

Every town has a story...
Welcome to ours.

Fort Frances – nature in the raw.

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FORTFRANCES
BOUNDLESS

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING PLAN

MARCH 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Tourism Development and Marketing Plan identifies a vision for tourism development, and a set of objectives and actions designed to work toward that vision. It establishes a focus for current and future tourism development activities.

A key challenge for Fort Frances is that it has always been a drive-through community for anglers on the way to somewhere...north. With 500K annual crossings at the international border, this is a lot of drive-through traffic.

Fort Frances' tourism vision is threefold:

1) We have more fully stepped toward greater presence of a primary NW Ontario product – angling - with better leverage of Rainy Lake.

2) We have developed a new and distinctive learn-to...fish/hunt/forage/track/cook market targeted at millennials and gen-younger Cultural Explorers (EQ Profile: 9% of US market, 12% of global market, 12% of Canadian market). This product exists elsewhere. We are the first to put this together in an integrated offering, driven by entrepreneurial guides, supported by online booking/marketing.

3) Pragmatically, simple low-on-the-ladder objectives help capture more tourism dollars:

- The 30 Minute Stop, Shop and Go Market
- The 30 Hrs-3 Days Stay 'n Play Market

Functionally, there's enabling strategy and actions that nurture stays and longer stays via elevation of quality of experience:

- Enhanced Accommodation Experiences
- Placemaking – a “Beautiful Fort Frances” initiative with targeted actions of benefit to both tourists and Fort Frances residents (and extended economic development strategy via attraction of creators, entrepreneurs and footloose workforce attracted to a Fort Frances value proposition).

To create the Plan, two workshops were held with tourism industry stakeholders, supplemented by an asset inventory, and further independent research conducted by Rynic. An Asset Inventory/Gap analysis and Workshop Highlights that informed strategic direction in this Plan is included in Appendix A.

Four goals accelerate focused product development, undertake target marketing, and address cornerstone tourism development challenges:

1) Nurture Signature Destination Product Experiences

- “Afishianado” – Rainy Lakes Angling
- “Forageur” – Guided Learn-To Food Experiences

2) Drive Accommodation Occupancy Rates

- Winter – Angling on Rainy Lake
- 1-2 Shoulder Season Sport Tournaments
- Yurts
- Sunny Cove
- A 30 Hrs-3 Days Stay 'n Play Market

3) Nurture the Supporting Atmosphere for Tourism Growth...Connect Dots

- Expand Foodie Experiences
- Introduce Product-Thematic Events
- Advocate for Craft/Maker Retail Premises
- Beautification of Scott Street/Town Entrances/Trans Canada
- Establish Wayfinding/Pageantry Program (Direction to Key Amenities/Water)
- Embrace Shevlin/Expanded Marina Destination Opportunity
- Expand Recreation Equipment Rentals

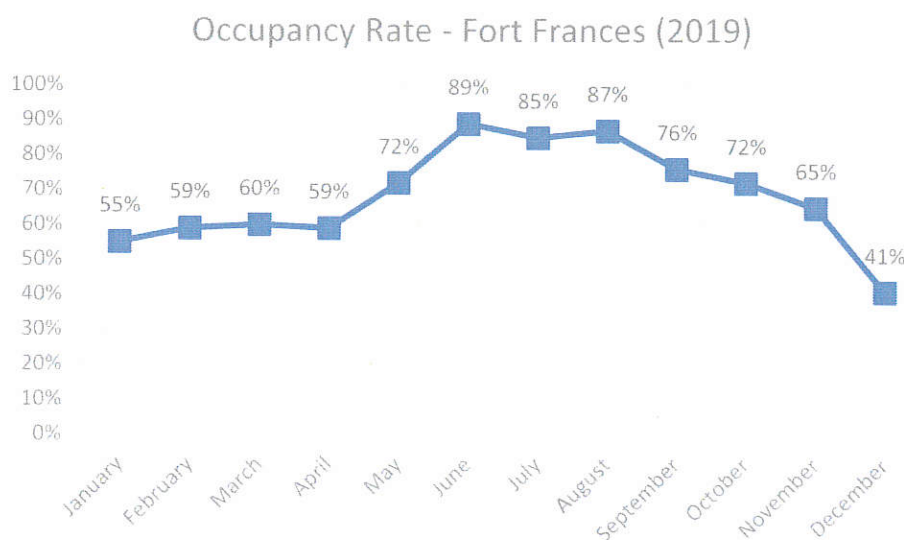
4) Sell Fort Frances

- Establish Marketing Foundations
- Develop Core Product Creative Direction
- Implement Core Product Marketing/Advertising Program
- Establish a 30 Minute Stop, Shop and Go Market – Get People to Stop on Way to Somewhere/Back From (including close-in International Falls market)

A Plan For Both The Short and Long Term

The unique characteristics of tourism in Fort Frances, including significant drive-through traffic to NW Ontario, remote location vis a vis major urban centres, and border location drive the need for: a) a new product option positioned for the future and longer term that can attract folks from distance given product uniqueness and greater distance traveled are directly correlated; b) more “scrappy” tourism tactics that take advantage of current tourism patterns; c) creation of niche draws that leverage what Fort Frances has and can do.

Content of this Plan is focused on driving overnight stays and higher occupancy rates, particularly in the shoulder and winter season given current high summer occupancy rates. Overnight stays result in higher consumer spending and a more prosperous accommodation sector. Therefore, in a world of available options, this Plan focuses on best ROI.



This Plan works to overcome key pitfalls inherent in destination development and management with its inclusion of both product development pathways and a three-year tactical action and marketing plan: 1) Heads in beds focus on short term marketing that neglects bigger picture product and place development. Fort Frances needs to create a bigger pie vs simply compete for the same-size pie; 2) Creating geographic borders. Fort Frances needs to do our part to promote the core product angling industry that is NW Ontario-wide. Fort Frances needs to participate in regional and provincial initiatives.

Why Tourism?

Tourism generates 4.1% of provincial GDP and 5.5% of provincial employment (Src: http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/research/quick_facts/facts.shtml). Tourism sector development in Fort Frances is a key diversification strategy amidst a re-positioning of the Fort Frances economy post-mill closure. Tourism benefits go well beyond direct consumer spending.

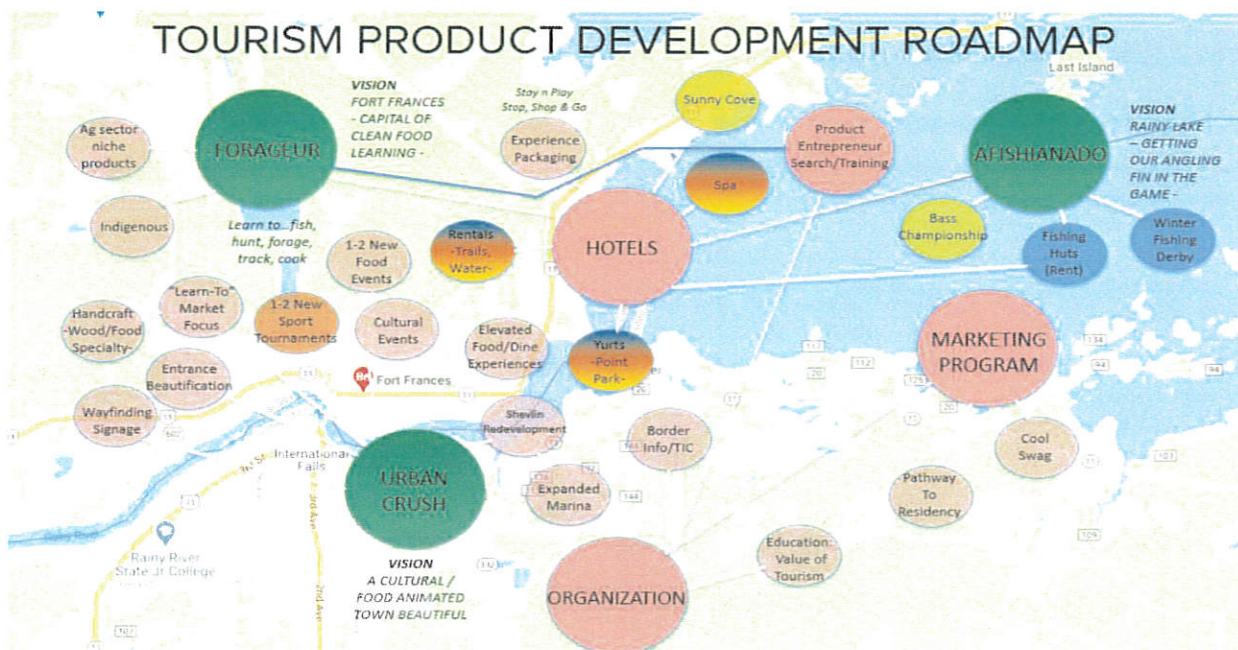
Research has established a link between tourism visitation and investment and relocation decisions. Seven percent of all Canadians live where they do based on a tourism visit to their community of current residence (Zinc Research, 2013).

A footloose/independent/"gig-based" workforce is growing as a proportion of the total workforce as we continue to transition to a knowledge-based economy. Location decisions aren't made based on where the large employer is; people choose a community they want to live in and make their work happen for them. And so the new norm of community value proposition looks like services quality/quantity, interesting recreation amenities, access to an airport, cultural diversity and expression, and quality of place.

Quality of place is a direct bridge between tourism and economic development. Both locals and visitors appreciate "town beautiful."

Fort Frances can compete on this basis, with its mythological connection to the great outdoors, presence of advanced Internet infrastructure, deep affordability, and gentleness inherent in rural communities vis a vis major urban settings. With the upheaval in 2020, one can envision this dynamic to intensify as people revisit connectivity to people and place and meaning of life, seek greater affordability, and have deeper sub-conscious reconnection to wide open spaces.

The past, present, and future recognized in this tourism development pathway for Fort Frances. Embracing a core product angling known with a bold step toward a new and distinctive future. Challenging for its unknown and uncomfortable? Yes. But in pursuit of distinction informed by an evolving tourism marketplace lies the secret to successful product, and successful marketing...and a means to break a drive-through cycle for Fort Frances. Simply – Fort Frances deserves to be a place people want to visit, relocate to, and invest in. This Plan delivers each of a Product Development Roadmap and a Tactical Plan to achieve this.



WHAT IS TOURISM?

Tourism: “The activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.”

Definition adopted by the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Statistical Commission. Src: https://tiac-aitc.ca/_Library/documents/The_Canadian_Tourism_Industry_-_A_Special_Report_Web_Optimized_.pdf

Canada’s tourism industry is comprised of several distinct – but complementary – business activities:

- 1) Transportation: including passenger services via air, rail, and boat, as well as interurban, charter and tour busses and vehicle rental
- 2) Accommodations: including hotels, inns, hostels, camping and rental properties.
- 3) Food and Beverage: restaurants and licensed establishments, as well as food service provided by accommodations.
- 4) Meetings and Events: conventions and business meetings, major events and festivals.
- 5) Attractions: recreation and entertainment activities, as well as cultural, natural and historical attractions.

Src: https://tiac-aitc.ca/_Library/documents/The_Canadian_Tourism_Industry_-_A_Special_Report_Web_Optimized_.pdf

For further detail, including future analysis of presence and significance of the tourism industry in Fort Frances, Tourism in Ontario is defined sectorally by NAICS codes:

http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/research/historicalstats/concepts_and_definitions_2014.pdf (pages 4-6)

The tourism industry has significant economic presence in Ontario:
http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/research/econ_impact/econ_impact.shtml,
http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/research/quick_facts/facts.shtml

A TOURISM VISION FOR FORT FRANCES

Development Vision: *Fort Frances: Industrious Heartland*

Tourism Brand Position: *Boundless*

Our Industrious Heartland Story

Resilient. Tough. Proud. A border town. The lowest cost power and industrial land in Ontario. A diversified industrial heartbeat of forestry, mining, agriculture, and tourism. A revived spirit of entrepreneurialism. When nature calls, we answer – inspired by blue lakes, rocky shores and the outdoors. But we are more. We have always been the industrial capital of Northwest Ontario, and we will strengthen that role. We are hands on and DIY.... we make things forged from the land, and from determination of spirit.

Our Boundless Story

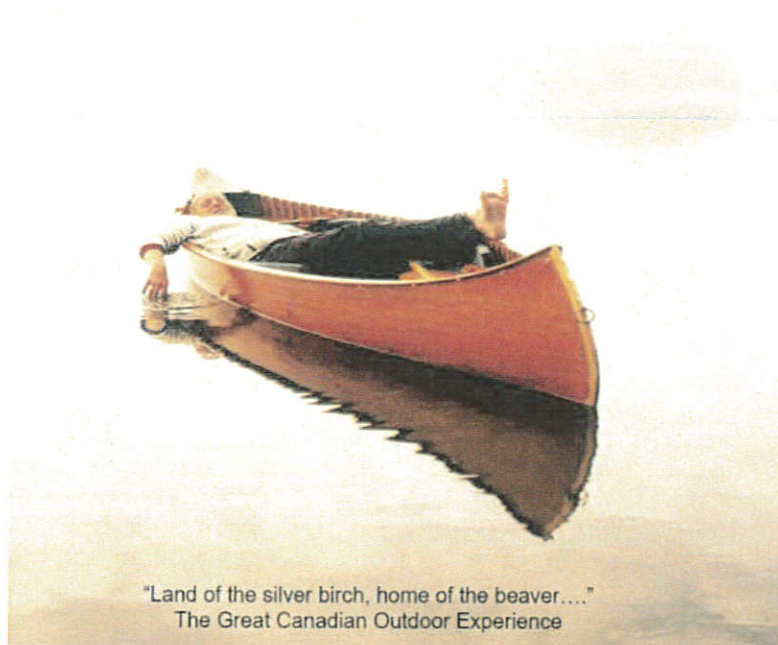
People feel better outside, in the fresh air, “spiritually” connected to big places with wild energy. Try to find a fence for 1000 km north of us. But our great outdoors in an of itself isn’t enough. Lots of places can claim access to wild spaces. Differentiation is all about unique human experiences we paint on the landscape palette. The stronger the differentiation, the greater the potential to attract people to experiences.

What are we as a culture, and in relationship to land?

We are a DIY culture born of our remoteness, our blue-collar history, and our love of scenes of plaid jackets with axes chopping winter firewood. We are an indigenous history and continued presence with reverence for land and sustainable harvest.

In 2030 we have extended a hand up to teach a younger generation what we know about land and nature – recognizing market desire to learn, to learn more quickly, and to make the link between wellness in mind, body and spirit, and healthy eating. Our backyard has the most organic food on the planet.

Human nature and entrepreneurial spirit is **boundless**. “Life in the making” represents exportable manufacturing and industrial production. Placed against a backdrop of nature in the raw, “Boundless” expresses new purpose, and a new future to be shaped.



FORT FRANCES: UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

Economic Development

- Cheapest power in ON (small power consumers).
- Border crossings – 500K/yr.
- Industrial history/workforce skills.
- Fibre connectivity.
- Only sizeable agricultural land in NW Ontario.

