

2011/2012 Action Plan



GEELONG OTWAY
TOURISM INCORPORATED

FOREWORD

Geelong Otway Tourism (GOT) develops a strategic directional plan each three years, supported by an annual action plan and budget to deliver activities and projects that will meet the overall strategic direction and goals of the organisation. These strategic plans are developed in consultation with our municipal and local tourism association partners. Through a series of Memorandums of Understanding and partnership agreements, each party agrees to its role in that strategic direction and assumes the responsibilities associated with delivering it over that three year period. The new plan was due to be developed for 2010/2013.

At the time GOT were preparing to develop the new three year plan, Tourism Victoria were in the process of undertaking a review of tourism industry structures across the state. The review included looking at the various levels of marketing bodies, industry associations and municipal councils involved in tourism promotion and development.

Whilst the review and subsequent restructuring of industry associations and project delivery models will ultimately result in a more effective model, it may make some significant changes to the relationships and arrangements GOT has with its partners and impact on our roles and responsibilities. As a result, this 2011/12 Action Plan and associated budgets have been set based on the tactical framework and strategic direction laid out in the existing Strategic Plan 2007/2010.

With the review and likely restructure to take place in the next twelve months, GOT board and staff will develop a new three-year strategic plan which will take into account any new roles GOT will play in a restructured tourism industry in our region.



INTRODUCTION

This annual plan details the projects and activities the staff will undertake during 2011/2012 in line with the existing strategic plan. Each key area of focus includes a range of specific initiatives to address that area of responsibility. Tourism business operators within our region are encouraged to review this plan along with the 2011/12 Membership Prospectus to identify opportunities for their business to participate in activities appropriate for their business.

At the time of preparing project budgets for this plan, GOT were undertaking a sponsorship recruitment process to grow income and attract corporate companies to participate in our partnership program.

The plan has been developed with a range of contingencies depending on the level of support achieved through this program. The budgets also assume:

- GOT maintains its 60% of local tourism association membership.
- Membership targets are met.
- Grant and sponsorship income is at a minimum of the same level as 2010/11.
- The tourism industry continues to invest in GOT managed marketing initiatives.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

The action plan contains a series of initiatives for each of our four areas of focus:

DEMAND: GOT has a thorough understanding of the markets for tourism in the region and implements effective marketing programs to grow demand.

SUPPLY: Ongoing development of the capability of the Geelong Otway region to deliver on market demands.

PARTNERSHIPS: Manage effective relationships with stakeholders relevant to tourism in the Geelong Otway region.

GOVERNANCE: Ensure the effective deployment of, and accountability for, GOT resources.

In addition to these key areas of focus, GOT will maintain its commitment to pursuing a sustainable tourism industry in our region.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The activities being undertaken by GOT in this action plan aim to deliver:

- A high performing tourism region with the highest profile in Victoria, widely recognised sectors and well known destinations.
- A dynamic tourism industry noted for its capability, high degree of collaboration and wide participation in industry programs and processes.

- Exceptional performance by GOT as the Regional Tourism Organisation, providing service to stakeholders, consumers and the tourism industry.
- Communities that are widely engaged in tourism and with a deep appreciation of the benefits it delivers.

A set of Key Performance Objectives to assess the delivery of this plan is detailed on page 13.

STAKEHOLDERS

GOT delivers this plan to benefit a wide range of stakeholders. Associated advantages of these activities for the various groups are:

COMMUNITY

- Stronger local economies and greater employment opportunities.
- Supporting infrastructure and services that benefit residents as well as visitors.
- GOT strategies encourage greater dispersal of visitation - geographically and seasonally.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Tourism activity delivers economic and social benefits including business development and employment.
- Coordinated, regional approach to tourism policy, planning and marketing with an underlying commitment to sustainability.
- Connections with the tourism industry and state / federal tourism agencies.

NATIONAL AND STATE TOURISM AGENCIES

- Working with a well coordinated, strategic and progressive tourism region.
- Maximise marketing effort through a coordinated and cooperative approach and good connection with regional industry.
- Provision of regional tourism industry knowledge and contribution to state and national policies, programs and organisations.

TOURISM BUSINESSES

- Access to a suite of marketing and development initiatives to grow the tourism industry in the region.
- Strategies focused on yield to grow industry profitability.
- Leveraging investment through participation in cooperative campaigns.
- A professional and knowledgeable organisation to use as a reference tool, source of advice and advocate on tourism issues.
- Delivery of visitor information resources and services.



