

*Investing
Together*

2009

TOURISM HAMILTON MARKETING PLAN







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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The coming year presents a significant turning point for Tourism Hamilton as the organization embraces innovation and partnership – two principles within the Tourism Hamilton Strategic Plan 2008 to 2010 - to achieve success. The Tourism Hamilton 2009 Marketing Plan covers broad strokes pertaining to the year's priorities and objectives. Subsequent goals will be set based on benchmarks in project plans.

As the first decade of the new millennium concludes, observers can confirm easily that travel booking is one of the largest e-commerce businesses on the web and travel planning motivates significant web usage among consumers. Recognizing this, Tourism Hamilton is poised to innovate our marketing reach by leveraging the internet in 2009.

Consequently, e-marketing merits its own section in this plan with a series of commitments that pertain to all market segments. From measurable and inspiring consumer leisure marketing campaigns to creative and influential techniques to foster travel influencers, tourismhamilton.com will expand its traffic flows to paint a vivid picture of Hamilton.

In the lucrative meeting and convention market, 2009 will witness the execution and results of significant research and recommendations mandated by Team Hamilton – the city's meetings and conventions stakeholders, including hotel and the Hamilton Convention Centre staff. Evocative marketing – ranging from trade publication advertising to face-to-face networking receptions – tailored to sectors and associations which carry Hamilton's best prospects will maintain current clients and produce new business sources.

On the sports field, Tourism Hamilton will position itself and partners strategically to leverage optimal investment and profile from the province-led regional bid for the 2015 Pan Am Games.

On the leisure marketing front, in the organization's third year of sustained investment in leading overseas markets – UK, Asia and Mexico – Tourism Hamilton will closely measure gains and ascertain future prioritization. To guide the organization through this and other decision-making processes, Tourism Hamilton will establish a leisure marketing committee, populated by local partners.



INTRODUCTION

Tourism Hamilton is the city's destination management organization and is governed by a Board of Directors that represents the local tourism industry. Fifteen members represent the city's private and public sectors, reflecting the partnership approach to tourism marketing in Hamilton. Each year, Tourism Hamilton produces a marketing plan in consultation with local stakeholders, which charts the organization's course for the coming year, identifying key priorities and opportunities.

In the organization's second year under the 2008-2010 Strategic Plan which provides a new set of guiding principles for this marketing plan, Tourism Hamilton is poised for success. This results-focused plan builds on seven years of experience crafting and following annual marketing plans.

To help you grow your business, Tourism Hamilton works with the following "customer groups":

- Tourism businesses and organizations in Hamilton
- Visitors who are either in Hamilton or who intend to visit the city
- Travel influencers, including meeting planners, association executives, sport organizations, tour operators and travel media

To assist in your own marketing preparations, the plan identifies strategic priorities in each market. Each market has numerous audiences that collectively represent Hamilton's broad customer base. Consequently, various tactics will be adopted featuring corresponding product and involving appropriate partners.*

*2009 Tourism Hamilton Annual Report – due in mid-2010 will comprehensively list and evaluate the strategies adopted in this marketing plan

Message

from Mayor Fred Eisenberger
CITY OF HAMILTON



Dear Friends:

Spreading the word of Hamilton's hospitality to tourists ranks among my most fulfilling responsibilities as Mayor of this outstanding city. And while the economic case for tourism marketing is sound, the pride Hamiltonians feel when our city shines is paramount. Our collective efforts to boost Hamilton's appeal help to mobilize visitors and citizens who are keen to explore their exciting city while taking pleasure in its sights and sounds.

To bolster Tourism Hamilton's mandate, I am an active member of the organization's Board of Directors and endorse this marketing plan. I am certain you will find a variety of innovative, results-oriented techniques to complement your own marketing strategies, and I encourage you to invest in Tourism Hamilton to help shaping the direction of the City's future marketing initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fred Eisenberger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fred Eisenberger
Mayor of Hamilton

Message

from Mark Farrugia
PRESIDENT OF TOURISM HAMILTON'S
BOARD OF DIRECTORS



On behalf of Tourism Hamilton's Board of Directors, I am excited to present Tourism Hamilton's 2009 Marketing Plan. The creation of an annual marketing plan is one of the key deliverables of our Strategic Plan, and indicates our accountability to local stakeholders, allowing them the opportunity to guide the city's tourism marketing direction.

As Tourism Hamilton completes its first year under the direction of the 2008 to 2010 Strategic Plan, the contents of this marketing plan are particularly significant as the organization and industry travels a stronger course. Our new vision, mission and key areas of effort provide a more focused approach to how we work with the industry and partners, and ensure that tourism receives the profile and attention it deserves.

The Vision for Tourism Hamilton

Tourism Hamilton Inc. will be a leading Destination Management Organization in Canada, supporting the development of a vibrant and growing tourism industry in Hamilton.

The Mission for Tourism Hamilton

Tourism Hamilton Inc. is an innovative Destination Management Organization dedicated to significantly increasing new and return tourist visitation to Hamilton

Tourism is an integral industry sector in Hamilton. Over 2,300 residents work in the hospitality industry locally, and tourism provides an economic impact of over \$132 million each year for the city. Tourism is also a point of pride for Hamiltonians, as we invite and host visitors from across Ontario, Canada and even the planet. Please take the time to review and then apply this marketing tool in the next year to leverage Tourism Hamilton's support and put your business or organization on the itineraries of Hamilton's visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark Farrugia', written in a cursive style.

