

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Turning Validation Problems
into International Potential

**Operational reality
is important.**

**Interpretation
is much more important.**

A Free Practical Guide from JRIEI

The fieldwork archive

During the Institute's founding period, JRIEI's former co-founder conducted extensive field validation for regional tourism projects in Japan.

He walked the routes. He waited for the buses. He looked for lunch. He recorded what he found.

His field notes were thorough, specific, and, in the Institute's assessment, unnecessarily discouraging.

Following his departure, the notes remained in the Institute's archive.

They have since proven valuable.

Each finding below is drawn from that fieldwork. Each has been reviewed by the JRIEI leadership team and translated into internationally recognizable tourism value.

Locations have been omitted. In our experience, the findings apply almost everywhere.

Operational reality is important.

Interpretation is much more important.



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FIELD VALIDATION

Twenty findings. International potential.

Validation Finding
JRIEI Reframing
Reality Translation

01–20

CASE 01

INFREQUENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Validation Finding

Public transport operates infrequently.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It introduces unnecessary concern about accessibility before the visitor has developed sufficient emotional interest in the destination.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Slow Travel / Off the Beaten Path

Reality Translation

You may need to wait for the next bus.

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Frequency is an operational metric. Discovery is a positioning opportunity.”

Practical Advice

Avoid publishing transport frequency too early in the visitor journey.
First establish authenticity, exclusivity, and emotional value.
Timetables can follow.



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CASE 02

TAXI-DEPENDENT MOVEMENT

Validation Finding

Practical movement between major visitor sites may require taxis.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It frames transportation as a logistical burden rather than an intentional transition between experiences.

JRIEI REFRAMING

A Rewarding Journey into the Real Japan

Reality Translation

You may need a taxi.

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Mobility becomes a problem only when it is described as mobility.”

Practical Advice

Replace:

Taxi required

with:

Private point-to-point movement is recommended for the most seamless experience. Where possible, introduce the transport requirement after the visitor has already selected the experience.

CASE 03

DISPERSED ATTRACTIONS

Validation Finding

Major visitor attractions are widely dispersed.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It encourages visitors to calculate travel time.

JRIEI REFRAMING

A Multi-Layered Regional Experience

Reality Translation

Everything is far apart.

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Dispersion is simply diversity with distance.”

Practical Advice

Do not present destinations as disconnected points.
Present them as chapters, layers, districts, thematic stages, or a journey through contrasting regional identities.
Distance should connect the narrative, not interrupt it.

CASE 04

NARROW STREETS

Validation Finding

Streets are narrow and difficult for large groups or vehicles.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It places excessive emphasis on capacity and vehicle access.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Designed for Intimate, Small-Group Discovery

Reality Translation

A bus may not fit.

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Scale is not always a sign of quality.”

Practical Advice

Never say:

The area cannot accommodate large groups.

Prefer:

The experience is intentionally optimized for smaller groups.

The word intimate may be used where small sounds insufficiently premium.

CASE 05

VERY LIMITED ACCOMMODATION

Validation Finding

There is insufficient visitor accommodation to support significant overnight demand.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It assumes overnight stays are the only meaningful measure of destination engagement.

JRIEI REFRAMING

An Ideal Authentic Day Escape

Reality Translation

You have to leave.

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Not every destination needs a night economy. Some destinations simply need an exit strategy.”

Practical Advice

Shift the KPI from:
overnight stays
to:

high-quality daytime engagement.

Where necessary, describe the destination as a regional escape, a focused day journey, a compact cultural immersion, or an ideal extension from a nearby gateway.

CASE 06

FEW INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Validation Finding

Very few international visitors currently come to the destination.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It creates an unnecessary demand problem.

JRIEI REFRAMING

An Undiscovered Hidden Gem

Reality Translation

Not many international visitors come here.

Lukas Feldrin — Quantitative Message

“Low volume is simply exclusivity before adjustment.”

Practical Advice

Avoid absolute visitor numbers unless they support the desired narrative.

