Direct Marketing of Crafts and Souvenirs to Vladimir Visitors

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Introduction

Since the beginning of travel souvenirs have been central to the tourist experience. In general travelers want a tangible object to take home with them that represents the places they have been, the things they have seen, and the memories they have made. Research done in 2001 by Vladimir State University reports that almost half of tourists to the Golden Ring are traveling for cultural reasons. Cultural travelers seek authentic, quality souvenirs that represent the area. Tourists also buy souvenirs so that they have something that symbolizes the memories they have made during their trip. For travelers, souvenirs say, “Look where I have been!” or “Look what I have done!” to everyone who sees their souvenirs. Tourists are all looking for a unique memento from their trip to take home with them and the potential benefits from souvenir sales can be very important for the destination where the sales take place.

Vladimir city officials estimate that the city received about 1,000,000 visitors last year. While this may seem a little high (other estimates are closer to 400,000) one thing is for sure, Vladimir stands to benefit enormously from the tourists dollars. One clear area where Vladimir could experience significant economic gains through tourism is in the souvenir business. Taking the average of the high and low estimates, if 700,000 tourists visited Vladimir in a year and spent only $10.00 each on souvenirs, that would total $700,000.00 in souvenir sales alone. It is also significant to note that with an increase in the number of independent visitors from relatively affluent European, Asian, and North American markets, demand for quality souvenirs is expected to grow over the long term and now is the time to plan for that demand. It is also time to build on existing information systems because the new market of individual travelers will be seeking their
own information and will not be dependent on tour guides. It is important to inform independent travelers about all aspects of Vladimir because they will not patronize establishments or cites that they do not know about.

In its present state the souvenir market in Vladimir is leaking thousands of tourist dollars out of the community. By selling souvenirs that are not made locally, the tourists’ dollars coming into the community are being sent back out by importing outside souvenirs. To keep the most tourist dollars in Vladimir, souvenirs should be locally made, with local material, by local people whenever possible. In economies throughout the world it has been proven time and time again that local, small-scale businesses are more sustainable that large, external enterprises. This will build uniqueness and authenticity into the product while keeping the benefits within Vladimir itself. Small businesses that produce unique, authentic, high quality products will usually have higher prices than businesses selling mass-produced or imported products. This situation cannot be changed but it may not be a problem because most tourists will pay a higher price for a souvenir that is unique, authentic, and quality. Tourists want a souvenir that “is” the destination to take back home with them.

The 2001 survey found that a high, 90% of visitors surveyed about traveling in the Golden Ring specifically indicated that they would like to visit the city of Vladimir again. This statistic alone shows the huge potential of Vladimir as a tourist location. As a tourist location Vladimir has a recognizable brand image to prospective travelers and a well-constructed souvenir sales campaign can help support this brand image. Vladimir is a major city in the Golden Ring, which is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Russia. Souvenirs that are representative of the history, architecture, and culture of
Vladimir, and the Golden Ring as a whole, can be taken by tourists back home and will create a brand image throughout the world.

This report an outgrowth of the Vladimir Tourism Development Plan produced by Bruce Wicks, Karen Hasara, and Yekaterina Lakshtanova. Both projects are under the direction of the American Home/Sister Cities Tourism Project from the summer of 2004. Our goal for this project is to provide suggestions to local tourism stakeholders on how to improve visitor experiences, promote local businesses, and enhance economic returns to vendors through souvenir sales.
Background Information

Tourism and Souvenirs

Tourism is a complex system, which consists of many complex and interdependent components. Services are one of these many components. Destination attractions cannot function well without services. Souvenirs shops provide a variety of services to tourists. Souvenir development plays an important role in destination management, because it is both psychologically and economically related to tourism.

Tourism and Handicraft

Handicraft is now a great business, and has moved a long way from its historical origins. Too often, training programs for craft skills are developed mainly as specialist programs for those perceived slow learners, handicapped, unemployed or home-based single parents. Only a few countries have developed policies, which clearly outline the role that government expects crafts to play in economic and social development. There is need for a policy statement, which addresses the following with respect to craft development:

- The role of the private sector
- Strategies for marketing and promoting crafts nationally, regionally and internationally
- Skill training and education policies that include the provisions for a design center
- The expected linkages of tourism, crafts and other sectors

The importance of craft for the region

A well-developed handicraft industry usually generates income for local producers. Unique local crafts might even become one of the main reasons for tourists to
visit the destination. In this case there are other surrounding heritage tourism destinations that are authentic and not replicable. Because of this they become something special, and distinguish the region (in case of Vladimir; city) from others in the area. There are many challenges associated with the development of handicraft industry. When constrains are overcome, production becomes very economically, culturally, and socially beneficial. The social and cultural benefits are mainly associated with heritage, which is memory of the old traditions and finding social and cultural identity in this age of globalization.

Before benefits can take shape there must be great attention paid to the many aspects of development. Crafts need to be recognized as one of major sectors in the area and the attitude towards crafts must change. At the national level, an institutional framework must be created and strengthened, for the handicraft industry to develop legally. Handicraft development also requires trained craftsmen to produce useful and authentic objects. The goal should be to create distinct handicraft products that they are immediately recognizable throughout the world as Russian crafts.

To conclude, souvenirs are important as a cultural artifacts as well as an analytic tool for understanding complex social processes (Ricoeur; 1971).

Russia

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) predicted that by 2020 Russia would be one of the top 10 favorites among the world's travelers. Domestic observers seem to agree, although they concede that there are large challenges ahead. Between 1993 and 1999 the number of foreign tourists in Russia grew from 1.5 million to 3.1 million, according to the Russian Association of tourism Agencies. They also believe that tourism was one of the country's fastest growing sectors.
Currently, much of that growth is centered in Moscow and St. Petersburg. According to experts, these are the country's prime tourist destinations - years of centralized power, during the era of the tsars and during the Soviet period, has led to these cities offering Russia's most famous and well maintained attractions. The uneven development of Russian capitalism has led foreign tourists, looking to sample the Slavic experience, to continue to tread many of the routes established by the Soviet Union.

*Main gearing markets*

All countries, excluding former Soviet republics, provide 30% of total foreigners coming to Russia. Ten countries are leading in terms of arrivals to the Russian Federation (they consist 80% of all market). Germany, Finland, United Stated, Great Britain, Italy, France, and Japan occupy the top positions. In recent years it has expanded due to the Baltic countries. In 2001 there was a 37% increase in the number of visitors from the Republic of Korea.

According to WTO estimates the most perspective market segments presently are:

- Environmental tourism
- Cultural and educational tourism
- Subject or specialized tourism
- Cruises

*Tourism before and during first years of transformation*

The main change, influencing tourism development in post-communist Russia has been a rapid transition to a free market system and capitalism (Shock Therapy). The rapid changing of priorities of the government associated with gathering and disseminating economic intelligence created a situation where there were many information gaps. An
extensive restructuring had squeezed government departmental budgets. This further resulted in a lack of collection of statistical data in many areas including tourism. The rapid changing socio-economic, cultural, and political spheres have given rise to great difficulties in calculating and reporting economic indicators. Also, there were only two significant travel agents dealing with tourism, Intourist and Sputnik. In 1997, there were 10,000 tourist enterprises leading to a situation, which might be described as “chaotic”. Formerly, tourism was seen as a non-productive industry, focused mainly on recuperating the workforce. Because of this attitude trade unions were heavily involved with social tourism making health spas and medical treatment the most popular forms of tourism in the country. Such socialized tourism resulted in the industry becoming heavily subsidized by various trade unions and enterprises. Great emphasis was also placed on children’s camps and holidays. Like tourism also other leisure activities had the purpose of creating good citizens. There were main regions designated as tourism destinations for different types of tourism. The Golden Ring was well known as traditional, cultural tourist destination. Because of its history, Russia now has to face many challenges to develop former tourist destinations that have bee neglected during the time of restructuring and to draw attention to and develop new, potential markets.