Tourism

CURRENT - WORLD CLASS ANGLING

- Pristine lakes – nature that is bigger, wilder, more free.
- Big fish/desirable species.

EMERGENT – FOOD-IN-NATURE LEARNING CAPITAL

- Not one opportunity (evidenced in current product offerings), but linked into an integrated offering via a unique approach (entrepreneurial guides) and a distinct mechanism (Better Guide)

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND MARKETING OBJECTIVES

1. NURTURE DESTINATION PRODUCT EXPERIENCES

- A. "AFISHIANADO" - RAINY LAKE ANGLING
- B. "FORAGEUR" – GUIDED LEARN-TO FOOD EXPERIENCES

2. DRIVE ACCOMMODATION OCCUPANCY RATES

- A. WINTER – ANGLING ON RAINY LAKE
- B. 1-2 SHOULDER SEASON SPORT TOURNAMENTS
- C. YURTS
- D. SUNNY COVE
- E. A 30 HOURS-3 DAY STAY 'N PLAY MARKET

3.. NURTURE THE SUPPORTING ATMOSPHERE...CONNECT DOTS

- A. FOODIE EXPERIENCES
- B. PRODUCT-THEMATIC EVENTS
- C. CRAFT/MAKER RETAIL PREMISES
- D. BEAUTIFICATION OF SCOTT STREET/TOWN ENTRANCES/MAINSTREET /TRANS CANADA
- E. WAYFINDING/DIRECTION TO WATER
- F. SHEVLIN/EXPANDED MARINA
- G. TRAIL/WATER RENTALS

4. SELL FORT FRANCES

- A. ESTABLISH MARKETING FOUNDATIONS
- B. DEVELOP CORE PRODUCT CREATIVE DIRECTION
- C. IMPLEMENT CORE PRODUCT MARKETING/ADVERTISING PROGRAM
- D. ESTABLISH A 30 MINUTE STOP, SHOP AND GO MARKET

NURTURE DESTINATION PRODUCT EXPERIENCES

1A

“AFISHIANADO” – RAINY LAKE ANGLING

OBJECTIVE: ENHANCE RAINY LAKE AS AN ANGLING DESTINATION

Vision: Fort Frances is a go-to angling destination in NW Ontario.

Fishing on Rainy Lake has potential to bring in significant US tourists with the right marketing plan and with easy to purchase packages offered by the local hotel group available to US anglers. Rainy Lake itself, with an area over 220,000 acres is truly incredible, and the best fishing on the lake is definitely on the Canadian side of the border.

The lake's location is also a major competitive advantage when it comes to attracting US angling tourists, many who travel in excess of 8 hours just to get to the Canadian border. This is a big deal to Americans. Rainy Lake offers a world-class fishery that competes quality-wise with any other lakes located in Ontario's Sunset Country. Sunset Country - the travel region located in Northwestern Ontario - covers an area 100,000 square kilometers in size, and regionally, is the number one destination in Canada for visiting US anglers. With over 250 lodges and resorts, more than 50% of all US anglers that travel to Canada go somewhere in Ontario's Sunset Country.

Sunset Country's leading position as the Canadian angling destination of choice for US visitors offers huge potential for Fort Frances. All that is required is an organized effort by local stakeholders to tell the story of Rainy Lake to US anglers, many of whom already know all about it, the quality fishery and the quality accommodations available at hotels in Fort Frances. With competitively-priced packages that include accommodations, meals and perhaps other features, and most importantly, that are priced in Canadian dollars, the interest level of Americans in the messaging will be high, and they will seriously consider the town as an angling destination.

Angling Product S.W.O.T Analysis

Fort Frances has many opportunities and challenges in developing itself as a destination worthy of attracting a share of the US angling market. The best way to identify this is through a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats analysis (S.W.O.T.) that provides context, “reality check”, and product development pathway insights for local stakeholders.

Strengths

- Strategic location on Rainy Lake.
- Location of a major border POE.
- The Fort is the Gateway to Sunset Country, Ontario, the # 1 destination in Canada for visiting US anglers.
- It's an easy drive – the Fort is located directly on the US/Canada border.
- Rainy Lake has strong brand awareness in target markets. The fishing is perceived as legendary.
- Quality accommodations and related services (restaurants) in the community.
- Location next to International Falls, MN.
- Quality and diversity of the fishery on Rainy Lake (several species, big fish opportunity).
- Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship location.
- Consistent funding for marketing/product development using the MAT.

Weaknesses

- Fort Frances *per se* currently not seen as an angling destination in target markets (low awareness).
- Limited organizational capacity (tourism marketing and destination management activities).
- No active digital presence (destination website, social media activity promoting fishing).
- Current industry “readiness” is low (infrastructure, fishing services, e.g. guides).
- Paper Mill in International Falls smells...not pleasant to tourists.
- Main target market needs a passport to visit (Americans).
- Border crossing issues in general e.g. DUI laws.
- No existing packaging by hotels/motels relating to fishing Rainy Lake.
- “Mill Town” mentality.
- Starting from basically square one – competitors are well ahead of Fort Frances.
- Dire need for product development and infrastructure.
- Lower possession limits on fish, especially walleye.

Opportunities

- MAT presents unique opportunity for consistent, effective and targeted marketing tactics.
- Tourism is a viable diversification strategy for Fort Frances.
- Entrepreneurial opportunities related to tourism – fishing guides, equipment rental, bait, tackle, and related tourism services.
- Establish effective working relationships with existing community organizations e.g. FFCBC Organizing Committee, RRFDC, Town of Fort Frances, Chamber of Commerce.
- Host media familiarization trips - use influencers in repositioning the community as an angling destination e.g. invite a well-known US fisherman and TV show host say someone like Babe Winkelman to town – he has already fished Rainy Lake and could be a “spokesperson.”

Threats

- COVID-19 – short term impacts are readily apparent, longer term impacts less so.
- Perception in consumer markets regarding the Border crossing experience continue to get worse.
- Low interest, low community “buy-in” to marketing effort.
- Unrealistic expectations, short-term focus.
- Strong competition on the US side of the Border, International Falls and Minnesota’s Lake of the Woods.

Key Objective

The MAT presents an opportunity never seen before in Fort Frances. Specifically, the Town is now able to conduct a coordinated tourism marketing campaign with funds generated by visitors to the community. The MAT ensures nominal but sustainable marketing funding over the long term and provides a real opportunity for the community to diversify its visitor base through increased promotion. A tactical marketing plan forms the focus of product development, with a goal of creating a favourable destination brand that positions Fort Frances as a quality angling destination with good local services and quality accommodations. The plan is designed to provide a solid three-year action plan of specific advertising and communication initiatives that can be easily implemented, their success measured, and results seen by community stakeholders.

Tactical marketing emphasis is as follows:

- Identify a coordinating professional to oversee implementation.
- Create a strong digital presence on web e.g. www.fishrainylake.ca), and on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).
- Work cooperatively with local, regional and provincial stakeholders to develop Fort Frances as an angling destination.
- Sell accommodation packages built for visitors seeking to access the excellent Rainy Lake angling experience year-round but emphasize winter and shoulder seasons.
- Aggressively position Fort Frances as “the Place to Stop” for supplies (liquor, licenses, groceries, fuel, to eat, etc.) before proceeding to their destination lodge in Sunset Country e.g. **Get it done in the Fort, then get on your way!**
- Foster a cooperative relationship between businesses in the community e.g. hotels, motels, B&B, restaurants, attractions in developing packages and servicing the needs of the visitors attracted to the community as a result of the plan.
- Ensure the tactics developed are targeted at the right markets in the right locations and are in market at the right time.
- Ensure that in addition to marketing, developing a “product-ready” community is key to success and investments in infrastructure may be necessary to compete effectively in the marketplace.
- Ensure a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are in place to evaluate how effective the plan implementation is and allow for the flexibility to make changes based on results and experience.
- Over time, use a variety of mediums to promote and develop the Fort Frances angling brand:
 - Television advertising
 - Media familiarization trips (TV, print)
 - Digital marketing (programmatic, search, digital display)
 - Social media marketing
 - Content marketing/storytelling (blogging)
 - Consumer show marketing

These tactics work together in a cluster whereby each component in the cluster is allocated a budget and each has its own set of success measures. The measurements for each component are rolled together annually, evaluated for effectiveness and the allocated spend is adjusted every year based on what works best aligned with market changes.

The organizational capacity available in the community will impact on the level of detail and scope of the proposed tactical initiatives that are implemented but with a qualified individual in charge of implementation, measurable results can be achieved.

Tactical Plan Target Market

The US freshwater fishing industry and traveling angler market is the largest in the world and is concentrated in the heart of the country – the US Midwest. Americans love to fish, and they have no reservations about traveling to destinations that offer a quality fishing experience. In an American angler’s mind, Canada, with its thousands of lakes and low population densities, is seen as the ultimate destination to visit, and tens of thousands of Americans already visit Northwestern Ontario every year for this exact reason. It is these “avid” anglers which have the greatest potential for Fort Frances.

Given the nominal budget available, and the fact the US avid angling market is distributed across the Midwest, Fort Frances is fortunate that two of the larger source markets, Minnesota and Wisconsin, are also the closest geographically to the town. Distance from the destination is a key

factor in destination selection so the fact the Fort is located right along the Ontario-Minnesota border is a huge advantage.

A profile of Fort Frances primary target consumer is identified as follows:

- Lives in either Minnesota or Wisconsin.
- Males, 25-65+, traveling in family groups and/or as friends - fishing is their passion.
- Spend significant amounts of money on related equipment – boats/motors, fishing tackle, fishing rods, reels, electronics, and fishing accessories.
- Take at least one fishing trip **away** from their home each year.
- Willing to travel up to 800 km one way (an 8-hour drive) for a quality fishing experience.
- Have good awareness of what the Canadian fishing experience entails, and many see Canada as the ultimate fishing destination.
- Strong affinity for related-media, outdoor publications, fishing television shows based out of the US Midwest e.g. *Lindner's Angling Edge*, *Good Fishin* etc.
- Aware of and in some cases already familiar with the Canadian fishing experience.
- Passionate and avid about fishing.

Initial concentration on avid anglers, and more importantly “avids” in close proximity, will ensure a better response and ultimately a higher yield in terms of trips booked and packages sold. As time progresses the consumer base targeted could be diversified to families, female anglers, etc. Important to note is the tactics targeting avid anglers have spillover reach to family vacationers, women and other consumer segments. It is important to note here that effective marketing alone is not the answer. It must be combined with product investments, good services and competitive packages if the *Brand Promise* we make through the marketing is to be met.

Angling Brand Promise: *Fort Frances, is your gateway to the spectacular fishing on Rainy Lake in Ontario, Canada. Located on the US/Canada border, the Fort is easy to get to, within a ½ day's drive of any where in Wisconsin or Minnesota and the town offers an exceptional 4-season angling experience, quality accommodations, with good food and all the services. So, come #fishthefort – for a unique take on the Canadian fishing experience.*

An angling tactical marketing plan is presented as part of a complete marketing plan in the Tactical Product Development and Marketing Plan section.

Guidelines and Suggestions for Tactical Plan Implementation

A tactical marketing plan is a valuable tool in building a marketable tourism destination and product. Fort Frances must first create awareness of the experiences that are available then convince people it is worth travelling to try it. These are not mutually exclusive exercises so generating awareness and delivering on the promises you make go hand in hand. Once a credible destination brand is established, immediate growth is possible but it's a marathon rather than a sprint and takes a concerted promotional effort with consistent messaging for several years for the effort to be successful.

Some key things to remember:

- Unless MAT partners work together to develop buyable packages, the objectives for the tactical plan will not be achieved.
- Trying something is better than nothing. Experiment with various messages and tactics within each medium and observe what works and what doesn't, change and adapt as necessary, learn from mistakes (and analytics).
- Be consistent, create familiarity and establish a “character” to the Fort Frances angling brand – make it a promise that is exciting but something that can still be delivered on.

- Credibility should be the underlying guideline in all messaging. People crave authenticity so give it to them.
- Don't cut corners on the initial acquisition of visual assets such as images and video. This will make all the difference down the road in your marketing and quality is everything.
 - Be active on social media. Don't go dark for long periods of time and use social pages to build traffic for the website and as a platform to deliver CTAs for package offerings.
 - Target avid anglers in the defined geographic zone for year one. They offer the highest yield potential.
 - Product development and investments e.g. in ice-fishing infrastructure such as heated huts can get expensive and may need to be planned. This is the type of experience consumers expect these days as an appraisal of competitors clearly shows.
 - A key year 1 objective is getting a well-known media influencer to endorse the Fort Frances angling experience.
 - Hammer exchange rate advantage for US consumers in marketing...a huge difference once the exchange is factored in. Current exchange rates mean an example package price of \$499.99 Canadian per person for 3 nights amounts to only \$385.00 in US dollars
 - Having a qualified individual coordinating the effort and steering consultants and media suppliers is imperative. It's the glue that makes the various components of a multi-media tactical plan work together.

1B

“FORAGEUR” – LEARN-TO GUIDED FOOD EXPERIENCES**OBJECTIVE: DEVELOP LEARN-TO GUIDED FOOD EXPERIENCES**

Vision: Fort Frances is the capital of clean-food learning. Fort Frances has developed a new and distinctive learn-to...fish/hunt/forage/track/cook market targeted at millennials and gen-younger Cultural Explorers (EQ Profile: 9% of US market, 12% of global market, 12% of Canadian market). This product exists elsewhere. We are the first to put this together in an integrated offering, driven by entrepreneurial guides, supported by online booking/marketing.

Introduction: Understanding Travel Flows for Fort Frances

It is important for us all to understand the variables that dictate regular tourism traffic to Fort Frances. There are two significant models used to understand basic travel flows to a particular destination, the *Travel Resistance by Propensity* and *Concentric Pull* models. They will be applied to the present travel flow of Fort Frances and later to the application of the NextGen products.

Travel Resistance by Propensity claims that we can understand travel flow to Fort Frances by first understanding the amount of resistance viewed as time, distance, cost, safety and regulatory variables such as passports. Distance and time also take into account direct versus connecting flights and convenience of securing rentals cars. Cost is monetary which includes cost of the product, travel, fuel and currency difference. Its common border with the U.S. is a positive for travel from adjacent states and a competitive advantage over the angling sector in Northeastern Ontario. However, Fort Frances is remote, making the understanding of travel flows critical to any tourism strategy. It is essentially four hours from a city and while the Falls International Airport is nearby, it is small, requiring specialized flights and has limited car rentals.



Foraging for Oyster Mushrooms
(RoslynDakin.com)

Travel Flows to a destination are a function of resistance by propensity

Propensity refers to how likely people from a particular destination will travel to Fort Frances. We know the majority of visitation is nearby and regional. We know there is strong U.S. representation from nearby states. There is demand for the hunting and fishing product in parts of southern Ontario, especially the Niagara region. Other parts of Ontario also show promise, unlike Quebec where residents are known to have a strong propensity to travel within the province.

