



RHRTA MARKETING PLAN 2011

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Overview

A range of marketing vehicles, promotions, and communications strategies will facilitate the visitor encounter with the RHR. Additional partnerships to market the Rideau Corridor will be negotiated with other tourism partners including Chambers of Commerce, Ottawa Tourism, Tourism Kingston, RTO 9, 10 & 11, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership (OTMPC) and other tourism groups. This region has been the focus of a great deal of activity related to tourism based on natural and cultural heritage (sustainable tourism). In addition to the UNESCO World Heritage Site, we have a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the National Model of Sustainable Tourism, and particular new interest by the National Geographic Society in a special region-wide designation relating to sustainability. All of these factors indicate an opportunity to position the region in the minds of that rapidly growing market segment interested in natural and cultural heritage.

RHRTA Marketing Objectives

- To provide industry leadership, strategic direction and destination marketing of the RHR Corridor in cooperation with members & partners.
- To facilitate the development of new revenues for tourism businesses along the corridor.
- To assist in the development and market cultural and ecologically sustainable tourism experiences located all along the RHR.
- To position the entire RHR Corridor as a natural and cultural heritage destination.

Corridor Brand

On June 30, 2007 the Rideau Canal and its fortifications in Kingston were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site; a first for the province of Ontario and the 14th for Canada. The RHRTA brought together Rideau tourism marketing agencies to develop a corridor brand that would provide a consistent and professional message to benefit all the communities and partners all along the corridor. Communities and partners can promote themselves as “**A World Heritage Destination**”. The region’s assets include authentic arts, recreation, natural and historical experiences.

The National Geographic Society's Center for Sustainable Destinations rated the Rideau Canal National Historic Site of Canada second best on the 2008 "Places Rated" survey. This annual survey measures the world's top historic sites for authenticity, stewardship and their tourism footprint.

Market Focus

The RHRTA marketing campaign will be targeted primarily at consumers. As the region’s Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), the RHRTA will profile tourism businesses in its marketing collaterals and on the web site. Once the Rideau product is more secure in the tourism marketplace, and the tour industry sees the success of the product, a concerted effort can then be undertaken to engage mainstream operators. The Travel Media market will be targeted directly through identified initiatives and the Travel Trade market will be reached in partnership with Parks Canada, Ottawa Tourism and Tourism Kingston.

Seasonality

The RHRTA marketing campaign will be a four-season effort with a strong emphasis on the Summer & Fall seasons. Marketing a critical mass of cultural and natural experiences within a single brand and marketing campaign - will grow the volume of visitations to the RHR Corridor.

Distinctive Themes

The RHR will be marketed as a “tapestry of experiences” centered around four distinctive themes that reveal the unique history and culture of the entire Rideau region. The RHR marketing collateral will feature these themes:

- Story of a Nation (1st Capital to current Capital, First Nations, legacy of Irish & Scottish canal workers)
- Celebrations and Diversions (events, reenactments, theatre)
- Colours & Flavours along the Rideau (Fall Touring and Local flavours / agri-tourism initiatives)
- A Day in the Countryside (paddling, cycling, hiking, walking & driving tours, recreation)

Evaluation

A new ad-hoc Measurement Committee of RHRTA will develop a strategy to review programs for effectiveness and “ROI”. Visitation data from Rideau Canal land & water based visitors, Statistics Canada reports and the Parks Canada land based visitor survey produced every 5 years will provide valuable market intelligence to assist with future planning. The RHRTA also plans to develop a Tourism Business Survey capturing details of the 2010 season and encourages corridor communities to capture demographic & market information about their current visitors as a benchmark for future.

