



**Southern Queensland Country
Destination Management Plan
2020 – 2023**

Acknowledgements

DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this report is intended to inform and should not be relied upon as a basis for investment. It is expected that any investment decisions made using these specific recommendations will be fully analysed and appropriate due diligence will be undertaken prior to being made.

In the course of our preparation of the Southern Queensland Country Destination Management Plan 2020 – 2023, recommendations have been made using information and assumptions provided by many sources and from the methodology adopted for this Plan. The authors accept no responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions or resultant consequences including any loss or damage arising from reliance on the information contained in this report.

It should also be noted that some of the visitation data and statistics presented in this Destination Management Plan for Southern Queensland Country is based on statistically small sample sizes and further research is recommended as a part of the ongoing strategy. Definitions can vary between data sources and over time and data should be used with caution.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Southern Queensland Country Destination Management Plan 2020 – 2023 has been developed to provide strategic direction for the Southern Queensland Country Tourism (SQCT) region and its stakeholders to plan for sustainable management, development, and marketing of tourism.

The Southern Queensland Country is the 19th largest domestic tourism region in Australia, based on visitor nights. It encompasses the Darling Downs, the Southern Downs and Granite Belt, the Bunya Mountains, and the Western Country – an area stretching from Stanthorpe in the south to Expedition National Park in the north, from Dalby in the east to St. George in the west. In addition to Toowoomba, key regional centres, towns and villages include Blackbutt, Bunya Mountains, Kingaroy, Chinchilla & Dalby, Goondiwindi, St. George, Warwick & Stanthorpe.

The Plan has been developed alongside industry stakeholders and the Southern Queensland Country Tourism team and the Board, supported by a situational analysis and stakeholder engagement process.

The aim of the Southern Queensland Country Destination Management Plan 2020 – 2023 is to sustainably grow the visitor economy and bring diverse experiences together through an invitation to discover provenance, produce and people.

This strategy recommends a ‘Provenance Trail’ be developed eventually, encompassing distinct ***real-food moments, that can be owned by each micro-region, such as sales and tasting from the farm gate, cellar door dining and events that introduce local farmers, chefs and key winemakers.***

Tailored research, champions, and mentors who walk the talk and bring others on the journey and create an understanding that there is strength and value in collaboration is critical to success. The Plan encourages new products that will be experience led. To increase ownership and share knowledge and resources, it recommends collective industry clusters that can be facilitated by SQCT to champion key issues such as networks and relationships between producers, suppliers, restaurants and accommodation, and to show stories of people and produce.

To be a sustainable, authentic provenance story, the food and wine on offer are stronger if it comes from the region it was grown in. A unique experience offer can be developed by tapping into that local produce and the faces behind it, by owning the stories and experiences with the potential to become famous.

Six strategic priorities have been determined from the stakeholder consultation process, assessment of marketing trends, and review of the current and potential regional tourism operating environment:

1. HERO PROVENANCE – BUILD PRODUCT & EXPERIENCE TO EQUAL EXPECTATIONS

- Support & enable SQCT stakeholders to enhance & develop quality, innovative and bookable product aligned to the five experience pillars to encourage yield, length of stay & dispersal
- Champions & sub-committees drive quality & incubation.

2. CUSTOM RESEARCH TO BE THE ROADMAP

- Interpret & deliver research to the industry to direct & develop customised product & experiences
- Use data to track and identify existing & potential visitor profiles & behaviour for targeted

3. MAKE IT EASY

- Remove the barriers from the customer journey and make it easier for visitors to understand and discover destination experiences

4. CREATE VALUE, CONNECTIONS, COLLABORATION & ADVOCACY

- Lead, advocate, inspire, engage & inform external stakeholders & organisations across local, regional, state & national levels giving a clear, consistent voice to the region & its operators

5. SKILLS & CAPACITY BUILDING

- Assist & enable the development of a tourism ecosystem that builds pathways to skills & destination knowledge
- Provide inspiring and engaging training, capacity building and skills development support

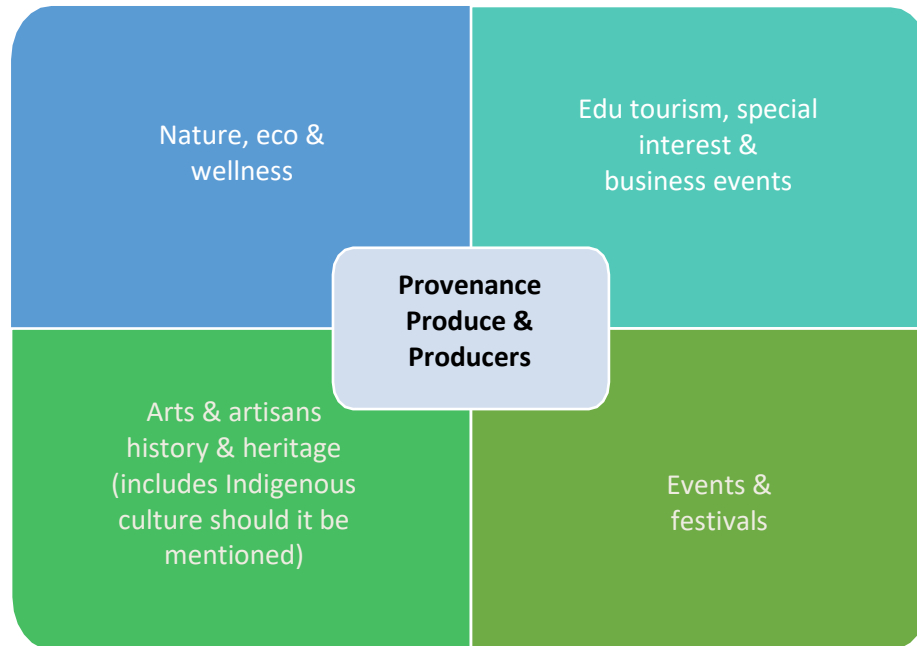
6. MARKETING WITHOUT BORDERS

- Be consumer-facing with storytelling & messaging focusing on hero brands, towns & villages
- Acknowledge regional 'borders' as a practical internal structure to harness & leverage the collective

Storytelling & experience pillars

In addition, five storytelling and experience pillars and catalyst projects have been identified to drive and coordinate product and experience development over the next three years. The central pillar of provenance links all experiences.

IMPORTANT CATALYST PROJECTS IDENTIFIED INCLUDE:



- **The Provenance Trail** - a trail of discovery throughout the region that showcases produce and people, with unique and authentic experiences, that will drive visitation and motivate engagement and endorsement.
- **A three-year SQCT Provenance Tourism Development Strategy** to identify opportunities and strategies to coordinate and encourage food & wine tourism product, and experience development and investment across the region in collaboration with the industry and led by Clusters & champions.
- **A customised research and data mapping platform.**
- **A partnerships program** - to pursue best practice, education & commercial opportunities.
- **A restructure** that is experience-led with Clusters, to advocate for flagship tourism experiences including the Provenance Trail.
- **A Training Skills Development Program** with relevant, cost-effective training in storytelling, digital marketing, and customer service. This Plan is a living, practical document. It will need the support of key industry stakeholders, particularly those who have already established strong product offers and experiences, to achieve its objectives and priorities. It includes tangible actions to be reviewed annually.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Southern Queensland Country Destination Management Plan (DMP) is a 'live' plan with built-in reviews and agility to adapt to data, changing technology and visitor shifts. As the peak tourism agency for the southern Queensland region, Southern Queensland Country acknowledges the profile and brand of its hero towns. It is well-positioned to advocate on behalf of the whole region and work with stakeholders to drive, coordinate and support the sustainable management and development of tourism across the region.

The region's diversity is both a challenge and a strength. This plan recommends a consumer-led, experience focused plan, with clear cues, to make the journey and destination assets easier to understand and navigate, based on the stories of provenance through a provenance trail.

The Plan aims to...

...grow tourism responsibly and sustainably, contributing to local economies with a focus on high yield visitors whose values lead them to quality, innovative experiences where people and provenance matters.

