

Spring 2008

## Telling our story – Case study of the Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism initiative

Chad Smith

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

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### Repository Citation

Smith, Chad, "Telling our story – Case study of the Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism initiative" (2008). *UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones*. 637.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/1755424>

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## Telling Our Story--Case Study of the Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism Initiative

Chad Smith  
May 10, 2008

## PART ONE

### *Introduction*

#### *Purpose*

This is a case study of the Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism initiative: planning began in 2005 and development began in 2008. This initiative resulted from the perceived need to create local employment, provide incentives to continue the culture and language of the Cherokee people, develop social and political good will in and outside of the Cherokee Nation area, enhance the brand of Cherokee Nation gaming and develop long term capacity in entertainment marketing. The opportunities identified included stimulating and reaching higher end Cherokee art and crafts market, encouraging development of more culturally authentic and fine Cherokee arts and craft, offering incentives to use and teach the Cherokee language, supporting and expanding small Cherokee businesses such as art studios, restaurants, bed and breakfasts, travel tours, and environmental tours, renovating of historic buildings, providing Cherokee educational experience to visitors, developing a clearer understanding and appreciation of Cherokee history and culture for both Cherokees and non-Cherokees, and accruing social and political capital by teaching the larger community and population about the value and contribution of the Cherokee Nation and people. Cultural tourism designed and executed by the Cherokee Nation is an opportunity to achieve a vision to increase the quality of life for Cherokees, their neighbors and the progeny of the entire Cherokee Nation.

#### *Justification*

This study has value for several reasons. First, it reviews the academic and trade tourism literature to identify and forecast cultural tourism including historic, identity and ethnic tourism as growing, profitable and sustainable segment of the tourism industry in the United

States. Second, the study provides insight from the literature review regarding challenges other domestic and international cultural tourism organizations and American Indian nations have faced in developing sustainable cultural tourism. Third, the study observes and analyses the development process and execution of a master cultural tourism plan that includes a relative large geographical area of the Cherokee Nation, which covers much of fourteen northeastern counties of Oklahoma. And fourth, the case study reviews the governance and marketing of the Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism initiative which is based on the entertainment, customer service, financing, management, and marketing competences of the Cherokee Nation's gaming business. This case study has application to scores of other Indian nations with gaming operations desiring to increase their entertainment and educational amenities, who are interested in leveraging their gaming competences to help preserving language and culture, and who wish to diversify their community business opportunities. This case study is helpful to those Indian tribes and nations who may chose to exercise their financial and political sovereignty to tell their own story through cultural tourism. Since the case study not only has application to other Indian nations but also to communities, towns and cities who are interested in a comprehensive model to address authentic cultural tourism.

### *Constraints*

The constraints of this study involve primarily the fact no actual performance data will be available for the Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism initiative for several years. A conceptual plan and business plan has been developed and the initial stages of execution have begun but no performance data such as profitability, number of customers, impact on the local economy, ultimate cost, customer satisfaction, social and political capital, or marketing performance will be available for several years. Since the success of the model will not be

known for several years, an analysis of the initiative should be conducted at some time in the future.

### *Glossary*

Indian country is the aggregate of American Indian nations and communities.

## PART TWO

### Literature Review

#### *Introduction*

Cultural tourism is often referred to as heritage tourism, historic tourism, and ethnic tourism. Particularly applicable to the Cherokee Nation is “identity tourism.” According to Pitchford (2006), identity tourism is those “attractions in which collective identities are presented, interpreted, and potentially constructed through the use of history and culture...” For purposes of this paper “cultural tourism” will be referred to as the class of tourism which includes cultural, historic, heritage, ethnic and identity tourism. The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP), defines cultural tourism as “traveling to places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present includes irreplaceable historic cultural and natural resources.” (Cultural Heritage Tourism 2007 Fact Sheet, April, 2007). The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a federal agency created in 1949 to assist in strategic planning, preservation, tourism development, interpretation, and marketing of historic properties. A preliminary review of the demographics of cultural tourism provides some insight in determining the character of and the market for cultural and historic tourism. The NTHP reports that in 2005, the tour and travel industry resulted in \$650 billion to the U.S. economy, which makes it the third largest retail industry in the United States behind food stores and automotive dealers. The tour and travel industry directly employs more than 8 million people, creates a payroll of \$171 billion, and generates tax revenues of \$105 billion for federal, state, and local governments. (Travel and Tourism Works for America, September, 2006). The NTHP reports that 81 per cent of U.S. adults who traveled in 2002 were considered cultural heritage travelers. Cultural heritage travel is increasing, as evidenced by 192 million travelers

in 1996, up 13 percent six years later in 2002 to 217 million person trips. The NTHP, citing the *Historic/Cultural Traveler* study by the Travel Industry Association and *Smithsonian Magazine* (2003), reports that cultural tourism visitors spend \$623 per trip, compared to \$457 for all other U.S. travelers, excluding the cost of transportation.

The World Trade Organization indicates that 37 percent of tourists travel internationally because of cultural tourism. Some organizations that are interested in cultural tourism are the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, which includes a Native American program committee focusing on interaction between Indian tribes, federal agencies, private concerns, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Park Service (NPS), and other public interest organizations.

*The Charlotte Sun*, reports in its article “Cultural Tourism – A Symphonic Duo” (2008) that there seems to be a paradigm shift since September 11, 2001. Before that time, people expected to be entertained while on vacation. Since then, tourism industry studies show that cultural tourism is one of the most rapidly growing segments of the tourism industry. One of the reasons appears to be that since 9-11, people prefer experiential vacations with enrichment opportunity and opportunities to reconnect with family and friends. This tourism driver creates many opportunities for tour and travel involving arts and culture.

A study conducted by Kaufman and Weaver (2006), focused on heritage tourist by classes of people broken down by age, results in some insight. Kaufman and Weaver, citing Silberberg (1995), identified certain traits among heritage tourists; for example, they earn more and spend more money while on vacation; they spend more time in the area while on vacation; they are more likely to stay in hotels and motels, are far more educated than the general public; they include more women than men; and they tend to be older. As a result, Kaufman and

Weaver study the differences between senior and non-senior markets at heritage sites. Their research reveals that seniors prefer slightly a historic site “more rugged, rustic, and off the beaten path than non-seniors”.

It is interesting to note that a wide spectrum of interests contributes to the overall promotion of cultural and heritage tourism. For example, the National Endowment for the Humanities awards grants of \$500 to teachers to attend workshops regarding historic properties such as the Blue Ridge Parkway; the Underground Railroad; Pearl Harbor; Immigration on New York’s Lower Side; the historic Roosevelt properties near Hyde Park, New York; Atlanta’s landmarks in civil rights history; Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage property; Minnesota’s Iron Range; James Madison’s home; Philadelphia’s significant sites from the American Revolution; Ellis Island, properties associated with Abraham Lincoln; the Missouri-Kansas border wars; and Women’s Suffrage sites in Wyoming. (Landmarks of American History and Culture, Workshops for School Teachers, Summer 2008 [www.neh.gov/projects/landmarks-school.html](http://www.neh.gov/projects/landmarks-school.html)). Cultural, heritage, identity, ethnic, and historic tourism have various common interests as an industry. Cultural tourism as a class may encompass an extremely broad spectrum of attractions. It may range from visiting Paris, France to view art to the plains of Wyoming to visits a Western dude ranch. There are also certain tiers of interest among cultural and heritage travelers, ranging from the tourist very intent on authenticity to those whose expectation of cultural tourism is filtered and require modern accommodations. Within this universe of heritage and cultural tourism, historic properties may include those supporting existing heritage and cultural tourism, such as historic districts found in Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities; or hotels that may become a resort destination people will attend because of its historic character, such as the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego, California; or perhaps the



property will become the change agent to create a tourism cluster such as the Crescent Hotel, built in 1866, which overlooks the rural hamlet of Eureka Springs, Arkansas which grew into a rural cultural and music attraction..

People are interested in cultural and heritage tourism, but who, why, when, where and how? Particularly how does cultural tourism play in Indian country? Does the general public and Indian country desire cultural tourism? Does one Indian image fit all? What are the pros and cons, the costs and benefits, the best cases and the learning from bad cases? Should cultural tourism in Indian country be a knock-off of Hollywood westerns and Washington Redskin football merchandising? Or should it be an opportunity for Indian tribes and nations to tell their story or perhaps, tell their stories or past, present and future?

#### Sustainability of Cultural Tourism

Sustainability of cultural tourism depends on more than financial feasibility or viability which looks to a bottom line fiscal return. Sustainability in cultural tourism encompasses the ability to keep the initiative or effort running and proceeding over a longer period of time. Sustainability may be dependent on non-financial essential elements such as community interest, personal leadership or government support. The issue of sustainability certainly enters into the feasibility analysis of cultural tourism; however the cultural tourism project may look to not only revenue it generates to cover expenses but also public financial support as a subsidy. Cultural tourism projects may have a substantial net value for the community or organization even if it does not break even from revenue it generates from operations. Sustainability also means a product that has quality and a long life. Cultural tourism must also be real, genuine and authentic in the content, context and process in which the story is told for

the attraction to endure. People are people and enjoy stories from which they can learn from and about others and how those stories help them understand themselves.

### Local Human Interest and Sustainability

A fundamental issue is whether or not there is the human resources and interest to building, grow and maintain a cultural tourism effort. Is there the necessary management ability or capacity, business acumen in the community, mass of social or public interest, or other leadership in the community? Walter Jamieson (1998) in his article, “Cultural Heritage Tourism Planning and Development: Defining the Field and Its Challenges,” acknowledges the growth of cultural tourism and the international interest in cultural and heritage tourism. He notes that where great value on cultural heritage resources emerges it becomes a desire that rehabilitation and interpretation of the heritage property can be financed by tourism and foster economic development. Therefore, heritage resource management has changed with the dimension of tourism and made the emerging field more challenging. This article provides the objectives of a tourism process and discusses the interface and conflict of tourism preservation and final assessment for challenges. A very valuable tool in determining the potential of cultural tourism and heritage preservation found in the book by Bob McKercher and Hilary Du Cros (2002) titled, Cultural Tourism: the Partnership Between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management. The authors look at cultural tourism and cultural heritage as being opposite sides of the coin, while the interest for tourism professionals was viewing cultural assets for profit, the other side of the coin, cultural heritage professionals, determining the intrinsic value of cultural assets without a view to a potential profit. The conclusion of the authors is that sustainable cultural tourism evolves when there is a partnership between both disciplines. The authors have distinguished between tangible and intangible heritage assets, tangible being the

physical evidence of culture and intangible being the cultural practices, living experiences and knowledge. The authors provide a good analysis between cultural tourism products and cultural heritage assets. The authors also provide some conceptual models with an analysis frame of reference to classify cultural tourism indicators a potential for cultural and heritage assets and criteria for making those assessments. In an article by Sue Berry and Adele Ladkin, (1999) titled “Sustainable Tourism: A Regional Perspective,” Berry and Ladkin, using focus groups, researched the use of sustainable tourism on the regional level. Their research was based upon a case study of East Sussex in the United Kingdom, to determine how general principles of tourism can be implemented by small businesses in the workplace. These small business focus groups explored three themes: how small businesses engaged in tourism via the concept of sustainability and how well they understood the concept; how sustainable tourism concepts can be put into practice by these small businesses and be workable; and to determine which major barriers the small businesses believe impede the development of sustainable tourism. The overall summary of the study is that small tourism businesses had little understanding of the economic concepts of sustainability. As with most small businesses, the practicality of a situation was much more important than the vague and academic concepts. Small businesses found that government policy didn’t have their trust, administration was weak, and often communication was uncertain. Finally the study acknowledged the cynical attitudes of small businesses toward government policy. Much of the discussion of sustainability arose out of local focus groups and the issue of environmental impact, demand on infrastructure, and coordination by private sector.

Doris Dyen, in “Routes to Roots: Searching for the Streetlife of Memory” reviews the conception, research, ultimate design and marketing of a driver’s guide which focused on

enabling tourist experience the folklife of a region. The region had previously been unused by tourists, but held a host of significant stories and venues that often even residents had overlooked. The author finds that the primary purpose of the guide was to use cultural tourism to revitalize the community. The project seemed to fulfill its purpose by helping stimulate community interest and providing some cultural tourism. The author's discussion of various classes of tourist and their interests and physical abilities is valuable in not only designing a driver's guide but also the design for a collection or consortium of historic properties. The driver's guide also can be used as a regional history and enhance the cultural appreciation of the region for the reader without leaving his home. A very poignant question the author pointed out was whether or not a site was ready for tourist. To a great degree the question boils down to is civil, social, and business community ready to support tourism?

Peter Brink (1998), in his article "Heritage Tourism in the USA: Grassroots Efforts to Combine Preservation and Tourism" observes that heritage tourism has been a growing trend for several decades in order to preserve historic properties as they become endangered. Heritage tourism has developed as a result of an affinity of individuals for historic and heritage properties. Often, when a historic property or historic house is threatened, community members will organize a group to advocate restoring and opening a landmark house as a museum. The community would like to share the history and design with visitors and create a method to generate funds to maintain the building. It becomes an opportunity to advance heritage tourism and preserve character of an anchor in the history of the community. There is a balance between the ability to sustain a renovation and community interest.

Tim Goetze, "Re-creation, Tourism and Historical Preservation: the Cases of Georgetown, Colorado (USA), and Gamkaskloof, Western Province (South Africa)

Considered” details case studies from Georgetown, Colorado and Gamkaskloof, South Africa regarding the viability of rural sites for historic and recreational tourism. The two studies focus on motivation and preservation efforts in the cultural context in which the initiatives were carried out. The study describes the impact of the projects and resulting tourism on each site and the local population.

### Determining Cultural Sustainability

A recurring issue in addition to market, logistics and convenience is the issue of maintaining integrity and authenticity of the cultural tourism property or activity. Cultural sustainability involves a tourism product that will last because it provides the genuine and authentic experience visitors are looking for and not a cheap Hollywood pandering to stereotypes and manufactured images. Jamal Tazim and Steve Hill (2004) in “Developing a Framework for Indicators of Authenticity, The Place and Space of Cultural and Heritage Tourism,” provide a very helpful frame of analysis in determining how to market, plan and manage cultural heritage tourism. The purpose of the paper is to examine the definition of “authentic” by tourism researchers and to offer a frame of reference for the aspects and dimensions of authenticity. Simply, there is little agreement by researchers on what constitutes authenticity. They first point out that authenticity in the context of cultural and heritage tourism has three dimensions: a real dimension which referred to as the objective, a sociopolitical dimension which referred to as constructed, and a phenomenological dimension which referred to as personal. Also those dimensions are within a context of space and time. Authenticity requires that the object is situated in a place and time for both the tourist and the resident to provide a lived experience. The issue that has greatest application to tourism in Indian country is the balance or mutual understand of authenticity by culturalists and managers

of tourism. These interests seem to converge in the personal perspective of the tourist seeking an enriching, embodying and emotional experience by not only learning from the cultural site or event but actually experiencing it through identifying with it or internalizing it. The authors capture the concept clearly by stating, “Here, it is clear that the authenticity of the crafts is being evaluated by touristic perceptions, an aspect of personal authenticity where meaning-making and identity-building are of paramount importance rather than scientific study and objective dimensions of authenticity.” If the personal dimension of authenticity is achieved by the tourist, the site or event has been effective. The manner of presentation may be “historic” for which the best example is actual artifacts, or “heritage” for which the site or event is manufactured to invoke the sense of the historic. The authors look at several aboriginal sites as examples of how authenticity plays in the aspects of space, identity and ethnicity in lived heritage. The study evolves into a set of indicators and framework in framing authenticity to include the tangible and intangible characteristics of sites, places, and objects and secondly understanding that the properties have inter-connected relationships between place, object and person. The affinity for a cultural property may serve as incentive to promote cultural tourism as a way to save the property. The authors also describe the “politics of authenticity” among indigenous people who struggle to re-create individual, social and national identities. They refer to two distinct uses of place and space: 1) cultural sites as pragmatic sites that act as educational, art and commercial areas, and 2) indigenous sites as contested sites of identity, legitimacy and belonging. These politics are very real when they are related to the survival and well-being of the indigenous groups. The political statement among indigenous groups has been as simple as that we are a “living culture, not dead, as some would presume.”

