

tourism hamilton

2005 Annual Report

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of Tourism*

Message from the President, Board of Directors

In my first year as Tourism Hamilton's president, I have become more aware of Hamilton's hard-working tourism industry and the importance of uniting our efforts to market the city to tourists. Working hand-in-hand with the local sector, we have made significant strides in 2005 towards reaching our business plan goals. I'm thrilled to share with Tourism Hamilton's partners and stakeholders our accomplishments in this annual report.



Sue Vattay

We only needed to look skyward for evidence that Hamilton has turned a major corner in the tourism industry. In September, Air Canada began flying into Hamilton International Airport offering flights to Montreal and Ottawa. Combined with WestJet's service, the HIA

saw 435,000 guests come through its doors. To capitalize on this marketing opportunity, Tourism Hamilton opened a new Tourist Information Centre at the airport.

The return of a cultural icon signified downtown Hamilton's re-emergence with the gold-wrapped Art Gallery of Hamilton. The gallery reopened in May after an 18-million dollar renovation and by year end, saw over 100,000 visitors. Elsewhere in the city, visitors bobbed around the bay aboard our new "Harbour Queen" boat cruise and rested their heads in one of 108 sparkling suites at the new Staybridge Suites hotel, behind the John C. Munro federal government building.

Behind the scenes, Tourism Hamilton, in partnership with Human Resource and Skills Development Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, completed the "Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Framework". The results of this initiative will provide a solid foundation for preparing a local tourism development strategy.

Local hotels and B&Bs also began administering the destination marketing fee which collected an additional \$300,000 to market Hamilton strate-

Hamilton Harbour Queen Boat Cruise

gically. In the marketplace, Tourism Hamilton worked alongside the local industry and continued to make its presence felt with strategic sales initiatives. Priorities were established through summer marketing plan input sessions and the productive Tourism Hamilton Summit, hosted in November at the Flamboro Downs. Details and results are outlined in the pages of this report.

Among the highlights which indicate a prosperous future for tourism in Hamilton, the Canadian Society of Association Executives selected Hamilton to host the organization's 2007 conference and showcase. The event will bring hundreds of influential meeting planners from across Canada to Hamilton.

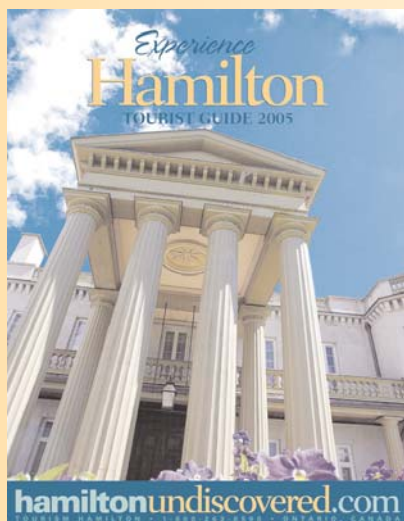
In addition, Hamilton continued to leverage exposure from bids for the Commonwealth Games by securing the 2006 Volleyball Canada Canadian Championships, the 2007 Tim Hortons Brier and the 2008 Vanier Cup. Preparations continued for the 2006 Canadian Open.

To generate more "free ink", over 80 of Canada's elite travel journalists attended the 2005 Travel Media Association of Canada Conference and AGM in February. Since then, Canada's elite travel journalists have given the city rave reviews in various media outlets.



Sue Vattay
President
Tourism Hamilton

Consumer Marketing and Visitor Servicing



Experience Hamilton Tourist Guide



Two of the "Feast for the Eyes" print advertisements



Hamilton International Airport Information Booth

In 2005, Tourism Hamilton continued to build awareness of Hamilton as a great getaway destination for the leisure traveler. The target priorities for this market include: Ontario within a 300 km radius, western New York, eastern Michigan as well as the local market to capture the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR).

Tourism Hamilton produced the third edition of the *Experience Hamilton Tourist Guide*, in partnership with the Hamilton Spectator. The guide, with a circulation of 125,000, was stocked in Ontario Tourism Information Centres and distributed to Hamilton's key geographic markets.

