

The Destination Assessment Program

ROGER BROOKS >
International



About Roger Brooks International

Roger Brooks and his team inspire people to find the special qualities that make their places unique and show them how to implement the possibilities. We've helped more than 1,500 communities around the world and are masters at getting people to work together to achieve success.

Based on decades of grassroots experience, we have learned what works and what doesn't – for attractions, downtowns, resorts, retail shops, and communities. The RBI team includes some of the most creative minds in the business – minds that know how people move, and know what moves people. Best of all, the team specializes in getting people enthused about the possibilities, bringing about positive, lasting change.



Downtown Gowanda, New York

Roger Brooks International

Destination Assessments

Every place, every attraction, and every business has the potential to become an outstanding destination – for residents, businesses, and visitors. To be successful, you need to look at your destination with fresh eyes to see objectively what is appealing and what isn't; what attracts people, and what repels them; what works, and what needs work. You need smart, practical solutions that are affordable and will make a positive difference, bringing you lasting success.

Over the past 30 years Roger Brooks has assessed more than 1,500 communities, regions, scenic byways, national parks and monuments, state and provincial parks, destination resorts, activity centers, guide services, tour operators, and attractions around the world.

We've heard our Destination Assessments called a "Visual SWOT Analysis," but with

solutions. It showcases your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, BUT with ideas to overcome or improve every single item noted during the process.

One of the most frequent comments Roger hears after an Assessment is, "We got more benefit from the assessment than when we spent four times the money and ended up with a study."

By far the most popular program Roger and his team offers, there is no program on the planet that gives a greater return on investment than having Roger and a team member spend multiple days secret shopping your destination.

The following pages showcase how the program works as well as the benefits of having an assessment performed.

Crockett Street
Beaumont, Texas



Why an assessment? What's included?

The assessment process is a thorough review – through the eyes of a first-time visitor – of your assets, activities, and supporting amenities: the product and experiences you provide, the effectiveness of your marketing efforts, your customer service, and your brand.

The multi-day assessment culminates with a photographic workshop, which includes anywhere from 20 to more than 80 things that can be done, typically at low cost, to increase your sales and bring customers back time and again.

Marketing will bring visitors to you once. What brings them back is your product, be it a hotel, attraction, museum, trail system, downtown, or a combination of things. Hence, the workshop usually focuses on product development.

For every shortcoming that is noted, a low-cost solution is provided. After all,

there's not much benefit in calling out challenges without offering solutions.

As one of North America's top-rated speakers within the travel industry, Roger Brooks delivers the workshop with humor, great insights, constructive suggestions, and, best of all, he has your back through the process and presentation.

People leave empowered, energized, and enthusiastic to turn suggestions into recommendations to implement.

The workshop is followed-up with an Assessment Report, providing a visual to-do list to help you work towards your goals.

The assessment program focuses on constructive solutions and points out all the things you are doing right. It's 100% about what can be done, as a team, to be even more successful tomorrow than you are today.



A Street Magician at Work
Cannon Beach, Oregon

How does the assessment process work?

Every assessment is customized to include a city or town, multiple communities, a destination resort, museums, cultural and entertainment attractions, downtowns, hotels, activity providers – basically any business, attraction, jurisdiction, or organization with ties to the travel and tourism industry.

Using a typical community assessment of a town or city as an example, the process works like this:

1. If you have something specific you'd like us to concentrate on, such as branding (finding your unique selling proposition), downtown, or certain activities or challenges, we'll take special care to look at those during the process.
2. For a community, the assessment is a multi-week process. It starts by having two members of the RBI team plan a trip to your area, your community, just as any visitor would. They are trying to find

out: "If the place were a two-hour drive from where you live, would you make a special trip there? If so, why? What closed the sale? What would you do? How long would you stay? If not, why not?"

And, "If you wouldn't make a special trip there, but were driving through the area, would you stop? Why, and what would you do?"

And, "Are the marketing materials helpful for planning? Do they close the sale?"

The "shoppers" look at websites, peer reviews, articles, social media, using various search methods, will often call to request printed materials, guides, and to talk to local expertise about the trip they are planning.

They write up their experience, offering suggestions and ideas for improvement.

