



Haliburton Highlands Brand & Marketing Overview

September 9, 2014

*“If everyone is moving forward together,
then success takes care of itself.”*

- Henry Ford



County of Haliburton

Tourism Director's mandate is to...

**CREATE
DEMAND.**



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Approach: Absorb, absorb, absorb

- Spoken to a number of stakeholders in the community, accommodators, influencers, leaders and various interest groups (HCDC, HHCoC, HH Tourism Committee);
- Observed the Tourism Info Centre and made improvements;
- Reviewed existing documents and research (tourism townhalls, premier-ranked, etc.)



Approach

But perhaps most importantly...

I respected the history. I did not approach this as an opportunity to “change everything” for the sake of change. I sought input from key people – and listened to what they had to say.



I combined all of that valuable input with my own experience and knowledge to build the plan.

Haliburton Highlands SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS



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TAKEAWAY:

Conduct a regular SWOT analysis of your “situation”

- Whether you’re in a marketing, human resources, administration, etc. – conduct a quarterly analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- You need to do this to help measure your successes – and identify opportunities!

TAKEAWAY:

PRODUCT vs. BRAND

You need a BRAND in order to have a successful product...and for your product to survive.



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My Big Aha Moment



WE HAVE A GREAT PRODUCT.

(...so we're lucky!)



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**BUT WE DID
NOT HAVE A
BRAND.**



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Great product.

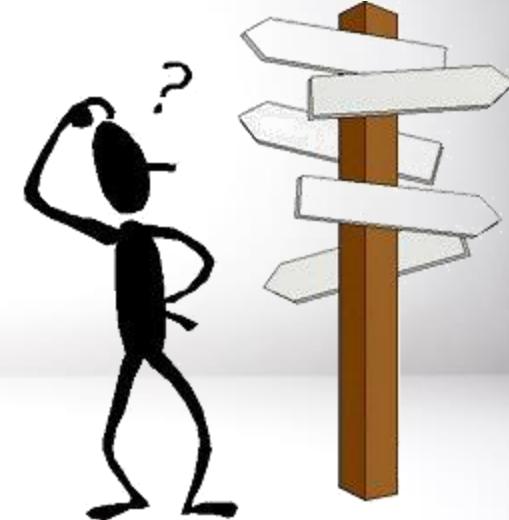
Something to see and do every day, for everyone.



No brand.

Who are we?

- The Highlands?
- Haliburton?
- Just an umbrella for four municipalities?



We have the iPods, we just don't have the Apple (so to speak).

WE NEED TO CREATE THE BRAND.



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SO HOW DID WE CREATE A BRAND?



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With a brand marketing plan which was...

Strategic

+

Flexible (ability to be nimble)

+

Quick to execute

The plan had to...

Build General Brand Awareness

“You don’t know where the Haliburton Highlands are? You’re missing out!”

Increase Share of Heart

A powerful brand lasts not because of share of voice, but because of **share of heart** (*brand ambassadors who are ‘just people’*)

Look Inside & Out

Have a focus on internal (within County itself) & external marketing (a drivable radius)



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Who Is Our Audience?



Who is a tourist?

[toor-ist] noun 1) a person who is traveling, especially for pleasure.

- *Oxford dictionary*

“Individuals (incl. Ontario residents) who travel 40km or more (one-way)...”

- *Government of Ontario**

Seasonal residents and cottage population are defined as “tourists”

- *2012 Premier Ranked Report, OHTO*



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Who is our ‘tourist’?

There was much debate as to what it means to be a ‘tourist’ in the Haliburton Highlands – and there probably is in your region.

- Who should we attract and why?
- What value do they bring?
- “If they don’t stay overnight, we don’t want them...”

We need to stop this debate because...



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IT DOESN'T MATTER!

