

Rotorua Visitor Industry: Strategic Plan 2007-2015

September 2007

Foreword

The visitor industry is a dynamic industry that has experienced strong growth in the past decade. For the sector to continue to play a leading role in the Rotorua economy this strategy identifies what needs to be done to ensure that the visitor industry and community achieve maximum growth potential whilst ensuring cultural, social, environmental and economic sustainability. The implementation of the strategy will make a significant contribution as part of the Rotorua District Council Growth Strategy.

The visitor industry and the Rotorua District Council recognise the value that the visitor industry has to the wider community and the adoption of Destination Rotorua as a 'Best Practice' regional organisation. Its role is to advocate product development, marketing and promotion as well as working collaboratively across other community sectors that have a direct or indirect gain from the visitor spend.

This strategy has been reviewed and updated by the Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board. The strategy acknowledges that the existing funding and initiatives play a key role for marketing our destination and this strategy sets to identify new initiatives that require new resources and funding over and above current 2007-08 resources of \$1.8m.

The strategy will provide a framework for decision making that will allow the visitor industry and community, in partnership with central and local government, to face the future with confidence and build the capabilities for sustainable growth. It acknowledges that in an increasingly competitive domestic and global marketplace the Rotorua and New Zealand visitor industry needs to be world class.

The Rotorua visitor industry will be a rewarding industry to work in over the next ten years; an industry that will make a significant contribution to the Rotorua District Council Growth Strategy. We look forward to achieving the objectives outlined in the Rotorua Visitor Industry Strategy 2007-2015.

Warren Harford
Chairman

Bryan Hughes
Deputy Chairman

Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board

Purpose of this Strategic Plan

This high level new strategic plan identifies the key issues facing the visitor industry in the Rotorua region namely;

- To provide the visitor industry and community with a new long-term framework to enable the stakeholders to anticipate, plan and prepare for potential changes, opportunities and threats
- To evaluate and prioritise Destination Rotorua future visitor and key target markets
- To generate new sources of funding to support sustainable marketing
- To identify initiatives for implementation to achieve the new strategic plan objectives
- To identify the required resources needed to meet the objectives of this new strategic plan
- To have appropriate accountability structures for public/private sector involvement
- To identify and monitor measurable outcomes

Contributing towards Community Outcomes

The Activity contributes towards sustainable development by promoting the following Community Outcomes:

A prosperous community;

- Co-ordinates the marketing and promotion of the Rotorua District
- Strives to improve returns and yield for Rotorua business sectors
- Positions Rotorua as a year-round visitor destination
- Positions Rotorua as a year-round Event and Conference destination
- Positions Rotorua as a year-round Retail Shopping destination
- Contributes to real economic growth which results in real job creation
- Creates an economic environment that will attract further investment from private sector

A community that respects its environment;

- Marketing is focussed on sustainability and business growth opportunities
- Management and monitoring is focussed on sustainable best business practise and minimising the impact on the environment
- Continued development and promotion of the Rotorua Sustainable Tourism Charter
- Commitment to education to the tourism sector, the community, and through education providers as to the opportunities and benefits of the visitor industry
- Protects and develops the Rotorua “Manaakitanga - Feel the Spirit” brand identity
- Strives to develop a safe community through education, advocacy and support of industry initiatives which will enhance the visitor experience

Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing

- Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing is a marketing body whose purpose is to raise the profile of Rotorua as a desirable destination and encourage visitor spend as a way to support economic growth and contribute to an exciting, vibrant, high quality destination.
- Marketing refers to all elements of the marketing mix which incorporates the management of the Brand, promotion, product development, destination packaging, and people development.
- Its role is to encourage both leisure and business travel via destination, retail, conference and events marketing campaigns as well as to encourage new product and events that may attract increased visitors and their spend.
- Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing will adopt a new domestic marketing role which is 'Building Demand' so that visitors come sooner rather than later. Internationally its marketing role will focus on raising destination awareness through training and trade exhibitions to the wholesale and travel industry as well as the international media.
- Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing seeks to be involved in strategic partnerships that promote the wider Central North Island region through its involvement with the international marketing alliance, the Thermal Explorer Highway which is part of the Great New Zealand Touring Route. Other regions involved in this collective are Taupo , Ruapehu, Hawkes Bay, Bay of Plenty and Coromandel.
- In addition to Council funding, Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing works to leverage additional financial contributions from strategic allies such as regional councils, strategic stakeholders, airlines, attractions, Rotorua city retailers, and corporate sponsors.

Vision for Destination Rotorua

To have a visitor sector that is making a maximum contribution to Rotorua's economic, social and environmental wellbeing by continually promoting Rotorua to existing and new markets as an exciting, vibrant, high quality destination.

To strengthen its unique position as the cultural and geothermal capital of New Zealand and continue to develop Rotorua as a family , fun, spa and wellness destination.

To encourage a 'Flying in Formation' approach recognising a need to collectively work together in a common direction, whilst recognising businesses and business sectors are individualistic and increasingly more competitive.

To have a balanced approach to resource the marketing of domestic, conference and incentive, events, retail and international markets and therefore sustaining a robust visitor industry to minimise seasonal fluctuations in markets and Rotorua's economic benefit.

Strategic Direction : Brand

To protect, manage and develop the usage of “Rotorua – Feel the Spirit” Manaakitanga brand

KEY:

ATTTO: Aviation Tourism & Travel Training Org
 BEAB: Bright Economy Advisory Board
 CINZ: Convention & Incentives NZ
 DOC: Department of Conservation
 DRTM: Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing
 EV: Event Venues
 GNZTR: Great New Zealand Touring Route
 ITOC: Inbound Tour Operator Council
 LTCCP: Long Term Council Community Plan
 MITR: Maori in Tourism Rotorua
 MSD: Ministry of Social Developments
 RDC: Rotorua District Council
 RR: Retail Rotorua
 RRA: Rotorua Regional Airport
 RSTC: Rotorua Sustainable Tourism Charter
 RTAB: Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board
 TIANZ: Tourism Industry Association of NZ
 TKP: Te Puni Kokiri
 TNZ: Tourism New Zealand
 VIN: Visitor Information Centre

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Rotorua tourism businesses and community are made more aware and encouraged to use the 'feel the spirit - Manaakitanga'.	To obtain wider tourism industry buy-in to the Feel the Spirit brand.	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
Robust research and development drives brand growth opportunities and measures brand success	Brand R&D review and monitoring completed every third year	DRTM External research company	2007-2008 2010 2013
Enhancement of the brand ensuring we are keeping up with today's standards and expectations	Brand review	DRTM External research company	Ongoing
Brand management	To delegate responsibilities correctly with DRTM	DRTM RDC	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Environment (1)

The Tourism Industry and Rotorua District Council works together to promote the principles of Kaitiakitanga and ensure Rotorua's environment is preserved for future generations

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
RDC plays a leading role in protecting and enhancing the environment in support of the 100% pure NZ brand.	Incorporate the goal of zero waste and carbon neutrality into RDC Environmental Policy.	RDC	2007-2015
International visitors are encouraged to visit Rotorua because of the way the natural and cultural environment is managed in what is a carbon constrained global market.	<p>Target visitors who support and whose ethical and behaviours align, with NZ's environmental values.</p> <p>Promote Rotorua as a destination where 'Carbon Miles' will be offset by carbon saving policies.</p> <p>The concept of Kaitiakitanga is integrated into Rotorua's marketing campaign and product offer.</p>	DRTM RTAB	

Strategic Direction : Environment (2)

The Tourism Industry and Rotorua District Council works together to promote the principles of Kaitiakitanga and ensure Rotorua's environment is preserved for future generations

