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FESTIVAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

REGIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATION 7
VERSION 3.0, FEBRUARY 2018

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FESTIVAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

General Program Overview

The Festivals Implementation Program (FIP) is designed to **coach**, and **educate** festival organizers in BruceGreySimcoe to

1. Make the festival more *sustainable*
2. Increase the *quality* of the festival
3. Expand or develop a *new* target audience to attend the festival (40km+ radius from host community).

The festival organizers must demonstrate how they will accomplish at least one of the items listed above by financially investing in the festival to achieve their goal(s). The Festival Partner **must be able to match RTO7's contribution** through this investment (i.e. capital improvements, marketing to support a new geographic target, etc.). Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7) will support the festival by providing a minimum \$1,000 including HST to a maximum of \$2,500 including HST towards digital marketing.

With over 500 identified festivals and events across BruceGreySimcoe, it is important to focus on areas that present the best opportunities for tourism growth. While events play a significant role in shaping the culture of the communities within the region, support for **established and emerging festivals** (as defined below) will be given priority. The Festival must also aim to:

- Increase visitor spending
- Increase length of stay and/or
- Increase return visits to BruceGreySimcoe.

DEFINITIONS

Festival¹ – An event with long-term planning and commitment. Such as Port Elgin's Pumpkinfest or The Orillia Perch Festival.

Event² – A stand-alone, short-term and focused performance or activity. Events can eventually be turned into a festival over time when the original event is complemented by a variety of other performances, activities or attractions. For example, a concert at a local theatre.

Well Established Festivals³ – A festival that attracts a significant portion of out of town visitors. These do not need to be large in terms of the number of participants, but they must attract a large percentage of tourists and/or media attention. For example, Meaford Scarecrow Invasion, Salsa at Blue or Collingwood's Elvisfest.

¹ Sierra Planning and Management. Regional Tourism Organization 7: Regional Strategic Plan for Festivals and Events. May 2014.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

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Regional/Emerging Festivals⁴: Festival whose attendance resides primarily within the communities of Bruce, Grey and Simcoe Counties, but not necessarily within the host community. This also includes events whose profile outside the region is growing. For example, Midland's Tug Boat Festival, Discovery Harbour's Pirates of the Bay or Coldwater Steampunk Festival.

Local Festival⁵: Festivals whose attendance is primarily from the host community. For example, Home & Garden shows, craft shows and Santa Claus Parades.

Coaching – This involves working with festival organizers through the steps in the product/experience development cycle. This includes brainstorming to find the right partners, developing tools to become more sustainable; helping to create action/marketing plans to grow the festival, or asking the relevant questions to shift thinking. The stakeholder takes the lead in seeing the project through to completion with support from RTO7 staff to help to drive the development forward.

Advertising: The paid, public, non-personal announcement of a persuasive message by an identified sponsor; the non-personal presentation or promotion by a firm of its products to its existing and potential customers.

Marketing: The systematic planning, implementation and control of a mix of business activities (product, price, place and promotion), intended to bring together buyers and sellers for the mutually advantageous exchange or transfer of products.

DIGITAL MARKETING SUPPORT

Eligible partners will receive the following per festival:

- \$1,000 - \$2,500 of digital advertising directed to the festival's home page through Facebook sponsored posts or Google Adwords.

Facebook Sponsored Posts

- Partner must have a Facebook *page*
- Maximum three (3) ad campaigns can be created
- Minimum five (5) photos including logo must be provided OR one (1) video
- Festival Partner must add the RTO7 agency of record, the Aber Group, as advertisers to their Facebook page
- Festival Partner is responsible for managing comments from the posts

OR

Google Adwords

- Maximum three (3) ad groups can be created with up to 100 keywords total

NOTE: Facebook and Google Adwords may both be used IF the RTO7 funding contribution is \$2,500.

- A one page report that details
 1. Impressions
 2. Reach
 3. Click Through Rate (CTR)
 4. Total Clicks
 5. Cost Per Click (CPC)
 6. Reactions/Comments/Shares

⁴ ibid.

⁵ ibid.

7. Total Spend

- This spend includes HST and Agency Fees (RTO7's Agency of Record will set up the campaign)

Please note: Keyword list and targeting will not change for the duration of the campaign.

Partners will receive support to develop the keyword list, geographical targeting, and interests for each of the ad campaigns.

Partners will receive one interim report approximately halfway through the campaign highlighting performance to date.

Stakeholders may add to the campaign by adding cash for digital marketing to increase the total budget for the campaign.

If Stakeholders have postal code data from previous 2-3 years, (min 500), RTO7 can provide a consumer segmentation report.

STAKEHOLDER REQUIREMENTS

Stakeholders interested in the Festivals Implementation Program will be required to demonstrate how the festival will:

- Improve quality and sustainability
 - Does it attract support from the private sector?
 - Is there a risk management policy?
 - Are visitor and/or vendor surveys conducted?
- Tell the story of place
 - Why is the festival unique to BruceGreySimcoe and the community?
- Collaborate with community stakeholders, Destination Marketing Organizations and/or other events
- Increase attendance and/or geographic reach
 - Will it attract cottagers and visiting friend and relatives?
- Increase tourist visitation and expenditures
 - Are visitors encouraged to extend their stay?
 - Are there additional opportunities to increase the economic impact? For example, ticketed VIP opportunities or a ticketed experience?
 - Are visitors encouraged to return to the community again?
- Greening
 - Does your festival have a green policy or initiative to try and reduce waste?

Festivals that take place during **high season** (July and August), must allocate **80%** of the RTO7 Festival Implementation Program digital spend to a geographic market that is **40km+** from the host community.

