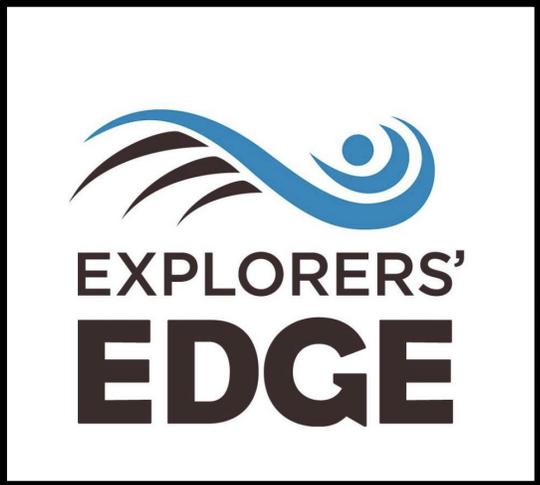


2025 Product Dev Sessions





Algonquins of Ontario Nations





Today's Agenda



- **Explorers' Edge Recap/Introduction**
- **The Regenerative Tourism Strategy**
- **The Co-Creation Lab**



- **Why Tourism Product Dev in the AH?**
- **Some (Loose) Definitions:**
Traditional, Experiential, Transformational Product

- **Asset-Based Community Development:**
What Have You Got?
- **Funding, Networking, Gaps & Partnership (Capacity):**
What Do You Need?



ExplorersEdge.ca



GreatCanadianWilderness.com



Welcome to the Great Canadian Wilderness

Discover all there is to see and do in this stunning region of Ontario, Canada.



EXPERIENCE THE REGION'S ICONIC ROCKS, TREES AND LAKES IN ALL FOUR SEASONS.
FROM PAMPERED TO RUSTIC GETAWAYS, YOUR EPIC CANADIAN VACATION AWAITS.

Spring in the Great Canadian Wilderness



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Paddle Prattle: Canoe, Kayak & SUP North of Toronto This Spring

Just as a city is known for high rises and condos, the Great Canadian Wilderness just north of...

[READ MORE](#)



GOLF

Canada's Best Golf: Rocks, Trees, Lakes & Epic Rounds Just North of Toronto

Taboo in Gravenhurst is just one of many incredible golf courses in Ontario's Cottage Country.

[READ MORE](#)



GreatCanadianWilderness.com



Algonquin Park

Almaguin Highlands

Loring-Restoule

Muskoka

West Parry Sound District

South Algonquin

Ontario







2024 - 2025

Business and Operational Plan

April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

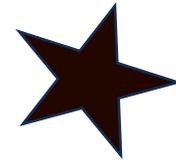
Business & Operational Plan





Mission

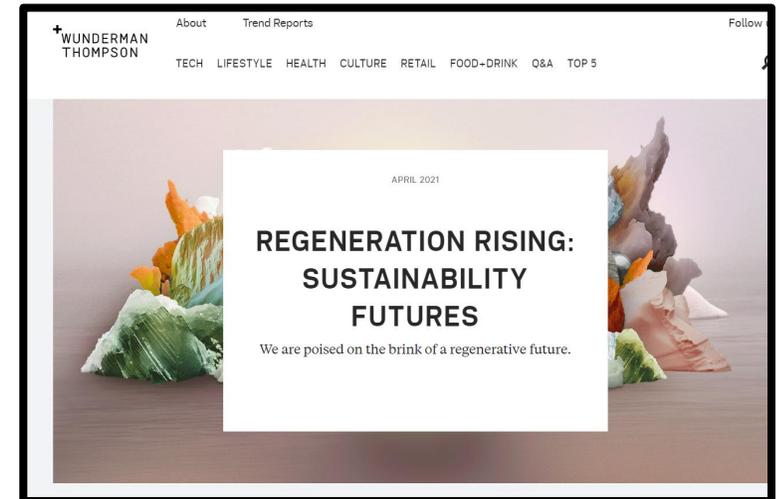
Develop innovative regenerative programs to ensure long-term sustainability and success for all stakeholders.



