

Your 5 Minute Guide to Directions!

Short on time? Here's a quick summary of some of the stories in this edition.

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Tactical Marketing Campaign

The 2009 tactical marketing campaign is now in market. A range of activity is underway including the Hot Deals website, Herald Sun print advertising, online advertising, email blasts and media visits.

The campaign is promoting packages that highlight operators throughout the region. This year's packages include accommodation, dining, attractions and tours. See below for a snapshot of the results so far!

- Over 6,000 unique visitors have clicked through to view packages on the Hot Deals website
- Emails have been distributed to over 2,000 contacts
- Email blasts have achieved open rates of 34% and click through rates of 16%
- 152 new subscribers have opted in to the database while downloading the eBrochure
- A survey of partners after the first four weeks has indicated over \$9,000 in revenue had been generated
- 38% of respondees indicated their business levels were up 1-10% for the month of May, compared to May 2008.

The digital presence will continue over the winter months via the Hot Deals website and ongoing email blasts. Other forms of advertising will resume at the end of July.

Fling and Win!

Spike the Echidna is the hero of a new online competition developed by Geelong Otway Tourism to promote the region.

In an innovative first for domestic tourism, 'Fling & Win' featuring Spike was launched in May. The objective of the animated game is for players to propel Spike as far as possible down the Great Ocean Road. The game background highlights icons of Geelong, The Bellarine, Surf Coast and Otways ending at the 12 Apostles.

A fabulous prize is up for grabs as an incentive for people to register their details and keep playing. One lucky winner will receive the ultimate Great Ocean Road experience including return flights within Australia, car hire courtesy of Budget and accommodation at the spectacular Rotten Point House courtesy of Holiday Great Ocean Road. You can nominate three friends to share in the prize.

Roger Grant, Executive Director of Geelong Otway Tourism says this new program is a first.

"This is an innovative way to increase awareness of the region and build a database for use in future campaigns. The novel and social nature of this project also lends itself to various forms of social networking, so be sure to keep an eye out for Spike on the likes of Facebook and Twitter," said Grant.

Visit www.flingandwin.com.au for your chance win and be sure to forward it to your own database of contacts!



Cat's star Cameron Ling was on hand to launch Fling & Win, resulting in some great coverage in the Geelong Advertiser



Geelong Otway Region Hosts World Tourism Leaders

Tourism chiefs from the Geelong Otway region hosted the world's leading tourism strategist for an industry forum and project launch at Torquay in April.

Geoffrey Lipman is Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and is recognised as the global authority on climate change and its perceived impact on the worldwide tourism industry.

The UNWTO is a specialised agency of the United Nations and the leading international organisation in the field of tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how.

Geoffrey was in the region to launch a world-first climate change adaptation project. The project is a partnership between the UNWTO, Geelong Otway Tourism, Tourism Victoria, Australian Tourism Task Force, Victoria University and the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre.

The Great Ocean Road Destination Adaptation to Climate Change Project will develop frameworks & tools for the tourism sector to assess its vulnerability, manage risk and adapt to climate change. National, state, regional and local partner organisations will ensure results of the project facilitate policy development, foster more robust and sustainable regional tourism destinations, and contribute to a more environmentally sustainable Australia.

Geelong Otway Tourism hosted an industry forum and roundtable with key tourism and government partners including a presentation by Geoffrey Lipman on the tourism impacts associated with climate change and the global economic downturn.

Rod Gale, behavioural scientist and marketing consultant also provided some consumer insights and predictions about tourism trends and behaviours in the context of the economic climate.

John Dalton, Director of Strategy and Policy at Tourism Victoria was also on hand to put global issues into a state context and discussed the response of the state tourism body to these issues.

Weblink: www.unwto.org

Island Archway at Loch Ard Gorge Takes a Tumble

Parks Victoria has reported a major change in the southern coastline with the fall of the Island Archway in the Loch Ard Gorge precinct, Port Campbell National Park. The fall occurred sometime between June 9 and 10.

"The southern coastline is always changing. Nature is constantly shaping and reshaping it," said Natasha Johnson, Acting Ranger in Charge - Port Campbell.

The changing coastline means we have to be continuously mindful of visitor safety. Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment conduct maintenance works in areas prone to erosion and landslips, including geotechnical assessments around infrastructure to reduce the risk to visitors and the environment.