In the discussion of authenticity of cultural tourism in Indian country, it seems anthropology enters the discussion. Benita Howell (1994) discusses in her article, "Weighing the Risks and Rewards of Involvement in Cultural Conservation and Heritage Tourism," criticism by some anthropologists who are engaged in assisting communities to develop heritage tourism. It appears communities are driven by economic growth and better quality of life which also leads to new business and industry finding the community more attractive. The study looks at representations of spurious cultural offerings. The concern was when tourist industry entrepreneurs appropriate local heritage and turn it into a commodity for tourist consumption which results in inauthentic events and actually inventing cultural traditions. Such activities degrade and undermine the authentic cultural expression of their local heritage. The author proceeds to examine state humanities council grants and the processes involved in awarding such grants. Howell finds that the process requires citizen participation and scholarly involvement. The article fundamentally focuses on the dilemma of anthropologists to exercise academic integrity but also participate in the work of cultural tourism which would demand social interaction in the planning and development process. It is suggested by Howell that such challenges would enrich anthropology. A question addressed by the author was the community and academic debate regarding the divide between "spurious" and "genuine" culture. She concluded that "The crucial issue in heritage tourism is not staging per se, but rather, who constructs culture and in behalf of who." She also observes that "Rank- and-file citizens do not unanimously welcome the prospect of tourism in their community and may not be well represented in the local organizations advocating tourism." She notes the economic, social and cultural benefits and costs of tourism are not distributed equally; nor is there consensus about the past or what part of it should be displayed for tourists. She suggests cultural politics most

at issue in heritage tourism is local. The studies suggest that sustainability of course requires amenities, a draw and transportation but the draw is based on something meaningful and builds identity. To accomplish that it must be authentic to the visitor's experience. Authenticity is within the providence of "who constructs culture and in behalf of who."

### Evaluating the Business Opportunity of Cultural Tourism

To achieve financial and cultural sustainability, the tourism property or event should be subject to a business case analysis in order to understand the cost, revenue and short and long term market. Taketo Naoi (2003), in "Visitor's Evaluation of Historical Districts: Roles in Authenticity and Manipulation," brings some clarity and insight into the marketing of cultural tourism, historic authenticity and ethnicity in at the historic property. Naoi, citing McCurher and Ducrois (2002), lists three kinds of tourists for cultural and historic destinations, including (a) purposeful, cultural tourists who want a deep cultural experience; (b) cultural sightseers whose purposes are cultural but are satisfied with a shallower experience, and (c) casual cultural tourists who are not culturally motivated and seek exclusively shallow experiences and entertainment. An understanding of the mix of tourists, the character and the quality of the property with its historical significance, and its relationship to ethnicity provides some guidance on how to market the property into a sustainable brand that brings word-of-mouth recommendations and return visitors. The casual cultural tourist would be very satisfied with historical fascia without any understanding of historical, cultural or ethnic significance of the hotel property or the district in which it is located. One good example would be Bourbon Street in New Orleans. Since tourists there are generally seeking hedonistic experiences, the true cultural significance of the area is unimportant (Vesey and Dimanche, 2003). In contrast,



purposeful cultural tourists who visit Venice would be shocked, and it would result in counter-productive marketing, for the historic districts to be plastered with plastic, fast-food operations.

In Donovan Rypkema's article entitled, "The Economics of Rehabilitation" published by the NTHP, the elements of determining feasibility are delineated in a very simple but comprehensive model. This model applies to a very limited scenario of cultural tourism involving historic buildings but it introduces the fundamental business or financial sustainability principles that should serve as a foundation for determining value for all cultural tourism. Rypkema provides cost benefit analysis that includes first determining the value and purpose of the investment and then comparing rehabilitation of a historic property with construction of a new building. An investor according to Rypkema looks at several factors including 1) high income, 2) dependable income, 3) timing of return, 4) capital appreciation, 5) minimum risk of loss, 6) favorable tax treatment, 7) leveragability, 8) ease of management, and 9) liquidity. He points out that for both new construction and rehabilitation project hard costs, such as materials and labor, can be 65-80 percent of the total cost and soft cost including architects, fees, appraisals, construction and accrued interest to be the remaining 20-35 percent of the cost. The distinguishing issues can be boiled down to "if no demolition is required, a major commercial rehabilitation will probably cost from 12% less to 9% more than the cost of comparable new construction with a typical building cost savings being about 4%." In essence, if there is no demolition required, the construction cost of a new building and the renovation cost of an old building is comparable. Another consideration is that rehabilitation of an existing building can often reduce construction time by 18 percent.

The Rypkema analysis, even though involving hard numbers in a standard formula, reveals that the value of a renovation of a historic property lies in harder to describe but

financially real intrinsic values of historic property. There is a property enhancement value of having a historic property blend in with a cluster historic environment that creates an opportunity for ambience and branding. Perhaps one of the most critical aspects that should be further examined is the intrinsic value of the brand that the historic property can provide and sustain over a period of time. Robert Billington (2004), in his article “Federal Leverage Attracts Private Investment at U.S. Heritage Sites: A Case Study,” discusses the thirty year effort in the Blackstone Valley region, which is generally believed to be the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the United States. According to Billington, the Blackstone River, located in western Massachusetts, reflects the area between two states, twenty-four communities and a population of 450,000, and flows from Worcester, Massachusetts, to Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island. Historically, it contained the first successful water-powered cotton-spinning mill in America and later became a corridor for manufacturing and business. An effort began in the mid-1980s to look at the decayed industrial assets and buildings along the river with an eye to convert them into retail, residential, or tourist attractions. Billington notes that at the time of the first effort to revitalize the region, the Blackstone River was unsuitable for swimming, and the entire region was aesthetically and economically depressed. A host of stakeholders, including private industry and public agencies, developed a plan that was memorialized in law as the Blackstone Valley National Corridor Act in November in 1986. Over the last 20 years, the primary goal of the Blackstone Valley project was to tell the story of historic industrialism and to regenerate the area. The National Park Service and other federal agencies invested \$20 million in the corridor, which primed the private sector to renovate a host of buildings and properties for condominiums, a Holiday Inn Express, live-work condominium projects, rental housing, and retail and office space. The prompting of public investment into

the valley has returned a four to one private sector investment. As of 2003, the private sector had invested \$80 million in renovations to historic buildings.

The financial feasibility for converting, regenerating, or remodeling historic property appears to be a decision balanced on the entire design and character of the historic cluster in which the property is located. Judith Reynolds (2006) in her article, “The Cost and Benefit of Historic Properties,” begins to lay out the parameters for evaluating the economic and financial feasibility for a historic hotel. It is anticipated that one of the main drivers for purchasing, renovating, and holding historic properties is for capital appreciation with the intent to sell at some point in the future. If the owner of the historic property is a public institution, such as a nonprofit heritage association or government, the cost benefit analysis will change because there is no anticipated sale or capital profit due to appreciation over time. The non-profit owner may be anticipating holding the property indefinitely to stimulate the local economy. Reynolds points out that nine initial questions should be evaluated in the process of determining financial feasibility:

1. What is the significance of this property to the history of the United States and/or to its region, community, or neighborhood, and is its significance architectural, cultural, or related to a historical figure or event?
2. What designations does the property have, or is it eligible for, in recognition of its significance?
3. Is the property solitary, or is it one of a grouping of historic properties?
4. Is the property eligible for historic rehabilitation tax credits or other tax credits?
5. Is the property eligible for grants, low-interest loans, or other benefits?
6. Will the rehabilitated property benefit from heritage tourism?

7. Is the property encumbered by, or eligible for, a preservation or conservation easement?
8. For what adaptive uses is the property suitable?
9. What extraordinary costs of rehabilitation or operation should be considered?

Reynolds evaluates each of the questions and provides a hypothetical case study in determining financial feasibility of purchasing, renovating, and holding historic properties. She outlines certain attributes of historic properties that would entitle it to federal and state tax credits. If the property is listed as a National Historic Landmark, or a National Historic District, it is entitled to a larger tax credit than a property that is located in a historic contributory district or was built before 1936. If the property is a certified historic structure by the NPS, the historic property is entitled to a 20 percent tax credit for qualified rehabilitation expenditures. Many states provide a similar tax credit; for example, the State of Oklahoma provides a similar 20 percent tax credit for certified historic structures and their renovation. If the property is a nonhistoric property constructed before 1936 or part of a historic district it is eligible for 10 percent tax credit. These tax credits would apply if the property is used for hotels. In partnership with local government, enhancements and infrastructure surrounding the property may be available to federal programs such as the Interlocal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which by the end of 2001, had provided \$800 million in funds to support historic preservation projects. Local use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from HUD can also provide infrastructure surrounding historic properties (Reynolds, 2006). Other financial incentives described by Reynolds include tax benefits in terms of deductions for conservation or preservation easements in which the property owner may deduct as a charitable contribution the value of preserving the easement or fascia of a cultural property in a perpetual designation. The theory is that the value of the property is encumbered by this preservation

easement since the marketability of the property is reduced. The reduced value is a charitable contribution to the public and deductible for taxes. The National Trust for Historic Preservation publishes handbooks on federal and state tax policies for historic preservation. Understanding the federal and state tax incentives helps define the financial feasibility model for historic properties in a realistic cash flow or rate of return analysis (Boyle, Ginsberg & Oldham, 2007). To qualify for the preservation tax credits, the property must be renovated according to standards established by the Department of Interior, codified at 36 CFR 67. It defines rehabilitation as “returning a property to a state of utility, the repair or alteration of which makes possible an efficient and contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to historic agricultural and cultural values.” It is important in the analysis of financial feasibility for historic hotels, in addition to understanding market conditions of real estate, appraisal, population density, traffic density, marketing projections, and financing considerations to understanding additional tax benefits and burdens. It should be noted that Indian tribes and nations, as other governments including federal, state, and local, do not pay income taxes so the tax value would only apply to tax paying entities such as business partners and private entrepreneurs. Indian tribes or nations may be able to transfer tax credits, which increases the financial viability of a project.

In addition to anticipating and understanding private sector investment in the historic cluster area, the economic considerations of risk, government subsidies and incentives, and infrastructure has to be considered also. Manente and Montaguti (2005), in their article, “The Inside-Out Gear - How to Monitor the Impact of Accommodation Evolution on Demand Choice in Heritage Cities,” discuss the challenges of successful tourism development. They focus on heritage cities that have had tremendous opportunity such as Venice, Italy. Venice

draws tremendous tourism because of its art. As a result of the growing demand for people to visit the art museums and the architecture of Venice, the authors suggest not only are the inhabitants of Venice negatively affected but also the quality and the meaningfulness of the tourist experience is damaged by congestion and pollution resulting from increased tourism. The downside of rapid tourist growth in physically limited historic areas such as Venice include not only pollution due to cars and buses but also the crowding out of other urban functions, such as quality, upscale shops being replaced with cheap, mass flow oriented tourist and souvenir goods, increases in prices for all kinds of goods, parking problems, vandalism and crime increase, and the contest for limited spaces in the high tourist draw areas. Modeling in the Venice case study is applicable to American venues such as Branson, Missouri. Although Branson started out as a hillbilly music center and certainly can not be compared to the city of Venice, the issue of diminution of quality of experience due to lack of planning and infrastructure is pertinent and instructive. The evaluation of business opportunity for a historic property is similar to other investment properties with the exception of various federal and state tax incentives, infrastructure and intangibles unique to the historic district.

#### Competitive Advantages of Cultural and Historic Properties

It would initially appear that financial feasibility of a historic property or product is determined by a business case analysis. The additional considerations are tax incentives, risk due to unknown performance of historic properties, and determining the marketability of historic property or product and the ability to capitalize on existing cultural tourism. Perhaps historic area properties have competitive advantages in branding. This historic branding has value because it identifies to the consumer an expected experience and ambience, but unlike a franchise brand which may change with ownership or a franchise agreement, it is stable and

durable. A franchise brand such as Holiday Inn or Westin Hotel may be withdrawn or changed after a relatively short period of years. The customer is confused or unsure as to the kind of lodging product he or she will receive when a franchise brand is changed. Where the brand is a historic property, the brand is enhanced by the historic cluster site or historic district, and there is an in-depth measure to the brand because of the long history and recognition of the historic district embedded with the public. There is an anticipation of a deeper, more rewarding experience with a historic property not associated with a simple franchise brand such as Holiday Inn or Westin Hotel that is reflective only of customer service and quality of furnishings and amenities. Not only may this historic brand bring immediate customers because it creates a character and an intrigue for the property, but that brand may sustain itself for a long period without the franchising and advertising fees involved with normal branding.

One group that has capitalized on historic branding is Historic Hotels of America (HHA). It was founded in 1989 with 32 members in association with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Criteria for participation is that the property must be at least 50 years old and either is listed or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or having been recognized locally as having historic significance. A total of 211 hotels and resorts are members and are located in 39 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Hotel rates are market value. Historic Hotels of America has a very professional, sophisticated Web site that provides marketing for its members. It provides tour packages, video tours and portrayals of each property, and has an Internet reservation program. As of October 2007, HHA joined the Preferred Hotel Group for franchise branding. By joining Preferred Hotel Group, HHA became part of a network of more than 400 hotels and resorts in 65 countries across the world and provided leveraged marketing to an international clientele. ([www.HistoricHotelsOfAmerica.org](http://www.HistoricHotelsOfAmerica.org),

Nov. 27, 2007). HHA also provides more than 75 specials and packages among its members. It is quite evident from the rapid growth of HHA over the last 20 years and its level of sophisticated marketing that there is a demand for the ambience and experience of historic hotels. For example, in the District of Columbia, there are 8 hotels, including the Churchill, Henley Park, and the Renaissance Mayflower. The Renaissance Mayflower opened in 1925 and was known as the Grand Dame of Washington, D.C., “boasting more gold than any other building in the country except for the Library of Congress.” It is in the vicinity of the White House. Academic research supports the idea that the concepts of historic ambience and experience have made Historic Hotels of America a success.

Branding includes a way to differentiate products and services from their key competitors. One critical component is the creation of a unique brand identity and image. Bonn, Joseph-Mathews, Dai, Hayes and Cave, (2007). Heritage tourism includes focuses on the destination’s historic, natural, and cultural value and looks at the cultural natural heritage of the people, which includes highlighting natural physical beauty and urban and industrial development as well as historical landmarks. The uniqueness of branding with Historic Hotels of America is quite clear and evident. Each property carries a brand of its history and ambience. The brand has matured over the life of the property and is embellished in a nostalgic method when marketed. The question of cultural atmospherics posed by Bonn, Joseph-Mathews, Dai, Hayes and Cave (2007) focuses on ambience, service, common design, layout and essential customer service. However, their research supports a proposition that ambience, aesthetically and historically, is attractive to the customer and encourages repeat business and referrals. The question of sustainable branding by historic properties becomes more complicated when the precise history of the period, the context of the property’s history with its contemporary



context, and the physical attributes of property is considered. Hitchcock (1999), in his article “Tourism and Ethnicity: Situational Perspectives,” points out that tourism brings into contact people who are not only strangers to one another but who are also members of different ethnic groups that can create different perceptions and expectations.. The author suggests that ethnicity has different levels and different reactions when in contact with cultural tourism and other ethnic groups. Quoting Rex (1986), Hitchcock suggests that there are several theoretical distinctions between primordial and situational or instrumental approaches to ethnicity. In essence, primordial ethnicity is seen as the identity and cultural practices you are born into that binds you to your kinsmen, but situational ethnicity may be based upon a response to a certain situation, such as exercising ethnicity and cultural traits when in a social environment that suggests it may be appropriate to claim that ethnicity. Whereas historic properties may not intend to engage in ethnic branding to a significant degree, the ethnicity of the historical district, historic building cluster, or operation of the property may create and send clear messages to customer and build a brand. Tourism promoters should understand that those tourists in search of authentic cultural tourism may see the operators of the hotel in a completely different cultural light than that which the historic hotel seeks to present. For example, a Wild West theme for a Colorado Springs hotel that features cigar store Indians may offend the American Indian population. The consideration of ethnicity of the people of the historic area has some fascinating interplay with branding. The public in search of an authentic experience and those responding to the historic brand of the hotel certainly will be cognizant of a disconnect between the culture of the ethnicity of the area or district and that portrayed by the hotel. In order not to create a disconnect or a disappointment of the ethnicity and the sustainable brand for the hotel, the operator must be sensitive to the ethnicity and the history of

the hotel to create a lasting image, story, or brand. A good example of this is illustrated by Abubakar and Austin (2003), in their paper “An Exploratory Analysis for the Modeling Effect of Marketing in Sensitive Historical Sites.” The authors focus on the Cape Coast Castle in the central region of the Republic of Ghana, West Africa, which was a former slave-trading fortification. The authors studied two groups of visitors, Caucasians and Africans residing in Africa. It was quite apparent that perception of the former slave trade site would have different expectations and responses from those who have an emotional, ethnic, or historical connection to the property. Incongruent marketing and portrayal in advertising of the property with its history and authenticity certainly would diminish the number of return visitors and word-of-mouth advertising.

Expectations by different ethnic groups was considered by Gvili and Poria (2005), in “Online Mass Customization: A Case of Promoting Heritage to Tourists.” A study was made by at major Islamic art museum in Jerusalem of the expectations of visitors based upon the Web site. The question was to test the relationship between tourist perceptions of the heritage site in relation to their own heritage in determining the hierarchy of information sought on the Web site. The authors suggested that the Internet affects tourists not only in their search for information but also to create an expectation for when the tourists actually visit the historic property. In their conclusions they found “meaningful relationships exist between the perception of the heritage site and the information sought on the website.” The stronger the perception of a heritage site as part of one’s own heritage, the higher the level of interest in information of educational and emotional nature. The two groups that were studied were Jewish and Muslim visitors to the Islamic Art Institute in Jerusalem. The authors found as a result of their study that the Jewish subjects were more interested in functional information as time,

place, and operating hours. Muslim subjects were more interested in information that stirred emotion. Understanding that finding allows marketers to leverage the Internet and to seek strategies on a customized basis that will build the historic brand. It also tells us that in order to market a historic property, it is not only curiosity of history that drives people, but it is the emotional attachment of ethnicity or identity as well. By understanding those concepts and then creating a brand and marketing that brand, it seems that the Internet site should not only tell the story of the history of the property or the ethnicity of the district but somehow involve the public in telling that story and bridging a gap between the historic and/or ethnic brand of the property to a broader market.