SNAPSHOT - SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND COUNTRY VISITOR ECONOMY



**International
Tourism Valued at
\$74.8 M**



**International Average
length of stay 22.3
Nights**



**International Average
Night Spend \$58**



**Gross Regional
Product \$1045M**



**Domestic Tourism
valued at
\$768.9 M**



**Domestic Average
Length of Stay
2.7 nights**



**Domestic Average
Night Spend \$130**



**Tourism supports
10,900 jobs**

2. TOURISM TRENDS AND ENVIRONMENT

This Plan considers mega-trends and potential factors that could influence visitor markets and the development of tourism products and experiences, across the Southern Queensland Country region. Global, national, state, regional and local trends and issues were analysed in the desktop research and the stakeholder consultation process.

Millennial Travel

Millennials will become the tourism industry's core customer base within the next decade, and their habits and digital and mobile connectivity, and preferences for unique experiences will help shape the industry. For regions like Southern Queensland Country, it will be important to develop experiences, product and communications that appeal to this market segment.

Food tourism

Food and beverage are growing motivators for travel, particularly with millennials who are increasingly interested in source and sustainability.

Health and Wellbeing

Medical tourism and holidays associated with health and wellbeing, such as health and yoga retreats, are a motivator for travel or increasingly becoming a key part of the holiday experience. For Southern Queensland Country, health and wellbeing products and experiences could be further developed into a core product strength to help extend stay.

Women Adventure Market

A growing trend around the world is groups of women travelling together or meeting up to participate in adventure activities. This can include treks, walks and more extreme adventure activities.

Over tourism

The combination of a growing world population and improved technology, resulting in cheaper air and sea travel, and growing affluence has resulted in a tourism boom, putting pressure on global tourism hotspots. Residents in the SQCT region are currently positive towards tourism and this positivity should be protected through monitoring, benchmarking and proactive strategies, to ensure sustainable lifestyle and infrastructure, as tourism continues to grow.

Accessible Tourism

To cater to this growing market segment, SQCT needs an accessibility strategy. It is important for the industry to be aware of the legal accessibility requirements when building or renovating accommodation or other tourism facilities.

The Sharing Economy and Digital Disrupters

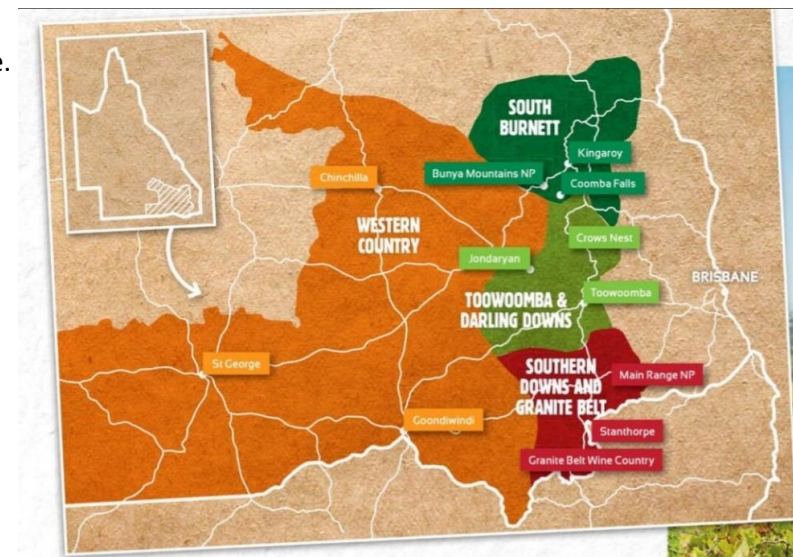
The sharing economy and digital disruption provide SQCT with an opportunity to innovate and be distinct from the many other destinations opposing this consumer-led trend. If managed and regulated strategically, SQCT could extend its product and local experience offer, and encourage dispersal. This should be a focus of SQCT business, partnership, and product development.

3. ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT & OUTLOOK - SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND COUNTRY

The Destination

Known for its regional beauty, the Southern Queensland Country tourism region has a strong agriculture sector, significant natural attractions, cultural history and heritage. Offerings such as Girraween National Park and the Bunya Mountains, through to the well-known Cobb & Co. museum in Toowoomba and historical museums in Chinchilla and Clifton, complement the award-winning wine district and fresh produce of the Granite Belt and South Burnett.

The region covers six local government areas (LGAs). With its gateway hub of Toowoomba, just 90 minutes' drive from Brisbane, the region encompasses the Darling Downs, the Southern Downs and Granite Belt, the Bunya Mountains, and the Western Country – an area stretching from Stanthorpe in the south to Expedition National Park in the north, from Dalby in the east to St George in the west. In addition to Toowoomba, key regional centres, towns and villages include Blackbutt, Bunya Mountains, Kingaroy, Chinchilla & Dalby, Goondiwindi, St George, Warwick & Stanthorpe.



Southern Queensland country '5As' assets' snapshot

Accommodation	Attractions	Access	Amenities	Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated xx rooms Average occupancy Xx Accommodation options range from modern motels, hotels, spa suites to backpacker-friendly hostels, caravan and camping parks (powered, unpowered, free camping), farm stays, cabins, B&Bs, retreats, vineyard cottages, farms, and cabins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 44 wineries – Granite Belt Wine, Ballandean Signature restaurants featuring product to plate e.g., Emeraude Mural art at Thallon silos Granite Craft brewery & artisan spirit distilleries Historical homes & heritage venues - Jondaryan Woolshed, Jimbour House, Gabbinbar Homestead Wide-ranging festivals & events – Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers, Jumpers & Jazz, Warwick Camp draft & Rodeo, Chinchilla Watermelon festival Queensland pubs – Nindigully, state's oldest hotel, first licensed in 1864 12 + National Parks, forests & conservation reserves - Palms National Park rainforest walk, Girraween National Park with 30 km of walking tracks, Ravensbourne, Crows Nest, Expedition, Bunya Mountains (world's largest forest of Bunya pines), Sundowner National Parks, Lake Murphy & Lake Broadwater Conservation Parks, Benarkin State Forest, Cunninghams Gap & Spicers Gap Rivers, lakes, waterfalls & freshwater pools – Maidenwell & Queen Mary Falls Cobb & Co Museum 	<p>Air - Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport, 70+ direct flights weekly to Melbourne, Sydney, Cairns, Townsville, and Western Queensland & daily QantasLink flights to Sydney with connections to other Aus. cities. St George Airport direct flights from Brisbane, Cunnamulla, Brisbane West Wellcamp, & Thargomindah Airport. Serviced by Sky West and Allegiant Air. Dalby, Warwick and Kingaroy Airports cater to private aircraft & charters</p> <p>Road – Gore, Cunningham New England, D'Aguilar Brisbane Valley, Gore, Moonie, Barwon Highways & The Warrego, Leichhardt, Great Inland, Adventure & Australia's Country Way</p> <p>Bus Coach - Bus Queensland, Crisps Coaches Greyhound, Murrays Coaches, Stonestreeets Coaches, Con-X-ion</p> <p>Train - Queensland Rail – Westlander offers a passenger rail service from Brisbane to Charleville with a scheduled stop at Toowoomba Brisbane to Toowoomba = 125 km Brisbane to Warwick = 154 km Brisbane to Stanthorpe = 214 km Brisbane to Kingaroy = 211 km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 17 accredited Visitor Information Centres in the region and numerous cultural, business, and service centres, and tourism associations Well serviced road-side picnic stops & toilets support the drive market The University of Southern Queensland – industry-relevant business management, hospitality, and tourism degrees. Queensland College of Wine Tourism TAFE - courses vary from Certificate to Diploma level. Clubs, stadiums & elite sports facilities Libraries Spas, wellness centres, beauty & health services, and gyms Service stations Auto mechanics Electrical Supplies Supermarkets and specialty foods Golf and country clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cellar door visits & wine tasting – food & wine tours Culinary tourism – cooking classes Birdwatching & wildlife Fossicking Kayaking Canoeing Wakeboarding Hiking & bushwalking Mountain biking & cycling Hot air ballooning Swimming Sporting activities Shopping 4W Driving Camping activities Museums/galleries Heritage & rail trails Weddings Festivals & events

Economic impact from Tourism – importance to the region

According to Tourism Research Australia, Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts 2017/18, tourism in the Southern Queensland Country has now surpassed the one-billion-dollar mark. Tourism Gross Regional Product totals \$1045.1 million (\$515.1 million direct). Additionally, it:

- generates \$3,600 per capita
- accounts for 5.3% of Southern Queensland Country’s Gross Regional Product
- supports 10,900 jobs, 7.7% of total employment in the region

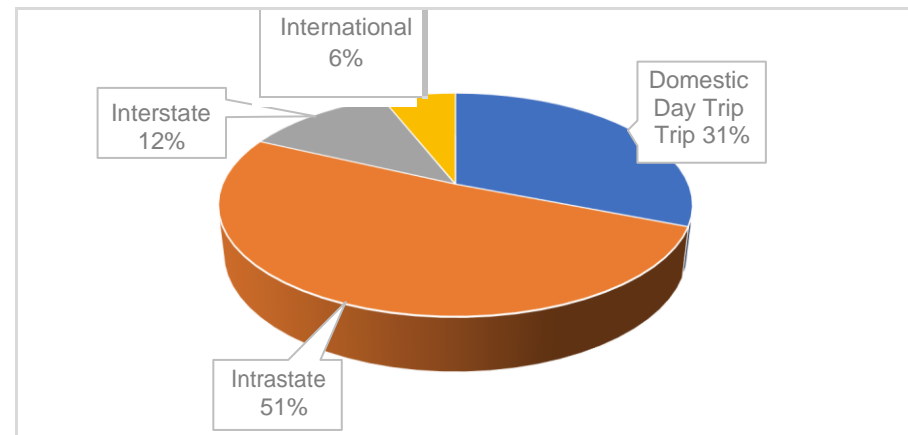
Tourism activity is spread throughout the region with Toowoomba the local government area accounting for the largest economic impact.

Sub-Regional Expenditure 2018 (\$ million) *

	International	Domestic Overnight	Domestic Day Trip	Total
South Burnett	2	61	52	114
Toowoomba	35	249	283	667
Southern Downs	14	104	52	170
Goondiwindi	3	50	33	86
Balonne	3	99	12	144
Western Downs	6	103	48	157

*Source: Tourism Research Australia. *Profiles are only prepared for Local Government Areas with adequate International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey sample to produce robust results. Further, data is averaged over four years, which minimises the impact of variability in estimates from year to year and provides for more robust volume estimates. Profiles are provided for international travel, domestic overnight travel, and domestic day travel.*

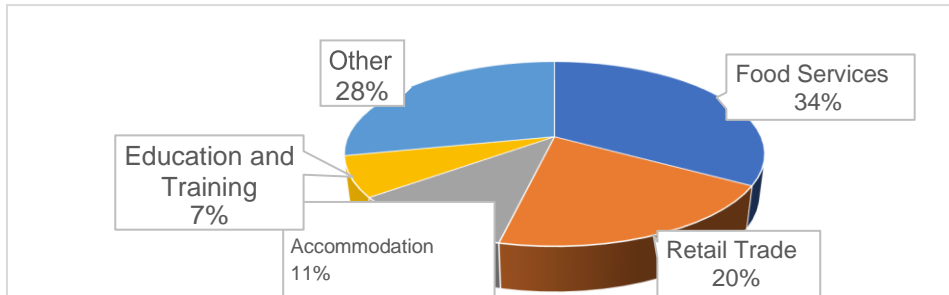
Economic Contribution per Origin Market Segment



The intrastate market accounts for just over half of the economic contribution, with domestic day trips a further 31%. The interstate and international markets combined account for only 18% of the total.

Source: Deloitte Access Economics RTSA 2016/17

Direct Tourism Employment by Industry



Food services account for the largest single share of employment in the region, followed by retail trade.

Source: Tourism Research Australia, Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts 2017/18



Local Residents' Perception of Southern Queensland Country and Tourism

The key perception of local residents towards the region includes friendly, rural, country, and peaceful. These perceptions align with the current positioning of the region but are also likely to apply to many other tourism regions in Australia.

Source: Southern Queensland Country Social Indicators, Tourism Events Queensland 2019

Perceptions of Positive Impacts of Tourism

Based on the 2019 study, 36% of residents agree with the statement “I really like it, can’t think of anywhere else I would rather live”. This was up from 31% in 2017, but slightly below the Queensland average of 40%. Attitudes towards tourists have also improved, with 58% stating “I really like tourists”, up from 55% in 2017. This is above the state average of 50%, which suggests the region appreciates the economic and cultural benefits of tourism. Only 5% of residents agreed with the statement “I stay away from places tourists go”, although this was up from 1% in the 2017 study which may indicate “tourism fatigue” in some areas of the region. 48% of residents thought the region should attract more tourists, significantly above the Queensland average of 32%. However, the 2019 figure is a slight drop in the 51% recorded in 2017. Only 5% of residents thought the region should attract fewer tourists. 72% of residents were happy with the continues level of tourism growth, up from 61% in 2017 and significantly above the state average of 59%.

Source: Southern Queensland Country Social Indicators, Tourism Events Queensland 2019

% Agree	Southern Queensland Country	Queensland Average
Greater cultural diversity	90%	91%
Important economic benefits	89%	89%
Festivals and events attract tourists and raise awareness	94%	89%
Increased regional profile	86%	83%
Increased local pride	83%	73%
New infrastructure	65%	69%

Domestic Overnight Visitation

For the year ending June 2019, domestic visitors to Southern Queensland Country reached a record 2.2 million, up 6.2 % over the previous year and generating expenditure of \$768.9 million (down 1%). The increased travel growth came from VFR (up 14.3 %), and business (up 11.9%), with holiday visitors declining by 4.4%. Total nights held fairly steady at 5.9 million, down 1.5%. These figures should be used with caution as there was a break in series in 2019 when Tourism Research Australia transitioned the National Visitor Survey to 100% mobile phone sampling.

The main purpose of the visit was VFR, accounting for 40% of visitors for the year ending June 2019, followed by Holiday (28%), Business (25%). The average length of stay was 2.7 nights, with business visitors staying slightly longer with 3.1 nights. Regional Queensland with 44%, followed by Brisbane with 38% are the key source markets for the region.

Key Domestic Source Markets (Visitors)

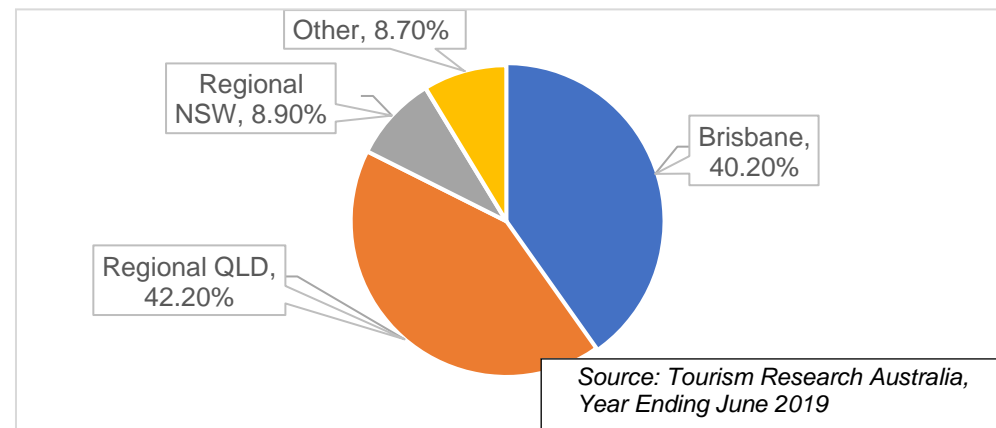
Domestic Day Trip Visitation

For the year ending June 2019, domestic day-trip visitors to the region were 3.90 million visitors, up 4.1% over the previous year. Day trip visitors generated \$500.7 million; a 17.0% decline compared to the same time period in the previous year. Day trips definitely present a great opportunity for the region to encourage these visitors to stay overnight on subsequent visits.

International Visitors

An estimated 58,000 international arrivals for the year ending June 2019, up 11.5% on average over three years ending in June. Visitors stayed an average of 22.3 nights, which may indicate a significant portion of backpackers.

European markets (including the UK) accounted for 20,000, up by 11.2% on average over the three years. New Zealand generated 13,000 visitors and 58,000 nights as the top source market. For holiday visitors specifically, the UK, followed by New Zealand and Germany were the top source markets.

