

# Destination Sydney Surrounds North

International Strategy  
Stakeholder Presentation

May 2019

An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, a sandy beach is visible on the left, bordered by dense green vegetation. The ocean is a deep blue, with white waves breaking onto the shore. In the middle ground, there are several green, hilly islands or peninsulas. The word "BACKGROUND" is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image, overlaid on a semi-transparent blue rectangular area.

BACKGROUND

# The Brief

Destination Sydney Surrounds North has identified that the coordination of an International Strategy across the Destination Network is lacking and a coordinated strategic approach will provide significant opportunity for the region to capitalise on an important visitor market, and provide a foundation for long-term strategic outcomes.

DSSN was seeking to deliver a two-staged approach to develop:

1. A DSSN International Specific Strategy
2. An implementation program and costings





WHERE ARE WE NOW?

# DSSN Snapshot

**300,000** int'l  
overnight visitors

↑ **17%**

**8%** of NSW Int'l visitation

Over **5 million** int'l  
visitor nights

↑ **7%**

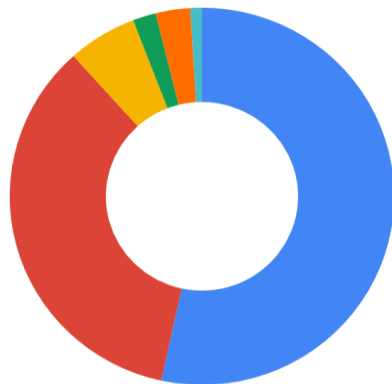
**5%** of NSW nights

**\$0.4 billion**  
in expenditure

↑ **29%**

**4%** of NSW Expenditure

Primary Purpose of Visit International Visitors YE Dec 2017



● Holiday ● VFR ● Business ● Employment ● Education ● Other

Anecdotally **100,000's of day trip visitors\*\*** from Asian markets including China, Korea and Taiwan predominately to Blue Mountains and Port Stephens.

\*\* IVS doesn't capture International Day Trips

Featured in **91%** of all DNSW International Campaigns.  
More than any other DN.