Outlook for the Tourism Sector (compilation of data from OTMP, CTC, Ottawa Tourism)

The new CTC “Explorer Quotient”

The EQ model is based upon a solid research foundation. Through adaptations of Environics* Social Values model, the CTC can effectively develop a profile (EQ) based on the reasons why people travel. The profile is not based solely on age, gender or education, but includes qualities of someone's personality. The CTC can then suggest Canadian experiences that are relevant to the traveller and consistent with the traveller's EQ. To create a profile travellers complete a 25 statement questionnaire dealing with travel habits and motivations. The RHRTA has a unique opportunity to fully integrate this sophisticated, proprietary tool into our operation. RHRTA can use the EQ tool to enrich our tourism product development and marketing activities. Simply put: EQ can help transform a world of explorers into some of our best customers.

Last minute booking and internet usage

Financial concerns will accelerate the trend towards last minute bookings and the internet will prove indispensable as a source for up to the minute trip planning. A noticeable increase has been noted with “stay-cations” where visitors are travelling closer to home and discovering their “own backyards”.

Emerging Markets

New International Travel markets will play an increasing role in the next two decades especially with the new UNESCO World Heritage designation and the National Geographic interest in the region. Close attention will be given to emerging markets identified by OTMP and Ottawa Tourism especially in light of the signing of the new ADS with China. Many of our Rideau communities are twinned with cities or regions in China which will require a long term strategy.

Ontario Tourism Industry Changes

There are numerous fundamental changes happening in the Ontario Tourism industry and it will take some time before roles are defined.

- OTMP is under review. Its future existence, roles and operating parameters are still unknown, including how they will work with partners in future.
- The Regional Tourism Organizations (RTO) are in a transition phase (2010) until full operation in 2011.
- The RHRTA jurisdiction has been divided into 3 new RTO regions (Region 9, 10, 11)
- The Ministry of Tourism and Culture and OTMP have yet to clarify if and where the current existing brands fit into the provincial tourism system and how they could be funded.

New RTO Resources

Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) have been established and the RHRTA will have the opportunity to access project based funding from 3 regions with RTO 9, 10 and 11.

Sustainable Tourism experiences

According to the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), Sustainable tourism actively fosters appreciation and stewardship of the natural, cultural and historic resources and special places by local residents, the tourism industry, governments, and visitors. It is tourism which is viable over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place. Sustainable Tourism preserves our natural and cultural capital, and enhances society and economy.

Economic Trends

Energy costs, transportation, World Markets changing rapidly and declining disposable incomes are all concerns that impact visitation.

Strategic Framework

Targeted cooperative marketing investment

Consolidate marketing investment into a limited number of identified high potential geographic and market segments. Focus on geographic markets that have shown visitation results in recent years. Partner with both Ottawa and Kingston Tourism to reach International markets. Work with partners to enhance marketing efforts and leverage tourism investment by offering cooperative marketing opportunities.

Dynamic web presence

RHRTA must match or exceed the expectations of its web visitors. Web enhancements including interactive features, and new modules (blogs, RSS feeds, email blasts, web based itineraries, packages and publications. Increase online presence for Rideau tourism businesses through new applications (Google Local, Trip advisor, contests...)

Tourism training/ Visitor Services

Facilitate the delivery of tourism training sessions in the areas of front-line customer service, market readiness and awareness of RHR experiences through partnerships with key associations such as Transportation Options to offer their popular "Welcome Cyclist" program to RHRTA partners.

Regional Initiatives

RHRTA will work with existing partnerships to successfully leverage several new initiatives that will shape the future of the Rideau; Parks Canada's Landscape Strategy; the Frontenac Arch Biosphere projects with National Geographic for a National Model for Sustainability; the Ontario East Economic Development Corporation's Tourism Development Committee; Ottawa & Kingston Tourism as they develop travel trade initiatives; and the Regional Tourism Organization Transition Teams in Eastern Ontario (R.T.O. 9, R.T.O. 10, and R.T.O. 11) in order to participate in regional initiatives.

Product Development Strategy

The RHRTA Product Development Committee hosted a Tourism Stakeholder session in early 2010 with over 65 stakeholders in attendance. A six step strategy was developed and adopted that will assist the Association in moving forward with product development goals. The RHRTA Product Development Committee will continue to implement the strategy and develop itineraries. Through the Board of Directors, the Marketing Committee will continue to promote product and remain flexible to support product development opportunities.

