

# Are You Visitor Ready?

10 Tips for Hosting Visitors and Providing Valued Service

July 29, 2020



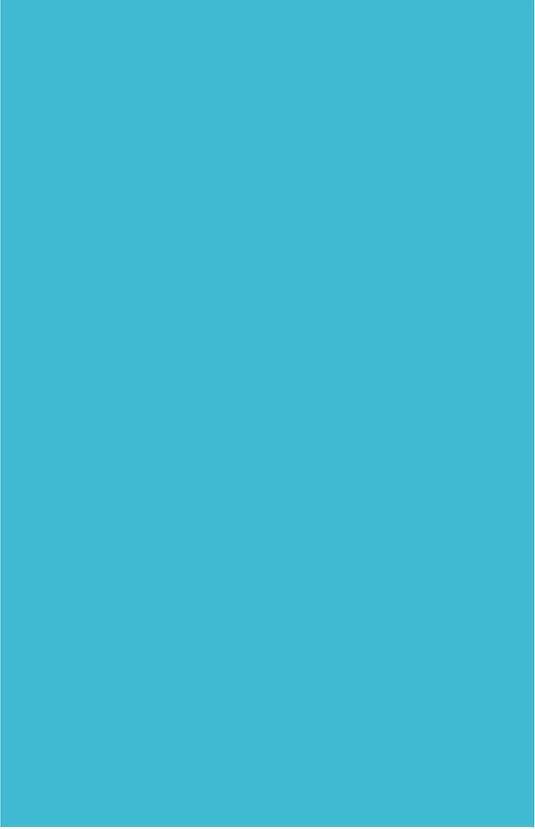
# Definition: Heritage Tourism

## **National Trust for Historic Preservation:**

Traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.

## **Inclusive Definition:**

It includes Historic, Cultural, Natural and Intangible Resources unique and distinctive to the destination.



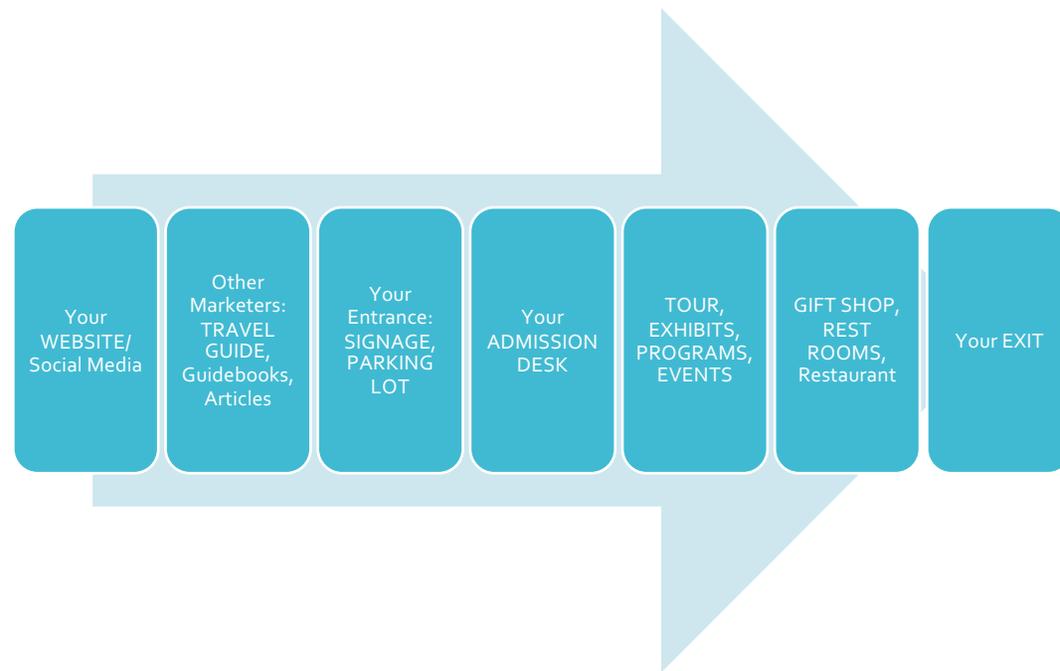
# Visitor Readiness

The Foundation for Quality Experiences and  
Excellent Customer Service



# The Customer Journey Map

Look at every touchpoint or experience where visitors interact with your site (either directly or indirectly) – from start to finish



# Visitor Readiness: Cover the On-site Basics

## Operations

- Open to the public?
- Regularly scheduled hours/days of operation posted?
- Open seasonally or year-round?
- Open on the weekend?

