

# Dryden Tourism Development Strategy and Implementation Plan



Photo taken by: Dennis C. Boyd, Otters on Wabigoon River



Photo taken by: Asmir Delic, Wabigoon Lake



Photo taken by: Brent Wesley, Wabigoon First Nation Powwow



Photo taken by: Dennis C. Boyd

March 27, 2009

By:

*McSweeney & Associates*  
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

# Dryden Tourism Development Strategy

Prepared by

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March 27, 2009

Dear Vicki:

On behalf of McSweeney & Associates, I am pleased to submit the final Dryden Tourism Development Strategy and Implementation Plan. This report provides the following:

- Background, methodology used and comments from stakeholders consulted;
- Target markets and their profile;
- Information and recommendations on how to adjust to changing market trends, create new and diversified tourism products and on the roles of the DMA and DDC as it relates to tourism development;
- And finally an Implementation Plan followed by appendices.

I would be pleased to discuss any aspect of this report with you at your convenience. The second half of the project - the Dryden Tourism Marketing Strategic Plan – will be completed soon.

Yours truly,

Eric McSweeney  
President

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## The Tourism Development Strategy at a Glance

### **What is it?**

The Dryden Regional Tourism Development Strategy is a guide with commonly accepted direction, focus and framework for decision-making by key stakeholders, the Dryden Development Corporation and the Dryden Marketing Association.

### **Why was it prepared?**

Dryden needs a tourism development strategy to help boost the tourism sector. Tourism is one of many sectors in its diversified economy.

### **How will it help?**

The tourism development strategy will guide the enhancement of existing tourism products and the development of new sustainable products to achieve an optimum mix that will attract specific market segments.

### **Who prepared it?**

The firm of McSweeney & Associates provided a participatory framework to enable community stakeholders, the Dryden Development Corporation, the Tourism Advisory Committee, and the Dryden Marketing Association to shape the development of this tourism development strategy.

### **When was it completed?**

It was completed in March of 2009.

### **Who will implement it?**

The Dryden Development Corporation, the Tourism Advisory Committee, the Dryden Marketing Association, and other key business and community stakeholders will work collaboratively to implement the strategy.

### **Who will benefit?**

Everyone who lives or works in Dryden and surrounding communities.

## A. Introduction

### 1. Background

The City of Dryden received funding from Ontario's Rural Economic Development Program (RED) to assist the City in the preparation of a Tourism Strategy, Marketing Strategy and Implementation Plan. These two strategies will assist the Dryden Development Corporation (DDC) and the Dryden Marketing Association (DMA) to attract tourists and tourism investment to the greater Dryden area.

Dryden recognizes the importance and the potential that tourism offers for diversification of the local economy. The DDC and the DMA recognize that forming partnerships with industry stakeholders and neighbouring communities will ensure greater success in establishing the Dryden area as a tourism destination. The objective of this assignment was to:

- Complete a detailed resource audit of built and natural tourism resources;
- Prepare a Tourism Market Analysis report;
- Prepare a tourism development strategy to provide analysis, overview, summaries and recommendations;
- Develop and prepare a tourism marketing strategy to provide strategic marketing direction;
- Develop implementation plans to identify the resources required to implement the tourism development and the tourism marketing action plans.

The outcome of this project is to provide direction, tools, guidelines, excitement and momentum to build the overall success, capacity and sustainability of the tourism sector in the Dryden area.

### 2. Methodology

The preparation of the Dryden Regional Tourism Development Strategy was rooted in broad stakeholder consultation, while utilizing a strong base of tourism market and trend analysis.

The methodology followed to develop the tourism development strategy included:



- An inventory of all regional tourism natural and man-made assets;
- A review of previously completed studies and all relevant documents;
- A review of industry sector outlooks and trends;
- Extensive data and statistical analysis, the results of which are in the Dryden Regional Tourism Market Analysis Report;
- Input from key stakeholders obtained from in-person interviews, surveys, and a public meeting.

### 3. Key Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Over 45 stakeholders of various backgrounds have provided input on the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as it relates to tourism. A list of the stakeholders that were interviewed personally by a consultant is provided in the Appendices. The following SWOT analysis is a summary of the input received. Please note that the comments expressed below are those of the individuals interviewed or surveyed. They do not necessarily reflect the views of McSweeney & Associates, the Tourism Advisory Committee or the Dryden Development Corporation.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rice harvesting</li> <li>▪ Pictographs</li> <li>▪ Fishing</li> <li>▪ Hunting</li> <li>▪ Lots of things to see and do, many opportunities to package</li> <li>▪ Lots of nice waterfalls and whitewater for canoeing/kayaking</li> <li>▪ Fur trading history and the disputes between the Northwest Company and the Hudson Bay Company</li> <li>▪ Rock climbing sites</li> <li>▪ Old trail routes</li> <li>▪ Access to many lakes, rivers and waterways; clear water trout lakes with sandy beaches and swimming</li> <li>▪ Wilderness</li> <li>▪ Easily accessed by Trans Canada Highway</li> <li>▪ Flora and fauna</li> <li>▪ Halfway between Winnipeg and Thunder Bay</li> <li>▪ Wildlife viewing – birds and animals</li> <li>▪ Natural beauty</li> <li>▪ Boreal forest</li> <li>▪ Wetlands</li> <li>▪ Large population compared to other communities in the North</li> <li>▪ Relatively safe community</li> <li>▪ Sports</li> <li>▪ Varied climate</li> <li>▪ Proximity to First Nation communities for cultural tourism</li> <li>▪ Provincial parks and camping sites</li> <li>▪ Friendly, knowledgeable, enthusiastic community</li> <li>▪ Vacant land</li> <li>▪ Outdoor activities year round</li> <li>▪ Established tourism-based businesses</li> <li>▪ Quiet and calm</li> <li>▪ Central location</li> <li>▪ Close to US border</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of resources to apply for available funding</li> <li>▪ Some residents discourage outside investment</li> <li>▪ There are no facilities that can accommodate over 400 people</li> <li>▪ Tourist camp operators tend not to accommodate shorter stays of less than 1 week</li> <li>▪ Getting all partners together to develop a package is difficult</li> <li>▪ No direct flights to a major hub like Chicago</li> <li>▪ Difficult to get people to come to this region</li> <li>▪ Lack of regional collaboration</li> <li>▪ Lack of willingness to reinvest in businesses to update</li> <li>▪ Snowmobile trails are not supported</li> <li>▪ Lack of consistent branding. Too many logos</li> <li>▪ DDC has too many responsibilities, need to focus on investment attraction</li> <li>▪ This town (Dryden) lacks energy</li> <li>▪ Lack of or poor signage to Dryden and to downtown and lack of wayfinding signs</li> <li>▪ Heritage sites not being allocated and some torn down</li> <li>▪ Historical society defunct</li> <li>▪ There are not many historical plaques</li> <li>▪ Lack of internet presence</li> <li>▪ Not enough pictures on websites and not the right ones</li> <li>▪ Liability with ecotourism growth</li> <li>▪ Resource extraction industries conflict with ecotourism</li> <li>▪ Clash between forestry activities and tourism needs</li> <li>▪ Retailers not open in evening</li> <li>▪ “not in my backyard” syndrome</li> <li>▪ Deemed remote</li> <li>▪ No major attraction</li> <li>▪ Natural areas disturbed by humans</li> <li>▪ No established unmotorized wilderness hiking trails</li> <li>▪ Little entertainment and local events</li> <li>▪ Too many fishing regulations</li> <li>▪ Price of land</li> <li>▪ Lack of capital money for investment</li> <li>▪ Cold climate</li> <li>▪ 2 lane highway, roads not being maintained</li> <li>▪ Lack of entrepreneurs</li> <li>▪ Canoe routes limited and not promoted</li> <li>▪ Lack of action – too much consultation</li> <li>▪ Public resistant to change</li> <li>▪ Residents need to be educated about respectful use of forests and lakes; garbage field disgraceful</li> <li>▪ Lack of public washroom facilities and tourist information</li> <li>▪ Same people do marketing for Dryden all the time</li> <li>▪ Citizens narrow minded – mill is all that matters</li> <li>▪ Lack of public access to lakes</li> <li>▪ Fragmented community groups working in isolation</li> <li>▪ Price of snowmobile permits</li> <li>▪ Non-resident hunters taking buck herd</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Network between tourism businesses</li> <li>▪ Co-op marketing</li> <li>▪ More B&amp;Bs</li> <li>▪ Clearer messaging and signage</li> <li>▪ Get everyone excited about tourism</li> <li>▪ Educate stakeholders on the reality of tourism</li> <li>▪ Take advantage of Provincial Parks in winter</li> <li>▪ Market to event planners</li> <li>▪ Have a conference centre on waterfront</li> <li>▪ Develop packages so people stay here 3 days or more</li> <li>▪ There are lots of things to see and do but we need to package them</li> <li>▪ Target Manitoba and Saskatchewan fishing enthusiasts</li> <li>▪ Facilities need to match expectations</li> <li>▪ Assemble other NW Ontario communities to do a Premier Ranked Tourist Destinations framework</li> <li>▪ Attract First Nation services in Dryden to develop more culture</li> <li>▪ Need more marketing dollars</li> <li>▪ Tap into Minneapolis, Winnipeg and Alberta markets</li> <li>▪ Create packages with other communities (i.e. regional, Niagara Falls)</li> <li>▪ Tourist operators need to look outside the box</li> <li>▪ Partner or package with First Nation tourism products</li> <li>▪ Develop more aboriginal tourism i.e. FN rice harvesting tours</li> <li>▪ We need a major attraction – like a waterpark</li> <li>▪ Activities that appeal to women and to children, particularly in summer</li> <li>▪ Operators need to accommodate shorter vacation stays</li> <li>▪ Provide tourism operators with the tools and knowledge they need</li> <li>▪ Have bus tours to bring people to local events</li> <li>▪ Take a regional approach to tourism marketing</li> <li>▪ Market the abundance of our cultural assets (i.e. Christmas market, entertainment series, cultural fair, studio tour)</li> <li>▪ Tourism product on forest fire management</li> <li>▪ That the city support the formation of a Culture Development Office and cultural interpretation centre</li> <li>▪ Have the Tourism Advisory Committee take on more responsibility</li> <li>▪ Need to market camps to US and other markets</li> <li>▪ Divorce the Chamber of Commerce and the Visitor Centre</li> <li>▪ Relieve the Chamber from the responsibilities of managing events.</li> <li>▪ Establish common retail hours of operation</li> <li>▪ Groups/organizations need to work together</li> <li>▪ Use testimonials, messaging to lift people (locals) up</li> <li>▪ Market to women</li> <li>▪ Develop canoe routes</li> <li>▪ Develop nicer lodges. Need to be competitive with other destinations</li> <li>▪ Promote that although we are in the wilderness we have amenities such as internet</li> <li>▪ Need to target niche markets around the world, not just in one location</li> <li>▪ Need to promote the “Canadian” culture</li> <li>▪ Develop and promote bird watching trails</li> <li>▪ Help young people who are interested in starting a tourism business</li> <li>▪ Build docking area on Wabigoon Lake with access to new walking trails and tenting areas</li> <li>▪ Better prices for families with licenses</li> <li>▪ Support natural environment and protect natural resources</li> <li>▪ Release crown land for development</li> <li>▪ First Nation representation on City council</li> <li>▪ Increase activities for teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complacency and apathy</li> <li>▪ Backwards thinking of the town – only looking at hunting and fishing angle</li> <li>▪ Lack of tourism products</li> <li>▪ Lack of product diversity</li> <li>▪ Lack of knowledge of your target market</li> <li>▪ Competitive attitude amongst regional tourist operators</li> <li>▪ Lack of awareness as a destination</li> <li>▪ Lack of networking</li> <li>▪ Lack of major airline and train service</li> <li>▪ Resistance to change</li> <li>▪ Businesses close too early</li> <li>▪ Closing of the mill</li> <li>▪ Market share for tourist camps is dwindling</li> <li>▪ Increasing cancellations at tourist camps</li> <li>▪ Increases in the price of fuel</li> <li>▪ Current global economic situation</li> <li>▪ Losing momentum/ enthusiasm in the development of tourism activities</li> <li>▪ Volunteer burnout</li> <li>▪ Communities working independently of one another</li> <li>▪ Tearing down heritage sites</li> <li>▪ Lack of funding or partners for developing canoe trail routes</li> <li>▪ Too much focus on ‘destination’ – it is not sustainable. Should be about the ‘experience’.</li> <li>▪ Wilderness city portrays a different vision depending on what country you are from</li> <li>▪ Current hunting, fishing and trapping practices have potential to reduce wildlife</li> <li>▪ Government’s failure to release crown land for cottaging and tourism</li> <li>▪ Exclusion of First Nation in community</li> <li>▪ Border hassles</li> <li>▪ High taxes</li> <li>▪ Poor customer service</li> <li>▪ High utility costs</li> <li>▪ poor highway conditions</li> <li>▪ climate change – less snow, wet summers</li> </ul>