Product Development Concepts that could be adapted for regional development:

Green Energy (i.e. Eco-Map featuring "Glamping" Glamorous Camping, Geological & Mineral History, Cycling Routes, Solar Boat Tours)

Themed Festivals & Events Series (i.e. Music Festivals on the Rideau, Food Festival Route, Fall Colour Studio Tours,

"Riding the Rideau" (promote as one of Ontario's most historic motorcycle routes/Great Fall Drives)

Rideau Crier Competition 2012 (Town Crier's along the Rideau support other festivals by adding a Crier competition between the world's finest Criers)

Chip Wagon Tour (Identify the French-Fry Stops along the route) Continue developing existing regional products ie: Luxury Paddling, Cultural tours.

Familiarization Tour Strategy

The RHRTA has formed a Fam Tour Committee to prepare a strategy and to provide direction and assistance with the delivery of Familiarization tours. There will also be a Tool kit (manual) developed. Fam tours will continue to be a very cost effective way to target several key markets including the consumer market, travel trade and niche markets such as paddling, boating, cycling, cultural explorers and many others since Travel media have the ability to reach these markets efficiently and in a precise manner with relatively low cost to RHRTA.

TARGET MARKETS

Initial focus will be on nature & culture oriented leisure travellers. The boating and outdoor recreation markets have been established along the Rideau since the early 1930s with generations of families coming to their cottages or the same lodges year after year but the pattern is changing and this market requires an infusion of new visitors to sustain the current facilities which require upgrades to keep up with market demand.

GEOGRAPHIC MARKETS 2011 (derived in consultation with Ottawa Tourism and Kingston Tourism)

Primary	Secondary	Passive/Emerging (indirect reach w/partners & travel media)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Ontario - Ottawa • Montreal • GTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New York, New Jersey • Pennsylvania • Michigan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK, France, Germany • Asia-Pacific (China, Japan, Australia) • Mexico

RHRTA Proposed 2011 Marketing initiatives									\$
<i>ITEM</i>	<i>Market</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>RHR cost</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Funding</i>	<i>Rank</i>	
Travel Trade Shows									
OMCA	North AM	Mid Nov	Reg July	800	800	North American Travel Trade & FIT	RHR & coop	1	
Consumer Shows									
VIA Rail Destinations Show	NEAR	May	March	600	600	Over 1,000 maps distributed at 2010 show	RHR	1	
Montreal Outdoor Show	NEAR	Feb	Dec		2,000	Could be coop representation at show	RHR	2	
Rideau Canal Festival	NEAR	Aug 1-3	March		Time	RHRTA & Chambers display of information	RHR & coop	3	
Kingston Leisure Show	NEAR	April	March		500	Could be coop representation at show	RHR	4	
Montreal Boat Show	NEAR	End of Jan	Aug	1,500	Time	Joint rep w/ Parks & Direction Ont	RHR & coop	5	
AAA/CAA Sales Missions	Near US	Spring/Fall	March	10,000	5,000	CAA/AAA presentations in NY,NJ,GTA, Mtl	RHR & coop	6	**
Travel Media Shows									
TMAC - Toronto Chapter	GTA	Monthly	1 month prior	5,000	VIA travel	Monthly mingle events in Toronto	RHR	1	
GoMedia Marketplace	INT'L	July	Reg March	2,800	2,800	TIAC Show - Int'l Media / TO in 2010	RHR	2	**
TMAC Marketplace	ON/CDA	2011	Reg Nov	800	800	Travel Media Assoc of Canada / in Ottawa	RHR	3	**
Canada Media Marketplace	USA	April	Reg Sept	4,000	4,000	CTC Show - US Media / NY in 2011	RHR	4	**
Advertising									
Summer Travel Discoveries	ONT	April circ	November	2,600	2,600	Travel source listing in OTMP guide	RHR	1	
L'Ontario en francais - Guide	ONT	May circ	November	3,000	1,000	French DO guide / co-op ad revenue	RHR & coop	2	
Great Drives - Fall	ONT	Aug circ	Jan /ad Apr	1,300	1,000	OTMP campaign	RHR	3	
Boating East	NEAR	May circ	Jan	2,000	1,000	1 pg destination ad w/ Parks & Fort coop	RHR & coop	4	
Travel Industry Guides	ALL	March circ	Nov	4,000	2,000	co-op partners to offset some cost	RHR & coop	5	*
Kingston Visitor Guide	NEAR	May circ	Dec	5,000	3,000	1 pg destination ad w/ Parks & coop ads	RHR & coop	6	
Ontario Group Tour Planner	ONT	Oct circ	Apr /ad May	300	300	Editorial listing ad	RHR	7	
CJAD Travel Radio	NEAR	June	Mar	4,500	1,650	Montreal live 1 hr travel radio show	RHR & coop	8	**
Kingston/Ottawa Radio	NEAR	Summer	Spring	5,000	1,000	Kingston/Ottawa Radio station campaign	RHR & coop	9	**
Ottawa Where Map	NEAR	May	Feb	6,000	4,000	destination ad with editorial support	RHR & coop	10	
Ottawa Shop/Dining Guide	Ottawa					Investigate participation as coop w/partners	Coop/Lanark	NEW	**
Canoe & Kayak Magazine	ONT					Investigate participation as coop w/partners	Coop/Lanark	NEW	**

