

## Tourism, Culture & Heritage

### 2007 Open Door Program

#### What is the Open Door Program?

The Open Door Program was created as an additional tool to compliment the Department's comprehensive training program. The Open Door Program provides another means to increase product knowledge within *tourism front-line staff*. The majority of card holders are casual seasonal employees who provide information and services to our visitors. Card holders in 2007 will include staff from all Visitor Information Centres in Nova Scotia as well as front-line staff from Check In Nova Scotia (Nova Scotia call centre). The overall objective of the program is to compliment our existing training programs to promote Nova Scotia's tourism industry by familiarizing front line staff about the many unique tourism products, services and accommodations throughout the province. Just as you would expect a retail worker to know the products they are selling to you, our tourism front-line staff must know the products they are selling to our visitors. With such a vast amount of product for these staff to learn about, the Open Door program provides a unique partnering experience to benefit all parties.

#### How does it work?

It's actually very simple. Front line tourism staff are issued *ID cards*. These cards must be shown by all participating staff in order to redeem the promotion, product or service being offered. You may also make your offer available year round. While some of the card holders may not work year round, many employees return for more than one season. This may be an advantage for businesses who prefer that participating staff visit during the non-peak season. Remember, the Open Door program is a completely voluntary program for both the card holder and the industry member. Although staff are encouraged to take advantage of all opportunities, there is no guarantee that your offer will be redeemed.

#### How will my business benefit from the Open Door Program?

By opening your doors to front-line tourism staff, you heighten the awareness of your product or

service. The intent of this program is to benefit businesses, attractions, services, tourism industry employees, and ultimately the visitors to the Province of Nova Scotia. With the added knowledge staff gain from experiencing your operation, product or service on their own time, they will be better prepared to answer any questions about your operation to our visitors. According to a recent survey, more than 50% of visitors who talk to a travel counsellor learn about an event, activity or area of the province they did not know about before.

#### What do I offer?

There are no limits to what you may offer. In previous years, operators have offered anywhere from discounts to complimentary packages or services. You may also place any restrictions you feel are appropriate with regards to your operation, for example, applicable certain times of the year, reservations required, based on availability, etc. The list of program participants will be made available to front-line staff in the Spring of 2007. All offers will expire March 2008, unless specific dates are provided as part of your offer.

#### How do I become a member?

Complete the attached application form and submit by March 31, 2007. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Peter Johnson at 424-2788 or e-mail [johnsp@gov.ns.ca](mailto:johnsp@gov.ns.ca)

#### What are my other options?

The Open Door Program is just one of many options to share information regarding your business with front-line staff. For information on other opportunities such as our annual Product Knowledge Tours contact Peter Johnson at 424-2788 or e-mail [johnsp@gov.ns.ca](mailto:johnsp@gov.ns.ca). In addition, we encourage you to stop by your local visitor information centre, introduce yourself and provide staff with all the information needed to better serve you and our visitors!