## Top 5 Source Markets (Visitors)

- United Kingdom
- New Zealand
- United States of America
- China
- Germany

**108\***

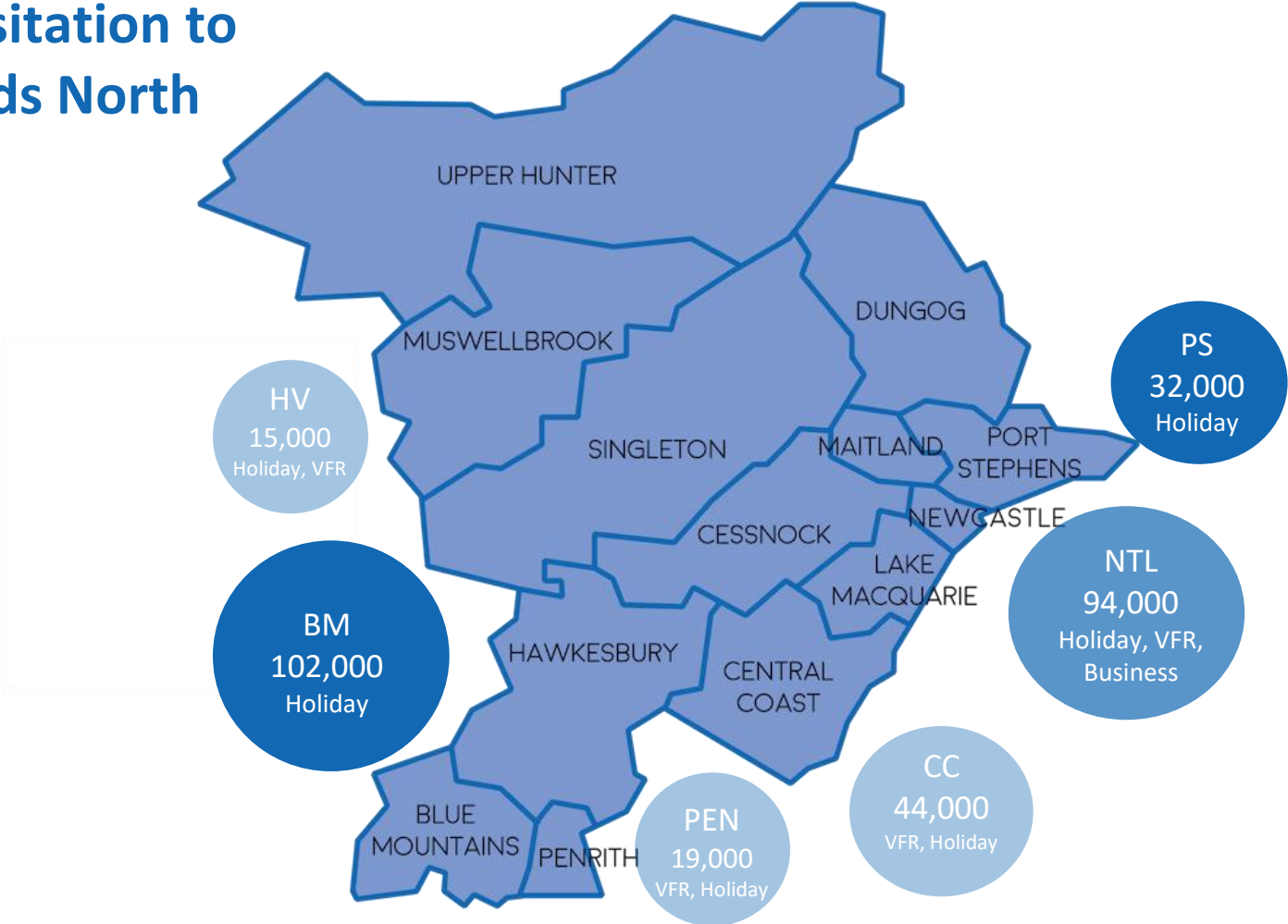
Export Ready Products

\* based in region identified by DNSW,  
excludes day tour operators

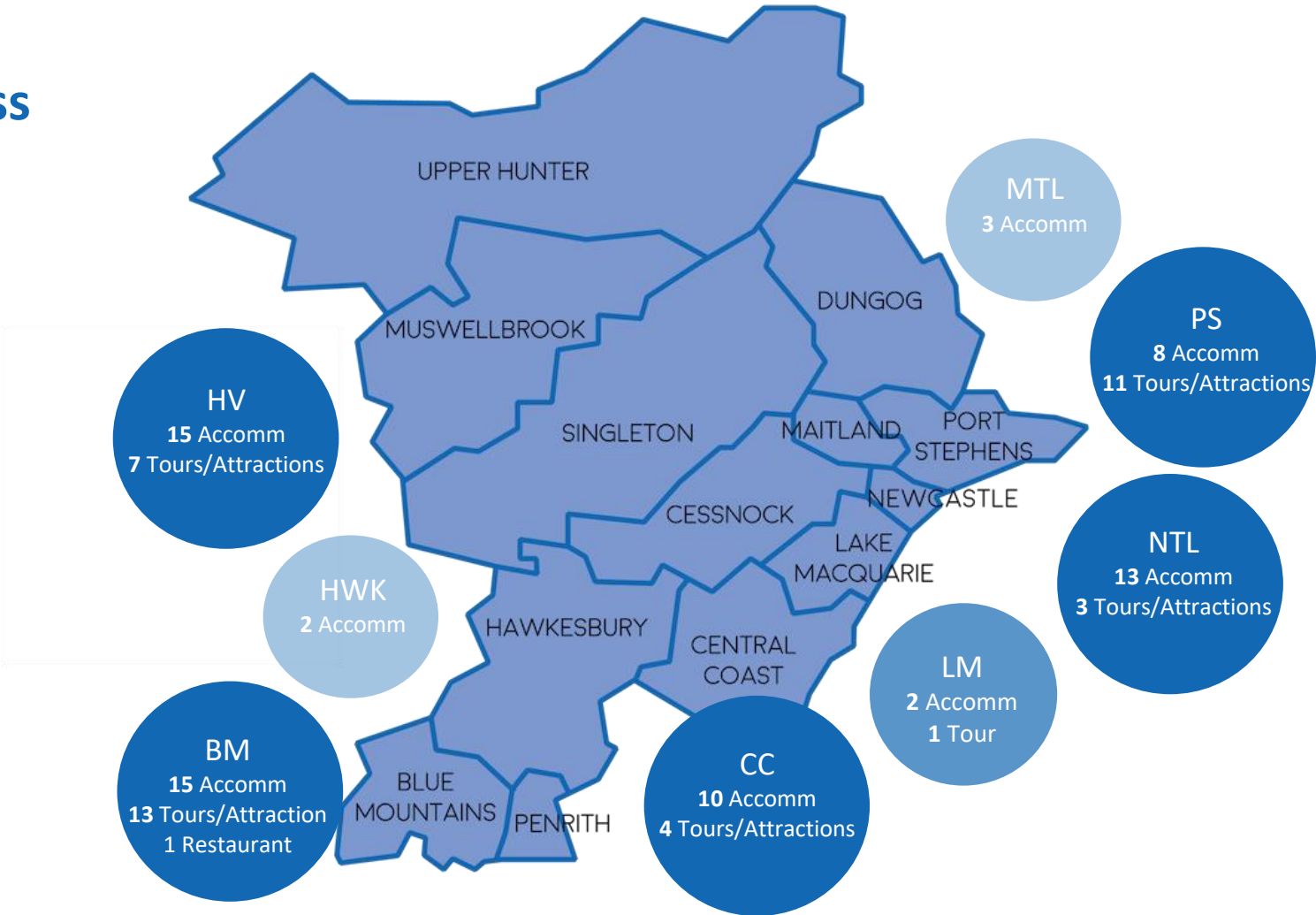
**Over 1,000 accommodation options** listed with OTA's

