

DESTINATION
ONTARIO

An Agency of the Government of Ontario

BUSINESS
PLAN
2025-2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Destination Ontario's 2025-26 Business Plan is designed to align with the Ontario government's priorities, supporting the province's tourism sector in a way that provides value for money. Through targeted marketing and strategic partnerships, the agency aims to enhance Ontario's economy by increasing tourism activity across the province, while adapting to evolving market dynamics and regional needs. In a globally competitive environment, Destination Ontario remains committed to positioning the province as a premier travel destination while fostering a resilient and sustainable tourism industry.

The agency's plan reflects the Ontario government's focus on cost-effectiveness and policy adherence. This year, Destination Ontario will work closely with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, ensuring that its activities align with the Minister's Letter of Direction, its mandate, and government goals. This includes implementing recommendations from the recent Value-For-Money Audit: Tourism Support Programs and focusing on attracting international visitors, particularly in high-potential regions like Niagara. Recognizing the shifting landscape of international trade and travel, the agency will prioritize markets that offer the strongest return on investment, with a focus on diversifying its outreach to mitigate potential economic fluctuations.

Destination Ontario will also emphasize enhancing visitor experiences through improved accessibility, expanded digital services, and data-driven decision-making in procurement and resource allocation. Given the evolving international trade climate, strengthening global partnerships and media engagement will be key to reinforcing Ontario's reputation as a welcoming and dynamic tourism destination.

To operate sustainably, Destination Ontario will manage its resources responsibly, adhering to its budget while focusing on priority areas. Workforce size and organizational capacity will be optimized in alignment with government directives.

In terms of accountability, Destination Ontario remains dedicated to transparency and rigorous performance monitoring. This includes establishing clear performance metrics and reporting progress to the Treasury Board and Management Board of Cabinet. Data security will be a priority, ensuring the protection of individual and organizational data while carefully managing artificial intelligence applications. High-risk areas will be closely monitored with proactive risk mitigation strategies. Furthermore, Destination Ontario is committed to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and anti-racist workplace, promoting a culture that is equitable and accessible to all.

With these priorities in mind, Destination Ontario will play a key role in strengthening Ontario's tourism economy, increasing visitor spending, and fostering long-term industry growth. By working collaboratively with government and industry partners, the agency is committed to delivering impactful results while maintaining transparency, efficiency, and resilience in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

MANDATE

Destination Ontario is governed by Ontario Regulation 618/98 made under the *Development Corporations Act*. Its mandate, as provided for in the regulation, is:

- (a) to market Ontario as a travel destination;
- (b) to undertake joint marketing initiatives with the tourism industry;
- (c) to support and assist the marketing efforts of the tourism industry; and
- (d) in cooperation with the tourism industry, the Government of Ontario, other governments and other agencies of governments, to promote Ontario as a travel destination.

Vision

To position Ontario as a preferred global destination.

Mission

To generate increased visitation by Ontario, Canadian and international tourists, enhance tourism expenditures in Ontario, and contribute to provincial economic prosperity through impactful marketing and results-oriented investment partnerships.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Destination Ontario's 2024-2027 strategic plan, also known as the Strategic Playbook, provides a three-year roadmap for the organization. The Playbook will also be guided by the 2025-26 Letter of Direction by the Minister and adhere to the Government Priorities for Provincial Board-Governed Agencies 2025-26.

The strategic plan encompasses the following key pillars and priorities:

1) Making Strategic Investments

Evidence-based marketing decisions that drive return on investment and contribute to the vitality of the Ontario tourism economy.

2) Aligning Outcomes Through Strategic Partnerships

Driving value and alignment through partnership programs with industry, private sector and government partners to achieve common business outcomes.

3) Advancing Corporate Leadership

Building our presence in the Ontario tourism industry through active engagement and communications that offer learnings, best practices, and expertise to support our collective modernization and growth.

4) Levelling Up

Continuously improving our own organizational capacity to be an effective marketer, trusted partner, and public resource.

2025-26 Letter of Direction:

The government has also set out the following priorities specific to Destination Ontario, via the 2025-26 Letter of Direction:

1. Work with the ministry to implement recommendations of the 2023 Value-For-Money Audit: Tourism Support Programs, conducted by the Auditor General of Ontario.
2. Continue to support government priorities related to growing international tourism across Ontario with additional emphasis in the Niagara region.
3. Continue to collaborate with industry stakeholders, Regional Tourism Organizations, and other agencies and attractions to promote Ontario as a preferred travel destination focusing on markets that generate a strong return on investment.
4. Continue to grow and generate positive media engagement and coverage that highlights the province's tourism and attraction appeal.

RESPONSE TO THE EXPECTATIONS SET OUT IN THE AGENCY LETTER OF DIRECTION

Destination Ontario is fully committed to aligning its strategic objectives, operations, and initiatives with the priorities and expectations outlined in the government's 2025-26 Letter of Direction. We will ensure that our efforts are focused on delivering innovative, sustainable, and accountable services that provide value to the people of Ontario and adhere to government policies and directives.

In compliance with the Agencies and Appointments Directive, our business plan reflects how Destination Ontario plans to:

- Simplify client and customer interactions, enhance digital service offerings, and improve satisfaction to foster innovation.
- Strengthen public service delivery by optimizing organizational capacity and ensuring prudent use of public resources to support sustainability.
- Develop and report outcome-focused performance measures, maintain robust cybersecurity and data protection practices, and mitigate risks effectively to uphold accountability.

Furthermore, we will implement the recommendations of the 2023 Value-For-Money Audit, collaborate with stakeholders to promote Ontario as a premier travel destination, and support initiatives to grow international tourism, particularly in high-return markets like the Niagara region.

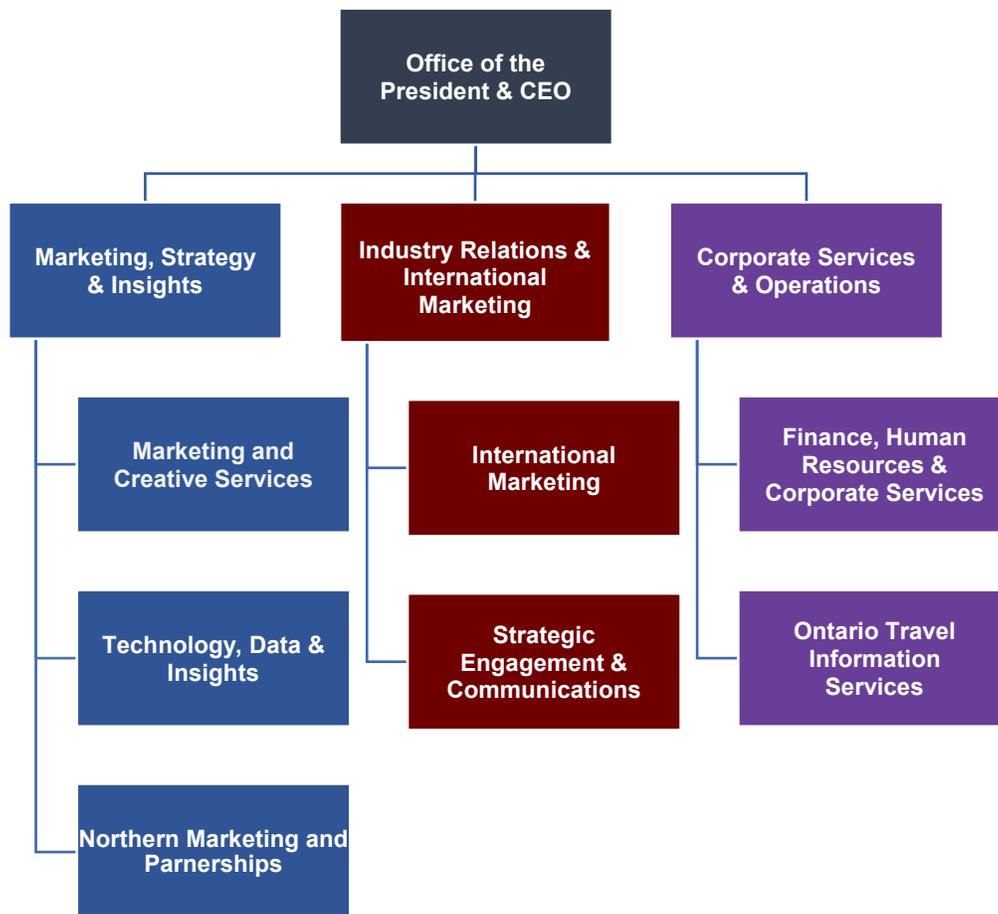
By aligning with these priorities, Destination Ontario aims to fulfill its mandate while contributing to the broader goals of the Government of Ontario. Our progress and

achievements will be regularly monitored and reported through our annual report and communicated to the Ministry in a transparent and accountable manner.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

As an agency of the Government of Ontario, Destination Ontario is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of business leaders and based on recommendations from the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. Board members are public appointments by the Ontario Lieutenant Governor in Council. Destination Ontario staff will continue to work closely with the Board to ensure they have the necessary briefing materials and information to help them provide informed strategic guidance and direction on key decisions.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Destination Ontario is a dynamic organization that collaborates across all areas of the organization to deliver on its mandate of positioning Ontario as a renowned tourism destination while fostering economic growth for tourism businesses. Our structure

includes the following key areas: President and CEO's Office; Marketing, Strategy and Insights; Industry Relations and International Marketing; and Corporate Services and Operations. By leveraging the collective resources and expertise of these areas, Destination Ontario optimizes the impact of our activities and programs.

Destination Ontario, as the leading force in provincial tourism marketing, will continue to strengthen its collaborations with key tourism stakeholders, building on the momentum of its 2024-27 Strategic Playbook. With a renewed focus on enhancing visitor numbers and spending, the agency will promote Ontario as a safe and captivating destination to Canadian, U.S., and international travelers. In response to growing global competition, Destination Ontario will work closely with Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs), Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), sector associations, and the private sector to explore revenue opportunities, drive efficiencies, and ensure program sustainability through innovation. A key objective will be distinguishing Ontario in a crowded marketplace while inspiring residents and international visitors alike to explore the province's diverse attractions.