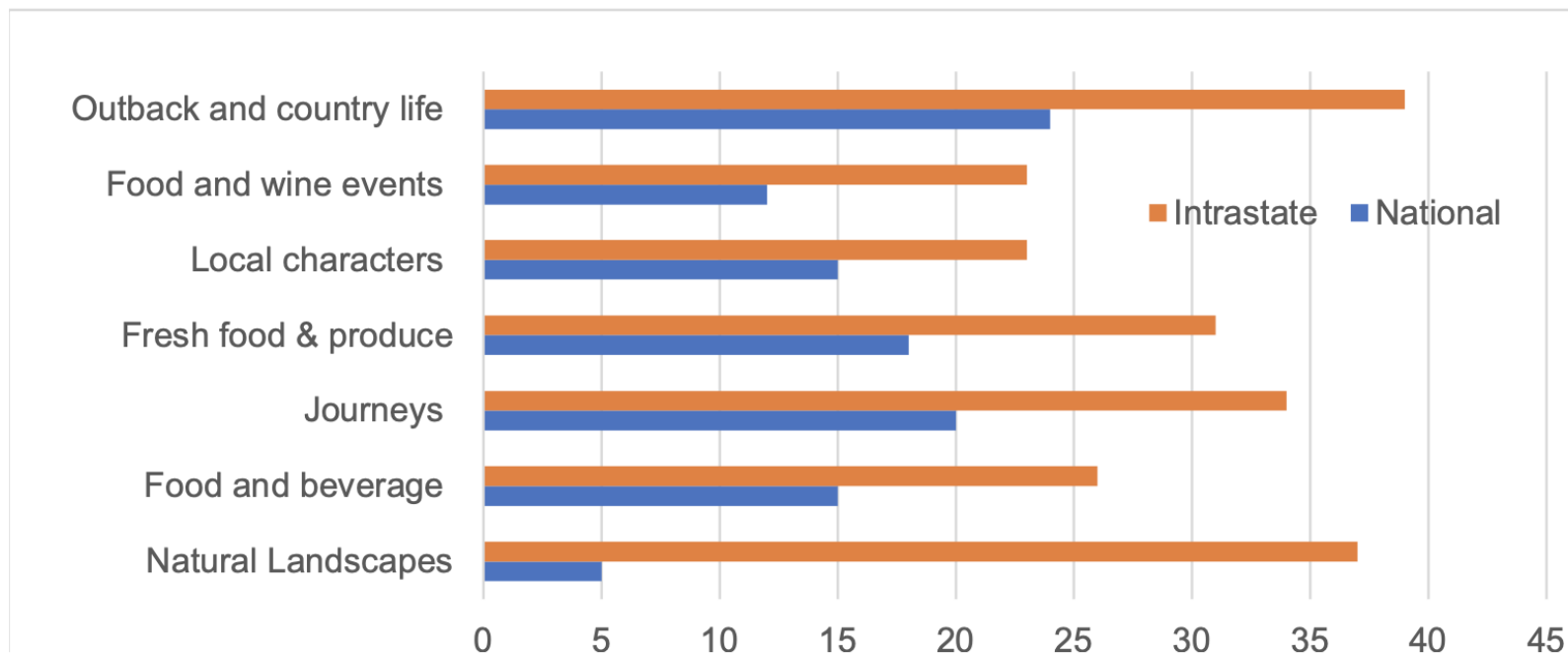


Brand Perceptions





Based on the 2019 Tourism Events Queensland Brand Health survey, there is a big gap between national and Queensland perceptions of Southern Queensland Country. Even within Queensland, the perception of the destination around food and beverage is not particularly strong given the region's attributes.

National versus Intrastate Perception of Southern Queensland Country

Source: 2019 Tourism Events Queensland Brand Health



SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND COUNTRY SWOT ANALYSIS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised food bowl - Integrity of produce offer • Existing reputation & brand of the Granite Belt & wine production • Real pubs • Accessible break from city life • Wellcamp airport • Toowoomba gateway - proximity to Brisbane • Diverse and quirky festivals & events • High Country Hamlets - micro regions • Safe • Natural environment - national parks, high country and outback experiences 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought – waterways no longer flow • Low awareness • Vulnerable to climate/impact of weather conditions • Perceived distance • Lack of packaged experiences • Service level can fall/are sometimes below expectations • Competition from nearby destinations • Visitor expectations not being met, overpromising on experiences 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Provenance story – build awareness & point of difference • Indigenous story and interpretative tours • Develop website & customised itineraries • Industry development and training • Promote clear reasons to visit • Packaged experiences to stay another day – food, nature, wellness • Agritourism, foodie stories and local provenance • Nature-based tourism and trails • Enhance support for RTO • Proximity to Brisbane Airport – domestic and international • Responsible tourism and climate change leadership • Package product opportunities, stronger links to experiences • Develop experience itineraries to 'open the gate' to visitors • Work with & strengthen relationships with the travel industry • Farm stays • Collaborate with VICs to enhance visitor experience • Tourism business incubator for collaboration and co-working • Improved tourism signage - connect provenance - e.g., Provenance Trail 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonality • Perception that summer is not the season to visit - drought • Competition from other wine/food destinations with stronger product offers, quality, and reputation • Not expanding target markets and current suppliers to encompass younger travellers • Regional populations declining 	

4. OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective of the Southern Queensland Country Destination Management Plan 2020 – 2023 is to help sustainably grow the visitor economy. This includes:

- Attracting a targeted mix of intrastate, interstate and international visitors
- Encouraging greater dispersal and spend across the region
- Increasing visitation in low and shoulder seasons
- Working collaboratively with the industry to develop quality experiences and tourism product
- Ensuring tourism is managed sustainably – with growth and development consistent with community values

5. STRATEGIC DIRECTION & PRIORITIES

Six strategic priorities (overleaf) have been determined from the stakeholder consultation process, assessment and analysis of trends, and review of the current and potential Southern Queensland Country tourism operating environment.

An action plan has been developed for each of these strategic priorities which identifies key activities, stakeholder responsibilities, key performance indicators (KPIs) and the following time frames:

Reference	Priority	Time frame
P1	HIGH	Immediate – within the first year
P2	MEDIUM	Within one to two years
P3	LOW	Three years and beyond

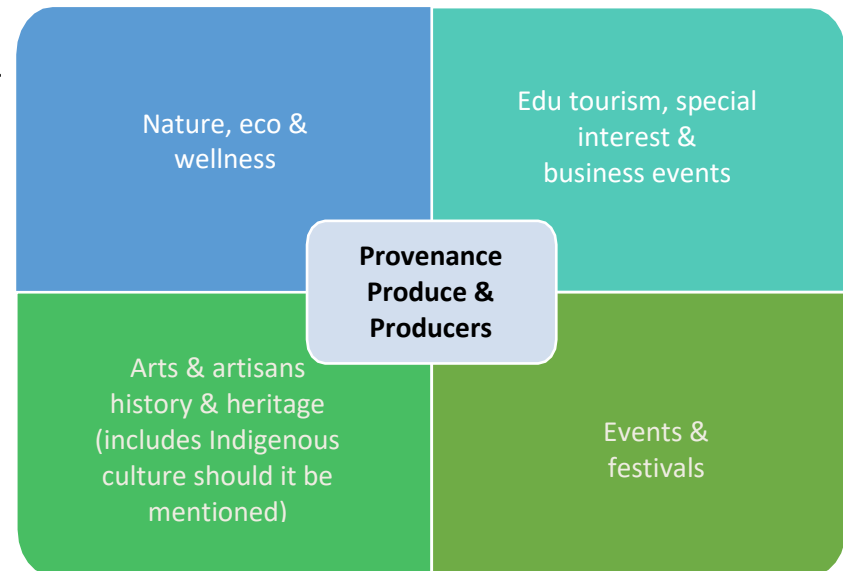
An annual review process, including updating, has been incorporated into this Plan.

