

*Final
Report*

**QUALITATIVE PRE-TEST:
MARKETING MATERIAL FOR
FORT LENNOX AND
THE FORTRESS OF LOUISBOURG**

Presented to:
Parks Canada
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SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

This report presents the results of a series of eight focus group discussions conducted in Montreal (4), Toronto (2) and Halifax (2) from January 31 to February 3rd, 2005. The subject of these groups and this report is participants' evaluation of different marketing material for Fort Lennox (print ads and brochures) and for the Fortress of Louisbourg (print ads). The overall objective of this process was to submit these documents to the critical review of members of the potential audience to align the overall campaign, and determine where and how individual concepts can be improved. Our focus groups were composed of "general population" Canadians who travel, but segmented between those who travel with families and those who do not.

The reader of this report is reminded that the methodology employed in this study is qualitative in nature, and therefore should not be construed as representative of the general population of Canadians in any statistically representative manner. The high degree of consistency in the findings derived from this process does, however, suggest that we may have confidence in the general validity of the findings reported herein.

1.2 OVERVIEW

Based on the findings derived from this process, and our analysis of the reactions of participants to the material tested, we assert the following as the general conclusions to be drawn from this study:

- Audiences in all focus groups, be they potential day trip visitors to Fort Lennox or potential overnight travelers to The fortress of Louisbourg are much inclined to presumption about what's involved in a visit to forts such as these. For the most part, these presumptions are *negative*, and pervasive. In this light, one of the important findings of this study is that the messaging for this campaign should account for these predispositions.
- Our findings shed light on the appropriateness of the campaign objectives, and specifically on what is feasible and realistic in light of the general "pull" that is associated with sites such as Fort Lennox and the Fortress of Louisbourg. If the objective of the campaign is to motivate large proportions of potential visitors to make an overnight trip, the reactions of Quebec and Ontario participants suggest that the Fortress of Louisbourg, as big as it is, does not provide sufficient pull on its own. Even Maritimers in Halifax tend to evoke similar kinds of reasoning. By the same token, it does appear reasonable (and this, based on participants' reactions to the material) for forts such as these to weigh in the balance of a decision to travel to a region.
- Finally, we see from reactions to the concepts tested that there are in fact elements to be manipulated to construct more effective campaigns. Certain choices relative to photography can serve to counter negative predispositions. Certain aspects of the fort visitation experience can be emphasized as a way of augmenting interest among a wide audience. History, an integral part of any National Historic Site, can be handled in ways that account for stereotype, and provoke potentially interested audiences to think about history and historic sites in more favorable ways.

1.3 PREDISPOSITIONS AND PRESUMPTIONS REGARDING HISTORICAL SITES

Very clearly, most participants we talked to are predisposed to think about the prospect of visiting a fort or a historical site in somewhat negative ways. These predispositions emerge in different ways and with different degrees of intensity from participant to participant, but nonetheless are articulated in the following common ways:

- *Forts in specific and National Historic Site in general* are widely seen to be of interest only to “history buffs” or school teachers in search of “learning activities” for school children.
- A corollary to the above presumption, less widely held but still prevalent, is that these sites are *boring*, and generally constrained to *passive* visitation of a site, and observation of the elements within.
- Most participants presume that the experience of visiting a site will be exclusively focused on the artifacts and physical elements of the site itself. In essence, the “stereotype” of the historical site is that the experience is somewhat narrow, focused, and on a small scale.
- For many, forts such as these (and even National Historic Sites in general) are seen as places that have a primarily educational vocation, which in turn explains why so many felt that “school children” were the intended audience for these concepts. While most appear to endorse this vocation for forts and National Historic Sites in general, this particular vocation is often seen as incompatible with the “have fun and relax” objective of vacation travel.
- Finally, we see differences between parents (who are weighing travel plans in light of their kids’ needs and wants) and adults young and old that need only cater to their own needs. While both groups appear to share the same general presumptions, it was clear that parents attach relative importance to the depth of the experience they might find (or not) in a historic site, particularly in light of their concern that their children will be bored or uninterested.

1.4 SALIENT ELEMENTS OF THE CONCEPTS

Participant reaction to the different concepts tested were highly useful for uncovering both the predispositions cited above, and the elements required to account for them in any campaign to motivate travel to a National Historic Site. Some of these elements emerged as a function of graphic elements, notably photography, whereas others are in the interplay between messaging and perceived target audience. These can be inventoried as a function of principles related to the notion of *scale, variety and depth, active versus passive visitation, and dealing with history*:

1.4.1 *Scale*

Many participants presume that forts are small in scale. This finding was made evident by their negative reactions to several aspects of the concepts tested, notably photography, and the layout of that photography. Concepts that depicted a single, large frame picture of a costumed character as opposed to an inanimate view of the site or its surroundings tended to reinforce this presumption. This effect was even more pronounced when a large-frame picture of a costumed actor was accompanied by a predominance of other pictures of costumed characters. Both graphic elements tend to be interpreted as a signal that the site is, in effect, focused, and of a small scale. What was interesting were the contrasting reactions to concepts that depicted the Fortress of Louisbourg on a large scale: In concepts where the Fortress was depicted at wide angles and with relatively complete “overviews” of the geography, participants tended to react much more favorably, and more importantly, re-visit their presumptions about the limitations of historical places.

