



2017/2018
**ANNUAL
REPORT**



Contents

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Contents	1
Our role, vision & mission	2
A message from our Chair and Chief Executive Officer	3
Our Board of Directors	4
Our Team	5
Destination Marketing	6
Business Events	13
Regional Event Marketing and Support	14
Industry Leadership	17
Membership	20



Our role, vision & mission

Our Role

Tourism Whitsundays is recognised by Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC) and Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) as the official Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) and peak industry body responsible for driving growth for the Whitsundays Tourism industry and leading the promotion of the destination. We are a membership-based organisation, primarily driven by its tourism industry members and partnering with major stakeholders to achieve the destination vision.

Our Vision

To showcase the Whitsundays as the globally recognised Great Barrier Reef destination.

Our Mission

We promote the destination globally to increase visitation, dispersal, expenditure and length of stay; driving the economic benefit and sustainability of the tourism industry through marketing and industry development.

A message from our Chair and Chief Executive Officer

This financial year has brought us challenges, but challenges are not without opportunity.

More than a year on from TC Debbie, it is evident our voices are being heard at the highest level. The spotlight has been shining on the Whitsundays, and as a result, we are very much set up for success.

With significant funding flowing in from the Tourism Recovery fund, it is pleasing to see industry and government bodies working together to uplift our entire region. This is leading to much-needed tourism infrastructure development for our region which will help make our tourism experiences even better. For example, the Whitsunday Skyway, is set to be a gamechanger.

The latest visitation results were mixed, with growth being generated at an intrastate level which is a fantastic rebound compared to prior years. Interstate numbers remain flat, however with a lower Australian dollar and effective marketing, we will bounce back on top to again be the most desirable island and sailing destination in the southern hemisphere as recently recognised by Condé Nast Traveler.

As an organisation, we have achieved many milestones throughout the year. Some highlights include increased membership, with new members from Collinsville, Bowen to Proserpine and Airlie coming on board. Other highlights include enhanced government engagement, strengthening industry ties with groups such as QTIC and undertaking successful international and domestic marketing campaigns.

Strong partnerships and collaboration remain instrumental to the continued success of the Whitsundays tourism sector and we would like to mention a special thanks to the ongoing support of our partners Whitsunday Regional Council, Tourism and Events Queensland and of course our members.

From a broader standpoint, it was fantastic to see the Federal Government announce a \$444 million commitment in funding for the Great Barrier Reef in the May budget, an announcement that we know was widely applauded by all stakeholders. We look forward to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation leveraging this funding through international philanthropic agencies and foundations.

Tourism Whitsundays is also working closely with Reef Ecologic on the local reef restoration and public art works project. We look forward to seeing the many positive outcomes that this project will generate for the future of the tourism industry.



We're excited about the new brand Whitsundays initiative, which once complete, will take our destination to new heights on the domestic and international travel stage. Special thanks to the Whitsunday Regional Council for funding assistance on this significant project.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the local tourism industry for their unwavering dedication and ongoing resilience. The continued growth of the Whitsundays tourism industry would not be possible without your hard work and commitment to our beautiful region. Tourism Whitsundays would also like to acknowledge the continued support provided by our partners, Tourism and Events Queensland, who we work very closely with throughout the year on several marketing and publicity activities. Partnerships with Tourism and Events Queensland, Whitsunday Regional Council, our members and other key stakeholders in the Whitsundays are important to ensure improved outcomes and greater success for the destination.

Furthermore, we would like to thank our outgoing board members for their support and assistance and the staff of Tourism Whitsundays for their unrelenting commitment to the Whitsundays tourism industry.

We look forward to welcoming the new board and continuing to work closely with you all to generate further success for the Whitsundays.

Our Board of Directors

The Tourism Whitsundays Board consists of a maximum of 11 directors, made up of 7 elected directors and up to 4 invited directors.

The intended purpose of giving the Board scope to invite up to four Directors is to identify specialist Board members such as an accountant, governance specialist or simply vital stakeholders from the tourism industry if the Board deems necessary. In addition, there are three ex-officio/non-voting positions permanently allocated on the Board.



*Al Grundy
Chairman*



*Greg Waites
Treasurer*



*Andrew Telford
Secretary*



*Jan Claxton
Deputy Chair*



Brooke Ogden



Naomi McKinnon



Trevor Rees



Judy Porter



Matt Boileau



Jonathan Freeman



Karen Vloedmans



Mayor Andrew Willcox



Racheal Klitscher



Craig Turner

Tourism Whitsundays Staff



Natassia Wheeler
Chief Executive Officer



Alison Rosemond
*Finance and Operations
Manager*



Emma Whitney
*Marketing Manager Interational,
Brand and PR*



Donna van't Hoff
*Marketing Manager Domestic,
Digital & Segments*



Henrik Bossmeyer
German Market Manager



Haylee Eaves
Membership Officer



Aimee Denham
Membership Officer



Kylie Forgione
*Sales and Marketing
Coordinator*



Deborah Friend
PR & Content Specialist



Natasha Miller
Marketing Assistant



Natasha (NJ) Plemenuk
Administration Assistant

Previous Staff

Craig Turner, Chief Executive Officer
Lorelei van Dalen, Business Events Marketing Specialist
Leanne Althaus, Finance Officer
Jasmine Kratz, Corporate Services Coordinator
Louise Hughes, Finance Officer



Destination Marketing

Consumer

Tourism statistics are regularly collated by Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey, providing a great snapshot into visitor and expenditure trends for all regions across Queensland. The survey results are based on a sample rather than a census. The data obtained helps to make informed decisions on marketing and investment activity and provides a gauge as to how the region is tracking. Summary of Whitsundays specific statistics captured for 2017/18 are as follows:

National Visitor Survey (NVS), Year Ending June 2018:

- Total domestic overnight expenditure \$554.6M increase of 5.9% (three-year trend increase 6.9%)
- Total domestic visitors 551,000 increase of 7.1% (three-year trend increase 11.5%)
- Total holiday visitors 335,000 increase of 11.5% (three-year trend increase 7.5%)
- Total domestic nights 2.3M decrease of 3.2% (three-year trend increase 2.5%)
- Average length of stay 4.2 nights decrease of 9.7% (three-year trend decrease 6.6%)
- Total intrastate holiday visitors 372,000 increase of 19.8% (three-year trend 17.2%)
- Total interstate holiday visitors 179,000 decrease of 12.3% (three-year trend decrease 1.3%)
- Total spend per night \$238 increase of 9.4% (three-year trend increase 4.3%)
- Total spend per visitor \$1,006 decrease of 1.2% (three-year trend decrease 2.3%)

The release of the International Visitor Survey (IVS) results for the June quarter 2018 were delayed due to the impact from ongoing concerns around the quality of the passenger card data supplied by the Department of Home Affairs used for IVS benchmarking purposes. Therefore, the below statistics are from the March quarter 2018 which are preliminary and do not include any data relating to the purpose of visit. This is because the quality of the main purpose of visit component of the passenger data supplied to Tourism Research Australia (TRA) by the Department of Home Affairs has been identified as a concern.

- Total international overnight expenditure \$214.5M decrease of 0.1%
- Total international visitors 243,000 decrease of 0.1%

Segments

Tourism Whitsundays, in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland, works to maintain the cruise market arriving in the Whitsundays by working with cruise lines, inbound tour operators, itinerary development and product development. The TW team also support the Cruise Ship Volunteer Ambassador program as this is an integral part of the cruise passenger arrival experience.

Some key points from 2017/18:

- Hosted two Inbound Tour Operator Famils in the Whitsundays showcasing product and itinerary development opportunities in Bowen, Airlie Beach and Proserpine.
- Financial support towards the cruise ship volunteer ambassadors program.



- The Whitsundays had an arrival of 56 cruise ships into region.
- 64,497 total passengers disembarked across the Whitsundays, with a crew tally of 4,178.
- The direct expenditure for the region was \$6.2m and the total economic benefit was \$11.3m.
- New product contracted with cruise ships included Paradise Cove Resort.

The drive market for the Whitsundays continues to be an important part of the visitation equation, with more and more consumers taking to the roads each year via caravan, camper trailer, motorhome or car. Tourism Whitsundays activity in promoting the Whitsundays to these travellers included maintaining the billboard campaign which stretches up the east coast along the Bruce Highway; attendance at Caravan and Camping Shows in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane where there was an attendance of 157,714. The team also attended the Townsville Home and Leisure Expo which was attended by more than 12,000 consumers.

Tourism Whitsundays partnered with Weddings Whitsundays in 2017/18 for the annual Wedding Travel Writer Famil. This famil was hosted in various locations around around the Whitsundays and generated significant national publicity across various mediums, such as high quality publications, blogs and social media platforms.

The Whitsundays was host to the annual Adventure Queensland ball in 2017/18 which saw over 160 attendees from across Queensland (and the Whitsundays attend). This was a great opportunity for the destination given the year it was, with thanks to Adventure Queensland committee for bringing the event here.

Tourism Whitsundays was the host for the Welcome Night at Boaty's and also hosted a dedicated Website Travel Youth Famil which featured a variety of members. They had the opportunity to showcase their products and the destination to five key youth trade from 29 August to 4 September 2017.

Consumer Shows

Tourism Whitsundays, in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland, attended the Flight Centre Travel Expos across Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. The purpose of these events was to promote the Whitsundays to travellers with compelling offers that drove an immediate or soon to be booking conversion. There was an attendance of almost 80,000 consumers and over 1,800 Whitsunday Visitor Guides were distributed throughout the shows.

Consumer Campaigns

One of the biggest domestic campaigns throughout the year was the Expedia and Wotif campaign, which was focused on providing 'The Whitsundays' with one hero campaign. This campaign incorporated both conversion and awareness phases to promote the Whitsundays. This campaign was successful for operators who provided enticing deals and offers, giving consumers a compelling reason to book immediately. The campaign also saw an increase in the conversion phase showing 55 per cent of bookings were booked with a travel window beyond 30 days compared to 43 per cent the year prior. Other activity undertaken throughout the year is detailed below:

- Out and about with Kids
- Experience Oz/Ticketmates
- Whitsunday Coast Airport and Jetstar
- 2018 Caravan Parks Directory
- 2018 North Queensland Games
- Spa and Wellness International
- Australian Traveller



Content Creation

Each year Tourism Whitsundays prides itself on hosting a strong and competitive travel writer familiarisation program. The program is designed to give select journalists the opportunity to experience a range of experiences in the Whitsundays in exchange for producing captivating content and stories that are published globally.