Understanding the possible competitive advantage of historic branding of a property requires consideration of the historic environment, cultural atmospherics and level of design for an authentic emotional expectation. In essence, a historic property is an opportunity to tell an emotional cultural or ethnic story. Considerations in addition to the various levels for desire of authenticity are whether the brand, message, or expectation of the property appeals to the same or different ethnic groups.

### Case Studies of Developing Tourism

In determining financial feasibility of cultural tourism, one aspect that provides an unknown that will assist in profitability is the attractiveness of the cultural tourism theme with which the historic property is integrated. Financial modeling will provide some certainty as to rate of returns, appraisals, traffic counts, and the like, but the challenge and reward for historic property and its competitive advantage is its ambience, historical environment and brand opportunity that must be studied in some detail as to impact, marketability, and sustainability

for the hotel. A series of case studies reflect different observations regarding the risks of historic and cultural tourism. William Gartner (2004), in his article “Rural Tourism Development in the USA,” suggests a different method of analyzing rural tourism and to shift the paradigm of analysis from bottom line profitability. Historically, rural destinations are primarily used by local tourists and rely upon the perspective of the local population. The research was conducted on highway travelers and tourists in Minnesota to rural areas. He advocates a different kind of analysis and paradigm shift from an attribute specific development approach to a benefits based model. A benefits based model is a way to position and market rural tourism destinations. He found that few international visitors toured rural areas and the vast majority of rural attractions were visited by residents of the state. He pointed out for rural development three components were needed: a gateway where basic services such as food and lodging were found, attractions that exert the pull or reason for visitation, and transportation linkages that connect service centers to the attractions and gateways to market. He also found that federal and state investment in parks that provided attractions without cost to the local market made feasibility for rural tourism much more favorable. In citing Long and Lang (2006), he reported six positive signs of rural tourism development: 1) growing interest in heritage, tradition, authenticity and rural life; 2) taking multiple holidays per year with a desire to take a second short break in a rural area; 3) increasing health consciousness giving a positive appeal to rural lifestyles and values such as fresh air, activity opportunities and stress-free situations; 4) market interest in high performance outdoor equipment from clothing to all terrain bikes and high-tech climbing equipment; 5) search for solitude and relaxation in a quiet natural place; and 6) an ageing but active population retiring earlier but living and traveling far

into old age. Therefore, the considerations looked at the benefits provided to the community rather than the profitability of the cultural or historic assets.

Cultural tourism analysis cannot ignore market conditions and logistics even if there is a driving desire by local government. Donald English (2000), in his article “Tourism Dependence in Rural America: Estimates and Effects” reviewed the impact by creating tourism in rural counties. In the economic analysis, an allocation is made between residents and non-resident visitors using the same businesses and infrastructure. The study strives to determine the jobs and income that results from recreational and tourism visitors outside a particular county. Techniques used are to cluster similar counties to determine the part of tourism sector that employs local people and to determine what part of export activity is consumed by non-recreation visitors. The information in the study is most interested in determining how those counties depending on non-resident tourism compared to other rural counties based on housing variables, economic structure, population and income. Generally, the author finds 10% of income and 15% of employment in recreational intense tourism counties is attributable to non-resident tourist. This study repudates some arguments that tourism reduces the standard of living for local residents. According to this study, the income levels of local residents compared between recreational tourism counties and non-tourism rural counties is similar. This study is based on residents and non-residents competing for finite natural resources that local residents have some sense of ownership. The analysis has limited application to cultural tourism since there is little competition for cultural resources generally in Indian country.

The apparent challenge for cultural tourism in Indian country is the rural location of most Indian tribes or nations. Richard Sharpley (2002), also examines sustainability of rural tourist and identifies a number of challenges. In his article, “Rural Tourism and the Challenge

of Tourism Diversification: the Case of Cyprus,” he outlines the development of agrotourism in Cyprus. Agrotourism is a form of rural tourism, major tourism companies have considered moving into rural areas as a way of providing a greater diversification of tours for clientele. Sharpley finds that rural tourism is an effective source of employment and supplementary income where traditional farming and agrarian economies have declined, particularly areas to well established tourist and coastal centers. The author also finds a number of challenges to the success of rural tourism in a low demand, a lack of essential tourism schools in rural areas, low return, high development costs, and the competition of mass tourism operators and urban settings. He concludes in order to make rural development possible technical support is necessary for the long term financial commitment is critical. His analysis applies very well to Indian country in that the vast majority of Indian tribes and communities are located in rural areas, inconvenient from urban transportation centers. Soper (2007), in “Developing Mauritius: National Identity, Cultural Heritage Values in Tourism,” examines the interconnectivity of national identity and emerging cultural tourism in Mauritius, an island in the Indian Ocean. Mauritius is located approximately five hundred miles east of Madagascar and is surrounded by a coral reef that provides for approximately one hundred twenty-four miles of white, sandy beaches, sheltered bays, and glassy lagoons. Tourism is a major industry for this island country. Interestingly enough, Mauritius was first a vacant island colonized by the French, British and other ethnicities and currently has a diversity of historic ethnicities including Chinese, Portuguese and French. The cohesive factor for this island nation is that it has developed as a sense of national identity, since there is not an ethnic identity. The government has promoted a campaign to solidify national identity along the lines of the slogan, “Unity and Diversity.” The slogan reflects diversity in ethnicity, language, and cultural backgrounds. This diversity

becomes alluring for foreign travelers because it creates a greater spectrum of commonality with foreign visitors. Understanding the ideological or ethnic bond of the area allows the tourism operator to begin to anticipate the sustainability of the historic and cultural tourism and identify ways the hotel's brand can be enhanced. Part of the awareness of national identity of Mauritius perhaps allows the hotel to capitalize its brand on the ethnic diversity with the spectrum of various ethnicities of staff, language of literature and signage, and institutional knowledge of diverse cultures.

One fascinating case study was written by Hemme (2005), and entitled, "Landscape, Fairies and Identity: Experience on the Backstage of the Fairy Tale Route." This case study is about a tour and travel route, the "Fair Tale Route," which does not focus on architectural or agricultural aspects of the cultural landscape, but instead focuses on fairies, princesses, and a romantic experience based upon the Brothers Grimm stories. This German fairy tale route connects a series of towns and landscapes on the theme that Little Red Riding Hood lived in Schwalm, Frau Holle resided on the Meirsner, and Sleeping Beauty lived in the Reinhardt's Forest. The Bremen town musicians were found, of course, in the town of Bremen. The challenge in the case study was how to deliver the expectations of a romantic drive along the Fairy Tale Route without cheapening it with "cheap, cardboard or pressed wood figurines." Along the route, re-enactors have developed marketing of castles. German people of all ages have a general and communal understanding of folktales. This becomes a competitive advantage in this particular historic and cultural cluster. One interesting observation of this case study was that the Weser Renaissance initiative was sponsored in part by the European Union. A community had to contribute £30,000 to the funding of electronic guides. These guides were electronic devices that would explain the significance of towns and events along this historic

and cultural route. What became apparent is that the electronic guide was incongruent to the ambience of fairy tales, essential storytelling, and hospitality provided by local people. In this instance, Hemme found, “Here there is a possibility for having authentic experience in a much-described longing of the enlightened traveler to encounter a ‘real native’ may feel fulfilled.” In essence, the technology was incongruent with the tourist’s emotional experience in that the hospitality and cultural intelligence of storytelling by local people created competitive advantage. In this instance, an historic hotel would be able to sustain its historic branding by leveraging the customer service of the hotel with the storytelling culture of the local people.

An illustrative case study is the Liberty Hotel in Boston. The old Charles Street Jail was renovated over a five-year period at a cost of \$150 million. Eighteen of the hotel’s 298 rooms are built in the original jail, and new construction adjoins the jail with its historic ambience. Stories about the jail are numerous and create a compelling historical ambience and curiosity in stark contrast to the dingy concrete and iron of the jail with luxury amenities. It is the luxurious furnishings and enhancements that bring comfort and pleasure to the customer, but the ambience is the historic jail. The Liberty Hotel is in the heart of Boston’s Beacon Hill neighborhood, surrounded by some of the world’s best medical complexes. It has a striking 90-foot central rotunda. Once a customer enters in the historic entrance he or she can view the three tiers of catwalks that comprised the internal vestiges of jail cells. The Liberty Hotel is also an example of using federal incentives to bring down construction costs. It qualified for a 20 percent federal tax credit (Palmer, 2005).

#### American Indian Cultural Tourism Case Studies

The cultural tourism literature provides a limited number of cultural tourism case studies involving individuals or Indian nations operating cultural or historic properties. Reasons



given for pursuing cultural tourism by Indian nations and operators involve primarily the desire to preserve culture and language, regulate cultural tourism development ensuring authenticity, and economic development by creating jobs. However, the initiatives found in Indian country are unique because Indian nations are not only governments but also run business entities. A holistic approach must not only consider financial feasibility but also consider the benefits of economic stimulation and cultural preservation. Within the last two decades the rise of Indian gaming has provided a financial opportunity to support cultural tourism and create diversity businesses that complement gaming market.

### Cultural Preservation

Cultural preservation appears to be a primary consideration for cultural tourism in Indian country. Cultural preservation indicates preserving something of the past whether it is buildings, history, ceremonies or artifacts; an equally important opportunity of cultural tourism is identity preservation or building. The design of cultural tourism can reinforce, incent, support, promote and encourage cultural attributes, value, world view, tribal language and relationships thereby ensuring cultural survival and enjoyment or it can be designed to corrupt the core culture of the Indian tribe or nation. Beginning in the 1950s and continuing until recently, “chiefing” was common at Cherokee, North Carolina. Eastern Band Cherokees would dress in Sioux headdresses and clothes, stand outside metal teepees and pose with tourist for money. Soon, Cherokees and the tourist forgot that Cherokees never worn headdresses or lived in teepees. Susan Pitchford, (2006) in her article “Identity Tourism: A Medium for Native American Stories” addresses perhaps the most critical issue of cultural tourism for Indian country: the ability to use tourism as medium to tell their story to benefit their people and develop understanding by the general public. The story told by the Indian tribe or nation will

continue to define their identity internally and externally. Pitchford's quantitative study involved eight in depth interviews with Indian museum curators, guides and promoters. She refers to identity tourism, "...with its focus on history and culture, is a medium highly relevant to movements that use history and culture to build collective identity and solidarity." She notes that "Museums and heritage centers reflect, represent and recreate social reality, including the realities of identity, difference and struggle." Her study reflects the difficulty in Indian museums and attractions to balance entertainment and education, to dispel stereotypes without turning tourist off with harsh holocaust stories of their history, and to show the present and future without being restrained by the past. The study reports the challenges of museums and attractions to design presentations for tourists who have a limited amount of time or attention span. However, the study clearly describes the idea that defining an Indian tribes or nation's identity is a fundamental right of sovereignty and nationalism and the party best able and should strike that definition is the subject party. The concept of identity building penetrates every Indian nation and tribe and control of it means the control of their future. It is the essence of self-governance. Further, identity building may be universal and empathetic among all people who look to stories of others to learn about themselves. Identity tourism is but one medium for an Indian tribe or nation to tell their story but it is a powerful one for Indian people to say, "This is who we are" rather than outsiders saying "This is who they are." If Indian tribes and nations do not tell their own story, someone else will and there is no telling what story they will tell.

Studies demonstrate that the stories told by Indian tribes and nations in cultural tourism should be authentic even though there is some dispute as to what is authentic. Michael Harkin (2003), addresses this issue in "Staged Encounters: Postmodern Tourism and Aboriginal

People,” and reflects upon a work by Dean MacCannell, titled “The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure class.” Although MacCannell’s book focused on tourism as perhaps a sociological view of class, additional insight provides some historic context and revelations. One of the things MacCannell found is that even as of 1973, tourists sought experiences of genuineness and authenticity which by definition at the time tourism was thought to be superficial. From this history, we can see the thread that a significant tourist class that continues today is those who search for an authentic experience. Harkin surveyed a number of Indian tourism venues discussing various aspects of authenticity that Indians culturally possessed or lost, how they chose to share them with outsiders, whether or not the Indians that shared culture were individuals or agents of tribal government, and what various classes of tourist want to see and experience. The article provides guidance and insight in developing cultural tourism attractions and sites. Harkin found that tribes like Pueblos actually used misinformation, psychological disgracing and satire to separate private and authentic cultural ways from the public. Pueblos created a “front stage” of a performance arena to share with the public even though many tourists want to be back stage in the daily lives or religious spheres of the tribes. The Pueblos were able to separate secular for the public from sacred reserved for the tribesmen unlike the Winnebago “Indian bowl” which fostered popular stereotypes. Harkin also found that museums and cultural centers was another means to meet the tourist public and begin correcting stereotypes. He observed that some tribes like the Eastern Cherokee actually promoted popular stereotypes during the 1950s and 1960s but others like the Mashantucket Pequot because the paucity of historic artifacts had to present its history suggestive of spoon feeding with Disney-like exhibits. Although the content was historically correct by the Pequot, the authenticity in presentation was lacking. Harkin notes there has been a long standing

tension between authenticity and general touristic practice that is often becomes a hyper real portrayal of the past. Each tribe based on its cultural values, location, history and public demand addresses the tension in a different manner and accommodation. Another dimension of Indian tourism has been added recently is the growth of casinos. The gaming public is driven more by the entertainment of gaming with its amenities than an educational experience based on historical authenticity. According to Harkin, tribes will address stereotypes with their cultural tourism efforts and introduce irony into their portrayal of themselves, their history and their culture. Harkin's article is helpful in understanding internal and external influences and the role of authenticity in developing cultural or historic properties.

However, preservation of culture and history sometimes takes an odd turn. Larry Nesper (2003) , "Simulating Culture: Being Indian for Tourists in Lac du Flambeau's Wa-Saw-Gon Indian Bowl" provides an insightful history of the "Indian Bowl" which began providing tourism attractions of "Indian" storytelling, powwows, dancing and pageantry in the 1950s. A group of Indian and non-Indian entrepreneurs built the Wa-Saw-Gon Indian Bowl at an abandon lumber mill site. The programs were contrived, but the author concluded that it assisted in Indians continuing an interest in their heritage by means of cultural reproduction for tourists. He suggests the program was truly a show and those involved, both performers and tourist, understood the tribesmen were "playing Indian" and the tourist knew they were "playing Indian." The promoters of the show professed to know when not to exposure non-secular songs and stories. It was little different in production that the "Baldknobbers" in Branson, Missouri that played the stereotypic role of hillbillies. The study provides a good historical frame of reference in how design of cultural attractions of Indian tribes can maintain and preserve the integrity of cultural activities and what happens when they don't. In last two

decades the Lac Du Flambeau tribe has abandoned the stereotypical presentations and enhancements to create a more sophisticated cultural tourism center and to create business and employment opportunities through gaming, natural resource development and other business. The history and case study is valuable to see the maturation process of one of the first cultural tourism projects by an Indian tribe. To the contrary of wholesale adoption of cultural tourism, Scott Nickels (1999), in the article “Inuit Perceptions of Tourism Development: the Case of Clyde River, Beffin Island, N.W.T.” describes the evolution of tourism in the arctic community of Clyde River, Beffin Island in the 1980s. Research indicates that the Inuit accepted growth of tourism if it was gradual and that the tribal community contained and controlled tourism. Many of the residents accepted economic benefits of tourism but were slow to examine environmental and social costs that resulted out of tourism development.

Cultural authenticity and integrity is a recurring and important theme in American Indian cultural tourism. Siegrid Deutschlander (2003), in his article “Politicizing Aboriginal Cultural Tourism: The Discourse of Primitivism in the Tourist Encounter” reviews a discourse analysis in examining tourist encounters at aboriginal tourist sites in southern Alberta, Canada. The study was focused on the growth of the Canadian tourism industry from 1999-2001 and the high growth potential of aboriginal cultural tourism. This article is helpful in understanding the perspective of some tribes “playing Indian” with a presentation of Indians as spiritual, noble and environmentalists and whites as greedy. The tourist response seems to require authenticity. The study focused on five Canadian tribes and how they portrayed their past and present. The article is instructive for tribes as they begin to interpret places, issues and events to understand the connection between past and present and the interplay of politicizing presentations at museums, living villages, cultural events and pow wows. Europeans, especially Germans, were

very interested in Canadian and aboriginal cultural tourism. The article examined the negotiation of “Indian-ness” and Indian culture by both native interpreters and foreign visitors. The discourse found that the natives presented a story similar to the Enlightenment notion of the “noble savage” reflective of colonialism. However the study went on to observe that many First Nations viewed political statements at cultural attractions as political resistance to an oppressive social situation.