1.4.2 *Variety and Depth*

Another presumption, namely that historical places are somewhat boring and singularly focused on artifacts, physical features, and perhaps costumed (or uniformed) characters, can also be reinforced by both text and photography. Again, photography or text that focuses on any one of these things in a singular fashion tends to reinforce this presumption.

Conversely, concepts that depict or describe a variety of these elements suggests greater depth to the experience. This in turn, typically, tends to increase interest and cause participants to review their presumptions. This observation also appeared to hold true for variation described or shown on the physical plane: Participants were more interested, and less inclined to indulge in “historical places are boring” presumption when shown the sites in their natural surroundings. This was particularly true for the Fortress of Louisbourg, where the element of the sea, boats, and so on greatly augmented interest in the site. Fort Lennox participants also tended to the same pattern.

1.4.3 Active versus Passive Visitation

The presumption that National Historic Sites are visited passively, much as if one goes in and comes out with one’s arms crossed was one of the more prevalent we encountered. For parents in particular, this presumption raises the difficulty in successful messaging because the expected consequence of a passive visitation experience is bored kids. Here too, photography is something that can contribute to this presumption of a passive experience, augmenting the notion when photographs show people standing and watching, and diminishing it when people are shown interacting with the actors, or otherwise engaged. The text can be equally telling in this sense, as seen in reaction to concepts that speak directly about the potential to interact, or even better, the direct description of that interactive experience. Concepts that were successful in this sense won over both parents and adult potential visitors to a greater degree.

1.4.4 Dealing with History

Finally, we noted that raising the spectre of “history” and particularly *learning about history* was both problematic and inevitable in marketing of this nature. More to the point, our findings suggest that the avenue to successfully navigating the presumption that history is boring and of interest only to history buffs, school teachers and senior citizens is to focus more effectively on the present-day relevance of the National Historic Site in question. As a case in point, we noted that a considerable number of participants who live outside of

Nova Scotia were wholly ignorant of where the Fortress of Louisbourg is situated, and even more about why it was preserved in the first place. Several even questioned if the site was in fact genuine, and not some “tourist attraction” built on the site to attract money from outside of the province. For Fort Lennox and the Fortress of Louisbourg alike, interest in the “history” increased, and the predisposed view that history is boring decreased as the modern-day relevance of the site was discussed. Interestingly (and tellingly), curiosity about the history of these sites appeared to be at some of its most palpable heights during moments when modern day sensitivities were being discussed:

Moderator: “What do you think?”

Participant: “I don’t know about this. I think some French people might be offended by this – that the British took this place that the French built.”

This suggests that conveying the modern-day relevance of these historical sites – even as a simple evocation of why they were preserved in the first place and what they relate to in the current Canadian context *may* be one avenue to dealing both with history and the related negative predispositions.

1.5 CONCLUSIONS

We can summarize what we have learned about how to align this campaign as follows:

- Participants that came to this exercise were rife with presumptions about forts and these presumptions came to bear on how they reacted to the various concepts tested. Generally, accounting for these presumptions or predispositions in the fashioning of marketing material seems paramount.
- Participants also came to this exercise much less aware of the Fortress of Louisbourg and Fort-Lennox than perhaps was anticipated. This lack of awareness extends to basic things such as the location of the Fortress of Louisbourg or even Cape Breton, as well as to larger questions such as the *authenticity* of the site, or its historical significance. Accounting for this lack of awareness in the concepts is equally paramount.

In executional terms, much can be accomplished in light of the first point above by adopting certain conventions in the fashioning of this marketing material. These would be (in no particular order of importance):

- Using photography and text that depicts the sites on a grand or large scale as opposed to a small or focused scale. This technique appears to augment the perceived interest in the site, whereas photography of a narrower focus seems to imply the same for the experience.
- Using photography and text to augment the sense that these sites offer a greater depth and variety of experience. This is often simply accomplished by “mixing up” photos and text so that key elements of the site’s features – interesting and impressive facilities, costumed characters, compelling natural surroundings and so on are all present in a single concept. A specific case in these concepts would be the value of depicting water, which reinforces “vacation-like” attributes.
- Using photography and text to convey the notion that interaction is part of the possible experience at these sites. This can be accomplished by speaking to interaction, or showing it in photography. Conversely, our findings suggest that photography that depicts only people watching passively, or text that speaks exclusively to the physical features of the site can exacerbate presumptions in this sense. Additionally, we see in this particular series of concepts that “thumbnail” photography that focuses solely on costumed characters, or small-scale scenes of the forts tend to reinforce these negative

predispositions. Thumbnails that show a wider variety of scenes were, however, well-received.

Finally, there is some evidence from this exercise to suggest that while evoking the historical nature and educational vocation of these sights is somewhat problematic (in that it tends to reinforce presumptions), interest in the sites may increase, and the tendency to presume may decrease to the extent that the modern-day significance of the sites is made clear.

