



# ESCAPE CITY

CASE STUDY

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## PRIMARY INTERVIEWEE

Mike Ringrose

## TITLE

Managing Partner

## COMPANY

Escape City



[escapecity.ca](https://escapecity.ca)



Edmonton, Canada (est. 2015)  
Saskatoon, Canada (est. 2016)

Founded in 2015, just as the Escape Room craze was crossing North America, Canada's Escape City has built a substantial operation thanks to diligent business decisions and a genuine passion for providing customers with unique and memorable experiences. Mike Ringrose, one of five partners in Escape City, is the organization's man on the ground, overseeing day-to-day operations for the company at both of its current locations while also working on future expansion and new markets.

The escape room business is a wholly unique puzzle as Mike will detail in this case study, not completely dissimilar from the brainteasers that are Escape City's bread and butter. One key element that has helped to ground Escape City's business? Resova's booking platform. Mike and his partners went through an exhaustive selection process when their previous platform changed its fee structure in 2020, and after switching to Resova, they haven't looked back.

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**Resova's commission-free business  
model and robust tools for  
marketing return visits have  
helped us grow.**





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#### WHY RESOVA?

When it came time to switch booking providers Mike and his partners did their research. They toured some of the best escape rooms around the world and one name kept popping up.

“One thing I noticed doing the booking for our partnership group was that Resova was being used frequently by some of the best escape room businesses,” he said. “So I started to dig into it and it became very clear that Resova really understands the escape room industry. It was comforting knowing that they understood the obscure, strange industry that escape rooms truly is. And that they had done their research to find out what these businesses need.”

## SWITCHING TO RESOVA WAS “A NO BRAINER”

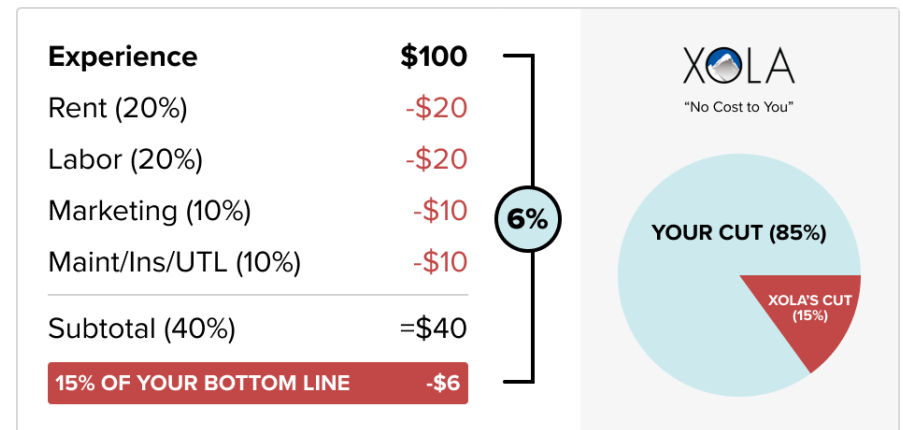
The first several years of Escape City’s bookings were powered by Xola until a change in the way their platform assessed fees made it financially impossible for Escape City to continue the relationship. And so Mike and his partners’ search for new booking software began. “We went back to the drawing board and chose Resova, and I’m glad we did,” said Mike, retracing Escape City’s choice to switch from Xola to Resova. “Resova gave us the functionality we needed at a more reasonable price point.”

One of the things that struck Mike about Resova was their drive to improve their product. “Resova is always innovating and adding new features, and that was attractive,” Mike said. “We could tell the team was hungry and that they really wanted to become the premier escape room booking system. And they’ve definitely done that.”

When asked to drill down on that more, Mike got into some specifics. “With Xola’s model, all of our sales would be exposed to not just a percentage fee from Xola, but also to a percentage credit card fee. We ran the numbers and the difference between Xola and Resova was massive. It was a no-brainer,” he said. “Working with Resova is a breath of fresh air. They understand where I’m coming from. They told me from the get-go that they weren’t going to that percentage fee model. And so that was a big decision factor for us when we were designing our new booking system.”

### How much does your “free ticketing partner” actually cost?

How much is **15%** of your business worth?



Escape City could have passed the credit card fees on to his customers, “but with Resova you don’t have to pass that fee along at all,” Mike said, “Resova gives us the flexibility to give our customers a better price point.” Such flexibility has been critical for Escape City’s business more recently. “With inflation, Resova’s pricing structure gave us a little bit of room to move on our prices that we might not have had if we had gone with one of their competitors.”

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When a customer walks through the door, we don't want staff grinding on the computer. **Resova's software is so easy to use** that we were able to get their eyes up and make sure that from the moment people walk through the door, we're delivering a great guest experience.

