

2013 Tourism Annual Report

May 2014

2013 Key Accomplishments

- Website Re-design
- Infomobile @ Pier
- Meetings campaign
- Haber Tournaments
- Taste Launch



Financial Highlights 2013

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Revenue | \$444,190 |
| Expenses | \$462,764 |
| '13 Deficit | \$18,574 |
| Un.Surplus | \$101,214 |
| Reserve Fund | \$76,241 |
| Capital Fund | \$46,167 |
| DMF Funds (Rev/Exp) | \$285,773 |

Increasing our Tourism Products

This report provides details on performance measures, events, marketing, and initiatives for 2013.

It was a busy year in Burlington with new projects and facilities impacting Tourism. The year started with a new RBG exhibit - Battle of the Titans. In the spring the Brant St. Pier opened on Sound of Music weekend with the Teen Tour Band marching along its length and fireworks to celebrate the long awaited opening of this waterfront landmark. During the summer our travel counselors welcomed over 6,000 people at the foot of the pier using our Infomobile as a mobile Visitor Information Centre. In the fall the new Haber Recreation Centre opened with 4 double gyms perfect for hosting a variety of sport

tournaments. Just in time for the holidays we worked with the City & Downtown to promote all the new parking changes including Free parking in December and on Saturdays. Over the year the excitement has increased about the PanAm Games and we have been working with various partners to help promote the games and encourage engagement. The year ended however with closures due to winter storms that significantly impacted attendance and clean-up costs at many of our local businesses.

We are fortunate that the Burlington Hotel Association agreed to utilize their reserve funds for 2013 & 2014 marketing initiatives and incentives so that we can continue to promote Burling-

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

ton to various audiences. We appreciate this support BHA and hope a new program is reinstated in 2014.

We were thrilled that Burlington was once again recognized as the best city of its size to live in Canada, so let's invite visitors to see what our residents are so proud of...our great city!

Thanks to our Board & Volunteers

Tourism Burlington depends on our board, committees & volunteers to help us deliver exceptional visitor experiences & we appreciate their enthusiasm & support. Centre Volunteers: Elaine, Wendy, Jim, Mike, Lorraine, Cheryl Board Members: Barbara Teatero, Drew

Furtney, Jason Stoner, Mary Nichol, Dave Miller, Dave Mammoliti, Darlene Bennett-Howe, Councillors Dennison & Sharman, Victor Szeverenyi, Sharon Jackman, Sharon Mooney, Bob Meehan, Tamer Fahmi Awards Committee: Gord Langford, Judi Scetta, Councillor Rick Craven,

Sharon Mooney Marketing Committee: Dave Miller, Mike Mueller, Nick Kondrat, Sylvia Hentz, Pat O'Reilly, Steve Traver Janice DeSilva, Kathy Morrison, Kelly Amott, Susan Stock, Julie Sutton-Yardley, Sheila Wiebe, Leila Hurley/Samantha Stratham, Kim Varian.

Measuring 2013 Tourism Burlington Performance

| | |
|--|--|
| Information Centre visits/calls/emails Waterfront–Infomobile visits | 13,128 visits (+2%) 1,087 calls, 511 emails 6,252 visits (+53%) |
| Website Visits | 127,678 Visits 29% used mobile devices |
| Virtual Tour | 6,885 Visits total tours on site |
| Volunteer Hours | 1,000 hours |
| Souvenir requests groups/individuals Out of country requests | 185 group requests 43 out of country |
| Pins distributed on behalf of city souvenir program | 6,955 City pins 2,400 Canada flag pins |
| Advocacy—support letters, presentations | 10 letters, 2 presentation |
| Public Relations—Displays/ Events/FAM tours | 14 Displays/Shows/ 120 events/ 5 FAM tours—1 sales mission |
| Partner contributions— co-op ads, sponsorships, grants, DMF | \$379,605 |

Working with our partners, we have been tracking performance in a number of areas: Our Centre visitation was up 2% compared to 2012. Travel Counsellors using the Infomobile greeted 6252 visitors. Our website stats remain steady with less bounce backs and longer views. We distributed over 9,500 pins on behalf of the City . We represented tourism at 120 community/ regional/provincial events. With the DMF/Transition funds our partner contributions continue to grow with a total of \$379,000. Average Hotel occupancy is down slightly to 60.03% for year.