As an agency of the Government of Ontario, Destination Ontario works closely with the Ministry to align agency goals, objectives, and strategic direction with government priorities and direction, including those outlined in the 2025-26 Letter of Direction. The agency remains focused on opportunities to assist stakeholders to recover and rebuild.

President & CEO Office

The President's Office delivers executive support to the President and CEO in guiding operational strategy, overseeing management, and executing the agency's key initiatives. This includes close coordination with the Board and industry committees. As an agency under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming (MTCG), Destination Ontario maintains regular engagement with the Ministry, ensuring seamless collaboration across ministerial portfolios. The President's office is committed to aligning Destination Ontario's strategic objectives with government priorities, fostering partnerships, and enhancing communications to support the growth and resilience of the tourism and culture industries.

Corporate Services & Operations

The Corporate Services team oversees administration operations in the areas of strategic and operational planning, controllership, financial management, accounts payable, human resources, procurement, facilities and asset management, and general administration services for Destination Ontario. This program area is also responsible for business continuity planning in the event of an emergency. The team provides strategic direction and leadership in the planning, delivery and evaluation of all corporate service strategies, systems and controls to support the ongoing business operations of Destination Ontario, including financial planning and reporting, and executing agreements efficiently and effectively to support industry partners. Corporate services provides solutions-focused advice on agency matters, ensuring the financial, reputational and policy interests of the ministry and government are considered and compliant with Ontario Public Service (OPS) policies and directives.

Ontario Travel Information Services

Ontario Travel Information Services (OTIS) create trip plans and drive bookings of Ontario tourism products and experiences and influence consumer travel purchasing decisions by providing travel advice and inspiration to visitors across multiple visitor service channels. Destination Ontario's knowledgeable travel counsellors offer personalized trip planning: in person at festivals, events and busy tourism locations as well as at the Ontario Travel Information Centres (OTICs), by email, phone and virtually to help visitors to discover the variety of tourism products and experiences available in Ontario.

Destination Ontario continues to evolve OTIS through strategic modernization initiatives and a 'Visitor Care' approach to enhance the delivery of tourism information services to visitors beyond the traditional bricks-and-mortar model through modern digital channels and support the industry to ensure strategic investments and partnerships.

Marketing, Strategy & Insights

The Marketing, Strategy and Insights team manages an extensive portfolio that covers all stages of campaign development, from planning and execution to monitoring performance across various marketing channels. This critical role enhances Ontario's presence across digital, social, and traditional media, ensuring a cohesive and impactful message that attracts visitors to the province.

The team's main functions include:

1. **Planning and Executing Omni-Channel Marketing Campaigns:** The Marketing team develops and oversees marketing campaigns across a range of channels to maximize reach and engagement. They are responsible for integrating messaging across digital, print, broadcast, and other media channels to create seamless experiences that connect with diverse audiences. Additionally, they track and report on campaign performance, providing insights that help optimize future initiatives.
2. **Owned Social Media Strategy and Management:** Managing all Destination Ontario-owned social media channels, this function includes developing and executing content strategies that reflect Ontario's tourism brand. The Social team creates, schedules, and manages social content, engaging audiences and fostering community across platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and others. They also monitor social media metrics to continually refine their approach and boost engagement.
3. **Creative Fulfillment for Organizational Needs:** The Creative Services team fulfills all creative needs across the organization, from concept development to final production of visual assets. This includes designing campaign visuals, producing video, promotional materials, branding, and ensuring a consistent visual identity across all platforms.
4. **Complete Operational Management of DestinationOntario.com:** The Web & Content team is responsible for the overall management, content creation, and user experience of DestinationOntario.com. This includes updating and

maintaining the website to ensure it is a reliable and appealing resource for visitors. They focus on search engine optimization (SEO), content strategy, and ensuring the site offers relevant and timely information that showcases Ontario's tourism offerings effectively.

Northern Marketing

Destination Ontario has a specific team focused on increasing visitation to Northern Ontario. Destination Ontario works with northern tourism partners to market the North's unique product, Indigenous experiences and natural landscapes. While the North as a destination is promoted and integrated across all the agency's work, there is also a specific concentration on avid consumers with a focus on powersports and touring, angling and hunting, and outdoor adventure.

Destination Ontario's northern marketing efforts are supported and undertaken in collaboration with strong northern partners, including RTOs 13 and 12, DMOs, sector associations and individual tourism operators.

A significant segment of Northern Ontario's tourism industry relies heavily on the U.S. traveller. As part of supporting the North, Destination Ontario's northern marketing programs and activities will continue to focus on both avid and leisure American travellers, while continuing efforts in Ontario and other source Canadian markets. Collaboration with northern partners will be critical to leverage marketing plans to target consumers to return to Ontario and to welcome new visitors.

Industry Relations and International Marketing

Strategic Engagement and Communications

The Strategic Engagement and Communications team includes three key areas for the organization: Partnerships, Corporate Communications and the Broadcast Program.

Partnerships

Destination Ontario plays a pivotal role as the provincial marketing organization for tourism in Ontario. By supporting a wide range of industry stakeholders, including RTOs, DMOs, sector associations, and private sector partners, it works to promote the province as a top-tier travel destination. Some of the work that the organization does to support partners includes:

Ongoing Partnerships

- Collaborative Approach: Destination Ontario continues to build on successful collaborations with key tourism stakeholders, such as RTOs, DMOs, Ministry sister agencies, and corporate partnerships. These partnerships are designed to strengthen the tourism sector across Ontario.

Industry Learning & Knowledge Sharing - Marketing and Research

- Expertise and Insights: Destination Ontario shares research and data that supports decision-making and helps tourism businesses target their audience

more effectively. This may include consumer trends, travel behavior, and marketing techniques.

- Marketing Support: Destination Ontario provides tailored marketing campaigns, digital tools, and promotional materials to its partners to help drive awareness and attract visitors to Ontario.

In-Person and Virtual Engagement

- Conferences & Events: Destination Ontario actively participates in industry conferences, meetings, and events—both in-person and virtually. This presence helps maintain its leadership role in the sector, while also providing opportunities for stakeholders to collaborate.
- Industry Networking: Participation helps facilitate networking among tourism stakeholders, which helps foster community development and collaboration across the industry.

Economic Impact

- By sharing expertise, research, and resources, Destination Ontario helps regenerate and support the tourism industry in Ontario. The collective efforts of its partners aim to increase tourism, drive economic activity, and sustain long-term growth in the province.
- Destination Ontario remains a trusted leader in the tourism sector, offering both strategic marketing expertise and the tools necessary for partners to succeed. Whether through webinars, conferences, or direct marketing support, the organization is committed to helping Ontario's tourism businesses thrive, and ultimately, ensuring that the province remains a premier destination for travellers.

Broadcast Program

The Broadcast Program is unique to Destination Ontario. The only program of its kind across all provincial marketing organizations, it supports Destination Ontario's mandate to market Ontario as a preferred tourism destination by bringing the province's products, experiences, attractions, and local tourism businesses to life on radio and television.

International Marketing

The international traveller is important to Ontario's tourism economy as they typically stay longer and spend more than a domestic visitor. In 2019, international travellers accounted for 2.8% of visits to Ontario and contributed 19.8% of overall visitor expenditures.

International leisure travel continues to resume in phases, and competition for travellers is fierce. Destination Ontario will continue to use an integrated approach to ensure that international travellers choose Ontario. The International Marketing program's work is undertaken with research and insights supporting decision making:

- Business Development – Working closely with travel companies (tour operators, wholesalers, and travel agents) to increase awareness of the province and drive sales of Ontario's market-ready tourism products and experiences.

- Media and Public Relations – Working closely with media representatives (journalists, editors, and influencers) to garner positive third-party editorial coverage to increase awareness of the province and inspire travel to Ontario.
- Consumer Marketing – promoting Ontario directly to consumers through digital and social tactics to drive awareness, consideration, and travel intent for Ontario spending.

Destination Ontario’s international markets of priority for 2025-2026 are the United Kingdom (U.K.), Germany, France, Japan, China, South Korea, Mexico, and Australia. Destination Ontario collaborates with Destination Canada, RTOs, DMOs, sector associations, Ministry sister agencies, private sector and its in-market representatives to promote Ontario internationally.

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Destination Ontario is building on its corporate communications activities to further strengthen engagement with tourism stakeholders and reinforce its reputation as a leader in tourism marketing across Ontario. The agency remains committed to providing stakeholders with timely, relevant, and valuable information to support their business needs.

A strong presence within Ontario’s tourism sector is central to Destination Ontario’s goals. Through consistent, impactful communication, the agency aims to increase visibility, share best practices, and provide partners with insights that support their business. This proactive approach benefits the broader tourism ecosystem by encouraging innovation, collaboration, and growth across the province, positioning Destination Ontario as a leader in promoting Ontario as a top travel destination and driving positive economic outcomes.

The corporate communications strategy includes enhanced communication channels to strengthen stakeholder engagement and build brand awareness. Through increased media coverage and proactive engagement, Destination Ontario will generate greater awareness of its activities, programs, and achievements. The new *Destination Digest* newsletter, with nearly 500 subscribers, delivers timely updates and insights that foster a deeper connection with industry partners. Additionally, Destination Ontario is expanding its LinkedIn presence to provide thought leadership, share success stories, and promote industry-wide insights, creating an ongoing dialogue with industry professionals. The corporate website (destinationontario.com/Corporate) also serves as a reliable resource, offering stakeholders access to corporate documents, strategic updates, and relevant information.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships remain a cornerstone of Destination Ontario's efforts, integral to many of the agency’s strategic initiatives and tactical executions. By fostering strong, collaborative relationships with stakeholders, Destination Ontario aims to drive increased tourism visitation and spending across the province. These partnerships will be essential for supporting the industry and fueling future growth. Through continued

collaboration with RTOs, DMOs, sector associations, other provincial agencies, and industry partners, Destination Ontario will expand market reach and create lasting economic impact, ensuring that these partnerships remain mutually beneficial and contribute to Ontario's tourism success.