The last significant collapse on the southern coastline was in July 2005 when a large stack fell at the Twelve Apostles.



Loch Ard Gorge before (above) and after (below) resulting in two new Apostles for the Great Ocean Road.



Geelong Finalist in the Electrolux Young Chef Award

In a fiercely contested 'Electrolux Appetite for Excellence Awards' Matt Dempsey, Executive Chef of Pettavel Winery & Restaurant won the Victorian State final in the Young Chef category.

From thousands of applications, three finalists from each state were invited to Sydney's Hilton Hotel in June to compete in a 'cook off' racing against the clock to prepare a dish in front of a panel of leading chefs, including Guy Grossi, Peter Doyle and Tetsuya Wakuda.

The six finalists now head off on a five day tour through Victoria's food and wine regions, learning from some of the leading food and viticulture producers. After the tour the finalists will return to Sydney for the national finals, where they will compete in a mystery box cook off.



Matthew Dempsey, Executive Chef at Pettavel in action

United Nations Appoints Local Tourism Chief to Panel of Experts

The Madrid based United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has invited Roger Grant, Executive Director of Geelong Otway Tourism (GOT) to join their world wide panel of tourism experts and have input into the tourism barometer that measures the health and direction of tourism around the world.

"To be invited to join this panel is indeed a personal honour but also recognises the high regard and reputation that GOT has domestically and throughout the world," said Roger Grant.

GOT's benchmark work around sustainability (business, social and environmental) in partnership with local government, industry and academia has captured the attention of many.

"The meetings and presentation I made in a recent visit to the UNWTO headquarters in Madrid and the subsequent visit to our region by the UNWTO Director Geoffrey Lipman has certainly cemented a closer working relationship that is both significant and exciting," said Grant.

Tourism with expenditure of over \$1 billion a year to the Geelong Otway region is a significant driver of our regional economy. The jobs generated as a result of visitor expenditure are particularly important during these challenging economic times. This partnership with the UNWTO is extremely welcomed.

"We are continually challenged in our region and the tourism industry in general. We have not been immune from the global impacts and challenges of Swine Flu, terrorism, SARS and now the global economic crisis. To have input into and access to the world wide work conducted by the UNWTO is a bonus for the Geelong Otway region," said Grant.

Top Drops to come! Geelong Wine Growers Celebrate Vintage '09

Geelong wine growers are celebrating! Despite record low yields, vintage 2009 is being heralded as delivering a true silver lining - producing some of the best fruit quality this region has ever seen.

Geelong Wine Association Executive, Robyn Fitzpatrick said although most vineyards reported an average 40% reduction in yields, the majority were thrilled with fruit quality and were looking forward to releasing some exceptional wines. Reduced yield vintages often brought exceptional results from vines because of the resultant increase in grape varietal nuance intensity and structure.

The Geelong region has also been fortunate enough not to be badly affected by the horrendous natural disasters that have gripped the country in the last 12 months.

"Our grapes were not affected by smoke taint or fire damage in any way, so we are truly blessed. In addition most Geelong vineyards have implemented state-of-the-art water management systems so that grape nutrition and nurturing has not been compromised.

"Vintage '09 will see some tremendous local wines emerge. We are talking multi-award winning, serious wines so I would recommend people look out for them. Those who know their wines will seek the Geelong region out," she said.

Green Your Business and Save

Tourists are some of the most influential consumers driving green purchasing today. For businesses in the tourism sector, it's important in the current economic climate to set yourself apart from competitors and save money in the process. Grow Me The Money is a free Victorian program that can help you do just that. Run by the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria, Grow Me The Money provides businesses with a step by step guide to help reduce their environmental impact and get recognition for their efforts.

Participants can save energy and water, reduce waste and save money by using the program's tools, resources and Helpdesk. Participants can also use Grow Me The Money's logos and branding to share their achievements with customers.

Grow Me The Money participants are achieving significant resource and financial savings. Successful participants have saved, on average, 2,600kL of water, 15 tonnes of CO₂, and \$1800 per year. They are also receiving the support, recognition and celebration they deserve for starting and continuing on their own paths to sustainability.

Contact Sarah Leaman on 5244 7117 for more information.



Conference Conscience Free

Pay for two delegates and the third will conference free when you book and hold a residential conference before 30 September 2009 at Mercure Geelong.