**Vladimir**

The city of Vladimir is one of the oldest Russian cities. It is located in the heart of the Vladimir region (Vladimirskaya Oblast) east of Moscow on the bank of the Klyazma River. The city was first established in 1108, when Vladimir Monomakh, the prince of Rostov-Suzdal, fortified the shores of the river and founded the town in his name. The capital of Rostov-Suzdal was eventually moved to Vladimir in 1157. The city expanded
rapidly as an agricultural region, a center for trade, and a hub for railroad transportation. It now makes up one of the eight cities known as the Golden Ring. Vladimir, whose current population is 335,600, boasts local manufacturers of textiles, plastics, and chemicals. Among the many notable structures of Russian architecture, the city is the site of a museum of history, an art gallery, and a teachers college. Tourists from all over the world travel to Vladimir to enjoy its rich culture and historic "white-stone" architecture. (see Appendix A)

Vladimir holds the key to the best Russian creative forms, as apparent in its many marvels of white stone architecture and awe-inspiring performances. Today, the city provides an atmosphere to carefully protect the relative spiritual values that promote the fruitful work of the recognized creative collections, artists, musicians, and writers. From the beautiful carvings in the Assumption Cathedral, to the grandeur of the Golden Gates, Vladimir offers a spectacular view of a history rich in culture and traditions.

Therefore, there is significant potential to expand Vladimir’s attraction base beyond historical, and largely religious, architecture in Vladimir. Providing new things for visitors to see and do will help attract the most desirable guests and lead to more lengthy stays.

The name or brand associated with the Golden Ring is known by almost all Russians as well as growing population of Europeans and North Americans. The value of this cannot be understated and the need to improve on the image associated with this identity is paramount. Obviously, UNESCO recognition is important but many misperceptions about the region may exist among potential travelers and need to be corrected.
The proportion of visitors that are considered independent travelers (not with a tour group) is significant and it is important to note that most of them are believed to speak English. It is very likely that this group of independent travelers will continue to grow. Because of this trend the city and region will no longer be able to depend on tour operators to disseminate travel information.

Moreover, there is a huge market of domestic and international travelers close to Vladimir. The Golden Ring’s location is ideal. It is far enough from Moscow to have a separate identity, yet close enough to be easily reached by road. The same or greater tourism attractions in far eastern parts of the country would be unable to draw even a small fraction of travelers that now arrive in the Vladimir region because of geographic information.

Profile of Travelers to Vladimir

Based on the 2001 study by Vladimir State University there are some clear demographic traits which travelers to the Golden Ring share. Most travelers are female. The largest age group of travelers is 18 to 45 year olds. And, most are office employees who describe their income as average or low. The study also found that the Golden Ring attracts both families with children and single travelers in remarkably similar percentages.

Most travelers to the Golden Ring visit both Suzdal and Vladimir, and 90% indicate that they would like to visit Vladimir again. 51% of travelers indicate that they were traveling for cultural/cognitive reasons and an overwhelming number indicate that the most enjoyable part of their trip was visiting museums and monuments. The second largest complaint (after the cold weather) was that there was not enough time to spend in
the museums. And a not a single respondent graded tour guides’ work as unsatisfactory; in fact, the overwhelming majority graded it as excellent (38%) or good (54%). Thus, tourists’ positive opinions of the Minor Golden Ring are to a very large extent entailed by museums and landmarks, and the skillful work of guides and escorts.

(see Appendix B)

**Current Issues in Vladimir**

Despite Vladimir’s rich history and huge tourism potential, it faces many realistic problems and challenges. The problem we will highlight in this report is souvenir sales and promotions. A big problem that souvenir sales face in Vladimir is the poorly developed supply side of souvenir sales.

The term “supply side” is understood to include not only providing souvenirs to the customers but it is the environment in which the souvenirs are sold. For example, the display of souvenirs to travelers in Vladimir is very poorly organized.

The second major issue in Vladimir is that there are several enterprises in the city and region that are not working together. Producers do not collaborate with each other. The other segments of producers are individual artists who make souvenirs on their own. They are mostly older individuals who know the old techniques of craft creation. They make an assortment of lacquer boxes and different carved woodcrafts. Several women make needlepoint creations, which are famous for their original Vladimir pattern (using a lot of red coloring), as well as tremendously beautiful white damask stitch needlework.
These individual crafts people sell their productions to souvenir shops or sell it themselves on makeshift tables, which are poorly organized as illustrated by earlier pictures and the picture below. They do this especially during holidays and special events in the city, even if they do not have permission to sell.

Even those individuals who are setup inside of a shop are often not well managed inside or out. The souvenirs they sell are usually not really unique or authentic; they are just general Russian souvenirs.

Despite these problems, there is another, bigger problem for the souvenir industry in Vladimir. This problem is, that there are many retailer who purchase various, non-authentic souvenirs from Moscow and other locations and then sell them on the streets. This is a problem not only in Vladimir, but also throughout the Golden Ring. In Vladimir, the market of “fake” souvenirs is located right near the Golden Gates, the main sightseeing location. The first thing shown to incoming visitors are these imitations of authentic handcrafts, which lead tourists to think of these things as authentic Russian folk crafts.

Through short and long-term improvements these three main problems can be overcome. In this project we will provide suggestions and examples for these improvements and through them souvenir industry in Vladimir, and throughout the Golden Ring, will be able to flourish. In the following section we will outline the specific goals of this project.
Project Goals

This primary goal of this report will be to provide recommendations and solutions to the problems outlined in the previous section. This will be done through a literature review and examinations of case studies from other destinations. This report will also serve the following goals:

- Educate local business and crafts people about the importance of souvenir authenticity.
- Encourage the people of Vladimir to improve the locations at which tourists purchase souvenirs.
- Encourage the people of Vladimir to promote souvenirs in many different ways, and emphasize the importance of easily accomplished promotion activities.
- Provide recommendations supported by examples from other countries; especially European Countries.
- Identify main base of souvenir supply and compare to other countries through literature and case studies.
Literature review

Souvenirs

Souvenirs are a tangible part of the tourism experience. Souvenirs provide an excellent opportunity to potentially worldwide advertising with a potentially lucrative economic activity (J Holder, 1989). Further, souvenir are “symbolic units” in the “tourist art system”, and can be read as “text” (S. Shenhav-Keller; 1993). Treating the souvenir as a “text” requires one to follow (its) movement from sense to reference and from what it says to what it talks about (Ricoeur; 1971). Souvenirs can make a reference to the social and political processes of the area, the context for the production of the souvenir, authentication, and display of wares on the part of the seller.

Consumer goods acquire symbolic value and serve many purposes for their owners. Souvenirs, and the memories associated with them, help the consumers participate in non ordinary experiences, expand their worldview, differentiate or integrate the self with others, and much more. By using the word “special” it is understood that the object has some meaningful value, memories, and importance/feelings attached to it for a specific person. As meaning evolves objects become symbolically significant to their owners.
Types of Tourists

There are different types of tourist’s categories and each one distinguishes different types of tourists. Tourists identify a rich variety of meanings in the souvenirs they purchase during travel. Three clusters of five identified by M.A Littrell (1990) seem to describe the heritage tourists in Vladimir.

