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Tourism consumer website redeveloped

In Budget 2011, the Territory Government will continue to aggressively market the Northern Territory as a major tourist destination through the redevelopment of Tourism NT’s consumer website.

Tourism Minister, Malarndirri McCarthy today announced that $700,000 will be spent on enriching the online user experience and enable users to use the site to explore, plan and book travel.

The redeveloped website will feature a new look and feel and include a new content management system (CMS) resulting in easier navigation and greater useability.

It will also integrate other social media tools, such as Facebook, Youtube and introduce Twitter to enable real time advice and encourage dialogue and sharing among visitors to the site.

Real time booking functionality will also be integrated for all operators listed as part of Tourism NT’s current ATDW program and who are connected to Tourism Exchange Australia.

This will direct visitors to the new website to book products directly in real time and will also include international variants and languages as part of future development plans.

“Online tourism activity is increasing rapidly and we need to be at the cutting edge of this in order to strengthen tourism development and assist local tourism operators,” said Minister McCarthy.

“The tourism budget of $41.4 million over the next year will continue to aggressively defend the Northern Territory’s market share of visitor numbers, and will continue to promote the Territory and support tourism operators.

“This year the Government is responding to the issues facing the local industry.

“This includes increased competition and unpredictability of the airline industry, changes in consumer behaviour, and economic factors impacting on the Territory’s major tourism source markets.

“The Northern Territory remains a highly attractive destination amongst our key target market based on our nature and cultural tourism assets.

“We will continue to attract visitors by showcasing the NT’s unique holiday experiences and support the local tourism industry.”
Key initiatives includes:
- $1.6 million towards a global Kakadu marketing program.
- $1.4 million towards a global Red Centre marketing program.
- $1 million for cooperative marketing and conversion programs with airlines, trade and other distribution partners.
- $0.45 million to leverage Tourism Australia's investment in the China market.
- $1.6 million for business development and marketing support to improve airline access from key source markets.
- $1 million to facilitate the development of Indigenous tourism experiences including Indigenous tourism employment and increased capacity of Indigenous tourism businesses.
- $1 million to foster the delivery of quality tourism experiences including exemplary service standards and adapting product offerings to capitalise on emerging markets such as China.
- $1.1 million to attract business events to the Northern Territory including conferences, exhibitions, corporate meetings and incentive travel.
- $0.2 million for environmental sustainability initiatives that support tourism businesses in the Northern Territory to measures and reduce their environmental footprint.
- $2.1 million for digital marketing and development including the redevelopment of Tourism NT’s consumer website, e-marketing campaigns and use of social media such as Facebook and YouTube. This includes $0.7 million for the redevelopment of Tourism NT’s consumer website.
- $0.1 million to assist the NT tourism industry to become e-enabled, specifically to ensure they have a website and adopt an inventory management system suitable for their business that will enable real time bookings through digital channels.

The tourism industry employs around 18,000 people in the Territory and contributes $1.7 billion to the Northern Territory economy.

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