

2010 Tourism Annual Report

May 2011

2010 Key Accomplishments

- 40 yrs. of visitor services and 25 yrs. as a DMO.
- 20% Partner growth
- Growth in social marketing initiatives
- Group Tour development



Financial Highlights 2010

Revenue	\$434,501
Expenses	\$410,418
Yr. Surplus	\$24,083
Un.Surplus	\$88,502
Reserve Fund	\$70,450
Capital Fund	\$64,364
Transition Funds (Rev/Exp)	\$218,000

New Challenges!

Tourism looks back on 2010 as a year of both accomplishments and new challenges. This report provides details on performance measures, events marketing, and initiatives for 2010 & 2011.

2010 was our 40th year offering visitor services in this community. From our humble beginnings providing visitor information out of a former snack bar we have evolved to being a formal destination marketing organization. 2010 also brought the opening of the DeGroote School of Business new Ron Joyce Centre and renovations and expansions at local hotels.

Tourism is an important economic driver with 1.3m visitors in 2008 generating \$112.2m in total tourism receipts, resulting in over 1,606 jobs. The Province has put in place new Tourism Regions

(see details pg. 2) and legislation to allow for the establishment of a special dedicated levy on accommodation to promote destination marketing.

The **Regional Tourism Levy** would standardize and replace destination marketing fees across the province. As of July 2010 with the full HST now applying to room rates the destination marketing fees (DMF) is no longer being collected across the province.

Interim funding has been provided by the province to DMO's such as Burlington who rely on DMF funds to deliver many marketing initiatives. This funding is in place until Dec. 2012 when it is hoped the new levy will be approved by local accommodations.

Tourism Burlington will con-

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

continue to provide updates on this important initiative.

With Burlington being recognized for the 2nd year in a row 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

2010 brought changes to the Tourism industry in Ontario with the introduction of Regional Tourism Organizations by the province. This new organization will allow for greater marketing opportunities to promote the region and our beautiful city and what we have to offer. Focus for Tourism

Burlington will be working with our partners to bring innovative thinking to the tourism market and promote Burlington in its best light. Ongoing promotion of the city as a destination for sport, culture, art, meetings, shopping, dining and overnight stays is what our staff at Tourism

Burlington does. Their dedication to promoting Burlington ensures everyone has a memorable visit. On behalf of the Board of Directors thank you to our staff and the visitors who continue to see Burlington as a vibrant tourism destination.

Susan Morrissey

Measuring 2010 Tourism Performance

Information Centre visits/calls/emails	13,290 +11%
Waterfront–Discovery Landing visits	4,429 – 22%
Website Visits	Visits 315,204
Virtual Tour	Visits 6,071 Total tours on site 33
Volunteer Hours	1,060
Souvenir requests groups/individuals	158 requests
Out of country requests	26 out of country
Pins distributed	4,868 City pins 4,283 Canada flag pins
Advocacy–support letters, presentations	7 letters– 4 presentations
Public Relations–Displays/ Events/FAM tours	3 Displays/88 events/5 interviews 2 FAM tours
Partner contributions–DMF/ Transition, Partner ads, sponsorships, in kind, grants	\$594,000

Working with our partners, we have been tracking performance in a number of areas: Our Centre visitation was **up 11%** compared to 2009 while the province showed a decrease. Waterfront stats were down since we started 2 weeks later and due to rentals. Our website unique visits have increased. We distributed over **9,151 pins** on behalf of the City. We represented tourism at **88** community/regional events. With the DMF/Transition funds our partner contributions have surpassed the city tourism commitment with a total partner contribution of **\$594,000**.
(Continued bottom of page 4)



Destination Marketing Fee/Transition Highlights

Through an agreement with the BHA and now with the Province, Tourism leveraged the voluntary 3% Destination Marketing Fee/Transition funds 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** additional distribution to Toronto & Niagara attractions, hotels, events, 400 Highways centres and trade shows
- **Leisure ads** with **1.2m** more impressions in various advertising publications and websites
- Hotel Deals campaign had **10.5 m impressions**- sold **1232** packages
- **Coupon Book**–**25,000** copies distributed to groups, visitors& online
- **\$50k** grants/sponsorships to **17** events = **1399** room nights **\$140k**
- **Travel Counsellors** provided at Discovery Landing from June until Labour Day greeted **4429** visitors
- Meeting brochure sent to **460** businesses/associations = **27** inquiries and **8 bookings**
- Updated **virtual tour**
- Welcome translated in **Chinese**
- **Group Tour** campaign

Tourism Regions- RTO#3

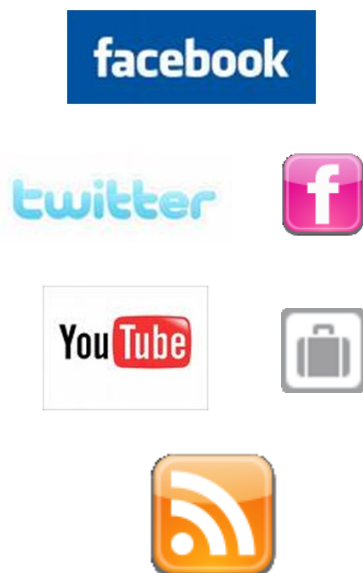
THE  OF ONTARIO.COM

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 to help support tourism development and job creation. Burlington is part of RTO#3

which includes Halton, Hamilton, Brantford, Brant County and Six Nations/New Credit. RTO#3 has developed a strategic plan and governance paper is incorporated and has an interim board in place until March 31, 2012. Tourism's E.D. and incoming Chair are members of the interim board.

