

Northern Ontario  
Regional Tourism  
Associations (NORTA)

*Five Year Tourism  
Strategy  
2006 to 2010*

Final Report  
September 2005

*Executive Summary*



the Tourism Company

In association with



&



SmartArts



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- Algoma Country (Algoma Kinniwabi Travel Association Incorporated)
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- Ontario's Near North (Almaguin-Nipissing Travel Association Incorporated)
- Rainbow Country Travel Association (RCTA Incorporated)
- Ontario's Sunset Country Travel Association (Norwestario Travel Association Incorporated)

and

The Strategic Tourism Development and Marketing  
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the Tourism Company

**146 Laird Drive, Suite 201 Toronto Ontario M4G 3V7**

**Tele: 416 696 7272 Fax: 416 696 5115**

[www.tourismco.com](http://www.tourismco.com)

**Jill Vandal**

[njvandal@tourismco.com](mailto:njvandal@tourismco.com)

**416 696-2182**

## Executive Summary

The six Northern Ontario Travel Associations were established under the Northern Ontario Travel Association Program (NOTAP) by the Province of Ontario in 1974 to undertake regional-based tourism destination marketing. The six organizations are listed below, starting with their current operating name, followed by their legal name if different than their operating name:

- Algoma Country (Algoma-Kinniwabi Travel Association Incorporated);
- James Bay Frontier (Cochrane-Timiskaming Travel Association Incorporated);
- North of Superior Tourism Region (North of Superior Travel Association Incorporated);
- Ontario's Near North (Almaguin-Nipissing Travel Association Incorporated);
- Rainbow Country Travel Association Incorporated (RCTA); and
- Ontario's Sunset Country Travel Association (Norwestario Travel Association Incorporated).

All six associations are incorporated, not-for-profit membership-based organizations established and maintained by membership fees, partnership programs, independent and fee for service initiatives, and other stakeholder initiatives.

Recognizing that there are many challenges and opportunities ahead, the associations initiated

the development of a five year tourism strategy with the support of FedNor, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines through the Northern Ontario Heritage Foundation Corporation (NOHFC) and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC). All parties invested considerable time and financial resources to develop this Strategy.

During the development of this strategy, these organizations made a decision to call themselves the **Northern Ontario Regional Tourism Associations (NORTA)**. The addition of the word 'regional' and use of the word 'tourism' rather than 'travel' better reflect their current and future roles. Therefore, from this point forward, starting with this strategy document, these six organizations will use the acronym NORTA.

A consulting team led by *the Tourism Company* in partnership with **TourismCLICKS.com** and **SmartArts** was engaged to assist in the development of the strategic plan.

The consulting team used a range of tools to complete this assignment including consultation with the tourism industry, a review of practices from other jurisdictions, and a review of current NORTA strategies and approaches. Input from approximately 225 tourism industry stakeholders was gathered through meetings in each region, on-line and faxed feedback forms and telephone surveys.

### Purpose and Goals of Five Year Tourism Strategy

*"...development and formulation of a five year strategy that will outline a strategic plan, clarify roles and responsibilities, examine opportunities and risks for the NORTAs and tie in with the Northern, Provincial and Federal Tourism Strategies for the next five years."*

**General Characteristics of Participation in Industry Consultation**

- NORTA members and non-members;
- Private business operators in tourism business for less than one year to over 50 years;
- Major provincial attractions and small local attractions;
- Urban hotels, B&Bs, motels, resorts, fly-in camps;
- Aboriginal operators;
- Resource-based operators
- Municipalities, Economic Development Officers, Chambers of Commerce; and
- Other organizations active in tourism marketing Northern Ontario including NOTO, Destination Nord, NONTA, and Ontario's North.

Two frameworks were used as the basis for analysis and review of opportunities.

The *Tourism Destination Marketing Framework* includes the following functions:

- **Research & Planning** – Collection, analysis and distribution of relevant, timely research to support the allocation of marketing resources;
- **Product Development** – shaping basic tourism infrastructure - including sites, facilities, programs, services, and events – into travel experiences that can be offered for sale;
- **Communications** - Development and delivery of messages to visitors that informs, influences and, involves them; and
- **Sales Promotion** - Methods and activities -- such as pricing, trip planning/counselling, loyalty programs, etc. —used to convert a potential visitor’s “desire to visit” into an actual visit , first time and repeat.