2013 Performance Measures continued

- 3 Time Out sport networking meetings—155 attendees
- 270 New Resident Packages
- 13 media stories/6 interviews
- 5.5m marketing impressions
- 25 photo requests
- 583 partners (reduced due to change in boundaries)
- 891,572 total attraction attendance (not all provided)
- 500,000 Festival attendance
- 52,533 Group tour attendees
- 42,241 Socials/Wedding attendees
- 26,824 Meeting attendees
- 60.03% aver. hotel occupancy (down slightly)

NOTE: Not all partner information provided on a consistent basis. Group tour, socials, weddings are from attractions only.



2014-15 Visitor Guide

RTO#3 - Hamilton, Halton, Brant

THE  OF ONTARIO.COM

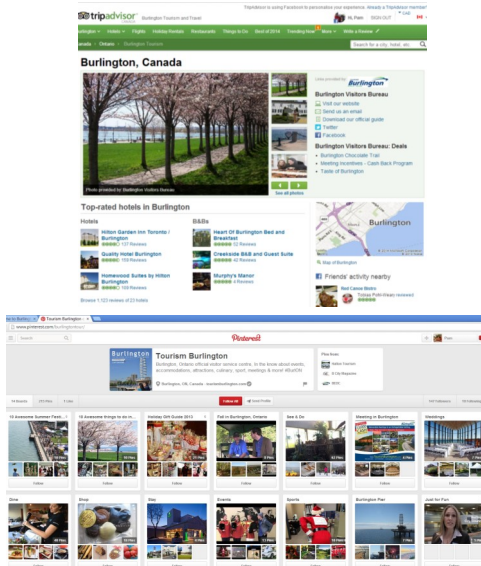
The Ministry of Tourism's *Report On The Future Of Tourism*, recommended the establishment of tourism regions to better coordinate marketing and management across Ontario. Burlington is part of RTO#3 which includes Hamilton, Halton, Brantford, Brant County and Six Nations/New Credit.

Hamilton/Halton/Brant is in the process of updating it's strategy and held industry consultation sessions in April. Year 4 focused on product development for Arts & Culture, Cycling and Outdoor Adventure, and FAM tours and sales missions for group tour. They also developed a tourism action plan and hosted a Pan Am

Tourism Symposium where they distributed a toolkit for local businesses. Industry development included customer service and packaging workshops. Visit hamilton-haltonbrant.com or theheartofontario.com.

Staff from Tourism participate on the RTO board and committees.

Web & Social Media



Trip Advisor & Pinterest Page

In May of 2013 our website was redesigned and successfully relaunched with a more streamlined look, easier navigation and more placement opportunities for partners.

Interest in our social media continues to grow and is a key marketing tool. Stats as of May 1 2014 - Our Facebook -Discover Burlington Ontario has **2098 likes**. Twitter—BurlingtonTour has **6,370 followers** - become a fan and follow us! We hosted two very successful Twitter parties with extensive engagement. A number of new videos were created with assistance from Andrew Gerroir from FreshFM and posted to YouTube and we have had **28,777 lifetime views**. Check them out & share friends. Our blog contin-

ues to be popular with new blogs added weekly and **226,090** total views. We have hired guest bloggers for special features. We continue to sponsor a page on Trip Advisor to manage information on this site and encourage our partners to engage in this platform. Our Visitor ENews has **1,577** subscribers and is sent to visitors, residents and partners 5 x/yr. highlighting events, attractions, and specials for the upcoming season. Anyone can subscribe by visiting our website. It is a very useful tool for front line staff who greet visitors, so print and post. Our partner Enews goes out twice a month to over **1,079** local partners and stakeholders.

2013 Tourism Events

In 2013, Tourism hosted or participated in many local events. We presented the 2012 Tourism Ambassador Award to the Burlington Eagles for hosting numerous tournaments and championships. Our AGM in May had a Culinary theme with over **60** attendees at the Ivy Bar & Kitchen. At the Tourism Ambassador Training, 40 front-line hotel, attraction and service industry staff and volunteers were trained as ambassadors.

We provided **visitor information** at 8 events during the spring/summer season, greeting over **6,360** visitors. (+75%)
3 Time out sports networking sessions were held throughout the year with entertaining guest speakers on a variety of topics.