**Less than 50 bookable experiences** listed with OTA's

# International Visitation to Sydney Surrounds North



# Export Ready Products across the Region



## Additional Export Ready Products

In addition to the export ready product identified by DNSW there are:

- **Two** new 5 star hotels expected to open by the end of 2020, operated by global chains, it is expected that these hotels will be export ready
- **Four** products working with DNSW to become export ready
- **Over 50** operators identified with the potential to become export ready
- At least **15 Day Tour companies** operating scheduled mono or multi destination trips into region from Sydney
- **200** commercial tour operators working in National Parks across the region including day trip operators. Of these, 10 in destination products are export ready. Others are at various levels of export readiness
- A range of free experiences across the region which appeal to and add depth to itineraries for international travellers

## Online Travel Agents

A key resource for international (and domestic) travellers when both planning and booking a holiday, online travel agents are often the first introduction for products to working in the distribution system.

There is an ***extensive range of accommodation*** options listed for all areas across the region on OTA sites with everything from branded hotels to boutique accommodation, bed & breakfasts, holiday homes and holiday parks.

Dependent on the OTA it ranges between 14 properties in Dungog to 447 in the Blue Mountains.

However, there is a ***distinct lack of bookable experiences***, creating the perception that there is nothing to do within the destinations.

Key experience based OTAs; **TripAdvisor Experiences/Viator, Get Your Guide** and **Expedia Local Experiences** all identified a gap in the range of products across the Destination Network.



# Destination Maturity

## HEROES

PORT STEPHENS  
BLUE MOUNTAINS

CENTRAL COAST  
HUNTER VALLEY



## EMERGING

NEWCASTLE  
LAKE MACQUARIE

PENRITH



## SUPPORTING

MAITLAND  
DUNGOG  
UPPER HUNTER  
HAWKESBURY

# Key Experiences

The region is blessed with a diverse range of experiences that are drivers for international travel and reflective of the key travel experiences identified by Tourism Australia and Destination NSW.

## Heroes



**Food & Wine**



**Nature &  
Wildlife**



**Aquatic &  
Coastal**

## Supporters



**Heritage &  
Culture**



**Indigenous**



**Events**

There is however a significant gap between the types of experiences on offer and the bookable product available. Filling this gap will be key to growing international visitation.

# Access Points and Connections



Easy **driving** access from the key gateway of Sydney. All destinations accessible within 3 hrs

**Touring Routes** – including Legendary Pacific Coast, Greater Blue Mountains Drive link destinations with the region and beyond



**Sydney Airport** number 1 gateway for international visitors to Australia (50% of all int'l arrivals)

**Newcastle Airport** direct flight access from Melbourne, Brisbane, Gold Coast & Auckland (seasonal)

**Western Sydney Airport** due to open 2026



**Bus Day Tour** operators – a mix of scheduled daily itineraries through to large Chinese & Korean Groups provide options for non self-drive visitors



Frequent Intercity **Train** Services from Sydney to:

- Newcastle via the Central Coast, connecting to Hunter Valley and Dungog
- Countrylink Service to Newcastle, Hunter Valley and Dungog
- Sydney to Blue Mountains via Penrith – daily, used by FITs and as a return option for some tour groups



**Cruise** ships into Newcastle and Sydney provide opportunities for day trips across the region

Poor public transport connections both in and between destinations make getting around the region challenging for FIT visitors who don't want to self drive.

