



Wine
Country
Ontario™

Local Tastes Better

Draft Strategic Marketing Plan for Stakeholder
Feedback – February 23, 2011



LEADING WITH OUR STRENGTHS

OUR BRAND ELEMENTS



Wine Country Ontario Brand Elements

Our Brand Mission

To become the leading marketer of the Ontario wine industry, by inspiring, educating and championing Ontario wine and the romance of the unique places where it's made.

Our Brand Vision

To make Ontario wines the #1 choice of Ontarians.

Our Brand Positioning

We represent the only wine country experience that Ontarians can explore in their own backyard. The one place where residents and visitors can come to enjoy the full essence of what our province's wine country has to offer: spectacular wines, passionate growers and winemakers, local food, gorgeous scenery, exciting activities, unique architecture and warm hospitality.



Wine Country Ontario Brand Elements

Brand Personality

Welcoming, Proud, Pioneering, Passionate, Confident and acting as a Catalyst (connecting food and other cultural elements).

Brand Essence – Local Tastes Better

This is the core essence. It evokes a sense of place, invites you to visit and be a part of the community, to meet the winemakers and grape growers, to take in the landscape, the cuisine – the whole experience that makes our wines so special.



DELIVERING ON OUR BRAND PROMISE

DRAFT MARKETING STRATEGY – 2011-2012



Marketing Strategy – Broad Goals

- Raise awareness and deepen the emotional attachment to Ontario wines with key target consumers living primarily in Toronto GTA and Ottawa with secondary target in shoulder markets.
 - Leverage our local positioning and elevate quality and leadership attributes to raise the profile and stature of Ontario wines.
 - Activate pride amongst target to increase purchase frequency.
- Motivate travel to Ontario Wine Country to create emotional engagement.
- Educate on a broad level to deepen the knowledge of consumers and trade to raise brand affinity.
- Become a tourism leader amongst provincial and regional tourism organizations.



FOUNDATIONS OF THE PLAN

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES



Strategic Imperatives - Aspirational

- **Access** – Be #1 in distribution, promotions and brand communication through 3rd party.
- **Tourism Leadership** – Strive for world class execution and consumer engagement that inspires and drives pride.
- **Educational Excellence** – This is key to telling our story.
- **Be The Best** – Event execution, PR, sponsorships, research, social media and branding excellence.



Key Strategic Imperatives - Enablers

Access	Tourism Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LCBO<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment of promotional calendars to be in market as often as possible.• Investment in programs that raise emotional connection & demonstrate quality, leadership and local roots.• Category clarity through signage roll-out.• Increase growth with improved distribution and sell through in Vintages.• Activate on-Shelf taste/quality and value cues.• Extend Go Local beyond LCBO.• Increase the size of Taste Ontario events..• Inter-Provincial market strategies and goals implementation in key markets.• VQA Awards of Excellence revamp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue with a strategic approach to the travel guide & optimize distribution & cost.• Maximize advertising campaign impact with new imagery, messaging and reach.• Build website consumer engagement – comments, ratings and book now feature.• Strengthen the wine country Ontario tourism experience of mobile app by optimizing the participation from accommodations, attractions and restaurants.• Ensure that we fully understand the size and value of wine country travel.• Take a leadership role with RTO's. Demonstrate the value of wine country tourism and marketing expertise.• Continue to build on quality and expand secret shopper visits.• Continue PR efforts towards tourism focused media & bloggers.



Key Strategic Imperatives - Enablers

Be The Best	Educational Excellence
<p>Strategic selection of tasting events to reach target consumers and activate pride and quality credentials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve consumer engagement.• Test experiential style VQA tasting team.• Review all sponsorships and evaluate based on strategic alignment.• Deliver on the brand promise. Be true to our core values and brand standards.• Invest in research that strengthens our marketing and tourism knowledge & leadership.• Expand consumer community reach and engagement factor across the social media platforms.• Continue to showcase our best through all PR initiatives (FAMS, Press Releases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to raise program awareness and value of the WCO certificate program by partnering with an academic institute.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start discussions with Universities to integrate Ontario wine education into their curriculum.• Leverage the program to reach the licensee trade.• Consider delivering winery staff education on-line?• Deliver VQAO educational objectives through trade and consumer education and programming.• Offer trade partners; WOW leaders, PC's and Store managers the best possible wine country experience that we can in order to drive their loyalty and pride.



ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

PROPOSED TACTICAL MARKETING PROGRAMS



GROWING ACCESS



Access – Vintages

Objective:

Deepen the loyalty of highly involved wine consumers and trigger purchase of VQA wines by demonstrating leadership in quality and sustainable farming practices.

Strategy:

- Propose PC wine country immersion to give hands on experiences that improve perception, overcome obstacles and bring to life viticultural and winemaking innovation that is taking place at Ontario wineries. Use U&A study results to validate the importance of this change.
- Increase the number of releases to match growth trend in \$15-\$25. Action plan to improve sell through.
- Propose that super premium VQA table wines be included in Classic Catalogues as a means of raising consumer quality perceptions.
- Increase attendance at Taste Ontario events in Toronto and Ottawa. Review the timing of the Ottawa event.
- Recommend full integration of Vintages wines into LCBO P7 program.
 - Stand alone VQA release timed to start of P7. VQA wines and talent feature on front and back cover of Vintages catalogue.



Access – LCBO Wines

Objective:

Deepen the loyalty of wine consumers and trigger purchase of VQA wines with an “Own the Podium” mindset.

Strategy:

- Build a stronger educational component for WOW leaders and Store Managers/District Managers that includes and encourages wine country visits. Turn LCBO employees into passionate advocates.
- Identify and target underperforming categories for new distribution and promotional opportunities. Play to our strengths; the varietals that we do brilliantly, the strength of the style of our wines (food friendly). Focus on table and sparkling wines.
- Finalize wording and roll out refreshed VQA signage program to ensure that we have consistent messaging.
- Build on the successful Buyer/Critics Choice endorsements
- Align WCO promotional calendar with LCBO – Be in market as often as possible whether LCBO or Wine Country Ontario.
- Add support for tastings in P1 and P4.



Access – LCBO Wines (continued)

Strategy:

- P7 Go Local promotion
 - Develop an action plan to address logistical and inventory issues .
 - Integrate VQA Award of Excellence program as a Go Local year round focus.
 - Add employee or store Go Local rewards program tied to performance.
 - Reduce the number of FSI's and reallocate budget
 - Support PR initiatives and continue with FAMs prior to P7 Launch



LCBO Summary

Outcome: To raise the scores of loyalty and pride and maintain the strong growth of VQA wines in LCBO wines and to improve the sales targets in Vintages.

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Period 7 LCBO	400,000	400,000
Vintages Taste & Buy (2 events 2011-2012 vs 3 in previous fiscal)	80,000	60,000
LCBO Tastings (Net)	30,000	110,000
WOW Leader Programs	80,000	130,000
Product Consultants Programs	20,000	70,000
VQA Holiday Program (no investment needed in 2011-2012)	40,000	0



Access – Inter-Provincial

Objective:

To breakdown provincial distribution barriers for Ontario VQA wines in key priority markets.

Strategy:

- Continue to build an industry strategy that supports distribution and promotion (where applicable) in BC, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Quebec.
- Outreach to target market of Quebec and strong interest from Nfld Labrador
- Focus consumer communication messaging to support quality and innovation leadership in target markets
- Leverage learning's from the success of the MLCC visit and execute Canadian VQA promotion in fall of 2011 in partnership with BC at the MLCC while maximizing customer, staff and public relations opportunities where possible.
- Develop plan to maximize value of 2012 Winnipeg Wine Fair opportunity
-



Interprovincial Summary

Outcome: To succeed in building collaborative relationships with 3 or more LCB's where we have an established distribution strategy in place. Support program execution when distribution increases warrant consumer programming investment

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Interprovincial Program	15,000	30,000



Access – Export

Objective:

Building on National wine export initiative, seek out opportunities to position Ontario wines with a leading position and Ontario wine country as a key travel destination that celebrates and provides an exceptional wine and culinary experience

Strategy:

- Investment and lead for inbound media and buyer missions
- Investment in key events in Ontario and abroad that build international profile and awareness
- International competitions
 - Prioritized competitions to include those with most cache with consumers, wine buyers
 - Leverage results through WCO web and social media efforts



Export Summary

Outcome: Support of National initiatives drive VQA wine quality credentials and build international exposure of Wine Country Ontario experience.

