

2015 Marketing Plan

March 25, 2015

Muskoka Highlands Golf Course, Bracebridge, ON

- 2014 Year in Review
- 2015 Marketing Plan Proposal



Strategy

2014/2017 Strategy & 2014/2015 Operational Plan

“Consumer-Centric Approach”

engaging “searching or discovering audiences” through



Branded
Content

Social
&
SE Marketing

Website
Enhancement

New Website Launched

Responsive design
for mobile screens

Showcases content for
“Discoverers”

Facilitates “Searchers” with
travel planning tools



Content Marketing Launched

140 stories published to the Explorers' Edge blog

Supported with 862 Facebook posts

EXPLORERS' EDGE
The Great Canadian Wilderness
Just North of Toronto

SPECIAL OFFERS PLAN BY SEASON EVENTS PHOTO GALLERY REGIONS

BOOK A ROOM: All Lodging Check-in Check-out

STAY EAT DO DIRECTIONS DISCOVER MORE

Cycling On A Lake: Winter Fat Biking on Georgian Bay

by Kate in Attractions, Outdoor Adventures on January 29, 2015

Writer and outdoors enthusiast Dawn Huddleston heads to [Parry Sound](#) to discover first-hand what winter biking is all about.

On a crisp, blue sky Monday, my friend Alex and I met Peter Isvan, co-founder of [Pedalling for Parkinsons](#), at [Parry Sound Bikes](#) to begin an unforgettable experience: fatbiking on Georgian Bay. [Parry Sound Bikes](#) owner Alesha Mullen set us up with KHS 4 Season 1000 fatbikes. Their four-inch-wide tires with heavy-duty treads looked like they could scale just about anything.

After a quick primer on gears (not much different than a mountain bike), braking (rarely needed as snow provides a wonderful, natural brake system) and trail etiquette (be courteous, stay off track-set cross-country ski trails and watch out for snowmobiles and skiers), we packed up the bikes for a short drive to the trail head.

Explorers' Edge
January 30 - Edited [?] -

Hit the fat bikes this winter in #ExplorersEdge and go where you never could before.

Cycling On A Lake: Winter Fat Biking on Georgian Bay
Writer Dawn Huddleston finds out what's so special about winter fat biking &...
EXPLORERSEGE.CA
436,736 people reached

Sponsored by Explorer's Edge

Tis the Season for Fat Biking

Slap super wide tires on a four season bike and you're ready to take on a Georgian Bay winter.

Business Objectives for 2014/2015

1. Drive 450,000 site visits to ExplorersEdge.ca – 50% increase over previous fiscal year
2. Increase outbound links to operator websites by 100% over previous fiscal year – 100,000K outbound links

A Record Year for Site Traffic

654K site visits

Up 133%

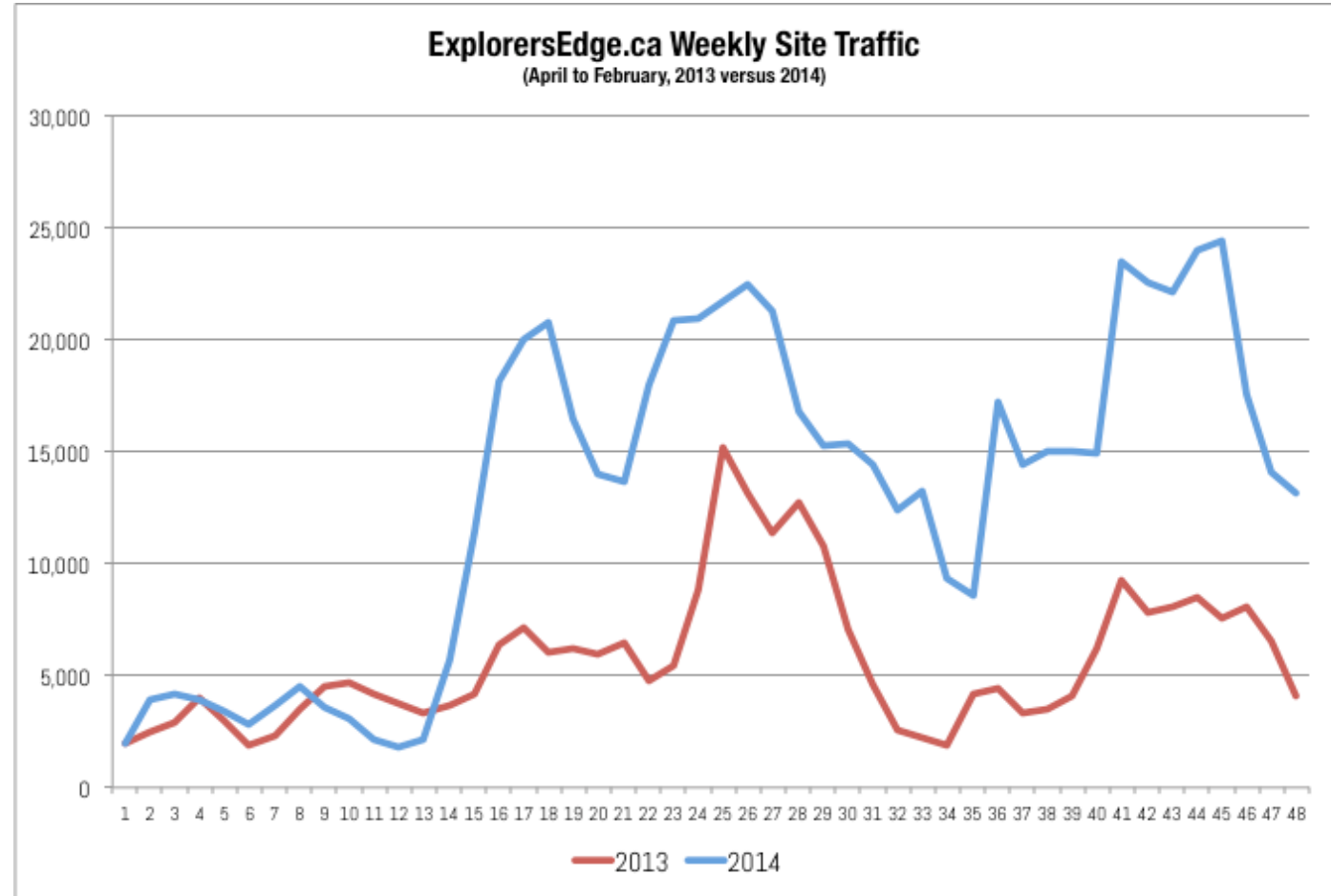
987K page views

Up 100% (to Feb 28)

