

# Customer Centric Visitor Information Services

## - Communications Strategy & Plan -

Prepared for the Shoalhaven Tourism  
Advisory Group, April 2016

# Tourism Masterplan Vision

To achieve tourism revenue of  
\$1 billion by 2020

- Shoalhaven City is the most visited, day trip and overnight, Local Government Area in NSW, outside of the Sydney region
- The Tourism Master Plan vision is for Shoalhaven City to retain this position and by 2017, to be recognised as a year-round destination, **valued for its quality environment and visitor experiences.**

# Tourism Masterplan Mission

“To provide visitors to the Shoalhaven LGA with a **world class experience** that encourages them to do more, stay longer and come back time and time again.”

# Tourism Objectives

To achieve tourism revenue of \$850k.

## Objective 2 | Visitation

- To sustain and grow core markets (younger families, over 50s, VFR)
- To ignite potential high yield industry market segments
- To leverage international market opportunities
- To drive tourism asset utilisation all year round
- **Deliver high quality Visitor Information Services throughout the region**

# VIS Communications Objectives

- **Educate, engage and excite** identified priority stakeholder groups about the new visitor information services strategy to better serve tourists and meet their needs
- To **mimimise rumour and hearsay** by proactively providing consistent and accurate information to key stakeholders groups including tourism operators, the local media and the community at large.

**Acknowledging the relocation of aspects of the current VIC site to the SEC (including staff) but not focusing solely on it**