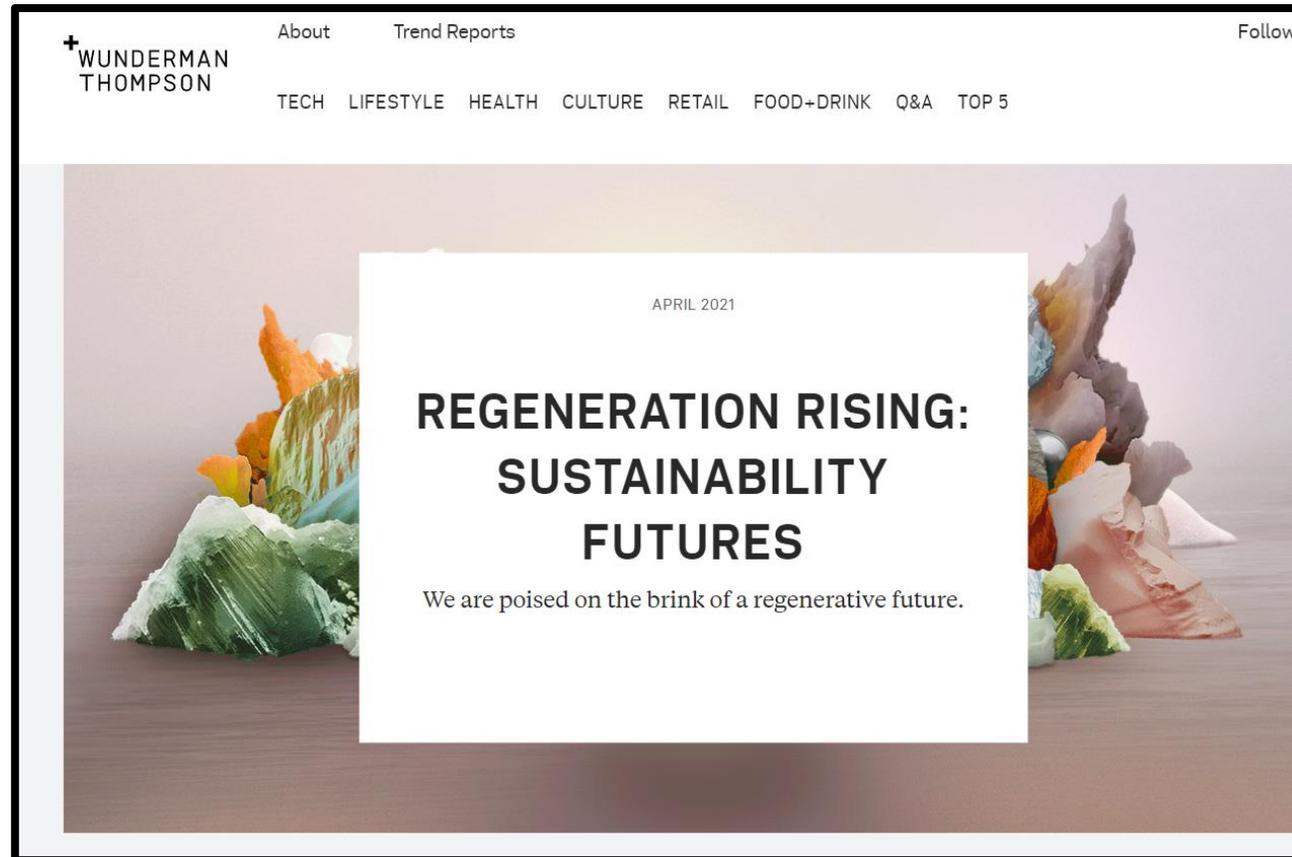
Regenerative Tourism

Constantly create and nurture the conditions for people, planet and economies (profit)

TO THRIVE.