Two fall cultural tourism campaigns – named "Feast for the Eyes" – focused on the western New York and southern Ontario markets. These multi-media campaigns, leveraged by the Ontario Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC), promoted over night packages including Hamilton's cultural offerings such as the Art Gallery of Hamilton and Hamilton Civic Museums. Contest promotion and material distribution to thousands of passers by at Toronto's Union Station and Buffalo's The Great Pumpkin Farm Festival also helped to create a buzz for these campaigns.

Thirty Air Canada travel agents descended on Hamilton for an organized city familiarization tour from Ottawa, Montreal and eastern Canada in September. These agents are significant travel influencers whose knowledge of Hamilton's product pays large dividends in increased air travelers to Hamilton.

During the summer and fall seasons,

Tourism Hamilton administered the Downtown Ambassador Program, which saw ten ambassadors promote Hamilton throughout the downtown and across the city. What began as a pilot project in summer 2004, has become an important and effective initiative to help animate the downtown core during the summer months.

The organization operated one year-round tourist information centre downtown staffed by the volunteer



Teasers for Hamilton's Union Station domination and Buffalo's The Great Pumpkin Farm Festival

Lady Hamilton Club in the shoulder seasons and by travel counsellors in the busier summer months. In partnership with the Hamilton International Airport, Tourism Hamilton opened a tourist information centre in the airport to service passengers coming to and through Hamilton via Air Canada and WestJet airlines. Travel trade development officer Betty McKillop staffed a centre at Clappison's Corners. The organization continued to offer a 1-800 line and Website to service out-of-town inquiries.

At a Glance – Total Visitors Serviced in 2005

Unique visitors to Website	111,653
In-person visits to Tourist Information Centres	14,203
Phone Calls	4,987
Total	130,843

Staff Leads 2005: Deborah Simon, travel services coordinator, Maria Fortunato, tourism development officer, marketing & sales, and Mira Todorovic, tourism information coordinator, airport



Media Relations

Last year saw unprecedented activity and achievements in media relations for Tourism Hamilton and the local industry. Acknowledging that the news media plays an important role in shaping public opinion of tourist destinations, Hamilton hosted the 2005 Travel Media Association of Canada Conference and AGM in partnership with the OTMPC and Sheraton Hamilton Hotel.

Tourism Hamilton's ability to proactively reach out and tell our story to local and national newspapers, television and radio stations, and news and wire services, provides an opportunity to expand the city's appeal as a destination for conventions, sports events, group tours and leisure travelers. As such, Tourism Hamilton has been aggressive in pitching story ideas and supporting journalists on assignment.

Tactics

In February, over 80 of Canada's premier travel journalists flocked to Hamilton for the TMAC Conference and AGM which generated immediate travel stories and also helped to alter the city's steeltown stigma perception that many previously held.

The conference, and the attention Hamilton received, was a springboard to attend additional marketplaces including the Society of American Travel Writers Conference and a series of Canadian partner receptions in Boston, MA, Chicago, IL and New York City, NY. These events promote Canadian product to high-yield media that are difficult to reach through more traditional communication methods. The cities are selected for their concentration of key media, not market size.

To solidify Tourism Hamilton's relationship with the Canadian Tourism Commission, Ted also attended their premier international and American media events, Go Media Canada Marketplace and Canada Media Marketplace, respectively.

Also as part of the Go Media Canada program, Tourism Hamilton commissioned two fit-for-print stories (Hamilton's bed and breakfasts and burgeoning arts scene) which have appeared in magazines and newspapers across the country and north east USA. To meet the media's need for quick-access, 24-hour support, Tourism Hamilton maintained the on-line media centre with story ideas, fit-for-print editorial and images.

Results

As a result of Hamilton's heightened presence in the travel media marketplace, an increasing number of third-party media endorsements are reaching millions, showcasing the city's diverse product year-round.

