

## **Part One:**

Bob Gilbert (00:08):

Welcome to Tourism Heads and Their Tails, a podcast series that invites travel and tourism leaders and influencers to share their take on key industry issues. My name is Bob Gilbert and I'm the general manager for the tourism and destination marketing practice at the award-winning strategic marketing agency Eddy Alexander. My career spans over three decades in the travel and tourism industry where I've had the privilege of working with iconic brands and so many amazing colleagues who in their own ways are pushing the industry forward and using tourism to increase understanding, access and quality of life. For those who work in travel, those that love to travel, and the communities that benefit from travel, I'll be bringing you into the conversation with top professionals who are shaping the industry, all with their unique tales and perspectives that they're ready to share with you.

Bob Gilbert (01:03):

Welcome to a freshly brewed edition of Tourism Heads and Their Tales. Now, well into its second year, I do want to take this opportunity on behalf of Eddy Alexander to thank the thousands of followers for this podcast series and of course the Incredible guests. Now, today is a very unique interview that many industry colleagues have requested me to do. So today we welcome to this episode Julie Gilbert, president and CEO for Destination Door County. Now for full transparency, we do have the same last names and yes, we are related. She's my wife for over 25 years and we have very interesting dinner conversations every evening about travel and tourism. Julie, welcome to the podcast.

Julie Gilbert (01:53):

Thank you. I've been wondering why it took you so long to invite me to be a guest.

Bob Gilbert (01:58):

Touche. So let's kick this off with the first question that I ask all of our guests is to please share with our audience your career journey.

Julie Gilbert (02:09):

Oh gosh. I started as Director of Sales and marketing for the state of West Virginia, and from there I went and started a marketing partnership program for the American Society of Travel Agents. Right after that I established a full service travel tourism and hospitality marketing agency. We were providing strategic marketing, sales management services to a wide range of travel related companies. And some of those included Disneyland Resort in Anaheim Big Mountain, which is now Whitefish Ski and Summer Resort and the US Department of Commerce. And then from there I took over as Director of Sales and marketing for National Park Reservations and I truly missed the destination organization space. So I went with Destination Niagara USA in 2014. And it was such an exciting time because I had the pleasure of managing the initiative of repositioning the iconic Niagara Falls USA brand. And from there I came to Destination Door County in November of 2021.

Bob Gilbert (03:29):

So Door County? Yes. Could you provide an overview of the destination? Where is it? What are the key attributes that Door County has?

Julie Gilbert (03:39):

Yes, of course. So it is the thumb, it's a peninsula, surrounded by Green Bay and Lake Michigan. And there are 19 municipalities throughout the peninsula, each with a very unique and different set of qualities from Southern Door, which is more agricultural, moving up into Sturgeon Bay, which has a tremendous amount of ship building history. And then on up into the small villages, which are on both sides of the peninsula with a lot of history, culture, the cuisine is incredible and, in many cases people refer to Door County as the Cape Cod of the Midwest.

Bob Gilbert (04:34):

So what is the tourism infrastructure that you have in Door County? I understand that as with any DMO it's complex. You mentioned 19 municipalities. So what, what is the infrastructure that you have in place?

Julie Gilbert (04:50):

It is complex and we have a tourism zone. And the tourism zone is the collector of the lodging tax. And through Wisconsin State statute we have the ability to collect 8% of the lodging tax throughout the peninsula. The tourism zone commission upon collection then distributes 30% of that 100% back to the municipalities and they can spend that money on whatever they would like to spend it on the 70%. Then we contract with the tourism zone as the official tourism entity and we can spend that money as long as we can validate that it is being essentially used by visitors if it's a tourism development project or extend the stay of visitors as well as sales and marketing and events that are all visitor driven. From there, we then provide 19% of that 70% back to community business associations throughout the peninsula. And there are 11 from Northern Door down to Southern Door. They are very similar to Chambers of Commerce and they're the ones that execute all of the events and the happenings that are constantly going on throughout the peninsula, which keep it very vibrant.