3. The on-site portion of the assessment

The Balsams Grand Resort
Dixville Notch, New Hampshire



for a community is a week-long process that follows a format along these lines:

Day 1: Travel to the destination, and once there, looking into what activities are available during the evening hours. Seventy percent of consumer spending now takes place after 6:00 pm, so this is an important element of the assessment process.

Day 2: Roger and team “secret shop” the destination, applying the 60 ingredients (see appendix for the full list) to his review. He typically starts approximately ten miles (16 km) from the destination, gradually narrowing the focus to key spending districts and activities. He takes nearly 200 photographs, video clips, and sometimes drone views along the way. This progression reveals what the area would be like as a place to invest in, a place to relocate or start a business, a place to live, and as a place to visit.

Day 3: The secret shopping continues. We are able to zero in on particular areas of interest to you, visit neighboring or competing places, retrace our steps to make sure we didn’t miss anything, and participate in activities that are promoted and key to your destination.

That evening the photography is processed, creating a library of photos to be used in the Findings & Suggestions Workshop and report.

Day 4: This entire day is spent creating the Findings & Suggestions Workshop. The presentation always starts from scratch and is 100% focused on your destination. We never know how it will play out until we are actually putting it all together. As noted earlier, for every challenge or shortcoming, Roger will showcase, using photographs and real-life examples, how it can be rectified or improved at low cost. Every suggestion is

numbered, making it easy to refer to for implementation.

Day 5: Usually held on Friday morning, the Assessment Findings & Suggestions Workshop is presented. For a community, it can be a public meeting, or for a destination resort or attraction, it may be a presentation to select staff.

Always fun, entertaining and informative, the workshop explains how to become an even stronger destination. Roger will ALWAYS have your back, supporting your efforts and providing ideas and suggestions with the goal of becoming an ever better destination.

We ask that the session be filmed, so that others unable to attend the workshop will be able to view it, and so it can be reviewed later for insights on particular suggestions.



KRISTINE-GRUND

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Roger is available to spend that entire morning with you, your team, the public (if invited) for the workshop and for a “where do we go from here” session immediately following it.

Back at the office: Within 90 days of the assessment, Roger’s team creates an Assessment Findings & Suggestions Report that brings all the suggestions together with photos from the presentation.

Six bound copies of the Findings & Suggestions Report are provided, plus two PDF versions in both high resolution (for printing) and low resolution (for online viewing) are provided.

For single attractions, hotels, and activity-based assessments, the process can take as little as two days. For scenic byways, counties, and larger areas, the on-site assessment process can extend as long as two weeks. This example used a single

community to showcase how the process works.

Having Roger spend multiple days or longer working IN your communities, resorts or attractions allows him to really get to know who you are and what you have to offer, so that he can offer great advice and support for your efforts. You’ll have a great friend and ally – for life!



What's the investment?

The costs vary depending on the size of the assessment, but range between \$8,500 for a single-entity assessment (hotel, B&B, activity provider) to \$40,000 for a multi-community (county-wide) assessment. For a single community using the sample scope of work detailed here – assessing marketing materials and resources, the downtown, local shops and eateries, attractions, museums, lodging facilities, supporting amenities, neighborhoods, and business opportunities – the cost is \$25,000.

The Roger Brooks Destination Assessment is one-of-a-kind. There is no program, anywhere, that can match the value and power of a Roger Brooks assessment.

Utah's Office of Tourism has provided 50% matching grants for communities that have an assessment done, allowing more than two-dozen communities

to take advantage of this excellent tool: finding their unique selling proposition, assisting local businesses take advantage of visitor spending, helping craft more vibrant downtowns, and creating more effective marketing efforts.

Visit RogerBrooksInternational.com/assessment-program, to view a video that also explains the assessment process.

And keep in mind that an assessment can be performed for historical attractions, resorts, lodging facilities, convention centers, attractions, guide services, tour operators, and events, as well as communities.

You will absolutely love the results.