Regenerative Tourism Development: A Step Further



Regenerative Tourism

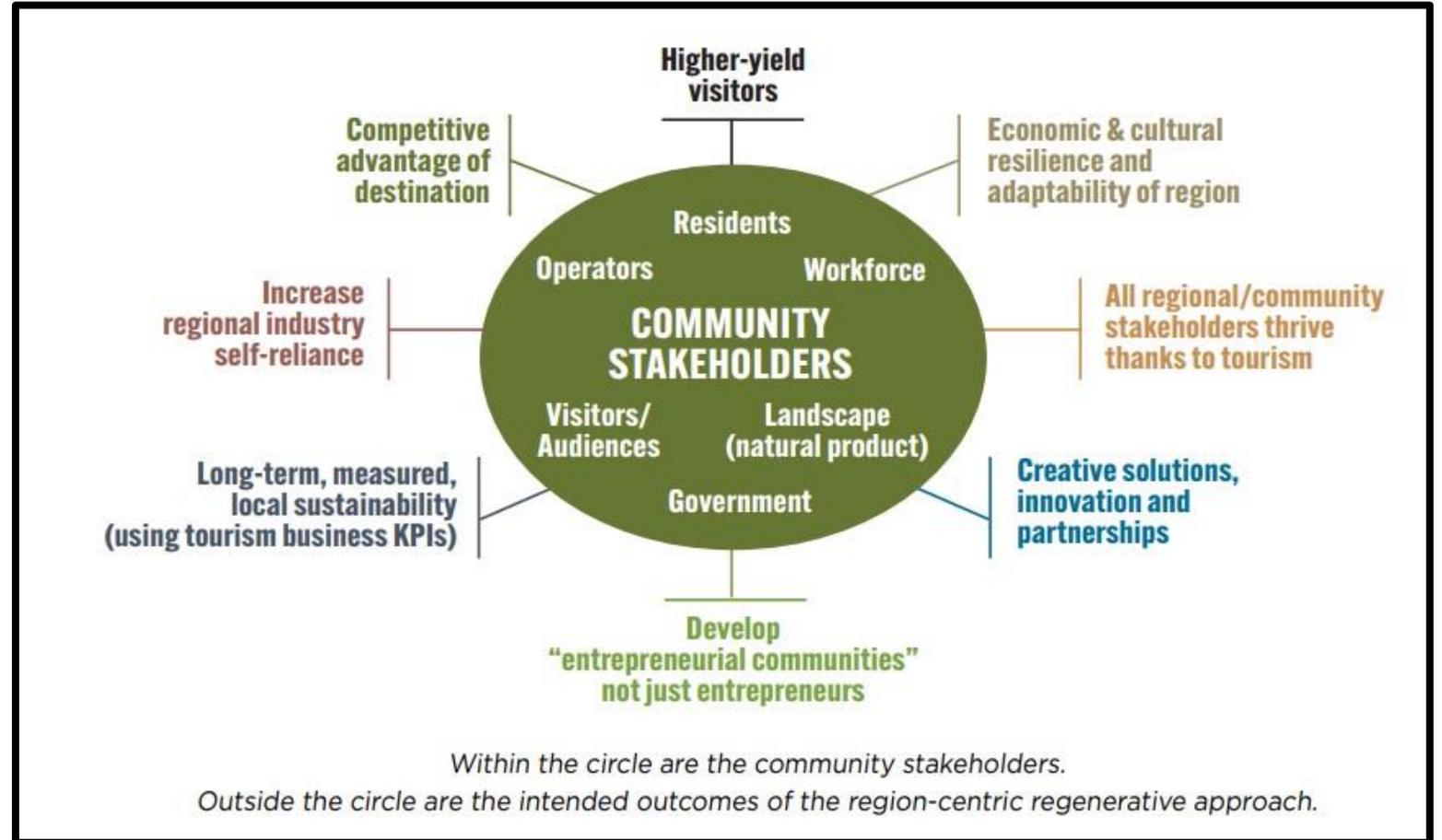
Community-Centric

**Mutually Beneficial &
Symbiotic Relationships**



Community-Centric

Mutually Beneficial & Symbiotic Relationships



Case Study

“Tayrnto”

 **The Eras Tour**  @TSTheErasTour

 | The police horses has their own friendship bracelets “Reputation (Taylor’s Version) & Debut (Taylor’s Version)  #TorontoTSTheErasTour



Will there be a “Swift” effect on the economy in Toronto?



In June 2024, there were **1,394 business locations in the traveller accommodation industry group** in the Toronto census metropolitan area (CMA).



Population of Toronto:
6,804,847



Number of planned shows in Toronto: **6**

Number of fans expected at the Rogers Centre: **240,000**



The Toronto CMA has **21,450 food services and drinking places.**



Source: A Swift effect on the economy (StatsCAN Plus), and Table 17-10-0148-01.



Statistics Canada
Statistique Canada

Canada

Hospitality workers in Toronto to rally for higher wages as hotel costs soar during Taylor Swift's concerts

TORONTO
THE CANADIAN PRESS
PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 14, 2024



The Royal York Hotel, in Toronto, on June 3, 2010. Unite Here Local 75 says Royal York employees have not seen a salary increase since 2021, and have been negotiating a new contract with the hotel since 2022.

ADRIEN VECZAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

3 COMMENTS SHARE BOOKMARK

LISTEN TO THIS ARTICLE

A group of hotel service workers in Toronto is set to hold a rally today outside the Fairmont Royal York to demand salary increases as hotel costs in the city skyrocket during Taylor Swift's concerts.

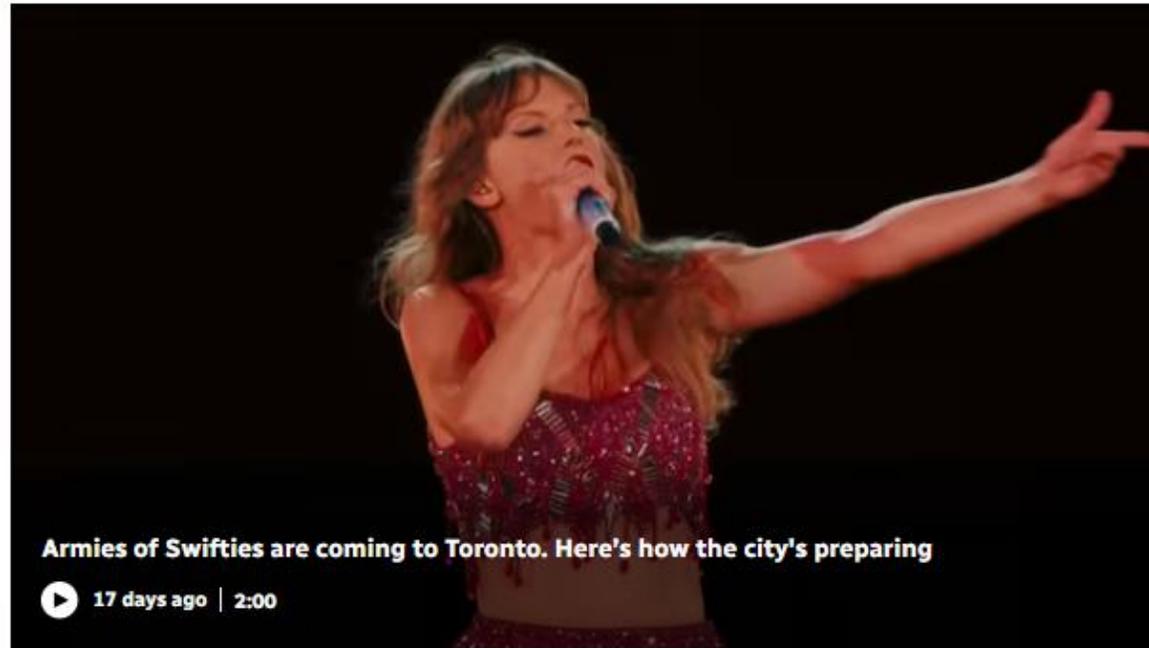
Unite Here Local 75, the union representing 8,000 hospitality workers in the Greater Toronto Area, says Royal York employees have not seen a salary increase since 2021,

Entertainment

Taylor Swift fans priced out of accommodations after hotel, Airbnb costs spike 10 times higher

Fans are selling their tickets to Vancouver, Toronto shows because they can't afford to stay the night

The Canadian Press · Posted: Oct 31, 2024 12:20 PM EDT | Last Updated: November 1



Hundreds of thousands of fans are expected to descend on downtown Toronto for six Taylor Swift concerts. Extra trains and buses are expected to run, and police say they are continuously monitoring for any threats.