Shopping oriented tourists

Souvenirs have the connotation of “memory” or “reminiscence.” The acquisition of souvenirs is not just the collection of objects, but of memories and, by extension, the experiences that provide those memories. Collecting local crafts, photographic images, t-shirts, jewelry, seashells, and the myriad other treasures that symbolize a destination help the traveler recall specific travel experiences (Smith and Reid 1994). Souvenirs are artifacts that one touches, reflects on, and shows others. To acquire a souvenir is to lay claim to a new experience, to assert that one has achieved something or been somewhere of significance (Boynton 1986). Although shopping is seldom cited as the primary motivation for undertaking a trip, it is a common and preferred tourist activity in many destinations (Timothy and Butler 1995). Tourists from the United States who traveled abroad in 1997 reported shopping as their second most important activity (Travel Industry Association of America 1998). In addition, shopping opportunities are a major attraction, drawing tourists to less developed countries where the costs of goods are generally low (Keown 1989). In a study of Midwestern, United States tourists, nearly 70% purchased gifts for family and friends during their travels (Littrell et al 1994). This might be expected to be more important when the traveler visits new or unusual places. The shopping element has recently become a very important instrument in promotion of
tourists’ places. Shopping has even become a solution for marketing tourism in places with a weak tourism profile (Jansen-Verbeke 1990).

*Authenticity seeking tourists*

The meanings of favorite objects are reflected in attachment. This attachment is based on the item’s foreign or authentic character. Cultural authenticity is associated with a wide variety of characteristics, including raw materials, colors, motifs, design and/or production techniques of the craft. For some tourists meaning is associated with a generalized image of the culture or the country that it comes from. For others meaning is connected to a more specific village or period in a country’s history. In the authenticity seeking tourist cluster meaning is associated with people, places and periods in time with which the tourist expresses interest and empathy.

*Special trip tourists*

For members of this cluster meaning is not tied to the culture or country visited, but rather to memories of the travel experiences from a specific trip. For many the cultural contexts in which the craft is acquired is of little significance. For the special trip tourists the process of travel contributes to the souvenir’s symbolism. The words “hand-made” and “hand done” are significant for these types of tourists.
Authenticity

Due to tourist demand and the economic impact on destination development, souvenirs have gained much attention from researchers. Gordon (1986) proposed that souvenirs could be put into five categories. The first category is pictorial images, such as postcards, photographs, and illustrated books about particular regions. Second are “piece-of-the-rock” souvenirs. These are usually natural materials or objects, such as rocks, shells, or pinecones, taken from the natural environment. The third category of souvenirs is symbolic shorthand. These are usually manufactured products, which evoke a message about the place from which they came. Examples include a miniature Eiffel Tower from Paris, France or a lobster pot from Maine in the United States. The fourth category may offer no reference to a particular place. These types of souvenirs are inscribed with words which, identifies them in place and time. For example, a T-shirt, which has little meaning by itself but is marked “Grate Wall” becomes a reminder of the place. The final category is made up of local products including a variety of objects such as ethnic foods and crafts.

Among all these categories, the authenticity of souvenirs may be the most important factor, which affects the tourist’s intention to buy. Tourists prefer symbolic and manufactured products that are made by local people. They want handcrafts to have traditional and cultural meaning. Littrell et al (1993) found that criteria used to define authentic crafts included several major themes. One of the most important criteria is a craft’s uniqueness and originality. Cohen proposes that “authenticity is a socially constructed and its social connotation is therefore not given but acceptable”. Authenticity is personally constructed, contextual and has a changing concept. Tourists are creators of meaning in their tourism experiences rather than passive recipients. Craft authenticity is
very often associated with the characteristics of the craft person and with shopping experience.

The concept of bringing home “authentic” souvenirs is not new. Tourist’s description of souvenir buying while traveling and while they search for authentic souvenirs shows that their consumption may be different than their everyday spending behavior (M.A. Littrell, L.F. Anderson, P.J. Brown; 1993). For example, old, used tribal crafts may appeal to a tourist who buys only new, pristine products when at home.

Tourists are reluctant to associate authenticity with crafts that are mass-produced or made from a kit (M.A. Littrell, L.F. Anderson, P.J. Brown; 1993). A product that tourists see duplicated at every shop they visit does not represent authenticity. Workmanship qualities are also associated with authenticity. It is important that a craftsperson take great care and effort to create the piece of work and it must be evident that someone made it with their own hands. Some tourists are concerned about the cultural and historical integrity or accuracy of a craft. If a craft shows religious meaning or tells a story tourists want that story to be accurate. Tourists do not accept souvenirs as authentic when they have labels that state “made in…” (M.A. Littrell, L.F. Anderson, P.J. Brown; 1993).

Tourists are expressing a need to have the authentication of their souvenirs verified. The first way this need for verification is being satisfied is during the shopping experience. This happens as tourists meet the craft person and watch the production process, often in the same location where the souvenir is sold. For other tourists seeing the production process is not enough. For these tourists authenticity requires that the craft be signed, dated and documented through accompanying literature. A survey conducted
in New Zealand (M. Asplet, M. Cooper 2000) showed that also the authenticity of the design is important. In this survey nearly half of the replied that they would be more inclined to purchase items if the authenticity of the design was vouched for on the label. Makers and distributors of authentic souvenirs should take steps to ensure that the authenticity of products is maintained and enhanced whenever possible. Some visitors only accept “one-of-kind” or “rare” craft items as authentic. Wood products can be called authentic, one-of-a-kind items because no two are alike due to the different woods used. Some travelers do not need their souvenir to be the only one of its kind but the group of items that their souvenir belongs to should “not [be] made in thousands” (M.A. Litttrell, L.F. Anderson, P.J. Brown; 1993).

In conclusion there are several authenticity categories that souvenirs can fall into. These categories include the craft being different from those the tourists already own, the crafts being made in a new or different way, and are the crafts unique to the region or country where they are produced.
Motives for Seeking Authenticity in Heritage Tourism

Tourism provides the opportunity to experience the pristine, primitive, and natural through travel to heritage tourism sites. Consumer demand for authenticity is driven by the search for products that provide an element of distinction or difference in the tourists’ lives. Tourists seek to escape from their fragmented lives that hold little meaning. Authentic souvenirs may link tourist with a travel destination that evokes a simpler, richer life meaning.
Other Factors Influencing Souvenir Purchase

What people buy is effected by social composition to consumers. However, tourists make purchase decisions based heavily on the composite value they attach to various attributes of individual items. In general, they want souvenirs that are easily portable, relatively inexpensive, understandable, cleanable, and usable upon returning home. Basically three product attributes are important to tourists;

- **Value**: as it pertains to range and quality
- **Product display characteristics**: such as color, display, packaging and size. Tourists are drawn to store displays that visually present ideas. They are also more likely to spend money on souvenirs if the display is high quality, imaginative, and attractive.
- **Uniqueness**: as it pertains to memories from their trip

Tourists use store attributes to deciding where to shop. They select stores based on their perceptions of the characteristics that they consider to be important.

There are twelve components that motivate consumers to patronize specific businesses; price, quality, assortment, fashion, sales personnel, location convenience, and other convenience criteria like:

- **Services**: consumers value friendly conversation with knowledgeable sales staff.
- **Sales promotions**
- **Advertising**
- **Store atmosphere**
- **Reputation on adjustments**
Within these components the most important characteristic of businesses in a tourist area is location because of the amount of time first-time visitors spend orienting themselves to the area.

Travelers want to experience the authenticity of the community they are visiting. Because of this they require emergence into community through conversation with local residents, participation in community festivals, and visitation to art galleries, museums and theaters.
Summary

Shopping opportunities are major attraction drawing tourists to many less-developed countries where the prices of goods are generally low. The tourists’ collecting of local crafts, photographic images, and other souvenirs that symbolize the destination creates new opportunities for the supply side of the tourism destination; it creates higher income in the area and may lead to further tourism development. The shopping element of tourism has recently become an important instrument in the promotion of tourist destinations, therefore it is important to pay great attention to what do tourists expect while souvenir shopping.