Mercure Hotels recently launched a national conferencing package combining its successful carbon neutral conferencing program with a 'pay for 2 get 1 free' offer that equates to a 30% saving on residential conferences.

Since launching in February 2008, the Mercure Meetings Carbon Neutral conferencing program has successfully offset over 1,700 tonnes of CO₂ over 5,000 meetings nationally, attracting the endorsement of respected government and private sector organisations.

Weblink: www.mercuregeelong.com.au for more information.

Athelstane House Now 4 Star Green Rating From AAA Tourism

Built in 1860, Athelstane House is Queenscliff's oldest operating guesthouse. In 1999 a complete interior renovation added many contemporary luxuries and over the years the property has been recognised with a multitude of awards, from Best Wine List to Best Chef. Today the Ebbels have turned their attention to the impact of their business on the environment. This focus has also been recognised with the achievement of four stars in the AAA Tourism, Green Star Accreditation program.

Green STAR Accreditation is tailored specifically for the accommodation industry and the standards used were developed by AAA Tourism in partnership with GREEN GLOBE – the internationally recognised performance improvement program for the tourism industry.

Green STAR Accreditation is an additional endorsement to Athelstane's current star rating and gives special recognition, showing customers coming to the region that the property is committed to reducing its environmental impacts.

The Green STAR logo helps customers identify properties that have earned this accreditation based on assessment criteria falling under Energy Efficiency, Waste Minimisation & Management and Water Minimisation.

For Athelstane House the green commitment is evident from energy efficient light bulbs, dual flush toilets, door seals and an in depth recycling program, through to signage and guest education on the re-use of linen.

"The cost savings over time will benefit our business in the long run as well as the environment," said Ross Ebbels. "By using less energy, water and waste we are able to minimise our waste removal fees and other on-costs. We have really noticed a trend in the market place towards more environmentally sustainable and aware accommodation and encourage all businesses to invest in the program and do their bit."

Weblink: www.athelstane.com.au



Going Green

The Pathway to Sustainability for Tourism Operators

A key component of the Geelong Otway Tourism project 'Creating a Sustainable Tourism Environment on the Great Ocean Road' was implementing initiatives to assist our tourism industry to make their individual businesses more sustainable. Through a series of workshops and consultation with the industry, fact sheets have been developed as a reference tool for businesses who want to reduce their environmental impact.

The fact sheets create a 'Pathway to Sustainability for Tourism Operators'. This approach recognises that the businesses in our region are at various stages along the process, so five fact sheets are available to assist operators, regardless of how much work they have undertaken already.

Step 1: Build on existing initiatives

Avoid the "greenwash" by adopting a sustainability policy, taking a Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach, involve your staff

- * An Introduction to Climate Change
- * Responding to Climate Change
- * Sustainability, Triple-bottom Line and Avoiding 'Greenwash'
- * Prepare a Sustainability Policy
- * Change Management & Motivating Staff
- * Understanding the Jargon
- * References and Key Links

Step 2: Commit to sustainability partnerships

Understand the risks and respond to climate change, measure your carbon footprint and develop a simple action plan to avoid or reduce impacts

- * The Risks of Climate Change
- * Measuring Your Carbon Footprint
- * Your Regulatory Requirements
- * Grant Programs
- * Write an Action Plan

Step 3: Undertake collaborative actions

- * Reduce Your Energy Use
- * Reduce Your Water Use
- * Reduce Your Waste to Landfill
- * Should You Offset?
- * Programs to Assist Your Business

Step 4: Become a leader in sustainability

- * Tips for 'Green Marketing'
- * Comparing Certification Programs
- * Communicating Your Success
- * Consumer and Supplier Trends

Step 5: Review progress & constantly improve

- * Reviewing Your Action Plan

Weblink: www.geelongotway.org to download the fact sheets.

Surf World Torquay Partners With Gold Coast

Australian beach culture and surfing heritage will receive a boost with the launch of Surf World Gold Coast under an historic partnership arrangement with the original Surf World Museum in Torquay.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to commemorate Australian surfing," Surf Coast Mayor, Cr Libby Mears said.

The Mayor said that the Gold Coast project had drawn on the experience of the Surf World Museum in Torquay.

"Surf World Gold Coast had developed in a similar way to the council owned and operated Surf World Museum in Torquay, which was established in 1993.

"Our staff have been working with the Gold Coast City Council and Surf World Gold Coast Steering Committee for some time now," Cr Mears explained.