MICHELIN Guide

Destination Ontario was pleased to have the opportunity to partner with Destination Canada, Destination Toronto, and the City of Toronto to bring and expand the MICHELIN Guide Toronto and Region. To date, 100 restaurants and 30 cuisine types are reflected in the Guide and Destination Ontario is optimistic for further selections to be added in the 2025 selection.

The MICHELIN brand not only places Ontario's culinary scene on the global stage but also brings invaluable benefits to the tourism industry. Ontario's recognition in the MICHELIN Guide Toronto & Region is especially impactful in Ontario's international target markets, where the MICHELIN brand is a highly respected symbol of excellence. Destination Ontario will continue to work together with its partners to share Toronto's culinary stories and successes.

Indigenous Tourism Ontario (ITO)

ITO and Destination Ontario renewed their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining specific areas of communication, marketing, and mentorship collaboration, with a goal to strengthen the Indigenous tourism industry across Ontario through the tourism lens.

Visitor Information Services Partnerships

Destination Ontario will continue to play a more proactive leadership role in visitor services with the more than 200 local and regional Visitor Information Centres (VICs) operated by RTOs, DMOs and community economic development offices in the province. Destination Ontario leads the network by sharing best practices, leading training sessions and webinars, sending quarterly email updates and hosts an online community for VIS network.

OTIS leverages industry partnerships to better promote Ontario's tourism products and services and support the industry. Staff work collaboratively with industry partners such as tourism associations, RTOs, DMOs and business operators for the Roaming Ambassadors Travel Information Services program, promotion of products in travel OTICs, over the phone, by email and virtually, resulting in opportunities for Destination Ontario staff training on new or updated tourism products and experiences. OTIS also hosts monthly Lunch and Learns where industry partners are invited to present to the OTIS team (and Destination Ontario) on their tourism products and experiences.

TOURISM OUTLOOK

Tourism is a major economic driver for Ontario, with millions of visitors contributing billions of dollars to the economy each year. In 2022, there were 114.3 million tourist visits in Ontario and these visitors spent \$28.6 billion. Tourism receipts reached

\$35.1 billion, generating \$33.4 billion for Ontario's total GDP, contributing \$5.5 billion in provincial taxes, and supporting 360,000 jobs.¹

Ontario's tourism industry has made significant strides in its recovery from the pandemic. Domestic tourism has rebounded strongly, surpassing 2019 levels. As the largest travel destination in Canada, Ontario received approximately two-fifths of all domestic visits in Canada, and nearly half (46%) of all international (US + overseas) entries to Canada in 2023.² And while the full recovery of international tourism is still underway, tourism trends continue to improve.

Domestic tourism is proving resilient. While increasing economic pressures may limit spending, travel remains a priority for many Canadians, and domestic travel is expected to see increased demand as cost-conscious travellers seek affordable options. A weaker Canadian dollar is expected to contribute to increased domestic tourism. Domestic tourism in Ontario is poised for continued growth, with both interprovincial and intraprovincial overnight visits in the province projected to see sustained growth through 2028.³

The U.S. economy is showing resilience, driving a robust recovery in U.S. visits to Ontario. In 2023, U.S. residents took 10.2 million trips to Ontario, representing 78% of the pre-pandemic 2019 level. Building on the momentum of 2023, U.S. visits to Ontario have continued to recover in the first three quarters of 2024, reaching 85% of the comparable 2019 level. The favourable U.S. dollar exchange rate further incentivizes American travellers to visit Ontario. The overall outlook for U.S. tourism to Ontario is positive, with overnight visitor numbers expected to exceed pre-pandemic levels in 2025.⁴

Destination Ontario is closely monitoring the changing travel landscape, including developments in U.S.-Canada relations, to proactively assess any potential impact on tourism. To gain deeper insights into the factors influencing travel to Ontario and inform marketing initiatives, Destination Ontario is conducting research to understand travel intentions and perceptions of Ontario among both Ontario and U.S. travellers in the current economic and political environment.

Overseas travel to Ontario has improved; however, it has not fully recovered from the effects of the pandemic. In 2023, Ontario welcomed 2.5 million overseas arrivals, 1.5 times those from 2022, and three-quarters (75%) of the number of arrivals observed in 2019. Overseas travel to Ontario has continued to show gradual improvement, with the first three quarters of 2024 demonstrating stronger recovery (78% of the 2019 level).⁵

¹ Statistics Canada (National Travel Survey, Visitor Travel Survey, Travel Arrangement Survey); Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming (Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model).

² Statistics Canada, Frontier Counts.

³ The Conference Board of Canada; Statistics Canada.

⁴ The Conference Board of Canada; Statistics Canada.

⁵ Statistics Canada, Frontier Counts.

While overseas tourism to Ontario is recovering, the pace varies across markets. European markets like the United Kingdom and Germany have shown the strongest recovery. Overnight visits to Canada from the United Kingdom are forecast to surpass the 2019 level in 2025, and overnight visits from Germany and France are forecast to surpass pre-pandemic levels in 2026. The recovery of Asian markets, especially China, has been slower due to geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainties. While overnight visits to Canada from South Korea and Japan are forecast to recover in 2026, overnight visits from China are not projected to surpass the pre-pandemic level until 2028. Australia is projected to recover in 2025.⁶ The imposition of visa requirements has negatively impacted the momentum of tourism from Mexico, which had shown strong recovery in 2023. Overall, the recovery of overseas tourism is expected to continue, but remains uneven.

Travel trends for 2025 point to a shift towards unique and authentic experiences. Travellers are exploring lesser-known destinations, seeking out local goods and experiences, and prioritizing relaxation and well-being. Natural phenomena, such as the northern lights and the recent eclipse, continue to influence travel decisions, with travellers eager to witness breathtaking events. Additionally, social media and entertainment, including movies, TV shows, and streaming services, are influencing travel decisions, with many travellers seeking out destinations featured in their favourite media.⁷

In Ontario, the industry continues to face challenges related to the workforce, the return of business travel, and climate change, with increasingly unpredictable weather patterns and events impacting tourism. Rising travel costs, although stabilizing, continue to pose ongoing challenges.

With a strong foundation and a positive outlook, Ontario's tourism industry is well-positioned to capitalize on future opportunities, maintain its position as Canada's leading travel destination, and continue to thrive and contribute to the province's economic prosperity.

IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

In 2025-26, Destination Ontario will continue its core mandate of promoting Ontario as a premier travel destination. Our focus on increasing visitation and tourism spending within the province supports the growth of the province's tourism sector.

The agency will leverage data-driven marketing strategies to enhance its programs and boost tourism across Ontario. Aligned with government priorities, Destination Ontario will collaborate with the Ministry, partner agencies, and industry stakeholders to drive innovation and build a resilient tourism economy. Across all implementation plans, DO is focused on delivering against its regulated mandate, as outlined in the following:

⁶ Destination Canada Fall 2023 Outlook (mid-term update); Tourism Economics

⁷ Expedia Group and OnePoll (Unpack '25: The Trends in Travel)

- a. To market Ontario as a travel destination.
- b. To undertake joint marketing initiatives with the tourism industry.
- c. To support and assist the marketing efforts of the tourism industry.
- d. In cooperation with the tourism industry, the Government of Ontario, other governments and other agencies of governments, to promote Ontario as a travel destination.

Across all implementation plans Destination Ontario will:

- deliver marketing services that contribute to regional and economic development,
- become a centre of excellence supporting provincial marketing,
- lead the marketing of Ontario as a travel destination nationally and internationally, and
- work with regional organizations to market travel within Ontario.

The effectiveness of marketing programs and activities is continuously assessed to ensure a strong return on investment and valuable insights for future campaigns. The goal is to maximize value for money.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be tracked and reported for all consumer campaigns, where applicable:

- Increase in overnight travel intention to Ontario.
- Growth in trip frequency.
- Greater interest in seasonal trip planning information.
- Improved unaided awareness of short getaways.
- Campaign performance metrics (e.g., Click-Through Rate (CTR), Cost Per Click (CPC), Cost Per Thousand Impressions (CPM), etc.).

Ontario Market

With significant interest from destination partners in the Ontario market, Destination Ontario will maintain and optimize the existing partnership system. This system is focused on supporting shoulder season travel to key destinations across the province. Our efforts are focused on growing domestic visitation and expenditure during the fall and winter seasons. A strategic emphasis is on overnight visitation and extended stays to help increase domestic revenue throughout the year. Our integrated efforts will encourage travel to lesser-known places and experiences through planning content, social content, travel counselling, broadcast, and media relations and public relations activities.

Outputs:

Fall and winter domestic campaigns.

- Partnered marketing system profiling partner content and operators
- Sustained search engine marketing media ensuring we support domestic search inquiries

- A year-round partnership with the Culinary Tourism Alliance in support of their 'DO something delicious' campaign promoting culinary destinations across the province
- Destination Ontario's content creator strategy will activate Ontario-based content creators in 2025-26. This work will focus on priority segments and groups ensuring the promotion of inclusive storytelling on our owned social channels
- Destination Ontario will continue to support the Ontario market through its earned media relations program, as well as targeting broadcast media outlets (radio and television) as well as short- and long-lead print and digital publications. Activities will remain flexible and continue to highlight all areas of Ontario while aligning with Destination Ontario's marketing campaign messaging and partner programs

Outcomes:

- Generate incremental visitation and spend attributable to domestic advertising campaigns
- Generate 600K in incremental visitation and \$100M in incremental spend.
- Generate 3.75M leads to industry
- Generate \$40M AVE in earned media across all of Destination Ontario's priority markets, domestic and international

Targets for visits and spend are projected against media investment of \$2.47M media spend and past campaign performance data.

Canada Market

With the strong 2023-24 performance, there is a strong rationale to maintain the partner collaboration model targeting the Quebec market with key bilingual destination partners. In addition, Destination Ontario will increase its search engine marketing (SEM) presence Canada-wide to ensure Ontario information is capturing any interest from potential Canadian travellers. Market objectives include:

- a. To target the Quebec market with destination partners to test market response and engagement with Ontario and destination partners as a travel destination.
- b. To increase investment in owned content strategy for the Quebec market to test and learn traveller engagement and interest.
- c. Engage target travellers with integrated org-wide activities, including our social channel strategy, content creation, broadcast, media relations and public relations activities to drive consideration of Ontario travel experiences.

