

Haida Gwaii

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2010-2011

Tourism
Project
Summary

2010-

2011

A review of the projects undertaken by Haida Gwaii's Destination
Marketing Organization – MIEDS under the guidance and direction of the
Haida Gwaii Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC)

Year #1

Haida Gwaii



Tourism Advisory Committee

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Haida Gwaii

Tourism Advisory Committee

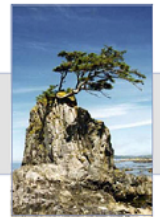
Introduction

Since MIEDS inception in 2008 and its subsequent decision to incorporate tourism in its work plan in the Spring of 2009, tourism has been furthering its development on the islands. This report is intended to outline the changes of tourism on the islands of Haida Gwaii since that time.



In a very timely fashion, the 2 year long process of compiling and researching tourism on the islands was completed in September 2009 by Tourism British Columbia. This 256 page Community Tourism Plan summarizes the conclusions and implications developed through meetings with stakeholders throughout the planning process and incorporates previous studies- the most relevant was the 2003 Heritage Tourism Strategy.

—Haida Gwaii
Queen Charlotte Islands —



HERITAGE
TOURISM
STRATEGY

MIEDS was identified as the organization that will take the lead responsibility for funding and implementation of this plan and the need to create a Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) to adopt the vision, mission and tactical plan that was developed through the Tourism BC Community Tourism Foundation process was noted. In December 2009 the TAC was formed with the recommendations of the Community Tourism Plan incorporated for composition, governance, and role, mission and vision and held its first meeting on March 8th, 2010.

Tourism Indicators and measures

There are a number of different avenues for measuring tourism on the islands that are available for public use and free information source. These are indicators from the BC Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, BC Ferries route 11 statistics, BC Visitor Centre Statistics, Gwaii Haanas visitor stats, Haida Heritage Centre visitor stats and statistics from the destination marketing website, www.goHaidaGwaii.ca. Although early yet to show any marked change on how our efforts have affected tourism to the islands, these information markers will prove to be valuable tools in the future.

