



ECONOMIC STRATEGY & TOURISM BRANCH NEWS



VOLUME 1 • OCTOBER 2008

UNDERSTANDING THE AGING WORKFORCE

In the 2005 Economic Strategy, we identified that workforce development was critical to continued economic growth in York Region. The aging workforce is a trend that we need to better understand as we move forward.

Over the next ten years, aging baby boomers in the workforce will begin to retire in large numbers. This may create a loss of valuable knowledge from the intellectual capital of York Region, a reduction in the supply of qualified employees and pose questions about succession planning at small entrepreneurial firms, which make up over 70% of York Region businesses.

In the 1920's seniors accounted for about 5% of the population, and 8% by the 1960's. Low fertility rates, longer life expectancies and the effects of the baby boom generation are among the factors contributing to their share of the total population increasing to 13.1% by 2004.

The aging of the population will accelerate over the next three decades as baby boomers begin turning 65 years old in 2011. Seniors' share of the population is expected to increase to 24.5% by 2036, representing a dramatic demographic shift that will have broad social and economic implications.

The aging of the population is certainly reflected in the age composition of the labour force. In 1976, 42% of people in Canada's labour force were 15 to 29 years of age however, by 2004, only 27% were in that age group. Conversely, the share of labour force participants aged 45 or older increased from 28% to 36%.

The median age of retirement has fallen from 65 in the mid 1970's to 60.6 in 1997. In 2005, the median age of retirement was 61.0 years; however following retirement, just fewer than 300,000 Canadians aged 65 and older participated in the labour force accounting for only 1.7% of the total labour force.

Through the late 1970's, about one-fifth of employed men aged 55 to 64 were self-employed. This share increased to almost 30% by the 1990's. The share of employed men aged 65 or older engaged in self-employment increased from around 40% in the late 1970's to over 60% through much of the 1990's and 2000's.

York Region has 159,635 residents aged 50-64 based on the 2006 census, accounting for 18% of the total Regional population. Assuming the average York Region employment participation rate of 70%, there are 112,000

residents aged 50-64 in the labour force who will be retiring, which represents 24% of the total current workforce. This trend will occur concurrent with the continued growth in York Region employment, which is forecasted to increase from 480,000 jobs in 2007 to 799,000 jobs by 2031.

We are developing a proposed Aging Workforce study program that will research labour market data on the aging workforce, identify best practices in mitigating labour supply issues, consult with key employers, survey workers, present findings in workshops, conduct consultations and develop a pilot initiative with select employers.

If funding is approved, the program is set to commence early next year. ♦



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ECONOMIC STRATEGY BUILDING A VIBRANT & SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

In February of this year, Economic Development released its Marketing and Communications Strategy Implementation Plan 2008—2010. The Plan was developed with Larter Advertising, and included in-depth consultations with York Region businesses and stakeholders, establishment of brand position and target markets, and development of creative design and collateral materials.

During consultations, stakeholder groups and the business community identified the need to promote a balanced approach to economic development that enhances quality of life, environmental sustainability and economic vitality.

It became evident for the Region to communicate its strengths, acknowledge its thriving economy and promote its quality of life through an established Regional brand. The brand will convey key benefits offered by York Region to the business

and investment community worldwide.

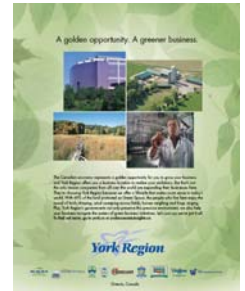
With a focus on **sustainability**, the Economic Development Marketing and Communications Strategy identified three priorities:

- ◆ Persuade foreign corporations that embrace environmental sustainability to locate in York Region
- ◆ Encourage York Region businesses to adopt environmentally sustainable business practices
- ◆ Develop programs to expand the Region's environmental technology sector

In terms of sustainable investment attraction, a series of advertisements (see inset) has appeared throughout the year in targeted business magazines. Three insertions appeared in Canadian publication **Green Business Magazine**, and three insertions in the U.S.-based **Sus-**

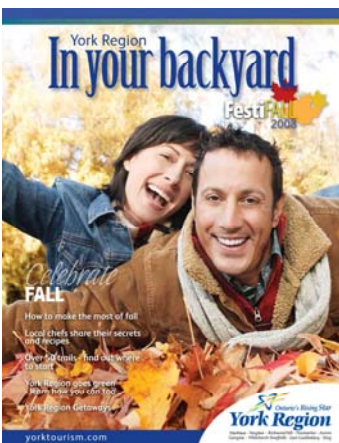
tainable Industries Magazine. In addition, a comprehensive International Investment Attraction program is being assembled for 2009.