## PAINLESS TRANSITION

Having made the full transition from Xola to Resova, could Mike recommend switching to other businesses contemplating a similar move? “I can say with confidence,” he responded, “that any business could switch from Xola to Resova easily and painlessly and get a full suite of functionality without the percentage fee attached to each booking.”

## COMMUNICATION AND EASE OF USE ARE CRITICAL

When asked about Resova’s best features, Mike goes straight to Resova’s customized emails and text messaging offerings. “Communication is critically important,” he says, “Resova does a good job of providing businesses with a number of different email templates and options to better communicate with your customers.”

Equally important for Escape City has been how easy the system is to jump into for users, regardless of skill level, especially where the greeting area is concerned. “The Resova system is really easy to use for our staff, which is important to us,” he says. “We have young staff working the front and we need them to be personable and focused on the customer. When a customer walks through the door, we don’t want them grinding on the computer. With Resova, we were able to get their eyes up and make sure that from the moment people walk through the door, we’re delivering a great guest experience..”

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### MARKETING, PROMOTION, AND INTEGRATION

One area Mike flagged as a big positive for Resova was just how robust Resova's Marketing and Promotion product is and how well it integrates with Escape City's mass email provider, MailChimp. "Between Resova's coupon code marketing program, which is quite robust and customizable, and its integration with our existing MailChimp account, we were able to put together a pretty good online package so that we could really focus on return visits," Mike said, "that combination has done wonders for our digital marketing."

### INVENTORY MANAGEMENT AND BOOKING ARE ON POINT

A booking management software suite is nothing if its actual booking features aren't stellar. Mike's team couldn't be happier with Resova on this point, and Escape City's business is flourishing as a result. "We want to deliver an epic entertainment experience to everyone that walks through the door. We can't do that if we're understaffed or overbooked, especially as we get into the busy holiday season. Resova provides us with the tools on the back end to ensure that we are staffed appropriately. It's perfect."

### SEAMLESS INTEGRATION FOR BEFORE AND AFTER THE ESCAPE ROOM EXPERIENCE

An escape room business' first point of contact with a potential customer is almost always on the web, so seamless website integration is crucial. "We do so many of our bookings online so it's really important that our booking software integrates well with our website," Mike said. "our website needs to provide a polished user experience and Resova delivers on that." Mike went further into the details on exactly how Resova's software helps guide the customer from the web, into the escape room and back out again. "After having a polished experience on the website the customer gets a reminder email to show up and our staff is reminded who's coming in the door. So their eyes are up and their attention is on the customer. Then once we get them in the room we believe in our product and our experience. The software helps us manage our guests before and after their escape room experience. That's where Resova really shines."

"Resova provides us with the tools on the back end to ensure that we are staffed appropriately. **It's perfect.**"





## ENABLING ESCAPE ROOMS TO CULTIVATE RETURN BUSINESS

Return business is a major challenge for the escape room industry; guests don't often want to replay games they've already solved. Armed with Resova's marketing platform, Escape City can easily gather intelligence on their guests and use it to market to them more effectively. "Our business model dictates that we flip one room per year and create a new experience," Mike said. "Thanks to Resova we know which rooms our customers have completed and when we launch a new experience we have a database that we fire out messages to. So in the first three or four months after a launch, we end up with a lot of repeat customers."

"We get customers into our funnel and then we provide them the opportunity to learn a little bit more about each of our experiences. A healthy percentage of our business ends up being return customers," Mike said, clearly satisfied with his business' ability to bring people back thanks in part to Resova's arsenal of marketing and promotion tools.

## WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

With Resova, Escape City feels supported well into the future. "I've been pleasantly surprised at the amount of new Resova features that are being considered, developed, and released on a regular basis," Mike said, "even if we don't use them all, it's nice to know that they are innovating to push their product forward."

The nature of the escape room product is that it's always evolving after all. "We're always building a new experience and trying to push the envelope and innovating with every new room. That includes developing new technologies and new and better ways to do things," Mike said. "It's nice to be partnered with a company that's doing the same thing in the digital space."

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There's nowhere to go but up. I have no  
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#### 10 OUT OF 10, WOULD RECOMMEND

Mike noted that he would absolutely recommend Resova, even to businesses in his market. “The escape room industry is interesting because you want everyone to also do a good job so that when people are done playing your rooms, you can make a suggestion and pass them off to other escape rooms to keep their interest level high,” Mike said.

When asked to rate his likelihood to recommend on a 1 to 10 scale, Mike noted “I would give Resova a 10 out of 10. There's nowhere to go but up. I have no problem recommending Resova to anyone.”

Ready to unleash the full potential of your business and blaze ahead  
of the competition with Resova?

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