



Executive Director Report – November 2017

Good Day,

Please forgive me, but I am going to get on a soap box for a moment. The staff are in the middle of building out the 2018-2019 Business Plan which will deliver on the objectives of the new Strategic Plan 2018-2021 approved by the board earlier this month. It builds on the success of the Destination Management Plan that comes to a conclusion at the end of this fiscal. Anyway, we were talking about the successes we had this year in getting free media coverage and PR for our stakeholders with our monthly events listings.

Events that we promoted were often picked up by several media outlets which led to more people learning about and visiting these events. Our Field Consultants were saying that many of our stakeholders don't take the time to upload their events on the Central Counties Event Cloud. This is where we select the events that we promote through our social media channels, on our website and through our media and PR efforts. If your event isn't there, we can't spread the word. We can't get it promoted through other media channels. We can't tell travel influencers about you.

If you love what you do – whether an employee or business owner – it just makes sense to take advantage of all of the free opportunities there are to promote what you have to offer and drive more people to your location. It is incredibly simple and can have huge results. And it is not just Central Counties that offers the ability to upload information about your organization and the events you are hosting.

- Your municipality is looking to learn more about what you are doing so that they can tell residents about all of the great things to see and do in the area.
- Each of our three regions (www.headwaters.ca, www.yorkscene.com, www.durhamtourism.ca) want to promote your events and provide varying opportunities to do so.
- It is easy to upload your corporate profile and events on Central Counties Cloud. Just visit www.centralcounties.ca to register your business
- Event Destination Ontario, our Provincial Marketing Agency, creates its itineraries, develops its stories and leverages earned media using information it finds on its corporate database. You can register your business and events with them by visiting www.tourismpartners.com and register as a new user.

What does it cost you to do this? Time. That's it. And to save yourself some time, may I recommend that you write out the details of your organization and your events in a word document that you keep open while uploading on these sites. Then it is just a matter of cutting and pasting the information rather than rewriting it each time. My suggestion is that you set a monthly calendar reminder for yourself to upload your new information and events. This also keeps you top of mind with the partners whose sites you are posting on.

What does it cost you not to do this? Exposure. Central Counties stakeholders who have taken the time to keep their profiles and events up to date have realized tens of millions of impressions for free. The

other day, I was mentioning that we should use a particular stakeholder as an example of success and one of the staff said we should use a different stakeholder because we often featured the one I mentioned. I was about to agree and then realized that the reason we are able to showcase this stakeholder in so many examples is that they take advantage of everything Central Counties, and other tourism resource providers have to offer. And because they spend so much time taking advantage of all of the opportunities offered, they are very, very successful. This allows them to hire part-time staff which frees them up to spend more time learning about and taking advantage of all the opportunities that exist for businesses in our area.

I am going to stop there, and step down from my soap box. I hope that you can find some time to take advantage of the free exposure you can get by ensuring all of the support organizations like Central Counties, have the ability to help tell the stories of your business and events.

Have a fantastic Holiday Season. Best regards,

Chuck