

DESTINATION ONTARIO

An Agency of the Government of Ontario

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The 2024–25 fiscal year marked an encouraging phase of renewed momentum for Ontario’s tourism industry. With fresh energy and a shared vision, the sector has taken important strides toward revitalization, resilience, and future growth.

Throughout the year, I have been inspired by the unwavering commitment of the Board and the remarkable team at Destination Ontario. Their adaptability, strategic thinking, and passion for our province have helped position Ontario as a destination of choice for travelers from around the world.

We are grateful for the ongoing partnership and guidance of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. I also want to extend my appreciation to our Board members for their thoughtful leadership and steadfast support in advancing Destination Ontario’s mission.

Thanks to Vincenza Ronaldi, our President and CEO (A), and her outstanding team. Their dedication, creativity, and tireless work have played a pivotal role in promoting Ontario’s diverse experiences and drawing visitors to every corner of the province. As we look ahead, Destination Ontario remains focused on building meaningful partnerships, embracing innovation, and showcasing the very best of what Ontario has to offer. We are excited to continue working together to shape a strong, inclusive, and competitive tourism sector that benefits communities and businesses across the province.

On behalf of the Board, thank you for your continued support. Together, we are helping write the next chapter of Ontario’s tourism story - one filled with opportunity, resilience, and pride.

Todd Halpern
Chair, Destination Ontario

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

It is with great pleasure that I present Destination Ontario's 2024–25 Annual Report. This past year marked a pivotal chapter for Destination Ontario and the broader tourism sector. One of our most significant milestones was the adoption and implementation of Destination Ontario's 2024–27 Strategic Playbook. Aligned with our fiscal planning cycles, the Playbook outlines key priorities and initiatives that will guide our work over the next three years - setting a strong foundation for long-term impact, innovation, and value for money.

Throughout the 2024–25 fiscal year, the Playbook served as a compass for our organization. It informed our business planning, shaped our marketing strategies, and ensured that our programs and initiatives were aligned, strategic, and measurable. In an evolving global landscape, we remained attuned to the geopolitical environment and made informed, timely decisions to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of our efforts.

This focus allowed us to connect meaningfully with travelers, showcase Ontario's diverse offerings, and support a vibrant tourism sector across all regions of the province. Performance indicators have shown encouraging momentum, underscoring the strength of our efforts and the power of collaboration. At the heart of this success is our talented and dedicated team, along with the strong relationships we have with industry partners across Ontario and beyond.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors, under the leadership of Chair Todd Halpern, for their strategic direction and unwavering support. I also thank our partners at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming for their ongoing collaboration and guidance.

As we look ahead, Destination Ontario remains focused on delivering on the promise of the Strategic Playbook - through storytelling, innovative marketing, and meaningful partnerships. We are excited to continue driving awareness and economic impact for Ontario's communities and tourism businesses.

Thank you for your continued trust and support as we work together to shape a strong and prosperous future for tourism in Ontario.

Vincenza Ronaldi

President & CEO (A), Destination Ontario

CORPORATE OVERVIEW

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.

Mandate

Destination Ontario is governed by Ontario Regulation 618/98 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.

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 financial controllership and administration, human resources, procurement and contract management, strategic planning, information technology, facilities and administrative services, and business continuity for Destination Ontario. 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 provide 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.
- 13 **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 dedicated team focused on increasing visitation to Northern Ontario. Destination Ontario works with northern tourism partners to market the North's unique products and experiences. 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. Given increased interest in the region on the part of leisure travelers, some focus is also being directed towards this traveler segment.

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

As part of supporting the North, Destination Ontario's northern marketing programs and activities will continue to focus on both avid and leisure American travelers, while

continuing efforts in Ontario and other source Canadian markets. Collaboration with northern partners will be critical to implementing marketing tactics that 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 collaborates with many partners, building relationships across government, tourism marketing organizations, provincial sector associations and operators.

DO's objective is to increase alignment across the industry through co-marketing partnerships and collaboration to strengthen Ontario's place in a competitive tourism environment.

By supporting a wide range of industry stakeholders, including RTOs, DMOs, sector associations, and private sector partners, the agency works to promote the province as a top-tier travel destination.

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.

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.

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

International tourists are a vital segment of Ontario's tourism economy, typically staying longer and spending more than domestic visitors. In 2022, while accounting for just 1% of tourist visits in Ontario, overseas tourists contributed a significant 10% of total visitor spending in Ontario.

International leisure travel continued to resume in phases, and competition for travellers is fierce. Destination Ontario uses 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:

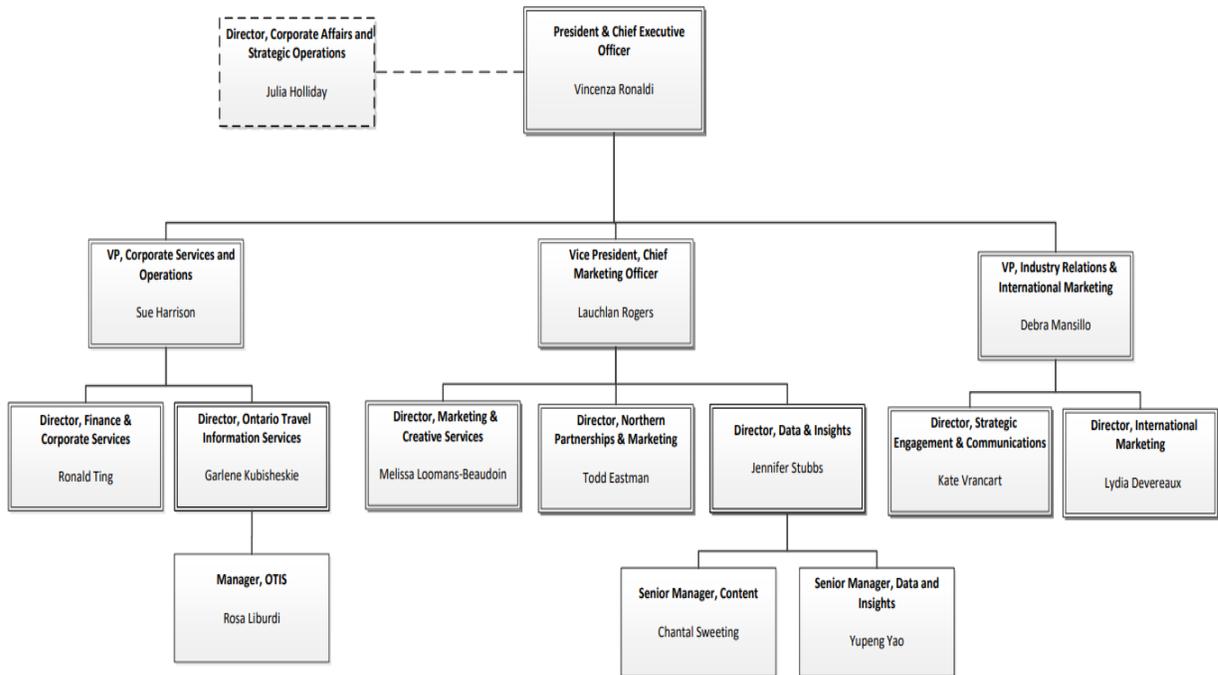
- **Business Development** – Working closely with travel companies (tour operators, wholesalers, and travel agents) to increase awareness of the province and drive sales of Ontario's market-ready tourism products and experiences.
- **Media Relations and Public Relations** – Working closely with media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

Visitor Information Services (VIS) Partnerships

Destination Ontario will continue to play a 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 hosting an online community for the VIS network where information and best practices are shared in weekly posts/content, and by adding training sessions and hosting webinars and sending quarterly email updates.

OTIS leverages industry partnerships to promote Ontario's tourism products and experiences and support the industry, resulting in increased tourism activity and expenditures. Staff collaborate with industry partners - including tourism associations, RTOs, DMOs, festival and event organizers, and business operators—to support the Roaming Ambassadors Travel Information Services program and promote tourism products through OTICs, phone, email, and virtual channels. These engagements also provide training opportunities for Destination Ontario staff 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 the broader Destination Ontario) on their tourism products and experiences.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Board of Directors

Destination Ontario is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of business leaders who are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, based on recommendations from the Minister of Tourism, Culture, and Gaming. The Minister receives advice on Board membership from the Chair and other interested parties. The volunteer Board of Directors does not receive remuneration, though they are eligible to claim allowable expenses under Ontario's Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive.

Board of Directors

(for fiscal year April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025)

<p>Todd Halpern, Chair President, Halpern Enterprises Toronto, ON Appointed: Oct. 1, 2020 Reappointed: Oct. 1, 2023 Term Ends: Sept. 30, 2026</p>	<p>Sumeeta Kohli, Director Owner, GLocal Marketing Mississauga, ON Appointed: Apr. 16, 2020 Reappointed: Apr. 16, 2023 Term Ends: Apr. 15, 2026</p>
<p>Jesse Hamilton, Director Vice President, Hospitality, Blue Mountain Port Carling, ON Appointed: May 21, 2020 Reappointed: May 21, 2023 Term Ends: May 20, 2026</p>	<p>Cathy Kirkpatrick, Director Partner - Alphabet Ottawa, ON Appointed: May 21, 2020 Reappointed: June 29, 2023 Term Ends: June 28, 2026</p>
<p>Andrew Galloro, Director Global Senior Director of Corporate Communication Four Season Hotel and Resorts Toronto ON Appointed: Aug. 31, 2023 Term Ends: Aug. 30, 2026</p>	<p>Jerry Pribil, Director President - Marienbad Hospitality London, ON Appointed: Jan. 19, 2023 Term Ends: Jan. 18, 2026</p>
<p>Jasveen Rattan, Director JKR Consulting Mississauga, ON Appointed: June 11, 2020 Reappointed: June 29, 2023 Term Ends: June 28, 2026</p>	<p>Dennis Matthews, Director Vice President - Enterprise Canada Toronto, ON Appointed: Mar. 11, 2021 Reappointed: Mar. 11, 2024 Term Ends: Mar. 10, 2027</p>
<p>Danielle Chretien, Director Owner/Manager Lake on the Mountain Resort Prince Edward County, ON Appointed: Apr. 29, 2021 Reappointed: May 9, 2024 Term Ends: May 8, 2027</p>	<p>Rob Taylor, Director Director of Policy and Government Relations, Wine Growers Canada Nepean, ON Appointed: June 10, 2021 Reappointed: July 25, 2024 Term Ends: July 24, 2027</p>
<p>Lacey Rigg, Director Coordinator of Meetings, Conventions and Sports Tourism City of Timmins, ON Appointed: June 22, 2023 Term Ends: June 21, 2026</p>	<p>Benjamin Purkiss, Director Creative Director - Ben Purkiss Design Grimsby, ON Appointed: Oct. 7, 2021 Term Ended: Oct. 6, 2024</p>

Board Meeting Attendance

2024-25 Board Meeting Dates	Board Member Attendance (%)
June 19, 2024	83
September 25, 2024	67
December 9, 2024	91
March 26, 2025	91

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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.

2024-25 Letter of Direction:

The government has also set out the following priorities specific to Destination Ontario, via the 2024-25 Letter of Direction:

- 1. Support government priorities related to growing tourism in the Niagara Region.
- 2. Continue to collaborate with industry stakeholders, Regional Tourism Organizations, and other agencies and attractions, to promote the growth of the tourism industry in Ontario.
- 3. Showcase Ontario festivals and events.
- 4. Continue to grow social media engagement and continue to generate positive media coverage of the province.
- 5. Continue to advance recommendations to modernize Ontario Travel Information Services.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Throughout the 2024–25 fiscal year, Destination Ontario remained focused on delivering strategic, high-impact initiatives that support a strong and competitive tourism sector. Guided by the 2024–27 Strategic Playbook, our work was grounded in clear priorities and aligned with the evolving needs of the industry.