Blogs are an important part of driving content and increasing visitation to Tourism Whitsundays assets. The TW team create engaging blogs throughout the year which are shared across social media assets. The blogs created in 2017/18 were produced in-house as well as by third party writers. An overview of some of the blogs include:

1. How to go Bareboating in the Whitsundays
2. Sir Elton John - A Dream Come True!
3. Reasons you Should Make a Beeline for Hamilton Island
4. Woo Your Valentine in the Whitsundays - Here's How!
5. Camping in the Whitsundays
6. 9 Ways to do Luxury in the Whitsundays
7. The Whitsundays: 5 top activities for nature lovers
8. The Whitsundays... an adventure waiting to happen!
9. An Instagrammers Guide to the Whitsundays Hidden Gems
10. Whitsundays Hidden Gems
11. Five Reasons you should Run the Great Whitsunday Trail

German Market Blogs

12. How to get to Whitehaven Beach
13. Which sailing tour is the right one for me?
14. The Whitsundays Guide

One of the biggest content assets Tourism Whitsundays owns is the consumer social media channels, including Instagram and the Visit Whitsundays Facebook page. The purpose of these assets is slightly different. For example, for Instagram, the purpose is to entice and inspire consumers to want to research and consider a holiday in the Whitsundays; and the Visit Whitsundays Facebook page is about driving bookings and activating digital marketing campaigns. Some key stats for TW's social media assets in 2017/18 include:

- Visit Whitsundays Facebook followers 588,604 (increase of 482,893)
- @whitsundaysqld Instagram followers 124,472 (increase of 24,402)

TourismWhitsundays.com.au had a total of 98,471 page views in 2017/18 with an average session duration of 2 minutes and 25 seconds. 78.60% of the visitation was new visits to the website and return visitors equating to 21.4%. There was a total of 94 ATDW product listings live on the website, 51 locality listings and 40 event listings.

Bookings generated from content creation on website and social media platforms totalled \$429,108 for the region including over 1,000 online chats. Some key stats on visitor enquiries for 2017/18 include:

- How did the visitor access information through Tourism Whitsundays?
 - 212 in person (at the TW office)
 - 205 via the visitor information phone line
 - 265 from the TW website or direct information email



- What were the visitors interested in learning?

- 535 - tours
- 220 - accommodation
- 28 - travelling north
- 44 - national parks
- 70 - general enquiry
- 298 - other
- 15 - travelling south
- 76 - transport
- 51 - events

In 2017/18 Tourism Whitsundays once again produced the annual Whitsunday Visitor Guide. It is produced every year and is an important tool to create awareness of the region and encourage visitation. A total of 70,000 copies were distributed in Australia and overseas to consumers and travel agents, as well as to guests once they arrived in the Whitsundays. The distribution of the guide increased locally with majority of visitors arriving at the Whitsunday Coast Airport and transferring with various bus companies, receiving a copy of the guide with their ticket to help plan the activities to do while in region. The guide provides up-to-date information on the wide range of activities and experiences on offer in the Whitsundays and in 2017/18, for the first time, a new mobile version was trialled. Users simply text a free number and the phone-friendly Whitsunday Visitor Guide was sent directly to their phone. The main change for the visitor guide in 2017/18 was a focus on bigger imagery, experiences and driving people to visit the website for more information and to book.

Some key distribution points for 2017/18 included:

- National and international distribution to consumers and trade; Whitsunday Coast Airport arrivals lounge, bus transfers from Whitsunday Coast Airport to Airlie Beach, cruise ship arrivals and consumer travel shows.

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- Distributed throughout the Queensland Visitor Information Centre network, and to other targeted interstate Visitor Information Centres.
- In response to consumer enquiries resulting from TW marketing campaigns.
- RACQ branches throughout Queensland.
- Tourism operators throughout the region in rooms, front desks, information packs and at regional events.

Throughout the year, Tourism Whitsundays hosted several digital influencers who generated massive exposure for the Whitsundays. Part of the agreements with some influencers included joint copyright on images created and engaging blog content.

Some key influencers that were hosted in region include:

- Mark Fitz, @_markfitz
- Jules Ingall, @julesingall
- The Sailing Yogi, @thesailingyogi
- Alitia Latimer, @alivialatimer
- Michael Quinn, @mikegquinn
- Meandmytravelbugs, @meandmytravelbugs
- Photobohemium, @photobohemian
- Trip in a Van, @tripinavan

In the past 12 months there have been a number of television productions hosted in region including:

- Postcards
- Places We Go
- Everyday Gourmet
- Merv Hughes Fishing Show
- Divas Hit the Road
- Queensland Weekender
- Australian Fishing Championships



Trade

Each year Tourism Whitsundays undertakes a series of trade activities internationally and domestically with a focus on training travel agents, increasing product contracted with Wholesalers, Online Travel Agents and Inbound Tour Operators and ensuring the Whitsundays is represented appropriately throughout trade partners programs.

Key domestic activity for 2017/18 included the annual Whitsundays Tourism Exchange (WTE) held in November which brings key product managers from major wholesalers and online travel agents (OTAs) to the Whitsundays for a trade event and famil. The program is designed to increase awareness of Whitsundays tourism products and experiences, introduce trade directly to suppliers of Whitsunday products and services, grow business opportunities for the Whitsundays suppliers with key Product Managers and maintain relationships with key trade partners.

The idea of the WTE is to contract or re-contract with the key trade at the beginning of the financial year and then towards the end of the financial year industry are offered the opportunity to go on the road to train travel agents as part of the Whitsundays East Coast Roadshow. Key WTE event stats include:

- 21 trade partner companies attended (total 30 pax)
- 37 industry attendees
- Overall the event was rated by industry as excellent or very good
- Overall the event was rated by trade that they all found it very valuable or valuable
- New contracted product as an outcome was the Airlie Beach Festival of Music which was packaged with Virgin holidays

The Whitsundays East Coast Roadshow was held in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne over the course of three days in May 2018. The event, which was very beneficial for tourism operators, showcased the quality and diversity of experiences that this great destination has to offer. Satisfaction ratings for the 2018 event were higher than prior years from industry and trade. Incorporated into the program was a lunch with key business event trade in Sydney, a lunch with travel writers in Melbourne, a Tourism and Events Queensland team product update in Brisbane as well as a product managers lunch in Brisbane. Key event stats include:

- 400+ trade attendees
- 21 industry attendees
- 89% of trade found the event very valuable or valuable and all industry agreed they would attend the event in 2019

On the international front, the Tourism Whitsundays team attended several events pertaining to the international trade calendar.

