

Explorers' Edge

Brand Health Study, 2013



Overview

- Explorers Edge commissioned Cloud AdAgents to do a follow-up study to the 2012 brand research, conducted online in the winter of 2012
- Similar samples, while different in size due to budget limitations, were selected to allow year-over-year comparisons
- The 2013 study reprises the same brand metrics questions included in the 2012 study, thereby permitting a longitudinal view of these metrics

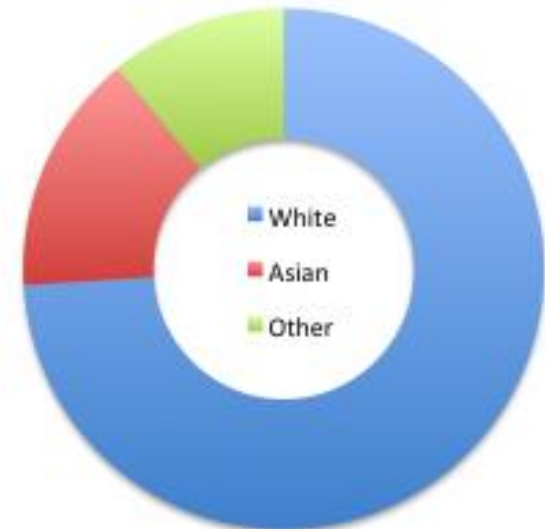
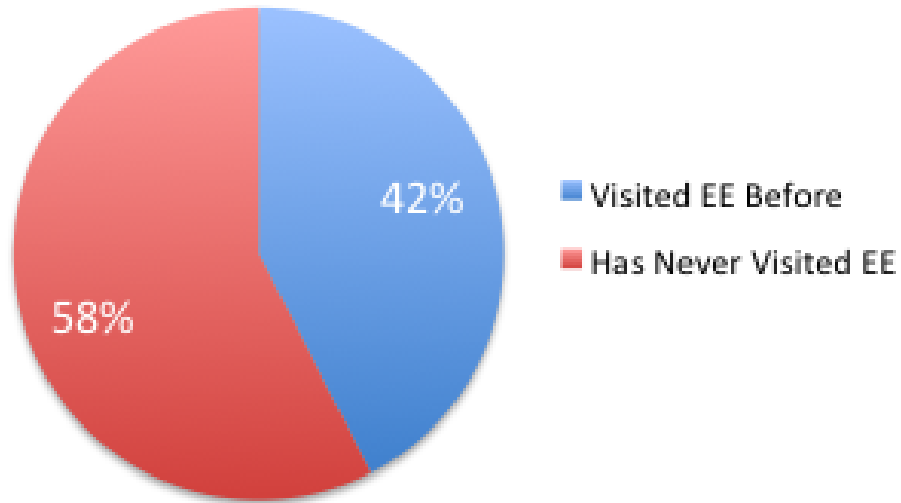
What does this mean for our marketing strategy?

- The research shows some progress with awareness of Explorers' Edge amongst the all-important Ontario Explorers segment:
 - However, overall most brand health metrics are unchanged from 2012. This is not surprising given the limited investment in brand advertising over the 12 months preceding the survey
 - Moving brand health metrics in large media markets such as the GTA is a very expensive undertaking, and generally requires a \$1MM+ media budget and a commitment to year-round brand advertising. This is not possible given all the demands on the annual budget of RTO 12
- We feel this research confirms the decision to focus the 2013 marketing programs on highly-focused tactical efforts:
 - To drive traffic to the EE web site
 - To encourage visitors to patronize the operators in the region
- The survey also confirmed that prospective visitors associate the region with nature and relaxation and less with activities and tourism packages. The former is a positive association, and a driver of visits to the region. However, work must continue to change the latter perceptions, and highlights the importance of tipping-point programs like *Explore the Edge*.

Methodology

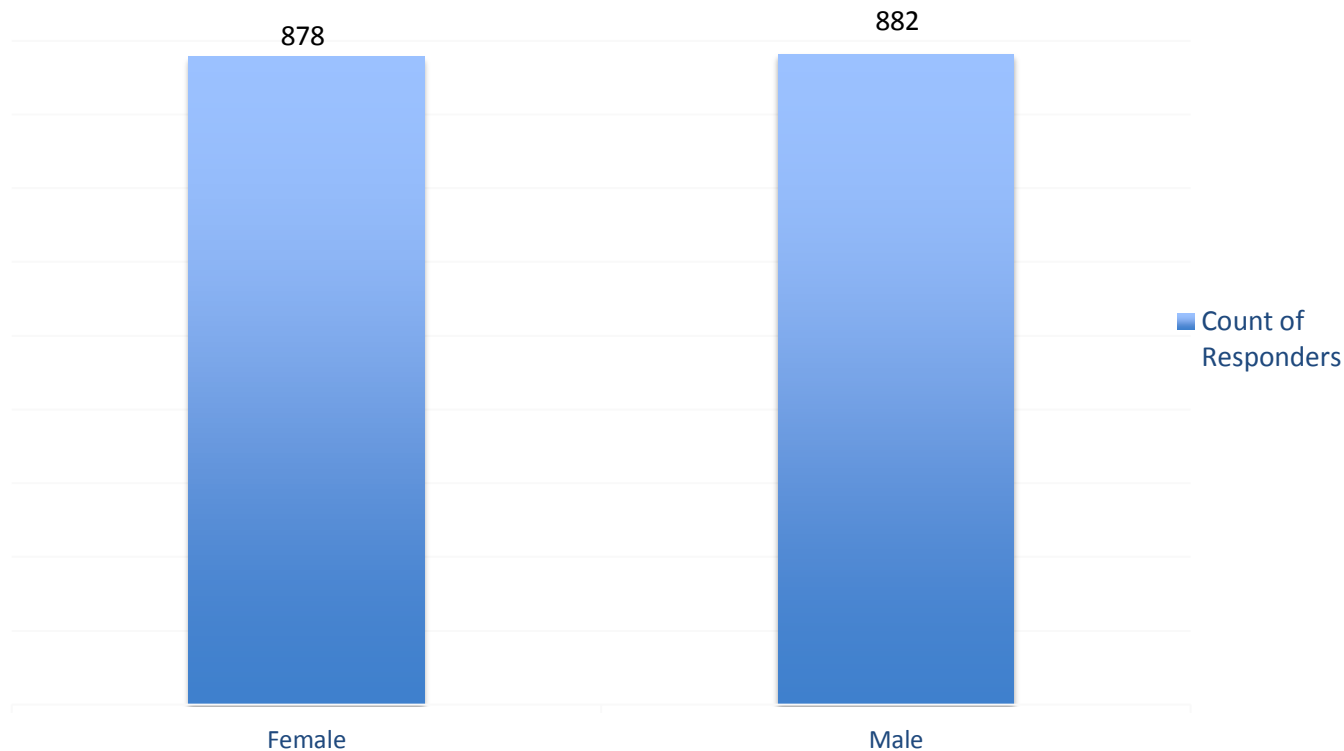
- Online quantitative research survey:
 - The 2013 was in-field in April – a total of 530 surveys were completed online
 - Distributed to ensure a quota based on age, income, gender and geographic location
 - Completed by residents of Southwestern Ontario