517K site visitors

Up 123%

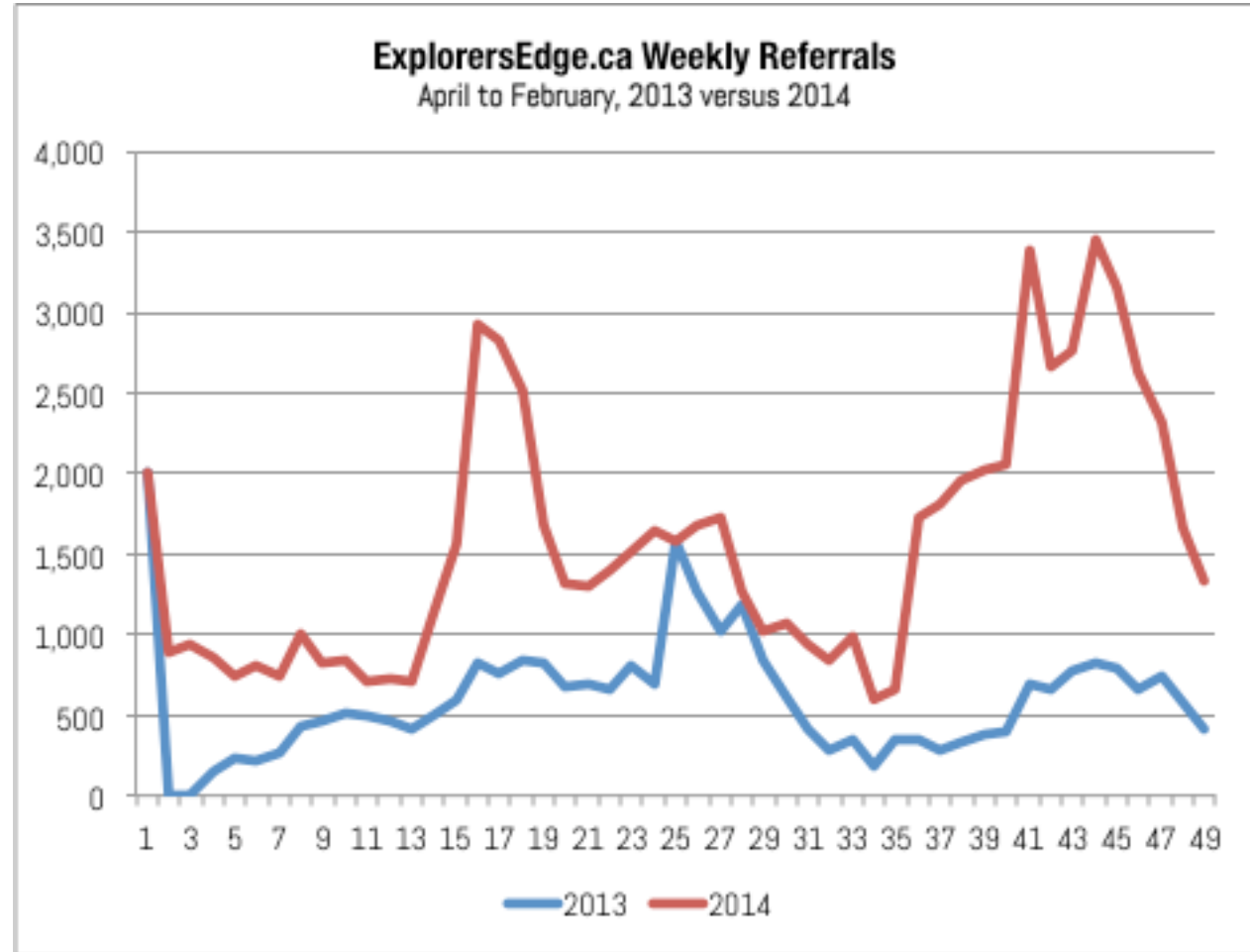
By year-end we will record almost 700K visitors, and 1 million page views



A Record Year for Referrals

107K referrals from EE.ca to third party sites
Up 144%

The referral rate has increased over 30% since the launch of the re-designed website

