



This month's newsletter is about leveraging partnering and packaging to respond to key market trends and to be ready for the upcoming travel season.

What's Inside

- [6 Steps for Tourism Businesses To Create Great Travel Packages](#)
- **Upcoming Application for Seats on the RTO 9 Board of Directors**
- **Featured Operators & Destinations on Packages & Itinerary Building**

RTO9 News



RTO 9 Annual General Meeting

Date: June 3rd, 2022, Online

Please join RTO 9 for a review of the 2021/2022 year at this virtual event.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Managing The Mental Health of Your Employees

Monday, April 11th 2022 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

As a hospitality owner or manager, are you able to recognize the signs of burnout, depression, anxiety, substance use challenges or crisis in your team? Do you know how to support your employees mental health?

Join RTO 9, Not 9 to 5, and Healthy Pour, for a candid discussion on real issues and challenges that hospitality employees deal with every day. In this Webinar, learn about strategies and resources you can use to create a supportive environment for your team.

This webinar will be recorded and will be sent to those who have registered.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

Upcoming Application for RTO 9 Board of Directors Seats

The following Board of Directors Seats for RTO 9 will be up for election. Brockville, At Large, Prince Edward County and Kingston. Stay tuned for a link to the application.



ATTRACT & RETAIN TOMORROW'S TOP TALENT

Free High-Demand Training

RTO 9 is supporting tourism and hospitality job-seekers, workers and employers by providing access to training and learning opportunities that focus on high-demand workplace skills. For a limited time, a selection of carefully curated on-demand courses can be accessed free!

Courses are suitable for people interested in joining the tourism industry, current employees who would like to improve their knowledge and upskill, and those planning a return to work.

[LEARN MORE](#)

We also monitor and share key market trends to help you respond strategically on our [COVID-19 resource page on our website.](#)

Market Insights



6 Steps to Creating Great Travel Packages

What has changed in partnering and packaging in a post-pandemic world? Most tourism businesses and operators are well versed in the benefits of partnering and packaging, but this will be even more important in a post-COVID-19 world. The pandemic has sadly caused gaps in our local, regional and national tourism sector. With business closures, staffing and resource tensions, accessibility issues, etc., – working together to fill these gaps to build compelling reasons to travel is a must.

As the last of the travel restrictions begin to be lifted, we know there is pent up travel demand and even more competition than ever. Partnering to develop targeted packages that speak to what we have all missed over the past two years and indeed targeted to our collective ‘new normal’ is key.

Why Travel Packages?

Creating travel packages involves working with other local tourism businesses to create new ideas or reasons for visitors to choose your destination. Successful packages aim to improve customer experience, spend and length of stay, and inspire return visitation. Now more than ever, travellers want their getaways to be stress-free and easy and keeping the target visitor segment in mind, as well as new travel trends, is key.

[READ MORE](#)

Resident Sentiment

Destination Canada's Resident Sentiment Report reveals how safe residents feel about travelling to different places in Canada. Here are the highlights as of March 8, 2022:

- Compared to the previous week, feelings of safety towards all travel destinations have remained stable. However, feelings of safety towards the US and other international destinations have generally been trending upward since mid-February. This means that Ontario destinations are increasingly likely have to compete with international destinations for domestic visitors.
- 87% of people in Ontario feel safe travelling to communities near me, while 85% are comfortable travelling within province and 74% within Canada. Despite this, only 48% of Ontarians feel comfortable travelling to the US and even fewer (38%) feel comfortable travelling internationally. This suggests that domestic travel is, for the meantime, still preferred and can be leveraged for a strong spring/summer travel season.
- Ontarians still have a preference for rural travel over urban (92% compared to 87%) and is in keeping with trend for less crowded destinations. RTO 9 partners can leverage this to draw visitors from urban centers as well as those who would have previously favoured an urban destination.
- Also demonstrating a positive upward trend is level of comfort for welcoming visitors increasing from 76% on February 22 to 78%. This trend has continued a steady rise since late January.

[READ MORE](#)

2021 Overnight Arrivals

[Destination Canada's Overnight Arrivals Report](#) compares international arrivals into Canada from key source markets for 2019 and 2020. Here are the highlights:

- Despite the borders remaining closed to US visitors until August 2021, and to international visitors until September 2021, the data demonstrates

an increase in growth (over 2020) from the key source markets of US (2.1M increase), UK (112K increase), Germany (54K increase), and France (121K increase), with a total annual overnight arrival increase of 3.1M (over 2020).