Amid a dynamic global environment, we adapted our approach to reflect shifting traveler behaviours and geopolitical realities, making timely, data-informed decisions to maximize impact. We deepened our collaboration with partners, invested in innovative marketing strategies, and showcased Ontario’s diverse experiences to audiences across Canada and key international markets.

Looking ahead, Destination Ontario is committed to building on this momentum—working closely with stakeholders to strengthen the province’s tourism economy, drive visitation, and deliver value to communities across Ontario.

President’s Office

The President’s Office provided executive support to the President and CEO in the operational planning, management, and implementation of the agency’s initiatives, including management of the Board and industry committees. As an agency of the Ministry, Destination Ontario regularly liaised with the Ministry. The President’s Office continued to work closely with the Ministry to collaborate on government communications and programs to support the industry. Destination Ontario’s goals, objectives, and strategic direction continued to align with the government’s priorities and direction.

Board of Directors

Destination Ontario’s Board of Directors met four times throughout the year to provide advice, strategic direction and oversight related to agency activities.

Marketing

Destination Ontario’s annual goals for all markets were to

- Generate **854K** in incremental visits and **\$250.4M** in incremental expenditures, based on a total media spend of **\$10.2M** in Ontario, Canada and U.S. markets.
- Generate **15K** in incremental visits and **\$15M** in incremental expenditures via the travel trade channel, based on a planned marketing investment of **\$1.5M** in the International Marketing Business Development Program.
- Generate **10.8M** leads to the industry from all marketing tactics.
- Generate **\$35M** in AVE for media relations and public relations activities with a planned investment of **\$830K**.

Destination Ontario achieved:

- Achieved over **1.01M total visits** and **\$328M in total expenditures (Ontario, Canada and U.S.)**, exceeding targets by **18% and 31% respectively**.
- Generated **16.3M** incremental visitation and **\$36.2M** incremental expenditures, via the travel trade channel, exceeding the targets by 9% and 141% respectively.
- Generated **18.4M leads to partners** and industry – exceeding the target by 23% (Ontario, Canada, U.S., International markets of focus).
- Generated **\$93.7M** in Advertising Value Equivalency (**AVE**) for media and public relations, by exceeding the target by **168%**.

Additionally, Destination Ontario's partnered marketing systems are getting more effective and efficient in reaching target audiences in each market of focus as more campaigns are delivered, data is analyzed, and performance is optimized.

It is to note this year, Context Research Group introduced a key refinement to our advertising performance measurement model by accounting for *multiple trips* taken by individual travellers, rather than assuming a single trip per influenced visitor. This adjustment better reflects real-world travel behaviour and provides a more accurate estimate of tourism activity and its economic impact. As a result, the updated model shows significantly higher performance against our targets—largely due to this methodological evolution rather than a sudden spike in campaign effectiveness. It's important to recognize that while historical data focused on the number of unique *visitors*, our current reporting includes total *visits/trips*, offering a more holistic and comprehensive view of the true return on our marketing investment.

Ontario Market Plan

In 2024-25, the content strategy efforts in the Ontario market generated 1.23 million non-paid organic leads to partners on our consumer website.

Destination Ontario's annual Ontario Market Plan provides support to the industry during the shoulder seasons of fall and winter by encouraging overnight travel and exploration of the province. These two campaigns drove 260.8K incremental visits and 424.2K total trips, yielding \$63.7M total tourism spend with a media investment of \$2.1M. The plan focuses on seasonality and tourism product experiences to encourage Ontarians to plan a seasonal getaway. It is anchored by a collaborative, partnerable marketing system that levers partner content and connects consumers with trip ideas and operators.

Canada Market

in 2024-25, the content strategy efforts in the Canadian market (excluding Ontario) generated 209K non-paid organic leads to partners on our consumer website.

Destination Ontario launched a pilot campaign, as a test to re-enter the Quebec market for the first time since COVID. This pilot aimed to re-engage the Quebecois traveller with three key eastern Ontario partners- Northeastern Ontario, Ottawa Tourism and Visit Kingston

With a limited budget, this pilot involved re-entering the Quebec market post-pandemic for leisure travel, employing a predominantly French campaign, and collaborating with destination partners to highlight key trip experiences. This campaign was responsible for delivering 21M+ impressions and over 610K leads to tourism partners.

U.S. Market

This year, the content strategy efforts in the U.S. market generated 97.5K non-paid organic leads to partners on our consumer website.

Destination Ontario is committed to encouraging consistent travel from the U.S. market to Ontario. The 2024-25 strategy focuses on the spring/summer and fall seasons, with the goal of increasing visitation from the drive market and building awareness and consideration in key fly markets. Destination Ontario aims to grow visitation and visitor spending from the U.S. drive market, particularly during the summer and fall seasons.

The U.S. Drive campaign included 14 destination partners across two seasonal flights. These co-investment models allow Destination Ontario to align with and support a wide array of destination partners across the province in a matched dollars program. The two campaigns drove an estimated 291.8K visitors (441K total trips) from target U.S. markets and resulted in a \$170.6M estimated spend in Ontario, with media investment of \$4.95M.

The fly market strategy is focused on building awareness and intent to travel to Ontario, targeting higher-yield markets during the fall season. This approach aligns with available travel capacity and seasonal opportunity. The U.S. Fall Fly campaign involved partnership elements with Destination Canada, Destination Toronto and Visit Mississauga. These co-investment models allow Destination Ontario to align efforts and leverage shared dollars to maximize market impact. This campaign significantly influenced 97.8K visitors (145.8K trips) to take or book a future trip in Ontario and \$93.7M estimated spend in Ontario as a result of the campaign.

Combined, these campaigns drove 6.5M+ leads to industry partners.

International Marketing

International Marketing activities provide strong awareness of Ontario as a tourism destination in a globally competitive landscape. Destination Ontario's international markets of priority for 2024-25 were the U.K., Germany, France, Japan, China, South Korea, Mexico, and Australia, and Canada and the U.S. (Business Development, and Media Relations and Public Relations only).

With the support of in-market representatives in the U.K., Germany, France, Japan and China, Destination Ontario used an integrated approach to inspire the international traveller and convert interest into travel bookings:

1. 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.
2. Media Relations 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.
3. Consumer Marketing – Promoting Ontario directly to consumers through digital and social tactics to drive awareness, consideration, and travel intent for Ontario.

Destination Ontario worked in partnership with Destination Canada to leverage the global recognition of the Canada brand and Destination Canada’s investments and resources in key markets internationally while ensuring that Ontario is recognized as a renowned travel destination within Canada.

Business Development

Destination Ontario worked with the travel trade, including tour operators and travel planners who focus on packaging, promoting, and selling leisure travel to escorted groups and individual travellers.

Marketplaces

Destination Ontario participated in several key travel trade events to ensure strong presence for Ontario. When Destination Ontario participates in these events, the team is representing destinations and partners from across Ontario who cannot attend on their own; this is an important aspect of the Business Development program. Events attended included:

- Rendez-vous Canada (RVC) 2024 took place in Edmonton, AB. Canada’s annual international tourism marketplace, led by Destination Canada and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, is a forum through which international travel companies connect with Canada’s trade-ready tourism industry partners through a series of business meetings and networking opportunities.
- Destination Ontario conducted over 300 meetings with tour operators, airlines, and receptive tour operators to help inform and advance strategies to build visitation and expenditures to Ontario, including current market intelligence, travel trends, product updates and potential promotions through trade channels. The Ontario delegation was the third largest, with 90+ organizations.
- At Destination Canada’s Focus Canada in Mexico, Destination Ontario lead a delegation of nine Ontario partners. Meetings were conducted with 22 Mexican tour operators and training was delivered to 70 travel trade (September 2024, Mexico City, Mexico).

- At Showcase Canada, led by Destination Canada, meetings were conducted with over 100 tour operators from the U.K., Germany, and France. Destination Ontario lead a strong delegation partner (November 2024, Paris, France).
- In China, Destination Ontario's in-market representative participated in the Dong Connection tradeshow and Destination Canada-led sales calls/events in Southern China.
- 4,000 travel agents were trained on Ontario's travel products, and 25 new products were developed.

International Trade Partnership Programs (ITTPs)

ITPPs with targeted travel companies were delivered across our priority overseas markets, resulting in an additional 16.2K trips to Ontario being directly booked with trade company partners, generating over \$36.2M in estimated incremental expenditures in Ontario. There were also 24 new products developed as a result of the ITPPs.

Examples include:

- A joint marketing promotion across two key markets, the U.K. and Germany, in partnership with Destination Toronto and Niagara Parks. Six key travel companies (three in each country) added the Niagara Parks Attractions Passport to their portfolio and encouraged new bookings to Ontario (Toronto, Niagara and other regions across Ontario). The promotion included out-of-home digital boards, digital advertising on high traffic lifestyle and news websites, social media posts, e-newsletters, digital radio and digital TV. The campaign concluded at the end of March 2025, and the final number of bookings have resulted in 3.4K passengers, with an expenditure of \$9.3M.
- In partnership with Destination Canada and two premium South Korean tour operators, Ontario-only itineraries were promoted through a variety of consumer facing tactics. Destination Ontario's \$45K investment was leveraged by \$107K from Destination Canada and the tour operators, resulting in 215 passengers booked, with estimated expenditures of more than \$322K.

Familiarization (FAM) tours

Destination Ontario welcomed 128 travel trade partners on 16 familiarization tours from the U.K., Germany, France, Mexico, Australia, and Japan.

Travel Trade Training

Training continues to be a crucial method of increasing awareness among travel trade, which strengthens their ability to close the sale to consumers. Training is delivered in-person and virtually; more than 4,000 travel trade from our priority international markets were trained on Ontario products.

Media Relations and Public Relations

Destination Ontario continued to take a strategic and active approach to media relations activities. Destination Ontario's earned media activities like press trips and overseas events kept Ontario top-of-mind as a beautiful and safe destination for global consumers.

Monitoring the travel landscape and industry changes remains an ongoing part of Destination Ontario's planning, along with important partnerships with Provincial Marketing Organizations, DMOs and Destination Canada. As a contributing member of Destination Canada's Communications Working Group, Destination Ontario's earned media team collaborated on storytelling, media pitches, themed content, creative assets, and media events to leverage the Canada brand and help Ontario stand out in today's extremely competitive market.

Media Events

Destination Ontario participated in several key media events to ensure a strong presence for Ontario. Highlights include:

- Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) Conference – In June 2024, Destination Ontario participated in TMAC's annual conference in St. John's, Newfoundland. The conference connects top Canadian travel/lifestyle media and travel destination/brands. It is comprised of networking sessions, professional development seminars, and the all-important one-to-one meeting appointment sessions. Destination Ontario met with 21 media representatives.
- International Media Marketplace (IMM) North America – in January 2025, members of Destination Ontario's Media Relations and Marketing teams joined a strong Team Ontario and Team Canada delegation at TravMedia's IMM North America in New York City. IMM is the world's leading travel media marketplace, bringing together travel brands, lifestyle media, editors, and content creators for two days of 1:1 appointments, networking and professional development. The team had a packed schedule of media and content creator meetings, sharing Ontario's unique story ideas to inspire positive coverage, drive awareness and encourage visitation and spending in Ontario.
- Chill With Canada – Destination Ontario participated in Destination Canada's in-market media event in July 2024, celebrating Canada Day with a group of targeted U.K. Media. 'Chill With Canada' was Destination Canada's first in-person media event post-pandemic and was an opportunity to reintroduce Canada to attending media and offer leads to provincial partners.
- Showcase Canada – held in Paris, France in November 2024. Destination Canada hosted this trade and media event for its three European markets. Showcase Canada was a comprehensive trade and media event. Destination Ontario's in-market representative attended the event and met with over 12

French media representatives and met with 100 tour operators from all European markets.