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
International Competitions	15,000	10,000
Chicago Pilot Project	12,500	0
Media and Buyer Missions	57,000	60,000
i4c	50,000	50,000
Media Kit (Export)	-	13,000
Canadian Media Marketplace	13,000	13,000
Vancouver Playhouse	10,000	0



Access – Licensee Trade

Objective:

Build on established success of trade tastings while evolving other roles for the marketing strategy in this channel.

Strategy (evolving):

- Deepen our understanding of why Ontario restaurants do not carry more VQA wines. What are the barriers and opportunities.
- Establish key learnings for what activities or actions would support increased distribution.
- Actions will be determined based on the results of the trade quantitative research early March 2011
- Results of the study late March will determine timing and budget allocation.∴



Licensee Summary

Outcome: Successful trade engagements leveraging off assets of Taste Ontario events. A licensee strategy that is aligned to the needs of our trade partners

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Licensee Training Program	40,000	0
VQA Award Program or Successor Programming	40,000	20,000
Licensee Events	5,000	0
VQA Trade Portfolio Tasting (2 in 2011-2012 vs 3 in 2010-2011)	80,000	75,000
PR - VQA Rest Award Event	10,000	5,000



TOURISM LEADERSHIP



Leveraging our Tourism Assets

Objective:

To be recognized amongst consumers and tourism partners for our leadership in creating top tourism destinations with world class programs, tools and experiences. Create emotional engagement to build consumer loyalty for Ontario VQA wines. Build value for winery partners in Wine Country Ontario through enhanced Guide and web-based collateral.

Strategy:

- Refresh Wine Country Ontario travel guide strategy to create the best user experience and incorporate new brand imagery and language.
 - Improved winery photos, increase listings for accommodations, food and attractions.
 - Distribution of the travel guide in Food & Drink magazine, LCBO and key premium food retailers.



Leveraging our Tourism Assets

Strategy (continued):

- Continued investment in visual design of website to create a vibrant & exciting site
 - New photos, improved navigation and reorganized content.
 - Add a section on Ontario's Talent, feature growers and winemakers/winery owners. Craft the story of talented people and demonstrate leadership in winemaking, sustainable farming and respect for the land .
- Increase consumer interaction and engagement with BOOK NOW feature for tour and event reservations.
- Repeat outdoor advertising campaign to create top of mind awareness and entice Enthusiast Influencers and the Inexperienced Aspirational's living primarily in the Toronto, GTA and Ottawa to travel to wine country. Secondary target shoulder markets in SW Ontario.
- Using new wine country imagery, refresh creative and develop a series of taglines that project quality and environmental leadership.
- Increase advertising spend as possible to deepen market penetration.
- Build complimentary campaign with the GGO to maximize value .



Leveraging our Tourism Assets

Strategy (continued):

- RTO, OTMP relationships.
 - Outreach program to the RTO's that include wine regions and other key markets .Create & deliver a presentation that shows the size and value of wine country travel to the region. Communicate the strength of the tourism programs that Wine Country Ontario has in place and the opportunities that exist for their partners to leverage; like social media, guide/website and mobile app and to reinforce the substantial investment that Wine Country Ontario /Wineries make to support tourism to Ontario regions.
 - Create dialogue and build a cohesive win - win strategy for all that goes beyond a regurgitated OTMP regional investment model.
- Partner with Ministry of Tourism to value the size and value of wine country tourism in each region and how it ranks amongst top regional attractions.
 - This would allow us to have sound data and to make wine country a trackable research project at the lowest cost to the program which cannot afford stand alone research this year.