Some of the slogans tested, *"To gain entry, they needed tall ships, artillery and great courage. All you need is a ticket, "Built by the French. Captured by the British. Preserved for Canadians"* and *"A national treasure in your own backyard"* were the generally favored options, all three of which showed some tendency to augment the perceived interest of the site.

Ultimately then, if we examine the concepts tested against the standard of motivating out-of-province or overnight travel (in the case of the Fortress of Louisbourg) or against the standard of motivating a day trip (in the case of Fort Lennox), our findings suggest that the material falls short of providing a singular motive for such travel. When set against the standard of providing an *additional* motive for someone already considering such a trip, the concepts, particularly amended as suggested above show more promise. One implication of this finding is that this material can be configured without reference to the larger region if it is shown in a regional travel guide (presuming that readers of such guides will already be considering such a trip), but that the same material in a "stand alone" context would do well to include reference to the attractions of the surrounding region.

Finally, participants were asked about where and how they research for travel related information. The feedback on this question produced an inventory of sources that included:

- The Internet, which participants cite as increasingly valuable tool for travel related information;
- The Canadian Automobile Association, which is consistently valued for providing maps and unbiased counsel;
- 1-800 numbers and tourist guides through the mail from the destinations themselves;
- Advertising in newspapers and magazines;
- And finally, other more minor sources such as advertising in various media, word of mouth, and travel agencies.

SECTION 2: OBJECTIVES

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this study was to assess, from the perspective of participants who have a history of traveling, the following specific questions relative to marketing material formulated to increase visitation to the Fortress of Louisbourg and Fort Lennox. The more specific measures and standards for this material were to ensure the following:

- Overall adequacy of the material relative to its ability to motivate travel to the sites, notably to Cape Breton for those in Montreal and Toronto (in an overnight vacationing context), and for day trips from Montreal to Fort Lennox. An additional component of marketing the Fortress of Louisbourg to residents of Halifax, for whom a trip to the Fortress of Louisbourg might mean also mean an overnight trip, was also considered.
- Clarity, adequacy of each graphic components in these concepts;
- Clarity of the language, level of language used;
- Suggestions for improving the material;
- Evidence of any potential unanticipated or unintended reaction to the guides or elements therein.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 CHOSEN METHOD

Given the objectives set out for this study, the method of focus group interviewing was selected as the most appropriate.

3.2 NUMBER AND LOCATION OF GROUPS

A total of eight focus groups were held, four in Montreal (in French), and an additional 2 groups each in Toronto and Halifax, all during the week of January 31 to Feb 3rd, 2005.

3.3 PARTICIPANT RECRUITING CRITERIA

As mentioned previously, all six groups recruited for this process were selected among Canadians who have traveled outside of their home province at least twice in the last 24 months. Additionally, the groups were recruited among Canadians so as to ensure the representation of different age groups, educational levels and so on. The specific criteria set out in the scope of work were as follows:

- For Toronto and Montreal: adults over 25 who have traveled overnight for pleasure out-of-province in the last two years, and who plan to do so in the next two years. Two sessions for each city, one with adults who traveled with children under 16, one with adults who traveled alone or as a couple.
- For Halifax: adults over 25 who have traveled overnight for pleasure in the last two years, and who plan to do so in the next two years. Groups in Halifax were recruited so as to ensure the presence of a minimum number who had visited the Fortress of Louisbourg, and were segmented according to gender.

Following discussions with the client, further refinements to the recruiting specification were made, namely to tighten the focus on people with a minimum income and education levels.

3.4 INCENTIVE FEES

Participants in all groups were offered an incentive of 50\$ for their participation and co-operation in the groups.

3.5 MODERATING AND ANALYSIS

John Patterson moderated all eight groups and was responsible for all aspects related to the analysis of results and the writing of this report.

3.5 MATERIAL TESTED

The material tested in this project consisted of a variety of concepts for both print ads and brochures. “Thumbnail” versions of each of these concepts are included in the text, each opposite their related report content.

SECTION 4: DETAILED RESULTS

4.0 DETAILED RESULTS

4.1 PRINT ADVERTISING CONCEPTS – THE FORTRESS OF LOUISBOURG

4.1.1 Concepts: “Don’t tell your kids...” / “Who goes there?”



Generally-speaking, reactions to these concepts were fairly lukewarm, and for a number of reasons, not least of which was their perceived focus on this young woman, and a relative absence of wider or more varied visual imagery. The young woman herself, while widely perceived as “friendly” and “attractive”, nonetheless causes some to question the authenticity of the experience offered in the Fortress of Louisbourg, at least among those who know enough history to recognize that militias of the period were unlikely to have women among their ranks. Several additional aspects and surface features of this concept were at issue:

- The rather large photograph of the young woman has the effect of narrowing perceptions of what the Fortress of Louisbourg experience is all about, such that many participants presume that the Fort offers an expose of history that is to be experienced passively.

“You go there, and you visit a place that has four walls.”

“C’est un fort comme tous les forts au Canada. On y va, on fait le tour...”

- In the “Who goes there” piece, some participants noted that the experience seemed focused on kids, and in a related manner, of less inherent interest for adults:

“It’s a good place for a school outing I think.”

