

Federal and Provincial Investments Help Exporters Regain Markets

Atlantic Canada's manufacturers, processors and service providers need to find new ways of doing business. They must adopt innovative technologies to help them regain lost markets due to COVID-19 and diversify their international customers and suppliers.

The Government of Canada and the four Atlantic Provinces today announced a total investment of more than \$4.8 million in 14 new projects to help Atlantic Canadian exporters increase production, create jobs, regain markets and return to a healthier, safer and more prosperous future.

The projects support the development of tools and resources to help Atlantic Canadian exporters find new ways to market and sell their products to buyers around the world. Among others, the investments will enable exporters to create or participate in virtual spaces to market their products and services to buyers anywhere, reducing or eliminating the need to travel and helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Supporting Exporters Across Atlantic Canada

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marketing and selling their products to buyers and consumers around the world.

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The adjacent list of Recipient Sector Activities funded by ATIGA totals \$4,837,08

Island Beach Company to Operate Gift Shops

Following a competitive procurement process, Tourism Nova Scotia has selected Island Beach Company as the successful proponent to operate a business/gift shop providing high-quality products and services at the Amherst and Port Hastings Visitor Information Centre (VIC) locations.

The contract is effective May

1, 2021, with a tentative opening date for both locations of Friday, May 21, 2021. As part of the contract, Island Beach Company's offerings will include a minimum of 75% of products and/or services that are either produced, prepared, manufactured, assembled, or originated in Nova Scotia, and/or showcase Nova Scotia.

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For example, the Atlantic Canada Aerospace and Defence Association is delivering three dynamic virtual regional events on behalf of its members. Aerospace and defence firms in the region will connect with local, national and global audiences by using an online platform to meet clients and develop new market opportunities.

The Doers & Dreamers Travel Guide is moving from a print guide to a digital guide in 2021. The guide will be produced as a downloadable PDF with the ability for readers to click through to tourism operator websites and other trip-inspiring content. The guide will be available at NovaScotia.com and users will be able to download and view it offline. This one-year pilot will be evaluated in 2021 to consider a permanent transition to digital-only in future years.

Traveller requests for the print version of the Doers & Dreamers Guide have declined significantly in recent years as people plan their trips online, with a drastic drop in 2020 reflecting the impact of COVID-19 on travel. Demand for print materials is expected to continue to decline as COVID-19

ment an Atlantic Canada Site Certification Program to increase foreign direct investment and investment readiness in Atlantic Canada. The program will help connect foreign investors to development ready, high quality certified sites across the region.

Atlantic Canada is leading the country in reopening its

economy and exports play an important part in each province's recovery plans. Today's announcement builds on the continued partnership through the Atlantic

Growth Strategy to grow the region's marketing, product development and capacity building initiatives to increase the reach and volume of Atlantic Canada exports.

New Digital Doers & Dreamers for 2021

public health protocols recommend reducing touch points.

A digital format also offers more flexibility at a time when the tourism industry is facing a lot of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With a printed guide, we have a set quantity and a deadline to finalize the information. We have heard from many businesses that it is difficult right now to say what they might be offering next year or what their hours might be. The digital format allows operators and organizations to update listings at any time throughout the year to reflect changes in hours of operation, cancellations etc.

Recognizing the financial constraints facing the tourism industry, the 2021 guide will not offer paid advertising opportunities; as conditions improve, this option

will be re-introduced.

The digital guide will be produced in English and French, and Tourism Nova Scotia will continue to print Nova Scotia road maps. Eligible tourism businesses will still be able to list their business in the guide at no cost. Complimentary business, package, experience, and event listings will also continue to

be available on NovaScotia.com. Regional guides, road maps, and individual business brochures will also continue to be available if visitors require printed materials.

We are currently developing the new digital guide and look forward to sharing more information through the iTouch newsletter and on tourismns.ca.

Get Help Optimizing Your Website

As part of the Tourism Nova Scotia Webinar Series, SEO consultant, Michael MacMillan of MacMillan Search has been helping tourism businesses improve their search engine optimization, or SEO, to make it easier for potential customers to find them online.

SEO is about improving the search engine results for your business so you can attract more people to your website, and make sure the people coming to the site take the action you want them to take.

In an Introduction to SEO for Content Webinar on December 3, Michael showed participants how to increase search traffic to your website with your content. He covered tactics to discover what questions potential customers are asking in search engines and how best to create content to answer these questions and get your website at the top of their search results.

If you weren't able to join the live webinar on December 21,

you can register to view the recording here.

Everyone who registered for the live webinar or to view the recorded webinar will receive an invitation in January to participate in an interactive online session to put those learnings into practice. Completion of the Intro to SEO for Content Webinar is a requirement for participating in the SEO Next Steps.

To make the most of this session, we recommend that you practice some of the techniques outlined in the webinar and come prepared with your questions for Michael. Mark your calendars for the SEO Next Steps Webinar with Michael MacMillan, Thursday, January 21 at 10:00am.

Michael also hosts regular SEO Brunch Meetups, where people can have a SEO audit of their website and ask questions about improving their SEO. The last SEO Brunch was held on Monday, December 21.

Building a Flexible Social Media Strategy

In the current COVID-19 environment, the message you need to communicate to your customers can shift quickly. It is important to be nimble and adapt to changing circumstances.

You are invited to join Tourism Nova Scotia and Digital Nova Scotia with a special guest presenter on January 14, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. for the Building a Flexible Social Media Strategy Webinar.

In this webinar, we'll answer questions like:

How do you shift your social media message

to promote your business during a temporary closure or when travel restrictions are in place?

How do you keep your audience engaged if you're closed during the winter? If you are open for business, how do you build loyalty and sales at this time of year?

How do you make the most of paid social media if you want to spend advertising dollars?

More details, including registration information will be shared at <https://tourismns.ca/webinar-series>.

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