The desire for authenticity by the public was supported by Heather Zeppel (2002), in her article, “Cultural Tourism at the Cowichan Native Village, British Columbia.” She reports on a self-completed survey in 1999 of 496 Canadian and international visitors at the Cowichan Native Village at Duncan British Columbia. The result of the surveys provides a profile of the visitor’s satisfaction and experience at the village. It provides helpful information regarding the native owned tourist attraction. In the analysis of the surveys, the author found that genuine and authentic experience by visitors required learning about the Cowichan history and personal and real contact with Cowichan employees and community members. The author provides affirmation that the indigenous cultural tourism market in that region of Canada is the quickest growing type of tourism and international visitors are a large segment the patrons and have an interest in First Nations and Native Americans. Other observations include 80% of the visitors were over 30 years old, travel guidebooks were the principal marketing information that brought them to the attraction, 90% of the visitors were first time an, 62% stayed 1- 2 hours, 43% have visited other native cultural attractions. The data overwhelmingly demonstrated that history and culture were very important. Also 66% of the visitors were interested in not only traditional culture but current culture also. The value of the study reinforces the finding of other studies that history, authenticity, genuineness, and personal interaction with native staff is

critical for a successful cultural tourism project but adds insight that a large majority of visitors want to know about current culture of First Nations people.

Cultural integrity is a central theme by Patricia Erickson (2003) in her article, “Welcome to This House: A Century of Makah People Honoring Identity and Negotiating Cultural Tourism” examines results of an archaeological discovery of a buried longhouse that held 55,000 artifacts of the Makah tribe. It is a fascinating study of the Makah from 1855 when their Reservation was established until 2003. Their reservation is located on the Olympic Peninsula. As a result of the discovery, the tribe planned a museum and the community became more interested in learning its traditions and language. The Makah Cultural and Research Center was established, and the article is a case study of the history, process and meaning of the Makah Cultural and Research Center. The author finds that the center became a “contact zone” among the Makah and where outsiders were introduced to local crafts and traditions. The study reflects the Makah have used cultural tourism and physical artifacts to assist in their economic development and survival and to a great degree, to protect their identity. The center also assists the tribe in dispelling Indian stereotypes by the creation of its own self image or self portrait for the general public. It has become an opportunity to self-present and self-portray themselves. Erison states, “Beyond supporting the economy, however, MCRC (Makah Cultural and Research Center) represents and performs Makah identity, reinforces existing social ties, and foster new ties.” The Makah in a remote section of the United States, the most northern part of the lower 48 states, have adapted to use cultural tourism to reinforce cultural by their design.

#### Regulation of Cultural Tourism

The physical location and ancestral lands of Indian nations seem to be a draw for cultural tourism in Indian country but the regulation of tourism and protection of those cultural

assets by Indian tribes and nations has had a slow evolution. Some of the practical tribal governance issues in connection with cultural tourism were examined by Theodore Jojola (1996), “On Revision and Revisionism: American Indian Representations in New Mexico.” The author discussed how tribes in New Mexico American Indian communities were trying to revisit and deconstruct images about Native Americans that were instituted by earlier tourism industry. Some of the questions examined which are poignant and pertinent to cultural tourism development was whether or not tribal governments would permit their tribes and communities to remain “living museums” whether they could control and prevent from exploitation intellectual and cultural property of the tribes and members, and whether or not the tribe could control commercialism over non-Indians and tribal members.

Regulation of cultural tourism may have to start with the Indian tribe or nation’s fundamental view of itself, and what it wants to share with the general public. John Welch and Ramon Riley (2001) addressed the issue in, “Reclaiming Land and Spirit in the Western Apache Homeland,” a study about the Western Apache. By focusing on land as a source of strength, inspiration and pride, the land then became more than a natural resource for export or tourism. The authors indicate the Western Apaches, who refer to themselves as Ndee, were looking at critical culture which includes geography and language and balancing those concerns with broader challenges. The Apache word ni’ means both land and mind and the identity of the two is understood with the saying, “Land is good to walk and good to think.” This interesting observation would suggest that in the development of tourism, the world view or culture of the tribe is critical in not only portraying their culture but also provide their world view to determine the process of developing and the structure of cultural tourism. Much of the culture is embedded in the language. The importance of cultural authenticity is important not



only on the presentation but also in the design, structure and process. The Western Apaches completed a place names project identifying almost fifteen hundred individual places with names including springs, hills, meadows, outcroppings and other landscape features. Many of the place names were associated to Ndee ancestors who named the place and principles of Apache culture and morality. With place being such an integral part of the Apache identity, they asserted control over the entire reservation and in 1999 closed 40 small dumpsites and built one state of art landfill. In a unique twist of history, in 1993, the White Mountain Apaches adopted a plan to convert Ft. Apache, a former army post initially built to keep Apaches on the reservation into a historic district and Cultural Center and Museum. By 1997, the Apaches, in conjunction with the National Park Service and other federal, state and local agencies restored nine of the fort's twenty-six historic buildings. In 2000, the Apaches conducted a reconciliation process and ceremony that involved more than 2000 people to acknowledge an unpleasant history and launch future community involvement programs. The interesting twist is that an Indian tribe took a "symbol of oppression and cultural erosion into a symbol of hope, power, and self-determination." Here the Apaches found an unlikely historic property and turned it into a strategic asset for telling their story and encouraging cultural tourism.

A region that has been studied several times is the southwest United States and the lands of the Navaho, Hopi and Pueblo tribes. In the article, "Culture and Tourism in the Navajo Country," Stephen Jett (1990) conducted a historical review of tourists' attraction for spectacular landscapes and cultural attractions in the Navajo country. The study is a history of tourism in the Navaho country beginning with a review of the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company (AT&SF) completed in 1880 developing an image campaign for the

southwest to increase rider ship on the train. It wanted to create an allure for the barren southwest with images of “veiled kingdoms of unknown cultures.” In conjunction with the railroad Frederick Harvey began a chain of restaurants and hotels along the line. A relatively sophisticated marketing campaign continued for decades including distributing free in 1907, 300,000 calendars with southwest Indian images. A series of guides and tourism promotions followed. Also the Santa Fe and Taos colonies developed a following of artists and writers who also contributed to the romantic images of the southwest and Navahos for the general public. The author traces the development of infrastructure over the decades showing how the improvement of roads dramatically improved tourism attendance. He also noted the tourism attempts by the Navahos met with a rather spotty success record. He suggests the bureaucratic impedance by the federal government, lack of capital and insufficient business skills doomed many tribal and individual Indian businesses to failure. The Navaho government over the fifty year period from 1940 to 1990 tried to create a series of tribal parks and attractions with limited success. Jett states the artist development of jewelry, Hopi pottery and Navaho rugs developed to a higher state of artistry and value over the last century due to the demand of tourist. Jett’s study for the sake of history is interesting but dated since the Navaho Nation has begun to excel since the report was published. The valuable observations are that transportation, lodging and amenity infrastructure is critical, that the desert with seemingly no competitive advantages can be marketing profitably, and that tourism even unregulated can create financial incentives to reaffirm and develop cultural arts. The Anasazi ruins and other historic buildings such as trading posts, Navajo culture such as clothing, handicrafts, blankets, and housing became iconic draws to the rather drab southwest. The report goes on to show there are a number of interested parties who have contributed to developing cultural tourism, including the Atchison, Topeka

and Santa Fe Railway, the Navajo tribe, the states in which the tribe is located, and the National Park Service. The Navajo Nation ultimately began exercising control and leadership in creating a recreational resources department, a tribal museum, nine tribal parks, and an arts and crafts guild. The report also examines the physical, economic and cultural benefits of tourism and the historic background of Navajo country tourism.

With a similar theme, Scott Zeman (1998), in an article, “Monument Valley, Shaping the Image of the Southwest’s Cultural Crossroads” provides an intriguing history of Monument Valley located in southeastern Utah and northeastern Arizona. It is a center of the Navajo’s physical and spiritual territory. The author quoting Gus Bighorse, “It looks like somebody was just playing and stood up the rocks so they will be beautiful to see. I think the Great Spirit put them there for us.” The article reflects that tourism began in Monument Valley in the 1880s by the Fred Harvey Company. Part of Harvey’s tourism theme was that Navajo country was a place of timeless beauty and exotic Indians. The portrayal of the “noble savage” in the western regions was developed at the end of the Plains wars in the upper Mid-west. By 1920, Arizona Highways, a magazine made popular the romantic images of the valley. By the late 1920s, the National Park Service was interested in creating a national park but the Navajo Council prevented its establishment. In the 1930s producers and directors in the film industry found Monument Valley to be attractive and it soon became the standard for westerns, including the 1939 film Stagecoach. Since 1957 with the creation of the Navajo tribal parks and recreation department and its creation of the Monument Valley Tribal Park, Monument Valley has been promoted by the Navajos on less exploitive terms. Navajos require that the park be respected. The tourism history of Monument Valley reflects how a number of industries have captured for tourism what at one time seemed to be an expansive waste land. For almost a century outside

entrepreneurs found ways to make money from the environment and the Navahos. Because of the needed income and employment Navahos generally welcomed tourism whether it was encouraged by railroads, the National Park Service, local marketing and magazines or the movie industry. Within the last several decades has the Navaho government begun to assert control over the natural resources it possesses and the parameters of tourism permitted. This history provides some guidance in structure the balance between cultural environment and the economic sharing through cultural tourism. A final study of the southwest is by Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh and T.J. Ferguson (2006). In “Memory Pieces and Footprints: Multivocality and the Meanings of Ancient Times and Ancestral Places among the Zuni and Hopi,” they look at the connection between Indian nations and ancestral lands. The article was based on a three-year research cooperative ethno-history project focusing on “contested past” perspective of American Indian tribes of ancestral landscapes. It was an anthropology study. Anthropologist at one extreme could adopt all information about a site including oral tradition and empirical studies including archaeology or on the other extreme only accept scientific information in reflecting upon the historic site. The contested past is the challenge by the indigenous minority to report on their version of the past. The contested past concept incorporates various perspectives and voices, resulting in an alternative history concept of contested past. A contested part approach is not inconsistent with scientific principles that respect tribal values of that history and the significance of the particular landscape or property. Contested past concept allows for tourism in that it links themes such as nationalism, identity, museology, tourism, and even war. The particular study focused on contemporary Zuni and Hopi observations of San Pedro Valley landscapes in Arizona. It allows for the indigenous world views of places to be expressed with significant cultural and individual meanings. Even though this is an

anthropology article, it is helpful to cultural tourism in the approach to interpret historic sites and acknowledge the meaning of a place to indigenous people. The science gives another dimension to the social, cultural and religious stories of the Indian nations.

### Cultural tourism as economic development

Economic development and the effort to create employment also is a driving consideration for cultural tourism in Indian country. John Colton (2005), in “Indigenous Tourism Development in Northern Canada: Beyond Economic Incentives” reviews the motivation for Indian tourism in Canada and finds that solid data on Indian tourism is deficient and scarce. His study suggests that economic incentives are the primary force behind the development. The author also looks at First Nations tourism development which is a counterpart to American Indians and Native Americans in the United States. The case study is of a northern Canadian Cree community. Economic incentives are a driver, but social, cultural, political and environmental factors also play into consideration for First Nation communities to evaluate tourism as a development potential. Colton makes the observation that the meaningful motivation for tourism is for the tribes to have more access and control over traditional properties and resources and thus be able to sustain their cultural identity and exercise of some aspects of sovereignty. A response to developing the capacity for cultural tourism in Indian country is described by Destry Jarvis (2005), lead author of “Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Indian Country.” He describes project by the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers that examines the need for economic development and the protection of sacred places in Indian Country. The report looks at the two-year history of three tribal pilot projects as a test of a tool kit for tribal tourism. The purpose of the study and the tool kit was to

drive tribal tourism and cultural initiatives among Indian tribes. A fundamental design in the tool kit was to allow grass-roots tribal communities to participate in planning tourism activities and coordinating existing tourism services with marketing. The report reflects that there is a need for technical assistance to assist in cultural heritage tourism and nature based tourist activities. Two of the three pilot tribes were rural with large land resources. It appeared from the report cultural tourism was extremely limited because of the difficulty of transportation to remote places. The report funded by an Administration for Native American grant was simple and provided little marketing insight into tribal cultural tourism. Daniel Gibson (2006), reports in "Sioux Center Settling into Rapid City" about a proposed project developed by the Alliance of Travel Tourism Advocates. Rapid City provided a grant for planning of a center in November, 2005. The plan is to develop an outdoor performance arena, a living history village, and retail art presentations that focus and explain Sioux life and culture. Ancillary benefits will be the using the planned facility as a teaching opportunity for on-the-job training and youth. The facility was expected to open by mid-2007. Completion of such a facility in Rapid City is a huge change from historic relationships in Rapid City. Three decades ago, Rapid City had the reputation of being very inhospitable to American Indians and was the site for physical conflict with Indian groups such as the American Indian Movement. It has shown that over the decades, tribal tourism appeared to have a strategic advantage. Another example of where tribes influenced development of tourism was written by Robert Keller (1996), "Lac La Croix: Rumor, Rhetoric and Reality in Indian Affairs." The case study was based in the 1980's involving the Lac La Croix Chippewa of Ontario and Minnesota and the development of their tourism industry they endeavored to use the Lac La Croix River which existed on the US-Canadian border. There were a number of restrictions demanded by environmentalists who

were outsiders to the area. As a result, both the American and Canadian governments recognized the need for native economy and loosened the application of their rules involving the Lac La Croix River.

#### Indian gaming assists cultural tourism

Indian gaming enterprises which are generally limited to those Indian nations with access to population centers have an opportunity to diversify gaming operations to support cultural tourism. Alan Lew (1998), in "Tourism Management on American Indian Land in the USA," surveyed 118 tribes and found that roughly one-third of the tribes in the United States were involved in some degree in tourism. As a result of this study, he found a great degree of diversity in the management of tourism based on styles influenced by their land holdings, population, and cultural differences. For example the range of land holdings spanned from 1 acre to over 17 million acres. He found that there was a growing and considerable opportunity for tourism for cultural and natural resources tourism. The focus of the study was in part to ascertain the interest in tourism by tribes and their management structure to address tourism. The management structures ranged from a dedicated tourism office, to an economic development board, to the office of the principal elected officer. The survey did touch on the position of a number of tribes in protecting cultural assets. In citing a Browe and Nolan survey, 65% of tribes stated that tourists should be restricted from some events including religious activities, sacred dances, feasts, rites, pilgrimages, puberty rituals and funerals. Also one-third of the tribes were concerned over potential conflicts between tourists and the tribes' natural resources. It is apparent from the location of the tribes, their logistics and natural resources as to what their primary tourism interests would be. Also to complement and to expand tourism interest, gaming provided a different marketing dimension. Many tribes had very basic forms

of administration, however, gaming tribes had developed more sophisticated management infrastructure. The author provided examples from several tribes demonstrating the wide spectrum of diversity. He concludes because of the exposure of colonialism and western expansion to tribes and changes of federal policy over the last several centuries there are several general observations. He states: community support for tourism on reservations decreases as one moves from east coast to west coast; tourism development is more likely to be sponsored by the tribe as one moves from east to west; most western tribes are likely to use the tribal chairman's office or an economic development office to manage tourism, while those further to the east use tribal tourism offices, museums and visitor centers; and gaming is more likely to be with eastern tribes while natural environment and outdoor activities are more likely in western reservations. Generally, his conclusions track history but gaming is a function of market and most tribes since the article was released operate gaming operations if there is a substantial population base in the area. His conclusion is that there is substantial opportunity in tribal tourism management, not only from a business development perspective, but also the protection of cultural assets.

Some Indian tribes and nations have taken the opportunity to holistically look at economic development, tourism and gaming, and then develop a strategic plan consistent with their cultural values. Judie Liner and Thomas Paradis (2006), in their article, "Beyond the Casino: Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Development on Native American Lands," did a case study of the Yavapai-Apache Nation's (YAN) experience in developing a long-term comprehensive development strategy arising out of casino development. It was a qualitative analysis to understand the decision making process in the development and management of Cliff Castle Casino in Arizona's Verde Valley. The Yavapai-Apache tribes joined several



decades ago and only had 634 acres in a rural area of Arizona off Interstate 17. Even though it is a small tribe, the demand for social and educational services was dramatic. In 1995, they built a casino under a contract manager. The modest casino subsequently built hotel performed well and revenues were invested in social services, infrastructure and essential government services. The authors found that tribal leaders had a long term vision that centered on more on tribal empowerment, sustainable economic development and cultural awareness than the immediate expenditure of casino revenues. As a result of this community philosophy and after critical services was addressed, the YAN set up institutions and developed conventions that looked at commercial development and cultural tourism. A critical principle was that that the YAN would not revenue share or make per capital payments to individual members. It set up an Economic Development Administration to segregate business and commercial issues from the tribal government and provided for an incubation process for tourism to grow and stand on it own. Issues that the authors focused on included: who is making the decisions on future development goals, how is the casino viewed in the larger process of economic and tourism development, what is the role of cultural values and sentiments on decisions affecting plans for further investments? As a result of gaming proceeds the YAN constructed a cultural center which has helped facilitate renewed interest in learning the tribal language and dances and pan-Indian beading. The YAN Tourism Department was established in 1999 and coordinates tourist activities including horseback tours, business tours to local geographical attraction, pavilion area activities including storytelling, arts, crafts, elders dialogue and food sales, and website. Perhaps the uniqueness of the study is the observation by the Tourism Director who states that the YAN leadership makes decisions on factors which focus on "... the balance of what life is. Not only how does it affect us today, but how it affects, the future, the

environment, our families, our health and how it affects us spiritually.” The author concludes, “Sustainable development, in general, and tourism, specifically, should work with local culture, rather than relying on inappropriate and large-scale development schemes that originate from outside the tribe. The study assists tribes in analyzing value of having a casino asset as a means to an end and that end is determined by a long term vision.