| Northern British Columbia | Total 2008 | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Total 2009 |
|---|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|------------|
| Total Customs Entries via Region | 138,393 | 883 | 1,110 | 1,232 | 1,365 | 13,310 | 15,913 | 20,620 | 27,520 | 13,123 | 1,909 | 1,108 | 1,060 | 99,153 |
| % change - supplied by Statistics Canada | (6.5%) | (5.2%) | 10.8% | 15.2% | 19.2% | (23.8%) | (39.2%) | (39.2%) | (20.1%) | (29.5%) | 13.0% | 14.9% | 8.4% | (28.4%) |
| Percent of Total Provincial Customs Entries | 2.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 2.4% | 2.4% | 2.4% | 3.3% | 2.3% | 0.6% | 0.5% | 0.3% | 1.8% |
| Room Revenue (\$000) | \$149,307 | \$9,825 | \$10,025 | \$10,975 | \$8,224 | \$8,985 | \$12,641 | \$13,908 | \$13,974 | \$12,433 | \$11,598 | \$9,714 | \$8,148 | \$130,448 |
| % change - supplied by BC Stats | 5.3% | 12.3% | (6.4%) | (12.0%) | (25.9%) | (17.1%) | (16.0%) | (12.5%) | (11.0%) | (16.7%) | (13.9%) | (13.3%) | (11.4%) | (12.6%) |
| Hotel Occupancy - Prince George | 65.3% | 47.8% | 51.0% | 57.5% | 57.6% | 57.4% | 63.3% | 60.2% | 60.7% | 66.2% | 64.0% | 57.0% | 40.9% | 57.0% |
| point change - supplied by Pannell Kerr Forster | (3.3) | (9.5) | (6.7) | (9.4) | (20.8) | (14.1) | (11.2) | (4.6) | (3.5) | (8.9) | (5.5) | (2.8) | (2.8) | (8.3) |
| Average Daily Room Rate - Prince George | \$103.82 | \$104.39 | \$105.51 | \$107.29 | \$105.40 | \$108.42 | \$108.25 | \$106.16 | \$102.70 | \$104.88 | \$104.38 | \$103.62 | \$98.12 | \$105.10 |
| % change - supplied by Pannell Kerr Forster | 7.7% | 7.4% | 3.5% | 8.9% | 2.9% | 1.6% | (0.2%) | 0.6% | (1.8%) | (1.2%) | (2.2%) | (0.5%) | (1.9%) | 1.2% |
| Prince George Airport | 417,484 | 30,469 | 30,696 | 34,971 | 30,977 | 31,702 | 30,999 | 28,075 | 29,843 | 30,266 | 32,237 | 31,791 | 34,014 | 376,030 |
| % change - passenger volume | 3.1% | (15.4%) | (15.5%) | (12.0%) | (15.1%) | (18.6%) | (10.7%) | (12.4%) | (5.3%) | 4.1% | (11.5%) | (2.9%) | 1.7% | (9.9%) |
| Smithers Airport | 70,017 | 4,261 | 4,401 | 5,353 | 4,573 | 4,648 | 5,019 | 5,387 | 5,786 | 6,024 | 6,097 | 4,398 | 4,926 | 60,873 |
| % change - passenger volume | (10.7%) | (21.7%) | (25.5%) | (14.3%) | (21.9%) | (18.8%) | (16.9%) | (19.3%) | (11.1%) | (7.0%) | (6.1%) | 11.9% | 4.7% | (13.1%) |
| Fort St. John Airport (North Peace) | 122,628 | 8,797 | 9,272 | 9,022 | 10,126 | 9,821 | 9,566 | 9,054 | 9,667 | 10,143 | 10,236 | 10,269 | 10,335 | 116,308 |
| % change - passenger volume | 2.8% | (8.9%) | (9.7%) | (18.9%) | (4.8%) | (9.0%) | (6.3%) | (1.9%) | 7.3% | (2.8%) | (10.0%) | 0.9% | 6.3% | (5.2%) |
| BC Ferries: Routes 10, 11 & 26 | 201,893 | 8,139 | 9,012 | 10,258 | 11,871 | 27,019 | 19,751 | 27,699 | 29,326 | 19,929 | 11,054 | 8,469 | 8,411 | 190,938 |
| % change - passenger volume | (2.6%) | (8.4%) | (10.1%) | (21.8%) | (11.5%) | 46.9% | (11.3%) | (7.4%) | (9.7%) | (10.8%) | (4.2%) | (12.8%) | (14.0%) | (5.4%) |
| Visitor Info Centres | 119,214 | 1,636 | 1,674 | 2,119 | 2,568 | 10,409 | 23,639 | 32,902 | 32,793 | 11,322 | 2,926 | 1,803 | 1,586 | 125,377 |
| % change - total parties | (0.3%) | 10.2% | (3.3%) | 2.8% | (18.7%) | (12.3%) | 1.8% | 8.8% | 15.5% | 14.5% | (16.3%) | (9.5%) | (5.9%) | 5.2% |

2008 Northern British Columbia Room Revenue by Regional District** (\$000s)

| | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sep | Oct-Dec | Total 2008 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| Skeena-Queen Charlotte | 1,765 | 4,762 | 8,173 | 1,780 | 16,479 |
| % change* | 4.8% | 1.3% | -8.9% | 1.6% | -3.7% |
| 1. Kitimat-Stikine | 2,341 | 2,849 | 3,751 | 2,577 | 11,518 |
| % change* | 21.7% | -3.0% | -6.0% | 10.2% | 2.9% |
| Bulkley-Nechako/Stikine | 1,986 | 3,025 | 4,355 | 2,663 | 12,029 |
| % change* | -1.7% | 1.7% | -4.8% | -6.1% | -3.0% |
| Fraser-Fort George | 8,349 | 11,029 | 12,460 | 8,080 | 39,918 |
| % change* | 5.5% | 11.1% | -0.6% | -12.1% | 0.9% |
| Peace River/ Northern Rockies | 18,811 | 16,825 | 20,845 | 19,512 | 75,994 |
| % change* | -2.2% | 17.1% | 12.7% | 27.0% | 12.6% |

Source: BC STATS

*All % change figures are for changes from same period of 2007.

** Some regional districts straddle tourism regional boundaries; therefore, the sum of room revenue for the regional districts will not equal the tourism room revenue total, as reported in the previous table.

