TIAO Industry Stakeholder Call  
Tuesday, August 11, 2020

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Share any community efforts, positive stories or messages of hope on social media #ontariospirit

You can email us with your thoughts, ideas, best practices and questions at: feedback@tiaontario.ca

The following is a digest of TIAO updates as well as questions asked during the industry call hosted by TIAO. We’ve done our best to provide the answers you need, provide links where we can, and are committed to taking your concerns forward in our discussions with government officials.

Number of participants: 148

Updates from TIAO:

- There will be no calls next week as the TIAO team will be attending the AMO Conference. We will be taking forward our briefing notes and messaging around support for the industry to members of the provincial cabinet.
- Beth will be presenting to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs on Tuesday, August 18th, in relation to the fall economic statement that is being prepared, as well as the impact of COVID-19 on SMEs.
- Summit reservations are now open.
- Our Insurance survey closes this Friday at 8AM. This will help us identify any pain points the industry is feeling so we can address them directly with the insurance industry.
- Survey 8 will be sent out after Labour Day – a look back on what the summer looked like.
- We heard from a number of destinations across the province with concerns regarding visitor behaviour. We are having a NIMBY (Not in My Backyard) conversation. Any DMOs that would like to join, please contact us.
- Safe Travel Stamp (WTTC): We will be in a position to offer this in Ontario. We will convey details soon.
**Guest Speakers:**

During the 'new normal' and with continued physical distancing, we know that many businesses are facing new challenges on how to effectively market their products to consumers.

How do you market your area when operators, consumers may not be ready? How do you do this when they are? How do you market when you have no access to funds?

**JLM Strategic Marketing** - Jennifer Mason, President & Founder  
  Janet Rouss, Creative Director

**BIOS**

**Jennifer**:  [https://jlmstrategicmarketing.com/team/jennifermason/](https://jlmstrategicmarketing.com/team/jennifermason/)
  - Worked with tourism industry for many years.
  - Worked with Ontario Tourism and Tourism Toronto in 2003 in the SARS Recovery.

**Janet**:
  - Has worked on many campaigns with Global brands such as Coca Cola, Heineken, Proctor and Gamble and Unilever Brands (involved in the launch of the Dove campaign for real Beauty, the longest running campaign).
  - Janet now works with small businesses and medium sized enterprises to bring that expertise (creative and strategic).
  - Taught at a local college for 4 years.
  - Does marketing (graphic design and copywriting) but also an instructional designer (training, lead generation).

**PRESENTATION**

Full deck **attached** below.

![Aug11.CovidTIAOM emberJLMPresentation](image)

- **SLIDE 3:**
  - Was active in SARS recovery; COVID-19 has had a bigger impact.
  - As entrepreneurs, we have to be resilient and remain positive.

- **SLIDE 4:**
  - We hope to address your pressing issues as we move to fall and winter; you may need some external help and picking the right partner is important.
  - Contact us if you have questions or looking for advice. We want to be a part of the solution.
• **SLIDE 5: Current Challenges**
  
  o This a real opportunity for you to revisit your entire business strategy and look at, what are the challenges that you're facing locally with the residents, with your potential customers, your tour operators, and employees that may have concerns.
  o If you’ve been operating during the summer months and you are really concerned about what's going to happen in the fall and winter, now's the time to get really collaborative; challenge yourselves to go beyond your typical tourism partners, and really engage the community.
  o There could be a forum for a town hall to bring out the residents. These residents may have ideas on how they see tourism.

• **SLIDE 6: Find the right solution**
  
  o Time to think outside the box
  o When looking for a marketing partner, it should be someone that knows the industry, the environment, and the audience.

• **SLIDE 7:**
  
  o You might have to completely reinvent yourself- figure out where do I go from here and how you build in a brand strategy with your marketing support around you.
  o Our 6 Step process

• **SLIDE 8: Brand Strategy**
  
  o See what's going on in the current state of tourism in your area. It's an opportunity for you to look at your brand and do an analysis – Is what you were doing before relevant today? Are people really going to want to do what you're doing and what you normally offer? Or is it something totally different?
  o There is market research that offers insight around customer intent which is helpful.

