

Industry Communications – April 2026 Industry Newsletter

Purpose: Communicate Group Tour Learning Sessions with OMCA

Date: April 13, 2026

Prepared by: Bev Scott

Building a Group Tour–Ready Region: Spring 2026 Learning Sessions

This spring, RTO3 delivered a series of Regional Group Tour Capacity Building Learning Sessions designed to strengthen the Hamilton-Halton-Brant region’s readiness for the motor coach and group travel market. In partnership with local DMOs and the Ontario Motor Coach Association (OMCA), four sessions were hosted across Oakville, Burlington/Halton Hills, Brantford/Brant/Six Nations, and Hamilton, engaging 54 participants representing 52 tourism businesses.

The sessions provided hands-on training in key areas such as group tour expectations, pricing and packaging, operational readiness, and working effectively with tour operators. By connecting businesses directly with industry experts and buyers, the initiative built confidence, increased understanding of the travel trade ecosystem, and supported the development of group-ready experiences.

As a result, many participating operators are now better positioned to welcome group business, collaborate on multi-stop itineraries, and tap into new revenue opportunities, particularly in shoulder and off-peak seasons. This work also strengthens regional alignment and reinforces Hamilton-Halton-Brant as a cohesive, competitive, and market-ready destination for domestic and international group travel.

RTO3 will continue to build on this momentum through targeted tools, training, export-readiness mentorship, and market activation initiatives to support long-term growth in the group tour sector.

Group Tour Capacity Building – At a Glance

4 regional learning sessions delivered

54 participants engaged

52 tourism businesses represented

7 DMOs collaborating across the region

Full sector representation across the visitor economy:

- Attractions and Experiences
- Culinary and Agri-tourism
- Accommodations
- Conservation and Nature-based
- Festivals and Events
- Municipal Culture Departments

- Indigenous Tourism Partners

What this means for the region:

1. **More** businesses are open for group business
2. **Increased** readiness for motor coach and travel trade markets
3. **New** opportunities for shoulder season and midweek visitation
4. **Stronger** regional collaboration and multi-stop itineraries

Bottom Line Impact: Through this initiative, RTO3 is strengthening the Hamilton-Halton-Brant region's capacity to grow into a more connected, competitive, and group tour-ready destination, building the knowledge, confidence, and collaboration needed to welcome motor coach tours and expand travel trade opportunities over time.

Get Involved:

For more information on group tour readiness and travel trade initiatives, or to explore how your business can get involved, please reach out to Bev Scott, Manager, Business and Visitor Experiences Development, bev.scott@theheartofontario.com, to connect and access available supports and resources.