



High Country Brewery Trail – a collaborative case study

We should always be exploring ways to rejuvenate and improve our tourism product to keep our businesses top of mind. Working collaboratively with other tourism operators is a great approach to investigate with many benefits.

With a well networked tourism industry in the North East there are many good examples of tourism products and experiences that have been developed collaboratively such as Prosecco Road and the High Country Brewery Trail to name a few.

Why is collaborative product development or marketing important?

- It's more cost effective
- It builds destinations
- It increases the "attractiveness" of the region
- It enhances the tourism product; in mix & volume
- It maximizes the benefit to visitors
- Too much competition "within" a region weakens overall effectiveness & efficiency of regional tourism development.
- It is POWERFUL in many ways – marketing, scale, voice & politically.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts they say!

What is the High Country Brewery Trail?

The High Country Brewery Trail involves 4 brewers from the region working together to promote the unique beers of the region via a touring route. It is a simple well used concept creating a map and trail between each of the breweries. With the brewers each being keen mountain bikers also and having mountain bike parks/tracks all relatively close to each brewer the High Country Brewery Trail collateral also links the brewers and their beers to their love of biking, another significant strength of the region.

Check out the trail here www.victoriashighcountry.com.au/brewerytrail

How was it created?

The process for the creation of the HCBT was reasonably painless. The brewers called a meeting and invited TNE to attend to brainstorm collaborative ideas around beer. The concept was agreed upon and supported by TNE given its regional nature and potential to drive PR about the entire North East having a strong connection to food, wine & beer and cycling. A plan was built to execute the concept.

All 4 brewers contributed evenly to the cost of producing the HCBT brochure and worked with TNE to create a plan to launch the trail in Melbourne to a targeted group of media.

Why is it successful?

The HCBT is a very successful model to develop a collaborative tourism product. It is successful because:

- Each brewery in its own right offers a quality tourism product and experience
- The brewers are passionately and authentically engaged with the visitor and live a beer and mountain biking life.
- Financially all contributed evenly, although often as is the case one or two individuals take the lead in managing the project to create clear lines of communication.
- A plan was brainstormed and created with support from Tourism North East.
- It gives media a newsworthy story to tell about the North East that has multiple angles; beer, brewers, natural landscape across the region along the trail, cycling, cycling events and locally grown Hops. This diversity in the product also gives various publications an opportunity to report on it from lifestyle, travel, broadsheet and cycling publications.

Results:

- The High Country Brewery Trail has resulted in more than a dozen PR articles being written about it (The Age Traveller, The Age Epicure, Sunday Age M Magazine, Herald Sun Weekend, Canberra Times, Border Mail, Jetstar mag, Australian Traveller mag, Outback mag, Ride On mag, Fairfax Good Weekend, The Crafty Pint, Beer Bar Band).
- Melbourne media launch and media kit distribution to travel, lifestyle, cycling, beer and food media
- The 4 brewers have since collaborated on a beer to continue to promote the trail and generate further PR and revenue to support future collaborative marketing projects.