Bob Gilbert (06:30):

So a lot of percentages there on splitting the tax that comes in the logic tax, who's the watchdog? Who keeps the eye on, on the money

Julie Gilbert (06:40):

Destination Door County has a governing board of directors and the tourism zone has tourism zone commissioners that are appointed by their municipality. And depending upon the percentage of revenue that they generate from each of those municipalities dictates the number of commissioners that sit on the zone. So between those two bodies, we present all of our plans, all of our budget, as well as our quarterly reports in order to ensure that we are compliant with what we're spending on and that everyone is aware of the results that we are also generating.

Bob Gilbert (07:27):

So basically full transparency across the board.

Julie Gilbert (07:29):

Yes, absolutely.

Bob Gilbert (07:31):

So, so what KPIs do you have that focus on that piece, on that transparency or more accountability. I would imagine as in keeping with most destinations today, that demands on accountability are more focused than ever. Do you have a structure in place that measures that accountability or KPIs?

Julie Gilbert (07:54):

Yeah, you know, I think it's changed over the last few years really because in so many cases it was driven by heads and beds, heads and beds, heads and beds, where we stepped back and saw that our residents were becoming much more concerned about the number of visitors into the peninsula. And from their perspective it was being overrun by visitors and this was COVID and the last few years. So we looked at that and we had to change what our key performance indicators were in order to be more aligned with the community. We look at municipal engagements, we look at resident surveys, we look at what that benchmark is and how are we working with nonprofits, how are we and what are we doing with travel journalists? Are we doing enough environmental plans? Are we looking at grant dollars that we're awarding? Are we volunteering in terms of number of hours throughout the community? How are we utilizing our leave no trace initiatives? And then from a marketing perspective, we always do look at visitation because that's what funds our ability to do all these other programs. So we do compare our lodging tax year over year, but it really is a lot of softer KPIs that we've evolved into in order to ensure that the community understands and sees what those public dollars are doing to not only generate and continue that economic viability, but also livability throughout the county.

Bob Gilbert (09:51):

So there are three things that spring to mind. One is that transition from heads in beds to more destination stewardship, but then within that there is also the visitor economy and shared values. Can you talk to each of those or pick one you'd like to kick off with and then we can go from there.

Julie Gilbert (10:12):

Sure, sure. I think it's important to understand what our three key pillars are within our strategic plan. And that is in addition to how we measure and are accountable. And one of those is community outreach and destination alignment. And the second one is sustainable development, and the third one is values-based marketing. So within each of those, we have our goals and objectives that we came together with a few of our board members on Destination Door County as well as zone commissioners. So that we really had a collaborative effort in ensuring that we were meeting those expectations of both groups. That's not always easy to do, particularly in a smaller community because you have various perspectives throughout. And it depends on if you're a seasonal resident or if you're a municipal board member or if you're a business owner. So to try and really define what those shared goals and objectives were was quite an exercise, but it happened, it's been very positive and with how we have positioned the county and moving forward with our values-based marketing, those groups as well as residents throughout the county are seeing that we are targeting people that are similar and like-minded related to how they want to take care of the county and care for the environment.

Bob Gilbert (11:53):

So really targeting the right fit visitor.

Julie Gilbert (11:59):

Correct. Yes.

Bob Gilbert (12:00):

You spoke about the infrastructure and the different organizations that impact the visitor economy and the marketing of Door County from a tourism perspective. So how large is your team and, and how much of the data-driven insight that you need is outsourced? You don't have to name, you know, a particular company that does whatever function they do, but what are the broad categories that, you carry on internally and you know, what is done externally?

Julie Gilbert (12:35):

Yeah, that's a really good question because internally, well, I should back up. I am going to refer to the tourism zone as an internal function because they are the ones that do the room tax collections. They provide us with ADR occupied rooms, all of those percentages, because we don't have brands. So we don't typically, we can't get a star report in order to get that information.

