Logic Model

Logic models are a way to think about the assumptions inherent in the activities of a heritage tourism initiative. A logic model is very useful in evaluation since it helps determine not only whether a planned activity produced the expected outcomes, but also why or why not. In other words, there are often assumptions about how initiative outputs (i.e., activities) lead to specific outcomes in heritage tourism. A logic model requires heritage tourism planners and evaluators to consider and state those inherent assumptions. Then it is possible to study if those assumptions are valid.

There are five components in a logic model, which are listed below. These components are described in more detail in a number of works describing the logic model approach including from Kellogg Foundation (2004) and University of Wisconsin Extension (2008):

- Inputs
- Outputs
- Outcomes
- Assumptions
- External Factors

The relationships between these 5 factors are also shown in the schematic chart on the following page

**Inputs** are the resources used in the logic model. These are the volunteers, workers, leaders, materials, funding, etc. that can be used to create a particular heritage tourism activity.

**Outputs** are the heritage tourism events or activities themselves. These are festivals, special exhibits, performances, reenactments, tours, marketing plans, etc. that are planned in order to enhance heritage tourism in a community. Obviously the specific package of events and activities carried out as part of a heritage tourism initiative is chosen by each community.

**Outcomes** are the heritage tourism impacts we expect will occur due to the outputs. These outcomes could include additional heritage visitors, longer stays by visitors, or more community recognition of heritage tourism activities, to provide several examples.

**Assumptions** are the underlying expectations held that explain why the outputs of the initiatives will lead to the outcomes which are anticipated. Take for example an output of a marketing campaign for heritage tourism in a particular community that is expected to increase the number of heritage tourists. This expectation is based on a variety of assumptions. One assumption is that the community has (or plans for) heritage sites and events that heritage enthusiasts would
find very interesting. The marketing campaign is needed to make them aware (or remind) them about those heritage sites. Another assumption is that the marketing campaign will be directed to the outlets (magazines or websites, for example) where heritage enthusiasts would be most likely to find them. These assumptions can be reviewed as part of the evaluation process.

**External Factors** are outside characteristics that also can influence whether outputs lead to the desired outcomes. External factors are outside of the control of heritage planners but may still influence their efforts. For example, residents of the community working to build their heritage tourism industry may be insular, and be indifferent or negative towards outside visitors. Another example pertains to the case of the heritage tourism marketing plan discussed earlier. Even if the assumptions behind the marketing plan are correct, the external factor of high gas prices may still cause the marketing plan to be ineffective. If gas prices spike during a particular summer, it will be difficult to attract visitors on long day-trips or overnight trips. The evaluation can also consider what sort of external factors are present or may have changed that have influenced whether the outputs of the heritage tourism initiative created the expected outcomes.

**Chart 1: Schematic of a Logic Model**

The evaluation team must develop a logic model for each of the planned activities (outcomes as these are called in the logic model) of the heritage tourism initiative. This should be done at the beginning of the initiative when activities are being chosen and planned. Logic models should be developed at the beginning of the process because it will help the evaluation team decide what types of data need to be gathered during in the time that follows. Development of logic models also may help with the planning process itself. Plans and strategies for a heritage tourism initiative may change as planners become better aware of the underlying assumptions and key external factors associated with each event or activity. The discipline of development a logic model can help in this regard.