

# Marketing Committee

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FALL / WINTER UPDATE

NOVEMBER 27, 2013



# Marketing

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2013 FALL BLUE

# Overview - Evolving Fall “Blue”

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- Promoting content to educate prospective visitors
  - spectacular fall colour that sets Explorers Edge apart from other destinations in Ontario – Blue.
- These targets have the following implications for media:
  - Younger consumers are voracious online consumers, and the Fall Blue idea (due to its visual nature) is well suited to this medium
  - Older consumers, while big users of digital and social media, are still avid users of print media. Again, the Fall Blue idea is well suited to this medium
  - Tactical targets can be reached online using SEM as well as display ads targeted by keywords (for example, having the Fall Blue ads appear on hiking and motorcycle enthusiast sites).

**Connected Explorers \* Outgoing Mature \* Couples Mellow Vacationers \* Nature Lovers**

# Objectives

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The primary objective was to drive “qualified” prospects to ExplorersEdge.ca.

**Specifically, 33,000 visits to the site over the campaign period.**

In addition, there were important subsidiary objectives:

- Drive engagement with the content on EE.ca
- Drive visitors onwards to operator websites



# Results

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# Focus for Impact and Efficiency

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**The goal is to have the campaign drive approximately 33,000 visitors to ExplorersEdge.ca**

**250% increase over Fall 2012.**

September 2<sup>nd</sup> – October 21, 2013

**80,206** visitors to Explorers' Edge

**2.4x** campaign objective

**250%** increase in site visits over 2012

**66,453** unique visitors vs 18,546 in 2012 (258% increase)

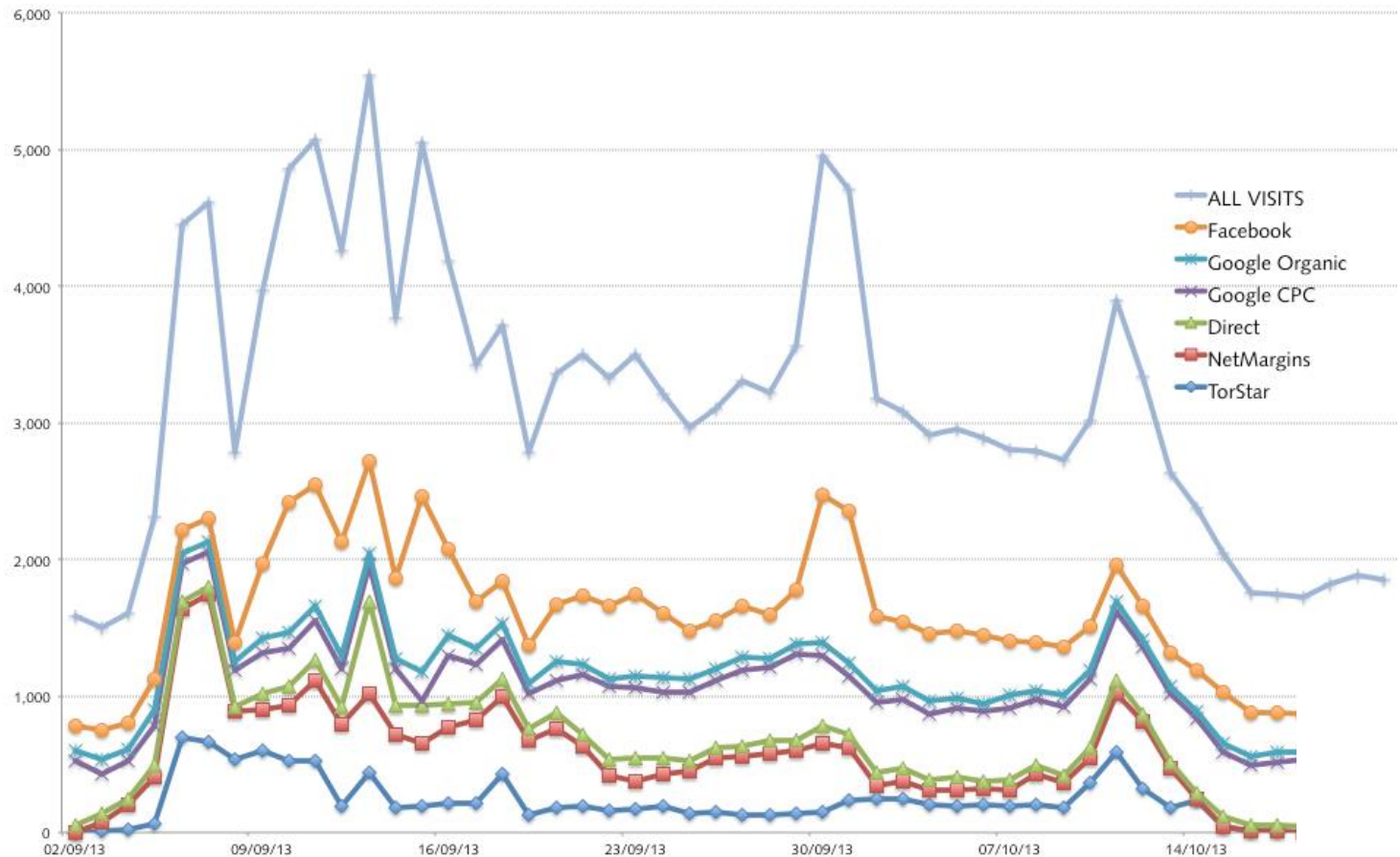
**135,293** page views vs 51,170 in 2012 (164% increase)

