

2010 Tourism Hamilton Marketing Plan

FOCUSING OUR EFFORTS

Table of Contents

03	Executive Summary
04	Introduction
05	Message from Mayor Fred Eisenberger
06	Message from Mark Farrugia
07	Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors
08	Message from David Adames
09	Tourism Hamilton Staff Team
10	Tourism Hamilton's Market
11	Key Partnerships and Memberships

Current Tourism Landscape:

12	Canada
13	Ontario
14	Hamilton
17	E-Marketing

Priority Markets:

19	Meetings and Conventions
24	Sport Tourism
28	Leisure
35	Visitor Services
40	Partner Relations

Executive Summary

In 2010, Tourism Hamilton and the local tourism industry will capitalize on key opportunities to leverage the impacts of tourism, countering the challenges of current and forecasted economic conditions. This plan, which echoes two principles documented in the Tourism Hamilton Strategic Plan 2008 to 2010 – innovation and partnership – provides a road map to reach that finish line.

Challenges in the coming year will be met by an organization and staff team better-equipped given the investment of business-building tools since the strategic plan's development.

In e-marketing, which touches all markets, Tourism Hamilton will undertake and complete an extensive improvement of the Website and online branding, including advertising and social media engagement. This will enhance travel planning and booking for consumers and travel influencers, activating direct sales for partners.

In the lucrative meeting and convention market, Team Hamilton – the city's hotel and convention centre stakeholders – will build on the awareness and lead-generating campaign initiated in 2009, targeting sectors and associations which carry Hamilton's best prospects. New multi-property city-wide business will be uncovered by nourishing relationships with Ottawa-based national association executives, McMaster University and Mohawk College – both wellsprings of ambassadors.

From the meeting room to the sports field, Tourism Hamilton will position itself and partners strategically to maximize the city's investment in the 2015 Pan American / Para Pan American Games through initiatives such as the provincial sport alliance marketing tradeshow. Effective servicing of key 2010 events will also help underscore Hamilton's hosting abilities and garner future business.

On the leisure marketing front, engaging consumers through various media – direct and third party (i.e. travel and social media) – bundled in seasonal campaigns with partner buy-in opportunities will foster greater interest in and visitation to Hamilton. And an enhanced way-finding program will help tourists to better navigate the city during their visit.

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 Tourism Hamilton's course for the coming year, identifying key priorities and opportunities.

In the organization's final 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 eight years of experience crafting and executing annual marketing plans.

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

- Tourism businesses and organizations in Hamilton
- Visitors and soon-to-be visitors
- Travel influencers, including meeting planners, association executives, sport event organizers, sport organization executives, travel journalists and tour operators

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.



**Message from
Mayor Fred Eisenberger**

Dear Friends:

Boasting about Hamilton's sites and sounds to tourists is one of my most cherished responsibilities as Mayor. I am regularly inspired by the city's hospitality and the strides we make as an industry when we collaborate. 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 the city – particularly important as we gear up to play host to the 2015 Pan American / Para Pan American Games.

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 us work together to shape the direction of the city's tourism industry.

Sincerely,

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 2010 Marketing Plan. The creation of an annual marketing plan is one of the key deliverables of our Strategic Plan, and signals our responsibility to local stakeholders, allowing them the opportunity to guide and leverage the city's tourism marketing direction.

In the final year of the 2008 to 2010 Strategic Plan, the contents of this marketing plan are particularly significant as the board looks to carve a path towards the future. Our vision, mission and key areas of effort are unwavering and provide a 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 2,700 residents work in the hospitality industry locally, and tourism provides an economic impact of over \$152 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 around the world.

Please take the time to review and then apply this marketing tool in the next year to fully leverage Tourism Hamilton's support and put your business or organization on the itineraries of Hamilton's visitors.