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Rotorua's tourism sector ensure the long term management of Rotorua's natural, cultural and built resources.	<p>All Rotorua tourism operators encouraged to be members of RSTC where they can access the tools and support to manage their environment.</p> <p>All operators understand and use the concept of Kaitiakitanga as the basis for the Rotorua tourism sector's actions to enhance the environment.</p> <p>Investigate product development opportunities for visitors to offset carbon emissions through tangible conservation projects that encourage visitor interaction.</p> <p>Monitor and ensure awareness of Qualmark's development "Greenmark" assessment programme.</p>	RSTC RTAB DRTM	
The principles of Kaitiakitanga are embraced by all members of the community, who understand the importance of managing natural and cultural resources for the collective benefit of people living now and for generations in the future.	Industry and local government work together to manage visitor impact on the environment by providing the best fit-for-purpose infrastructure and systems.	RDC RTAB DRTM	

Strategic Direction :

Maori Tourism (1)

To encourage the development and positioning of Maori tourism in Rotorua in a strategic alliance with Maori In Tourism Rotorua (MITR)

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Maori Tourism continues to grow and develop	A funded fulltime MITR co-ordinator to identify opportunities, drive projects, source funding, promote the region and add value to partnerships with members, iwi & wider industry	DRTM MITR	2010
	MITR provides DRTM & RDC with strategic advice on local regional & national Maori Tourism development	MITR	Ongoing
Visitors, trade & wider Industry are aware that Rotorua offers a historic, diverse & authentic cultural tourism offering	Develop an annual plan that strengthens our leadership position	DRTM MITR Maori Operators	Ongoing
	Local stories are incorporated into marketing collateral & training presentations	DRTM MITR Maori Operators, Iwi	Ongoing
Industry provides value back to Maori owned natural and cultural assets	Visitor research is gathered to support further investments, improved experiences of existing attractions, activities & services	DRTM MITR Waiariki	Annual
	Environmental & cultural practices are identified, implemented & adopted by all users to ensure we protect our natural & cultural assets for future generations	DRTM, MITR Iwi, Industry TPK, DOC, RDC	2009

Strategic Direction :

Maori Tourism (2)

To encourage the development and positioning of Maori tourism in Rotorua in a strategic alliance with Maori In Tourism Rotorua (MITR)

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
	Koha is factored into all famils where non-commercial natural & cultural assets are being utilised	DRTM MITR	Ongoing
All commercial Maori Tourism businesses are quality endorsed	Businesses that do not have an industry recognised quality status are identified and supported to become so	DRTM MITR RDC Maori Operators	Annual
Rotorua is the Sth Pacific destination for holding and running indigenous & cultural events	Rotorua Events Strategic Plan identifies the opportunity to target World Indigenous Events to Rotorua	DRTM MITR Maori Operators Event Venues Industry	Annual
	Support the development and promotion of Maori driven events including Opera in the Pa, Matariki and Rotorua Mud Festival	DRTM MITR Maori Operators Event Venues Industry	2008 onwards

Strategic Direction :

Maori Tourism (3)

To encourage the development and positioning of Maori tourism in Rotorua in a strategic alliance with Maori In Tourism Rotorua (MITR)

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
A career in Tourism for Maori is seen as a viable & sustainable option	Support MITR to facilitate training & education opportunities with ITO's etc that will increase skills of people employed within Maori Tourism	DRTM MITR ATTTO MSD Waiariki Industry	2008 onwards
	Identify a working group to investigate the viability of a road show to select graduates for a one year executive training with key Maori businesses.	MITR Maori Operators	2009
Rotorua embraces "Kia Ora" as the city's way to officially greet all customers	Drive a Kia Ora Campaign to all tourism operators, retailers & other stakeholders	DRTM MITR Industry	2009
	Develop a pilot programme where operators provide work experience opportunities for secondary school students on all facets of the industry.	MITR Local High Schools Maori Operators	Mid 2008