Do not anymore time trying to define what it means to be a tourist (or a local, or a seasonal resident, blah, blah) and let's focus on a core audience of people who are interested in...

the beauty of the area;
the experiences in the area;
spending money in the area



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BUT... we can't market to everyone

The County simply doesn't have the resources to market to 'everyone', nor would that be a strategic approach to marketing the Haliburton Highlands.

The RTO 11 study (Sept 2012) showed the following demographic for Ontarians (96% of our visitors) who most visited the Haliburton Highlands:

- Middle-aged (35-54)
- College or University education
- Higher household income
- Skew slightly toward couples without children
(not to say families aren't visiting)



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Why we like this target.

- They have money to spend
- They have time to spend
- They like **outdoor adventure**
- They appreciate (and are likely to participate in) **arts & culture**
- They are highly engaged with social media
- Seeking new and different experiences to tell their friends and family about
- We like “Karen & Jake”
- ...and related residual audiences



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Residual Audiences



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TAKEAWAY:

Define your target audience

- ...and market to them!
- Create all your materials & information with this target in mind
- Assess how your market is increasing or changing over time



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TAKEAWAY:

Undertake a branding exercise

Can you answer these questions?

What is it that I am “selling”?

What is my MISSION – can I define it in one sentence?

Define your BRAND in 3 words

 What you are NOW

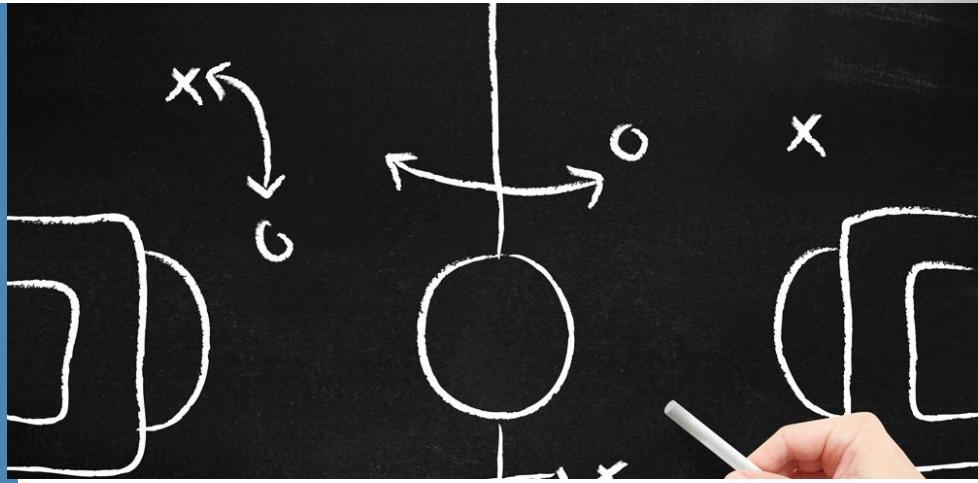
 What you would LIKE to be – are those words different? (Might be ok if they are!)

Does everyone on my team and in the company know all of the above? They SHOULD.



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Tactics



Creating the Brand Framework

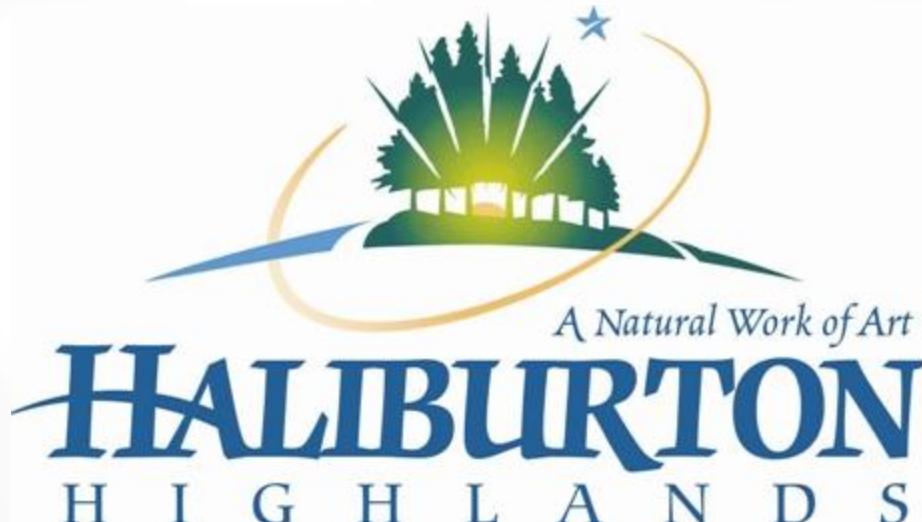
- 1) Develop brand guidelines
- 2) Establish common ‘talking points’
- 3) Create new marketing “assets”...



