



CITY OF HAMILTON

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT Tourism Division

TO: Mayor and Members General Issues Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: March 22, 2011	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Tourism Hamilton 2011 Marketing Plan (PED11049) (City Wide)	
SUBMITTED BY: Tim McCabe General Manager Planning & Economic Development Department	PREPARED BY: David Adames 905-546-4132
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report PED11049 respecting Tourism Hamilton's 2011 Marketing Plan, attached as Appendix "A" to Report PED11049, be received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism Hamilton is the City's destination management organization. City Council established Tourism Hamilton "to act as the primary, full service visitor, tourism and convention information and marketing agency for Hamilton". Its primary function is to increase tourism-related receipts for Hamilton's tourism businesses and organizations. Each year, Tourism Hamilton produces and executes a marketing plan in conjunction with and for the benefit of Hamilton's tourism industry. The marketing plan provides a framework for Tourism Hamilton to promote the city for conventions, sport events, leisure tourism while providing visitor services and networking opportunities for tourism businesses.

The marketing plan was developed by evaluating results of previous plans, reviewing Ontario Tourism's plan as well as gaining input from tourism stakeholders and the Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors, who approved the plan on January 20, 2011. The format for the 2011 plan includes two new sections, one for Partner Relations that outlines services for tourism businesses and organizations and one for the Interactive Strategy that outlines work that will be undertaken for the web-site, social media and the customer relationship management (CRM) system. The plan also outlines goals and tactics for convention and sport sales and servicing, leisure promotions and visitor services.

Highlights from 2010 included:

In the past year, Tourism Hamilton invested in a new web platform, merging the customer-relationship management (CRM) system and web site, while creating new social media functionality including blogging and video-logs. In addition, a number of micro-sites were created including the War of 1812 Bicentennial site, Country Music site and a music site (www.livemusichamilton.com), the latter site is supporting a cultural tourism, product development initiative centred on music. The interactive investment provided enhanced service to all markets, increasing value added services for customers.

Tourism Hamilton worked with partners in Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) #3, including chairing the transition task force for RTO #3. Four priority projects were undertaken on behalf of tourism stakeholders in the region, ranging from a Fall/holiday leisure promotion, War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration work, creation of an on-line image library and a travel trade promotion. Work was also undertaken on a strategic plan that was developed with input from stakeholders.

A number of high-profile conventions and sport events were secured for Hamilton over the past year, including the 2011 Ontario Tourism Summit and the 2012 Canadian Open Golf Championship.

Highlights for 2011 include:

Tourism Hamilton will continue to work with and provide leadership to the new Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) #3. A new Board of Directors will be in place for RTO #3 in the first quarter of 2011. A tourism strategy will also be developed by June, 2011 for the region that will include an action plan for Hamilton.

Tourism Hamilton will be investing further in the interactive strategy, including creating a mobile site and assessing mobile application(s) and augmenting social media opportunities. Additional micro-sites will be considered as part of tourismhamilton.com, building on the micro-sites for music, Country Music Week and the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration.

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Planning will be well underway throughout 2011 on the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration, 2012 Canadian Open Golf Championship and identifying hosting opportunities associated with new Pan Am sport facilities.

In 2011, Hamilton will be hosting a number of high profile conventions, sport events and festivals including:

- World Foundation on Breast Cancer Conference (June)
- Canadian Country Music Week and Country Music Awards (September)
- Ontario Tourism Summit and Ontario Travel Information Centres conference (October)
- Ontario University Athletics Wilson Cup (March)
- OFSAA Girls AAA Soccer (May)
- Mobility Cup (August)

Alternatives for Consideration – N/A

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for Recommendation(s) only)

Financial: N/A

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

June 26, 2002: Tourism Hamilton was incorporated.