Mark Farrugia

Mark Farrugia, President

La Piazza Allegra

Larissa Ciupka

Art Gallery of Hamilton

Tracey Desjardins

Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Recreation

Mary Devorski

City of Hamilton Mayor's Office

Ward Dilse, Executive Director

Ontario University Athletics (OUA)

Mayor Fred Eisenberger

City of Hamilton

Duncan Gillespie

Hamilton Entertainment &
Convention Facilities Inc (HECFI)

Steve Goulding

WestJet | WestJet Vacations

Heather McClellan

Orlick Industries Ltd

Councillor Dave Mitchell

Ward 11

Carol Puddicombe

Puddicombe Estate Farms & Winery

Paul Sutton

Crowne Plaza Hotel & Lincoln Alexander Centre

Sue Vattay

Mohawk College of Applied Arts & Technology

Councillor Terry Whitehead

Ward 8

Alice Willems

Parks Canada Discovery Centre

Message

from David Adames,
TOURISM HAMILTON'S
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On behalf of Tourism Hamilton's staff team, I am pleased to share with you our 2009 Marketing Plan. The plan is integral to establishing our joint priorities and applying resources – both time and funds – to make them a reality. Tourism Hamilton is aware that these are challenging times for many of our partners. This is the time to stay on strategy but adjust some marketing tactics and we will be doing just that as you will see in this plan.

To better serve you, our partners, and to stay current with technology advancements, we have made strategic investments in technology, including upgrades to tourismhamilton.com and acquisition of new web-based customer-relationship management software.

In 2009, we will acquire an on-line booking engine to convert more business opportunities into bookings. Also in 2009, we will continue to advocate for "all things tourism" in Hamilton, ensuring that tourism is well represented in discussions around the Pan Am Games bid, the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration, the Metrolinx plans and the City's Cultural Plan.

In February, the release of the Ontario Tourism Competitiveness Study is expected. As the report's recommendations are considered, Tourism Hamilton is keen to work with the province to ensure that we position Hamilton to contribute to the overall Ontario tourism picture while growing our share of the tourism pie. The study, led by Greg Sorbara has provided an opportunity to reflect on our local tourism priorities and think about them in a provincial, national and international context. Tourism Hamilton was appreciative of the Ministry of Tourism including Hamilton as a location for consultation during the preparation of the report.

With this plan underway, and Tourism Hamilton's professional staff team at the ready, we are well positioned to help you realize maximum return from the increasing flow of business to our city. While this plan will be followed thoroughly, we will carefully consider additional opportunities that become available over the year and offer them to our partners accordingly.

As always, my staff and I are available to answer your questions and welcome your feedback.

Yours in tourism,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Adames", written over a light blue horizontal line.

David Adames



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TOURISM HAMILTON'S PRIORITY MARKETS

TOURISM HAMILTON'S PRIORITY MARKETS

- Meetings and conventions
- Sport tourism
- Leisure

OUR METHODOLOGY

Tourism Hamilton's 2009 Marketing Plan is the result of extensive research and consultation. Over the fall, Tourism Hamilton staff consulted with key partners to ascertain their marketing priorities. Following these sessions, Tourism Hamilton staff consulted the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation's (OTMPC) marketing plan, research available through the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) and Ontario Ministry of Tourism and then drafted key priorities and budgets for the organization's respective markets. Tourism Hamilton's Board of Directors reviewed the draft plans and approved with recommendations at its October 2008 meeting. The plan was then presented to all partners and stakeholders at the November 2008 Tourism Hamilton Summit.



KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Key Partnerships and Memberships

- American Bus Association
- Attractions Ontario
- Bi-National Tourism Alliance
- Canadian Inbound Tourism Association (Asia Pacific)
- Canadian Society of Association Executives
- Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners
- Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance
- Canadian Tourism Commission
- Destination Marketing Association of Canada
- Destination Marketing Association International
- Economic Development Council of Ontario
- Festivals and Events Ontario
- Flamborough Chamber of Commerce
- Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
- Meeting Planners International
- National Tour Association
- Ontario Ministry of Tourism
- Ontario Motorcoach Association
- Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation
- Society of American Travel Writers
- Stoney Creek Chamber of Commerce
- Tourism Industry Association of Canada
- Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
- Tourism Toronto
- Travel Media Association of Canada



CURRENT TOURISM LANDSCAPE

Current Tourism Landscape: Canada

Total Person Visits: 254.5 million

Breaking down that number: who's travelling to/in Canada?

- Canadians: 224.1 million (88%)
- Americans: 25.8 million (10%)
- Others: 4.6 million (2%)

What impact does tourism have in Canada?

- Visitors to Canada (including domestic travellers) spent \$70.9 billion
- Export spending (money spent by international visitors to Canada) was \$16.3 billion while domestic spending reached \$54.6 billion in 2007

*Source: 2007, Statistics Canada, National Tourism Indicators, International Travel Survey and Travel Survey of Residents of Canada



CURRENT TOURISM LANDSCAPE

Current Tourism Landscape: Ontario

Total person visits: 118,283,000

Breaking down that number: who's coming to Ontario?

- Total person visits from Canada: 94,843,000 (80%)
 - Total person visits from USA: 21,391,000 (18%)
 - Total person visits from other countries: 2,049,000 (2%)
- Total person overnight visits: 46,674,000 (39% of total person visits)

Breaking down that number: who's staying overnight in Ontario?

- Total person visits from Canada: 37,498,000 (80%)
- Total person visits from USA: 7,434,000 (16%)
- Total person visits from other countries: 1,742,000 (4%)

How much are they spending?

- Same-day and overnight visitors spent \$17,080,680,000

Breaking down that number: who's spending money in Ontario?

- Canadians: \$10,356,110,000 (61%)
 - Americans: \$4,383,217,000 (26%)
 - Other countries: \$2,341,353,000 (13%)
- Note that overnight visitors spend \$12,606,370,000 (74% of the combined spend)

What impact does tourism have in Ontario?

- Spending by visitors generates \$20,424,000,000 in direct, indirect and induced contributions to gross domestic product

Source: 2004, Statistics Canada, Canadian Travel Survey, International Travel Survey, Ontario Ministry of Tourism



CURRENT TOURISM LANDSCAPE

Current Tourism Landscape: Hamilton

Total person visits: 3,294,099

Breaking down that number: who's coming to Hamilton?

