



# Expert Tips to grow your group sales

By **GroupTourMedia**  
publisher of *Group Tour Magazine* & *Student Group Tour* magazine

## How Ottawa embraces student travel

Interview with Kelly Dean, Ottawa Tourism  
by Mary Lu Laffey, Editor, Group Tour Media

**As Canada's capital, Ottawa's history and cache draws student groups from all over the planet. It is regularly listed among the top 10 locations for student travel in Canada.**

"Many destinations have to sell the destination first, then develop programming. We are fortunate not to have to do that," said Kelly Dean, sales manager at Ottawa Tourism for Tour & Travel, Canada and USA. "This allows us to concentrate on what we have to offer through programming."

According to Dean, the challenge for Ottawa Tourism is not as a destination. It is in scheduling the visit.

"The closer the school district is to Ottawa, the earlier students come and the reverse is true. Distance is a factor when determining when a student group visits," she said. Peak time is mid-May through June.

"It is fortunate for us that American schools travel earlier, arriving February through April," Dean said.

The bureau has developed a dynamic list of options to attract visits other than in the summer.

"We may showcase French language immersion for two weeks," Dean said. "Or balance a trip showcasing science and technology with a visit to the National Arts Centre."

Ottawa Tourism produces exclusive videos and materials for tour operators to use when speaking with schools.

"Even in the video," Dean said, "We do not dance around the message of cost-effective programming at any time of the year but especially not in the heat of the summer."

"It is working for us," she said, as her office is reaching into markets and into areas where Ottawa is not as well known.



*Kelly Dean, Ottawa Tourism*

"I believe in FAMs," Dean said, having recently hosted a post-Student & Youth Travel Association trip. "I believe in spending the money to get them to experience what we have to offer. It makes packaging the product so much easier. It makes selling it easier too."

Dean also supports tour operator FAMs that invite educators to Ottawa. "Again," she said, "for programming. When someone is here, they can see the spectacular Grand Hall at the Canadian Museum of History and visualize their students performing there."

### Dean's 1-2-3:

1. Know yourself.
2. Don't dance around your message.
3. Support sales efforts.

What's ahead: "Student is stable and remains strong."

P.S. Congratulations to Ottawa Tourism for snaring the One Young World 2016 conference. The gathering of young delegates is second in number only to the Olympics.

Read more news about student travel in *Student Group Tour* magazine or online,  
[www.studentgrouptour.com](http://www.studentgrouptour.com)

By 2020 the youth travel market is expected to grow to **\$320 billion** per annum with almost 300 million international youth trips per year.\*

\* Source: WYSE Travel Confederation and UNWTO Forecast