Sincerely,

Mark Farrugia

Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors

Mark Farrugia, President

La Piazza Allegra

Larissa Ciupka

Art Gallery of Hamilton

Mary Devorski

Mayor's Office, City of Hamilton

Mayor Fred Eisenberger

City of Hamilton

Duncan Gillespie

Hamilton Entertainment &
Convention Facilities Inc (HECFI)

Steve Goulding

WestJet | WestJet Vacations

Andrew Holmes

Courtyard by Marriott Hotel

Pat MacDonald

Mohawk College of Applied Arts
& Technology

Heather McClellan

Orlick Industries Ltd

Councillor Dave Mitchell

Ward 11

Carol Puddicombe

Puddicombe Estate Farms & Winery

Joe Sardo

RBC Dominion Securities

Councillor Terry Whitehead

Ward 8

Alice Willems

Parks Canada Discovery Centre

Observer:

Tracey Desjardins

Ministry of Tourism,
Culture & Recreation



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 2010 Marketing Plan. The plan is integral to establishing priorities and applying resources – both human and financial – to realize our goals. 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 keep pace with technology advancements, we have made strategic investments, including upgrades to tourismhamilton.com and enhancement of our web-based customer-relationship management software program. In 2010, we will continue to advance our online presence to activate sales and visits. Also in 2010, we will continue to advocate for "all things tourism" in Hamilton, ensuring that tourism is well represented in discussions around the 2015 Pan American / Para Pan American Games preparations, the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration, Metrolinx plans, Economic Development Strategy and the City's cultural plan.

In July, the province's destination marketing and management organizations (DMMOs) will commence operation. The DMMOs, one of the recommendations of the 2009 Ontario Tourism Competitiveness Study by Greg Sorbara, will "better coordinate tourism marketing and management across the province" and "should work towards creating a unique brand and a stellar experience within a provincial brand." While the roles and responsibilities of the DMMOs are finalized, Tourism Hamilton is committed to support the smooth implementation of the Hamilton Escarpment DMMO and ensure Hamilton plays a key role.

With this plan complete 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 emerge 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,

David Adames

Tourism Hamilton Staff Team



David Adames
Executive Director
905-546-4132
david.adames@hamilton.ca



Kathy Dunn
Tourism Events Coordinator/
Administration
905-546-2424 Ext. 5584
kathy.dunn@hamilton.ca



Marjorie Walker
Administrative Assistant
905-546-2424 Ext.
majorie.walker@hamilton.ca

Visitor Services:



Annie Chong,
Travel Counsellor
905-546-2424 Ext. 5771
annie.chong@hamilton.ca

Sales and Marketing:



Trish Chant-Sehl
Sport Tourism Coordinator
905-546-2424 Ext. 5499
trish.chant@hamilton.ca



Marie Fennell
Travel Counsellor
905-546-2424 Ext. 5771
marie.fennell@hamilton.com



Ted Flett, Marketing and
Media Relations Coordinator
905-546-2424 Ext. 5585
ted.flett@hamilton.ca



Maria Fortunato
Visitor Services Coordinator
905-546-2424 Ext. 2616
maria.fortunato@hamilton.ca



Sharon Murphy
Sport Tourism Coordinator
905-546-2424 Ext. 5770
sharon.murphy@hamilton.ca



Jane LaBette
Travel Counsellor
905-546-2424 Ext. 5771
jane.labatte@hamilton.ca



Mira Todorovic
Convention Sales Coordinator
905-546-2424 Ext. 5465
mira.todorovic@hamilton.ca



Jennifer Paquette
Travel Counsellor
905-546-2424 Ext. 5771
jennifer.paquette@hamilton.ca

Tourism Hamilton's Priority Markets

- Meetings and conventions
- Sport tourism
- Leisure marketing

Our Methodology

Tourism Hamilton's 2010 Marketing Plan is the result of extensive research and consultation. Over the fall, Tourism Hamilton staff attended the 2009 Ontario Tourism Summit, consulted the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation's 2010-2011 marketing plan, research available through the Canadian Tourism Commission and Ontario Ministry of Tourism. Key priorities were then identified in tandem with committees that support each market (i.e. meetings and conventions: Team Hamilton, sport tourism: Sport Tourism Advisory Committee, leisure marketing: Leisure Marketing Committee). Correspondingly, budgets have been set to support the execution of the plan.

Tourism Hamilton's Board of Directors approved the marketing plan at its November 2009 meeting.