Average Visit Duration & Page Views Per Visit  
Decrease 36% & 25% respectively

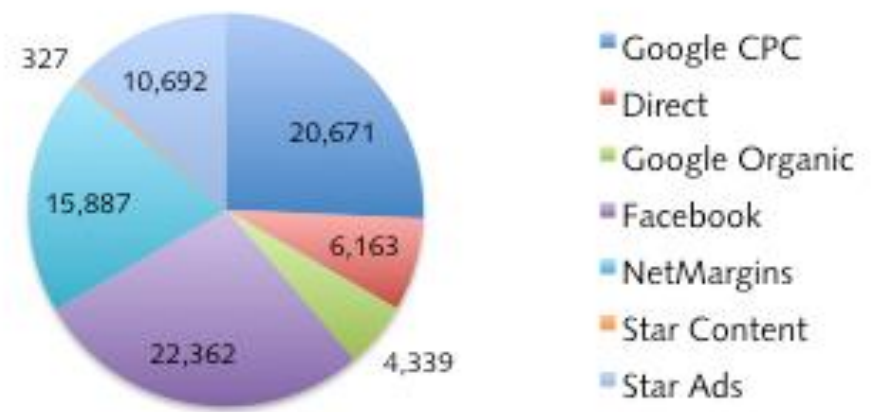
## Facebook

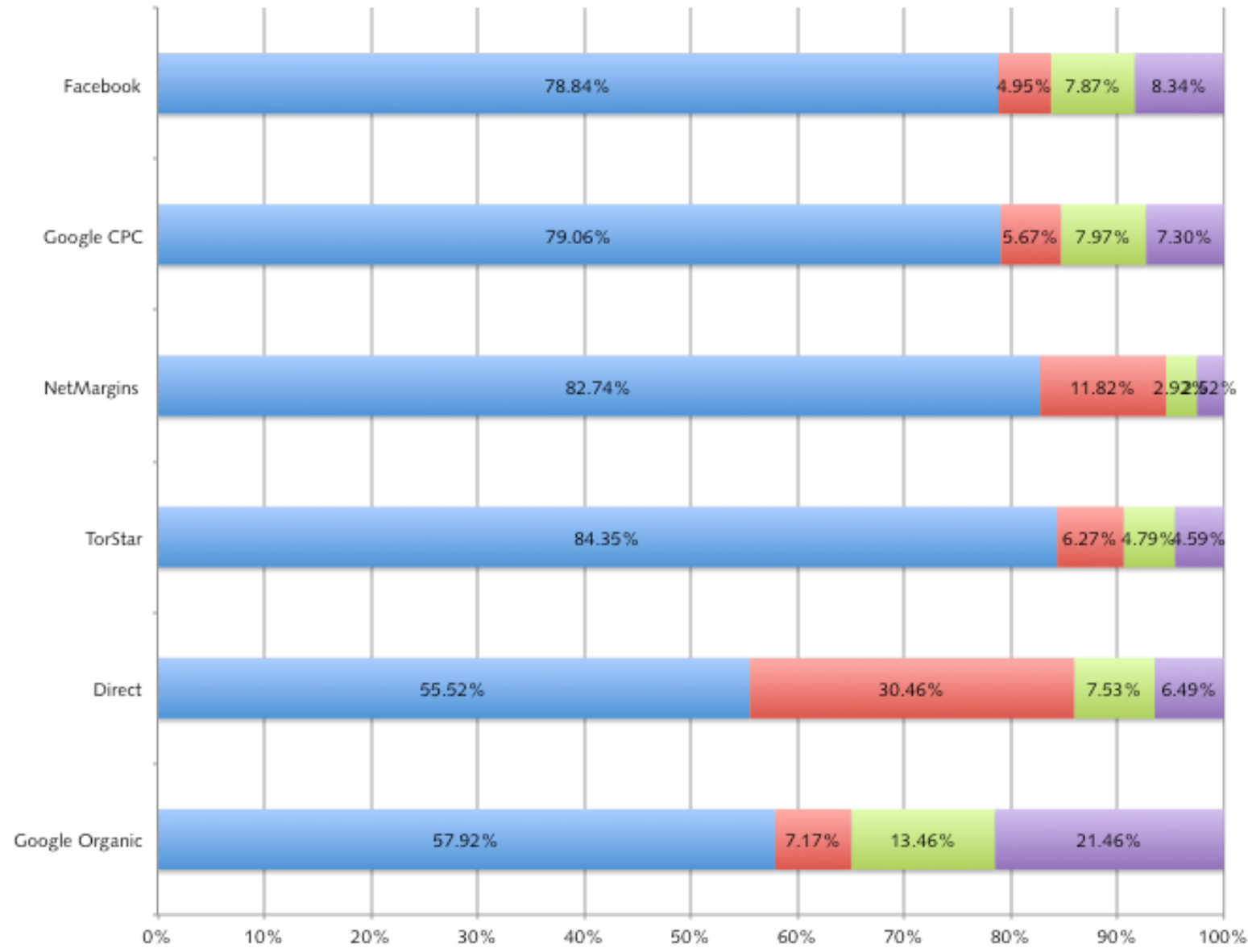
Drove the Greatest Volume – 28% of all Traffic  
Google AdWords 26% - NetMargins 20% - The Star 13%





