

Friends of Tourism Award Finalist

Conseil de développement économique de l'Alberta, Edmonton

Tapping into francophone markets

The Conseil de développement économique de l'Albertahas three mandates: to promote Alberta to francophone visitors, to encourage and help enable the industry to provide services in French and to distribute material and signage to let francophones know where they can receive service in French.

"The work we do not only motivates more francophones to visit our province, but it reaches more than 225,000 Albertans who speak French," says the council's CEO, Marc Tremblay. "In addition, we encourage companies to display our signs that say *Services Available in French* and to actively serve their francophone clients in French, which in turn generates positive word of mouth."

The Conseil de développement économique de l'Alberta is the only organization in Western Canada that has such a broad tourism development strategy for the francophone market. It publishes a travel guide in French, offers a website, develops and executes marketing campaigns in Québec and Europe and offers free signage and workshops to help companies better tap into the francophone market.

"For us, being a finalist of the Friends of Tourism Alto award, is recognition and validation by the industry that we are adding value to the Alberta tourism industry and that we're doing something right," Tremblay says. "The nomination will also help us generate partnership and collaborations with other destination marketing organizations. There are so many francophone and bilingual employees that work in the tourism industry in Alberta. Why not hire them and train them to actively serve francophone clients in French? It's just good business."

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October, 2011

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Sponsored by Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association, the Friends of Tourism Alto Award recognizes any not-for-profit group, corporation, organization or institution whose primary industry is not the support, promotion or delivery of tourism products or services, but whose activity directly supports and enhances the tourism product in Alberta.