2010/11 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

As well as continuing with some existing and ongoing initiatives that are important for the regional tourism industry, the 2010/11 Action Plan includes several new initiatives:

VISITING FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

GOT will continue to work with Local Tourism Associations, via Leisure and Business Events Campaigns to develop and implement a Visiting Friends and Relatives campaign to work with the local community across the region.

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES STRATEGY

During 2011-12 the Geelong and Great Ocean Road Visitor Information Centre will relocate into a permanent shop at Little River Service Centre. Due to the success of the facility, the owners of the Service Centre are building a series of three shops. This provides an opportunity for the relocatable Centre at Little River to be moved to a new location. Discussions are currently being held about the best location for the facility to be relocated to in the City of Greater Geelong region.

Commencing in July 2011, Council is also managing a volunteer staffed Information desk greeting daily afternoon flight arrivals. It is also planned that the Barwon Heads Information Service will also return this Summer.

WEB DEVELOPMENT

Continuing the development of the new consumer website through a development of a strategy which will include search engine optimization, content management, industry participation opportunities, social media, online bookings, trip advisor/blogging and further use of the e-database. In addition to this, the strategy will also include the delivery of the Business Events Geelong function, GOT Industry Website and development of an online membership management system in conjunction with the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse information. A key component of the development of this strategy is to provide businesses a mechanism to create online packages through a package management portal directed at specific tourism experiences.

INCREASED WEB PRESENCE

In 2011-12, all renewing tourism members in the region have been given the opportunity to develop a business profile on either www.visitvictoria.com or www.geelongotway.org at no additional cost. This opportunity provides individual businesses with greater online exposure, while providing the region the same increased presence of available product. The www.visitvictoria.com website received over 7 million visits and 30.8 million page views from consumers over the last twelve months. The Visit Victoria listing also allows the ability for all businesses to be profiled on the region's official tourism websites www.visitgeelongbellarine.com and www.visitgreatoceanroad.org.au.



FUTURE DIRECTION

As we move forward into 2011/12 with a new and refined regional tourism structure, GOT will take an exciting new approach in developing a regional tourism strategy. The plan will focus on the principles of destination management.

DESTINATION MARKETING including:

- Research
- Identifying and targeting the correct markets, including new and emerging markets.
- Raising awareness in the target markets of the qualities of the destination.
- Increased visitation and yield.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT including:

- Protection of the unique and natural assets of the destination.
- Ensuring quality visitor experiences.
- Industry leadership.
- Growing a unique and sustainable industry in the destination.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT & OPPORTUNITIES PLANNING including:

- Assess the tourism potential of the region and monitor development progress.
- Focus on attracting appropriate investment and infrastructure.
- Workforce planning to generate employment and ensure skilled staff are available for the industry.
- Developing long term strategies to grow the industry.

The development of this new three-year strategy will take place in consultation with our industry and municipal partners. The process will commence at the beginning of 2012.



DEMAND

Geelong Otway Tourism has a thorough understanding of the markets for tourism in the region and implements effective marketing programs to grow demand.

1. UNDERSTAND MARKET REQUIREMENTS AND TRENDS – VISITORS AND INDUSTRY.

1.1 Provide qualitative and quantitative regional market research.

- 1.1.1 Source, analyse and publish relevant regional visitation data from existing tourism research programs including: Tourism Research Australia, Aust Bureau of Statistics, Aspire - Independent benchmarking of RTO across VIC with Tourism Vic.
- 1.1.2 Support Great Southern Touring Route research into international visitors through Visitor Information Centres.
- 1.1.3 Conduct regional business events research with conference partners (In house)
- 1.1.4 Publish analytical statistics for the regional visitor website including Visitor Information Centre Statistics and Website results e.g. Google Analytics