**Visits by source**





Of the “paid” tactics employed in the campaign,

**Google Adwords and Facebook**

delivered the highest quality visitors

Google Organic 0:03:17

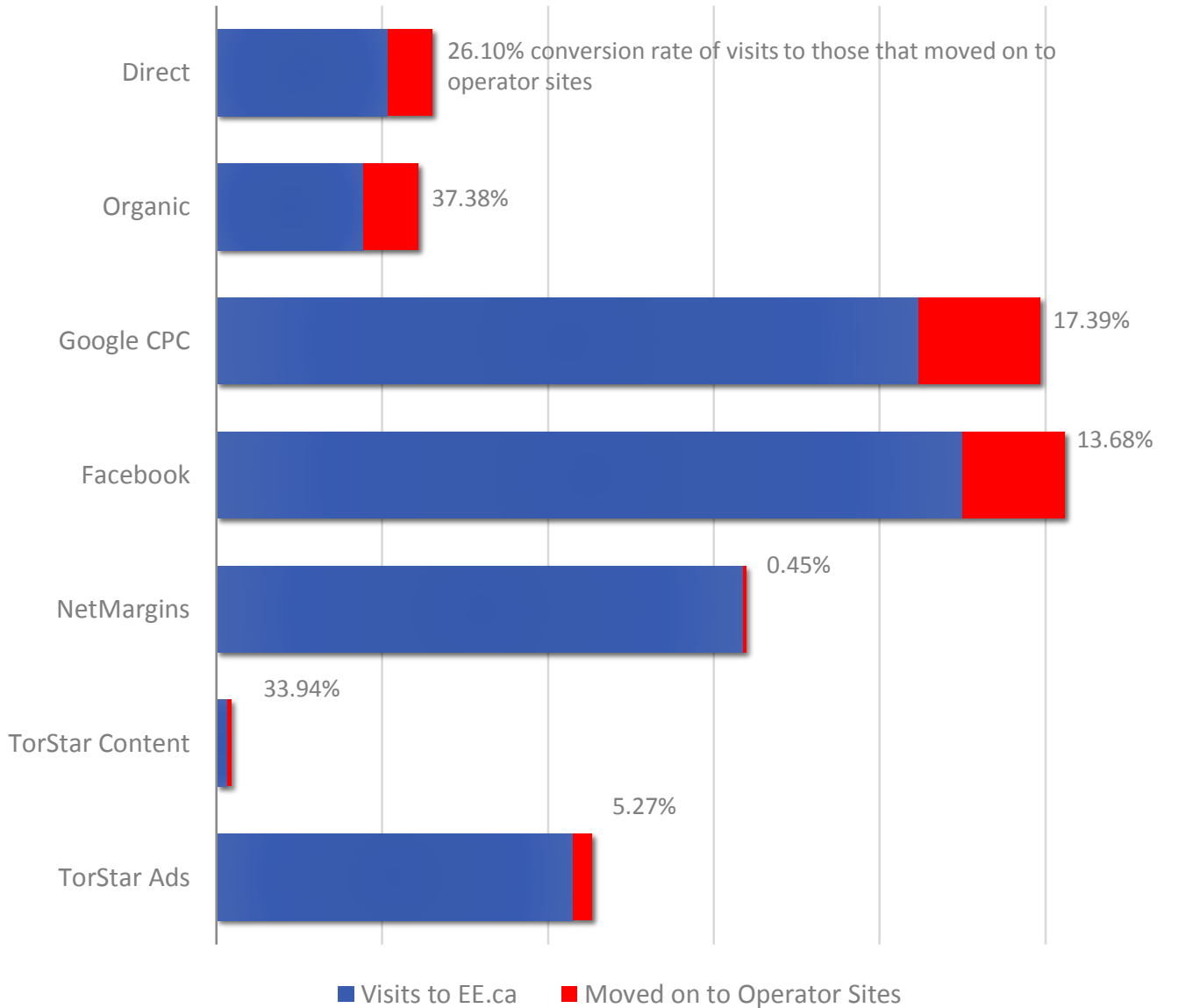
Direct traffic 0:02:41

Google CPC 0:01:07

Facebook 0:01:07

TorStar 0:00:46

NetMargins 0:00:33



Overall, during the campaign period  
**11,434** visitors were referred  
 DMO and other regional websites  
 This represents 14% of all visitors

URL	CLICKS
pc.gc.ca	1,289
discovermuskoka.ca	491
algonquinpark.on.ca	436
gbcountry.com	357
adventurelodge.com	314
parktoparktrail.com	260
facebook.com	244
almaguin.on.ca	190
algonquinboundinn.com/index.html	136
beauview.on.ca	130
ahmiclakeresort.com	122
vacationlandontario.com	115
cloverleafcottages.ca	110
algonquinelodge.com	104
yoyageurquest.com/algonquin-lodge.php	104
youtube.com	100
mukokadreambedandbreakfast.com	97
40baystreet.com	87
deerhurstresort.com	83
springlakeresort.net	81

# Top Twenty Referrals

# facebook

	CONTENT PROMOTION	"WHAT'S YOUR FAVE FALL COLOUR?" CONTEST
Impressions	1,162,313	86,482,933
Clicks	24,963	25,062
Spend (GROSS)	\$5,184	\$19,493
CTR	\$0.02	\$0.00
CPM	\$4.46	\$0.23
CPC	\$0.21	\$0.78
Page Likes	1,598	4,499
Cost per Like	\$3.24	\$4.33
Clicks to Website	16,811	N/A
Cost Per Visit	\$0.31	N/A

The **content promotion campaign** was setup to drive engagement with Explorers' Edge online content. These ads generated almost **25,000** clicks, of which **16,811** went to EE.ca

The **contest app promotion** was setup to drive traffic to the Explorers' Edge contest app and to generate page likes. It generated just over **25,000** clicks and almost **4,500** page likes

# Online Display Ads

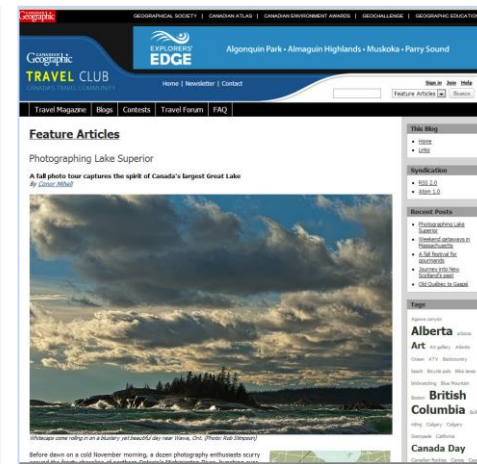
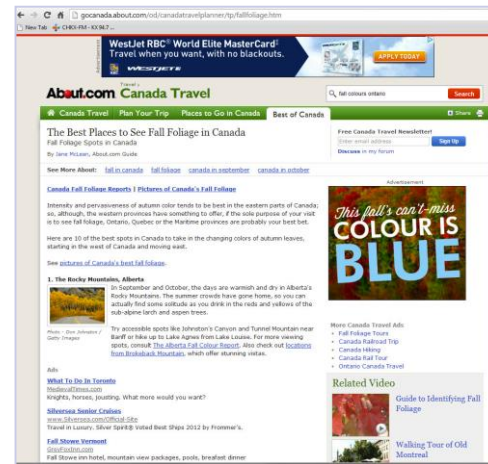
Toronto Star