- Canadians: 3,023,530 (92%)
- Americans: 197,738 (6%)
- Others: 72,830 (2%)

Total person overnight visits: 713,833 (22% of total person visits)

Breaking down that number: who's staying overnight in Hamilton?

- Total person visits from Canada: 578,151 (81%)
- Total person visits from USA: 90,628 (13%)
- Total person visits from other countries: 45,054 (6%)

What are they doing?

- Visiting friends and relatives: 437,425 (61%)
- Pleasure trips: 171,769 (24%)
- Business trips: 47,730 (7%)
- Other reasons: 56,910 (8%)

Top Ten Activities by Overnight visitors

1. Visiting Friends and Relatives (84%)
2. Shopping (39%)
3. Outdoor/Sports Activity (24%)
4. Sightseeing (22%)
5. Historic Sites (12%)
6. Bars/Nightclubs (11%)
7. National/Provincial Parks (10%)
8. Cultural Performances (9%)
9. Museums/Art Galleries (7%)
10. Sports Events (6%)



CURRENT TOURISM LANDSCAPE

How much are they spending?

- Same-day and overnight visitors spent \$186,456,956

Breaking down that number: who's spending money in Hamilton?

- Ontarians: \$107,158,076 (57%)
- Other Canadians: \$32,905,843 (18%)
- Other countries: \$23,509,286 (13%)
- Americans: \$22,883,753 (12%)

Note that overnight visitors spend \$119,361,115 (64% of the combined spend)

What impact does tourism have locally?

- Spending by visitors generates \$132,159,000 in direct, indirect and induced contributions to gross domestic product
- Total municipal taxes generated as a result of visitor spending is \$4,233,000
- 2,384 local jobs, full-time, part-time and seasonal, are supported by tourism

Source: 2004, Statistics Canada, Canadian Travel Survey and International Travel Survey, Regional Tourism Profiles: Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Municipality. Ontario Ministry of Tourism



E-MARKETING

The World Wide Web and related e-marketing tools have revolutionized how travel destinations and operators market and sell their products. An impressive Web site in the tourism industry can attract millions of visitors, book rooms, sell tickets, offer promotions and sign up visitors for further communication. No other media can rival the internet's capabilities and reach. But today, just having a Web site isn't enough. With the advent of Web 2.0 which favours user generated content, destination management organizations are pushed to enhance e-marketing efforts to maintain web performance standards.

To keep pace with other Website innovations, in 2009, Tourism Hamilton will incorporate Web 2.0 features on tourismhamilton.com and engage an online booking system to sell overnight and day packages on the Website to support hotels and attractions. Tailored to each audience, Tourism Hamilton will also enhance the contents of web pages dedicated to travel influencers to present dynamic and updated information. To improve industry relations, Tourism Hamilton will also implement new customer relationship management software for our partners to innovate and provide accountability within our partnerships.



E-MARKETING

Trends, Opportunities and Challenges

Making it easy for consumers to access information and plan their trip is imperative in this highly competitive environment. With the widespread use of the Internet, information is literally at their fingertips 24/7. Consumers can be convinced about taking a trip (or remove it from their consideration list) based on the information and images presented, the ease of use of the website, the packages offered and the opportunity to book the trip. In fact, the web has become the number one planning tool, preceding even word of mouth*

Web 2.0 is a term describing changing trends in the use of World Wide Web technology and web design that aims to enhance creativity, secure information sharing, collaboration and functionality of the web. Web 2.0 concepts have led to the development and evolution of web-based communities and its hosted services, such as social-networking sites, video sharing sites, wikis, blogs, and folksonomies. Although the term suggests a new version of the World Wide Web, it does not refer to an update to any technical specifications, but to changes in the ways software developers and end-users utilize the Web.**

In 2007, Tourism Hamilton contracted a third party e-Marketing firm, A Couple of Chicks e-Marketing, to evaluate the performance of tourismhamilton.com on referral search engines. In 2008, Tourism Hamilton implemented the recommendations from this analysis upon contracting our Agency of Record, OK&D Marketing to leverage search engine optimization.

* Source: Proposed 2008-2009 Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation Marketing Plan, September 2007

** Source: Wikipedia.com, October 2008



E-MARKETING




Objectives

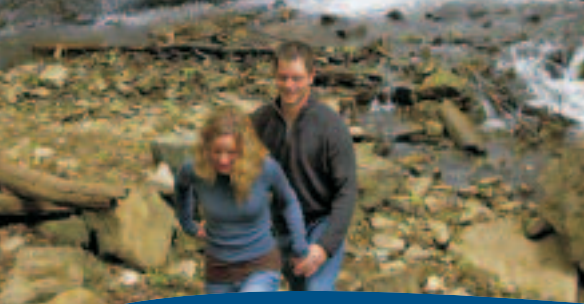
Tourism Hamilton will increase our audiences' e-impressions of Hamilton to drive further visitation to the city.

STRATEGY 1

The website will market and service visitors at all stages of their vacation planning, from browsing to booking, with content that is enticing and practical.

Tactics

-  From the homepage to subpages, tourismhamilton.com will embrace web 2.0, encouraging more user generated content to build consumer trust and engagement.
-  Tourismhamilton.com will carry online packaging featuring destination marketing fee contributing hotels and select key attractions to offer visitors with competitive pricing and unrivaled value.
- Tourism Hamilton will execute two seasonal marketing campaigns – spring/summer and fall with partner buy-in opportunities that will include a microsite and strong online marketing techniques.
- To sustain visitation, the website's content will be regularly changed and updated to appeal to regular visitors and encourage repeat visits. While the design of the website will be consistent, flexibility will be incorporated into the site to offer a fresh presentation of information and images.
- Tourism Hamilton will continue to entice visitors to subscribe to the quarterly e-newsletter through subscription incentives such as contesting.
-  Tourism Hamilton will develop and disseminate quarterly e-newsletters featuring product and offers relevant to that season and driving visitation to the website.
- Tourism Hamilton will launch year-round online banner advertising opportunities to partners.



