



Creators of  
Captivating  
Communication

# DESTINATION MARKETING STRATEGY

Marketing the Tablelands Destination - Year One Campaign

DATE: 12 JAN 2021



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## INTRODUCTION

Located in Tropical North Queensland, the Atherton Tablelands area offers immersive nature and adventure based experiences for visitors with dramatic mountain ranges, untouched rainforests and breathtaking waterfalls.

In order to create greater awareness and propensity to visit in key target markets, there is a need to focus marketing on tailored offerings under defined experience pillars, which will resonate with key audiences.

The 2021 Destination Marketing Campaign will be highly targeted in approach, using a mix of PR, digital media, stakeholder engagement and leveraging opportunities to communicate in key target markets.



## OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective is the development and delivery of a three-year destination marketing campaign for Tablelands Regional Council to increase visitation to the area, length of stay and tourism spend.

### **Year one objectives:**

- Develop a destination marketing campaign for Year One
- Identify key target markets for Tablelands
- Identify a campaign-based approach for marketing the Tablelands destination.



# SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

## Key PEST Considerations:

- More Australians researching and booking holidays online
- Increase in Australians seeking domestic holidays, due to international border restrictions
- No international tourism due to Covid-19
- Increase in domestic tourism marketing campaigns to capitalise on Australians seeking domestic holidays
- Rise of experience economy
- Trend towards people seeking new, different, authentic experiences
- Trend toward regional destinations for short stay trips
- Local towns within TRC operating reduced hours due to Covid-19

# STAKEHOLDERS

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Key stakeholders for the Destination Marketing Strategy include;

## 01 TOURISM BODIES

### TOURISM TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND

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**Role:**

Regional Tourism Organisation responsible for marketing and destination management of Tropical North Queensland

**Activity:**

Overarching campaign messaging – See Great, leave greater. Strategy is based on putting seasonal campaigns in market to target visitors at various points of the year based on different offerings. Marketing is heavily drive based.

**Opportunities:**

Collaboration with media famils, co-op marketing if aligned to seasonal campaign strategy. Linking to website via TRC campaign site. Social media content.

### TOURISM ATHERTON TABLELANDS

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**Role:**

Local Tourism Organisation for Atherton Tablelands region.

**Activity:**

Destination website and social media management. Visitor Guide (Discover Magazine), content development (video, photography).

**Opportunities:**

Linking to website via TRC campaign site, shared social content.

## 02 LOCAL TOURISM OPERATORS

**Role:**

294 tourism-based businesses offering experiences and accommodation to visitors

**Activity:**

Varied. Operators encouraged to share plans, news, offers and event information with TRC

**Opportunities:**

Packaging experiences for marketing key pillars. Contributing to any media stories or famils.

# STAKEHOLDERS

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Key stakeholders for the Destination Marketing Strategy include;

## 03 NEIGHBOURING LGO'S

### MAREEBA SHIRE COUNCIL

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**Role:**

LGA. Destination marketing of Mareeba Shire

**Activity:**

Planning 3-year digital marketing campaign focusing on experiences in Kuranda, Mareeba and Chillagoe

**Opportunities:**

Cross-promotion in Kuranda as entry point for the Tablelands.

### CASSOWARY COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

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**Role:**

LGA. Destination marketing of Cassowary Coast – collaboration with Tropical Coast Tourism

**Activity:**

Campaign run by Tropical Coast Tourism focusing on pillars of Nature and Adventure. Key marketing in Cairns and Townsville regions. VIC vehicle at key events, Caravan/camping expo display, social and print media in key markets.

**Opportunities:**

Collaboration around nature and adventure opportunities to strengthen offering. Cross regional events (TARGA, mountain biking etc).

## 04 MEDIA

**Role:**

To cover stories of interest and significance to their audience

**Activity:**

Coverage of tourism and travel stories across key publications

**Opportunities:**

Raising awareness in key markets through proactive PR engagement with target media.

**Other Stakeholders to keep informed of marketing activities include:**

- Visitor information centres
- Wet Tropics Management Authority
- Queensland Parks and Wildlife
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Herberton Business & Tourism Association
- Herberton Community Interaction
- Tablelands Futures Corporation
- Yungaburra Association Inc



# DESTINATION AUDIT

The newly developed Destination Management Plan (DMP) includes a thorough Destination Audit. Key observations, specific to marketing the Tablelands destination include;

<b>ATTRIBUTES:</b>	Natural assets – volcano lakes, waterfalls, rainforests, farmland.
<b>APPEAL:</b>	Beauty and diversity
<b>ICONIC SITES:</b>	Tinaroo Dam, the Curtain and Cathedral fig trees
<b>EXPERIENCE PILLARS:</b>	Nature, heritage, trails, food

These experience pillars also cross-over with recommendations from Tourism Atherton Tablelands Strategic Plan and the Story Project plan developed for TRC.

## IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES:

- Attracting markets is much more difficult without a specific, stand-out marketing ‘hook’.
- “Strength of having wide variety of assets – something for everybody – can become a weakness. It can dilute effort and resource allocation, confuse markets and work against the need to stand out from the competition.”
- Natural assets are of high quality but free to experience which leads to low yield for the local tourism sector
- Accommodation capacity is fundamental to increasing visitor length of stay, especially larger groups
- There is limited data available on visitation, with only high-level statistics available

## RECOMMENDATION OF DMP:

- Focus marketing on highly differentiating features and well-defined market segments.

# KEY CONSIDERATIONS

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## CURRENT MARKETING ACTIVITIES AND COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

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In developing the campaign and positioning for Tablelands, a review of current marketing activities and potential collaboration opportunities must be considered. These primarily include activities by the RTO, LTO and neighbouring LGA's as outlined in stakeholders.

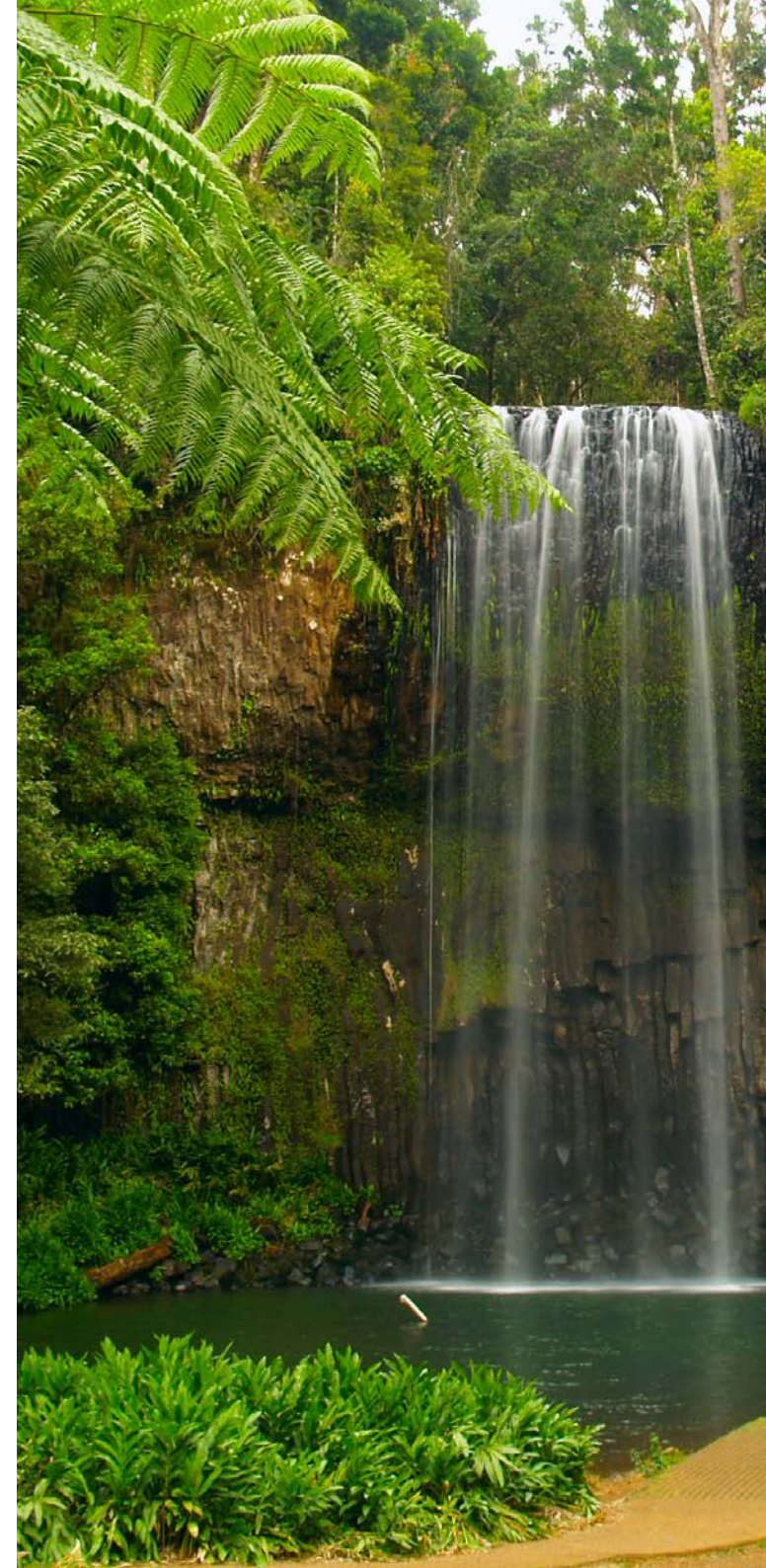
### Key digital platforms that have been reviewed include;