Strategic Direction : Marketing Domestic (1)

To raise the profile of Rotorua as a desirable year round destination and maximise their spend

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Raise domestic awareness of Rotorua as a year round visitor destination.	Develop a year round brand awareness campaign through a consistent media placement strategy, i.e. national magazines, TV, billboards	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
	Undertake one major national promotion per annum, i.e. McDonalds, AA Tourism	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
Consumer direct marketing	Continue to grow a domestic database for direct mail opportunities.	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
	Explore attendance at consumer shows to build databases and raise awareness. i.e. Big Boys Toys, Field Days	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
A more targeted and effective marketing programme to leverage the growing visiting friends & relatives market	Distribute Rotorua Visitor Guide and Hot Deal brochures at selected times through the Rotorua letterbox channel. Promote visits to rotoruanz.com	DRTM VIN	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Marketing Domestic (2)

To raise the profile of Rotorua as a desirable year round destination and maximise their spend

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Immediate call to action	Include hot deal offers in all domestic marketing	DRTM VIN Industry	Ongoing
More positive media stories on Rotorua	Host 6 domestic media visits per annum	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
	Identify domestic TV opportunities, i.e. Breakfast, Weather	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
	Provide editorial and imagery to publications that are running Rotorua stories in conjunction with advertisements from Rotorua operators	DRTM	Ongoing
Further revenue for domestic marketing	Investigate potential revenue from Travel Office to be channelled back to DRTM	DRTM Travel Office	

Strategic Direction : Marketing Australia

To raise the profile of Rotorua to the consumer and grow market share

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Raise awareness of Rotorua and the reasons to visit, direct to the Australian consumer	Support Tourism NZ consumer direct activity where affordable i.e. What's On	DRTM TNZ VIN Industry	Ongoing
	JV with key trade partners and undertake at least 2 major promotions per annum including famils	DRTM Trade	Ongoing
	Attend at lest 2 consumer shows per annum, either in conjunction with trade or independently.	DRTM Industry Trade	Ongoing
Well informed and knowledgeable stakeholders in Australian market	Quarterly sales calls to visit key wholesalers, airlines, TNZ and other relevant parties including one pa to Adelaide and Perth	DRTM Trade	Ongoing
	Develop and communicate with an efficient trade database every quarter	DRTM	Ongoing

Strategic Direction :

Marketing Trans Tasman Services

A Short Break Visitor Destination from East Coast Australia

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Develop airline alliances for Trans Tasman market	Collaborate with the Rotorua Airport Company and industry	DRTM RTAB RRA	Ongoing
Redevelopment and focus on enhanced service levels of Rotorua airport	Work with Airport Company	RRA	Ongoing
Effective Trans Tasman launch	Development working group to establish marketing plan for launch of Trans Tasman services	RDC RRA DRTM Industry EV BEAB	2008-2009

Strategic Direction : International Marketing (1)

To raise the profile of Rotorua as a desirable year round destination and maximise their spend

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Leverage IMA resources to manage sustainable marketing to long-haul markets where TNZ trade activity is restricted to IMA representation.	Partner with GNZTR and surrounding regions to co-operatively market in key regions.	DRTM GNZTR TNZ	Ongoing
Well informed stakeholders in all key markets	Develop and communicate with an efficient trade database at least quarterly	DRTM	Ongoing
	Foreign language websites developed for key markets, i.e. Japan, Korea, China	DRTM	2007-2008
	Quarterly visits on Inbound Operators within New Zealand	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
Growth in market share and length of stay from USA	Support all TNZ trade and media famil activity and generate at least 5 per annum separately.	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
	Undertake a Roadshow annually	DRTM Industry	Annually
Growth in numbers from Emerging Markets	Industry and Wholesaler JV activity in markets of Brazil, South Africa, Eastern Europe, Russia, UAE and Pacific	DRTM Industry TNZ	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : International Marketing (2)

