

## WHAT ARE CONSUMER TRENDS AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT FOR TRAVEL, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

The global marketplace is changing at an ever increasing rate so a greater understanding of visitor behaviour can be vital.

Trends can help us to better prepare for the future needs and wants of our visitors and allow us to: adjust our business strategies accordingly; tailor the types of experiences we offer; and focus our marketing activity to create competitive advantage.

### UNDERSTANDING TRENDS ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- » They allow us to see things from new perspectives and help us keep the visitor at the heart of what we do
- » They help us anticipate future consumer behaviour
- » They help us futureproof our business strategy to negotiate around future threats and opportunities

- » Drive new thoughts, ideas and innovation which lead to profitable growth

In short, trends help us to 'see around the corner' and act appropriately.

## TREND IDENTIFICATION

When identifying trends, the following focus is applied. Trends must be:

### FORWARD LOOKING



Trends that are evidenced but not entirely widespread ...yet

### OUTWARD LOOKING



Trends that have a broader perspective than just tourism – to get wider outlook on behaviours

### PEOPLE CENTRIC



Understanding people as people and not just consumers or tourists

## TRENDS CAN BE CLASSIFIED INTO FOUR MAIN CATEGORIES

<b>CONTEXTUAL DRIVERS</b> <i>Influential</i>	<b>Contextual Drivers are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Primary behaviour and attitudes which affect the masses</li><li>» Will influence, to a degree, all trends</li><li>» A force that is unlikely to die soon – an inescapable fixture in life</li><li>» Contextual drivers are not isolated. Contextual drivers combine and interact with all facets of human life and trends</li></ul> <p><i>For Example:</i> demographics (aging population, millennials), digital applications etc</p>
<b>ESTABLISHED TRENDS</b> <i>Shaping</i>	<b>Established trends are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Ways consumers are currently reacting/altering their behaviour to deal with contextual drivers</li><li>» Demonstrable and measurable: the size of trend can be quantified and trajectory predicted and can be monitored through ongoing research</li><li>» Established trends do not work in isolation, but are affected and driven by other trends</li></ul>
<b>EMERGING TRENDS</b> <i>Inspiring</i>	<b>Emerging trends are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Potentially niche or not yet a widespread reality</li><li>» Evidence of trend has been seen but not yet fully quantifiable</li><li>» Predicted to grow but rate of uptake not yet known</li></ul>
<b>FADS AND FASHIONS</b> <i>Trendy</i>	<b>Fads and Fashions are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 'Trendy' but not trends</li><li>» Things like colours, flavours, style trends, some digital applications...</li><li>» Difficult to quantify</li><li>» Don't have longevity and can quickly change</li></ul>

- » **Contextual** and **Established Trends** are important to follow and consider. Contextual drivers provide understanding as to the environment visitors live in and established trends reflect behaviours and expectations of visitors now. Failure to respond to such trends will leave our industry playing catch up with our international competitors.
- » Identifying what's happening on the horizon and taking into account appropriate **Emerging Trends** provides the opportunity to carve out competitive advantage by exceeding visitor's expectations.
- » **Fads and Fashions** generally have a short shelf life and so are interesting to review but not usually suitable for implementation.

## IN RELATION TO TRENDS WE HAVE TO CONSIDER:

- » That trends are everywhere; however the important question is how can we identify the ones which matter most and best utilise our knowledge of that trend?
- » What competitive advantage is to be gained from incorporating a particular trend into our business strategies and marketing activities?
- » Local context is important, but aspiration is global.
- » Consumers don't live inside industry silos and neither should we. Therefore we must be conscious that trends that influence other industries also impact our industry.