The aim would be for Fort Frances to manipulate aspects of resistance to make travel from the high likelihood origins more amenable to travel to the area. But the reality is that there is not much Fort Frances can do lessen aspects of resistance. The physical distance will remain and the currency rate is not in its control, direct flights from Falls International airport to major cities in North America is not likely to occur, even with outside lobbying. There are few aspects of resistance that Fort Frances can manipulate. This brings us to the second model, the Concentric Pull model.



The Concentric Pull Model

The Concentric Pull model of tourism claims that people will travel further and spend more (i.e. overcome resistance) for a travel product they deem to be more unique and attractive. For example, Northern Ontario attracts three overnight anglers for every one general overnight tourist. The angling product appears to be stronger than the opportunity for a general overnight stay. Fishing is a very strong product for the region, meaning that it offers a unique and attractive fishing product relative to its competitors.

In comparison to other destinations (e.g. Regional, Minnesota versus California, Niagara Region versus Toronto), Fort Frances understands which destinations show a higher propensity for available products. Fort Frances has little ability to manipulate the significant aspects of the resistance, therefore the strategy must turn to developing a NextGen product that is unique and attractive enough to drive visitation from distance origins.

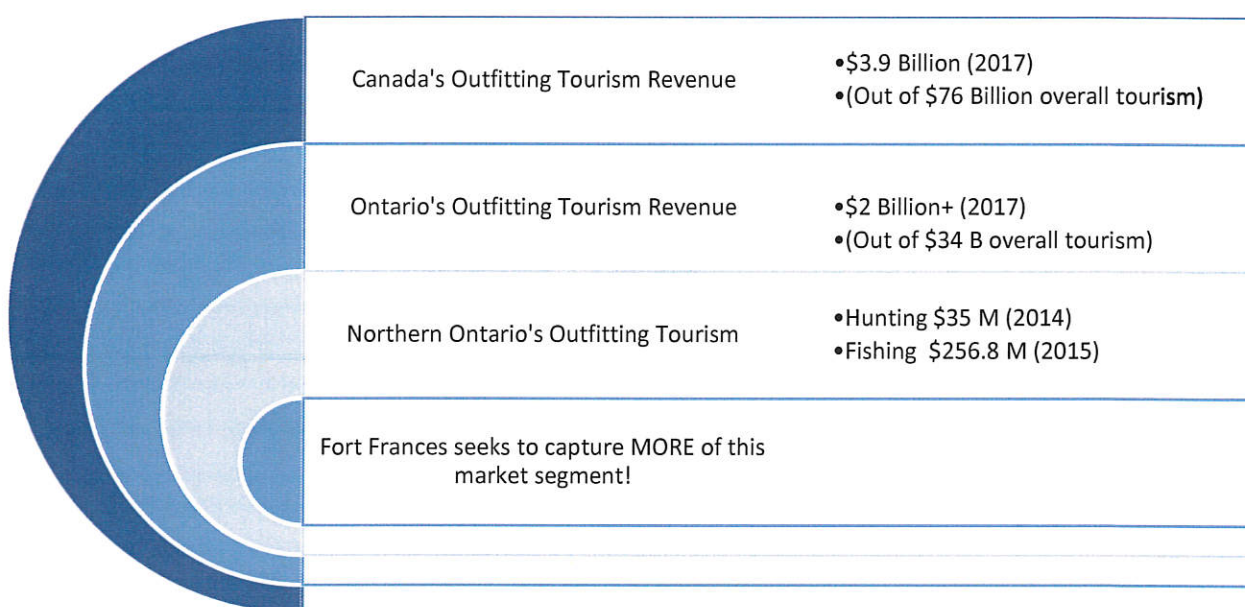


Bannock over campfire (Javier Frutos CanadianGeographic.ca)

Case for Action: Existing Market of Hunting and Fishing

The hunting and fishing market overviews that follow underscore how outfitting travel tendencies are shifting significantly and will have immediate impacts on Fort Frances.

According to the Economic Impacts of Outfitting in Canada published in 2019 by the *Canadian Federation of Outfitters Association*, the hunting and fishing outfitting industry contributed nearly \$3.9 billion to Canada's GDP, with the highest spending being in Ontario over \$2 billion (2017).



With hunting and fishing combined, the outfitting tourism sector supports over 37,000 jobs Canada-wide (2017). Northwest Ontario has 6.5% of the population employed through all types of tourism. However with its declining pulp industry, Fort Frances now relies more heavily on tourism as its number two economy and thus seeks higher than average performance.

Context: The 2016 Closing the Gap report for Tourism Ontario

	Percent of employment in tourism	Percent of regional GDP by tourism	Percent of municipal Revenue that is Tourism
Ontario average	83	04	84
W Ontario	5	8	5
E Ontario	8	8	4
Ponquin Parry Sound	1.3	0	7

Hunting

In a 2004 study, tourism strategists documented a foreseeable decline in overall tourism to Northern Ontario, with U.S. visitors to Canada falling by 1.7% per year. Hunting is an important high yield component of Northern Ontario tourism. According to a 2018 report issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, there was a loss of 2.2 million hunters between 2011 and 2016. It has come to the attention of wildlife conservators and organizations that hunting has not been passed on to the next generation, threatening environmental protections and conservation, and limiting its

economic impact. Predominately, hunters across Canada and the U.S. have been Caucasian men, 50 years and older, and their ranks are decreasing.

In addition to the changing demographics due to ageing, several other trends and patterns are expected to affect the hunting industry:

- It is projected that by 2044, Caucasians will make up only half of the population
- Urban populations are increasing
- People are becoming conscious of changing habitats and endangered species
- Climate change has become a long-term issue that affects the tourism industry
- Globally, there are hard to predict events that affect safety, such as extreme weather or infectious diseases.

To combat the decline in hunting, U.S. conservation groups have been seeking to draw a new generation of hunters with new incentives and reasons to hunt. There are groups focusing on creating mentorship opportunities and encouraging older hunters to recruit younger people within their sphere of influence. These include workshops that bring multi-generations together for mentorship. Additionally, there are conservation groups that are seeking a new type of hunter that does not fit the composite of the traditional hunter.

Hunting must appeal to a new demographic that does not seek the same experience, such as taking photos with their kill or trophy antlers. While the hunter over 50 is still important, there are other emerging demographics. Travellers are younger and more sophisticated, and have higher household incomes. They are seeking authenticity. This includes LGBTQ+ members, the so-called 'Hipster', and 'Foodies.' Authenticity may appear in the form of unique activities that create a 'once in a lifetime' signature experience. Green tourism is expanding as tourists become mindful about their environmental footprint and move toward sustainability. Additionally, they want ecologically conscious, ethical and local food. As people seek more ethical ways of eating, hunting is being presented as way to gather food that is from sustainable and local sources. The pristine wilderness of Ontario holds a competitive advantage for the promotion of tourism and a revitalization of hunting. With competing destinations emerging, there are opportunities to position Ontario as a destination that offers exotic experiences.

Groups in the U.S. have been actively attempting to recruit a new generation of hunters by advertising in urban areas, opening stands at farmers markets that offer free samples of venison, and staffing community events. Workshops are offered that focus on ethical hunting, and local food sources that are organic and sustainable. In this way, hunting has grown more appealing to women. There are workshops available to women offering shotgun and rifle shooting, and archery.

College campuses are offering free courses, teaching hunter's safety, hands on butchering clinics, and cooking wild game classes to garner interest in wild meat. In Vermont, there are weekend intensive courses for novice deer hunters, and eight-month apprenticeships. There are 1- to 3-hour long seminars on topics like calling turkeys, selecting firearms, or cooking wild game. Other course activities include traditional shooting practice and blood-trailing exercises, but also mock hunts, meditation, and a sacred goat slaughter so students can practice butchering.

Overall, Canada captures 9% of global tourism. Northern Ontario attracts more hunters than any other province at 28%. While Canadians dominate the industry, American hunters inject \$17.5 million-which is almost half of Northern Ontario's hunting revenue. This is probably because American hunters tend to stay longer (average six nights) in paid roofed lodging, while the most popular accommodations for Canadian hunters are private cottages.

Northern Ontario is an attractive hunting destination for its many attributes. According to a 2010 survey, of the 16 categories of reasons to visit Northern Ontario, the top-rated reasons for American hunters are feeling safe, having no health concerns, and its convenience and access. Other benefits are having lots for children to do, a familiarity of language and culture, great shopping, and the availability of a range of accommodations from budget to mid-range to luxury. American hunters residing in Minnesota and Michigan are the prime inbound high yield market. Within Canada, Winnipeg and Western Canada have been identified as an opportunity for the Northwest given the proximity, and for economic and market conditions.

Fishing in Northern Ontario

Northern western (TRO13) Ontario captures an outsized proportion of the fishing market including the higher yield angler, however **there are concerns of that the market is dwindling with little recruitment!**

Canada attracts about 8.1 million overnight tourists from domestic, U.S. and overseas countries who went fishing on their trip. Just over 1 million or 12% of these tourists are likely to go to Northern Ontario but only 3% will stay overnight. Northern Ontario attracts three times more anglers than other overnight tourists. The majority of anglers to the region are Canadian, with a strong representation from Americans who also signify a higher yield market. American anglers tend to rely on fixed roof accommodation and related services to add value to their experience. In fact, two thirds of those who rely on fixed roof accommodation are American.

Anglers are generally high yield visitors. They account for more than one third of all overnight tourism spending and nights in Northern Ontario and one half of all nights spent in the region's paid, roofed lodging. Northwest Ontario (13C) is a destination for about one third of all overnight tourists in Northern Ontario, but is substantially more popular among anglers, attracting about one half million or 53% of the total number of anglers. The nearby border with the United States accounts for some of these numbers. In 2015, Northwest Ontario generated about \$256.8 million in tourism spending, and two thirds were overnight anglers.

Demographic Description of Anglers

Of all anglers to Northern Ontario, the market tends to be older and do not bring children or teenagers on their trips. However, the domestic angler is somewhat younger than the corresponding American, averaging 45 years and 52 years, respectively. The segment relying on paid roofed lodging (from both Canada and the US) is, not surprisingly, somewhat older than anglers as a whole (Canadians, 48 years; Americans, 54 years).

The sector is concerned that the present angling market is not recruiting younger cohorts to take up angling. High yield anglers that rely on a bevy of services and amenities are critical to the tourism economy of Northern Ontario. Numerous studies report a decline in the market or proportion of the population engaged in angling (and hunting). For example, over the past decade *Fisheries and Oceans Canada* has consistently reported a slight but consistent decline in the number of anglers. A 2018 study by the *U.S. Fish and Wildlife* agency reports a similar slight decline of anglers from 2006 to 2016*. The drop is greater when considering the proportion of the population that fishes away from home. The Northern Ontario tourism industry is deeply concerned with developments and trends in the U.S. given that it supplies a critical high yield market of anglers to the region. There are many reasons posited for the decline, but it is likely due to a number of variables.

There are a growing number of programs in Canada and the U.S. attempting to increase the number of anglers with a focus on the youth and urban markets. Research presently directs us to consider changing motivations for angling, which includes simply disconnecting with the digital world, connecting with nature, and learning to fish.

*The report indicates that there is a slight decrease in the number of total anglers, a slight increase in the number of days fishing, and a slight decrease in the total angling expenditure.

Next Gen Product - Overview

-Learn to Fish, Hunt...and other cool stuff-

It is important that the Fort Frances region begin engaging with a next generation (Next Gen) tourism product for summer and fall that is positioned for the long-term. It is important that this product be attractive to a wide market, but especially a younger cohort to ensure sustained visitation. It is important this next generation product be unique and attractive, such that it can overcome the challenges surrounding the remoteness of the region. It is also important that the next generation product respect and leverage the great work and reputation of the people who have built tourism to where it is today.

There is a strong, albeit niche, urban market of older millennials through to Gen Z's who are keen to hunt as part of a larger life-politic surrounding food, clean food, knowing and being a part of how you obtain your food and generally connecting with nature. The greatest barrier to entry is a lack of skill and capacity to hunting. A *learn to hunt* program allows a younger urban cohort to come up to the region, and hunt, clean and prepare the game to bring back home. The program is envisioned as a five-day plus program that may involve other dimensions such as tracking and gun handling (necessary). It can be augmented with *other cool stuff* such as foraging, tracking, weather, survival elements and critical cultural components. The latter can be incorporated into a *learn to hunt* program or separately as a *learn to track and forage* program.



Stokes Bay Resort-Rainy Lake
Outpost (ResortsandLodges.com)



Tracking (ForestFix.com)



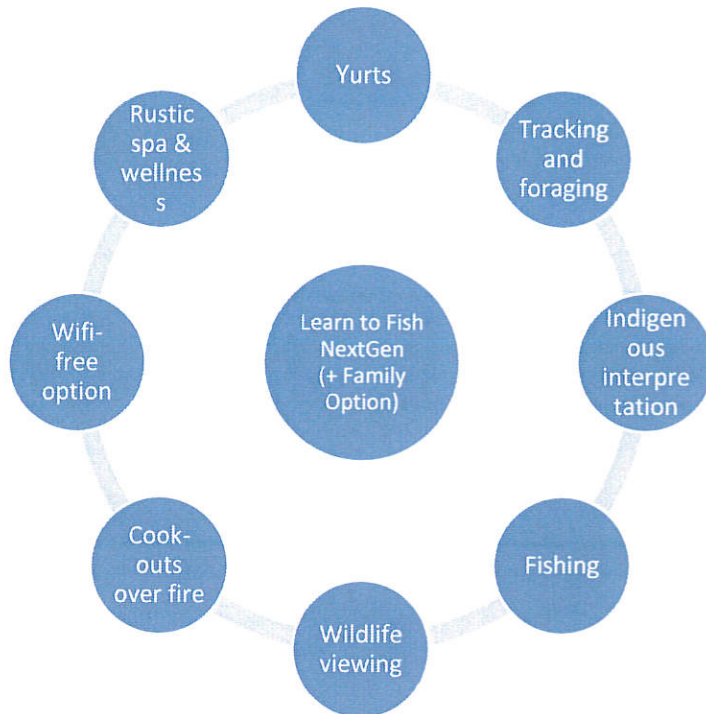
Outdoor Yoga (ForestFix.ca)



Forest Bathing (ForestFix.ca)

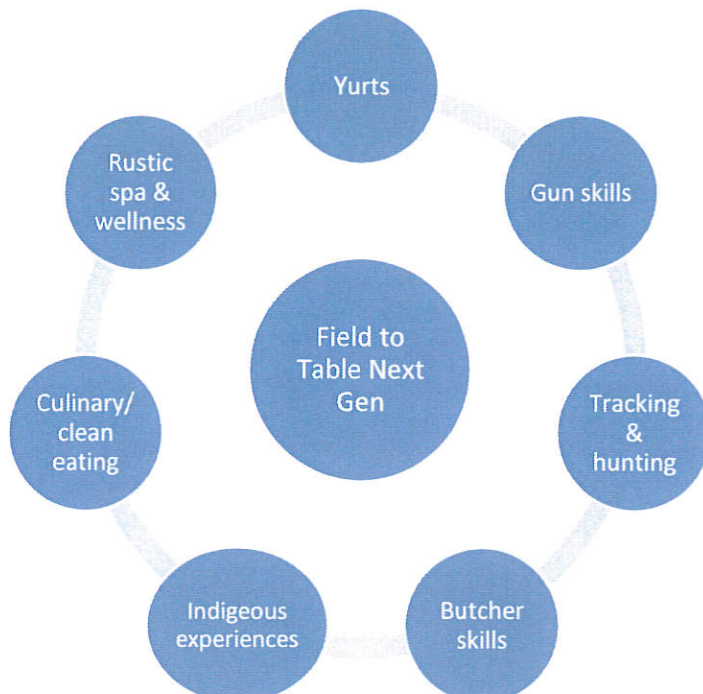
Summer Product Wheel

The Summer Product Wheel for this market is as follows and will also ensure it does not conflict with the traditional fisher clients, but rather complement it.