• **SLIDE 9:**
  
  o We know people are emotional when making decisions and now with COVID-19, people are exhausted and need a break.
  o Important to understanding the mindset of where people are coming from and what they want to do when on vacation; identifying your customer segments may be done in a new way.
  o People have varying budgets. There are those looking to stay local, and looking for something that can satisfy their family needs while staying safe.
  o What would be helpful for regions is to look at popular destinations and how you manage traffic flow. What partnerships can you forge in your region?

• **SLIDE 10:**
  
  o Part of getting people to commit is that balance of whether or not they should go.
• Your Google SEO is important – your website should be up to the moment in regards to hours and your safety procedures/policies. All should be upfront.
• Look at the customer’s entire path-to-purchase.

- SLIDE 11: What are they looking for?
  - Can I trust that I’m going to feel comfortable?
  - Start at home with your employees and the residents – they can be advocates if you can get them excited about what you are doing.
  - Put information not only on your website but also on your social media channels, in a visitor friendly way (instead of policy style way) so people who visited you in the past are now aware of what changes you implemented.
  - People are coming to relax/escape so tap into that nurturing sensibility.

- SLIDE 12: Guiding your guest’s path-to-purchase
  - Awareness Phase – You may be talking to a new audience -now that borders are closed and Canadians may not be travelling overseas; a hyper local mentality; look at new media /shifting your media plan.
  - Attraction – How do you tap into those that are dreaming but not ready yet? It’s about getting that meaningful message to your customer and knowing where they’re at in the process.
  - Conversion (in that moment of purchase) – What are the objections that are coming with people? They may feel comfortable with your protocols but may be wondering what to do when they are there. So be able to answer those questions.
  - Experience (on site) – Be able to match people’s expectations.
  - Retention: Who are these new customers? What can you do long term to evolve your business? Is there something new that you are doing now, that you can continue to do beyond COVID?

- SLIDE 13: Marketing Plan
  - Look at some tactics and at the path-to-purchase.
  - Be smart about how you use your budget and have measurable activities.
  - When working with clients, we first identify business goals, their financial goals and then design ideas around meeting those goals.
  - Once you start to conceptualize and build the campaign, it’s now making sure you have measurable tactics in place. You can then figure out what’s working for you and eliminate the activities that are not giving you traction.

- SLIDE 14: Touchpoints
  - Enhance those touch points at every step along the guest journey.

- SLIDE 15: Bookings and Reservations
  - People are going online more than they ever have before.
  - We are shifting in the way we communicate. We now need to tap into what is going on at home.
  - When thinking about the booking stage, make sure that information is up to date.
• **SLIDE 16: Real-Time Tour Guides**

  - If really busy this summer, what are the FAQs you can put in the hands of a Chatbot so that all your customers queries can be answered.
  - Instagram has some cool tools that you can leverage; some “in the moment” tools (e.g. Stratford is using video to describe what’s going on).
  - If going old school, are there any in person touchpoint moments that we use to impact guest? Who are your real time tour guides? They can greet and guide people along (concierge program).
  - What innovative ways can you use so that people can be a little bit more spontaneous on site of your event/attraction? So people on vacation don’t feel scheduled. Think of ways to break down barriers. Provide that “human touch” where it can be challenging.

  Example: Through heat sensors determine where there is traffic and where you have space available.

• **SLIDE 17: Thought Starters**

  - During SARS, “The Time for a Little T.O” campaign by Tourism Toronto, was an effort to encourage people to come back and let them know it was safe again. It was a local campaign, even though it wasn’t Tourism Toronto’s mandate to market locally. Packages included an overnight hotel stay, dining and theatre experience. A good example of hyper local marketing.
  - Expedia has a campaign, Travel Now and Pay Later. People pay a small deposit and you can get a sense of people’s travel intentions.
  - If you have great policies in place where people can get a refund or postpone their trip.
  - VIP Experiences – Private jet bookings are skyrocketing, as corporations are flying their executives as it lowers their risk of exposure. This is one way to tap into commercial travel; think of ways they can spend their free time and disposable income (meals, activities, etc.). How do you tap into those dollars here in this province? What kind of experiences, could you potentially wrap around a luxury vacation that might involve jets?

