribe? And, if so, what tribe do you most closely affiliate?
- What tribe do you represent in an official tourism capacity?
- What project(s) have you been working on lately?

Background

- How does the Tribe define tourism (i.e. gaming, outdoor recreation, tours, cultural center)?
- Does the Tribe see their culture important to their tourism product/program? If so, how does your tribal tourism program support the Tribe's cultural perpetuation goals?
- How long have you worked in tourism?
- How long have you worked in tribal tourism?
- Do you have any experience in tribal tourism outside of your current role?
- Why did your tribe start a tribal tourism department?
- When was the department created?
- Who participated in the development of the department?
- How many people work within the department?
- What is the department responsible for within the organization?
- Under what branch of the tribe does the department exist?

Current Landscape

- How does the Tribe tell its story through their tourism program and/or product?
- What role do the keepers of the culture play in your tourism development and planning?
- How is the department funded?
- Is the budget volatile or flat? If so, up or down? Flat for how long?
- Do you anticipate the department growing in employees or oversight in the next one year? Two years? Three years?
- How do you define success?
- Who participates in the process of defining success?
- Who is excluded who should be part of the conversation of defining success?
- How do you measure success?
- Does the tribe contract with any vendors to provide ROI data? If so, who and for what data?
- Does the department have an adequate budget?

- Does the department earn revenue? If so, how?
- Is revenue earned directly by the tourism department measured? Important? Does it impact the budget?
- Do you believe the department would exist if no revenue were earned?
- What is the department's single most important goal?
- How do you measure the success of the goal?
- What does the department do well?
- What could the department do better?
- What criteria do you use to measure the department's success (or failure)?
- Do you receive feedback from leadership regarding the department's efforts?
- Is there any information you currently do not have access to that would assist in the department's efforts?
- Does the department have a strategic plan? Is the plan kept up to date?
- Do you have clear, realistic objectives?
- Do you have support for senior leadership?
- Do you have good communication internally with partners?
- Do you have good communication externally with partners?
- Are other departments involved in tourism efforts?
- Do other departments understand tourism?
- Do other departments support tourism?
- Do you have sufficient/well-allocated resources?
- What additional resources would assist tourism efforts?
- Is technology relevant to the department's tourism efforts?
- How does technology impact success?
- What internal relationships are most important to the department's success?
- What external relationships are most important to the department's success?
- What factors have you identified that assist in successfully marketing your destinations?
- Are there any roadblocks to tourism success internally? Externally?
- Do you collaborate with other tribes who have a tourism department?
- What is most valuable from that/those relationships?
- What, if anything, do you wish that/those relationships also provided?
- Do you collaborate with other tourism entities?
- What is most valuable from that/those relationships?
- What, if anything, do you wish that/those relationships also provided?

Imagery

- Do you include native imagery in your marketing efforts?
- Do you notice a difference between imagery that includes native images and those that do not? What?
- Do you have any data that supports the belief?
- What avenues do you use to promote your destination?
- If budget were no issue, where would you advertise?

Explore

- Where within the tribal structure, should tourism reside?
- Expectations of the department?
- What components should be under the tourism umbrella?

Appendix B Master Matrices

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
ECONOMIC	Sites			
		Our most recent project has been the development of our Museum.		Tribe A
		Yeah, so today, our cultural tourism department manages six museums, which in November will be seven, two welcome centers that were formerly state of Oklahoma welcome centers. Three other gift shops that are outside of a museum facility that are standalone. We also operate some public programs space, including a pavilion, that was an interpretation of an 1843 structure, we operate, so those are our physical operations.		Tribe A
		So the Nations cultural tourism strategy was to develop museums to tell our story. So we've dealt, we've been blessed with historic properties that needed restored, but still were intact enough that we could restore them. So we did an interpretation plan, interpretive plan that said about each of those properties, telling its own story. And that's set amongst an overall interpretive plan where somebody can come from one site, get a little bit of the story, and then go to another and get a little bit more of the story.		Tribe A
		Oversee one art gallery and four tourism information centers, all of which sell retail which welcome over a million people each year.		Tribe D
		Part of our department, our welcome centers and art gallery have retail components. So at those locations they do generate revenue, however it is not enough to cover the overhead of operations and headcount.		Tribe D
		Welcome Center, which also includes our online store and gift shop there in the headquarters. We also have an art gallery that's there.		Tribe D
		So we have the Welcome Center that does produce revenue. And then we have the headquarters gift shop that, while not an official Welcome Center, we utilize in that manner. So we bring in gross revenue that way.	We struggle which I mean, in being completely Frank, like we don't make money a lot in the black. If we hadn't opened a second location, we would never be in the black. And that's not something uncommon from us. I mean, when you look at what visitors come in to do, they're spending very little money on like souvenirs and f&b, those are more knickknack types, it's not enough to compensate for the staff, we do that more as a service. So To me, the revenue is important because everything we do we want to justify the cost and offset it whenever we can. But would we still do what we're doing, regardless of the amount we brought in? Absolutely.	Tribe C
		So we, unlike some of the other tribes, we promote gaming also just because that's one of our biggest amenities. So typically, as far as tourism goes, you know, we're, we're marketing our cultural sites and businesses and try to draw attraction to there and then our council halls, it's probably our biggest cultural attraction. It's a free, to tour it		Tribe B
		Then we also have a visitor center that we're developing, it's across the street from our council house, you know, we want to preserve the culture. We work with a couple of our cultural departments to do that. We're involved in the Homelands project and making that a national park. So the legislation passed Congress this past January to make that happen. So we go there every year. Then we have some, we have some cultural farmers going there. The culture needs to be preserved. We know working with our language department and our cultural preservation department to make sure that we're doing everything we can to promote their departments as well.		Tribe B
		The facility where we office is a fitness facility as well as a basketball gym and so we have, we offer basically free fitness programs to any citizen of any tribe and also anyone who works for our tribe. It's our, our department manages that		Tribe B
		we do promote gaming. So like, our casino resort is a huge draw for us. So when we go to these consumer shows, they're in the region, people like, people know what our casino is and so that's like, an instant draw for us and so we say, Hey, you can come, you know if we're in St. Louis, come stay a week here, have a girls weekend if you want and hang out by our pool, but make sure you go to some of our cultural sites to or go to our council house and so really using that name recognition as a key draw to answer overall goals.		Tribe B
		So from my perspective, I think what we could do better on is the site development, I think that that is the biggest key. Too often, we want to focus on our own assets, because we have that direct ROI. And we have like that measurable piece to it. And of course, we want people to spend money at our sites like that's how we function, right. But I genuinely feel that if we only focus on ourselves, if we only focus on the tribe, we're going to limit our community so severely, like we are handicapping them, because if the tribe ceases to exist, we're just going to have dried up communities. And then the same thing is true, even if we become the next Las Vegas, but we have nothing outside of ourselves. That doesn't benefit our tribal members, our community members or those coming to visit us, and so right now we have out of our entire budget, we have \$25,000, set aside to work with five sites every year. And again, and again, that is the piece of what we do that gets question but it's also what I believe the most in because the state and different industries, they don't direct that funding to historical sites that we believe have value. And so, so much in Oklahoma, we talked about cultural and heritage tourism, and you know, the history, and we want to preserve that, but nobody's putting their money where their mouth is. And I would love to see us come in and do that. And I say that, not because I want us to come in and take over those sites. I mean, if we have to, that's what we'll do. But I'm a firm believer in people owning what they have. And that's like, the biggest piece of site development for me is that we want to come in and be a true partner. But the at the end of the day, the goal is for us to give you the resources and the tools to own what you have, and we want you to be proud of it, we want you to be sustainable. And so if I had to pick that is the one thing that we would severely ramp up.		Tribe C

