

Marketing your tourism experience

Marketing your experience is an opportunity to be creative, to share your story to your customers, and to ultimately drive awareness and demand for your tourism experience.

It is important to first identify who your Ideal Customer(s) are for your business. Understanding your Ideal Customer(s) will help you determine which marketing activities and tools you can use to inspire and engage them.

Refer to the [Understanding your customers](#) guide to learn more about identifying your Ideal Customer(s).

Understanding your unique selling proposition

Your brand is the most powerful marketing tool for your tourism business. Building your brand starts with understanding the value you offer to your Ideal Customer(s).

A Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is a statement which describes your tourism experience, and what sets it apart from other businesses who offer something similar.

Your USP is the brand message that should permeate through all your marketing activities. To identify your USP, think about the below questions.

What are the features of my tourism experience that are unique and interesting?



What benefits does my tourism experience offer my Ideal Customer(s)?



What aspects of my tourism experience appeal most to my Ideal Customer(s)?



What competitive advantage does my tourism experience offer?

Brand marketing assets

Once you have developed your USP, it is time to promote your tourism business. To do so, businesses should consider investing in some brand marketing assets to help communicate to your Ideal Customer(s).

Logo and style guide

Creating a logo and style guide that reflects your brand message is essential to maintain consistency across all your marketing activities. You may consider working with a graphic designer to develop a brand kit that reflects your tourism business and what you want to be known for. This kit would typically include logos, fonts, colours, and a style guide.

Images and videos

A library of images and videos that showcase your offering will help you build content and stories to inspire your audience.

Key images to consider

- **Orientation** – A mix of portrait and landscape orientation.
- **Hero shots** – These reflect your USP and brand personality and serve to capture the attention of your Ideal Customer(s) and inspire them to delve deeper.
- **Product shots** – Supporting images that showcase your product features are important and can be used on your website. These should demonstrate key features of your offering (e.g. accommodation room types or different places visited on a tour).
- **Social media images** – More candid images of your tourism experience are valuable for social media channels, specifically when sharing time-sensitive or interesting things happening around your business.
- **With / without people** – A mix of images that show your Ideal Customer(s) enjoying your tourism experience, as well as others without people that can be used as clean ‘background’ shots – e.g. landscapes or aerial shots.

Key videos to consider

- **Length** – A mix of short and long form videos.
- **Hero experience video** – A video that captures what you do and inspires your Ideal Customer(s) to dig deeper. Hero videos could be used on your website home page, YouTube, or as your Facebook cover image.
- **Your ‘Why’** – Working with a videographer to develop a video that shares your ‘Why’ is an engaging piece of content you can share on the ‘About Us’ page of your website. This is more of an interview style, where you clearly and sincerely articulate your passion for your tourism business.
- **A virtual tour** – A video that captures a real point of difference from your competitors. If you are an accommodation provider, a tour around your property to give customers a feel for rooms and spaces can be a great asset to drive conversion.

Sourcing images and videos

Professional

For your hero images and videos, you may consider engaging an experienced tourism photographer. Photographers are creative at heart and will see your experience differently to you, which can help when it comes to articulating your brand personality and USP.

User generated

Images and videos of your experience that have been shared by your customers on their social media channels are a valuable content source. These are a direct reflection of your tourism experience, and can easily be curated, with permissions sought for use in your website marketing, social media, and blogging activities.

Brand marketing activities

Once you have established your brand marketing assets, you may like to consider investing in some brand marketing activities to drive awareness of your tourism business.

Website

The key benefits of building and managing a tourism website are:

- Increasing your brand awareness with people that may not know of your business.
- Increasing engagement with potential Ideal Customer(s) through sharing content that helps them.
- Increasing direct bookings from your Ideal Customer(s), which generates maximum yield for your business.

Refer to the [Building and managing a best practice tourism website](#) guide for tips on building a tourism website.

Media and Public Relations

Public Relations activities involve a proactive approach to building positive reputation through unpaid or earned media, including press, social media, and in-person engagements. These opportunities are about identifying your brand story through a third-party source.

As an example:

- You may write and distribute a press release to selected media outlets to see if they may be interested in covering your story.
- You may host a media familiarisation or event showcasing your product.