Leveraging our Tourism Assets

- Regional Activities to deliver results for Wine Country Ontario program and participants
 - Stronger alignment to strategy. Selective approach to support
- Wine Route Signage management.
 - Redesign and install 3 new area profile highway signs for Niagara .
- Increase secret shopper visits to 3 times per year.
 - June, October 2011 and Jan/Feb. 2012.
 - Winery retail training to address gaps.
 - Adjust training to 2 levels – Novice and Advanced
- Aggressive Public Relations campaign to drive earned media around tourism
 - Focus on travel and lifestyle media and bloggers



Tourism Summary

Outcome: Regional and Provincial tourism partners seek out Wine Country Ontario for guidance in building strong tourism programming. Increase in consumer loyalty scores. Strong execution of Wine Country Ontario guide, extensive growth of consumer use of web based and social media assets. Advertising to deliver strong metrics.

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Wine Country Ontario Guide	324,000	380,000
Website and Web Based Mobile App	86,000	50,000
Book Now Reservation Feature – Setup (Wineries to support monthly)	0	15,000
Regional Programming & Signage	75,000	60,000
Secret Shopper Program	50,000	75,000
Advertising	580,000	650,000
PR Support – Brand Support	40,000	20,000



EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE



Educational Excellence- Consumer/Staff

Objective:

To take a leadership role in driving accurate and consistent wine education to consumers, trade, winery staff and key influencers everywhere.

Strategy:

- Train the trainers FAM tour to role out Ontario wine education program to college educators in May in partnership with Niagara College. (Budget covered from 2010-2011 fiscal year).
 - Build in a road show to colleges across the province to reach the broader group of educators to ensure that the program is well understood and utilized by all colleges.
- WCO winery staff education revised to include 2 levels of training, novice and advanced. This will allow for better coverage of more meaningful and relevant information.
 - Video tape the staff education programs to allow for on-going training at wineries.
 - Content to include Wine Country Ontario brand engagement and wine education



Education Summary

Outcome: Wine Country Ontario is seen as a reliable source for academic quality educational material. The delivery of consistent and meaningful wine education content throughout Ontario colleges & wineries.

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
College Programming	0	15,000
Retail Training	5,000	15,000



BE THE BEST



Be The Best – Consumer Programming

Objective:

- To raise quality perception of VQA wines with core consumers through engaging sampling events that educate and drive trial.

Strategy:

- Participate in 2 key consumer shows that align with our strategy and reach core consumers.
 - Toronto and Ottawa recommended. London to be reviewed
 - Increase consumer engagement by adding local artisanal food component and take away redeemable wine tour coupon and or Facebook/ Twitter consumer recruitment card.
- Admin support for local culinary and wine events – Terroir, SIP Ontario.
- Invest in regional shows in PEC, Niagara and LENS that align with our strategy.
- Test experiential VQA sampling team events to bring the wine country experience to consumers.
 - Event team will be selected based on wine knowledge, passion , attitude and demographic profile. They will be equipped with portable props, team outfits, extensive training and program expectations and deliverables.



Consumer Programming Summary

Outcome: Raise performance on key metrics of consumer attitude, especially around quality parameters.

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Consumer Shows	200,000	170,000
Consumer Experiential Pilot Program	0	105,000



Be The Best – Social Media Programming

Objective:

Continue to build our on-line presence and credibility as an authentic, trusted source for meaningful information and engaging experiences.

Strategy:

- Grow the community & momentum on Facebook, Twitter and the Wine Country Ontario blog by creating more consumer and blogger engagement and experiential opportunities to turn them into raging fans.
 - Build on the elements that are working well, the blogger outreach, daily updates, the promotion of regional and winery activities/events and hands on management of the program.
 - Build in metrics for fan increase of 50%.
- Create a tool kit for wineries that encourages their on-going participation and engagement in the program and helps them leverage the social media tools to build their own on-line communities. Initiate more sharing of content both to Wine Country Ontario and to wineries



Be The Best – Social Media Programming

Strategy:

- Build an exciting video contest to find the “Ultimate Wine Country Ontario Ambassador” . Semi-finalists to attend Wine Country Boot Camp immersion program where the most passionate ambassador will rise to the top. Winner becomes the consumer blogger for a week. and rewarded with prizes including winery tasting coupons.
 - Program will be supported by live video feed that can be posted on youtube, Facebook and WCO website..
- Investigate Four Square technology integration into our social media campaign.
 - Four square is a location based social networking software for mobile devices. We would build a program to increase the frequency of winery visits by creating a reward system and a series of badges based on a targeted number of winery and regional visits. This adds consumer engagement and a fun rewards system that appeals to a younger consumer base.
 - We are investigating the logistics and costs.
- Facebook ads to drive followers twice per year.



Social Media Summary

Outcome: Doubling of followers across all social media platforms.
Deployment of new enhancements to web based programming to grow consumer engagement with online assets. .

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Social Media Program	140,000	155,000



Be The Best - Research

Objective:

To invest in research that strengthens our marketing and tourism knowledge and leadership. Benchmark performance and measure brand health movement.

Strategy:

- Annual Usage and Attitude study 2 times per year to measure change in consumer perception, attitude and behaviour with Ontario VQA wines.
 - Supports our annual marketing strategy and helps guide our tactical plans to drive trial and loyalty of Ontario VQA wines.
 - Support improvement in comprehension and educational effectiveness of the term VQA to deliver against VQAO objectives.
- Annual advertising tracking to rank program effectiveness; awareness, comprehension and impact.



Research Summary

Outcome: Build and enhance our research tool kit that enables us to make fact based, informed marketing decisions on all consumer and tourism programming. Brand health measures able to be measured against benchmarks set in 2010-2011.

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Usage and Attitude Study	60,000	60,000
Ad Tracking Research	25,000	25,000



Be The Best – Public Relations

Objective:

Execution of a strategic PR plan that is integrated and supports all marketing and tourism initiatives. The primary focus will be to drive wine country tourism and support the marketing of VQA wines. Strengthen core messages to media and influencers relating to the quality and leadership attributes of Wine Country Ontario and VQA wine.

Strategy:

- Focus PR efforts on wine, travel and lifestyle journalists and bloggers in GTA and key international influencers
- Leverage PR off of WCO led events and industry/partnership events and initiatives.
- Support key regional events – i4c, Riesling experience
- Support of incoming missions of media and trade from export program as appropriate
- Nurture travel and lifestyle stories in the US seeded at Canada Media Marketplace
- Support blogger activities – Taste Camp North, Intl Wine Bloggers Conference
- Support for Canadian Wine Awards activities
- Strengthen all messaging around new Wine Country Ontario positioning so that feel and voice is reflected in all PR materials and activities



Public Relations Summary

Outcome: Wine Country Ontario through the Wine Council is seen as a reliable source for media and influencers for information about Wine Country Ontario. Consistent key messages about Wine Country Ontario are delivered and understood by media and shared in their stories for consumers. Wine Country Ontario increases its share of earned media in all outlets including wine, travel, lifestyle and bloggers.

Proposed Investments Overview:

CATEGORY	2010-2011	2011-2012
Events/Radio/TV programs	20,000	15,000
Media Monitoring	18,000	20,000
Media Tours	79,000	75,000
Wine Samples to Magazines	12,000	8,000
Canadian Wine Awards	0	10,000



PLAN SUMMARY



Budget Summary for Tactical Activities

Category	Proposed Plan	Last Year
LCBO	\$780,000	\$857,000
Inter-Provincial	\$30,000	\$15,000
Licensee	\$100,000	\$208,500
Tourism	\$643,500	\$660,000
Advertising	\$650,000	\$588,500
Consumer Engagement	\$275,000	\$200,000
Social Media	\$155,000	\$140,000
Research	\$110,000	\$350,000
Export	\$148,000	\$166,500
Public Relations	\$158,000	\$161,000
Admin per funding	\$450,000	\$466,000
	Total: \$3,499,500	Total: \$3,812,500