Corroboree Asia was held in the Gold Coast, where over 100 travel agents from Asia were trained on the Whitsundays. The event is also followed by five-day familiarisation trips around the country where the Whitsundays was lucky enough to showcase the destination first-hand to some of these agents.



In October 2017, Tourism Whitsundays co-hosted for the first time in the Whitsundays ATEC Inbound Up North. This gave the destination a great opportunity to be a part of one of the key annual trade events for Inbound Tour Operators and for the local tourism industry to showcase their tourism product and strengthen their commercial relationships with close to 50 Australian-based international buyers around the country.

Tourism Whitsundays also attended ITB Germany, one of the world's leading travel trade fairs, which took place in March at the Messe Berlin.

Tourism Whitsundays German Market Manager based in Munich undertook a range of trade engagement and training activities throughout 2017/18 including direct trade e-news to the German market; over 70 sales calls to key wholesalers throughout Germany; product growth of nine new products featured in international programs; wrote blogs which were translated direct to German trade, continual brochure audit of wholesaler brochures and websites; as well as a trade database growth of 668.

The team attended the Australian Tourism Exchange in Adelaide where they held over 80 appointments with key wholesalers from core markets to the Whitsundays including UK, Europe, Americas and China.

The Connecting with Asia program commenced in 2017/18 which the Whitsundays is featured in as a key partner. It is a three-year program aimed at driving traffic through Brisbane Airport and linkages to the Whitsundays, Gold Coast and Brisbane. The result at the end of the program is to have stronger trade understanding of leisure holiday destinations, increased itinerary exposure, and of course an increase in aviation capacity to the partner destinations.

The team also represented the region at Queensland on Tour Americas as well as Queensland on Tour China which are trade events aimed at training travel agents and growing product exposure in these key markets.

To ensure the training that happens in market resonates with trade, Tourism Whitsundays operates a suite of domestic and international trade famils each year aimed at targeting key distribution partners. These include, but are not limited to, retail agents, senior managers and product managers, inbound tour operators and wholesalers.

Domestic trade famils undertaken:

1. Be Digital team
2. Helloworld / AOT
3. Faust Brothers
4. Infinity Holidays
5. Infinity Holidays Incentive
6. Sunlover Holidays Incentive
7. Angela Sweeney - Flight Centre Global Procurement Network
8. WTE Post Famil
9. Intercruises Shoreside and Port Services
10. Abercrombie & Kent (Cruise division)
11. Julian Laws - tourstogo.com
12. Azra Hadzic - Tourism and Events Queensland
13. RTO Managers
14. Infinity Holidays



In 2017/18, Tourism Whitsundays facilitated a sales incentive with Fusion Holidays where the top seller won a four-night famil to the region. This activity resulted in an increase of 15% in sales year-on-year.

International trade famils undertaken:

1. InternationVIP UK, France, Italian ASP Trade Famil - Corroboree West
2. VIP German ASP Trade Famil - Corroboree West
3. VIP America's ASP Trade Famil - Corroboree West
4. ITO ATEC IUN Famil
5. Eva Air Austraiian Trade Famil
6. ASP Italy Famil
7. US Signature Agent Famil
8. Etihad Netherlands Famil
9. UK STA Youth Famil
10. Inaugural Air China Famil
11. Website Travel Youth Famil
12. Air NZ Trade Famil
13. CWA China ITO Famil
14. QF Hong Kong Famil
15. Product Managers Air China Famil

The other area of trade engagement that occurs each year is direct trade campaigns which are mostly focused around international markets to drive sales. In 2017/18, Tourism Whitsundays partnered with key trade partners to undertake the following campaigns:

- I know Just the Place campaign with Tourism and Events Queensland which was with three wholesaler partners (Freedom Destinations, Dial-a-flight and Trailfinders). This activity was highly successful in terms of consumer engagement and referrals back to tour operators. It significantly over-performed against engagement KPIs.
- Goway and Qantas Campaign focusing on the America's was another successful campaign in 2017/18, generating a 43 per cent conversion rate for the Whitsundays, up from the 26 per cent targeted.

- Whitsundays and Noosa cooperative campaign with American Wholesaler About Australia primarily focused on lead generation through distribution methods while concurrently increasing demand through top of the funnel conversion, content creation, marketing, lead nurturing and retargeting.
- The German integrated marketing campaign with key wholesaler FTI Touristik was the key activity for the German market in 2017/2018 which generated an increase in room nights of 10,5 % for the Whitsundays region between November 17 and September 18 (target: 10%). Turnover to the Whitsundays increased by 14 % (target: 10%). Average length of stay was 2,2 nights which also shows an increase of 4,8 %. The campaign consisted of various B2B (webinar, roadshow, shop decoration) and B2C activities (website landing page, direct postal consumer mailings).



Business Events

In 2017/18 Tourism Whitsundays operated Whitsundays Business Events which is a collective term referring to attracting leads or bookings for corporate and government meetings, incentive travel reward programs, association conventions, and exhibitions.

Business Events represent one of the highest yielding sectors in Australia's visitor economy. According to a 2015 Business Events Council of Australia Report, the business events sector was worth a record \$28 billion to Australia's economy.

The Whitsundays Business Events unit in 2017/18 had a dedicated membership structure with a selection of members from conference venues, tours and service sector.