Ideally, for tourism destination marketing to be effective, each of the marketing functions needs to be implemented as part of an integrated marketing strategy and plan - like pieces of a puzzle fitting together - that is developed to achieve specific short-term and long-term marketing objectives. Achieving effective integration is not easy given the large number of organizations active in one or more of the functional marketing areas in any given

destination area. Indeed, overlaps and gaps in meeting the marketing needs of tourism operators often exist.

The *Industry Development Framework* has at least five components:

- **Access to Funding and/or Financing** – providing funding programs and/or assisting with access to financing;
- **Advocacy** – working on behalf of tourism operators to keep their voice and views on government and industry agendas;
- **Business Services** – support for day-to-day operations through offering programs such as group insurance rates, favourable vendor credit card rates, etc.;
- **Business Support Services** – such as consulting and marketing planning services (i.e. how to develop a business plan, how to develop a marketing plan, etc.); and
- **Professional and Industry Development** – such as training and development workshops, seminars, conferences and meetings for tourism business owners, managers and staff.

As with tourism destination marketing, overlaps and gaps in meeting the industry development needs are not uncommon.

### *Review of the NORTAs*

It is important to acknowledge the historical context of the NORTAs to appreciate their evolution to their current state. It is equally as important to appreciate the fact that they each operate in unique and distinct tourism destination marketing and industry development environments. Highlights of the review of their historical context and role and their current role follow.

### *Historical Context and Role*

Each of the NORTAs are incorporated, not-for-profit membership-based organizations established and maintained by membership fees, partnership programs, independent and fee for service initiatives and other stakeholder initiatives. Volunteer Boards of Directors, elected by their peers and paid managers provide leadership to these organizations.

Over their 30 years of operation, the NORTAs have faced many challenges including:

- a shift from government-led tourism marketing to shared public/private tourism marketing;
- the establishment and demise of the Northern Ontario Tourism Marketing Corporation; and
- uncertainty around annual investment from the Ministry of Tourism/OTMPC.

Through many market and organizational changes the NORTAs have remained a stable

presence for their regional tourism industry stakeholders and members.

### *Current Context and Role*

Each NORTA's current role in tourism is highly responsive to significant differences in operating and marketing environments as well as differences in organizational capacity, membership profile and reach. A brief overview of their current role follows by NORTA.

**Algoma Country...** Operates in region with Sault Ste. Marie (SSM) as major urban centre that is interested in and investing in tourism; impacted by marketing efforts of provincial level attractions such as Algoma Central Railway; proximity to U.S. border and markets has led to investment into unique Canada Store in Michigan and participation in bi-national Lake Superior Circle Tour initiatives in partnership with NOSTA; lead marketing body for area municipalities and wide range of resource-based and rural operators and municipalities active in tourism including, for example, Elliot Lake and Wawa

**James Bay Frontier (JBF)....** Represents largest geographic area with comparatively less market-ready product; plays important role as marketing body for member municipalities; impacted by provincial level attractions with significant resources (Ontario Northlands Railroad/Polar Bear Express/Shania Twain Centre/Polar Bear Habitat etc.); proximity to Quebec and francophone communities in the JBF region, supported by Destination Nord, add another dimension;

### **Scope of Typical NORTA Services**

- Design, creative, editorial and distribution of various publications
- Design and maintenance of Website(s)
- Facilitation of training opportunities for the tourism industry
- Media relations
- Tourism research
- Toll-free service and fulfilment for enquiries
- Development and maintenance of visitor enquiry list(s)
- Support and training related to visitor information centres
- Media familiarization (FAM) tours
- Attendance at consumer trade shows
- Distribution of literature at all levels of Information Centres
- Attending community meetings
- Participation on various Boards
- Support of government programs and services
- Advocacy on as needed basis
- Consulting services for members on request basis.

NONTA and NOTO are primary marketing contact for some operators; lead marketing organization for municipal members; JBF is in rebuilding mode.

