

using your knowledge and promoting your sense of place



Now that you've explored the unique qualities of your area and developed your business's Sense of Place, make sure that you don't keep the knowledge to yourself. Communicate your Sense of Place effectively to your visitors, give them the access they want to Wales's unique culture – don't be backward about coming forward!

There is a skill to understanding your customers' needs and delivering it. Information is of course only one part, but in terms of Sense of Place the quality and style of your information service is an integral part of how visitors will perceive your Sense of Place and the impression your business and the locality makes on them.

There is no standard way of providing verbal information; it relies on personal style and circumstance, but the following aims to help you discover the opportunities for providing both verbal and written information, and some tips on engaging your visitors in conversations to discover what information they might want, and then fulfilling that need.

Exercise: Information opportunities

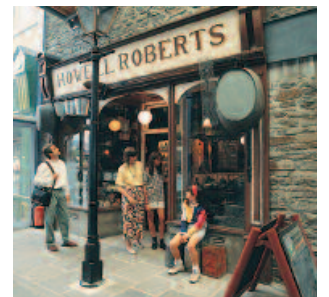
This exercise will help you identify the moments of opportunity during your visitors' stay when you have contact with them, when it may be appropriate to engage them in an 'information conversation'.

List the usual points of face-to-face contact that you have with your guests/ customers. These could be when they check in, buy a ticket, when they arrive at your business, when you guide them to their room or table, when you take their order, when they come to the shop, buy a guidebook and so on.

- 1.....
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- 2.....
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- 3.....
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- 4.....
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- 5.....
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- 6.....
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- 7.....
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- 8.....
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Exercise: Using open questions to start an information conversation

At each of these moments you've listed above, there are some open ended questions – those that require more than 'yes' or 'no' as an answer - that you could ask your guests to lead them into a conversation. This is when you can begin to explore their needs and provide them with an effective information service.





Some customers are more open than others, so don't be put off by people who clearly don't want to be engaged in conversation and keep themselves to themselves. They are relatively few and far between, and you'll quickly pick that they don't want to talk. In these cases, a pack of literature in their room may be more useful.

Try these questions:

What brings you to this area?

What are you looking to do during your stay here?

Is there anything about the area that I could help you with?

This is a great area for <activity, sport, history, shopping, eating out>If you're interested, I'd be very happy to recommend some of the best places.

Exercise: Frequently asked questions

You may find that many of your visitors ask similar questions about a certain topic. Use this area below to list them, but make sure that if you can't answer them, that you do some research so that in future you can provide the information needed.

You may find that similar questions are asked by certain types of visitor – business / leisure / young couples / families etc. Understanding what kind of people ask what questions will help you to build a picture of your business's market – who they are, why they are attracted to your business or the area and importantly, the kind of information and topics they're interested in.

EXERCISE: Frequently asked questions

Question:.....
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Who asked the question (note male female / approx age/ reason for stay / nationality).....
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The answer:.....
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Question:.....
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Who asked the question (note male female / approx age/ reason for stay / nationality).....
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The answer:.....
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Question:.....
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Who asked the question (note male female / approx age/ reason for stay / nationality).....
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The answer:.....
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EXERCISE: redefining your marketing messages

As you delve deeper into your business's unique Sense of Place and start to understand even better why your customers come and what they're looking for, you may decide that it's time to tweak your marketing messages to reflect your unique offer and attract even more of the types of visitors that your business is so good at servicing.

Consider the following:

Why do my visitors come to this business?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

What is unique about this place or what does this business do better than most competitors?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

What's special in the locality that seems to be a big draw to my visitors?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

What are my top three most frequently asked questions and the answers

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Now write a paragraph or two to promote your business that incorporates these:

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