Print and Digital

Destination Ontario, with the support of in-market representatives, leveraged its strong relationships with print and digital media to ensure that Ontario remained top-of-mind through proactive pitches and responding to more than 120 queries from Canadian media alone and generated 2.7K stories promoting Ontario destinations, attractions, and experiences.

Global earned media relations performance targets were exceeded, with an estimated Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE) of \$970.9M. Achievements include:

- Dolsing Four Men, TV Show, South Korea – With Destination Canada partnered with SBS, a major South Korean broadcaster, on four 60-minute episodes of Dolsing Four Men, one of SBS’s most popular entertainment talk and variety shows. The original broadcast alone reached over 10.4 million viewers in the country, and garnered significant AVE with even greater exposure through reruns, syndication, streaming services, social media channels and YouTube.
- BE-PAL Magazine, Japan – Seven-page article in Japan’s most popular outdoor magazine with extensive coverage on the Canadian Canoe Museum, Trent Severn Waterway and Madawaska Kanu Centre. Reach: 400.4K; AVE: \$145K.
- As a result of a press trip in 2023, German journalist Britta Schmidt published a piece in September 2024. This piece was published in 58 regional northern German newspapers and highlighted Ontario as a must-see destination during the fall colours. Reach 386.3K; AVE: \$215K.
- U.S. Media result: DO hosted the journalist, Omar Masoom, on a media FAM, in partnership with Destination Toronto. The resulting story published June 2024, in Esquire magazine, featured Chef and TV Personality Matty Matheson’s guide to Toronto and Fort Erie’s Food Scene. Impressions: 9.6M; AVE: \$330K. The piece was also picked up by Yahoo.com and AOL.com, bringing the total estimated reach to over 35M.
- In May 2024, Destination Ontario partnered with Peterborough and Kawartha Tourism, Parks Canada and LeBoat to host targeted members of TMAC on an exclusive media tour to preview the grand opening of the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough. The press trip also included a visit to the new LeBoat hub on the Trent Severn Waterway, the Peterborough Lift Locks, museums and restaurants. The resulting coverage included 51 articles with estimated impressions of 35.9M and an estimated AVE of \$1.5M.

- Pavone, Saison Express, Rurubu, Japan – Extensive Northern Ontario coverage ranging from Agawa Canyon Train to Wawa to Cochrane.
Reach: 8M; AVE: \$223K
- National Geographic Traveler (U.K.) – Feature article highlighting Toronto’s incredible culinary scene as a result of DO-led FAM tour.
Circulation; 1.8M; AVE: \$117K
- Sunday Express (U.K.) – Feature article highlighting winter travel in Algonquin Park and Muskoka to promote off-season travel as a result of DO-led FAM tour.
Reach: 539.6K; AVE: \$1.1M
- Elle Decor (FR) - Feature article on Toronto, highlighting the city’s design appeal in one of the world’s leading design publications, as a result of DC/DO-led FAM.
Reach: 1.5M; AVE: \$272K
- Travel & Leisure (MX) - Feature article on travelling Southern Ontario and experiencing local culinary delights as a result of DO-led FAM.
Reach: 30K UMV; AVE: \$6K

Consumer Marketing

National Geographic Content Partnership

Destination Ontario partnered with National Geographic for a second year on a multi-market campaign to grow awareness of the province and stand out amongst competitors in key priority markets. This year’s concept *Ontario’s Water Crafters* invited international travellers to test the waters in Ontario by highlighting how Ontario’s diverse waters shape and inspire local crafts, passions, and lifestyles. The narrative spotlighted individuals who embrace the influence of water focusing on three key pillars, Arts and Culture, Health and Wellness and Food and Drink. The campaign targeted high value guests in the U.K., Germany, Australia, and France, and included a digital article and long form video with cutdowns along with social posts and display banners.

The campaign ran in two flights (September – November 2024 and January – February 2025) and generated 23.5M impressions, 4.8M video views, 147.5K clicks, 217K engagements, 44.5K landing page views, and an average page dwell time of 3 minutes 11 seconds. Pre and post campaign studies were conducted across each market: 68% of respondents recalled seeing the campaign, 75% of respondents said they now know a little bit or a lot about Ontario, 34% have researched Ontario since seeing the campaign, and 19% say they have started planning a trip to Ontario and 14% have visited Ontario.

U.K. Influencer Campaign

Working with influencers has been a key strategy for Destination Ontario, and in recent years, we've placed greater focus on expanding this type of partnership in international markets as well. This year, Destination Ontario executed a U.K.-focused influencer program, reflecting the importance of the U.K. as one of our priority international markets for both visitation and visitor spend.

Four U.K.-based influencers were hosted on a week-long trip through the province from September 30 to October 6, with content shared through to mid-November. The objective was to generate high-quality, engaging content for both the influencers' audiences and Destination Ontario's organic channels. Each influencer delivered 20 Instagram Stories and three Reels, resulting in a total of 164 posts—well above the KPI of 100. The program was supported by in-kind contributions from Niagara Tourism, Niagara Parks Commission, Muskoka Tourism, and Destination Toronto, with Destination Canada providing flight support through their visiting influencer program.

The campaign generated 960K total views, reached 807K users (surpassing the KPI of 500K impressions), and drove 13K positive advocacy actions. The average reel completion rate was 73%, and the campaign also resulted in over 200 new U.K.-based followers on Destination Ontario's Instagram channel.

France Influencer Campaign

Building on increased air capacity between France and Ottawa—and the strong flow of French travellers to Quebec—Destination Ontario launched a fall influencer campaign to position Eastern Ontario as a natural and scenic extension of a Quebec trip. From September 30 to October 6, 2024, two French influencers embarked on a road trip showcasing vibrant fall foliage, soft adventure, eco-tourism, and charming small towns across the Thousand Islands, Kingston, Prince Edward County, Haliburton Forest, Muskoka, Algonquin, and Ottawa.

The campaign deliverables included a 4,000-word itinerary-style blog post on Hello Laroux, daily Instagram Stories, one carousel post, one Reel, and cross-promotion through Instagram's collaboration tool. Content was posted from October 2024 to January 2025, and overall output far exceeded expectations: 38 Instagram Stories, 8 carousels and Reels, 2 LinkedIn posts, and 1 blog article.

Combined, the Instagram content reached over 44K users and generated more than 6.9K advocacy actions (likes, shares, comments, bookmarks), while Instagram Stories received 114K views. On LinkedIn, posts generated 3.6K+ impressions and 183 advocacy actions. The blog article attracted 2.6K views between January 30 and March 31, contributing to ongoing engagement beyond the campaign period.

Destination Canada Japan Fall Integrated Campaign (Consumer, Trade and Media)

In 2024, Destination Canada launched a Japan-focused autumn campaign with three main components: a BS Fuji TV program, a special website showcasing deep autumn experiences across Canada, and a consumer campaign utilizing social and digital media advertising. The goal of the campaign was to highlight Canada's autumn offerings and inspire Japanese travelers to visit during this season.

Destination Ontario strategically invested in this initiative to enhance the province's visibility and storytelling within the Japanese market. As part of this investment, Ontario was featured in two segments of the BS Fuji TV series *World Tour SP: Deeply Connected With Canada*, which aired in August and were rebroadcast throughout the fall (September to November). Hosted by Japanese TV personality Miki Sumiyoshi, the segments showcased Niagara Falls, the Canadian Canoe Museum, and the Peterborough Waterway, emphasizing sustainability and the cultural significance of water.

Additionally, our investment secured two dedicated fall experience pages on the campaign microsite, showcasing Ontario's autumn offerings. We also benefited from dedicated Ontario banner ads on google and X, expanded video distribution, and additional Ontario-specific social media posts. To further amplify our reach, Miki Sumiyoshi promoted Ontario through her radio appearance on Tokyo FM's Blue Ocean, reaching an estimated 500K listeners.

The campaign delivered strong results, with the BS Fuji TV segments reaching over 3.6M viewers. Additionally, the YouTube secondary usage of the Ontario BS Fuji segments reached 495.7K views. The two paid video ad campaigns for Ontario which featured a 60-second Destination Ontario autumn video, garnered 740.9K views on YouTube and 555.2K on X. Ontario-specific tour links on the campaign microsite received 56 clicks, while social media engagement helped boost Ontario's visibility during a key travel season in Japan.

Multi-Markets

Northern Marketing and Partnerships

Destination Ontario continued to work with northern partners and industry across Northern Ontario this fiscal year. Given the significant impact pandemic border restrictions had on the Ontario's northern tourism industry as well as the current geo-political climate, it was vital to continue engagement with American visitors, as well as encourage domestic travelers aligned with northern access corridors. The agency continued to promote Ontario's avid tourism experiences of angling and hunting, powersports and touring and outdoor adventure. Additionally, Destination Ontario promoted the region as a unique destination to experience leisure outdoors, arts, culture, and heritage.

New in 2024-25, Destination Ontario onboarded a volunteer Northern Marketing Committee of 11 tourism industry representatives from across RTOs 12 and 13. The committee was onboarded in May 2024 and three meetings were held over the fiscal year. This committee will help guide the organization's northern portfolio. The committee members were endorsed by the DO Board and the DO Board also approved the Terms of Reference.

Overall, the northern portfolio employed targeted marketing tactics to connect with avid and passionate travelers with contextually relevant content. The overall results across avid portfolios included:

- The completion of 62 media FAMs.
- Creating and optimizing 254 stories on northernontario.travel and destinationontario.com that generated 1.9M sessions and 710K pageviews respectively.
- ~4.4M campaign leads generated for northern tourism partners.

Angling And Hunting Program

Avid Angling and Hunting Media Program

Destination Ontario's Angling and Hunting program leveraged leading angling and hunting influencers in Ontario and the U.S. to ensure Ontario was kept top-of-mind for future avid travel. The program produced 35 television/Instagram long form video episodes featuring 33 lodge and/or resort properties. Each episode will be aired a minimum of two times before going into a re-run format and then posted online. Online long form videos went live within six weeks of shooting, except for ice fishing, these will air in the early winter booking window.

To date operators are reporting \$610K in business reservations following their first airings of television and videos, with reruns of all television shows in progress now.

Content developed through the media partnerships also leveraged the social channels of TV personalities as well as written content for northernontario.travel. These efforts resulted in over 728 social posts with over 201K social engagements about Northern Ontario fishing and hunting experiences. New this year, Destination Ontario worked with a content creator with a younger demographic following as part of a growth strategy. This partnership rendered some encouraging results including six short and long-form videos generating 546K video views on YouTube and 239K views on other platforms.

Angling content uploaded to northernontario.travel represents over 1K partners and avid experiences. For 2024-25, this content resulted in 198K web sessions, 230K pageviews and 22K leads to partners. These results were down slightly when compared to the previous year.

Destination Ontario continued supporting the GoFish and GoHunt social channels dedicated to an avid following. The channels saw over 704 posts this year with over

1.2M in reach, over 24K social engagements and drove 12K leads to partners. Facebook numbers showed growth in some areas, but organic numbers continue to be an issue as Facebook algorithms are soft on organic reach.

