



While we're encouraging our visitors to dream now and explore BC later, a great way to stay top of mind and maintain engagement with your audience is by creating and sharing a virtual experience through your social media channels.

Virtual experiences are social media posts that bring the sights and sounds of your experience, attraction, or destination to your visitors so that they can enjoy what you have to offer from the comforts of their home.

Virtual experiences don't need to be fancy, nor do they require a large budget. All they require is a bit of creativity on your part, access to the internet, a video camera (i.e. your phone), and a few minutes of your time.

Both within our BC tourism network and across the globe, we've seen many creative virtual experiences being shared, including virtual tours, live experiences, and virtual events.

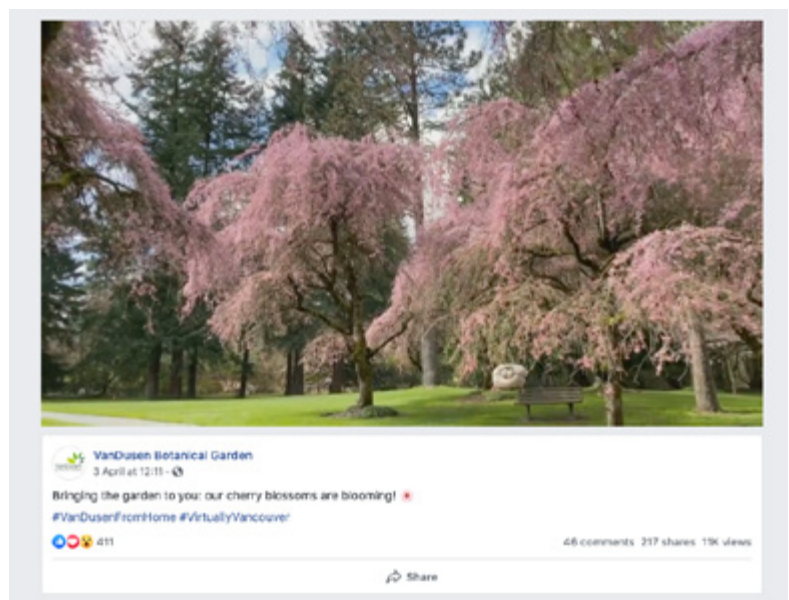
Virtual Tour

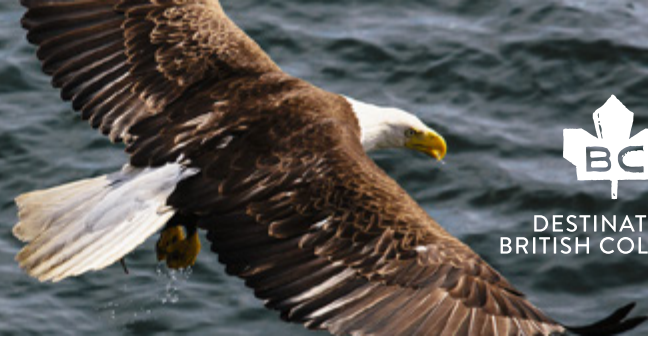
Virtual tours are videos that capture the sensation of being there in person. They can be short panning videos or longer walk-through videos. They can be narrated tours or unnarrated, capturing the sights and sounds of what your visitors might experience if they were able to visit you in person.

VANDUSEN BOTANICAL GARDEN

Although Vancouver's [VanDusen Botanical Garden](#) is currently closed to the public, they took a short 30-second video of their cherry blossom grove in full bloom and shared the video on Facebook. The video pans up into the tree canopy and around the surrounding landscape so we get a sense of being immersed in the garden. While it's not narrated, we can hear the chirping of birds and the honking of geese, which adds to the authenticity and makes it feel as though we're experiencing the garden in person.

 [Watch It Here](#)





Live Experience

A live experience is a video which is being broadcasted live to your social media channels at the same time that it is being recorded. Think of it as social media's answer to live TV. Facebook and Instagram algorithms favour live experiences, and they're excellent at driving engagement. However, live experiences do require strong internet signals, which may not always be available, especially in remote outdoor settings. Live experiences provide an opportunity to engage with your audience in real-time. The videos can also be watched after the broadcast is over.