A number of initiatives will surface in 2009, focusing on the development of sustainability with York Region businesses, including a green resource guide, sustainability seminars and workshops, and a corporate education initiative.



In the latter part of 2009 into 2010, programs to expand the Region's environmental technology sector will be developed and implemented. ♦

TOURISM FESTIFALL A SUCCESS!



The tourism marketing program provides the framework for the promotion and development of York Region as a year round destination. Each season the tourism industry is provided with tactical partnership opportunities to enhance and grow their businesses.

The **FestiFALL** promotion spans ten weeks, from late August to early November, and includes *everything* fall.

This year's **FestiFALL** magazine, *In Your Backyard*, is full of hundreds of fall outing ideas and includes maps and touring routes, local chefs'

secrets, a calendar of events, over 50 trails and much more! It is a great reference to help residents celebrate everything fall in York Region.

Industry partners were very excited about this year's publication, and their participation more than doubled from last year.

The **FestiFALL** magazine is free and is a fantastic resource for every home. Over 4 million residents from York Region, the GTA and beyond were targeted in this year's outreach program, which included mailed postcards, newspaper and magazine

advertisements, e-blasts and radio spots. To date over 47,000 issues have been circulated.

Call 1-888-448-0000 or visit www.yorktourism.com/fall to order the "In Your Backyard" **FestiFALL** magazine, and enter to Win a prize. ♦

Visit our
**Tourism Industry
News Blog at:**
yorktourism.com/en/industrynews.asp

YORK EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WELCOME GARY OUE, OUR 2ND EXPORT ADVISOR

International opportunities and challenges assessments are offered to select export-ready companies.

York Region's Export Development Program is growing! Gary Oue joined the team in September 2008, replacing Kenneth de Wolf as our second contract Export Advisor.

Gary has over ten years experience advising clients in market planning, exporting, product launch and sales channel development. His most recent position was at the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks

Corporation where he was Manager, Incubatee Development and Technology Support, providing clients with advisory services for international business development.

Gary resides in Markham and is well versed in the global opportunities for York Region companies. Proficient in English, Cantonese and Mandarin, he will work with businesses in Aurora, Markham and Richmond Hill.

Jim Hobbs has been with the Export Development Program since January 2007; his territory is East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville and Vaughan. ♦

Contact your export advisor:

- ♦ Jim Hobbs: (416) 453 8323
jim.hobbs2@sympatico.ca
- ♦ Gary Oue: (647) 835 1819
gary.88@hotmail.com

SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE SPRING & SUMMER PROGRAM UPDATES

In May 2008, Small Business Consultant, Dan Ruby joined Pauline Nagelmakers, Small Business Assistant, in the York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre (YRSBEC).

The YRSBEC serves York Region's six Northern municipalities, and this year, the municipalities worked together to host the Small Business Workshops. The rural outreach was a great success enabling Mayors and Economic Development Officers to intensify relationships with local business, and this will continue in 2009.

In the spring and summer, the YRSBEC and Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services conducted the Summer Company Program. We select business advisors to mentor ten young entrepreneurs on their own Small Business Plans— this was the highest participation rate since inception.

The Business Plan Challenge, also for youth, is nearing completion, culminating in the Regional and Provincial Awards Gala hosted by Markham on November 8, 2008.

Twelve Pickering College students were recognized in a speech by Patrick Draper and Sofia Khan of the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services on October 2, 2008 at Pickering College for their business plan submissions.

Barry Mason, one of the twelve students, has been selected to move to the finals in November. We wish him the best of luck! ♦