The Star campaign (which included the NY Times) was a pay-per-impression campaign

NetMargins Network

Net Margins and Olive Media campaigns were exclusively pay-per-click

Two types of banner ad creative were used to drive traffic to EE.ca – big boxes and leaderboards



## Observations

Overall, the CTR (as measured by visits registered on EE.ca) was 0.20% for the pay by impression campaign.  
This is 100% higher than projected based on previous online campaigns for EE

The Fuel & Fun versions of the ads had a CTR of 0.28%, **86%** higher than the ads without it  
Special ad units such as wallpaper and pre-roll significantly outperformed the standard IAB units  
The Wallpaper had a CTR 5x the average for the campaign, while the preroll was 3x the average

## Recommendations

Dropping the leaderboard unit in future campaigns as it significantly underperformed the average

Best performing content sections on the Star:

Life (CTR 4.6x higher)

Custom Content (CTR 2.4x higher)

Travel (CTR 2.1X higher)

# Google AdWords

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Campaign	Impressions	Clicks	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost
Geography	570,691	2,091	0.37%	\$ 0.86	\$ 1,796
Attractions	155,211	1,688	1.09%	\$ 0.94	\$ 1,593
Outdoor Adventures	1,846,954	3,396	0.18%	\$ 0.98	\$ 3,328
Spas	1,224,217	1,698	0.14%	\$ 0.88	\$ 1,500
Arts and Entertainment	235,824	633	0.27%	\$ 0.94	\$ 597
Culinary	175,072	1,088	0.62%	\$ 0.91	\$ 987
Accommodations	238,563	599	0.25%	\$ 1.78	\$ 1,065
Fuel and Fun Fall	2,249,771	8,117	0.36%	\$ 1.85	\$ 15,027
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,696,303</b>	<b>19,310</b>	<b>0.29%</b>	<b>\$ 1.34</b>	<b>\$ 25,895</b>

Launched August 19

Fuel & Fun accounted for **60%** of the total spend

Google Adwords

Delivered high quality traffic to EE.ca, with an average time on site of more than one minute.





- > HOME
- > NEWS
- > YOUR TORONTO
- > OPINION
- > SPORTS
- > BUSINESS
- > ENTERTAINMENT
- > LIFE
- > DIVERSIONS
- > CLASSIFIEDS
- > OBITUARIES

Explorers' Edge



Explorers' Edge | Sponsored Sections | Toronto Star  
Algonquin Park: "Fall's Greatest Splendour"



**Parry Sound on Georgian Bay: "More Rugged, More Refined"**  
Thu Sep 05 2013  
With its iconic Georgian Bay coastline (think bent pines and the rock of the Canadian Shield), the bustling port of Parry Sound is the place for exploring this stunning freshwater archipelago that is also a UNESCO-designated World Biosphere Reserve.



**Muskoka: "Once discovered, never forgotten"**  
Thu Sep 05 2013  
There's a reason the folks at National Geographic Traveler magazine named Muskoka one of their favourite spots on the planet.



**The new fall colour is blue**  
Thu Sep 05 2013  
There's a region of Ontario, just two hours north of Toronto, where the brilliant leaves of a Canadian autumn are twice as stunning as anywhere else.



**The Almaguin Highlands: "Undiscovered Cottage Country"**  
Thu Sep 05 2013  
Just 20 minutes north of Muskoka and bordering the west side of Algonquin Park, the Almaguin Highlands area of Ontario is one of the province's best kept secrets – and an emerging travel destination.

Video



**Adam Van Koeverden's Fortress of Solitude**  
Olympic and world champion Adam van Koeverden in his natural habitat: Algonquin Park. Video by: By Randy Rising and Reported by: Randy Starkman

Get a **\$50 GAS CARD**  
when you book a stay of 2 or more nights,  
*plus \$50*  
**IN CASH VOUCHERS!**

From The Homepage

- ▶ Jane-Finch principal Craig Crone talks tough love after summer of violence
- ▶ **NEW** Pamela Wallin has Sept. 16 deadline to repay expenses
- ▶ **Updated** Toronto mom sentenced to 6 years for daughter's death
- ▶ **LIVE:** Boogie Nights Live Read
- ▶ **CA** 'Snuffy' the cat, euthanized within hours for cold-like symptoms
- ▶ Future of Captain John's could be in court's hands
- ▶ Stephen Harper urges military action against Syria
- ▶ **TTC** chair demands answers on Scarborough subway plan



The Grid: Three bottles of bourbon you need to get now



The Kit: 10 easy summer-to-fall fashion finds



Hockey player scores with chiropractic



Paying for a post-secondary education



Prostate and testicular cancer survivors speak out

Most Popular

# Toronto Star Content Hub

The hub was live from Sept.5 to Oct. 14, 2013

The content hub received

**109,254** visits

drove **554** clicks through to EE.ca

The new fall colour is **BLUE**

Discover more ways to experience fall's splendour

Brought to you by

EXPLORERS' EDGE

The co-branded ads  
3,000,229 impressions

7,920 click-throughs to the  
sponsored content hub

**MOVIES ARE BETTER WITH SCENE**  
 FREE MOVIES AND MORE  
**JOIN SCENE NOW**

Live the Dream. **WEST SHORE**  
 Own a Beach House.  
 4-Season Homes from \$299,990  
 WestShoreBeachClub.ca

