

2009 Annual Report

May 2010

2009 Key Accomplishments

- 37% Partner growth
- New website
- Social marketing
- Sport Tourism growth
- Green Tourism Initiatives



Financial Highlights 2009

Revenue	\$422,708
Expenses	\$419,631
09 Surplus	\$3,077
Un.Surplus	\$64,419
Reserve Fund	\$68,640
Capital Fund	\$54,304
DMF Funds (Rev/Exp)	\$415,609

Changing Times!

This report provides details on performance measures, marketing, events and initiatives for 2009 & 2010.

2009 has seen many changes in the tourism industry with the release of the Ministry of Tourism **Competitiveness Study** in Feb. '09. The Province has approved new legislation to allow for the establishment of a special dedicated levy on transient accommodation such as hotel rooms, to promote destination marketing.

The **Regional Tourism Levy** would standardize and replace destination marketing fees across the province with this new dedicated funding mechanism. As of July 2010 with the implementation of HST the destination marketing fees (DMF) will no longer be collected. Interim funding has been confirmed for

local DMO's such as Burlington who rely on DMF funds to deliver many marketing initiatives. This funding is only in place until a new levy is established in 2012 if local accommodations vote to adopt it.

The study also recommended the establishment of new Tourism Regions—see page 2 for more details. Tourism Burlington will continue to provide updates on these important initiatives. Working with the Halton Tourism Advisory Committee and with support from the Ministry of Tourism Consultants PKF were retained to research the economic benefit of tourism in the region. This study provided some great statistics for Burlington showing that tourism is an important economic driver with **1.9m visitors** in 2008 generating **\$112.2m** in total

2008 Burlington Tourism Profile- Stats Canada

1.3m visitors 3 out of 4 were same day visits
\$112.2m spent in area
\$48.2m direct economic activity in city
70% of overnight tourists came to visit family & friends
910 direct jobs - 1,606 indirect \$52.2m in taxes

tourism receipts, resulting in over **1,606** tourism jobs. A copy of this report will be available in June. With Burlington now being recognized as the **3rd best place to live** in Canada, let's invite visitors to see what our residents are so proud of...Beautiful Burlington!

P. Balgrade

Message from the Chair Susan Morrissey

Tourism Burlington continues to grow and adapt to the needs of the community and visitor. 2009 brought new initiatives, & opportunities which are highlighted in this report. There were also challenges which we faced with 'out of the box' thinking and creativity. Continued involvement in bringing groups together in sport,

culture, meetings etc. ensured that the visitor and resident knew what Burlington has to offer. Our success is largely due to our excellent staff and volunteers - thank you for your hard work and dedication. Our Board provides leadership and enthusiasm and I thank them for their support and participation. 2010 marks our 40th

Anniversary in celebrating tourism in Burlington. From our humble beginnings to our current status one thing has remained constant - we continue to showcase what is best about our city. We look forward to the new opportunities that face the Tourism industry and Tourism Burlington is definitely up to the challenge!

Susan Morrissey

Measuring 2009 Tourism Performance

Information Centre visits/calls/emails	11,889 -6%
Waterfront—Discovery Landing visits	5713– 24%
Website Visits	Average 17,000 unique visits/month
Virtual Tour (July - December)	2,055
Volunteer Hours	1236
Souvenir requests groups/individuals	152 requests
Out of country requests	26 out of country
Pins distributed	9,780 city pins 5,635 Canada flag pins
Advocacy—support letters, presentations	7 letters—4 presentations
Public Relations—Displays/Events/FAM tours	10 Displays/86 events/ 5 FAM tours
Partner contributions—DMF, Partner ads, sponsorships, in kind, grants	\$490,000

Working with our partners, we have been tracking performance in a number of areas: Our Centre visitation was down compared to 2008 as well as our stats at the waterfront - this was a national trend due to the economy plus our wet summer. Our website unique visits are holding steady. We distributed on behalf of the City over **15,000 pins**. We represented tourism at **86** community/regional events. With the DMF, our partner contributions have surpassed the city tourism commitment with a total partner contribution of **\$490,000**.
(Continued bottom of page 3)



Destination Marketing Fee Highlights

Through an agreement with the BHA, Tourism is leveraging the voluntary 3% Destination Marketing Fee to increase awareness of Burlington as a destination. (See pg. 1 for changes in program.) Our marketing plan, developed with the Marketing Committee, BHA and the Tourism Board included:

- **Visitor Guides expanded distribution** to Niagara attractions, hotels,

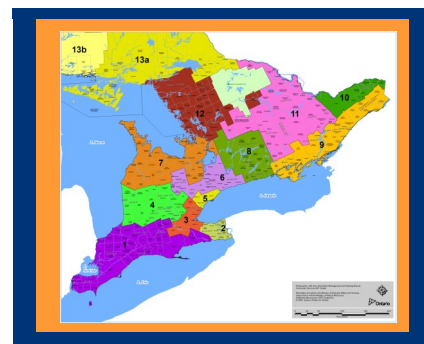
- events, and 400 Highways centres
- **42 additional ads with 2.8m more impressions** in various advertising publications and websites
- Hotel Deals campaign had **2.9 m impressions** & new website created
- **Coupon Book**—25,000 copies distributed to groups, visitors and downloadable online
- **\$57,859 grants** awarded to 11

- sport groups who hosted 24 events resulting in 2650 room nights
- **Travel Counsellors** provided at Discovery Landing from June until Labour Day greeted **5,700** visitors
- **\$19,000 grants for conferences**
- Meeting brochure sent to **1875** businesses/associations =13 leads
- Updated **virtual tour**
- **Group tour** teaser and mailings

Province creates Tourism Regions

The Ministry of Tourism's *Report On The Future Of Tourism*, recommended the establishment of tourism regions to better coordinate marketing and management across Ontario. The Province has allocated \$40m for the 13 regions, once they are established, to help support tourism development and job creation.