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
ECONOMIC	Funding Need			
		I think the biggest challenge is just the advocating for funding, even though we're well supported. We live in a political organization, and there's external factors. We're very blessed to be supported by the businesses. But you know, it, tourism is not a huge moneymaker. It's a big economic impact, but it's not a big, we don't, we are not highly profitable and so we're, we are dependent upon the economy at large and are dependent on our businesses, economy, because they directly support us get funding. So those are some of the challenges.		Tribe A
		I believe that we could increase our budget. We have, you know, stayed flat and with the you know, the economy, changing and different things, it, We have identified ways in which we can grow our brand through research, partnership, increased marketing spend and creative campaign strategies however every effort requires additional funding currently not available. Additional budget for headcount would also have a positive impact on the department's ability to grow the tourism brand. Currently shared services or external vendors are utilized and while they are great, they lack the specific knowledge and expertise of the region to effectively tell the story of our destination in an authentic tone."		Tribe D
		Well, besides, I mean our, we have sufficient, we would love to have more budget,		Tribe D
		Yes, for if we were looking to grow and actually increase, like our awareness and what we're able to impact? I would say no, you look at a lot of different tourism departments, and how they staff there's even specifically within Oklahoma, and I would say that we're understaffed, and a little under budgeted. Specifically, I would say, as to our media budget, you look at any of our competition, which doesn't refer specifically to Oklahoma, or to the tribes as anyone trying to get those road trippers in our immediate vicinity. Compared to what they have were severely under budgeted.		Tribe C
		The biggest thing I would like to see, like you mentioned getting the visitor profile is kind of that visitor profile and like zip code data, as far as specific to our target demographic. And that's not saying that we aren't able to get it as budgetary constraints.		Tribe C
		So of course, funding, we would always be happy to have funding. And then I think a big part of it is we want our communities to be able to provide information to us. But they struggle with the same things we do probably to a greater extent they don't have the funding, they don't have the staff. We're very lucky in the fact that we have much more Even though I'm saying that we could use more, we have much more of that than they have access to. I think a big, The biggest thing that could kind of alleviate that for all of us is if we just had additional staff that we were able to utilize to say like we have 10 and a half counties, I'm hiring, hiring three additional staff people that would be over the specific regions. And then we will be able to kind of coordinate data and information. I think, even though we like I wish we had more like funding in these different things .		Tribe C
		I mean there are things that we could pay for that would probably give us access to more information and more data and different, different ways we can reach more people that we aren't doing right now.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
ECONOMIC	Events			
			We also operate various cultural programs and events, including an art market, which is in our tribal market.	Tribe A
		our department puts on our annual festival each summer and so we just finished that in June. So that's our biggest event of the year that we do. Attendees are usually between 30 and 40,000 people that attends that and so it takes about 900 volunteers to put it on and we have about 25 different events that goes on according to for each event. So it's usually a year worth of planning, the event is and we do, there's you know, arts and crafts vendors, obviously food vendors. We have free concerts with national acts like this year we had Easton Corbin headlined one night and getting the girl headlined the other night. There's a huge rodeo, I think it's second biggest in the country. There was almost 500 participants in that, we have large softball tournament team coming from all over country for that and there's a royalty pageant tied to the festival. We have a parade, there's a living legend ceremony, honorees, only five citizens who have contributed to the tribe or have done well in their lifetime.		Tribe B
		We hosted, it was a six day tournament and was the first one we ever did and we had like throughout that week, over 10,000 people attend and over \$20,000 in gate sales and then concession was about \$15,000. So we got to really expose our facility to the community and because of that, we were also chosen to host some high school playoffs, we hosted the class B area tournament, I'm sorry, Class B regional tournament and then we were selected to host 3A area tournament. During that we, we filled the gym to the maximum capacity of, we had 2000 people there. They bring a big crowd and it was the biggest crowd we ever had in the dome. So between the three tournaments, we had over \$50,000 in ticket sales, \$30,000 in concession revenue, and there was over 20,000 people who attended games in the dome	We're trying to duplicate that success from basketball to softball, so we're upgrading our fields and reaching out to high schools we've already lined up a huge tournament for this March for softball. We're going to have schools from all over the state come and play. It'll be the first Nation Classic softball tournament. We're partnering with the local high school, to put that on	Tribe B
		Cultural preservation partners with us on events like we do a ceremony, where we honor and get together celebrate where we first settled, and started to create and develop the city, and so that's kind of a joint planning that we do with them.		Tribe B
		we have a revenue generation opportunity so like, you know, what did we sell in concessions, what did we get for sponsorships for an event, you know, what did we do for tickets, with attendance for an event .		Tribe B
		I think we're really good at this point, putting on events, like the festival, like that's, that's been good. If we can do an event that big we can do smaller events as well. So a lot of times, we are the Event Management Group for the tribe so like we'll do events, not really always tourism related, but like will be asked to put on any kind of event that the tribe needs or will be over it and I think the thing, that's one good thing		Tribe B
		We try to make sure that we do things for the tribe, like I talked about, like the food trucks, that we don't benefit from them at all, but everyone else hopefully sees value in it and like stuff, like, you know, we put on like some employees, like we put on an employee volleyball tournament just for fun, just to do it and just try to create some things that, that gives the people you know, a break in the monotony. Yeah and when you show up, like what their day to day is and so I think that helps and go along with		Tribe B
		For the festival that we put on, it's a mix, it takes 900 volunteers, and so most of those come from the tribe. So there's a ton of people involved in that. When we do like the basketball tournaments, we take volunteers to help with concessions and stuff like that, too and, and so it takes, people are excited to see us bring that many people to the area, into the dome, into our facility and so like, they want to help and be a part of that and so there's pretty good involvement with the other employees from other departments.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
ECONOMIC	Data			
		More data regarding current visitors is always helpful.		Tribe D
		like data collection analytics, like we talked about, that's one thing we struggle at .		Tribe B
		I'm sure there's data as far as tourism that you're probably know a lot more about than I do that like, you know, travelers, and who are interested in seeing like, you know, native culture, I think that, obviously, there's outlets for us to spend money and get that information from, we just haven't really done that yet. So I think that and just, any information that would help us make sure that we are targeting and targeting people in the best way possible.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Community			
		So the department development was guided by a strategic planning process, who that was developed with community stakeholders.		Tribe A
		how we could better understand our success is by bringing in, we have good relationships with local communities, but we still, meaning municipalities, the local chamber, we have great partnerships, but in a way, we still do our own things. And so I think, you know, I see future growth and development and the ideas of working better to understand each other's goals, and bringing them, us bringing them to the table, and then them bringing us the table as well.		Tribe A
		So being, and it's not black and white, but a big part of our measurement of success is our community response to what we've done. We have had some failures that we've had great community response for. We've learned from that. But we have resounding successes as well, where the community is vocal about how we've done has made them feel or whether or not it's instilled a sense of pride.		Tribe A
		Tourism is defined by the tribe by bringing people, the act of bringing people into our area within the 7600 square miles to our businesses and just the businesses located within our area	Promoting everything tourism related within our 7600 miles of Oklahoma within the boundaries both First American owned and non, via the tourism brand.	Tribe D
		While we have great relationships with our communities, as a tribal nation we operate independently. We could do a better job bringing in outside voices to evolve the definition of success.		Tribe D
		We don't measure success independently. Elected Leadership always says, a rising tides lifts all ships. If what we are doing helps others in the community, state or Indian country, we count that as a success.		Tribe D
		We also have our recurring project of site development, where we go into our communities and based on quality standards that we have created, we go in and kind of consult with them to kind of raise the visitor experience.		Tribe C
		There's not you know, one set perspective, if you were to ask me, I would say we have more of a community development role. As far as we don't focus on our own assets, we don't focus on the casinos, the cultural center that we're about to have, they have their own groups, we focus on raising our communities to get to the same level as us.	Okay so we have our tourism brand, which it represents our region of Oklahoma. So we're responsible for working within the communities around that brand and the marketing initiatives around that.	Tribe C
		I think we do really well with the community involvement piece. Like I said, our biggest struggle starting out which and I feel like I can speak to this a little differently because I was raised in the area that I'm promoting. And so you know, for the first 25 years of my life, I was like Oklahoma is what it is like there's nothing special about us. So being able to come and work for the tribe specifically in tourism, you take a, you take a different look at things right. And you understand what we have and why it's important and how fortunate we really are. And so I think one thing we have done really well is reaching out to our communities and trying to inspire that in the same way.		Tribe C