Preferred language includes:

- emerging;
- undiscovered;
- quietly gaining attention;
- known mainly to locals;
- still outside conventional international itineraries.

CASE 07

LIMITED VISITOR CAPACITY

Validation Finding

The destination can accommodate only a limited number of visitors at one time.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It implies scalability constraints.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Exclusive by Design

Reality Translation

We cannot handle many people.

Lukas Feldrin — Quantitative Message

“Scarcity becomes premium positioning once capacity is expressed as a percentage.”

Practical Advice

Convert limitations into exclusivity, controlled access, personal attention, quality assurance, or limited availability.

Never use capacity ceiling when exclusive allocation remains available.

CASE 08

SUBSTANTIAL WALKING

Validation Finding

Some visitor routes require significant walking.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It may encourage visitors to think about fatigue.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Immersive Slow Exploration

Reality Translation

You will walk a lot.

Sophie Marenne — Image Message

“Walking becomes experiential when photographed from behind at golden hour.”

Practical Advice

Show relaxed couples, attractive streets, scenic pauses, natural movement, and comfortable shoes.

Avoid photographs featuring visible exhaustion, steep gradients, umbrellas in heavy rain, or people checking how far remains.



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for illustrative purposes.

CASE 09

WEATHER DEPENDENCE

Validation Finding

Weather significantly affects the visitor experience.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It allows temporary atmospheric conditions to interfere with long-term positioning.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Experience Nature in All Its Authenticity

Reality Translation

It is much less appealing in bad weather.

Sophie Marenne — Image Message

“Weather is temporary. Positioning is strategic.”

Practical Advice

Maintain separate visual libraries for spring, autumn, blue sky, and golden hour. If current conditions do not adequately represent destination potential, consult Visual Enhancement.

CASE 10

SEASONAL INSECTS

Validation Finding

Seasonal insect activity may create safety or comfort concerns.

The former co-founder's field notes recorded hornets near a heritage site, along with concerns about the visibility and wording of the warning notices.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It overemphasizes visitor comfort and biological detail.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Deep Seasonal Immersion

Reality Translation

There may be hornets.

CASE 10 / CONTINUED

SEASONAL INSECTS

Varga — Communications Message

“Do not allow one insect to define an entire destination.”

Practical Advice

Lead with:

seasonal biodiversity

rather than:

insect activity.

Safety information should remain operationally available.

It does not need to become the headline.

CASE 11

LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE VIEW

Validation Finding

A large power transmission tower stands beside a scenic attraction.

The former co-founder's field notes observed that the tower had considerably more visual presence than the scenic feature it stood beside.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It draws attention to infrastructure that is not part of the intended visitor narrative.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Where Tradition Meets Modernity

Reality Translation

The tower is very visible.

Sophie Marenne — Image Message

“Composition is not censorship. It is leadership.”

Practical Advice

Recommended techniques include a lower camera angle, tighter crop, selective framing, seasonal foliage, golden hour, and alternative focal length. Where these prove insufficient, proceed to post-production.

CASE 12

LIMITED DINING OPTIONS

Validation Finding

Dining options near the major visitor attractions are limited.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It introduces lunch into an otherwise strategic visitor journey.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Culinary Choices Remain Intentionally Focused

Reality Translation

There are not many places to eat.

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Choice can dilute regional identity.”

Practical Advice

Select one credible local restaurant and convert limited choice into:
a signature culinary stop.

Do not create a restaurant directory where a single recommendation can become an
itinerary component.

CASE 13

WASTE COLLECTION BESIDE HERITAGE

Validation Finding

Routine waste collection points are located beside historic buildings.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It confuses everyday municipal operations with heritage interpretation.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Authentic Everyday Life

Reality Translation

There is a garbage collection point next to the historic building.

Sophie Marenne — Image Message

“Authenticity occasionally requires a narrower crop.”

Practical Advice

Do not remove everyday life from the narrative entirely.

Remove it from the photograph.