Fall Product Wheel

The Fall Product Wheel for this market is as follows and will also ensure it does not conflict with the traditional fisher clients.



Winter Product Wheel

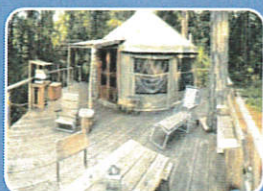
Winter tourism in Fort Frances is less developed and thus *learn to hunt and fish* experiences will launch initially. From there can you start to better understand the market to customize winter products and slowly introduce winter activities:



Ice Fishing (Nicholas Taffs
CanadianGeographic.ca)

Facility Alternatives

Mindful that Fort Frances is not a large destination, the following concepts have potential to be integrated with less investment than traditional development, and yield results immediately.



Yurts

Low investment opportunity can be to use glamping type pods such as Yurts which are both very popular and easy to add as a supplement to existing accommodation operations.



Rustic Spa

Wellness demand growth gives rise in opportunity to provide spa options suitable to the "sense of place" of Fort Frances. A beer spa could cater to the travelers as could indigenous-inspired foraging and massages infused with herbal remedies from the forests.



Food Trucks / Mobile Businesses

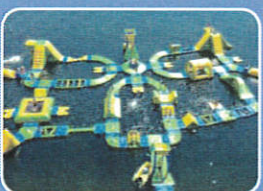
Innovative food and beverage options can be introduced seasonally with little barrier to entry compared to brick and mortar restaurants in order to support the busier summer and fall seasons. Indigenous cuisine may be featured.



Sporting Clays Skills Course

"Sporting Clays is the fastest growing and most exciting clay target game. All courses are unique (like golf courses)"

www.americanshootingcenters.com/facilities/sporting-clays/



Family-friendly Activities

Floating Splash Parks are growing in popularity among lake destinations. They have the capacity for up to 200 persons with features like climbing walls, trampolines etc.



Sense of Place

More Ojibway Art could be integrated into hotel and wellness infrastructure with the permission of the First Nations peoples to raise pride and educate visitors of this traditional land.

Festival and Events

While a number of events already operate on an annual basis, a few concepts that could be developed are as follows. Events and festivals are often used by destinations to introduce visitors to a destination and entice them back to stay other times of the year. They can be strategically placed in times of low occupancy to offer hoteliers, lodge owners and other tourism players a means of increasing their revenue.



Winter is currently lacking in events. Due to the distance to Fort Frances, a signature ice fishing event could be offered on a long-weekend with elements that are also appealing to the GenZ'ers. Winter sporting event opportunities may also be explored.

Spring is generally slower for the tourism season in most destinations. This may be an opportune time to promote discounted group retreat packages using elements from the GenZ models that are not season specific, such as wellness, spa, nature-walks, spring foraging, and forest bathing.

Summer heat offers a great time to cool off with a Beer & Cider Fest. Given the popularity in craft beverages, a partnership could be forged with the local craft brewery to offer a seasonal ale to mark the festival. Other partners would be engaged for food (e.g. beer battered fish and chips), beverage (local and regional beers, for example Winnipeg and Thunder Bay Breweries may have a presence, and as such they can be engaged as promotional partners to entice residents from their cities). The weekend may also include entertainment (beer tent and live music), corn hole tournament, booths featuring upcoming fall *learn to hunt* experiences to draw people back, and more.



Fall A *Smoked Meat Cook Off* could be offered during a time of lower occupancy on a weekend in fall. Following in the popularity of meat smokers and traveling rib fests in British Columbia and several areas in the U.S.A. annually. Different vendors with large meat smokers offer a chance to taste the variety of sauces and meats. Beer tents, live music, sponsored vendor booths such as barbeque sauce companies, and other activities can add to the attraction. By year three, the marketing plan implementation can progress to a meat smoking competition, whereby participants compete in sub categories of cooking beef, pork and wild game to win sponsored cash prizes from big names such as Trager Grills. See example to the right from Ohio.



Partnerships & Promotion

Collaborations within Fort Frances and with outside partners are key in the product development and promotional phases of this plan. The following are a few examples of potential strategic partners.

Partnerships

Destination Northern Ontario (Tourism Excellence North) will be an important partner for product development, training and marketing.



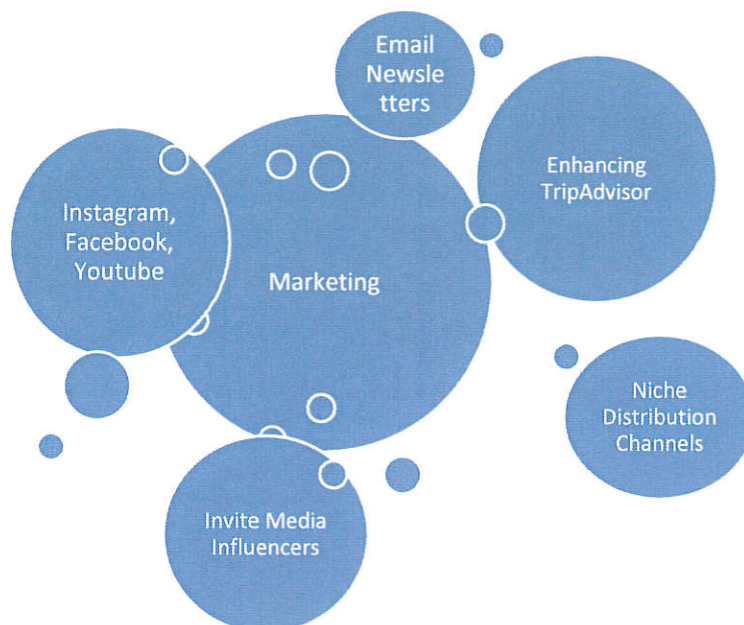
Border partnerships with the Falls International Airport Information Desk, car rental agencies and related organizations will be valuable in marketing and communication. It is recognised that the existing U.S. rubber tire traffic visitor base is approximately 500,000 through the town per year. Once the new tourism products are unveiled and marketed, the drive through markets can be informed and appealed to in order to attract them to stop, and ideally come back to stay longer next trip.

Several stakeholders in the region will be valuable partners in tourism training, small and medium enterprise (SME) operations, marketing and more.



Promotion

The following are preliminary examples of marketing tactics to reach this NextGen market.



Travel Trade Distribution Channels

Many of the typical online platforms where Fort Frances and its tourism providers are, or should be promoted, are currently seriously lacking in descriptions and visual assets such as images and videos. Most certainly, this is immediately sending prospective visitors to competitor destinations

when they don't find the information they need, and assume the destination is not going to meet their needs. By improving presence on the platforms where the Next Gen and other travelers frequent, the prospective visitors will have a much higher rate of conversion into bookings.



Book Your Hunt

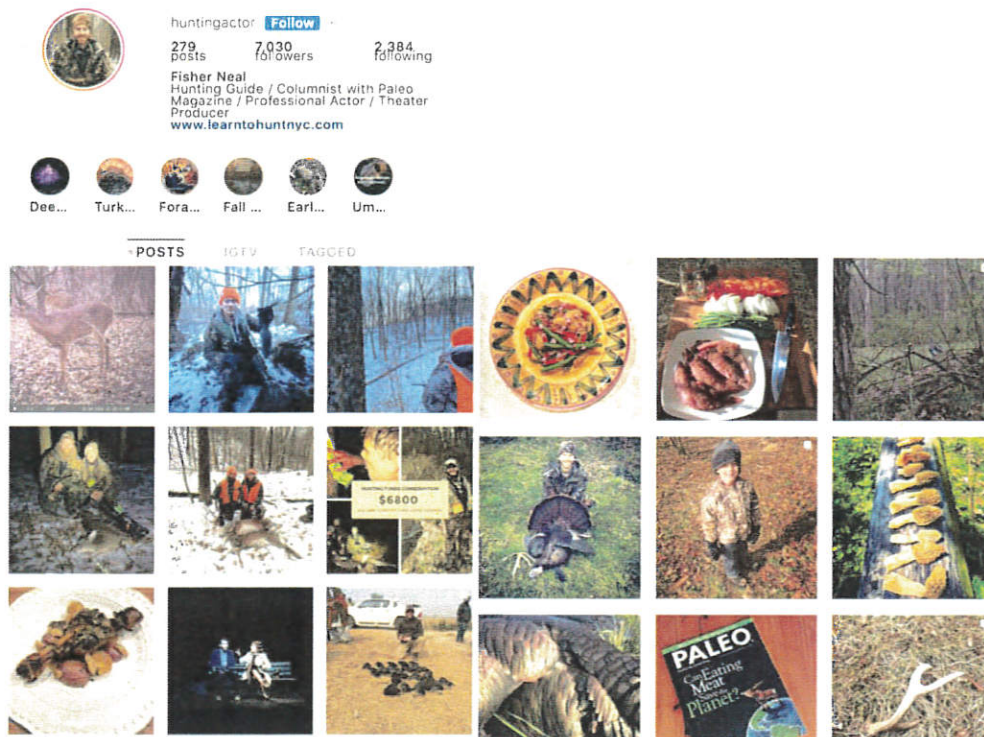
Social Media

Social media is a key communication channel for the Town of Fort Frances and its tourism providers to have an active presence. These sites not only allow for posting from the destination, but also create a means for visitors to upload their user-generated content (UGC), which is so important to the travelers' decision making process to see.



Influencers and Media

Opportunities exist to invite influential social media personalities to experience Fort Frances and share with their audiences. For example, this Instagrammer targets Next Gen'ers in the U.S. Tri-State area, and is also a columnist for Paleo Magazine: <https://www.instagram.com/huntingactor/?hl=en>



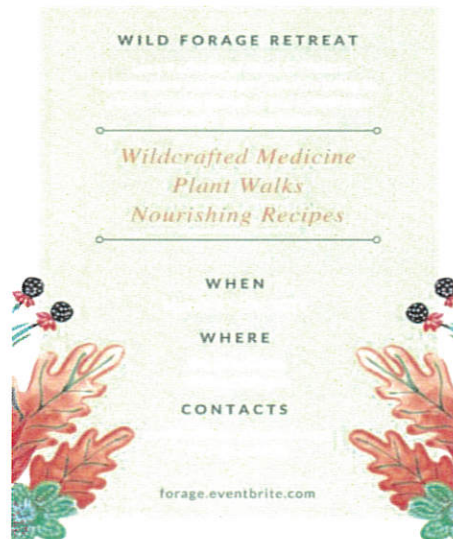
Also, inviting one of the trending shows on hunting and cuisine to Fort Frances may land a feature episode on the region. Shows are always scouting new, authentic and less developed destinations so it would offer an ideal fit.



Other promotions

Email Newsletters, Internet marketing, as well as print marketing can include developing program posters for events and product experiences.

ample Learn to Hunt program from a lodge: ample wellness foraging retreat promotion:



More details related to the marketing tactics will come in final Report and Action Plan.

Next Gen Market - Who does this?

We are not the first to suggest a *learn to hunt* program that targets younger urbanites. There is a growing number of articles appearing on the subject of hard core younger urban folks needing to learn to hunt, as well as successful outfitter operators like "Learn to Hunt NYC". Celebrities such as Joe Rogan and now Mark Zuckerberg have entered this arena with the same message – it is important for this generation of urbanites to learn about their food from its source.



In *Hipsters who Hunt*, an article by Emma Harris and posted in *Slate.com*, an argument in detail was laid out as to why it is critical for this group to learn to hunt.

Keep in mind *Slate.com* is an extremely influential daily current events site, targeted to a young urban market. The article also chronicles books, documentaries and podcasts (including Joe Rogan), who advocate learning to hunt to know your own food. In 2014, Canada's *MacLean's Magazine* ran a similar article on the same subject, noting the growing trend of Toronto hipsters looking for ways to connect with their food through hunting.

In 2019, *Outdoor Life* ran a similar story and showcased several U.S. based learn to hunt programs such as 'Becoming an Outdoors Woman' program, and 'Field to Fork' put on by the U.S. Quality Deer Management Association. Mountain Songs in Vermont and Learn to Hunt in Minnesota are others. Steve Rinnella's popular Netflix series "MeatEater" focuses on the organic culinary aspect of hunting vs trophy hunting, and influences viewers in North America.

Fit with Urban Millennials

The published work thus far reports the strong evidence of the link between hunting and urban millennials centered on food and connecting with nature. There is evidence to suggest they are keen to gain competencies in animal dressing and packaging through to exotic ways of preparing the food. Food is status as is the ability to kill your own.

Millennials also make one of the largest traveling cohorts in North America, that is, they are not put off by travel, which makes a trip to the wilds of Fort Frances more likely.

Next Gen and Wellness

The *Global Wellness Institute (GWI)* 2019 report states that Wellness Tourism is growing twice as fast as general tourism with \$241.7 billion in expenditures per year in North America, through 204 million trips. The majority of the travelers seek wellness as a secondary benefit of their trip, not the primary purpose. In a 2017 study, *GWI* found that international wellness tourists spent \$1,528 per trip, which is 53% more than typical international tourist. The premium for domestic wellness tourists is even higher. Domestic wellness travelers spend even more at about \$609 per trip, they spend 178% more than the typical domestic tourist.



Elsewhere in Ontario and Minnesota, there is a surge in yoga and meditation. The differentiation in product offered in Fort Frances may be through forest foraging or nature therapy (forest bathing).

Although wellness tourism is rapidly developing throughout the province, it has yet to reach Fort Frances, so this marketing plan provides an opportunity to introduce it and capitalize on the growing demand. Trends in wellness tourism relevant to Fort Frances include more healthy options in restaurants, spa treatment services like massages, possibly a small Nordic Spa development, retail sales of body products, and more.

Indigenous Tourism

According to a study by the *Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada*, 27% of all tourists (including NextGen) are interested in an indigenous cultural experience, and the immediate potential across Canada is 2.5 million visitors. Indigenous tourism development is still limited in Fort Frances, but opportunities are abundant and interest from residents in starting up small enterprises is apparently growing. Other provinces may be more advanced, such as the *Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA)* based in Quebec, but it shows success can also be had by the residents of Fort Frances in embracing their heritage and translate it into a means of earning economic benefits and still respecting traditions. Ojibwe First Nation's people have been hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering berries and edible lichen, and more, on traditional territory for thousands of years.