## B. The Tourism Development Strategy

### 1. Executive Summary

The following strategy addresses two fundamental premises: understand what tourists want and provide them so they will come. To achieve success, the strategy has identified the types of travellers that are attracted to the assets that the Dryden area currently has; and the tourism products that will successfully attract them. This strategy focuses solely on tourism product development. The upcoming Dryden Tourism Marketing Strategy will provide recommendations on how to market those tourism products to reach the right people.

Detail on each of the recommended target market is provided in the first section of the strategy. They are: Business travellers & conference events; sport events & spectators; and active outdoor travellers – particularly those who engage in wildlife viewing, hiking, paddling, fishing, hunting/foraging, cross-country skiing, wilderness activities and horseback riding.

The geographical target markets include: In-transit travellers; residents who reside within 300km; urban dwellers beyond 300km; and worldwide for niche tourism products.

The second part of the strategy provides recommendations on tourism product development. They are based on the following:

- It is important to stay abreast of what tourists want as their tastes and needs change;
- Tourists today want experience-based products, therefore existing products needs to be enhanced;
- Diversify the tourism products offered to suit the target markets;
- Demonstrate that there is lots to see and do in the area;
- Create new products and infrastructure to fill in the gaps;
- Collaborate to develop packages;
- And, attract investment to opportunities that require significant capital.

To ensure the successful implementation of the two strategies – tourism development and tourism marketing, and to ensure that efforts are balanced between the two, recommendations on the organizational structure and governance model have been provided in the last section.

### 2. Target Markets and Their Profile

Based on the Dryden Region Tourism Market Analysis, it is clear that certain types of travellers are attracted to what the Dryden area has to offer. These tourist types reside in every community around the globe, and thanks to the World Wide Web, attracting those originating from distant countries is very much a possibility.

Naturally, distance is a factor when choosing a destination therefore a greater percentage of these pleasure traveller types will come from within, Ontario, Canada and the U.S. And they will likely not come from communities that offer the same environment or tourism products nearby, with three exceptions:

- 1- The traveller that is en route to another destination;
- 2- They live within 300km and are looking for a mini-getaway;
- 3- The destination offers a tourism product that is unique and there are no substitutions closer to home.

The following recommended target markets represent the different types of travellers (market segments) that should be actively pursued, and where they originate from (geographical target markets).

## 2.1. Target Market Segments

### **Sports Events and Spectators**

This segment includes teams or competitors engaged in out-of-town tournaments, their families and friends and visiting spectators. The size of this market segment is close to 15% of adult Canadians. This segment is primarily either young or middle-aged and more likely to be male. They are more active in outdoor activities and entertainment activities compared to the average pleasure traveller.

### **Business and Conference Travellers**

This segment includes people travelling for the purpose of business and business events such meetings and conferences. This industry presents significant economic benefits to a community as business convention visitors spend more in accommodation, food, entertainment and transportation. This segment presents a largely untapped market in Dryden as business travellers are also eager consumers of local tourism products.

### **Active Outdoor Travellers**

Active outdoor travellers are individuals who participate in 3 or more outdoor activities while on a trip. Profile highlights are:

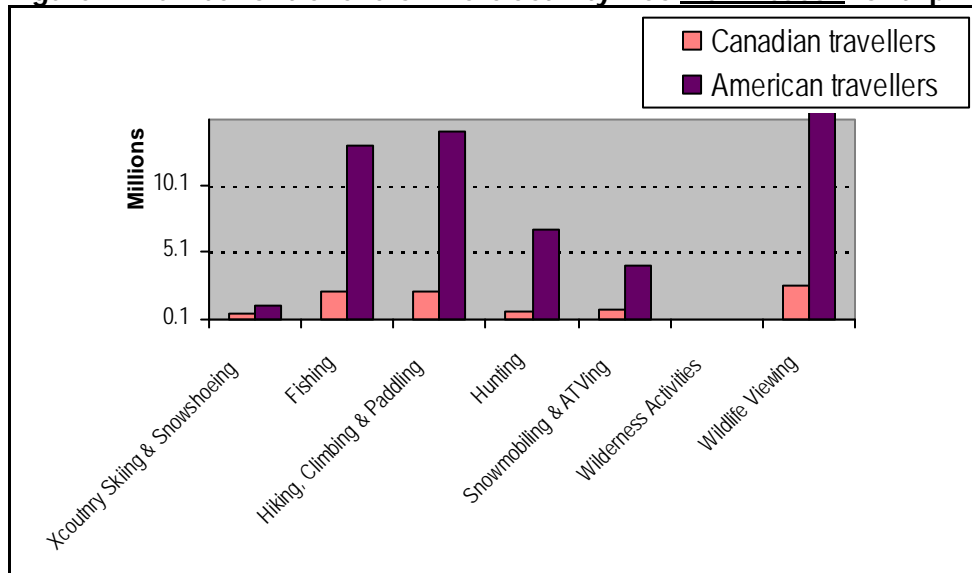
- They are very active people both at home and when travelling
- Market size in North America is estimated at 90 million
- Average age is 42
- Above average education
- Above average income (for those who engage in 6 or more activities the income is much higher)
- Big consumers of all tourism products - they engage in much more cultural and entertainment activities (including dining) and tours compared to less active outdoor travellers
- The benefits sought on a trip (compared to less active travellers) are: to relieve stress, to create lasting memories, to see or do something new, to enrich their perspective on life, to gain knowledge, to be feel physically energized, and to stimulate the mind.
- Destination attributes of greater importance compared to other travellers include: lots of things for adults to see and do and information about destination available on the internet.
- Destination attributes of much less importance compared to other travellers include: convenient access by car, direct access by air, low-cost package deals available, convenient access by train or bus, shopping opportunities, and being familiar with local culture.