Sixty Key Elements Reviewed in a Community-based assessment

- Vehicular wayfinding
- Pedestrian wayfinding
- Business mix in downtown districts
- Community gateways
- Downtown gateways
- Crosswalks
- Pedestrian accessibility
- Business operating hours
- Customer service (retail)
- Retail signage
- Exterior retail displays
- Sandwich boards
- Temporary/portable signs
- Streetscapes
- Water features
- Public art
- Gathering places (public/private)
- Outdoor dining
- Internet accessibility
- Billboards/outdoor marketing
- Retail beautification
- Critical mass/clustering
- Attractions mix
- Seasonality
- Recreational activities
- Supporting vendors
- Evening activities
- Visitor information availability
- Cross-selling ability
- Diversionary activities
- Primary draw/opportunities
- Historical attractions/museums
- Cultural activities/facilities
- Parking (time limits, availability)
- Pedestrian accessibility
- Parks and public spaces (outdoor)
- Public assembly spaces (indoor)
- Facades and architecture
- Linkages: Activities and amenities
- Supporting services/amenities
- Overall quality (retail, business mix)
- Brands and perceptions
- Curb appeal
- Community maintenance
- Beautification (public access areas)
- Pole banners
- Anchor businesses
- Hidden gems
- Continuity
- Visual cues, first impressions
- Residential neighborhoods
- Entry point impressions
- Access and egress from highways
- Transportation (rail, ferry, public)
- Industrial areas
- Community arts programs
- Safety factors – day, night
- Invitations vs. rejections (retail)
- Use of technology
- Lodging facilities

*"Nothing great was ever
achieved without enthusiasm."*

– Ralph Waldo Emerson



About Roger Brooks

There are very few change-agents on the planet who have motivated more people in more places than Roger Brooks has in the travel industry. Over the past 35 years Roger has helped thousands of people transform ordinary places, businesses, and attractions into incredibly successful destinations.

One of the most recognized and frequently quoted experts in the travel industry, Roger inspires and empowers audiences around the world to achieve their highest aspirations. He is extraordinarily dynamic. He's also very funny, combining humorous video clips and fascinating real-life stories, while providing steps, rules and ingredients – bottom line solutions – that every audience member can implement today to make a positive difference tomorrow.

Roger began his career in the concert

industry providing tour management services for international recording artists including The Eagles, Fleetwood Mac, Chicago, Earth Wind and Fire, and others, culminating in the famous Saturday Night Fever Tour with the Bee Gees.

From there he spent ten years assisting in the development and marketing of acclaimed destination resorts including Whistler Resort in British Columbia; Harbour Town on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina; Sunriver Resort in Central Oregon, and several others.

Roger has since worked with more than 1,500 communities, as well as many states, provinces, national parks, and countries in their branding, product development and marketing efforts.

Beyond the public sector, Roger has worked with trade associations and businesses in the resort, lodging, retail,

and restaurant industries, as well as attractions, tour operators and providers, marketing agencies, and the travel media. He is the go-to expert for anyone with ties to the travel industry or in downtown development where most travel spending takes place.

A former board member of the U.S. Travel Association and author of the popular book “Your Town: An Amazing Destination – The 25 Immutable Rules of Successful Tourism,” Roger has become one of the world’s most popular keynote speakers and authorities in the travel industry.

There is simply no one who can get an audience pumped up and excited about making something happen as well as Roger. It’s not surprising his personal motto is Ralph Waldo Emerson’s statement: “Nothing great was ever

achieved without enthusiasm.” His enthusiasm is contagious, so let Roger empower your audience to reach new heights.

What are People Saying?

"Wow! What a wonderful day! You did such a remarkable job getting Manteca to think about its future. I have had so many good comments and numerous calls thanking us for the assessment. Thanks for making us look so good!"

– Linda Abeldt
Executive Director
Manteca California CVB

"My phone has not stopped ringing since Tuesday night! Response has been beyond anything I ever anticipated. Your assessment has galvanized our community to move forward to 'Make a difference.'"

– Mayor Donnetta Walsler
City of Monroe, WA

"We had such a great time with Roger. Everyone is pumped and my challenge is to move all that energy forward! People are e-mailing me and stopping me in the streets to talk about the Assessment. Safe to say this was a huge success."

– Trudy Curley
Director Bluenose Coast Tourism
Association, Nova Scotia

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