An aerial photograph of a dune buggy race on sand dunes. Several buggies are visible, leaving long, winding tracks of sand behind them. The scene is captured from a high angle, showing the undulating shapes of the dunes. A semi-transparent blue rectangular box is overlaid in the center of the image, containing the text "WHAT IS ALREADY BEING DONE?".

WHAT IS ALREADY BEING DONE?

# Current Activities - Trade and Consumer Marketing

## New South Wales Regional Deals



### Blue Mountains

**Scenic World**  
From \$40 to \$20  
Save \$16

**Blue Mountains Scenic Railway**  
From \$20 to \$10  
Save \$10

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From \$20 to \$10  
Save \$10

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From \$20 to \$10  
Save \$10

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From \$20 to \$10  
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### Grand Pacific Drive

**Blue Mountains Scenic Railway**  
From \$20 to \$10  
Save \$10

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From \$20 to \$10  
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## 20th NSW Packages



### Blue Mountains Valley

**Blue Mountains Scenic Railway**  
From \$20 to \$10  
Save \$10

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Save \$10

## Farmstays



### Blue Mountains Valley

**Blue Mountains Scenic Railway**  
From \$20 to \$10  
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## Best of Sydney



**TOUR HIGHLIGHTS**

- Admission to the Sydney Opera House
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge

**Package Includes:**

- Admission to the Sydney Opera House
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge

**Price:** \$438

## Full/Half Day Tour Packages



**Package Includes:**

- Admission to the Sydney Opera House
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge

**Price:** \$174

## Great Sydney Deals

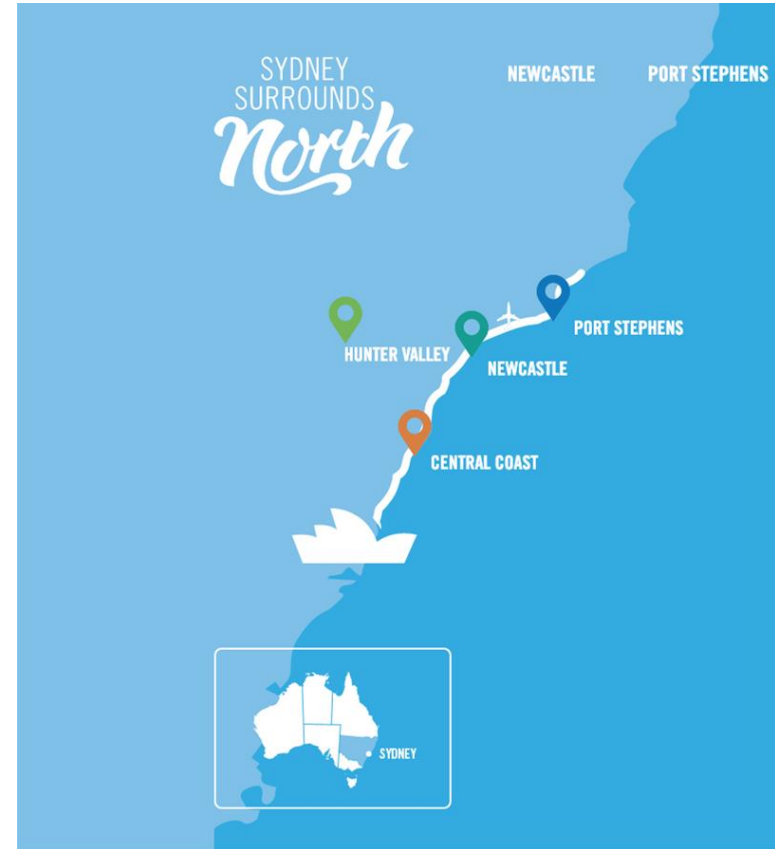


**Day 2 Attractions & Get 1 FREE**

**Package Includes:**

- Admission to the Sydney Opera House
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Admission to the Sydney Harbour Bridge

