HIGHWAY H2O

Highway H2O is a group of Maritime Transportation System (MTS) stakeholders who have partnered to promote maritime transportation and create a shared “brand” for maritime transportation on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway. The program was created in 2003, and is sponsored by the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation and St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. The program is also supported by a variety of members including ports, private terminal operators, vessel operators, stevedoring companies, and local economic development agencies.

These members have access to a variety of benefits including annual conferences, marketing materials, business development support, workshops, webinars, and other research.

The overall objectives of Highway H2O are to identify and promote opportunities for maritime transportation, and raise awareness of the MTS’s potential to address transportation challenges. As part of that work, the group has engaged marketing efforts intended to help communicate the benefits of maritime transportation and attract new traffic to the MTS. These efforts include:

- Seaway Toll discounts or incentives for new system users, or volume rebates
- Route calculators providing shippers with estimates of travel time to foreign ports.
- Toll calculators to provide shippers with estimates of Seaway tolls.
- Sponsoring research on the economic and environmental competitiveness of the system.
- Hosting events such as an annual conference, workshops, and webinars.
- Purchasing booth space at transportation-related trade shows.

The Governors and Premiers’ Regional Maritime Strategy notes that the MTS needs a single-consistent brand, and recommends that the Highway H2O brand be assessed for its potential as a starting point for future region-wide marketing plans.

TYPE
Investment

ISSUE
Maritime Transportation