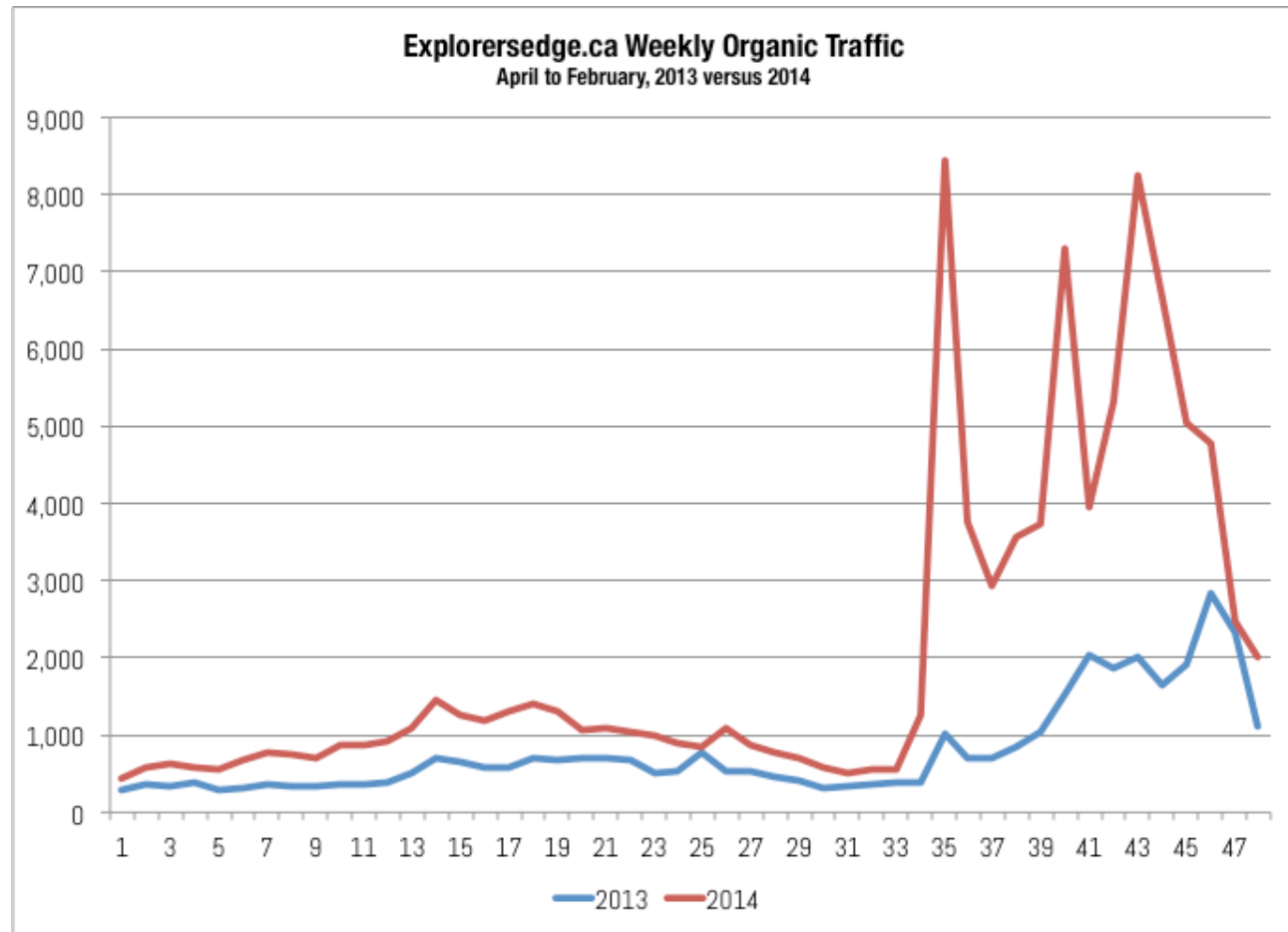


A Record Year for Organic Traffic

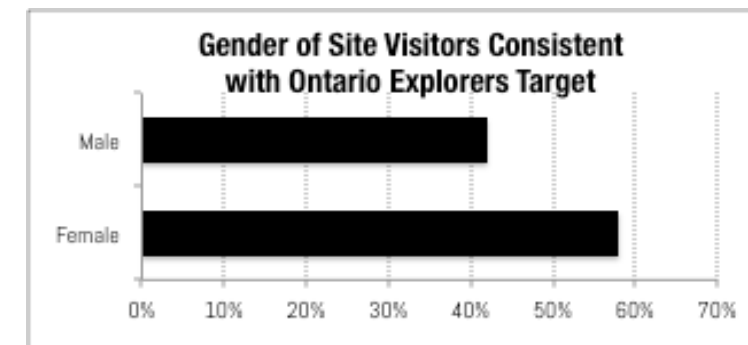
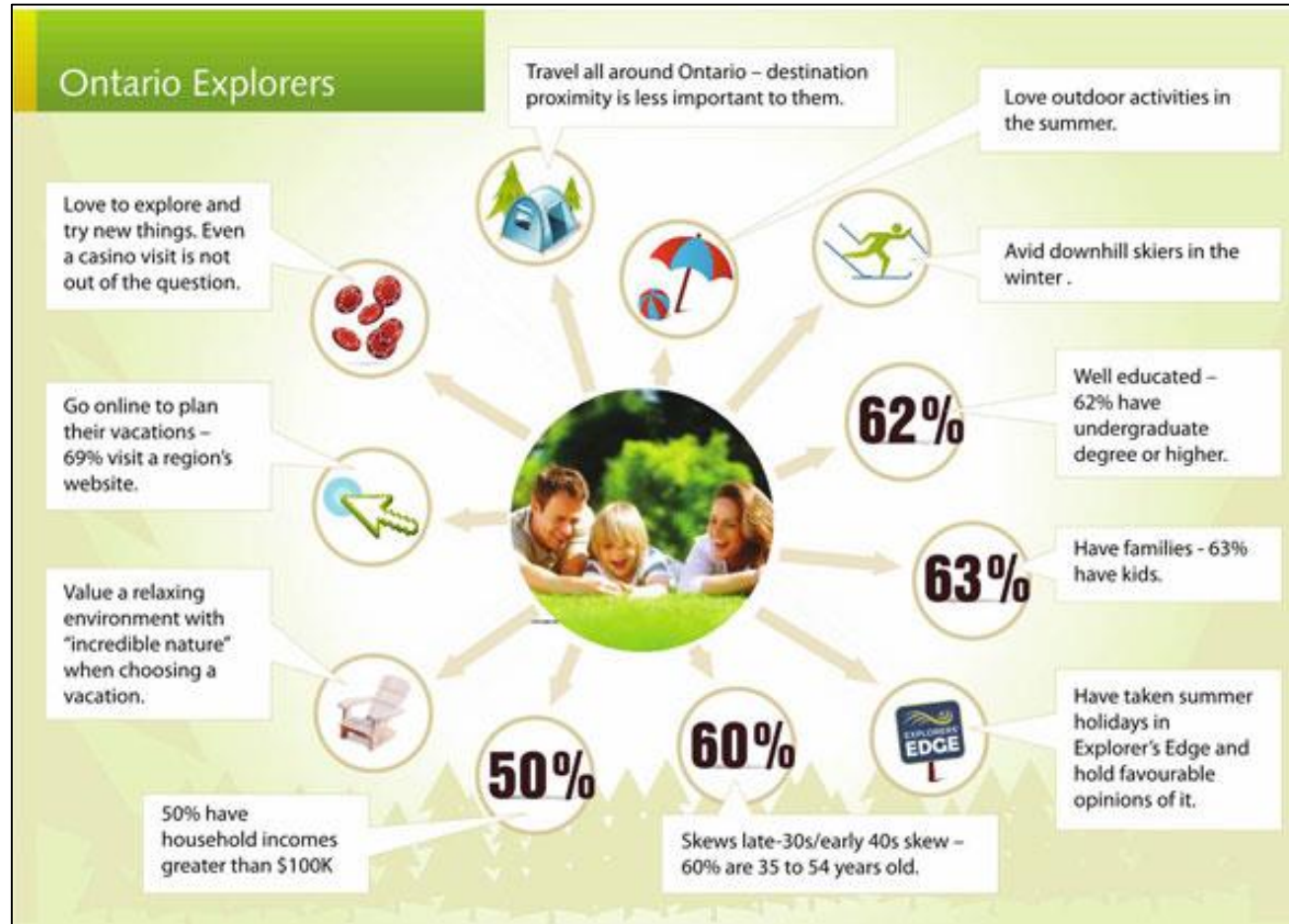
Searchers were
16% of all traffic

