



Media Release

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Tourism Organizations Collaborate to Create New Marketing for Muskoka

(Gravenhurst, ON) Collaboration over the past few months between Muskoka Tourism and Explorers' Edge, the regional tourism organization, has resulted in the development of two innovative campaigns targeting leisure and business travel markets in Ontario.

"The Board of Directors of Muskoka Tourism is pleased to have worked with Explorers' Edge to develop these marketing campaigns," said Muskoka Tourism's Board president Jessie Hamilton. "By partnering with Explorers' Edge to access matching dollar funding, we were able to create work that aligns with our new vision for our organization, which is to be a leading Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) in Ontario. We were also excited to work with the regional tourism organization to align – and strengthen – tourism promotion for Muskoka."

Earlier this year, Muskoka Tourism launched the Take Back Your Winter campaign to encourage residents in Toronto and the GTA to come enjoy the recreational activities the region has to offer in the snowy season. The campaign's main tool is an engaging and interactive set of animations that juxtaposition Muskoka's winter fun against the less enjoyable elements of an urban winter.

"Our operators work tirelessly throughout the winter shoveling off ice rinks and grooming trails in order to create a great seasonal experience for their guests," said Michael Lawley, Executive Director of Muskoka Tourism. "One of the main issues we hear on a regular basis is that many travelers think Muskoka shuts down for the winter. This project focuses on changing this perception and inspiring travelers to head north for the great Canadian winter experience."

James Murphy, Executive Director of Explorers' Edge, agrees.

"Part of our strategy as a regional tourism organization has always been to change perceptions of this area in order to build new audiences, and to develop shoulder season visits as well, so partnering with Muskoka Tourism on the Take Back Winter campaign was a very good fit for us."

Recognizing an opportunity to distinguish Muskoka in the corporate travel market and to build the shoulder seasons further, Muskoka Tourism also accessed matching dollar funding from Explorers' Edge

to create the new Meetings Muskoka campaign.

“Meetings Muskoka is designed to act as a hub of information for business event planners throughout Ontario looking for the perfect spot to host a gathering,” said Jordan Mulligan, marketing manager for Muskoka Tourism. “Muskoka’s natural setting – which is second to none in Canada – and its extensive offering of outdoor activities help differentiate the region from other destinations. Take into consideration our accessibility from Toronto and the GTA and it is easy to see why Muskoka is an attractive location for corporate events. Meetings Muskoka will help us pitch our region’s unique selling propositions to key event planners.”

The Meetings Muskoka campaign launched at the beginning of March and consisted of new branding, a microsite for planners that includes RFP functionality, a planner’s tool kit, digital advertising and incentive giveaways to get planners to Muskoka for site visits.

“Explorers’ Edge is pleased to partner with Muskoka Tourism to bring more conferences and business meetings to the area,” said James Murphy. “We are particularly grateful to the DMO for taking the lead on communicating with the corporate travel market, to the benefit of multiple operators.”

For information on Take Back Winter, visit www.takebackwinter.com

For information on Meetings Muskoka, visit www.meetingsmuskoka.com

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About Muskoka Tourism:

The Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency (MTMA) is a not-for-profit association representing 380 members and stakeholders in Muskoka’s tourism industry in maintaining Muskoka’s 140 year history as an iconic tourist destination. Muskoka Tourism’s mission is to be the driving force behind Muskoka’s tourism industry as Ontario’s most progressive Destination Marketing Organization.

About Explorers’ Edge:

Explorers’ Edge is one of 13 regional tourism organizations (RTOs) established by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to build a stronger tourism industry in the province. An objective of the RTO is to work collaboratively with tourism stakeholders in Explorers’ Edge to grow tourism in the region.

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