2. IMPLEMENT STRATEGIC MARKETING ACTIVITIES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AND RELEVANT BODIES.

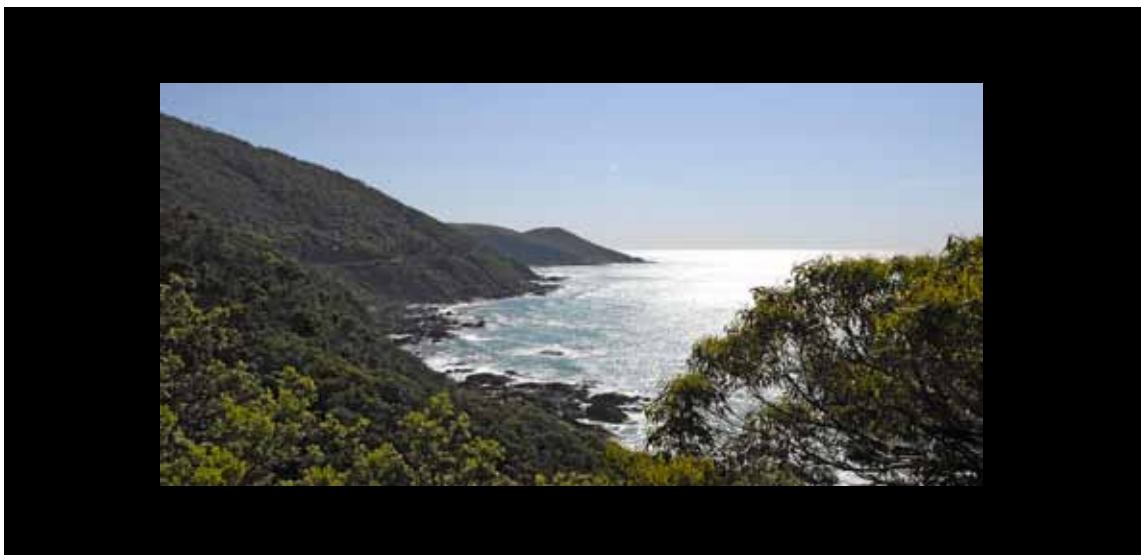
2.1. Engage international and domestic visitors by actively participating in cross regional branding and marketing programs with a focus on specific destinations.

- 2.1.1. Contribute to and participate in Great Southern Touring Route initiatives.
- 2.1.2 Contribute to State campaigns in partnership with Tourism Victoria. E.g. Villages of Victoria program, brand strategy, sub-brand strategy etc
- 2.1.3. Contribute to and participate in Destination Melbourne Partnership Program (Income for this item is generated from expenses from Partnerships 4.1 Marketing Packages)
- 2.1.4 Partner with Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau to market the region as a Business Events destination.
- 2.1.5 Maintain contribution as a service delivery partner for the Great Ocean Walk (Administration servicing of this Campaign relates to the \$20,000 income budgeted)

2.2. Develop and implement marketing campaigns based on key product strengths.

- 2.2.1 Develop and implement niche marketing including food and wine, golf, health and wellbeing, nature-based tourism initiatives. Specifically to develop Bellarine Taste Trail, Geelong Wine Region, Otway Harvest Trail, Moorabool Valley Wineries
- 2.2.2 Develop and implement Conference and Business Events Niche Marketing
- 2.2.3 Work with Surf Coast Tourism to develop the Surf Coast as a Business Events destination.
- 2.2.4 Develop and produce Conference and Business Events Planning Guide
- 2.2.5 Develop and implement a Visiting Friends and Relatives campaign in partnership with Local Tourism Associations, Leisure and Business Events Campaigns
- 2.2.6 In partnership with Local Tourism Associations, towns and Tourism Victoria, provide assistance in promoting local brand concepts via marketing campaigns
- 2.2.7 Develop and implement Cruise Ship strategies including interactive promotional website, update of cruise shipping information and cross promotion with Port of Melbourne - covered in COGG budget

- 2.3. Develop and provide appropriate marketing collateral to promote region and destinations.**
- 2.3.1 Coordinate production and distribution of regional Official Visitor Guides (Income outlines sales of program of \$145,000, Expenditure outlines \$135,000 for production and \$10,000 for distribution)
 - 2.3.2 Attend consumer shows in partnership to promote regional brands, key destinations and product strengths.
 - 2.3.3 Maximise regional presence at Avalon Airport through signage and brochure display. Advocate State Government support for Avalon Airport as a domestic gateway to Victoria.
 - 2.3.4 Maintain partnership obligation with Geelong Advertiser Group to support the production of the Spring Edition of Breakaway. After this time the agreement will cease
- 2.4. Encourage industry participation in marketing initiatives.**
- 2.4.1 Develop annual marketing program calendar, budget guide and prospectus.
- 2.5. Develop and implement marketing activities to address seasonality and regional dispersal.**
- 2.5.1 Develop and implement activities and tactical marketing for Leisure Travel (includes off peak). This item is in partnership with 2.5.2 Online strategy below.
 - 2.5.2 Develop and implement the GOT Digital Strategy
 - 2.5.3 Provide visitvic webpage to all members able to participate in the program, as part of membership
 - 2.5.4 Develop and implement activities and tactical marketing for conference and business events (includes off peak)
 - 2.5.5 Develop and implement marketing activities in partnership with major events in the region such as the Great Ocean Road Marathon and Rip Curl Pro. This item is in partnership with Supply Item 2.1.3
- 2.6. Undertake public relations program and support media activity in the region.**
- 2.6.1 Engage a public relations agency to work on behalf of GOT to encourage media activity through editorial promotion and media familiarisations for the region
 - 2.6.2 Continue building a high-quality photographic library of the region including strategies to gain awareness of the region with government, industry and international delegates
- 2.7 Establish an annual marketing contingency budget to capitalise on opportunities that may become available during the year.**