103K page views
Up 161%

Top 10 Blog posts
accounted for 10% of
all traffic



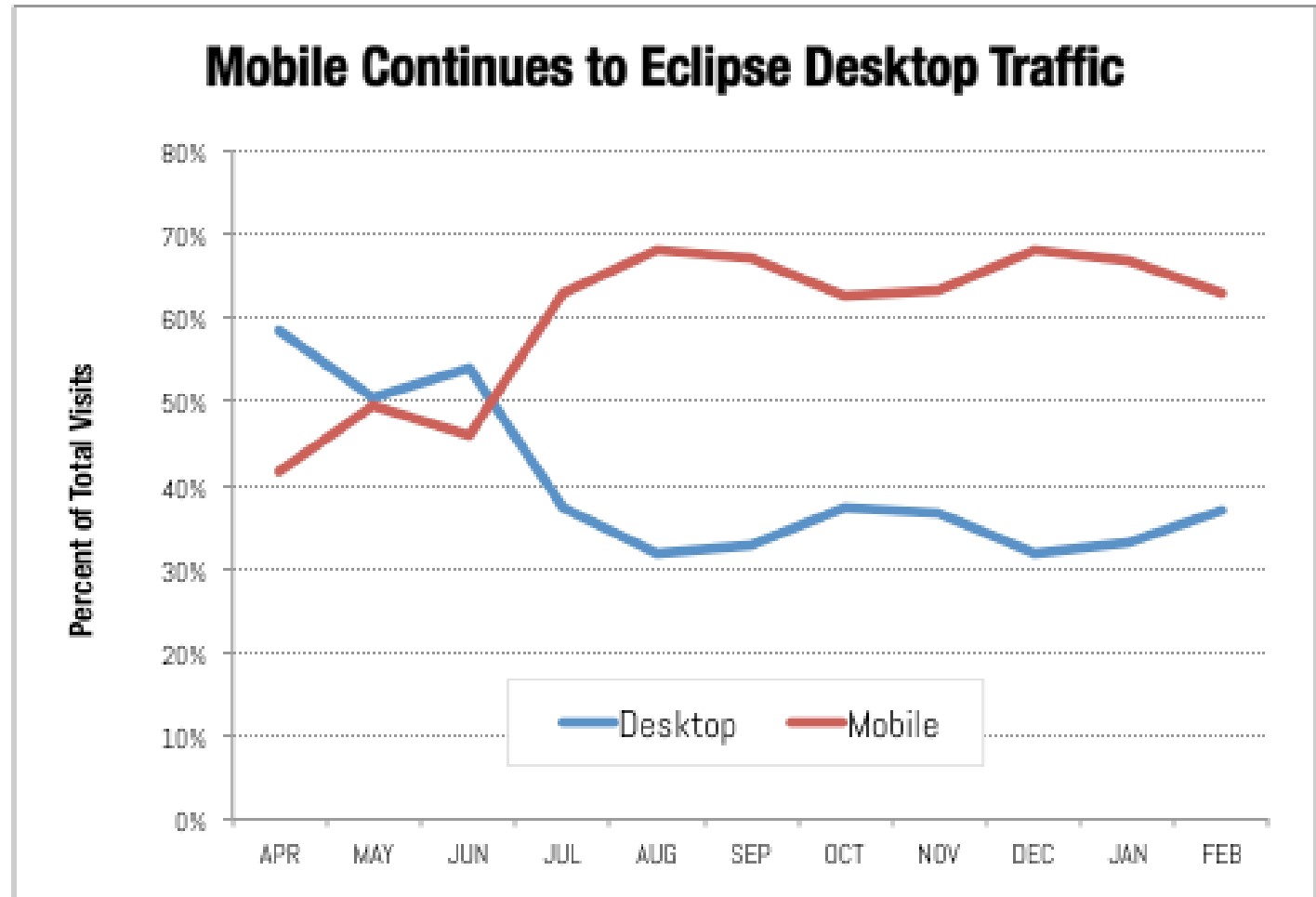
We're Hitting Our Key Target Market



Mobile Has Become Our “First Screen”

Mobile accounts for 64% of all traffic

Apple iPhone accounts for 38% of all mobile traffic



Content Drives Massive Engagement

Top 25 posts drove almost 40% of all page views and 40% of all organic traffic

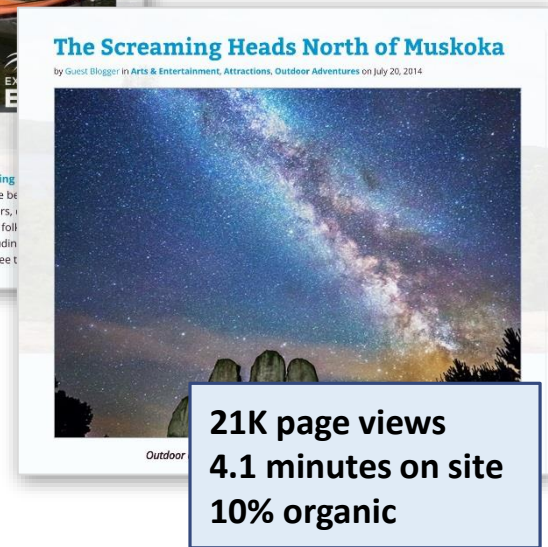
Time on site for blog visitors 3X that of average for site