One of the most important characteristics of souvenirs is authenticity; among all types of souvenirs, the authenticity may be the most important factor that affects tourists’ buying intentions. Tourists want to identify the local character of the souvenir. They prefer symbolic and manufactured products that are made in the local area, and handcrafts that have traditional and cultural meaning. Several authenticity categories can be noted, some are: whether the crafts are different from those the tourists already own, made a new way, or more unique to the region or the country where produced. Authentic souvenirs are not the ones people see duplicates of in every shop they visit. Also workmanship qualities are associated with authenticity; some tourists are concerned with the cultural and historical integrity or accuracy of a craft. Tourists also want the authenticity of the souvenirs they buy to be verified. The first step of verification occurs while shopping, when the tourist meets the craft person and watches the craft being made. Sometimes seeing is not enough and the craft must be signed, dated, and documented through accompanying literature (educational materials). The
most involved process of proving authenticity is allowing tourists to have the opportunity to be engaged in the creation process. When tourists take part in the creation process of a product, they are more willing to buy the souvenir because they created it with their own hands. Many tourists also want souvenirs that are easily portable, relatively inexpensive, understandable and usable upon returning home. In conclusion, three product attributes are most important to tourists: value (range and quality), display characteristics (color, display, and packaging, shopping process environment), and uniqueness. The other components that influence tourists’ spending are: convenience of the location, price, fashion, sales personnel and service.
Recommendations and Supporting Examples

Based on literature reviews and the analysis of current problems in Vladimir’s souvenir sales, we have constructed twelve recommendations. We believe that looking at what other places have done successfully can provide useful and meaningful information about what Vladimir could improve upon as well. In the following sections, we will discuss each of the twelve recommendations and examples from other places in greater detail.

Recommendation One: Importance of the Authenticity of Souvenirs

As a part of their travels, tourists purchase crafts and other souvenirs that serve as tangible evidence of having found the authentic and also serve as reminders of activities that are not part of the tourist’s daily routines at home (Littrell, Anderson, Brown 1993). Therefore, finding authentic crafts and souvenirs that truly represent the destination is essential to providing a memorable experience for tourists. In addition, providing authentic products would be a good opportunity for tourism businesses to become successful.

Explanation:

Since many of Vladimir’s tourist attractions are based on history and religion, it is a good idea to make souvenirs more authentic by connecting them with the city’s history and religion, which cannot be copied by another destination.

Finding and providing authentic products is not easy for tourists or businesses. For tourists, it is hard to figure which souvenirs, among many, are authentic. Littrell, Anderson, and Brown (1993) commented on this situation in their research, saying, “finding authenticity may be most problematic among tourists who adopt a ‘romantic
gaze’ as they search for naturalness and undisturbed beauty in nature”. For businesses that provide souvenirs, it is not easy to assure tourist that their product is authentic because each tourist verifies the authenticity of a product in a different way. According to Littrell, Anderson, Brown (1993), Uniqueness and originality, workmanship, Cultural and historic integrity, aesthetics, function and use could be the standard for assessing the authenticity of product.

In this perspective, finding authentic product in Vladimir souvenir would be a little difficult for tourist, because many of those souvenirs are handcrafts. There is a huge range in the quality of handicraft souvenirs and it is difficult to find out what meaning the souvenir have for tourist because they are usually unfamiliar to the area. Explaining the quality and historical or cultural meaning of souvenirs is difficult to relate to tourists.

There is a need to agree on authenticity to help both tourist and souvenir business. Littrell, Anderson, Brown (1993) suggested two different ways of accomplishing this. In the first theme, verification comes during shopping when the tourist meets the craftperson and watches the craft being made, often in the same setting where it is sold. For other tourists, apparently seeing is not believing. Authenticity requires that the craft be signed, dated, and documented through accompanying literature. Furthermore, written documentation seemed particularly important if the craft items are expensive.

In Vladimir showing the souvenir production process or providing paper certifications is not always done because of limited space for showing the process and the efficiency of making paper certifications of authenticity. In many countries the most frequently used way of ensuring authenticity is by creating a seal of authenticity for
certified souvenirs, which guarantees the authenticity and quality of souvenir for the tourist and the souvenir business.

Vladimir should develop a seal of authenticity for souvenirs in their area. By creating this seal for souvenirs, they could ensure the tourists that their souvenirs are authentic and high quality. Tourists could be made aware of the meaning and importance of the seal of authenticity through brochures or a website.

**Example One: Japan**

In Japan, The National Souvenir Association control over what products are allowed to receive the seal of authenticity (see picture above). The evaluate souvenirs based of four criteria. These criteria are the fitness of product to identity of destination, provincial design, quality of product, and quality of cover. Is takes tow years to get approval to use this seal of authenticity and after the end of this period, all products are continually reevaluated to ensure continued quality.

**Example Two: Korea**

The Korean National Tourism Organization grants the rights of use of their seal of authenticity to businesses, who have won prizes at the National Tourist Souvenir Contest. Businesses can use this seal for ten years and after this period business can apply for an extensions of rights to use the seal of authenticity.

**Example Three: Hong Kong**

The Hong Kong Tourism Board grants the rights to businesses to use the seal of authenticity. This seal certifies that a business has passed a stringent, annual assessment. Their standards of evaluation are providing genuine products with clearly displayed
prices, displaying clear product information and menus, and ensuring superb customer service with front-line staff possessing extensive product knowledge enabling them to answer questions efficiently.
Recommendation Two: Educational Materials

Educational materials and information about Vladimir and locally made souvenirs should be made available to tourists. These will help tourists identify with the location and give them insight into the history of Vladimir making them more interested in buying souvenirs to commemorate their trip.

Explanation:

The first two informational sources for tourists are the tour guides and the Internet. Tour guides are able to show travelers around the city. These tour guides should be informed about local crafts and where they can be purchased. Tour guides are a tangible, personal source of information for foreign tourists. The Internet is more important for the growing market of individual foreign travelers because they may not use a tour guide but they will still need to know about the destination. The Internet is a widely used tool that can be very helpful to many tourists. It is important that tour guides and any informational Internet site know about a great deal about souvenirs in Vladimir so they can pass that information onto the tourists.

Another idea is to create a simple calendar with beautiful pictures of the town and locally made souvenirs. This calendar will serve more than one purpose. It is an aesthetically pleasing souvenir and also teaches the reader about Vladimir through pictures and some informational pages or sections. The calendar for Vladimir could have beautiful pictures of the town throughout the calendar, which could be followed by pages with links to websites about the town, a list of must-see attractions, a map of the area, and a list of unique shops.
One last idea is to create nice publications that provide necessary information to the tourists. Some of these publications would include road maps and visitor brochures, which would tell people where to buy each kind of souvenir. One of these publications could be similar to the “Made in Illinois” book.

In this book, information about area-specific souvenirs should be given, as well as short introductions or stories about the people who create them. Pictures of the people and souvenirs should accompany each selection, as well as a list of places where these products can be purchased. These books should be available to visitors in some local stores and a central location, preferably a welcome or information center for tourists.
Recommendation Three: Brochures/Visitors’ Guide

A brochure or visitor’s guide, published in both Russian and English, including attractions, accommodations, restaurants, and shopping opportunities would be helpful to tourists visiting Vladimir because it would give them a clear idea about what the area has to offer. Each attraction or important site should be followed by basic information citing the importance and some interesting facts about the location. Accommodation listings should include contact information, location/address, and information about the amenities offered. A description of available restaurants should describe the type of food served and the atmosphere (family/kid-friendly oriented or adult only oriented). Most importantly to this project is the inclusion of shopping opportunities in Vladimir in the brochures or the travels’ guide. A list of shopping locations and the types of products sold at the location would be very helpful to tourists. The listing of products sold would help to inform tourists of authentic works that can be purchased and can help them find what they are looking for, such as wood working pieces, pottery, jewelry, or paintings. Another important part of this brochure or visitors’ guide would be the inclusion of an easily readable map. This entire brochure or visitor’s guide would be easily transferable to a website.

