

CURIOUS PUBLIC



Communications and Marketing Strategic Plan 2025-2027

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Prepared by: **Curious Public**

Prepared for: **Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre**

Executive Summary

Earlier this year, the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre (hereafter: “BCM&CC” or “the Museum”) issued a competitive request for proposals for communications consulting services to develop its next three-year marketing and communications strategic plan. That plan would guide the high-level objectives and direction of the Museum’s communications and marketing activities for the next three years.

Curious Public’s team (that’s us) and proposal were chosen to lead this project. Starting in July 2024, the team conducted surveys and interviews, reviewed programming and marketing collateral, and researched the best practices of other museums to pull together the Museum’s next communications and marketing plan.

The communications and marketing plan was developed after weeks of exhaustive research and interviews by our team – those insights form the first section of this report. In addition to the recommendations (which appear in greater detail at the end of this document), there are four key elements of the plan to highlight. These are:

1) The Master Narrative:

Master narratives are foundational and strategic documents that are used internally to guide communications and align the team around a common story.

Narratives answer the questions: who are we, who do we serve, and what do we do? As such, narratives form the background and the context of messaging, rather than its content - although elements of the narrative may find their way explicitly into written materials from time to time.

2) Guiding Principles:

Based on our research, consultations and insights, we have come up with seven guiding principles to shape the communications and marketing plan for the Museum, for the next three years. Together, each guiding principle has informed the foundation of the plan.

3) Mission, Vision and Tone:

The mission statement describes the “how” of the Museum’s communications activities, while the vision statement focuses on the “why,” or the meaning behind the Museum’s communications activities. Finally, the tone we have outlined for the BCM&CC is consistent with the strategy laid out by the narrative and should help guide the Museum’s day-to-day language in communications and marketing.

4) Strategic Recommendations:

To achieve the objectives set out by the guiding principles, the plan establishes 51 strategic recommendations.

Recommended Narrative: “Make history”

BCM&CC does not have a set “narrative” per se at the moment, but the Museum has all the pieces needed to tell an amazing story—and the stories of everyone in Bruce County. As we note in the insights report section, the Museum has a solid core audience of women over 60 mostly in the Saugeen Shores area and wants to attract more younger professionals, families with

children, and newcomers to Bruce County. The narrative we've written is designed to do just that by inviting visitors to, "*Experience Bruce. Share your stories. Make history.*"

Recommended Guiding Principles

- Emphasize community ownership and engagement, inviting everyone to see themselves reflected in the exhibits and archives
- Make it clear that the museum tells the stories of all Bruce County residents, past and present
- Position the BCM&CC as a place where history comes alive through touch, play and interactivity, allow visitors to have meaningful experiences
- Embrace technological innovation to showcase the museum as forward-thinking and adaptable, and by doing so attract younger, tech-savvy audiences
- Bring more visibility to exceptional exhibits and programs the Museum has to offer
- Show how the Museum is a place of belonging and a place where your knowledge and skills are valued
- Present the Museum as the place where people come together to celebrate their shared heritage and learn about the Region's evolving identity

Recommended Mission, Vision and Tone

Recommended Communications Mission Statement

We show everyone how we make our shared stories come to life, and we give the people of Bruce County the chance to make history with us by having meaningful conversations.

Recommended Communications Vision Statement

We aspire to be leaders in engaging, dynamic communications that bring our stories to life. We want to make every visitor to the BCM&CC feel like they can experience Bruce County, share their stories, and make history when they walk through our doors.

Recommended Communications Tone

In its interaction with the public and internally, BCM&CC Communications will be:

- Helpful
- Energetic
- Informal
- Story-driven

Strategic Recommendations

Below is a summary of our 51 strategic recommendations for the three year communications and marketing strategic plan. For the full list of recommendations, including specific steps to take, required resources, and recommended timing for each, see Appendix A.

Communications

To, "Develop key messages that articulate value propositions for the Museum operations and services to strengthen the positioning of the BCM&CC within the museum, tourism, education,

cultural and social markets of Bruce County to meet changing community demands and needs,” we recommend that the Museum:

1. Train staff on the narrative
2. Align priority content with the Narrative
3. Continue brand consistency
4. Use bolder voice and tone
5. Concerted effort in hard-to-reach areas
6. Reintroduce a Museum mascot
7. Consider a post-expansion rebrand

Optimize Programming Promotion

To, “Effectively promote BCM&CC’s exhibits, archival offerings, and related events to drive attendance, build community connections, and position the Museum as a central hub for exploring Bruce County’s shared history,” we recommend that the Museum:

8. Develop exhibit-centered campaigns
9. Tie archives to living history
10. Use community input to drive engagement
11. Extend promotion beyond the Museum walls
12. Host Nerd Nites to engage audiences
13. Promote accessibility and interactivity
14. Engage Youth Advisory Board
15. Develop a Public Programming Committee
16. Build annual marquee event
17. Leverage technology for deeper engagement
18. Expand on mobile museum initiatives
19. Sustain mascot integration

Optimize Digital Marketing

To, “Optimize social, email and web channels and identify solutions for gaps in digital marketing tactics and tools that will increase engagement and reach,” we recommend that the Museum:

20. Encourage and leverage user-generated content
21. Regularly track website traffic, referral sources, and top pages
22. Optimize email marketing
23. Integrate customer relationship management (CRM) system with email marketing tool
24. Optimize website for search engines and user-experience
25. Develop a social media strategy
26. Partner with organizations and community influencers
27. Create, curate and publish regular blog content
28. Create new digital marketing positions
29. Explore Short Message Service (SMS) / Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) marketing

Optimize Content Marketing

To, “Provide strategic recommendations to leverage organic content in connecting audiences with Museum programming, events and exhibits through relatable and engaging storytelling,” we recommend that the Museum:

30. Showcase the stories behind the Museum
31. Use archival photos and “Then & Now” content
32. Launch a hashtag campaign
33. Introduce the mascot into content marketing
34. Continue to align content with programming themes
35. Engage audiences with interactive content
36. Expand digital storytelling initiatives
37. Maximize the mascot’s digital presence