“I’m not sure what you’d do there. I’m wondering if it has enough to keep me interested for more than an hour or two.”

- Some noted that this text is more informative about the nature of the Fortress of Louisbourg experience than are the photographs in any of these concepts. The narrative that employs descriptive “you will…” formulations seems to describe the overall experience with more inherent interest than does the photography.
- Finally, many participants reacted poorly to the education-related slogans, notably because the direct appeal to “learning” tends to reinforce stereotypes that “learning about history” is fundamentally boring.

The different slogans associated with this visual provoked different kinds of reactions, and had different influences on the perceived message and target audience:

- “Don’t tell you kids they might learn something” apparently reinforces some negative stereotype surrounding what a historic site has to offer, but also signals that the site caters to the essential concern among parents that their kids have fun at such a site. The promise that kids might have fun and learn is compelling, but does not appear to be accepted at face value. This is partially a function of other aspects of the ad, notably its singular focus on costumed characters.
- “Who goes there” was understood as a minor play on words, but otherwise suggested little in terms of expected benefit.

In summary then, this concept was revealed to be relatively ineffective at motivating participants to travel to Cape Breton, but might otherwise influence a decision to go there for the right audience. The intended audience for this concept was generally tied to people who might be expected to be interested in learning about history – school kids, history

buffs, and perhaps senior citizens. Overall, the message here suggests that the Fortress of Louisbourg experience is somewhat narrow, passive, and of focused interest for specific audiences.

4.1.2 “*Learning was never so much fun*” / “*Apprendre n’a jamais etre aussi amusant*”



The initial reactions to this piece were much the same as for the other concepts in this series: Some participants reacted positively to this “appealing child”, but

on the whole, most participants were unimpressed with the concept itself. Although appealing, this child does not appear sufficient to convey much in terms of a motive for visiting the site, and the concept as a whole is “vague” about what one is to experience there. The words of one participant seemed to summarize the general reaction to this concept:

“He’s very appealing, but you wouldn’t go to a place like this just to see someone else’s child.”

Parenthetically, some participants were very much more interested in this piece where and when they presumed that this kid was a visitor as opposed to an actor, and from this, we see one of the more important provisos concerning the site emerge: For the vast majority of participants, visiting a site with costumed characters as passive observers holds much less promise and interest than does the notion of visiting a site like this and *participating* in the enactment of period life.

Other aspects that came up in the context of this concept were also revealing:

- The text was well received, on the whole, but seemed to evoke a more passive vision of the site than the text in the previously discussed concept. Here, the discussion of the site seems to focus on a description of the locale, as opposed to a description of the *experience*.
- Several participants suggested (and with the apparent agreement of their counterpart participants) that the photograph of the site in blue, at the lower portion of the concept, is quite impressive, and should be made clearer than it is in the current version. The value associated with this photograph is that it depicts the Fortress of Louisbourg on a grander scale, and thus conveys that the site is grander, more impressive, and more diverse.
- A few participants noted the aerial photograph of the site, but participants were generally mixed about the impact and implications of the fort. Some felt that this aerial view does a better job of conveying the scale of the Fortress of Louisbourg than other photographs, while other felt it does just the opposite.
- The perceived target audience here was predominantly perceived to be school children, partly as a by-product of the photographic emphasis on the child in the main picture, and partly as a function of the slogan's emphasis on learning. In fact, from this and the previous concept that speaks to learning, we see clear evidence that evoking this as a product or a benefit of the site is widely interpreted as a signal that the pitch is to school children.
- Finally, the slogan or headline in both the English and French versions of this ad provoked similar reactions to the previously discussed concept: While the slogan directly evokes an ideal benefit (that one can learn and have fun at the same time), this direct evocation of the historical vocation of the site reinforces some negative stereotypes (i.e. that history is inherently dull and of interest only to history buffs), and ultimately *over-promises*. Several participants pointed out that the text and the overall messaging of the concept failed to credibly advance this notion in the headlines.

“I just don’t buy what the text says. It just doesn’t look like a place where you’d have that much fun.”

4.1.3 Concept: “To get in, they needed tall ships, artillery and great courage. All you need is a ticket”



Overall, this concept generated much more positive reactions, and although some nuance emerged as a function of different headlines used in different versions of this concept, it was also clear that a good measure of the positive reaction to this piece stems from the main photo of the fort. Seen from the water, and from a wide-angle, the fort is obviously more impressive, and conveys an experience of a grander scale than was the case for other photography used.

Other specific aspects of these concepts were as follows:

- The headline that ends “All you need is a ticket” was of apparently greater interest to men, but also seemed to connect to most participants in ways not observed elsewhere. The connection, apparently, is to the *significance* of the Fortress of Louisbourg. To be sure, the military undertone of this headline provoked some reaction, but the reference to the conflicts at the fortress was also apparently provocative:

“Something important happened here!?”

“Wow, it must have been quite something!”