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NEW VISUAL (LOGO)

Haliburton Highlands was dated...with zero “call to action”



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LET'S TALK ABOUT TAGLINES

“Yours to discover” - Ontario

“Ripe with surprises” – Kelowna, BC

“Prepare to be amazed” – Oshawa, ON

“Find yourself here” – California, USA

“So much more” – Bermuda

“Once discovered, never forgotten” - Muskoka

“A natural work of art” – Haliburton Highlands



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The best taglines...

- Are simple
- Have a call to action or symbol incorporated
- Includes the destination name itself



These are some renowned destination campaigns:

“Incredible India”

“Super, Natural British Columbia”

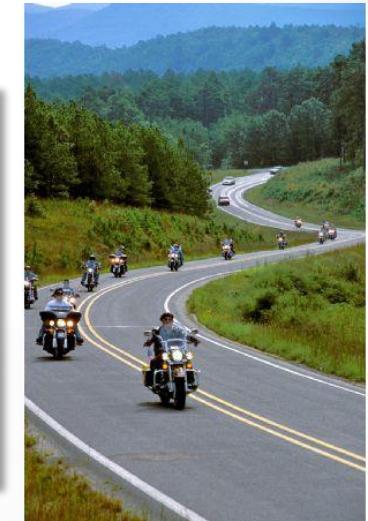
“I ❤️ NY”



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Remember, we need to stop trying to define “who has the right to be here”...

Most importantly, need a tagline that is inclusive and resonates. Everyone can be part of it & share their story of what the Haliburton Highlands mean to them – much like “I ❤️ NY”



#MY *Haliburton*
HIGHLANDS

MY *Haliburton*
HIGHLANDS

MY *Haliburton*
HIGHLANDS

New logo + tagline provides us with...



- A clearer definition of the brand for advertising & marketing purposes
- Something exciting that the community can embrace
- Creates new, fresh momentum for the brand
- A call to action
- Creates a sense of belonging with visitors
- It helps to energize!



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Promotion of new branding

Every stakeholder includes logo and tagline in their email signatures – build mass awareness and instilling a sense of community pride. County of Haliburton & local municipalities include on all communications.

Moving forward, together.

One brand.



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TAKEAWAY:

Develop Marketing Assets

- Make sure your promotional imagery AND language is common across the board
- Ensure that stakeholders/partners are speaking the same language
- Leverage your promotions to TELL your story and show why what you have to offer is UNIQUE
- Create “brand ambassadors and they will “do the work for you”!



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#MyHaliburtonHighlands by ROOTS Collection