Tourism Hamilton's Key Partnerships and Memberships

- American Bus Association
- Attractions Ontario
- Bi-National Tourism Alliance
- Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance
- Canadian Society of Association Executives
- 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
- Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners
- Meeting Planners International
- Mohawk College Travel and Tourism Program and Recreation Leadership Program
- 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: 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: 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: Hamilton

Total person visits: 3,535,000

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

- Ontarians: 3,272,000 (92%)
- Other Canadians: 41,000 (1%)
- Americans: 150,000 (5%)
- Internationals: 73,000 (2%)

Total person overnight visits: 676,000 (19% of total person visits)

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

- Ontarians: 530,000 (78%)
- Other Canadians: 22,000 (3%)
- Americans: 72,000 (11%)
- Internationals: 52,000 (8%)

What are they doing?

- Visiting friends and relatives: 419,000 (62%)
- Pleasure trips: 181,000 (27%)
- Business trips: 28,000 (4%)
- Other reasons: 48,000 (7%)

Top Ten Activities by Overnight visitors, in Priority

- 1 Outdoor/Sports Activity
- 2 Cultural Performances
- 3 Sports Events
- 4 Historic Sites
- 5 Zoos/Aquariums
- 6 Museums and Art Galleries
- 7 Parks
- 8 Festivals/Fairs
- 9 Casinos
- 10 Theme Parks

Current Tourism Landscape: Hamilton

How much are they spending?

- Same-day and overnight visitors spent \$226,309,000

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

- Ontarians: \$165,736,000 (73%)
- Other Canadians: \$8,126,000 (4%)
- Americans: \$19,976,000 (9%)
- Internationals: \$32,472,000 (14%)

Note that overnight visitors spend \$107,869,000 (48% of the combined spend)

What impact does tourism have locally?

- Spending by visitors generates \$152,288,000 in direct, indirect and induced contributions to gross domestic product
- Total municipal taxes generated as a result of visitor spending is \$7,810,000
- 2,768 local jobs are supported by tourism

Source: 2007, Statistics Canada, Canadian Travel Survey and International Travel Survey, Regional Tourism Profiles: Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Municipality. Ontario Ministry of Tourism

Current Tourism Landscape: Hamilton

Service Measurement	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Tourist Information Centre Visits	17,996	14,669	14,203	35,788*	65,833	31,821
Web Unique Visitors	87,522	121,926	111,653	135,193	153,617	148,595
Phone Inquiries	7,364	5,101	4,987	5,923	5,271	4,475
Leads Generated for Travel Trade	155 tour operators; plus 1,926 mail-outs	280 tour operators; plus 1,591 mail-outs	353 plus mail-outs	260 tour operators; 75 group leaders	125 tour operator; 630 travel agents; plus 500 tour operator/group leader mail outs	215 tour operators
Leads and Inquiries Serviced for Travel Media	38	46	111	78	84	71
Leads Generated for Conventions and Sport Events	53	181	192	185	219/44	254/77
Convention and Sport Bids Lodged and Won	29/11	39/28	27/16	30/19	30/14	21/10
Room Nights Generated from Bids Won	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,675 Conventions 4,460 Sports	5,200 Conventions 3,210 Sports
Value of Room Nights	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$788,000 Convention \$525,000 Sports	\$676,000 Convention \$381,990 Sports
Conventions and Sport Events Serviced	157	89/44	100/41	74/55	69/56	47/87
Convention/Sport Grants Administered	N/A	N/A	N/A	51	16/43	14/43
Business Lost Conventions and Sport						5/2
Tourism Impacts						
Hotel Occupancy Rate	59.6%	62%	60.9%	62.9%	66.4%	N/A
Hotel Average Daily Rate	\$98.84	\$95.97	\$100.47	\$103.00	\$107.90	N/A
Revenue per Available Room	\$51.02	\$52.27	\$57.26	\$64.83	\$71.65	N/A
Municipal Taxes Supported by Tourism	\$3.72M	\$4.23M		\$6.2M	\$7.8M	N/A
Hamilton Jobs Supported by Tourism	2,113	2,384		2,310	2,768	N/A

E-marketing

As the Internet inevitably evolves to become the primary information source for tourism decisions, Tourism Hamilton will invest in a stronger, more robust online presence in 2010, to support the needs of the local tourism industry. The growing impact of the web on travel was clearly identified within one of the recommendations of the Ontario Tourism Competitiveness Study: "The industry should increase internet marketing and online booking capabilities. Through its marketing agency, the Ontario government should work with industry to make it easier for consumers to book accommodation and visit attractions." This sentiment was confirmed by members of Tourism Hamilton's Leisure Marketing Committee.

