

TIAC Takeaways

The 2021 TIAC Tourism Congress featured more than 85 presenters delivering forward-thinking ideas and solutions to Canada's tourism industry. We asked attendees from a range of sectors to share some of their key takeaways. Here's a quick roundup.



Be Future Ready

- We need to future-proof like never before – it's critical to be prepared
- Effective communication is key to navigating crises
- Travellers will continue to seek out low-density experiences
- Use your DMO and PMO to promote yourself – they exist to tell your story
- The industry needs to adapt to new staffing realities; to reimagine the labour market of the future – with business, academia and government at the table
- Rather than forecasting your future, try “backcasting.” Start by articulating where you want to go, then identify the building blocks to get there

An Economic Powerhouse

- Tourism can quickly jumpstart economic growth like no other industry – investment in tourism results in immediate wins
- Economic investment strategies should connect tourism opportunities with entrepreneurs
- Tourism investment must be collaborative between business, communities and local governments
- Business travel is critical to economic recovery and urban tourism – we need strategies from all levels of government to help
- We need to not only consider the economic impact of tourism, but shift our thinking to recognize the social, mental and physical benefits of travel

Thinking Local

- DMOs need to recognize that their most important client is their community
- Visitor satisfaction is more important than number of visits
- Partnerships are the key to positive community impact
- The transportation sector needs to connect urban to rural
- Local public health offices are trusted voices to safely welcome visitors

Our Sustainable Future

- Tourism needs to play a role in a sustainable future
- Our transportation industry is working hard to find sustainable solutions
- Tell customers what you are doing in sustainability
- Sustainability KPIs need to be imbedded in tourism management roles across industries
- Conferences and events must align with sustainable needs
- The WTTC has developed a Net Zero Roadmap to guide change in the tourism industry

Thank You to Our Thought Leaders



Natalie Allaby
Manager, Cruise Dev.
Port Saint John



Minto Schneider
CEO
Explore Waterloo Region



Patti Balsillie
President
Patti Balsillie Management



Edmar Xavier
CEO
EXA Group Canada



Rebecca Mackenzie
President & CEO
Culinary Tourism Alliance



Greg Elmhirst
General Manager
Elmhirst's Resort



Catherine Callary
VP, Destination Dev.
Ottawa Tourism

Tourism's Opportunity and Responsibility Toward Reconciliation

- Get out of the boardroom and explore your local Indigenous community – meet, shop, engage
- Access to Indigenous experiences brings connection, understanding and the opportunity for reconciliation
- Passion and collaboration will bring opportunities for Indigenous operators
- Let's stop "trying to solve Indigenous problems with non-Indigenous solutions"

Alphabet®

About Alphabet®: Alphabet® is a 25-person tourism branding and marketing agency based in Ottawa, Canada, operating since 2000. Alphabet® has a history of partnering with clients and other consultancy teams, pushing the boundaries of how brand positioning and marketing strategy contribute to a destination's economic vitality. www.alphabetcreative.com