Taylor Swift fan Kelly Hall was elated when she beat the odds and was allocated three tickets for

P
1
2
3
4
5

CONTRIBUTORS

Opinion | Taylor Swift fans will spend hundreds of millions in Toronto. Why does the city get so little of it?

Nov. 14, 2024 | 2 min read



With Taylor Swift now in Toronto and her Eras Tour kicking off on Thursday, an inflatable bracelet adorns the south side of the Rogers Centre.

Richard Lautens Toronto Star

Toronto City Hall

Toronto hotel tax bump: 'We need to make sure they share the wealth,' Chow says as Swifties send room rates skyrocketing

By [Joshua Freeman](#)

November 13, 2024 at 1:09PM EST



Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow speaks with reporters ahead of a City Council meeting Wednesday November 13, 2024.

Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow says the incredible influx of fans into the city for Taylor Swift's six-concert stay shows that Toronto's hotel industry can afford to pay a little more in tax when major events come to town.

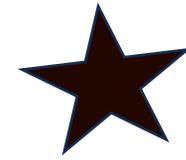
"They are doing very well. Taylor Swift is in town. Wow. It's now costing a lot of money to stay in hotel," Chow said. "So I would imagine that they are doing fine at this point."

Chow's comments come as City Council considers implementing a temporary hike in the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) on hotels. A report being considered by council Wednesday recommends hiking the tax from 6 per cent to 8.5 per cent from June 1, 2025 to July 31, 2026 when Toronto hosts six FIFA World Cup games.

Asked to respond to criticisms that the hike is being pushed without enough consideration, Chow disagreed that the move is

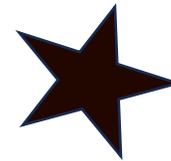
Editor's





Mission

Develop innovative **regenerative programs** to ensure **long-term sustainability** and success for **all stakeholders**.



Step One



Over to you.



Why develop tourism product?



Stay or go? Newfoundland town divided over prospect of resettlement

Only a few dozen people still live in Gaultois, N.L., after decades that closed the fish plant, shrank the local school and left many homes abandoned. Now, those left will vote on a contentious plan to take provincial compensation and leave

GREG MERCER >

INCLUDES CORRECTION

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 20, 2022

UPDATED OCTOBER 21, 2022

This article was published more than 2 years ago. Some information may no longer be current.



Doug Skinner of Gaultois, N.L., sits on the bench where he and his friends will sometimes 'have a yarn.' The town has a population of just more than 70, which is one-10th of what it was in the early 1990s.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DARREN CALABRESE/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

1.

The Business of
Tourism + Community
Economic
Development.



MICHELIN 2024

“We are deeply honored to receive the MICHELIN Three Key recognition, an acknowledgement of our commitment to originality, regenerative practices, caring service, and the importance of place.”

– *Managing Director A. Decker-Penton*

RT012

Resident Sentiment Study WAVE 1

December 2022



Community-Centric



#2

Dispersion
Competitiveness

#3 Sub-Regional Development

- **FUNDING:** Muskoka heavily funded from multiple sources now (District, municipalities, MATs, DMO, Chambers).
Niagara Investment increasing.
- **MARKETING:** differentiated audiences depending on the sub-region (GTA vs. Ottawa, North Bay, Sudbury)
- **PRODUCT DEV:** (lack of funding or human capital, more product elsewhere)



2024-2025 BOP Recommendation:

Invest in sub-regional strategies and development (primarily **product/event development**) for under-funded sub-regions.

REAFFIRMED FOR 2025-2026



#4 Duplication vs. Differentiation

Destination Ontario  
Sponsored · 
Explore the snowshoeing c... See more



algonquinoutfitters.com
Start Your Winter Outdoor Adventures... [Learn more](#)

  15 2 comments

Destination Ontario  
Sponsored · 
Snowshoeing promises not... See more



discovermuskoka.ca
Muskoka: The Snowshoeing Capital... [Learn more](#)

   12 1 comment

 **deerhurstresort**
anamé, gardenstate, Bien · The... 



snowshoeing

Destination Ontario  
Sponsored · 
Dimensions' 17 lakeside lu... See more



dimensionsretreats.com
Adults-Only, All-Inclusive Escape at Di... [Book now](#)



Destination Ontario 


Sponsored · 

Winter glamping is the coziest way to immerse yourself in Ontario's snowy scenery. Stay in a heated dome, hot tent or rustic cabin, fall asleep beneath star-filled nights and awake to adventure literally on your doorstep.



NORTHERNONTARIO.TRAV...
11 Winter Glamping [Learn more](#)