Respondent Profiles



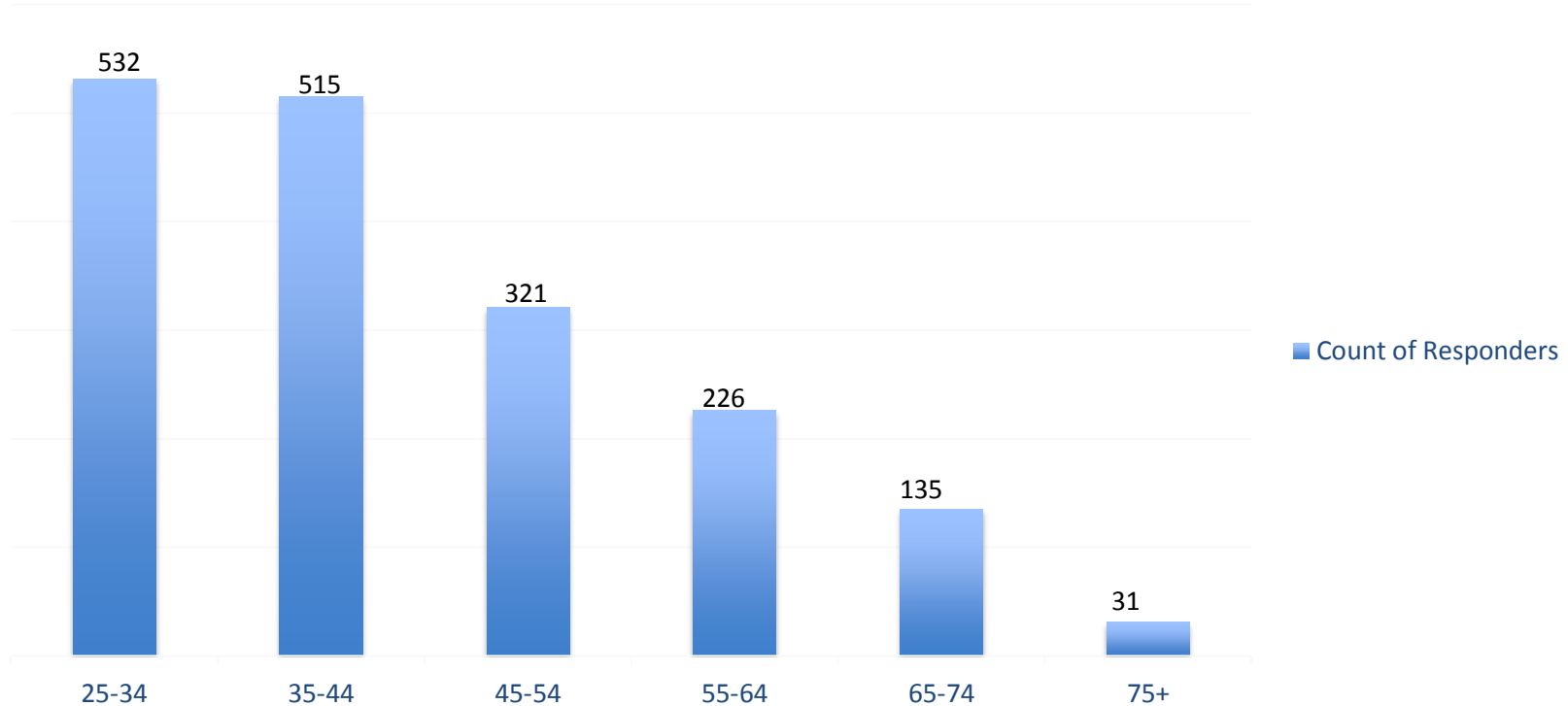
Gender Distribution of Survey Respondents

