

Government Tourism Strategies

A Tourism & Hospitality Case Study

The Queensland State government's *Best of Queensland Experiences* program drives agenda delivery through a clearly articulated definition of excellence in visitor experiences.

Government support in tourism

When governments coordinate a shared tourism agenda and support industry to develop the skills and knowledge to deliver it, industry's capacity to present a cohesive narrative is amplified, improving brand recognition and access to markets.

Best of Queensland Experiences Program

The Queensland state government's *Best of Queensland Experiences* program drives agenda delivery through a clearly articulated definition of excellence in visitor experiences. Great visitor experiences deliver the crucial word-of-mouth factor that drives real growth for the tourism sector - 92% of consumers trust recommendations over all other forms of advertising.

The program has been developed in partnership with the state's Regional Tourism Organisations, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council and the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development to 'guide the Queensland tourism industry to deliver exceptional customer experiences, create positive word of mouth, help attract more visitors, grow expenditure and increase market share.' The program allows Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) to identify operators and products that consistently deliver a high-quality visitor experience, and over time these businesses will be prioritised for inclusion in TEQ marketing activities. In 2019, 2,416 operators were assessed as part of the program. Of these, 1,313 were identified as a *Best of Queensland Experience* by meeting a set of criteria based on consumer expectations, representing a 26% increase compared to the inaugural assessment in March 2018.

Operators in the program receive a personalised bench-marking report, and extensive online training materials support sector upskilling. Guidance is available on subjects including domestic and international marketing, social media engagement and online reputation management, preparing to work with China, storytelling, media relations and the accreditation process. Industry are encouraged to engage with their peak body and other relevant organisations, and free ATDW (Australian Tourism Data Warehouse) 'health checks' are provided. A live, current listing on ATDW is the only prerequisite for automatic participation in the scheme, and participants are supported, as above, to achieve inclusion on the Best of Queensland Experiences annual list.

Applying the model in WA

Western Australia's size and diversity may contribute to identified skills gaps in several areas which may be similar to those addressed by the Best of Queensland Experiences program, including marketing and tour packaging. The creation in WA of an incentivised scheme along similar lines could assist the tourism sector to present a coordinated narrative, organise and collaborate more effectively, and deliver improved visitor experiences that will drive word-of-mouth and return visitation.

References

1. <https://teq.queensland.com/experiences/best-of-queensland-experiences>
2. <https://teq.queensland.com/>
3. <https://teq.queensland.com/experiences/best-of-queensland-experiences/useful-resources>