Maximize Advertising Return on Investment (ROI)

To, “Address ways to maximize ROI and identify new opportunities for investment in advertising channels,” we recommend that the Museum:

38. Optimize social media advertising
39. Sponsor regular email broadcasts from Blackburn Media and other partners
40. Continue to monitor and adjust digital advertising tactics
41. Examine the return on ad spend (ROAS) of print advertising
42. Implement remarketing strategies

Partnerships and Alignment with Key Stakeholders

To, “Identify and develop innovative partnerships to bring in new audiences, align with Bruce County’s strategic plan, and deepen collaboration with stakeholders, we recommend that the Museum:

43. Continue collaborating with First Nations communities
44. Continue to partner with local artists and performers
45. Work with Bruce County Tourism
46. Engage community organizations
47. Continue to build partnerships with local schools
48. Deepen multicultural partnerships
49. Expand partnerships with schools and colleges
50. Establish a mobile museum partnership
51. Strengthen volunteer and donor networks

We’re pleased to deliver the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre Communications and Marketing Plan recommendations, and we look forward to their successful implementation.

Sincerely,



Lloyd Rang
Project Lead

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Introduction

Framing the Project

Bruce County hugs the shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay in Southern Ontario and is known for its rugged beauty and vibrant communities. From its inland farms to its lakeside cottaging towns, the county boasts two national parks, eight provincial parks and a unique ecosystem that is home to rare plants and animals. Bruce County has more than 747 km of lakeshore and is not only a natural wonder but also a thriving community that has more than 73,000 people. The county's economy is powered by agriculture, tourism, the service sector and nuclear energy.

For thousands of years, the Saugeen Ojibway Nations have made this land home. The Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and Saugeen First Nation have a deep historical and cultural connection to Bruce County, which continues to influence the region today.

The Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre (BCM&CC or the Museum) has told the stories of local First Nations, early European settlers, and natural history since opening its doors in 1955. Starting from humble beginnings in Southampton's historic schoolhouse, the Museum expanded with the addition of the County Archive in 1979 and the Cultural Centre in 2005.

Today, BCM&CC attracts tourists, hosts dynamic exhibits and provides cultural, educational and community-based programs for locals and visitors alike.

Challenges and Opportunities

The BCM&CC's last marketing plan covered the period from 2019 to 2021 — a time when the world faced unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As operations continue to recover, Bruce County has seen major population growth, bringing with it increased diversity and new audiences. This growth presents both challenges and opportunities for the Museum — and the region — as it works to stay relevant in a rapidly changing landscape.

A recurring issue we see with many clients is how to better engage 30–40-year-olds, a demographic that is crucial for creating long-term community engagement and also of great value to local employers as they retain their workforces. The Museum could play a role here in creating opportunities to “go out” in a location that lacks these options, especially once the summer season ends (e.g. The nearest movie theatre is in Owen Sound, 36 km away). Reimagining event programming to target this demographic by offering more interactive and engaging experiences, such as collaborations with local breweries and casual community-driven events, could be a way to attract this audience. A good mix would combine entertainment, education and social engagement.

To address these changes and challenges, the Museum is embarking on a new three-year marketing and communications strategy. It must include the following:

- **Communications:** Develop key messages that articulate value propositions for Museum operations and services to strengthen the positioning of the BCM&CC within the Museum, tourism, education, cultural and social market of the County of Bruce to meet changing community demands and needs.
- **Increase Awareness and Engagement:** Develop strategies to increase awareness and interest in BCM&CC offerings through targeted marketing and communications strategies to key audiences and community outreach opportunities.
- **Optimize Programming Promotion:** Develop better marketing strategies to effectively promote BCM&CC programming and events and exhibitions.
- **Digital Marketing Optimization:** Recommend ways to optimize social, email and web channels to use organic content effectively. Identify gaps in digital marketing tactics and tools and give solutions that will increase online engagement and reach.
- **Optimization of Content Marketing:** Recommend ways to strategically use organic content to leverage connections to Museum programming, events and exhibits.
- **Maximize Advertising Return on Investment (ROI):** Assess current paid advertising strategies across external platforms and identify cost-effective mixes to attract promotions. Address ways to optimize advertising spend to maximize ROI and identify new opportunities for investment in advertising channels.

The plan we create will help engage both County residents and visitors, attract new audiences and ensure that BCM&CC remains a vital and impactful institution for years to come.

The Process: How We Gathered Insights

At Curious Public, we believe that curiosity drives connection. Understanding who your audience is and what they want is key to creating a successful marketing and communications strategy. For BCM&CC, this meant engaging in deep conversations with key stakeholders to gather insights, identify challenges and uncover opportunities.

We conducted a series of consultations with a diverse group of people, including county officials, Museum staff, sponsors, volunteers and community members. Through these conversations, we gained a nuanced understanding of the Museum's strengths, its role in the community and the unique challenges it faces in a post-pandemic world.

This report shares the findings from those consultations. It gives an in-depth exploration of what we heard from stakeholders and what those insights mean for the future of the Museum's marketing and communications efforts. We've also surveyed county residents and reviewed background materials provided to create a communications audit.

By understanding the diverse perspectives of the people who interact with the Museum, we can create a plan that resonates with Bruce County's growing and changing population, ensuring that BCM&CC continues to be a dynamic cultural hub for the entire community.

Insights from Communications Audit

The team performed a communications audit including a range of documents and brand assets from the Museum, the organization's website, social media channels and marketing materials. The findings are summarized below:

Insight 1: What's Going Well

The Museum produces a range of organic and paid marketing and communications products across digital, print and broadcast channels. The products include:

- Social media content
- Email newsletters
- Out-of-home advertising
- Radio advertising
- Newspaper advertising
- Brochures
- Rack cards (and more).

The strategy phase of this project will include targeted recommendations to capitalize on strengths and weaknesses in these communications. For now, it is important to highlight areas where the Museum has found natural strengths.