Culinary Tourism

Overlapping with all of the above tourism sectors is culinary tourism, which is growing at a rate of about 9% annual growth rate worldwide. A 'Foodie' is person who has an ardent or refined interest in food and who eats food not only out of hunger, but also due to their interest or hobby. *National Geographic's Geotourism* founder Jonathan Tourtellot recommends that successful food destination providers become tour guides of local fresh food, to interpret ingredients and preparation methods to the visitors. In the '2020 State of Travel Industry' report by the *World Food Travel Association*, Dalma Diaz Pinto agrees and says, "Authentic Heritage and storytelling should be the foundation of a destination's gastronomy tourism strategy."

Trends among foodies that are relevant to the Next Gen product in Fort Frances include pellet smoking. In 2019, *Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association* reported wood pellet grills to be one of the hottest sellers in the industry, "with...the popularity surging." *Grandview Research* added that these meat-smoking grills are "projected to foresee a CAGR of 5.3% from 2019 to 2025. The majority of consumers are millennials who are inclined to experiment in food and cooking, owing to the influence by TV cooking programs featuring BBQ Pitmasters."

Conclusion

As noted, the existing hunting and fishing market in Fort Frances is still somewhat relevant, but as the older generations decline in being active and the newer generations have not yet learned how to hunt and fish (i.e. there is little recruitment), they need to both learn and be introduced to the skills. Destinations with diversity have a greater success rate, and that is what this plan offers. The product development approach is not advising a major overhaul or change to business. Thus, outfitting lodges and hotels can continue to cater to the markets that already bring them revenue, but will benefit by adding the Next Gen travelers to the mix, and add both revenue and new vibrant energy to the destinations. What this Next Gen marketing plan suggests includes Summer, Fall, and Winter Product Wheels, each with strategic changes that can be implemented in less than a year. The destination can be ahead of the curve in attracting this emerging market of visitor, and thus differentiate itself in Northern Ontario.



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DRIVE ACCOMMODATION OCCUPANCY

2A

WINTER ANGLING – RAINY LAKE

**KEY ACTIONS: EXPLORE CO-OP ICE HUT INVESTMENT
EXPLORE WINTER ICE FISHING DERBY POTENTIAL**

FISH HUTS

Winter offers significant opportunity for attracting anglers and there is a healthy and established ice fishing industry on the American side especially on Minnesota's Lake of the Woods - see: <https://lakeofthewoodsmn.com/ice-fishing/>

What is being offered amount to all-inclusive packages that include accommodation (in some cases in "sleeper" huts right on the ice), meals, and transportation to and from the ice huts. Packages usually range from 3 to 5 days and are priced on a per-person basis. With the appropriate investments, and assuming the right fishing location near Fort Frances can be identified and MNR regulations overcome, this may be a "best bet" opportunity for Fort Frances to pursue for the winter season.

This opportunity would have to be explored by a single accommodator, as a joint venture of a group of accommodators, with consideration of potential for subsidy from the MAT.

Manufacturers (basic to luxury, sleepers vs day generates price variability).

- <https://canadianfabrication.ca/ice-shacks>
- <https://www.traluminumdesigns.ca/ice-shacks>
 - Preferred – 6 x 8 price quote - \$6500
- <http://www.koendersmfg.com/fishing.htm>
- <https://yettioutdoors.com/>



Src: <https://www.traluminumdesigns.ca/ice-shacks>

Fort Frances has open water/thin ice in immediate proximity to the Town. Placement would need to occur away from the Town on Rainy Lake. An equivalent is Lake of the Woods where commercial operations are located further out on the lake and left permanently through the winter season (regulation does not require daily removal). Location away from Town would reduce potential for vandalism.

WINTER FISHING DERBY

A derby for "rough" fish e.g. burbot (ling) or crappie is recommended given they are not pursued in the same way they do walleye, making it more palatable to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Another option is "biggest fish first prize" regardless of species.

Prize value has to be worthwhile (i.e. significant...\$15K or greater...or something like an ATV as a prize...the more significant the wider the draw). Prize value is generated from entry fees, or sponsors, or a combination of both.

Catch and release is mandatory.

This initiative requires community support and a volunteer organization. Municipalities often provide in-kind contribution vs cash contribution to events of this nature. Support in principle from the Ministry of Natural Resources is advised, and would be more well received as a catch and release tournament that avoids walleye kill.

Though typically held on one day, a means to drive occupancy rates and multiplier spending in Fort Frances would be to hold the tournament as a "series" - such as one a month for three months or one every weekend for four weekends, with a weekly prize and a grand prize for people who participate in all four.

2B

1-2 SPORT SHOULDER SEASON TOURNAMENTS

KEY ACTIONS: CONDUCT MUNICIPAL FACILITY USE RATE STUDY
IDENTIFY TOURNAMENT/EVENT OPPORTUNITIES
CREATE 1-2 NEW SHOULD SEASON TOURNAMENTS

Sport tournaments generate significant overnight stays (teams/families) and local spending that enhances community prosperity. Fort Frances has a strong history of tournament hosting. Facility/recreation amenity demand is also highly variable seasonally – depending on specific type of facility/recreation amenity. Anecdotally, volunteer burnout is a significant issue. It's therefore important to be highly selective and niche in considering additional tournament hosting. There also needs to be a clear link to facility/amenity opportunities hosting based on analysis of facility use rates, including plotting of current tournaments. Given high summer accommodation occupancy, new tournament identification should focus on shoulder seasons. Winter is not considered an opportunity.

Analysis of this nature is typically completed in creation of a Recreation Master Plan, and includes community survey work. This exercise may identify points of convergence between interest in new facilities and tournament potential (e.g. pickleball).

An example (Town of Okotoks) is provided as an example:

CAPACITY POINTS TO SEASONAL, SPORT, FACILITY OPPORTUNITIES

Src: Town of Okotoks Recreation, Parks and Leisure Master Plan Research Report, 2017 - PDF Pages 36-38 - <https://www.okotoks.ca/sites/default/files/pdfs/Rec%20Master%20Plan%20Research%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

Town Fields	Monday to Friday (6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Saturday and Sunday (8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Total Prime Time
Bookable Hours	3,589	3,504	7,093
Hours Booked	390	115	504
Utilization Percentage	11%	3%	7%

School Fields: Community Hours	Monday to Friday (5:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Saturday and Sunday (8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Total Prime Time
Bookable Hours	4,094	5,026	9,120
Hours Booked	663	222	885
Utilization Percentage	16%	4%	10%

Town Diamonds	Monday to Friday (6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Saturday and Sunday (8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Total Prime Time
Bookable Hours	2,323	2,435	4,758
Hours Booked	666	652	1,317
Utilization Percentage	29%	27%	28%

School Diamonds: Community Hours	Monday to Friday (5:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Saturday and Sunday (8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.)	Total Prime Time
Bookable Hours	3,722	4,536	8,258
Hours Booked	658	238	896
Utilization Percentage	18%	5%	11%

Okotoks Recreation Centre Gymnasium	Monday to Friday (6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.)	Saturday and Sunday (7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.)	Total
Bookable Hours	1,445	1,338	2,782
Hours Booked	960	791	1,751
Utilization Percentage	66%	59%	63%

School Gymnasiums: Community Hours	Monday to Friday (Varies by School)	Saturday and Sunday (Varies by School)	Total
Bookable Hours	4,701	3,264	7,965
Hours Booked	2,243	441	2,684
Utilization Percentage	48%	14%	34%

Arenas	Monday to Friday (6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.)	Saturday and Sunday (7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.)	Monday to Friday (6:30 a.m. – 7:30 a.m.)	Total Prime Time
Bookable Hours	2,100	1,920	270	4,290
Hours Booked	2,046	1,830	262	4,138
Utilization Percentage	97%	95%	97%	96%

Crescent Point Fieldhouse

Utilization	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Prime Hours Utilized (%)	79%	85%	74%	65%	28%	28%	21%	20%	25%	59%	65%	50%
Non-Prime Hours Utilized (%)	21%	19%	21%	29%	19%	17%	32%	28%	13%	32%	34%	28%

2C

YURTS

KEY ACTIONS: EXPLORE CO-OP YURT INVESTMENT

The Idea: Glamping Yurts located lakeside in Point Park. Key card access (door on Yurt). Shared by accommodators – first come first serve or other business model accommodators come to agreement around. Purchase subsidized by MAT. Create agreement with Town of Fort Frances for location on Town land, with a \$0 or low fee lease contract. Nature of temporary/removable use addresses potential obstacles.

Yurts would expand summer hotel-related accommodation and therefore summer capacity and revenue. Depending on the type of yurt, they can also be three and even four-season.

Yurts are an increasingly popular experience – and an experience that is different than that current being offered in Fort Frances. They have potential to host larger families, which are harder to accommodate in hotel rooms. There is always consumer demand to be lakeside.

Given price per unit, it is suggested that 1-2 yurts be purchased annually for an eventual total in the order of 20.

Mid-size hotel construction has a per room construction rate of \$120-\$130K. Expected sector rate of return is 10-15% annually (Src: CBRE, Village of Canal Flats Hotel Study, 2018). Based on a rustic-furnished, insulated (3 season) yurt cost of \$20K with healthy rental rates in the order of \$150 (e.g. 6 person, Pigeon Lake, AB), business modelling should be conducive to pursuit of the opportunity.

Manufacturers:

- <http://yurta.ca/yurts/> 2-3 hour deployment. Can function up to -25 (shoulder even most of winter). Company location – Greenwood, ON (Toronto metro). Pricing (3-4 season) – approx.. \$15K
- <http://biome-canada.ca/products/the-yurt/>. Quebec. \$20K insulated and rustic-furnished.

Create a new experience - <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/voyage-travel/hebergement-accommodation/yourte-yurt>

Examples:



Camping

Yurts	Capacity	Rate
Large (#119)	8 Person	\$ 170 / night
6 x Medium (#112, 114, 120, 121, 122, 124)	6 Person	\$ 145 / night
Small (#123)	4 Person	\$ 125 / night

Mar 3, 2020

www.albertaparks.ca > central > pigeon-lake-pp > information-facilities >

Comfort Camping - Pigeon Lake Provincial Park | Alberta Parks



Algonquin Provincial Park

Official Website of The Friends of Algonquin Park

Home | Visit | Get Involved | Shop | Virtual Algonquin | The Friends of Algonquin Park

Selected Park Information

- Directions to Algonquin Park
- Algonquin Park Wildlife
- Algonquin Park Fees
- This Season's Activities
- FAQ's
- Camping
- Recreational Activities
- Visitor Centre, Museum and Exhibits
- Programs
- Natural and Cultural History
- Park Management
- Commercial Services
- Events Calendar
- Travel Trade Industry
- Contact Algonquin Park

Vents Calendar

April 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Home > Visit > General Park Information > Algonquin Park Fees > Yurt Fees

Yurt Fees

Permits allow for overnight stays at Algonquin's yurts. Seven are available year round at [Mew Lake Campground](#) along the [Highway 60 Corridor](#), one is available only from late April to late October at [Achray Campground](#).

Valid to March 31, 2020

Yurts (at Mew Lake and Achray campgrounds)	\$97.18/night
Prices include applicable taxes (13% HST).	

When you arrive, a security deposit charged by Ontario Parks ranging from \$100 to \$500 will apply (a credit card deposit will be accepted). The security deposit will be refunded upon checkout, subject to inspection of the accommodations.

Fees are subject to change by Ontario Parks.

[Make A Reservation](#)

[Make A Reservation](#)

Reserve your developed or backcountry campsite for your next visit.

[Support Your Park](#)

Share your passion for Algonquin Park by becoming a member or donor.

Yurts in Algonquin Park



Yurts are eight sided, tent-like structures, are mounted on a wooden deck floor and offer electric heat. These structures can sleep up to 6 people, are accessible by vehicle at the [Mew Lake Campground](#) and [Achray Campground](#) and are suitable for camping year round.

Yurt Locations

- [Mew Lake Campground](#) (7 yurts available year round)
- [Achray Campground](#) (1 yurt available May to mid October)

Yurt Features & Amenities

- accommodate up to 6 people
- bunk beds (2 sets, each with single & double bed, and a vinyl covered futon mattress)
- electric heat and one electrical outlet (110V) [not available at Achray Yurt]
- fluorescent lighting
- campsite with a 15A and 30A receptacle [not available at Achray Yurt]
- table with 6 chairs and indoor shelving unit
- propane barbecue for outdoor use only (propane supplied) [May to Thanksgiving only]
- cooking utensils, cutlery, dishes, glasses, kettle, pots [Mew Lake Campground Yurt only (not the Achray Campground Yurt), May long weekend to Thanksgiving only]
- outdoor fire pit & picnic table
- fire extinguisher & smoke detector

<http://www.algonquinpark.on.ca/visit/camping/yurts-in-algonquin-park.php>

2D

SUNNY COVE

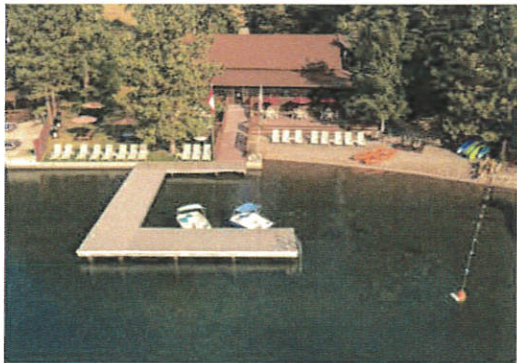
KEY ACTIONS: EXPLORE ACCOMMODATOR CO-OP PURCHASE AND OPERATION OF SUNNY COVE

Imagine...Sunny Cove of the future is a day retreat lodge for Fort Frances accommodators. Rent a boat. Or drive. Gated, keycard access. Access to a lodge, water, docks, swimming, picnicking, and other water-based activity (rentals with waiver). Fire pits. Fish from the dock. Site of yoga, spiritual and wellness retreats, weddings, and reunions. Day use fees applied. A contributor to higher three season accommodation occupancy rates.

Consumer demand is always high for water access. Sunny Cove features 29 acres of lakeside lifestyle. Sunny Cove is currently owned and operated by the Town of Fort Frances as a location for kids' summer camps, and orientation to special events bookings outside of kids' camps. The Town has indicated desire to dispose of the property, with some suggestion at no cost depending on the nature of a proposal offered to the Town. Due to Ministry of Natural Resources permitting issues, this would not be an angling lodge.

A similar example in Montana is provided – the Rocky Bar-O day lodge on Flathead Lake, Montana, which is owned and operated by Meadow Lake Resort in Columbia Falls

(<https://meadowlake.com/product/rocky-bar-o-a-day-at-flathead-lake/>):



Rocky Bar-O: A Day at Flathead Lake

Spend a day enjoying the good life at a private beach lodge on Flathead lake, the largest freshwater body of water west of the Mississippi. Gas grills are provided so you can stay fueled up for summer time fun. Swim off the dock, lounge in the shade or paddle board out into the lake, with supplies provided on site. Wave Runners and power boats are available for rent on the adjacent dock. If it gets too hot, you can retreat inside the lodge for board games, a game of pool or a ping pong match. This place is fun for all ages.

Recommended Time Two hours to a full day.

Distance A scenic forty-five minute drive through the Flathead Valley.