5.1 STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE: HERO PROVENANCE – DEVELOP PREMIUM PRODUCTS & EXPERIENCES TO EQUAL EXPECTATIONS

The geographically diverse Southern Queensland Country Tourism Region offers broad-ranging experiences and natural attractions across mountain ranges, high country hamlets, national parks, urban towns and rural villages. The region is a powerhouse when it comes to clean and green food production in Australia, particularly for grains, beef, pork, poultry, eggs, dairy, fruit, vegetables, nuts and cotton, and boasts Queensland's only two Geographical Indications (GI) classified wine regions and a young, artisan craft brewery and distillery offer. It has the potential to turn its growing reputation for produce and provenance into a competitive advantage and distinctive point of difference over other Australian coastal, country and hinterland regions by building on emerging micro-regions. Quality and consistency are key to underpinning and owning the SQCT provenance story. Developing and recognising hero products through a 'Provenance Trail' with distinct *real-food moments* is a key recommendation of this plan. Tailored research, champions and mentors who can walk the talk and bring others on the journey and create an understanding that there is strength and value in collaboration is critical to success.

Five storytelling & experience pillars are proposed to drive and coordinate the region's tourism product and experience development over the next three years.

The aim is to provide unique experiences tailored to visitor expectations, that are unique to the SQCT region. Provenance, recognition of distinct, diverse micro-regions and storytelling can deliver on that promise of distinction. The destination plan starts with product development at its foundation. Quality product will provide visitors reasons to stay and travel across the region by encouraging them to sip and sample the paddock to plate produce and get to know the people behind the road-side stalls, pantry shelves, cellar doors, bars, cafes and fine dining tables.



Key learnings from the stakeholder workshop and engagement process and a detailed situation analysis have informed the strategic direction and actions of this plan and highlighted the need for:

- A practical, objective and staged, product and experience audit and incubation program across region, based on target visitor values, behaviour needs and expectations to identify existing hero product and champions and understand gaps and collaborative opportunities to develop sustainable strategies and actions to evolve and create new products based on the five experience pillars
- Development of destination and micro-regions collaborative network to identify connected visitor experiences, journeys and itineraries to encourage targeted visitor dispersal e.g., pub & artisan brew tours, grape grazing, meet the artisans
- Leverage the potential of the region's provenance as it relates to all the experience pillars through inspiring, interactive tours, trails, drives, that take you behind the gate/door/fence/cellar door and/or into the kitchen/art studio/nature/mountains to experience wellness, immersion in heritage and history, Indigenous stories, festivals, events and learning outcomes that are not at the expense of the local community and environment
- Partner and build relationships with leading culinary, and food and wine industry advocates, experts, authorities and associations e.g. A4E, Wine Australia, Queensland Wine, Jeremy Oliver, to develop and promote food and drink experiences
- Work with Queensland National Parks, Bicycle Queensland, Mountain Bike Australia, adventure, health & wellness organisations to develop premium targeted products and experiences
- Work with Indigenous arts, artisans, and heritage stakeholder organisations to create and prioritise opportunities
- Support hero products e.g., Granite Belt, High Country Hamlets to increase awareness and extend market appeal through new products

Key insights

'To realise our potential, truthful conversations are needed around quality and consistency'

- Workshop participant

'Some restaurants struggle with sustainability. Food offerings don't always keep up with wine evolution in terms of quality – need consistency to establish true paddock to plate reputation.'

'It's important to innovate, explore & build products for new markets. We have a young product & the potential to appeal to millennials.'

Destination (Experience & Product) Development...

...is about creating and maintaining visitor experiences, saleable products and services that meet visitor needs and expectations, reflect the destination brand and facilitate the elements of a journey within a destination. Development may not be restricted to hard infrastructures such as transport, accommodation and attractions. A destination might require investment in soft infrastructure such as interpretation to make experiences more accessible and interesting for the visitor. Consider existing products and experiences; identify gaps in the tourism product and experience offering; and discover opportunities to attract investment to develop new or to enhance existing product or experiences.

The most authentic visitor experiences may be developed outside the regular tourism offering. These will provide opportunities for visitors to experience the landscape, people, way of life, culture and food enjoyed by the local community...

The Guide to Best Practice Destination Management

**5.2 STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE ACTIONS – HERO PROVENANCE STORY
- DEVELOP QUALITY PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCES TO EQUAL EXPECTATIONS**

Action	Priority/timing*	Responsibility	KPI
<p>Experience audit & Incubation program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand target audience behaviour, preferences and opportunity - using most recent consumer and visitation data build target behavioural visitor profiles and match to experience type and demand aligned with experience pillars • Conduct an existing product and experience audit based on research findings • Develop a provenance strategy paper including prioritised catalyst project opportunities to establish micro-regions, incubate and coordinate unique food & drink product and experiences (such as dinner at a farmer's table) and quality standards • Establish an advisory panel of industry advocates and experts (local and national) to provide input for the latest in industry standards, advice and to advocate on quality, policy issues and sector constraints 	P1	SQCT Business development supported by consultants as required (e.g., audit & research, provenance strategy) Advisory panel	Data-driven visitor profiles aligned to experiences No. of businesses/products in audit Delivery of strategy paper & advisory panel established
<p>Cluster Framework - experience clusters to drive quality & incubation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the framework and scope for five cluster groups based on the experience pillars - consider 'Experience Leads' in RTO to manage cluster, supported by local champions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provenance, producers & people – local produce, unique to the region, including Indigenous/bush tucker ○ Nature, eco & wellness e.g., yoga retreats, cooking classes ○ Culture, art, artisans & heritage ○ Education tourism, special interest & business ○ Festivals & Events • Identify & recruit local mentors and champions to take leading role in clusters - share information and experience - guide others 	P 1 - 2	SQCT Business development	First cluster established by June 2020 – meetings & program scheduled Provenance champions identified Cluster support by industry Leaders established All clusters established by Dec 2020
<p>Develop bookable tours, packages, experiences, events & festivals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SQCT Experience Lead/partnerships specialist and Provenance Cluster to work with local food groups to build relationships with the private sector to identify, create and promote new and existing food/beverage/produce trails and tours to encourage visitors to 'travel to taste' and connect with regional produce and agri-tourism experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oldest Pubs Tours - linking to experiences in various villages – i.e., Esk ○ Behind the farm gate ○ Meet the producers 	P 1- 2	SQCT Business development Provenance cluster Culture cluster	Provenance trail(s) & product established and launched – connected to booking platforms

**5.2 STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE ACTIONS – HERO PROVENANCE STORY
- DEVELOP QUALITY PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCES TO EQUAL EXPECTATIONS**

Action	Priority/timing*	Responsibility	KPI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage focus on 2020 - Year of Indigenous Tourism - work with QTIC on First Nations opportunities, TEQ and other relevant departments, regional galleries and Indigenous businesses and networks to identify ways to enhance and connect existing experiences and develop new opportunities • Develop a bike tourism strategy to leverage the extensive cycle pathways in Toowoomba to Highfields and develop 'hero' rides, mountain bike trails and e-bike opportunities throughout the SQCT region by working with groups and associations such as TRBUG, Department of Transport & Main Roads, Bicycle Queensland & Mountain Bike Australia • Work with National Parks and nature-based stakeholder groups to encourage guided tours and experiences that highlight natural attractions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Artisan spirits & stargazing ○ Sunrise breakfast at the blueberry farm/wildlife in the mountains ○ Self-drive, walking & mountain bike tours with personalised itinerary builders/interactive maps • Identify & enable sustainable living, health & well-being tourism products & experiences • Work with tertiary institutes, such as the University of Southern Queensland, Queensland College of Wine Tourism, schools and industry-relevant accredited training providers to develop special interest/education tourism products such as study tours, AG & farm tours, behind the scenes tours (with access to working farms that are not usually accessible) e.g., wind, cotton, solar, and fish farms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ promoting sustainable tourism and agriculture ○ climate change mitigation ○ leveraging the longer-term shift from tourist to 'Citizen Scientist' • Support the creation of unique events to leverage micro-region strengths that align with the experience and storytelling pillars to encourage dispersal, longer stay, and awareness 		<p>Nature, eco & wellness cluster</p> <p>Nature, eco & wellness cluster</p> <p>Education tourism cluster</p> <p>Events & Festivals cluster</p>	<p>Indigenous event/experience in 2020</p> <p>Bike tourism group established with milestones - strategy developed by June 2021</p> <p>Nature, eco & wellness bookable product</p> <p>Education tourism cluster established Academic & training stakeholders support</p> <p>One new event in 2020</p>
<p>Build shareable platforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's On schedules for visitors – website/platform • Enable accommodation providers to be the what's on 'voice' for visitors – connected group • Link events 	P1	SQCT team Media, Comms Web & digital team	Industry engagement & content sharing Platform launched Site visitors & bookings

5.3 STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO - CUSTOM RESEARCH TO BE THE ROADMAP

The Southern Queensland Country Tourism region is investing in cutting edge research that includes data mapping, visitor tracking and behavioural profiles.