**Price:** \$183



Destination NSW Scoot Singapore Campaign 1718



# Current Activities - Trade and Consumer Marketing

## Consumer Marketing

**Consumer Websites:** [australia.com](http://australia.com) and [visitnsw.com](http://visitnsw.com) - both attracting millions of unique visitors annually

**Consumer Marketing Campaigns** - run by DNSW in conjunction with partners in targeted markets across the globe

**International Media Programs** – including media famils, run by both TA and Destination NSW to support consumer marketing activities

**Social Media Platforms** – TA and DNSW have an active presence on global platforms (including Chinese social media)

**DNSW Drives Program** - 6 drives feature the DN including the Legendary Pacific Coast Touring Route and Greater Blue Mountains Drive

## Trade Marketing

**Aussie Specialist Program** – TA online training program, over 32,000 qualified agents globally

**Trade Shows and Events** - including ATE, TA and DNSW trade missions and workshops and ATEC Meeting Place connect suppliers with buyers

**DNSW New Product Showcase** - workshop for newly export ready product to meet with key ITO's and partners

**Trade Famil Program** - showcasing NSW destinations and products to qualified international distribution partners

**ATDW/Get Connected** – connection to over 200 online distribution partners

**Tourism Australia's** – Best of Experiences Collections (Ultimate Winery, Luxury Lodges, Indigenous, Wildlife, Golf, Walks, Fishing & Culture)

# Local and Regional Activities

## **Destination Port Stephens** (Ongoing)

Proactively working with products partner who can buy into a range of activities including coordinated trade shows attendance

## **NZ Direct Flights**

Trade and consumer marketing activities led by Newcastle Airport, in conjunction with Newcastle City Council, Destination Port Stephens, Hunter Wine Tourism Association supported by DSSN and DNSW

## **HVWTA - China Campaign (Feb 2019)**

Supported by Wine Australia Funding, a \$100,000 digital partnership campaign targeting Chinese FIT Holiday and VFR travellers, through social influencers supported by digital advertisers

## **National Parks & Wildlife - Export Product Development**

Working with their Commercial Tour Operators on park, export ready training provided, ITO sales calls and ATE attendance

## **Sydney Surrounds North** - [sydneysurroundnorth.net.au](http://sydneysurroundnorth.net.au)

Series of 6 international itineraries from Sydney to Central Coast, Hunter Valley, Port Stephens and Newcastle. Available in English and Mandarin, print and online. Developed with DNSW Product Development funding led by DPS and supported NCC and Newcastle Airport

## **Blue Mountains International Travel Planner 2017 and ATE** - Developed by BMATA with support from support by BMCC

## **Legendary Pacific Coast Touring Route** (past platform)

Membership based program, with partners being promoted through PR, social media and trade representation (predominantly in the USA market). The itinerary is still relevant and promoted by individual products

# Resources and Support

DNSW

**Product Development Team**

A dedicated team, working with operators to support them to become export ready.

[NSW First Program](#)

**Workshops** - 'Export Ready 101' on demand webinar and 'Inbound Strategy' Workshop - available for delivery face-to-face or via webinar

**Guides** - 'Develop Your Tourism Business', 'Promote Your Tourism Business', 'Sell - Inbound Tourism Guide' and 'China Market Toolkit' available online

Tourism Australia

**Research and Insights**

A range of consumer research, market profiles, stats and forecasts providing insight into visitors

ATEC

[Tourism Export Toolkit \(TExT\)](#)

An introductory 'How to guide' on becoming export ready and working in international markets developed with TA and the STOs

**KITE - Know-How for Inbound Tourism Excellence**

National training framework focussing on export tourism business capability-building developed by industry with the support of TA and the STOs

**Discovery Membership**

A 12 month membership program which provides KITE training and additional support

Wine Australia

[Growing Wine Tourism](#)

A practical, wine-specific skills development program for wine businesses looking to develop products and services for the inbound market, delivered in partnership with ATEC. The first workshops will be delivered in the Hunter Valley on 25-26 March 2019

Other

**Sales Representation and Consultants**

Various private businesses offer specialist consultancy, training and sales representation for operators working in the international market

[Business Connect](#)

Free business advisory service available to all NSW businesses, provided through Department of Industry

# Funding Sources

To support operators, destinations and membership based organisations entering or working in international markets, there are a range of funding programs available including:

<a href="#"><u>Export Market Development Grants</u></a>	Administered through Austrade, products and membership based organisations
<a href="#"><u>DNSW Regional Product Development Fund</u></a>	Offers grants of \$15,000 - \$150,000 in match funding for eligible projects, which could include developments to enable products to cater for international visitors and itinerary and tour development
<a href="#"><u>DNSW International Business Development Program</u></a>	The program encourages an increased presence of NSW products at key events in international markets by subsidising part of the registration cost for one delegate to participate in specified events
<a href="#"><u>Wine Australia Grants</u></a>	The Australian Government's \$50million export and regional wine support program, Wine Tourism and Cellar Door Grants open 1 July 2019



# THE CHALLENGE



*“There is a disconnect between demand driving marketing activities and the tourism products and organisations in region.*

*Fundamental **product** and **knowledge** gaps exist which restrict growth potential.”*



An underwater photograph of three dolphins swimming in clear blue water. The dolphins are sleek and grey with white underbellies. They are swimming towards the right side of the frame. The water is a vibrant blue, and the surface of the water is visible at the top of the image, showing some ripples and light reflections. A semi-transparent blue rectangular box is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing the text "THE ROLE OF DSSN" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# THE ROLE OF DSSN

# The Destination Network and the Tourism Ecosystem

With many players in the tourism ecosystem, having a clear understanding of the DN's role and how it connects with activities and plans of other tourism organisations, will help to define activities of the strategy.



What DSSN can do:	What DSSN can't do:
Facilitate training and education programs to support tourism organisations and operators	Make operators work with distribution partners or international markets - it must be a business decision
Encourage and inspire tourism organisations and businesses to work in the international space, clearly articulating the opportunities	Negotiate rates and sell products/experiences to the travel trade, this must be done by the business
Educate tourism organisations and business on how to work with distribution partners globally	Create new products for the international market or build new infrastructure
Coordinate sales and marketing activities with a goal to leverage activities to provide maximum benefit	Control tourism organisations buy in to programs and activities – financial or otherwise
Ensure Destination NSW and Tourism Australia are aware of the export ready product and experiences available in the region	Deliver international marketing campaigns
Foster connections between our stakeholders, DNSW, TA and other organisations	Confirm longevity of tenure beyond 2020 – must ensure maximum impact in the short term and that activities leave a legacy

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, a dirt road curves through green fields. A large, multi-story house with a dark roof is visible in the middle ground, surrounded by trees and smaller buildings. The background features rolling hills and mountains under a clear blue sky. A semi-transparent blue rectangle is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing the text "WHERE TO FROM HERE?".

WHERE TO FROM HERE?



## The Solution

*“A tailored industry & product development program supported by activities which connect products to consumers & trade through all stages of the travel cycle – dreaming, planning, booking, experiencing and sharing.”*



## Product and Industry Development

Building the capacity and the capability of partners and businesses must be at the core. Enabling knowledge building, developing 'bookable' experiences, creating itineraries, educating and inspiring products and partners

## Trade Engagement

Connecting products and experiences with the right trade partners - online and offline to simplify planning and booking

### Partnerships

Work with partners to leverage existing programs, extend reach and maximise outcomes

### Content Creation

Use digital, social and PR to tell the stories of the destination experiences and join the dots across the region to inspire visitation