Example: Champaign County, United States

The Champaign County 2004 Visitors’ Guide an example that those working on tourism promotion in Vladimir could use.

The Sites and attractions included in the CC Visitors Guide could be comparable to the listings of the different architectural sites. They have a separate section for arts, entertainment and museums but for the Vladimir Visitors Guide these could be combined
with the attractions so the museums could be listed along with the sites since in many cases they overlap. The shopping opportunities should be listed differently than they are in the CC Visitors Guide but it would be beneficial to list them by location groupings as they did. Again, with the restaurants different formatting should be used and more description should be used for each individual restaurant. This should not be a problem because since the restaurant listings are only for one town and not an entire county there should be a shorter list and it should be manageable. The way that CC has laid out their hotel accommodations is good but a more personalized approach may again be needed due to the number of accommodations. The map in the back of the CC Visitors Guide is a good example that can show how those in Vladimir can build on what they already have.

The CC map shows the spatial relationships between the heart of Champaign County to the surrounding areas and shows major roadways. Since Vladimir is only a car ride away from Moscow, a well-known and heavily traveled city, it would be extremely beneficial to tourists to be able to see the relationship between their locations and the spatial relationships to the other cities of the Golden Ring.

A second map of a smaller area could be modeled after this map as well. This second map could imitate the color-coding of the CC map. On the map above, the orange, numbered circles correspond to a list of attractions and the purple, numbered squares correspond to a list of accommodations throughout the county. This system could be applied the existing map of Vladimir’s tourist center (see picture at the top of the next page). The map of Vladimir should be expanded to include shopping opportunities, restaurants, and restrooms as well as attractions and accommodations.
Recommendation Four: Educating Tourists through the Internet

Research data shows that a growing portion of tourists to Vladimir are individual, foreign travelers. It has also been proven that these individual travelers are more likely to get information from Internet. Because of this, the city should continue to maintain and improve the existing website in English, as well as Russian, and update it frequently. The existing website, www.valdimir-russia.net, is a good start and should continue to be further developed.

Explanation:

In today’s information focused society, the Internet plays a key role for education and communication. It is a powerful tool that can for searching for information, which is very helpful and important for tourists. From the demand side perspective, the Internet is an important tool for tourists planning their trips and making travel decisions. They can use the Internet to find information about the target destination and learn more about the destination’s history, weather, culture, top sites, souvenirs, etc. Tourists can also make online reservations for accommodations, transportation, and even restaurants. From the supply side perspective, Internet is really effective, efficient, and cheap way to promote tourist attractions. Different companies within the tourism industry can put information about their services on websites, as well as other useful details. For the host community itself, the Internet is a good way to create and promote the community’s image. Websites provide two-way platforms, from which tourists and host cities can receive numerous benefits. For Vladimir, the Internet could be a great way to promote the city’s image and inform tourists about the destination.
Example: Hangzhou, China

The city of Hangzhou, China has many good examples of informational websites for tourists. There are several websites about the city of Hangzhou that provide information for tourists. The websites were created by the government, the tourism bureau, non-profit organizations, different entities from within the private sector, and very few belong to individuals. No matter who creates these websites, the city benefits from them. Most of the websites are written in English, to assist international tourists, and include lots of information, including information about shopping and souvenirs.

The following are some example websites about Hangzhou, China:

- http://www.travelchinaguide.com/package/hangzhou.htm
Recommendation Five: Tourism Information Center

A tourist information center should be created in a central location of Vladimir, either as a freestanding building/kiosk or a small part of another, larger building. The tourist center should have a display of brochures with information about Vladimir, specifically about places to buy souvenirs, as well as the surrounding towns and attractions. It would also be beneficial to staff the information center with a knowledgeable person who is able to speak the languages of the majority of tourists to that area, so that they could communicate with and help foreign tourists.

Recommendation Six: Souvenir Marketplace

Setting up a marketplace is an important step for Vladimir because it acknowledges the fact that shopping oriented tourists exist (Littrell, np). For tourists, souvenirs represent memories and give insight into the travel experience that they had. However, within these markets certain regulations should be followed to help control the flow of the people, and prevent the sale of undeserving souvenirs. Zoning laws could be passed by the Vladimir City government to prohibit people from setting up random tables. To make these zoning laws work a designated souvenir area could be set up and all vendors wishing to sell their crafts could be licensed to do so.

Example: Sydney, Australia.

Paddy’s Market in Sydney, Australia is open Thursday thru Sunday in a warehouse within a tourist neighborhood inside the Sydney borders. According to Kristen Swanson, author of *A Structural Model for Souvenir Consumption, Travel Activities, and Tourist Demographics*, “location is the most important retail characteristic in a tourist area because of the amount of first time visitors spend orienting themselves with a new
city.” Since Sydney is a larger city, the municipality accommodates tourists staying elsewhere by placing themselves as a site along the Sydney explorer tour. A bus drops off a group of tourists and has a pick up every quarter hour thereafter. Tourists are invited to stay in the market as long as they wish. The market has booths that are set up as aisles along the interior of the warehouse and each vendor displays their registration on the outside of their booth.
Recommendation Seven: Capitalize on Impulse Purchasing

On-site souvenir shops located by historical landmarks or other designated tourism sites can be a generator of tourism revenues. Locating souvenir shops near attractions is a particularly strategic plan because it caters to tourist impulse buying.

Example:

Impulse buying is a large profit generator for businesses such as Disney, and Warner Brothers. At both the Disney theme parks and all of the Warner Brothers, Six Flags theme parks, impulse buying is activated through ride departure. At Six Flags Great America, when person gets off the Superman roller coaster ride they must walk through a souvenir shop to get back to the rest of the theme park. In this shop they are bombarded with Superman souvenirs that they can purchase to commemorate their ride on the roller coaster. This strategy is also used at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. As a person exists the Buzz Light Year adventure ride they must go through a store containing Toy Story apparel and toys.

However, these examples do not directly relate to Vladimir because all of the souvenirs sold in these examples are all mass produced items. Vladimir must use this approach with extreme caution because souvenir sales will not be improved by turning Vladimir souvenirs into generic souvenirs. Care must be taken in these impulse buy locations to make sure that the quality and authenticity of the souvenirs is not lost.
Recommendation Eight: Visitor Participation in Souvenir Production

Displaying the souvenir production process to visitors in Vladimir could have a profound effect on sales. Craftsmen could associate and organize an event for tourists. People are interested in how things are made. If they see the process, they are more likely to buy an item because they understand the value of the product and witnessed an effort being put forth in the process. Making the production process a type of activity or tourist destination may also provide customers a chance to participate in creation of souvenir. It may be possible to provide materials to allow visitors make their own work. If visitors are involved in the souvenir production process, of course, people are more likely to buy the things they made by themselves. These types of areas could be a part of a souvenir marketplace or a visitors’ center.

