

SECTORS IN TOURISM

Sectors Overview

The tourism industry has been divided into eight different sectors or areas. The following sector descriptions are brief overviews.

1. Accommodation
2. Adventure Tourism and Recreation
3. Attractions
4. Events and Conferences
5. Food and Beverage
6. Tourism Services
7. Transportation
8. Travel Trade

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors in the tourism industry. In 1997, approximately 173,000 people were employed in hotels and other lodging operations in Canada. Between 1986 and 1996, accommodation services experienced growth of 39%.

Reasons for this are:

- demand is extending beyond traditional seasons, e.g. conferences during the summer at ski resorts
- growth of large chains and increased interest in vacation or time-share concepts
- increased interest in Canada as a destination.

The benefits of growth are reaped by those looking for careers in this sector. New jobs are being created, movement along one's career path is accelerated, opportunities for positions and careers in different regions and types of establishments are increasing.

Hotels

- Hotel properties usually cater to both business and pleasure travellers and offer a wide range of accommodation types.
- Deluxe, airport and convention hotels are generally located in urban centres or near airports. They are often large (over 150 rooms) and have a wide range of facilities and services (e.g. convention rooms, restaurants, shops, fitness centres). Many are members of a chain, meaning that the property is part of a larger company and has sister properties in other areas. *The benefit of working at a chain to an individual employee might be the ability to transfer to other properties in the chain.*
- All-suite hotels are increasingly popular. Each unit contains the same facilities as an apartment, meaning the traveller has a private place for meetings (i.e. the dining room table) and a kitchen for cooking meals.
- Smaller, privately owned hotels offer lodging and many also contain a café or restaurant, and a beverage room.
- Resort hotels and lodges are usually located in or near recreational sites. Many offer guests a wide range of activities, such as golf, skiing, tennis, riding or water sports. They may also offer entertainment (e.g. nightclubs, shops, piano bars, casinos, dinner theatre) and have convention facilities.
- Motels, motor hotels and inns are often much smaller (less than 150 rooms), less expensive facilities that appeal to overnight or short-stay travellers. Some motels are franchise or chain operations, others are independently owned and operated. Motels are often found in smaller communities, the suburbs of cities and along major highways.

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Bed and Breakfasts and Farm/Ranch Vacation Sites

These cater to people wanting a personal touch, a unique heritage or lifestyle setting, or a home-like atmosphere. Few accommodate more than 8 - 10 people. Prices and amenities vary greatly from operation to operation. There may not be many positions at these sites, as many are owner-operated sites and small enough that just one or two people can manage. However, a position at one of these sites can be as varied as any in the industry. Helping the guests saddle up in the morning might be part of the 'front desk' position!

Cabins, Cottages and Houseboats

Often located in recreation areas, and offering facilities such as a beach, fishing rentals, playgrounds, etc., these are often destination sites for travellers. Generally, stays are longer than a night or two and involve the whole family, including the dog.

Campgrounds

Campgrounds cater to travellers who have their own roof, usually a tent or motorhome, but require a serviced site for it. Campgrounds range in the services they supply, from 'wilderness sites' with no services except maybe an outhouse, to full power and water hookups, with complete restaurant, laundry, entertainment and washroom facilities. This type of accommodation generally appeals to travellers who want an inexpensive outdoor experience and/or related activities, such as hiking, canoeing, fishing, hunting or boating.

Hostels

These are usually non-profit facilities catering to budget-conscious or adventure travellers. Guests supply their own sleeping bags, cook their own meals, and often sleep in dormitory-style rooms.

TYPES OF POSITIONS IN THE ACCOMMODATION SECTOR

Positions in the accommodation sector are as varied as the types of businesses. Most properties have a department, or a person, who specializes in the following areas. There may be people for each area, or one person may have one or more of these roles. The different areas in which one might work in this sector are:

Front Office and Guest Services

This is usually the most visible department of a property, and is often where a guest has initial personal contact. Individuals employed in reservations, guest services and front desk reception are all part of this department.

Administration

Administrative staff plan and co-ordinate all operations. Administration includes the areas of management, human resources, finances, purchasing, and sales and marketing.

Housekeeping, Maintenance and Fitness

Housekeeping and maintenance are essential departments in any property. Those working in these departments often have little direct contact with guests, however their services add significantly to guest satisfaction. Fitness is a newer area of the accommodation sector, and positions are available for those who have expertise in the monitoring of equipment or products and their use, and in setting programs for those wishing to work out.

