



Norfolk Island – wonderful holiday location

Snapshots

Advance Tourism

November 2005

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Norfolk Island's new marketing direction

A year ago, visitor numbers to Norfolk Island fell so much that air services from Australia became unviable and ceased. With help from Qantas, the Norfolk Island Government now has new air services in place.

New marketing strategies have since been adopted by Norfolk Island and signs already indicate brighter results in 2006.

Details are shown in the Special Report below.

BAROSSA SCOOPS TWO NATIONAL AWARDS

The Barossa has won the Regional award while local chef Michael Voumard has won the Food Heritage Award in the inaugural *Vogue Entertaining+Travel Audi Australian Produce awards* – the first nationally recognised annual awards for Australian producers.

Racheal Klitscher, Regional Marketing Manager for Barossa Tourism says “These awards are recognition of the significance of produce to our region. Barossa wine speaks volumes around the world and Barossa’s food is a wonderful extension of our lifestyle. It is fitting that the Barossa is the first region in the country to be acknowledged in this way.”

AUSTRALIAN MARKET REVIEW BY NEW ZEALAND

During April 2005, Tourism New Zealand conducted an extensive industry review of the state of the holiday market from Australia to NZ. This review involved detailed interviews with travel sellers within the retail, wholesale, internet and airline environment in Australia. Some interviews were also conducted with tourism and travel industry contacts in NZ.

The report is an “eye opener” and should be a “must read” for anyone associated with regional destination marketing. Much of the “demand trends” section applies to Australian destinations. The NZ report can be found at www.tourismnewzealand.com and then click on “Market Research”, “Other research” and “Australian Market Review” in that order. Our Kiwi friends are so professional.

Two terms in the report are “i-site” and KEA Network. “i-sites” is the merchandising name for Visitor Information Centres in NZ. “KEA Network” means Key Expert Agent Network. These agents have been trained to a minimum product knowledge on New Zealand products and destinations. Agents then enjoy leads from advertising referrals coming from Tourism New Zealand’s 100% Pure campaign.

WHITSUNDAY COUNCIL COMMISSIONS SPECIAL REPORT

Whitsunday Council commissioned a report on the impact of tourism. Council wanted to learn more about the economic contribution of tourism and its social impact. Amongst other findings, the report showed tourism is a major employer, far more significant than agriculture, forestry, fishing or mining and creates a lot of jobs for local people, in particular young people.

FIVE SA COUNCILS FORM TOURISM ALLIANCE

The Regional Councils of Light, Wakefield and Goyder, Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council and District Council of Mallala have formed a Tourism Alliance to act as a facilitator for these local government organisations to better communicate and co-operate in a shared vision of what tourism can attain in their region. Their activities are designed to complement destination marketing activities being undertaken by RTOs and South Australian Tourism Commission.

The Councils collectively fund a Regional Festivals and Events Coordinator and CEOs of the Councils meet monthly to monitor progress with implementation of strategies, make joint funding applications, join in collaborative projects, plan regional product development and implement recommendations from the Clare Valley and Barossa Tourism Integrated Strategic Tourism Plan.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

In 1989, the first steps were taken to form Victoria’s Country Victoria Tourism Council which proved to be a great asset for regional tourism in the state. Recently an incorrect report was circulated about the early days of the organisation. Full details shown in the special report below set the record straight.

HANDY TIP FOR DESTINATIONS SMALLER THAN REGIONS

Statistics from Tourism Research Australia (TRA) are published down to regional areas but many destinations want figures to go down to LGA level. TRA advises that these figures can be accessed in many instances. As examples, Kalgoorlie WA which has one Council or Echuca Moama which has Councils each side of the Murray River can obtain relevant statistics. TRA can provide different research findings for different needs. For further information, just phone TRA (02) 6213 7124 and ask for details of “small area statistics”. TRA will be pleased to outline the assistance they can provide.

WHERE IS FLINDERS ISLAND?

Part of an archipelago of 65 islands, Flinders Island is a popular island in Eastern Bass Strait between Victoria and Tasmania. Presently Advance Tourism is assisting Flinders Island to develop and implement a new marketing strategy to be launched in early 2006 with a new positioning, a new brochure and a new website. Emphasis will be on generation of new business. Before developing the strategy, Flinders Island tourism leaders made a fact finding mission to Kangaroo Island, SA, arranged by Northern Tasmania Development. Much was learned from this visit.

TOURISM NEW SOUTH WALES NEW ZEALAND SUCCESS

Infinity Holidays, Flight Centres wholesaler, has released throughout NZ, a new holiday package range, Byron Bay and Beyond, a first for this NSW destination. Packages include Byron Bay, Lennox Head, Ballina and Tweed Heads. Optional extras include Tropical Fruit World, Tweed River cruises, Tweed Valley safaris and Hertz rentals. Flight Centres will be using press advertising to promote the packages. Thanks to Kate Strange and Rebecca Avent, Tourism NSW Auckland who made these packages happen.