As per the survey quota, we've delivered a roughly 50/50 gender split



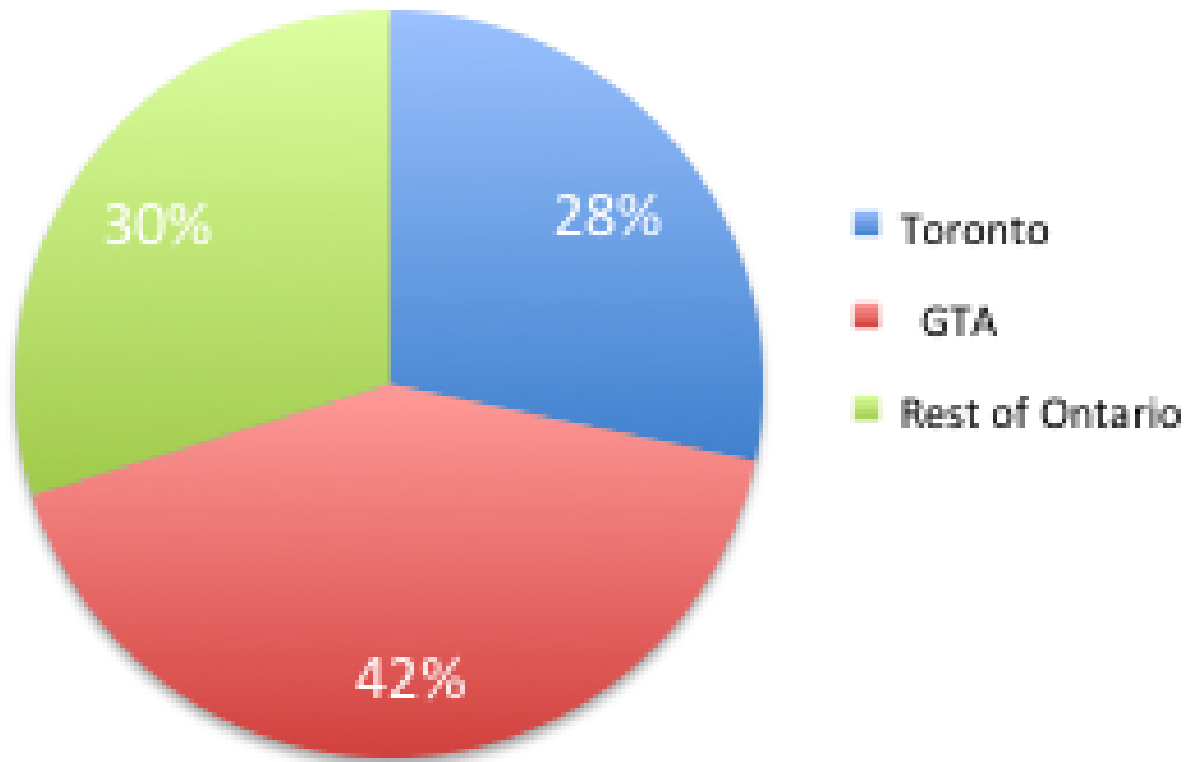
Age Distribution of Survey Respondents

Our quota by age group skewed to a younger 25-44 demographic, similar to the study in 2012



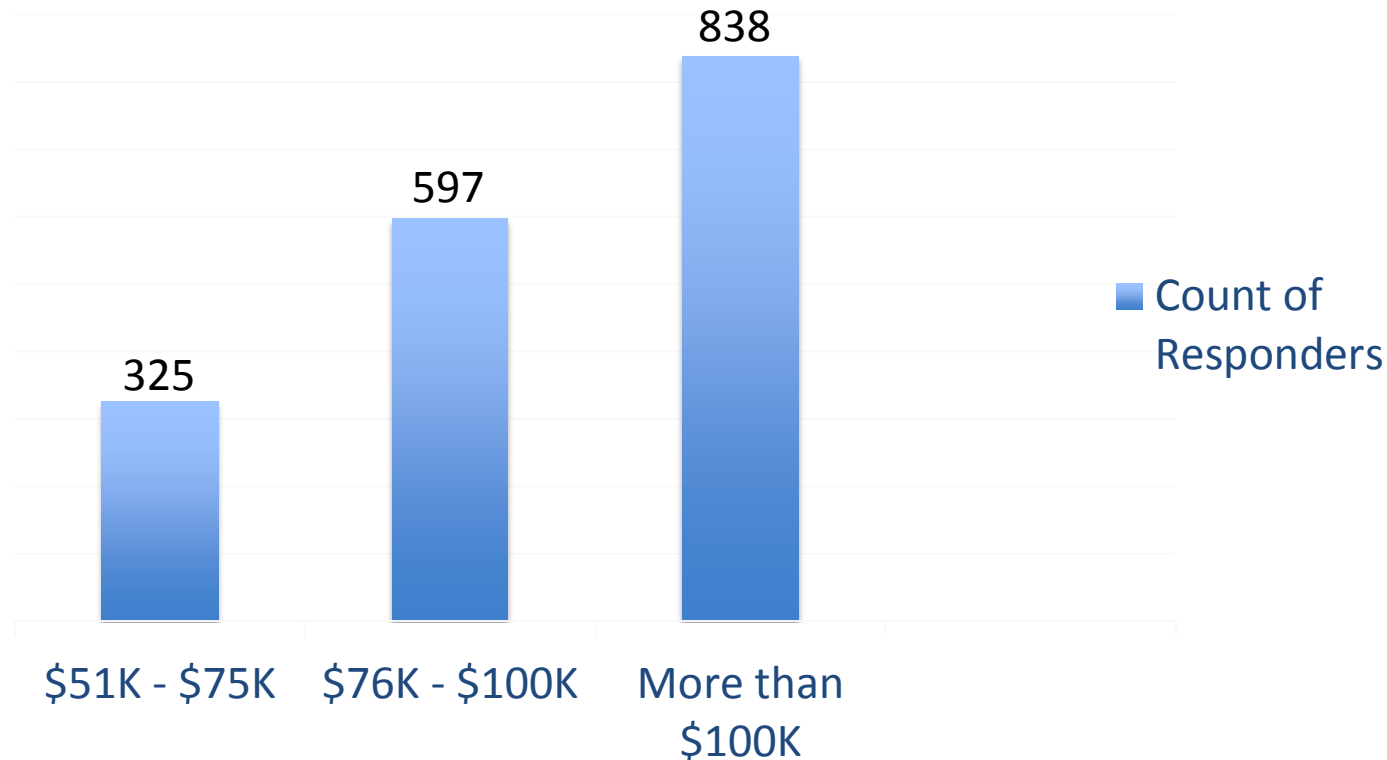
Residency distribution of survey respondents

Proximity to RTO12 was considered an important qualifier for the survey quota. Toronto, in particular, was specifically targeted



Income distribution of survey respondents

Similar to 2012, an emphasis was placed on securing respondents with a slightly-higher-than-average annual income.



