

RURAL TOURISM, COLLABORATION IS KEY!



Tilma Management is a boutique tourism and events agency based in Coolamon in the Riverina district of NSW. Operating since 2008, we pride ourselves on providing a first class, personalised service to every client. We have built our reputation on this promise combined with our many years of tourism, events, marketing and public relations experience.

Our agency has a regional and rural focus and works with businesses and organisations of all sizes primarily in regional NSW and Victoria. Our services focus on Tourism & Destination Marketing, Tourism Development, Events and Conference Management, Award Submission Writing and Mentoring and Business Chambers of Commerce support.

TOURISM vs THE VISITOR ECONOMY

Getting more people – and more dollars – into rural and regional towns is a key aim of many civic and community leaders. Tourism, as an industry, is a powerful tool that can help to achieve this.

We need to understand and embrace tourism, and believe that it can contribute significantly to our rural community and economy.

When talking to regional and rural communities, we should start using the term 'visitor economy' rather than 'tourism'. This is more achievable and real to many. 'Visitor economy' refers to the direct and indirect contribution that tourism makes to an overall economy (such as that of a town, state or country).

- **Direct contributions** refer to the value generated by tourism products and services, such as visitors paying for accommodation, eating out at restaurants, visiting attractions and spending money in shops.
- **Indirect contributions** refer to other sectors that rely on or support tourism, such as food and beverage suppliers to restaurants.

Many regional and rural areas are not typical tourism destinations, however they attract visitors every day. Visiting friends and relatives, business travellers and 'passers through' all contribute to the visitor economy of regional and rural towns, therefore it is important that these communities understand the impact visitors have on their economy.



HAVE A LITTLE FAITH!

As much as we need to understand and embrace the visitor economy, we must believe in our regions, realise our assets and be prepared to work in partnership with all levels of government, the community and the private sector to create opportunities. We have to be prepared to invest time, effort and resources. We need to find and support the right community leaders.

Tip 1: Find ways for members of the community to get involved in growing the tourism industry. This takes the pressure off everyone.

THE POWER OF THE VISITOR ECONOMY

According to Tourism Research Australia, when combining the direct and indirect tourism components, in 2010-2011:

- Tourism's contribution to Australian gross domestic product (GDP) was \$73.3 billion or 5.2% of the Australian economy.
- In Australia, tourism directly and indirectly employed 907,100 people representing 7.9% of total Australian employment.
- Tourism's resilience is reflected by its recovery from the impacts of the global financial crisis. During the crisis in 2008-2009, tourism's GDP declined by 0.3%. During 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 it grew by more than 2.5% annually.
- Tourism's total output multiplier was valued at 1.92, which means that for every dollar tourism earns directly in the Australian economy, 92 cents is added in value to other parts of the economy. This multiplier is larger than that of the mining and retail industries.

WHAT'S COLLABORATION GOT TO DO WITH IT?

Collaboration (or cooperation) is a business strategy. It is not to be confused with competition – they are two different things. Competition can be useful for stimulating innovations and efficiencies, but COLLABORATION is often seen as being more important as it involves stakeholders coming together to be as productive, effective and efficient as possible. Your business strategy needs to find the balance.

Regions do not have the unlimited resources and fund, expansive product offerings, or the skills and knowledge to go it alone. If we pool our resources, skills and experience, we all of a sudden have the product and power to promote!

"It means putting aside individual differences to work together for the good of the community"



destination marketing

regional tourism

event management

There are many ways to collaborate:

- **Packaged tours** – combine product and service offerings to enhance appeal
- **Shared reservation systems** – why recreate?
- **Cooperative R&D** – share the cost, the work and the benefits
- **Standardised products** – economies of scope and of scale
- **Cooperative pricing policies** – uniform and stable prices are good for everyone
- **Networking** – exchange of information and sharing ideas
- **Industry associations** – share information, joint marketing campaigns and more
- **Marketing & promotion** – pooling funds to develop a more comprehensive and effective marketing campaign

A whole of community approach is required if everyone is to benefit from the visitor economy in rural communities!

Tip 2: Find local ambassadors to encourage, instigate and drive the collaboration

SUCCESSFUL CASE STUDIES

June, Riverina Region NSW

Industry, community and government collaborate to turn a \$10,000 marketing budget into a \$30,000 marketing budget.

Learn more about how they did this by contacting:

Linda Tillman – Tourism Development Officer, June Shire Council
tourism@visitjune.com.au. www.visitjune.com.au

Patton Village Community & Business Association (PVCBA), Outback Region Broken Hill

Owner of Bells Milk Bar Jason King's passion for regional tourism has been a catalyst for the formation of the "Patton Village Community & Business Association Inc" which is working with the local community to develop the tourism potential of the local shopping precinct.

The PVCBA is a trader's group and a community organisation rolled into one. 'Officially' PVCBA is a not-for-profit incorporated association that represents the interests of all stakeholders to Patton Village, South Broken Hill and the wider Broken Hill community. (e.g. Business, community, government, individual, education). The aim is to ensure that the Patton Village precinct, which is an important hub for South Broken Hill, can survive and prosper now and in the future.

Learn more about this great collaborative concept by contacting: Jason King – Bells Milk Bar & Patton Village Volunteer
www.bellsmilkbar.com.au

Elm Cottage, Snowy Mountains Region NSW

Elm Cottage is a 4.5 star luxury retreat situated on the banks of the Goobarragandra River. Only 20 guests are allowed on the property at any one time. Yield and volume is exceptionally important.

When it comes to marketing, Elm Cottage has always believed they are only a very small player in the overall Visitor Economy. They based their marketing plan on a destination concept rather than Elm Cottage the product.

The Elm marketing philosophy: get them to the region first...then worry about it!

Visit the website to see how they market collaboratively, as a destination www.elmcottage.com.au or contact owner David Sheldon for further details.

Cobb & Co Heritage Trail, NSW

The Cobb & Co Heritage Trail in regional NSW is one example of how resource clustering can build a strong cultural tourism theme that overcomes distance, and empowers cultural visitors to travel to rural areas. The trail links together a series of heritage sites located between Bathurst and Bourke – basing itself around the Mitchell Highway but also including byways into small rural towns.

By working collaboratively to link each heritage site together, the involved council areas have given visitors a firmer reason to want to visit each town. In effect, the cultural tourism product has been more successful in turning each town along the trail into cultural tourism destinations; towns which visitors may well have bypassed otherwise.

Learn more about this project by visiting www.cobbandco.net.au

FURTHER READINGS AND INSIGHTS

- Tourism Management (2004), Neil Leiper
- The Experience Economy: Work is Theater & Every Business a Stage James H. Gilmore (Author), Joseph B. Dine (Author)
- Special Interest Tourism Weiler, B.; Hall, C. M.
- Australian Regional Tourism Network: www.regionaltourism.com.au
- Tilma Management: www.tilmamanagement.com.au
- Small Town Renewal Overview and Case Studies, Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation (2001) www.rirdc.gov.au

Tip 3: Collaborate with industry and government when applying for funding programs!



EXCLUSIVE TEE OFFER

All delegates have the opportunity for a complimentary one-hour consultation or 'chat' about rural tourism, destination marketing and the visitor economy. Are you an operator who wants further tips and advice on how to better embrace the industry through collaboration? Are you part of a destination that is not yet realising its full potential? We would love to discuss your issues, ideas, opportunities and challenges and assist in any way possible with advice and support. Contact us today!

To redeem this offer call us on 02 6927 2866 and visit www.tilmamanagement.com.au to view the range of services we provide