- Tourism Atherton Tablelands website
- Atherton Tablelands Instagram and Facebook
- TTNQ website
- TTNQ socials

## COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

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The current international travel restrictions related to Covid-19 present both a challenge and an opportunity for the Tablelands area. While international visitation will take some time to reinstate, there are many Australians with cancelled overseas holidays who are now looking for alternatives within Australia. Federal and State tourism campaigns are encouraging Australians to support domestic tourism industries with campaigns such as 'Queensland, you're good to go', which provides the momentum and motivation to attract local, regional, intrastate and interstate visitation to the area through a well-timed and executed destination marketing campaign.





# AUDIENCE

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## TARGET

- New visitors
- People travelling domestically who are looking for new and different experiences (instead of internationally)

## SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

### SELF-DRIVE MARKET

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- Locals wanting to reconnect in their community
- Queenslanders wanting to support Queensland tourism industries
- Interstate travellers visiting Queensland following the easing of travel restrictions. This could include travellers who would usually fly to a destination but have now converted to self-drive post COVID-19.

### VFR

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- Family and friends of 'locals' who are keen to visit once restrictions ease

## HOLIDAY SEEKERS

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- Families with cancelled overseas holidays who are motivated to travel in the next 12 months
- Grey nomads looking for new self-drive experiences

## GROWTH MARKET

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- 18-35 years looking for new and unique experiences

## MARKETS

### TIER 1

Townsville and Cairns (self-drive market, holiday seekers, VFR and experience seekers most likely to visit as part of a holiday to Cairns region)

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### TIER 2

Brisbane, Gold Coast and Regional QLD (self-drive market and experience seekers)

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### TIER 3

Sydney and Melbourne (holiday seekers and VFR entering Cairns via Sydney and Melbourne)

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## APPROACH

Following a review of all activity in market and consultation with key stakeholders, year one of the marketing campaign will be a seasonal, targeted, campaign-based approach.

The paid digital campaign component will run from August to October, to extend the winter season as a focus and to align with TTNQ and neighbouring Council's marketing approaches, with other activity spread across the year.

This ties closely to TTNQ's approach of marketing experiences based on the season that fall into their focus pillars. The benefit in this alignment is the opportunities this provides TRC to partner with TTNQ on specific campaign initiatives, which TTNQ has expressed a willingness for.



## **EXPERIENCE PILLARS**

### **Nature and adventure**

The campaign will focus on the key experience pillars of nature and adventure, through the development of specific collateral and marketing that focuses on the nature and adventure experiences in the region.

Increasingly, Australians are searching online for destination information with the start of the journey (research) and decision point (booking a holiday) occurring online. Digital marketing will be one of the key elements of the campaign, with a number of tools and channels deployed to capture potential visitors at all stages of the customer purchase cycle - dreaming, planning, booking and destination.

# THE CUSTOMER PURCHASE CYCLE

	GOAL	FOCUS
<b>DREAMING</b>	Capture the imagination Inspire, Ignite interest, Create Desire	On emotion, how this holiday will make the consumer feel and look - what is the benefit to them.
<b>PLANNING</b>	Make it tangible and achievable Communicate value	On the tactical, how we can demonstrate value against our competitors.
<b>BOOKING</b>	Make it easy. Make it their own	On tactical, how is value demonstrated, where are the savings, how have you got the best deal?
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Increase spend in the market. Encourage return visits. Inspire the next journey	Tactical - how is value demonstrated in market. Emotional - how to maintain the holiday feeling.

ACTION	DECISION	SHARING
<p>Moves from thinking about holidays generally to actively considering where to go.</p>	<p>Potential travellers are open to broad range of information, including experiences, deals and offers. However the focus at this stage is weighing up potential destinations, with this phase ending when a person decides where to go</p>	<p>Reliving the experience and influencing others Traditionally a post destination activity for long-haul travel. However, social media and user generated content allows for sharing across all stages of the purchase cycle.</p>
<p>Collecting information seeking recommendations, building itineraries.</p>	<p>Travellers have decided to come to Australia and are active and in-market - they are consuming advertising, talking to friends, surfing the web. Looking for elements to create the best holiday for them.</p>	
<p>Physical process</p>	<p>Flights are usually booked first, while accommodation and activities fall into place later as other good deals arise. The booking stage is a great opportunity for upselling and upgrades.</p>	
<p>On holiday!</p>	<p>The destination stage is the heart of the journey cycle. However, decisions are still being made around altering itineraries, booking accommodation and activities or making last minute local travel arrangements.</p>	

## **BRANDING**

The Atherton Tablelands has a destination brand in place, which is available to all tourism and business operators in the Atherton Tablelands. Developed by Tourism Atherton Tablelands, the 'Discover Perfect' brand and fig leaf logo is carried across the Discover Magazine, social channels and website.