E-MARKETING

STRATEGY 2

The website will inform travel influencers such as meeting planners and travel journalists of Hamilton's offerings specific to their needs and outline Tourism Hamilton's support services.

Tactics

- Tourism Hamilton will add succinct travel blog fodder to the online media centre, while maintaining compelling fit-for-print editorial and images. Tourism Hamilton will also provide a frequent and regular supply of inspiring and newsworthy story ideas including The Hamilton Notepad newsletter.



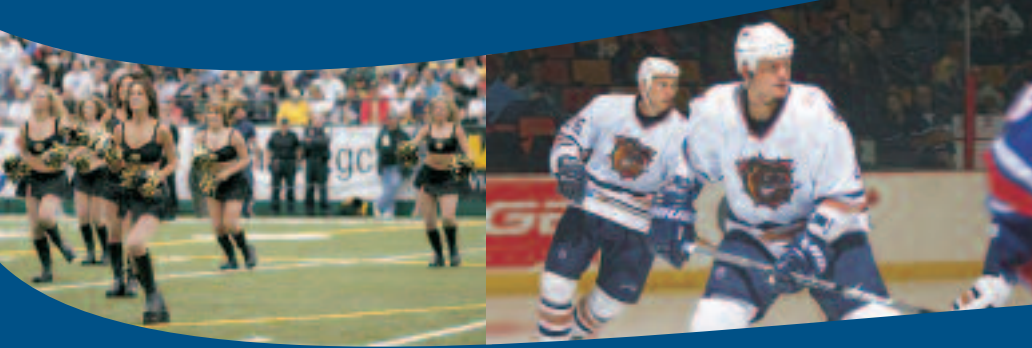
- Targeting meeting and convention planners and local ambassadors, Tourism Hamilton will market the city's offerings and industry's services through sales materials, website content, an e-blast program and lure brochure supporting tourismhamilton.com.



- Tourism Hamilton will entice and engage sport organizers through an interactive facility inventory, testimonials and online sport lure piece.



- To satisfy the desire of tour operators for new product, Tourism Hamilton will craft and disseminate two trade e-newsletters featuring destination product development and itineraries.





E-MARKETING

STRATEGY 3

The website will offer local partners and stakeholders information to build their business or organization.


Tactics

- The Inside Tourism Hamilton page on tourismhamilton.com will feature market research as well as current and archived information such as reports, newsletters, plans and staff lists.
-  • Talking Tourism newsletter, for partners and stakeholders, will undergo design enhancement to evoke greater reader interest and offer more links to tourismhamilton.com.
-  • Utilize the IDSS Customer Relationship Management system to improve communications with clients and partners.

STRATEGY 4

The website will bolster its online positioning to increase new and return visitors that reflect prospective demographics and target markets.

Tactics

- Tourism Hamilton will secure competitive online advertising positioning on sites with users that match Hamilton's best prospects.
- Tourism Hamilton will continue to follow and implement search engine optimization techniques.
- Offline – in print and broadcast marketing and advertising – Tourism Hamilton will strengthen profiling of the organization's URL in conjunction with wordmark and artwork.
-  • Local partners and stakeholders will be strongly encouraged to include a link to tourismhamilton.com on their websites.



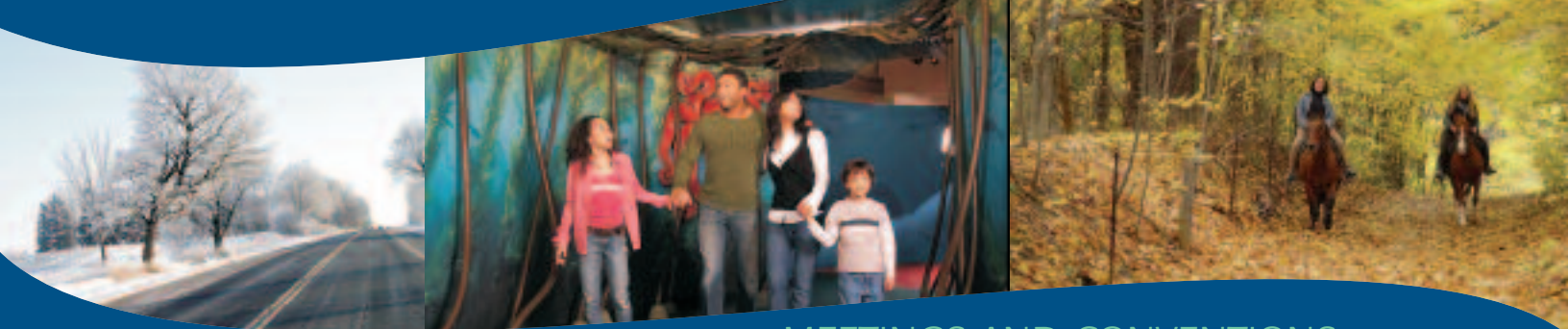
MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

The meetings and conventions market represents tremendous opportunity for business and economic development for the city. Although the meetings and convention market is smaller than the leisure market, the yield is more significant. Delegates attending conferences in Hamilton, in many cases, experience the city for the first time, providing an ideal opportunity to showcase Hamilton, and spend more money.