## Access

- Sufficient and attractive signage?
- ADA Compliant?
- Parking?
- Restrooms?

## Safety

- Necessary interior and exterior lighting?
- Emergency assistance?
- Crisis Communications Plan?

# Visitor Readiness: Offer the Experience

## Programs

- Schedule is convenient for visitors?
- Various delivery methods: self-guided, guided, QR/ App for more information?

## Exhibits

- Quality displays?
- Interactive and immersive (post COVID)?
- Relevant stories to engage all audiences

## Events

- Special activities for all ages?
- Tied to themes, people, commemorative dates?

## VISITOR READINESS CRITERIA

Local Asset	Visitor Ready	Almost Ready	Not Ready
Historic Sites	a) Open a minimum of three days a week including one weekend day	a) Seasonal or more limited but regular hours/days of operation	a) Do not have regular operating hours or only open by appointment.
	b) Staffed	b) Staffed by volunteers	b) Self-guided
	c) Programming, guided tours scheduled at least once a month	c) Limited programming or events	c) No programming or events
	d) Information available on site for visitors (exhibits, brochures, interpretive signs)	d) Limited on-site information	d) No on-site information available for visitors
	e) Visible signage, lighting and well marked entrance/access	e) Limited signage, lighting and access	e) No signage, lighting. Access at personal risk.
	f) ADA Compliant	f) Limited accessibility	f) No accommodation for persons with disabilities
	g) Public parking, restrooms available	g) Facilities and services may be limited	g) Limited or non-existent facilities
	Bonus: Authentic, Unique to destination		

# 10 Ways to Improve Customer Service

Win Favorable Ratings and Recognition for Excellence



## Why is Good Customer Service Important?

As a group, Millennials are willing to spend the most (21% additional!) for great customer service.

- [American Express 2017 Customer Service Barometer](#)

U.S. companies lose more than \$62 billion annually due to poor customer service.

- [Newvoicemedia.com](#)

“The rise of the citizen review site is a sobering development. All of a sudden, the masses are conversing with one another. If your service or product isn’t any good, they’ll out you.”

- *David Pogue, Scientific American*

If you are part of a collection – such as associated with the Revolutionary War 250 – the experience the visitor has at your site will impact whether they decide to visit other historic sites.

# 1. Greet visitors on arrival



## 2. Get to know your Visitor



## The valued HERITAGE Tourist

- Older (49 vs 47)
- More Affluent
- Educated
- Often Married
- Frequent traveler – taking 3.61 leisure trips in the last three years (compared with 3.4 trips for the general leisure traveler)
- Spends more on travel, an average of US\$1,319 per trip vs. US\$820
- More likely to stay in a hotel, motel or B&B
- 46% of total trip expenditures were spent on activities, dining & shopping

Source: Mandala Research LLC, 2013

## Top activities of Heritage Travelers

1. Visiting historic sites (66%)
2. Participating in historical re-enactments (64%)
3. Visiting art museums/galleries (54%)
4. Attending an art/craft fair or festival (45%)
5. Attending a professional dance performance (44%)
6. Visiting state/national parks (41%)
7. Shopping in museum stores (32%)
8. Exploring urban neighborhoods (30%)

Source: Mandala Research 2009



### 3. Use Positive Language

- Make visitors feel welcome, rather than an intruder
- Help visitors understand how to be respectful; they are a guest in someone's home, courteous to other visitors
- Find "user friendly" ways to say "no" if necessary