This research will provide more accurate and timely insights and information on travel patterns and visitor preferences. With SQCT analysis, it will inform product and experience development opportunities, content and messaging, and targeted offers. Establishing new and reliable regional research and data collection platform will support the region's tourism planning and decision-making. This Plan recommends SQCT has a dedicated resource to analyse and interpret data, provide advice on changing market trends, and hot spots for activity and accommodation to support industry members.

It is envisaged the targeted data will be used alongside Tourism Research Australia (TRA) visitor data which has provided long-term and consistent visitation data. On a regional level, particularly with smaller LGAs, there can be issues with the sample sizes and reliability of the TRA data and this new research is expected to provide a much needed layer of local intelligence.

The model and methodology of the new research program will include the option of a tiered, user-pays tailored analysis for operators who may be considering events, new business opportunities or reinvestment, well beyond the current level of research updates and information based on TRA International and National Visitor Surveys.

Key insights from the workshop & stakeholder engagement showed a clear need for

- Evidence-based, timely information to guide strategies, planning & decision making
- The ability to benchmark and measure success
- Provide relevant, targeted data to assist with grant applications and evaluation of business opportunities

5.4 STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO KEY ACTIONS – CUSTOM RESEARCH TO BE THE ROADMAP

Action	Priority/timing*	Resources /Responsibility	KPI
Establish a research cluster group with representation from each key micro-region/town to identify tourism research gaps and priority needs (e.g., consumer perceptions, visitation numbers at key attractions, experience drivers, behavioural profiles matched to attractions and locations, industry benchmarking.)	P 1-2	SQCT team/ Research & Data Analyst Media & Comms	Cluster group established Staged action plan in place including data tiers for membership model
Based on cluster industry feedback data findings, develop a research and data platform, program and tiered model that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • base-level intelligence through to more extensively targeted and tailored user pays reports • an easily understood and engaging way of presenting the data with tips and insights • TRA visitation data • The latest consumer findings and trends – focus on key experience platforms 	P 1-2	SQCT team Research & Data analyst Business Development	Stage 1 introduced in J2020 Industry engagement Research take up Membership due to research (benchmark) Satisfaction (survey)
Evaluate data benchmarking and analytics service offers to determine opportunities to create a framework for regional collaboration and sharing of key information, such as occupancy performance and other insights to support industry quality and decision-making	P 1-2	SQCT team Research & Data analyst Business Development	Industry engagement No. of businesses sharing data
Work with Southern Queensland Country tourism stakeholders to provide relevant research findings to assist with tourism development business cases, award submissions, and event grants.	P 2	SQCT team Research/Data Business Development Grant Writer Relevant cluster groups	No. of grants applied for & results Award results Industry engagement

5.5 STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE - MAKE IT EASY

The size, geographical spread and diversity of the Southern Queensland Country Region can be a little confusing to the uninitiated. It could be argued that the region's 'boundaries' are more driven by tourism administration purposes than by the consumer. Unlike Outback Queensland, far North Queensland or the 'coasts', that do provide destination cues through their names, the SQCT region is a mix of both country and outback with little brand recognition or understanding, even when prompted. Trying to navigate on websites and influencer platforms is overwhelming without a logical hierarchy there is a mix of brands, towns, council areas, LGAs, tourism tags, villages, regions and micro-regions.

This plan recommends a stronger consumer led, experience focus, with clear cues to make the journey and destination assets easier to understand and navigate, based on the stories of provenance through a provenance trail. Hero produce and the people who provide it would be easily found through interlinking micro-regions.

There are strong tourism groups already within the SQCT region such as - *Granite Belt and High-Country Hamlets*, who have developed networks, associations, more mature product offers, brands of their own, and champions of provenance. Others have varying levels of emerging product or potentially strong, but disconnected attractions and experiences. A Provenance Trail that invites the visitor to travel through micro-regions that hero clearly distinct experiences of produce, producers and stories, with quirky roadside signs, information and education in restaurants, cafes and providores will be the glue that binds the region together. It will be easier for visitors to understand and discover the destination experiences and provide a much stronger road map to conversion, loyalty and advocacy.

Finding relevant information that inspires action at every touch point should be easy...

Designing your journey map – what we did

- We engaged with staff and stakeholders to understand the journey from varying points of view
- We asked Google - how easy is it for people to find you? How easy is it to find key information and to book? How do you compare to competitors?
- We did our own research - TEQ segments, Tourism Research Australia, industry experts and reports.

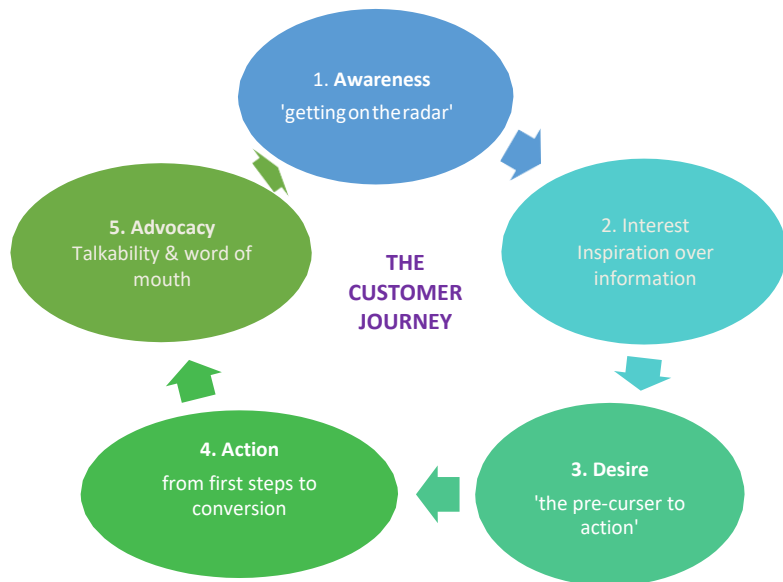
Over the page is a snapshot of your customer journey...

Key insights

It's not the name of the region that's important, what's important is finding a way to connect stories and experiences that make sense to the visitor...

They need to know how easy it is to connect with and navigate the region and why they should. How to connect the right stories to the right people at the right time...

Consistency of information & content is key to servicing & linking experiences & the visitor journey throughout the region – VICs, What's On, Attractions, service businesses etc.



A proactive, engaging approach to encouraging user-generated content, recommendations, and reviews on social media and influencer sites such as Trip Advisor, gives potential visitors trust and confidence that their expectations will be fulfilled. Trust in delivery of promise is key to conversion. Attention and focus are needed for factors such as: images & messages need to be authentic and match the promise

- experiences need to offer relevance and add value to target markets
- information relevant to potential visitors' needs must be easy to find.

Websites and social media platforms that show they 'get' their customers and understand their needs, are very powerful. Digital and social media platforms that explain itineraries, packages and the promise of unique experiences, are critical to conversion and advocacy.

The Plan aims to make each stage and touchpoint of the customer journey easy, and to remove existing barriers.

To get on the visitor radar, image-rich, curated, but real quality content unique to each microregion is needed to tell the provenance story. A proactive digital and social media strategy needs to be put in place to optimise opportunities to connect and engage with hospitality, tourism, and local businesses, and encourage them to share with their markets.

The interest and desire stages rely on inspiring content, images, and unique Product, and experience offers capable of lifting the region above competing destinations with similar offers.