**Near North...** Operates in region with North Bay as major urban centre; highly concentrated areas of tourism operations has led to establishment of a number of local tourism groups; diverse range of products with maturing resource-based operations that have been forced to shift experiences offered due to changes in resources and visitor interests; proximity to southern Ontario market provides opportunities to participate in OTMPC programs not necessarily relevant to other NORTAs; organization entering stable phase after a number of years of senior staff changes.

**North of Superior (NOSTA)...** Operates in region with Thunder Bay as major urban centre; impacted by provincial level attractions such as Old Fort William; NONTA and NOTO are primary marketing contact for some operators; represents wide geographic area with range of established and emerging resource-based operators; active leadership role in bi-national Lake Superior Circle Tour initiatives; works cooperatively with range of partners through North of Superior Tourism Council.

**Rainbow Country...** Operates in region with mature and sophisticated year round tourism industry, diverse mix of urban and rural products; established local and regional DMOs including City of Sudbury, PEAT, Great Spirit Circle Trail, all strong marketing players for their respective niches; recent emergence of Georgian Bay Country

has added new dimension; proximity to southern Ontario provides opportunities to participate in OTMPC programs not necessarily relevant to other NORTAs; mature organization with long term and stable staffing.

**Sunset Country...** Relative to other NORTAs has homogenous, resource-based, seasonal product and membership base with no major urban centre with interest in tourism; targets U.S. border markets not served by OTMPC, some shared with NOSTA; currently representing members well; pressure will increase over time as the need to replace traditional fish/hunt markets increases; recognized as lead tourism marketing organization in Northwestern Ontario, delivering innovative and targeted programs.

Features and highlights of the review of current memberships, revenue and marketing activities are outlined below:

- Collectively the NORTAs managed a total of approximately \$2.4 million in revenue in 2003/04 with revenue from memberships ranging from 4% to 29% of total revenue.
- Efforts to increase membership revenue are on-going for each NORTA and have been particularly successful for NOSTA and Near North in recent years with each increasing membership revenue two or three-fold in recent years.
- Revenue from municipal memberships is an important source of revenue for many NORTAs.

- While each has a mix of private sector and municipal members, this mix varies significantly due at least in part to individual NORTA evolution and resulting by-laws.
- The NORTAs have just over 900 individual tourism businesses as members and through over 150 municipalities reach considerably more front line tourism operations, a significant resource and asset.
- The NORTAs are most active in marketing communications.
- Innovation in marketing activities include Algoma's Canada Store in Michigan, Rainbow Country's recent introduction of 'Plan Your Vacation' feature on their Website and Sunset Country's effective management of a number of Web sites that maximize member reach.

### SWOT Analysis

Collective and individual review of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the NORTAs are summarized below.

#### Strengths

- **Industry Relationships:** The NORTAs have long-established and effective working relationships with member tourism businesses, municipalities, and range of provincial and federal ministries active in tourism.
- **Monitoring Performance:** NORTAs regularly complete strategic reviews with partners and members; some have recently

restructured membership classes and Board composition to expand reach and representation.

- **Visitor Information Centres:** NORTAs have a established leadership role and expertise in training and staffing of Visitor Information Centres.
- **Inter-Regional Cooperation:** NORTAs currently work across traditional regional destination boundaries, which provides a foundation for expanded shared initiatives.
- **Connected to the Front Line:** The NORTAs all have a strong connection to both members and non-members on the front line and they enjoy a high level of trust. This relationship provides a potential 'one point of access' distribution network of all levels of government.
- **Areas of Excellence:** The NORTAs have each developed 'areas of excellence' that can be shared to enhance operations of their colleagues.

#### Weaknesses

- **Emphasis on Destination Brand Vs. Experience:** Most NORTAs lead with region destination trademark in their marketing. An approach that balances experiences with the destination will become increasingly more important as NORTAs market to visitors with limited knowledge or experience of landscapes or regions in Ontario.
- **Service and Menu Programs:** Annual member services and programs are typically

#### Innovation in Marketing

Innovation in marketing activities include Algoma's **Canada Store** in Michigan, Rainbow Country's recent introduction of '*Plan Your Vacation*' feature on their Website and Sunset Country's **effective management of a number of Web sites** that maximize member reach.

