

Free Mystery Shops Offered to Tourism Businesses

Pembroke, ON (July 9, 2012) – Do you have what it takes to meet and exceed the expectations of your visitors this tourist season? That is exactly what the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO) is asking of tourism businesses and organizations now that the busiest season has arrived.

As a result of the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization's (OHTO) broader strategy to improve the overall quality of customer service being provided to visitors to the region, the OHTO is offering complimentary mystery shops for tourism-related businesses within Ontario's Highlands. Mystery shopping is an important tool used to measure the quality of customer service being delivered to visitors and provides businesses with insight into how guests perceive the entire experience, from start to finish. Along with an anonymous assessment that evaluates the organization's service delivery, businesses are also provided with a full report of the mystery shop which is an invaluable tool for businesses to learn what they are doing well and identify areas for improvement.

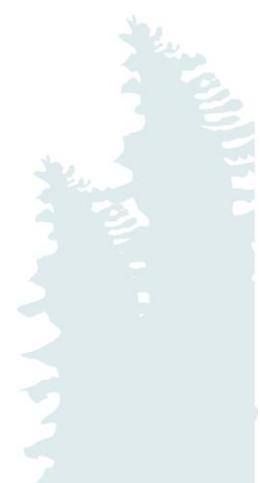
Think you already offer great customer service? You may want to think again. Research has shown 80% of companies believe they provide a superior customer experience, while only 8% of their customers agree with them.

"Most businesses are surprised when they hear this discrepancy," says Stephanie Hessel, Tourism Development and Industry Relations Coordinator with the OHTO. "The tourism industry is fiercely competitive and businesses who provide a level of service that best meets the needs of the visitor will continue to see growth. The OHTO is committed to supporting the industry towards developing excellent customer service practices that will translate into positive guest experiences, but the first step is understanding how you measure up."

The complimentary mystery shops are offered as one of the many benefits for signing up for the OHTO's new OHvation Customer Service Designation Program launched this June across the region. The OHvation program is a key initiative towards developing Ontario's Highlands as a region of high caliber tourism experiences and originated from the fact that improving customer service is one of the most attainable and affordable ways to contribute to tourism growth.

Businesses have until July 31st to book their mystery shop. All tourism-related businesses from within the region are eligible but space is limited and will be offered on a first come first serve basis. Contact Stephanie at designation@ohto.ca or 613-629-6486.

The OHTO is a not-for-profit organization mandated by the Province of Ontario to increase tourism within the counties of Haliburton, Lanark, Hastings and Renfrew and portions of Frontenac, and Lennox and Addington. The OHTO works in collaboration with eight sub-regional marketing organizations, tourism agencies and authorities including: Algonquin Nation, Bancroft & District Chamber of Commerce, ComfortCountry.ca, Haliburton Highlands, Lanark County





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Tourism, Land O' Lakes Tourist Association, Ottawa Valley Tourist Association, and the Rideau Heritage Route Tourism Association. Find out more about the OHTO at <http://www.ohto.ca>.

For more information, please contact Stephanie Hessel at 613-629-6486 or designation@ohto.ca.