Family Fishing Spring Campaign

As traditional avid anglers gradually age out of the sport, Destination Ontario launched a marketing program to attract new anglers. This initiative promotes family travel activities centered around fishing lodges and resorts, targeting Ontario, Manitoba, and key U.S. border states. Destination Ontario collaborated with Destination Northern Ontario (DNO) and its four sub-regions for this campaign, which ran from May 13 to June 25, 2024. The media strategy focused on prospecting tactics to drive consumers to regional planning content. With an investment of \$178.1K, the campaign achieved impressive results: 42M impressions, a cost-per-click of \$0.18, 4.2 million completed video views, and 578K leads to partners.

Fly Fishing Campaign

Fly fishing is a niche angling product that saw a recent surge of interest. This sport is heavily skills-based, and the anglers tend to be much younger than the traditional avid gear angler. Destination Ontario targeted fly anglers to travel North during the fall shoulder season – the ideal time of year for fish to be feeding at the surface to the water. Target markets included Southern Ontario, targeting 35 – 64-year-olds in both French and English. Destination Ontario prioritized urban centres with active fly fishing clubs.

This campaign was in-market from July 15 – August 15, 2024, targeting Ontario and U.S. border states. With an investment of \$180K, the media strategy allocated a small investment to destination awareness and most of the media investment was allocated to prospecting media tactics. The campaign leveraged a 15-second video, social and digital ads driving to Destination Ontario's web content and direct to partners. Results for this program included 61M impressions, 152.8K completed videos views and 720K leads to partners.

Avid Angling Campaign

Destination Ontario has continued to build on the success of this program over the last three years. The marketing program drove directly to the sub-regional partner websites which showcased lodges and operators in respective catchment areas. This campaign targeted the avid gear angler in Southern Ontario, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, Illinois and Wisconsin. The targeted demographic was adults 35-65 years old with an affinity for angling and hunting. The media buy focused solely on prospecting media tactics to drive as much traffic as possible to partner planning content during the booking season period. The campaign ran from January 6 – March 25, 2025.

The campaign's \$299K media investment resulted in 79M impressions, a cost-per-click of \$0.27, and 985K leads to partner websites.

This year for the Avid Angling Campaign, Sunset Country Travel Association participated in a test that saw Destination Ontario shift DemandGen optimizations from landing page views to internal link clicks. This led to improved website engagement rates and times, indicating more qualified users were landing on site. Although these users had a higher cost per click and generated less traffic, the budget spent on lower quality clicks has decreased. Based on these remarkable findings, all angling programs in fiscal year 2025-26 will be based on quality leads vs quantity.

Powersports And Touring Program

Snowmobile Campaign

Snowmobiling in Ontario is a premier experience with over 30K kilometres of maintained trails. Destination Ontario ran a paid campaign on a content page focused on purchasing early bird snowmobile trail permits from the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC).

The campaign focused on the Ontario market and ran from October 16 – November 30, 2024. The campaign encouraged riders to buy the early bird permit and start planning for winter using digital and social traffic driving ads. With a media investment of \$40K, Destination Ontario was able to generate over 116K pageviews and 1K leads directly to the OFSC snowmobile permit purchase page.

Motorcycle Campaign

Destination Ontario re-entered the motorcycle market with a dedicated campaign this year. The primary objective was to encourage U.S. motorcycle riders to plan a ride to Northern Ontario in summer, and to increase travel intent for U.S. motorcycle riders to consider Ontario for their next trip. Target markets included U.S. border states, targeting 35 – 64-year-olds with an affinity to ride.

This campaign was in-market from February 24 – March 25, 2025, to capitalize on the spring/summer booking season. With an investment of \$326K, the media strategy balanced positive destination awareness assets with prospecting investment driving directly to the four participating Northern sub-regions, Ontario's Highlands (RTO11) and Explorers' Edge (RTO12). The campaign leveraged a 15-second video, social and digital traffic driving ads driving to partner content, Destination Ontario's web planning content and direct to partners. Results for this program included 48M impressions, 5.9M completed videos views, a cost-per-click of \$0.596 and 219K qualified leads to partners.

Avid Powersports and Touring Display Ad Campaign

Destination Ontario worked with a few niche online media outlets to target powersports avid enthusiasts (snowmobiling, motorcycling, RVing, boating and ATVing). The display and content partnership generated 16 new powersports stories on these highly read media sites, approximately 10M impressions and 108K pageviews.

Avid Powersports and Touring Content Acquisition and Distribution

Destination Ontario's Powersports Touring program represents motorcycle, snowmobile, all-terrain vehicles (ATV), boating and recreational vehicle (RV) touring. This program has successfully focused on the development of online content and social engagement. In 2024-25, 58 stories were published on northernontario.travel and 25 resource articles were updated on DestinationOntario.com. This work resulted in 346K leads to partners and 1.06M pageviews to the powersports and touring related content on these two websites. This generated a conversion rate of 33%, exceeding last year's conversion rate of 21%.

Seven media and influencer and content acquisition FAM tours took place, and 12 partnered co-operative media fam tours were completed with 14 partners, including RTOs and DMOs. The reach of all campaign elements was an audience of over 5.1M riders with social engagement of over 193K, and over 3.4M video views.

Outdoor Adventure Program

The Outdoor Adventure program successfully executed the promotion of fully outfitted, guided, and lodge-based paddling, cycling, and trail experiences through a strategic, content-driven approach. By leveraging high-quality content creation, targeted social media engagement, influencer partnerships, and curated Ontario product tours, Destination Ontario effectively reached key consumer segments with strong potential to increase visitation and tourism spending from priority markets.

As a result of Destination Ontario's integrated campaigns, the program generated a significant volume of qualified leads for overnight, guided, and lodge-based adventure experiences. These efforts also drove direct engagement with Destination Ontario, tourism partners, and operators through website visits, phone inquiries, trip planning tool usage, and other channels - demonstrating clear consumer intent to book future travel.

Ontario Market Plan – Seasonal Northern Outdoor Collaboration

To complement the overall Ontario Market Plan, the outdoor adventure program was part of the seasonal Ontario market campaigns.

Integrated into the Ontario Market Plan, Northern outdoor content was featured through digital channels in spring/summer, fall and winter spotlights, which resulted in 24.9M impressions, 462.7K ad clicks and 2.7K leads to partners. Each season featured a mix of articles created to highlight avid outdoor experiences and operators across Northern Ontario.

U.S. Paddling & Cycling Campaign Phase 2

Destination Ontario partnered with AKTA, NeONT, Superior Country, Sunset Country and RTO 12 to invite U.S. paddlers to visit Ontario to experience the premier paddling destinations Ontario has to offer. This campaign focused on generating leads directly to our partners' websites and/or content that encouraged U.S. avid paddlers to book their paddling adventure in Ontario.

Building on the paddling campaign from winter 2024, where the campaign featured a mix of prospecting and awareness ads that were promoted to a U.S. audience from February 20 – March 20, 2024, phase 2 allowed Destination Ontario to enter similar U.S. markets from April 22 – May 23, 2025, but directed consumers straight to partner content moving them further down the path to purchase. Phase 2 resulted in 81.5M impressions, 1.2M ad clicks and 1M leads to partners.

Outdoor Adventure Content Development

On northernontario.travel, the outdoor adventure, paddling, and bicycling pages published 50 new articles and optimized 60 top-performing articles. The outdoor sub-portal on NorthernOntario.travel had over 779K total visits with 889K pageviews and 730K unique visitors. These results generated an output of over 189K leads to operators. The outdoor program, working with Destination Ontario's content team, was able to create new outdoor content pieces for destinationontario.com to continue to fill in gaps of outdoor content.

Outdoor Adventure Fam Program

The outdoor program completed 13 FAM tours and influencer programs which spanned across RTOs 11, 12 and 13. The outdoor program worked alongside 14 plus partners resulting in 12 trip planning articles and over 20 videos and reels highlighting Northern Ontario outdoor content. The FAM tours included a variety of avid outdoor experiences such as embarking on an epic road trip to carve the ski hills across Algoma, paddling the legendary Moose River, facing the waves of Lake Superior by kayak, embracing the magic of winter fun in Sunset Country with ice biking and overnighing in a luxury ice hut and experiencing the exhilarating rush of dogsledding through the snowy trails of Haliburton County.

Leisure, Arts and Culture Experiences

Destination Ontario continued to build on engaging an art lover target with the distinct Group of Seven art experience. Destination Ontario partnered with DNO and Northeastern Ontario Tourism, Sudbury Tourism, Algoma Country, Tourism Sault Ste. Marie, the Ottawa Art Gallery and the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, on a spring Group of Seven campaign. This campaign connected the art consumers they see on the wall in galleries to the actual landscapes that inspired the art. This campaign was in-market from May 27 – July 11, 2024, targeting the Ontario market. With an investment of \$208K (including \$60K of partner investment), the media strategy was split between awareness and prospecting media tactics. The campaign leveraged a 15-second video, social and digital ads driving to Destination Ontario's web content and direct to partners. Results for this program included 46M impressions, 2.9M completed videos views and 527K leads to partners.

Destination Ontario, working together with Indigenous Tourism Ontario, developed new Indigenous content for DestinationOntario.com. This content included a northern driving tour featuring Indigenous business along the route. For this content we ran a small social campaign in March that resulted in 9.3K clicks to operators, 100 shares and 42

interactions. In addition to the itinerary, we developed a story on Indigenous Fishing and Hunting, Medicine Gardens in Ontario.

Consumer Website

The organization's consumer website (www.destinationontario.com) uses a data-centric approach to deliver qualified travel leads to Ontario tourism partners and operators by making the website discoverable, engaging and conversion efficient, ensuring the user experience is as frictionless as possible.

Destination Ontario kept a focus on accessibility performing user testing with visitors who relied on assistive devices, ensuring non-visible navigation was more user-friendly. We also reviewed, refreshed, and wrote over 470 articles in 2024-25 to provide visitors with more content on tourism in Ontario.

The website continues to be a reliable source of non-paid organic leads for tourism partners and operators with 3.65M sessions and delivering over 1.58 million non-paid organic leads in 2024-25.

Corporate Website

The corporate website (www.destinationontario.com/en-ca/corporate) provides the tourism industry with research highlights, marketing opportunities and information on Destination Ontario's plans, programs, partnership opportunities and the ability to submit content and story ideas.

The corporate website had a considerable design and content refresh in 2024-25, applying user experience research and feedback collected from industry members.

Creative Services Asset Capture

Destination Ontario's recent photo and video shoots have been a success, capturing the essence of Ontario - from breathtaking landscapes to immersive cultural moments - the photo/ video shoots have helped bring Ontario to life across all the organization's campaign work and channels.

Through these shoots we're able to inspire audiences, showcasing why Ontario is a must-visit destination for adventure, relaxation, and everything in between. The team has captured over 230+ locations and completed 10 partner shoots.

Market Research and Data Intelligence

Destination Ontario's research and data analysis function is essential for generating critical market intelligence and understanding evolving consumer behaviour. This evidence-based approach empowers the agency and its tourism partners to make informed strategic decisions, adapt effectively to changing market dynamics, and ultimately achieve positive outcomes for Ontario's tourism sector. To enhance efficiency

and ensure a unified approach to data and insights, Destination Ontario now operates with a centralized research and data analysis function.

Destination Ontario's research activities cover a broad spectrum, including: market analysis and profiling; understanding consumer preferences and travel intentions; pre-campaign performance testing and campaign performance measurement; strategic and corporate performance monitoring and strategy development; tracking timely target market sentiment through large-scale studies; marketing ROI forecasting; surveying for partner feedback and program evaluation; and, providing current tourism industry intelligence.

To drive informed decision-making and effective marketing, Destination Ontario led the development of several research products and reports in 2024-25 that yielded valuable insights to shape marketing strategies. Context Research Group was utilized for several of the activities, along with working with other tourism research partners including Destination Canada.