#### *Conclusion to Literature Review*

A review of the literature provides a scanty, incomplete picture of the financial feasibility and value of cultural tourism in Indian country. The more than two hundred Historic Hotels of America evidence profitability and a market demand for visiting historic based properties. It appears that the defining factor for profitability of cultural tourism certainly centers around its location and its ability to capitalize on historic ambience, emotional connection, and the customer’s sense of value. An area worthy of additional research would be to identify the economic value of cultural tourism in Indian country.

Although the financial feasibility of developing cultural tourism is uncertain there is a growing number of cultural tourism efforts and an increasing sophistication of its management due to the growth of Indian gaming and business acumen by Indian nations. Cultural tourism in Indian country is subject to the same challenges as cultural tourism in non-Indian rural areas because of a lack of proximity to population centers, logistics, transportation and a lack of a cluster of management talent. Cultural tourism has several significant functions: it can preserve and promote tribal culture, it can bring economic development, it can be regulated to provide a clear image of the tribe, it can enhance gaming operations, and it can educate the general public as a pre-emptive political statement.

The literature is clear that business basics apply to cultural tourism in the Cherokee Nation. A gateway where amenities such food and lodging, a draw to attract visitors, and convenient transportation to the amenities and attractions are necessary. The attraction is the story of the Cherokee Nation told so there is personal authenticity to visitors and which allows them make meaning in their life and assist building their identity. The ones to tell the Cherokee story are those whom the story is about: the Cherokee Nation and people.

### PART THREE

#### *Introduction*

Each state is entitled to be represented by two statutes in the United States Capitol Statuary Hall. Oklahoma's two statues are of two Cherokees: Sequoyah, known for developing a Cherokee written syllabary by himself, and Will Rogers, known for being a humorist, newspaper columnist, radio commentator and movie star. They also represent the broad attraction for cultural tourism in the Cherokee Nation providing cultural bookends of the Cherokee Nation: Sequoyah's home place in southeast of Cherokee Nation, near Sallisaw, Oklahoma and Will Rogers Memorial in the northwest of Cherokee Nation, near Claremore, Oklahoma.

Cultural tourism in the Cherokee Nation essentially is designed to be an experience resulting from the Cherokees telling their story. It is identity tourism. The impact of the story depends how well the compelling, emotional and educational story is told. The critical skill is the ability to tell a story well. The story can be told orally, by customer service, by property interpretation, by literature, by audiovisual, by mass communication, by architecture and by designing tour and travel. The ability to tell a story well is essential in bringing individuals into the empathy and emotion of the Cherokee Nation and its cultural experience. It is fundamental to the cultural tourism effort for each employee, regardless of whether they are a bus driver, waitress, or operations manager, to understand the process of telling storytelling and know the methods of stories to tourists. Story telling is not only the content and how it is packaged or delivered; it also involves the structure and process of conveying the content. Cultural tourism is based on the mosaic of places, traditions, art forms, celebrations and experiences that portray the Cherokee Nation and its people and reflect the diversity and character of the Cherokee Nation

### *Methodology*

This is a case study of the recent history of the Cherokee Nation to develop cultural tourism. This paper is a qualitative report on the process of the Cherokee Nation in developing a cultural tourism plan and many of the considerations addressed in that process. It examines the historical context, structure and governance of designed culture tourism in the Cherokee Nation. A number of feasibility questions were evaluated by the Cherokee Nation and the results of that inquiry are reflected in this paper. Lastly, this paper reviews the strategy the Cherokee Nation adopted for cultural tourism and the planned work to develop cultural tourism over the next several decades.

### *Overall strategy of the Cherokee Nation*

The Cherokee Nation's Mission is captured in a Cherokee word: Ga-Du-Gi "Come together and working together for the benefit of the community. The long term vision of the Cherokee Nation is to assist the Cherokee people to become a happy and healthy people. In furtherance of this vision, the Cherokee Nation has three long-term initiatives: Jobs, Language, and Community. Jobs is economic self-reliance, Language is to exercise and revitalize the arts and crafts, cultural attributes and values that enrich Cherokee lives, and Community is the exercise of Ga-Du-Gi either by place and interest to form cohesive Cherokee communities. Ga-Du-Gi is the Cherokee word that means come together and work for the benefit of the community. This overall strategy is often referred to as a 100 year plan. (Smith, 2007). The Cherokee Nation anticipates it will take several decades to achieve the goals of its culture tourism plan.

### *Cultural Tourism as Part of an Overall Strategy*

Cultural, heritage, ethnic, identity and historic tourism each has somewhat of a different definition within the cultural tourism field as explicated by the literature previously discussed, but each one takes on a unique meaning when applied to a particular project or area. For the Cherokee Nation, cultural tourism is an opportunity to accomplish strategic initiatives of the Cherokee Nation by telling the Cherokee story. The Cherokee Nation believes its ultimate vision is to become a happy and healthy people. To achieve that vision three primary initiatives are advanced. These initiatives are drawn from a baseline acknowledged over one hundred years ago when the Senator Dawes, at the 1883 Lake Mohonk Conference in New York, stated there was not a pauper in the entire nation, every family owned its own home, and the tribe owed not a dollar. His observation of the Cherokee Nation was before allotment and forced

assimilation in 1906, when there was economic self reliance, an enriching cultural identity and healthy tribal government composed of cohesive communities.

Cultural tourism helps accomplish these three of the strategic initiatives based on successes. Cultural tourism, very simply, allows Cherokees to tell their story. That story can be told a number of ways, the content and the process is well defined by Cherokee history and culture, but the medium changes. The most fundamental issue in developing a cultural tourism concept was to determine “what is the product.” To design an effective system it is best to start from the product and work backward. The product is very simply to tell the Cherokee story. Articulating the stories convey the wisdom, challenges, and aspirations of the Cherokee people. The foundation and first step was to premise the development of the cultural tourism system on the process of telling a story. (Lewis, 2007). Corporate America for some time has acknowledged the value of storytelling in transferring intrinsic knowledge which is the higher form of knowledge, including problem solving and creativity.

Business opportunities of the Cherokee Nation are evaluated by five criteria: 1) make a profit, 2) employ Cherokees, 3) outsource to Cherokees, 4) develop long term capacity, and 5) develop social and political goodwill. Cultural tourism is a “low capital investment per job” industry that provides employment and business opportunities close to home for Cherokee citizens. Cultural tourism creates incentives for Cherokees to exercise their cultural, language, history, arts and sports. Cultural tourism, in addition to an industry that may make a profit, satisfies the Cherokee Nation’s long term strategy. Cherokee Nation cultural tourism encourages commitment from the communities and promotes economic self-sufficiency while educating others about the Cherokee Nation. Creating a positive image of the Cherokee Nation is not only beneficial for tourism but for all of Cherokee Nation businesses. Cultural Tourism

focuses on promoting the people, history, culture, and traditions that help define the identity of Cherokee People.

The Cherokee Nation jurisdiction consists of fourteen counties in Northeastern Oklahoma. See Exhibit 6 “Map of the Cherokee Nation.” Its territory in Oklahoma is marked by a fee patent issued by the US government in 1838 and again in 1846 after the infamous Trail of Tears, on which 4,000 of 16,000 Cherokees died after being forcibly removed from their homelands in northern Georgia. These boundaries for federal and tribal relationships are as significant as state boundaries. It is the political territory of the Cherokee Nation. A cultural experience provided in this territory gives a glimpse not only of the Cherokee Nation, its people, and its history but also American history from a unique perspective.

#### The Product of Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism is Story Telling

Storytelling is not only oral stories and how the presenter entertains; stories are certainly told in literature, audio and video recordings, but the idea of storytelling can influence the design and architecture of historic properties, the organization of tour and travel, the presentation of a meal at a restaurant, the flow of retail in a store, and the layout in an art studio in a historic district. It is the understanding of the process of storytelling and being able to communicate the content of the Cherokee story is that is organizing concept for Cherokee cultural tourism.

The Cherokee story is first told to an internal market, that being the Cherokee people. Unfortunately, many of the Cherokee people have lost cultural attributes, knowledge of their history, and the positive impact of a Cherokee way of life. Cultural tourism creates incentive to re-learn the language, to develop the arts and crafts to a higher level, to learn stories and to tell

them, and to study the history of the Cherokees. In essence, cultural tourism helps reinforce and ensures the language, culture, tradition and heritage of the Cherokees.

The second market is an external market. Cherokees have learned from history that public policy, embodied in law, changes every 20 to 40 years. In order to be able to moderate or influence that public policy, the Cherokee Nation must influence public sentiment to be neutral or favorable. Public sentiment is influenced by hearing the Cherokee story. Cultural tourism can very effectively tell the Cherokee story through arts, crafts, oral stories, and design of buildings. It is time that the Cherokee story is told and comprehended by the external market, non-Indians in the area, region and nation, in order to build social and political capital. Congress is less likely to pass hostile law if it truly understood the history, status and aspiration of the Cherokee people and the Cherokee Nation. It is a function of survival to influence the external market. The Cherokee Nation must be able to ensure that crass and harmful stereotypes and misinformation regarding the Cherokee Nation are not perpetuated intentionally or by an intelligence void filled by Hollywood and adversaries with non-sense.

An example of the Cherokee cultural tourism experience would be travelers either by personal car, tour, or travel bus, could stop almost anyplace within the Cherokee Nation and begin to sense the cultural ambiance and history. The optimal product would be demonstrated by somebody driving or flying into Tulsa, stopping at the casino property at Catoosa, and then driving 65 miles to Tahlequah, the Capital of the Cherokee Nation. On the way down on Highway 82 they stop for gas at the small town of Peggs. They go in to pay for the gas and the family asks about Zeke Proctor, who is known to them to be an infamous Cherokee outlaw. The gas station attendant says, "Well, let me tell you the true story about Zeke Proctor. He was not an outlaw but a great patriot, and this is his story..." The gas station attendant uses greetings



and goodbyes in Cherokee. The front of the building has the word for gas station written in the Cherokee syllabary. There are historic and cultural materials on the counter and authentic Cherokee arts and craft for sale. The family resumes its journey to Tahlequah and finds there are ten cultural properties including the Capitol building, the Supreme Court building, the oldest public building in Oklahoma, and the Female Seminary the first institution of higher education west of the Mississippi for women. Downtown Tahlequah is themed with historically accurate decor and products and the Cherokee syllabary appears on each storefront. Home cooking with Cherokee based foods are available and Cherokee products are available in small boutique shops and cafes including Kanuchi, wishi, frybread and quality arts and crafts. Packages are available for a drama; float trips, horseback trips, reenactments of the Trail of Tears, visitation to historic cemeteries and churches, and other tour and travel packages. All those stories, told in person and by place, combine to tell the Cherokee story of a great legacy and a cultural experience that the traveler values.

### History of the Cherokee Nation

To understand the Cherokee Nation, its vision, overall and business strategy, and the opportunity for cultural tourism, its history must be reviewed. The Cherokee Nation legacy is seen in the many episodes of its history. In the 1730s, the Cherokee Nation lost half of its population to small pox because of commercial trade with England. In the 1770s, the Cherokee Nation faced the genocidal wars of Great Britain and the United States designed to wipe Cherokees from the face of this continent.

In the 1830s, the Cherokee Nation faced political and legal battles to save its homeland and existence. That episode resulted in the Trail of Tears on which the Cherokee Nation lost 4,000 of 16,000 Cherokee people on the 850 mile death march from Tennessee to Indian

Territory in the middle of the winter of 1838-1839. Cherokees faced those adversities, survived, and adapted. After the Trail of Tears, the Cherokee Nation built a sophisticated society and restored the government to serve their needs. Cherokees were a people who believed in the law. The Cherokee Nation adopted an Act of Union and Constitution in 1839. In 1844, the Cherokee Nation built its Supreme Court Building, the first public building in Indian Territory. The Cherokee Nation went on to build a National Capitol Building, National Prison, and nine district courthouses. Placing high value on education, the Cherokee Nation built the first institution of higher education for women west of the Mississippi River, the Cherokee Female Seminary, which opened in 1851. The Cherokee Nation then built the male seminary and went on to build 150 day schools through the Cherokee Nation. Ninety percent of the Cherokees were literate in their own language.

The American Civil War was devastating to the Cherokee Nation. Two thirds of the Cherokee people fought for the North. More than 2,500 people died, leaving behind 4,000 widows and orphans. The Cherokee Nation suffered greater human and property loss than states in the heart of the South. Cherokees recovered from that episode even after the United States enacted a retribution treaty against Cherokees in 1866. Next was the ugliest chapter in the Cherokee relationship with the United States government: allotment. It was the design of the United States to forcibly assimilate Cherokees and terminate the government so that the Cherokee lands could be opened up for settlement. The common title of Cherokee lands was divided up to individual Cherokees in 1906. By 1920, the American policy to get to Cherokee lands was so successful that Cherokees had lost 90 percent of their land. No longer did Cherokees have the protection of common title to their lands. Cherokees became dependent on a “cash” economy.

Cherokees suffered in the Great Depression and Oklahoma Dust Bowl. Between 1930 and 1940, half of the Cherokee population left Oklahoma for Texas and California looking for work. The “Grapes of Wrath” migration was an economic “Trail of Tears.” There was also the relocation programs moving Cherokee families to urban centers in the 1950s and 1960s designed to further the policy of forced assimilation.

In 1975, Cherokees adopted a superseding constitution and began efforts to revive the Cherokee Nation. In 1976, a federal judge found that the Bureau of Indian Affairs had practiced a policy of “bureaucratic imperialism” since 1906. The BIA had wrongfully prevented the Cherokee Nation from exercising its governmental rights. The political Dark Ages of the Cherokee Nation came to an end.

Many Cherokees believe they have a legacy which is a gift from ancestors. It carries with it a duty, burden, responsibility and obligation to carry on and give those gifts to their children and posterity. But far greater than that duty is the great honor is to carry on this legacy. Many also believe one hundred years from now, their great grandchildren will judge our decisions today. Either those descendents will enjoy an enriching cultural identity knowing their history, arts, culture language, traditions and wisdom, or they will pick up a dusty history book and find a footnote which states, “...once there was a great Cherokee Nation, but it is no more.”

The Cherokees story is this legacy: they are a people who face adversity, survive, adapt, prospers and excel.

## Business Case for Cultural Tourism

### Market Data and Statistics

The first consideration by the Cherokee Nation was whether or not there was a potential cultural tourism market (Lewis, 2007). The following information helps make that first decision. Nationally, in 2000, tourism contributed \$582 billion to the US economy. Tourism is the third largest industry in the US. Nationally, tourism directly employs 7.8 million people and indirectly supports 11.5 million jobs and creates new businesses, higher property values, and an improved quality of life and community pride. Nationally, travel-generated employees earned nearly \$1.5 billion in wage and salary income during 2002, up .4% over 2001.

Statistics from research performed for Oklahoma Tourism in 2004 suggests there is a market for Native American cultural tourism. See Economic Impact of Travel on Oklahoma Counties, 2002, Travel Industry Association of America. This study revealed that 16% of those traveling to Oklahoma did so in search of Native American events or attractions. An examination of advertising cited in the same research suggested that 13.5% of traveler were influenced by interest in Native American History, which led to 15% requesting a brochure including a list of events/festivals. Other market data and information supporting growth potential for cultural tourism in the Cherokee Nation from the study includes follows:

- Domestic travel spending in Oklahoma reached nearly \$3.9 billion during 2002, a 1.3% increase over 2001.
- The State of Oklahoma Tourism Campaign was “Native America”
- Domestic travel expenditures generated 69,200 jobs within Oklahoma in 2002, 4.7% of the state’s total non-agricultural employment. Without these jobs generated by domestic travel, Oklahoma’s 2002 unemployment rate of 4.5% would have been 4.1 percentage points higher than it was or 8.6% of the labor force
- Domestic travel spending in Oklahoma generated \$690.9 million in tax revenue for federal, state and local governments in 2002.
- Oklahoma County, which includes Oklahoma City, received nearly \$1.3 billion in domestic travel expenditures which lead all Oklahoma counties in 2002.