Our objective is for the Tourism Hamilton Website to become the "definitive portal" or "go-to" for all things tourism-related in Hamilton. New functionality on the Website will allow Tourism Hamilton to leverage Web 2.0 online innovations which are integral to creating buzz and facilitating user-generated content from visitors. Further, Tourism Hamilton will explore fostering positive Hamilton messaging throughout the internet, utilizing social media instruments such as Facebook, Tripadvisor and Twitter.

The meetings & conventions and sport tourism markets will also leverage the internet to drive results. Meeting planners, association executives and sport organizers will be touched by Tourism Hamilton more frequently and strategically through electronic means including e-proposals, personalized e-newsletters, convenient ambassador tool kits and an online sport facility inventory.

Emarketing tactics by segment at a glance:**Meetings & Conventions**

- 1 Enhance website content including ambassador toolkit
- 2 Personalized e-marketing campaign to prospects
- 3 Share leads with partners and construct client proposals via CRM

Sport Tourism

- 1 Develop more robust online content including sport facility inventory and athlete testimonials
- 2 Personalized e-marketing campaign to prospects
- 3 Provide online coupon booklet to boost local economic impact
- 4 Share leads with partners and construct client proposals via CRM

Leisure Visitor Services

- 1 Enhance functionality of Website through user-generated content
- 2 Encourage Website visitation via seasonal online advertising campaigns and encouraging partner Website links
- 3 Utilize enewsletter subscription database to inform consumers of product, promotions with a strong call to action
- 4 Maintain an online media centre to satisfy immediate needs of travel media
- 5 Share leads with partners and construct journalist visit itineraries via CRM

Visitor Services

- 1 Populate content on Website
- 2 Respond to e-mail and Website inquiries

Partner Relations

- 1 Utilize web-based channels such as tourismhamilton.com, e-marketing and CRM to encourage Tourism Awards nominations, gala/professional development session registrations
- 2 Provide industry-focused enewsletter and partner information page on tourismhamilton.com to help share information relevant to partners

Meetings & 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, Challenges

In 2009, Tourism Hamilton's Meeting & Conventions team:

- Serviced 66 meetings and conventions in Hamilton
- Sent 99 leads to local partners
- Hosted 25 site inspections for considering meeting planners

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.*

In a February 2008 report commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Hamilton was described as a mature convention market and the potential for growth in number of events is somewhat limited. Private sector competition (i.e. The Oakville Conference Centre and Burlington Convention Centre) have put pressure on facilities from a trade and consumer show perspective.**

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

** Source: Ontario Convention Market Analysis Final Report, February 2008. Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Investment Development Office by HLT Advisory

2010 Objective(s):

Tourism Hamilton will increase meeting and convention sales in 2010 by pursuing qualified repeat and new business.

Specific Objective(s) to support above:

- 1 Increase the number of city-wide conventions by 3-5 conventions
- 2 Continue to build awareness of Hamilton's value-added services amongst M & C planners
- 3 Build awareness and enhance reputation of Team Hamilton
- 4 Introduce Hamilton's M & C services to a minimum of 24 new organizations
- 5 Update and build CRM files

Target Groups in Priority:

- 1 Canadian and Ontarian association executives responsible for planning citywide conventions of 200 or more delegates
- 2 Independent Convention and Meeting Planners that plan regional events
- 3 Hamiltonians who serve on provincial, national or international boards, agencies or organizations (Convention Ambassadors)
- 4 McMaster University and Mohawk College Faculty who belong to provincial, national or international associations
- 5 Source list of meetings and conventions that previously met in Hamilton

Communication Recommendations:

- 1 Maintain and build on “Hamilton Brings More to the Table” value-added positioning and direct marketing campaign that was developed in 2009
- 2 Extend sector-specific direct marketing and follow-up program
- 3 Develop McMaster Faculty event to complement annual staff receptions
- 4 Implement a targeted media relations program for the meetings and conventions market

Tactics:

- 1 Enhance and maintain web content, including Convention Ambassador testimonials
- 2 Continue to develop the M & C sales content and materials in the Ambassador Tool Kit and recruit key individuals to add to our team of Convention Ambassadors
- 3 Develop Convention RFP content on a sector-specific basis
- 4 Establish ties with the growing tenant group at the new McMaster Innovation Park
- 5 Develop turn-key, value-added servicing programs that can be offered to prospective convention groups
- 6 Trade shows: Tete a Tete (February); CSAE annual convention (October)
- 7 Sales receptions in Toronto and Ottawa (June)
- 8 Attend minimum of three CSAE and MPI events in Toronto and Ottawa
- 9 Sales calls in Ottawa and Toronto
- 10 Personalized e-marketing campaign to convention prospects
- 11 Host sales receptions at McMaster University and Mohawk College
- 12 Hold two receptions at McMaster University for pre-qualified members of Faculty – April and September

Support Rationale:

- 1 Industry research and current economic conditions support continuation of "value-added" positioning
- 2 Hamilton needs to aggressively offset increased competition from London, Windsor and Toronto
- 3 Hamilton recognized as value destination with experienced convention support group

Results Measurement Criteria:

Tourism Hamilton will comply with DMAI performance reporting standards

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 provided better service to existing events. Throughout 2009, Hamilton played host to 108 sport events which includes competitions and meetings.

According to the action 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."

Tourism Hamilton will update the Sport Tourism Action Plan in 2010 to reflect the opportunities associated with hosting the 2015 Pan American / Para Pan American Games. This \$2 billion per year industry remains a strategic priority at Tourism Hamilton. Sport Tourism has created awareness, built relationships and succeeded in attracting new sport events for the City of Hamilton. Earnest continuation of the "Bring it On" campaign launched in June 2009, which saw the completion of the sport tourism lure, facility inventory and upgrades to the sport tourism pages on the Tourism Hamilton Website will all help increase business for 2010 and beyond.

Trends, Opportunities, Challenges

In 2009, Sport Tourism:

- Serviced 108 sport events in Hamilton
- Bid on eight events; successful in one
- Sent 190 sport opportunity leads to local partners
- Hosted three site inspections for sport organizers

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 (i.e. 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 when 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

2010 Objective(s):

- To raise the profile and image of Hamilton locally, provincially, nationally and internationally through hosting sport events in Hamilton
- To position Hamilton as a desirable and capable host for sport events
- To support sport development and participation at all levels in Hamilton
- To support economic development and downtown renewal for Hamilton
- To engage residents through volunteerism
- To engage organizations and businesses through partnerships
- To build and improve sport facilities

Specific Department Objective(s) to support above:

- 1 Foster relationships with Local Sport Organizations, Provincial Sport Organizations, National Sport Organizations and International Sport Organizations, promoting Hamilton's facilities and Tourism Hamilton's and local industry's hosting abilities
- 2 Leverage 2015 Pan American / Para Pan American Games hosting opportunities and improve sport facility infrastructure
- 3 Increase number of sport events hosted and serviced by 3 events
- 4 Continue working with repeat customers ensuring economic impact for Hamilton
- 5 Build on reputation as a welcoming and hospitable host city

Target Groups in Priority:

- 1 Local Sport Organizations (Sports Ambassadors)
- 2 Provincial Sport Organizations
- 3 National Sport Organizations
- 4 Athletes and spectators

Communications Recommendations:

- 1 Raise awareness of Tourism Hamilton's services and Hamilton's sport hosting abilities to local sport organizations to help increase the magnitude of their events through participation or frequency
- 2 Complement current sport event roster in Hamilton with new sport events to increase local economic impact by pursuing provincial and national sport organizations
- 3 Promote Hamilton's hospitality to visiting athletes and spectators to maximize local spending

Tactics:

- 1 Develop and maintain more robust online content to promote Tourism Hamilton's services and Hamilton's sports facilities through online sport facility inventory and sport organizer and athlete testimonials
- 2 Execute a targeted media relations program on sport investment and sport events
- 3 Perform sales calls to previous clients who have knowledge of Hamilton's sport credentials
- 4 Update sport lure brochure to reflect current sport landscape and utilize in tradeshow and sales calls
- 5 Attend tradeshow/conferences such as Betty Tweedy Golf Tournament, Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance and Sport Alliance of Ontario to nourish current relationships and gather new leads
- 6 Organize a provincial sport organization initiative in Toronto to raise awareness among these sport tourism influencers
- 7 Prospect through provincial and national sport organizations websites
- 8 Host two Sport Tourism Workshops and a client reception for Local Sport Organizers to facilitate improvement in Hamilton's sport community, raise awareness of Tourism Hamilton's services and Hamilton's sports facilities
- 9 Create a coupon booklet of local partner accommodations, attractions, restaurants and retail to distribute to visiting athletes and spectators