Example: Yingge, Taiwan

The city of Yingge in Taiwan is famous for their pottery. There are many pottery factories in Yingge that are open for people to visit and provide a chance for them to make their own pottery. There are two benefits for factories to have a production performance. First, the factory can charge a fee for entrance and a materials fee for visitors who want to make their own works, and even a shipping fee for later sending the item to visitors who choose buy it. Second, the factory is not only a place to produce and sell the pottery, but also becomes an attraction for people to visit. Of course, the more time people spend in the factory, the more likely they will be to buy the products.
Recommendation Nine: Industry/Manufacturing Tours

The Crystal Factory in Vladimir has the potential to be developed as a tour group destination, by creating tours through rooms in which tourists could see the production process and, become familiar with characteristics of Vladimir’s crystal products. If possible, more than a show could be organized; tourist could be allowed to participate in part of the production process. The factory could also create a souvenir shop within the building or in a nearby neighborhood, so visitors could buy crystal products soon after the production show. In the souvenir store products that were made in the factory could be sold as well as other glass crafts if made in Vladimir. Many European cities decided to attract tourists by providing them opportunities to watch part of the production process or tour parts of the factory.

Example One: Boleslawiec, Poland

The city of Boleslawiec is located in the southwest part of the Dolnoslaskie area in Poland. It is on the crossroad of one of the most important transportation roads going from Zgorzelec to Wroclaw and from Jakuszyce to Poznan. The A2 highway already goes through the town and the A4 highway is going to be built. This city is famous for its long history of pottery manufacturing.

A couple of years ago the most important market in this area was domestic tourists, but following globalization all kinds of industries, including tourism have changed and markets new have developed. Nowadays older adults from Germany, England and Austria are the main markets. This market situation is similar to Vladimir’s.

There is an increasing number of pottery manufactures, offering new ways of attracting tourists from all over the country. They organize tours throughout the factory
and some offer production shows, which present the way the products are made. A perfect example of this tourist orientation in manufacturing is the Stoneware Factory. It is one of the most tourist-friendly manufacturers in the city of Boleslawiec, Poland (www.boleslawiec-ceramika.com). They prepared special programs and tours for visitors who want to see more than the finished products.

The privately owned Stoneware Factory is one of the leading producers of handmade stoneware in the region. The “Manofaktura” invites all to enjoy the process of the time-honored tradition of creating authentic Boleslawiec Stoneware (schedule provided in Appendix C). Visitors have an opportunity to view and personally experience this old Polish folk art tradition through factory. Because the tourists are able to see the products produced and entire process is steeped in folk art tradition, authenticity is apparent. Multi-lingual guides and artists are used to offer tours and a stoneware-making workshop to diverse groups of travelers.

**Example Two: Meissen, Germany**

Another good example of manufacturing tours, which are connected to souvenir sales, comes from the city of Meissen, Germany. The Meissen Porcelain Manufactory offers a series of seminars to art lovers, in which they can realize their own artistic potential by making their own Meissen porcelain creations, also called Dresden china by English-speakers. They give seminars, led by experienced master instructors and artists, for beginners and those with previous painting experience.

The Meissen Porcelain Manufactory can boast almost 300 years of creative expertise and experience in the modeling and decorating of porcelain. Up-and-coming decorators were trained at a customized art school within the Manufactory as far back as
The Meissen Porcelain Painting and Creativity Seminars five-day porcelain seminar is firmly rooted in this tradition (details provided in Appendix D). High quality, academic illustration seminars and next-stage watercolor seminars form the first building blocks in a learning process that embraces the art of visualization.

Porcelain decorating seminars, with subject matters ranging from easy to advanced enable visitors to enter the serenely effervescent world of Meissen floral painting. They also offer a glimpse into the captivating ornamentation of Meissen decors. The versatile form known as "Indian painting", for instance, is closely bound up with the spirit of oriental art. Participants have access to a demonstration workshop at the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory as well as to the exhibition hall, with its unique collection of Meissen Porcelain. The course also provides visits to a variety of “craftsmanship-in-progress” sites.

The course fee covers the following range of services:

- Introduction to artistic decoration using a wealth of patterns and models.
- Explanation and initiation of stages in the artistic process.
- Provision of required painting materials such as paint, oil, brushes, and spatula.
- A piece of "Hobby Collection" Meissen porcelain, including the firing process.
- Certificate of authenticity and catering.

During the tourist season, November through March, the factory offers special events for organized groups, which allows tourists to watch the traditional production process of the most famous porcelain in Europe. This action is targeted to a German
market, but any foreign tourist groups are able to admire the traditional-way of porcelain production during the peak season. The entrance fee for regular tourists is five Euro and only one Euro for school tours. Teachers and other people who supervise the groups are allowed to enter the show for no charge. During the show, students and tourists are able to participate in porcelain production process. They are first taken into an introducing room, where a video of historical facts and circumstances about invention the first European porcelain is shown. In the following rooms, the manufacturers personally show all the steps of porcelain creation are shown to the visitors. Finally, in the exhibition room, over 3,000 porcelain art pieces are available for visitors to view. The collection contains pieces from 1710 to recent times, and is the most famous porcelain exhibition in Europe. Visitors are able to purchase the pieces they have created at the end of the tour.
Recommendation Ten: Souvenir Shop Business Hours

Souvenir shops or markets should match their hours to meet the needs of the travelers, this may mean extending their business hours through the evening and businesses should also be open during the weekends and holidays, as is appropriate. The three major reasons for extending business hours will be discussed in the following explanation.

Explanation:

Extending business hours for souvenir shops is important for both international and domestic tourists. Many domestic tourists are traveling during weekends and holidays on short trips. If the souvenir shops and markets are not open on weekends and holidays, where will tourists be able to buy local souvenirs? In other words, tourists would have nowhere to spend their money. It is harmful not only for the local economy, but also for tourists’ satisfaction. Research shows that if tourists do not have places to spend their money, the host community will lose valuable revenues. In order to maximize the local economic benefits, souvenir sales should be one of the central issues. Businesses remaining open into the evening is important for international tourists as well, especially those from Asian countries. Many Asian tourists like shopping at night, this can be seen by investigating Asian culture and habits; many shops in Asia are open until 9:00 p.m. or even later.

Secondly, it is important for a community to provide night activity for tourists. In Vladimir, there are not many nightclubs, bars, or other places where tourists can spend time at night; instead they can shop for souvenirs. Vladimir is one of many stops in Russia for international tourists. International tourists tend to join group tours, which
schedule several activities during the day and may not provide tourists with time to shop for souvenirs. Businesses staying open during nighttime hours is very important, or even essential, for tourists that want to purchase souvenirs. Another advantage of offering nighttime shopping opportunities is that they might make tourists want to spend the night in Vladimir, as opposed to only day trips. Therefore, it is necessary for souvenir shops and markets to extend their business hours to give tourists more time to shop.

**Example: Hangzhou, China**

The city of Hangzhou is one of China’s "shopping paradises". The city offers a superb collection of local crafts, rare arts and other souvenirs. A great place to shop for souvenirs in Hangzhou is a market that opens every evening on Wushan Road. In this market tourists can avoid the high prices of Hangzhou's many daytime tourist shops. It opens every evening at 6:00 p.m. and closes at midnight.
**Recommendation Eleven: Souvenir Design, Packaging, and Delivery**

By developing unique characteristics of souvenirs sold in Vladimir, craftsmen will be able to assure that tourists will recognize their products and want to buy them. The design, packaging and gift-wrapping, and delivery of the souvenir should all be uniform processes that, when seen, boasts the fact that these souvenirs came from Vladimir, Russia.

**Explanation:**

The design of the souvenir is important for several reasons. “Customers make purchase decisions based on the composite value they attach to various attributes of individual items” (Swanson and Horridge). The design of the souvenir is the first thing a tourist will notice, so the design of the souvenir should show off the quality and value of the souvenir and let the buyer know that he/she is buying something of worth. The design of the souvenir should relate the souvenir to something meaningful from Vladimir. This could be a memory the visitor made, a special quality the town possesses, or something that uniquely represents Vladimir as a destination.

