



Travel Manitoba's New

Customer Assurance Plan

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Delivering on promises:

Today's tourist is far more travel-savvy than in the past, demanding that experiences and services match their expectations. While an individual's or group's specific expectations are likely to differ depending on their particular interests and on a business's promotions and prices, all travellers have come to expect a minimum standard of professionalism and services. These minimum expectations can range from the business having appropriate insurance to being properly licensed to providing timely responses to inquiries, to name just a few.

To ensure that Manitoba's tourism sector is able to remain competitive with other national and international destinations, Travel Manitoba, in consultation with the tourism industry, has developed a new Customer Assurance Plan (CAP). This strategy will be in effect for all 2009 promotional and marketing programs.

This initiative is designed to elevate consumer confidence in Manitoba's tourism experiences and services by ensuring that all businesses promoted in Travel Manitoba marketing materials meet minimum standards.



To be included in Travel Manitoba's 2009 marketing programs and promotional materials, businesses and organizations will need the following:

Current and sufficient liability insurance.

Proof of insurance is to be provided to Travel Manitoba upon request.

Liability insurance is vital to the success of a business, as unexpected legal expenses or judgements following an unforeseen accident can drive a business and its owners into bankruptcy. Insurance is a consumer expectation; it protects the owner's investment and increases the long-term stability of operations. This type of insurance also demonstrates your commitment to managing risk to customers and other partners, which can increase their confidence in your operation and can translate into increased sales and additional opportunities.

Necessary licences and permits required to operate.

Licences and permits for your type of operation may be required by law. Operating without the necessary authority can be punishable by law, putting a business and its owners at risk of receiving fines or other legal action.

The ability to communicate and receive messages from customers by telephone, fax, website or email throughout its season of operation at a minimum, and the ability to respond to inquiries in a reasonable period of time throughout the year.

Effective and reliable communications increases consumer confidence in a business's ability to meet expectations and provide a memorable experience. Customers may be choosing between an experience provided by your business and a competitor or another destination, and timely, effective communication with a prospective visitor can mean the difference between losing or gaining a sale.



Promotions or advertisements that represent the actual experience or service being offered to the consumer.

Promotions and advertisements represent a promise to the consumer. If the experiences or services don't match the promotion, the credibility and reputation of not only that business, but the entire Manitoba industry could be put at risk.

Be in good standing with Travel Manitoba's complaint procedure.

Occasionally, despite best efforts, a business or employee may fail to meet a customer's expectations. In these circumstances, modern travellers also expect that their complaints and concerns will be heard and dealt with quickly.

To meet this expectation, Travel Manitoba has created a new complaint handling procedure that will also be in effect January 1, 2009.

Should Travel Manitoba receive a complaint about a business, that business will be notified by Travel Manitoba promptly, to provide the opportunity to resolve the problem. Travel Manitoba staff will also assess the complaint for legitimacy and will refer complaints to other agencies or government departments if appropriate.

However, if three legitimate complaints are received and remain unresolved within a two-year period, Travel Manitoba may remove that business from its marketing programs. The business would be notified about this removal in writing, along with the conditions that will need to be met for the business to again be included in future marketing efforts.

Special note for businesses involved with travel trade:

Working with the travel trade to sell to international consumers requires some additional practices on the part of the business. Because tour operators are typically assembling their product offers and associated promotional materials well in advance of tour dates, prices should be available at least six months in advance.

To meet the needs of the lucrative travel trade market, in addition to the above standards, businesses involved with travel trade should be able to acknowledge inquiries and bookings within 24 business hours of receipt. They should also be able to offer commissionable pricing six months in advance and be prepared to honour commissionable pricing once it has been published.

Please ensure that as a business owner, you fully understand commissionable pricing to avoid misrepresentation and to protect your bottom line.





Frequently Asked Questions:

How will Travel Manitoba know that a business is meeting the standards in CAP?

Every year, Travel Manitoba sends a Turn-around document (TAD) to every business in its contact database. This document requests information about the business and what it offers consumers.

The TAD is then used to create Travel Manitoba's publications and website and is used as a reference tool for many other Travel Manitoba marketing initiatives.

The TAD will provide businesses with the opportunity to verify that it meets the standards set out in CAP.

Please note, if Travel Manitoba does not receive a completed TAD by the deadline date we may not be able to include your business or promotions. It's imperative that you return a completed TAD to Travel Manitoba to secure your presence in our marketing materials.

What happens if I don't meet all of the standards?

A business that does not currently meet the standards may still participate in 2009 marketing initiatives. To do so, the business should return a completed TAD that identifies the standards currently being met, along with a separate letter that explains how all remaining standards will be met. The deadline for businesses to meet all standards is March 31, 2009.

What Travel Manitoba marketing programs fall under CAP?

These standards apply to all Travel Manitoba marketing programs. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to guide books, publications, the consumer website (www.travelmanitoba.com), the Media Tour Program, the Familiarization Tour Program and other partnership marketing initiatives. Programs such as the Media Tour Program, the Familiarization Tour Program and other partnership marketing initiatives, may have additional requirements to these minimum criteria.

Where I can get more information on CAP?

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