- Tulsa County, which includes the city of Tulsa, indicated over \$1 billion in domestic travel expenditures in 2002.
- Four counties in Oklahoma indicated one thousand or more jobs directly supported by domestic travel expenditures in 2002.
- Overall, the percentage of people that reported a trip to Oklahoma increased from 49.3% in 2000, to 59.7% in 2004.
- Overnight conversion rate increased from 39% to 44%. The percentage of day trips increased from 21% to 26.6%.
- Direct visitor spending increased from \$17 million in 2000 to \$25.9 million in 2004 while media expenditure decreased over the same time span.
- Return on Investment of media expenditure has increased to \$12.30 from \$6.24 from 2000-04

It appears from the report that the reward of cultural tourism is traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. The report suggests heritage and cultural tourism industry is growing in popularity.

There is a very strong interest in the Native American Culture, especially with the Germans, Japanese and Canadians. Tourists are interested in Native American stories, history, religious beliefs, dress and rituals. Statistics show tourists that are visiting to see culture tend to stay longer and spend more money. The Oklahoma Conservation Commission stated the reasons for people to travel are as follows: second, outdoor activities; third, history; fifth, cultural events; sixth, parks; and eight, gaming. All these activities can be found in the Cherokee Nation.

Oklahoma Tourism Demographics Report (2004) indicates the following for tourism:

- Primary Age: 35-54, Secondary Age: 25-34/55-64
- Primary Audience: Women
- Median Household Income: \$80,000

- Primary Family Travel Behavior: Adult Travel with Children: 67%, Adult Travel w/o Children: 33%
- Primary Region: Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Arkansas, New Mexico and Illinois

After reviewing general data and information, there appeared to be opportunities to appeal to:

- Adults who travel without children
- Families who travel with children
- Cultural heritage travelers
- Group tour travelers
- International travelers
- Local and Regional Schools

The Cherokee Nation has several marketing advantages. The focus on Cherokee people and the Cherokee ways strengthens the uniqueness of the tourism experience. There are currently over 250,000 tribal citizens throughout the U.S., however according to the 2000 US Census, there are 750,000 people who claim Cherokee ancestry. There are a 500,000 people who are not tribal citizens that have some affinity for the Cherokee Nation.

The Cherokee Nation is also a Nation with many accomplishments such as the first written tribal constitution, first published Native American newspaper, and the first to publish tribal laws in the Cherokee language. Other strengths of the Cherokee Nation that would influence the feasibility of cultural tourism include: exercise of the sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation government which would avoid certain state imposed regulations and obligations, outstanding existing natural resources such as the geography of the foothills of Ozarks, Illinois River, Tenkiller Lake, numerous state and local parks, and a host of hunting and fishing opportunities including the second greatest inland shoreline of any state. There exists a

foundation of tourism in area including such as: Cherokee Heritage Center, Historic Murrell Home, Cemeteries, Northeastern State University Seminary Hall and downtown Tahlequah.

Many travelers, domestic and international, have expressed an interest in the Cherokee culture and touring the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee name is very well respected and publicized. The Cherokee Nation has taken an initiative in preserving and protecting their land, natural resources, culture, language and history. Over 9,000 people have completed a 40 hour Cherokee Nation history course since 2000. The Nation has made it a priority to educate tribal members in hopes of moving toward self-sufficiency.

#### Availability of Cultural, Historic, Heritage or Ethnic Properties, Activities and Events

Cultural properties, people, media, arts and crafts, events and activities help tell the Cherokee story. An inventory of properties, activities and events are listed in Exhibit\_\_\_\_\_, ‘List of properties that will be available to tell the Cherokee story.’ There are over thirty historic properties, ten hospitality venues, sixteen arts, craft and cultural sites, fifteen cultural activities, ten major community events, fifteen potential tours, thirteen outdoor activities, and eleven Cherokee Nation governmental sites and facilities. There appeared to be a sufficient number of historic places and cultural activities and events to warrant further investigation of cultural tourism. Also see Exhibit 3 “Events in Fourteen County Jurisdiction of Cherokee Nation- Cultural Development Summary Draft, Feb. 8, 2007”, and Exhibit 4 “Historic and Cultural Resources Master List”.

#### Competitive Advantage of Cherokee Nation Enterprise

Another question for success cultural tourism was whether or not there is the organizational and marketing capacity to build a system and industry. The organizational

design for cultural tourism at the Cherokee Nation rests upon a principle that the Cherokee Nation is a government that pre-existed the United States by sixty years. Cherokees entered into their first treaty in 1721, becoming the military and political ally of Great Britain. Cherokees became the political, military, and economic ally of the United States in 1785. But even with that inherent governmental status, the Cherokee Nation, has over the last several decades, understood that there must be a division between governmental interests and proprietary or business interests. Government decisions made upon political considerations are not necessarily bad or irrational, but they are made upon policy that helps the vast majority of the people. Basically, political decisions are made for the greatest good for the greatest number. Sometimes those policies are skewed by a selfish political motive resulting in pork barreling or other deviant decisions. Business decisions are based upon a set of business principles established to maximize the bottom line or sustain long term value and growth. In the Cherokee Nation, the decision was made to segregate business decisions and political decisions thirty years ago. The mechanism, process and organization to accomplish that for the Cherokee Nation as a government was to create corporations pursuant to its sovereign authority. The sole shareholder of these corporations is the Cherokee Nation as a government. Pursuant to Cherokee Nation law after a corporation is formed, the board of directors is appointed by the Principal Chief and ratified by the legislative body referred to as the Council. The corporation is then given a charge to run the business in a business manner. It focuses on business decisions which often times would be unpopular or risky political decisions. The gaming enterprises of the Cherokee Nation are vested in the Cherokee Nation Enterprises (CNE). It has been somewhat successful since in the last eight years; it has grown from 500 employees to 3,200 employees with a net profit from \$3 million to \$120 million. Within that process of growth and



expansion, CNE has developed significant business acumen and capacity in its board of directors and its staff. It would appear that CNE would be more than competent to make sound and sustainable business decisions to build cultural tourism in the Cherokee Nation.

### The Preparation of a Cultural Tourism Plan

Having determined initially there was a potential market, philosophical and strategic support, a sufficient inventory of cultural properties and events for cultural tourism in the Cherokee Nation, and management capacity, a planning team was organized to determine to an initial design of a cultural tourism system (Lewis, 2007). A foundational cultural tourism planning meeting was conducted in July, 2005 to discuss the concepts of cultural tourism by staff of the Cherokee Nation. Present were Cherokee Nation staff from Small Business Development, Commerce, the Cherokee National Holiday, Natural Resources, the Cherokee Nation Heritage Center, Education Department, Cherokee Nation Businesses, and Cultural programs. Staff prepared an initial rough draft of a planning development plan.

The planning team believed that the Cherokee Nation with other entities, including private businesses, local government and organizations should provide an authentic, enriching cultural experience for guests at a competitive price. The cultural tourism effort lead by the Cherokee Nation planning team believed it should be a multi-faceted delivery system for enriching cultural experiences. The design should include training of staff to share cultural experience, develop the brand for the marketing effort, execute the marketing effort, help build infrastructure based on the existing gaming operations, maintain, acquire, and build cultural properties and govern the system by creating standards for attractions, events, training, and the

brand. The planning team believed CNE through a department should also develop ways to fund, subsidize, and generate revenue from cultural tourism marketing.

In 2006, the Cherokee Nation planning team elected to use a “design team” concept to develop a Cultural Tourism Plan; a relative small steering committee staffed by Cherokee Nation employees would organize a series of meetings with participation by a large group of stakeholders. The stakeholders were self chosen after notice went to every group in northeastern Oklahoma who had any interest in tourism. Stakeholders at an initial meeting in May, 2006 self-selected to participate in working committees on some subject of cultural tourism and would report back periodically to the entire group of stake holders, staff and the steering committee on their work. The design team met monthly for six months with the goal to complete a Cultural Tourism Plan. The steering committee was composed of staff involved with cultural tourism, planning process, Commerce Department, Cherokee Nation Businesses, National Resources, the Cherokee Heritage Center, Cherokee Nation Enterprises, Communications, Governmental Affairs and Administration. The goals of cultural tourism developed by the Cultural Tourism Design Team were:

- Develop cultural tourism to secure economic prosperity and full employment.
- Make tourism economically accessible and ensure that present and future markets are afforded adequate tourism and recreation resources.
- Contribute to the visitor’s personal growth, health, education and intercultural appreciation of the Cherokee Nation and its geography, natural and human resources, history and ethnicity.
- Promote quality, authenticity, and reliability in all cultural tourism and tourism related visitor services
- Preserve historical, natural, and cultural properties as part of the Cherokee Nation tourism development, and insure future generations an opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the Cherokee Nation’s rich heritage.

- Encourage the development, collection, analysis and dissemination of data to measure accurately the economic and social impact of tourism to and within the Cherokee Nation in order to facilitate planning, marketing and management in the public and private sectors.
- Seek cooperation of all government activities in support of tourism and the tourism industry.

The design team posed a number of questions and issues for stakeholders to consider including: the best suited areas for immediate development, issues to be considered for cultural tourism growth, and the top ten initiatives that should be developed and who should take responsibility for them. Response grids reported the results. It appeared the results were influenced by the participant's occupation or industry.

Working conferences with stakeholders participating in different committees to report out on their issues met on the following dates and had the indicated attendance and participation.

May 15, 2006 -Working Conference on Tourism  
Cherokee Casino Resort – Tulsa, OK  
90 – Made advance reservations  
Approx. 115 Attended

June 5, 2006 -Working Conference on Tourism  
Cherokee Nation Complex- Tahlequah, OK  
43 – Made advance reservations

July 10, 2006 -Working Conference on Tourism  
New Civic Center at the Amory- Tahlequah, OK  
58 Made advance reservations

August 7, 2006- Working Conference on Tourism  
Meeting Room at Sallisaw Hotel- Sallisaw, OK  
35 Made advance reservations

February, 2007- Summary Presentation re: Working Conference on Tourism  
Cherokee Casino Resort – Tulsa, OK  
110 Approx advance reservations

Approx. 119 Attended.

In September 2006, a Department in the Cherokee Nation's Trade & Commerce Group began to focus efforts in rural Cherokee communities. At that time, the Commerce Group presented information about tourism at community meetings. During these meetings communities were introduced to the idea of tourism development in their communities. These meetings were used to establish community needs and inventory assets. Surveys were distributed to participating communities about their needs and aspiration. A preliminary department for cultural tourism was established as a Cherokee Nation office in 2006 to help advance development of the Cultural Tourism Plan. The Cherokee Nation Commerce Group launched a Website. During the summer of 2007, the Commerce Group performed several more introductory community meetings as well as some follow up meeting from the fall of 2006. During this time more community needs were determined and the Commerce Group started to offer technical assistance to several communities in the area of tourism development, festival planning and marketing. Marble City was the only community that became active in the tourism planning process. Other communities are still interested in tourism development, but have focused on other community initiatives.

In the final report out on the Culture Tourism Plan in February, 2007 by the design team, 199 people attended representing: OKTourism, Oklahoma House of Representatives and Senate, the Tahlequah Newspaper, Cherokee Nation staff from various departments including roads, commerce, tourism, finance, housing and communications, Cabin Creek Winery, Big Cabin Winery, Cherokee Nation Businesses, private tourism operators, Osage Tribe Tourism, City of Claremore Economic Development, Cherokee artists, Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, Cherokee Heritage Center, banking, bed and breakfast operators, Department of Agriculture,

Saline Preservation Association, Tahlequah Chamber of Commerce, Tour Operators, Will Rogers Museum, Washington County Commissioners, Tahlequah Main Street Association, Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, Tahlequah Mayor's Office, Muskogee Tourism Department, Cherokee Nation Holiday, Northeastern State University Tourism Department, art shops, and the Cherokee Nation Council.

The Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism Plan was assembled by staff from reports of the working groups under the supervision of the steering committee. These participants and stakeholders received a briefing on the proposed Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism Plan and were invited to send comments for incorporation within two weeks of the report out meeting. The final report was provided by the design team in late February, 2007

After the Cultural Tourism Plan was released by the Cherokee Nation in February, 2007, the refinement and implementation of it was vested in Cherokee Nation Enterprises, a solely held corporation of the Cherokee Nation. As a result of the Cultural Tourism Plan, discussions by the Principal Chief with the Board of Directors and recommendations of CNE Chief Executive Officer lead CNE to create a new department, Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism (CNCT). It was charged to refine the cultural tourism plan, implement the plan and be the facilitator of all the activities involved with the Cherokee cultural tourism experience. CNE is responsible for the Cherokee Nation's gaming and hospitality business and was charged to enhance and develop the tourism industry in the Cherokee Nation. CNE believed it should focus on bringing in travelers from all areas. CNE appointed a Director and began the process of reviewing, developing and implementing the Cultural Tourism Plan by hiring staff, contracting with a site development consultant, preparing a development budget and acquiring

critical properties with staff from the Cherokee Nation. The goal of CNCT was to provide an authentic cultural experience for guests at a competitive price.

## Organizational Design and Governance

Cultural tourism development and implementation was vested with CNE to make sound business decisions and to ensure the growth and sustainability of the cultural tourism effort. Equally clear in addition to the business acumen and business case discipline process demanded by CNE, it had developed expertise which could be leveraged for the cultural tourism initiative. Gaming in the Cherokee Nation includes slot machines and card games pursuant to a compact with the State of Oklahoma. CNE has outstanding marketing experience, customer service proficiency, attractive amenities such as lodging and food, and entertainment.

Cultural tourism is designed to build upon that business foundation. The design team believed it would be an incremental effort for CNE to leverage its abilities laterally and manage another form of entertainment: cultural tourism. The ability to tell a story must have a component of enjoyment, learning, and emotional stimulation, all of which are components of entertainment.

CNE is logistically organized to provide centers for tour and travel. As seen by Exhibit 6 “Map of the Cherokee Nation.” The Cherokee Nation has developed three Casinos, each approximately 80 miles apart in a triangle, which have entertainment, hotel, and food services. These provide a triangular network to service visitors who would like to expand their gaming experience to a cultural tourism and heritage experience. Located within or close to that triangle are at least 30 cultural properties that range in history from pre-removal in the 1820s to the infamous Cherokee Trail of Tears, to the American Civil War, to the allotment period beginning in 1898 during which oil was found in the Cherokee Nation. That history continues

after the creation of the State of Oklahoma in 1907, through the Depression era with the WPA projects, and even WWII POW camps were established in rural areas of the Cherokee Nation.

The government of the Cherokee Nation ascertained that the cultural tourism initiative had the best chance of success because of CNE's business acumen, track record, management capacity and understanding of entertainment.

#### Business Governance

When the cultural tourism initiative was proposed to the CNE board members, two of which were retired from Citgo as the CEO and his second in command and both Cherokee, asked the question, "Why vest this initiative with CNE?" The initial financial projection was that it would not positively cash flow. Admission, gaming lift and other forms of direct economic value were apparently not sufficient to cover the anticipated operating expenses. One of the executives asked, "How do we determine what to do, what is the priority of projects in this initiative if there is no substantive return?" Those questions were the precise reason why the initiative was vested in CNE, because the board of directors, financial staff, executive staff, and other professionals were equipped with sound business case processes to properly plan, evaluate and analyze the best projects to begin the initiatives, and to design them for the greatest success. As a result, the cultural tourism group established within CNE began refining the cultural tourism plan and determining value and priority of investment.

A capital development and operational plan needed some value matrix to determine if and what properties should be invested, to what extent, and how they could be made successful. The Cherokee Nation government, as articulated by the executive branch, for success CNE's businesses should accomplish five goals. One is to make money, two is to hire Cherokees, three is to outsource to Cherokees those operations that are contracted out, four is to develop social



or political capital or goodwill, and five is to developing term capacity for the Cherokee Nation, CNE and its people.

The preliminary analysis of cultural tourism left questions of whether or not, a large capital and operating investment would ever break even. Therefore, to ascertain the overall feasibility of cultural tourism, it was required to develop a matrix along each of these goals to determine true economic value and comparative value for each project under the cultural tourism initiative. A value matrix was developed to ascertain various interests under each goal that generates economic value. That matrix is appears below.

### Value Analysis

Criteria	Property 1	Property 2	etc
VALUE			
Revenue			
Property			
Gate Receipts			
Retail Sales			
Tour/Travel Fees			
Association Fees			
Casino Lift			
Hotel Occupancy Lift			
Food and Beverage Lift			
Word of Mouth Marketing			
Local Economic Multiplier			
Jobs			
Direct (# x \$10k/job)			
Cherokee Nation			
CNE			
Indirect (# x \$8k/job)			
Arts/Craft			
Small Business			
Other			
Outsource			
(% x volume of contract value)			
Goodwill			
Culture (\$ x # of visitors)			
Art/craft (% x volume sales)			
Community (\$ x # of communities involved)			

Social/Political/Government (\$ x # of visitors)  
 Gaming Compact (2017, \$/vote x votes needed)  
 Capacity  
 Arts/Craft Skills (\$x number of Cherokees involved)  
 Language (\$ x Cherokees involved)  
 Educational (\$ x Cherokee visitor)  
 Marketing/Management (% x net value)

## COST

CNE

Operational  
 Capital  
 Total CNE

Less

Cherokee Nation

Infrastructure  
 Training  
 Marketing  
 Total CN

Less

Other

Partner  
 State of Oklahoma  
 Local Government  
 Private Foundation

NET CNE Value (Value less Costs)

It is questionable whether fees from certification and gaming lift can provide the requisite funding for marketing, advertising and property development in a comprehensive culture tourism system. This value matrix allows the CNE and others to ascertain the overall value of cultural tourism projects and their comparative value to each other and to the Cherokee Nation. Below is an explanation of the value interests in the matrix.