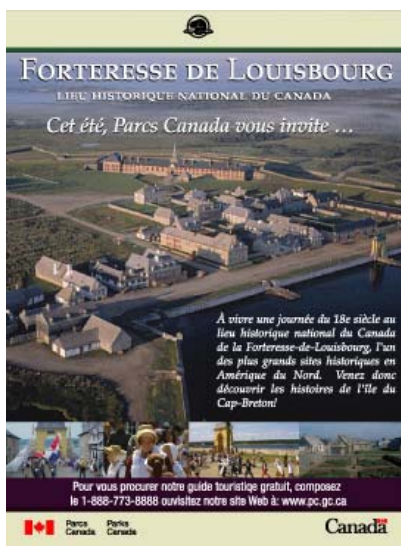
- The headline “Built by the French. Captured by the British. Preserved for all Canadians” was apparently more provocative to some, and also because

it evokes the significance of the site. Here, the reference to historical conflict between the French and the British evoked modern-day sensitivities:

“I’m not sure this would be well received by French people.”

- A few participants remarked that the parchment effect on the lower half of the concept was “interesting”, and to some, a more compelling way to convey history with graphics.

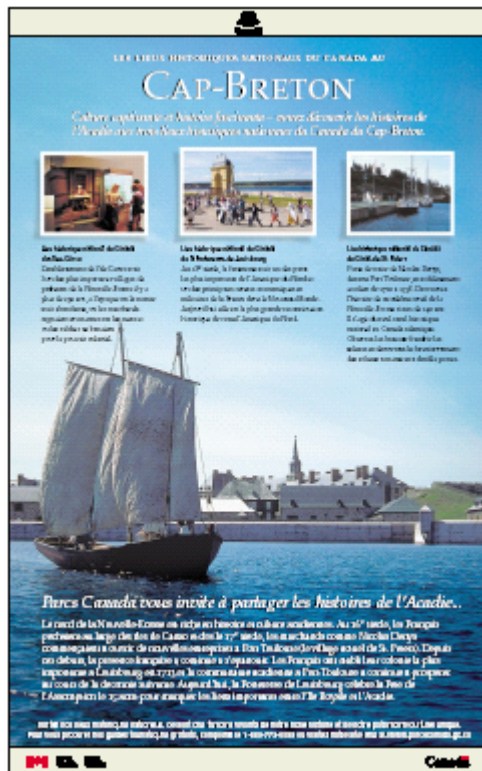
Concept: “Cet Été, Parcs Canada Vous Invite ”



Some things about this concept were of apparent and immediate appeal relative to the other concepts tested, notably the aerial view (which in this case succeeds more consistently in conveying the scale of the place). In addition, there was valuable insight in participants’ reaction to the set of smaller photographs, which in this case convey a richer experience and an experience of a more varied texture. Otherwise, we also heard echoes of previously mentioned insight in reaction to this piece, notably:

- That the text, while well understood and generally descriptive of the site itself doesn’t convey much about the nature of the experience to be had there. This is in part conveyed by the photography, and particularly by the “thumbnail” sized pictures.
- Some people remarked that the thumbnail picture of the people dancing was particularly interesting because it depicts visitors interacting with actors. Here again, the sub-text that interactivity is a compelling and indeed essential feature of the site to pitch to prospective visitors emerged.
- On the whole, however, the perceived target audience for this ad tended to be school children, or perhaps senior citizens.

4.1.5 Blue from the Water Concept



Of all the Fortress of Louisbourg concepts tested in French, in Montreal, this one was definitely the most well-received, and apparently for several important reasons that illustrate broader imperatives for the campaign:

- Once again, the photography in this piece is compelling for several reasons: It conveys something of the scale of the Fortress of Louisbourg, and suggests (indirectly) that the site can be visited in interactive as opposed to passive mode. The colour here, and the scene from the water sends a strong signal that the Fortress of Louisbourg has vacation-like attributes, which in turn signals that

the site itself can be enjoyed as a place in its own right.

- Participants also picked up on the fact that this concept sells the Fortress of Louisbourg as a part of Cape Breton, as opposed to a destination in and of itself. This has a profound effect on the overall motivation of participants, who clearly find it easier to contemplate the Fortress of Louisbourg as part of a visit to Cape Breton as opposed to the other way around. The direct reference to “Cape Breton” in the headline and the use of the “thumbnail” photography to pitch other National Historic Sites in the area both serve this end.
- The perceived target audience for this piece was “families”, but also more definitively included couples and people who travel as individuals. This is clearly a function of the more “vacation-like” notions that emerge as a function of the photography, and the wider inventory of activities suggested by the text and the caption photographs.
- Finally, the view of the site taken from the water, in addition to adding to the vacation-like attributes of the site, also suggests something of a broader and grander scale than views of the site from other angles.

4.1.6 Concept: Cape Breton Island – Sharing the Stories of Our Past



Reactions to this concept in English mirrored those to the previous we encountered among Francophone participants in Quebec: this is a concept that effectively sells Cape Breton as a destination with a message that promises vacation-like weather, a variety of things to do, and things of interest for the whole family and young adults alike. This is also a concept that seems to convey the most of its message by way of photography, and in this sense presents text that was absorbed, but not much at issue or of interest to participants.

Other aspects of interest to emerge relative to this concept were as follows:

- This is interpreted as advertising for Cape Breton first, and for the National Historic Sites in the area second. Participants quite readily acknowledged that in this light, the concept might motivate people to travel to Cape Breton, but leave them nonetheless disinterested in the Fortress of Louisbourg.