• **SLIDE 18:**

  - Another example/ideas as we move into winter.

    This ice hotel in Japan offer guests the opportunity to stay in the regular hotels and have an experience for a night or two in the Ice Hotel in between them.

    They have a video that shows how they clean and how they were servicing their customers. The video/visuals gives you a sense of comfort.

  - Other ideas: Toronto had an ice hotel; Mercedes did an ice dealership last year and hosted concerts in their local community.
  - What can we do to encourage people to really embrace winter and try some new experiences?
Example: Pop up experiences outdoors where you can partner with companies such as Roots or Canada Goose.

- **SLIDE 19: Media Buying**
  - You really want to consider looking at social media channels and the stories that you can share through some of those channels.
  - Snapchat has introduced a new chat tool where you can play short movies or vignettes.
  - What can you do that’s really highlighting your home, your local community but also what kind of influencers can you tap into? Maybe everybody who comes to your establishment could be an influencer and you give them the tools, where they can share back.

- **SLIDE 20: Concept Development**
  - Start thinking about what is the big idea? We tend to react to necessity (an app, upgrading our website, uploading social media content); become reactive.
  - It doesn’t have to be expensive or time consuming, the simpler the better.
  - Should be a collaborative opportunity. Bring in key stakeholders in your organization to discuss how they can pivot the business, rebuild the brand.
  - Customer advisory boards offer huge insights into how to create concepts, create a brand experience and what needs they have.
  - Create a concept that you can own; that your competition can’t put their stamp/logo on it.
  - Also look outside your industry. Example: airports looking at how they can turn their planes around quicker, looked at racing pit crews to apply to their business.

- **SLIDE 21: Samples**
  - Drive in concerts and events i.e. TIFF
  - How can you turn these challenges on its ear?
  - Comment from stakeholder about being 9hrs away from Toronto - Maybe this can be a time travel concept.
  - How do you wrap an experience around the value of family during these challenging times? Meet people where they’re at now so concepts are wrapped around this idea.

- **SLIDE 22: Stratford**
  - They offered picnic tables and music on the boats. They made arrangements with Uber Eats to deliver food. Taking the experience outside.
  - Student are cleaning up the area
  - When thinking of concepts that are based on key stakeholders, it’s important that it includes the entire community; everyone feels safe and a part of something.

- **SLIDE 23: Samples of big ideas; instead of being reactive.**
  - Britain is paying 50% of restaurant pub bills to stimulate recovery.
- As a county or an individual operator, to attract people to come in and try things out, you write that off in your promotional expenses.
- Hold a fundraising event – collect food donations for a local food bank.
- Barbados has a remote workers program for 12 months.
- Dock to Dock party with Purpose - This is to support the Canadian Institute for the Blind. They have a camp in the Lake Joseph area and they couldn’t do normal fundraising of getting 700 people. They brainstormed and got the community together and the radio station. They are now doing a fundraiser where they’re getting everyone to register their dock. You have your bubble and you can sign up with the local community and get food and drink delivered to you. Fundraising is done from the dock all day. The radio station will be broadcasting and entertainment will be shared. A great way to turn a very difficult situation for a charity.

A feel good event where everyone’s having a good time, they’re socializing but yet they’re doing it safely and contributing to a cause. This will also draw a big audience and media attention.

- **SLIDE 24: Ontario you never knew about article**
  - Driving packages / road trips
  - Stakeholder asked if 9 hours is too long for a road trip. Answer: If you give me stops along the way and show me what I’m going to see on the way up and on the way back then it’s not too far.
  - Stratford has a chocolate trail; there are apple pie and butter trails
  - How can you partner with people to get a consumer to travel nine hours, and make it look like something amazing that they’ve never seen before?
  - How do you inspire consumers and get them to go out and forget about COVID and just be excited to discover something new?

- **SLIDE 25:***
  - Look at your strategy and what is it that you’re trying to achieve in your business; determine which partnership would best suit you (in execution and strategically). A good marketing partner needs to be able to bring this to the table.
  - If you do it right and you create the right experiences, you’ll get extra media attention, which means free advertising.