TW worked with members and stakeholders to ensure leads for business events in the Whitsundays were being responded to, in an effort to increase business event activity for the destination. Key Business Events activity for

- 1 dedicated business event activity
- 4 advertising pieces
- 3 articles
- 2 dedicated sales trips
- 1 trade famil
- 1 PR famil
- Database growth of business events trade of 700

Tourism Whitsundays facilitated leads in 2017/18 to Business Event members, including but not limited to:

- Health Workforce Queensland Diabetes Workshop
- Jobs Queensland Regional Workforce Planning
- Session
- TEQ Workshop
- Department of Education Training Graduation
- Australian Timeshare Holiday Ownership Council
- Australian Society of Travel Writers Convention
- Australian Cruise Association General Meeting

Trade Events where Business Events members were represented included:

- PCOA Conference
- AIME 2018
- Whitsunday East Coast Roadshow Business Events Luncheon (Sydney)

Trade Famils included representation from the following companies:

- Event Advisors
- Ovation Australia
- Travel with a Twist
- UNIQ Travel and Incentives and Powell Consultants

Advertising feature in MICENET Magazine The Wonderful Whitsundays featuring the following Business Events members:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| • Air Whitsunday Seaplanes | • Mantra Club Croc |
| • Coral Sea Resort | • Mirage Whitsundays |
| • Cruise Whitsundays | • Palm Bay Resort |
| • Daydream Island | • Peppers Airlie Beach |
| • Hamilton Island | • Paradise Cove Resort |
| • Lure - Abell Point Marina | |



Regional Event Marketing & Support

Events play a key role in fostering regional tourism and economic development. Tourism is an essential industry to many rural and regional centres. Not only do events provide economic stability, but they can be a cost-effective way of promoting a region and its attractions. As an event grows, it attracts tourists in its own right.

The positive economic impact and interest in a community that a successful regional event can generate not only helps to build a sense of local pride but can also foster confidence and strengthen the entire community.

Tourism Whitsundays aims to support events that:

- Generate local economic activity and development in the destination
- Attract external visitation to the destination
- Drive social and community outcomes for the destination, noting the important link between community outcomes and economic benefit
- Enhance the profile and appeal of the host destination

In 2017/18 Tourism Whitsundays provided support to key events which either contributed to visitation or were working towards increasing visitation to the destination, dispersal and length of stay. Tourism Whitsundays was proud to support and work with several events across the region in assisting with marketing plans, reviewing funding applications and providing event mentoring. Other areas Tourism Whitsundays provided support and marketing for in the events space included:

- Inclusion in the Whitsundays Visitor Guide Events Calendar
- In the lead up events information inclusion in TW's consumer newsletter (database of over 20,000) and E-news
- Inclusion in media and trade news updates leading up to the event
- Inclusion on social media platforms as appropriate
- Issuing joint press releases to leisure media database
- Support with ATDW event listing
- Sharing blogs on the TW website
- Inclusion of event specific banners on TW.com.au
- Use of TW marquee
- Create packages to sell on TW website subject to information and approval from all partners being received (where relevant)
- Assist with holiday package creation through trade partners (where relevant)
- Providing media and marketing schedule outlining where TW will amplify activity



[2018] EVENTS	
	JAN 18 Clipper Race Arrival, <i>Free Event</i> Abell Point Marina
	JAN 19 Clipper Race Day Abell Point Marina
	JAN 19 "Bendigo Bank" Clipper Race Welcome Party, <i>Free Event</i> Airlie Beach Esplanade
	JAN 19-20 Open Boat Day, <i>Free Event</i> Abell Point Marina
	JAN 20 "Fish D'Vine" White on Whitehaven Long Lunch Whitehaven Beach
	JAN 20 Public Talk, <i>Free Event</i> Abell Point Marina
	JAN 21 "WhitsundayFoodservice" Progressive Cruise Lunch Various Location
	JAN 21-22 Open Boat Day, <i>Free Event</i> Abell Point Marina
	JAN 27 Rodeo By The Reef Bowen
	JAN 29 Parade of Sails Clipper Race Departure, <i>Free Event</i> Abell Point Marina

In 2017/18, Tourism Whitsundays partnered with Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC) and Abell Point Marina (APM) (the consortium) to hold the inaugural Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival. The Carnival was underwritten by the consortium; with additional financial investment from Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and the Australian Federal Government.



The event itself was then managed and coordinated by an Event Manager who assisted with all individual event requirements. The Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival showcased the region as Australia's world premier marine holiday destination located in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef.

The 17-day region-wide event in its inaugural year leveraged from the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race - encompassing 12 yachts and 700 crew all sailing 40,000 nautical miles around the globe. The event attributed to 8,800 visitor nights which was a significant economic impact for the destination, including approximately \$80,000 in ticket sales with a direct expenditure greater than \$1.9M attributable to the local economy.

Set in the idyllic location of the Whitsunday Islands within the heritage listed Great Barrier Reef, the Whitsundays Clipper Race Carnival featured signature events such as a long lunch on the iconic Whitehaven Beach, a rodeo alongside the coastal beaches of Bowen and a welcome party in the centre of Airlie Beach.

Event Fun Facts:

- Attendance of 4,666 across 14 event days
- 722 participants, skippers and their support team attract more than 4,000 visitors
- 8,800 visitor nights generated
- Over 128,000 page views to event landing page
- 922 tickets sold across four paid events
- \$78,486 (incl. GST) generated in ticket sales
- \$1.9M attributable to the local economy

Industry Leadership

2017 Whitsunday Tourism Awards

The Whitsunday Tourism Awards are the region's premier tourism event, established to pay tribute to the enormous contribution made by the region's tourism operators and service providers and to encourage excellence within the industry. The Awards are a submission and inspection-based program and provide the opportunity to publicly acknowledge and showcase the Whitsundays' finest tourism operators. The Awards cover 31 categories ranging from attractions, events, tour and transport, accommodation, restaurants, culture, eco-tourism, marketing and recognition for individuals. The Awards recognise growth in tourism products and services and are based on businesses having a solid business plan, businesses that continually innovate their products and who implement targeted marketing campaigns. The 2017 Whitsunday Tourism Awards were held on Hamilton Island on 27 September with 42 entries and 320 attendees to the ceremony.

