

Industry Development Success

Projects and Industry Growth

Bendigo Tourism has supported the growth of key industry development projects including:

- O’Keefe Rail Trail extension – signage/video/imagery/ brochure development
- Sandhurst Gaol Tour – tour and brochure development
- Food Fossicking Tour – ongoing publicity and marketing support
- Bendigo Region showcase video
- Bendigo Regional Food and Wine Fossicking Map development
- Goldfields regional map development



Building Networks and Upskilling

Bendigo Tourism has provided the following training and networking opportunities to support collaboration and business growth:

- 2015 Small Business Festival – Retail Trilogy
- Experience Bendigo Famil Program (6 tours)
- Networking Nights – Membership Launch, AGM and Networking Dinner, End of Year Networking Function, and Bendigo Art Gallery Major Exhibition Preview Night (Marilyn Monroe)
- VTIC Workshops and Tourism Awards Support



Key Projects

2015 RACV Great Victorian Bike Ride

Over 3,500 riders and support staff travelled through and experienced the Bendigo Region as part of the 2015 Great Victorian Bike Ride. Bendigo and Heathcote hosted three overnight stays including the rest day in Bendigo where many riders experienced all that Bendigo has to offer.

Destination Management Plan

Bendigo Regional Tourism has developed a Destination Management Plan (DMP) which examines current data and trends in regional tourism. This strategy highlights the importance of delivering a unified approach in growing tourism throughout the Bendigo region including Mt Alexander, Central Goldfields Shire and Loddon Shire.

The Fine Art of Retail Program

Over 20 local retail operators participated in the innovative and practical retail training program, ‘The Fine Art of Retail’. In addition to engaging workshops, participants received one-on-one mentoring, which fuelled a renewed passion for their business growth.

Bendigo and Regional Branding

Bendigo Regional Tourism has developed a brand personality strategy for Bendigo and the surrounding regions, which identifies key brand strengths, regional personalities and an overall strategic direction for further brand development.



Highlights of the 2015/2016 Tourism Year

Bendigo Tourism’s Marketing Campaigns 2015/2016

An event led strategy has headlined our key marketing campaigns into Melbourne, regional Victoria and interstate. Our major events and themes throughout the year have highlighted our core brand strengths in history and heritage, food, wine and craft beer, arts and culture, fashion and music. Marketing campaigns have included a mixture of traditional (radio, television and print) and digital (email, social, blog and website).

Bendigo Art Gallery and Twentieth Century Fox present Marilyn Monroe



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The exhibition attracted 143,500 attendance.
- Bendigo was featured on major signage right across Melbourne including City Link banner signage, Melbourne Airport flags, V/Line train wrap, station signage, and branding on Melbourne City Circle Trams.
- Bendigo received publicity nationally and internationally into New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia.
- Social media coverage was phenomenal throughout the campaign. 106 posts were published on Explore Bendigo (Facebook) promoting the exhibition which reached more than 2.2 million people, an average of over 21,000 people seeing each post.
- The tourism industry celebrated Marilyn by decorating their business shop fronts, developing accommodation and experience packages, displaying Marilyn welcome mats and promotional collateral, and developing unique Marilyn-inspired products and experiences.
- 20 key tourism operators developed Marilyn accommodation and experience packages. Over 1,400 packages were sold with a total revenue of more than \$192,000.



A Year of National Promotion

- A range of Bendigo's experiences received national exposure over the past 12 months on the following programs:
 - Melbourne Weekender – hosted by Cameron Ling (Channel 7)
 - Postcards – hosted by Brodie Harper (Channel 9)
 - Sunrise Weather – hosted by James Tobin (Channel 7)
 - The Today Show Weather – hosted by Steve Jacobs (Channel 9)
- Digital promotions (blog, social media and email) targeted a younger demographic audience (25 – 40 years):
 - Urban List
 - Broadsheet
 - Timeout
- Strong editorial coverage via leading publications across Australia:
 - Country Style
 - Sydney Morning Herald
 - The Age
 - Herald Sun
 - The Australian