Moderator: “What’s the message here?”

Participant: “Come visit Cape Breton!”

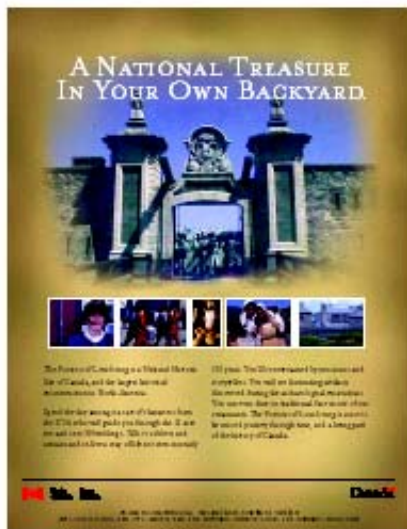
Moderator: “What does it say about the Fortress of Louisbourg?”

Participant: “Not much.”

- Some participants wondered, given the destination-driven character of the piece, why there weren’t maps, and other indications of how far apart the different National Historic Sites were from one another.

Ultimately, then, reactions to this concept served to reinforce the point that it is easier to “sell” a region with several points of attraction than a single site as the sole motive for travel. In this sense, this concept illustrates that motivating travel is a function of conveying sufficient depth and variety of things to do to make the trip worthwhile. More specifically, this concept also makes it clear that these two messages (“come to a region” versus “come to a National Historic Site”) aren’t necessarily complementary. In addition, we see from reactions to this ad that the balance of messaging about a region or a site within that region is an important consideration. Finally, the more varied content of this ad had the effect of broadening the perceived target audience.

4.1.7 Concept: “A National Treasure In Your Own Backyard”



Reactions to this concept were largely tepid, particularly for its lack of visual appeal. Here again, the photography of the gates of the fort serves poorly in terms of conveying the scale of the Fortress of Louisbourg. The thumbnail pictures on the lower third of the concept serve somewhat better in this sense, although a few participants thought there was too much emphasis on the costumed characters. This feeling was augmented by their sense that the Fortress of Louisbourg actually has more visually interesting things to offer (water, many buildings, ramparts, etc.), and offers many more interesting things to do than simply watching actors. For most participants, the target audience for this concept would be “history buffs”, or perhaps “older people” with the time and disposition to enjoy such things.

One interesting messaging component did emerge from the messaging concept was the notion of “a national treasure”, which seems to underline the compelling notion that places

like the Fortress of Louisbourg are indeed treasures, and that they have commanded considerable resources, effort and attention. One participant, although speaking with slight irony, nonetheless sounded genuine when he reflected: “They spend a lot of money on the place, and it is the largest reconstruction in North America. We ought to go see it.” Finally, some participants remarked that the text in this ad does a better job of evoking the interactive possibilities at the site than others.

4.1.8 Concept: *L’histoire se Répète / History Repeats Itself*



Reactions to this concept were similar to the preceding in that the photography seems to “undersell” the site, and focus too exclusively on the actors to the detriment of a wider view, or a

wider appreciation of what the Fortress of Louisbourg has to offer.

Some of the positive messages to be associated with this concept were:

- An “open book” or an “invitation” to visit the site;
- That there are more diverse things to do here, and the promise of “une journée bien remplie”;

Whereas some of the more negative things were:

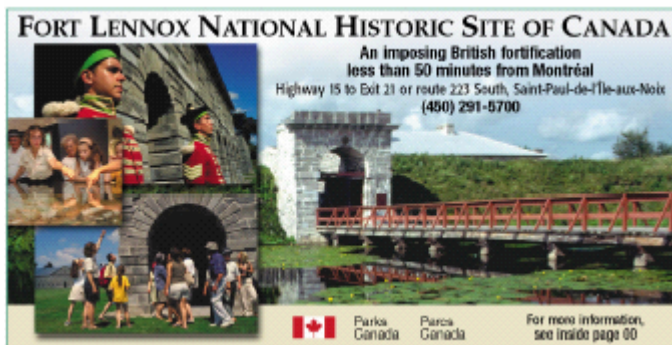
- The “same old Canadian fort experience”;
- “Une journée thématique pour des sorties d’école”

The slogan here showed some promise in that a few participants picked up on the notion that history repeating itself suggests a site where things are *relived* in modern times. The idea of something relived in turn underscores the interactive aspect of the site.

4.2 FORT LENNOX: PRINT AD CONCEPTS

The Fort Lennox concepts – consisting of both print ad concepts and brochure concepts were tested only in Montreal. Overall, reactions to these concepts were largely similar to the reactions we encountered vis-à-vis the Fortress of Louisbourg concepts, both in tone and content. In the case of the Fort Lennox material, we see evidence that the site’s smaller stature increases the difficulty in motivating people to visit, despite the fact that is relatively close to Montreal. Here again, we see evidence to suggest that the mechanisms required to motivate visitation revolve around successfully conveying that the Fort Lennox can provide a complete, varied, and somewhat interactive experience. To the same degree that potential visitors to the Fortress of Louisbourg were more open to visiting Cape Breton, and the Fortress of Louisbourg as a part of that Cape Breton trip, the Montrealers were spoke seemed more willing to consider a visit to Fort Lennox in the context of a larger day trip. Most participants remained skeptical that the fort could fill a day.