September, 2001: Council approved establishing Tourism Hamilton.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Tourism stakeholders
Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors
Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (Ontario Tourism)

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

City Council invested \$1.4 million into Tourism Hamilton in 2010. In return for that investment, Tourism Hamilton executed the 2010 marketing plan and produced the following results (the results helped to inform decisions for the 2011 marketing plan):

Meetings and Conventions:

- 75 meetings and conventions
- 35,687 delegates
- 21,310 hotel room nights
- 21 convention grants administered for \$17,176
- \$15.5 million economic impact

Sport Events:

- 96 sport events
- 63,122 sport participants
- 19,860 hotel room nights
- 35 sport event grants administered for \$27,500
- \$32 million economic impact

Leisure Tourism:

- Travel media: value of editorial coverage: \$275,000
- Summer leisure promotion: Multi-media campaign
 - 33 tourism partners participated
 - Survey of partners post-campaign results:
 - 100% were satisfied or very satisfied with ability to increase awareness
 - 81% saw increased sales activity
 - 88% satisfied with ability to meet marketing objectives
 - 94% satisfied or very satisfied with value of media
 - leveraged \$161,000 in cooperative marketing funds
 - Produced and distributed 100,000 Experience Hamilton Guides

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- 11 week television campaign ran on CH TV and Global TV: 13.1 million impressions
- On-line advertising: generated 3.5 million impressions
- E-newsletters for on-line subscribers (4,210 new subscribers from campaign) 13-16% open rate

Interactive Strategy:

- New web-site created
- Three new micro-sites created
- 181,400 unique visitors, 12,000 e-newsletter subscribers; 3:08 minutes on site

Visitor Services:

- 20,857 visitors serviced at two tourist information centres
- 6,426 email inquiries answered
- 2,564 telephone inquiries answered

Additional results as well as 2009 results and 2011 forecasts:

Meetings and Conventions:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Forecast
City-wide conventions	7	2	8
Hotel room nights	16,059	21,310	20,575
Meetings	71	73	80
Number of Delegates	29,776	35,687	10,287
Economic Impact of Meetings and Conventions	\$15.1 million	\$15.5 million	\$9 million
Trade Shows and Sales receptions	5	4	6
Sales Leads generated for partners	254	165	175
Bids won	4	15	16
Bids lost	3	14	14
Site inspections	25	34	30

Sport Events:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Forecast
Sport Events	108	96	90
Hotel room nights	14,668	19,860	17,121
Number of Event Participants	82,613	63,122	44,500
Economic Impact of Sport Events	\$27.1 million	\$32 million	\$10 million
Trade Shows	2	2	2
Sales Leads generated for partners	202	96	90
Bids generated	8	7	5
Bids won	1	2	3
Bids lost	7	5	2
Site inspections	3	3	5

Visitor Services:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Forecast
Visitors to TICs	24,661	20,857	26,000
Emails	7,386	6,426	7,800
Phone calls	2,402	2,564	2,800
Web unique visitors	179,966	181,383	220,000

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

N/A

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN (Linkage to Desired End Results)

Focus Areas: 1. Skilled, Innovative and Respectful Organization, 2. Financial Sustainability, 3. Intergovernmental Relationships, 4. Growing Our Economy, 5. Social Development, 6. Environmental Stewardship, 7. Healthy Community

Skilled, Innovative & Respectful Organization

- ◆ More innovation, greater teamwork, better client focus

Financial Sustainability

- ◆ Delivery of municipal services and management capital assets/liabilities in a sustainable, innovative and cost effective manner
- ◆ Generate assessment growth/non-tax revenues

Intergovernmental Relationships

- ◆ Acquire greater share of Provincial and Federal grants (including those that meet specific needs)
- ◆ Maintain effective relationships with other public agencies

Growing Our Economy

- ◆ A visitor and convention destination

Environmental Stewardship

- ◆ Natural resources are protected and enhanced

Healthy Community

- ◆ An engaged Citizenry

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix "A" - Tourism Hamilton's 2011 Marketing Plan



2011 Marketing Plan
Focusing our Efforts

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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. Tourism Hamilton’s shareholder is the City of Hamilton. Thirteen directors 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. The marketing plan supports Tourism Hamilton’s strategic plan.