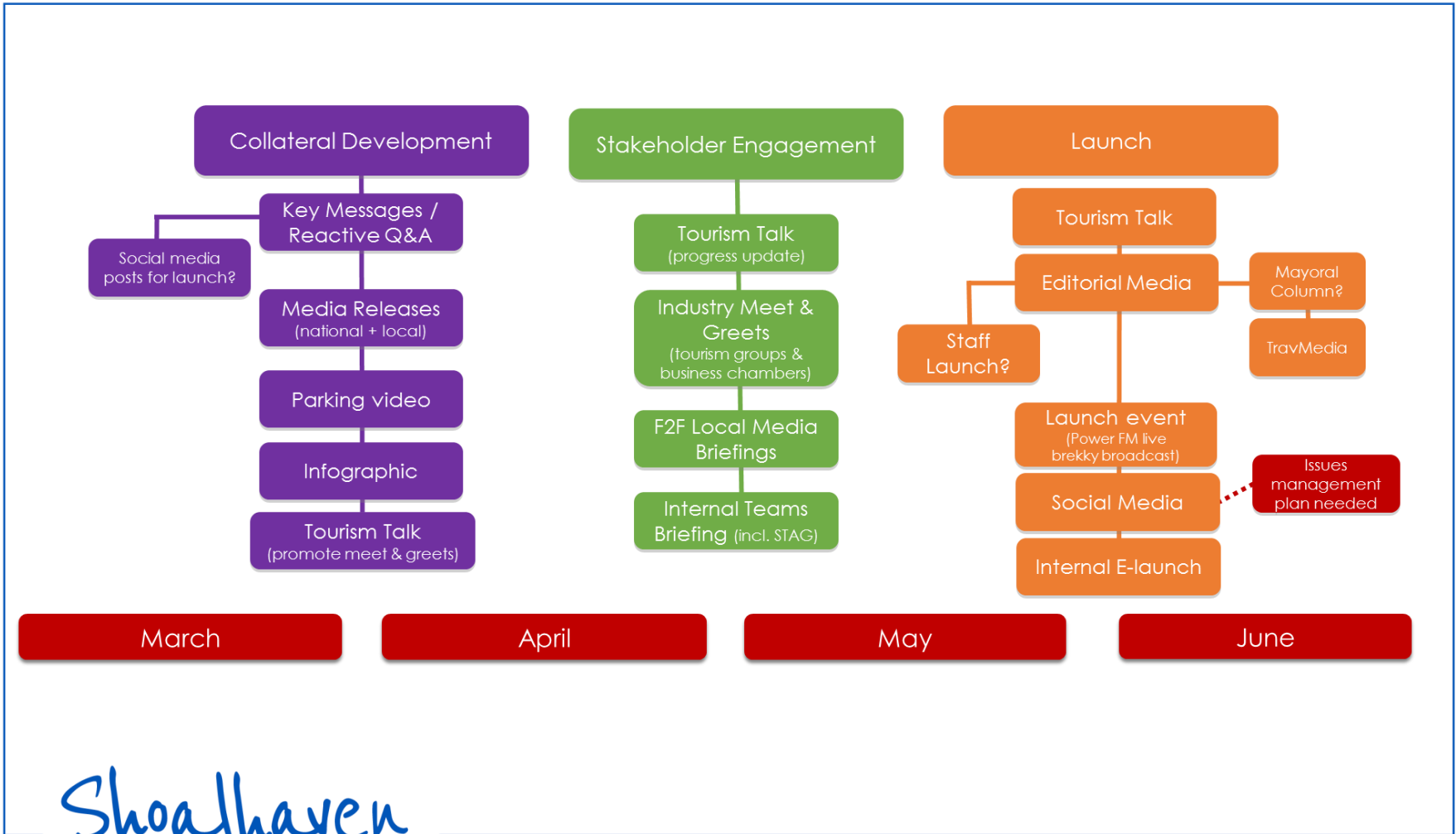
# VIS Communications Strategy

- **CONNECTION** – identify key local influencers and proactively establish two-way dialogue which presents the facts, whilst providing a mechanism for valid feedback
- **CONVERSATION** – utilise established communications routes and the local media to lead and shape the conversation around the OUR key messages with both external and internal audiences, aiming for a positive discussion at best, neutral at worst
- **CONSISTENCY** – we deliver the same key messages every time, allowing for tailoring to different audiences as necessary
- **CELEBRATION** – create “move momentum” and create a focused initiative to celebrate the benefits this decision brings about for everyone involved in the local tourism industry. This is good news!

# VIS Target Audiences

- Local tourism operators
- Local media
- General local community
- Internal stakeholders (Shoalhaven City Council)
- Tourism networks and groups
- Local business chambers

# VIS Tactical Plan Snapshot





# Comprehensive Materials Suite

### what we do

Visitors want to talk to people who know the area & share real life stories

They are then more likely to **STAY LONGER & SPEND MORE**

### why change?

Industry trend: 20% decline in people using stand-alone Visitor Information Centres in the last 7 years\*

Old & tired Nowra Visitors Info Centre

**18%** share of budget

**1.8%** share of visitors

Nowra Centre: 33% reduction from 2014 - 2015

### how we will do it better

**better**

Improved web services | More region visits | Increased staff | New premises

**shared**

Staff skills transfer | = better facilities and better customer service! | Cafe facilities for visitors

**new**

Visitor kiosks | Volunteer ambassadors | Mobile Visitors Info

### P Parking, no problem!

Cars	Caravans & RVs
6 extra per hour 13 allocated spaces	2 every 4 hours 4 new spaces

## SHOALHAVEN TOURISM UNVEILS NEW VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES STRATEGY TO MAXIMISE LOCAL BENEFITS

**xx May 2016:** In a move of the forefront of the tourism industry, Shoalhaven Tourism is unveiling a new visitor information strategy designed to deliver more customer-focused services for tourists and in turn, increase exposure for local tourism businesses. On the eve of what is expected to be a busy winter season, the new strategy will re-allocate tourism funds to deliver a wider variety of innovative visitor services, centred on encouraging visitors to spend more time and more holiday dollars in the region.

The move of the Nowra Visitor Information Centre to modern premises in the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre and new digital information kiosks and form the longer term plans include a mobile van at key locations and events, and a volunteer visitor ambassador program.

Importantly, tourism staff will have more face-to-face contact with tourism operators and businesses - a key request from a survey recently conducted by Shoalhaven Tourism amongst businesses who rely on visitors to the region.

**Shoalhaven Tourism Manager, Ms. Coralie Bell** comments: "We are being recognised as one of Australia's iconic destinations, and transitioning into a new age of relevant services for visitors, will help sustain our tourism industry, which in turn will support the local community.

"This new customer-centric strategy constitutes a genuine reallocation, not a reduction, of tourism funding. The changes will not affect staffing levels, and our team has been supportive of this new approach which shows the value we place on ensuring the tourism industry continues to thrive," she says.

**Q: Why is Shoalhaven Tourism changing its visitor information services strategy?**

**A:** This new strategy will ensure tourism information and services in the Shoalhaven are delivered in line with the needs of today's tourism customer, which will benefit the local tourism economy and associated businesses.

Currently, only 1.8% of tourists are accessing our visitor information services. We need to make changes if we are to remain relevant and enjoy the benefits of a thriving tourism industry.

**What changes will take place with the new visitor information services strategy?**

In the short term this means, the move of the Nowra Visitor Information Centre to modern premises in the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre and digital kiosks, expected to be in place by the end of June. Longer term plans include a mobile van available to be at key locations and events, and partnerships to provide access to visitor information across the region through a volunteer visitor ambassador program.

**How will the new visitor information services meet the current and future needs of tourism operators and businesses?**

The new strategy is designed to meet the current and future needs of tourism operators and businesses when and how they want it, through the delivery of a wider variety of services throughout the region. It's important we act now to ensure our services remain valued by our visitors and sustainable in our tourism industry.

**Is the move a temporary measure?**

The move of the Visitor Information Centre to the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre is part of a bigger strategy to have a larger variety of visitor information services throughout the region.

# Questions?

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