**Stable Core Funding is a key characteristic of successful DMOs**

All successful and established DMOs in Canada and elsewhere operate with significant and stable core operating funding provided by one or both of public sector contributions and destination marketing fees.

presented as generic menus, rather than integrated tactic by target market or experience. As tourism operators become more focused and targeted in their offers, they are seeking fully integrated marketing programs.

- **Unstable Finances:** The fluctuation in financial operating levels for the NORTAs creates an unstable operating environment and impedes their ability to plan and implement sustained tourism marketing campaigns.
- **Internet Shy:** With the exception of Sunset Country, the NORTAs have been slow to embrace the Internet as a destination marketing and management tool. A delayed response to Internet opportunities clouds NORTA strengths and experience in other areas.
- **Institutional Capacity:** The capacity to deliver high quality programs is directly related to the skills and expertise of NORTA staff and Boards. NORTAs with long time staff may be vulnerable as normal succession occurs.
- **Overcommitted Human Resources:** NORTA managers and staff are at capacity delivering current programs including ongoing fulfilment of requests from OTMPC, and other government partners. Implementation of elements of this strategy requires investment into expanded and/or incremental human resources.

*Opportunities*

- **Industry Brokers:** NORTAs have an opportunity to act as brokers for a range of marketing programs, providing objective recommendations to operators as they consider a broad range of public and private marketing opportunities.
- **Pan-Regional Coordination:** NORTAs have the opportunity to act as catalyst to build pan-regional coordination between such tourism marketing organizations as Destination Nord, Northern Ontario Native Tourism Association, and Ontarios' North.
- **Focus on Market Development:** There is an opportunity for NORTAs to play a leadership role in identifying and seeking new markets and to undertake lead generation activities on behalf of their partners.
- **Responding to Provincial Strategy:** Opportunities identified in the Northern Ontario Strategy and emerging niches not being addressed are opportunities for shared NORTA strategies.
- **Gap in Business Support Services:** Operators and municipal partners are seeking business support services and expertise specific to the tourism sector. NORTAs have the opportunity to address this gap in their region.
- **Market Shifts:** Visitation and demand to Northern Ontario continues to shift, due to many factors and influencers. The NORTAs have the opportunity to assist their members

in adjusting their products and services as well as providing leadership on selling and marketing of these experiences.

- **Expanded Resources:** The current Strategic Tourism Development and Marketing Partnership for Northern Ontario provides the NORTAs with significant opportunity for investment into incremental and new initiatives.
- **Product Development Gap:** NORTAs have the opportunity to act as an incubator for local and regional marketing partnerships by providing expertise and knowledge. They can also link similar partnerships to each other to build critical mass or to complement Northern Ontario and/or regional initiatives.
- **Market Intelligence Gap:** Relevant, timely, sound local/regional tourism market demand research is a critical element in effective destination area and operating marketing strategies that, unfortunately, is often missing or weak. A market research gap of varying width exists at the regional and local level that could be effectively addressed by NORTAs.
- **Segmentation and Niches:** Markets are becoming more segmented and benefit from marketing that addresses this segmentation. Marketing to these visitors at a regional level will benefit from investment into niches within and across NORTA regions. This approach has implications for all tactics including design of web pages, the number

and types of Visitor Guide books published, lure pieces and shows attended.

- **Integrating the Web:** The Internet is one part of a suite of integrated marketing tactics. With the focus on Web-based initiatives at many levels, it is important to remember the need for other media to drive visitors to Web sites, to meet the needs of visitors who do not use the Internet and to provide resource material while in-market. NORTA tactics and tools must lead with Internet-based strategies supported by other tactics as appropriate. In addition, NORTAs should ideally develop in-house Internet expertise in order to facilitate daily updates of content, to manage Internet-based marketing strategies at a regional level, and to assist members with the implementation of their own Internet strategies.

#### *Threats*

- **Intra-regional Industry Profile:** There is generally little awareness among members and partners about the range and scope of services delivered by the NORTAs, due in part to the fact that current operating activities leave little time or resources to effectively communicate their benefits and services.
- **One of Many:** Each NORTA will always be one of a multiple number of players in the destination marketing and industry development systems within their region as political priorities and funding programs

### **Vision**

*By 2010, the NORTAs will collectively be recognized and acknowledged as vibrant Destination **Management** Organizations, delivering a suite of marketing and industry development programs and services that reflect the specific needs of visitors to their region and to tourism businesses and communities in Northern Ontario while supporting and complementing provincial and federal strategies.*

*The NORTAs will continue to provide innovative, integrated and relevant initiatives to energize membership, engage the broader industry and build credibility and trust with investors and partners. The strategy will be implemented in an orderly and strategic manner with partners and stakeholders.*

continue to shape the systems through public funding support. NORTAs must avoid offering destination marketing and industry development services and programs that compete with other providers so as not to waste scarce human and financial resources.