Given the existing branding and the focus of 2021 being a targeted campaign-based approach, a campaign theme will be developed for all marketing activity, which will not dilute, but complement the Discover Perfect brand.



# THE CAMPAIGN - YEAR 1

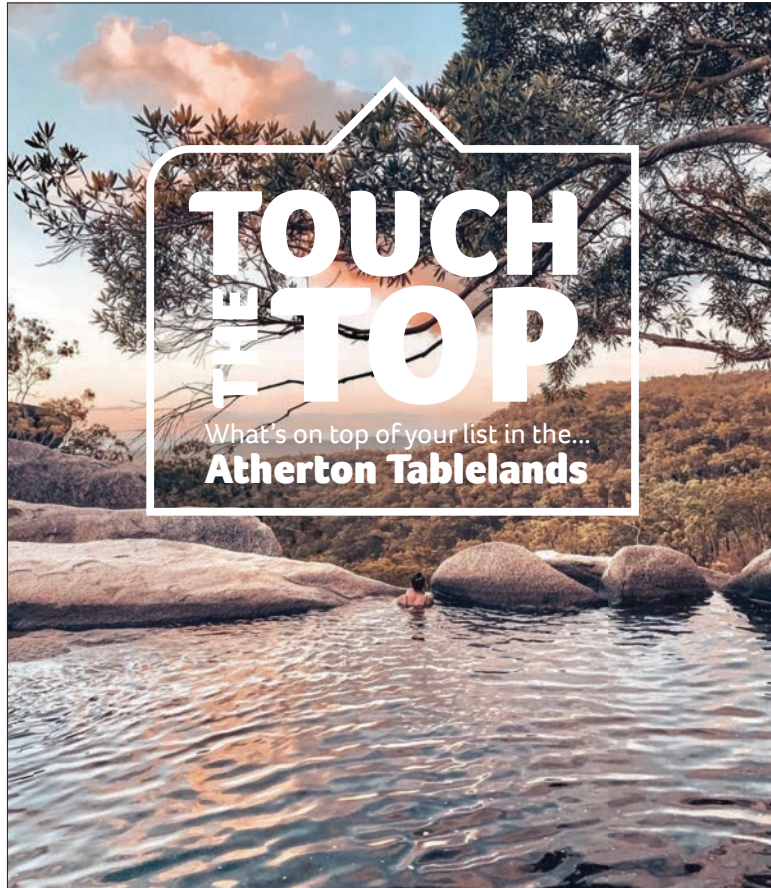
## Campaign theme: 'Touch the top'

The campaign nods to the geographical positioning of the Tablelands and the destination being one that is often visited as part of a holiday to the Cairns region. Visitors can top off their trip with experiences only found in the Tablelands. By 'Touching the top', they can top off their trip.

### **CAMPAIGN MESSAGING**

- Touch the top - visit Atherton Tablelands
- Top off your trip with a visit to Atherton Tablelands
- Top off your holiday with nature in the Atherton Tablelands
- Top off your trip with adventure in the Atherton Tablelands
- What's top of your list in the Atherton Tablelands

# CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS



## Experience something...

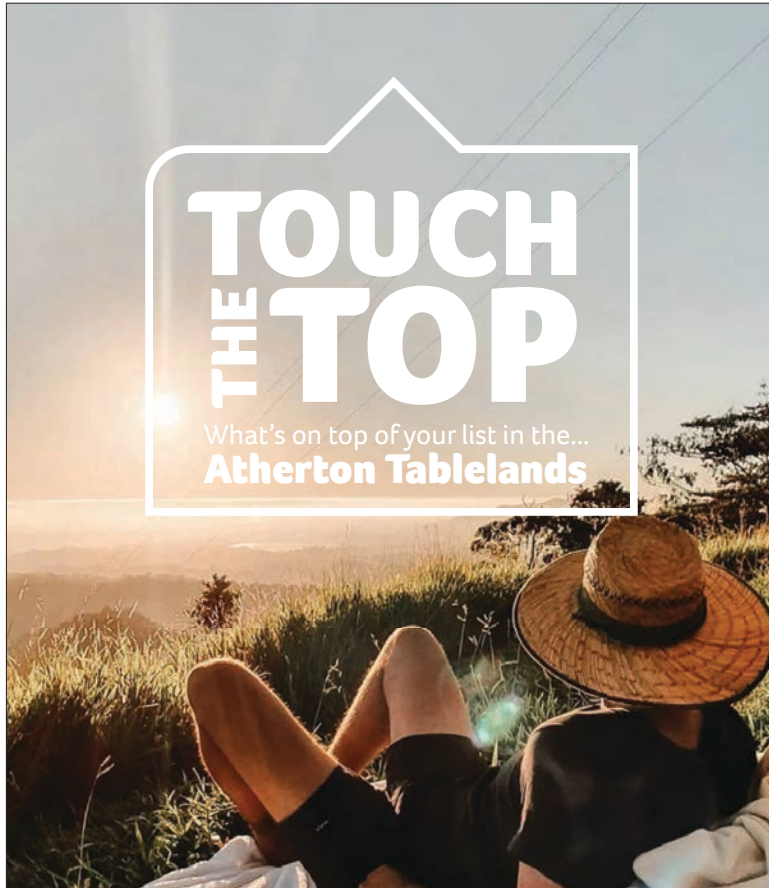
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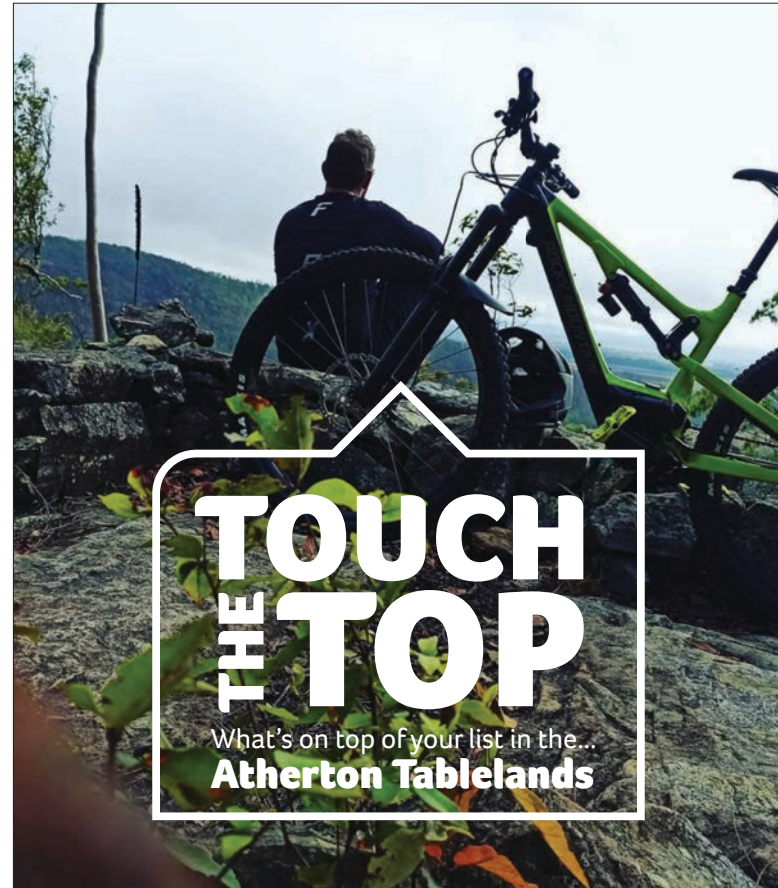
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# CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS



## Experience something...

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## Experience something...

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## CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