Small But Mighty Team

The Museum team is small but "punches above its weight." Its internal departments, like programming, operations, and marketing work together to effectively plan, promote and generate sales for events using limited resources. The Museum communicates with external agents and stakeholders to grow awareness, connect with the community, secure funding and coordinate events to avoid overlap in programming when possible.

The Museum wants to expand its audience to target Millennials and Gen Z, but the marketing department takes great care to avoid publishing material that could mislead its audience or

create expectations that won't be met; the department knows it's "putting the cart before the horse" when programming isn't there to suit the younger generations' needs.

Brand Consistency

The Museum has strong brand consistency and cohesive messaging across programming collateral that are strategically rolled out across a variety of mediums. This means program promotions can be recognized immediately, no matter the environment they're seen in.

Social Media Audience Primed to Engage

The Museum has a solid understanding of its audience and knows the key social channels to reach them consistently: Facebook and Instagram. This has led to a pivot away from X/Twitter and a greater focus on Facebook and Instagram including using Instagram Stories. LinkedIn remains in the mix but isn't used for daily event and programming content.

From 2023 to 2024, the Museum's Facebook and Instagram channels had a consistent increase in reach and followers. When the organization is able to focus more resources on creating and publishing more content, the result is huge growth in reach and engagement. These results were seen in summer 2023: hiring a summer student for content support resulted in a notable gain in reach and followers. Again, increased results were seen in March 2024 when an external agency, Interkom, was hired to support social media content: the Museum saw a 207% growth in reach and big jump in website traffic. Website traffic coming from social media indicates the content succeeded in driving the audience's interest closer to the converting action, such as a ticket sale.

While the Museum regularly posts content, the frequency and type of content can be limited by team capacity. It may not be possible to have extra content support year-round, but the Museum should consider how to encourage and leverage user-generated content to save resources and maximize the benefits of social media.

Insight 2: A Narrative Could Help Bring Digital Content To Life

The Museum's website and social media content are consistent and informative but could be even more compelling with dynamic visuals, writing and storytelling.

Website

The Museum's website effectively communicates its purpose but lacks a strong overarching narrative, reducing its emotional impact. Enhancing storytelling could strengthen the connection with visitors. The site's formal tone is appropriate but could be more inviting and engaging, particularly in sections promoting membership, donations and volunteering. Visuals are clear but could be more dynamic to improve engagement (e.g., a hero image, video, or carousel on the home page would be more impactful than the logo graphic). Integrating a user-generated social feed to showcase audiences that have tagged the Museum in their posts is

another way to engage the audience without more content creation. There is an opportunity for search engine optimization (SEO) within the copy, by incorporating keywords and phrases.

The site is well-structured and easy to navigate but adding interactive features and content like virtual tours would enhance user experience. The mobile experience is good, but there are overlapping and unaligned elements that need to be addressed. Google places a higher importance on mobile experience than desktop as a key factor in paid and organic search results.

Social Media

The Museum primarily uses Facebook and Instagram. LinkedIn is used sparingly, and X/Twitter has been abandoned. A lot of content is cross posted across the Meta platforms which means it isn't optimized for each channel. This is in part due to limited resources but can indicate a lack of channel strategy or purpose (i.e., for each channel, who is the identified audience and what is the purpose?).

The Museum should consider including a focus on user-generated content by creating a unique hashtag and encouraging members and visitors to tag their accounts and/or use the hashtag. Curated content can be naturally engaging and can then be showcased on the website as well. Other content to consider sharing is behind-the-scenes; social media users aren't looking for the pristine visual, they want to see authenticity.

The organization can strengthen its communications through social media posts by taking advantage of the informal, playful and trending aspects of Instagram and Facebook especially in post captions. An important piece of the Museum's digital strategy will be finding a relatable voice that aligns with the Museum's brand personality to reach and engage younger audiences online.

The Chicago Field Museum [Instagram](#) is a great example of how a museum can relate to social media audiences by using:

- Captions in a fun and relatable way to engage first and share information second and,
- Trending audio in Reels to increase reach on the platform

Insight 3: Email Marketing Breakdown

Email marketing is one of the Museum's main communication channels. 66.7% of survey respondents indicated it's their preferred channel to get information from the organization.

The Museum sends bi-weekly email broadcasts from Constant Contact to lists segmented by audience preferences. Our team reviewed the email analytics and discovered the following:

- Open rates hover around 50%
- Click rates are within or above the [industry average](#)

- Average click-to-open-rate (CTOR) is above 5% and at times as high as 9%.

These data points in combination with a low unsubscribe rate confirm that the Museum's audience is interested in the content shared with them through email.

Currently, there is an opportunity to improve the Museum's internal systems for a smoother and more efficient flow. Its customer relationship management (CRM) system (Xplor Recreation) does not integrate with its email marketing tool (Constant Contact). This means new memberships must be entered manually into Constant Contact by staff. The manual process creates a disconnect in the customer experience from the initial interaction to confirmation and follow-up emails and it opens the door for errors when copying the information from one system to the other (e.g. Typos). To enhance efficiency, accuracy and user-experience, it's recommended the Museum invest more resources into email marketing processes.

While the Museum reviews its existing email marketing resources for optimization between systems, it should consider Short Message Service (SMS) features (i.e., text message marketing). Survey data indicates an appetite for this form of communication and 8% of respondents said text messages are their preferred communication channel with the Museum. [Research](#) shows text message is the preferred way Millennials and Gen Z want to engage with brands. A [2022 survey](#) found 44% of Gen Z preferred communicating with brands through text message. As the Museum begins to strategize how to connect and engage with younger audiences, there is value in exploring SMS marketing.

Insight 4: Advertising Audit

The Museum's marketing department understands and carries out effective multi-facet advertising campaigns. The team knows publishing consistent content on social media and email blasts in combination with out-of-home and radio advertising works in concert to drive ticket sales.