Outputs:

- Partnered campaign into the Quebec market in promotion of summer travel to Ontario
- As part of our enhanced strategy, Destination Ontario's SEM efforts will expand its focus into the Canadian market, with a special emphasis on promoting Ontario to travelers across all Canadian provinces

- Destination Ontario's content creator strategy will activate Quebec-based content creators in 2025-26. This work will focus on aligning to our campaign efforts in the Qbec market and profiling partner destinations and products
- Destination Ontario will continue to support the Canadian markets through its earned media program targeting broadcast media outlets (radio and television) as well as short- and long-lead print and digital publications. Activities will remain flexible and continue to highlight all areas of Ontario while aligning with Destination Ontario's marketing campaign messaging and partner programs

Outcomes:

- Generate 500,000 leads to industry
- Generate a baseline for travel intent
- Generate a baseline for visits and expenditures
- Generate \$40M AVE in earned media across all of Destination Ontario's priority markets, domestic and international

Lead targets are projected against media investment of \$375,000 media spend and past campaign performance data.

U.S. Market

Building on the success of the 2024-25 plans, this year's strategy is focused on promoting spring/summer and fall travel to Ontario. Our efforts encourage U.S. visitors from both the U.S. drive and fly markets to choose Ontario as their next travel destination. The plans are anchored by strategic partnerships with key gateway partners and supported by integrated strategy of social, content, broadcast, media relations and public relations activities.

Outputs:

- Advertising campaigns in key drive and fly U.S. markets
- Partnered campaigns leveraging partner destinations
- Destination Ontario's content creator strategy will prioritize work with U.S.-based content creators in 2025-26. This work will focus on alignment opportunities with campaign partners & relevant 'trip types'
- As part of our enhanced strategy, Destination Ontario's SEM efforts are now more focused than ever on attracting travelers from the U.S., with a special emphasis on promoting Ontario to U.S. visitors
- Destination Ontario will continue to support the U.S. markets through its earned media program targeting broadcast media outlets (radio and television) as well as short- and long-lead print and digital publications. Activities will remain flexible and continue to highlight all areas of Ontario while aligning with Destination Ontario's marketing campaign messaging and partner programs

Outcomes:

- Generate 800K in incremental visitation and \$450M in incremental expenditures
- Generate 5M leads to industry from all U.S. marketing activities

- Generate \$40M AVE in earned media across all of Destination Ontario's priority markets, domestic and international

Targets for visits and spend are projected against media investment of \$4.1M U.S. media spend and past campaign performance data.

International Market

The International Marketing Program's overall objective is to drive Ontario's destination awareness and grow visitation and revenue. All integrated areas are focused on the following areas:

Awareness Growth

- Increase awareness and consideration of Ontario and differentiate ourselves from competitors

Visitation Growth

- Continue to focus on growth in peak seasons (summer and fall) Extend growth in off-peak seasons (spring and winter)

Revenue Growth

- Attract more high value international guests (spend more, resilient market, they return more often), and secondarily VFR (visiting friends or relatives) travellers
- Extend length of stay in Ontario and add destinations to trip (expand itineraries)

For 2025-26, Destination Ontario's priority international markets include the United Kingdom (U.K.), France, Germany, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico and Australia.

Target markets are determined using a number of criteria including:

- Market potential using economic health, political stability, air access and commercial demand as key inputs
- Prioritize markets that offer the highest return on investment for Ontario
- Consideration of Destination Canada market prioritization plus partnership opportunities
- Validation from region experts, partners and in-market representatives
- Real-time monitoring using a range of sources, including Statistics Canada, Destination Canada, e.g., Global Traveller Research Program, digital search, etc.
- Budget optimization scenarios

In-market Representatives

The International Marketing team is fortunate to have the support of in-market representatives who are the 'face' of Ontario in the U.K., Germany, France, China and Japan. Their on-the-ground support keeps Ontario top-of-mind in an extremely competitive global landscape.

A steady and integrated presence in these markets is vital to encourage visitation now that international travel is recovering globally. Destination Ontario's in-market representatives:

- Provide valuable frontline strategic insights and advice on best consumer, trade, and media tactics
- Provide access to valuable, vetted trade and media contacts that help Destination Ontario maintain strong relationships with key business and opinion leaders to ensure that Ontario is consistently profiled as a year-round tourism destination through all channels
- Develop marketing and promotional opportunities with key tourism partners (i.e. Destination Canada, airlines, non-traditional partners and travel trade operators)
- Encourage the development and inclusion of new tourism products with tour operators
- Train travel trade
- Share Ontario travel news and pitch story ideas to media influencers to generate coverage
- Coordinate travel trade and media familiarization tours

The International Marketing program has three core pillars for executing its work: Business Development, Media Relations and Public Relations and Consumer Marketing.

Business Development

Objective: To promote Ontario to travel companies and leverage this powerful distribution network to increase awareness and convert interest into bookings for Ontario.

Outputs:

- Promote market-ready destinations and experiences
- Educate and train travel agents and tour operators
- Execute trade partnerships with tour operators
- Participate in key marketplaces, such as Rendez-vous Canada (RVC) and Canada Showcases
- Host trade FAM tours
- Lead in-market business-to-business sales programs
- Leverage trade partnership opportunities with Destination Canada
- Build and maintain relationships with key accounts

Outcomes:

- Generate 15,000 incremental visits and \$15M incremental expenditures as a result of International Trade Partnership Programs
- Train at least 3,000 travel agents on Ontario's travel products
- Develop 25 new products in tour operator offerings

Media Relations (MR) and Public Relations (PR)

Objective: To achieve positive, third-party media coverage for Ontario to drive awareness and inspire visitation.

Outputs:

- Pitch stories to generate awareness
- Build and maintain relationships with key accounts
- Provide resources such as information and visual assets
- Collaborate with key partners
- Attend key media marketplaces and in-market media events
- Carry out MR/PR activities to generate interest
- Host press tours that highlight Ontario's iconic and best-in-class experiences, including key festivals and events
- Leverage media partnership opportunities with Destination Canada

Outcomes:

- Generate \$40M AVE in earned media across all of Destination Ontario's priority markets, domestic and international

Consumer Marketing

Objective: To build consumer awareness and consideration of Ontario as a travel destination.

Awareness Strategy:

Destination Ontario will launch a multi-year international awareness campaign positioning Ontario as a must-visit travel destination. The campaign will target high-value guests in Ontario's key priority markets. This initiative underscores a commitment to showcasing the province's attractions, culture, diversity, and sports to a global audience. Historically, a cohesive creative theme has not been utilized across international markets; this campaign aims to introduce a unified approach to elevate Ontario's brand position amongst target audiences. The concept will be adapted to each market's unique interests and nuances, and applied to varying degrees across media, travel trade, and consumer direct channels to increase destination appeal and drive visitor interest. Components of the campaign will be tested in one or two regions first, with insights used to refine the broader strategy.

Outputs:

- Differentiate Ontario through Destination Ontario-led consumer campaigns in key markets
- Maintain and refine curated market-specific landing experiences on destinationontario.com
- Leverage Destination Canada's opportunities, investment and reach, as well as the Canada brand
- Collaborate on airline, corporate, content partnerships

Outcomes:

- Establish benchmark for brand awareness in select markets
- Pre-post campaign message lift
- Web sessions/page views

- Contribute to the overall organization goals of incremental visits and incremental expenditures and leads to partners
- Audience Growth 2% and Content Advocacy of 10%

Multi-Markets

Consumer Website

Starting in Spring 2022 and ending in Winter 2024, Destination Ontario completed an extensive user experience audit on its consumer website, destinationontario.com. This included user testing, interface validation and accessibility review with a goal of offering a visitor-first and user-focused experience for consumers and tourism stakeholders.

The technology team will continue to implement improvements to align with the data gathered from the UX audit. Destination Ontario will continuously optimize the content to best position the site to positively affect traveler's purchasing decisions to build Destination Ontario's authority, knowledge, position, and positive relationship with its audience. Content will build on product and seasonally relevant content, as well as 'Know Before You Go' content. All articles will undergo ongoing optimization and updates for relevance and accuracy.

Corporate Website

The corporate site (Destinationontario.com/corporate) will provide the tourism industry with information about Destination Ontario, including marketing content, partnership opportunities, research, and travel media information. Several sections were updated in 2024-2025 to reflect user experience best practices and stakeholder feedback. Additional sections will be reviewed and refined in 2025-2026.

Image & Video Media Hub

The image and video media hub provides users with an array of Ontario images and videos free of charge. This site will continue to be updated with new and inspirational visuals on an ongoing basis.

Social Media

As part of the content strategy, Destination Ontario will deliver value-driven content that connects travelers with dynamic travel ideas through written content, short and long-form video and social channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WeChat and Weibo for China. Destination Ontario will also work with sister provincial agencies and the Ministry to collaborate on creating and/or amplifying content that is relevant and important to current Ministry priorities.

Market Research and Data Intelligence

Destination Ontario conducts tourism research and data analysis that provides market intelligence and consumer behaviour insights to enable the agency and its tourism partners to make more informed business decisions, be flexible to changing landscapes and deliver results for tourism businesses. Destination Ontario also engages in tracking.

Destination Ontario takes a holistic research approach, prioritizing how data is used, collected and analyzed to better understand the visitors and grow visits and visitor spending in Ontario. Tourism research supports Ontario, Canada, U.S. and international marketing activities of Destination Ontario and the needs of tourism industry stakeholders. Teams will continue to utilize existing research, data and insights to inform its work, while also looking to new areas of focus to gather further intelligence to build a stronger program. Some of these new tools include:

- Overseas Return on Investment (ROI) Forecasting Model (Launched August 2024)
 - Tool predicts the returns of marketing investments in overseas markets, including the projected ROI, the number of visits in Ontario, visitor spending in Ontario, among other key metrics.
 - Supports Destination Ontario to forecast performance for any overseas marketing campaign, enabling informed investment decisions, and will facilitate a deeper understanding of campaign performance.
- Canadian Tourism Data Collective
 - International Marketing Team purchased premium-tier access for Destination Ontario for 2024-25.
- Destination Canada's Traveller Segmentation Program (Launching Fall/Winter 2024)
 - Will support a deeper understanding of the visitor in Ontario's key markets through market profiles and targeting tools.
- Market Health Score Index
 - Exploring development of a simple market health score framework to assess the health and potential of overseas markets to support informed decisions about resource allocation and strategic planning.