Executive Summary

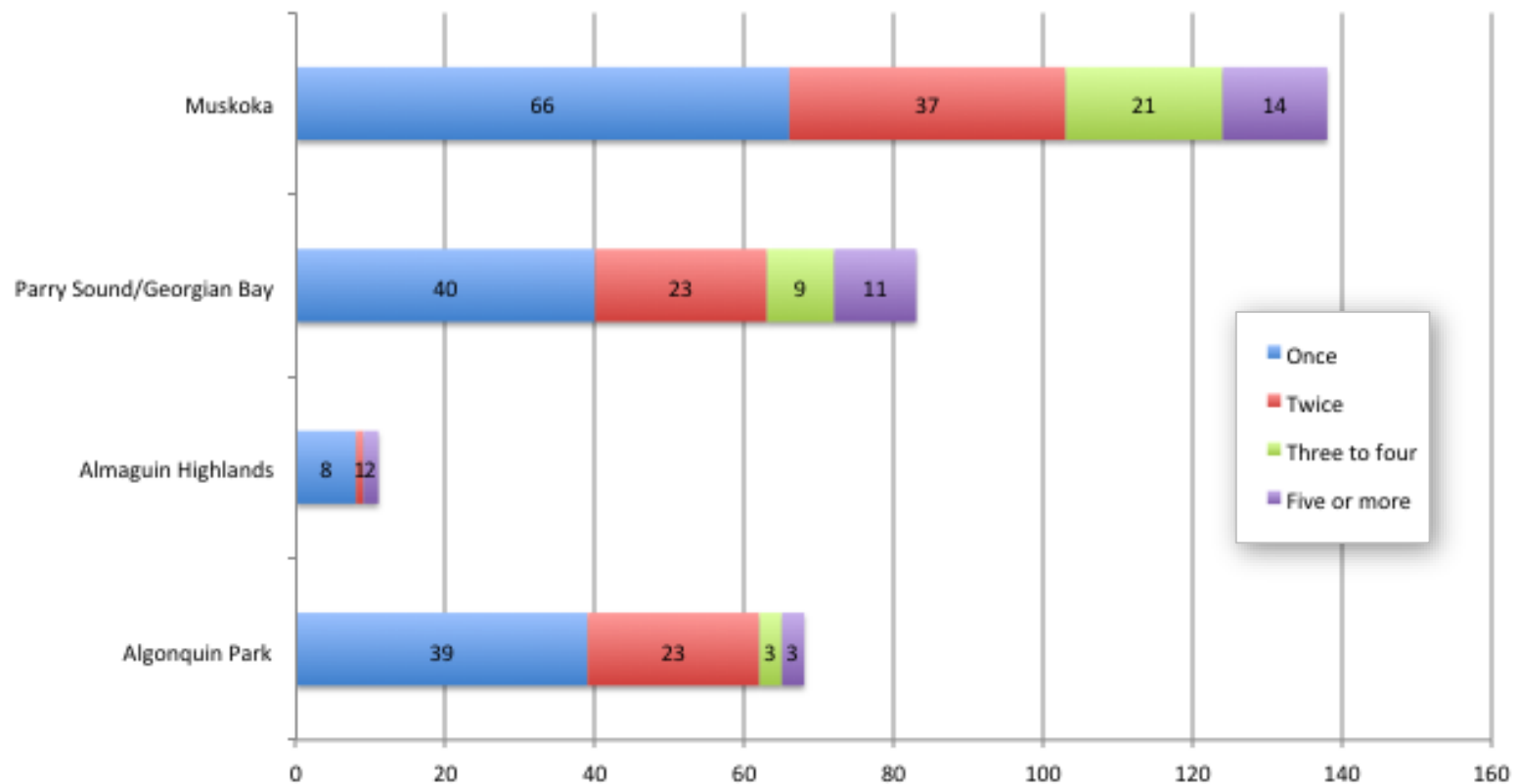
- Aided recall is virtually unchanged over the previous year, though it has increased with GTA respondents and with respondents 45-54 (both these groups fall into the Ontario Explorers segment defined as our primary target in 2013)
- Explorers' Edge continues to be a popular travel destination in Ontario, especially during the summer, Muskoka has remained in 2nd place after Niagara and Algonquin is in 8th place the same as in 2012
- The importance of a region's website is growing – consumers are using these as their primary source of information to help them plan a vacation or day trip
- Consumers perceive the distance to Muskoka and Parry Sound in particular to be a negative when planning their vacation
- Bad traffic congestion is a barrier for consumers for travel in Ontario, but it's a bigger issue for our main competitors of Niagara, Stratford and Prince Edward County
- On the other hand, the Explorers' Edge region is perceived very positively of having a large variety of outdoor activities, beautiful scenery and a relaxing atmosphere

Executive Summary

- Of all regions in EE, Muskoka is the most popular but if respondents visit any of the regions they are significantly more likely to say they will visit again
- Respondents from the GTA are the most likely to visit Parry Sound, Algonquin Park and the Almaguin Highlands compared to the other geographic regions

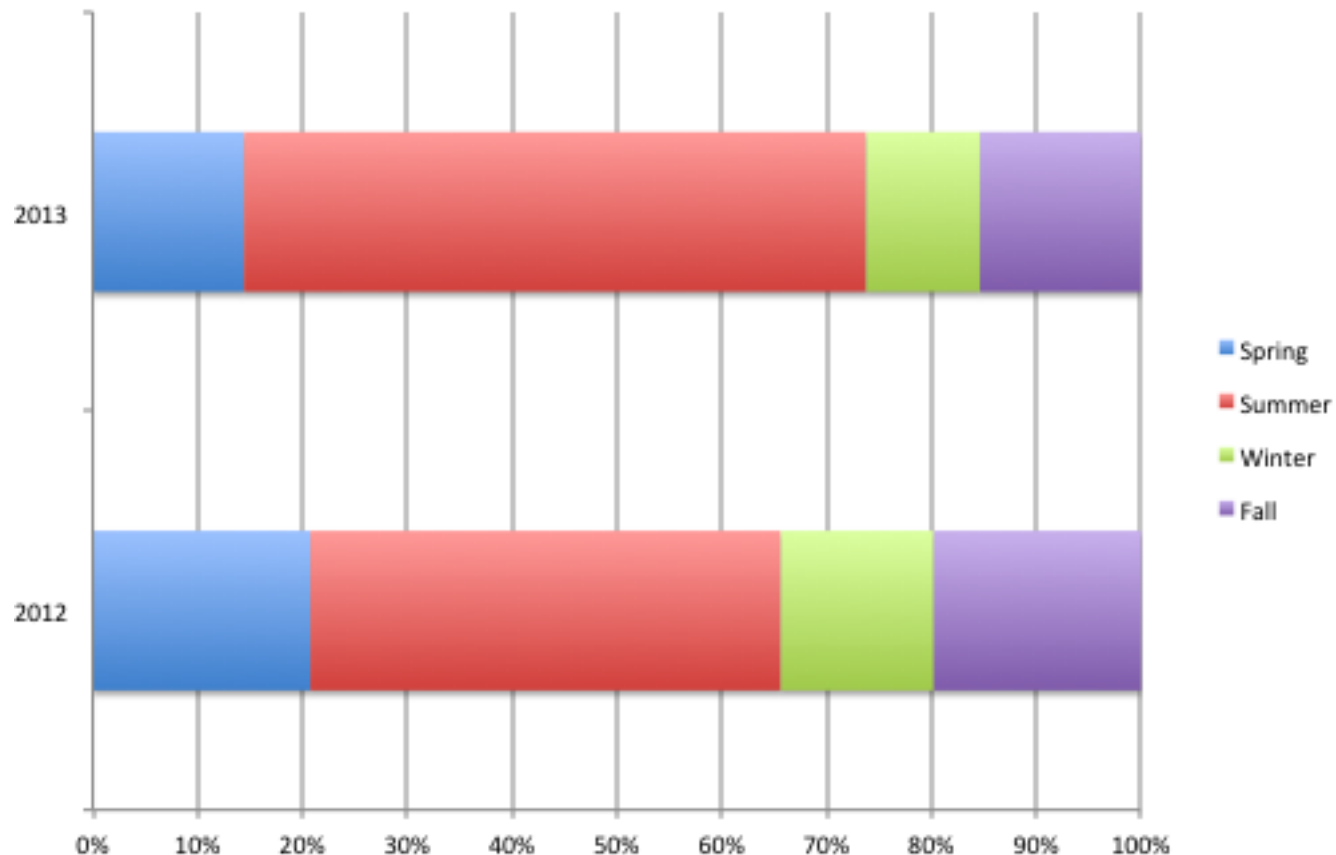
Frequency of Visits to Specific EE Sub-regions

