



# FISHERIES & TOURISM

FACT SHEET SERIES

## Creating partnerships with tourism businesses

Fishermen and aquaculture farmers who partner with tourism industry members can leverage respective skill sets to save costs and increase visibility and marketing options.

### Types of partnerships

**Informal cooperation:** Businesses can recommend one another, share website links and social media posts, display another's brochures, and invite staff to experience their respective businesses.

**Joint promotion:** Take it one step further by developing joint brochures, advertisements, web pages, or other materials that promote thematic experiences. For example, you offer a restaurant a wholesale discount on lobster. In exchange, the restaurant lists details about your lobster tours on their menu.

**Packaged experiences:** Research shows that demand for package tours is on the rise. Tourism packages offer tourists one-stop shopping with centralized reservations/booking/payments for "complete travel experiences." For example, the package experience might include a weekend getaway at a local inn, with meals at local restaurants, a boat or fish farm tour, and a visit to an historic house. The customer books everything through one of the businesses, and each respective business gets a cut of the price paid by the customer. Individual businesses can join forces to develop their own package experiences or can work through existing package tour companies (for example: a bus tour can offer local boat excursions). Be sure to develop a written agreement or contract that covers all the legal details between the partners, including:

- ▶ Who is responsible for marketing, reservations, bookings, transportation and other details.
- ▶ How the price the customer pays gets divided among partners.
- ▶ How cancellation/refund policies affect partners, including weather cancellations.
- ▶ Who is liable for what (refer to the fact sheet on "Maritime law, liability, and insurance"),
- ▶ Consider alternative dispute resolution, such as arbitration or mediation, as a stipulation of the contract, to prevent costly litigation if something goes wrong.



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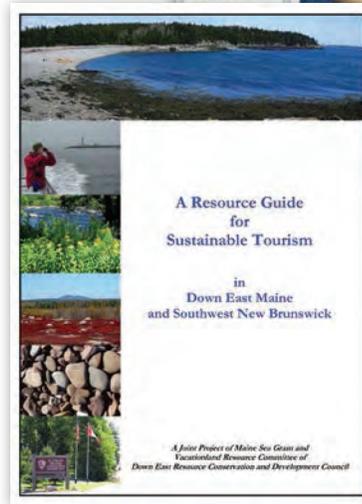
**Specialized agreements:** In some cases, you will have a very specific need that can be solved less expensively by forming an agreement with another business. For example, perhaps commercial entities cannot load and unload customers at the town dock, or your lobster cooperative does not want tourists wandering the work area. Set up an agreement with a waterfront hotel, restaurant, campground, or other business to gain access to their wharf for loading your customers in exchange for increased traffic at their business. Written agreements should outline details, such as, in our example here, who is liable for injury on the wharf?

**Formal business partnerships:** In a formal business partnership with another business, the ventures become joint in more ways than any of the options described above. For details on these options, including tax advantages, refer to the fact sheet, “Models for fisheries and aquaculture tour businesses.”

## Resources

List your overnight package experiences with the Maine Office of Tourism, [visitmaine.com/help/tourism/add-package/](http://visitmaine.com/help/tourism/add-package/) and group tours you could offer through tour bus companies at [visitmaine.com/group-tour](http://visitmaine.com/group-tour).

For sample contracts, see Appendix A of the Sustainable Tourism Resource Guide, [seagrant.umaine.edu/extension/sustainable-tourism-resource-guide](http://seagrant.umaine.edu/extension/sustainable-tourism-resource-guide). ■



*This fact sheet is part of a series intended to provide resources for fishermen and aquaculture farmers who seek to augment their earnings through tourism. More information, including the legal research upon which these fact sheets are based, can be found at [seagrant.umaine.edu/fisheries-tourism](http://seagrant.umaine.edu/fisheries-tourism).*

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