Northern Marketing

Destination Ontario has a dedicated team and budget focused on promoting Northern Ontario. The team works closely with Destination Northern Ontario (RTO13) and other important tourism partners in the region. Its mission is to generate increased tourism visitation to and expenditures within Northern Ontario through collaborative and effective marketing programs and partnerships.

The approach to Northern marketing is anchored in key avid experiences aligned with the travel corridors that have access to the vast North. With the rise in leisure travel to the region, marketing strategies have also included softer Northern product aligned with a leisure and family demographic.

The main marketing tactics that will be deployed in 2025-26 to drive interest in Northern Ontario include content development, execution of strategic digital campaigns, content acquisition, familiarization tours (FAMs) and media influencers and promotion at targeted consumer shows in Ontario, Quebec and the U.S.

Outcomes:

- Build upon baseline travel intention rate to Northern Ontario across key avid product.
- Generate 3M leads to industry from northern marketing activities.

Ontario Travel Information Services (OTIS)

Destination Ontario's OTIS team offers personalized trip planning and visitor information services through a range of service delivery channels to assist in influencing potential and actual visitors to Ontario through the customer purchase cycle, from consideration and planning to expanding itineraries and travel plans. The audiences for OTIS range from domestic Ontario travellers to Canadians, U.S. and International. Each audience has different needs, interests and expectations when planning and travelling in Ontario and the OTIS team meets and exceeds those needs through digital fulfillment and personalized travel planning services.

The team delivers first-class visitor information and trip planning services across all OTIS front-line service delivery channels through a seamless, multi-footprint approach providing consumers the flexibility to interact with Destination Ontario using their preferred channels - when, where and how they want to help them discover the variety of travel experiences and products available in Ontario.

The OTIS team has a direct positive impact on visitor travel activity, generating incremental visitation which boosts consumer spending and helps to contribute to Ontario's economy. OTIS will focus efforts on providing visitor information services at high profile festivals and events throughout the province and supporting tourism growth pan-provincially, with an emphasis on the Niagara region.

In 2025-26, OTIS will continue to conduct formal research to measure the incremental spend and impact by consumers as a result of interacting with an OTIS Travel Counsellor across 4 service channels (1-800, email, virtual and roaming). Key results and insights will include additional activities, additional night stays, additional travellers and resulting additional spend. As an example, in Q1 of 2024-25, OTIS services generated approximately \$1.8M in additional revenue. Continuing the research in 2025-26 will provide ongoing and meaningful insights into ROI of each service channel as well as provide data on consumer preference for seeking visitor information across various stages of the path to purchase.

In 2025-26, Destination Ontario will continue to transform and modernize the current operations of its nine Ontario Travel Information Centres (OTICs) and service delivery channels (by phone, by email, by videoconference and roaming ambassadors).

Ontario Travel Information Services (offered in both English and French) include:

- In person:
 - o at one of nine OTICs

- o roaming Ambassador Travel Information Services program at high traffic tourism areas, festivals and events.
- By phone:
 - o calling the 1-800-ONTARIO toll free tourism line.
 - o available 7 days a week from 9 am to 5 pm ET
- By email:
 - o contacting Destination Ontario at visitorcare@destinationontario.com on the Destination Ontario consumer website, OTIC online listings or social media calls-to-action
 - o responded to daily from 9 am to 5 pm ET
- By Videoconference:
 - o booking a free Zoom session through www.destinationontario.com website.
 - o available daily including evening and weekend appointments.

Outputs:

- Pan-provincial partner agreements with tourism organizations and businesses for:
 - o roaming ambassador travel information services program.
 - o sale of tourism products and services including merchandise and attraction/event tickets and passes
 - roaming opportunities in other provinces and U.S. border states.
- Provision of a high level of visitor care through continued modernization of the delivery of services with a fully integrated omni channel experience by:
 - o monitoring and evaluating previously integrated channels into the customer care digital platform tool for gaps in service and training and best practices:
 - 1-800-ONTARIO toll-free phone line.
 - Social channels.
 - Visitorcare@destinationontario.com email.
 - o focusing resources on channels that are influencing, or have the most potential to influence, trip planning behaviour to a greater extent based on data and feedback (ROI, Cost Per Party Counselling (CPPC))
 - o continuing to utilize a remote workforce to allow roaming in more locations across the province.
- Expansion of Destination Ontario's leadership role by:
 - o sharing additional digital training and online modules through webinars and workshops with VIS network.
 - o leading smaller and more regional on-site, in-person training
 - o hosting an online community for provincial VIS network
- Consumer satisfaction surveys

Outcomes:

- Extend and influence travel purchasing decisions and increased perceived value of Ontario's products and services
- Incremental spend resulting in increased tourism revenues for the province.
- Repeat visitor engagement

- Increase staff knowledge of Ontario tourism products and experiences
- Lead best practices in visitor information and trip planning services across Ontario.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Business Plan performance measures are complemented by comprehensive metrics for each activity area that are monitored and reported on a quarterly basis through an output and outcome-based lens.

New performance measures have been developed as part of our broader corporate reporting for the three-year strategic plan. These measures will be reported on in 2024-25, which will serve as the benchmark year. The targets will be reviewed and may be adjusted based on performance.

| | 2023-24 Actual | 2024-25 GOAL | 2025-26 GOAL | 2026-27 GOAL | 2027-28 GOAL |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Incremental Visits and Expenditures as a result of Advertisement) | | | | | |
| Incremental Visits | 1,621,841 | 854,000 | 1,500,000 | 1,600,000 | 1,700,000 |
| Incremental Spend | \$ 574,643,210.00 | \$250,400,000 | \$557,500,000 | \$583,000,000 | \$608,500,000 |
| Total Leads to Partners | 14,338,090 | 15,000,000 | 14,000,000 | 13,000,000 | 12,000,000 |
| Advertising Value Equivalency¹ | \$ 86,154,661 | \$ 35,000,000 | \$ 40,000,000 | \$ 47,200,000 | \$ 55,696,000 |
| Incremental Visits & Expenditures as a Result of Trade Partnerships | | | | | |
| Incremental Visits ² | 18.3K | 15,000 | 19,500 | 25,350 | 32,955 |
| Incremental Expenditures ² | \$38.4M | \$ 15,000,000 | \$ 18,900,000 | \$ 23,814,000 | \$ 30,005,640 |
| Website Excellence | | | | | |
| Site Health Score *SEMRush | 90% | 77% | 77%> | 77%> | 77%> |
| Authority Score *SEMRush | 53% | 48% | 50%> | 50%> | 50%> |
| Social Engagement | | | | | |
| Social Audience Growth | 14% | 2% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Content Advocacy | 12% | 10% | 8% | 10% | 13% |
| Travel Services Visitor Health Score | 93% | 90% | 90%> | 90%> | 90%> |
| Travel Services Trip Created | 38,065 | 37,500 | 41,250 | 43,313 | 45,478 |
| Total Number of Invested Partners - Buy In | n/a | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 |
| Total partner investment into DO-led Industry programs - Buy In | n/a | \$ 2,000,000 | \$ 2,000,000 | \$ 2,000,000 | \$ 2,000,000 |
| Partnership Satisfaction Score - Buy In Programs | n/a | 75 | 80 | 85 | 85 |
| Corporate Leadership Score | | Benchmark Year | | | |
| Education Series Usefulness Score | n/a | | | | |
| OTIS - Visitor Information Services Network webinars | n/a | 70 | 75 | 77 | 80 |
| Education Series Attendance Score | n/a | | | | |
| OTIS - Visitor Information Services Network webinars | n/a | 70 | 75 | 77 | 80 |
| Ontario Stakeholders Participating in DO-Led Programs - In Kind | n/a | 1200 | 1200 | 1200 | 1200 |
| Number of Programs - In Kind | n/a | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| Partner Satisfaction Score - In Kind | | Benchmark Year | | | |
| | | | | TBC | TBC |

Notes:

1. The 2025-26 target is consistent with DO's 2025-26 Letter of Direction performance measure for AVE provided to TBS. Targets for 2026-27 and 2027-28 were determined by applying the average historical YoY growth rate in AVE from 2021-22 to 2023-24, adjusted by the projected YoY growth rate for 2024-25 over 2023-24 (i.e., 18%).

2. Targets for 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28 were determined by applying the average historical YoY growth rate from 2017-18 to 2018-19 (pre-COVID) and 2022-23

Definitions:

Incremental Visitor Spending

Incremental Visitor Spending – Ontario and U.S.

Number of trips taken (outcome) by those influenced by the campaign multiplied by the average visitor spend, as measured through the *Brand and Advertising Tracking Study*, conducted by a third-party research supplier.

Incremental Visitor Spending – North America and Overseas (via trade channel)

Estimated direct expenditures (outcome) from travel trade channel bookings. An expenditure based on estimated number of trips booked as a direct result of campaign or joint marketing initiatives with travel trade and conversion partners internationally. Average per person/night pleasure trip expenditure of visitors to Canada as reported by Destination Canada (based on Statistics Canada's International Travel Survey) is applied to the number of nights reported by trade channel partners.

Media and Public Relations

Earned Media (Advertising Value Equivalency or AVE) – The amount in Canadian dollars a similar size story/broadcast would cost if it appeared as paid advertising at a 1:1 equivalency ratio (outcome), determined by measuring size/length/reach of the story by the advertising rate of the relevant media outlet. The ability to collect AVE may fluctuate year to year impacting final AVE results.

Travel Trade

Number of Travel Trade Trained – Number of tour operator staff and travel agents trained on Ontario tourism products (output) by Destination Ontario or in conjunction with Destination Canada.

Number of New Products Developed – The actual number of packages, itineraries, experiences incorporated (outcome) by trade channel partners (new additional overnight in Ontario, new itinerary, new experiences added to itineraries, etc.).