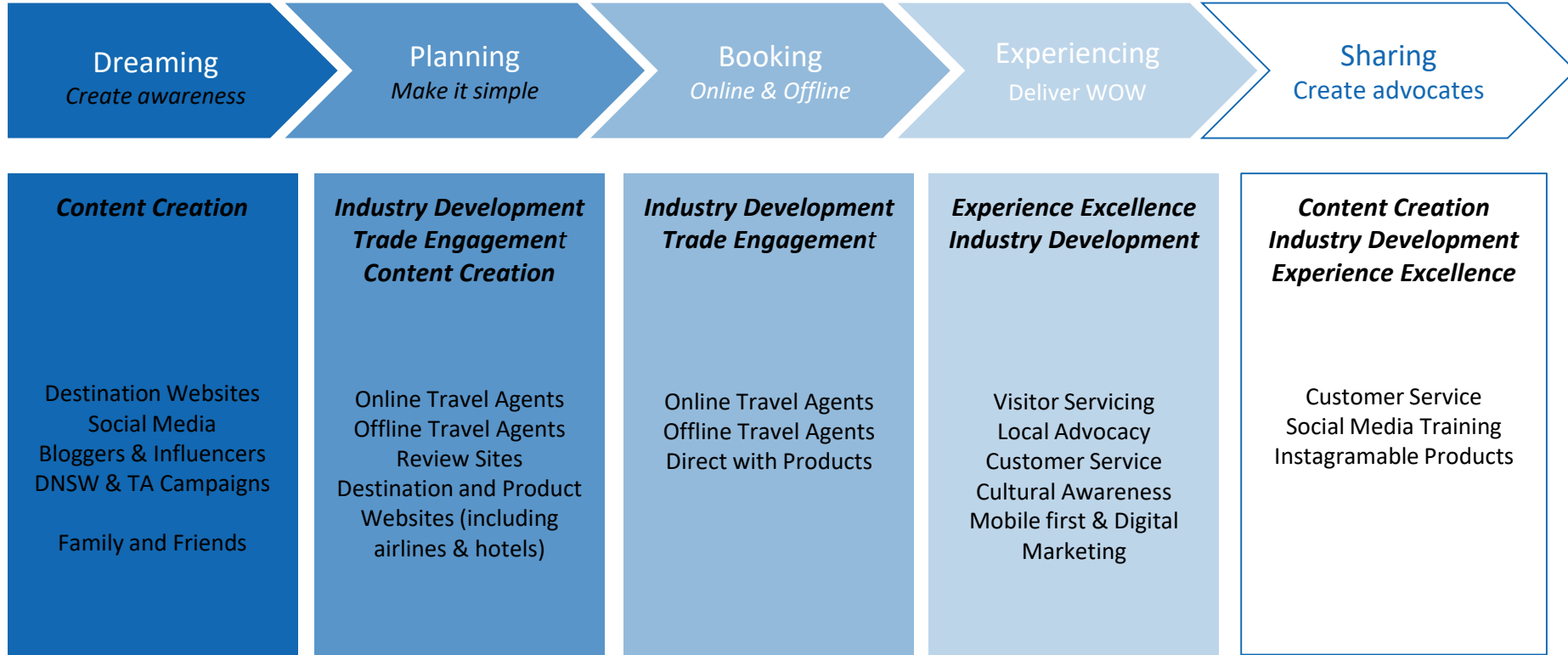
### Experience Excellence

Working to ensure excellence in experience delivery and visitor servicing, build advocates and encourage sharing

### Resources

Develop resources across the DN to ensure long term sustainability of the program

# Activities at the Five Stages of Travel



# Target Travellers

Aligned with Tourism Australia and Destination NSW international target markets.

## Primary Markets

### The High Value Traveller

Tourism Australia's global target audience – defined by behaviour and attitude. High Value Travellers are most likely to be free and independent travellers and rely heavily on a variety of online sources for researching and booking their travel. These travellers have a propensity for long haul travel and:

Are **considering** or intending to travel to Australia

Have one or more of **Australia's experience strengths** on their list when selecting a destination:

- Aquatic & Coastal
- Food & Wine
- Nature & Wildlife

Have a **higher value** – spending more, staying longer and dispersing further than other travellers

### Source Markets

Singapore

India

Malaysia

United Kingdom

Germany

New Zealand

### Visiting Friends and Relatives

Travel where the purpose of the trip or the accommodation type (or both) involved visiting family and friends. VFR travellers tend to have a longer length of stay, disperse further and spend more on eating out and activities.

Currently 36% of international visitors to the region, there is an opportunity to grow both visitors and spend from VFR travellers from the primary source markets of New Zealand, United Kingdom and India.

# Secondary Markets

Short to medium term opportunities to spread visitation across the region

## Groups

### Korea

A flexible market already familiar with our region, particularly the hero destinations of Port Stephens and Blue Mountains. They are willing to try new things and change itineraries. This market has already begun to convert to overnight stays in our region.

### Education Groups

There are a growing number of school groups from Japan, Korea. If the right product is developed, there are opportunities to capitalise on this often overlooked market.

### Technical Visits

As they are travelling for a specific purpose these visitors will disperse more widely into regions. Opportunities in the health, agriculture, education, mining and production sectors which can be catered for in Penrith, Newcastle, Upper Hunter and Hunter Valley.