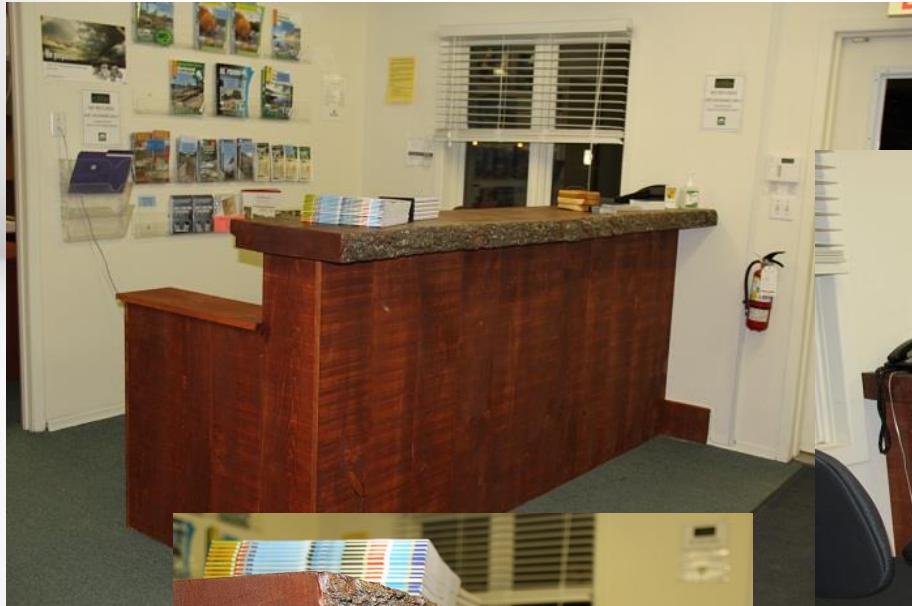
- Canadian-made, quality wear!
- Roots does not work with everyone (e.g. Parks Canada story)
- Cache/buzz creation
- Creates brand ambassadors



Tourism Info Centre: Welcome counter



Tourism Info Centre: Welcome counter



Tourism Info Centre: But wait...there's more!



Tourism Info Centre: But wait...there's more!



New welcome signage

Create new signage with new logo + tagline at key placements/entries to the County: *Hwys 35, 118, 648 & 60 & key County roads (pending RED grant)*



But, we were able to...



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New Materials



Why does all of this matter?

...because this is how a brand is established – people need “something” to connect with, be proud of (and brag about!)

“Canadian consumers are caring less about product and price – but more about emotional connection. They want to be engaged and excited...”

– Frédéric Ranger, Tourisme Montreal



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Experiences: The Big 3



Promotional opportunities all year round

Arts & Culture

Outdoor Adventure

Food
(Grant Received!)

Special events – marketing blitzes

Winter Games

Hike Haliburton

Highlands Summer Festival

Farmers Market

Studio Tour



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Destination Development: Food & Culinary Tourism (2014 and beyond)



**Boshkung
Brewing Co.**

haliburtonfresh



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Destination Development: Food & Culinary Tourism

Work in partnership with OCTA to develop Haliburton Highlands' culinary tourism offering.

23 week project which includes inventory list & mapping, stakeholder engagement, SWOTT analysis, Culinary Tourism Development Plan and final report.



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Destination Development: Travel Trade (2015 and beyond)



Once the ‘foundation’ has been built and the Haliburton Highlands brand is established & recognized, the County can look at moving into the area of travel trade, and create key partnerships with experience providers.

(Rendez-vous 2015 likely to be hosted in Niagara Falls)



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TAKEAWAY:

Evolution is constant.

While you're working at building or creating your brand...

- Always be improving your products
- Always be planning ahead
- Always be focused on relationship building



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Marketing the Brand & Experiences



Consumer Shows

For Q2 2014 and beyond, the County of Haliburton took a hiatus from Consumer/Trade Shows

- The Motorcycle Show and Outdoor Adventure Show (Q1 2014) were attended
- It is getting more and more difficult to demonstrate a positive ROI for consumer shows
- Revisit the idea for 2015 and perhaps participate in different shows as they relate to experiences in the County (e.g. The Food & Drink Show, One of a Kind Show, etc.) and partner with key stakeholders.



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Social & Digital Media is ‘where it’s at’

- It is inexpensive
- Highly effective
- Ability to reach **mass** market and build awareness

...and now for some fun with stats...