## Revenue

CNCT is challenged to secure the revenue for cultural tourism. A limited amount of income is derived from the particular property's gate receipts, and retail and merchandising sales. Other income is generated from tour and travel fees and association fees. Income may be

substantial from the lift or incremental sales from casino operations, hotel occupancy, and food and beverage at the various casinos or gaming operations. From reviewing the map where gaming properties are located within the Cherokee Nation, the gaming market appears to be focused on three urban centers: Tulsa, Oklahoma, Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Bentonville, Arkansas. Bentonville is a relatively high income population due to headquarters of Wal-Mart and other major businesses of northwest Arkansas. Cultural tourists, through packaging, will be enticed to go to the nearby gaming operation thereby increasing the gaming lift. This helps CNCT fund the infrastructure and operations of cultural tourism.

There is cost effective marketing for the casino, hotel, food and beverage through word of mouth for those travelers who experience cultural tourism. This brings long term value in addition to the immediate increased sales. Also of pecuniary value is local economic multiplier effect on the local economy. This concept is built on the premise that a dollar spent in the community circulates three to seven times thus increasing the economic impact of a new business or industry.

### Jobs

CNCT will also determine the increased employment of Cherokees for each project. This analysis will include jobs not only created by the Cherokee Nation but also private parties. Unlike some private businesses, the Cherokee Nation has a paramount concern with developing jobs for Cherokee citizens so they can become self reliant. A driving motive and measure of success is the increased number of jobs in cultural tourism for the public and private sector. For the Cherokee Nation a meaningful job for a Cherokee citizen means a reduction in the demand for social services, health benefits, housing assistance and education scholarships. Meaningful employment furthers the overall strategy of the Cherokee Nation for it as a government and its

people to become self-reliant. The jobs in this part of the analysis may be directly or indirectly attributed to the operation and development of the project, property, event or activity. For example, if CNCT renovates the Tahlonteeskee Court House near Webbers Falls, Oklahoma, how many jobs will be created for the operation of the property, how many jobs will be developed for arts and craft due to the increased tourism traffic, and how jobs will increased traffic create at the local diner and gas station?

#### Outsource

An additional measure is the increased business or sales that ancillary businesses receive from CNCT due to the project. It is good business often to outsource operations or services rather than perform them with in-house employees. Measuring the quantity of outsourcing contributes to the value analysis of the project or property.

#### Goodwill

CNCT will also determine the amount of goodwill that the project will generate. Goodwill includes social and political capital created by cultural tourism. From a strict marketing perspective goodwill means that less advertising is necessary for a customer to return to Cherokee Nation properties and events for gaming, retail, lodging and food and beverage purchases. The social and political capital inures to the benefit of the Cherokee Nation as a government. A study of Cherokee history reveals that every twenty to forty years that federal law driven by public sentiment changes from favorable to hostile (Smith, 2007). During hostile policy times, the Cherokee Nation has suffered genocide, forced acculturation, removal, forced assimilation, allotment and liquidation of assets, and relocation. By creating social and political capital the swings in public sentiment will be moderated in the future and

the harshness of the change of federal policy will be minimized. Overall not only prosperity of the Cherokee Nation is at stake but also its survival.

Goodwill can be measured to some degree by the impact that the Cherokee Nation culture and history creates empathy and understanding with the general public. For analysis purposes, a value can be assigned to every visitor that has a cultural or educational experience at the property or event. A Cherokee cultural or educational experience also occurs when a visitor buys authentic Cherokee art or craft that carries with it a positive story. The experience is memorialized with the art or craft piece and taken home or gifted to someone. A measure of the quantity of sales can approximate the measure of goodwill associated with arts and crafts.

There is internal and external good will associated by Cherokee communities interacting with the general public. This interaction allows the general public to understand clearly the cultural and social aspects of the Cherokee people and put a contemporary face with the culture and history of the Cherokee people. Friendly personal contact and sound customer service produce substantial social and political capital. Also interaction assists Cherokee communities to develop more cohesive communities by developing and successfully implementing community projects like a farmer's market, art and craft booths, food sales, or specialized tours. This aspect of goodwill can be measured by a value assigned to the number of communities participating.

There is another dimension of social and political goodwill generated by successful cultural tourism projects; it is the value of understanding and creating empathy for the Cherokee Nation as a government. Many Americans do not understand the Indian nations are governments that existed before there was a United States. It assist the Cherokee Nation as government with state and federal relations in drafting compacts, legislation and contracts; it is

more productive if the general public and the legislatures to understand about the governmental status of the Cherokee Nation. Entering into a hunting and fishing compact with the State of Oklahoma may be easier with more advantageous terms if the Oklahoma public and legislature understood that the Cherokee Nation retained hunting and fishing regulatory ability over its property and people even after the State of Oklahoma was created. A measure of this goodwill can be approximated by a value assigned to each visitor.

A very clear and foreseeable value of goodwill and social and political capital is when the Gaming Compact with the State of Oklahoma comes up for renewal in 2017. In 2004, a referendum vote approved the current compact after the Cherokee Nation invested in a public relations campaign. The cost of the campaign is one index as to the value of social and political capital for the Cherokee Nation and its gaming enterprise. With each Oklahoma resident that develops an understanding and empathy for the Cherokee Nation it will easier to renew the gaming compact on favorable terms. A value for each visitor may approximate an amount of social and political capital that would be in reserve for the renewal of economic impact compacts with the State such as the renewal of the gaming compact.

#### Capacity

The last measure of value is capacity or abilities of the Cherokee population. Initially in conformance with the overall strategy of the Cherokee Nation enhancement, development and exercise cultural skills by Cherokees is important and valuable. Those skills include art and craft, Cherokee language fluency and understanding Cherokee history. The measure for each of those may be a value assigned for each Cherokee participating. The other long term capacity that is transferable to other business efforts is the management and marketing abilities

developed by Cherokees during the cultural tourism development process. That management ability may be measured by a percentage of the net value of the project or property.

After values are inserted in the matrix for each property, a comparative net value for each property results and gives the decision maker, in this case the CNCT staff and Board of Directors, a broader more objective analysis to make investment decisions.

#### Priority of Investment

A different part of the investment analysis is to determine the attractiveness of the thirty plus cultural properties to prospective visitors. A consultant group was retained to ascertain the tourist market for the various Cherokee historic properties. An internet survey was conducted the weekend of April 4 through April 6, 2008 with 641 responses. The survey was fielded on the internet and was programmed and produced by the CNE Marketing Group. 1,149 Esearch panel members responded and 641 qualified to participate in the survey. Sixty percent of those responding said they will or probably will visit a Native American cultural event or historical site within the next 12 months. The survey results are attached as Exhibit \_\_\_, "Tourist/Visitor Site and Activity References Project." The respondents were 54% female and were equally distributed by age in four age classes beginning with 21 and ending with 65 years of age. 46% of the respondents vacationed with family; 69% of the respondents had incomes of over \$40,000. The responses validate over all trends for Native American Cultural Tourism discussed in Part Two of this paper, the Literature Review. For example, 88% of those who would go to a Native American event or site would attend less than four times within the next 12 months. Only 27% felt access to gaming was important. If a free motor coach was provided then 59% of the respondents would travel from a casino to the cultural site. It was interesting to

note that 54% of the respondents were likely visit the Cherokee Nation if the package included accommodations at an upscale casino resort.

Eleven historical sites were described; respondents were asked if they would be very likely, likely or unlikely to visit each. The sequence of sites respondents would very likely visit was: Cherokee Heritage Center, Scenic Byways, Artist Alley, Downtown Tahlequah, Saline Courthouse, Hildebrand-Beck Mill, Cherokee Nation Capital, Cemeteries, Cherokee National Supreme Court Building, Cherokee National Prison, Dawes Commission Building. There are at least thirty history sites CNTC has identified but these properties validate the personal observations of staff as to the properties with the greatest visitor interest. Also those properties that visitors had a greater interest are also those sites where there is a lower capital investment. Also for each property respondents listed their priorities for activities. That information is helpful in designing each property for appeal to the public.

The responses give guidance to staff and planners and provide with the value matrix, a marketing and investment analysis helpful to determine whether or not to invest in a project or site, the priority of investment and the amount of investment.

### Development Plan

A preliminary development plan by phases was prepared for the securing, repair, renovation, interpretation and maintenance of historic properties according to their market attractiveness and value. The phase plan is attached as Exhibit \_\_\_\_ . CNCT is advancing a multi-year phasing for renovation, repair and interpretation of various historic properties. Historic validation of the property is researched as a first step to determine what and how it helps tell the Cherokee story. Several clusters of historic properties are noted. The first and largest is located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, the Capital of the Cherokee Nation since 1839. In



Tahlequah there are structural sound historic properties including the Female Seminary, the Capitol Building, the Supreme Court Building, the National Jail, the Town Branch and downtown Tahlequah with a main street corridor to Northeastern State University. Four miles away is the Civil War era Murrell home, the Cherokee Heritage Center and Ross and other historic cemeteries. This cluster is the lowest cost to develop and has the great preference for tourists. Within the Tahlequah cluster, various historic properties are ranked for renovation, acquisition, interpretation and marketing. Other clusters include smaller groupings of historic properties such as in Sequoyah County in which Sequoyah's home and Tahlonteskee Court house is located, Rogers County in which the Will Rogers Memorial is located and Delaware County in which the Beck Mill, WPA structures and WWII prisoner of war camps are located.

These cluster sites and individual historic properties are also highlighted by a new construction art, architecture and theme plan. The Cherokee Nation has had new or major renovation construction in nine communities with casino, health and tribal building expansions. There will be in the next several years or has been since 2004 over \$350 million in construction. The Cherokee Nation enacted a law which requires the Cherokee Nation to spend 1% of the construction expenditures on art. Every community or town is designated a historic time period between 1750 and present day. The architecture, art and motifs of the building must reflect that designated time period. The purpose of the historic time designation is to provide a history of the Cherokee Nation at each site and to create a cultural tour to look at new construction architecture and art. This master plan to designate historic periods for construction of tribal buildings supports and enhances the cultural importance of historic properties. It was a design choice driven by the overall strategy of the Cherokee Nation to revitalize its language, culture, and history.

As of January 2008, CNCT, with guidance of consultants, has published a Strategic Concept Plan which offers a refinement and restating of principles that will direct all cultural planning development and implementation. Those principles are:

1. Cultural tourism will provide opportunities for members of the Cherokee community and visitors to experience and understand the Cherokee community's heritage and culture first hand thereby influencing public opinion.
2. The relationship between heritage places (the resources) and cultural tourism is dynamic and may involve conflicting values. All resources and infrastructure associated with the program should be developed and managed to be sustainable.
3. Members of the Cherokee Nation and partners in the broader community should be involved in planning for cultural and historic preservation and tourism, as appropriate.
4. Cultural tourism and preservation activities will further the economic self sufficiency of the Cherokee Nation and provide employment for its members.
5. Cultural tourism and preservation activities should benefit the Cherokee Nation community socially and culturally.
6. Cultural tourism and preservation activities will ensure that the visitor experience is worthwhile, satisfying and enjoyable.
7. The cultural tourism program will serve a wide range of visitors i.e. different ages, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds.
8. Interpretation of places and resources will be anchored in factual historical information, stories, and products.
9. Interpretation will reflect a range of interpretive methods (e.g., personal and non-personal; structured and unstructured; active and passive, guided and self-guided).
10. Cultural tourism programs will foster visitor orientation, safety, and site connectivity.

This series of principles are consistent with principles developed by stakeholders in drafting the initial Cultural Tourism Plan. A development plan has not been approved by the Board of Directors as of date and is a staff recommendation.

### Cultural Tourism Products

CNCT will not run all the tours or provide all the products and information but it will coordinate private parties, its investment and the Cherokee Nation assets to provide a total cultural experience.

### Branding and Brand Recognition

CNCT is charged with the development and the governance of the cultural tourism initiative. Part of the charge to develop a brand for Cherokee tourism based upon historic, cultural, and language authenticity. In 2000 US Census, 750,000 people proclaimed themselves as having Cherokee heritage. There is a tremendous ambiance, name recognition, identification, and romance with Cherokee Indians, those claiming Cherokee heritage and the Cherokee Nation. For example, Chrysler Jeep named a vehicle “Cherokee” forty years ago and Target stores named their in-house clothing brand “Cherokee.” Rather than commercially exploit the name recognition of Cherokee, CNTC will use Cherokee name recognition as a foundation and an entry to a larger market to provide a culturally enriching and historic educational experience. The CNTC brand will link businesses such as restaurants, hotel, gaming, crafts, and the art industry together as an overall enriching experience. The brand of this cultural experience may be anchored by CNCT staff developing curriculum and providing training to all employees of the CNCT, its partners and relation operations on Cherokee history, cultural authenticity and the Cherokee legacy as the Cherokee story.

### Tour and Travel Brand and Certification

To package this marketing effort, a brand and certification will be used to identify member restaurants, stores, and attractions who have achieved a level of historic authenticity and quality of product. This certification is similar to a “Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval” or “Good

Sam's" trademark and will provide the Cherokee Nation a way to advertise and market this cultural experience, provide the governance of private parties, and set the standards for both the Cherokee Nation and private parties in delivering the cultural experience. The protection of this brand will come through copyright enforcement. The certification insures that each member and their staff including restaurants, arts and crafts stores, studios, cultural events, and cultural properties will go through requisite training in language, history, customer service and knowledge of other cultural properties, events, and personnel. The certification will be offered to artists, museums, hotels, restaurants, event planners, outdoor and recreational business, gaming operations, small business with significant tourism.

#### Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism Partners

The CNCT Partners (Partners) will be a trade organization, a branding franchise and association of certification recipients run by CNCT. Partners is designed to involve the community and private sector in the CNCT plan, assure cultural, historic and linguistic authenticity of the partner tourism product or service, and protect and enhance the CNCT brand for the Cherokee Nation and its partners. The objective is to work together with local businesses in the promotion of Cherokee Tourism through various courses and certifications to increase the positive experience of the tourists. CNCT intends to draw Cherokee citizens to become key players in the effort in order to offer an enriched cultural experience.

There will be a fee for being certified by CNCT Partners. The benefits of the certification include:

- Certification classes to assist with enhancement of a guest's cultural experience,
- Strategic partnering to offer guaranteed business through the bookings of CNCT such as purchasing a number of stays at a beginning bed and breakfast,

- Higher return on advertising by the Partner because the CNCT certification provides the public with a favorable expectation of experience and quality,
- CNCT adds the Partner's business to the overall marketing strategy
- The CNCT brand and certification increases partner's profitability and market stability.

It is anticipated that the CNCT Partner will be required to do the following for certification:

- Complete the Cherokee history course to better equip the Partner for tourists expectation of a memorable cultural experience
- Complete a language orientation course to achieve an understanding of the Cherokee language to enrich the experience of travelers
- Complete CNCT customer service training and business development course
- Require industry specific standards, i.e. Hotel/Housekeeping standards, Restaurant quality standards, and others that may apply
- Pass annual performance standards, certification will be renewed periodically

CNCT will work cooperatively with Partners to maintain an authentic Cherokee Cultural Tourism program, including adequate representation of regional tourism planning. CNCT will educate the domestic and international travel trade about Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism and its attractions to raise awareness of CNCT as a premier tourist destination and increase the amount and quality of CNCT tourism products featured in travel programs. CNCT will pursue a range of cooperative marketing activities with airlines, rental car agencies, local businesses, and tour bus groups and produce cooperative, integrated tactical marketing campaigns which promote the Cherokee Nation and regional attractions and resorts.

#### Website

CNCT created an interactive website to enable the consumer to arrange reservations and take a guided tour of experiences available. See [www.cherokee.org](http://www.cherokee.org)

#### Tourism Packages

Cherokee Nation Cultural Tours packages will be available to a variety of market segments as the cultural tourism plan is implemented. These tour packages will be built around properties and events. Customers will have the option to custom design the experience.

Examples are:

- Cherokee Traveler Pass, stay in the luxurious Casino Resort in Catoosa with on site gaming and restaurants, explore the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah, learn to craft and create their own authentic Cherokee pottery, choose from a variety of world class museums such as Gilcrease, Will Rogers Memorial, or Philbrook, visit a selection of Historic Cherokee sites as a tour guide tells the stories behind the history, and take a day to hunt small game and fish the way the Cherokee ancestors did along the riverbanks of the Illinois.

- 4-day/3-night stay at a secluded Bed & Breakfast lodge located just northeast of Tahlequah in the beautiful foothills of the Ozarks. Take pleasure in a variety of activities the whole family can enjoy.

- Guided hunts using traditional Cherokee weapons such as the bow and arrow and blowguns.

- Rappel down the bluffs of the Illinois River.

- Horseback rides while eagles fly above on trails along the scenic Illinois River.