BC 2009 Year in Review shows a 28.4% decrease in international customs entry in the Northern BC region and a 12.6% decrease in overall room revenue in the Northern BC Region from the year before. BC Ferries passenger volume also decreased by 5.4% for their routes 10, 11 & 26 but there was an increase in total parties at the Visitor Info Centres of 5.2%. 2010 statistics are not available yet on this site.

| | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------|---|
| REVENUE (\$000s) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | |
| SKEENA-QUEEN CHARLOTTE | 11,557 | 11,683 | 11,924 | 12,325 | 12,723 | 12,930 | 13,605 | 16,614 | 16,061 | 13,839 | - | |
| Fishing Lodges | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Hotels | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6,886 | - | - | - | |
| 251+ Rooms (H1) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 151-250 Rooms (H2) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 76-150 Rooms (H3) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 1-75 Rooms (H4) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Motels | 2,541 | 2,159 | 2,163 | 2,182 | 2,341 | - | - | - | - | 2,609 | - | |
| Vacation Rentals | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Miscellaneous | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 842 | 948 | - | - | |

2. BC Ferries

BC Ferries also show a decrease in numbers from the period before. Passenger numbers on route 11 (Skidegate and Prince Rupert) were down 2.08% from June 2010 YTD from the same period as the year before. Although these statistics do not differentiate between resident Haida Gwaii travellers and visitors, this may be the best and easiest statistic to use for Island visitation. Another popular way to travel to the islands is by one of the airlines – Air Canada and Pacific Coastal from Vancouver or North Pacific Seaplanes from Prince Rupert. However, passenger numbers are not publically available from these companies.

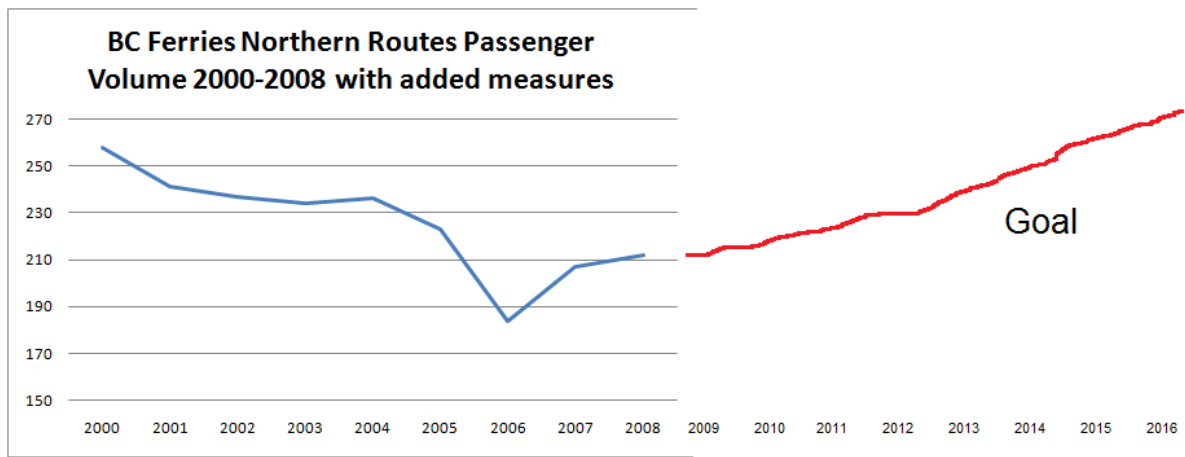


STTR 190
Fiscal Year: 2011
Source: F_Sailing_Event

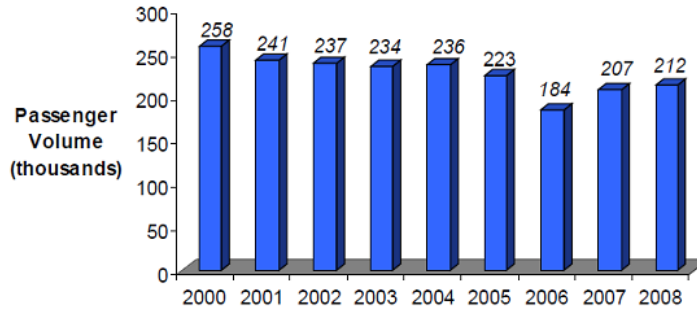
Traffic Statistics System
Total Vehicle and Passenger Counts by Route for June 2010

