

TOURISM STRATEGY REPORT AND UPDATE

PROGRESS ON 2005-2006 ACHIEVEMENTS
AND 2006-2007 PRIORITIES



MINISTRY OF TOURISM



ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Completed field work on the *Travel Activities & Motivations Survey* (TAMS). The study will report on the size, characteristics, and behaviour of travellers in North America.
- Launched *Toronto Ambassador Program* in partnership with Tourism Toronto, who have delivered 170 tours to date.
- Upgraded tourism agencies to make them more accessible to all visitors.
- Developed new signage options (eg Topiary signs) for Prescott-Russell at its gateway, in partnership with Canadian TODS and the Ministry of Transportation.
- Ran successful pilot partnership program that provided the City of Toronto with the opportunity to provide material promoting its attractions within the Provincial Travel Information Centre in the city.

PRIORITIES:

- Promote *Service Excellence China* by developing Chinese cultural training programs for tourism businesses and communities.
- Produce 20 Travel Activities and Motivations Survey reports to support business development and marketing, and distribute them through the web and presentations.
- Toronto desk at the Ministry’s Travel Information Centre on Dundas Street will open in May 2006 and continue as year-round facility in Toronto centre.
- Support Accommodation Industry Alliance of Ontario in developing a sustainable business plan for an accommodation ratings system, through the provision of funding.
- Mobile Travel Information Centre will travel to festival and event sites in Toronto during summer 2006.

DEVELOPING DESTINATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Destination development teams to raise the profile of Ontario as a tourist destination established in:
 - Toronto
 - Niagara Region
 - Ottawa-Gatineau
 - Georgian Bay
 - Muskoka
 - 1,000 Islands & St. Lawrence Seaway
 - Windsor, Essex County & Pelee Island.
- Supported the Eastern Ontario Trails Association in developing a provincial model for sustainable trails system through ATV Ontario product development.
- Created a new product, *Identifying Demand Generators*, in partnership with stakeholders. Delivered six pilot workshops.
- Supported province wide experiences, including:
 - Enhancing a professional development program and consumer and industry website for Ontario's festivals & events; ongoing consultations on festival and event classification and quality standards initiative. Developed and published methodology for the conduct of economic impact studies for festivals.
 - Improved francophone tourism offerings and market position, including Circuit Champlain.
 - Supported the 2005 Ontario Aboriginal Tourism Conference and a new website for ATASO.
- Provided organisational development support to establish the Rideau Heritage Route Tourist Association.
- Supported the completion of nine Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Frameworks across the province.
 - Provided seed funding for eight regional projects to implement Premier-ranked recommendations.
- Supported Lanark County Tourism in its development of a *Tourism Business Database and Mapping System*.

PRIORITIES:

- Implement strategies and action plans in the seven destinations.
- Continue to support the *Premier-ranked Tourist Destination Framework* with the completion of four frameworks, and provision of initial support for six frameworks. Support a Premier-ranked provincial symposium and deliver workshops on key aspects of the framework.
- Provide funding for additional Premier-ranked implementation projects.
- Implement the *Culinary Tourism Strategy*, including support for the Culinary Tourism Symposium, and Niagara Ice Wine Classic event.
- Launch new *Festivals and Events Ontario* (FEO) consumer industry website; work with National Capital Commission and FEO to promote provincial participation at the 2006 International Festival and Events Association in Ottawa; support professional development of Festival and Events.
- Support Franco-ontarian programming and partnership development in Francophone tourism products.
- Build Aboriginal tourism experience exposures through signature event.
- Enhance Ontario's outdoor product development by providing support for the 2006 Lighthouse Conference and participation on Ontario Trails Coordinating Committee.
- Develop Ontario's Heritage Waterways through support for execution of the Rideau Heritage Route plan and a tourism action plan for the Trent Severn Waterway.

BUILDING THE IMAGE AND INFLUENCE OF TOURISM



ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Supported industry capacity building and future sustainability by funding development of TFO strategic plan and providing support for industry conferences.
- Presented *Making the Case for Tourism* toolkit at industry forums and conferences. Made toolkit available online.
- Supported the operational review of the Northern Ontario Native Tourism Association (NONTA) in conjunction with MNDM, OSAA and the federal government.
- Launched *Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model* on Ministry website.
- Supported two Aboriginal tourism skills training workshops with the Northern Ontario Native Tourism Association.

PRIORITIES:

- Work with the new Tourism Industry Association of Ontario.
- Provide continuous updates to *Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model* and continue to promote to industry.
- Work with DMOs within communities to increase awareness of tourism as a career, economic engine, and important factor in the quality of life for communities.
- Increase awareness and use of the *Making the Case for Tourism* toolkit.
- Support rural tourism capacity building by continuing delivery of Beyond the City Lights Conferences.

STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC MARKETING

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Completed Ontario tourism brand review.
- Conducted marketing partnerships with experiential and destination partners:
 - Niagara Falls – partnered on newspaper insert distributed to 2.5 million households in Ontario, Quebec and US border markets.
 - Ottawa – partnered on campaign for Spring, Summer and Fall, targeting Quebec and US markets.
 - Kingston – partnered on consumer campaign for the summer targeting the GTA.
 - Blue Mountain – winter campaign targeting south western Ontario and the Michigan market.
 - Ontario’s North – a collaborative, pan-northern \$1M dollar campaign including the five cities of Timmins, North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay
- Reviewed www.ontariotravel.net website to increase overall satisfaction rating to very good, and identified potential enhancements.
- Staged Ontario Showcases in Buffalo and Detroit. Over 60 diverse Ontario experiences participated and provided an opportunity for over one million Americans to “See, Feel, Experience and Discover” Ontario.
- Transferred responsibility for Travel Information Centres to Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation in order to align marketing efforts.
- Held first Ontario Tourism marketing summit and industry awards program.
- The *Amazing Race: Family Edition* TV show came to Ontario and featured the province as a world-class tourism destination. More than 14 million North American viewers tuned in to the December season finale.

PRIORITIES:

- OTMPC will implement its brand strategy.
- Hold tourism marketing summit and awards program.
- Establish marketing partnership with Niagara Falls, Ottawa, Kingston/ Thousand Islands, Windsor and Blue Mountain / Georgian Bay.
- Maintain and enhance existing Industry Partnerships with key northern Stakeholders.
- Continue to proactively promote Ontario to key domestic, US and overseas markets.



ALL OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Made representation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Transport regarding air travel issues and tourism.
- Continued Ontario's advocacy for a national tourism strategy.
- Submitted Ontario's position on the *Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative* to the US government. Published report on economic impact of WHTI in Ontario.
- Held successful summit involving MTOUR, MNR, MNDM and NOTO to deal with the remote outpost camp tourist operator's land tenure and fishery concerns. Established working groups to address the issues on a long-term basis.
- Implemented cultural tourism marketing campaign with Ministries of Culture, Tourism, Economic Development & Trade, and Finance.
- Ran successful *Fun Pass* pilot program with selected school boards to provide school children with access to government agencies and attractions in Ontario.

PRIORITIES:

- Ensure Ontario's interests are represented during the public comment period on US draft rules for the *Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative*.
- Work through the resource based tourism working group and northwest task team to address Crown land tenure and fishery management issues. Hold a follow up government and industry outpost summit.
- Expand the *Fun Pass* program to 100 school boards, to reach 1.4 million elementary school children.



E N A B L E R S

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Infrastructure:
 - Provided ongoing support for cultural attractions such as construction and facility openings, including Drayton Festival Theatre, Soulpepper Theatre, and the first stage of the ROM expansion.
 - Opened new Sarnia travel information centre in summer 2005.
- Market Intelligence:
 - Expanded research outreach and communication and developed new brand - *We know. Just ask.*
 - Provided access to TAMS-2000 database on the web (eTAMS)
 - Carried out two waves of the Travel Intentions study – a study that provides strategic information to marketing for better targeting and messaging.
- Tourism investment:
 - Facilitated investment in the province through enhanced website and maintaining database of 1,560 investor contacts.
 - New hotel investment generated in the Town of Iroquois Falls as a result of listing on the investment web site
 - Facilitated investment for two major facilities - an eco adventure attraction and a retail/entertainment/hotel expansion - with a combined value in excess of \$300 million.
- Information Technology:
 - Partnered with MEDT on a pilot project to identify tourism information technology needs and solutions in the Peterborough/ Kawartha area, with responses from 120 tourism operators.
- Business Skills Development
 - Presented over 30 Market Readiness workshop modules across Ontario to 600 participants, including Beyond the City Lights rural tourism conferences.
 - Developed and presented workshops on business skills training with NONTA for Aboriginal tourist operators.

PRIORITIES:

- Infrastructure:
 - Support the completion and opening of major culture and tourism infrastructure across the province, such as the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto and the Gravenhurst Muskoka Wharf project.

- Market Intelligence:
 - Expand the availability of research tools via: the web; stakeholder workshops and presentations; newsletters and market reports.
 - Work with Statistics Canada and national partners to improve survey instruments at the national level, such as the International Travel Survey and new Travel Survey of Residents of Canada.
 - Complete and disseminate forward-looking analytical tools and reports, such as regional forecasts and the Business Outlook survey, providing information to better plan for the future.
 - Produce a report to identify the travel patterns of new immigrants in order to better plan for tourism experiences and services that meet their needs.
 - Produce reports from the new *Travel Activities and Motivations Survey*.
 - Undertake a study to analyse visitor spending through credit card data

- Business Skills Development:
 - Provincial roll-out of the Market Readiness programme, including train-the-trainer documents.

- Tourism Investment:
 - Continue to advance investment in Ontario's tourism industry:
 - assist municipalities in understanding the importance of tourism as an economic generator;
 - develop tools and resources to identify market-ready investment opportunities;
 - work with tourism operators and the financial community to raise the profile of Ontario as the place for tourism growth; and
 - create outreach programs to attract new investment.