- Take the whole family or just a few friends rafting or canoeing on 3 to 12 mile excursions.

- Enjoy campfire snacks as a guide tells stories and legends of the Cherokee People.

- Fish in the cold streams of the Illinois River.

- Enjoy a 3-day 2-night stay at the Cherokee Inn in Tahlequah and experience the rich history of the Cherokee Nation.

Guided tours with stories of the Cherokee Nation in between stops, which include:

- Cherokee Heritage Center

- Cherokee Courthouse (First Courthouse West of the Mississippi)

- Original Dawes Commission Office

- Ross School

- Murrell Home/Park

- Sequoyah's Home

- Ross Cemetery

- NSU Seminary Hall–First School of Higher Education in Oklahoma
- Tour Tahlequah
- National Tour of Cherokee historical buildings
- Create Your Own Cherokee Craft
- Group Guided Tours
- Personal Guided Tour
- Fine Dining at the Echota House
- Buffet at Restaurant of the Cherokees
- Theater Drama at Amphitheater
- Tour of Cherokee Historic Sites in Tahlequah

CNCT can coordinate a package blend to appeal to a variety of markets. Included in the packages will be a mix of historic sites, nature experiences, events, and hospitality venues.

Customers will have the ability to choose their experience.

Potential joint venture packages include:

- Jenks Aquarium
- Philbrook Museum of Art
- Bank of Oklahoma Arena
- Bass Pro Shop
- Tulsa Zoo
- Gilcrease Museum
- Philbrook Museum

The packaging of tours is not different than other tourism venues but the uniqueness of the Cherokee Nation is the mix between cultural, history, gaming and amenities. CNCT will offer



many tourism packages to fit the desires of guests. Because there is a multitude of excursions potentially available, CNCT will initially start in Tahlequah and subsequently expand parts to the Cherokee Nation.

#### Government and Private Partnerships

For business success, CNCT must also provide advocacy and design for other kinds of income or value contribution. CNCT with the Cherokee Nation, local government, and state government will develop proposals and advocate for tourism taxes that contributed to the cultural tourism effort at local or state levels. Various state, federal and private foundation grants may be available for capital or operational costs which reduces the investment by CNCT and makes the desired financial return easier to achieve.

#### Small Business Development

CNCT and the Cherokee Nation will advocate for subsidies to various businesses in their development from federal, state, and private foundation grants. Other kinds of subsidies may include guaranteed nights stay for “mom and pop” bed and breakfasts and guaranteed maximum rent for artist’s studios in their first year of operation. CNCT in cooperation with the Cherokee Nation’s Small Business Center will assist Cherokee citizens develop cultural tourism cottage businesses such as a Cherokee products, arts and craft, excursion or historic site development work

#### Cultural Authenticity

A challenge with cultural tourism in Indian country has been the balance between commercial viability and authenticity. The Cherokee Nation’s cultural tourism plan is based on its historical record, buildings and institutions. The tourism plan is not be based on natural resources even though it will accent and supplement it historic and heritage tourism. The

foundation of historic buildings including the Cherokee National Capitol Building, Supreme Court, Penitentiary, Female Seminary and other buildings will provide a physical base insisting on accurate presentation thereby encouraging authenticity. To insure cultural authenticity, CNE has established a Cultural Committee composed of a number well-recognized Cherokee historians, culturalists and community leaders. The Committee must approve all branding, construction motifs, art, imagery and cultural content. All of CNE's gaming construction is subject to review by this Committee for cultural themes, consistency and authenticity. The Committee will also review all CNCT cultural development, themes and content. Also the Cherokee Nation provides a forty hour Cherokee history course to employees and the general public. All the staff of CNCT will be required to complete the Cherokee history class, beginning Cherokee language class and story telling class.

### *Conclusion*

Cherokees as a people and a Nation have been resilient, effective, and competitive in all aspects of their organizations and institutions over time. Exercising Ga-Du-Gi has shown to be powerful and effective for the Cherokee Nation, its people and their neighbors. The Cherokee Nation has demonstrated success and growth in multiple areas and cultural tourism is an opportunity to begin to achieve a vision of being a happy and healthy people by developing jobs, creating incentives to revitalize Cherokee language and culture and bring communities of interest and place together. Through the efforts of CNCT, this idea should become a reality. Given the success that CNE has achieved in gaming, cultural tourism will have its best chance to thrive and become a solid investment in the Nation's future, economic, people and identity. It appears that cultural tourism based on historic and heritage tourism is feasible because the Cherokee Nation has each of the ingredients for success.

This case study examined the process of developing a strategic comprehensive cultural tourism plan designed to accomplish long term goals for economic self-reliance, revitalization of Cherokee language and culture and developing cohesion in Cherokee communities. After the plan is implemented and sufficient time has passed to judge the success of this initiative, performance research should be done to actual determine if the goal were met and what learning was gained from the experience.

Cultural tourism is the opportunity for the Cherokee Nation to tell its story. It is a powerful story of a legacy over scores of episodes demonstrating they face adversity, survive, adapt, prosper and excel.

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List of Exhibits Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism

- Exhibit “1”    Cover Sheet- Photographs of Sequoyah and Will Rogers
- Exhibit “2”    List of properties that will be available to tell the Cherokee story  
Culture and Tourism Work Plan- 106 Group Ltd. January 11, 2008,
- Exhibit “3”    Events in Fourteen County Jurisdiction of Cherokee Nation- Cultural  
Development Summary Draft, Feb. 8, 2007
- Exhibit “4”    List of All Properties-- Cultural Development Summary Draft, Feb. 8, 2007
- Exhibit “5”    Tourist/Visitor Site and Activity Preferences Project- 106 Group Ltd. March  
2008
- Exhibit “6”    Map of Cherokee Nation- Cherokee Nation GeoData Department, May,

Exhibit '2' List of properties that will be available to tell the Cherokee story:

#### Historic Sites

- Gilcrease Museum
- Will Rogers Birthplace
- Woolaroc
- Matoaka Cemetery
- First Rail Road in Cherokee Nation
- Original Iron Boundary Post
- Historic Saline Courthouse
- Beck's Mill
- Delaware Court Museum
- Bull Hollow
- Oaks Mission School
- Ross School
- Baptist Mission
- Camp Egan
- Murrell Home-Park
- Flint Courthouse
- Burnt Cabin Ridge State Park
- Dwight Mission
- Sequoyah's Home Place
- Battle of Honey Springs State Park
- Ft. Gibson Stockade
- Montford Stokes Memorial
- Tahlonteskee  
Ross Cemetery  
Cherokee National Cemetery

#### Downtown Tahlequah

- Cherokee National Capitol
- Cherokee National Supreme Court
- Cherokee National Jail
- Cherokee Nation Female Seminary
- Sequoyah's home place.

#### Hospitality Venues

- Cherokee Casino
- Catoosa (Resort)
- Roland
- West Siloam
- Ft. Gibson
- Tahlequah
- Sallisaw
- Will Rogers Downs Racino
- Hotel/Motel

- Catoosa
- Roland
- West Siloam
- Restaurants
- All Casino Locations
- Golf Courses
- Catoosa
- Tahlequah

#### Cherokee Arts & Crafts

- Cherokee Heritage Center Art Exhibits and Shows
- Cherokee Heritage Center Crafts Classes
- Cherokee Heritage Center Gift Shop
- Cherokee Owned Gift Shops
- Cherokee Community Arts/Crafts Shows & Sales
- Cherokee Artist & Artisans (individual galleries/shows/sales)
- Cherokee Bow & Stonepoint Makers (Associations)
- Kenwood Arts & Crafts Show

#### Cherokee Culture

- Cherokee Heritage Museum
- Cherokee Old Town
- Cherokee Ancient Village
- Cherokee Genealogy
- Cherokee Amphitheater
- Will Rogers Museum
- Willard Stone Museum

#### Cherokee Activities

- Cherokee Educational Systems
- Cherokee History Courses
- Cherokee Language Course
- Cherokee Foods (Kanuchi Festival/Hog Frys)
- Cherokee Agricultural Tours
- Cherokee Music/Dance
- Cherokee Games/Sports
- Cherokee Story Telling/Oral History
- Cherokee Traditions
- Cherokee Cultural Grounds
- Cherokee Families/Communities
- Cherokee Government
- Cherokee Newspaper: Cherokee Phoenix
- Cherokee Nation Today (Tourism Magazine)
- Cherokee Nation Website

## Cherokee Events

- Cherokee National Holiday (All Events)
- Strawberry Festival
- Cherokee International Film Festival
- Cherokee Sports
- Cherokee Baptists/Methodists Camps
- Cherokee Gospel Singings
- Cherokee Fiddlers Association
- Cherokee Community Events in all 9 Districts

Jay Giggling Festival

Jay Huckleberry Festival

## Cherokee Historical Tours/Sites

- Historical Cherokee Government Buildings
- Historic Downtown Tahlequah Capital
- Historic Cherokee National Prison
- Historic Supreme Court Building
- Camp Gruber
- Historical Cherokee Schools
- Cherokee National Female Seminary
- Northeastern State University
- Cherokee National Male Seminary
- Sequoyah Home place
- Historical Cherokee Cemeteries
- Historical Cherokee Towns/Communities
- Historical Cherokee Routes
- The Nancy Ward Tour
- Trail of Tears Routes

## Cherokee Outdoor Adventures

- Hiking
- Camping
- Horseback Riding
- Swimming
- Float/Canoe Trips
- Boating
- Water Skiing
- Fishing
- Frog & Crawdad Giggling
- Hunting (Deer & Fowl)
- Compound Bow, Rifle, Other
- Botanical
- Bird/Animal Watching

## Cherokee Nation Government/Properties/Buildings Tour

- Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branch
- Housing Authority
- Medical Clinics
- Hospitals
- Game Preserve
- Natural Grass Preserves
- Cherokee Nation Government/Land/Properties/Buildings
- Cherokee Nation Schools-Sequoyah/Job Corp.
- Arkansas Riverbed & Dry Beds
- Kerr Lake Peninsula Park and Landing
- Veterans Memorial

## Exhibit “5”

Tourist/Visitor Site and Activity Preferences Project  
April 2008

## Purpose:

This research project places 11 Cultural Tourism options located within the Cherokee Nation in a hierarchy of priority for refurbishment, development, and/or acquisition.

Additionally, it provides insights into the activities and historical exhibit expectations and preferences of guests stating a high level of intent to visit these sites.

Methodology:

This project was conducted over the weekend of Friday, April 4 thru Sunday, April 6, 2008.

The survey was fielded via the internet and was produced and programmed in-house through CNE Marketing Research.

Sample was supplied by Esearch online panel and was previously used in the July, 2007 Cultural Tourism Study.

1,149 Esearch panel members responded to the survey invitation and 641 qualified to participate in the study.

Travel Intent:

Likelihood of visiting a Native American cultural event or historical site within the next 12 months

Will not	5%
Probably will not	35%
<i>Will</i>	45%
<i>Definitely will</i>	15%

*Sixty percent represents the 641 respondents qualified to complete the survey and reflects all analysis going forward*

Travel Intent (con't.)

Number of Native American cultural events or sites planned on visiting within the next 12 months

1 – 2	62%
3 – 4	26%
5 – 6	8%

7 plus	4%
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Furthest distance traveled to a Native American cultural event of historic site

<= 50 miles	7%
51 – 100 miles	14%
101 – 200 miles	13%
201 – 400 miles	17%
401 – 600 miles	15%
601 – 800 miles	9%
801 – 1,000 miles	8%
1,000 plus miles	17%

*Importance of access to gaming while on a vacation or trip*

<i>Very Unimportant</i>	23%
<i>Unimportant</i>	15%
<i>Neutral</i>	35%
<i>Important</i>	19%
<i>Very Important</i>	8%

*If free motor coach transportation to and from Cherokee Casino Resort were provided to the sites how would it affect your likelihood of visiting?*

<i>Very Unlikely/Unlikely</i>	16%
<i>Undecided</i>	25%
<i>Likely</i>	37%
<i>Very Likely</i>	22%

*Does a travel package to these historical Cherokee sites, that includes accommodations at an upscale casino resort, increase your likelihood to visit NE Oklahoma and the Cherokee Nations?*

<i>Very Unlikely</i>	9%
<i>Unlikely</i>	10%
<i>Undecided</i>	28%
<i>Likely</i>	37%
<i>Very Likely</i>	17%



Likelihood of Visiting a Historical Site

**Descending order of Very Likely to Visit**

<b><u>Attraction</u></b>	<b><u>Very Likely</u></b>	<b><u>Likely</u></b>	<b><u>Unlikely</u></b>
<b>Cherokee Heritage Center</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Scenic Byways</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Artist Ally</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Downtown Tahlequah</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Saline Courthouse</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Hildebrand-Beck Mill</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Cherokee National Capital</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Cemeteries</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Cherokee National Supreme Court Building</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Cherokee National Prison</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Dawes Commission Building</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>51%</b>

### Likelihood of Visiting a Historical Site

#### Ascending order of Unlikely to Visit

<u>Attraction</u>	<u>Very Likely</u>	<u>Likely</u>	<u>Unlikely</u>
<b>Cherokee Heritage Center</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Scenic Byways</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Cherokee National Capital</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Saline Courthouse</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Artist Ally</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Cherokee National Supreme Court Building</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Downtown Tahlequah</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Hildebrand-Beck Mill</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Cemeteries</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Cherokee National Prison</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Dawes Commission Building</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>51%</b>

### Preferences by Site

#### Cherokee Heritage Center

1. Ancient Cherokee Village
2. Museum and art gallery
3. Jewelry making classes
4. Pottery making classes
5. Flute making
6. Basket-weaving classes

#### Scenic Byways

1. Trail of Tears final stop before disbandment
2. Museums
3. Tribal sites
4. Scenic natural resources including bike trails
5. Hands on activities
6. Historic buildings within the 14 county jurisdictional boundaries
7. RV facilities
8. Fishing sites, boating/water skiing
9. Exhibits
10. Wildlife habitats
11. Camp ground
12. Interpretive centers
13. Lakes
14. Rafting/canoeing
15. Rivers/streams
16. Ponds

#### Downtown Tahlequah

1. Historical museums
2. An authentic and restored town square
3. Historical walking trails
4. Cultural entertainment
5. Downtown guided tour
6. Outdoor recreation
7. Art shops
8. Retail shops
9. Downtown audio tour

#### Artist Alley

1. Hands on activities
2. Special art exhibits
3. Art-work on display
4. Artist demonstrations
5. Jewelry
6. Sales of artwork
7. Special art exhibits
8. Paintings
9. Pottery
10. Painting
11. Basket-weaving
12. Baskets

#### Saline Courthouse

1. Read markers that tell stories of the Cherokee lifestyle and history
2. Nature hikes
3. Study native plants and grasses and the simple beauty of life from the Cherokee prospective
4. Camping at the historical site
5. Outdoor classes

#### Hildebrand-Beck Mill

1. Archeological digs
2. Nature trail
3. Working mill
4. Camping/cookouts
5. Storytelling
6. Horseback riding
7. Fishing
8. Graves
9. Hiking
10. Remains
11. An equestrian facility

#### Cherokee National Capital

1. Meet and greet with past chiefs of the Cherokee Nation
2. Trail of Tears exhibits
3. Exhibits on the Cherokee Peoples from the early 15th century forward
4. Historical items and artifacts on all the Chief's of the Cherokee Nation

#### Cemeteries

1. Graves of past Chiefs of the Cherokee Nation
2. Graves of those Cherokees having survived the Trail of Tears
3. Famous Oklahoma outlaws
4. American Civil War cemeteries
5. Graves of missionaries to the Cherokee People

#### Cherokee National Supreme Court Building

1. Authentic Native American artifacts
2. Cherokee Phoenix Museum
3. History of the building
4. Trials that had taken place
5. Complimentary newspaper hot off the press

6. Hands on experience utilizing the printing press
7. Interactive reenactment of utilizing the printing press
8. Authentic printing press

#### Cherokee National Prison

1. Exhibits and artifacts
2. Interpretive center on the prison grounds and its prisoners
3. Reconstructed gallows

#### Dawes Commission Building

1. Original artifacts & exhibits that are still with the building
2. Original furniture
3. Original land allotment plot maps
4. Original land applications

#### Demographics

##### Gender

- Male 46%
- Female 54%

##### Country of Origin

- USA 87%
- Canada 13%

##### Age

- 21 – 35 27%
- 36 – 45 25%
- 46 – 55 24%
- 56 – 65 23%

##### Vacations With

- Family 46%
- Friends 14%
- W/spouse or partner only 32%
- Travel Group 2%
- Self only 7%

##### Furthest distance traveled to a Native American cultural event or historic site:

- <51 miles 7%
- 51 – 200 miles 27%
- 201 – 600 miles 32%
- 601 – 1,000 miles 17%
- >1,000 miles 17%

Household Income

- <\$25k 9%
- \$25k - \$40k 19%
- >\$40k - \$60k 27%
- >\$60k - \$80k 20%
- >\$80k 22%

Marital Status

- Single 20%
- Single w/children 6%
- Married 43%
- Married w/children 4/11/2008 19%
- Committed relationship 12%