Burlington is part of Region #3 which includes Halton, Hamilton, Brantford, Brant County and Six Nations/New Credit. Region #3 submitted an expression of interest to operate the new RTO. A new board will be formed and stakeholder input will be solicited to help determine a business plan that complements existing DMO's.



New Media to promote Tourism





In 2009 we introduced a number of new media into our marketing tactics. In the area of social marketing, we set up a page on **Facebook - Discover Burlington Ontario** and as of April 2010 had **682 fans**. We also are keeping people updated via **Twitter—BurlingtonTour** and now have **595 followers**. Become a fan and follow us! In the summer we launched a new digital box outside of our visitor centre which provides information on where to stay, dine, shop, events, things to see and do and is available 24-7. In the fall, we announced a new partnership with **Screenscape** a digital sign company which provides a low cost opportunity to promote tourism

through the network of subscribers. Check out this program on our large screen at the visitor centre or at tourismburlington.screenscape.net. A number of Tourism Burlington videos have been posted to YouTube. Check them out and share with your friends. We have created a **Visitor ENewsletter** that is sent to visitors, residents and partners 5 times per year and highlights events, attractions, and specials for the upcoming season. Anyone can subscribe to this ENews by visiting our website. Currently it is sent to over 800 visitors and partners. It is a very useful guide for front line staff who greet visitors, so print and post.



Mark
Runciman &
Terry Yates

2009 Tourism Events

In 2009, Tourism hosted or participated in numerous events.

We presented the Tourism Builder Award to **Mark Runciman and Terry Yates** of the Royal Botanical Gardens at the Chamber Business Awards Gala in May.

Our AGM in May was a green theme with keynote speakers and local partners sharing their green stories. We also hosted a Go Green Tourism workshop to help partners develop green plans.

At the Tourism Ambassador Training, 50 front-line hotel, attraction and service industry staff and volunteers were trained as **ambassadors**. Through DMF funding, we provided

visitor information booths at 7 major festivals and events during the summer season, greeting over 4,000 visitors. For the second year we coordinated the **Taste of Burlington** prix fixe dining program working with the BIA's and local restaurants. This program continues to grow from 12 restaurants participating in 2008 to 26 now in 2010 with an economic spin off of more than **\$200,000** per program.

Performance Measures cont. pg 2

- 216,000 copies of print materials
- 237 Welcome to Burlington New Resident Packages
- 13 media stories/ 2 interviews
- 41 ads in publications
- 22 photo requests
- 520 partners (up from 380)
- Total attraction attendance **1,666,298**(not all provided)
- Major Event/festival attendance **417,000**.
- Group tour attendance **35,506**
- Hotel occupancy was **52%** (down 5%)

NOTE: Not all partner information provided on a consistent basis.



Meeting Brochure

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Visitor Survey Summer '09

Some interesting information has been gathered from the survey boxes located at hotels attractions, etc. Here are some of the highlights:

- 60% female
- 51.3% married
- 37.5% from Halton/Hamilton
- 13.2% from GTA
- 13.6% Western Ontario
- 22.5% were on day trip
- 23.4% visiting friends/family

- 15% on business or vacation
- 16% was their 1st visit
- 83.6% travelled by car
- 40% stayed in hotel
- 8.8% spent over \$500

Top activities during visit:

- 66% enjoying shopping
 - 60% dining/entertainment
 - 52% visiting Waterfront
 - 39% visiting events
 - 37% visiting parks/outdoor
- NOTE: Fall-Spr. Stats also available.



**Congratulations
to 2009
Tourism
Ambassador
Award**

**Recipient
Ako Matsubayashi
Mundalization Committee**

Marketing & Partner Initiatives in 2010

During National Tourism Week • June 7-11, 2010



Send a Burlington Postcard!

IT'S EASY AND FUN...

1. Visit our website: tourismburlington.com
2. Click on Send E-Postcard.
3. Select card and add your message.
4. Send to family and friends near and far.
5. Enter contest to win a \$500 Burlington gift basket.
6. Each time you send a card, you get another chance to win!

Email: info@tourismburlington.com or visit our website.

Enter to WIN a \$500 Gift Basket!

Tourism Week

For 2010 we have many exciting marketing and partner activities planned. Once again we will celebrate **National Tourism Week June 7-11** by increasing public awareness about our local attractions and driving traffic to our website through an **EPostcard campaign** and contest targeted to local residents with an insert in the Burlington Post and online at Inside Halton.

We have been working closely with the City on sport initiatives including the **Pan Am Games** site for soccer (football), the **Canadian Cycling Championships** and sport hosting policies and guidelines. We continue to offer the **Event Funding Grant program**, and hosting **Time Out Sport** networking sessions which are very successful programs.

Burlington Hotel Deals promotion continues with a focus on more local exposure since so many of our visitors come here to see family and friends. Tactics include online advertising through sites such as the Weather Network, Red Flag Deals, and Inside Halton plus with the Post and On the Go Magazine among others. These deals include \$20 off regular rack rate at BHA hotels plus a \$20 gift card for local shopping and services. Encourage your

customers, friends and family to visit burlingtonhoteldeals.com for all the details.

Our leisure marketing includes events and focuses on the GTA through online and print ads.

Our **Bring it Home** meetings campaign continues with advertising in Within 2 Hours and direct mail to key associations, businesses and organizations. With the incentive of up to **\$3,000** towards eligible events we are generating a number of leads.

Our **group tour** flyer was sent out to over **250 operators** and we continue to provide updates about events and attractions to encourage more tours. We are pleased to be working with partners to host a number of conferences and tournaments this year which are featured on our website. Refer to more details in our **Tourism ENews**.