Bob Gilbert (13:08):

So from, from a hospitality standpoint, very few. I mean, you have a couple of brands, but very few. And the majority are short-term rentals.

Julie Gilbert (13:15):

Well, short-term rentals and independence. Yes, throughout the county.

Bob Gilbert (13:20):

Yeah. Independent hotels. Indeed. And

Julie Gilbert (13:23):

You know, we also look at sales tax, which we, we get through public data sources and we do look at short-term rental reports and we do overlays with our short-term rental reports with the tourism zone because sometimes short-term rental owners may not identify that they're doing business. And our tourism zone does do monthly audits in order to ensure that. And then we look at geolocation data, we look at overnight versus day trip because of course we want those overnight visitors. We look at what they're doing when they are here, what are their top places of interest, and then that average visitor spend by category and place those all together. And it helps us better determine who and what our visitors are doing from what markets. And then we can better align our digital advertising towards those particular types of people.

Bob Gilbert (14:30):

So, what are those different types of services that you outsource? You mentioned one there, I guess that was your digital spend.

Julie Gilbert (14:39):

GPS location data we outsource.

Bob Gilbert (14:42):

So the cell phone Geo, yeah.

Julie Gilbert (14:44):

Visitor spend data, short-term rental reports, overnight visitation data.

Bob Gilbert (14:50):

Right. Is the history of Door County and the repeat visitor, you have a very high repeat visitor factor within Door County, where do they come from and how many years have they been coming here? Because it sounds a little bit like you mentioned Cape Cod, there's a lot of repeat visitors there, the Poconos, a lot of repeat visitors, very traditional. What are your key sources?

Julie Gilbert (15:15):

So for many years, the area of Door County has been the weekend getaway for people in Chicago, Milwaukee, the Fox Cities and Minneapolis to a lesser degree. But that market has popped up. But from that longevity, it's really Chicago, Milwaukee, some of those bigger metro areas that are within three and a half to four hour drive. Throughout the years, people have passed down their cottages and cabins in order to be able to continue that traditional visitation. And then you go back to the early 19 hundreds when Jens Jensen came from Chicago and really began to see the visual beauty of the county. And he was really a big push in order to move conservation efforts forward so that the people who began to come and continued to come would have that similar experience throughout the years, which is what has happened.

Bob Gilbert (16:25):

So with the 19 municipalities there are very unique stories and traditions within each of them. We are surrounded by water all the way around because we are a peninsula. If you come here you will totally understand from a dining perspective and appreciate what is called a fish boil, which I think comes from Scandinavia originally, if I'm not mistaken.

Julie Gilbert (16:47):

It does, yes.

Bob Gilbert (16:48):

And also Washington Island, which you need to take a ferry from northern Door from Gill's rock to the island. Tell us a little bit about some of the history of Washington Island.

Julie Gilbert (17:02):

Well, it's a very unique place. People that live there, live there because they want to live there because they're, like you said, there's only one way on the island and one way off and that is by ferry. And the ferry, actually the gentleman who owns and runs the ferry is on the Destination Door County board of Directors, we were having a conversation and he truly is not transportation. He's the lifeblood of the community there. You know, if they feel that somebody is sick or needs help, the ferry will bring back supplies from the mainland. They call the regular peninsula, the mainland, and it's really truly quite remarkable because a lot of us talk about that sense of community, which we do have throughout the municipalities throughout the peninsula. But Washington Island is truly a strong supportive community and neighbors helping neighbors because they have to. So if somebody knows that someone else is coming to the peninsula, you know, they'll call them and ask them if they can bring back whatever they may need. And if there is an emergency, boy, they all rally and people support each other. So it's really quite remarkable.

Bob Gilbert (18:27):

So would you like to expand a little bit into some of the new initiatives that you've launched within Door County?