 Comment as    


Destination Ontario 


Sponsored · 

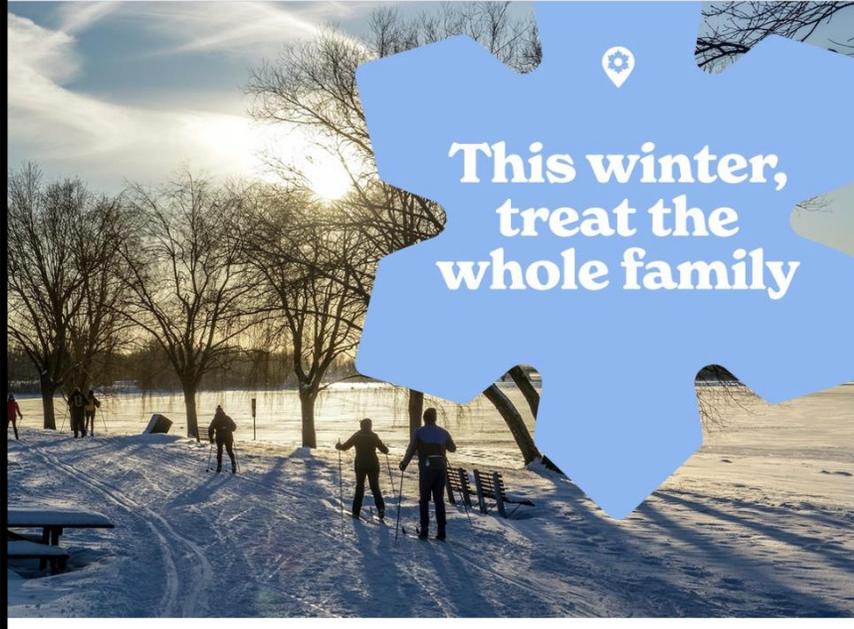
Learn to rough it or keep things pampered when you book your winter getaway just north of Toronto.



thegreatcanadianwilderness.com
Winter Camping, Glamping & Great Getaways Just North of Toronto [Learn more](#)

 **ottawatourism**  

Sponsored



**This winter,
treat the
whole family**

 **Destination Ontario**   

Sponsored · 

Prioritize relaxation and we... See more



ontariosouthwest.com
**Reconnect with Nature
& Each Other in Ontar...** [Learn more](#)

  371 16 comments 14 shares

What can you expect from the new site?

 Fishing & Hunting: The best lodges and outfitters in Canada.

 Touring: Explore scenic routes and the unique landscapes by auto, motorcycle, and more.

 Nature & Adventure: Hiking, cycling, skiing, and outdoor activities for every season.

 Culture & Heritage: Discover the rich history and local traditions that make **Simcoe County** special.

 Accommodations: A range of options, from cozy cabins to luxury stays.

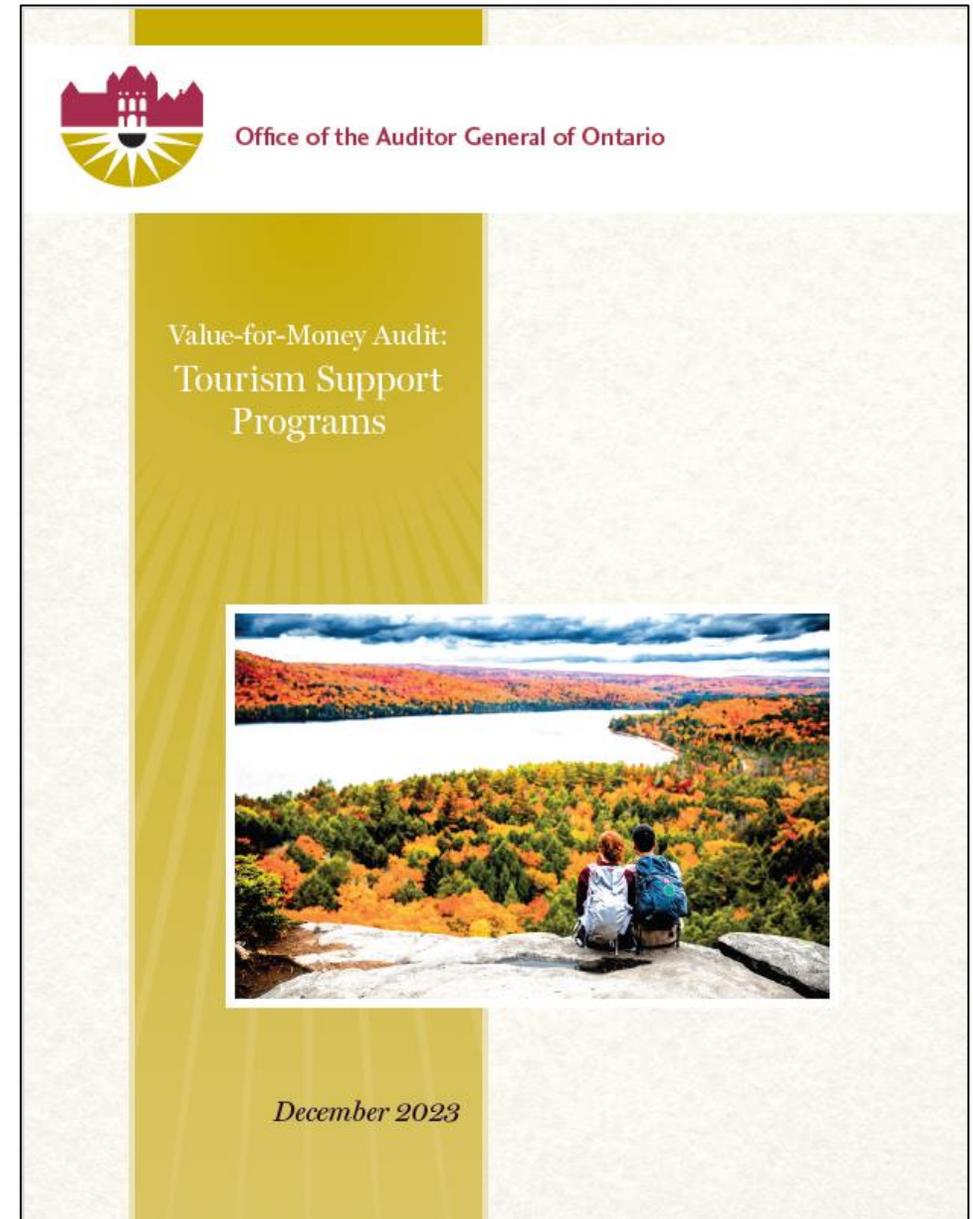
 Communities: Learn more about the vibrant towns that make up our region.