The following segments are travellers whom the main reason for their trip was to engage in a specific outdoor activity. These travellers have very similar secondary activity preferences, therefore any tourism activity developed to attract one type will also appeal to the others. See the appendices section of this report for a profile summary on each type, or the Dryden Region Tourism Market Analysis report for more details.

### **Wildlife Viewers**

Wildlife viewing includes viewing birds, flora, fauna and even northern lights (as per Travel Activities and Motivations Survey). Wildlife viewing holds the largest potential tourism market for the Dryden region with its abundance of extraordinary wildlife. It is the second most cited reason (followed by ocean activities) for taking a trip for all outdoor travellers. The figure below demonstrates its market size compared to other key outdoor activities offered.

**Figure 1: Number of travellers where activity was main reason for trip<sup>1</sup>**



Other popular activities engaged in by wildlife viewers can be found in Target Market Profile Summary tables in the appendices section.

### **Cross-Country Skiers and Snowshoers**

This segment is a small in size but affluent. Individuals who choose a destination for the main purpose of skiing will also shop, dine and engage in other tourism activities much more compared to the average pleasure traveller. Cross-country skiers and snowshoers enjoy the finer things in life (i.e. spas and wine tastings) and high culture (i.e. jazz, art galleries, classical music, film festivals) yet will stay in remote or fly-in lodges nearly as much as anglers do (3.4% vs 4.9%).

### **Wilderness Activities**

Although the Wilderness Activities (i.e. survival training, dog-sledding, winter camping) market is smaller, few regions in Canada and the U.S. are better suited to develop wilderness tourism products than the Dryden region. Current tourism trends are pointing towards a worldwide surge in demand for wilderness survival tourism products (shows like *Survivorman*, *Mantracker*, *Man vs Wild* are driving this demand) and while there are various survival certification courses offered, there is a lack of survival experience-based products.

### **Hikers**

Travellers who choose a destination to go on a walking/hiking tour are attracted to scenic outdoor wilderness. This segment complements wildlife viewing and cultural tourism activities, and represents opportunities for camp operators to develop guided lodge-to-lodge multi-day hiking/walking tour packages with stops at cultural/historical places of interest (including eateries). In addition, wilderness tours are a very popular secondary activity for all the other target market types, therefore products developed to attract hikers will be popular with other traveller types.

<sup>1</sup> 'Trips are defined as out-of-town trips for any purpose involving an overnight stay of one or more nights'. Definition retrieved from: [http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel\\_activities/CDN\\_TAMS\\_2006\\_Wildlife\\_Viewing\\_Oct2007.pdf](http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel_activities/CDN_TAMS_2006_Wildlife_Viewing_Oct2007.pdf).

## **Paddlers**

Without a doubt, the extensive waterways and future network of canoe routes in the region combined with wildlife and pictographs will be a great draw for tourists who choose a destination for paddling. Their average household income is higher compared to the average pleasure traveller. And, as explained further in this report, many variations of guided kayak/canoe eco-adventure tours can be created for all tastes, income and skill levels.

## **Anglers**

Fishing has and will always be a tourism draw in the region. The numbers of anglers may never be what they once were at their peak but the potential to tap into new markets is there; both in geographical markets as well as psychographic segments.

As explained above, tourists will travel the distance if there is no substitution closer to home. Research has shown that there are still plenty of untapped geographical markets as it is estimated that more than half of all Americans do not know much about Northern Ontario. Potential to tap into new market segments also exists such as: individuals who know nothing about fishing but want to try it; business travellers who would like to do a few hours of fishing before heading back home; 'foodies' who want the freshest and finest to cook with; new Canadians wanting to experience true Canadian culture, etc.

## **Hunters and Foragers**

Hunting remains an important tourism product in the Dryden region and offers the same potential to exploit new geographical and segmental markets as for fishing. New levels of social consciousness and the trend for 'being taken outside one's comfort zone' offers potential new markets such as: hunting for organic food lovers; meat eaters against industrial livestock farming; ethicists who want to experience the hunt; individuals interested in traditional trapping techniques; foodies who want to learn how to cook with wild food; or *Survivorman* wannabes.

## **Horseback riders**

Horseback riders are likely to travel further to get to a destination compared to the average pleasure traveller. They have above average incomes and are very active in both outdoor and cultural activities. Like most of the target segments, they seek physical and intellectual stimulation when on a trip.

## 2.2. Geographical Target Markets

### **In-Transit Travellers**

In-transit travellers are individuals/families driving through Dryden to another destination. To attract this market segment, additional tourism products that are quick and physical in nature need to be developed. More on this topic is discussed further in the report.

### **Near Market (within 300 km)**

This market represents communities in Northwest Ontario and Manitoba within approximately 300 km of Dryden. Residents from these communities may consider Dryden for mini-getaway vacations if there is potential or opportunities for these types of trips. These visitors may come for a day or stay for one or two nights, depending on the tourism products offered in the area.

To attract overnight guests, it is important to offer packages for one and two night stays that include a few activities and time for rest and relaxation. The key is to make it easy and stress free for consumers to arrange.

Individuals from surrounding communities already come to Dryden to shop but they may come more frequently, stay longer or come in larger groups if there are interesting activities for them to do. Tourism products that do not take much time (1 hour to 6 hours at most) would appeal to this market group to allow time to travel back home.

### **Distant Markets (300 km or more)**

#### Worldwide for Unique Niche Products:

Surveys reveal that increasingly travellers of all ages are choosing their destination and planning their vacation based on information found on the internet. Thanks to the World Wide Web, niche markets all over the world can now be targeted easily and inexpensively. Tourism products that are unique will attract travellers from all four corners of the world. Individuals passionate about an activity, such as wildlife viewing, will travel great distances just to see a specific bird species.

#### Large Cities for the Wilderness Experience:

The Dryden area offers pristine wilderness and waterways, with unique flora and fauna. It also presents richness in cultural history. Individuals willing to travel to the area to see its natural and cultural beauty are people who do not reside in or near similar natural environments. Marketing to communities in proximity to the wilderness whereby its residents can participate in the same activities at home is a tough sell as there are few competitive advantages in going to Dryden.

There are many cities that are not located near pristine wilderness and abundant wildlife. These cities do not offer its dwellers serene places "in the middle of nowhere" to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Research has shown that travellers who engage in many outdoor activities do not have an issue with the length of the journey or with having to take various modes of transportation to get to their destination. On the contrary, it adds to the experience. Therefore it is recommended that marketing initiatives target large cities in regions where the physical geography (terrain) and/or climate are different than Dryden's.

### 3. Making the Shift: Adjusting to Market Trends

#### 3.1. Know What Travellers Want

Tastes and needs of travellers change over time pressuring tourism operations to adapt if they want to stay afloat. Failing to adapt means a business will be competing for a shrinking market that will eventually disappear. Effort is needed to ensure tourism operators know the trends and are able to easily make the shift.

A list of tourism trends is provided in the Dryden Region Tourism Market Analysis report, a few of which include: shorter stays, last-minute trips, internet searches and bookings, packages, and lots of things to see and do.

#### 3.2. Stepping up the Experience

The increasing demand for experienced-based tourism activities necessitates the assessment and enhancement of existing tourism products to ensure they deliver an experience to the traveller - the greater, the better. Experiential tourism incorporates various elements with the intent to affect the tourist on a physical, intellectual and emotional level. It touches on all the senses.

For example, in the past, a visitor interested in learning about the life of fur traders would typically visit a museum and look at exhibits, and perhaps watch a video. Today, travellers want more. They want to experience what it would feel like to be a fur trader through touch, taste, sound and smell.