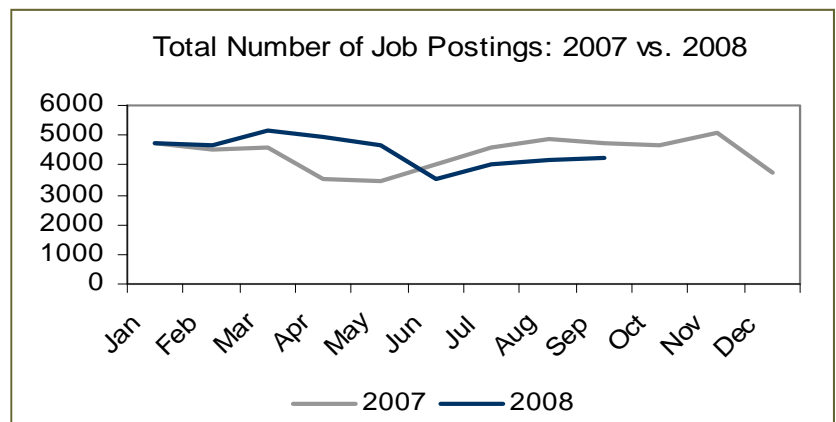
JOB HIRING INDEX QUARTERLY UPDATE

The third quarter analysis presents a few interesting variances in job postings compared to 2007.

The total number of job postings were down 13% in September vs. 2007, however they increased enough in the first two

quarters to result in a fairly insignificant year-to-date variance of -3%.

Job postings in the Goods Sector, which includes manufacturing, were down 25%. This is significantly lower than jobs in the Service Sector, down 11%. ♦



FEATURE STORY: YORK REGION JOB HIRING INDEX

Labour force supply is one of the major factors that impact the ability of businesses to sustain their competitive position.

In an effort to better understand the hiring demand of York Region businesses, York Region Economic Development created a Job Hiring Index with *Fairy Lake Jobs.net*.

Labour force supply is one of the major factors that impact the ability of businesses to sustain their competitive position. The Index collects data on job postings and monitors trends in the demand for York Region's labour market.

During the Employers Opinion Survey undertaken in 2004, employers clearly expressed that a major challenge they face is to attract and retain suitable workers for their industry.

The quality of the labour force and the range of issues surrounding the supply and access of employees was a persistent theme raised by stakeholders and the business community during the Economic Strategy consultation process.

Workforce development was identified as a strategic initiative in the 2005 approved Economic Strategy, and one of the actions proposed was for York Region to facilitate better forecasting of industry requirements, skills shortages and deficiencies within the Region.

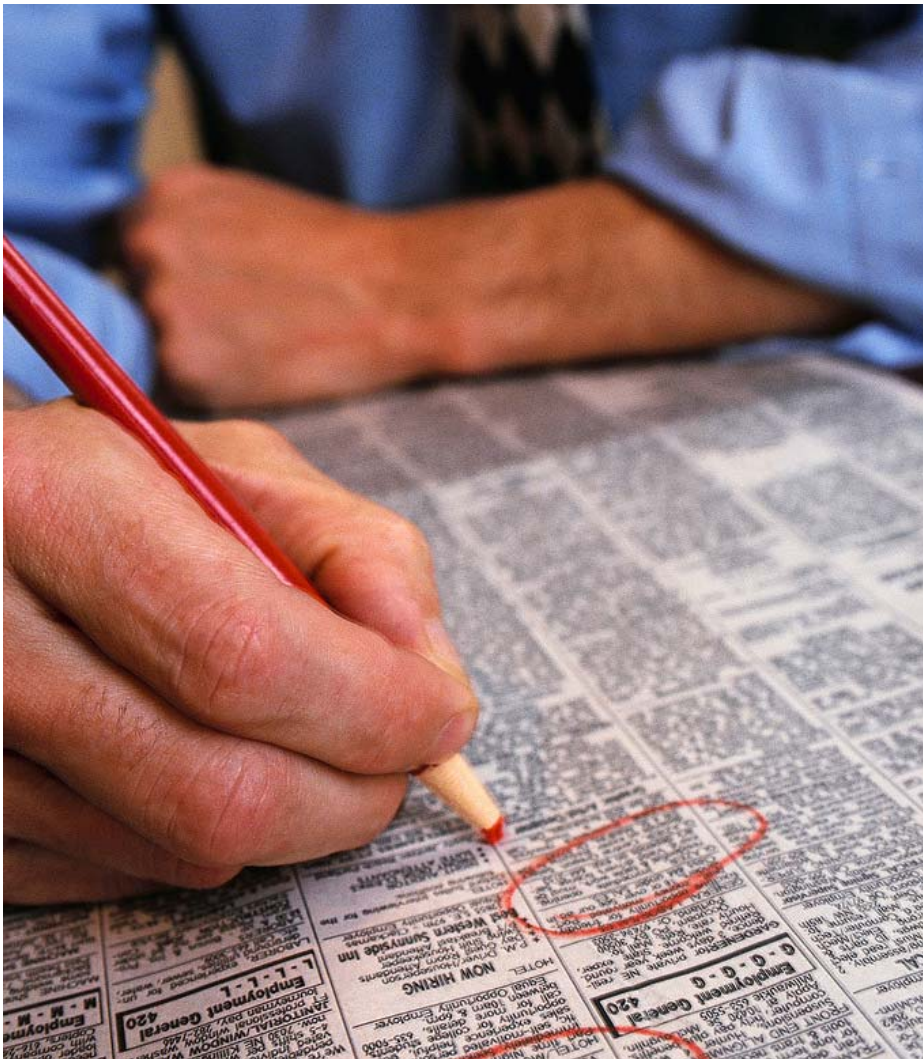
Tracking employment and hiring trends is an important indicator of future economic activity. Private sector firms increase hiring as business grows and reduce hiring if revenues are decreasing.

