

IMPACT

x16 increase
in
general admissions



55%  **MOBILE SALES**

For both general admission and event online ticket sales via smartphones and tablets

x10 increase
in
school groups

ABOUT

Founded in 1904, the Stratford Perth Museum winked in and out of existence for decades until its re-birth in 2009 in a 2,500 sq.ft. historic home and a 10,000 sq.ft. extension. With four employees and some 75 students, volunteers and guides, the museum has a permanent local collection in addition to special exhibits, often in partnership with the Stratford Festival and other cultural organizations.

STRATFORD PERTH
MUSEUM
Your Community. Your Museum.

THE HIGH LEVEL

When the Stratford Perth Museum re-positioned itself as a tourism destination and embraced digital marketing, RTO4 assisted and some key management insights emerged:

- 1 *"Collaborate with other attractions to build a bigger experience – the Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival thanked us for bringing in this year's Anne Frank Exhibit."*
- 2 *"Have young people and volunteers around – and be open to their ideas, especially for social media."*
- 3 *"Use analytics to find out how people are already buying from you online, and do more of that."*
- 4 *"A lot of your customer service issues can be addressed and solved on social media, such as TripAdvisor."*



“For a cultural institution to build this type of success, you have to be entrepreneurial. And that takes a committed staff and a brave Board of Directors.”

John Kastner
General Manager
Stratford Perth Museum

CAN A MUSEUM GO DIGITAL?

When the Stratford Perth Museum's Board of Directors hired John Kastner, former Managing Editor of Stratford's daily newspaper, as General Manager in 2013, his mandate was to raise the profile and relevance of the century-old institution. *"It was a deliberate shift by the Board to hire someone from journalism and not the cultural industry,"* says Mr. Kastner. *"They wanted someone who understood media and what stories would resonate with the public."*

The Board also committed to a change of vision to bring a digital mindset to museum marketing, and actively pursue collaboration with outside partners. *"The Board adopted a culture to experiment and partner,"* John says. *"That takes a brave Board. People at other organizations shake their heads and say, 'We could never do that.'"*

The results are startling: Quadrupled attendance from 853 people in 2013, to 3600 in 2014, and on track to top 15,000 in 2015. And that's not including school groups, which exploded tenfold, from 400 to over 4,000.

IN FOR A FEW REPAIRS

Kastner's first inspiration came from an unlikely source: NASCAR. *"I looked at their digital presence – their website, social media integration, live race commentary on Twitter ... and I thought, 'We can do that.'"*

"Then RTO4 helped us solve website problems, like replacing a proprietary platform that took days to change and didn't work well on mobile devices. We went to a mobile friendly, open source platform, integrated our social media into the site, and now tablets and phones are 35% of our traffic."

There were also glitches in online ticket sales, which have now gone from zero to \$1,000 monthly and still growing. *"You learn a lot along the way. Turns out our prime time for mobile sales is same-day from 9 to 11AM. So look at your traffic analytics and plan your social media posting for it."*

COLLABORATION AS STRATEGY

"Partner with someone nearby," says Kastner. *"The Board knew that meant The Stratford Festival."*

The Museum's first collaboration was with the Festival and University of Toronto: an exhibit of the first-known portfolio of Shakespeare's scripts in 2014. This year's outstanding success was landing the Anne Frank Exhibit from the Netherlands for four months to coincide with the Festival's production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Kastner lobbied hard to get it, with active support from the Festival, County of Perth and City of Stratford. *"In the end, [Artistic Director] Antoni Cimolino thanked us because 'It helps us offer a more complete experience for our patrons...just tell us what you want to do next and how we can help.'"*

Kastner also says to surround yourself with younger people and listen to their ideas. He saw the Festival's 2016 playbill and didn't have any ideas of what the museum could do. *"Until my kids said, 'Are you kidding? Do The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe!' And then my volunteers came up with all sorts of ideas."*



"Stratford Perth Museum does an exceptional job of continually improving the visitor experience and extends that philosophy to also include the visitor's digital experience: from the first digital touch point to post visit social media sharing. Their collaboration with the Stratford Festival created a truly unique visitor experience that enriched the entire destination."

Zac Gribble, Director of Media Technology, RTO4

WHAT NOW?



If your website isn't mobile friendly, change it. As soon as possible. Visit bit.ly/MobileTraveler to learn more.



Test everything on different devices. *"Google Maps was sending people to four different locations, and it took several attempts to fix it."*



Always link your social media posts back to your site, or others'. *"They'll return the favour."*



Re-Tweet or Share as soon as possible to boost others. *"@ is where it's at."*



Engage with your social media channels. You can address a lot of your customer service issues on sites like TripAdvisor.



Adopt a common voice & tone for all your social media posts. Visit voiceandtone.com to see how MailChimp does it.



Track and measure what works. *"Use analytics to find out when and where people buy online. And do more of that."*