- **Industry Credibility:** The role and relationship of the NORTAs with respect to the Northern Office of OTMPC, the Northern Committee and the implementation of the Northern Ontario Tourism Marketing Strategy 2004 to 2007 is underutilised. The NORTAs have valuable and current market intelligence from their front line interaction with visitors (Internet, 1-800 and e-mail inquiries) and with tourism operators and partners. In addition, their marketing and industry development programs can complement those undertaken by OTMPC. They are in a position to plan and deliver elements of the Strategy or to address gaps. Two-way integration of NORTAs into the Strategy for Northern Ontario will provide an expanded integration of marketing programs to the benefit of the province as a whole while enhancing the credibility of the NORTAs with their stakeholders. This requires official standing and representation at Northern Committee meetings.

When healthy and active, the NORTAs play an important role, both short term and longer term in Northern Ontario tourism by providing the link to broader marketing and industry

development initiatives for smaller operators and municipalities.

### ***NORTA Five Year Tourism Strategy and Action Plan***

The NORTAs will undertake action in three areas to achieve the Vision as outlined on this page:

- ✓ ***Enhanced NORTA operations....***to engage visitors in a meaningful manner, retain current membership base, attract new members and to generate new or expanded revenue streams. These recommendations should be implemented in the next one to two years.
- ✓ ***Shared initiatives....*** to leverage synergies across NORTAs to meet visitor and member needs. These initiatives are not necessarily shared by all six NORTAs but rather respond to their common visitor and origin target markets. These initiatives will occur on an on-going basis and should be implemented over the next five years as market and partner conditions permit.
- ✓ ***Re-defined role in the broader tourism industry.....***to respond to anticipated shifts and needs from both the visitor and membership base in each market

area. Recommendations in this area will depend on the role of each NORTA in their respective region with implementation for some expected over the next 3-5 years.

Recommended strategic initiatives reflect the following principles:

- By addressing visitor needs first, the NORTAs will add value to their members, therefore increasing their organizational value which in turn sets the stage for increases in membership dues, increased number of members and increased participation in partnered programs;
- Building on established areas of expertise and current areas of focus for each individual NORTA ensures a favourable climate for the implementation of the recommended initiatives.
- Allowing for variability and customization in the application of recommendations to each NORTA in recognition of their unique environment and stage of development ensures the recommendations are relevant to all NORTAs,
- Implementing many of these initiatives will require additional support from the public sector as the collective NORTAs invest in higher and more consistent levels of service. This support may be with project-based funding, leveraged marketing investment or increases in core funding.

Key elements of the strategy are outlined below.

### **ENHANCED NORTA OPERATIONS**

The following priority actions to enhance NORTA operations have been derived from 13 separate recommendations in three major categories – internal operations, member services and benefits, and common initiatives.

- 1. Building in-house capacity to manage Websites coupled with optimized Internet presence and use.** NORTAs will seek financial support for Internet and Web based resources in initial years, while building new revenue streams through sales of Internet-based benefits to members and partners. A shared Internet/Web expert is a priority included in common/shared initiatives. Individual NORTAs may also seek in-house Web expertise through funding for interns, secondments from government agencies, etc.
- 2. Implementing a refined marketing mix** that encompasses a number of the recommendations including:
  - niche market approach;
  - integrated marketing strategies;
  - refreshed visitor guides,
  - enhanced distribution; and
  - enhanced lead generation.

While some NORTAs do currently plan, implement and evaluate fully integrated marketing strategies, the NORTAs will all

*Examples of niche market approach.....*

**New markets for high-end remote lodges/camps such as corporate and meetings market:** landing pages, keywords, images, marketing materials, messaging and pricing that speaks to meeting planners; ads in meeting planners' trade publications; attendance at meeting planning trade shows.