LIVE EXPERIENCE EXAMPLE 1:

In Whistler, the [Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre](#) is broadcasting a weekly live instructional video on Facebook to educate and entertain their followers. Every Friday at 11am, people watching can learn a new skill, such as weaving, by following along on Facebook Live. One benefit of broadcasting an instructional video live is that you can field questions from your audience and respond to them live on camera.

 Watch It Here



LIVE EXPERIENCE EXAMPLE 2:

In Keremeos, the [Grist Mill and Gardens](#) films a daily live experience on Facebook from their unique property in the Similkameen Valley. The operator and manager, who lives on site with his family, uses Facebook Live to broadcast these "virtual field trips" to his audience, so they can learn about the property while also being entertained. This live experience is narrated in a casual, unscripted tone of voice, which feels authentic and personable.

 Watch It Here



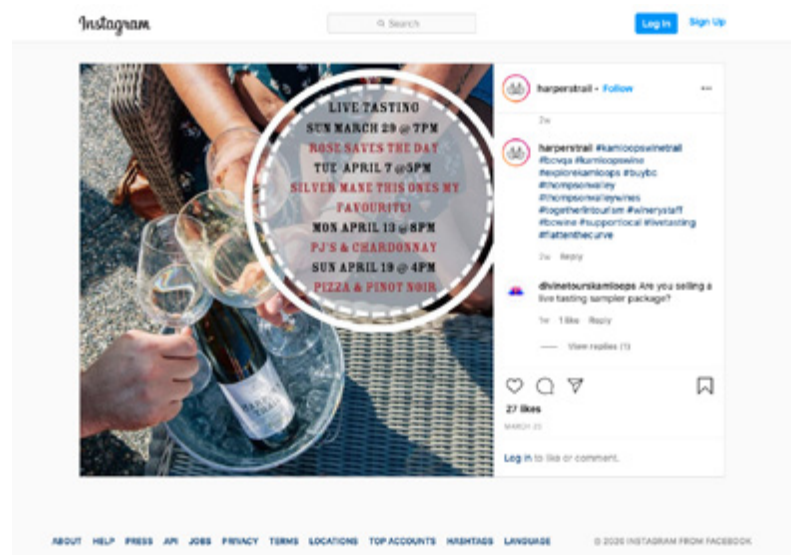
Virtual Event

A virtual event is like a regular event, except people gather virtually online at a mutually agreed upon channel, such as Zoom, Facebook Live, or Instagram Live, at a specific time and date. Virtual events require advanced coordination to set the date, time, channel, and purpose. They also require an invitation or a social media post to raise awareness, but once coordinated, they can be a fun and creative way to engage with your audience.

VIRTUAL EVENT EXAMPLE:

In Kamloops, Harper's Trail Winery is using Instagram to promote and host a virtual wine tasting event. Fans of the winery are encouraged to order the wine online from the winery or from their nearest Save On Foods, and can then taste and discuss the wine collectively from the comfort of their home using Instagram live on the specified dates and time.

 [See It Here](#)



We encourage you to use the above examples, and others that you may see from your tourism industry network in BC, to inspire your own virtual experiences. Embrace your creativity! Be sure to share them with us by tagging [#explorebclater](#), or sending us an email at: covid19response@DestinationBC.ca.



Capturing video on behalf of your business or destination can be intimidating, especially if it's new to you. However, most of us already have the equipment available, in the palm of our hands, to create high-quality video content—thanks to our smartphones. With a few tips and tricks, and some practice, you can create compelling, engaging videos for your audience. We've compiled some suggestions and best practices for you, below.

General

- Test before you shoot—make sure there are no major sound or lighting issues. Recording a test for 2–5 seconds is ideal.
- Always make sure your lens is clean before beginning to shoot; use a microfibre cloth, or in a pinch, a cotton shirt, to clean.
- Make sure your focus and white balance are working correctly.
- Hold the shots longer than you might usually—for example, shoot a few seconds of the subject sitting before they start speaking, to allow you to adjust any of your settings.