Staff Lead 2005: Ted Flett,
media relations officer



Steeltown sheds its rusty image by Helena Katz
The Barrie Examiner, The Cornwall Standard-Freeholder, The Hamilton Spectator, The Montreal Gazette, Montreal, The Prince George Citizen and The Winnipeg Free Press
March/April 2005
Combined circulation:
431,337



Sheila Copps's Hamilton
by Mathieu Chantelois
VIA Rail's Destinations
October 2005
Circulation: 240,000



Hamilton has a Locke on antiquing
by Susan Scott
Ontario Travel Discoveries
Spring 2005
Circulation: 425,000

Stop for a fun visit and discover Hamilton
by Maria Ceraulo
The Buffalo News
June 5, 2005
Circulation: 290,930



Meetings, Conventions and Sport Events

The meetings, conventions and sports events markets represent tremendous opportunity for business and economic development for the city. Working hand-in-hand with the local hospitality industry, Tourism Hamilton focused domestically for these markets. The team completed traditional marketing efforts such as tradeshow and sales missions with creative strategies to set the city apart from other destinations.



Hamilton Ambassador Recognition Program

Tactics

The Convention Development Fund, administered by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism as a post-SARS recovery initiative, has extended the city's marketing reach. Specifically, Tourism Hamilton and local partners took a more active marketing role in the Toronto chapters of the Canadian Society of Association Executives and Meeting Planners International.

The 2007 CSAE Conference and Showcase was among the significant conventions pursued and secured in 2005. The event will attract over 500 delegates from across Canada – key not-for-profit decision-makers in this sector. On the sport tourism side, in 2005, Tourism Hamilton and partners secured the 2007 Tim Hortons Brier, 2006 Canadian Open Golf Championships, 2006 BMO Skate Canada Synchronized Skating Championships, 2008 Vanier Cup and the 2006 and 2007 Volleyball Canada Championships.

In April, Tourism Hamilton and

partners saluted 132 locals who have secured future events in Hamilton at the Hamilton Ambassador Recognition Program. The gala's objective is to encourage more Hamiltonians to bid for conferences and sports events.

A familiarization tour was hosted in conjunction with the May Sarah McLachlan concert for association executives and meeting planners.

Following the success of the 2004 initiative, Tourism Hamilton continued to market the city's convention services sector with tradeshow at McMaster University and also took the program to Mohawk College. The tradeshow help to educate faculty and administrators on the variety of products and services available to them to bid and secure conferences and sport events.

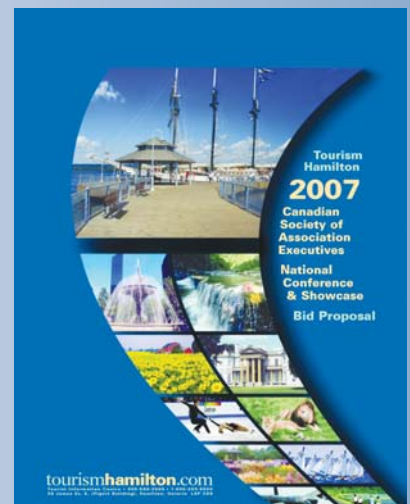
To increase Hamilton's presence in the sports event market, Tourism Hamilton attended the Canadian Sport Tourism Association Marketplace. As Tourism Hamilton prepared to apply the Sport Tourism Action Plan in 2006, staff began reaching out to local sports enthusiasts and associations given these grass root contacts are often pipelines to regional, provincial, national or international tournaments.

As a tool to help local partners to market their services to incoming groups, Tourism Hamilton regularly distributed convention lists and convention alerts. Staff also advised clients about the organization's assistance including registration support, companion and pre-/post-conference tours, grants and attendance building.

