“Punching Above Our Weight”

BRANDED DESTINATION BUILDING & THE CANADA 150 STRATEGY
RTO12 Background [for those who don’t know us]

Established in 2010

One of 13 regional tourism organizations funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport

Governed by a volunteer board of directors who are all tourism business owners or their general managers
Vision
- In three years (2017), EE will be the most popular tourism destination in Ontario.

Mission
- Explorers’ Edge is an operator-driven organization whose mission is to develop a profitable and thriving tourism industry in the Region.
RTO12 Background  [for those who don’t know us]

There are 5 pillars we are mandated to work in by the MTCS
• Marketing, Product Development, Workforce Development, Investment Attraction and Governance

Funded by the province of Ontario 1.4 million
• $500,000 Base
• $757,000 Proportional
• $166,000 Partnership
Governance

We work under a committee structure and very tight governance
- Marketing
- Tourism Operator Relations
- Community Relations
- Research
- Governance

Strict accountability to the MTCS
- Transfer Payment Agreement (Business and Operational Plan)
- Progress Report
- Budget to Actuals
- Final Report

Audited Financial Statements
- Processes internal and external
- Decision Making
Workforce Development [Industry Training & Development]

- Self Assessments
- Case Studies
- Group Training
- Best Practice Mission
- Broker Training

James Murphy @rto12news · 2016-09-28
Tourism Excellence North training and working session @CanadoreCollege parrysound
@explorersedge - great turn out - thanks @GBayBiospherc
Workforce Development [Ask Me Anything]
Workforce Development [Social Media Training]
Workforce Development

[Reservation System Training and Admin]
Investment Attraction

Commercial Air Service
• Investigation
• Communication
• Business Plans

Economic Development
• Communication
• Content
Product Development [2017 - Strategy Development]

- Board will invest money in a strategy next fiscal year
- Challenge for us to do a lot because of limited funds
- Ice Trail - Impact of Product Development on Occupancy
Product Development [Self Guided Mobile Tours]
Product Development

[Main development through content - Video]
Product Development [Main development through content - Blog]
Product Development [Signage]

- Huntsville – Arrowhead
- Huntsville – GGW
- Huntsville - GOS
- Georgian Bay Township
- Parry Sound Amazing Places
Marketing

Where Board invests most money

Target domestic visitation

For 3 years we have lead the industry in content marketing and seen enormous success

Our objectives are to:

- Build new audiences for the region
- Build shoulder season visitation in particular
- Build a the regional destination that levels the playing field for all sub-regions and all operators within the region
- Change perceptions
Marketing

Brand positioning: Great Canadian Wilderness North of Toronto

We promote 5 sub-regions and that have approximately 1700 tourism associated businesses within

Algonquin Park, Almaguin, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka and Parry Sound
Marketing - Huntsville [screenshot examples]
Marketing – Huntsville [Partners/Promotion]

Resorts of North Muskoka in Winter
At Home Resort in Muskoka Kawartha, Winter 2013

Deerhurst Resort: Epic Winter Adventures & A Lifetime of Memories
[Image]

Nuit Blanche North
Inns-How to North Muskoka - A Love Letter to the Season

From Pioneers to Portage Flyers: Living History at Muskoka Heritage Place
[Image]

Ticket To Ride – The Portage Flyer
[Image]
Results: Punching Above Our Weight

One of least funded RTOs BUT...

- Million visits to website vs. 200,000 in 2012
- Lead Facebook
- Among first content marketers in Canadian tourism industry
- Strong lead nurturing program as a result
- Huge success in Direct-To-Consumer marketing
Punching Above Our Weight

Do more with less allows us to punch above our weight

**Content Marketing** allows us to do more with less

Canada 150

- adopts that philosophy and will allow us to target international markets...

USE STRATEGY TO DO MORE WITH LESS AND PUNCH ABOVE OUR WEIGHT
Direct-to-Consumer:

- Take success with domestic markets and attempt to duplicate with international markets

How do you do this on shoe-string budget?

- Leverage Canada 150 and ex-pat communities who will help broadcast the message
Punching Above Our Weight: [International Markets]
Up Next:

- CYQA
- Commercial Air Service

- Wordly Wise
- Internal Strategy to execute CYQA

- Pilot HLOBCOC Partnership
- Community Marketing Initiative
After The Ice Trail: Do More & Dine in Huntsville, Muskoka

By now you’ve probably heard about Ontario’s hottest winter attraction – the Ice Trail at Arrowhead Provincial Park – and its use to experience this special setting is a non-negotiable. For those who haven’t, it’s located in the heart of winter wonderland, filled with ice and snow for a once-in-a-lifetime experience. This season in Muskoka, it’s all about what comes after the ice trail.

Do More And Then Some

After its popularity last year, the 2022 edition of the Ice Trail is expected to be even more impressive. This year, the trail is being extended to include more ice structures and activities, offering a unique winter experience for visitors.

Fresh Tracks can be found downstream near Huntsville, providing the perfect starting point for some fun. The ice sculptures are a major highlight of the trail, offering stunning views of the frozen river and the surrounding forest.

Keep an eye on the trail for updates. Highlights include the Ice Palace, a large structure made entirely of ice, and the Ice Slide, a thrilling ride for children and adults alike.

Make sure to bring warm clothing and sturdy shoes. The trail requires some physical effort to navigate, so it’s important to be prepared.

Don’t forget to bring your camera. The Ice Trail is a great place to capture beautiful winter scenes and make memories that will last a lifetime.

There are also a variety of activities available to enjoy after the Ice Trail. Visit the Muskoka Winter Festival, which takes place in downtown Huntsville, and enjoy ice sculpting, skiing, and snowmobiling.

Parry Sound Tourism @PSoundTour

Indulge your sweet tooth by exploring #Orville Bakery Barista in @NaturallySeguin! #ParrySound @explorersedge
Questions

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