

DON'T LOVE IT TO DEATH

USING STORYTELLING TO INSPIRE SOCIAL CHANGE

Among many destination development objectives, the Sea-to-Sky Corridor Destination Development Strategy identifies the need for a Destination Education Initiative to address regional obstacles such as disrespectful land use, unnecessary strain on search-and-rescue resources, and overcrowding.

— “ —

Heartfelt and eco-conscious, Don't Love It To Death is centred on emotive storytelling that builds a relationship with locals and visitors by showing them how they can be part of the solution while exploring B.C.



MURRIN PROVINCIAL PARK | Photo: Hubert Kang

To further this objective, the Sea-to-Sky Destination Management Council (the Council) surveyed more than 600 people—including tourism and community partners and local residents—who collectively ranked “respect” and “outdoor conduct” the most important areas for an educational program to prioritize. This feedback, paired with support and input from Indigenous communities, led to the development of Don't Love It To Death, a destination development initiative that uses bold messaging to drive a culture of responsibility among locals and visitors.



SQUAMISH | Photo: Hubert Kang

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Many areas along the Sea-to-Sky Corridor are seeing more visitors in high seasons, leading to an overuse of assets that is impacting the environment as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

The repercussions are varied and far-reaching, including a noticeable increase in garbage; transportation, traffic, and parking issues; trespassing; people interacting with, and negatively impacting, wildlife; and other forms of environmental and resource degradation.

PROJECT APPROACH

Too many people overusing environmental assets is a complex issue that requires a seismic behavioral shift, as it's nearly impossible to mandate this scope of social change.

Instead, the Council opted to take a holistic approach involving key tourism partners and stakeholders, Sea-to-Sky communities, and visitors to the area. Together, they identified the necessary components of a campaign to reverse the negative affects of overtourism in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor: cultivating a culture of respect for the environment and affected communities; facilitating an emotional connection between visitors and the region; and encouraging proactive advocacy around behaviour change. With support from the Province of B.C., through the Targeted Regional Tourism Development Initiative, a creative team was then appointed to develop a campaign that met each of these goals. The result: Don't Love It To Death.

Heartfelt and eco-conscious, Don't Love It To Death is centred on emotive storytelling that builds a relationship with locals and visitors by showing them how they can be part of the solution while exploring B.C. The first phase of the campaign introduced a well-resourced, engaging website sharing facts and statistics. Bold signage and billboards were designed to capture attention and drive immediate behavioural changes. The second phase added paid digital campaigns, an ambassador program, and an attention-grabbing video, among other assets. Looking ahead, the campaign will continue to evolve with seasonal content that's relevant and timely to recreational users. It's a long-term goal to help fuel a movement that encourages audiences not only to change their own behaviours, but also to become on-the-ground educators to others.



PROJECT RESULTS

Don't Love It To Death Social Media Handles



+658%

increase in Facebook reach
(four-month average)*



+257%

increase in Instagram reach
(four-month average)*



+88%

increase in social
media followers

Don't Love It To Death Website



+697%

increase in website visitors



+494%

increase in social
media referrals



+129%

increase in direct traffic

*Between December 2022 to May 2023

- **Don't Love It To Death messaging adopted** by Destination Marketing/Management Organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and businesses across the province
- **Engagement and support from outdoor associations**, including the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, and search and rescue groups across B.C. and Canada



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Collaboration among partners, Indigenous communities, and other local community members is critical to achieving large-scale changes that address challenges within an area. Education on why these proactive changes are necessary is crucial, as encouraging residents and visitors to become advocates for the solution can amplify and extend its positive impacts.

The Don't Love It To Death campaign showcases everything that can be achieved with a compelling, story-based campaign: increased awareness of the challenges, engagement among audiences to reach a solution, and behavioural changes that benefit the environment, wildlife, and entire communities.



Photo: Sea-to-Sky Destination Management Council



Photo: Sea-to-Sky Destination Management Council

Learn more about the Don't Love It To Death campaign by visiting dontloveittodeath.com.