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| Route | Terminal | Vehicles | | | | | | | Passengers | | | | | | |
|-------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | | Month Curr Year | Month Prev Year | % To Prev Year | YTD Curr Year | YTD Prev Year | % To Prev YTD | Total Prev Year | Month Curr Year | Month Prev Year | % To Prev Year | YTD Curr Year | YTD Prev Year | % To Prev YTD | Total Prev Year |
| 11 | PR | 727 | 839 | -13.35 | 1,898 | 1,946 | -2.47 | 7,711 | 1,789 | 2,050 | -12.73 | 4,448 | 4,699 | -5.34 | 19,134 |
| | SKID | 675 | 799 | -15.52 | 1,679 | 1,693 | -0.83 | 7,425 | 1,738 | 1,944 | -10.60 | 4,100 | 4,031 | 1.71 | 18,536 |
| | | 1,402 | 1,638 | -14.41 | 3,577 | 3,639 | -1.70 | 15,136 | 3,527 | 3,994 | -11.69 | 8,548 | 8,730 | -2.08 | 37,670 |



Passenger Volume on BC Ferries' Northern British Columbia Routes 2000-2008



Source: British Columbia Ferry Services Inc.

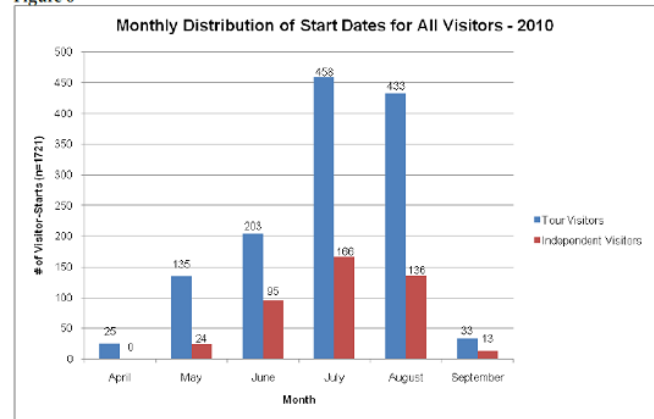
3. Queen Charlotte Visitor Centre Stats

Another statistic to use for an indication of the growth or decline of tourism on the islands is the Queen Charlotte Visitor centre stats or the Sandspit Visitor Centre stats. There is information such as the number of visitors per hour, number of phone calls, number of emails/faxes, but the most general indicator is the total number of visitors. This has shown to have gone down 21.4% in 2010 from 2009 at the Queen Charlotte Visitor Centre.

4. Gwaii Haanas User Statistics

Once a year, the people at Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site publishes an extensive statistical document with information on independent tours, commercial tours, educational groups, camping distribution, watchman base camps, management/ research trips and a summary. For our purposes, a total amount of Gwaii Haanas visitors would best help identify the change in tourism traffic down to the Park. In 2010 there were 1,726 visitors, 50 less than 2009.

Figure 6



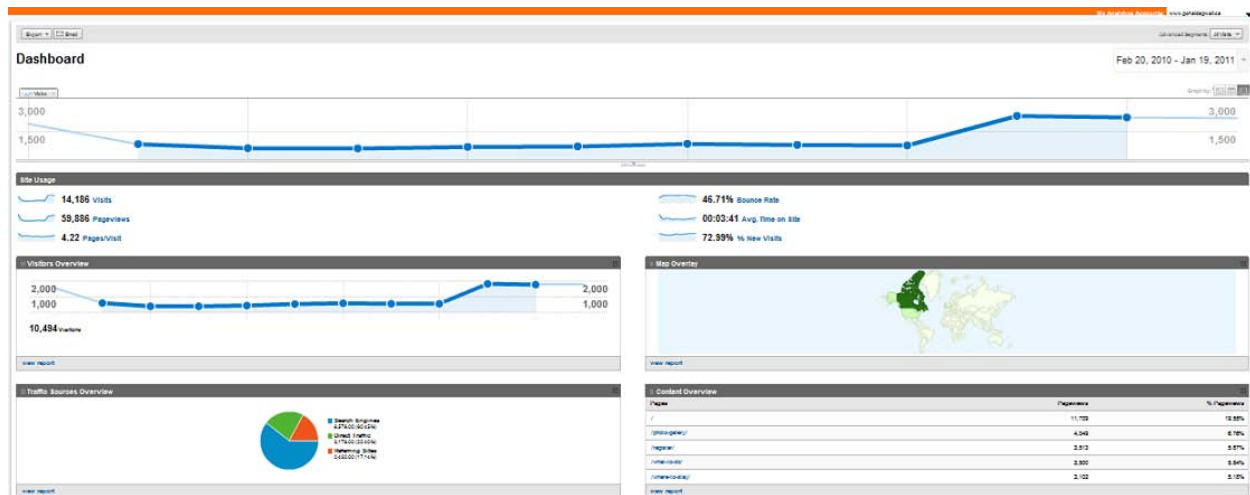
5. The Haida Heritage Centre visitor stats

Monthly visitor statistics to the museum indicates use. Data not requested yet.

