



Australian Government

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# TRA Case Study: Gold Coast Tourism

## TRA DATA – WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD...

You would be hard pushed to believe that once upon a time in the 1960s, the Gold Coast was a collection of small country towns. Fast-forward forty years or so to 2018 and it has become the largest non-capital city in Australia, welcoming over 13 million visitors a year to experience its sandy beaches and exciting attractions.

However, building and maintaining a strong tourist base depends on more than just a great destination – it also requires data. Tourism Research Australia (TRA) provides the city's tourism board – Gold Coast Tourism (GCT) – with the insights it needs to make important business decisions and grow visitor numbers.

GCT is not just the 'face' of the Gold Coast for national and international tourists, it also has 500 subscribed members who are tourism industry operators. They receive GCT market updates that leverage TRA data and help to spread knowledge about the Gold Coast's tourism market to local tour operators and hospitality businesses.

The most important source of data for GCT's market updates is TRA's Online Data, featuring cross-tab analysis techniques. This allows GCT to break down details about who their visitors are, where they come from and what they do.

**Want to use tourism data to cross-check  
your business' performance with your  
surrounding area?**

Learn more about [TRA Online](#).

Nigel Smith is the Manager of Research & Strategic Insights at GCT and says everyday decision-making is regularly influenced by TRA research and data.

'GCT is the only regional tourism organisation in Australia that has dedicated research staff,' says Nigel.

'We're seeing the results not only in the performance of the region, but through the performance of more insight-driven and targeted marketing campaigns.'

'We use the data daily. Pretty much everything I do comes down to finding out what the market looks like, and without the International and National Visitor surveys, I'd have no way to do that.'

Nigel explains, 'For example, we use regional expenditure data from both the National and International Visitor Surveys to calculate our national market share of visitation spend. Combined with demographic data, this has allowed us to look at the broader socioeconomic drivers of travel behaviour.'

GCT believes that extensive research should be central to the strategy and planning of tourism work, since so much of tourism is driven by decision-making and human behaviour. Searching for patterns and creating audience segments to target ensures GCT marketing dollars are spent wisely.

Subscribers to TRA Online appreciate the business advantages of having access to TRA's core data, along with the easy-to-use interface.

'I use the data on a daily basis and it's made my life much easier,' Nigel says.

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