- Of the 42% of respondents who have visited EE in the past year, the destination and frequency of visits is as follows:



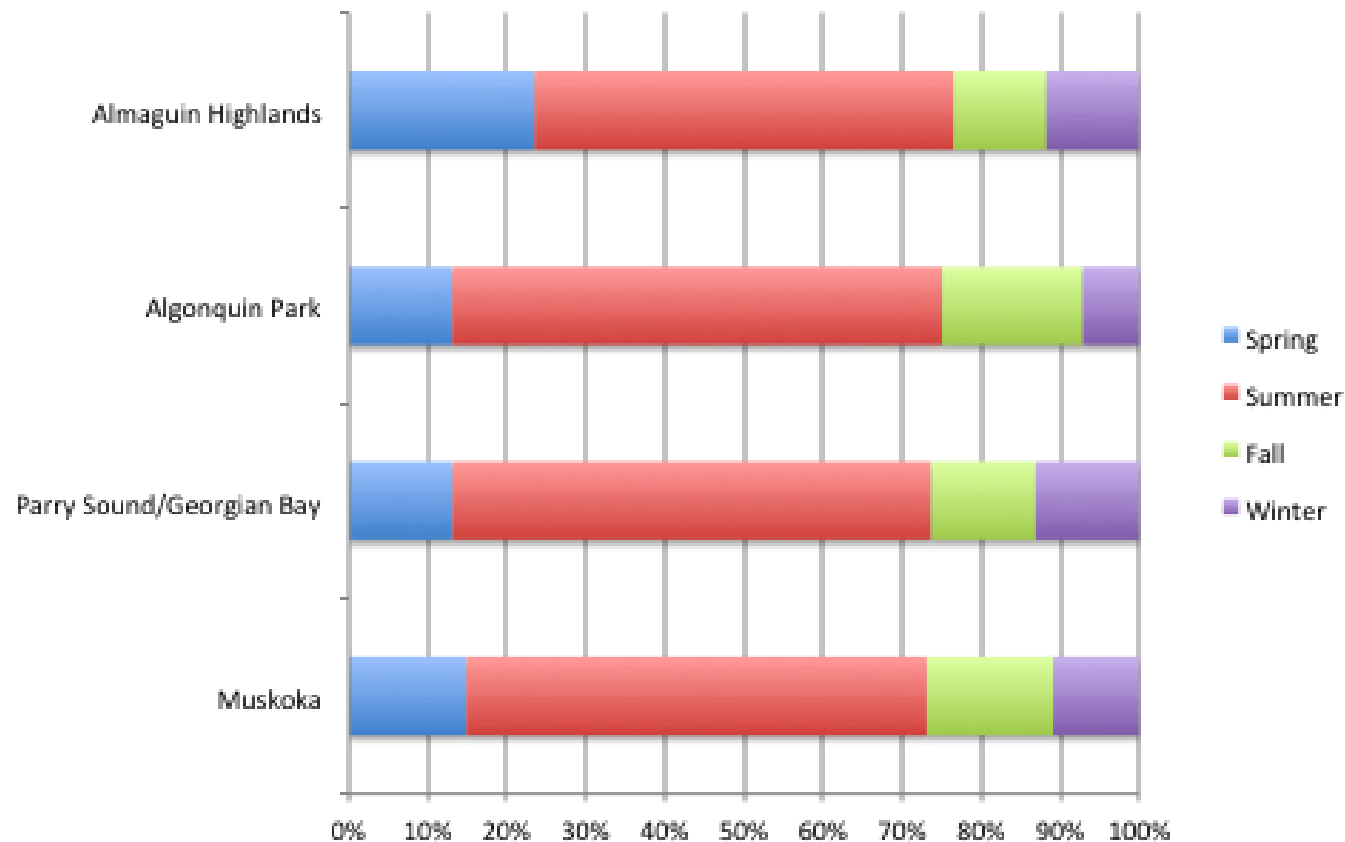
Do they visit us in the fall and winter?

- In the 2013 study, respondents showed a greater tendency to visit EE during the summer



