

# Australia's Green Cauldron

## A NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

### Hero Experience + Mentoring Program 2015

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Department  
of Industry

CITY OF  
**GOLDCOAST**



**SCENIC RIM**  
Regional Council



**Gold Coast**  
Tourism Corporation

**destination**tweed

THE NORTH COAST  
DESTINATION  
NETWORK

**Southern Cross**  
University

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The regions of the Gold Coast and North Coast NSW are growing in both terms of visitor spend and overnight visitation. From the National and International Visitor Survey figures for year ended June 2014, the Gold Coast region experienced an increase in visitor spend of more than 2% and the North Coast NSW region had an average increase in both domestic and international overnight stays of 5%.

In light of this growth and increased spotlight on the region in the lead up to the staging of the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) on the Gold Coast in 2016 and the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games 2018, it was identified that now was the time to harness this growth and profile opportunities. In order to maximise visitor spend during this time, **visitor dispersal is essential.**



Given the right experience development and practical commercial networks, Australia's Green Cauldron (AGC) offered the ideal cross-border platform to achieve this.



The Hero Experience and Mentoring Program was created to:-

1. **Improve connectivity and integration** across tourism supply chains;
2. **Facilitate industry innovation** through specialist mentoring;
3. **Encourage new hero experience development**; and
4. **Build destination appeal**, attractiveness and brand awareness of AGC as a region, for the domestic and international audience

The program was developed and implemented across five key phases as outlined below:-



Over a hundred businesses attended masterclasses across the region to promote the program. Fourteen businesses were selected from twenty five applicants. The program involved mystery shopping, intensive mentoring and consultation over a six month period, including:-



## KEY FINDINGS + INSIGHTS

Most businesses were difficult to find online or in person with poor signage	Weak branding, unclear messaging and lack of presentation and sales skills	Many were neither consumer or trade ready
The majority could not be booked online, directly or through trade	86% of websites were not mobile optimised	Limited customer understanding with no historical data
Limited or no cash flow and time poor	Little or no packaging occurring	Not linked to tourism and destination networks



## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ **Packaging and value-adding** the experiences *within* each business and making it easy to purchase.
- ✓ **New Experience development** maximising World Heritage Rainforests Walks, Wildlife Experiences and Health & Wellbeing.
- ✓ **Maximising and linking with tourism destinations**, particularly Brisbane, Gold Coast and Byron Bay.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The program has delivered outstanding results for tourism businesses across the region.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

To maximize the investment in the program and provide industry ongoing support, the following recommendations are made based on industry needs and feedback.

<b>Sales + Marketing Training</b>	Training in marketing, media and sales techniques
<b>Working with Trade</b>	Long-term training in trade relationships & packaging
<b>Digital Training Program</b>	Website and social media training tailored for tourism operators
<b>Cultural Awareness Program</b>	For all major Asian Markets, with specific focus Singaporean FIT Market
<b>Clustering Familiarisations</b>	Scheduled group familiarisations of each sub-region and cross border to increase knowledge and future clustering
<b>Table Top Talks</b>	Additional central symposium with a focus on <b>clustering across</b> the region, with LTOs, RTOs, media and trade

**“The guidance we received has instilled confidence for a lifetime. We found this whole program absolutely invaluable. Thank you doesn’t seem like enough”**

**Louise McKay, Australian Bush Buddies**

**“We were impressed by the professionalism, and would like to thank the whole Green Cauldron team. The mentors took the time to understand our business and experience it first-hand. They gave us honest appraisal. Together we worked on the problems of getting more bums on our boat”**

**Simon & Lorraine Freeden, Byron Bay Eco Cruises &**

**“I can honestly say that great beneficial change has come about. This program has lifted my eyes from the grindstone We are now working co-operatively with other businesses and how to shape my business to provide the experience that will deliver the outcome expected by my target market, in particular Singapore and Eastern markets.”**

**Nathan Overell, Worendo Cottages**