U.S. Pulse Study

To gain deeper insights into the factors influencing travel from the U.S., Destination Ontario conducted pulse studies among U.S. High-Value Guests in both Fly and Drive markets. This research explored sentiment toward Canada and Ontario as leisure travel destinations.

Wave 1, conducted in January 2025, established a strong baseline. In Wave 2, conducted in late March 2025, there was remarkable stability in Ontario's brand and destination appeal, despite increasing political awareness and concerns in the U.S.

Recognizing these evolving perceptions, Destination Ontario is committed to ongoing monitoring of US traveller sentiment to inform responsive marketing strategies.

Informed by the U.S. pulse study finding that exchange rates are the strongest driver of travel intent, Destination Ontario displayed daily favourable U.S. to Canadian currency conversions on billboards as part of its 2025 U.S. Spring/Summer Drive campaign.

Ontario Consumer Study

In March 2025, Destination Ontario conducted a new domestic consumer travel survey. This study engaged Ontario-resident leisure travellers to better understand their favourite travel experiences, destinations and seasonal intentions, as well as gauge their travel intentions and sentiment towards travel to the U.S.

The study highlighted a strong preference among Ontarians for travel within the province and produced brand-new insights into how Ontarians are exploring their own province. From lakeside dining to scenic drives, small-town strolls to big-city stays, the results showed a deep love for Ontario travel and the diverse experiences it offers.

Overseas Return on Investment (ROI) Forecasting Model

Destination Ontario launched an Overseas ROI Forecasting Model in 2024-25. This tool predicts the returns of marketing investments in overseas markets, including the projected ROI, the number of visits in Ontario, and visitor spending in Ontario. The model allows Destination Ontario to forecast the economic impacts in Ontario from the projected visitor spending from an investment.

The model supports Destination Ontario to forecast performance for any campaign, enabling informed investment decisions. The tool supports strategic planning, budgeting, corporate reporting, and performance measurement.

Creative Territory Testing (International Awareness Strategy)

As part of developing its international awareness strategy, Destination Ontario conducted creative testing of two territories among High-Value Guests in the U.K., Germany, France, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, China, and Australia to understand which territory had higher performance potential.

This research yielded insights into the performance of each territory, allowing Destination Ontario to identify the stronger performer, which scored best on key metrics such as appeal, uniqueness, clarity and relevance. As a result of this research, Destination Ontario proceeded with the development of a single creative territory for its international awareness strategy, ensuring a data-driven approach.

Overseas Segmentation Strategy

In alignment with Destination Canada, Destination Ontario is evolving its focus in overseas markets from High-Value Guests to Highly Engaged Guests (HEGs). Highly Engaged Guests travel often and spend more compared to other travel segments, align with core values and are deeply connected to the Canada brand (e.g., more likely to visit Canada, inclined towards luxury travel, value Indigenous experiences, like to explore off-the-beaten path). Segments including Refined Globetrotters, Outdoor Explorers and Culture Seekers have been prioritized for targeted marketing and strategic efforts in priority overseas markets due to the opportunity they provide to contribute significantly to the Canadian tourism landscape.

Building on this new segmentation approach, Destination Ontario's research initiatives in 2025-26 will focus specifically on these Highly Engaged Guest segments. Examples include creative testing designed to inform an international brand awareness campaign and a dedicated Europe pulse study in the U.K., Germany, and France.

Tourism Research Partnerships

Destination Ontario is committed to collaborating with tourism research partners to drive tourism competitiveness, facilitate knowledge sharing and a coordinated approach to tourism research, and produce impactful multi-jurisdictional research for the benefit of the entire industry.

Canadian Tourism Data Collective

Destination Ontario supported Destination Canada's Canadian Tourism Data Collective through a premier-tier subscription. The partnership grants Destination Ontario with access to robust and actionable tourism data, market intelligence, and industry analysis, and fosters collaboration across the sector by supporting a centralized platform for tourism research and data in Canada. This platform offers a free, public access option for industry stakeholders.

Visitor Travel Survey

Destination Ontario supported Statistics Canada to conduct the Visitor Travel Survey of international travellers in Canada. The Survey is a primary source of information about the impact of international tourism in Ontario, and the data are critical for targeting the appropriate markets, measuring recovery from the pandemic, setting goals, and informing strategy development. Survey results are published for free access to support Ontario's tourism industry.

Collaboration through Working Groups and Associations

Destination Ontario actively participated in several working groups to cooperate on national tourism research projects, support the development of tourism research in Ontario and Canada and a common approach, and share information and knowledge. These groups included Destination Canada's Segmentation Advisory Committee, the Tourism Research Partners Forum, and Destination Canada's Research Advisory Committee. The core mandate of the Research Advisory Committee is to provide strategic advice and counsel that guides Destination Canada's data and analytics function and initiatives. Destination Ontario is also a member of the Travel and Tourism Research Association.

Strategic Engagement and Communications

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.

Partnerships are essential for supporting the industry and fueling future growth. Through continued collaboration with RTOs, DMOs, sector associations, other provincial agencies, industry partners and corporations, Destination Ontario continues to expand market reach and create lasting economic impact, ensuring that these partnerships remain mutually beneficial and contribute to Ontario's tourism success.

MICHELIN Guide Expansion

In 2024-25, the MICHELIN Guide was expanded to include Toronto & Region, providing the opportunity to attract visitors from around the world by spotlighting the city's diverse food scene and the quality of the region.

In partnership with Destination Canada, Destination Toronto and the City of Toronto, the prestigious Guide now shines a spotlight on culinary gems in RTOs 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7. There are 100 restaurants and 30 cuisine types are reflected in the Guide and Destination Ontario is optimistic for further selections to be added in 2025-26.

Destination Ontario executed an integrated mix of marketing communications tactics to support the partnerships and announcement, including earned media, content creation, social posts and industry outreach.

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.

Top Chef USA in Ontario

Destination Ontario was thrilled to partner with Destination Canada who successfully negotiated a deal for Season 22 of Top Chef USA to be filmed in Canada.

In partnership with Destination Toronto, Destination Ontario secured six episodes filmed in Toronto and one episode filmed in Niagara to leverage the Top Chef spotlight and showcase Ontario as a culinary destination to inspire travellers.

Episodes were filmed in 2024 highlighting Toronto, Niagara, Calgary, Montreal and Prince Edward Island and the series premiered in March 2025.

Preliminary feedback from Destination Canada is that this season has an increase in Canadian viewership.

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.

Ontario Hockey League (OHL)

Destination Ontario's renewed partnership with the Ontario Hockey League (OHL) continues to strategically position the province as a premier travel destination by leveraging the league's passionate fan base and broad reach. As an official and exclusive category partner, Destination Ontario benefits from full marketing rights to OHL assets, enhancing brand visibility through in-arena activations, digital platforms, contests, and national TV spots. With province-wide engagement across 17 Ontario markets and reach into U.S. border cities, this integrated campaign strengthens

awareness and inspires travel through direct fan interactions, dynamic advertising, and compelling content, showcasing Ontario's diverse tourism offerings.

Partnerships with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and Government Agencies

- The Destination Ontario content team worked with other areas within the organization and directly with agency partners to find out about agency experiences and products, ask questions and fact-check information regarding content and images for DestinationOntario.com.
- Destination Ontario's social media team regularly highlighted and generated engagement of agency attractions and experiences through its network of social channels.
- Destination Ontario's Broadcast Program promoted two agencies and 21 attractions during eight broadcasts, garnering positive media coverage on television and radio in the Canada and U.S. markets. Agencies and attractions promoted included: Niagara Parks Commission and St. Lawrence Parks Commission.
- Through the Ontario Travel Information Services (OTIS) team, roaming services were provided during the summer months in partnership with Niagara Parks. OTIS also sold Niagara Parks attraction pass.

Corporate Communications

Destination Ontario strengthened its corporate communications program to elevate industry engagement and increase awareness of strategic initiatives. In alignment with the 2024–27 Strategic Playbook, Corporate Communications adopted a proactive and collaborative approach to support tourism partners, enhance brand reputation and reinforce Destination Ontario's role as a trusted leader in tourism marketing.

The Corporate Communications team focused on improving how Destination Ontario informs and engages stakeholders by investing in new channels, amplifying executive visibility, and sharing meaningful stories and insights with the industry.

Achievements:

- Launched *Destination Digest* - To increase transparency and regular engagement with industry stakeholders, Destination Ontario launched *Destination Digest*, a bi-monthly digital newsletter to tourism industry subscribers designed to deliver timely updates, data and partnership opportunities. The newsletter featured DO campaigns, initiatives, team highlights, industry events, job alerts and recurring sections including "Sector Spotlight" and "Collaboration Corner". In 2024-25, 5 editions were published to an audience of 560+ subscribers, achieving an average open rate of 32.1% with the January 2025 edition achieving a 46.9% open rate.

- LinkedIn - A renewed focus on LinkedIn led to growth in audience and engagement. Post content featured Destination Ontario campaigns, partnership opportunities, job opportunities, data and survey results, Destination Ontario news and amplified industry partner events and posts. Destination Ontario's LinkedIn account gained 1.7K new followers, representing a significant increase in industry reach, generating 1.74M impressions, 4.4K reactions, 115 comments and 106 reposts.
- Executive Visibility and Stakeholder Engagement - Provided direct communications support to the CEO's office, reinforcing Destination Ontario's leadership role across the tourism industry. Developed stakeholder messaging and remarks to support the CEO's participation in major industry events including the TIAO Tourism Summit.
- 2024-27 Strategic Playbook Rollout - Led internal and external communications for the launch of Destination Ontario's 2024–27 Strategic Playbook by creating a communications snapshot and launch plan, including a phased, digital-first rollout, key messages and risk analysis.
- Destination Ontario's 25th Anniversary Campaign (DO25) - Celebrated DO's 25-year milestone through a multi-channel campaign designed to engage both internal and external audiences. Efforts included a coordinated LinkedIn campaign featuring industry testimonials and "Meet the Team" profiles and Throwback Thursday archival features. Support was provided for TIAO Tourism Summit DO25 activities, including preliminary support for an anniversary video produced by Destination Ontario's creative services team and a toast delivered by the CEO with former Destination Ontario presidents. Corporate communications also fostered staff engagement through an internal contest and distribution of commemorative DO25 pins and tattoos.
- Sustainability Communications - Demonstrated Destination Ontario's commitment to sustainable tourism through strategic communications and industry alignment by facilitating the signing of the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge, being the first Provincial Marketing Organization in Canada to do so. Corporate Communications also launched the organization's GreenStep Solutions certification journey and promoted sustainability milestones via the corporate website and media channels.
- Media Reach - Amplified Destination Ontario's voice through media relations and storytelling by issuing a joint press release with TIAO on sustainability commitments, resulting in 181 media pickups and a potential reach of 60.6M. The corporate communications team also published an article in The Agora, the Ministry's internal newsletter, highlighting DO's 25th anniversary and incorporated CEO quotes into media to position Destination Ontario as a national leader in tourism marketing.

Broadcast Program

Destination Ontario's broadcast program saw sustained growth for a multi-month period in 2024-25. Not only did the program reach a consistent rate of total broadcasts, but also successfully partnered with 11 of the 13 RTOs for on-location broadcasts promoting Ontario attractions, experiences, and overnight stays.

The program continued to build strong relationships with media and tourism partners while expanding into the U.S. market in targeted border states, resulting in 2.4K broadcast minutes promoting 352 industry partners with an AVE of \$23.9M and a reach of 221.5M in both Canada and the U.S. markets.

