

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **RTO4 Partners with Stratford Festival on a regional call centre to support the New Online Booking Service for tourism**

*New reservation system provides one-stop shopping to help visitors plan better trips*

**STRATFORD, Ont.**—All the best tourism attractions and accommodations of Huron, Perth, Wellington and Waterloo Region are now only a computer click or a phone call away via a one-stop-shopping and reservation portal — from world-class theatre, accommodations, heritage tours and fine dining, to spectacular hiking and relaxing escapes on some of Ontario’s best beaches.

“This new online tool simplifies the planning experience for visitors and give them a lot of fantastic ideas to make the most of their getaway,” says Marc Armstrong, Chairperson of RTO4 (Ontario Regional Tourism Organization Four). “At the same time, it allows us to offer a broader experience, more entertainment and accommodation options, and encourage visitors to stay and have fun even longer in the area.”

In addition to the online system, under the three-year agreement with the Stratford Festival, the system will be supported by the Stratford Festival’s call centre which has some 60 years of experience in serving visitors to the region.

The comprehensive new online booking system and call centre will link tourism properties and products from across Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Wellington, providing visitors numerous benefits, including a single point of access to the over 300 regional hotels, Inns, B&B’s, campgrounds and attractions as well as wealth of pre-arranged stay-and-play packages custom-tailored to specific interests.

“More and more of our visitors are turning to the web to make their travel plans,” explained Stratford Festival Director of Marketing and Audience Development Lisa Middleton. “By providing an online snapshot of everything the region has to offer, we hope the new service will entice visitors to stay longer and to try a new experience.”

In addition to creating a vastly superior user experience for visitors, the new service benefits tourism operators throughout the region. Because RTO4 is underwriting the cost of implementing and operating the new reservation system, tourism operators will not pay users fees and commissions.

“The goal is to grow the tourism revenues in the region by raising the profile of the great tourism products we have to offer and making them easier to buy and sell,” says RTO4 Chief Marketing Officer Napier Simpson.

Consumers can check out the booking system through one of the portals listed at [betterweekending.ca](http://betterweekending.ca).

### **About Regional Tourism Organization Four Inc:**

Incorporated in October 2012 by a volunteer board and supported by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sports, RTO4 is dedicated to growing the tourism industry and economy in Waterloo, Wellington, Perth and Huron. For more information visit [betterweekending.ca](http://betterweekending.ca).

### **About the Stratford Shakespearean Festival:**

**The Stratford Festival**, in picturesque Stratford, Ontario, Canada, is North America's leading classical theatre, drawing half a million visitors a year. It presents a seven-month season of a dozen plays in four venues, along with a Forum of events to enrich the play-going experience. With the works of Shakespeare at its core, the Festival features classics, contemporary dramas, musical theatre and new plays. It presented its first season in 1953, using an innovative thrust stage that revolutionized Shakespearean performance in our time and inspired the design of several other major venues worldwide.