Consequently, a tourism activity on the fur trade geared towards today's market would be more of an adventure. It might incorporate a series of engaging activities such as: paddling and portaging a birch bark canoe (physical); visiting the remains of or the reconstruction of a remote trading outpost (smell, sound, visual); participating in fur tanning activities or sorting and grading furs (physical, intellectual); eating a typical period meal (taste); sitting by a campfire listening to stories on the adventures of fur traders (intellectual, emotional); and perhaps sleeping overnight in a wedge tent (physical, visual, emotional).

Enhancing an existing product to create a greater experience can be as simple as adding an activity that stimulates a different sense and/or impacts emotionally such as observing wildlife, a picnic by a waterfall, rappelling down a cliff, a hands-on workshop, story telling by elders, or a glass of wine by the fire.



The desire for greater experience is not just limited to activities; it extends to accommodation and dining. Increasingly consumers - particularly women - place great importance on the ambiance when choosing accommodation. Successful operators of accommodation establishments periodically invest in upgrading and updating the look of their rooms to remain competitive. They understand that décor styles and expectations of consumers change with time, and that guests want their lodgings to be a pleasure.

The current trend in accommodation spaces is for uncluttered, minimalist Zen-like environments that induce feelings of comfort and serenity. Luckily, this can be achieved quite easily and affordably.

**Recommendation 1:**

That a "DestinationDryden.ca" web site be established to market Dryden as a destination, with potential visitors being the main target audience. A member's only area of the site should provide access to tourism related information and resources. It is important that the website portrays everything that there is to see and do in the area, therefore all tourist-serving operations should be able to list their business info/ products and website URL free of charge (extra features could be fee-based).

Tourism related resources for members should include sample exit surveys and resources to help improve business quality and the overall experience. Some useful guides include:

- [Steam Pro](#)
- [Visitor Exit Surveys Design and Other Considerations](#)
- [Enjoying Research?](#)
- [CTC Experiences guide](#)
- [Capital Stay Improving Your Business](#)
- [Capital Stay How We Do It](#)
- [Best Practices Tour 2000 in Adventure Travel and Ecotourism](#)
- [Defining Tomorrow's Tourism Product – Packaging Experiences](#)

**Recommendation 2:**

Offer Dryden tourism businesses the service of an independent assessment (from a consultant or committee) of their tourist facility or service, on several categories, such as quantity and quality of amenities, maintenance, attractiveness to target segments, level of experience, and website messaging. The assessment would provide constructive recommendations based on deficiencies and opportunities.

## 4. Creating New and Diversified Tourism Products Built on Strengths

The Dryden Tourism Market Analysis reveals that for travellers who participate in many outdoor activities 'having lots of things to see and do' is an important factor when choosing a destination. The following sections provide recommendations that support an increase in, and diversification of the number of activities visitors can engage in while in the Dryden area.

### 4.1. Tourism Business Start-Ups and Development

Feedback received from stakeholders pointed to the need for additional support for tourism businesses. Although some support is provided by existing membership-driven regional marketing associations, more is needed to help operators access the tools and information needed to grow.

To address the gap in tourism products and services, effort is needed to encourage and support new business start-ups. Many of the tourism business opportunities discussed in the following sections can be operated part-time or on an 'as needed basis' (such as guiding, workshops, tours and services).

#### **Recommendation 3:**

That Patricia Area Community Endeavours (PACE), the Northwest Business Centre, the BDC and other stakeholder groups provide assistance and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs interested in starting a tourism business. Suggested resources to include are:

- [Insurance Tutorials for Outdoor Tourism Businesses](#)
- [Database of Insurance Service Providers for Adventure and Ecotourism Operators](#)
- [Tourism Inc. Readiness Self-Assessment Workbook](#)
- [Outdoor Tourism: An Industry Profile and Resource Guide](#)

### 4.2. Cross-Linking and Networking

All businesses benefit from an increase in visitor traffic. Competing for the same market, particularly one that is dwindling can, however, induce strong business rivalry. The key to changing this situation is to diversify tourism products, build mutually benefiting networks and strengthen tourism business relationships.

To an undecided vacationer, a website that displays numerous activities is more appealing than one that showcases few. Naturally, it would be difficult for one tourism business to develop and sustain many different tourism products, therefore cross-linking with other tourism operators offering different activities is crucial to attracting more visitors.

Networking is equally important to tourism growth. Recommending to guests activities offered by another tourism operation reduces the risk of earlier departures and encourages guests to stay longer or to return in the future.

#### **Recommendation 4:**

Encourage Dryden area tourism businesses to post other businesses' tourism products on their respective websites. Steps include:

- Compiling a list of tourist businesses that wish to have their products promoted on other businesses' websites;
- Distributing to all tourist-serving businesses a list of authorized tourism products (with URL, picture and product description) that can be posted on their websites.
- Encourage businesses to track and reward or celebrate referrals.

#### 4.3. Easy and Inexpensive Ways to Add New Products



Photo taken by: Natasha Gordon, Vermilion Bay



Photo taken by: Brent Wesley

Adding more tourism products on the websites of local tourist-serving businesses makes Dryden more appealing as a destination and helps to attract more visitors.

The easiest and cheapest way to increase the number of products is to add to a website a striking images and a few words on local existing natural or man-made assets, such as:

- Wildlife
- Historical sites
- Waterfalls
- Northern lights
- Interesting insects and flora
- Berry or mushroom picking
- Trails
- Ice road (it is an attraction).

Other suggested tourism products that would require little resources to deliver include:

- Tobogganing (provide toboggan and hot chocolate)
- Canoe and kayaking
- Cleared area for ice skating (supply skates)
- Cross country skiing or snowshoeing (supply equipment)
- Cycling or mountain biking (supply bikes)
- Walking/hiking trails (trails with trailhead and directional signs, and if possible interpretive signs for sites of historical or natural significance)
- Wildlife viewing area (create a grazing field, add bird feeders, plant vegetation that attracts butterflies, etc.)
- An outdoor or indoor area for meditation
- [GeoCaching](#)<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> "Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers and then share your experiences online.

**Recommendation 5:**

That an inventory of quality pictures of area natural and man-made tourism assets be collected and made available for download from the members' section of [www.destinationdryden.ca](http://www.destinationdryden.ca).

Note: Many top quality pictures taken in the area (as displayed throughout this document) can be obtained by permission or for a small royalty on [flickr.com](http://flickr.com). If needed, a local photography contest can be conducted to fill in gaps in specific categories.

Additional tourism product ideas that build on existing strengths and local knowledge are demonstrations and workshops. Research has shown that these types of products are particularly appealing to baby boomer travellers. In the world of learning and enrichment travel, there is a market for every activity that can be taught. And, in each community, as in the Dryden area, there is a rich pool of expert knowledge on a variety of topics.

These workshops need not be elaborate or profitable; they can merely be a means of attracting visitors who will spend on other profitable services and who would otherwise not come. The duration of these workshops can be one hour, a few hours, one day, a weekend or a week. Some ideas include:

- Art painting demonstration
- Meditation for beginners
- Marsh habitat field class
- Wild flowers and trees field class
- Guided wildlife viewing or bird watching
- The art of trapping
- Fishing/ice fishing for beginners
- How to prepare and cook wild food
- Identifying edible plants and mushrooms
- Evening of astronomy observation for amateurs

**Recommendation 6:**

Offer workshops in the spring and fall (preferably in November and April) open to tourist operators and aspiring entrepreneurs aimed at providing the information and tools needed to understand and adjust to changing trends and attract more visitors. Topics should include:

- Current trends and standards - seeing your business through the eyes of your customer: accommodation standards, food, service, website messaging, etc.
- Providing clients with an "experience"
- Why and how to showcase that there are "lots of things to see and do"
- Creating packages
- Effective messaging

Ensure that a summary of each topic is available online for individuals who could not attend.

#### 4.4. Filling in the Gaps in Tourism Products and Infrastructure

##### Waterfront Development

Whether you are a business traveller, tourist, event organizer, or looking to relocate, the physical attractiveness of a city is a highly important factor in choosing a location. Any effort aimed at improving the physical beauty of a city impacts its economy positively while also improving the quality of life for residents. The Dryden Sustainable Waterfront Development Project will not only increase the beauty of the Van Horne waterfront but will give rise to the development of many new tourism products. Both will result in attracting more visitors to the City.

**Recommendation 7:**

That the City, DDC and other partners support the development of the Dryden Sustainable Waterfront Project as a priority to ensure its success as Dryden's foremost "four-season destination for citizens, visitors and tourists". Next steps include:

- Undertake the business plans/feasibility studies for each opportunity, including finalizing and promoting the prefeasibility assessment of an eco-lodge & spa;
- Undertake engineering plans;
- Develop partnership agreements;
- Promote and nurture private sector investments;
- Build, operate and maintain public infrastructure.

##### Sports Tourism

Sports tourism involves individuals or groups travelling to a community to participate in or observe sports. This is an area of strength for Dryden due in part to the City's central location and its world class body of water and shoreline. Through the efforts of volunteers, the business community and the City have benefited greatly from tournaments as these events attract not only players but their family and friends as well outside sport enthusiasts.