Tourism Hamilton exists to support the city’s tourism industry – businesses, organizations and the individuals who make their living from the tourism industry. To help grow the tourism pie for Hamilton, Tourism Hamilton works with the following “customer groups”:

- 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 objectives, communication recommendations and tactics for meetings and conventions; sport tourism; leisure markets and visitor services. This plan contains a new section that outlines what services Tourism Hamilton, as your destination management organization (DMO), provides on your behalf and suggestions on how you can put Tourism Hamilton to work for you. As well, the plan outlines a broader interactive marketing strategy, an increasingly important part of tourism marketing.

Message from Tourism Hamilton’s Board President, Stephen P. Goulding

On behalf of Tourism Hamilton’s Board of Directors, I am pleased to present Tourism Hamilton’s 2011 Marketing Plan. The creation of an annual marketing plan is one of the key deliverables of our Strategic Plan, and provides a road map for our tourism partners to follow. Tourism Hamilton is your destination management organization and exists to provide services, from sales and marketing to visitor services, to help grow your tourism business. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in last year’s marketing programs and for volunteering on committees to support Hamilton’s tourism industry.

The following vision and mission statements guide the work of the Tourism Hamilton Board and staff:

The Vision for Tourism Hamilton

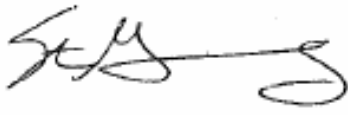
Tourism Hamilton Inc. will be a leading Destination Management Organization in Canada, supporting the development of a vibrant and growing tourism industry in Hamilton.

The Mission for Tourism Hamilton

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

Tourism is an integral industry sector in Hamilton. Over 2,300 residents work in the hospitality industry locally, and tourism provides an economic impact of over \$132 million each year for the city. Tourism is also a point of pride for Hamiltonians, as we invite and host visitors from across Ontario, Canada and around the world. Please take the time to review and then apply this marketing plan 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,



Stephen P. Goulding,
President

Tourism Hamilton Board of Directors

Executive Committee (May 2010-May 2011):

Stephen P. Goulding, President
WestJet Airlines

Alice Willems, First Vice-President
Parks Canada

Heather Beale, Second Vice-President
Orlick Industries Ltd

Joseph Sardo, Treasurer
RBC Dominion Securities

Patricia MacDonald, Secretary
Mohawk College of Applied Arts & Technology

David Adames, Executive Director
Tourism Hamilton

City of Hamilton:

Mayor R. Bratina

Councillor Robert Pasuta, Ward 14

Councillor Russ Powers, Ward 13

Directors:

Tim Bullock
Simpson Wigle Law

Sam Ion
Travel Journalist

Joseph Mercanti
Carmen’s Banquet and Conference Centre

Lindsay Puddicombe
Puddicombe Estate Farms & Winery

Lorna Zarembo
Theatre Aquarius

Ex-Officio:

Duncan Gillespie
Hamilton Entertainment & Convention Facilities Inc (HECFI)

Observer:

Nancy Fallis
Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Recreation (Acting)

Message from Tourism Hamilton’s Executive Director, David Adames

On behalf of Tourism Hamilton’s staff team, I am pleased to share with you our 2011 Marketing Plan. The plan is integral to establishing priorities and applying resources – both human and financial. Tourism Hamilton is aware that there are many changes afoot in the tourism industry – from changes at the Canadian Tourism Commission, Ontario Tourism and the establishment of the RTOs – to day to day business challenges for our tourism partners. This is the time to stay on strategy but adjust some marketing tactics and we will be doing just that as you will see in this plan.

To better serve you, our partners, and to stay current with technology advancements, we made strategic investments in technology in 2010, including upgrades to tourismhamilton.com and enhancement of our web-based customer-relationship management software program. In 2011, we will continue to advance our online presence to activate sales and visits. We will also focus on story telling, working with our partners to identify stories to develop and push out content through on-line sources, in our publications and in our campaigns. Also in 2011, we will continue to advocate for "all things tourism" in Hamilton, ensuring that tourism is well represented in discussions around the development of RTO #3, 2015 Pan Am Games preparations, the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration, and Economic Development Strategy.

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. Adames".