Marketing activities in year 1 included a campaign promoting the Region as **The Heart of Ontario**, increasing photo/video library, War of 1812-14 product development, and Group tour initiatives. For more info visit region3tourism.ca.

Social Media Growing Strong



We continue to see growth in our social media marketing. Our **Facebook - Discover Burlington Ontario** has as of April 30, **1105 fans**. We also are keeping people updated via **Twitter—BurlingtonTour** and now have **1305 followers**. Become a fan and follow us!

A number of Tourism Burlington videos have been posted to YouTube and we have had **5017 views**. Check them out and share with your friends. After the success of our summer counselor blog we created a Tourism blog and we have had over **16,000 views** and have posted **66 blogs** since Sept. '10. We have hired a guest blogger travel writer and local resident Bar-

bara Ramsay Orr to author key blogs. We also have added Flickr and Four Square to our menu and have redesigned our website homepage to reposition all social media tools. Our **Visitor ENewsletter** has **1094 subscribers** and 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. It is a very useful tool for front line staff who greet visitors, so **print and post**. Our partner Enewsletter goes out twice a month to **720 local partners and stakeholders**. We have also set up social media and enews to promote Taste of Burlington.

2010 Tourism Events



Ako Matsubayashi

In 2010, Tourism hosted or participated in numerous events.

We presented the 2009 Tourism Builder Award to Ako Matsubayashi from the Muncalization Committee at the Chamber Business Awards in April. Our AGM in May

had a Doors Open theme and was held at the Water St. Cooker. Local partners highlighted Doors Open activities. It was also our 25th anniversary as an organization and 40th year offering visitor services and we celebrated with a keynote address from Laurie Branch and a historical slideshow. At the Tourism Ambassador Training, **36** front-line hotel, attraction and service industry staff and volunteers were

trained as **ambassadors**.

We provided **visitor information** at 6 major festivals during the summer season, greeting over **2,500** visitors. We coordinated the **Taste of Burlington** prix fixe dining program. This program continues to grow from 12 restaurants in 2008 to **26** in 2010 with an economic spin off of over **\$200,000** per program.

Performance Measures cont. pg 2

- **8 Time Out** sport networking meetings—**520** attendees
 - **150,000** copies of print materials
 - **250** New Resident Packages
 - **15** media stories/interviews
 - **32** ads in publications
 - **32** photo requests
 - **627** partners (up from 520)
 - **1,048,051** total attraction attendance (not all provided)
 - **114** Event/festivals - attendance **565,000**.
 - **Group tour campaign & mailings**
 - Group tour attendance **13,937**
 - Group welcome bags RBG—**650**
 - **3** Group Tour Email blasts—**750**
 - Hotel occupancy **55.6 %** (up 3.6%)
- NOTE:** Not all partner information provided on a consistent basis.



2011-12 Visitor Guide

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Visitor Survey 2010

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

- 58% female
- 52% married
- 36% from Halton/Hamilton
- 17% from GTA
- 6% Western Ontario
- 16% were on day trip
- 20% visiting friends/family

- 15% on business or vacation
- 18% was their 1st visit
- 81% travelled by car
- 42% stayed in hotel*
- 9% spent over \$500

Top activities during visit:

- 57% enjoying shopping
- 56% visiting Waterfront
- 51% dining/entertainment
- 45% visiting events
- 41% visiting parks/outdoor
- 39% visiting RBG

* more surveys collected from hotel locations



**Congratulations
to 2010
Tourism
Ambassador
Award
Recipient
Jack Vanderlaan
Canadian Netherlands
Friendship Association.**

Marketing & Partner Initiatives in 2011

A number of new marketing and partner activities are planned for 2011. We have created a new set of 4 **seasonal posters** that are on display at the visitor centre and are available for purchase. These posters and our visitor guide have included a QR code directing smart phone users to our blog/website. We have also updated our **tourism video** and uploaded more vignettes to youtube on Waterfront, Spas and Cycling. Working with Direction Ontario we have translated **step on guides** for tours into French and have **French urls and keywords** for our website. We have done advertising to the **Chinese market** with the RBG. We will celebrate **National Tourism Week June 4-12** by increasing public awareness of attractions and driving



traffic to our website through an **EPostcard campaign** and contest targeted to residents. We are thrilled to be hosting the **Canadian Road Cycling Championships** and a number of other high profile sport events. We continue to offer the **Event Funding Grant program**, and hosting **Time Out Sport** networking sessions to promote sport tourism. **Burlington Hotel Deals** promotion continues and tactics include online advertising through sites such as the Weather Network, Red Flag deals and promotion at Go Stations etc. 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 and take advantage of these great deals. Our leisure marketing includes events

and focuses on the GTA through online, electronic, print ads and posters.

Our Bring it

Home meetings campaign continues with online and t.v. ads running earlier this year offering an incentive of up to **\$3,000** for meetings including overnight stays. Our **group tour** flyers were sent out to over **250 operators**, we send seasonal email updates about events and attractions and have offered a FAM tour to group tour operators. We are pleased to be working with partners to host a number of conferences and tournaments this year which are featured on our website. For more details refer to our **Tourism ENews**.