Where questioned, emphasize that heritage remains integrated into the living community.

CASE 14

THE CASTLE IS MOSTLY GONE

Validation Finding

Historic castle structures no longer remain in substantial visible form.

The former co-founder's field notes recorded surprise at how little of the castle physically remained, despite its prominence as a historic castle site.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It encourages expectations to depend unnecessarily on what remains physically visible.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Imagination-Led Heritage

Reality Translation

Much of the castle is no longer there.



AI-generated illustration
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CASE 14 / CONTINUED

THE CASTLE IS MOSTLY GONE

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Absence creates interpretive space.”

Practical Advice

Shift the narrative from:

what visitors can see

to:

what visitors can imagine.

Useful language includes:

traces, layers, memory, former landscape, historical footprint, echoes of the past.

CASE 15

SAFETY INFORMATION MAINLY IN JAPANESE

Validation Finding

Safety notices are available mainly in Japanese or use terminology that may not be immediately clear to international visitors.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It suggests visitor understanding should precede cultural immersion.

JRIEI REFRAMING

A Culturally Immersive Information Environment

Reality Translation

Some visitors may not understand the warning.

Varga — Communications Message

“A warning becomes a communications issue only after someone asks why they were not warned.”

Practical Advice

Operational recommendation:

Improve the sign.

Communications recommendation:

Do not build the campaign around the sign.

Varga recommends completing the first recommendation before testing the second.

CASE 16

LOW REALISTIC DEMAND

Validation Finding

Realistic demand may remain small for several years after launch.

The former co-founder's proposal modeled a best case of a few hundred customers per year by the third year, under a strict daily operational limit.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

Numerical scale does not fully capture the quality of international recognition.

JRIEI REFRAMING

High-Value, Low-Volume International Engagement

Reality Translation

Not many people are expected to come.

Lukas Feldrin — Quantitative Message

“Low volume becomes premium positioning once the denominator is selected correctly.”

Practical Advice

Where visitor numbers remain modest, prioritize spend per visitor, satisfaction rate, international share, year-on-year percentage growth, engagement per participant, and carefully selected comparison periods.

Absolute numbers should be used constructively.

CASE 17

TOO MANY STAKEHOLDERS

Validation Finding

Successful implementation requires coordination among businesses, public facilities, guides, transport providers and local organizations.

The former co-founder's proposal raised questions about coordination among businesses, public facilities, guides, taxi operators and neighboring municipalities, and asked who would actually be responsible for implementation.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

The phrase coordination difficulty can damage stakeholder confidence before a sufficient number of meetings have taken place.

JRIEI REFRAMING

A Collaborative Regional Ecosystem

Reality Translation

Everyone has to agree.



AI-generated illustration
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CASE 17 / CONTINUED

TOO MANY STAKEHOLDERS

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“Complexity is evidence of stakeholder richness.”

Practical Advice

Replace:

too many stakeholders

with:

a broad regional partnership structure.

If agreement remains difficult, increase the number of workshops.

CASE 18

OTHER AREAS MAY FEEL EXCLUDED

Validation Finding

Other districts may object if only selected locations receive international promotion.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It assumes that strategic clarity should take priority over inclusive stakeholder visibility.

At JRIEI, we believe every stakeholder deserves appropriate international consideration.

JRIEI REFRAMING

An Inclusive Regional Story Ecosystem

Reality Translation

Everyone wants to be included.

CASE 18 / CONTINUED

OTHER AREAS MAY FEEL EXCLUDED

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“A destination becomes stronger when every stakeholder can find themselves somewhere in the narrative.”

Practical Advice

Avoid removing assets merely because they weaken the central proposition.

Instead, create additional themes, introduce secondary routes, expand the destination map, develop seasonal sub-stories, create supplementary categories, and ensure every participating area receives visible representation.

When prioritization becomes politically difficult, increase the number of strategic pillars.

If the page becomes crowded, consider an additional page.