For 2024, the Museum's total ad budget is about evenly distributed between print, digital, radio and out-of-home.

Out of Home and Print

The Museum considers the return on the billboard ad on Highway 21 "extremely high." When the ad is paired with a promotion, it's a "lynchpin." The Museum also uses newspapers and magazine advertisements targeted to baby boomers, First Nations people and tourists, but these publications are expensive and it's difficult to track the return on investment (ROI). There is consideration to half the ad sizes to save money, but this won't solve the root problem of tracking ROI. The Museum should consider experimenting with a promotion that is only available in the newspaper ad format such as a special discount code or offer, track the return, then evaluate results to make an informed decision.

Radio

Monthly radio buys are spread across two or three major stations with Blackburn Radio. According to the BCM&CC Geofence Report Consumer Data Analysis, this tactic aligns with the current attendee demographics interests noting 86% listen to Country stations for about four hours per week. There is a high interest from the Museum's current audience in listening to CBC radio as well.

Digital

The nature of digital ads and related analytics make it easier to see return on investment (ROI) in comparison to other ad channels. The Museum runs social media ads on Meta and can "see a return and can justify the spend." The Museum has an opportunity to optimize social media ad spend by testing different audience targeting, visuals and messaging.

In addition to social media, the Museum uses Blackburn to run website ad campaigns. A review of the Museum's website analytics shows some of the highest engaged traffic comes from the Blackburn ad campaigns which indicates the audience targeting is accurate.

Review and Analysis of Programming and Services

Public Programming

What's Working:

1. **Interactive Exhibits:** Exhibits like the railway diorama and The General Hunter have been particularly successful in engaging the public through hands-on interaction, encouraging repeat visits and building a loyal audience.
2. **Community-Driven Projects:** The involvement of community members in the development and execution of exhibits, such as the railway exhibit, has strengthened the connection between the Museum and the local population, making the public programming more relevant and resonant.
3. **Brand Consistency:** Public programming promotions are consistent across various media, ensuring that the Museum's events are easily recognizable and accessible to the community.

Future Directions:

1. **Enhance Digital Interactivity:** Introduce more digital and interactive content, such as virtual tours and augmented reality (AR) experiences, to complement physical exhibits and attract a broader audience, particularly younger and tech-savvy visitors.

2. **Expand Inclusivity in Programming:** Develop public programming that reflects the diverse cultural backgrounds of Bruce County’s people, including more First Nations and multicultural exhibits and events.
3. **Community Connections:** Introduce programming that is targeted to younger audiences and involves the community. For example, “[Nerd Nite](#)” as inspired by MONOVA below; language practice events; or even a [Human Library](#) program, tailored for Bruce County.

Children’s Programming

What’s Working:

1. **Hands-On Engagement:** Exhibits that are designed with children in mind, such as the railway diorama with its Lionel train and interactive elements, are particularly popular and successful in attracting families.
2. **Social Media Engagement:** Children’s programming has benefited from the Museum’s strong social media presence, where events and activities are effectively promoted to families through platforms like Facebook and Instagram.
3. **Community Involvement:** Children’s programming often involves local community members, enhancing the educational value of the exhibits and creating a sense of ownership among local families.

Future Directions:

1. **Develop More Interactive Children’s Programs:** Introduce new, interactive children’s programs that use emerging technologies, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), to create immersive learning experiences that appeal to younger audiences.
2. **Broaden Reach Through Mobile Programming:** Consider developing mobile programs or exhibits specifically targeted at children in remote or underserved areas of Bruce County, ensuring that all children have access to the Museum’s educational resources. Local First Nations communities would also welcome this kind of programming.

Archival Programming

What’s Working:

1. **Community and Research Engagement:** The archives attract researchers, genealogists and community members interested in local history and the Museum has done well in making these resources available to people who are looking for them.
2. **Preservation and Accessibility:** The museum has successfully maintained and preserved important historical documents and artifacts, contributing to the community’s understanding of its own history.

3. **Collaboration and Events:** the Museum has organized successful events around its archival materials, engaging the community in the preservation and exploration of local history. Having the archives onsite is a helpful reminder for guests and visitors that they are available to explore.

Future Directions:

1. **Digitize Archival Content:** Not all archival content can be shared online for privacy and legal reasons as well as resource shortages; however digitizing things like images of “Bruce County Past” can help bolster content libraries and be used to share messages about the archives. Digitizing what can be digitized helps increase accessibility and allows residents and researchers from outside the area to engage with Bruce County’s historical materials.
2. **Promote the Archives as a Community Resource:** Increase awareness of the archives as a valuable community resource, not just for researchers but for everyone. This can be achieved through targeted programming, workshops and outreach efforts that encourage more people to explore *and contribute to* the archives.
3. **Use Archives to Create Interest:** Use archival records or photos to tell stories of then and now, highlighting BCM&CC’s “hidden history” goals in the Strategic Plan. This strategy is versatile as it could lend itself to a number of applications: social media posts, editorial, newsletter content, or even QR codes at particular sites linking to historical images.

Key Audiences

Bruce County's population is poised for major growth and notable changes in its demographic makeup. According to the KCI Fundraising Communications Final Report, the county will see an increase in retirees, younger families and a projected 10-25% rise in the number of children under the age of 14 between 2020 and 2046. This demographic shift suggests a growing influx of younger families relocating to Bruce County, presenting new opportunities and challenges for BCM&CC in terms of audience engagement and programming.