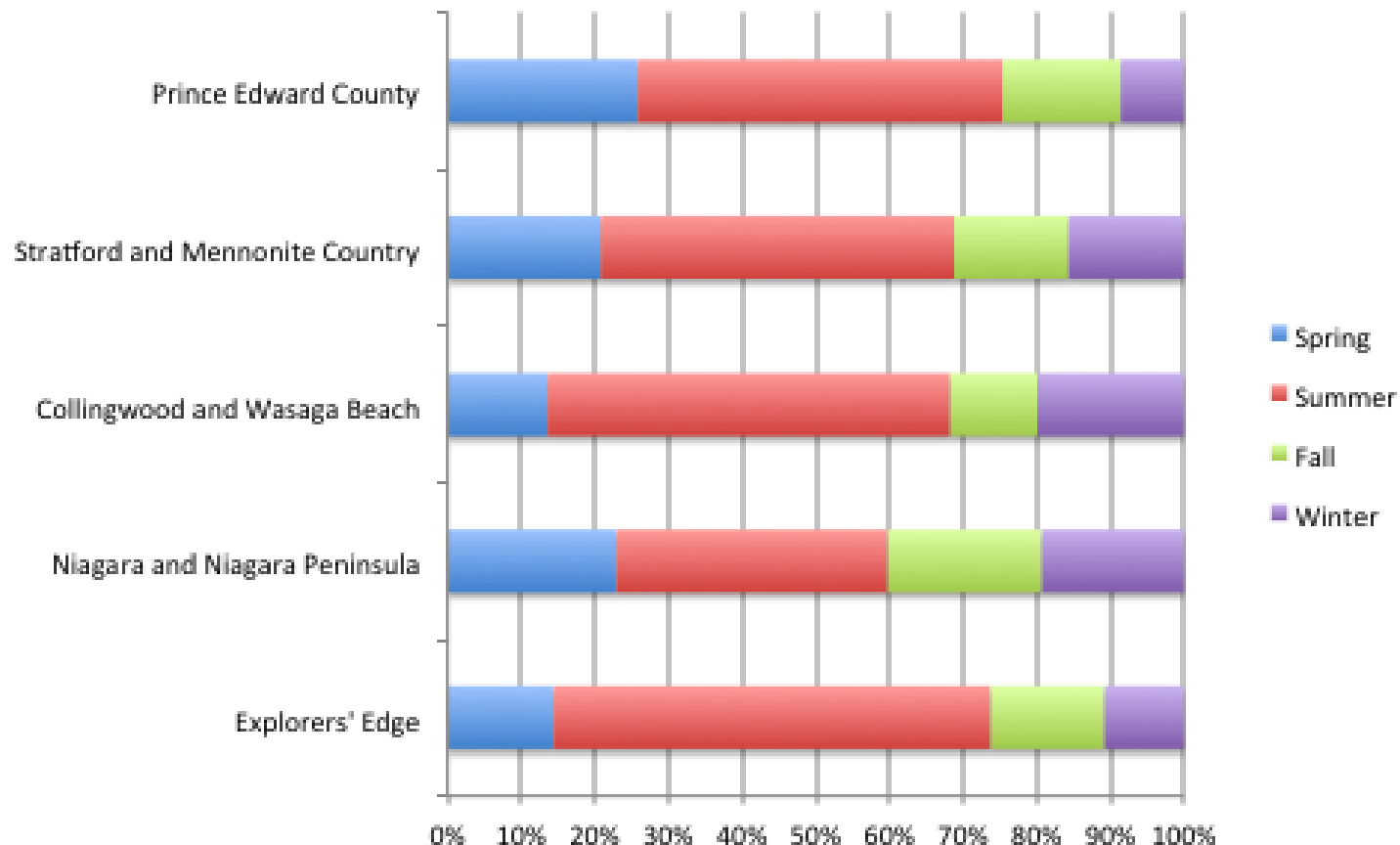
Which sub-region do they visit in the fall and winter?

- By EE sub-region, Algonquin Park has the greatest proportion of visits in the fall



Seasonality of Visits EE versus Competition

- EE has the greatest concentration of visits during the summer; Niagara has the most balance across the four seasons



Destination Rankings, Unaided

- Niagara/Stratford, Muskoka and Ottawa continue to rank as the top three destinations that come to mind when thinking of nearby vacation destinations. Algonquin ranked 8th this year, as it did last year

	2012 Study		2013 Study		Change
	Rank	Mentions	Rank	Mentions	
Niagara/Stratford	1	565	1	253	0
Muskoka	2	315	2	131	0
Ottawa	3	256	3	105	0
Barrie/Collingwood/Blue Mountain	4	152	4	96	0
Wasaga Beach/Georgian Bay	5	146	5	80	0
Prince Edward county/Kingston/1000 islands	6	137	6	64	0
Northern Ontario	9	78	7	50	2
Algonquin	8	90	8	44	0
Montréal/Québec	7	118	9	34	-2
Kawarthas/Peterborough	10	62	10	31	0
Haliburton	13	34	11	28	2
Toronto/GTA	11	59	12	27	-1
London/Kitchener/Waterloo/W. Ontario	12	39	13	26	-1

Q8. When it comes to going on a vacation in ontario or nearby, what places come to mind?

We're competing with Niagara, consistent with 2012 findings

- Of all regions in EE, Muskoka scores the highest intention to visit amongst all respondents
- Previous visitors to the region show significantly higher intention to visit again
- Respondents of the GTA score higher intention to visit Parry Sound, Algonquin Park and the Almaquin Highlands

	Total	EE	No EE	Toronto	GTA	Rest of Ontario	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Niagara/Niagara Peninsula	74%	72%	76%	70%	77%	74%	73%	74%	78%	73%
Toronto	64%	68%	62%	-	91%	88%	57%	51%	76%	78%
Collingwood & Wasaga Beach	45%	52%	39%	44%	50%	38%	49%	45%	45%	39%
Muskoka	42%	68%	22%	41%	40%	45%	36%	46%	53%	35%
Montreal	38%	33%	41%	51%	36%	27%	50%	42%	31%	25%
Ottawa and Ottawa Valley	34%	39%	30%	34%	33%	35%	37%	31%	37%	32%
Peterborough and The Kawarthas	32%	42%	25%	28%	34%	34%	24%	31%	43%	32%
Parry Sound/Georgian Bay	29%	51%	13%	23%	29%	35%	32%	26%	31%	29%
Stratford and Mennonite Country	28%	30%	26%	25%	25%	34%	16%	22%	35%	39%
Northern Ontario	23%	30%	17%	19%	25%	23%	24%	23%	24%	21%
Algonquin Park	21%	36%	10%	20%	23%	19%	24%	23%	26%	11%
Prince Edward County	21%	27%	16%	20%	20%	22%	15%	17%	27%	26%
Almaguin Highlands	3%	7%	1%	3%	5%	1%	6%	5%	1%	1%
None of the above	5%	2%	7%	11%	2%	2%	6%	6%	1%	4%

Q9B. Which of the following regions do you intend to visit in the next 12 months?