NSW DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PILOT

A destination development program (DPP) has been developed by Tourism NSW. A pilot program has been developed in conjunction with the North Coast RTO. It is designed to add to local industry knowledge with detailed market research information at destination level to identify and understand markets to be targeted. The program aims to better understand customer wants and expectations.

Workshops were held in Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Forster and Port Stephens. In 2006, it is planned to progressively roll the program out to other regions.

ACCOLADES FOR TOURISM WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Tourism Western Australia (TWA) was recently named a finalist in the “Best Online Promotion” category for the 2006 National Internet Awards. TWA was up against some high calibre competition including global brands such as Pepsi, Fosters, Yellow Pages and 20th Century Fox and was the only Western Australian organisation represented out of all the categories. TWA’s nomination was for “The Real Thing – Win a Real Australian Holiday online promotion”.

Additionally, Mike Bullen, Online Customer Relations Management Coordinator at Tourism Western Australia has been awarded “WA’s Young Direct Marketer of the Year”. This recognises his excellent work developing and implementing the TWA eNewsletter strategies to an ever increasing database – now at 128,000 consumers. The TWA monthly eNewsletter has evolved from one template that serviced all markets to four customised templates, each with specific branding. They each reflect the “The Real Thing” campaign.

Other good news is the return to TWA of Ross MacCulloch as Director, Destination Development. Until recently Ross has been in England in a senior role with Kent Tourism Association.

Thank you for so many kind comments

May we express our gratitude for the many kind comments received here at Advance Tourism for our newsletters and Tourism Information Papers. It is our pleasure to provide this information. Over 4000 email addressees in Australia and NZ receive these papers.

Our aim is to provide information from across regional Australia that is not always available in other states for regional tourism businesses and organisations. But there is a commercial reality. It is only by having customers to keep our consultancy operating that these papers are possible and we would like to thank our clients for their support. If your organisation has a project, perhaps Advance Tourism can put its extensive industry experience at your disposal. By retaining Advance Tourism perhaps we can also give your project some wide recognition. Feel free to give Norm White a call at 03 9888 1572 or 0409 198 531 for further details.

YARRA VALLEY SUCCESS

In 1994, as part of a Tourism Development Plan developed by Advance Tourism for the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges RTO, it was recommended that a special meetings and conferences group be formed comprised of stakeholders (members) active in that sector. After being fostered by the RTO for a period, the group established itself as an independent group titled the “Yarra Valley and Ranges Conference Meeting Network.

Ever since, the Network has been pro-actively building meetings and conference business for their region. The Network’s latest brochure, based on their years of experience, is superb with the information provided being tailored to client needs. Further details www.yarraconf.com.au

WA ATTRACTION GREAT HIT WITH OVERSEAS VISITORS

At Busselton, South West WA, is a remarkable attraction which is proving very popular with overseas visitors as well as Australian travellers. It is an underwater observatory at the end of the longest wooden jetty in the southern hemisphere. Visitors descend 8 metres below sea level to see an underwater garden teeming with marine life. There can be 30 species of fish at any one time with superb interpretation being provided by guides and displays around the walls. Seeing fish and marine up close is a great experience.

Since opening in December 2003, over 150,000 have visited the observatory with over \$8 million being injected into the local economy. It is one of the eco-tourism attractions of the *Living Windows* network.

TIGER AIRWAYS FLIES INTO DARWIN

Singapore based Tiger Airways starts flying between Singapore and Darwin from 19th December next with Airbus 320 aircraft. This will provide a valuable airlink for travellers coming from as far away as UK, Europe and Asian ports. They will feed visitors into the NT, North West WA and other parts of Australia.

These flights will be in addition to services now operated by Qantas using Airbus 330 aircraft and Australian Airlines with Boeing 727s.

UP TO 60% OF BUSINESS FROM ONLINE BOOKINGS IN REAL TIME

The latest newsletter from Book Easy states some tourism businesses in regional areas are reporting up to 60% of their business is now being made online in real time. Anecdotal evidence indicates tourism businesses need to provide online booking services to maintain market share. Some tourism businesses are updating as many as 17 websites each day to get a share of the action! Visitor Information Centres are recording from 6% - 60% of their business being booked online also.

THE GOOD NEWS KEEPS ROLLING IN. Book Easy advises that when going "live", Port Stephens, NSW, had set their annual targets with the average number of bookings each month. They did not know what to expect. The average figure they had set to achieve over 12 months was achieved in the 2nd month – well exceeding their expectations. They are now actively promoting their real time booking website. Book Easy can be contacted by emailing Pauline McLeod at pauline@bookeasy.com.au

TOURISM RESEARCH AUSTRALIA STATISTICS

Recently Advance Tourism released national visitor and international visitor statistics for regional Australia from 1999-2004. There were also comparisons with capital city results. These figures, kindly made available by Tourism Research Australia, enable regions to better monitor their performance. Due to a small number of typos and transcription anomalies, these figures have been checked by TRA and are being reissued. They can be relied on to be 100% correct.