Julie Gilbert (18:35):

It's been a very exciting year. It's been a very busy year and we knew that because of some of the negative challenges that Covid generated with so many people coming up to the peninsula, to get out of those urban areas really generated a lot of negative backlash on the visitor economy. And we made some very dramatic changes within the organization and took funding that we were receiving and set up a community investment fund with the Door County Community Foundation as the facilitator of the investment fund for programs or projects that fit the state statute, which would generate visitation reasonably likely to generate additional room nights, as well as being reasonably likely to support visitors or to be used by visitors. But then in addition to that, we also wanted to have the caveat that if a project first passed that initial test, then there were also additional criteria that project would have to meet the residents needs as well.

Julie Gilbert (19:54):

So that impact visitors as well as residents. We launched that in January and went to all of the municipalities. These funds are for municipal government, 501C 3's and 501C 6s. And we've had two rounds of grants. We had initially just under \$2 million in this community investment fund with several objectives in order to really be able to keep this on track. And it has crossed all boundaries with helping organizations that have always felt underserved from the visitor economy. And it has turned a negative challenge into a very positive story where residents are seeing the benefits firsthand from what our visitors are providing based on that lodging tax. The second thing we also did was we had a surplus of funds that came in above and beyond the budget that we had set for 2022. We looked at what was our highest visitation or our points of interest, and it's our state parks and county parks as well as some of the green space throughout our municipalities.

Julie Gilbert (21:20):

So we set up another parks initiative program, which was also part of our community outreach and destination alignment and sustainable development pillar. And within those parks initiatives, we provided funding to the friends groups within the state park and the county parks, as well as working with the state park friends groups to launch a challenge fund. So we will be working with them and doing consumer outreach, which we're already doing, it's that type of consumer that we're targeting in order to generate additional funds for the friends groups for whatever state park that particular person may want to help. And it again, has opened up communication and partnerships with groups of people that we never have been able to speak with before. Along with the Department of Natural Resources, all the superintendents, leave no trace Initiatives, friends of the state park groups and their friends. And it just has really been this incredible groundswell of positive feedback and looking at how people are starting to talk about the visitor economy now, it's becoming, we're not there yet, but it's becoming more of a positive rather than a negative.

Bob Gilbert (23:04):

Thanks.

## Part Two:

Bob Gilbert (00:08):

Welcome to Tourism Heads and Their Tales, a podcast series that invites travel and tourism leaders and influencers to share their take on key industry issues. My name is Bob Gilbert and I'm the general manager for the tourism and destination marketing practice at the award-winning strategic marketing agency, Eddy Alexander. My career spans over three decades in the travel and tourism industry where I've had the privilege of working with iconic brands and so many amazing colleagues who in their own ways are pushing the industry forward and using tourism to increase understanding, access and quality of life. For those who work in travel, those that love to travel, and the communities that benefit from travel. I'll be bringing you into the conversation with top professionals who are shaping the industry all with their unique tales and perspectives that they're ready to share with you. So let's rejoin Julie Gilbert, president and CEO for Destination Door County part two on Tourism Heads and their Tales. How do you communicate the values of sustainable tourism to the community? What are the avenues or the tools that you use to communicate to the residents as well as the stakeholders?

Julie Gilbert (01:27):

Yeah, I, you know, we're in a smaller community. We have one county newspaper along with several other local radio stations that are all digital as well. So I do a monthly column in our county newspaper and I just continue to talk about things that somebody who may be from Chicago and owns a home up here and they're only up here seasonal, they've never been exposed to it, nobody's ever educated them or talked with them about it. We hit radio stations. We have monthly conversations with all of those. We have the county newspaper, we do a lot of Facebook and a lot of Instagram deployment and encourage in front of various groups providing thoughts and presentations. No group is too small for me to come in and speak to them because it's that grassroots outreach. That's the only way that we can get to them. We also work with our community business associations and any opportunity that we have to speak to their members or their partners, business owners, we always take that opportunity as well.