To raise the profile of Rotorua as a desirable year round destination and maximise their spend

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Grow value visitors from China	Nurture and grow the Nanjing Town relationship enabling three night visits of Chinese visitors with paid inclusions.	DRTM Industry	2007-2009
Use existing resources of industry in key markets	JV with Rotorua Industry to ensure all major markets are serviced with regular visits and promotion. Avoid duplication of funds by co-ordinating activity. Particularly relevant in Asia.	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
Growth in market share and length of stay from UK / Europe	UK Roadshow annually	DRTM Industry	Annually
	Promote sustainability at any opportunity	DRTM RSTC	Ongoing
	Ensure Rotorua representation at IMA training days for UK and Europe	DRTM GNZTR	Annually
Remain committed to Japan market	Continue trade activity and market visits in conjunction with industry	DRTM Industry	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Seasonal Marketing

To use events, conferences, Indian and Australian market to address seasonal imbalance

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Growth in event participation numbers during shoulder / low season.	Identify and market to event organiser databases and domestic databases that have the potential to grow numbers in the low / shoulder seasons.	DRTM EV	Ongoing
Grow Indian visitors to Rotorua	With peak travel periods being May / June – promote Rotorua to the Indian market, via incentive businesses and key wholesalers. 1 market visit pa	DRTM TNZ Industry	Ongoing
Position Rotorua as the key C & I destination in New Zealand	As per C & I Marketing Plan. Conventions have the potential bring business at all times of the year but are particularly cost effective during the winter / autumn months	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
Encourage domestic travel year round	See domestic marketing plan	DRTM	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Retail Marketing

To assist in the promotion of retail business in Rotorua to visitors

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Regular retail promotional activity aimed at both international and domestic visitors	RR communicates regularly with RTAB	RR RTAB	Ongoing
Closer links and business referral opportunities between retail sector and visitor industry sector	Participation in joint promotional activities	RR Industry DRTM	Ongoing
Retail sector to align with Trans Tasman developments	Retail sector to develop relevant trading hours	RR	

Strategic Direction :

Conference & Incentive Marketing

To promote Rotorua as the premier Conference destination in New Zealand

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Marketing plan to position Rotorua as a premier C & I destination to Australia, NZ	Organise and run one C & I Event in Auckland , Wellington and Australia per annum	DRTM Industry	Annually
	Attend Meetings and AIME Tradeshows	DRTM CINZ	Annually
	Undertake scheduled media promotion domestically incorporating print and internet media as well as direct mail opportunities via AKL Chamber of Commerce	DRTM	Ongoing
	Develop and communicate with an efficient database in both New Zealand and the world on a quarterly basis.	DRTM	Ongoing
Well informed and proactive Conference organisers both in Australia and New Zealand	Promote and undertake self famil programme. Co-ordinate with industry to ensure all famils run by them receive relevant information on the destination.	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
Research programme	Participate in annual national survey/research programme to identify benchmarking and key performance indicators	DRTM Industry	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Events Marketing

To promote and develop Rotorua event participation

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Establish contacts database	Build a comprehensive database of event managers, sponsors and potential event participants.	EV DRTM RTAB	2007-2008
Rotorua is the New Zealand destination for Events	Identify new events and assist in growing existing ones that have the potential to move numbers during low / shoulder season.	DRTM EV MITR	Ongoing
	Ensure event listings in all media have good Rotorua content.	DRTM EV	Ongoing
	Bi-annual production of Rotorua Events with effective distribution particularly into the Auckland market	DRTM	Ongoing
Grow numbers of event participants during low/shoulder season	Continue with 12 month domestic media plan using mainstream media to highlight Rotorua as vibrant and happening event destination	DRTM Industry	Ongoing
	Identify and market one key event to international markets to encourage participation growth	DRTM Industry EV	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Infrastructure & Transport

To assist in improving infrastructure and transportation to meet the needs of visitors