Customer journey	Aware	Interested	Desire	Action	Advocate
What they do	Check social media, read about it, ask friends	Online research Social media	Compare reviews, images & opinions – online/social	Book online Calls for info Download maps, apps	Social post Review & rate Tell friends
What they need?	5 A's \$ value relevance	Authentic stories Their key life-stage interests & values met	Easy plan, availability, price & value	Easy process Fast confirmation Personalisation Customised experiences	Responsive platforms & to be heard Acknowledgement
Barriers	Not finding info quickly	Boring Not inspirational Lack of care & content	Not finding info fast, expensive \$ Negative reviews	Wait times on3 hold Unfriendly staff Generic content	No real engagement
Opportunity	Clear positioning & content Inspiring stories of provenance	Experience based content & imagery - meet the producers, taste teasers of the region	Targeted digital & social ads User-generated content	Fast and easy booking platform	Make it easy to give feedback & ratings
Touch points	Mobile devices WOM	Media, mobile, internet	WOM & Social	Digital, mobile, res staff	Mobile Influencer sites

5.6 STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE KEY ACTIONS - MAKE IT EASY

Remove the barriers from the customer journey and make it easier for visitors to understand and discover destination experiences

Action	Priority/timing*	Responsibility	KPI
Conduct an audit , review and update key information and opportunities to connect and act at each stage of the customer journey, particularly website, social media, booking and review sites	P 1	SQCT Comms & digital team	Audit complete Opportunities, timing & milestones identified
Develop a provenance trail through microregions with maps, infrastructure & signage e.g., to help visitors understand & navigate High Country Hamlets. It could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arrival/gateway and directional signage at key locations & microregions - <i>follow the provenance trail, digital & mobile apps etc.</i> ○ In restaurant/café/store/cellar door information, displays to educate and build the connection with the producer 	P 1-2	SQCT Business, Comms & digital teams	Benchmarks to monitor uptake & visitation Increased awareness User-generated content
An updated, visitor website for the region, search-friendly, booking-enabled and updated regularly with unique, region & microregion content and stories. The website would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily understood microregions with key towns, villages & provenance heroes • Curated stories, vlogs, local provenance heroes - aligned to the five experience pillars • Customised, interactive Itinerary Builder and trip planner - based on research • Booking platform 	P 1-2	SQCT Comms & digital team	Launched website that is easy to navigate with storytelling, customised content, booking analytics & metrics – site-visitation & actions
Visitor Information Centres & Accommodation Providers - immersive, inspiring stories & samples of provenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhanced volunteer and ambassador training programs including product knowledge, basic social media training etc. ○ Create an inspiring sense of welcome through arrival concierge, quality signage, clear theming, engaging displays, what's-on signboard, experience showcases, refurbishment, etc ○ Ensure engaging and high-quality audio-visuals are used to bring the provenance stories to life - meet the farmers, meet the producers, follow the provenance trail... ○ Pop-up activation opportunities & displays ○ Meet your local producer – bring food & drink to life 	P 2	SQCT business development Cluster groups Volunteers	Training program commenced Volunteer engagement Visitor engagement & satisfaction Dispersal numbers & locations

5.7 STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR CREATE VALUE, CONNECTIONS, COLLABORATION & ADVOCACY

As the region's peak tourism leadership body, there is a need and opportunity for SQCT to build both its profile and programs to drive enhanced local partnerships and collective efforts. By delivering a clear, robust and consistent voice for the region's tourism industry, SQCT will focus on leading, advocating, inspiring, informing and engaging across local, regional, state and national levels on behalf of the industry.

A refreshed and focussed campaign to communicate the values, goals and priorities of the organisation will be important to foster understanding, dialogue and buy-in from operators to regional programs and to also demonstrate the RTO's mission to work for and on behalf of the industry. Engaging industry champions across various priority areas, such as marketing, product development, food industry, or accommodation, for example, can also help in building advocacy at the grassroots level.

A new membership model will be introduced in 2020. It will create a strong industry by encouraging tourism-related businesses to work together as partners.

To thrive as a supported and sustainable tourism organisation, SQCT must be able to demonstrate that it's well-governed and in tune with operator needs, that it's known and reliable and can deliver relevant and measurable outcomes for the industry. Flow on benefits will be delivered to local businesses and the community and add to the reputation and profile of the RTO.

Key insights

'It is so important to get everyone in the same tent'

'We are stronger together'

5.8 STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR KEY ACTIONS CREATE VALUE, CONNECTIONS, COLLABORATION & ADVOCACY

Action	Priority/ timing*	Resources /Responsibility	KPI
<p>Advocacy & leadership for the industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a corporate vision that highlights the importance of leading the industry to inspire, facilitate, coordinate, support, inform and represent. • Take a lead in assessing opportunities and information in order to funnel best-fit directions for the industry and provide tools to help evaluate benefits and outcomes. • Assist in sourcing funding, grants and development opportunities for operators and industry sectors. • Activate a proactive role to speak on behalf of the industry, lobby where relevant, become a trusted voice to higher levels and seek outcomes for the business. • Identify and work with industry champions who can assist in accelerating development and experience outcomes on the ground. 	P1	SQCT team SQCT Board Grants Writer Media Comms	Industry engagement & membership numbers Sharable content Industry champions identified
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define and communicate the role and responsibilities of SQCT and elevate engagement with operators and stakeholders • Take a lead in sharing and disseminating information on current trends, research and activities that may benefit operators. 	P1	SQCT team SQCT Board Media Comms	Membership Industry engagement Satisfaction survey
<p>Issues & crisis management – lead a coordinated approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear issues management approach to be on the front-foot as a trusted, reliable and positive voice to unify, reassure and advise the industry • Identify and communicate information, trends, and resources about tourism sustainability, climate change, drought/fire and other key issues with the potential to impact the region. Key messages at the right time could include: ‘open for business’, SQCT leaders in sustainability practices • Develop proactive tourism crisis and risk management training opportunities and resources on the SQCT partner/member website – e.g., checklist of best practices, UNWTO toolbox example, workshops, issues register • Advocate for LGA and association tourism managers to include crisis management planning for tourism in their own planning • Provide crisis recovery support as needed to tourism associations such as grants and funding applications for ‘open for business’ communications and marketing campaigns 	P1	SQCT team SQCT Board Media Comms	Endorsed Crisis Management Strategy adopted by June 2020

5.8 STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR KEY ACTIONS CREATE VALUE, CONNECTIONS, COLLABORATION & ADVOCACY

Action	Priority/ timing*	Resources /Responsibility	KPI
<p>Research & insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relevant, timely data and insights for the industry – interpret, target and tailor information to provide direction and practical examples on how to use intel in making businesses more successful • Guide professional development across the region by seeking input on key areas of need and developing an annual schedule of training and workshops. • Be a voice of trust, esteem and credibility for/of the SQ and broader tourism industry at regional, state and national levels. 	P1 - 2	SQCT team Research & data Media comms Business development	Membership buy into data levels Industry engagement Share of voice within Industry & media
<p>Marketing & product experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivate industry collaboration via hero destination experiences’ process to define, theme and strategise for focussed sector activities. • Investigate regional imperatives to enhance capacity building, training and industry development. • Improve product availability via packaging and product development trade training program. 	P3	SQCT team Research & data Media comms Business development Cluster groups	Micro regions established Cluster groups & partnerships Bookable products Training programs & participation
<p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish clear and close avenues of engagement with key TEQ and TA team to drive marketing outcomes for the region - lead product updates, invite in-region famils, and create industry update sessions. • Create a partnership role/function to develop mutually beneficial commercial partnerships with organisations and ambassadors who align with SQCT experiences and provenance pillars • Coordinate internal industry famils to enhance collective marketing, improved collaborations and better team spirit. 	P1-2	SQCT team Media comms Business development	Key stakeholder engagement Content share Visits & famils Partnership value (benchmark \$ and in-kind)
<p>Coaching & development services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate options for tourism business incubators for collaboration and co-working in key areas. 	P3	SQCT team Media comms Business development	Industry engagement & participation

5.9 STRATEGIC PRIORITY FIVE – TRAINING, SKILLS & CAPACITY BUILDING

This Plan positions SQCT with its industry experience clusters as a trusted skills and training advisor and a go-to source for tourism trends.

A key SQCT role is to assist and enable the development of a tourism ecosystem that builds pathways to skills and destination knowledge by providing inspiring and engaging training, capacity building and skills development support. If a story of provenance is to connect the region, those on the ground need to be able to deliver that story. A cohesive network that enables two-way connection and collaboration between producers and experience providers that includes education, skills transfer, and allows for the incubation of fresh ideas and new products will benefit the region.