Achievements include:

- Summer Campaigns – Coordinated 18 radio and television broadcasts across eight RTOs promoting summer Ontario attractions and experiences, including a Corus Radio junket in Muskoka, a Global News Morning's Local Escapes segment in Elora, and a two-day culinary focused CH Morning Live pre-taped remote in Parry Sound. U.S. broadcasts include a full episode of New Day Cleveland in Windsor, and a week Niagara Falls takeover on Daytime Columbus. Reach: 62.3M, AVE: \$4.4M.
- Fall Campaigns – Coordinated 8 radio and television broadcasts across four RTOs promoting ways to enjoy the fall season and last-minute getaways, including a Niagara Falls Winter Festival of Lights segment on The Morning Show, a Global News Morning's Local Escapes segment in Sault Ste Marie to capture the Fall colours, and promoting 10 different operators on The Weather Network in Kingston. Reach: 46.9M, AVE: \$2.3M.
- Winter/Spring Campaigns – Coordinated 45 radio and television broadcasts across 10 RTOs promoting winter, holiday, and spring activities and events in Ontario, including a CH Morning Live full 4-hour live show at Deerhurst Resort, a live on-location CP24 Breakfast Show at the JW Marriott The Rosseau, CTV's Things to Know T.O. at Kingstonlicious, and Breakfast Television's Get Lost with Natalie in Niagara Falls. U.S. Broadcasts include a national syndicated show, Travelling with Denella Ri'chard in Niagara Falls and 96.3 WDVD's Blaine and Lauren in Blue Mountain. Reach: 112.1M, AVE: 17.3M.

Corporate Services and Operations

Ontario Travel Information Services (OTIS)

Destination Ontario's OTIS team provided customized itineraries and trip planning advice across multiple visitor service channels both in person and digitally. This multi-channel approach allowed Travel Counsellors to reach a wider audience of consumers including international, U.S., domestic, regional and local, and during all stages of the path to purchase from inspiration and pre-trip planning to in-market travel advice.

Travel Counsellors continued to use a visitor first approach to provide exceptional customer service and visitor information and delivered itineraries, information on destinations, attractions, and experiences across Ontario through personalized trip planning.

Based on consumer feedback OTIS continued to grow and expand its visitor information services beyond the traditional bricks and mortar of the travel information centres through modern, digital channels and roaming travel counselling. Providing trip planning and travel advice through these modernized channels resulted in consumers enhancing and extending their travel plans and spend by driving bookings and influencing travel purchases and decisions.

Third party impact tracking research conducted by Context Research Group demonstrated that the impact of OTIS trip planning services across four channels (roaming, email, phone and virtual) resulted in an additional \$8.99M in consumer spending in Ontario during 2024-25. The \$8.99M in additional, incremental spend includes 31.8K additional room nights and an additional 69K activities to consumers trip plans. Travel counsellors also influenced consumers to add 7K additional travellers to their travel party.

After engaging with a Travel Counsellor through one of these channels, 48% of consumers increased the number of travel activities (increase of 2.8 activities on average) and 24% extended their trip by an average of 2.5 nights. 22% of consumers increased their travel spend by an average of \$573 and 5% increased their travel party size by an average of 2.5 people.

Modernized Visitor Information Services

The OTIS team continued to expand and enhance its service delivery models to adapt to visitors changing travel patterns and information needs and preferences. Travel Counsellors provided curated, personalized visitor information services, trip plans and itineraries in-person at OTICs and roaming at major attractions, tourist locations, festivals and events as well as over the phone, virtually by video conference and by email. OTIS continued to shift away from print material consumer fulfillment to digital resources, itineraries and promotional brochures and information.

In collaboration with DO's social media team, OTIS launched the "Ask a Travel Expert" series on DO's Instagram channel, providing trip inspiration ideas and advice based on questions and topics submitted by consumers. Consumers were prompted to submit questions around planning spring break activities, food and drink in Ontario and hiking trails. Travel Counsellors highlighted tourism products and experiences around the province, linking to partners and content on DO's consumer website. The stories also linked the OTIS landing page on destinationontario.com, inviting consumers to connect with a Travel Counsellor via one of the service channels for more personalized trip planning advice.

Key Performance Measures: Visitor Health Score (VHS) and Trips Planned

OTIS continued to measure and track the VHS, introduced in 2021-22, across all five service delivery channels. The VHS reflects the quality-of-service visitors receive across all service delivery channels. It aggregates the Net Promoter Score (NPS), Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT) and Service Level (SL). ²In 2024-25, OTIS service channels collectively achieved a VHS score of 92, an NPS of 83, CSAT of 97 and SL of 95, exceeding industry benchmarks. Travel Counsellors were able to counsel a total of

116.2K parties through its service delivery channels (in-centre, roaming, by phone, virtually and by email) and create a total of 34.4K Trips Planned. The Trips Planned metric was introduced in 2023-24 and is defined as the number of travel-related consumer interactions across all OTIS channels, including new activity, a trip planned and/or itinerary developed, an enhancement or increase to an existing travel plan or itinerary or a booking is made that results in incremental visitor spend.

Roaming Ambassadors Travel Information Services Program

OTIS grew and expanded the roaming program in 2024-25, with more than 21 roaming partnership agreements which is a 108% increase over 2023-24. Roaming ambassadors provided mobile trip planning and information services for the equivalent of 751 days at more than 50 festivals, events and high traffic locations across Ontario such as the World Rowing Championships, Kempenfest, the Akwesasne Pow Wow, and during the Taylor Swift concert series. Roaming ambassadors offered these services on site at partner locations with branded equipment such as gazebos, tents and tricycles and provided real-time travel information services to visitors. In 2024-25 there were more than 123K visitors engaged in this channel, which is a 23% increase in visitors engaged over the same period in the previous year.

OTIS entered into roaming partnerships agreements with many new partners including Tourism Thunder Bay, Visit Mississauga, and Stormont Dundas Glengarry Tourism expanding its pan provincial presence. OTIS also partnered with the City of Toronto to provide roaming trip planning services during the Taylor Swift concerts in November 2025. The roaming team also activated at a series of OHL games (regular season and playoffs) across the province, providing rink side trip planning to fans of the home team and the visiting team. The team was able to provide travel consultation and inspiration for future travel/trips in Ontario to domestic and US-based fans.

DO entered a new partnership with the Ministry's ExperienceON program to form roaming partnerships with festival and event organizers who received provincial funding. DO had a roaming presence at an additional seven events as a result of this partnership. OTIS developed a matrix to identify key opportunities according to location, attendance at the event, etc.

In 2024-25, a total of 45.2K groups of visitors spoke to a roaming travel counsellor and 28% of interactions resulted in a trip planned. The OTIS roaming program achieved a partner satisfaction score of 86.6.

In addition, the impact tracking research showed that roaming had an impact of more than \$8.2M in additional consumer spending in 2024-25.

“Friendly smiles and lots of knowledge about Ontario”

Ontario Travel Information Centres (OTICs)

In 2024-25, the OTICs operated with varying schedules and days of operation based on the ever-changing travel demands of consumers and to leverage staffing resources to support higher yield channels. Some OTICs continued with reduced days of operation in

response to reduced demand for in-centre services, which allowed OTIS to focus on supporting roaming activities, email, phone and virtual travel counselling. Overall visitation to the OTICs, which was down 80.1% compared to 2019-20, continued to decline in 2024-25 with a decrease in visitation of 12.1% over 2023-24. This decrease in visitation reflects change in behaviour and consumer preference for accessing visitor information services digitally and “where they are” (at festivals, events and high traffic tourist locations).

“Our travel counsellor was amazing! She understood what we were looking for and made sure to highlight those places we would want to go to. 10/10”

1-800-ONTARIO toll free phone service

OTIS staff continued to offer trip planning services in English and French to callers to 1-800-ONTARIO which operates seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. In 2024-25, over 4.9K callers were travel counselled. The top inquiries Travel Counsellors responded to focused on consumers requesting trip planning and information on outdoor activities, shopping and attractions as well as food and wine experiences. Travel Counsellors provided this service in real time and often follow up information (such as itineraries and personalized trip plans) was sent digitally. Callers to 1-800-ONTARIO were connected to a live Travel Counsellor in less than 45 seconds during regular business hours, resulting in CSAT, NPC and SL scores averaging close to 100% in this channel. This service level exceeds the Ontario government service standard of a call being answered in less than 2 minutes during regular business hours.

“I was so impressed with the service I received from the lady on the phone. She was so helpful and so knowledgeable about all the areas I was interested in.”

Consumer Email

OTIS Travel Counsellors continued to respond to both English and French email inquiries from consumers seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. On average, consumers received a response to their email inquiry in less than 2.5 hours. Customer satisfaction scored close to 100% in this channel.

“I emailed and did not expect an email back for days. But it was minutes not even hours when she emailed me back and got the information she needed, and we spent a few hours emailing back and forth before she emailed me and told me she had attached some information. Our plans are for next year 2025 but if everything goes like these emails did, I will recommend to everyone to visit Canada!”

Virtual Travel Counselling (VTC) Services

OTIS continued to offer evening and weekend appointments to better serve consumers and added morning time slots to accommodate various time zones. In 2024-25, OTIS staff conducted a total of 121 virtual travel counselling sessions, with 82% ending in Trips Planned.

OTIS began the review and evaluation of the third-party booking app (Picktime) to remove barriers to consumers booking (i.e. minimum wait time till next available time slot) and possible solutions for integrating video chats into customer care platform.

Visitor Information Services (VIS) Network

In 2024-25, OTIS grew the VIS network to more than 200 members representing 150 DMO, local and municipally operated visitor services. OTIS implemented a VIS Strategy, based on feedback and input from the members, OTIS offered quarterly email updates and webinars featuring training links, research, best practices and fireside chats with partners such as Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island (TWEPI). The VIS webinars achieved a cumulative usefulness score of 89 and an attendance score of 96.

In October 2024, OTIS launched an online forum/community with more than 55 members where content was posted weekly and members were encouraged to post, comment and engage with other members. Content posted in the forum included Ottawa Tourism's new visitor centre, a spotlight on Stormont Dundas Glengarry Tourism's visitor services team, information on what other jurisdictions such as Boston Tourism are doing in the visitor services space, member polls and research shared as fun facts and Did You Know posts.

"Hello from Tourism London! It's wonderful to see a forum like this dedicated to sharing ideas and best practices in delivering exceptional visitor information services. I look forward to connecting with everyone, exchanging insights, and learning new approaches to enhance the experiences we provide to our visitors."

"Hello from Tourism Hamilton! Thank you so much for sharing this exciting new platform with us. I'm looking forward to some great discussions and to learning from and sharing with my fellow visitor services folks."

Digital Tools

To support the modernization and digitization of visitor information services, OTIS continued to use a number of digital tools and platforms such as Travefy, and Coassemble, resulting in improved, streamlined training modules, quicker service to consumers and efficiencies in decreasing the amount of time required to research and build itineraries, among other things.

In addition, OTIS began to explore additional service delivery channels (text and chat) in ZenDesk, the customer care tool to facilitate one-window collection of data and improved reporting/dashboards.

OTIS also piloted the use of Virtual Reality (VR) at select roaming locations, where consumers experienced 2D sizzle reels highlighting tourism products and experiences across Ontario with the use of VR goggles. VR content was developed in collaboration with DO's creative services team.

Corporate Services

Destination Ontario's Corporate Services team continues to play a pivotal role in ensuring the organization's operational excellence and financial stability. Through diligent financial planning, strategic resource management, and comprehensive support services, Corporate Services is committed to fostering a productive and efficient work environment.