4.2.1 “An Imposing British fortification less than 50 km from Montreal”



Initial reactions to this piece were mixed, but most participants remained unmoved by either the visual presentation here and/or the text. To many, this concept evokes something of a stereotype Canadian Fort advertising piece, focused on the physical features of the fort itself and a few uniformed individuals. Many of those who had visited forts were indifferent to this presentation, having clearly concluded that they had already experience this, and that

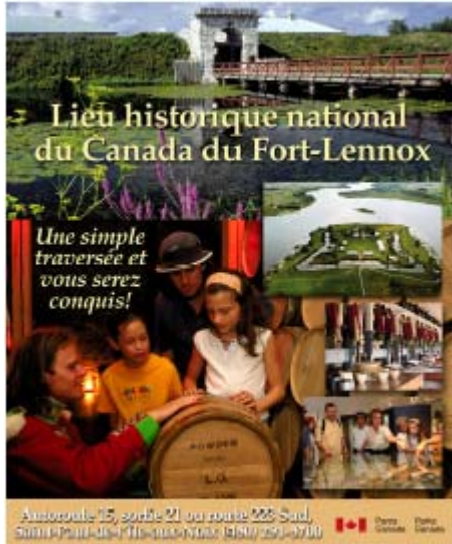
Fort Lennox was unlikely to offer anything different.

Some of the additional associations and characteristics of this concept were as follows:

- Some detected an unappealing focus on the military aspects of the site, and therefore concluded that the intended audience, or perhaps the likely interested audience would be those interested in the military and in history;
- Some detected an underlying “promote Canada” theme, and described this ad as consistent with “le fédéral”;
- Some felt that the message was “*Venez visitez le lieu historique en peu de temps*”, underscoring the perceived narrow focus of the site and the related visit.
- From a more charitable perspective, a few thought the piece nonetheless was successful in conveying the notion of a “pleasant day trip”.

Finally, it was very clear from the majority of participants that the intended audience here was focused on families, or school teachers, underscoring the “educational” theme, and by the same token, a lack of content or messaging of perceived interest to adults.

4.2.2 Concept “Une Simple Traversée et vous serez conquis!”



Although the general tone and reaction to this concept remained tepid, this concept fared better than the previous concept, if only because it succeeded in conveying something of a larger focus, expanded beyond the military to include something more interactive, and perhaps something of interest to a wider audiences.

More specific things to emerge in association with this concept were as follows.

- To some, this concept conveys a wider experience, and something of interest to a broader audience, not constrained, as was the case last time, to “people who travel in buses”;
- The message, generally, seemed to be “something to do in a pleasant environment”, even though many were visibly unmotivated by this proposition.
- The photography suggests something of a more interactive experience, at least for kids, which is a present and constant concern for parents;
- The photography succeeds somewhat better in conveying that water is part of the scenery at Fort Lennox, which in turn broadens the interest for those who are less interested in “military history”. This is partly a function of the caption.

4.2.3 Concept: Fort-Chambly et Fort Lennox



This concept failed rather completely in its attempt to motivate overnight travel to two National Historic Sites. Although the principle of selling a “destination” as opposed to a site held true in most other groups, and particularly for the Fortress of Louisbourg site and Cape Breton, most Montrealers we spoke to were rather

incredulous regarding the notion that both sites would warrant such time and expense. In addition, the introduction of the Auberge Harris as an additional point of attraction very visibly fell flat with most participants, and for some, actually reduced the impact of the messaging surrounding the forts:

“C’est clair, si on aime pas le fort, on peut au moins venir se baigner.”

The one valued feature of this concept, however, was the aerial photography of the forts, which succeed somewhat better in conveying scale, and the presence of interesting surroundings.

4.3 FORT LENNOX – BROCHURE CONCEPTS

4.3.1 Concepts: “Un Site Majestueux”



While reactions to these brochure concepts were generally consistent with the reactions to the previous advertising concepts, at least in general tone, several things emerged with clarity about the *relative* impact of this approach:

- It is apparently easier to convey the depth of experience and the diversity of the geographical features of a site such as Fort Lennox with a pamphlet than with a print ad.
- Here, elements such as interactivity emerge, via different photography in each, but nonetheless clearly enough to suggest to parents that there are activities here sufficient to keep their kids busy for a while. Several participants mentioned that the picnic table was an important element in conveying that there are things to do “off site”, which was also important to them.

- These brochure concepts do a better job of conveying the appeal of the site in strictly visual terms, underscoring the idea that Fort Lennox is in pleasant surroundings, and that the Fort has its eye-pleasing characteristics.
- Many participants appreciated the more informative aspect of these brochures, particularly the map, and the hours of operation.