**EXPLORES' EDGE** Naturally Adventure

**PLAN YOUR fall adventure at EXPLORERSEDGE.CA**

Algonquin Park • Almaguin Highlands  
 Muskoka • Parry Sound

Ontario *Yours to discover*

Thursday, September 24, 2013  
 4:37 PM EDT

the star.com

GET DIGITAL ACCESS customers get FREE Saturday Home Delivery in the GTA

**EXPLORES' EDGE**

SPONSORED SECTION

Home, News, Your Toronto, Opinion, Sports, Business, Entertainment

Explorers' Edge

PLAN YOUR fall adventure at EXPLORERSEDGE.CA

Thursday, September 5, 2013  
 11:27 PM EDT

the star.com

**OPINION**

Search The Star

14°C Toronto

My Horoscope, Good News, My Team, My Writers, My Newsletters, This Day in History

**GET DIGITAL ACCESS** includes FREE Saturday Home Delivery in the GTA

the star.com

**OPINION**

PATHS TO PROSPERITY

The new fall colour is **BLUE**

Discover more ways to experience fall's splendour

Updated Congressional support for military intervention in Syria stalls

NETA's George Zimmaras wife files for

**EXPLORES' EDGE** Naturally Adventure

**PLAN YOUR fall adventure at EXPLORERSEDGE.CA**

Algonquin Park • Almaguin Highlands  
 Muskoka • Parry Sound

Ontario *Yours to discover*

Monday, September 9, 2013  
 8:54 AM EDT

the star.com

**TRAVEL**

GET DIGITAL ACCESS includes FREE Saturday Home Delivery in the GTA

**Get a \$50 GAS CARD** when you book a stay of 2 or more nights, plus **\$50 IN CASH VOUCHERS!**

**This fall's can't-miss COLOUR IS BLUE**

**Get a \$50 GAS CARD** when you book a stay of 2 or more nights, plus **\$50 IN CASH VOUCHERS!**

Top News

Lake Superior: Tour gives a sense of the lake's beauty

Niagara-on-the-Lake

Friday, September 6, 2013  
 7:53 PM EDT

the star.com

**LIFE**

GET DIGITAL ACCESS includes FREE Saturday Home Delivery in the GTA

**Get a \$50 GAS CARD** when you book a stay of 2 or more nights, plus **\$50 IN CASH VOUCHERS!**

**This fall's can't-miss COLOUR IS BLUE**

**PLAN YOUR ADVENTURE TODAY**

ONTARIO *Yours to discover*

EXPLORES' EDGE

Ellie | Spring/Summer 2014 | turf: study | about happiness and | Syria

TRAVEL  
**Reporter**

EXPERIENCE THE ADVENTURE | TREAT YOURSELF | RETURN TO COMMUNITY | DRIVE THE EDGE



# THE NEW FALL COLOUR IS BLUE

*When the fall colours start to turn, there's no better place to witness Mother Nature's impressive performance than the Explorers' Edge region of Ontario*

With Algonquin Park, the Adirondack Highlands, Muskoka and the Thousand Islands, the Explorers' Edge is home to some of the country's most stunning natural landscapes. And, in autumn, they kick the whole fall colour thing up a notch. Have you? Find that the beautiful reds, oranges and yellows that already mesmerize you are twice as breathtaking to behold because they are reflected in thousands of sparkling blue lakes and rivers. All across Explorers' Edge the favourite fall colour is blue.

And when you plan your fall getaway here—just two hours north of the GTA—you'll discover endless ways to experience the incredibly rich blues of fall.

Explore the lakes (including Georgian Bay) and rivers by canoe, kayak or stand-up paddle board. Learn how to use a paddle as one of many helpful activities in the region. Hike or bike around the blue waters, exploring thousands of kilometers of trails and rolling, winding roads. Mix gears with More and discover more than 50 courses when you hit the links in Canada's best golf destinations. Visit an artist or see dozens in action during an organized studio tour. With your vehicle when you take the culinary trail and visit award-winning food businesses (and one brewery). Take a cruise for a special view of the colours reflected in the region's renowned waterways. Or hit the spa, grab a comfy robe and find a lakeside patio (deck and hot tub) but take it all in.

With autumn now just, you'll find more availability of great rates and—maybe best of all—no bugs.

Active Algonquin Park, the Adirondack Highlands, Muskoka and the Thousand Islands discover more fall colour and more ways to experience autumn's incredible performance. Visit Explorers' Edge this season for red, yellow, orange—and the blue, too.

TRAVEL REPORTER  
 Includes a QR code linking to the website  
 in Toronto. For more information, visit [www.ontario.com](http://www.ontario.com)  
 FALL 2016  
 Ontario  
 Travel  
 Reporter

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT PROVIDED BY GDC MEDIA

**THE (SERIOUSLY) GREAT OUTDOORS**

*From paddling to hiking, the stunning natural landscape of Explorers' Edge is best enjoyed in fall*

**THE LURE OF BLUE WATER**

*With fish schooling in the shallows of bays and rivers, fall is prime fishing season in Explorers' Edge*

**THE FINEST BLUE**

**GOLF THE EDGE**

**THE VIEW FROM ABOVE**

*SPECTACULAR VIEWS ON A CRUISE*

**RIDING IN EXPLORERS' EDGE**

*from one rider to another*

**THE BEST ROUTES**

*Pristine forests. Lakes, rivers and cliffs. Winding back roads that range from tame cruisers to technical twisties. That's what riding in the Explorers' Edge region of Ontario is all about.*

**TK**

**Fall in Love with Muskoka Here**

# Toronto Star Print Insert

The supplement ran in the Sunday edition of the Star on September 15.

A total of 207,000 supplements were delivered to Toronto Star subscribers in the GTA. An additional 10,000 copies of the supplement were also handed out in select areas of downtown Toronto.

