

Earn Cash by Providing Local Experiences to Travelers

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Traveling can be a fun and rewarding way to visit new places and meet new people. But the downside is that when someone visits a new location, they don't know the area or what to do.

They can buy an area guidebook, but those don't give them much information other than places of interest. Sites that are unique and experiences that could enrich their travel are not found in visitor guidebooks.

What Are AirBnB Experiences?

There is a way that travelers can enrich their vacation and have the time of their lives by using a unique service provided by Airbnb. You may already be familiar with the company that helps people find sleeping arrangements with hosts in a variety of different locations.

Now, Airbnb is offering something exciting to guests - a way where they can find a host to stay with during their travels but also engage in fun things known as experiences.

An experience is an activity or a trip that's created by an Airbnb host. Some of these hosts offer accommodations in addition to experiences. But some just offer an experience by itself.

The type of experience can differ. You might offer one that's just a couple of hours, one that's all day or one that's several days long. These experiences follow a schedule and what the participant will be doing will depend on what the host is offering.

With one host, the guests might find themselves taking a class or workshop on something that interests them. With another, they might find

themselves hiking into a gorgeous off the beaten path area that the host is familiar with.

Guests can learn new things and enjoy the area in a way they wouldn't be able to without the host's experience event. Travelers get to choose what it is that they want to do that's available in that area.

Not every city or foreign country has an experience set up yet, but the program is expanding as more hosts sign up. An experience is more than just a walking tour of the city where the traveler is staying.

Although you can sign up as a host to take people on tours, there are things that can include hiking, providing a class and teaching a new skill, or a night of enjoyment in the arts.

The cost of these experiences varies but you can expect that you'll charge between \$150 to \$250 for it. When the guest decides to sign up for an experience, they'll be verified along with the host.

They'll also have to determine if they're going to be booking accommodations in addition to the experience event. These events are as varied as the hosts that offer them.

You might see travelers head to one city for a behind the scenes comedy experience or to enjoy learning about music and what goes into putting on a live performance.

Or they might visit places that show them how to impact lives - such as helping an impoverished area. Some experiences that offer the chance to get involved in a local community non-profit event are high on the list of things that travelers want to do.

An experience is what can take a traveler beyond a simple trip to a new place and immerses them in the area and its culture and helps them interact and mingle with the people.

Guests get to see a side of the place that regular visitors don't get to see. It's a way for them to travel and come home with a new skill, a new friend or two and a love and appreciation for what they've experienced.

How to Start a Business Providing Experiences

You've probably heard the saying that anyone can hang a shingle and go into business. While that's true, that's not all there is to it when it comes to getting started as an Airbnb experience host.

You can't just make a decision and then get approved. You have to go through a process that qualifies you to be able to offer these experiences. To get started, you first have to sign up Airbnb.

Once you do that, you can send in your experience idea (or ideas). After you do that, Airbnb will look over your idea and then determine if it's something that's feasible.

There are many different things that factor into the decision on whether or not to accept an experience idea. The company has to keep in mind the enjoyment of the travelers that use their site as well as the professionalism and skill level of the potential host.

If you get turned down after suggesting an experience, that doesn't mean that you're not qualified to host. It means that for some reason that idea wasn't one that could be engaging to travelers or it had some safety issues or some bugs that needed to be worked out first.

You can suggest more than one hosting experience idea, but the ones that have a better chance at getting accepted are the ones that you're most qualified to handle.

For example, someone who wants to take travelers out on a self-run boat day trip, but has no boating skills and hasn't even lived in the area long would probably not be accepted.

Whatever it is that you send to Airbnb will be thoroughly checked out. Some potential hosts think that it's easy jump right in and give an experience. This might be possible in some circumstances, but not always.

There might be bugs that have to be worked out. But you'll learn as you go along what works and doesn't. To get started, you come up with your idea, then you send it in for consideration.

Your odds of getting approved as an experience host are greatly enhanced if you have a lot of in-depth knowledge about what you're suggesting for the guests. For example, if a traveler wants to go surfing and you're a master surf instructor, you're more than likely going to be approved over the summer lifeguard who has taken a few surfing lessons and now wants to teach others.

Some of the qualifications to become an experience host don't have anything to do with the kind of skill level that you have. Some of the qualifications have to do with you as a person.

Not everyone has the personality to be an experience host. If you're impatient and you're looking at the travelers as dollar signs and nothing more, then you probably wouldn't do so well with this endeavor.

An experience host is someone who not only has to be skilled, but also needs to really like interacting with new people. You should also be someone who wants to make sure travelers have a good time.