Destination Marketing Fee Program Highlights

Through an agreement with the BHA, Tourism leveraged the Destination Marketing Fee (DMF) to increase awareness of Burlington as a destination. Our plan, developed with the Marketing Committee, BHA and the Tourism Board included:

- **Visitor Guide additional distribution** to Toronto & Niagara attractions, hotels, events, trade shows
- **Leisure ads with 5.5 m. impressions** in publications & online
- **Hotel Deals campaign** sold 4104 packages since 2008
- **\$169,145 grants/sponsorships/incentives/event funding**
- **Attended CSTA Congress and Ontario Sport marketplace**
- **Updated meetings video; brochure sent to businesses/associations/Chambers = 36 inquiries** —Cash back incentive program had 15
- **events \$33,000 in incentives provided**
- **Group Tour catalogue** created by RTO#3, ads in Travel Planner & Group Connect, 3 eblasts and OMCA sponsorship. Numerous inquiries, 2 FAM tours and 7 tour bookings through Tourism.
- **Shared booth at Women's Show** to promote Girls Getaways with a contest directing entries to blog

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Twitter: [@BurlingtonTour](#)

Blog: [TourismBurlington](#)

Youtube: [TourismBurlington](#)

Linked in: [Tourism Burlington](#)

Tourism Burlington Team

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Pam Belgrade | Executive Director | pam.belgrade@burlington.ca |
| Linda Cvetanovic | E Marketing Coordinator Leisure, Media, Events | linda.cvetanovic@burlington.ca |
| Linda Oliner | Marketing Coordinator Sport, Meetings, Group Travel | linda.oliner@burlington.ca |
| Sally Fitz-Gibbon | Administration & Visitors Services Coordinator | sally.fitzgibbon@burlington.ca |
| Nelia Gubbels | Administration & Special Projects | nelia.gubbels@burlington.ca |

Submit Nominations for Tourism Awards:

- Customer Service (Pickle Awards)
- Ambassador Awards
- Builder Awards

Visit website for details
www.tourismburlington.com

Culinary Tourism

In 2013 we reformatted the Taste of Burlington launch into a public ticketed event which sold out and was very well received. Since that time we have expanded and fine tuned the event so that it sells out without any paid advertising required. This prix fixe dining winter and summer program continues to grow from 12 restaurants 2008 to 31 with a financial impact for restaurants of **\$250,000+/-** program.

Social media for Taste of Burlington has **672** likes, **2,121** followers & **6,073** Enews subscribers. **The Burlington Chocolate Trail relaunched** in with new participating sites and chocolate events throughout the year. Marketing of the trail includes a website, flyer, site identification & social media. For details visit burlingtonchocolatetrail.ca.

What's New for 2014

A number of new marketing and partner activities are planned for 2014.

Our major initiative is investigating a new web based app. Working in conjunction with some of our Team Burlington partners and the city we plan to use our website database and to include a link to the new events calendar.

We have developed seasonal videos which have been uploaded to youtube.

We are celebrating **National/ Provincial Tourism Weeks** by increasing public awareness of attractions and driving traffic to our website through a special social media campaign in conjunction with a call out which encourages people to visit participating locations. We are kicking things off with a

twitter party (#VisitBurlON) on **June 11** from 8-9pm.

Working with the Sound of Music we have developed a new Sweet Seats overnight hotel package.

We continue to host **Time Out Sport** networking sessions to promote sport tourism. We are working with the City on an Events Hosting strategy to help advance sport tourism initiatives. We have been very busy helping with bids and providing welcome services for several major tournaments hosted at the Haber Recreation Centre which have had significant ROI for local business. Refer to sport events on website for details.

Burlington Cycling Offers include a \$20 gift card for local outdoors store plus cycling map and giveaways pro-

moted via Cycling Ontario and various online sites. Our leisure marketing includes events and focuses on the GTA & Niagara through online, print and posters.

Our meetings campaign continues with targeted promotions to Executive Assistants and a FAM tour planned for July. The Cash Back incentive program continues offering up to **\$3,000** for meetings including overnight stays.

Our **group tour** initiatives include promotion to tour operators, through seasonal email updates about events and attractions and ads in trade publications.

For more details refer to our **Tourism ENews** or contact us at **market-**

Our CASH BACK Program

\$3,000 CASH BACK

For new meetings, conferences or special events in our city that include overnight stays.