Business listings

There are two main types of business listings:

- Brand awareness listings which are referrals to your tourism business website (e.g, Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, Google My Business)
- Online listings which are a direct link through to an online booking platform (e.g. an online travel agency)

Learn more about creating and maintaining business listings in the following guides:

- [ATDW - Getting started](#)
- [ATDW - Optimising your listing](#)
- [Online listings and customer reviews](#)

Advertising

Advertising can be an effective way to share your brand story and is typically used to generate awareness and leads. It is a good idea to consider a mix of online and offline channels in your advertising plan, ensuring that you are using channels that reach your Ideal Customer(s).

Examples of online and offline advertising channels include:

- **Search Engine Marketing** – Used to generate brand awareness in Google’s search engine result pages for relevant user search queries.
- **Digital advertising** – Delivered online in the form of banner advertisements, video placements (e.g. YouTube ads), broadcast video on demand (e.g. streaming services) to a highly targeted audience.
- **Print advertising** – Placement in relevant newspapers, magazines, travel brochures, other printed collateral, or printed billboards.
- **Social media advertising** – Targeted placements across social media platforms with relevant audience demographics, including geographic, interest and behaviour-based targeting.
- **Radio and television advertising** – Commercials aired on radio or television to reach a broader audience.
- **Outdoor advertising** – Referred to as out of home placements, including bus shelters, roadside signs, airport billboards, shopping centre billboards etc.

Content marketing activities

Content marketing involves creating and distributing content about your tourism business to your Ideal Customer(s).

Blogging

The cornerstone of content marketing is your blogging strategy – sharing inspiration and information in an article format on your website to specifically address your Ideal Customer(s) travel motivations and challenges.

Some of the benefits of creating articles include:

- Your articles can be found by your Ideal Customer(s) in search engine results for relevant queries.
- Your articles can be shared on your social media accounts to drive conversation and generate leads to your website.
- Your articles can be used as the base of your consumer email marketing strategy.

See the [Building and managing a best practice tourism website](#) guide for further information.

Social Media

Social media platforms offer tourism businesses the opportunity to attract and connect with audiences who are interested in their experience.

It is recommended that tourism businesses invest time each week to use social media to market their experiences. Here is why:

- Typically, people spend lots of time on social media. It is the second most popular online activity after watching TV, and different channels are popular with different age groups. Some popular social media channels include – YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and Pinterest.
- Active social media accounts improve organic search visibility and website traffic.
- It is a platform to influence, build trust and loyalty, convert business, and provide customer service.
- Customers are marketing your experience for you on social media. They are sharing photos, videos, reviews, check ins and recommendations – which are all highly trusted, authentic, word of mouth marketing for your business.

- People discover new destinations and businesses through social media search, discovery, hashtags (Instagram) and posts they see from family and friends.

See the following guides for more information:

- [Social Media – Get set for success](#)
- [Social Media – Tips for Facebook and Instagram](#)

Email marketing

Email marketing is a lead generation marketing tactic which can be used by tourism businesses to capture audiences who are interested in learning more about your experience.

You can use email marketing to:

- Share stories to build further engagement with your subscribers.
- Share time-sensitive offerings to an audience who are engaged in your brand.

Brochures

Printed brochures can be an important form of marketing, particularly for visitors who have already arrived in the destination. Consider the following when producing your printed brochure:

- Incorporate your brand elements and your USP. You may consider working with a graphic designer to produce your brochure in line with your brand kit.
- Keep your Ideal Customer(s) in mind when writing your copy and selecting imagery. Use clear and concise language to describe your offering.
- Provide details of your tour, accommodation or experience including:
 - Description of the experience and what is included
 - Tour times / operating hours
 - Booking information including your website and contact details
 - Pricing information (carefully consider these details as a brochure cannot be updated as readily as your website content)
 - Address, location map, and directions / transport information

Things to remember



Align all marketing activities with your Ideal Customer(s)

Whether you are investing in brand or content marketing, it is essential the channel, language and stories are relevant for your Ideal Customer(s).

See the [Understanding your customers](#) guide for more information



Measure your investment

It is essential that you have the correct metrics set up to monitor the return on investment (time and money) on all marketing activities. Each digital platform has a set of robust tracking mechanisms to better measure your investment, so it is important to utilise these, and focus on activities that bring the most value.