



"Endorsed & Trusted"

2025 Plan

Mission Statement: The Canadian Association of Tour Operators (CATO) is dedicated to representing and supporting the tour operator community in Canada. Through advocacy, industry leadership, and collaboration, CATO aims to strengthen the tour operator sector, enhance the global competitiveness of its members and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Vision: *to be developed...*

CATO members will be endorsed and trusted nationally and globally by the entire travel industry and consumers alike for delivering exceptional, responsible, and transformative travel experiences that enrich lives, preserve cultural heritage, and contribute to a sustainable future for all.

CATO's "confirmed" Events in 2025:

- **Educational / Social Partnership events / activities. (2-4)**
Promote / participate in social and educational events alongside our partners' members roadshows for CATO members and invited VIP trade guests. (*Portugal, Switzerland, ...others*)
- Two educational / informative webinars on relevant topics for members
- **Fall 2025: Move forward with EIA for YE 2025 (upon members' approval)**
- **November 2025: Out-of-Country Symposium – work in progress... stay tuned**
- **August:** social gathering (sponsored)

CATO's Role in 2025: CATO will play a central role in the tour operator industry as:

1. Advocacy and Policy Influence:

- Governments must recognize the vital role of tour operators in the travel industry and their significant contributions to the Canadian economy.
 - (*To properly fulfill this role, CATO needs to assess and update its Economic Impact Analysis (EIA) every two years.*)
- Represent CATO wherever it's needed to voice its members' concerns.
- Serve as CATO's representative on the Industry Advisory Council of Ontario (IAC).
- Collaborate with other organizations on key issues.

- Promote more efficient legislation and regulations, aiming to reduce red tape and cost, such as the TICO plan to introduce individual mandatory registration for every travel seller in Ontario.
- Continuously monitor and provide updates on government policies and changes that affect the tourism sector and travel regulations.

2. Support Sustainable Tourism Development:

- Promote and facilitate the adoption of sustainable tourism practices, carbon-offset programs, and increase partnerships with eco-friendly destinations and to ensure that CATO members lead in environmentally and socially responsible travel offerings.
 - Short & Medium-Terms Goal: 75% of member operators with have established clear sustainability policies.
 - Long-Term Goal: develop a certification program, potentially in collaboration with other organizations.
 - Provide members with the necessary tools to implement sustainability standards and achieve certifications.

3. Visibility and Networking:

- Updating our brand: the executive committee proposed to include “*endorsed and trusted*” with the logo and really pushing this out to members along with our code of ethics. What do you think?
- Enhance CATO's international partnerships with global tourism boards.
- Expand CATO's networking opportunities for members with international tour operators, industry leaders, and suppliers to increase business opportunities.
- **Improve CATO's Communications and Marketing**
 - Social media and public awareness campaign / strive for 1 LinkedIn post every two weeks.
 - The likely parameters for LinkedIn posts could be:
 - CATO accomplishments
 - CATO announcements
 - CATO advocacy
 - CATO boosting (re-posting newsworthy content)
 - CATO insights (emerging issues, trends, risks, etc.)
 - CATO member highlights (extraordinary accomplishments i.e. celebrating one of our own)
 - Tourism.

4. Professional Development and Training:

- Assess the needs through a survey.
- Increase member (participation) professional development opportunities (workshops, webinars, etc.) - in collaboration with partners (e.g. USTOA)
- Provide at least two specialized training webinars.

5. Operational Goals

- **Grow membership.**
 - **Technology:** Improvements to the CATO website and improve CATO members-only digital platform that incorporates tools for networking, business collaboration, and accessing resources related to industry regulations and trends.
 - **Governance:** increase representation on the board of directors.
 - **Newsletter:** One every two months
 - **New Bylaws:** Modernize / Update CATO's Bylaws
 - Propose a **Code of ethics.**
 - **Mission and Vision Statements:** to be developed.
 - ***Encourage / stimulate Members' Feedback and engagement.***
 - **Conduct surveys to members:**
 - to evaluate and get feedback on various matters,
 - to assess the needs and effectiveness of programs, training, and resources, etc.
 - **Annual Report:** At the end of 2025, CATO will publish a comprehensive report outlining mission progress, membership growth, and the impact of the strategic initiatives.
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Longer Term

6. Connector and Facilitator:

- Build a network of Canadian tour operators, suppliers, and travel partners that fosters collaboration, cross-promotion, and business development.
- Organize events and networking opportunities for members to meet, collaborate, and expand their market reach.

7. New potential initiatives / activities for Members:

- Annual CATO Conference:
 - Host a CATO Annual Conference, bringing together tour operators, travel agents, suppliers, and industry leaders.
 - Key features:
 - Panels on global tourism trends, AI, digital marketing for tour operators, and sustainability in travel.
 - Networking sessions and one-on-one business matchmaking.
 - Workshops on regulatory compliance and industry best practices.
 - A dedicated exhibition showcasing new travel technologies, products, and services.
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