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Flexibility			
		Today the department is structured under businesses. So the Nation businesses is the holding company and the operator of our diversified businesses on behalf of the tribe.		Tribe A
		I think that it's different for every tribe. What makes sense for one tribe won't make sense for another one, just because tribes generally aren't structured the same. But wherever it's aligned, it should have some connection to some people who have, know a little bit about marketing, or a lot of it, should have a structure to people who, you know, should be somewhere adjacent. If people have a mind about cultural history, it should have some type of alignment with, not sure for us. So I guess I don't have a place but I can name some attributes that should be near.		Tribe A
		Success is defined collectively within the department and in collaboration with Commerce Leadership. Ultimately, what we present needs to answer the questions that Leadership is interested in knowing. The department mimics what other DMO's report in an attempt to provide similar data even though our destination is not measured and funded by hotel tax. We strive to align with general definitions of success across tourism, understanding that they very destination to destination. Primarily the process is defined within the department though. We change them as business changes and as tools change.		Tribe D
		For some reason, I like to call this kind of the group without a division or the group without like, kind of any boundaries, because if they, if the task doesn't belong somewhere, we normally pick it up. So we're involved in like, arts, in cultural, in community meetings, like I said, retail, so we're really kind of across the board.		Tribe C
		We're really funded appropriately and if, if we ever had a project come up that was in excess of our budget, we can request an appropriation from Elected Leadership. And so for that process, I, I present to our Committees, which is Elected Leadership members, our plan, revenue projections from it, costs projections and if that committee approves it, it goes in front of the entire Elected Leadership, and they vote as a group whether to fund the project or not.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Visitor Interaction	Tourism is defined as how visitors interact with our sites and our stories.		Tribe A
		we also operate a tour program or we have an Interpretive Guide for motor coach and school groups		Tribe A
		Right now, we tracked success through our visitor numbers. But we are missing a large base of visitors that we know have been inspired to visit, but may not have come to one or all of our attractions. So we're, we're missing some of those people that we depend on to, you know, know, if we are successful or not. And so we're working on some other tools to try to come up with better metrics for those.	But success as it states now is increasing visitors, year over year, and having survey results that people learn something more about the Nation than they knew.	Tribe A
		So we do some surveying with visitors. And we're going to do more surveying visitors to gauge their level of understanding and to, but simple questions like, do you know more today about our culture than you did before.		Tribe A
		Understanding who your visitor is, or an understanding of who your visitor is and who it's not truly knowing and owning what we are and not trying to be everything to everybody. And then trying to do what we do in an authentic way and not put people not just not being just what people want? Or what they expect, but being who we truly are.		Tribe A
		Currently, we are working to prepare for our trade shows, which is a marketing component of our organization. We are preparing for travel, getting the literature ready, the information that we distribute to the potential visitors to our area.		Tribe D
		you know, just the, the visitor counts that we see at our businesses are also used to determine success.	At our locations we look at the, you know the attendance numbers.	Tribe D
		our visitor counts and things like that if the visitor count is down. Then we, you know, we know that there's a need to either change or see what we can do differently.		Tribe D
		I think in the tourism industry, we have to recognize that not everybody, they want a cultural experience, and they want it to be authentic, but they also want it to be comfortable. So we have to make some concessions as far as how we offer that education and that experience. And so it makes it difficult for us to make that a larger part of our tourism initiative, when they're very focused on like, the grass roots of it like they want, I mean for lack of a better term, they want people to come walk in the dirt and you know, dig their own river cane, like they want that. What may be meaningful to a traditional person to be meaningful for the visitor and there's a disconnect there.		Tribe C
		So based on the conversations, when whether we're at trade shows or at the Welcome Center, when they say, oh, what about this area, or I'm looking to do this, we kind of gauge how aware they are a what we have, and how engaged they choose to get. So some people come in and say I'm going here, this is what I'm doing whatever it is, but we kind of look at, if they come in and say like we say "Hello", and they're like, oh, tell me about that. You know, what is the language? It's really based on how engaged people are willing to get with us on the education piece of it.		Tribe C
		They'll pull that out. And they'll say, you know, you hear the can we see a real Indian there? Or can we see, you know, teepees and whatnot. And so having anything related to that encourages those questions, which isn't bad, because it creates visitor engagement, but it also, it also kind of, it hinders the education that we can provide for them.		Tribe C
		So interestingly enough, like it's really interesting that you ask me this question now. So I have not been a big proponent of international advertising, just because until we have like, again, a solid cultural base that it hasn't been worth it. Because you hear just like in Germany and different things that people want that native experience. Well until we can offer it. I've never seen the value in promoting it. And I had a really interesting conversation with Detlef. It's not about bringing them here, they're already coming. We just have to route them through our area. And so that really kind of just in the last day or so has had me thinking about, you know what, like that perspective, like, it's not something that we do, because that's not the scale, we look at it with the tribe, like they want us, you know, bringing them from overseas and having those numbers. And it's, it's not about that it's just changing the route that they're already taking. I think that if we had the money, I would branch out even if it was just a test, I would branch out into the international market specifically like in I mean, Germany is obviously the easiest one that like we could reach into right now		Tribe C
		One thing we do is when we go to trade shows, we see, count how many pieces of our promo literature we go through. For our council house, we can see what, how many visitors they get, and hopefully, you know, that's something that we're sending their way. You know, for the festival it's hard to count that many 1000's of people but we can kind of get an idea if it was busy this year compared to last year		Tribe B
		we do promote gaming. So like, our casino resort is a huge draw for us. So when we go to these consumer shows, they're in the region, people like, people know what our casino is and so that's like, an instant draw for us and so we say, Hey, you can come, you know if we're in St. Louis, come stay a week here, have a girls weekend if you want and hang out by our pool, but make sure you go to some of our cultural sites to or go to our council house and so really using that name recognition as a key draw to answer overall goals.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Storytellers			
		The tribe started a tribal tourism program to tell our story from our perspective.		Tribe A
		Our single most important goal is to educate the public about the history and culture of the Nation and people.		Tribe A
		What we do well is tell the story of the people in authentic way.		Tribe A
		Our main expectation is that we are telling an authentic story.	So our main standard that we're held to is that we promote preserved history in an authentic way	Tribe A
		Well we promote the museums, the Cultural Center . The culture, the places people can go to learn about the story of the people.		Tribe D
		Elected Leadership wanted to be able to connect all of the tourism assets the tribe was investing in under one brand , that was not the government brand. A brand owned, and told by the Nation.	Tourism is the thread that connects all of the tribal assets under one umbrella for a visitor.	Tribe D
		The tourism department is the storyteller to visitors of the destination and the tribe. Since the tourism department is set up to equally promote tribal and non-tribal destinations, we do these through numerous partnerships, internally and externally. We use imagery from locations within the region in addition to creating our own content. Our stories are told through our website, social media, brochures and annual travel guide. We also tell our story through our tourism information centers and the First American art we have on display and for sell at each facility .	Our single most important goal is to promote our tourism brand, to promote our area to visitors and to get people into our area, ultimately visiting a Nation destination.	Tribe D
