

INBOUND TOURISM CHECKLIST

Not all tourism products are suitable for marketing overseas. Some products may need to be refined before being marketed to inbound consumers, or may only suit specific markets or niche consumer segments. Other products may be more attractive to inbound markets as part of a package.

Before investing your time and money in the international market ask yourself the following questions:

- Is your business established in the domestic market? Very few businesses enter the inbound market without first establishing themselves in the domestic market.
- Do you have booking mechanisms in place for international markets?
- Are you able to offer a booking confirmation via email or the Internet within 24 hours? Phone and fax are less commonly used to make international reservations.
- Do you understand the international distribution system and are you familiar with commission levels and pricing structures? You should allow up to 30 per cent commission for distribution through Inbound Tour Operators (ITOs) and wholesalers.
- Do you understand the concept of pricing? Be prepared to set rates and guarantee them 12 – 18 months in advance to coincide with the travel industry calendar in each target market, which generally runs from 1 April – 31 March.
- Have you thoroughly researched the international markets to establish where your product fits? Tourism Australia's market information fact sheets provide specific information on international markets, visitor travel patterns, consumer preferences and travel distribution in your selected source markets.
- Do you clearly understand the needs of international markets compared to domestic markets? It is important to consider the travel patterns, motivations and expectations of international travellers, as well as their language and cultural differences.
- Do you have a distribution strategy which works through a range of media to target your consumers?
- Have you developed a range of promotional material for your clients, both consumers and agents?
- Have you researched opportunities to package your product with other complementary product in your region?
- Do you have an active quality assurance program to maintain your product to a recognised high standard? International travellers expect consistent levels of service, quality products and reliable operating schedules. In many cases, you and your travel trade partners will need to adhere to stringent consumer protection laws.
- Are you prepared to work cooperatively with Tourism Australia, your State Tourism Organisation (STO), your Regional Tourist Association/ Organisation, (RTA/ RTO) and your Local Tourism Association (LTA)? These organisations can advise you about their international marketing efforts and offer a range of cooperative advertising and promotional opportunities.