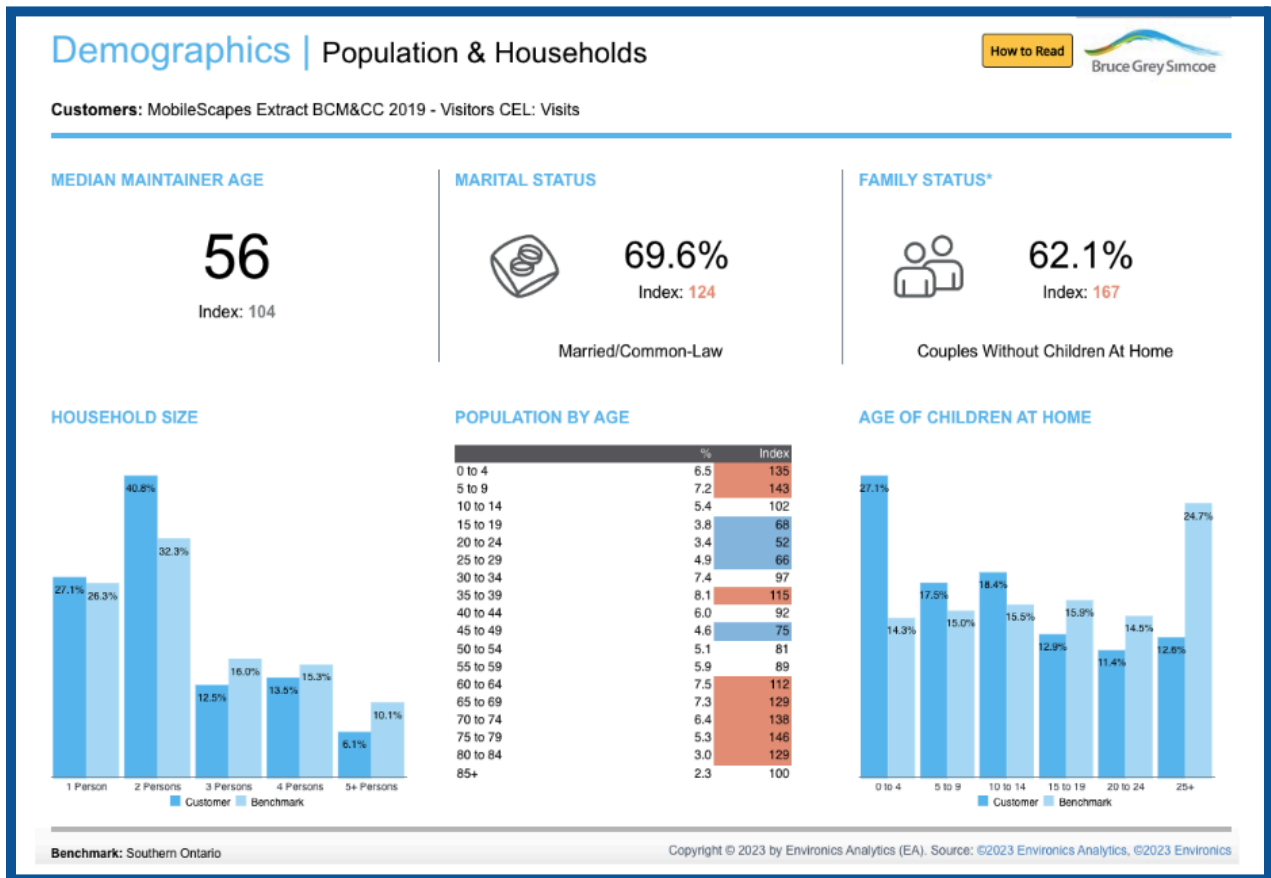
Key Audience Segments

1. **Families with Young Children (under 14)**
 - As the number of younger families grows, the Museum could focus on creating family-friendly programming and educational initiatives that cater to this group. This includes developing events that appeal to both parents and children and strengthening partnerships with schools to build long-term relationships. [Key Segments include](#) “Family Mode” and “New Country.”
2. **Baby Boomers / Older Singles and Couples (65+)**
 - Bruce County's aging population, particularly people over 65, remains a core audience for the Museum. Programming tailored to their interests, such as local history, art and cultural heritage, should remain a priority. This group is highly engaged with traditional media channels like radio and print and enjoys programming that emphasizes connection to nature and community values. [Key segments include](#) “Boomer Bliss,” “Backcountry Boomers,” and “Slow-lane Suburbs.”
3. **First Nations and South Asian Communities**
 - The Museum could expand its outreach to First Nations and South Asian communities, recognizing the growing diversity within Bruce County. Incorporating more multicultural and First Nations programming will ensure that the Museum reflects the full breadth of the region's cultural heritage.
4. **Gen Z and Millennials (ages 25-44)**
 - South Bruce is expected to experience growth in the 25-44 age range, representing 22% of the population as of 2022. This aligns with the Museum's strategic goal of engaging Gen Zs and Millennials. Programming and marketing that focuses on interactive, tech-savvy experiences, such as digital storytelling, AR/VR exhibits and social media campaigns, will help attract this demographic. Using family-oriented events to bring in younger parents is also an effective strategy to engage this group.

Current Audience

The Museum's [current audience](#) is mostly community members from Saugeen Shores (61%). Owen Sound residents make up the second highest visitation (4%) followed closely by Kincardine, Toronto and South Bruce Peninsula. These visitors appreciate outdoor activities, prefer logical and reasoned decision-making and have utilitarian consumer habits. Their ages are primarily 60+. Facebook and YouTube are key platforms for reaching the bulk of this audience: 82% of Boomers use Facebook daily and 65% watch YouTube content regularly. Radio also remains a strong channel. 86% of the people surveyed listen for close to four hours weekly, to country stations and CBC.

BCM&CC Geofence Report Consumer Data Analysis: 2019 & 2022 MobileScapes Mobile Movement Database



Membership Analysis

Closing out 2024 the BCM&CC membership base included 661 member households. Based on the analysis below it is evident that the majority of memberships are families from the Saugeen Shores area. However, there was engagement of varying degrees in all municipalities within Bruce County and beyond. The secondary audience within BCM&CC’s membership are seniors who represent 26% of its membership base.