		We promote our area very well we, we know our area very well. We take pride in getting into our areas and learning what's going on in them so that we can be the storytellers of the destination .		Tribe D
		We also have retail under our umbrella, so a lot of that revolves around having merchandise out there that has like a cultural storytelling perspective or aspect to it .		Tribe C
		It was really kind of they were following the trend in Oklahoma. So obviously some tribes had theirs and several other tribes were following that trend as far as like starting an official tourism departments. And so they did that more so that they were on board with everything going on. They didn't really have a clear vision at that point. Even though we've kind of tried to form that over the last few years.		Tribe C
		The single most important goal is to bring visitors into the area . And we can further that just a little bit, By the way I say it is we bring them in, and then we throw in a little education as we go.		Tribe C
		I think moving forward, cultural is really going to be probably single handedly the most important, because we've developed towards more last five years being more community involved, which is still very relevant. But being a tribe, what is unique about us is the fact that we have like this entire culture that we can share with people. I mean, you hear again and again, that people want to learn about Native, unfortunately, they want to learn about like the Hollywood perspective of native. And so as we move forward, we definitely want to change that connotation. And but in order to do that, we have to have a strong relationship with the cultural group. And as we develop the cultural center and different assets, I think we need them and they need us because they have to realize that while we don't want to commercialize, we do have to take into perspective, what the visitor wants. And really just like we hold all of our sites accountable for these quality standards, we need to hold ourselves accountable to that, whether it's parking, or restrooms, or what's in the gift shops, I think we can both lend each other a little bit of advice that will make it easier for both of us to bring people in		Tribe C
		Because more likely than not, if they come in having this unrealistic expectations, they won't come back to see us.		Tribe C
		one of the big things we do is we put out a kind of a guide to the nation, the tourism part puts that on and tells the history of our tribe, and talks about, you know, kind of all my stuff i talked about before, like, our key sites in culture and our history and our businesses and gaming and so this is the guide that we put out that's really nice and like i said, the entire tribe ends up using to tell the story of our tribe. We take it to all of our trade shows that we go to, and the consumer shows.		Tribe B
		Most important goal is to create awareness for our tribes, cultural sites and amenities.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Collective Effort			
		We have shared itineraries and we have, we have opportunities where we get called upon from some tribes to not only share and collaborate promotional aspects, but also to share development aspects. So how did you do what you did, and we share that as a good partner as well.		Tribe A
		One individual was hired to develop the tourism department, however the vision for the department came from Elected Leadership, who hired the individual. The individual put together a committee of representatives from across the Nation to develop the tourism brand.		Tribe D
		Our job is to market and promote the region and assets to visitors, not create the assets.		Tribe D
		We don't measure success independently. Elected Leadership always says, a rising tides lifts all ships. If what we are doing helps others in the community, state or Indian country, we count that as a success.		Tribe D
		To measure success, we also look at businesses not owned by us, are businesses staying open, are they investing in their businesses and things like that.		Tribe D
		We work really closely with the other Oklahoma tribes. Also we share knowledge and tourism development data with tribes National through speaking at conferences and being on the US Travel Association.		Tribe D
		Best Practices, what they're seeing being successful, what they're seeing as hardships. You know the networking we have and learning from each other.		Tribe D
		Visitors, there's a lot of visitors that come to the region that we can draw off what they, the people that they're pulling in. We partner well together. Oklahoma Tourism Department, you know we partner with them to get our information out, you know, more as they may be going some to a show or something that we're not going to. On their website were able to get our events and things on there, our locations. So I think just the way we partner together is what's important. National and internationally – the exposure is most valuable.		Tribe D
		So currently, none. I mean, they are definitely consulted, especially as we work on our projects are things that would kind of line over, we want to make sure we're representing ourselves accurately. But from a daily perspective, or even, you know, an annual perspective, they don't get involved		Tribe C
		If we had like our ideal environment of who contributed to, what tourism looks like, and what success meant to them, we would include someone from all the realms that we promote. you would see a community representative, someone from gaming, someone from cultural, and someone from our other businesses, because, Tourism is more than our tourism assets, it's anywhere you don't expect it to be. So it's included in our travel plaxaz and health, etc. ideally, we would have someone from each walk of life. if we had to sit down and say specifically, we would have someone from each division		Tribe C
		we look at sales tax data. So what the state puts out every year, we look at how the sales tax increases, if those jobs increase, we struggle with the fact that it's not a direct attribution. then we look at any attractions, whether they've opened or closed over the year. And any direct money that we put into the communities, we count that as success. So whether that's through our media, or through direct grants to any of our places, we show that investment is successful, not to say that it benefits us, but it benefits the tourism industry as a whole.		Tribe C
		the next year is really to ramp up our partnerships, where we have, you know, identifying tags going out to all of our tourism assets of their proud talk to our country partner and keeping them very up to date with monthly newsletters that will go out about what we're doing. And the hopes that they reciprocate that because I think that's our biggest struggle. Not that they don't know what we're doing, even though like our goal is always reaching into our target market. And bringing them in, we still want to make sure that our internal, like our community partners know what we're doing. But they aren't always great about sharing that information back with us. And part of it is just because they are so siloed as well, even within their own communities		Tribe C
		I would say the state, just because I think that our locations isn't enough to bring someone in and keep them for a long amount of time. On average, I think the number is for every one hour they drive, we need three hours of activity in our area. because of the drive time between a lot of our locations, there are very few areas that can really hold someone with the exception of like a state park, for instance. being able to say that we are part of a larger whole, their marketing efforts really do impact us because we're not saying just come visit our destination, we're saying you can visit all of these different areas, which is what we do at trade shows, we try to pass them along through all of us. we also feed off of their data and different things they're working on. with us being such a new department relatively in the grand scheme of things, it helps to be able to piggyback off of them		Tribe C
		So we have like, right now we have a limited time with each other, right? Like we see each other at a conference here or you know, something there. And we get that networking opportunity, and we get those connections. But I wish that it was one of those that we had kind of the relationship where we sat down and said, You know, this is our overall goal. This is our goal in the next year, the next three to five years, this is what we're planning, and this is what we've kind of rolled out. And we're able to compare that so not only are we able to say, you know, we tried that this is I would recommend you do X, Y and Z instead of this. But it would also see where we could overlap, just like I mentioned, our goal is not to just bring them to our areas to spread the love and send them to different locations and throughout the state. I think that if we were able to collaborate in that way, and say I was trying to do specifically this marketing campaign that focused on this initiative, we were able to kind of have that thread throughout all of us, rather than just one of us individually.		Tribe C
		Absolutely. So I mentioned our communities. very few have tourism departments. it falls to the chamber. our major communities, we work together, whether it's putting together collateral, gathering content, events, they reach out when it comes to sponsorships and whatnot. we're normally able to leverage that so that we're able to get some resources from that relationship as well.		Tribe C