Preference

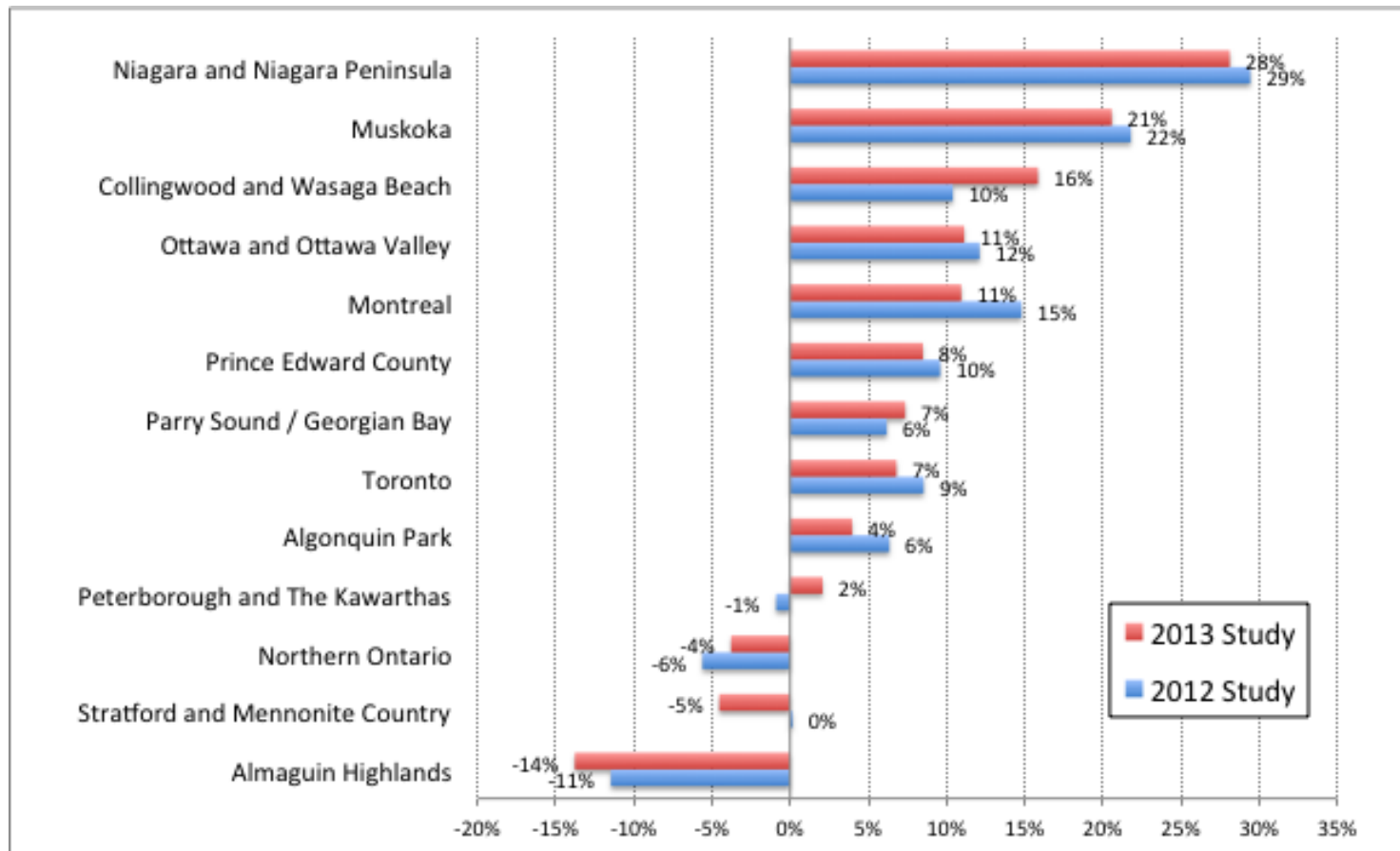
- When asked how they felt about each destination as a vacation/get-away spot, overall there was degradation in the performance of EE sub-regions year-over-year (YOY)
- However, drill-down reveals EE sub-regions performed better YOY amongst respondents outside of Toronto/GTA and respondents 45 to 54 years of age (1st column is 2012, 2nd is 2013 study)

	Muskoka		Parry Sound Georgian Bay		Algonquin Park		Almaguin Highlands	
All Respondents								
Only/Preferred choice I would consider	26%	23%	18%	15%	17%	12%	17%	11%
One of several options I would consider	61%	58%	54%	52%	50%	48%	39%	31%
Unlikely/Never to consider this choice	12%	19%	27%	33%	32%	40%	44%	58%
Non-Toronto/GTA Respondents								
Only/Preferred choice I would consider	23%	28%	15%	17%	11%	15%	8%	9%
One of several options I would consider	61%	52%	50%	50%	46%	38%	25%	25%
Unlikely/Never to consider this choice	16%	20%	34%	33%	43%	47%	67%	66%
45-54 Year Old Respondents								
Only/Preferred choice I would consider	23%	25%	14%	18%	13%	17%	7%	8%
One of several options I would consider	64%	59%	61%	58%	47%	52%	40%	26%
Unlikely/Never to consider this choice	13%	16%	25%	24%	40%	31%	53%	67%

Q10F. Imagine you wanted to go on a vacation / get-away in Ontario or nearby, which statement best describes how you feel about each region?

Most regions either stayed the same or declined compared to the 2012 study

- This measure tracks the momentum in perceived popularity of a region: It is based on the difference between those who say a region is “gaining ground” less those who say a region is “losing ground”.



Q13: Based on everything you've seen read or heard, please indicate whether each of the following regions is gaining ground, losing ground, or staying the same in terms of popularity as a tourism destination. (

Digital is critical for vacation planning

- A region's website is still the most important planning tool, and growing in importance
- 35-54 year olds are more likely to speak to friends for planning advice

Activity	2012 Study	2013 Study	35-54
Visit the regions website	1	1	1
Search for information on sites like Google, Yahoo! or MSN	2	2	3
Talk to friends	3	3	2
Visit travel sites like expedia, travelocity, etc	4	4	4
Talk to family members	5	5	5
Browse tourism brochures, pamphlets, etc	6	6	6
Read online blogs/reviews posted by people	7	7	7
Browse online advertisements	8	8	8
Read online blogs/reviews posted by travel experts	9	9	9
Talk to a tourism representative	10	10	11
Look for videos on youtube	11	11	10
Look on facebook	12	12	12
Other	13	13	14
Read Twitter posts	14	14	13

Q17. When planning a vacation, please indicate which actions you typically do.