SUPPLY

Ongoing development of the capability of the Geelong Otway region to deliver on market demands.

1. FACILITATE ACCESS FOR TOURISM OPERATORS IN THE GEELONG OTWAY REGION TO PROGRAMS THAT IMPROVE THE CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY OF THE INDUSTRY.

1.1 Facilitate and support the development of the industry in partnership with Local Tourism Associations via Tourism Excellence Program including (Budget is for all 5 actions)

- 1.1.1 Ongoing series of workshops to grow professionalism and service excellence
- 1.1.2 Encourage industry participation in appropriate training and development programs delivered by external partnership agencies
- 1.1.3 Encourage industry participation in accreditation and tourism excellence programs
- 1.1.4 Ongoing delivery of sustainability initiatives in partnership with the industry
- 1.1.5 Encourage industry participation in a 'Mystery Shopper' program to determine delivery of professionalism and customer service within the region

1.2 Facilitate a coordinated effort in the region for the use of online booking services via TXA functionality on the visitor website and improve booking capacity at Visitor Information Centres

2. ENSURE GEELONG OTWAY REGION TOURISM PRODUCT MEETS MARKET DEMANDS.

2.1 Support product development strategies focused on core and emerging strengths.

- 2.1.1 Food and wine development initiatives.
- 2.1.2 Conference and business event development initiatives.
- 2.1.3 Event development initiatives.
- 2.1.4 Golf / Adventure / Nature based tourism development initiatives.
- 2.1.5 Dive tourism development initiatives.
- 2.1.6 Cycling / health and well being / trails development initiatives

3. ADVOCATE TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AS A DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY.

3.1 Work with industry, councils and planning authorities to support appropriate tourism infrastructure development.

- 3.1.1 Continue work on Destination Management and Tourism Opportunities Planning funded via grants
- 3.1.2 Continue support for a purpose built conference centre in Geelong.
- 3.1.3 Continue support for the recognition of the Great Ocean Road as an item of National Heritage Significance, including support for a Great Ocean Road Heritage Centre at the Lorne VIC and development of a welcome/farewall signage policy
- 3.1.4 In cooperation with Surf Coast Shire, support the development of surf related initiatives including the interpretation and preservation of Bells Beach and the Surf City Precinct in Torquay
- 3.1.5 Continue work on developing a VIC strategy for Geelong, the Bellarine and Great Ocean Road region in response to changes in visitor dispersal caused by the Ring Road including 'I' sign strategy

PARTNERSHIPS

Manage effective relationships with stakeholders relevant to tourism in the Geelong Otway region.

1. GOT WILL LEAD A UNITED, COOPERATIVE AND COORDINATED TOURISM INDUSTRY WITH OPEN AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ALL SECTORS.

1.1 Maintain effective working relationships with partner local tourism associations and industry operators.

1.1.1 Work with Local Tourism Associations to recruit and service tourism industry members, including the development of membership marketing material

1.1.2 Review these relationships and gain industry feedback via an Industry Survey providing an incentive prize to increase responses

1.1.3 Conduct a review of Membership with industry participation

1.2 Maintain board and committee positions with leading tourism organisations.

1.3 Maintain communication with leading business and community groups.

1.4 Implement strategic communication activity for industry and stakeholders that identifies opportunities and reports on achievements and results.

1.4.1 Monthly GOT brief update to be provided to industry via LTA newsletters

1.4.2 Quarterly newsletter - Tourism Directions (including reporting on GOT achievements / results tracking)

1.4.3 Provide input into external communications as required.

1.4.4 Host member functions, product launches and seminars. Annual event by Geelong Otway Tourism at \$2,500 Net Cost

1.4.5 Inkind sponsorship functions - Wine Geelong

2. MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

2.1 Maintain effective partnerships with member councils.

2.1.1 Regular communication to councils.

2.2 Maintain effective partnerships with State Government and agencies - Tourism Victoria, Parks Victoria etc.

2.3 Maintain effective partnerships with Federal Government and agencies - Tourism Australia.

PARTNERSHIPS continued

3. ENCOURAGE COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE GEELONG OTWAY REGION TO BE INFORMED, SUPPORTIVE AND ACTIVE PARTNERS WITH THE TOURISM INDUSTRY.