 Stories to Inspire Travel & Exploration:

Explorers' Edge Perspective

Value for Money Audit: December 2023

- Duplication (including MAT)
- Lack of provincial strategy
- Localized opportunities
- Differentiated product is key



2024-2025 BOP Recommendation:

Higher Yield* Marketing Strategy

Visitor numbers remain steady. Revenue increases exponentially.

(Regenerative approach)

*High Yield is not the same as “High Net Worth Travel”

RTO12 Estimated Visits:

2008:	3.5 million visit
2010:	3.8 million visits
2011:	4.8 million visits
2012:	4.1 million visits
2013:	4.3 million visits
2014:	4.3 million visits
2015:	4.4 million visits
2016:	4.7 million visits
2017:	4.5 million visits
2018:	3.7 million visits
2019:	4.4 million visits

RTO12 Estimated Spending:

2008:	\$662 million in spending
2010:	\$513 million in spending
2011:	\$598 million in spending
2012:	\$596 million in spending
2013:	\$614 million in spending
2014:	\$589 million in spending
2015:	\$699 million in spending
2016:	\$778 million in spending
2017:	\$650 million in spending
2018:	\$884 million in spending
2019:	\$840 million in spending

Response: Regenerative Travel Agency (OTA Social Enterprise)



RTA Objectives

Attract “high yield visitors”

Differentiate in the marketplace

Avoid duplication

Build destination loyalty

Create sustainable revenue generation / **REVENUE FOR IMPACT**

DIFFERENTIATED AND UNIQUE MARKETING STRATEGY



Travel Industry Council of Ontario (TICO) license awarded

Corporate changes undertaken (Governance)

Go-To-Market (GTM) strategy development





Photo illustration by Natalie Matthews-Ramo/Slate

Social media fatigue is real.

Also: Duplication



Real people are preferred (“intimacy”).





POSTS | ITINERARY

RIDE THE EDGE: A KILLER MOTORCYCLE ROUTE TWO HOURS FROM TORONTO

MOTORCYCLE

SHARE THIS POST



Motorcycle Touring in The Great Canadian Wilderness

CONTRIBUTORS



Andrew Booth
President

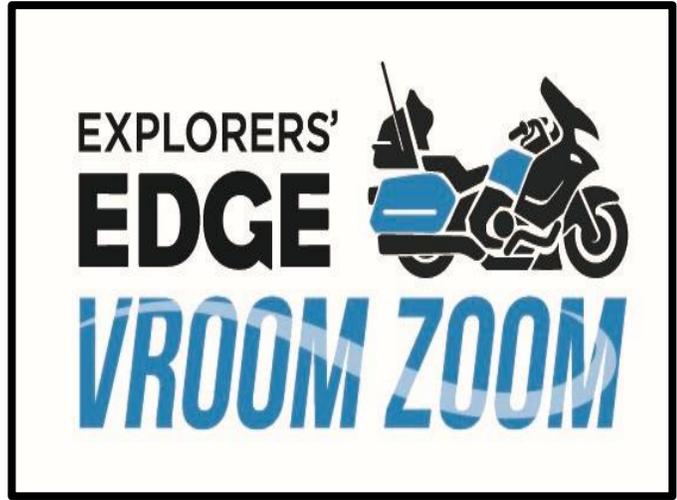
Right in the middle of Ontario is a gorgeous motorcycle route, developed by riders, which captures all the best of the Canadian Wilderness, without sacrificing great conveniences and amenities. It offers incredible [local food](#), picturesque [cabins](#), motorcycle-friendly [accommodations](#), and endless twisty [backroads](#), which are visited annually to ensure they are in great condition. Plus, it's all within a couple hours from Toronto or Ottawa.



Andrew

Andrew

Lisa





AI and data are driving for this long haul trip...



...but product experts hold all the **car bingo cards**.





A Very Special Zoom Chat with
Colin Bruce, FRCGS
Store Manager for
Algonquin Outfitters at
Oxtongue Lake

Join Colin and Explorers' Edge
staff to get hot tips on the best
ways to explore Canada's oldest
provincial park in the fall.



Tuesday, September 10
6pm to 7pm



For more info and to register
for this 'virtual fireside chat', visit
GreatCanadianWilderness.com/
[Algonquin-Park-In-Autumn](#)
or message this page.

'Thanks so much! So **helpful** for me.'

'Thanks everyone for all the **info**'

'**Wonderful informative** presentation Kate & Colin!'

'Amazing job Colin & Kate! **Great contributions from Ontario Parks and participants as well.**'

'Thank you! Very informative session - I appreciate your time and effort in setting this up for all of us.'

'Thank you, very **educational & interesting.**'

'Thank you - **this session is very informative.**'

'Congratulations guys! **Great chat tonight!!**'

'Thanks **Explorers' Edge and AO** for putting this on!'