Industry Partnerships

Total Leads to Industry Partners – Ad clicks or tracked visits to partner websites (outcome):

- From destinationontario.com.
- From Destination Canada partnered initiatives.
- From Destination Ontario-led campaigns or initiatives.

Partners' Cash Contribution Leveraged – The dollar amount of cash that partners provide to Destination Ontario to execute a Destination Ontario-led campaign or initiative (output).

HUMAN RESOURCES

Destination Ontario's Corporate Services will continue to improve workplace practices and performance through the implementation of identified efficiencies, training, advisement, and other supports. This includes:

- Continuing to support Destination Ontario program areas through organizational reviews and transformations as a result of agency letters of direction and Destination Ontario strategic planning and modernization initiatives. This will be done with the support of the ministry's human resources (HR) Strategic Business Unit and other human resources and labour relations partners, as required.
- Ensuring OPS policies, directives and programs on HR matters continue to be followed in a consistent and responsible manner. This includes matters around recruitment and fair hiring practices, full-time equivalent (FTE) management, talent/performance management, labour relations, and employee engagement. Destination Ontario will also continue supporting any HR initiatives that are OPS driven, such as large-scale job description reviews.
- Destination Ontario is committed to being a leader in creating a workplace that is inclusive, diverse and equitable. In support of this commitment, Destination Ontario has developed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) framework for our people leaders which outlines priority areas, commitments and targets to monitor our progress in creating an inclusive workplace. The framework focuses on recruitment, performance and talent management, and learning and development. This includes staying abreast of relevant learning forums and following the guidance and commitment from the Secretary of the Cabinet on related engagements and activities.

Performance plans for the 2025-26 performance year will be based on the following priorities:

- A collaborative approach within the organization and across the industry to support Destination Ontario's strategic priorities:
 - Making Strategic Investments - Evidence-based marketing decisions that drive return on investment and contribute to the vitality of the Ontario tourism economy;
 - Advancing Corporate Leadership - Build our presence in the Ontario Tourism industry through active engagement and communications that offer learnings, best practices, and expertise to support our collective modernization and growth.
 - Aligning Outcomes through Strategic Partnerships - Drive value and alignment through partnership programs with industry, private sector, and government partners to achieve common business outcomes; and
 - Levelling Up - Continuously improve our own organizational capacity to be an effective marketer, trusted partner, and public resource.

- Destination Ontario will have modern marketing campaigns informed by data and consumer insights. Emerging technology and marketing trends will inform the mediums that Destination Ontario markets in and activities the agency undertakes.
- Continue to lead and collaborate with industry partners toward mutual success, strong return on investment and provide value to industry stakeholders. Build alignment and collaborate across the Ministry portfolio including other provincial agencies.
- Continue to develop a holistic research approach and improve how data is mined to incorporate insights into strategic planning and in all marketing activities across the organization. Establish clear data governance for the agency and build data analytics capacity to measure impact of our services. Destination Ontario will strengthen advertising impact tracking and investigate and adopt new, innovative measurement tools.
- Demonstrate effective fiscal risk and expenditure management through available controls and measures while ensuring efficiency and long-term sustainability.
- Foster equity, diversity and inclusion. Positively contribute to outcomes that create a diverse, anti-racist, inclusive, and respectful culture and workplace, and nurture collaborative teams and ensure a respectful workplace where each employee is valued and experiences a sense of belonging.

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MEET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Capital Planning

Destination Ontario works with the Ministry to manage asset capital planning across Destination Ontario's portfolio. Destination Ontario works with Infrastructure Ontario (IO), a Crown agency of the Government of Ontario, to support the modernization of the OTICs. The agency will continue to work with IO and the Ministry to complete Threat Risk Assessments at all offices and special purpose buildings to identify high-risk health and safety requirements, as well as ways to improve the OTICs through modernization initiatives.

Operating Budget

Budget line items have been strategically aligned to deliver programs to meet our collective business objectives and industry expectations. Destination Ontario will remain flexible and may make in-year adjustments to address changes affecting travel, shifting target markets, if needed, and meeting the needs of the tourism industry.

FINANCIAL BUDGET AND STAFFING

Financial Budget

DESTINATION ONTARIO

2025-26 THREE YEAR PROPOSED BUDGET

(\$ 000's)

| PROGRAM | CURRENT BUDGET 2024-25 | PROJECTED ACTUALS 2024-25 | PROPOSED BUDGET 2025-26 | PROPOSED BUDGET 2026-27 | PROPOSED BUDGET 2027-28 |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Revenue: | | | | | |
| Province of Ontario Grant | 33,047 | 33,051 | 33,063 | 33,063 | 33,063 |
| Advertising Sales | 1,715 | 2,731 | 2,257 | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| Travel Information Centres - Sales and rentals | 50 | 150 | 100 | 50 | 50 |
| Interest Income | 250 | 250 | 200 | 150 | 150 |
| Amortization of Deferred Contribution | 1 | 12 | - | - | - |
| | 35,063 | 36,194 | 35,620 | 35,763 | 35,763 |
| Expenses: | | | | | |
| Advertising and Marketing | 19,899 ¹ | 21,563 ¹ | 19,802 ¹ | 19,033 ¹ | 18,824 ¹ |
| Salaries and Benefits | 10,098 | 10,398 | 10,658 | 10,818 | 10,980 |
| Travel Information Services | 2,362 | 2,352 | 2,305 | 2,351 | 2,398 |
| Technology Operations | 654 | 605 | 1,042 | 700 | 700 |
| Marketing Intelligence & Business Strategy | 627 | 562 | 597 | 600 | 600 |
| Partnerships | 891 | 941 | 791 | 791 | 791 |
| Amortization of Capital Assets | 351 | 131 | 152 | 214 | 250 |
| Facilities | 825 | 825 | 875 ² | 900 ² | 900 ² |
| Supplies & Equipment | 419 | 526 | 513 | 515 | 515 |
| Board and Committee Expenses | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Audit | 27 | 27 | 35 | 35 | 35 |
| | 36,173 | 37,950 | 36,790 | 35,977 | 36,013 |
| Net Revenue | (1,110) | (1,756) | (1,170) | (214) | (250) |
| Carryover Funds | 500 | 2,154 | 528 ³ | - | - |
| Addback Non-Cash Items: | | | | | |
| Amortization of Deferred Contribution | (1) | (1) | - | - | - |
| Amortization of Capital Assets | 351 | 131 | 152 | 214 | 250 |
| Surplus (Deficit) | (260) | 528 ³ | (490) | - | - |
| Projected FTE Count | 86.03 | 86.03 ⁴ | 82.03 ⁴ | 82.03 | 82.03 |

¹ 1) Ontario; 2) U.S. short-haul/rubber tire (California, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and District of Columbia); 3) Manitoba; 4) Quebec; 5) United Kingdom; 6) Germany; 7) France; 8) China; 9) Japan; 10) South Korea; 11) Mexico; 12) Australia as planned currently, but subject to change.

² Current head office lease expires in May 2025. Facility costs may require adjustments based on results of lease negotiations conducted by Ministry of Infrastructure.

³ Funds from 2024-25 to be carried over to 2025-26 to help pay for Content Development and Distribution to align with timing of spring campaigns.

⁴ In 2022, DO had requested and was approved for 4 temporary FTES from the ministry pool to help build out our web development team. However, the temporary FTES are expiring at March 31, 2025 and will not be renewed, and so the FTE count will be reduced by 4 to 82.03, which is DO's permanent FTE complement.

Staffing

Destination Ontario is comprised of 82 FTEs composed of Association of Management, Administrative and Professional Crown Employees of Ontario (AMAPCEO) represented positions, Ontario Public Services Employee Union (OPSEU) represented positions and management positions.

Compensation is negotiated centrally by the provincial government through collective bargaining and management compensation policies.

*Note: Number of FTEs does not include seasonal staff and students employed at the OTICs.

INVENTORY OF THE AGENCY'S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE CASES

Destination Ontario has limited use of AI technologies as it is leveraging Artificial Intelligence in Ontario Travel Information Services to enhance consumer trip planning through travel counseling and trip planning research. However, we recognize the transformative potential of AI in enhancing business efficiencies, data analysis, customer engagement, and decision-making processes.

Teams across the organization may explore its adoption in the coming year to enhance various functions, including:

- Create travel guides, itineraries, or blog posts that are more tailored to local and international audiences.
- Translate and adapt content to resonate culturally with audiences in different countries.
- Analyze competing destinations' marketing strategies by summarizing their social media, websites, or advertising campaigns.
- Assist with responding to emails or online inquiries from partners and tourists in their language.
- Generate content calendar suggestions with themes, hashtags, and timelines.
- Draft professional yet friendly responses to potential visitors' inquiries.
- Generate SEO-friendly keywords for travelers in different languages.
- Write compelling ad headlines and descriptions for Google Ads, Facebook, or Instagram.

As part of our forward-looking strategy, we are actively exploring opportunities to integrate AI into business processes. This includes identifying high-impact use cases where AI can deliver measurable value, such as personalized marketing, predictive analytics, and operational automation.

Destination Ontario plans to undertake a thorough assessment of AI applications relevant to our business needs, ensuring alignment with our organizational goals and compliance with ethical and regulatory standards. These efforts will be integrated into future business plans to ensure a structured and impactful adoption of AI technologies.