Trends, Opportunities and Challenges

- The Association market has experienced a general decline in memberships, thereby reducing the opportunity for large-scale meetings and conventions.*
- Meeting planners are faced with an increasing list of challenges, including more frequent, smaller meetings, reduced budgets, shorter lead times, and corporate changes in procurement policies (e.g., more emphasis on preferred supplier agreements and external sourcing). These 'process' issues are restricting the amount of time they can devote to exploring new opportunities.*
- Many companies are redefining eligibility qualifications for conventions and incentive travel, to include more non-sales employees. As such, planners need to satisfy the needs of increasingly diverse groups of attendees.*
- While Internet-based RFPs are on the increase, there remains a gap in the planning mindset, and a need for planners to be educated on the benefits and process for using online RFPs.*
- There is a distinct range of meeting planners in the marketplace, with very different service requirements. They are either well-seasoned professionals or young inexperienced individuals who require more time and attention.*

* Source: Proposed 2008-2009 Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation Marketing Plan, September 2007



MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS






Objectives

Tourism Hamilton will increase meeting and convention sales in 2009 by pursuing qualified repeat and new business. A team approach to develop a creative positioning strategy based on sound research will focus the industry's marketing efforts on the domestic leads and multi-property conventions will grow the number of city-wide conventions and room nights.

STRATEGY 1

Tourism Hamilton and local partners will promote Hamilton's convention-hosting appeal through "Team Hamilton" to qualified meeting planners and associations.

Tactics

-  • Tourism Hamilton will lead Team Hamilton through a creative positioning exercise with OK&D Marketing based on meeting planner survey results to best position the city's product and meeting and convention incentives to be integrated in all communications and materials for enhanced results and greater brand consistency. Tools will include sales materials, website content, print advertising in trade publications, an e-blast and lure brochure. The new branding will launch at Tête-à-tête tradeshow in February.
-  • Coordinated meeting and convention marketing will target conventions that carry a delegate count of 250 to 500 and focus on the following sectors, in priority: medical & healthcare, education, government & professional, sports, technology, light manufacturing, agriculture and business.
-  • Tourism Hamilton will contract OK&D Marketing Group to source new business leads which meet the criteria for groups with best prospects to select Hamilton as a meeting and convention host.
-  • Team Hamilton will host two networking receptions in Toronto and Ottawa for key meeting and convention decision makers to maintain current business and source new opportunities.
 - "Team Hamilton" will maintain gold sponsorships in the Toronto and Ottawa chapters of CSAE and MPI to gain greater prestige and raise awareness among these associations' influential members.
-  • Utilize the IDSS Customer Relationship Management system to improve communications with clients and partners.
- Team Hamilton will leverage memberships with CSAE, CanSPEP and MPI through tradeshow and event participation.




MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

STRATEGY 2

Tourism Hamilton will broaden the city's meeting and convention reach by nurturing local ambassadors: Hamilton-based professionals who are pipelines to various associations and organizations and can influence decision-makers to bring their event to Hamilton.

Tactics

- Team Hamilton will salute ambassadors at an event, the centerpiece event of the Hamilton Ambassador Recognition Program (HARP), providing a networking opportunity to source new business.
-  • Tourism Hamilton will establish a marketing partnership with a local media outlet to become a co presenter for the HARP.
-  • Tourism Hamilton will create a series of community-wide and sector specific ambassador recruitment advertisements and coinciding advertorials to be run by media partner.
- Work with McMaster University, Mohawk College and Redeemer University College to leverage the meetings and conventions that these institutions can bring to Hamilton, including hosting up to two marketplaces at McMaster University and one marketplace at Mohawk College.
-  • Tourism Hamilton will develop a convention planner's "tool kit" for local ambassadors used to sell Hamilton as a preferred venue, highlighting Hamilton's convention resources including the lure, bid submissions, DVD and partner inserts.



SPORT TOURISM

Hamilton is a city with a passion for sport and has a rich tradition of hosting successful sport events. Hamilton is home to North America's oldest professional football team, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats; North America's oldest road race, the Around the Bay; inaugural host of the Commonwealth Games in 1930; and biannual host of the longest running international multi-sport event in North America, the CANUSA Games, to name a few.

The city has been in the business of sport tourism for many years but in 2005, Tourism Hamilton made this \$2 billion per year industry a strategic priority by adopting a three-year Sport Tourism Action Plan and hiring two full-time staff dedicated to Sport Tourism. Over the past three years, the plan has been the road map for increasing the number of sport tourism opportunities for the city, as well as providing better service to existing events. Throughout 2006 and 2007, Hamilton played host to 136 sport events (competitions and meetings) which represents a 120% increase in the number of events that were identified and serviced by our organization in 2005 (pre-Sport Tourism Action Plan).

According to the plan, "Sport events create media attention, contribute to economic development, sport development and participation, raise civic profile, engage the community, help enhance infrastructure, and foster civic pride."



SPORT TOURISM

Trends, Opportunities and Challenges*

Cities across Canada are increasingly recognizing the value of sport tourism. Many communities are moving toward creating or manufacturing their own events that they can control from start to finish. The Bell Capital Cup Atom Hockey Tournament (Ottawa, ON), World Pond Hockey Championships (Plaster Rock, NB), various triathlons and marathons, etc. are examples of this trend.*

The development of competitive opportunities at the Masters (+50 years of age) level is becoming a trend, given the changing demographics (ie. aging population, more fitness oriented, propensity to travel, higher disposable income, etc.).*

Sport organizations are becoming more sophisticated in their approach to securing event hosts as they are realizing the value of their event properties. Communities are actively looking to host sport events and as a result the rights holders - in most cases provincial and national sport organizations - have become more sophisticated in the decision-making processes. In many cases, sport organizations have established a formal RFP process where an informal decision-making process was utilized before. This has minimized the benefit of personal relationships in event host selection, and forces communities to be creative and ensure they are putting their best foot forward in a bid proposal.**

* Rick Traer, CEO, Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance, November 2007

** Tourism Hamilton staff observation, 2008



SPORT TOURISM

Objectives

Year four of the Sport Tourism Action Plan will see a renewed focus on growing existing events, as well as increasing Hamilton's profile through hosting provincial, national and international events.