- **SLIDE 26: Creative Execution**
  - The design and copywriting – ensure that your brand’s messaging and designs integrate across all touch points; make sure that the message is in the voice of your brand (the language that your customers use).
  - A good writer / copywriter is a good stenographer; somebody that listens to the voice or listens to the language that people use and integrates that in your advertising and into any communications. It’s really important to understand your audience when it comes to that creative execution.
• **SLIDE 27: Brand Identity & Product Development**
  
  o What is your brand identity?
  o If you need a new brand logo, or if you’re creating a new product you want to promote, or you’re now doing something that’s very safe, secure and hygienic, then maybe there’s some kind of branding around that; make it more relevant to the time.

• **SLIDE 28:**
  
  o Just make sure that the people that are doing your design work know design (typesetting and colours).

• **SLIDE 29: Implementation**
  
  o Everyone has a different size budget. If you have the opportunity to work with somebody who can’t help you on every aspect of your marketing budget, figure out where you need help the most, and then look at students or other people in your organization that can help you execute.
  o For example, if you work on a hero design and concept, then maybe somebody on your team can take all those elements and make it work in social media.
  o Sometimes having that outside voice (somebody outside of your organization) that’s not at all invested in all the challenges that you’re facing, can come at it from a really creative perspective.
  o When you bring in a lot of partners, everybody needs to know their roles and responsibilities. There has to be great communication because even though collaboration and idea generation is great, if people are running off in 10 different directions, it can be very challenging.
  o What are your top three goals? What are you trying to get out of it? What are your top three challenges? What are your non-negotiables? And then what are your assets? What are you looking to solve around you?
  o If you bring in the community, you stay true to your authentic needs, voice and financials; stay open to collaboration and you can get there.
  o Have tools that you can share such as Office 365; identify what works for everyone and have town hall meetings so everyone can collaborate and share files.
  o This also goes for post analysis. When you’re in the field and you’re getting great photos or stories, how do you share with all of your partners so that everyone’s getting mileage from what you’re doing?

• **SLIDE 30: The Keg**
  
  o A question came up about when doing content creation, it gets tricky. So how do I do it?
  This is an example where they didn’t show any masks but they’re still talking about social distancing through supers and invoice.

• **SLIDE 31: Post Analysis**
  
  o You need to be able to measure what you’re doing.
• **SLIDE 32: Big Idea Campaigns**
  
  o All of these campaigns here were big ideas and they were also supported by all the partners in Ontario, who contributed to it. None of these events would have happened or fueled the economy in the local communities if it hadn’t been for the collaboration and partnerships that were out there.

• **SLIDE 33: Example Dashboard**
  
  o Here’s just an example of what you can look at reporting on - some real time tools. There’s ways to tie this back to your actual goals and your bookings.

• **SLIDE 34:**
  
  o Pick the right marketing partner

• **SLIDE 35: Gift Shop**
  
  o Here is a link to a questionnaire to answer a survey of your business and what you need to do: [https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/r1CsPx](https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/r1CsPx)

  o JLM will be offering a complimentary gift of a 30 minute conversation to help answer some of your specific questions and hopefully get you going in the right direction. Offering some quick solutions and ongoing long term solutions for your business.

  Redeem JLM 30-Min FREE Consultation Gift

• **SLIDE 36: Contact Info**

**Questions:**

1) What is the average drive time that someone might be willing to do? Might be useful in determining new market to target.

   See Slide 24

2) Can we get specific examples of partnerships that are working?

   See Slide 17

**Comments:**

• That’s because they are probably closer to Southern Ontario. It’s more difficult for those of us that are 9 hours or more north of Toronto

• I started writing a Hyperlocal Travel column in 2018 for Waterloo Region, which I knew was important, it’s now more important than ever!

• Good 6 steps navigation!
RESOURCES:

- Ontario’s Stage 3 reopening [https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-stages#section-3](https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-stages#section-3)
- Industry Protocols: [https://www.tiaontario.ca/cpages/covid19](https://www.tiaontario.ca/cpages/covid19)
- Northern Ontario Business reopening Toolkit: [http://reopenthenorth.ca](http://reopenthenorth.ca)

We look forward to speaking with you again soon!