"Their aims and objectives are similar to those of Surf World in Torquay, and we are delighted to be forming this alliance."

A short-term location for Surf World Gold Coast has been secured in a building opposite the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and negotiations are under way to secure a permanent home.

"Surfing is a way of life for both our regions and the opportunity to work with the Gold Coast in collectively marketing this experience will be very rewarding for the tourism economy," Cr Coker said.

Surf World Gold Coast will operate under a licensing agreement with Surf World Torquay, and will share branding as well as the trademark Surf World name.

It is anticipated that as this project develops a number of programs and exhibitions will be developed between the two museums, who both share the aim of celebrating the story of Australian surfing.



News in Brief

Swine Flu Update

While Victoria has a number of reported cases the tourism industry remains open for business and continues to welcome travellers from around the world. There have been no reports of any cases of swine influenza directly impacting on local tourism businesses so far.

Weblink: www.tourism.vic.gov.au for the latest information supplied by Tourism Victoria.

Mystery Shopper Opportunity Coming Soon!

There is an exciting opportunity coming up for Geelong Otway Tourism members to participate in "Mystery Shopper" audits. If you chose to participate, over the next 12 months your business will be visited by a mystery shopper as part of the confidential audit process. The purpose is not to find fault, but to independently and objectively measure, track and assess the actual customer experience being delivered, providing an honest snapshot of how you are performing.

The audit process examines all facets of your day-to-day operations on any given day, including first impressions, presentation, quality of the overall experience and the likelihood of return visitation and recommendation to others.

Because mystery shoppers are utilised, there is no disruption to your operations. It will be business as usual. Keep an eye out for more information about these mystery shopper audits soon.

Channel Deepening Project

In May this moved a step closer to completion. With services protection works in the Yarra River progressing well, vessel traffic management restrictions were lifted in May, six weeks ahead of schedule. This means the Yarra river reopens to commercial shipping 24 hours a day, eliminating potential delays for river users.

Weblink: www.channelproject.com for further details.

Blues Train Pulls Out Early

Due to popular demand, The Blues Train will begin the season two months early!

Additional performances in August and September have been added to the calendar and the team are pulling out all the stops with a new winter menu, platform heating and toasty carriages to make sure you can party in comfort. There are stellar line-ups and special rates on offer with a range of accommodation to choose from. PLUS the new T-class #251 steam engine!

Weblink: www.theblustrain.com.au

Facelift for a Great Ocean Road Icon

One of Australia's most recognisable and photographed homes, The Pole House has been generating plenty of interest while it undergoes some general maintenance.

The Pole House, as the name suggests, is a small house sitting atop a giant concrete pole jutting out from the steep hillside at Fairhaven. It was the vision of engineer and architect Frank Dixon and served as a weekender for the Dixon family, up until its sale in 2006. Today the amazing property is available as a holiday rental.

The unique design and location of the house presents quite a challenge when a fresh coat of paint is required! The whole structure is covered in scaffolding to enable these works, making it a remarkable site from the Great Ocean Road.

Kathi & Ray Adams, owners of the Pole House say this project has provided an interesting period of reflection.

"This is the first time in over 30 years that it is covered in scaffolding. We are fortunate to have the iconic building's history documented, with so many fascinating images of the construction period," said Ms Adams.



2 Faces Celebrates 10 Years

In May this year, owner operators Simon Yarham and Tim Mitchell notched up 10 years trading as 2 faces restaurant in central Geelong.

Simon Yarham heads up the small but passionate kitchen team and says using only the best ingredients and providing eclectic menus have been two of the major key factors in the restaurant's success.

Located in an 1857 heritage listed former bank building, the high ceilings and wood paneling provide a warm and classic environment.

2 faces is open for dinner Tuesday to Saturday evenings. Bookings essential. Cooking classes are also on offer.

Weblink: www.2faces.com.au for more information.

The Bellarine.

- Bellarine Tourism, Tourism Geelong and Central Geelong Marketing, have developed a new and exciting industry training program to help business operators prosper in the face of today's economic challenges. All workshops are free for members of Tourism Geelong, Bellarine Tourism and Central Geelong Marketing. Workshops including refreshments are \$50 per person for non-members. Bookings essential. To obtain a copy of the professional development calendar contact Emma on 5244 7107.
- Bellarine Tourism Members will soon have an opportunity to express an interest and be part of the exciting new Bellarine Touring Map. The official prospectus will be issued to members in the coming weeks. For more information contact Emma on 5244 7107.