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6. Lastly, our new website www.goHaidaGwaii.ca which was launched in February 2010 has statistics that range from number of hits a day, where people are viewing the site from and how long they spend on the site. As this site hasn't been up for a year yet, it is difficult to judge and compare the success but in March 2010 there were 808 site visitors and in December 2010 there were 2216. The transfer of the Haida Gwaii Tourism Association Website in October 2010 helped bolster numbers. We can easily measure the success of advertising the website for tourism information directly using this analytical tool.



Web Presence

There are a number of tourism company websites on the web with information on Haida Gwaii and prior to the formation of the TAC, there was the Haida Gwaii Tourism Association website, the Queen Charlotte Visitor information website and the municipalities websites offering tourism information. To take advantage of the international visitors in Vancouver for the Olympics in February 2010 there was a large undertaking to promote Haida Gwaii to the world and in that, a website was launched as the official Destination Marketing



Website: www.goHaidaGwaii.ca.

The Haida Gwaii Tourism Association's website traffic was directed to www.goHaidaGwaii.ca in October 2010. We now have over 2200 unique email addresses that have requested information on Haida Gwaii and are sent a Spring and Fall newsletter highlighting some of the features of the islands as the direct marketing initiative. Comments about the website directed to the email info@gohaidagwaii.ca have been very encouraging.



Here we are at the beginning of September already closing the chapter on one of the sunniest summers on record. You can often find kids playing in the ocean bays, watch the eagles and ravens compete over the choicest fish, not to mention the Haida from the Eagle and Raven clans competing in one of the many canoe races during the summer.

Haida Gwaii is a group of isolated islands in Northwest British Columbia that is home to some of the most interesting and welcoming people. We are also one of the largest and most isolated archipelagos in western North America and exhibits a rich diversity of biologically unique plant and animal species. We boast the largest and friendliest black bear species in the world – not recommended to hug!

There were some significant successes and milestones accomplished in the Haida community that we would like to honour. Some old news is the official name change of the islands from "Queen Charlotte Islands" to the original name of "Haida Gwaii" back in December 2009. A ceremony celebrating the name change was held in Old Massett in June with Haida Dance groups performing with Premier Gordon Campbell in attendance. As well, the "Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area Reserve" was legislated this June as the new seabed conservation area extending 10 kilometres offshore from the existing Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, the world's first step to extend park protection from mountain tops to ocean floor. Well done Haida Nation in keeping your culture strong and working to protect the natural environment!

Surfing is still a quiet gem up here in Haida Gwaii. Although the season for surfing the waves is generally in the winter time when the swells create the higher waves rolling into the beaches, one surfer from off island decided to circumnavigate the largest of our islands, Graham Island on his self made surfboard by paddling one hand stroke at a time. It is a feat that will take him approximately 50 days to complete. A crowd of well wishers formed on the beach in front of the Haida Heritage Centre on the morning of July 23rd to witness the young man from Oregon start his adventure. He was blessed by the chanting of



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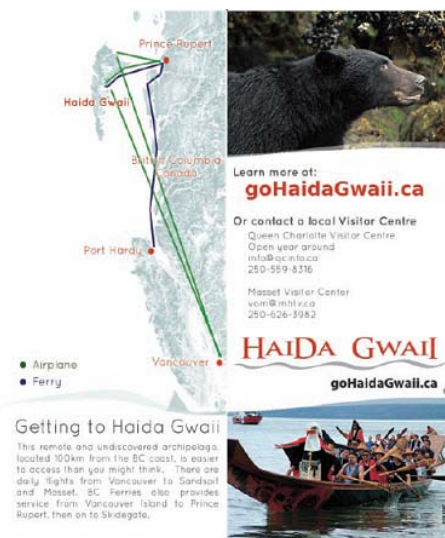
There has also been some advancement in the social media department although there is still a lot of room for improvement. In September 2010 MIEDS/TAC engaged Think! Social Media in a workshop to learn about the different avenues of Social Media. Blogging, tweeting and a facebook presence need to be worked on but there has been some support in travel forums for those interested in travelling to Haida Gwaii.