David Adames

Tourism Hamilton Staff Team

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Our Methodology

Tourism Hamilton’s 2011 Marketing Plan has been created by evaluating results of previous marketing plans, reflection on market trends, review of OTMPC’s marketing plan, input from tourism partners and review by Tourism Hamilton’s Board of Directors. Over the fall, Tourism Hamilton staff attended the 2010 Ontario Tourism Summit, consulted the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation’s (OTMPC) marketing plan, research available through the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) and Ontario Ministry of Tourism. Key priorities were then identified in tandem with committees that support each market (i.e. meetings and conventions, sport tourism). Correspondingly, budgets have been set to support the execution of the plan. Tourism Hamilton’s Board of Directors reviewed the draft plans at its November, 2010 meeting and approved the plan at its January, 2011 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
- Travel Gay Canada
- Tourism Toronto
- Travel Industry Association of Canada
- Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
- Travel Media Association of Canada

Review of 2010 Highlights and a Look Ahead to 2011

2010 Highlights:

In the past year, Tourism Hamilton invested in a new web platform, merging our customer-relationship management (CRM) system and web site, while creating new social media functionality including blogging and video-logs. In addition, a number of micro-sites were created including the War of 1812 Bicentennial site, Country Music site and a music site (www.livemusichamilton.com), the latter site is supporting a cultural tourism product development initiative centred on music. The interactive investment provided enhanced service to all markets, increasing value added services for customers.

Tourism Hamilton worked with partners in RTO #3, including chairing the transition task force for RTO #3. Four priority projects were undertaken on behalf of tourism stakeholders in the region, ranging from a fall/holiday leisure promotion, War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration work, creation of an on-line image library and a travel trade promotion. Work also was undertaken on a strategic plan that was developed with input from stakeholders.

A number of high-profile conventions and sport events were secured for Hamilton over the past year, including the 2011 Ontario Tourism Summit and the 2012 Canadian Open Golf Championship.

2011 Highlights:

Tourism Hamilton will continue to work with and provide leadership to the new regional tourism organization (RTO #3). A strategic plan and new Board of Directors will be in place for RTO #3 in the first quarter of 2011. As more information becomes available, Tourism Hamilton will share information and opportunities with our local partners.

Tourism Hamilton will be investing further in our interactive strategy, including creating a mobile site and assessing mobile application(s) and augmenting social media opportunities. Additional micro-sites will be created as part of tourismhamilton.com, building on the micro-sites for music, Country Music Week and the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration.

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- OFSAA Girls AAA Soccer
- Mobility Cup

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Service Measurement	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Tourist Information Centre Visits	17,996	14,669	14,203	35,788*	65,833	31,821	24,661	20,857
Web Unique Visitors	87,522	121,926	111,653	135,193	153,617	148,595	179,966	181,383
Phone Inquiries	7,364	5,101	4,987	5,923	5,271	4,475	2,402	2,564
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 plus 75 group leaders	125 tour operators; 630 travel agents; plus 500 tour operator/group leader mail outs	215 tour operators	50 tour operators	N/A
Leads and Inquiries Serviced for Travel Media	38	46	111	78	84	71	82	45
Leads Generated for Conventions and Sport Events	53	181	192	185	219/44	254/77	292/202	165/96
Convention and Sport Bids Lodged and Won	29/11	39/28	27/16	30/19	30/14	21/10	48/26	36/17
Room Nights Generated	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		16,059 Conventions 14,668 Sports	21,310 Conventions Sports 19,860
Value of Room Nights	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$788,000 Convention \$525,000 Sports	\$676,000 Convention \$381,990-Sports	TBD – Conventions \$862,500 – Sports	TBD
Conventions and Sport Events Serviced	157	89/44	100/41	74/55	69/56	47/87	71/106	75/96
Convention/Sport Grants Administered	N/A	N/A	N/A	51	16/43	14/43	22/50	21/35
Business Lost Conventions and Sport						5/2	14/13	14/5
Tourism Impacts								
Hotel Occupancy Rate	59.6%	62%	60.9%	62.9%	66.4%	63.5%	N/A	N/A
Hotel Average Daily Rate	\$98.84	\$95.97	\$100.47	\$103.00	\$107.90	\$108.92	N/A	N/A
Revenue per Available Room	\$51.02	\$52.27	\$57.26	\$64.83	\$71.65	\$69.15	N/A	N/A
Municipal Taxes Supported by Tourism	\$3.72M	\$4.23M		\$6.2M	\$7.8M	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hamilton Jobs Supported by Tourism	2,113	2,384		2,310	2,768	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Partner Relations: Working with Tourism Hamilton,
your Destination Management Organization (DMO)