Analysis by BCM&CC Development Officer

BCM&CC - 2024 Membership		
	Dec	Year End %
Saugeen Shores	449	68%
Kincardine	45	7%
South Bruce	10	1%
South Bruce Peninsula	26	3%
North Bruce Peninsula	3	1%
Huron-Kinloss	3	1%
Arran-Elderslie	27	4%
Brockton	8	1%
Grey County	34	5%
USA	7	1%
Outside Bruce/Grey	49	8%
Total	661	
Membership Type		
	Q4	%
Individual	20	3%
Family	452	68%
Senior	174	26%
Corporate/Organization	2	0.30%
Lifetime	13	2%
comp		
Total	661	

Target Audiences for Growth

According to the KCI Fundraising Communications Final Report, Bruce County will see more retirees, younger families and a projected 10-25% increase in the number of children under age 14 between 2020 and 2046. [Population growth](#) of ‘working prime’ (age 25-54) and young children suggests more young families are relocating to South Bruce.; as well, it’s projected there will be a 152% growth in age 75+. These changes represent opportunities for education programming, partnerships with teachers/educators and school orgs.

1. **Families with Children**

- The expected growth in younger families relocating to Bruce County is an opportunity for the Museum to deepen its engagement through child-centered programs, partnerships with schools and family-oriented events.

2. **Gen Z and Millennials**

- To attract younger professionals, the Museum should create engaging online content that disrupts their digital habits and introduces them to the Museum’s offerings. Social media campaigns, influencer partnerships and community events targeting family engagement and/or an evening out could serve as effective hooks for this audience.

3. **Newcomers to Bruce County**

- Strengthening the Museum’s relationship with local immigrant and newcomer organizations can help engage these new residents. A potential strategy includes creating welcoming educational experiences or exhibits that highlight the contributions of diverse communities, such as South Asian and Chinese immigrants, to Bruce County’s history.

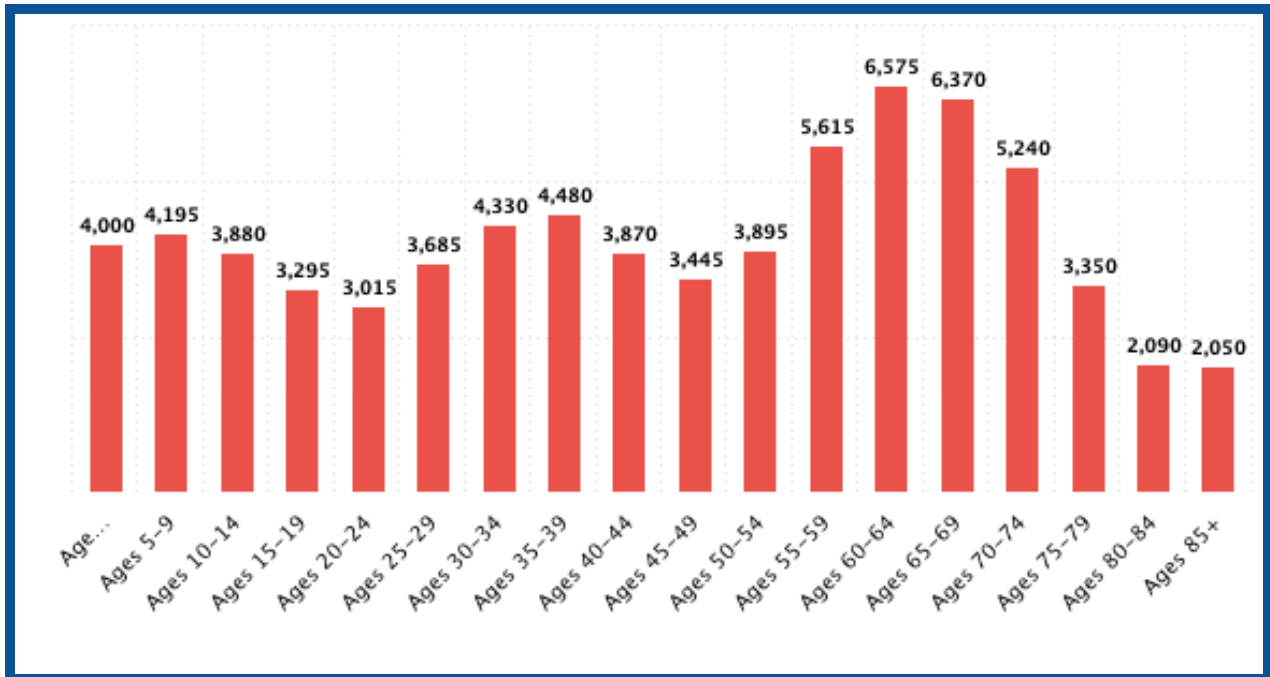
4. **Tourists**

- Tourists represent an important secondary audience, offering opportunities to position the Museum as a “must-visit” destination for families and friends exploring Bruce County. Marketing efforts should emphasize the Museum’s unique experiences and family-friendly activities, encouraging tourists to spend time at the Museum as part of their visit to the region.

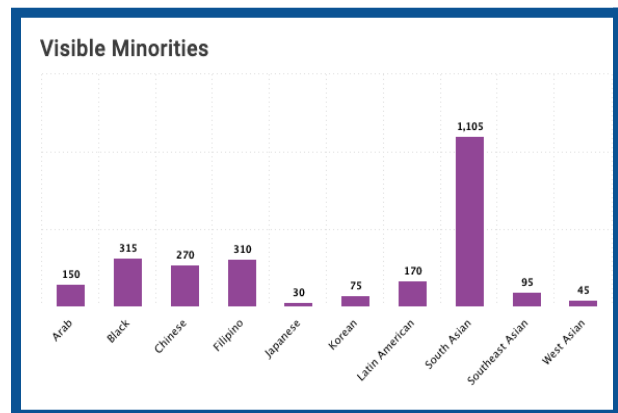
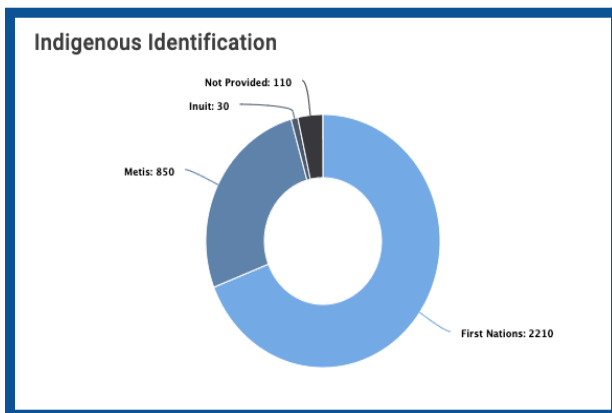
5. **Prospective Volunteers, Donors and Partners**

- Engaging community members as volunteers, donor and partners remains a key strategy for sustaining the Museum’s growth. Programs such as youth councils and post-secondary partnerships can help build a pipeline of young talent and contributors.

