

EVALUATION OF THE ATLANTIC CANADA TOURISM PROGRAM (ACTP)

*Year 2 :(2007-2008)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

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- The Atlantic Canada Tourism Marketing Program (ACTP) was successful in meeting its overall objectives in 2007. The Program generated \$87.0 million in expenditures in Atlantic Canada and attained an overall return on investment (ROI) of 17:1.
- The US program continued to be very strong. It generated \$82.9 million in expenditures and attained an ROI of 19.45:1. This was well above its 14:1 objective.
- The Overseas program improved its ROI from \$4.00 last year to \$4.74 in 2007 however it continued to run short of its 6:1 objective. Revenues used to evaluate the overseas program are limited to the results of tour wholesaler co-ops. Web inquiries are an example of impacts which are not included in revenue estimates. Web inquiries in overseas markets have now reached levels that conversion rates of less than 5 percent would be required to meet overall program objectives in overseas markets.
- The US Consumer advertising campaign attained an ROI of over 26:1. This was the fourth consecutive year the campaign has delivered an ROI of more than 20:1 in unstable market conditions.
- In addition to the expenditures generated by the consumer campaign, surveys carried out in New England show advertising awareness for the Atlantic Provinces increased in 2007 and it generally ran equal to or better than awareness for its leading Canadian competitors (Quebec and Ontario).
- Media brokered savings and added value in the US market totaled \$1.4 million in 2007. This was an all time high for the program and was well above the objective of \$900,000.
- Media relations programs were very successful in both the US and overseas. The equivalent of \$13.6 million in media coverage was attained in the US (up 58 percent from last year). In overseas markets media coverage reached \$10.2 million (up 9 percent from 2006).
- Tour wholesaler partnerships in Europe were very successful. Fourteen partnerships delivered \$3.7 million in ACTP attributed expenditures and an ROI of almost 16:1. Expenditures were up 20 percent from \$3.1 million last year and the ROI was up from 10:1.
- France is still in the start up phase. Three of five (reporting) tour wholesaler partnerships generated \$315,000 in revenue attributed to ACTP and an ROI of approximately 10:1.
- Partnerships with US tour operators struggled in 2007. Three partnerships generated \$800,000 in revenue and an ROI of 10:1.
- The most recent International Travel Survey data (2006) shows New England visitation and expenditures in Atlantic Canada have been falling consistently for the past four years yet the Region's share of total New England visits and expenditures in Canada have remained relatively stable.
- This is not the case with the Mid Atlantic States. Atlantic Canada has lost share as well as volumes of visitors and expenditures.

- The International Travel Survey found visitation to Atlantic Canada from overseas markets declined by 6.4 percent in 2006. Expenditures remained unchanged at \$102 million. Preliminary data suggests little change should be anticipated in 2007 (direct entries to Canada up 3.5 percent).
- In terms of individual markets, Germany appears to have positive momentum (four consecutive years of increase); the UK is flat (little change in four years); Japan is in trouble (consistently falling in visitation, revenue and share).
- Although specific measurables are not available, indicators suggest it was a very good year for Corporate Communications. All activities were carried out as scheduled.
- It was also a very successful year for research. In addition to awareness and travel intention studies the research web site now lists more than 50 recent studies which cover all segments of the Industry.