Guided by a commitment to accountability, fiscal responsibility and modernization, Destination Ontario continued its oversight of the agency's corporate services (financial controllership and administration, human resources, procurement and contract management, strategic planning, information technology, facilities and administrative services, and business continuity) to continue identifying areas for improvement. As a result, Corporate Services delivered on many activities that achieved improved effectiveness and efficiency, as well as activities to support the organization and tourism industry. These included:

- Completing a comprehensive organizational review with Blackline Consulting to enhance operational efficiency and alignment with the 2024-2027 Strategic Playbook. The review captured staff sentiment, identified areas for improvement, and Blackline produced a final report outlining recommendations for continuous improvement. The process culminated in an All-Staff Day where the findings and recommendations were discussed, highlighting plans to implement improvements that strengthen, streamline, and enhance internal DO processes while strengthening organizational culture.
- Responding to growing financial constraints by implementing a zero-based budgeting approach for the 2025-26 budget. All proposed marketing activities were evaluated by the senior management team prior to the fiscal year to ensure funds are allocated to activities and campaigns that contribute directly to Destination Ontario's objectives, mandate and Strategic Playbook and prioritized based on value-for-money and return-on-investment.
- Completing a full-cycle of formalized quarterly re-forecasting to ensure program areas re-assess their budgets on a quarterly basis to identify financial pressures and savings and re-allocate as needed. Introduced quarterly soft close process to assist program areas with reconciliation of expenditures against accounting records and early recognition of any discrepancies. Destination Ontario's total expenditures in 2024-25 were within 3% of the re-forecasted budget.
- Collaborating with the OPS Learning & Talent Development Branch (Treasury Board Secretariat) to secure 80 LinkedIn Learning licenses for Destination Ontario staff to help further our key pillar of "levelling up" and continuously improve our organizational capacity. DO leveraged LinkedIn Learning to develop a collective advancement and employee learning program to address skills gaps and strengthen the organization's ability to remain agile and adapt to shifting industry dynamics.

- Continuing collaboration with the OPS Cyber Security Branch through participation in corporate phishing education campaigns to generate awareness on phishing emails and provide training on identifying and reporting suspicious emails, all within a safe environment so staff could learn to recognize threats and protect critical assets. Across five corporate phishing campaigns, Destination Ontario staff recognized and reported 37.6% phishing emails versus 23.6% for the OPS.
- Collaborating with MTCG's legal department, and Ontario Shared Services and Supply Chain Ontario for advice on various contract agreements and templates to ensure appropriate accountability and consistency. In 2024-25, Destination Ontario developed and executed 227 contractual agreements.
- Updating Destination Ontario's Delegation of Financial Management Authority framework to align with the ministry and added more specific expense categories to provide clarity to staff when determining the proper signing authority. Inclusion of 'Administrative Expenditure Authority' to streamline processing of internal documents after approval by proper signing authority and reduce administrative burden on the executive management team by delegating subsequent approvals to directors/managers.
- Promoting Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) by addressing systemic barriers, ensuring all employees have the resources, support, and accommodations needed for success. Corporate Services championed MTCG and OPS initiatives that foster an inclusive, respectful, and anti-racist workplace, with a focus on inclusive recruitment practices. As a result, all 2024-25 recruitments utilized the OPS Recruitment Lens to ensure fair and equitable hiring, and every competition included a Diverse Interview Panel Program (DIPP) member or an external panelist with diverse lived experience. Additionally, 83% of competitions included equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)-focused questions to assess candidates' understanding of EDI, and anti-racism. To further this effort, an Inclusive Hiring Checklist was established to increase understanding of fair and inclusive practices at DO. Corporate Services also shared mandatory training sessions for Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention to leaders and staff.
- Revitalizing Destination Ontario's Employee Engagement Committee (EEC) and introducing initiatives and actions in 2024-25 to address the key themes identified in the Employee Engagement Action Plan: mental health, balancing workload, employee recognition, equitable and inclusive leadership, and respect and belonging. EEC completed three Wellness challenges spanning, mental, physical, and financial wellness.
- From a people leadership perspective, Corporate Services continued providing guidance, support and advice to employees and management at all levels

regarding human resources matters. This included information on workforce management, talent and performance management, labour relations, health and safety, recruitment and retention, and learning and development.

- Destination Ontario remains committed to ensuring its workplace culture is one that is respectful, diverse, inclusive, equitable, and free from harassment and discrimination. The Corporate Services team continued to explore opportunities for continuous improvement to ensure all employees feel that Destination Ontario is an organization where they are supported, safe, and provided with the tools and resources needed to effectively perform their roles and responsibilities. Corporate Services conducted a survey to all Destination Ontario staff to gather feedback on the current state of learning and development, equipment, software and applications and suggestions for improvement.

In summary, the Corporate Services team continued to champion an organizational culture that enables the leadership team to be equipped with sound advice, helpful tools and coaching strategies to continue building high-performing teams and offering support to advance the mandate of the agency. Our efforts will strengthen the leadership team's confidence in managing programs, processes and human capital effectively and efficiently.

Compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*

Destination Ontario continues to comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Customer Service Standard) and Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005* administered by the OPS Accessibility Office.

Destination Ontario continues to ensure corporation-wide compliance and that all staff are trained and aware of the obligations under the AODA. Destination Ontario successfully completed the Desk Audit – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 conducted by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

		2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Goal	2024-25 Actual
	Incremental Visits and Expenditures as a result of Advertisement)			
1	Incremental Visits	1,621,841	854,000	1,011,060
	Incremental Spend	\$ 574,643,210	\$250,400,000	\$328,069,319
2	Total Leads to Partners	14,338,090	15,000,000	18,422,514
3	Advertising Value Equivalency	\$ 86,154,661	\$ 35,000,000	\$ 93,701,866
	4 Incremental Visits & Expenditures as a Result of Trade Partnerships			
	Incremental Visits	18.3K	15,000	16,282
	Incremental Expenditures	\$38.4M	\$15M	\$ 36,171,701
	5 Website Excellence			
	Site Health Score *SEMRush	90%	77%	92%
	Authority Score *SEMRush	53%	48%	53%
	6 Social Engagement¹			
	Social Audience Growth	14%	2%	4.5%
	Content Advocacy	12%	10%	6.4%
7	Travel Services Visitor Health Score	93%	90%	92%
8	Travel Services Trip Created²	38,065	37,500	32,638
	TO UNDERTAKE JOINT MARKETING INITIATIVES WITH THE TOURISM INDUSTRY (Aligning Strategic Objectives)			
9	Total Number of Invested Partners - Buy In	n/a	70	76
10	Total partner investment into DO-led Industry programs - Buy In	n/a	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,183,500
11	Partnership Satisfaction Score - Buy In Programs	n/a	75	96
	TO SUPPORT AND ASSIST THE MARKETING EFFORTS OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY (Advancing corporate leadership)			
12	Corporate Leadership Score	n/a	Benchmark Year	N/A
13	Education Series Usefulness Score	n/a		
	OTIS - Visitor Information Services Network webinars	n/a	70	89
14	Education Series Attendance Score	n/a		
	OTIS - Visitor Information Services Network webinars	n/a	70	96
	WORK IN COOPERATION WITH THE TOURISM INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO, OTHER GOVS AND AGENCIES TO PROMOTE ONTARIO (Aligning Strategic Objectives)			
15	Ontario Stakeholders Participating in DO-Led Programs - In Kind	n/a	1200	905
16	Number of Programs - In Kind	n/a	150	134
17	Partner Satisfaction Score - In Kind	n/a	Benchmark Year	96

Notes:

- DO saw declines in audience growth and content advocacy in 2024/25. Key factors include halting posts on X (Twitter) due to platform shifts, reduced organic reach on Facebook, and Instagram's pivot toward Reels and video. DO will monitor and adjust strategies to boost engagement.
- OTIS did not achieve the Trips Planned goal in 2024-25 because of reduced operating days, shifting consumer preferences, staffing challenges, geopolitical events and poor weather. OTIS is taking action in 2025-26 to keep the target moving forward by shifting resources to support higher yield channels, expanding the roaming program and considering additional visitor channels.

DEFINITIONS

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Definition
Incremental Visits (Advertising)	The additional number of visits to Ontario that can be attributed to advertising campaigns by Destination Ontario, as estimated using established survey methodologies.
Incremental Expenditures – Ontario and U.S.	The additional tourist spending in Ontario generated by advertising campaigns, as estimated by established survey methodologies.
Incremental Visitor Spending – North America and Overseas (via trade channel)	An estimate of the visitor spending generated by the incremental visits resulting from International Trade Partnership Programs (ITPPs).
Earned Media Relations (i.e., Advertising Value Equivalency or AVE)	A monetary measure that quantifies the value of earned media coverage based on what it would cost to achieve the same reach through paid advertisements.
Social Audience Growth	The percentage growth in Destination Ontario's followers or subscribers across social media platforms.
Social Content Advocacy	Engagement in the form of sharing, saving, likes, applauses or amplifications of Destination Ontario social channels content by individuals on their owned social channels. Calculated as total shares, saves, likes, applauses and amplifications divided by total audience size.
Trips Planned (OTIS)	The number of trips to Ontario planned through the Ontario Travel Information Services (OTIS) system, reflecting intent driven by marketing efforts.
Visitor Health Score (Travel Services)	The quality of service that visitors receive when engaging in one of Destination Ontario's Ontario Travel Information Services (OTIS) channels for trip planning. VHS incorporates Net Promoter Score, service level and customer satisfaction ratings.
Total numbers of invested partnerships - Buy-in	The total count of partnerships where stakeholders invest directly in marketing programs led by Destination Ontario under a buy-in model.
Total partner investment into DO-Led Paid Programs - Buy-in	The cumulative financial contributions from partners towards Destination Ontario's paid marketing programs under the buy-in model.
Corporate Leadership Score	In development.
Education Usefulness Score	The degree to which stakeholders find Destination Ontario's educational resources and sessions useful for achieving their goals. Based on feedback surveys.

Education Series Attendance Score	This score measures the likelihood of future participation in Destination Ontario education events among session attendees. (Not a measure of attendance at a particular session.)
Total Leads to Industry Partners	Number of inbound consumers driven to destination partners, sector associations or individual business digital properties.
Ontario Stakeholders Participating in Destination Ontario-Led Programs (#)	The total number of stakeholders involved in Destination Ontario's programs, including familiarization tours, campaigns, and promotional initiatives.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Management reviews risk on an ongoing basis, including quarterly management reports, and year-end and in-year audits. The Audit, Finance and Risk Committee of the Board of Directors regularly reviews and discusses with management corporate policies on internal control to ensure that appropriate processes are functioning effectively, to monitor the risks to which the organization is exposed, and that internal control is effective in managing risks to an acceptable level. Throughout 2024-25, Destination Ontario remained a flexible and dynamic organization, with the ability to adjust accordingly when internal and external changes impacted Destination Ontario's operations.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended March 31, 2025

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming is the principal source of agency revenue, contributing 90% (\$33.6M) of Destination Ontario's \$37.3M operating revenue. The grant funding from the ministry includes \$114,480 for the Summer Experience Program to supplement the Summer Student Travel Counsellor Team, and an additional \$473K for the 2024-25 Bill 124 offset allocation from Ontario Shared Services. The remaining portion of Destination Ontario's revenue is self-generated through merchandise sales at the Travel Information Centres and the Destination Ontario-led collaborative and partnerable marketing system. This system leverages partner funds and content to connect consumers with trip ideas and operators.

Destination Ontario recorded an operating deficit of \$0.8M after depreciation of \$0.1M on capital assets. The operating deficit is in line with initial expectations prior to the start of the fiscal year due to a carryover of \$2.1M from 2023-24. Spending in 2024-25 was guided by the best possible market intelligence available to make timely and responsible decisions and maximize value for money and was re-forecasted every quarter.