Results Measurement Criteria:

Tourism Hamilton will comply with DMAI performance reporting standards

Leisure

Tourism Hamilton's leisure marketing efforts focus on the consumer but also support the other markets given the importance of a general destination sell when pursuing a meeting, conference or sport event. In 2010, Tourism Hamilton will concentrate its efforts on e-marketing, leveraging the air lift to Hamilton via flyglobespan and WestJet and strategic travel media relations. The organization will also participate in programs offered by the CTC and OTMPC to extend our reach and nurture our relationship with these senior destination marketing organizations. Tourism Hamilton staff and the Leisure Marketing Committee will also look critically to ascertain Hamilton's domestic and international profile and act accordingly.

Trends, Opportunities, Challenges

Over the most recent 12 month period (November 9, 2008 to November 2, 2009), tourismhamilton.com registered:

- 176,847 unique visits
- Average time spent on the site is 3:30
- 722, 816 pageviews
- Average pages viewed per visit is 4.09
- Current number of newsletter subscribers is 14,203

Tourism Hamilton 2009 Summer Leisure Marketing Campaign Snapshot:

Objectives:

- Promoted area attractions and encouraged extended overnight stays to families (OTMPC's footloose families) through "You've Got to See This" theme, suggesting experiential travel and immediacy
- Provided highly cost-effective, co-op advertising opportunities for Hamilton's tourism partners
- Raised awareness of Hamilton's summer attractions and experiences through www.tourismhamilton.com
- Populated Tourism Hamilton's e-newsletter subscription database

Tactics:

Multi-media promotions pushing e-newsletter subscription for weekend in Hamilton contest eligibility

Spend:

\$305,000 (\$150,000 from Tourism Hamilton; \$97,000 from partners; \$58,000 from OTMPC IPP)

Results:

Multi media campaign outcome:

- 12 week television campaign on CH and Global Ontario generated 18 million impressions
- An online advertising campaign via Facebook, The Weather Network and Google delivered 22 million impressions combined with an e-newsletter blast to generate 110,000 visits to tourismhamilton.com
- Partner banner advertisements on tourismhamilton.com that generated .92% average click-thru rate for Premium partners, 23 times better than the industry average of 0.02 to 0.04% signaling the appeal of tourismhamilton.com visitors
- Publication of 100,000 Experience Hamilton Tourist Guides distributed via Tourism Hamilton Tourist Information Centres, municipal service centres, partners, CTM Brochure Racks and Ontario Travel Information Centres province-wide to approximately 250,000 readers
- Full page advertisement in OTMPC's My Ontario magazine, reaching 400,000 readers

Post-campaign partner survey results revealed:

- Involved the support of 52 partners
- 93% satisfied or very satisfied with value of media
- 100% were satisfied or very satisfied with ability to increase awareness
- 89% saw increased sales activity and interest as a direct result of campaign
- 90% satisfied with ability to meet partner sales and marketing objectives
- 90% will consider participating in a 2010 program

Tourism Hamilton 2009 Fall Leisure Marketing Campaign Snapshot:

Objectives:

- Promoted area attractions and encouraged extended overnight stays to couples and singles less than 35 years old and over 55 years old (Young Go-Gos, Retired Roamers and Adventurers – OTMPC Environics) through "You've Got to See This" theme, suggesting experiential travel and immediacy
- Provided highly cost-effective, co-op advertising opportunities for Hamilton's tourism partners
- Raised awareness of Hamilton's fall attractions and experiences through www.tourismhamilton.com
- Populated Tourism Hamilton's e-newsletter subscription database

Tactics:

Multi-media promotions pushing e-newsletter subscription for week end in Hamilton contest eligibility

Spend:

\$80,000 (\$52,000 from Tourism Hamilton; \$28,000 from Partners)

Results:

- Involved the support of ten partners, including enhanced OLG sponsorship and nontraditional partners such as VIA Rail Canada and Pioneer Petroleum
- 6 months banner advertising on Tourism Hamilton website
- 6 page free standing insert, with dedicated partner editorial October 10
 - 140,000 households for Globe & Mail Ontario edition
 - 60,000 households for Kitchener-Waterloo Record
 - 28,000 Chinese-language GTA households-Sing Tao
- Participation in Ontario Tourism's Getaways Collection program

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.*

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.*

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

2010 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.