4.3.2 Concept: *Two Guards*

Reactions to this brochure were, in most relevant respects, almost identical to those heard for the previous concept: The brochure format is better suited to conveying that the site has its visually appealing characteristics, and does a better job of suggesting that the surrounding area has features and benefits that might add to the appeal of a visit. Here again, however, the prominence of costumed military people serves to underscore the fundamentally limited historical vocation of the fort itself. Some participants noted that the photography is better here, and that a good picture can add considerably to the potential appeal of the site. This simply underscores a constant we encountered in the context of Fort Lennox marketing material, which is that the site does better when situated in a larger environment that might add to the appeal of those who are less interested in history.

Appendix:
Recruiting
Screener

Patterson Langlois Consultants
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Tel. : (450)672-6678

Recruiting Screener
Project: PC Marketing Material Eval 2005
Final version
January 12th, 2005

Toronto

DATES/TIMES: February 2nd: 7h30 and 19h30.
CLIENT: Parks Canada
SUBJECT: Advertising evaluation
LOCATION: CRC
INCENTIVE: \$50
FORMAT: 11 for 10

Record: Male 1 → A good mix
Female 2 → A good mix

INTRODUCTION

Good day/Evening, my name is _____, and I'm calling on behalf of a marketing research firm working for the government of Canada. I'm calling today to see if you would be interested in attending a focus group on travel related advertising for Parks Canada. The purpose of this call is to see if you're eligible to participate. This will only take a few minutes, if I may?

Yes 1
No 2 **THANK AND TERMINATE.**

Q.2 First, to which of the following age groups do you belong? **READ**

Less than 24 years old 1 **CHECK FOR ALTERNATIVE IN HOUSEHOLD ELSE
THANK AND TERMINATE**
Between 25 and 35 2 **A good mix**
Between 36 and 45 3 **A good mix**
Between 46 and 65 4 **A good mix**
Over 66 years old 5 **THANK AND TERMINATE**

Q.2a What is your level of education?

a) Incomplete high school 1 **THANK AND TERMINATE**
b) High school 2 **No more than 3 per group**
c) Some post secondary education 3 **Target 50% of group**
d) University degree or higher 4 **Target at least 50% of group**

Q.2b Are you presently...?

a) Working part time 1
b) Working full time 2
c) Retired 3

Q.2c Are you presently...?

- a) Single 1
- b) Married / Living together 2
- c) Divorced / Separated 3
- d) Widow 4

Q.2d For the year 2004, in which of the following categories did your total household income belongs?
Please consider all your sources of revenue (Ex: retirement plan, family allocation, welfare...) (**READ**)

- Less than 50k\$ **1 THANK AND TERMINATE**
- Between 51k and 64.999 \$ **2 Minimum Singles or Retiree living on one income**
- Between 65k and 79.999 \$ **3 Minimum for couples without child**
- 80k\$ and over **4 Minimum for couple with children**
- DNK/DNA **5 THANK AND TERMINATE**

Q.3 Have you travelled outside of your hometown for pleasure in the last 2 years?

NOTE: does not include business, nor personal, like moving child to University, weddings, funerals, etc)

- Yes 1
- No 2 **THANK AND TERMINATE**

Q.3a When I travel, I usually...?

- Travel alone 1 **THANK AND TERMINATE.**
- Travel with another adult (spouse, friend, grown child) 2 **Target 50% of group**
- Travel with child(ren) less than 16 years old 3 **Target 50% of group**

Q.3b How likely do you think it is that you will travel overnight for pleasure out-of-province in the next two years?

- A certainty 1
- Likely 2
- Not very likely 3 **THANK AND TERMINATE.**
- Not at all likely 4 **THANK AND TERMINATE.**
- Don't Know 9 **THANK AND TERMINATE.**

Q.4 Do you or someone in your household work for?

(**If yes to one of these questions, Thank and terminate**)

- | | Yes | No |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) an advertising agency | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| b) a market research firm | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| c) a public relations firm | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| d) a media | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| e) the federal or provincial government | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |

Q.5 For the next question, I would like if you could answer rapidly, without thinking too much: After visiting a restaurant for the first time, can you name for me three things that might tell you about the quality of this restaurant?

(Evaluate the answer, and terminate anyone who doesn't have a coherent third item)

Q.6 *This focus group will include around 10 persons like you and a moderator who will be asking you about your opinions on some ideas for advertising. We do not want to sell you anything; all we want is your honest opinion. Your presence would be on a voluntary basis and all the answers will remain confidential. To thank you for your participation and for the inconvenience of the time spent with us, we will give you a \$50 compensation at the end of the discussion. Can we count on you?*

(If asked: this compensation is not a salary so it is not taxable.)

Yes 1
No 2 → **THANK AND TERMINATE.**

We are holding this focus group in the offices of CRC, 130 Bloor street west.

If you need glasses to read and write please bring them with you. The discussion lasts about 2 hours. Please ensure that you show up at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the discussion and bring a photo ID. If for any reasons, you should be unable to attend, please call us as soon as possible so that we can replace you. For further information, call _____ at _____.

Name: _____

Since we are going to call you the day before to confirm your presence, what is the best phone number to reach you at?

Home: (____)-____-_____

Other: (____)-____-_____

Thank you for your cooperation!

RECRUITED BY: _____ **CONFIRMED BY:** _____