RISK IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Likelihood Definitions:

| Assessment | Level | Description |
|----------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rare | 1 | This event is very unlikely to occur (less than 5% chance). |
| Unlikely | 2 | This event is unlikely to occur (5% to 20% chance). |
| Possibly | 3 | This event is unlikely, but possible to occur (21% to 50% chance). |
| Likely | 4 | This event is very likely to occur (51% to 89% chance). |
| Almost Certain | 5 | This event is almost certain to occur (90% or greater chance). |

Impact Definitions:

| Assessment | Level | Description |
|---------------|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Insignificant | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact can be absorbed through normal oversight activity with no senior management effort needed. The achievement of objectives will not be impaired. No impact on continuity of operations. No impact on reputation. |
| Minor | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact can be absorbed with minor senior management effort in order to achieve objectives. Minimal impact on continuity of operations. Minimal impact on reputation. |
| Moderate | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact can be endured with active senior management effort in order to achieve the objectives. Continuity of operations is somewhat affected. Reputation is somewhat impacted. |
| High | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact can be endured with active and ongoing senior management effort and may impair the ability to meet objectives. Continuity of operations is visibly affected. Reputation is visibly impacted. |
| Very High | 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact, even with senior management effort, will most likely lead to long-term or permanent damage to the ability of meeting objectives. Continuity of operations is significantly impaired. Reputation is significantly impacted. |

Risk Rating = Likelihood x Impact

| Level | Score | Description |
|---------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| High | 20+ | Significant management attention required. |
| Medium – High | 11-19 | Ongoing management review and discussion is necessary. |
| Medium | 7-10 | Limited management review required. |
| Low | 1-6 | Risk can be managed through existing oversight/routine procedures. |

2025-26 ENTERPRISE RISK AND MITIGATION

| | Objective | Risk Statement | Risk Category | Existing Controls | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Rating | Mitigation Strategies |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Maximize return on investment of marketing activities and reach consumers who can travel to Ontario | External/ environmental factors and global and geo-political events (e.g., pandemic, inflation, economic downturn, changes in policies, elections), may have a negative impact on global travel patterns. | Delivery / Operational - | Destination Ontario employs a balanced portfolio approach to international marketing, focusing on priority markets of greatest opportunity for return on investment. This spreads risk across source markets. | Likely - 4 | High - 4 | Medium - High | Destination Ontario has some program flexibility to shift strategy to address environmental factors. Depending on the factors identified, there would still be an impact to results due to change (e.g., reduction of investment, market reach) to destination marketing. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | <p>Ensure the safety of electronic data for all Destination Ontario corporate staff and external website users</p> | <p>Modern business is conducted largely using web-based tools. Web based tools are subject to phishing, hacking and other cyber-attacks that expose Destination Ontario to external security/privacy breach.</p> | <p>Delivery / Operational - Technology</p> | <p>All data is encrypted. Monitoring and logging is in place to allow for visibility into the solutions security and access posture. Permissions are assigned using the least privileged principle.</p> <p>Application components and packages are routinely scanned for vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Staff are reminded of cyber risk associated with communication tools and web behaviour. Staff have tools available to draw attention to suspicious email activity through easy one-click reporting to central I&IT (Information & Information Technology).</p> <p>All endpoints are accessed through HTTPS.</p> | Possible - 3 | Moderate - 3 | Medium | <p>Any new technology developed is reviewed by Provincial Government Privacy Impact Specialists; revisions are made based on their recommendation.</p> <p>Applications are designed and deployed within tier architecture for a logical separation of web and app data components for better security control.</p> <p>DO management and staff work with the OPS (Ontario Public Service) Cyber Security Operations Centre (CSOC) to identify network intrusion detection- prevention systems, and to detect and analyze threats to information security, such as worms, viruses, intrusion attempts, denial of service attacks, misuse, and security vulnerabilities. Targeted phishing simulation campaigns have been conducted to improve Destination Ontario's organizational resilience to cyber-attack through staff awareness and training with the management team and all-staff.</p> <p>A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) has been updated to include actions for cyber security should a threat be detected. Implementation of the revised COOP was completed in October 2024.</p> |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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| 3 | Ensure the continuity of Destination Ontario's operations when access to physical office(s) are restricted | Provincial lockdowns (partial or full) as experienced during the pandemic will strain access to technology and could negatively impact operations. | Delivery / Operational - Technology | Destination Ontario has simplified access to remote-work services to ensure staff can perform duties and responsibilities necessary to continue the Agency's essential functions during any type of threat or emergency. This includes the introduction of cloud-based services such as SharePoint, Google Data Studio, etc. | Unlikely - 2 | Minor - 2 | Low | <p>Destination Ontario Corporate Services and HR work with staff and management to identify gaps and subsequent technology solutions.</p> <p>Destination Ontario takes a continuous improvement approach and regularly reviews equipment, technology, and technical support and ensures they are regularly tested and upgraded when appropriate.</p> |
| 4 | Deliver Destination Ontario programs on time and on budget and regularly communicate with partners and stakeholder to avoid surprises | Delays in programming approvals, may result in a negative impact on stakeholder relations and can increase costs impacting DO's budget. | Delivery / Operational - Timeline | <p>All projects have developed critical paths that partners are consulted on as appropriate. Regular communications exist with Ministry on key initiatives. Project management discipline is applied to project deliverables.</p> <p>Where ministry or intra-ministry concurrence is required, Destination Ontario works with Agency Relations and Accountability Office to secure concurrence.</p> | Possible - 3 | Moderate - 3 | Medium | <p>Where issues are identified, stakeholder management strategies are engaged so that partners are up to date on government direction.</p> <p>Despite best efforts in terms of communication and outreach, some stakeholders will remain dissatisfied if projects are discontinued, and direction does not align with business needs/business planning timelines.</p> |

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| 5 | <p>Measure and monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely, to inform and improve program delivery and results</p> | <p>Ineffective or inappropriate performance measures can negatively impact program management and results.</p> <p>Investment and funding levels may impact the organizations' goals.</p> | <p>Delivery / Operational - Information</p> | <p>A dedicated marketing team reviews and provides direction on performance measurement, setting targets and reporting tools.</p> <p>Destination Ontario conducts stakeholder surveys, monitors, and responds to comments throughout the year. Campaign analysis and reporting is completed for campaigns.</p> | Possible - 3 | Moderate - 3 | Medium | <p>Destination Ontario Management works with its marketing and analyst teams to assess marketing for effectiveness and efficiency. KPIs are reviewed regularly for currency and effectiveness. Where appropriate, new measures are added while fewer effective measures are discontinued.</p> |
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| 6 | <p>Deliver impactful marketing that maximizes performance results and value for money.</p> | <p>Increased annual cost year over year and inflation can result in decreased marketing impact in real terms over time which jeopardizes ability to maintain robust performance results for corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPI's).</p> | <p>Delivery / Operational - Environment</p> | <p>Destination Ontario works with its media Agency of Record in the design and delivery of large-scale omni-channel marketing campaigns that deliver on DO's overall market plans. This collaboration allows DO to leverage external industry experts and media insights to ensure best-in-class, informed, impactful marketing campaigns.</p> <p>Destination Ontario has secured an Agency of Record for two years with option to extend for two additional terms of up to one year each for a total of four years to an expiry date of June 3, 2028.</p> <p>Destination Ontario uses a collaborative approach with the Ministry and industry as a whole: Management works with internal and external clients to best deliver on ministry direction and its corporate mandate.</p> | Possible - 3 | Moderate - 3 | Medium | <p>DO has invested significant time up-skilling internal Marketing team to continuously monitor and optimize digital campaigns. The emphasis on "real time" dashboarding and reporting allows for nimble optimization for all campaign work, ensuring cost-effective performance delivering on DO's Key Performance Indicators. In consultation with DO's media agency of record, DO continuously evaluates and makes strategic updates to campaign planning, ensuring media plans deliver on DO's and partners' core objectives.</p> <p>To better understand the mindset of the consumer and to inform marketing growth strategies, DO consults on various on-going proprietary tracking studies on consumer attitude and behaviour.</p> <p>Destination Ontario works with Advertising and Communications Services Procurement Branch (ACSPB) that is responsible for managing the Advertising and Marketing Communications Services Vendor of Record procurement to proactively request timely Treasury Board of Cabinet approval to procure these services per the agency's current Delegation of Financial Management Authority.</p> |
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| 7 | Deliver effective marketing activities while complying with OPS I&IT standards | Inability to function effectively due to strict OPS I&IT standards created for protecting government and personal information. | Delivery / Operational - Technology | Destination Ontario seeks supplementary I&IT approval and exemption where appropriate to use applications restricted to the OPS to optimize marketing or business activities. | Possible - 3 | Minor - 2 | Low | Where barriers are identified, Destination Ontario works with Ministry and broader OPS colleagues to enhance permissions for digital applications and data collection. |
| 8 | Effectively procure and enter into agreements with vendors/suppliers to support delivery of Destination Ontario mandate | Inability to enter into agreements for purposes of planning, measuring, analyzing, and purchasing online advertising space on digital and social media platforms due to contract clauses that increase Destination Ontario's contingent liabilities. | Policy - Policy Direction | The value related to the contingent liabilities cannot be quantified or estimated at this time; however, the overall risk of any liability materializing as a result is low. | Unlikely - 2 | Minor - 2 | Low | Destination Ontario has secured a Section 28 approval under the Financial Administration Act ("FAA"). This ensures continued compliance with the FAA while entering contracts that include clauses with contingent liabilities for instances where the vendor has declined to remove the clause. |
| 9 | Evolve and modernize Destination Ontario marketing activities to utilize the most up to date technological advances | Reluctance or delayed acceptance from industry stakeholders and partners as DO changes and evolves to using innovative marketing technologies. | Delivery / Operational - Technology | Destination Ontario has regular communication with key stakeholders like RTOs (Regional Tourism Organizations), DMOs (Destination Marketing Organizations) and sector associations. | Unlikely - 2 | Minor - 2 | Low | Destination Ontario provides support and guidance by means of education and licensing tools to support and enhance digital growth to its industry partners. |

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| 10 | Attract and retain best-qualified staff to effectively deliver Destination Ontario's mandate | Due to Bargaining Unit, salary caps, fixed headcounts FTEs (Full-Time Equivalents) and Ontario Public Service hiring restraints, challenges exist in creating an organization that is structured to meet evolving needs of a marketing organization which includes attracting and retaining the best-qualified staff in a dynamic marketing and media environment. This may result in lower staff morale and less confidence from stakeholders. | Delivery / Operational - Human Resources | Destination Ontario Corporate Services has in-house human resource services and liaises with key Ministry partners to ensure agency needs are met in a timely manner, in addition to providing direct staff support and counseling. | Possible - 3 | Moderate - 3 | Medium | <p>Ontario Shared Services, Human Resources (HR) Advisory Services and Labour Relations provides enterprise-wide HR advice and services that enable the achievement of government priorities and business objectives by promoting strategies and practices for building an engaged and productive workforce.</p> <p>The Ministry's dedicated Strategic Business Unit (SBU) provides Destination Ontario senior executives with advice and services to support attraction and retention of diverse talent, build capacity to sustain a world class organization and engage employees to achieve results.</p> |
| 11 | Strategically balance types of media buys to maximize highest return on investment | Higher media buying and production costs in traditional, yet effective media channels such as TV. | Financial - Market | Destination Ontario management works with its media planning and buying service provider to balance audience reach with scale of media budget, however, Ontario's tourism profile is reduced. | Likely - 4 | Moderate - 3 | Medium - High | Destination Ontario strategically targets markets of highest return, allowing for a focused approach. |

