

2009 Nova Scotia  
Tourism Plan and Partnership  
Opportunities Highlights



NOVA SCOTIA.COM

  
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Tourism, Culture and Heritage

## Highlights

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The global tourism industry faced significant challenges in 2008. A combination of factors – from high fuel prices to economic instability – resulted in lower consumer confidence and spending, altered travel behaviour and changes in the industry, such as the loss of airlines resulting in reduced air access.

Nova Scotia was not immune to these pressures. Overall visitation was down slightly from previous years. The decline in United States visitation continued, while traditionally strong markets, like Ontario, showed some decrease. On the positive side, growth in the European and Western Canadian markets continued, cruise passenger visits increased and room nights sold grew modestly.

The three pillars of our long-term tourism strategy, *New Realities*, *New Directions*, continue to remain relevant and guide our activities in these uncertain times. Those pillars – courtship, gateway and core experiences – are the basis for the tactics planned for the industry in 2009.

Our courtship strategy involves three key steps that bring a visitor to Nova Scotia: lure, sample, buy.

We will build awareness and lure potential visitors to novascotia.com through online and traditional advertising, public relations, direct marketing, event marketing and social media.

At novascotia.com, visitors will sample the experience and be given the opportunity to easily buy Nova Scotia experiences. These consumer-focused efforts will be complemented by travel trade and partnership activities in key markets – part of our gateway strategy. Meanwhile, product development will focus on ensuring core experiences are of the quality desired by our target market.

Visitors will then buy their trip to Nova Scotia through our website, the Check-In call centre or directly through operators.

Our new brand positioning is rooted in our maritime culture, both modern and traditional, and appeals to today's "cultural explorer" who wants to experience the way of life in the places he or she visits.

In 2009, we will build upon the fundamental strengths of our brand and respond to change by pursuing opportunities in growth markets and using new tactics.

- Our new brand advertising campaign will lure potential visitors to the beauty and culture of Nova Scotia through the warmth and friendliness of our people. We will use the latest in social media to connect more people with our unique mix of products and experiences. This will be integrated with more comprehensive events and editorial programs, as well as travel trade activity and our conventional advertising mix of TV, print, direct mail and online.
- We'll strengthen our efforts in the Maritime region to maximize visits from our largest market and to respond to the trend of people travelling closer to home. We will reallocate some investments to fuel an increase of visitors from our main European market, the United Kingdom, and from Western Canada, while maintaining a presence in the northeastern United States. And we will continue activities in other core markets like Ontario and Quebec.
- Our use of social media will increase to ensure Nova Scotia has a greater presence in global online travel conversations. This will include monitoring and responding to online discussions and questions, and integrating blogs, social media news releases and popular sites such as Facebook and YouTube into the traditional marketing mix.
- Events and publicity in key cities will stimulate peaks of awareness during decision-making periods. The events will include opportunities to showcase our culture through music, food, wine and history.

- An enhanced editorial program in both traditional and online media will ensure that more content is available for more media to maximize Nova Scotia's presence in key markets.
- A priority focus for the Department will be on developing cultural tourism experiences to meet the needs of visitors who are interested in experiencing our culture firsthand in tangible and interactive ways.
- Visitor Information Centres (VICs) across the province will be refreshed to include new brand imagery, signs and technology upgrades. Digital flat-screen technology will be used to provide important travel-related information, promote attractions and encourage regional travel through Nova Scotia's new touring regions.
- Finally, we will continue to strengthen our new communications strategy that keeps industry informed and facilitates ongoing dialogue. This will include a new web portal, revamped Facts Flash and regular Let's Talk: Tourism Business Forums.