In addition to the design of a souvenir, the packaging is important, as well. “Three product attributes that are important to tourists: value (range, quality), product display characteristics (color, display, packaging, size) and uniqueness (memory of the trip)” (Swanson and Horridge). The packaging of a souvenir relates to its quality and value; it also protects the souvenir from possibly breaking or being damaged. Many tourists also keep the packaging that the souvenir they purchased came in; the packing itself can be considered a souvenir because it also represents the country or town the tourist visited.
In addition to the original packaging of the souvenirs, which also represents the destination, the packing after purchase can also be important to a tourist. “Visitors want souvenirs that are easily portable, relatively inexpensive, understandable, cleanable, and usable upon returning home” (Swanson and Horridge). Many tourists who visit Vladimir may not live near the town; these visitors need to be able to transport their souvenirs home safely. Souvenirs have to be easy to carry around during a day’s activities and they need to have the ability to arrive at their new home unbroken and usable. Because the postal service is unpredictable and cannot be shipped to the visitors, vendors need to carefully wrap the souvenirs in a manner that will keep them from breaking during the rest of the tourists’ day and their trip home.
**Recommendation Twelve: Souvenir Related Special Events**

We recommend holding special events for souvenir or handcraft competitions. Souvenirs could be involved in events in the form of an arts and crafts show or fair. It could showcase the local talent and introduce local artists to visitors. There are three main benefits to holding special events for souvenir theme and handcraft. First, through events or competitions people will be able to tell the quality of the products. Second, it also can help to set a fair price. For instance, a winning product could be set at a higher price than a second place product. Finally, an event or a competition can be used as a hook to lure people to come to Vladimir. Moreover, the event or show would interest people in buying souvenirs because they understand the value of product.

**Example: Taiwan**

Every year in Taiwan, the Taiwanese Farmer Association holds the *Best Tea Leaves* competition. The judges evaluate and grade each of the competitors’ tea leaves against one another. Through this competition the farmer not only knows the quality of their product, but they are also sets the price of their tea leaves based on the results. The competition is well known and allows consumers to tell the quality of the tea leaves.
Recommendation Thirteen: Multilingual Signage and Publications

Catering to different tourists’ specific needs, including language translation, will help produce a more enjoyable trip. This will create positive word of mouth for the destination and the generation of repeat business. Multilingual signage is important to souvenir sales in Vladimir because tourists are unlikely to purchase what they do not know exist. Continued market research should be conducted to find the specific language demographics of the tourists visiting Vladimir. From this information the city can produce brochures, menus, road signs, etc., to overcome the language barrier.

Example: Australia

The country of Australia is an example of how tourist needs are met by the breaking down of the language barriers. An example of multilingual signage can be found in Brisbane Australia. Posted road signs, in some areas, are written in Chinese as well as English. Travel brochures and flyers throughout the country, but especially in popular tourist areas like Cairns, Melbourne and Sydney, are printed in English, German, French, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and Japanese.

Universal signage (images) should be used when necessary to locate important places like restrooms, hospitals, and basic directions. Directional arrows, male and female figures, or a picture of a toilet to show restroom locations could be a useful tool (see pictures below).
**Action Steps:**

**Immediate Action:**

**Brochures/Visitors’ Guide (Recommendation Three)**

Immediate action should be taken to make and distribute multilingual brochures and visitor’s guides about Vladimir and the larger Golden Ring area.

**Educating Tourists through the Internet (Recommendation Four)**

Immediate action should be taken to further develop the existing website, [www.valdimir-russia.net](http://www.valdimir-russia.net), and to connect Vladimir to other tourist information websites.

**Short-Term Steps:**

**Importance of the Authenticity of Souvenirs (Recommendation One)**

A plan of action should be conceived and implemented as soon as possible to ensure authenticity and quality of souvenirs for tourists and business owners.

**Educational Materials (Recommendation Two)**

Educational materials about authentic souvenirs should be gathered, synthesized, and distributed to tourists and tour guides as soon as possible.

**Visitor Participation in Souvenir Production and Industry/Manufacturing Tours (Recommendations Eight and Nine)**

The manufacturing industry in Vladimir should be informed about the potential gains that tourism can bring. A plan of action should be
devised and implemented to work with the manufacturing industry to create tours for visitors.

Souvenir Design, Packaging, and Delivery (Recommendation Eleven)

The design, packaging, and delivery of a souvenir can be just as important to tourists as the souvenir itself. A plan of action should be made and implemented as soon as possible to ensure the quality of these aspects, which contribute to the total souvenir purchase process.

Souvenir Related Special Events (Recommendation Twelve)

A special even or contest centered around authentic Russian crafts (souvenirs) should be organized and held in Vladimir to promote and raise awareness about authenticity.

Multilingual Signage and Publications (Recommendation Thirteen)

This recommendation may be costly but should be implemented as soon as possible. Signage is very important due to the rising number of independent foreign travelers. These travelers will probably not be able to read Russian signage and will not visit places that they are unaware of due to the language barrier.

Long-Term Steps:

Tourism Information Center (Recommendation Five)

Would most likely require construction but future plans should be made in order to be ready for future growth.

Souvenir Marketplace (Recommendation Six)
Would require construction and cooperation from many individuals including the government, individual sales people, and business owners. If successful it would help to eliminate unauthentic and poor quality souvenirs, which in turn would help generate more revenues and encourage further sales.
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Appendix A

Visit Old Vladimir for a Taste of Gold

Author: Oksana Smirnova

Part of the so-called Zolotoye Koltso, or Golden Ring of ancient cities encircling Moscow, Vladimir is a worthy city to stroll through and soak in the past.

The main attractions of Vladimir are easily accessible by foot from the train station, and thus a one-day outing will suffice to acquaint you with the city's highlights. But for those who want to linger and drink in the history of one of Russia's oldest cities, an overnight stay may be just the ticket.

Less than 200 kilometers from Moscow, Vladimir -- which literally means "he who controls the world" -- was named after Grand Prince Vladimir II Monomakh, who founded the city in 1108 to be a mighty fortress on the high bank of the Klyazma River. Indeed, its location alone -- protected from the north by the Lybed River and from the east and west by deep ravines -- may have made the city appear impenetrable. This was an ideal spot to build a new city that was to serve as the Russian capital in the 12th and early 13th centuries.

The city did enjoy periods of fame and greatness, but it also endured times of neglect and decline. Today, Vladimir is ancient and young, noisy and mysterious. If you've had the chance to visit Kiev, Russia's first capital, you will no doubt find that Vladimir Monomakh chose a similar city for his capital. The buildings of Vladimir were meant to show that the capital of northeastern Rus would not play second fiddle to Kiev. Many of Vladimir's buildings are imitations of Kievan originals, including the Zolotiye
Vorota, or Golden Gate, a rare example of Russian 12th-century fortifications. The gate was designed to serve as a triumphal entrance to the city. Even today, the road into Vladimir’s old city leads to the Zolotiye Vorota, erected by Grand Prince Andrei Bogolyubsky in 1164, "that my fatherland might remember."

The earthen embankment of the city fortress bound the gate on two sides. The earthen rampart to the south of the gate remains to this day. It is known as the Kozlov Val, or Kozlov’s Rampart, for a merchant named Kozlov who acquired the surrounding land in the 18th century. Over the centuries the rampart has diminished in height by about 6 meters, but tourists -- especially children -- love to clamber up to the top for a view of the old town.