- The US drive market continues to be important and represents a key opportunity for RTO 9 with 1.4M of the 2.91M US arrivals in 2021, where entry by air represented 676K, and entry by other represented 18K.

[VIEW THE INFOGRAPHIC](#)

Workforce Development

Rendez-vous Canada 2022 – Toronto

“As we look to the future of Rendez-vous Canada, we are thrilled to share that we will be hosting a hybrid format of Rendez-vous Canada+ (RVC+) in 2022. The new format will bring back in-person attendance, while also incorporating a virtual component, creating opportunities for more of industry to engage and make appointments with international buyers, travel trade media and Destination Marketing Companies.

Taking place from May 24 – 27, 2022, the in-person portion of RVC+ will be a buyer-seated marketplace in Toronto, Ontario. This will be Canada’s RVC and hosted by Destination Canada and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, creating an exciting opportunity to welcome international buyers back to Canada and showcase the beauty of this country, as well as the truly meaningful travel experiences on offer across each province and territory.”

RVC+ offers a great opportunity for sellers to “forge new contacts and strengthen existing partnerships, gain the inside track on Canadian tourism and where it’s headed, expand your network, and learn new and creative ways to market to a global audience”. It is also a unique opportunity to hear from buyers representing key international source markets about what experiences their clients are seeking and provide valuable insights on who to partner with and what packages would be most attractive to buyers.

In recognition of how difficult the past two years has been for tourism businesses, Destination Canada has reduced registration, implemented a reduction in registration fees.

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

Tourism and Hospitality Businesses Can Hire Ukrainian Job Seekers through Job Bank

The Government of Canada has created a process for employers interested in hiring Ukrainian nationals arriving in Canada. Interested employers can create an employer file on the federal Job Bank and upload job postings, indicating that they are for Ukrainian nationals. Community groups can express their interest in being involved in the recruitment and support process.

Job Bank will be used by Ukrainian job seekers who have arrived in Canada.

[Learn More](#)

Featured Operators/ Destinations



A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats

Tourism Kingston's Rest and Relax Staycation offers a great example of how to get the most out of your partnering and packaging to make a compelling reason to travel.

The package provides a charming accommodation, in-room spa treatments and features locally made products in support of local businesses and providing a truly unique experience. While traditional accommodation packages often include on-property amenities, working with other tourism businesses and local partners can help to not only make it easier for visitors to choose your destination; it also helps to amplify and ripple the economic impact of the visitor spend. Showcasing different aspects of your destination by creating custom packages that speak to travel trends and target audience. This approach can also help to fill potential gaps in the tourism ecosystem and create a streamlined experience for visitors that will compel them to come back, again and again.

[READ MORE](#)

In late 2021, RTO 9 partnered with VIA Rail and Canadian tourism company Landsby, to help stimulate economic growth in the region by encouraging local Winter travel. The result was the successful Rail + Roam campaign, which

offered travellers discounted train tickets and exclusive itinerary packages throughout South Eastern Ontario.

View our [latest blog post with founder & CEO, Jason Sarracini](#) and learn how you can get started working with Landsby to [grow your tourism and hospitality business.](#)

[GET STARTED WITH LANDSBY](#)

Media Spotlight

The Government of Ontario Encourages Ontarian's to Rediscover the Province

On March 10, the provincial government announced an Ontario Staycation Tax Credit to encourage residents to explore their own backyard. Residents will get back up to 20 percent on their eligible accommodation expenses for leisure stays in the province this year.

[READ MORE](#)

ACTA Launches Urgent Appeal for Extension of Federal Aid

On March 8, ACTA President Wendy Paradis lobbied the federal government for an extension of the rent and wage subsidies to continue at 100% until at least July of this year. This comes on the back of a fifth wave of Omnicron that further devastated Canada's tourism sector and nearly eliminating a winter travel season.

[READ MORE](#)

Opportunities



'Safe Travels' Stamp Application

The specially designed stamp will allow travellers and other Travel & Tourism stakeholders to recognise destination authorities and companies around the world that have implemented health and hygiene protocols that are aligned with WTTC's Global Safe Travels Protocols.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Every month, we'll be sending you the latest insights, research and thoughtful perspectives on the issues that matter most to tourism businesses and operators in RTO 9.

If there are any topics you want to read about in a future newsletter, please email imedeiros@region9tourism.com with your ideas.

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