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CANADA ONLINE



27.4 million Canadians are online:
that's 80% of the population



They spend 17.2 hours online
per week on average



Each person in Canada watches
1 hour per day of online videos



93%
go online for product information

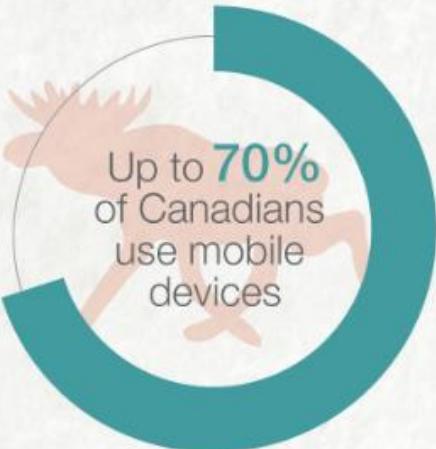


44%
use online videos more than
they did last year

Businesses need to
adapt and understand how
to play the new game—
one of the best ways to
reach consumers is now
online... and on the go.



THE MOBILE TAKEOVER



Of those that use mobile devices...



97% use their mobile phone at home

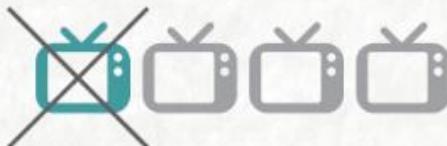
83% use mobile on the go

80% use a smartphone

79% don't leave home without it

60:1

Smartphone searches
to regular phone



1 in 4

would give up TV over
their smartphone



86%

of smartphone users notice
mobile ads



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Fish where the fish are.

More than 19 million Canadians are logging onto Facebook at least once every month — that's more than half the population — while 14 million check their newsfeed every single day.

70% of Canadian seniors are engaged with social media.

Facebook, 2013, Harris-Decima 2011



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It worked! Social Media Explodes

Redbrick's Municipal Social Media Survey looked at social media use by all 444 municipalities in Ontario.

Redbrick Communications is a Mississauga-based agency with an extensive municipal practice.

This research was produced as a part of their ongoing Municipal Social Media Survey.

This survey has been conducted for the past four years. HalCty never made the list at all, but now holds these spots in 2014.



1. Sault Ste. Marie
2. London
3. Haliburton County
4. Cornwall
5. York Region
6. Kitchener
7. Niagara Falls
8. Mississauga
9. Niagara Region
10. City of Prince Edward County



1. Pelee
2. Schreiber
3. Ignace
4. Terrace Bay
5. Nipigon
6. Haliburton County
7. Red Rock
8. Goderich
9. Georgian Bay
10. Sioux Narrows -Nestor Falls



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TAKEAWAY:

Social Media IS now.

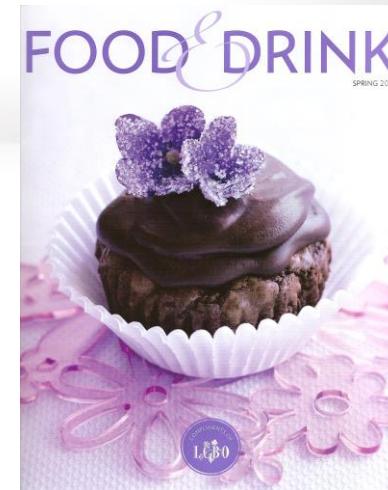
- Everyone is on it – I guarantee your audience is on it
- It's inexpensive and the most immediate way to reach a mass audience
- Make sure your messages are clear, concise and “on brand”
- Don't pass off your social media channels to *Joe the Intern*



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Paid Media (Advertising)

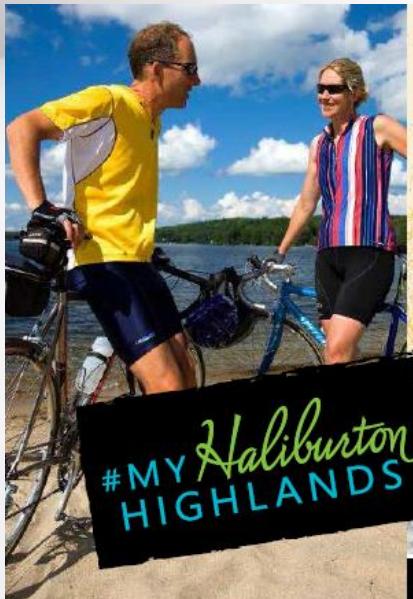
Specifically advertised where our ‘target’ audience is...