A large event can attract hundreds of overnight guests. The 2010 Windsurfing Championship Regatta is expected to attract approximately 100 competitors, 200 hundred spouses and friends and a great number of spectators to Dryden. These visitors will stay at hotels, shop, dine and participate in other activities while in Dryden. To ensure the Regatta's success and to help secure more national level events in the future, much work is needed.

There is significant potential for growth in this area once the weaknesses in attracting and hosting sporting events are addressed. Some of these weaknesses include:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of sports field lighting to increase playing time</li> <li>• No water and sewer services</li> <li>• Inadequate shoreline for water type events</li> <li>• Limited food service</li> <li>• Poor washroom and changing facilities</li> <li>• Lack of proper score boards</li> <li>• Lack of bleachers</li> <li>• Insufficient sports fields</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No safety netting</li> <li>• Inferior playing surfaces</li> <li>• Lack of accommodations</li> <li>• Lack of a facility/venue to host large events</li> <li>• Insufficient marketing</li> <li>• Lack of support to help organize/attract tournaments – volunteer burnout</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

In order to exploit this segment fully, efforts are needed to bring all stakeholders together to identify the weaknesses, set priorities, find solutions, explore viable/temporary alternatives such as portable bleachers and tents, and to implement a plan of action.

### **Recommendation 8:**

Assemble key stakeholders to form a Sports Tourism Alliance with equal representation by sport type to:

- Identify weaknesses in attracting and hosting sporting events in Dryden (use the [Sport Tourism Planning Template](#));
- Identify all possible solutions and sources of funding;
- Develop and implement a prioritized action plan;
- For infrastructure improvements that require significant capital investment, build a solid case by conducting a pre-feasibility assessment and identifying potential funding partners.
- Collaborate/partner with stakeholder groups that share common goals (see recommendations 11 and 12).

Note: additional related tools and reports can be found at the [Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance](#) website.

### **Recommendation 9:**

That a Golf Task Group be formed with representatives from the DDC, the City of Dryden, the DMA, and the Patricia Regional Tourist Council to explore the following opportunities:

- Explore viable expansion/upgrade possibilities at Eagle's Landing Resort, such as:
  - Creating an 18-hole golf course. Options include: pontoon shuttle between golf courses or existing plans to expand on adjacent lands;
  - Building a mid-course club house on Eagle's Landing Resort;
  - Bringing water and sewer services to the property to allow for expansion;
  - Explore solutions to improve the viability of the curling arena. Consider promoting curling or adapting the building for more viable uses;
  - In collaboration with other stakeholder groups (see Recommendation 12), assess the viability of turning the facility into a top-notch meeting/conference facility;
- Develop and promote golf packages with area tourism operators;
- Improve signage to golf courses;
- Explore other opportunities related to golf tourism.

## **Convention Tourism and Business Travellers**

Business travel is a largely untapped market in Dryden as business travellers could easily be enticed to escape the seclusion of their hotel rooms and engage in local tourism activities. To exploit this segment, tourism products need to be easy to book, available on short notice, be 3 hrs or less, and offered at convenient times. As more products are developed, Dryden should be in a better position to serve this market.

Convention tourism includes meeting, conference, convention, trade and consumer show markets. This industry presents significant economic benefits to a community as business convention visitors will spend more on accommodation, food, entertainment and transportation. However, as indicated in the [Ontario Convention Market Analysis Report](#), competition is fierce as other cities have expanded and upgraded their exhibit and meeting space. As well, convention organizers are increasingly requesting that potential host locations bid for their presence.

Current venues in Dryden may not be suitable for large conventions and tradeshow, and the lack of public transportation, the quality and functionality of exhibit and meeting areas, and the attractiveness of the City may not currently meet market criterion. According to the Ontario Convention Market Analysis report, the five key success factors for a convention venue in attracting events are:

- Air lift to the destination
- Quality hotels close to or adjacent to the venue
- Quality venue space
- Cost of destination and venue
- Attractive destination.

On the other hand, Dryden presents a locational advantage as well as richness in natural and cultural assets which may make it an attractive host for certain types of events. In addition, the City's strengths in the health and outdoor recreation sectors make it more appealing to two of the top industries in the demand for convention space: medical & healthcare and sporting goods & recreation sectors. Great potential also exists in attracting Northern First Nations who regularly hold meetings, conferences and other events. As the development of the waterfront progresses and quality tourism investment is attracted and facilities are improved, convention tourism will likely grow in Dryden.

**Recommendation 11:**

That an event lead handling protocol be developed and adhered to by key stakeholders (hotels, restaurants, Culture Centre, City, DDC and DMA) to ensure the greatest possible success in attracting and hosting large events. The protocol should include the following:

- That a spirit of cooperation, teamwork and mutual trust form the basis of the protocol;
- That all inquiries and leads be referred to the event coordinator who would assist with the venue selection and the organizer's primary point of contact for the duration of the event.
- That all inquiries be acknowledged, and where possible, responded to by the Event Coordinator within 24 hours.

**Recommendation 12:**

Assess the market demand and pre-feasibility of constructing and operating a large conference facility (that can accommodate over 400 people dining) or expanding an existing facility to include a large hall with kitchen facility (possibly adjacent to Dryden Regional Training and Cultural Centre or Eagle's Landing Resort). Steps include:

- Assess the market demand, size and functionality of required convention space;
- Assemble key individuals to conduct a pre-feasibility assessment for each alternative;
- Assess and establish community support for the investment opportunity;
- Market the opportunity.

## Tourism Products for Travellers in Transit



Source: <http://www.campfortune.com/en/aerial/home.php>

Dryden is located at the perfect distance to take a break when driving from Thunder Bay, Winnipeg or on Highway 502. Travellers en route to another location represent a great opportunity for Dryden. Tourism attractions that entice restless drivers and their passengers to stop and stretch their legs will greatly benefit nearby restaurants, shops and gas stations.

Ideally these attractions should be dynamic, outdoor, easy to access, and visible from the highways. They should also appeal to children and teenagers equally or more so than to adults, require little fuss and time, be physically engaging and adventurous while respecting the region's cultural and wilderness authenticity. Potential opportunities to explore include:



- Tropical greenhouse open to tours (as described in the Dryden Economic Development Strategy, 2008)
- Obstacle course
- Suspended bridge
- Canopy trails (as indicated in the *Pine Ojibway Interpretive Centre Partnership* concept paper)
- Zip lines
- Hiking trails
- Rappelling wall
- Maze
- Boat tours
- Tubing or ice hill.

Source: [http://winterlude.ca/bins/ncc\\_web\\_content\\_page.asp?cid=16297-16298-22877-29508&lang=1](http://winterlude.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16297-16298-22877-29508&lang=1)

### **Recommendation 13:**

Assess the market demand and pre-feasibility of constructing and operating a rope course/zip line or other product that would appeal to travellers in-transit. Steps include:

- Conduct a survey at the visitor centre, hotels and restaurants that currently serve this market to assess demand;
- Assemble key individuals to conduct a pre-feasibility assessment of each alternative;
- If viable, assess and establish community support for the investment opportunity;
- Identify potential partners and market the opportunity.

## Arts, Culture and Culinary Tourism Products

Tourists who engage in outdoor activities also engage in cultural activities while on a trip. Currently, the Dryden area offers few experienced-based or place-based cultural tourism products in spite of its richness in cultural assets. The area offers a multitude of potential cultural attractions that when properly packaged and marketed could result in significant tourism traffic and expenditure. Potential opportunities exist in:

- Fur trade and settlers history
- Food and agriculture
- Mining (precious minerals unique to the region, equipment – old and new, mine sites)
- Forestry industry
- Forest fire management
- Arts
- Ojibway First Nation culture

There is no shortage of aboriginal activities that could be developed and offered to tourists year-round. Tours led by Ojibway guides could incorporate one or many of the following themes:



Manomin field

- Aboriginal resource stewardship practices (i.e. modified birch trees)
- Traditional craft making skills such as birch bark baskets, canoes, snowshoes, sleighs, etc.
- Aboriginal cuisine
- Manomin (rice) fields and the harvesting and processing of manomin
- Wild blueberry fields and cranberry bushes
- Pictographs
- Old growth white pine and cedar
- Residential schools
- Traditional trapping techniques
- Winter survival skills
- Aboriginal spirituality
- Storytelling by elders

### Recommendation 14:

Encourage and collaborate with neighboring First Nation communities to develop Aboriginal tourism products. The following actions are recommended:

- Examine the concepts proposed in the *White Pine Ojibway Interpretive Centre Partnership* paper (Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, 2003), such as the proposed Old Growth Pine Canopy Walk;
- Consider building an Ojibway Interpretive Centre at the proposed Van Horne waterfront location as described in the Sustainable Waterfront Development Plan;
- Explore the possibility of starting an [ElderHost](#) program;
- Encourage the development of an aboriginal trail with regional First Nation communities, similar to [www.circletrail.com](http://www.circletrail.com).

