

*Leveraging
Partnerships*

2008

Tourism Hamilton Marketing Plan



tourismhamilton.com



Message

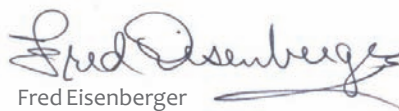
from Mayor Fred Eisenberger
City of Hamilton



Promoting Hamilton, and all that our great city has to offer, easily rates among my most fulfilling responsibilities as Mayor. And while there are definite economic benefits to promoting the local tourism industry, the pride that Hamiltonians experience when our city shines is immeasurable. Our work collectively to boost Hamilton's appeal mobilizes not only visitors, but also citizens keen to explore their own backyards and take pleasure in their own city's sights and sounds.

To help guide the organization's direction, I am an active member of Tourism Hamilton's Board of Directors and am pleased to endorse this partner-engaging marketing plan. I'm certain you will find a variety of results-oriented and innovative techniques to complement your own marketing strategies.

Sincerely,


Fred Eisenberger

Mark Farrugia, President

Food and Beverage

Owner, La Piazza Allegra Italian Restaurant

Joumana Ghandour, First Vice-President

Accommodations

General Manager, Sheraton Hamilton Hotel

Joan Balinson, Second Vice-President

Events and Conferences

Owner, About Town Event & Meeting Planners

Larissa Ciupka, Treasurer

Arts and Culture

Director, Marketing and Communications,
Art Gallery of Hamilton

Carolyn Puddicombe, Secretary

Agri-Tourism

Owner, Puddicombe Estate Farms & Winery

Mayor Fred Eisenberger

City of Hamilton

Councillor Dave Mitchell

Rural Ward

City of Hamilton

Councillor Terry Whitehead

Urban Ward

City of Hamilton

Ward Dilse

Sport/Recreation

Executive Director, Ontario University Athletics

John Gibson

Transportation

Vice-President, Marketing,
Hamilton International Airport

Heather McClellan

Labour

Visitor Services and Communications Coordinator,
Workers Arts & Heritage Centre

Sue Vattay

Tourism Services

Program Manager, Mohawk College

Alice Willems

Attractions

Manager, Parks Canada Discovery Centre

Vacant

Travel Trade

Ex-Officio

Tracey Desjardins

Consultant, Ministry of Tourism,
Culture & Recreation

Mary Devorski

Senior Advisor, Mayor's Office, City of Hamilton

Duncan Gillespie

Executive Director, HECFI

Steve Miazga

General Manager/CAO,
Hamilton Conservation Authority

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 2008 Marketing Plan. The creation of an annual marketing plan is one of the key deliverables of our Strategic Plan, and provides an opportunity for our local stakeholders to guide the city's tourism marketing direction.

I am also pleased to say that as Tourism Hamilton completes its first five years of operation, your board has written a new three year strategic plan. I am confident that it will guide the continued development of the tourism industry in our city. The board has refined the vision, mission and key areas of effort that will 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 welcome visitors from across the province, country and world.

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 "must-see" lists of Hamilton's visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Farrugia', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Farrugia



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Message

from David Adames
Tourism Hamilton's Executive Director



Along with the staff team at Tourism Hamilton, I am pleased to share with you our 2008 Marketing Plan. The coming year is an important one for Tourism Hamilton and the local tourism industry.

In 2008, tremendous marketing opportunities exist for our local tourism industry. Hamilton will host the influential Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners Conference (November) to showcase the city's product. On the football field, Hamilton will host the prestigious Desjardins Vanier Cup at Ivor Wynne Stadium. Tourism Hamilton, meanwhile, will be enhancing our online and overseas marketing efforts. We will also begin to develop marketing strategies for the outdoor, culinary and GLBT markets to capitalize on Hamilton's product and these growing market segments.

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 partners accordingly.

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

Yours in tourism,


David Adames





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INTRODUCTION

Tourism Hamilton is the city's destination management organization and is governed by a Board of Directors that represents the local tourism industry. Eleven tourism sectors are represented through the Board, 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 first year of 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 five years of experience crafting, following and evaluating 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.*

*The 2008 Annual Report – due in mid-2009 will comprehensively list and evaluate the strategies adopted in this marketing plan.



TOURISM HAMILTON'S PRIORITY MARKETS

Tourism Hamilton's Priority Markets

- Meetings and Conventions
- Sport Tourism
- Leisure

Our Methodology

Tourism Hamilton's 2008 Marketing Plan is the result of extensive research and consultation. During the summer of 2007, Tourism Hamilton hosted two marketing plan input sessions where partners contributed their advice and experience to identify 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 each market. Tourism Hamilton's board of directors reviewed the draft plans and made recommendations accordingly. The plan's main themes were presented to partners and stakeholders at the November 2007 Tourism Hamilton Summit and the final plan was approved by the board in December 2007.



KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND MEMBERSHIPS

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
- 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 Toronto
- Travel Industry Association of Canada
- Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
- Travel Media Association of Canada



CURRENT TOURISM LANDSCAPE

Current Tourism Landscape: Canada*

Total Person Visits: 239.8 million

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

- **Canadians:** 206.4 million (86%)
- **Americans:** 28.9 million (28.9%)
- **Others:** 4.5 million (2%)

What impact does tourism have in Canada?

- Visitors to Canada (including domestic travellers) spent \$66.8 billion
- Export spending (money spent by international visitors to Canada) was \$16.5 billion while domestic spending reached \$50.3 billion in 2006

*Source: 2006, Statistics Canada, National Tourism Indicators, International Travel Survey and Travel Survey of Residents of Canada

Special thanks to Jennifer Hendry, Manager, Research at the Travel Industry Association 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%)



CURRENT TOURISM LANDSCAPE

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%)

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



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, 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

Objectives

Tourism Hamilton will increase meeting and convention sales in 2008 by pursuing qualified repeat and new business. A team approach to strategy and marketing focusing on the domestic market and multi-property conventions will grow the number of city-wide conventions and room nights.



MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

Strategy 1: Tourism Hamilton and local partners will promote the ease of organizing a conference in Hamilton by marketing the city's meeting and convention suppliers and services through “Team Hamilton”.

Tactics

- Tourism Hamilton will coordinate the “Team Hamilton” concept initiated in 2007 with local partners in 2008 through the Ministry of Tourism Convention Development Fund program. The team will operate cooperatively in strategy development, awareness building, sales missions, trade shows (CSAE, CSPEP) and follow up
- To remind meeting planners of “Team Hamilton's” booking incentive launched at the 2007 CSAE Conference and Marketplace in Hamilton, Tourism Hamilton will coordinate an e-marketing campaign that will include compelling weekly touch points around the theme of “50 reasons to meet in Hamilton”
- “Team Hamilton” will obtain gold sponsorships in the Toronto and Ottawa chapters of CSAE and MPI to gain greater prestige and raise awareness among these associations' influential members
- “Team Hamilton” will plan and execute the Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners Conference (November) to ensure positive presentation of Hamilton to the event's influential delegates
- Leverage memberships with CSAE, CSPEP and MPI
- Increase the content for meetings and conventions on tourismhamilton.com

Strategy 2: Tourism Hamilton will broaden the city's meeting and convention reach through its Hamilton Ambassador Program by nurturing relationships with local professionals who have a connection with various associations and organizations.

Tactics

- 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 and the local industry will salute “Hamilton Ambassadors,” as part of the “Hamilton Ambassador Recognition Program” (HARP) – local residents who have brought a conference or sport event to Hamilton
- Tourism Hamilton will leverage the City's Economic Development strategy and the larger industries in Hamilton to seek convention opportunities. These industries include: advanced manufacturing, medical, education and agriculture



SPORT TOURISM

Hamilton has a rich tradition in hosting successful sport events and sport conferences. Hamilton is home to the oldest road race in North America (the Around the Bay Road Race), the oldest professional football team on the continent (Hamilton Tiger-Cats) and the oldest high school invitational event in the province of Ontario (Silver Fox Invitational). In 2005, the Tourism Board approved the Hamilton Sport Tourism Action Plan. Through sport events and sport conferences, Hamilton can achieve multiple goals. 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”.

Trends, Opportunities, 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.).

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

Objectives

2008 will mark the third year of the Sport Tourism Action Plan. Tourism Hamilton will continue to follow the recommendations of this plan to sell Hamilton to, and increase the number of events secured from local, provincial, national and international sport organizations.



SPORT TOURISM

Strategy 1: Maintain and build on 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
- Leverage the 2008 Vanier Cup to further position Hamilton
- Build on our current strategic list of clients and follow-up on all leads
- Attend the Canadian Sport Alliance Congress and Marketplace in Gatineau, PQ
- Sponsor the Betty Tweedy Golf Tournament in September 2008.
- 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).
- Participate in a multi-market promotion to be held in Toronto and Ottawa in 2008
- Attend TEAMS and Sport Accord Conferences in 2008

Strategy 2: Work with current sport event organizers to grow their events to provide more economic impact.