Bob Gilbert (02:38):

Right. And to put things into some kind of perspective, you know, the population of the entire county is about 30,000 and the county seat has about 9 to 10,000 folks. But you know, Door County attracts about 2 million visitors a year. That really showcases the opportunity. But at the same time, the challenges that those kinds of similar destinations have in terms of similar destinations and outreach, what associations and industry groups to Door County and you personally belong to and where do you see the benefits of that kind of relationship?

Julie Gilbert (03:17):

We are very strong supporters of Destination International and they provide us with the help and support with education, ensuring that we are staying on top of what is happening in the industry as well as education for our partners and our stakeholders. US Travel Association, we actually just returned from educational seminars for travel offices. Again, the educational opportunity really keeps us in the forefront as we all move forward and the industry changes, consumer behavior changes as well as more of that national advocacy with Wisconsin State Senators and Congressmen and then other various organizations that we're able to belong to that do provide us with that networking opportunity. I think so many destinations, because we're so focused on our community and ensuring that our residents are happy, ensuring that our stakeholders are successful, all of those things, sometimes we feel we're on an

island and these types of events, you create relationships and you have those networking opportunities because typically if you're experiencing a lot of similar challenges, somebody else's as well. And it's always good to be able to share ideas, thoughts, what may have worked a certain way in one destination. You tweak it a little bit, it can also work in your destination. So sharing of those best practices is really beneficial.

Bob Gilbert (05:00):

So with that in mind, if from a geographic standpoint, Green Bay, which is you know, about an hour's drive south and the closest airport, are they a competitor or are they a partner and how do you compete? How do you partner?

Julie Gilbert (05:16):

We partner with them from an international perspective because Green Bay has such a different product, a different feel. They are truly more a sports industrial city than Door County. We joke with their president and CEO, he always says he is going to put a big billboard up and saying Door County is closed. But of course you can't do that. But with the Packers of course we definitely utilize the exposure and the visibility because people know where Green Bay is and we're just 50 minutes north. So from a geolocation perspective it works really well. Wisconsin is truly a state that has some of the nicest people I think I have ever met and it is a pleasure to be able to partner with people in Green Bay and actually throughout the state because everybody really does work together and there's always that fun competition. But we do see a lot of day trips out of Green Bay, but that is mostly residents of Green Bay.

Bob Gilbert (06:25):

Now you attended an event the other week in Green Bay that was kind of related to sports. Can you share what that was with the listening audience?

Julie Gilbert (06:34):

Yes. So Green Bay will be hosting the 2025 NFL Draft and we are so excited because the number of visitors will exceed. I think all of our expectations and the communities throughout the state are within one to two hours of Green Bay. The entire state will really benefit from it and we can't wait.

Bob Gilbert (07:02):

And I think keeping it on the sports theme, there is a particular Packer that is one of your tourism ambassadors. Can you tell us a little bit about him?

Julie Gilbert (07:13):

Yes, we're very fortunate. AJ Dillon actually when we first came to Door County, I think I had been in the office one day and it was the annual dinner and he had been out and about in Door County apparently, oh a few months before he had met his future wife and her parents have a place in Egg Harbor and he had been up quite a bit and had just really highlighted how much he loved Door County on all of his social. He said he wanted to be the mayor of Door County. So the team was smart, clever, quick, got a key, created and invited he and his fiancé at the time and her family to our annual dinner, which they all came. They had no idea this was going on. And I had the pleasure of presenting this key to Door County to him as mayor. It has just continued and he and his now wife have a beautiful son and it truly is his love of Door County where he continues to provide that visibility because we don't pay him for that. It's genuine and we're pretty fortunate,

Bob Gilbert (08:27):

You know, it's always better when it's authentic and it's not forced. People see that and identify it with that. So that's great to have an ambassador that is held in high regard both locally and within the sports world as well. And I would imagine that also helps with your economic development efforts. When I say yours, I mean local economic development efforts. How do you partner with your local economic development office?