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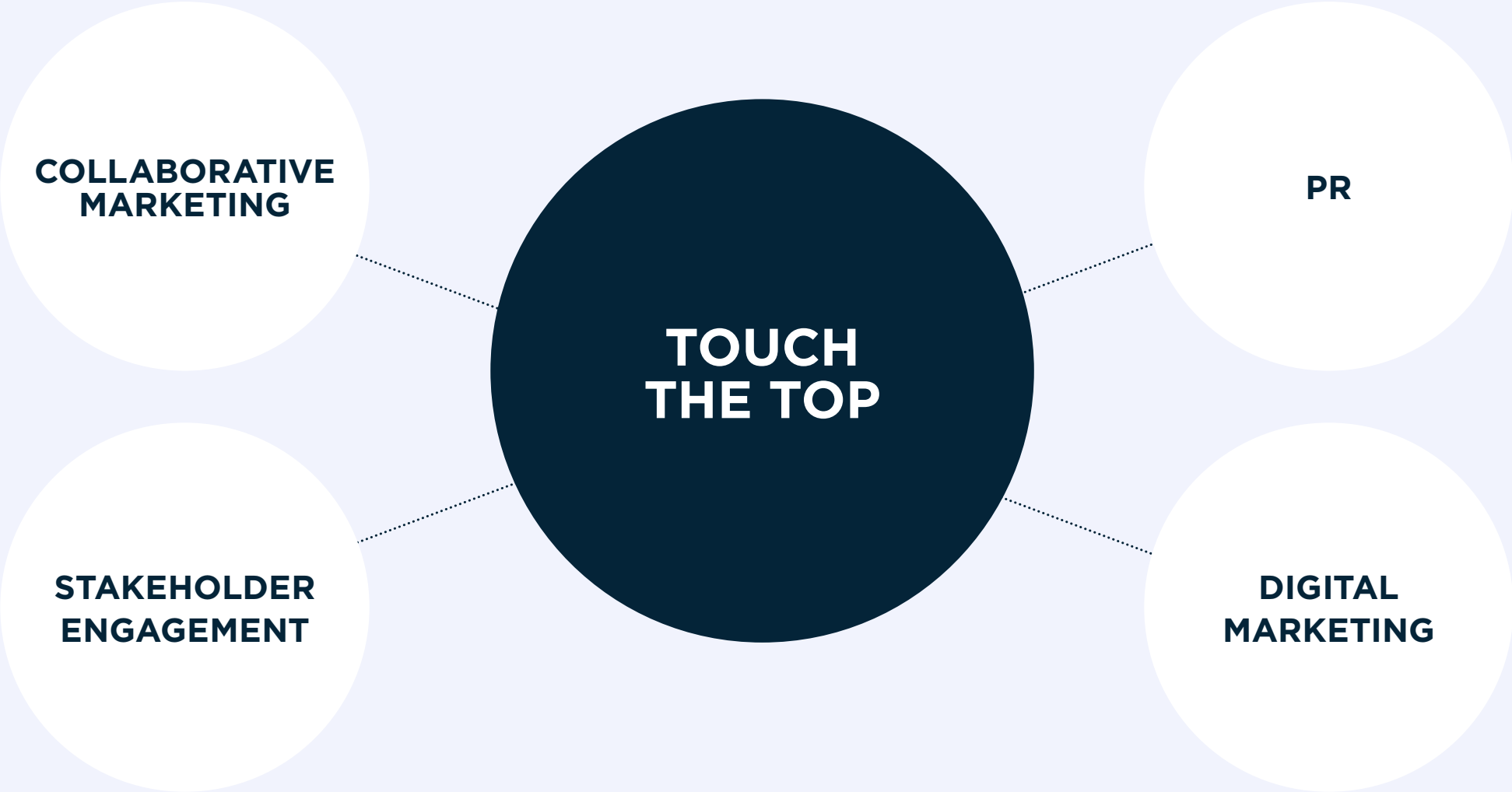
## CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

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# CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

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# PUBLIC RELATIONS

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The PR campaign will target key audiences via traditional and new media through a range of approaches;

## **INFLUENCER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Influencers in key target audience segments (celebrity, media, bloggers and influencers) will be engaged to promote the Atherton Tablelands to their followers. The influencer program will include a target of six separate engagements across the calendar year. Local tourism operators will be engaged as part of the program to provide influencers access to key experiences.

### **Examples of influencers who will be targeted through the campaign include;**

- The Aussie Bucket List
- Sammie O'Brien (influencer and QLD Weekender journalist)
- The Batchelors
- Ytravelblog
- Wunez (Daniel McGenniskin)
- Katie Purling

## **PROACTIVE PR / EDITORIAL OPPORTUNITIES**

A 12-month proactive PR program will be established to identify and secure PR and editorial opportunities at a local, regional, state and national level within key markets to drive awareness, consideration and visitation to the Atherton Tablelands.

### **A comprehensive target media list with be developed, with a mix of national, regional and trade media including;**

- Queensland Weekender
- Road Ahead Magazine
- Caravanning Magazine
- Tropic Magazine
- Duo Magazine
- Pak Magazine
- In-flight magazines
- Specialist adventure and nature publications
- Specialist publications for specific adventure activities – mountain biking etc.

## **REACTIVE PRESS OFFICE**

A reactive press office will be established, with pre-prepared media materials, backgrounders, fact sheets and images ready to pitch to selected outlets as opportunities arise and in response to requests. This will ensure limited turn-around time on media requests and the ability to maximise all PR opportunities.

# DIGITAL MARKETING

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The Digital campaign will speak to the target audiences through a range of channels and tools including;

## WEBSITE

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A dedicated campaign website will be established by Council's web provider, with content direction from C7EVEN to direct traffic. The website will carry the Touch the Top branding and key elements will be adopted across to dedicated landing pages to capture SEM traffic.

## DISPLAY ADVERTISING

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Display advertising across the google search network. By advertising visually, we will engage with our target audience by showing the destination through imagery. The display ads will fall into our two pillars of Nature and Adventure and will lead back to the landing pages. We will utilise only the most served display sizes such as mrec (300x200).

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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A social media campaign using a combination of paid and organic social content will be rolled out as part of the strategy.