DESTINATION ONTARIO

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2025

DESTINATION ONTARIO

Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2025

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DESTINATION ONTARIO

Management Report

The accompanying financial statements are the responsibility of the management of Destination Ontario. The financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards. The statements include certain amounts based on estimates and judgements. Management has determined such amounts on a reasonable basis in order to ensure that the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects.

Management maintains a system of internal accounting and administrative control that is designed to provide reasonable assurance the financial information is relevant, reliable and accurate and that the Corporation's assets are properly accounted for and adequately safeguarded.

The financial statements have been audited by Deloitte LLP, a firm of independent external auditors appointed by the Board of Directors, whose report follows.

Vincenza Ronaldi
President and CEO
June 12, 2025

Ronald Ting
Treasurer
June 12, 2025

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of Directors of
Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Destination Ontario (the "Corporation"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2025, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Corporation as at March 31, 2025, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards ("Canadian GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Corporation's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

DESTINATION ONTARIO**Statement of Financial Position**

	March 31 2025 (\$ 000)	March 31 2024 (\$ 000)
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	3,171	3,938
Accounts receivable (Note 3)	788	883
Prepaid expenses	31	34
	<u>3,990</u>	<u>4,855</u>
Capital assets (Note 4)	<u>37</u>	<u>128</u>
	4,027	4,983
<hr/>		
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	3,075	3,331
Obligation for retirement benefits (Note 2h)	369	294
Deferred revenue (Note 5)	-	25
	<u>3,444</u>	<u>3,650</u>
Obligation for retirement benefits (Note 2h)	<u>650</u>	<u>592</u>
Deferred capital contributions (Note 6)	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>650</u>	<u>593</u>
	<u>4,094</u>	<u>4,243</u>
Net (deficiency) assets		
Unrestricted fund	(104)	613
Investment in capital assets	37	127
	<u>(67)</u>	<u>740</u>
	4,027	4,983

Commitments (Note 10)

Approved on behalf of the board:

Board Chair

Member, Audit Committee

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

DESTINATION ONTARIO**Statement of Operations****For the year ended March 31****2025**
(\$ 000)**2024**
(\$ 000)**Revenues**

Province of Ontario grant (Note 7)	33,555	33,063
Advertising sales	3,094	2,447
Interest income	341	403
Travel Information Services - sales	292	317
Amortization of deferred capital contribution	1	11
	37,283	36,241

Expenses

Advertising and marketing	20,829	19,741
Administration (Note 8)	9,315	7,633
Travel Information Services (Note 9)	5,482	5,317
Partnerships and sales	1,263	1,479
Technology operations	826	522
Research	278	414
Amortization of capital assets	91	400
Board and committee expenses (Note 12)	6	46
	38,090	35,552

(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenses**(807)****689**

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

DESTINATION ONTARIO**Statement of Changes in Net Assets**For the year ended March 31

	Unrestricted Fund (\$ 000)	Investment in Capital Assets (\$ 000)	2025 Total (\$ 000)	2024 Total (\$ 000)
Net assets , beginning of year	613	127	740	51
(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenses for the year	(717)	(90)	(807)	689
Net (deficiency) assets , end of year	(104)	37	(67)	740

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

DESTINATION ONTARIO

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31	2025	2024
	(\$ 000)	(\$ 000)
OPERATING		
(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenses	(807)	689
Add (less) non-cash items:		
Amortization of capital assets	91	400
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	(1)	(11)
	<u>(717)</u>	<u>1,078</u>
Change in non-cash working capital (Note 11)	(183)	(3,914)
Obligation for retirement benefits, net	133	(121)
	<u>(767)</u>	<u>(2,957)</u>
CAPITAL		
Capital asset acquisitions	<u>-</u>	<u>(36)</u>
Decrease in cash during the year	(767)	(2,993)
Cash, beginning of year	<u>3,938</u>	<u>6,931</u>
Cash, end of year	<u>3,171</u>	<u>3,938</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

March 31, 2025

1. NATURE OF CORPORATION

The Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (“OTMPC”) was established as a corporation without share capital on November 30, 1998 pursuant to Ontario Regulation 618/98 made under the *Development Corporations Act*. The Regulation was amended by Ontario Regulation 271/04 in September, 2004 to extend the mandate of the OTMPC indefinitely. The OTMPC commenced active operations on April 1, 1999. In the fall of 2017, the OTMPC announced a new corporate operating name, Destination Ontario. Destination Ontario (the “Corporation”) became the official legal name of the Corporation pursuant to Ontario Regulation 231/24 as of June 7, 2024. The objects of the Corporation are:

- (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 co-operation with the tourism industry, the Government of Ontario, other governments and other agencies of governments, to promote Ontario as a travel destination.

The Corporation enters into agreements with private and public sector partners in order to add value to tourism marketing programs. The Corporation tracks the dollar value (leverage, in-kind) of such agreements to demonstrate the impact of the Corporation's investment on the partnered marketing programs. However, related partner revenues and expenses are not included in the Corporation's financial statements.

The Corporation is a not-for-profit organization, and thus not subject to income tax.

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**(a) Basis of Accounting**

The financial statements are the representations of management and are prepared in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards (“PSAS”) including the 4200 series of standards contained in the Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA) Canada handbook.

(b) Revenue Recognition

The Corporation follows the deferral method of accounting for revenues.

Province of Ontario Grant

The Corporation is funded primarily by the Province of Ontario. Operating grants are recorded as revenue in the period to which they relate. Grants approved but not received at the end of an accounting period are accrued. Where a portion of a grant is related to a future period, it is deferred and recognized in a subsequent period.

Advertising Sales

Revenue from Advertising sales is recognized in the period in which the program is run, the amount can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

DESTINATION ONTARIO
Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(b) Revenue Recognition (continued)

Travel Information Services – Sales

Revenue from Travel Information Services – Sales is recognized when the Corporation realizes sales over and above the cost of consigned merchandise and tickets.

Interest Income

Interest income is recognized in the period in which it is earned.

(c) Partner Support

The Corporation benefits from donated services provided by the tourism industry, such as transportation costs (airline and bus tickets), and accommodation and meal costs (discounted or free hotel rooms and restaurant charges). Because of the difficulty of determining their fair value, donated services are not recognized in the financial statements.

(d) Capital Assets

All capital assets are recorded at cost. Amortization is provided on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful life of the asset, with half a year amortization taken in the year of acquisition and disposition. All capital assets are amortized over three to five years.

(e) Deferred Capital Contributions

Deferred capital contributions represent amounts received from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming to finance the acquisition of capital assets. The amortization of deferred capital contributions is recorded as revenue in the statement of operations on the same basis as the amortization of the related assets.

(f) Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates as additional information becomes available in the future. Accounts requiring significant accounting estimates include amortization of capital assets, accrued liabilities, obligation for retirement benefits, deferred capital contributions, and deferred revenue.

(g) Financial Instruments

Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the Corporation is not exposed to significant interest, currency, liquidity or credit risks arising from its financial instruments.

The Corporation's financial instruments, which include cash, accounts receivable, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities, are all valued at cost less any amount for valuation allowance.

DESTINATION ONTARIO
Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(h) Retirement Benefits

Retirement benefits represent legislated severance accruals under the Public Service Act of Ontario and is recognized as it is earned by eligible employees. The liability is calculated using management's best estimate of underlying assumptions.

(i) Foreign Currency Translation

Foreign currency accounts are translated into Canadian dollars as follows:

At the transaction date, each asset, liability, revenue and expense is translated into Canadian dollars by the use of the exchange rate in effect at that date. At the year end date, monetary assets and liabilities are translated into Canadian dollars by using the exchange rate in effect at that date. The resulting foreign exchange gains and losses are included in the excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses for the year.

3. CREDIT RISKS RELATED TO FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Corporation's exposure to credit risk is minimal. The Corporation determines on a continuing basis, the probable credit losses and sets up a provision for losses, if necessary, based on the estimated realizable value.

Below the accounts receivable aging is summarized:

				2025 (\$ 000)
	Current	+60 Days	+90 Days	Total
General accounts receivable	403	25	15	443
Harmonized Sales Tax ("HST") receivable	345	-	-	345
Totals	748	25	15	788

				2024 (\$ 000)
	Current	+60 Days	+90 Days	Total
General accounts receivable	103	104	38	245
HST receivable	638	-	-	638
Totals	741	104	38	883

DESTINATION ONTARIO
Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	2025		2024	
	(\$ 000)		(\$ 000)	
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Cost	Accumulated Amortization
Web Strategy	2,299	2,268	2,299	2,190
Leasehold improvements	1,106	1,106	1,106	1,106
Furniture	174	168	174	155
	3,579	3,542	3,579	3,451
Net book value		37		128

5. DEFERRED REVENUE

	2025	2024
	(\$ 000)	(\$ 000)
Advertising programs	-	25
	-	25

6. DEFERRED CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Deferred capital contributions represent contributions received relating to acquisition of capital assets:

	2025	2024
	(\$ 000)	(\$ 000)
Opening balance	1	12
Amortization	(1)	(11)
Ending balance	-	1

DESTINATION ONTARIO
Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

7. REVENUE: PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

The Corporation received funding that is recognized as revenue from the Province of Ontario as follows:

	2025 (\$ 000)	2024 (\$ 000)
Core Funding	32,968	32,968
Bill 124 Retroactive Awards	473	-
Summer Experience Program	114	87
Repair and Rehabilitation Funding	-	8
	33,555	33,063

8. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Certain costs of administration such as legal and human resources support services were provided by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming without charge. All other administrative expenses are borne by the Corporation and are as follows:

	2025 (\$ 000)	2024 (\$ 000)
Salaries and benefits	7,990	6,508
Lease	775	680
Services	368	181
Supplies and Equipment	120	188
Transportation and communications	62	76
	9,315	7,633

The Corporation provides pension benefits for all its full-time employees through participation in the Public Service Pension Fund (PSPF) and the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union Pension Fund (OPSEU Pension Fund) which are both multi-employer defined benefit pension plans established by the Province. These plans are accounted for as defined contribution plans, as the Corporation has insufficient information to apply defined benefit plan accounting to these pension plans. Included in salaries and benefits are contributions to the PSPF and OPSEU pension funds for the year of \$568,000 (2024 – \$501,000).

Costs of post-retirement non-pension employee benefits are paid by the Management Board Secretariat and are not included in administrative expenses.

DESTINATION ONTARIO
Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

9. TRAVEL INFORMATION SERVICES

The expenditures for the Travel Information Services are as follows:

	2025	2024
	(\$ 000)	(\$ 000)
Salaries and benefits	3,044	2,865
Lease	1,430	1,432
Services	402	357
Supplies and equipment	292	340
Merchandise for sale	225	245
Transportation and communication	89	78
	5,482	5,317

Included in salaries and benefits are contributions to the PSPF and OPSEU pension funds for the year of \$182,000 (2024 - \$166,000).

10. OPERATING LEASES

The Corporation has various operating leases for its premises expiring up to the 2028/2029 fiscal year. The minimum annual payments are as follows:

	(\$ 000)
2026	632
2027	491
2028	491
2029	491
	2,105

11. CHANGE IN NON-CASH WORKING CAPITAL

	2025	2024
	(\$ 000)	(\$ 000)
Decrease in accounts receivable	95	11
Decrease (increase) in prepaid expenses	3	(25)
Decrease in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(256)	(3,800)
Decrease in deferred revenue	(25)	(100)
	(183)	(3,914)

12. BOARD AND COMMITTEE EXPENSES

Board and committee members do not receive per diems. Board and committee members are reimbursed for meal and travel expenses incurred to attend board of directors and related committee meetings, consistent with the Ontario Public Sector Travel, Meals and Hospitality directive.

March 31, 2025

13. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

The Corporation is dependent on the Province of Ontario for financial assistance to cover some of the costs of operations.