'**Any trail suggestions for moose rut this weekend?**'

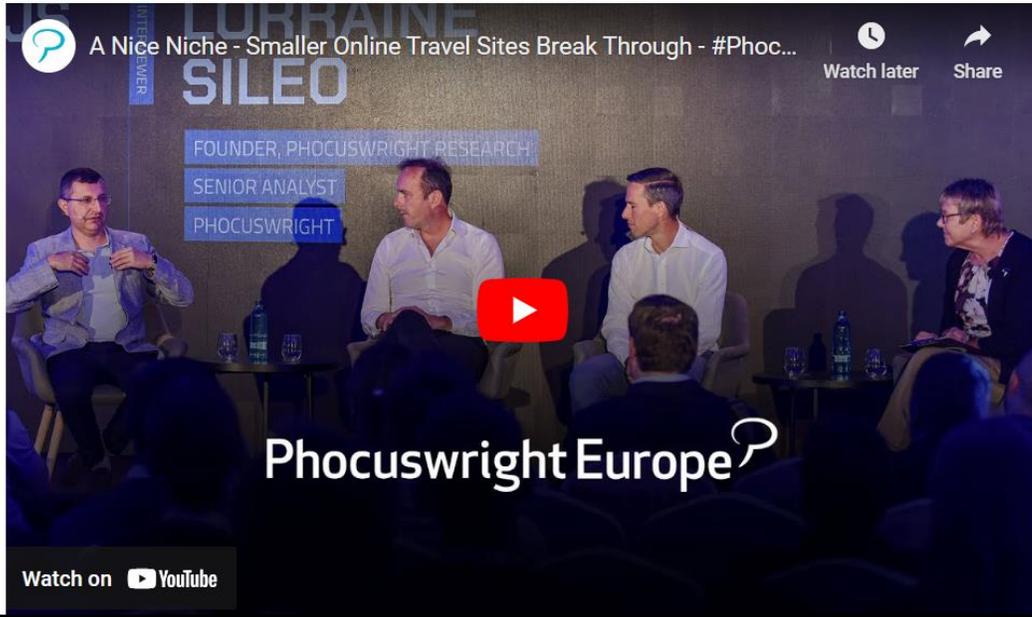
'Lots of Info for future. **I feel much more informed now.**
Thanks Colin!'

Niche is nice.



Why niche can be nice in the massive world of online travel

A Nice Niche - Smaller Online Travel Sites Break Through - Phocuswright Europe 2024



JOIN US: Arival | Activate Edinburgh, 23-25 Nov 2024 | Arival 360 | Valencia 2025, 28-30 Apr 2025 | Arival 360 | Washington, DC 2025, 30

ARIVAL Events Articles Research Resources Job Board Join Arival

A NEED FOR NICHE: 50 SPECIALIST OTAS IN TOURS, ACTIVITIES & ATTRACTIONS

More startups seek to fill gaps they say are left unmet by the big global platforms. Here's a list of 50 online travel agencies that focus on a particular sub-segment within tours, activities and attractions.

Home » Opinion

PDF Email Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Pinterest





THE TRAVEL CLUB FOR HOTEL LOVERS





**Personalization +
Engagement**

**Branded Region +
Product**



As many experts as there are stars.

As many partners as there are products.



As many (high yield) travellers as we can imagine.



Explorers' Edge Mantra:

“Personalization & Engagement for Conversion”



You are a storyteller.

[break]



What do we mean by “Tourism Product”?

- Traditional
- Experiential/Transformational



“Traditional”

- Popular Attractions
- Events
- Stay, Eat, Do

- A LOT of competition

ISAUGA ONTARIO LOCAL NEWS CHANGE CITY > HOME

New 5-star hotel in Niagara Falls moves forward

+ PREFERRED REGION 2 Ontario | Niagara | Niagara Falls | Latest News | Lifestyle | New Openings | Real Estate

By [Ashley Newport](#)
Published November 22, 2024 at 5:15 pm

X in WhatsApp



default

Last November, it was revealed that a National Historic Site in Niagara Falls that has been vacant since 1974 was [slated to become the beloved tourist town's first five-star boutique accommodation.](#)

Product Support to be Competitive (funding/marketing)



Experiential/Transformational (Travel Manitoba)

Experiential tourism is a growing trend in the travel industry that goes *beyond traditional sightseeing*.

Instead of merely visiting popular tourist attractions, this style of travel emphasizes **immersing oneself in the local culture, lifestyle and environment** of a destination.

It's about experiencing **the place** more deeply and authentically.

Asset-Based Community Development: What Have You Got? (Fogo Island approach...)



Friends of the Muskoka Watershed
Science Driving Solutions

PEER UNDER THE SURFACE CRUISE

PORT CARLING
DOCK

SUNDAY, SEPT.15 | 10 A.M. – NOON

Cruise with world-renowned freshwater scientist Dr. Norman Yan and learn what's living in every drop of lake water.

