



Ellen Hill
Communications Co-ordinator
Blue Mountains Tourism
communications@bmtourism.com.au
0422 140 528

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New tourism marketing services platform: more opportunity and value for all

Blue Mountains Tourism (BMT) has undergone the biggest shakeup in its 40-year history – and small tourism businesses benefit most.

The region's local tourism organisation has introduced a new "pick and mix" marketing services platform (Blue Mountains Tourism Essentials) that focuses on opportunities for every size business and budget.

The revamp follows the \$2.6 million in bushfire funding BMT secured in partnership with Blue Mountains City Council in July 2021.

That money allowed BMT to do some big-ticket activities such as employ three staff; a rebrand, new website and Been There Done That advertising campaign; and attend national industry expos.

The current \$275 bronze, \$1000 silver and \$5000 gold membership structure is being phased out.

The new Blue Mountains Tourism Essentials platform allows businesses to become a member for as little as \$150 or simply select the specific marketing opportunities without being a member.

Blue Mountains Tourism president Jason Cronshaw said basic membership was "fantastic value for money on its own", giving access to 11 monthly BMT networking events for just \$13.60 while other industry groups charged at least \$25.

"A networking event is a great casual setting where you can hear latest industry news, meet new people and talk business over a glass of local wine.

"Its where small businesses get to meet big business owners and managers and can access staff from government departments and agencies they may not otherwise come across.

"And big business and government people get to find out about new businesses they might want to partner with or refer customers to."

However, tourism businesses do not need to be BMT members to buy marketing products and services ranging from social media posts, blogs, inclusion in consumer newsletters and media releases to shared campaign buy-ins, magazine advertising, representation at national industry expos and more.

The new marketing services platform “levels the playing field by giving all tourism businesses the same access to all our products, services and events regardless of their size or turnover”, Mr Cronshaw said.

“It’s less about exclusivity and more about inclusion and opportunity for all.”

It gives businesses better value on investment and allows them to tailor BMT engagement to suit their unique needs.

It also gives more direction to the BMT management committee of industry professionals: “We will have a better understanding of what our members need (and want) from BMT.”

Before its launch, the new membership model was shared with a focus group including small operators and the region’s largest tourism businesses, which provided feedback that BMT implemented.

Mr Cronshaw recommends business owners plan their marketing strategy to suit their budget in three, six or 12 month increments, then choose the BMT products and services that best help them achieve their goals.

“This is not a finished product by any means.

“One thing the past few years has taught us is that ‘normal’ is a very fluid term. This new marketing services platform will allow us to evolve and change as the industry needs us to.”

Current BMT members were recently emailed a unique login password to the new membership portal on the visitbluemountains.com.au website.

Other tourism businesses can gain access by emailing joinbmt@bmtourism.com.au.

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