**Wilderness resorts, cabins and lodges with programs for women:** landing pages, keywords, images, marketing material and messaging that shows understanding of the needs of this market, attendance at women's and lifestyle shows.

**Intergenerational opportunities:** highlighting programs, experiences and adventures designed for example for grandparents with grandkids, mothers and daughters, etc. As above, with emphasis on presence at shows and Internet sites used by decision-makers relevant to this opportunity.

adopt fully integrated marketing strategies driven by the unique planning needs of target niche markets. They will benchmark and test tactics and tools by niche segment, working across NORTA boundaries as appropriate and sharing lessons learned.

Tools to be researched and tested include:

- newly designed guide books;
- lure pieces;
- Web components including e-newsletters;
- CD ROMs; and
- distribution at alternative/new consumer shows in parallel with review of current consumer show strategies.

This integrated approach will be applied to current and ongoing Corridor Strategies.

In addition to the priority activities identified above, each NORTA will also review and apply recommendations for enhanced internal operations and member benefits and services as appropriate.

#### COMMON AND SHARED INITIATIVES

1. The NORTAs will develop and sign an *"Affirmation of Partnership"* between the NORTAs to demonstrate commitment to moving forward on shared initiatives as appropriate. The partnership of regional tourism marketing associations in Northern

Ontario will act as a coordinating body for shared initiatives

2. The NORTAs will **form a Shared Initiatives Task Force** comprised of a small, representative group of senior NORTA staff and NORTA members to keep the momentum of this strategy going. NORTA representation may be comprised of either Board or non-Board members.
3. The NORTAs will finalize a detailed **Action Plan** for this Strategy in early November 2005 after each NORTA has had the opportunity to present this strategy to their Boards and broader memberships at regularly scheduled meetings held in fall 2005.
4. The Action Plan will include an external **Communications Plan** to launch this strategy and include communications to senior executives and managers of partners in this strategy – OTMPC, FedNor, NOHFC and MNDM.
5. The NORTAs will work with the Northern Office of OTMPC to submit a NORTA nominee to the Northern Committee to achieve **formalized standing on the Northern Committee**.
6. The NORTAs will seek resources for an **Internet/Web resource expert** to be shared by the NORTAs to quickly expand capacity in this important area. More specifically, the expert will be used to assist with the development of in-house skills such as writing for the Web, reviewing existing and

planned web pages, designing and launching of e-newsletters and e-mail campaigns and posting of member packages, etc.

7. The NORTAs will implement a **shared look and feel for visitor guides** across NORTAs for summer 2006. Shared features will include a cover template that also allows for NORTA-specific images and a tie-in to the overall Ontario brand, a shared design for Table of Contents listings and a standardized NORTA map in the first few pages with the respective NORTA highlighted.
8. The NORTAs will pursue **printing efficiencies** by pursuing a request for proposal for printers to respond to. The NORTAs will also continue to liaison with OTMPC on warehousing and distribution support for visitor guides.
9. The NORTAs will invest in **building capacity** of both staff and Board members through formalized and planned sharing of best practices and investment in one-time and ongoing professional and skills development opportunities.
10. The NORTAs will actively report to and engage their partners through the **development and distribution of a shared 'annual NORTA report'** that highlights market activities and results (using shared tracking tools) as well as organizational profiles and reach.
11. The NORTAs will further **enhance their relationship with OTMPC** by increasing

two way sharing of information and plans to identify synergies. Planning will be initiated earlier in the planning cycle and allow for customized contracts between each NORTA and OTMPC when appropriate.

12. The NORTAs will pursue an **in market intercept strategy** over the longer term, in consultation with OTMPC and their major urban and attraction partners.

#### **RE-DEFINED ROLE IN THE BROADER TOURISM INDUSTRY.**

By embracing services outside traditional marketing activities, NORTAs will evolve to become Destination *Management* Organizations. This is a subtle shift to supporting and enhancing the broader development and marketing of the tourism industry and members rather than selling the region as a destination. The applicability of recommendations to shift into a broader role in the tourism industry is driven by each NORTA's *current* role in their region. This is an area with longer term recommendations. Recommendations include:

1. **Shift to Stakeholder Model:** This organizational model, currently being implemented at the regional level in British Columbia, removes the requirement for membership to be listed on the regional Web site. This approach allows the regional DMO to better represent the full breadth and depth of offer and ultimately leads to broader buy-in to paid programs.