Statistics Canada: Ages in Bruce County, 2022



Statistics Canada: Indigenous identification and visible minorities in Bruce County, 2022



Youth Engagement

The Museum could create a youth council to involve younger voices in program development, using word of mouth and social media to increase engagement. This would create an opportunity for students to earn volunteer hours while influencing future programming. This would help create a stronger connection with the community's young people.

Narrative Direction

Community Ownership and Engagement: BCM&CC is not just a museum but a living record of Bruce County's history, deeply intertwined with the community's identity. The narrative should emphasize that "this is your museum," inviting everyone to see themselves reflected in their museum's exhibits and archives.

Inclusivity and Diversity: the Museum must embrace its role as a hub for all Bruce County communities, including geographically remote areas and underrepresented cultural groups. Its narrative should focus on inclusivity, making it clear that the Museum tells the stories of **all** of Bruce County's residents, past and present.

Interactive and Dynamic Learning: the Museum's interactive exhibits, such as the railway diorama, exemplify the power of hands-on learning. The narrative should position BCM&CC as a place where history comes alive through touch, play and interactivity, encouraging visitors to engage with the past in a meaningful way.

Evolving with Technology: A narrative shift towards embracing technological innovation — AR, VR, QR codes and digital storytelling — will showcase the Museum as forward-thinking and adaptable, particularly as it attracts younger, tech-savvy audiences.

A Hidden Gem Ready to Shine: Despite its exceptional exhibits and programming, BCM&CC remains somewhat under the radar. The corporate narrative can reposition the Museum as a "hidden treasure" waiting to be discovered by both residents and tourists with a renewed focus on raising its profile and visibility. Understanding what the audience is looking for — and delivering — is key to standing out.

A Place of Connection and Contribution: the Museum is a space for community collaboration, where volunteers and members can share their talents and be part of something bigger. This sense of belonging should be central to its narrative, inviting residents to not just visit but to contribute their knowledge and skills.

Bruce County's Heartbeat: BCM&CC should present itself as the cultural heartbeat of the county, where people come together to celebrate their shared heritage and learn about the region's evolving identity in a way that is engaging, dynamic and relevant to today's audiences.

Communications and Marketing Plan

Narrative and Key Messages

Current Museum Narrative

BCM&CC does not have a set “narrative” per se at the moment — but the Museum has all the pieces needed to tell an amazing story — and the stories of everyone in Bruce County.

As we noted in the insights report, the Museum has a solid core audience of women over 60 mostly in the Saugeen Shores area. There’s an opportunity to significantly expand the Museum’s audience and invite more younger professionals, families with children, and newcomers to Bruce County to come visit. By addressing geographic barriers and showing how the BCM&CC has more to offer than an ordinary museum, the Museum can encourage these new audiences to come and visit.

Guiding Principles

That’s why we recommended the following guiding principles for the Museum’s new narrative and its three year marketing and communications plan:

- Emphasize community ownership and engagement, inviting everyone to see themselves reflected in the exhibits and archives
- Make it clear that the museum tells the stories of all Bruce County residents, past and present
- Position BCM&CC as a place where history comes alive through touch, play and interactivity, allow visitors to have meaningful experiences
- Embrace technological innovation to showcase the museum as forward-thinking and adaptable, and by doing so attract younger, tech-savvy audiences
- Bring more visibility to exceptional exhibits and programs the Museum has to offer
- Show how the Museum is a place of belonging and a place where your knowledge and skills are valued
- Present the Museum as the place where people come together to celebrate their shared heritage and learn about the Region’s evolving identity

As such, we recommend that the Museum use the following internal, guiding narrative for its next communications and marketing plan:

Final Draft Revised Narrative

Long slogan: Experience Bruce. Share stories. Make history.

Short slogan: Make history.

Section 1 - Framing

Who makes history? You do.

We experience history every day. It's all around us. That's because history is the story of people — just like you.

Bruce County's history is made from your stories. It's a story of family. It's the traditions we hand down from one generation to the next. It's the blend of local culture with cultures from around the world. And it's creating memories today that last far into the future.

So whether your roots in Bruce County go back thousands of years, or you just moved in yesterday, your story belongs here.

Your history belongs here.

Section 2 - Who We Are

At the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, we believe in sharing our stories, diving deep into our past, and looking to our future. We believe that if you want to understand the story of Bruce County, you've got to experience it yourself.

Section 3 - What We Do and How We Do It

That's why our best programs and exhibits are inspired by the stories you've shared with us. Diaries, photos, and even your family tree can become part of our collective history when you share them with us.

Then we work with people like you in our community to plan our exhibits and programs, and to bring them to life. We use the 20,000 pieces in our collection to tell the story of Bruce County, and welcome creative and engaging ideas to offer innovative new exhibits and programs all year-round.

The Bruce County Museum is also a place for you and your family to write the next chapter of your story by making new memories. We host social events, kids programming, cultural events, and live music performances, made by and for people all over Bruce County.

We're located in Southampton and work hard to bring our exhibits and programming to every corner of Bruce County. And we're always looking for exciting new technologies to tell your stories.

We're digitizing our collection and archives to make more of it available online, working with community groups and schools to bring our exhibits and programs closer to home, and creating more virtual events and engaging programs you can experience in the palm of your hand.