Tactics

- Complete the sports facility inventory to assist the sales activity and clients who are looking at Hamilton for their sport event and conference.
- Host two workshops for local sport organizers in partnership with Sport Hamilton
- Provide servicing to sport events to assist event organizers and to help grow their events, building on the service level provided in 2006-2007
- Attend local sport events which are networking opportunities for Sport Tourism.
- Build relationships and strategies with Hamilton Tiger Cats and the Hamilton Bulldogs including packages for incoming visitors
- Attend with the Hamilton Tiger Cats, the Grey Cup in Montreal

Strategy 3: Refine positioning and messaging for promotional materials for sport tourism.

Tactics

- Create a lure piece for Sport Tourism
- Branding opportunities to be considered at key sport venues
- Increase content on tourismhamilton.com



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 2008, Tourism Hamilton will concentrate its efforts on e-marketing, leveraging the air lift to Hamilton via Air Canada, 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.

Trends, Opportunities, 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.

A strong Canadian dollar is here to stay for the foreseeable future, making outbound travel to the U.S. and some other international destinations more affordable for Ontarians and inbound more expensive for U.S. and Overseas visitors. With the Canadian dollar forecast to stay above .90 cents U.S., Ontario is now competing with a wider range of destinations for both its residents' and other jurisdictions' tourism dollars.

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.



Trends, Opportunities, Challenges continued

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.

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.



LEISURE

Trends, Opportunities, Challenges continued

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

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 The Hamilton Notepad, story ideas for the savvy 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 MyOntario 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, En Route by Air Canada, 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 and Canadian chapter meetings and conferences, TMAC Conference and monthly Ontario chapter networking receptions



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 will execute a summer marketing campaign promoting outdoor family product to Provincial Families (ON), Footloose Families (U.S.) and Young Go-Gos (U.S.) as identified through OTMPC's research with Environics
- Tourism Hamilton will explore and plan a marketing strategy for the GLBT market through a task force comprising local partners
- Tourism Hamilton will make the most of local professional sports teams including the Hamilton Bulldogs and the Hamilton Tiger-Cats by developing and offering game day packages in cooperation with the teams to competing team enthusiasts
- Tourism Hamilton will leverage critical year-round marketing opportunities to present Hamilton as a multi-season destination

Strategy 3: Recognizing the use of internet among consumers to plan and book travel, Tourism Hamilton will boost Hamilton's online identity.

Tactics

- Continue to develop tourismhamilton.com adding features to increase visits and return visits while increasing our reach online through banner advertising and executing quarterly e-newsletters to our database
- Launch online advertising and increased profiling opportunities on tourismhamilton.com to partners
- Execute the recommendations of the E-Marketing Report, July 2006, including enhancing Tourism Hamilton's online identity vis-à-vis social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, MySpace) and advertising (i.e. Google, Expedia etc.)



LEISURE

Strategy 4: Tourism Hamilton will refine Tourism Hamilton's brand to more effectively sell the destination.

Tactics

- Through an RFP process, Tourism Hamilton will select a creative design agency to assist the organization in planning and designing marketing strategies
- Tourism Hamilton will produce and distribute the 2008-2009 Experience Hamilton Tourist Guide with additional value-added features, including bundling Experience Hamilton with the Hamilton Spectator's Community Guide and offering an on-line version of the guide

Strategy 5: 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 Air Canada, CAA, flyglobespan, 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
- Investigate the return of enhancing Hamilton's presence in the UK and Asian markets and promote accordingly at Canadian Inbound Tour Operators Asia-Pacific (CITAP) and Spotlight Canada
- Organize and execute a travel media and tour operator sales mission to the U.K. to leverage flyglobespan's air lift by promoting Hamilton's product offerings
- Maintain and leverage memberships in American Bus Association, Attractions Ontario, Festivals and Events Ontario, National Tour Association, Ontario Motor Coach Association and Tourism Toronto



VISITOR SERVICES

While not a market segment, 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, 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. 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.

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 offer tourism services in five municipal service centres located in five communities in Hamilton
- 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
- Work with Tourism Burlington on a joint brochure racking pilot project



VISITOR SERVICES

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
- Increase the content and sales/advertising opportunities on tourismhamilton.com
- 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. 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.

Tactics

- Tourism Hamilton will publish the 2007 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 work to nurture the organization's relationship with local influencers such as politicians
- Tourism Hamilton will host the 10th annual Tourism Awards, hand in hand with partners, to recognize excellence in the tourism industry
- Tourism Hamilton will host the 2008 Tourism Hamilton Summit to share industry trends, offer professional development and encourage networking
- Tourism Hamilton will advocate on behalf of Hamilton's tourism industry regarding key issues affecting the industry
- Tourism Hamilton will communicate with local and national media outlets on newsworthy matters relating to Tourism Hamilton and the local tourism industry



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