Print Publications

- Bendigo Dining & Shopping Guide
- Bendigo & Heathcote Official Visitor Guide
- Marilyn Pocket Guide

Social media is a key marketing tool – Explore Bendigo

39,026

Likes on Facebook

↑ 48% compared to 30 June 2015

Highlights for 2015/2016

315,627 people engaged with Explore Bendigo's posts (liking, commenting and sharing)

546,624 people viewed Explore Bendigo videos

4,396

Followers on Instagram

↑ 141% compared to 30 June 2015

3,191

Followers on Twitter

↑ 26% compared to 30 June 2015



Record website visitation

527,408

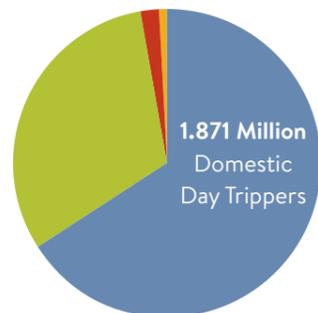
Visits per year

↑ 21% compared to 30 June 2015

Annual Visitation

- 1.871 Million Domestic Day Trippers
- 890,000 Domestic Overnight
- 54,300 International Day Trippers
- 19,700 International Overnight

Source: Tourism Research Australia, NVS and IVS years ending March 2016.



Economic Impact

\$407 Million

Regional Bendigo Loddon tourism spend 2015

Source: Tourism Research Australia Tourism Region Profile 2015.



Bendigo Visitor Centre Highlights

Special Event Visitor Servicing

- 25 new volunteers were recruited to the team of 96 who staffed Visitor Information Satellite Stands (Welcome Hubs) at the major international exhibition *Bendigo Art Gallery and Twentieth Century Fox present Marilyn Monroe*. In addition volunteers staffed the Bendigo Railway Station Platform, *Forever Marilyn* at Charing Cross, and by travelling on V/Line trains servicing visitors on route to Bendigo.
- A new Conference Registration service met the needs of niche markets and assisted in attracting the Victorian Tourism Conference to Bendigo.
- Bendigo Event Rewards* a Virtual Show Bag was developed for major event participants, targeting 120,000 plus visitors.

Volunteers

- More than 132,000 people (15% increase from 2015) were personally welcomed by volunteers and staff throughout the year.
- Volunteer Ambassadors meet more than 400 train services into Bendigo, attended over 13 major events, serviced over 80 local retail, attraction and tour tourism members across central Bendigo.

Tours

- Newly developed heritage building tours at Ulumbarra Theatre/Sandhurst Gaol have seen more than 1,600 visitors in the past 12 months.

Booking Services

- Sold over 1,400 *Marilyn Monroe* accommodation/experience packages worth more than \$192,000.
- \$2.23 million in gross sales from face to face, telephone or on-line bookings.
- More than \$1.88 million directly injected into local tourism through accommodation, attractions, tour operators, artists and producers.
- The team has serviced over 19,700 incoming call enquiries during the past 12 months, 23% more than 2015.



Living Arts Space Highlights

- Supported ten emerging artists via four exhibitions held throughout the year.
- Attracted a total of 25,000 locals and visitors, an increase of 2,000 from the previous year.



Retail Sales

- Uniquely Bendigo has expanded its range to 49 local suppliers, with sales of \$381,892, an increase of 10% compared to 2015.

Heathcote Visitor Centre Highlights

- In the past 12 months the centre has delivered information services to more than 16,000 visitors, an increase of 7% compared to 2015.
- A third of visitors originate from Melbourne. International visitors have increased by 7% compared to 2015.
- 23 volunteers contributed over 6,000 hours of service.
- Visitors continue to be delighted by the quality local produce, gifts and souvenirs achieving gross sales of more than \$27,000 and exceeding annual targets for the third year.



- Collaboration with local events has grown with increased support provided for; *Heathcote On Show*, *Engine Room Productions*, *Heathcote Wine and Food Festival* and the *Great Vic Bike Ride*, with Heathcote being voted the "most welcoming and favourite town" by participants of the 2015 ride.