GolfDigest®

Paid Media (Advertising)

...a glance at some of the ad creative...



Looking for a unique destination for your next getaway?

Eager to experience exhilarating outdoor adventure, nature and a vibrant arts & culture scene? No matter the season, the Haliburton Highlands will leave you wanting more. Located just 2.5 hours from Toronto and 4 hours from Ottawa, you can start ticking off that bucket list closer to home than you thought!

Follow #MyHaliburtonHighlands on [Facebook](#) Haliburton.Highlands and [Twitter](#) @visithaliburton and start planning your next adventure!

Photos courtesy of: HalliburtonForest.com, Winterdance.com, YoursOutdoors.ca

#MY Haliburton HIGHLANDS

MyHaliburtonHighlands.com



So close and so very unique!

#MY Haliburton HIGHLANDS

Enjoy the many restaurants and foodie experiences in the Haliburton Highlands from wine making to our unique maple syrup to locally-grown garden goodies. You won't want to miss a stroll through the farmers' market or a delicious meal on a lakeside patio. Find us at [MyHaliburtonHighlands.com](#)

Like us on [Facebook](#) Haliburton.Highlands and follow us [Twitter](#) @VisitHaliburton

Paid Media (Advertising)

The 2014 paid media impression goal is 8 million. We are currently at...

15,193,370



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Unpaid Media (Public Relations)

- Develop an Influencer/Blogger Program
- Media Tour

These programs have been underway via partnership with OHTO. We will continue to leverage the relationships which have begun via the bloggers/media who visited our stakeholders this year.



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TAKEAWAY:

You don't need a million dollars *(even thought that would be nice)*

- Advertising/Marketing/PR – it's all about being strategic
- Fishing where the fish are – knowing your audience
- Redefining and revisiting your advertising strategy (have you been advertising with that one publication because you've "done it every year?")
- Look beyond the obvious (e.g. travel vs. sports, for example)



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Measuring Success



SWOT, revisited

In the SWOT analysis which was conducted in fall 2013, there were some weaknesses and threats identified, which have come a long way due to the hands-on relationship cultivation by the tourism department:

- Many fragmented efforts/groups
- Lack of common branding/not using existing branding
- General lack of confidence in the area
- Lack of buy-in from stakeholders
- Team work, as a community

Mission Accomplished. In 9 months, we have...

- Created a new brand (created a brand, period!)
- Successfully promoted the brand in new & exciting ways
- Revamped our advertising strategy and creative
- Improved all social & digital activity
- Widely promoted County events and activities to a huge audience
- Developed new signage
- Raised the quality, look/feel of the Tourism Centre
- Developed new materials (maps, window clings, etc.) – improved DG
- Launched a clothing line with a high profile partner
- Launched the Food Initiative
- Earlier launch and better planning for Hike Haliburton activities
- Worked on Pan Am Games strategy/awareness
- Formed partnerships with several organizations (e.g. Arts Council, HHOA)
- Stakeholders are speaking the same language
- Gained trust of stakeholders



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TAKEAWAY:

You don't **10** years to “make it happen”

- Create a plan
- Make it nimble, be flexible, prepare to change course if needed
- Execute it quickly
- Cultivate relationships with partners and leverage those to help with the plan execution
- ...and don't be too hard on yourself – building a brand takes time
(Rome wasn't built in a day, neither was Apple or Nike)



County of Haliburton

THANK YOU! Now, follow ME/US...!



@amanda_ranson53



@VisitHaliburton



/Haliburton.Highlands