ITEM	Market	Date	Commitment	\$ Value	RHR cost \$	Details	Funding	Rank	
Communication strategies									
Web	ALL		Ongoing	50,000	7,000	updates, new images, hosting , languages	IDO	1	**
RHR Newsletter	Partners		Quarterly	500	500	Electronic newsletter for partners	RHR	2	**
Familiarization Tours	ALL		Ongoing	5,000	2,000	Mileage, meals, gifts	RHR	3	**
Guide Distribution program	NEAR		June	2,000	2,000	combination of distribution channels	RHR	4	
RHR Travel guide	ALL	May	Jan	50,000	10,000	Identify new guide opportunities	RHR & coop	5	**
Rideau-1000 Islands Map	NEAR	May	Feb	20,000	5,000	Produce 2nd edition of map w/ ads	RHR & coop	6	**
Signage	NEAR		May	12,000	12,000	Annual contract renewal	RHR	7	
Information Kiosks	ALL	Spring	Fall 2010	25,000	5,000	4-6 unmanned kiosks w/map panel	EODP	8	*
CITAP meetings	Asia-Pacific	Dec / May	Nov	5,000	1500	Canada Inbound Travel Asia-Pacific Assoc.	RHR/LTI/SF	9	**
Street Banner Program	NEAR		May	6,000	Time	Coordinate bulk order for communities	RHR	10	**
Rideau Experiences - web	NEAR	Aug-Dec	June	15,000	Time	Enhanced web listings for Rideau partners	VH CFDC	11	**
Kingston this Week contest	NEAR	June-Sept	May	30,000	Time	12 week themed editorials with contest	RHR	12	**
(above costs do not include travel or admin)									
 NOTES:									
* Applied for funding									
** Must apply for Funding									

Joint representation at Trade Shows through partnerships

SHOW	MARKET	PARTNER
ABA	US	Ottawa Tourism, 1000 Islands Travel Council
NTA	US	Ottawa Tourism, 1000 Islands Travel Council
Bienvenue Quebec	Quebec Trade	Ottawa Tourism, Direction Ontario
Conozca Mexico	Mexican	Ottawa Tourism
Rendezvous Canada	International trade	Ottawa & Kingston Tourism
Montreal Bike Show	Montreal consumers	Bike Train c/o Transportation Options
Ottawa Womens Show	Ottawa females	Lanark County
Ottawa Travel Show	Ottawa consumers	Lanark County