		Well, I think, I think the entire team should, because if, if they're not happy with what we're doing, how we're working, then we're not really successful.		Tribe B
		Yeah, we do. there was one for the year and then there were quarterly goals for strategic plan and we met after each quarter to say whether we hit those goals or not, talk about the results. I work with leadership from our team. Well, I'll say what I think they are, here's my thoughts, and then let them give their opinion and then after each quarters over share our goals and this is what we did with the entire group.		Tribe B
		obviously, making sure that we're collaboratively promoting the tribe, and then helping to enhance the overall goals of all those organizations as well.		Tribe B
		I mean working with organizations like to stay in relationship marketing to do co-ops and, you know, save some money on some different projects and, and marketing efforts, I think helps us the most in doing the consumer shows as a partnership, I think is key for us.		Tribe B
		Yeah, it'd be good for us to maybe try to chat more, get together more, share best practices more and maybe before I was around, that happened, I don't know. Like the Intertribal, since it changed formats it's kind of killed that and so it'd be nice to have something in place where we can, you know, have that dialogue more consistently.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Technology			
		So it's a piece of everything we do I mean, it's simple from, you know, fire alarm went off in a building, and how can I get a mass communication out about it, that it's not an emergency. So there's the mobile aspect of it, that's just, you know, for communication. There's also all of our, we just rolled out a new point of sale system that has a data management component in it that collect zip code, and email and can and can prompt some visitor questions and data. We also integrate technology through all of our museum. So our new museum that is open has an augmented reality through an iPad experience with it. So that has been well received, very well. But then we also use it for collection purposes. So we have, we just, we were spending staff time to go do collection reports on temperature, humidity, and all of our museums, every literally somebody's going logging them and with our new museum has to be done twice a day. So we move to networked data, sensors for temperature, humidity, that report to a system. And then we compile that data there. So it's, it makes our lives easier, and it improves efficiency. And the technologies, the way people find us, most of our marketing is moving to digital, and meeting visitors where they're at whether they're on their phones at a soccer game, and they're scrolling through Facebook, well, we want to be in front of them and so technology is a huge part of the promotional aspects of what we do as well.		Tribe A
		So we do that, we promote those areas, via social media, traditional media, trade shows, so we try to get as many people as we can into those locations to learn about the people and their story.		Tribe D
		This includes managing the website, social media and all marketing and advertising components		Tribe D
		Also we use our website as a tool to see success. How many people do we get coming to our website to learn about the area	Well, our website is key for us, social media is key for us. They allows us to get our message out and it also allows us to be a resource for the potential guests coming. Social media and our website, are our main components.	Tribe D
		We contract with Adara. That helps us to determine if a visitor has seen our digital ad and if they then visited our location, and then we can also equate what their spend would be in, in market.		Tribe D
		Via our website, we sometimes promote deals from different locations in our region and then they can tell us if the, if people brought the coupons in and things like that.		Tribe D
		The website, you know, are we, do we need to update content if website traffic is not there long enough? Or if we're not getting enough traffic our way, do we need to change keywords, if our website visitation is down we track the data and try to get it up.		Tribe D
		Oh, absolutely. I think that technology is a big component of our marketing efforts. Just because we don't do a lot of print media, we do some but like you all know, it's not as trackable. So, as we mentioned, utilizing pixels and different things as we go in and especially like on the website, being able to track people from one page to another and seeing what, what they're interested in. We just launched like an app in a widget that further enhances visitor experience and adds track ability to our side. And one of the biggest things that we're working on is the geo-fencing. So within the app, as they download it as we serve up ads, we're able to do it within like certain areas. So if they have the app, and they're entering, you know, a specific county, and they're going by one of our sites, we can push messages out to them. And so I think that we're going to use that more and more as we're trying to not only get into our area, but help control their experience as they go through. Because like I said, even though we want them to spend money in the area as a whole, we of course want to guide that. So they either spend it at our sites or at you know, something that benefits the community directly, maybe not like a corporate gas station, but our travel Plaza or a mom and pop stop as they go through		Tribe C
		technology is going to be the fastest growing way to be able to get some sort of data back that justifies what we're doing		Tribe C
		So a lot of that is going to be the digital media. So we attend. First, we attend eight to nine trade shows per year. And we're slowly growing that and going out and actually having that one on one engagement with people, but the majority of our money and resources to spend doing digital media. And that's normally specific to the drive markets, because as we are right now, we don't think that having someone come in and spend multiple days with us is actually feasible. So we focus on our immediate drive market. I forgot where I was going with that but yes that is the main avenue. There we go. That is the main avenue that we use for advertising our destination. So we do digital media and a lot of social media as well.		Tribe C
		we can measure through social media, their engagement following there and through the website		Tribe B
		You know, we, so we brought on a new employee over the summer, and he's, his background was, he was the host of a TV show, and it was on the media side. So with him, we're producing really cool video content now. So with him, you know, I've got him really get cameras, getting him in a nice, good drone, he's got a really good Apple computer an iMac to where he's got the software he needs, to create really neat content for us and like he can produce, you know, TV spot for us, if we need him to.		Tribe B
		Well, you know, if you talk about digital marketing and social media, everyone's fighting for the viewership and, and, and these days, and so you got to create impactful content that is relevant, and it takes that technology to, to put that stuff together.		Tribe B
Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Feel Good			
		many people know our name, how many people like know that we exist, I won't even say that they have an accurate perception is just that they know tourism exists		Tribe C
		If we were just marketing, we wouldn't care about our communities and how we build them up, or, you know, increasing the visitor product that we have.		Tribe C
		I think our department right now as one of, one of the main parts of the tribe that's actually growing and doing new things, and really one of the spotlight, like the positive spotlights with the tribe, and I want to keep being that and each year expanding on what we're doing and making sure our team is happy while doing so.		Tribe B
		I think it's just up to, is just like, I guess just visually for the festival, you can tell like if it's, if we've done a good job promoting it and just hearing it like ours, knowing if like, the council house has been busy or not, as far as crowds go. All the things we do are just supplemental, like we help promote our casinos, we will never know how, how well we can track that at all. But, so a lot of what we do is isn't as easy to track and supplemental such as, kind of hoping that we're making an impact and just doing new things		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Remote	And so, you know, trying to not only get yourself and your message above the crowd, but to bring people to a state that they're not familiar with traveling to that's, that's an obstacle. The, there's lacking English infrastructure. There's physical location of sites. So the Nation attraction is located in a site that if you don't have a plan to go to, you're probably not, it's about 30 minutes either direction off of two major interstates, one's a turnpike so to get people off the turnpike, and then have them pay to get back on you know, is a challenge to. So we're not immediately adjacent with our resources to sites that would pull a visitor that's, that's traveling, right off the road for a two hour, one hour visit and then get back on its, we really have to sell visitors to come see us and spend some time with us and that is a challenge.		Tribe A
		Not necessarily a roadblock but we are a remote destination so we have to work harder to get someone to travel out of the way to visit our destinations if they are traveling east, west or along Route 66.		Tribe D