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Food and Beverage

Food and beverage outlets can range from restaurants and bars to nightclubs and posh dining rooms. Kitchen staff, room service staff, food and beverage servers and bartenders are just some of the positions that are available in this area.

ADVENTURE TOURISM AND RECREATION

Adventure tourism and recreation, like the accommodation sector, is growing fast. Changing trends in travel and tourism, where clients request active, recreational experiences or travel adventures where they can learn about nature and/or culture, are driving the growth. This sector includes everything from bird watching to salmon fishing, horseback riding to white water rafting, golf to wilderness trekking. Adventure tourism and recreation draws those who want to experience Canada as a place that is natural and unspoiled, and those who want active, unusual vacations. *Because activities often mean clients need transport, hotel rooms and restaurants, other tourism sectors also benefit.*

There are over eighty different occupations in the adventure tourism and recreation sector. The opportunities for small business owner/operators are limited only by the creativity of the operators. Total Canadian employment in this sector in 1997 was 71,100 and this is expected to grow to 90,000 by 2005.

The major areas of this sector are:

Outdoor Adventure and Ecotourism

Many travellers seek adventure, challenge and excitement in an outdoor setting. Canada is blessed with a wide diversity of relatively unspoiled wilderness areas that support these types of activities. Hiking, cycling, mountaineering, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, horseback riding, river rafting, scuba diving, sky diving, snowmobiling, and nature/ wildlife viewing are just some of the activities included in this portion of the sector. In addition, there are many Canadian businesses dedicated to fishing our lakes and oceans, and hunting or photographing wild animals.

Outdoor adventure and ecotourism businesses require staff who have a love and knowledge of the outdoors. They often need technical proficiency and expertise in the activity that the business focuses on. In addition, in order to ensure the long-term viability of the business, they must respect the environment and help others to respect it as well. As with all tourism occupations, employees must enjoy working with people and be skilled at understanding and meeting individual needs.

Ski Resorts

Over two million Canadians regularly ski or snowboard. There are nearly 300 alpine ski areas in Canada and hundreds of ski clubs to serve them. Canada's top five resorts enjoy steady growth. These resorts attract skiers and boarders from across the country, and large numbers of foreign travellers from around the world, especially from Japan, Britain and Germany.

Eleven per cent of Canadians cross-country ski. Enthusiasts travel to recreation areas, such as the site of the 1988 Olympic cross-country ski trails in Canmore, Alberta, to experience the tracks and the outdoors.

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Ski-related jobs are numerous. They are available at ski resorts, hills and clubs, and in those businesses that support the industry, like lodges and ski shops.

Golf and Tennis Facilities

Almost five million Canadians golf. Annual industry revenue is almost \$1 billion. There are 1800 golf courses in Canada and golf holidays are becoming increasingly important to the economy.

Another popular summer sport is tennis. Many clubs and resorts offer tennis courts, tennis lessons and tennis gear. This is also an important part of the industry, with revenue earned through the sale of clothing and gear, the rental of courts, the training of players and the maintenance of equipment.

Golf and tennis pros, those who fix equipment and maintain courts and greens; those who work in industries that support the golfers and tennis players - all work in this area of the adventure tourism and recreation sector.

Parks

There are 38 national parks and 792 national historical sites in Canada. In addition, all provinces and territories have regional parks, and most urban and rural municipalities have parks and habitat protection areas. Many people are involved in planning, maintaining, promoting, patrolling and interpreting these areas. Positions are as varied as the sector.

Marine Facilities

Across Canada, water and water-based activities are popular with Canadians and visitors alike. Activities include fishing, swimming, sailing, windsurfing, water-skiing, canoeing, and sea-dooing. Related businesses include marinas, tour boat excursions, sport fishing lodges, fly-in fishing camps and boat rental operations. On both the east and west coasts, there are thriving marine businesses ranging from whale-watching tours to deep-sea fishing adventures.

As in all portions of this sector, instructors are an important part of the industry. Those who have mastered an activity to a point where they can teach others to do it can market these abilities to employers in this sector.

ATTRACTIONS

Every province and territory in Canada has major and minor attractions that attract visitors and generate tourism revenue. Attractions include historic sites, heritage homes, museums, halls of fame, art galleries, botanical gardens, aquariums, zoos, water parks, amusement parks, casinos and cultural attractions.

