

# SPOTLIGHT ON LISA KNEZOVIC

HEAD OF MARKETING, BRAND AND  
TOURISM AT OPTUS STADIUM



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## Give us your bbq pitch. What do you do?

We're all about experiences at Optus Stadium. But for me, with my tourism and marketing hat on, it's really about storytelling. Creating that feeling of what it would be like if you were to be there. Creating a compelling reason to come out and have a great time. Selling those memorable moments.

## Did you always plan to work in this industry?

I went straight into hospitality from school, doing various jobs before I landed a role working in marketing for a global beverage company based in Sydney while I studied a Diploma in Marketing at TAFE. They had a huge sponsorship budget, so I got to work on a lot of major events, from motor racing and surfing to music festivals. And that got me hooked.

## So, how did you get to market the world's most beautiful stadium?

Via Sydney, London and Tourism Western Australia. I moved to the UK with the aim of getting in with the Formula 1 teams. I got to do that, as well as working with the English Premier League team Arsenal, through a sports marketing agency. A big highlight was working on the ATP World Tour Finals at O2 Arena, on behalf of some major global brands. Then I worked for Virgin Media in their sponsorship team before heading back to Perth, where I picked up a role as Commercial Manager for Tennis Australia working on the Hopman Cup.

I briefly went back to my marketing roots after that with BankWest, although I had my eye on working for Tourism Western Australia. So, when a Senior Manager opportunity came up in their Events division, I grabbed it. I was contracting small and major events to come to Perth and the regions – like the Manchester United Tour at Optus Stadium in 2019. I'd got my dream tourism job, but when this role came up at Optus Stadium, it aligned perfectly with my experience.

## How would you describe yourself?

I've always been pretty ambitious and independent. Social and creative, which are a must-have in marketing.

## What do you love most about the industry?

Our industry is full of amazing individuals who share a love and passion for our beautiful state. I love being a part of an industry dedicated to delivering the kinds of experiences people can't stop talking about.

## What's the best part of your job?

The variety is what I really love. From all the excitement of the major one-off events, like Rugby Australia's Bledisloe Cup, to the really simple little pleasures, like inviting families to come over, kick-back and enjoy a weekend barbecue in Stadium Park. We recently launched Halo, the rooftop tour at Optus Stadium, and quite often we get to go up there in the middle of our workday. Sitting on top of the stadium roof, taking in phenomenal views of the city skyline, you can't help thinking, it doesn't get much better than this!

## What's your best advice for anyone starting out?

Whenever I'm hiring, I love to see candidates who've thrown themselves into the industry just to learn through internships and community involvement. Obviously, having paid experience is great, but volunteering really speaks volumes about a candidate's passion for the industry. My advice would be to get out there and immerse yourself in it. Get to know it, find out which areas are the perfect fit for you.

## And what's next for you?

Two years ago, I set my sights on securing a voluntary board position and in Jan 2021 I was fortunate to be appointed to the Board of Australia's South West – a great opportunity to learn and add value to tourism in the South West. I'm always heading down there, but our board meetings give me a great excuse to make another couple of trips and add value to the industry down there.

## Connect with Lisa on LinkedIn

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