The experience idea you consider should be one that's different from regular run of the mill experiences. In other words, if it's an experience that the traveler can get from a tourist guide, then he doesn't really need you.

You need to be able to offer something that the traveler can't experience by himself. It needs to preferably be something that just won't work without you. If that's the case, then you've hit on an idea for an experience that would most likely be approved and that guests will love.

Whatever it is that you come up with, you can't just think that you're going to stand up in front of the group and teach something. They can listen to someone instruct them online or through a class.

Listening to someone teach or tell them stuff about the area isn't that thrilling. You need to think about what they can do to get involved. Instead of just teaching a group about what it's like to create a vase in a pottery class, put them at the wheel.

Let them feel the clay as it spins. Let them get their hands dirty. An experience is something that can't be enjoyed unless they're immersed in it, so keep that in mind.

Once you come up with your experience idea, you need to be able to spell it out. Think about what's involved, where it will be, when it starts, when it ends, and any pertinent skill level needed by travelers.

If it's going to be physically demanding, that has to be made clear. Some people are not able to handle the demands of certain experiences. You'll also need to determine what the cost of the experience is.

It's best to keep your prices average when you're first starting out. You can raise them as your experience gains in popularity. If you're competing with other similar experience providers, then you might want to price a bit lower initially to get some momentum.

Creating an Experience for Your Area

Getting involved as an experience host on Airbnb is a great way for you to earn some cash. What you can earn depends on the experience that you're offering, how often you offer it and how many people are in the group.

What you want to keep in mind when creating an experience is that you want the traveler to be able to get what the locals get about the area, but more. That means you'll want to give them something that they're not able to just arrive in town and do solo.

When deciding which experience to create in your area, take a second to think about what's going to make yours stand out from everyone else's experience? For example, if one person is offering an immersion cooking experience with exotic foods and they're a popular chef, how can you top that?

Try to put a spin on a typical experience – something that sets you apart a bit. If a lot of people are offering something similar, then you can bet that yours isn't all that unique.

You want to create an experience that makes people talk. It was so good, so much fun that they just can't wait to tell everyone they know about it (and leave a wonderful rating for you, too).

When coming up with an experience for your area, you need to do some thinking before you decide. Take a scouting trip to look around your town or city. Look at what's already available.

Think about a service or fun thing to do that people may want to participate in, but only with someone leading the way. One key point to remember is to make the experience fit the guest.

For example, if a guest is an outdoor enthusiast, you can create an experience that's based on being in nature - such as going on a wilderness expedition. If your area has a lot of beautiful hiking trails and waterfalls, then this might be a perfect situation for your guests.

If your area is host to several music festivals, and you can secure behind the scenes meet and greets with musicians, that might be a perk. Other music topics work well, too – such as teaching someone to play an instrument or time spent learning the ins and outs of a recording studio including recording a demo.

You can find some recording studios that charge a reasonable hourly rate and you figure that cost in when you're creating the experience. It's that "behind the scenes" stuff that really connects with some travelers.

It's a few hours or a few days out of the ordinary and allows them to experience things that are special and give them lasting memories they otherwise couldn't create on their own.

You need to develop your experience based on whether it's a one day or multi-day event. You can create an experience alone or with someone else. You can involve people who are doing things for the community around your area that guests on a regular traveling visit don't get access to.

That would mean that you have to reach out and create a network. But you can get involved in worthy causes like biking for a nonprofit or events that raise money for certain reasons.

If you live in a city that has something that's unique to it, you can involve your guests in an experience with that. For example, if you live somewhere that has a chocolate making factory, you can set up a tour of the facility as well as a hands-on experience where the travelers get to make their own special candy. Don't be afraid to make arrangement with other parties to help your guests get something above and beyond what the general public can partake in.

If you know how to hang glide and you have a high instructor skill level with that, then offer travelers the chance to go hang gliding. You don't have to create an experience that's action packed, either.

It can be whatever it is that you know how to do that guests would find fun or interesting – or even relaxing. If you know specialty things like how to grow difficult plants or flowers in gardens or you're involved in something like animal husbandry or beekeeping, then you can give your guests a hands on experience in those areas.

Experiences that center around food are always a good idea. The key to making it something that fits your area is to make the experience one that focuses on a specialty local cuisine.

This would be something that guests can't find in other states or in other foreign locations such as Tex-Mex in Texas. You can also host things like a

wine tasting in wine (grape) country or an experience where the guests get to go and create their own wine.

These experiences can be created for an individual, a couple, for small groups or large groups. With some planning, you can make your experience such a one-of-a-kind event that you'll be booked solid and make plenty of money helping people enjoy themselves.