92K page views
2.8 minutes on site
83% organic



62K page views
1.7 minutes on site
0% organic

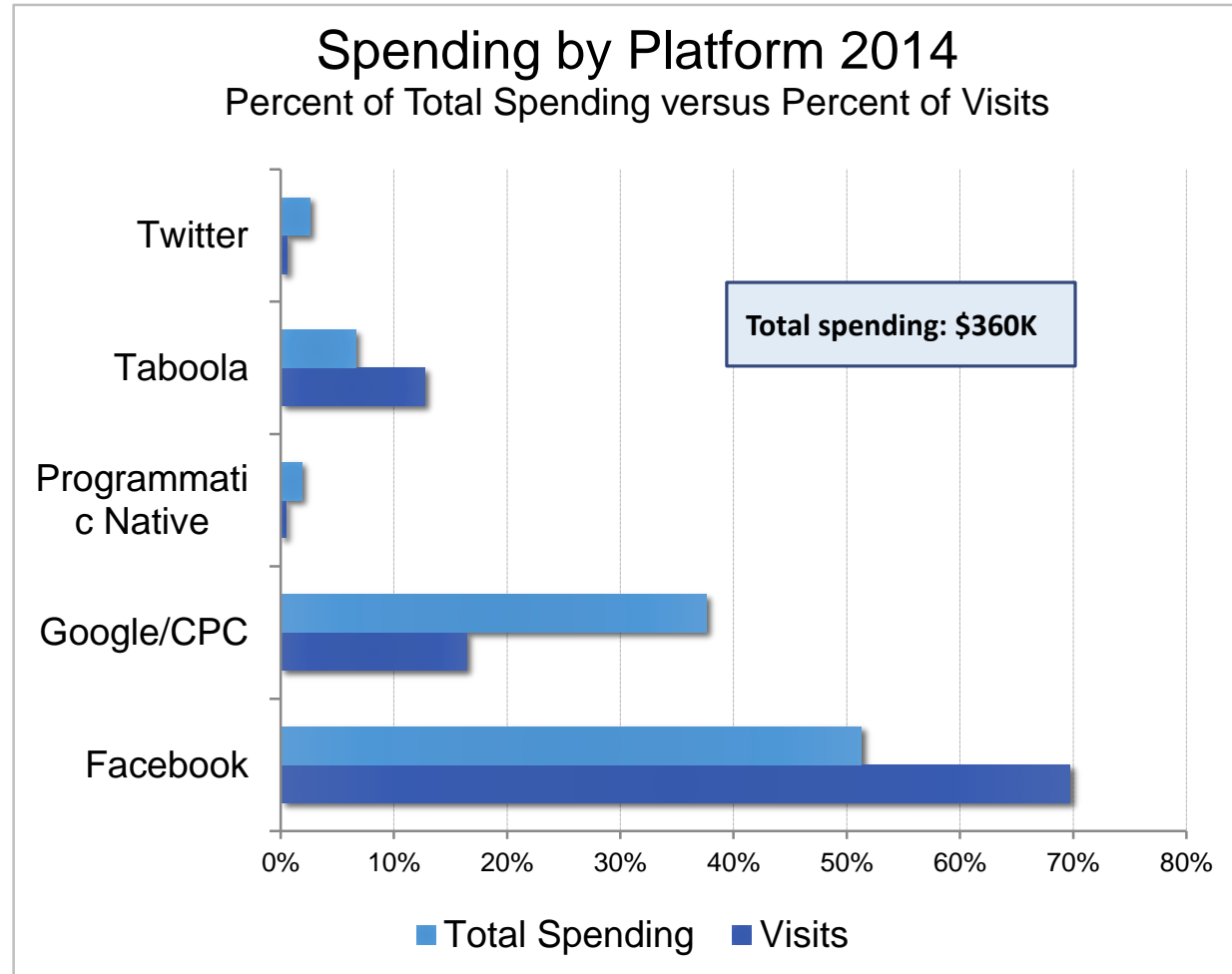


Facebook is Most Effective Traffic Driver

Paid sources account for **75% of total visits** to site

Facebook accounted for **70% of PAID traffic but only 51% of the total spending**

Google CPC and Programmatic Native deliver highest quality paid traffic



Our FB Page is the Now Third Largest

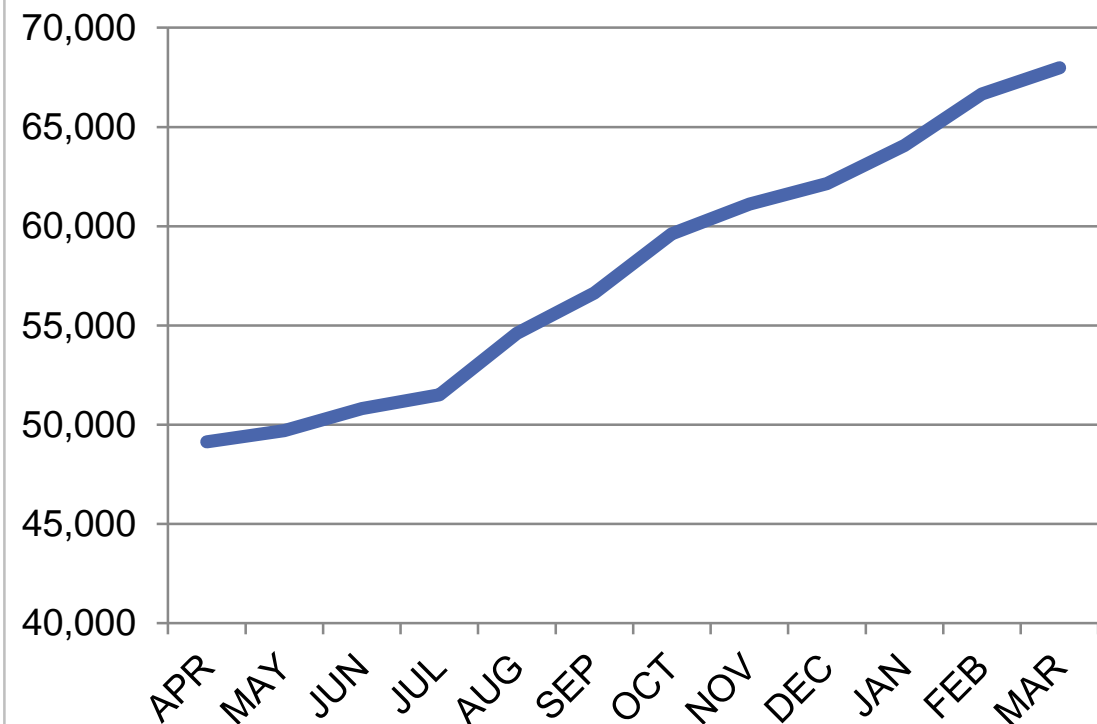
Of Ontario tourism organizations, EE page with 67K Fans is **third largest**, just behind OTMPC with 212K Fans and Tourism Toronto with 102K Fans

We added 9K Fans, 38% growth rate

Top 10 Facebook posts reached over 2.1 million Facebook users and generated over 75,000 actions

Engagement rate for Facebook posts was 4%, 7.5X the average for posts made by Pages on Facebook