The content in the Travel Reporter included 13 articles about things to do and where to stay in Explorers' Edge in the Fall. And also included a full page dedicated to Ride The Edge.

# Key Learnings

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Moving forward we need to focus on more than just driving a high volume of visits to EE.ca. It makes sense now to add in **engagement metrics** – time on site and referrals to operator sites – as additional ways we will measure success

**Facebook** has emerged as the number one driver of visits to EE.ca. And these visits are very cost efficient, the Fall cost per click for Facebook was less than 20¢ and it is also effective at sending visitors on to operator sites

Non-traditional ad units including **content** are more effective at driving engaged visitors to EE.ca than traditional IAB units

**Content hubs** are like mini-microsites of EE.ca and visits to these hubs are almost as good as visits to our own site with their focused content

- The fall campaign drove 80,000 visits to EE.ca but in addition, over 8,000 visits to the content hub on Toronto Star – all highly engaged visitors

**Print**, effective at driving incremental traffic – we see a spike in website traffic and are also effective brand builders

Recommend adding a question to the brand research survey asking responders about how far in advance they plan their **fall getaways**

- It would be useful to get more information into the fall travel purchase process
- consider if the fall campaign would be more effective if it started in August

# Questions / Discussion

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# Draft 2014 Winter Marketing

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**BUDGET: \$110k**

Winter 2014 Campaign Theme: Nothing new under the sun

**“Winter turns up the fun!”**

**Focus of our messaging is therefore on activities**

Our audience has the perception that cottage country shuts down in the winter, and there’s nothing to do until the ice is off the dock

**The target for our message: Connected Explorers**

Those who engage in outdoor winter activities – these people are typically 25-64 and have higher than average affluence

**As stated in the overall 2013 strategy  
objective is to drive qualified visitors to EE.ca**

**Success will be measured by traffic to EE.ca**

# of visits \* time on site (industry standard) \* pages viewed (industry standard)

The overall marketing strategy, therefore, has evolved since the beginning of the year to improve the **“quality”** of visitors to include those who are more engaged

# Proposed Channel Plan

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Maintain investment in Google AdWords

