



"Kingston's World Heritage brand is sure to spark a renewed curiosity with Tour Planners - Ontario's newest must-stop group destination."

Travel Trade

**TOURISM KINGSTON 2008
MARKETING PLAN**

LEISURE • SPORT TOURISM • MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS • TRAVEL TRADE



Travel Trade

ALL ABOARD!

Welcome to the 2008 Sales & Marketing Plan for Kingston's Travel Trade Initiatives. This Marketing Plan has been integrated with the entire Tourism Kingston marketing plan.

It provides a review of 2007 activities and challenges, opportunities for the year ahead and the objectives and strategies for 2008.

The objectives for 2008 will focus on boosting recognition of Kingston as a 'MUST SEE' destination. The Travel Trade committee will continue to target the same demographic Markets with the inclusion of international markets. With continued research the foreign markets include Asian, German and Italian, just to name a few. Strategies to maintain and build the business will include direct sales, customer relationship management, communications, FAMs and advertising.

Svetlana Rychkova, all rights reserved

2007 REWIND

In 2007, the Travel Trade group initiated two main direct sales initiatives and attended a number of Trade Shows. As well as hosting a number of FAM tours for Media and Travel Trade buyers.

A task force committed to Tourism in Kingston, partnered with Small World Media, to create a website. This site offers personalized service and suggestions for tour planning in Kingston.



- > With the escalating recognition of Fort Henry National Historical Site's UNESCO designation, the Asian market has increased with peaked interest in Kingston. This has media visiting Kingston from Japan, China, France and the German markets. All produced very positive feedback and has resulted in booked business for both attractions and accommodation throughout the city.



- > Tradeshows such as American Bus Association, Rendezvous Marketplace, Ontario Motor Coach Association, were all attended and introduced over 200 qualified Tour Operators to new product and off season options. These concentrate on the US market, International market and all across Canada.

- > During the OMCA tradeshow, Tourism Kingston hosted a martini bar for all delegates. The K-Town-Tini was introduced as the beverage of choice and provided staff and the Travel Trade committee networking opportunities with Kingston as the focus.



THE BEST BETS



- > There are opportunities to reach more viable European markets. With the increase in visitors from Germany , Italy and France at a number of local attractions, Tourism Kingston will attend Spotlight Canada. This is an international tradeshow that draws buyers from European markets including the ever increasing Asian market. The tradeshow takes place in London, England in March 2008.
- > The UNESCO World Heritage Designation in 2007 of the Rideau Canal, Fort Henry and the Kingston Fortifications provides another excellent opportunity for marketing Kingston. Heritage sites are of great interest to the Asian market. There has already been an increase in media coverage in the late summer and fall of 2007.
- > With the reduction in traffic from various markets due to exchange and fuel prices primarily, we have an opportunity of working with Canada Tourism in their brochure distribution Service. This would include the CAA, AAA, Eastern provinces, Eastern States and Quebec markets. This would enable Visitor Guide distribution on a much larger scale and exposure at travel trade shows.
- > Go Play! Winter Adventure publication has invited Kingston to promote winter activities with editorial on new and current events. This is an ideal opportunity to open new doors for FIT and also Group Tour in the winter months.

CHALLENGES

Branding

Transitioning the KEDCO brand to Tourism Kingston brand continues to be slow, but methodical. However, Kingston will continue to be the brand positioned with industry operators. Strategies to develop and communicate this brand with our local industry in all advertising/marketing materials has been well accepted within the Travel Trade market.



Competition

Competitive destinations including Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal have larger budgets for destination marketing. While we strive to have Kingston included as a layover destination, it still remains a short stop-over. Developing marketing alliances will help build awareness for Kingston as an overnight destination along the corridor.

World Events and Currency Exchange

Factors that can influence when and how people travel include gas prices, acts of nature, international political issues and currency exchange. High gas prices, the strong Canadian currency and the new U.S. regulations to enforce a required passport for trans-border travel have large ramifications for Canada as a whole. The world is entirely accessible now and visitors react quickly to these events, which in turn affects a destination's fragile tourism season.

2008 TACTICS



- > Recruitment of new participation in the Travel Trade Committee to better encompass all that Kingston has to offer. This would include accommodation, attractions, retail and dining partners that are group friendly
- > Implement UNESCO branding in all marketing materials.
- > Target Tour Operators in Toronto, Montreal and the U.S. to promote a stop in Kingston as part of their itineraries.
- > Promotion of the new Group Travel Planning Website that will only increase travel trade, visitation and sales to Kingston. This is an opportunity to realize increased FAM tours into Kingston.

TARGET MARKETS

Demographic

- > Traditional group tours focus on seniors and students. Kingston experienced an increase in 2007 with visitors from Ontario. The number of coach tours into the Tourist Information Office significantly increased in 2007.

Geographic

- > Local Toronto/Ottawa/Quebec markets continue to utilize Kingston. With the decrease in travel from all US markets, a concerted effort should be made into the European markets as they are on the rise.

2008 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Direct Sales

- > Continue to attend key marketplaces and shows to promote Kingston to domestic and international tour operators.
- > Sales calls to existing tour operators. Send updated information to them such as the Visitor Guide, calendar of events and new products.
- > Sales calls to new tour operators to educate them on the product and services available in Kingston.
- > Encourage travel trade partners to promote themselves at marketplaces and in visitor information publications.



Customer Relationship Management

- > Create collateral material that will assist tour operators in selling Kingston as a destination. This would include itineraries, print material and access to information.
- > Meet the needs of tour operators by having both group and FIT rates available.

Communications

- > Educate local markets in the importance of tourism in Kingston and continue to update partnerships of Tourism Kingston's activities.
- > Partner with other DMO's to promote the diversity of Eastern Ontario as a destination. This allows for the continued growth of partnerships.
- > www.planandtourkingston.ca will be further enhanced to provide accurate and refreshed content for group operators.

2008 TRAVEL TRADE MARKETING BUDGET

Travel Trade City Contribution	27,525
Travel Trade KAP Contribution	18,000
TOTAL TRAVEL TRADE BUDGET	45,525