Cost No cost to Owners and Guests. Resting Accommodations.

Recommended Attire Swimwear, weather appropriate clothes, sunscreen and sunglasses.

Intensity Ranges from low impact lounging to thrilling wave running.

Address 33223 Lakeshore Drive, Bigfork, MT 59911.

More information Contact Meadow Lake Resort (800) 321-4653.

Note: this facility used to be a New York private girls' school summer camp. Can drive there or boat. Bring own food and drink and use facility for the day. No overnight. Can also book a boat trip out of Bigfork with this facility as a stop.

This initiative would require full collaboration of Fort Frances accommodators.

2E

A 30 HOURS – 3 DAY STAY 'N PLAY MARKET

KEY ACTIONS: CREATE AND MARKET STAY 'N PLAY PACKAGES

Stay 'n Play experience packaging is a way to encourage overnight visits. Based on local amenity, packaging is recommended to focus on the following draws:

1) Trails-based (ski/snowshoe/hike/bike/snowmobile/ebike) - Manion Lake (72 km east), Rainy Lake Nordic Ski Club

Trail-based activities are good day-long activities with retreat to urban comforts in evenings. As opposed to boating, most people have access to equipment they already own and use.

<https://visitsunsetcountry.com/attractions-activities-fort-frances-ontario-canada>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/382216212116382/>

Product Enhancements:

- Single, simply map of trails by type in Fort Frances region.
- Create one branded “rugged” trail-based event (e.g. Tough Mudder – www.toughmudder.com).
- Translate mapping into online apps for younger generations – e.g. www.mapmyhike.com
- See Rentals 3F

2) Heron Landing Golf Course

Interest in overnight golf course stay 'n play is correlated with golf course quality. A “Top 10” will have much stronger overnight-related stay interest than a typical course. Priority should be Heron Landing golf course on Couchiching First Nation, which was selected as a top new course in Ontario when it opened.

A secondary option (a Day 2) is Kitchen Creek Golf Course.

Product Enhancements:

- Packaging linkage to “The International Tour” package that includes Heron Landing and The River in International Falls.



Img Src:
www.wasaw.ca/heron-landing-golf-course.php

3

NURTURE THE SUPPORTING ATMOSPHERE**KEY ACTIONS: CREATE FOODIE EXPERIENCES****INTRODUCE PRODUCT-THEMATIC EVENTS****ADVOCATE FOR A LOCAL CRAFT/MAKER RETAIL PREMISIS****PURSUE BEAUTIFICATION OF SCOTT STREET/TOWN ENTRANCES/TRANS CANADA****ENHANCE WAYFINDING SIGNAGE****ADVOCATE FOR MIXED USE, ANIMATED, VISITOR EXPERIENCE FRIENDLY SHEVLIN YARD REDEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING EXPANDED MARINA****ENHANCE TRAIL/WATER EQUIPMENT RENTAL CAPABILITY****3A. Foodie Experiences/Product Thematic Events**

Establish link – via butchers, and restaurants - between Product 2 harvest, and local learn-to process, and learn-to cook.

Establish accommodator marketing package link with higher experience restaurants, particularly any sourcing local/regional ingredients.

Create 1-2 new food-focused events that connect with and leverage “Learn To” Product 2 experience.

- Smoked meat/game meat festival
- Handcraft beer/cider festival
- Investigate potential for cannabis sections at these events.

Rainy Lake Square

- Existing: Rainy Lake Square Series
- Potential: MAT sponsorship of a signature draw performance (summer/shoulder). “The bigger the name, the bigger the draw...including cross-border.”

Create new winter fishing derby

Re-Position Farmer’s Market as a “Learn To” Market

- Fresh produce is still a central feature of the market, but “learn-to” activities are introduced. This heightens a typical farmer’s market experience. This aligns with Product 2. This positioning distinguishes vis a vis market share that has been lost to Kenora in recent years, which provides a new growth path for the market. Learning is an endless subject matter, which opens the market to more variety and interest.
- Examples: cook, sew, pottery, carve wood, make soap, paint, tie knots, identify plants, identify animal tracks

Product Enhancement: Use website as a key means to advertise and recognize events/create sharing (e.g. events calendar, signature events featuring, post performances (pre and post event), social media posts/social media advertising up upcoming events.

3B. Craft/Maker Premises

Craft/Makers are a natural bridge between tourism product focus (land/food/harvest), local culture, entrepreneurial enablement, and home-based business. Crafters/makers are typically small scale and home-based. They are labours of love. A gap in most communities is a way to bridge from home-based business to retail presence. Retail spaces are typically too large for this type of business.

An innovation is to step into this gap with aggregation of craft/makers product in a single retail space. The space is run as a business, with lease of micro rental spaces to crafters/makers.

Examples include:

Main Street Market, Okotoks



https://www.facebook.com/mainstreetmarketokotoks/?modal=admin_todo_tour

Canmore Artisan Retail - <http://www.albertasownmarket.com/>

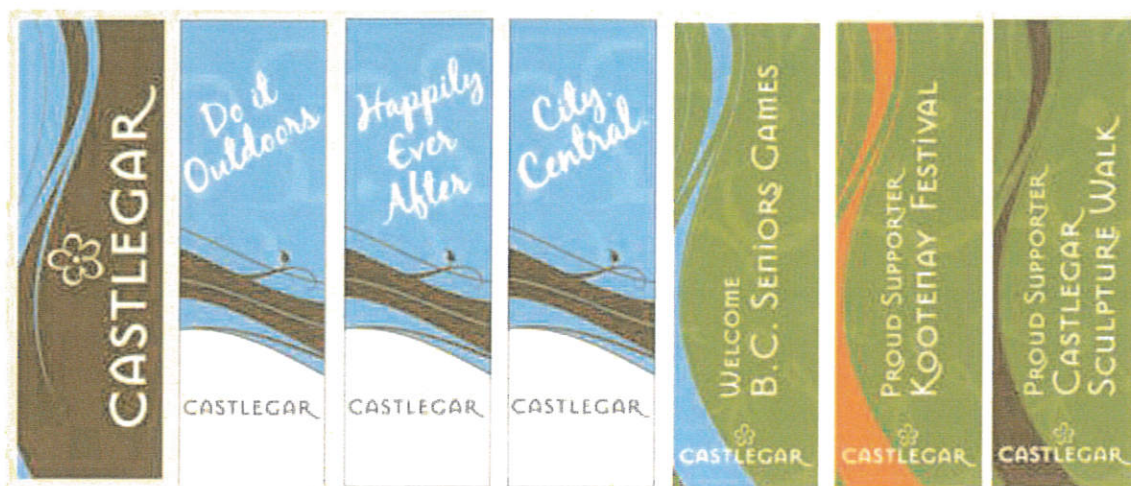
3C. Beautification of Scott Street/Town Entrances/Trans Canada

Beautification should focus on the most visible/traveled elements of community given budget restriction and need to focus on priority. Community entrances are important given neuroscience research shows that first impressions leave a lasting impression.

A focus on Scott Street/Town Entrances/Trans Canada – in that order – is recommended.

Actions should focus on:

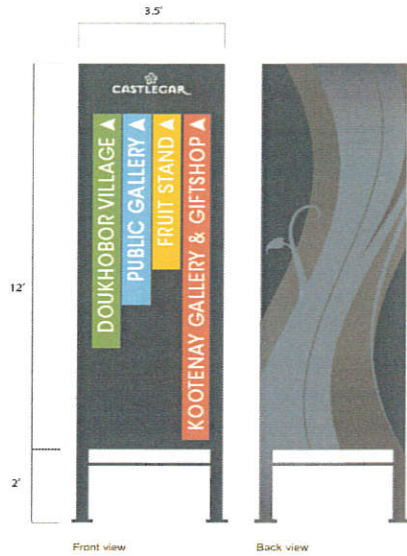
- Graffiti clean-up asap (cleanliness is a top ranked visitor observation).
- Community clean-up and priority ongoing pick-up along length of Trans Canada in Fort Frances.
- Advocacy for fewer billboards/removal of derelict billboards just outside west entrance to Fort Frances.
- Screening of storage businesses at west entrance with planted material if right of way permits.
- Creation of planting spaces where possible in the area of the TIC.
- Banners on Scott Street (expanding westward along Trans Canada is possible) that are branded, colourful, may be seasonal, and can contain brand messaging. An example from the City of Castlegar is provided as follows:



3D. Wayfinding Signage

Entrance signage is established and is attractive but in-community navigation to key attractions/amenity can be challenging for visitors without a GPS. Wayfinding signage can step into this gap, while also serving as attractive and even artful installations depending on design. An example of this is the City of Castlegar, where “industrial chic”, colourful, internally lit signs are artful in and of themselves:

Multi-Purpose Signage Con't



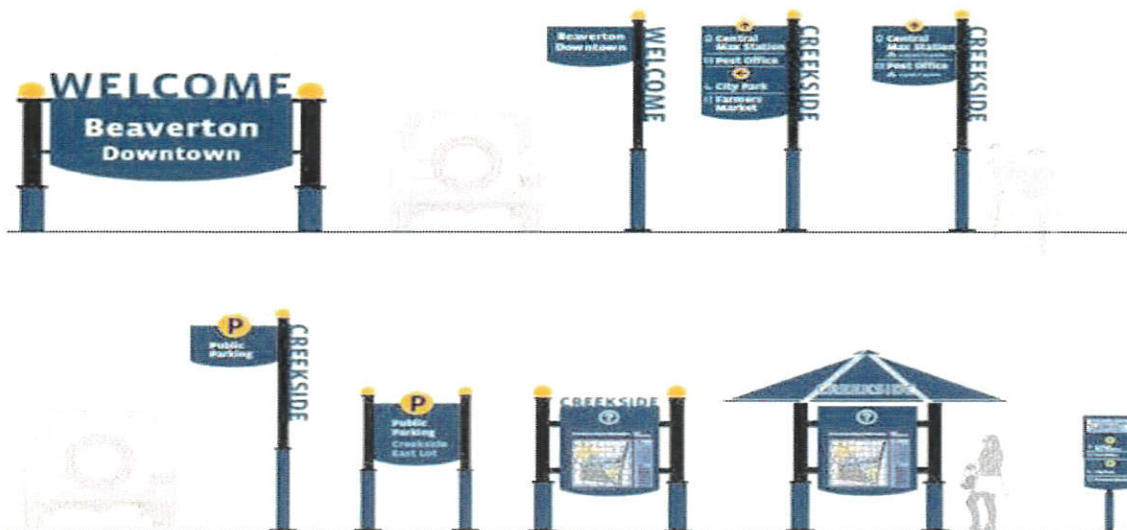
Triple paneled powder coated grey metal structure with die cut slots on the front, allowing for colored opaque plastic material with white decal lettering to be slotted into the front and backlit with LED. Colour coded wayfinding signs with directional arrows are placed to make reference to the distance needed to travel to get to the destination (ie, the shortest coloured band would reference either closest or furthest destination) Coloured slots top aligned to allow for some differentiation from the Columbia Avenue signage on Page 5).

The back of the structure will feature a brushed metal design (use here of Castlegar "swosh" element)

Rainy River frontage (LaVerendrye Parkway) is the strongest feature of the community, but given location off main road has to be "found" and isn't fully capitalized on (linkages to main road).

Wayfinding signage should focus almost exclusively on Highway 11/Trans Canada/Scott Street in context of limited budget.

With a comprehensive design study, wayfinding signage can be designed as part of a comprehensive and consistent community signage program (special purpose design: downtown, trails, vehicles, crosswalks, key attractions; municipal building signage (external and internal); point of interest signage (restrooms, parking, information, parks, services (e.g. police, fire, hospital); directional (traffic/street naming, highway):



3E. Shevlin Yard Redevelopment

Depending on land use, mix of use, and aesthetic, and target market, Shevlin yard redevelopment can be a significant catalyst for tourism development in Fort Frances as a water-based draw. This would require consideration of tourism amenity/draw on-site. Examples include resort hotels, casinos, niche retail, entertainment venues, cultural venues, and restaurants. Walkability and inspired architecture within the development would be vital. Public art/inviting common spaces would attract. Functional orientation to, and interplay with, water would be vital. An expanded marina would facilitate further tourist/rental access to water with recreation equipment.

3F. Trail/Water Equipment Rental

Access to sport and recreation equipment would encourage longer duration stays in Fort Frances. While the less portable, less purchased and more expensive items like power boats can be problematic as a business/insurance model for all but the busiest of destinations, there may be entrepreneurial opportunity in offering of grouping of types of equipment rental. These include skis, snowshoes, racquets and balls, kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddleboards, sailboats, aluminum fishing boats, bikes, and ebikes.

The nature of access to the offering might be able to span inherent business model challenges. One example of this is the BC-based The Thingery (<http://thethingery.com/>) – essentially glorified and secure sea cans that offer co-op based tools in community settings. This kind of approach could be used to rent all but the largest recreational equipment.

This can be considered on an independent entrepreneur basis, or as a collaborative accommodator co-op.

4

SELL FORT FRANCES

KEY ACTIONS: ESTABLISH MARKETING FOUNDATIONS

DEVELOP CORE PRODUCT CREATIVE DIRECTION

ESTABLISH A 30 MINUTE STOP, SHOP AND GO MARKET

IMPLEMENT CORE PRODUCT MARKETING / ADVERTISING PROGRAM (See 3 Year Tactical Plan)

4A. Marketing Foundations

1) Create a Destination Fort France Visual Identity



The visual identity modification is simple and subtle, substituting the black colouring in the Town of Fort Frances visual identity with white, with addition of the word "Destination."

2) Register Trademark/Domain Names

- Trademark "Forageur" (see Big Lake Report for process)
 - The following needs to be undertaken by the municipality: Trademark search reveals Forageur trademark is available - <https://www.ic.gc.ca/app/opic-cipo/trdmrks/srch/home?lang=eng>
 - Application site - https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01369.html?Open&wt_src=cipo-tm-main&wt_cxt=toptask,https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr01275.html

Application fee - \$330

Renewal fee - \$400 (every 10 years)

Can be pursued by municipal designate, municipal legal counsel, or here's a list of registered trademark agents - https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr04549.html
 - Register Destination Fort Frances URL (available - .ca and .com)
 - Register FishRainyLake URL (available - .ca) – which will redirect to destinationfortfrances.ca
- Note: domains are \$20/yr each.*

3) Online Presence

i) Create New Website - Destination Fort Frances

Why? Because this site needs to integrate well with the private sector (promotions, coupons, etc.) – which benefits from independent control over content. Because the site needs to “pick winners” as a matter of differentiated/elevated experiences, which municipalities don’t want to do.

RRDC to develop/update as part of tourism development and marketing program.

Structure:

Scroll Content Approach - think of modern, screen-adaptive websites as a set of square blocks. These blocks run in long from vertical scroll as a set of layers. Ost important or timely content sits at the top. More detailed content can sit deeper in the scroll.

- e.g. Village of Canal Flats - <https://www.canalflats.ca/>

A recommended content scroll for the site is as follows:

- **Top Navigation Bar:** (*Destination Fort Frances Logo top left*), Awesome Experiences, Events, “Buyable Packages”, Plan Your Trip (*with social media buttons a weather icon, and a search function*)

Note: Plan Your Trip to link to mapping function for accommodation, food etc. services.