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| 12 | Maintain positive public perception and maintain stakeholder satisfaction. | Regional representation on the Board of Directors. Change to physical location of operations may result in negative stakeholder/partner reaction. | Public Perception / Stakeholder - Reputation | Destination Ontario has regular communication with Ministry appointments staff on the desire to ensure balanced regional (and particularly northern Ontario) representation on its board. DO management works with the Ministry and Infrastructure Ontario on realty location decisions to plan for and to ameliorate potential stakeholder concerns. | Possible - 3 | High - 4 | Medium - High | DO has created a Northern Marketing Committee for regional representation. Collaborative approach: DO management and staff regularly interact with Ministry appointments staff to communicate desire to have balanced regional representation on its Board. DO management works with the Ministry and Infrastructure Ontario on realty options and decisions. |
| 13 | Maintain positive social media presence. | Social media presence exposes Destination Ontario to negative external comments or inadvertent misuse by staff leading to public embarrassment. | Public Perception / Stakeholder - Reputation | Clear guidelines are posted for public and staff and social media is monitored on a regular basis and posts that do not meet the guidelines are removed. | Possible - 3 | Moderate - 3 | Medium | Destination Ontario works with the Ministry's Communications team when potential public issues are identified to proactively address potential issues. |
| 14 | Understand public attitudes and behaviours in Canada and other countries to inform strategic and tactical planning | The global pandemic has resulted in significant negative economic impact causing noticeable changes in public behaviour and consumers are worried about their finances, job prospects, and are delaying major purchases including travel. | Public Perception / Stakeholder - Performance | Destination Ontario is using proprietary market research tracking to understand public attitudes and behaviours in Canada and other countries to inform strategic and tactical planning. | Likely - 4 | Moderate - 3 | Medium - High | Destination Ontario has program flexibility to shift strategy and adjust marketing tactics to address environmental conditions. |

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| 15 | Provide timely reporting to the Ministry | Failure to meet deadlines and requirements could contravene regulations and directives. | Governance / Accountability - Controllership / Compliance | Collaborative approach with the Ministry on meeting accountability requirements. | Unlikely - 2 | High - 4 | Medium | Destination Ontario works with the Ministry to meet timelines and reporting criteria. |
| 16 | Comply with OPS policies and directives | Non-compliance with established OPS policies and directives may result in issues for: financial accounting, employee relations, accountability requirements, and reflect negatively on the organization. | Governance / Accountability - Controllership / Compliance | Management reviews risk during quarterly management reports and year-end and in-year audits. The Audit Finance and Risk Committee of the Board of Directors reviews the Management Report on a quarterly basis to assure itself that appropriate processes are functioning effectively, monitor enterprise risks to which the organization is exposed, and that internal control is effective in managing risks to an acceptable level. | Unlikely - 2 | Moderate - 3 | Low | <p>Corporate Services continues to regularly educate all Destination Ontario staff by means of 1:1 training, attending regular division level meetings, mandatory workshops on financial processes and business processes, etc.</p> <p>The Corporate Services team and as required OPS Legal, review all new agreements to minimize risk and ensure maximum accountability.</p> <p>Destination Ontario reviews all the results of internal control assessments (including, where applicable, those related to outsourced services, reports from their internal audit function, the management letter of recommendations from its external auditor and any reports by the Auditor General) for identified deficiencies and takes appropriate actions to address identified deficiencies.</p> |

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| 17 | Address and implement recommendation on governance | Negative attention from stakeholders due to failure to address the recommendations of external reviews (e.g., mandate reviews). | Governance / Accountability - Controllership / Compliance | <p>Mandate review recommendations are implemented as and when appropriate.</p> <p>The Public Appointments Secretariate requires Board appointees to undertake Board Appointee training on governance and accountability.</p> <p>Board appointees receive Public Appointments Secretariat training on governance and accountability for public boards. Board and staff expenses are carefully reviewed for proper documentation and compliance with directives and Destination Ontario expense claim policy. Training is regularly provided to staff and board as needed.</p> | Unlikely - 2 | Moderate - 3 | Medium | <p>Destination Ontario works with Ministry colleagues to address any recommendations coming out of reviews.</p> <p>Destination Ontario takes a proactive approach in addressing and documenting Board and staff accountability requirements.</p> |
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| 18 | Secure funding for capital needs | Historically, capital needs have been limited due to premises being leased and limited capital funding has been provided. | Delivery / Operational - Infrastructure | <p>All Destination Ontario property arrangements continue to be managed by Infrastructure Ontario.</p> <p>Where substantial capital needs are identified, Destination Ontario works with the Ministry to apply for incremental funding through the Treasury Board.</p> | Likely - 4 | Moderate - 3 | Medium - High | <p>Threat Risk Assessments (TRAs) are undertaken with the guidance of Infrastructure Ontario. Identified threat risks are mitigated as appropriate through capital repairs and/or adjustments to premises.</p> <p>Capital funding for leasehold improvements will continue to depend on availability of funds from the Ministry. Due to the limited availability of funding, the Ministry prioritizes capital investments in projects that are considered currently critical (health and safety), that address code and legislation compliance, and that are considered at risk of imminent breakdown.</p> |
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| 19 | Address the ongoing ACTRA issue | <p>ACTRA and ICA have failed to renegotiate a National Commercial Agreement (NCA). This has resulted in a labour dispute that has been going on since 2022. Mediation between the opposing groups has been taking place since October 2022, but broke down in fall 2023.</p> <p>May 14, 2024 – ACTRA posted a news release stating, “The Hon. David Piccini, the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development of Ontario, recognized that government agencies like “Destination Ontario, Metrolinx and OLG, do seek advertising services” and committed to “calling after Question Period the heads of all three agencies” to have a “conversation with them because I recognize that government does have a role here” and “we want a deal here between both bodies [ACTRA and the ICA].”</p> | Governance / Accountability - Controllership / Compliance | Many Agencies, including MTCG’ Destination Ontario, use the Agency of Record (AOR) from the Ontario government’s Creative Agency Vendor of Record (VOR). The government’s master agreement does not mandate creative agencies to be ACTRA signatories. | Likely - 4 | Moderate - 3 | Medium - High | <p>While a resolution between ICA and ACTRA is being negotiated, Destination Ontario must fulfill their mandate to market Ontario as a global tourism destination and therefore must allow their vendors to seek out ACTRA alternatives to casting.</p> <p>Destination Ontario will continue to pay any hired non-union talent at ACTRA rates in good faith.</p> <p>As soon as ACTRA talent is available, DO will work with its creative agency to use ACTRA talent in broadcast and radio productions.</p> |
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| 20 | Ontario Travel Information Services (OTIS) Modernization Strategy | If the OTIS Modernization Strategy is not advanced the Ontario Travel Information Centres will continue to fall into disrepair and require capital funding to maintain operations and the public will continue to have a negative perception of the province and issue complaints to the Minister/Ministry. | Delivery / Operational - Infrastructure Public Perception / Stakeholder - Reputation | DO consistently collaborates with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) and its sub contractors (BGIS) to repair and rehabilitate the most basic structural needs at the OTICs to be able to operate in a safe and secure environment for both the public and staff. | Likely - 4 | High - 4 | Medium - High | Continue to work with Ministry to advance the Modernization Strategy that aligns with the OAGO recommendation and Minister's Letter of Direction. Continue to explore and implement the best options for modernization and service delivery alternatives such as roaming ambassadors, 1-800-ONTARIO phone line, email inquiries and virtual travel counselling services. |
| 21 | Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Conflicting policies with third-party vendors. | As the Government of Ontario's travel marketing agency, DO relies heavily on third-party vendors and partners, such as Google, who extensively use AI in their products and services. There is a risk that DO's internal AI policies may conflict with those of our vendors, which could lead to difficulties in carrying out operational needs and meeting DO's marketing objectives. | Delivery / Operational and Public Perception / stakeholder | DO has ongoing communication with third-party vendors and will continue to engage to clearly understand AI policies. DO regularly reviews agreements with vendors to ensure they align with DO and OPS policies and that they comply with relevant laws and regulations. DO will align internal policies with key vendors where possible, to minimize the risk of conflicts. DO will continue to provide training to staff to raise awareness of relevant policies and directives. | Unlikely-2 | Minor-2 | Low | Destination Ontario will continue to liaise with MTCG (including Legal Services when necessary) to understand the risks and implications of AI. DO will continue to ensure that the agency's operations are in accordance with formal OPS guidance on AI (outlined in the directive on the Responsible Use of AI). DO will continue to report on AI use cases to MTCG as requested, in alignment with the requirements as set out in the Agencies and Appointments Directive and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) |

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| 22 | Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) when travel counselling consumers and researching trip planning content | When utilizing AI to support consumer trip planning, there is a risk that outdated information or false information is provided to consumers looking for travel information. This could result in DO or the Ministry receiving complaints. The tourism industry is quickly adopting AI technology to support customer service and trip planning. Limits on Destination's Ontario's availability to access specialists and technology in this space may result in reputational challenges with stakeholders who are looking to us for thought leadership. | Delivery / Operational - Information | AI training is continuously provided to Travel Counsellors on a regular basis including the responsibility on staff to check fact and websites to ensure consumers are provided with the most up to date information for their travel plans. | Unlikely - 2 | Minor - 2 | Low | Continue to review and adhere to Ministry and OPS AI policies and continue to ensure updated training is provided to all travel counsellors on a regular basis. Develop a Destination Ontario specific policy as it relates to the tools used by the industry and the organization to add additional levels of compliance and transparency. Provide comprehensive training to staff regarding the appropriate use of AI. |
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