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Listening	Primarily to measure success or failure of our department we use feedback. Feedback from visitors, the community, our department, the Nation .		Tribe D
		A lot of it is just feedback. As far as like comments we receive on social media , what we hear at our trade shows if people are coming to visit , and then how our communities feel, I think a big part of what when we first started tourism was not only reaching out to our communities and reaching like having people visit our communities. But it was kind of really instilling that pride in our area of the fact that we have something to offer. And so as we see our communities continue to grow, and I guess branch out on their own with tourism initiatives, I count that as success, because it's not just us making the efforts as everyone as a whole .	So a big part of how we market what we do is really just listening to the consumer	Tribe C
		I think it's just up to, is just like, I guess just visually for the festival, you can tell like if it's, if we've done a good job promoting it and just hearing it like ours, knowing if like, the council house has been busy or not, as far as crowds go. All the things we do are just supplemental, like we help promote our casinos, we will never know how, how well we can track that at all and like the Riverwalk the same thing. But, so a lot of what we do is isn't as easy to track and supplemental such as, kind of hoping that we're making an impact and just doing new things like, like we talked about on the recreation side, We know that we've been successful through that, because we have the numbers to show for the crowd, show for, in like, you can hear the entire community talk about it, in like, like there will be stores in town or restaurants in town said hey, so you guys brought a ton of people to our restaurant that week and it's just really cool to hear those kind of things happen. So if we can attract tourism to not just the tribe, but to the community, you know, we're helping everyone.		Tribe B
		I think it just varies on what kind of event it is, or what we're, what we're doing a lot of stuff we don't do well, and like collecting data. So it's a lot of just like, visually or by word of mouth. If you, if you hear like different feedback on the things you've done .		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
SOCIAL	Disconnect			
		It would help if we had knowledge of future projects within our area. We are not always aware of projects, internal or external until they are made public. If we had the information prior, we would be able to immediately support the initiative.	I think more knowledge, again, of what is going on in our area what is potentially happening on or just a little bit more communication of resources that you know just better communication as to what's happening and how we can get in front of it.	Tribe D
		I think in the tourism industry, we have to recognize that not everybody, they want a cultural experience, and they want it to be authentic, but they also want it to be comfortable. So we have to make some concessions as far as how we offer that education and that experience. And so it makes it difficult for us to make that a larger part of our tourism initiative, when they're very focused on like, the grass roots of it like they want, I mean for lack of a better term, they want people to come walk in the dirt and you know, dig their own river cane, like they want that. What may be meaningful to a traditional person to be meaningful for the visitor and there's a disconnect there.		Tribe C
		If I were to ask, do I have clear realistic objectives? I have clear objectives. And somewhat realistic, because we have like we have what we want and how we want to get there. But again, it's kind of where that whimsical feel good piece that can change on a dime. Does the tribe have realistic expectations of us? Realistic? Sure. But clear? Absolutely not.	Yes. And no, I think that within our own division, we do not, which is the struggle, because tourism is definitely a tool used towards economic development and so from the economic and business development perspective, we don't have great communication, we're very siloed, even though we were within our same division, which is to me very frustrating.	Tribe C
		In certain aspects? Yes. So like I mentioned, we have, everyone can kind of have a different vision of what we do. So if it's important to them, then yes, we have support. Like if we're talking about a big picture as far as do I feel like I have someone that I can go hash out issues with or explain our perspective or from a tourism goal or that will fight for what we need. No, and I'm not that's not saying that chief and assistant chief would not be that person. But we have layers in between there that don't allow us to jump to that level	They understand their view of tourism. So every department like they have their niche, right, like, so communications focuses on marketing. So they understand the marketing and tourism, tribal events understands how we go out to trade shows and community event, they understand their piece to what they're willing to accept. And they understand what they see, they see you know us on social media going out to trade shows, having fun saying, Yeah, you guys come visit, they understand it to a very simplistic level, they don't understand the depth of it. And what it takes to actually like, pull off an event or work with community partners on a regular basis	Tribe C
		I think the biggest like the biggest hindrance is not having a clear unified vision. And I actually kind of developed something about this a while back of where tourism could live within the tribe, and what like the numerous ways it could actually look. And really, like if we lived under commerce, it can be more focused on economic development and partnering with business development to develop our own assets, like adventure parks, or cultural experiences outside the cultural center. I mean, we can live in that aspect, we can live in marketing, specifically, that's our only goal is to just get our message out there and bring visitors and not control their experience. If we were to stay like kind of live just like on the community base, and do just kind of internal marketing, and really, that feel good piece. Trying to do all three of those things well, or in some aspect limits our success overall. Because you can't, not having a clear vision, you're not able to focus all your efforts in one area. And I really feel that if we had like this is chiefs vision, and these are the steps that we need to take to get there, we could be a lot more successful in that realm. And that's not to say that we wouldn't still pick up pieces of the other tasks that are there. But we would focus most of our resources on the best course forward		Tribe C