Real Science costs real money. All donations are appreciated

WWW.FOTMW.ORG/DONATE



LIMITED
TICKETS
AVAILABLE
\$65 PER
PERSON

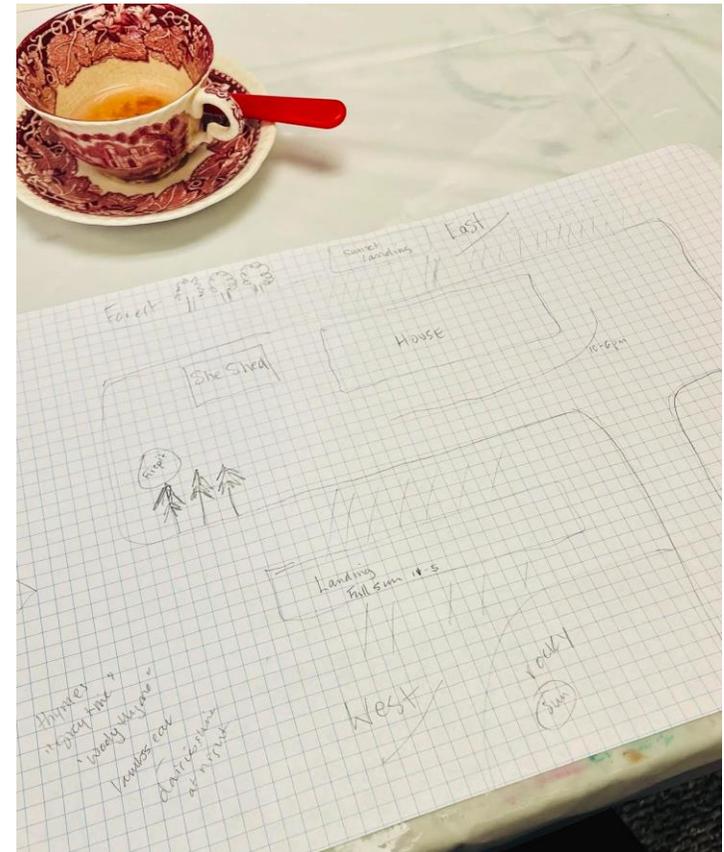


Experiential/Transformational

Personalization & Engagement for Conversion

Competitive advantage / Non-Competitive Approach

Place-based





Mutually beneficial
and symbiotic
relationships.

Asset-Based Community Development:

What Have You Got?

- Traditional product (attractions, events, food & beverage, accommodations)
- Experiential product
- Natural and cultural assets
- Infrastructure
- Experts



Be The Mushroom,
Be The Tree.



- Traditional product
- Experiential product
- Natural and cultural assets
- Infrastructure
- Experts

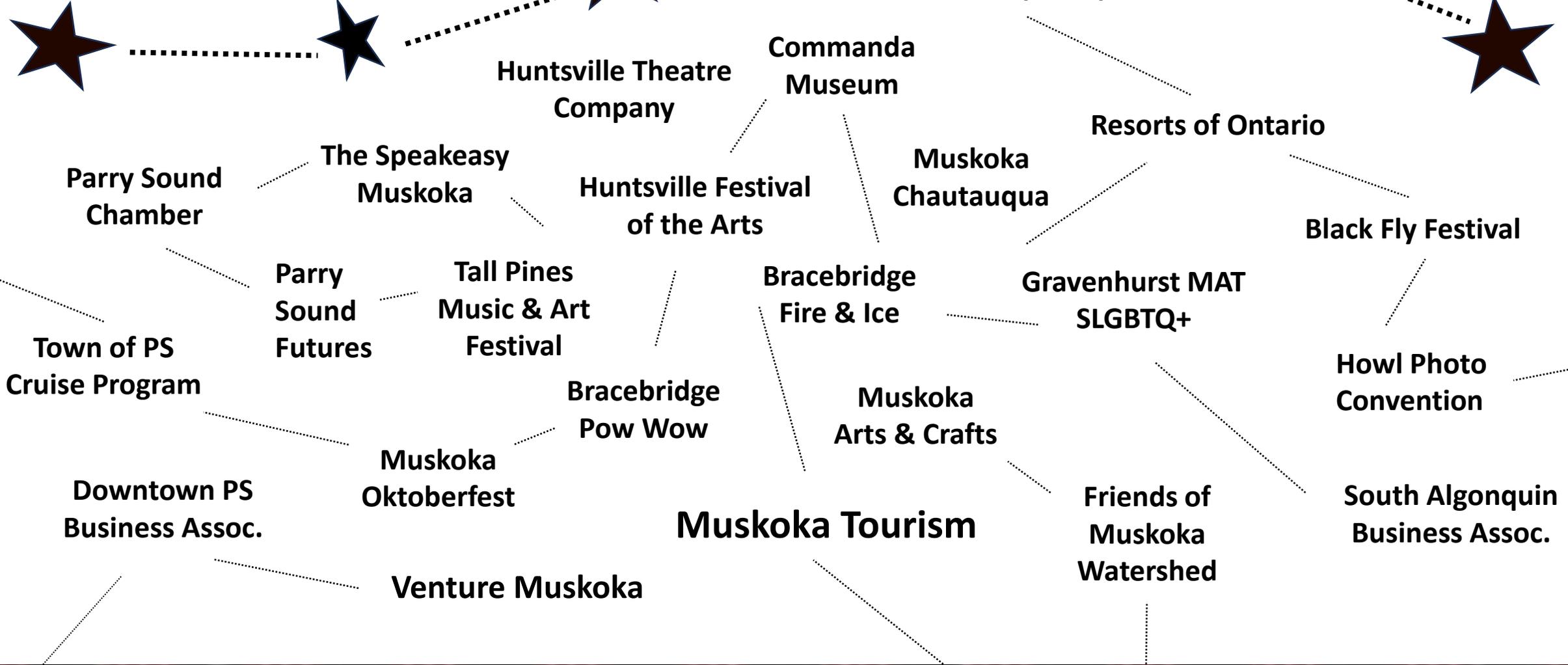


Funding, Networking, Gaps & Partnership

What Do You Need? (Capacity)



Partnerships





Next Steps

- Have a deeper think (mushroom/tree)
- Second AH-specific product development survey
- Zoom(s) for follow-up
- Trevor Norris, Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board
- Co-Creation Lab continues!
- ACED continues to be communication and dev partner





Thank You!

Kate@explorersedge.ca

James@explorersedge.ca

Erin@explorersedge.ca

Jake@explorersedge.ca