Explorers' Edge Facebook Page Fan Growth
By Month, 2014

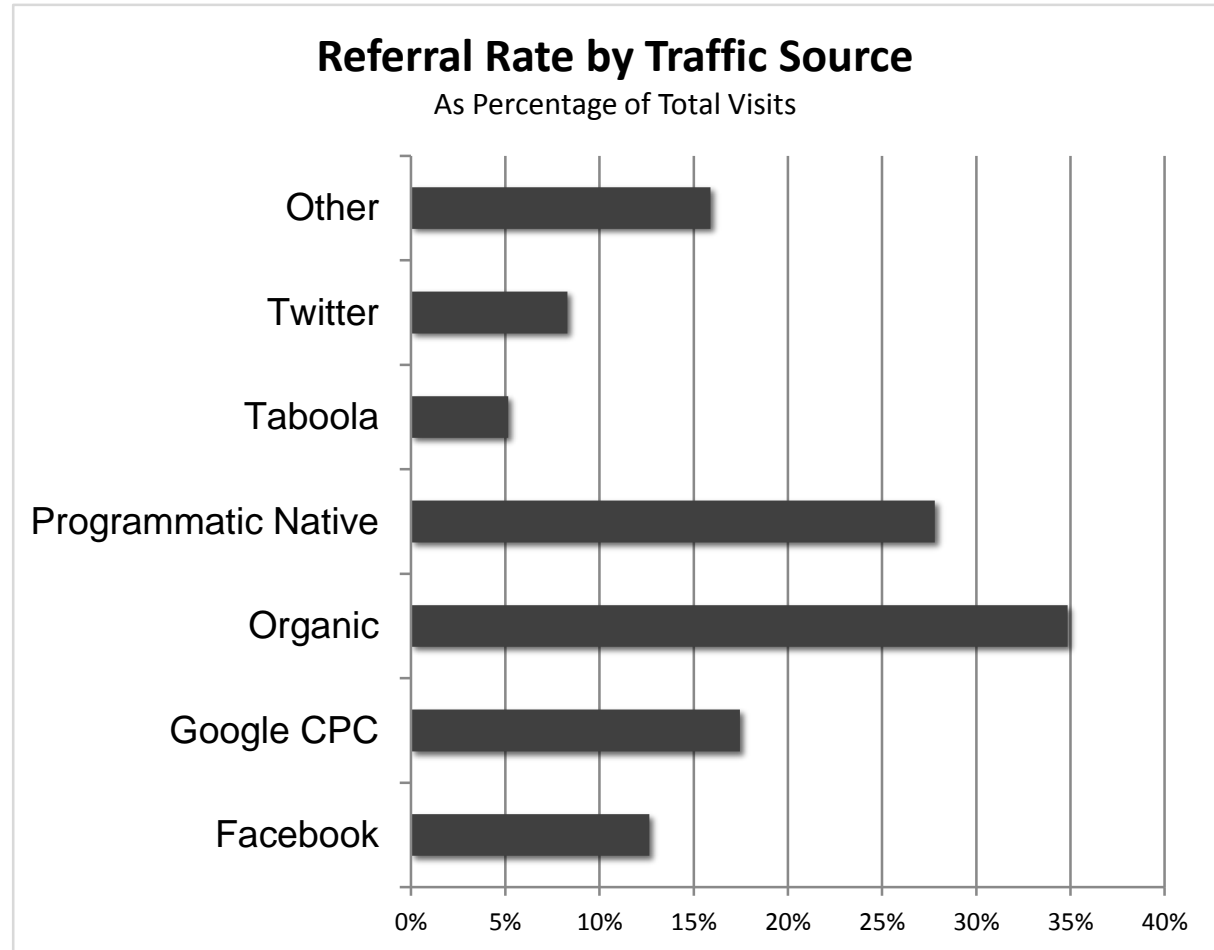


Organic Traffic Top Referrals Generator

Total of 107K referrals to third party sites from Explorersedge.ca

Average referral rate is 16%

Organic, Google CPC and Programmatic Native have the highest referral rates

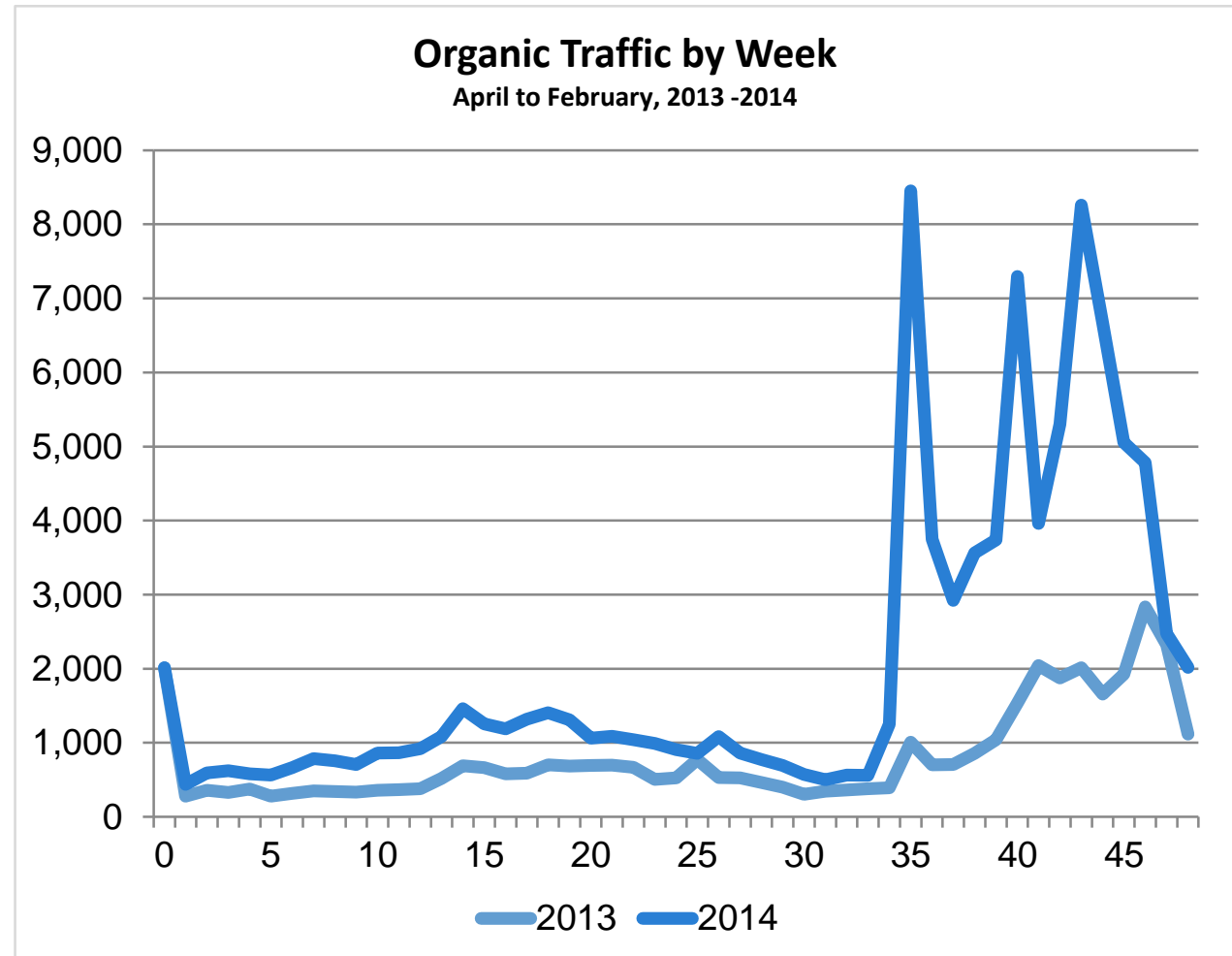


Google AdWords Drives Accommodation Seekers

Total investment of \$135K drove 87K visits

Average CPC in 2014 was \$1.55, 19% higher than in 2013 due to increased competition for keywords