In terms of the specific types of cultural and entertainment activities, surveys reveal that roughly 70% of outdoor travellers visit historical sites, museums and art galleries while on a trip. Currently the region is deficient in both historical attractions and art galleries.



Artist: Dale Mackenzie, retrieved from <http://dalemackenzie.com/>



Artist: Burton Penner, retrieved from [www.canada-dogsled.com](http://www.canada-dogsled.com)

### **Recommendation 15:**

That the proposed Cultural Roundtable be approved and formed to undertake the following:

- Create a heritage sub-committee that would build awareness of Dryden's historical assets and identify and encourage the adaptive reuse of architecturally interesting buildings (i.e. repeater office/train station building) to enhance and preserve the city's physical beauty and historical charm;
- Continue the development of a Dryden area cultural digital map (integrating GIS coordinates) that includes historical points of interest.

### **Recommendation 16:**

In consultation and collaboration with the Area Cultural Partnership and other key stakeholder groups, endeavour to open a permanent art gallery/art centre with regular operating hours, to exhibit and sell artwork created by talented regional artists. Consider using the venue for other events such as vernissages, food and wine tastings, and literary events. Locations to consider:

- Van Horne Waterfront area as proposed in the framework plan
- As part of the Dryden Regional Training and Cultural Centre
- As part of the future location of the Visitor Information Centre.



Shore Lunch, photo courtesy of Northwest Ontario Sunset Country Travel Association



Source: Retrieved from <http://www.strictlybowhunting.com/>

Experience-based tourism is not only about seeing the region's beauty, but savouring it as well. The trend in culinary tourism is for regional dishes made with locally produced artisan food and wild food (i.e. walleye, game meat, blueberries). Activities that centre on local foods, such as farmers markets and pick-your-own farms, are forms of culinary tourism. Culinary tourism is a popular secondary tourism activity for highly active outdoor travellers.

All that is required to engage in culinary tourism is a shift from processed mainstream food to providing travellers ample opportunities to sample food from the "terroir".

Local Dryden restaurants have much to profit from the development of culinary tourism. Travellers passionate about food don't mind paying a premium for the pleasure of sampling dishes made from fresh local products. Dishes made with local ingredients should be offered and highlighted on restaurant menus.

### **Recommendation 17:**

Encourage the development of culinary tourism:

- Provide resources on culinary tourism as well as a contact list of regional food producers and their products in the member section of the [destinationdryden.ca](http://destinationdryden.ca) website. Resources on culinary tourism include:
  - [How-to guide: Develop a Culinary Tourism Product](#)
  - [National Tourism & Cuisine Forum: Recipes for Success](#)
  - [Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance](#)
- Provide members via email or e-newsletter a brief summary on culinary tourism along with a hyperlink to resources.



Chef Martin Picard, sous-chef Hugue Dufour in 'Wild Chef'

Wild food cooking is growing in popularity as can be seen by the emergence of new television shows such as [The Wild Gourmets](#) and [Wild Chef](#). Dryden – the Wilderness City - surrounded by abundant wildlife and flora, with big city amenities and expert guides, is in an advantageous position to exploit this new trend. One opportunity might be to organize and host a wild food culinary event - similar but broader in scope than the Canadian Pure Wild Rice Cook-Off.

The wild food event could include a professional wild food cooking competition where teams of chefs with the help of local guides must hunt, fish and forage for their ingredients in the days leading to the cook-off competition (this would make for great reality TV); and then create several courses for the judges using what they have acquired along with a standard basket of basic provisions (i.e. oil, butter, seasonings, etc.). If successful, such an event (particularly if televised on the Food Network) would be a tremendous boost to Dryden's economy and its image as a tourism destination.

### Recommendation 18:

Explore the possibility of creating and hosting a National/North American wild food culinary event. Steps include:

- Assembling key individuals to form a working group;
- Contacting the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance and other organizations for possible support;
- Contact organizations, media and individuals involved in wild food cooking to explore collaborative or partnership opportunities.

### Winter Tourism Products



Photo taken by: Dennis C. Boyd

Winter tourism products are clearly underdeveloped in the region. The market potential seems endless when you consider the number of people in this world who reside in a warm-climate country and have yet to experience the wonders of winter. Potential winter tourism products for the area include:

- Winter wildlife viewing
- Snow kiting
- Ice skating in a maze, or on a river
- Winter wilderness survival
- Tobogganing, tubing or ice hills
- Ice hotel/bar (i.e. [Hotel de Glace](#) in Quebec City)
- Learning workshops, such as building shelters or making maple syrup
- Ice climbing
- Trapping
- Snowshoeing
- Lodge-to-lodge cross-country skiing or snowmobiling
- Spectacular nature scenes (i.e. winter waterfalls)
- Winter astronomy

## Recommendation 19:

Encourage the development of winter tourism products. Steps include:

- Solicit provincial tourism organizations such as OTMPC and Ontario Ministry of Tourism to provide resources and workshops on winter tourism product development;
- Provide information and resources on winter tourism in the member's area of the [www.destinationdryden.ca](http://www.destinationdryden.ca) website such as:
  - Potential winter tourism product ideas and packages (i.e. mini all-inclusive winter getaways, lodge-to-lodge cross-country skiing or snowmobiling);
  - Examples of easy and inexpensive winter products that can be offered;
  - Explanation on the importance of posting quality winter images on websites. Provide a link to inventory of pictures.



Photo taken by: Dennis C. Boyd, Bohemian Waxwing

## Network of Trails and Water Routes



Having a network of quality trails and water routes is a great asset for tourism development. It offers opportunities to develop a variety of guided tours and packages suited to different profiles of outdoor travellers with varying household incomes.

With or without a guide, these trail-users are big consumers. They will typically buy many supplies locally and, like any other traveller, will shop, dine and engage in other tourism activities. In time, as the number of trail-vacationers grows, supporting investment opportunities will arise, such as an outfitter store, equipment rentals or training clinics.

**Recommendation 20:**

Organize a facilitated interagency meeting bringing together all regional stakeholder groups involved in trail maintenance and mapping to address weaknesses and identify areas of mutual cooperation and leveraging. Groups to include are: the Dryden Canoe & Kayak Club, the Dryden Power Toboggan Club, the Trans Canada Trail Canoe Routes and Path of the Voyageur Canoe Route supporters.

**Guided Adventure Trips and Tours**



Photo taken by: Asmir Delic



Photo taken by: Dennis C. Boyd

Guided adventure trips and tours can vary greatly in theme (i.e. aboriginal culture, history, wildlife viewing, and fall colours), mode of transportation (i.e. kayak, hiking, boat, walking, train, or a combination of), length (one hour tour to ten day treks), skill level and level of comfort (survival camping to luxury accommodation and meals, or a combination of both). There is a tour for every type of traveller - the opportunities are endless. And fortunately, developing a tour requires little investment. Recommended tours include:



Photo courtesy of Fire Management Centre



Photo taken by: Asmir Delic, Wabigoon Lake

- Wildlife viewing
- Aboriginal culture
- Flora viewing
- Wilderness expedition trips (canoe, kayak, hiking, white water, dog-sled, etc.)
- Educational trips (wilderness survival training, farm life, astronomy, photography or painting)
- Experienced-based adventure trips (i.e. life of a fur trader, dog-sledding, surviving alone on an island, spiritual/meditation, etc.)
- Short (one to two hours) tours for in-transit travellers
- Overnight or weekend trips (snowmobiling, horseback riding, etc.)
- Boat tours
- Horseback riding tours.

**Recommendation 21:**

That an inspiring and informative workshop on 'starting and operating a guiding business' be delivered to boost the development of more guided trips and tours. The workshop, which could be sponsored by PACE and other stakeholder groups should include the following topics:

- Product development and trends
- Marketing and online booking
- Certification and training
- Insurance, business registration, etc.
- Best practices
- Available resources.

**Recommendation 22:**

To increase the number of tourism activities available in the City of Dryden and to make participation easy for visitors, explore the possibility of delivering regularly scheduled guided tours of the following:

- Dryden Airport Tours that include the Fire Management Centre, Superior Helicopters and Hicks and Lawrence
- Aerial tours (i.e. float plane, helicopter or other)
- Guided tours of the Laura Howe Marsh
- Guided boat tours
- Year round tours of the Domtar Mill
- Dryden wildlife viewing tours.

### 4.5. Combining Tourism Products to Create Packages

Packages are appealing to all types of travellers as it makes getting away simple and easy. The right mix of packages need to be created to ensure they suit all target segment interests and time schedules. Trends in tourism indicate a demand for spontaneous and short getaways, therefore, short packages from one day to three nights should be available.

**Recommendation 23:**

Deliver a how-to workshop on creating tourism packages, including programmed time for participants to network, collaborate, explore, and develop potential packages ideas.