The Job Hiring Index uses advanced data collection technology to capture all advertised job postings across York Region. It automatically captures advertised jobs from online sources, including web editions of newspapers, online job boards and company web sites. The technology also identifies and sorts the data by the job type, employer (if identified), location, characteristics of the job opening and industry.

Data is collected daily and processed monthly. Data collection commenced in January 2007. Results are compiled and analysed quarterly, and distributed to each municipality's Economic Development Officer, as well as key external stakeholders.

Continued collection of job posting data will enable year over year comparative quarterly, monthly, and annual trends.

The findings are presented in a number of different formats, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of York Region as a whole, as well as targeted analyses displaying results by industry, by job type and by municipality.



Some Findings

The most recent analysis includes cumulative data for the first three quarters of the year, and allows us to compare 2008 relative to 2007, year to date September. It was found that the total amount of job postings increased by 3% year date.

Two tables from this analysis are included here to exemplify the types of results and trends that this Index provides.

Table A: Postings by Municipality (inset), shows the Regional breakdown, with particularly strong increases evident in the municipalities of Georgina, Whitchurch-Stouffville and East Gwillimbury, with only Markham and Vaughan showing small signs of slowing. This tells us that more jobs are becoming available in the high-growth outlying municipalities.

Table B: Posting by Industry (inset) illustrates the varying trends by industry from 2007 to 2008. The largest increase is in Public Administration at 78%, with Retail Trade, Real Estate / Rental / Leasing also showing large increases. Utilities shows the largest decrease of 75%.

The Job Hiring Index is an in depth analytical tool that is utilized by each local municipality to further understand employment trends, and enables York Region to work with the local Municipal Economic Development branches to assess local trends. By providing a detailed data information package, the Job Hiring Index results enable municipalities to conduct local job hiring analysis.

A synopsis of the quarterly updates will be included in each Branch Newsletter, with a summary of key findings and trends. ♦

If you are interested in learning more about the Job Hiring Index, please contact Sharon Vekh: sharon.vegh@york.ca, (905)830 4444 ext 1509.

A: POSTINGS BY MUNICIPALITY	YTD SEPT	CHANGE VS. 07
Aurora	2,367	30%
East Gwillimbury	94	88%
Georgina	192	225%
King	429	28%
Markham	13,696	-18%
Newmarket	5,001	21%
Richmond Hill	5,577	29%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	497	120%
Vaughan	6,142	-5%
York Region	6,186	26%
TOTAL	40,181	3%

B: POSTINGS BY INDUSTRY	YTD SEPT	CHANGE VS. 07
Retail Trade (44)	5,879	21%
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,985	2%
Professional/Scientific/Technical Services	5,567	-10%
Retail Trade (45)	2,533	28%
Admin and Support, Waste Management & R	2,681	-2%
Accommodation and Food Services	2,341	16%
Wholesale Trade	1,800	-34%
Manufacturing (33)	2,721	-4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,242	31%
Other Services (excl. Public Administration)	1,791	23%
Finance and Insurance	1,456	18%
Public Administration	1,407	78%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,251	9%
Information and Cultural Industries	1,063	-18%
Educational Services	1,162	18%
Manufacturing (32)	1,103	-20%
Construction	719	-6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	420	-40%
Transportation and Warehousing	442	-2%
Manufacturing (31)	299	8%
Transportation and Warehousing	246	15%
Utilities	18	-75%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	27	5%
Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	27	5%
TOTAL	40,181	3%