2017 Winners				
Category	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Finalist
Major Tourist Attractions	Abell Point Marina			
Tourist Attractions	Horseshoe Bay - Whitsunday Regional Council			
Festivals & Events	Spring Break Whitsundays	Whitsunday Reef Festival	Whitsundays Schoolies 2016	Airlie Beach Festival of Music 2016 Bowen Offshore Superboats
Specialised Tourism Services	Lure - Abell Point Marina	8 Seconds - Where we live Airlie Beach	Airlie Beach Day Spa	
Visitor Information Services	Bowen Visitor Information Centre HALL OF FAME WINNER			
Business Events Venues	Coral Sea Resort			
Major Tour & Transport Operators	Ocean Rafting	Air Whitsunday Seaplanes		
Tour & Transport Operator	Red Cat Adventures	Whitsunday Jetski Tours	Providence Sailing	
Adventure Tourism	Red Cat Adventures	Whitsunday Jetski Tours	Ocean Rafting	
Destination Marketing	Bowen Top of the Whitsundays App			
Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services	Fish D'Vine	Walters Lounge		
Caravan & Holiday Parks	Big4 Adventure Whitsunday HALL OF FAME WINNER	Big4 Bowen Coral Coast Beachfront Holiday Park		
Backpacker Accommodation	Magnums Backpackers HALL OF FAME WINNER	Nomads Airlie Beach		
Unique Accommodation	Whitsunday Escape	Cumberland Charter Yachts		
Self-Contained Accommodation	Pinnacles Resort			
Deluxe Accommodation	Mirage Whitsundays	Whitsunday Bliss		
Excellence in Sustainable Tourism	Whitsunday Segway Tours			
New Tourism Business	Island Jet Boating	Airlie Beach Skydivers	Matador Whitsundays	Whitsunday Bullet Heart Hotel and Gallery
Outstanding Contribution by a Volunteer or Group	Bowen Tourism & Business			
Young Achiever	Rob Mohr - Walters Lounge			
Bob Porter Award for Outstanding Contribution Contribution by an Individual	Colin Crossley - Whitsunday Transit			



2017 Whitsunday Tourism Awards Sponsors



Monthly Networking Nights

Tourism Whitsundays facilitate monthly networking nights, hosted by various industry partners and/or stakeholders. The main intention is to encourage relationship development between industry colleagues, provide an update of recent Tourism Whitsundays activity, and allow the host venue to showcase their product to the attendees.

Networking locations and associated attendance is listed below:

- July 2017 hosted by Whitsunday Times with 84 attendees
- August 2017 hosted by PRD Nationwide with 108 attendees
- October 2017 hosted by Mirage Whitsundays with 85 attendees
- November 2017 hosted by Boaty's with 145 attendees
- February 2018 hosted by Cruise Whitsundays with 82 attendees
- March 2018 hosted by BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort with 105 attendees
- April 2018 hosted by Explore Dive & Snorkel with 83 attendees
- May 2018 hosted by Abell Point Marina with 83 attendees
- June 2018 hosted by Fat Frog Beach Café with 74 attendees

Average attendance in 2017/18 was 94



Industry Development

In 2017/18 Tourism Whitsundays offered members and local industry opportunities to participate in workshops and industry forums which are relevant to assisting with continued industry and product development. The aim was for participation in these workshops to lead to continued business improvement.

Some of the key workshops held in 2017/18 include:

1. Distribution Ready
2. Digital Ready
3. Tourism Awards Writing Workshop
4. Working with Online Travel Agents Workshop
5. Trade Ready
6. Connecting with Asia Masterclass

Corporate Communications

Tourism Whitsundays promotes the activities and achievements of the organisation through a variety of platforms, including industry e-newsletters, media releases, corporate social media channels as well as columns in all key newspapers within the region. Some key execution points for 2017/18 include:

- Distribution of 26-member E-newsletters
- 82 media releases
- 2,380 followers on Tourism Whitsundays Facebook page which is an increase of 1,310 from the year prior
- Fortnightly Chairman columns in the Whitsundays Times
- Monthly CEO columns in the Bowen Independent and the Proserpine Guardian

Education and Training

In 2017/18, Tourism Whitsundays led the VAK8 Program, in conjunction with the Department of Education and Response Learning NQ. It entailed matching high school students with local tourism businesses, so they could carry out work experience and study for a Certificate II in Tourism.

At the first graduation ceremony in October 2017, 19 students from Proserpine State High School, Whitsunday Christian College and St Catherine's College graduated from the pilot program. The program continued in 2018.

Advocacy

Tourism Whitsundays is passionate about engaging in positive and meaningful advocacy work designed to benefit the Whitsundays tourism sector. The Tourism Recovery Funding has been an important part of the organisation's advocacy work, as has providing advocacy support to members.

The Tourism Recovery Fund (TRF) is a \$7M initiative, jointly funded through the Australian and Queensland Governments. The objective of the TRF is to facilitate recovery, rebuild and/or create new tourism experiences and infrastructure that will drive demand, improve quality, and increase tourism expenditure, with flow-on economic benefits across the tourism supply chain.