Many attractions are educational in nature, others are solely for entertainment.

Canada has a wealth of cultural and heritage attractions: the Parliament Buildings and National Gallery in Ottawa, the Fortress of Louisbourg in Cape Breton, and Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site in Manitoba. There are heritage communities like Vancouver's Gastown, natural resource attractions like the hot springs in Banff and Jasper National Parks, and the northern lights in the Northwest Territories. In addition, there are large amusement parks like Canada's Wonderland in Ontario, museums such as the Maritime

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Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax, and family attractions like Anne of Green Gables House on Prince Edward Island. Canada has a lot to offer.

To maintain this important part of Canada's tourism industry, the Canadian Tourism Commission has developed an industry led Cultural/ Heritage Tourism sub-committee. The sub-committee's mandate is to plan, direct, manage and implement programs to improve and expand cultural heritage tourism in Canada. The sub-committee is made up of culture, heritage and tourism industry representatives from across Canada acting to ensure that cultural & heritage tourism will become a vibrant and profitable part of the Canadian Tourism industry.

Due to the Canadian climate, many outdoor attractions are seasonal. Indoor attractions operate year round, and some, like West Edmonton Mall, combine activities, such as shopping with an amusement park, an ice rink and a water park.

All attractions, large or small, need people to sell food and souvenirs, market the attraction, maintain the facility and manage the operation. The attractions sector offers a wide range of employment opportunities, ranging from seasonal part time to permanent full time positions. There is also variety in the types of jobs available. Casinos, a rapidly growing area of the attractions sector, add many new positions, such as pit bosses and dealers, to the labour pool.

It is estimated that in 1997, 120,000 people were employed in the attractions sector. Employment is expected to reach 152,000 by 2005.

EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Events and conferences contribute dollars to communities. Not only do travellers spend money on the event or conference itself, but 'spinoff dollars' are also spent on everything from accommodation to souvenirs. Travellers need to get to and from the event or conference site, so the transportation sector is also involved. They need to eat, so food and beverage outlets are visited. Conferences usually have social events or entertainment planned, so dollars are spent on tickets, admission, beverages and/or tips. Special events, such as festivals and sports events, may have formal or informal meetings that take place, so meeting space is rented, food and beverages are purchased, and/or local transportation is required. All of this means money is transferred from travellers to the local economy.

Special Events

There are a growing number of special events that encourage travellers to go to areas to which they may not otherwise go. Many of these events are so successful that they have become national or international attractions. For example, the Edmonton Fringe Theatre Festival has become North America's largest alternative theatre event; the Calgary Stampede is known around the world and has 300 staff members that work year round to put on the 10-day summer event.

There are also large national and international events that require several years of planning and preparation. For example, hosting an Olympic Games employs hundreds of people,

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many of them for years prior to the event. Some people become specialists in organizing and running these mega-events, and then move on to another when one is done.

Other international events, which are complex but do not require quite as much advance preparation, are formal visits by celebrities, such as a member of the Royal Family, a world leader, the Pope or the Rolling Stones. Often celebrities have their own staff, who work in concert with the local organizers to make the event successful.

There are also thousands of smaller events and festivals organized across Canada each year. Holidays such as Canada Day inspire celebrations in almost every community. Many communities host an annual event to celebrate their history, culture, ethnic roots or geography. Examples include The Trappers Festival in The Pas, Manitoba and the Frostbite Music Festival in Whitehorse, Yukon. Other local events, such as charity fundraisers and sporting events, also qualify as events and require staff.

The planning and organizing of any special event can be complex and demanding. *All facets need to be coordinated so that the event will run efficiently and profitably.* There are often many paid positions. As well, many events and conferences allow opportunities for volunteers to gain exposure and experience. For example, the 1999 Pan American Games in Winnipeg was the largest sporting and cultural event ever staged in Canada. Eighteen thousand volunteers were required. For those volunteers (and the employees too) there is a great wealth of experience to be added to their résumés.

Conferences, Meetings, Trade Shows and Conventions

Business people frequently meet to share ideas, research and information, to solve problems or to develop new strategies or products, and/or to be trained. Organizations send their staff to sales meetings, professional development conferences and networking conventions. Companies exhibit their wares at specialized exhibitions and trade shows. Club or association members, specialists in various fields, and special interest groups also gather at conventions. They travel across the country or across the globe. People meet as members of the Rotary Club, a square dance association or a Star Trek convention.