Niagara is still our main competition

- While Muskoka fairs well, other regions in EE trail behind on key vacation decision-making criteria

Criterion	Muskoka		Parry Sound Georgian Bay		Algonquin Park		Almaguin Highlands		Niagara and Niagara Peninsula		Collingwood and Wasaga Beach		Stratford and Mennonite Country		Prince Edward County	
	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study
Close proximity to home	51%	41%	41%	39%	32%	34%	22%	21%	78%	71%	58%	57%	49%	47%	41%	42%
Has large variety of outdoor activities	82%	82%	75%	74%	83%	80%	55%	49%	73%	69%	79%	82%	46%	49%	67%	63%
Best location for favorite activity	66%	55%	52%	54%	54%	47%	37%	26%	67%	63%	58%	58%	39%	38%	47%	44%
Top rated accommodations	71%	64%	46%	45%	38%	32%	32%	25%	86%	76%	57%	57%	49%	48%	49%	44%
Accessible to me (i.e., by car, bus, etc)	29%	69%	23%	60%	20%	56%	18%	31%	73%	85%	37%	69%	34%	63%	28%	59%
Family friendly	83%	81%	71%	76%	79%	78%	50%	47%	82%	81%	81%	83%	66%	68%	71%	69%
Offers exclusive packaged deals	54%	53%	40%	38%	35%	30%	27%	22%	81%	79%	49%	52%	41%	40%	41%	40%
Cultural activities (i.e. galleries, museums, etc)	35%	31%	28%	31%	27%	21%	25%	20%	55%	61%	30%	30%	58%	61%	37%	38%
Incredible nature	88%	90%	80%	78%	90%	90%	61%	56%	73%	68%	70%	69%	53%	58%	73%	66%
Relaxing environment	86%	88%	79%	82%	84%	85%	58%	54%	61%	59%	73%	73%	65%	66%	75%	72%
Attractions (i.e. theme parks, amusement parks, etc)	35%	24%	28%	26%	26%	26%	24%	19%	79%	79%	45%	43%	29%	28%	25%	27%
Great dining & entertaining experiences	60%	53%	39%	37%	28%	26%	27%	24%	85%	77%	53%	51%	56%	53%	54%	44%
Road Network / Traffic Congestion		48%		48%		44%		30%		57%		57%		47%		52%

Q21FA. How well do you think each of the following tourism regions would perform on each criteria?

Traffic congestion is a negative but not just for the EE region

	Muskoka		Parry Sound Georgian Bay		Algonquin Park		Almaguin Highlands		Niagara and Niagara Peninsula		Collingwood and Wasaga Beach		Stratford and Mennonite Country		Prince Edward County	
	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study
Close proximity to home	51%	41%	41%	39%	32%	34%	22%	21%	78%	71%	58%	57%	49%	47%	41%	42%
Has large variety of outdoor activities	82%	82%	75%	74%	83%	80%	55%	49%	73%	69%	79%	82%	46%	49%	67%	63%
Best location for favorite activity	66%	55%	52%	54%	54%	47%	37%	26%	67%	63%	58%	58%	39%	38%	47%	44%
Top rated accommodations	71%	64%	46%	45%	38%	32%	32%	25%	86%	76%	57%	57%	49%	48%	49%	44%
Accessible to me (i.e., by car, bus, etc)	29%	69%	23%	60%	20%	56%	18%	31%	73%	85%	37%	69%	34%	63%	28%	59%
Family friendly	83%	81%	71%	76%	79%	78%	50%	47%	82%	81%	81%	83%	66%	68%	71%	69%
Offers exclusive packaged deals	54%	53%	40%	38%	35%	30%	27%	22%	81%	79%	49%	52%	41%	40%	41%	40%
Cultural activities (i.e. galleries, museums, etc)	35%	31%	28%	31%	27%	21%	25%	20%	55%	61%	30%	30%	58%	61%	37%	38%
Incredible nature	88%	90%	80%	78%	90%	90%	61%	56%	73%	68%	70%	69%	53%	58%	73%	66%
Relaxing environment	86%	88%	79%	82%	84%	85%	58%	54%	61%	59%	73%	73%	65%	66%	75%	72%
Attractions (i.e. theme parks, amusement parks, etc)	35%	24%	28%	26%	26%	26%	24%	19%	79%	79%	45%	43%	29%	28%	25%	27%
Great dining & entertaining experiences	60%	53%	39%	37%	26%	26%	27%	24%	85%	77%	53%	51%	55%	53%	54%	44%
Road Network / Traffic Congestion		48%		48%		44%		30%		57%		57%		47%		52%

Q21FA. How well do you think each of the following tourism regions would perform on each criteria?

Lack of interest, distance and awareness are still the big impediments to visiting Explorers' Edge

Criterion	Muskoka		Parry Sound Georgian Bay		Algonquin Park		Almaguin Highlands		Niagara and Niagara Peninsula		Collingwood and Wasaga Beach		Stratford and Mennonite Country		Prince Edward County	
	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study
Not of interest	28%	40%	40%	44%	34%	40%	29%	34%	23%	24%	36%	36%	43%	50%	34%	42%
Too far	27%	40%	35%	41%	42%	53%	15%	18%	10%	6%	16%	26%	14%	27%	22%	33%
Never thought of it	28%	26%	40%	42%	25%	25%	61%	66%	15%	12%	25%	32%	43%	50%	50%	51%
Too expensive	21%	23%	8%	10%	6%	8%	4%	3%	23%	29%	16%	14%	8%	7%	8%	10%
Decided to stay in town	11%	18%	8%	19%	9%	17%	6%	7%	25%	29%	12%	15%	11%	14%	9%	12%
Did not offer preferred activity	12%	13%	7%	10%	15%	17%	6%	8%	10%	6%	15%	19%	13%	16%	8%	9%
No transportation	9%	13%	7%	13%	9%	9%	5%	6%	8%	18%	12%	17%	7%	10%	7%	9%
Unable to take time off work	15%	13%	7%	9%	7%	8%	4%	5%	20%	12%	14%	15%	9%	8%	9%	8%
Poor weather condition	9%	10%	9%	5%	9%	13%	3%	2%	23%	35%	8%	13%	5%	6%	4%	5%
Travel partner unable to go	9%	8%	7%	8%	9%	9%	4%	4%	18%	24%	10%	14%	7%	7%	5%	5%
Other	3%	3%	1%	1%	3%	3%	12%	19%	-	-	3%	-	2%	2%	4%	5%
Read a poor review online	4%	1%	2%	5%	2%	-	2%	2%	8%	29%	6%	4%	3%	4%	2%	1%

Q23A. What do you believe has prevented you in the past from visiting each of the following regions?

Aided awareness is virtually unchanged over the previous year

- Though it has increased with GTA respondents and with respondents 45-54 (both these groups fall into the Ontario Explorers segment defined as our primary target in 2013)

		Region								Age							
		Total		Toronto		GTA		Rest of Ontario		25-34		35-44		45-54		55+	
		2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study	2012 Study	2013 Study
Yes		6%	7%	8%	7%	4%	9%	4%	4%	5%	10%	11%	8%	2%	6%	3%	3%
No		94%	93%	92%	93%	96%	91%	96%	96%	95%	90%	89%	92%	98%	94%	97%	97%

Those aware of EE associate is with relaxation, attractiveness and adventure/excitement