In the winter of 1238, the Zolotiye Vorota was heavily damaged when Mongol invaders sacked the city, and it suffered again during military campaigns in the early 17th century. But it was not until the late 18th century, after the wheels of a carriage conveying Empress Catherine II got stuck in its archway, that the gate received much-needed attention. According to Svetlana Kulikova of the Old Vladimir Museum, the empress ordered a top-to-bottom renovation of the gate. The earthen ramparts were removed, opening up a roadway around the gate that was, in turn, surrounded by additional small towers. The church located above the archway was built anew in brick and consecrated in 1810.

At the same time the Golden Gate was going up in 1158, another Vladimir landmark was born -- the white-stone Assumption Cathedral on the banks of the Klyazma. Vladimir’s chief cathedral might well be the work of an artel of European
builders sent by the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa. According to historical records, "God brought master craftsmen from every land" to raise it.

The cathedral's vault is supported by six pillars. Its gilded dome was crowned by a cupola that rose 33 meters higher than the similarly styled Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Kiev. In its original form, the cathedral was modestly decorated with white-stone reliefs depicting women's faces, animals and ornamental motifs on the exterior, while frescoes by Andrei Rublyov and Daniil Chyorny adorned the interior.

The cathedral suffered extensive damage from a fire in 1185, only to be rebuilt by Prince Vsevolod Bolshoye Gnezdo, or Big Nest -- a name he earned for his numerous offspring. Five cupolas replaced the original one, and the building as a whole acquired a stepped silhouette. Half a century later, the prince's family -- along with some residents of the city -- took refuge in the cathedral during the Mongol attack of 1238. The invaders set fire to the cathedral, killing everyone inside, but leaving the building itself still standing.

The Assumption Cathedral complex includes a bell tower and the Georgy Church. Architect Alexei Vershinsky built the 56-meter-high bell tower in 1810 on the site of a 12th-century hipped-roof bell tower. Nikolai Artleben built the church in 1862 between the bell tower and the cathedral.

One of the main attractions of the Assumption Cathedral is the Virgin of Vladimir icon, brought to Vladimir from Kiev by Andrei Bogolyubsky of Vyshgorod. According to legend, during the prince's journey from Kiev, he received a wondrous sign just outside of Vladimir. His caravan transporting the miraculous icon -- later dubbed the Virgin of Vladimir -- came to a halt, and the horses could not be induced to go any further. That
night, the Virgin Mary appeared before Bogolyubsky and commanded him to build a monastery on the spot where his caravan had stopped. The prince built his residence there, giving rise in the mid-12th century to the city named Bogolyuby, located just 10 kilometers from Vladimir near the confluence of the Nerla and Klyazma rivers.

Today you can visit the village of Bogolyubovo, about 30 minutes from Vladimir by bus. You can book an excursion in the Vladimir tourist office. The architectural jewel of the village is the Church of the Veil on the Nerla, built in 1165. The Vladimir princes' cult of the Virgin is expressed here with particular force. The church, considered a world-class architectural masterpiece, was set off on its own in a meadow surrounded by water on the banks of the Nerla River.

After the city was sacked and burned by the Mongols in 1238, it fell into decline; no new buildings were erected, and many trades were forgotten. By the 14th century, the former capital was just another city in the Grand Principality of Muscovy. Several centuries later in 1774, Vladimir was classified a gubernsky gorod, the principle town in the province, leading to the construction of many new government buildings.

In the 1790s, a new provincial administration building was raised, the Korpus Prisutstvennykh Mest, or Office Building. Today, the entire three-story building has been transformed into a museum containing a collection of paintings, a library, and an exhibit devoted to the Russian gentry estate. If you're traveling with children, don't miss the "Russian Bylina," "Birth of the Book" and "Stroll Through Old Vladimir” exhibits.

Another interesting museum devoted to historical Vladimir is located in an old water tower on Kozlov Val, not far from the Golden Gate. The museum's exhibits recreate the spirit of Vladimir in the 18th and 19th centuries, including scenes from the
life of Vladimir's bourgeoisie, merchants and state officials. On the top floor of the tower is a platform offering an unforgettable view of the city.

Where to Stay

Vladimir has quite a few hotels. One of the most convenient is the Vladimir Hotel and Shopping Complex in the city center at 74 Ulitsa Bolshaya Moskovskaya. Tel. (0922) 32-3042. Book at least a week in advance. Rooms go for 860 rubles per night. Breakfast costs another 90 rubles per day, supper 210 rubles.

Where to Eat

The Vladimir Hotel has a bar and a good restaurant. Dinner for one costs $20 to $30. Other good bets in the city center are Tri Peskarya, a charming cafe, and the rather pricey U Zolotykh Vorot.

How to Get There

Vladimir is 190 kilometers northeast of Moscow. You can catch an elektrichka, or commuter train, at Kursky Station, departing at 8:12 a.m., and arriving in Vladimir at 11:23 a.m. If you prefer to go in the evening and stay overnight, an express train leaves Moscow at 6:04 p.m. and arrives at 8:34 p.m. Tickets cost about 150 rubles. Motorists have an easy two-hour drive up the M7 highway.
Appendix B

Demographics of Travelers to Vladimir

Age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Tourist Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 and Younger</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 45 Years</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 60 Years</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and Older</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travel Party:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel Party</th>
<th>Tourist Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Families with Children</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families without Children</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment Status:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Tourist Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Employees</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students/School Children</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business People</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons for Travel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Travel</th>
<th>Tourists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive/Cultural</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation &amp; Rest</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positives of Traveling in the Golden Ring:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positives of Traveling</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museums &amp; Monuments</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The town of Suzdal</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursion Program &amp; Work of</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church service</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Factors (e.g. locals,</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weather)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The town of Bogolyubovo</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The city of Vladimir</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Services</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Negatives of Traveling in the Golden Ring:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cold Weather</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time to visit museums</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated plans to listen to chimes or church choir</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Factors (e.g. lack of entertainment, locals, etc.)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dilapidation of monuments</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadside service</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of toilets</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

The schedule of events for the Stoneware Factory (Boleslawiec, Poland)

Day 1

10:00am- view the creation process and learn of the rich history of the craft
12:00pm- visit the management offices and meet the staff

Day 2

9:00am- learn the process of forming and cleaning the stoneware
10:am- individual work….”hands on experience”

Day 3

9:00am- learn the decorating process
11:00am- individual work

Day 4

9:00am - learn the glazing process
10:00am- individual work….”hands on experience”

Day 5

9:00am – learn the firing process
10:00am – fire of the individual products

General fee per day per person is 50 Euros!!!!

“Manufacture” Sp.J Smolenski&Zwierz
Boleslawiec, Poland

www.boleslawiec-ceramika.com
Appendix D

Inclusive 5-Day-Meissen porcelain seminar

5 nights in a very fine hotel in the town of Meißen, includes

- Breakfast buffet
- One dinner "Saxon Menu" with wine-tasting
- Expert guided tour subject through the "Nikolaikirche", church in Meißen, where the world's tallest Meissen Porcelain® figures can be seen
- One book "Meissen® in Meißen" with information about the history of the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory and the city of Meißen
- Chauffeur service from the railway station of Meißen to the hotel when you're arriving by train
- Extensive information material with city guide and tips for visits Meißen zum Hotel
- Price per person in double room from € 860 up

Additional services:

- Ticket bookings for theatre and opera
- Negotiation of lodgings in Dresden and environs
- Chauffeur service from airport or from the railway station of Dresden to Meißen
- Guided tours through Dresden and Meißen
- Special programs for companions, for example bicycle tours along the river Elbe

Special offer for organized groups:

http://www.meissen-porcelain.com/schulklassen_1004.htm