59% of traffic from Google AdWords went to pages relating to accommodations

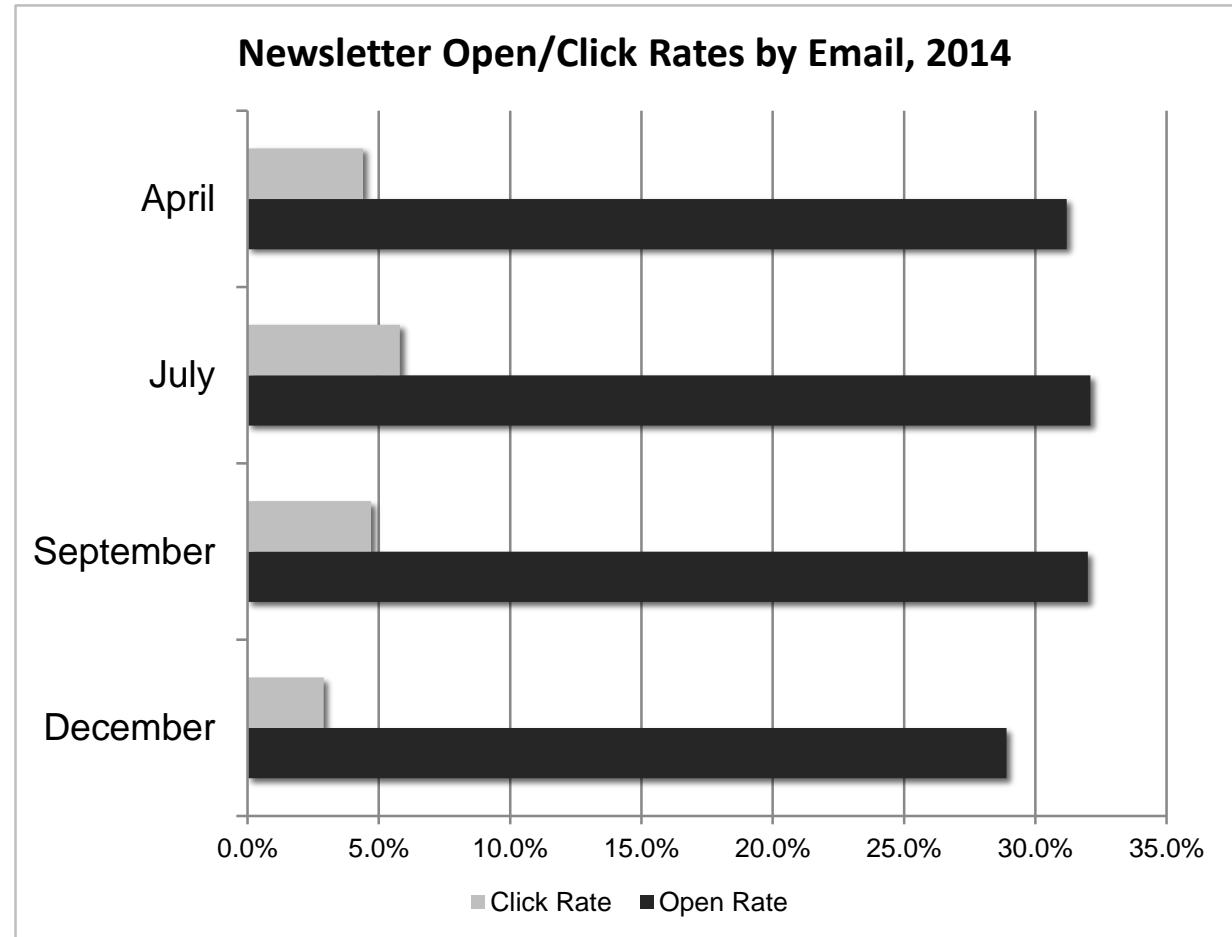


Email is an Untapped Opportunity

Explorers' Edge newsletter subscriber list grew by 1,400 records to just under 6,000 names - 34% growth rate in 2014

Average open rate of 31% versus 15% for the travel sector overall

Our click rate of 4.4% is twice the industry average of 2.2%



Additional Marketing Through Partnerships



Bala Cranberry Festival

5 Facebook promoted posts, content distribution engine placement and Google AdWords. Program delivered 144% of projected site visits, for 16,870 sessions



Loring-Restoule

Executed in May, 2014 to build the audience for the association's Facebook Page. Page likes increased by 4,800 and drove almost 9,000 visits to the LRBA's new website.



Discover Muskoka

Promotion of video and blog content on social media. Reach to date of 1,227,174 with 26,274 site visits and 57,868 video views



Kearney Dog Sled Race

Partnership focused on branding and delivery of more engaging online content. Attendance was up by about 20%, with increases in both musher and spectator counts.

Jack Rabbit

345 accommodation listings:

- 15,000 referrals
- 44% Referral to Search Ratio
- 98% listings benefited with more than 5 qualified referrals

6 attractions:

- Arrowhead Provincial Park, North Ridge Ranch, Johnstons, Chocpaw, Algonquin Adventure and Voyager
- 192 referrals since January 2015

The screenshot shows the Explorers' Edge website interface. At the top, the logo reads "EXPLORERS' EDGE The Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto". Navigation links include "SPECIAL OFFERS", "PLAN BY SEASON", "EVENTS", "PHOTO GALLERY", and "REGIONS". A blue navigation bar contains "STAY", "EAT", "DO", "DIRECTIONS", and "DISCOVER MORE".

The search results section shows "YOUR SEARCH » March 13 to March 14" with "A total of 27 venues found based on selected dates". Below this are buttons for "CUSTOMIZE RESULTS" and "SORT BY". A search bar shows "NEW SEARCH" with date pickers for "03/13/2015" and "03/14/2015" and a "SEARCH" button.

Two attraction listings are visible:

- North Ridge Ranch**: Williamsport Rd, Huntsville P1H 2J4. Tickets from \$100.00*. Includes a "BOOK >> NOW" button.
- Algonquin Adventure Tours**: 1023 Cooper Lake Rd, Dwight P0A 1H0. Tickets from \$29.00*. Includes a "BOOK >> NOW" button.

Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership

- Traffic OTMPC
 - Down 35% year over year
 - 1,700 referrals (5 million print publications!)
 - Leading in Time on Site overall
 - 1,500 packages listed vs 8,000 packages

- Northern Ontario FSI
 - 100k MacLean's, OUR Canada, National Geographic Traveller
 - Union Station – Cancelled
 - Consumer Show – 80k Great American Outdoor Show - Harrisburg
 - EE Paid Blog Post – Top Performing (Fuel & Fun to come)
 - Ray Mears – OTMPC Landing Page – does not impact RTO12
 - No mention of Algonquin Park

THEMED CAMPAIGNS TOTAL REACH 4.95M



Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership

- **Traffic OTMPC:**

- Down 35% year over year
- 1,700 referrals (5 million print publications!)
- Leading in Time on Site overall
- 1,500 packages listed vs 8,000 packages

- **Northern Ontario FSI:**

- 100k MacLean's, OUR Canada, National Geograph
- Union Station – Cancelled
- Consumer Show – 80k Great American Outdoor Show - Harrisburg
- EE Paid Blog Post – Top Performing (Fuel & Fun to come)
- Ray Mears – OTMPC Landing Page – does not impact RTO12
- No mention of Algonquin Park

THEMED CAMPAIGNS TOTAL REACH 4.95M



Questions



2015 Marketing Recommendations

“Consumer-Centric Approach”

engaging “searching or discovering audiences”
through

Continue with **leading edge social/mobile/content strategy**



2015 Marketing Priorities

- **Content marketing:**
 - Publish exceptional content serving the Ontario Explorers segment and specific niches
 - While our focus will be on “discoverers,” we will attract “searchers” with product and offer-oriented content
 - Grow site traffic and focus on increasing its quality
- **Lead nurturing:**
 - Convert site visitors to leads and row them to “heads-in-beds”

2015 Marketing Objectives

- Publish 150+ pieces of content on EE.ca
- Drive 700K visitors to that content and other pages on ExplorersEdge.ca
- Drive 150K referrals to third party websites
- Add 4K leads to the email database







Content Marketing

2015 Marketing Objectives

- We focus at least one story per month on:
 - Purchase decision criteria where EE is perceived to be lacking (proximity/accessibility, accommodations, cultural activities, attractions and dining/entertainment)
 - Communities of interest/niches, such as cyclists, motorsports enthusiasts, etc.

Content reinforces the brand position:

The Great Canadian Wilderness just North of Toronto

	Primary Audience(s)	Primary Platform Role	Platform Content
	Searchers & Discoverers	Organic and paid search, lead capture/CRM, sales	Original long-form text and embedded video content
	Discoverers	Amplify blog and YouTube content to reach people unaware of EE	Blog links and YouTube link posts, photo posts, curated third party content
	Searchers, Trade	Communicate "in-the-moment" developments	EE news and promotions, especially those of interest to travel trade
	Searchers & Discoverers	Educate and entertain, build SEO	EE news and promotions, especially those of interest to prospects who already have EE in their consideration set
<i>Instagram</i>	Discoverers	Reinforce EE's brand position and create desire to visit	The best in photography from the region
	Searchers	Conversion to heads-in-beds	Participate in forums, add content to EE destination page
	Searchers	Conversion to heads-in-beds	EE news, offers and promotions targeted to the specific segment needs

Lead Nurturing

The Evolution of EE Marketing

- We have proved we can drive traffic to our website
- Now it's time to focus on the "last mile" in the content marketing process - converting site visitors into overnight visitors to the region
- "Lead nurturing" plays a critical role conversion:
 - The process of building relationships with qualified prospects over the long run with the goal of earning their business when they are ready to book

Lead Nurturing Program Objectives

1. To develop deeper engagement with site visitors and ultimately convert more of them to “heads-on-beds”
2. To grow the list from two perspectives:
 - List depth – acquire new subscribers
 - List breadth – collect data on existing/new subscribers to expand our understanding of who they are/their travel preferences

Program Components

- **Building the database:**
 - Capture information from visitors to the website as well as to EE's social media networks using special offers via custom landing pages to encourage sign up
- **Lead processing:**
 - Upon sign-up, we will ask the prospect a series of simple questions in order to assign them based on interests to marketing segments
- **Email marketing:**
 - Monthly email deployments
 - We will no longer do one-size-fits-all marketing: Only segments for whom we have a relevant message will receive an email, to a maximum of 6 emails per year

Operationalizing the Lead Nurturing Program

- **Marketing automation software** is key to an effective lead nurturing strategy:
 - Segment prospects and prioritize them based on interests and engagement
 - Easily create customized landing pages for email campaigns
 - Automate the deployment of customized email based on prospect behaviour
 - Manage content publication and track content interactions across online and social platforms
 - Integrate with lead management systems such as Highrise

Operationalizing the Lead Nurturing Program

- We recommend **HubSpot** provide our marketing automation solution:
 - Designed for small/medium sized businesses
 - Priced considerably lower than its main competitors
 - Scalable
 - Fully integrated solution without expensive add-ons
 - Optimizes for mobile
 - Tracks the lead all the way through the purchase loop
 - Expert services/consultation available at no additional charge to ensure the software is being used effectively



RTO12 Additional Programs

TRANSACTING

- Jack Rabbit
 - Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency
 - Golf Muskoka
- Package Development
- Spring Fuel and Fun
- Fall Fuel and Fun

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Georgian Bay
- Winter Non-Motorized
- Paddling
- Craft Beer and Wineries
- Cycling

Questions



2015 Marketing Budget

2015 Marketing Priorities

- **Content marketing:**
 - Publish exceptional content serving the Ontario Explorers segment and specific niches
 - While our focus will be on “discoverers,” we will attract “searchers” with product and offer-oriented content
 - Grow site traffic and focus on increasing its quality
- **Lead nurturing:**
 - Convert site visitors to leads and row them to “heads-in-beds”

2015 / 2016 Marketing Budget

Social Media Advertising - Facebook Ads	\$271,000.00	
Search Engine Marketing - Google Adwords	\$75,000.00	
Content Promotion - Stack Adapt / Programmatic Native	\$60,000.00	
OTMPC	\$17,000.00	
Sub Total		\$423,000.00
Content Development / Guest Authors	\$25,000.00	
Promotions/Contests/Incentives	\$22,850.00	
Creative Development	\$10,000.00	
Project Mngmt (Facebook 15%)	\$40,650.00	
Project Mngmt (Google 14%)	\$10,500.00	
Project Mngmt (Stack Adapt / Programmatic Native 10%)	\$6,000.00	
Monthly Retainer (\$4,000 x 12 months)	\$48,000.00	
Tools - Social Listening / Subscription	\$4,000.00	
Hubspot (20k Training Component)	\$35,000.00	
Sub Total		\$202,000.00
Total		\$625,000.00

Questions