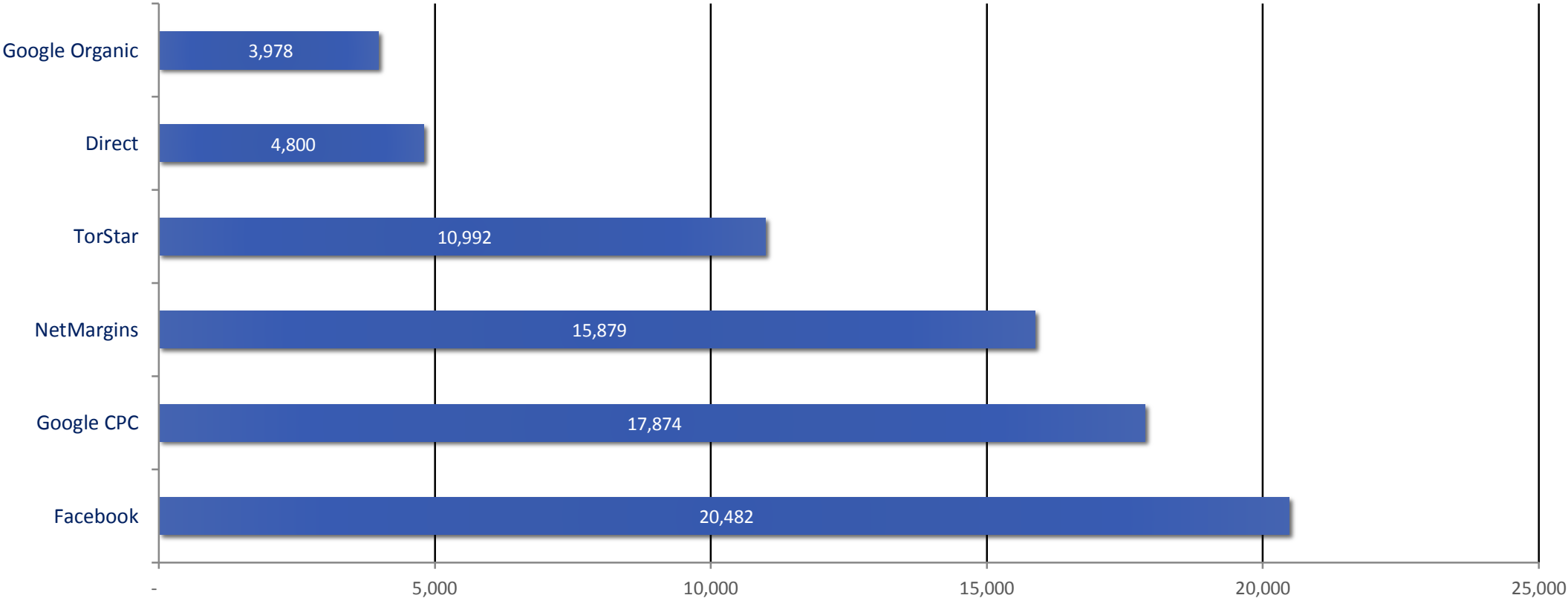
Maintain investment in Facebook

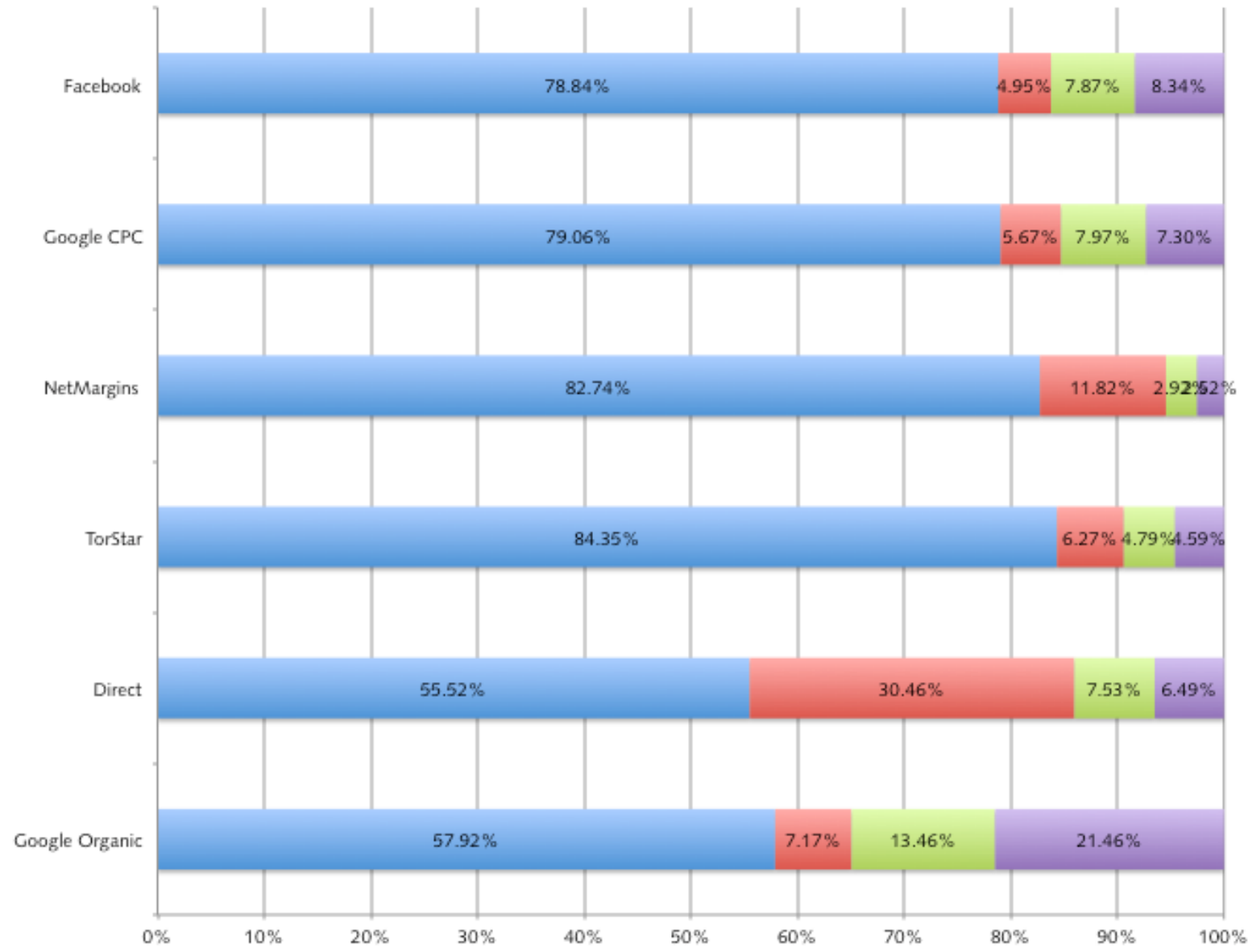
Leverage branded online content to drive engaged traffic

Test new 3<sup>rd</sup> party properties

We have reviewed results from the Fall 2013 campaign looking for findings that would help guide our creative and channel planning for Winter 2014

Just under 74,790 visits to the site from Sept. 2 to Oct. 15, these 6 sources accounted for 74,005 of these visits