Julie Gilbert (08:54):

We work very closely with Door County Economic Development Corporation. Their executive director is on our board as a voting member and I am on their board. And we ensure that we maximize and leverage our marketing to help them get into markets for workforce development. All of those things we can do in order to create more efficiencies. So collaboration is strong, communication is continuous because it's so important that people look at the visitor economy and economic development as helping each other because they do. And Door County is predominantly a visitor economy.

Bob Gilbert (09:40):

So we mentioned, you know, the county seats, Sturgeon Bay, you know, there is a history of shipping. You've got one of Europe largest ship builders actually has offices and a yard. I say that whenever I drive by, there are several huge cargo ships there being refitted because there is access to the Great Lakes and from the Great Lakes out to the Atlantic. Is it Fincantieri, the Italian ship builder?

Julie Gilbert (10:03):

Yes,

Bob Gilbert (10:04):

I am reminded of Maura Gast quote. I know you are familiar with that. If you build a place where people want to visit, et cetera, et cetera, then that kind of helps with people wanting to move and companies wishing to relocate. Do you work with the Economic Development office to tie together some of the programs you have? Yes,

Julie Gilbert (10:24):

Actually the Community Investment Fund is something that they're very closely aligned with as well as we're in the creation of a destination master plan or a vision for the next three to five years where they were very integral in creating the outline and choosing the company. And we actually will be going into town hall meetings September 13th. We have three town halls scheduled and then our visioning workshop with stakeholders and community leaders, zone commissioners, board, all of the people that can provide the direction on what the visitor economy should look like and how can we do that together and ensure who is responsible for what moving forward. I think a big part of what has been a challenge historically here is that accountability has never been part of having these conversations in building bike paths. Is it the municipality, is it the county? Is it this group or that group? Really the goal with working through the Economic Development Corporation has been okay, let's get all these people together who has the resources, who has the area of expertise, define that vision and then identify who takes the lead, who can support and continually follow up. We can do that because we're the agency that is initiating that and by helping everyone we can continue to facilitate those conversations and action because that's always been the challenge historically.

Bob Gilbert (12:08):

So there's two questions I'd like to ask. The first one is, you know, you've got a lot of initiatives going on, a lot of communications out with the 19 different communities, municipalities. What keeps you awake at night? Other than my snoring, I'm just kidding. I don't snore anybody who wants to know out there.

Julie Gilbert (12:26):

Yeah he does. But we won't get in to that.

Bob Gilbert (12:28):

Too much information anyway. So what keeps you awake at night with the programs and the initiatives that you're rolling out and hope to roll out in the future? And the question isn't necessarily local, but it could be, you know, tourism as a whole.

Julie Gilbert (12:43):

I think 2022 was a banner year. Door County blew it out of the water in terms of visitation, economic impact, all those indicators that we keep an eye on. It also highlighted a lot of the challenges that we're going to have moving forward. And this is very prevalent throughout the US. How are we going to ensure that we continue to have the workforce that wants to work, that's excited to work? Where can we house them? Because as you know, when you look at housing throughout the peninsula, it's not inexpensive and it's very difficult for a hospitality worker in many cases to purchase a home in the peninsula because we are so isolated and we don't have a large population. Maybe Green Bay would be the closest, but if you're in Green Bay, you're 50 minutes to Sturgeon Bay and then another 40 miles up to the north of the Peninsula, well actually even more so that keeps me up at night along with the economy.

Julie Gilbert (13:53):

How is that going to change and will that impact our visitation moving forward? Another thing is our weather last January, February, we didn't have a lot of snow and it didn't get as cold as it typically does and because of that, our charter captains really struggled because ice fishing has become a very significant piece of business for the county in those times of years. So there's a lot of moving parts that could potentially impact us negatively from a multitude of areas. And you know, I never shut off the mind, so I am constantly thinking about it. You always have to be prepared and that's the way we operate here. We're always prepared for potential outcomes and that just provides us more of an understanding of how we adapt. And adaptability is critical.