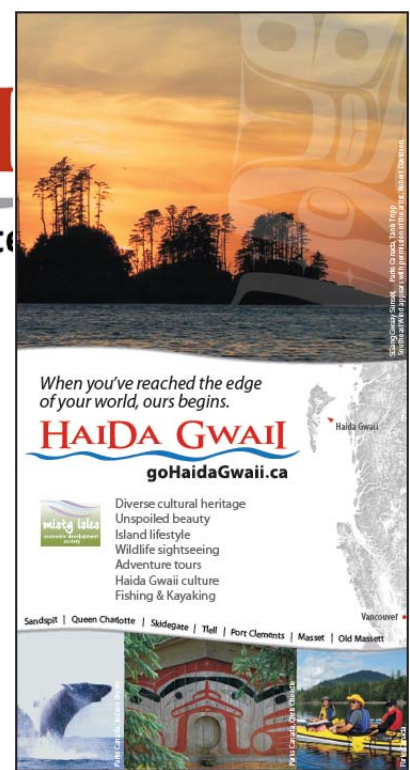
In the Spring of 2011, the website will include specific information of value to the media. There will be 20 fact info sheets posted in the back end of the website and available for public viewing thereby increasing awareness and knowledge of the Islands.

Advertising

Prior to the formation of the TAC under MIEDS, advertising for the Islands was left up to private businesses and municipalities. With guidance from the TAC as to the best magazines to use and using the Community Tourism Plan put out by Tourism BC for the target audience, the TAC has accomplished a lot in a short time in regards to advertising Haida Gwaii off island. From April 2010 to March 2011 the following ads with expenses have been done or continues as the case may be:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| • Lure brochure with Teldon print (12,500) | \$1,273.44 |
| • Lure brochure design by Heron Wier | FREE (\$1,000 value) |
| • BC Ferries racking 4 mos (Dec, Jan, Feb, Mar) | \$1,172.64 |
| • BC Info Centres racking (Jan-Mar 5 locations) | \$466.35 |
| • Shipping costs for lure brochure estimate | \$200.00 |
| • Go Camping ¼ page ad with 15% discount | \$1338.40 |
| • Go Camping webpage under Skeena region for a year (Apr 1+) | \$364.00 |
| • Wavelength Kayaking ¼ page ad | \$560 |
| • Northern BC Travel guide | \$967.68 |
| • SOAR (Pacific Coastal) Magazine 1/6 page | \$716.80 |
| • Westworld BCAA travel magazine for 1/6 pg partnered with Aboriginal Tourism BC | \$6060 |





Brochures and Maps

There have been a few strides taken in regards to providing visitors with products to help make their stay here more enjoyable and of longer duration. Two of these products are the Art Route brochure and the free Visitor take away map also called the Pad Map.

1. Art Route

The Art Route brochure was started by the volunteer efforts of the QCI Arts Council in 2003 and continued to grow in depth and numbers since then having 62 members in the 2010 Art Route brochure. In 2008 the QCI Arts Council approached MIEDS to take over the Art Route brochure and had an incredible rejuvenated year in 2009 with \$31,000 budget to coordinate, design, print, advertise and distribute including racking on BC Ferries.



Art Route connects visitors with artists, increases exposure in the marketplace and revenue to local artists and increases visitation and dollars spent at local galleries and cafes. Although surveys to the artists don't show a significant increase in their income from participation in the Art Route, the majority still believe that the project is important and continues to be members.

In the subsequent years, finding funding has been more difficult as funders do not encourage funding core projects- or projects that happen again and again. It is because of this that Art Route in 2011 has started to define the difference between individual artists and businesses, increased the cost of businesses from \$25 to \$100 and provided further advertising opportunities in an attempt to cover design and printing costs. Coordination and distribution of the brochure is provided by the MIEDS staff.

2. Visitor Pad Map

The pad map printed in March 2010 was the first comprehensive map of the islands in an attempt to include all tourism services on the back of the map and includes maps of the islands and our communities on the front.