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT / SUN
		1	2	3	4 / 5
6	7	8	9	10	11 / 12
13	14	15	16	17	18 / 19
20	21	22	23	24	25 / 26
27	28	29	30	31	

October 3, 10:00 am—2:00 pm

GTAEDP Meeting

For information, contact: Patrick Draper ext 1503

October 17, 8:00 am—3:00 pm

EDO Partner Meeting

For information, contact: Peggy Morton ext 1512

October 18, 9:00 am—12:00 pm

York Small Business Workshop: *Building a Business Plan*

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

October 21, 8:30 am—10:30 a,

York Small Business Seminar: *Time Management*

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

NOVEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT / SUN
					1 / 2
3	4	5	6	7	8 / 9
10	11	12	13	14	15 / 16
17	18	19	20	21	22 / 23
24	25	26	27	28	29 / 30

November 6, 8:30 am—2:00 pm

York Region Annual Tourism Conference

For information, contact: Cathy Downard-Parmer ext 1552

November 14, 8:30 am—2:00 pm

Northern York Region Investment Tour

For information, contact: Sharon Vegh ext 1509

November 17

BizPal Launch on www.york.ca

For information, contact: Sharon Vegh ext 1509

November 21, 8:00 am—12:00 pm

Exploring Export Opportunities to Mexico Workshop

For information, contact: Peggy Morton ext 1512

November 25, 9:00 am—12:00 pm

York Small Business Workshop: *Bookkeeping & Taxes*

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

DECEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT / SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6 / 7
8	9	10	11	12	13 / 14
15	16	17	18	19	20 / 21
22	23	24	25	26	27 / 28
29	30	31			

December 2, 8:30 am—10:30 am

York Small Business Seminar: *Strategic Planning for 2009*

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

KEY NATIONAL INDICATORS: Q2 2008

Source: Canadian Economic Accounts, Stats Canada, August 2008

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	Real GDP increased 0.1% in the second quarter, following a 0.2% decline in the first quarter. The Energy sector posted the largest decrease of 2.3%, while Information and Communication Technologies increased by 1.0%. While final domestic demand continued to outpace GDP, growing 0.5% in the quarter, foreign demand for Canadian goods and services registered its fourth consecutive quarterly decline.
Personal Spending	Personal spending grew 0.6%, continuing to moderate after gains of 1.8% and 0.8% in the previous two quarters. The slowdown reflects the drop in spending on durable goods, especially motor vehicles. Conversely, purchases of clothing / footwear remained strong, and furniture / furnishings / household equipment posted a sixth consecutive increase of over 1.0%.
Manufacturing Shipments	The manufacturing sector continued to improve slowly after a very weak start to the year. The turnaround has been led by new orders, which had tumbled 3.3% at the turn of 2008, but are now increasing at 1.2%. Manufacturing shipments, down 0.3% in June were hampered by a strike in the auto industry.
Inflation	Inflation edged up in the second quarter to 2.3% from 1.8% in the first. Higher gasoline prices have continued to exert the strongest upward pressure on consumer prices. Gasoline prices increased 26.9% between June 2007 and June 2008, significantly higher than the 15.0% advance posted in May. This increase was the largest since the 34.7% gain reported for September 2005, when hurricanes Katrina and Rita disrupted the oil market.
Employment & Unemployment	Employment was unchanged in the second quarter, holding at 63.8%, while the unemployment rate edged up 0.2 percentage points to 6.1%, still among the lowest in 30 years. Over the past 12 months, employment in Canada has grown by 1.7% or 290,000.
Exports	The volume of exports fell 1.5% in the second quarter, 4.7% lower than the same period in 2007. The decline was widespread, as international sales of forestry products, machinery / equipment and automotive products continued to fall, reflecting, in part, declining US expenditures on these goods. The volume of energy exports decreased 3.7%, after a jump in the first quarter.
Imports	Imports advanced 0.6%, after falling 2.3% in the first quarter. Machinery / equipment imports grew, continuing the upward trend that began in 2003. The volume of international purchases of energy products jumped, mostly due to increased imports of crude petroleum. Energy imports have posted an average quarterly growth of 9.8% in the first half of 2008.

YORK REGION INDICATORS: MID YEAR 2008

Source: Economic & Development Review Mid-Year 2008, *2007 York Region Employment Survey

Canada's Exchange Rate averaged 0.99 USD in the second quarter, 9% higher than the same period last year.

