



MEDIA RELEASE

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Visitors to experience Whitsundays in Virtual Reality Installation

A Virtual Reality Installation at the Bowen Visitor Information Centre is set to enhance the way visitors experience the Whitsundays.

Tourists visiting the Information Centre at the Big Mango are now able to explore the entire region through a touchscreen, computer-generated imagery (CGI) interactive map and via a virtual reality (VR) headset that transports the viewer to several hero experiences.

Visitors can also purchase a cardboard virtual reality headset and download the free Visit Whitsundays app to take the virtual experiences home with them and share with family and friends.

The installation, accompanying smart phone app and Whitsundays-inspired headsets were made possible through the joint state and federal government Tourism Recovery Fund.

The 360 videos produced for the installation and app showcase hero experiences from every corner of the Whitsundays region, from snorkelling the Great Barrier Reef to visiting a haunted outback pub.

Viewing the 360 videos through a VR headset literally places the viewer in the scene, discovering the thrill of skydiving onto a beautiful Whitsundays beach, or fishing for the elusive barramundi on Lake Proserpine. The Great Barrier Reef, Whitehaven Beach and delightful Greys Bay in Bowen are also featured in crystal clear fly-overs.

Bowen Tourism and Business Chairman, Jonathan Freeman, said the diversity of experiences available in the Whitsundays region was captured beautifully in the virtual reality footage, offering visitors to the Visitor Information Centre a unique way to plan their journey through the region.

“The true potential in the project, however, will be realised in the distribution nationally and internationally of the cardboard VR headsets and Visit Whitsundays app. We will be bringing the Whitsundays to potential visitors across the world, influencing their travel choices when dreaming, planning and booking their holiday” he said.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer Natassia Wheeler said the VR Installation was a creative way to showcase the diversity of the beautiful Whitsundays to anyone with a smart phone.

“From skydiving, snorkelling on the Great Barrier Reef and walking through the slightly haunted Bowen River Hotel, the VR headset provides individuals with a new and fun way to experience the Whitsundays from any location,” she said.

“It’s also a great opportunity to entice people to come to the Whitsundays and experience all the amazing icons and activities on offer in the Whitsundays first hand.”

Innovation and Tourism Industry Development Minister Kate Jones said the virtual reality installation would help to lure more visitors who stay longer and spend more in the region.

“This is about using cutting-edge virtual reality technology to entice a new generation of tourists to the Whitsundays,” she said.

“We know the Bowen Visitor Information Centre is a hub for tourists looking for unique experiences in Queensland.

“Now visitors will get a taste of what the Whitsundays has to offer while they’re planning the next stage of their trip.”

Visitors can now experience the Virtual Reality Installation at the Big Mango Visitor Information Centre or download the Visit Whitsundays app to view the 360 videos with a virtual reality headset.

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