Lighting

1. **Avoid back-lighting:** when shooting, think about where your light source is coming from. If you're shooting people or a subject, the light should be ON them rather than behind them.
2. **Embrace the clouds:** clouds or a slightly overcast sky are a good thing! They provide a lovely, diffused light for your subject—so don't be afraid to shoot if it's not a perfectly sunny day.
3. **Time your shoot for magic hour:** the softer light of the morning and late afternoon is known as “magic lighting” because of how soft and warm it is. These are great times to shoot outdoors.
4. **Watch for shadows;** they can be positive or negative. Is it adding something interesting to your visual, or is it distracting from the subject matter (i.e. the person speaking)? If it's the latter, try moving your subject around based on the lighting diagram above. If it's bright, harsh light (i.e. close to noon), try looking for somewhere in the shade to shoot.





Sound

1. **Wind:** this can create distractions for the viewer, or make it hard to hear someone speaking on camera. If you're challenged by wind, try to create some protection around your mic with your hand, without actually covering the mic. Test the audio before you capture the final shot, or go live, if possible.
2. **Capturing a subject's voice:** when shooting someone speaking, borrow a second phone, start recording audio, and place the phone in your subject's pocket. Then, shoot the video from your phone from a few feet away. This will give you two versions of the audio track, in case the one from your phone isn't strong enough. You can then sync them up in video editing, or use the back-up audio track to pull quotes from for an article or video with captions.

Operating the Camera

1. **Check your camera settings:** on an iPhone, you'll find these in settings > camera > record video. We suggest the following:
 - 4k at 30fps for high resolution
 - 1080p at 30fps for good digital resolution
 - 1080p at 240fps for slow-motion
2. **Consider format:** which channel(s) will you release this video on? If it's for multiple channels, we suggest filming in horizontal, as that gives you more flexibility. If you know it's for social/mobile only, we suggest filming in vertical.
3. **Frame your image using these tips:**
 - Think about your frame in three parts. This will help you later, if you need to crop it to vertical (for example, using the BC Story Network story creator). Turn on grid lines on your phone camera to help with this; on an iPhone this is found in settings > camera > grid.
 - Completely fill the frame while filming from edge to edge and top to bottom.
 - Instead of placing your subject right in the middle of the shot, try to place your subject along one of the grid lines.
4. **Hold steady:** this is important. Some tips on steadying the phone while recording video: Use both hands; tuck the elbows in close to the body. Or, don't use your hands at all—prop your camera against a chair, table, rock, fence, etc.
5. **Length:** try to shoot clips of 10 seconds at a time or longer. Having longer video is always better than shorter video when recording so you have more to work with in the editing process.



Editing your Video

There are a variety of user-friendly, mobile video editing apps available. We suggest downloading one or two and playing around with personal videos, first. Some examples include:

- iMovie
- VSCO Cam
- Final Cut
- Apple iOS photos app
- Adobe Premiere Rush
- Videoleap
- Adobe Premiere CC

There are also a number of free, simple tutorials online. Here are some examples:

Basics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3i7CGfRxDo>

Landscape Photography: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EhWyd602fY>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6YMDPfvY8>

Cinematic but outdoors: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0f521kPj3DI>

Live Video

GENERAL

In addition to the video tips above, there are some special considerations when planning a live video broadcast. Consider the following:

1. **Choose a location with a clean background** (i.e. a wall with a single colour) and try to avoid other visual distractions in the frame
2. **Prepare your content**—it's best to have a script or speaking notes, so that you can stay focused and on-track once you're live. This is not the best format to "wing it"!
3. **Ensure you have a strong, reliable internet connection.** If your connection drops out, it will pause the video for your viewers and you may lose them.
4. **Promote your live video in advance;** give your audience enough notice to plan to tune in.
5. **You can test live video by changing the privacy settings to "Only Me" before going live.** This is a great way to check your audio and lighting before broadcasting to your followers.
6. **Engage with your audience**—one of the benefits of live through social media platforms is the ability to engage with your audience in real-time; for example, answering questions from viewers.
7. **Orientation**—if it's going out through Instagram Stories, capture it in vertical. If you plan to use a Facebook feed live video, capture in horizontal.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/facebook-live-tips/>
2. <https://wave.video/blog/12-simple-tips-for-making-your-videos-look-more-professional/>
3. <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2017/07/31/facebook-live-guide>
4. <https://training.npr.org/2017/06/02/nprs-facebook-live-guide/>