Tourism Hamilton, as the City’s destination management organization (DMO) exists to work with Hamilton-based tourism businesses, organizations and individuals to grow tourism receipts in the city. The tourism industry is represented by a 14 member Board of Directors. For 2011, Tourism Hamilton will have the following standing committees:

- Convention and Sport Committee
- (new) Attractions Committee
- War of 1812 Advisory Committee
- Tourism Awards of Excellence Committee
- 2015 Pan Am Games Visitor Services Committee

The purpose of these committees will be to encourage more input and feedback for Tourism Hamilton’s strategic plan and annual marketing plan activities.

Tourism Hamilton will host the following workshops and networking opportunities in 2011:

- two workshops called “Working with your DMO” and encourage representatives of Hamilton’s tourism industry, especially new staff, to attend to learn about opportunities associated with working with Tourism Hamilton and to gain an overview of services available to partners
- two sport tourism workshops
- 13th Annual Tourism Awards (March 3, 2011)
- Three “partner mixers” to foster networking and information sharing among tourism partners

Annually, Tourism Hamilton provides the following services to local tourism stakeholders:

1. Destination branding and marketing*
2. Travel media relations*
3. Promotions through www.tourismhamilton.com
4. Listing on www.tourismhamilton.com *
5. Brochure distribution through tourist information centres*
6. Sales leads and inclusion in bid documents for conventions and sport events
7. Access to annual convention and sport event lists*
8. Access to monthly convention and sport alerts*
9. Recognition through annual Tourism Awards
10. Access to coop marketing initiatives
11. Access to trade shows and sales missions
12. Advise on grant programs and support letters*
13. Access to workshops
14. Access to tourism sign programs
15. Representation on regional tourism organization three*
16. Representation to provincial and national tourism organizations*
17. Advocacy for tourism related issues*

***Free Services available to partners**

Tourism Awards of Excellence

2011 Objective

Host the 13th Tourism Hamilton Awards of Excellence to encourage and acknowledge excellence in Hamilton's tourism industry.

Target Groups in Priority:

1. Local partners and stakeholders
2. Local businesses
3. Non-traditional event sponsors

Communication Recommendations:

Utilize web-based channels such as tourismhamilton.com, e-marketing and CRM to encourage awards nominations, awards package submissions, gala/pd session registrations

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:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Plan
Nominees	120	99 *	120
Event attendees	544	600 (capped by venue)	625

- *NOTE: as of 2010, the Lifetime Achievement Awards category was closed to open nomination*

Interactive Strategy

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Tourism Hamilton has recognized that the Internet has evolved to become a primary information source for tourism decisions. In 2010, Tourism Hamilton invested in a stronger, more robust online presence to support the needs of the local tourism industry and enhance the visitor experience. Looking forward, Tourism Hamilton will optimize the website to provide more promotional support to local tourism partners and the local tourism industry. As the internet has become an integral part of the tourism decision making process, Tourism Hamilton is committed to building and using the website to enable the local tourism industry to benefit from this shift in consumer behaviour, particularly through ways to convert interest into sales.

The objective for the Tourism Hamilton Website is to become the “definitive portal” or “go-to” for all things tourism-related in Hamilton. Tourism Hamilton will achieve this by promoting the website and by continually updating the website functionality to leverage Web 2.0 including user-generated content, reviews, blogging, on-line conversations and social media. To keep the website content relevant and up-to-date, Tourism Hamilton will continue to build its content database in the CRM system by adding information related to events, activities and tourism partners. Tourism Hamilton will also dedicate more staff resources to working with partners to identify more story ideas to generate increased content for on-line applications.