Please note: Festivals on Canada Day, the Civic Holiday, Labour Day and Thanksgiving weekends must allocate 100% of funding outside BruceGreySimcoe.

Festivals that take place in the **shoulder season** (January – June, September – December), must allocate at least **50%** of the RTO7 Festival Implementation Program digital spend to a geographic market that is **40km+** from the host community.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

WHO CAN APPLY

- Private tourism businesses
- Not-for-profit organizations who coordinate tourism festivals such as the Lucknow Kinsmen for Music in the Fields
- Destination Marketing Organizations who run individual festivals
- Tourism Organizations/Associations who coordinate tourism festivals within BruceGreySimcoe
- Municipalities/Conservation Authorities who organize tourism festivals
- Business Improvement Associations/Chambers of Commerce who organize tourism festivals

CLUSTERS

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), Business Improvement Associations (BIAs), Municipalities or Chambers of Commerce may apply for a cluster of festivals (min 2, max 5) as the lead partner. Each festival within the cluster would receive \$1,000 - \$2,500 towards digital marketing. RTO7 reserves the right to approve each festival within the cluster. The lead partner must be able to demonstrate that **each** festival within the cluster has invested at least \$1,000 - \$2,500/festival towards creating greater sustainability, increased the quality or expanded to/attracted a new audience. Each festival does not need to make the same financial investment but RTO7 will match the **actual** investment to a maximum of \$5,000. This can be funding directly from the festival, the DMO or a combination of both. A maximum of \$12,500 may be accessed per year

Festivals must apply at **least six (6) weeks** before the festival advertising campaign commences.

All festivals must occur within BruceGreySimcoe before March 31, 2019.

STAKEHOLDER REQUIREMENTS

- Businesses or organizations must be established and be able to demonstrate the capacity (financial and otherwise) to execute the festival.
- Organizations must be legally registered to operate in Ontario.
- All necessary permits must be in place (federal, provincial, municipal, etc.).
- Festival must carry liability insurance and name RTO7 as an additional insured party
- Have a website/social media page, phone number and email address that are regularly monitored and contain current information.
- If using Facebook as the marketing mechanism, the Festival must have a Facebook **page**.
- Google Analytics are activated on the festival's, or when appropriate, the Lead Partner's website
- If using Facebook, the partner must commit to monitoring the posts daily for the duration of the campaign.
- Partner's home page has [BruceGreySimcoe Always in Season](#) and Ontario logos placed on it for one year and links back to [brucegreysimcoe.com](#) and [Ontariotravel.net](#). RTO7 will provide these logos.
- Social media posts must tag @BruceGreySimcoe (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and use #brucegreysimcoe. RTO7 will also provide a list of standard #hashtags that are used in partner's area.

- Identify BruceGreySimcoe and Ontario as partners on all printed collateral and media releases.
- Maintain a current and up-to-date operator listing on BruceGreySimcoe.com and ensure current festival information is listed on the BGS Festivals and Events Calendar (for assistance, please contact info@brucegreysimcoe.com).
- Current festival information is listed on www.Ontariotravel.net (free listing).
- Complete the free BruceGreySimcoe Service Excellence online training program prior to submitting an application. Program information can be found [here](#).
- Must be signed up for the RTO7 E-Newsletter <http://rto7.ca/Public/Special-Pages/Mailing-List-Signup>.
- All partners are required to complete a final report and supply copies of invoices demonstrating their \$1,000 - \$2,500 investment in the festival within 30 days of the completion of the festival. Failure to do this may result in ineligibility to participate in RTO7 programs in the future.

TARGET MARKETS

The target market for festivals should fit within the existing targets of RTO7.

Geographic Targets

- Greater Toronto Area
- Southwestern Ontario
- BruceGreySimcoe (Visiting Friends and Relatives)
- Quebec
- USA Border States

[RTO7 Consumer Segmentation Targets*](#)

- Up & Coming Explorers
- Connected Explorers
- Nature Lovers
- Sports Lovers
- Pampered Relaxers
- Knowledge Seekers

Targeted activities within BruceGreySimcoe have been identified through various studies and reports. Projects that are focused on these activities will be given priority.

Targeted Activities

- Water-based tourism
- Nature and outdoor recreation
- Culinary and agritourism
- Culture
- Cycling
- Resorting

*Please note: you must be registered on www.rto7data.ca and login to view the segment reports.

TARGET FESTIVALS

- Well Established Festivals

- Regional/Emerging Festivals

DATA COLLECTION

RTO7 reserves the right to collect information from the Festival partner to help measure visitation and spending. The data collected from Festival partners may then be aggregated with other data in the longer term to provide a clearer picture of the state of tourism within the region. RTO7 can provide a standardized survey. The information will also help to determine how successful the program is. **Partners must be prepared to commit to and follow through on collection of data related to the festival and RTO7's needs.** Failure to do this may result in ineligibility to participate in RTO7 programs in the future.

INELIGIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS

The following contributions are **not** eligible contributions for partners' financial outlay:

- Grants and flow-through to partners or other organizations
- Charitable funding
- Political parties or lobby groups
- Recipients of funding from Ontario Government programs such as Celebrate Ontario, Tourism Event Marketing Program or Destination Ontario or other RTOs
- In-kind donations

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until January 31, 2019 or until the program is fully subscribed.

Applicants should be aware that RTO7, through funding arrangements with the Province, is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.f 31, as amended from time to time, and that any information provided to RTO7 in connection with their application, project or agreement may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Partners agree to permit RTO7, if required, to verify/audit information submitted (at the discretion of the Province) to ensure that it is complete and accurate, and that funds were used for the purpose(s) intended.