

Navigate Expeditions Business Profile

Navigate Expeditions offers immersive and regenerative kayaking, walking, and mountain biking tours for environmentally conscious travellers on the South Coast of NSW.

Guests can explore the stunning Mimosa Rocks, Bournda, and Beowa National Parks by walking, or kayak along the Bega, Bermagui, and Pambula Rivers. They can also experience mountain bike tours and hire in Tathra, Eden, and Narooma, or customise their own private tour and embark on a journey that combines environmental awareness, outdoor activities, and unforgettable experiences.

We asked Jess a few questions about her experience with NSW First programs.



Jess Taunton
Navigate Expeditions

Image Credit - Davey Rogers Photography

How have the NSW First workshops facilitated by Destination Southern NSW helped your business?

The workshops provided us with a valuable refresher on the inbound market and post-COVID updates. We gained insights into the latest market research, learned how to access relevant information, and connected with other businesses and destination agencies. The workshops facilitated networking opportunities and encouraged collaboration with Destination NSW. They were informative, up-to-date, and stimulated our thinking around new ideas and concepts to attract international guests. Overall, our participation in these workshops enhanced our knowledge, expanded our network, and inspired us to innovate within the international tourism space.



Image Credit - Jess Taunton

How has the Destination NSW New Product Workshop helped you develop your business and what types of trade partners are you planning to work with?

Attending the DNSW New Product Workshop was incredibly valuable, providing insights into international markets and trade partners. The face-to-face workshop opened doors for networking with local businesses, DNSW representatives, and regional tourism marketing teams. The ongoing communication and guidance from DNSW have been instrumental in advancing our tourism product. Access to industry professionals for document feedback was vital, and the workshop led to additional opportunities to connect with trade partners. This one-day event has opened a world of possibilities for our regional NSW business. Highly recommended, even for seasoned tourism professionals.

How did you develop into an Export-Ready tourism business?

Our vision for Navigate Expeditions always included targeting the international market. To accelerate our progress, we seized the opportunity to attend the DNSW New Product Workshop in March 2023. This workshop became a vital stepping stone, providing us with invaluable insights, practical knowledge, and industry connections needed to become an export-ready tourism business.

Export-Ready Top Tips

- **Incorporate commissions into your pricing structure:** Agents will be marketing and selling your product on your behalf. Embrace this collaborative approach to expand your reach and attract international visitors.
- **Implement an online booking system:** *An online booking system is crucial for seamless integration with ITOs and travel agents, allowing for automated booking confirmations, streamlining the reservation process and making it easier for partners to book your product.*
- **Prioritise communication:** *Ensure your business is easily contactable and responsive to enquiries, and provide information promptly. Having key details about your product readily available, such as rates, itineraries, and promotional materials, will enable you to effectively engage with potential international partners.*

What International markets are you planning to target?

We have identified several international markets that we plan to target. Our focus will be on the European self-drive market, which is known for its advanced planning and longer holidays during our winter season. By targeting this market, we aim to fill the gaps in our slower domestic season and attract visitors who are seeking immersive experiences in kayaking, walking tours, and more.

Another market we are looking to tap into in the future is the Indian market. People from India tend to have a taste for adventure, but they also appreciate guided experiences, making them a perfect fit for our walking and kayaking tours. We see great potential in capturing their interest and providing them with memorable experiences.

Additionally, we are concentrating on the American cruise market. These travellers often have limited time during their stopovers in Eden and are seeking authentic experiences that showcase local culture, food, and wildlife. By catering to their interests and offering unique experiences, we aim to provide a fulfilling and memorable visit during their brief stay.



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Will you update any of your products to appeal to new inbound markets?

While we haven't had to change our core product to appeal more to the inbound market, we do modify the interpretative information we provide during the tours. International guests are particularly interested in learning about the local wildlife, our lifestyle on the far South Coast of NSW, and more general aspects such as population and housing. They appreciate hearing personal stories, including our experiences during the fires, and our interactions with Australian wildlife.

In cases where we can't encounter animals in the wild, we offer interpretative books with photos and interesting facts about the wildlife in the area. By adjusting our interpretative content, we ensure that our tours cater to the specific interests and curiosities of the inbound market without compromising the core nature of our product.

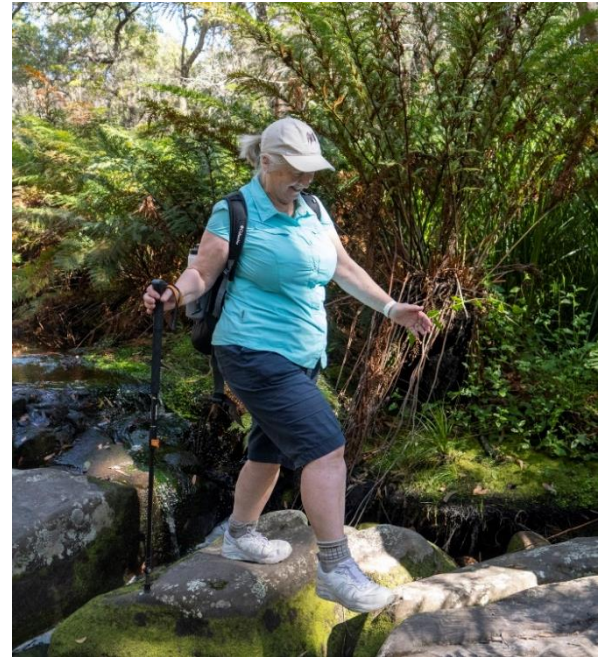


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What's one thing you have learned from your experience with your target markets?

We've learned that the cruise season (October to April) attracts American and European visitors to the far South Coast of NSW. However, due to Covid impacts and the cost-of-living pressures, it's difficult to identify consistent seasonal patterns. As our business evolves, each season has been unique with new tours and experiences.



Image Credi - Jess Taunton

How has having an online booking platform assisted you in securing bookings?

Implementing an online booking platform has been a game-changer for our business. It saves us time by automating payments and collecting guest information. Integration with online travel agents like RedBalloon boosts our visibility and bookings. The database of guest information obtained through the system helps with targeted marketing and customer retention. It streamlines operations, reduces admin tasks, expands distribution, and improves customer service.



Image Credit - Jess Taunton

What advice do you have about running a successful trade familiarisation (famil)?

It's important to showcase the highlights of your product or experience efficiently, considering the limited time available. Focus on showcasing the unique and standout features of your product or experience that set you apart from competitors. Take the time to speak with each agent individually to understand their target audience and how your product aligns with their needs. Following the trade famil, send a follow-up email that includes essential details such as product information, rate sheets, a media library with high-quality images, and clear trade terms.



Want to find out more about the NSW First Program?

Contact Destination Southern NSW via info@dsnsw.com.au or visit

<https://www.destinationnsw.com.au/tourism/business-development-resources/nsw-first-workshops-program>