STRATEGY 1

Maintain and build relationships with targeted local, provincial and national sport organizations to position Hamilton as a desirable host city for their event or conference.

Tactics



- Maintain membership with the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance and work with the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Pan Am Secretariat.
- Leverage the 2015 Golden Horseshoe Pan Am Games bid opportunity to further Hamilton priorities.
- Utilize the IDSS Customer Relationship Management system to improve communications with clients and partners.
- Build on our current strategic list of clients and follow-up on all leads.
- Participate in the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance Congress and Marketplace.
- Sponsor the Betty Tweedy Golf Tournament in September 2009.
- Conduct pre-qualified sales calls to the Sport Alliance of Ontario with follow-up to both the provincial sport organizations (PSOs) and local sport organizer (LSO).
- Host targeted clients at a Hamilton Tiger-Cats game in September.
- Attend TEAMS Conference, Sport Accord and the Canadian Sport Leadership Conference in 2009.
- Complete a comprehensive sport facility inventory for Hamilton as a selling and servicing tool for clients.



SPORTS TOURISM

STRATEGY 2

Work with current sport event organizers to grow their events to provide more economic impact.

Tactics

- Host two workshops/networking sessions for local sport organizers which focus on sport event hosting issues, trends and challenges.
- Provide servicing to sport events to assist event organizers and to help grow their events, building on the service level provided in 2008.
- Strengthen relationships with local sport organizers by attending their events.
- Continue to assist sport event organizers with the promotion and marketing of their respective events.

STRATEGY 3

Collect and analyze sport event bid and hosting data to assist with targeting future opportunities for Hamilton.

Tactics

- Use the IDSS Customer Relationship Management System to track lost business, turned down business and confirmed business from sport events and conferences, as well as reasons cited for lost and turned down business.
- Collect testimonials from sport event organizers who have hosted events in Hamilton.
- Compile economic impact data on sport events and conferences.
- Run all new bid opportunities through the Bid Opportunity Assessment Tool.





LEISURE

Tourism Hamilton's leisure marketing efforts focus on the consumer but support the other markets given the importance of a general destination sell when pursuing a meeting, conference or sport event. In 2009, Tourism Hamilton will concentrate its efforts on e-marketing, strategic travel media relations and leveraging the air lift to Hamilton via flyglobespan and WestJet. Tourism Hamilton staff and board will also look critically to ascertain Hamilton's international profile and act accordingly. A leisure marketing committee will be struck to guide future leisure marketing initiatives and identify key trip motivators to showcase in promotions.



LEISURE

Trends, Opportunities and Challenges*

With new destinations entering the marketplace each year, consumers are presented with a wide range of product offerings, thus making the tourism environment increasingly competitive. Anticipating consumers' interests and effectively delivering on these interests can give a competitive edge to any destination.

Making it easy for consumers to access information and plan their trip is imperative in this highly competitive environment. With the widespread use of the Internet, information is literally at their fingertips 24/7. Consumers can be convinced about taking a trip (or remove it from their consideration list) based on the information and images presented, the ease of use of the website, the packages offered and the opportunity to book the trip. In fact, the web has become the number one planning tool, preceding even word of mouth.

High gas prices and passports will be both challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, these factors are expected to provide a small boost to domestic travel, with some Ontario residents choosing to travel within the province instead of driving to other provinces or to the U.S. On the other hand, these very factors will have a limiting effect on inbound travel from these jurisdictions.

Advertising targeting Ontarians by other provinces and jurisdictions has increased significantly in the last couple of years, with no signs of abatement. Given this increased competition in the province and the penchant for outbound travel, it is important to maintain advertising presence and share of voice within the province.

The CTC has recently changed its strategy and is now exclusively focusing on international markets, including most of Ontario's overseas source markets. Overseas residents consider Canada as a travel destination as opposed to being aware of the political boundaries of the provinces. As such, it leads to efficiencies to take advantage of the synergies and target overseas markets with a unified Canada message, under the lead of the CTC.



LEISURE

The gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender (GLBT) market represents a niche opportunity for Ontario. In the US the market size is estimated to be around 15 million, with above average household income, high incidence of college/university graduates (82%), in professional/managerial positions, with total spending power estimated at \$500 billion annually. The market is fiercely brand loyal, go out more, buy more, have more disposable income and are early adopters of new trends. Canada is already high on the consideration list as a travel destination and Toronto has been viewed as a gay friendly community for many years. In 2008/09, OTMPC will work closely with the CTC and specific destinations targeting this market to deliver compelling messages through appropriate channels.

With the exception of Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) motivated travel, overseas travellers are more inclined to think in terms of the broader 'Canada' as a destination (vs. Ontario or Toronto); the decision to visit Ontario, therefore, is contingent primarily on their awareness and perceptions of Canada and secondarily on their more specific awareness of Ontario.

GST non-rebate and exchange rates will increase travel costs to Canada by 10%-15% for German residents and by 2%-4% for UK residents. This, coupled with the strength of the Canadian dollar will result in cost becoming a more significant consideration.

Changes in U.S. visa requirements for both Mexico and South Korea could benefit Ontario. For Mexico, where the U.S. will now be requiring visas, those residents may elect to visit Canada instead. Similarly, if the U.S. does waive visa requirements for South Koreans, more of those residents will be motivated to put North American destinations on their consideration list.

While there have been improvements to overseas air travel in some countries in terms of capacity and direct flights, costs will continue to be an issue. Japan in particular has experienced a significant reduction in lift into Canada, especially from Western Japan. As noted earlier, both the European Union and the U.S. have significantly more robust Open Skies agreements than does Canada.

* Source: Proposed 2008-2009 Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation Marketing Plan, September 2007



LEISURE

Objectives

Tourism Hamilton will drive overnight and same day sales from consumers through effective media relations, compelling marketing campaigns, enhanced online presence, reinforced branding and attractive packaging to tour operators.