The 2011 Interactive Strategy will include the following areas of focus:

More advertising opportunities for partners

Tourism Hamilton will make more advertising opportunities and enhanced promotional features on the website, creation of preferred paid listing opportunities for restaurants, a rate-card and pricing schedule, and development of a sales strategy to launch this opportunity within the local tourism market.

Entering the “Mobile” arena

Based on the quarterly website traffic reports from 2009 and 2010, it is clear that an increasing demand for a ‘mobile’ version of the Tourism Hamilton website exists. Tourism Hamilton completed a review and analysis of multiple options for providing a ‘mobile-friendly’ website in 2010. In 2011, Tourism Hamilton will develop a version of the website that will be compatible with hand-held devices including the Blackberry, Apple and Android operating systems. It will also create added promotional opportunities for our tourism partners and new revenue generation for Tourism Hamilton.

The use of ‘micro-sites’ as a web-build strategy.

The success of Tourism Hamilton’s website has created a demand for increased content to attract visitors coming to Hamilton, to provide promotional support for specific events and partners and to support product development initiatives. In 2010, micro-sites were developed through the Tourism Hamilton website for the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemoration, The 2011 Canadian Country Music Awards, and to develop Hamilton’s Music Scene as a trip motivator. This strategy has proven effective by increasing website traffic, improving search engine optimization, and enhancing visitor experience by logically segmenting content. Tourism Hamilton will continue to develop microsites in 2011 as new content needs to be added to the website.

Meetings/Conventions and Sport Tourism

The meetings & conventions and sport tourism markets will also receive new website features, functionality and content in 2011. The objective is to leverage the internet to increase interest in Hamilton’s facilities, enhance the sales process by providing information through an easy-to-use website, and ultimately increase bookings in Hamilton through Tourism Hamilton and through direct bookings with local partners. Again this initiative offers added opportunities for partnerships and revenue generation.

Interactive tactics by segment at a glance:

Leisure Visitor Services

1. Enhance interaction with website visitors through user-generated content, and addition of 'local experts' contributing to blogs
2. Generate and post more stories about Hamilton – both on www.tourismhamilton.com and through on-line sources
3. Encourage Website visitation via seasonal online advertising campaigns (Summer and Fall)
4. Encourage partner Website links
5. Encourage user-generated content contributions through contest promotions linked to the Summer Leisure Marketing Campaign and live music sites; viral campaigns
6. Utilize enewsletter subscription database to inform consumers of product, promotions with a strong call to action
7. Maintain an online media centre to satisfy immediate needs of travel media
8. Share leads with partners and construct journalist visit itineraries via CRM
9. Utilize mobile website to provide tactical visitor information and direct business to our Tourism Partners

Meetings & Conventions

1. Enhance website content including facility inventory, detailed facility information, interactive map of M&C facilities, on-line sales toolkit
2. Personalized e-marketing campaign to prospects
3. Share leads with partners and construct client proposals via CRM

Sport Tourism

1. Enhance website content including sport facility inventory, grid-at-a-glance facility listing, detailed facility information, interactive map of Sport facilities
2. Develop more robust online content including 'pride factor' event listing and athlete testimonials
3. Personalized e-marketing campaign to prospects
4. Provide online coupon booklet to boost local economic impact
5. Share leads with partners and construct client proposals via CRM

Visitor Services

1. Populate content on Website
2. Respond to e-mail and Website inquiries
3. Build restaurant information

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 (ex. Talking Tourism email)

Meetings & Conventions Sales and Servicing

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 2010, Tourism Hamilton’s Meeting & Conventions team:

- Serviced 75 meetings and conventions in Hamilton
- Sent 165 leads to local partners
- Hosted 34 site inspections for considering meeting planners
- Sent 32 bids to Associations and meeting planners to host events

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

2011 Objective(s):

Tourism Hamilton will increase meeting and convention sales in 2011 by pursuing qualified repeat and new business.