Specific Objective(s) to support above:

- 1 Tourism Hamilton will target consumer campaigns to customer prospects - mainly as identified by the OTMPC - with a large emphasis on cost-effective e-marketing
- 2 Generate positive editorial coverage in key domestic and US print and broadcast media outlets as well as trade publications through cost-effective Hamilton product promotion to a general audience
- 3 Tourism Hamilton will leverage its relationship with tour operators, domestic and overseas, to increase overnight and same day sales by promoting market ready partners

Target Groups in Priority:

- 1 Domestic consumer (OTMPC Environics: Footloose Families, Young Go-Gos, Retired Roamers and Adventurers [couples and singles less than 35 years old and over 55 years old, respectively])
- 2 International consumer (OTMPC Environics: US Footloose Families, Young & Restless, Silver Streaks and High Flyers [couples and singles less than 35 years old and over 55 years old, respectively])
- 3 Travel media – domestic and international
- 4 Tour operators – domestic and international

Communication Recommendations:

- 1 Develop and maintain mutually-beneficial working relationships with members of the domestic and US travel media – with emphasis on top 10 Canadian and border state dailies including wire services – through inspiring story pitches, media marketplace attendance and customized or group media familiarization tours
- 2 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
- 3 Execute seasonal marketing campaigns with clear objectives, calls to action and tangible forms of measurement, bundling partner promotional opportunities to maximize their investment

Tactics:

- 1 Tourism Hamilton, with the support of the marketing agency of record, OK&D Marketing, will execute a summer marketing campaign promoting outdoor and family product to Footloose Families (ON and U.S.) as identified through OTMPC's Environics research with partner buy-in opportunities and through multi-media (television, print/guide, online)
- 2 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 Adventurers (ON), High Flyers (U.S.), Retired Roamers (ON), Silver Streaks (U.S.) Young Go-Gos (ON) and Young and Restless (U.S.) as identified through OTMPC's Environics research with partner buy-in opportunities
- 3 Enhance the functionality of tourismhamilton.com by including web 2.0 features such as user-generated reviews, image galleries and video
- 4 Tourism Hamilton will continue to facilitate the Leisure Marketing Committee to gain direction in ongoing leisure marketing efforts
- 5 Execute a trade program including association memberships, tradeshow attendance, sales mission participation and e-marketing, which provides sales leads to market-ready partners
- 6 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
- 7 Support Hamilton International Airport to identify and pursue potential business opportunities from current and new customers
- 8 Linking with partner Websites is an important driver of traffic to tourismhamilton.com as approximately 40% of traffic is from referring sites. Encourage partners to link to tourismhamilton.com on their respective Websites, increasing traffic to tourismhamilton.com therefore enhancing the broader Hamilton experience to the visitor

Results Measurement Criteria:

Tourism Hamilton will comply with DMAI performance reporting standards

Visitor Services

Effective visitor servicing is essential to help optimize sales and deliver a favourable visitor experience. Visitor services comprise Tourist Information Centres, Website (tourismhamilton.com), call centre, 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.

Objective(s):

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. Effective visitor servicing is essential to help optimize sales and deliver a favourable visitor experience.

Major components of visitor services are delivered via the Tourist Information Centres that are staffed by Travel Counsellors and volunteer members of the Lady Hamilton Club. This combined team welcomes visitors to Hamilton and provides brochures, directions and answers to tourists' questions whether in person or via mail phone or email.