3.1 Implement public relations activity in partnership with Tourism Alliance Victoria and Local Tourism Associations for Victorian Tourism Week promoting the benefits of tourism

3.2 Develop and maintain the tourism ambassadors program into the region

4. SECURE RESOURCES TO ALLOW THE EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF GEELONG OTWAY TOURISM AND ACHIEVEMENT OF TOURISM INDUSTRY GOALS.

4.1 Industry Marketing Packages

4.2 Sponsorship: Actively pursue corporate sponsorship and retain current sponsorship

4.3 Council

4.4 LTAs Membership subscriptions please refer to 2011/12 fee schedule document for full breakdown of budget estimate

4.5 Development of Grant Submission Applications



GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

Ensure the effective allocation of Geelong Otway Tourism resources in a strategic, accountable and sustainable manner.

1. MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FRAMEWORK.

2. ENTER INTO A RENEWED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH PARTNER MUNICIPALITIES.

2.1 Extend the current Memorandum of Understanding in place for 2007-2010 to 30 June 2012 due to potential structural changes in the region by State Government.

2.2 Commence work on developing the Memorandum of Understanding for 2012 to 2015 following clarification of tourism industry structures

3. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PARTNERSHIP & SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH MEMBER LOCAL TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS.

3.1 Following finalisation of Industry Structures across the region, develop and commit to Partnership and Service Agreements

4. IMPLEMENT INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY OF ALL BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND DECISION MAKING.

4.1 Maintain and utilise internal and external auditing processes to monitor financial performance - LBW Chartered Accountants (in kind sponsorship)

4.2 Maintain reporting processes to stakeholders on progress of strategic plan implementation and performance against industry approved KPI's

5. ADMINISTRATIVE & BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1.1 Annual Interest and Bank Charges

5.1.2 Community Donations

5.1.3 Board Support

5.1.4 Administration Servicing of Marketing Campaigns

5.1.5 Management of GOT Industry (Corporate) Website

5.1.5 Maintenance and Hosting fees

5.1.6 Develop 3 yr business plan for 2012/2015

5.1.7 Review 11/12 Plan and Develop 12/13 Action Plan

BUDGET

Budgeted expenditure by key area of focus:

DEMAND:	\$ 988,053
SUPPLY:	\$ 112,500
PARTNERSHIPS:	\$ 393,687
GOVERNANCE & COORDINATION:	\$ 39,000
CARRY OVER PROJECTS:	\$ 45,481
TOTAL BUDGET EXPENDITURE:	\$ 1,578,721

EVALUATION - KEY PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

The Key Performance Objectives outlined below will be reported quarterly to industry and stakeholders through Tourism Directions. Final evaluation will be completed in the 2010/11 GOT Annual Report.

DEMAND

KPO 1 – Collect, analyse and publish data from relevant sources in a timely manner

KPO 2 – Deliver marketing and online activities as outlined in the 2010/11 Action Plan, meeting all budget and timing objectives. Evaluate effectiveness of major tactical campaign and benchmark against 2009 figures

KPO 3 – Public Relations activity will be measured by the amount of free or supported press

SUPPLY

KPO 4 - In partnership with LTA's, develop a comprehensive Professional Development Calendar. As there is no baseline data, we are evaluating attendance and satisfaction via surveys to use as benchmark for the following years.

KPO 5 – GOT will continue to actively promote tourism direction and support for infrastructure projects that benefit the broader tourism industry and community

PARTNERSHIPS

KPO 6 – GOT will develop and communicate clear plans and strategies for delivery of all projects in the 2010/11 Action Plan

KPO 7 – Continue strong engagement with government bodies. Provide positive tourism messages to the public and industry via our PR consultancy

KPO 8 – Meet budget objectives for industry buy in, sponsorship revenue and membership subscriptions, in partnership with LTA's and their officers

GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

KPO 9 – Communicate and work with State Government and key regional stakeholders to facilitate the tourism structure review project, communicating any planned changes to stakeholders and the industry as they are available.

KPO 10 – Provide clear and timely communication to Board members, continue to increase the delivery of administration, communication and information in a digital framework including board agendas, reports and minutes, within agreed timeframes.