		I think that it's one of those struggles that we face, like, we want to make sure that we're identifying very clearly what people want. And so a big factor has been getting outside our own head, like working for the tribe, everybody wants to think that native is what's going to bring people in, and I'm not discounting that by any way, shape or form. But again, the people looking for native, especially as to speak internationally have a very specific idea of what we're looking for. And they look for that Hollywood First American. But we hear people are looking for native, and we think that they're going to be satisfied Driving through our like our area, but they don't see their native experience, if that makes sense. So it's really kind of getting outside what like, our definition of tourism is and what our definition of bringing visitors in is, and understanding truly what the visitor wants.		Tribe C
		I think a lot of people expect stuff from the tribe, which isn't uncommon in any state, any tribe, we either look like an ATM or just you know, we're continually handing things out. Because even though we love to give back to the communities, we've given our communities a handicap in the same sense. And so I wish that it can be more reciprocated, as far as like true partnerships created as far as this is what we're putting in. This is what the communities are putting in. I wish they were more apt to have a little skin in the game and put items toward the cause instead of just expecting the tribe to do it.		Tribe C
		So most of that is focused on landscape imagery. We hesitate to put native out there because we don't want to lead visitors to an experience that is not quite there. Until we have a solid base of like cultural activity. We don't want to say, hey, come to our destination where you can experience the native lifestyle. When really, it's what you can experience in any small town.		Tribe C
		They'll pull that out. And they'll say, you know, you hear the can we see a real Indian there? Or can we see, you know, teepees and whatnot. And so having anything related to that encourages those questions, which isn't bad, because it creates visitor engagement, but it also, it also kind of, it hinders the education that we can provide for them.		Tribe C
		So why we weren't involved in that property, we did develop a comprehensive plan, as far as like what a tourism asset could be like what we can build there. But once we had like that plan lined out, we weren't involved any further in developing the financials or keeping any of that realistic. And it's something that kind of fell to the wayside because one of the things that I can't say all tribes, our tribe can be bad about is we talked about diversifying outside of gaming, but we struggle with getting away from what we know and what we've always done. So it's one of those that they don't look at the bigger picture, they kind of lose that creative side. And I think that from a tourism perspective, we have a very relevant voice to be had, whether it's when we're bringing in the casino, how we can increase the visitor experience or have like visitor centers just like you guys do kind of in the conference areas and whatnot. It's actually that we want to have it fall under our umbrella, but we want to have a voice in those instances a seat at the table.		Tribe C
		I think we're really good, as far as the tribe goes. There's no consistent branding throughout the tribe hardly at all. Every department kind of does its own thing. They all run their own social media and it's just, it's all over the place. There's no consistent look, but I think we do a good job of consistently branding our department and making sure that if you see our billboard or ads it is known who we are, what we are and what we're trying to accomplish through that.		Tribe B
		Yeah, I think on the tourism side just being, I would like for us to be more culturally focused and sometimes relying on like promoting gaming in like, retail, it's just because people know about those places, and like some of our cultural things like aren't, out there, like gaming can do tons of their own advertising and, and, and sometimes that we could probably focus more on culture I think.		Tribe B
		Previously, for the few years leading up to me coming aboard some of the things were just the same thing every year, nothing new was happening or being done and so I think it's just good to see our facilities being used, like with the basketball and the softball. We're actually generating revenue for it, and bringing people to the community.		Tribe B
		I think, I think some do, I don't think everyone does. I think some people wonder what that is, or why you know, why it's done but I think that they see, we provide value to the tribe. They might not all, all know exactly what tourism means but I think they know that as a department, what our functions are, and that we are doing good for our nation.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
CULTURAL	Pride			
		And then also, another big success factor for us is like with our new museum, we just opened, you know. People feel proud and inspired when they visited. So it's not just for the public, it's for our citizens as well. And so we use their pride and their response about how we're doing what we do, and how we're doing what we do, to measure our success as well.		Tribe A
		So being, and it's not a black and white, but a big part of our measurement of success as our community response to what we've done. We have had some failures that we've had great community response for. And so we've learned from that. But we have resounding success, successes as well, where the community is vocal about, you know, how, how we've done has made them feel or whether or not it's instilled a sense of pride.		Tribe A
		Understanding who your visitor is, or an understanding of who your visitor is and who it's not truly knowing and owning what we are and not trying to be everything to everybody. And then trying to do what we do in an authentic way and not put people not just not being just what people want? Or what they expect, but being who we truly are.		Tribe A
		Elected Leadership wanted to create a department to connect all of the tourism assets the tribe was investing in under one identity, that was not the government brand. A brand owned, and told by the Nation.		Tribe D
		We promote our area very well we, we know our area very well. We take pride in getting into our areas and learning what's going on in them so that we can be the storytellers of the destination.		Tribe D
		A lot of it is just feedback. As far as like comments we receive on social media, what we hear at our trade shows if people are coming to visit, and then how our communities feel, I think a big part of what when we first started tourism was not only reaching out to our communities and reaching like having people visit our communities. But it was kind of really instilling that pride in our area of the fact that we have something to offer. And so as we see our communities continue to grow, and I guess branch out on their own with tourism initiatives, I count that as success, because it's not just us making the efforts as everyone as a whole.		Tribe C