Target Groups in Priority:

- 1 Ontario visitors
- 2 International visitors
- 3 Visiting Friends and Relatives
- 4 Hamilton Residents
- 5 Hamilton businesses and organizations

Communication Recommendations:

- 1 Tourism Hamilton will work to increase visitation to the Tourist Information Centres by promoting their locations, hours of operation and services offered – enhance the presence on tourismhamilton.com
- 2 Tourism Hamilton will continue to improve upon and add helpful elements to tourismhamilton.com including mapping, to provide more comprehensive services to Hamilton's visitors and increase value to partners
- 3 Produce promotional materials to assist explore and direct visitors to Hamilton's diverse tourism product offerings such as maps and dining guides
- 4 Maintain and enhance visitor services role utilizing the CRM
- 5 Participate in community and tourism activities (conduct presentations, set up qualified information booths) to promote Hamilton and highlight Tourism Hamilton's visitor services
- 6 Improve way-finding to make the city more welcoming, safe and easy to navigate

Tactics:

- 1 Continue to operate two year-round Tourist Information Centres (downtown and at the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport)
- 2 Manage content on tourismhamilton.com
- 3 Enhance partnership with the City of Hamilton Call Centre which assists Tourism Hamilton in responding to telephone inquiries via the local and the toll free phone lines
- 4 Maintain tourism services in the five City of Hamilton Municipal Services Centres
- 5 Monitor the Lady Hamilton Club to enhance volunteer customer service assistance at Tourism Information Centres and information tables at special events and conferences
- 6 Continue to administer the Downtown Ambassador Program including partnering with downtown stakeholders and reaching out to key events across Hamilton
- 7 Brochure distribution and information fulfillment to partners, stakeholders, neighbouring DMO information centres and Ontario Travel Information Centres
- 8 Enhanced information table presence at major events for conventions and sporting markets
- 9 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, engaging stakeholders on the development
- 10 Continue to work with Tourism Burlington on a joint marketing impression program in key attractions that benefit both cities
- 11 Work with Tourism Burlington on a new tourist route along the waterfront on Lake Ontario
- 12 Continue to work with the City of Hamilton Culture division and Community steering committee on the War of 1812 Hamilton commemorative activities to enhance visitation to Hamilton during this celebratory timeframe to help maximize business opportunities for partners
- 13 Continue to support tourism-oriented festivals and events to increase visitors to Hamilton and generate greater economic spin-off
- 14 Develop a revenue generation business plan for the Hamilton International Airport Tourism Information Centre in partnership with Hamilton International Airport
- 15 Improve way-finding and offer benefits to tourism partners by launching a tourism-oriented sign program in cooperation with the City of Hamilton's Public Works Department to provide directional signage to specific tourism activities, operations and facilities on key city roads

Support Rationale

- 1 Tourism Hamilton marketing initiatives direct inquiries to Visitor Services, responds to emails, telephone and in-person inquiries
- 2 Tourism Hamilton sales and servicing programs in M & C and Sport Tourism are coordinated and fulfilled by Visitor Services
- 3 Visitor Services manage the brochure inventory of Tourism Hamilton marketing tools (tourist guide & tourist map) and manages tourism industry partner brochures with a distribution process in place

Results Measurement Criteria

Tourism Hamilton will comply with DMAI performance reporting standards

Partner Relations

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.

Trends, Opportunities, Challenges

The 11th Tourism Awards of Excellence snapshot:

- 544 attendees
- Eight major sponsors in addition to 17 awards sponsors
- Ticket sales and sponsorships totaled \$32,705; Expenses totaled \$27,326; Revenue totaled \$5,379

2010 Objective(s)

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 established and new – in an effort to maintain and improve this standing.

Specific Objectives to support above:

- 1 Host the 12th Annual Tourism Hamilton Awards of Excellence to encourage and acknowledge excellence in Hamilton's tourism industry
- 2 Facilitate education and networking among Tourism Hamilton partners
- 3 Produce an industry-focused newsletter and partner information page on tourismhamilton.com will help share information relevant to partners

Target Groups in Priority:

- 1 Local partners and stakeholders
- 2 Staff at Canadian Tourism Commission, Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation
- 3 Non-traditional event sponsors

Communication Recommendations:

- 1 Utilize web-based channels such as tourismhamilton.com, e-marketing and CRM to encourage awards nominations, awards package submissions, gala/pd session registrations
- 2 Host professional development events for partners, possibly leveraging support from Hamilton Escarpment DMMO upon implementation

Tactics:

- 1 Staff and Awards Committee to provide direction on timelines, categories and Gala event planning
- 2 Solicit and secure new sponsors to increase revenue generation to support other Tourism Hamilton programs
- 3 Execute local media relations program to extend awareness of awards program, awards winners and professional development programs, encouraging increased participation

Measurement Criteria:

- 1 Event attendance numbers
- 2 Revenues generated from events via registration and sponsorship