Bob Gilbert (14:51):

So you speak about ice fishing and you need frozen lakes and if there is global warming it makes it a little bit more challenging to put a hut, you know, up on, on the lake to fish for the walleye or perch or white fish that are there. So as you look at your crystal ball, what trends have you identified? And I understand the workforce issue, which Door County is not alone in that particular challenge and it's going to take a lot more than just tourism folks to resolve that particular issue. But what other trends have you identified that could impact the future sustainable growth of tourism to Door County and destinations in general?

Julie Gilbert (15:34):

You know, we are seeing shift to more electric vehicles. It's a an emerging technology. We as a county have had a number of electrical vehicle chargers that we put in seven or eight years ago and they're old now. The technology has improved. It's much more sophisticated and much more fast. So we did have a grant this last year, I think we had 12,000 a thousand dollars per grant request to set up an electrical vehicle charger because we know that that's something that people who we target and people that visit the county are really looking for. The other thing is, I think we've all seen the emergence of AI and chat GPT and we want to make sure that we understand how people are using it and if we have the content on digital platforms where if somebody is asking chat GPT to create and develop an itinerary, do we have that content set up so that it will be easy to grab and provide as a tool for planning their next trip. You know, the economy is a concern. So I think we all have to wait and see how that rolls out. Door County seems to be a destination that does pretty well if there is a challenge with the economy because it is predominantly drive you can't get here except by private plane unless she drives. So we'll just keep an eye on that. Gas prices are the same right now as they were a year ago and we'll see how it goes.

Bob Gilbert (17:20):

I will say and share with the audience that you referenced, US Travel Association and you attended ESTO and congratulations on winning the award. And I think, and correct me if I'm wrong, but you had to present different marketing plans. Why don't you tell the audience what that was? But I know that you did dress up as Barbie and there are photos so you can't deny it that have been published by your tourism colleagues.

Julie Gilbert (17:45):

Yes, I did. There are photos.

Bob Gilbert (17:47):

Talk about what was that briefly?

Julie Gilbert (17:50):

So the debate was surrounding the future of marketing and my role in that debate was to back up an older marketing tactic. And because I truly believe in all the digital content and AI, I really do love emerging technology. So I had to make it fun. And the only way I could do that was looking and identifying what was old is new again and gosh, if somebody hadn't seen Barbie. So that was really the reasoning behind the Barbie focus. And I then supported direct mail because it was one piece of old marketing that people are still using. It was a lot of fun. We had a lot of laughs.

Bob Gilbert (18:43):

But educational at the same time, which is what ESTO is all about. Yeah,

Julie Gilbert (18:47):

You know, that particular session is really surrounded. It's four 15 on a Monday after all the sessions and people want infotainment. They just, they want to chill out and have fun with their colleagues and that really is the directive for that particular session.

Bob Gilbert (19:05):

Well you carried out your assignment in flying colors and again, as you said, tourism can be fun, it's a serious business. But this has been fun. You've been a great guest and I'm absolutely sure that we're going to continue this conversation over dinner tonight.

Julie Gilbert (19:19):

As long as you prepare a really good dinner, which you typically do. So I think we're all good.

Bob Gilbert (19:25):

Shh, don't tell too many people or there'll be a line outside the door. Julie Gilbert, destination Door County. Thank you so much. This has been unique. Never interviewed my wife before and very informative. Thank you so much.

Julie Gilbert (19:40):

Thank you.

Bob Gilbert (19:42):

Thanks for listening to part two of this episode. Please like, subscribe, and leave a review. You can also visit [EddyAlexander.com](http://EddyAlexander.com) to learn more about our tourism, marketing, and destination management services and read some of our recent case studies.