

PRESS RELEASE

Famils – more than just a “free lunch”

Otways tourism operators have been warned against considering that on-site promotions are merely handing out a free lunch or bed.

Peter Janssen, Operations Manager Familiarisations, Tourism Victoria, told more than 20 tourism business owners at a Gellibrand forum that media and travel agent familiarisation exercise – or “famils” should be an important component in a marketing budget and a valuable way to promote a business locally, interstate and internationally.

As the guest speaker at this week's Business to Business Familiarisation of the Otway Hinterland, Mr Janssen advised the operators from across the Colac Otway Shire on the benefits of being involved in Tourism Victoria's two famils programs and gave tips on hosting media and travel agent famils.

Mr Janssen's address at the Gellibrand General Store was part of a full day tour by operators through the Otway Hinterland, visiting tourism businesses at Forrest, Colac, Gellibrand and Beech Forest.

Accommodation venues, hotels, tour operations, wineries and galleries showcased their product to the group in a bid to improve partnerships and networking, cross-promotional opportunities and awareness of local products and businesses.

Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce's tourism representative Les Nosedo said operators needed to be fully informed of attractions and accommodation if they were to provide a better service.

Tourism Alliance Victoria project co-ordinator Erin Slattery, who organised the forum, said the tourism community had been asked to identify what success would look like in their region.

“We believe these famils are one way to support the tourism to achieve their goals,” Ms Slattery said.

“The famils are the first of a range of initiatives, focused on improving the capacity of the industry to take control of their future and their future prosperity, to be implemented through the three year Otway Hinterland Capacity Building Project.” said Ms Slattery

The Capacity Building Project is one of 19 projects supported by the State Government through the New Future for the Otways Tourism Initiative. The Otway Hinterland is one of Victoria's most precious natural settings and to make the most of this, the Government is investing in this suite of tourism projects.

The government's \$7 million commitment to tourism in the Otways is one of Victoria's largest public land tourism investments.

To find out more about the Otway Hinterland Capacity Building Project visit www.tourismalliance.com.au or contact Erin Slattery, Project Co-ordinator, Tourism Alliance Victoria on 03 9650 8399.

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