

# ADVENTURE TOURISM

## Introduction

Adventure tourism is an outdoor leisure activity that generally takes place in an unusual, exotic, remote or wilderness setting. It sometimes involves some form of unconventional means of transportation and tends to be associated with low or high levels of physical activity. As the name suggests, it entails an element of risk and can range from 'getting wet' to 'getting high' to 'getting faster'. An adventure tourism business provider can arrange a single adventure or a combination of adventure pursuits for paying tourists. When considering an adventure business, it is probably more cost effective to concentrate on the aspects that you are good at and have a specialised interest in. Unlike other tourism businesses, an adventure tourism enterprise will rely heavily on the



*Adventure tourism generally involves physical activity.* specialist interest, experience and skills of the operator. Therefore, the specialist understanding required for adventure activities is a critical area of experience for a would-be adventure tourism entrepreneur.

## Requirements

### 1. Protection

Some adventure activities (for example quad bike racing) are, by their nature, dangerous and can cause injury, and even loss of life, to persons and damage to property. Any enterprise providing access to such activities must protect themselves against claims for loss or damage caused to persons who partake in the activities provided by the enterprise. While

insurance costs may be high, return on investment may still be attractive. Health and safety requirements must be adhered to.

### 2. Training

The first line of protection is to ensure that owners and staff are properly trained and equipped to provide supervision and guidance to participants in the activities, and ensure that

### Products and services

There are many types of niche products and services that fall within the adventure tourism category.

#### Getting wet:

- surfing;
- canoeing – touring, rental and expedition services;
- kite surfing;
- wakeboarding;
- skateboarding;
- white-water rafting;
- caving;
- waterskiing;
- diving;
- windsurfing; and,
- kayaking.

#### Getting high:

- flying;
- gliding;
- paragliding;
- ballooning;
- rock climbing;
- high rope;
- micro lighting; and,
- zorbing.

#### Getting faster:

- archery;
- karting;
- mountain biking and expeditions;
- paintballing;
- land boarding; and,
- rallying.

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Consult a reputable insurer or broker on the exposure to risk.

equipment is in excellent condition at all times. Make sure that all participants are properly trained in the use of equipment and in the rules of the activity that they plan to engage in. The rules should be designed to make the activity as safe as possible.

### 3. Legal requirements

Before launching any adventure activity, find out what specific legal requirements pertaining to the sport or activity being pursued must be complied with. This can be obtained from the relevant sport or activity co-ordinating body. Also check with your solicitor.

### 4. Insurance

Consult a reputable insurer or broker on the exposure to risk and, in particular, ensure that

adequate public liability is in place. Before hosting groups of visitors or planning a public event, check with an insurance agent about adequacy of liability coverage. Be guided by the insurer in how to structure the business and minimise exposure to risk to the maximum extent.

### 5. Land use zoning

Become familiar with all laws applicable to: locating an office; licensing and registration; road transportation permits; public driving permits; regulations; and, by-laws. Consult with the local council and also a solicitor.

### 6. Grants

There are several different avenues that may help with funding. LEADER gives capital grants

for the development of tourism activities and facilities. They also give marketing grants, which can help promote an adventure tourist business. Contact your local LEADER company for more information.

### Planning and marketing your enterprise

In-depth market research should be carried out and a detailed business plan prepared before proceeding with such a venture. Your local regional tourist authority and Fáilte Ireland are only too willing to help you make the connection with the marketplace. Effective marketing is a key element in any business enterprise and is an ongoing process. Marketing can be as simple as word-of-mouth referral, or involve an intensive media campaign. Your marketing style and message must be directed to your identified audience. If providing quad bike racing activities for example, you could emphasise the experience of all-weather cross-country driving fun. Network with other tourism and adventure providers such as clay pigeon shooting, rifle target shooting and archery to provide interesting packages for the tourist.

## Business planning and marketing

In order for your adventure tourism business to be successful, it is important to carry out market research.

### Identify your target market:

- Who are they?;
- Where are they located?; and,
- What are their demographics?

### Carry out competitor analysis:

- Who are your competitors?;
- Where are they located?;

- What services are they offering?; and,
- What are their prices?

### Identify market trends:

- What do your customers want?;
- Do you have a niche product or service offering?; and,

- Can you develop a unique selling point?

### Pricing:

- What are your costs going to be?;
- What can your target market afford?; and,
- Can you adopt premiumisation to increase your profit margin?

### Further information

For further Information please contact Barry Caslin, Teagasc, Rural Economy Development Programme at:  
+353 (0) 76-111 1213  
barry.caslin@teagasc.ie

The following resources are also helpful:

- [www.iaat.ie](http://www.iaat.ie)
- [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie)
- [www.ildn.ie](http://www.ildn.ie)
- [www.localenterprise.ie/Find-Your-Local-Enterprise-Office/](http://www.localenterprise.ie/Find-Your-Local-Enterprise-Office/)

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[www.teagasc.ie/ruraldev](http://www.teagasc.ie/ruraldev)