Specific Objective(s) to support above:

1. Increase the number of future city-wide conventions by 3-5 conventions, including targeting national and international conventions through the 2011 convention development fund (CDF)
2. Increase the number of leads and bids for tourism partners
3. Continue to build awareness of Hamilton’s value-added services amongst M & C planners
4. Introduce Hamilton’s M & C’s services to a minimum of 24 new organizations
5. Update and build CRM files
6. Create an “Ambassador Tool Kit” to recruit new ambassadors to our team
7. Leverage the City’s Economic Development plan to target economic sectors for meetings and conventions

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 national and regional events
3. Hamiltonians who serve on provincial, national or international boards, agencies or organizations (Convention Ambassadors)
4. McMaster University, McMaster Innovation Park 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 calling program to (identify new sectors)
3. Continue to identify and support local convention ambassadors
4. Implement a targeted media relations program for the meetings and conventions market

Tactics:

1. Enhance and maintain web content, include 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. Host local trade shows to grow sales with local convention ambassadors and increase service value:
 - a) McMaster Innovation Park
 - b) McMaster University
 - c) Mohawk College
4. Attend national trade shows:
 - a) Tete a Tete
 - b) CSAE annual convention

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5. Host the winter summit for CSAE Trillium Chapter
6. Attend minimum of three CSAE and MPI events in Toronto and Ottawa and conduct sales calls in conjunction with functions
7. Undertake regular telemarketing of convention prospects, particularly those convention planners who have previously hosted in Hamilton

Support Rationale:

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

Results Measurement:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Forecast
City-wide conventions	7	2	8
Hotel room nights	16,059	21,310	20,575
Meetings	71	73	80
Number of Delegates	29,776	35,687	10,287
Economic Impact of Meetings and Conventions	\$15.1 million	\$15.5 million	\$9 million
Trade Shows and Sales Receptions	5	4	6
Sales Leads generated for partners	254	165	175
Bids won	4	15	16
Bids lost	3	14	14
Site inspections	25	34	30

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 putting in place dedicated staff resources for Sport Tourism. 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.”

Sport Tourism 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 site on the Tourism Hamilton Website will all help increase business for 2011 and beyond. Looking ahead, Tourism Hamilton will assess future hosting opportunities associated with new venues in the city, including the new Pan Am Games related facilities.

Trends, Opportunities, Challenges

In 2011, Hamilton will be hosting the following key sport events:

- 40th anniversary of Silver Fox tournament
- OUA Wilson Cup
- 117th Around the Bay Road Race
- OFSAA Girls AAA Soccer
- NSA World Series Championship
- 2011 Mobility Cup
- 48th Annual Croatian National Soccer Tournament

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), the Walter Gretzky Ball Hockey Championship, 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

2011 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

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 local industry’s hosting abilities
2. Develop Pan/Am Games related hosting opportunities
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

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Tactics:

1. Develop and maintain more robust online content, including possible mobile application, 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 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

Results Measurement:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Forecast
Sport Events	108	96	90
Hotel room nights	14,668	19,860	17,121
Number of Event Participants	82,613	63,122	44,500
Economic Impact of Sport Events	\$27.1 million	\$32 million	\$10 million
Trade Shows	2	2	2
Sales Leads generated for partners	202	96	90
Bids generated	8	7	5
Bids won	1	2	3
Bids lost	7	5	2
Site inspections	3	3	5

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 2011, Tourism Hamilton will concentrate its efforts on “story generation”, e-marketing, implementing a summer and fall leisure campaign and strategic travel media relations. The organization will also participate in programs offered by the CTC, OTMPC and RTO #3 to extend our reach and nurture our relationship with these senior destination marketing organizations. Tourism Hamilton staff and the Attractions Committee will also look critically to ascertain Hamilton’s domestic and international profile and act accordingly.

Trends, Opportunities and Challenges:

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

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

Hamilton has a rich and robust offering of experiences at our attractions, performing arts venues, clubs, special events and festivals, restaurants and shopping destinations. Tourism Hamilton will offer two coop marketing seasonal campaigns – summer and fall; will work with partners to identify story ideas and will produce more content based on these stories for the website, media releases, travel journalist fam tours and publications. Tourism Hamilton will also work with partners to develop more buyable packages by bundling saleable tourism products and experiences.