NEW MEMBERS: ANZ, Little Darlings Babe & Maternity, Shesells, Lonsdale Hydroponics, Beach Haven, Ruby Red Queenscliff.



Tourism Geelong

- Tourism Geelong, along with Bellarine Tourism and our new partner Central Geelong Marketing held successful and well attended member professional development workshops in March and April. Topics included 'Applying for Awards' where members were guided through the process, with many examples and case studies, and 'Knowing your Customer' where members learned the fundamentals required to develop a loyal customer base.
- In May members were invited on a 'Taste Bud Tour of the Moorabool Valley.' This great networking opportunity was very educational.
- Early in May, filming was undertaken for a 90 second "tempter" film for Geelong to promote our wonderful city. The film will be used predominantly on the internet to entice people to visit Geelong. This was a joint project between Tourism Geelong and Tourism Victoria.
- The Board of Tourism Geelong is working with Geelong Otway Tourism towards the best outcome for Geelong members in terms of web presence.

NEW MEMBERS: Colin Mockett, Australian Ghost Adventures, Geelong & Surfcoast Limo Bus, Black Bull Bar & Tapas, The Haymarket Boutique Hotel.

- The Lorne Gourmet Trail was officially launched at the end of March. The trail leads visitors on an exploration of the Great Ocean Road's hinterland, including wine, food, produce and great places to stay. It encompasses Bambra, Birregurra, Deans Marsh, Murroon, Winchelsea, Pennyroyal and surrounds.
- The Surf Coast Walk Working Group have been successful in obtaining a grant of \$800,000 from the State Government (Regional Development Victoria Provincial Pathways Program). This grant is for the implementation of Stage 1 of the Surf Coast Walk project which will support an extension and enhancement of the Surf Coast Walk between Jan Juc to Aireys Inlet.

NEW MEMBERS: Church Cafe and Collectables, Wallflower Designs.



- The Great Ocean Rd marathon in May was a great opportunity for operators to leverage off the event and generate additional business during a traditional quiet time.
- The Otways Photography Competition continues to progress due to the work of the sub committee and in particular Otways board members, Rex Brown and Peter Headlam and Administration Officer, Lindy Fullarton. Well done to everyone so far and we look forward to the climax of the event in October.

Membership Update

Membership renewal packs will be distributed at the end of June. Each pack includes a 2009/10 invoice, member information form and marketing calendar for the year.

Please review your membership details form when it arrives and return it signed and dated with your payment.

Post 1 August a 5% increase will be applicable, so be sure to get in by 31 July to take advantage of the early bird rate.

Exciting developments for 2009/10 include improvements to the regional visitor website which will offer cost effective multi tiered opportunities that will profile your business in the regional, state, national and international online distribution systems. Sales program will begin in July.

Member Profile

The Haymarket Boutique Hotel

The Haymarket Boutique Hotel is a multi award-winning Property, located in the heart of Geelong's Central Business District. With six individually designed guest suites, a delightful private courtyard, luxurious lounge and Sommers Private bar, The Haymarket is the perfect alternative choice for private, highly personalised hotel accommodation.

Built in 1855, the historically significant building was extensively renovated in early 2001 reopening in September 2003. Specialising in corporate accommodation, the hotel has been designed to make business travel a memorable experience every visit.

The Haymarket Boutique Hotel
244 Moorabool Street, Geelong Phone: 5221 1174
Weblink: www.haymarketboutique.com.au



Blazing Saddles

Operating since 1992, Blazing Saddles operates out of Aireys Inlet, catering for riders of all ages, abilities and interests.

They are open seven days a week, with a mix of pony rides, beach or bush rides, lessons, children's holiday clinics and after school clinics on offer. What a unique way to discover more of our beautiful region.

Facilities include a cafe, playground and outdoor arena. Individuals and school groups are welcome.

With Blazing Saddles you can experience one of the best horse trail rides in Victoria. The product has been featured on TV shows including Postcards and Coxy's Big Break and written up in the last three editions of Lonely Planet.

Blazing Saddles
Lot 1 Bimbadeen Drive, Aireys Inlet Phone: 5289 7322
Weblink: www.blazingsaddletrailrides.com



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