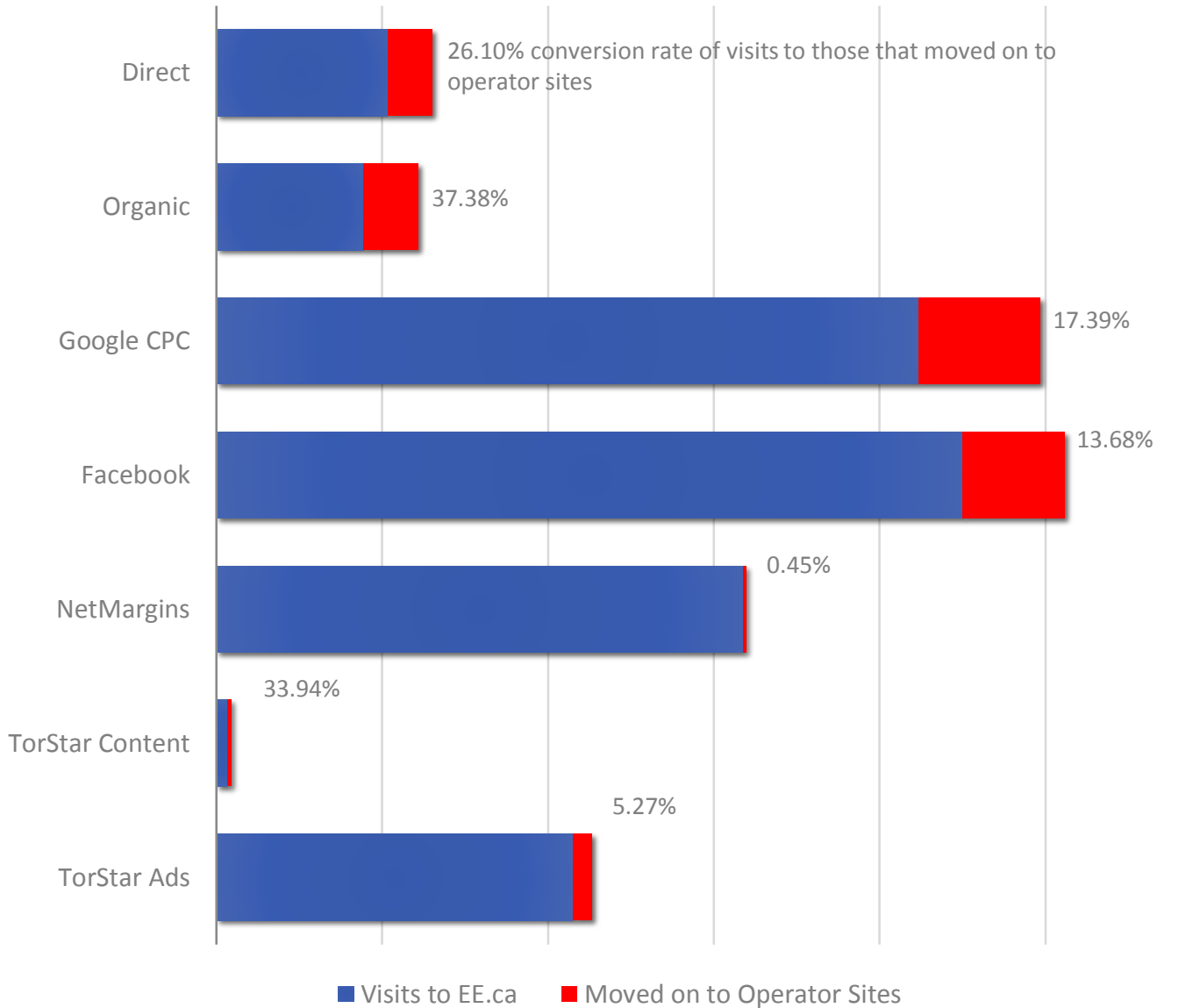


Of the “paid” tactics employed in the campaign,

**Google Adwords and Facebook**

delivered the highest quality visitors

Google Organic	0:03:17
Direct traffic	0:02:41
Google CPC	0:01:07
Facebook	0:01:07
TorStar	0:00:46
NetMargins	0:00:33



Overall, during the campaign period  
**11,434** visitors were referred  
 DMO and other regional websites  
 This represents 14% of all visitors

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, centered on a solid blue rectangular background.

facebook

A total of 49,655 clicks were generated by Facebook ads during the fall campaign, at a cost of just \$0.40 per click, the lowest CPC of all marketing activities:

24,604 were generated by content promotion ads, of which 16,517 went to EE.ca (75% of all clicks sent to EE.ca by Facebook)

25,051 were generated by ads for the contest (these clicks went to the Facebook Page or Contest tab)

# facebook

The investment in Facebook has paid off:

- Facebook is now the number one driver of page view and engagement on the site
- Facebook has become the most cost-effective way of generating reach for the EE content.
- Contests and promoted content are equal contributors, driving visits to both the website and Facebook page



# Engagement Best Practices

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Best practices state if you drive all traffic to your home page, bounce rates will be higher.

Reducing bounce rates while creating more engagement on your website:

Start using landing pages with the Winter campaign to try and increase engagement on the site (time on site and page views) and drive more traffic to operator sites.

Industry benchmark see a drop of over 25 percentage points in bounce rate when unique landing pages are used as compared to when no unique landing pages are used

## Conclusions

- Facebook is a powerhouse for generating content engagement and drive traffic to the website
- We should not reduce spend with Google Ad Words
- Driving consumers to relevant content pages on the site based on the banner creative or the branded content
- Continue using media that drive a high volume of engaged visits to EE.ca
- It is important to invest in 3<sup>rd</sup> party media sites to help feed direct and organic search results
- Continue to test new media to increase traffic and expand the selection of media that perform well for EE.

# Channel Plan

## Google AdWords

- Targeting based on activity and regional keywords and driving to relevant activity content pages on EE.ca

## Facebook

- FB ads to promote content on site and FB posts
- Winter activity contest app to drive fan-base engagement, new fans and Sojourner subscribers

## Toronto Star

- Display advertising on thestar.com plus sponsored content HUB on the site focused on winter activities in the EE region
- Travel, Life and News sections – 289,075 impressions
- Pre-Roll run of site ads – 58,633 impressions
- Run of site ads on the Olive Lifestyle network – 1,412,230 impressions

# Channel Plan – Test New Media

## **theweathernetwork.com**

Leverage Where's Kevin remote scheduled for Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> on the Ice Trail

6-week campaign of display ads targeted to GTA incl. Toronto and Southern Ontario:

500,000 website ads \* 300,000 mobile ads \* 200,000 tablet ads

2 takeovers in the GTA

Typically get between 250,000 to 540,000 page views depending on how active the weather is that day

Bonus: TWN will promote the Facebook contest on their site at no cost (\$5,000 value)

## **Outdoor Canada**

Create a sponsored content hub on the site

Will contain 8-10 articles, some will be existing articles from Outdoor Canada and of these EE will have approval

Patrick Walsh has been approached to write an article about his experiences in the EE region

## **City Parent.com**

Banner ads on site plus on one e-blast

Banner ad big box will run for two months starting mid-December along with a bi-weekly eblast

## **OTMPC**

Banner ad in promo spot in January and February - Site get 3.8MM visits a year

Publication	Cost
Google Ad Words	\$30,000
Facebook Content	\$9,000
Facebook Promo	\$11,000
Weather Network	\$20,700
Toronto Star (Content HUB)	\$17,250
Toronto Star (Banner ads)	\$0
OTMPC - Banner ad (monthly promo offer)	\$690
City Parent	\$1,265
Outdoor Canada	\$6,000
Facebook App + Contest	\$7,000
Creative Development + Production	\$10,000
Total	\$112,905

Focus on the many outdoor activities to do in the region in winter

Build on the campaign and awareness started last year

Re-use the existing *Winter Turns Up the Fun* creative:

EE.ca content is king and fundamental to the campaign:

- Develop weekly content for website and Facebook page focused on key activities
- Switch focus of activities each week

Re-use the Winter activities Facebook app from Winter 2012 campaign

# Questions / Discussion

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