



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*For immediate release*

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### **Tourism Whitsundays celebrates first full year as standalone organisation**

The Whitsundays' lead marketing and visitation agency Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is celebrating its first full year as a standalone organisation.

TW started operating on April 1 last year after a demerger was enacted that saw it break away from the former Whitsundays Marketing and Development Inc., which was responsible for economic development and tourism.

Now, after completing its first full financial year as a standalone organisation responsible solely for tourism, TW is celebrating its successes and achievements, which have been made possible by working closely with partners, including Tourism and Events Queensland and Whitsunday Regional Council.

At a special members' networking function last night (Thursday July 27) at the Reef Gateway Hotel, Cannonvale, TW launched its 'End of Financial Year' Report Card, summarising some of the key statistics achieved throughout the 12-month period.

Highlights of the Report Card included achieving worldwide publicity valued at more than \$10 million, with a global reach of 156 million people. This was as a result of hosting 78 journalists and digital influencers, from both Australia and overseas, in region, and also writing and publishing 63 media releases.

Other results included more than 12 TV shows being filmed in the Whitsundays, 60 international trade representative visits, 26 domestic trade visits and seven consumer expos.

Eight separate marketing campaigns were rolled out in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and USA in the past financial year, and significant gains were recorded on the organisation's social media channels with followers increasing by 95 per cent on the consumer Facebook page and 156 per cent on the corporate Facebook page.

Julie Telford, co-owner of Red Cat Adventures, said she had "thoroughly enjoyed" working alongside Tourism Whitsundays over the last year.

"We've been presented with rewarding marketing opportunities that have resulted in an increase in direct bookings," she said.

"Tourism Whitsundays has also supported and promoted the growth of our business in the domestic and international market."

Lisa Bates, sales manager at Cruise Whitsundays, said Tourism Whitsundays had gone from strength to strength in the past 12 months.

“In that time they have rejuvenated the brand and started to drive the Whitsundays forward through marketing campaigns, famil and brand exposure, it’s been a fantastic move forward for the region,” she said.

Meanwhile, Fiona Johnson, from BIG4 Bowen Coral Coast Beachfront Holiday Park, said she was very happy with the support received from the newly reformed Tourism Whitsundays.

“I’ve found everyone very approachable and in tune with the needs of our business and the importance of promoting the region as a whole,” she said.

“As the marketing contact for our park I feel well informed and am impressed with the quality of campaigns and famil opportunities offered to us. Recently we hosted the Jetstar famil and felt very proud to introduce the media to the Whitsundays with a genuine Bowen welcome.”

To find out more about how you can get involved with Tourism Whitsundays, please call 07 4948 5900.

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