IN BRIEF

- Harvey World Travel says its online sales grew 400% in the first quarter of the 2005-06 fiscal year compared with the same period last year. This comes after the retail group launched an updated version of its website in September which allows customers to book international flights online.
- Victoria's Tourism Minister has announced "phenomenal" growth with wine tourism. Visitor numbers to Victorian wineries had grown from 3.2 million to 3.6 million since 2002. Estimated economic value was \$493 million up \$81 million.

SPECIAL REPORT NORFOLK ISLAND TAKES NEW DIRECTION

Like many regional destinations in Australia, Norfolk Island has experienced a downturn in demand in recent times. Norfolk Island's only airline ceased operating during this time.

The Norfolk Island Government entered into an arrangement with Qantas to provide a Boeing 737-400 for services between the island, Sydney and Brisbane on a QF code-share basis.

From NZ, Air New Zealand continues to provide 737-300 services from Auckland. The Norfolk Island fare is part of the Trans Tasman fare structure and Norfolk Island is common rated with AKL/CHC and WLG.

The Norfolk Island Government appointed a new Tourism General Manager, Steve McInnes from Australia who has a strong private sector background in tourism marketing with recent sales and marketing roles including most recently being National Sales Manager for Kosciusko Thredbo Pty Ltd.

With a new Tourism General Manager comes new strategies which concentrate on

- Targeting the Sydney and Brisbane markets
- Targeting the whole of New Zealand
- New advertising and marketing strategies in Sydney
- A special marketing program for Queenslanders, a market with a strong affinity with Norfolk Island
- A Tasmanian based consultancy (Ocean Communications) being retained to develop a new brand and destination campaign. It will concentrate on the reasons to visit
- A strong emphasis targeting travel industry support. Discussions have been held with wholesalers to support their activities to help generate more demand for Norfolk Island. Norfolk Island Tourism holds regular meetings with its key wholesalers and has shared their vision and strategy plans with them. All feel that the new strategies will help their businesses grow.

Having their own airline arrangements enables Norfolk Island to take some fare initiatives. One will be to offer special fares to attract families which will be a marketing priority. The conference and incentives markets are to be targeted also.

An important step has been to appoint Integra Tourism Marketing in Sydney to give Norfolk Island a presence in Australia particularly in its key market

In 2006, Norfolk Island will celebrate its Sesqui-centenary marking 150 years since the Pitcairn Islanders, most descendants of the bounty Mutineers, made Norfolk Island their new home. A year of celebrations is planned and Norfolk Island wants visitors to be part of the celebrations.

While building awareness of the destination is an important plank in the strategy, the main aim is to build business (increased visitor volumes) for the Norfolk Island industry and the island's air services.

SPECIAL REPORT SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Six months after Norm White started Advance Tourism in 1988, the Victorian Tourism Commission convened a two-day State Tourism Conference in Melbourne. Delegates came in large numbers from all over the state. However the conference agenda was heavily Melbourne-centric with very little reference to regional areas. This was indicative of the low profile of Victorian regions at that time. Norm White saw the need for a Country Tourism Association and canvassed widely for support for its formation.

The interest in the proposal led to Norm convening Victoria's first ever Country Tourism Conference at Tullamarine in January 1989. At the end of this conference it was pre-arranged that a motion would come from the floor to establish a country tourism association. The motion was unanimously supported and Norm was elected Chairman of a Steering Committee to establish the organisation. The conference operated at a loss which was covered by Norm White's personal finances.

Over the following months Norm spent time contacting a range of people important to the formation of this new organisation. Much encouragement and support was given by the new Victorian Tourism Commission CEO, Ms Katie Lahey (now Chief Executive Business Council Australia).

In September 1989, pressure of business in the consultancy called for Norm to step aside and he arranged for a special luncheon at William Angliss College in Melbourne when an Interim Committee was elected. At this time Wayne Kayler-Thomson became President of the interim structure. Being Economic Development Manager for Stawell Council he had access to a Council's resources to help support the work of establishing the new organisation.

In December 1990, the first Annual General Meeting of the country tourism association was held with its title of Country Victoria Tourism Council (CVTC). Wayne Kayler-Thomson was elected President with Norm White as Vice-President. This arrangement continued until 1993.

After the Kennett Government was elected, Wayne and Norm called on the new Chairman, Tourism Victoria Board, David Grant seeking funding for an executive officer position. David Grant agreed to a full time position to be funded by Tourism Victoria. From this, Ken Hore was appointed the first CEO and under his leadership CVTC went from strength to strength.

WHAT DOES ADVANCE TOURISM DO?

Advance Tourism is a consultancy that for the last 17 years has specialised in regional and urban tourism management and marketing particularly Tourism Development Plans, Marketing Plans, Feasibility Studies, Business Plans, public speaking, training workshops and operations evaluations.

The range of projects handled over the years across Australia has been diverse which is why Advance Tourism is able to regularly release free Tourism Information Papers and newsletters for regional Australia on such a wide range of subjects.

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Should you wish to subscribe or unsubscribe from this free newsletter and periodic Tourism Information Papers please send an email to advtour@netspace.net.au. If you could include the name of your state and organisation that would be much appreciated.

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