I, THE CUSTODIAN OF VILLA BORGHESE ON THE PINCIO,  
DECLARE THE FOLLOWING.  
WHOEVER YOU ARE, PROVIDED YOU ARE A FREE MAN,  
DO NOT FEAR THE FETTERS OF THE LAW HERE.  
GO WHEREVER YOU WANT TO, ASK FOR WHATEVER YOU DESIRE,  
LEAVE WHENEVER YOU WISH.  
HERE THINGS ARE PROVIDED MORE FOR THE VISITOR  
THAN FOR THE OWNER  
IN THIS GOLDEN AGE WHEN THE SECURITY OF THE TIMES  
HAS MADE EVERYTHING GOLDEN  
FOR UPRIGHT GUESTS.  
THE OWNER FORBIDS THE IMPOSITION OF RIGID RULES.  
LET PROPER GOODWILL BE THE LAW FOR FRIENDS HERE. HOWEVER,  
IF ANYONE WILLFULLY AND DELIBERATELY, WITH EVIL INTENTIONS,  
BREAKS THE GOLDEN RULES OF CIVILITY,  
LET HIM BEWARE  
LEST THE RATHER IRATE ESTATE MANAGER BREAK  
THE TOKEN OF FRIENDSHIP ON HIM.

## 4. Make Visitors Feel Important



## 5. Practice Empathy, Patience and Consistency



## 6. Listen – and Anticipate Visitor Needs (and Wants)



## 7. Be Attentive (throughout the visitor's journey)

“Don't make the mistake of thinking it is okay to provide inferior service to your clients simply because you are offering a free service.

The reason your organization exists is to serve your clients and a failure to provide adequate customer service is essentially a failure to achieve your mission.”

- Gaebler

## 8. Help Visitors “Connect the Dots”



## 9. Ask Customers for Feedback

A majority of guests will leave online reviews – whether their **experience** was bad or good. **Satisfied customers** are looking for a **memorable experience** and an **energetic service**, where it matters the most, and if they get that, a positive review will be coming your way!

- [Newvoicemedia.com](http://Newvoicemedia.com)

Americans are more likely to post about good experiences (53%) than poor experiences (35%) on social media.

*Takeaway: While people are more likely to tell others about a bad experience than a good one, when it comes to social media specifically, people are more likely to be positive.*

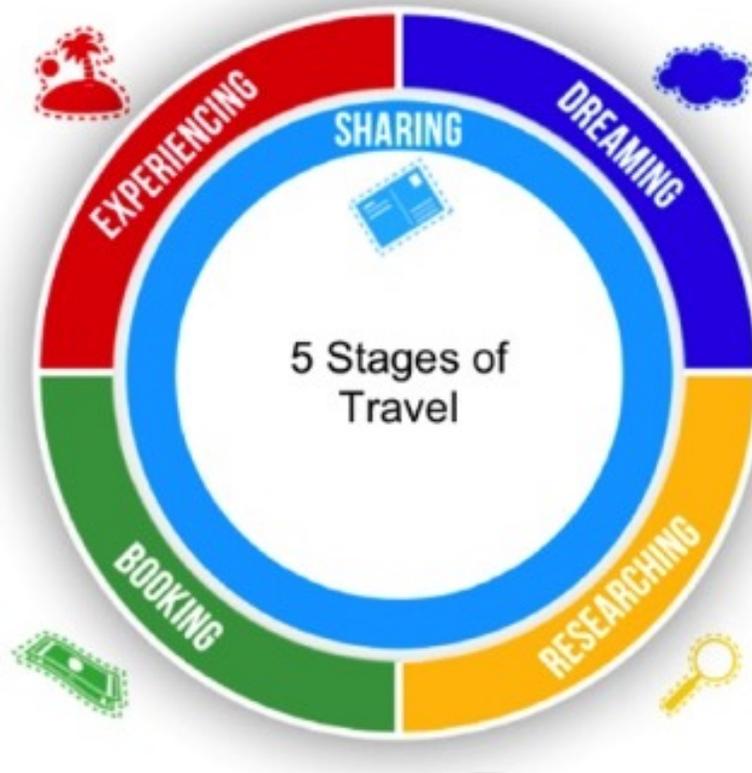
- [American Express 2017 Customer Service Barometer](#)

## 10. Engage Visitors in Future Activities

It is anywhere from 5 to 25 times more expensive to acquire a new customer than it is to keep a current one.