STRATEGY 1

To provide cost-effective Hamilton product information to a general audience, Tourism Hamilton's media relations program will generate unpaid, relevant editorial coverage in key domestic and US print and broadcast media outlets as well as trade publications.

Tactics

- Tourism Hamilton will develop and maintain mutually-beneficial working relationships with members of the domestic and US travel media with special emphasis on customized individual media tours, as well as marketplaces and media events.
-  • Provide a frequent and regular supply of inspiring and newsworthy story ideas including two issues of "The Hamilton notepad... for the travel journalist."
- Work cooperatively with the CTC and OTMPC to leverage additional media coverage and contribute to broader Ontario and Canadian travel stories, including OTMPC's My Ontario publication.
- Target the travel and lifestyle sections in the top 10 Canadian dailies including wire services, regional publications and partners' publications motivating increased travel among customers. (ie. Destinations by VIA Rail, Up! By WestJet and Visitors by Town Media)
- Target border state publications.
- Marketplaces: CTC annual media marketplaces, Canadian Partners media events in key U.S. cities, SATW national conference, SATW Ontario chapter conference, TMAC Conference and monthly Ontario TMAC chapter gatherings.
-  • Tourism Hamilton will host a spring media familiarization tour for select media to promote the destination's summer offerings.



LEISURE

STRATEGY 2

Tourism Hamilton will target consumer campaigns to customer prospects - mainly as identified by the OTMPC - with a large emphasis on cost-effective e-marketing.

Tactics



- Tourism Hamilton, with the support of the marketing agency of record, OK&D Marketing, will execute an enhanced summer marketing campaign promoting outdoor and family product to Provincial Families (ON) and Footloose Families (U.S.) as identified through OTMPC's Environics research with partner buy-in opportunities and through multi-media.

- Tourism Hamilton, with the support of the marketing agency of record, OK&D Marketing, will execute an online fall marketing campaign promoting arts & culture, dining, performing arts and shopping to Upscale Adventurers, Young Go-Gos (ON) and Young and Restless (U.S.) as identified through OTMPC's Environics research with partner buy-in opportunities.



- Tourism Hamilton will strike and coordinate a leisure marketing committee populated by significant attraction operators and hoteliers through which to gain direction in ongoing leisure marketing efforts.
- Tourism Hamilton will produce and distribute the 2009-2010 Experience Hamilton Tourist Guide with additional value-added features and offer an on-line version with increased functionality.
- Tourism Hamilton will leverage critical year-round marketing opportunities to present Hamilton as a multi-season destination.
- Tourism Hamilton will investigate marketing jointly with Tourism Burlington to extend our marketing reach and increase interest and visitation to the region.



LEISURE

DOMESTIC LEISURE TRADE MARKETING

STRATEGY 3

Tourism Hamilton will leverage its relationship with tour operators, domestic and overseas, to increase overnight and same day sales.

Tactics

- Create a travel trade program that partners can buy into for sales leads and trade show representation - mobilize partners with a stake in the travel/trade market to develop themed programming and marketing strategies and tools.
- Tourism Hamilton will work hand-in-hand with local travel providers, such as CAA, Days Inn, Intercontinental, Marriott, Starwood, VIA Rail and WestJet to promote Hamilton's tourism product and Tourism Hamilton's services thereby maximizing Hamilton's return and further benefiting these investors.
- Work closely with OTMPC to identify potential business and secure new leads.
- Maintain and leverage memberships in American Bus Association, Attractions Ontario, Festivals and Events Ontario, Ontario Motor Coach Association, National Tour Association and Tourism Toronto.



LEISURE

OVERSEAS LEISURE TRADE AND CONSUMER MARKETING

STRATEGY 4


Tourism Hamilton will leverage its relationship with tour operators to increase overnight sales.

Tactics

UK:

-  To strengthen Hamilton's relationship with flyglobespan and capture more business from Canada-bound passengers, Tourism Hamilton will offer Hamilton experiences in the airline's tour program, execute a joint marketing agreement with the airline and leverage additional marketing opportunities.
-  Organize and execute a Team Hamilton sales mission in key UK markets to promote Hamilton to key consumer-influencing tour operators and travel agents.
 - Attend the CTC UK's annual trade and media marketplace: Spotlight Canada.
 - Attend the CTC and TIAC's premier annual trade marketplace: Rendez-Vous Canada.
 - Execute a media and trade familiarization tour to promote flyglobespan's summer season.
 - Work closely with CTC UK to identify advantageous marketing opportunities.
 - Work closely with OTMPC and Hamilton International Airport to identify potential business and secure new leads.

Mexico:

- Attend the CTC Mexico's annual trade and media marketplace: Conozca.
- Attend the CTC and TIAC's premier annual trade marketplace: Rendez-Vous Canada.
- Work closely with OTMPC and Hamilton International Airport to identify potential business and secure new leads.
-  Participate in OTMPC's Mexican trade and media sales mission.

Asia-Pacific:

-  Develop an Asian trade strategy, engaging appropriate local partners.
- Attend the CTC and TIAC's premier annual trade marketplace: Rendez-Vous Canada.
- Investigate enhancing Hamilton's presence in the Asian market and promote accordingly at Canadian Inbound Tour Operators Asia-Pacific (CITAP).
- Work closely with OTMPC and Hamilton International Airport to identify potential business and secure new leads.



VISITOR SERVICES

Effective visitor servicing is essential to help optimize sales and deliver a favourable visitor experience. Visitor services comprise Tourist Information Centres, web site (tourismhamilton.com), call centre, Lady Hamilton Club, downtown ambassador program, brochure distribution and information fulfillment. Tourism Hamilton operates two year-round Tourist Information Centres: one in downtown Hamilton and one at the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport. The Centres, staffed by Travel Counselors and volunteer members of the Lady Hamilton Club, welcome visitors to Hamilton and provide brochures, directions and answers to tourists' questions whether in person or via mail, phone or e-mail. While mainly a marketing tool, tourismhamilton.com is also an integral part of servicing visitors already in town. Tourism Hamilton partners with the City of Hamilton's customer contact centre to provide call centre services for the toll free phone line.