2. **Central and Comprehensive Database:** With the shift to a stakeholder model, the need for a comprehensive database of tourism operations increases. The database can be used to build Web site content and also provide the NORTAs with an asset that other sub-regional organizations cannot.
3. **Plan and Facilitate Primary Research:** Working with a range of partners, conduct recurring and one-time primary research to enrich the understanding of existing and emerging opportunities and preferred markets at the local, sub-regional and regional levels.
4. **Organize and Interpret Secondary Research:** As noted in many of the meetings held with the tourism industry, there is a need and interest in increased opportunities for the interpretation and discussion of implication and opportunities from a range of secondary research. While there is a wealth of this information available on-line and through other mediums, discussion and interpretation at the local level is in demand. This type of service can be done on a sector basis and be delivered as stand-alone, for-fee workshop and or as part of a broader regional or NORTA initiative.
5. **Provide Business Support Services with a Tourism:** In those regions where there is a gap in business support services with a tourism focus, there is an opportunity for NORTAs to be the service provider. Services provided should complement efforts of

CFDC's and other parties and could be delivered on behalf of these organizations on an as-need contracted service basis.

Tables on the following pages outline planned timing for implementation. The year for initiation of the action item is identified. Initiation may mean the development of a more detailed business and implementation plan or implementation of a specific tactic.

#### *Monitoring Performance*

The successful implementation of the recommendations in this five year strategy will be defined by the following measures of success:

- A more standardized set of member benefits and services across NORTAs;
- Successful implementation of shared marketing initiatives as measured by accepted performance/effectiveness measures;
- Increased and stable membership and partner participation; and
- Ongoing leadership and innovation in tourism marketing in Northern Ontario.

<b>TABLE 1</b> <b>Implementation Plan</b> <b>ENHANCED NORTA OPERATIONS</b> <b>and</b> <b>RE-DEFINED ROLE IN TOURISM INDUSTRY</b>					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>ENHANCED NORTA OPERATIONS <i>Internal Operations</i></b>					
Review Member Rates and Categories		→			To be implemented in parallel with <i>Shared and Common Initiatives</i> ; initiated as appropriate by each NORTA by 2007 at the latest.
Facilitate Participation		→			
In-House Capacity to Manage Websites					
<b>ENHANCED NORTA OPERATIONS <i>Member Benefits &amp; Services</i></b>					
Niche Market Approach	To be implemented in parallel with <i>Shared and Common Initiatives</i> ; initiated as appropriate by each NORTA.				
Integrated Marketing Strategies					
Optimized Internet Presence and Use					
Refreshed Visitor Guides					
Enhanced Distribution					
Enhanced Lead Generation					
Increased Media Relations					
Test Marketing of New Initiatives					
<b>RE-DEFINED ROLE IN TOURISM INDUSTRY</b>					
Shift to Stakeholder Model	Implemented as deemed appropriate by each NORTA on a timeline that reflects their role in regional industry and capacity to deliver.				
Central and Comprehensive Database					
Plan and Facilitate Primary Research					
Organize and Interpret Secondary Research					
Business Support Services with Tourism Focus					

**TABLE 2**  
*Implementation Plan*  
**COMMON AND SHARED INITIATIVES**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF NORTA STRATEGY</b>					
Development of detailed Action Plan	◆				
Development of detailed Communication Plan	◆				
<b>ENHANCED NORTA OPERATIONS <i>Common Initiatives</i></b>					
E-newsletters and Email campaigns		→			
Visitor Guides with Shared Look and Feel	◆				
<b>SHARED INITIATIVES</b>					
In-Market Intercept Strategy				→	→
Annual FAMs			→	→	
Long Haul Strategy			→	→	
Refined Consumer Show Strategy	→	→			
Printing Efficiencies for Visitor Guides					
Build Capacity	◆	→	→	→	→
Formalized Standing on Northern Committee	◆	→	→	→	→
Enhanced Partnership Relations	◆	→	→	→	→
Shared Measurement and Reporting Mechanism	◆	→	→	→	→