- **Masthead** – modified from campaign-based advertising (supported by campaign-based social media and other marketing channels). Note campaign can change over time as needs/market conditions warrant.

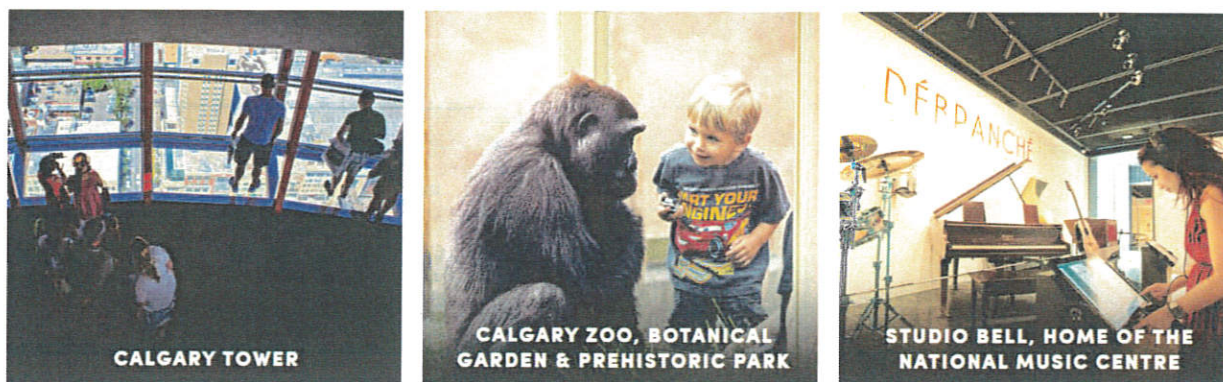


- **Welcome Message/About Fort Frances** – short description with personality in campaign theme.
- **Best Of** – curated experiences (modeled on Tourism Calgary site - <https://www.visitcalgary.com/things-to-do/our-citys-best>) – main image with a link to “See Our Best”

Note: because this is curated with high-quality experience criteria it's important to explain "the why" in the story descriptor for each experience – e.g. third-party endorsement/award, unique building, sourced-local, etc. Curator(s) are required to develop/update this. A more interactive way to capture experiences would be a member/partner or Destination Fort Frances survey of favourite attractions/experiences.

Sample categories (to have catchy titles with calls to action): Shop, Eat, Sport, Happy Trails, Get Arty, Here Fishy Fishy, At Night, Fun, Photo Worthy

Big Tile approach on click throughs to Best Of descriptions - e.g. Tourism Calgary:



Tiles can embed video.

Tiles should use catchy hook summaries and conversational writing style: e.g. Canal Flats

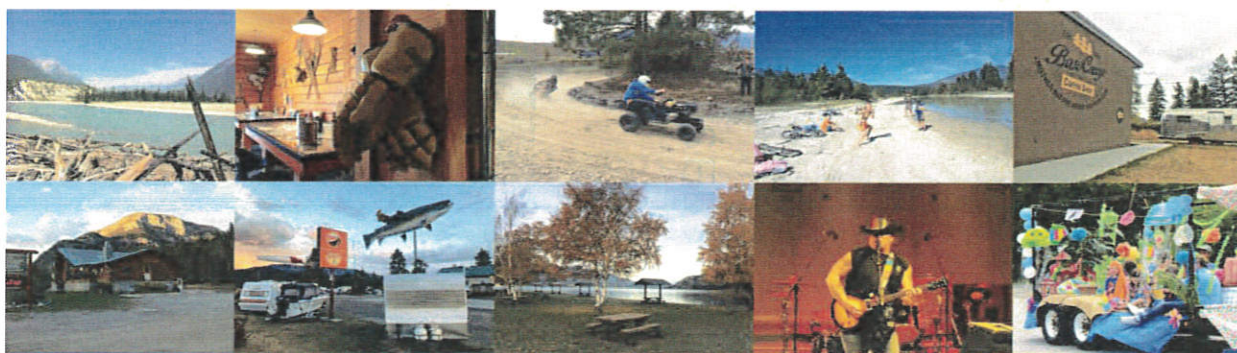


Feature Events – tile approach with a box click through to Events Calendar – simple tile approach with simple top search function by event type and date – e.g.

https://www.visitcalgary.com/events?category=0&start_date=07%2F31%2F2019&end_date=08%2F14%2F2019&.. Specific focus on sport (sport tournaments, Fort Frances Lakers - <https://www.fortfranceslakers.com/>, Rainy Lake Square - <https://www.facebook.com/rainylakesquare/>, Townshend Theatre (music/performing arts) - <https://www.fortfrances.ca/experience/activities-amenities/townshend-theatre>

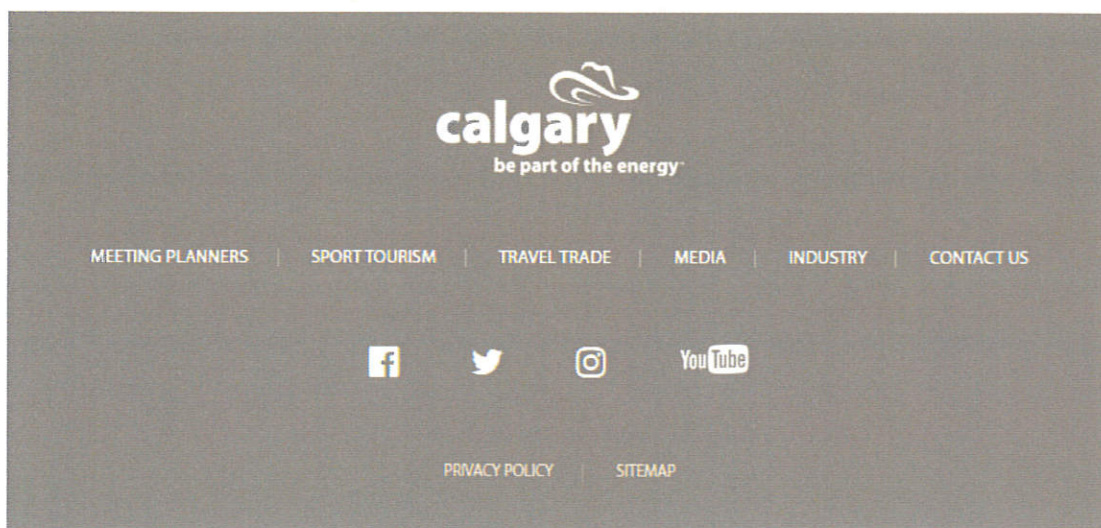
- **Two Product Experiences** with Short Summaries: Be An Afishianado, Be a Forageur – link to content features and special features within each of these. Can eventually have embedded video for each.
- **Embed Feature Video (s)** - link to video platform (e.g. Wistia, YouTube) reveals additional videos on the platform.
- **Stories** - this can develop over time – like a blog - but it's a key means to storytell, to capture things like seasons, to feature specific experiences, to celebrate (e.g. a playoff run), to feature a container product experience, etc. Can curate from a set of writers, purchase stories, or do them in-house. Can embed specific video if it relates to the story.
- **Photo/Video Gallery – e.g.**

GALLERY



- **Bottom Container** with new links for Meeting Planners and Sport Tourism (do not include travel trade, media or industry) as per the below), repeat of social media links, privacy policy, site map, accommodator/partner logos.

Note: new content needs to be written for each of Sport Tourism and Meeting Planners, along with a downloadable package. Content approach can be modeled on Tourism Calgary site.

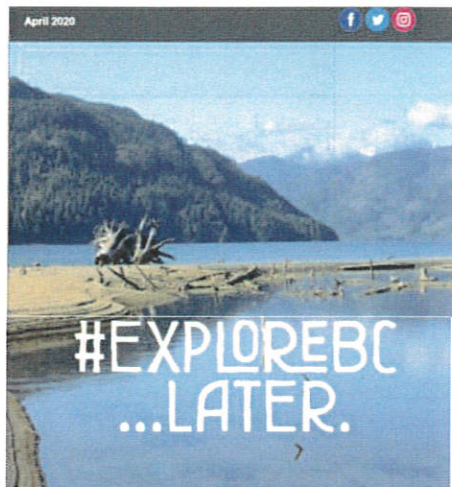


http://tourism.visitcalgary.com/sport-tourism?_ga=2.52520619.2009084207.1564578038-1745341907.1561671984

e.g. of Sport Facilities content as a sales pitch – Casper, Wyoming - <https://visitcasper.com/sports/>

Other Elements:

- Direct-linked to Visit tab on Town of Fort Frances web page. Remove destination information from Town of Fort Frances website.
- Key Product 1 or 2 choice on main page.
- Living in Fort Frances link – recognizes path to relocation (7% of all Canadians live where they do solely based on first tourism visit).
- eNewsletter – most important function – builds contact database...connects to path to purchase/return visits/path to non-tourism investment and relocation. Special promos. Frequency – quarterly. Use tool like Constant Contact/MailChimp. Best practice – Discover Comox Valley:



Dream now, [#exploreBClater](#).
Comox Lake, Comox Valley

This spring we wanted to be able to share the Comox Valley with you... this is how we can do it safely and in some cases Virtually!

Here are a range of things to do in the Comox Valley, that allow for [social distancing](#), but support getting families and residents into the beautiful outdoors. Please check websites and follow health advisories & directions.

Spring Social Distancing Activities



Hike at Seal Bay Nature Park



Take a Bike Tour in the Comox Valley



Take in the waterfront of Miramichi Beach Provincial Park



Did you know that the [Comox Valley Art Gallery](#) is hosting a virtual tour of the art exhibit: The Time of Things: The Continuum of Indigenous Customary Practice into Contemporary Art. Visit <https://bit.ly/2xwH91Q> for the virtual pdf tour of the exhibit, on now until May 9th.



A great family Easter event is still being brought to you this year, just a little differently. The Easter Promenade, brought to you by the City of Courtenay is being offered as a "Home Edition" this year due to proper social distancing practices! Visit <https://bit.ly/2UEH42x> for how the Promenade works and have some great fun with your family!

Check out all of these amazing Businesses, Farms and Organizations that all have services available to assist you during these difficult times.

Comox Valley Economic Development & Tourism has provided a tool for local businesses including restaurants, retail service providers, farm markets/stands, and winery/brewery/distilleries to outline their current services being offered, in one common location.

This [resource page](#) will serve to assist residents quickly determine what level of modified business services are available during this difficult time. To view COVID-19 protective measures from the [BC CDC](#) [click here](#)



Businesses Listing of Available Services

Plan your dream stay here in the Comox Valley, research all of our amazing accommodators so you're ready to book when its safe to travel again.



Best Western, the Westerly Hotel 1-250-338-7741



Old House Hotel & Spa 1-888-703-0202



Bayview Hotel 1-778-225-0010

Call to book today!

Call or [book online today!](#)

Call or [book online today!](#)



Crown Isle Resort 1-888-338-8439



Travelodge Courtenay 1-800-795-8486



Super 8 by Wyndham Courtenay 1-877-393-2200

Call or [book online today!](#)

Call or [book online today!](#)

Call or [book online today!](#)

[View Accommodations](#)

Discover Comox Valley
visitorcentre@discovercomoxvalley.com | 1-855-400-2802 | DiscoverComoxValley.com
#101 - 3601 Small Road, Cumberland, BC

© 2020 | 3601 Small Road, Courtenay, British Columbia V9M 1M7, Canada

info@discovercomoxvalley.com

Update: Traffic 1 About Constant Contact

Sent by visitorcentre@discovercomoxvalley.com on 04/04/2020 at 10:00 AM

Constant Contact
The email marketing that just works.

ii) Establish Destination Fort Frances Social Media Platforms

Facebook

-FB has an aging demographic user base. Target content at Product 1 - Angling

E.g. <https://www.facebook.com/destinationokotoks/>

Instagram

Instagram has a younger demographic than Facebook. Target content at Product 1 – “Learn To” Market

E.g. <https://www.instagram.com/destinationokotoks/>

iii) Establish core hashtags (based on core products): #fishthefort, #foragethefort, #trackthefort, #huntthefort

iv) Create visual content

Video

It is recommended that two “anchor” videos – one for each core product - at 90-120 seconds each be produced to demonstrate core product value proposition. These videos will also demonstrate brand elements (storytelling themes, visual approach, soundtrack) that can be replicated in additional video. It is further recommended that a future “tree structure” approach to video work be employed that builds 30-60 second, thematic vignette videos onto this initial effort in future. These thematic videos can focus on stories within the anchor product stories (e.g. specific fish species, learn to hunt vs learn to fish, learn to forage, learn to track, etc.).

A fresh municipal video model (Destination Okotoks) that encompasses both public and private sector joint venture investment has been highly successful. The advantage of this model is social sharing. In Okotoks, metrics showed a collaborative social sharing approach to have a 15x exposure benefit to a single entity producing and promoting video.

Video style, creativity, storytelling, and production quality is critical. Video needs to maintain a Fort Frances brand: authentic, ruggedized outdoor, humorous, “real”, people-based vs purely landscape.

Municipal examples are available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGMZUuTmlUCqhHzdL5reZJg>.

Photo Library

A professional photographer should be engaged to photograph a core set of high-quality core product pictures. Photos should be used for the website, and as content for social media posts (visuals in Facebook have exponentially better traction than text alone). Professional photography can be supplemented by thematically curated and carefully selected photography acquired from the community.

Photography needs to maintain a Fort Frances brand: authentic, ruggedized outdoor, humorous, “real”, people-based vs purely landscape.

v) Create a gamification app (468 Insider – “Incentivizing Presence” – www.468insider.com)

The 468 Insider app is a good example of the marriage of technology with consumer motivation to visit bricks and mortar establishments.

468 Insider is a customizable mobile app that drives visitor engagement and commerce for communities by rewarding users for visiting places. The more places visited, the more points earned. Points can be redeemed for discounts on good and services within the community. By deploying the app, organizations can go beyond basic maps and directory listings – making their communities more fun, memorable and rewarding for visitors.

The app's EXPLORE button takes visitors to your community's map, which has pins indicating places of interest. Clicking on each pin on the map gives users more information about that location. Locations can be assigned POINTS to be collected when users are within GPS range of a location. Places of interest can be anything geographically: a point of interest, a business location, or an item in a store. Physically visiting a location adds points to a user's Achievement page. Points can be redeemed for goods or services at REWARDS locations. Place owners enter a code to deduct points in exchange for a reward of their choosing. The app can be customized (brand) for location. An online control panel provides valuable data about visitor activity, volume, and origin.

To provide cost context, a 40-location arrangement is \$3.6K/year with zero setup cost for 3+ year contract terms. Pricing is tiered based on the number of locations.

vi) Order Swag

Swag is only successful when it's creative, distinctive, and/or fun. Swag is most effective when aligned with brand (e.g. Lillooet black Guaranteed Rugged toques, City of Castlegar Do It Outdoor shirts). Carefully considered, ordered and product-placed, swag can break even while offering brand awareness building.