Objectives

Visitor services will improve the experience of visitors to Hamilton by advising them about the breadth of activities thereby encouraging them to spend more and stay longer in the city.



VISITOR SERVICE

Tactics

Tourist Information Centres

- Tourism Hamilton will continue to operate two year-round Tourist Information Centres (downtown and at the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport).
- Tourism Hamilton will work to increase visitation to the Tourist Information Centres by promoting their locations, hours of operation and services offered.
- Following the model of working with the City of Hamilton for call centre services, Tourism Hamilton will work with the City to maintain tourism services in five municipal service centres located in Hamilton's five communities.
- Tourism Hamilton will investigate and implement further retail to generate revenue to support the operations of the Tourist Information Centres.
- Tourism Hamilton will create a business plan for City Council's consideration for a new gateway tourist information centre for the QEW/Fifty Road precinct, including working with stakeholders on the plan.
- Tourism Hamilton will administer the downtown ambassador program, partnering with downtown stakeholders and reaching out to key events across Hamilton.
- Continue to work with Tourism Burlington on a joint marketing impression program in key attractions that benefit the region.

Website



- Tourism Hamilton will continue to improve upon and add helpful elements to tourismhamilton.com including mapping and packages, to provide more comprehensive services to Hamilton's visitors and increase value to partners.
- Encourage partners to link tourismhamilton.com on their respective websites, increasing traffic to tourismhamilton.com and painting a broader picture for a potential visitor.

Signage

- Work with the City of Hamilton's Public Works department to implement a tourism sign program on key city roads.
- Work with Tourism Burlington on a new tourist route along the waterfront on Lake Ontario.



CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Tourism Hamilton's ability to deliver the commitments included in this marketing plan as well as the 2008-2010 Strategic Plan relies on the organization's credibility among our partners and stakeholders.

Objectives

With competing marketing and advertising opportunities, Tourism Hamilton will be seen as a results-oriented leader in tourism marketing and destination management. Tourism Hamilton will continue to facilitate dialogue with partners and stakeholders – both longstanding and new - in an effort to maintain and improve this standing.




STRATEGY

Tourism Hamilton will facilitate regular interaction with local partners and stakeholders to inform, gain insight and cultivate mutually beneficial working relationships.



CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Tactics

- Tourism Hamilton will publish the 2008 Tourism Hamilton Annual Report to inform partners of Tourism Hamilton's achievements. This document and others, including market research, will be available on the organization's website.
-  • Tourism Hamilton will roll out a customer relationship management program in new IDSS software to better communicate and share accountability with local partners.
- Through a strategic government relations program Tourism Hamilton will work to nurture the organization's relationship with local influencers such as members of City Council and local MPs and MPPs.
-  • Upon the release of the Ontario Tourism Competitiveness Study, by the Government of Ontario and chaired by MPP Greg Sorbara, Tourism Hamilton will respond accordingly to act with care and speed to support the provincial and local tourism industry.
- Tourism Hamilton will advocate on behalf of Hamilton's tourism industry regarding key issues affecting the industry, particularly representing Hamilton's interests in major projects such as Metrolinx, War of 1812 200th anniversary commemorations, 2015 Pan Am Games Bid and others.
- Tourism Hamilton will host the 11th annual Tourism Awards, hand in hand with partners, to recognize excellence in the tourism industry.
- Tourism Hamilton will host the 2009 Tourism Hamilton Summit to share industry trends, offer professional development and encourage networking.
- Tourism Hamilton will communicate with local and national media outlets on newsworthy matters relating to Tourism Hamilton and the local tourism industry.
- The Inside Tourism Hamilton page on tourismhamilton.com will feature market research as well as current and archived information such as reports, newsletters, plans and staff lists for partners and stakeholders.
-  • Talking Tourism newsletter, for partners and stakeholders, will undergo design enhancement to evoke greater reader interest and offer more links to tourismhamilton.com.



CALENDAR

Program Component

Program Component	Quarter 1												Quarter 2														
	January				February				March				April				May				June						
	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	
Meetings & Conventions																											
Prospecting and bidding																											
Trade Shows																											
Sales Missions																											
Event Building and Representation																											
HARP																											
Ambassador Recruitment Program Launch																											
Trade Marketing - Advertising & Lure Direct Mail																											
Sport Tourism																											
Prospecting and bidding																											
Trade Shows																											
Sales Missions																											
Event Building and Representation																											
Leisure Marketing																											
Domestic Consumer Marketing:																											
Fall Marketing Campaign																											
Summer Marketing Campaign																											
Lure Launch																											
Domestic Trade Marketing:																											
Prospecting and bidding																											
Media Relations:																											
Story pitching and fulfillment																											
Hamilton Notepad Release																											
Media Marketplaces																											
Spring Media Familiarization Tour																											
International Marketing:																											
Sales Missions																											
Trade shows																											
fgs JMA																											
Visitor Services																											
Fielding visitor inquiries																											
Downtown Ambassador Program																											
Brochure Display at TIC																											
Product Familiarization Tours																											
Industry Relations																											
Summit																											
Awards																											
Annual Report Release																											
CRM Roll Out																											



CALENDAR

Program Component

Program Component	Quarter 3												Quarter 4													
	July				August					September			October				November					December				
	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14	21	28
Meetings & Conventions																										
Prospecting and bidding																										
Trade Shows																										
Sales Missions																										
Event Building and Representation																										
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Industry Relations																										
Summit																										
Awards																										
Annual Report Release																										
CRM Roll Out																										

NOTES

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