### This will include;

- Facebook pixel added to the website
- Facebook Ads - paid efforts to leverage organic reach of video content
- Integration of CRM data (when available) for creation of audiences
- Geo and demographic targeting to appeal to the self-drive markets and younger market.
- The use of Lead Magnet Ads, engaging with an audience who show meaningful intent. A lead magnet is the downloadable brochure, and our ad series will invite people to download the information packet in exchange for giving us their name and contact details. We will store these details and utilise them in future campaigns through EDM's

- Organic social content provided to key social channels such as Atherton Tablelands Instagram and Facebook and tourism providers in the region

## BEHAVIOURAL RETARGETING

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Appealing to people who have cancelled overseas holidays and are motivated to travel by remarketing based on their online search via Facebook and Google.

## SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING (SEM)

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Paid search will be a key component of driving awareness and consideration of key markets.

Google Ads campaigns will support the 2 core campaigns being Nature and Adventure with associated ad-sets built out with relevant associated keywords and search phrases. Traffic will be directed to dedicated Landing Pages, each with the ability to capture prospect details.



# DIGITAL MARKETING

## GOOGLE REMARKETING

To further enhance the opportunity for conversion and increased awareness. Remarketing will be based on landing page visitation. People who have engaged with our material and visit the landing page will receive our ads more frequently providing a top-of-mind reminder for our destination marketing.

## DEDICATED LANDING PAGES

As part of deployment, we will produce two specific landing pages in partnership with your preferred web supplier for the Nature and Adventure pillars. Integrated for tracking new prospects (via webform + Google Ads). This will also assist in leveraging remarketing opportunities and integrating high value content downloads.

Nature and Adventure brochures will be developed to package product experiences across the region under these pillars.

DIGITAL CONTENT PILLARS		
CONTENT PILLAR	MEDIA TYPE	EXAMPLE DELIVERABLES
<b>NATURE</b>	Owned (website) Earned (social) Paid (SEM, Retargeting, Social, display)	Flyer Display Ad Sets Remarketing Ad Sets Website Graphics Video Social posts
<b>ADVENTURE</b>	Owned (website) Earned (social) Paid (SEM, Retargeting, Social, display)	Flyer Display Ad Sets Remarketing Ad Sets Website Graphics Video Social posts

DIGITAL MEDIA BUDGET ALLOCATION	
PAID MEDIA	% ALLOCATION
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>DISPLAY</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>SEM + RETARGETING</b>	<b>75%</b>

# OTHER MARKETING & MEASURING SUCCESS

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## COLLABORATIVE MARKETING

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- User generated content will be utilised in the marketing campaign, particularly on social media, to help drive organic awareness
- Regular liaison with tourism operators - to promote latest offerings through consistent media relations activities
- Leveraging tourism databases by working closely with tourism bodies to incorporate Atherton Tablelands messages into their eDMs
- Promotional inclusion in rates notice to tap into the VFR market and put the Atherton Tablelands destination back on the radar of 'locals'
- Piggybacking - with TTNQ around destination famils and influencer engagement

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

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- Joint offers, promotions and advertising opportunities will be Identified by working closely with similar companies to boost exposure while minimising cost
- A PR toolkit for local and regionally based tourism operators to assist in amplifying PR content and messaging for the Atherton Tablelands across their channels, particularly social media
- Shared social content by local tourism operators and key stakeholders on their own socials

## MEASURING SUCCESS

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- Monthly campaign reports will be provided to Tablelands Regional Council with a summary of activities and outcomes for that month and the focus for the coming month
- Monthly client meetings will be established to share the monthly campaign report outcomes and discuss upcoming activity.
- Monthly evaluation will be undertaken to analyse key campaign outcomes and metrics, with tactics refined to meet the needs of target audiences at that point in time.
- Annual campaign review will be undertaken in November of each year, which will provide direction for the development of the Year 2 and Year 3 destination marketing campaigns.

# OTHER MARKETING

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## KEY CAMPAIGN KPI METRICS

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### The objectives are to:

- Increase brand awareness of the Atherton Tablelands region
- Drive visitation from local, regional, intrastate and interstate markets

In relation to specific KPI's for campaign performance, C7EVEN will after one month assess the performance of the digital marketing according to industry benchmarks (click through rate and engagement scores). After which we will set more definitive campaign KPI's for digital performance. The KPI's we will specifically be looking at are:

## TOF (AWARENESS):

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- Ad Engagement score - measure the success of the creative concept and ads
- Click through rate (CTR) - measures the success of interest in the market
- Social media likes
- Landing page visitation

## MOF (CONSIDERATION):

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- Time on page (TOP - measured through analytics on the landing page)
- Landing page engagement (Measured through landing page heat mapping or Hot Jar)
- VIC enquiries
- EDM Open rates