In order to meet the needs of convention and meeting delegates, many cities have built large convention centres and exhibition grounds. Most large hotels and resorts also cater to the convention and meeting market, offering meeting rooms, ballrooms and catering facilities.

A convention, large meeting or conference takes an enormous amount of work to ensure its success. Some conventions involve 30,000 delegates or more. *Large organizations usually hire professional convention/meeting planners who have the specialized knowledge and skills necessary to ensure large events will run smoothly. These planners generally work with a budget and hire staff to assist them.*

Since conferences, meetings, tradeshow and conventions are big business to communities, most cities and regions have convention and visitor bureaus, with marketing and sales departments that spend money and time (up to 10 years for major conventions) to attract conventions to the area.

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FOOD AND BEVERAGE

The food and beverage industry is a \$32 billion a year industry. Over 700,000 people in Canada are employed in this sector. Another 213,000 positions are expected by 2005. *The food and beverage sector is also a major youth employer and a major training ground for many employees who are beginning their working careers.*

As changes occur in consumer preferences, and competition increases, the food and beverage industry becomes increasingly sophisticated in the way it handles management and corporate strategies. Many restaurants, especially chains, are diversifying, coming out with their own retail product lines. Specialty cafés market their products to airlines and offices. Food and beverage chains have found a niche in bookstores, department stores and in casinos. As the lines between traditional food and beverage operations and other industries blur, employers and employees alike will have to continue to react to changing customer expectations with innovative ideas and responses.

The food and beverage sector encompasses all types of establishments supplying food and beverages for consumption from fine dining and ethnic restaurants to institutional food outlets and catering firms, from pubs and bars to nightclubs and lounges.

TOURISM SERVICES

The tourism services sector is made up of the organizations, associations, government agencies and companies that specialize in serving the needs of the tourism industry as a whole rather than the needs of travellers specifically.

Those working in tourism services include people who research tourism trends, advertise and market tourism products, educate or inform others about tourism, and those who distribute general tourism information, like statistics. Retail businesses that benefit from tourism and travel also fall into this sector.

There are several areas that make up this sector.

Government

Government organizations encourage business by providing money, information and services. For example, governments collect valuable market research and market or promote destinations. Government policies also affect tourism indirectly. Building a new airport, expanding a park system, improving a highway, levying a hotel tax: these actions impact one or all of the tourism sectors.

The federal government focuses on promoting Canada as a tourist destination to international markets. *Each province and territory has its own ministry, department or agency of tourism that recognizes the value of tourism and supports its growth. This office often works with municipalities, tourism associations or chambers of commerce to achieve regional goals, strengthening and diversifying the tourism products and services available, and fostering marketing, research and promotional activities.*

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Industry Associations

Industry associations have been established to serve either the entire industry or specific sectors. Some industry associations focus on marketing, e.g. Prince Edward Island Convention Bureau and the Canada West Ski Marketing Council. *Other associations (such as the tourism education councils found in every Canadian province and territory) focus on education, training and professional development of those working in the tourism industry.* There are also associations that concentrate on lobbying or advocacy. Examples include the Tourism Industry Association of Canada and the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

Marketing Services

Marketing is the promotion by an organization of the various services it has available for the purpose of attracting customers. Due to the amount of competition, consumers have a large variety of products and services from which to choose. Marketing is of primary importance to tourism, and many organizations have specialized marketing staff and services.

Research

Researchers and analysts can be found in many government tourism departments, and at market research firms. Market research is essential in order to make informed plans and decisions. Information collected may be about an organization's own market and/or about competitors' markets. The reports that are generated from this research are useful in planning and decision-making. They measure the impact of tourism on the economy and find out what tourism consumers need and expect.

Retail

Retail businesses that benefit from tourism revenue are also part of the tourism services sector. Travellers who shop for the socks they forgot at home, or who get a hair cut while travelling, contribute dollars to the local economy. *The World Tourism Organization defines tourism simply as the activities of those who travel outside their usual environments. This broad definition means that many businesses benefit from tourism dollars every day. Any businesses that are retail in nature are part of the tourism services sector.*

TRANSPORTATION

Tourism was earlier defined as an industry that provides for the movement, comfort and enjoyment of people. The 'movement' in this definition is addressed by the transportation sector. Air, railway, water and ground transport provided 267,600 positions in 1997 and is expected to generate 27,800 new jobs by 2005.