To prevent any problems, if you're going to be hosting your experience at a venue, you need to make sure the location is easily accessible for everyone. For outdoor experiences, you do need to make sure that your listing has an alternative plan if the weather turns bad.

Or make it clear that it's on whether or not the weather holds. If you're going to be within a structure and you're hosting a large group, you have to be aware of any restrictions on the number of people so that you don't violate any local codes.

How Much Money Can I Make Hosting Experiences?

Wanting to know how much money you stand to make is a reasonable question. There are many things out there that promise you can earn cash but don't actually pan out.

Hosting an Airbnb experience isn't one of them. To accurately figure what you can feasibly earn, you need to do a total cost versus income ratio when you decide on an experience.

You want to make sure that your profit margin is a good one. Some potential hosts figure in the cost of supplies, but then neglect to look at the amount of preparation time they're putting in.

Those hours can add up. If you're working for two hours to prepare for an experience, you need to factor that in when you figure up what the total price of the experience is worth.

Understand that not every experience is going to rate high right off the bat. The greater the reputation and the more guests that you have talking

positively about the experience, the greater chance you have of making the most earnings.

Decide the amount of time you're going to dedicate to the experience. How you structure it can also allow you to make more money. For example, you can host a day experience and what you'll make will be determined by the number of people in that group.

So if you have five people in the group and they're each paying \$200, then you make \$1,000 for that day. But if you do experiences that are a couple of hours, then you could schedule three to four experiences in a day.

If you have five people in each group and they're each paying \$200, then your take would be \$3,000 for the day for three experiences - more for if you had four. So it all depends on what you can do.

You don't want to rush the people through an experience to cram in as many as you can because that could end up backfiring on you. The number of people you have in each experience can vary and you can end up making more one week than you would the next.

You'll know ahead of time how many bookings you'll have and pending no cancellations, can determine the earnings by looking at your calendar. Another thing that can make a difference in how much money you'll earn with your experiences will be whether or not you're also renting a space to the guests.

The harder you work at creating memorable experiences, the more money you'll make. The fee structure for the portion that Airbnb will take differs from what you'll earn if you were just renting space, so keep that in mind as well.

How to Provide an Experience That Rates Well

When creating an experience, you want whatever activity it is that you have planned to be one that stands out. It should be one that is unique

and that you genuinely love doing because your enthusiasm (or lack of it) will shine through. .

Having a listing that has a wow factor can certainly help - like meeting a local celebrity or engaging in something that's generally off limits to people. If you want to provide an experience that rates well so that you earn cash and have solid reviews on Airbnb, then you'll need to make sure that you handle your account like it was a business.

You'll be able to look at what your guests are saying to know how well your experiences are ranking. It's important that you have an experience that does well according to Airbnb.

For the ones that don't, those experiences will no longer be allowed to remain on the Airbnb site. If you have a guest who leaves a nasty review, that happens and one won't jeopardize your standing.

However, consistently getting reviews of low star ratings for your experiences will mean that something just isn't working out. Not only will you lose potential guests, but you'll end up having your account suspended.

You'll want to pay attention to what people are saying because if there's a potential problem, you can fix it and then it won't be an issue any more. By following the hosting standards, you can have a thriving business.

As long as you love what you're sharing and you know all about the experience, you'll do well at making sure others love it, too. One of the standards that you'll want to pay attention to so that it rates well is to be consistent with your word.

If you get a reservation, don't flake out - especially at the last minute. The people who are paying for the experience are looking forward to it. They're excited. So if you abruptly cancel that time, then you'll have disappointed, unhappy guests.

Not only that, but these people have gone to a lot of trouble to arrange time off from their usual schedule. They probably went ahead and bought plane tickets to the destination.

So you'll not only cost them time, but they'll lose money as well. You have to make sure that, aside from a real emergency, you are consistent with your reservations.

If something goes on in your life to make you unavailable, then you have to make sure that your calendar reflects that or you'll end up rating low. Before the experience even starts, you'll be in contact with potential guests.

Make sure that you quickly respond to any messages. Be very up front about everything and respond to their questions or concerns. Be professional and polite.

Not every guest who signs up for the experience who you speak to online or in person is going to be easy to get along with. You have to be understanding that these people will have a different viewpoint about life.

The hosts who treat everyone like they're welcome will end up having an experience that rates above others. One of the top ways to get good ratings on your experiences is to go above and beyond with little touches that seem insignificant, but set the mood and provide a special touch.

Understand that when people decide to book an experience, they have a certain image in mind of how it's going to be and how it will unfold during their visit. That means that you can't charge a rare champagne price for something that's a beer budget experience.