Section 4 - Call to Action

So come to the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre. Make one of our events your next adventure with friends or a memorable experience and write the next chapter of your story.

Spend a day researching your roots or sharing your family's story with the archives.

Roll up your sleeves and learn about arts, sciences, and local culture through play in one of our kids' programs.

Experience Bruce. Share your stories. Make history.

Key Messages

- Who makes history? You do.
- We experience history every day. It's all around us. That's because history is the story of people — just like you.
- Bruce County's history is made from your stories.
 - It's a story of family. It's the traditions we hand down from one generation to the next. It's the blend of local culture with global cultures. And it's creating memories today that last far into the future.
- So whether your roots in Bruce County go back thousands of years, or you just moved in yesterday, your story belongs here.
- At the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, we believe in sharing our stories, diving deep into our past, and looking to our future.
- And we believe that if you want to understand the story of Bruce County, you've got to experience it yourself.
- Our best programs and exhibits are inspired by the stories you've shared with us.
- We work with people like you in our community to plan our exhibits and programs, and to bring them to life.
- We're also a place for you and your family to write the next chapter of your story
 - We have kids' programming, cultural events, and live music performances, made by and for people all over Bruce County.
- We're located in Southampton, and we're working hard to bring our exhibits and programming to every corner of Bruce County.
- We're always looking for new engaging and immersive technologies to tell your stories.
- Come to the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre. Experience Bruce. Share your stories. Make history.

Applying the Narrative

With the master narrative established to drive communication strategy, it needs to be applied across the Museum’s communications. The first step is to develop a boilerplate paragraph that would act as a public-facing, elevator-pitch version of the narrative.

The next task is for the Marketing team to familiarize itself with the new narrative, including why narrative-driven communications are effective, as well as the strategic goals and objectives of the narrative—especially which parts of the narrative will appeal to the Museum’s existing audience, and which parts will attract new visitors. Once they have done so, efforts should be made to share the narrative, its goals and objectives with all Museum staff, particularly if they interact with visitors in any capacity.

Once everyone is familiar with the narrative, the Museum should use it as a guide going forward, integrating its themes and key messages into all future communications as appropriate. This begins by taking an inventory of all topline, current content on all BCM&CC communications properties and channels and updating them where appropriate so they better align with the narrative and its key messages.

Mission, Vision and Tone

Mission and Vision Statements Defined

In general, a mission statement describes the “what” and “how” of an organization (sometimes also including the “why”), while a vision statement focuses more on the “why” or meaning behind an organization’s actions.

For example, Disney’s mission statement is *“to entertain, inform, and inspire people around the globe through the power of unparalleled storytelling, reflecting the iconic brands, creative minds and innovative technologies that make ours the world’s premier entertainment company.”* Their vision statement is *“to be one of the world’s leading producers and providers of entertainment and information.”*

Mission Statement Background

As we created a mission statement for the Museum’s Communications and Marketing Plan, we wanted to keep the overall narrative in mind. Our goal was not just to clarify the Museum’s mission, but to show how the narrative supports it.

Recommended Communications Mission Statement

We show everyone how we make our shared stories come to life, and we give the people of Bruce County the chance to make history with us by having meaningful experiences.

Vision Statement Background

The team’s goal was to create a vision for the Museum that was aspirational rather than descriptive. The vision builds on the mission and connects back to the narrative and the priorities we heard in the insights report by focusing on driving community engagement and a sense of ownership over the museum.

Recommended Communications Vision Statement:

We aspire to be leaders in engaging, dynamic communications that bring our stories to life. We want to make every visitor to the BCM&CC feel like they can experience Bruce County, share their stories, and make history when they walk through our doors.

Communications Tone

As communications fulfills its mission and vision and executes against its narrative, it needs to keep a particular voice and tone in mind that is consistent with the values we bring to communications — both internally and externally:

In its interaction with the public and internally, BCM&CC communications will be:

- Helpful
- Energetic
- Informal
- Story-driven

Approach to Strategic Recommendations

Our goal is to create a comprehensive framework that supports increasing awareness and engagement for audiences of BCM&CC. Every initiative, from programming to partnerships, must support a unified vision while addressing the unique challenges and opportunities faced by the Museum.

Framework for Strategic Recommendations

Integrative Approach

To achieve meaningful results, all strategies must work together, reinforcing one another to amplify the impact of the Museum's efforts. Communications, programming, and stakeholder partnerships should connect seamlessly, creating a unified message that resonates with target audiences. By presenting a cohesive narrative across all touchpoints, the Museum can maximize its ability to increase awareness and deepen engagement with diverse communities.

Insights-Driven Planning

Effective strategies are built on a foundation of data and community insight. By leveraging audience feedback and consultation findings, the Museum can ensure its initiatives are tailored to the needs and interests of its audiences. This includes addressing barriers — whether geographic, cultural, or logistical — that may hinder participation, ensuring that all residents feel connected to the Museum's offerings.

Emphasis on Community Ownership

The Museum is a living record of Bruce County's history and identity. By building emotionally resonant narratives, the Museum can invite audiences to see themselves reflected in its exhibits and programs. Storytelling should be central to this effort, making Museum offerings accessible, relatable, and compelling. Encouraging community participation in program development and content creation can further deepen this sense of shared ownership.

Technology and Innovation

The digital landscape is evolving rapidly, and there is opportunity for the Museum to embrace technological tools that enhance visitor experiences. Augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and QR codes can bring exhibits to life and create new pathways for engagement. Simultaneously, optimizing the Museum's online platforms for usability and interaction will ensure a seamless experience for digital visitors and amplify the reach of programming and events.

Sustainability in Execution

Strategic recommendations must balance ambition with practicality. Actionable steps should be designed to work within existing resource constraints, ensuring the long-term viability of initiatives. Partnerships with stakeholders — including businesses, community groups, and County departments — can provide the additional support needed to expand capacity and deliver impactful programs.