2011 Objectives

Tourism Hamilton will drive overnight and same day sales from consumers through effective media relations, compelling marketing campaigns, increased content generation (stories), enhanced online presence, reinforced branding and attractive packages to consumers.

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. Focus on story (content) generation – develop stories to use in media releases, on website, in blogs and through e-newsletters.

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 (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

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 with group of travel journalists to identify compelling stories on Hamilton
3. 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
4. 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, video, and micro-sites.
4. Tourism Hamilton will facilitate the Attractions Committee to gain direction in ongoing leisure marketing efforts
5. 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
6. Support Hamilton International Airport to identify and pursue potential business opportunities from current and new customers
7. Tourism Hamilton will work with partners to develop inviting packages to attract consumers and convert interest to sales, particularly overnight packages
9. 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

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Results Measurement:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Forecast
Trade Shows	7	1	2
Travel Media leads generated	82	45	50
Media hosted	20	17	20
Stories generated	5	7	8
PR Value of stories generated	\$253,718	\$275,000	\$300,000

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, brochure distribution, information tables at events and information fulfillment. Tourism Hamilton operates two Tourist Information Centres: one in downtown Hamilton and one at the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport (seasonal). 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. The Lady Hamilton Club will be celebrating 40 years of service in 2011. 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. Visitor Services also include tourism sign programs through liaising with the provincial TODS program and the new sign program on municipal roads.

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 with partners to ensure up-to-date information is available to fulfill visitor inquiries
2. 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
3. Tourism Hamilton will continue to improve upon and add helpful elements to tourismhamilton.com including additional micro-sites, mapping, and other services to provide more comprehensive services to Hamilton's visitors and increase value to partners
4. Produce promotional materials to assist explore and direct visitors to Hamilton's diverse tourism product offerings such as maps and dining guides

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5. Maintain and enhance visitor services role utilizing the CRM
6. Participate in community and tourism activities (conduct presentations, set up qualified information booths) to promote Hamilton and highlight Tourism Hamilton’s visitor services
7. Improve way-finding to make the city more welcoming, safe and easy to navigate

Tactics:

1. Continue to operate two Tourist Information Centres (downtown and at the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport - seasonal)
2. Manage informational 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. Work with the Lady Hamilton Club to enhance volunteer customer service assistance at Tourism Information Centres and information tables at special events and conferences
6. Brochure distribution and information fulfillment to partners, stakeholders, neighbouring DMO information centres and Ontario Travel Information Centres
7. Enhanced information table presence at major events for conventions and sporting markets
8. Finalize 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
9. Continue to work with Tourism Burlington and RTO #3 on a joint marketing impression program in key attractions that benefit the Region
10. Work with Tourism Burlington on a new tourist route along the waterfront on Lake Ontario
11. 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
12. Continue to support tourism oriented festivals and events to increase visitors to Hamilton and generate greater economic spin-off. Included with the production of a tourism events brochure and content management of the Events Calendar on www.tourismhamilton.com
13. 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
14. Implementation of Frontline Partner workshop to provide visitors with a standard “Welcome to Hamilton” engaging experience
15. Implementation of Partner Program to profile and promote industry partners at the Visitor Information Centre and at Municipal Service Centres

Support Rationale

1. Tourism Hamilton’s leisure marketing initiatives direct call to action to Visitor Services.- responds to emails, telephone and in-person inquiries
2. Tourism Hamilton’s convention and sport tourism sales servicing programs 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 – have inventory process in place

Results Measurement:

Performance Metrics	2009 Actual	2010 Actual *	2011 Forecast
Visitors to TICs	24,661	20,857	26,000
Emails	7,386	6,426	7,800
Phone calls	2,402	2,564	2,800
Web unique visitors	179,966	181,383	220,000

* Impacts for 2010 Actual Data:

- John C. Munro International Airport TIC closed in October due to change in passenger carrier flight schedules
- Tourism Hamilton did not do a Fall leisure campaign and Fall e-newsletter campaign which impacted website and email volume