Results

- Tourism Hamilton serviced 37 sports events and 100 conferences
- 27 Bids were presented for meetings, conventions and sports events. 16 were successful
- 35 site inspections were conducted
- 33 convention and sports event grants were processed
- 192 sales leads generated in the association market and 8 in the sport market

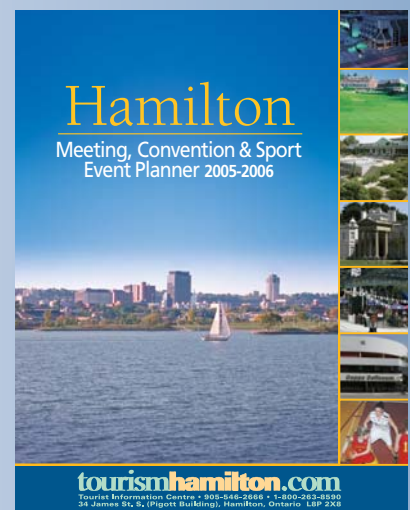
Staff Leads 2005: Dilna Khory, conventions servicing coordinator and Sharon Murphy, conventions sales officer



CSAE Conference Bid Proposal



2005 Confederation Cup Program Ad



Meeting, Convention & Sport Event Planner



Group Tours



Flamboro Downs was among the stops for the group tour operator June familiarization tour

Tourism Hamilton's Group Tour Marketing program promotes the city's products to tour operators and group leaders to maintain current motorcoach traffic while attracting new business. Services in 2005 included marketing, itinerary development, familiarization tours and tailored service to meet the tour operator's needs.

Tactics

Tourism Hamilton continued to strategically increase its attendance and presence at trade shows and sales missions, enabling staff to keep Hamilton in the radar of group travel influencers.

Key Marketplaces included:

- American Bus Association Conference & Marketplace
- Ontario Motorcoach Association
- National Tour Association

To satisfy business generated through these marketplaces, familiarization tours and sales missions were conducted.

A New England sales mission was carried out in partnership with the Holiday Inn Express and a two-day familiarization tour in June attracted 23 tour operators from across Ontario, New York and Pennsylvania.

Tourism Hamilton also produced the 2005-2008 Travel Trade/Group Planner – a key marketing tool. The publication has a three-year shelf life and is distributed at trade shows,

during sales calls and through qualified mail outs.

To continually remain top-of-mind for tour operators and group planners, a co-operative advertisement with five local partners was taken out in the Ontario Group Planners Guide (circulation of 8,000). The OMCA Resource Guide was another publication in which Tourism Hamilton advertised (circulation of 1,000).

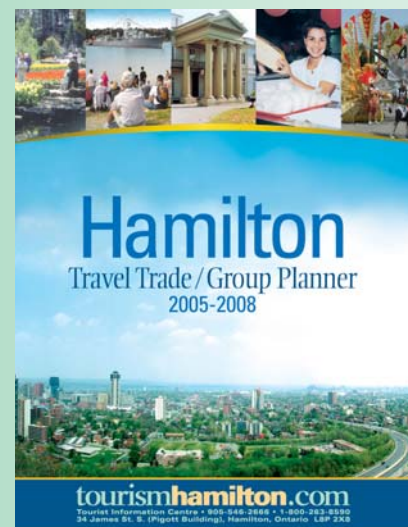
Results

Tourism Hamilton staff increased awareness of and interest in Hamilton specifically through face-to-face meetings with tour operators who attended A.B.A., N.T.A. and OMCA marketplaces. In total, Tourism Hamilton generated 353 sales leads.

The June familiarization tour generated multiple overnight bookings in 2006 through Ontario's Fun Connection – a local receptive operator. The New England sales mission resulted in a 3-night booking for the fall of 2006 and additional prospects.

Working hand-in-hand with two local receptive tour operators, Maxima Tours and Ontario's Fun Connection, in 2005, Tourism Hamilton was able to offer tour operators convenience and added service while also increasing our capacity to follow-up and secure business. Both operators booked or are in the process of booking a number of overnight and day trips to the city.

Staff Lead 2005: Betty McKillop, travel trade development officer



Hamilton Travel Trade/Group Planner

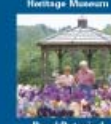
Destination Hamilton



African Lion Safari



Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum



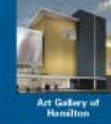
Royal Botanical Gardens



Dundurn Castle



Flamboro Downs & Slots



Art Gallery of Hamilton



Pear 4 Park

Looking for new ideas for your next group tour?