Create an experience that literally screams exclusive. Whatever the experience is that you're going to host needs to match the price and rise to the satisfaction of the guests.

They should leave your experience feeling like they've gotten their money's worth. The worst thing would be to have guests thinking that they can't believe they spent money on that.

When you're listing your experience on Airbnb, you want to make sure that you don't leave anything to chance. Completely spell out what the experience is and how you're qualified to host it.

In the listing, tell the potential guests a little about yourself. Then talk about the experience and why they should take part in it. Tell them what they can gain from signing up.

Make sure you talk about where they'll be, what they can be expected to need as far as what to wear, any information that's pertinent like meals and the action that they're going to be participating in.

If the experience that you're listing is one that a person needs to be in prime fitness level for - like outdoor rock climbing or cave spelunking - then you need to say who the experience will fit and who it may not.

When you remove room for guests to say, "I didn't know there would be physical limitations," then you also remove the odds of having your experience rate poorly.

Make sure that you put your guests at ease and that they're included in all aspects of the experience. You should be prepared with a plan B and C in case something happens during the experience so you can quickly solve any problems.

By having the experience go as smoothly as possible - even if there are problems - you'll end up with one that gets great ratings. You'll want to pay close attention to the things that resonate with guests on Airbnb.

Of course that includes the entirety of the experience - how things went for them as a whole. Most guests will overlook small bumps in the experience, but not big ones. But take a look at existing experiences and see what little issues people loved - or had a problem with.

Truthfulness is another area that can help you get your experience rated well. If you're honest through the listing and the entire activity with anything that goes on, guests will appreciate that.

Whether or not they felt comfortable and treated well is another area where you can boost your rating. How approachable you were both before and after the experience will matter.

The best ratings for experiences are given to hosts who treat their guests with a great deal of hospitality. If you're passionate about showing people a uniquely good time, that will show up in your ratings.

Experiences that include something extra (like making sure guests have bottled water if it's an outdoor event) can help ratings. So can an easy flow of conversation where it seems like they're among friends rather than having to deal with the awkwardness of spending time with strangers.

Marketing Your Experiences

When it comes to putting your experience on Airbnb, there are some things that you can do to ensure that you have a greater success rate getting sign ups and eventually, profits.

You want to market on the site by making sure all your account information is up to date and completely filled out. You also want to make it as easy as possible for your guests to be able to reach out to you as well as to book the experience that you're offering.

People like things that are simple and easy. Having to jump through hoops to book something can end up turning people away. Give your experience an edge by using competitive pricing.

Pay attention to the days as well as the seasons and adjust the price accordingly. Get involved in the community on Airbnb. By getting involved in the groups, you'll not only meet people who can help you with different issues, but you can also establish a good network.

If a host in the group knows that you have an experience nearby and they don't offer one, they may turn to you and recommend what you're offering to the guest wanting to book them for a house rental.

You can create a buzz about your experience among residence hosts. Don't just limit the conversation to what's on Airbnb. When you have a unique experience to offer, make sure you talk it up in your everyday life, too.

Word of mouth is a very powerful marketing tool. Talk to all your friends about what it is that you're doing. Let your family in on it, too. Ask them to talk about it as well – especially sharing it on social media sites for you.

While Airbnb is a popular site, you can educate people about how they can get more from their travel plans by booking an experience. Word of mouth can easily lead to you signing up some guests – even if they're local and not from out of town.

When you do get guests, don't be afraid to ask them to share the experience with who they know or to provide a text or video testimonials for you that you can use on sites like YouTube.

Offer them an incentive if you need to - like a certain percentage off when someone books based on their recommendation. Or offer them a discount on their fee if they return with other guests.

This helps them feel like they're valued. Images can tell a story a whole lot faster and often better than words can. Don't be afraid to put your experience in visual format.

You can video yourself and some of your friends going through whatever experiences you're offering. This gives potential guests a sneak peek at what they can do and it hooks their interest.

People love seeing fun activities and it makes them want to try. Have someone who knows what he's doing with video capture the experience for you and edit it to showcase it in its best light.

Put the videos up on sites like YouTube but also consider Facebook Live. Upload images or videos to Instagram and put a link in the comments to your experience listing.

You can also take photos with the people who book your experiences and at the end, ask them if you can share it on social media. Utilize all of your social media platforms to help you build awareness about your experiences.

Your experiences on Airbnb can benefit from the same marketing methods used in traditional marketing. Make it personal. Let the potential guests see the person behind the business. It connects you to the public and helps you build trust.



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