The sector is divided into four categories: Air, Rail, Ground and Water. The following text offers an overview of each area.

Air Transport

Air remains the primary mode of domestic travel, after private vehicles. The 'Open Skies Agreement' reached in February 1995 allows airlines (instead of governments) to decide which transborder routes they want to fly. Since then, transborder traffic has increased by 31%. With increased traffic comes the benefit of more jobs in the industry.

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As passenger traffic continues to increase, airports are undergoing major renovations, and are expanding retail operations and marketing efforts. This also means new positions are created. There were more than 65,000 people employed in air transport services in 1997.

Rail Transport

Via Rail, Canada's only national passenger rail service carries approximately 3.8 million passengers annually. There are also smaller regional railways that employ staff for positions from selling tickets to operating the train. Rail travel is a relaxed, scenic way to travel, and is becoming increasingly popular as a vacation, rather than only as a way to get to a vacation spot.

Ground Transport

The majority of Canadian travellers use private vehicles to travel within the country. There is a whole support industry for people and their cars. There are also other types of ground transportation businesses, including motor coach travel, taxicab operations and vehicle rental companies. Again, there are many positions in each of these types of companies.

Because many travellers arrive at their destinations by air, they often need rental cars or bus transport to get them from the airport to their accommodations or events. This constant demand supports a large number of national and international rental car companies as well as regular shuttle bus and taxicab trips.

Water Transport

Marine-based businesses include ferry companies, marinas, cruise lines, water taxis and other forms of water transportation. Ports along the eastern seaboard and St. Lawrence Seaway have benefited from increased traffic because of strong marketing, a search for alternative destinations by cruise lines and a lower Canadian dollar. The Vancouver Port Authority regularly hosts vessels from around the world.

Large numbers of Canadians take water cruises each year, many of them cruising up or down the coast of BC. There are also ferries that link highways across the country. Ferry travel can be on a vessel that holds one or two cars and travels for four or five minutes each way, or can be a huge super ferry that transport millions of people each year on journeys that take from half an hour to all-day treks.

All of these different methods of travel have associated job opportunities. The variety of positions in this sector is large, and many jobs allow employees to travel and explore Canada and the world.

TRAVEL TRADE

The travel trade sector supports the bookings and sales in the other sectors. The people that work in the travel trade make reservations for accommodations, tours, transportation, food and beverage and/or for attractions. These bookings can be in the form of an all-encompassing tour package or a single booking for a single traveller.

This sector employed 47,700 people in travel agencies and tour companies in 1997 and an estimated 1,600 new positions are expected by 2005.

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There are two subcategories in the travel trade sector.

- The first is the retail arm of the industry, made up of travel agencies.
- The second is the wholesale side, made up of tour operators, who sell to travel agencies.

Retail Travel Agencies

Travel agencies sell travel packages as well as individual travel components, such as airline tickets, car rentals and hotel reservations. They sell directly to the public, to both business and pleasure travellers.

In 1995, there were approximately 4000 travel agencies operating in Canada. Total sales exceeded \$10 billion. However, as a result of sweeping technological changes to the way that products are being developed and delivered, (ticketless travel, web marketing pages, intranet exchange and e-commerce which allows for electronic billing and payment) many small travel agencies are entering alliances with other agencies or with large agency consortiums. This allows for increased buying power through shared purchases of technology, management systems and training. It also means fewer independent operators, down from the numbers in 1995.

Wholesale Tour Operators

Tour operators and wholesalers develop and package tours to sell to the retail trade, i.e. travel agencies. Often these tours are all-inclusive (that is, they include all travel, accommodation, meals, and entertainment) and are marketed to encourage specific markets to buy, e.g. employee incentive travel; convention-related or special interest travel, such as theatre, sports or bird watching tours.

Some tour operators specialize in tours to international destinations; others focus on groups coming into Canada.

Tour operators work independently, or are affiliated with an airline, motor coach line or other travel-related business. *They respond to change in the industry by developing new and unique products that have a competitive edge in price, value and variety.*

Both retail and wholesale operations employ many people in a variety of positions. This is a competitive industry and new regulations (for example, airline deregulation), industry consolidation and new packages to new destinations keep those who work in this sector busy and challenged.