*(Source: Harvard Business Review)*

# Becoming – and Staying – Visitor Centric



Source: Google

## Case Study: East Jersey Old Town Village



Photo credit: Smithsonian Magazine

# Additional Strategies for Readiness

Expand Context, Connectivity, and Perspectives  
Safety & Health Guidelines



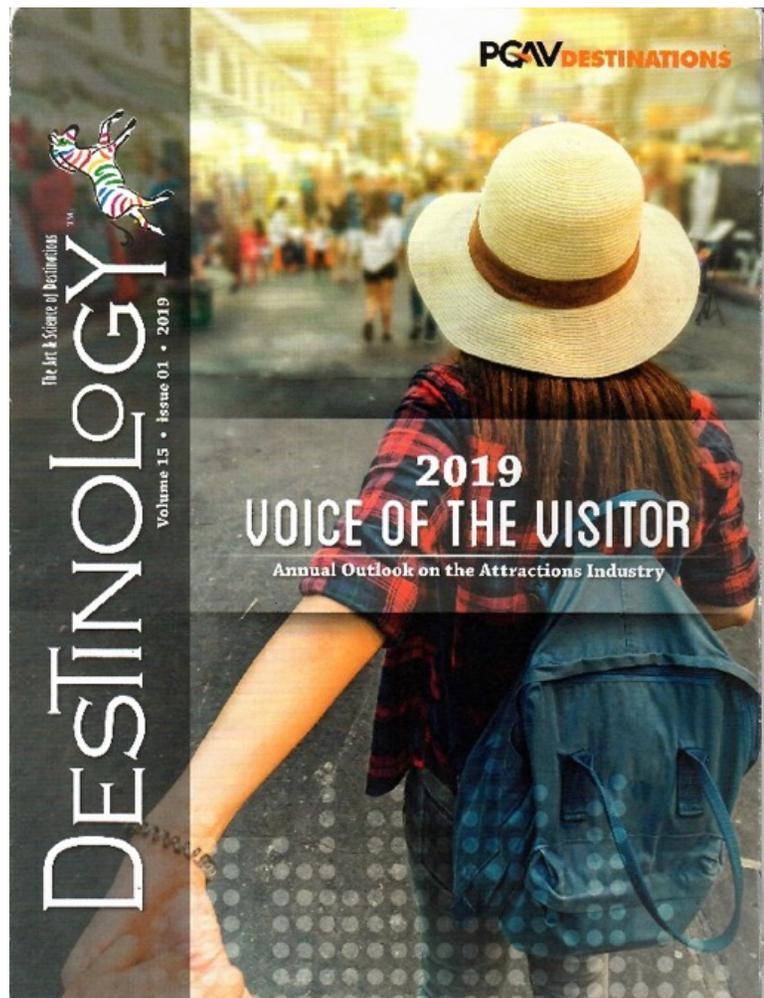
Challenges  
Impacting  
Growth,  
Sustainability of  
Heritage Tourism  
in New Jersey

**Inconsistent Quality:** Days/Hours of Operation, Hospitality Training, Visitor Services, Admission Fees, Policies, Programming

**Exclusion/Revisionist History:** Need for Inclusive, Transitional, Contextual and Relevant Interpretation, Programming

**Need to Document ROI:** Tracking and evaluating impact – of preservation, marketing, motivations, programming, and visitor activities – to grow heritage tourism, increase resource stewardship.

“Historic Landmarks/  
Places:  
Whites visited  
19 percentage  
points more  
than  
minorities.”



# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- Board
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Programs
- Exhibits
- Outreach
- Education
- Marketing

Reference: "The Inclusive Historian's Handbook"

<https://inclusivehistorian.com/>

# Additional Challenges

## Increased Competition

- In November 2018, IMLS reported a total of **30,171 active museums in the United States; 55% are history museums**
- This is down from the 2014 high of 35,144 but still represents a **77% increase in the number of museums over the last 20 years** (Source: IMLS)

## Changing Demographics/ Interests/ Travel

- **Visitors frequenting fewer attractions:** 3.3 different attractions in 2018, down from 3.9 in 2017
- Historic Landmarks and Sightseeing Tours have the highest potential to be **“One-and-Done” experiences**

(Source: PGAV Destinations, “2019 Voice of the Visitor: Annual Outlook on the Attractions Industry” Destinology Volume 15, Issue 1, 2019)

## Impact from COVID-19 pandemic

# COVID-19 Readiness

Implementation during Pandemic and Recovery





Elements of this image furnished by NASA GETTY

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2020/04/27/customer-experience-mindset-in-a-post-covid-19-world-an-infograph/#529636973doe>