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
CULTURAL	Cultural Representation			
		One of the Nations main initiatives, especially with our new administration has been preservation of our native language and so all of our, we have dual language signage, we have our new museum features, our tribal language as the prominent text instead of English, it's given more weight than English. And we also have some of our most fluent speakers that have voiced over audio experiences as well. So we tried to not only tell the tribal story, but you know, use our own culture to tell our story as well.		Tribe A
		We also operate various cultural programs and events, including an art market, which is in our tribal market.		Tribe A
		and then we also are responsible for the Nation how to, has a 1% law that was passed about 15 years ago. And so within that as a collection of cultural art, across natural conditions, 40 different properties, so 1% of all construction projects, \$500,000, or over 1% of the budget allocated for art. And so our team helps care for that. We have a collection management team that cares for the artifacts and our museums, and then all the art across all of our casino and health properties to about 40 different properties. About 8000 pieces worth about \$8 million		Tribe A
		Our single most important goal is to educate the public about the history and culture of the Nation and people.		Tribe A
		So within the board of directors, we have a cultural committee that we directly answer to and we, also on the tribal council, there is a culture committee on the tribal council.		Tribe A
		People want to see our ads that have an identifiable First American person and those get liked more, get shared more on social media and they create more impressions through digital media and we have very vocal visitor response from people who want to come meet these people, once they come visit us. Where's the guy at? We know that we have some real data that tracks you know, digitally what the response or impressions have been but we also create a narrative on the phone, the amount of people come to the door, and I've seen somebody on an ad and I want to meet that person.		Tribe A
		Visitors bringing them in to visit our locations, learn about our culture.		Tribe D
		Well we promote the museums, the Cultural Center. The culture, the places people can go to learn about the story of our people.	The Cultural Department of the Nation. We work really closely with them, to promote the museums, the Cultural Center	Tribe D
		we lean on them to get the information about the different museums and locations owned by the Nation. So we, we ask those, we use them as an information resource. Also they, they help us tell us the story of our people.		Tribe D
		In some markets, yes. Internationally, the native imagery is very important. Sometimes in the domestic, it is and sometimes it's not.		Tribe D
		I think moving forward, cultural is really going to be probably single handedly the most important, because we've developed towards more last five years being more community involved, which is still very relevant. But being a tribe, what is unique about us is the fact that we have like this entire culture that we can share with people. I mean, you hear again and again, that people want to learn about Native, unfortunately, they want to learn about like the Hollywood perspective of native. And so as we move forward, we definitely want to change that connotation. And but in order to do that, we have to have a strong relationship with the cultural group. And as we develop the cultural center and different assets, I think we need them and they need us because they have to realize that while we don't want to commercialize, we do have to take into perspective, what the visitor wants. And really just like we hold all of our sites accountable for these quality standards, we need to hold ourselves accountable to that, whether it's parking, or restrooms, or what's in the gift shops, I think we can both lend each other a little bit of advice that will make it easier for both of us to bring people in		Tribe C
		Yes, and No. So in theory, yes, they want tourism to be very much about the culture today, we don't have any assets that have really lent themselves to making it.		Tribe C
		So with the retail perspective, we've been able to do buying not only for my locations, but I've done buying for the travel plazas so that no matter where we go across the 10 and a half counties, there are, you know, certain cultural items, there are certain hats, certain shirts, and a lot of the shirts, we put in a cultural tie, whether it's the language or it's the turtle, so people understand, it opens up an avenue for storytelling and for people to ask questions. It's just one of those things, we may bring them into a travel plaza to buy a soda, or they may come into the gift shop, they get a souvenir, But we're throwing in that cultural education and kind of surprising them with it, which is what most people will accept.		Tribe C
		We also have retail under our umbrella, so that revolves around having merchandise out there that has like a cultural storytelling perspective or aspect to it.		Tribe C
		Then we also have a visitor center that we're developing, it's across the street from our council house, you know, we want to preserve the culture. We work with a couple of our cultural departments to do that. We're involved in the Homelands project and making that a national park. So the legislation passed Congress this past January to make that happen. So we go there every year. Then we have some, we have some cultural farmers going there. The culture needs to be preserved. We know working with our language department and our cultural preservation department to make sure that we're doing everything we can to promote their departments as well.		Tribe B
		There might be graphical elements that have Mississippian symbols and so either that's in our logo or our department has a Mississippian sign in it, so our designers usually try to tie those elements, but like, not everything we do has native elements.		Tribe B
		Then the Cultural Center Archives oversees our council house and all of our historic artifacts and so we work with them in making sure that we're telling the story correctly, and then promoting cultural sites as well that we're in collaboration. One of our employees does any kind of graphic design related to those programs as needed. He developed all the panels that are used in the council house, he created all those and so we really try to work closely with them to make sure that like anything that we do visually is appropriate to our culture.		Tribe B

Bin/Concept	Theme	Key Quotes	Key Quotes	Documents
CULTURAL	Leadership			
		we have elections for leadership every four years, and in when that, when there's a new administration, sometimes direction could change and so right now we're in an election season, and like, we don't know who our new Elected Leadership is going to be. They could say, they can change our direction completely. For example, we, the golf course which we operate, it doesn't, it's not, it's not profitable for us to run and that's a hard decision for us on whether we should keep that or not. You know, if, if someone says, No, then people are losing jobs, obviously but just things like that can happen or like any funding for future projects we want to do can halt our growth as well. So right now we're in a state of unknown so we have, come January, I'll have a new secretary over me, and new Elected Leadership, that we don't know, or thoughts on tourism, recreation or plans for the future, so it's kind of scary.		Tribe B