The key projects for the Whitsundays under this fund are as follows:

- Island Short Walks (\$500,000)
- Hill Inlet upgrade and expansion (\$2 million)
- Peter Faust Dam Tourism Infrastructure Development (\$1 million)
- Indigenous Bush Tucker Trail and Paddock to Plate Venue-Flagstaff Hill (\$1 million)
- Hamilton Island auditorium Bougainvillea Marquee (\$500,000)
- Underwater tourism infrastructure in the Marine Park (\$971,610)
- Feasibility study into the restoration and relocation of a Catalina (\$48,390)
- Interpretative space at the Bowen Visitor Information Centre (\$90,000)
- Whitsunday Skyway feasibility study (\$260,000)
- Inclusive family-friendly water play attraction (\$130,000)
- Coral gardening tourism experience (\$500,000)

Tourism Whitsundays provided letters of support and advocacy to members and community groups throughout the year, including:

- Whitsundays PCYC Cyclone Refuge Upgrade
- Bowen Marine Centre of Excellence
- QTIC/Earthcheck application to the Natural Disaster Resilience Program
- Whitsunday Skyway Cableway and Downhill Sports project
- Whitsunday Steiner School
- GSL Aviation Letter of Support
- VMR Whitsundays - Replacement of building roof
- Queens Beach Tourist Village Tourism Recovery Grant Funding Application
- Coral Sea Catalina Heritage Museum - Restoration and Relocation of Catalina Flying Craft to Bowen Project
- Rose Bay Resort - Tourism Recovery Grant Funding Application
- Bowen Tourism & Business QICA Annual Visitor Information Centre Conference 2017
- Australian Bass Tournaments 2017 BARRA Tour
- QICA - Queensland Visitor Centre Association 2018 Annual Visitor Information Centre Conference
- ASTW - 2019 Annual Australian Cruise Association Conference and Annual General Meeting
- Letter of Support for the Airlie Beach Festival of Music
- Letter of Support for History Trail Project
- Letter of Support - CycloneDebbie.help
- Red Cat Adventures Weddings and Events
- QTIC Tourism Digital Workforce Plan
- VMR - Westpac Group's Natural Disaster Recovery Fund
- Letter of Support for The Wedding Planners Whitsundays
- Whitsunday Paradise Explorer Bowen tour operations
- Whitsunday Reef Festival funding application
- Lindeman Great Barrier Reef Resort
- Whitsunday Regional Council The Greening and Growing Bowen Program
- Whitsunday Coast Airport Grant Application
- VMR Support to replace building roof



Membership

In 2017/18, Tourism Whitsundays was proud to have a strong membership base of 264 financial members.

The team facilitated over 244 meetings with members including new members, product updates and site inspections.

The membership base had a total increase of 29%.

PLATINUM

- Coral Sea Resort
- Cruise Whitsundays
- Daydream Island Resort and Spa
- Discovery Parks Airlie Beach
- Hamilton Island Enterprises
- Whitsundays Sailing Adventures

GOLD

- Air Whitsunday Seaplanes
- BIG4 Adventure Whitsundays Resort
- Explore Hamilton Island
- Explore Whitsundays
- GSL Aviation
- Hayman Island
- Heart Hotel and Gallery Whitsundays
- Mantra Club Croc
- Mirage Whitsundays
- Ocean Rafting
- Port of Airlie
- Queensland Rail Travel
- Queensland Yacht Charters
- Red Cat Adventures
- Renegade Fishing Charters
- Whitsunday Fishing Charters
- Whitsunday Transit

SILVER

- Abell Point Marina
- Accom Whitsundays
- Airlie Apartments
- Airlie Beach Motor Lodge
- Airlie Beach Skydivers
- Alani Whitsundays
- BIG4 Bowen Coral Coast Tourist Park
- Charter Yachts Australia
- Colonial Palms
- Cumberland Charter Yachts
- Flametree Tourist Village
- Freedom Shores
- Hamilton Island Air
- Helireef Whitsundays
- Hertz Whitsundays
- Island Gateway Holiday Park
- Island Jet Boating
- Island Transfers
- Kipara Tropical Rainforest Retreat
- Lady Enid Sailing
- Magnums Backpackers
- Nomads Airlie Beach
- Ocean Dynamics
- Palm Bay Resort
- Peppers Airlie Beach
- Pinnacles Resort
- Portland Roads
- Proserpine Bait and Tackle
- Providence Sailing
- Ocean Dynamics
- Queens Beach Tourist Village
- Reef Gateway Hotel
- Reefstar Cruises
- Riverside Marine
- Rose Bay Resort
- Salty Dog Sea Kayaking
- Scamper
- Sea Star Apartments
- Seabreeze Tourist Park
- Shingley Beach Resort
- Sky View Units
- TeePee Events
- Topnotch Game Fishing
- Toscana Village Resort
- Whitsunday Apartments Hamilton Island
- Whitsunday Crocodile Safari
- Whitsunday Escape
- Whitsunday Jetski Tours
- Whitsundays Mustangs & Rental Cars
- Whitsunday Paradise Explorer
- Whitsunday Rainforest Retreat
- Whitsunday Rent A Yacht
- Whitsunday Sailing Club
- Whitsunday Segway Tours
- Whitsunday Terraces
- Whitsundays 2 Everywhere
- XBase Airlie Beach



BRONZE

- Airlie Beach Day Sailing
- Airlie Beach Hotel
- Airlie Beach Online
- Airlie Beach Party Bus
- Airlie Beach Tourism
- Airlie Beach YHA
- Airlie Court Units
- Airlie Day Spa Whitsundays
- Airliebeach.com
- at Beach Court Holiday Villas
- at Blue Horizon
- at Boathaven Spa Resort
- at Marina Shores
- at Waterfront Whitsunday Retreat
- at Waters Edge
- at Whitsunday Vista Resort
- Backpackers by the Bay
- Best Western Mango House Resort
- Big Fury
- CS Car Service
- Coral Cove Apartments
- Earlando
- Elysian Retreat Long Island
- I do Events
- ISail Whitsundays
- Just Tuk'n Around
- Mantra Boathouse Apartments
- Mediterranean Resorts
- Ozone Whitsundays
- Ozsail
- Peninsula Airlie Beach
- Prosail
- Queens Beach Hotel
- Stryker Sports Fishing
- Summer Rain Photography
- Sundowner Cruises
- Sunsail
- The Wedding Planners Airlie Beach
- Villa Botanica
- Waterview Airlie Beach
- Whitsunday Arts and Cultural Centre
- Whitsunday Health and Wellness Retreats
- Whitsunday Sands Resort
- Whitsundays Waterfront Apartments
- Whitsunday Eco Retreat