# Customer Experience Mindset In The Age Of COVID-19

BLAKEMORGAN  
www.blakemichellemorgan.com

## 1 TRAUMATIZED SOCIETIES

18 percent of people have a family member or friend whose health has been impacted by COVID-19, including 5 percent whose family member or friend died of the disease <sup>\*Agility PR</sup>

### Anxiety and Emotional Impact

22% of people say they are experiencing anxiety from being confined to their house

19% worry about running out of money with 18-24 leading in money worries 32.4% and 65+ lowest 10.3%

## 4 EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS IN THE FUTURE

36% of those working from home, said they would like to continue to work from home after the pandemic is over.

## 2 CONSUMER TRUST

71% say if they perceive that a brand is putting profit over people, they will lose trust in that brand forever <sup>\*Edelman Trust Barometer</sup>

## 3 CONSUMER SPENDING NOW

Shopping online is the new normal and 30% plan to shop more online in the future, even 28.3% of those 65+ say so and 33.8% of 18-24 <sup>\*Prosper Insights & Analytics</sup>

## 5 TECH. SPEEDING UP DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND ROBOT ADOPTION

### Companies That Provide Digital Transformation Doing Well

Organizations that excel at CX are investing in methods to centralize analytics and decision making approaches and scale them exponentially, across all connected channels. CX leaders are investing in customer data platforms (53%) and real-time decision engines (45%). <sup>\*Pega</sup>

### Tech is hiring

Facebook, Amazon, Google, and Apple are all hiring tech jobs including engineers, data scientists, software designers, and cybersecurity experts <sup>\*CareerBuilder</sup>

### Uptake In Robots

13% increase in average utilization of brain powered robots increased since January 2020 in retail locations eg. floor scrubbing robots at Walmart <sup>\*BBC</sup>

## 6 COMPANIES THAT ARE THRIVING AMID COVID-19

Peloton, Netflix, Amazon, Walmart shares are all up

## 7 NEW APPRECIATION FOR NORMAL LIFE

Today, a third of consumers strongly agree with the suggestion that they will reappraise the things they value most and not take certain things for granted. <sup>\*Ernst & Young</sup>

Customer Experience Mindset In The Age of COVID-19 BLAKE MORGAN

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2020/04/27/customer-experience-mindset-in-a-post-covid-19-world-an-infograph/#529636973doe>

# Attracting Visitors during COVID-19 Pandemic and Recovery

- Offer social distancing options
- Reduce touchpoints
- Provide high standard of cleaning; adhere to health and safety guidelines
- Offer on-line learning and virtual tours
- Organize “Coffee and Conversation” with members, community groups
- Use social media to stay connected
- Work with local tourism bureau to promote visitors
- Help residents be a “visitor in their own community”
- Create day trip excursions with nearby sites, attractions

While history or heritage activities may not be the **MOTIVATOR** for the trip, travelers often engage in heritage as part of their visit to a destination.

## Heritage Behaviors of General Leisure Travelers

- Visited heritage buildings/historical buildings (42%)
- Attended cultural/heritage fair, festival (40%)
- Attended historical reenactments (38%)
- Participated in an organized tour of local history or culture (37%)
- Visited living history museums (37%)
- Took a tour focusing on local architecture (34%)
- Researched family history (32%)
- Shopped for items made by local artisans, craftspeople (31%)
- Visited farms and ranches (25%)
- Explored small towns (24%)
- Experienced local or regional cuisine for a unique and memorable experience (23%)
- Self guided walking tour (22%)