One constraint to creating popular packages is getting travellers to and from accommodation, restaurants, tourism activities, shops, the train station and the airport. Not all visitors will have cars or want to rent them, and the distance can sometimes make a taxi service unaffordable. Ideally, getting somewhere should be simple and affordable. The easier it is to get around, the more guests will shop, dine and engage in other activities throughout the area. If not mobile, a guest will remain at their accommodation for most of their vacation and Dryden loses out on additional tourism spending.

**Recommendation 24:**

Develop a Tourism Transportation task group comprised of representatives from local governments, DDC, DMA, PACE, Chamber, Patricia Region, and other stakeholders groups to explore:

- Transportation/bus tours to shuttle residents of surrounding communities to regional events;
- The opportunity of providing a shuttle service (fee-based or fully/partially subsidized by businesses) to shuttle tourists to downtown shopping and restaurants;
- With input from airline companies, assess the potential demand for outbound and inbound seats at various times of year for direct flights to/from Chicago and Toronto. Build and present a case if numbers meet industry thresholds.
- Explore and inform stakeholders on how to create vacation packages with VIA Rail.

Another way to increase tourism flow and spread tourism spending throughout the area is to develop self-guided tours. These tours would encourage visitors to drive to various points of interest throughout the area to engage in 'must-do' tourism activities. New digital features such as Google Earth Record Your Tour, GPS Tours, and Murmur (using cell phone to listen to pre-recorded stories) are great tools that encourage self-guided tours.

**Recommendation 25:**

Develop self-guided itineraries of varying time lengths (themes can include cultural, nature, culinary, or a combination) and include the itineraries on the [destinationdryden.ca](http://destinationdryden.ca) website and the Northern Ontario Web Portal.

## C. Organizational Structure and Governance Model

Marketing Dryden as a destination and developing/enhancing tourism products are two distinct realms that are best managed separately. Experience has shown that organizations that attempt to manage both inevitably end up focusing more on marketing.

It is therefore recommended that the Dryden Development Corporation (DDC), in addition to their existing mandate, be responsible for all initiatives relating to tourism product development and tourism investment attraction. It is recommended that the Dryden Marketing Association (DMA) be responsible for all tourism destination marketing and tourist attraction initiatives.

### **Responsibilities of the Dryden Development Corporation:**

1. Implementation of the Tourism Development Strategy action plans;
2. Tourism investment attraction initiatives, including pre-feasibility assessments of investment opportunities;
3. Greater regional collaboration for the development of regional products such as multi-community tours.
4. Partner with other stakeholder groups in hosting workshops.

To adequately fulfill these additional responsibilities the DDC requires one full-time Tourism Development Officer position for a minimum of 2 years.

### **Responsibilities of the Dryden Marketing Association:**

1. Implementation of the Tourism Marketing Strategy action plans;
2. Collaborating and leveraging with other marketing associations;
3. Broader regional collaboration in tourism destination marketing and branding.

#### **Recommendation 26:**

That the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) include representation from the following organizations:

- Dryden Library
- Dryden Power Toboggan Club
- Dryden Ski Club
- PACE
- Cloverbelt Country Farmers' Market
- An organization/stakeholder in eco-tourism or wildlife viewing

## Appendix A: Tourism Advisory Committee

### Members of the Tourism Advisory Committee

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Stefanie Armstrong	TAC Chair/ DDC Board member
Mike Furlong	TAC Interim Chair/ DDC Board member
Sandra Boyko	Dryden Marketing Association
Trent Hamilton	Chamber of Commerce
Gail Solomon	Public Works
Cherry Rivard	Dryden Regional Airport
Jennifer Francis	Dryden Recreation
Leah Gardner	Dryden Museum
William Latham	Community Services
John Borst	Communities in Bloom
Scott Ellery	Ontario Parks
Mike Loewen	Patricia Regional Tourist Council
Judith Hamilton	Dryden Area Cultural Partnership
Brad Woodworth	NW Ontario Windsurfing Club

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### Staff

Vicki Kurz  
 Economic Development Manager  
 Dryden Development Corporation

Vicki Blanchard  
 Market Development Officer  
 Dryden Development Corporation

Dana Soucie  
 Tourism Coordinator  
 Dryden Development Corporation

## Appendix B: Stakeholders Interviewed

In addition to feedback received from the Tourism Advisory Committee, the following individuals listed were interviewed personally. Valuable input was also received from over 30 individuals through the online survey and the public meeting.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Vicki Kurz	Dryden Development Corporation
Vicki Blanchard	Dryden Marketing Association
Brian Miles	Patricia Area Community Endeavours (PACE)
Doug Pronger	Patricia Area Community Endeavours (PACE)
Vicki Blanchard	Dryden Marketing Association
Mike Loewan	Patricia Regional Tourist Council
Jerry Fisher	Northwestern Ontario Tourism Association (NWOTA)
Harold Lohn	Kenora District Camp Owners Association (KDCA)
Shannon Brennan	Dryden Canoe & Kayak Club
Joanne Misner	Carlson Wagonlit Travel/Aries Travel
Burton Penner	Borealis Dog Sled Adventures
Kathryn Duchnick	FEDNOR
Cherry Rivard	Dryden Regional Airport
Silvana Edenburn	Fort Vermilion
Jeff Frank	Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram Landscape Architecture & Planning
Stephanie Armstrong	Chair of Tourism Advisory Committee
Scott Ellery	Ontario Parks
Andy Sky	Eagle Lake First Nation
Dale Mackenzie	Artist
Leah Gardner	Dryden and District Museum
Gerry Cariou	Sunset Country Travel Association
John Carlucci	Dryden Regional Training and Cultural Centre
Judith Hamilton	Dryden Area Cultural Partnership
Gerry Nobel	Dryden Historical Society
Angie Berry	Dryden Ball Diamonds Committee
Gary Nickle	Dryden Youth Soccer/ Dryden citizen
Sandra Boyko	Best Western
Rob & Deb Alderice	Eagles Landing Golf and Curling
Jeff McMurrich	Outdoor recreation instructor
Randy Allen	Dryden Minor Hockey
Brad Woodworth	NW Ontario Windsurfing Club

## Appendix C: Photographic Contributions

The following individuals and organization kindly permitted that their photos of the region be used in the strategy. You are invited to follow the links below to view their beautiful photostreams. If you would like permission to use an image, please contact them directly.

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Brent Wesley	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/bdwes/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/bdwes/</a>
Asmir Delic	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/17363339@N00/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/17363339@N00/</a>
Dennis C. Boyd	<a href="http://www.paramedicweb.info/dennisboyd.info/">http://www.paramedicweb.info/dennisboyd.info/</a>
Natasha Gordon	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/staynergirl/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/staynergirl/</a>
Bill Rivey	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/brivey/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/brivey/</a>
Davis Conrad Bacher	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/29411003@N07/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/29411003@N07/</a>
Northwest Ontario Sunset Country Travel Association	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/sunset_country/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/sunset_country/</a>

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## Appendix D: Profile Summary of Target Market Segments

**Figure 2: Profile of Canadian Target Markets**

		Wildlife Viewers	Hikers, Climbers & Paddlers	Hunters	Cross-Country Skiers	Anglers	Wilderness Activities	Horseback Riders
"Main Reason for Trip" Market Size, # of persons		2.6M	2.1M	0.64M	0.6M	2.1M	0.4M	0.18M
Average Age		43.2	39.9	44.6	41.7	42.5	37.1	38.8
Average Household Income		\$74,554	\$77,490	\$72,789	\$78,897	\$76,370	\$73,987	\$77,800
Other key <sup>3</sup> outdoor activities engaged in while on a trip	Top over-indexed <sup>4</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilderness Activities<sup>5</sup></li> <li>Horseback Riding</li> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilderness Activities</li> <li>Cross-country Skiing &amp; Snowshoeing</li> <li>Horseback Riding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snowmobiling &amp; ATVing</li> <li>Wilderness Activities</li> <li>Fishing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilderness Activities</li> <li>Skating<sup>6</sup></li> <li>Sailing &amp; Surfing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunting</li> <li>Snowmobiling &amp; ATVing</li> <li>Wilderness Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cross-country Skiing &amp; Snowshoeing</li> <li>Hunting</li> <li>Skating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilderness Activities</li> <li>Cross-country Skiing &amp; Snowshoeing</li> <li>Sailing &amp; Surfing</li> </ul>
	Most popular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Fishing</li> <li>Golfing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Fishing</li> <li>Skating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing</li> <li>Snowmobiling &amp; ATVing</li> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Skating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Golfing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Fishing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Fishing</li> </ul>
Top Over-indexed Cultural Activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory Historical Activities</li> <li>Aboriginal Cultural Experiences</li> <li>Literary &amp; Film Festivals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equestrian &amp; Western Events</li> <li>Comedy Festivals &amp; Clubs</li> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> <li>Wine, Beer &amp; Food Tastings</li> <li>Aboriginal Cultural Experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> <li>Equestrian &amp; Western Events</li> <li>Live Theatre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> <li>Professional Sporting Events</li> <li>Participatory Historical Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory Historical Activities</li> <li>Literary &amp; Film Festivals</li> <li>Aboriginal Cultural Experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equestrian &amp; Western Events</li> <li>Literary &amp; Film Festivals</li> <li>Aboriginal Cultural Experiences</li> </ul>

Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Travel Activities and Motivations Survey. (2006). Retrieved from [http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel\\_activities/index.html](http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel_activities/index.html)

<sup>3</sup> Only activities that can be done in the region or that products can be developed around are included here. For example, ocean activities and swimming are not included.