This project included extensive coordination to attain information on the local businesses on the island in order to include them on the map for free. Printing 10,000 maps and designing the map cost under \$5,000. There is a plan to produce a second edition of the map in the Spring of 2012.



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3. B-roll film and Winter Activity Video

A local contract was completed to add to the video asset library for B-roll film. This will be added to the DAMS system in the initial set-up in April/May 2011. A winter activity video was also made and will be review by the TAC, shared on social media sites and added for a time on the homepage of the goHaidaGwaii.ca website.

4. Fact Info Sheets

20 fact info sheets in their first draft have been compiled and will be made available to travel writers for article ideas on some aspect of Haida Gwaii. These info sheets have current, up to date information on the topic, contact information for more info or an interview for relevant people and websites for further information. Along with the completion of the DAMS system, an invitation email will be drafted and sent out to over 300 hundred media people across the country and the world to research for themselves the unique characteristics of Haida Gwaii.

More fact info sheets can be written in the future to broaden the scope and will be available on the website, www.goHaidaGwaii.ca

Off Season Promotion

One of the priorities of the TAC is to build off-peak and shoulder season visitation. At a TAC meeting in the Spring of 2010 it was decided to help the off island marketing of the second annual Surfing Expression Session to be held in November 2010 as this year's off season promotion.

The weeklong program comprised of a number of events such as a documentary movie called "One California Day" shown in Masset and Queen Charlotte with discussion time allotted at the end of the movie to discuss the development of surfing on the islands. 20 people came to the movie in Queen Charlotte and 28 people came to the movie in Masset. On the Sunday there was also a Photo class held and led by the pro surfer who is also a professional photographer. 7 people attended the class.

33 people registered and more attended in the "Expression Session" which included surfing free style on North Beach with lessons from pro Surfer Joe Curren from California – also highlighted in the previous mentioned film. 8 people came to the event from off island. They were from Vancouver, Victoria, Courtenay and Prince Rupert.

The expenses for the off season promotion portion of the event (the local business – North Beach Surf Shop incurred further expenses) amounted to just under \$2000 and included flying the Pro Surfer from Vancouver, advertising in Northword magazine, hosting the movie, and printing T-shirts for the event. \$1000 is covered from Northern BC Tourism's 50% matching fund and the other half by North Beach Surf Shop. QCI Rec was also a partner and handled the registration and life guarding for the event.



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Although over 15 story write ups before and after the event including the Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star were all positive, the on-island letters to the editor for our local newspaper, the Observer told another story. A few surfers on north beach were upset the event was promoted off island.

Tourism Organizational support

In addition to projects, the TAC also supports Tourism organization development by helping to bring businesses together to partnership, providing a forum for tourism development and being the destination marketing organization.

Work has been done to promote a relationship with BC Ferries in order to help advise its role in tourism to the islands. TAC members and its staff attended meetings with the Ministry of Transportation in March 2011 to note the importance of BC Ferries to tourism.

The TAC has also been forming partnerships with other organizations around the province and Canada in order to better represent Haida Gwaii to our visitors; BC DMO Association, Tourism BC, Northern BC Tourism, Aboriginal Tourism BC, regional DMOs across BC, Aboriginal People's Television Network, and many travel authorities.

Conclusion

From April 2010-March 2011 the tourism budget has been largely directed from the \$25,050 50% matching funding from Northern BC Tourism for projects with operation and administrative costs covered by MIEDS. The other 50% matching funding has been provided by Gwaii Trust and other sources.

The Northern BC Tourism Community Tourism Opportunities 50% matching grant comes every year to varying amounts. It is suspected that due to recent Provincial Government ministry changes, revenue to the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts will continue to decline as will the community grants.

The TAC has engaged the accommodation sector of Haida Gwaii for support to implement the 2% Additional Hotel Room tax beginning in the Spring of 2010. Initial research has shown that a possible \$80-\$120k revenue could come back to the islands for tourism purposes. Supporting signatures have been gathered for this tax and initial response was positive but a number of letters to the Observer newspaper with negative inclinations towards the tax has hampered the progress of gaining the necessary 51% support from the accommodation sector.

It is the hope of the TAC that secure funding for tourism is found through the implementation of the Additional Hotel Room Tax so continued tourism projects will provide demand for island businesses and therefore, employment to its residents.