Take a trip on the wild side with a visit to **African Lion Safari**, a drive-through game reserve featuring live animal shows, nature tours and boat rides. Hungry? Check out the group buffet for your luncheon enjoyment. Touch down at the **Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum** for a close encounter with the vintage WWII aircraft that fought in the Battle of Britain! A stroll through the fragrant lilacs, peonies and roses of the world-famous **Royal Botanical Gardens** will delight the senses and whet the appetite for a light snack or sumptuous lunch at one of several on-site cafes and tea houses. Follow up with a visit to **Dundurn Castle**, the majestic homestead of early Canadian premier Sir Allan Napier MacNab. If you're feeling lucky, you can always bet on a good time at **Flamboro Downs & Slots**, with 750 slot machines and live harness racing. Don't miss the grand re-opening of the **Art Gallery of Hamilton** in the spring of 2005 and our two new waterfront attractions – the **Canada Marine Discovery Centre** and the famous Canadian warship, **HMCS Haida**.

For more great trip ideas for multi-day & day trip packages, contact Betty McKillop at 1-800-263-8590 or email: bmckillo@hamilton.ca.

tourismhamilton.com
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada • 905-546-2666 • 1-800-263-8590

OMCA Resource Guide Advertisement



Audited Financial Statements

Tourism Hamilton Inc. Balance Sheet

Year Ended December 31, 2005

2005

2004

Assets

Accounts receivable	102,571	18,839
Due from City of Hamilton	519,167	340,606
Prepaid expenses	2,409	-

\$ 624,147 **\$ 359,445**

Liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	86,802	101,095
Deferred revenues	440,005	216,096
Accrued employee benefits	97,340	42,254

\$ 624,147 **\$ 359,445**

Net assets

Unrestricted net assets	-	-
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\$ 624,147 **\$ 359,445**

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures and Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended December 31, 2005

	Budget 2005	Actual 2005	Actual 2004
Revenues			
Partnership contributions	299,560	591,377	101,723
Tourism Awards & Summit	27,000	8,215	26,397
Federal grants	18,603	10,658	17,710
Provincial grants	372,550	211,660	61,500
Interest earned on reserve	-	12,851	-
City of Hamilton contribution	1,729,740	1,577,411	1,278,885
Total revenue	\$ 2,447,453	\$ 2,412,172	\$ 1,486,215
Expenditures			
Employee related costs	912,200	899,030	742,200
Material and supplies	69,910	69,258	29,639
Buildings and grounds	82,580	74,424	76,808
Program costs	1,308,263	1,272,932	615,448
Visitor centre set-up costs	-	12,544	-
Administrative costs	74,500	83,984	22,120
Total expenditures	\$ 2,447,453	\$ 2,412,172	\$ 1,486,215
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Net assets, end of year	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Prepared by **Grant Thornton**

Tourism Hamilton's Key Partnerships and Memberships

- American Bus Association
- Association of Convention Operations Management
- Attractions Ontario
- Bi-National Tourism Alliance
- Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance
- Canadian Society of Association Executives
- Canadian Tourism Commission
- Economic Development Council of Ontario
- Festivals and Events Ontario
- International Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaux
- Meeting Planners International
- National Tour Association
- Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation
- Ontario Motorcoach Association
- Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation
- Society of American Travel Writers
- Southern Ontario Tourism Organization (closed April, 2005)
- Tourism Toronto
- Travel Industry Association of Canada
- Travel Media Association of Canada

Tourism Hamilton

34 James Street South,
Hamilton ON L8P 2X8
Telephone: 905-546-2666
or 1-800-263-8590
www.tourismhamilton.com



Hamilton

Tourism Hamilton is a public-private partnership with the City of Hamilton. It has been established with a 19-member Board of Directors to be the tourism marketing agency for the City of Hamilton.

Executive Editor:

David Adames, *Executive Director*

Email: dadames@hamilton.ca

Editor: Ted Flett, *Marketing and Media Relations Coordinator*

Email: tflett@hamilton.ca