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
State Highway signage into Rotorua improved	Work with Transit NZ.	Transit NZ	2007-2010
Better intra regional transport systems	Work with local transport networks to improve and widen options for FIT travellers within city and environs	RTAB	2007-2008
A focus on training, up-skilling and education within the transport sector	Participation in the development of an 'ambassador' training and incentive programme	Waiariki Industry	2007-2008
Entrances to Rotorua City improved and beautified	Work with RDC to create welcoming entranceways to Rotorua	RDC RTAB	2007-2009
Improve Public toilet infrastructure	Work with RDC to ensure wider Public toilet facilities available within Rotorua and Environs	RDC RTAB	2007-2009

Strategic Direction :

Product Development – Visitor Needs

To research, monitor, and enhance visitor needs and expectations

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Research	Undertake research to monitor and measure Rotorua's position compared to competitor destinations	DRTM	Ongoing
Rotorua is a leader and is recognised as NZ's safest destination for holidaying and living	Industry participation in crime-prevention initiatives and safer community best-practices	DRTM Police Community Industry RTAB	Ongoing
Qualmark assessed businesses are recognised as priority partners with Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing	JV with Qualmark to roll-out assessment to wider industry and allow three years for industry to become assessed	DRTM Qualmark Industry	Ongoing

Strategic Direction :

Product Development – Community Needs

To engage and involve the community in the development and growth of tourism in Rotorua

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Community has a strong understanding of the value and direct benefits of the visitor impact to Rotorua's economic growth	Annual economic impact reports and monthly industry news communicated to community	DRTM	Ongoing
The Tourism Industry has an opportunity to engage and be involved with future planning for Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing through Councils annual planning process	Annual submissions and City Focus information week	RDC	Annually
The Tourism Industry has an opportunity to engage and be involved with managing the environment to minimise the impact from the visitor industry growth	Community consultation and input into environment strategic planning and implementation of initiatives e.g. recycling	RDC Community	Ongoing
Better communication between tourism sector and media to ensure better support	RTAB to meet with the all media	RTAB	

Strategic Direction : Training, Up-Skilling & Education

To encourage and foster development of a trained and skilled tourism workforce

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
A focus on training, up-skilling and education	Participation in the development of an 'ambassador' training and incentive programme for delivery to sector groups	Waiariki Industry ITOC	Ongoing
Industry opportunities	Promote industry opportunities to students	RDC RTAB Waiariki	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Monitoring, Review and Research

To continually monitor and assess the direction and development of tourism in Rotorua

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
To monitor and review the outcome of this plan	Assess the effectiveness of the strategic directions in November each year as part of RDC's planning cycle	LTCCP funding policy RTAB	Annually
Industry forum	Undertake bi-annual forum for industry to review the strategy and progress	DRTM RTAB	Bi-annually
To have a robust research and reporting programme that provides applicable information to assist Rotorua to maintain a competitive edge	Annual research to identify the benefits to Rotorua generated by tourism	DRTM RTAB	Ongoing
Continual research projects	Regular one-off research projects to identify future strategic opportunities for Rotorua tourism	DRTM RTAB	Annually
Ongoing communication with community	Communicate the results of all research to the wider community	DRTM RTAB	Monthly
Research on website	Drive through vibrant research branch on current website	DRTM	Monthly

Strategic Direction : Funding and Finance

To ensure that there is continuity of existing funding and to look for opportunities of increased funding

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
A sustainable funding base for developing and marketing the Rotorua visitor industry.	Sustained annual funding of DRTM	RDC	Annual
Sponsorship opportunities	Develop a framework to take to potential partners and sponsors to seek specific commitment	RTAB	Ongoing

Strategic Direction : Governance

To ensure that Rotorua's "voice" is heard at national levels

Outcome	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Strong representation at key national levels such as TNZ, CINZ, ITOC	Industry to lobby for appointment to key executive positions	DRTM Industry	Ongoing