Marketing Campaign Spirit Leveraged

-Swag-



Posters/cards

Apparel



License plate frame



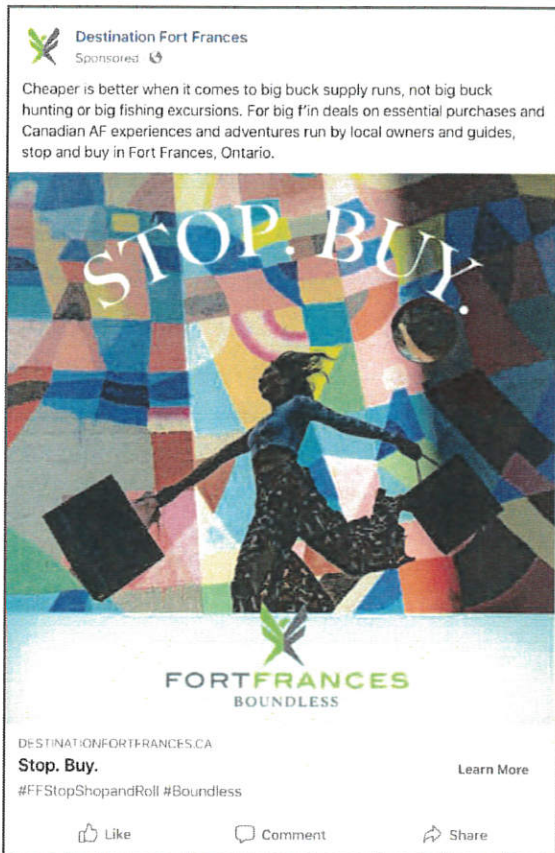
iPhone frame



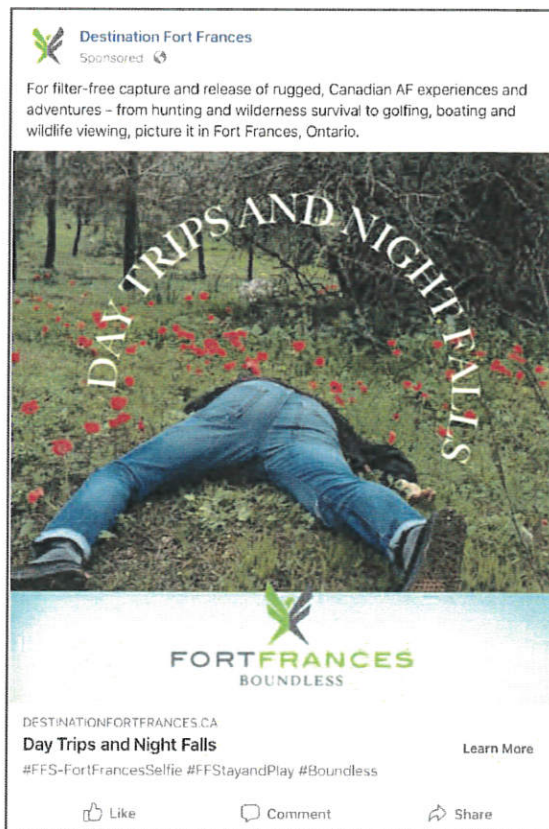
Note: Images sourced from Internet search.

4B. Core Product Creative Direction

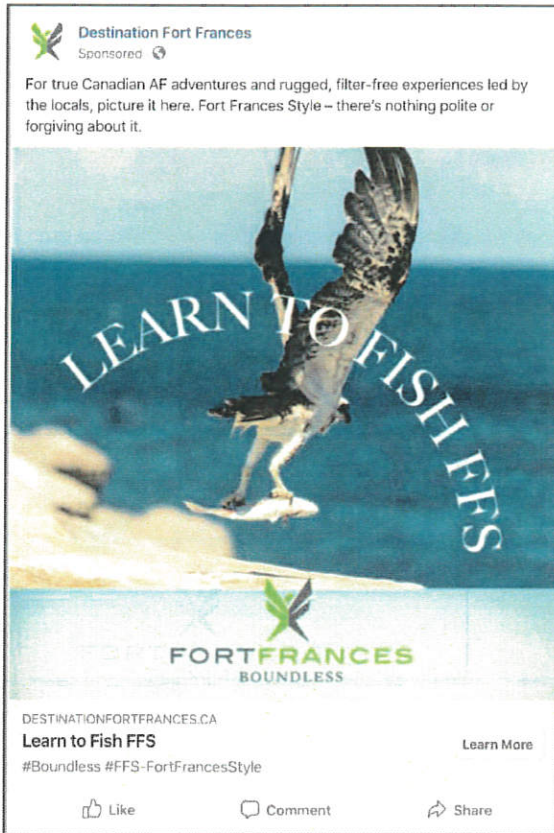
Brand creative has been updated to reflect two core products, online focus, and creativity required to break through marketing clutter. Creative is presented as representative Facebook ads with a call to action click through that would drive back to campaign/promo specific sections of the website, including packaging and discount codes if relevant.



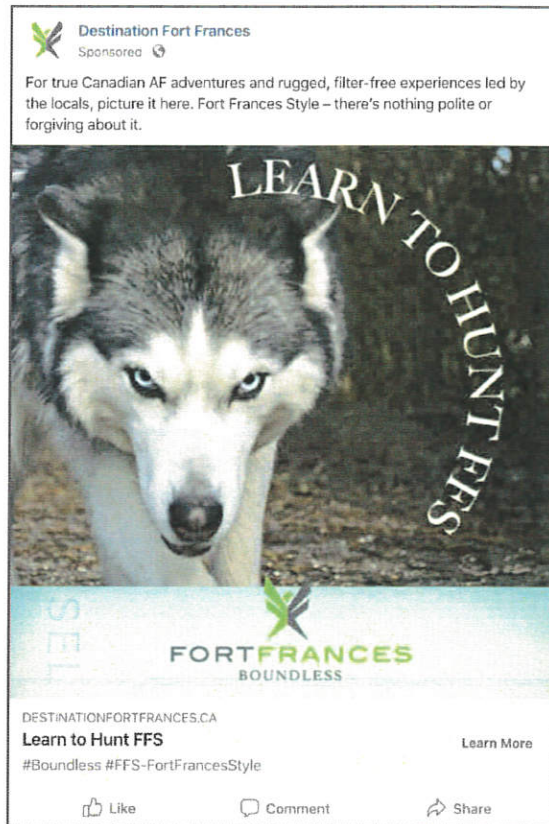
30 Minute Stop, Shop and Go Promo with call to action click back to Destination Fort Frances for packaging, coupon codes, etc.



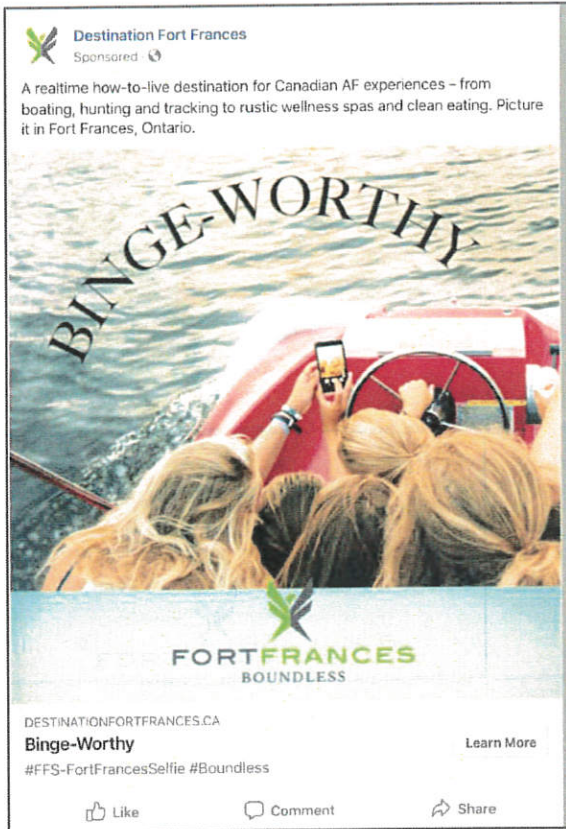
Stay and Play promo (trails/golf focus) with call to action click back to Destination Fort Frances for packaging, coupon codes, etc.



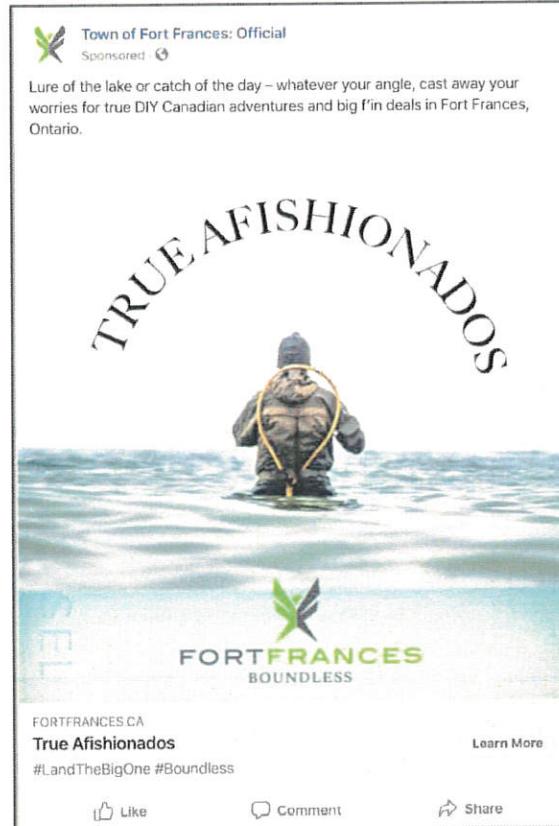
Product 2 – Learn To Targeted at Millennials and more youthful target market with call to action click back to Destination Fort Frances for packaging, coupon codes, etc.



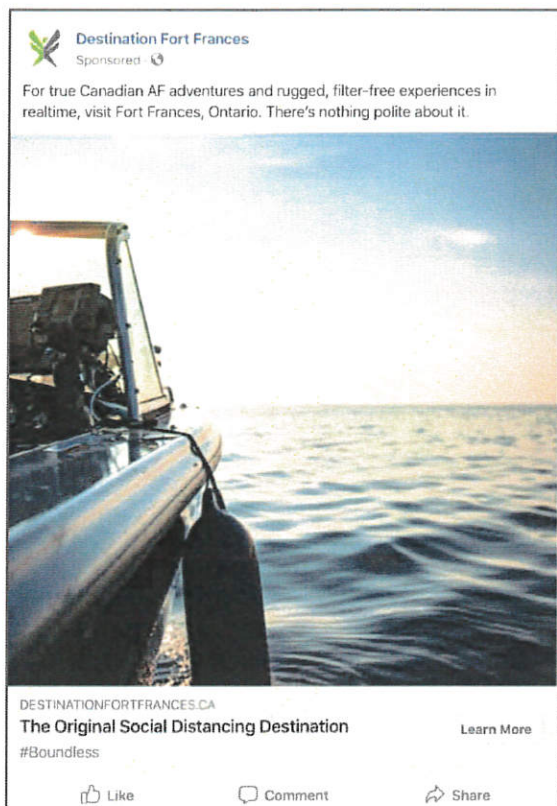
Product 2 – Learn To Targeted at Millennials and more youthful target market with call to action click back to Destination Fort Frances for packaging, coupon codes, etc.



Product 2 – Learn To Targeted at Millennials and more youthful target market with call to action click back to Destination Fort Frances for packaging, coupon codes, etc.



Product 1 – Angling with call to action click back to Destination Fort Frances for packaging, coupon codes, etc.



COVID Recovery Phase product awareness building ad



Facebook/Destination Fort Frances website masthead

4C. 30 Minute Stop, Shop and Roll Market

The notion here is to get people to stop for supplies in Fort Frances on the way to lodges up north/shop for cheaper stuff on way back to US. Gas, angling supplies, groceries, etc. Or even someone in International Falls/northern Minnesota that comes to Fort Frances for some cheaper shopping.

Note: there is a bit of big box there – Canadian Tire, Walmart.

Mechanically this looks like a collaborative group of merchants co-investing in an online ad campaign and/or materials available at TIC/border, co-invested via the MAT. Ads can be grouped by type: angling supplies, therapy shopping, restaurants, etc. or by distinctive stop, shop and roll groupings (e.g. one gas station, one restaurant, one retailer per promo).

Offerings start to look like this: <https://www.radiumhotsprings.com/listings/offers/>

Fast Pass Technology Solution - Wildcard

On changeover day the line-up to get back into the US can be long – resulting in long wait times in Fort Frances. What if Fort Frances could create a way for cars of interest to pull out of the line, do some shopping, then return to their place in the line as it has moved forward? This approach is akin to Disney's ride FastPass system.

Fort Frances should explore the potential of an RFID system and dedicated lane modification in the area of the Tourist Information Centre to enable vehicles to “skip forward in the line” at a prescribed time.

E.g. <https://www.drbsystems.com/products-and-services/pos-add-ons/fastpass/> - where a small tag (3/4" x 4") is handed out, and a reader “interrogates” the tag at a prescribed location to allow gate entry.



ORGANIZATION

Tourism planning, development, marketing, and budgeting – including collection of the MAT - will be managed by the Rainy River Development Corporation (RRDC). The RRDC has advisory board oversight.

Operational intention is to manage tourism development and marketing contracts with consultants who have specific skill sets and can meet specific Fort Frances needs.

A challenge is to ensure that tactical implementation planning is concise and focused...building from smaller initiatives and foundations into broader considerations.

Budget is estimated at approximately \$150K/year. Both product development and marketing will be conducted using this revenue. RRDC will not serve as a product developer. Its role is to advocate for private sector entry into tourism sector development, and incentivization/subsidization of select activities with high strategic value and ROI.

The budget will be leveraged where possible – via private sector participation in specific marketing initiatives, and grants where applicable. Desire is 70/30 MAT/private sector cost share on marketing initiatives in order to secure active private sector participation in initiatives.

Establish Valuation of Tourism

While statistics are available specific to the size and composition of the tourism sector in Ontario, no information is currently available for the Town of Fort Francis. Fact and evidence-based conversation is an important of explaining “The Why” in terms of the value and contribution of tourism to diversification strategy.

It is recommended that the Town of Fort Frances contact the Government of Ontario to acquire an accurate tourism measurement model, and secure the services of the province and/or a consultant to establish baseline measurement of the size, value and sector profiling of the tourism sector. e.g. Lillooet - <http://www.lillooetbc.ca/PDF/District-of-Lillooet-Value-of-Tourism-Study-2009-2.aspx>

A STEAM economic impact model is typically used to quantify sports event impacts – enabling a community to determine a level of interest in sports event bids and/or tournament development. Metrics support other important legacies from sport tourism that don't have a standardized measurement but are still important to consider: infrastructure development, community visibility and spirit, volunteer and leadership development, and new partnership development between sport, businesses, the tourism sector, and the community. One must be member of Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance and take a STEAM training course to use this tool- <https://canadiansporttourism.com/steam.html>