RESTAURANT/RETAIL

- Above & Below Photography
- Adelyn Retail Consultancy
- Airlie Beach Treehouse
- Airlie Fitness
- Anchor Bar Airlie Beach
- Aquava Boutique Catering
- Birds Fish Bar
- Boaty's
- Boathouse Fish Bar
- Bright Eyes Airlie Beach
- Cape Gloucester Beach Resort
- Cherrie Baby Boutique
- Clipper Restaurant and Bar
- Club Croc Bistro
- Cruise Café & Bar
- Denmans Beer Café
- Dingo Beach Hotel
- Epicure Homewares
- Fat Frog Beach Café
- Fish D'Vine
- FISHI
- Ginger Blonde Co
- Grand View Hotel Bowen
- Hemingway's
- KC's Bar & Grill
- La Marina Restaurant
- Le Sorelle The Sisters Coffee House and Florist
- LUXE Fashion House
- Lotus Beach Boutique
- Mama Africa's Bar and Nightclub
- Mangrove Jacks
- McDonald's
- Peach and Pear Catering
- Pit Pont Tavern
- Red Rooster Bowen
- Sails on Main
- Shuckz Oyster and Champagne Bar
- Sorrentos Restaurant
- Subway Bowen
- Subway Proserpine
- The Deck Airlie Beach
- Walter's Lounge
- Whitsunday Pacific Seafoods
- Whitsunday Provisioning

ASSOCIATE

- 8 Seconds
- Airlie Beach Music Centre
- Angel Signs
- Brooke Miles Photography
- ByteWise IT Solutions
- Graphic House
- KB Design
- Reserve Group
- Response Learning North Queensland
- Riptide Creative
- Roebuck Civil
- Shirtfront Solutions
- TAFE North Queensland
- Total Entertainment
- Vink Publishing
- Wasp NQ



SUPPORTER

- Airlie Sails and Shade Solutions
- All Marine Services
- Ash Electrical Whitsundays
- Bendigo Bank Cannonvale - Proserpine
- Camp Island
- Compass Business Advisory
- CQ University
- Eclipse Financial Services
- Inspired Impact with Jasmine Kratz
- Leader Group
- Live Life Pharmacy
- Macrossan & Amiet Solicitors
- Media Whitsundays
- My CFO on the Go
- PRD Nationwide
- Ray White Whitsundays
- Rekenen Accountants
- Shiift
- Sushi Whitsunday
- Telstra Store Whitsundays
- Veris
- Whitsunday Airport
- Whitsunday Bliss
- Whitsunday Bullet
- Whitsunday Foodservice
- Whitsunday Law
- Whitsunday Tickets

OUT OF REGION

- Ocean Safari
- Sarina Sugar Shed
- Sealink Queensland
- The Feathered Nest - Luxury Wildlife Retreat

NOT FOR PROFIT

- Australian Marine Conservation Society
- Bowen Golf Club
- Bowen Pastoral Agricultural Association
- Bowen PCYC
- Camp Kanga
- Collinsville Bowling Club
- Collinsville Community Association
- Collinsville Connect Telecentre
- Collinsville Lions Club
- Collinsville Worker's Club
- Collinsville Youth Coalition
- Community Solutions
- Coral Sea Catalina Heritage Museum
- Eco Barge Clean Seas
- Girudala Cooperative Community Society
- Proserpine Chamber of Commerce
- Proserpine Golf Club
- Proserpine Museum
- Reef Catchments
- Rotary Club of Airlie Beach
- Show Whitsundays
- SKAL Whitsundays
- Variety Queensland
- VMR Whitsunday
- Weddings Whitsundays
- Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association
- Whitsunday Coast Chamber of Commerce
- Whitsunday Counselling and Support
- Whitsunday Running Club
- Whitsunday Sportspark
- Zonta Club of the Whitsundays

LIFE MEMBER

- Paul Sergeant

BUSINESS EVENTS

- Coral Sea Resort
- Daydream Island Resort and Spa
- Hemingway's
- Mantra Club Croc
- Palm Bay Resort
- Red Cat Adventures
- BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort
- Cruise Whitsundays
- Hamilton Island
- Lure, Abell Point Marina
- Mirage Whitsundays
- Peppers Airlie Beach
- Whitsundays Sailing Adventures



BUSINESS EVENTS ASSOCIATE

- Air Whitsunday Seaplanes
- Brooke Miles Photography
- Whitsundays 2 Everywhere
- Airlie Beach Music Centre
- Shiift

CORPORATE PARTNERS

- Archers Soft Drink
- Lion Nathan
- Queensland Rail
- Whitsunday Times
- Fraser Ford
- Paradise Outdoor Advertising
- StarFM

Partner Organisations

During 2017/18 Tourism Whitsundays was a member of:

- Australian Tourism Export Council
- Caravanning Queensland
- Queensland RTO Network
- Queensland Tourism Industry Council

Tourism Whitsundays liaised/partnered with:

- Airlie Beach Cruise Ship Volunteer Ambassadors
- Bowen Tourism and Business
- GW3
- Proserpine Chamber of Commerce
- Reef Catchments
- Reef Ecologic
- Regional Development Australia
- SKAL Whitsundays
- State and Federal Government Departments
- Tourism and Events Queensland
- Whitsunday Coast Chamber of Commerce
- Whitsunday Regional Council



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