## Segments

**Business Events** – grow international conference and incentive business in partnership with Business Events Sydney

**Youth** – particularly from the Western Markets (USA, UK, Europe)

**Cruise** – building shore excursion products from Sydney and Newcastle

## Emerging markets

**Indonesia**

**Vietnam**

**Thailand**

With fast growing middle class these emerging markets have long term potential and are a good match for the experiences on offer across the region.

**China** – the largest and fastest growing international market which should be approached in a strategic considered way.

High volume of ADS groups currently visit the region (Port Stephens and Blue Mountains) on day trips. Chinese millennials are changing the market and there is a shift towards FIT travel, into regional areas. To be successful in this market we must first ensure that operators understand and are ready to work with this complex market.





HOW WILL WE DO IT?

# Proposed Action Plan Overview

Month 1 April	Month 2 May	Month 3 June	Month 4 July	Month 5 August	Month 6 Sept	Month 7 Oct	Month 8 Nov	Month 9 Dec	Month 10 Jan	Month 11 Feb	Month 12 Mar
Industry Development											
Identify PER product		Tailored export ready mentoring program for PER & LGAs									
Create resource portal				Education, Technical, Drive Product Development			China Scoping				
	Trade Engagement										
	Trade Asset Development					DNSW New Product Workshop			ITO Workshops		
			OTA Blitz	ASP Review						Coordinate ATE 2020	
Content Creation											
	Tailored Itinerary Development			PR Plan		PR Blitz				Review Itineraries for ATE	
			Online & Social Training				Digital Content Review				
			Experience Delivery								
			Industry & VIC Training		Champions & Advocacy Programs		Events Toolkit				

# Product and Industry Development

Increase the number of in region export ready product to 130 by 30 June 2020

- Development of 'distribution ready roadmap'
- Creation & Collation of resources
- A six month 'distribution ready' training program for selected industry partners which connects existing programs with additional support
- LGA connection & support

# Trade Engagement

Create opportunities to connect operators with distribution partners and increase the number and types of experiences in the distribution system

- Regional Trade Asset & Sales Kit Development
- DNSW New Product Workshops
- Aussie Specialist Program Review
- Increase products with OTA partners
- ITO Workshops
- ATE 2020 - coordinated presence

# Content Creation

Build appeal and intention by telling the right stories at the right time across a range of content platforms

- Tailored itinerary development
- Public Relations Activities
- Online & Social Training
- Digital Content Review
- Review Itineraries for ATE

# Experience Excellence

Encourage customers to stay longer, spend more and share their stories by creating regional advocacy

- Intra regional training
- Customer service and product delivery training
- Champions and Advocacy Programs (VFR)
- Events Toolkit



# Enablers of Success

To ensure success the right resources and partners must support the plan

## Partnerships

### Primary Partners

**Destination NSW** – primary partner

**LGAs/LTOs and Industry Associations**

**Newcastle Airport (NAPL)**

**Tourism Australia**

**Trade Distribution Partners** including **Online**

**National Parks & Wildlife Service**

### Secondary Partners

**Neighbouring DNs** – Country and Outback, North Coast, Sydney Surrounds South

**UoN & UoWS**

**Other airports** that can provide a gateway to our region:  
Gold Coast, Brisbane and Melbourne

## Resources

### DSSN Staff

Specialist to build framework and build knowledge and skills internally to deliver programs in the long term

### DNSW

Draw on support from the product development, international trade and marketing, PR and digital teams as required

### Potential Financial Support for Strategy Implementation

#### DSSN

#### NAPL

#### Regional Strategic Alliance (RSA)

#### LGA/LTOs

A photograph of a child with blonde hair, wearing a maroon t-shirt and blue jeans, standing in a grassy paddock and reaching out to touch the nose of a brown horse with a white blaze. Another similar horse stands to the left. A wooden fence is in the foreground, and a sign on the fence reads "PLEASE DO NOT FEED". The background is filled with trees and a bright, hazy sky. A semi-transparent blue rectangle is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER?".

HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER?





A person wearing a red jumpsuit and a red helmet is suspended in the air, holding onto a rope. They are in a gym-like setting with large windows and a curved ceiling. A blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the image, containing the text "NEXT STEPS".

NEXT STEPS

1. One on One conversations
2. Training program finalised by end May
3. Identification and qualification of potential export ready product by mid June
4. Industry Development program commences July
5. Industry resource portal (on [dssn.com.au](https://dssn.com.au)) available from June