## BOF (CONVERSION):

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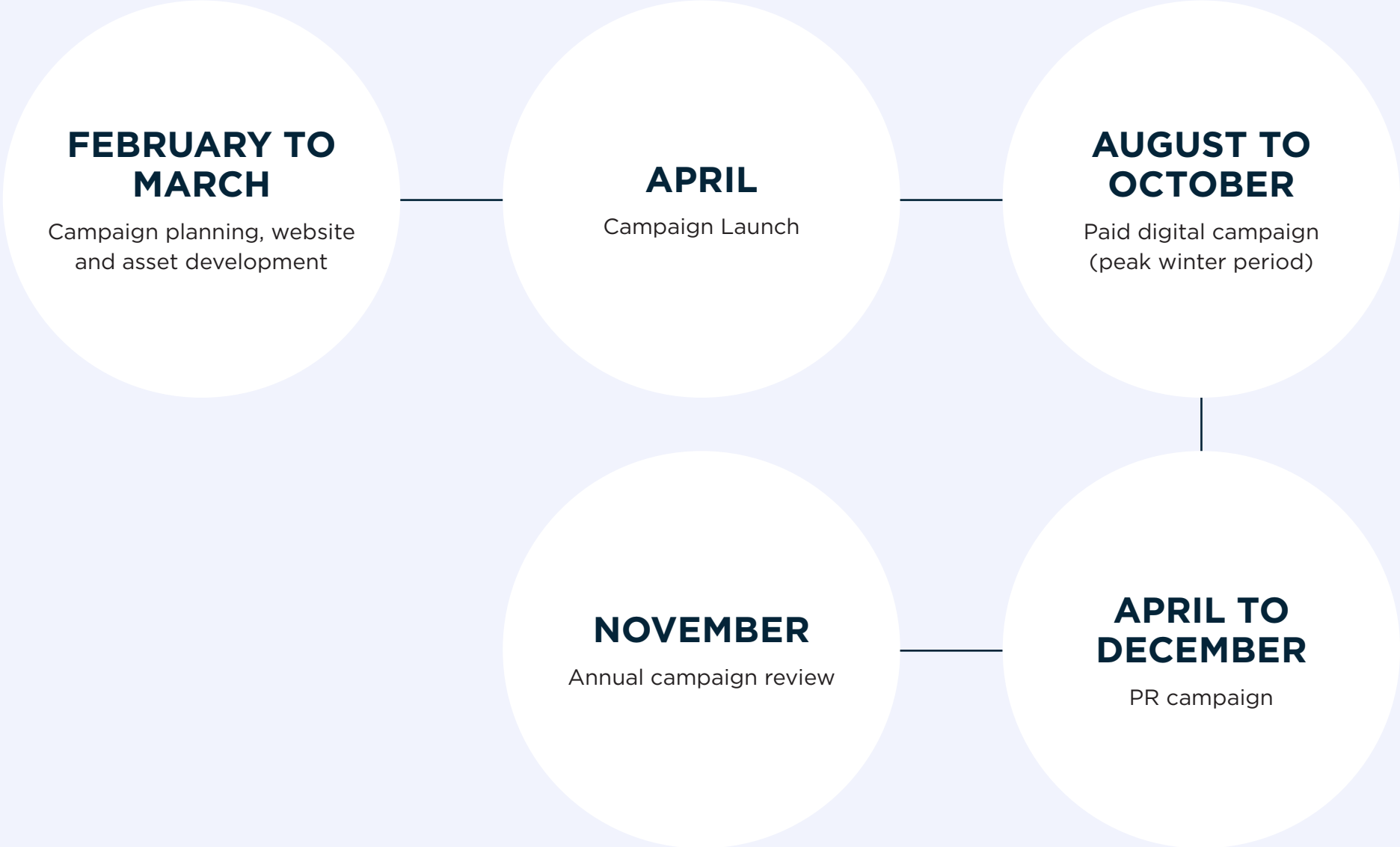
- Downloads of brochures (2 key pillars)
- % of follower growth
- Accommodation booking data (Provided by TRC)
- Visitation growth

# OTHER MARKETING & MEASURING SUCCESS

OTHER METRICS INCLUDE:		
OBJECTIVE	METRIC	TIMING
INCREASED BRAND AWARENESS	Positive media mentions	Monthly
	Engagement	Monthly
DRIVE VISITATION FROM LOCAL, REGIONAL, INTRASTATE AND INTERSTATE MARKETS	Tourism operators survey	Collective data - midway and at end of campaign.
	Visitation / ticket sales at key attractions	Annually
	Accommodation occupancy and nights	Annually
	Market numbers and sales	Annually
	Anecdotal feedback from tourism operators	Ongoing

# IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

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