Source: Mandala Research LLC, 2013

# New Jersey Activity Participation

## ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

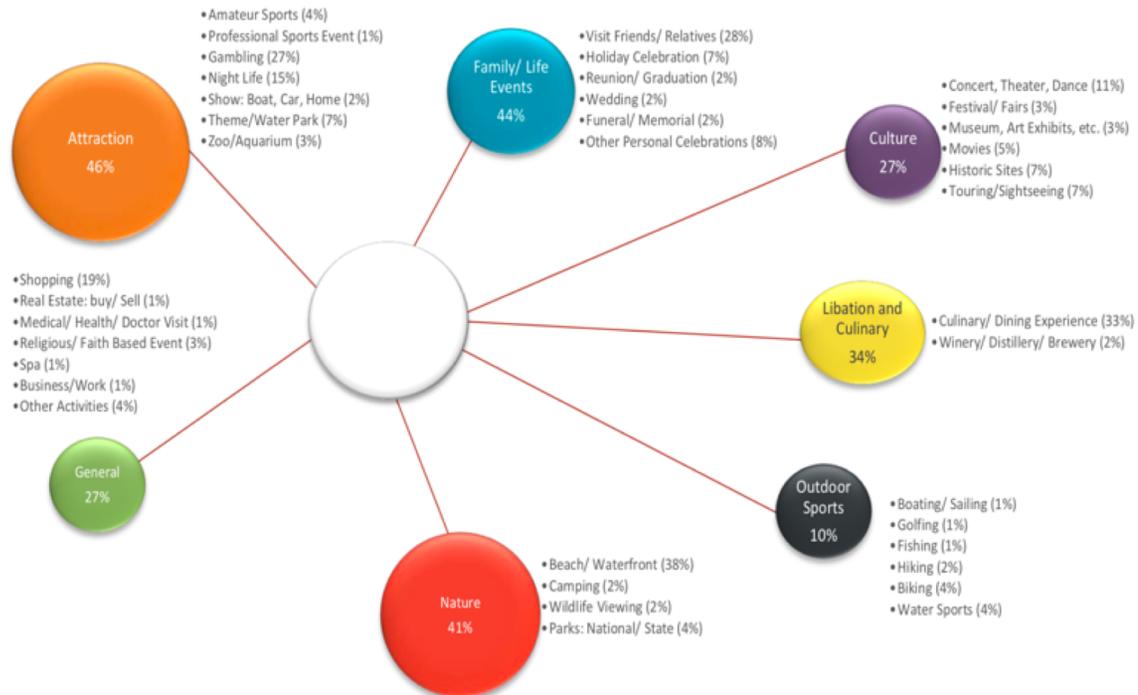
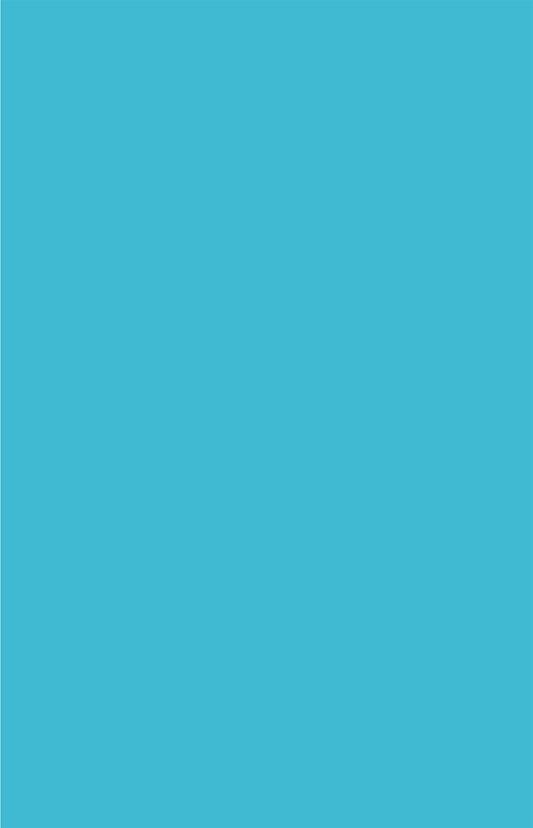


Chart 50 • Segment: 2017 Overnight Leisure Person-Stays (%) • New Jersey n = 964 household count

## Create

- Thematic
- Linear
- Hub & Spoke Itineraries

- Work with nearby attractions and activities (restaurants, B&Bs, parks, pubs, entertainment venues) to create tailored itineraries and overnight packages (when appropriate) as urban getaways
- Link programs and events around themes to attract distinct audiences (Women, Blacks, Immigrants, Kids, etc.)
- Partner with other Rev War sites to create group itineraries with special access or alternative ways to experience sites - at night, via bike, dining, special guest lectures
- Use a soldier, wife, child, Patriot, farmer, enslaved, or other period residents to tell their story of the Rev War. Use this different perspective to help visitors frequent all the sites associated with the storyteller – share their journey.



# Thank You!

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