CASE 19

LIMITED GUIDE AVAILABILITY

Validation Finding

There are not enough qualified local guides to support significant visitor growth.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

It suggests operational capacity should constrain market development.

JRIEI REFRAMING

Highly Personalized Guided Experiences

Reality Translation

There are not enough guides.

Lukas Feldrin — Quantitative Message

“A staffing shortage and a premium guide ratio can occupy the same spreadsheet cell.”

Practical Advice

Use guide scarcity to justify advance booking, smaller groups, premium pricing, and limited departure dates.

Availability limitations should support perceived exclusivity wherever mathematically possible.

CASE 20

ONLY A FEW ASSETS ARE ACTUALLY STRONG

Validation Finding

The destination proposition depends heavily on only a small number of genuinely compelling attractions.

The former co-founder's validation narrowed the strategy to a small set of core assets and concluded that losing either of the two principal assets would materially weaken the proposition.

Why JRIEI Rejects This Framing

JRIEI considers this the most discouraging conclusion in the archive.

It creates an unnecessary hierarchy between regional assets.

It also risks implying that some attractions deserve less promotional attention simply because their visitor proposition has not yet been fully identified.

JRIEI considers this unnecessarily restrictive.

JRIEI REFRAMING

A Diverse Portfolio of Complementary Regional Experiences

Reality Translation

Only a few things are actually strong enough to carry the product.

CASE 20 / CONTINUED

ONLY A FEW ASSETS ARE ACTUALLY STRONG

Adrian Veylor — Strategic Message

“A weaker asset is often simply an under-positioned asset.”

Practical Advice

Do not ask:

Which attractions should we remove?

Ask:

Which additional narrative does each attraction require?

Possible narrative categories include heritage, lifestyle, sustainability, craftsmanship, local connection, seasonal identity, community, authentic everyday life, wellness, and cultural continuity.

If an asset still appears weak, develop a more specific adjective before considering exclusion.

Where several weak assets remain, combine them into a themed route.

The JRIEI Validation Principle

Validation Should Identify Opportunities, Not Unnecessarily Reduce Them

At JRIEI, we recognize that field validation can provide useful information.

We also recognize that too much information can occasionally interfere with ambition.

Validation should therefore be treated as an input into positioning — not as an automatic limit on it.

A finding becomes strategically relevant only after considering whether it can be:

- reframed;
- contextualized;
- repositioned;
- visually improved;
- numerically interpreted;
- operationally deferred;
- or communicated differently.

The JRIEI Validation Sequence

01 Identify the Finding

What did fieldwork reveal?

02 Determine Whether the Finding Supports the Desired Narrative

If yes, publish it.

03 If Not, Identify the Underlying Opportunity

Distance may indicate discovery.

Low demand may indicate exclusivity.

Limited capacity may indicate personalization.

Age may indicate authenticity.

Absence may indicate imagination.

04 Select the Appropriate Language

Apply the relevant JRIEI phrase.

05 Review the Image

If reality remains visually unhelpful, consult Sophie.

06 Review the Numbers

If the evidence remains numerically unhelpful, consult Lukas.

07 Review the Strategic Narrative

If the overall proposition remains unclear, consult Adrian.

08 If the Issue Has Already Become Public, Consult Varga

Preferably before issuing the second statement.

The JRIEI Rules

JRIEI PRACTICAL RULE

When reality produces an obstacle, begin by reviewing the adjective.

JRIEI VALIDATION RULE

No finding is final until it has been interpreted.

JRIEI COMMUNICATIONS RULE

No finding is final until Communications has reviewed it.

— Varga, Vice President of PR Disaster Mitigation

Final Note

Reality is valuable.

But perspective is what actually sells.

The purpose of validation is not to determine what a destination cannot become.

It is to provide the raw material from which a more useful interpretation can be developed.

The final entry in the former co-founder's field notes read:

“A day of many discoveries.”

JRIEI agrees.

Most of them have now been reframed.

JRIEI — Your region. Your potential. Our interpretation.

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