The quality of a visitor’s experience is influenced by a multitude of factors and perceptions from information received at the first stage of the customer journey through to service and product quality delivered by tourism businesses pre- and post-visit, in-transit and at the destination. Digitally savvy travellers are also making more informed decisions on where to visit and stay and driven by their desired experiences based on individual interests and preferences – expectations are high. The quality and consistency of these services directly influence the level of satisfaction and attachment a visitor feels for the destination and whether they will become an advocate who shares content and recommendations, a repeat visitor, or a detractor. The opportunity for SQCT is to work with operators to increase their capacity for developing their own unique provenance stories. Building skills, enabling storytelling, and curation and sharing of content is a priority.

SQCT has the opportunity to partner with industry and academic stakeholders to help shape the tourism and hospitality workforce now, and into the future through a members-based industry development program that supports local operators to deliver quality service and experiences to keep pace with visitor expectations, and digital and tourism trends. Delivering quality research and data intelligence will support LGA and LTO tourism managers by ensuring they are aware of behavioural trends and issues influencing the SQCT region and competitors, national and international destinations. An SQCT industry development platform would sit on a refreshed ‘corporate’ or partner arm of the new SQCT visitor website and would include: an extensive industry tool kit, research and reports, training workshops and programs, business calendar of events, curated content, mentors, industry experts and case studies.

Key insights

- Nurturing human talent is a key ingredient in tourism product development
- It generates a unique brand engagement through experience
- Employees become ambassadors of the product, providing tangible value to the consumer

Second Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism - UNWTO

5.10 STRATEGIC PRIORITY FIVE KEY ACTIONS – SKILLS & CAPACITY BUILDING

Assist and enable the development of a tourism ecosystem that builds pathways to skills and destination knowledge. Provide inspiring and engaging training, capacity building and skills development support

Action	Priority/timing*	Resources /Responsibility	KPI
Implement a centre of excellence in the SQCT website and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources (curated content, branding assets, image library, awards & grants' information & applications) Industry & Experience development – workshops, profiles, case studies, mentors, and calendar of events Events & business events kit Research & reports Industry links 	P1 - ongoing	SQCT team Website/digital Comms & content Business development	Updated website 2020 Metrics & analysis in place – actions, visits, clicks etc.
Develop a tourism tool kit based on best practises to include: Storytelling, digital marketing, customer service, accommodation refresh and refurb options, business and trade activation, event management, and sustainable practices	P 1 - 2	Media Comms Digital website Cluster	Tool kit live 2021 or before Establish metrics e.g., visits & downloads
Engage with the government, industry, academic and other stakeholders to influence tourism workforce outcomes such as industry pathways, talent identification and promotion, relevant upskilling and training, local skills pool to match demand, and foster career development opportunities		SQCT team & board Bus development Cluster	Outcomes & benchmarking agreed
Establish a Training, Storytelling and Skills Development Program that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embraces farmers and producers in the tourism industry, and offers support and an opportunity to meet the growers Introduces success stories and case studies from other regions, cost-effective training including digital marketing, quality customer service and important segments such as inclusive/accessible tourism 	P 2	SQCT team Business development Media Comms Cluster	Pilot program 2021 Industry engagement & participation
Identify and partner with recognised experts, industry training and awards programs e.g., Appetite for Excellence, Court of Master Sommeliers etc.	P 1 - ongoing	SQCT team Bus development Comms & Cluster	Partnership value Service quality benchmarks
Talent identification, awards and mentoring to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying potential mentors both in region & online create criteria to identify talent & develop 'fast track' opportunities – training, one on one sessions, awards, scholarships, study tours 	P 2-3	SQCT team Bus development Comms & Cluster	Mentors identified & accepted by industry Criteria established

5.11 STRATEGIC PRIORITY SIX – MARKETING WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

Clear delineation between administrative structure and consumer-focused marketing must be central to the region’s direction for visitor promotion, directing external communications to an experience-led strategy and away from a geographical one. The Plan recommends that SQCT continue to provide the structure to connect the myriad councils, stakeholders, diverse townships and landscapes that comprise the region, and provide the expertise and momentum to develop more experience-based content, messaging and campaigns needed to engage and inspire existing and potential visitors to travel through the region’s hero towns and villages. Experiential travel is a driving factor in tourism with consumers

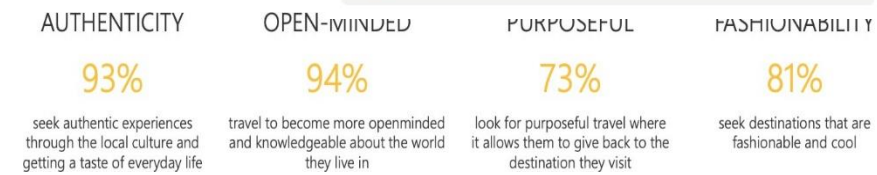
DRIVERS OF DESTINATION CHOICE	
	#1 Nature & wildlife
	#2 Safety & security
	#3 Food & wine
	#4 Aquatic & coastal
	#5 Value for money

Often choosing holidays according to a desired feeling or learning over and above a bucket-list destination. Trip Advisor’s 2019 Experiences Trends Report reveals that some of the current leading drivers for travel are classes and workshops, family-friendly activities wellness experiences, followed closely by outdoor activities and food and wine. Aligned with this, Tourism Australia’s insights into the high-value visitor market show that key decision-making drivers for this important sector include nature and wildlife, safety and security and food and wine. A sector that is more likely to visit often, stay longer, and

immerse more in experiences, the HVT is also seeking destinations that are authentic, trending, and open-minded. Storytelling, real people profiles, content that is not staged, marketing-led by feeling rather than doing, and voicing ethical drivers are key to SQCT content and messaging. The SQCT region has stories in spades to tell, from local provenance, agritourism country pubs and vineyards to heritage tales, bike trails and township touring. There is room to embrace responsible tourism leadership, Edu-tourism, for climate considerations, Indigenous tourism inclusivity and local community welcomes. The role digital platforms and agile technology can play in improving the visitors’ experience in touring and storytelling is also important, given the region’s size and diversity. Social media can provide a person-to-person invitation to visit and revisit to experience all the varied destinations, events, tours, accommodation and places across the region. Harnessing industry energy and investment in an experience-led marketing strategy is key to success. Clear definitions of lead (and secondary) experiences, industry champions and easy-to-understand targeted cooperative marketing opportunities are all integral to an effective and authentic marketing position.

"The hottest souvenir to bring back from a trip is a new skill: travellers are learning different skills during trips abroad, enriching their lives beyond their trip."
TripAdvisor’s 2019 Experiences Trends Report

-  **Health and wellness are important**
-  **Commitment to the environment drives choices**
-  **Sceptical about traditional advertising and motivated by authenticity**
-  **Actions are aligned with their own values first rather than brand loyalty**
-  **Digital landscape requires immediacy + personalised journey**



5.12 STRATEGIC PRIORITY SIX KEY ACTIONS – MARKETING WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

Action	Priority/timing*	Resources /Responsibility	KPI
<p>Experience-led marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine and seek agreement on primary and secondary regional experiences in line with consumer preferences Define brand positioning based on lead strengths Develop strategy to hero provenance, produce and people across micro-regions based on their lead offerings rather than relative locations Create experience packages to encourage drive touring and discovery <p>Hooks & storytelling – road map to hero experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map out a storytelling campaign based on experience strengths and created around/voiced by relevant local characters, produce, natural assets and hero locations and dial up the local meaning and authenticity Create an events strategy, including new content, influencer visits and blog content, to hero the region's unique and stand-out events Help visitors find the 'hidden gems' and experiences through drive itineraries, touring content-led campaigns and hosted media visits Aim to define the distinct city + bush cultures, landscapes, people and messaging tailored to distinct target markets <p>Make it easy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop easy to use drive maps and itineraries that align with key experience strengths and make navigation easy, framed by storytelling and hero strengths Work with industry to develop experience-based packages to drive visitation across the region 	<p>P 1-2 in line with product development</p>	<p>SQCT team Media comms lead Cluster groups</p>	<p>Content sharing User-generated content Product experiences Matching visitor experiences Satisfaction survey Social media indicators Engagement, bookings & agreed metrics Share of voice Media coverage Famils Enquiries Visitation Bookings</p>