<sup>4</sup> Over-indexed or highly indexed signifies that a greater percentage, compared to the average Pleasure Traveller, selected that specific outdoor activity in the TAMS survey. For example, more travellers who engaged in hunting while on a trip selected Snowmobiling & ATVing as another outdoor activity participated in while on a trip.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. wilderness skills course, dog sledding.

<sup>6</sup> i.e. ice skating, rollerblading

Figure 3: U.S. Target Market Segments

		Wildlife Viewers	Hikers, Climbers & Paddlers	Hunters	Cross-Country Skiers	Anglers	Horseback Riders
"Main Reason for Trip" Market Size, # of persons		11M	14M	6.7M	1.2M	13.1M	2.6M
Average Age		45.5	41.6	43.2	43.4	43.3	40.4
Average Household Income		\$78,959	\$83,957	\$78,852	\$99,325	\$76,138	\$90,481
Other key outdoor activities engaged in while on a trip	Top Over-Indexed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Cross-country Skiing &amp; Snowshoeing</li> <li>Horseback Riding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cross-country Skiing &amp; Snowshoeing</li> <li>Extreme Skiing</li> <li>Horseback Riding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snowmobiling &amp; ATVing</li> <li>Extreme Skiing</li> <li>Fishing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extreme Skiing</li> <li>Board and Blade</li> <li>Sailing and Surfing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunting</li> <li>Extreme Skiing</li> <li>Snowmobiling &amp; ATVing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extreme Skiing</li> <li>Board and Blade</li> <li>Sailing and Surfing</li> </ul>
	Most Popular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shopping and Dining</li> <li>Historical Sites, Museums &amp; Art Galleries</li> <li>Theme Parks &amp; Exhibits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Games &amp; Individual Sports</li> <li>Fishing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing</li> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Games &amp; Individual Sports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Games &amp; Individual Sports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildlife Viewing</li> <li>Hiking, Climbing &amp; Paddling</li> <li>Games &amp; Individual Sports</li> </ul>
Top Over-indexed Cultural Activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory Historical Activities</li> <li>High Art Performances</li> <li>Theatre, Film &amp; Musical Festivals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Archaeological Digs &amp; Sites</li> <li>Participatory Historical Activities</li> <li>Aboriginal Cultural Experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Science and Technology Exhibits</li> <li>High Art Performances</li> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> <li>Participatory Historical Activities</li> <li>High Art Performances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equestrian &amp; Western Events</li> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> <li>Amateur Tournaments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National &amp; International Sporting Events</li> <li>Participatory Historical Activities</li> <li>Equestrian &amp; Western Events</li> </ul>

Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Travel Activities and Motivations Survey. (2006). Retrieved from [http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel\\_activities/index.html](http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel_activities/index.html)

**Figure 4: Trip Planning and Information Sources Consulted by Canadian Target Segments**

	Wildlife Viewers		Hikers & Paddlers		Hunters		Cross-Country Skiers		Anglers		Wilderness Activities		Horseback Riders	
Information Sources Consulted (Top 4 by Percentage)	Internet	73.5%	Internet	78.8%	Past experience	54.5%	Internet	81.4%	Internet	65.4%	Internet	74.2%	Internet	79.4%
	Advice of others	61.2%	Advice of others	62.5%	Advice of others	51.8%	Advice of others	63.7%	Advice of others	56.2%	Advice of others	66.8%	Advice of others	63.1%
	Past experience	59.8%	Past experience	60.4%	Internet	48.3%	Past experience	58.7%	Past experience	55.5%	Past experience	64.2%	Past experience	59.0%
	Maps	42.8%	Maps	43.6%	Maps	31.6%	Maps	45.3%	Maps	35.5%	Maps	49.3%	Travel agent	44.8%
Percent Using Internet to book part of trip	44.9%		49.9%		23.2%		49.2%		35.3%		41.6%		54.2%	
Information Sources Consulted (Top Over-Index <sup>7</sup> )	1. Official travel guides or brochures from		1. Travel guide books such as Fodor's		1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows		1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows		1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows		1. Programs on television		1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows	
	2. Visitor information centres		2. Programs on television		2. Programs on television		2. Programs on television		2. Programs on television		2. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows		2. Travel guide books such as Fodor's	
	3. Programs on television		3. Visitor information centres		3. Advertisements on television		3. Travel guide books such as Fodor's		3. Advertisements on television		3. Travel information received in the mail		3. An electronic newsletter or magazine received by e-mail	
	4. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows		4. Official travel guides or brochures from state / province		4. Past experience / Been there before		4. Official travel guides or brochures from state/province		4. Official travel guides or brochures from state/province		4. Travel guide books such as Fodor's		4. Official travel guides or brochures from state/province	
	5. Travel guide books such as Fodor's		5. Articles in newspapers / magazines		5. Advice of others / Word-of-mouth		5. Articles in newspapers / magazines		5. Past experience / Been there before		5. Advertisements on television		5. Visitor information centres	
	6. Travel information received in the mail		Visits to trade, travel or sports shows				6. Visitor information centres		6. Maps		6. An electronic newsletter or magazine received by e-mail		6. A travel agent	

Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Travel Activities and Motivations Survey. (2006). Retrieved from [http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel\\_activities/index.html](http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel_activities/index.html)

<sup>7</sup> Over-indexed means that compared to the average pleasure traveller (index value 100), a greater percentage selected the information source when surveyed (index value > 100). For example, wildlife viewers use official travel guides much more often than the average pleasure traveller to plan their vacation.

**Figure 5: Trip Planning and Information Sources Consulted by American Target Segments**

	Wildlife Viewers		Hikers & Paddlers		Hunters		Cross-Country Skiers		Anglers		Horseback Riders	
<b>Top Information Sources Consulted</b>	Internet	82.9%	Internet	85.7%	Internet	71.6%	Internet	91.3%	Internet	75.9%	Internet	86.6%
	Past experience	63.8%	Past experience	62.9%	Past experience	60.6%	Past experience	66.3%	Past experience	60.5%	Past experience	60.3%
	Advice of others	54.4%	Advice of others	56.9%	Advice of others	53.7%	Advice of others	61.5%	Advice of others	50.9%	Advice of others	55.3%
	Maps	45.1%	Maps	45.6%	Maps	38.7%	Maps	49.0%	Maps	36.4%	Maps	40.2%
<b>Percent Using Internet to book part of trip</b>	56.90%		60.80%		42.30%		69.70%		47.70%		61.9%	
<b>Information Sources Consulted – Top Over-indexed</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Official travel guides or brochures from state / province</li> <li>2. Visitor information centres</li> <li>3. Programs on television</li> <li>4. Travel guide books such as Fodor's</li> <li>5. Articles in newspapers / magazines</li> <li>6. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Travel guide books such as Fodor's</li> <li>2. Official travel guides or brochures from state/province</li> <li>3. Visitor information centres</li> <li>4. Programs on television</li> <li>5. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows</li> <li>6. Articles in newspapers/magazines</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows</li> <li>2. Advertisements on television</li> <li>3. Programs on television</li> <li>4. Advertisements in newspapers / magazines</li> <li>5. Maps</li> <li>6. Advice of others / Word-of-mouth</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows</li> <li>2. Travel guide books such as Fodor's</li> <li>3. Programs on television</li> <li>4. Articles in newspapers/magazines</li> <li>5. Official travel guides or brochures from state / province</li> <li>6. An electronic newsletter or magazine received by e-mail</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows</li> <li>2. Programs on television</li> <li>3. Advertisements on television</li> <li>4. Advertisements in newspapers / magazines</li> <li>5. Official travel guides or brochures from state / province</li> <li>6. Visitor information centres</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visits to trade, travel or sports shows</li> <li>2. Programs on television</li> <li>3. Travel guide books such as Fodor's</li> <li>4. An electronic newsletter or magazine received by e-mail</li> <li>5. Advertisements in newspapers / magazines</li> <li>6. Articles in newspapers/ magazines</li> <li>7. magazines</li> </ol>	

Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Travel Activities and Motivations Survey. (2006). Retrieved from [http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel\\_activities/index.html](http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/research/travel_activities/index.html)