	2007	2008	% change
Population	965,000	997,600	1.4 %
Unemployment	5.9%	5.8%	- 1.7 %
Number of Jobs	475,000*		
Number of Businesses	29,000*		
Total Construction Value	\$1,756,142	\$1,506,399	-14.2 %
Residential	\$1,248,878	\$1,067,840	- 14.5 %
Industrial	\$177,327	\$181,779	2.5 %
Commercial	\$226,766	\$198,633	- 12.4 %
Institutional	\$103,170	\$58,147	- 43.6 %
Industrial Vacancy Rates	5.2 %	5.8 %	11.5 %
Commercial / Office Vacancy Rates	8.2 %	6.7 %	- 18.3 %
Housing Sales (Resale)	9,326	7,848	- 15.8 %
Average House Price	\$416,264	\$440,399	5.8 %



ECONOMIC STRATEGY & TOURISM
BRANCH NEWS

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

17250 Yonge Street, 1st Floor
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1
(905) 830 4444

Visit us online!

www.york.ca
www.yorkeconomicinsights.ca
www.yorktourism.com
www.yorksmallbusiness.ca

BRANCH SERVICES

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

With a goal of enhancing community prosperity and a strategic focus on sustainable business practices, we specialize in attracting new businesses and helping York Region firms expand their business. We offer assistance in location selection, access to federal and provincial funding programs, investment information services, export strategies, workforce development, and small business start-up consulting. We work in partnership with the Region's nine municipal Economic Development Offices to ensure that all Regional businesses are successful in achieving their goals.

SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE

Offered in partnership with the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services, we serve entrepreneurs in the Northern York Region municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, and Whitchurch-Stouffville. Key services include delivering seminars and workshops, one-on-one business consultation and start-up advice. Annual programs offered by YRSBEC are the Summer Company Program, Business Plan Challenge, and the Bridges to Better Business Conference.

YORK EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

An Economic Development program providing advisory services to export-ready companies in all nine municipalities of York Region. Our goal is to enable growth of companies by increasing export sales revenue through providing international contacts and referrals.

TOURISM

As a department of the Economic Development Branch, we market York Region as an integrated travel destination in partnership with the tourism industry and other levels of government. We collaborate with tourism partners and colleagues to develop and deliver marketing programs that position York Region as a premier, four-season destination. We encompass a full range of services and resources, from strategic planning, marketing research and product development to media advertising, consumer information services, publications, travel trade and media relations.

STAFF PROFILE: CATHY DOWNARD-PARMER & MEREDITH HITCHMOUGH

When Cathy joined York Region Tourism four years ago, she brought a wealth of experience from Tourism Toronto and Toronto Tours Ltd. Responsible for Tourism Promotions, Cathy plans seminars, promotional events and the annual tourism conference for industry partners.



This spring, Meredith joined the tourism team after spending eight years in British Columbia working in various roles within the industry.

Just before joining the Region, she helped create a Destination Marketing Organization in Squamish. As the Tourism Marketing Specialist for York Region, Meredith is responsible for coordinating the development of print publications, advertising and communication materials.

In the last year, the team has worked on a number of initiatives. With the Hotel Industry FAM Tour, they took 20 front-line hotel staff to experience some of York Region's tourism attractions. They also hosted an interactive e-marketing seminar for 25 industry partners, and launched an extremely successful summer enhancement marketing campaign promoting getaways in York Region.

Both Cathy and Meredith agree that their most recent project, the **FestiFALL** magazine *In Your Backyard*, was a huge success! This year's publication features a new look and feel, engaging articles, and excellent visibility for the industry—partner participation more than doubled from last year, which attests to how successful **FestiFALL** is as a promotional tool. The team has worked very hard to distribute 47,000 magazines in less than one month.

Next year, Cathy and Meredith will be developing two new seasonal publications, and anticipate exciting new challenges as they develop the content and supporting marketing campaigns. They will also focus on improving the optimization and functionality of their website yorktourism.com as this is a priority that will pave the way for future opportunities.

Brenda McGowan, Program Manager of Tourism Development, is very proud of her team's efforts to build industry partnerships. These partnerships have contributed to the evolution of the tourism program since 2000, when it became a core function of York Region's Planning and Development Service's Department, Economic Development Branch. ♦

Contact Cathy or Meredith:
cathy.downard-parmer@york.ca
meredith.hitchmough@york.ca